

Danran Mao

(+86) 135 6428 3317

(+1) 412 592 1630

maodanran1024@gmail.com

Education Background

Carnegie Mellon University, 2022-2026

Bachelor of Art in Architecture, Minor in Game design

Relevant Courses: Educational Game Design, Transformational Game Design, Theme Park Design, PRG Writing, Understanding Game Engines, Designing Human-Centered Software

Skillsets

Game Development

Unity, C#, Python, Game Balancing, Prototyping, Narrative & Systems Design, Level Design

Design Tools

Adobe Suite (Illustrator, Photoshop, InDesign, Premiere, After Effects), Rhino, V-Ray, Grasshopper, AutoCAD, Figma, Miro

Creative & Research

Screenwriting, Storyboarding, UI Design, Playtesting & Iteration, User Research, Visual Communication, Photography

Soft Skills

Team Collaboration, Problem Solving, Ideation, Empathetic Design Thinking

Professional Experience

Shanghai Architectural Science and Technology Institute

2023.6-2023.8, Intern Architect

Assisted in multiple phases from concept design to construction documentation using CAD and visualization tools.

HCCH Atelier

2025.5-2025.7, Intern Architect

Designed and facilitated an architecture & gaming camp (ages 6-14) introducing I.M. Pei's design concepts through interactive play; Prepared materials, playtests, and conducted bilingual workshops. Managed translation/localization of media content, including social posts and publications. Created and documented physical models and visual drawings for studio project, facilitate client communication

National Organization of Minority Architecture Students (NOMAS CMU)

2024-Present, Facilitate Board

Created PR and social media materials to highlight NOMAS initiatives and community impact.

Participated and facilitated on campus and community events.

Project Experience

Luminara – Educational Video Game Design Project | 2025.5 – Present

Designed an educational game themed around color mixing and optical principles.

Led UI/UX redesign and adjusted level pacing to enhance player satisfaction and learning experience.

Experimented with Boolean operations and light mechanics for gameplay design.

Contributed to basic programming and prototyping in a 3DS simulator version.

Just an Island | 2024.8 – Present

Designed a hybrid floating community integrating daily life and festival activities, include architecture and narrative of a movable floating-island system simulating dynamic scenes and spatial transitions.

Expanded a walkable simulation prototype turning the project into a exploration game.

Wrote a seven-act narrative integrating spatial rhythm and game storytelling.

Pres. no Name | 2025.10

Entry of Ludun Dare Game Jam 58, delivered a story-driven prototype completed within 72 hours.

Designed the core gameplay loop, level progression, and stat systems from concept to execution.

Focused on mechanical innovation and player experience, **ranking #87 globally in Innovation.**

The Plight of the Four Houses | 2025.10 -Present

Original Dungeons & Dragons campaign written, set in the world of Baldur's Gate 3.

Co-wrote a fully playable five-act campaign in the mystery genre, including quests and character arcs.

Independently wrote one full act player character setup, integrating narrative structure with gameplay flow.

Created dungeon maps, NPC & monster statblocks, and the villain's plan.

Produced a publication-ready campaign balancing narrative pacing and player agency.

Leaf and Lore | 2025.1 - 2025.5

Architectural studio project of a community library located in Boston, MA that merges architecture and storytelling, where a glass greenhouse "invades" the conventional library volume to create an immersive reading environment.

Integrated the spatial rhythm and progression of game levels, guiding users through zones of discovery and calm, tailored to different age groups and reading habits.

Framed the circulation as a narrative journey, where light, vegetation, and material transitions act as environmental cues for emotional pacing.

Employed gameplay narrative in architecture design to foster engagement and curiosity in public space.