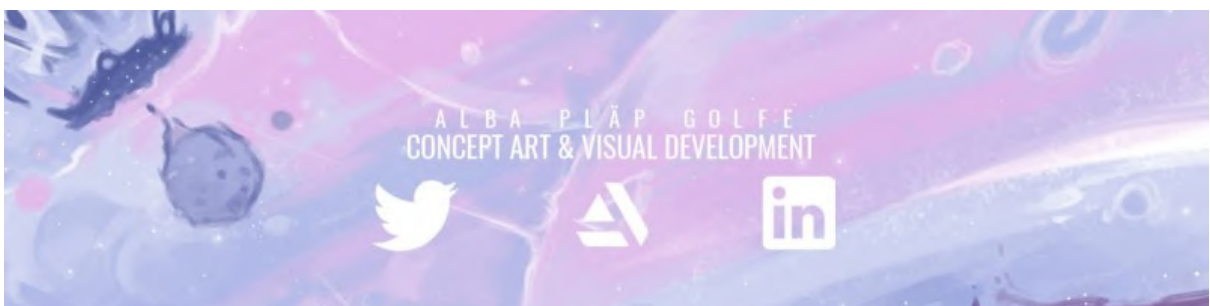


"I want to make video games!" - My scholarship experience, studies & internship

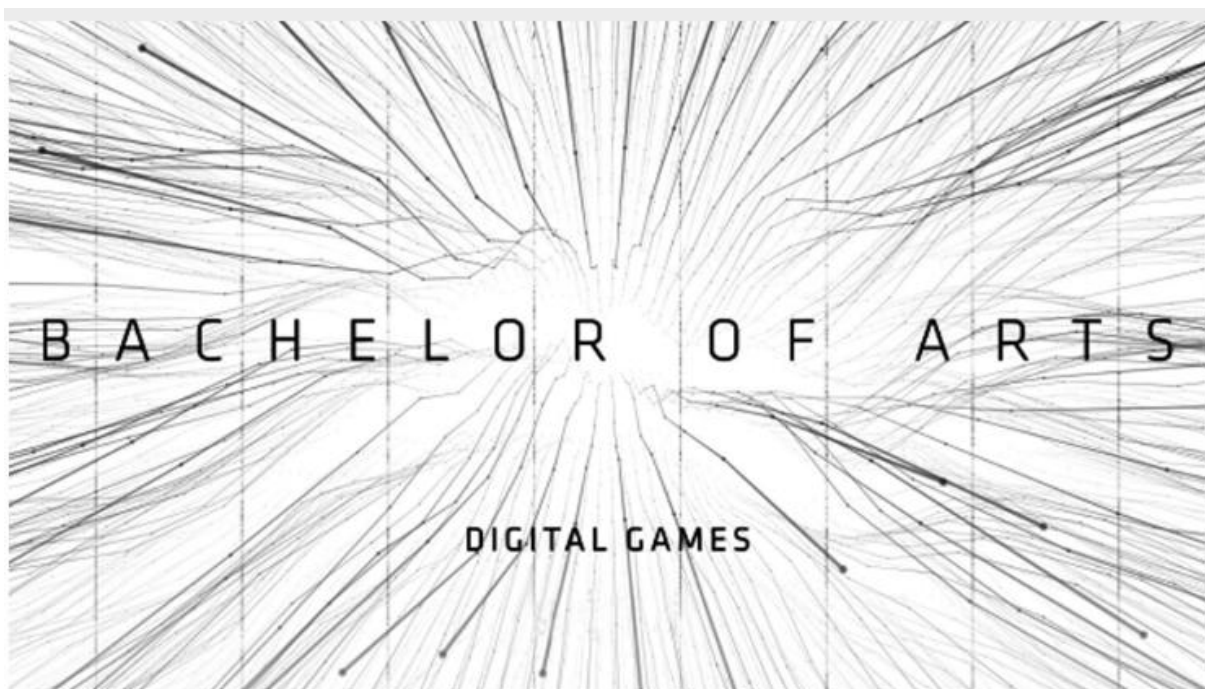


Greetings, fellow Gaming Industry enthusiasts here on LinkedIn! Cheers to professors, fellow students & anyone with whom I've shaken hands over the past four years! And also those who might want to be part of the Gaming Industry themselves in the future and are seeking some career guidance - this one is for all of you.



Cologne Game Lab

This month I finished my B.A. in Digital Games at the Cologne Game Lab. Since then I have created Concept Art, 3D Models, as well as Games and Levels in Unreal Engine. Due to the successful completion of my studies, I am writing out a final report of my studying experience and what my start was like in the Games Industry here in Germany. I began my studies at the CGL In 2018. But this wasn't the only milestone I accomplished that year!



<https://colognegamelab.de/study-programs/undergraduate-graduate/digital-games-ba/b-a-overview/>

I needed to cover my expenses to study in cologne, so I started my search for a fitting scholarship while simultaneously applying to universities. I was lucky to get referred to the Gaming Aid Scholarship over the CGL Facebook group by one of the students.



Excerpts from my application project "Trails of a Soul", 2018.

Perfect! There weren't any other gaming-specific scholarships out there and I was fortunate that this would be the first year applications were open. Since I had worked hard on my Portfolio to join the Cologne Game Lab, I was already working on high-quality pieces for my application. I was thrilled to participate!

Gaming Aid e.V.



My scholarship ended this year in March of 2022. Gaming Aid has supported me 3 ½ years with financial support every month - the entire duration of the regular study course and almost my entire time at CGL! Here is a short recap of how it all started and the possibilities these amazing people had opened up for me that went much beyond financial aid.



Read more about the GaSt Stipendium here:
<https://gaming-aid.de/gaming-aid-stipendium/>

To apply for the scholarship I had to write out a letter of motivation, an excerpt from this letter I wrote out in 2018 reads: “[...] whenever I had the possibility of watching someone play, I was instantly hooked on the screen, no matter what type of game. Something within me deeply corresponds with the idea of creation, a fictional world someone had created with all its assets for me to explore [...]”

When applying, I emphasized my passion for exploring this vast landscape that was waiting beyond my horizon in making games. I brought a whole lot of curiosity and drive to learn and displayed those personal passions and reasons for my personal enticement with games.



Baby Alba at Gamescom 2019

Success! After making it through the first round of applicants, which included sending a letter of motivation, a current CV, and proof of volunteering work, I was able to upload my artwork to a Dropbox folder. After another round of nerve-racking waiting time, I was invited to an online interview with the examination board.

I remember doing really well because of the knowledge I had gathered of Concept Art from informing myself about the production pipeline online. I knew a lot about the job position being part of pre-production and I was also active on forums and communities like Cubebrush and DeviantArt, participating in competitions and seeking feedback as a beginner artist. I have always been a very engaged artist, it wasn't just a dream to become a Concept Artist - it is a craft, a goal, and a skill set I was working toward every step of the way.

Apparently, this had set me apart from other applicants of that year - and in the end, I got chosen as the first Gaming Aid Scholarship recipient!

Welcome to the German Games Industry!



[Gaming-Aid vergibt erstmals Stipendium](#)

From the first minute on I got to meet the curators of the scholarship - [Wolfgang Walk](#) & [Svenja Bhatti](#). Two amazing people, who, throughout my studies, always supported my creations and opened up new opportunities.

One of the biggest opportunities the scholarship provided was my internship with Ubisoft. Ubisoft Education even partnered with Gaming Aid e.V. to cover my financial support. This was huge! Suddenly my name was popping up on websites and they were even filming interviews with me. I was still developing my artistic voice and I hadn't quite settled in any themes or direction - suddenly everyone was so interested in my sketches and where I was headed as an artist.

An Impression of Ubisoft Education

Everything happened so fast that I was barely able to realize how much this scholarship represented at the time - and still does now! The German Games Industry keeps trying to establish itself as a serious contender in the spheres of a political and globally competitive economy. Supporting young and upcoming talent is a sign of a thriving industry - and Gaming Aid keeps pushing onward every year supporting talent from all over the world!

Games Talente Academy

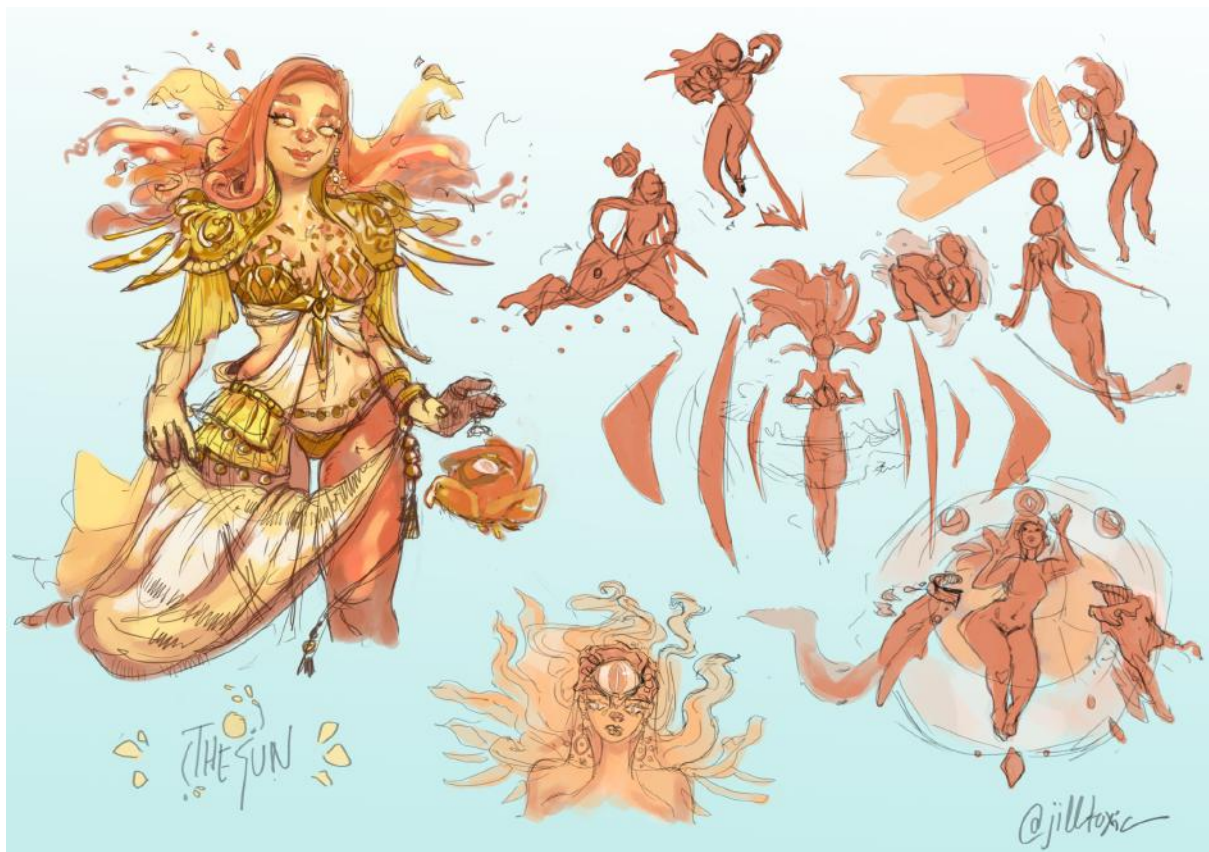


<https://gamestalente.de/>

As I was wondering what else was happening in Games and upon showing my interest, Svenja referred me to help out as a volunteer at the Games Talente Academy 2019. This was one of the best experiences of my life! Over the course of one week, I supported teenagers aged 13-16 with the development of their very first video games. My task was to support the participants with workshops about Concept Art while they were experimenting with new software and planning methods. I helped out at the Academy with various specialized people from the gaming industry, fellow students, as well as dedicated educators. It was an exciting adventure, with a lot of heart & video games!

Seeing how games spark the curiosity in these kids just as they had sparked mine was a huge revelation and showed me the true potential of gaming and what it could provide in the future of education. The sheer passion they put forth for their little projects was truly inspiring. As teamers, we helped to conceptualize the Academy and it's been an ongoing project ever since with a lot of success. Huge thanks to the people from Stiftung Digitale Spiele Kultur as well as Bildung & Begabung for creating such an inspiring concept for these young students.

My Internship at Ubisoft Düsseldorf



Personal Concept Artwork applying the knowledge I gathered during my Internship at Ubisoft Düsseldorf

Entering the Ubisoft Office was a huge milestone for my young artist career. At the time it was exactly what I needed to improve my art. Of course, entering a AAA studio at 20 was beyond my imagination and only possible because of the wonderful people at Gaming Aid. Working

alongside Art Director [Edgar Bittencourt](#) and Concept Artist [Magdalena Proszowska](#) as well as [Eduardo Garcia](#) motivated me to push my art much further than what I had been willing to before.

It was a very intense time, but it showed me again how open this industry is to newcomers like me. The people in the gaming industry love to share their knowledge and I am so appreciative of having been part of the team at the time. My art made a huge jump in quality due to the professional environment and feedback I received.

Thank You, Everyone!



Alba 2k22, a.k.a. Alboba, a.k.a. Chaos Noodle

One thing I have to say about the (German) Games Industry - it is an explosion of cultures. Because of its internationality, people here are open-minded, inclusive, and kind. I've met students, professors, artists, programmers, designers, and many more specialists from all over the world, whom I now call my friends. Who share their distinct cultures with me. I've heard the spoken poetry of languages such as Arabic, Russian, Korean, Indian, and many more to learn to admire their picturesque alphabets.

Gaming Aid gave me the possibility of taking my time to grow as an artist and as a person. These four years have been incredibly important to my development and listening in on my fellow comrades at CGL, we felt this place, this industry has given us just what we needed. Free range as creative people. Possibilities to those with drive and passion to reach their goals wherever we are headed. Work and finances to thrive.



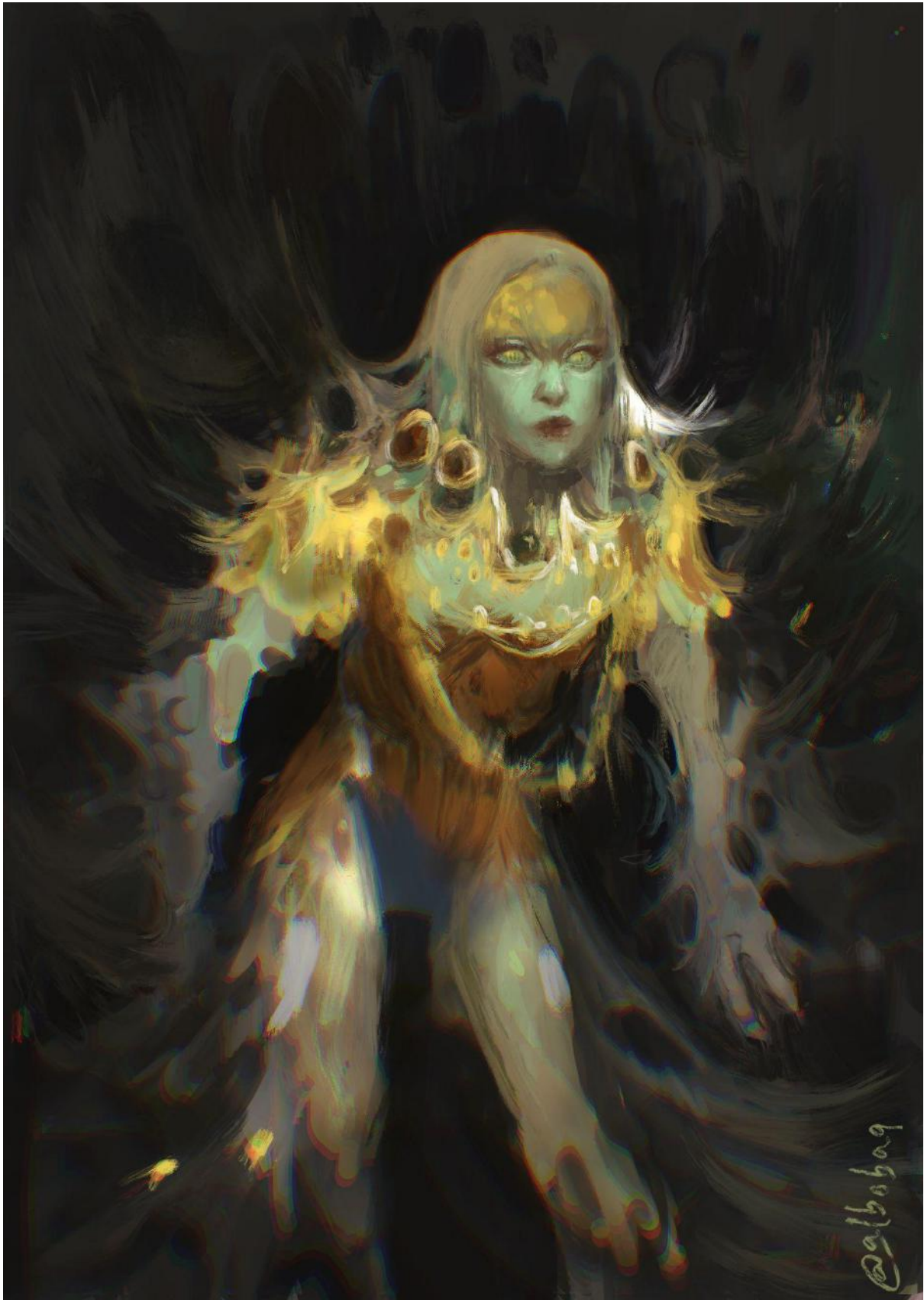
What I discovered here was beyond my imagination. It is the perfect fusion of technology and creativity. Just like the time I woke up extra early to scavenge through Pokemon Mystery Dungeons on my Nintendo DS or climbed enormous Colossi on Playstation, I cannot avert my eyes from what games are bringing us. Making games is even more complex and rich of a process than my imagination could have ever come up with.



The technology behind it covers a whole lifetime of joyful learning and experimentation. Now I see these worlds are manifested by people like my friends and me through dedication, time, and patience. Fused together by the comradery of having visited the same worlds and lived the same adventures through tiny screens as baboos (this is the word for “child” we use that one of my Russian friends came up with).

What's Next?

[Timelapse](#)



I want to make video games! Now more than ever. I am currently in the process of creating pieces for my Portfolio and hoping to join the industry as a Concept Artist. I will also take some time to rest and let all of this adventuring sink in a little.

Huge thanks again to my professor [Björn Bartholdy](#), who has been a big supporter of mine during my time at CGL and as my Scholarship / B.A. Mentor. Thank you to my best friend [Maria Lobanova](#), we did it all together and I couldn't have done it without you.

And to all the Gaming Industry veterans out there - go play some video games! Don't forget why you started out here in the first place.

Yours Truly, Alboba