

Christin Lee

## Dream Agency

During the stillness of the pandemic, I had found myself replaying *Mass Effect Legendary Edition* for the third or fourth time. *Mass Effect* has always been a favorite video game of mine, but I never really had the insight as to why I felt so easily drawn to the sci-fi world of the series. But somewhere in the glow of the Normandy's control room and the weight of the game's outcome-altering decisions, I came to a quiet realization: I wanted to do this. I wanted to design a game that people could feel as passionate as I did about my favorite series, to comfort them in uncertain times, and to give them an experience to relive. And I hope to continue that legacy one day by working at BioWare's Austin studio.

BioWare is the game design studio that made me understand that games were a form of art. Through games like *Mass Effect*, *Dragon Age*, and the choice-based gameplay that the studio is notorious for, I realized through first-hand experience how deeply a player could connect with a game's storytelling. Every companion was thoroughly fleshed out and felt like a person. Every decision felt like it had a consequence. BioWare's utility of humanity in storytelling and depth in design inspires me to one day contribute to that legacy. I believe in what BioWare represents: that games can be character-rich, narratively compelling, and still innovatively designed. And as a new designer, I want to push it further.

As a student who has earned my associate's in game design and is pursuing my bachelor's in visualization, I've participated in projects that will hopefully, one day, contribute to my application to the BioWare Austin studio. In *Purgatory High*, a narrative game I designed, I

created branching dialogue paths, created scripts, developed characters, and built the entire user experience to reflect themes of redemption and choice— which admittedly, was based on the “BioWare T/F System.” In coding, a “true” or “false” refers to a switch that tells the program if an action was taken. BioWare’s T/F system refers specifically to how branching dialogue and choices flip these switches and affect the outcome of the story. I mirrored this system in the development of *Purgatory High*, creating a branching pathway that would affect the player’s experience depending on their choices. It was my love letter to stories that prioritize player choice.

In another project, *The Goat (Board)Game*, I took a different route and designed gameplay mechanics, visual assets, and a physical board map for a two-player strategy game. That experience helped develop my understanding of systems thinking, layout design, and player interactivity. For *Mirror Zero*, a pixel-style sci-fi platformer, I served as art lead and created sprites, tilesets, and environmental assets to help bring a cyberpunk setting to life. Each project, in its own way, deepened my understanding of how mechanics, visuals, and story must work in tandem, which would be skills crucial for level design for BioWare.

And while I strive to be versatile, I am an artist at my core. I’m constantly sketching characters and scenes, exploring composition, emotion, and movement. My passion for art informs every part of my design process. I believe that subtle visual choices, like a glimmer of light across an iris or the hesitation in a character’s idle animation, can make a design unforgettable. To impress and inspire BioWare’s creative team, I would bring not only my skills, but my collaborative spirit and devotion to storytelling. I believe in thoughtful design, in asking “why” behind every creative decision. I want to learn from the minds that shaped my passion to

pursue my dream career. I want to create the kind of experience that someone treasures. I dream to be the mind behind someone else's *Mass Effect*.