

## 2K Games releasing doc chronicling art contest

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This photo provided by 2K Games shows a student drawing an illustration in the film, "The Art of the Game." 2K Games commissioned filmmaker Matthew Davis Walker and his production company Story Developing to create the feature-length documentary, set to debut for free Thursday, May 8, 2014, on Machinima's Twitch.tv channel and later on Xbox Live and YouTube. The film chronicles budding game designers at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco who competed last year for an internship at 2K by creating short computer-generated films set in the fictional realm from the "Borderlands" games. (AP Photo/2K Games)

The next release from 2K Games, the publisher of such interactive

adventures as the sci-fi shoot-'em-up series "Borderlands" and the alternate history saga "BioShock," won't be another out-of-this-world game. It's a film planted firmly in reality. With the release of "The Art of the Game," 2K is becoming the latest game maker to trade interactivity for a documentary.

The feature-length movie is scheduled to debut for free Thursday on Machinima's Twitch.tv channel and later on Xbox Live and YouTube. It chronicles budding [game designers](#) at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco, who competed last year for an internship at 2K by creating computer-generated short films set in the fictional realm from the "Borderlands" games.

2K commissioned Matthew Davis Walker, who previously produced the music doc "Muscle Shoals," and his production company Story Developing to craft the film, which is interwoven with profiles of folks from across the gaming world, such as transgendered [game](#) designer Mattie Brice and Wii bowlers from the Sullivan Senior Center in Torrington, Connecticut.

"The last thing we wanted to make was a commercial," said Walker. "2K was a wonderful partner because they were able to be so open-minded about what we brought them. We wanted to approach the industry from a wide-ranging perspective, whether it was education involving children, design with the college students or the older generation playing games."

Kelly Miller, the marketing manager behind the film at 2K, said the company originally decided to hold the contest at the Academy of Art University because of the school's interest in game design and proximity to 2K headquarters in Novato, California. The notion of documenting the process, including equipping students with cameras to film themselves, came later.

"It didn't start as an hour-long [documentary](#)," said Miller. "When we began the project with the students, we immediately realized we wanted to follow them and tell their story. We then started working with Story Developing and talking about what would be the best format to do that, and it just felt like the right format. There was a lot of depth there."



This photo provided by 2K Games shows a student working on a short film in the documentary, "The Art of the Game." 2K Games commissioned filmmaker Matthew Davis Walker and his production company Story Developing to create the feature-length documentary, set to debut for free Thursday, May 8, 2014, on Machinima's Twitch.tv channel and later on Xbox Live and YouTube. The film chronicles budding game designers at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco who competed last year for an internship at 2K by creating short computer-generated films set in the fictional realm from the "Borderlands" games. (AP Photo/2K Games)

Ultimately, 2K greenlit three short films to be produced by Academy of Art University students outside of their classwork, and "The Art of the

Game" follows their creation from storyboard concepts to final products, with a pair of participants later earning jobs with the company. The three winning short films will be released digitally alongside the documentary.

Despite the filmmakers' pure intentions, "The Art of the Game" is the latest example of a game publisher moving into the documentary business and blurring the lines between creativity and advertising. (The majority of the professional game designers who appear in "The Art of the Game" are employed by 2K Games Inc. owner Take-Two Interactive Software Inc.)

In March, "Portal" and "Dota 2" publisher Valve Corp. released its own self-produced, feature-length doc online called "Free to Play: The Movie." The e-sports chronicle focuses on three players who competed for the \$1 million prize in the first-ever "Dota 2" international tournament in 2011 in Cologne, Germany. It's amassed over 1.9 million views on YouTube.

Activision Blizzard Inc. recently enlisted Vice Media, which publishes books and a magazine, as well as produces its own HBO documentary series, to create a video released last week about real-world private military contractors. The video promoted the next "Call of Duty" installment, "Call of Duty: Advanced Warfare," which stars "House of Cards" star Kevin Spacey.



This photo provided by 2K Games shows a scene from the film, "Darkest Day," created by one of the student subjects in the documentary film, "The Art of the Game." With the release of "The Art of the Game," a feature-length doc chronicling a group of budding game designers, 2K Games is the latest game maker to trade polygons for reality. "The Art of the Game" is set to debut for free Thursday, May 8, 2014, on Machinima's Twitch.tv channel and later on Xbox Live and YouTube. (AP Photo/2K Games)

In recent years, games have been the subject of several [documentary films](#), including 2012's stressed-out game-making tale "Indie Game: The Movie," 2008's haunting online game addict profile "Second Skin," 2007's record-breaking arcade recount "The King of Kong: A Fistful of Quarters" and 2004's puzzle game profile "Tetris: From Russia with Love."

Other game-centric documentaries set for release this year include "Atari: Game Over," a chronicle of last month's excavation of a landfill filled with copies of old-school Atari games that's part of Xbox Entertainment Studios' six-part series "Signal to Noise," as well as

"Gameplay: The Story of the Videogame Revolution" from filmmaker Richard Goldgewicht.

**More information:** [facebook.com/artofthegamefilm](https://www.facebook.com/artofthegamefilm)

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