

Two new video game studios form with 'Star Wars' and id Software pedigrees

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Video game studios like other tech industry has seen plenty of tumult this year. Publishers have announced several layoffs while others have said they will refocus their approach. That means plenty of talent is out

there, and in this uncertain time, two studios have emerged boasting several big names and hints of promising AAA projects.

Giant Skull and emptyvessel have impressive pedigrees. Giant Skull is headed by Stig Asmussen who recently helmed the "Star Wars Jedi" titles. Both are stellar games. He also previously worked for Santa Monica Studios on "God of War II" and "God of War III"

"The Giant Skull studio culture is founded on creativity and curiosity," said Asmussen, who is also Giant Skull CEO, in a news release. "We have assembled a talented team renowned for immersive storytelling, heroic combat and exhilarating traversal, and our goal is to craft a rich universe that players will want to lose themselves in for years to come."

Some of the talent on the team also includes Jon Carr, who worked with Amussen on "Jedi: Survivor" as technical director; art director Patrick Murphy, who also has ties to the studio head, and Brian Campbell, a founding member of the "Fortnite" team.

The first game will be a single-player action-adventure title that uses the Unreal Engine 5. If Amussen's previous work is any indication, expect it to be another epic title full of big moments and equally solid level design.

In Austin, Texas, emptyvessel also boasts a team with impressive credentials. They have developers who worked on "DOOM," "Quake," "Call of Duty," "The Last of Us," "Borderlands," "Tomb Raider," "Uncharted" and "Callisto Protocol." Veteran game director and CEO Emanuel Palalic and general manager and COO Garrett Young had critical roles at id Software while others such as CTO Wei Ning, art director Alex Palam and animation director Rico Flores also have backgrounds in recent blockbuster titles.

"Many [game developers](#) like myself began our journey fueled by the dream of one day bringing our worlds to life," said Palalic in a news release. "By prioritizing and aligning with our strengths, we're confident it's possible to create AAA-quality games with smaller, focused teams. The industry has often overlooked the people who pour their hearts and souls into crafting these worlds. With emptyvessel, we're determined to change that narrative and make that dream a reality for as many developers as we can."

It's notable that though emptyvessel is based in Texas, it operates fully remote with its staff located worldwide. Giant Skull, which is based in Los Angeles, also has remote staff.

Emptyvessel said it's working on an unannounced project that "leverages their experiences in the immersive shooter space," a news release said. It's powered by Unreal Engine 5 and is inspired by dystopian sci-fi worlds.

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