

The Tale of LEGO® Bricktales

LEGO Bricktales was born in a bathtub of LEGO DUPLO® bricks, inspired by Nintendo's Captain Toad, and created by a team behind a game played by one in every 100 people on Earth.

The story of the ClockStone Studio-developed and Headup-published game is one of childhood friendships, big gambles, and unexpected success.

While the game's development started in 2019, you actually need to go back to the early 2000s to understand how the game came to life and why its journey from concept to fruition was such an unexpected one.



ClockStone Studio was started by two high school friends who, early in their budding career, connected with the fledgling publisher Headup. The publisher helped bring Greed: Black Border, the recent college graduates' second game, to market. While it wasn't a tremendous success, it helped strike up a lasting relationship between the developer and publisher.

But it wasn't until 2011, when the studio was verging on collapse and the founders were starting to think about going their separate ways, that the two companies struck accidental gold.

Dieter Schoeller, the founder of Headup, said he was trying to come up with a project that would inject a bit of quick cash into his company, so he went to ClockStone with the idea of them creating a simulation game based on building bridges.

ClockStone founders Minh Tri Do Dinh and Stephan Sossau said they took on the work but didn't think it would amount to much.

"We were pretty much at our low point," Sossau said. "When we got Bridge Constructor, we were trying out a bunch of different things. Not only games, but also visual visualizations and small other applications. But it wasn't really going well.

"We were running out of money. And we were just running out of motivation."

The ClockStone team worked diligently on Bridge Constructor and released it in 2011 to very little fanfare. It was, in their minds, just another way to keep their head above water as they searched for a title, an idea that could earn them some recognition.

But then the game absolutely blew up – first as a standalone game, and then turning into a six-game franchise that has been played by more than 80 million people worldwide.

The brand's enduring popularity also eventually led to the LEGO Group's doorstep and a pitch that would evolve into LEGO Bricktales.

Back in 2018, Anders Tankred Holm, then a platform architect at the LEGO Group, was asked to come up with a pitch for a mobile title for LEGO Games and an outside partner. He thought back to his time when he started with the company and a visit to the LEGO House alongside some development partners.

"One of the things we continue to do today is that we invite the partners to sit in a DUPLO pool and to build a bridge between the edges of that pool," Holm said. "And that sort of stuck with me in terms of that building bridges play with the physicality of the LEGO brick."

Then he recalled Bridge Constructor, which he happened to be a big fan of, and thought that the idea of combining the two could result in a good game. So he pitched the idea to LEGO Games, and they asked him to run with it. He tracked Schoeller in 2019 to see if he would be interested in creating LEGO Bridge Constructor.

"They said, 'OK, we have these core values defined for LEGO games, and we feel that Bridge Constructor Portal isn't too far away from our core values,'" Schoeller said. "Then they gave us the chance to develop a concept and to pitch to them. So they invited us, and we had very good conversations."

That early, one-page pitch for LEGO Bridge Constructor quickly evolved, first shifting to a broader concept, and then layering in ideas like creating a strong storyline and building out each level to look like a diorama.

It was another game, 2014's Captain Toad: Treasure Tracker for the Wii U, that actually inspired the look of LEGO Bricktales. The Nintendo game stars the eponymous Toad as he journeys around tiny isometric minigames by rotating perspectives around dioramas.

"That was one of the key inspirations for the game from the start," Sossau said. "Captain Toad does so many things with changing the environment – like interactions that really

change the basic structure and open up new pathways. We thought this is something that could be huge for LEGO dioramas as well."

Ultimately, the team at ClockStone married that look with other central game design pillars, like the ability to build out solutions to challenges, brick-by-brick, and unlocking more bricks and elements to play with.

The result is a robust LEGO brick building game, packed with colorful, detailed dioramas that uses an adventurous storyline to pull you through the levels.

LEGO Bricktales is a bit of a turning point for ClockStone. It's a game that feels like the culmination of a decade's worth of design and development centered on the joy of catastrophic, and often cinematic failure.

Explore more ...

In order of appearance:

[ClockStone Studio](#) – Official website

[Headup](#) – Official website

[Bridge Constructor](#) – Official website

[Bridge Constructor Portal](#) – Official website

Transcript

Bits N' Bricks Season 5, Episode 50: The Tale of LEGO® Bricktales
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Prologue – 00:00

Announcer

Please note that this episode of Bits N' Bricks contains instances of misuse of the LEGO trademark, which must always be used as an adjective and never a noun. As a reminder, it is never appropriate to refer to the company that designs and produces LEGO brand products as LEGO. Rather, the correct name for the company overall is the LEGO Group.

Ethan Vincent

Hi, everyone. I know we've been absent for a bit, but we're back today to talk about a really exciting new game.

Brian Crecente

Today, we're talking about a game born in a pool-sized bathtub of DUPLO® bricks, inspired by Nintendo's own Captain Toad, and created by a team behind the game played by one in every 100 people on Earth.

Ethan Vincent

That's a lot of people, Brian.

Brian Crecente

It's a ton of people.

Ethan Vincent

Yes. LEGO Bricktales, developed by ClockStone Studio, is out now, but its journey from concept to launch is a long one.

Brian Crecente

You actually need to go back quite a bit to trace the roots for this game.

Ethan Vincent

All right, Brian, let's do this.

Brian Crecente

Rock on (chuckles). I don't know why I say that. Why not?

Bits N' Bricks: Introduction – 1:11

(Bits N' Bricks Season 4 theme music plays)

Ethan Vincent

Welcome to Bits N' Bricks, a podcast about all things LEGO games. I'm Ethan Vincent.

Brian Crecente

And I'm Brian Crecente. Together, we look back at the rich, 25-year history of LEGO games, chat with early developers and seasoned studios who have all tackled the creation of video games for one of the most popular and respected toy companies in the world – the LEGO Group.

(Theme music continues)

Chapter 1: ClockStone Studio – 1:39

Ethan Vincent

The Story of LEGO Bricktales begins with two friends in Austria. ClockStone Studio's co-founders, Tri Do Dinh and Stephan Sossau were childhood friends who went to high school together in Innsbruck, Austria, which is not too far from my stomping grounds. Right, Brian?

Brian Crecente

Yeah, that's cool. So is it like, do you guys know each other? Is it that tiny a town? (laughs)

Ethan Vincent

That's a good question. (laughs) It reminds me when Europeans ask me if I know someone in Texas, right? Do you know a John in Texas, Brian?

Brian Crecente

I know everybody in Texas. What are you talking about?

(Laughter)

Brian Crecente

It's a tiny, quaint little state.

Ethan Vincent

Yeah, exactly. No, luckily, Austria is not that big. Austria is the size of Maine, and Innsbruck is probably about a six to seven to eight-hour drive from Vienna, Austria. So Innsbruck itself is nestled between these incredible Alps, and it's a beautiful, beautiful town. And it's quite fun that these two friends met in that town and created ClockStone Studio.

Tri Do Dinh

During my teens I was interested, as a teen is, in just games in general. So I would play a lot.

Ethan Vincent

This is Tri speaking.

Tri Do Dinh

And I think I have a creative streak, always. So that was just me. And interestingly enough it was Stephan. We were classmates, and we were kind of like the art kids in the class who would, like, draw and just do creative stuff. Just later on, like after school or high school when we started college around the time, we were trying to figure out if there's anything to do in creative fields.

Stephan Sossau

Funny thing I think, is for me, I wasn't really playing that many games as a kid because we never had a computer at home.

Ethan Vincent

This is Stephan speaking.

Stephan Sossau

Actually, at a very early age, I was thinking about games a lot while not being able to play them. So I got into drawing, and I got into thinking about how to create games more on an early stage, I think. So, as soon as I got a computer, the computers I had to work with were always very old, and I got to play old games, and I got to experience old technology and working with a lot of limitations. So I think that was maybe a part of the spark of creativity, I think.

Brian Crecente

Tri said that it was other friends who got them involved in creating their very first game.

Tri Do Dinh

He was making a game on his own time. He was coding a game on his own time. And it's like through those channels, we kind of got together in a group, and it kind of took off from

there because we just decided, "Hey, wouldn't it be cool if we contribute art to this?" And he was like, "Sure," and then things just snowballed into essentially what would become our first game, Avencast. And it's like, in the wake of that we would found the company and everything else, you know?

(Brief tune break)

Ethan Vincent

Avencast: Rise of the Mage began life as a hobby project meant to mimic the best elements of action role-playing games like Diablo. After four years of development, it was released for PC in late 2007.

Brian Crecente

And with one game under their belt, the small team at the studio started wrestling with what to do next. Here's Tri.

Tri Do Dinh

We started founding the company really just to publish Avencast. That was like the first step. And afterwards, we will kind of assess, you know, what's the situation, what do we want to do, and obviously, game development and sustaining game development really is not an easy job to do. So we kind of took this as an aside to make non-gaming projects to secure ourselves a little bit. And it kind of developed into those two lanes that we essentially run in with ClockStone.

Brian Crecente

In those early years of the studio, the team supplemented their income by working on non-gaming software like a product presentation app, a lighting configuration system, a virtual company tour, and even software for tracking live-fire gunshots in real-time.

Tri Do Dinh

The shot detection thing was just one particular person who was like a hunter, professional hunter, and he had some system running that would do like a shot simulation software – that sort of thing. And he essentially just hired us for that particular project.

(Brief tune plays)

Chapter 2: Headup Games – 5:43

Ethan Vincent

In 2009, the studio launched its second game, Greed: Black Border, a hack-and-slash action role-playing game set in a futuristic universe. It landed to mixed reviews, but more

importantly, it started the relationship with publisher and developer Headup Games, which would go on to publish LEGO Bricktales.

Brian Crecente

Dieter Schoeller's love for gaming can probably be traced back to his early teens, not just because, like most teens of his era, he enjoyed the occasional game of Sonic, but because he was really good at playing games.

Dieter Schoeller

The first Sega master championship in Germany, the official one, was at a time when you had to send in screenshots to prove your points, which meant actual pictures taken by camera off your TV, and then basically was the first Sega championship, and it was 200 kids in a hall playing Sonic for one minute, who gets the most points, and I actually won, ended up with a Game Gear with a TV adaptor as a prize, as a 14-year-old kid.

(Brief tune plays)

Ethan Vincent

But despite that auspicious start and his growing love for video games, Dieter decided when he graduated high school that he should study law, rather than pursue a job in game development.

Brian Crecente

I think for a lot of people, this would have been one of those crossroad moments in life, and I guess to some degree it was, but Dieter told us that, as he wrapped up his law degree, he came to the realization that he actually didn't want to practice law. Instead, he decided to go back to his first love – video games.

Dieter Schoeller

I was always a gamer. And then I basically, during my study time, because law studies are super boring, to be fair, I ended up doing a lot of Quake and Wolfenstein modding. That's how I got into the whole modding team and modding scene. And that side showed me that, hey, you can actually, if you market it well, you can have like 150,000 people play your Quake mod. And I picked up on the whole industry thought during my study time. But as I was already studying, I said, "OK, I'm going to finish this. And then I'm going to move into this industry," which was very young at that point.

Ethan Vincent

So, instead of following along that law degree path, he got an internship at Ubisoft, spending a year essentially learning about the marketing and public relations of video games. And then he turned that into the beginning of a lifetime career in the games industry.

Brian Crecente

So it's 2008, and Dieter is working at RTL Interactive in Germany, and he can't help but notice a sudden wave of tremendous indie games starting to hit the market. He spotted an opportunity.

Dieter Schoeller

So basically, when actually I realized small teams can make a difference, and I wanted to be part of that really exciting new venture and new trend in the gaming industry that you don't need the publisher as a gatekeeper and large teams with hundreds of people, but that actually smaller teams can create really creative and innovative products. And I wanted to be a part of that, but I'm not a developer, so I try to set the stage for those teams.

Ethan Vincent

In 2009, Dieter launched Headup, a company focused on helping indies bring their games to market. In Dieter's words, the publisher wasted a year and all of their initial money on their very first game and working setting things up.

Brian Crecente

But that year money wasn't a total loss. Dieter said he learned a lot from the process. Once they had their legs under them again, they invested in two more games. One was a title called Greed, which was developed by ClockStone Studio and published in 2009. It was, Dieter said, the start of a beautiful relationship – one that would eventually lead to LEGO Bricktales. Here's Dieter.

Dieter Schoeller

They were basically introduced through an industry colleague. And then we met the team, and we really liked each other from the very first day, and we gave them the vision of the game we wanted to do, and they have done a title before that called Avencast, which was in a fantasy setting, an action-RPG. So they seem to be the right team to tackle our vision. And then we started working together, and it was a really good partnership.

Brian Crecente

In the following year, 2010, Headup released five games, then seven in 2011, including Bridge Constructor. Within a few more years, they were connected to seemingly every big name indie title on the market: The Binding of Isaac, Terraria, Limbo, Super Meat Boy. That's largely thanks to Edmund McMillen, one of the people behind both Isaac and Meat Boy.

Dieter Schoeller

He basically gave me a video pitch I could forward to developers saying, "Hey, if you want to work with somebody, work with Dieter. He's the one who's actually paying royalties."

(chuckles) And it was just a super positive, nice video – better than any business pitch. The indie scene at the time was very small, to be fair, so the word spread that we're just doing honest business. So people started approaching us as well, because friends told them about us. And that way, it somehow spiraled and then we, for the second and third wave of indies, we worked with a lot of great talent. And we still do. For example, on Thunderfull we are now publishing Super Meat Boy Forever, working with Tommy very closely on this one. Most of our developers are really friends by now. So, for some, we're invited to their weddings, or we invite them to our vacation or something. I think the common factor is that we all love games, and we love games apart from the mainstream.

Chapter 3: Bridge Constructor – 10:47

Ethan Vincent

Alright, Brian, before we continue, I kind of wanted to rewind a bit to that comment you just made about Headup's history. You mentioned there were seven games in 2011, and specifically called out Bridge Constructor.

Brian Crecente

Yes! Good catch, Ethan. This is a very important development, pun intended, in the company's history, and the eventual birth of LEGO Bricktales.

Ethan Vincent

If you're not familiar, Bridge Constructor is a pretty basic physics-based puzzle game. In it, you build a bridge – often a rickety bridge – and then you see if a truck can make its way over it without the whole thing falling apart.

Brian Crecente

Spectacularly.

Ethan Vincent

Yes, spectacularly.

Brian Crecente

So Bridge Constructor became a pivotal game for both the developers and the publishers, a title that would eventually inspire a LEGO Group designer to pitch a brick version of the game. But it started life in the most mundane of ways: a need for cash.

Dieter Schoeller

Basically, it was born out of the idea to make a project with quick cash flow.

Brian Crecente

Here's Dieter.

Dieter Schoeller

Because there was all these, like, farming simulators in the market so we figured, "Hey, why don't we do also a small simulation game?" That has to do with the way on how retail pays for products because you get paid first, and then you return later, and so forth. But the point was we wanted to tap into that simulation market. And long story short, in the end, basically, there were some projects – Pontifex and Bridge Builder – who were in the market before actually we came up with Bridge Constructor, but we made a very similar game, in terms of its inspiration. ClockStone did a great job on making it more mass-appealing and more colorful. In the beginning, Bridge Constructor was a pure PC game, and we didn't know the mobile market, and somehow ClockStone and us got talking and said, "Hey, there's something called smartphones, and we're using an engine which is compatible. Let's go to mobile." So while on PC, the game was mediocre successful because it was just a box with a very bad cover, to be fair, the mobile version really spiked. And we were really fortunate to be on that first wave of premium store games. I think by now, Bridge Constructor has tapped into – I mean, we've reached over 80 million players on the brand worldwide.

(Bridge Constructor gameplay sounds and music)

Brian Crecente

So let's let this sink in for a second. Eighty million people have played one of the Bridge Constructor games to date. That's like saying one in every 100 people, unless my math is off (laughs), on the planet have played the game.

Ethan Vincent

That's crazy. While Headup had the idea, it was up to ClockStone to breathe life into it, but even they weren't convinced it was going to be a meaningful creation. Here's Tri.

Tri Do Dinh

That was already essentially a collaboration between, you know, Headup Games – Dieter and Marcel, in particular – and us, in the sense that they would have some ideas what would be interesting games to make, and they suggested like Bridge Constructor as like a port. And we took this as an opportunity to say, "OK, let's do this." We didn't quite think it would be as successful as it was, but it was just, you know, "Here's another thing. Let's do this. OK." That sort of thing.

Stephan Sossau

We were pretty much on our low point when (chuckles) we made Bridge Constructor.

Ethan Vincent

Here's Stephan again.

Stephan Sossau

We were trying out a bunch of different things – not only games, but also with visualizations and small other applications, but it wasn't really going well. Basically, as soon as we were done with Greed, we made some laser shot games and some small hunting simulations. We were just running out of motivation and hope. (chuckles) You kind of need to take a big breath and store enough air if you want to survive as a game developer. Back in the day, there weren't nearly as many opportunities as now, which is a good thing, but it also can be a bad thing. We didn't really have figured out how to make games, even if we tried for years and years, we thought of ourselves still as beginners, and we didn't really understand why it didn't work out. Almost nobody took this project really seriously (chuckles), so we weren't really thinking, "OK, this will be our last thing we try, and then we give up." It's not about that because we thought, "OK, it's not a big deal. We are doing this," but we just didn't expect anything.

(Brief tune plays)

Brian Crecente

The ClockStone team worked diligently on Bridge Constructor and released it in 2011 to very little fanfare. It was, in their minds, just another way to keep their head above water as they searched for a title, an idea that could earn them some recognition. As they wrapped up development, some at the studio were even thinking of leaving. Here's Stephan again.

Stephan Sossau

A few of us were still focused on creating games. I think Tri and me were one of the core game people that were thinking, "OK, we want to really make games for a living, and we love this media." We were thinking about "OK, would it make sense to close or leave the company and start our own thing?" That would maybe have been an option but didn't come so far.

Ethan Vincent

And then something surprising happened. The game absolutely blew up.

(Bridge Constructor gameplay explosion sounds.)

Brian Crecente

Yeah, and it was sort of like a two or three-stage rocket. Not just one blowup, but a series of them. Here's Dieter.

Dieter Schoeller

I remember when we released the game, I was sitting at the Nordic Game Conference in Malmo in Sweden, and we released it. I looked at the numbers of the first day on mobile and was like 200 units or something, and I said, "OK, it's going to make its money back. It wasn't that expensive, either." And then, basically, on the second day, it suddenly said 2,000 units, third day was like 20,000, and it just skyrocketed, and we had no idea why.

Ethan Vincent

The next big moment for Bridge Constructor came when it took off in the U.S., thanks to a Reddit post showing a truck seemingly just barely making it across a bridge, only to flip over and blow up. The success took everyone by surprise, even Tri and Stephan.

Tri Do Dinh

I don't think we ever like celebrated really big. I think it was just a realization of, "Oh, wow. OK, this is doing well. And the company is going."

Stephan Sossau

Yeah, it feels kind of a little bit unreal because –

Ethan Vincent

Here's Stephan again.

Stephan Sossau

– yeah, you just don't expect this to happen, and if I think back, I would have loved to think a little bit more about certain aspects of the game. Like, obviously, as an artist about the visuals. We went with a very simple style for the games, and a lot of those have not-so-pretty sides as well. So, obviously, I'm thinking about that a lot, and it could have been better. But at the same time, it kind of is a valuable experience to know, OK, you don't have to get it perfect to get some success, there is some luck involved, there is some hard work involved, so that boosted our confidence a little bit, I think.

Brian Crecente

The team immediately realized they were on to something and started working on sequels. First was Playground, then Medieval, and Stunts. Each seemed to increase the popularity of the growing brand.

Ethan Vincent

And then came another explosion of popularity, this time delivered with the aid of famed publisher Valve.

Dieter Schoeller

The idea is one of those ideas which you just have in the shower, basically.

Brian Crecente

Here's Dieter.

Dieter Schoeller

Like I said, I love mashups. I've been always a fan. I mean, we mashed up a game where we mashed up blackjack mechanics with Super Street Fighter II visuals, where basically, instead of the fights you battle, yourself in blackjack rounds, but the rest looks 100% Street Fighter II from Super Nintendo. But also a musical side. I love crossovers. I've grown up in the '90s where crossover always was a big thing. So the idea of mashing up things, somehow to me personally it's very appealing. And so we had the idea of doing this, "Hey, we have the physics-based gameplay of Bridge Constructor, and then there's the velocity gameplay of the Portal games. What happens if we combine those two?" Because the whole thought of how fast you access a portal is the same speed you exit the portal, I just felt it really fits well with the physics of Bridge Constructor. That's where the idea came from, and I think it took about a year to one and a half years to actually convince Valve that this is a game that should be made. But once they reached their decision, they've been a tremendously great partner.

(Tune break)

Brian Crecente

Dieter spent years pitching the idea to Valve to absolute silence. He never got a no, he never got a yes, nothing. Then they found a champion in a Europe-based Valve employee. He loved the idea and helped get Valve on board. Bridge Constructor Portal was announced in early December 2017 and released about a week later. It sold half a million copies in about six months.

Ethan Vincent

Next, Dieter set his eyes on another mashup, focused on a popular comic and an even more popular TV show. The result was Bridge Constructor: The Walking Dead, which was released in 2020.

Brian Crecente

Looking back now, everyone involved in the Bridge Constructor series of games realizes what an outsized impact it had on their lives. Here's Tri.

Tri Do Dinh

For us, from the get-go with the first Bridge Constructor, it saved us as a company. I think creatively it's interesting because, you know, tying back to the previous point of where you take your inspiration from, it's not something that we foresaw, "Yeah, let's do a Bridge Constructor for 10 years" or something like that. Making Bridge Constructor games, it almost has like a workmanship like quality to it, where you say, "OK, this is the thing that brought success, and let's find something interesting to do with it, and really try to make it as good as we can and also find new opportunities that have arisen, like making Bridge Constructor Portal, in particular, and Bridge Constructor: The Walking Dead, to see how we can evolve this." Because the other way would almost be like, as a game developer, or as a creative mind, I would say, you attempted to be very bold. You know, we make bold choices and make big changes and try to really go far and do different things. But for us, it's like it has become this different things where we make Bridge Constructor, and it's almost like we are slowly honing the knife to become as tuned in as we are.

Dieter Schoeller

Our portfolio has been very diverse on Headup's side.

Ethan Vincent

This is Dieter again.

Dieter Schoeller

We have so many indie titles. I mean, if you Google us, sometimes you will find our name in connotation with Terraria, even though we've only done the retail version. I think Headup published over 120 games in 10 years, so we never felt like we are this one publisher for Bridge Constructor, because our focus was always on the smaller indie teams, as well. It turned out to be our cash cow, which enabled us to fund a lot of other activities for great indie teams, to be fair. So our reputation within the audience, at least in the developer scene was never, "Hey, these are the Bridge Constructor guys," but it was always like, "Hey, these are the guys who are doing Super Meat Boy or who are doing box versions of Super Meat Boy" and so forth, so I never got to that stage that I felt like, "Hey, we are a one-brand company."

(Tune break)

Chapter 4: Bridge Constructor & The LEGO Group – 21:49

Ethan Vincent

With nearly a decade of experience making Bridge Constructor games, Headup and ClockStone probably weren't expecting any new take on the game, but then the LEGO Group came calling.

Brian Crecente

To understand how a developer and publisher with a decade's experience making bridge games came to work with a construction toy company, you just have to go back to a single moment in time.

Ethan Vincent

And, Brian, this is where I probably should set the stage for you. It's 2018. Anders Holm has been with the LEGO Group for just three years. While he initially tried to land a job with LEGO Games back in 2014, he ended up joining as a platform architect instead.

Anders Tankred Holm

Four years ago, actually goes back to September, exactly four years ago, I joined LEGO Games and was part of an interview with Danny Bergmann and Don Meadows, colleagues still in the LEGO Games team. And one of the cases that I needed to do for that interview was to make a case for a partnership or an opportunity for a mobile titles that can bring the LEGO values into the mobile audience. We go back actually to that time at LEGO Games where the new mobile strategy was set in place, especially Danny and Don was driving that, going out to partners finding good fits was right about that time. Titles like LEGO Tower, LEGO Brawls, and LEGO Builder's Journey all came out of that funnel process. So I, during that interview was – needed to present a case for one of such titles that could fit into that mobile strategy.

(Tune break)

Brian Crecente

OK, so we should probably unpack this a little bit. The LEGO Group realized years ago that they needed to refine their mobile game strategy, and shift away from creating free-to-play titles essentially designed as marketing vehicles.

Ethan Vincent

Right, back then most of the games were work-for-hire projects, and they didn't always have what we all like to refer to as LEGO DNA. So the company shifted its strategy and instead sought out interesting, cool development partners who could make awesome LEGO games, titles that were meant to both stand on their own but even make money.

Brian Crecente

Yeah, so we're talking about games like Builder's Journey, LEGO Brawls, a lot of titles that we've actually talked about in this podcast series.

Ethan Vincent

Yes.

Brian Crecente

OK, so now back to the story. Anders is facing this challenge to come up with a neat idea for a new mobile video game. If he nails it, maybe he lands a job at LEGO Games. So he thinks back, back to a time when he started with the company and a visit to the LEGO House alongside some development partners.

Anders Tankred Holm

One of these things, and we continue to do that today, is that we invite the partners to sit in a DUPLO pool and to build a bridge between the edges of that DUPLO pool. So we literally sit. And that's sort of stuck with me in terms of that building bridges, play with physicality of the LEGO brick and clutch power. I'm an introvert geek, so sitting in a DUPLO pool with a lot of LEGO House guests around you and building a bridge, you know, that was putting me a little bit out of the comfort zone, so that was also why it kind of stuck with me. But it's definitely the aspect of the teamwork, and actually that quickly reminded me of the games I like to play, which is physical puzzle games. And then doing that in collaboration in that DUPLO pool was pretty amazing – and we still do it.

Ethan Vincent

Now jump back to Anders trying to come up with a game idea. He's playing a bunch of indies like World of Goo, and Incredible Machines, and Bridge Constructor Portal.

Anders Tankred Holm

And I thought that there must be something magical here if you use the LEGO brick and the clutch power. At least how I played with LEGO bricks when I was a kid was to make these contraptions – I played a lot of Stunts, the DOS game Stunts – and trying to make these bridges, physical bridges, and have my pull-back car drive over them and stuff like that to see if they were stable and all that. So there must be something around that that could also be incredibly fun in the digital space, and I thought that, I believe that Bridge Constructor series have proven that, together with World of Goo and these kinds of titles. And even Headup and ClockStone has also made what is called Bridge Constructor Playground, a title that is more for the younger demographic, more easygoing, because I was also well aware that taking Bridge Constructor, and call it LEGO Bridge Constructor, might be too nerdy, too difficult, essentially.

Brian Crecente

So Anders has this sort of aha moment, and he gets to work putting together a pitch as part of the interview process for the LEGO Games job. And included in that pitch was this idea of getting ClockStone to create LEGO Bridge Constructor.

Anders Tankred Holm

There was no dialogue with Headup or ClockStone from Bridge Constructor. It was all just me stealing images (laughs) from Google and photoshopping LEGO bricks into their visuals,

so it was all fakes. But if I remember correctly, I think my key points was that LEGO Games should be all about building with the brick. It should be about problem solving, about having fun with failing and keep iterating your idea or your solution, which is all about these physical puzzle games where you build brick-by-brick or piece-by-piece, you constantly press play to see if you fail, and if you fail, you find it hilarious, you find it funny. And I remember I took some examples from Bridge Constructor Portal and some other titles where it's actually fun to fail in these games, because hilarious things happen to the character or the vehicles trying to get across the bridge. And there was these moments that you could learn a lot about these different things and learn about problem-solving and having fun at the same time. That was sort of my key points. And then again, back to they have worked with an IP before, and a quite restricted IP like Valve for Bridge Constructor Portal, and they also did Bridge Constructor Playground, and thinking about the younger audience. So to me, that was a perfect fit.

Ethan Vincent

The LEGO Games team liked the idea, but not as Anders presented it. Good thing too, because soon LEGO Bridge Constructor would become Bricktales.

Anders Tankred Holm

That is what I love about game development, right? Because what I suggested was essentially not the right solution, because I essentially pitched to do the same thing as they did with the Bridge Constructor Portal, which is a great game, but would not have been as fitting in a LEGO content. But what I suggested was LEGO Bridge Constructor, so a literal 2.5D build LEGO bridges in a LEGO City environment. I pick City as a theme because we have a lot of cool vehicles, it's relatable, and then essentially built bridges for LEGO vehicles to drive across and do these one-by-one puzzles.

Brian Crecente

Anders got the job, and about a week after he was hired, Don and Danny asked him if he had reached out to Headup yet.

Anders Tankred Holm

And then they just gave me the option to just run with it and cold call Dieter from Headup and talk about it and see if we should try to make something happen.

Chapter 5: LEGO Bricktales – 29:10

Ethan Vincent

Anders tracked down Dieter Schoeller and struck up a conversation in 2019. Dieter explains.

Dieter Schoeller

It was actually the LEGO Group who approached us because they played Bridge Constructor Portal and they really liked the game, and they said, "OK, we have these core values defined for LEGO games, and we feel that Bridge Constructor Portal isn't too far away from our core values. So how about we let this team pitch to us?" because they were looking for several different partners on mobile premium. And then they gave us the chance to develop a concept and to pitch to them. So they invited us, and we had very good conversations, and there was personal sympathy from day one, to be fair.

Ethan Vincent

Tri and the team at ClockStone put together a one-page pitch document to kick off an interactive process that involved a lot of back and forth communication.

Tri Do Dinh

The interesting thing was, somewhere around January when we discussed this internally, even though the step to make LEGO and just combine it with Bridge Constructor, we were hesitant because we felt like it wouldn't be quite enough. We had the feeling that just Bridge Constructor, as a pure bridge-building game, the different scenarios that you can create with LEGO would be just a little bit too limited. And that created the evolution where we thought to ourselves, "Well, is there something more that we can do? Can we broaden our horizons?" In a sense that we say, "OK, is there a different way to frame this idea of surmounting obstacles – essentially, what bridge building is?"

Ethan Vincent

Stephan said it was a long and fruitful journey getting from LEGO Bridge Constructor to the core ideas that hold up the play and look of Bricktales.

Stephan Sossau

Very soon, we stumbled upon new challenges that we didn't expect. Those became actually pretty interesting, and these challenges they now make the core of the game. So, while we were preparing this pitch, and we were using the sketches, we thought, "OK, that could look better." Obviously, drawing LEGO bricks isn't really going to help much because it's way too much work, and so I tried to model the diorama out of bricks. And then I remember we had a few days time to finish up this document, and I started placing bricks individually, like thousands of them, and that didn't work out. So (chuckles), I mean it did work out for the purpose of the pitch but it was a good way to feel we need to think about tools a lot because placing bricks isn't that fun if you have to do it over and over again for thousands of bricks.

(Tune break)

Ethan Vincent

Abhinav Sarangi, the LEGO Games producer on the title, said the teams ultimately came up with a few concepts to define the game.

Abhinav Sarangi

From my perspective, there are three pillars to this game. One being, you know, the puzzles and brick-by-brick building to solve puzzles, so that was one core pillar, which was constant throughout the development. We were sure that we wanted brick-by-brick building and then using that to solve physics-based puzzles. That was one core aspect to the key. The second core pillar, as we touched upon, was dioramas – this idea that we can build beautiful worlds with the LEGO brick, worlds which invite the players to, you know, come in and explore. So dioramas gave us a good vehicle for us to communicate the visual language of the game itself. The third core pillar was this adventure aspect that we talked about. We knew we wanted to bring the players on an adventure, an adventure – sort of the third core pillar supported the first two core pillars. The dioramas, you know, hinted at this idea of an adventure that you go into this fantastic worlds to go and solve puzzles, but puzzles also gave us an idea that the solve, puzzle-solving that you're doing is to, you know, help you progress through your adventure. So the three core pillars for this game were physics-based, brick-by-brick building puzzles, dioramas, and adventure.

Brian Crecente

While meaningful, those pillars were actually the outcome of a lot of trial and error. Anders said many of those issues came up and were solved during prototyping. Among them, one intriguing problem was that real-world LEGO bricks weren't very good at, well, breaking apart once built.

Anders Tankred Holm

So that's really, really funny, because one of the early prototypes they did, they really, really did an amazing job of trying to get as precise physical calculations as possible to really represent both the clutch power, and we provided them the data about them, the mass for our bricks and how the tolerance and all these kinds of things. But that just concluded in a very, very easy game, because essentially, it was almost impossible to not make a bridge that would hold, essentially, because the clutch power was so strong, and the vehicles you drove over, because in the first version they used the actual mass of the bricks, they are not that heavy, a LEGO vehicle. So they sort of needed to fake it a bit and to put some more mass on the on the vehicles going over and play with the physics, so it worked better as a game.

Stephan Sossau

In reality, those bricks like they are really, the connections are quite strong.

Brian Crecente

This is Stephan.

Stephan Sossau

And we couldn't really find so many super-interesting puzzles. I think we have some really nice ones where you get to know and play around with this physical aspect, but we could do much more there. And we bent the reality a little bit so we can make things more interesting, obviously, by introducing heavier bricks.

Ethan Vincent

The team also puzzled out how best to allow players to build with digital LEGO bricks, a mechanic that game developers have been refining for two and a half decades. Abinav explains.

Abhinav Sarangi

One of the core pillars was brick-by-brick building, and we wanted to stay true to that. But it was a challenge all through the process. One of the things which was very clear early on when we started testing it with players that because most of the players that we were testing with had experience with playing with a physical LEGO brick in 3D space, using their fingers to manipulate the LEGO bricks in a 3D space, they had certain expectations about how that works. When we tried to translate that 3D building experience into a 2D screen, we had to do a lot of things on the back end, trying to predict where the player wants to put their brick, you know, based on the movement speed of the mouse, as an example, based on where it was before and where the mouse is now. We had to go through a lot of iterations and a lot of testing to get that right to where the building would feel intuitive, the building would feel like second nature. But on a 2D space on a screen, we are limited to the different camera angles. So one of the early things we did was put shadows to be able to tell players that the brick that you're holding is actually on this specific axis, this far along on the screen, because the depth of the field was not something which was very easy to communicate from a 2D screen perspective. And another major problem was how big the puzzle spaces could be. If you have a lot of bricks that you have to use to build the solution to a puzzle, it can get tiring, as with physical bricks, but especially on a 2D screen, you know, having to build something which is 100, 150 bricks deep. One of the solutions was kind of like make puzzles which were more restricted in how many bricks you'd need to get together to solve those puzzles. So it was an interesting journey to, you know, various aspects of trying to translate the ease of putting LEGO bricks in a physical 3D space into a similar ease of putting the LEGO bricks on a 2D screen with the use of a mouse and a keyboard.

Brian Crecente

The result is a game with puzzles that are solved by building with bricks, brick-by-brick. Once a puzzle is solved by, say, building a bridge and successfully testing it, more bricks are unlocked and a player can go back and free build to really expand their construction.

Abhinav Sarangi

What we feel players will do is they will use it to, you know, experiment with bricks. They will use it to be able to build things which they feel really talks to them from a customization perspective. We have a small area that you can customize in-game, which you can customize with small builds, which will allow you to kind of like put these builds in this area and decorate the area according to how you feel like it, so I think we will see a lot of customization come through that. One of the things which we want to encourage players is to, you know, share what they are creating outside of the game, share it wherever they can share it with friends, and we love to see what players are building with the brick pallets that they have to encourage players to, you know, go out and collect more of these bricks, more of the brick palette, so to speak, so that you know they can expand their library of bricks and build more things that they can imagine. So I'm definitely looking forward to what players build with the bricks that they collect in the game.

(Tune break)

Chapter 6: Hands-On With LEGO Bricktales – 38:32

Brian Crecente

By now, you, listener, may have sunk more time into the game than we have. But at the time that we were researching and recording this, Bricktales hadn't come out yet.

Ethan Vincent

Yes, but we were able to receive an early build, and it allowed both of us to spend quite some time playing it. Brian, what was it like for you just firing up Bricktales for the first time and seeing it come to life?

Brian Crecente

Man, the first thought I had was that it is such a colorful game.

Ethan Vincent

Yeah.

Brian Crecente

It is so, I don't know, so fun to look at. The first thing you do is, of course, you have to be sort of introduced into the world and into that story. And it's funny – I know when we were

doing interviews, you brought this up but there is on some level a little bit of similarity between the storylines of Bricktales and Builder's Journey.

Ethan Vincent

That's correct, yeah. In Builder's Journey there's a father and a son. And in Bricktales there's a grandfather and a grandchild. And their relationship is kind of established very quickly, early on. Matter of fact, I got a big kick out of what happens because basically, the grandchild shows up, and the grandfather makes a mistake. Immediately you're into a narrative and a story.

Brian Crecente

Yeah, and that sets the stage for what becomes, obviously, this sort of globe-trotting LEGO brick adventure that has you going between all of these, essentially, these theme sets. But yeah, the look, lets talk about the look because it's – oh, man, it is just such a pretty, pretty game and, every level is presented as this, initially, this sort of square diorama that you can actually, I don't know if you did this, but you can back out, or I guess when you first start, you can spin them around. And you'll find these, like, little hidden areas where you're like, "Oh, I haven't been there yet. How do I get over there?" It's so cool.

Ethan Vincent

The other thing too, is because it's a building game, it really makes sure you understand the mechanics, and it does that through several little tutorials along the way. And it's really there to not only familiarize yourself again with digital building, which if you've done you kind of know how to do, but it's more about you understanding the controls I think they have and, and the possibilities you have with those controls to make things either quicker or stack things quicker. There's quite a few great shortcuts.

Brian Crecente

Yeah, now I played it on PC with the mouse and keyboard and a huge monitor. I think you had it on Switch. Is that right?

Ethan Vincent

I did. Yes, I played it on Switch.

Brian Crecente

So I'm curious. I didn't – I actually I will say I did check it out on the Steam Deck, which it is officially supported, which is cool.

Ethan Vincent

Yeah, it is.

Brian Crecente

But there is – yeah, it's like a different, obviously a different experience. What was it like for you to do that, like picking up bricks and clicking them together, using the Switch?

Ethan Vincent

You know, because I played Builder's Journey, a lot of it, you know, picking up LEGO bricks is something you're kind of familiar with. You navigate over there, and scroll over there, and you click the A button, and you pick things up and rotate them and – but there are some shortcuts, some quicker buttons you can use, button combinations you can use to stack things, to set things, to organize it to get ready for like a bigger build, for example. And I thought that was cool that there were different options than just pick a single brick and take that brick, but you can obviously rotate it, and you can also rotate the camera. So you're doing a lot with this digital sphere – at least on the Switch it was that way.

Brian Crecente

And I guess we should talk a little bit about the sort of the core conceit of the game. And that is you're building something that could very easily not sustain itself. It's going to fall apart if you don't do it right. And, you know, it's interesting because they talk a little bit about how they had to put a lot of work into that to make sure that, you know, basically, they're cheating a little bit because probably, in reality, these structures would hold up. What I found interesting though was, as I played the game, I could very quickly, within a level, sort of figure out by looking at it, like, "Oh, this thing is going to fall apart. It needs a support here." So it's not, it doesn't put you off, you know?

Ethan Vincent

And a lot of it comes back to just our sense of how the LEGO brick works in the physical world, right? So, if you were, in the real world, trying to build a bridge or connecting two platforms or whatever, you would have to use a certain set of bricks, and then, you know, if my son were to take a little car and drive over it with that, I could pretty much tell from looking at it if it's going to hold up or not, right? So there's this kind of visual element to it, too, where you can just assess right from the get-go kind of like, "Eh, this is looking pretty shady, Ethan. I don't know if this is going to hold anything up."

Brian Crecente

Yeah, and you know, what I think is fascinating is how quickly your brain adjusts to what are, essentially, these sort of tweaked in-game physics, because as they had said in our interview, like, in the real world, if the bridge was that short maybe it would hold up. But like your brain like snaps to it, you're like, "OK, it failed once" you're like, "Alright, I understand the physics now. I know that, in this world, this is the length it can take." One of the other things I found that was hilarious is – so you're building this stuff. And I think, at least for me, my first instinct was just, "OK, I'm going to just slap this thing together. Get it done. I don't care what it looks like."

Ethan Vincent

Yep, I did the same thing.

Brian Crecente

And I remember thinking when they're like, "Oh, you can go back and, you know, we've unlocked more bricks for you." And I'm like, the first level – the first time I did this, I was like, "I'm not going to do that." The second one though I was like, "Oh, maybe I'll spend, you know, let me just see what I could do." And then like three hours later. (laughs) You know, I'm like –

Ethan Vincent

Three hours later. Exactly.

Brian Crecente

It's so fun!

Ethan Vincent

It is fun. And a lot of it I think does come back to the look like you talked about. You know, Bricktales, you know, just has this way of looking like it's fun to play with, right? So even just the optics on its own lure you into wanting to do more. So like when you said when you unlocked that new brick palette, you're like, "Well, maybe, actually, you know, let me try this little brick." And so it really – the art direction on this game I think really opens it up for fun and building fun.

Brian Crecente

Yeah, and the other thing that I thought was hilarious was, so what I did, the first time I did that was you had to do this long bridge. It's early in the game. And I just did a quick little long bridge. And then I went back and I made it a covered bridge. But then it's like, "Oh, we're still going to test it." And I was like, "No! Don't test it! (chuckles) It's going to fall apart! I wasn't thinking about that!"

Chapter 7: The Look of LEGO Bricktales – 44:50

Ethan Vincent

That's right. So yeah, again, I think that all comes back to this beautiful palette and art direction and design that it has, and that they also decided to turn each level into this kind of standalone diorama, Brian, but we should probably get back to the story, right, and the history here. We kind of geeked out there for a little bit.

Brian Crecente

Yeah, and we could talk forever about this. So getting back to the story ClockStone was very aware that TT Games essentially redefined what it meant to be a LEGO game. And they didn't, you know, ClockStone didn't want to mimic the visual style of those games, so early on, they bought into the idea of presenting a world made entirely of LEGO bricks. But actually it was another game, a Nintendo title, that inspired these eye-catching dioramas of Bricktales. In 2014, Nintendo released Captain Toad: Treasure Tracker for the Wii U. The game stars the eponymous toad as he journeys around tiny, isometric minigames by rotating perspectives around dioramas.

Stephan Sossau

Definitely, yeah this was one of the key inspirations for the game from the start.

Brian Crecente

This is Stephan.

Stephan Sossau

Captain Toad does something that we were not able to do, and I think that's why we are at a point now where we are finally seeing the final form of the game. And it's like the same for every game developer perhaps, that in the end, you just finally see, "OK, this is how our game is looking, and this is how it plays." And then you see all this untapped potential that's still there. So Captain Toad does so many things with changing the environment like interactions that really change the basic structure and opens up new pathways. This is something that could be huge for LEGO dioramas as well. We are limited to a more static version of a diorama now, but in the future, I think it would be super exciting to have more dynamic elements, because those bricks that make up these parts in the minds of the player, they still exist. And it would be super exciting to tap into that and change more of the environment.

(Tune break)

Ethan Vincent

While the inspiration may have been Captain Toad, Stephan noted that the building diorama for the game levels actually solved a number of design challenges.

Stephan Sossau

We kind of have a limited amount of space we want to work in. So we don't want to have an open world. So we kind of have to think about borders of the space you're able to walk around. And the other thing is the technical background. There were a lot of challenges when you create a large world out of LEGO bricks, they take a lot of polygons if you're placing thousands of bricks, so we had to think about how to reduce that complexity.

Brian Crecente

The problem was that a computer would pretty quickly get bogged down once you start packing a level with all the LEGO bricks needed to create a scene.

Stephan Sossau

In the beginning, we wanted to make big dioramas where the whole story of a world should take place in one diorama, and we were kind of forced to iterate on that idea. So the first one was just the performance aspect, because everything's too slow if our dioramas were too big. Initially, we wanted to have dioramas that were by about four-by-four base plates, so on 96 studs. Then we went down to three-by-three base plates. And now in the end we use 96 for our biggest dioramas. But it's not only a technical limitation, but it's also for aesthetics, because actually, we found out that it just looks better if you have a diorama in front of you and every time you look at the diorama, you can see those bricks. It really works better, it feels better and it reminds you of the physical LEGO bricks, and we want to have those memories always in the mind of the player, so the bricks should always be visible, and the bigger and the farther you are out, you can't, like, individually see the bricks.

Ethan Vincent

As soon as the team settled on the dioramas, everything clicked together. They also found some other games to look at, For instance, Lara Croft GO, and Hitman GO both use a sort of diorama look to them. And then there's LEGO Builder's Journey, which we did two episodes on, and it also, of course, used dioramas to great success. Here's Tri.

Tri Do Dinh

So it was definitely an inspiration, like we were aware of it even back then when it was only available on mobile. We didn't really dive too deeply into the details of it. We did have some exchange. It might have been the beginning of 2021 where we would get together and have like a call with the people at Light Brick, so they talk about their experience of how they made LEGO Builder's Journey and how they went on about it, and obviously the challenges that they faced. I mean, also in particular, because I do remember they had LEGO levels, and they needed to scale it down just to, you know, execute their vision of the game. So at this point, it became clear that what we were doing diverged to a certain degree because our dioramas are so much larger by like a factor of eight or something like that, and also the building mechanics are more extensive in the sense that you have to be able to build, you know, things that have a higher brick count, that fulfill certain goals, so we needed to approach this a little bit differently.

Chapter 8: The Story of LEGO Bricktales – 50:27

Brian Crecente

While the physics and play of the game were solved early in the process, and the look of the game and use of dioramas helped jell brick tails captivating look, there was still one more hurdle: the story, the thing needed to pull everything together and help identify what sort of theme sets to include. Here's Tri.

Tri Do Dinh

The general idea is that you walk around, and you help people by building. That's the abstract description of the game. But then we thought, like, "Why not just take this and move this into the internal logic of the story?" So you're almost like, "Hey, you are a superhero of sorts, and you walk around, and you help people by building." And the more we just continued that train of thought, the more interesting it became, especially in the times that we've gone through, you know, because at the end of the day, 2020, a pandemic hits and everything else. We felt like, especially in combination with the wholesome quality that LEGO has, we felt like it would fit to just play it as straight as possible, to say, "This is the story: You run around, you help people, and by helping people, you actually get something, in our case the happiness crystals that you collect, that you can directly use to transform the park and help your grandfather." So it was very much driven around this idea of having a wholesome story, of wanting to emphasize the story aspect that you run around and you help people by building.

Ethan Vincent

That framework for the story fit in neatly with one of the game's key pillars, as Abhinav told us.

Abhinav Sarangi

Adventure is one of the core pillars for something which I think ClockStone really wanted to explore. In their previous games, they had not had the opportunity to really tell a story, and LEGO Bricktales provided them with a vehicle where they really wanted to be able to use the medium, medium of the LEGO bricks, but also the LEGO Group IP to be able to tell a specific story, which was close to their hearts. So when we started talking about this game, adventure was something which ClockStone was really certain that they want to really explore, and really want to communicate to the players. It did provide us with a great vehicle to go from point A to point B, beyond just solving the puzzles. One of the things which a LEGO IP does really well, is to add a bit of fantasy, a bit of fun to anything that we added to. So I think we really leaned on that, the fantasy and the fun aspect of the LEGO IP in the adventure, where in this game you get teleported into different worlds, which does not make any sense but, you know, it makes sense in a LEGO perspective, you collect happiness crystals, which, you know, doesn't really make a lot of sense in from a from a real-world perspective, but it makes sense, you know, from the LEGO IP perspective. So I

think this levity, which the LEGO IP brings, really helped ClockStone to tell the story that they wanted to tell.

Ethan Vincent

Next, the team started spitballing ideas for themes and settings.

Tri Do Dinh

We just collected ideas, what would make sense –

Ethan Vincent

Here's Tri.

Tri Do Dinh

– visually, there was one aspect of it. The other aspect of it was just we were looking at the classics of LEGO, you know, sets that are very well known and people have a lot fondness for, and we say, "OK, are there any interesting ones that we can pick out?" And we decided – I mean, the particular set that we have right now was decided and essentially to play the classics, in a way, maybe with the exception of desert that we picked because it has like just visually such a strong contrast to go into the desert. But the other ones especially, I mean City and Medieval, a very classic ones, you know, where everybody knows the sets, those sort of things.

(Tune break)

Chapter 9: Final Thoughts – 54:15

Brian Crecente

Bricktales feels like a bit of a turning point for ClockStone, a game that is the culmination of a decade's worth of design and development centered on the joy of catastrophic and often cinematic failure. With the game now released, Stephan says the studio is pondering what to do next.

Stephan Sossau

We have a meeting lined (laughs) up after this call, where we are talking about the future of our company, so it really opens up a new possibilities for us, even if all the things that we learned during this project, like, we're super motivated, obviously, to keep it interesting with Bricktales as well, and we are thinking about new ideas. But we learned a lot about our company and what we actually want. So I think, working with a bigger company like the LEGO Group and all the super nice individuals was really a push forward for us.

Ethan Vincent

Dieter says he's happy with what the studio achieved, especially considering where this all started so long ago.

Dieter Schoeller

I think we found the right mix of puzzles-versus-story-versus-world exploration. For me, for my part, for example, I'm a bad person, I always skip storylines in games, but I really enjoy myself running around in those little dioramas and doing the puzzles, while other players will definitely enjoy the storyline and the humor of the game. I think we hit a pretty sweet spot on the humor side.

Brian Crecente

From the LEGO Group's perspective, they're very excited with everything they've seen of the game, the overwhelmingly positive reaction to the public demo release, and the building hype surrounding the release. Here's Abinav.

Abhinav Sarangi

People have been saying that, you know, they love to be able to kind of build solutions their own way, or be able to do prefab brick building to be able to solve these puzzles, so everything I've heard of from players still now has been really exciting. So I'm really looking forward to, you know, sharing the game with a wider audience and learning from what players have to say, and use this to be able to provide a play experience which hopefully players have not seen before, and enough hopefully something which players really enjoy.

Ethan Vincent

And what about Anders, whose moment in a tub of DUPLO seemingly sparked an idea that ClockStone wove into digital gold?

Anders Tankred Holm

I hope it finds this audience that I was part of. I'm a part of that audience that like these problem-solving with the LEGO brick, and I feel like if I look at the comments on Twitter and Facebook and Steam, a new screenshot or trailers has been pushed out, people that are saying that that is the LEGO experience they remember when playing with it on the floor when they were kids, right, to actually build these contraptions and build cars to drive over these things. So I obviously hope and believe it will do quite well.

(Postscript music)

Bits N' Bricks: Credits – 57:11

Ethan Vincent

Bits N' Bricks is made possible by LEGO Games. Your hosts are Brian Crecente and Ethan Vincent. Producing by Dave Tach. Our executive producer is Ronny Scherer. Creative direction and editing by Ethan Vincent. Research and writing by Brian Crecente. Art Direction by Nannan Li. Graphics and animations by Manuel Lindinger and Andreas Holzinger. Mixing and sound design by Dan Carlisle. Disclaimer voice is Ben Unguren. Music by Peter Priemer and foundermusic.com. We'd like to thank our participants Minh Tri Do Dinh, Anders Tankred Holm, Abhinav Sarangi, Dieter Schoeller, and Stephan Sossau. For questions and comments, write us at bitsnbricks@LEGO.com. That's bits, the letter N, then bricks@LEGO.com. And as always, stay tuned for more episodes of Bits N' Bricks.

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