

Q&A: Grant Hinds on being at the top of his game



By [Evan-Lee Courie](#)

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The V&A Museum in London, England, a leading museum of arts and design - is currently showcasing Videogames: Design/Play/Disrupt - an exhibition solely devoted to the contemporary art of video games, and South African gamer, Grant Hinds, is the only South African gamer to have a vlog featured in the exhibition.

The vlog titled 'What is Super Friendly Arcade?', was filmed and produced by Hinds, and delves into a Cape Town-based meetup group founded and attended by avid gamers as well as creatives across all manner of disciplines.

“When I was approached by the museum I was quite simply thrilled. It has taken a while to have video games recognised as an art form, so when the museum asked to include one of my vlogs in an exhibition dedicated to video games it just blew my mind,” says Hinds. “And to be the only South African featured in the exhibition is such an incredible honour.”

We chat to Grant Hinds to find out about how he got into gaming and how he turned it into a career.

How do you describe what you do?

I'm a content creator that uses YouTube as one of my platforms. I am also a gaming entertainer. I'm just passionate about games and so I have made gaming my career.

▣ **What did you do before you became a 'gaming guru'?**

I studied graphic design at university, and as soon as I had finished with my studies, I went on to work as an illustrator. While I was doing this, I realised that gaming was my passion and so my journey into gaming began.



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▣ **How did you get into professional gaming?**

I used to be a storyboard creator of a cartoon character. While I was working in the studio, I was asked if I could fill in for someone who was supposed to do a gaming review and I agreed. I then fell in love with the content creation side on my job and found a way of merging the two together through YouTube. I guess that's the reason why I like YouTube because I'm able to do both of the things I'm passionate about on one platform.

▣ **What was it about online gaming that attracted you?**

It's gaming in general and the interaction with my mates and the viewer. I mean, I get to play games and interact with my fans at the same time - even though it has proven to be difficult at times. I don't think I would trade that feeling for anything.



Grant Hinds

▣ **When and how did you realise you could make gaming a profession?**

I was reading a gaming magazine in high school during recess, and while reading this I saw gamers were making an actual career out of playing games. However, because of the traditional ideology of careers, I decided to just leave the idea of making a living out of this thing I was so passionate about.

Gaming had always been a big part of my life, from high school all the way throughout university. What made me start taking gaming as a profession seriously was the gaming review that I did for a well-known daytime TV show.

▣ **Do you have any advice for people wanting to become a professional gamer?**

It's very tough! You have to be self-motivated. It's not easy. It's not what people think. It is not just playing a video game that you love all day. It's playing very hard. Like playing a game in a professional capacity at tournaments. Those people need to train the whole day with specialised software that helps their hand-eye coordination. They need to go to gym for a couple of hours a day and they need to perform.

As an entertainer, you must understand what part of the industry you fit into, what your contribution is to the space. What you can offer businesses. You have to have a good business mind because you can't just play games and expect people to put a logo on your channel. You must also be a service provider. If you are not a service provider, people will not come to you. Being a service provider facilitates being a gamer.

■ ***What's the biggest highlight for you as a gamer?***

I would definitely say it's getting to review all the latest games and equipment before it reaches the shelves.

■ ***How would you describe the South African gaming industry compared to the global market?***

Unfortunately, the South African gaming market is relatively smaller than the overseas market. We have a large financial barrier, many people in South Africa can't afford to play high-end games, whereas the earning power up abroad is a lot more, so people invest more in gaming. Apartheid has left this legacy of people being very negative towards games and anything new - back then they hated technology.

However, the current generation is showing positive reactions to gaming, and this shows that we are taking steps in the right direction in terms of making an impact on the gaming market.



Grant Hinds

■ ***Would you say South Africa still has a long way to come in terms of gaming, compared to the rest of the world?***

Yes, I would say South Africa still has a long way to go in terms of gaming, because, let's not forget, South Africa is a developing country and we don't have as much revenue to put into the gaming industry as the rest of the world does. However, we are moving in the right direction. New developments of e-sports channels have come through. So, I would say we are moving in the right direction.

■ ***What are some of the trends that we can expect in the gaming industry, local and international?***

I would say battle royale genres will dominate the industry before excitement starts to die down. Fortnite is still trending hard, and it won't die down anytime soon. This game is amazing and I would say it's my favourite at the moment. The Nintendo Switch is also something that people need to look out for because it's innovative, easily accessible and convenient.

■ ***What's next for you?***

I would like to educate the South African youth and South Africans at large about gaming so that people can change their mindsets about gamers and gaming. I also want to infiltrate the international market more, I believe in collaboration and so I want to collaborate with more gamers and work more on the business side of my career.

The [Videogames: Design/Play/Disrupt](#) exhibition is currently on, and runs until Sunday, 24 February 2019.

Watch Hinds experience the videogames exhibition:

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