

ADRIAN MELIAN

TECHNICAL ARTIST

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Summary

Vision-driven Technical Artist and creative leader with a uniquely blended background in animation, design, and programming. Bridging visual creativity with technical execution. Over 14 years of experience translating artistic intent into high-performance, studio-wide solutions across AAA game development. Leads teams with empathy and technical rigor, building tools and pipelines that elevate both production efficiency and artistic integrity. Equally adept at prototyping VR rigs or refining animation exports for blockbuster titles, with a passion for empowering artists through intuitive, design-conscious systems.

Skills & Abilities

TECHNICAL ART & TOOLS DEVELOPMENT

Pipeline design and automation for rigging, animation, and character workflows. Custom tool development in Python, PyQt, PyMEL, and MEL. Batch processing, naming conventions, rig templates, and export utilities. Integration with Unity and Unreal pipelines, performance optimization.

RIGGING & SKINNING

Biped and quadruped rigging (manual and auto-rig systems). Skinning refinement, deformation correction, helper joint setup. Space switching, IK/FK matching, modular rig components. Havok Cloth authoring, simulation setup, and debugging.

GAMEPLAY IMPLEMENTATION & PROTOTYPING

Full ownership of in-game assets from concept to implementation (e.g., glasses: modeling, texturing, rigging, animating, and hooking into gameplay triggers). Animation event hookups, state machine triggers, and physics/simulation authoring. Rapid prototyping of features and visual effects for gameplay clarity and feel.

ARTISTIC SKILLS

Strong foundation in graphic design and visual hierarchy. Modeling, UVs, and texturing with clean topology and engine-ready optimization. Deep understanding of animation principles, timing, and stylization. Shader tuning, character lookdev, and visual polish.

COLLABORATION & LEADERSHIP

Cross-discipline communication between art, design, and engineering. Team leadership, mentoring, and documentation (style guides, wikis, onboarding). Proven ability to build scalable systems that serve both artists and production goals.

SOFTWARE & TOOLS

Maya, Unity, Unreal Engine, ZBrush, Substance Painter, Photoshop, Figma, OptiTrack/Motive, Git, Perforce, JIRA, Confluence, VS Code

SLEDGEHAMMER GAMES — EXPERT TECHNICAL ARTIST

REMOTE | JAN 2020 – PRESENT

TITLES: VANGUARD (2021), MW3 (2023), UNANNOUNCED TITLE (2026)

- Led the Character Tech Art team; trained and managed internal and OS artists
- Developed and maintained character, animation, and rigging workflows
- Created proprietary tools for animation, rigging, and cloth simulation
- Skinned high-fidelity characters, including celebrity likenesses like Snoop Dogg
- Balanced and optimized character assets for in-engine performance

FACEBOOK — TECHNICAL ARTIST

MENLO PARK | NOV 2018 – DEC 2020

TITLE: HORIZON (2020)

- Created artist-facing tools and animation exporters
- Built performance-optimized workflows for VR
- Developed a Figma-to-ReactVR plugin

NOMADIC VR — SENIOR TECHNICAL ARTIST

SAN RAFAEL | DEC 2017 – NOV 2018

- Integrated LEAP Motion VR
- Calibrated OptiTrack & Motive systems
- Prototyped LBE VR experiences and digital-physical rigs

NCSOFT — SENIOR TECHNICAL ARTIST

SAN MATEO | JAN 2017 – DEC 2017

- Built main character rigs and batch rigging tools
- Developed a modular auto-rigging system and animation retargeting tools
- Created 30+ rigs for hero and enemy characters

UBISOFT — SENIOR TECHNICAL ARTIST

SAN FRANCISCO | OCT 2015 – JUL 2016

TITLE: SOUTH PARK : THE FRACTURED BUT WHOLE (2017)

- Rigged 2D/3D characters
- Authored pipeline and 2D flipbook animation tools

PULLSTRING — SENIOR TECHNICAL ARTIST

SAN FRANCISCO | OCT 2015 – JUL 2016

- Rigged all characters across multiple projects
- Built a pose/animation library, Trax editor pipeline, lip-sync tools, and Maya–Unity exporters
- Authored planetary shaders for procedural galaxy rendering

PERFECT WORLD ENTERTAINMENT — TECHNICAL ARTIST

REDWOOD CITY | MAR 2015 – OCT 2015

- Rigged and animated characters, props, and buildings for mobile games
- Built Maya–Unity export tools

DOUBLE FINE PRODUCTIONS — TECHNICAL ARTIST

SAN FRANCISCO | JAN 2012 – NOV 2014

TITLES:

Costume Quest 2 – Rigged/skinned 26 of 28 characters, animated gameplay and cutscenes

Broken Age – Modeled, rigged/skinned 40+ characters, built flipbook animation system

Massive Chalice – Created map-editing and randomization tools based on CSV input

Spacebase DF-9 – Animation/RIGGING

My Alien Buddy – Concepted and prototyped gameplay, created all characters, and wrote Lua scripts

Kinect Party – Updated tools, authored animation transfer tools

Worked on multiple **Amnesia Fortnight** titles (Little Pink Best Buds, Dear Leader, Black Lake, White Birch)

CONCEPT ART HOUSE — TECHNICAL ARTIST & PROJECT MANAGER

SAN FRANCISCO | FEB 2011 – SEP 2011

Created MEL-based auto-rigging tools for bipeds and quadrupeds

Managed outsourcing teams, tracked production, and maintained quality

Authored style guides, tutorials, and assignments for external partners

Worked across various social and browser-based games (Zoo World 2, Legacy of a Thousand Suns, Vegas City, etc.)

Education

ART INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA – SAN FRANCISCO

B.S. in Media Arts & Animation | Sep 2006 – Dec 2010

Best Portfolio Award 2010

SUNY SULLIVAN – NEW YORK

A.S. in Graphic Design | Aug 2004 – Aug 2006

Communication

Authored internal style guides, tech tutorials, training documents, and pipeline documentation. Frequently collaborated with cross-discipline teams, from art to engineering. Delivered presentations, live demos, and 1-on-1 training to onboard artists and support adoption of new tools.

Leadership

Led Sledgehammer's Character Tech Art team on three Call of Duty titles.

Managed, trained, and art-directed internal and offshore artists. Oversaw large-scale rigging and skinning pipelines with consistent quality control. Delegated tasks, reviewed work, and maintained consistency across complex multi-project pipelines.
