BEN SLEDGE

Rigging & Technical Artist

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Professional History

2017 – present — **Creature TD, ILM Vancouver**
Implemented and maintained cloth and simulation systems for digital double characters. Supported and maintained creature rigs. Used proprietary systems to craft in-shot creature simulations, including cloth and rigid body dynamics.

2015 – 2017 — **Rigging Artist (Mid), Rainmaker Studios**
Crafted character rigs for characters, props and sets using a proprietary, Python-based rigging build system. Extended build system with custom modules. Created scripts used by animators to increase rig functionality. Scripted plug-ins and deformers using the Maya Python and C++ APIs.

2014 – 2015 — **Technical Animation Artist (Mid), Moving Picture Company (Vancouver)**
Designed and maintained character cloth and simulation rigs to meet both show and shot specific needs. Crafted character performance and believability with skin, hair and cloth simulation as a creature effects TD. Performed character finishing tasks by building post-animation deformation systems to enhance creature performance. Created cloth simulation geometry for digi-double characters in Marvelous Designer.

2011 – 2014 — **Graduate Asst. / Production Manager / Python Developer, Clemson (SC) University**
Supervised a team of 8-10 designers at Campus Banner and Design (CB+D) on the campus of Clemson University. Duties included managing work-flow efficiency, prioritizing projects and tasks to meet client deadlines, using strong problem solving skill set, and hiring and training new designers, including customer service-based orientation training. Designed, developed and maintained a job tracking and invoice webapp built on the Python framework Django.

2013 — **Rigging Lead / Pipeline Lead / Animator, "ROBO+REPAIR" Short Film**
Part of the DreamWorks Animation Summer Industry Course at Clemson University. Designed a full-featured, joint-based deformation system for the rigid body main character. Integrated scripts and tools into the production pipeline to move assets and resources between software packages, Strengthened the production pipeline by extending render-queue management scripts.

2012 — **Character TD / Modeler / Animator, "The Water is Always Bluer..." Short Film**
Modeled, rigged and laid out UVs for the main character and environment models and assisted with lighting, character design and story concepts. Lead animator on several shots.

Academic History

2014 — **Master of Fine Arts (MFA) – Digital Production Arts**
College of Engineering & Science, School of Computing
Thesis: "An Automated Build Script for Articulated Characters" (Dr. Tim Davis, Chair)
Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina

2010 — **Bachelor of Science – Digital Media**
Minor – Computer Science, College of Business & Technology
East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee
Graduated Magna Cum Laude

Selected Filmography

2017 **Transformers: The Last Knight (Creature TD)**
Monster Trucks (Character FX)
SurfsUp 2: WaveMania (Rigging)

2016 **Open Season: Scared Silly (Rigging)**

2014 **Night at the Museum 3: Secret of the Tomb (Character FX)**

2013 **ROBO+REPAIR (Rigging, Animation, Pipeline Development)**
SIGGRAPH Dailies (2014)

2012 **The Water is Always Bluer... (Modeling, Rigging, Animation)**
Charleston International Film Festival (2013)
Blue Plum Animation Festival (2013)
Greenville International Film Festival (2013)

Animation, Visual Effects & Technological Skills

Character FX TD Adept at believable cloth and skin simulation for human and creature characters using nCloth. Able to effectively perform shot-specific character finishing and animation fixes to enhance character performance and silhouette.

Character Rigging Experienced in designing character setups using deformers, skeletal systems and blend shapes. Able to create animator friendly rigs while maintaining a high level of control over deformations.

Python / MEL Scripting Highly proficient with Python both in and out of the Maya environment to increase efficiency & reduce user error with a focus on pipeline integration. Familiar with the Maya Python and C++ APIs. Experienced with the Django web application framework.

3D Generalist Skilled in modeling, UV layout, texturing/surfacing, lighting, rendering and animation. Comfortable working in team based environments with other artists. Focused on creating quality assets for downstream departments.

Operating Systems Windows, Linux, Mac OS X

Software Maya, Mudbox, Nuke, Marvelous Designer, CineSync, Photoshop, Premiere Pro, FileMaker Pro

Computer Science Fundamentals Python, MEL Script, Maya Python API, C++, C#, GIT, SVN

Professional Memberships & Leadership

2009 – Present **Member, ACM SIGGRAPH**
Student Chapter Member, East Tennessee State University, 2006-2010

2012 **Greenville (SC) International Film Festival**
Positions Held: Judge for Emerging Filmmakers Category & Student Volunteer

2006 – 2010 **ETSU Student ACM SIGGRAPH Chapter**
Positions Held: Treasurer (2009-2010), Webmaster (2007-2009), Secretary (2006-2007)