

# BEN SLEDGE

## *Rigging & Technical Artist*

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### Professional History

- 2015 – present**      **Rigging Artist (Mid), Rainmaker Entertainment**  
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. Developed and maintained custom Maya nodes and tools in Python and C++.
- 2014 – 2015**      **Technical Animation Artist (Mid), Moving Picture Company (Vancouver)**  
Designed, implemented and maintained cloth, hair and dynamics systems used to create visual effects for feature films. Used nCloth and proprietary hair solvers to create digital doubles of actors. Enhanced character-to-environment and character-to-character interactions and deformations with the use of Maya and proprietary deformers.
- 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	<b>Barbie Video Game Hero (Rigging)</b> <b>Surfs Up 2: Wave Mania (Rigging)</b> <b>Monster Trucks (Character FX)</b>
2016	<b>Barbie &amp; Her Sisters in a Puppy Chase (Rigging)</b> <b>Open Season: Scared Silly (Rigging)</b>
2014	<b>Night at the Museum 3: Secret of the Tomb (Character FX)</b> <b>Peanut Butter &amp; Jelly (Rigging)</b>
2013	<b>ROBO+REPAIR (Rigging, Animation, Pipeline Development)</b> SIGGRAPH Dailies (2014)
2012	<b>The Water is Always Bluer... (Modeling, Rigging, Animation)</b> Charleston International Film Festival (2013) Blue Plum Animation Festival (2013) Greenville International Film Festival (2013)

## Animation, Visual Effects & Technological Skills

<b>Character Rigging</b>	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.
<b>Python / C++ / MEL Development</b>	Seasoned with Python both in and out of the Maya environment to increase productivity and reduce user error with a focus on pipeline integration. Experienced with Maya plug-in development using both Python and C++.
<b>Character FX</b>	Experienced with simulating hair and Maya nCloth systems for digital characters. Creates character interactions with dynamics and cloth solutions as well as deformation based approaches. Comfortable creating cloth and dynamics rigs on a shot and a show basis.
<b>3D Generalist</b>	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.
<b>Operating Systems</b>	Windows, Linux, Mac OS X
<b>Software</b>	Maya, Mudbox, Nuke, Marvelous Designer, CineSync, Photoshop, Premiere Pro, FileMaker Pro
<b>Computer Science Fundamentals</b>	Python, MEL Script, C++, C#, GIT, SVN

## Professional Memberships & Leadership

2009 – Present	<b>Member, ACM SIGGRAPH</b> Student Chapter Member, East Tennessee State University, 2006-2010
2012	<b>Greenville (SC) International Film Festival</b> Positions Held: Judge for Emerging Filmmakers Category & Student Volunteer
2006 – 2010	<b>ETSU Student ACM SIGGRAPH Chapter</b> Positions Held: Treasurer (2009-2010), Webmaster (2007-2009), Secretary (2006-2007)