

# Darren K. Woodland, Jr.

Experimental Media Artist & Designer

Philadelphia, PA | 803.210.9112

[darrenwoodland3@gmail.com](mailto:darrenwoodland3@gmail.com) | [darrenwoodlandjr.com](http://darrenwoodlandjr.com)

LinkedIn: [darrenwoodlandjr](https://www.linkedin.com/in/darrenwoodlandjr/)

## Professional Summary

Experimental media artist and designer with extensive experience in immersive digital media, game development, and interactive art. Strong technical background in 3D modeling, animation and simulation, immersive technologies, real-time audio-visual systems, and creative coding with academic roles as researcher and instructor. Combines proficiency in digital content creation (DCC) tools (like Maya and Houdini), game engines (like Unity and Unreal Engine), and programming languages including C#, Python, and C++ with experience in Perforce version control systems. Excels in cross-disciplinary collaboration, developing interactive performances and installations, and has showcased work through publications, presentations, and exhibitions at domestic and international venues.

## Education

**Drexel University — Philadelphia, PA**

**Ph.D. in Digital Media** (*January 2022 – Present*)

- Research: Afrofuturism, real-time audio, immersive experience design, live performance, narrative co-creation

**Graduate Minor in Computer Science** (*September 2022 – January 2025*)

- Focus: Software design, computer vision, machine learning, audio programming

**North Carolina State University — Raleigh, NC**

**M.A.D. in Experimental Media Arts** (*August 2018 – December 2020*)

- Research: Sound, interaction design, extended realities

**Graduate Certificate in Digital Humanities** (*May 2019 – December 2020*)

- Focus: Games in social contexts, ludic networks, game design

**University of South Carolina — Columbia, SC**

**B.A. in Media Arts & Art Studio** (*August 2013 – December 2017*)

- Media Arts Concentration: Animation, narrative writing, game design
- Art Studio Concentration: Graphic design, illustration, drawing

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## Work Experience

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### Robotics, Automation, and Dance (RAD) Lab — Philadelphia, PA

**Artist in Residence** (*May 2025 – Present*)

- Exploring symbolic human movement for applications in human-robot interaction (HRI) through collaboration
- Develop documentation, proposal, and interactive resources for grant funded usability study and project

### Drexel University — Philadelphia, PA

**Version Control Administrative Assistant** (*January 2024 – Present*)

- Manage Perforce version control server, facilitating workflow between students, faculty, and IT
- Develop documentation and learning resources to streamline version control adoption

**Graduate Teaching Fellows** (*January 2022 – Present*)

- Teach courses in game history, game development, and advanced game art, covering particle systems, proceduralism, and technical art
- Instruct students in 2D and 3D techniques and workflows for real-time tools, storytelling, and technical proficiency
- Design curriculum and learning objectives for game development and digital media courses, including lesson planning, assessment creation, and instructional material development

**PhD Researcher** (*January 2022 – Present*)

- Research real-time audio, body tracking, and narrative co-creation in dance and Afrofuturism
- Collaborated with Drexel Performing Arts to develop synchronized visuals and simulations for a live dance performance
- Collaborated on a prestigious Rankin Scholar project to create visuals and an interactive installation and exhibition

### Colorado Conservatory of Dance — Denver, CO

**Freelance Multimedia Artist** (*January 2024 – July 2024*)

- Designed and developed audio elements and supporting animations for a live stage dance production
- Created real-time visuals in Unreal Engine, including motion-based animations
- Integrated and edited multimedia content using DaVinci Resolve to enhance production quality

## UNCSA METL — Winston-Salem, NC

### **Art Director & Technical Artist** (*April 2021 – October 2021*)

- Led art direction and asset development for a VR project, creating or compiling 200+ assets
- Developed 3D models and textures for virtual reality environment
- Integrated spatial audio and sound design into the production pipeline

## MxReality Lab — Raleigh, NC

### **Digital Modeler** (*October 2020 – December 2020*)

- Created high-fidelity character models based on historical references using cutting-edge character creation software
- Applied knowledge of human anatomy, color, and rendering for accurate character models using Reallusion Character Creator and iClone

## The IntelliMedia Group (CEI) — Raleigh, NC

### **Digital Artist & Graduate Research Assistant** (*May 2019 – December 2020*)

- Took ownership of asset pipeline development by designing, modeling, and animating 2D/3D assets for educational games and VR training applications
- Created character models, props, and environmental assets for interactive and educational applications

## NCSU College of Design — Raleigh, NC

### **Graduate Teaching Assistant** (*August 2018 – May 2019*)

- Taught industry-standard design software and workflows, reinforcing technical foundations for students

## University of South Carolina (UofSC) Dept. of IT — Columbia, SC

### **Digital Artist** (*May 2018 – July 2018*)

- Designed and illustrated a large-format learning map for university-wide IT training

## South Carolina ETV — Columbia, SC

### **Digital Media Intern** (*January 2017 – May 2017*)

- Produced an animated short on the life and achievements of a prominent South Carolinian scientist

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## Publications & Exhibitions

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**Digital Twin** (Art Exhibition) — *Digital Twin: Transforming human experience through digital rendering, exploring the effects of technology on physical and psychological existence*, 2025

**SIGGRAPH Asia** (Paper) — *Plumes and Pixels: Bridging Digital and Traditional Art in SciArt Education*, 2024

**Media Arts and Design Conference** (Paper & Presentation) — *Motifs of the Future Metamorphosis: Afrofuturism in Media Arts and Design*, 2024

**Mandell Theater** (Dance Performance) — *Grilief*, 2024

**Colorado Conservatory of Dance** (Dance Performance) — *Home is in Me*, 2024

**Ars Electronica** (Presentation) — *Echoes of Harmonic Threads*, 2023

**SXSW, SIGGRAPH, Bucheon Film Festival, Pico VR** — *Black Ice VR*, 2022

**audiokinetic Blog** — *Cybernetic Thrills: Black Ice VR*, 2022

**NCSU M.A.D. Thesis** — *On Soundscape: Listening as Interaction*, 2020

**AIGA of SC InShow 22 Awards** — *Pop! Art Book Covers*, 2017

**Knowitall.org** (Animated Video) — *Scientific SC*, 2017

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## Skills

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**Adobe Creative Suite:** Creative Cloud Suite, Substance

**Programming:** Visual programming, C, C++, Java, Python, JavaScript, Lua

**Modeling & Simulation:** Houdini, Maya, Reallusion

**Game Development:** Unity, Unreal Engine

**XR Platforms:** Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR), Mixed Reality (MR)

**Audio Development:** Reaper, Max/MSP, MetaSounds, Wwise

**Interactive Media:** TouchDesigner, Isadora, PureData

**Version Control and Project Management:** Perforce, Git, Plastic SCM (Unity), Jira

**Media Editing:** DaVinci Resolve, After Effects, Adobe Premiere Pro

**Design Principles:** Color theory, graphic design, visual storytelling, design thinking, design process, iterative design

**Core Competencies:** Cross-disciplinary collaboration, technical documentation, project management, research methodology, performance direction