

# STEPHEN BAKER

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<https://vimeo.com/56541329>

## PROFILE

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Experienced educator, animator, director, and visual storyteller with twenty-two years of animation and animation supervision experience. Four years of experience co-chairing the animation department of a film school ranked fourteenth in the nation, as well as teaching at the collegiate level. Strong skills in character animation, team leadership, department creation and growth, CG production, screenwriting, hand-drawn animation, stop-motion animation, 3D animation, gaming, layout, camera set up, story development, storyboarding, motion capture, and artist mentoring, will create a learning environment where innovation and creativity thrives, facilitate collaborative relationships across departments and schools, and develop skilled and confident animators who produce projects at professional levels of finish.

## EDUCATION

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### M.F.A. CREATIVE WRITING

Vermont College of Fine Arts, Montpelier, VT 2016

### B.F.A. COMPUTER ANIMATION

Ringling College of Art and Design, Sarasota, FL 1997

### B.A . INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 1989

## ACADEMIC HONORS AND AWARDS

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- Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators Karen Cushman Award for best Work-in-Progress Novel, 2016
- Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Prize for Best Novel, 2016
- Marion Dane Bauer Scholarship for Best Middle Grade Novel, 2015
- First Place Winner, 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators Writing Contest, Novel Category, 2015
- Academy Award nomination For Visual Effects, *Snow White and the Huntsman*, 2013
- Winner, Academy Award for Visual Effects, *Hugo*, 2012
- Winner, VES Award for Outstanding Visual Effects in a Broadcast Series, *Terra Nova*, 2011
- Academy Award nomination For Visual Effects, *Transformers: Dark of the Moon*, 2011
- Academy Award nomination For Visual Effects, *Star Trek*, 2009
- Game of the Year, *Halo 3*, 2007
- 10 Game of the Year Awards, *Half-Life 2*, 2004
- Academy Award nomination For Visual Effects, *Hollow Man*, 2000

- Academy Award nomination For Visual Effects, *Stuart Little*, 1999
- Academy Award nomination For Visual Effects, *Mighty Joe Young*, 1998
- Alias/Wavefront Student Competition Winner, 1997
- 5th Annual New York Digital Salon Winner, 1997
- Rhythm & Hues Animation Scholarship Winner, 1997
- Siggraph Screening Room, 1997
- Eight "Best of Ringling" awards, 1994-1997
- National Dean's List, 1994-1997
- Outstanding Senior, School of Creative Arts, Purdue University, 1989
- Outstanding Senior, Department of Industrial Design, Purdue University, 1989
- Graduated with Highest Distinction, Purdue University, 1989
- Graduated Phi Kappa Phi, Purdue University
- Golden Key Honor Society, 1984-1989

## SUMMARY

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- Twenty seven years of creative experience across films, games, television, and toys
- Sixteen years of experience managing, mentoring and developing creative teams
- Four years of teaching at both the private and collegiate level
- Day-to-day administration of the animation department
- Oversee and implement departmental and facilities budgeting
- Actively recruit top talent to the animation department
- Constantly evaluate and develop the animation curriculum
- Proven ability to collaborate across Administration, Faculty, Departments and Schools
- Direct animated characters, creatures and objects to an extremely high level of quality
- Comfortable teaching animation across a broad range of styles and techniques
- Ability to clearly pitch and present story, art, and characters
- Creative problem solver who embraces big challenges and decisive action
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Excellent time-management and organizational skills
- Task driven, self-motivated, proactive and works well under deadline pressure
- Strong leadership skills and ability to build and motivate teams that strive to succeed

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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- Co-chair of the Animation Department at the UNCSA School of Filmmaking.
- Animation Department enrollment has risen 300% since my arrival.
- Program Director, UNCSA Summer Animation Intensives for high school students
- Created five new classes for the animation curriculum, and helped rewrite the overall curriculum, while teaching twelve classes per year.
- Escort animation graduates on an annual week-long trip to California to introduce them to the studios and opportunities that Los Angeles offers.

- In the past two years, our animated student films have been chosen for such prestigious film festivals as Cannes, Windrider, Laguna, Beaufort, Cucalorus, RiverRun, and submission to the Student Academy Awards.
- Evaluated, budgeted, and purchased the hardware, software, and interior design elements that comprised our new 35,000 sq. ft. animation facility.
- Selected to judge the 2015 Blue Plum Animation Festival.
- Directed the creation of the cinematic performances for TOMB RAIDER via key-frame and motion capture animation. Directed the animation team, built the animation department within a new studio, recruited the team, developed the production pipeline, and delivered high-quality cinematics on a tight production schedule. Tomb Raider received critical acclaim and sold one million copies within 48 hours of release, and has sold more than 8.5 million copies to date.
- Managed the creation of all promotional television spots for Disney's feature film G-FORCE. Built and supervised the in-house character animation component while managing all other aspects of CG production via outsourced development teams for a total of 27 artists. Spots were designed to run on TV, in movie theatres, and major sports venues. This was accomplished on time and under extremely tight deadlines, and facilitated the film's success, \$293,000,000, and a strong tie-in presence in the DVD, video game and toy markets.
- Managed the animation department and directed the creative output of 65 animators for the animated feature film BARNYARD while exceeding schedule and quality expectations. Initialized and built the character animation department within a new studio and developed the production pipeline in collaboration with cross-functional teams to ensure quality results. Through theatrical release, product tie-ins, television show, video games, DVD and advertising sales, Barnyard has generated \$390,000,000 in profits for Nickelodeon.

## EXPERIENCE

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ASSISTANT PROFESSOR AND CO-CHAIR OF ANIMATION, University of North Carolina School of the Arts, Winston Salem, NC 2013-Present

Teaching all forms and styles of animation at levels ranging from first year students through graduating seniors. Building a world-class animation, gaming, and visual effects department within one of the top film schools in the nation. Designing the curricula, faculty requirements, facilities, and methodologies that will uniquely position UNCSA graduates to excel in the 21st century.

ANIMATION SUMMER INTENSIVES DIRECTOR, UNC School of the Arts, Winston Salem, NC 2014-Present  
 Creating, directing and teaching an immersive animation experience for high school students interested in pursuing animation as a collegiate and professional career.

ANIMATION INSTRUCTOR, Gnomon School of Visual Effects, Hollywood, CA 2012-2013  
 Developed and taught courses and curricula for the character animation component of Gnomon's interactive online course series.

OWNER/DIRECTOR, RagingZen, Los Angeles, CA 2006-Present

Creating visual and written story development, animation performances, game cinematics, commercials, and pre-visualizing film sequences, all while supervising custom-built teams of internal and external artists and managing a business.

LEAD ANIMATOR, Frame Machine, Santa Monica, CA 2011-2012

Directed a team of artists in the creation of cinematic sequences for the 2013 *Tomb Raider*. Directed the motion capture, re-targeting, keyframe animation and facial animation teams. Built the animation department within a new studio and developed the production pipeline.

LEAD ANIMATOR, Pixomondo, Burbank, CA 2011-2012

Created Oscar and VES award-winning character animation performances for film and television while facilitating the growth of the U.S. character animation team of this global visual effects house.

ANIMATION DIRECTOR, Image Metrics, Santa Monica, CA 2006-2007

Managed and directed a team of 24 artists in the creation of all facial animation for the cg animated film 'Food Fight'. Built and integrated a film-quality animation pipeline into the studio.

ANIMATION SUPERVISOR, Ovation Studios, San Clemente, CA 2004-2006

Managed the animation department and directed a team of 36 animators for the animated film 'Barnyard'. Initialized and built the character animation department within a new studio.

SENIOR ANIMATOR, Rhythm and Hues, Los Angeles, CA 2001-2004

Created character animation for motion pictures and television commercials and collaborated with all production departments to ensure animation integrity and quality.

LEAD ANIMATOR, Mooncrescent Studios, El Segundo, CA 2000- 2001

Spearheaded the creation of an animation department within a new animated feature film studio. Managed the character design developed the animation style, and developed the animation pipeline.

SENIOR ANIMATOR, Valve Software, Kirkland, WA 2000

Supervised the integration of Maya into the existing 3DS Max pipeline and managed the contract development team. Generated character designs, models, and animation for *Half Life 2*.

SENIOR ANIMATOR, Sony Imageworks, Culver City, CA 1998-2000

Created animation performances for the CG characters and worked closely with all creative departments in the production pipeline to ensure amazing animation in the motion pictures *Stuart Little* and *Hollow Man*.

CG ANIMATOR, Dream Quest Images, Simi Valley, CA 1997-1998

Created the character animation for the motion picture *Mighty Joe Young* and was instrumental in facilitating the core team that reworked all animation to meet client expectations and deadlines.

ANIMATION INTERN, LucasArts, San Rafael, CA, Summer 1996

Worked on character animation for use in *Jedi Knight: Dark Forces II* as a member of this gaming company's production team.

ANIMATION INTERN, Rez.n.8 Productions, Los Angeles, CA Summer 1995

Created models and textures for use in *Zork: Nemesis*.

SENIOR PRODUCT DEVELOPER, Milton Bradley, Long Meadow, MA 1992-1994

Managed the development cycle of twenty seven toy lines, from concept to production release, through close collaborating with management, marketing, engineering, manufacturing, and development.

PRODUCT DESIGNER, Tyco Toys, Mt. Laurel, NJ 1989-1992

Created new products for the toy industry. Managed all aspects of product development, including concept development, presentations, prototyping, costing, team collaboration and production.

#### ANIMATION HIGHLIGHTS

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- Hugo
- Snow White and the Huntsman
- Harry Potter / Philosopher's Stone
- Stuart Little I & II
- Scooby Doo I & II
- Garfield I & II
- Green Lantern
- Men in Black II
- Green Lantern
- Cats and Dogs
- Daredevil
- Mighty Joe Young
- Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen
- Transformers: Dark of the Moon
- Star Trek
- G-Force
- Valkyrie
- Eagle Eye
- Hollow Man
- The Rundown
- The Ring
- Elf
- Barnyard
- Food Fight
- Terra Nova
- Pushing Daisies
- Tomb Raider
- Half Life 2
- Halo 3
- Lair
- SOCOM 4: Seals
- MOH: Airborne
- Midgard
- Lord of the Rings
- Kung Fu Panda
- Coca Cola Polar Bears

#### PRODUCT HIGHLIGHTS

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- Typhoon II R/C Hovercraft
- Fast Traxx R/C Vehicle
- Jetstream R/C Airplane
- Miss Budweiser R/C Hydroplane
- Crash Test Dummies Product Line
- Spy Tech Product Line
- Total Control Racing Sets
- Power Gladiators R/C Battlebots
- NBA Slam Dunk Basketball
- Streetfighter II
- Jurassic Park
- Barney Activity Line
- Lucky Ducks