

STEPHEN BAKER

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OBJECTIVE

Experienced animation director and supervisor with strong skills in team leadership and management, artist mentoring and development, outsource management, pipeline development, studio creation, character animation, cinematics direction, voice talent direction, cinematography, story development, storyboarding, animatic creation, staging, pre-visualization, lighting, editing, VFX, audio, and all forms of CG animation production will create a team environment where innovation and creativity thrives, facilitate collaborative relationships across teams of artists, developers, and producers, and build art teams that consistently produce incredible projects that are taken from storyboard to completion on time and on budget.

SUMMARY

- Twenty-one years of experience across the film, game, and television industries
- Seventeen years of experience directing, managing, and developing art teams
- Develop, direct, and communicate the cinematic vision both horizontally and vertically.
- Direct, unify, and maintain cinematic vision to an extremely high level of quality
- Comfortable working across a broad range of styles and techniques
- Excellent writing skills with the ability to clearly pitch and present story, art, and characters
- Experienced working across a broad range of styles and techniques
- Leadership skills and ability to build and motivate strong teams of artists and animators
- Creative problem solver who embraces big challenges and decisive action
- Excellent verbal communication, time-management and organizational skills
- Task driven, self-motivated, proactive and works well under pressure
- Strong leadership skills and ability to build and motivate strong teams that excel
- Experienced and comfortable educating and mentoring artists and animators
- Experienced preparing and directing mocap sessions
- Experienced casting voice talent and directing recording sessions
- Ten years of experience supervising external development teams
- Highly proficient with Maya and ToonBoom

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Directed the cinematic sequences for TOMB RAIDER via key-frame and motion capture animation. Directed a team of animators, built the motion capture cleanup and animation departments within a new studio, recruiting the team, developed the production pipeline, and delivered high-quality cinematics on very tight production schedules. Cast and directed voice acting capture sessions as well. The game received critical acclaim, sold one million copies within 48 hours of its release, and has sold more than 8.5 million copies to date.

- Directed the creative teams that produced all promotional spots for Walt Disney's 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. The spots were designed to run on TV, in movie theatres, and at all Major League Baseball venues. This was accomplished on time and under extremely tight deadlines and facilitated the film's success.
- Directed and managed the animation department for BARNYARD, THE ORIGINAL PARTY ANIMALS, Nickelodeon's second CG animated feature with Steve Oedekirk . Supervised a team of 65 animators 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.

EXPERIENCE

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

Creating and directing character animation performances, game cinematics, commercials, pre-visualization and visual story development while supervising custom-built teams of artists and managing a business. Highlights include *Tomb Raider*, *Halo 3*, *Kung Fu Panda*, and *Transformers II & III*.

PROFESSOR OF ANIMATION, UNC School of the Arts, Winston Salem, NC 2013-Present

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 animation graduates to excel in the 21st century.

ANIMATION DIRECTOR, Pixomondo, Burbank, CA 2011-2012

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

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, body animation and facial animation teams. Built the animation department within a new studio and developed the production pipeline.

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

Managed and directed a team of 24 artists in the creation of all facial animation provided to Threshold Entertainment for use in their cg animated film *Food Fight*. Built and integrated a film-quality animation pipeline into the studio. Directed voice talent capture as well.

ANIMATION SUPERVISOR, Omaton 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 thirteen motion picture and television projects, including *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, while collaborating 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.

LEAD 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 Pictures Imageworks, Culver City, CA 1998-2000
Created animation performances for the CG characters and worked closely with diverse creative departments to ensure animation integrity 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 1996
Created in-game character animation for *Jedi Knight: Dark Forces II*

ANIMATION INTERN, REZ.N.8, Hollywood, CA 1995
Created models and texture maps for *Zork: Nemesis*

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

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

EDUCATION

MFA CREATIVE WRITING, Vermont College of Fine Arts, Montpelier, VT
BFA COMPUTER ANIMATION, Ringling College of Art and Design, Sarasota, FL
BA INDUSTRIAL DESIGN, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN