

Ben Bays

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Specialties

Animation, Post Production and Visual Effects; Interactive Media; CGI

Education

University of Texas, Austin, TX
BA Studio Art (Illustration) 1998

Employment History

Lecturer

University of Texas at Austin

Educational Institution; 10,001+ employees; Higher Education industry

August 2008 – Present (9 years)

I teach and have developed several classes in digital and new media in the RTF department at U.T.

These include

- Intro to Motion Graphics and Visual Effects
- Advanced Visual Effects
- Intro to 2D Animation
- Advanced 2D Animation
- CG for Film and Games
- Intro to 3D Animation
- Advanced 3D Animation
- Immersive Media Production (VR)
- Digital Media Production (online)

It has been a great honor to work with so many wonderful young artists and filmmakers in the RTF department. Additionally, through the University, I have had the opportunity to teach Summer Workshops, Camps, advise visiting researchers, be a part of the GAMMA certification, The Bridging Disciplines program and the SAGE lecture series.

Adjunct Professor

Austin Community College

Educational Institution; 1001-5000 employees; Higher Education industry

January 2010 – January 2017 (7 years)

I taught in the GDI - Game Development Institute.

- Introduction to 3D Modeling and Rendering
- 2D Design for Games

In-World Composite Director

VideoRanch

November 2009 – Present

Responsible for compositing an audio and video stream in a virtual world, accompanying 3D virtual environments. Oversee in-world content creation (models, animations, etc)

Lead Artist

Amaze Entertainment

Privately Held; 201-500 employees; Computer Games industry

October 2006 – August 2009 (2 years 11 months)

The Tale of Despereaux for the Nintendo DS. A 2.5D side scroller, adapted from the movie. Used SCRUM and agile development throughout, vertical slices. Outsourced UI and some level art.

My experience working as a lead artist could not have been better.

Environment Artist

Fizz Factor/F9

2006 – August 2009 (3 years)

Have had a fantastic time making environments for the Nintendo DS. Along the way I have made quite a few different types of games:

- "Legend of Spyro, a New Beginning": top-down, isometric hand drawn backgrounds
- Spyro: The Eternal Night was a full 3D title...very challenging, but fun.
- Over the Hedge: Hammy Goes Nuts: Backgrounds pre rendered in 3D, I touched them up and aggressively compressed them.
- Wizards of Waverley Place (not released): Pre-rendered BGDs from 3D, painting touch up and FX
- The Incredible Hulk: wow, hand painted tile based side scroller. Both orthographic AND simultaneous perspective cameras. Damage states (3) per tile. Really pushed the limits of the DS.
- The Tale of Despereaux: 2.5D side scroller. Movie adaptation. Captured the style well, a lot of fun. Only made a few level from scratch. Spent bulk of time integrating in-house and outsourced level art, soloed beta and gold for environments.
- Another Night at the Museum: another side scroller, created a few levels in the aviation and space section of the museum.
- Assassin's Creed 2 for DS: yet another 3D side scroller

Additionally I have created many concept docs, pitches, proposals, mock-ups, t-shirts, I have uprezzed, down-rezzed, made particles, props, sprites, palette cycling animation (!), UI...if it has anything to do with art in or around a game, I have probably done it.

Animator

Detour Production

October 2004 – December 2005 (1 year 3 months)

Worked as an animator on Richard Linklater's "A Scanner Darkly". We used a vector-based rotoscoping system (not available commercially) to paint frames over pre-edited video. It was not unlike Illustrator meets After Effects. I painted most of the backgrounds in the film. If a background or environment has a

lot of complex motion in it, I almost certainly painted and animated those. The software used some key framed planes to map images upon. Like a 4 corner-pin in After Effects. Nothing truly 3D, but we managed to get a pretty good look out of it by using a ton of masks, splines, distortions and hand tracking. I also did the animation on the helmets in the lab, which uses bezier splines.

Environment Artist

Acclaim Studios

2001 – 2004 (3 years)

Worked on multiple platforms: PS2, XBOX and Gamecube on a full 3D fantasy title: VEXX. In addition to creating the first and third worlds, I worked closely with some programmers to down-rez much of the assets when needed. It was a fantastic experience.

Artist

Swerve Pictures

January 2000 – January 2001 (1 year 1 month)

Worked on an independent film, "Trip to Roswell" under director Geoff Marslett. Hand animated the main villain (Dr. Fortunato), painted many of the backgrounds and created spaceships and special effects in 3D to composite into hand drawn scenes. Also my first foray into 3D character animation.

Animator

Francesca Talenti

January 1999 – January 2000 (1 year 1 month)

Was an animator for a series of short films shown on PBS as part of a grant. One of said films was later shown in the Guggenheim in NYC as part of a women in animation show. Thank you Francesca!

General Manager

Vespaio

May 1998 – June 1999 (1 year 2 months)

I opened Vespaio restaurant in Austin. I was the original floor manager, did the books and was saucier. I love wine, I love good food and I love beautiful people. Vespaio is all these in spades. Many thanks to Alan, Claude and Scott.

Teaching Assistant

University of Texas at Austin

Educational Institution; 10,001+ employees; Higher Education industry

September 1996 – May 1999 (2 years 9 months)

I was a teaching assistant for the animation class at UT for several years. While this is hardly the most impressive job, I would like to say that I got the position as an undergraduate, not a graduate student AND it was in the RTF school, not the Fine Arts school.