

BEN SLEDGE

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Professional History

1/2024 – present	Department Head – Creature, ILM Vancouver • Collaborated with global department heads to define and implement standardized workflows, tools, and best practices for rigging and character effects across all studio locations. • Partnered with Talent Management and recruiting to spearhead hiring, on-boarding, and strategic casting of artists and leadership for Vancouver-based projects. • Mentored the department's leadership team, including Creature Supervisors and Leads, fostering career growth and ensuring high-quality project oversight. • Acted as a primary stakeholder for the department, interfacing with R&D and Pipeline teams to guide the development roadmap and prioritize new tools and technologies. • Provided expert consultation for producers on project bidding, planning, and resource allocation. • Fostered cross-departmental collaboration to streamline workflows, remove friction, and resolve complex production pipeline challenges. • Provided hands-on supervision and creative/technical direction for creature teams on high-profile productions.
5/2022 – 1/2024	Creature Supervisor, ILM Vancouver • Directly supervised and lead rigging and CFX teams across multiple projects. • Defined the creative and technical approach for rigging, hair, fur, cloth, feathers, and other character related simulations and deformations. • Collaborated with VFX, CG, and Animation Supervisors to ensure rigging and character effects supported the needs of the show. • Partnered with software engineering and pipeline groups to develop and maintain efficient rigging and CFX tools and workflows. • Worked with producers and project managers to bid, schedule and prioritize work to ensure high-quality and timely delivery.
4/2020 – 1/2024	Area Tech Lead – Rigging, ILM Vancouver • Workflow Owner for new pipeline integrations in rigging, and Product Owner for modular characters project. • Interfaced with software engineering and pipeline groups to advance cross-studio tools and workflows. • Contributor to continued developments on proprietary rigging system. • Collaborated with global counterparts to advance new workflows, tools, and techniques.
4/2021 – 4/2022	Lead Creature TD, ILM Vancouver • Supervised rigging and CFX artists. • Assisted interviewing, on-boarding, and training new team members. • Prototyped new techniques, tools, and workflows. • Provided quality control and asset review for production rigs.
4/2019 – 4/2021	Senior Creature TD, ILM Vancouver
4/2017 – 4/2019	Creature TD, ILM Vancouver
3/2015 – 4/2017	Rigging Artist, Rainmaker Studios
9/2014 – 3/2015	Technical Animation Artist, Moving Picture Company (Vancouver)
8/2011 – 5/2014	Graduate Asst. / Production Manager, Clemson University
5/2013 – 8/2013	DreamWorks Animation Summer Industry Course, Clemson University

Education

2014	Master of Fine Arts (MFA) – Digital Production Arts College of Engineering & Science, School of Computing Thesis: "An Automated Build Script for Articulated Characters" (Committee: Dr. Tim Davis, Dr. Jerry Tessendorf, Dr. Sophie Jörg) Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina, USA
2010	Bachelor of Science – Digital Media Minor – Computer Science, College of Business & Technology East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee, USA Graduated Magna Cum Laude