

Kendall Litaker

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OBJECTIVE

To participate in engrossing technical challenges with people who are dedicated to their work, hopefully resulting in new and innovative methods which can affect the visual effects and animation industries, and further establishing my career as a Pipeline Technical Director.

EDUCATION

Texas A&M University, College Station, TX
Master of Science, Visualization Sciences

Graduated August 2013

University of Central Florida, Orlando, FL
Bachelor of Arts, Digital Media
Minor, Computer Science

Graduated May 2009

SKILLS

Programming Languages: Python, Qt, C++, C, MEL Scripting, RSL/Slim, Renderman

Software/OS Proficiency: Maya, Nuke, Shake, Flash, Photoshop, Gimp, Mac OSX, Linux, Windows XP/Vista

Software General Knowledge: Houdini, Final Cut Pro, Illustrator, Unity

WORK RELATED EXPERIENCE

Assistant Technical Director "Zootopia", Walt Disney Animation Studios, Burbank, CA

2013-Present

Worked throughout the entire production, through initial pipeline development for new tools, asset production, and shot production, supporting artists in every department as they encountered problems. Overhauled the modeling workflow allowing asset variants to be assembled from individual parts. Further developed the foundation lighting pipeline, facilitating light rigs that could be applied to entire sequences. Developed a workflow for look artists to use to quickly determine level of detail settings for fur and vegetation. Built a GUI that collected department based information on shots, allowing artists to monitor queue jobs, Shotgun data, and rendered images in the same tool.

Pipeline Technical Director "The Book of Life", ReelFX, Dallas, TX

2013

Reworked the model publishing tool to allow publishes to occur locally or on the renderfarm (Qube). Reimplemented model importing in Mari to allow texture artists to bring in cached Alembic subdivided geometry and switch in basic blendshapes. Developed a Qt model/view to facilitate the selection of look variations for all the assets in a set assembly. Built a layout tool to allow stereo camera attributes to be shared across similar shots. Developed a custom OTL in Houdini to allow lighting artists to parent constrain a light or light rig to a cached animation control. Provided pipeline support to various departments.

Instructor and Graduate Teaching Assistant, Visualization Department, Texas A&M

2010- 2013

Taught the introductory studio 2D and 3D design courses. Developed project ideas and lectures. Developed and presented an iPhone curriculum that related to Flash for a multimedia design class.

Visualization Intern, Space Telescope Science Institute (STScI), Baltimore, MD

2012

Created C, C++, and python scripts to develop a particle generation, texturing, and rendering pipeline for visualizing nebulae. Performed look development using Maya and scripts to modify particle attributes to create the cloudy appearance of a nebulae. Developed Shake macros using pixel shifting to enable post-processing stereoscopy.

Look and Lighting Lead for student film "After Hours" in conjunction with Disney Animation Studios

2011

Organized and directed the look development of all of the characters, sets, and props of the film. Created the lighting keys. Worked in conjunction with my group to model, shade, animate, light, and composite all objects in the film.

Technical Artist, Louisiana Immersive Technologies Enterprises (LITE)

2009-2010

Modeled and textured objects for a Louisiana DOTD training program, and developed a Unity3D shader to randomly color the generic vehicle elements. Designed and implemented SIGGRAPH 2009 booth kiosk using Flash and Actionscript.

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Technical Director for student film "Atlas' Revenge"

2008-2009

Created macros in Shake to ensure the final image continuity across the film. Worked on all stages of the production, from character design to final lighting and compositing. Supervised a story sequence and acted as a lighting sequence lead.

EDUCATION EXPERIENCE

Thesis Work

2012 - 2013

Continuation of work from STScl, expanded to work with galaxies as well.

Digital Lighting

2012

Created RSL/Slim shaders for materials like wax, metal, and ceramic clay.

Physically Based Modelling

2012

Created simulations in C++/OpenGL to demonstrate collisions, particle systems, flocking, springy meshes, and rigid bodies.

Image Synthesis

2011

Built a raytracer in C++/OpenGL that could perform ray casting, texture-mapping, ambient occlusion, and colorbleeding.

Rendering and Shading

2011

Programmed RSL surface, displacement, and light shaders. Implemented a voronoi-based stained glass shader with raytracing.

OTHER WORK/VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

3D Anatomy/Ecorche, Los Angeles Academy of Figurative Arts

2015

Touring Docent, Greater Los Angeles Zoological Association

2015

Wish Granter, Make-A-Wish

2014-2015

Electrician, "Prelude to a Kiss", Texas A&M University

2012

Educator and Tour Guide, Sea World Adventure Park, Orlando, FL

2007-2009

PROFESSIONAL & ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

SIGGRAPH 2013 Dailies, Presented Clip of Thesis Work, Anaheim, CA

2013

Savannah International Animation Festival, Screening, "Atlas' Revenge"

2011

Graduate Diversity Fellowship, Texas A&M University

2010

SIGGRAPH 2010 Space Time Exhibition, 1st Place Industry Animation, "Atlas' Revenge"

2010

SIGGRAPH Student Volunteer, SIGGRAPH 2008, Los Angeles, CA

2008

REFERENCES

Tad Gielow, iOS Developer

Company: Derivative Light

Email: tadgielow@mac.com

Frank Summers, Astrophysicist & 3D Visualization Lead

Company: Space Telescope Science Institute (STScI)

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Ergun Akleman, Professor

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