

Brent J. Zorich

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MASTER CHARACTER TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
INDUSTRIAL LIGHT & MAGIC CREATURE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
DIGITAL ARTIST
LEAD/ SENIOR TECHNICAL ARTIST
COLOUR COMPOSITING
LUCASFILM BEST PRACTICES STEERING COMMITTEE
LUCASFILM EXECUTIVE LEVEL TRAINING

To Fellow Computer Graphics Researchers, Engineers, Executives, and Artists,

Creating works of art have been my strongest passion my entire life. I took private art lessons at the Central Ohio Art Academy (a school where Peter Jackson judged work before) for twelve years, competed internationally, and won Best of Show. Prior to the animation industry, I worked for the architectural firms ranked number one (Gensler) and number two (NBBJ) in the world as an interior architect; having graduated from the department of Industrial Design (where I was given honorary admission from high school) at THE Ohio State University- the top five rated design school in the country. I studied and completed his first Masters of Arts in Computer Visualization at ACCAD at THE Ohio State University (where CGI was founded- typically getting over 200 applicants a year and accepting eight - being recommended by a partner at Gensler); focusing my research in bio mechanical character setup. This research involved working directly with supervisors from DreamWorks SKG via the DreamWorks SKG Outreach Program. The end project entitled The Mystery Dinosaur” aired on The Discovery Channel. I first interned at Electronic Arts on the title Superman Returns where I did such a good job artistically I was tasked to do Lex Luther, the second most important part of the game. At Take 2 Interactive, research was done on ways to streamline current rigs to make them lighter for game play on the award winning title NBA 2K. Later, I returned to EA Sports as a technical artist implementing rigging techniques as well as doing research on more advanced character setup for the top selling titles in the world, including MADDEN (the top selling title in North America).

At Lucasfilm, Ltd. I was apart of the team on film game convergence by collaborating on global “Star Wars” related projects while working with all three divisions: LucasArts, Lucasfilm Animation, and Industrial Light and Magic. This research involved complete analyzing and understanding of both render and real time assets for maximum output and potential (led by myself and a team of core artists and engineers). This was shown to Mr. George Lucas in Singapore. For the ease of better global communication, I was relocated (via order of the executive committee) from the Lucasfilm Animation Singapore studio (LAS) to the home office (The Presidio and the Skywalker Ranch) in San Francisco to continue research on this subject matter. I was also selected by The Director of Animation Technology (former Chief Technology Officer at Weta on The Lord of the Rings) to be on the Lucasfilm, Ltd. steering committee setting best practices and digital standards for Lucasfilm, Ltd. globally. Later, I was put through executive training at Lucasfilm, Ltd. with Mr. Larry Seal with the hopes of becoming a studio executive. There were approximately eight of us in training (head of public relations, legal, head of marketing, head of distribution) and I was the only computer graphics person. I wrote an executive proposal entitled Offensive Attack Strategy for the President of LucasArts, Mr. Darrell Rodriguez; after reading it, Darrell requested a digital copy and forwarded it to the board of directors at Lucasfilm. I was also in Creature Research and Development at Industrial Light & Magic with the Creature Department Supervisor. It was in these meetings where I critiqued colour on the film Transformers Revenge of the Fallen. My character that I did technical direction on, Ultimate Evil, was the character chosen for the cover of the Star Wars title, Star Wars: The Force Unleashed Ultimate Sith Edition; a very prestigious honour. In addition, I was also tasked on Indiana Jones Intellectual Property written by Mr. Steven Spielberg and instrumental in the cancellation of the XBOX 360 and PS3 version of the title. Lastly at Lucasfilm, I was in charge of prepping the monthlies for the studio which included organizing and editing presentation shots on Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince. This was shown to the entire staff as well as the executives at Lucasfilm, Ltd.

I have begun taking classes in computer science at Strayer University specializing in software engineering. My goal with this type of education would be that I could get into the software architecture of packages like Maya and ZENO (ILM’s that I’ve used) and manipulate the software to better suit my needs when necessary without passing the task off to a different department. Lastly, I have successfully started my own vendor production studio, BRENT ZORICH PRODUCTIONS LLC, selling my own custom tools and software via direct digital download that is based on experiences with previous employers and have made a profit on this venture. In 2009, I was approached by the editor of 3D ARTIST to be the featured Industry Insider. The article referred to me a one of the top people in this industry. I look forward to speaking to other graphics researchers on the subject matter listed above and am always open to accepting linkedin invitations from colleagues in the industry who share my passion for doing great work. I am looking for a full time position as a technical or artistic lead in a studio while running my business BRENT ZORICH PRODUCTION, LLC as a vendor. Running my business will not interfere with daily tasks of being a lead in a studio.

Sincerely,



Brent J. Zorich



Film and Game Software Solutions Through Instant Direct Digital Download*Chief Technology Officer and Owner*

Topic: www.brentzorchproductions.com
 As a vendor, this is supplemental income and this company has turned profit.
 Handled banking setup, web development, marketing, tool development, and billing.
 My auto rig tool (from experiences on Star Wars, Indiana Jones, Madden, NBA 2K, and discussions in the Lucasfilm steering committee that I was in for digital standards and best practices) is for sale. What could take a TD two weeks to do can be done in ten seconds.

2011 ADDITIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Selected to be a member of Cambridge's Who's Who run by Donald Trump Jr.
 Dean's List: Masters of Science in Computer Science at Strayer University

CCAD (COLUMBUS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN)**2010**

Paid Guest Lecturer

Topic: Film Game Convergence and Computer Graphics. Critique Student Portfolios

2010 ADDITIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Masters of Art in Technical Animation at ACCAD at The Ohio State University 2010
 Portfolio and Biography featured in Issue 10 of "3D Artist" magazine

LUCASFILM, LTD.**2008-2009**

Senior Technical Artist/ Character Technical Director (Lead Rigger)

Projects: "Star Wars The Force Unleashed Ultimate Sith Edition" (lead rigging and submitted concept artwork)
 "Indiana Jones and The Staff of Kings" (rigging and character deformation research and development)
 "Star Wars The Clone Wars: Season Two" (color correction and compositing) Showcased at annual firmwide meeting.
 "Transformers Revenge of the Fallen" (shot approval)
 "Star Wars The Force Unleashed II" (initial kickoffs, shared assets, file management, eight month rigging and d)

Proposal submission to Executive Committee (OAS- Offensive Attack Strategy).
 Multi Divisional Steering Committee setting digital standards for Lucasfilm, Ltd. worldwide- approx ten of us.
 Research and Development (ILM, Lucasfilm Animation Singapore, and LucasArts).
 Involved in the interviewing and hiring of candidates for Lucasfilm, Ltd.
 Physiology research and close relations to the Skywalker Ranch Library.
 Creature dev meetings Industrial Light + Magic.
 Working knowledge of proprietary rigging software for Lucasfilm, Ltd.
 Characters rigged for TFU included main playable (Ultimate Evil), Boba Fett, and Jabba the Hutt.
 Full working knowledge of biped, quadruped, winged, and custom rigs used for all Clone Wars and ILM.
 Research and development on existing game engines for Star Wars IP including Unreal Engine.
 Research and development shown to Mr. George Lucas in Singapore.
 Promoted and relocated from Lucasfilm Animation Singapore to the Lucasfilm Presidio (SF) after only five months.
 Two relocation packages within five months (\$10,000 EACH).
 Executive Level Leadership Training arranged by internal human resources for Lucasfilm, Ltd.
 There were approximately eight of us in training (head of public relations, legal, head of marketing, head of distribution).
 I was the only computer graphics person being trained to be a studio executive.
 Participant in the initial kickoff meetings for Star Wars The Force Unleashed II.
 Bimonthly meetings with the two heads of ILM Singapore on the topic of Film Game Convergence.
 Instrumental in the cancellation of the XBOX 360 and PS3 version of Indiana Jones and the Staff of Kings written by Steven Spielberg.
 Prototype rigs created and submitted for Lucasfilm Tech Art Documentation combining The Force Unleashed,
 The Clone Wars, and Attack of the Clones, for both The Force Unleashed II as well as Indiana Jones.
 Enveloping and rigging r and d comparisons and documentation between ILM's ZENO and Maya.
 Quality assurance on porting ILM's ZENO Block Party software from Linux to Windows.
 In charge on monthly presentations while at Lucasfilm Animation Singapore and worked on a presentation with the
 head of ILM Singapore that involved shots on HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF BLOOD PRINCE.

Associate Technical Artist (Lead Rigger)

Projects: "Madden NFL 08" 2007 Winner "Best Team Sports Game" Video Game Awards
"NCAA Football 08"
"EA Sports MMA" (research and development)
"Tiger Woods PGA 09" (research and development) 2008 Nominee "Best Individual Sports Game" Video Game Awards
"NFL Tour"
"NFL Head Coach 09"
"Madden NFL 09" 2008 Nominee "Best Team Sports Game" Video Game Awards
"NCAA Football 09"

Proposal submission for Central Football (incorporating Nike biomechanics and physiology into Madden animation).

Multi studio Steering Meetings setting direction for EA Sports.

One of the global meetings involved included myself as well as others critiquing and helping give audio assistance on motion and rigging on FACEBREAKER, NBA LIVE, and FIFA- as well as a few others.

Research and Development (Rigging and Biomechanics).

In charge of all rigging for central football: Madden, NCAA, NFL Tour, and NFL Head Coach.

Advised and assisted on rigging for Tiger Woods Golf 09.

Worked with lead engineer on custom quaternion node used in central football for deformation.

Improved physiology of all body types from NFL/NCAA 08 to NFL/NCAA 09.

Attended weekly technical art meetings on advanced mathematics based on taped lectures of MIT professors.

Madden work also feature on the television show on ESPN "Madden Nation".

R and D rigging work dealing with real time muscle jiggle, fat jiggle, flexing, and deformation on EA Sports MMA.

Responsible for the implementation of new player proportions based on scan data from Madden 08 to Madden 09.

Given a raise after three months of working there.

Told by human resources after my one month notice and exit interview I was in great standing with EA and could come back to any studio.

2K SPORTS (TAKE 2 INTERACTIVE)**2006***Character Technical Director*

Projects: "College Hoops 2K7"
"College Hoops 2K8"
"NBA 2K8" 2007 Nominee "Best Team Sports Game" Video Game Awards

Rigged cheerleaders for NCAA 2K7 that are driven by motion capture.

Rigged players for NBA 2K8 and NCAA 2K8 and added more attention to physiology detail

EA (ELECTRONIC ARTS)**2005***Modeling Rigging Intern*

Projects: "Superman Returns The Video Game"

Modeled several citizens (LODs included) or the game that contained swappable parts and laid out the UVs for them.

Modeled the clothing of Lex Luther, the main villain in the game.

Rigged two of the main bosses in the game that Superman must face and defeat.

DREAMWORKS SKG OUTREACH PROGRAM**2005***Participant- Modeling, Texturing, Lighting, Rigging, Compositing, and Animation*

Projects: Partial finaling work on "The Mystery Dinosaur" airing on The Discovery Channel

Participant in a twenty week intensive training program with the supervisors DreamWorks SKG in a production setting.

Taught one of the classes in the Wexner Center for the Arts during the DreamWorks SKG Outreach program.

Trained in DreamWorks SKG process: Modeling, Texture Painting, Rigging, Animating, Lighting, and Effects.

Asked to give the lecture on CGI at the Wexner Center for the Arts for the DreamWorks SKG non studio class.

Modeling, Rigging, Animation, Color Correction, Layout, Compositing

Projects: "The Mystery Dinosaur" airing on The Discovery Channel

Worked with scientists from across the country for feedback on this project.
Designated as one of the lead modelers, character setup artists, and animators on this project.
Worked with Texture Lead on "Madagascar" via DreamWorks SKG Outreach Program.

GENSLER (architectural design firm ranked overall #1 in the world)**1999-2001**

Interior Architect

Clientele: Volkswagen, Solomon Smith Barney, Adidas, Lincoln Mercury

Gave presentation to staff on Industrial Design as relating to environmental psychology, product development, branding, and pioneering science fiction technology.
Worked on the branding, design development, and construction documentation of interior spaces for several of Gensler's exclusive Fortune 50 clientele including Arthur Anderson, GTE, Solomon Smith Barney, Adidas, Volkswagen.
Sat in meetings about professional practices and leadership driven by executive committee at Gensler. Parties involved with these meetings included M. Arthur Gensler and Edward Friedrichs.
Flown between studios to do marker rendering and illustration.

NBBJ (architectural design firm ranked overall #2 in the world)**1998-1999**

Interior Architecture Intern

Clientele: The Republic of China

Worked as an intern with a team on the design of the Beijing Hotel in Beijing, China that is approximately 1 million square feet.
Sat in critique sessions of Beijing Hotel while listening to theory and practice from a lead designer who had been inducted in the Interior Design Hall of Fame as well as the partner of NBBJ, Friedl Bohm.

Software Experience

Maya, Motion Builder, MEL, Python, Photoshop, ZENO (ILM's software), After Effects, Final Cut, VRML, Pixar's Renderman, Slim, HTML, C++

Education

Bachelor Science Industrial Design The Ohio State University 1998
Masters of Art in Technical Animation at ACCAD at The Ohio State University 2010
Masters of Science in Computer Science at Strayer University 2011 (expected graduation SU '12)

Honors

Portfolio and Biography featured in Issue 10 of "3D Artist" magazine
Portfolio featured in panel at Siggraph 08
Multiple Graduate Associateship Scholarships
Chairperson's Discretionary Scholarship voted as Undergraduate Design Circle President
Selected to be a member of Cambridge's Who's Who run by Donald Trump Jr.

To Fellow Computer Graphics Researchers, Engineers, and Artists,

Article Disclaimer Please Read:

I was approached by the editor of this publication on doing a story on both my portfolio and my biography. My scholastic research interests were discussed as was my advise to those trying to break into this industry. Lastly, the topic of film game convergence was key to the interview. This is a worldwide publication. 3D Artist is owned by Imagine Publishing.

Note: portions of subtext misleading. Characters shown on 360 and PS3 version of Indiana Jones and The Staff of Kings (the version I helped cancel due to gameplay) were untouched by myself. The character technical director that I helped hire and led did the manual work on Obi-Won and Player Tatooine (I trained and oversaw him).





Industry insider Brent Zorich

Character technical director,
Lucasfilm

Each issue, 3D Artist finds out how the top people in the 3D industry got their jobs and what you need to know to get a foot in the door



About the insider

Job Character technical director/lead rigger

Education Master's of Fine Art at ACCAD at The Ohio State University

Company website www.lucasfilm.com

Personal website www.brentzorich.com

Biography Prior to immersing myself in the animation industry, I had worked for the top two architectural firms in the world. I pride myself on trying to be on a team that does the best work, no matter what project. I push technology as far as I can on whatever team I am affiliated with

There are few people in the 3D industry who can claim to have worked on bestselling EA games titles one year and hung out at Skywalker Ranch with Lucasfilm the next, but Brent Zorich is a man who can. Zorich was part of a steering committee meeting for Lucasfilm on film/game convergence. In addition, he was lead rigger on *The Force Unleashed: Ultimate Sith Edition*. On this title, he was working in the LucasArts division, looking at pipeline and storage optimisation and lead rigging on such characters as Jabba the Hutt and Boba Fett. Zorich was also dealing with convergence on all divisions from Lucasfilm to LucasArts, Lucasfilm Animation, Industrial Light & Magic and Lucasfilm Animation Singapore.

3D Artist: What did this role of working on convergence mean in practice?

Brent Zorich: As a part of the senior staff, I wrote proposals to help set the direction for Lucasfilm Ltd as a company. In Singapore, not only was I part of research and development prior to my promotion and relocation to the home office in San Francisco, I

also worked on colour correction and compositing for *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*.

3DA: How did you get this job?

BZ: I applied online and was hired after Lucasfilm Animation Singapore saw the great work I did on EA Sports' football franchise.

3DA: What kind of course did you do at university, or training did you do?

BZ: At ACCAD at the Ohio State University, I did extensive research on the following topics: VRML; procedural animation; Pixar's RenderMan; motion capture. I also researched Wayfinding in real-time simulation (the subject analysed and improved upon was the game *Spider-Man The Movie*).

First of all, the Wayfinding tool was created out of VRML and theories worked on with an eminent scholar. I also studied the enhancement of realism in computer animation through the incorporation of biomechanics and fatigue (the subject analysed was *Shrek*). Next, I looked at rigging of prehistoric animals with my project-based thesis *Mystery Dinosaur work*. Finally, I looked at creatures evolving based on the ecosystem around them. Classes were also taken in digital still-life lighting and theatre lighting.

3DA: For today's generation of students, what is the kind of educational grounding they should be looking to undertake to get a first job as a character animator, or is the entry level a less specific role?

BZ: This is the way that I do it. I have a television next to my monitor. I watch *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (the Buckbeak scene). If I am embarrassed to look at what is on my monitor then I'm not done, plain and simple. I am my own toughest critic and I have zero tolerance.

3DA: In your role as associate technical artist or lead rigger at EA Sports, what kind of work did that entail?



portfolio highlights

Zorich has worked on a host of videogames over the years. Feast on these...

2008-9 *Star Wars: The Force Unleashed, Ultimate Sith Edition*
2008-9 *Indiana Jones and the Staff of Kings*
2008 *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*
2008 EA Sports MMA
2007-8 NFL Tour
2007-8 NFL Head Coach 09
2007-8 NCAA Football 09
2007-8 Madden NFL 09

2007 Tiger Woods PGA Tour 09
2007 Madden NFL 08
2007 NCAA Football 08
2007 College Hoops 2K8
2007 NBA 2K8
2006 College Hoops 2K7
2005 Superman Returns: The Videogame
2003-5 The Mystery Dinosaur for The Discovery Channel



1 Character rigging on SW Force Unleashed

2 Brent at Lucasfilm Animation

3 NCAA college football from EA



BZ: I needed a complete understanding of physiology of humans built for strength and speed. Because I was an athletic trainer who trained football players, it came to me naturally. I know how a football player flexes, I know how they run and sprint and I know how they get prepared for collision. Often, because I have a football player's body, I would go into the washroom at EA where there was a mirror, take off my shirt and flex both my traps and my arms to see the proper deformation. This is how I got into character and what made it so easy is that the character I was getting into was myself!

3DA: Is there much of a culture or professional working practice difference between working for someone like EA and a company like Lucasfilm?

BZ: You are who your team is. Lucasfilm, as a company, is a natural fit for me. We both have zero tolerance when it comes to the quality of our work. We push the absolute limitation of technology in every way, shape

and form. Because we are not on yearly titles, we have the ability to push back a launch date to guarantee that we are doing our best to break new ground.

3DA: What software packages and tools have you used for rigging and animation?

BZ: I use Maya, the proprietary software to Industrial Light & Magic, and After Effects and HyperCam for documentation.

3DA: Do you think there is a shortage of skilled digital artists doing animation and did you find it difficult getting into the industry?

BZ: My best advice to any student is try to do an internship in a studio. Do not rush to get out of school; stay in and develop your craft. Finally, do the Buckbeak test as I mentioned above.

3DA: What are the key skills required to work as a character animator or character rigger?

BZ: Observation, patience and the goal to push technology. Everything you do, imagine you have to present it to George Lucas. Then you will work harder and will expect the absolute best from yourself and your team.

3DA: If there was one feature missing from current software apps that you would like to see implemented to help with any aspect of CG animation, what would it be?

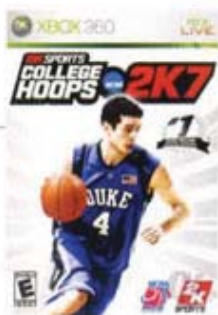
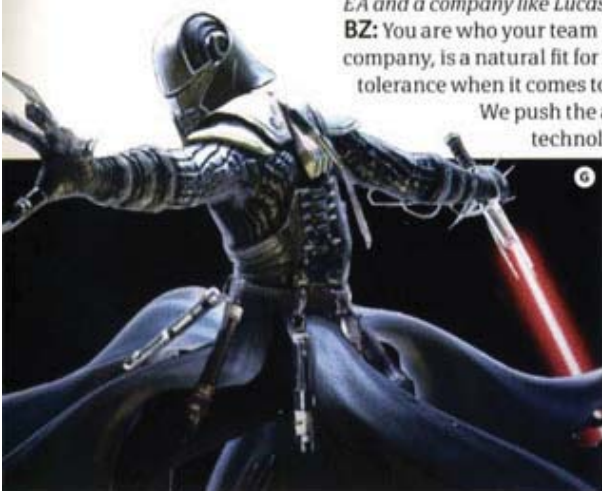
BZ: I saw a demo from a company where you can actually draw arcs of motion on a Wacom tablet and the object will have an animation path.

3DA: Professionally, what's the most satisfying project you've worked on and why?

BZ: Seeing my name at the end credits of *Star Wars: The Force Unleashed, Ultimate Sith Edition* makes me incredibly proud. I saw the first *Star Wars* film when I was three in 1977. It motivated my whole career. To see my name in a *Star Wars* product gave me a sense of satisfaction.

3DA: What would be your dream project to work on?

BZ: One that continues to push film/game convergence on every level. The ultimate goal for me would be to have an engine that supports a controlled character and the user cannot distinguish between real-time and render.



D Tiger Woods PGA Tour 09

F Character work on NFL Tour

F Indiana Jones and the Staff of Kings

G Artwork from SW: TFU Ultimate Sith edition

H College Hoops 2K7

I The Ultimate Edition in full

