

QUALIFICATIONS

- Combined skill sets of an artist, engineer, software designer and educator. Constantly exploring, building, teaching new technology
- 10 years of teaching at every level from high school to graduate school, outside the academy for specialist professionals from diverse fields, and for general audiences
- Software-agnostic 3D generalist filmmaker with special expertise in rigging and pipeline TD. Familiar with a full range of media tools both proprietary and libre
- Expert Blender user and Director of its first Open Movie, Elephants Dream. Developed Blender's original production pipeline. Pipeline consultant on its recent Gooseberry production, and before that on Plumiferos -- the first feature animation made with free/open software
- Director of ongoing experimental production, Wires for Empathy/Tube. Created data-intensive distributed pipeline with solutions for a global range of artist needs and skill levels
- Lead designer/developer of SPINE, a new decentralized media project and asset management platform
- Blender code contributor, supplying features, fixes, design proposals and bug reports. Author of extensive Blender add-ons
- 10 years of consulting for studios and companies ensuring rapid, efficient integration of Blender with varied pipelines and fields of application
- Media consultant and contract programmer for diverse new technologies, e.g. in textile design, art drones, genetic testing, VR
- Wide experience in project management, writing, and public presentation
- Well-known participant in free software / open culture communities
- Proficient in Python and C programming; knowledge of C++, Assembly, others
- Facility with hardware, software, multiple platforms

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Creative Director, Co-Founder

Urchin / URCHN.ORG

Northampton, MA

2007-present

- Conducting a new experiment in Open Movie animation with local and distributed teams combined using a web-based tool set
- Creative development, project management, business strategy
- Designing, coding, and overseeing new tools and workarounds
- Producing CC licensed 3D assets and both written and video educational resources, such as for the widely adopted ManCandy character developed as an easily animatable test bed for rigging experiments, and released in multiple iterations for public use
- Consulting with international studios considering the application of libre tools and licensing, and training teams during transition
- Industrial animation consultancy produces prototype visualization and marketing content. As consultant engineer, determines technical and business objectives; devises and realizes short movies demonstrating proof of concept, market viability

Visiting Artist		
Bit Films, Hampshire College	Amherst, MA	2009-present

- Managing a mixed team of professional and student contributors to current Open Movie project, with interns and artists both visiting and participating from abroad
- Mentoring student and graduate participants in the Computer Graphics Incubator; contributing expertise to other works underway in the shared environment, using a variety of tools and pipelines
- Field testing web-based asset management software, holding design discussions, recruiting and organizing for revision/development
- Teaching student-driven classes by student request, including Python Programming, Python for Artists, and Debugging Open Source Projects

Animation/Rigging and Open Media Consultant		
Manos Digitales: <i>Plumíferos</i>	Buenos Aires, AR	2006

- Brought pipeline knowledge and experience from the premier Open Movie Project to the first feature-length animated film production using libre software
- Rigged characters and made test animations to demonstrate their rigs
- Assisted animators in hands-on training and held workshops on animation for production
- Worked as a contributing animator

Director - Elephants Dream		
Blender Foundation: 'Orange'	Amsterdam, NL	2005-06

- Made the 11 minute animated short “Elephants Dream”, the groundbreaking Open Movie (open data + content, made using all libre tools), with a budget of 120,000 Euros, 6 months, and a 6 person team
- Created/maintained original Blender studio pipeline during a process of intensive Blender redevelopment
- Responsible for project management, final edit and completion of film to budget and deadline
- Close collaboration with Blender developers working in tandem
- Participated in scripting, design and composition, rigged the two principal characters and contributed as animator
- Assembled multi-platform studio from hardware to sys admin
- 'Outreach' in the form of writing production articles, creating educational materials, holding workshops and speaking at conferences and festivals

Software Engineer		
Source Two, Inc.	Palmer, MA	1997-2005

- Design and implementation of human-machine interface, motor control, ad hoc embedded systems networking
- Linux/Windows NT systems administration

EDUCATION	Bachelor of Science, Electrical Engineering
	University of Massachusetts Amherst, MA

Bachelor of Science, Electrical Engineering
University of Massachusetts Amherst, MA 1995

ANIMATION

Director, Tube Open Movie Project. Urchin [In Production]
Director, "Very Satisfied". Urchin [Pre-Production]
Director, Industrial + Commissioned Works. Urchin, 2005-present
Animation, Paper City (documentary). Gibbons, 2015
Rigging Artist, "Omega". Franz + Goralczyk (Germany), 2011
Consultant/Lead Artist, "Interviews from the Future". Spark (Italy), 2008
Director/Author, "The ManCandy FAQ" (tutorial DVD + shorts). Urchin/
Blender Institute (US/Netherlands), 2008
Animator, "Big Buck Bunny". Blender Institute (NL), 2007
Consultant Artist, "Plumiferos". Manos Digitales (Argentina), 2007
Director, "Elephants Dream". Blender Foundation (Netherlands) 2006
-- Updated for compatibility with modern 2.7 Blender, 2015

PUBLICATION

Contributing Writer, "3D World Magazine". 2005-present
Technical Editor, "Blender for Dummies" 1st and 2nd editions

COURSES,
WORKSHOPS +
LECTURES

Hampshire College	Amherst, MA	2010-16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courses in Python Programming, Python for Artists, and Debugging Open Source Projects • Presentations to local animation classes, groups, and GLUG meetings 		
Libre Planet	Cambridge, MA	2011-16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops and presentations 		
Libre Graphics Meeting	Montreal, etc	2007-16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops, presentations, artist showcase 		
Blender Conference	Montreal / Amsterdam	2003-13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops and presentations on pipeline, rigging, production art 		
SIGGRAPH	USA	2003-13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops and presentations 		
MaMa Net Kultur	Zagreb, Croatia	2010
TOSMI Blender Intensive	Sofia, Bulgaria	2009-11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General and advanced workshops in which teams form an ad hoc studio to produce animated shorts 		
Connecticut Film Festival	Danbury, CT	2009-10
Open Video Conference	New York, NY	2009
Collision Collective, MIT	Cambridge, MA	2008
Blender Institute	Amsterdam, NL	2007-08
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master Class intensives 		
Red Hat High	Raleigh, NC	2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer instructor of workshops in Blender and F/OSS multimedia tools for regional high school students 		
"To Hell With Technology"	Toronto, CA	2007
Future Film Festival	Bologna, IT	2007
Free Software Conference	Buenos Aires, AR	2006
Higher Institute for Fine Arts	Antwerp, BE	2005-06
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-lecturer in workshops given to post-graduate art students 		
Netherlands Media Arts Institute / Montevideo Time Based Arts	Amsterdam, NL	2005
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-lecturer in artist workshops for university-level film students 		

SELECTED
EXHIBITION +
SCREENINGS

MOMA - "Design and the Elastic Mind". (United States, 2008)
Berlinale Film Festival (Roosendaal Keynote, Germany, 2008)
Melbourne International Animation Festival (Australia, 2008)
London International Animation Festival (England, 2008)
Ars Electronica (Austria, 2007)
Le Cinéma des Cinéastes - Némó (France, 2007)
Amsterdam Fantastic Film Festival (Netherlands, 2007)
Animatu Festival (Portugal, 2006)
Netherlands Media Arts Institute/Montevideo Center for Time-Based Arts
(Netherlands, 2005-6)
Netherlands theatrical release
German, Argentine and French television
Direct distribution: without including sales, verifiable Elephants Dream
download numbers from primary servers alone were above 500,000;
because also decentralized, actual numbers are estimated at well beyond
1 million, with unusually active BitTorrent seeds persisting for years

HONORS +
AWARDS

Thanks - Caldera, Prix Ars Electronica winner 2012
Best Animation - Connecticut Film Festival 2010
Best Short Film - European 3D Media Festival 2010
Blender's Suzanne Award for Best Animation (Spark), 2009
Elephants Dream anthologized in "The Indie 50: 3D World's greatest
independent animated shorts: 1997-2007"
Grant recipient - Paul Robeson Fund for Independent Media, 2007
Imaginaria International Film Festival (Italy) - Animation Prize 2006
Webcuts Special Award 2006
UK Linux & Open Source Award for Best Use of CGI, 2006
Elephants Dream featured by CG Society in its retrospective of signal
computer graphics events, 2005-06
Blender's Suzanne Award for Best Animation (Kurdali), 2003

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Athens, Francisco. "Alternative Animation 1960-Present." HyperEd.Org Art Education Wiki. 2008. <http://hypered.org/tiki-index.php?page=AthensF+200805+Elephants+Dream>

"Interview with Bassam Kurdali, Director of Elephants Dream."

BlenderNation. 21 Feb. 2007.

<http://www.blendernation.com/2007/02/21/interview-with-bassam-kurdali-director-of-elephants-dream/>

Herpich, Nate. "A film getting buzz online is free to watch -- or change."

Wall Street Journal. 10 June 2006.

http://online.wsj.com/public/article/SB114988628965676434m5hc1Mia4AS60NLu7ePJ0jWkqoE_20070609.html

"Elephants Dream Production Diary." Issues 74-79, 3D World Magazine.

[Elephants Dream article] Free Software Magazine, 7/12/2006

[Elephants Dream article] Linux Magazine - Issue 69, August 2006

Frontpage interview, Het Financieele Dagblad (Dutch Financial Times)

<http://www.blendernation.com/2006/03/22/elephants-dream-on-frontpage-of-leading-dutch-newspaper/>

Elephants Dream has been featured across the web on sites such as SlashDot, CGSociety, Newsforge, Wired, DivxStation, and BlenderNation.

Also of note are derivative utilizations of Bassam's work: the teaching + testing character, ManCandy continues to appear in such diverse forms as presented technical papers, graduate theses (e.g. on simulated fluid dynamics), animation competitions, and a range of projects creative, instructive or commercial; Elephants Dream has, for instance, been used as the primary case study of a Turkish Master's thesis on the nascent model of Open Source filmmaking.