

kennethfinlayson

SUMMARY

- 11+ years working in games, film, TV and toys; 5+ years in leadership roles
- Proponent of proceduralism across many disciplines
- Passionate about tools design, user experience, workflow and systems creation
- Experience making RPG, FPS, multiplayer, co-op and sports titles in various game engines
- Well-versed in character customization, digital acting, garment construction, asset performance and optimization
- Experience growing and maturing young teams as well as leading mature teams
- Very experienced shader author with knowledge of PBR and linear workflows
- Communicates effectively with technical and artistic specialists and bridges gaps in understanding
- Scripting experience with Python, Maxscript, HLSL, Processing, MEL and VEX

SOFTWARE PROFICIENCY

3DS Max	Advanced	Houdini	Intermediate	Photoshop	Expert	NukeX	Intermediate
Maya	Intermediate	Mari	Advanced	Syntheyes	Intermediate	Topogun	Intermediate
ZBrush	Expert	After Effects	Expert	Unreal 3	Intermediate	Bodypaint	Expert
Lightwave 3D	Expert	Boujou	Intermediate	Mudbox	Expert	UVlayout	Advanced
Marvelous Designer	Advanced	Substance Designer	Advanced	Substance Painter	Advanced	Modo	Expert
						Unity 3D	Intermediate

WORK

Hinterland Studio (Vancouver Island, BC)

Character Lead Apr 2015 – Present

The Long Dark [released TBD] Apr 2015 – Present

Art direction, Look development, Character process, Shaders, Asset development.

On a small development team you wear many hats. On this team I have made contributions and had input into UX, UI, QA, and the periodic rigging of assets outside of my typical domain responsibilities.

Sabbatical (Edmonton, AB)

Independent Learning May 2014 – Apr 2015

While at Insomniac, I was exposed to the power of Houdini and saw a potential to revolutionize art production processes. As my remote contract with Insomniac came to a close, I saw a gift of time and a great opportunity to expand my skills in Houdini, scripting and technical art.

During my sabbatical, I have spent the majority of my time thinking about new approaches to asset creation and developing artist-friendly tools that turn “dumb” assets (or assets that are entirely dependent on destructive artist workflows) into “smart” assets (or assets that are contextually aware and non-destructive). I am currently learning Qt to enable me to build more elaborate tool interfaces. For my latest work, please visit my [R&D tools blog](#).

Insomniac Games (Burbank, CA & Edmonton, AB)

Principal Character Artist – Remote

Feb 2014 – Apr 2014

Lead Character Artist – Studio

Mar 2011 – Jan 2014

- Within the first year reduced the run-time cost of all character related assets by one-third or greater while increasing the visual quality coming out of the department
- Pioneered, documented and revised an asset pipeline around Marvelous Designer and cloth, putting dynamic clothing on hundreds of assets
- Delivered company-wide presentations regarding asset performance and creation during the transition from one game engine to another
- Responsible for designing, implementing and maintaining several key asset creation, randomization and end user customization systems
- Hired, managed and groomed a young but talented team of 5 character artists
- Instilled a culture of artistic as well as technical pride in artists
- Introduced Houdini to the studio and a vision for future production, hired experts, which would culminate into us making a major contribution to the **Houdini Engine** initiative
- Key author of shaders at the studio

Sunset Overdrive [released 2014]

Mar 2011 – Apr 2014

- Highly involved in rendering R&D as well as the guidance of our proprietary engine and the evaluation of Middleware.
- Architected and drove a garment system to put dynamic clothing on 6 body types, 2 genders
- Created systems to generate rendered looks on an abstraction layer independent of assets
- Played a key role in bringing Houdini into the studio and revolutionized world creation

Fuse [released 2013]

Mar 2011 – May 2013

- Built many master shaders used globally on the project
- Massive visual and asset quality improvements over Resistance 3
- Massive run-time cost reduction, looks better than R3, costs 60% of R3 assets

Resistance 3 [released 2011]

Mar 2011 – Sept 2011

- Repaired the relationship between Character art and Tech animation
- Balanced my involvement across 3 “other” SKUs at this same time
- Analyzed current shortcomings in tools to be implemented in the new engine

BioWare ULC (Edmonton, AB)

Lead Character Artist

Jan 2010 – Mar 2011

Senior Character Artist

Oct 2007 – Dec 2009

Character Artist

Feb 2006 – Oct 2007

Mass Effect 3 [released 2012] *Metacritic rating: 93*

Mar 2010 – Mar 2011

- Managed an experienced team of 4 character artists
- Balanced the production of 3 SKUs (ME3, and 2x ME2 DLC's) and outsource
- Pioneered the in-house development of: multiplayer assets, a “Gore” system, a modular weapon upgrade system
- Acted as a technical consultant to EA motion capture and scanning facility
- Headed up “in-house delivery” of final shot of ME3 “Digic” announce trailer

Mass Effect 2 [released 2010] *Metacritic rating: 96*

May 2009 – Mar 2011

160+ awards, 25+ Game of the Year awards

- Pioneered the in-house development of Xbox Live assets
- Created multiple party member characters – Illusive Man, Zaeed, Alt Thane etc
- Created key downloadable characters (DLC) (i.e. Zaeed, Katsumi, Shadow Broker, Fire Walker, Overlord, Arrival, Multiple “Skin packs”)

- Developed several armor variants for the female Commander Shepard
- Dragon Age** [released 2009] *Metacritic rating: 86* Jun 2006 – Apr 2009
- Initiated the creation of several tools to facilitate production bottlenecks
 - Created the universal head asset as well as head morphs for party members
 - Responsible for all weapon appearances and implementation
 - Co-managed character creation and customization systems
 - Managed a team of 3 character artists
 - Liaised with graphic programmers, technical animation leads and senior management
 - Provided feedback, direction and technical support to contractors
 - Trained personnel
 - Authored 20+ page, comprehensive document on level art techniques in ZBrush
 - Created documentation to share and standardize process throughout the organization
- Mass Effect** [released 2007] *Metacritic rating: 91* Feb 2006 – May 2006
- Created clothing variations and one creature

Electronic Arts Canada (Vancouver, BC)

Character modeler/Z-Brush specialist

Jul 2005 – Jan 2006

- Provided support to four game teams and special projects
 - Painted master head texture-templates
 - Established visual targets for multiple game teams
- Provided expertise on ZBrush
 - Was a recognized instructor of intermediate/advanced ZBrush classes for EA University
 - Initiated the development of a ZBrush User Group

Mr. X Inc. (Toronto, ON)

Junior Visual Effects 3D Animator

2004

- Responsible for the 3D side of effects shots i.e lighting, tracking, etc.
- Rigged props and pre-visualized shots
- Setup initial shot composites

Sheridan Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning (Oakville, ON)

- Taught After Effects 5.5PB to a third year classical animation class (7 weeks)
- Tutored a Computer Animation student on Maya (10 weeks)

FILMS, TV & TOYS

Assault on Precinct 13	Focus Features	2005
The Ice Princess	Walt Disney Pictures	2005
The Perfect Man	Universal Pictures	2005
Beast Legends Series	The History Channel	2010
Let Me In	Icon Productions	2010
The Nautilus	Hallmark Keepsakes	2011

GAMES

FIFA 2006	Electronic Arts	2005
NHL 07 (VTAR)	Electronic Arts	2006
World Cup 07 (VTAR)	Electronic Arts	2006
March Madness 07	Electronic Arts	2006

Mass Effect	Bioware Corp.	2007
Dragon Age: Origins	Bioware ULC	2009
Mass Effect 2	Bioware ULC	2010
Mass Effect 3	Bioware ULC	2012
Resistance 3	Insomniac Games	2011
Fuse	Insomniac Games	2013
Sunset Overdrive	Insomniac Games	2014

EDUCATION

Sheridan Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning (Oakville, ON)

- Post-Graduate Certificate, Digital Visual Effects** 2003 – 2004
- Managed 6 people to produce a short film
 - Studied 3D tracking, MEL, HRDI, target removal, stabilizing, camera mapping, 3D compositing
- Post-Graduate Certificate, Computer Animation** 2002 – 2003
- Studied character modeling, rigging and animation
- Diploma, Illustration (Technical and Scientific)** 1999 – 2002
- Studied anatomy and life drawing, model making and package design, architectural illustration, blueprint reading, and traditional airbrush and technical line techniques.

PERSONAL ENDEAVOURS

- Created the Tutorial Series - Zbrush Advanced Workflows (2008)
- Graduate of the Scott Eaton digital figure sculpture and anatomy course (2013)
- Judging panel member for the Sinister Circle forum art contest (2009)
- Deep interest in facial animation, FACS, facial mocap, photogrammetry, performance capture, photo-realism, proceduralism, computer vision, muscle systems and simulation, automation
- For many years I have helped a number of Software developers with general beta testing and guidance in tools design. Some developers include: Pixologic, The Foundry, Allegorithmic, Skymatter and Headus

SELECTED AWARDS AND HONOURS

- “Good Job” page interview and profile in Game Developer magazine 2011
- Recognition Stock Award, Bioware ULC 2009
- Appearance on episode of X-play (G4 Tech TV) “Will work for games” 2008
- Appearance and artwork in Game for Windows magazine, Issue 1 2006
- Artwork in Electronic Gaming Monthly magazine “Mass Effect” 2006
- Featured in Vfxworld.com article “Mudbox Preview” 2006
- Student Ambassador for Computer Animation Program 2002 – 2003
- Selected to greet Queen Elizabeth II at Sheridan College 2002
- Royal Bank Art Award 1999

REFERENCES

Available upon request