

Summary

My name is Justin Mijal, and I am a visual effects artist with 15 years experience on feature films, videogame cinematics, commercials, advertising imagery, product design, and various real-time / virtual reality applications.

I'm an entirely self-taught and thorough artist. I spent the better part of my life teaching myself every piece of software I could get my hands on, and I feel that I bring a unique perspective to the table in that regard. I have been a visual effects artist for over 15 years professionally, and I have worked on a very broad spectrum of projects. It is because of this diversity that I am confident in my problem solving abilities under pressure.

Projects

[2016 – 2017]

Armstrong White / SGSCO

Senior CGI Artist / Modeling Lead

“Various Advertising Imagery”

My role was to help facilitate the creation of a new branch of the company focused primarily on consumer packaged goods advertising imagery. Early on, the decision was made to utilize 3d scanning processes and typical retopology methods in order to create hundreds, eventually thousands, of digital representations of physical products on store shelves. The purpose was to allow our clients to create a unified brand representation. The goal was two-fold; to create assets that could be utilized in any form of future advertising uses, and to take control over search engines' results with their own art-directed imagery. This approach required a much more thorough, almost engineering-style Asset creation approach which is atypical for tighter budget projects. Models were created with 100% contiguous meshes that could hold up to any FX simulations and photo-realistic rendering at very high resolutions. I lead a small team in the creation of these assets, as well as also being an on-point senior artist for the company's typical automotive advertising needs, which included wheels, seats, etc.

[2015]

Uncharted Territory / 20th Century Fox

Senior Modeler

“Independence Day: Resurgence” Feature Film

I created layout / ncam environments, the high resolution engines on the human fighters, the bomb-bay interior of the human bombers, and the alien fighters. I also made numerous scripts for the modeling and layout team to use.

[2015]

Blur Studio

Scene Assembly Artist

“Batman: Arkham Knight” Trailer

I did the bridge / city look-dev and environment creation for this trailer. The opening shot was created in 3 parts, which had some foreground buildings, the hero bridge asset, and the background matte-painting geometry from ingested game assets. I textured, shaded, lit, and composited these shots as well. The later shots with the batmobile and batman were fairly typical scene assembly shots that I lit and composited.

[2014]

Blur Studio

Scene Assembly Artist

“Halo 2: Anniversary Edition” Cinematics

This was definitely one of the toughest projects that I've worked on. The entire project was 53 minutes of content with most of the work being done inside of a 6 month period. We brought on a very large team of freelancers for this project, and the onboarding and training caused a lot of additional pressure for the leads. In order to help alleviate some of the strain, I ended up leading some scenes and handling the matte painting deliveries and integration from various outside vendors. I also created environments, textured and shaded assets from outside vendors, and handled the scene assembly on a multitude of complex, FX-heavy shots. This project was an excellent experience overall.

[2013]

Blur Studio

Scene Assembly Artist

“Thor: The Dark World” Feature Film

I handled a lot of the ship asset ingestion / shading tasks, as well as handling a couple of the more complex shots involving them. With no guide to go from, I designed the look of the ArkShip's engines which went over well at the production studio and was then passed onto other VFX studios as a reference. The two back to back shots consisted of many lighting FX passes, and a lot of keyframing in comp. I did the shading, lighting, and composition of the two ArkShip hero shots, as well as a few green-screen keying shots. Later in the production, I jumped onto adding sky-bursts and bifrost effects to others' shots using 3d comp setups I had created.

[2013]

Blur Studio

Scene Assembly Artist

“The Amazing Spider-Man 2” Feature Film

I worked on a short sequence for this film which involved some heinous green-screen removal and element replacements. In the special projects division of the building, there were vaults with iconic character elements from the Spider-Man universe such as the Doc Ock suit, Vulture's suit, etc. These were 3d added to the existing plate. Heavy concrete blast doors protected them, and these were 3d elements I added as well. When the alarm is set off, the on-set lighting goes haywire with strobes and all sorts of flickers, which made pulling a decent key of the green-screens quite a task.

[2013]

Blur Studio

Scene Assembly Artist

“Batman: Origins” Trailer

This was my first project at Blur, and it marked the beginning of my transition from a 10-year specialized modeling lead to a VFX generalist. Blur turned out to be the perfect studio for such a task. I created the warehouse interior environment, some basic props, the layout environment for the exterior shots, and I also had a bunch of shots of my own to scene assemble.

[2013]

Scanline VFX

Modeling Lead

“300: Rise of an Empire” Feature Film

I was in charge of leading the two modeling teams, in Los Angeles and Vancouver, on the creation of the assets for this film. I created the majority of the two hero ships from LIDAR data scans done on set.

[2013]

Scanline VFX

Modeling Lead

“The Wolf of Wall Street” Feature Film

I was primarily on this project just as a helpful hand, as it was handled mostly in Vancouver, and it was such a small project. I modeled the initial previs geometry for the boat, and handled a few issues that arose here and there.

[2013]

Scanline VFX

Modeling Lead

“Man of Steel” Feature Film

Most of my work on this project dealt with LIDAR conversion and optimization for camera matching, and I also created the digi-double of Superman for FX uses. On the oil rig sequence, the digi-double is used for wide shots where he holds up falling debris, tears doors open to save people, and gets lit on fire.

[2012]

Scanline VFX

Modeling Lead

“Iron Man 3” Feature Film

Our sequence on this show required the creation of a few environments, high resolution vehicle assets, the Iron Man Mk XLII suit, more detailed shot-specific “suit connect” assets, and a lot of destruction FX. Under my lead, the modelers in Munich made the helicopter asset, the team in Vancouver created the Tony Stark mansion and some of the house props and vehicles, and I mainly handled the creation of the Iron Man suit and hero props. I translated the engineering CAD data from Audi for the R8 e-tron, and modeled the Superlite Nemesis car in Tony's garage. The big task, however, was the suit. We were delivered work in progress versions from Trixter, as well as the data for the physical suit. Our shots required additional elements and also needed to be fully detail modeled for our suit-connect shots. I handled the majority of these elements and oversaw what wasn't directly my work.

[2012]

Scanline VFX

Modeling Lead

“Avengers” Feature Film

My big task for this film was the ingestion and management of the assets from ILM, as well as keeping detailed simulation meshes up to date for our FX artists when the geometry was updated. The helicarrier and jet assets underwent numerous revisions and ingestions, each taking numerous days, which eventually had to be scrutinized on a “is it worth updating” triage mentality in order to fit our shots' needs and overall timeframe of production. These decisions were incredibly important for keeping the project running smoothly and on budget.

[2012]

Scanline VFX

Modeling Lead

“Battleship” Feature Film

I, once again, was tasked with handling the ingestion and management of work-in-progress assets from ILM, throughout multiple re-deliveries and updates. Max and Maya parse data completely differently, so when an asset was delivered in Maya format, the mothership for instance, it used over 60Gigs of ram in Max just to have the asset opened, without any textures. I had to figure out an efficient way to ingest the assets after every delivery and condense/clean the geometry so that Max could handle it more efficiently without sacrificing any visual fidelity. Detailed hero models were created by myself, such as the ship that hits a satellite and countless versions of damaged buildings. We started out by modeling the hero Bank of China building with architecturally sound methods to aid in believability when destroyed. As production progressed, this one asset turned into 9 different assets spread across multiple artists and departments, all with unique needs and restrictions, but all needing to represent the same original building. When an update or style change was made, I had to update every asset individually to keep continuity while also not bogging down our FX artists with constantly having to redo all of their work. The additional detail destruction that was pre-modeled in for some of the shots was also done by myself.

[2012]

Scanline VFX

Modeling Lead

“Journey 2: The Mysterious Island” Feature Film

In between working on other projects, I was also the modeling lead on Journey 2. I modeled the island for the wide shots, some digi-doubles off of LIDAR, and various destruction assets / debris. I also oversaw the rest of the modeling on the show, which included training new artists.

[2011]

Scanline VFX

Modeling Lead

“Immortals” Feature Film

For this project, the large task was to create the Titan's Tomb environment. Working closely with the lighting artist, methods were split between shading and modeling for the main tomb details, and I modeled the large statues in a form that facilitated their destruction by the FX team. Other various work included lidar processing, matte painting geometry creation, and set extension setups.

[2011]

Scanline VFX

Modeling Lead

“Super 8” Feature Film

This was one of my favorite projects to work on. We received most of the base traincar assets from ILM, and aside from the typical asset ingestion work to be done, the main task came down to their destruction modeling. We had recently lost our animation supervisor, so the majority of that work came down onto me. I created nearly all of the damage myself, with additional help from a couple of modelers. Most of the damage was created for a general overall look, while some shots required one-offs to be made, such as the traincar that gets split in half. In order to get the proper look of heavy bent metal, I employed the use of cloth simulations on lower resolution driver meshes which the higher resolution meshes were then bound to. This sped up the overall creation while also giving a much more realistic look. Each area of influence was then broken off into individual blend shapes/morphs so that the animators could keyframe them per shot. This being handled in the rig also allowed us to continue to refine the models, Uvs, etc. without any animation work being lost.

[2010]

Scanline VFX

Modeling Lead

“Hereafter” Feature Film

Our sequence on Hereafter was at the very beginning of the film where a tidal wave destroys a city, drowning the hero of the film. Her character model was one of my larger tasks. On top of the hero character asset, we also needed numerous digi-doubles which were created from photography shot on-set of the extras used in the sequence. I created the base-meshes (Adult male and female, as well as child male and female) which were then “stamped” down to each individuals’ LIDAR scan. By not changing the topology, we were able to re-use textures and also create 4 different body modification blends per model. This essentially took 4 assets and created ~50 or so unique looking characters with minimal effort. The city streets were filled with countless props that myself and my team created. The buildings lining the streets were primarily projected plate footage and photo reference onto geometry in Nuke, but many of them required fully 3d modeled additions, overhangs, etc. These were then destroyed in the FX department. Additional hero assets that were pre-destroyed, such as cars, shattered windshields, and higher resolution fractured wooden structures, were created by myself.

[2009]

Uncharted Territory

Modeling Lead

“2012” Feature Film

This was my first feature film, and I came on board as the modeling lead. My team and I were tasked with creating digital representations of Los Angeles and Las Vegas which were to be destroyed in FX. I had to manage a team of modelers, create hero assets, and handle ingestion of assets from outside vendors. Having dealt with incredibly large CAD data sets at my previous employment, I came to this project equipped with the tools and knowledge to help streamline the pipeline and increase efficiency.

[2004 – 2008]

Speedshape, Inc.

Modeling Lead

“Automotive Advertising Assets”

When I started at Speedshape, the other artists were already creating amazingly realistic renderings of digital vehicles for various advertising-based needs; primarily for the client General Motors at the time. This was a time when traditional photography was still the dominant method for advertising imagery. The CAD data used to manufacture the physical parts on the vehicles was provided by the client, translated, and used for rendering shots. The data that could not be delivered, however, is what ended up being the task given to me. Interior soft trim parts, such as leather seats, leather steering wheels, and manual transmission shifter boots, are all parts of vehicles that are largely created manually. No 3d data exists. I developed a robust pipeline to solve this which was capable of adding realistic stitching and wrinkle details utilizing new softwares and technology; all within the constraints of a pre-64bit industry that was plagued by memory shortage issues. Despite these issues, on my 3rd month at the company, we sold our first believable interior vehicle render using my assets. Countless others were to follow, and the scope of my work shifted slightly to include more R&D and management tasks, working very closely with the pipeline developer to create tools used to automate as much of my process as possible. I became the modeling lead quickly and lead a team of artists in the creation of digital assets for numerous projects for many varying clients over the years.

Experience

Autodesk 3dstudio Max	Creaform Handiscan	Hard-Surface Modeling
Autodesk Maya	Creaform VXScan	Organic Modeling
Pixologic Zbrush	ForestPack	Oculus Rift
Headus UVLayout	RichDirt	Photogrammetry
Quixel Suite – NDO / DDO	Knald	Photography
Allegorithmic Substance Designer	Marmoset Toolbag	LIDAR Data
Allegorithmic Substance Painter	fumeFX	Ephere Lucid Physics
Allegorithmic B2M	Pflow	3dsmax Cloth
Adobe Photoshop	Maxscript	Rhinoceros 3d
Adobe After Effects	Windows OS	CAD Data
Adobe Lightroom	Shotgun	Deep Exploration
BlackMagic Design Fusion	Team Leadership	Wordpress
BlackMagic Design Davinci Resolve	Geomagic	Google Docs
Agisoft Photoscan Pro	Simplemeshes	PDPlayer
Reality Capture	Greenscreen / Chroma Keying	Set Extension Modeling
Chaos Group V-Ray	Linear Workflow	Basic Tracking
Rotoscoping	Compositing	Animation
LUTs	3D Coat	Stereolithography 3d Printing
Retouching	Cura	CrazyBump
Rigging	Thinkbox Xmesh	Unreal Engine
UV Laser-based 3d Printing	Thinkbox Frost	Optical Flares
Keyshot	Particle FX	Layout
Keylight	Primatte	ReelSmart Motion Blur
Railclone	3D Compositing	Xnormal
Kinematik Lab PhysX Painter	FX-Based Modeling Requirements	