

# JASON KENNEDY

Character Animator, MoCap Artist, 3D Generalist



Creative, collaborative, and inclusive 3D artist with 17+ years of experience teaching and producing animation within deadline-driven environments, including supervising numerous award-winning projects. Positive, independent, and self-driven attitude supported by adaptable technical, managerial, and communication skills. Superb attention to detail and time management while working in high-pressure settings. Comfortable self-assessing, receiving and implementing feedback, and reporting to supervisors. An artist and storyteller who is always growing by embracing a range of creative practices, including writing, drawing, and acting. Eager to contribute expertise and passion for creating exceptional animated performances.

## EXPERIENCE

### Senior Lecturer (Animation & MoCap) | AUT University

Auckland, New Zealand | 2008 — Present

- Served roles as head of department, curriculum leader, programme leader, and animation pathway leader
- Led and designed undergraduate curricula across a department of 12 animation, visual effects, and game design staff
- Designed and implemented character animation and MoCap papers geared toward effective storytelling and character performance
- Supervised 12+ award-winning undergrad and postgrad animation projects, with official selections at 10+ prestigious international film festivals, including eligibility for an Academy Award nomination
- Incubated and supervised industry projects based on animation / VFX production models
- Mentored staff with teaching, research, and supervision strategies
- Helmed weekly department meetings
- Timetabled staff and facility resources
- Led department through swift adaptation to remote classroom management and online teaching strategies throughout pandemic
- Produced robust library of 200+ tutorials for 3D production
- Credits include:
  - ◆ Animation director for "Treplev" (2020) | 3D animation (PhD)
  - ◆ Animation director for "Actor - Fear" (2016) | 3D animation
  - ◆ Animation director for "Actor - Love" (2015) | 3D animation
  - ◆ Animation supervisor for "The Wild Cats of Piran" (2015) | Film pitch
  - ◆ 3D modeler for "Spitfire" possum elimination device (2015) | TVC
  - ◆ Visual designer for "Compressed Air Energy Storage" (2015) | TVC
  - ◆ MoCap performance consultant for "25 April" (2015) | 3D feature
  - ◆ Preproduction supervisor for "Mother's Milk" (2014) | Film pitch
  - ◆ 3D modeler for "Listen Hear! Love the Music" (2010) | CNC sculptures

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## EDUCATION

### AUT University

Auckland, New Zealand

2015 — 2021

Doctorate of Philosophy

Animation & Performance Capture

### University of Cincinnati

Cincinnati, Ohio, USA

2005 — 2007

Master of Fine Arts

Electronic Art: Animation

### Albion College

Albion, Michigan, USA

2000 — 2004

Bachelor of Arts — Honours

Studio Art: Drawing

Minors: Palaeontology, Mathematics

## HOBBIES

Acting

Reading

Writing (Sci-Fi)

Drawing

Cooking / Baking

Photography

Collecting Fossils

Dino-ramas

Jewellery Design

Playing Piano

## SOFTWARE EXPERIENCE

### Expert

Maya

MotionBuilder

ZBrush

Photoshop

Premiere

Faceware Analyzer

Faceware Retargeter

Motion Analysis Cortex

### Journeyman

Substance Painter

Unreal Engine

After Effects

Mari



**Animation Director | “Meek the Meerkat” (3D Animation)**

Auckland, New Zealand | 2024 (Expected) | Self-Produced

- Directed development of film from conception to completion
- Created production pipeline and led team of 5 artists through pre-vis, layout, modelling, texturing, rigging, grooming, and animation
- Used keyframe animation to craft compelling performances for bipedal, quadrupedal, and avian characters, as well as other assets
- Wrote custom scripts to support animation production
- Crafted dynamic virtual cinematography unique to each shot
- Lit, rendered, composited, and edited finished result

**VFX Supervisor | Eco Astronomy Sri Lanka**

Auckland, New Zealand & Ratnapura, Sri Lanka | 2022 — 2023

- Collaborated with lead scientists to produce scientifically accurate 3D visualisations of ten extinct Sri Lankan megafauna composited within live-action backgrounds
- Created production pipeline and led team of 12 junior artists through requirements (modelling, texturing, rigging, posing, simulation, lighting, rendering, & compositing)
- First updates to scientific visualisations in seventy years, based on reconstructive evidence of recently discovered fossils
- Rendered visualisations displayed within Sri Lankan Natural History and Science Museum

**Animation Director | “Heathens” (3D Animation)**

Auckland, New Zealand | 2023 | Self-Produced

- Directed and recorded live performance capture with actor
- Cleaned and retargeted PeCap data for face and body
- Keyframe-animated entire facial performance to meticulously honour source performance, with high fidelity of thought / emotion cues
- Refined and enhanced body PeCap data with keyframe animation to produce a believable, lifelike performance within a continuous closeup
- Lit, rendered, and composited finished result

**VFX Lead | “Holding South” (Short Film)**

Auckland, New Zealand | 2021 | Wild Greens Productions

- Collaborated with cross-functional teams to ensure creature design and animation aligned with director's vision and project requirements
- Worked with VFX supervisor to advise director, writer, and producers about on-set production requirements for digital effects
- Designed, modelled, textured, rigged, animated, lit, rendered, and composited creature animation into filmed plate, including complex direct interaction with a live-action actor
- Recorded, processed, and integrated on-set photogrammetry to support animation interactions
- Rotoscoped, composited, and colour-graded live-action footage
- Structured and created digital atmospheric effects
- Mentored junior artists, including WIP reviews and daily feedback
- Film winner of 22+ international indie film awards, and 6+ nominations

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**PRODUCTION SKILLS**

Character Animation  
Facial Animation  
Quadruped Animation  
MoCap Production  
MoCap Animation & Editing  
3D Modelling  
Texturing  
Rigging  
Virtual Cinematography  
Lighting & Rendering  
Editing, Roto, & Compositing  
Photogrammetry  
Project Supervision  
Animation Training

**PROFESSIONAL HABITS**

- Passionate, resilient, and collaborative working ethos
- Meaningful creative input during client interactions
- Able to lead projects and take direction, as required
- Meticulous attention to detail while able to prioritise tasks
- Adaptable to different styles
- Respectful, inclusive, & punctual
- Tenacious resolve when trouble-shooting solutions
- Continuous learning and staying up-to-date with industry trends
- Strong fine art background
- Wide knowledge of film and literature



**Managing Director | K. Amani Fine Jeweller**

Auckland, New Zealand | 2011 — 2019

- Rendered realistic jewellery designs for website, collateral, and clients
- Modelled organic jewellery designs that conformed to fine tolerances for lost-wax casting, stonesetting, and client requirements
- 3D-scanned client jewellery and cleaned digital replicas to support precise fits between existing and new designs
- Executed entire 3D printing process, including preparing digital assets for printing, cleaning / curing prints, and troubleshooting
- Collaborated with specialist manufacturers to refine production workflow for efficiency while maintaining high-quality results
- Designed, constructed, and managed website, including marketing collateral, interactivity, and written copy
- Managed retail store and ensured content met or exceeded business and client requirements 100% of the time
- Published 3D modelling / 3D printing tutorial in 3D World Magazine (Issue 183), and interviewed for 3D printing expertise (Issue 184)

**Compositor | “Plan B” (Short Film)**

Auckland, New Zealand | 2012 | Shirin Brown

- Tracked footage and composited a digital insect to follow actor

**VFX Artist | “Artaud at Rodez” (Stage Play)**

Auckland, New Zealand | 2011 | Love, Blood and Rhetoric Productions

- Filmed, edited, and composited footage projected on set during live performances at Unitec Theatre

**Animation Supervisor | “And Again” (Music Video)**

Auckland, New Zealand | 2010 | Mile High

- Supervised on-set production to create plausible integration with CG elements
- Modelled, textured, and rigged robot character, and integrated MoCap data with keyframe animation in 10 shots
- Edited and colour-graded final video

**Freelance 3D Generalist | National Australia Bank (Pre-Vis)**

Auckland, New Zealand | 2010 | The Activate Group

- Collaborated with CG layout team to create interior design for bank
- Produced eight 3D models under rapid deadline to client satisfaction

**3D Generalist | Megazone (Animated Briefing Video)**

Auckland, New Zealand | 2010 | Fina Design

- Worked with director and client to storyboard narrative for briefing
- Produced eleven 3D models and various textures, rigs, and motion graphics elements
- Created all character and prop animations
- Established virtual cinematography unique to each shot
- Lit, rendered, composited, and edited finished result

**AWARDS****Best Research Project**

Eco Astronomy - Best Research Awards  
Category: Digital Reconstruction (2023)

**TRAINING****Screen Acting Coaching**

Kacie Stetson Studio (2011 — 2022),  
Coaches: Kacie Stetson, Dawn Glover

**Acting for Animators Masterclass**

AUT University (2014)  
Mentor: Ed Hooks

**Pixar Story & Animation Masterclass**

VanArts (2013)  
Mentors: Matt Luhn, Andrew Gordon

**Screen Acting - Levels 1 & 2**

Studio 111 (2010 — 2011)  
Mentor: Sally Spencer-Harris

**ACTING CREDITS****Holding South | Short Film**

Wild Greens Productions (2021)  
Character: Joe

**Taking Stock | Short Film**

Meerkat Animation, Ltd (2020)  
Character: Arthur Devine

**8 | Stage Play**

Maidment Theatre (2012)  
Character: Dr Segurra