



**L**ook at that face.

It's true. It's mostly made out of rubber.

It's been put to good use on many occasions acting out scenes with animators, telling crazy stories and used as a lip-sync reference for dozens of animated characters. Surprisingly, clients and studios pay real money for this and it's really hard to believe I get to make a living at what seems like having a lot of fun, telling stories.

Joy is one of the fundamentals necessary to creating great work. I find if a crew are and I are enjoying what we do, it contributes to telling a better story.

For me, this joy all started a long time ago with a love for drawing which led to

*The Classical Cartoon Animation Programme* at Sheridan College and subsequent scholarship to *The New York Institute of Technology - Computer Graphics Laboratory (CGL)*. Little did we know at the time but 'the Lab' would become the launchpad for both Pixar and Lucas Digital. After getting a Bachelor's of Science degree I returned to Toronto and joined the crew of folks at *Sythavision (Tron)* to work on various design and commercial projects and eventually, *The Fly* for David Cronenberg, my first feature film. Working with various studios in Toronto I got to direct the first computer animated characters for syndicated television as well as do design, broadcast graphics and commercial work.

In 1994 I joined Industrial Light + Magic in Marin County California, first working on *Casper* for Steven Spielberg and then moving into the *ILM CG Commercials* group. Leading a very talented team, we were able to complete high-end commercials including spots that aired during *The Superbowl*. Later, I was asked to join the ILM features division as part of the Senior Creative Group that incorporated the Visual Effects Supervisors and Animation Directors, leading to working on films such as *Jack Frost* and *Magnolia* (involving a plague of raining frogs). This also opened up the chance to start directing projects for George Lucas such as *Star Wars: Phantom Menace Extended Scenes*, adding seven more sequences to the Star Wars story for the DVD project, as well as *Star Wars: Bounty Hunter*, the in game cinematic story of a major AAA game release for Lucasarts. Both *Star Wars* projects involved ground up scene creation from the story right through to delivered footage.

After 10 years at ILM I had a chance to join Weta Digital so we sold our home and many of our belongings to relocate to New Zealand and work on *Lord of the Rings: Return of the King*. When the film wrapped with an exciting 11 wins at the Academy Awards and an amazing country wide party to celebrate, I was asked to stay on to help Peter Jackson do development for *King Kong*. A very exciting time since Peter was entirely open to storytelling suggestions and I was able to contribute to several sequences, especially getting to design many shots in the final NY sequence. I remember pitching Peter, "Kong has died. Every thing has slowed down as if we've

gone into a dream. The slow motion biplanes coming into frame are like angels of death, coming to collect Kong's soul". He put it into the movie verbatim.

Since Weta, I've done some more films including *Fantastic Four*, *Zathura*, *Pan's Labyrinth*, *District Nine*... I've had the chance to direct some animated series, *Viva Pinãta* (FOX), *The Lebrons* (Lebron James) and work on animation for some popular fantasy/sci-fi shows for television, *Once Upon a Time* (ABC), *The X-Files* (FOX), *Legends of Tomorrow* (CW/DC) and *Stargirl* (CW/DC), amongst others.

I've had a chance to meet and work with so many great folks who have been generous with their time and experience. Chances to encounter animation heroes: I've worked with *Betty Boop* and *Popeye* animators, been lucky to meet some of Disney's "Nine Old Men", had dinner with both Chuck Jones and Ray Harryhausen and their wives, met Brad Bird, Richard Williams and design legend, Syd Mead. I've also been able to work with some of the best film directors of our time and learn from them which has really made me better aware of story. I was involved in forming and leading *The Independent Story Group* at Industrial Light + Magic as well as developing story and vfx for the ending of *LOVE*, an indie film for Tom DeLonge [*Blink-182*, *Angels&Airwaves*]. Some of my favourite words from clients have always been, "do you have any ideas here?"

Production stories? I got 'em and am happy to share a tale or two over a cup of coffee. Feel free to check out my credits, job experience and references, but just so you know...

My best achievement is being married to my fabulous wife Laurie and having three amazing kids, Kristen, Brad and Tiffany. I'm enormously proud of my family.

And although my kids are grown up now, animation and storytelling still puts me in touch with a precocious, curious kid, who loves to act up every day.

That'd be me.