Heather L. Abels
2687 Windwood Ct, Clarksville, TN 37043 • 415.672.4209
heather.abels@gmail.com • www.heatherabels.com

WORK EXPERIENCE

Remote Matte Painter
11.2016 - Present
projects include:
DISNEY'S HAPPILY EVER AFTER
NIGHTMARE BEFORE XMAS LIVE
THE LITTLE MERMAID LIVE

Mousetrappe
Burbank, CA
• Remote work painting projections for The Hollywood Bowl, Disney World Magic Kingdon, Disney World Animal Kingdom, and Disney World Hollywood Studios

Matte Painting Consultant
09.2019 - present
projects: *UNANNOUNCED*

Boulder Media
Dublin, Ireland
• Assist in setting up pipeline and artist workflow for Matte Painting department
• Matte Painter for development shots

Set Extension Artist
05.2019 - 08.2019
projects: *FROZEN 2*

Walt Disney Animation Studios
Los Angeles, CA
• Matte painting, modeling, look development, and layout tasks as needed per shot
• Assisted in planning the pipeline setup for passing work along to other departments

Remote Matte Painter
08.2015 - Present
projects include:
GAME OF THRONES
DEADPOOL
FAST & FURIOUS 8
THE ORVILLE (TV)

Nemesis Collective
Clarksville, TN
• Remote work for Rodeo FX, Tippet Studios, Fuse FX, Blur, A52, The Mill, Buster Design, Blackthorn Media, North Forty Studios, Odd-NY, & more
• Includes matte painting, projections, compositing, poster concepts, lighting, modeling, cg generalist work and virtual reality paintings

Set Extension Artist
02.2014 - 07.2015
projects: *MOANA*
ZOOTOPIA
BIG HERO 6

Walt Disney Animation Studios
Los Angeles, CA
• Matte painting, modeling, look development, and layout tasks as needed per shot
• Assisted in planning the pipeline setup for passing work along to other departments
• Artist training and mentoring
• Helping plan for tool development

Matte Department Supervisor/
Production Technical Liaison
02.2012 - 02.2014
projects: *R.I.P.D.*
MACHETE 2
DJANGO UNCHAINED
300: RISE OF AN EMPIRE
PERCY JACKSON 2
SEVENTH SON
WINTERS TALE
X-MEN: FUTURE

Rhythm & Hues
Los Angeles, CA
• supervising a department of over 20 artists and found appropriate casting for each artist
• oversaw the growing technology for the department, and how it fit into the studio goals
• improved the department workflow and established technical priorities for each show
• finding and interviewing new candidates for hire
• establishing a new technical position to help balance non-technical artists with more technically demanding projects
• training of all new department hires on studio tools and procedures & tool documentation
• troubleshooting broken or challenging shots for all shows, shot work as time permits
• communicating with show supervisors regarding broken or ineffective tools

Matte Painter / 3d Generalist
02.2013 - Present
projects: VARIOUS COMMERCIALS
"BETTER BOT" TAKEOVER

Freelance
Los Angeles, CA
• freelance matte painting for several superbowl commercials for The Mill
• modeling, texturing, and motion graphics for the TD Ameritrade "Better Bot" takeover

Lead Matte Painter
09.2011 - 10.2012
project: *LIFE OF PI*

Rhythm & Hues
Los Angeles, CA
• helped develop a new Photoshop color pipeline to paint high dynamic range images for use in lighting and compositing
• managed 7 artists to execute work in over 500 shots
• worked with compositing and lighting teams to deliver artwork and files in a usable way
• worked with pipeline to create new tools for entirely new technical challenges
• trained artists on new tools and troubleshot any technical issues in all 500 shots

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Matte Painter
12.2009 - 09.2011
project: *BIG MIRACLE*
CHARLIE ST.CLOUD / YOGI BEAR

Rhythm & Hues
Los Angeles, CA
• created digital backdrops for underwater cg elements
• painted & projected stereo environment matte paintings, modeling and precomps
• master paintings for time-lapse shot

Matte Painter
09.2009 - 11.2009
project: *AVATAR*

Weta Digital
Wellington, New Zealand
• created stereo projection paintings using Photoshop, Maya and Nuke

Matte Painter
08.2009 - 09.2009
project: *NEW MOON*

Prime Focus World
Los Angeles, CA
• created digital paintings for projections in final film in conjunction with other artists

Matte Painter
11.2008 - 04.2009
project: *MUSEUM 2*
LAND OF THE LOST

Rhythm & Hues
Los Angeles, CA
• created digital paintings for trailer shots and final film

Matte Painter
01.2008 - 11.2008
project: *THE SPIRIT*
DON'T MESS WITH THE ZOHAN
THE BATTLE OF RED CLIFF 2
VARIOUS COMMERCIAL WORK

The Orphanage
San Francisco, CA
• painted, modeled, projected and rendered 2d & 3d matte paintings and concept art
• texture development and look development of 3d objects
• filled in as Look Development Supervisor on Red Cliff
• approved assets and packaged look developed models and assets for vendors

Assistant Matte Artist
08.2007 - 11.2007
project: *THE GOLDEN COMPASS*

Matte World Digital
Novato, CA
• set up projections, rendering, matte painting extension, cleanup, and model modification

Texture Artist
07.2006 - 09.2006
project: *SPIDER-MAN 3*

Giant Killer Robots
San Francisco, CA
• texture painting, custom brush creation for continuity & Photoshop action
  creation for better automation

Assistant Matte Artist/Digital Artist
01.2006 - 06.2006
project: *ZODIAC*
INVINCIBLE

Matte World Digital
Novato, CA
• created matte paintings for sky replacements, roads, and buildings for taxi shot
• rotoscoping, re-creating motion blur in elements, 3d shadow tests and pre-comps

Design Director
04.2004 - 08.2004

The Voice Magazine (TWHBEA)
Lewisburg, TN
• Responsible for the design and creation of all ads for clients for monthly publication
• Restructured department work flow to maximize productivity, reduce clerical errors,
  and ease communication of ideas and job revisions
• Archiving and categorizing of all ads, scans and page files

Graphic Designer/Prepress Artist
12.2002 - 04.2004

Lewisburg Printing Company
Lewisburg, TN
• Managed multiple time sensitive jobs for clients
• Designed custom print solutions for client needs
• Altered, repaired, or prepared external files for digital and large format printing

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TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Author:
Matte Painting Training Materials
Fall 2019

Rooster Teeth
Austin, TX
• created training materials for a leading animation studio

Author and Mentor:
Intro to Digital Matte Painting
Fall 2018 - Present

CG Spectrum
online @ cgspectrum.com
• co-created course Introduction to Digital Matte Painting
• mentor of new students taking the online course

Author:
Matte Painting Basics
and the Static Camera Shot
Summer 2017 - 2018

Pluralsight
online @ pluralsight.com
• created course Matte Painting Basics and the Static Camera Shot

Adjunct Instructor:
Electronic Imaging
Fall 2014 - Present

Austin Peay State University
Clarksville, TN
• Taught foundations class introducing students to digital art techniques

Instructor:
Advanced Matte Painting
Fall 2014 - Present

CGWorkshops
online @ training.cgsociety.org
• helping students take their matte paintings from 2D to 3D by teaching advanced projection and 3d techniques used in modern matte painting.
• teaching basic modeling, simple and advanced 3d shot setups, as well as Photoshop tips and tricks
• discussing topics like color theories, workspaces, image clarity and file organization

Matte Painting S.M.E.
(Subject Matter Expert)
02.2012 - Present

Rhythm & Hues
Los Angeles, CA
• developed training curriculum for all new department hires
• trained all new hires on company proprietary software and company workflow standards
• international training using video conferences and remote desktop sharing
• recorded training videos and set up training files for self guided education
• followed up training by regularly assisting staff with questions or problems

Instructor:
Advanced Matte Painting
Fall 2008

Academy of Art University
San Francisco, CA
• taught advanced matte painting techniques including 2.5d and 3d projections, camera setup and modeling for matte painting

EDUCATION

Master of Fine Arts
2007

Academy of Art University
San Francisco, CA
Animation & Visual Effects

Bachelor of Science
2002

East Tennessee State University
Johnson City, TN
Engineering Technology: Animation, Illustration, & Multimedia

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SKILLS

Software Photoshop • Maya • 3D Studio Max • After Effects • Shake • Nuke • Vue • UV Layout • Illustrator • InDesign • Deep Paint • Body Paint • Camtasia • Mac OS • Windows • Linux

Techniques Matte painting • 3d Modeling • Texturing • Look Development • Compositing • Lighting • Editing • 2.5D & 3D Projection setup • Stereoscopic - Projections • Graphic Design • Concept Art •Environment Design • Print Production • Illustration • Photo-restoration • Motion Graphics

PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT & PUBLICATIONS

Member
Fall 2013 - Present
Visual Effects Society

Interviewed & Work Featured
02.2015
Advanced Photoshop Magazine Issue #132
"25 Matte Painting Tips"
Images pg 33, 35, 36 - article pg 26

Contributed to
02.2015
Win - Academy Award for Best Animated Feature "Big Hero 6"
Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences

Contributed to
2014
Win - ADDY Awards - TD Ameritrade "Better Bot Homepage Takeover"
National ADDY Award
AAF District 9 AAA (ADDY) Gold Winner 2014
AAF Nebraska Professional Gold ADDY Award 2014
Best of Show - Internet Advertising Competition 2014

Shot Work Featured
01.2013
Cinefex #132
"The Calculus of Pi" (Life of Pi)
Image pg. 68 - article pg. 53

Contributed to
02.2013
Win - Academy Award for Best Visual Effects "Life of Pi"
Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences

Interviewed
11.2012
Animation World Network Article
"Rhythm & Hues Taps NVIDIA Technology for Life of Pi"

Contributed to
02.2010
Win - Academy Award for Best Visual Effects "Avatar"
Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences

Contributed to
02.2008
Win - Academy Award for Best Visual Effects "The Golden Compass"
Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences

Shot Work Featured
01.2008
Cinefex #112
"Northern Lights" (Golden Compass)
Images pg. 97, 98 - article pg. 85

Shot Work Featured
07.2007
Cinefex #110
"The Enemy Within" (Spider-Man 3)
Image pg. 103 - article pg. 110

Shot Work Featured
04.2007
Cinefex #109
"The Streets of San Francisco" (Zodiac)
Image pg. 56 - article pg. 49

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ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Chosen Participant
2008
Siggraph 2008 Space/Time Exhibition
"The Tempest" short film (with Scott Raymond)

Finalist
2008
Academy of Art Spring Show
Visual Effects/Short Subject & Visual Effects/Compositing

Member
2005-2007
"Missing Pixels" Visual Effects Club
Academy of Art University

Show Winner
Spring 2001, Spring 2002
EDGE Spring Show - East Tennessee State University
First in Group Digital Video, Vector Character, 3D Environment, Traditional Illustration, Reflective and Interactive CD categories

Winner
2000
ETSU's Preview Program Logo Contest
Designed winning logo and slogan for freshmen orientation program

President,
Vice President, Secretary
1998-2002
Edge Club (Engineering Design Graphics Extremists)
East Tennessee State University

Vice President
2000-2001
Member since 1999
Epsilon Pi Tau (The International Honorary for Professions in Technology)
East Tennessee State University

Recipient
1999
Saturn Scholarship for Dependent Children
East Tennessee State University

Member
1998-1999
Alpha Lambda Delta
(National Academic Honors Society for Freshmen)
East Tennessee State University