Zancois Rice

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Reno, NV

Professional Summary

A highly skilled and innovative **Senior 3D Character Artist** with over 20 years of experience, specializing in **game art, character modeling, and animation**. Proven expertise in creating high-quality assets across diverse styles and platforms, including AAA games and cinematic projects. Skilled in **collaboration, leadership, and pipeline optimization**, with a strong passion for crafting immersive and visually stunning experiences.

Core Competencies

- **3D Character Art Expertise**: High-poly sculpting, low-poly optimization, and texturing for real-time engines.
- **Technical Proficiency**: Mastery of Maya, ZBrush, Substance Painter, and Unreal Engine 4/5.
- **Collaboration**: Extensive experience working with riggers, animators, and art directors to ensure character models meet both artistic and technical requirements.
- **Pipeline Development**: Skilled in optimizing character art pipelines to enhance efficiency and quality.
- **Leadership & Mentorship**: Proven ability to train and mentor junior artists in advanced techniques and workflows.
- **Problem-Solving**: Adept at managing time, resolving challenges, and balancing creative vision with technical constraints.

Professional Experience

Founder/Art Director
Escape Speed LLC – Reno, NV
2024- Present

- **Founder and Art Director at Escape Speed LLC**, an independent animation and entertainment studio based in Reno, Nevada. In this role, they oversee every aspect of creative development, production, and business operations.
- Responsible for **concept creation, 3D modeling, animation, lighting, rendering, and post-production**, as well as managing the studio's signature intellectual property, *The Splinter*. They direct the overall **artistic vision, storytelling, and technical pipeline**, ensuring projects meet both creative and commercial standards.
- Beyond production, handles **strategic planning, branding, and outreach**, positioning Escape Speed LLC as a hub for cinematic 3D animation, transmedia storytelling, and independent IP development. The studio operates under a **grassroots, creator-owned model**, focusing on building original worlds, collaborating with like-minded artists, and expanding into future video game and interactive divisions.

Principal Artist II/Lead Artist IV
Everi Holdings – Reno, NV
2021 – 2024

- Crafted **high-quality 3D character models** and animations for slot games, integrating conceptual and final art seamlessly.
- **Developed and streamlined pipelines**, introducing AI-based workflows to accelerate production and elevate quality.
- Mentored junior artists, fostering a collaborative and innovative team environment.
- Provided accurate project estimates, ensuring on-time delivery and resource optimization.

Synergy Blue – *2D/3D Artist*
Las Vegas, NV · 2019–2020

- Created and 3D modeled unique characters for upcoming slot machine game releases, enhancing the visual appeal and engagement of the games.

- Executed 3D modeling of both hard surface and organic assets, demonstrating versatility and technical prowess.
- Digitally painted and animated 2D art for upcoming titles, integrating seamlessly within the Unity game engine.
- Maintained cohesive communication with game design, math, audio, and software engineering teams to ensure project alignment and success.

Senior 3D Artist/Designer

Konami Gaming – Las Vegas, NV

2017 – 2019

- Delivered **end-to-end production** of character models, UI assets, and animations for slot machines.
- Guided teams in mastering diverse artistic styles, enhancing the quality and cohesion of final products.
- Collaborated with cross-functional teams to align art assets with gameplay and narrative goals.

3D Artist/Animator

VGT/Aristocrat – Reno, NV

2014 – 2017

- Produced **real-time optimized character models** and animations, meeting technical requirements for slot game engines.
- Consistently exceeded expectations in delivering high-quality art within strict deadlines.

Education

A.A.S. in Media Arts and Animation

Art Institute of Pittsburgh | Pittsburgh, PA

Awards and Recognition

- **Best Technical Achievement Award**: For "Leaving the Game," a machinima project showcasing innovative storytelling and visual design.

Technical Skills

- **3D Modeling and Texturing**: Maya, ZBrush, Substance Painter, Marvelous Designer
- **Game Engines**: Unreal Engine 5, Unity
- **Other Tools**: Photoshop, After Effects, Perforce, Jira, Spine Animation