Gregory Araya

Los Angeles, CA
info@gregaraya.com
IMDb
LinkedIn

SUMMARY

Animation director and production leader with 25+ years bridging creative production and emerging technology across episodic television, higher education, and GenAI-native pipelines. Deep credibility with working filmmakers and production teams, built through direct production leadership, festival and juror standing, and industry education work. Proven ability to evaluate creative technology honestly, build knowledge infrastructure that practitioners actually use, and guide teams through technological transitions without eroding trust..

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Director & Artist Leadership
- Building Knowledge & Training Programs
- Schedule & Budget Management
- Cross-Functional Stakeholder Communication
- Production Pipeline Design
- Experimental Production Methodologies
- GenAI Workflow Assessment & Integration
- Guiding Creative Teams Through Change
- Distributed & Remote Production
- Community and Culture Building

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Senior Character Animator | Duolingo, 2024–2026

- Built structured testing frameworks to evaluate generative AI tools for image, video, and text production against real pipeline conditions rather than controlled demos, distinguishing genuine capability from compelling but unreliable tools
- Documented findings and adoption criteria for team-wide use, translating hands-on tool evaluation into guidance the broader creative organization could act on
- Partnered across creative, engineering, and product teams to determine where GenAI tools created real production value versus new friction

Animation Director | Bento Box Entertainment, 2020–2024

- Directed episodic animated productions for Apple TV+, FOX, Netflix, and Hulu, serving as the trusted hub between creative, technical, and executive stakeholders
- Launched the studio's first animation operation in Melbourne, Australia from the ground up under broadcast deadlines, leading a team through new infrastructure and workflow adoption with no existing playbook
- Introduced predictive scheduling and shot-tracking systems, earning buy-in from production teams by grounding new tools in demonstrated reliability rather than mandate

Associate Chair & Professor of Animation | Savannah College of Art and Design, 2014-2021

- Led operations for SCAD's largest academic department of 1,000+ students, managing faculty, curriculum, and cross-departmental relationships
- Organized industry masterclasses and built sustained convening relationships between the department and working animation and film professionals
- Led curriculum development for the 2D animation concentration and BFA capstone sequence, contributing to a #1 global ranking for the discipline (Rookies Global School Rankings)

Writer, Story Artist, Director, Animator | 2005-2014
Warner Bros. Animation, Disney TVA, Nickelodeon Animation Studios, Cartoon Network Studios

- Contributed to animation production and pipeline execution across major studios, building relationships across departments and production teams

EDUCATION

MFA, Animation and Digital Arts | University of Southern California, School of Cinematic Arts

BFA, Illustration (Magna Cum Laude), Art history Minor | Savannah College of Art and Design

INDUSTRY STANDING & RECOGNITION

Juror: RiverRun International Film Festival (2023)

Finalist: 31st Student Academy Awards, Animation (2003)

Selected Exhibitions:

- Sundance Film Festival (2004)
- Annecy International Animated Film Festival (2004)
- SXSW Film Conference and Festival (2004)
- Ottawa International Student Film Festival (2003)
- Edinburgh International Film Festival (2003)
- SIGGRAPH *Flash Forward* (2008)
- LACMA *Young Director's Night* (2006)
- Los Angeles Film Forum *On The Edge* (2007)

TECHNICAL PROFICIENCY

Generative/Agentic AI: Ideogram, Stable Diffusion, Midjourney, ChatGPT, Claude, Cursor, Replit,

Real-Time Engines: Unreal Engine 5 (Certification from Studio Arts, Los Angeles)

Production: ShotGrid, Cinesync, Syncsketch, BOX, Toon Boom Harmony, Maya, Blender, Adobe Creative Suite