UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Technical Artist IV

Job Code: 165683

Grade: TK
OT Eligible: No
Comp Approval: 9/10/2008

JOB SUMMARY:
Serves as key leader or technical specialist for the creation and development of all art work related to a project(s) including the creative design and technical art approach. Selects, defines and utilizes technical and creative resources to achieve consistency of art throughout the project while meeting all project requirements such as budget, schedule, aesthetic and technical matters. Administers art budget and assigned resources. Researches, conceptualizes, and creates 2D and 3D computer graphic assets using off-the-shelf and/or proprietary software. Provides leadership in forming policies and norms regarding the creation, modification, enhancements, standards and maintenance of art asset pipelines. Creates, describes and maintains newly developed processes. Works directly with engineers, programmers, artists, content designers, and researchers to pioneer, enhance, and advise on technical issues relating to art and to achieve team and project goals, including the integration, definition and meeting of requirements for art assets. Creates and documents guidelines to achieve appropriate balances between technical and aesthetic requirements. Researches and creates advancements in new tools while working towards advancements in art technology as needed and assists with research publications. Provides technical consulting and serves as technical art expert for the team.

JOB ACCOUNTABILITIES:

*E/M/NA % TIME

--- Serves as key leader or technical specialist for the creation and development of all art work related to a project(s). Leads, defines and directs the artistic look of projects including the creative design as well as the technical art approach. Writes art technical design. Coordinates proposal and request for bid documentation, both internal and external.

--- Leads, guides, defines and directs technical and creative artists to achieve consistency of art throughout the project while meeting all project requirements such as budget, schedule, aesthetic and technical matters.

--- Interviews, selects, reviews and evaluates artists for the team. Administers budget and task allocations within the art team, both internal and external. Leads art staff in regards to art asset creation. Reviews work for overall compliance to standards and provides quality assurance and feedback to resources both internal and external.

--- Facilitates and trains technical artists. Consults with and orients research programmers and research scientists about the technical artistic constraints of a project. Writes tutorials as necessary, creates and maintains art pipeline process documentation.

--- Researches and develops cutting edge techniques and art technologies. Advances the state of art through research publication and collaboration. Researches, conceptualizes, and creates 2D and 3D computer graphic assets using off the-shelf and/or proprietary software. Creates and evaluates new technologies.
Models and textures 3D architectural environments such as buildings, settings, terrains, modes of transportation, objects/props, etc., and other art related needs within the aesthetic vision.

Creates and retargets animation for characters, vehicles and props using existing or custom rigs. Creates storyboards to show new concepts. Creates new rigs and defines standards. Consults and trains technical artists, both internal and external to use defined standards.

Constructs environments using mapping, scale, proportion and lighting to complete the artistic goals.

Researches and develops advancements in pipeline techniques. Designs and creates new art tools with programmer assistance. Tests and/or coordinates testing for new tools and/or features. Evaluates, creates instructions and recommends tools for use by the art team.

Analyzes, evaluates and initiates streamline processes and features needed to improve production. Researches, creates and describes newly developed processes. Directs the implementation of processes and trains others to utilize new procedures, as needed.

Creates, modifies, enhances, standardizes, and maintains pipelines for art assets and seeks out inefficiencies and problems. Identifies problems, makes recommendations and/or creates solutions to resolve problems.

Serves as consultant for projects and assigned art teams, especially in regards to the usage of pipeline standards, guidelines, tools and procedures.

Solves pre-production and production issues by applying technical expertise to ensure art assets meet project requirements. Identifies problems in current systems, produces test cases, determines best course of action and implements fixes.

Communicates technical issues to programming staff and facilitates communication between the artists and programmers.

Creates, maintains and implements naming conventions, directory structures and asset management. Documents processes and defines production pipeline standards.

Establishes, builds, and maintains vendor relationships and attends vendor/industry sponsored events to identify and communicate industry trends, features and techniques.

Assists with research publications and serves as the technical art expert for the department.

Stays informed of new developments and technologies by reading journals and other pertinent publications, maintaining contact with vendors, and participating in professional organizations, meetings and seminars.

Performs other related duties as assigned or requested. The university reserves the right to add or change duties at any time.

*Select E (ESSENTIAL), M (MARGINAL) or NA (NON-APPLICABLE) to denote importance of each job function to position.

**EMERGENCY RESPONSE/RECOVERY:**

Essential:  No
In the event of an emergency, the employee holding this position is required to “report to duty” in accordance with the university’s Emergency Operations Plan and/or the employee’s department’s emergency response and/or recovery plans. Familiarity with those plans and regular training to implement those plans is required. During or immediately following an emergency, the employee will be notified to assist in the emergency response efforts, and mobilize other staff members if needed.

**JOB QUALIFICATIONS:**

**Minimum Education:**
- Bachelor’s degree
- Specialized/technical training
- Combined experience/education as substitute for minimum education

**Minimum Experience:**
- 3 years

**Minimum Field of Expertise:**
- Experience and proficiency using off-the-shelf art 2D and 3D development, plus video editing and compositing tools. Strong design knowledge and experience creating art assets that meet and define requirements and production pipelines. Demonstrated ability to define and implement visual styles. Knowledge and a strong understanding of multimedia scripting. Understanding of programming and advanced rendering techniques. In depth knowledge of character/vehicle rigging, skinning and animation. Demonstrated high quality 3D modeling, texturing and understanding of the principles of animation. Demonstrated content and asset management source control. Experience leading a team while creating deliverables, meeting deadlines and budgets, working both independently and with a team. Must be able to meet deadlines and work with minimal direction. Experience as a lead artist on a successful project. Demonstrated proficiency in training others. Must be able to communicate effectively with not only team members, but outside entities as well.

**Preferred Education:**
- Bachelor’s degree in a related discipline

**Preferred Experience:**
- 7 years

**Skills: Other:**
- Analysis
- Assessment/evaluation
- Communication – written and oral skills
- Conceptualization and design
- Consulting
- Graphic design
- Interpretation of policies/analyses/trends/etc.
- Knowledge of applicable laws/policies/principles/etc.
- Lead/guidance Skills
- Organization
- Planning
- Research
- Teaching/training
Skills: Machine/Equipment:
    - Computer network (department or school)
    - Computer network (university)
    - Computer peripheral equipment
    - Fax
    - Personal computer
    - Personal mobile communication devices
    - Photocopier

Supervises: Level:
    - Leads employees performing similar work on a project basis.
    - May oversee student and/or temporary workers.

Comments:
    - Evening or weekend work may be necessary to meet deadlines or solve specific problems.

SIGNATURES:

Employee: ______________________________  Date:____________________________
Supervisor: ___________________________  Date:____________________________

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed. They are not intended to be construed as an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties and skills required of personnel so classified.

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