

Hand your portfolio in to professors Bruce Barnes or Midori Kitagawa or leave it in boxes outside their offices by the end of Wednesday, Feb 23rd, 2005. Include the following information on a cover letter in your portfolio:

- Name
- Email address
- Phone number
- Degree you are working on
- Expected date of graduation
- Professional objectives

If you are allocated a portfolio review time, you will be contacted.  
If you have questions, see Bruce Barnes or Midori Kitagawa during office hours (Barnes 1:00-3:00pm Thursdays, Kitagawa 1:30-3:00pm Wednesdays).

Portfolio can be one (or a combination) of the followings:

- \* Hard copy portfolio with drawings, still images, frames from animations, etc.
- \* A demo reel on VHS tape. Tape should be cued. No more than 3 minutes. The best work first.
- \* CD/DVD. Should have some kind of interface that guides reviewers, or should linearly play itself (i.e., Don't expect reviewers to open all the folders and files, hunting for your works.) Do not expect reviewers to download applications that are required to review your portfolio either. It is best if your CD/DVD is playable on both the PC/Mac platforms, but if you don't know how to create such a CD/DVD, make a note that tells reviewers on which platform your portfolio can be reviewed.

The followings are additional tips on portfolio preparations, not just for this occasion but for other job/school applications as well.

- \* Be selective. Reviewers have hair triggers and are often looking for any reason to slap the book shut and get through the stacks before go home. Don't give them a reason to reject yours. Include only the best of your best. If it's iffy or something doesn't seem quite right, leave it out. Do not put everything that you have created on a CD or DVD, just because there is enough space for it. Quality matters but not quantity. Leave reviewers wanting to see more. If you have long animations, make a compilation of the excerpts that are the best parts from your animations.
- \* Label your portfolio. Companies and schools receive a large number of portfolios. Your cover letter and work may be separated and scattered as people show this and that to others. They may forget who and where it came from. Put your contact information on your portfolio and on the back of each and every piece you submit. Make sure to put your name on your tape/CD/DVD as well as their boxes.
- \* Best work first. Make reviewers want to see what's next. Make them want to see more. Again many places review a large number of portfolios. If the first few seconds of your demo reel does not catch reviewers eyes, they may stop reviewing your demo reel before it ever

gets to "the good stuff". Put "the director's cut" at the end of your reel. If they liked the clips enough they may be willing to see what they came from. They have a lot of work to review. No one wants, or is willing, to sit through a 5 or 10 minute piece, looking for what they want to see. Show them in 2 or 3 second clips. That also will win you bonus points for being a thoughtful, professional-style submitter.

\* Make a clean and simple package. No bells or whistles. Since you are not applying for a graphics designer position, the design of your portfolio does not have to be super duper. Make it clean and simple. Let your work do the talking. Reviewers generally believe that the more flashy the packaging is the more the submitter is trying to compensate for weak work. If you want to be a professional, make it look like the packaged work of a professional.

\* Include a breakdown guide. Your breakdown guide should describe each project on your demo reel briefly and your "role" on each project. Don't make them guess what you did or did not do. Also never try to get credit for something you didn't do. Your friend may apply to the same companies that you do. It has happened.

\* Identify your strength and focus on it. If you are good at modeling and want to work for a production (game) company as a modeler, your demo reel does not have to have animation. It can be a collection of still images of your 3D models and/or simple animations of your models on a turn table. If you are good at lighting, your portfolio can be a collection of high resolution prints of your works that demonstrate your lighting skills. A good plan is to show a realistic space under a variety of lighting conditions, such as day, night, twilight, dawn, interior light sources, and exterior light sources. No one really knows what dawn on Planet X looks like but we all can recognize the morning sun coming through the dining room window. Also, where appropriate, use shadows to create mood and/or help sculpt your objects.

\* Showcase your technical skills and creative talents. Between two of us, we have almost 20 years of experience teaching animation and many of our former students have gone to production companies, such as Pixar, Disney, Rhythm and Hues, PDI, Blue Skies as well as a variety of game houses and academic places. With our past experience we can tell you that companies and schools look for technical skills and artistic abilities in portfolios. Pixar already has people who make Pixar style animations. They must be sick of seeing copies of Luxor Jr. and Nimo in applicants' demo reels. Production companies want to find people who have unique talents that add something new to their production teams. They don't want to hire copycats or software operators who know how to use certain software packages well but have no creativity or artistic skills.