

Jordan Kulm

VFX Director

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Summary

Passionate and technically-minded VFX Director with over 10 years of professional experience in creating, managing, directing, and educating art and technical skills from commercials to AAA video games. Proven track record with dozens of shipped titles and a legacy of artists mentored and given their foundation in the discipline. Ensured the quality and performance of hundreds of assets in games such as Borderlands 4 and Halo Infinite.

Professional Experience

VFX Director 2017 – 2025 | Portland, Oregon
Liquid Development

- **Department Leadership & Mentorship:** Built, scaled, and directed a multi-regional VFX department from the ground up. Conducted 1:1 mentorship, performance evaluations, and structured education paths for 12+ artists, successfully elevating junior talent into senior, lead, and director roles.
- **Pipeline & Optimization:** Architected technical workflows and optimization strategies from DCC (Houdini, Maya) to engine (UE5, Unity), enforcing strict performance budgets for overdraw, shader complexity, and memory profiling across multiple platforms.
- **Technical Art Execution:** Executed hands-on real-time simulation, linear algebra applications, node-based shaders, and scripting to deliver hundreds of high-fidelity assets for AAA titles.
- **Key Shipped Titles:** *Borderlands 4*, *Halo Infinite*, and *The Walking Dead: Saints & Sinners - Chapter 2: Retribution*.

Technical Director 2016 – 2017 | Portland, Oregon
Refuge VFX

- **Simulations & Lighting:** Created dynamic gore, fire, smoke, dirt, glass, cloth, and rag-doll simulations for broadcast television (*Grimm*) and independent film (*The Monster Project*).
- **Compositing Prep:** Handled character and asset lighting to seamlessly match live-action footage, configuring multi-pass rendering pipelines for compositing teams.

Technical Director 2015 | Portland, Oregon
Bent Image Lab

- **Commercial VFX:** Created small-to-large-scale fluid simulations for international commercial campaigns, alongside end-to-end 3D generalist execution (modeling, animation, lighting, texturing, and rendering).

Technical Director 2015 | Portland, Oregon
Deep Sky Studios

- **Pipeline & Particle Systems:** Produced fluid and particle simulations for commercial product demonstrations while actively assisting with scripting, rendering, and fluid pipeline integration.

Education

Bachelor of Fine Arts in Visual Effects and Motion Graphics 2011 – 2015 | Portland, Oregon
The Art Institute of Portland

Skills

Unreal Engine / Unity / Proprietary Engines

Scripting / Basic Programming

C#, Python, MEL, VEX, Blueprint

Particle Systems

Niagara, Cascade, Shuriken, VFX Graph

Shaders

Node based, HLSL/GLSL

Simulation

Houdini, Embergen, Fluid Ninja

Modeling

Houdini, Blender, Maya, 3ds Max

Texturing

Photoshop, Substance Designer/Painter

Art Direction

Mood boards, reference, feedback, paint overs, hands-on direction

Technical Art

Pipeline development, tools, documentation

Source Control

Perforce, Git, SCM

Pipeline Development

Workflow and technical process from DCC to engine to ship

Performance Optimization

Particle, overdraw, and shader complexity reduction per platform profiling data

Mentorship & Coaching

Structured education paths, guidance, and constructive feedback