

INTERVIEWS

Interview with Jeremy Stewart Co-Founder, CCO ANIMISM STUDIOS -Vancouver

PRABU DECEMBER 7, 2020



Vfxexpress- can you introduce yourself and tell me a bit about how you started in visual effects?

Jeremy Stewart – The very beginning? When I was a little kid, I always liked drawing and comics. I had stacks and stacks of Mad magazines (some of them now decorate my office wall). However, as I got into my teen years I put art and drawing on pause because I didn't think I could make a career out of it. It wasn't until a few years after high school that I picked up my pencils and started drawing again. Around that same time, my friend showed me some of the 3D animations he was working on.

This blew my mind and inspired me to take some part-time courses, build up a portfolio, and eventually go to film school for 3D animation & VFX. At the time (the late '90's) courses weren't very focused. We were taught a little bit of everything, I felt the animation was my strength so I decided to focus on that. Shortly after graduating, I got my first job animating on a cartoon as most junior artists do.

I love all animation, but to be honest, I don't really watch a lot of children's films, so it wasn't really a decision. I just naturally gravitated to VFX and away from cartoons and animated features.

Don't get me wrong, many of my favorite movies are animated, I just have more of a passion for VFX work. I love the whole process of animating and creating creatures. Especially the prep work, finding references, studying anatomy, learning about their behavior, and evolution. And when it's an imaginary creature that's even better, you get to study several creatures and combine that knowledge to produce something that people believe is a real living thing.

Vfxexpress- how was your beginning? Challenges you faced – what made you start up a VFX house? What was your motivation?

Jeremy Stewart -Starting a VFX company is not easy, so it's a good thing I did not try to do it on my own. Each of the co-founders has brought their unique strengths to build Animism Studios to what it is today; A full-service



We have and will continue to face a lot of challenges. All of us have had to learn new skills and do jobs we wouldn't have to do if we were working for a studio.

Before co-founding Animism I really enjoyed supervising and working at big companies. It wasn't easy for me to walk away from my last job: the big films, the perks, and the great people. However I like new challenges and co-founding a company was a challenge I could not refuse. Being an owner doesn't mean you get to do whatever you want. It means doing what needs to be done for the benefit of the company, not yourself. There are a lot of mundane, thankless tasks that come with the job. Despite all that, I find a lot of satisfaction in overcoming the daily challenges that come with the job.

Vfxexpress- tell me about your company?

Jeremy Stewart -We're based in Vancouver (my home town) and we're a full-service VFX studio working on a wide range of projects, mostly Film and episodic. The other founders and I all come from a VFX animation background, so naturally, our focus leans more towards animated creatures.

Vfxexpress- any memorable shows you wish to share your experiences?

Jeremy Stewart -We've worked on a lot of great projects at Animism Studios. The Werewolves our team made for The Order: *Season II* is horrifically beautiful. We won an award for our work on Childs play, and we've recently ventured into Virtual Production.



The Order: *Season II*



ANIMISM STUDIOS won an award for our work on Childs play

A personal career highlight for me was working on Victoria the T. rex. This wasn't a prestigious feature film with famous actors, Victoria the T. rex is a museum exhibit featuring one of the most complete Tyrannosaurus fossils ever discovered. Not your typical VFX project,

we produced a film for the exhibit that tells the story of Victoria's life, death, and discovery. As well as the CG scenes that play throughout the exhibits "digital diorama".

A recreation of the cretaceous forests that the T. rex once roamed, brought to life with our digital set extensions giving viewers the feeling they are a few meters away from a living T. rex. We were responsible for producing



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As the Creative and Animation Director for this project I had to wear many hats and it was a huge challenge, but totally worth it. The team did amazing work, clients (and audiences) loved it, and we've picked up 3 awards for it so far.

ANIMISM STUDIOS -Recently ventured into Virtual Production.



Vfxexpress- These days health has become an issue for artists, what are the programs related to health and care are provided to the artists?

Jeremy Stewart -We take the health and welfare of our crew very seriously at Animism Studios. Almost all our crew is working remotely and safely at home. When it comes to improving employees' health and wellbeing many studios neglect the simplest solution. Avoiding overtime and working normal hours! We do everything we can to avoid or reduce overtime hours.

Vfxexpress- what do you expect from artists?

Jeremy Stewart -I expect artists to try their best and focus on solutions. Not everyone has the same level of talent or experience, but everyone does have the ability to put in their best effort.

Everyone is also capable of adopting a solutions-oriented attitude. Creative work is very tough because everyone sees the world differently, everyone has different perspectives on how a shot should look, and how it should be done. Then add to that all the other problems that come with every production.

I find working with people who choose to focus on solutions makes the job so much easier and enjoyable. I can say from my own experience dwelling on problems just creates more problems, and we already have enough of those.

Vfxexpress plans for the future?

Jeremy Stewart ..uh ask me in 2021 😊 Seriously though, now that the company is running smoothly I'd like to spend a bit more time with my family, maybe even sneak away for another motorcycle road trip.

Vfxexpress- How can one apply in your company

Jeremy Stewart -Visit our website. Or better yet follow us on LinkedIn for the latest news and job postings.
<https://www.linkedin.com/company/animism-studios/>

We're on instagram too: @animismstudios



Animism Studios Reel

2019 studio reel
 from Animism Studios



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Vfxexpress- any advice for artists and production?

Jeremy Stewart -As I mentioned earlier, focus on finding solutions with the whole production in mind. VFX and filmmaking is a team sport so we all have to work together to do what is best for the production, not just the artist or department.

If any of your readers need advice on something specific feel free send me a direct message on LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jeremystewart/>

Vfxexpress- Ritto prabu – Thank you Jeremy Stewart For sharing all

Jeremy Stewart- Thank you Ritto prabu

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