

PROFILE

Greg is an experienced and innovative conceptual, character, mechanical, industrial and visual effects designer. He has an eclectic background in zoology and industrial design, illustration, puppetry, writing, story telling, historic research, engineering and performance. He initiates projects and produces vfx for Film and TV.

Greg's expertise makes possible the impossible .

He has travelled through 40 countries, designs and flies aircraft for recreation, scuba dives, photographs wild animals and documents oral history.

Greg has:

Supervised VFX and animation directed the theatrically released feature film documentary "Turtle the incredible journey", working with Wildthings partner Alister Ferguson in the official roles of Visual effects supervisors.

Supervised VFX for longline, driftnet & Shark finning sequences for the Disney-Nature/Galatee "Oceans" feature film, in the official role of Creature effects supervisor.

Supervised VFX for the BBC "Saved by dolphins" documentary which recreates genuine cases of Dolphins saving humans from shark attack.

Researched, appeared in, conducted interviews and produced VFX for the award winning documentary "Killers in Eden".

www.killersofeden.com

Greg Conceived, story boarded and developed the Orca attack scene for "Happy Feet" and choreographed huge crowds of thousands of penguins for major dramatic and dance sequences.

Greg created Visual effects and performed characters for other Film and TV projects including:

Babe 2 Pig in the City.

The Matrix.

Farscape.(TV series)

Peter Pan

Happy Feet

Racing Stripes

George of the Jungle2

Nim's Island

Starwars ep.III Revenge of the Sith

Babe: the gallant Pig

Paradise Lost

Mad Max Fury Road

Unbroken

1990-1995 Co-Founder and Director of Robotechnology pty. ltd.

Design and construction of 11 Oscar winning lip-synching animatronic characters for "Babe".

Free swimming animatronic sharks for Jackie Chan

Full size 38-ft ocean going submersible humpback whale for "ocean Girl" series.

1989: Design and construction of contract winning character and 100+ characters for Warner Bros. Movie World.

1987: Exhibition designer for Bicentennial First State 88 and Expo-88

Writer and Illustrator of Children's book: "Echidna Airways: The Great Wungle Bungle Aerial Expedition".

1980: Australian design award for creation of world's fastest production planing-hull sailing catamaran.

Design of step-hull catamarans and sailboards.

Greg works with such companies as Kennedy Miller Mitchel, LucasFilm, ILM, Dave Elsey, J.C.C.W, M.E.G, ABC natural history unit, Jim Henson Co., Animal Logic. Big Wave, BBC, Galatee.

Specialties

Project management, innovative conceptual and industrial design, bio-mechanical engineering. In depth Motion analysis, biological and mechanical. Zoological knowledge. Historical research. Marine engineering/fluid dynamics. Manufacture of robotic duplicates of living organisms. Story invention, Performance and puppetry. Design of control systems for animatronics. VFX supervision, 3D animation, sculpting, texturing compositing and editing.

Greg has extensive practical mechanical/materials experience and skills of Mig and Tig welding, machining, lathe (metal and wood) fibreglassing, all powertools processes, spray painting, airbrushing and using incredibly diverse materials from carbon fibre composites, stainless steel, silicone and urethane elastomers, stretch fabrics and artificial nylon furs to bones and feathers.

Experience

“SciFi Volume1” 2015

Motion Pictures and Film industry

For this film still in post production I created a number of expressive alien/monster heads and claws as as part of a group of monster suits with monstrous mechanised claws for an up and coming Australian genre -Movie production company under director Shane Abbess,

The creatures had full facial expression animatronics, and jaw, eyes, brows and working lips and tongue and full head articulation , all worn off a lightweight backpack by performance artists.

Dubai Govt World Expo Film “Family Tree” 2015 Milan

Motion Pictures and Film industry

Working as co-VFX supervisor and lead animator with Colleague Al Ferguson from my Wildthingscreative partnership , I supervised VFX on location in the Liwa Desert in Dubai then worked largely from a laptop to previs then final animate photorealistic Arabian Wolves plus skyscrapers erupting from the desert sands

“Unbroken” 2013-2014

Motion Pictures and Film industry

Fulfilling a requirement for recreations of desperate survival onboard a WW2 life raft I pitched for and secured the creation of lifelike marine creatures working with regular collaborator Paul Trefry for Angelina Jolie’s film “Unbroken”.

We build realistic free-swimming replicas of blue sharks that could circle the film's stars in their lifeboat under their own power and could struggle realistically when dragged aboard.

We also built a fully realistic flapping Albatross that was able to interact and violently struggle with the desperately hungry cast.

Qantas "Curiosity" Mars rover replica

Motion Pictures and Film industry

2013 /2014

For the Qantas frequent flyer loyalty rewards program I designed the electronic control and drive system for a 75% scale working replica of the NASA mars rover curiosity. With 4wheel drive and 4 wheel steering and fully articulated 6 wheel suspension our motorised replica had remarkable off-road ability, effortlessly scaling difficult terrain in outback Australia near Coober Pedy and climbing snowy and rocky landscapes in New Zealand's Queenstown.

Senior Special Effects Technician

Mad Max 4 "Fury Road"

Motion Pictures and Film industry

2010-2013

Drawing on my vast experience of engineering and control systems, I modified massive supercharged post-apocalypse road-train vehicles to blast across the desert under full radio-control and not have a single human onboard, creating the potential for spectacular kinetic and pyrotechnic stunts with zero danger to stuntmen. Truck trailers were also modified to do the same and other forms of remote controlled full size motorised vehicles are presently still in private development. I drove all remote control vehicles for the film including the largest pyrotechnic truck explosion featured in the film's trailer

I also created numerous remotely controlled instrument gauges and machine gun shell ejector rigs, turbine blower rigs etc.

Flight Animation Supervisor

Paradise Lost

Motion Pictures and Film industry

2011

Invited by Owen Patterson to join the concept design team to work on Alex Proyas' ambitious digital take on Milton's classic poem of Lucifer's fall, I drew on my expertise of flight physics and flying animal physiology to be angel flight/wing animation supervisor aka "wing commander". Generating numerous concepts for wing configurations of angels and other heavenly beings, I modeled and rigged multi-wing animation concepts in maya and animated them in tests of flight cycles, combat, hypersonic and faster than light poses and relaxed-folded configurations. These were also rendered in metallic armored and translucent iridescent display versions for characters like Lucifer who has six pairs of wings to the simple virtues who have a single pair. I also worked on animated visualisations of the planetary scale birth of angels and visualisations of the birth of the universe at the subatomic quark level through to the formation of DNA and large scale planetary structures.

VFX supervision, animation direction for “Turtle the Lost Years”

Gulliver productions.

Motion Pictures and Film industry

2009

VFX Supervision , animation and compositing for Gulliver productions wildlife documentary Building on our previous VFX supervision work on “Turtle the incredible journey”, Greg and Alister created multiple retextured versions of Australian loggerhead turtles and animated and composited numerous photo-real shots of 3D turtles, indistinguishable from real wildlife footage.

VFX supervisor, Animation director for "Turtle the incredible journey"

Feature release documentary

BigWave productions UK

Motion Pictures and Film industry

2008-2009

VFX Supervisor

"Turtle: the incredible journey" feature release documentary

Motion Pictures and Film industry

Myself & Alister Ferguson supervised the VFX for the feature release documentary, "Turtle: the incredible journey", for the documentary production company Big Wave, UK.

Uniquely we produced vfx footage of 3D “wild animals” that was so realistic that even world expert zoologists specialising in sharks and turtles had no idea they were watching vfx.

Besides final modeling and texturing and animation of three photorealistic 3D hero turtle characters indistinguishable in every way from real turtles, I modeled textured and animated blue sharks and composited and supervised almost 100 photorealistic documentary realismshots

http://www.mckeewildthings.com/Video/Loggerhead/turtle_vfx_h.264.mov

Creature VFX supervisor

Walt Disney-Nature / Galatee "Oceans" feature film

2008 – 2008

I directed and supervised two companies and a team of artists to produce realistic full scale location marine creature effects for drift net, long-lining and shark finning sequences in this magnificent film. The photorealistic creatures operated in open ocean off the Goldcoast included a full size sperm whale calf, broadbill swordfish, californian sea-lion, loggerhead turtle, eagle ray, blue-sharks and finned sharks

Our creatures were indistinguishable from the real thing.

<http://www.apple.com/trailers/disney/oceans/>

VFX supervisor

"Saved by Dolphins" BBC documentary

Motion Pictures and Film industry

2007

Contacted by the BBC and Bigwave productions on the recommendation of the ABC natural history unit, Wildthings was asked to supervise more than 3 minutes of photorealistic 3D animation of Bottlenose dolphins, Great White and Mako sharks in recreations of genuine cases of dolphins saving human lives from shark attacks, 3D dolphins and sharks were animated swimming next to real dolphins and humans in the same shots and prove to be indistinguishable from real dolphins to even expert observers.

I modeled and textured all creatures and manually tracked and animated every single shot, then shared compositing duties with colleague Alister Ferguson

Animatronic Creature creator

“Nim’s Island” feature film

Motion Pictures and Film industry

2006

For this production working with John Cox I built a fully self-contained self-propelled animatronic crawling Green sea turtle and numerous self propelled animatronic turtle hatchlings

Concept / Previz artist for Orca Scene "Happy Feet". Crowd TD Animal Logic / Kennedy Miller Mitchel

Motion Pictures and Film industry

February 2005 – August 2006

Invited by the producer Doug Mitchel to join the production based on my Orca expertise, I was required to fill in a major gap in the Happy Feet film script, and conceive, draw story boards and then previsualise a major action sequence in Maya. Initial story boards for presentation were scanned and edited in Final Cut Pro on my laptop. Working with director George Miller I developed the storyboards and concepts further and prevized the sequence in Maya. We also discussed and developed dialog concepts for the sequence which were then adapted and ad-libbed to by Robin Williams and Elijah Wood in LA. I also participated in story hub meetings which influenced the overall narrative structure of the film.

Using A.L.'s "plague" software, and working with Crowd supervisor Greg Van Borssum I orchestrated and composited crowd mid and fore ground elements for numerous dramatic pivotal scenes, including the complex Boogie Wonderland dance , exile and return sequences

VFX supervisor / Historian / Researcher "Killers in Eden" ABC Natural History unit Doco

Motion Pictures and Film industry

2004 – 2005

A product of 15+years of my own research, this was a documentary I developed with Klaus Toft from the ABC natural history unit. Incorporating video interviews I had conducted with eyewitnesses to whaling in Eden in the 1920s, Klaus and I orchestrated period costume re-enactments of whaling using replica whaleboats at the original location in Eden . I manufactured a full size animatronic killer Whale "Old Tom" for use in the sequences and with Colleague Alister Ferguson, I assembled and directed a small team to produce over 3 minutes of photorealistic computer animated humpbacks, right whales and killer whales in mortal conflict. I also starred in the documentary as I am the worlds' leading authority on the subject. My website for the story is www.killerofeden.com

Creature designer/fabrication/texture artist "Farscape Peacekeeper Wars" Jim Henson Productions

Motion Pictures and Film industry

2005

A continuation of earlier work on the Farscape TV series. I collaborated with my colleague Dave Elsey to create and produce Alien "Guest villains" and bizarre period props for a spin-off of the lunatic sci-fi tv series. We trained and supervised costume actors, performers and voice-over artists.

Creature control system designer/animatronics/performer
“StarWars Episode III” Revenge of the Sith -LucasFilm

Motion Pictures and Film industry

2004 – 2005

I was invited by Lucasfilm and colleague Dave Elsey to develop a new computer control system to operate live action alien characters. This entailed working with the production’s dialogue coach and supervising and recording voice talent and then programming lip synch movements of animatronic heads to be worn by suit performers playing Nute Gunray and other trade federation aliens

I also built animatronic lip synching heads for “Mon Calimari” alien senator characters.

Responsibilities also included remotely performing the “face acting” of the alien characters live on set and ad-libbing interactions with Ewan McGregor, Natalie Portman, Samuel L Jackson and Ian McDiarmid. I also created a photorealistic mechanical stunt duplicate of Ewan McGregor and coached a team of surprisingly shy 7 foot tall Basket-ballers to find their inner “Wookiee” and act like hairy simian warriors

Creature control system designer/performer

“Peter Pan” Sony/Revolution pictures Industrial light and magic

Motion Pictures and Film industry

2002

Employed by Industrial Light and Magic, working with John Cox this entailed spending weeks aboard Cap’n Hook’s pirate ship and dining with pirates, red Indians and fairies. It also involved building and performing a massive Robotic Hydraulic crocodile, artificial Dog and animatronic/rod puppet pirate parrot, rehearsing with Ludivine Sagnier, Jason Isaacs and Richard Briers and improvising on set.

I introduced Pioneering voodoo control and deliberately imprecise positional feedback systems for hydraulics of the giant crocodile, laying the foundation for the technology of the “Walking with dinosaurs stage show”.

My facial voodoo system controlled the expressive crocodile face and also was used for the diseased pirate parrot which I also puppeteered

Control system designer/creature creator/lipsynch/facial performer

“George of The Jungle 2”

Walt Disney productions

Motion Pictures and Film industry

2001

This Walt Disney Picture, working with John Cox involved building numerous Gorilla characters and performing facial expressions and pre-programming lip synch for the main Gorilla Character “Ape” voiced by John Cleese. It also involved training numerous suit performers and training facial expression puppeteers. All prerecorded audio tracks and dialogue had to be packaged and cued on set in “conversation” with the actors

Creature effects creator/performer
“Farscape” Television series

Jim Henson Productions

Motion Pictures and Film industry

1999-2001

This involved numerous seasons of work in a creative team conceiving, designing, building and operating a bewildering variety of alien creatures and weird props. Working at a break-neck pace for a number of years, we conceived and created imaginative and twisted film quality characters on a TV budget and then suggested ways they could be incorporated into the series plotlines

Concept designer/physics-science advisor

“Red Planet”

Warner Bros

Motion Pictures and Film industry

2000

Invited to the project as a science advisor and advanced technology expert to advise the director and Art department on space travel physics and microgravity phenomena, I also developed concepts for Aimee the military robot.

Creature effects designer

“The Matrix”

Motion Pictures and Film industry

1999

Working with colleagues from MEG, this involved designing and building creepy organic props, including a photo-realistic breathing and struggling replica of Keanu Reeves who has an organic squid-like probe crawl into his belly button.

Creature effects designer

“Babe Pig in the City”

Motion Pictures and Film industry

1997-1998

Working for Kennedy Miller, this involved studying real animals to be used in the film and creating photorealistic animatronic animal duplicates to perform on set.

The only Australian animatronics designer asked to work on the sequel, I pioneered new techniques in making photorealistic feathered talking birds and numerous other photorealistic animatronic animal duplicates

Creature effects designer

Tv Adverts M.E.G.

Motion Pictures and Film industry

1994-2000

Working with M.E.G. I produced creature VFX for numerous television adverts, including the award winning Sony “fishing” Dragonfly advert, Duracel Bunnies, Smith’s Gobbledok, Bund-berg rum polar bears, Caltex “Birds” etc etc

Creature effects designer
Jackie Chan's "First Strike" Golden Harvest Pictures
Robotechnology & John Cox

Motion Pictures and Film industry

1996

Making designing controls and operating free swimming great white & grey nurse sharks , at a time when a world's leading robotics expert Michael S. Triantafyllou, stated "Replicating the performance of a fish by merely imitating its form and function would be impossible, because a smoothly and continuously flexing vehicle, with a fishlike body, is beyond the state of the art of today's robotics. "

Creature effects supervisor
"Babe The Gallant Pig" Kennedy Miller / Robotechnology

Motion Pictures and Film industry

1994

This was the first high profile success for my company Robotechnology. Besides quoting, writing the initial contracts, designing, prototyping and project managing the construction of numerous photorealistic robotic animals, I also wrote the visual effects technical submission paper to the academy of motion picture arts and sciences and spectacularly we won the visual effects Oscar.

Senior Director, Co-founder
Robotechnology Pty Ltd

1990 – 1995

Co-Founder and Director of Robotechnology Pty Ltd. Responsible for contract bidding, project management and design and manufacture of visual and mechanical effects for numerous film, television and exhibition projects including the design and construction of 11 lipsynching animatronic characters for "Babe".

Work resulted in academy award for visual effects.

Remarkable high performance prototypes included free swimming animatronic sharks for Jackie Chan, and a full size yet low budget 38ft ocean going submersible humpback whale for "ocean Girl" tv series.

Animatronics Creative supervisor
Sally Animatronics

1989 – 1990

For Warner Brother Movie world, Greg and colleagues Matt Ward, Chris Chitty and John Cox built a demonstration Bugs Bunny that won the multi million dollar animatronics contract for the entire park.

I supervised construction and artistic finish of literally hundreds of Animatronic Looney Tunes and Gremlins characters. The Looney Tunes characters have operated for two decades

Exhibition designer / Conceptual illustrator

Desmond Freeman associates FS88 & Expo 88

1987 – 1989

For the official NSW Bicentennial First-State88 exhibition , I conceived and designed a series of whimsical 3metre long home-made flying machines, piloted by an assortment of animatronic humans, marsupials, reptiles and farmyard animals.

The flying machines & characters were the single most popular aspect of the exhibition which was seen by over 2million visitors in 6months. I developed my concept drawings into an award winning Children's Book, "Echidna Airways: The Great Wungle Bungle Aerial Expedition" which has had more than 4 reprints and has been exhibited in Art museums all over the world with the James Hardie foundation's treasury of Australian Children's classics.

I also designed major sections of various pavilions for Expo88 in Brisbane

Education

University of Sydney

Zoological science faculty

1981-1983

University of Technology, Sydney

Ba, [Industrial Design](#)

1983 – 1986

Extreme sports design

1981

Australian Design award for "Itza cat" worlds fastest sailing catamaran under 20ft long. Whilst still at high school I developed with friend Alex Cirrigottis the planing hydroplane hulled "Itzacat". We manufactured and sold these all over the world and won numerous design awards, including the Australian Design award.

I also pioneered hydrofoil borne and step hull catamarans and sailboards.

Growing up as water skiers, my brother and I prototyped and developed the wake boarding concept, with my brother setting up a company manufacturing the world's first production wake-board: the "McSki " and "SSS skiboard" and "wakesnake". The brainchild of myself and brother Bruce is now one of the biggest water sports in the world.

In 1986 my Industrial Design final year major project, a head-up display computerised and data logging Scuba diving mask was adopted by the Tabata Tusa dive equipment company.

The prototype headup display mask was toured in Scuba dive equipment dive trade shows around the world in official Tabata/Tusa displays as "conceptual product" .