

# Diana Donado Bornacelli

Animation Direction | Gameplay & Cinematic Direction | Technical Animation /Art

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## Professional Summary

Animation Director with 15+ years of AAA experience leading gameplay and cinematic animation across both creative and technical domains. Scales from department direction to hands-on implementation as production requires — defining animation vision, building teams and pipelines, or directly prototyping and integrating gameplay systems in-engine.

Collaborates closely with design and engineering from early feature development through runtime integration, translating animation intent into responsive, player-readable gameplay. Equally comfortable directing mocap and mentoring teams, or stepping into asset creation, system setup, debugging, and implementation to support milestone delivery.

## Key Skills

- Cross-Discipline Collaboration between Animation, Design, and Engineering
- Pipeline Optimization & Delivery Consistency
- Gameplay Readability & Player Feedback Focus
- In-Engine Troubleshooting to Support Milestone Delivery
- Animation–Gameplay–Cinematic Continuity
- Scalable Workflow & Documentation Practices
- Feature Ownership from Prototype to Implementation
- Balances cinematic performance with gameplay responsiveness without loss of player readability.
- Mentorship & Team Development

## Professional Experience

### Consulting Animation Director / Animator & Technical Animator

*Inevitable Studios* | July 2025 – Present | Remote

- Directed gameplay and cinematic animation for *Always in Mind*, balancing expressive acting with responsive gameplay timing.
- Prototyped locomotion and gameplay animation systems in Unity using state machines, blend trees, and procedural layers.
- Collaborated with engineering and design to integrate animation logic early in feature development.
- Mentored animators on system-driven animation, style consistency, and technical implementation.

### Animation Director (Consulting)

*Saber Interactive / Mad Head Games* | June 2024 – Dec 2024 | Remote

- Directed the animation vision for an *unannounced* AAA title focused on clarity, impact, and player feedback.
- Defined animation guidelines, documentation standards, and review processes across gameplay and cinematics.
- Partnered with engineers to implement gameplay animation systems in Unreal Engine 5, including Animation Blueprints, state machines, and runtime logic.

### Head of Animation / Animation Director

*2K Global Services – IR* | June 2023 – Dec 2024 | Ireland

- Built and led a new global animation department supporting multiple AAA titles, including *Bioshock*.
- Defined scalable animation pipelines supporting locomotion frameworks, blend spaces, and state machine-driven gameplay systems.
- Directed teams across mocap, gameplay animation, technical animation, and cinematic storytelling.
- Mentored senior and junior animators, improving team performance and consistency.

### Animation & Cinematic Director

*Splash Damage* | June 2022 – June 2023 | UK

- Oversaw gameplay, combat and cinematic animation pipelines for *Transformers: Reactivate*.
- Partnered with engineers to implement new gameplay animation systems and tools in Unreal (UE5).
- Directed motion capture performance, ensuring emotional cohesion between storytelling and gameplay.

### Head of Animation Department / Animation Director

*Starbreeze Studios* | September 2020 – October 2022 | Sweden

- Directed gameplay animation for the *Payday* franchise, focusing on first-person locomotion systems and systemic runtime behaviours.
- Built internal mocap capabilities and streamlined production pipelines across departments.
- Introduced clear documentation and onboarding systems that increased delivery speed and quality.

## Head of Animation Production / Production Director

*Epic Animation (Cubic Motion) | August 2019 – May 2020 | UK*

- Led gameplay and cinematic animation delivery, collaborating with technical teams on runtime integration and animation system implementation for *Spiderman: Miles Morales*, *Ratchet & Clank*, and *Little Hope...*
- Managed a 55+- person studio, coordinating animation, tech, tools, and pipeline teams.
- Drove R&D efforts during the Epic Games acquisition, improving workflows and facial-animation processes.

## Head of Animation / Animation Director

*Rebellion Development | October 2018 – September 2019 | UK*

- Directed animation for *Zombie Army 4*, *Sniper Elite 5*, and *Evil Genius 2*.
- Established mocap, VO, and cinematic pipelines, ensuring continuity across storytelling and gameplay.
- Set clear style guides and documentation for gameplay readability and character performance.

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## Earlier Career (Condensed)

### Cinematics Lead & Senior Producer

*Asobo Studio / Microsoft / Remedy | 2015 – 2016 | France*

- Directed cinematic animation, VFX collaboration, and mocap/VO shoots on *Quantum Break* and AR project *Fragments*.
- Ensured animation continuity between real-time gameplay and in-engine cinematic systems through runtime integration.

### Lead Animator / Associate Producer

*Ubisoft | 2012/2015 | France*

- Directed gameplay animation and collaborated with design/programming on responsiveness and readability on *Rabbids Land* and *unannounced projects*.
- Created asset conventions and early production pipelines

**Senior Producer / Cinematic Lead / Game Product Manager / Producer** – *Dead Island 2*, *The Chainsmokers VR*, *VRally 4* (Sumo Digital, Kuju, Kylotonn), *Bulkypix*: Oversaw publishing strategies for mobile/handheld titles

**10+ years in film/TV animation & VFX** before transitioning fully into games

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## Selected Projects

- **AAA:** *Bioshock*, *Transformers*, *Payday*, *Spiderman: Miles Morales*, *Ratchet & Clank*, *Quantum Break*, *Zombie Army 4*, *Evil Genius 2*, *Dead Island 2*, *Sniper Elite 5*, *Le Cri*, *VRally 4...*
- **VR/AR:** *Chainsmokers: Paris VR*, *Fragments (AR)*, *Marvel Disney Season*, *Ymagis*, *Desperado VR*
- **Stylized/Family:** *Rabbids Land*, *Pix'n Love Rush*, *Burn It All...*

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## Education & Certifications

**MBA, Specialized in Film and Video Game Management**- IIM Digital School

**Master Degree in Animation, Filmmaking & VFX** - EICAR Film School

**Certified Technical Animator/Artist Program** — *In Progress (Expected Completion 2026)*

**Advanced Animation & VFX Courses** - Animation Mentor

**Technical Training:** Python for VFX and Animation in Maya, Character Rigging, Mechanical Rigging & Facial Rigging- CGMA

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## Technical Skills

**Gameplay Animation & Systems:** Gameplay Animation Systems, Locomotion Frameworks, State Machines, Blend Spaces, Motion Matching, Procedural Animation, Animation Blueprints, Runtime Integration

**Technical Animation Implementation:** Control Rig, Blueprint Logic, In-Engine Prototyping, Animation System Setup, Debugging

**Engines:** Unreal Engine 4/5, Unity, Sequencer

**DCC & Scripting:** Maya, MotionBuilder, 3DS Max, ZBrush, Nuke, Python (Maya/VFX)

**Pipelines & Production Tools:** ShotGrid, Perforce, Jira, Trello, Hansoft, Documentation Systems, Pipeline Design, Workflow Automation

**Continuing formal technical animation training to deepen procedural workflows and runtime systems integration**

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## Languages & Interests

**Languages:** English, French, Spanish – Fluent

**Women in Games Ambassador | Grads in Games Mentor**

Stop-motion, 2D animation, photography, indie film creation