

Michelle Gao

Senior Lighting Artist
Lighting Supervisor

Michelle Gao

Burnaby, BC Canada

<https://michellegao.com>

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Skills

Specialist in Lighting, Shading, and Compositing with a deep technical foundation in Katana, Houdini, Maya, and Nuke. I am proficient in Linux-based environments and dedicated to workflow optimization, with a focus on delivering top-tier visuals through collaborative problem-solving.

Experience

Pixomondo / Senior Lighting Artist

May 2023 - present, Vancouver Canada

Works and communicates closely with team members across North American time zones. Responsible for compellingly challenging sequence setup, key and shot lighting work. Ability to closely translate visual concept art to cg lighting.

- *House of Dragons S3* (September 2025 - present)
- *Alien: Earth* (April 2025 - July 2025)
- *The Old Guard 2* (December 2024 - February 2025)
- *Chief of War* (October 2024 - November 2024)
- *Goosebumps Season 2* (July 2024 - September 2024)
- *Avatar: The Last Airbender* (September 2023 - November 2023)
- *Goosebumps Season 1* (May 2023 - August 2023)

Mainframe Studios / Lighting & Compositing Supervisor

January 2022 - March 2023, Vancouver Canada

Ability to oversee the creation of a new animated franchise in a team of 42 lighting & compositing artists. Works closely with other departments to ensure lighting and rendering requirements are successful and efficient. Interprets, implements and facilitates notes and feedback from the Director, Producer, and Art Director. Motivates, supports, and mentors the lighting team in use of the new pipeline.

Sony Pictures Imageworks / Senior Lighting & Compositing Artist

June 2015 - November 2021, Vancouver Canada

Ability to work and communicate in medium-sized teams of 25-40 members. Responsible for VFX and animation feature film key-lighting & shot-lighting.

- *The Sea Beast* (March 2021 - November 2021)
- *Vivo* (May 2020 - March 2021)
- *Over the Moon* (February - May 2020)
- *Men in Black: International* (January - July 2019)
- *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse* (June - November 2018)
- *Hotel Transylvania 3* (October 2017 - May 2018)

- *Spider-Man Homecoming* (January - May 2017)
- *Smurfs The Lost Village* (August 2016 - January 2017)
- *Storks* (March - August 2016)
- *Alice Through the Looking Glass* (August 2015 - March 2016)
- *The Angry Birds Movie* (June - August 2015)

Animal Logic / Lighting & Compositing Artist

June - August 2017, Vancouver Canada

Collaborated with team members in sequence-level lighting with quick turnaround. Responsible for animation shot lighting.

- *Lego Ninjago*

Nathan Love / Freelance Look Development Artist

July - December 2014, New York NY

Adept at working in a small team environment of 5-10 members. Responsible for texturing & look development for photoreal animation characters and hero props.

- *Leroy & Larry*

Framestore / Freelance Look Development Artist

May - June 2014, New York NY

Responsible for lighting & precomping CG characters into live action shots, modeling & texturing 3D hero assets.

- *Corning Gorilla Glass*
- *Hershey's M&M*

C2C Studio / CG Generalist

June - August 2013, Glendale CA

Worked in a small team of 3-6 members in product and web design. Responsible for modeling, rigging, texturing, lighting & rendering.

- *Tenkai Knights*

Education

Savannah College of Art & Design / B.F.A in Visual Effects & Minor in Technical Direction

September 2010 - May 2015, Savannah GA

Awards

Pixomondo - *My PXO City Photo Competition* (2025)

Sony Pictures Imageworks - *Applause Award* (2018)

Sony Pictures Imageworks - *Applause Award* (2017)

Sony Pictures Imageworks - *Applause Award* (2016)

Savannah College of Art & Design - *Dean's List Award* (2011 - 2015)

Autodesk - *Excellence in Design Award* (2010)

FIRST Robotics - *Dean's List Award Hawaii Semi Finalist* (2010)

Hawaii State - *Recognition of Students National Achievement Award* (2010)