

Laura Barbera

Director, CG

Animation & VFX Executive · Emmy-Nominated Supervising Producer · Emmy-Winning Animator
AI Research & Workflow Development

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Emmy-winning animator and Emmy-nominated Supervising Producer with 30 years of experience across film, episodic, and commercial production — from creature animator to creative executive, without ever losing the instinct for what makes a scene work.

Currently the creative and technical connective tissue across all Marvel Studios Animation — bridging executive vision and production reality, and knowing how to get everyone to yes.

Marvel's primary AI evaluator for 2+ years — embedded in pre-release testing groups for every major generative AI tool entering the production pipeline, and the studio's official representative to Disney Research teams developing the next generation of production technology.

Believes animation is magical — that a squiggle or a look from a hand-drawn, CG, or stop-motion character can make you feel something completely real. The job of everyone above the artists is to protect the conditions where that magic can happen.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Director, CG · Marvel Studios - 2021 – Present

- Creative and technical connective tissue across all Marvel Studios Animation — translating VP-level strategy to productions, synthesizing show status and risks back up to executive leadership, and serving as the creative filter that determines what reaches senior executives for final approval
- Shaped the final character designs for every hero across the Marvel Animation slate — X-Men '97, Eyes of Wakanda, Marvel Zombies, Your Friendly Neighborhood Spider-Man, I Am Groot, and What If? — sitting with Visual Development through rounds of creative notes to mold how each character looks, moves, and animates in 3D
- Embedded on X-Men '97 from story through DI for two-plus years — effectively functioning as 2D Supervising Producer on Marvel's most celebrated animated series, a role that didn't formally exist on the show
- Built the creative and technical foundation across the full Marvel Animation slate in its early years — stepping in as VFX Supervisor, CG Supervisor, Animation Supervisor, or Supervising Producer as each show required — then hired the right leadership to make productions self-sufficient
- Drives cross-show crew decisions across 100+ in-house artists; brokers solutions across multiple vendor studios
- Consults with Line Producers on budget health, scheduling, staffing, and pipeline strategy across studio and outsource vendors

Global Head of CG · CoSA VFX - 2017 – 2021

- Built and led the CG department across LA, Vancouver, and Atlanta studios — managing up to 18 projects simultaneously, with over 40 projects across the tenure
- Sole responsibility for artist management and recruiting across the entire 3D department for the full four years — building and maintaining the team from the ground up
- Shaped production budgets in close collaboration with the EP; accountable for resolving overages; determined pipeline and technology needs
- Cultivated a tight-knit team culture through daily all-hands check-ins — building the kind of cohesion and trust that sustained a multi-studio department through an intense and varied slate

Also served as: VFX Supervisor · CG Supervisor · Animation Supervisor

Episodics: Westworld S2–3 (HBO) · Lucifer S2–6 (Netflix) · Raised by Wolves S1 (HBO) · Resident Alien S1 · Orville S2 · Gotham S5

Films: The Unbearable Weight of Massive Talent · The Prom (Netflix) · Night School (Universal)

Supervising Producer · Nickelodeon Animation - 2010 – 2016

- Ran WallyKazam! S2 end-to-end — executing executive vision while managing a limited budget, reining in scope and finding creative alternatives that kept the show on track without compromising its heart.
- Traveled to partner studios in India multiple times annually for TMNT and WallyKazam! — launching productions, conducting formal animation training, and teaching acting for animation to bring Western performance sensibility to overseas artists.
- Animation Supervisor on Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (26 episodes, 22 min) and Fanboy & Chum Chum (52 episodes, 11 min) — directing and noting up to 500 shots per episode across both series.

Animation Supervisor · Lead Animator · Creature & Character Animator · Various - 1995 – 2010

Sony Pictures Imageworks · Framestore · Digital Domain · Zoic Studios · Third Floor · Foundation Imaging

Films: Alita: Battle Angel · Patriots Day · I Am Legend · Hairspray · The Polar Express

Episodics: Star Trek: Voyager S7 · Roughnecks: Starship Troopers Chronicles S1 · National Geographic – The Ultimate Survivor

Commercials: Nike – Game Breakers · FedEx – Stick · Geico – Icons · Disneyland 50th Anniversary · Xelibri – Beauty for Sale

A I R E S E A R C H & W O R K F L O W D E V E L O P M E N T

Official Marvel Animation Studio representative to **Disney Research** (Burbank and Zurich) — collaborating on evaluation and development of proprietary AI technology across Stylization, Gaussian Avatars, and AI-driven asset creation. Provides production data for testing, delivers detailed result notes, and advises on tooling direction and development priorities.

Primary AI battle-tester for Marvel Studios for 2+ years — maintaining active trusted evaluator partnerships with Google, OpenAI, Runway, Fal, Luma, LTX, Kling, and Sora, working directly with their teams to provide production-grounded feedback that shapes tool development. Testing spans animation, concept art, storyboards, script breakdowns, FX, style transfer, motion comics, and shot work.

Cross-studio AI collaborator across the Disney banner — Pixar, ILM, Walt Disney Animation, and Lucasfilm. Advanced AI production training through Curious Refuge.

T E A C H I N G E X P E R I E N C E

2016 – 2021

Instructor · Gnomon School of Visual Effects, Games & Animation

Developed and taught original curriculum

3D: Creature Animation 1 & 2, Character Animation 2 & 4, Previs & Animatics

2D: Principles of Animation, Figure Drawing

2007 – 2021

Senior Lecturer · Otis College of Art and Design

Developed and taught original curriculum · 2016 Teaching Excellence Award

3D: Character Animation 1 & 2

2D: Concept Design, Advanced Concept Design

1992 – 1999

Instructor · CUNY Kingsborough, NY

2D: Drawing, Photography and Sculpture

E D U C A T I O N

MFA Computer Graphics & Interactive Media – 3D Animation · Magna Cum Laude · Pratt Institute, NY

MFA Painting/Drawing & Printmaking · Summa Cum Laude · Brooklyn College, NY

BFA Photography · Magna Cum Laude · Brooklyn College, NY

A W A R D S & H O N O R S

2017 Daytime Emmy Nomination – Outstanding Pre-School Animated Program – Supervising Producer – WALLYKAZAM

2016 Teaching Excellence Award – Otis College of Art and Design

2006 Creative Emmy Award – Outstanding Commercial – FEDEX – STICK

2006 News & Documentary Emmy Nomination – Outstanding Achievement in Graphic & Artistic Design – NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC: THE ULTIMATE SURVIVOR

2004 Gold Clio – Animation – NIKE GAMEBREAKERS (dir. David Fincher)

2004 Bronze Clio – Animation – XELIBRI: BEAUTY FOR SALE (dir. David Fincher)

2001 Primetime Emmy Award – Outstanding Special Visual Effects for a Series – STAR TREK: VOYAGER

M E M B E R S H I P S & L E A D E R S H I P

Academy of Television Arts & Sciences — AI Task Force Committee Member · Animation Peer Group Member

Visual Effects Society — Executive Board Member (elected)

BAFTA · SAG-AFTRA · WIA — Women in Animation · ASIFA

The Academy of Magical Arts