

CREATIVE PORTFOLIO



Daniel T. Ballard

CHARACTER DESIGNER | ANIMATOR | PUPPETEER | PRACTICAL F/X AND SCENIC ARTIST

ABOUT ME

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Few creatures evade Daniel T. Ballard's interest or capacity to bring to life. With his expertise in puppetry, animation, fabrication, sculpture, and practical effects, Daniel creates compelling characters and scenic elements for live theatre, stop-motion animation, music videos, and theme parks.

Trained in the art and technique of sculpture at the University of South Alabama, Daniel has expanded his skill set over the years through collaborative partnerships with creature and f/x shops that produce the magic seen in Walt Disney World, Universal Orlando Resort, and Jim Henson Productions, to name a few. He brings a deep appreciation for organic movement, whimsical design, and immersive stories to his craft.



DANIEL T. BALLARD

MY RESUME



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EXPERIENCE

2019 – present

Sculptor's Assistant

Assisted in the fabrication of scenic elements by mixing and applying epoxy formulations

2019 – present

Creature Designer (Independent)

Designed and built hand-and-rod puppets, creature suits, and minifigures for both private clients and theatre productions.

2015 – 2015

Puppet Designer, Hippodrome Theatre

Designed and built two characters, including a life-size reindeer puppet suit, for original play, The Snow Queen

2012 - 2012

Assistant Fabricator, ThemeWorks

Assisted in the fabrication and painting of set pieces for theme parks such as Walt Disney World and Ripley's Believe It or Not!

SKILLS

Fabrication



Foam and latex construction



Moldmaking



Armature building



Sewing



Character design



Scenic painting



EDUCATION

2019

Intern, Tom Blasco

Assisted in puppet builds, moldmaking, prop painting, and foam latex construction in special f/x shop serving Orlando theme parks.

2009 – 2010

Florida School of Massage

Learned anatomy and kinesiology that guided my creature engineering and kinetic puppet development

2002 – 2004

BFA Sculpture, Univ of South Alabama

Learned anatomy, history, theory, and techniques for sculpture, drawing, and clayshaping.

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SCULPTING AND CREATURE FABRICATION



Custom character design: clay sculpture next to fabricated face set in the foam-and-fur body of final puppet build



Custom character design: Ghoulanoids mini-figures sculpted and cast in polyester resin



Rancor family from Star Wars universe: Foam and latex construction of stop-motion armatures



Making a mold wall around the master before creating the mold



Custom set design: Stop-motion set for a music video for the band Green Jelly



Custom character design: Stop-motion armature and set



Sarlacc from Star Wars Universe: final stop-motion armature fabricated, engineered, and painted



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PUPPET CREATION



I begin with a master sculpture made from clay.



Then, I make a mold wall with pegs.



Afterwards, I paint a plaster or Ultracal mold.



Next, I cast the puppet in latex and pour-in foam.



Finally, I add the fabric body and foam eyes!

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CHARACTER DESIGN



Eight-horned flying dragon



Creature from beyond...that likes brains



Mothman



Kuo-toa



Flying serpent

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MY ACHIEVEMENTS

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Competed in Jim Henson Creature Shop Challenge Live, 2018 at Dragon*Con

Shortlisted for Jim Henson Creature Shop Challenge on SyFy network, 2015

Collaborated on award-winning music video for They Might Be Giants 2014 "Am I Awake" contest

Worked in the shop of Heather Henson's company Ibex Puppetry for 2014 Fringe production of "Flight: A Crane's Story," Orlando

Instructed student puppeteers for Santa Fe College's production of "Voyage Imaginaire" in 2015, theatre students at Hippodrome Theatre, 2016

Manatee puppet suit created for
Rainbow Tiger Circus at Gainesville
Downtown Festival and Art Show

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SOCIAL

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Mural painted at The Midnight bar,
Gainesville, Florida

DANIEL T. BALLARD