

ABOVE THE CLOUDS



ABOUT ABOVE THE CLOUDS

For most birds, it is in their very nature to fly. From the moment they leave the nest, they are not only free to live independently but also free to explore the world from the clouds above. But if flying is their nature, what would happen if they were deprived of it?

As a freshman, I often looked up to those I admired and wondered, “How did they become so creative? There’s no way I could ever do that.” I felt hollow, never satisfied in my pursuit of growth. In my turmoil over my identity as an artist—if I was even an artist—my professor pulled me aside after reviewing some of my lackluster charcoal drawings and told me:

“I can tell you will never be truly happy unless you create.”

That resonated with me. So when I arrived at SCAD, I created. I didn’t always know what I’d create or how I’d create it. I didn’t always enjoy the process, but I did it anyway because I am an artist. I realized how my creations interacted with the world around me. I saw people who were better than me, people who had perhaps gone further than me, but I didn’t care because I was happy to keep moving forward as an artist and to share that experience with others. The beauty is that you can never know everything, so you always learn—the sky is the limit. But it is in my nature to want more as an artist, just as it is in a bird’s nature to want to fly.

This struggle is what inspired Percy - a barn owl who yearns to be somewhere he never knows if he can reach. I wanted a simple story that embodied my struggle to accept myself and my love of flight; a film that resonates with a period of growth in our lives as artists and conveys the message, “You are good enough.” I knew I had to take a leap of faith as a director and trust in my team, even if I was uncomfortable not knowing everything. Our goals may fluctuate, but one thing remains constant—as artists, we must create, and as students, we are just beginning our creative journey.

You’re going to be scared and you’re going to feel uncertain. Keep creating anyway, do your best, and take pride in knowing you’ve done all you can. Even now, I am uncertain about my future as an artist. I don’t think our doubts will ever completely disappear, but I am proud of every step I take. The effort that has gone into this film is unparalleled, and I am beyond proud of the steps we have all taken as a team to bring Percy to life. I believe my fellow artists will relate to this message as you watch this film. As a team, we have created something wonderful and put it out into the world, pushing our limits just as Percy pushes himself.

- **Alani Sanders**, Director

LOGLINE

Above the Clouds follows the journey of an owlet who yearns to fly above the clouds. Despite his shortcomings, he finds that all he needed was an unexpected glide down the mountainside.

TRAILER

<https://vimeo.com/948961229>

FACT SHEET

Running Time: 2:53 mins

Software: Autodesk Maya, Autodesk Flow Production Tracking, Houdini, Substance Painter, Nuke, Davinci Resolve, Procreate, Adobe Suite, Blender, Toon Boom Harmony, Redshift

Screening Format: 2K MP4, 2K Flat DCP

Aspect Ratio: 2048x858 (2.39:1)

Sound: Stereo, 5.1, and Dolby Atmos

Country of Production: Savannah, Georgia, United States

Year: May 2024

Language: English

Website: <https://abovetheclouds2024.wixsite.com/above-the-clouds>

Press / Business Contact: abovetheclouds.2024.film@gmail.com

Social: @abovetheclouds.film on Instagram

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FILM STILLS



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MEET THE TEAM

Alani Sanders

Director, Concept Artist, Rigger, 3D Animator, Texture Artist, Composer

Alani Sanders is a 3D animator who has a passion for learning. As director of Above the clouds, Alani loved to learn a variety of new skills that allowed her to be more versatile as a leader and team member, as well as taking charge of scheduling and creating guides to make all aspects of the pipeline accessible to different team members. Her ultimate goal was to create a challenging product that everyone could say they were happy to work on and grow from, creating fond memories with the team. As a persistent optimist, she is nothing but excited for the future and considers herself incredibly lucky to have been on a team with such wonderful people. Outside of the film, Alani can be found working on side projects with friends and traveling with her partner



Bryan Reyes

3D Animator, 2D Animator, Concept Artist, Lighter, Composer

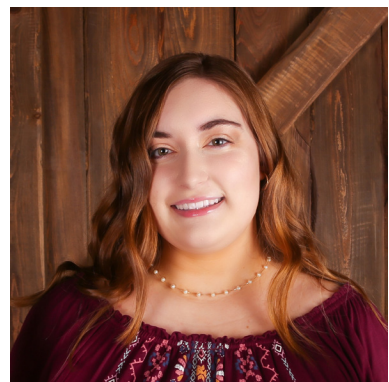
Bryan Reyes always had a fascination for the animation medium with its endless amount of opportunities for engaging storytelling. While he is essentially a 3D character animator, the various artistic roles in the 3D pipeline is what he is eager to continuously explore. Working alongside the talented crew of “Above the Clouds” has not only given Bryan the opportunity to push his skills in 3D character performance, but to also broaden his skillset by gaining experience in prop design, 3D layout, lighting, compositing and 2D effects in order to help make the film as whimsical as it can be. When you’re not seeing Bryan working behind the computer, he enjoys his free time listening to music, reading graphic novels, playing video games with his friends, watching movies, and playing his saxophone or ukulele (in that order).



Emma (Michelle) Richmond

Producer, 3D Animation Lead, Lighter, Composer

Emma (Michelle) Richmond is a 3D animator, whose passion is to infuse every produced artwork with the breath of life, bringing a smile to the audience’s face. With a thirst for learning, she sees each new skill as a steppingstone toward becoming an invaluable asset to her current team and future endeavors. Captivated by the film’s inception, Emma was inspired to take on these complexities and technical hurdles. As someone who prioritizes organization, she set up Flow Production Tracking for every crew member and ensured that dailies flowed effortlessly. Outside of work, Emma’s wanderlust is never-ending; she’s always eager to travel and explore the world. Whether she’s off globetrotting or just hanging out with her cats and/or friends, she’s thrives off new experiences. If elsewhere, you’ll find her knee-deep in any traditional art medium, letting her imagination run wild





Haidyn Hawkins
3D Animator, Modeler

As a 3D animator, Haidyn Hawkins was drawn to “Above the Clouds” for its focus on character development, theme, and artistic stylization, aligning with her passion for bringing characters, worlds, and stories to life in a 3D space. Haidyn not only contributed to the film’s layout, modeling, and animation, but she also aided in collaboration through feedback and engagement. Getting to work alongside an amazing team on “Above the Clouds” has continued to fuel her passion for cinematic animation and storytelling. Beyond the studio, Haidyn finds inspiration in the pages of a good book, surrounded by nature, or a combination of both

Jerilyn Tennison
CFX Artist, Technical Artist, Pipeline TD, Modeler, Composer

Jerilyn Tennison is a visual effects artist and fundamentally a problem solver. Working on a group project is an exciting chance to aid in making the beautiful visions of the artists on the team come to life by providing technical solutions and insight. Working on “Above the Clouds” was an amazing chance to help with the building of a complete pipeline. More than anything this project has opened her eyes to how much she don’t know, and has filled her with the desire to continue learning and pushing harder into the future. Outside of work Jerilyn is a big nerd about old video game technology and the history of CGI



Lucy Le
2D Animator, Lead Lighter, Colourist

Lucy is a 2D animator with a passion for effects animation and a love for the whimsical. Her versatility and knowledge of colour theory has allowed her to wear multiple hats during film production, being the colourist and lead lighter on the film to bring a splash of vibrancy to Percy’s world. Being able to work on the film is something she is very thankful for, having the opportunity to explore new skillsets she would have never thought about learning, in a welcoming environment with amazingly talented crewmates. While not working on the film, you can spot Lucy in the wild exploring new coffee shops and practicing her stuffed animal crochet skills.

Mackenzie Gregory (Mack)

Art Director, Storyboard Artist, Concept Artist, Texture Artist, Lighter, Composer

Mackenzie Gregory, also known as Mack, is a visual development and storyboard artist specializing in television animation. Her passion for continual growth led her to embrace new challenges, such as transitioning to 3D animation for Above The Clouds. As the film's art director, she ensured cohesion among the team while maintaining the director's vision. Mack's responsibilities spanned from storyboarding, environment and prop design, texturing, lighting, and 3D compositing. When she isn't working, she enjoys delving into fantasy/romance novels, writing short stories, and gaming with friends.



Sadie Lange

Storyboard Artist, Texture Artist, Concept Artist

Sadie Lange is a story artist with a love for collaboration and animals, making "Above the Clouds" her perfect fit. As the number one Percy fan and designated doodler, Sadie was eager not only to bring life to the characters of the film, but also the environment through matte paintings and textures, the latter of which she found an unexpected passion for. Above all, Sadie is grateful for the opportunity to have worked with such a wonderful group of people with a wide array of unique skill sets. Outside of artistic endeavors, Sadie can be found volunteering at animal shelters and studying canine behavior with her beloved dog, Captain.



Vrinda Vinod

3D Animator, Storyboard Artist, Lighter, Composer

Vrinda Vinod, a 3D animator, found herself drawn to animation due to its limitless capabilities for a variety of storytelling and a love of showcasing character depth through acting. She is thankful to her peers for pushing her animation to be some of the best work she's created thus far. Whilst having to wear many hats during the Production of "Above the Clouds," Vrinda loved learning all aspects of the pipeline alongside her teammates, including but not limited to storyboarding, environment/prop design, lighting, and compositing. Working to create the final film for "Above the Clouds" has been such a wonderful collaborative experience that she is sure to cherish for years to come. When she isn't working, you might find Vrinda buried amongst her never ending TBR, or watching shows with her sister.





Ying Huang

3D Animator, Concept Artist, Storyboard Artist

Ying Huang is a 3D animator with a love for storytelling and creating visuals. Ying's journey is all about making characters and worlds come alive on screen. On "Above the Clouds," Ying gives characters their movements and emotions, making them feel real. She also dreams up the characters and worlds as a concept artist, bringing her ideas to the team with colorful sketches and designs. Ying is always eager to learn and grow.

When she's not animating, Ying enjoys painting, learning new things, and trying out new art techniques. During her free time, Ying enjoys nature and collecting pretty notebooks.

FULL CREDITS

Director: Alani Sanders

Producer: Emma Richmond

Art Director:

Mackenzie Gregory (Mack)

Concept Artists:

Alani Sanders

Bryan Reyes

Mackenzie Gregory (Mack)

Sadie Lange

Vrinda Vinod

Ying Huang

Lauren Coursey

Sampy Sicada

Storyboard Artists:

Mackenzie Gregory (Mack)

Sadie Lange

Ying Huang

Grace Beason

Modeling:

Alani Sanders

Haidyn Hawkins

Jerilyn Tennison

Hope Lee

Texture Artists:

Alani Sanders

Sadie Lange

Ananya Shenoy

Abigail Utz

Andrew Deaver

CFX & VFX Artist:

Jerilyn Tennison

Pipeline TD:

Jerilyn Tennison

Rigging:

Alani Sanders

Layout Artists:

Alani Sanders

Bryan Reyes

Emma (Michelle) Richmond

Haidyn Hawkins

Vrinda Vinod

Ying Huang

3D Animators:

Alani Sanders

Bryan Reyes

Emma (Michelle) Richmond

Haidyn Hawkins

Vrinda Vinod

Ying Huang

2D Animators:

Bryan Reyes

Lucy Le

2D Effects Artists:

Bryan Reyes

Lead Lighter:

Lucy Le

Lighting Artists:

Bryan Reyes

Emma (Michelle) Richmond

Mackenzie Gregory (Mack)

Vrinda Vinod

Coleman Adams

So Yun Park Kim

Emma Schaberg

Compositing:

Alani Sanders

Bryan Reyes

Emma (Michelle) Richmond

Jerilyn Tennison

Compositing (cont.):

Mackenzie Gregory (Mack)

Vrinda Vinod

Editing:

Alani Sanders

Lucy Le

Colorist:

Lucy Le

Music Composer:

Tyler Grow

Sound Mixer:

Daniel Doan

Sound Effects Editor:

Sawyer Bisson

Script Writer:

Lindsay Fletcher

Special Thanks:

Our Faculty Supervisor - Bernardo Warman

Overcast Team | Friends & Family

Gabby Gillespie | Professor Gray | Professor Osborn

Oatland Wildlife Center | Goro Goro Team | Love At First Light Team

