

Antonio Govela

Principal Technical Artist

Character Technology • Pipeline Architecture • Technical Leadership

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Executive Summary

Principal Technical Artist with 26+ years of experience designing scalable character technology, production pipelines, automation frameworks, and artist-facing tools for AAA games. During 19 years at Obsidian Entertainment, I established and led the Central Character Technical Art (CCTA) organization, supporting approximately 150 Maya users across as many as five concurrent AAA productions while driving studio-wide standards, pipeline modernization, and adoption of next-generation character technologies.

Career Highlights

- Founded and led Obsidian's Central Character Technical Art (CCTA) organization.
- Supported approximately 150 Maya users across up to five concurrent AAA productions.
- Architected reusable production infrastructure spanning rigging, animation, validation, metadata, automation, and asset management.
- Architected a universal proportional character rigging framework used from The Outer Worlds through Grounded, Avowed, and multiple productions.
- Championed MetaHuman, Advanced Skeleton, Unreal Control Rig, JALI, Motion Matching, Live Link, and Xsens integration.

Professional Experience

Obsidian Entertainment / Xbox Game Studios

Principal Technical Artist / Central Character Technical Art Lead (2008–2027)

Leadership

- Founded the Central Character Technical Art organization and established studio-wide technical standards.
- Defined long-term roadmaps, priorities, documentation standards, and strategic initiatives.
- Primary escalation point for Character Technical Art across multiple AAA productions.
- Partnered with Art, Animation, Engineering, Production, IT, Xbox Game Studios partners, and outsourcing teams.
- Mentored Technical Artists and participated in interviewing and hiring.

Pipeline Architecture & Production Systems

- Architected a shared Character Technology ecosystem supporting approximately 150 Maya users.
- Designed production infrastructure spanning rigging, animation, validation, metadata, analytics, batch processing, and automation.
- Developed metadata-driven asset tracking and validation systems identifying source files, authorship, dependencies, and production readiness.
- Modernized the Maya production environment through Maya 2027 while maintaining compatibility across active productions.

Character Pipeline & Production Systems

- Conceived, architected, and developed a comprehensive suite of character-aware production tools within Maya that formed the foundation of Obsidian's Character Technical Art platform.
- The ecosystem began with Character Setup Tools, Animation Manager, Asset Exporters, and Attachment Setup Tools, all sharing a common understanding of characters within a scene.
- Expanded the platform with Motion Capture Integration, Animation Pickers, Dynamic & Physics Tools, Batch Processing, Character Validation, Metadata & Asset Tracking, Tool Telemetry & Inventory Management, and Pipeline Diagnostics.
- Together these interconnected systems streamlined artist workflows, reduced manual work, improved consistency, and supported multiple AAA productions over many years.

Character Technology & Innovation

- Architected a universal non-destructive proportional character rigging framework preserving controls, rig data, custom shapes, and artist workflows.
- Developed skin-weight preservation and transfer tools enabling proportional rig changes without rebuilding rigs.
- The framework became the studio standard from The Outer Worlds through Grounded, Avowed, and multiple productions over many years.
- Led evaluation and integration of MetaHuman, Advanced Skeleton, Unreal Control Rig, JALI, Motion Matching, Live Link, Xsens, StretchSense, Manus, Rokoko, Runtime Rigging, and Python 3 / Qt 6 modernization.

Previous Experience

Noesis Interactive / Left Coast Studios

Senior Technical Artist / Project Coordinator

- Partnered with Softimage and Valve to develop and launch Noesis Interactive around Softimage|XSI and the Source Engine.
- Presented as a Softimage|XSI demonstration artist at GDC and SIGGRAPH.

- Developed Source Engine character production workflows and coordinated multidisciplinary technical teams.

Fiction Lab Studios

Co-Founder • Animation Supervisor

- Co-founded a digital animation academy and defined its technical vision.
- Designed a 50-workstation production environment and technical infrastructure.
- Recruited instructors, taught advanced Softimage|XSI workflows, and established production standards.

Technical Skills

Languages & APIs: Python, MEL, Maya API, PySide, Qt

Game Engines: Unreal Engine, Unity, Source Engine

Character Technology: MetaHuman, Advanced Skeleton, Unreal Control Rig, Motion Capture, Facial Animation, Runtime Rigging

Pipeline Development: Automation, Metadata Systems, Asset Validation, Batch Processing, Tool Telemetry, Pipeline Diagnostics

Production: Perforce, Jira, Confluence

Professional Philosophy

I believe great technical art removes friction from the creative process. My focus has always been to build scalable, maintainable production systems that enable artists to create exceptional games while technology quietly supports production.