Whether you work in film or gaming, this book teaches you to really think and work like an animator. True success comes from understanding the art behind the technology. Your character animation journey continues...

CHAPTER 1: Real World Production
CHAPTER 2: Story
CHAPTER 3: Rigging Characters
CHAPTER 4: Animation Tips & Tricks
CHAPTER 5: Human Motion
CHAPTER 6: Acting
CHAPTER 7: Animal Motion
CHAPTER 8: Anthropomorphic Animation
CHAPTER 9: Games
digital character animation 2, volume II: advanced techniques

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201 West 103rd Street, Indianapolis, Indiana, 46290
Digital Character Animation 2, Volume II: Advanced Techniques

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International Standard Book Number: 0-7357-0044-3

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 06-101495

Printed in the United States of America

First Printing: August 2001

Interpretation of the printing code: The rightmost double-digit number is the year of the book’s printing; the rightmost single-digit number is the number of the book’s printing. For example, the printing code 02-1 shows that the first printing of the book occurred in 2002.
About the Author

Growing up in Arizona, George Maestri was well renowned as the kid who could always draw a really cool Camaro. He got his first taste of computers before high school when he taught himself to program computer games on his Dad's mainframe. He landed his first programming job at age 16, writing code for the Altair 8800. He earned a degree in computer science and Silicon Valley quickly seduced him, where he worked as an engineer on early Unix-based graphics systems in the '80s. After a few years, he noticed that the people who created art on computers had a lot more fun than the engineers who made the machines. This sparked an early midlife crisis and George embarked on a career change.

George enrolled in the animation program at DeAnza College in Cupertino, California, and was soon making his own student films. There he met Joe Murray, who had just pitched an animated series idea to Nickelodeon. Joe hired George to help with development of Rocko's Modern Life. Soon after, George found himself working day and night on the pilot as an animator and assistant producer. Miraculously, the show was picked up, and George moved to Los Angeles in 1993, where he worked on Rocko's Modern Life as a writer for the entire run of the show, earning a Cable Ace nomination in the process.

During his time at Nickelodeon, George taught himself 3D animation. His interest in this subject soon landed him a monthly column covering 3D animation for 3D World magazine. George has continued working as a freelance journalist, writing articles on animation production for magazines such as Computer Graphics World, Animation Magazine, Film & Video, and Digital Magic.

In 1995, George found himself at Film Roman as a writer and creator, developing new concepts for animated series. Several of his projects were picked up for development by major networks. George also got his first taste of 3D animation production, animating a 3D Felix for the CBS Series 'The Twisted Tales of Felix the Cat'.

George worked as a freelance animation director until he was hired as the original animation producer on South Park in 1997. In this capacity, George ramped up production and hired the original staff of artists, animators, and technical directors. He also used his computer background to develop the techniques and technology for animating cut-out characters using Alias.
After *South Park*, George went back to freelancing and found himself on the road. He taught animation at Nanyang Polytechnic in Singapore and then flew to Paris to direct a live-action/3D pilot at Medialab for Film Roman. George then became an animation consultant at Curious Pictures in New York, where he helped set up the production of *A Little Caricature*, the first TV series animated in Maya.

During this time, George was creating and pitching his own projects. He sold two properties into development: *The Experts* (co-developed with Jerry Beck) to Warner Bros., and *The Forgotten Ones* to Disney/ABC. George wrote and directed both pilots.

In 1999, *The Experts* was renamed *Karen & Kirby* and George’s characters became part of the Kids WB family. George set up the production and directed all 13 of the three-minute episodes, which aired during *The Big Cartoonie Show*. George, along with Jerry Beck, also acted as story editor. One of these episodes, "When Animals Go Berserk," was shown to wide acclaim at a number of festivals, including the LA Animation Celebration and Siggraph 2000.

About the Tech Editors

Angie Jones is currently an animator at Sony Pictures Imageworks (SPI) producing animation for the characters in *Stuart Little 2*, to be released April 2002. Previous to SPI, Angie worked as a Lead Artist at Angel Studios. She has also worked as a character animator for Oddworld Inhabitants on the award-winning Abe's Exoddus. From 1995 through 1998, Angie worked on over 25 character-driven educational software products for the Playstation at The Lightspan Partnership, Inc. Angie has also worked as a 2D/3D animator for the children's educational television show *Reality Check*, among others during her freelance career in Atlanta, Georgia. She is also the coauthor of the books *Inside 3D Studio Max 2, Volume III: Animation* (New Riders, 1998) and *3D Studio Max 3 Professional Animation* (New Riders, 2000). For additional information about Angie Jones, go to http://www.epiccricket.com.

Swan Miller, who has a background in fine arts, theater, and computer graphics, is a character animator at Oddworld Inhabitants. The head of the real-time animation team for the 3D adventure game Oddworld: Munch's Oddyssey, he has also worked on the in-game character animations and the award-winning cinematics for the game Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus.
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Dedication

This book is dedicated to my kids.
Acknowledgments

I'd like to thank all of the people at New Riders for their extreme patience and wonderful support; my family for their support and all the software vendors—Discreet, Alias Wavefront, Softimage, and many others for allowing me the chance to use their tools. Thanks also to Jerry Beck, Warren Fuller, Sean Miller, Jackie Watson, John Baurley, Carlos Julioa, Warner Bros., and everyone else who worked on "Kow & Kirby; Angie Jones, Annette Van Duren, Laura Lawson, Renee Hatcher, and finally, all the animators who've helped me and given me advice over the years.