

## A decade of pushing the limits of computer graphics, and why 2016 is the year of AR/VR

J Michael Bills

**Sprocketship & Clackamas Community College  
& Portland State University**

Computer graphics for film has been as wild ride for eager audiences around the world hungry for the next blockbuster effects extravaganza, and an equally wild ride for the artists that create these alternate realities on the screen. As the “science of fake” has matured, computer graphics have gotten more and more realistic. From humble digital beginnings like Jurassic Park that served as groundbreaking landmarks of what the technology was capable of, through to fully realized worlds like that of Pandora in the film Avatar; completely built to spec from scratch to bring the vision of the director to life. Compositor J Bills will give us a look into the process and technology necessary to produce images at this level. With a credit list that includes Avatar, Lord of the Rings, King Kong and others, J will feature a couple of projects from the course of his career and show behind the scenes examples of how this intersection of art and science makes its way to the screen. Conceptually, he'll talk about some of the processes and skills involved in this type of work. Then, he'll take a look at the future of computer graphics as we trade the screen for glasses: virtual and augmented reality.



**10:00 am, Monday  
February 1, 2016  
FAB 86-01  
1900 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Ave**

John-Michael "J" Bills was the 2D Lead and Compositor at Psyop in NYC before a long run at Weta Digital, Peter Jackson's visual effects company in New Zealand, first in the roto/paint department on *Lord of the Rings*, then shifting over to Compositing after *King Kong*, through to *Avatar*. He and his family moved home base to Portland in 2008 and began working at Laika on *Coraline* and *ParaNorman*, as the Lead Compositor. He also did stints at Sony Imageworks and returned to Weta during gaps in Laika projects (*Lovely Bones*, *Man of Steel*, *Iron Man 3*, *Alice in Wonderland*, etc) and locally for Gus Van Sant (Virginia) before starting Refuge VFX in 2013 based around the Portland-shot NBC show *Grimm*. Left to form Sprocketship in 2014, he handles compositing needs on all Sprocketship projects and oversees operations. He is one of the five Microsoft HoloLens Academic Research Grant Award Recipients in 2015.