

Sahana Vijai

Creative Lead · Art Direction · Creative Systems

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SUMMARY

Creative lead with more than ten years of experience spanning Meta, Facebook Reality Labs, and Disney Research. My work connects visual direction, character craft, realtime technology, and the systems teams need to deliver consistently at scale. As Art Lead for the Avatars 2.0 hair category, I led work from an evolving visual brief through cross-functional alignment, launch, and post-launch growth. I now work as an AI Technical Artist, where my work focuses on Agentic Game Creation.

EXPERIENCE

Meta

London, UK · September 2022-Present

AI Technical Artist

2026-Present

- Evaluated practical applications for Agentic Game Creation by developing AI-assisted technical-art workflows across procedural content, creative tooling, and 3D production, translating findings into direction for future content-creation pipelines.

Art Lead

Q4 2023-December 2025

Horizon Avatars

- Delivered approximately 100 launch hairstyles and approximately 90% legacy-choice coverage across mobile, desktop, and VR by leading the creative-production path across an 11-person core group spanning concept, texture, 3D art, technical art, and production, plus external vendor support. Coverage means a legacy choice had the same or a meaningfully comparable new option, not a one-to-one recreation.
- Protected the original launch timeline and quality bar by reframing a late parity request around representation coverage, leading the legacy-to-new mapping, selecting the final ten priority styles, and partnering with the Product Manager to align leadership around the plan.
- Enabled nearly 100 additional catalog assets in the year after launch by distributing review ownership and establishing reusable production, decision, and quality systems, while continuing to lead category delivery through December 2025.
- Shaped post-launch direction by translating user-research signals into modular production, automation, and greater customization opportunities, directing two concept artists and partnering with Product on future category and asset-tier options.

Character Artist

September 2022-Q4 2023

- Helped establish the Avatars 2.0 visual and technical foundation by creating character maquettes across clothing, geometry, and texture and testing hair-simulation approaches against realtime constraints.
- Removed a repetitive asset-authoring step by co-developing and validating a Houdini prototype with Tech Art that was adopted as a standard pipeline component; this broader systems work supported my move into hair-category leadership by Q4 2023.

Facebook Reality Labs

Pittsburgh, USA · December 2015-June 2022

Character Artist

XR avatars and Codec Avatars

- Helped research teams evaluate likeness, expression, presence, and realtime behavior by translating perceptual observations into concrete visual targets and testable questions.
- Enabled in-context evaluation of avatars during realtime interaction by building and dressing 3D environments in Unreal Engine and setting them up in VR.
- Strengthened photoreal Codec Avatars and related stylized-avatar explorations by contributing character craft, technical implementation, authored targets, rigging, and realtime hair and cloth simulation experience.

The research team developed the avatar system.

EXPERIENCE CONTINUED

Disney Research

Pittsburgh, USA · May-December 2015

Associate Digital Artist

- Helped translate emerging character research into presentable demonstrations by working in a small team of artists and technical artists alongside research scientists.

Otherworld Interactive

Remote · November 2014

Contract 3D Artist

- Supported production of The Traveler, a mobile VR experience, by creating props, environment assets, and creatures.

Alice Project - Carnegie Mellon University

Pittsburgh, USA · June-September 2014

Character Artist Intern

- Designed, created, and prepared characters for animation by setting up joint-based rigs for the CMU Alice Project.

National High School Gaming Academy

Pittsburgh, USA · June-August 2013

Teaching Assistant

CORE SKILLS & TOOLS

Creative direction and leadership: Visual direction · Quality-bar definition · Art review · Team guidance · Cross-functional alignment · Vendor collaboration

Creative systems and production: Production strategy · Scalable asset systems · Pipeline definition · Taxonomy and catalog planning · Realtime constraints · Process improvement

Human-centered and emerging technology: Avatar identity and expression · Realtime evaluation · Agentic Game Creation

Tools: Maya · ZBrush · Photoshop · Substance 3D Painter · Marvelous Designer · Unreal Engine · Unity · Houdini · Python

EDUCATION

Carnegie Mellon University

2012-2014

Master of Entertainment Technology

Cross-disciplinary work on client briefs at the Entertainment Technology Center, including selected collaborations with Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, Sony Computer Entertainment, and Electronic Arts.

BMS College of Engineering

2007-2011

Bachelor of Computer Science & Engineering