Quba Michalski: Curriculum Vitae

Reel + Selected Works

To jump right in and begin watching a selection of my works curated specifically for you, go to: **http://qubahq.com/privateshowing/** and enter **workwithquba** (all lowercase) as a password.

Biography

Born in Poland, in 1976, Quba Michalski is a Creative Director, Motion Artist, Filmmaker, Problem Solver and Creative Thinker with over two decades of experience in various disciplines of design.

He begun his adventure with the world of design at the age of 12, when his father smuggled the first Macintosh computer to then-embargoed Poland. The machine run Swedish OS and with the Polish designers never exposed to GUI-based software, Quba ended up figuring out how to use the computer and then training the Academy of Fine Arts graduates at the Poland's first desktop publishing studio.

Over the years, Quba trained himself in various disciplines of design - from DTP through interactive and web design and coding, photography, cinematography to motion design, visual effects and compositing.

His unique, multi-faceted approach is a result of a wide array of interests (from gaming, coding, design and film-making to automation, psychology, quantum physics and anthropology to name just a few), combined with a multi-cultural upbringing (Quba left Poland at the age of 16 and has spent a majority of his life in various cities across Europe, Middle East and finally the US).

Quba is best known for his ability to analyze or create new projects, observe them from multiple perspectives, and develop practical solutions. With his wide area of expertise, he is able to quickly identify potential future problems and remedy them in advance through smart planning and adjustments. As a project leader, he is equally comfortable with traditional techniques, cutting-edge modern tools - or with authoring brand new solutions either practically or in code.

Quba's visual style uses storytelling, optical illusions and tight correlation between audio and video, often employing principles of misdirection, impossible geometries and practical builds to continually surprise, delight and entertain the viewer.

Education

1999 - 2001
Master of Fine Arts in Graphic Design (M.F.A.)
Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey
Graduated with Honors

1995 - 1999
Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design
Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey
Graduated with High Honors (third best student of the entire university, first in the faculty and department)

Skills

Creative Direction
From concept to delivery - leading large teams towards a singular creative vision. On the fly course corrections, problem solving and creative thinking.

Art Direction
Styles, moods, emotions, tempo, rhythm, look development. Translating an idea into a visual style.

Technical Direction, Technical Development
Many of the projects designed by Quba are brand new ideas, never before attempted by anyone else. Apart from coming up with an idea, Quba is also trained and experienced in figuring out how to execute it both in practical and CG scenarios.

Motion Design, Animation
Titles, shapes, animated graphics. Quba is one of the fastest and most innovative Adobe After Effects wranglers worldwide. No stranger to Cinema 4D either and sufficiently familiar with most other 2D and 3D packages to supervise a skilled operator or take helm in front of the box himself.

Visual Effects, Compositing
Same tools, different skill set. From the early planning stages, through directing shoots to hands-on software operation - Quba always finds new and surprising ways of squeezing something new and fresh from the tool.

Photography, Cinematography, Set Directing, Directing
A veteran of many years of photo, video and film shoots, Quba has a wide range of experience with directing any aspect of the set - be it still photography in natural environment, slow-motion pyrotechnics or motion controlled green screen shoot.

Copy-writing
While not a native English speaker, Quba wrote and co-wrote many of the commercials he shot, coming up with both the narrative, the dialog and the shooting plan.

Scripting, Basic Programming
With a solid understanding of idea-to-code workflow, Quba likes to automate and develop new tools. With solid foundations in HTML and CSS, he often scripts After Effects tools using Expressions (derivative of JavaScript). He also thought himself ASP and PHP at some point, in order to build database-driven websites.

Training
Quba believes in sharing the knowledge and has always devoted time to educating his teams in both basic and brand new techniques. He also creates video tutorials for After Effects, publishing them for free on his website.

Software Skills
Capable of quickly learning new tools and methodologies and devising new ones for the existing software. Guru in After Effects and Photoshop. Expert in the rest of Adobe Creative Cloud Suite and Cinema 4D. Knowledgeable, though not operating himself: Maya, Nuke, Flash, SynthEyes, Boujou, Touch Designer.

Languages
Polish (native), English (perfect), Turkish (proficient)

Work Experience

2014 - 2015
Creative Director at Google, Mountain View and Venice, CA

Responsibilities:

- Working with ATAP, Robotics, ACME, Cardboard and JUMP teams (innovations in video and interactive tech)
- Directing shoots (live action, vfx, 360 and vr)
- Creative direction in development of new technologies

Main accomplishments:

- Created and directed a series of promotional films for multiple emerging technologies developed at Google (internal and external)
- Instrumental in the development and testing of Google Jump - a stereoscopic 360 camera rig
- Planned and developed a Stereoscopic 360 production and post-production pipeline, training company's internal and external partners in it's use and principles

2012 - 2015
Creative Director at Autofuss, San Francisco, CA

Responsibilities:

- Client pitches
- Creative, art, technical development of the projects
- Directing shoots (photo, motion capture, motion control, slow motion, live action)
- Team training and recruitment

Main accomplishments:

- Created and directed a very successful worldwide campaign for Google's Nexus 7 tablet (2013 edition), including the strategy, messaging, style and execution.
- Created and developed a technique for shooting high-speed (slow motion) footage with motion controlled camera orbiting the scene at high speed, then successfully used the technique in a TV spot for Jambox.
- Took part in the development of several new exciting technologies including projection mapping on moving surfaces (solid as well as deforming), combining motion capture and motion control in a live environment and several that I cannot mention here.
- Developed several brand new tools and effects for my team, including AE Superglue (tracking "sticky" expression), AE Chromatic Aberration Rig, PS RGB Channel Splitter (new method of color grading), etc.
- Planned, shot and directed nearly two dozen high-profile TV and Internet spots.

Work Experience (continued)

2003 - 2012
Co-Founder, Creative Director, Motion Artist at imago studios, Istanbul, Turkey

Responsibilities:
- Client pitches, production, budgeting
- Creative, art, technical development of the projects
- Directing shoots (photo, slow motion, live action)

Main accomplishments:
- Created Turkey's first motion design studio and made it a premiere place for high-end motion graphics while maintaining a small, 2-person size.
- Over nearly a decade created over 500 pieces of media, from interactive banners to international campaigns.
- Managed to devote 30% of the company time to development of independent pieces, showcased in film and motion design festivals around the world.
- Got married with a wonderful woman who constituted the second half (art direction) of imago studios.

2011 - 2012
Creative Free Agent - Freelance, Istanbul, Turkey

Responsibilities:
- While still helming imago studios, provided freelance consultancy, directing and animation services to a number of post production and production houses
- Worked as a part-time art and creative director on major national campaigns for Leo Burnett and TBWA

Main accomplishments:
- Creatively directed a major campaign for Turkey's top mobile operator
- Was able to provide my services to production houses contractually unable to work with imago studios.

Work Experience (continued some more)

2008 - current
Founder, Writer and Presenter at QubaHQ.com

Responsibilities:

- QubaHQ is my personal site, containing a variety of articles and video content on the topics of motion design, gaming and visual effects
- It is a self-initiated project with no official release schedule, managed in my off-time.

Main accomplishments:

- Created a successful series of tutorials focused on pushing Adobe After Effects in new, unexpected directions.
- Produced a series of "Video Bits" - short experiments in motion design - too small to be considered "a piece" but too interesting to simply shelf them.
- Became one of the go-to websites for people who actually want to improve their motion design skills, rather than simply follow other person's style ("teach a man to fish" as opposed to "give a man a fish")

2001 - 2004
Academic Instructor - Bilgi University, Istanbul, Turkey

Responsibilities:

- Teaching a variety of undergraduate and graduate courses, including: Advanced Typography, Desktop Publishing, Video and Editing, Motion Design and VFX, Web Design
- Contributing to the growth of the faculty through recruitment, event planning and representing the school during national and international events.

Main accomplishments:

- Educated several generations of motion designers
- Produced and directed a number of promotional films for the school.

1998 - 2001
Teaching Assistant at Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey

Responsibilities:

- While in the fourth year of undergraduate studies, and throughout the graduate program, acted as a teaching assistant at the departments of graphic design and visual communication design.
- Classes taught included: Photographic manipulation, Desktop Publishing and Animation.

Main accomplishments:

- Became the youngest person to teach their own course at either of the departments.
- Got to the point where I was actually earning money while at the university (full academic scholarship + teaching assistant salary).

Work Experience (last page, I promise)

1997 - 1999
Web Designer, Coder at G-Tasarim (G-Design), Ankara, Turkey

Responsibilities:
- User experience, User interface design
- Coding HTML and CSS (with minimal JavaScript)

Main accomplishments:
- Over the span of 2 years created nearly 60 websites for some of Turkey's and Europe's largest companies
- Won "Best website of the year" in 1999 for the site of Ankara Jazz Society

Developed a crazy cool (and looking back now, highly inefficient) method utilizing multiple mouse-overs and animated GIFs for highly immersive sites without Flash.

1994 - 1997
Designer - Mount Kerkenes Archaeological Survey Group, Ankara, Turkey

Responsibilities:
- Design of all printed and web materials.
- Digital artifact reconstruction.

Main accomplishments:
- While still in high school, worked with world-renowned archaeologists on a historically significant project.
- Came up with a method for, proposed and conducted a digital artifact reconstruction on a 2,500 year old artifact found at the site.
- Earned enough money to buy my first PC - an insanely powerful Pentium 166MMX sporting brand new Windows 95.

1988 - 1990
Junior Designer, "Systems Specialist" at Polprint, Gdansk, Poland

Responsibilities:
- At the age of 12, was tasked with figuring out how Macintosh computers work and educating the designers in their use for desktop publishing.
- Classes taught included: Photographic manipulation, Desktop Publishing and Animation.

Main accomplishments:
- Knowing no word of English or Swedish, figured out how to use Photoshop, Quark, Freehand and Director and successfully conveyed that knowledge to designers with zero computer experience
- To this day I remember that cut/paste in Swedish is klippa/klistra