

# S. Atia Newman

Associate Professor

Rochester Institute of Technology

CG Professional, Artist, Innovator, and Strategist

## Education

MFA - Digital Arts and Animation *Terminal Degree*  
Pratt Institute, Brooklyn NY 2010

BFA - Communication Design *Graduated with Honors*  
National College of Arts, Lahore 2003

## Additional Training

Adobe Educators Certification - *Influencer Level* 2025  
Story Coaching - One on One 2022 - 2023  
LinkedIn - How to Make Strategic Thinking a Habit 2020  
Sundance Webinar - Creating Social Impact Through Storytelling 2020  
NYFA Grant Development Workshop 2019  
Houdini Master Class 2017  
CGMA Advanced Rigging Certificate 2016  
Pixar Storytelling Master Class Chicago VanArts 2014  
Collider Conference Rigging Master Class 2013  
Collider Conference Animation Master Class 2013

## Academic Work Experience

Associate Professor, School of Film and Animation  
Rochester Institute of Technology, NY 2018-current

Assistant Professor, School of Film and Animation  
Rochester Institute of Technology, NY 2012-2018

Full time Instructor - Digital Arts  
Bowling Green State University, OH 2011 - 2012

Animation Training Lead  
Post Amazers (Pvt.) Ltd. 2004 - 2005

English, Math, Social Studies Substitute Teacher  
Beaconhouse Public School System, Karachi 1995 - 2001

## Professional Affiliations

AAUP - Member 2025-now

AAUP, NY - Member

AAUP@RIT - Officer of External Outreach/Relations

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Digital Twins Consortium	2025-now
WNY Faculty Governance Coalition (co-founder)	2024-now
ACM SIGGRAPH - Professional Member	2011-now
ACM SIGGRAPH, Greater Rochester Professional Chapter	
Member	2017-now
Vice-Chair	2018-2022
IGDA - International Game Developers Association	2018-now
Women in Tech	2019-now
Women in Animation	2017-now

## Industry Service

Karamah Law and Legal Summer Program	
Host/Moderator plus Communications	current
Digital Twins Consortium - Academia and Research Working Group	current
Shared Governance Summit #2	
University of Rochester, St. John Fisher and RIT	2025
International Choice Awards Network (ICAN) - GDC	2025
External Tenure Application Reviewer	
Montclair State University	2025
Shared Governance Summit #1 - <i>Co-founder/ Organizer</i>	
RIT, St. John Fisher	2025
ACM SIGGRAPH Greater Rochester Chapter	
Vice Chair	2018-2022
External Tenure Application Reviewer	
Loyola Marymount University	2021
Book Manuscript Reviewer - Routledge: Taylor and Francis Group	
Making the Cut at Pixar: The Art of Animation	2021
Academic Program Reviewer NYSED - SUNY Canton	
Game Design and Development BS Program	2018
Book Proposal Reviewer - Taylor and Francis	
"Aesthetic 3D Lighting: History, Theory, and Application" by Lee Lanier	2017
"Advanced Lighting Techniques" by Lee Lanier	2015

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"Organic Modeling for Animation"

2013

Panel Presentation Reviewer

2013

University Film and Video Association

## University Service

**School of Film and Animation AI Committee (current)**

This committee is actively exploring AI tools and drafting a collective representative statement for the faculty. Developing guidelines on how the unit will support the success of our students and our classrooms through this new technical revolution.

**Chair of RIT Faculty Senate – May 2022 – May 2025 (Three terms)**

Elected three times to lead and oversee the Faculty Governance process at RIT. Represented the interests of 1,100 full time faculty employed across 9 colleges and 2 Degree-granting units.

Maintained relationships with administration to ensure effective communication between leadership and faculty.

Implemented organizational structures to ensure the smooth development, approval and implementation of policy and other curricular objectives in the university.

Created a strategic communication plan to keep our constituents informed of leadership decisions and impacts.

Built relationships with Staff Council and Student Government to spark joint initiatives to address key pain-points across all groups: ie, transportation, curricular demands etc.

Led a number of initiatives to ensure the faculty perspective was taken into account during key institutional moments.

**RIT Strategic Planning Committee - (2024 - 2026)**

This committee is responsible for defining the strategic goals of the institution for the coming decade while assessing the global, political and academic climate. I represent the collective concerns and opinions of the RIT community and maintain focus on our core values as educators.

**Research Allocation and Budget Committee – Committee Chair – CAD Rep**

Chairing the Senate Committee that interfaces with University Leadership to advocate for spending measures which align with the university mission and faculty consensus.

**RIT Global Summit Organization Committee (2023)**

Co-organized this biennial event as part of my role as Faculty Senate Chair. Took a delegation from the US to Dubai and led discussions regarding the implementation of Shared Governance.

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Explored the different cultural and educational contexts of governance with our international campuses in Croatia, Kosovo, Dubai and China.

## COACHE Survey Steering Committee - (2022 - 2024)

Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education.

Used my public-facing role to encourage faculty participation in this survey.

Reviewed and reported on the results to the community and identified key actions that should be undertaken to address institutional goals.

## RIT University Council Executive Committee - (2019 - 2025)

This committee discusses university priorities and establishes the agenda for the University Council. This allows us to strategically address concerns through the academic year.

## RIT University Council - (2018- 2025)

This group meets monthly to review the operations of the university and to ratify policies that have been reviewed and approved across campus.

## RIT Eisenhart Teaching Awards Committee - (2022 - 2025)

This committee reviews the teaching portfolios of our nominated finalists and votes to recognize their efforts on behalf of their students.

## Vice Chair of RIT Faculty Senate - (2021 - 2022)

## College Rep on RIT Faculty Senate - two terms (2018-2025)

## College Rep on the Council for Representation and Engagement of Women Faculty - (2021 - 2023)

## Leadership Council for the RIT Senate Women's Caucus - (2021 – 2025)

## School Rep on College Tenure Committee (2018)

## School Director search committee (2018-2021)

## Faculty search committees (2018 – 2022)

## Tenure-track Faculty Mentor - (2019 – 2025)

## Animation Rep for the SOFA Gender Equity Committee - (2017 – 2020)

## National Portfolio Day Reviewer (undergraduate admissions)

## Curriculum Redesign - 3D BFA Program, 3D MFA Program

## SOFA Social Media Curation Committee

## Organizer, Cultural Exchange Events

## Organized speaker events with companies and artists, i.e. Blizzard entertainment

## Pre-Tenure Service

### College Rep on University Faculty Affairs Committee

### Faculty Search Committees (2012 – 2016)

### NASAD Accreditation Prep and Self-Study Committee (2013-2014)

### SIGGRAPH RIT Booth Co-Organizer

### Animation Rep for the SOFA Gender Equity Committee

### Curriculum Redesign

### SOFA Social Media Curation Committee

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## Pop-up workshops on Animation Production

Topics ranged from: Quick Rigging Tips, Lighting and Rendering Best Practices and Time Management in Production

Co-organizer Anijam, the 24-hour Animation Competition

Graduate Admissions Portfolio Review committee

National Portfolio Day Reviewer (undergraduate)

Organized speaker events with noted digital artists; i.e. Chris Landry

Supervised update of 3D Model Archive

## Bowling Green State University

Faculty Advisor Student Game Animation Group

Faculty supervisor for BGSU trip to the Game Developer's Conference 2012

Fund-raising team member for the School of Art

Organization crew for group exhibitions at the Columbus Art Expo

## Speaking Engagements

### "Communication Strategies"

Karamah Law and Legal Summer Program, D.C 2025

### International Women in STEM *Panelist* – Advance Women in STEM

Rochester Institute of Technology 2023

### Digital Interactive Preservation

Cultural Heritage Imaging, Preservation and Research – CHIPR

Rochester Institute of Technology 2023

### "On Feminist Animation" *Panelist*

Brandeis Women's Studies Research Center, MA 2022

### Women in Leadership *Panelist* – Advance Women

Rochester Institute of Technology, NY 2022

### The Lahore Fort Preservation Project

Cultural Heritage Imaging, Preservation and Research – CHIPR

Rochester Institute of Technology, NY 2022

### "Developing Diversity in Animation" – Art & Art History Lecture Series

University North Carolina Charlotte, NC 2021

### "Creating Diverse Characters for Animation" – Body Art

Ringling College of Art and Design, FL 2021

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"Creating Diverse Characters for Animation" – Body Art	
Ringling College of Art and Design, FL	2020
"Creative Careers in a Global Setting"	
The Lyceum School, Karachi	2015
"Storytelling in Pictures"	
BoneYard Summer Camp – SUNY Geneseo NY	2014
"Misinformation and Perspective in Media"	
Rochester Institute of Technology, NY	2013

## Grants

### In Development

ACLS – Digital Justice Seed Grant Application	
Decolonizing Cultural Preservation	2027

Epic Game Megagrant	
Game Creation as a Means for Digital Preservation	2026

### Successful Grants

Wehrheim Grant Award	
PI – Digital Interactive Preservation	2024
Provost's Learning Innovation Grant	
PI – Digital Interactive Preservation	2024
RIT Advance Connect Grant	
2nd-PI w/Ambarien Alqadar, Sultana's Dream	2021
Epic Game Megagrant	
Team member, Virtual Production	2020
NSF Advance Connect Grant	
Co-PI w/ Mark Reisch, Character Mosaic Project	2017
Office of Diversity and Inclusion	
Co-PI w/Mark Reisch, Character Mosaic Project	2017
RIT FEAD Grant	
Co-PI w/MarkReisch, The Mill NY Co-op	2016
NSF Advance Connect Grant	
Co-PI w/Cat Ashworth, The Iroquois Creation Story	2014
Farrash Foundation Grant	
Sub-PI, Iroquois Creation Story	2013
RIT FEAD Grant	

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PI – SIGGRAPH Booth Organizer

2013

## Unsuccessful Grants

"Integrating Game Animation and Architecture for Digital Preservation"	
Co-applied w/Dr. De Wit-Paul	
Epic Megagrant	2025
"Developing a New Method for Preserving Cultural Heritage Sites "	
Co-applied w/Dr. De Wit-Paul	
John Ben Snow Foundation	2024
"Integrating Game Animation and Architectural Preservation Techniques"	
Co-applied w/Dr. De Wit-Paul	
Advance Connect Grant – RIT	2024
"Lahore Fort Digital Preservation Project"	
National Endowment for the Humanities – NEH	2023
"Digital Preservation"	
Advance Connect Grant	2023
"Lahore Fort Digital Preservation Project"	
Ambassador's Cultural Preservation Fund – US Dept. of State	2022
"Lahore Fort Digital Preservation Project"	
Creative Capital Award	2021
"Interactive Cultural Preservation"	
Epic Megagrant	2021
"The Lahore Fort Preservation Process"	
Harvard Radcliffe Fellowship Program	2021
"Lahore Fort VR Scan"	
Aquent Designing for Good Grant Program	2021
TED Fellowship Program	2021
TED Fellowship Program	2020

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## Conference Papers and Presentations

### Submitted or In Development

"Multidisciplinary Teaching Digital Interactive Preservation: Games for Global Knowledge" - *submitted*

*Co-authored with Dr. Alissa De Wit-Paul*

The Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA) and the Association of Architecture Schools of Australasia (AASA)

2026 AASA/ACSA International Conference

2026

"Teaching Technology in the Age of Technology: Understanding the Ebb and Flow of Learning" - *in development*

SIGGRAPH Educator's Forum

2026

"Designing to Teach: Exploring Ways to Help Students Learn" - *in development*  
INTED - 20th Annual International Technology, Education and Development Conference - *submitted*

2026

### Peer Reviewed Presentations with Published Proceedings

"Decolonizing Preservation: The Digital Interactive Preservation Game"

*Co-authored with Dr. Alissa De Wit-Paul*

Games for Good, Clark University, Worcester MA

2025

"Gaming Physical History: The Process of Digital Interactive Preservation"

*Co-authored with Dr. Alissa De Wit-Paul*

UNESCO World Heritage Institute of Training and Research, "Reshaping Heritage Conservation In Higher Education: What, How, For Whom?" Shanghai, China

2025

"Cultural Preservation Using Game Technology" - *Top Speaker*

Game Developer's Conference, San Francisco CA

2022

"Digital Preservation Using Game Technology"

Global XR Symposium, Netherlands

2021

"The Lahore Fort Preservation Project"

Frameless Labs XR Symposium RIT, Rochester, NY

2021

"Diversity in Gaming" Panelist, Atkins Library Presentations

University North Carolina, Charlotte NC

2021

"Aesthetic Trends in Game Animation" - *Panel Presentation*

University Film Video and Animation Conference, Los Angeles CA

2013

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## Peer Reviewed Presentations

"Sharing Cultural Sites Through Digital Twinning: A Case Study of the Campbell House" *Co-authored with Dr. Alissa De Wit-Paul*  
Cultural Heritage Imaging and Innovation Conference, Dubrovnik2025

"Digital Preservation with Gaming Workflows"  
FACSS SciX Annual Conference 2024

## Unsuccessful Conference Submissions

"Gaming Physical History: the Process of Interactive Digital Preservation Demonstration." *Co-authored with Dr. Alissa De Wit-Paul*  
Small Museum Association Conference, Gaithersburg, Maryland. 2024

## Articles and Published Works

### Submitted or In-Development

"Scanning Heritage for the Future. A Manual to Support Virtual Creation."  
Book Proposal - *in development* TBD

### Peer Reviewed Published Works

"The Digital Preservation Project: Campbell House"  
Co-presenter Dr Alissa De Wit-Paul  
SHED Wehrheim Gallery curate exhibition 2024

"The SHED Pilot Project"  
SHED Wehrheim Gallery curated exhibition 2023

"Pedestals" – short film  
Columbus E-Tech Design Educator's Conference 2012

"Pedestals" – short film  
61st Annual Exhibition Dorothy Uber Bryan Gallery, Bowling Green OH 2011

Iroquois Creation Story Festival Screenings – (2015 – 2017)

Wolves Independent International Film Festival – Lithuania  
Comanche Nation Film Festival – OK  
Santa Fe Film Festival, Santa Fe – NM  
Green Bay Film Festival, Green Bay – WI  
Maoriland Film Festival – New Zealand

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Native Festival, Madrid – Spain

Wairoa Maori Film Festival – New Zealand

Flaming Arrow Inter-Tribal Film Festival, Portland – OR

Asinabka Film Festival, Ottawa – Canada

Copa Short Film Festival, Maricopa – AZ

## Unsuccessful Published Works

"Digital Interactive Preservation: Saving the Unique for All"

Co-authored with Dr. Alissa De Wit-Paul

Journal of Technology |Architecture + Design 2025

"Decoding: Recoding: Virtual Design for Designing Virtually"

Co-authored with Dr. Alissa De Wit-Paul

Journal of Technology |Architecture + Design 2024

## Awards

Frank J. Romano Endowed Prize – *Innovative Research* 2024

Iroquois Creation Story – short film 2015-2017

12th Annual Red Nation Film Festival – LA

*Winner Best Animation and Best Live Short*

Indianer Inuit Film Festival – Germany

*Winner Best Animation*

Bare Bones International Film and Music Festival – OK

*Winner Best Animation*

Buffalo Niagara International Film Festival – NY

*Winner Best Animation*

American Indian Film Festival, San Francisco – CA

*Winner Best Animation*

18th Annual Native American Film Festival of the South-East – SC

*Winner Best Original Music*

## Courses Developed

SOFA Contemporary Topics: Digital Preservation Using Game Technology

Fundamentals of 3D Animation (graduate only)

Building the 3D Character (cross-listed undergraduate and graduate)

3D Lighting and Rendering (cross-listed undergraduate and graduate)

Senior Animation Capstone 1 (undergraduate)

Sophomore Animation Workshop 1 (undergraduate)

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Intro to 3D Modeling (undergraduate)

## Courses Taught

SOFA Contemporary Topics: Digital Preservation Using Game Technology

Scripting 3DDD (undergraduate)

Principles of Animation (undergraduate)

Intro to 3D Modeling (undergraduate)

Advanced 3D Modeling (undergraduate)

3D Animation I (undergraduate)

3D Animation II (undergraduate)

3D Animation III (undergraduate)

After Effects for Animators (undergraduate)

Sophomore Animation Workshop 1 (undergraduate)

Senior Animation Capstone 1 (undergraduate)

Building the 3D Character (cross-listed undergraduate and graduate)

3D Lighting and Rendering (cross-listed undergraduate and graduate)

After Effects for Animators (cross-listed undergraduate and grad)

Fundamentals of 3D Animation (graduate only)

After Effects for Animators (graduate only)

Independent Studies: Advanced Animation, Advanced Rigging (face, quadruped, creatures)

## Commercial Experience

The Mill, NY

Co-op, Lighting and Rigging

2017

Dustbunny Studios, NY

Rigging Artist

2011

Willoughby 5N, NY

Prop Fabrication

2011

Armistice Media, NY

Animator

2011

Nathan Love, NY

Rigger

2010

Magnetic, NY

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CG Generalist – Rendering, Post-production	2010
Animation Collective, NY Animation Intern	2008
The Carrot Company (Pvt.) Ltd, Karachi Lead Animator/ Project Manager	2005-2006
Post Amazers (Pvt.) Ltd, Karachi Team Lead, Project Lead	2005
Post Amazers (Pvt.) Ltd, Karachi Senior Animator, Character Rigger	2003-2005
Post Amazers (Pvt.) Ltd, Karachi Junior Animator	2003

## Additional Experience

Exhibitor: Animation Collective – The New York Anime Conference, NY  
Design Intern – IAL (Saatchi & Saatchi) Pvt. Ltd.  
Stage Manager – Nautanki Theater Company  
Acting Coach – NCA Puppeteers Society  
Student Representative – Government Education Conference for the Promotion of Art and Cultural Studies in Pakistan  
Lead Actress – Lyceum Productions “Noises Off”  
Mural Artist – Idara Home for the Mentally Disabled  
Book Cover Illustrator – “Mehaktey Phool”  
Illustrator/Colorist – “Pehli Kiran” Educational textbook series

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## Contact for More Information (or stalk online)

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