MANAV GALA

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SUMMARY

FX Artist specializing in Houdini-based simulations with a focus on destruction, pyro, FLIP, and procedural workflows for film-quality visual effects. Experienced in developing custom HDAs, VEX-driven tools, and optimized simulation setups for large-scale shots. Winner of multiple Gnomon 'Best of Term' awards and finalist in The Rookies 2025, Rookie of the Year.

ACADEMIC PROJECTS

Cornfield - Metal destruction, Vellum hair & Pyro FX   **October 2025 - December 2025**
- Highly art directed metal destruction sim using a constraint switching loop to deform and freeze on impact, followed by post-sim animation and blendshapes.
- Vellum hair sim for cornfield with individual pieces instanced onto hair curve points for hyper efficient rendering.
- Large-scale pyro simulations for dust kickup, broken up into ultra high resolution clusters and merged; the final simulation consisted of over 500 million voxels.
- Lit and rendered in Karma using USD/Solaris, composited in Nuke using render layers for quick iteration.

Whale Breach - FLIP, Whitewater and Ocean Spectrum (Ongoing)   **January 2026 - Present**
- Highly efficient FLIP simulation constrained to the camera frustum and utilizing a custom meshing system for maximizing efficiency and speed.
- Several layers of custom particle and volume simulations for whitewater foam, spray, bubbles, mist and air field.
- Highly optimized caching consisting of attribute management, occlusion and frustum culling and compressed caching.

Dragon (2024) - Pyro, Destruction and Crowds   **October 2024 - December 2024**
- Hierarchical pyro setup for fire breath, ground fire, smoke elements, embers and debris.
- Processed and optimized high-fidelity Kitbash3D assets for RBD destruction, including topology cleanup, manifold geometry correction, and interior face generation.
- Crowd simulation with paths, goals, collision and fire avoidance and ragdoll physics.

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- **Houdini:** Pyro (Native and Axiom), RBD destruction, FLIP & whitewater, POPs, Vellum, VEX scripting, HDA development, procedural modeling, TOPs, USD/Solaris, Karma.
- **Other Software:** Maya, Nuke, Substance Painter, ZBrush, Unreal Engine.
- **Render Engines:** Karma, Mantra, Arnold, Vray, Redshift, Renderman.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

- 2x Grand Prize - Gnomon Best of Term (Winter 2024, Winter 2025).
- 2x Category Winner - Gnomon Best of Term (Fall 2024, Spring 2025).
- Finalist - The Rookies Awards 2025 (Rookie of the Year - Visual Effects).

EDUCATION

Gnomon School of Visual Effects   **Expected Graduation: March 2026**
- B.F.A. in Digital Production.
- Visual Effects Concentration.
- Proficient in the entire VFX pipeline through coursework and projects.