Maurizio Zappettini | VFX Technical Artist | AI Generalist (ComfyUI) | Houdini FX | Nuke

- **Nationality:** American | Italian ● **Address:** Los Angeles | Palo Alto, California ● **Phone number:** 626-524-0130
- **Email address:** hello@mzo.tv ● **Portfolio:** 3D / VFX: https://mzo.design | Gen AI: https://mzo-ai.studio
- **Linkedin:** https://linkedin.com/in/mauriziozappettini ● **Company:** https://impossiblelabs.ai

Profile

AI Generalist and **VFX Technical Artist** with 20+ years in high-end VFX and short-form production, working at the intersection of art + tech. I build **ComfyUI**-based generative workflows for real shot work, image generation, inpainting/outpainting, look exploration, cleanup/extension, and consistency-focused pipelines, and integrate them into production contexts with Python tooling when needed. Comfortable working with open-source and in-house fine-tuned models, creating repeatable node graphs, evaluating quality with look grids and review passes, and improving reliability through dataset hygiene, prompt systems, and workflow versioning. Strong production instincts, curiosity, and taste focused on shipping usable AI pipelines that hold up under deadlines and client constraints.

Work Experience

07/2005 – Present
Los Angeles, CA | U.S. & Europe

VFX Technical Artist | Houdini FX / 3D Simulation | Procedural Pipelines | Nuke Compositor | 3D Generalist | Gen AI Artist
mzo.studio (mzo.design | mzo-ai.studio)

• Led VFX/CG direction and supervised delivery for high-end advertising and music video projects across the U.S. and Europe.

• Built procedural Houdini workflows and reusable toolsets/pipelines to reduce iteration time and increase throughput (procedural/parametric systems).

• Delivered Houdini FX and 3D simulation work (fluids/particles/environments) and integrated final shots in Nuke compositing.

• Owned end-to-end shot execution under real client deadlines: lookdev/render handoff, comp integration, versioning, and final delivery.

• Served as the technical + creative bridge between agencies/directors and artists. Translating creative intent into efficient technical plans.

01/2003 – Present
Los Angeles, CA | U.S. & Europe

Director | Creative Director | Producer
mzo.studio (mzo.tv)

• Directed award-winning advertising, fashion films, and music videos; produced international campaigns since the early 2000s.

01/2025 – Present
Los Angeles, CA | Palo Alto, CA

Founder & Creative Technologist (Applied AI / GenAI / AI Imaging)
Impossible Labs

• Founded an R&D-driven studio building next-generation imaging and communication products (consumer + pro-facing).

• Architected end-to-end AI application systems: agentic workflows, tool orchestration, structured outputs, evaluation loops, and reliability-minded pipeline design.

• Built backend APIs, database-backed workflows, integrations, and delivery systems for production-like AI products.

• Developed GPU-accelerated imaging workflows and shader-based components to support computational photography features.

Work Experience

• Led product execution from ambiguity to working prototypes: product vision, architecture, implementation direction, QA strategy, and release planning.

• Researching training/fine-tuning and serving strategies toward future proprietary models and evaluation methodologies.

06/2017 – 06/2023
Santa Monica, CA

Advertising Film Director
Untitled, Inc.
• Represented on Untitled's director roster (commercial representation).

04/2023 – 05/2023
Los Angeles, CA

Lead 3D Artist
Be Grizzlee
• Led 3D team delivery for a multi-spot advertising campaign using Houdini/Redshift/Nuke workflows.

• Shipped high-quality CG under tight timelines and client constraints.

03/2023 – 04/2023
Los Angeles, CA

CG Pipeline Engineer (USD / Solaris / Clarisse)
Wild Capture
• Designed and tested a USD-based pipeline bridging Houdini Solaris and Clarisse iFX to utilize a proprietary volumetric video texturing system.

• Validated compatibility and iteration speed in a production pipeline environment.

• Collaborated with engineering and production teams on pipeline reliability.

08/2022 – 08/2022
Los Angeles, CA

VFX Artist (Nuke)
Compadre
• Nuke compositing and VFX for National Football League, NFL+ (national campaign; high-viewership).

06/2022 – 08/2022
Los Angeles, CA

3D Artist (Houdini & Clarisse)
TiltShift
• Houdini particle simulation plus Clarisse layout/lookdev/rendering for Walmart 2022 Christmas campaign.

04/2022 – 06/2022
Los Angeles, CA

3D Art Director & Lead 3D Artist (Houdini)
Be Grizzlee
• Led the 3D/VFX team and executed Houdini fluid simulation work for Blue Diamond Almond Breeze.

03/2022 – 03/2022
Los Angeles, CA

VFX Artist (Nuke)
MIRADA
• Nuke compositing and VFX for Dell Precision 5000 and 5470 product spots.

10/2021 – 11/2021
Los Angeles, CA

3D Art Director (NFT) & Lead 3D Artist (Houdini)
Unblocked
• Houdini Digital Assets creation, overall art direction, and Houdini 3D modeling and animation for Cypress Hill NFT collectibles.

12/2010 – 10/2012
London, United Kingdom

Founder | Executive Producer | Creative Director
loudcloud.tv
• Started this content production studio as a subsidiary of Claw Films.
• LoudCloud was among the very first digital content studios in Europe.
• Produced web commercials, viral content.

10/2008 – 10/2012
London, United Kingdom

Founder | Executive Producer | Creative Director
Claw Films Ltd.
• Founded Claw Films and grew it into an internationally recognized production company.
• Ran the company and led a small team of producers and creatives.

Work Experience

• Produced iconic music videos internationally.

09/2004 – 09/2005
Genoa Area, Italy

Creative Producer | VFX Supervisor
Marinastudios
- Former state of the art post production facility.

01/2002 – 12/2004
Genoa Area, Italy

Founder
Noname Pictures
- Former music video and short film production company.

01/2001 – 12/2002
Milan, Italy

Digital Artist
Santa Veronica Studios
- Fashion digital image post-production and video editing work.

Projects

Impossible Camera
Computational photography + GPU imaging pipeline R&D

LuminaFace AI
AI portrait platform (upload → processing → delivery system)

EMULSE
Film emulation tooling (GPU kernel + editor workflows)

MeshWhisper
Privacy-first off-grid messaging R&D (mesh + decentralized systems concepts)

Skills

– AI / GENAI ENGINEERING

GenAI App Dev	Agentic Workflows	Prompt Systems	Tool Calling
RAG Concepts	Structured Outputs	Evals / Regression	Agent Orchestration
Guardrails / HITL	Vector Embeddings	Tracing / Observability	Cost / Latency Tuning

– GPU/IMAGING/RENDERING

Metal (MSL)	Metal Compute	Compute Shaders	GPU Pipelines
GPU Image Proc	Shader Development	Comp Photography	Color Pipeline
Tone Mapping	AVFoundation	Core Image	TWAIN

– GENAI TASKS

Inpainting	Outpainting	Generative3D	Upscaling
Relighting	Matting	Depth	Normal Maps

– CORE GENAI VFX WORKFLOW

ComfyUI Workflows	Krea Nodes	Custom Nodes	Workflow Builds
FLUX	ControlNet	IP-Adapter	LoRA Training

– IMAGE GEN MODELS

Seedream	gpt-image	NanoBanana	Firefly
FLUX Models	Stable Diffusion	SDXL	Midjourney

🧪 Skills

– VIDEO GENAI

Runway	Sora	Veo	SeedancePro
WAN	Text-to-Video	Image-to-Video	Video-to-Video

– VFX/3D/PIPELINE

Houdini	USD / Solaris	Nuke / Compositing	Maya
Cinema 4D	Redshift	Arnold	Octane
Substance Painter	After Effects	HDA Development	VEX

– VFX INTEGRATION

Nuke Tools	Nuke Python	Houdini PDG	USD Pipelines
Batch Render	Shot Cleanup	Look Dev	Deep Compositing

– DEVELOPER TOOLING (AI-NATIVE)

Cursor	Windsurf	OpenAI Codex	GitHub Agent Hub
Android Studio	GitHub Workflows	Claude Code	Warp

– LLMS

OpenAI	Anthropic	Google Gemini	Grok
DeepSeek	Qwen	Llama	Mistral
Kimi	Cohere	Reka	Yi

– BACKEND/WEB/SYSTEMS

REST API Design	TypeScript / React	DB Modeling	Tailwind CSS
Async Workflows	AWS Services	Stripe Payments	OAuth 2.0
Email Delivery	Docker Containers	PostgreSQL	Redis

– PROGRAMMING LANGUAGES

Python	TypeScript	JavaScript	Swift
SQL	C / C++	Metal Shading Language	VEX

– R&D/EXPLORING

LoRA/QLoRA (PEFT)	SFT concepts	DPO concepts	Data / Eval Methods

– AUTOMATION / ORCHESTRATION / INTEGRATIONS

n8n	Zapier	Workflow Automation	Integration Automation
Event-driven Workflows	Webhooks	REST APIs	API Integrations
JSON	HTTP Requests	Data Pipelines	ETL Concepts
Email Automation	Background Jobs	WebSockets	Queue/Worker Patterns

– PLATFORMS

Replicate	OpenRouter	Krea	HuggingFace

– CORE TECH / OS

Git	APIs	Linux	macOS

Education

01/2013 – 12/2016
Pasadena, CA

Film, Advertising, Design | Bachelor of Fine Arts with Distinction
ArtCenter College of Design
GPA 3.924; Provost's List every term

01/2001 – 12/2003
Genoa, Italy

D.A.M.S. Film, Advertising, Arts
University of Genoa

Awards (selection)

06/2017   **AICP Show | Shortlist**

01/2017   **Clio Awards | Shortlist**

01/2017   **Telly Awards | Silver (Commercial Directing / TV & Cable)**

05/2016   **Telly Awards | Bronze (Commercial Directing / TV & Cable)**

03/2016   **American Advertising Awards (ADDY) | Gold (Los Angeles)**

03/2015   **American Advertising Awards (ADDY) | Silver (District 15)**

03/2015   **American Advertising Awards (ADDY) | Silver (Los Angeles)**

Languages

English

Italian

Contacts

@
hello@mzo.tv

+1 (626) 524-0130

+1 (626) 524-0130

in
in/mauriziozappettini