

2019/01/13 - New Year's Update

The Research & Development phase of this project is turning out to be more intense than I first anticipated. I'm concentrating on my character animation workflow at the moment. My goal is to get/create a set of tools which enhances the animation process.

For the last while I have been working on a facial animation rig for the ManuelBastioniLab. The original author has decided to stop supporting and developing further features. A group of people decided to pick up the slack, including me.

The characters created by the ManuelBastioniLab are good and the rig is very usable, however, creating facial expressions require animating shape keys, which makes it difficult to animate. I decided to create a face rig to drive the shape keys. As usual, the concept sounds easy, but the implementation is riddled with technical details I have to wrap my mind around. It took a bit of time to complete. However, the first version of the rig is now available on the new official [MB-Lab addon](#), and also a version of the addon I'm maintaining, [here](#).

The next project I'm working on is to create a lip-syncing feature in the Lab to be able to create lip-syncing animation. I've been looking at different Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR) open source software to work with. The idea is to run a speech clip through the ASR engine, which produces timing information of when phonemes are spoken, I take this data into blender and create a first path lip-sync animation. There is [Rhubarb](#) and an equivalent [addon for blender](#) that do that, but it's only for Windows and Mac, I'm looking at either porting it to linux, or developing my own. Being who I am, I'm leaning towards developing my own, just to learn how things work