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Editor: STEPHEN PRICE

Publisher: GREG ROBINS

Associate editor: HEATHER GRIEVE

Associate publisher: CHRISTINE STEAD

Account managers: STACY JAMES FRY,
APRIL HARVEY

Producer: BRANDON DEMARCO

Submissions coordinator: ABBEY KERR

Music editor: STEVE MARCHESE

Proofing editor: MARILEE BOITSON

Preview director/producer:
STACY JAMES FRY

Preview editor: JEAN-DENIS ROUETTE

Montage editor: JEFF ZEMETIS

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At the reception after the Best of Stash 2007 screening at the Museum of the Moving Image in NY last month, one of the audience asked why short films were on the program, as they are art and not design or advertising. I was still formulating my quasi-intellectual attempt at an answer when a rather hairy man I had not met leaned in and said, "Of course short films are advertising. We call it branded content."

The term "branded content" is one of the cloudier gems to emerge from the new media lexicon. It is applied to marketing materials – usually video – where the sales message is subordinated in some substantial way to the entertainment quotient. The BMW films from earlier this decade are the classic (and no doubt too-often cited) example.

And by that definition Hairy Man had a point: Short films are investments in studio/artist moral, skill development and ego building but, longer term, they are also portfolio pieces intended to attract more and better-heeled patrons. Perhaps traditional fine art pieces can be seen in the same way: a form of advertising for the talent involved.

This idea implies a kind of art and media grey zone where no hard line exists between commercial art and art for art's sake. The visual I get is a long, messy, mercurial spectrum where companies like MK12 comfortably occupy both ends.

Have a look at their 30-minute opus "History of America" on the bonus disk and see if you agree with the Hairy Man and me.

Stephen Price

Editor

New York, March 2008

sp@stashmedia.tv

MONSTER "LEGS"
TVC :60

Agency:
BBDO, NEW YORK

Director:
RUPERT SANDERS

Production:
MJZ

VFX:
MASS MARKET

www.massmarket.tv

Working with the MJZ production team and VFX guru Stan Winston, Mass Market tested several approaches to this spot's eponymous legs. Mass Market EP Justin Lane says the final technique combined stilts and prosthetics held together with Flame magic. And what about the center of the earth set piece? "From the start, Rupert had a very clear vision of what he wanted with the gyroscopic rig and in pre-pro his production designer created an amazing design for it. We had to augment that design with CG elements to extend the structure and create the grandness that everyone was looking for. Finally, in CG we designed and built the cave environment, capturing this dark otherworldly space."



For BBDO, New York

CCO: David Lubars
ECD: Eric Silver
AD: Jerome Marucci
Copy: Steve McElligott
Sr producers: Anthony Curti,
Ed Zazzera
Executive music producer:
Loren Parkins

For MJZ

Director: Rupert Sanders
EP: Eric Stern
Producer: Laurie Boccaccio

For Mass Market

EPs: Justin Lane, Angela Bowen
Producer: Nancy Nina Hwang
VFX super/lead Flame:
Cedric Nicolas-Troyan
Flame: Chris Staves, Sarah Eim
Lead TD: David Chontos

Designer: Josh Harvey
CG animators: Jonah Friedman,
Chris Hill
Tracking: Joerg Liebold, Steven Hill,
Hyunjeen Lee
Lead roto: Leslie Chung
Roto: J Bush, Alejandro Monzon,
Tiffany Chung

Toolkit

Maya, Flame, Silhouette, boujou



**FEDEX “CARRIER PIGEONS”
TVC :30**

**Agency:
BBDO NY**

**Director:
TOM KUNTZ**

**Production:
MJZ**

**VFX:
FRAMESTORE NY**
www.framestore.com

“We knew it would be time-intensive to create full CG birds, but we knew we could bring a lot to the animation and make these look and feel like 15-foot, half-ton, genetically engineered creatures,” recalls David Hulin, VFX Super and head of 3D at Framestore NY of this spectacular HD Super Bowl spot. “3D feathers can be very challenging and this job was no exception. We created the heavily feathered Hippogriff in Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban, but that involved 100 people working for a year. For this spot, we had to take all that CG knowledge and technology and apply it to 30,000 feathers on each bird in an eight-week schedule.”

For BBDO

CCO: David Lubars, Bill Bruce
ECD: Eric Silver
Associate CD/copy: Reuben Hower
AD/CD: Gerard Caputo
EP: Elise Greiche

For MJZ

Director: Tom Kuntz
DOP: Jeff Cronenweth

For Framestore NY

Animators: Dave Hulin, Murray Butler
Producer: Satoko Linuma

Audio post: Sound Lounge
Mixer: Tom Jucarone

**Watch Behind the Scenes on
the DVD.**

COKE "IT'S MINE"
TVC :60

Agency:
WIEDEN+KENNEDY

Director:
NICOLAI FUGLSIG

Production:
MJZ

VFX:
THE MILL NY
www.the-mill.com

The languid pace, seamless VFX and endearing pneumatic cast lifted this spot out of the crowd at Superbowl XLII. After studying footage from the Macy's Day Parade the animators at the Mill NY emulated giant balloon behavior using a mix of keyframed animation and dynamics simulation. Defining how fast the characters should move was crucial – too slow and the spot would drag, too fast and the characters would appear too light and unbelievable.



For Wieden+Kennedy

CDs: Hal Curtis, Sheena Brady
Producer: Matt Hunnicutt

For MJZ

Director: Nicolai Fuglsig
Producer: Emma Wilcockson
DP: Ellen Kuras

For The Mill NY

CD: Angus Kneale
Producer: Bethan Thomas
VFX supers: Angus Kneale,
Andrew Proctor, Asher Edwards

CG producer: Asher Edwards
Sr CG: Ben Smith
CG: Andrew Proctor, JongJin Choi,
Keith Kim, Glen Swetetz,
Rob Petrie, Kevin Ives, Justin
Zurrow, Wyatt Savarese, Emily
Meger, Mike Panov, Joshua Merck,
Dylan Maxwell, Douglas Luka,
Vince Baertsoen, Yann Mabilie,
Tomas Salles, Yorje Kumalasari
Shake: Andrew Proctor, JongJin
Choi
Lead Flame: Angus Kneale, Dan

Williams
Flame: Pheng Sisopha,
Randy McEntee
Smoke: Jeff Robbins
Support artists: Greg Gilpatrick,
Anu Nagaraj, Suzanne Dyer
Telecine: Alex Maxwell,
Sal Malfitano
Telecine producer: Angela Botta

Toolkit

Maya, XSI, Shake, After Effects,
Photoshop, Mudbox, Massive,
Flame, Spirit



KIT KAT
“THE ULTIMATE BREAK”
Viral/TVC

Agency:
JWT, PARIS

Director:
AKAMA

Production:
WANDA PRODUCTIONS

Animation:
AKAMA STUDIO

www.akamastudio.com

Fellow Parisians and longtime collaborators Wanda Productions and Akama Studio help Nestlé launch the new Kit Kat bar with this engaging and ambitious character-driven film. The clip leads off a massive campaign which culminates with two consumers winning trips into outer space for their “Ultimate Break”.

For JWT, Paris

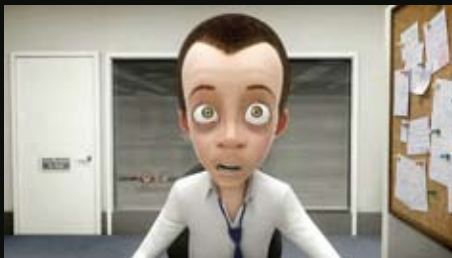
CD: Ghislain de Villoutreys,
Olivier Courtemanche

AD: Xavier Beauregard

Concept/copy: Hadi Hassan

Assistant AD: Yan-Gaël Cobigo

Producer: Elisabeth Boitte



For Wanda Productions, Paris

Producer: Claude Fayolle

Web agency: Grouek

Music: Xavier Berthelot

CCM "ANATOMICAL"
TVC :30

Agency:
CRAMER-KRASSETT,
MILWAUKEE

Director:
BEN GROSSMANN

Animation:
THE SYNDICATE
www.syndicate.tv

"Organic subject matter is always one of the hardest things to do in VFX," admit the powers that be at The Syndicate in LA. "In order to design a hockey skate that looked like it was the result of natural human evolution, the team spent time brushing up on their anatomy, and studying reference macro imagery of cellular life. We also bought and photographed slabs of beef, bone and cartilage. After getting a solid handle on all that, the trick was really to pull it back to keep it from looking too real and too gross. We needed to set up several procedural systems to create and animate things like veins, bone growth, and muscle tissue. All of these systems became very complex in order to be controllable, yet still appear natural and random."

For Cramer-Krasselt

EP: Kara Harris
CD: Curtis Smith
Copy: Ray Boome
Sr AD: Jim Root

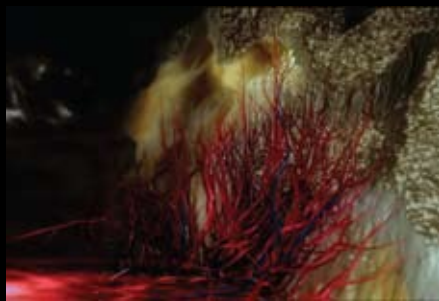
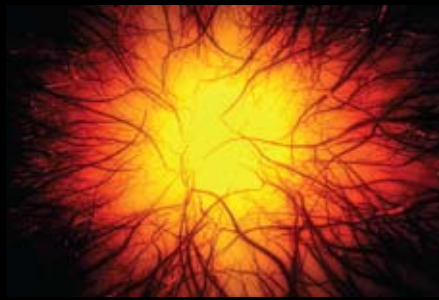
For The Syndicate

Director: Ben Grossmann
EP: Kenny Solomon
Producer: Magdalena Wolf
VFX producer: Erik Press
VFX coordinator: Jena Huyhn
CG super: Beau Cameron
Digital artists: David Sliviak,

Oliver Arnold, Jesse Franklin
Modeler: Jaview Bello
Lighting/rendering:
Anthony Bussiere
Colorist: Beau Leon
Editor: Ben Grossmann

Toolkit

Maya, Shake, After Effects



For Psyop

Director: Eben Mears
 EP: Justin Booth-Clibborn
 Producers: Jen Glabus
 Asst. producer: Carol Collins
 DOPs: Igor Jadue Lillo,
 Steve Koster
 Additional design: Tanya Weiss,
 John Saunders, Gordon Waltho,
 Pete Sickert-Bennett, Anh Vu,
 Ine Van Den Elsen
 VFX super: Jake Slutsky
 3D: Jeff Lopez, Damon Ciarelli,
 Iggy Ayestaran, Aditi Kapoor,
 Saira Mathew, Boris Ustaev, Jeff
 Dates, Jordan Blit, Josh Harvey,
 Todd Akita, Tom Cushwa, Lee
 Wolland, Pota Tseng, Jason Vega,
 Kitty Lin, Jason Goodman
 FX: Miguel Salek
 Flame: Eben Mears, Aska Otake,
 Jaime Aguirre
 2D compositing: Molly Schwartz
 Lead 2D roto: Leslie Chung
 Lead 2D tracking: Hyunjeen Lee,
 Seung Lee
 Storyboards: Ben Chan
 Editor: Cass Vanini
 VO: Donald Sutherland

Toolkit

Maya, Houdini, After Effects,
 Flame

"This was one of the hardest jobs creatively I have ever worked on," admits Psyop director Eben Mears. "Because of the nature of the brief, the story was always in flux. We ended up doing something like 30 or 40 versions of the previz and still we couldn't lock it down. There was a constant back and forth between the agency and us on what 'worlds' best represented the Dot's journey. This meant updating and changing sections right up till the end. The spot is really built on fluid transitions from world to



world and therefore cutting out a section in the middle really throws everyone in production for a loop. The most challenging technical hurdle was creating ink fluids in CG. We used Houdini for the first time here to create particles for the ink section of the spot. I was extremely happy with the results and think that we created something unique and original – we started calling our fluids TD 'Particle Jesus' when we saw the results."

GUINNESS "DOT" Cinema, TVC

Agency:
IIBBDO, DUBLIN

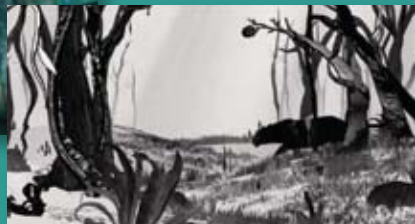
Director:
EBEN MEARS

Production:
**PSYOP
 STINK**

Animation:
PSYOP
www.psyop.tv

For IIBBDO, Dublin
 CD: Mal Stevenson
 AD: Jonathan Cullen
 Copy: Rory Hamilton
 Producer: Onagh Carolan
 Beer stylist: Thomas Power

For Stink
 AD: Haejin Cho
 EP: Blake Powell
 Producer: Sophie Kluman



FOX SPORTS NASCAR
"ENGINE CITY"
TVC :30

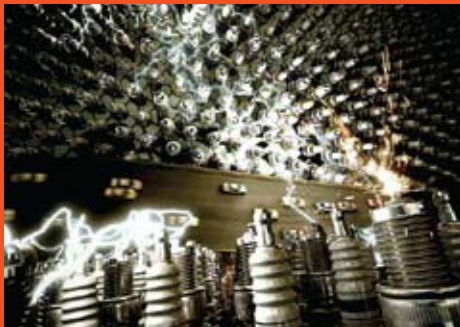
Client:
FOX SPORTS

Directors:
MARK DENYER-SIMMONS,
JASON SCOTT

Production:
FOX SPORTS

Animation:
BUF

www.buf.com



A standout during Super Bowl XLII, this promo for the 2008 Nascar season re-teams the BUF and Fox teams for an epic race through 42 CG shots burning up 3,000 hours of rendering on 60 machines. The 2D and 3D work was done via BUF's own Bstudio and Bpaint software with rendering handled

in their newest homegrown production tool, you guessed it... Brender. "There's always a frame of reference for inspiration when starting a project," says Fox Sports CD Jason Scott. "But any pictures, commercials, etc. we showed BUF were for what we didn't want. It's a crime to work with a company

like BUF and ask them to mimic something that's already been done. Our creative meetings with them were about weeding out all of the absurd ideas and keeping the concept in its purest form: a city made of engine parts." Schedule: six weeks.

For Fox Sports

CDs/ADs: Mark Denyer-Simmons, Jason Scott
EVP marketing: Eric Markgraf
SVP/CD: Robert Gottlieb
EP: Bill Battin
PA: Lauren Haugh
Editor: Kirk Smith
Sound design: Mic Brooling
Mac artist: Tommy Woolh

For BUF

VFX super: Olivier Dumont, Julien Bollbach
Flame: Thibault Debaveye
Producers: Audrey-Anna Bazard, Vanessa Fourgeaud

Toolkit

Bstudio, Bpaint and Brender (all BUF proprietary software), Flame





For Channel 4

Producer: Shizuka Hata
Director: Brian Harrington

For Nexus Productions

Animation director: Simon Robson
Producer: Libbie Doherty
Animators: Daniel Fitzgerald,
Jason Morice, Dean Smith

Toolkit

After Effects, Photoshop

CHANNEL 4 "RAMSAY'S KITCHEN NIGHTMARES"

TVC :40

Client:

CHANNEL 4

Director:

SIMON ROBSON

Animation:

NEXUS PRODUCTIONS

SIXTY40

www.nexusproductions.com

www.sixty40.com

Just the thought of working for British celebrity chef Gordon Ramsay – known equally for his volcanic temperament as well as perfectionist cooking – would scare off lesser souls, but Nexus Productions director Simon Robson put aside preconceptions and set out to design a visual representation of the intense conflict that makes "Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares" so popular. Supplied with an audio recording of the star's verbal jousting, Robson and Sydney-based design studio Sixty40 turned the promo around in one week from boards to final delivery. In the end, according to Robson, "The project was a pleasure to work on. We even created an unbleeped version with four-letter type animation. I heard that Gordon f***king loved it!"

CN REFRESH “ELIJAH RAP” Broadcast design

Client:
CARTOON NETWORK

Director:
SHILO

Production/animation:
SHILO

www.shilo.tv

Another broadcast treat from the Shilo and Cartoon Network teams where traditional cel, 2D, and 3D animation is driven by the actions and words of a talented young performer named Elijah who was discovered among the project's 100 audition tapes and wrote his own rap for the occasion. "Directing isn't just about giving people orders," asserts Shilo Co-founder Andre Stringer. "It's as much about finding the right people and letting them do their thing. Once everybody saw Elijah, we knew we had our star."

Read more detailed notes at
www.stashmedia.tv/42_09.

For Cartoon Network
CD: Sean Akins
AD: Kevin Fitzgerald
HOP: Nathania Seales



For Shilo

CDs: Andre Stringer, Jose Gomez
Associate CD: Evan Dennis
Lead design: Evan Dennis,
Mitch Paone
Design: David Hill, Seth Ricart
Cel animation: Stieg Retlin
Animation/compositing: David Hill,
Jose Fuentes, Gerald Soto,
Rick Maltwitz, Yussef Cole
Audio: Darrin Wiener
Editor: Nathan Caswell
Producer: Dexter Randazzo
Line producer: Scott Lane
EP: Tracy Chandler

CARTOON NETWORK UK
Broadcast design



Director:
CLAIRE UNDERWOOD

Production:
HANRAHAN FILMS

Animation:
PESKY PRODUCTIONS
www.pesky.com

Pesky is the animation studio started in Brighton in 1997 by animation director Claire Underwood and creative director David Hodgson. Now based in London, the company dishes out work for hire gigs as well as developing their own properties. One of their series, "The Amazing Adrenalini Brothers", caught the fancy of Cartoon Network UK who asked for a series of IDs with a similar frantic style and energy. Schedule: Six weeks. Pesky is repped by London's HANraHAN Films.

For HANraHAN

Managing director:
Mark Hanrahan
EP of animation: Alan Dewhurst

For Pesky

Director: Claire Underwood
Producer: David Hodgson
Design/animation: Elena Bolardo,
Gary Boller, Steve Lenton,
Mia Nilsson, Claire Underwood
Sound: Paul James

Toolkit

Flash, After Effects



stash 42.11

**FUEL "BELOW DECK",
"SACKRIFICE"**

TVCs :15 x 2

Client:
FUEL TV

Director:
RYAN HONEY

Animation:
BUCK

www.buck.tv

The last half of Buck's four-clip assignment from Fuel TV (the first two, "Buzz Kill" and "Damn Gravity" ran in Stash 36) keep up the channel's habit of commissioning the coolest visuals they possibly can. As fun as the work is, Maurie Enochson EP at Buck LA, says there was a hurdle to clear in the "Sackrfice" spot, "We wanted to do a cel-shaded 3D style, but not the same obvious one you always see. We did some great R&D on toon lines and shaders, but it was not until Photoshop CS3 arrived at our office that we were really able to dial it in. Three artists spent about a week each just drawing over it frame by frame using the new Photoshop animation timeline."



For Fuel

VP marketing/on-air promo:

Jake Munsey

Director on-air promo: Oren Hatum

Producer: Todd Dever

For Buck

CD: Ryan Honey

EP: Maurie Enochson

Producer: Nick Terzich

AD: Thomas Schmid

3D: Jens Lindgren, Chris Phillips,

Markus Wipplinger, Bill Dorais,

Matthew Everton, Paul America,

Tim Hayward, Jeremy Sahlman,

Yates Holley, Henry Foster,

Alexander O'Donnell, Shannon

Pytlak, Martin Jung, Chris Phillips

Character animation: Steve Day

2D: Joe Mullen, Fede Reano

Music: Insurgent Music

Toolkit

Maya, Fusion, After Effects,

Photoshop

For Dinamo Digital

Director: Ricardo Carelli
 CDs: Ricardo Carelli,
 Ricardo "Magrão" Fernandes
 Director's assistant: Clara Morelli
 Post coordination: Maria Luiza
 "Tutu" Mesquita, Anderson
 Coutinho
 Concepts artists: Daniel Moretti,
 Vitor Cervi , Bruno Farnaze
 ADs: Daniel Moretti, Vitor Cervi
 CG super: Chrystie Lira
 Texture/shade: Bruno Farnaze
 Character/set modeler: Natan
 Zuanaci, Cezar Zambelli
 Character setup: Cinthia Fujii,
 Daniel Moreno
 Character animation: Lincoln Lima,
 Leo Cadaval, Daniel Moreno
 Editor: Beto Araujo



"MEUS PRÊMIOS NICK"
 Broadcast design

Client:
NICKELODEON

Director:
RICARDO CARELLI

Animation:
DINAMO DIGITAL
www.dinamodigital.com.br

Director Ricardo Carelli of São Paulo studio Dinamo Digital says the biggest hurdle in creating this promo for an annual Nickelodeon Brazil awards show was wrangling the cast of 14 parade characters: "The main technical challenges were to turn all the sketches into 3D and think how they would move, since very few of them had arms or legs. The rigging was the aspect most discussed, so the characters could have a jellylike consistency, walk and look funny. Besides, some scenes had dozens of creatures interacting with each other and the animation had to be very detailed."

Toolkit
 Maya, After Effects, Smoke,
 Final Cut

stash 42.13

DISCOVERY CHANNEL
"LOBSTERMEN"
TVC :30

Agency:
FRAME BY FRAME

Director:
JUSTIN HARDER

Production/VFX:
JUSTIN HARDER
www.justinharder.la

Director/writer/ animator/ composer Justin Harder admits his problems all started with the lobster suit. After several delivery delays, the crustaceous costume finally arrived leaving him only 10 frantic days to shoot, edit, create, animate the 3D ship and composite the entire promo. In a word, Harder describes the production as, "Insane!!!" But in hind sight allows, "It was the most successful project I've done under such an extreme timeframe and limited budget."

For Frame by Frame

CD: Kristian Boserup
Director/writer/animator/
composer: Justin Harder

Toolkit

Final Cut Pro, After Effects,
Photoshop, Illustrator





MICHAEL FAKESCH
“BLACKBIRD”

Music video

Record label:
K7 RECORDS

Director:
GIRAFFENTOAST

Production:
GIRAFFENTOAST

Animation:
GIRAFFENTOAST

www.giraffenttoast.de

For Michael Fakesch's upcoming solo album, Hamburg-based creative shop Giraffenttoast created the surreal music promo for the first single called "Blackbird". Fakesch who was once a semi-professional break dancer is now known as the Munich-based beats genius that made up 1/2 of the now-defunct band Funkstörung with Chris De Luca. As for Giraffenttoast, when not working on motion projects, design leads Philip Braun and Jens Lueg also pursue print jobs, web design and silkscreen projects.

For Giraffenttoast

Design/animation: Philip Braun,
Jens Lueg



NEWS, INSPIRATION, STUFF TO WATCH

feedhere.com

“ME AND MY GOLDFISH”

Branded content

Client:
GOLDFISH BANK

Agency:
GREY LONDON

Directors:
ARNO SALTERS,
LOYALKASPAR, FOREIGN
OFFICE, ADAM MARKO-NORD

Production:
STINK DIGITAL

Animation:
ARNO SALTERS,
LOYALKASPAR, FOREIGN
OFFICE, ALPHAVILLE

www.arnosalters.com
www.loyalkaspar.com
www.foreignoffice.com
www.alphaville.se

London-based production house Stink Digital and Grey London unveil four three-minute branded films for the new Goldfish credit card campaign, “Me and My Goldfish”. Grey commissioned original stories from writer Anthony Horowitz, comedian Rik Mayall, adventurer Sir Ranulph Fiennes and television presenter Meera Syal. Each were instructed to write a story on the subject of “Me and my Goldfish”, where “goldfish”



“Me and My Goldfish Went for a Stroll”

Director: Foreign Office
Sound design: Foreign Office
As written/read by: Sir Ranulph Fiennes



“Me and My Goldfish Love Cranial Osteopathy”

Director: Adam Marko-Nord
Animators: Adam Marko-Nord, Andreas Paleologos, Kimmo Popponen
Producer: Sara Waldestam
Audio/sound Design: Ljudligan AB
As written/read by: Meera Syal



“Me and My Goldfish Went to the Pub”

Director: Arno Salters

Animator: Eric Montchaud

AD: Mahi Grand

Sound design: RV Salters

Stills photographer: Ben Fogg

As written/read by: Rik Mayall



“Me and My Goldfish Went Swimming with Sharks”

Director: Loyalkaspar

Director/animator: Sarah Orenstein

CDs: Beat Baudenbacher, David Herbruck

Producer: Jenn Dewey

Audio/sound design: Ear Goo, NY

As written/read by: Anthony Horowitz

could represent anything, whether literal or symbolic. Each personality recorded complete narrations of their respective tales; Grey then commissioned Stink Digital to create animated films for each voiceover.

Stink Digital took a global tack, pairing Mayall with the Paris-based Arno Salters, Fiennes with London's Foreign Office, Horowitz with New York's Loyalkaspar and Syal with Stockholm's Adam Marko-Nord. The resulting visual treatments, from Loyalkaspar's stop-motion/set-design hybrid and Salters' cardboard cutout Monty Python homage to Marko-Nord's vibrant watercolor-feel animations and Foreign Office's snowy bitmapped "digital antique" approach, are stylistically as different as the narratives.

For Grey, London

ECD: David Alberts

CDs: Jimmy Blom,

Jonathan Marlow

Producer: Jacqueline Dobrin

For Stink Digital

EP: Mark Pytlík

LES SAVY FAV
"WHAT WOULD WOLVES DO"

Music video

Record label:
FRENCHKISS RECORDS

Director:
RYAN QUINCY

Animation:
RYAN QUINCY

www.ryanquincy.com

How does the LA-based director of animation for Comedy Central's South Park come to animate the latest music video for an obscure Brooklyn-based band? "I contacted Les Savy Fav via Myspace out of the blue offering up my services if they ever wanted to do a music video," says Quincy. "To my surprise, Syd Butler, their bassist and head of their record label, got back to me later that day. After a few back and forth e-mails, the band gave me their blessing and off I went." Total amount of sleep lost to moonlighting? Three months.

Artwork/animation/director:

Ryan Quincy

Editor: Eric Erickson

Toolkit

Flash 8, Photoshop, Final Cut Pro



“IMMERSE”
Short film**Client:**
CARTER FILMS ROMANIA**Director:**
WE ARE OM**Animation/VFX:**
WE ARE OMwww.weareom.com**For We Are Om**

Design/direction/post:
Anton Groves, Damian Groves,
Richard Hardy
Lighting: Mihai Sibianu
Editing/sound: Studioset
Thanks: Videolink, Stopfilm
Romania, John Ketchum,
Kodak Romania

Toolkit

Cinema 4D, After Effects, 16mm
film



We Are Om is the front for the film and VFX endeavors of Anton Groves, Damian Groves and Richard Hardy. For their second film project together, the London and Bucharest-based trio wanted to creatively question the microscopic level of existence. “We set out with the intention of combining live action filming with post-production to create this world, and to try and cleverly

blur the boundaries between the two,” explains Anton Groves. “This meant building the machine and its environment both in reality and virtually. A big problem was our inability to shoot underwater, having the means only to shoot in a glass water tank. This meant we had to find other ways of creating the sensation that we were surrounded by that infinite inner space and were not just

looking in on it. Making the scale model look like it was animated and alive was also a big challenge, one we approached both digitally and manually. In fact, throughout all stages we were working with the intention of blending old shooting techniques with modern software to get an image that was somewhat timeless.”
Schedule: two-day shoot, one month for post.

“RAPT SODA”
Short film

Directors:
ALEXANDRE ADA,
CÉDRIC JEANNE

Production:
AKAMA STUDIO

Animation:
AKAMA STUDIO

www.akamastudio.com

Either a short film or long spec spot, this tale of a rat and his caffeine/sugar quest was produced over six months between paying gigs at Akama Studio in Paris – partially for fun but also to demonstrate the studio’s talents for weaving CG with live action. Produced in HD after a two-day shoot.



For Akama

Producer: Cyril Deleye
Directors: Alexandre Ada,
Cédric Jeanne
Directors’ assistant:
Emilie Nicodex
PM: Jacques Vilaplana
PM assistants: Maxence Rapp,
Laure Auger
Location managers: Alexandre
Petellat, Eric Marguillier

Photography director:
Félix Darasse
Second camera: Louis Mikulski
Sound director: Nicolas Mas
AD: Denis Moutereau
Props manager:
Barthélémy Moutereau
Lead edit: Pietro Di Zanno
Design: Nicolas Dabos
Modeling: François Rimasson,

Alexandre Ada, Laurent Herveic
Tracking: Stéphane Soubiran
Animation: Cedric Jeanne,
Helder Pereira, Guillaume Dhont
Cloth: Cedric Jeanne
Setup rigging: Cedric Jeanne,
Laurent Herveic
Shave: Christophe Parelon,
Alexandre Ada

Rendering: Christophe Parelon,
Alexandre Ada
Compositing: Alexandre Ada
Sound design: Alexis Assadourian

Toolkit
Maya, After Effects, MatchMover,
Shave & Haircut, Illustrator,
Photoshop



“SEAT 29E”
Short film

Director:
ELENA WEN

Animation:
ELENA WEN

www.elenawen.com

NY director/ animator Elena Wen says the narrative for her latest short film “Seat 29E” was given to her by a friend: “I think he just found the complaint letter somewhere and thought I might appreciate the humor and want to make something out of it. He was right – besides the potential of a fun animation project, I also saw it as an exciting little playground to exercise and explore design/ illustration directly aimed at storytelling.” Wen shot the sky footage – seen out the airplane window – while flying herself. Schedule: one month

Director/ animator: Elena Wen
 Sound effects/ engineering:
 Juan Sosa

Toolkit

Photoshop, After Effects, pen,
 paper

stash 42.20

PLASTIC OPERATOR "HOME 2070"

Music video

Record company:

FINE DAY

Director:

PETE CIRCUITT

Animation:

BITSTATE

www.bitstate.com

After the success of Plastic Operator's music video for their "Folder" track (Stash 18) the electro-pop duo from Antwerp and Montreal returned to collaborate with Bitstate director Pete Circuitt for their latest single "Home 2070". Wanting the new clip to match the quality and character of "Folder" but also be unique, Circuitt created the new video out of still photography and 3D backgrounds matched with digital camera moves. FYI - the 94-year-old man is Peter Circuitt Sr. filmed on location at his residence in New Zealand.

For Bitstate

Director: Pete Circuitt

Animation: Pete Circuitt, Bill Sneed





"The biggest creative challenge was to make a high contrast performance video original and unique. It's a pretty easy and common route to take the footage, edit it, make it black and white and poof! video," recalls Laundry co-director Anthony Liu. "We referenced a lot of 60's op art for patterns as transitional devices and animated elements and to help carry the pace of the track.

"The technical challenge was to get this edited to our liking then key it out and animate it in our short deadline. We were initially concerned about the volume of keying since we shot on green screen, but the black and white was very accommodating to the smaller details of green screen removal that usually haunt us: re-hair and spill.

"The extremely tight schedule presented a number of challenges. After we got approval on the concept/style, we had about three days to prepare for the shoot at the Panavision Stages in Woodland Hills. We had two HD cameras and a 30-foot Techno Crane. Once the footage was captured we had two weeks to edit and composite the entire thing."

THE BLOOD ARM FEATURING ANAIS "DO I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION?"
Music video

Record label:
BECAUSE TV

Agency:
WANDA

Directors:
ANTHONY LIU,
PJ RICHARDSON

VFX/animation:
LAUNDRY!

www.laundrymat.tv

For Laundry!

Directors: Anthony Liu, PJ Richardson
 Producer/PM: Kari Salrin
 Editor: Matt Berberich
 First AD: Graham Rich
 DP: Michael Dallatore
 First AC: Nate Kolbeck
 Crane Op: Henry Flores
 Best boy electric: Pablo Jara
 Grip: Chris Sloan
 Playback: Monty Buckles
 Wardrobe: Lauren Culter
 Makeup/hair: Chervine Moncharte
 PAs: Matt Berberich, Brandon Thompson, Rachel Polan

Toolkit

After Effects, cel animation

**FAIR & SQUARE “DOTS”,
“PATTERN”**
TVCs :30 x 2

Agency:
BBH LONDON

Director:
CHRIS DOOLEY

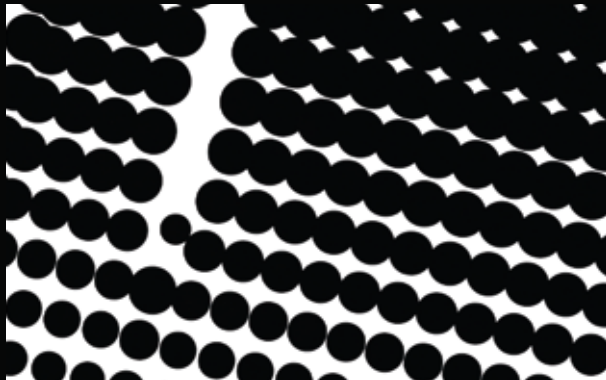
Production:
NOT TO SCALE

Animation:
NATIONAL TELEVISION
www.natl.tv

It's not your average launch campaign, and it's certainly not the average launch for a bank. But that's the point as BBH London positions new UK financial institution Fair & Square as anything but your average bank. After a heavy pre-production phase involving multiple rounds of concept design and storyboard options, National Television and London production company Not To Scale arrived at “Dots” and “Pattern”, two spots recalling the film title work of Saul Bass and the op art canvases of Bridget Riley.

For BBH London

Creative team: Andy Brittain,
Yu Chang
CD: John O'Keefe
Producer: Michelle Kendrick



For Not To Scale / National Television

Director: Chris Dooley
Producers: Rebecca Blakenship,
Debbie Impett
EPs: Jared Libitsky, Dan O'Rourke
Animation: Brumby Boylston,
Bran Dougherty-Johnson,
Sang Lee, Diffan Norman
Music: Hear No Evil
Composer: Mark Lord
Producer: Sam Reid

FORD ECOSPORT
Virals x 2

Agency:
DIGITAL@JWT, ARGENTINA

Director:
STUDIOCHU

Animation:
STUDIOCHU
www.studiochu.tv

Watch closely and you'll notice the animated elements in this pair of virals never touch the edges of the screen. Director/ animator Julian Pablo Manzelli of Buenos Aires-based StudioChu explains the clips were designed to run on the white borderless field of the Ford EcoSport Argentine website and admits, "This technical or layout point defined the animation ideas." Schedule: one month for two spots.

For StudioChu
Animation: Julian Pablo Manzelli,
Agustin Viguera
Sound design: Emilio Haro

Toolkit
Illustrator, Photoshop, After Effects



stash 42.24

RAC "NODDING OFF"

Cinema :30

Agency:

AMV BBDO

Director:

BLOOM

Animation:

PARTIZAN LAB

A jarring message from the UK roadside assistance and automobile services company RAC delivered via the directing and animation talents of Paris-based CG collective Bloom. Julie Crosbie of Partizan Lab reveals the spot was a charity project completed over five months between paying gigs. Main challenges: "To do something hard hitting and that has a very individual look and to give humanity to the project even though we are using the metaphor of the nodding dog for the driver that is falling asleep."

For AMV BBDO

Producer: Maggie Mullan

CDs: Tony Hardcastle,

Mark Tweddell

For Partizan Lab

Director/ animator: Bloom

Toolkit

LightWave



For Heimat Werbeagentur

Creative team: Guido Heffels,
Yves Krämer

For Markenfilm

EP: Lutz Müller
Line producer: Tobias Steinhauser
Director: Carl Erick Rinsch

For Furia Digital

VFX super: Alex Grau
Animation: Hugo Torres,
Salvador Simó, Kepa Casado
FX: Sergio Pinto, Pablo Gimenez
Lighting: Alberto Corpas
Flame: Ana Cortes, Oriol Puig

Toolkit

Maya with mental ray, Houdini,
Combustion, Flame



HORNBACK BAUMARKT AG
“PROJECTS HAUNT YOU”
TVC :30

Agency:
HEIMAT WERBEAGENTUR,
BERLIN

Director:
CARL ERICK RINSCH

Production:
MARKENFILM

VFX:
FURIA DIGITAL
www.furia-digital.com

Aired throughout Germany to promote a chain of hardware stores, this vignette of Kafkaesque antagonism between one man and his decrepit washroom was also a battle for Barcelona-based VFX shop Furia Digital. Here's a quick run-through of their daytime terrors:

1. Director Carl Erick Rinsch insisted the bathroom pieces move in different ways for every shot.
 2. The actor was shot on green screen for the fight scenes without any props or reference points.
 3. Nightmare-inducing tracking with a variety of handheld camera moves in each shot.
- Schedule: eight weeks.

stash 42.26

VOLKSWAGEN
"THE MOVING CITY"
TVC :45

Agency:
DDB ITALY

Director:
ANDREW HARDAWAY

Production:
PARCO FILM

VFX:
THE EMBASSY
www.theembassyvfx.com

The Embassy continue to build their international reputation for high-end CG realism with this VW clip shot in the Czech Republic for DDB Italy to run in Europe and Japan. Besides the CG car shots and digital building choreography, the studio explains there were more mundane factors to deal with: "Because the weather in Prague did not always play nice (it rained half the time), we were forced to do some sky replacement. For two shots we created skies completely in 3D because the practical plates were so dark they didn't work with the rest of the piece." Post schedule: three months.



For DDB Italy

Producer: Giuseppe Brandolini
ADs: Francesco Guerrera,
Andrea Maggioni
Copy: Luca Gelmuzzi
For Parco Film
Director: Andrew Hardaway
Producer: Catherine Byrne
Editor: Pedram Torbati
DOP: Jordan Valenti

For The Embassy

Producer: Charlie Bradbury
VFX super: Winston Helgason
Sr CG: Simon van de Lagemaat,
Marc Roth
CG: Tristram Gleni, Dan Prentice,
Paul Copeland, Jim Hebb, Adam
Marisett, Michael Blackburn

Music: Human

Toolkit

LightWave, Modo, Shake



For The Animation Workshop

Writer/director: Salvador Simó
 Producers: Mathilde Schytz Juul,
 Soren Fleng, Tim Leborgne,
 Salvador Simó
 Storyboard/designs:
 Salvador Simó
 Layouts: Bahadir Tosun,
 Ferran Casas, Laia Alomar
 Modeling: Ferran Casas, Laia
 Alomar, Salvador Simó, Yran Xu
 Texturing: Salvador Simó

Rigging: Laia Alomar,
 Ferran Casas, Salvador Simó,
 Lluís Llobera
 Animation:
 Angel Aguirregomezcorra,
 Dripha Benseghir, Svetlana
 Bezdornikova, Paulien Bekker,
 Lluís Llobera, Stein Lotveit, Ingo
 Schachner, Salvador Simó,
 Bahadir Tosun, Ilga Vevere, Marie
 Verhoeven, Signy Magnusdottir

Additional animation: Rustlan
 Piterja, Alexis Liddell, Henri Leik,
 Bettina Ostensen
 Lighting/rendering/compositing/
 editing: Salvador Simó
 Technical support: Svend Nordby,
 Thomas Christensen, Thomas
 Ahlmark

Toolkit

Photoshop, Maya, Digital Fusion,
 Premiere

"INSIGHT" Short film

Director:
SALVADOR SIMÓ

Animation:
**THE ANIMATION WORKSHOP,
 VIBORG**

www.animwork.dk

Spanish illustrator/designer/
 animator/teacher/director Salvador
 Simó completed this seven-minute
 short with a crew assembled
 during his teaching stint at The
 Open Workshop in Viborg,
 Denmark in 2006. Inspired by a
 question from Simó's six-year-
 old daughter about a homeless
 woman she saw on the street,
 the film was in production for over
 a year with the volunteer crew
 taking freelance jobs along the
 way to pay the bills. Looking back
 Simó (now on staff at Furia Digital
 in Barcelona) says the biggest
 challenge was just trying to keep
 the project doable: "We had to find
 a simple style that fit the extremely
 low budget and the timeline, but
 trying to keep the ambiance of the
 film. Composition was used as
 a basic element to tell the story,
 adding just what was necessary;
 always thinking 'simple is better.'"

BLUR STUDIOS

Recent Game Work x 3

There are only a handful of studios sprinkled across the planet who produce the dense, detailed and dynamic cinematics, trailers and TV spots required to keep gamers' eyes and wallets wide open. The 800 pound gorilla on that list – the company producing by far the largest quantity of this time and talent-intensive work is Blur Studios. Jennifer Miller, co-founder and CD of the studio in Venice, CA, gives us some insight into three of their recent game projects.



HELLGATE: LONDON

Game cinematic

Game developer:
FLAGSHIP STUDIOS

Creative director:
TIM MILLER

Animation:
BLUR
www.blur.com

"The toughest challenge on this project was the asset management of over 700 templars charging into battle against the demons emerging from the HellGate. It required us to push the advancement and organization of the production pipeline and asset tracking in regards to animation, hair, cloth, and FX. Another interesting innovation included a pseudo-parametric/procedural modeling approach to the environment elements." Schedule: four months

For Blur

CG super: Kevin Margo
Animation super: Davy Sabbe
CD: Tim Miller
Producer: Debbie Yu
EP: Al Shier
FX super: Seung Jae Lee
Layout: David Nibbelin
Modeling: Shaun Absher, Luis Calero, Sze Jones, Tim Jones, Alex Litchinko, Kevin Margo,

Barrett Meeker, Laurent Pierlot
Rigging: Malcolm Thomas-Gustave, Steve Guevara, Jeff Wilson
Hair/cloth simulation: Becca Baldwin, Jon Jordan
Animation: Brent Homman, Jacob Patrick, Davy Sabbe, Brian Whitmire
Lighting/compositing: Luis Calero, Sebastien Chort, Dan Knight, Laurent Pierlot, David Stinnett, Rodrigo Washington
FX: Craig Brown, Seung Jae Lee, Attila Zalanyi
Mocap: Chris Bedrosian, Gavin Carlton
Mocap prep/clean-up: Ryan Girard, Jeff Weisend
Concept design: Hugo Martin, Sean McNally, Francisco Ruiz, Chuck Wojtkiewicz

Toolkit

Character animation: 3ds Max, facial animation: XSI, compositing: Digital Fusion, modeling/layout/assembly: 3ds Max, rendering: Brazil 1/mental ray

Watch Behind the Scenes on the DVD.

MX VS ATV

TVC :60

Agency:
AYZENBERG GROUP

Developer:
RAINBOW STUDIOS

Creative director:
TIM MILLER

Animation:
BLUR
www.blur.com

"This was the very first project at Blur done entirely in mental ray. In the beginning it seemed a bit crazy, but everyone picked it up extremely fast and were able to use 3D motion blur, and that alone gave us the visual edge over what we usually do. The agency wanted the hero vehicles (MX Bike, ATV, Monster Truck and Dune Buggy) to be 'born' from their own environments. Ultimately 'The Rise of the Machines' idea was chosen." Schedule: eight weeks.

For Blur

CG super: Daniel Trbovic
Creative Director: Tim Miller
Producer: Mandy Sim
EP: Al Shier
FX super: Kirby Miller
Modeling: Darren Butler
Luis Calero, Joshua Cox, Alex Litchinko, Leandro Amaral, Zack Cork



Rigging: Michael Stieber
Layout/animation lead:
August Wartenberg
Animation: Ander Bergstrom,
Bryan Hillestad
Lighting/compositing: Darren
Butler, Luis Calero, Joshua Cox,
Daniel Trbovic
FX: Ian Farnsworth, Seung Jae
Lee , Andrew Melnychuk-Oseen,
Kirby Miller
Character modeling QC super:
Sze Chan
Vehicle and prop modeling QC
super: Barrett Meeker
Concept design:
Chuck Wojtkiewicz

Toolkit

Animation/rigging: XSI,
compositing: Digital Fusion,
modeling/layout/assembly: 3ds
Max, rendering: mental ray

EMPIRE EARTH III

Game trailer

Game developer:
MAD DOC SOFTWARE

Creative director:
TIM MILLER

Animation:
BLUR

www.blur.com

"The objective was to create a powerful trailer comprising the many factions, civilizations, and wars from the game. We wrote and directed a story focused on one warrior fighting an epic battle spanning from ancient times to the future. It was vital the transitions through the different eras and multiple costume changes remain seamless while energized with bold camera moves. All the details on the characters had to be modeled so they could fit inside each other. The clothing, accessories and weapons were also modeled and rigged so we could literally peel away one layer to reveal the next." Schedule: nine weeks.

For Blur

CG supers: Dave Wilson,
Heikki Anttila
Animation super: Davy Sabbe
CD: Tim Miller
Producers: Debbie Yu, Scott Tinter
EP: Al Shier

FX super: Kirby Miller
Layout: Andy Grisdale
Modeling: Shaun Absher, Darren
Butler, Sze Jones, Ian Joyner,
Alex Litchinko, Barrett Meeker,
Iain Morton
Rigging: Fabio Stabel, Malcolm
Thomas-Gustave
Hair and cloth simulation:
Becca Baldwin, Jon Jordan
Animation: Andy Grisdale,
Davy Sabbe, Nye Warburton
Lighting and compositing: Heikki
Anttila, Corey Butler, Kris Kaufman,
Barrett Meeker, Dave Wilson
FX: Craig Brown, Seung Jae Lee,

Kirby Miller, Brandon Riza, August
Wartenburg
Mocap: Chris Bedrosian,
Heather McKenney
Mocap prep and clean-up:
Ryan Girard, Jeff Weisend
Character modeling QC super:
Sze Jones
Concept Design: Hugo Martin,
Sean McNally, Chuck Wojtkiewicz
Music: Rob Cairns
SFX and final mix: Gary Zacuto

Toolkit

3DS Max, XSI, Digital Fusion,
Brazil 1, mental ray



"HISTORY OF AMERICA"
Short film

Director:

MK12

Production:

MK12

Animation:

MK12

www.mk12.com

There are few motion graphics studios one could classify either as an enigma or as a legend. MK12 may be the only one qualified as both. Founded as an artist collective and design lab by Ben Radatz, Jed Carter, Tim Fisher, and Shaun Hamontree in Kansas City, MO in 2000, the group quickly established a cult following as they defined the freshest edge of motion design.

They found a wider international audience after joining the Ebeling Group in 2002 and then, in 2005, MK12 released a head-snapping trailer for something called "History of America". In classic viral tradition, the popularity of the clip crashed the company's server.

But the initial anticipation and feverish rumors faded as the months passed. And passed.



Until many assumed the project had been mothballed for good.

Cut to

Int: Darkened theatre, Sundance Film Festival 2008

The credits roll on a short film called "History of America". The audience jumps to their feet in a standing ovation.

Yes, the finished 31-minute film the studio calls their, "psychedelic western space opera", pitting astronauts against cowboys in a complex, absurd, and apocalyptic struggle, had truly arrived.

The MK12 collective, now numbering nine, are currently at work on Marc Forster's new James Bond adventure (releasing November '08) but promise they are conjuring more of their own tall tales to tell.



Watch Behind the Scenes on the Bonus DVD.



Featuring:

Jim Korinke, Marv Dunkle,
Quinn Van Camp, Rebecca
Neuenschwander

The History of America players:

Meshel Cook, Ruby Dibble,
Kelsey Harder, Will Laffery,
Jason Leftwich, Kieran Malloy,
Rachel Mcmeachin, MK12,
Terrence Moore, Rebecca
Neuenschwander, Amber Paitz,
Jack Ruhl, Peter Ruhl, Alex
Sandmann, Van Albert Sneed III,
Jerry Spencer, Corrie Van Ausdal,
Quinn Van Camp, Andrew
Westermann, Jessica Williams
Additional camera: Darin Fisher
Additional camera/jib operator:
Scott Jolley
Additional gaffer: Bill Thomas
Additional grip/electrician:
Glenn Eddins
Additional grip/boom operator:
Chris Brechnitz
The Manhandler: Beniah Leuschke

Additional props: Scott Murray

Cactus boy costume:

Callyann Casteel

Additional wardrobe/makeup:

Rita Brinkerhoff, Ashley Kelly

History book illustrations:

Steven Sanders

Additional 3D modeling:

Brien Hindman

Additional roto: Derek Rausch

ADR character voices:

Michael Ashcraft

ADR recording/final mix: Chapman

Recording Kansas City, Mo

ADR/final mix engineer: Evan Clark





NEWS, INSPIRATION, STUFF TO WATCH

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