



Discreet Congratulates Visual Effects and Animated Short Film Academy Award Winners: Spider-Man 2 and Ryan

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Tenth Consecutive Year that Discreet Clients Win Best Visual Effects Academy Award

HOLLYWOOD, Feb. 28 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Discreet, the media and entertainment division of Autodesk, Inc. (Nasdaq: ADSK) congratulates post-production facilities Sony Pictures Imageworks (SPI), Zoic Studios, Radium and Ring of Fire on winning the Academy Award(R) for Achievement in Visual Effects for Spider-Man 2. For the tenth consecutive year, all films nominated in the Visual Effects category have been shaped with Discreet's solutions. Discreet also congratulates director Chris Landreth and Copper Heart Entertainment, in co-production with the National Film Board of Canada and in association with the Seneca College Animation Arts Centre, for winning in the Animated Short Film category with Ryan.

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20050228/SFM095>)

All nominees in the Visual Effects category used Discreet's solutions to deliver awe-inspiring storytelling: Spider-Man 2, Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban and I, Robot. SPI used Discreet's solutions to create 108 shots for the winning film Spider-Man 2. The shots included the bank robbery, train and deli sequences, as well as the action-packed car chase. According to Lisa Deaner, senior Discreet flame(R) system artist at SPI, the post house used Discreet's systems to speed up their creative process: "During Spider-Man 2, Discreet's flame and burn(R) solutions helped us solve problems and realize creative ideas quickly, which became invaluable when layering 2K and Vistavision 12-bit plates. The interactivity was a perfect complement to our traditional node-based compositing pipeline." burn is Discreet's multi-node background processing solution for Discreet inferno(R), flame and flint(R) visual effects systems.

Zoic Studios used Discreet's flame system and combustion(R) software for multiple wire and rig removals in Spider-Man 2. Steve Meyer, Zoic Studios' senior compositor said, "On Spider-Man 2, the use of the flame and combustion solutions' paint, tracking and warping tools often allowed us to completely clean the rigs out of a scene. For more difficult shots, elements were recreated, and then composited back into the scene using the flame system."

Post-production houses Radium and Ring of Fire also worked on Spider-Man 2 and created 52 and 26 shots respectively, mostly using Discreet's inferno system and combustion software.

For Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban, post-production house Industrial Light & Magic (ILM) used Discreet's inferno system as part of its proprietary SABRE visual effects and compositing system, to suck Harry's soul out of his body in the opening train scene.

ILM's compositing sequence supervisor Dean Yurke said, "The opening train scene required 61 takes to perfect. The movements of Harry's body as his soul is being sucked were designed with the inferno system's 3D geometry, cone vortex, particle and displacement mapping tools. Using the inferno system as part of SABRE let us create the 'extreme' look that helps make Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban the scariest of the three Harry Potter films."

Cinesite, Moving Picture Company and Framestore CFC also used Discreet's inferno system on Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban. Colorist Peter Doyle digitally graded the film with Colorfront technology that forms the foundation of Discreet's lustre(R) color grading system.

California-based Digital Domain and Vancouver-based Rainmaker both worked on Twentieth Century Fox's I, Robot. Using combustion software, Digital Domain completed 150 shots that involved removing actor Allen Tudyk out of plates and replacing him with Sonny, the murderous NS-5 robot. Rainmaker produced some 70 visual effects shots for the movie, using Discreet's inferno system extensively on the "Lanning House" destruction sequence, in which Will Smith and the mansion narrowly miss being decimated by a huge demobot.

Three of the five nominated projects in the Animated Short Film category -- Ryan, Gopher Broke and Birthday Boy -- used Discreet's solutions. The winning animated short Ryan, directed by Chris Landreth, is a tribute to Canadian animator Ryan Larkin. Although incredibly realistic and detailed, Ryan was created and animated without the use of live action footage. All characters in Ryan were animated by hand and filmmakers relied heavily on Discreet's combustion software and flame system for compositing and 2D effects.

Belma Abdicevic, lead compositor on Ryan, was responsible for lighting, compositing and rendering. Abdicevic commented on her experience using Discreet's combustion software: "I've been using combustion software for five years now, and it was invaluable in the making of Ryan. The software was used for all compositing; it is one of the strongest and easiest-to-learn desktop compositing tools on the market. combustion software's renowned paint, color correction and motion blur tools were used extensively on Ryan. These tools helped us complete complicated shots in simple ways, such as the last shot in the bathroom where Chris looks in the mirror. The shot ends with a motion blur, effectively communicating emotion and transition to viewers. The color correction tools enabled us to achieve a dark mood in specific shots without compromising the short's quality."

Gopher Broke was created by Blur Studio (Venice, CA) using Discreet's 3ds max(R) modeling and animation software. The 41/2-minute 3D film is styled in classic cartoon comedy tradition, telling the story of a hungry gopher that tries to pilfer a quick snack but soon discovers there's no such thing as a free lunch. The film was written and directed by Jeff Fowler, with Tim Miller serving as executive producer.

Miller, creative director at Blur Studio, said, "Discreet's 3ds max is the most well-rounded 3D modeling software available. It allows us to live our philosophy of efficiency and hyper-creativity. When we have new people join Blur Studio, even if they've never used 3ds max software before, they're up to speed, productive, and carrying a full workload in a few weeks. The tools in 3ds max software are so intuitive and easy to use that we have more time to be creative, as evidenced by Gopher Broke." Miller and his team have been using 3ds max software since Blur Studio formed 10 years ago.

In Birthday Boy, childhood innocence is contrasted with the realities of wartime. Set in 1951 Korea, a child plays alone in the village streets, imagining his father's life as a soldier on the frontline. When the child returns home, he finds a parcel that changes his life. All elements were composited with Discreet's flame system. Birthday Boy was written and directed by Sejong Park and produced by Andrew Gregory.

About Discreet

Discreet empowers media professionals to realize the visual experience and transform their most evocative and ambitious visions into reality. Discreet's award-winning solutions are designed for digital media creation, management and delivery-across all disciplines from film and television visual effects, colour grading and editing to animation, game development, web/interactive, and design visualisation. Discreet is based in Montreal, Quebec and is a division of Autodesk, Inc, the world's leading design and digital media creation, management, and distribution company. Founded in 1982, Autodesk is headquartered in San Rafael, California. Product and corporate information: www.discreet.com. For additional information about Autodesk, please visit www.autodesk.com.

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