



Holiday Movies Twilight, Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa and Others Come to Life With Autodesk Technology

December 17, 2008

SAN RAFAEL, Calif., Dec 17, 2008 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX News Network/ -- Visual Effects Enhance Storytelling in Fantasy Films, Historical Dramas and Animated Movies

Across multiple movie genres and filmmaking techniques, this year's holiday blockbuster movies demonstrate the wide-range of entertainment that is shaped with Autodesk, Inc. (Nasdaq: ADSK) software. Filmmakers are using Autodesk's animation, visual effects and color grading tools to enhance their creative process and enable sophisticated storytelling.

Visual effects (VFX) studio CIS Vancouver led the visual effects effort on the teen vampire box office bonanza, Twilight. Full of atmospheric effects, the 250-shot Twilight required heavy rotoscoping and compositing to incorporate hyperkinetic vampire motion and augment stormy weather. For the previsualization stage, CIS extensively relied upon Autodesk Maya 3D modeling, animation and rendering software. A scene set in a ballet studio filled with mirrors created complex visual challenges, requiring tracking of more than half a dozen reflective bounces between the mirrors. "Using Maya to conduct multiple camera pre-tests from many angles, we were able to save the production team hours of set time," said Geoffrey Hancock, CIS visual effects supervisor. "Autodesk's powerful tools gave us the opportunity to focus on the creative challenges of this scene rather than the technical ones."

CIS also worked on the historical drama Changeling. As the lead VFX house, CIS' dedicated team of artists worked diligently with a shortened schedule to ready the film for its Cannes Film Festival premiere and subsequent theatrical release. CIS used Maya for virtually all the modeling and animation, and Autodesk Inferno visual effects software for matte paintings. VFX Supervisor Geoffrey Hancock stated, "The graphics speed, multiple iteration-ability and overall robustness of Inferno was invaluable to our pipeline. The film's subtle visual effects allow audiences to become fully absorbed in the story. We actually enjoyed the constraints of creating a believable and historically accurate environment. It was so refreshing to create invisible effects, not solely for the spectacle."

In an imaginary animal universe, DreamWorks Animation's dazzling computer-generated (CG) animated film Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa also relied upon Maya to tell its story. "Maya gives us a lot of control over our particle simulations. The software is deep in its programmability and very scalable for all kinds of visual effects, from the down-and-dirty two-day effect to the dam-breaking effect that took four months to perfect. Maya covers our needs on both ends of the spectrum and we rely upon it more and more every year," said Scott Peterson, Head of Effects for Madagascar 2. DreamWorks turned to the Autodesk Lustre system for the film's color grading, tailoring the film-look to augment the adventure of a motley crew of New York Zoo animals.

For the instant cult classic City of Ember, lead VFX house Luma Pictures used Maya and several plug-in solutions including mental ray and RealFlow. These tools were used to create a fantastical world filled with complex CG water systems, full subterranean CG sets and an enormous CG mole. Payam Shohadai, executive VFX supervisor at Luma Pictures, remarked, "Maya is the backbone of our entire VFX pipeline. Its amazing power and scripting flexibility allowed us to bring the City of Ember to life in ways no one thought possible - Maya is truly indispensable."

About Autodesk

Autodesk, Inc. is the world leader in 2D and 3D design software for the manufacturing, building and construction, and media and entertainment markets. Since its introduction of AutoCAD software in 1982, Autodesk has developed the broadest portfolio of state-of-the-art digital prototyping solutions to help customers experience their ideas before they are real. Fortune 1000 companies rely on Autodesk for the tools to visualize, simulate and analyze real-world performance early in the design process to save time and money, enhance quality and foster innovation. For additional information about Autodesk, visit www.autodesk.com.

Autodesk, AutoCAD, Inferno, Lustre and Maya are registered trademarks or trademarks of Autodesk, Inc. and/or its subsidiaries and/or affiliates in the USA and/or other countries. mental ray is a registered trademark of mental images GmbH licensed for use by Autodesk, Inc. All other brand names, product names or trademarks belong to their respective holders. Autodesk reserves the right to alter product offerings and specifications at any time without notice, and is not responsible for typographical or graphical errors that may appear in this document.

(C) 2008 Autodesk, Inc. All rights reserved.

Contacts: Rama Dunayevich, 415 547-2472/ Natasha Wang, 310 450-1482
Email: rama.dunayevich@autodesk.com / natasha@razpr.com

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20081217/SF53046>)

(Logo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20050415/SFF034LOGO>)

SOURCE Autodesk, Inc.

<http://www.autodesk.com>