Autodesk Technology Helps Conjure Movie Magic for Academy Award Honorees

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Autodesk Celebrates Digital Artists Behind Most-Acclaimed Movies of the Year

SAN RAFAEL, Calif., Mar 09, 2011 (BUSINESS WIRE) --

The remarkable transformations of cityscapes in "Inception" were achieved with the help of visual effects software from Autodesk, Inc. (NASDAQ: ADSK), marking the 16th consecutive year that Autodesk Digital Entertainment Creation tools were used on a Best Visual Effects Oscar-winning movie.

"We're thrilled to see a win for 'Inception,' and for long-time Autodesk customer Double Negative," said Marc Petit, senior vice president, Autodesk Media & Entertainment. "The Double Negative team did an incredible job, transporting the audience into the dreams of the film's main characters with groundbreaking visual effects work that seamlessly integrated digital elements with the special effects and live-action footage."

Achievement in Visual Effects

"Inception" -- *Oscar Winner*

In "Inception," Double Negative, the sole visual effects house and British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) winner, helped create an unforgettable visual landscape where dreams and reality are interwoven in a complex tale of redemption. Double Negative used an arsenal of VFX tools to fold an entire city block in Paris in on itself, erect vast expanses of modernist buildings and crumble dilapidated architecture into the sea.

"Alice in Wonderland" -- *Academy Award Nominee*

"Alice in Wonderland" offers a new twist on the classic Lewis Carroll tale, in which computer-generated (CG) characters interact with a host of live-action performers -- many of whom are digitally stretched, pinched and distorted to appear vastly different from their real-life counterparts. Sony Pictures Imageworks (SPI), the primary facility on the project, made extensive use of Autodesk Maya, Autodesk Mudbox and Autodesk Flame software. "We are extraordinarily proud of the work and celebrate the talent that went into its production. Ken Ralston and the Imageworks team used virtually every conceivable technique to achieve Tim Burton's creative vision. Autodesk technology, using Maya as the foundation for every shot to some intricate compositing in Flame, was a key part of our production pipeline. It is an honor to be nominated in this year's distinguished company," said Rob Bredow, SPI chief technology officer. The Third Floor also relied on Maya and Autodesk MotionBuilder software to create the 263-shot detailed previsualization on the movie.

"Iron Man 2" -- *Academy Award Nominee*

ILM, which created 527 visual effects shots on "Iron Man 2," created the film's remarkable Iron Man suits and spectacular action sequences with the help of Maya and Flame. "Maya played an invaluable role in providing our artists the tool to create the animation for 'Iron Man 2.' Animators that were new to ILM were able to jump straight into shot production with very little training time and thanks to Maya's opened ended platform we were able to customize and create new tools that were vital in bringing both Iron Man and War Machine to life," said Marc Chu, ILM animation director. Autodesk's Digital Entertainment Creation tools were also central to the previsualization work by The Third Floor (700 unique shots).

"Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part I" -- *Academy Award Nominee*

The Harry Potter franchise continues to push its story of wizardry, friendship and adventure into darker realms. MPC (180 shots), Framestore (100 shots), Baseblack (250 shots), Cinesite (100 shots), Double Negative (190 shots) and Rising Sun Pictures digitally created a host of otherworldly characters and effects that inhabit the world of Harry and his Hogwarts cohorts including, Deatheaters, Dementors, character transformations, digital doubles, fire and battles. Framestore CG Supervisor Andy Kind said, "Maya was our principal tool for modeling, rigging and animation. By giving us the flexibility to write a suite of rigging and animation tools, Maya enabled our animators to bring Dobby and Kreacher to life." Baseblack Executive Producer Stephen Elson added, "Eighty of our shots involved 3D content and Maya was the backbone of our pipeline in every case."

"Hereafter" -- *Academy Award Nominee*

"Hereafter" opens with an incredible reenactment of the devastating tsunami that destroyed a wide swath of coastline in Thailand in 2004. To create the photorealistic CG water sequence, Scanline VFX used Autodesk 3ds Max software for modeling, animation, rigging, cloth and hair simulation. All water and fire simulations were created by its proprietary fluid simulation system, Flowline, which is tightly integrated with 3ds Max and V-Ray for rendering; for crowd simulations with motion capture, Scanline turned to MotionBuilder. Stephan Trojansky, Scanline visual effects supervisor said, "Realism is a hallmark of Clint Eastwood's film, and a key part of the challenge in 'Hereafter' was creating supporting visual effects that were realistic and believable, yet highly controllable. The film required us to push our proprietary software, Flowline, to the next level, with improved ways of controlling the behavior of the physics of water, as well as rendering it for optimal effect."

Autodesk technology was also used to shape Oscar-winning and Academy Award-nominated films in the following categories:

Best Animated Short Film

- "**The Lost Thing**" -- *Oscar Winner* -- Co-directors Andrew Ruhemann and Shaun Tan of Passion Pictures Australia used a variety of Digital Entertainment Creation software to tell the tale of a boy and a creature he finds on the beach. Autodesk Softimage software was used for modeling, rigging, animation, lighting, rendering, dynamics and particle effects; Autodesk Smoke software for online mastering and conform; and Autodesk Lustre for color grading.

- **The Gruffalo**" -- *Academy Award Nominee* -- Directors Jakob Schuh and Max Lang of Magic Light Pictures, brought this classic picture book to life using a combination of Maya for animation, Autodesk Combustion for compositing and Mudbox for texturing and sculpting 450 shots.

Achievement in Cinematography

- "**Black Swan**" -- *Academy Award Nominee* -- Tim Stipan of Technicolor New York used Lustre software to do the color grading on this film, while LOOK Effects, Inc. used Maya to create 210 visual effects shots, including the stunning transformation of actress Natalie Portman into the Black Swan.
- **"True Grit" --** *Academy Award Nominee* -- EFILM used Eworks, a proprietary workflow built on Lustre, to color grade this classic western remake from the Coen Brothers, using dusty, understated hues.

About Autodesk

Autodesk, Inc., is a leader in 3D design, engineering and entertainment software. Customers across the manufacturing, architecture, building, construction, and media and entertainment industries -- including the last 16 Academy Award winners for Best Visual Effects -- use Autodesk software to design, visualize and simulate their ideas. Since its introduction of AutoCAD software in 1982, Autodesk continues to develop the broadest portfolio of state-of-the-art software for global markets. For additional information about Autodesk, visit www.autodesk.com.

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