

JOCK

A N I M A T I O N




September 2009

Production

Spring is finally here! The huge Jacaranda tree outside our studio is not the only thing in bloom at Jock... production is blooming too.

Our animation team have now completed 45 minutes of the film. The guys know their monthly targets (as I keep reminding them about that daily) and there is a great competitive spirit in the air amongst the team. Our aim for the end of the year is to animate another 8 minutes.

Our caching team and lighting teams are trailing behind animation and this is one area we are wanting to streamline. Although they are at the end of the pipeline, we need to close the gap between lighting and animation. Our render farm has been running smoothly twenty four hours a day. It is amazing to think how much work is actually going through on our render farm. The lighting team makes sure that come weekend time, jobs are queued long in advance to make sure the render farm renders non stop through to Monday morning. It is also interesting to see just how much heat these machine generate. Even though we have air-conditioning in the rooms, cooling really needs to be monitored constantly. So when I say things are heating up in our studio here at Jock, I really mean it!

The stereoscopic team is off to a very good start too. For those of you that do not already know, stereoscopic is the term used whereby two cameras are set up and rendered at a certain degree apart from each other, as a separate right and left image, and then projected onto a screen as one complete image. You need to wear the 3D glasses when viewing the picture. The result is an image that comes to life and literally pops out at you! Not only are we incorporating stereoscopic camera and renders into our current pipeline, but since it was decided on (half way through this year), we need to revisit all work done and make sure it is stereoscopic compatible. It is incredible to see our 3D pictures come to life as true 3D. We are all so excited by the final result!!

Another constant challenge on this production has to be our ever growing project size. Currently our main project which the entire team work from, is sitting at a whopping 4.5 terabyte. If you do not understand computer mumbo-jumbo, 4.5 terabyte is absolutely huge!

Marketing by Andy Rice

Even though the movie's release date is still fifteen months away, we are starting to open discussions with potential commercial merchandise partners. Naturally, this involves showing them examples of the work in progress so that they can see the quality of the animation for themselves. So we are busy kitting out one of the upstairs Hyde Park offices as a comfortable viewing room, complete with cinema seats kindly donated by Ster-Kinekor and a massive stereoscopic 3D TV screen. A fridge and some bar stools will complete the entertainment facilities!

In a couple of weeks' time we will have our first examples of marketing material to support our forthcoming sales drive. An introductory brochure has been designed by Black River FC, a Joburg-based advertising agency, and Jason Pearce, an extremely talented designer specializing in character-themed merchandise, is compiling our Style Guide, which will be used to demonstrate how the Jock characters can best be used on clothing, toys, books and all the other categories of merchandise we intend to develop.

We have also appointed Cheryl Hunter to handle our public relations, and she has already set up a number of interviews with journalists, so keep an eye out over the next couple of weeks for Jock's first formal appearances in the South African media!

If you have not already seen Pixar's new film 'Up' in stereoscopic, I want to really encourage you to go and see it on the big screen while you still can. Thank you to all those people who gave us feedback on our new look Newsletter. I hope you like this one just as much.

Race Day - Giant Boabab

Jock finds himself in a dusty race alongside Warthogs and dogs. Not to mention some unusual jockeys - Vervet monkeys!

Cheers
Kerry Liss
Production Supervisor

