The Da Vinci Code: Double Negative's Quest for Visual Effects Led to Autodesk Technology

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SAN RAFAEL, Calif., June 5, 2006 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX News Network/ -- Autodesk, Inc. (Nasdaq: ADSK) today announced that visual effects studio Double Negative turned to Autodesk technology in order to deliver stunning computer-generated imagery for the new thriller The Da Vinci Code. From car crashes to elaborate tombs, Double Negative used Autodesk Maya 3D animation software to realize creative ideas for 80 of the film's shots.

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

Steve Garrad, visual effects producer at London-based Double Negative, summarized the company's use of Autodesk Maya: "Double Negative worked on The Da Vinci Code for 10 months with Autodesk Maya software. The Maya software's 3D animation, modeling and rendering capabilities enabled us to pre-visualize and enhance scenes, as well as create entire scenes in the post-production process. Many of the shots we delivered would have been impossible to craft without Maya."

Director Ron Howard's film is based on The Da Vinci Code novel by Dan Brown. The story follows the main characters -- Robert Langdon (Tom Hanks) and Sophie Neveu (Audrey Tautou) -- on their quest to discover a religious mystery. Double Negative's Garrad described one of the film's key shots, in which Silas the monk is driving: "The car in the first half of the shot was computer-generated and a real car was used for the second half of the shot. The computer-generated car matched the real car perfectly frame-by-frame. This was due to the talent of Lead CG Artist James Benson here at Double Negative, as well as Autodesk Maya software."

In addition, Maya helped depict the main characters' memories. Robert Langdon has an extraordinarily detailed and vivid recollection of past events. As well, Sophie Neveu has a horrific memory of her parents dying in a car accident. 3D elements were created in Maya and added to 2D imagery to create a shocking visualization of this memory.

Jesper Kjolsrud, CG supervisor at Double Negative, discussed the role of Maya as a pre-visualization tool: "In The Da Vinci Code, the reveal of Mary's sarcophagus is a good example where Autodesk Maya became the backbone of a shot. The shot was first pre-visualized in Maya. Camera movement was then programmed onto a motion control green screen plate of the sarcophagus, using Maya. Maya was also used to pre-visualize the Newton's tomb sequence."

Double Negative is currently using Autodesk Maya on a number of projects, including Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix, The Reaping, 10,000 BC, Stardust, Children of Men, Penelope and The Magic Flute.

About Autodesk

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