



## Starz Animation Toronto Animates Shane Acker's Hit Movie '9' Using Autodesk Software

September 17, 2009

SAN RAFAEL, Calif., Sept. 17 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Focus Features' animated, action-packed adventure "9", from director Shane Acker and producers Tim Burton and Timur Bekmambetov, spotlights animation from Starz Animation Toronto using *Autodesk, Inc.*'s (Nasdaq: ADSK) *Autodesk Maya* and *Autodesk Mudbox* 3D software.

"9" tells the story of a post-apocalyptic world in which machines have destroyed the human race. A group of small creations was given the spark of life by a scientist in the final days of humanity, and they continue to exist post-apocalypse. With their group so few, these "stitchpunk" creations must summon individual strengths well beyond their own proportions in order to outwit and fight against still-functioning machines.

At Starz Animation Toronto, 125 animation artists and 100 other employees completed work on "9" in just 14 months. *Maya* was used for asset creation, camera work and animation, while *Mudbox* was used for digital sculpting and texturing. Director of Photography Kevin Adams said, "'9' is a testament to what can be achieved with good planning, fearless execution, and great tools and support from Autodesk."

The film's virtual camera is positioned only nine inches off the ground, showing the world from the characters' perspective. This zoomed-in view required highly detailed characters and environments. Adams explained, "Our greatest creative challenge was creating a close-up view that still felt visually rich. Every sequence has a new location with either a new stitchpunk character or an attacking monster."

Starz Animation Toronto developed a tremendous amount of detail for each scene. This required robust character rigs to communicate characters' body language, extensive facial animation, and frequent mixing of 2D backgrounds with 3D foregrounds. Adams said, "All of our artists can work in 2D and 3D, and *Maya* helps bring it together by bridging these worlds. This helps us take shortcuts without compromising visual quality, and lets us get every possible ounce of cool on the screen."

Adams added, "We used *Mudbox* for the first time in production on '9', primarily for ground detailing. The software proved itself and we look forward to using it more in future projects. *Maya* has been the backbone of our digital pipeline since Starz Animation Toronto opened its doors. We love it for its power, flexibility, excellent support, and huge community of artists."

To learn more about the making of "9", watch a video presentation by Adams on AREA, Autodesk's Digital Entertainment and Visualization Community\*:

[http://area.autodesk.com/inhouse/videos/siggraph\\_2009\\_starz\\_animation](http://area.autodesk.com/inhouse/videos/siggraph_2009_starz_animation)

*\*Must register and log-in to view content*

### *About Starz Animation*

Starz Animation Toronto ([www.starzanimation.com](http://www.starzanimation.com)), a unit of Starz Media, LLC, is one of Canada's leading high-quality digital animation studios, providing world-class computer-animated content for feature films, DVDs, television series, commercials, visual effects and shorts for studios and independent producers, as well as proprietary productions. Starz Media, LLC, is a programming, production and distribution company operating worldwide. It includes the Film Roman, Anchor Bay Entertainment, and Manga Entertainment brands. Its units create animated and live-action programming - including theatrical films - and programming created under contract for other media companies. It distributes that programming, and programming acquired from outside producers, through home video retailers, theaters, broadcasters, ad supported and premium television channels, and Internet and wireless video distributors in the US and internationally. Starz Media ([www.starzmedia.com](http://www.starzmedia.com)) is a controlled subsidiary of Liberty Media Corporation attributed to the Liberty Capital Group.

### *About Autodesk*

Autodesk, Inc., is a 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 early in the design process to save time and money, enhance quality and foster innovation. For additional information about Autodesk, visit [www.autodesk.com](http://www.autodesk.com).

*Autodesk, AutoCAD, Maya and Mudbox are registered trademarks or trademarks of Autodesk, Inc., and/or its subsidiaries and/or affiliates in the USA and/or other countries. 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) 2009 Autodesk, Inc. All rights reserved.*

Contacts: Roohi Saeed, 514.961.7296 / Rama Dunayevich, 415.547.2472

Email: [roohi.saeed@autodesk.com](mailto:roohi.saeed@autodesk.com) / [rama.dunayevich@autodesk.com](mailto:rama.dunayevich@autodesk.com)

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

SOURCE Autodesk, Inc.

Roohi Saeed, +1-514-961-7296, [roohi.saeed@autodesk.com](mailto:roohi.saeed@autodesk.com), or Rama Dunayevich, +1-415-547-2472, [rama.dunayevich@autodesk.com](mailto:rama.dunayevich@autodesk.com), both of Autodesk, Inc.