L.A. ACM/SIGGRAPH Presents
Tuesday October 12th, 1999

"Heads Up Troopers" An Evening with Foundation Imaging

The Event

An Evening with Foundation Imaging
Best known for their Emmy Award winning effects on "Babylon 5" and "Star Trek: Voyager", Foundation Imaging has joined the list of companies producing CGI animation for television which includes Mainframe Entertainment. Their latest project, "Roughnecks: The Starship Troopers Chronicles" is currently shown on the Bohbot Kids Network (Airs locally on KCAL Channel 9 Mon-Fri at 7:30am).

Foundation Imaging, a leading computer animation/special effects company based in Valencia, California, was founded in 1992 by Ron Thornton and Paul Bryant to create computer

What would you like to see published in the newsletter?
We would like your feedback. Please email us at Los_Angeles_Chapter@siggraph.org

[ ] Less Content    [ ] Event Information Only
[ ] More Content    [ ] Classified Listing (hardware, software, jobs)
[ ] Other
An Evening with Foundation Imaging

Continued from page 1


The company is currently producing 25 episodes of fully computer generated animation for Columbia Tristar’s “Starship Troopers: Bug Wars”, airing in the fall of 1999 on Bobbot Kids Network. The show, striped for syndication will feature action on eight different alien worlds.

Foundation is also currently in post-production on the pilot for “The Universe & Harry Morgan”, the first action-comedy from their production arm, Revenge Productions, Inc.

In addition, the company also provided effects shots for client Sony ImageWorks for the TriStar Pictures release “Contact”. These shots involved one of the film’s climactic scenes which took place in the Mission Control Center.

Thornton and Bryant perceive the effects business as a “blending of art and technology,” with Thornton as animator/model maker/motion control specialist and Bryant handling the computer and technology aspects required to create the ground-breaking visual effects for which the company is highly regarded. The duo has formed a visual FX animation business which they believe is unique – an innovative and pioneering organization specializing in high-end film and television visual effects which can be produced within extremely rigid budgets.

In 1993, the principals of Foundation Imaging received an Emmy Award for “Outstanding Achievement in Special Visual Effects,” for their very first effort, the visual effects for the pilot of the sci-fi television series, “Babylon 5.”

After that project came a string of others: Paramount Television’s “Viper,” for which they won an “International Monitor” Award, an English program entitled “Dan Dare,” and then additional work on the “Babylon 5” series, after it had been successfully launched into first-run syndication.

In 1993, Foundation Imaging decided to branch out into the development and creation of its own television programs. The idea was to do live action shows in combination with CGI. In 1994, Thornton and Foundation Imaging created a new children’s program called

Continue on page 4
Continued from page 3  An Evening with Foundation Imaging

"Hypernauts". The show, which ran for several months on ABC, was designed to break technological barriers, while remaining an exciting live-action/CGI adventure which would follow three teenagers on their futuristic journeys throughout outer space.

The Speakers

Animation Producer, Jeff Scheetz, will give an overview of the project. In addition to managing the production flow on Starship Troopers, Jeff Scheetz handles much of the recruiting for Foundation Imaging's Lightwave division.

Mocap Supervisor, Dave West, discusses Foundation's migration from magnetic to optical solutions. Dave West joined Fl in February 1997 as a character animator for "stein.oedeker.k.com", and then went on to be a modeler/animator.

Model Supervisor Dave Adams and CGI Character Model Supervisor Tom MacDougall will share insights and discuss issues such as design vs. functionality of storyboards. After a 10 year career in Special Effects/Production Management in Detroit, Dave Adams (a.k.a. LightwaveDave) joined Foundation Imaging as a Visual Effects Animator in January 1998. Tom MacDougall discovered animation in 1996 while making short films for school projects.

CGI Animation Directors PJ Foley, Kevin Kipper, Emile Edwin Smith and Mike Stetson will discuss lip sync, primary animation and technical direction of scenes. PJ Foley has been with Foundation Imaging for 2 1/2 years. After heading up a Detroit-Based Lightwave User's Group for a short time, and being a part-owner in a small animation company, PJ turned his attention to Hollywood special effects. After working as a freelance artist for Computer Café in 1996, Kevin Kipper joined the team of animators working on "Hypernauts", "Babylon 5" and "Star Trek: Voyager" at Foundation Imaging. In 1997 he supervised the animation team responsible for the CGI shots on the Warner Bros direct to video release of "Batman vs. Mr. Freeze: SubZero" and later that year for the feature film "The Jackal". Mike Stetson made a career change and came to Foundation in January, 1997. Emile Edwin Smith went to the University of California at San Diego where he received his bachelor's degree in film. He has also shot various elements on film for our "Star Trek" work. Currently he is directing several episodes of "Starship Troopers" as well as contributing to other areas of the show's organization.

Digital Director of Photography Robert Baldwin has been at the heart of the Rebellion ever since his duty in Houston, where he helped found a virtual reality company. When that company was boarded by troops from the Imperial Star Destroyer Devastator, Rob was programmed with vital plans and technical data. The little droid struggled to carry that message to waiting compatriots in Austin, where he did real-time game art and technical direction. After freelancing in Texas for a few years with pirates and Wookies, Rob decided to move to California, where the bright center of the 3D universe and further adventures with his droid companions led him to Valencia. Rob continues to play an important and ongoing role in helping the Rebels thwart Imperial forces.

Foundation Imaging continues to create, design and produce intriguing - and unduplicated digital special effects for network and syndicated television projects, feature films, multimedia projects and theme parks around the world.

"Roughnecks: The Starship Trooper Chronicles" Foundation Imaging ©1999 Adelaide Productions, Inc.