

Evergreen Films
(www.evergreenfilms.com)
Anchorage, Alaska
Los Angeles, California

Autodesk® Lustre®
Autodesk® Maya®
Autodesk® Smoke®

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—Pierre de Lespinois
Founder, Director, Producer
Evergreen Films, Inc.

People, Get Ready.

Evergreen Films uses Autodesk software to explore the “what-if” of what’s next in 3D stereoscopic production and post.



Image courtesy of Evergreen Films and Irish Rover Films.

Summary

Based in Los Angeles, California, and Anchorage, Alaska, Evergreen Films was founded by Emmy® award-winning director Pierre de Lespinois and entrepreneur Mike Devlin to combine a wealth of production and technological experience into a full-service production company for the film and high-end television production business. Through innovative use of Autodesk software, Evergreen has emerged as a leader in advanced 3D stereoscopy production and post-production, and has the results to prove it.

To many, the recent explosion in 3D stereoscopic film projects may seem to have come out of nowhere. The Evergreen team, however, has been working toward full-scale 3D production for several years, and Autodesk has been there with them.

“We really saw the 3D wave coming,” says de Lespinois. “As we were designing and developing 3D camera rigs, we noticed that Autodesk was already working toward providing software for 3D stereoscopy, and we knew it was a company to watch. Autodesk is making tools that are enabling us to ask ‘what if?’ and get answers right away.”

The Challenge

For his part, de Lespinois points to the long history of 3D stereoscopy. “Shooting in 3D isn’t new, of course,” he explains. “There are 3D photographs of Abraham Lincoln, and films using the single-camera anaglyph process date back to before the 1950s. What is new today is we can capture the footage digitally which allows us to more efficiently control the whole process in post.

Never has the phrase “leading edge” been more applicable than in the world of 3D stereoscopic production. “This is a very exciting time for 3D artists and filmmakers,” says de Lespinois. “I’ve never seen something explode on the scene so quickly. There are new 3D television channels, new 3D capability in traditional theaters, manufacturers developing off-the-shelf products that are already 3D compliant. This is a revolution. People need to spend time with the new technology to get a more complete understanding of how 3D works and what it can do.”



Image courtesy of Evergreen Films and Irish Rover Films.

The Solution

A long-time user of Autodesk software, Evergreen has made use most recently of Autodesk® Lustre® color grading software, Autodesk® Maya® software for 3D modeling and animation, and Autodesk® Smoke® software for online editing and finishing. According to de Lespinois, these software products were particularly helpful on a recent 3D concert film featuring the Dave Matthews Band.

“We used eight cameras for Dave Matthews, which is really 16 cameras for 3D,” he explains. “This is a live performance in front of 40,000 people, so you can’t just say ‘cut.’ To do it in 3D, you’re not just dealing with zooming, panning, and craning, but you’re also changing the interocular convergence as you get closer to your subject. There is a great deal going on.”

While viewing footage on the 24-foot screen in Evergreen’s Los Angeles studio, the team was able to more easily move from Smoke to Lustre to see everything in 3D and make necessary adjustments.

“The most important thing is to make sure that the 3D placement of the subject is consistent from shot to shot,” says de Lespinois. “Otherwise, viewers’ eyes will instinctively be darting back and forth. We were able to use Smoke, Lustre, and Maya to help make sure that the transition from shot to shot was smoother, more believable, and more comfortable for the eyes. Smoke, Lustre, and Maya worked together seamlessly, and that is very empowering for a

director. I am sure of what these tools can do, and that confidence spurs me to more creative freedom.”

The Results

According to de Lespinois, what the Evergreen team achieved in roughly five days on the Dave Matthews concert project would have required more than a year of work in the not-so-distant past. Another upcoming project is called *Totem*, a feature film that de Lespinois calls a “Native American ghost story.”

“*Totem* combines live actors with animated characters built using Maya,” he explains. “I appreciate consistency, and our combination of Autodesk products helps give us a more complete palette to work from. There is no stronger toolset for doing visual effects and understanding 3D space.”

Adding to the products’ appeal is a support team that de Lespinois describes as “second to none.”

“No company has better support than Autodesk,” he says. “We are always on a tight deadline and on multimillion dollar projects that simply cannot be delayed. Add to that the fact that much of our work has never before been done. With Autodesk, we have a technical partner that we can count on. That is crucial in our business.”

For more information about Autodesk Media & Entertainment software, visit www.autodesk.com/me.

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