

[R I S I N G S U N P I C T U R E S T A K E S L E A D R O L E O N C H A R L O T T E ' S W E B]

[Adelaide, South Australia] Rising Sun Pictures [RSP] is proud to have taken a lead role on Paramount's live action version of the classic tale Charlotte's Web. Starting in January 2005 and finishing in July 2006, RSP delivered over 240 spellbinding shots of Charlotte and her magnificent webs. A team of 60 artists developed the photo-realistic computer-generated character, who is voiced by Oscar winner Julia Roberts for the film, which premiered in December 2006.

A realistic yet lovable Charlotte was crucial to the success of the story. As the lead character in the film, she needed to display an onscreen presence on par with the performance provided by Julia Roberts, without breaking the illusion that this unique arachnid was as much a part of Zuckerman's barn as the rest of the animal cast. RSP built a collaborative relationship with the filmmakers, especially Director Gary Winick, VFX Supervisor John Berton Jr & Animation Supervisor Eric Leighton – Berton & Leighton even spent time with RSP during production to further enhance the partnership. They succeeded, says director Winick, by paying special attention to the eyes. "They had to have a quality to them that would be expressive." An additional challenge that RSP undertook was the creation of the web - which Charlotte uses in the story to communicate with the world. The team at RSP developed an extensive set of custom tools for Charlotte to interact with her web and the environment, and for it to look suitably magical and realistic.

Rising Sun Pictures is the only Australian visual effects company that is exclusively dedicated to feature film visual effects. Founded in 1995, RSP has collaborated with the industry's top film makers on award winning films such as The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King, and Superman Returns as well as the blockbuster hits Batman Begins, Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire and The Last Samurai. Since creating the lead character of Charlotte, RSP has been awarded visual effects sequences for New Line Cinema's Mimzy, along with the Warner Brothers blockbuster Blood Diamond, and the fifth instalment of the Harry Potter saga, Harry Potter and The Order of the Phoenix. With most clients on the other side of the world, RSP focuses on building collaborative relationships with their clients. It is these relationships that have made it possible for RSP to deliver over 450 visual effects shots for feature films this year.

Rising Sun Pictures uses cineSync for all its client reviews. cineSync [cinesync.com] is a remote review and approval tool that allows people to review movies and images at the same time with anyone, anywhere in the world. It was developed by Rising Sun Research, who are responsible for pioneering tools that are currently in use at many of the major international visual effects companies around the world. Using cineSync gives clients from around the world the ability to communicate visually with the RSP teams in Adelaide and Sydney as if they were in the same room.

[CHARLOTTE'S WEB & RISING SUN PICTURES- FAST FACTS]

SHOTS/SEQUENCES

242 shots delivered for film
32843 frames delivered for film
Approximately 23 minutes on screen

SERVICES PROVIDED

- Character Design & Conceptualisation/development
- On-set VFX supervision
- Pre-visualisation for key sequences
- Photorealistic Animated Lead Character [voiced by Julia Roberts]
- Interactive Web
- extra CG elements - barn, fly, egg sack, moth
- Digital Environments

VFX INFORMATION

Team: 60 artists with 25 support staff

Location: Adelaide Studio

Team breakdown: 20 animators, 15 lighters, 15 compositors, 10 Technical Directors, 3 supervisors, 1 art director, 3 editorial, 2 production managers, 1 executive producer, 1 producer, 1 production supervisor, 4 coordinators, 2 assistants, 4 wranglers, 3 system administrators.

Highest iteration: v036

Lowest iteration: v001

Software [in alphabetical order]: 3Delight, Affogato, Boujou, Cinepaint, Flesh, Furnace, Hype, Liquid, Maya, Photoshop, Softimage XSI, Wings

RSP rendered everything using 3Delight, a RenderMan-compliant renderer

Lighting for Charlotte was carried out using a custom RSP light rig in XSI

RSP developed a custom XSI to RenderMan translator, Affogato

Affogato was used to translate all 3D data from XSI to 3Delight

Affogato, will be provided as open source to the VFX community

Ambient- & reflection occlusion was used on the body to mask out the HDR reflections and the lighting

3Delight added extensions for hair rendering that allow quality control beyond industry-standard

HDR environment maps, captured on set, were utilized for eye- & body reflections and anisotropic reflections on hair to add to the realism

Due to the need for interactive tweaking of the look of Charlotte & the web, there were over 30 separate element passes for Charlotte, and 40 for the web - all 2048x1556 float OpenEXR.

RSP developed an extensive set of tools to simulate and automate web behaviour and interaction with the spider and the digital environments

[PEOPLE OF RISING SUN PICTURES]

JOHN DIETZ, VFX SUPERVISOR, RISING SUN PICTURES

John's background as a traditional artist and sculptor, coupled with his wealth of experience on films such as Hollow Man, Babe: Pig in the City, The Green Mile and Charlotte's Web give him the rare ability to oversee both the technical development of complex CG characters and deliver a Director's vision for look and performance. His enthusiasm for the craft is infectious, and his way of actively engaging filmmakers allows the RSP team to deliver uniquely collaborative solutions for our clients.

JAMES WHITLAM, HEAD OF PRODUCTION, RISING SUN PICTURES

As head of production at Rising Sun Pictures James is charged with the task of further expanding RSP's international film portfolio. Over the past fifteen years he has worn the hats of visual effects compositor, animator, supervisor and producer on more than twenty films. Since joining RSP in 2002, James has produced or overseen most of RSP's work for Warner Brothers Pictures, Paramount Pictures, Walt Disney Pictures, New Line Cinema and Marvel Studios.

TONY CLARK ACS, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, RISING SUN PICTURES

Tony Clark is an Emmy Award winning Cinematographer, Visual Effects Supervisor, co-founder and Director of RSP. He is an active member and advocate of the Australian film community, and his tireless work representing our country's capabilities in Los Angeles, as well as lobbying for more effective Government incentives to attract more foreign production to Australia, recently earned him a position on the board of Ausfilm. He has been named 2006 Entrepreneur of the Year and Export Awards winner in South Australia.

[MARKETING CONTACT]

Rising Sun Pictures is available for interviews, and have a set of Paramount-approved images to be used upon request.

For more information or for arranging interviews, please contact:

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