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Ingenuity Engine Taps Krakatoa for Zabeel Investments Commercial
Directed by Graeme Joyce, Frantic Films Software's High Volume Point-Based Renderer
Creates Dreamy Sandscape

Winnipeg, Canada (December 2, 2008)—Frantic Films Software, the R&D arm of award-winning visual effects studio Frantic Films VFX and a division of Prime Focus Group, announced that its high-volume point-based particle renderer Krakatoa was used by Los Angeles-based VFX studio Ingenuity Engine on a TV commercial for Zabeel Investments. Directed by Graeme Joyce, "Bedouin" is a cinematic exploration into the rich possibilities of investing in the United Arab Emirates. The spot is airing in the Middle East market and premiered in September.

The software tool first caught the attention of Ingenuity Engine because of its efficiency in handling high particle count volumetric rendering and its seamless interoperability with the company's Autodesk 3ds Max pipeline. Said David Lebensfeld, founder and lead artist, Ingenuity Engine, "To remain competitive, it's crucial to stay on top of the best tools and techniques available and it was clear Krakatoa was the most logical solution for the Zabeel Investments project. Our experience was one of those rare moments in which the technical hurdles that Krakatoa eliminated actually ended up dictating the spot's look and feel."

The :60 TVC "Bedouin" opens on a desert at night, as winds kick up swirling clouds of sand. Inside, a Bedouin man reads a book by firelight. A v/o intones, "In the future, the land shall rise from the sea. Knowledge shall be free." The man walks through the tent amidst a motion graphics flurry of Roman numerals, symbols and words in Arabic, which dissolve into particles. "In the future, gemstones will glisten in the sky. Cities will know no boundaries," the v/o continues, as twinkling stars form into the shapes of skyscrapers before blowing away as giant clouds of dust. "But this is not the future. And I'm no fortune teller," the voice says as the title cards, "This is today. This is Dubai. We are Zabeel Investments." closes out the spot.

"We knew we had the ability to make realistic and believable flying sand, so we tested it and worked with director Graeme Joyce to perfect it before production even took place," continued Lebensfeld. "This allowed us to tailor parts of the spot around this technique. Working with a director like Graeme was also a blessing because he was very open to our ideas while keeping razor sharp focus on the final product, making sure we didn't get too out of hand with our particle party."

For the commercial's main VFX team, which comprised Lebensfeld and Senior 3D Artist Kris Cabrera, one of the most valuable features within Krakatoa and one that was pivotal to its production process was the ability to partition particles. Ingenuity Engine's biggest obstacle to overcome was in creating more particles than Autodesk 3ds Max could natively support. This was where Krakatoa shined—the toolset was able to generate two million particles, partition them out, create another 10 million and have an offset motion for each partition.

"This not only saved us a lot of time, it's what made the commercial possible to begin with," commented Kris Cabrera, senior 3D artist, Ingenuity Engine. "Once the particles were cached, our artists were able

to tweak the lighting without the additional cost of render time. With these features, we were able to leave a sequence rendering overnight and come in the next day and watch it, which helped smooth out the revision process. This combined with the fast render time with motion blur really made the tool invaluable.”

Ingenuity Engine’s primary 3D package is Autodesk 3ds Max running on Dell workstations with an Avid Nitris as its primary I/O. The facility’s network attached storage is a 5tb Dell Server with a gigabit backbone. All shots were composited in Combustion 4, and then transferred over to a G-Speed SAN for review on the Avid. Ingenuity Engine purchased Krakatoa specifically for use on the Zabeel Investments commercial, but has since used the tool on a “Back to School” campaign for Sears and a Pokerstars.com campaign, both directed by Joseph Kahn.

Pricing and Availability

Krakatoa is available directly through the Frantic Films Software Division, please visit <http://software.franticfilms.com/> or contact krakatoa-sales@franticfilms.com with sales inquiries. Krakatoa is available now for a list price starting at \$495.00 and is compatible with Autodesk’s 3ds Max Version 8 and higher.

About Frantic Films VFX

Headquartered in Winnipeg, Canada, with offices in Vancouver and Los Angeles, Calif., Frantic Films VFX has been operating divisions that provide visual effects for film and television, and VFX software development since 1997. Frantic Films’ VFX award-winning visual effects teams have worked on films including *W.*, *Fantastic Four: The Rise of the Silver Surfer*, *Grindhouse*, *Superman Returns*, *X-Men 3*, *Poseidon* and many others. The company’s software tools were developed to solve complex production challenges on in-house feature effects projects, and are also in use at many leading 3D animation and effects facilities worldwide. In November of 2007 Frantic Films VFX became a division of international post and VFX leader Prime Focus Group. For more information, visit <http://www.franticfilms.com>.

PRODUCTION CREDITS:

Title: “Bedouin”
Length: :60
Client: Zabeel Investments

Post Production:
Supervisor/Lead Artist: David Lebensfeld
Executive Producer: Matthew Poliquin
Post-Coordinator: Michael Lebensfeld
Senior 3D artist: Kris Cabrera
3D artist: Michael Dunkley
Senior 2D/3D artist/On-set Supervisor: Daniel Raschko
Online Editor: Adam Catino
Still photographer for matte paintings: Justin Gunari

Production:
Director: Graeme Joyce
Producer: William Green
1st Assistant Director: John Knowles
Director of Photography: Daniel Pearl, ASC
1st AC: Eric Laudadio

Gaffer: Joe Warren
Key Grip: Jason Wiest
Production Designer: Charles Infante

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