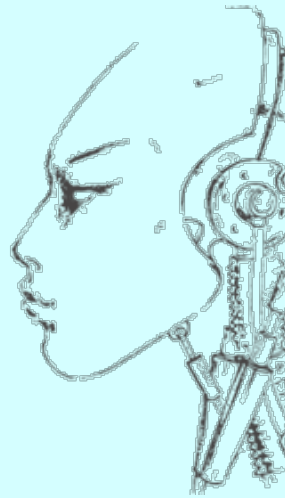


VISUAL EFFECTS MEETS SPECIAL EFFECTS



"I didn't want to do Metropolis or C3PO. I wanted to concentrate on narrative." - PAUL STREET

"With any job, you have to get into their heads, find out where they're coming from." - CHRIS HARTWILL



Most effects these days aren't necessarily the obvious ones. Whether it's matting out backgrounds or removing in shot production equipment, special effects are becoming far more integrated with live-action and visual effects than ever before. And that means far greater liaison between production and post-production than previously.

Two such examples, both posted at Rushes, were BP's award winning commercial 'Give Life Robot' for Streetlight and Invensys 'Beer' for RSA. Both had models that needed to be integrated with cgi and other special effects, yet a look that wasn't obviously 'artificial'.

"Just in the last year," agrees RSA's Chris Hartwill, "I've been doing more special effects stuff than I've done in the last five, the sort where people can't tell what's cgi and what's live action. In these shoots, almost every shot can end up with certain post-production elements - production and post-production are definitely dove-tailing. However, you shouldn't be doing special effects for special effects' sake. It should be the means of getting to an idea rather than the idea itself."

Fellow director Paul Street of Streetlight concurs, "whenever I can, I avoid special effects. I'll always try to do everything for real and in-camera." Yet both Hartwill and Street maintain that the main reason they use Rushes is that it knows where to draw the line. "I've worked quite a lot with Rushes," says Street. "I've always had a good relationship with the people there and they know the limitations of cgi."

"I love to pick the brains of people I respect, who won't lead you down the path of cgi or post if it's not the right technique." Explains Hartwill, "You can see the Rushes' effects team discussing projects with each other all the time - you know they're really thinking about the job and they're enthusiastic. Essentially, you've got to like the people you use for post. You're going to spend almost every day with them for three weeks."