

3D

WORLD

THE MAGAZINE FOR 3D ARTISTS



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THE HORROR ISSUE

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• Come and take part in the colourful world of film promotion and international film festivals. If you're trying to decide where to screen your film, turn to page 39 ...

GLOBAL

Someone once said, "In every 3D artist lurks a frustrated filmmaker." If you're one of those impassioned few who models by day, and textures, animates, lights and renders by night, you'll want to know how to make the most of the international film festival circuit.

Read our essential guide to find out how

BY KIRA-ANNE PELICAN

When Moon Seun walked away from a six-figure salary and a successful career as an effects animator at DreamWorks, it was, incredibly to some, her own choice. She wanted to work full-time on her animated short film, *Henry's Garden*. "Working at the major studios was very challenging at first, but after five years I felt my personal creativity deteriorating rapidly. I really wanted to create my own characters and tell my own stories, rather than continue to labour on relatively minor aspects of other people's films."

It's a sentiment close to the hearts of many 3D artists. Hard as it is to create the time and space in your life to work on your own project, completing your short is just the beginning. Film festivals are the testing grounds of new filmmakers, and it's for good reason that it's at festivals that studio executives go scouting for talent.

With over 2,500 film festivals worldwide, the first challenge for any filmmaker is choosing where to submit your film. Entry fees averaging around £20 mean you'll probably want to start by focusing your attentions on a selected few. A comprehensive list of festivals can be found online at www.imdb.com. Start by ruling out the obvious: for example, some festivals are limited to certain types of film, and some

EXPOSURE



● Tim Weimann and Tom Bracht took four years to make their graduation film *My Date from Hell*. Promotional materials like the poster to the right can be particularly helpful at festival screenings

along with your bio and a publicity shot. A filmography is a must. Include a list of festivals where your film has already screened, and any awards won. You'll also need to write a statement about why you made the film. The postcard is the business card of the festival circuit: print up a couple of hundred to pass around.

Until around five years ago, the only method of submitting a short to a festival was to send it by post or courier in the festival's preferred format. For multiple festival entries, the process of duplicating the media, completing multiple entry forms and posting in the packages was laborious. Automated submission is now set to become the standard. Some festivals run their own automated submission systems, allowing the filmmaker to upload his film online. Other festivals link to www.withoutabox.com or www.shortfilmdepot.com, its European equivalent. For just the standard per-festival entry fee, you can enter any festival on their comprehensive lists.

The perennial question for Terrence Masson at this year's Siggraph CAF, is what festival juries are looking for. "Excellence



"I imagine *Eternal Gaze* did well at festivals because it's different. It's a slow burn with a beautiful score, and at 16 minutes is long enough to immerse yourself in"

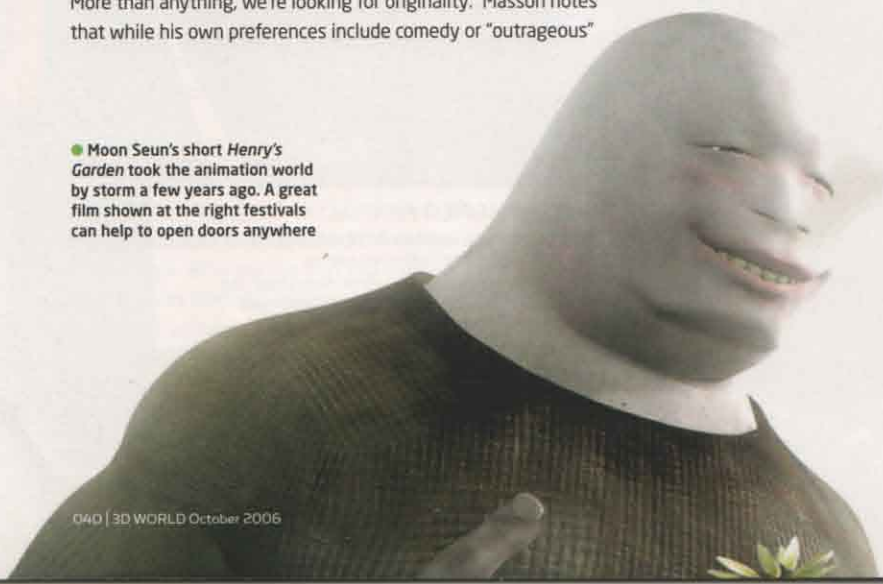
SAM CHEN, INDEPENDENT ANIMATOR

of direction, innovation and a new aesthetic," he explains. "We've become so accustomed to looking at amazing CG that it isn't enough anymore. This year, four major studios submitted their work on *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. It was all great work, but as it didn't show anything new, it didn't make the selection. More than anything, we're looking for originality." Masson notes that while his own preferences include comedy or "outrageous"

technique, look or subject matter, his co-jury members have been selected for their range of backgrounds and varied personal tastes. While comedy might be Masson's preferred genre, for others it's drama.

One such critically acclaimed drama is *Eternal Gaze*, a short based on the life of artist Alberto Giacometti, made by indie animator Sam Chen. "I imagine it did well at festivals because it's different," says Chen. "It's a slow burn with a beautiful score, and at 16 minutes is long enough to immerse yourself in. Ultimately it touches people." After working at SGI for eight years, Sam came across Giacometti's story at an art class. He was so inspired he quit his job, burnt through his life savings and spent three years making the film that had him qualified for Academy Award nomination. Watching the film screened at festivals was reward

● Moon Seun's short *Henry's Garden* took the animation world by storm a few years ago. A great film shown at the right festivals can help to open doors anywhere



● With some spectacular backgrounds like the one above, *Henry's Garden* depicts the encroachment of technology on nature through a gentle monster's perspective. It's an emotionally engaging story