Spider-Man:
Behind the Mask

Sony Pictures Imageworks takes you for a spin through the virtual world of Spider-Man. Scott Stokdyk and his team reveal how the effects, buildings, and characters were created in the computer and integrated with the live action. CG Supervisor Ken Hahn discusses the complexities involved in creating the buildings of New York City. CG Supervisor Peter Nofz explains the challenges of setting up characters for animation, and Character look Lead Greg Anderson shows us the process of look development for character lighting.

Scott Stokdyk
Visual Effects Supervisor
Sony Pictures Imageworks

Scott Stokdyk dreamed of a career creating computer generated effects for the movies, there were only a handful of people making a living at it when he started college.

Following graduation from Harvey Mudd college in 1992, Stokdyk took a job at Teradyne, Inc. in Agoura Hills, California, as an applications engineer testing microprocessors and RISC chips. Not motivated by the work and still envisioning a career in visual effects, Stokdyk added computer graphic classes at night through UCLA Extension and the American Film Institute to his Engineering Degree.

By 1994 the field of visual effects was exploding. Stokdyk landed a job at visual effects house Motions Works as a programmer. Looking for a way into effects, Stokdyk stayed late at night and taught himself to use their animation system. When two of the company's animators suddenly left, Stokdyk got his break. He started by creating animation for commercials and straight-to-video animation productions. Later in that same year he moved to Metrolight Studios as a technical director. There he worked on an AMC Gift Certificate piece, effects shots for feature film "Broken Arrow" and on Herbie Hancock's music video "Dis is Da Drum." Then in 1995 Stokdyk jumped to Digital Domain and put his visual effects career in full gear, working as a digital artist on "Titanic," "Terminator 2/3D" and as a sequence supervisor on "Fifth Element."

Stokdyk came to Imageworks in 1998. He worked as a digital artist on "Starship Troopers" (1998 Academy Award Nominee, Best Visual Effects) and "Contact." He moved up to become a computer graphics supervisor on "Godzilla." Then he supervised 150 shots on "Stuart Little" (1999 Academy Award Nominee, Best Visual Effects). He was promoted to digital effects supervisor and received his first Academy Award Nomination for supervising the creation of the incredible disappearing man and gorilla in "Hollow Man."

Stokdyk was visual effects supervisor on "Spider-Man," where his team created the digital characters of Spider-Man and the Green Goblin, as well as a synthetic version of several locations in New York City. "No one has ever created a photoreal CG city location for a movie that's been used in this way before," said Stokdyk. "This will allow us to take the camera everywhere Spider-Man flies and see him and the world from a different vantage point. Audiences are in for something new."

Peter Nofz
CG Supervisor
Sony Pictures Imageworks

Following graduation from Technische Universitaet Munich, Germany, with the equivalent of a MS in Computer Science, Peter Nofz began his entertainment career as a Production Assistant for Gesellschaft fuer Bildende Filme (GBF) in Munich, Germany. He coordinated and supervised production of 35mm industrials for such clients as Volkswagen, BASF and Bayer.

In 1989 Peter moved to Sun Microsystems as a senior consultant/lecturer, where he taught advanced seminars in graphics programming, UI design and UNIX networking throughout Europe.

Desiring to marry his computer graphics talents with his life long love of movies, Peter returned to Northwestern University in 1990 to pursue a MFA in Radio/TV/Film. While working toward his degree, Peter was a member of the adjunct faculty for advanced 3D animation and video.

After completing his degree, Peter worked at Insight Pix, first as a Technical Director, then Senior TD/Animator. His credits included such award-winning commercials as Sega Obsidian (Golden Clio: Visual FX) and McDonald's Fish (New York Festival Gold); television productions, Warner Brothers' House of Toons, HBO's, Mr. Stitch, and feature films "Waterworld," "Executive Decision" and "Kaazam."

Peter joined Imageworks in 1998 as a Senior Technical Director on "Stuart Little" and "Hollow Man," both of which garnered Academy Award nominations for Best Visual Effects. Most recently Peter was a CC Supervisor on the international hit "Spider-Man."

Ken Hahn
CG Supervisor
Sony Pictures Imageworks

Ken Hahn joined Sony Pictures Imageworks in 1996 as a sequence supervisor on "Contact" and went on to work on such projects as "Godzilla," "Starship Troopers" and "Stuart Little." Ken recently supervised the construction of 3D virtual city environments for Columbia Pictures "Spider-Man." He previously led an Imageworks crew in the creation of a digital human for Columbia Pictures "Hollow Man," which was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Visual Effects.

Prior to joining Imageworks, Ken spent several years as a Technical Director at Walt Disney Feature Animation and at AT&T as a Software Engineer. Ken holds a B.S. in Computer and Systems Engineering and an M.S. in Computer Science.

Gregory Anderson
Sr. Technical Director
Sony Pictures Imageworks

Gregory Anderson began his career in computer graphics during his undergraduate tenure at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. As an architecture student, his work focused on using computer graphics to better visualize unbuilt spaces. His research was widely published and led to winning multiple national and international juried architecture competitions. After completing his M.S. there, he decided to expand his interests into digital effects.

He joined Sony Pictures Imageworks in 1996, working as an effects animator on "Starship Troopers," then on "Godzilla." On his next project, "Hollow Man," Greg worked as Character Look Development Lead, responsible for developing the look and lighting pipeline for the digital human and gorilla in the film.

On his most recent project, "Spider-Man," Greg reprised his role as Look Development Lead, working to design the appearance of all the digital characters in the film. This led to an opportunity to work as CG Supervisor for one of the many "Spider-Man" commercials released with the film.