

SCRATCH helps 'Les Krostons' become masters of the universe

'Les Krostons' want to take over the world and their impish intentions were recently revealed in a five-minute VFX-laden 3D stereo teaser, directed by Frederick Du Chau through Le Studio d'Imagination, and screened at the 2010 Cannes Film Festival. Based on the 1968 comic-book creation devised by Arthur Piroton and Paul Delière, Duran Duboi in Paris harnessed the powers of ASSIMILATE's SCRATCH® Digital Finishing Solution to streamline the file-based stereo workflow, from set to post to DCP deliverables.

Elodie Ly-tri, 3D data manager at Duboi in Paris, a subsidiary of Quinta Industries group, was responsible for managing the project under Eric Martin's supervision, post production manager at Duboi. Ly-tri explains here how SCRATCH proved to be an essential tool in their tapeless, end-to-end, data-centric DI mix.

Showcase: *Les Krostons* is a great showcase for SCRATCH's post capabilities in a number of areas - efficient data workflow, quality control, conforming, 3D stereo image manipulation, DI grading, finishing, and deliverables.

Why SCRATCH? It was a natural choice. We've been working with SCRATCH as the heart of our DPX and RED workflows for nearly four years, and have used it to conform and grade many projects, such as *The Ghostwriter*, *My Own Love Song* and *Lucky Luke*. We're close to ASSIMILATE's R&D team, and we have been

Krostons' team: production company: Le Studio d'Imagination, director: Frederik Du Chau, DP: Pascal Ridao, editor: Tom Finan.

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working on the development of MXF within SCRATCH. We knew SCRATCH was used successfully to make 3ality's U23D, and after ASSIMILATE proved its 3D capabilities to us, we were convinced it was the right tool for Les Krostons.

Workflow: *Les Krostons* was shot in 1920 x 1080p with a Panavision Genesis and a mirror rig provided by Binocle. The 4:2:2 capture was on Panavision's SSR, with this footage offloaded to a Codex Portable recorder, which also directly captured the 4:4:4 VFX shots. Every night we received 40 minutes of dailies per eye, on a Codex DiskPack, and we offloaded the DPX files to our SAN. We usually received the dailies at 2:00 a.m., and we were ready to do separate quality control reviews of the L and R eyes, as well as the converged picture, in SCRATCH by 6:00 a.m. This was incredibly fast! By mid-morning we were able to provide the director, DP, and stereographers with a report regarding focus, lenses, color and pixel issues.

Managing data: After pre-grading in SCRATCH, we exported the shots as Avid stereogroup DNxHD36 MXF files, and sent them to the edit room in LA. To make it clear and easy for them, we managed all the relevant metadata in SCRATCH, renaming shots to each slot where we might apply a cut, and adding the reel IDs as required. SCRATCH can present the files either side-by-side or over-and-under, and they wanted over-and-under.

Conforming & comp'ing: What's really cool about SCRATCH is that I had groups of CONstructs with all the DPX dailies and one with the DPX conforms - all within the same project. Having access to all the DPX files, at any time, made it very easy for me to not just conform, but also to send shots to the VFX team. Our comp'ing team uses SCRATCH with shared



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storage, so I could prepare a CONstruct with the VFX shots, send that over, and they could simply link to the media and export as required. When shots were completed I simply dropped them back on to my timeline.

XML support: This is one of SCRATCH's most powerful features. On *Les Krostons*, we used XML scripts to optimize the flow of files between network locations for the compositing team. We also used XML to prepare the daily QC reports for the production company, sent from SCRATCH as a PDF. With the new HTML support allowing us to publish to the web, SCRATCH

provides ever more efficient ways to interact with the production team during post.

3D capabilities: A key advantage of SCRATCH is that it has a built-in workflow for 3D stereo. So, along with being able to review L and R eyes individually, you can also playback the converged picture. Using the SHOT FRAMING tool set, I could adjust the X and Y offset to change the convergence of a shot, subtly scale the L or R to remove any black edges within the frame, and also correct any vertical or horizontal disparities. Grading for stereo is straightforward too. Gilles Granier, one of

our in-house color grader made color changes to the left eye through SCRATCH Scaffolds, and could apply them to the corresponding shot, or shots, in the right eye by a single keystroke.

Deliverables: For marketing purposes we created 3D and 2D DCP masters of the teaser in SCRATCH, with 2.35:1 for the 2D and 1.85:1 for the 3D stereo. The sheer ability of SCRATCH to have the footage available in CONstructs in the same project, and to conform, grade and crop images as appropriate, meant that we created these really fast in only two sessions.

Working relationship: We've worked closely with the ASSIMILATE team for several years. They have always been very helpful, and they listened to our suggestions, which I think makes SCRATCH a stronger product because of this client-friendly approach. SCRATCH is open; easy to operate; works well with Avid; is very good for managing DPX files and associated metadata; and offers powerful XML specificity. It's strong on conforming, managing versions, color grading, finishing, and 3D, and handles new camera formats, such as RED and ARRI Alexa. What more could you want?

“A key advantage of SCRATCH is that it has a built-in workflow for 3D Stereo”

Elodie Ly-tri - 3D Data Manager



The first French long feature shot in 3D

We are now working on “Derrière les Murs” (Behind the Wall) and it stars Laëtitia Casta. It’s directed by Pascal Sid and Julien Lacombe and produced by Sombrero Films.

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