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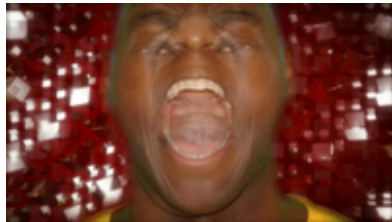
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NYIT Professor's Entry Flavor screened at VISIONFEST 06

By John Virata



The New York Institute of Technology announced that Professor **Paul Lipsky's** experimental [film /Flavor/](#), which attempts to detail how differing flavors affect the individual sampling those flavors, was one of 47 entries (out of 550 entries), screened at the VISIONFEST 06 film festival. The film is unique in that it contains no video, but rather is a series of still digital images that emulate the look of

movement. Lipsky, who has been teaching 3D computer animation at NYIT since 1999, created the film with the help of off the shelf [software](#) and a Sony digital camera. [Digital Media](#) Net spoke with him regarding some of the details of the making of this experimental film. Here is how he did it.

DMN: Your experimental film was animated from still photographs. What kind of morphing software did you use to make those photographs appear to move? Why was that software chosen?

PL: I used Autodesk's Combustion software which has some internal morphing capabilities. I chose combustion because I like the interface and find it easier than After Effects when it comes to doing tedious hand manipulations.

DMN: How many actors were involved in the film, and how many individual photographs were taken, on average, of each actors lips and face?

PL: I photographed roughly 30 people and took around 4-5 takes per actor. Each take had roughly 12 photos so in total I ended up with around 1,500 photos.

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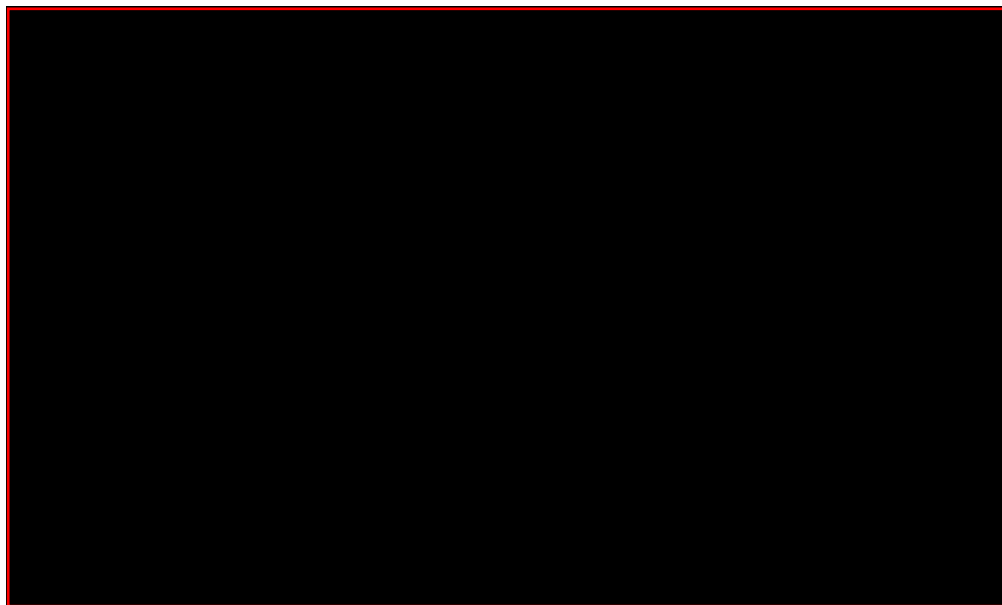
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DMN: How important was it to use a [high resolution](#) digital camera to achieve the look of the film? What camera was used to capture the shots? Why was that camera chosen?

PL: It was critical to use a high resolution digital camera for two reasons. I mastered the original film in high-def and I also needed the ability to crop my photos. Both would not have been possible without the 8 megapixel digital camera. I used the Sony DSC-F828 8.0 mega pixel camera because of it's ability to take sequential photos at high-res.

DMN: Over the course of how many days did you take the photographs of the actors?

PL: Four evenings.

DMN: What kind of video editing [application](#) did you use to put the still images together to make the film?

PL: The morphing and hand rotoscoping was done in Autodesk's [combustion](#) but the final piece was put together in [Adobe's After Effects](#).

DMN: What about the soundtrack to the film? How was it created?

PL: I attained limited rights of "River Run" by Philip Glass Dunvagen Music Publishers Inc.

DMN:You served as the principal animator and director for Flavor. How many other people worked on the film and in what capacity?

PL: Actually I was the only production person on this project. It turned into a passion of mine, that's why it took four solid months to complete.

DMN: Your film was one of 47 films selected from more than 550 entries to screen at VisionFest 06. It also screened at the 27th Durban International Film Festival, and will screen at the International Digital Media and Arts Association in San Diego, Ca. A lot of folks have seen the film. Has your previous work experienced this much interest? And how does it feel to get an experimental film out there?

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PL: Most of my other work is commercial which can be viewed at: (<http://iris.nyit.edu/~plipsky/plipsky/content/mydemoa.html>) This is my first piece in the experimental realm. I enjoyed both the process of making it and having it shown and I'm planning to do more experimental work in the future.



DMN: You have been working with 3D animation for more than 15 years, yet Flavor seems to be a departure from 3D, taking a 2D, almost video look to it. Why did you use this type of technique to promote the concept of flavor? Have you used this type of technique on other projects?

PL: Great question. No I've never used this technique before. I wanted to push the envelope of my skill set and not create something predictable or something that has been seen before. I knew from the onset that I would have to create a new technique to capture the facial features of flavor in an interesting way. I would have used 3D if appropriate but just fell in love with the morphing look. It gave everything a surreal look. But if you look closely I did use some 3D. The mirrored cubes were all done in 3D.



DMN: How has 3D animation evolved over the last 10 to 15 years? Are the tools getting easier to use or just more feature laden and is that a good thing?

PL: Another great question. . . my first 3D package that I used was called "Magi Synthavision" This package of 3D software had NO interface. You needed to graph everything out and then type in your 3D coordinates. It was very difficult to use. When I moved on to Wavefront software on a SGI computer I thought it was heaven to actually see your 3D as you modeled. Back in these days (around the late 1980s) you needed to be much more technical than you do today because of the maturation of the software. But as you mentioned in your question with maturity comes more features. I find today's packages much easier to learn but much more difficult to master all the different aspects. I mention this all the time while I teach 3D that students need to focus on their demo reel and not spend time and effort on learning multiple packages. Talent comes in how one becomes a creative problem solver. With experience you grow as a professional. There will always be something to learn.

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John Virata is senior editor of Digital Media [Online](#). You can email him at jvirata@digitalmedianet.com

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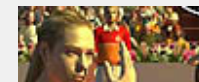
Keeping your camcorder and accessories cleaned and maintained

This morning at about 3am, I awoke in a cold sweat. I had been dreaming; not the pleasant musings about soirees with Elle McPherson or Scarlett Johanssen, oh no. I was filming my brother who was snorkelling and I was using my Canon XHA1. Trouble was I was swimming too and I didn't have an underwater housing for it. Worse, I had dropped the camera into the briny. No wonder I woke up in a sweat [Read More](#)



Virtual Sports! Tennis and golf thrive at the virtual country club

Like most journalists, I can't afford membership in a country club. The only one I've ever been invited to is Ray's Hilton Country Club, a sarcastically named dive bar in my hometown of Newport

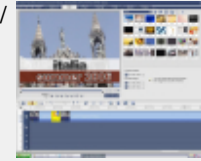


News, Virginia. Just about everything I know about country club life comes from innumerable viewings of "Caddyshack"... [Read More](#)



First Look: Corel VideoStudio 11

Corel VideoStudio 11 is the first iteration of this entry level video editing application since Intervideo/Ulead was acquired by Corel. While the application is still targeted at first time consumers as well as those who occasionally enjoy making creations out of their video clips, the application has become more robust, while still retaining its familiar tab style editing workflow. [Read More](#)



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