

PRE-VIZ

NEWS / OPINION / ANALYSIS

New markets for 3D artists

ANALYSIS Ad agencies may be wary of CGI, but demand for medical imagery and game art is soaring. We uncover the illustration industry's hottest sectors **BY KIRA-ANNE PELICAN**

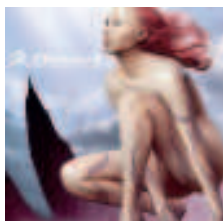


PLUGGED IN

ZBRUSH 3.0

The wait is over. Pixologic has finally finished tinkering and tailoring the new release of its flagship sculpting application and is shipping *ZBrush 3.0*. A lengthy list of new features includes: basic pose controls; real-time shadows; layer support for nonlinear sculpting; PolyPainting, which enables artists to paint directly on their models without assigning UVs; MatCap, which lets them apply lighting data from photographs directly to their models; and Rapid Start, an entirely customisable interface based around scripted macros and custom palettes. Look out for a full review in issue 94 of *3D World*.

www.pixologic.com/zbrush



History was made last month with the announcement of this year's D&AD award winners. For the first time, an ad campaign in the Illustration category was awarded the UK-based design association's most prestigious prize of all, a Black Pencil. The compelling images, created by German agency Kolle Rebbe Werbeagentur for its 'War Orphans' campaign, feature murals depicting Somali and Iraqi families, shattered by photorealistic bullet holes. The images could have been a perfect opportunity to use 3D, but instead, the Hamburg-based agency chose to use *Photoshop* retouching of scanned traditional illustrations.

The reluctance to use 3D in print advertising campaigns unless absolutely necessary is a pervasive force throughout the industry. As Hillary Frileck, director of art production at leading US agency TBWA \ Chiat \ Day New York comments, "There's still a lot of scepticism about what can be achieved in 3D. Where possible, the industry would generally rather turn to commissioned photography."

Part of the problem may be the lack of high-end 3D studios producing work for print. The big-name visual effects studios tend to stick to film, commercials and long-form animation, leaving only a few world-class studios creating high-end CG for the market. One such company is London-based Saddington & Baynes, a former leader in the photographic retouching industry, now turned 3D illustrator. "CGI has freed creatives' imaginations in the same way as it did a few years ago in the television and film arena," says director Richard Baynes.

But while 3D CG is still in the early stages of high-end advertising, its heyday in the editorial world of book and magazine publishing has come and gone. 2006 saw recession hit. Joe Zeff, former graphics director of *Time* magazine, and one of the best-known 3D illustrators in the industry, notes: "I recently spoke to an art director who told me he's had his budgets slashed by 25 per cent. With no money, he's been 'forced to be creative'. It's a trend that's been ongoing for the last five

years. Magazine covers have been less badly affected, but publishers are increasingly turning to stock illustrations and photographs."

Recent changes in fashion have also conspired to drive 3D artists out of the editorial illustration sector. The last few years have seen a marked trend towards simplicity, and a move away from the high-detail, complicated graphics that are the staple of many of the 3D illustrators on the marketplace. Editors are increasingly looking for clean vector-like graphics against simple backgrounds – a style much better suited to digital 2D illustration.

So what *are* the growth sectors of the illustration market for 3D artists? Accurate statistics remain frustratingly elusive. Neither the UK-based Association of Illustrators nor The Illustrators' Partnership of America collects data about the activities of their membership. And since the majority of 3D illustrators tend to specialise within particular sectors of the industry, snapshot overviews are hard to come by.

"OVER THE PAST 18 MONTHS I'VE SEEN A MARKED INCREASE IN REQUESTS FOR MEDICAL 3D STOCK GRAPHICS"

KEITH PAVLIK, PRESIDENT, NUCLEUS MEDICAL ART

However, anecdotal evidence collected by *3D World* suggests that, while the editorial and advertising sectors are looking bleak, videogame covers, architectural, shipbuilding, aviation, interior design, and medical illustration are the fastest-growing sectors of the market for 3D print.

Nucleus Medical Art has provided illustrations for the legal, publishing, marketing, pharmaceutical, medical device and healthcare institutions for the last 10 years. "Over the past 18 months I've seen a marked increase in requests for 3D stock graphics," says president



3D illustrations by Saddington & Baynes. Top left: Segment Systems office (photographer: Richard Prescott). Main: Deutsche Bank airport (agency: Doremus). Middle right: Tide ship (agency: Saatchi NY). Bottom right: Bombay Sapphire. Bottom left: Cathay Pacific Airways plane (agency: McCann)

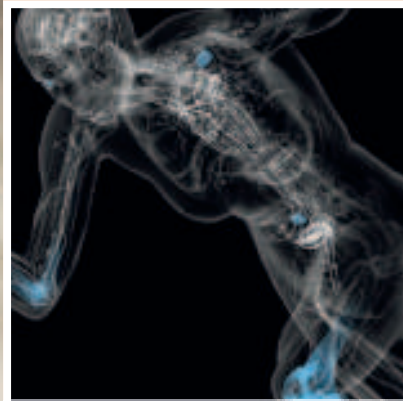


Image © Bryan Christie Design

● **Medicine, aviation, interior design, architecture and videogame covers are just some of the areas in which demand for 3D illustration is rising fast**



PRE-VIZ Analysis

FEED BACK

We want to hear from you on the issues affecting 3D artists, so from now on, once you've read our main news story on the facing page, why not visit our forum or CGSociety's forums and post your reaction to it online?

This month, we focus on the market trends and fastest growing industry sectors for 3D illustration

With editorial work falling, and ad agencies still reluctant to commission 3D for print campaigns, which will be the fastest-growing sectors of 3D CG illustration?

● **Advertising:** As CG proves itself in the print advertising arena, creative directors will increasingly turn to 3D to realise the impossible.

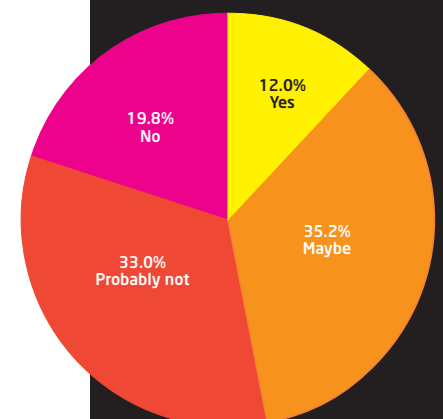
● **Medical:** Medical imagery is already in great demand. Accurate representations created from 3D stock models will dominate its future.

● **Automotive:** Real-time rendering solutions are becoming popular in the motor industry. CGI is starting to replace photography.

● **Corporate communications:** Annual reports and corporate presentations are becoming slicker, creating a growing demand for high-end 3D

LAST ISSUE: THE VERDICT

Is open source software set to become the dominant toolset in feature film production?



Produced in association with



TALKING POINT | What are the current trends in 3D CG illustration?



"In my mind we're still in the early stages of using 3D in advertising print campaigns and we're still experimenting with the technology for use in ads. At TBWA \ Chiat \ Day our standards are extremely high and there are only a couple of London-based studios we'd consider using. Getting the right look with CG isn't achieved at the snap of a finger. It's a process that takes time and skill and, most importantly, an eye."

Hillary Frileck, director of art production, TBWA \ Chiat \ Day New York
www.tbwachiat.com



"3D illustration has become an art form. It's an expressive tool where colour and light are increasingly being used in a more painterly fashion. There was a period when people were wowed simply by creating something that looked like a photograph. But as clients have become more sophisticated, they've begun to ask for more restrained, stylised artwork, where the idea or concept takes precedence over the realistic execution or wow factor."

Bryan Christie, 3D illustrator, New York
www.bryanchristiedesign.com



"A growth area which will greatly involve CGI for print is the portrayal of architectural, shipbuilding, aviation and interior design subjects in 'true photoreal' form using HDRI lighting and photographic texturing, as opposed to the CAD realisation formerly used by architectural and engineering companies. We have been approached by several well-known architectural practices to discuss major projects for premium landmark buildings. I am sure that this represents a huge future opportunity."

Richard Baynes, Saddington & Baynes
www.saddingtonbaynes.com

Keith Pavlik. "We have seven international distributors with scores of sub-agents that appear to be leaning more towards the 'high-tech', 'modern' look. Subjects in demand are 3D body systems, unique and exaggerated anatomical views and microbiology."

This trend is most likely down to economics. "Many of these distributors are pursuing more commercial sales - artwork that would customarily appear in a print ad, tradeshow display or annual report. They want show-stopping, realistic images with real drama," says Pavlik. "Our 2D traditional art does very well in the editorial market but the price points are dramatically higher on a commercial sale. These distributors are pursuing the higher price point sales."

Michael Bohbot, a San Francisco-based illustrator, has seen similar growth in the market for videogame covers. "Over the last five years I've been going into my local Borders and tallying up the numbers of videogame covers containing some kind of 3D work. In 2002 there was an even split between traditionally illustrated covers and those incorporating 3D work. Last year, 85 per cent were 3D. As a traditional

illustrator, the rise was scary. If I hadn't taught myself 3D, I'd have lost over three-quarters of the jobs out there."

But with the editorial market now in decline, what guarantee do 3D illustrators have that the market sector they target will not experience a similar case of boom and bust?

Pavlik is confident the medical market will continue to grow. "I've no doubt that, with the drama and realism one can achieve through creative lighting, perspective and texture, 3D images will continue to be in high demand by creative directors and designers looking to get their device, pharmaceutical or technology noticed," he says.

Joe Zeff adds that there will always be a demand for well-designed graphics that help set an advertiser apart from the rest of the market. But the real changes will surely come when the ad agencies gain confidence and discover the enormous creative potential for 3D.

● **Do you work in 3D illustration? Send us your feedback on our findings by emailing us at 3dworld@futurenet.co.uk**

Have your say | <http://forum.3dworldmag.com> or <http://forums.cgsociety.org>