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SPARK

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INDIAN TV EMBRACES VFX

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- Indian VFX races into the fast lane
- Indian VFX Studios Hollywood Loves
- South India's VFX advantage
- Virtual reality becomes real in India

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This is the second year that AnimationXpress.com's Spark is winging its way from Mumbai in India to Effects MTL in Montreal, Canada. We are very happy to partner with this leading North American East Coast animation and VFX industry conference and get together.

Like at MIPCOM, MIPTV and ATF more and more Indian animation, VFX, and post-production studios are beginning to make their way into international markets, scouting for services work, buyers, distribution and co-production partners, technology and what have you.

It's a sign of the times. India's nascent entertainment sector is looking to explode on to the world stage. Whether it's film, TV, mobile content, OTT or VOD services, India is looking to get its rightful place under the entertainment sun.

Yes, the country has a billion plus consumers, much more than any other nation apart from China. Yes, there are changes in the way content is being served to them. Yes, they gorge on locally produced content.

But a thin sliver of India's relatively young population loves international (read: Hollywood) productions. And the content quality that Hollywood delivers in VFX and post-production is having an impact on the quality that India's new content making breed is churning out. Of course, if one looks at the credits of many a VFX heavy Hollywood film, you will see several Indian names listed there. The reason: India has emerged as a strong hub for outsourced VFX, animation and post-production services for Hollywood and Europe.

The new tribe of content creators wants to deliver *The Game of Thrones* kind of visuals and shots. But they have a fraction of the budget that the studios in the US do.

Nonetheless they are putting their best foot forward. VFX was initially the terrain of Indian film makers (read: Bollywood and regional cinema, later) who have been relying for a decade and more on the magic of technology to create scenes which can be done only digitally.

But today India's TV channels and producers have embraced VFX, DI and coloring like it has never been done in the past.

Despite the limitations of budgets, some of the shots and CG visuals they have been delivering have impressed some of the best internationally.

The Indian VFX and post-production market is pretty nascent, but it is growing at eye popping rates.

We hope this small journal we have put together for the visitors of Effects-MTL will give you a whiff of the Indian market. Our initiative has been put together to help you understand the opportunities that lie in this land of promise, the land of yoga, and engage better with the growing Indian delegation attending this conference. We hope to be a part of building the India-Canada connect over time.

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Indian VFX races into the fast lane



After Studio: The VFX studio marches ahead into animation & VR



Montura VFX: An Indian VFX studio with international work ethics



Indian VFX Studios Hollywood Loves



Indian TV embraces VFX - and how!



Virtual reality becomes real in India



South India's VFX advantage



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Studio & Product News

Indian VFX races into the fast lane



Swati Panda

Boom! That one word describes the business cycle that the Indian visual effects industry is going through right now. Industry estimates are that it grew at a blistering 31 per cent in 2016 to Rs 18.9 billion and is expected to treble in revenue by 2021. With growth in between 20 and 30 per cent per annum, the industry appears to be on steroids. "The VFX market is in a state of constant flux owing to the technological developments as well as the creative boundaries that creators seem to be pushing more and more. Now more than ever, the possibilities are endless and it is one of the most amazing times to be in," says VFX studio Fluidmask CEO Viral Thakkar.

With the talent available in India and relatively lower costs, it is but obvious that the industry is on a grow-grow curve boosted by the increasing number of projects coming its way from Hollywood. International projects continued to be the major contributor to the VFX industry's growth, accounting for more than 73 per cent of its revenue in 2016.

"Our strategic focus is to deliver more and more from our cost advantageous locations and continue to drive profitability. We are also taking proactive steps to upsize and upskill our Indian workforce and expect to further increase delivery from India" said domestic VFX and post-production industry leader Prime Focus founder executive chairman and global CEO Namit Malhotra. He added, "We expect growth momentum to increase further through fiscal year 2018."

Adding to the buoyancy is the fact that India's new breed of film makers have been increasingly pumping in money to make movies look better in terms of production values, and they have been relying on VFX as one of the tools to help them achieve that. Estimates are that VFX revenues from domestic projects will grow at a CAGR of more than 31 per cent between 2016 and 2021 on account of increasing budgets being apportioned for VFX in domestic films. The demand would not only come from Hindi but also from regional movies.

In 2016-17, VFX redefined storytelling on the big screen (read: Bollywood) with the release of films like Disney India's *Jagga Jasoos*, Maddock Films' *Raabta*, Red Chillies' *Raees*, Ajay Devgn FFilms' *Shivaay* and YashRaj Films' *Fan*. Regional filmmakers have also began using VFX increasingly, looking to produce IPs of bigger scale and showcase their creative prowess.

Ditto with India's TV producers who have been churning out period dramas, fantasy shows and even thrillers which have been gaining cachet with audiences. To retain authenticity, some of them are

managing to eke out higher budgets from broadcasting partners and the best are even setting up captive VFX units to deliver on the weekly and daily episode needs that TV programming demands. TV commercials too have seen an upping of budgets by brands, courtesy the need to stand out from the pack and to attract the viewers attention from the ad clutter on the idiot box and online. They have been putting that money into animation, VFX and post-production to make the TVCs appealing.

Then the arrival of VOD streaming platforms like Amazon Prime, Netflix with big programming budgets like India's producers have not seen before is likely to further accelerate the investment in VFX. For instance, Amazon laid out a production budget close to Rs 100 million for a 10 episode drama series with cricket as the central theme. Labeled as *Inside Edge*, it featured 1200 VFX shots which was the responsibility of Fluidmask. The studio simulated a stadium filled with 50,000 cricket fans for the show. A generic crowd made up of four sets of males and eight sets of females was enhanced with the wardrobes that included jerseys, caps, waving flags, animation cycles and more.

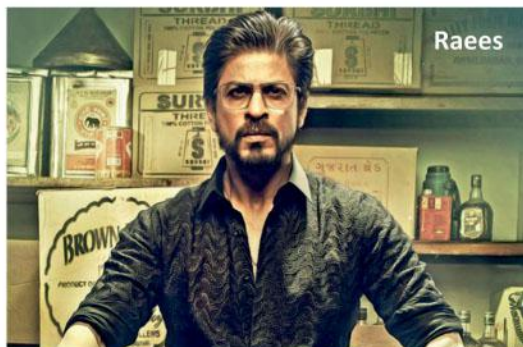
Trends in Bollywood

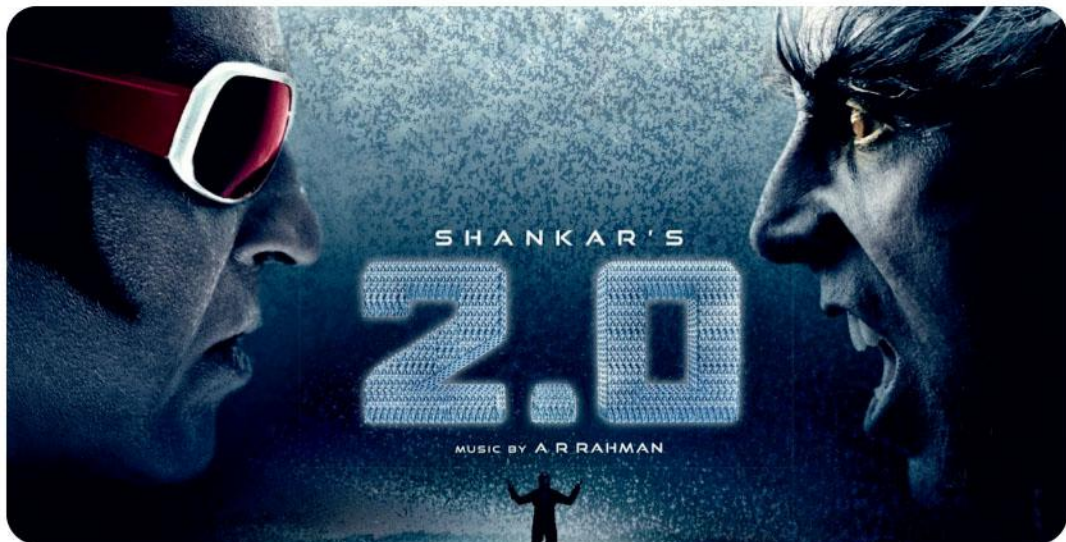
Raabta (2017) was a VFX heavy film done by Prime Focus showing past life in a visually appealing manner with good action sequences, landscapes, waterfall, ships, fire blasts and underwater sequences.

VFX studio Red Chillies' big VFX project was SRK starrer *Raees* (2017). The film being set in the eighties and nineties era used VFX to bring realism to the film. With about 400 artists working on the movie, *Raees* consists of 1495 VFX shots which accounts for 80 minutes of the film's runtime (142 minutes).

It took about six months for the Red Chillies VFX team to complete the project. It has also done superb colouring for *Jagga Jasoos* and created a friendly ghost for the film *Phillaari*. In the film, actress Anushka Sharma can be observed phasing through things, floating around and has a celestial aura. She has a translucent look, with details such as hair and clothing that floats and moves as she flies through the air.

The sequel to *Baahubali* which was released in 2017 appointed about 30 VFX studios from around the world. South India has embraced VFX post *Baahubali*. And it's not just Tamil and Telugu language films that are falling for the charms of using visual effects. After Studio has worked on the VFX of films produced for Marathi, Sikkimese and Punjabi audiences as well.





India's leading VFX studio NY VFXWAALA promoted by Bollywood action hero Ajay Devgn was behind the VFX of the Disney film *Jagga Jasoos*. It had some great ostrich chase scenes, glider ride scene, giant wheel scene and a lot of animals have been shown in the film with superb colour grading. A beautiful clock tower has been created along with the different city landscapes in the movie.

Prime Focus World continued to rule the industry delivering the VFX, DI or EQR of several films in 2017 like *Raabta*, *Tubelight*, *Meri Pyaari Bindu*, *Begum Jaan*, *Gautamiputra Satkarni* to name few.

The next film to watch out for is Rajnikanth, Amy Jackson, Akshay Kumar starrer science fiction film *2.0* directed by Shankar which has a budget of Rs 4.5 billion. Undoubtedly, the film will be a VFX treat for audiences.

The role of Ad agencies

The use of high end VFX is no longer limited to big budget films, as advertising agencies have been using it remarkably to create innovative advertisements. Bollywood lead actor Ranveer Singh recently did a VFX heavy Ching's Secret ad (2016) directed by India's leading director Rohit Shetty. It had an advertising and promotional budget of Rs 750 million, as much as that of a mid-size hindi film. A lot of VFX was used for the ad and it was delivered by NYVFXWAALA. It recreated a dystopian city, a giant vehicle and several action sequences.

Imports and talent

The Indian industry is importing talent to push up its skill sets and leap frog up the creative curve. Thus it has gone international welcoming many professionals on board like Pete Draper being Makuta's CEO, Turkish colourist Metin Okutay recently joining Nube Studio, Rob Lang being a colourist in After Studio who did the colouring for *Airlift*, colorist Andreas Brueckl joining another studio Futureworks. Then, Americans John Hughes and Walt Jones have come on board as visual effect specialists for the movie *2.0*.

Other local private institutes have been offering VFX courses. And now even Prime Focus is also doing its mite to provide the much needed talent for the fast paced VFX segment.

It has opened an institute named as Prime Focus Academy of Media and Entertainment Studies (PFAMES) with courses for rotoscoping, digital paint, rotomation and matchmove. The training is in sync with the industry and students get an opportunity to be recruited by them.

Changing technological gears

Of the 400 odd animation and VFX studios in the country, most of the studios used to purely do labour-intensive jobs, such as match moving, rotoscoping, wire removal and keying. However, this has slowly started to change as studios in India have begun engaging local talent in exhaustive training programmes. Studios are incorporating VFX practices that are on a par with their counterparts in other countries and executing high quality projects end-to-end.

VFX studios in India have started to embrace the cloud. For instance, Prana Studios selected IBM cloud to run new high resolution rendering jobs that are essential to generate high-quality visual effects.





India has gradually started accepting AR and VR technologies. The country's prowess in the software development space, launch of 4G services by telco major Reliance Jio and other telecom operators, and major boost from the government to 'Digital India' initiative are likely to drive the growth.

AR and VR are likely to penetrate in visual effects domain with more projects based on these technologies flowing in. The production team of the film, *Bahubali 2*, launched a 360-degree virtual reality video showcasing the gigantic sets of the film.

The increase in the adoption of VR headsets in the coming years will propel the demand of VFX services. India has now, more than 70 start-ups in this space, which are investing in techniques to create innovative content. Once the wave starts, there will be no stopping it for sure.

Like other segments, the Indian VFX industry is thus poised to head in only one direction: skywards.

Coming late to the VFX party obviously has helped.

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Montura VFX: An Indian VFX studio with international work ethics



From left: Sofiya and husband Nirshid

When you have a resume that states that you have contributed to VFX work done on globally prestigious projects, what do you do for an encore?

Well you could take the route that Nirshid Puthiyakath Puthanveetil has. Having lived in some country or the other throughout his working life, the Indian VFX specialist decided to return to his home town Calicut in the beautiful state of Kerala, India, to fulfill his dream to set up a venture which would help generate employment as well as provide a great work culture to employees.

With his home as his office and his wife Sofiya as a co-promoter, he was one day brainstorming with his best buddies Prajeesh Mathew Thomas and Vijin S.L., on what they should call the startup. And somehow the name Montura popped up and it stuck. Montura – a Spanish vocable – literally translated into English means frame. And because it suited what they were about to do which is set up a VFX venture, they opted for it. Thus was born Montura VFX four years ago.

Two of Nirshid's ex-colleagues from Reliance helped unconditionally in putting the HR process and production pipeline in place. With this, he started approaching clients with his proficient global experience in the VFX arena.

After knocking on many doors and making cold calls, Montura managed to get a small project, which was delivered by a small team of four artists. However, things were not looking very positive for them back then. At times, the founders find it hard to believe that they have come this far.

"But then we reminded ourselves of what the late billionaire industrialist Dhirubhai Ambani of Reliance Industries had said, 'Think big, think fast and think ahead. Ideas are no one's monopoly'," says

Nirshid.

By 2015, they had moved Montura VFX into its own production premises at the Kerala Government's Calicut based Cyberpark in 2015. And soon the company developed a reputation for its delivery schedule as one of the prominent VFX service providers in the southern Indian state.

Montura VFX today works as an outsourcing partner offering international studios services such as roto, paint, prep and compositing. And the kind of projects it has worked on is impressive: big budget Hollywood films such as *Dragon Blade*, *The Legend of Hercules*, *Monster Hunt* and *Power Rangers* to name a few.

It offers rotoscoping of elements to generate alpha mattes in prepping for compositing and conversions from 2D to 3D, as well as in digital paintings to expunge unwanted objects whilst also recreating the missing objects for a shot. It also helps in providing alpha mattes and shape files for increased easiness during compositing. Some of the other major services include tracking in stills or image sequences into a shot like TV screen replacement, accurate extractions by combining keying and articulating roto with marker removal by painting.

Most of the projects have come on account of the rapport and goodwill Nirshid developed with studios internationally during his years of globetrotting for VFX work which garnered him plenty of acclaim as a solid professional who delivered to tight deadlines and within costs

Nirshid points out that his studio helps clients to get rid of the laborious and tedious tasks and generates flawless shots. Says he: "An efficient production pipeline and highly skilled and experienced artists create fascinating VFX wonders on the screen. We pledge to 'd-

emphasize your needs,” and provide top drawer services without ever compromising on requirements. We strive to please our clients with spectacular outputs and provide a sense of security that VFX needs are being looked after by an excellent digital post-production service.”

The studio has good workstations, very good data security, 24 hours security system and very good infrastructure. To ensure that the quality of its service is never compromised, it has a very strong internal quality assurance system, which comprises multiple levels of approvals before any shot or frame goes out of their studio.

Nirshid also believes in a healthy work-life balance. VFX as such is an industry with stringent deadlines and late night shifts. In such organisations, keeping the morale of employees up is challenging. It celebrates each moment of accomplishments, but also strives to bring artists to an international level by providing them continuous training offered by experienced professionals.

It also has an approachable management team who address issues that employees go through at the earliest. It goes out of the way to ensure that each employee is growing professionally and personally.

Having the youngest of the employable crowd in house, at times it is strict with the policies and principles to make them good professionals. And when it comes to celebrating festivities, it does so with all vim and vigour, whilst also distributing gift vouchers.

And that led to an extremely endearing work culture that employees revel in.

Consider Abheesh N U who is the studio's 2D supervisor with a vast experience in VFX and has also been a part of various leading Hollywood firms. Or team lead Deepak Dev who is a creative professional having excellent experience in the field of multimedia and visual effects. From a graphic designer to senior roto and prep artist, serving as the team lead has given him enormous opportunities to work on lots of international projects and with a team of experienced professionals. His robust domain knowledge and unique mixture of experiences has enabled him to produce high quality results.

Production Lead Akhil Mohan has always been very passionate about the many forms of computer art. His strong background in graphic designing and photography has given him a sophisticated grip in the



field of multimedia design. He serves as the team leader as well as the production co-ordinator.

Says Abheesh: “We have talented, energetic and passionate artists in our team who are ready to explore more for the work requirements. Stress is expected in VFX industry, so we keep “fun at work” as our motto, and that helps us to overcome stress easily. We make decisions based on our experiences and explorations. At Montura, we are open to the suggestions given by the artists that help us to get





Montura VFX studio location

quick and great results on time.”

Also, in an effort to encourage and nurture the young and upcoming talents, Montura has set up a training wing to hone their skills by training the students through various educational institutions and also subsequently provide placement assistance.

“There’s lot of talent in Kerala but they are not well equipped for the industry. So we have decided to start our own academy,” says Nirshid. “We are picking students from various institutes, schools and colleges and we are training them. There are a lot of institutes but they are still teaching outdated softwares. So we are teaching only the production tools that need to be known by students. It is a way to give back to the society from my side.”

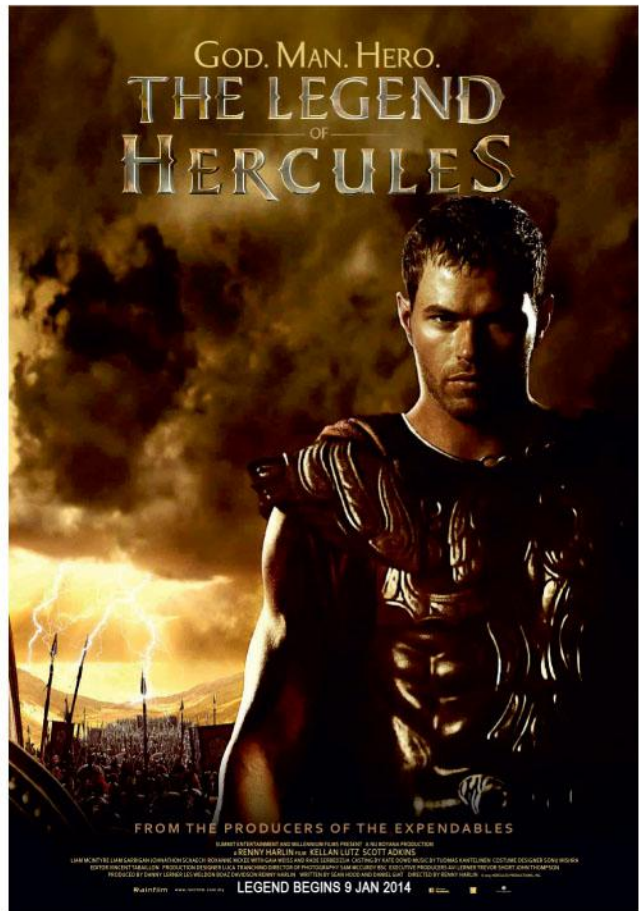
With outposts in Canada and offices in Kerala, Nirshid is now looking at setting up a base in the US. Los Angeles is the city he has zoomed in upon.

He is aware that a VFX job can be challenging and even nerve wracking. And expanding aggressively can put extra demands on the company. But he believes that the Montura VFX team and management is up to the task. He recalls a project way back in 2008 which challenged him, and he and his team had to walk the extra mile to get the project done.

He says, “There was this Will Smith starrer movie *Hancock* in 2008, which involved his character stopping a moving train but ends up derailing the train. It took us as long as six months to deliver the shot and it was really challenging.”

He is really happy about is being able to bring his dream closer to fruition and his choice of Kerala as his home base.

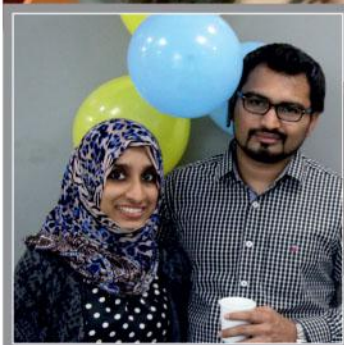
Says Nirshid: “There is a growing demand for visual



effects professionals across the globe with the film industry also opting for more experimentation. Kerala is a perfect destination for Montura considering the huge talent pool. We will be focusing on this aspect and create a world class professional group in Kerala. Kerala is called God's own country. When someone is present there the main attraction is the greenery and it has a different working environment. One gets to work in a very cool environment. Being early birds there, the government has given Montura a lot of support and it is a tax free zone."

He has been getting full support from the likes of Cyberpark's former CEO Ajith Kumar who considers that the entertainment industry is going to be a major employment generator in the coming years and the complex wants to leverage the opportunities in this booming sector. Montura VFX should act as a beacon for others to come to the complex.

Clearly Montura VFX is a studio to watch out for.



Nirshid and Sofiya believe in a healthy work-life balance. VFX as such is an industry with stringent deadlines and late night shifts. In such organisations, keeping the morale of employees up is challenging. Montura VFX celebrates each moment of accomplishments,

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Indian TV Embraces VFX - And How!



Peshwa Bajirao

Anshita Bhatt

India's well-heelled TV audience is fanatically following international blockbuster series such as *Sherlock Holmes*, *The Walking Dead*, *Doctor Who*, *Flash*, *Game of Thrones*, *Supernatural*, *Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.* and many more, getting mesmerised by the storytelling and realism that these series portray, courtesy high end visual effects.

However, a vast majority of Indian viewers running – into hundreds of millions – still gorges on homegrown Indian television. The reason: even as most Indians are tuning into global cultural trends, they are still going home to eat their home-made Indian food and watch TV shows with stories which are strongly rooted in Indian culture, and have a very strong local ethos. In recent times, TV series with historical, fantasy and mythological storylines have become all the rage, with striking lifelike visual effects.

When you channel surf, you will see it is across all the mainline general entertainment channels run by the likes of the Twenty First Century Fox's Star India, the Viacom-Reliance India joint venture Colors, Sony Pictures Networks India or the Indian origin Zee TV.

Prior to this, VFX was primarily the domain of India's big budget Bollywood movies. And the use of VFX in films has seen a massive boom in India in recent years, so much that film-makers now rely on special effects for even the simplest of scenes. In the gaming industry, it has been an integral part always.

That being said, why should the Indian TV industry be left behind?

It is said that the interest of Indian audience in mythological shows was aroused with the use of special effects for the very first time on TV in 1986 with Ramanand Sagar's *Ramayana* which aired on the public broadcaster Doordarshan.

This was followed by B.R. Chopra's *Mahabharat* in 1988. One cannot imagine the Gods without powers and battles without explosions, all of which (even though on a small scale) was brought alive by special effects.

Which were good for their time, but look primitive now, compared to the work that is being done today.

Since then, VFX in TV industry has journeyed a long road to get to where it is now. VFX now is not used as an aid for shows, in fact, it carries the entire show. Now, VFX is used to create not only explosions and divine aura, but also set extensions, huge scale battles, humongous armies, lush forests, CGI animals, magnificent palaces, gigantic forts, heavenly locations, supernatural powers and exotic landscapes.

When you've gotten a taste of excellence, you don't go for anything less. And so has been the case with VFX on Indian TV. The audience has whiffed the level of effects in Hollywood and Bollywood features as well as in American live-action TV series. But TV shows since the past couple of years have offered no less.

Take the case of historical series *Peshwa Bajirao*, mythological shows *Sankatmochan Mahabali Hanuman*, or the most recent *Vighnaharta Ganesh*, *Aarambh*, *Karmafal Daata Shani* and *Mahakali- Anth hi Aarambh hai*.

Rose Audio Visuals VFX producer Devendra Kumar feels that VFX in TV industry has grown by leaps and bounds. "Initially, it used to be special effects which were shot on camera itself, but the reception of CGI during those days was extremely tough," Kumar explains. "VFX used to be looked down from the corner of the eyes as people were gradually realising its prospects and possibilities. Fortunately, we are working with producers and a director who are so well aware of the possibilities of VFX."

Contiloe Pictures, a content production company from Mumbai, has always helmed non-soap opera shows for Indian television, beginning with horror and turning towards historical and mythological. "Thriller and horror shows in the beginning gave us entry into the VFX space at a very early stage," says Contiloe CEO Abhimanyu Singh. "VFX has helped us tell stories that we couldn't have told earlier, and tell them differently."

Sphereorigins chairman & managing director Sunjoy Waddhwa, who has been in the television production sector since 18 years, feels that everything has been upscaled.

"We have more scope. But VFX quality, studio availability and manpower availability has increased to a great extent," says he.

The number of VFX shots per episode varies according to the show. Rose Audio Visuals' *Aarambh* directed by Goldie Behl has 400 to 500 VFX shots per its 43-minute episode, and the latest episodes saw them delivering 700 to 800 shots.

The historic action drama *Aarambh* is set in the time of Vedas and narrates the story of the intense rivalry between two prosperous clans Aryans and Dravidans.

With a VFX team of 100 to 150 artists, the show boasts of stunning VFX shots: seven rivers meeting to form one, a coronation ceremony, photo realistic snakes and crocodiles, fight sequences involving horses and elephants.

After Studio created 650 minutes of VFX-heavy content in a span of six months for the now off-air show of Star Plus, *Everest*.

That brings us to the greatest challenge of the VFX houses for TV-deadlines. While shows like *Aarambh* air on the weekends, shows like *Karmafal Daata Shani* air from Monday through Saturday. Adhering to deadlines for a daily series becomes an arduous task but the team at Swastik Productions (also known internationally as One Life Studios) has been doing this job successfully since 10 months without compromising on quality.

Deadlines have not deterred the teams from delivering work. "Jokes apart, we have been delivering 400-500 shots per episode till a point of time and all of a sudden, we had to deliver 800 shots which we did in 24 hours. Then we were required to deliver approximately 1200 shots which were again delivered overnight," exclaims *Aarambh* VFX supervisor Abhishek Guha.

"There is so much VFX that goes into one episode of these shows," adds Swastik Productions VFX supervisor Vipul Valvi, referring to their shows *Karmafal Daata Shani* and *Mahakali*. "When it comes to VFX for these shows, we have to deliver 1000 to 1500 VFX shots in a span of 12 hours. As the telecast is on weekdays, we tend to deliver these many shots on a daily basis."

According to Waddhwa, the challenge is to keep up with technology abroad because Indian shows are always going to be compared. "People compare, saying that graphics are not so good but the amount of money spent on VFX abroad is far greater than in India," he explains.

The quality of VFX has definitely seen a rise with every show, and so has the budget.

2013's *Mahabharat* created by Siddharth Tewary and produced by his Swastik Productions was said to have a budget of Rs 100 crore (approximately US \$15 million). With elaborate sets, shoots at several places and attractive costumes, it is given. But a major reason for this rise is the escalation in utilisation of special effects, which make the deities more believable and the battles more real.

But do the producers see this as a new avenue for investing money?

"VFX projects do demand a hefty budget. As VFX does provide that visual extravagance, producers and investors are finding it quite lucrative," shares Kumar, who also serves as the VFX producer of *Aarambh*. "In all the ways, VFX is gaining much needed popularity and acceptance. Some producers have even gone ahead and started their own well equipped VFX facilities."

Singh, whose Contiloe produces several VFX-heavy shows simultaneously, feels that "with digital players coming in, the amount and quality of VFX is only going to increase."

Rightly said, as production houses cannot be in a state of "ignorance is bliss" with the recent success of Amazon's (VFX-heavy) original *Inside Edge*. Digital platforms can be a shot in the arm for the TV industry, and television channels have to gear up for the major challenge from OTT platforms.

This is the case only with the urban areas as television still has a comprehensive grip in the Indian rural areas. But TV cannot sit in nonchalance as OTT platforms take over the urban audience. It will require continuous innovation in the kind of content that it does and the look and feel of the shows.

This is the time when shows like *Vighnaharta Ganesh* and *Porus* will act as game changers (or should we say table-turners) in Indian television's VFX. Motion capture technology is being used for the first time on Indian TV by Contiloe's *Vighnaharta Ganesh*, on the 3D CGI

The CGI model of the face makes Lord Ganesh in the show look like people see him in temples. Mocap has been used to achieve precise movements on the elephant-face keeping the same actor as the subject.

Contiloe has purchased motion capture equipment from Faceware Technologies, an innovator in markerless 3D facial motion capture solutions.

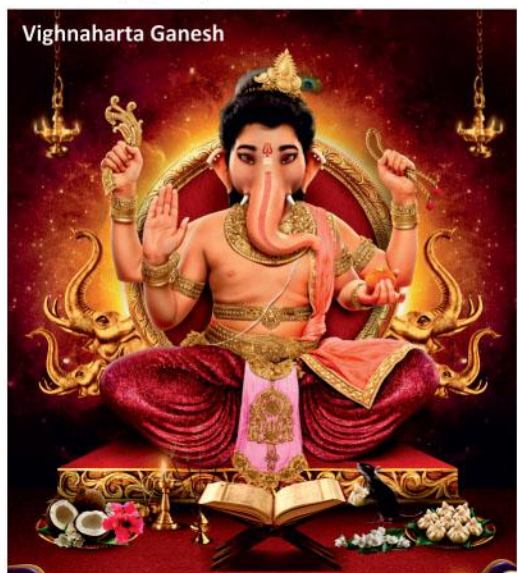
The R&D procedure took Contiloe's team nearly six months. Experts from Faceware had come down to India to train the team of *Vighnaharta Ganesh* for three days, on the usage of software and hardware. The teams hold multiple meetings before each shoot to discuss how to go about the technique for the shots.

Porus from Swastik Productions is a historical series based on the life of Puru, the king who fought valiantly against the Greek conqueror, Alexander the Great. The show - which will begin airing in October - boasts some extremely refreshing VFX shots and eye-catching visuals in its promo.

Guha feels that the phenomenal changes in Indian television shows' VFX can be attributed to the immense exposure to the advanced techniques and latest applications.

"This has been tremendously helpful to the VFX houses as they can upgrade and mentor their artists from time to time, as per the latest techniques. Due to this sudden exposure to the vast knowledge and current techniques used in the west, VFX houses have become competitive in terms of quality and deadlines. They are well equipped in so many ways that they can deliver quality in really crunch deadlines."

"Earlier, it was a challenge to do CG on day to day basis. When we work for TV, the deadlines are short. You cannot deliver CG in the amount of time you have," adds Valvi. "But now we work on a studio library which has most of your CG assets ready, like animals, trees, backgrounds, props, so it becomes easier to deliver CG in less time as we have this library of pre-modelled, textured, fur, foliage, rigged characters and props ready."



With that, it may look like the VFX in Indian television has overshadowed everything in its blaze. But debatable issues still linger, waiting for a solution. The major one being the pay of artists. "With the growing demands of VFX in TV and films, the VFX artists draw a handsome remuneration. Now, there could be a debate on this," says Kumar, "but it also depends on individual artists as they have to be proactive all the time. This is a highly competitive industry."

He adds, "Here, he who cracks the problem quicker is the winner. Now, if a certain VFX house has been highly proactive throughout the delivery of the show with consistent quality, then they come with competitive prices as well, and maybe a little higher. Budgets are always tight but the achievement is when the VFX house delivers the shots within the sanctioned budgets."

Consistency in workforce however is something that the VFX houses for TV production still need to achieve. The rapid pace of growth in this industry results in attrition at an equal rate as people keep getting better offers. At the same time, there is no dearth of manpower as "good technicians are always available," Waddhwa states. All of this is gradually leading to a sector which exhibits the promise to establish a strong hold in the entertainment market.

"VFX has given wings to all departments involved in producing the visuals," highlights Guha. "If a certain location is not available for some reason then we shoot against green or blue screens and create the backgrounds in VFX. If the weather is not permitting to shoot outdoor, we shoot indoor with chroma screens. If the actors have an issue shooting with a specific prop, VFX has solutions."

"In these and many more ways, VFX has indeed become an essential part of TV shows today," he sums up.

There was a time in the history of Indian TV when programs were limited and audience had no choice of the shows. Then came a time when broadcast saw an upsurge in the number of channels, giving people a wide range of shows to choose from.

And soon, with the dawn of VFX-era on Indian TV, viewers will base their choices on the kind of graphics and visuals. And that is not far.



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South India's VFX advantage

Sachin Bhat

Amidst all the mania and the huge success of the much touted Baahubali franchise, one important talking point about the rise and rise of Indian VFX has been missed out. And that is the kind of hold that south Indian VFX studios have managed to retain on the business.

Estimates are that VFX houses in southern India account for almost 65 to 70 per cent of the annual VFX and post-production revenues of Rs 53 billion (around \$900 million) in 2017.

That's because many of the global and Hollywood outsourcing VFX projects are handed out to studios such as Technicolor and MPC which are based in the south. The big advantage is that Hollywood is quite open to sign fat cheques for quality VFX work in films and TV, compared to what is allocated by Indian film makers, whether Hindi or regional language cinema. Tamil and Telugu directors have for a long time been pushing to get more VFX shots in their films, pushing producers to up budgets to get more realism in scenes.

And the appetite for visual effects has only been growing after films like *Robot* and is only likely to increase further with the huge box office numbers that SS Rajamouli's *Baahubali* raked in. Some of the work that has been churned out in the south puts some of its bigger cousins in Hindi cinema, which has been tom-tomming its VFX initiatives, to shame.

In fact, south Indian films have garnered wider acclaim and recognition. Today, the region has turned into a bustling ground of VFX artists and studios.



One of the major reasons that an increasing number of international and domestic content creators are approaching studios from south relate to the fact that they have recognised the creative talent that inhabits the region.

"There is a large pool of highly educated and technically qualified professionals in south India. Added to the fact that south Indian movies have been VFX intensive from the early days of cinema, this has evolved over time as a preferred destination for the international studios," opines Prasad EFX head of corporate communications Mohan Krishnan.

Let us take a look at some of the key players down south:

The big fishes in this massive ocean

Firefly Creative Studios:

Tamil superstar Rajinikanth once took the action genre into the stratosphere with his mega-budget flick *Robot* that enthralled viewers with its thrilling visuals, courtesy Firefly Creative Studios.

The Hyderabad-based VFX services company shot to fame for its work in *Baahubali*, where it worked primarily on the avalanche and war sequences for the movie, amounting to almost 25 minutes of it. For Bollywood director Rakesh Omprakash Mehra's biopic on Indian Olympian Milkha Singh, *Bhaag Milkha Bhaag*, it worked majorly on the crowd shots for three race sequences, accounting for nearly 60 VFX shots of four minutes.

Firefly Creative has gone on to work with more projects from the south such as *Magadheera*, another blockbuster, delivering top drawer visuals for each.

EFX Magic:

Coming back to Rajinikanth and *Baahubali*, EFX Magic too has cast its spell in a few box-office sensations. In the former's *Kabali*, the digital production company weighed in with the digital intermediate process, and later followed suite in Rajamouli's historical epic. And as a matter of fact, it delivered as much as 3100 VFX shots for the Tamil-Telugu film hit *Singam III* and 4200 shots for *Sahasam*.

EFX has extended its service to Hindi movies too. In cine star Sunny Deol's *Singh Sahab – The Great*, it delivered 600 VFX shots, another 250 for *Raaz 3* spanning a little over 22 minutes. It's glittering CV also includes a few more mainstream films like *Piku*, *Mr. X*, *NH10*, *Highway*, *Khamoshiyan*, *Jai Ho*, *Hasee Toh Phasee* and *Dum Laga Ke Haisha* to name a few.

Based out of Chennai (its HQ), Hyderabad, Bengaluru and also Mumbai, EFX has weaved its magic in some mainstream Hollywood films such as *Independence Day*, *The Departed*, *The Aviator* and *A Sound of Thunder*.

Celebrated Hollywood director Martin Scorsese was full of praise for the studio when he said, "Their commitment is to the highest standards of quality. The film foundation looks forward to restoring more cinematic treasures with them."

Unifi Media:

This studio has focused more on regional movies and that has helped it grow from strength to strength over the past decade or so.

The Bangalore and Chennai-based Unifi Media has been behind several Kannada movies – *Astitva*, *Krushna Leela*, *Srikanta* to name a few - while in its latest assignment, it has worked with be superstar Ramesh's centurion film, *Pushpaka Vimana*, for which it delivered 100 VFX shots.

Makuta VFX

Hyderabad-based Makuta VFX handled the major work for the Indian epic *Baahubali 2* with 4,000-5,000 VFX shots, but won the prestigious National Award for its work in *Eega (The Fly)* for which it delivered 2200 shots.

The list of studios may be endless, but the ones mentioned are among the cream of the crop. However the bigger meat to chew on, the more seamless is the progress that the south Indian VFX industry has shown, clearly indicating how much catching up the rest of the country has to do.

The story though, doesn't end there. There are also some infrastructural and government developmental measures being undertaken to foster and even accelerate the progress. Karnataka, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh are the states with AVGC industry friendly policies.

Putting the pedal to the floor

Karnataka can be taken as an example. The government recently approved a renewed policy to leverage growth of the AVGC industry in the state by introducing new measures, a 'Centre of Excellence' with state-of-the-art facilities, IP protection policies et al.

The state's ambition was summed up by the IT & BT (information technology and biotechnology) minister Priyank Kharge, who said,



"This is one of the fastest growing sectors and the state is proud to be the first one to mull a policy for this growing industry that has nurtured the sector since 2012. Now we are planning to come up with a digital media city and a venture fund of around Rs 200 million which has been already put in place for contribution and towards promoting the AVGC sector in the state."

The optimism was echoed by Technicolor India country head and ABAI president Biren Ghose, who feels: "The launch of the AVGC policy is a red letter day for Indian media and entertainment industry.

Biren Ghose



The policy aims to 'remonetise' the Indian media industry through an economic partnership between government and a broad constituency across the creative production and IP sectors."

And to add to that, the minister has also announced a first-of-its-kind 'technology summit' in Karnataka's premier city Bengaluru in November this year. Housing all the minor and independent tech events under one roof, this tech summit is aiming to have a global reach.

There are also some infrastructural and government developmental measures being undertaken to foster and even accelerate the progress. Karnataka, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh are the states with AVGC industry friendly policies.

Priyank explains the vision behind it – "Be it IT, BT, nano tech, animation or gaming. There are so many technologies that have evolved. So we thought, it is better to have one anchor event for the entire state and make it a global event."

Clearly, exploiting the synergies between all the sectors could help give a boost to the VFX, post-production and animation sectors too, is the belief.

That belief is what will keep the south ahead of the rest of the country. And continue to work as a magnet for AVGC – not just from India, but from Hollywood too.

After Studio: The VFX studio marches ahead into animation and VR

After Studio is India's leading post-production studio which provides top notch quality services in the realm of post-production, digital intermediate, visual effects, graphics, animation and a newly formed VR division.

It is owned by Vijay Ratnakar Gutte, who also holds VRG Digital Corporation, and is the director of Sunil HiTech Engineers. It is managed by Ritesh Rai and Parish Tekriwal.

Vijay Gutte's keen interest in the media industry led to the creation of After Studio. Joining hands with the best creatives from India and overseas, getting the best required technology, he started it eight years ago with a small team in an area of 500 square feet. And currently, it has a team of more than 250 employees with two floors of 10,000 square feet each in the hub of Mumbai, along with a separate division for animation in Santacruz, Mumbai.

VFX in Bollywood

Talking about its huge body of work, After Studio has recently worked on the blockbuster film *Baahubali 2: The Conclusion*, bringing a majestic kingdom to life, CG compositing of the palace with multiple lighting passes, adding multiple elements like waterbody, crack on the ground, impact dust, crowd multiplication and FX.

It started with about 30 VFX shots but ended up creating 200 complex shots for the movie. *Baahubali 2* proved to be its most challenging project till date, with six climax sequences that were completed by 100 plus talented artists in a span of three months. Their scope of work also comprised of finalising the asset and texture of the palace, trees, flags, animation, lighting.

After Studio has recently worked on *24* – the Tamil visual extravaganza/science fiction thriller film starring Surya, which is based on the concept of time travel.

The studio worked on almost 850 shots for the thriller over a span of merely three months. The film went on to receive the best visual effects awards at the 2017 Vikatan Awards and the best production design award at the 64th National Film Awards in India.

The studio's credits also include delivery of VFX for films like *Jai Gangajal*, *Ghayal Once Again*, *Machine* and also for a TV series named *Everest*. For *Ghayal Once Again* (2016), actor and producer Sunny Deol's demand was restricted to only two shots: making a day shoot look like a night scene. Deol was so satisfied with the output that he asked for 1200 additional shots.



Baahubali2: The Conclusion

after
post production studio



“our job begins before you plan to shoot”

The studio has also delivered a lot of photorealistic output of 170 shots for *Veerappan* (2016). It supplied 600 shots in two and half months for Abbas Mustan's latest film *Machine* (2017). The FX work included a shot of a burning mansion (interior and exterior), extension of building, cloth simulation and dry ice in the dance sequence.

Currently, it is working on the VFX of upcoming releases like *Lucknow Central* and *Simran* (2017). It's other upcoming projects are colour grading work for *Chef* starring Saif Ali Khan and *Parmanu* starring John Abraham. After Studio has previously worked on colour grading for the critically acclaimed *Sarkar 3*, *Jai Gangajal* and *Airlift*.

Rob Lang, the colour grading artist working for feature films at After Studio has been in the industry for more than 15 years. The team also has Italy's Nicola Gasparri who does commercial as well as feature films. Pramod Patil, the senior most colourist in the Indian industry who has an experience of 30 years, deals with commercials and feature films.

After Studio is pre-eminent when it comes to water stimulation, having done full water sequences, muzzle flashes and blasts in several movies.

VFX in regional movies

Timely delivery and craftsmanship have attracted Tollywood film makers to its doors. Currently, it has a Telugu movie *Raju Gari Gadhi 2* (RGG) on its plate with 100 VFX shots.

The film starring actor Nagarjuna in has visual effects which have never been seen before in the Indian film industry.

Also the team is currently working on Telugu star Pawan Kalyan's next film with director Trivikram Srinivas, delivering 120 minutes of VFX for the film.

It has worked on Marathi (*Balkadu*, *Baji*, *Disco Sanya*), Punjabi (*Dildaaryan*, *Lock*), Bengali, Tamil, Malayalam and Sikkimese (Purple Pebble Pictures' *Pahuna*) cinema.



VFX in TV industry

After Studio has also forayed into the Indian TV industry. The studio's team has worked on DI and VFX of *Prisoners of War* (POW) for India's leading general entertainment channel Star Plus where it has done an average of six to seven minutes of CG. The work comprised of set extensions, chopper creation, chromas and design work of surveillance rooms.

It also worked on a pilot episode of Indian historical fiction TV series *Aarambh: Kahani Devsena Ki*. This project involved 40 minutes of VFX work which included adding photo realistic snakes, crocodiles, background replacement, designing and execution of fight sequences and title sequence.

Another promising project was a TV series *Everest* for Star Plus, which was directed by Ashutosh Gowariker (the director of India's entry to the Oscar *Lagaan*). 650 minutes of VFX work - which included the Everest mountain ranges and landscapes - were completed in a span of six months flat.

Work culture

After Studios has a robust work culture. With an absence of vertical hierarchy, the entire department comes together and brainstorms to reach a consensus and take decisions. Though the responsibilities are shared, they tend to overlap.

The technical team, VFX supervisors, the marketing team and the grading team, all meet the client to understand their requirements. Young talents are given decision making responsibilities by involving them in projects.

The studio is service driven with operation teams, line producers, studio managers, all led by the management that sorts out uncertainties. It has a VFX pipeline set, a full team of line producers, CG supervisors, VFX supervisors who all work in sync with the

producers and directors. This makes it easier to execute and deliver the project on time.

It has a unique blend of experienced as well as fresh talents, with the experienced guiding the younger ones. Young talents are also very much welcomed in the team!

Services

Editing, digital intermediate, restoration, camera rentals and sound studio are the services it provides with CG being its strength. Along with the most experienced colourist from India, it has the most experienced and young colourist from overseas, making it one of the best grading team of India.

For the virtual reality department, the studio has a creative team which works on concepts, right from production to post-production. Since this market is in its initial stages in India, it plans to pioneer it for its groundbreaking future. It visualises this experimental marketing as a boom amongst the brands by making available all the services needed for a successful VR project during production.

Animation work

Talking of animation projects, After Studio is helming an animation series *Sherazade - The Untold Stories* for the international market. It is also working on the animation TV series *Tai Tai Fish* catering to the domestic animation market. The studio has done a lot of animated TVCs and now is venturing into animated content creation. The post production department deals with short formats (ad films) as well as long format animation (animated TV series) while the production department deals with IP creation.

A new studio has been inaugurated in UK as well as in Dubai, targeting its animation and VFX market. The DI and VFX of eight to ten movies is being done at the UK studio.



Creative Visualisation

The After Studio team is working on an animated Hollywood feature film *The Pup Name Billy*, wherein it will handle everything from pre-production to post production. The film which will be produced from its London facility will have the best global skilled artists who will be joining from the first week of September.

Quality being paramount, it is moulding the pipeline according to the requirements and challenges of the project. The tech support always remains on its toes to be aware of the latest technologies.

TVC front

It has worked on the Coke-owned carbonated drink Thumbs Up TVC, starring Bollywood superstar Salman Khan, where the studio created a cyclone using CG and FX. For the Sunfeast Dream Cream ad (manufactured by diversified tobacco and foods megacorp ITC) it created a dream world of biscuits and an animated crocodile and a monkey. It has worked on automobile TVC for brands like Mercedes, Mustang, Skoda, Honda, Suzuki and Bajaj. And it has also done several beauty TVCs for Lakme, L'Oréal, Dove, Ponds and Tresemme.

Pepsi, Thumbs Up, Cadbury and Samsung are regular clients of the studio. It has also worked with leading international agencies such as Leo Burnett, JWT, Ogilvy & Mather and Lowe Lintas.



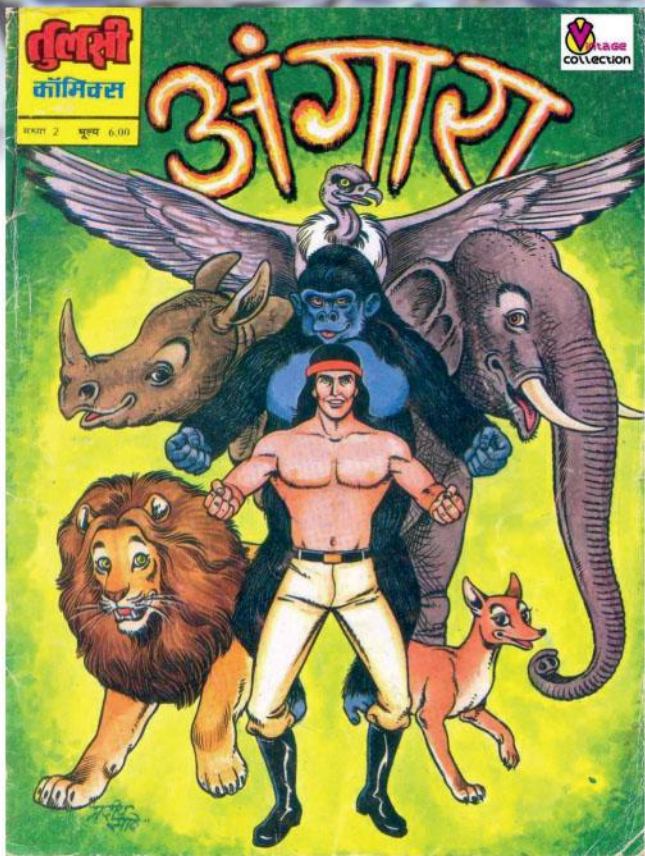


Future plans

After Studio has created few concepts as its Intellectual Property (IP). It has also brought the rights of some series from Tulsi Comics like *Angara*, *Jumbu*, *Rajan* and *Iqbal*, for which it is approaching numerous leading channels across Asia to create animation series.

Angara is about a character which has the powers of all the animals. *Rajan* and *Iqbal* is about the friendship tales of two detectives. *Jumbu* is a kind of an iron man like character. *No Man Army* is about the ordinary animal transformations to save the village.

After Studio, having a remarkable stronghold in the VFX industry, is undoubtedly surging ahead in the animation and VR market.



After Studio Presents its Upcoming IPs

ANGARA

After Studio from Mumbai brings to effects MTL, a series named *Angara*. Angara is a super intelligent being created from a gorilla, a fox, an elephant, a rhino, a vulture and a lion by a surgeon named Dr. Kunal. Angara has bullet proof rhino skin, extra intelligent brain from a fox, eyes of a vulture, power of an elephant, a lion heart and a gorilla skin which makes him look like humans. The story is about an army that killed almost all the wild life in Angara land Dr. Kunal decides to create an extraordinary creature to fight the powerful army and that is how Angara was born to save animals. We are looking for buyers for this action packed animated series with a strong message.



RAJAN IQBAL

After Studio presents best friends Rajan and Iqbal, the detectives who are out to help the world get rid of evil doers. This story taken from India's popular Tulsi Comics, portrays the tricky games played for power in a political scenario. In one of the episodes, Rajan and Iqbal are investigating the death of a promising young politician. But very soon Rajan goes missing, Iqbal takes charge and starts exploring the intricacy of the case with the help of the local police. When the shameful secrets behind the political conspiracy are revealed, the whole nation is stunned! After Studio welcomes buyers for this animation political thriller with a lot of suspense, action and drama.



JUMBU

We all fantasise about robots. Meet Jumbu, a super genius robot fitted with the brain of his creator Dr. Bhawa. He is the most popular superhero of India's hit Tulsi Comics whose rights have been acquired by After Studio. After being stranded on an island, Jumbu defeats their king and becomes the ruler. Then he explores his relation with the native race, rebuilds their society and saves them from attacks. He later discovers his doppelganger by the name of Shanichar who had tortured him in his past. Then follows a showdown between both the nemesis which leads Jumbu further into the dark and mysterious adventures of bringing his whole body together.



NO MAN ARMY

After Studio welcomes effects MTL to a small town which is rich in uranium reserves. The town head is involved in a conspiracy with a foreign chemical company to vacate the town. Enters, wise old scientist Dr. Subrato as a saviour who trains his four commandos, a mouse, a bull, a monkey and an eagle to become superheroes from ordinary creatures. Wow! They fight against the evil using their super powers and save the beautiful town. Excited? We are looking to make it as a fun, peppy and inspiring 3D animated series.

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Biren Ghose

Country Head
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AnimationXpress is one of the most trusted sources of news and information for animation and the VFX industry in India. We, at Autodesk, rely on it for market intelligence. For more than a decade now, it has additionally contributed to the CG community in India through the industry events and initiatives it puts together

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Country Manager- Channels
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Indian VFX Studios Hollywood Loves

Sachin Bhat

There's an uncanny spurt in the number of Hollywood film makers reaching out to India's burgeoning VFX studios for outsourcing. Having started with the IT industry (which is growing slower than earlier now), outsourcing has slowly but steadily crept its way into several other Indian sectors, including visual effects.

Factors like low cost, skilled labour, ease of communication, and also quality service have made India an attractive destination. Numerous recent blockbusters – *Spider-Man: Homecoming*, *The Jungle Book*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Pirates of the Caribbean 5* et cetera have the origins of their visual effects in Indian studio.

"While in the past, work was outsourced to India keeping the bottom line of the studio in check, nowadays the scenario is such that work outsourced to India is purely based on the valuable skills and expertise that the artists can bring to the table," says Redchillies VFX COO Keitan Yadav.

So whilst the Indian outsourcing bubble continues to grow in size, here are the players who are the major domos when it comes to outsourcing.

Prime Focus World



Warcraft

A creative service division of Prime Focus, it currently provides first-rate services in VFX (with Double Negative), stereo conversion and animation, and has partnered with several international studios and movie productions.

PFW (Prime Focus World) was the first to convert a full Hollywood movie from 2D to 3D, and since then, has garnered the stereo conversion credits for *Warcraft*, *The Martian*, *Captain America: Civil War* and *Ant-Man* to name a few.

In 2014, Prime Focus World merged its VFX business with Double Negative, which has credit roll that includes *Star Trek Beyond*, *Batman vs Superman: Dawn of Justice*, *Avengers: Age of Ultron* et al. Together, they continue to churn out visuals that are second to none.

Moving Picture Company

A subsidiary of Technicolor, MPC has established a stellar reputation in the VFX domain and its stock continues to rise by the day.

MPC Bangalore has made big strides since the last eight years, but its crowning moment was when *The Jungle Book*, one of its portfolios, was honoured with the Best Visual Effects award at the Oscars.

Equipped with some industry-leading software, it has also pulled off stunning visuals for some of the recent box-office biggies such as *Wonder Woman*, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*, and so on.

Toolbox Studios



Rise of an Empire

With films like *300: Rise of an Empire*, *Jupiter Ascending*, *Hunger Games*, *Insurgent*, *Pixels*, *Maleficent* and *San Andreas* under their belt, the studio must definitely have some intriguing tools in their VFX box, for it continually attracts well-known international clients.

Boasting an international experience across three different continents, Toolbox Studios has come a long way in the nine years since its inception.

Mist VFX

Founded in 2013, the 'mist' has already engulfed Hollywood. Having done rotoscoping for *Spider-Man: Homecoming*, *Ghost in the Shell*, while VFX for *Guardians of the Galaxy*, *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*, *Star Trek Beyond* and many more, Mist VFX is much in demand.

The Chennai-based studio is fast becoming a lucrative destination for international production houses. With several projects still in the production stage, Mist VFX is the one to watch out for.



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Virtual reality becomes real in India



Hereafter Mills, The Untameable Spin, Bacardi Nh7 Weekender 2016

Krishanu Ghosal

Abruising data price war is being waged amongst Indian telcos with India's most capitalised startup – Reliance Jio – giving bandwidth away at dirt cheap rates in a nation which boasts a billion mobile consumers, of which about 250 to 300 million use smart phones. Other major telcos operating in the country have been forced to drop mobile data prices too. This has resulted in the country reportedly becoming the largest data consuming nation in the world with Jio users using around a billion gigabytes (GB) of data per month.

And guess which industry is going to indirectly benefit from this?

Punters are betting that India's nascent virtual reality sector is going to get a fillip from the dropping prices with price sensitive consumers now consuming an increasing amount of VR content on their hand held devices.

According to a recent report, the global VR is projected to be a \$30 billion industry by 2020..

Synchronous with all things IT, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's India is pushing forward in the global market in terms of VR as well. From movie theatres to VR cafes, the penetration of VR in urban India is increasing at a stable clip.

"I have been a tech enthusiast for a while but never really knew how immersive VR could be, until I tried it at an entertainment zone. I walked the plank using a VR HMD and it was terrifying, but really amazing too. I am definitely looking forward to more experiences," says Manoj Yadav, a media professional from Mumbai.

With the advent of demand, VR content creators and studios have also been popping out all over India rapidly. Memesys Culture Lab created one of India's first VR documentaries. Titled *Cost of Coal*, the VR feature shows how coal mining has ravaged the surroundings of a specific area.

From the country's biggest game development conference, Nasscom Game Developers Conference to FICCI Frames, one of the most well known media and entertainment events, almost all the events of the same kind throughout the country have been replete with sessions and showcases of VR.

TV anchor turned news channel promoter Republic TV's Arnab Goswami has also recently launched its company's VR division which has a separate feed on its digital platform.

Hereafter Mills, a VR studio, had created *The Untameable Spin* at Bacardi NH7 Weekender last year which was a real time render of a 3D and VR roller coaster experience of the venue.

"Virtual reality and mixed reality enables people to submerge themselves into experiences that both thrill their senses, spark their curiosity and allow them to disconnect from limitations that their 'every day realities' would otherwise present.

"Startups in the country have begun to understand this, and look to VR to provide these experiences, but also prepare for the next generation of interactive experiences like mixed reality. Demand is high and it currently remains a great field to combine skill, creativity and a constant need to adapt to ongoing change," says Hereafter Mills CEO Rahil Kulshreshtha.

The space has been attracting youngsters who have been innovating by making their own camera rigs using Gopros or other cameras to circumvent the high costs that quality VR cameras entail. Even though the gear might be low cost, the content is beginning to look good.

"It is an exciting space," says a media observer. "And the enthusiastic youngsters are only going to help experiment, find new ways to get brands, platforms, and governments to engage with VR. I can only see VR, MR and AR going one way: in the fast lane."

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Studio News: Mist VFX Studio



MIST VFX STUDIO
Innovating Creative Visual FX

Mist VFX specialises in the creation of seamless visual effects imagery for feature film, commercial, TV production and the VR space. With expertise in 3D stereo and 4K workflows, Mist consistently delivers work of the highest caliber.

Founded in 2013, Mist has provided VFX services for TV series like The OA and box-office hits like Spider-Man: Homecoming, Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2, Rogue One: A Star Wars Story, Ghost in the Shell, Power Rangers, Arrival, Star Trek Beyond, Ghostbusters, Independence Day: Resurgence and many more.

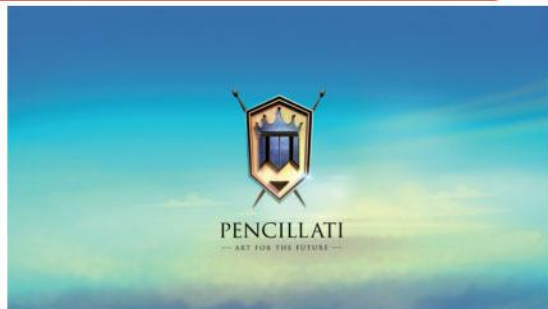
Mist VFX Studios' umbrella of services include concept art, texturing, matte painting, CG modelling, rigging, match move, rotoscoping and compositing.

With a company philosophy based on service and quality, Mist delivers shots of the highest standard in an efficient and timely manner. It understands the ever changing nature and stresses involved with production schedules so offers 24/7 production support accommodating any time zone and production need.

Mist integrates itself into the studio workflow and communication process providing a cohesive environment making clients feel it is part of their organisation.

Contact: info@mistvfxstudio.com

Product News: Pencillati Studios



Pencillati Studios bring to Effects MTL "The Bloop Troop", a (1x3 minute pilot) for an animated series, involving three warriors in a slapstick humor setting.

Fun begins when a Barbarian, a Knight and an Archer are brought together by their knack for finding trouble.

This unique CG style engages audience of all ages and geographies. Pencillati is looking for publishing and production tie-ups for animation content.

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