



Press Release from Bournemouth University

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BU's National Centre for Computer Animation becomes the world's second Houdini Certified School

The National Centre for Computer Animation (NCCA) at Bournemouth University (BU) has been named a Houdini Certified School, recognising the provision of the industry-leading 3D animation software on BU's courses.

Houdini has been offered on the University's popular MA Digital Effects and MSc Computer Animation & Visual Effects courses for the last seven years. BU's Houdini 'curriculum' has been developed throughout this time, taking stock of technological developments to ensure students graduate with the skills required by employers.

The seal of approval makes BU only the second Houdini Certified School in the world, the other being the Savannah College of Art & Design in the USA. BU is also the only university in the UK to actively engage students with the software as part of its animation degrees.

A high-end package developed by Side Effects, Houdini covers all the major areas of 3D production, notably modelling, animation, lighting, rendering and compositing. According to Side Effects, institutions eligible to join the programme have a strong focus on Houdini and "prove themselves by graduating Houdini talent into the industry".

Many BU graduates have gone on to use Houdini in their careers, including John Hughes, who has worked as a digital effects artist and technical director on a variety of major motion pictures. These include *Watchmen* (2009), *I Am Legend* (2007) and *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (2004).

Talli Peled graduated with an MA in Digital Effects in 2007 and has since worked on *Batman Begins*. She said: "One of the most impressive aspects of learning Houdini at BU was the sheer amount knowledge I acquired within a short period of time. After

completing my course, I felt comfortable with Houdini and my understanding of the software wasn't far from industry standards.”

She continued: “Houdini is a powerful programme, which is highly regarded among many of my colleagues. Being able to use it is a wonderful benefit because I know it will become a valuable skill for years to come. I feel very fortunate, reflecting on my BU experience, that I had the opportunity to use the software as it helped me get my foot into a very exciting industry.”

Phil Spicer, Programme Leader of the MA Digital Effects course said: “The news of our certification as a Houdini Training Partner was an unexpected but warmly welcomed surprise. We have spent some years refining and perfecting our Houdini curriculum and passing our students’ Houdini output back to Side Effects Software for review and inclusion on its Student Showreel. This award therefore is a great recognition of our work and marks a significant step forward for both the NCCA and BU. We hope this partnership can continue and grow and that our investment in Houdini can be cultivated further.”

Ends

Notes to editors

- (1) The Media School at BU is the largest centre for professionally-based Higher Education for the media and communications industries in the UK. It is designated as the only Centre for Excellence in Media Practice (CEMP) by the Higher Education Funding Council for England, recognising our commitment to innovation and excellence in learning and education.
- (2) The Media School is also home to the National Centre for Computer Animation (NCCA), making it the best place in the UK to study computer animation.
- (3) Our animation courses give students the opportunity to acquire the skills required to work in television productions, films, animated feature films, computer games and a variety of interactive media applications. Each course is geared to industry, ensuring students graduate with the practical hands-on skills employers are looking for.

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