

From art school to 'Avatar'

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**From art school to 'Avatar'**

**Austin, TX August 12, 2010 - Austin based production company, luzworks will be presenting the first in a series of special events called "2.0". To inaugurate the occasion, film designers TyRuben Ellingson and Yuri Bartoli will give a live presentation at 6:30PM on August 30th at El Sol y La Luna on 600 E 6th Street in Austin, TX. The two will talk about their unique and creative artistic contributions to the James Cameron classic movie AVATAR which is being re-released with additional scenes nationally August 27th. Ellingson and Bartoli will also make a special announcement during the evening with Jonathan de la Luz, President of luzworks, a Austin-based motion picture production company, as to their long term local filmmaking impact.**

TyRuben Ellingson is the Lead Vehicle Designer for James Cameron's AVATAR. He joined the team at Lightstorm in early 2006 and provided the designs for the AMP suit and RDA combat aircraft. As the show moved into post-production, TyRuben designed the RDA mining equipment and RDA ground vehicles, several of which were also used in the AVATAR video game.

The son of a Minnesota art professor, TyRuben spent his childhood in his father's studio drawing and painting. While completing his Master's degree at St. Cloud State University, Ellingson taught drawing and design courses at the university and exhibited his paintings in regional and national juried shows. His Master of Fine Arts degree was completed in 1987 at Southern Methodist University. In the film business at large, holding an advance degree is extraordinarily rare, especially a terminal degree.

Combining his fine art successes with a life long interest in film, Ellingson landed a position at George Lucas' Industrial, Light and Magic in 1989 as a Visual Effects Art Director. While at ILM, Ellingson contributed to the creation of ground-breaking special effects in films such as JURASSIC PARK, STAR WARS: A NEW HOPE, and DISCLOSURE.

In 1995, Ellingson accepted an invitation by Director Guillermo Del Toro to act as principal designer of the signature creature for his film, MIMIC. TyRuben also designed weapons and equipment for Del Toro on BLADE 2 and the HELLBOY films. As a result of his unique and robust understanding of story, production, visual effects, and design, TyRuben collaborates with directors in a manner that extends well beyond

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design work. Known for his creative thinking, he brings value to each project by proposing new story elements, set pieces, and/or sequences in addition to inventive designs. Other films to which he has lent his creative talents include BLADE TRINITY, SIGNS, EAGLE EYE, SURROGATES, PRIEST (2011) and BATTLE: LOS ANGELES (2011).

“It has been a great joy and opportunity to mine the imaginary”, says Ellingson.

Throughout his career, Ellingson has spoken regularly to students and professionals regarding his work and the film industry at large. Speaking engagements of note over the past twenty years include the following; Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, Stanford University, San Jose State University, Expression College for Digital Arts, Guadalajara Museum of Art, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Gnomon School of Visual Effects, Saint Cloud State University. In 1993, he was a keynote speaker at the National Association of Art Department Deans, and that same year taught a semester in the cinema department at San Francisco State University.

Yuri Bartoli is the Supervising Virtual Art Director for James Cameron's AVATAR. In May of 2005, he began work on Avatar as one of four artists initially hired to work directly with James Cameron to design the creatures and environments of Pandora. His journey ran through to the very end of production, five years in total, making Bartoli the longest running creative on the picture.

From conceptual design, he moved on to supervising the Avatar Virtual Art Department. His responsibilities included leading the team creating digital sets for the real-time virtual production process of the Volume, which included the performance capture and virtual camera systems. With constant input from Cameron, Yuri assisted in creating a world that existed only in the computer, innovating and improving the look of the template of the film. As production wrapped and moved into post, Yuri art directed the work of vendors on the VFX side, including Weta, ILM, Framestore, Prime Focus and others to realize the full extent of the environments, creatures and graphics that the film required.

Coming from a background in traditional art, film and illustration with a BFA from School of Visual Arts in New York City, Bartoli made the move to California to work as a concept artist on STAR WARS: ATTACK OF THE CLONES. He has been working in the visual effects, commercial and film industry for over 10 years at companies such as Pacific Data Images and Dreamworks Animation. As Visual Effects Art Director on such films as EVOLUTION, MINORITY REPORT and AI, he honed his skills in special effects, art and matte painting as well as computer graphics and later transitioned into computer animated feature films. It was while working on films such as MADAGASCAR and SHREK 2 that he learned valuable pipeline production techniques that would assist him in later films.

The opportunity to work, learn and contribute to the process of making Avatar was unique- from Virtual Production to 3D stereography, from concept design to technical knowledge of the Volume; he looks forward to applying it all to future projects, and pushing the envelope even further.

Recent presentations and interviews for Avatar by Bartoli have included the Director's Guild of America, the Gnomon School of Visual Effects, the American Society of Cinematographers, several presentations for Microsoft, two Siggraph 2010 VIP events hosted by Autodesk at Giant Studios, and Sideshow Collectibles, as well as online interviews. He will be appearing at an upcoming Avatar benefit hosted by Microsoft.

Jonathan de la Luz has been in motion picture industry over 30 years as a writer-producer and production/ financial consultant working with various studios and independent production companies.

He produced his first movie, the cult classic, MEET THE HOLLOWHEADS (aka LIFE ON THE EDGE) in 1989. It was directed by legendary make-up special effects pioneer, Tom Berman (THE GOONIES).

In 2000 Jonathan, as an entrepreneur, created Azisa Pictures and based in East Texas. This company developed several scripts and made use of cutting edge digital technologies to create high quality independent films utilizing a host of varied locations. "The truth is," says de la Luz, "the whole world is our back-lot." One such result was, THE HUNT, which Jonathan co-wrote the story and screenplay also co-produced. It was Azisa Pictures first movie undertaking. Released by Image Entertainment, it was directed by Fritz Kiersch (CHILDREN OF THE CORN) and Executive Produced by Gray Frederickson (Oscar winner for Best Picture, GODFATHER II) and business entrepreneur John Simonelli.

Jonathan also wrote the screenplay, produced and directed the follow-up production entitled AGENDA, which is a unique contemporary feature film neo-noir murder-mystery-thriller. Both films received several awards.

Taking time to explore the rapid and complex changes that were - and still happening - in the media business, Jonathan decided to abandon traditional outdated models for producing movie content and focus on new paradigms dealing with production and distribution.

Moving to Austin, Texas in early 2010, Jonathan created a new solely owned entity, luzworks, an entertainment production and distribution company that develops intellectual properties for film, television, Internet and toy markets.

"One of my goals is to have luzworks produce a series of high profile events throughout the year that will be co-hosted by local content groups be they film, comic book or toy related. This first time out will be hosted by Edgen Films, a local edgy production company. --We all have one thing in common. Entertaining the entire world community starting here in Austin, Texas," says Jonathan de la Luz enthusiastically about his newly adopted home.

The Austin Film Society, The Austin Producers Association, Edgen Films and other prominent film, television and game companies will be present. The event will be streamed/webcast on the Internet. Check the website for more details at [www.luzworks.com/fromartschooltoavatar](http://www.luzworks.com/fromartschooltoavatar)

Beyond the special announcements for the evening of August 30th at El Sol y La Luna on 600 E 6th Street in Austin, TX - the one and a-half hour presentation, FROM ART SCHOOL TO AVATAR, will chronicle the journey TyRuben and Yuir have been on since they both left art school with behind-the-scenes antidotes. They will also discuss why they choose Austin, Texas to make an important announcement with local producer Jonathan de la Luz and his luzworks company. The event will be hosted by Nicholle Walton of Edgen Films. Admission is free. Doors open at 6:30 PM. Seating is limited.

TyRuben Ellingson

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cHla7C9gCnc>

Yuir Bartoli

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vhxcx5n3gjQ>

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