

Press Release

Released for Publication

mental ray enables DreamWorks' "Shark Tale" to achieve unprecedented levels of visual sophistication and detail

5

BERLIN, Germany, and SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., Sept. 9, 2004—. DreamWorks Animation credits mental ray® for helping it achieve the extremely high visual target for its new computer animated feature, "Shark Tale", which premieres in the historic Piazza San Marco in Venice, Italy on September 10th, 2004. Known for its leading-edge programmability and artistic control, mental ray was widely used in "Shark Tale" to create its unique and visually compelling look. The software allowed DreamWorks to generate extremely sophisticated lighting for the 3D environments. "Shark Tale" is the first fully animated movie by DreamWorks that takes advantage of mental images's advanced rendering software. The film debuts to audiences beginning October 1st, 2004.

"mental ray provided a global illumination solution that gave "Shark Tale" a unique richness in depth of lighting. The flexibility of mental ray allowed us to use it in a way which provided for a great deal of artistic control unlike other Global Illumination solutions we've explored." said Doug Cooper, Visual Effects Supervisor on Shark Tale. "Our proprietary approach to Global Illumination, pioneered by Mark Wendell, CG Supervisor, combined with mental ray's ability to simulate the physical process of light propagation to produce realistic lighting, helped us to create among the most visually compelling work ever seen in feature animation."

“Shark Tale” is the first computer animated feature film to be produced out of DreamWorks Animation’s new state-of-the-art production facility in Glendale, California. This underwater comedy includes the voices of Will Smith, Robert De Niro, 30 Renee Zellweger, Angelina Jolie, Jack Black and Martin Scorsese.

For “Shark Tale”, DreamWorks used mental ray in a proprietary production pipeline to create multiple separate image elements which contain different components of the 35 lighting for each frame of the entire animation. These elements describe the exposure of each 3D element to ambient lighting and the effects of indirect lighting in a scene. These “exposure” and “bounce” elements are then used as texture maps in the final image. DreamWorks’ lighting artists can thereby control the location and to what degree the two elements contribute to the final rendering by their choice of light direction and weighting factors providing a highly flexible and efficient solution to achieving the advanced lighting targets for the film. 40

Realistic lighting is largely determined by indirect illumination effects such as the occlusion of elements in a scene from simulated direct light and the indirect illumination caused by light scattered from various directly or indirectly lit surfaces in the 3D environment. mental ray offers supreme control over light scattering and the effects of indirect light in a 3D scene, which was a key requirement for “Shark Tale”. 45

However, realistic lighting is not the primary artistic goal to achieve in a feature animation, just as the physically realistic simulation of motion does not automatically lead to great animation. “DreamWorks has used mental ray in a highly innovative way, giving the artists much greater control over the final effect of the indirect illumination simulation than in a pure lighting simulation for a 3D environment,” says Rolf Herken, CEO and CTO of mental images. “By combining the physical correctness and precision of the lighting simulation with the flexibility and programmability of 55 mental ray, DreamWorks has created a unique and most appealing visual experience for their audience.”

Movie studios increasingly demand the level of virtual photorealism and artistic visual richness that can be achieved with mental ray. mental images's technology blurs the 60

line between virtual and real, allowing for experimentation with innovative effects that have begun to revolutionize the motion picture industry.

65 “We give designers and animators the most advanced software tools to bring their ‘mental images’ to life on the screen in the most realistic and lifelike way possible today,” continued Herken. “Helping the DreamWorks team bring ‘Shark Tale’ to life was a challenging and rewarding task.”

* * *

Total words: 1004.

About mental images: mental images®, founded in 1986, is the recognized international leader in providing rendering software to the entertainment, computer-aided design, scientific visualization, architecture, and other industries that require sophisticated images. The world's leading cinematographers use its main product, mental ray®, to generate images of unsurpassed realism in visual effects. mental ray was initially released in 1989 and has been used in the production of over 130 major motion pictures. mental images GmbH is a privately held company based in Berlin, Germany, with a subsidiary in San Francisco, California.

For more information, visit www.mentalimages.com.

mental images Contacts:

| | | |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| United States: | Elena Arney Access Communications | e-mail: earney@accesspr.com Telephone: +1 (530) 587-9771 |
| Other: | Silvia Hanko mental images GmbH Fasanenstrasse 81 D 10623 Berlin, Germany | e-mail: office@mental.com Telephone: +49 (30) 31 59 97-0 Telefax: +49 (30) 31 59 97-33 www.mentalimages.com |