



SAFFRONIC AND TRIOSCOPE'S RECENT COLLABORATION OPENS A NEW PARADIGM OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE WORLD OF CG

[HTTPS://WWW.TRIOSCOPE.CO/](https://www.trioscope.co/)

WWW.SAFFRONIC.COM

■ INTRODUCTION

Saffron!c a CG production studio specializing in feature films, TV series, gaming, and VFX, is always on the lookout for new technology to aid in the production of high-quality, global content. It recently collaborated with Trioscope Studios to produce a short film that seamlessly marries live action with CG elements to create an immersive post-apocalyptic world.

Trioscope Studios works with production houses, directors, and content creators across the world to create unique, optimal projects using their prime Stylized Entertainment Engine (SEE ®) - a one-of-a-kind content stylization tool.



■ BACKGROUND

Saffronic landed the project for the film Mary Margaret Road Grader (MMRG) after submitting a fool-proof test which required the team to not only create a CG world but also to use Trioscope's propriety tool SEE ®.

MMRG is a 26-minute short film based on the work of the late science fiction writer Harold Waldrop. It was produced by George R.R. Martin of Game of Thrones fame and directed by Steven Paul Judd. The film (a feminist tale) is set in a post-apocalyptic world where Native Americans reclaim a portion of America. The final output uses Trioscope's SEE ® tool to redefine conventional storytelling and deliver a unique, comic-like feel.

The test was challenging with limited inputs and the use of what was then, an unknown tool for the Saffronic team. The test input from Trioscope was three green plate shots and a guide to the SEE ® tool. The Saffronic team did their homework, read the novel, and studied the nuances of the tool and the project. The team visualized and created the world of MMRG by initially building simple assets with the added expertise of their Matte Painting skills.

With a mix and match of 2D & 3D elements to recreate MMRG's Oklahoma landscape, Saffronic's production and R&D teams curated a unique pipeline catering to the dynamic needs of the project.

THE PROCESS OF CREATING THE WORLD OF MMRG

+ INPUTS

All the characters in the film were shot against a blue screen and that footage was transferred to Saffron!c. On receiving the input, the Saffron!c VFX Team began the plate cleanup process using Chroma Keying, Rotoscoping and Paint.

In Parallel, the Asset Team was involved in building the props and sets required for the story. The entire set of MMRG which includes vehicles, environment props, and digital matte painting was all done through the magic of CG.

Mastering the vehicles was crucial as they are central to the storyline. Every vehicle has a unique design including armor and defensive tools and in Waldrop's story they are assembled from various stolen parts. Each vehicle had varied maneuvers that made for a challenging and complex Rigging process.

The plot requires huge crowds of spectators something that is traditionally costly to produce in CG. To get around this, Saffron!c enlisted the help of Trioscope by asking them to film a single shot of the characters, lined up in a row using multiple cameras from different angles. Saffron!c then took this footage and rearranged the characters, multiplying different action shots of the crowd and tracked the progress of the characters' layers.

THE PROCESS OF CREATING THE WORLD OF MMRG



STAGES OF PROCESSING

Live-action camera shoot information was exported as CG Data using Nuke and imported into Maya to replicate the camera movements.

The next stage of the process was to perfect the CG sets which needed to be positioned and built with exact proportions as they would be in the real world so they would have seamless integration with the live-action characters.

The team had to match the live-action movements of the vehicles. The most complex part was the need to mimic the accurate scale and proportions of each vehicle for which the available live-action footage was limited.

All elements like smoke, debris, dust, and fire were created using FX and treated in the Compositing stage which was later integrated into the footage.

Crowd shots were cleaned, processed, and made ready for camera tracking as per the shot requirement.



THE PROCESS OF CREATING THE WORLD OF MMRG



STAGE OF PROCESSING

Unlike conventional processes, we applied the SEE ® Tool in the asset stage so the client was able to analyze the look and feel of the props and environment before the final compositing. This helped to reduce the number of iterations meaning assets could be developed faster with a quicker approval process.

This was also a major advantage as it gave both the Saffronic and Trioscope Creative Teams a chance to see the visual comic book style before final approval.

“Trioscope’s toolset opens up a whole new gateway of creative choices filmmakers have at their fingertips. It not only expands the visual library but allows the storytellers to dial into a specific look that best frames the story they wish to tell. In short, Trioscope has developed a creative game changer in visual storytelling”, says **Kevin Johnson, Executive Creative Director at Saffronic**

“The Trioscope tools are a boon for animation and live-action filmmakers, enabling them to infuse their work with a distinctive artistic touch and unleash limitless imagination!”, says **Chandrasekaran Gopinathan, Creative Director at Saffronic**



THE PROCESS OF CREATING THE WORLD OF MMRG



FINAL OUTLOOK

The final compositing stage involved combining CG Renders of the animated action including crowd and FX elements. Color correction and integration of the live characters in the CG Environment were done before adding the final layers processed via Trioscope's SEE® tool.



THE TOOL OF UNLIMITED POSSIBILITIES: SEE®

Saffronic was one of the first studios to test the SEE® Toolkit in its initial release. The tool has evolved based on collaboration between the two teams. Several suggestions put forward by Saffronic have been implemented in subsequent versions of the Tool, including enhanced features and compositing controls.

SEE ® is a budget-friendly tool that is highly recommended for moviemakers who wish to bring a unique touch to their creations. The highlight of the tool is the Tool Core concept that gives a stylized look and feel which can be achieved in the compositing stage.

SEE ® consists of different types of tools like Outlines, Tincture, vPen, and TimePainter. The Saffronic team enjoyed working with vPen which generates sprite effects from live-action plates based on depth.

“The Trioscope toolkit is easily one of the most optimal, efficient, user-friendly toolkits I’ve used. Usually, we need to do many 3D renders during R&D but with this toolset, we can do all the R&D in compositing. This approach can save time and reduce costs”, says **Dhanunjaya Adapa, Saffronic Team Lead, LRC.**

THE FUTURE OF SEE®

Today, SEE® runs exclusively on Foundry's Nuke, the leading compositing platform for professional filmmakers. Trioscope's roadmap for SEE® envisions a tool that will work on multiple platforms. Next up is support for the Adobe Cloud suite of tools, in particular - Adobe After Effects. SEE® is being designed to support an array of new more powerful tools for the stylization of filmmaking including support for third-party conventional and future generative AI tools on a selective basis. This will speed up the process of stylization and encompasses an array of stylization functionalities including compositing, edge detection, layer separation, color, lighting, line, texture and color. Ultimately, SEE® will run as a browser-based SaaS platform and be made available to the public.



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