

History of Motion Graphics: Part 2

2001 - 2004

AN INDUSTRY IN TRANSITION

In 2001 After Effects was only six years old and the motion design industry was still developing. By the end of 2004 things had changed a little. If you knew where to look motion graphics were everywhere and were considered cool for the first time. After Effects was still a crude tool compared to what it is today, but creative people were pushing back against the limitations to create some stunning work. Here we look at four pieces -- two big title sequences, one for TV and one for film, that were made with relatively high budgets, and two low-budget experimental projects that became cult hits. Anything was possible in the Aughts!

“Six Feet Under” Titles (2001) - Directed by Danny Yount

This meticulously crafted sequence was almost single-handedly responsible for elevating television titles to the prestige level of film titles. Danny Yount and his team blend rich conceptual musings about death and decomposition with pitch-perfect photography, typography, and graphic composition. Way ahead of anything else at the time this piece was awarded an Emmy for Outstanding Title Design in 2001.



They planted the tree on this hill to get this shot.

“Finn Movie” (2002) - Directed by GMUNK

This trippy Alice-In-Wonderland freak-out from 2002 launched the career of motion design powerhouse GMUNK. He describes it as why “sweet little girls should never take LSD.”



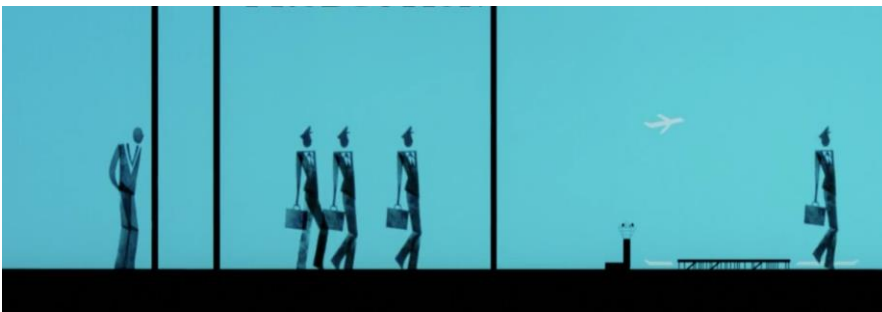
No little girls were harmed in the making of this PDF

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“Catch Me If You Can” Titles (2002) - By Kuntzel & Deygas

French husband and wife team Olivier Kuntzel and Florence Deygas created this charming homage to Saul Bass and mid-century American design for Steven Spielberg’s 2002 film “Catch Me If You Can”. We call this our first “grandmother” piece on this list because everybody and their grandmother saw this thing and loved it. Clients referenced it in lots of creative meetings for the next five years or so, and many people got into motion design after seeing it. It was a huge deal.



The design of this piece is still so beautiful. The animation, on the other hand...

“Take Me Out” Music Video (2004) - Directed by Jonas Odell

This collage-style animated music video successfully references Dadaism, Surrealism, Soviet propaganda posters, and even Busby Berkeley musical numbers from 1950s Hollywood all at the same time. But it all hangs together and works perfectly thanks to director and designer Odell.



The minimal color palette, angled lines and graphic compositions keep this video fresh