



RHINOFX AND SMUGGLER REV UP NASCAR FOR ESPN

The Brief:



rhinofx recently enhanced a series of innovative :30 spots for **ESPN** to promote the channel's broadcasts of the **NASCAR** Nationwide Series. The clips feature live action slot cars in the midst of action-packed NASCAR races, complete with grandstands, toy spectators, pit crews, and announcers amidst a variety of strikingly authentic speedways. rhinofx creative director, **Vico Sharabani** collaborated on the project with Director **Jon Watts** of **Smuggler** through **Wieden+Kennedy New York**.

The Spots:

The series of spots includes **Green Flag**, which begins with motors roaring when twenty cars "start their engines." The drivers communicate with their crews via radio as the green flag waves the race on with the crowd going wild. In **The Duel**, two cars battle to end the race, scraping up against each other as they take the checkered flag to a photo finish. With the camera alternating between the driver's-eye-view of the track and rear view mirror, to thrilling close-ups of the speeding vehicles and the perspective of the enthusiastic fans, the miniature race becomes larger-than-life.

For the unconventional project, rhinofx collaborated directly with Smuggler's Jon Watts. Commenting on the alliance, rhinofx Head of Production Karen Bianca Bisignano adds, "It was a great experience to again work with Jon and the Smuggler team. By building the giant slot car tracks from the floor up, hand-painting the model cars, and addressing every minute detail, he was really able to create the experience in camera, making it truly feel like NASCAR. Their thorough execution enabled our artists to focus on enhancing and accentuating the details, for an even more realistic result."



Lead Composite Artist Nitant Karnick explains, "A unique spot like this one allowed us to explore a variety of effects techniques, from creating the feeling of camera shaking to replicate the speed and vibrations of the track, to enhancing the mood of the sunset race. To counterbalance the toys and make it look and feel like an actual NASCAR race, we really focused on realism, paying

meticulous attention to every detail. Using Digital Fusion and some Maya treatment, we augmented the textures of the asphalt, logos, walls, and grass, and manipulated the lighting—we also added sparks and camera flashes, and created subtle lens flares. Because Jon created and captured so much, we were really challenged to maintain the continuity among so many levels of compositing.” The result is a truly seamless series that gives the real NASCAR a run for its money.

The ESPN series is the latest in an impressive run of projects for the artists at rhinofx. Recent efforts include work on major brands such as Cadillac with Modernista and Dell with Mother, as well as multiple projects for Mercedes, K-Mart, and Toyota. rhinofx has also worked on several major VFX film projects in recent months, including *Perfect Stranger*, *The Nanny Diaries*, and Dreamworks' *Ghostown*, which is currently in production.



The Creds

Client: ESPN
 Campaign Name: Nascar Nationwide Series
 Spot Title: Green Flag, Duel
 Air Date: April 2008

Agency: Wieden + Kennedy New York
 ECD(s): Todd Waterbury and Kevin Proudfoot
 CD(s): Derek Barnes, John Parker
 Copywriter: Scott Hayes
 Art Director: Kurt Lenard
 Head of Production: Gary Krieg
 Producer: Nick Setounski

Prod Company: Smuggler
 Director: Jon Watts
 Head of Production: Laura Thoel
 EP(s): Patrick Milling Smith, Brian Carmody, Lisa Rich, Allison Kunzman
 Producer: Kathleen Handwerk
 Production Coordinator: Jen Thomas

Post/Effects: rhinofx
CD: Vico Sharabani
Producer: Linda Gallagher
Lead Composite Artist(s): Chris Difiore, Nitant Karnick
Composite Artist(s): Makoto Sato, Sohee Sohn, Alexey Khaimov, Yoshiko Hirata
EP: Karen Bianca Bisignano
COO: Camille Geier
Managing Director: Rick Wagonheim
CEO North America: Zviah Eldar

Editorial: Cut and Run
 Editor: Adam Jenkins

Telecine: The Mill
 Colorist: Fergus McCall

Sound Design: Amber Music
 Sound Designer: Bill Chesley



rhinofx.tv

About rhinofx:

Since its launch in 2000, **rhinofx** has created award-winning visual effects, design, and animation for commercials, VFX for feature films, episodic television, webisodic mini-series, and videogame cinematics. The company's principals and artists have also led the industry's exploration into the boundless potential of branded digital content. By cultivating extensive relationships with key brands, advertising agencies, and film/TV studios, rhinofx utilizes its creative directors and artists to develop and execute powerful branded entertainment to build both identity and awareness. The company's principals include: CD/Director Vico Sharabani, CD/Director Harry Dorrington, CD/Director Arman Matin, CD/Director Natasha Saenko, COO Camille Geier, CEO North America Zviah Eldar, and Managing Director Rick Wagonheim.



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