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SMOKE & MIRRORS NEW YORK ADDS KIRK BALDEN

Smoke & Mirrors New York proudly welcomes award-winning VFX Supervisor/Senior Flame



Artist, Kirk Balden into the fold. Most recently, Kirk was a VFX supervisor/Flame/Smoke artist at LA-based A52 where he worked on notable projects for Microsoft, Nike, Lexus, Jeep and the main title sequence for HBO's Emmy nominated original program, Rome. Prior, Kirk permalanced as a Fire/Inferno artist at Sea Level, Venice working on Superbowl spot Visa *Snowball*, Gillette, and Toyota to name a few. In Addition, Kirk has held posts at Hydraulx (Santa Monica), Ring of Fire (Hollywood), and Sony Pictures Imageworks (Culver City).

SMNY's recent hire Executive Producer Celest Gilbert adds, "I've been a big fan of Kirk's since we worked together at Sea Level. He's professional and talented with a great work ethic. I'm looking forward to having him on board with us."

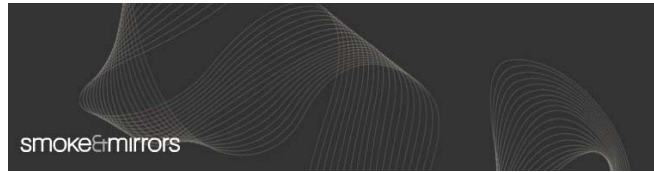
Kirk Balden first began using Flame for commercial work while at Venice-based King Cut in 1998. Two years later, he spread his wings as a freelance visual effects artist with Imaginary Forces, contributing to film sequences for *Minority Report*, network redesigns for Comedy Central and Lifetime, film trailers for *Harry Potter* and *Jurassic Park III*, architectural installation projects for IBM and Morgan Stanley, and scores of high-profile commercials. On *Minority Report*, Kirk was part of a three-person effects team that collaborated closely with art director/designers Matt Checkowski and Kurt Mattila, who directed the prevision sequences, to design the look of those sequences almost entirely in flame over the course of two months.

Founder/CD Sean Broughton notes, "Smoke & Mirrors is a creative-led facility and Kirk is a welcome addition; a superb talent with a great level of experience, both technically and artistically that will compliment the team perfectly."

About Smoke & Mirrors:

New York and London-based design, animation and VFX studio, Smoke & Mirrors was founded by Creative Director/VFX Artist Sean Broughton (NY), Penny Verbe (UK) and Mark Wildig (UK). A creative and artist-driven company synonymous with vision and originality since its inception, Smoke & Mirrors has consistently succeeded because of its collaborative approach and ability to build lasting creative relationships with directors, producers, agencies and clients alike.

Production in the New York office is lead by Managing Director Jo Morgan and Executive Producer Celest Gilbert. Diverse projects range from work on the Harry Potter and Bond film series, to commercials campaigns for Mercedes, Burger King, Miller Lite and Sirius. Recent music vid clips include Feist's 1 2 3 4,



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and *I Feel It All*. Each office is fully networked together with complementary systems allowing the companies to share resources, expanding local capacity. Close involvement with hardware and software manufacturers and developers has kept Smoke & Mirrors at the forefront of innovation and technology.



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