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## SMOKE & MIRRORS NEW YORK COLLABORATES FOR MERCEDES



In this collaborative effort for the Mercedes Benz brand, Merkley+Partners, director Adam Berg of Smuggler, and the VFX team at **Smoke & Mirrors New York** create an enigmatic campaign for the 2008 C and E-Class models. The two :30 spots reflect upon the storied history of the Mercedes Benz production line, and the generations of engineering prowess that have led to the quality and excellence that are synonymous with Mercedes and its luxury fleet of vehicles.

“When the agency contacted us we were immediately hooked by the boards,” commented SMNY’s **Senior Flame Artist Daniel J. Kelly**. “They sparked an originality that continued to echo the elegant approach of previous Mercedes campaigns while still providing a challenging aesthetic for us to get our heads around.” SMNY worked closely on an extensive round of R&D with the director to establish a workable aesthetic that would carry across both spots. The direction was to create a believable photographic effect that echoed the style of time lapse photography, and offer a flashback, while remaining in context of present time. The characters were to appear “ghosted” and leave trails as if a moment in time had been captured.

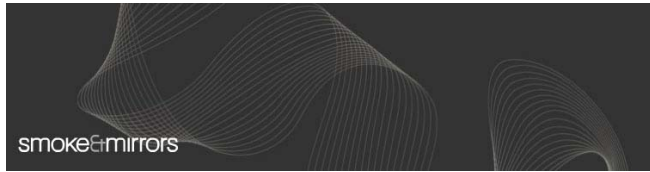


SMNY established a two stage shooting process for the generation of elements in preparation for the compositing of the “ghosted” effect. The first was that the “ghosted” characters had



their camera angles matched to the live action plate and performed their directed moves. The second was shot on an alternative stage with a locked camera that took the averaged values of lens distance, height and tilt. The actors were then given a specific route that would later be used to generate their before and after moves in and out of each scene.

Characters could then be filmicly layered into the scenes which ultimately resulted in a more pleasing look. This required very precise lighting control in production and DP Linus Sandgren



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did an amazing job in providing us with the perfect elements that we required to pull off this effect.” explained Kelly.

“Everyone was very happy with the outcome of the spots,” says Smoke and Mirrors **Creative Director Sean Broughton**. “Not only because of the enigmatic nature and individuality of each of the pieces, but also because of the success of the collaborative process. This was very much a design based workflow and relied upon an open collaboration from all involved. Director Adam Berg’s involvement was a breath of fresh air.”

SMNY’s Recent Commercial and Music Video Credits Include:

- Miller Lite – *Beer Heaven* (dir: Tarsem, @Radical Media – BBH, NY)
- Feist – *I Feel It All, 1,2,3,4* (dir: Patrick Daughters, The Directors Bureau)
- Activision (dir: Martin Granger, Moxie - Arnold Worldwide)
- Ricoh (dir: Albert Kodogolian, Believe Media - Lowe, NY)
- Dell (dir: Jonas Akerlund, RSA - Mother, NY)

**The Creds:**

Client: Mercedes-Benz  
Spot Title: “Projections”: C-Class, E-Class  
Air Date: March 31, 2008

Agency: Merkley + Partners  
CD(s): Chris Landi, Tom Qualino  
Producer: Alex Kobak

Prod Company: Smuggler  
Director: Adam Berg  
DP: Linus Sandgren  
EP: Laura Thael

**Post/Effects: Smoke & Mirrors/NY**

**CD: Sean Broughton**

**Lead VFX Artist: Daniel J. Kelly**

**VFX Artist(s): Sean Broughton, Alex Cathpoole**

**Graphics: Steve Parish, Serkan Ertekin, Greg Calas, Eric Lampi**

**Head of Production: Cary Flaum**

Editorial: Bug Editorial  
Editor: André Betz  
EP: Joy Copeland

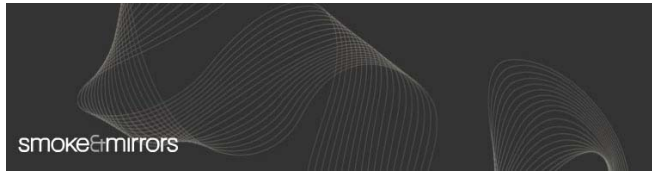
Telecine: The Moving Picture Company London  
Colorist: Mark Gethin

Music: The Rumor Mill

Sound Facility: Blast Digital

**About Smoke & Mirrors New York:**

Founded by Creative Director Sean Broughton, CEO Penny Verbe and CTO Mark Wildig lead the New York and London-based design, animation and VFX studio Smoke & Mirrors. It has been synonymous with creativity, originality, and innovation since its inception.



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Smoke & Mirrors has always succeeded because of its collaborative approach, building strong creative relationships with directors, producers, agencies and clients alike.

Each office fully is networked together with complementary systems allowing the facilities to share resources, expanding local capacity. Close involvement with manufacturers and developers has kept Smoke & Mirrors at the forefront of technology and on all levels.

Smoke & Mirrors diverse range of projects include: feature films from ranging from Harry Potter to James Bond, award winning commercials, music videos and television.



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