

# 2009 Creative STORAGE<sup>SM</sup> CONFERENCE

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AN ENTERTAINMENT STORAGE ALLIANCE™ EVENT



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**Jeff Okun, Chair, Visual Effects Society**

## **BIOGRAPHY**

JEFFREY A. OKUN, currently in production on 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox's *The Day The Earth Stood Still*, has just completed the visual effects work on the Warner Brothers award winning film, *Blood Diamond*.

Working closely with Edward Zwick, the film's Director, Co-Writer and Producer, Jeff was charged with creating invisible effects for the film, for which he was nominated for the Visual Effects Society award. The mission statement for this project was, 'If the audience sees a visual effect then we have ruined the film.'

The over 425 visual effects for this feature film range from virtual set extensions to full 3D creation of the film's stars for key action sequences, traditional matte paintings to computer generated weapons of warfare in the hands of the actors and adding spectacular action 'beats' that propel the story forward. Additionally Jeff employed both traditional crowd replication techniques and the newer CGI 'internal logic battling crowds'.

Okun is known for creating 'organic' and invisible effects, as well as spectacular 'tent-pole' visual effects that blend seamlessly into the storytelling aspect of the project. "I feel that my job is not to showcase what can be done with the technology but to serve the story above all else."

Okun has also worked on wide-ranging effects as seen in such films as *THE LAST SAMURAI*, the award winning sci-fi hit *STARGATE*, *SPHERE*, *RED PLANET*, *DEEP BLUE SEA*, *LOLITA*, *CUTTHROAT ISLAND*, *DEATH TO SMOOCHY*, *THE CROW: CITY OF ANGELS*, *DIE HARD 2: DIE HARDER*, *SLEEPWALKERS*, *THE LAST STARFIGHTER*, *TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES III*, *SUBURBAN COMMANDO*, *TWIN PEAKS: FIRE WALK WITH ME*, and *WES CRAVEN'S SHOCKER*.

His credits also include music videos from such varied artists as Sting, The Beatles, Jimi Hendrix, Janet Jackson, Wayne Newton, Bryan Adams, Amy Grant, Dolly Parton, Prince, Michael Jackson, the Neville Brothers and Rod Stewart, in which he created many amazing in camera and optical effects.

In addition, he has added his special talents to such memorable commercials as Reebok's *LEGENDS*, *SHAQ ATTACK*, Miller Lite's *SUMO HIGH DIVE* and *BIG LAWYER ROUND-UP*.

Additionally Jeff created visual effects tracking and bidding software that is in wide use within the industry, as well as creating the revolutionary visual effects technique dubbed the "PeriWinkle Effect" and the "Pencil Effect", which has been used in many projects to help achieve more a realistic sense of danger and more accurate budgets.

Jeff also served as the Chair of the Visual Effects Society and chair of the VES Awards Committee, having spear-headed the creation of the Awards. He is a respected member of the executive committee of the Visual Effects Branch of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences, the Academy of Television Arts and Science, BAFTA and the VES.