

Trevor Cawood

Spy Films; Biscuit Filmworks

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Trevor Cawood has gone on some wild rides supervising effects on film spectacles—namely, both Matrix sequels and a slew of spots, including the Neill Blomkamp-directed Nike "Evolution," featuring an organically morphing shoe and Citroen "Transformer," starring a car that lives up to the spot's name. But all that magic making was just a stepping stone to where he is today.

Cawood's path to directing has followed a similar trajectory to that of former colleague Blomkamp, with whom he had co-founded Vancouver's The Embassy, along with other defectors from Canada's Rainmaker Studios. The 33-year-old Canadian native finally turned his own sights to directing full time three years ago when he joined Toronto's Spy Films after shooting Never's "The Dream," a low budget music video featuring giant wind-up robots against a backdrop of '70s Brutalist Architecture. Last month, he also joined the roster of Biscuit for U.S. representation.

While it's no surprise that his reel reflects an effects-driven bent—apparent on Citroen's "Runner," a follow-up to "Transformer" and a touching spot for GMC in which two little androids seem to become one with their maker after seeing a new Yukon—those skills only help to enhance an impressive grasp of story and character-building, especially evident in his short film Terminus, which appeared at this year's Toronto Film Festival. The film follows a weary businessman who's beleaguered by a mysterious, hulking cement figure who likes to boogie in the man's personal space. Citroen: Transformer | Full View »

Cawood's visual roots certainly helped to bring an odd charm and believability to the man's 700-pound stalker, created using motion capture and prosthetics. "He can't move very fast, so one of the things we had to do to make sure that the actor kind of looked and behaved like the actual cement guy was we had to put weight all around his limbs," he explains. As for the characterization itself, "I actually got the idea for him from someone I used to work with who

used to come up and dance a foot away from you, for no reason. You'd be like, 'Dude, what are you doing?' "

The story itself reflects the director's strong interest in character, and the sort of work he'd like to explore in the future—more internal, psychological subjects—"things that are going on in someone's mind, rather than more big, external societal commentary. The film is sort of an observation of mine on how a lot of people function in society. The creatures in *Terminus* don't really exist. They're in people's heads, but the people try and function like nothing's wrong. They're sort of metaphors for living with anxiety or unresolved issues and trying to ignore it rather than deal with it."

Spy Films

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