

Illusion behind closing ceremony

The 2010 FIFA World Cup closing ceremonies producer, WVV Group, to conceptualise and deliver on all aspects of digital effects and post-production for the World Cup events, contracted Ministry of illusion.

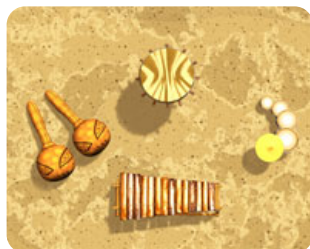
"Being invited to join the conceptualisation phase of the ceremonies gave us creative license; it also meant our team got to work with some of the best brains in our industry. There were a large number of elements to our work, but it seems the real crowd pleasers were the 'watering hole', the 'marimba' and the 'newspaper'," said Gerd Müller, MD of Ministry of illusion (MOI).

Watering Hole



The watering hole sequence began with rain droplets that rippled a pool of water while cast members simultaneously ran out with umbrellas. The projected raindrops were generated as 3D water particles and the image of the rippled pool of water on the surface of the field was composed together in Flint to create the final effect. Out of the watering hole, by means of superimposed visuals, the Jabulani ball made way for live visuals of the semi final games.

Musical Instruments



The watering hole was slurped-up by a thirsty elephant and the remaining sand patch revealed a marimba, shakers, a drum and cymbals. A cast member joined the set and began to play the marimba by jumping on one key at a time to activate musical notes and form a melody. The entire Marimba scene was created, modelled, lit and textured with realistic shadows in 3D animation.

Newspaper



The newspaper scene began with the 'Jozi Times' centre field and cast running on precisely choreographed and accurate

framed. As they began to tear the page live action footage of group matches were revealed, starting with the Tshabalala goal. It ends with the illusion of wind picking up and the newspaper fluttering, gaining momentum and blowing away. The integration of the lights around the perimeter of the graphics created a synchronised image, and as the graphic blew away the lights angled up and away into the audience. The close of those graphics marked the only blackout moment that the closing ceremony purposefully used.

Müller concluded, "It was one of the more stressful jobs that the MOI team had to produce. The deadlines were crazy and responsibility was huge. Standing on the side lines of the field at Soccer City on 11 July 2010 is a night I will never forget we were part of something special, something real and most importantly something that showcased South Africa to the world!"

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