Yaya Video Clip – Making of (2008)

1- Beginning of the adventure

First, let us tell you this beautiful story because yaya has been brought to life thanks to Destiny.
In august 2006, our dear country Lebanon has been hit with a unexpected 1 month war. Alain the founder of Beirut Animation Network, decided to go to Paris, as soon as the war finishes, to promote Lebanese animation and talent and to show what Lebanon is capable of producing artistically.
In the same time, Stephanie, founder of Aswat, creators of yaya, had to go to Paris, 2 months before, with the French consulate, as deportation. Stephanie went to paris in order to promote Aswat's concepts, Yaya and others…

3 days after Alain's arrival to Paris, he called his cousin Geraldine to meet over in a coffee shop. What we didn't know, is that Stephanie was with Geraldine. This is where to real adventure begun.

Stephanie and Alain met and shared their thoughts about their visions about the concepts, toons and animation world and about their dreams and ambitions. We knew that this would make a dream team.

Aswat introduced yaya to Ban, letting BAN inside their creative world. The directing of YAYA's video clip was a real real challenge, pleasure and adventure.

2- The Team Behind Yaya

Let us tell you about the team and organization because it has a special point We achieved this movie clip with a team of 4 digital artists and animators, including the director. The videoclip was done in 6 months.

This is a very small team for this time period achievement but the team is quite exceptional and we thank them all for giving their heart, breath, emotions, motivation, skills, thought, creativity into this project.

Thanks to them, without whom, this project could not have seen the light.

We are going to see each 3D artists in the team with each step in which they are involved, but here is a brief introduction:

Aswat's Team

Stephanie : Singer, Music Artist, 2D Character designer, Creative concepts
Alain S : Singer, Music Artist and expert, Composer, Lyrics, Creative Concepts

Stephanie & Alain are the most interesting and pure, good persons we have met so far. There creative sense of toons and concept, storytelling is so developed that anything could lead to a music, character, concept in a couple of minutes. It is so exceptional. BAN had the pleasure to partner with Aswat on this project because of their human kindness and humility.

The concept is born from Aswat and was shared with BAN for 3D animation.

A movie is nothing without a scenario and a concept, so we thank Aswat for sharing this with us, it helped us get the experience while having so much fun.

So please come in in the adventure and let us get down to the real process of animation, and doing this video clip.

Ban's Team

Joelle: Lead 3D Character animator (Animating YAYA)

Joelle graduated from ALBA and has enrolled in BAN in April 2007 with this first project. Joelle is a passionate person about animation and lectures kids in school about the art of animation. She has great skills and helped the team get through all the problems that could be encountered with 3D Studio and technical problems while working on such a project. The project and team benefited from her experienced. This project could not have seen the light without the skills of Joelle and we thank her for that.

From emphasizing on the animatics, Preparing all the characters for animation, to the animation of YAYA, joelle helped us get the most out of her previous experience with short animation movies.

Ashley: 3D Character modeler /animator
Ashley is a great talented person and is a digital artist with great level of detail. Character Modeling is a piece of cake for her as she allied technicity and artistic character acting. Ashley sings too and has a very nice voice, she will be voice acting our next animation movie.
Ashley exceeded the team's expectations while coming up with great character acting and animation, She was always searching for improvement and high level of quality. Ashley modeled and animated all the secondary characters and crowd with a great quality and in a record time.

David: 3D Backgrounds storyboarding, Modeling, Creative Storytelling
David was supposed to be a simple 3D backgrounds modeler but david showed a great level of creative storytelling and artistic creativity. David contributed widely to the creation of the secondary characters and the scenario details enhancement that make the difference. Always trying to search for the small artistic detail, and keeping the big picture, david showed BAN directly that he was capable of achieving great stuff. This video clip benefited from david's skills in the best way. As David is multi-skilled, he created the 2D secondary characters, then taking pictures of Lebanese streets and with the imagination, he could transpose the whole image into 3D Studio to model all the background and sets.

Alain: Director
Please believe in my true honesty when I tell you that I felt magic while teaming up with Joelle, Ashley, David, Stephanie, Alain & Patrick. I couldn't have done anything without them. They motivated me and helped me get the most out of this project. Hours, days weren't calculated anymore. We used to sleep at the studio (at the beach) and wake up. Weeks would pass by without even turning the car ignition. We worked so hard and I can only thank the team for all this.

3- about the project
The concept: (presented by Aswat) (5 min)
How did we came up with the concept?

4- Video Clip Process Making (30 min)

4.4 Process of Coming up with Yaya in 3D - Character Modeling (From 2D to 3D Character) – Presented by Ashley (10 minutes)

This was one the hardest steps to achieve. As yaya was only drawn in 2d with a lot of 2D photoshop make up, it was very hard to transpose the exacts emotion of Yaya 2D into a real 3D character.
The process of making Yaya in 3D was a very subtle process, filled with feelings. Thanks to our creative and very talented 3D Character designer, we could transpose the feeling proposed in 2D into a real life 3D character.
As we see that Yaya in 2D shows a lot of feelings, composed by the make up and some photoshop cheats and effects, the real 3D character was a real challenge to come up with.
Through iterative and intensive trial and errors, we could transform the look and feel of Yaya into this living creature in 3D.
The aim was to produce a 3D character that will be animated fully with her charm and showing her real character and little lady cuteness.

Ashley: Showing the different steps of the evolution pictures of yaya (2D-3D)

4.5 Character Animation (presented by Joelle)
Yaya has a complex body, designed customely with many rounded forms and back.
The difficulty rose in the back moves of yaya and the lipsync expressions.
Everything was morphed and with our mirror, we could transpose the real expressions of a real Lebanese girl.

Joelle : Video showing what you want to show

4.6 Background & Sets, Creative storytelling, Secondary characters (David)
The first aim was to present yaya into Beirut downtown district. But, then , we preferred create a whole virtual place, showing our imagination and creativity.
We had to create whole 3D environments from scratch.
The boutique:
The street and environment:
The Coffee Shop:
The dancing club:

The aim was to produce and create a Beirut environment showing the feel of our city.
Through multilple picture taking, walking in the city streets, we went in the discovery of the smallest details that made these backgrounds so real. This was a very nice process.

Alain: Secondary Characters – From Chracter personality, to drawings to 3D…to cloth texturing

The characters creation was very easy because they were alive in our heads before drawing them

4.7 – Secondary character animation (Ashley)

Video Presented by ashley

4.8 Lighting presented by Amine

As vray is a powerful renderer, we experienced a lot of artistic possibilities in lighting. Exterior, Interior and night vision concluded our general overview of the lighting process.

4.9 Special Effects:

After effects was at the meeting.
The beginning and closure of the movie clip was requiring us to come up with the speakers/round DJ stuff

5 – Rendering

Pour dire que chaque etape etait un enorme challenge mais la magie de la vie fait que ETC me prete le rendering

Apres mes calculs, il s'est avere que j'aurai besoin de 50 ordinateurs pendant 1 mois a raison de 12 h par jour pour effectuer les calculs de rendus finaux. ETC me prete son etablissement, et me donne les clefs pour y faire mes rendus de 9 pm a 9am…

6- Final words: Director:

It was a real challenge to come up with such a high quality video clip in a time so stretched and squeezed but thanks to our creative, skilled team, we could achieve that in time and with the quality desired.

3D is a great hard process, everything is created from scratch. Nothing is real. Everything ends up to be real in our head. We live in our imaginary worlds.
To keep up a project of 4 months while staying completely immerged in the background and environnements , and feeling the characters…is a long story and very passionate adventure.