

The Mill Helps to Create the Slowest Audi Ever Built

A Gleaming New Car Gradually Appears Built Bit by Bit by an Army of Near-Invisible Technicians

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Just as much behind-the-scenes care and skill went into the making of the ad, which is a highly stylised interpretation of the manufacturing process: The Mill team, led by Yourick Van Impe, James Healy, John Leonti and shoot supervisor Hitesh Patel, spent six weeks crafting the spot with a mix of Baselight, Flame, Maya and Shake.

The "fast-slow" effects -like a long-exposure shot of cars driving along a highway- began with four days' initial filming in Eisbach Studios in Germany, shooting in motion-controlled passes on three different cameras as the car was assembled by 130 mechanic passes -every one of which needed to generate a trail. The fact that the cameras were always on the move meant the Mill team faced the challenge of adding passes, and blending both 2D and 3D elements, to achieve the layered end result. Each technician and machine was shot on its own, and over time the overlapping effect was built up, creating a feeling of playing tricks with space and time.

"The concept of light trails was always the original brief the Mill was working to," says lead 3D animator John Leonti. "It was a difficult job due to the volume of work that needed to be 3D rotoscoped. The 3D team created some tests in Maya to experiment and research into light trails, geometry and shading. We needed to make sure the trails didn't obscure the car or take attention away from it."

Finally, the Mill's New York-based Telecine operator Damien Van Der Cruyssen set the grade with director Olivier Gondry. Back in London, lead Telecine Adam Scott followed the grade through the film. The result is a high-contrast look using clean whites to deliver the clinical, high-tech feel the director wanted.

More Information at www.themill.com. Images and Video Courtesy of The Mill and Audi AG