



The Mill Takes A Swim With BMW

The Mill works with director Daniel Barber on the latest BMW 7 Series commercial. The 60 and 40 second ads titled Pool, were produced at Rose Hackney Barber for agency WCRS.

The commercial is set at night against an urban backdrop. A young woman dives off a high board into a seemingly empty swimming pool. As she hits an imaginary waterline, her movements slow down and she gracefully swims through the air towards the BMW that is sitting at the bottom of the pool. Mill flame artist Jason Watts attended the 10 day shoot in Cape Town, South Africa. The commercial airs on March 15th in the UK.

To achieve this effect, various plates of the car were shot in the empty pool. The young woman was then shot separately, swimming underwater in a naval diving tank, beside a mirror. Camera angles and lenses were set up as closely as possible to match the different plates. The shots of her reflections from the mirror were later composited onto the car to create her reflection as she swims up to it.

Shooting underwater presented the crew with various challenges, the main one being image clarity, which deteriorated dramatically as the subject moves away from the camera, therefore, keeping the diver close to the camera was of up most importance. This inevitably led to parts of her body dropping out of shot. Lead flame artist Jason worked on seamlessly tracking in her missing body parts, whilst his team removed air bubbles from the divers hair and costume.

For the dive shot a stuntwoman was used, with Jason then working on removing the safety harnesses and wires, tracking in new body parts to disguise her as the original diver. Mill flame artists also worked on replacing the empty skyline with a cityscape and adding the diver's shadow to pool surroundings. Additional work included creating a 'pool tiled' ramp to enable the car to drive from the pool.

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Links

Director: Daniel Barber
Production Company: Rose Hackney Barber
Agency: WCRS
Agency Producer: James Lethem
Post Production: The Mill
Mill Producer: Helen Weil
Lead Flame Artist: Jason Watts
Flame Artist: Chris Knight
Telecine Operator: Adam Scott
Flame Assistants: Matt Wilmshurst, Gavin Wellsman, Richard de Carteret