

"LOCOMOTION"

SUNNYVALE, CA - **Pacific Data Images'** latest in-house production, "**Locomotion**", premiered at the SIGGRAPH '89 Film and Video Show on July 31, 1989. "Locomotion" is PDI's modern day interpretation of the classic childrens' fable "The Little Engine That Could".

The production represents some of PDI's latest character animation techniques and effects. "We wanted to give the characters of the locomotive engine and caboose their own distinct personalities without adding faces, arms or legs to the realistically designed models," explained Producer/Director Steve Goldberg. The charismatic squash and stretch of the lead characters was produced by more traditional key-frame animation and a new hierarchical solid deformation technique. Many elements such as the engine drivetrain, sparks and smoke were created using procedural animation, a technique which allows animators to predescribe intricate relationships between objects so the computer can be used to generate motion automatically.

PDI's policy of making room in the production schedule to give animators "personal time" between production jobs provides a creative testing ground for new tools and techniques. Once the "Locomotion" concept was developed some preliminary animation was done using this personal time. The piece was then storyboarded. "Steve presented the storyboard and asked for some extra time to work on the project," explained PDI's President, Carl Rosendahl. "We were all so excited about the piece that we dedicated substantial production resources to the project. The end result was created with a mixture of people's personal time, late

nights and weekends, and scheduled production time. I think the entire company's dedication to the project shows through in the finished piece."

All the music and sound effects were performed by Christopher L. Stone and Nick Vidar on an AudioFrame by WaveFrame.

The Producer/Director on the project was Steve Goldberg and the Animation Director was Howard E. Baker.

If you would like more information about "Locomotion" you can contact Debbie Gaeta at PDI (408) 745-6755.

CREDITS:

Production Company: Pacific Data Images, Sunnyvale, CA

Producer/Director: Steve Goldberg

Technical Director: Nick Ilyin

Animation Director: Howard E. Baker

Story: Henry F. Anderson, Howard E. Baker, Tim Johnson, Joe Palrang,
Steve Goldberg, Jim Ward, Nick Ilyin, Bill Foss

Backgrounds: Nick Ilyin

Animation: Steve Goldberg, Tim Johnson, Nick Ilyin, Carlos Arguello,
Howard E. Baker, Karen Schneider, Roger Gould, Michael Collery

Locomotion Software: Graham Walters

Special Effects: Susan McVey, Carlos Arguello, Rex Grignon

Software: Thad Beier, Michelle Tsui, John Gross, Richard Chuang

Modelling: Nick Ilyin, Tim Johnson, Ray Giaratanna, Theresa Ellis,
Steve Goldberg, Karen Schneider, Rex Grignon, Michael Collery

Digitizing: Jane DeKoven, Jim Ward, Andi Cho

Production Manager: Patty Wooton

Music/Sound Effects: Christopher L. Stone & Nick Vidar, Los Angeles, CA