



## Visual Effects Pioneer Jeff Kleiser Appointed Fellowship to Advance Media Grid Standards

BOSTON, MA – March 01, 2007 – The Grid Institute has appointed visual effects pioneer Jeff Kleiser a fellowship to participate in the design and development of Media Grid rendering and digital cinema standards.

Kleiser, whose career spans nearly three decades, is widely recognized as a leader in animation and visual effects. He has produced and directed visual effects for numerous award-winning television commercials, and has created unique location-based entertainment projects such as the 3D stereoscopic films *Corkscrew Hill* (for Bush Gardens), *Santa Lights up New York* (for Radio City Music Hall), and *The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man* (for Universal Studios). Kleiser's film credits range from Walt Disney's *Tron*, the ground-breaking CGI movie released to critical acclaim in 1982, to recent Hollywood releases such as *X-Men* (including *X-Men 2* and *X-Men: The Last Stand*), *Fantastic Four*, *Scary Movie* (3 and 4), *Slither*, *Son of the Mask*, *Exorcist: The Beginning*, and many more. In 1987 Kleiser and partner Diana Walczak founded the visual effects studio Kleiser-Walczak and together coined the term "synthespian" to describe digital actors (synthetic thespians). In 2005 Kleiser and Walczak founded Synthespian Studios ([synthespians.net](http://synthespians.net)) to create original projects for animated characters. In 2006 Kleiser was a keynote speaker at Boston's first annual digital media summit ([mediagrid.org/summit/](http://mediagrid.org/summit/)). He is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and serves on the board of directors of the Visual Effects Society, Williamstown Film Festival, and Norman Rockwell Museum.



As a Fellow of the Grid Institute, Mr. Kleiser will participate in the design and development of Media Grid standards for rendering and content delivery. Media Grid reference implementations will be developed and tested in cooperation with Synthespian Studios using the firm's recent *Sun-Maid* and *Santa Lights Up New York* projects:



**Sun-Maid "Grapes and Sunshine" Campaign** - The Sun-Maid Girl, famous for her red bonnet and for holding a tray of freshly picked grapes, received a digital make-over for her 90th anniversary. Working closely with Sun-Maid, directors Kleiser and Walczak carefully guided the character's make-over as Synthespian Studios designed, developed, and produced an ad campaign comprised of two pilot commercials, several print ads and visual imagery that today appear in a variety of marketing and public relations applications including Sun-Maid's website ([sunmaid.com](http://sunmaid.com)).



**Santa Lights Up New York** - For America's most beloved holiday theatrical, "The Radio City Christmas Spectacular," starring the world-famous Radio City Rockettes, Kleiser and Walczak directed a 3D stereoscopic film that takes audiences on a thrilling sleigh ride with Santa through New York City. The film plays at Radio City Music Hall for more than 200 performances each Christmas season. Liz Smith, writing in the *New York Post* said, "It is simply magnificent! When they hand you the program, stapled to it is a pair of 3D glasses which you don for Santa's sleigh ride through the canyons and over the buildings of NYC. This is the best short movie of the year!" After screening this film and *Corkscrew Hill*,

Lenny Lipton, author of "Foundations of the Stereoscopic Cinema" and one of the world's leading experts on 3D imagery, said these films "show a complete mastery of the medium. I have never seen anything better."

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*Sun-Maid Girl* image Copyright 2006 Sun-Maid Growers of California. All rights reserved.

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### About Synthespian Studios

Synthespian Studios is a story development, design and character animation studio launched by creative directors Diana Walczak and Jeff Kleiser who, as partners, helmed the bicoastal animation and effects house Kleiser-Walczak Construction Company. Founded to create original projects for animated characters, in 2005 Synthespian Studios was commissioned to develop, design and produce two pilot commercials for the Sun-Maid Raisin Growers of California and their iconic Sun-Maid girl. The success of these spots lead to the development of more commercials and print ads for Sun-Maid as well as projects for entertainment clients. In addition to their spot and print work, Synthespian Studios recently designed and produced an all-CG animated dance sequence spoofing *War of the Worlds* for *Scary Movie 4*. Kleiser and Walczak's latest visual effects work may be seen in shots created for *X3 (X-Men: The Last Stand)* and *Fantastic Four*.

### About the Media Grid

The Media Grid is a public utility for digital media. Based on new and emerging distributed computational grid technologies, the Media Grid builds upon existing Internet and Web standards to create a unique network optimized for digital media delivery, storage, and processing. As an on-demand public computing utility, a range of software programs and Web sites can use the Media Grid for delivery and storage of rich media content, media processing, and computing power. The Media Grid is an open and extensible platform that enables a wide range of applications not possible with the traditional Internet alone, including: Massive Media on Demand (MMoD); Interactive digital cinema on demand; Immersive education and distance learning; Truly immersive multiplayer games and Virtual Reality (VR); Hollywood movie and film rendering, special effects, and composition; Real-time rendering of high resolution graphics; Real-time visualization of complex weather patterns; Real-time protein modeling and drug design; Telepresence, telemedicine, and telesurgery; Vehicle and aircraft design and simulation; Visualization of scientific and medical data.

*The Grid Institute leads the design and development of the global Media Grid through the MediaGrid.org open standards organization in collaboration with industry, academia, and governments from around the world.*