

CAN A PRO SKATER SAVE HIP-HOP? P.66

FSU

LIFESTYLES OF THE YOUNG AND DANGEROUS

TRANSWORLD

STANCE

MUSIC★
SPORTS★
CARS★
GIRLS★



CHAD MUSKA
PRO SKATER/ENTREPRENEUR

DECEMBER 2002 | STANCEMAG.COM
U.S. \$3.99 CANADA \$4.99



KORN REDEFINES "PLAYING LIVE" P.86
THE CROC HUNTER'S LAST WORD P.98
 WHO KNEW **A. DICK** WAS SO FUNNY? P.108
 GIRLS, PILLOWS ... **PILLOWFIGHT!!!** P.132

INTERACTIVE DESIGNERS

THE *MINORITY REPORT* PREVISIONARIES



Name: Matt Checkowski and Kurt Mattila
Job: Designer, Director
Salary: Lobster one night, McDonald's the next

As members of the design and production company Imaginary Forces, Matt and Kurt were the creative team responsible for conceptualizing and executing the dreamlike prevision sequences in Steven Spielberg's latest blockbuster *Minority Report*. In the film, these scenes represent the predictions of future murders rendered by the "pre-cogs," dormant psychics whose abilities allow detective John Anderton (played by Tom Cruise) to stop the crimes before they happen. In other words, these are the guys who gave Cruise something to do, and to whom Steven Spielberg turned when he needed to give his film a little something extra.

How did you get to where you are now?

Matt: I have a design degree from North Carolina State. I moved out to L.A. primarily to work at Imaginary Forces because I could work on a lot of different things: commercial graphics, interactive work, even designing architectural spaces. Basically, putting motion together with interactive design.

Kurt: I have a fine-arts degree in filmmaking from Rhode Island School of Design, and then came out to L.A. I was one of the first employees at IF, starting as an editor and then working my way up to directing commercials and things like that.

And they pay you for this, right?

Kurt: Yeah, but it's difficult to gauge an actual salary. We get director fees and stuff like that depending on the project, but of course those projects change all the time, and so does the money.

What's the best part of your job?

Matt: We get to work on a lot of really amazing projects, and most of the time we get to help figure out what the problem or challenge is and then help decide how to solve it. It's not

just someone saying, "This is what we need." It's more having someone come along and say, "Let's talk about what you want to do and then figure out the best way to execute and design it."

Kurt: Sometimes it's hard to believe they actually pay us for all this stuff. It's like the joke's on them, because we're having way too much fun.

And the worst part?

Kurt: Remember that salary question you brought up earlier? Well, let's just say it can be feast or famine.

Matt: Exactly. That, and the fact that my girlfriend gets pissed because I'm never home.

What's it like working with guys who are legends in the industry?

Matt: Steven Spielberg basically came into the company and said, "Here's the script, check it out, let me know what you guys think." We met with him as a company, and then Kurt and I just took the reins on the project. What we really realized was how high he sets the bar, creatively. Every person around him is absolutely the best at what they do, and they absolutely love their job. And it was incredible to be able to sit next to these people, and we just said, "We have to live up to this."

What's your advice for people who want to get into this business?

Kurt: You've just gotta put your money where your mouth is. For a job like *Minority Report*, it doesn't do any good to just talk about it; you've got to show them what you can do. We didn't have a budget to start out with, so we just took a video camera and made three short films and cut 'em together and showed them to Steven and that's what got us the job.