



Project Firefly Rises from Ashes of Disney Florida

by Ryan Ball

A group of seasoned Disney character animators have banded together to form Project Firefly Animation Studios. Working out of offices on the Universal Studios Florida backlot, the company will produce family-friendly animated employing both traditional 2D animation and cutting edge 3D technology.

Project Firefly was co-founded by Paulo Alvarado, Gregg Azzopardi, Dominic Carola, John Webber and Glen Gagnon. Carola serves as president. Collectively, the partners' credits

include Brother Bear, Lilo & Stitch, Mulan, Tarzan, The Hunchback of Notre Dame, The Lion King, Pocahontas, Hercules, Treasure Planet and Fantasia 2000.

The company has a slate of original projects in development for theatrical and video release, and is also looking to partner with other studios on animated projects.

"Due to the financial benefits, outsourcing has become more prevalent in the animation industry," states Gagnon, co-founder and director of business development and finance for Project Firefly. "The combination of our solid depth chart of talented artists and the economical advantages of living in Florida makes Project Firefly Animation Studios an attractive outlet."

"This has been a dream of ours for a long time," Carola comments. "We're grateful to Disney for the training and experience we had there. They honed our gifts as animators and skilled artisans, which prepared us for this tremendous opportunity. Now that the doors are officially closed at Walt Disney Feature Animation Florida, ours are open."