

CONCEPT ARTS - DIGITAL MATTE PAINTINGS AND ENVIRONMENTS

- FIRST EDITION -

LUCA G. ROSSETTI

Digital Works

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Luca G. Rossetti is a leading matte painter and concept artist specializing in works for film, television and videogames.

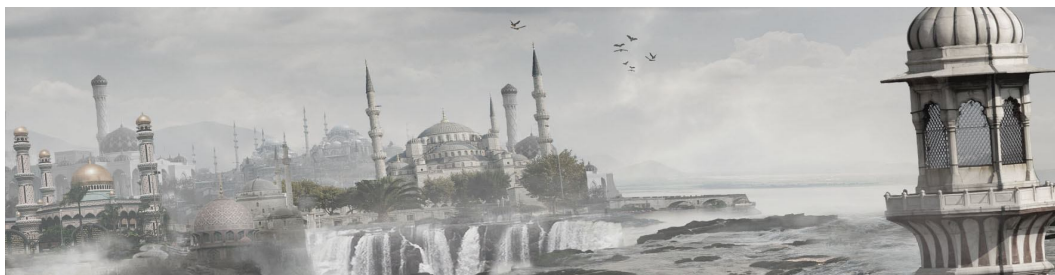
After graduating, he started to work in the visual effects industry growing up more and more till he left his country starting working abroad.

He became over the years an excellent digital compositor in films, till the point his passion for the fine arts took him in another direction, the magical world of digital paintings.

Specialized then in Digital Matte Painting, with a particular interest in combining photo real 2D art with 3D and/or models with a thorough understanding of 3D and compositing techniques needed to create and achieve totally convincing extensions and environments led him to work with some of the major studios around the globe such as Animal Logic, Rising Sun Pictures, Double Negative and others.

He made some stunning concepts art and mattes for movies as Snow White and the Huntsman, Total Recall, Conan and the Great Gatsby, but also for other cool movies.

In Conan the Barbarian he was leading the art department as well as Visual Effect Art Director.



Inspiration: As far as matte painters, I had the privilege of working with Dylan Cole over the past years or so. He is an awesome artist and a strong art director. I learned something from him almost every time we went through his masterpieces of art. Dylan knows how to drive a shot with simplicity and clarity as well also, his compositions are very impressive. Other people I knew over my career, as Art Directors and lead matte painters, and, from anyone of them, I had a piece of their way to think.

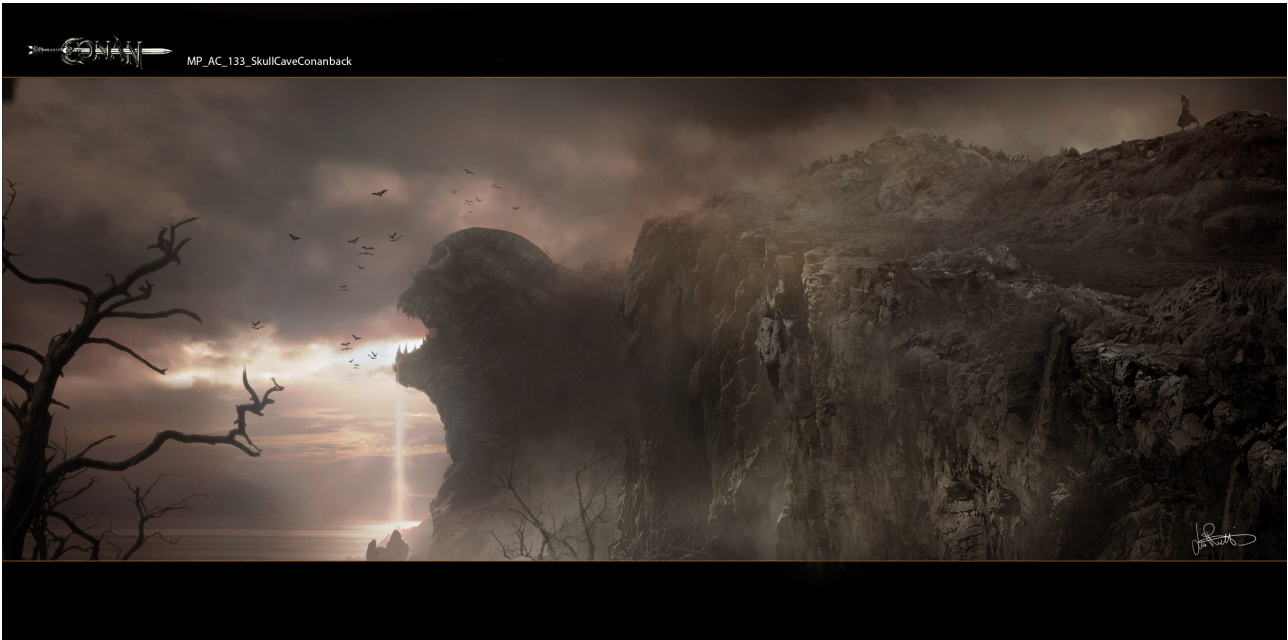


KhorKhalba Palace interior: a first look I developed for the temple of Khalba in Conan



The Red Waste: In the desire to paint a kind of lost city in the middle of the desert. I think the depth in this paint give you a random real world feel.

Working in a team: I guess the hardest thing about matte painting is to let go and realize you are just creating one shot in a big film, and that, it has to fit. You are a part of a team and you are not making the whole movie or a piece of art for yourself. Bare in mind, always, about context and continuity, you must know what is going on in the scene and what cuts surround your shot.



The Skull Cave: This paint was driven by Dylan in the beginning, but after that I've got to do quite a few changes

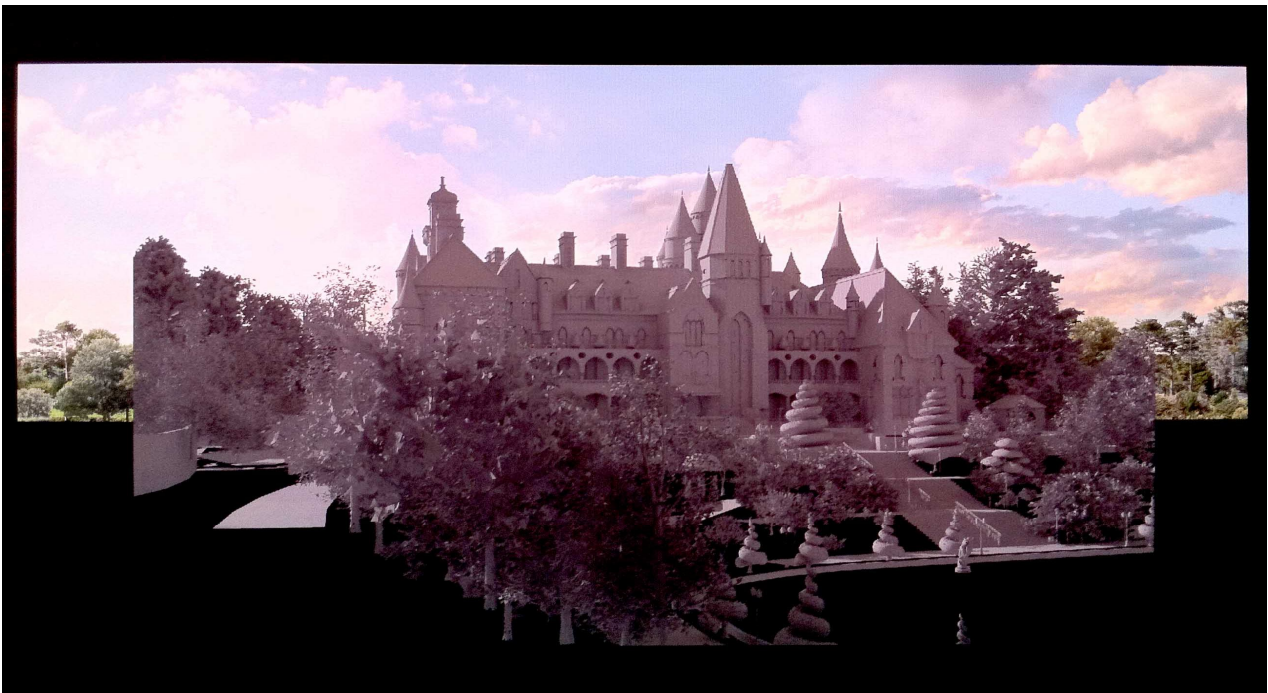


Bridge to nowhere: Again even in this shot the director wants to have a different mood from the original idea.

Environment Artist: Nowadays the term matte painters feels like an obsolete term. To be honest, I reckon, a lot of us, the “new generation” of painters, never done a “real one”.

We are a kind of virtual environment artist using just digital tools and we have to adapt on it.

3D became a vital part of us, and we do have so much control which before was quite impossible, but still, a matte painting has a lot of advantages over 3D, faster and flexible and no render time at all.



The Gatsby Mansion: This was a part of the matte painting of the villa of Gatsby, I’m proud to have been working of this beautiful movie, we did so much stunning landscapes, the whole movie looks like a bit magical.

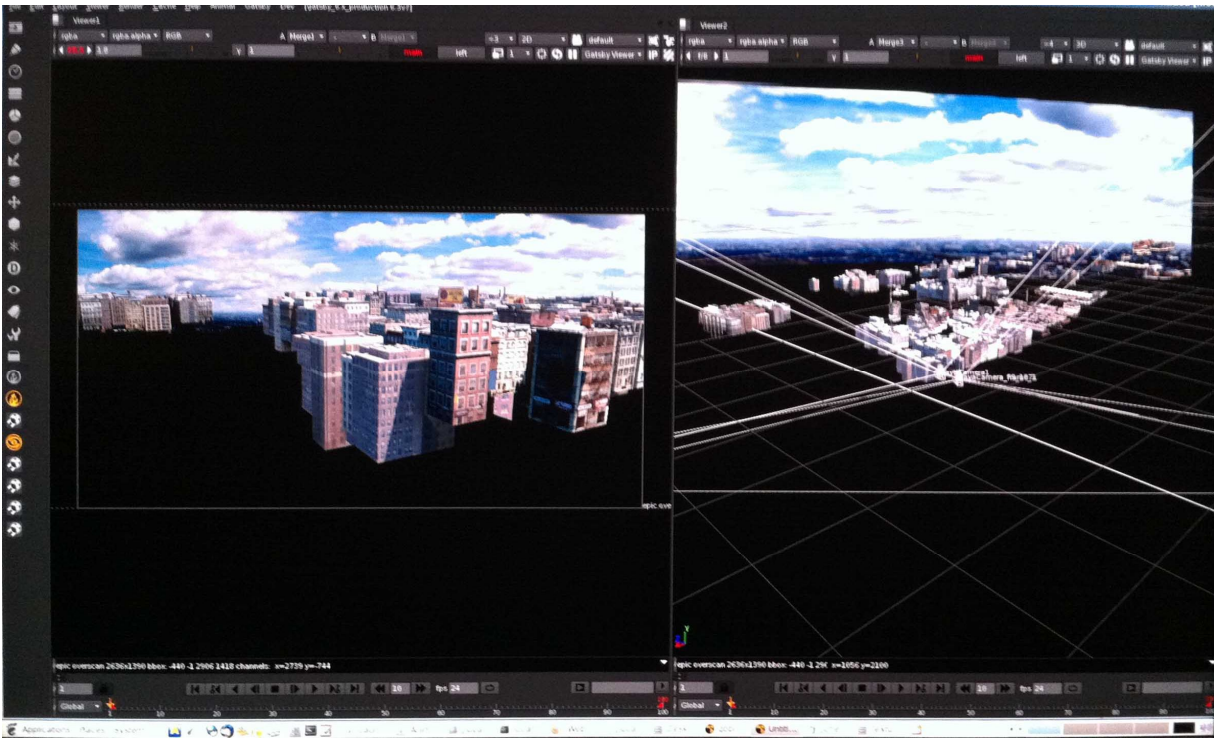


Working for Hollywood: I really enjoyed working for The Great Gatsby, where the heavily use of 2.5 projections techniques was a real challenge indeed. One of the shot I worked on, required me to start building a 3D layout of the Queens, after the Manhattan Queensboro Bridge, in the 1930.

Each project requires different skills, and ways to finalize the sequence, but this one, required all the knowledge and techniques possible know to achieve the goal.



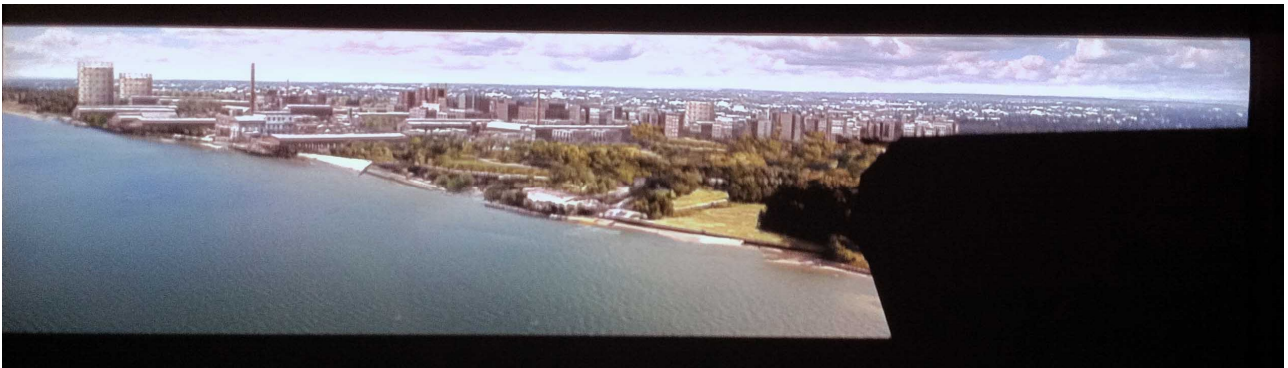
Queensboro Bridge right side view: This matte painting is showing the right side of the Queens in the 1930 during the car chase on the bridge.

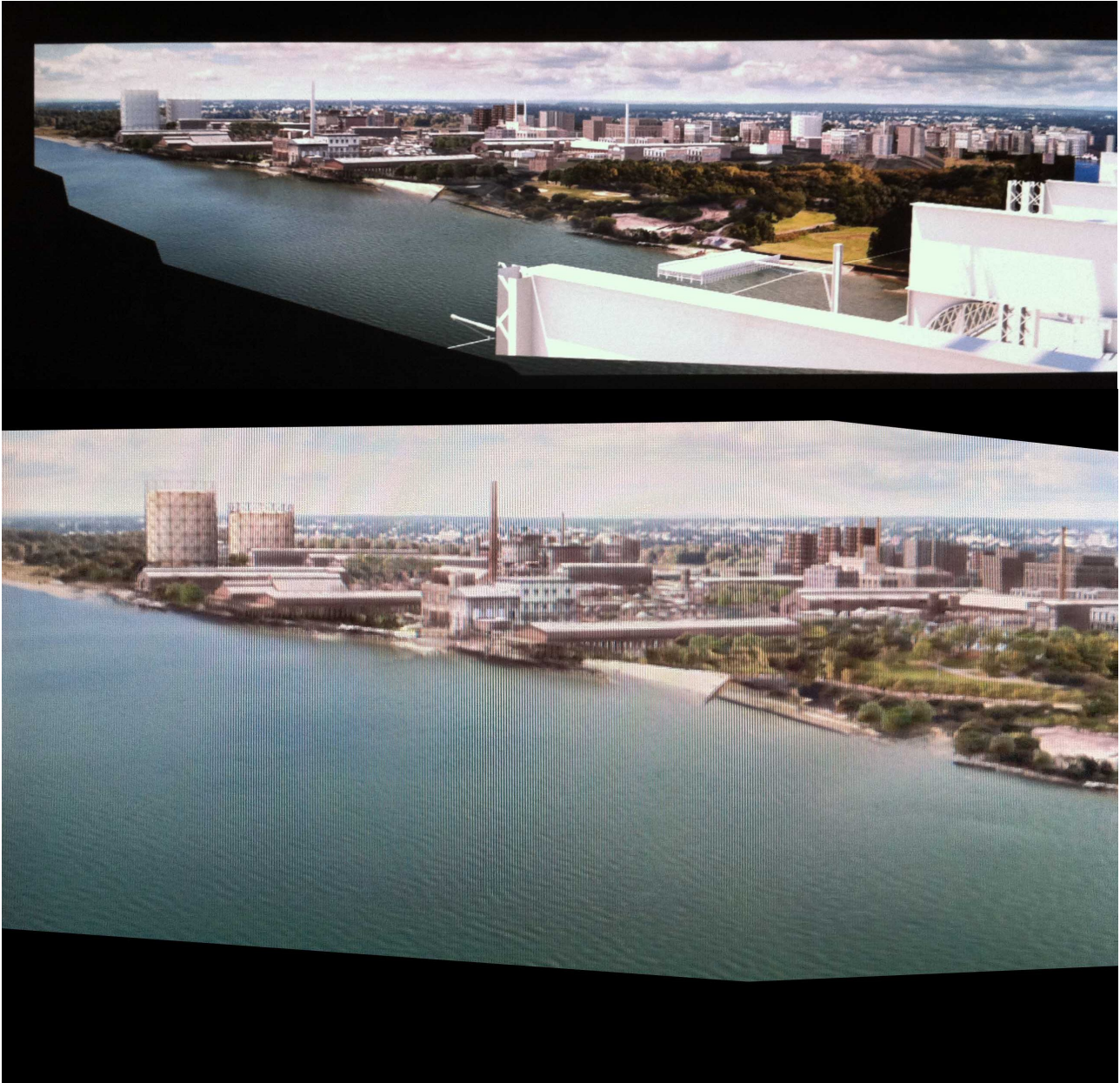




Queensboro Bridge view: UP here you can see the 2.5d camera re-projections in Nuke

Queensboro Bridge left side view: This matte painting is showing the left side of the Queens in the 1930 during the car chase on the bridge.





The process: I have worked on all types of matte paintings, (2D, 2.5D and 3D). I do love all of them even if techniques are perhaps a bit different. Since the goal of camera mapping is to make the thing easier to paint and more efficient, you want to make sure not making things more difficult than they need to be and get the camera as close to final as possible.



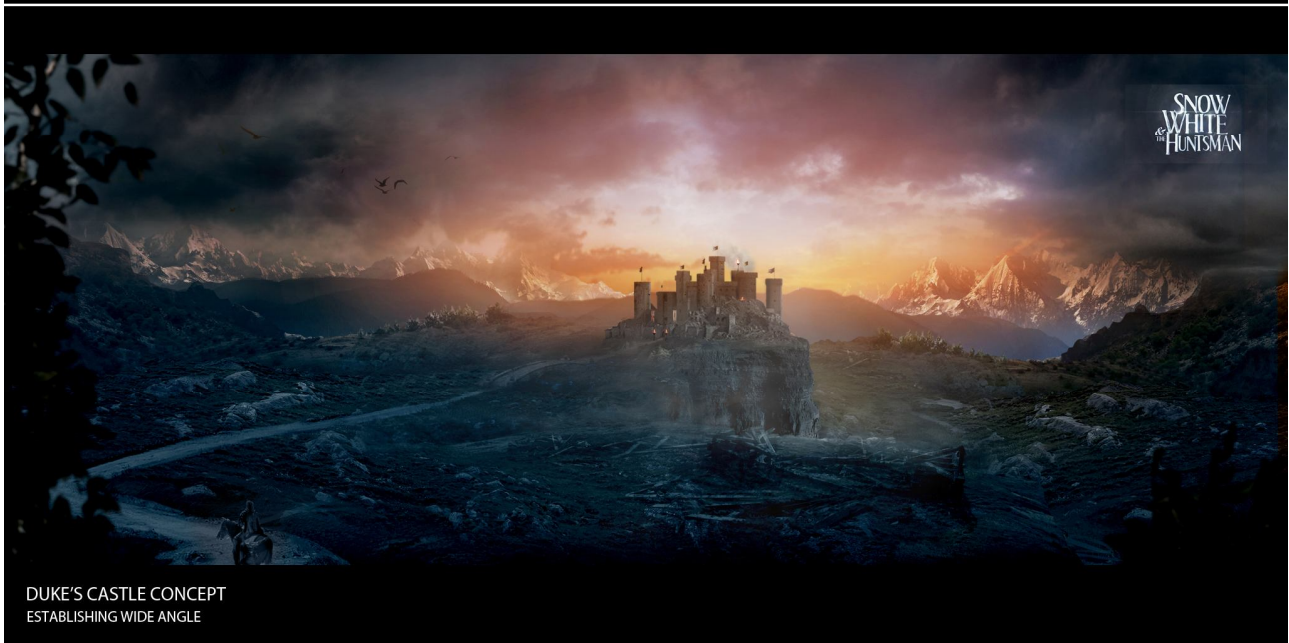
Futuristic London wide angle view: This concept art was made for Total Recall, it was supposed to be a view from a window on a train. Down here a few concepts of the same train in the “wasted London” opening scene.





Futuristic London final matte painting: . Up here the final result of the “wasted London” opening scene.

Satisfaction: I'm not sure which was my best painting I did in my career, and to be honest, sometimes, you are driven to much from the production and, you can't really do what you want, however, I'm proud because I contribute on a lot of nice shows. Many projects satisfy you in different ways, not just because your painting is amazing. Some of them are pretty invisible work, no one notice then, but you know they are there. Every project is different because many reasons, subject matter, work environment, the people you are working with, technical pipeline and so on, I reckon, this is the reason why, every time I start a new job, it seems fresh and exciting to me.



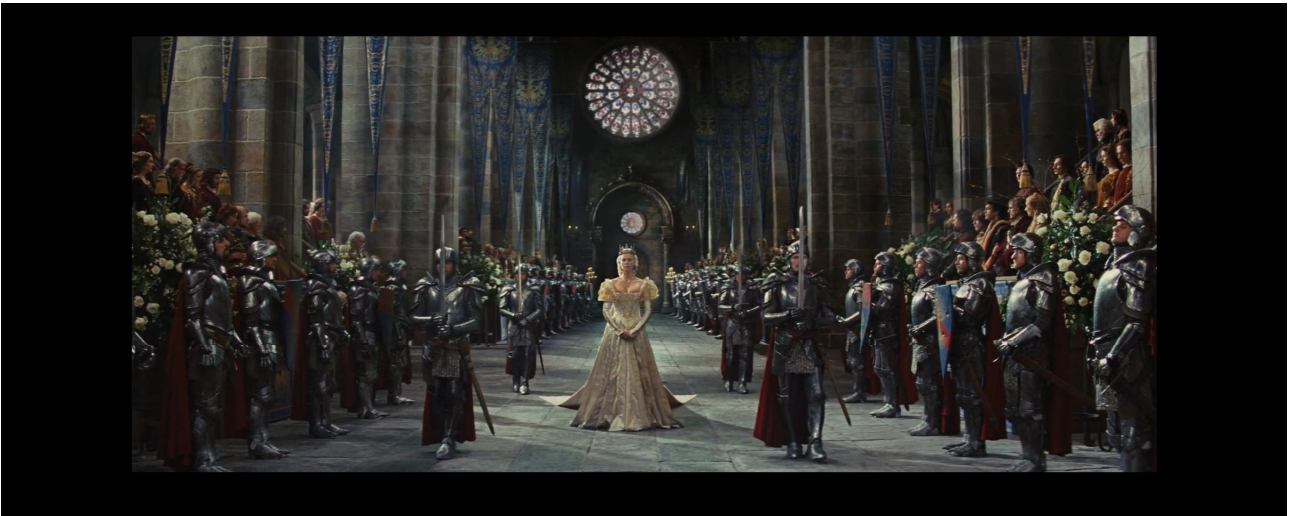
Snow White Duke's Castle concepts: . I did several concepts for this castle, I would have like to put some kind of magical atmosphere around. That was just the first look, afterwards, we changed quite few things.



Snow White Duke's Castle concepts: Another concept of the castle based on the plate



Snow White Duke's Castle final matte painting: Here the final matte painting



Snow White Cathedral Interior: Working on the interiors of the cathedral was really exciting, it was challenging to work on that big set extension for each camera angles.



Tools: I use a lot of tools, photoshop on first line, Maya or Max for 3D, and Nuke for projections and compositing. In the same time I also use other tools which help me out in some circumstances, like ZBrush or Vue

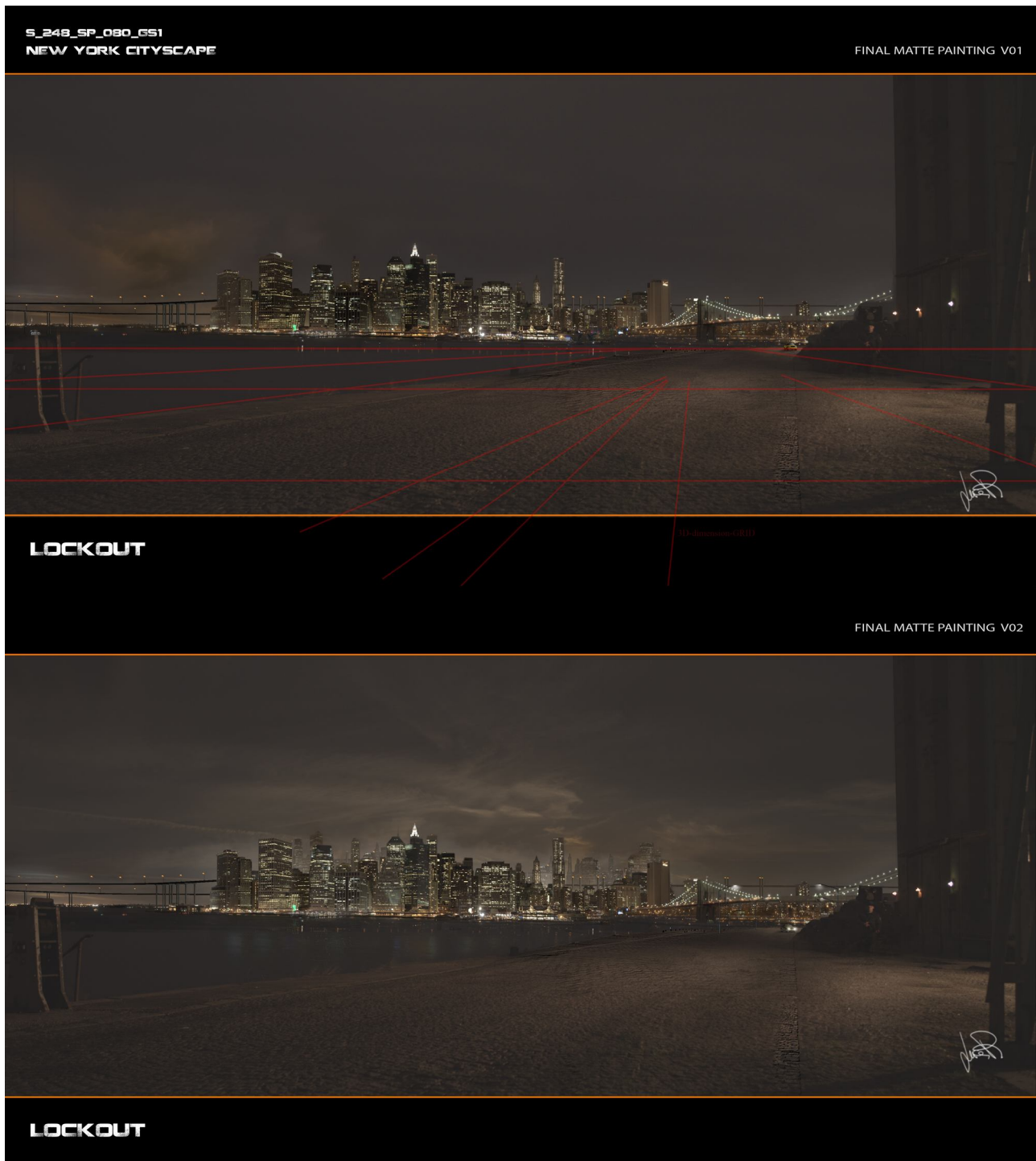
I have my personal opinion about tools, but, you need to be on the same page with vfx studios, so, you get driving by them in terms of tools. I can say, I love Xsi, but then again, who is using xsi today? A very few bunch of studios...So you become not appetible in the market...



The Outer world: This is a personal painting I did few years ago, I would like to visit this place for my next vacation, such a beautiful vista!



Wudang Temple: The smart placement of compositional elements adds interest to what could otherwise have been a plain foreground, also creating a perception of depth and perspective.



LOCKOUT: I always loved to work with Luc Besson behind the scenes, he is a visionary, this matte cityscape view from the docks of the NY city in the future, represent the final scene in the movie.

I really love the final mood with the orange haze on top of the skyscrapers, make the atmosphere feeling a bit toxic.







LOCKOUT PRISON Interior: The orbital prison MS1 was a practical set with a lot of set extensions to do. The final painting are a mix of 2D and 3D elements re-projected on cards and geo's.

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Edited by Luca G. Rossetti
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