

ZBC Contest 2: Action Hero

The Challenge

Pixologic is proud to announce our second official contest, with more sponsors and even bigger prizes! All registered ZBrushCentral members are encouraged to enter.

In order to participate in Pixologic Inc.'s Action Hero Contest (the "Contest"), all potential participants must agree to abide by and comply with the rules set forth herein (the "Rules"). Failure to comply with the Rules may result in your submission (or "Entry") being disregarded and you being disqualified from the Contest.

The challenge this time around is to create an original superhero or villain and show him or her in action. Imagine yourself to be a newspaper photographer, capturing your subject at a key point of the fight against his archenemy in what is sure to become a Pulitzer-winning shot. Except that you're doing it in 3D, creating a full figure sculpt of your hero.

Obvious takes on established characters are not permitted. Your creation must be a hero that has never been seen before in any media. Invent a one paragraph back story for your character, describe the hero's primary powers, then bring him or her to action-packed, crime fighting life in ZBrush.

The following examples demonstrate the sense of drama that you should strive for with your poses:

<http://www.marvel.com/comics/onsale/covers/uploaded/0.723032001208362373imagebig.jpg>

<http://www.marvel.com/comics/onsale/covers/0508/INVIM001.jpg>

<http://www.marvel.com/comics/onsale/covers/uploaded/0.702522001208358873imagebig.jpg>

http://www.dccomics.com/media/product/9/0/9011_400x600.jpg

http://www.dccomics.com/media/heroes_and_villains/origin_stories/green_arrow/01.jpg

http://www.dccomics.com/media/heroes_and_villains/origin_stories/nightwing/01.jpg

Form and pose are paramount in this challenge. This may be a comics-style action pose, but that doesn't mean that Good Form is a villain that can be thrown out the window! Be conscious of muscle structure and how it moves beneath the skin as a person moves. Think about things like balance and action lines. We want your character's representation to be believable! One excellent resource to help you with this subject is Scott Eaton's "Digital Figure Sculpture" article.

<http://www.pixologic.com/zclassroom/artistinaction/scotteaton/>

Entries will be judged first by a panel of experts, followed by the entire ZBC community. Impress them! Judging will be based on three requirements:

- Success in portraying the contest theme.
- Quality of the finished artwork. We're looking for a 3D model with great form and terrific detail.
- Displayed ZBrush skill, especially with sculpting, SubTools, TransPose, and TransPose Master.

The Prizes Totaling MSRP \$12,500

Grand Prize Totaling MSRP \$4,500

Top of the line Axiotron Modbook www.axiotron.com/index.php?id=modbook

One Year Subscription to 3D World Magazine www.3dworldmag.com

User Chooses 20 Gnomon DVD Training Package <http://www.thegnomonworkshop.com/>

First Prize Totaling MSRP \$4,000

NextEngine 3D Scanner www.nextengine.com

One Year Subscription to 3D World Magazine www.3dworldmag.com

Winner Chooses 15 Gnomon DVD Training Package <http://www.thegnomonworkshop.com/>

Second Prize Totaling MSRP \$2,000

12" 3D Print from Offload Studios www.offloadstudios.com

One Year Subscription to 3D World Magazine www.3dworldmag.com

Winner Chooses 10 Gnomon DVD Training Package <http://www.thegnomonworkshop.com/>

Third Prize Totaling MSRP \$1,000

Wacom Cintiq 12WX www.wacom.com/cintiq/12WX.cfm

Fourth Prize Totaling MSRP \$300

4" 3D Print from Offload Studios www.offloadstudios.com

Runners Up Totaling MSRP \$400

Each finalist not winning one of the above prizes will receive one Standard Edition Book from Ballistic Publishing.

Choose From These Titles:

Exotique 4 (Softcover) [More Info](#)

Matte Painting 2 (Slip Cased) [More Info](#)

Digital Painting 2 (Slip Cased) [More Info](#)

Element 3 (Hard Cover) [More Info](#)

Expose 6 (Soft Cover) [More Info](#)

www.ballisticpublishing.com

Honorable Mention Totaling MSRP \$300

4" 3D Print from Offload Studios www.offloadstudios.com

How the Contest will be Run

Since ZBC is geared toward helping artists learn from each other, this challenge will be a WIP (Work in Progress) challenge.

All entrants will be required to create a new thread in the Action Hero forum, beginning with an original concept sketch as well as the character's "Back Story and Powers" paragraph. If you're not a great sketch artist, don't stress out about that. All you need is enough to convey the overall idea that you're going for. It's meant to be a starting point; not a straightjacket. Your entry will only be judged based on the ZBrush work and end result.

Following posts will then show the ongoing progression of the entry until the finished model is finally posted before contest end. All members of the ZBC community are encouraged to participate in the thread, offering constructive feedback and encouragement. All entrants are also encouraged to participate in the threads of their fellow contestants. (Please be courteous at all times.)

1. All software used in the execution of this contest must be legally licensed to the user or school at which the user is enrolled as student or faculty. No company owned copies are allowed, unless the company is owned by the contestant or permission has been granted by a company officer. The ZBrush trial version may be used to begin your entry, provided that a license is purchased no later than January 30, 2009.
2. ZBrush must be used for the entirety of this challenge. Only a base mesh may be brought in from another application, after which all work (including final render) must be accomplished in ZBrush. You may use any and all ZBrush features, including SubTools, HD Sculpting, PolyPaint and TransPose. (The use of plugins such as TransPose Master and SubTool Master is encouraged. Bonus points will be scored by using ZBrush to create the base mesh as well.)
 - a. Photoshop may be used via ZAppLink, or for post-render work on the finished image. Please note that such post-render work will not be taken into account by the judging panel, although it may influence the popular vote.
3. The thread's title must be: "Action Hero – Hero/Villain Name"
4. The first post in the thread must show a concept sketch of the character, and a one paragraph description of his or her back story, along with a description of primary powers.
5. The first post must also include the artist's full name (first and last).
6. Entries that do not meet requirements 3-5 will be immediately deleted. In such an event, it is permissible to enter again once all entry requirements have been met.
7. Submit your WIP images on a regular basis. This can include test poses, samples of character elements as they're completed, character turnaround movies, etc. Progress updates must be no more than one week apart.
8. It is highly recommended that you participate in the ZBC community by critiquing other challenger's works in the respective threads (be courteous) and responding to the comments of others in your own thread. (This is a requirement for winning the Honorable Mention prize.)
9. Final entry will be in three parts:
 - a. A still render of the posed character.
 - b. A ZBrush turntable movie of the posed character.
http://www.zbrush.info/docs/index.php/Recording_A_Turntable
 - c. A five to ten minute video showing a key phase of the posing process via TransPose.
<http://www.zbrushcentral.com/zbc/showthread.php?t=054270>
10. Submit your final entry before the end of the challenge. Absolutely no late entries will be accepted.
11. Failure to present WIP images and interact with the ZBC community (including other entrants) can result in disqualification, preventing the artist from being included for judging.

After the deadline, all qualified entrants will be judged by our panel of industry experts. These judges will focus on the technical aspects of your work: Does the character look believable? Is the pose dramatic, while also displaying solid form and clean lines of movement? Is ZBrush used to good effect? After judging, the contest will be narrowed to ten finalists.

The ZBC community will then have the opportunity to vote for the winning characters (one vote per member). The ongoing vote tallies will not be made available to the community or participants. The final vote count will only be disclosed at the conclusion of the contest.

Honorable Mention is a special prize awarded for quality of community participation during the challenge. To qualify for Honorable Mention the artist must:

- A. Complete his or her personal entry.
- B. Show a high level of quality participation in his or her entry's thread.
- C. Show a high level of quality participation in the threads of other entrants.

The Honorable Mention winner may be selected from any of the entrants who meet the above criteria, even if that artist's entry is not selected by the judging panel as a finalist. "Quality participation" includes detailed explanations of work done on the entry, as well as a positive and helpful attitude toward other participants. This will be judged solely by the Pixologic staff. All decisions are final.

All winners except Runners Up and Honorable Mention will be required to write tutorial articles for the creation of their characters, accompanied with high resolution work-in-progress stills within two weeks of contest end. These tutorials will then be featured at ZBrushCentral and on the Pixologic website.

Final Submission

Still Image: The final submission must be posted on ZBC in JPG format and no wider than 1000 pixels. (So that it may be posted in your thread with a minimum of horizontal scrolling.) An additional high resolution version of the image may be linked to beneath the ZBC copy. All that is required is a high quality render (done in ZBrush) of your finished model. Additional renders showing areas of detail may also be submitted. Incorporating your character into a scene or doing post-render work is optional, and won't be taken into consideration by the judging panel. (Although it might influence the popular vote if your character is selected as a finalist.)

Turntable Movie: A turntable rendering (of the posed character must be exported from ZBrush. It must be hosted via Screencast, YouTube, or Veoh and embedded within your final entry post by using the appropriate vB Code.

TransPose Movie: Since the main theme of this contest requires the use of ZBrush to dramatically pose your hero, a Screencast, YouTube or Veoh movie showing a key portion of the posing process is required. This video should be five to ten minutes in length. It is up to the artist's best judgment to decide which portion of the posing should be highlighted. Keep in mind that the judging panel will be viewing these movies as examples of your ZBrush expertise! As with the turntable, your posing movie must be embedded in your final entry post via vB Code.

Detailed guidelines and instructions for creation and presentation of the Turntable Movie and TransPose movie on both PC and Mac platforms will be provided no later than two weeks prior to the entry deadline of February 13, 2009.

The finished model must also stand on a small pedestal base. Inanimate elements are allowed on this base if they contribute toward the drama of the finished character's pose, or are necessary to support the character after 3D printing. Because three winning entries will be output via 3D printing, it would be beneficial to keep the format's requirements in mind. **Please note that your model does not have to be built to the following specifications.**

You may modify your model after the contest, if necessary.

- All parts should have some thickness.
- All parts should intersect each other. Nothing should be free-floating.
- All individual objects should be "watertight" (i.e. no holes).
- All normals need to face outward
- Avoid back face crashing through to the front. Clothes-extract with extra thickness to avoid crash through (Turn on double sided to verify).
- The 3D print winner will be required to submit the finished ZTL file to Offload Studios for processing. Keep all sub-tools steps in tact.
- Offload will work with the winning artist to realize their vision using either a texture they provide or an Ambient Occlusion Bake custom texture.
- If you win the 3D print, you will be allowed to make final adjustments to your hero if they will result in a better quality print. For example, if your character has a cape you would be able to thicken or remove that element before sending the model for printing.

Meet the Judges

Pixologic is proud to introduce your panel of industry experts! The following individuals will be judging your entries for their technical merit and success in conveying the contest theme in order to determine the ten finalists.

Zack Petroc www.zackpetroc.com

Zack Petroc has a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Cleveland Institute of Art with a major in sculpture and a dual minor in drawing and digital media. Additionally, he studied anatomy at Case Western Reserve School of Medicine and figure sculpture in Florence, Italy. Zack is currently working as a consulting Art Director and serves on the Art Director's Guild Technology Committee. He recently opened Zack Petroc Studios, which offers a variety of services from concept design to production modeling, and specializes in digital design sculpts for feature film and video games.

Aaron Sims www.theaaronsimscompany.com

Aaron Sims stands out as one of the most innovative and versatile Character Designer's working in films today. Industry insiders revere him for his multi-faceted approach to creature design; audiences become spellbound by Sims' other-worldly creations. Sims' first breakout came when his work attracted the attention of Academy-Award® winning effects artist Rick Baker. Sims collaborated with Baker for the next twelve years; as lead FX artist, he created memorable characters in some of the most popular movies of the 1990s, like Grandma's make-up in *The Nutty Professor* and the 'worm guys' in *Men in Black*.

Sims moved on to work with another Academy-Award® winner, Stan Winston, who encouraged Sims' interest in emerging digital technology. Using high-powered hardware and cutting-edge software, Sims originated a process that forever altered the design of creatures and characters in the film industry. In 2000 Sims demonstrated his process to Steven Spielberg, eventually becoming the head character designer for *Artificial Intelligence: A.I.* Sims vast array of character creations secured his reputation as 3D artist. This exciting time led to Sims' co-founding and heading Stan Winston Digital where Sims continued to push the envelope with films like *Constantine*, *Terminator 3*, Spielberg's *War of the Worlds* and Tim Burton's *Big Fish*.

Sims' pioneering 3D design process significantly shaped the development of industry tools and education, as well as pushing the envelope of character design.

With the same pioneering spirit that led Sims to embrace digital technology, Sims struck out on his own and formed The Aaron Sims Company. Helming the design of creatures for films like *Day the Earth Stood Still*, *The Golden Compass*, *I Am Legend*, *Incredible Hulk*, and the *Clash of the Titans* Sims continues to generate creatures that both thrill and amaze. In 2007 Sims co-founded White Rock Lake Productions with business partner and long-time friend John Norris, an enterprise seeking to nurture new talent in the fields of producing, directing and writing. Together they have already produced several award-winning films.

Ian Joyner www.ianjoyner.com

Ian Joyner is a freelance character artist residing in Culver City, California. Over the years he has worked on games, commercials and feature films at Blur Studio, and recently ventured out as a freelance character artist for clients all over the world. His work can be seen throughout various projects including (but not limited to) "Bioshock", "Halo Wars" (upcoming), "Golden Axe" (upcoming), "Marvel: Ultimate Alliance", "Hellgate: London", "Jericho", "Brothers in Arms", "Warhammer: Age of Reckoning" and "Rise of Legends" to name a few. Film work includes "Rocky Balboa", "Aliens of the Deep", and Blur Studio's short film "A Gentlemen's Duel". Other work includes tech demonstrations for XSI's Face Robot, training material (DVD's and classes) for Gnomon Workshop, and promotional material for a large variety of projects.

Kris Costa www.antropus.com

An award-winning Brazilian CG artist, Kris Costa has participated as character animator, texture artist and/or digital modeler in productions such "The Barnyard", "Pan's Labyrinth", "The Mist", "Evan Almighty" among others. His tools of choice are ZBrush, Maya and Photoshop, used both for his personal and professional work. Kris had won the 3D Grand Prize in two of CGTalk's Challenges: "MachineFlesh" and "Master and Servant" -- the biggest CG challenges of this kind. He used ZBrush extensively in both challenges. "Antropus" has his works, texts and interviews published in several websites, books and magazines. He has also created a great many free tutorials to help beginners and advanced users learning modeling, texturing, shading etc.

Magdalena Dadela www.mdadela.com

Magdalena Dadela is a character artist from Poland and a Vancouver Film School graduate. She is currently part of Ubisoft's Digital Arts studio in Montreal, Canada, where she has contributed to various cinematic projects on titles like "Assassin's Creed", "Tom Clancy's End War" and "Far Cry 2". Her specialties include high resolution character modeling and sculpting, as well as texturing and character concept art. Her biggest passions and influences are art, film and literature

David Giraud www.mojette.deviantart.com/gallery/.com

David Giraud was Born in Paris France in 1975, He spent the last 11 years working in the video game industry. he originally began as a traditional artist before specializing in computer graphics. He worked at various positions from concept artist to level artist to animator and finally became a sculptor/concept artist,

The first big projects he worked on at Ubisoft was the original Splinter Cell, working as a character texture artist then became the lead Character artist/concept artist for Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time.

He moved to Denmark in 2003 for two years to work on Hitman Contracts and became lead on the characters of Hitman blood money from Eidos.

He's been back at Ubisoft Montreal since 2005 and worked on Assassin's creed as a Senior character artist He is currently working on James Cameron's Avatar the game as a sculptor/concept artist. David's focus is on character concepts, High-Res and Low-Res characters including modeling, Texturing, shaders, lights and posing, he is also involved in other areas of expertise from Cinematic Characters to marketing images and recently 3d printing.

Alex Alvarez www.alexalvarez.com

Alex is founder and director of The Gnomon Workshop and of the Gnomon School of Visual Effects in Hollywood. Having dedicated the last decade to educating students and professional artists around the world, Alex has helped change the face of computer graphics and design education. He has been published in industry magazines, websites and books - plus he has taught courses at several major trade conferences. Alex is president of the Los Angeles Maya Users Group and sits on the Advisory Boards for Highend3D.com and CGsociety. He continues to work on personal and professional projects, recently as a creature development artist on the James Cameron film *Avatar*. Prior to Gnomon, Alex worked for Alias|Wavefront as a consultant and trainer for studios in the Los Angeles area. Alex is an alumnus of the Art Center College of Design and the University of Pennsylvania.

Cesar Dacol Jr. www.cesar-dacol-jr.com

Cesar Dacol Jr. has worked in the film industry for nearly 20 years, having started his career in the makeup effects industry and transitioning to computers effects in the mid 90's. With a background in anatomy and traditional sculpting, he quickly adapted to the 3D world of computers. For the past 5 years Cesar has worked primarily as Lead and Modeling Supervisor, contributing to many feature films such as *Journey to the center of the earth 3D*, *300*, *Barnyard* and *Fantastic Four*. He is presently freelancing CHARACTER DESIGNS and DEVELOPMENT for the entertainment industry.

Contest Official Rules and Deadlines

1. One thread per artist. (Should you change your concept, the new work must continue within the original thread.)
2. No team entries are permitted.
3. Employees of sponsors may participate in the WIP phase of the challenge, but are not eligible for the contest. Such participation must be labeled as "Non-Entry" in each post in which a WIP image is shown.
4. **The emphasis of the challenge is on the use of ZBrush.** No more than a base mesh may be imported from another application, and the use of such a mesh must be disclosed. If a base mesh is used, the thread must contain an image of what the model looked like upon import into ZBrush. This allows viewers to then understand the use of ZBrush from that point.
5. Pre-fabricated models are permitted for this base mesh. Keep in mind, however, that the contest is being judged by industry experts and your peers. Your character will achieve better impact if you create all elements from scratch than if you resort to using anything that is pre-fabricated.
6. The use of copyrighted elements is not allowed.
7. Any character deemed to be the same or similar (in whole or in part) to one currently published by yourself or any other artist will be disqualified.
8. Any image deemed to contain content that depicts explicit acts that are overtly violent, sexual, cruel or brutal will be disqualified. Such entries may, at Pixologic's sole discretion, be closed during the WIP phases of the contest.
9. The challenge runs eight weeks, from December 19, 2008 through midnight on February 13, 2009.. The final post for your entry must be made no later than February 13, 2009. No late entries will be accepted.
10. Community involvement is a key aspect of this competition. For that reason, entrants are not allowed to wait until the last weeks of the contest before entering. The deadline for making your initial post is three weeks following the start of the contest: January 9, 2009.
11. Panelist judging runs for one week: February 14, 2009 through February 20, 2009.
12. Community judging runs for one week: February 21, 2009 through February 27, 2009.
13. Winners will be announced on Monday, March 2, 2009.

14. All dates are based on the U.S. Pacific Time zone. Entry and voting deadlines are at 11:59 pm on the date in question.
15. To be eligible for prizes, all winning contestants must provide detailed tutorial articles for the Pixologic website. These articles must be provided to Pixologic between the dates of March 2, 2009 and March 16, 2009. Instructions for their delivery will be made available to the winners at time. Failure to submit a tutorial article by the deadline will result in your prize being awarded to the next runner up.
16. The sponsors of this contest may use final or winning artwork for marketing purposes in the context of the challenge, and agree to clearly credit the artist if any such artwork is used.
17. All entries are the property of the respective artists. Pixologic may use submitted artwork for the purpose of promoting this or future contests. If any artist's work is used in this manner, the artist will be credited.

Pixologic reserves the right at its sole discretion to disqualify any entry that does not adhere to the spirit of ZBrushCentral and these rules. Pixologic also reserves the right to suspend, adjust the dates, modify or cancel the contest, including these rules, in any manner and at its sole discretion. This may be done with or without prior notice. If you do not agree with any of the above terms and conditions, please do not enter the Action Hero contest.

Above all, have fun! We look forward to seeing what your creations in action.