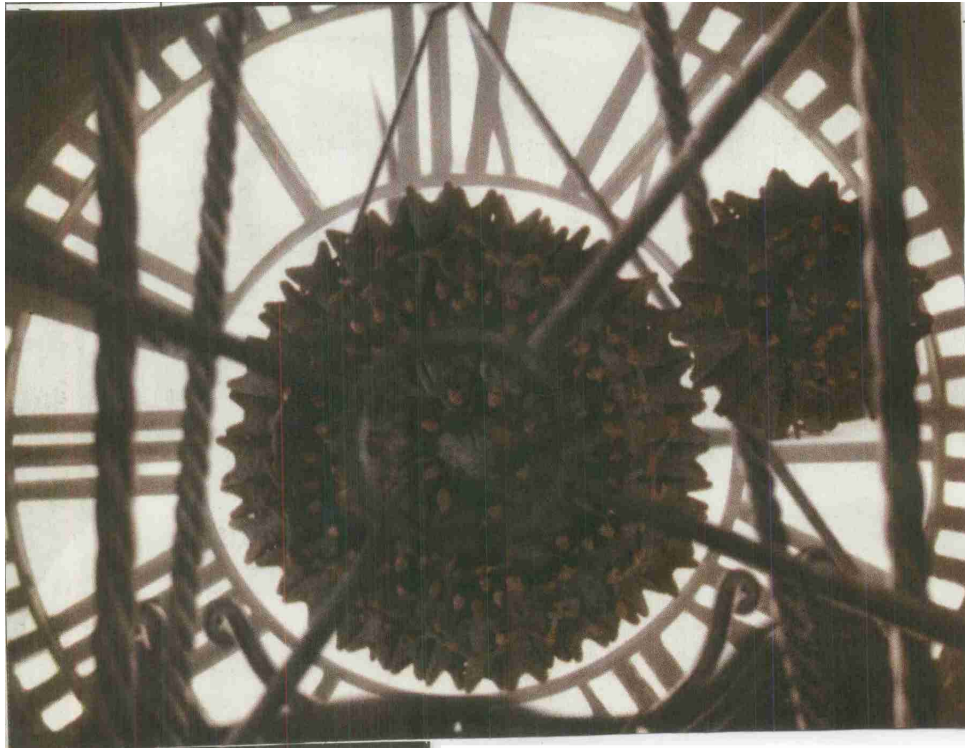


# Ad factor

It is not only films that use computer generated (CG) images, ad films too use a lot of it, the latest being the Himani Fast Relief advertisement that has won several accolades. **Deepal Dass**, VFX Compositing team leader, Visual Computing Labs, Tata Elxsi speaks about the effort involved



**▲ Clock after pasting human formation**

**Tell us about the conceptualisation of the ad.**

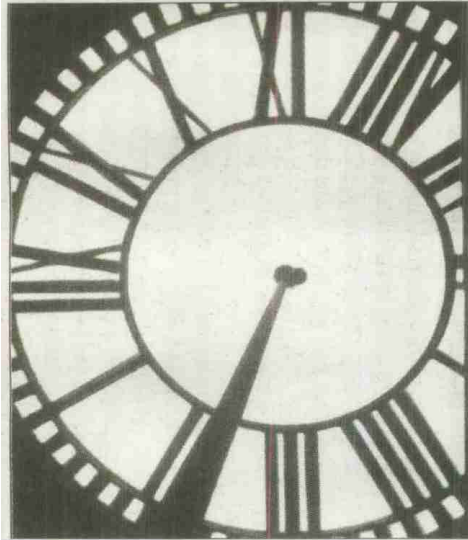
Creative directors Ashish Khajanchi and Prassana Sankhe came up with an idea, which director Ram Madhvani executed. The gist of the commercial is with man going through rigorous activities round-the-clock and when the body succumbs to pain by way of fatigue, sprain etc, Himani Fast Relief is an instant cure.

**What was the first step you did after the script was narrated to you?**

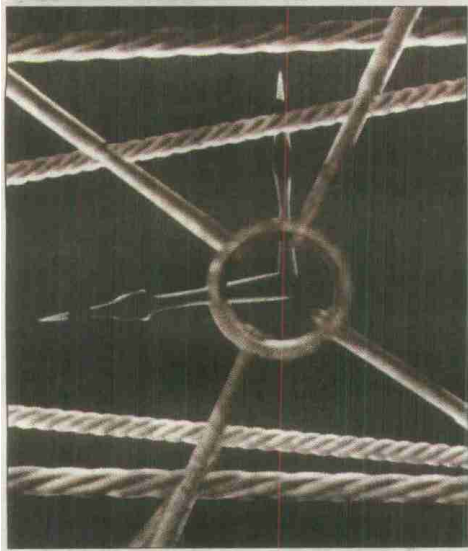
After the story was narrated, we broke it down into different zones of location and activity involved, after which a meticulously-planned shoot of the foreground and background was carried out as per the sequences that summed up the story. The discussions were with the creative teams of Equinox and Tata Elxsi Ltd- VCL involving our VFX supervisor and Creative Director.

**How was the ad shot?**

Human characters were shot against a green screen inside a studio and rotoscoped (a process where the foreground layers are isolated from that of the background) as



▲ A Clock



▲ Pistons of a clock



▲ Human formation shot on a turntable

separated layers, that is (a) human formation (live), (b) the background and the bus stop which were digital stills treated together and (c) different vehicle parts like the wheels, chassis, bonnet etc. Several elements like the front glass (windscreen) and the back-and-side-panes of glass were actually used live and rigged and embedded into the human formations. The bus on which you see people crowded, was in fact pulled manually with the help of rigs (Which were motorised to achieve constant speed levels); which were digitally removed later. Also, the human formations were held



Deepal Dass

**The research and the pre-production process took six months while the rehearsals of 200 people who participated took two months**

And how were the human formations on the big wheel done? Human formations were put on a motorised turntable with the camera static on top. The human element (after stabilising for camera

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shakes) was later composited which also had various CG elements like needles and the pistons of the clock to show the internal working whereas the main back-plate of the inside of the clock was a Matte Painting.

**How was the factory sequence shot?**

In fact the factory sequence was the most challenging sequence where again human formations were put on specially-designed moving/rotating rigs while the camera was moved using motion control technique front and back.

Also in some cases we had machine rigs which had to be shot standing up while the others could be shot only lying down. The background of the factory was a series of digitally-stitched still frames, which when put together along with the machines gave a feel of a post dolly movement of camera. All this had to be tracked and multiplied to show an assembly line of machines. Also we had to design additional Sfx elements like CG smoke and sparks on the machines.

**And the CG shots?**

In fact there were 2 shots that involved computer graphics. Shot 1 involved a car forklift which had to be generated to show humans transporting heavy boxes. CG was used as it was difficult to shoot that part live. The next shot showed a long shot of heavy-duty cranes lifting heavy load in the sea and the location was Mumbai's Bandra-Worli sealink. For this shot live action plates of the sea and just the base of the cranes were shot and hence the main crane arm and the cables lifting load were computer-generated. The real triumph was in making the CGI elements blend well with the backgrounds which we believe we achieved.

Moreover, there were a lot of fill-in shots showing vehicular movement.

**What kind of vehicles did you use?**

We used specific vehicles like Mumbai's taxis (Premiere Padmini), Mumbai's buses, heavy lorries and various passenger cars. These were shot live on the shooting floor and later duplicated on digitally-shot plates of Mumbai roads by the help of VFX. The real beauty of this sequence was in the manner in which the formations were rigged to achieve the look of specific cars especially the famous Mumbai taxi. Also in the shot depicting the traffic jam, we also had a cow sitting right in the middle of the jam actually causing it. Again it was shot separately and put into the jam by us. The traffic jam by itself was a composite of different layers of car rigs of humans shot separately.

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