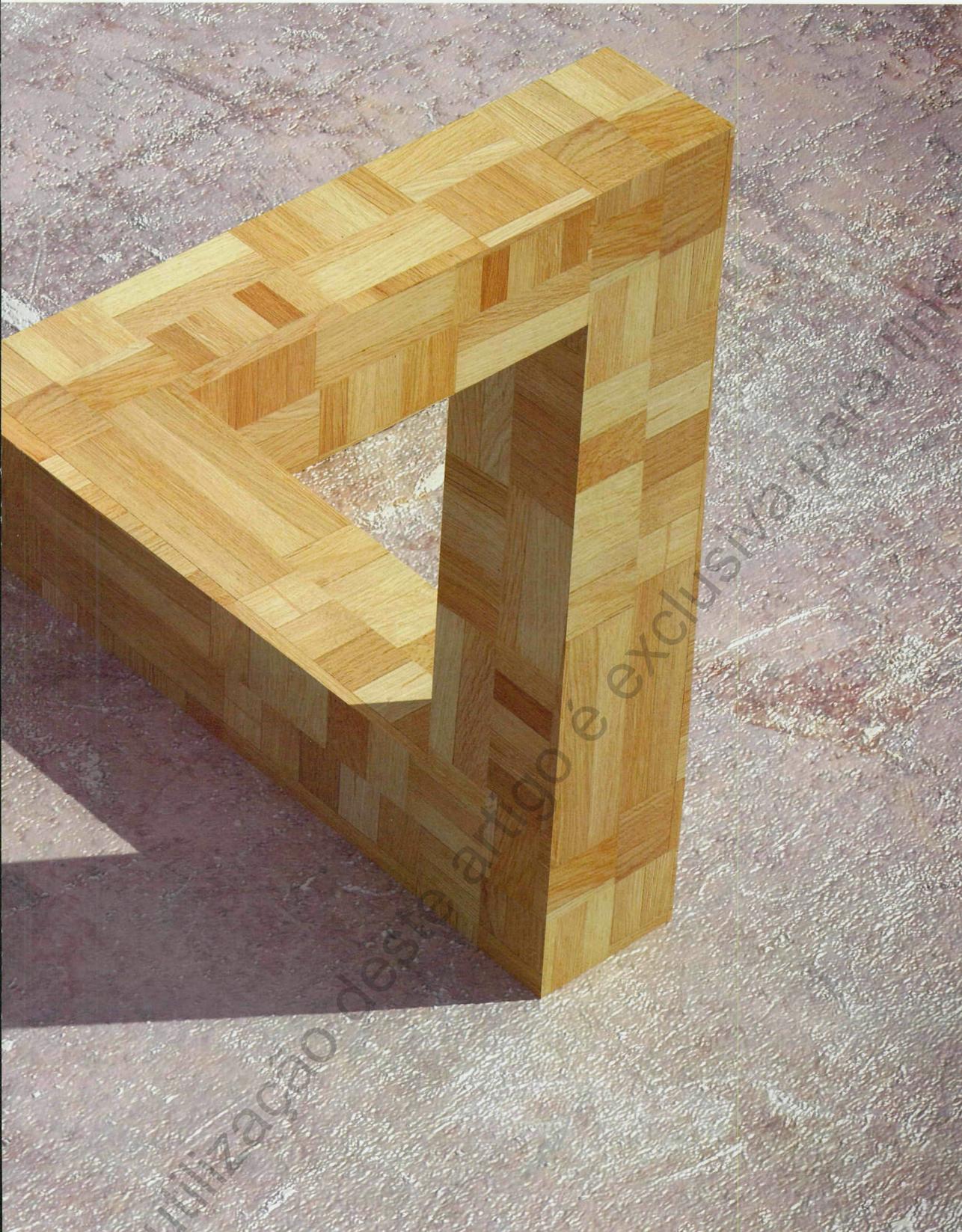


FX: the art of illusion

CGI is a great problem-solving tool for art directors and designers but, for this issue, we decided to turn that on its head and instead invite leading CGI studios to create problems rather than tackle them. Five studios were invited to create a puzzle or visual problem for readers to wrestle with. It could be a so-called 'impossible image' in the style of Escher, a modern take on a traditional puzzle (as with Farmhouse's Canary Wharf crossword) or, well whatever they chose. We also gave each studio the option of creating an additional moving image piece based on their idea which will be featured on our upcoming iPad app. The results, along with details of how each image was created, are featured on the following pages. First up is TigerX.Studio's take on the impossible triangle





*The Impossible Triangle,
by Tiger X.Studio*

"I've long been fascinated by the original 'impossible triangle' even since childhood, and would draw them often," says TigerX.Studio's Dougie Cross. "Given this brief I thought the time had come to re-create this unique shape, but add in the complexity of making it look 'real'. As it developed, we further complicated it by deciding that the inclusion of a pseudo plausible shadow would be a 'next generation' addition to the riddle. The resulting high-resolution image uses no post-production to create the illusion, the entire piece was crafted from scratch in 3D." Cross's studio also created an animated version of the shape that reveals how it is constructed (which will be featured on CR's forthcoming iPad app). "The key to making the image able to be animated was that the view should work without any post-production manipulation to form either the continuous corners of the seemingly solid object, or the shadow," Cross explains. "This was achieved by pin-point vertex alignment and a good bit of trial and error to achieve the ideal balance of soft shadow at the tip. The object appears simple, but in fact is a complex distorting shape that counters natural perspective to fool the viewer into believing an approximate 'axonometric' [ie pertaining to a line about which a body rotates] view is a real shape," Cross says.

tigerx.co.uk



Crossword: Recom Farmhouse

“This image was inspired by the desire to merge urban landscapes with a classic puzzle,” says Farmhouse’s Christoph Bolten. “In the opaque and impregnable landscape of Canary Wharf we found a strong resemblance to the

financial system itself being so complex and difficult to understand that we decided to turn buildings of the financial institutions themselves into a riddle. We further developed this concept together with photographer Holger Pooten who also shot the backgrounds for us.

In terms of integration between photographic elements and CG elements this project wasn’t particularly challenging as it mainly consisted of finding some cryptic financial expressions, making up the questions, creating the billboard and

crossword facade in CG and compositing everything together.”

Art direction and compositing: Davide Russo; 3D: Kristian Turner and Dinh Nguyen; Photography: Holger Pooten; Creative direction: Christoph Bolten. recomfarmhouse.com



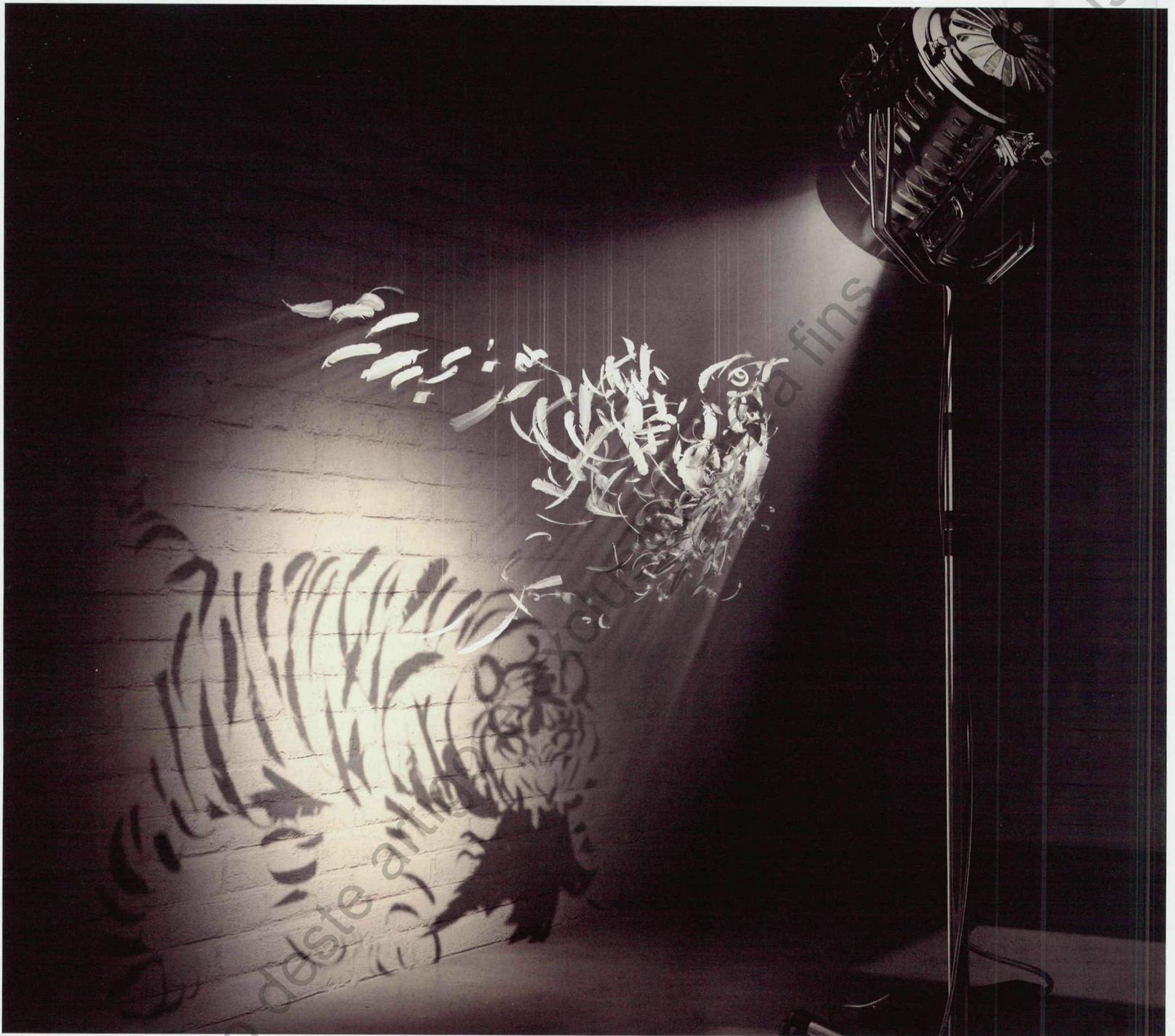
1. 8mm Film Camera
2. Fire Extinguisher;
3. Horse; 4. Speed Boat;
5. Road Scraper; 6. Hair Dryer; 6. Flatsoo;
7. Wheelie Bin; 8. Traffic
- Cone; 9. Basketball
- Backboard & Hoop;
10. Vulcan Bomber;
11. Cow

Skull, by Saddington Baynes
CG artist Mark Jackson explains the making of this image: "Very early on I decided I wanted to create a skull out of a mishmash of bits and pieces, my influence coming from artists who exploit the human brain's ability to make the familiar from the unfa-

miliar. We're very interested in neuroaesthetics here at Saddington Baynes - being aware of the way your brain processes imagery. One of the most significant forms your brain searches out is the human face. The process was one of finding objects that 'worked' within the skull struc-

ture, trying to create juxtapositions of the boring with the exciting or absurd. The horse rearing up and the jet are offset by the wheelie bins, traffic cones and cow. The lighting and shaders were a no-brainer: I wanted the skull to look menacing. Each object needed to be equally

defined by the light source; no one object could stand out or it would ruin the effect, so I chose a matte black with three area lights in a Y shape to pick up all those forms." There are 11 different elements in the image: can you spot them all? saddingtonbaynes.com



Stalking Tiger, by Happy Finish

One image creates another: Happy Finish's image was inspired by the work of Shigeo Fukuda and Cornelia Parker. "As light and shadow are fundamental to any CG or photographed image, this was the perfect

starting point for creating the illusion," says retoucher, Chris Roome. Using the feathers proved to be a creative test for CGI artist Simon Allan as it is always trickier to accomplish realistic representations of organic material. Drawing from references to Fukuda and Parker,

Allan created and lit the scene in 3Ds Max. "CG is a great tool for creating shadow play as the lighting replicated in the CG scene and the shadows it creates are faithful representations of how the shadows would be cast in a real life installation," explains Allan, "By looking through the viewpoint of

the CG light source each feather could be moved in order to ensure the shadows fall in the right place to create the tiger's stripes. The challenge was always going to be creating the face, as this requires moving smaller feathers by tiny degrees to form perfect lines." happyfinish.co.uk



Maze, by Taylor James

Taylor James' in-house creative lead, Barry Craig, explains the development of this complex image: "In the 1950s mathematician Roger Penrose described the Penrose Triangle as 'impossibility in its purest form'. Sixty years later we are still as

mesmerised by this shape as ever. It seemed only right that when creating an illusion of our own we should begin by looking at the Penrose triangle. Starting with three Penrose triangles as a base, we have designed a maze that can be viewed from multiple angles to create new paths

that seemingly appear out of nowhere as the magazine is rotated through various orientations. We have included two Taylor James mascots to mark the beginning and end point of the maze, add some character and encourage reader interaction. Using CGI was both a challenge

and a huge timesaver; once the initial lo-res plans had been drawn up the test came in making the object exist in a real 3D space. Once the technical issues were solved by our R&D team, we had creative freedom to play with shape, style, material and colour." taylorjames.com

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