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HOW TO MAKE A 22-MINUTE MOVIE FOR UNDER \$5,000!

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FEATURE



BUDGET ANIMATION THE MAKING OF KAZE, GHOST WARRIOR

Most animators dream of having the time and money to realise their personal projects. Stop dreaming and start doing, says Timothy Albee. In this article, the former Disney animator and LightWave expert explains the production tricks that enabled him to make a feature-quality 22-minute film for just \$5,000

Almost everyone who has a love of animation as an art form harbors at least one story they long to create. Most of these people are quietly biding their time, waiting for a 'good opportunity' to make their dream a reality.

They're waiting to be able to afford the new mega-beast computer system, the new 3D graphics accelerator, the too-hip-for-words animation software. Or perhaps they're waiting to save up enough money to take the time off work to be able to focus only on making their film.

But if you don't make a commitment to making a thing happen, it never will. And that's exactly what I'm hoping to demonstrate with my own new film, *Kaze, Ghost Warrior*.

Kaze, Ghost Warrior is what I hope will be a 'proof of concept' for a complete re-writing of the rules of

independent animated filmmaking. Its 22 minutes of NTSC-resolution, feature-quality animation were done by one person, on two consumer-end PC computers, in six months of production, and on a budget of just \$5,000.

The film was made, in part, to blow away the idea that feature-quality CGI needs to be expensive. It doesn't. Making an animated feature isn't brain surgery; it's just a matter of taking the existing tools, and putting them together in ways that get the most done with the least amount of effort.

One of my hopes is that *KGW* proves to the people with the money to invest in animated film-making that a 'micro-team' of dedicated artists, telling a story they have always wanted to tell, is a much safer investment than being a tiny piece of a \$200 million film. If *KGW* was made on \$5,000, just think what could be done with \$5 million: a sum that even a low-run film could make back in its opening weekend!