



**HPA Announces Winner of  
Judges Award for Creativity and Innovation  
*The Mill BLACKBIRD® Chosen by Blue Ribbon Judging Panel***

29 August 2016 (Los Angeles, CA) - The Hollywood Professional Association (HPA) has awarded its prestigious Judges Award for Creativity and Innovation to The Mill BLACKBIRD®. Created by The Mill, the BLACKBIRD® is the first fully adjustable car rig that creates photoreal CG cars. The coveted honor will be bestowed November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at the 11th annual HPA Awards gala at the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles, CA.

The HPA Judges Award for Creativity and Innovation was conceived to recognize companies and individuals who have demonstrated excellence, whether in the development of workflow and process to support creative storytelling or in technical innovation. A jury of industry experts selected The Mill BLACKBIRD® during the recent presentation and judging session in Los Angeles.

Developed by The Mill over a three-year period, the BLACKBIRD® was designed to address problems faced by the advertising industry when creating content for automobile commercials: car availability, model revisions, limited access to locations, and footage that can quickly become outdated. The Mill BLACKBIRD® is a car rig that can be shot at any time, in any location, without the need to rely on a physical car. The length, width, wheels, and suspension of the rig can be adjusted or swapped to mimic almost any car in development or on the market. Its electric motor can be programmed

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to simulate various driving experiences, and The Mill BLACKBIRD® packs a camera array and 3D laser scanner to generate a virtual model of the surrounding environment for even more realistic CG renderings. Beyond its advertising applications, the BLACKBIRD® technology enables many design and creative disciplines to test concepts long before manufacture.

Al Thompson, Executive Vice President - The Mill comments: "We are thrilled to be awarded the highly sought after Creativity and Innovation honor at this year's HPA Awards; being recognized and awarded for The Mill Blackbird's pioneering technological creativity is a huge achievement for us. The Mill Blackbird® has taken about three years to concept, design and engineer and it really has been a wonderful example of what you can achieve when you get the best minds in the business together. It was the genuine needs of our advertising clients that made the Blackbird® happen and their constant support and input has shaped its design and made it the game changing innovation that it has become."

Seth Hallen, HPA President, said, "The Judges Award for Creativity and Innovation has opened the door for us to honor excellence in ideas and technologies that fall outside other HPA Awards categories. The Mill BLACKBIRD®, a production and design solution, is a perfect entry for the Creativity and Innovation Award that illustrates why the category was conceived. The Mill has developed an incredibly exciting technology that serves creatives as well as automotive designers that empowers the creative process. This year, the entries for Creativity and Innovation were highly competitive, and we applaud all who entered."

In addition to the Judges Award for Creativity and Innovation, the HPA Awards will recognize excellence in 12 craft categories including color grading, editing, sound and visual effects. Other special awards will be presented to Michelle Munson who has been named as recipient of the Charles S. Swartz Award, Herb Dow, 2016 HPA Lifetime Achievement Award honoree, and winners of the Engineering Excellence Award.

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Tickets for the 11<sup>th</sup> annual HPA Awards are on sale now and can be purchased online at <http://www.hpaawards.com>. More information about the HPA Awards and the Hollywood Professional Association can be found at [www.hpaonline.com](http://www.hpaonline.com). Blackmagic Design, NAB Show, Avid, Company 3, Deluxe, Dolby, EFilm, Encore, IMAX, SohoNet, and Sony are among the sponsors of the 2016 HPA Awards. Sponsorship and congratulatory advertising opportunities remain available, contact Mary Vinton at [mvinton@smpte.org](mailto:mvinton@smpte.org).

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*Video: [www.themill.com/portfolio/3002/the-blackbird%C2%AE](http://www.themill.com/portfolio/3002/the-blackbird%C2%AE)*

#### **About the HPA® Awards**

The HPA Awards were created to foster awareness and recognize the achievements of the individuals and companies that have contributed to groundbreaking technologies and creative excellence within the professional media content industry, and build involvement in the Hollywood Professional Alliance. The HPA is a partner of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers® (SMPTE®). Information about the HPA Awards is available at <http://www.hpaonline.com>. The HPA Awards will be presented with generous support from Foundation Members and sponsors.

#### **About the Hollywood Professional Association**

Hollywood Professional Association (HPA) serves the professional community of businesses and individuals who provide expertise, support, tools and the infrastructure for the creation and finishing of motion pictures, television, commercials, digital media and other dynamic media content. Through their partnership with the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers® (SMPTE®), the leader in the advancement of the art, science and craft of the image, sound, and metadata ecosystem, the HPA continues to extend its support of the community it represents. Information about the HPA is available at [www.hpaonline.com](http://www.hpaonline.com).

#### **About the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers® (SMPTE®)**

Winner of an Oscar® and multiple Emmy® Awards, the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers® (SMPTE®) is a global leader in the advancement of the art, science, and craft of the image, sound, and metadata ecosystem. A professional membership association that is internationally recognized and accredited, SMPTE advances moving-imagery education and engineering across the communications, technology, media, and entertainment industries. For a century, SMPTE has published the SMPTE Motion Imaging Journal and developed more than 800 standards, recommended practices, and engineering guidelines. Nearly 7,000 members - motion-imaging executives, engineers, creative and technology professionals, researchers, scientists, educators, and students - who meet in Sections worldwide, sustain the Society. Through the Society's partnership with Hollywood Professional Association (HPA®), this membership is complemented by the professional community of businesses and individuals who provide the expertise, support, tools, and infrastructure for the creation and finishing of motion pictures, television programs, commercials, digital media, and other dynamic media content. Information on joining SMPTE is available at <http://www.smpte.org/join>.

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