

BODIES of LIGHT

CANAL+ SPORT Marries Art & Science In Rebrand

With more than 10.5 million subscribers in France and the brand of CANAL+, CANAL+ SPORT, CANAL+ CINEMA, CANAL+ DECALE and CANAL+ FAMILY on the table, the stakes were high as the rebrand marked the first entirely new look for the portfolio since the network launched 25 years ago.

To underline the innovative nature of the channel both in artistic and production terms, CANAL+ sought to create a completely new trend in television graphics by combining abstract and video art for their new on-air look. CANAL+ reached out to London-based creative agency devilfish for a complete network rebrand, including their sport channel, CANAL+ SPORT.

The artistic idents devilfish created for CANAL+ SPORT in particular got creative tongues wagging, and executives involved with the campaign broke down the elements that went into the shoot for Brief.

Richard Holman served as creative director for the shoot, with Lucy Hunt producing, Dan Eatock art directing and Grant Gilbert as design director.

A Slice in Time

Literally tapping into time and space to get the job done, devilfish utilized “motion time-slice” for a look that was completely unique to CANAL+ SPORT viewers.

Motion time-slice is a new technique of abstracting kinetic energy in order to generate dramatic and beautiful movement trails from performers and athletes. The fluid motion of a boxer landing the knockout punch, the leap of a sprinter clearing the hurdles and the whip of a jockey in the heat of the race were all turned from science to art using the technique.

“There’s a great beauty in the movement of athletes,” said Richard Holman, founder of devilfish. “Our aim was to do something different from conventional sports promotion by capturing this beauty in way people haven’t seen before.”

Eighty is Enough

To accomplish this, devilfish placed athletes on the stage and surrounded them with 80 cameras on a single rig that curved around the scene to record their every movement. Working with Swiss-based Digital Air, the cameras were offset to snare two seconds of live action using Pentax lenses. Forty of them were set to shoot sharp images, while the other half absorbed longer exposures.

Athletes then performed as the curvature of the rig holding the lenses provided an around-the-body movement, which was taken into DS and treated with fluid-motion software. Brightly colored lights bathed the performer and weaved in and out during the shoot in order to create streaks of colors in the final product.

“This is a great way for an end user to be able to replay a sports moment and really break down the physical movement and separate the time and space,” said Mike Drake, camera array operator for the shot.

Artistic Energy

Once the footage was edited together, the result set the channel apart from the look of most sports networks. With the time-freezing shots and emphasis on the fluid beauty of each athlete’s movement, devilfish realized CANAL+’s goal of bringing artistic form to branding.

“This branding stands out because of its simplicity. The emphasis is on form and construction and not on content,” said Christian Gierycz, artistic director of CANAL+.

“What is important is the mode of communication with the viewer,” he said. “The degree of abstraction of the image and the sound give the new CANAL+ branding even more emotion.” ■

devilfish

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