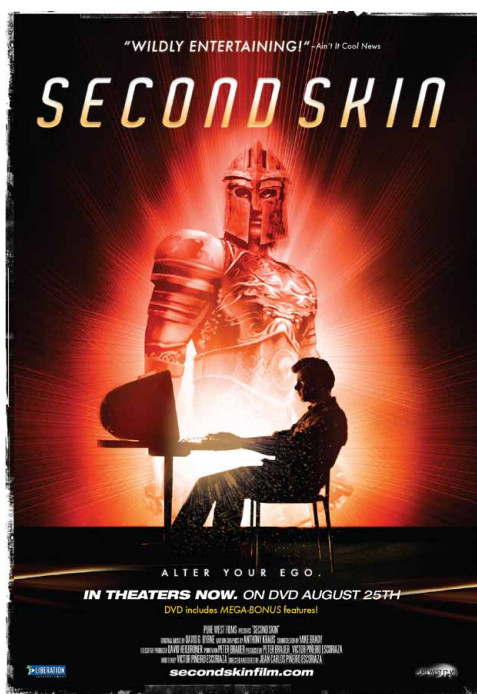




Real-world success

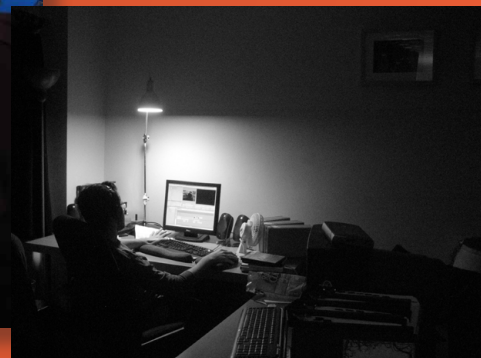
Indie filmmakers unveil fascinating story of virtual worlds in documentary *Second Skin*, created using Adobe® Creative Suite® 4 Production Premium software



Juan Carlos Pineiro Escoriaza was born to tell stories. He began making short family films as a child, charting a course that led him to a degree in filmmaking from the New York University (NYU) Tisch School of the Arts. He ultimately co-founded Pure West, a digital creative agency, along with Writer and COO Victor Pineiro; Producer and CFO Peter Brauer; and Designer and Chief Strategy Officer Chris Baily.

Pure West's latest stellar accomplishment is *Second Skin*, a feature-length documentary directed by Pineiro Escoriaza about computer gamers and the virtual worlds they inhabit. The film won rave reviews during the opening night slot at the famed South by Southwest (SXSW) Film Festival.

Second Skin director Juan Carlos Pineiro Escoriaza relied on Adobe Creative Suite 4 Production Premium software to create and market the film, including suite component applications Adobe Premiere Pro, After Effects, Photoshop, Illustrator, and Soundbooth, as well as Adobe Media Encoder.



“With the newest version of Adobe Creative Suite Production Premium, all of the applications are more tightly integrated than ever. The result is a more advanced, streamlined workflow.”

Juan Carlos Pineiro Escoriaza, co-founder, Pure West, director, *Second Skin*

Rave reviews

Since the initial debut at SXSW, *Second Skin* has been picked up by Liberation Entertainment, a hot feature film and TV distribution company that also distributed *Tokyo!* by Michel Gondry and *Rage* by Sally Potter. Pure West’s solution of choice for creating and marketing its films is Adobe Creative Suite 4 Production Premium software.

“With the newest version of Adobe Creative Suite Production Premium, all of the applications are more tightly integrated than ever,” says Pineiro Escoriaza. “The result is a more advanced, streamlined workflow.”

A fascinating glimpse into virtual worlds

Second Skin takes an intimate, disturbing look at computer gamers whose lives have been transformed by Massively Multiplayer Online games (MMOs) such as *World of Warcraft*, *Second Life*, and *Everquest*. According to the press notes for the film, 50 million people worldwide participate in MMOs, and half of them consider themselves addicted.

Second Skin introduces viewers to the real people who populate these online virtual worlds—couples who have fallen in love without meeting, disabled players whose lives have been given new purpose, those struggling with addiction, wealthy online entrepreneurs—all living in a world that doesn’t quite exist.

Pineiro Escoriaza says the inspiration for the film came from personal experience. His brother Victor received the game *Star Wars Galaxies* as a gift. While initially interested, Victor and Juan Carlos soon became tired of it. However, their friend became obsessed with the interactive game that is based on the *Star Wars* movie series and involves virtual galaxies, characters, and towns. In real life, the friend was planning his wedding, but he took the game so seriously that it became almost as if he was living a double life.

The brothers were intrigued with the idea that virtual worlds and economies exist where players buy, sell, and trade virtual items with virtual money—but also where the line between true reality and virtual reality can become blurred. To develop the film, Pure West visited conventions and spoke with people involved in the world of interactive gaming. They also met with experts. It took two years to complete the film.

Melding the real world with virtual reality

Pineiro Escoriaza shot the film with Brauer on a Panasonic AG-DVX100 camera and captured the video directly into Adobe Premiere® Pro CS4. To capture the in-game sequences from MMOs like *Second Life*, Pineiro Escoriaza used Fraps



Pure West Films' *Second Skin* explores the world of computer gamers whose lives have been transformed by Massively Multiplayer Online games (MMOs) such as *World of Warcraft*, *Second Life*, and *Everquest*. The "Fort Wayne Boys" are a group of such gamer friends from Fort Wayne, Indiana featured in the film. Each of their lives has been altered by gaming. One met the others in a virtual world and moved across the United States to live with them. And in the midst of real-life events like getting married and having children, some take their gaming identity so seriously it's almost as if they are living double lives.

software to record in-game video. He recorded the game sequences at maximum frame rate and then downsized the files to 740x480 to edit the clips.

He used Adobe After Effects® CS4 and a wide variety of filters and plug-ins to create effects. He also created the *World of Warcraft* sections for the film using After Effects to composite the characters against a green screen. For the most complex machinima, Pineiro Escoriaza collaborated with digital effects animator Eric Fullerton and motion graphics artist Anthony Kraus. Together, they created titles and graphics that seamlessly integrated the real world with the virtual space using Adobe Illustrator® CS4 and Photoshop® CS4 Extended and animated them using both After Effects and Adobe Premiere Pro CS4. He took advantage of Dynamic Link throughout the project to round trip files between Adobe Premiere Pro and After Effects.

"My favorite feature by far in Creative Suite 4 Production Premium is Dynamic Link," says Pineiro Escoriaza. "It saves so much valuable time by eliminating intermediate rendering, and helps me stay in the creative flow."

For the final edit of the film, Pineiro Escoriaza worked closely with sound designer Mike Brady. They extracted the sound from the Adobe Premiere Pro CS4 timeline and edited and sweetened it using Adobe Soundbooth® CS4 software. Any updates appeared automatically in the Adobe Premiere Pro timeline.

"Dynamic Link makes it so easy to edit sound by moving seamlessly between Adobe Premiere Pro and Soundbooth. Now, whether I'm working with a sound professional or editing sound on my own, I have a more efficient way to mix and edit sound," says Pineiro Escoriaza.

For Pineiro Escoriaza and Kraus, the biggest challenge was fine-tuning the transitions between the virtual scenes from the games and the real-world footage. Going between Illustrator, Photoshop, Adobe Premiere Pro, and After Effects, they were able to finesse the 2D and 3D graphics and smooth out the transitions from the virtual worlds into real space.

"For *Second Skin*, one of the hurdles was creating seamless transitions that didn't seem jarring to viewers," says Pineiro Escoriaza. "During the process, we had to do a lot of finessing of the game graphics, integrating them into the Adobe Premiere Pro timeline, and generally moving back and forth between the applications. The integration among applications in Production Premium really streamlined this part of the editing process."

Grassroots marketing

According to Pineiro Escoriaza, the real trick to documentary filmmaking is not only creating a great film, but also making sure people hear about it. Pure West created a website and blog early on to help develop a groundswell of attention. The film today has a cult-like following, fueled by ardent fans on social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter and broad online distribution on sites like YouTube, SPIKE.com, and blip.tv. To

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Challenge

- Create exceptional documentary about Massively Multiplayer Online games
- Meld virtual and real-world footage
- Produce grassroots social media marketing campaign

Solution

- Tap into integrated workflow of Adobe Creative Suite 4 Production Premium
- Prepare files for online delivery using Adobe Media Encoder

Benefits

- Garnered rave reviews, an opening night showing at SXSW, and a distribution deal with Liberation Entertainment
- Streamlined transitions between game and real-world footage
- Created groundswell of interest in *Second Skin*

Toolkit

- Adobe Creative Suite 4 Production Premium. Components used include:
 - Adobe After Effects CS4
 - Adobe Illustrator CS4
 - Adobe Media Encoder CS4
 - Adobe Photoshop CS4 Extended
 - Adobe Premiere Pro CS4
 - Adobe Soundbooth CS4

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Juan Carlos Pineiro Escoriaza, co-founder, Pure West, director, *Second Skin*



prepare the film for distribution on all of these different websites, Pineiro Escoriaza used Adobe Media Encoder software to create presets and batch-encode several different versions of a file for uploading to the Internet.

"Every site has a sweet spot in terms of preferred file type," says Pineiro Escoriaza. "Adobe Media Encoder provided smaller, better-quality compressed files; it was key to our ability to broaden the film's distribution and maximize the quality of the viewing experience. Video delivery to virtually any device or format is becoming even more essential in our business, making Adobe Media Encoder indispensable."

The ultimate filmmaking toolkit

Second Skin has now been screened in several prestigious venues, including the Red Vic Movie House in San Francisco and The Hollywood Theater in Portland. It is also being translated into Chinese, Hebrew, Portuguese, and several other languages. For translation on future projects, Pineiro Escoriaza is looking forward to using the Speech Search feature in Adobe Premiere Pro CS4 and Soundbooth CS4.

"With more than 400 hours of footage to go through for *Second Skin*, I cannot tell you how Victor, Peter, and I dreaded transcribing the entire thing," he says. "With Speech Search in Adobe Premiere Pro CS4 and Soundbooth CS4, I will be able to transform dialog into a basic transcript that can also be exported as text-based metadata to make my video searchable online. For a filmmaker, Speech Search could just be the ultimate tool."

With *Second Skin* a runaway success, Pure West is moving on to new visions and projects realized with the help of Creative Suite 4 Production Premium. "With Adobe Creative Suite 4 Production Premium, we can work with unparalleled efficiency, so we have more time to be creative," says Pineiro Escoriaza. "We're also able to deliver on film or online to market our projects. Creative Suite 4 Production Premium really covers all the bases for independent filmmakers."



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