

Mr Raman HUI Shing-ngai *BBS*

Mr Raman Hui is a Hong Kong animator and film director whose work is known to audiences all around the world. His best-known work to date probably is his work on *Shrek* (2001), for which he designed the characters and supervised the animation. *Shrek* won at least 37 awards, including one Academy Award—or an Oscar—for Best Animated Feature, and two awards from the British Academy of Film and Television (BAFTA). In 2008, the American Film Institute ranked *Shrek* number eight among the ten greatest animation movies ever made. Unsurprisingly, *Shrek* was followed by *Shrek 2* (2004) and *Shrek The Third* (2007), on which Mr Hui worked as, respectively, supervising animator and co-director. His work on the *Shrek* movies resulted in several individual nominations (for two Annie Awards by the International Animated Film Association, and for one Visual Effects Society Award), and in one individual award, namely, the ShoWest Animation Director of the Year award, which Mr Hui received with *Shrek The Third* co-director Chris Miller in Las Vegas in 2007.

Mr Hui has also worked on other well-known, award-winning animation films. For example, he designed the characters and supervised the animation for *Antz* (1998); he was additional animator for *Madagascar* (2005); and he was additional story artist for *Puss in Boots* (2011). Many famous actors have lent their voices to Mr Hui's characters, including Woody Allen, Sharon Stone, Gene Hackman, Eddie Murphy, Cameron Diaz, and Vincent Cassell. Mr Hui, in turn, lent his voice to one of the characters (Jin) in *Sinbad: Legend of the Seven Seas* (2003).

There was probably little that could foretell that Mr Hui would end up making such a career in animation, although he loved drawing cartoons from an early age. He was born in Hong Kong in 1963 into a single-parent family, the eldest of three. In 1984, he graduated with a Higher Diploma in Design (Graphic Communication) from The Hong Kong Polytechnic (later renamed The Hong Kong Polytechnic University) where he acquired the basics of animation—enough, though, to be able to produce a movie on graduation for which he received the Best Animation Award at the Hong Kong Independent Film Festival. He then went on to work as a traditional animator for Quantum Studios in Hong Kong, before deciding, in 1989, to attend a three-month course in computer animation at Sheridan College in Ontario, Canada. In that same year, he was hired by Pacific Data Imaging (PDI) in Silicon Valley, a computer animation company that would

merge, in 2000 (i.e. after *Antz*) with the feature animation division of Dreamworks (into PDI/Dreamworks). During his time at PDI, Mr Hui also directed two short movies: *Fat Cat on a Diet* (2000), and six years earlier, *Sleepy Guy* (1994), which was nominated for Best Short Film at the Chicago International Film Festival, and which won awards at the London Animation Festival, Nicograph in Japan, the US International Film & Video Festival, and Imagina in Monaco. In addition, while at PDI, Mr Hui worked as animation director on a couple of feature-length movies, as animation supervisor on *Batman Forever* (1995), and as a computer animator on one episode of *The Simpsons* (1995).

Mr Hui's work for PDI/DreamWorks had occasionally brought him back to Hong Kong and Mainland China. Nowadays, Mr Hui works only part-time for PDI/DreamWorks. The movie he directed most recently, *Monster Hunt* (2015), a combination of live action and computer animation, was realised with the backing of a Hong Kong company, Edko Films. *Monster Hunt* effectively marks Mr Hui's return to this part of the world, not just because of how it was produced, but also because of its storyline, which was inspired by the ancient Chinese text *The Classic of Mountains and Seas*. At the time of writing, *Monster Hunt* is on its way to becoming the biggest-ever box office success in China.

Notwithstanding his highly successful career, Mr Hui comes across as modest, down-to-earth, and eager to let others benefit from his expertise and international experience. It is perhaps in the same spirit of generosity that Mr Hui has also been producing illustrated children's books such as *Brownie and Sesame*; the proceeds of which have gone to a charity that works with senior citizens and children in Sha Tin.

Mr Hui was conferred the World's Outstanding Chinese Designer Award by the Hong Kong Design Centre and was awarded the Bronze Bauhinia Star by the Hong Kong SAR Government in 2008 and 2009 respectively.

Mr Chairman, in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the local creative industry and, more generally, to the world of animation film, may I now present Mr Raman Hui to you for conferment of an honorary fellowship.

English citation written and delivered by Prof Rafael De Clercq