

Transition through *Tablets*

Big Bad Boo Studios takes its production pipeline fully digital with Wacom Cintiq interactive pen displays and Intuos tablets.

“We have a fun and funky studio,” says Aly Jetha of Big Bad Boo Studios, an animation production studio he founded in Vancouver, B.C., with Shabnam Rezaei. “We enjoy creating great animation.”

Begun in 2006, Big Bad Boo Studios is an award-winning production and distribution company with a noble mission: to teach children culture through entertainment. Today, Big Bad Boo boasts two offices—in Vancouver and New York—a staff of 70, 75 Apple workstations, and numerous, notable achievements, such as award nominations and airtime on PBS, Disney, and international children’s networks.

The company and its products have grown considerably over the past five years; yet, at first, production was a manual and painstaking process. While the founders and the artists possessed heart, energy, and skill, they lacked the adequate tools to bring their unique, global vision to life.

“In the beginning, because we were first-time producers, we hired traditional artists or ‘paper people,’” Rezaei describes. “The designers loved to draw on paper; the storyboard artists drew every single panel on traditional storyboard paper. One episode was as thick as a phone book, and each department and each location needed a copy. One or two people would scan it in over a few days, and then we would edit it, scan it, re-edit it, and rescan it. All the revisions had to be incorporated in the whole paper workflow, then we had to make an animatic out of the scans and label each panel. Nothing was automated.”



Big Bad Boo soon shunned the inefficient, manual process in favor of a digital pipeline, with Wacom pressure-sensitive tablets and pen displays employed from start to finish.

“We use Wacom professional products in almost every department now,” admits Rezaei. The storyboard, design, background, and layout departments use Wacom Cintiq interactive pen displays to draw directly on screen, whereas modelers and animators use Wacom Intuos tablets to streamline their work.

Wacom Cintiq interactive pen displays and Intuos professional tablets take center stage in Big Bad Boo Studio’s digital production pipeline.

Wacom professional tablets free artists at Big Bad Boo to focus on their award-winning art and productions.



Wacom Intuos and Cintiq tablets feature pressure- and tilt-sensitive Grip Pens, delivering impressive levels of precision, control, and comfort for editing digital images, applying effects and filters, sketching, painting, and modeling.

“For our pipeline—in which we are creating everything digitally, paperless—the Wacom pen-based workflow has really helped us out. It’s a really great way to transition from the old way of doing things, of drawing on paper,” says Chris Muzya, Big Bad Boo Studio’s layout supervisor, who oversees background layouts and a staff of three artists using Cintiqs.

Big Bad Boo artists particularly enjoy using the Wacom Cintiq, and the entire company is reaping benefits. “That extra real estate on top of the fact that it’s digital is just a double whammy,” Rezaei admits. “It speeds our efficiency by 40 to 50 percent in terms of the preproduction phase, not to mention the costs and all the frustration saved over the manual process.”

The Cintiq family of interactive pen displays—the large-format Cintiq 21UX and low-profile Cintiq 12WX—enables creative professionals to work naturally and intuitively using Wacom’s patented professional pen technology directly on the surface of an LCD display. Its responsive, pen-on-screen performance closely replicates the experience of working with traditional pen and paper, but provides all the benefits of a digital workflow.

“We are all really impressed with how it works and how it makes our job easier,” Muzya says. “It really saves us a lot of time, and our workflow is easier because of it. For how they want to produce cartoons, this is the way they have to go and this is the hardware they have to have.”

“It really improves the workflow, and it raises the level of the artwork being done, because erasing, copying, and re-doing are so much easier,” Rezaei adds. “The artist is now able to focus on the art, and not worry about administrative and annoying things that go around creating art.”

The investment in Wacom Cintiq interactive pen displays and Intuos tablets, and in an all-digital workflow, is paying off in spades. Big Bad Boo’s latest project, *1001 Nights*, was nominated for British Columbia’s prestigious Leo Awards in four out of five animation categories. Neither Big Bad Boo, nor Wacom are resting on their laurels, however; both companies continue to push the boundaries of what is possible.

“I see the improvements from one [tablet] generation to the next,” says Rezaei, unable to think of a single area that needs improvement. “I can’t think of anything. What we have right now is just ideal. We use Wacom tablets in every aspect of production and, from what I know and what I can see, it works very nicely. It’s not something we are ever going to remove. In terms of what we do in the future, it is always going to be there; and, because Wacom keeps innovating and coming up with new functionality, new brush styles, new buttons, and better ergonomics, it will always be a better, faster, cleaner, more ergonomically friendly piece of hardware for our artists.”

For more information or to purchase Wacom Cintiq or Intuos4 pressure-sensitive tablet and wireless pen and mouse combinations, visit www.wacom.com.



Artists have their choice of two Wacom Cintiq models:

Cintiq 21UX	21-inch, color-accurate screen	\$1999 U.S.
Cintiq 12WX	12-inch-wide screen	\$999

The Wacom Intuos4 is available in five models:

Small	6x4-inch active area	\$229
Medium	9x6-inch active area	\$349
Large	13x8-inch active area	\$469
XL	18x12-inch active area	\$789
Wireless	8x5-inch active area	\$399