

## “A Career in Creative Science”



**Cory Resh, Partner & Chief Creative Officer, 3FX, Inc.  
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**Report By: Allison Beal, PhD**

As scientists we have come to appreciate the value of modern technology that allows us to do what we do every day. However, the presentation on April 27, 2011, highlighted just how incredible modern technology is and how it can be used to make movies that creatively visualize complex biological processes.

Our speaker for the April meeting, Cory Resh, has a much different background from most of the speakers that present at AWIS meetings. He is a 3D animator who is an expert at 3D productions and the technology behind them. While he is not a scientist, he has always been fascinated by science. Cory is the Founder and Chief Creative Officer at a 3D life science animation and visual effects company called 3FX, Inc. Cory explained that as the Chief Creative Officer he markets the 3FX brand, designs the new look for next year, and meets with clients to understand what they want animated. During his meetings with clients, Cory's creativity comes out and as the clients are explaining what they want he can already begin to visualize and develop the creative part of the animation in his head. He then passes along the ideas and information to the production team who then initiate the animation process.

Cory's story of how he got to where he is today is quite interesting and is filled with perseverance and incredible experiences. In his words, his career "has been a long hard road." Even when he was young, Cory was aware of his creative side. He wanted to be either an artist or a musician and since it was a more lucrative career choice, Cory decided to pursue graphic design in college. Right out of college Cory worked for an advertising agency in Maryland, but he didn't really enjoy it. One night, Cory was stood up on a date--true story--and decided to go to the movies to see *Tron*. He was impressed with the computer animation and realized that he wanted to pursue animation as a career. This led Cory to New York Institute of Technology in New York City where he studied computer graphics.

During his time at NYIT, Cory faced some hard times. He lived in and out of the local YMCA since living in New York was so expensive. In classes, Cory worked on some of the first computer systems that were made up of 30 large computer cards that had to be individually pushed into place to start the computer and then since there were not any hard drives it took 10-30 minutes just to render one frame. This really put in to perspective how very different the technology was

when Cory started out in NYIT 30 years ago when 3D animation was just getting started. Upon graduating NYIT, Cory got a job in DC as a 3D animator where he work on commercials and even did some work for NASA. In 1987, Cory moved to the Philadelphia area where he was introduced to the Pharmaceutical world and over time he began to see biological processes in a creative way. Then in 1995 he started 3FX with his partner, Jody Bortner, where they decided to focus on 3D animation for healthcare, medical education, and medical devices. It was very exciting for Cory to break into the science field and he admits that while he still does not understand what scientists do he understands what scientists are talking about, and he can visualize the knowledge and ideas in a creative fashion.

The last part of Cory's presentation focused on giving us an idea what they do at 3FX and how they do it. To put it simply, Cory and his team create medical animation and visual effects. However, the process is not that simple. The entire creative process to produce the animations from idea to finished product can take anywhere from 6 months to a year and a half. It begins when a client approaches 3FX with an idea and together with the client a project is planned.

Following the initial project planning, a scientist on Cory's team works with the client to write a script, which is typically about 3 minutes in length. After they have a script, 3FX works on developing character sheets that display the style, color palette and design elements to the client. Once the script and character sheets are approved by the client and medical legal approval is achieved, they begin to put the animation scenes together using storyboards, which provide the first visual of the production. Finally, many steps later the team begins the 3D animation process. To achieve 3D production, the animations are modeled in wire frame mode. This allows 3FX to create a 3D environment in space and to texturize the objects to make them look realistic. The animations can be complimented with custom music and voice narrations. The art director who achieves the "wow" factor by adding the composite and visual effects then finally completes the long process of 3D animation. Once the production is complete, 3FX provides the client with a visually rich high-definition animation that is not only amazing to watch but portrays accurate information as well.

All in attendance appreciated the power of the animations 3FX creates. We watched a number of sample clips that Cory played using a new, hot off the shelf App that 3FX designed. We were the first to see the clips using this new App. We viewed several innovative, award-winning animations that included topics such as medical education, disease state, drug mechanism of actions, and drug delivery systems.

Cory's presentation was truly a memorable visual experience. The presentation highlighted the full potential that modern technology has to portray and visualize complex biological systems. The talk concluded with an interesting discussion on how 3D animation would be a powerful tool to use to educate the general public on science and human health and disease. There is much promise and power that these 3D animations hold for public education and given Cory's experience with hard work and perseverance throughout his career we will likely see this become a reality in the near future.

*Photo of Mr. Resh courtesy of Sherri Meyer, PhD  
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