

Designing ML Studio's Website

Evan Raskob

Role: User Experience Designer; Web Developer (Wordpress / Php / XHTML / CSS)

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<http://mlstudio.co.uk>

Background:

In 2008 myself and 3 colleagues decided to represent ourselves as a freelance creative studio called ML Studio. Together, we possessed a depth of past projects and documentation. Through a studio website we would curate those projects for public consumption. We spent a few weeks discussing what we wanted to show on the website and to whom the website would be targeted.

Website Goals:

- Showcase work of studio partners to potential clients
- Generate interest in upcoming projects
- Create a system for organizing work across very different genres
- Create an online portfolio of completed, individual projects that can be easily deep-linked to and emailed to clients, the public, and media partners
- Minimal but visually-rich content on each page
- Minimal navigation, except through set paths – prevent users from browsing too broadly and getting off-topic.
- Allow mainly emailed links or links from other blogs and websites for landing pages

Website Audience:

- Professionals in the music industry
- Production companies
- Advertising firms
- Art organizations
- Design firms
- Potentially non-Internet-savvy clients

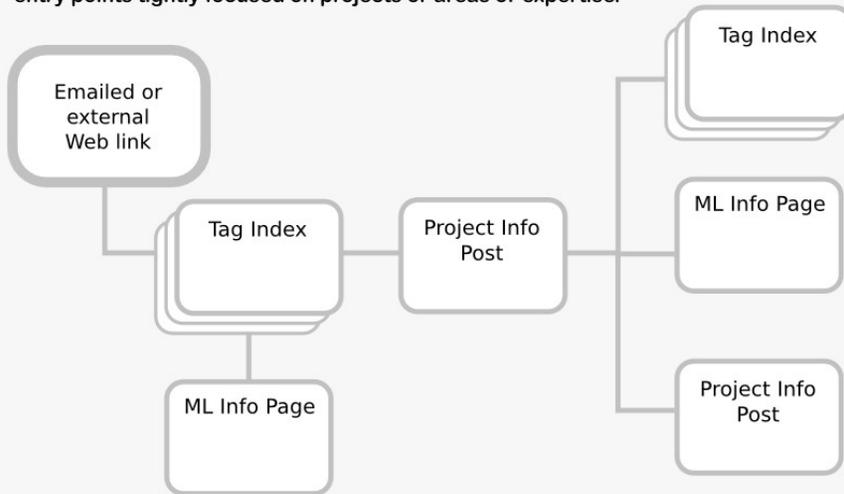
Design Solutions:

- Using Wordpress as a quick, customizable CMS
- Use Wordpress tags as basic navigation
- Human readable tag and category names for meaningful links
- Quick links to related information and projects
- Easily updatable via Wordpress so content can change quickly
- Uncomplicated main landing page features a current, time-sensitive project or event

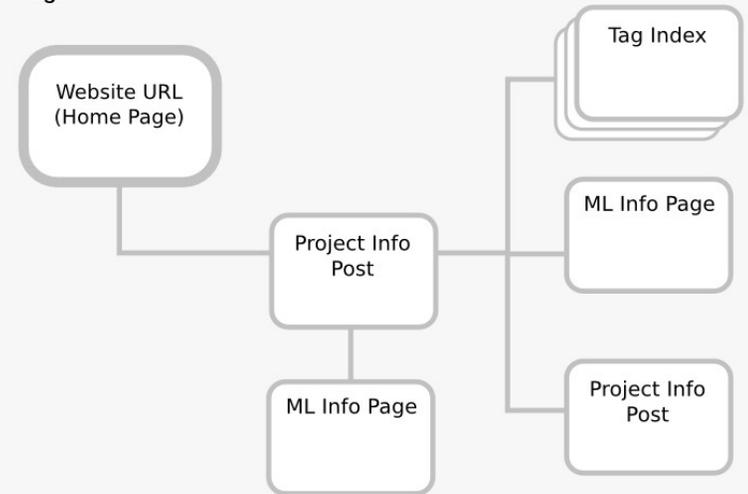
Wireframes:

MLStudio.co.uk Site-Map: Entry Points

Deep-linking - expected way of entering the site. Provides curated entry points tightly focused on projects or areas of expertise.



A front page contains a rotating featured project with a compelling image.



Types of Web Pages in mlstudio.co.uk



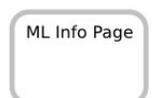
Tag Index

An index of multiple Project Posts tagged with this Tag



Project Info Post

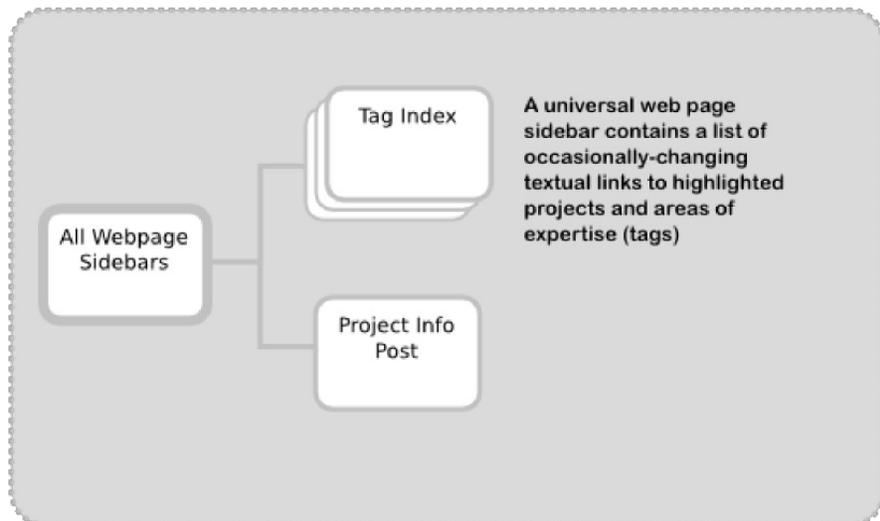
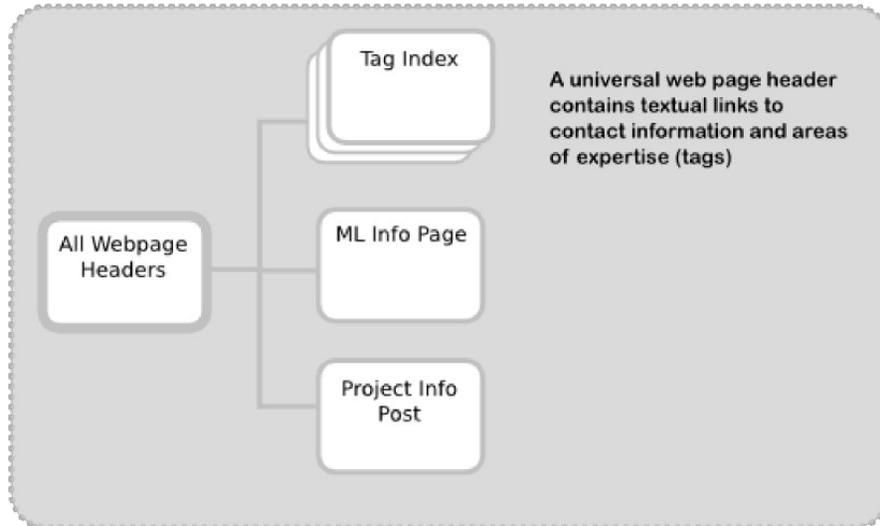
Wordpress Post about a specific project, such as a textual overview, optional embedded video, optional image gallery. May be multiple posts per project to highlight different aspects (e.g. projection design vs. animation)



ML Info Page

Wordpress Page containing information specific to the studio as a whole.

MLStudio.co.uk Site-Map: Intra-Site Navigation



Types of Web Pages in mlstudio.co.uk



Tag Index

An index of multiple Project Posts tagged with this Tag



Project Info Post

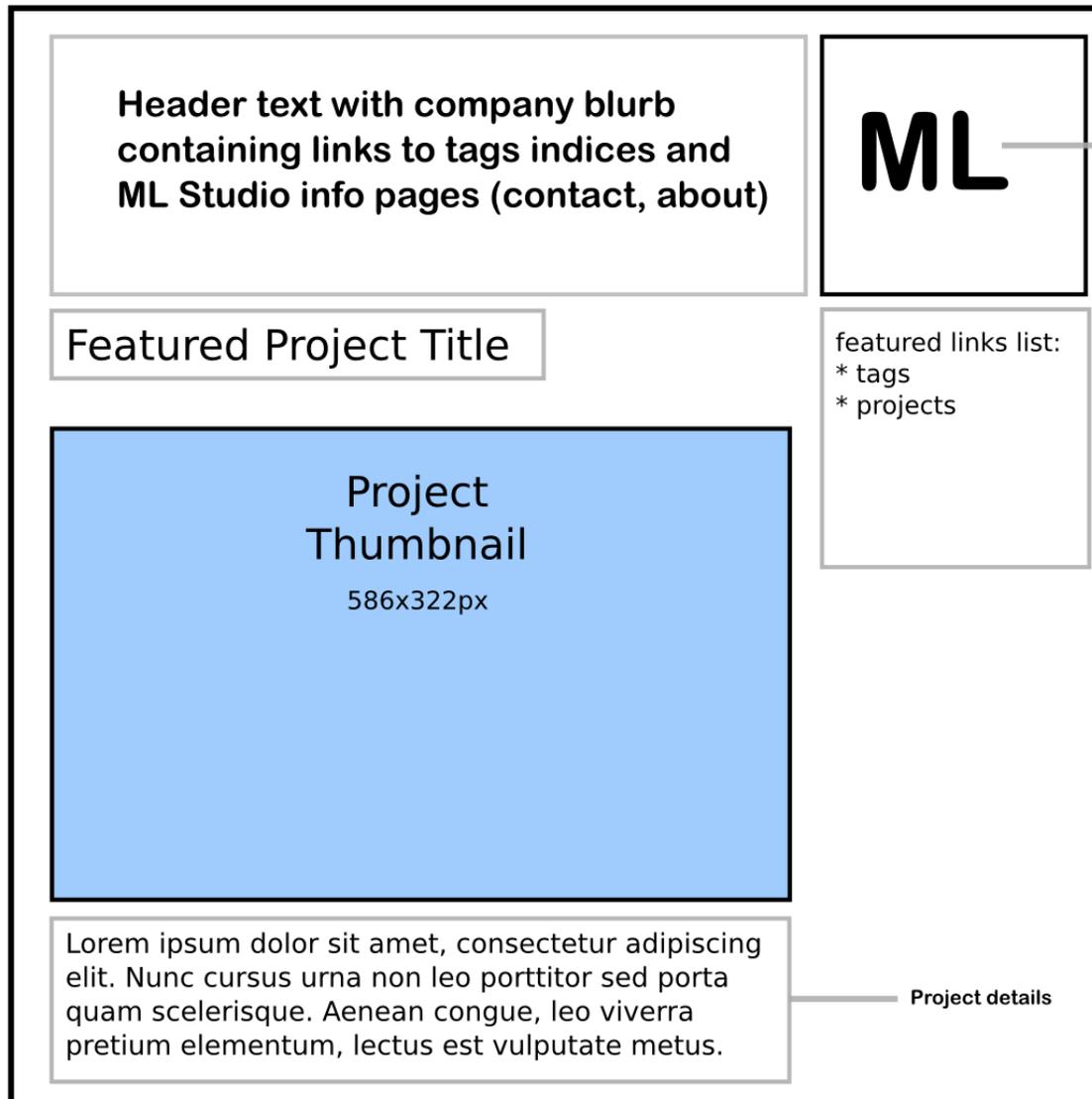
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ML Info Page

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MLStudio.co.uk Home Page Wireframe



Home Page

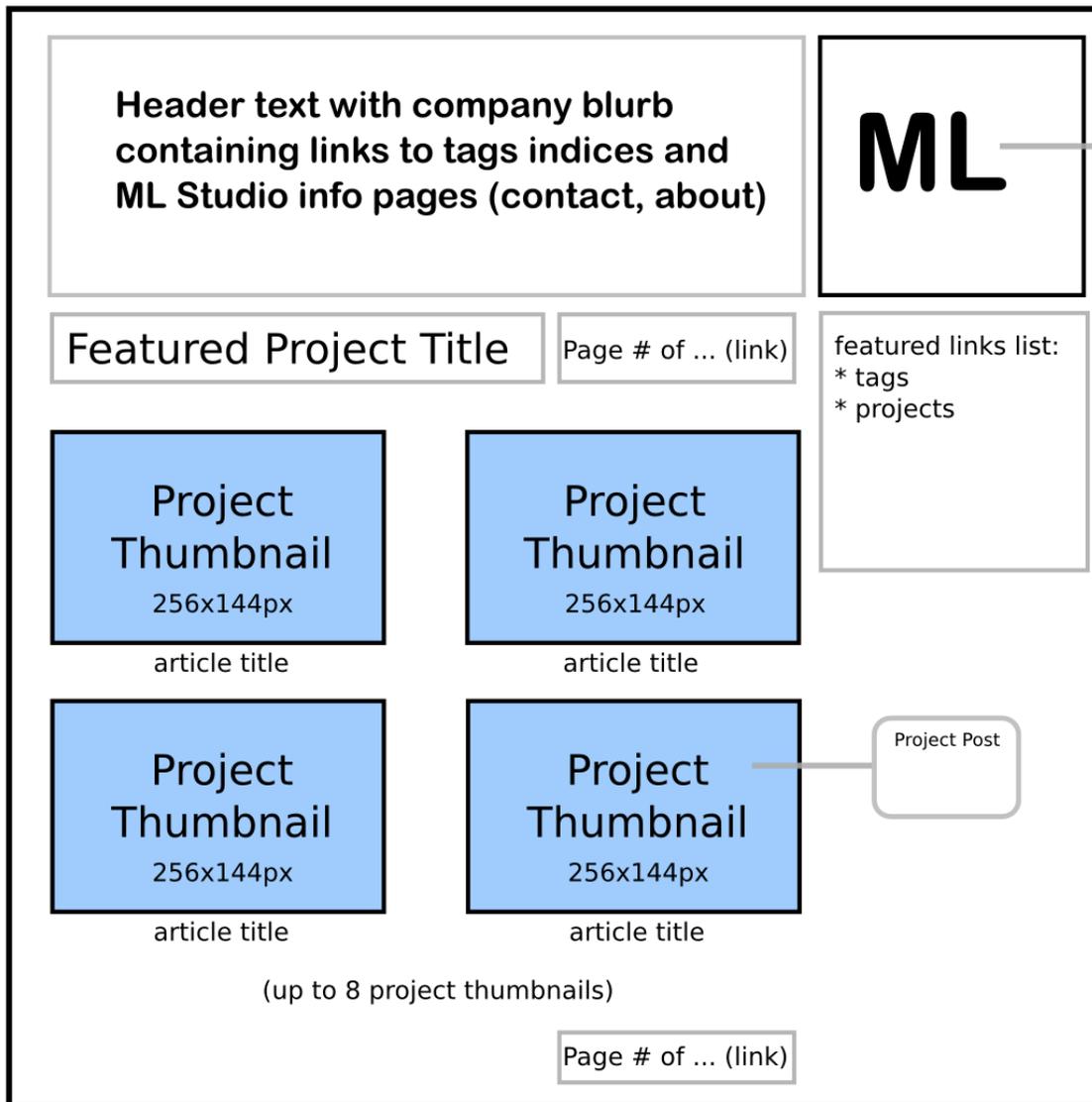
Goal:

Provide a simple, default, curated entry point into the site.

Drive users towards time-sensitive projects, including events.

Features:
Contains a rotating featured project with a compelling image.

MLStudio.co.uk Tag Index Wireframe



Goals:

Organize related projects by arbitrary tags (ex: genre, client, event, etc).

Create customized views of multiple projects as a kind of portfolio for sending to clients.

MLStudio.co.uk Project Wireframe

Header text with company blurb containing links to tags indices and ML Studio info pages (contact, about)

ML

Home Page

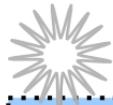
Project Title

featured links list:
* tags
* projects

Video or still image
480x292px

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nunc cursus urna non leo porttitor sed porta quam scelerisque. Aenean congue, Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nunc cursus urna non leo porttitor sed porta quam scelerisque. Aenean congue,

Optional image gallery



lightbox effect

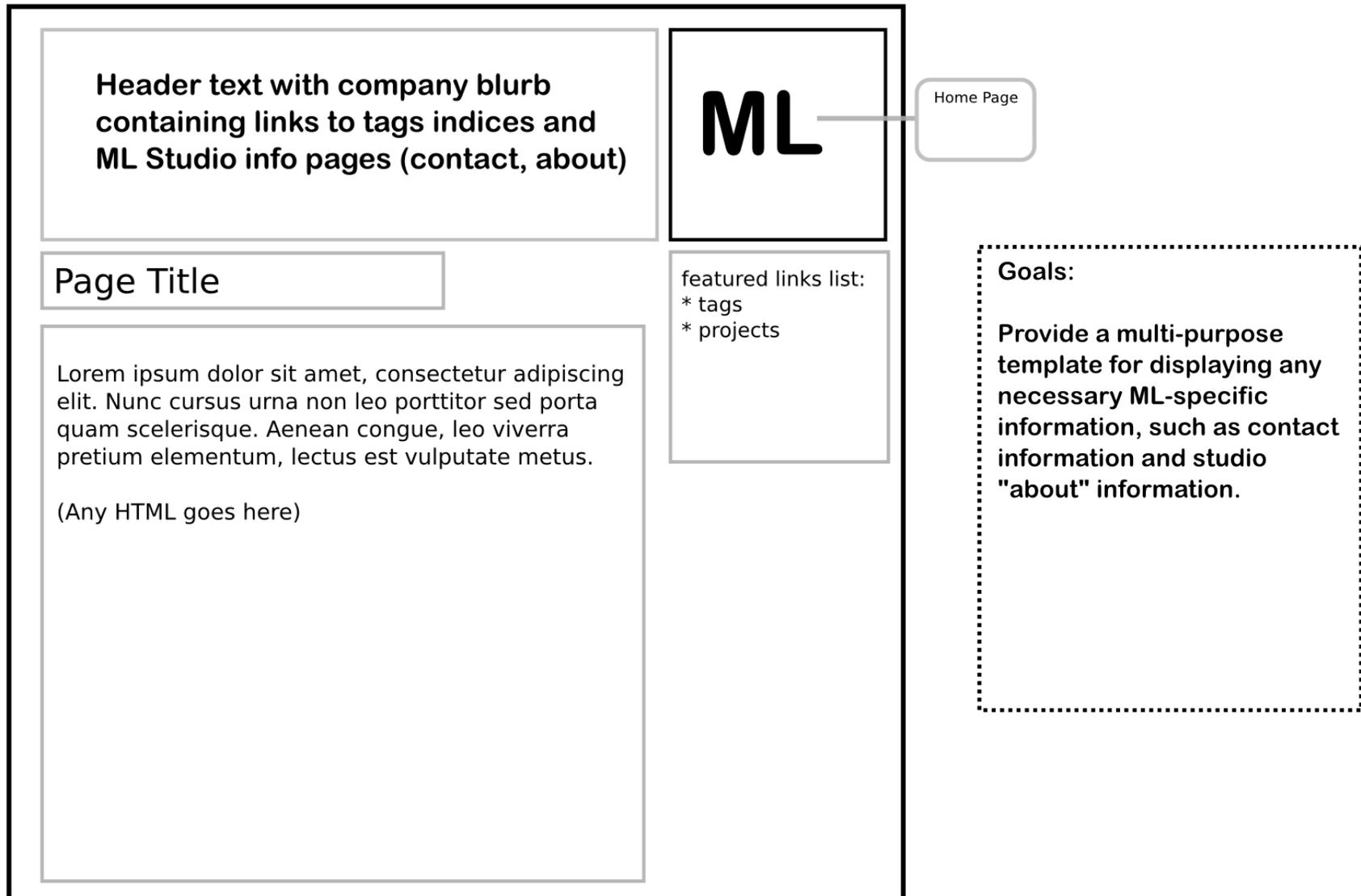


Goals:

Sum up a project (or particular aspect of a project) visually in a compelling manner.

Designed to be completely self-contained, for deep-linking via emailing urls to clients and through cross-posting on other Internet sites.

MLStudio.co.uk Info Page Wireframe



Current Assessment:

The site works as expected, except we found the design to be too static; not representative enough of the vibrant tinkering going on in our studio with the many projects we have undertaken but which are not ready to be archived and documented in a final form, yet.

We created a private wiki to act as a central, editable location for private ML documents such as project ideas, research, and proposal drafts. This has been successful internally, but does not help us market the studio and share our research with the public, from whom we could receive valuable feedback.

Solutions:

- Add a blog category to the Home Page to keep interested people updated with the status of current projects.
- Add RSS feeds from studio partners' personal blogs to the Home Page to act as a central location for concurrent projects by partners.
- Create a public wiki as a central source of information on discoveries and techniques gained from project development and research

Current Website:

Home Page:

MLStudio is a production company with a focus on live entertainment; particularly for **tours**, **theatre**, **installations**, **performing arts** and live events. We offer creative direction, production services, **animation** and **interactive design**. Click on the words above to explore. Find out more about who we are here or **contact us** for more info.

ML

Pitch Control: A Musical Instrument by Marcus Lyall.



Featured

- **Bon Jovi**
- **The Rolling Stones**
- **Music Tours**
- **Art**

At Takeaway Festival: May 19th-30th 2009
The Science Museum's Dana Centre
165 Queens Gate
London SW7 5HD

Tag Index (“tours”):

MLStudio is a production company with a focus on live entertainment; particularly for **tours**, **theatre**, **installations**, **performing arts** and live events. We offer creative direction, production services, **animation** and **interactive design**. Click on the words above to explore. Find out more about who we are here or **contact us** for more info.

ML

Tours

Page 1 of 2 ▶



Bon Jovi - We Got It Goin' On



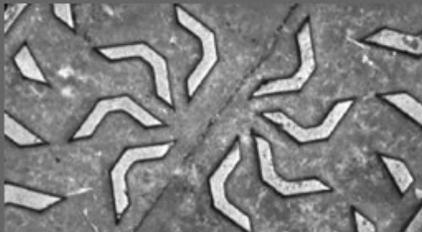
Bon Jovi: Lost Highway Tour



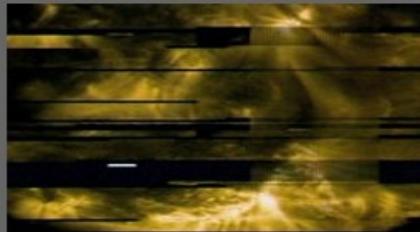
Rolling Stones 'Licks' Tour 2002



U2 Elevation Tour 2001



Metallica: Wherever I May Roam



Kronos Quartet "Sun Rings" video

Project (“Rolling Stones' Licks Tour”):

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Rolling Stones ‘Licks’ Tour 2002

Prod Co: Punk Films

Video Creative Director: Willie Williams

Lighting Designer: Patrick Woodroffe

Video Content and On-site Post Production.

‘Sympathy’ for the Devil’, involved shooting a 12 foot long set of burning lips and huge pyrotechnic effects. ‘Undercover of the Night’ took library police surveillance footage and transformed it into an abstract montage of collisions and twisted metal. For “Honky Tonk Woman” we animated a figure challenging the famous tongue to a duel, riding it like a bucking bronco, piercing it but eventually getting eaten by the giant lips.

Contributing Directors: Lance Bangs, Mark Logue, Willie Williams, Marcus Lyall, Mark Norton
Animator: Murray Johns

Tags

- LED
- Rolling Stones
- Rolling Stones
- Tours
- Video

