

# THE STRAIN

technicolor



FEEL THE WONDER

## The Strain

A look inside the contributions of Technicolor and Mr. X to *The Strain*.

### Customer

#### Created by

Guillermo del Toro / Chuck Hogan

#### Executive Producers

Carlton Cuse / Guillermo del Toro / Chuck Hogan  
/ Gary Ungar / J. Miles Dale / Bradley Thompson /  
David Weddle / Regina Corrado

#### Producers

Ra'uf Glasgow

#### Associate Producer

Richard J. Anobile

#### Produced by

FX Productions

#### Broadcasters

FX / FOX

### Challenge

To create an immersive experience through imagery, sound and VFX while maintaining a balance between efficiency and a high level of quality.

### Solution

Mr. X team in Toronto delivered over 3500 shots for *The Strain* Season 1-3 while Technicolor Toronto completed picture and sound post production including color finishing and sound mixing.

*"The close creative collaboration with Technicolor and Mr. X has been vital in elevating «The Strain» and every project we work on. Their enormous energy, know-how and invention has given us an edge we would not have otherwise."*

**Guillermo del Toro**

*"We have had a fantastic experience with Mr. X. Their creative work and exacting standards are exemplary. They've solved problems and made «The Strain» a better show across the board. It's always such a thrill to see the show once their VFX work is cut in. It totally elevates the show and brings it to life in a whole new way."*

**Carlton Cuse**



*The Strain* is a thriller series based on the best-selling vampire novel trilogy from award winning filmmaker Guillermo del Toro and author Chuck Hogan. FX Productions produces the series alongside executive producers Carlton Cuse and J. Miles Dale. This one-hour high-concept thriller tells the story of Dr. Ephraim Goodweather (Corey Stoll, *House of Cards*), the head of the Center for Disease Control Canary Team in New York City. He and his team are battling a mysterious viral outbreak with hallmarks of an ancient and evil strain of vampirism, *The Stragoi*. In season three the local government is no longer helping the team who is struggling to contain and cure the outbreak that has started to spread across the globe.

The series is shot in Toronto and Technicolor and Mr. X have worked on it since its inception in 2014. Technicolor provides an array of services, including on location services, dailies and complete picture and sound post. "It's been nothing but smooth sailing working with Technicolor Toronto on all three seasons of *The Strain*," says Executive Producer – Miles Dale. "Being able to put our trust in this talented, hard-working group makes all the difference when producing such a complex show."

Colourist Rob Evans has been working with Guillermo as well as DOP'S Miroslaw Baszak and Colin Hoult since season one, delivering a very stylized and moody grade that has rich blacks and a highly saturated colour palette. As the story has progressed through the seasons the colours have remained rich and vibrant. Rob uses DaVinci/Resolve for the grade, providing both the dailies colour pass as well as the final colour finishing. This allows for optimized colour continuity from on-set to VFX and through the complete post production pipeline.

Mr. X covers all aspects of Visual Effects for *The Strain*, from planning and filming on-set with the production, to completing the final shots and creating several key effects, such as the CG Worms and "stingers". Visual Effects Supervisors, Dennis Berardi and Matt Glover, work with the producers, show runners, episode directors and Guillermo del Toro to help plan, shoot and determine the required elements and performances to be able to deliver the effects. Once in the post-production process the team works mainly with Guillermo del Toro, giving final approval on all VFX shots.





The VFX work is divided based on pipeline steps and disciplines, where it falls in the process of completing the episode and what type of work is being done. Over 100 artists and production staff from Mr. X's Toronto and Gotham locations have helped deliver Season 3. "There are approximately 1100 shots in season 3 across the 10 episodes", says VFX Supervisor - Matt Glover. "It is full of new types of effects and is shaping up to be really special."

Mr. X's ability to deliver "feature quality" effects for broadcast projects is evident in *The Strain*. They strike a balance between efficiency and quality, delivering 3500 feature quality VFX shots for season 1-3 while leaving room to be creative, and find new ways to help tell the story.

The post-apocalyptic soundscape of *The Strain* continues to evolve in Season 3 with the introduction of new creatures and locations. A goal of the sound team is to try to have a sound for everything on screen, creating a feature film style mix with at times more than 500 FX tracks. Mixing on the newest Avid S6 control surface allows the team to deliver the robust sound mix, taking advantage of the full range of the frequency spectrum.

A lot of sound design goes into the creatures as well as into the surroundings of *The Strain*. These sound personalities work with the music to create a dark and ominous sonic atmosphere for the viewer. "Sound is used to reflect the importance of The Master and his role in the story," says Season 3 re-recording mixer – Al Degraaf, "his voice is created by using 5 different tracks comprised of different languages and backward dialogue."

Seasons 1-3 took full advantage of Technicolor's remote mixing capabilities with all mix playbacks and reviews taking place with the client remotely. Technicolor created a sound room within *The Strain* post production office in Los Angeles that mirrors the speaker setup and quality of the Toronto mix stage. Clients were able to monitor the mix and collaborate with the mixing team in real-time without leaving Los Angeles.

"When managing Post for a series, I always strive to create a central Post focal point – a Post Hive," says Associate Producer – Richard Anobile. "Technicolor facilitates and supports creating that focal point for *The Strain*; especially so now that Mr. X is a Technicolor company and a part of its internal pipelines. Having such accomplished talent under one corporate roof,



combined with state of the art remote capabilities, ensures that such a creative and technically complex show as *The Strain* flows smoothly from dailies to delivery.”

*The Strain* continues to deliver impressive ratings and has a large “cult” following amongst young adults. It highlights Technicolor and Mr. X’s talent as well as the full scope of services they offer and the benefits they bring to content creators.

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