

The Personal Story Behind Guy's Opening Sequence in 'The Croods: A New Age'

For story artist Colin Jack, boarding the heartbreaking backstory meant dealing with his own recent loss, made easier by enlisting the help of his son Gabriel.

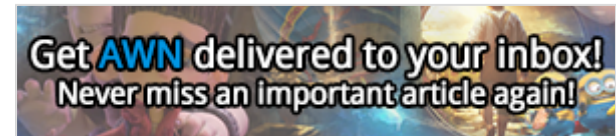
By [Victoria Davis](#) | Friday, December 18, 2020 at 9:40am

In [3D](#), [Art](#), [CG](#), [Digital Media](#), [Films](#), [Music and Sound](#), [People](#), [Voice Acting](#) | [ANIMATIONWorld](#) | Geographic Region: [All](#)



Final rendering for the young Guy in 'The Croods: A New Age,' now available On-Demand and in theatres. All images © 2020 DreamWorks Animation LLC. All Rights Reserved.

For the past six years, DreamWorks Animation has been home for story artist Colin Jack, working on family-friendly and adolescent-angled stories like *Captain Underpants: The First Epic Movie*, *Trolls Holiday*, *Trolls World Tour*, and the recently released *The Croods: A New Age*. While Jack



Latest AWN Must Reads

- » 'Bearly' Charms as SCAD Animation Studio's Debut Film
- » 'Cops and Robbers': Contrasting Childhood Play with Racial Hatred
- » Pixar's 'Soul' Skillfully and Honestly Embraces Ethnic and Cultural Diversity
- » Madeline Sharafian 'Digs' Her 2D World in Pixar's 'Burrow'
- » Translating Simon Stålenhag's Art to the Screen in Duvchi's 'Geronimo' Music Video
- » The 5 Most Memorable Animated Christmas Characters
- » Celebrate the Holidays with an AI-Remastered 4K Christmas

mostly utilized action comedies and rom-coms as references for his boards on the new *Croods* sequel, inspiration for the film's opening sequence, revealing a young Guy and the death of his parents, came from a much more emotional and personal source: his own family.

"Grab your hankies," says Jack. "This gets a little sad. I couldn't get through the practice run-throughs without choking up."

Jack was boarding the most recent installment in the *Trolls* franchise when he got the proposition to work on *The Croods: A New Age* with Joel Crawford or, as Jack puts it, "the nicest man on the planet." "I was working on *Trolls World Tour* when Joel, my old director from *Trolls Holiday*, came into my office and let me know he'd be directing the new *Croods*, and that I'd be working on it," remembers Jack. "Thankfully, he didn't give me a choice. My family really enjoyed the first film, and we were excited it was finally getting its sequel."

While the first *Croods* centered around Eep and her family's discovery of a world outside their cave home, *The Croods: A New Age* puts Guy front and center, diving into his past and introducing the Croods to a brand-new danger and opposition: passive-aggressive and highly territorial neighbors, the Bettermans, "emphasis on the 'better,'" who are also key components of Guy's character development in the film.

» The Personal Story Behind Guy's Opening Sequence in 'The Croods: A New Age'

[See More »](#)

Top Headline News

» VFX Producer Edward Irastorza Dies at 52

» WarnerMedia to Release Six Superhero Films a Year

» Justice League's Ray Fisher Removes Himself from DC Film Franchise

» Hand-Drawn 'Minor Accident of War' Tells Harrowing Personal WWII Story

» Joseph Gordon-Levitt May be Joining the MCU

» Shia LaBeouf Not Joining the MCU Following Abuse Allegations

» 'The Boss Baby: Family Business' Release Date Pushed

» Podcast EP92: Skylar Zerr's Top Tips on Becoming A 3D Animation Director

[See More »](#)

Career Connections

» Animation Supervisor
[The Christian Broadcasting Network](#)



Young Guy storyboards.

» Sr. Graphic Designer
[Motorola Solutions](#)

» Digital Media Design, Adjunct
[Florida Gulf Coast University](#)

» Editorial Creative, Photo & Video
[Paypal](#)

» Senior Digital Graphic Designer - Minnetonka, MN
[UnitedHealth Group](#)

» Creative Services Producer - Graham Media
Group
[WSLS](#)

» Multimedia Production Specialist
[US Cellular](#)

» Senior UX Designer
[Paypal](#)

[See More »](#)

Recent Comments



The most important issue for me on this news is how will the VFX work environment improve if these projects are greenlit. While everybody looks at the accusations by the actors the production staff...
[WarnerMedia to Release Six Superhero Films a Year](#)



Excellent series.
[Nickelodeon's 'The Legend of Korra' Steelbook Collection Coming March 16](#)



He left us too soon. May he rest in peace.
[VFX Producer Edward Irastorza Dies at 52](#)



David Finch Very thorough article on an important story, thank you Animation World Network!

[Hand-Drawn 'Minor Accident of War' Tells Harrowing Personal WWII Story](#)



Hey Kate, thanks for this, I'm so glad you find these topics meaningful.

[Teach Yourself Animation - The Art of Timing](#)



animation (2d or 3d) have been my dream since i was a little kid... sadly, animation courses are very scarce and very expensive... i couldnt afford it so i make it a lifelong goal to earn so i...

[Teach Yourself Animation - The Art of Timing](#)

Most Popular

[Nickelodeon's 'The Legend of Korra' Steelbook Collection Coming March 16](#)

1 comment · 2 days ago

[Hand-Drawn 'Minor Accident of War' Tells Harrowing Personal WWII Story](#)

2 comments · 3 days ago

[VFX Producer Edward Irastorza Dies at 52](#)

1 comment · 3 days ago

[Fans Already Disgruntled with Studio Ghibli's 'Earwig and the Witch'](#)

9 comments · 3 weeks ago



[WATCH: The White Stripes' 'Animated Yule Log Video'](#)

1 comment · 1 week ago

[Kickstarter for 'Art of Change' Book by 100 Artists to Support Black Lives](#)

2 comments · 2 weeks ago





As a story artist, working with the director and head of the story, Jack used story pads, grease pencils, and Photoshop to sketch out and refine character movements, facial expressions, and background visual boards for major scenes in the film, such as the Croods' family kill circle, the discovery of the Bettermans' wall, Phil and Hope Bettermans' matchmaker plotting sequence, and 2D cave art scenes with the young Guy backstory. The scene begins with Guy's parents pleading with him to run from the rising tar, leading to a heartbroken but determined young Guy setting off to fulfill their last wish - for their son to find his "tomorrow."

The already tearful scene proved extremely emotional for Jack, whose grandmother had passed away the week before he was assigned to board young Guy's scenes. "She was a great storyteller and a huge influence me," remembers Jack. "All the grief I was experiencing went into this scene."

Jack's personal investment in the scene, he says, made for a strong assortment of story art, though young Guys' crying shots were also inspired by Elliott's character in *E.T.* at the point where Elliot believes E.T. to be dead. But when it came time to pitch the sequence to Crawford, Jack had a difficult time getting through the dialogue. Jack brought in his son Gabriel to record temporary audio for young Guy, but the pairing turned out to be a perfect fit.

"The team loved Gabriel's take on it," says Jack. "Though they searched high and low for a professional child actor to replace him, they had a case of temp love and we convinced Gabriel to record a few more official takes."



(From L-R) Gabriel and Colin Jack.



Boarding, and certainly not bored, at home.



Jack attended every one of Gabriel's recording sessions, watching his often very private son come alive in the booth and give vocal life to the emotions Jack poured into the scenes. "Being a dad and losing my grandmother right before definitely had me emotionally wrecked by this scene," he reveals. "That being said, what I love about the scene is its connection to the end where Guy finds his tomorrow and it's not a place, it's Eep. It'll take him the next 86 minutes to figure it out, but he gets there."

He adds, "My family and I haven't gotten the chance to see the film together yet, but Gabriel did have some ADR to do, so I was able to watch his scene with him. It looked stunning and for a moment I forgot he was even the voice of Guy. He liked that."

Though the artistic journey for *The Croods: A New Age* meant a whirlwind of emotions for Jack, the story artist says it paid off and that the creative process is something that should always be trusted. "There are always challenges with creating story art, but every artist has a process for making a scene," explains Jack. "If you can just trust the process it'll work itself out."



Jack is currently working on another family-oriented DreamWorks Animated film, *The Boss Baby: Family Business*, set for release in March 2021. *The Croods: A New Age*, now showing in theatres, is also available through Video on Demand as of today. You can find out more information on the film by following the director, Joel Crawford, @joelbcrawford.



Victoria Davis is a full-time, freelance journalist and part-time Otaku with an affinity for all things anime. She's reported on numerous stories from activist news to entertainment. Find more about her work at victoriadavisdepiction.com.

Tags [Animated Feature Films](#) [feature film animation](#) [Universal Pictures](#)
[Dreamworks Animation](#) [The Croods: A New Age](#) [The Croods](#) [Joel Crawford](#) [Mark Swift](#)
[Colin Jack](#) [Gabriel Jack](#) [storyboards](#) [boards](#) [story artist](#) [Photoshop](#) [Concept Art](#)
[story art](#) [story sequences](#) [Sketching](#) [Trolls](#) [Trolls World Tour](#) [Trolls Holiday](#)
[Jakob Jensen](#) [Nicolas Cage](#) [Catherine Keener](#) [Ryan Reynolds](#) [Emma Stone](#)
[Clark Duke](#) [Cloris Leachman](#) [Peter Dinklage](#) [Leslie Mann](#) [Kelly Marie Tran](#) [3D](#) [CGI](#)
[CG](#) [cg animation](#) [Feature Films](#) [Features](#) [Movies](#) [Films](#) [DWA](#) [Dreamworks](#)
[Universal](#) [Business](#) [character animation](#) [Character Design](#) [voiceover](#) [Voice Acting](#)
[voice recording](#) [ADR](#) [The Boss Baby: Family Business](#) [PVOD](#) [VOD](#) [Video On Demand](#)
[On Demand](#)

More From ANIMATIONWorld:

 Celebrate the Holidays with an AI-Remastered 4K Christmas	Next Post	Previous Post	Magicians Perform More Than Just Magic in Taylor Meacham's 'To: Gerard' 
---	-----------	---------------	---

Related Content

[Unpacking 'The Croods: A New Age' Character Animation](#)

[Eep, Grug, and Gran Are Back in DreamWorks Animation's 'The Croods: A New Age'](#)

[Universal and 'The Croods' Helping to Provide One Million Meals to Families](#)

['The Croods: A New Age' Drive-In Screenings November 19-24](#)

[WATCH: Official Trailer for DreamWorks Animation's 'The Croods: A New Age'](#)

[DreamWorks Animation's 'The Croods: A New Age' Shifts to Thanksgiving Release](#)

['Sing 2' and 'The Croods 2' Release Dates Shifted](#)

[Joel Crawford Set to Direct 'Croods 2'](#)

[DreamWorks Sets 'Croods 2' for 2020, 'Spooky Jack' for 2021](#)

ALSO ON ANIMATION WORLD NETWORK



a month ago · 1 comment

In time for the holidays, bring home the fully restored groundbreaking ...



a month ago · 2 comments

Iervolino Entertainment has released its first peek at their upcoming animated ...



17 days ago · 1 comment

The world's largest live streaming platform for gamers has become ...

0 Comments

Animation World Network

Disqus' Privacy Policy

Login

Recommend

Tweet

Share

Sort by Best



Start the discussion...

LOG IN WITH



OR SIGN UP WITH DISQUS [?](#)

Name

Email

Password

Please access our [Privacy Policy](#) to learn what personal data Disqus collects and your choices about how it is used. All users of our service are also subject to our [Terms of Service](#).

I'd rather post as a guest



Be the first to comment.

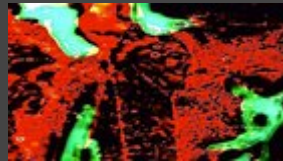
[Subscribe](#)

[Add Disqus to your site](#)

[Do Not Sell My Data](#)

DISQUS

Elsewhere on AWN



Free Download: Special
Annecy 2018 Edition of
ANIMATIONWorld
Magazine!

The Burden of Other
People's Thoughts: Don
Hertzfeldt Talks 'World
of Tomorrow Episode
Two'

A Candid Talk with
Scratch Film Master
Steven Woloshen

Marcy Page Leaves Her
Mark on the NFB

Hayao Miyazaki – The
Interview

Chris Landreth Talks
'Subconscious
Password'

Animation World Network

[Contact Us](#) | [About Us](#) | [Terms Of Service](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Media Kit](#)

More Animation World Network Sites

[AWNtv.com: AWN Television](#) | [Videos](#) | [Channels](#) | [Categories](#) | [Playlists](#) | [Submit Your Films](#)

[AIDB.com: Animation Industry Database](#) | [Production Companies](#) | [VFX Houses](#) | [Schools](#)

© 2017 AWN, Inc. AWN.com - Part of the Animation World Network - 13300 Victory Blvd, Suite 365 Van Nuys, CA 91401

