Bournemouth & Poole College

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Michal "Mike" Skowron, age 37, 3D CGI Modelling and Animation, FdSc and BSc.

"Since graduating I've worked in film VFX for Framestore, Moving Picture Company and Platige Image, contributing shots for Wrath of the Titans, 47Ronin, Gravity, The Jungle Book, Martian plus many others."

When originally looking for Degree courses, I was really impressed with The Bournemouth & Poole College and their facilities. Not only that, the course would give me a 'hands-on' experience, enable me to do a Foundation Degree before topping it up to a full Degree and give me a qualification that was accredited by Bournemouth University. It was a no brainer!

It was hard work and a steep learning curve, but I couldn't have been happier with my choice. Throughout the course I developed excellent modelling and software skills and these have been very useful since I started working in the industry.

Since graduating it has been full on, but I've loved every minute of it. I've worked in film VFX for Framestore, Moving Picture Company and Platige Image, contributing shots for Wrath of the Titans, 47Ronin, Gravity, The Jungle Book, Martian plus many others. I have also worked on TV commercials for Ford and AMEX, and now I'm working for Mackevision/Jaguar Landrover as a car interior modeller, so it's been quite a diverse career so far!

My love for learning continues and alongside working I have successfully completed a MSc in VFX at the University of Kent where I also lecture and I'm now working towards a PhD in film VFX.

I'd say to anyone considering this course, work hard and follow your passion. Remember that very often less is more!

Develop a broad range of skills, spend some time learning fine arts, try painting and photography, and especially look at lighting. Learn about cameras (both artistic and technical sides), learn to see the detail in the light surrounding your world - especially try to find things we take for granted.

Software can always be learned, but it's good to have a solid understanding of principles in 3D modelling, shading models and texturing techniques. Learn at least two major 3D packages, Maya and 3ds Max are a must across different industries. Mari, Nuke, After Effects, Houdini are also highly desirable. Learn the basics of photography, especially shooting HDR's and filming and cleaning backplates for any VFX work.