

Part B

The making of Coldplay's Adventure Of A Lifetime video



Tim tells the story of how the music video was made for the hugely successful British rock band, Coldplay.



1 Chris Martin of Coldplay had met Andy Serkis on a plane, and they knew they wanted to do something together – they just weren't sure what. So a date in the studio was booked, and the plan was to just see what happened, and decide where to go from there.

2 We got the Coldplay band members onto our studio set. This has about 50 cameras around it, all linked to a central computer. All our performers wear skin-tight suits with reflective markers on them. The markers are on the most important points of the body for capturing movement. Light from the cameras reflects back from the markers and is picked up by the computer, which records every movement the performers make.

If subtle facial expressions are needed, the performer's face is covered with small marker dots – that's part of my job. The performer wears a head-mounted camera which can capture even tiny movements in the face. We use these to create realistic expressions in the digital character.



3 Andy Serkis is an expert on the way monkeys move – he was in the remake of the film *King Kong*, and starred in *Rise of the Planet of the Apes*.



Andy suggested Coldplay try moving like monkeys. The band started to really enjoy themselves, and the story for the video grew out of that. It was a long session – we were there until midnight – but it was great fun!

4 At the end of a session, we have computer data for all the movement in a performance. We use this to create a moving skeleton. The magic is that this can be used to create any kind of digital character – a dog, a dragon, or a pirate. They would all move in exactly the same way Coldplay did, and have the same expressions. Here of course, we created skeletons of monkeys. We then created the bodies of monkeys around the skeletons.



5 At first we tried using natural-looking monkey faces. They didn't have enough individual character though, so we created monkey faces that expressed the band members' characters better.

This basic monkey animation was then handed over to an animation design studio. They put fur on the monkeys' bodies, built a forest in the background, and got the lighting right.

It was a fantastic project to work on, and everyone feels proud to have been a part of it!

