





Tim Burton in the TIFF Bell Lightbox Gallery

After spectacularly successful engagements at MoMA and the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, *Tim Burton* arrives at TIFF Bell Lightbox with a new look: a special commission created especially for our gallery windows and an entirely revamped exhibition design. Barr Gilmore of Barr Gilmore Art + Design walks us through the redesign of the exhibition that he developed with Michel Arcand of IN8 Design Inc.

Barr Gilmore:

From the beginning, Michel and I knew that our biggest challenge for mounting this show at TIFF Bell Lightbox's HSBC Gallery would be crowd control. MoMA's exhibition space was much larger than ours, so there were challenges right up front in terms of the design and flow of the exhibition. Rather than starting the exhibition as MoMA did by having *The World of Stainboy* episodes playing on the walls of a long, striped entrance corridor (which we noticed tended to create a bottleneck, as visitors stopped to watch them), we decided to treat the exhibition more chronologically, less thematically.

We decided to start with *Frankenweenie* and *Vincent*, Burton's early short films, move through the trajectory of his career, and then end with *Frankenweenie* again, as Burton is now remaking it as a feature film. Our exhibition begins and ends with two storyboard sketches from the original *Frankenweenie* that read "The End... Or Is It?" I think it's perfect to pair *Vincent* and *Frankenweenie* because they really show the play between childhood and adulthood. And it's nice to begin and end with them, so that you're always reminded you don't have to grow up!

I think what makes Burton's work so special is that he shows the frightening side of the transition from child to adolescent to adult, that dark side of our psyches that emerges as we go through these changes, and the strange characters that we meet along

the way. Dark as his films may sometimes be though, he always manages to make us laugh—especially at ourselves.

To complement the giant *Balloon Boy* that will greet our visitors in the lobby, we've worked with Tim Burton and his studio to create a new installation especially for TIFF Bell Lightbox. Originally, we were thinking of the window as an *Edward Scissorhands* snow globe, complete with the *Edward Scissorhands* costume and the deer topiary replica that MoMA commissioned from Karen Atta Studio. However, when some issues arose about the loan of the mannequin and "Edward" costume, we thought that it would be a great idea to commission Burton to create a special piece just for TIFF.

Burton and his studio came back with some great concepts. The concept chosen is based on a 1983 drawing for *The Black Cauldron*, a film that did not end up using any of Burton's designs. We're working on producing the piece now with Feature Walters here in Toronto, so I'll let our visitors discover it for themselves when it is revealed at the end of November!

Looking at this exhibition, it's really amazing to see how unified Burton's creative vision is. Just like his films, his artworks are dynamic, playful, childlike, sinister... I think this show gives further proof of his beautiful lunacy.