



Story **Catherine Caines**

Meet the household names of tomorrow. In the third of our series that highlights young and globally focused innovators in design, fashion, wine, travel and more, we present four technology-driven groundbreakers

Technology



“YuuZoo’s growth is fuelled by its accessibility to all mobile phones, not just smart phones”

**Catherine Nelson
Visual artist**

“Technology is my brush,” says visual artist Catherine Nelson, whose expertise in painting and digital post-production in the film industry has fused into a cutting-edge form of photographic construction that’s comparable to bonsai in its detail and technique. Using her skill in film CGI digital effects, Nelson, takes hundreds of photos of the natural environment and then constructs them, image by image, into what she calls a “science fantasy”, a fabulous, digitally landscaped world.

“It’s a very new and unexplored genre, this art form of digitally manipulated photography,” says Nelson, who before focusing on fine art worked on such blockbusters as Moulin Rouge!, Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban, 300 and Australia. The complexity of turning such a technologically driven genre into emotionally engaging images involves a combination of her specialised skills. “My film, visual effects career completely informs what I do know,” she says, “I would not have been able to create [these art forms] without that education and experience. But on the artistic side, I trained as a painter and I look at things as a painter, not really as a photographer.”

Based in Gent, Belgium, the Australian-born, 38-year-old has found near-instant international demand for her manipulated yet organic photographic series, Creation and Future Memories. In the past six months,

she has had solo exhibitions at the Australian Centre for Photography and Galerie Paris-Beijing, Paris. Among her group shows is the prestigious Art Paris 2011 fair.

Her reconfigured floating worlds, populated with birds, flowers, trees and even bats, have connected to a global audience because of their “eco theme message”, she says. “They [her viewers] all see it as a comment on climate change and as a comment on looking after the planet and keeping what we have.”

**Ron Creevey
President, YuuZoo**

With his passion for speed and innovation, Ron Creevey is the embodiment of the new breed of telecommunications entrepreneur. The 39-year-old co-founder of the global mobile media hydra known as YuuZoo, which boasts close to 2 million users registered in 164 countries, may be its global president but his work commitments do not keep him deskbound. Which perhaps isn’t too surprising for the racing veteran, who has competed in several Sydney to Hobart yacht races.

Since teaming up with mobile pioneer Thomas Zilliacus, the chief executive who started Nokia Asia, Creevey has travelled the globe over the past four years establishing YuuZoo into regions Silicon Valley executives would never have dared to tread. “We are very strong now in emerging markets and we are arguably

pushing to be number one now across the Middle East; we are deploying channels on a literally daily basis,” says Creevey. “We have an aggressive target: to get more than 11 million subscribers by the end of the year.”

From racing the YuuZoo SuperMaxi across Bass Strait to brokering mobile deals in Iraq, Creevey always looks for the right game-changing moment. “It was back in 2007 and we were in this two years before iPhone was released,” recalls Creevey about his and Zilliacus’ timely YuuZoo launch. “We knew it was going to be very hard to push the YuuZoo story to Americans and, particularly, the investment community. But emerging markets were receiving mobile phones for the first time and at that point we knew emerging markets were where we needed to be.” Creevey moved quickly to establish YuuZoo’s infrastructure and network in the sleeping-giant territories of the Middle East, Africa, South America and Asia, a first for any mobile media company.

With plans to list on the NASDAQ Stock Market late this year, Creevey says that YuuZoo’s growth is fuelled by its accessibility to all mobile phones. “We don’t just provide services for smart phones like iPhones or Blackberrys, which command a small portion of the mobile market really. We make sure if someone wants to have a YuuZoo service it’s available to all handsets.

“In a lot of the emerging markets the reality is they use dumb handsets, but that’s the majority of the market and that’s where you make money.”



JAMES BRAUND



LYNDON MECHENSEN

**Robert Murray
Firemint CEO**

“We want to be the Pixar of the games industry,” says Firemint chief executive Robert Murray (above left) and, with international iPhone hits *Flight Control*, *Real Racing* and *Real Racing 2*, the company has shown Australia can deliver the best when it comes to designing, developing and publishing original games.

Maybe Pixar should be taking notes because Firemint is the only developer to have been awarded Apple Design Awards for two different apps in one year (2010): one for *Real Racing* on iPhone; the other for *Flight Control HD* on iPad. These two prestigious awards compete for attention at Firemint’s Melbourne headquarters alongside such accolades as the Independent Games Festival Mobile Award for Technical Achievement and International Mobile Gaming Award for Excellence in Connectivity.

Focusing on connectivity is the key says Murray, who predicts: “Powerful, personal entertainment and communications devices will ultimately come to dominate all forms of entertainment. That’s the first big supporting trend for Firemint. Our ambition is to become the greatest entertainment company in that space – not the biggest, not the richest, just the best.”

Perhaps the 39-year-old is already there. Having founded Firemint in 1999, he has climbed the international ranks of gaming during the past decade and is now included in *Game Developer Magazine’s* list of “50 Important People” in the illustrious company of such industry heavyweights as Apple’s

Steve Jobs and Nintendo chief executive Satoru Iwata.

Pixar’s movie blockbusters have delivered box-office gold and *Flight Control* is Firemint’s blockbuster. The game has reached Number 1 on the App Store’s top paid downloads charts in 20 countries, including the US.

Firemint estimates that *Flight Control* is one of the top 20 best-selling apps to date and Murray says this is just the tip of the iceberg. “High-speed, ubiquitous connectivity for personal entertainment devices like iPhone and the iPad are the future. This will enable online games to be played anywhere, without thinking about cost or connectivity. It will be incredibly liberating for our audience.”

**Mark Kendall
Bioengineer**

Professor Mark Kendall (above right) is medicine’s unlikely rebel. Faced with the staggering statistic that 30 per cent of the needle vaccinations administered in Africa each year are unsafe due to cross-contamination caused by needle-stick injury, he has pioneered a rule-breaking alternative.

Based at the Institute for Biotechnology & Nanotechnology at the University of Queensland, the 38-year-old is leading a team that aims to replace needle injections with a postage-stamp sized patch that allows a small dose of vaccine to be administered more effectively than via traditional needles. “Right now,” says Kendall, “we are leading the world in using vaccines to deliver into the skin and we have demonstrated that,

by using the Nanopatch, we can achieve the same performance as a syringe but with 150 per cent of a dose.”

He says the Nanopatch has many other important attributes that set it apart from the needle especially when trying to treat patients in third-world conditions. One of these is that “because we dry-coat the vaccine to the projections we don’t need to refrigerate the vaccine material and that’s important for transportation”.

Becoming a leader in medical innovation has taken Kendall on a 12-year journey from the University of Oxford, where he was associate director of the PowderJect Centre for Gene and Drug Delivery Research, a university research lecturer and lecturer at Magdalen College, to joining the University of Queensland in a professorial position and winning the Australian Medical Researcher Award in 2008.

Testament to Kendall’s experience is his industry understanding of how to turn his innovations into commercial propositions and not have them languish as successful lab research projects. He believes the Nanopatch will become available in the next 10 years and will be the safest form of vaccination technology ever.

“The Nanopatch is designed to place vaccines directly into the skin, where our rich body of immune cells are. And unlike the needle, which puts things into the muscle that has very few immune cells, the Nanopatch puts it to our immune sweet spot. And by doing that we make vaccines work a lot better.”

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