

In the Spotlight

Khalid



Meet **Khalid**, founder and director of Muharraqui Studios. Khalid is an artist and designer working on a number of architectural visualizations.

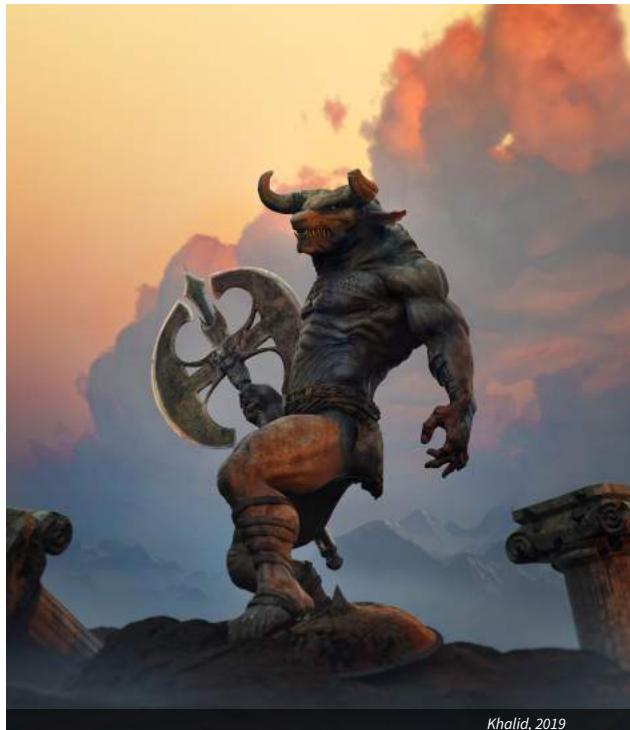
Khalid is always looking for new challenges to expand his creativity and gain momentum as a studio.

Find out what Khalid has to say on how he uses VUE, the projects he's worked on, and more, in this Spotlight Interview!

e-on software: What is your background?

Khalid: I'm part of a small studio that was established in 2005, located in the Middle East. We work on numerous projects related to marketing and architectural visualization. In general, I was drawn to this career because of my interest in 3D. Anything related to the development of 3D worlds was interesting for me, and the types of businesses that were available at the time were all related to marketing and architectural pre-visualizations.

I don't have one particular area of expertise as we do many different types of work ranging from visualizations to character design, animations and special effects, and now we're getting into VR/AR and gaming systems. The most interesting part of my career are the challenges I'm presented with to create new things, use new tools, and to try to adapt them within my workflow. Also, the continuous growth of this field is a challenge, but I feel that the learning aspect of it all is the most fun part.



Khalid, 2019

There is no typical day. Every day presents a new problem or challenge that we have to face. Our portfolio shows that we don't have one type of work, and believe me, with each project you have to think differently in terms of time constraints and budgeting. Our clients include anyone from the very top VIPs with big masterplans to medium-sized developers. Some know what they want from the beginning, but others don't know what they're looking for. At the end of the day, we have to try to find a medium ground that will help them achieve their targets.

e: What is your experience with VUE?

K: I've always had good experiences with VUE. It's a nice package all around. I began using the O-Zone plugin with Lightwave just for the skies and have recently switched to VUE. I've always loved the details that you're able to create and with the ability to adjust everything in the ecosystem. As an artist, it gives me a lot of control over the scene.

I've been using tools from e-on for at least three or four years now. It definitely helps me achieve better results with amazing atmospheres. It also supports my content and allows me to achieve everything in less time than before. My favorite features are the lighting, atmospheres, skies, and clouds. I've never seen such ease and quality from a software while still maintaining control.

I don't have just one project that I'm most proud of, especially since each project is different and the amount of effort you put into a project progresses or changes over time. The most recent work that I've enjoyed is the work I created for larger masterplans such as Diyar Al Muharraq, Bahrain Bay projects, and many more. I've also used VUE for my conceptual character poses. We try to choose our clients' brief so that we don't end up repeating our work, as it can get boring after a while, and we always try to make the creative process as fun as possible.



Khalid, 2019

e: What was the biggest challenge you faced in one of your most recent projects? How did you overcome this challenge?

K: It's difficult to pinpoint one of the biggest challenges we've faced, but if I can choose a few things, I would say time constraints and the limitations of some of the tools we work with make it harder to meet our target or deadline. These are the two main issues we'll face when working. If we take the Diyar Al Muharraq project, for instance, it was a major undertaking, and we had to get over 40 modelers to manufacture all the 3D structures within the allotted timeframe.



Khalid, 2019

We were limited to a few months to have it all achieved for their launch, and the size was too big to handle with the hardware and software we had.

One of the most important things I always say to anyone is to have proper planning. We tried to plan this project carefully and to see how to optimize each step by mixing different tools together to render out the necessary scenes for the job. In the end, we had to convert all of the data we had into a gaming engine platform for touchscreen technology, which was the last step after finishing all of our renderings.

We're very good at organizing because we've worked on more masterplans instead of jobs for single towers or buildings. These masterplans require a high level of detail and planning so that we remain organized and on track for any changes or add-ons we may receive from the client.

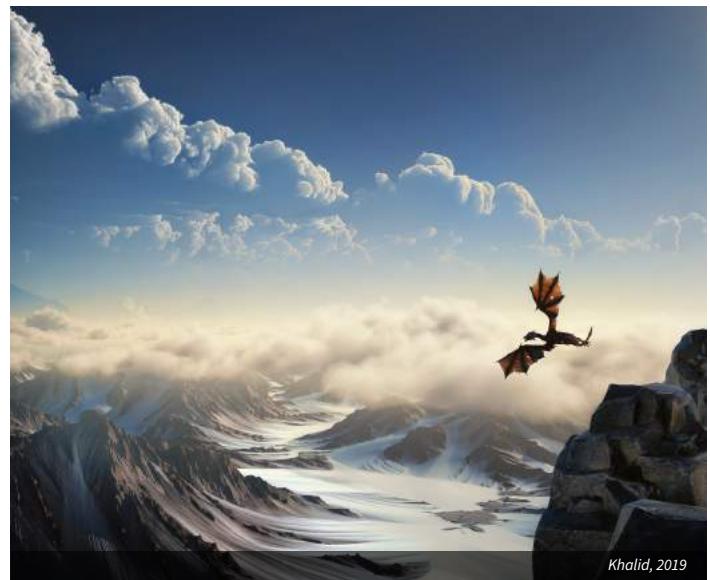
Some other software we use includes, Lightwave, Zbrush, Modo, 3Dsmax, and many more. We've learned to bridge the software we use with our team so that we can get different content from different architects or developers. My advice always to the artist is to use the tools that work for you. I don't have any preference to a single product. My main aim is to get the tools that can help us achieve the best results.



e: Do you have any advice to share?

K: The most important aspect of visualization is to get the correct brief from the client from the beginning. I've found that is the step where the most misunderstanding occurs. You need to be clear on the type of results the client is hoping to achieve and what you'll need to do to get there. If you don't get it right, it'll be a very expensive problem in the end. We're quite good at finding that bridge between ourselves and the client today, but that only came after a lot of trial and error and experience.

If you're looking to get into the visualization industry, you have to work hard, non-stop. Be focused and don't let anybody put you down. You have to put more hours into your training, as well, since that's what's going to help you in the end. Don't underestimate how difficult it may be either, it's a long journey and you'll have to accept new challenges as progress.



e: Where do you get your inspiration?

K: I get my inspiration from the people around me, especially artists. My greatest inspiration is my father, Abdullah Muharraqi. He's a classical painter, designer, and cartoonist. I also get my inspiration from different architects, such as Zaha Hadid, painters such as Frank Frazetta, and many, many more.

e: Would you recommend VUE to other artists/studios, and why?

K: Yes, for sure I would recommend it. It has the best atmospheric field and light that I've ever seen. It's not too hard to use once you understand the tools. You'll only have to figure out how the bridge works between other software you'll be using. Overall, it's a great tool, especially since you can save out all of your sky concept designs and use them later on for other projects or share them with colleagues.

Thanks, Khalid! Make sure to check out his portfolio at:
www.muharraqi-studios.com

