

Get On – Rankin style...

Advertising shoot for the new BMW Motorrad season launch campaign

The photographer Rankin has taken pictures of some of the most famous people in the world, from royalty to rock stars, artists, models, actors, directors and politicians. His latest work for BMW Motorrad also features super models, but not the kind you'll find on the cover of fashion and beauty magazines. These super models are the latest recruits in the 2011 BMW Motorrad line-up, specifically chosen to feature in the brand's Get On campaign for the New Season Start.



As well as creative fashion and portrait photography, Rankin is well known for his commercial campaigns, and after noticing last year's 'Get Out' New Season Start campaign, his producer contacted BMW Motorrad's international agency Serviceplan to see what their ideas were for 2011. After initial discussions and sharing of ideas, this meeting of minds resulted in a photo-shoot in a packed studio in south London.

Along with all the usual people involved in the shoot (Rankin, his assistants, hair and make up artist, models, stylists, agency producer, creatives, account handler and clients) there were several of the newest BMW motorcycles and a great big trampoline on display! The reason for this is that a trampoline would be the best way to realistically capture the movement necessary to accurately portray the riders propelled through the air towards their bikes, limbs outstretched and ready for contact.

The shoot took place at the Malcolm Ryan Studios in Wimbledon, which was chosen because a ‘floating’ ceiling was needed for trampoline jumps and the extreme perspectives. The agency had used trampolines in other shoots, so knew that in theory at least, the shots that had been sketched on layouts, could be achieved in real life – and look special and authentic at the same time.

In order for Rankin to get the shots he needed, two professional athletes were chosen to reach the heights required and display the correct body positions. Twenty-four year old James Stewart isn't just an excellent trampolinist, he can do pretty much any sporting activity to a high level, including gymnastics, Tae Kwon-Do, kick-boxing and stage fighting. His co-star for the day was 28-



year old expert gymnast and trampolinist Lisa Mason, whose additional skills in street-dancing, salsa and wire work in stunt doubling made her an obvious choice for this shoot.

For this particular shoot though, the very specific and exact heights needed and various body positions required had to be achieved fully clothed in BMW motorcycle equipment, and wearing a helmet! That's no easy feat for any trampolinist, but to do it under lights and under pressure from Rankin and his team was quite exceptional.

Translating the original storyboard layouts to the finished pictures was the job of Rankin, and his special creativity and imagination was essential for the realization of the campaign pictures. It was his idea to work with trained athletes to get the perfect motion, and the bike and action shots were taken separately, as Serviceplan's Matthias Harbeck explains:

“Rankin was really excited about this idea from the very beginning and he mastered the complexity of this shoot very easily. The bikes were done first and he took a lot of shots from every machine to bring out the character and specific shape of each one. The



following morning he selected the bike positions and shot the adequate body positions. He liked the unusual combination of a motorcycle and a people-shoot, as well as the shape and individual style of all the models we had on set. How he sets the light and brings all the bits and pieces together is really exceptional, and one is always stunned witnessing his precision and visual brilliance.”

The skill in lighting the shoot with so much movement in the pictures, as well as the contrast of the dark clothing the two models had to wear, can clearly be seen in the final images, which are exciting and convey a longing that all BMW fans are feeling, to get back in the saddle. How Rankin achieved this remains a secret of course, although Matthias admits that it's certainly down to a team effort.

“Rankin seems to master every task with an ease that’s beyond comparison, and nothing really seems to be a problem,” he said. “He has a fantastic team in place; there were four assistants working on the set and lights, two digital assistants and one retoucher, who ‘tested’ the selected shots right away to see if they worked in the layout. It was very impressive to see how he managed this big crew, and although everybody was working incredibly hard, the mood on set was always good.”



After the shoot was finished, the post production began, and Rankin’s in-house post-production did all the work. In fact, so reluctant is he to hand over any part of the creative process that even these ‘making of’ pictures are by Rankin Photography and Rankin Film also produced a ‘making of film’ for his company.



As for the R 1200 R, S 1000 RR, G 650 GS, K 1600 GT and K 1600 GTL models that feature in this latest campaign, they are all currently on their way to a BMW Motorrad dealerships somewhere in Europe, in preparation for 19 March when the New Season Start officially begins.

If you would also like to join in the celebrations and 'Get On' at a Motorrad dealer near you, then find out all the latest details at

www.bmw-motorrad.com/com/en/fascination/season_2011/season_2011.html