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Storm Hawks - Hawks Rise Again and Tales From The Atmos

by Howie Green
 EDGE Contributor
 Tuesday Jan 15, 2008



Not every computer animated cartoon has to recreate reality with every strand of hair and every drop of water faithfully recreated to look more like real life than a photograph. Various studios are using computers to generate a new kind of look and feel that is more like hand drawn, but even better. I first started noticing this type of animation used in early episodes of Futurama where the ships and machines were just a little too

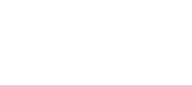
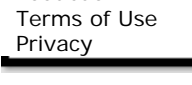
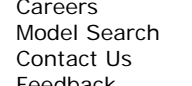
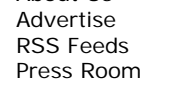
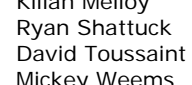
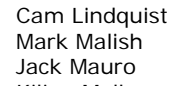
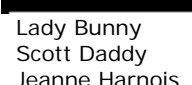
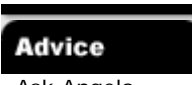
good looking to have been hand done. Then a couple years ago I became a big fan of a cartoon called Dragon Booster which was created by the good folks at Nerd Corps and all computer generated, but with a really different, cool and fun look. Now the Nerd Corps guys and gals are doing a new show for Cartoon Network called **Storm Hawks** using the same techniques with even better stories, better characters and, thank goodness, humor. The animation look and feel of these shows is awesome and using computers gives the creative team the ability to come up with great action sequences and spectacular special effects. Although the shows are aimed at kids the graphics and animation are well worth tuning in for. And anyone interested in seeing non-Pixar-style state-of-the-art animation should check out the 2 new DVDs just released.

The two discs each feature 4 half-hour episodes, a bonus episode and some throwaway un-special features along with tons of previews and trailers. The storylines center around a group of kids who have taken on the mantle of being the new Storm Hawks to keep their galaxy free from evil after the original warrior troupe was betrayed and defeated by the evil Cyclonians. The kids each have special abilities and weapons and all drive souped up motorcycles that morph into any number of flying configurations so the battle scenes between the kids and the bad guys are aerial fights that take great advantage of the capabilities of the computers used to create them. The funny banter and relationships between the kids is very similar to the kind of friendships and fights that go on in the animated Teen Titans series, but then kids will be kids. As the kids engage the enemy and prove themselves worthy opponents they are slowly earning the respect of their neighbors and the wrath of the Cyclonians. The series is off to a great start and looks like it may be able to keep going longer than the Dragon Booster series, which ran out of creative gas too

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The two DVDs contain the following:

- Storm Hawks - Hawks Rise Again
 - Age of Heroes Part 1
 - Age of Heroes Part 2
 - Gale Force Winds
 - The Code
 - Bonus: Tranquility Now
 - Storm Hawks Squadron animated montage
 - Storm Hawks weapons animated montage
- Storm Hawks - Tales From the Atmos
 - Best Friends Forever
 - Black Gorge
 - Absolute Power
 - Velocity
 - Bonus: Fire and Ice
 - Cyclonians animated montage

Each disc has a running time of approx. 110 minutes.

Howie Green is a Boston-based artist and painter whose portrait of rapper Biggie Smalls appears on the 2007 compilation album "Incredible". He was winner of Absolut Vodka's 25th Anniversary art competition and he painted 3 of the cows in the Jimmy Fund's Cow Parade 2006. He is also a multi-media designer and author of several books including "Jazz Fish Zen: Adventures in Mamboland" - and he once sang back-up for the opening act at a Shaun Cassidy concert in Madison Square Garden. He loves Peggy Lee, Dusty Springfield, Star Wars, and any movie where a car flies through the air, something big explodes and pretty people do nasty things. A self-described media slut, he sees over 100 movies a year, hears over 100 music albums a year and reads 30-40 books a year, not to mention concerts, live shows, DVDs and TV.



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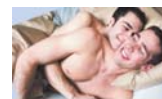
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