

postPerspective™ Extra



Veteran Post Pro Finds Freedom Without Sacrifice on Mobile Workstation

Dell Precision and NVIDIA Give Albert Fortgang a New Way to Work

By Karen Moltenbrey

Albert Fortgang first stepped into the world of post production when he was just a teenager. "My best friend's dad was a cameraman for Univision down here in Miami, and he had an edit room in his house. We would spend weekends in that room doing simple little cut videos and music videos — nothing fancy, but I thought it was so cool," he recalls.

That passion never extinguished. He started doing offlining for some shows at Univision, the leading Spanish language network, and that turned into some online work using an Editbox. Three years later, he was doing promos and other work for World Cup soccer. And that's when his career really took off.

During the past dozen or so years since, Fortgang has built up a large clientele, and he is especially sought after within the Hispanic market. Initially, he did a lot of work in the sports arena, although today he has produced a wide range of projects — commercials, network promotions, high-profile broadcasts and, yes, sporting events — for the likes of Don King Productions, Top Rank Boxing, BVI/Manhattan Transfer, Thirdeye and Merge Studios. He has also collaborated with brands such as AT&T, Volkswagen, Nintendo, Disney, Universal Orlando Resorts, Discovery Channel, Toyota, Honda, Ikea, Presidente beer and Wendy's, among others.



Albert Fortgang

Delivering for the Hispanic Market

Fortgang lived in the Dominican Republic as a youngster before moving to Miami in his teens. Post facilities often seek him out, whether for the general market or, more often, for the Hispanic market. He estimates that three-quarters of his work is done there. "That's where my strength is, in the Hispanic market," Fortgang adds.

Oftentimes the work involves adapting the language of a national campaign from English to Spanish, and many times it involves different creative, especially if the project is coming from a Hispanic agency. One of the challenges is that the Hispanic market is, of course, not a monolith. It encompasses a wide swath of people, cultures, dialects and countries — Mexico, Cuba,

Guatemala, Panama and more. One thing, though, is inherent in this work, according to Fortgang. "We have so much fun when doing spots for the Hispanic market. We don't overly stress ourselves. The clients are just more fun. There aren't 10 people in a session sitting behind you. It's just more of a creative atmosphere." The budgets are similar to those for the general market, but the teams are often smaller. And he notes, the ads are more individualized, more personal.

Evolution of the Work

In the early days, Fortgang used Autodesk Smoke as well as Avid Media Composer when working at the Hispanic networks. While at Manhattan Transfer, he was back using Smoke and working on various short- and long-form projects. "Whatever came in, I was finishing it," he says. He performed the "meat and potatoes" (conform, delivery, client-facing work) on Smoke, while another person did scene work on Autodesk Flame. Eventually Fortgang made his way to Thirdeye for a few years, where he became proficient on Autodesk Flame.

Throughout his career, Fortgang has worked across all genres. "I've done film work, VFX for film, documentaries and features, as well as post-supervised films and TV series. At this point, I've done it all," says Fortgang, noting that the diverse experience resulted from his time at Univision, where a person was trained to do just about every function.

He has since joined the artist roster at [Harbor Picture Company](#) and has continued working with clients including Univision, NBCUniversal, Draftline, Spectrum, Facebook, Toyota, Planet Fitness and more.

At one point in his career, Fortgang was particularly fond of editing — that is, until he discovered how to finish spots. "I enjoy the finishing aspect of it and getting projects on-air. I also enjoy being on-set for VFX supervision," he says. Insofar as production is concerned, it's not Fortgang's thing. However, he offers this advice to clients when it comes to shooting: Get the best director and DP you can afford, and ones who fit your creative.

Evolution of the Gear

Fortgang works from his home in Miami, where during COVID, he set up a full post studio tech center in his garage. He strongly believes it is important to own your own gear; that it is vital to being able to complete a job. "I make it a point to invest in tools I need to do the work, and that includes paying for software licenses," Fortgang says.

In partnership with Harbor, Fortgang is able to execute client sessions involving supervision and real-time reviews — using an extensive setup supported by Harbor's engineering team that includes Streambox solutions or Sohonet's Clearview. As a result, he can work with clients across geographies, servicing agencies throughout North America, Latin America, South America and EMEA.



During the summer months, Fortgang and his family head off to a remote location in the mountains of North Carolina (as they also did during COVID). This used to mean packing up \$80,000 or so worth of gear so he could continue working. "That's a lot of money to be moving around on a car ride," he says.

A New Way to Work

That was before he transitioned to a [Dell](#) mobile workstation. "I don't have to take all that equipment now, and I can work remotely without skipping a beat. For the past several months, I have been using the laptop on set... and everywhere. It's been a godsend," says Fortgang of the Dell Precision 7750 with an NVIDIA [RTX A5000](#) GPU, on which he runs Flame 2022.2. "It's just as fast as my \$50,000 workstation, but it's a \$14,000 laptop!"



Fortgang often does on-set supervision for Univision and finds himself doing rough edits for clients using the Precision 7750. Usually, he will have a cut the client likes by the end of the day. "I'm also testing the chroma keys. It's amazing I can do all that on-set," he notes. Recently, he acquired a Precision [7760](#) with a next-generation NVIDIA RTX A5000 GPU, "and I am very happy with it running the latest version of Flame."

Fortgang confesses that he had never been a Dell person, and instead used other brands and SuperMicro machines. But then Autodesk asked if he wanted to try out Flame on a Dell mobile workstation and sent him the computer with the software preinstalled. "I thought, OK, it can't hurt to try it out," he says. "And I've fallen head over heels for it."

The Work in Progress

Among the more recent projects Fortgang has completed using the Dell Precisions is a 15-second commercial for Metro by T-Mobile, for which he did all the VFX, conform and finishing using the 7750. ([Watch it here.](#)) The work on the Spanish-language spot entailed changing the artwork on a taco truck and adding cellphone screen comps, in addition to mastering and delivery.

Fortgang also conformed and finished a flashy long-form promo for the Miami Heat on the Precision 7760. ([Watch it here.](#)) That job entailed touch-ups and compositing players into the piece who had been shot on greenscreen. The challenging aspect of this project was meeting the tight deadline, as Fortgang faced (and met) a 48-hour turnaround for the work.

Most recently, Fortgang used the Precision 7760 to add VFX to the high-profile Rick Ross *Little Havana* music video, as well as conform and finish. ([Watch it here.](#)) The work, done within Flame, required replacing all the artwork on the boats in the video (tracking, painting, and cleanup).

Currently, Fortgang is using a hybrid system for his work. In addition to the Precisions running Flame, he also utilizes his original equipment and software — which is set up in his home studio space — especially when shipping and mastering spots. But for work on the go, that is now reserved for his Dell mobile workstations. "I can be on-set with a simple monitor, and it works like I'm at my office. It just works. I've had zero issues with it. Zero."



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