

Piggley winks in our backyard!

The \$7-million 3-D animation film that's won an Emmy was made in Mumbai

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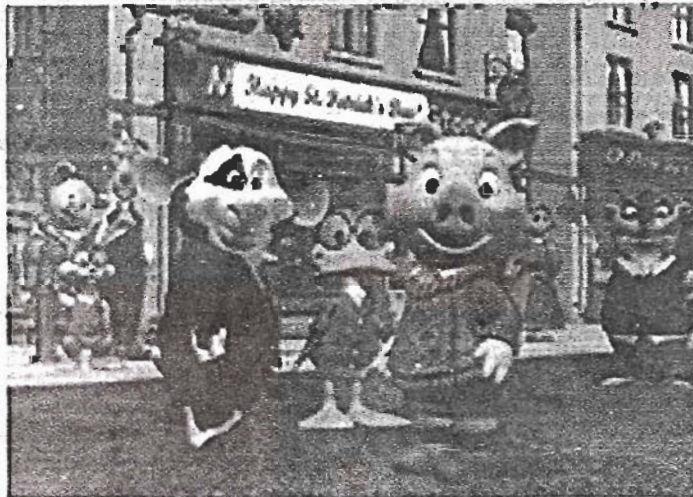
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IT took a barnyard full of animals and a team at Crest Animation Studios, Mumbai, to make it happen. But *Jakers! The Adventures of Piggley Winks*, which airs on PBS in the US and on other networks around the world has just bagged a Daytime Emmy Award for Outstanding Children's Animated Program.

The show, which turned a group of two-legged mammals into a household phenomenon, was created by A K Madhavan and his pool of 60 animators out of their studio space in Worli.

"It was first outsourced to us in the middle of 2002. And we delivered the first season of 26 episodes in 2003," says Madhavan (46), CEO, Crest. *Jakers!* also won a BAFTA in November 2005 in the children's category.

The sophisticated 3D animated series features an Irish pig, Piggley, and his friends Dannan the Duck and Ferny the Bull. Each episode opens with Grandpa Piggley, who now lives in North America, shar-



A still from the 3-D animation film *Jakers! The Adventures of Piggley Winks* that features an Irish pig, Piggley, and his friends Dannan the Duck and Ferny the Bull. The film was made by Mumbai-based A K Madhavan

ing stories of his childhood exploits with his three grandchildren.

Using xsi, a high-end graphics software, the show was developed in Mumbai, keeping in mind the character briefs supplied by Mike Young Productions of the US. "The look and feel came in the form of sketches. But the entire process of modelling, rigging, com-

positing was done by us," Madhavan adds.

Because the show is broadcast internationally, Crest found themselves competing with some of the best studios in the world and needed an edge, which came in the form of proprietary software they wrote especially for the project.

"We made a lot of value-addi-

tions, specials effects like storms, clouds, water ripples and rainfall. The animation had to stand apart," he says.

Placing the characters in their Irish milieu involved a lot of background research—how the houses should look, what kind of trees should be planted into the landscape or even the manner in which the protagonists ought to be dressed.

Sculpting the actual figures was easier. "Because they're fictional two-legged forms we didn't really need to use animal references. That happens when we're working with four-legged creatures," explains Madhavan.

The studio recently concluded the second season of *Piggley Winks* along with *Pet Alien*, which airs on Cartoon Network and *Bratz*, for Mike Young.

They've also signed a deal for the animated theatrical *Sylvester and the Magic Peddle* and are in the process of moving into a brand new 45,000 sq ft office in Ghatkopar.

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