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**arts**

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DESCRIPTION : ARTICLE ABOUT MAKING THE TITLE  
SEQUENCE OF "HOW HIP HOP CHANGED  
THE WORLD" FOR FRESH ONE, CHANNEL 4



01-02 Background images of objects like musical gear were traced from photos using Illustrator, then turned into 3D objects and lit in Maya, for what Allen calls a "2D-3D feel"

03 To evoke the 1980s through the typographic cityscape, Allen chose a strongly graphic, squared-off font: "It had a constructivist feel and enabled me to make these very architectural shapes."



## HOW HIP HOP CHANGED THE WORLD

CLIENT Fresh One / Channel 4

ARTISTS The Light Surgeons

[www.lightsurgeons.com](http://www.lightsurgeons.com)

"The idea for the titles was to have a journey from a needle falling on a record to a kind of viral infection of the world," says Christopher Thomas Allen from The Light Surgeons collective, which created the titles for Channel 4's new programme *How Hip Hop Changed the World*. Allen art-directed and storyboarded the sequence for the two-hour survey of hip hop's 35-year influence on mainstream culture,

which was produced by Jamie Oliver's company Fresh One.

Animated by BlinkinLab's Tom Wall, the sequence moves outward from the record deck through a cityscape composed of typography, eventually showing the whole world in words. "I liked the idea of representing the programme in typography, so we got the director to write a list of all the key things in the programme," Allen says.

Graphic artist Mitchy Bwoy drew the images of the music's pioneers, such as DJ Kool Herc and Flavour Flav that appear, an aspect that proved a potential minefield for a programme that might be licensed to the USA, where laws about image usage vary.

"We wanted to represent key icons within the genre visually, but then came quite a discussion about the legalities of using famous people." Fortunately, a solution was found – "Mitch pulled together a lot of images of these characters and hybridised them to make a stylised version with subtle levels of adaption" – but the irony wasn't lost on Allen: "I thought it was quite funny because hip hop's all about sampling and reappropriation."