

Engineer Wins Sci-Tech Oscar for Visual Effects Tools

By **LISA TSERING**

India-West Staff Reporter

Anil Kokaram, an engineering lecturer based in Dublin, Ireland, has won an Academy Award for the design of "Furnace," a set of visual effects software tools, it was announced Jan. 4.

Kokaram and his colleagues, Bill Collis, Simon Robinson and Ben Kent, will receive the award at a gala function at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel in Beverly Hills, Calif., Feb. 10.

Their team is among 15 winners of this year's Scientific and Technical Academy Awards.

An expert in the restoration of films, Kokaram, 39, is currently a senior lecturer and fellow at Dublin's prestigious Trinity College, founded in 1592. He was born in Trinidad and Tobago and was educated at Cambridge University.

Furnace is a highly versatile integrated suite of software tools that — in the words of an Academy press release — "robustly utilize temporal coherence for enhancing visual effects in motion picture sequences."

For an explanation of what that means, **India-West** tracked down Kokaram in Dublin and he gracefully obliged.

"It turns out that many effects and enhancement operations for motion pictures or video require good 'motion estimation,'" he said in an email Jan. 8.

"Furnace is the name they use for a collection of different software tools that allow a user to perform various tasks that were previously very difficult to do in post-production except with manual editing. Some of the tools began with my motion estimation and picture interpolation technology and developed/evolved

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