



## TZ Relaunches HBO Latin America

By [Michael Barlow](#)

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# TZ Relaunches HBO Latin America

**Vice President/Creative Director: Iain Greenway**  
**TZ**

Early in 1999, **HBO** Latin America began shifting its programming emphasis to include more original programming created specifically for the Latin American market. Their previous offerings had centered around the standard American movie product borrowed from the U.S. parent channel, and their on-air graphics look amounted to a re-



**"Shadow, Water, Ink and Wisp IDs"**

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packaging of this content for a Latin American audience. With all new programming and a corresponding new image, HBO Latin America needed a completely updated broadcast package. Rather than submit the job for the pitching process, in Autumn of last year, the HBO marketing team came directly to **TZ** and vice president/creative director Iain Greenway. Based on the package TZ created for HBO North America, as well as its wide variety of international projects, the HBO Latin America marketing group was confident in TZ's ability to fulfill the channel's own design requirements.

"The HBO team had already begun preliminary design work," said Greenway, "establishing a minimalist



### "Tumble IDs"

[1.3 MB QuickTime 3 Movie](#)

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print look for the basic foundation of the project. The important element of that design was the idea of a grid structure; that was the point of entry for us. We had to determine how it would all come to life and what the grid boxes would have inside them. We were trying to find something that was minimal, yet

communicated a natural movement, and of course we were going for something completely original. The real key to the design was making it feel Latin American without pointing to any specific culture. We had to look at the iconography from the various regions and establish something which felt like it came from Latin American history without using any actual regional icons.

"We went to the library and looked at things like sculpture, textiles, artwork and religious iconography; then we pasted these visual references all over one wall and started brainstorming. We collated everything we'd come up with and laid it all out on the table with the client. We wound up with a situation where we liked certain aspects of the different icons we had created -- the bird feet of one symbol or the way the arms crossed on another. We then combined these different elements to create the exact look we wanted. It was an organic progression where we absorbed authentic images and invented our own library of symbols. We tried to keep the designs very simple because we knew we would be fragmenting them within the grid structure. A couple of times we had to backtrack because the designs had become too complex. We generated 12 symbols based on our anticipation of how many graphic elements the client needed and how many icons would be necessary to give the package the necessary variety.

**Iain Greenway, Creative Director**  
**TZ**

In addition to the icons, TZ broke the package down into a series of five natural motions which

would correspond to individual IDs and lead the entire package. "The idea to use natural motion was our solution to establishing distinct animation while maintaining the overall simplicity of the design. The motions we settled on were: 'tumble,' where the cubes literally tumble over one another; 'shadow,' where a moving light source reveals the logo; 'wisp,' where the movement of smoke forms the logo; 'water,' where the cubes float on the surface of water, and 'ink,' where the logo reveals itself the way ink spreads across a paper surface. Each of these actions works into its own series of elements within the package. For example, we use the 'tumble' animation for all the program ratings bumpers."



### "Program Bumper with Ink ID"

[3.0 MB QuickTime 3 Movie](#)

[5.5 MB QT 2 \(CinePak\) Movie](#)

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Greenway and his team used a combination of organic and digital methods to achieve each of the desired movements. "The 'shadow' animation was one of my favorites. We wanted it to move like the shadow of a real object so we cut out our icon shapes from plywood, spun them on a piece of monofilament in front of a single light source and videotaped the shadows that were thrown onto the background. Eventually, we decided we could have more control over the shadow if we built it as a 3D digital model, so we built it in Softimage, then took that into our inferno\* and fragmented it further. We split it apart, added the color and gave it some motion blur until we had much more of a painterly look.

"The technique we used for the 'ink' animation is an old trick I've used many times. We took hand-crafted watercolor paper and washed it with water, then dropped black ink onto the surface. The ink ran across the wet paper in natural rivulets. We filmed it on digital video to avoid the in-betweens of interlaced video. Once we got the look we wanted, we broke it into film frames in the inferno\* and made it into a matte that we used as the reveal. It's a very simple thing, but it's something that if you tried to synthesize it, you'd never get it right.

"In all the animations, we worked to get the essence of the motion and not make it overly complex. I've been doing this rather a long time; when I started at the BBC 20 years ago, I had to build models because 3D systems didn't exist. Even though digital means might be the best tool for the job, I still think in terms of organic models. In the end, the particular tool doesn't really matter -- whatever helps you get the job done."

**Iain Greenway, Creative Director**  
**TZ**

## CREDITS

### Client: HBO Latin America

On Air Manager: Sonia Echezuria  
Art Director: Javier LaRiva  
Executive Producer: Carlos Abascal

### Design Company: TZ, New York, NY

Creative Director: Iain Greenway  
Technical Director: Joe Shingeloy  
Designer: Dale Ide  
3D Animators: Jim Collins  
Dan Barlow  
Mike Cushny  
Inferno\* Artist: Udi Edni  
Producer: Carolina Glucksmann  
Production: Jen Andros  
Coordinators: Javier Gonzalez

### Tools

Hardware/Software: [Discreet inferno\\*](#)  
[SOFTIMAGE|3D](#)  
[Alias|Wavefront Maya](#)  
[PowerModeler](#)  
[Adobe Photoshop](#)  
[Power Macintosh](#)

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