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ANIMATION\_VFX\_DESIGN

## THOM YORKE LAMENTS, BENT IMAGE LAB ANIMATES

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 [heathrow](#) |

Thom Yorke's [latest video](#) for the track "Harrowdown Hill" (the weighty song about David Kelly - the controversial British weapons inspector whose 2003 suicide is considered suspicious) from director Chel White at [Bent Image Lab](#) intros with a stunning example of tilt-shift lens photography applied to the moving image. I think the track is fantastic, and I'm dying to hear more new Thom Yorke but the clincher for me are those early landscape and cityscapes with that great miniature look that's really hard not to love. Plus the structuralist stop-motion eagle animation from David Russo is quite the impressive achievement.



PORTLAND, Or. – Aug. 7 – British alternative rock icon Thom Yorke recently released his debut solo album, *The Eraser*, which shot to the top of the charts in the U.S. and Britain. When it came to filming the music video for the album's first single – "Harrowdown Hill" – Yorke, who's best known as the frontman for Radiohead, enlisted the aid of Portland-based director Chel White and Bent Image Lab to create the highly-stylized and experimental piece.

The 4:30 song, released by independent record label, X L Recordings, is based on the story of David Kelly, a controversial British weapons inspector whose 2003 suicide is considered suspicious. Yorke, who has a reputation as a political activist, has described the song as the "angriest song I've ever written in my life."

"I was immediately struck by the song's underlying intensity and depth of emotion," recalls director Chel White. "I got a great feeling of eeriness from it as well, and yet there was something oddly hopeful about it too. I knew I didn't want the video to literally be about the David Kelly case, and Thom Yorke and the video commissioner Dilly Gent were in agreement with me on that. At the same time, there were certain metaphoric images such as the eagle scenes and Thom drowning, that had enormous relevance."

"Upon first listening to the song," says White, "I immediately imagined the video as having different sections, like chapters. From animation to underwater imagery, each section would be characterized by a distinct visual approach. I was concerned that one single technique for the entire 4 and a half minutes would not only get a little tiresome, but wouldn't do justice to what I saw as the evolving nature of the song."



Chel White says, "I sent Thom a DVD of my short films and he responded specifically to a film I made a few years ago called 'Passage'. The film juxtaposes underwater portraits of people with historic footage of war and atrocities. Thom described the film as possessing a characteristic of 'soft time,' and this interested him. I understood it as lacking a normal perception of space and time in a manner that is other-worldly. It's like what I imagine we all experience when we die--space and time no longer have the same meaning. At the very first stage in the process, Thom and I talked about the element of 'soft time' being a key part of the Harrowdown Hill video."