



HP Z8 G5 Fury Delivers Performance Boost for Autodesk Flame Creative Work

Case Study



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As the co-founder of Logik.tv, an online community of more than 3,000 Autodesk Flame artists, Andy Milkis is used to sharing his experience and perspective on all things VFX and creative finishing – from esoteric artistry to speeds and feeds. As a go-to for Flame artists, Milkis regularly test-drives new technology and benchmarks various workstations, graphics cards and system components not only to share knowledge with the Logik.tv community, but to drive his own work forward. His latest experiment was on an HP Z8 Fury G5 desktop workstation, one of Autodesk Flame’s recommended specs, provided by HP for testing purposes.

A Flame artist and VFX Supervisor for the better part of 20 years, Milkis has been running the Flame Facebook group since 2013 and has produced 128 episodes of his weekly Logik YouTube show, featuring guest artists from all over the world showing their work and talking with the community.

“I’m a freelance Flame artist who owns my own business and works every day, often on multiple projects,” Milkis said. “As a community, Flame artists need to turn out the highest volume of work at the highest level of quality. We’re all looking for the same thing– how can I possibly get this project done faster without compromising quality?”

Milkis had been seeking to find that answer by testing a combination of components, and found gold when he tested a 4K project in Flame 2024.1 (rewritten from the ground up in Vulkan) running on the HP Z8 Fury G5 workstation with the 36-core Intel® Xeon® W9-3475X processor and NVIDIA RTX 6000 Ada GPU. This trifecta delivered a significant increase in performance when rendering a complex 4K beauty shot, compared to the same project running on his older HP Z8 G4 workstation.



“When I put this all together, leveraging the power of Flame, some CPU and some GPU, all with the power of the hardware you can find in the HP Z8 [G4] Fury it just screams. I was moving around as many pixels as I possibly could, and the [HP Z8] G5 blew me away with a 2.75X performance increase compared with my older G4 system.”

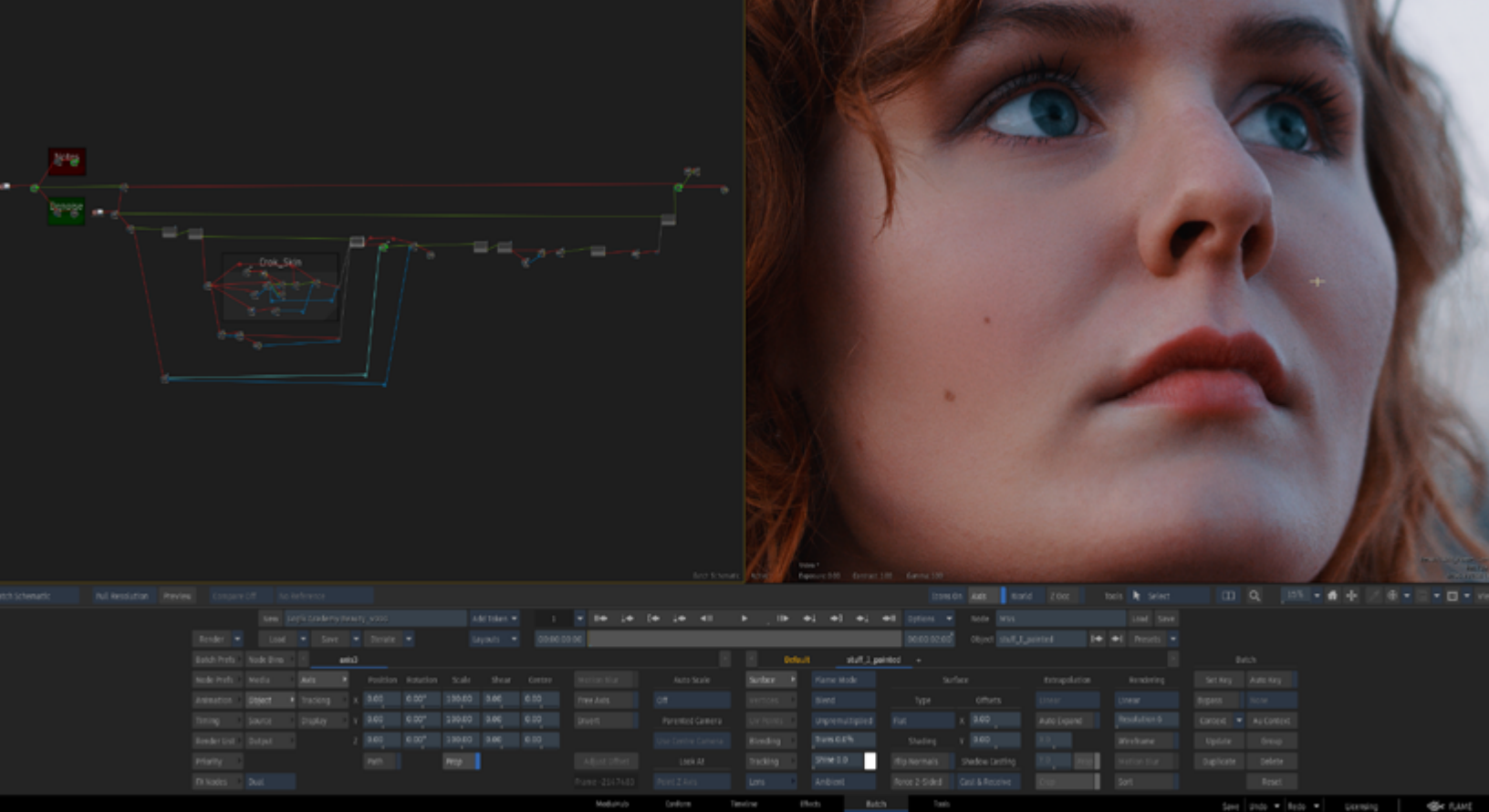
While the sheer number is impressive, it’s the impact of that performance increase that Milkis took back to the community at Logik.tv. “The reality of getting files off storage and into a processor and graphics card is so robust that to me, the most impressive benchmark of all is that what I’m doing eight hours a day, five days a week, will be faster on this machine.”

Faster Processing to Keep Up with Growing File Sizes

As productions from commercials to films, TV, games, and next-gen entertainment move

to higher-resolution workflows and virtual production, artists need faster tools to handle the massive file sizes they now have to wrangle. Expanded deliverables add to the complexity.

“In the high-end 2D world, we’re grappling with the reality that our deliverables list has exploded,” Milkis explained. We’re doing work in 8K, 4K, 16 x 9, and really the only way to deliver all of that and remain profitable is by working at the highest resolution and down-sampling for each deliverable. Sometimes I’ll work at 6K or 8K, not because the content will be in an IMAX theater, but because it ends up getting shown on 12 screens in 12 sizes and I need to be able to down-sample in multiple ways.”



The Bottom Line is Always the Bottom Line

Milkis said the reality - for freelance artists especially - is that investing in high-end gear is the main hurdle to overcome. "When I looked at the cost of these components and amortized them over the year, the amount of work I can push through this system pays for itself quickly and completely."

He also noted the benefit of building projects on a Linux-based workstation that is configurable. "With the alternative approach, if one component breaks, the whole machine is gone. The advantage of starting on the HP Z8 Fury G5 workstation is that if I need to upgrade, add RAM or storage, I can do that the G5

also has redundant power supplies, storage, graphics card, networking ports and the like. In a pinch, I could run to a retail store to replace them. That flexibility matters."

"When you do the kind of work I do, every day is different. "I might be working on shots for an indie film, doing bread-and-butter VFX cleanup work, driving shots, beauty work – it could be anything. From a Flame artist's perspective, all of these projects have different needs. But I always need a reliable workhorse of a machine, and [HP Z] always delivers."

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May 2025



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