

COBRA REBELLION ART DEPARTMENT SUBMISSION
PLANET POSITIVE AWARD

NEW PICTURES
sky original

COBRA
REBELLION



COBRA 3 - REBELLION
SKY TV/NEW PICTURES
ART DEPT PLANET POSITIVE SUBMISSION

Cobra Rebellion was 6 episodes shot over three blocks from 2022 to early 2023. Each block had its design challenges but basically broke down (in story and design terms) like this:

Block 1 - A government-backed high-speed trainline is being constructed in the countryside north of London. The massive dig goes under a town. The dig is sabotaged and the construction tunnel collapses and sections of the town end up in rubble, several meters below ground. An environmental political group uses this negative publicity on the government to its advantage.

Block 2 - At an arms fair, a disgruntled ex-soldier conspires to steal a high-tech smart mortar with the intention of using it as a bargaining tool against the government.

Block 3 - The series climaxes with the PM being moved to an underground base for his protection while the ex-soldier and his cronies plan an assault on Whitehall.

Obviously, there was a lot more detail in the story but they were the main challenges for the art dept.

Firstly, as with any recurring TV drama, we had core sets that we had kept in storage from series 2. Some of these had been used since series 1 but there were new sets in series 2 that Construction Manager John Foster and his team also flat-packed. John and I had conversations with Gavin Lewis (supervising art director) about how we would design sets in the first place so that packing them away was more feasible. We always gambled that the show would be back for another series, so proper storage of the sets was key to a cost-effective (and consequently greener) rebuild. The sets were stored in dry conditions in Yorkshire and once reassembled, required paint touch-ups and various other elements, for example, we remade the entire floor of the Cobra Room, as it didn't survive the storage too well. But all-in-all, we were pleasantly surprised with the condition of the sets. The sets were erected on Stage 4 at Space Studios in Manchester and with a tweak to the corridor to the Cobra Room, we managed to fit them all onto one stage. The three main sets were: The Cobra Room, the PM's office at No 10 and the PM's apartment at No 10.

Set Decorator Sam Slater was new to the project for series 3. She and I discussed sourcing as many of the props as we could in the Manchester area, rather than carting stuff up from London, as we had done in previous series. Many of the core props were purchased for previous series, and so, just like the sets, were kept in dry storage, and were in excellent condition. I think the impact this had on our

carbon footprint was big. It meant most of our deliveries were kept local, and we spent less money that anticipated on long-haul prop transport.

I think these two methods (reusing existing sets that were stored, and hiring/sourcing props in the local area) had a significant impact on our efforts. Frankly, in the cut and thrust of art dept work it can be hard to try to use “greener” companies/suppliers, as we are always slaves to the scripts and therefore must react to what’s presented to us. But, like I say, as we kept these two attitudes in mind throughout the process the carbon footprint was affected in a positive way.

Block 1: We had to create a building site for the main Trainline Construction Area. Once we had established the location (Hutchbank Quarry, Haslingden, Lancashire) we could make pre-vis art of the set proposal and accurately predict what elements we needed, ie, plant machinery, portakabins, portaloos, barriers, etc. All of the elements here were hired directly from real construction hire companies and therefore construction elements for the art dept were kept to a minimum. By doing a pre-vis, we can (in prep with the director and DP) “lock off” the confines of the set with a degree of accuracy and thus keep to budget etc.

At Hutchbank we also shot elements of the sinkhole (created in the explosion) for our story. Because we had already shot the town elements of the story we could reuse the same props here and cut down on costs and transport.

Other sets in Block 1 included a collapsed tunnel and a remote Command Area for the government. Both of these were built in Old Wentworth School in Ellesmere Park, Manchester.

Block 2: The story required a large Arms Expo. We shot this in the Manchester Central exhibition centre. The same attitude applied here. By doing a pre-vis we knew what the set limits could be. In a high and wide shot we could add more of the Expo, but our set could be relatively contained.

Block 3: The underground bunker that the PM is evacuated to (called “Sit-Cen” in the story) was built using the flats from the Arms Expo. Although at the time we were planning Block 2, we still didn’t have locked Block 3 scripts, we always knew the flats from the Expo would be reused for whatever we on the horizon.

Sit-Cen was partly built on the Command Area in Block 1, and partly on the collapsed tunnel. Therefore the floor coverings and flats from these previous sets, were also reused in Block 3.

I am unable to speak fully for other departments, but I imagine that this also had an impact on the crew in general, ie, the electricians could use the same rig on both sets, etc.

In conclusion, it seems to me that keeping to a budget, combined with a certain attitude, goes hand-in-hand with a greener approach. By the very philosophy of keeping things “local” and reusing as much as we could, in this case by relying on a store of (a) things we had made or bought on series 3 or (b) things we had stored from previous series, our carbon footprint was reduced.

COBRA REBELLION ART DEPT

Stephen Daly	Production Designer
Gavin Lewis	Supervising Art Director
Sam Slater	Set Decorator
Ellie Dyson	Art Director
Kat Hale	Art Director
Rachael Britch	Production Buyer
Olivia Kidner	Action Props Buyer
John Foster	Construction Manager
Douglas Ferguson	Prop Master

COBRA REBELLION
EXT ULTRALINE CONSTRUCTION SITE
BASIC DRESSING LAYOUT



HUTCH BANK QUARRY
10.10.22

CONCEPT ART

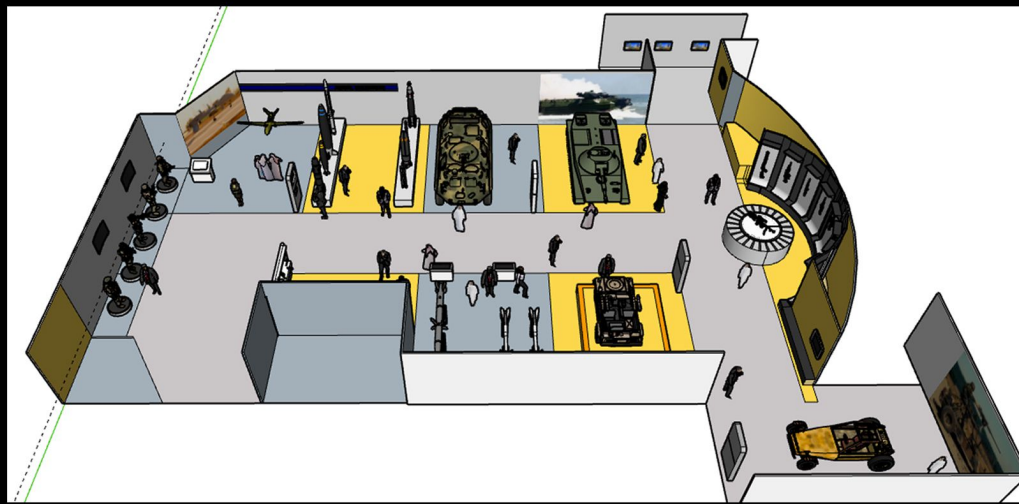


COBRA REBELLION
ART DEPT
EXT ULTRALINE CONSTRUCTION SITE
BLOCK 1

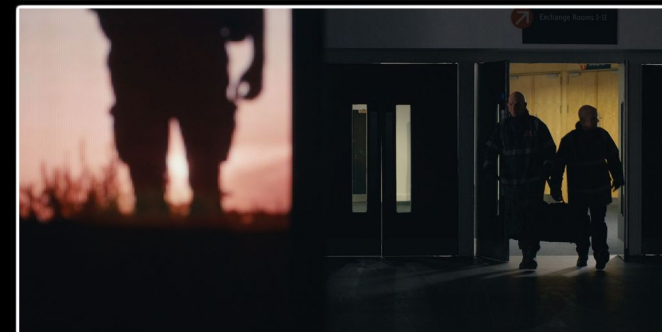
SCREEN STILLS



BLOCK 2 - INT ARMS EXPO - BUILD AT MANCHESTER CENTRAL EXHIBITION HALL



**CONCEPT
ART**



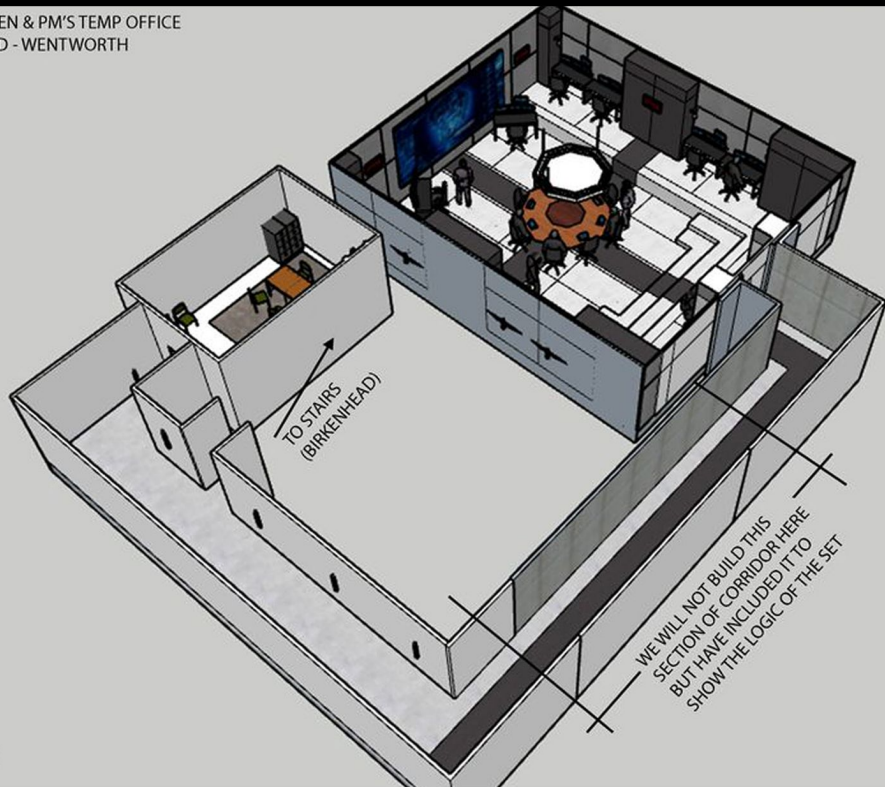
**SCREEN
STILLS**



BLOCK 3 - INT SIT-CEN - SET BUILD AT WENTWORTH SCHOOL, MANCHESTER

SCREEN STILLS

INT SIT-CEN & PM'S TEMP OFFICE
SET BUILD - WENTWORTH



CONCEPT ART

