

# KONG

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**“Rock & Pop is Dead. This is DanTDM!”**



## **Kong Studio collaborates with DanTDM on his latest live immersive tour – The Contest**

**DanTDM** is one of the world’s biggest YouTubers, loved by kids and adults alike. His positive and fun attitude have made his channels the place to hang out on YouTube with his 21 million subscribers and 14 billion views, testament to his popularity. He recently went back on tour in the UK after creating a totally immersive gaming experience – The Contest. The show toured 4 arenas (Wembley, Manchester, Birmingham and Glasgow) over a two-week period in Summer 2019. The show featured five epic twenty-six metre wide motion comic animations from Kong Studio.

### **Everything about the show was big!**

The official event description - *“2019’s live arena shows will allow Dan to transport you into a totally new world, one that hasn’t even been seen on his channel; showcasing specially created games, animations and stories that you won’t want to miss.”*

Talking of the project Kong’s Producer Emma Burch says - *“It’s definitely our most epic project to date!”*

**Cut & Mustard** - an immersive live events company, developed the show’s intergalactic E-Federation concept with Dan himself, alongside the show’s director James Kermack and script writer **Neil Jack** – a regular Kong Studio collaborator. Kong Studio then brought the Talonian, Artikan and Arborean tribe back stories and parallel dimensions to life in an Anime style, using their well-oiled motion comic pipeline.

*“Combining detailed manga/gaming style character design with looser painted backgrounds enabled us to create something really cinematic and rich in appearance within the deadline.”*

*By the nature of it being part of a live show, it was clear from the start that this project would be very dynamic and constantly evolve. The 10 week turnaround including development was very tight. We had to work quickly, with each artist needing to get several panels of storyboard completed each day to leave enough time for the compositing.*

*To be honest, at times it felt like a Talonian mountain to climb, but we hit the deadline without ever compromising the work. ”- Tom Baker, Kong Co-Founder*



### **Melbot Reinvented**

Kong Studio’s second contribution to DanTDM’s The Contest show was a redesigned, real-time, live animated version of DanTDM’s sidekick - Melbot, brilliantly voiced by actress [Anna Brook-Mitchell](#).

Melbot was Kong’s first foray into real-time animation. After researching options with established audio-visual and fine artist David Daniels, they decided VJ software Magic Music Visualiser was the best fit for “the brief, creative and budget”.

### **Highlights**

Kong Studio says of there were 3 main reasons why the DanTDM project excited them so much:

- 1. This was the largest scale screen Kong’s work has ever been shown on – it was (a mere) 26 metres wide!**

*“The motion comics were essentially 3 x 1080i width which was wider than anything any of us had worked on before and we wanted to take full advantage of this super wide screen format. The character detail added to the depth and epic spectacle of the backgrounds. The backgrounds focused your eye back on the fantastic characters. ” - Tom Baker, Kong Co-Founder*

- 2. Kong Studio got to try something new and experiment with live VJ animation software**

*“We developed the existing DanTDM Melbot design to make her more feminine, friendly and engaging for a live audience. We then assembled Melbot’s different emotional ‘states’ so these could be easily activated during the performance. It was great to see the live aspect work so well which added personality and charm to Melbot while giving the show’s production crew the flexibility they needed on the night.” - Emma Burch – Kong Executive Producer*

- 3. It was seen by thousands of DanTDM’s devoted audience - and the response was phenomenal!**

In the words of British comedian and broadcaster Iain Lee:

**"Rock and pop is dead. This is a YouTube [@dantdm](#) The reaction is phenomenal."**  
**[pic.twitter.com/713UBcKH71](https://pic.twitter.com/713UBcKH71)**

**— Iain Lee - talkRADIO (@iainlee) [June 28, 2019](#)**

*"Watching 15,000 kids lose their mind at a live show to our work was one of my proudest moments."*

- *Tom Baker, Kong Co-Founder*

Elspeth Rae and Ton Greenwood-Mears, joint MD's of the production company Cut and Mustard that created, produced and promoted the show said - *"This was always going to be an exciting challenge. Scaling up to arena size, when so many of Dan's fans are used to seeing him on a small screen was a big step but, working with such talented teams of people made the whole thing much easier; the quality of the production was astonishing. The fan feedback has been brilliant and we are so proud to be the team to bring the first YouTuber to arenas on this scale."*

In addition to Kong's animation and Melbot elements, the immersive show featured bespoke games from Leeds based developers [Running in the Halls](#). As well as an audience app by [HeyHub](#). Without forgetting mentioning the many talented production crew members from [production lighting design](#) and [management, set design](#), crowd management etc. who all made the show a huge success!

View Kong's DanTDM Trailer here – <https://kong-studio.com/work/dantdm-the-contest/>

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### **About Kong Studio:**

Kong Studio was founded in 2015 by Bill Elliott and Tom Baker and joined by ex-Simon's Cat Producer Emma Burch in 2018. The studio specializes in 'well-crafted and beautifully realized animation, illustration and storyboarding'.

Kong Studio have worked on short-form content in advertising, corporate, feature film and children's entertainment for clients including Amnesty International, Penguin Publishing and Intel. Most recently we completed production on Thomas & Friends, a 12-episode YouTube series for HIT Entertainment that attracted over half a million views per episode.

### **DanTDM The contest / Kong Credits:**

Creative Director : **Bill Elliott**  
Art Director : **Tom Baker**  
Producer : **Emma Burch**  
Lead Character Artist : **Javier Castillo**  
Additional Character Designer : **Judit Boor**  
Digital Artist : **Rob Smith**  
Historical Designer : **Matt Oxborrow**  
Compositor : **Johnathan Klhar**  
VJ Compositor : **David Daniels**

### **For further information please contact:**

Kong Studio Ltd  
Emma Burch – Executive Producer  
[Emma@kong-studio.com](mailto:Emma@kong-studio.com)  
Bill Elliott – Co-Founder / Creative Director  
[Bill@kong-studio.com](mailto:Bill@kong-studio.com)  
Tel: 0203 417 570