Watch how Apple made its new puppet-packed holiday ad

While companies like Coca-Cola turned to generative AI to create “visually jarring” holiday ads this year, Apple continues to embrace practical effects with its new festive short film called *A Critter Carol* featuring a forest full of tech-savvy woodland creatures.

In the ad a hiker drops their iPhone 17 Pro, which is found by a curious raccoon who uses it to shoot an impromptu performance of the song “Friends” by Flight of the Conchords, along with other animals including a bear, wolf, owl, deer, squirrel, and rabbit. The phone is eventually retrieved by the hiker, who uses their Apple Watch to locate it.

Similar to how the new Apple TV intro was created by filming a glass model of the logo illuminated with colored lights, Apple released a behind-the-scenes look at the practical effects used to make *A Critter Carol*. There were lots of blue screens and blue bodysuits used that allowed the forest set to be digitally extended and human performers to be removed in post-production, but the critters were all hand-crafted puppets brought to life by a small army of puppeteers controlling various body parts. And yes, the entire production was shot on an iPhone 17 Pro.

https://www.theverge.com/news/831431/apple-a-critter-carol-holiday-ad-puppets-practical-effects