

P R O T E U S

A NINETEENTH CENTURY VISION

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Over the years I have worked with different animation techniques to bring life and motion to the art work of various cultures, including European signs and symbols, Tibetan Tanka paintings and Precolumbian stamp designs. When I first saw Ernst Haeckel's nineteenth century lithographs of single-celled undersea life forms, I was inspired to search for ways to animate their evolution and bring to life their extraordinary beauty and variety.

From my obsession with these tiny creatures, I found myself drawn into an ever-broadening investigation of the sea and the nineteenth century imagination. These explorations eventually encompassed marine biology and oceanography, poetry and painting, alchemy and mysticism, and led me into interaction with dozens of scientists and scholars around the world. The film *Proteus* is the end result of this long and – to me at least – endlessly surprising process.

David Lebrun
Director