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PANORAMA

CyberLink

CyberLink
PhotoDirector
ULTRA v4

From Camera Shots to Perfect Photos

Windows 8
Compatible

Mac

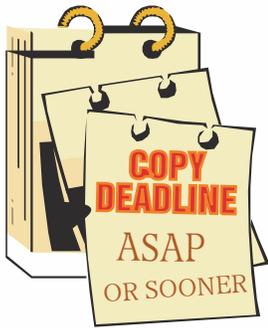
The Publication of the SOCIETY of CANADIAN CINE AMATEURS / SOCIETE DES CINE AMATEURS

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Front Cover

Stoney Creek City Hall
by Fred Briggs



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Disclosure



In August of 2013 I received an offer from CyberLink asking if they could “sponsor” our AGM in October. Sponsorship would consist of free disk copies of a trial of their products, PhotoDirector and PowerDirector, for our Members in attendance, plus Licenced Versions of both of those products for presentation to the winners of the SCCA Annual Video Competition, and a purchase discount for our members .

In return, we would be expected to present a demonstration of those products at the meeting, plus publish a review of each of those programs in PANORAMA. They would provide a registered copy for my own use so that I could write the review(s), information about the programs including recorded demos on a thumb stick that could be screened at the meeting, brochures for all in attendance, and a T-Shirt that I was to wear during the demonstration. While less than enthusiastic about that last requirement, I agreed in principle, subject to agreement from the SCCA Executive. They accepted the arrangement at the September Executive Meeting.

I’m no stranger to CyberLink. I’ve been using CyberLink PowerDVD V7 for viewing DVD’s on my computer for many years (6?, 12?) – I think it came with my LG Burner!

I bought PowerDirector 10 in 2012 because it had a facility I didn’t have on any of my older Video Editing Software: the ability to mix old 4:3 video into a Full Resolution HD 16:9 format, very important with the 200+ hours of footage I’ve shot since 1999 for my epic

documentary. This means I can mix new HD 16:9 footage and old 4:3, placing the 4:3 frame clips where I want, leaving some blank space in the frame for a time line, comments, titles, etc.

It also provided the facility to sync together footage shot simultaneously on several cameras, automatically locking the sound track of second and third cameras to the sound track of camera one, and I know from experience how tiring that is!

There was one problem with CyberLink’s offer though! PhotoDirector (for editing still pictures) is on one DVD Disk, and the PowerDirector video editing program is on another. While PowerDirector includes AudioDirector and ColorDirector, which are loaded automatically when the software is installed on your computer, PowerDirector will not work on an Apple/Mac, while PhotoDirector will run on either computer system, CyberLink provided the PhotoDirector software on it’s own DVD so Apple users can at least use PhotoDirector for their still pictures!

This meant that we had to determine in advance which of the Annual Winners use which computer system, and the Apple group received only the one disk, while the PC users got the whole combo.

You’ll find my review for PhotoDirector 4 on [page 8](#), and I’ll review PowerDirector 11, alone and in combination with PhotoDirector 4, in the January 2014 PANORAMA.

Legacy SCCA Trophies

The [Minutes of the AGM](#) report on a solution for the problem of the now redundant SCCA Trophies shown in the photo below (the tall ones in the back). At the end of the day, they all disappeared out of the building with no one complaining that he had lost his trophy!



Photo by Jenny Pfalzner

SOCIETY OF CANADIAN CINE AMATEURS

AGM 2013 MINUTES

October 18, 2013

The **Society of Canadian Cine Amateurs Annual General Meeting** was held at the former Stoney Creek City Hall on October 18, 2013.

Members Present: Ben Andrews, Reinhard Buehling, Fred Briggs, Carolyn Briggs, John Cook, Harold Cosgrove, Mary Cosgrove, Rick Doelle, Ian Firth, Celia Firth, George Gerula, Keith Gloster, Helen Gruber, Jenny Pfalzner, and Jim Small. (15 people)

Proxies from Paul Bentley, Joan Jacquemain, and Thom Speechley who were unable to attend.

Call To Order: 10:15 a.m.

Welcome: President Fred Briggs welcomed all present and announced that we had sufficient members present to constitute a quorum.

Minutes of the 2012 Annual General Meeting: As the Secretary, Joan Jacquemain, was on her way home from England and unable to attend, Carolyn Briggs read the minutes of the previous AGM. The 2012 minutes were published last year in Panorama. The 2013 minutes will be reported in the next issue of PANORAMA.

Old Business:

Websites – Since the 2012 AGM, all the old CIAFF Programs from the past that we have been able to find, that Thom Speechley has scanned, have been added to the CIAFF Website. These issues span from 1970 to 1993. To access them just click on the link on the CIAFF Home Page and read it right there. You can also search all Panoramas and all CIAFF Programs for any name or the name of any film, simultaneously on both of the websites at once by typing your search word(s) in the box below “Search The SCCA Site!” (or “Search This Site” on the CIAFF Home Page), and then clicking on “Find”.

Fred has discovered more CIAFF Films, some videos, and a large number of films and videos made by Fred Attridge. Fred’s son John Attridge has agreed with his father’s films and videos being transferred to the University of Toronto Media Collection, and these films and videos, along with the remaining CIAFF films, will be transferred to the University through Brock Silversides later today.

The possibility of reviving the CIAFF through VIMEO is still on the table. There are many problems with VIMEO and the Executive is still considering it, and discussions will continue into 2014.

The President reminded the membership about changes to the use of the music in the SCCA Royalty Free Libraries, and promised to again email a message to our members describing the procedure for obtaining the music.

Ian Firth moved that the Minutes be accepted as read, and the motion was seconded by Mary Cosgrove.

Treasurer’s Report: Treasurer Rick Doelle gave his report, presenting only the highlights as the books are still in the hands of the Auditor and a long recital of numbers wouldn’t be remembered by anyone anyway.

The following are the highlights of the SCCA Income Statement for the fiscal year June 1, 2012 to May 31, 2013:

Total Revenue: \$4012.50 (previous year: \$4323.49)

Total Expenditures: \$5815.44 (previous year: \$4175.80)

Net Gain or (Loss): (\$1802.94) loss. (Previous year: \$ 147.69 gain)

Major expenses for the fiscal year:

Transportation, Lodging: \$2401.86

Transfer CIAFF Films to Video Files: \$2451.25

Rick announced that he was prepared to provide more details to any member who asked for them. Acceptance of his report was moved by Carolyn Briggs and seconded by Keith Gloster.

Rick mentioned that memberships (\$20) in arrears for 2013 - 2014 are now overdue, and he was prepared to accept them now.

(A Complete Financial Statement is Registered every year with Revenue Canada and can be read for several years by one and all by clicking on the link (non-profit charitable organization) in the first line on the SCCA Home Page.)

There was a question from the audience about whether any other Projects could be expected to hit the bank account as hard as the digitizing of the CIAFF Films in the past year, and the members were assured that it would not.

SCCA Annual Video Contest: The following report was tabled by Keith Gloster.

2013 brought again some inspired, entertaining contest entries from across Canada, and from Michigan USA.

A total of 28 entries on DVD were eventually received, from some 13 entrants, a relatively small base.

Club activities of course permitted a somewhat larger participation.

New technologies continue to improve the quality of the submissions, although a few entries continue to contain material which may not have been cleared for copying. (Check your local SCCA sources for copyright free material please)

The judges were required to try to place some entries as to an appropriate category, due to some incomplete entry forms, - and a few entries were sometimes difficult to show on standard DVD players. Only one failed to be readable on any equipment this year.

Labels badly cemented onto discs can cause player problems - I would prefer that you simply mark your entries with a black SHARPIE pen, to avoid any physical problems. We have not had any teen entries for some years, and it may be indicative of the declining entry base we have been experiencing. i.e. those who were prolific with past entries, are tending to slow down in video activities such as contest preparations.

A new theme will soon be set, hopefully to re-pique your creative interests, and I encourage your continued video activities, and contest submissions in 2014.

Thanks for your interest in the SCCA to date, and continued good luck.



Photo by Harold Cosgrove

There was a question from the audience regarding the possibility of entering HD/Blue-Ray Videos in the future. A discussion ensued about the problem of some videos not able to be screened for the judges, and closed with the statement that the Contest Chairman has not yet seen a big demand for HD entries, and that problem will be considered when it needs to be.

Keith's Motion for Acceptance of his Report, was seconded by Jim Small.

Mary Cosgrove moved a Congratulations and Thank You for the work Keith did for the Contest, seconded by Paula Cutulle. Motion Carried.

New Business:

Helen Gruber informed us that the Ottawa Club is celebrating Gordon Fowler's 95th Birthday and she has a Birthday Card for those who would like to sign it.

In the past the winners of the various awards in the Annual SCCA Film or Video Contest were presented with Trophies that had been donated to the SCCA. Each year, the winner of each Trophy took home the Trophy with a shield added to it with his/her name and the year in which it was won, as well as a smaller plaque that the winner could keep. Many of those Trophies were very large and heavy, and while it wasn't a great problem for someone attending the Convention, it was expensive to mail them to a winner who lived some distance away. It was also expensive for the recipient to mail it back for the next year, some arrived too late to get the engraving done, many were damaged over the years, and some never came home, so we stopped presenting the Trophies (or adding the shields) and just kept them in storage after 2001 until we found another solution.

The time has come to face this problem and the Executive has come up with a very large number of possible solutions, with most of us making several suggestions. In the end, we decided to bring the Trophies to this AGM so everyone will know what we are talking about, and see what the members present thought we should do with them. Alas, there were even more ideas after an open discussion, so we decided that each trophy could be claimed by the most recent name on the shield, and if that person wasn't present, or didn't want it, it could go home with the second-to-last recipient, and then the third-to-last, but no one could take any trophy out of the building until anyone present with a better claim had turned it down.

Now that the CIAFF films have been copied onto a hard drive we have to consider who will take on the job of copying them onto DVD's and correcting problems like "turning red" which is really a problem of the fading of colours other than red, and changing the contrast on some of them. We may or may not copy them all, or only some of them, and this will be considered by the SCCA Executive in the future. We have opened an account with File Factory so those making DVD copies can get files over the internet instead of passing hard drives around.

We are also considering putting together selections of winning SCCA Contest Videos, arranged in groups by year, in order to be able to lend DVD Show Reels to the various clubs for screening at club meetings. The questions arose "Who will do it?" and "Who will want to watch them?" and the Executive decided to get a feeling on this from those at this AGM. After an explanation of the question, and much discussion, a motion was put forward, seconded, and passed, to produce a Master Copy on DVD of compilations of future winners of the SCCA Contest, and several years back for which we have the DVD's in hand.

PANORAMA

The President apologized for all the delays and missing issues of PANORAMA, listed those that are overdue, and promised that he would get caught up on as many of them as fast as he can find material for inclusion. He repeated his plea for articles, part-articles, ideas, reports, scripts, photographs, etc., and anything our members can provide, as soon as, and whenever, it strikes you.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 11:45 AM. ■

SCCA ANNUAL VIDEO COMPETITION 2013 AWARDS

Class A ADVANCED

Winner	FROM HANOI TO MEKONG DELTA	Mila Werbik
1st Runner-Up	CANADIAN TUNDRA	Mila Werbik
2nd Runner-Up	THE GREAT WALL	Ben Andrews
3rd Runner-Up	OASIS	Harold Cosgrove
Hon. Mention	TRIP TO MARS	Alex Szatmary
Hon. Mention	BELAGIO TRIBUTE TO GENE KELLY	Harold Cosgrove
Hon. Mention	INTERNATIONAL DRAGON DANCE	Ben Andrews

Class B INTERMEDIATE

Winner	PATROL VESSEL 356	Rick Doelle
1st Runner-Up	A PHONE CALL FROM DAD	Ray Bayliss
2nd Runner-Up	I TAWT I TAW A PUDDY TAT	Wayne Schaler
3rd Runner-Up	CHRISTMASTIME ...	Wayne Schaler
Hon. Mention	ALBERTA BADLANDS PALEONTOLOGY	Reinhard Buehling

Class C NOVICE

Winner	THE PICNIC	Paula Cutulle
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Class D (CLUB) THE GARLICK TROPHY

Winner	THE CASE OF THE MISSING BONDS	Ottawa Film & Video Makers
1st Runner-Up	A WIN BENEATH A SAIL	Hamilton Video/Film Makers
2nd Runner-Up	THEY'RE COMING	Hamilton Video/Film Makers

Class E (COMPULSORY THEME) THE INTERCITY TROPHY

Winner	GRAND STAIRCASE ESCALANTE	Ian Firth
1st Runner-Up	TALENT SEARCH	London Videography Club

SPECIAL AWARDS

Most Humorous	THE PICNIC	Paula Cutulle
Best Visual Effects	THE CASE OF THE ORNERY OWL	Robert Bayne
Best Cinematography	FROM DELHI TO KATMANDU	Mila Werbik
Best Editing	THE WATER'S EDGE	Bob Makara
Best Scenario	BAD MEMORY	Alex Szatmary
Most Original	THE PICNIC	Paula Cutulle
Best Entry	FROM HANOI TO MEKONG DELTA	Mila Werbik
Best Dialogue	BAD MEMORY	Alex Szatmary

AMATEUR MOVIE CAPITAL OF CANADA **HAMILTON, ONTARIO**



Jenny Pfalzner for Ottawa Movie Makers
Best Club Entry (Garlick Trophy)



Carolyn Briggs for Mila Werbik
Winner Class A Advanced



Paula Cutulle
Winner Novice & Most Original



Alex Szatmary
Best Scenario & Best Dialogue



Rick Doelle
Winner Class B Intermediate



Ian Firth
Compulsory Theme Intercity Trophy



By Fred Briggs

Some people like to use one program for everything. I find that one program is either lacking in some features, or is extravagantly expensive and usually very complicated to use! Therefore, I use several programs for editing pictures, using the “toolbox” approach. When I was much younger, my toolbox was kept in the trunk of my car, and most of its content was automobile tools – socket sets, box and open-ended wrenches, etc. As I became a householder, I had to add woodworking tools, plumbing and electrician tools, etc., and now I have crowbars, tree pruners, power equipment, etc., etc., -- many, many toolboxes! And that’s how I am with software, too.

I have three computers networked together (not counting a laptop), one for “office work”, like writing this, spread sheets, and databases, keeping track of friends, contacts, and all kind of records, and of course, email and the internet. A second computer is used primarily for photography/pictorial material and software, and video software and projects. The third, seldom turned on, is devoted to music, sound effects, and audio editing software.

Panorama is written on the “office” computer, the photos are massaged on the visuals computer, and it’s compiled there into PANORAMA issues, and then copied over to the office computer from where it’s uploaded to the scaonline Website. Different tools for different jobs!

Here I’ll review CyberLink’s PhotoDirector 4 which can be used on an Apple/Mac or on a Windows/IBM computer. PhotoDirector meshes well with CyberLink’s PowerDirector, but the latter won’t work on an Apple computer, so I won’t review that program until the January Issue. Moreover, I can’t review this software on an Apple, for obvious reasons, but I have to assume that it has exactly the same features and capabilities and produces the same results on an Apple as on a PC. If there were differences (for the user) there would have to be two different

versions, with different Guides, etc., and there doesn’t seem to be!

When I first opened PhotoDirector I found it intuitively very different from the very old version of Adobe Photoshop that I’m still using! I saw a great number of very impressive features, but I couldn’t see how to open a file from my hard drive, work on that file and then save it, or see how to perform any of the usual easy steps, like cropping a picture, changing its size, etc. I had never had problems like that with PowerDirector 10, or any problems with that program, or any problems at all for that matter!

My first thought was that this would have to be treated as a special purpose program, like some of the programs on which I have reported over the years – Remember *Black Magic*, *Photo To Color Sketch*, *Virtual Painter*, and *GMX PhotoPainter* in the Spring 2008 PANORAMA? How about *DigiRostrum* and *Autopano Pro* in November 2008? Or *Sqirlz* and *Nature Illusion Studio* in the January 2009 PANORAMA? These were all small programs that did one or two things, but certainly not everything! Did you put any of them in your toolbox? I did!

I wasted a lot of time trying to figure out PhotoDirector based only on my experience with other programs, but I finally remembered “Read The Instructions!!!” There’s a 120 Page User’s Guide, which tells you just about anything you can imagine. Download it [HERE](#). Clicking on the “Cyber link PhotoDirector 4.0 - User’s Guide”, you will download a pdf file. The cover doesn’t say “PhotoDirector 4, but I’m 99% certain that it’s the right Manual! Save it to your hard drive, and put a link to it on your desktop. I recommend exploring the User’s Guide on the computer, where you can search the file for any word, move forward or backwards through the Manual, and click on live links (like the Subject Headings in the Table of Contents).

So let’s look at CyberLink’s PhotoDirector 4. You can Import any jpeg or tiff file from your hard drive or camera. The program also supports most camera RAW Photo Formats. The software supports

an unbelievable bevy of features for organizing, cataloguing, embedding keyword tags and descriptive information, and other classification features, including even sorting by automatic face recognition!

Beside the occasional vacation, party, etc., most of my pictures are worked on for one of three purposes: DVD covers for the Programs I record from television for later viewing or study, Cropping and Sizing pictures for PANORAMA, and the big one, my longtime video project on the history of Burlington Beach where I spent my early years. The video outweighs the other two in that many of the pictures are old, black and white, damaged, and suffer from a long list of problems requiring a variety of touch-ups.

I didn’t test any of PhotoDirector’s organizing and cataloguing features because I already have almost 12,000 scanned photos and drawings in 760 folders identified by their sources (to keep track of everyone who should get a Credit at the end of my documentary video), plus more than 4,000 digital photos in over 260 folders shot with 6 different cameras over the years organized by Camera and Date. Altogether, more than 13,000 of these for my project are catalogued and tagged with 175 subjects, and I can scroll through icons of all the pictures, or select any heading and view only those, at a variety of sizes. Each picture is tagged with the exact location (folder, subfolder, title) on my hard drive, and is the result of 15 years work, so I’m not about to mess it up!

I expect that I will continue the way I have been approaching the problem all along – prepare the still shot with a photo editing program, or more than one program, saving it back onto the hard drive and then reopening it in another program as the need arises before passing the still shot off into the video editing program.

However, PhotoDirector 4 has a very big feature that no other editing software has – it can operate in tandem with, or

within, the CyberLink Video Editor, PowerDirector 11, at least on a PC! Working within PowerDirector 11, PhotoDirector 4 can work its magic on moving images instead of just on still shots! I will review PowerDirector 11 in the January issue of PANORAMA, so here I'll review PhotoDirect 4 as a standalone photo editor.



(Increase Page Size To See Small Details)

When you open the program you will see a top line providing **File, Edit, Photo, View, Help** and then icons for **Undo, Redo, and Preferences**. The first seven are all easily understood, and **Preferences** lets you make some choices like the language used and various other settings.

On the following line you will find **Library, Adjustment, Edit, Slide Show, and Print** and below this line, on the left side of the screen there is a long list of selections that varies with the choices you select. I tried to describe all the choices presented when you make a selection, but it became so complicated that I decided to simply provide a brief summary of the various adjustments you can access. If you have a copy of the software, or a free 30 day trial, you can easily explore the many clear layouts and all the options available, and it will all become much clearer!

When **Library** is selected there are labels for **Project and Metadata**. Project is for setting up Photos, Folders, Albums, Tags, etc. My first big surprise here was the Metadata Information reported that the photo I had loaded was shot on an old Pentax Optio M20, the Focal Length was 6 mm, and it was shot at 1/125 at f/4.6, the file name was IMGPO126.jpg, the "Film Speed" was ISO 64 and the Flash Did Not Fire!

And below **Adjustment**, when that is selected, **Manual or Presets** are the choices.

Presets will let you use Defaults, Presets you download from DirectorZone (currently 435,000+ available for FREE), or upload your own Presets to DirectorZone for others to use.

Choosing **Manual** displays a Black & White Histogram or Color Histogram of your Photo. **Regional Adjustment Tools** provides Icons for Crop and Rotate, Spot Removal, Red Eye Removal, a Mask Adjustment Brush, a Selection Eraser and a Gradient Mask with Sliding Adjustments for Size, Feather, and Strength and Fit to Edges On or Off.

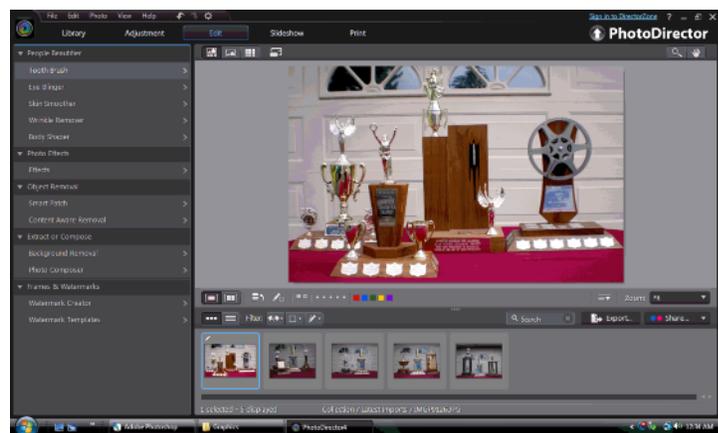
Global Adjustments Tools include White Balance (As Shot, Automatic, or Custom with adjustments for Temperature and Tint), **Tone** (Auto Tone or with sliders for Exposure, Contrast, Brightest, Bright, Midtone, Dark, Darkest), **Tinge** (with sliders for Clarity, Vibrance, and Saturation), **HDR Effect** (Glow and Edge, each with Sliders for Strength, Radius and Balance), **Level** with Presets

for Standard, (with Flat, Medium Contrast and Strong Contrast) and Channel Choices (of RGB, Red, Green, and Blue with a colour Histogram, Curve with Histogram and sliders for Highlights, Lights, Darks, and Shadows, all the tools for bringing out details in the shadows without burning out the brightest areas in a picture!)

There's also **HSL Color Adjustments** of Hue, Saturation, and Lightness Sliders, each with sliders for 8 Colors, and **Detail Sharpness Slider** for Amount, Radius, and Edge Mask, with a magnified area of the photo.

Also available are **Noise Reduction** (Luminance and Color Detail Sliders), **Correction** (for Keystone, Vertical and Horizontal), Fisheye Distortion with its own Distortion Slider, and Chromatic Aberration with Blue/Yellow Level and Red/Cyan Sliders, Vignette Removal with Sliders for Amount and Midpoint, and Vignetting Effect with Sliders for Shade, Size, Roundness and Feather.

If your present Photo Editor doesn't have these tools, wouldn't it be worth the bother to save your file, close your old program, and open the file in PhotoDirector 4, just to get at this tool kit? It will probably require a lot of experimentation and practice to master *all* these tools, but you'll get results immediately because the changes are shown in real time – not later, after rendering!



(Increase Page Size To See Small Details)

That was just **Adjustment**. Let's look at **Edit**, the EASY Part! On this Toolbar there are only Five Sections: People Beautifier, Photo Effects, Object Removal, Extract or Compose, and Frames & Watermarks.

People Beautifier lists Tooth Brush, Eye Blinger, Skin Smoother, Wrinkle Remover and Body Shaper.

Tooth Brush whitens the teeth, with sliders for Size, Feather, and Strength, with a Box to Check to Fit to Edges. **Eye Blinger** has two functions: brightening the eyes and enhancing the dark area of the eyes, each with Sliders for Size, Feather and Strength. **Skin Smoother** removes rough skin, blemishes, large pores, etc., and has the Skin Smoother Brush with Sliders for Brush Size, Feather, Strength and a box to tick to Fit to Edges. There's also an Eraser Brush. **Wrinkle Remover** has a Brush (variable in size) to mark the wrinkle you want to remove, and an Erasing Brush (it doesn't erase the wrinkle, just the selection of the wrinkle). After you have marked the wrinkle you drag it to a matching area without the wrinkle, and drop it there. The wrinkle disappears! **Body Shaper** is different from all the others. There are four distortion tools to warp an outline: Forward Warping Tool, Pucker Tool, Bloat Tool, and Recover Tool. For each there is a Slider for Size and for Strength. Another way to perform this is to use Mesh or Manual Mesh, by dragging Control Points on the Mesh to reshape objects in the photo. Mesh can be varied from 2 Rows and two Columns up to 20 Rows and 20 Columns. Manual Mesh lets you click on the photo to add control

points exactly where you want them. Right clicking on a control point will remove it. This is difficult to explain but you can see it demonstrated at [PhotoDirector 4 Tutorial Videos](#) .

Effects is quite simple, just four effects, the first being Black and White (Grey Scale), the second is Sepia, the third is Tint and the fourth is Blur. Black & White is instantaneous. The Brush Settings (Size, Feather, Strength) is used to remove the effect in part of your picture after it has been grey-scaled. Clicking on the icon removes the effect in total, and the brush removes the effect (restores colour) in a local area, and that can be Erased. Sepia is exactly the same, only different! Blur works on the picture with or without colour, and can be varied in degree. You can easily blur the picture a little and then clear the blurring for the main subject.

Object Removal is pure magic! There are two techniques here. **Smart Patch** lets you draw a line around the object and then move it onto the background, and the object should be replaced by the background (just like the wrinkle remover). It might work OK for a very small object, but I wasn't impressed with this one. I suspect it's a left-over from an earlier version of the program. **Content Aware Removal** is easier to use but it takes a while to process, and it takes care, patience, and experience, especially for larger objects, but it's still magic!

Extract or Compose consists of Background Removal and Photo Composer. Perversely, **Background Removal** requires you to Select (outline) the Foreground! You can use Magic Selection or Smart Lasso to outline the foreground. This too requires practice, and I found it difficult. You can reposition the outline and add or delete the coverage by holding down the left click button on the mouse while you make corrections. There is also another tool to Fine Tune the edges of either the foreground or the background, and you can use it after removing most of the background to clean it up by removing a bit here and a bit there. I managed to do an acceptable job of it, but I'd really hate to remove a tree, with or without leaves, with this feature. It might be easier if the background was the complex feature and the foreground was smaller and smoother!

When (or as) the background is taken away you can have it replaced by either transparency or a colour of your choosing. If there is transparency the photo is saved automatically as a png file!

The **Photo Composer** is much easier. When you open the feature a file with your pictures pops up, and I assume you can find a foreground object you filed earlier and then paste it into another picture. I didn't even try it because I didn't have a suitable object to paste. This might be important to some users, but I don't think I'll ever use many paste-ups.

Frames & Watermarks includes a Watermarker Creator and Watermarker Templates. Watermarker allows you to add a frame or line to your photo and add text. I was pleased to see that the program found *all* the fonts that are on my computer, and I can select the colour for the text, for the text border, the usual font styles (Normal, Bold, Italic or Bold & Italic), font size opacity (for watermarks) and shadow and the positioning of a shadow of the text. You can also add images here (which can be easily sized to fit), and their opacity changed. Full marks here!

Slideshow has options for **Style** that includes **Effects** (Fade, Wide Left Soft, and Motion) and your choice of **Format**, 4:3 or 16:9. There are also five pieces of Background Music which you can Fit to Music for durations varying from 2 seconds to 10 seconds. Wow! I didn't try to build a Slide Show as I gave up on slide shows when I got my first 8 mm camera. When I present

my photos to the public they will be as substitutes for video clips I just couldn't get. Your use may vary!

Print contains a lot of Layout Settings, Paper Settings, Landscape and Portrait Orientation, Rows and Columns Grids, Sizes, etc., etc. If you print your own prints on your own printer, I think this will have every feature you need for the task. On the rare occasions I want to present someone with a picture I have made, I take the file on a thumb stick to a professional printer for a perfect job. That's what I feel the photos deserve! However, for those of us who use photos in their videos, I think you will find PhotoDirector 4 a great tool for improving those photos.

The Version I have reported on here was PhotoDirector 4 Ultra. The version currently offered for sale is PhotoDirector 5. The Standalone Program is available in three versions – PhotoDirector 5 Deluxe for \$49.99, PhotoDirector 5 Suite for \$119.95, and PhotoDirector 5 Ultra for \$84.99! Apple users may want to buy one of these three versions. Check the prices and features included on the [CyberLink Website](#) before buying. CyberLink PowerDirector 11 (their Video Editing Software) will be reviewed in the January 2014 PANORAMA. PC users may want to wait before deciding if they want to buy PowerDirector 12 in a version currently selling from \$58.99 to \$199.99, or Director Suite 2 (which includes PhotoDirector 5) for **\$239.99**.

* * *



Brock Silversides

Final Reel!

As you're already aware, Over a period of time that seems like forever, we negotiated the transfer of the CIAFF 16 mm films to the Media Commons Archive at the University of Toronto, arranged for Harold Cosgrove to copy most of them to a hard drive for us, and get them picked up and delivered by the Curator, Brock Silversides, in two separate trips from Toronto.

There were a few 16 mm films left over for various reasons, and a large number that we couldn't identify. Further investigation revealed that most of those had been made by Fred Attridge of the Toronto Movie Club, and I traced his son, John Attridge, who agreed to donate his father's films to the U of T Media Commons Archive, but he was concerned that the collection might contain some "family films", weddings, birthday parties, etc. So he agreed to check over his own collection, and come around to my home to see what I still had. Neither one of us had any idea how they had fallen into my hands!

When he arrived in my home and came upstairs to my large "movie studio", he said "I remember! I've been here before!" And it all came back to me. He had contacted me when his father died, to ask what he should do with his fathers films, and because I didn't want them to go to the dump, I offered to take them. I stored them in a corner of the second floor Studio of Jimeck Inc., the wedding video company consisting of Eckhard Kries, Jim Small, and myself! And then I forgot they were there and what they were.

Before turning them over to the Media Commons Archive I tried to identify each film as well as I could, and I transferred many of them from their plastic hubs to steel reels, until I used up all the spare 16 mm reels that I had. When the films were ready, Brock attended the AGM and spoke to us about the best preservation of movie films. He expected to speak for fifteen to forty-five minutes, but he enthralled us for a full hour! And I learned that the first thing they do is take them out of steel boxes and off steel reels and put them on plastic hubs in plastic boxes. Live and learn!

Brock took all the rest of the CIAFF and Attridge films back to Toronto with him. ■

TECH TIPS

MAKING BETTER iMOVIES

by Jeff Carlson
Managing Editor of TidBITS

If you wanted to edit video in the recent past, you needed a room full of specialized equipment and a fair amount of training and experience just to get started. Now, most what you need is probably sitting in your Applications folder. Apple's iMovie enables anyone with a recent Macintosh to import video footage and edit it into a professional-looking movie. Here are some Tech Tips for Apple's iMovie application:

1. Visual QuickStart Guide. If you're just starting to get your feet wet with digital video, these pointers will help you during shooting and when editing in iMovie.

<http://db.tidbits.com/getbits.acgi?tbart=06709>

www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0201787881/tidbiselectro00A/

2. A Stable Working Relationship. Most people equate home video footage with the jittery movement of home movies and police pursuit shows. Except in rare circumstances, that look isn't a matter of style: the diminutive size and weight of most camcorders make it difficult to maintain stability while filming. Mounting the camera on a tripod is your best bet for keeping the camera stationary,



but a tripod is often a pain to carry and set up. Instead, maintain stability when shooting by tucking your elbows into your sides and hold the camera with both hands. Although

most cameras offer digital image stabilization, which does a good job of compensating for small variations in camera movement, don't rely on it to reduce larger tremors.

3. Zoom Zoom. One of the first things potential camcorder buyers do is test the product's zoom capabilities. And why not? Unlike Hollywood movie directors, who can place a camera wherever it suits them, you may be trying to get a shot of a grizzly bear from hundreds of meters away (and, in the spirit of recommendations, I strongly encourage you to stay hundreds of meters away from grizzlies in the wild). Punching up the telephoto zoom can be the difference between fur, blur, or getting munched, for those that ignore these tips.



As you're zooming, try to keep the motion steady and measured. The zoom control on most camcorders is pressure sensitive; so pressing hard makes the lens zoom quicker than a lighter touch. Try not to zoom in or out (or heaven forbid, both in succession) as fast as possible, unless you're trying to nauseate your audience. If you have the opportunity, practice zooming in on your subject before you begin filming. Also, turn off your camcorder's digital zoom feature. Unlike optical zoom, which describes the amount the lens mechanism can zoom (usually 10 times the normal setting), digital zoom is a technique where the camera's processor interpolates the image and enlarges the pixels to approximate a higher zoom level. In essence, the camera guesses what the higher zoomed-in image will look like, and it shows: digitally zoomed footage is highly pixelated, and it's often hard to tell what was originally being shot. Although a 200x digital zoom sounds nifty, it's more marketing gimmick than film maker's tool. Turn it off now while you're thinking about it, so you don't

scold yourself later when reviewing unexpectedly blurry footage.

4. Do You Hear What You Hear? As you're recording, use headphones plugged into your camera to ensure that the audio you're capturing



is the sound you expect. Any pair of headphones will do, as long as what you hear is what the camera's microphone hears. You won't want to begin editing your footage and realize that traffic noise drowned out the rest of your footage's audio.

5. Cover Your Assets. When you get to the editing stage, you'll want to assemble a tight movie, with no scenes that can make your audience lose interest. However, when you're out shooting, record plenty of extra coverage. Linger at the end of scenes, and don't stop recording when the action ends. Take a few minutes to shoot the scenery, the reactions of people around you, or objects that catch your eye but may have nothing to do with the subject of your video. You want to go into the editing stage with more than enough footage to work with, because in most cases you won't be able to go back and reshoot something. That extra coverage can be essential when you need to add a few seconds of footage to maintain your movie's timing and rhythm.

6. Dumpster Diving in iMovie. With the shooting complete, it's time to import your footage and begin cutting together your movie. As you begin to chop, crop, and rearrange your clips, it can become difficult to



know which sections were once whole in case you want to go back and try a different combination of clips. Fortunately, iMovie offers a few methods to retrieve footage. First, you'll find yourself using iMovie's ten levels of undo often, though remember that the counter resets when you close your iMovie project. If you can't undo changes, you may still be able to restore an original clip. As you make edits, iMovie records only the changes that have been applied to the original clip you imported from the camcorder – it doesn't actually split the clip's media file on your hard disk. For example, suppose you imported a 10-minute original clip from your camera and split it into a number of smaller clips. Now suppose you deleted one of those smaller clips, not realizing until too late that you needed it. Unlike the Finder's Trash, you can't open iMovie's bin and pull out a discarded clip. Rather than reimport from the camera, select another one of the smaller clips and choose Restore Clip Media from the Advanced menu - iMovie reads the entire 10 minutes of data from the media file on the hard disk and turns that small clip into the full clip, which you can edit down to the necessary footage again. Be warned that if you use the Empty Trash command at any point, the clip is gone for good - iMovie edits the media file on your hard disk and removes the portions you threw away.

7. Transitions Leave enough padding in your clips to accommodate transitions. A transition such as Cross Dissolve overlaps portions of the two



clips it's bridging in order to display both simultaneously. If the action begins immediately in the second clip, it will be partially obscured by the dissolving portion of the first clip. Leaving a few seconds of neutral

footage gives you the transition effect you're looking for without disrupting the content of the scene. If you end up with too much padding, you can always trim it out later. Speaking of transitions, don't go crazy adding every type of transition you can find (and there are plenty - in addition to Apple's, check out GeeThree's Slick Transitions and Effects <http://geethree.com/>). In most situations, you'll probably use Cross Dissolve, Fade In, Fade Out, and Overlap. Although others can be appropriate in context, using too many different flashy transitions in one project tends to distract from the movie itself. It's the same principle as using too many fonts in a word processing document: with more than a few on the page, it no longer matters what the words say.

8. Sizing Up Titles From an ease-of-use standpoint, the slider that deter-



mines a title's font size is wonderfully simple: slide left to reduce the size, slide right to increase the size. However, this approach can be maddeningly frustrating if you want precision. It doesn't make it any easier that the longer your title, the smaller the text will appear, even at the largest font size. Also, iMovie's rough title preview can be deceptive about text sizes and where longer phrases are wrapped to the next line. So, apply your titles to a few dummy clips that you can export back to tape and preview on a television to see exactly how the title will appear.

9. Using Music Tracks iMovie features what must have once seemed like an ingenious method of adding music to your movie: you can record song tracks from an audio CD directly into the program. You must start playing the song and record it as it plays, much the way you import



video from your camcorder's videotape. However, with MP3 music file and iTunes, this technique has become archaic. Instead, use iTunes to extract music as MP3 files, and then use iMovie's Import command to add the song to your movie. If you want the highest quality audio (which takes up significantly more disk space), use iTunes to extract the song in AIFF format; that's how iMovie's built-in audio recorder stores music, but iTunes provides a far superior interface to getting it done.

10. The iMovie Effect. Once you start editing in iMovie, you'll never watch movies or television the same again. You'll see scenes in terms of shots, angles, lighting, audio effects, and visual narrative. My wife, after using iMovie only a few times, proved this to me when we watched the online trailer for the movie "The Man Who Wasn't There" www.youtube.com/watch?v=xUoRUdjn_Qg. It's a great



work of editing, but I didn't realize how good until Kim casually pointed out that each shot ended in a cross-dissolve transition, except when the main characters were on screen, which used jump cuts to show another shot of the actor before dissolving. If that doesn't demonstrate how iMovie's ease of use and editing power can get into your brain, I don't know what can. ■

Illustrations by Frank Swanson