JANUARY 2013

ENJOYING VISUAL TECHNOLOGY

SYDNEY VIDEO MAKERS CLUB

ELECTRONIC EYE

N E W S L E T T E R
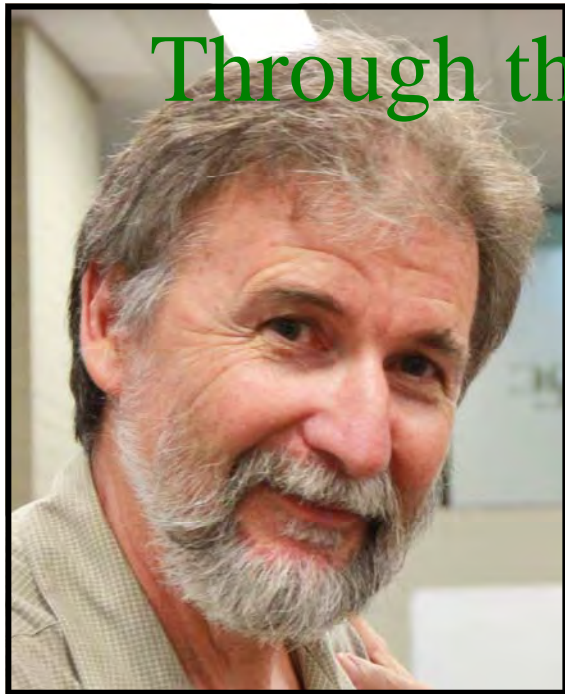
2013

Next Meeting
Wednesday
23rd January, 2013

www.sydneyvideomakers.org.au

Through the Presidents Lens

Welcome back everyone to a new year of video making. I hope everyone enjoyed their break and has made a serious resolution to make more videos in 2013.

I have been out of action since early December. I had a cycling accident and fractured my hip socket ending up in hospital for three weeks. Fortunately I was discharged on Christmas eve so I was home for Christmas. I am currently on crutches and taking it pretty easy as bones heal slowly. Leonard Lim also had a bit of bad luck just before Christmas with a heart problem, he is now on the mend and plans to attend our January club meeting, so you can wish him well.

Thanks to everyone who made suggestions about what we could do better in our club, both from our last focus night and the online survey. The club committee had a planning day in December and used some of this feedback to incorporate into this years program. I will be presenting both a summary of the feedback and an overview of this years program at our January Club meeting.

Some of the changes are
- Show more members videos & clips – we have added a slot in Club nights so please bring in any short clips where you want to demonstrate a technique or if you have a problem you would like some help with. The approach will be positive and constructive so don't feel apprehensive about showing your material.
- more club outings to shoot video – Mike Elton will be organising some excursions this year where we can shoot a local event and learn from each other. If you have any suggestions for suitable events please contact Mike.
- Club Website update – we are currently updating the website with a fresh new look and to be more relevant. It will contain more videos and include a members area with useful reference material.
- Focus nights – we are alternating focus nights between a 'basic' and 'intermediate' level, which should appeal to new and more experienced members.
- The club annual membership will increase to $60 this year. It has been the same for the last 5 years but our treasurer tells us we are not covering current costs.

- Competition entries will be screened on the night they are submitted. You will not have to wait until the following meeting night.
- We will be publishing a running total for competitions as the year progresses so members and teams know where they stand. Ruskin & Margaret are working on details but it will be like the Formula 1 points system.
- I will be asking members to nominate themselves as Mentors within their area of expertise. This could be a particular piece of software (e.g. Vegas or Pinnacle) or an area of knowledge or experience (e.g. Storyboarding, Scriptwriting,…) This
  information will be helpful to other members and also new members. Please
  contact Eddie Hanham to nominate yourself.
- We will be actively recruiting new members this year. The first step is asking every member to bring a friend to the February Club night. We will also be teaming up new members with a 'buddy' to ensure they engage with the club and don't feel lost. If you have any ideas on how we can attract new members contact Ruskin Spiers or myself.

VOTY was a great night for a celebration and reunions. Our club's 21st year was marked with a cake cutting by original member Merv Blanch, club stalwart Noel Leeder, past president John Urquhart and myself. Many members from years past turned up and it was a great chance to catch up with old friends. Some of the past members on the night were: Mario Llige, Adrian Barac, Chris & Alan White, Leo Henry, Laurie Donaldson, Ken Bisset, John Wilson, Roger & Joan Ellison, Jim & Lyn Macintosh, Chris Korgemets, Peter Frybort, Alex Alexander, Ashley Raizenburg.

I spoke to a number of past members who were unable to make it to VOTY but passed on their wishes to all. They were: Alan Petschack, David McDougall, Roger Cowland and Barry McKnight, Gerd Kogler, Bob Green and Garry Murdoch.

Thanks to last years committee for all their hard work. We are fortunate to have many committee members continuing this year, their experience will be invaluable.

Stay Focused
Andy

"A quarter of my life!"

When Eddie Hanham handed me an unexpected microphone on our wonderful VOTY night and invited me to speak - just before Andy Doldissen, John Urquhart, Merv Blanch and I were then to formally cut Sydney Video Makers' magnificent birthday cake so lovingly made by Margaret Tulloh - I was caught a bit flat-footed and, on reflection, I feel that I did not respond at all well.

After all, everyone already knew what a wonderful club we had shared for twenty one years and knew how much it had meant to each of them and how amazingly successful the club had been and why it was so prominent on the world stage through the astonishing talents of our members submitting superb videos which deservedly won VOTY trophies before shining at international contests and walking away with the world's top awards.   Suddenly, the videos from the boys down under had made the rest of the world sit up and try hard to do better!

Old news, really!   Especially to the sea of broadly smiling faces of old and more recent members thronged around that wonderful birthday cake!   The real news was that the huge audience packing the foyer of the beautiful Roxy Theatre that night was an amazing group of like-minded friends who had enjoyed twenty one years of wonderful shared experience in the evolution of amateur video making!

Just think about how you accomplished early non-linear image capture using very primitive camcorders, then bump-edited the assembly of your footage in clumsy video recorders and, if all went well, eventually looking at the results on a grainy monitor. But - you and your colleagues HAD captured that moving image for posterity!!

Moving on, video gear rapidly came of age and computers arrived!!   Gradually - through many false starts - tape capture and editing became fully digital and, finally solid state capture and display arrived!   Wow!! What an amazing journey we all shared within NCC/SVM! And…..there is lots more to come!!

I started MY journey in 1932, when my father handed me a Box Brownie to capture a black and white Verichrome image of the first ship to pass under the just-opened Sydney Harbour bridge. A few years later, I built my own primitive enlarger from old camera bits and made a full plate (215mm x 165mm) B&W enlargement from that historic Verichrome negative - which I still treasure.   Inevitably, large format and 35mm cameras followed, 8mm film then 16mm Kodachrome captured my affection and, finally, early video capture brought me to wonderful Northside Camcorder Club when John Weaver 'phoned me one day, just as I arrived back from an overseas working trip! So, I fell short of being a founder - Merv Blanch beat me to it by a few days!

I now have 65 videos covering some 50 years of my film and video making on my dedicated Youtube channel (YouTube nleeder) with almost 30,000 viewers to date seemingly enjoying my efforts over many years.   Isn't that great!!   And, YouTube is free and apparently a safe repository into the future!

But, above all else, I feel so amazingly privileged to have participated in the evolution of Australia's pre-eminent group of utterly dedicated and extraordinarily accomplished video achievers at Sydney Video Makers for almost <u>a quarter of my now 88 years of life</u>   How could anyone deserve to be so lucky??

And ….<u>that</u> is the <u>real</u> message I should have conveyed just before we cut our superb 21st.birthday cake at VOTY.   Think about it!   How huge a part of <u>your</u> life has been enriched by the great friendships and collective effort to achieve video making perfection within NCC/SVM?   A big chunk, I suspect!!

Long may it be so!

Noel Leeder.
Photos of Voty 2012 pages 35-40.

VOTY 21—30th NOVEMBER, 2012

Our congratulations to all those winners, runners up and to the third place getters not listed here. Recognition is also due to all the entrants who contributed to such an excellent evening of video screening.

Time does not allow for all entries to be screened on VOTY night, so entries are ranked by final score to determine which of them will screen on the evening. This year we were able to screen all entries.

There will be a VOTY 2013 to be held on 29th November 2013, so now is the time to get started on a team or individual entry. If you missed attending this year's event take note of that date and get it into your diary now.

If after having attended VOTY you can suggest any ways to improve the event please let a 2013 committee member know, or just sent an email to the Secretary, so that we can take to suggestion on board. (But we believe that Voty 21, 2012 will be Hard to beat).

Andy Doldissen & Bob Hallett

DRAMA   Flyer   A Doldissen & C Saville

Presented by Bob Hallett

Chris Callaghan & Chris Korgemets

MUSIC   Sacred Earth Sacred Spirit   C Callaghan

Presented by Chris Korgemets

Ilma Cave & Ami Levartovsky

DOCUMENTARY   Newtown 150 years Old
                            Packers Team

Presented by Ami Levartovsky

Ernest Cheung & Ken Bisset

TRAVEL   Amazing Safari in Kenya   E. Cheung

Presented by Ken Bisset

Ruskin Spiers & Andy Doldissen

SPECIAL TECHNIQUES   Mystery Caller Ruskin Spiers

Presented by Andy Doldissen

Eddie Hanham, Chris Saville, Andy Doldissen

Voty of the Year   Flyer   A Doldissen & C. Saville

Presented by Eddie Hanham

Leonard Lim & John Urquhart

GWEN STONEY AWARD   Leonard Lim

Presented by John Urquhart

Ruskin Spiers & John Wilson

BEST MEETING NIGHT VIDEOGRAPHER INDIVIDUAL

Ruskin Spiers

Presented by John Wilson

Rob Nercessian & Joy Saunders

BEST MEETING NIGHT VIDEOGRAPHER TEAM

G7

Presented by Rob Nercessian

Andy Doldissen, Chris Saville & Peter Frybort

EXCELLENCE IN PHOTOGRAPHY

Flyer   A. Doldissen & C. Saville

Presented by Peter Frybort

Chris Saville, Andy Doldissen & John Urquhart

TED NORTHOVER TROPHY

Flyer   A. Doldissen & C. Saville

Presented by John Urquhart

Phil Brighton & Eddie Hanham
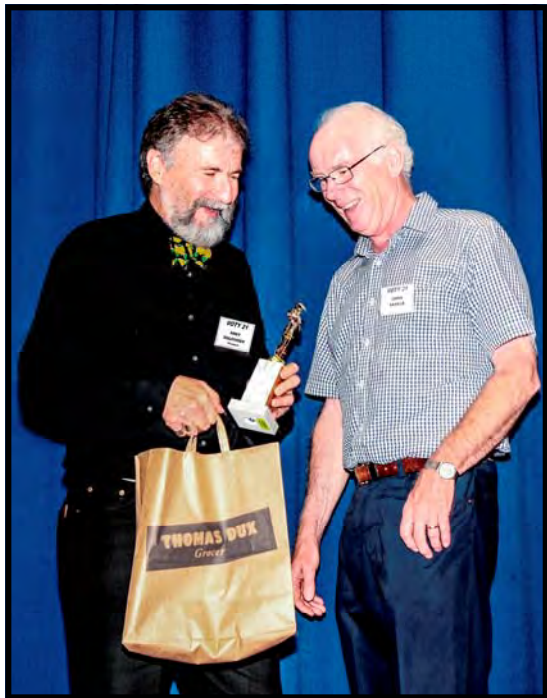
AUDIENCE POPULAR VOTE

Done Deal   The Nuts Team

Presented by Eddie Hanham

Eddie Hanham, was our MC for 2012,
(and he kept within the time limit).

Congratulations Andy Doldissen and Chris Saville
for bagging the top Awards.
Well done

(bag complements of Eddie Hanham)

I would like to thank all Judges for making my job a lot easier with their prompt attention.

When I decided to ask the Judges in England I thought it might not work. I need not have worried as the attention was prompt and back in no time. Thanks to Lee Prescott and Mike Szewczuk and the other judge for their help.

Start now on the winning entry and join us on 29th November, 2013 for another great night.

We would also like to thank Eddie Hanham for being the MC. What a job well done.

Margaret Tulloh.
Competition Manager
Voty Organising Team

Next Focus Night

**Wednesday
13 February 2013
7.30pm**

Green Screens for Beginners
– as well as for those with a bit more experience

Everything you need to know to get going with a green screen. How to set-up, light, shoot and edit a simple green screen shot.

Green Screens for beginners
– as well as for those with a bit more experience

Next Focus Night

A green screen gives you endless possibilities and is both pretty cheap and more importantly, pretty simple! At the next focus night we'll take a look at how you do it - how you do it well and get anyone who's so inclined ready to travel the world inside their green painted garage!

So, if you don't know your greens from your blues, your chokers from your spills, your plates from your storyboard or your clip black from your white balance then come along!

If you've done green screen before and had halo's, artefacting, excessive spill, problems with shadows and so on then come along too, we're going to talk about those things too and your experience will be useful - we're not going to focus on how Hollywood does it so what went wrong in your garage is what we need to know!

We'll start with the simple stuff

- Where and why you might use a green screen
- And then the basic stuff it's useful to know about planning, lighting, positioning, shooting, even acting and directing with a green screen
- The on to some basic keying (removing the green bit). If you've done the planning and set up well then this should almost be one click and you're [almost] done.
- And of course, some common pitfalls – from amateur to professional mistakes

And then…

We'll look at a number of different scenarios and think about what's working well and what's not and some things to think about when you try something more advanced.

On the next few pages are some examples of green screen applications I've used in the last year and some comments on them which might be food for through for beginners. I learnt a lot from doing these and - at the same time - finding out what you're not supposed to do! If you're less of a beginner then spot the mistakes.

Food for thought

If you know all about green screens - or even if you don't - take a look at the final example and think about how, if the picture was in fact a storyboard, you would shoot it.

Pulling the Key

Here's a very simple, step by step guide to how you 'pull a key' - which essentially means removing the green part of your shot so you have what you need to place your actor (or whatever) in the background environment you have in mind.

Here I used After Effects for editing but the principles and even many of the steps will essentially be the same across most programs. Of course some will do things differently and I'm not going to try and tell you exactly how your program works but this guide will help you understand " what you need" to be doing. so you can work out how yours does it.

As well as the Internet there's always the programs' own help resource - usually found by pressing F1. If you're using a Mac of course that won't work - but if you're using a Mac you only have yourself to blame, I have no sympathy!!

See how to create we used a green screen in this shot so we could do this

Step 1
Bring in your footage to your editor of choice.

This example is After Effects but the principle will be the same whatever you use.
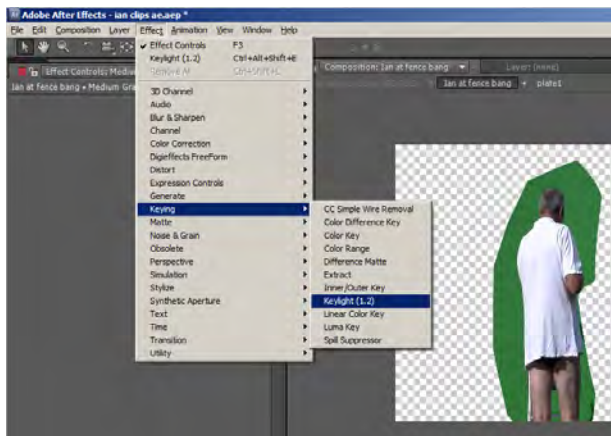

Step 2
Create a 'garbage mask' around the area you want to keep and remove the parts you don't want to use.

One advantage of a mask is it reduces the amount of the clip the computer has to work on in memory, usually speeding things up.

In this example the mask was more fiddly than a simple rectangle because of the shadow which is visible in Step 1.

13

Step 3

Select your "keying" tool / function.

In After Effects you select the "Keylight" effect and add it to the clip layer. Then you start to configure it. Each program will be slightly different but again, the idea will be the same - you have to select your keying tool somehow.

In After Effects what you then see is a whole load of configuration options which are
essentially adjustments you can tweak to improve the key.

Simpler programs will probably have fewer of these but don't worry about that, often you only use a couple anyway and most programs will probably have many of them.

Step 4

First up, find your pipette tool (or similar) and use this to select the green (or blue if you used that) from your clip. In the picture you can see After Effects shows the colour it's currently using next to the Pipette.
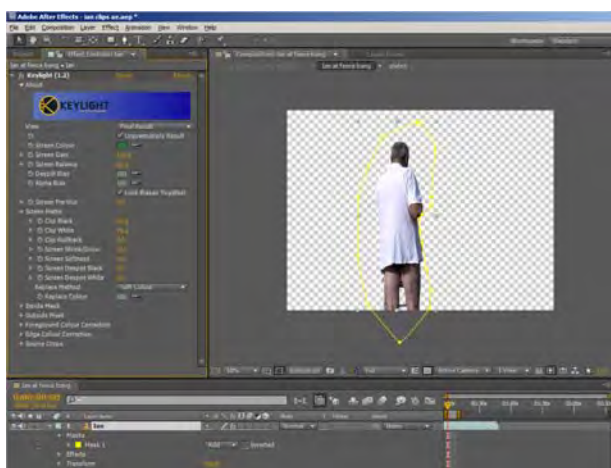
If your screen wasn't well lit or had creases then this part can be a bit 'trial and error' as you try selecting a different shade of green to get the best key. This is when you appreciate how important planning & lighting is!! If you rushed on set then expect to play around at this step for some time!

Step 5

At this point your green should have all gone and you *should* be left with the part you wanted on a transparent background, indicated here by grey & white squares.

Unfortunately it's usually not quite as simple as that and this is when you start to fiddle with some of the adjustments to try and get rid of things like green 'halos' and so on.

Keylight (1.2)   Reset   About...
About

KEYLIGHT

View   Intermediate Result
                        ☑ Unpremultiply Result
Screen Colour   🟩
Screen Gain   100.0
Screen Balance   50.0
Despill Bias
Alpha Bias
                        ☑ Lock Biases Together
Screen Pre-blur   0.0
Screen Matte
  Clip Black   0.0
  Clip White   95.0
  Clip Rollback   5.0
  Screen Shrink/Grow   -1.1
  Screen Softness   5.0
  Screen Despot Black   0.0
  Screen Despot White   0.0
  Replace Method   Soft Colour
  Replace Colour
Inside Mask
Outside Mask
Foreground Colour Correction
Edge Colour Correction
Source Crops
Simple Choker   Reset   About...
  View   Final Output
  Choke Matte   0.50

Step 6

Often, even with the most ideal lighting situations and the flattest green screen you will still need to deal with things like spill (where the part you want has green 'spilling on to it'), or small halo's, or other 'imperfections' in the differences between the colour of the green screen and the actor or whatever you have shot.

There are various adjustments you can make many of which are shown on the left in a screen grab from After Effects.

Each of these does different things and, to be honest, I'm not 100% sure what, precisely and in technical language, they all do!! But that doesn't matter! With most of them you can play with them and see what effect they have, often the adjustments you will make are quite small!

Ones I commonly use as starting points are:
Screen Gain - boost it to maybe 120
Screen Balance - take this to around 60
Clip White - take this to about 85
**Clip Rollback** - to about 5
Screen softness to 2.4

Sometimes, if your screen is quite dark you will also use Clip Black, but if it's well lit then possibly not.

If you find yourself with green 'spill', particularly on flesh, then you can use the 'Despill Bias' pipette to click on an area which has green in it and the despill tool should help to reduce that. You can see on the left the flesh colour being used.

The other common adjustment is to shrink the area being keyed by a very small amount.

There are basically two ways to do this, the Screen Shrink / Grow setting which shrinks the border of your key, hopefully removing any 'halos'.

You can also use a Simple Choker to do a similar thing. With all of these there is no right or wrong number, it's trial and error every time. The better lit and the flatter your screen the easier the key will be!
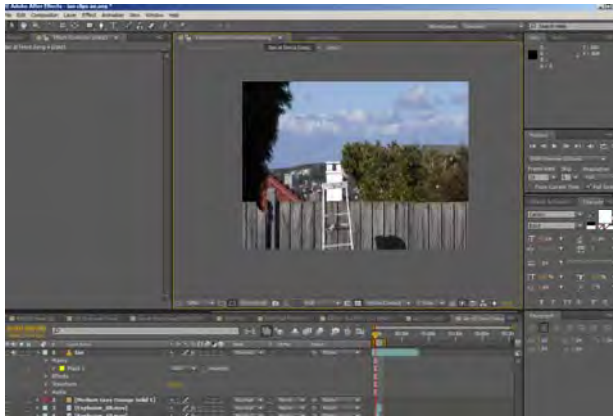
Step 7
At that point that's pretty much it. All done!

All you need to do now is get your background shot - called the 'Plate' shot and place that underneath your keyed footage.

Hey presto. All done!

In this example with Ian up the ladder you might be wondering why we did this since in the bottom shot on the left he's just up the ladder and we could have just shot that!?!

The answer is that in the editor we now have him on a different layer to the background so we can add things in-between - which is what we did when we added the explosion as the dog bought it!

You can see the final shot in example 3 below.

The examples below hopefully show you that, even with simple green screen applications, what may look similar is in fact quite different, with different considerations at each point…
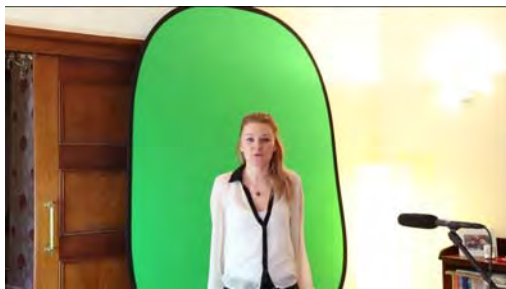
1. The Simple Shot

This is pretty much as simple as it gets:
- One person
- Not moving very much at all
- Shot indoors
- Shot against a reasonably well lit background

Just dropped onto a fairly simple background

Know what you're doing already?
What did we do wrong here?

2. The Slightly More Involved Shot

This is a tiny bit more involved:

The shot is outdoors

The actor moves a fair bit during the shot

There's no additional lighting used

Know what you're doing already?

What are the advantages of how this was done?

What could we have done better?

3.
The Even More Involved Shot

So this is a bit more involved for a few reasons
- We're outdoors again but this time in direct sunlight
- The actor is up a ladder and directly against a fence
- There are no extra lights

The final shot involves adding explosions not just dropping the green screened item onto a background

Know what you're doing already?

What problems can you see? How could they have been mitigated?

4. A challenge for you - The One to Think About

Imagine this was a storyboard of the final shot that's needed and you're now tasked with getting this shot, what would you do?

You're not being asked to do the Post Production bit, your job is to give the editor the shots he or she needs to create this in Post. Can you see how to do that? And, before you ask, this is 85% Green Screening and 15% effects!

Green Screens for Beginners
– as well as for those with a bit more experience

Wednesday
13 February 2013
7.30pm

Some Tips for better green screening

Plan the complete shot
The best results will come if you think about the final shot up front and plan the shot properly. That means thinking about what happens in the shot and what the audience impression is meant to be as well as the technical aspects.

Don't Depend on the Imagination of Cast or Crew
Don't assume that the cast or crew understand what your final shot is going to look like. Simple storyboards help get everyone on the same page.

Think about how you're going to 'Sell the Shot'
Selling any shot is about making the audience 'believe it's real', something which is only achieved by paying attention to details. Whether it's balancing lighting with your final shot, thinking about perspective, introducing other props or making sure there's no halo's, artefacting or spill. These are the difference between a green screen shot which is so obviously a green screen shot it's not believable or engaging, and one that simply isn't. Remember, your audience doesn't care how you did it so do everything you can to not make it obvious!

Green or Blue
They basically do the same thing but they recommend trying to use green for dark haired people and blue for blondes. That said, if you have green elves in your shot then you'll need to use blue whatever their hair colour!

Spend time setting up the screen
Perhaps this applies more to full green screen setups as opposed to simple pop up ones but, as with planning the complete shot, getting things right before your actors arrive helps the shot be better.

Don't wear green (or blue if you're using a blue screen)
Obvious? Maybe. It's easy to forget and if you're doing an interview you have to take time to check what the interviewee is wearing – or ideally pre-warn them.

Keep your actor(s) some distance from the screen
Not always as simple as you might think. Ideally 5 or 6 feet in front but certainly try and avoid having them right next to it!

Light your green screen
If you've got lights handy then use them. You're aiming for as even a light across your green screen as possible. You don't need special lights to achieve this, run of the mill fluorescent lights will do fine. Then, if you have soft lights you can use them on the actors, the difference will help make the key easier to pull.

Try and match lighting to that of the final scene
This is not the same as 'use lighting on your green screen'. If you don't have lights you can't do that, but you can possibly use your green screen in-situ of the final shot and hence get the same lighting.

Minimize wrinkles in the screen whenever possible
You're aiming for a smooth consistency of colour on your screen and having a smooth screen helps achieve this. This is actually easier to achieve with pop up screens which are self tensioning than with larger screen drapes but do what you can to make it as smooth as possible.

By Ruskin Spiers
Vice President

FROM THE S.V.M. LIBRARY DESK

CD   Disk 1: Classic Power all back ground music (Interesting variety, Orchestral, Electronic, Solo)   this disk has 21 tracks running times are between   1 minute to 5 minutes

CD Disk 2: Classical Emotions all back ground music (Classical, Orchestral) this disk has 16 tracks, 14 tracks their running times are between 1 minute to 5 minutes. And tracks 9 & 11   run between 7 to 8 minutes.

CD Disk 3: Orchestral slow music this disk has only 4 tracks all 15 minutes long, also suitable for back ground music. "The Main Feature 15.02 sec" "Sixties Sensation 15.09sec"" Holiday Sunshine 15.08sec" "Gentle Scenes 15.05sec"

CD Disk 4: Cooperate Power Has 34 Tracks Long and short back ground music, (Orchestral, Electronic, Slow-Medium-fast music) the first 17 tracks run between 3 minutes to 4 minutes. From Track 18 to 34 are all short, run between 12 seconds to 42 seconds

CD Disk 5: BVG Home Video CD This disk has 16 Tracks also back ground music, (Electronic Keyboards, Slow- Medium-Fast & Ethereal Music) Run times are between 1.13 seconds to 5 minutes.

CD Disk 6: Home Video CD   This disk has 16 tracks (Electronic, Slow Music & Medium) Run times between 2.24sec to 4.35sec.

More on the Music and Sound Effect's next month.

your Librarian

Graham Sainty

Filming at night:

by Rob Nercessian

Additional contributions by Andy Doldissen,
Ian Scott & Ruskin Spears

If you attended VOTY 2012 you would have noticed the surprising number of entries that were filmed at night or in dimly lit situations. Each of them won an award, but the one I remember well is "Done deal", the NUTS Team production, that's because I played the Shonky Vicar along with Don & Phil. (you can contact my agent if you wish to book me for your next feature film!). Most videographers wouldn't dream of filming at night based on their earlier experiences with 8 mm film which required a one kilowatt halogen lamp. And you still can't avoid using a tripod in the dark no matter how clever you are.

So, here are my ten rules for night shooting adopted for Video from the last century:

1.   Use a solid tripod

2.   Light is your main ingredient, so choose a location that is near some available lighting such as street lights, traffic lights, shop Neon's, or outside a restaurant etc. If you have LED lights use them "off camera".

3.   Switch to manual mode so that the focus doesn't 'Hunt'. Also remove any lens filters that may attenuate what little you have, and turn off any ND Filters (on big cameras) as ND should only be used under bright lights to quickly get your exposure into the "Ball park".

4.   Try various modes like 25P, 50i to ascertain which is best for your situation and run a test before you go final in other words the highest quality available.

5.   Select a slow shutter speed 1/50 sec.   Faster shutter speeds may cause unwanted flicker under some light sources.

6.   In the case of DSLR's, use the fastest lens you have and open the aperture to the widest available f stop. . Most modern video cameras have apertures around the f1.9 This will compensate for the reduction in light due to slow shutter already selected in point 5. This is the single most important point. If all you have is a slower lens then you will have to rely on additional lights.

7. Select a type of picture mode that gives the lowest contrast. This varies with each camera, so you need to read the manual or better still experiment. For example a setting like "vivid" usually involve high contrast which can yield a muddy image or cause colour

artefacts. So try a flatter setting "Opposite to Vivid" in order to get the cleanest picture.

8. Increase the gain just a little. Gain is your artificial brightness, a way of amplifying light that isn't there. With DSLR's you raise the ISO dial. In Video you must select manual mode and open up aperture past the recommended level, this will automatically raise your gain.
With Pro cameras you will have a separate "Gain" switch that can be set ahead of time e.g. set Low gain to +3db, Mid= +6 db, and High set to +9db, then you can choose the amount of 'boost' instantly.
Gain means grain! Do not get carried away with it as anything above ISO 800 will generate grain even if you don't see it on the viewfinder.

9. Unless the script calls for it do not use the green "Night vision" feature even if your camera has one. Normally older DV tape cameras had it.

10. Get closer to your subject to minimise the effects of "inverse square law" loss in light intensity.

Gain And Grain
Still Cameras use ISO measurement for "pushing" light while Video Cameras uses decibels. Experiment with yours but keep the gain as low as you can, in my opinion use no more than 20% of the maximum gain available to you.

I have found that having some "grain" is acceptable for night scenes as long as you don't introduce too much "colour distortion" into the shadows.

This phenomenon appears when you ask the camera circuitry to come up with more light than exists in reality. In this case the Cmos amplifier has to "invent" pixels at random resulting in a decrease of your signal to noise ratio, manifesting itself as murky soup.

If you do see the random colour noise in the shadows parts of your screen then you have "Pushed your gain too far", in which case pull it back and increase your lighting in a subtle way instead.

Alternative methods:

1. You could film the "Night scene" in broad daylight then darken the image afterwards on your computer, this will avoid Gain/ grain problems but introduce other challenges.
You need to not only reduce Gama (light intensity) but also adjust your Chroma (Colour) by adding or subtracting appropriately.

Add a Blue or green colour cast to resemble darkness, but that is not as easy as it sounds.

2. Another trick is to Work out your "Blocking" i.e. where your subject will move from / to, once you work out the "virtual stage" you only darken the room and only light that specific area using a narrow beam of light, with some hidden lights for hair and shoulder.
   If your light source is too strong and looking too obvious then use a blue or green filter on the lens (or cellophane on the light source)

   This technique restricts subject movement as it keeps the actors within the boundaries of the "wash".

The Nuts team got the "Audience award" with the film I mentioned and the other two low-light films produced by (Andy & Chris Seville) and (The phoenix team) also won awards, but each used a different technique.. more about them later.

When the NUTERS invited me to do the acting in their VOTY production featuring a "Shonky Vicar" I immediately knew which part they had in mind for me. Naturally I was delighted to be considered no matter what the role was.

I realised just how intense their preparation was when Scotty first explained the plot. That hard work only served to make the actual shoot a breeze.. impressive.

After the win Scotty explained :

"The Nut's Team script for Done Deal called for the Old Farmer to show our Shonky Vicar a piece of old furniture buried under a bench in an outdoor shed. A few factors were influencing the scene design and execution.

 Firstly they did not have a piece of furniture to show, so it had to be seen by the actors but hidden from the viewers.

Secondly the shed outside and inside sets were at two separate locations yet had to appear as one.

Jpeg from the movie: Pleasure acting with Brighton & Reade

Thirdly we needed to show the Vicar's hungry look as he recognised "A Great Find" without alerting the farmer.

 Lastly it was decided that a dark scene would add some mystery to the drama.

The filming was in daylight so scenes outside the shed were normal. To introduce the visible effect of gloom inside the shed a backlit scene of the Vicar entering the shed shot from inside the shed used. To add to the gloomy interior effect the Vicar turned on his "Little torch" as he stood in the entrance and shone it around being careful to "flash the camera" a few times.

At the alternate set, which incidentally was the interior of Phil's garage, the garage door was lowered half way and blackouts fixed to the single window and lower half of the garage door. We now had a darkened area lit only by some light leakage from the single window, lower half of the door and of course the Vicar's "Little torch" The camera exposure was reduced by stops until the required gloomy scene was to requirement. The torch was now used to illuminate and highlight only what "was to be seen" this enabled the viewer to participate in the revealing of the furniture item without actually having one to show. Using a setup inside the darkened area we photographed the Vicar "Looking under the bench" with the camera positioned with a viewpoint looking out from under the bench. Looking directly at the camera the Vicar's face was able to animate his greed in accordance with the script and his little torch again flashed the camera to

complete the illusion required that he was looking under the bench at the "Great Find". Very little correction was required in post to ensure that the scene was effective and a great success" - Scotty

Phil Brighton's garage dimmed to create impact

There couldn't help but notice the style is no denying that working within a team has intrinsic values and it was interesting to see how the Nutters work together as if they read each other's mind which makes the execution of the project a breeze, particularly when the resident comedian Phil Brighton injects one liners every so often, whether you need it, or not!

While the audience laughter during the screening of "Done Deal" was a reflection of valuable input from all of the NUTS guys I couldn't help but notice the style of the second prize winner for Drama (Arab Dawn), produced by the phoenix team. So I had a chat with Ruskin Spears who did the edit for it.

Ruskin said:
"For Arab Dawn we had almost 2 mins of night scenes and amongst them tried it all - ambient lighting, added off camera lights, day-to-night shots, and we also shot at dusk so had very changeable natural lighting.

There were three major challenges we faced in Post:
(1) Lightening some of the darker scenes without creating noise

(2) Balancing the scenes

(3) The biggest and most challenging – deciding what level of 'darkness' to use in the final edit. I viewed the film on 5 or 6 different screens and every one displayed differently, some too dark, some too light. It's no good just thinking I'll calibrate my monitor since your monitor won't be calibrated!

In the end the bedroom scene was a bit light but the rest was ok!
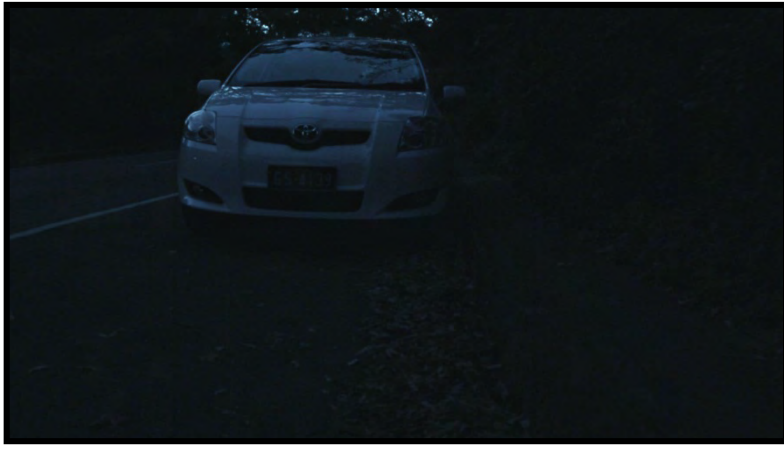
Raw footage was very dark - sun was going down and we didn't use lights here!

Was lightened in Post, cropped slightly and the car lights added"- Ruskin

I must say that the Phoenix team along with Ruskin broke new ground in film style utilising significant effort in the post production realm which only adds to the club's mosaic of abilities.

I describe the 'Nuts' funny film as entertaining, The Phoenix film as intriguing, and just as you thought there couldn't possibly be another challenging film shot in the dark … along came "Flyer" !

No wonder the judges were confused.. Filmed by the two veterans Andy Doldissen and Chris Saville. Flyer got 1st priZe in Drama,

I was quick to ring Andy to congratulate him (he collected a few more awards on the night but let's not go there). Speaking from his wheel chair, as he suffered a major road accident soon after the awards night (who's got that Voodoo doll now?), I asked him how he and Chris tackled the night scene:

"The first step was to find a location that had suitable lighting and met the needs of each shot. Our first choice, in the Rocks, looked good but when we did some test shooting one evening we realised that this spot was where government buses parked with their engines running for up to 15 mins at a time. A noise which was impossible to avoid. Doing a test shoot is a chance to ensure you are getting the right look.

We used ourselves for stand ins for the actors - setting up camera angles and using different gels over the supplementary portable LED lights for different effects.

We than went back to the edit software and played around with selected shots to see if they would work. This gave us confidence that we were as ready as we could be for our real shoot.

The night shooting was done in a park in the Rocks, with the camera on a tripod and using manual controls, aperture wide open, zero gain and carefully setting manual focus for each shot. The main lighting was the street / park lighting which we supplemented with small portable LED lights to soften any shadows on the face.

This shot shows the importance of positioning the camera to get an interesting background. The camera was set up to get the bridge in shot, it was a coincidence that the moon was rising as well.

The following shot, the reverse of the previous, shows a backlight on Emile's hair. This was done using a small torch (CREE 160 lumens) that can be focussed wide or narrow set on a stand just out of shot. It makes Emile really stand out from the background"

I thanked Andy and we wish him a speedy recovery.

We also wish Leonard Lim a speedy recovery after he suffered a serious heart attack. Leonard was part of the G7 team who also won an award in a different category.
So It's good to see such diversity of talents in the club which made us arguably the world's best amateur Video club.

Get your scripts ready everyone and call me for the acting bit in VOTY 2013 ..

Rob Nercessian

New Club Website

Check out the new club website which launched this month. The new design includes everything the old site had plus a whole lot more. The most obvious change, apart from the design, is the site now features club videos.

Where the club has permission some of the videos are publicly available, helping people who might be thinking of joining to see what we do. Many others are locked away in a "member only" area which you will need a password to access. The member area also includes other things and more will be added in the next few months.

At the moment the video library includes VOTY 2012, 2011, 2010 and 2009. Gradually we will get as much of the library as possible into the member only area so you can watch them again or - if you've never seen them - then watch them for the first time!

Members, come along on Wednesday, January 23rd and get your username and password

DSLR's are better for shooting video than the more traditional video camera style...

Agree?   **Disagree??**   **Have no idea???**

Visit the new club website and cast your vote today!

Classic Movie Camera	DSLR

Got a poll suggestion?

We'd love to hear it and use it! It needs to be a short (approx 15 words max.) film making related question with at least 2 and no more than 4 short (1 or two words) answer options. Email your suggestion to our newsletter editor or webmaster or pop it on a piece of paper and give it to us at a meeting night.

COMPETITION MATTERS

A number of our Members who produce video on their own are not too interested in Drama or Documentary production. Their main interests probably lie with Travel or Scenic Montage videos. The latter genre being particularly strong with the increasing use of the DSLR camera in video mode. Our competition themes, apart from the "open" category over the New Year and for VOTY, are not conducive to Travel or Scenic Montage submissions.

To provide more scope for members to be involved in Club Night Competitions the Committee has agreed to add an "open" category to each of the Club Night competitions. "Open" will allow individual members to submit entries based on Travel or Scenic Montage genres.

In order to keep the judging administration effort to a workable level entries by interested Individual Members are limited to one, in either the published theme or "open" category in each Club night competition. As is the case today, defined by the Club Screening Procedures, an individual who participates in a team submission can still make an individual submission.

Margaret Tulloh
Competition Manager.

COMPETITION CORNER

Competitions for 2013

27th February Club Night	**OPEN** **As published in 2012** **Entirely Open for you to decide.**	**5 Minutes**
24th April Club Night	**"LOST"** **A drama which must include** **3 of these Items**	**5 Minutes**
26th June Club Night	**"Sell Bank Fees"** **60 seconds Ad with a 30** **Second cut on the theme**	**60 Seconds**
28th August Club Night	**"Daylight Robbery"** **A common script will be** **Developed for this comp,** **Each entrant must use the** **Script to execute the theme** **as they see fit.**	**5 minutes**
23rd October Club night	**VOTY closes in accordance** **with club screening procedures**	

**On the club night closing dates February through to August entries will be accepted
in the "Photo Montage" genre. This will allow individuals who wish to work alone to
Participate in competitions with this genre of video.**

**Entry Forms can be obtain from our resources page. If you Copyright Music in your entry,
You must complete the Copyright Form.
Any questions must be directed to the Competitions manager.
Good Luck everyone for 2013.**

**Margaret Tulloh
Competition Manager.**

Bryon Spiers (one of Margaret's Helpers)

Cake by Margaret Tulloh
Photos by Neville Waller

Ruskin & son Oscar Spiers

VOTY 21 - 2012

Stuart Plant & Alan Tulloh making sure the liquid flowed

Marianne Rowley & Chris Kembessos with helper Serena

Andy Doldissen & Mario Llige

Lorraine Scott & Phil Brighton

Claire Waterworth

Ruskin Spiers

Ron Cooper, Phil Brighton with John Sirret

Leonard Lim explaining his camera to Erik Bennett

Maree & Gerry Benjamin with their daughter Lerida Grant

Heather Baker, Alison & Kent Fry, Jens Bagoine & Lindy Ward

And the food flowed freely

Take note:- 5 females around the bar

Erik & Denise Bennett & Leonard Lim.

Meaghan, Ian Scott & Lauren

Merv Blanch & John Sirret

David Rodgers & Ros Doldissen

Joy Saunders, Gwen Roberts & Ruskin Spiers

Chris Saville, Camilla & Rob Nercessian

Peter Edwards, Janet & Don Reade Mrs. Edwards

Barbara Whitehead, Glenn Booth & Jim Whitehead

David Rogers & Colin Cooper

Joy Hruby & Joy Saunders

Chris White, Marianne Rowley & Alan White

Ernest Cheung & Margaret Tulloh

Ken Bisset, Beryl Stephens, Jim & Lyn Macintosh

Leonard at work

Roger Ellison, Chris White, Marianne Rowley Don Reade
Clare Waterworth

Josie and Max Milgate with Lyn Macintosh

Ilma Cave, Janette Waller & April

Margo Hallett, Ernest Cheung & Carol Bovingdon

Chris & Cathy Callaghan

Alex Alexander, *Lorraine Scott and Di Hughson*

Members looking at the photos of yesteryear

Rob Nercessian in front of his photo of 2010

Elma Cave & Andy Doldissen

Noel Leeder and daughter Kathyrn

Lindy Ward, Alison Fry & Felicity

Marianne & Chris Kembessos

Our man from Hong Kong with Ian Scott

Chris and Max amongst the Audience

Agnes & Mike Elton with Peter Frybort

A group get together

Beryl & John Stephens

Lee & Barry Crispe acknowledging the Teams award

Margaret Tulloh

Noel Leeder in front of a photo of Chris White and Noel in 1999

*Past Presidents from L to R
Peter Frybort,
John Wilson,
Rob Nercessian,
John Urquhart,
Ami Levartovsky,
Ken Bisset,
Chris Korgemets.
Andy Doldissen
(President), Bob Hallett
(Past Vice President).*

Peter Frybort with wife & son

John Urquhart, Noel Leeder, Merv Blanch, &
Andy Doldissen celebrating SVMC's 21st.

Andy Doldissen & Margaret Tulloh

Ian Scott accepting a wee drop from Andy Doldissen

President:
Andy Doldissen

Vice President:
Ruskin Spiers

Secretary:
Ian Scott

Treasurer:
Peter Frohlich

The Club meets on the **FOURTH WEDNESDAY** of each month (except for November & December) at 8PM at the **Dougherty Centre, Victor Street, Chatswood.** Tea & Coffee are available from 7PM. **FOCUS** nights, which   usually cover technical subjects,   are held on the   **SECOND WEDNESDAY** of each month (except January & December) at 7.30PM at the **Dougherty Centre**, **Victor Street, Chatswood.**

The Committee meets on the **FIRST WEDNESDAY** of each month. Members are always welcome to attend, and for meeting time and venue, see any committee member.
Member's guests may be invited to meetings; the first visit is free, subsequent visits are $5. New members are always welcome. Annual membership is single **$60,** self and spouse **$80**, Family **$120**, country member **$50** - with an initial joining fee of **$10.**

Note: Equipment brought to a Club night is not covered by the Club's insurance. Members should study their household insurance and check whether their video equipment is covered away from their premises and consider whether their cover should be extended.
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Secretary	Ian Scott	0419 239 953
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Assistant Treasurer	David Rogers	0428 110 600
Membership Secretary	Peter Frohlich	0414 414 441
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Visitors Coordinator	Gwen Roberts	0422 034 251
Copyright Registrar		
Video Director		
Team Coordinator	Andy Doldissen	0403 838 783
Catering	To be Decided	

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