

FOCUS

MAGAZINE

FOR THE PROFESSIONAL & THE ENTHUSIAST

THE RELAUNCH ISSUE

INTERVIEWS

NEWS+REVIEWS

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EXPERIENCES

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OFFERS



THE INSTITUTE OF VIDEOGRAPHY

ISSUE 234 | WINTER 2018/19 | SIX POUNDS

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cover picture: from Big Stock
photograph: Royalty-Free

notes from an editor

The relaunch of Focus Magazine after a long gap is a early indicator of the patient's health and outgoing disposition. To make it happen has meant calling on the resourcefulness of a number of people, inviting Keith Woolford to show his skills as a designer and thereby create a new look for the magazine, while Chris North has been out there cajoling people for the wide variety of content you see in these pages.

Chris and myself have then done a heap of work to check, and where needed edit the text to produce literate and appealing articles.

Just like the old saying that it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a team to raise a magazine and I am impressed and grateful to all those behind the scenes and the contributors themselves for their efforts for our magazine and organization.

The teamwork has extended to discussions and work sharing with a stalwart Volunteers' group, and it would have been not only difficult, but potentially demoralising, to try to plough on without their support.

This has got us to a point as we start 2019 where we can have more confidence in the IOV as a viable organisation capable of growth.

Our new website will soon be live and as well as being faster and easier to navigate, it will also improve information to members, reach out to the video production world of suppliers and colleges, and be a useful resource to any visitor who has an interest in video or who may be seeking a suitably qualified producer.



Keith Woolford, Tony and Phil Janvier
– IOV stand, The Photography Show '18

Tony Manning

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The opportunity to join the Executive Committee either in an advisory capacity or designated role is available.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE:

I would like to invite any suitably qualified IOV member to offer themselves for election to the IOV Executive. We are looking for a quorate body of no fewer than three members and no more than five.

On this occasion when the closing date is reached (11 January 2019) the voting process will be online. All current members are entitled to vote. A period of five days will be allowed for voting and once this time has passed results will be announced and all candidates will be informed of the outcome.

As permitted by the constitution of the IOV, the Executive may appoint any other person as a co-opted member for a particular purpose or period of time.

See our website for full details.

Tony Manning M.M.Inst.V
Chair, Institute of Videography



Winter Cashback I

A good season to think about new gear with offers from a major player. Nikon, number two in camera brands, are running a fair decent cashback for their DSLRs – D750, D500, D7500 and the D5600 together with some 17 fast lenses.



Running up to 15 January 2019, do check the website for terms and conditions.

<https://nikonpromotions.co.uk>

Winter Cashback II

Not to be outdone, Canon, the number one brand in the world, are also making a similar offer with nine cameras starting at the entry level models – a mix of full frame, mirrorless and compacts.



Apart from the inclusion of eight lenses they have added five printers from their Pixma range. The offer runs until 17 January 2019 and the T&Cs can be found on the website.

<https://www.canon.co.uk/cashback/current-cashback/>

Make a 2019 Exhibition of yourself

16-19 Jan	The Societies Convention/Show, London
26-28 Feb	BVE, EXCEL London
16-19 Mar	The Photography Show, NEC Birmingham
6-11 Apr	NAB, Las Vegas
30 May	KitPlus Roadshow, Glasgow
4 June	KitPlus Roadshow, Bristol
11-12 June	MPS, Olympia London
13-17 Sept	IBC, RAI Amsterdam
5 Nov	KitPlus Roadshow, Manchester

Missed Opportunity

With the chaos that was Black Friday but a distant memory, did you spot one of the bigger bargains up for grabs?

Amazon were offering the original Sony Alpha A7 full frame camera with a 28-70mm zoom lens for a ridiculous £509 after discount and a Sony £150 rebate. That's a whopping 67% of the RRP! Although no 4K video capability, it has a respectable full HD 60p. Should have looked harder.



IDX promotion offers a free charger



Buy two E-HL 10DS batteries and get the VL-2X charger free (while promotional stock lasts).

www.idx-europe.co.uk | Tel: +44-1753-547692

Exclusive AKM Music Offer

AKM Music are delighted to be part of the relaunch of the IOV's Focus Magazine and have arranged a generous exclusive discount code on online orders of their Royalty Free Music for Focus readers only.

This is an exclusive offer to Focus readers only who can now enjoy 30% off album packs and a massive 40% when ordering three or more albums from their website.

Choose from over 200 themed albums or select single tracks for your next video production. All purchases come with a clear and simple licence which covers usage on all your video productions from corporate to broadcast.

AKM Music are a UK company who have had a long-standing association with the IOV supporting its various Trade Shows and Award evenings and has been a regular advertiser in Focus.

For your exclusive AKM Music discount enter this code online: **IOVFOCUS**



www.akmmusic.co.uk

Exclusive Colour Grading Offer

We feel a little like the Godfather in making readers offer's they can't refuse – although with slightly less drama and absolutely no violence whatsoever.

Denver Riddle, this issue's featured interviewee – see page 38, has generously given a handsome 20% discount off his products for all readers of Focus.

Color Grade users are guided step-by-step workflow that follows and teaches as used by top colorists. Grade management (grouping similar shots), side-by-side shot matching and rippling (copying) looks across clips and scenes is all intuitively and seamlessly handled. There are over 70 built-in presets – looks based on mood, time of day, location, genre and color scheme. A NEW Look Transfer tool also allows users to transfer color palettes from their favorite movies or images.

To claim your exclusive discount enter this code online: **IOVFOCUS234**



www.colorgradingcentral.com



Canon XF705

The XF705 is a fixed lens, three-ring camcorder, designed for professional broadcast use, day in, day out. It has an 8.3mm - 124.5mm lens (which is a 15x optical zoom), and in 35mm equivalent terms, that's a 25.5mm - 382.5mm lens. And if you shoot in HD, you can crop into the sensor to double your zoom at the telephoto end without losing any quality.

The footage is recorded onto two SD card slots, and the camera can record up to UHD 50p, in 10bit 4:2:2 internally making it ideal for broadcast work. Both the SDI & HDMI ports can output UHD 50p, 10bit 4:2:2 as well, so you have plenty of options for recording externally too.

i £5,832.50 + vat
www.proav.co.uk/canon-xf705
www.canon.co.uk/pro/video-cameras/xf705/

Canon XF405 4K UHD Camcorder

The Canon XF405 combines outstanding 4K UHD image quality and a portable design, making it an ideal companion for news coverage that lasts all day or even documentary shoots that lasts for hours. This camera can also make a case for camcorder of choice for covering sports events.

With a 1.0-inch 4K UHD CMOS sensor that can record 4K UHD video at 60fps and slow motion Full HD video up to 120fps, the XF405 makes a strong case for use in various shooting scenarios, be it a creative production or a professional one.

Video review here (US site):
<http://epfilms.tv/canon-xf405-4k-uhd-camcorder-review/>

i £2,295.00 + vat
www.proav.co.uk/canon-xf405-4k-compact-camcorder
 video review here:
www.epfilms.tv/canon-xf405-4k-uhd-camcorder-review/



DaVinci Resolve 15.2

DaVinci Resolve 15 is the world's first solution that combines professional offline and online editing, color correction, audio post production and now visual effects all in one software tool!

You get unlimited creative flexibility because DaVinci Resolve 15 makes it easy for individual artists to explore different toolsets. It also lets you collaborate and bring people with different creative talents together. With a single click, you can instantly move between editing, color, effects, and audio. Plus, you never have to export or translate files between separate software tools because everything is in the same software application! DaVinci Resolve 15 is the only post production software designed for true collaboration. Multiple editors, assistants, colorists, VFX artists and sound designers can all work on the same project at the same time!



Whether you're an individual artist, or part of a larger collaborative team, it's easy to see why DaVinci Resolve 15 is the standard for high end post production and is used for finishing more Hollywood feature films, episodic television programming and TV commercials than any other software.

DaVinci Resolve 15 now has full Fusion visual effects and motion graphics built in! The Fusion page gives you a complete 3D workspace with over 250 tools for compositing, vector paint, keying, rotoscoping, text animation, tracking, stabilization, particles and more.

i DaVinci Resolve 15.2 Free download
 DaVinci Resolve 15 Studio £239 | Micro Panel £805
 Mini Panel £2,405 | Advanced Panel £24,075

www.blackmagicdesign.com/uk/products/blackmagicurbroadcast/

Sony PMW-300K1 XDCAM camcorder with interchangeable 14x zoom HD lens system

The Sony PMW-300K1 Semi-shoulder handheld camcorder integrates with multi-camera operations and is equipped with three 1/2-inch Exmor™ full-HD CMOS sensors, capable of delivering high-quality images even in low-light environments. Ample support for interchangeable lenses and a robust metal body further ensure that PMW-300K1 is suitable for a wide range of applications. Additionally, the PMW-300K1 offers a convenient remote-control and multi-camera operation capability, which allows use with high-end camera systems.

HD 422 50 Mbps recordings ideal for a wide range of shooting conditions with XAVC future-proofing

An evolution of Sony's industry leading PMW-EX3, the PMW-300K1 is able to record 50Mbps HD material in MPEG-2 HD422, meeting broadcast standards around the world, including the European Broadcasting Union's requirements for



HD broadcast acquisition for long form programme making. The high bit rate ensures excellent capture of fast moving objects, while its chroma subsampling feature is perfect for a wide range of video encoding areas such as VFX and green screen applications. The camcorder can also be upgraded in the future to support Sony's revolutionary XAVC codec, extending the lifecycle of the product to ensure maximum return on investment.

i £6,280.00 + vat

Digital Audio Processing for high quality sound for ENG/EFP productions

The UWP-D11 belt-pack wireless microphone package offers the sound quality of digital audio processing combined with the reliability of analogue FM modulation. The package includes the UTX-B03 belt-pack transmitter and URX-P03 portable receiver. It also includes a high quality omni-directional lavalier microphone and a range of accessories including windscreen, microphone holder clip, belt-clip and shoe-mount adaptor.



The UWP-D11 package offers wide frequency coverage with up to 72 MHz bandwidth (depending on region) across a wide range of channels, with a choice of models to choose from. Easy-to-use features include a large display and small size receiver to fit neatly on any size camcorder or DSLR camera, automatic channel setting function, headphone output, USB connection for power supply and line input availability. The UWP-D Series system provides superb transient response performance for all ENG / EFP production applications.

Digital Audio Processing for high quality sound

Improves transient response performance between the UWP-D transmitter and receiver, which will provide impressive natural sound quality compared to conventional analogue wireless systems.

i £450.00 + vat
www.topteks.com/shop/brands/sony-uwp-d11/

Two Cameras in One – the URSA Broadcast

Switch instantly between live work or field shooting!

URSA Broadcast is two cameras in one! The compact design, familiar controls and broadcast camera features are ideal for ENG style shooting and vital for working quickly when you're trying to capture breaking news.



Whether you're in the studio or out in the field, URSA Broadcast will give you incredible image quality, accurate skin tones and vibrant colours that are far superior to cameras costing ten times more.

The key is URSA Broadcast's new extended video mode that produces pictures you don't need to colour grade so you can shoot, edit and get stories on air faster than ever before.

URSA Broadcast is also the first camera that finally lets AV and web broadcasters afford a true professional broadcast solution that's dramatically better than DSLRs!

You will require a viewfinder a lens and appropriate lens mount, battery and adaptor plate...

i £2,542.50 + vat
www.visuals.co.uk/5940599-bmdcineursamc4k.html

O1

WHAT MAKES A GOOD VOICEOVER?

Colin Day, together with his wife and fellow v/o, Emma Thurston, run one of the busiest voiceover studios in the UK. With a career spanning more than 35 years, Colin is the voice behind literally thousands of commercials and corporate videos.

Clients include Mercedes Benz, Aston Martin, HSBC and Mastercard.



BY COLIN DAY

THE VOICEOVER PRO OFFERS AN INSIGHT INTO HIS WORLD

WWW.VOICEOVER-UK.CO.UK



I'm sometimes asked what makes a good voiceover – the voice or the script? Obviously, it's a combination of the two, and you can't have one without the other. But there's much more to it. I can't speak for everyone in the craft, but I can give a few insights as to how we approach things.

So, the words: it sure helps if they pass for English! Both me and Emma Thurston (my wife and partner in the Thurston/Day Voiceover Team) get to read all kinds of scripts which are not exactly Shakespeare, but you work with what you've got and do the best you can. The challenge is to read it like you wrote it. We don't often get involved in script writing here, but we do find ourselves offering suggestions.

All clients are different but it's nice to have a little bit of creative freedom because writing for the ear is a rather different skill than writing for the page; not everyone has the knack. Sometimes the script is generally good, but maybe you'll find two words

that collide or make for an awkward tongue-twister. So it's great to have a tiny bit of latitude from the client, perhaps just to change the order of words, as long as it doesn't change the sense.

Male or Female voice?

Our clients make that choice, but I think the old boundaries have been blown away. Emma voices loads of technical and industrial v/o work that, traditionally, male voices might have covered. I did my first v/o in 1982 and went full-time in 1986. Outside of London, there were only a handful of female voices around and whenever I bumped into one, they'd always complain that there wasn't enough work for female voices. Now, things are completely reversed; the girls are all over everything! I can only think of one arena where male voices have been completely dominant and that's movie trailers. The studios are just too risk-averse. Having said that, since the great Don La Fontaine passed away,

you won't often hear any kind of v/o on trailers, that era seems to have passed.

Voiceover is a fashion business and as such it reflects much broader cultural trends. The days when a sort of good-natured uncle with a deep rich voice did the v/o on absolutely everything are long gone. Actually, it's a turn-off. So nowadays, bookers are looking for interesting voices that consumers can identify with – 'Oh, he/she sounds just like me'. Businesses are desperate to communicate on a peer-to-peer level, rather than top-down. We've become very savvy and can easily sniff out a hired-gun. I guess I spent the first half of my career trying to sound like a voiceover and the second half trying not to!

I came from a radio background. Traditionally, a lot of people from radio had a sideline career doing voiceovers; mostly because they had good voices and mic skills – but that was yesterday. Now it's less about the voice, more about the attitude, the interpretation,

how 'relatable' can you be? Coming from radio, those booth skills served me well for a short time, but pretty soon I realised that voiceover is a job for an actor. So I took as many classes as I could; learnt how to find the rhythm of the text, divine the writer's intention, lift the words off the page.

Direction

You'll almost always get some kind of steer from the director, even if we're recording remotely and solo. I built my first home studio in 1990 and, boy, were things different then. Occasionally, a client would turn up to the house and direct me, but most often I was just left to get on with it. Then the internet came along and everything changed. Now there are thousands of voiceover people worldwide who are offering a remote recording service. So clients' expectations have changed too. Quite rightly, they want things bang on point. I'd say more than half of our sessions now are attended in some way or another, be that by ISDN, Skype, Source

Connect, Cleanfeed – or even plain old landline. These days clients can get involved in every nuance, be just as picky as they need, and get exactly the result they want. In the end, it saves us a lot of time and guesswork.

Preparation

So apart from the script, what else makes for a good voiceover? As Emma always says, "fail to prepare, prepare to fail." And we do a LOT of prep before we step into the booth.

The first important thing to establish is who we're talking to, because that really informs the tone of voice. So, it's obvious that I'll adopt a different attitude if I'm narrating something aimed at board level engineers versus an explainer video for mums-to-be.

When I first see the words I try not to think about the reading style at all. All I want to do on my first read-through is comprehend it. So I'll just read it very slowly in my head and see if it makes sense. Some of the highly technical



narrations are impossible to fully grasp, but you have to get the gist of things. And not just the text, but the context too; the back story. Who are we talking too and why? Where will they be viewing this? If it's a corporate video, what does the end client want to achieve? What's the takeaway? What do we want people to understand or feel after watching this?

Next the read-through – still in my head – I'll try and get to know the words. So I'm not trying to memorise it but I want to know it well enough that nothing is surprising me. But at this stage, I don't want to fix my performance by rehearsing it out loud.

Then I might have a mumble through it without any attempt at performance, and at that stage I'm just getting used to the feel of the words in my mouth. I'm also trying to scope out the structure; ah... OK... this is the beginning... and this section about driver's side airbags – that's the important middle bit – then here's where I start wrapping it up, and so on. At the same time I'm imagining the visuals and also looking for opportunities; maybe this word will make a little rhyme with that word;

this other word might need a pause for emphasis, and so on. I might spot some potentially tricky bits – words that might trip me up. But again, I'm not fixing the read, I'm trying to internalise the words, so that when I enter the booth, the words on the page simply act as a reminder of a fact or idea that I already know. I probably won't perform it, if that's the right word, until I get into the booth, mostly because I need to be flexible, but also because I want to keep some freshness and spontaneity.

Voicing a film

It's always helpful to see the pictures first. Quite often we'll be synching our v/o to the film here – but it isn't always possible. So in that case, I just try and visualize them. I know that Emma does the same. If I don't go through that process, if I'm not describing or explaining something which I can see in my mind's eye, then the result will always be a little hazy or disconnected. So, if you can send a rough cut, great! If not, don't worry, I'm going to picture it anyway. Even if the film in my head is quite different from the actual film, as long as I'm describing something it seems to help.

As an aside, I think the second most useful thing directors can do is to let us hear the music before we do the session. Emma is especially keen on that. Not that all narration or commercials have music, but if they do it's great to know what you're up against. Too often we see corporate films where the voice is at complete odds with the music track. Of course, it's great to see at least a rough cut of the pics, but if that's not possible, then give us an idea of the music because it can really inform the pace and energy of the read.

Hardware and processing

Typically, I like a little bit of hardware processing in my cans, so I'll do a tiny bit on the way in – not too much because it's so easy to overcook things – then a weenie bit more processing on mixdown. Just a hint of EQ and compression to tame the tip of the peaks and tidy up the very low end.

But really, the trick is to try and use as little processing as possible. That means the right mic in the right room. I've tried more than a few condensers, but for my money nothing translates the human voice with quite so much ease and grace as a nice Neumann U87 –

preferably a vintage one. Pair it with a Neve pre-amp it's a magical combo that just needs a little tickle to be broadcast ready. Now, of course, a U87 is a great mic, but if you put it in a room that's less than optimal acoustically, you'll just end up with a great recording of a poor room! So for me, the most important elements would be: the voice, the room, the mic, then the pre-amp – in that order.

I was recently asked to do a Pathé Newsreader voice on a corporate job. So naturally that had to be a ribbon mic, but they don't usually have enough bite for everyday v/o work. Now and then I'll also use a Sennheiser MKH 416, especially for very quietly spoken reads or 'Voice-of-God' scripts. You probably wouldn't think of it as a voiceover mic, but if you know how to work it and get just the right distance from the capsule you can get a sound which is bigger than life. The proximity effect is huge, and, again it's easy to overcook it.

Costs

Costs relate to the job. That principle is well established. If you're doing a TV spot your voice is more widely exposed and carrying a heavier load, so

you're rewarded accordingly. Broadly speaking, I think that most voiceovers try to be flexible with rates. It may depend how busy they are, but say it's a not-for-profit community film, you might be surprised how affordable a good v/o can be. There are lots of us, plenty of emerging artists and it's very competitive out there.

Finding a voiceover

I'll never forget one of my first sessions as an itinerant voice up at Radio Aire in Leeds. It was 1984. After the session the production manager made great ceremony of writing my name on this list pinned to the wall. "There you go, Colin," he said, "you are officially number 48!" Naturally I was curious what he meant? He explained that he had compiled the most comprehensive list of voiceovers working outside of London and I was number 48! Well, these days I'm guessing there must be 40 or 50 voiceovers in Leeds itself. You just have to Google us, send a script and ask for a quote.

Our craft has been discovered and it seems like every singer, actor, dancer, model wants to be a v/o – even my postman asked me the other day how he could get into it! Trust me, if you're looking for a voiceover these days you will not struggle to find one. Will it be a good one? Well, that's for you and your audience to judge.

Casting the right voice for the script – that's a subject for another whole article!

Colin Day

[RE]SPITE

Interviewing for your next production?

Then look no further than this inspirational short from Catherine Tate, Gemma Atherton and a whole host of actors, darling, for some sure-fire tips.

Entitled 'Leading Lady Parts', this highly amusing film has a suitable edge.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=fpDHNbjGivo

O2

GOPRO AND SHOGUN ATMOS

My third camera is a GoPro! All of us in the business of video production take pride in our kit. For most of us it has taken a long time to build up a veritable arsenal of cameras, lights and grip equipment. The acquisition is organic, a series of impulse buys and additions purchased for specific jobs, and I will confess that I have been guilty of this at times.

BY BOB SANDERSON
M.M.INST.V.

DETERMINATION, A TOUCH
OF SKILL AND
25 HOURS IN THE DAY

VOXVISION VIDEO PRODUCTIONS
AND MEDIA
WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/BOB.
SANDERSON.5



But over the last few years as my turnover has reduced due to me choosing to run down the corporate side of the business in favour of personal projects (you can do that at my old age). I have had to plan carefully as to what new kit I buy and why as a reducing budget will only stretch so far.

As a professional producer of corporate and educational video, choosing cameras has been for me a very serious business. My prime consideration has always been value for money around which I have taken into account functionality, future proofing (as much as one can in this business) and cost. I do not, as you will see, update my cameras on a regular basis, so I have chosen kit that will suit my future needs as closely as possible and to some, my current cameras, purchased over the last four years may seem old hat.

To date I have settled upon the Panasonic AF101a as my main

workhorse, backed up with the Lumix GH4 which will give me, if and when required, 4K. Both cameras share the micro four thirds lens system and I am therefore able to make a saving by swapping lenses. The down side to these cameras for corporate shoots has been that they are cinegraphic and not really intended for run and gun shoots. However, they are both excellent for drama based shoots where I have had more time to work within a 'film set' environment.

The GoPro

I had considered the addition of a GoPro some time ago but was put off, as at that time my understanding was that it utilised a fish eye wide angle lens and used its own video format which needed conversion before mixing with other camera clips on the editing time line. This is no longer the case and the GoPro Hero5 has exceeded my expectations. Not only does it now offer 4K but also a choice of lens angles from superview, wide, medium, linear

and narrow. The quality of video that it produces is excellent and for me, being designed as a quick autofocus camera with little sign of focus hunting it fulfils many applications within both my business and private projects. Here are a few:

The GoPro is great for hand held shots of two people talking/walking face on towards camera – good quality video with no focus issues. You would of course need to use a sound recorder as although acceptable for fun shots the audio is not of the high quality needed for drama or corporate shoots. It's also great for low level shots of plants insects etc. I did some random shots at a National Trust venue using a selfie stick and slowly pushing the camera through groups of daffodils the effect was great and I also managed to pick up pollinating bees hiding in there.

Time lapse is a breeze it was designed for this, and as it is waterproof you could for example, set it up on a balcony and get great time lapse shots of cityscapes, sunsets etc.

Slow motion is brilliant as it can be set up to 240fps which when placed on a 25fps time line gives very credible slow motion, dripping tap shots and the like. And its small size makes it ideal for shooting in public places where you may not wish to attract attention e.g stock shots of high streets, the hustle and bustle of moving feet etc. And it's brilliant of course for in-vehicle shots, capturing both driver/passenger and road shots.

And, of course, what it was designed for - action shots from bikes, skis, snowboards and such and of course you can take high level shots with it mounted on a lighting stand.

Always at hand. I recently filmed a brewery tour as a test sequence. Using a selfie stick as support, I filmed the tour and also shots inside vats that I could not have got so easily with a conventional camera whilst on a site walkthrough, see: <https://youtu.be/V2MHs1QYG8>. These are just a few applications, I am discovering more every day. There is still a small element of fish eye even on narrow view. It is more of an issue if filming people beside a straight line, door frames etc, but this can be corrected in post. So that is why my third camera is a GOPRO. I do not have a large budget for kit and I am sure that larger companies would query my camera choices, but it works for me and the three cameras offer me now a greater flexibility on shoots and of course multi-camera angle on single takes.

One of the problems with the GoPro is accurate live monitoring and the ability to record in full professional codecs. That is where the Atomos Shogun comes in.





A Shogun in the works

It was always on my agenda to purchase an external recorder and earlier this year I decided to add the Atomos Shogun Inferno to my kit bag. This fulfils a number of needs with my production process. The seven inch monitor screen has many superb functions, but for my ageing eyes the electronic focus facility is a godsend. Now all of my projects are pin sharp at the point of filming. As I am considering producing content for TV broadcast in the future I now have the ability via the Shogun to video in 10 bit 4.2.2. I now have greater flexibility in colour matching my various cameras on multiple camera shoots. And, the Shogun works well with the GOPRO, enabling me to view this tiny camera's perspective on the seven inch screen. I have a project for next year where I need to get in amongst some re-enactors for action shots and being able to have the Atomos and GOPRO attached to a sturdy monopod offers some exciting possibilities.



As a professional actor and more recently author, I have started to film myself reading short stories for YouTube. The Shogun is great for self monitoring and is a useful aid to getting yourself in focus. My most recent clients for video production have involved me more and more in drama type filming which I have thoroughly enjoyed. I envisage therefore to create more in the

way of short films and even possibly music videos in the future. For the purpose of this the Shogun is a fantastic addition to my gizmo collection.

I hope you all found this of interest, so why not tell us what's in your kitbag.

Bob Sanderson

apple orchard

At Apple's October 2018 'There's more in the making' event in New York City, there was much to be cheerful about (sneaky price increases aside). A plethora of updated hardware was announced – the gorgeous Macbook Air, the long overdue Mac Mini, an edge-to-edge iPad Pro and Pencil 2, plus with the latest iOS #12 and additional services. Also, we are promised an update on the five-year-old Mac Pro in 2019.

And, behind the scenes, the back room boys and gals have continued to develop their nle since its release in the Summer of 2011.

Mac Mini + iPad

The newly updated space-gray Mini now really packs a punch with SSD and 8th generation Intel Core processors offering five times the performance of its predecessor. Apple also claims it's 30x faster at encoding HEVC video.

And, by adding any iPad as a second display you have touch control to-boot.

This will also work with Mac desktops and laptops – see website for exact models.



The hardware, supplied by Luna Display – a Kickstarter business, is totally wireless, you choose whether a DisplayPort or USB-C is required and then download the App.

Info: <https://lunadisplay.com>

Final Cut Pro #1

Onwards and upwards. Although a heads-up as future releases of Apple's OS, (post Mojave), will not be compatible with 'legacy' media.

"Legacy media can include footage recorded with cameras like Sony HDCAM-SR cameras, footage from GoPro cameras recorded in the CineForm format, video files in the Avid DNxHD/DNxHR format created with software, footage shot with many other older cameras, or files modified with older software."

Apple say that we should prepare for future macOS releases by completing FCP projects that contain any legacy media.

The White Paper can be read in full from the link below.

Info: <https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT209000>

Final Cut Pro #2

Continuing to enhance and improve their professional nle, November saw the 28th FCPX update, now at 10.4.4, along with associated Apps Compressor at 4.4.3 and Motion now 5.4.2. all free to existing owners. Offering a number of improvements and additions, this seems primarily aimed at workflow efficiency. Whereas you would need to go to a third party App, now they can be integrated directly into the nle by way of Extensions.

Apart from ultimately saving the editor time, this allows other software suppliers an SDK (development tool kit). This opens up a substantial opportunity in the market place and a major reversal by Apple finally opening a long closed door.

Here are a number of the new features announced:

- Allow third party extensions access directly from Shutterstock, Frame.io and CatDV.
- Batch Sharing – one-step exporting of multiple clips or projects.
- Comparison Viewer - to help with colour grading Sharing.
- Floating Timecode - view the asset being used at the time.
- Video Noise Reduction - function to minimize objects from low-quality recordings.



They also include Customs LUTs plus a Comic Filter.

Motion gets colour correction tools and Compressor now has a 64-bit engine, Closed Caption and Automatic Configuration automating frame rate, field order, and colour space settings.

Info: www.apple.com/uk/final-cut-pro/

Keith Woolford

PRESENT AND CORRECT

So, you've brought the man or woman (other genders apparently available) in your life the latest video-gizmo. With Christmas (other festivals also available) over – what on earth (other planets...) will you do for New Year? (Okay, we expected this to be out earlier.)

The following suggestions offer a viable alternative to socks plus a class 2 512Mb SD card and are guaranteed to brighten anyone's Brexit-laden days...

BY KEITH WOOLFORD
WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM:
CHRIS NORTH
TONY MANNING
KEITH @ARCH-MEDIA.CO.UK



1. PRESIDENTIAL ERASURE

With the Mid-Terms dust now settled and a realignment of the planets beginning, here is the first of three Donald offerings.

If only life's problems could be removed with a little rubbing.

—KW

[i](#) IWOOT | £6.99

2. WRITE-ABLE SD CARD

It's not a good idea sticking labels on SD cards – they can become gungy and get stuck in the slot. We need them manufactured with a write-on panel!

—CN

[i](#) Fantasy-Land | £tbc

3. THE EYECAM CAM

A camera implant in your right eye – so we don't have to carry around loads and loads of kit.

—CN

[i](#) Fantasy Land + eye surgeon | £500k

4. PET SNACK LAUNCHER

This 'Man's Best Friend Snack Launcher' brought an immediate smile as I stumbled over this little gem from 'I Want One of Those'.

I'm seriously considering buying a dog on the strength of this wacky gift.

—KW

[i](#) IWOOT | £6.99

5. 100 MOVIES SCRATCH BUCKET LIST POSTER

This beautiful poster compiles 100 of the best films ever made and allows you to scratch the title off as you watch the film, unveiling a powerful image related to the film. How many have you seen?

Consider yourself a film buff or know someone who loves the classics or always needs to see all the latest film releases? This poster will be the ideal gift for them.

—TM

[i](#) menkind.co.uk | £6.99



6. HAYNES EXPLAINS PENSIONERS

Bestselling author Boris Starling gives us an insight into the world of pensioners.

He uses all the classic Haynes methods of conveying information by way of graphs, flow charts, fault diagnosis and exploded views.

—TM

[i](#) menkind.co.uk | £6.99

7. FCPZ – EDITING BY THOUGHT

No keyboard shortcuts required. This saves loads of time – although you need to keep a clear head. It also ingests directly from the EyeCam.

—CN

[i](#) Fantasy Land + neurosurgeon | £1m

8. THE BACKWARDS CLOCK

Often bought in conjunction with Spike Milligan's classic song 'I'm Walking Backwards to Christmas'. Eccles would probably love this timepiece.

—TM

[i](#) findmeagift.co.uk | £6.99

9. SNORE NO MORE EXTENDABLE ARM

Fed up having to reach over and nudge your partner to stop snoring? Well now you can put a stop to it with one comical blow! This hilarious anti-snoring device is a foam fist on the end of a telescopic handle. Of course it's not intended

for actually punching your partner in the face – more for like giving them a loving 'you're keeping me awake because you sound like a rhinoceros and if you don't let me get some sleep I'll be like a raging unicorn in the morning' tap!

—TM

[i](#) findmeagift.co.uk | £3.99

10. TRUMP SQUEEZY POOPER

For the time a stress ball just isn't enough. And, you can attach it to your camera bag to boot!

I realise this lowers the tone enormously and shouldn't be included. But it has, get over it.

—KW

[i](#) The Works | £1.50

11. THE FUNNY CHRISTMAS STOCKING FILLER BOOK

Packed full of hilarious games, dubious jokes and fun Christmas facts. Involve your sleeping relatives in a game of human buckaroo, play sprout golf or the Christmas movie charade game, or entertain amazing Christmas trivia. (Did we mention this whole article is late?)

—TM

[i](#) Amazon | £3.00

12. DO NOT DISTURB SOCKS

Damn it, of course there must be socks!

These Do Not Disturb personalised socks are for anyone who may just be 'resting their eyes' on the sofa! The perfect napping themed gift!

Is there anything better than a lovely afternoon nap. Well, we wouldn't be caught doing anything so indulgent. Resting our eyes maybe, but napping...NEVER!

—TM

[i](#) Not on the High Street | £14



O4

WINNING NEW BUSINESS

Filming customer referrals creates a powerful marketing tool for any business or organisation. No, it's not a fad – it's a fact! We all buy from people so there's nothing better than hearing people share their stories of their buying experiences. Successful organisations concentrate on perfecting customer experience. By filming referrals you enable your client to share the experience repeatedly with new and potential customers.

BY KEVIN COOK
F.INST.V. (HON.)

SHARING AN
OPPORTUNITY TO ASSIST
THE CLIENT AND BUILD
YOUR BUSINESS

WWW.VIDEO-ARTISAN.COM



Tips and Tricks of filming customer referrals

Like all marketing activities, your client must know the 'who, what, where, when and why' answers. Who are their customers? What do they want or need? Where are they? When are they looking to purchase your products/services? Why should they choose your client?

These Five W's questions form the basic approach to journalistic storytelling. They also constitute a formula for capturing the complete story on the customer experience. Armed with these questions you have a ready-made script to start filming customer referrals.

Choosing the customers

Your client will, hopefully, already have a good collection of satisfied customers. Some will be particularly special and exactly what they want to attract more of. These existing customers are the best advocates in

attracting new 'ideal' customers. Whilst each will have their own customer experience story, a powerful connection to new customers will be found within their answers to the Five W's questions.

You are not looking for the best on-screen performers or most photogenic people when filming customer referrals. What you are looking for are real people who can tell their story in a believable, natural, and engaging way. The secret here is to get them relaxed and comfortable in front on camera. This is one of the things we pride ourselves on at Video Artisan. We make the experience fun, interesting and educational for all involved.

B-Roll footage

The interview itself obviously forms the main narrative when filming customer referrals but additional footage is needed to tell the complete story – the 'B-Roll' or 'Cutaways'. These shots are used to illustrate the customer's story. They help the film



flow and to enable editors to cut the customer's answers to deliver the most concise marketing message.

Quite often the interviews will have many edits within each answer. Without B-Roll to cover these 'joins' you would end up with jump cuts and loss of continuity. Done correctly, the end result will be fluid and logical. And, most importantly, they help deliver a compelling case for new customers to engage with their business.

Capturing reality

Filming customer referrals can provide another service for your production company. Some people double as the interviewer and cameraman when filming from a tripod but it is usually better to have someone else asking the questions so that the subject is more relaxed – and so that you can concentrate on capturing perfect pictures and sound.

The person asking the questions and prompting the responses needs to be able to put people at ease – and that's not easy if you are not experienced as an interviewer!

Kevin Cook



Examples

Kainos Evolve – Paperless Healthcare

This short customer reference film tells the story of Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals innovative drive towards delivering a paperless healthcare system to their local community.

<https://vimeo.com/258051889>

Cimar Referral Marketing Film

This short film was produced for Cimar as a marketing tool to help new customers understand the benefits of their medical image transfer technology.

<https://vimeo.com/200836932>

BT – High Street TV and Avaya IP Office

This short film reveals the benefits that BT has brought to High Street TV by way of increased productivity, greater reliability and flexibility through using their Avaya IP Office solution.

<https://vimeo.com/64299485>

05

A FILMMAKER'S HOBBY

I am the first person in the world to take on the character of the new Warhammer warrior Rogal Dorn. Warhammer, the supernatural game of ancient warriors and battles, is not just for kids. The popular miniature war game 'Warhammer 40,000', simulates battles between futuristic armies. It is also played seriously by adults. Both young and old painstakingly paint the small plastic characters to a detailed specifications.

BY DAVID SINCLAIR

FORMER SOLDIER ENLISTS AS EMPEROR'S VIRTUAL CHAMPION

WWW.CORPORATE-MOTION.TV
PRINCIPAL IMAGES COURTESY OF
IAIN POOLE PHOTOGRAPHY



STEVE THEWIS

I've become a Warhammer Warrior in real life – well at least at cosplay costume events! Resplendent in full character armour and costume, specially crafted in Wales, I take on the persona of Rogal Dorn, a mighty warrior of larger-than-life proportions. Having regularly taken photos of cosplayers for some time now, when shooting at the Birmingham Comic Con earlier this year I decided to join the ranks and become one. This is how it happened.

Getting hooked

As I had bought an early entry pass I was in through the doors one hour before the public were allowed to enter. I have to say right away no queueing was awesome, a major positive start to my day. The extra hours early entry allowed me to roam around the stands and take photos of various amazing setups and of course cosplayers (players in character costume). And wow there were some truly inspiring handmade costumes on display and every

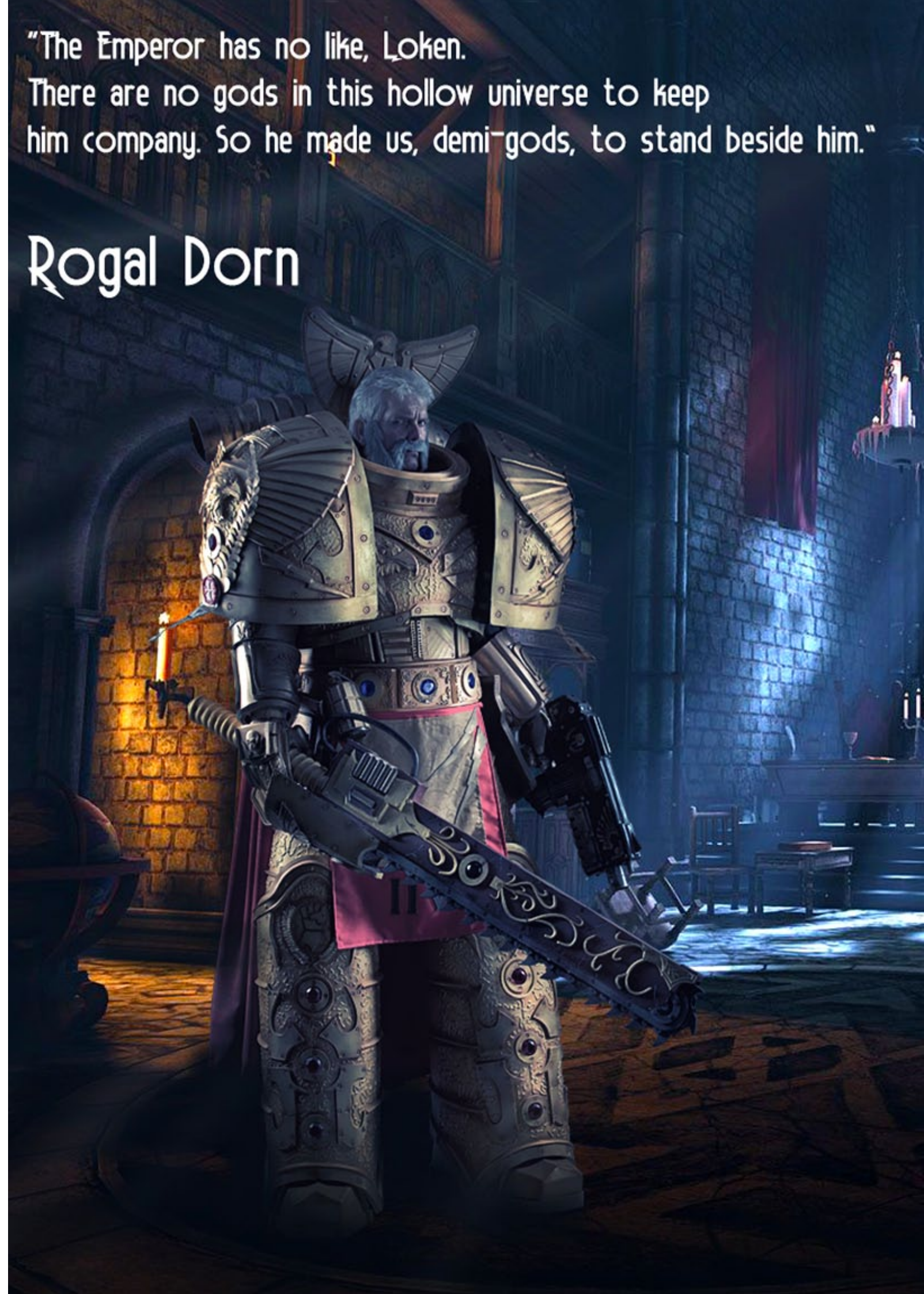
cosplayer I spoke to had a smile on their face and were more than happy to have their photo taken.

So, what makes some one want to dress up in costume? Is it because they are extrovert? Is it because they want to hang out with like-minded peeps? No, I think it's a desire to be something different from the normal day to day life we live. I think it's making new friends, and hanging out with old ones and having a really cool time together. It's about enjoying yourself and the sense of freedom that becoming a character from your favourite film / comic / game that it brings.

As a cosplayer you can be anyone you want. With enough money you can buy several different costumes and be different at each visit to an MCM event. Many of the players I spoke to have more than one costume in their cupboard and may even take more than one costume along so they can change half way through the day. Either way what an awesome way to spend a day

"The Emperor has no like, Loken.
There are no gods in this hollow universe to keep
him company. So he made us, demi-gods, to stand beside him."

Rogal Dorn





David Sinclair in full Rogal Dorn regalia

out alone or with family and friends. And, I have to point out everyone was having fun with no alcohol in sight, just the high of everyone in the room on the same wavelength.

I have admired the large bulky costumes from the Warhammer 40 universe for some time now. So, when I decided to become a cosplayer I knew straight away what type of costume I wanted but just had to decide on what character.

Rogal Dorn

At the end of January 2018, Forge World, the official Games Workshop modelling department, released a model that interested me greatly as it looked amazing. I knew at that point that I wanted to have a costume made in the guise of Rogal Dorn. He was one of the twenty Primarchs created by the Emperor in the earliest days of the Imperium, just after the end of the Age of Strife. Rogal Dorn, was also known as the Praetorian of Terra and was the Primarch of the Imperial Fists Space Marine Legion. On Facebook I knew of a very talented gentleman called John Davies, aka the foam wizard. I made contact with John and asked if he would be able to create me something based on Rogal Dorn. This was February and only two weeks after the model of Rogal Dorn had been released.

Little did I know at the time that in the cosplay world as we know it there was no other cosplayer walking around as Rogal Dorn. After several internet searches and communication with various Warhammer cosplayer elitists it soon became apparent that I was, in fact, a world first! John set about creating the costume as fast as he could and the day came for me to pick it up from his office in Wales. I have to say it was a very exciting moment for a 56-year-old man and I couldn't wait to try it on.

The costume is made of eva foam in 3, 5 and 10mm thicknesses. Weight wise it's very tolerable and the longest time I have spent in it is 3½ hours. Inside my very large boots are blocks of plywood. The insides of my boots are now on to the MK3 version and so far, these are the best to walk around in.

Dressing

I can't actually get dressed up by myself as I have 20 items of kit to have fitted and 14 separate clips so my wife dresses me and is also my spotter. Due to the size of my costume, it is very easy to step on a small child out of my vision below me. Also, because I wear Warhammer 40K Armour which is large, Comic Cons require cosplayers like myself to have a spotter with

them at all times. Karin my wife loves the new-found interest of cosplaying so much that she herself is having a costume made. So, I commissioned John once again to make a costume this time for my wife, and she will be kitted out as a female warrior knight.

As I now have the cosplay bug I have decided that I want a second costume and have commissioned Oaken Mist Greenhill to measure me and create a Predator costume with the Wasp themed colours from the comics. So far, I have attended the Leicester, Manchester, Northampton, and Leighton Buzzard comic cons as Rogal Dorn and I have been met with positive comments and smiley faces on the little ones. Next up is Loughborough, London and Birmingham and I can't wait.

The world of cosplay is not for everyone but for me I have found a new hobby and one that both Karin and I love and we have been married 36 years.

David Sinclair

areas & area reps

The opportunity to meet up with other members face-to-face used to be a popular element of IOV membership. Then somebody invented Google and the worldwide wotsit and it was easy to search for what ever info or solutions you wanted from your warm and comfy chair at home.

The time and cost of travel came into it too. If your nearest meeting was fifty or more miles away you might think twice, three times if you weren't assured of an interesting topic and a good turn-out.

Some dedicated Area Reps continued to try but often felt they were swimming against the tide, an exhausting experience. At times it was disappointing or indeed embarrassing to have a pitifully low turnout when a speaker or presenter had taken the trouble to attend.

At this point my understanding is that only a few areas persist in meeting on anything like a regular basis. So, is there any continuing purpose in areas and Area Reps?

One aspect of the Area Rep 'Job Description' was always to welcome new members personally and to be a point of contact for all within their area. Having made contact they might be able to suggest someone else who might share that member's special interest. If there was a meeting to attend, so much the better. Back in the day this was often how enduring video partnerships came into being, and endured for decades.

Our new website has the facility to show on a map where all the members are, and each individual can add information about themselves and their work. This then presents the opportunity for informal self-directed links.

Of course these days people can get together via Skype and similar platforms and many creatives collaborate quite effectively using this and other means. Using our TV channel on Vimeo (which we intend to develop massively) people can see and comment on each others' work. Using the Forums they can communicate on any relevant topic, create debate, and fix problems.

Call me old-fashioned but I still think that people meeting up remains important even in an age of virtual reality. So even if meetings are occasional with a social get-together now and again I still think they are worthwhile.

Tony Manning



06

FILM [RE]VIEW – ‘METROPOLIS’

Causing a storm some ninety-one years ago, **METROPOLIS** became a classic in the genre of science fiction. It also signposted the way for many directors that followed. Costing upwards of £150m in today's money, these were the days before the ever present (and often over-used) CGI.

BY KEITH WOOLFORD

METROPOLIS (1927)

DIR: FRITZ LANG

SCORE:

GOTTFRIED HUPPERTZ

THE CLASSIC SCI-FI AND

A DISCONCERTED

HG WELLS

KEITH@ARCH-MEDIA.CO.UK



This is the story of the lower class (literally underground) – the workers who knew their place and the elite who live in soaring skyscrapers above – those in power. Set in 2026, it depicts a futuristic and bleak city beautifully. All models, miniatures and mirrors. And, really big sets.

Throw in the timeless romance of boy meets girl, boy loses girl, boy finds girl, girl turns in to a naughty robot, girl/robot burnt at stake, then she/it saves the world.

Mix in a good dose of revolting workers, an evil scientific genius, cabaret, death and destruction.

Following the German premier, it was felt that the film was way too long so the distributors, Paramount and MGM, cut around 25 minutes. The latest ‘definitive’ restored version has the original running time of 153 minutes. Unfortunately, the shorter version(s) omitted a character thereby losing some plotline.

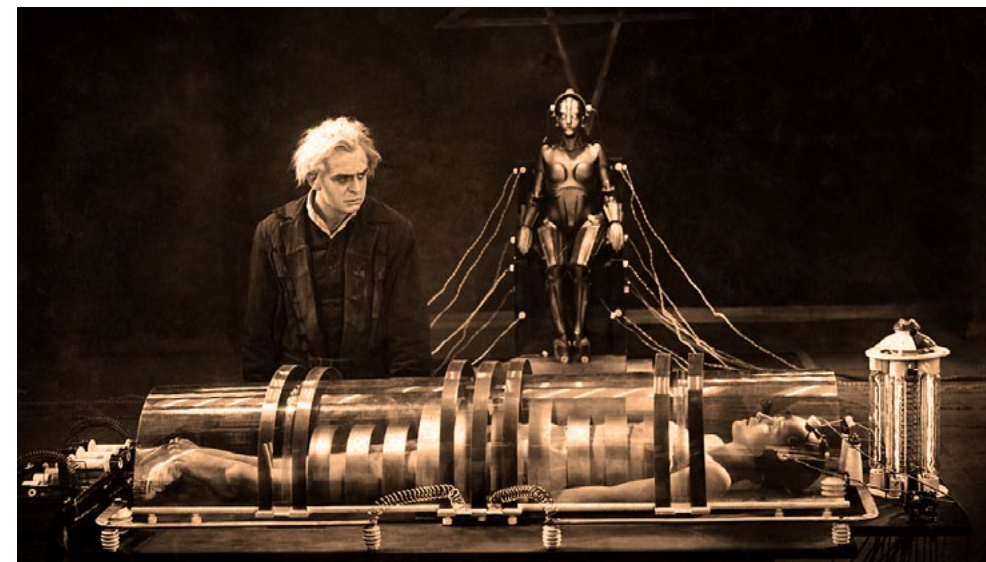
Voted by oodles of film critics and industry luminaries as the 35th top film of all time (11th by Rotten Tomatoes), it was not, however, universally acclaimed in 1927.

Here is an extract of a review published in the New York Times, April 1927 from a British writer, a Mr HG Wells of Bromley, Kent, he who also dabbled in science fiction.

“I have recently seen the silliest film. I do not believe it would be possible to make one sillier.

And as this film sets out to display the way the world is going, I think *The Way the World is Going* [written and published by HG Wells in 1928] may very well concern itself with this film.

It is called *Metropolis*, it comes from the great Ufa studios in Germany, and the public is given to understand that it has been produced at enormous cost.



“Vier Minuten bei Regulo Sechs sollten ausreichen”
(Four minutes at regulo six should be enough)

It gives in one eddying concentration almost every possible foolishness, cliché, platitude, and muddlement about mechanical progress and progress in general served up with a sauce of sentimentality that is all its own.

It is a German film and there have been some amazingly good German films, before they began to cultivate bad work under cover of a protective quota. And this film has been adapted to the Anglo-Saxon taste, and quite possibly it has suffered in the process, but even when every allowance has been made for that, there remains enough to convince the intelligent observer that most of its silliness must be fundamental.

Possibly I dislike this soupy whirlpool none the less because I find decaying fragments of my own juvenile work of thirty years ago, *The Sleeper Awakes*, floating about in it.

Capek's Robots have been lifted without apology, and that soulless mechanical monster of Mary Shelley's, who has fathered so many German inventions, breeds once more in this confusion.

... The aeroplanes that wander about above the great city show no advance on contemporary types, though all that stuff could have been livened up immensely with a few helicopters and vertical or unexpected movements.

The motor cars are 1926 models or earlier. I do not think there is a single new idea, a single instance of artistic creation or even intelligent anticipation, from first to last in the whole pretentious stew; I may have missed some point of novelty, but I doubt it; and this, though it must bore the intelligent man in the audience, makes the film all the more convenient as a gauge of the circle of ideas, the mentality, from which it has proceeded.

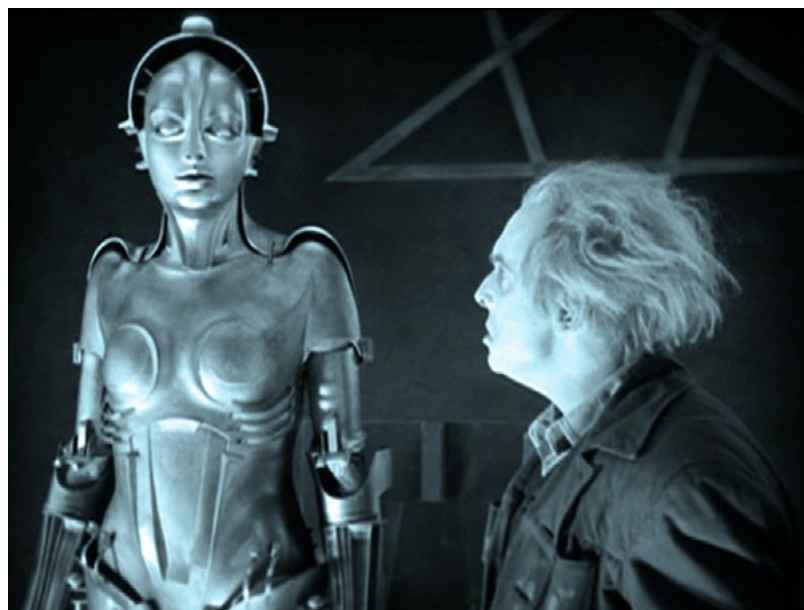
... The British census returns of 1901 proved clearly that city populations were becoming centrifugal, and that every increase in horizontal traffic facilities produced a further distribution. This vertical social stratification is stale old stuff. So far from being ‘a hundred years hence,’ *Metropolis*, in its forms and shapes, is already, as a possibility, a third of a century out of date.

... One is asked to believe that these machines are engaged quite furiously in the mass production of nothing that is ever used, and that Masterman grows richer and richer in the process. This is the essential nonsense of it all. Unless the mass of the population has the spending power there is no possibility of wealth in a mechanical civilization. A vast, penniless slave population may be necessary for wealth where there are no mass production machines, but it is preposterous with mass production machines. You find such a real proletariat in China still; it existed in the great cities of the ancient world; but you do not find it in America, which has gone furthest in the direction of mechanical industry, and there is no grain of reason in supposing it will exist in the future.

... The current tendency of economic life is to oust the mere drudge altogether, to replace much highly skilled manual work by exquisite machinery in skilled hands, and to increase the relative proportion of semi-skilled, moderately versatile and fairly comfortable workers. It



“Schaust du mich an?”
(Are you looking at me?)



may indeed create temporary masses of unemployed, and in *The Sleeper Awakes* there was a mass of unemployed people under the hatches. That was written in 1897, when the possibility of restraining the growth of large masses of population had scarcely dawned on the world. It was reasonable then to anticipate an embarrassing underworld of under-productive people. We did not know what to do with the abyss. But there is no excuse for that today.

And what this film anticipates is not unemployment, but drudge employment, which is precisely what is passing away. Its fabricators have not even realized that the machine ousts the drudge.

‘Efficiency’ means large-scale productions, machinery as fully developed as possible, and high wages. The British Government delegation sent to study success in America has reported unanimously to that effect. The increasingly efficient industrialism of America has so little need of drudges that it has set up the severest barriers against the flooding of the United States by drudge immigration.

... The story of Babel, as we know, is a lesson against ‘Pride.’ It teaches the human soul to grovel. It inculcates the duty of incompetence. The Tower of Babel was built, it seems, by bald-headed men. I said there was no original touch in the film, but this last seems to be a real invention. You see the bald-headed men building Babel. Myriads of them. Why they are bald is inexplicable. It is not even meant to be funny, and it isn’t funny; it is just another touch of silliness. The workers in *Metropolis* are not to rebel or do anything for themselves, she teaches, because they may rely on the vindictiveness of Heaven.

But Rotwang, the inventor, is making a Robot, apparently without any license from Capek, the original patentee. It is to look and work like a human being, but it is to have no ‘soul.’ It is to be a substitute for drudge labour. Masterman very properly suggests that it should never have a soul, and for the life of me I cannot see why it should. The whole aim of mechanical civilization is to eliminate the drudge and the drudge soul. But this is evidently regarded as very dreadful and impressive by the producers, who are all on the side of soul and love and suchlike.

... Then comes the crowning absurdity of the film, the conversion of the Robot into the likeness of Mary. Rotwang, you must understand, occupies a small old house, embedded in the modern city, richly adorned with pentagrams and other reminders of the antiquated German romances out of which its owner has been taken. A quaint smell of Mephistopheles is perceptible for a time. So even at Ufa, Germany can still be dear old magic-loving Germany. Perhaps Germans will never get right away from the Brocken. Walpurgis Night is the name-day of the German poetic imagination, and the national fantasy capers insecurely for ever with a broomstick between its legs. By some no doubt abominable means Rotwang has squeezed a vast and well-equipped modern laboratory into this little house. It is ever so much bigger than the house, but no doubt he has fallen back on Einstein and other modern bedevilmments. Mary has to be trapped, put into a machine like a translucent cocktail shaker, and undergo all sorts of pyrotechnic treatment in order that her likeness may be transferred to the Robot. The possibility of Rotwang just simply making a Robot like her, evidently

“Colgate ist diesmal etwas zu weit gegangen”
(Colgate have gone a little too far this time)



never entered the gifted producer’s head. The Robot is enveloped in wavering haloes, the premises seem to be struck by lightning repeatedly, the contents of a number of flasks and carboys are violently agitated, there are minor explosions and discharges. Rotwang conducts the operations with a manifest lack of assurance, and finally, to his evident relief, the likeness is taken and things calm down. The false Mary then winks darkly at the audience and sails off to raise the workers.

... Never for a moment does one believe any of this foolish story; for a moment is there anything amusing or convincing in its dreary series of strained events. It is immensely and strangely dull. It is not even to be laughed at. There is not one good-looking nor sympathetic nor funny personality in the cast; there is, indeed, no scope at all for looking well or acting like a rational creature amid these mindless, imitative absurdities. The film’s air of having something grave and wonderful to say is transparent pretence. It has nothing to do with any social or moral issue before the world or with any that can ever conceivably arise. It is bunkum

and poor and thin even as bunkum. I am astonished at the toleration shown it by quite a number of film critics on both sides of the Atlantic. And it costs, says the *London Times*, six million marks! How they spent all that upon it I cannot imagine. Most of the effects could have been got with models at no great expense.

The pity of it is that this unimaginative, incoherent, sentimentalizing, and make-believe film, wastes some very fine possibilities. My belief in German enterprise has had a shock. I am dismayed by the intellectual laziness it betrays. I thought Germans even at the worst could toil. I thought they had resolved to be industriously modern. It is profoundly interesting to speculate upon the present trend of mechanical inventions and of the reactions of invention upon labour conditions. Instead of plagiarizing from a book thirty years old and resuscitating the banal moralizing of the early Victorian period, it would have been almost as easy, no more costly, and far more interesting to have taken some pains to gather the opinions of a few bright young research students and ambitious,



modernizing architects and engineers about the trend of modern invention, and develop these artistically. Any technical school would have been delighted to supply sketches and suggestions for the aviation and transport of A.D. 2027. There are now masses of literature upon the organization of labour for efficiency that could have been boiled down at a very small cost. The question of the development of industrial control, the relation of industrial to political direction, the way all that is going, is of the liveliest current interest.



“Diese jungen Jedi stehen wirklich auf meine Titten”
(these young Jedi are really getting on my tits)



“Verdammt, Mann, ich brauche dickere Ringelblumen”
(damm it man, I need thicker Marigolds)

Apparently the people at Ufa did not know of these things and did not want to know about them. They were too dense to see how these things could have been brought into touch with the life of today and made interesting to the man in the street. After the worst traditions of the cinema world, monstrously self-satisfied and self-sufficient, convinced of the power of loud advertisement to put things over with the public, and with no fear of searching criticism in their minds, no consciousness of thought and knowledge beyond their ken, they set to work in their huge studio to produce furlong after furlong of this ignorant, old-fashioned balderdash, and ruin the market for any better film along these lines.

Six million marks! The waste of it!

The theatre when I visited it was crowded. All but the highest-priced seats were full, and the gaps in these filled up reluctantly but completely before the great film began. I suppose every one had come to see what the city of a hundred years hence would be like. I suppose there are multitudes of people to be ‘drawn’ by promising to show them what the city of a hundred years hence will be like. It was, I thought, an unresponsive audience,

and I heard no comments. I could not tell from their bearing whether they believed that Metropolis was really a possible forecast or no. I do not know whether they thought that the film was hopelessly silly or the future of mankind hopelessly silly. But it must have been one thing or the other. ☺

This is two-thirds of the article written by the sixty-year-old Herbert and makes fascinating reading. He includes references to his own work and others, and also changes the name of the principal character! Although he had strong opinions against the church, was an advocate for social equality, fairly liberal ideas on sex – he could be ill-tempered and as changeable as the British weather.

He had a bitter disagreement with George Bernard Shaw over the Fabian Society.

Did he have an axe to grind with this film and/or does he have a point?

And, some of text seems to resonates with current views across the globe.

But hey, he gave us ‘War of the Worlds’, ‘The Time Machine’ and ‘The History of Mr Polly’!

Keith Woolford



layman's guide to...

SD CARDS – a key part of the taking and storage of media. This small yet highly efficient method was developed from the MMC (MultiMediaCard) by SanDisk, Panasonic and Toshiba in 1999. The early SD Memory Cards were designed to compete with Sony's Memory Stick launched a year earlier, and were (only) capable of storing 32MB and 64MB. With an increase of 1000 fold in the last decade alone, those early days are a far cry from the current 512GB available today!

Now as ‘cheap as chips’, you can pick-up a quality branded 64GB UHS-3 SDXC card for a tenner, although the 512GB will burn several holes in the camera bag.

Of course, the bounds of possibility are forever being stretched as SanDisk have a whopping 1TB prototype card in the works – it's listed on Amazon but ‘currently unavailable’. The ability to quickly change cards, the capability of dual recording, plus the space saving and portability is a real boon.

I recall, with a shiver, an early commission for a stills wedding shoot for a double-booked photographer. Confronted by two best men and a female vicar, I was illogically thrown and it took several excruciating minutes to load the role of medium format film into the Hasselblad.

Of course, for those important jobs a ‘belt and braces’ approach is always recommended – invest in an external recording drives or use the camera facility to sync the recording so that you always have a copy.

A recent personal experience on holiday underlines the importance of quality*. Having been seduced by a ‘good’ price for a card on eBay, I was framing the House of Cards in Coombe Martin for a shot when – nothing. Complete dud. I'd stupidly ignored the first rule of comedy – always check and re-check your equipment beforehand. Fortunately, the old maxim of carrying a spare paid off.

Keith Woolford

Speed
max card writing transfer
(do not confuse
MB's (bytes) for Mb's (bits))

Lock
mans best friend
- record, eject and lock it

Capacity
MB's (bytes) for Mb's (bits)

Brand
*crucial for reliabilty - buy
from a respectable source

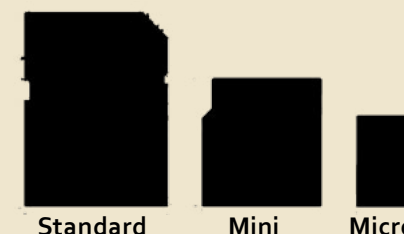


Model
category within brand

Format
SD - 2GB max
SDHC - 32GB max
SDXC - 2TB max

Speed Class
minimum write speed
Class 2 - 2MB/s
Class 4 - 4MB/s
Class 6 - 6MB/s (V6)
Class 10 - 10MB/s (V10)

Ultra High Speed Class
UHS I - 10MB/s (V10)
UHS-II - 30MB/s (V30)
UHS-III - 624MB/s (V60)
Express - 985MB/s (V90)



The three diffent sizes of SD cards in relation to each other

07

GIVING UP THE DAY JOB – #1

I joined the IOV back in 2003 after deciding to 'take the cheque' from my corporate employer. I had 25 good years working for various American IT companies but towards the end, after three rounds of redundancies involving my staff, I'd had enough. I always wanted to make films. At a very early age I remember writing little scripts for TV programmes like the TV Western 'The Virginian'.

BY STEVE HART
M.M.INST.V.

TAKING A CORPORATE
DIRECTION PAYS
DIVIDENDS

REELTAKEFILMS.CO.UK



I was always fascinated in how films were made and in particular their locations. Throughout my teenage years I was constantly making Super 8mm films and obviously had some talent as I was accepted at Bournemouth film school. All I had to do was get 2 A level passes. Unfortunately, I got distracted and ended up on the dole.

Going solo

So, fast forward to 2003 and I'm 43 thinking if I don't become a cameraman now I never will. I had a business idea of making VHS instructional videos for golf professionals. I attended loads of free 'how to setup a business' courses and a few IOV courses on camera craft, lighting etc. I called my business ReelTake Films Limited, after the school cine club we set up.

During that first year I did my one and only piece of marketing when I mailshot all the golf professionals in

Worcestershire, Warwickshire and Oxfordshire. A year into making instructional golf videos the business wasn't making much profit but it had been an excellent way of developing my camera and editing skills.

My big break was during 2004 when a friend ask me to film a health and safety conference for the company he worked for. Not a particularly demanding job but it introduced me to their safety team. The company was Powergen and that was the start of my journey of working with power generation companies.

Corporate confidence

One of the benefits of having 25 years of experience of working in big business was I was comfortable with dealing and supporting large corporate clients. As I started to expand my network of contacts within Powergen I spent six months filming switchgear instructional videos and then moved onto creating site

induction videos for their then 26 sites. I was then approached about designing and building a centralised corporate induction system. With two friends we set up Merge Media Limited to build a bespoke induction system with site specific induction videos. It was so successful that we sold similar systems to Drax Power Station, British Energy and Siemens. My role in Merge was to be responsible for all the video content.

Filming offshore

During the last 10 years there has been a massive growth in renewable energy.

I have been fortunate to film some major wind farm projects, both onshore and offshore, throughout Europe. To film offshore you need to have number of Global Wind Organisation approved certificates including working at height, first aid, manual handling, sea survival, etc.

In addition, you need to pass a Chester Step Test to prove your fitness and have an annual Seafarer's Medical.

Working offshore is great fun but hard work. Filming turbine builds offshore can take up a long time as it is totally dependent on the weather. You live and work on massive jack-up vessels which carry all the components for the turbines. The vessels work 24 hours so sleep can be minimal. For all my filming I use a Sony PMW 350. It's a great shoulder camera that gives me impressive pictures and sound. I also use a lot of GoPro cameras for filming from positions that would be deem too dangerous to stand. GoPros are ideal for putting on crane blocks and components being lifted. I have recently qualified as a CAA Approved Commercial drone pilot so I can now offer additional services to my clients.

The next job

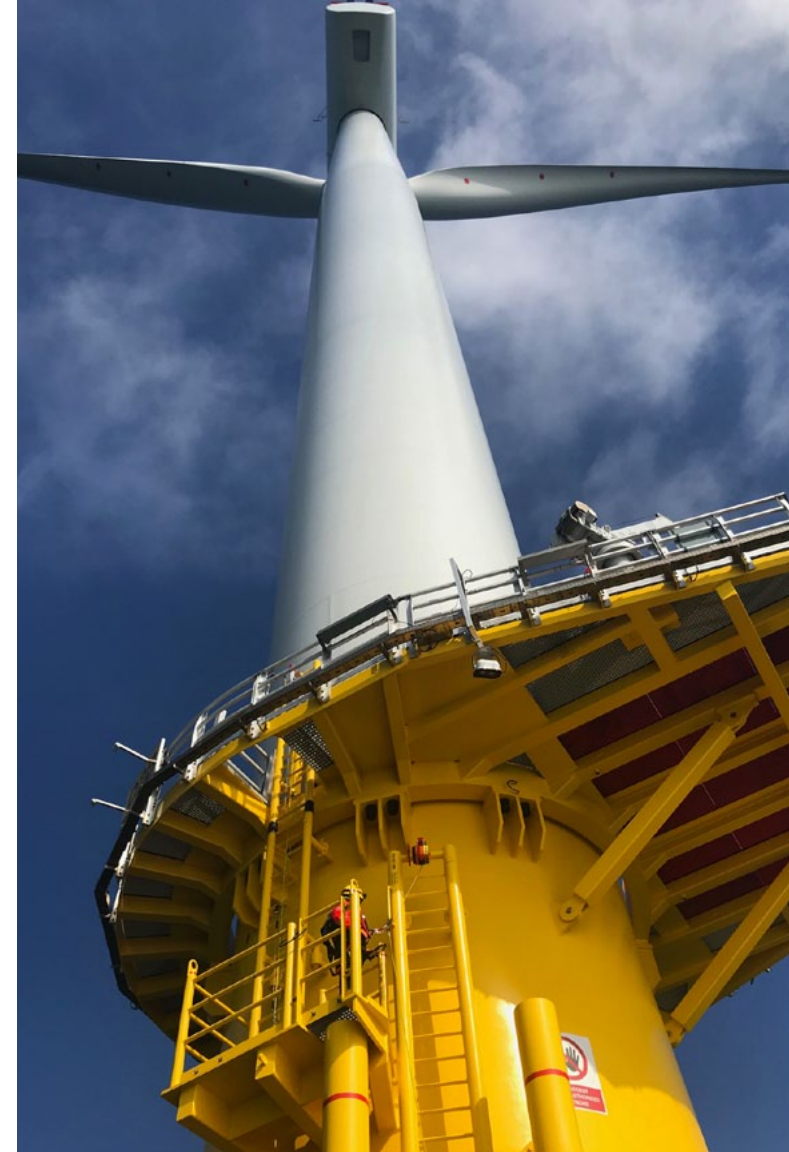
I have now been in business for over 15 years and still going strong. You never loose that fear of when is the next job is coming in or having too much work. With big clients you are only as good as your last job. I now have a great network

of like-minded professionals to help me including cameramen, sound engineers, voice-over artists, graphics animators, etc. who I call on depending on the size of the project and budget.

I love being my own boss, managing my own time and working with people I like and I trust. It's great just to walk to my studio in the garden most mornings.

I still dream of making a movie at Pinewood Studios but in the meantime I really enjoy making my videos and being thanked by my clients.

Steve Hart



08

GIVING UP THE DAY JOB – #2

'Don't give up the day job' is usually sound advice. But if you're in a job that doesn't allow your creative self to flourish then may be you should. Many professionals start out as part-time film-makers. Only a few take the plunge and start a second career but that's exactly what I did, at the age of fifty-two. Bold or stupid?

BY BOB SANDERSON
M.M.INST.V.

DETERMINATION, A TOUCH
OF SKILL AND
25 HOURS IN THE DAY

VOXVISION VIDEO PRODUCTIONS
AND MEDIA
WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/BOB.SANDERSON.5



I'd had enough of being a sales executive and consultant and decided to make the jump to set up my own business, based on.... myself! I had always been a performer, singing and playing guitar in several bands over the years, as well as holding down a day job, but what I really wanted to do was to become an actor... at the age of fifty-two! I had studied drama on and off for 10 years and had a Diploma from LAMDA. I realised that if I was going to be a performer and develop my creative side I would have to go self employed. And that's what eventually led to me setting up my video company, Voxvision Video Productions & Media. But a lot happened on the way.

Self-employed

I knew that I just had to go self-employed. This was the start of my new work portfolio. You see, as a creative it helps to do more than just one thing unless you want to starve. Within three months of giving up

the day job I had secured a position of performing theatre in education nationwide within primary schools. I delivered 16 historical one man shows that were so much fun and very satisfying from a creative point of view. I also associated myself with a training company performing business role play and forum theatre and this is where I began to 'push the envelope' as I found that doing one thing very quickly opened up opportunities for another. Now in control of my own work diary, you would think that things would be easier but sadly no. It's hard to say no to opportunities when you are self employed and trying to earn a decent living. This often meant going from one engagement to the next with dangerously little sleep. On one occasion I got home from a band gig at 4.00am only to have to leave home again at 6.00am to be Henry the VIII in a school the other side of the country. Sadly, I did not have six wives to help me unload and re-equip the van.



'The Retro-Flyers', with Bob playing guitar

Filming

One day, whilst working for the training company as a role player with a local authority, the client asked, "Do you know anyone that could make a film about our library service?" Like a shot I said "Yes, I can do that." Well, I'd had an 8mm cine camera in my youth, my son now had a video camera and I had a computer, so it would have been rude not to.

Once my effort was delivered, complete with my actor trained voice-over and appropriate background music they loved it and asked me to make two more films. From that I made a show reel which I sent to every local authority in the Midlands and thankfully one of them responded positively resulting in me working with them on video production projects for over 10 years. Since then, as Voxvision Video Productions and Media I have made films for a wide variety of corporate, local authority, charity and education based clients. The theatre in education and video production businesses complimented each other and gave me the opportunity to promote my video skills to schools whilst performing, and my acting talents to them, whilst videoing. Hence we got to make a lot of education based films.

Acting

As you know to perform in schools you must be DBR checked (previously CRB). I nearly shot myself in the foot at one time when I was asked by my TV agent to appear in a Carlton Television documentary as a rapist. The role required me to be a photographer (no pressure there then) and lasciviously throw a beautiful young model in a bikini down onto a bed. This was a great experience to act, but resulted for me in a scenario that when queuing at my local post office, the lady behind the counter who had seen me on TV said, loud enough for all to hear, including Mums with toddlers: "Hello, you raped anyone lately?" – a warning to all to choose carefully the roles that you play.

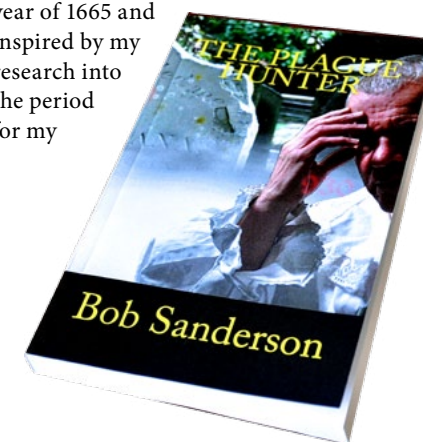
Voice-over

The envelope gets pushed again when I was asked, "You do voice overs, can you do one for us?" Suddenly, I'm voicing content for other video production companies, examination boards, animators, and in recent years O2, EE and many other large businesses. Once again I had to be careful when booking things appropriately in my diary. On a couple of occasions I had to voice corporate videos whilst sounding like Joe Cocker, as I had performed a hard week of two hour vocal sets with my soul band.

Writing

Then push-push, I'm writing scripts for corporate clients. So why not write a book? Inevitably, as I was working with children, my first book was for 8-11-year-olds, but I'd had an idea for an adult book.

Two and a half years later I published my first adult novel on Amazon, 'The Plague Hunter' set around the plague year of 1665 and inspired by my research into the period for my



theatre in education work. I have just published my second novel 'Alchemy from the Ashes' a sequel to the first.

My long term goal is to get one or both of these turned into a TV series. Well a man's got to dream.



For the sake of my art – blood, glorious blood.



"Don't put your son on the stage, Mrs Sanderson"

Trainer

Over the last 16 years I have also found myself running training workshops on presentation skills, giving career advice at schools and colleges and providing writing workshops.

This is not to mention being invited to be a guest speaker on many occasions delivering a multitude of anecdotes from my experiences as a musician, actor, video producer, voice artist, author and workshop presenter.

Who am I?

With my actors hat on I have appeared on television and had major parts in two independent feature films as well as a multitude of small roles in student films and the like, with my most recent role being a transsexual taxi driver in Stoke on Trent.

The independent films have been diverse. In one I played a head teacher and the other, a horror film, I had to have my eye taken out with a crowbar and was covered from head to toe in fake blood. This would not have been so bad if I had not had to drive 15 miles home looking like that, due to the lack of a shower facility on set, and then

scaring the new neighbours to death as I got out of my car. I did enjoy the looks from other drivers though, when I stopped at traffic lights.

So it is possible to combine your skills, hobbies and interests in order to make a living. It takes a bit of courage and a lot of determination but, in times of uncertainty, not having all your eggs in one basket can be an advantage. Whilst I still do video work I now seem to be doing more voice work and serious writing – and enjoying what I do.

So now at sixty-eight and still working, this is not what I do, this is who I am. I suppose I should have known really, at an early age, as you can see from the early photo, I loved the microphone – and the case around my shoulder contained my first camera.

Destiny, eh!

Bob Sanderson

premiereinn

Adobe are forever pushing their suite of programmes forward through the now obligatory Creative Cloud subscriptions. Premiere Pro, launched originally as Adobe Premiere in the dark and distant 1991, recently updated to V13.0.02, is pretty much the industry leader. Probably for good reason. The integration with its Adobe App brothers makes good sense.

Many editors may use both Premiere and FCP dependent on the collaborators' or client's needs.

Premiere Pro #1

Whilst Apple has iMovie, Adobe has Premiere Elements, the former may be a tad more popular. One 2018 poll had FCP ahead of the pack followed by iMovie then Premiere Pro. Really depends on the time of day and who you're talking to – a consumer, semi-pro or a professional.

"There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics." Attributed to British Prime Minister Disraeli by Mark Twain, we shouldn't read too much into these articles when they lift one software package over another. Polls and stats can justify practically anything to support a firmly entrenched belief.

A recent intercourse with a neighbour had them saying, "You must have a wonderful computer", after watching one of my films. I was able to return the compliment shortly after when having one of their tasty cup cakes, I retaliated with "Mmm, this is delicious – you must have a fantastic oven!"

The previous paragraph is entirely fictitious, but point made, nevertheless.. And, I don't eat cake.

There's no doubting that Premiere Pro is widely regarded and has been used to edit the likes of Deadpool and Gone Girl motion pictures.

We all have our favourites, with the more enthusiastic swearing an oath of allegiance. And, possibly having a tattoo of a certain fruit or the letters CC discreetly about their person.

Indeed, casting a questioning look on a colleague's nle is tantamount to calling their first born illegitimate. Although, these days that's probably not as good an analogy as it might have been 20 years ago. On further consideration, calling their child ugly would have been better.

Premiere Pro #2

Adobe has collaborated with Apple to provide editors, artists, and post-production professionals with comprehensive ProRes workflows for Premiere Pro and After Effects. Apple ProRes is a high-quality codec and is widely-used as an acquisition, production and delivery format. Support for ProRes on macOS and Windows streamlines video production and simplifies final output, including server-based remote rendering with Adobe Media Encoder.

HEIF files, recorded on iOS devices can be imported into Premiere Pro and Media Encoder on macOS and Windows. This feature requires macOS 10.13, or higher, and Windows 10 (version 1809 or higher).

And, support for ProRes HDR footage allows for accurate import of Rec2020 and PQ/HLG colour information from HDR media in ProRes containers.

There's improved support for 360° video, the opening of multiple projects and they claim it's easier to use.

i Info: <https://helpx.adobe.com/uk/premiere-pro/using/whats-new.html>

Keith Woolford



9

THE INTERVIEW – DENVER RIDDLE

I have a theory that over 90% of American names are made up. I mean, have you watched Judge Judy? No John Smith, David Jones or Mo Farah for them. Most names are more a statement of intent. At least to my tender English/Welsh ears.

So, enter the wide smile, enthusiastic, checked-shirt entrepreneur young American...

BY KEITH WOOLFORD
A.M.INST.V

GRAPHIC BY
SIMON ILLUSTRATION

DEDICATION DELIVERED
COLOR GRADING CENTRAL
SUCCESS

KEITH@ARCH-MEDIA.CO.UK



Responsible for a spankingly* brand new App for colour grading your film, Denver has taken time out between flitting around the States on commissions to chew the cud.

Some/most entrepreneurs seem to exude a fusion of optimism and a permanent high. This issue's volunteer interviewee is no exception. Catch one of his promo films and you will need no convincing. It may be something in the water. The ability to see a need and then fulfil it delivers the natural warmth of success.

Same when you marry some footage to that piece of music just perfectly. Can happen by oodles of hard work, by design or pure serendipity.

The thirty-five year old Denver has been married 11 years and has three little girls. As a dedicated family man, working remotely allows time with "my most prized possessions", and is always the ultimate aim. Although a self-confessed 'country bumpkin',

his childhood consisting of hauling hay and feeding the horses and cattle, the call of tech led initially to a career as a DOP. Demanding more control over the final look, colour grading dictated an obvious next step. Color Grading Central was established in 2011 culminating in today's must-have products for Adobe premiere, Apple's Final Cut Pro and DaVinci Resolve.

I invited Denver for a virtual sitdown to learn more...

Keith – Okay, I don't believe I'm alone this side of the Pond in saying we can usually recognise an American name when we hear it from a couple of miles away. Your parents have pretty much nailed it with yours – where did Denver come from?

Denver – My grandmother tells me I was named after a popular soap actor in the 80s though I haven't been able to verify this is true.



Denver Riddle – Minority Report-esque...

Keith – Working as a colourist (oh, and please note correct spelling) on feature films and a TV series plus as a documentary cinematographer during the last seven years, what path was taken to achieve this?

Denver – I originally started in wedding videography because being behind the camera, it provided some income and experience. I landed my first career job during the most difficult part of the recession and I consider myself very blessed that I found the opportunity. From there it was lever by lever working from corporate into freelance specializing as a colorist but it all would not have been possible if I hadn't been grading my films to help my work stand out when I landed that first job.

Keith – Colour effects mood and emotion. Like great CGI, it can/should often go unnoticed by the viewer – is that your aim?

Denver – Yes a good colorist is an unsung hero because their actions can aid with the emotion of the story with subtle visual cues.

Keith – With Apple's 2017 update of FCPX relating to colour grading this could well have thrown a large spanner in your works. Rather than being

downcast, you and your partner Dimitri used it to inspire the product you have today. What was the driving force?

Denver – We've always wanted to make it easier to provide good results and we felt like it was an opportunity to innovate and explore new ideas.

Keith – Having created the Instagram filters, was this the catalyst for your colour journey and how did this commission come about?

Denver – I had been working freelance for some time for Facebook. When they had acquired Instagram and were looking to add video as a new feature in 2013 they wanted help from a colorist with experience in creating looks. This was an incredible opportunity to work with the Instagram engineers on implementing the original video filters in Instagram.

Keith – The software was well received at the demo during October's LACPUG meeting. So, all done – will you be retiring now?

Denver – We have a lot of work ahead of ourselves. It's one thing to launch a new product to a warm audience but it's another to continually look for opportunities and markets to expand into.



CINEMA GRADE



Keith – There are certain mysteries in this world shrouded in the mists of time or by cunning deception. These new colour grading tools allow mere mortals to intuitively accomplish sophisticated results easily. Smug or what?

Denver – Shrouded in secrecy has always been a part of the role of a colorist who gets to be the final person to touch major films. The tools were so expensive and inaccessible. Blackmagic Design has changed all of that with DaVinci Resolve but it's still like trying to step into a Ferrari and learn how to drive.

We felt like there were so many things that were cumbersome and in the way of creativity based on decades old ideas and designs. We asked ourselves the question I'm sure everyone asks, "Why can't I just click on the image and change it there?"

Keith – The Americans are famous for their work ethic having no statutory rights to paid leave. Whereas us Brits, on the other hand, would circle the wagons, paint placards and protest outside the Houses of Parliament (this may be a mixed metaphor or something) if we had less than our 28 days with full pay. If and when you have downtime, what's your favourite activity?

Denver – I really enjoy spending time in New Hampshire with my family because it's secluded, quiet and beautiful.

Keith – So, here's the nub of the matter – Premiere or Final Cut?

Denver – FCPX simply because of the forward thinking similar to our philosophies on color (auto correct changes to American spelling :P) with Cinema Grade. We like to be forward thinking and innovating.

Keith – Crystal ball time – what does the future hold for Mr Riddle and Color Grade Central and where will our industry be in five years?

Denver – There's a possibility of AI or machine learning playing a larger role in color correction though I don't always want to put too much stock into those ideas as it takes away some of the creativity and there is something always empowering about being able to do something ourselves.



American spelling aside (and, heaven forbid, certainly any mention of politics), I was delighted to have the opportunity of exchanging views with our cousin from across the pond. Denver has kindly offered a discount for readers of Focus on his products.

Full details and a seven day trial can be found at: www.colorgradingcentral.com

Keith Woolford

CGC DISCOUNT

To celebrate the re-launch of Focus Magazine, Denver has generously offered readers an exclusive discount.

20% OFF
CGC PRODUCTS
see page 7

* There is such a word (possibly of Scandinavian origin) and it means:

SPANKINGLY ('spæŋkɪŋli)
adv.
in a spanking manner

SPANK-ING (spæŋ'kɪŋ)
adj.
Informal, exceptional of its kind; remarkable

adv.
Used as an intensive: a spanking clean shirt

n.
A number of slaps on the buttocks delivered in rapid succession, as for punishment.

video assets

There is a world-wide shortage of fonts, transitions and lower-thirds. If that were true, it may account for most of the hoarded 1,600 fonts on my iMac. As a self-confessed glutton for that 'special offer' and numerous freebies available over the internet, here are six resources offering peace in our time.

All are free – however, and as a responsible precaution, please ensure you are satisfied with the quality and provenance before installing.

1) 75 DESIGN FONTS

Although many are free and/or requiring registration most can be used commercially. A wide variety to suit pretty much all occasions. Round up courtesy of Creative Bloq.

<https://www.creativebloq.com/graphic-design-tips/best-free-fonts-for-designers-1233380>

5) FCPX ICONS, SYMBOLS AND ALERTS

Recently updated illustrated list for Final Cut Pro users by everyone's go-to guru, Larry Jordan. A visual depiction of those little icons which appear – could just save your bacon in the future.

<https://larryjordan.com/articles/what-do-the-icons-in-final-cut-pro-x-mean/>

2) STOCK VIDEO AND PHOTOS

Just need some footage to illustrate a commission? Well, Pexels Video may just have the answer. All are HD or 4K with a broad portfolio of subject matter. They are licensed under the Creative Commons Zero (CC0) license.

<https://videos.pexels.com>

6) MUSIC FOR VIDEO

Tons of music available on the Free Music Archive site – just check the licencing requirements. There is a section suitable for video and comprehensive notes on what the terms mean. There are oodles of genres to choose from.

<http://freemusicarchive.org>

3) FINAL CUT PRO & PREMIERE PLUGINS

Ah, plugins. Just saying the word leads one to believe everything will be alright again once installed. From those very kind people at: idustrialrevolution so, go get 'em.

<https://idustrialrevolution.com>

4) FINAL CUT PRO PLUGINS

There are 18 free plugins on the Ripple Training website offering a broad range of helpful additions to your nle. Some may be familiar, but others could just fit the bill.

www.rippletraining.com

Keith Woolford



10

CAPTURING THE CELESTIAL LIGHTS

Roger and Gillian Perry have always been interested in both photography and video. When Roger retired in 1997, he turned a hobby into a business. Days were filled with recording dance shows and weddings but never gave up their hobby of filming astronomy spectacles. Their main interests are solar eclipses and the Northern Lights. In this article they talk about their trips to see the Northern Lights, the Aurora Borealis...

BY GILLIAN PERRY
M.M.INST.V.

THE YEARNING AND TRICKS TO CAPTURE DISTANT LIGHTS



Combined skills

It's the combination of both our skills that have led to us creating our movies of the Aurora. Our movies have been time-lapse movies due to the very dim light given off by these celestial lights. I take the photographs and Roger has created the movies. I am not saying it is impossible to record on a camcorder but, very specialist low-light equipment is needed.

Whilst it is on many people's bucket lists to see the Northern Lights few spend the time thinking about how they can capture the spectacle they are viewing. Hundreds of people each year head off to the Arctic with their cameras in the hope of capturing an image of the Northern Lights. Many of them travel with their latest mobile phones hoping that it will be possible to get that incredible footage. Whilst capturing photos and creating movies is not difficult it does need some planning before you embark on your journey. Otherwise, I guarantee that there is

some piece of equipment, you wished you had packed. At first, I produced still images of the aurora (some taken in the days of 35mm film photography), and while people marvelled at the photographs produced, people could not see how fantastic the light show is when that glow in the sky becomes alive with green lights swirling quickly through the air creating many different shapes, changing in intensity, creating additional colours. It ebbs and flows from a simple arc, to shooting spotlights and significant curtains of colour across the sky. Finally, it slowly becomes a constant arc again and eventually subsiding to leave a dark sky and the twinkling of many distant stars. In the past, Roger had tried on a few occasions to record the sight on a camcorder with very limited success – although we continue to hope that newer equipment and a very bright aurora will come together to allow a short movie showing a truly real-time film of the spectacle. Only the very bright events can be seen on the video camera and even then

camcorders of the past could not mimic the very long shutter speeds you can use on a film or digital camera. For us, the only solution to produce a movie was to create a time lapse video using a number of still images and string them together in such a way as to create a short but interesting movie. Hopefully when you use the links at the end of this article you will agree and this may inspire you to head North and have a go for yourself.

Northern and Southern hemispheres

In fact, the Aurora can be seen in both the northern and southern hemisphere. The Northern lights being known as the Aurora Borealis and the southern lights the Aurora Australis. The latitude of these frequent events makes it such that unless you are an Antarctic scientist or penguin you are not going to see the Southern lights, with the exception of very active nights when they have been seen from New Zealand, Australia or South Africa. The Northern Lights, on the other hand, can be seen on a

regular basis at latitudes of 66 to 69 degrees North (further south on a very active night). This means that locations such as Alaska, Canada, Greenland, Iceland, Norway, Finland, Sweden and Russia all have places where you can see the lights. However, when you overlay this with the accessibility of the locations, accommodation, and weather predictions, the places to go are much fewer in number.

About eight years ago when we decided to give the movie creation a go, we had been visiting and imaging the Northern Lights since our first trip in 1999. At that stage digital cameras were on the horizon but had not matured into the phenomenal kit we have today. We headed back to our favourite destination, Fairbanks Alaska, with two digital cameras and a laptop loaded with Premiere Pro.

With our knowledge of where to go, and the experience of taking images over many years, we already had some great ideas of what we wanted to do.

Our kit

Before heading off to Fairbanks Alaska, we pack the digital cameras (Nikon D700 and D7200) each with a remote timer. This would ensure the images were captured using exactly the same length of time and the identical interval between the shots.

The cameras would be used at a relatively high ISO and the lenses we use are wide angle allowing for a reasonably low F stop to ensure we could keep the exposure to the shortest length possible. This helps to ensure that the structure in the image is not blurred.

The full frame camera has a 12mm lens and the DX camera a 17mm lens. We also pack some good quality sturdy tripods. Expensive tripods are not required, you just need to keep the camera fixed in one place for the number of shots in the sequence and I've found the fluid heads have been known to seize up in the cold.





Setting up

During our stay each evening we head outside and set up the cameras on tripods, once the Auroral Arc has appeared. After a whole evening of watching the aurora we would pack up the equipment ensuring we placed the very cold cameras into a polythene laundry bag and seal it to allow each camera to warm up steadily in our room without fear of condensation causing us problems with the electronics in the camera. The next morning the warm camera would be opened up and the memory card placed into the laptop. Once the images have been loaded onto the timeline of Adobe Premiere we create a short film of the aurora showing all of its exciting movement. The cameras would then be set up for the next evening in the hope of a repeat of the previous night's display. As we don't get aurora every night we plan other activities. I need to remember to set up the camera before the evening's display starts. From experience I have found that when you are outside in the dark and cold, it's far too difficult to think about setting up the camera. (We set the ISO, WB, Manual focus, Manual

F stop, shutter speed bulb-setting and affix the remote timer while indoors). The cameras are set to manual focus so I find infinity during the day and mark where I want to set it to in the evening. During the evening I will often check that I am still in focus although other than the setting marked on the camera it's difficult to see the focus in such low light. The aurora is relatively dim so when you are dark-adapted you really don't want to ruin your night vision. For anything I need to illuminate to view in the dark I use a red torch to help keep my dark-adaptation, and not upset others I may be with.

Dealing with the cold

If anyone has ever tried to do this they will tell you that in the places you can see the aurora it is often very cold. We have often imaged in temperatures ranging from minus 15 to minus 30 degrees Centigrade. Keeping yourself warm is incredibly important likewise keeping the batteries warm or at least having a spare set of warm batteries ready for when the batteries die. In those temperatures the batteries can last an hour or more although sometimes it has been so cold after 20 minutes

the batteries are showing that they are almost out of charge. It's not really, out of charge it's actually just too cold for them to work. If you swap batteries and put the batteries that are showing as flat in your pockets they will come back to life and show almost fully charged. Whilst batteries are the main cause of concern we have had problems with LCD displays that eventually give up working in such cold conditions (when this happens you are unable to change the time of the exposure even though they seem to keep working at the set exposure). So, keeping some kit warm is essential. Over the years I have created ways to power my camera with the batteries in my pocket and a lead to the camera to ensure they can be kept warm.

On a couple of occasions I have accidentally bent a lead on a remote timer when packing up and the whole thing has split as it was frozen solid.

A couple of years ago, I wrote up the whole process of creating these movies and this is now available free of charge from Amazon, with a print version at a small cost. If you are interested in looking at the videos I have put some of the links below.

Aurora in March

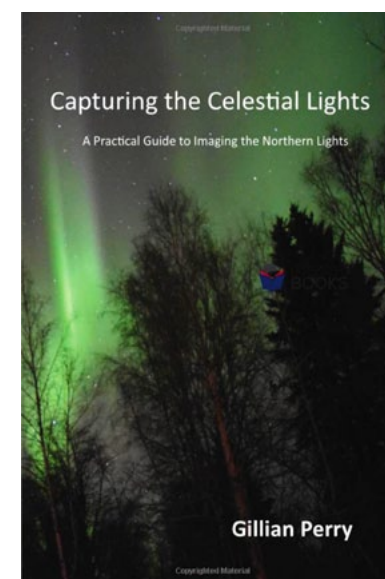
When we head north in March to again look at the aurora we will take one of our camcorders. If it's a bright aurora we may again try our hand at recording it in real time. If any of you are thinking about trying your hand at Aurora photography and movies, especially

if you have a really good camera that operates in low light, I would love to see the images. If you read my notes and find better ways of producing a movie I would really like to know how you do it.

Finally, this is a passion for me so if any of you want to contact me please do.

I plan to write about our solar eclipse videos in a future edition of Focus.

Gillian Perry



Examples

Aurora, 28 February - 1 March 2017

Filmed on a Nikon D700 at Grizzly Lodge, Fairbanks, Alaska - 4mins 36secs
<https://vimeo.com/207926770>

Aurora, 2 - 3 March 2017

Filmed on a Nikon 7200 at Grizzly Lodge, Fairbanks, Alaska - 4mins 36secs
<https://vimeo.com/207948225>

Aurora, 9 - 10 February 2018

Filmed at Grizzly Lodge, Fairbanks, Alaska - 12mins 51secs
<https://youtu.be/KLenjz8WPXQ>

MIKI-D INTERFACE

The MIKI-Digital is a small, broadcast-quality, matchbox-size microphone interface that enables you to input and capture full-bandwidth audio to your computer, laptop or smartphone. Working with Windows, Apple and Android systems, it weighs next to nothing – the only weight you will notice is the standard XLR line socket on the end of the cable. So, what do you get for your seventy-nine euros ...

BY CHRIS NORTH
M.M.INST.V.

MIKI-D MICROPHONE
INTERFACE FOR
SMARTPHONES & LAPTOPS
€79 + VAT

CHRIS.NORTH@IOV.CO.UK



Let's start with why

I discovered this little device when looking for something to get better audio into my Android smartphone for interviews and occasional filming with the phone. Yes, you can plug a lapel mic into your phone's audio jack (if it still has one!) using an adapter cable – and you can even connect a battery powered professional XLR mic to the mini jack using a cable with a current-blocking capacitor – and it can sound quite respectable. But it is still using the phone's audio circuitry. If you want to capture really nice clean, full frequency audio (or if you have a phone without a mini jack socket) then you need to get the audio in via the USB port or an iPhone's lightning port. This necessitates converting the mic's audio to digital before it gets into the phone or computer. For the best sound quality this is really the only way to go. But to get the required amplification and fidelity you need an adapter with a really good microphone pre-amp and

analogue-to-digital converter, which is where the Miki-Digital comes in.

You can also use the MIKI-Digital to record commentary directly into your computer via a professional XLR mic when making a screen recording or when doing a podcast or Skype – or when contributing live to your local radio station from home or on location via a web app. The greatest advantage for me is that I can monitor my sound input in real time, with no latency, since the MIKI has its own high quality headphone amp built-in.

There are, of course, other devices on the market. Musicians will be aware of the well-known iRig mic-to-USB converters (and others) but they are somewhat larger than the MIKI-Digital. Some can deliver 48v phantom power, although these do require batteries. The MIKI-D takes its power from your USB socket but it cannot deliver any form of power to your mic – if you need that you have to step up to the company's more expensive (and

more highly specified) uMi, which will deliver up to 12v of power from the USB port – enough to drive lapel mics and many condenser mics also – but the uMi is two-and-a-half times the price of the MIKI and does not provide built-in headphone monitoring. So I decided to try the MIKI-Digital version.

The great thing about the MIKI-Digital is that it is clean enough to drive hand-held dynamic mics used radio 'reporter style' close to the mouth, as well as battery



powered hand-held or shotgun condenser mics, which are more sensitive and have a stronger output so can be used further away without circuit hiss becoming a problem. If you need to use a lapel mic it will also have to be self powered.

So, let's have a look at the specs and how it performs in real life.



The MIKI-Digital in depth

The MIKI-Digital was developed by Technica Del Arte in the Netherlands for radio reporters using the company's live broadcast internet software LuciLive. The LuciLive system allows reporters to transmit live audio back to the studio for live link transmissions. To send good quality links, reporters need to get good clean audio into their laptops and smartphones in a convenient way, with kit they can carry in their pocket. That is why the MIKI and uMi miniature devices were developed.

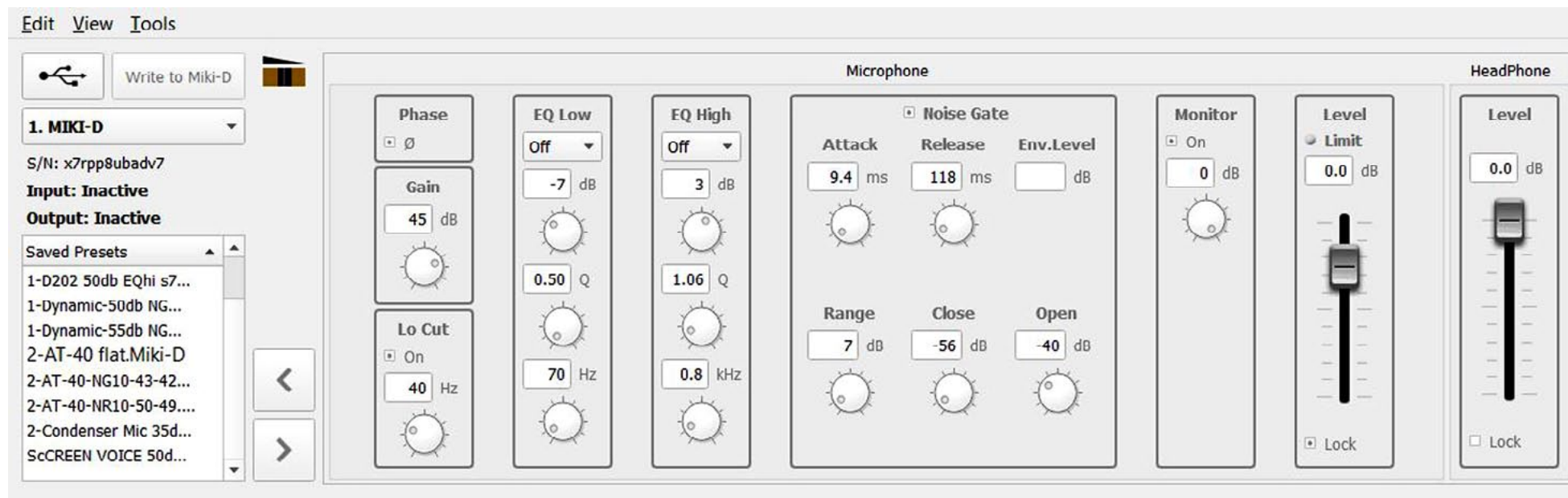
Physically the MIKI-Digital is a small but robust plastic box less than 5cm x 2cm x 1cm, which has a 3.5mm headphone socket and a three position sliding switch. There is a 30cm USB (A or C) cable coming out of one end and a 1m mic cable at the other, terminated with an XLR line socket.

That's it! Well, not quite. Inside there is a mic pre-amp and premium A-D converter as well as a small headphone amp. And there's some very clever software that comes with it, which enables you to set up three pre-sets for different mics (or line) inputs, which can be saved to the device – hence the three position switch. I have the USB-A version and use an OTG cable with my phone.

The MIKI-D Controller software

The MIKI-D Controller software works on Windows and Mac computers. Whilst you can only save three pre-sets on the device itself at any one time, you can save as many as you like on your computer and load them into the MIKI when required.

The device has a pre-fade gain of up to 60db plus a fader with a further 15db of gain on top of that. The gain stage is very clean up to 40db but above 45db circuit hiss becomes noticeable. All is not lost however since there is a very sophisticated Noise Gate included, with five parameters. This can be fine tuned to gate out the circuit hiss at higher gain settings and with a bit of care you cannot tell that it is in operation with moderate gain – other than there is no audible noise during quiet moments – or as little as you wish, since you do not always want to drop to absolute silence. And, of course, the Noise Gate works in real time as you are recording or transmitting. In practice I have found that it is only necessary to employ the gate when using low output dynamic mics at higher gain settings in a very quiet environment. With a battery powered condenser mic, such as my old hand-held Audio Technica AT10a, with a rated output of 6.3mV, only 35db of gain is needed on the MIKI – and at this level there is no audible circuit noise at all. In fact I could not hear any difference in noise at this level between the MIKI and my SoundDevices MxPre3, which is super quiet in terms of circuit noise.



MIKI[®] BROADCAST
the smart connection

The Noise Gate itself is quite sophisticated and sensitive. Firstly it shows the current Environmental noise level – so if you are quiet you can read the ambient noise level of the room or wherever you are (eg. next to your computer). This gives a steer to enable you to set the appropriate level that the Noise Gate trips in and out – i.e. the Gate Open and Gate Closed db levels. There is also a Range setting, which is essentially how many decibels the noise level will be reduced when the gate is ‘closed’. You can adjust the Range figure until any unwanted noise just disappears – or set it to a lesser level to keep the background noise sounding natural.

There are also two equalization channels, a Low and a High, which can be set to ‘shelf’ or ‘parametric’. In parametric mode you can select the frequency and the amount of cut or boost at that frequency and also the slope of the curve at which the cut or boost is applied – the Q (1-5). Unfortunately there is no graphical display of the Q curve (1 is flatter, 5 is a steep peak).

The software also has a Phase Reversal switch so that you can make sure your mic is in the same phase as other audio (and that it has the correct phase on your voice if you are monitoring through headphones). There is also a built in LoCut filter to cut out bass rumbles up to 150Hz. I generally have this at about 40Hz to reduce

handling noise – which can cause high readings on your level meters and can also trigger the noise gate to open in otherwise quiet sections where it is intended to suppress noise.

All the adjustments, Gain, Noise Gate and Equalisation respond in real-time, so you can just listen and tune, and then save the whole pre-set to your computer or to one of the three switch channels on the MIKI-Digital.

The MIKI-Digital in use

The MIKI-Digital comes with three pre-set levels installed; a 0db gain for line inputs, a 30db for condenser mics and a 40db for dynamic mics (rated at 2.8mV). There is also a built-in limiter which operates in the background at all times – just in case! To get the best out of the device you will need to set it up for your own mics using the software and load your presets into the



MIKI. My hand-held condenser mic only requires about 35db of gain on the MIKI but my dynamics need about 45 db for comfortable, close, hand-held interviews, since they are low output (1.6 - 2mV).

There is only a small amount of circuit hiss at 45db so this is only audible in a quiet room – outdoors it is well below the environmental noise threshold. Since there are three pre-set switch positions I have set one at 45db gain with no Noise Gate, one at 45db with the Noise Gate engaged and one at 35db without the noise gate for my condenser mic. If I need a line input or more gain then I can set this very quickly via the software when the MIKI is plugged in to a computer. You can quickly download the software on any computer if the MIKI is plugged in.

The verdict

The MIKI-Digital is a very convenient way of getting high quality audio from a professional microphone into your laptop, computer or smartphone. It is well suited to pairing with a good quality battery powered condenser mic but it can also be used with dynamic mics for hand-held interviews a few inches from the mouth, at gain settings up to about 45db, without circuit noise becoming an issue.

Beyond that you may need to set up the Noise Gate to get rid of circuit noise during quieter moments, where it is not masked by the principal audio

or ambient environmental sound. The Noise Gate is also ideal if you are recording or transmitting close to your computer and wish to gate out fan noise when you are not speaking – for example during an interview.

Tech Spec

The frequency response of the MIKI-Digital is a whopping 20-24000Hz at 48kHz (and it goes up to 48000Hz if you record at 96kHz!) Since we can't hear much above 20000Hz there is nothing to worry about here. Whilst there is a quoted maximum gain of 72db it is not fully usable because of hiss levels at higher gain settings – although you can gate out hiss at moderate settings. Microphone sensitivity is -66db and the Equivalent Input Noise (EIN) is quoted at a modest -113dbU compared with the professional standard of its more expensive brother, the uMi which achieves 130dbU (at 150 ohms) with a microphone sensitivity of -82dbU full scale.

Price

The MIKI-Digital is aimed at professional users, so the original price point of €99 (now €79) was not unreasonable. However, when you take into account UK VAT, which adds €24.80 and the rather high postage cost of €25, plus your bank's non-sterling transaction charge, the bill came to around €150 (£136) – now recently

£119. That is cheaper than some of the competition – and it is better specified.

Customer Service

I contacted the manufacturers/ developers as a private purchaser and I have to say that their customer service was excellent. They sent very quick and helpful replies. The unit comes with a two year guarantee.

Chris North

[RE]SPITE
As an example of having a good idea, fully researching and preparing – this short film from professional photographer Göran Strand takes some beating. Plus, living in Sweden, patience and a Nikon D850, helps.
Oh, and a full moon.

www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=7&v=sAaWJcTQ8Cg

12

MANAGING VIDEO DATA

We've come a long way from the days of tape recording on large clunky tape cartridges, be it analogue Umatic, SVHS, Betacam SP, or the later digital formats such as DigiBeta, DVCam or miniDV, to name just a few formats that were available in the last three decades since I started in the industry. Most would think or assume that digital encoding makes video production much easier and more flexible, which is largely true.



BY MARC SHUTTLEWORTH
M.M.INST.V.

AVINTERACTIVE LTD

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Digital Data

The bounds of possibility in today's video production world mean that pretty much anything is possible, limited only by imagination and the skills required to use a variety software applications. We can now move video around, convert it, copy it and transmit it at the stroke of a few mouse button clicks, which is, quite frankly, amazing. There is however a caveat to all this; 'Easy Come, Easy Go'. Whilst a video file does all of the above, it is also just as easy to lose, misplace, or even delete data. One of the main things I have learned in the digital video world is that you need to be extremely well organised, you need a way to store and identify your DATA so that all those trillions of 1s & 0s are stored securely and in a way that is easily identifiable.

So here's a question – you're on a video shoot and spend all day setting up some nice shots and content for your best client. Your footage is a bunch of data stored on a memory card in your

camera, what do you do? You have one copy of all your lovely hard work on the memory card, which you could lose, have stolen or get corrupted by some random static electricity, before you get back to your studio! My answer is: Do not pass go, do not collect £200 – move directly to making a second copy before you do absolutely anything else. There is always the temptation to pack all the gear up and get home after a hard day. Do I always do it? Maybe not always – but I know I should.

The Process

Every digital video producer will, or certainly should, have a process to look after their media. I will share ours. Firstly, all our cameras use SDHC cards. We have some fast enough for HD and others for 4K. If you are using any other cards, such as compact flash or Sony XQD formats, you also need to think along those lines. The speed of the cards is another consideration. Make sure your cards are up to the specification of your camera.

We have two card boxes, one marked 'BLANK' and one marked 'USED'. If it's in blank it's good to stick in the camera, format and hit record. If it's in used then it needs to be very well looked after until we have what we call a 'Double Backup'. Needless to say, when we take a freshly recorded card out of the camera it goes straight into the used box ready for further processing.

We generally use portable USB3 drives for projects, so as soon as we can, we copy the card data to a project folder on the portable USB drives. Back at base we have a Network Attached RAID (Redundant Array of Independent Disks). As soon as we get back to our studio we copy the footage to the Network Attached RAID to make a second copy before importing the media into a Premiere Pro project and checking we have everything. That is our double backup. Then, and only then, do we move the cards from the used box to the blank box ready for the next shoot.

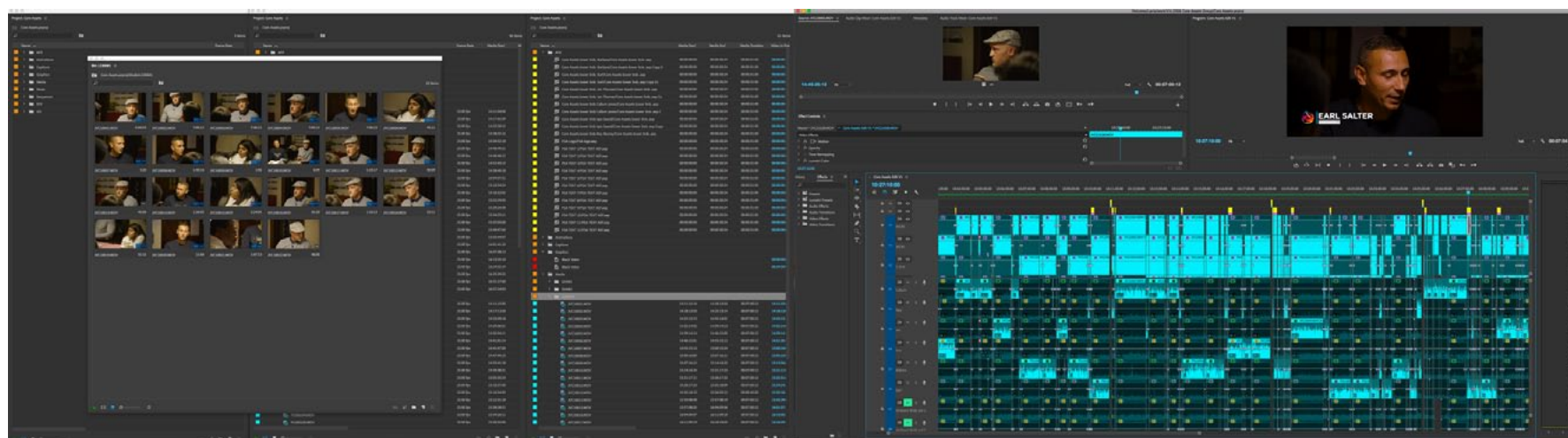
Some digital video producers may go to further lengths such as cloud storage and off-site backups, as a security against fire or theft. We believe what we do is adequate for our level of business and data-loss risk that we face. You need to assess the value of your own data and how much pain you would experience if you lost it and put in an appropriate backup and security process.

Size matters

The other thing about data is how big is it? There are a few non-technical people I know who don't know the difference between one Kilobyte, one Megabyte, one Gigabyte and one Terabyte of data. If you're working in digital video you do need to know the difference. There's no point trying to attach a video file to an email if it's bigger than about 7MB. Have you ever tried uploading a 3GB QT file and wondered why it's taking days? Size matters massively. Make sure you understand it. Along with size is the time it takes to transfer, backup, copy or do whatever with your files. Copy

times are becoming significant due to the increased file sizes of 4K and higher detailed codecs. This should be taken into account when planning projects or even quoting jobs. Think how are you going to archive a terabyte of data just for one project. How many copies do you need and how long will it take?

We recently covered a conference where we had nine cameras. Managing the data over the three days turned out to be a full-time job. No sooner had backups been made of one session than there were a bunch of memory cards from the next, ready for transfer to a hard drive and back up. In this particular example we were working overseas so had two drives for all the media on site – and when we travelled back they were packed separately. One I kept hold of personally. Most of this is common sense and is obvious to the experienced digital video producer but if you're just getting started I would urge you to put some data management procedures in place right from the outset.



All hard drives die

The question is not what you will do 'if' your hard drive goes down but 'when' your hard drive goes down. At some point we will all lose a hard drive, so make sure when it happens you've stuck to your procedures and a major problem will be avoided since you will have a copy. A useful tip is to create some pre-made folders that have a folder structure that includes a folder for animation, media, voiceover, music etc. At the start of each project we duplicate the folder template and rename it for the job. In our case we have a sequential job number list for managing projects. The great thing about this is we know everything for a particular project is somewhere within that folder structure. On completion of the job we archive the whole folder and it's sub-folders.

Kit and software

We store our SD cards in boxes which are clearly marked as 'used' and 'blank'. The pre-prepared folder structure we use has a folder for everything we may need, at the end of the project the whole folder is archived so we know everything is in one place. It's also good practice to have the same folder

structure as most edit software will be looking for media in a predefined folder. We work on Macs but the same applies for PCs.

The Backup software we use is called 'Get Backup Lite' and we use the synchronisation mode, so no fancy incremental backups. It just makes sure that your source and destination folders are the same, it also has protection to stop you overwriting a newer file if you get things the wrong way round. We just use it manually before and after we do any work on a project and certainly if we take a project drive out of the building to work on elsewhere.

Memory cards and portable drives

I won't go into detail about memory cards here, just to say make sure that the cards you use are fast enough for the data write speed of the camera. Otherwise, they may appear to work on short test clips but when you get out on a job and start recording longer segment it may cause you a problem.

I have already mentioned hard drives. We have a number of portable USB3 hard drives and we also have a RAID

drive. A RAID drive uses what is called data striping to record media over several drives and in our case to increase speed. They can also be setup to record multiple copies for security but with no speed advantage but I personally can't see any benefit in using an expensive RAID drive for this. The flexibility and portability of the USB3 drives is a more sensible option for us. Another tip would be to setup your edit software with internal bins, sequences and a layout ready to use. Save this as a template, so when you start a project everything is in the right place.

Proxy files

If you are shooting 4K or even higher you may have noticed how slow your software processes these files compared with standard HD. Certainly with Premiere Pro we find just updating Proxies can take an age. For 4K we usually work with Proxies (a small version of the original file with the same name and attributes). We use Adobe Creative Cloud and Media Encoder, which lets you batch-encode/convert a series of files and store them in a different location. It can also add a watermark to highlight that it is a proxy.



Make sure you keep the originals in a different folder so when you are ready to finalise your project you can just re-direct your software to the originals instead of the Proxies. I would recommend doing some tests to make sure you have a process that works before committing to a live project. Premiere Pro does have a facility to automate this, I have however struggled to get it to work so I do this manually. My references to software such as Premiere Pro and Media Encoder are just the application we have chosen to use. I can't vouch for other software but in general they all work in a similar way.

To summarise, digital is great and is of course here to stay – but make sure you are well organised right from the start. Don't underestimate the gravity of losing your data and the ease of how this may happen if you're not organised

Marc Shuttleworth

[RE]SPITE
The wait is over. Pantone have finally announced the official colour of 2019. Drum roll. – 'Living Coral' (16-1546 TCX). So, "Life-affirming, nurturing, symbolizing optimism". Now you know.

Here's Stephen Colbert saying what you're probably thinking...

www.youtube.com/watch?v=KN_VyCH5VVE

13

IOV TRAINING WORKSHOPS

Last year we explored possibilities to develop regular and relevant training within the IOV. Some excellent proposals came through, and although it proved difficult at the time to get them off the ground, the energy has not gone away.

In this article I will outline the proposals submitted plus one or two others that might be of interest...

BY TONY MANNING
M.M.INST.V.

SUCCESSFUL MEMBERS
ARE AN IMPORTANT
ELEMENT OF IOV – SO
TRAINING IS PART OF OUR
MISSION

TONY.MANNING@IOV.CO.UK



Any courses we do offer will emphasise practical hands-on participation alongside teaching of the fundamentals. We will also try to have a suitable spread across the regions, including repeating any course that proves popular in another location.

The intention would be to offer the courses to members at a highly subsidised rate but to invite others to attend at full price or to take advantage of reductions by joining at the point of booking.

Some courses lend themselves to a single day, others to two days and yet others to a single day with a scheduled follow-up. Cost, travel and accommodation is a consideration.

At this stage I will omit the names of the proposers.

Some potential courses are more fully fleshed out than others partly to address space requirements in the magazine.

Training themes:

1. The Corporate and Promotional shoot

This will include:

- the initial enquiry.
- developing the brief, contract and budget (including variations).
- thinking and operating as a PD (Producer/Director).
- helping non-professional people to appear on video.
- how to short-list, cast, rehearse and then shoot with actors and presenters.
- health and safety in the studio environment. It is assumed that the shoot will be indoors, or mostly so.

2. Shooting in an Outdoor Environment

Many of the same elements will be involved, but there will inevitably be issues and preparation to deal with



IOV Training Day

exterior conditions – weather, changing light, ground conditions, etc. Some particular features therefore will be:

- Scoping the territory.
- Implications for sound (capture and monitoring).
- Implications for camera (ditto).
- Communications amongst the crew.
- Health and Safety, including emergency contingencies.

3. Wedding and Events Productions

This area of production is a major source of income for many IOV members and independents. It is also a potentially one of the most difficult areas of production, in a live environment, with limited control of events, and high expectations on the part of those commissioning the work.

Some likely elements to cover will be:

- different styles of production (video samples of different styles to be shown).
- the business side of wedding and event video.
- pre-production considerations.
- time management in a single or multiple location event.
- directing the event – where should those cameras be positioned and what should they be covering?
- particular skills e.g. the vox pops and marryoke.
- issues in the edit and output phase.

4. Shooting single-camera location material for UK broadcasters

How to respond to a news organisation wanting a report typically at short notice.

- Understanding the brief.
- Preparing questions for interview or vox pops.
- Location shots and cutaways to set the scene and provide variety.
- Managing the multi-camera shoot.

5. Working with Talent

Actors, Presenters, the experienced and the novice.

6. Skills of Pre-Production

As soon as you've got the gig you are in the world of pre-production. In fact you could argue that in pitching for the job you were already entering that world, discovering client requirements, scoping what you would need to meet those requirements and working out a realistic timescale and budget.

So this course will examine everything from pitching to site recce, from hiring crew and kit to organization on the set and crucially managing client relationships throughout the process.

7. Improve production skills

8. How to pass your IOV accreditation exam

Understanding the technical and artistic elements, (one day).

9. Run and Gun – Techniques for professional content producers in the YouTube age

It covers practical learnings, tips, insights, and challenges faces when filming in public and private places, rural and urban, with minimal crew, precious little time, tight publishing deadlines, and a host of other uncontrolled factors and risks which affect the quality and cost of producing a professional end product.

Selected Draft course content:

- Know the rules, before breaking them.
- Planning and scheduling.
- Managing the Unknown: Risk Management.
- Publishing techniques and tips including YouTube and social media.
- Camera techniques and tips including Sound and Lighting, suggested equipment & checklists.
- Looking after your people.
- Editing techniques and tips.

10. Better Audio for the Video Producer

- Understanding Sound.
- Different microphones or different tasks.
- Mic placement.
- Monitoring.
- Scripts for Audio.
- Working with an experienced presenter or VO artist, or with a novice to get the best performance.
- Prompting and listening.
- Editing audio.
- Additional audio kit.
- Problem solving 101.

So these are some workshops that we hope to get off the ground in 2019 and beyond. Making a success of these ventures will go a long way towards re-establishing the credibility of the IOV or suggestions will be welcome.

As Henry Ford said, *"The only thing worse than training your employees and having them leave is not training them and having them stay."*

So, do drop me a line.

Tony Manning

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A JOURNEY BACK IN TIME

Those of you who follow the members' Facebook page may remember my latest adventure in my time machine when my wife and I travelled back in time.

To be precise, we went back to 1925, for the evening. While there, we popped into a local cinema, just for fun. The film showing was an American adaptation of Gaston Leroux's 1910 novel 'Le Fantôme de l'Opéra'.

BY MIKE WEST
M.M.INST.V.

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA (1925)
DIR: RUPERT JULIAN
STARS: LON CHANEY
MARY PHILBIN

ALL NOSTALGIC WITH MAN
OF A THOUSAND FACES

VIDEOGRAMIK@HOTMAIL.CO.UK



It was a silent film, directed by Rupert Julian, starring Lon Chaney as the deformed Phantom who haunted the Paris Opera House, causing murder and mayhem to promote the woman he loved to stardom. You probably all know the story, anyway, from the Andrew Lloyd Webber/Richard Stilgoe musical.

Being a silent film, we had the pleasure of an accompaniment by Michael Wooldridge on the Wurlitzer Organ.

The evening began with Michael playing some introductory music as he rose from the pit seated at the Wurlitzer. After a few minutes, he turned to the audience and explained there would be a short delay to the start of the film as there had been an advert flashed on the screen at the town's other cinema, so they were waiting for others to come from there. Apparently, this other cinema is very modern and they show something called 'Talkies'.

In the meantime, he demonstrated some of the marvellous features of this organ. It has a range of pipes

from 2 inches to 32 feet in length. He demonstrated the longest and shortest of the pipes. Ok, I knew he was playing the longest because I could feel the floor vibrating, but the shortest were totally lost to me.

When the film began it only took a few minutes to become totally engrossed. The acting, of course, was very different to what we have today, as the actors must convey the story without the benefit of speech. There were a few subtitles within the film and I had to note they were readable, unlike many of the subtitles we have on modern TV productions (unless made by an IOV member of course).

As already mentioned, in those days actors had to express the story visually and Mary Philbin, playing the part of Christine Daaé, carried this to great effect in the scene where she unmasks the phantom. Apparently, according to the film's cameraman, Charles Van Enger, Lon Chaney's self-devised makeup was kept a very close secret



Channel 4s 'Three in a Bed' has really gone downhill



"Gosh, am I the only one come dressed as a curtain?"

and when she finally unmasks him, Mary's look of horror was very real.

Another noticeable feature of the filming, was the way in which shadow was used to promote impending danger, something also used by Walt Disney to great effect in his early hand-drawn cartoons.

By the time the film ended, I noted Michael Wooldridge had been playing the Wurlitzer continuously for almost two hours.

Apart from the interest in the film as the beginnings of our own profession, the IOV does have a connection with these theatre organs.

Veteran members of the IOV will probably remember one of our founder members, Geoffery Belmont-Rixon, who had spent part of his life as a theatre organist at the Paramount, Leeds.

The evening had proved most entertaining and well worth the trip.

As a side note, this magnificent Wurlitzer has been constructed by the Sussex Organ Trust into the Assembly Hall Worthing, from parts obtained mostly from the Wurlitzers of the Metropole Cinema in Victoria, London

and also from the huge Troxy in Stepney. Should anyone be interested, the Organ Trust hold regular concerts at the Assembly Hall, featuring many leading organists. We attend as often as possible, especially those occasions when Phil Kelsall from the Blackpool Tower Ballroom makes the journey south to entertain us with the 'Blackpool Sound'.

Mike West



above: Mike and his Time Machine
top: The Wurlitzer, courtesy of the Sussex Organ Trust



15

BLACKMAGIC POCKET CINEMA CAMERA 4K

Back in April 2018, when things didn't look as bad and Brexit as they do now, I optimistically put a deposit down on a new Black Magic camera.

On the basis of a black & white render and a list of specs in an email from CVP (other suppliers are available) I was happily committing myself to what could be a whole world of pain. Again.



BY IAN SANDALL
F.INST.V.

A BOX FULL OF DELIGHT
OR AN EARLY CHRISTMAS
TURKEY...

SPL-COMMUNICATIONS.CO.UK
IS@IANSANDALL.VIDEO



Let me explain...

I had the original Black Magic Pocket Cinema Camera and just didn't get on with it for a number of reasons. After a disastrous shoot abroad (when I ended up shooting everything on a 7D in desperation) it had to go. And in early 2015 it did. Why?

- The monitoring was awful and it only worked with some monitors. It had a micro HDMI connector as well. The internal monitor was pretty dim – useless in bright sunlight. Also, it didn't articulate so made having another external monitor almost a necessity.
- The software was buggy (OK, I know this has been sorted out since) and drop-frames were not uncommon. And, too many controls that you'd normal expect to be on buttons were hidden deep in the menus.
- The sound from the internal mics was not exactly hi-fi. Headphones didn't go loud enough.

- The maximum ISO was low (800 as I recall, although I may stand corrected) and low-light performance was uninspiring.
- The sensor was only Super 16 size – not even full micro-four-thirds, so the inherent 3x crop factor made every lens a telephoto!
- Battery life was a joke.

Of course its saving grace were the actual pictures it produced in good light – and it did reward careful lighting.

Offering a robust ProRes codec or RAW shooting, it out-punched cameras that cost three or four the price in terms of its image quality – especially with flesh tones.

And that last point is really why I was willing to take a punt. Odds on, I'd get frustrated and give up again but the actual image quality (something I'd also seen reviewing the Blackmagic Ursa Mini on launch) would hopefully win me over.

On paper the specs looked promising: Dual native ISO up to 25,600. CFast and SD/UHS II cards. 4K HDR recording with LUT support at up to 120 fps. It was definitely a wish-list for the DSLR generation! Delivery – September. Well, knowing Blackmagic, I thought it might make a nice Christmas present to myself...

So off went my money and the rest of the year passed pleasantly enough. And then the reviews started coming though – and finally an email came from CVP in late November (remember other suppliers ARE available) asking for the rest of the money. Which was a bit of blow just before Christmas. And next day it came.

Resisting the temptation to make an unboxing video (too old) I did take some pictures and had a play. Here are my first impressions:

Size/Form

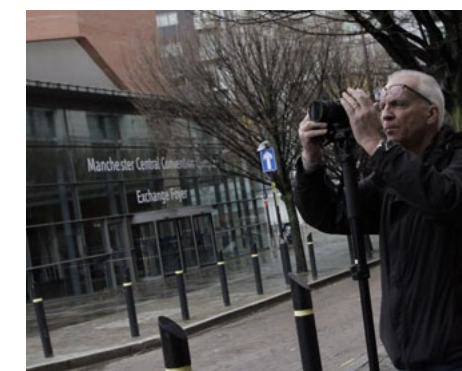
It's enormous. Only Fagin would have a pocket big enough to fit this into.

It's getting on for twice the size of a mirrorless and bigger than a Canon DSLR. Really it should have been called the Ursa micro/nano. But for its size its actually quite light until you stick on a lens. BM say it's made from a plastic reinforced with Carbon Fibre. I'll get back to you on that after I drop it for the first time.

Batteries (of which one is supplied) are LP-E6 – the kind that Canon use on many of their cameras. On my camera the battery door kept springing open so needed a little 'modification' to make it stay shut properly.

One odd thing is that it doesn't have a cold-shoe mount (surely something that everyone needs, whether for a monitor, mic or light) but instead has two quarter/20 screw threads, one at the top where the cold shoe should be and one at the bottom.

I assume this is for mounting a cage but to my mind this defeats the object of a 'pocket' camera. This is an annoyance as I had to buy a separate mount.





Screen

Again, it doesn't articulate. Admittedly it's a lot bigger and far brighter than what went before but the simple fact is that we've all been accustomed to articulating screens on camcorders for years and more recently on mirrorless and DSLR cameras, so this is a real pain. Going back to shooting on this reminds me of when I first got my 7D after having shot for many years on a Z1E and how frustrating that was! Personally, I'd forgo some of the size to have the screen articulating – and would even pay extra for the privilege! Even just to be able to angle it up when shooting low shots would really help. I wonder if anyone fancies a home-brew mod?

Functions

Most of the controls you need for everyday shooting are actually buttons. Woo Hoo! There are three user-assignable ones too. So you can have false colour, focus assist, guidelines or

whatever you want just a push button away. Plus dedicated controls for ISO, shutter and exposure where you'd expect them. Compatible MFT lenses will auto-expose and focus via controls on the back too – very useful. Exposure controls worked through my active EF lens adaptor too. But not auto-focus, oddly enough – even though this does work on my Panasonic MFT camera.

The main drawback however (compared to a GH5 or an A7S) is the lack of on-board stabilization. So using vintage FD lenses or even EF primes with adaptors is not on if you're hand-held. You're going to need a recent Panasonic lens with stabilization built in and if you don't have any this is a cost to factor in (the decent ones are not cheap either.) Of course, many purchasers of this kit will have come from the original Pocket Camera so may have glass that works.

The camera updating doesn't work properly so far and will be addressed on a future firmware update BM tell

me. Basically right now if you plug it in using a USB C to USB 3 cable (not supplied) your PC won't recognize it (although a Mac will.) Only if you plug it into a USB 2 port on a PC will the updating software work. This is frustrating but about par for the course with Blackmagic! Additionally, the mic input levels on the 3.5 mm jack are pitifully low so you need to boost the levels resulting in lots of hiss.

Strangely enough, plugging a mono mic into the Mini XLR socket (once you've found or made up a cable) gives a strong signal. And this socket has switchable phantom power too. Again BM say this will be addressed in future firmware upgrades.

Sensitivity

The dual native ISO seems to work well most of the time but on my first test I noticed a fair amount of noise at higher ISO settings in challenging conditions. However nothing that a decent plug-in (like the one in Resolve) can't cure.

Overall

I only had one chance to go out and shoot stuff due to weather and work but bearing in mind everything above it worked admirably, with really nice pictures and decent sound off the internal mics. I shot with the standard Blackmagic film LUT switched in and on getting back to Resolve afterwards, switching in the LUT resulted in mostly clean, life-like pictures. Admittedly, I was shooting RAW 4K but considering the weather and the low light, it worked pleasingly.

Overall, it has the makings of a great camera but I am as yet unwilling to put it onto paid jobs. One issue is the battery life and the other issue (with my example at least) is that if you leave it on for 10-15 minutes the two metal bits top and bottom where the quarter/20 screw holes are get uncomfortably hot. This, and the resultant poor battery life and broken battery cover, have led Blackmagic to ask for its return so they can test and if necessary replace or repair.

I had the camera only about a week and now it's gone back. I'm hoping it comes back soon so I can continue testing and then hopefully it'll start earning its keep.

To be continued

Ian Sandall

[RE]SPITE
Adjustment Layers can be essential – ask any keen Photoshop user. But, did you know they are a very useful tool in Final Cut Pro?

Ripple Training generously offer tons and tons of free video-shorts and have a free plugin along with a 'how-to' video.

www.rippletraining.com/articles/

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THEY SHALL NOT GROW OLD

Our final article in this issue of Focus defies all reasoning. Whilst commemorating the centenary of World War One Armistice around country, we were presented with a rather startling film.

Directed by Peter Jackson, he of Lord of the Rings, a riveting depiction of life in the trenches was released on an unsuspecting public.



BY KEITH WOOLFORD
A.M.INST.V.

THEY SHALL NOT GROW OLD (2018)
DIR: PETER JACKSON
MUSIC: DAVID DONALDSON
EDITOR: JABEZ OLSEN

THE INDESCRIBABLE GIVEN
A NEW LEASE OF LIFE

KEITH@ARCH-MEDIA.CO.UK



Of course, we know everything there is to know about The Great War. It started with the assassination of the Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand in June 1914 and finished with some signatures at Compiègne in November 1918. It wasn't until The Treaty of Versailles, in June the following year when it was formally ended.

As wars go, 'Great' seems so inappropriate. With 37 million casualties – some 16 million killed, by no stretch of the imagination should this adjective be used.

There, two paragraphs and WWI completed understood.

Until, that is, Mr Jackson, and a very large team, decided to take old black and white archive footage from the Imperial War Museum and work some incredible magic. Interviews from veterans recorded for the 1960s BBC 'The Great War' television series were overlaid. As there was no audio recorded on the original film, additional sound effects for marching, explosions,

rifle fire and general movement were carefully added.

Lip readers were employed so actors could speak the words spoken over 100 years ago. In "a very real, natural way", says Jackson.

Original film footage was often on hand-cranked cameras at around 13 and 15 frames per second. This was slowed down using computers to create new frames in between the existing – necessary for screening at the today's 24 frames per second in a smooth and contemporary way.

And we haven't come to the exceptional part yet.

Using advanced technology, the film was then painstakingly colourised by experts.

Bearing in mind that this front-line footage had suffered deterioration, tears, chemical marks, shrinkage, starches, scratches and general muck and bullets. This was a place that even Gollum hadn't ventured.

Meticulous research was undertaken to ensure the uniforms, the shells, boxes of food, adverts etc. were all accurately coloured.

Not content with leaving it there, they then made a 3D version!

The result was staggering. There was the usual preamble in the papers showing before and after stills, but nothing prepares for the physical impact when watching the film. Initially, the build up of excited young men, often boys, signing-up for the 'great adventure'. Training and arriving at the Front – all with the voice-overs and in a cleaned-up black and white state.

Then WHAM. Colour. It changes to real people joking around, eating, crouching in fear, going over the top. Hanging on barbed wire. Shells explode close by. Dangerously close (is there any other sort?).

Suddenly, these were real fathers, sons, brothers, uncles. It had never been comical watching Tommy move

quicker than normal across the screen, but there was an apparent 'distance' it implied. That was then, a far off country fought by ancestors a long, long time ago.

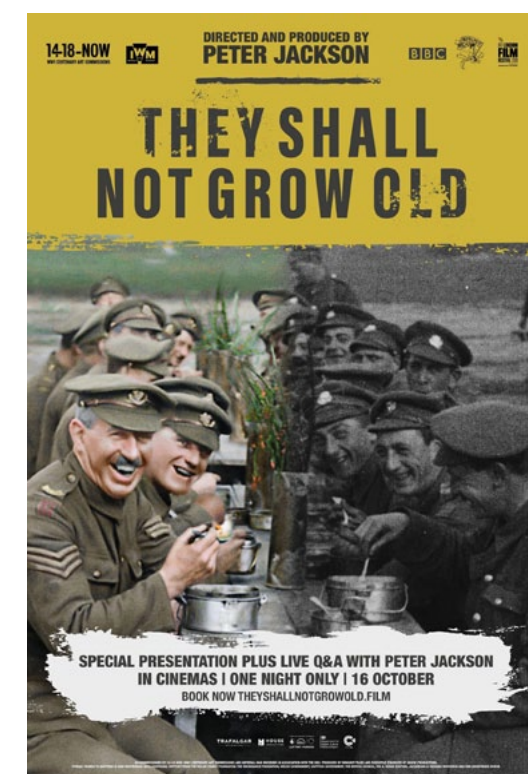
And, humour – vital in surviving, not least the mental terror, of the time. Along with a dollop of good luck.

More by accident than design, I caught a performance of 'The Third Light'* at the Minack Theatre in Cornwall whilst on my September holiday this year. It told the story of a local village where, incredibly, all the men had returned from 'The War to End all Wars'. Beautifully portrayed, yet revealing the hidden scars that remained.

Probably the best film, documentary or otherwise, you will see this decade.

Keith Woolford

* The third light from a smoker's lighter was usually accompanied by a sniper's bullet.



THE IOV

So, what do our members do?
Well, what don't they do?!



Image courtesy of Andrew Charlton © 2014



Image courtesy of David Haynes © 2014



Image courtesy of David Haynes © 2014



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