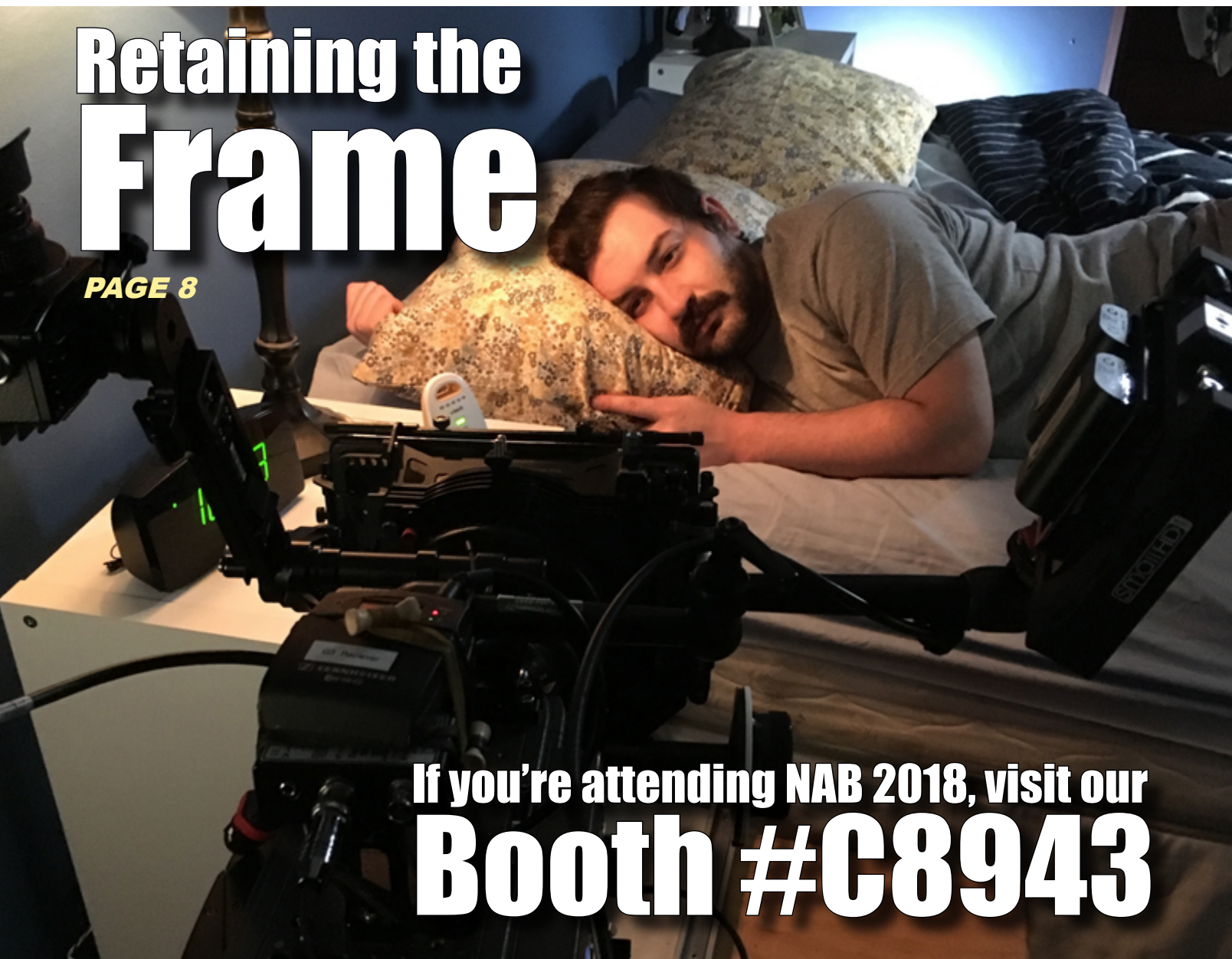# STUDENTFILMMAKERS

The #1 Educational Resource for Film and Video Makers

Retaining the Frame

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MEET THE WRITERS

SCOTT ESSMAN's filmography includes more than 28 productions including *Jack Pierce: The Man Behind the Monsters*, *Ten Men on the Field*, and *Trane and Miles*. He won a Rondo Award for Best Feature Film Commentary for work on the Legacy Set of Universal's *The Mummy* (1932 version). Essman has published over 500 articles about people who work behind-the-scenes in movies. He teaches mass media, filmmaking, and digital video editing.
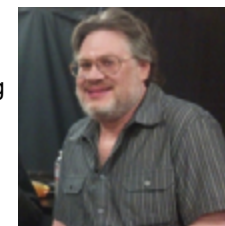
WILLIAM DONARUMA is currently a Teaching Professor in Filmmaking at the University of Notre Dame and also serves as Creative Director for the Office of Digital Learning. His courses involve narrative digital cinema production as well as visual research in anthropology stemming from his documentary work off the coast of Ireland. He forged careers in academia, cinematography and directing winning awards for both teaching and filmmaking. www.williamdonaruma.com
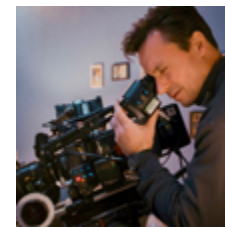
SHERRI SHERIDAN is a leading world expert in teaching story to digital filmmakers, animators, screenwriters and novelists. New book coming soon "Filmmaking Script To Screen Step-By-Step" with an app. Other books include "Maya 2 Character Animation" (New Riders 1999), "Developing Digital Short Films" (New Riders / Peachpit / Pearson 2004) and "Writing A Great Script Fast" (2007). Sherri is the CEO and Creative Director at MindsEyeMedia.com and MyFlik.com in San Francisco.
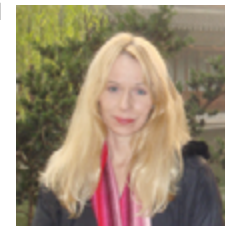
FRED GINSBURG, CAS, PH.D. is a highly experienced and award winning professional sound mixer whose decades of work includes features, episodic TV series, national TV commercials, corporate, and government. He is a member of the Cinema Audio Society, and the University Film & Video Assocation. Fred holds doctorate, graduate, and undergraduate degrees in filmmaking; has published more than 180 articles; and wrote the "Guide to the Nagra 4.2 and Production Sound Recording".

AL CAUDULLO's multiple award-winning career has spanned 30 years of video production including excellence in HD, 3D and now 4K UltraHD. His career highlights include ground-breaking work in Videowalls - the 72nd Annual Academy Awards, the Year 2000 Daytona 500, the World Film Premiere of "Star Trek Insurrection," and the 100th US Open PGA Golf Championship. In the field of 3D, Caudullo has brought his vast knowledge of 3D as a consultant to major industry players seeking to update and enhance their 3D hardware and software tools.

DAVID LANDAU is the author of "Film Noir Production: The Whodunit of the Classic American Mystery Film" from Focal/Routledge press. He is also an award winning cinematographer and author of the book "Lighting For Cinematography; A practical guide to the art and craft of lighting for the moving image" from Bloomsbury Press. He holds an MFA in Screenwriting from Goodard college and is the co-screenwriter of the feature film "Dark Tarot", available on Amazon Prime. David is a professor in the film department at Fairleigh Dickinson University, but also continues to work professionally as a DP on low budget films and corporate videos and as the lead gaffers on Lifetime's "Project Runway Allstars".

DAVID APPLEBY has been making documentary films for over forty years. He began teaching at the University of Memphis in 1977 where he began producing films on regional subjects – independently and for public television. When he was awarded a Kellogg Fellowship in International Development in 1987, he began to concentrate his film work on community development issues and civil rights. His films have aired nationally on PBS, ABC, A&E, and Starz. www.memphis.edu
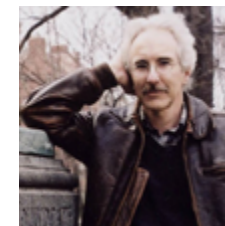
KRISTEN BAUM is a Sundance Fellow and LA-based film composer. She works on a broad range of projects. Her music is on soundcloud.com/kristen-baum, her website is kristenbaum.com, her film credits are at imdb.me/kristenbaum. *Photo by Daniel Kresco.*

NEIL LANDAU is a bestselling author, producer and award-winning screenwriter who runs the Writing for Television program in the UCLA Department of Film, Television and Digital Media (his alma mater). Credits include *Don't Tell Mom the Babysitter's Dead, Melrose Place, The Magnificent Seven, Doogie Howser, M.D., The Secret World of Alex Mack, Twice in a Lifetime,* MTV's *Undressed* and one-hour drama pilots for CBS, ABC, Freeform, Warner Bros., Disney, Lifetime and Fremantle. Neil has served as Executive Script Consultant for Sony Pictures Television and Columbia Pictures. Neil penned the bestselling *101 Things I Learned in Film School, The Screenwriter's Roadmap, The TV Showrunner's Roadmap* and *TV Outside the Box: Trailblazing in the Digital Television Revolution.* www.neillandau.com

STEVE MYERS Based in Chicago, Steve Myers brings over 30 years of experience in writing and producing music for film, video, albums, television, radio and live events. As a composer, engineer and music director, Steve has worked on film and video projects for Anheuser Busch, McDonald's, McDonald's Beijing, Disney-Buena Vista, Ronald McDonald House Charities, United Airlines, PepsiCo, Taco Bell, John Deere, Volkswagen, Ford Motor Co., United Parcel Service, United States Post Office, Pfizer, Kraft Foods, Searle, Allstate, Abbott Labs, Willow Creek Church, Willow Creek Association and more.

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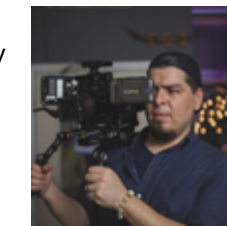
LADSON MARK JONES is a reporter for *StudentFilmmakers* Magazine and *HD Pro Guide* Magazine and covers NAB, IBC, and other tradeshows & events for Welch Media, Inc. studentfilmmakers.com hdproguide.com

StudentFilmmakers Magazine Announces
Must-Visit Booths at NAB 2018

LaCie
NAB Booth # SL9610

collective.lacie.com/pushplay
www.lacie.com

This year at NAB Show, we're hosting a full lineup of award-winning pros who are ready to share their workflow tips with you. Join us for the COLLECTIVE Speaker Series at Booth SL9610.

Experience the future of live motion capture—no body suits. No marker placements. It's done in real time and it's all video based. Swing by our Creative Studios stage and see how we do it.

Check out the pro tools used by photographers, filmmakers, and production studios.

Sound Shark Audio
NAB Booth # C6750

www.soundsharkaudio.com

The Sound Shark is an sound intensifier that allows an ordinary lapel microphone to capture audio from greater distances that a typical shotgun microphone. It has been used to capture wedding vows from 50 feet, it from five feet away it sounds like the speaker is wearing the lapel mic. The Sound Shark also provides greater directionality than a shot gun microphone. This means that it rejects, or ignores, more of the sounds off to the side, or behind, the microphone. This allows clearer audio to be captured in noisy environment like a convention hall or press conference. The design of the Sound Shark also greatly reduces, or eliminates, the wind noise that plagues shotgun microphones.

Azden Corporation
NAB Booth # C8438

www.azden.com

Founded in 1952, Tokyo, Japan, Azden has over 60 years of experience to back its expertise in audio equipment manufacturing. Started as an OEM manufacturer, Azden has provided its products to many of the top audio and electronics brands. Now a well established and independent brand name, Azden is well known in the audio market around the world. Specializing in microphones and wireless audio for video production, Azden's mission is to provide video creators and film makers with quality audio gear at an affordable price.

https://www.facebook.com/AzdenUS
http://instagram.com/azdenproaudio
http://youtube.com/AzdenUSA
http://twitter.com/azdencorp

MAC Group
NAB Booth # C6643

www.macgroupus.com

Our passion for image-making shows in our commitment to those who are dedicated to mastering the art of photo and video. Whether you're a photographer or filmmaker, we handle all your creative needs by supplying you with the world's finest image-making tools. Each company we represent draws strength from being part of MAC Group. Brand value is grown continuously as we collaborate with clients to develop integrated, data-based solutions.

Six of our brands are proud to be sharing new products at NAB Booth #C6643 this year: Benro, Kupo, Light & Motion, Sekonic, Tenba.

www.benrousa.com
www.kupogrip.com
www.stellaprolights.com
www.sekonic.com
www.tenba.com

Carl Zeiss
NAB Booth # C3639

www.zeiss.com/cine/cp3

There's a great many new cameras being launched this year with full frame sensors and ZEISS has lenses for all of them. With superb sharpness and excellent control over aberration, full frame cine lenses from ZEISS assure you complete coverage of every sensor used today. ZEISS also offers you full control of your metadata with its line of Compact Prime, CP.3 XD lenses. Want to see for yourself? Join us at NAB in Las Vegas in April! You can find us in the center hall, booth #3639. ZEISS has you covered.

RigWheels, LLC
NAB Booth # C11445

www.rigwheels.com

RigWheels has backed up the truck and dropped off a ton of new products and configurations for NAB. Known for practical, useable and portable products like the Cloud Mount and Passport Dolly, RigWheels new products like the Slingshot continue to provide ORIGINAL solutions for moving and mounting your production tools.

Sigma Corporation of America
NAB Booth # C10308

www.sigmaphoto.com

Sigma Cine lenses are designed for the latest camera sensor technology and optimized for 6K-8K productions. The Sigma Cine line includes the S35 High Speed Zoom Line, the FF Zoom Line and FF High Speed Prime Line. Featuring an attractive price point and compact design, all lenses are available in EF, E and PL mounts. Leveraging outstanding optical design of the celebrated Sigma Global Vision line with 100% retained optics, Sigma Cine features a 100% new mechanical lens body design, catering to the needs of the modern cinematographer. Each Sigma lens is handcrafted and individually tested in Sigma's sole facility in Aizu, Japan.

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StudentFilmmakers Magazine
NAB Booth # C8943

www.studentfilmmakers.com

The *StudentFilmmakers* readers and online community are creating the award-winning films of tomorrow using the latest technologies. They are learning to work with the equipment they will use for the rest of their careers. And, in an industry that changes each day, even the pros need to keep learning and many have found *StudentFilmmakers* to be an excellent resource.

There simply is no other magazine on the market that specifically serves the aspiring filmmakers community like *StudentFilmmakers* Magazine. *StudentFilmmakers* Magazine is the bright star of industry publications covering the latest technologies and workflows. Each issue addresses the needs of the five distinct phases of film and video making for educators, students and the continuing education of the professionals of today's industry.

StudentFilmmakers.com, **#1 Educational Resources for Film and Video Makers,** brings together students, professors, and independent filmmakers of all levels around the globe into one network and community.

The StudentFilmmakers print/digital trade publication, interactive website, and free monthly E-newsletters cover various topics with special focus on the five stages of filmmaking: Development, Pre-Production, Production, Post Production, and Distribution. High-level educational articles, insider techniques and best practices, stories, interviews, industry news, and high-end technology news highlight categories such as Cinematography, Lighting, Directing, Camerawork, Editing, Audio, Animation, Special FX, Screenwriting, Producing, Distribution, and more.

Learn about the latest, cutting-edge technologies and techniques and join the Filmmakers Global Network at https://networking.studentfilmmakers.com.

STUDENTFILMMAKERS
The #1 Educational Resource for Film and Video Makers

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Retaining the Frame

By William Donaruma

The camera operator can be an underappreciated skill on a crew and in schools as if you are the person who just pushes the red button when you are told. If that were true, then why does Roger Deakins always want to operate his camera? It's because you are the person responsible for making that image, shot, composition happen and exist in that moment and forever. One of the important details to this skill set is retaining the frame when the action is about to start and making the correct moves. Bad takes cost time and money and it's on you. This is something I have never seen in a textbook and rarely taught, so I make a point of it in class.

Under fairly normal circumstances you line up the shot and the slate comes in and out of frame and you push the button and make the move when necessary. However, there are many times when you need to move the camera around, the actor enters the shot, it is a dark scene or a close up and you need to re-frame the shot to get the slate, account for the height of the actor or simply know exactly what the starting and ending composition the director or cinematographer wants to balance the shot. The trick here is to become specifically aware of the edges of the frame using furniture, props, equipment on the outside edges or lighting on the set. One example I had was a close up of an actor opening a door, so we had to move away to get the slate and re-frame for her height with the door closed. I couldn't use marks on the door because we would see them when she opened it so I had to rely on small knicks on the door itself and the edge of the door jamb. Another tough scenario is when it is a dark scene and becomes hard to see details until light is supposed to come into the scene. You have to be acutely aware of the lighting and geometry of where objects are in relation to the corners of the frame. It's all in the attention to details and the skill of your operator to retain that frame each and every take. And it definitely helps to use your eyepiece (EVF) and not some little monitor attached somewhere to the camera! You need to be the camera and retain the frame.

Calling for the roll aka "Turn 'Em Over"

by Fred Ginsburg CAS

Calling for the roll: FILM SHOOT

(see further down in article for instructions if shooting on video/electronic cinema)

Before the shooting sequence begins, the sound mixer has recorded a HEADER ID at the beginning of the sound roll, HD, or media card.

A proper HEADER contains the following information:

- Production Number and Working Title.
- Date and Location.
- Name of Sound Mixer.
- Make/model of audio recorder.
- Track format (such as Mono, 2-track, 4-track, 8-track, mon0 x #, stereo pair x #)
- Sampling and Bit Rate (such as **16 bit**, **48k** or **24bit/48k**)
- Timecode Rate. Such as 23.976, 24.00 native, 29.97 non-drop, 30 non-drop.
- Always specify non-drop or drop-frame if using 29.97
- Always specify NON-TIMECODE if your recorder cannot record timecode!
- Slate what the reference tone level is going to be recorded at (such as negative 20 dB)
- Record 30 seconds of reference tone onto your recorder.

Include this HEADER ID file once on every sound roll, hard drive, or digital media that you turn in for dailies.

ASST DIRECTOR: to sound mixer

"Put us on a light and bell. Quiet on the set."

Light and Bell System is remote controlled at the soundcart, and activates the RED warning lights outside the stage, sounds one long blast of a buzzer or bell, and sometimes also controls the ventilation/air conditioning system.

- Sound Mixer activates Light & Bell from the soundcart.
- When Crew hears one long blast of buzzer, they know to cease all activity and remain silent.
- RED LIGHTS outside the stage warn people not to enter!

The Assistant Cameraperson (aka Clapper/Loader) holds the slate in front of the face of the actor, so that camera does not need to reset focus/framing.

Always begin with the sticks in the OPEN position!

Sound mixer needs to make sure that a nearby mic, such as the boom or the actor's lav, is ready to record the clack of the sticks closing.

ASST DIRECTOR: to sound mixer

"Roll Sound!"

Sound Mixer switches the recorder from STANDBY/PAUSE into RECORD/PLAY.

Sound Mixer announces the scene and take number into the slate mic at the mixing panel.

- Always use alphabetic "words" when you slate, since "letters" (aye, bee, see, dee) are harder to differentiate during playback.
- Examples: alpha, beta, charlie, david, edward, frank, george, henry.
- Or just use any words that begin with the right letter!
- After voice slating the scene & take, the soundmixer should take a lengthy pause, in order to record a few seconds of room tone.
- Turn off your slate mic.
- Make sure that your primary mic for the scene is OPEN and set to the level expected for Dialogue!

After a moment, the **SOUND MIXER** shouts: "SPEED"

Exception: If this is the first take at a fresh location or major set change, then the sound mixer should attempt to record 30 seconds of ROOM TONE at this time.

- The Mixer would record scene/slate, and then shout "Please remain quiet while we record 30 seconds of room tone, as requested by the Producer."
- Of course, the crew will begin murmuring and whispering after only several seconds, but get whatever you can for the Editor.
- Calling for the roll:
- FILM SHOOT
- Even several seconds of good, clean room tone is highly valued by the Editors!
- Make sure that you record room tone with the same mic, same position/angle, and same gain (volume) settings as you would use for dialogue in that scene!
- When any additional recording is futile, re-slate the scene/take and call out "Finished with room tone, let's do it... SPEED!"
- After voice slating the scene/take and calling "SPEED" -- make sure to close your slate mic and open the mic that will hear the clapstick.

ASST DIRECTOR: to Camera Operator

"Roll Film!" (*or "Roll Camera"*)

Camera Operator begins shooting film.

CAMERA OPERATOR:

immediately verifies that film is rolling, and then shouts out: "Mark it!"

Note that the camera operator does not waste valuable film footage by shouting something like, "Everything looks good. I don't see any warning lights or hear any strange sounds coming from the magazine. So, yeah, I guess Camera is rolling", while then awaiting yet another long pause for the Assistant Director to call for the clapstick.

As soon as the Camera Operator alerts us that all is well with the camera by calling out to "Mark it", the person holding the slate responds by announcing **"Marker"** and then *gently* clacks the sticks.

Continue to hold the closed slate in place for a full moment, so there is no blurr. Then remove the slate from the scene.

As soon as the clapstick slate has been removed from the shot... the Sound Mixer must double-check that all "slating" mics are closed, and that the appropriate DIALOGUE mics are open.

...while the **DIRECTOR** calls out for: "Action!"

Calling for the roll: VIDEO SHOOT

Similar to a film shoot, but note the following differences when shooting film style in video.

- The HEADER ID should be recorded, along with color bars and reference tone, at the beginning of each camera 'reel' (hard drive, media card, etc.).
- The HEADER ID should also be recorded, along with reference tone, on the audio recorder (if a separate audio recorder is being used for backup or double system audio).
- Note that the reference tone level recorded on the video will be set for the particular video system in question, and may be a different level than what is being used for the digital audio recorder.
- Make sure that your log sheets and verbal HEADER ID's denote any difference.

*Instead of the **ASST DIRECTOR** calling to: "Roll Sound"*

The initial command would be to:

"Roll Video!"

- Remember, since audio is being recorded onto the video camera, the video camera must be rolling BEFORE the sound mixer can verbally slate the scene & take.
- If a separate audio recorder is being used as well, then the Sound Mixer must put it into RECORD mode at this time.

The video **CAMERA OPERATOR** would verify that the video is recording by shouting out:

"Video is recording!"

The **ASST DIRECTOR** would then call out to the sound mixer:

"Sound"

The sound mixer would verbally announce the scene & take into the slate mic.

- Just as in film, the sound mixer should take a pause in order to record some room tone.
- If this is the first take of a new location or major setup, then the Mixer should try for "30 seconds of room tone".

After the pause for room tone, the **SOUND MIXER** would shout:

"Speed!"

Just as on a film shoot, the **CAMERA OPERATOR** would call out for stix,

"Mark it!"

The person holding the slate would echo back, **"Marker!"** and then close the clapsticks.

And the **DIRECTOR** calls for "Action!"

Summary: Film Shoot

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR:
"Put us on a light and a bell."
"Roll sound."

SOUND MIXER:
(announces)
"Scene & Take #, Speed!"

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR:
"Roll camera."

CAMERA OPERATOR:
"Mark it."

CLAPPER HOLDER:
"Marker."
closes stix

DIRECTOR:
"Action."

Summary: Video Shoot

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR:
"Quiet on the set. Put us on a light and a bell."
"Roll video."

CAMERA OPERATOR:
"Video is rolling."

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR:
"Sound."

SOUND MIXER:
"Scene & Take #, Speed!"

CAMERA OPERATOR:
"Mark it."

CLAPPER HOLDER:
"Marker."
closes stix

DIRECTOR:
"Action."

Talking to Your *Composer*

By Kristen Baum

I've met many first-time directors who fear the scoring process or are unfamiliar with it. "I don't know anything about music or how to talk about it," they say. This is the reason to hire a film composer. The music-making expertise is left to them and you get to be the expert about your story.

Develop a Common Language

At the heart of the director/composer relationship lies your common language. Talk about your story. About your intention. About the words that describe your story. Then go deeper. Talk about what those words mean to you. Shared language helps your composer understand your story, your story's intent and its musical needs. When your composer asks, "What do you mean when you say…" dive in and discuss how you feel about your story and how you want your audience to feel until you're both clear on what you're getting at. Don't be afraid to ask if music can help.

Communicate Intention

The way you speak with your cinematographer or your actor can be an effective way to speak with your composer. Speak in intention. This helps the composer understand what you want—or don't want—the music to do.

Be Bold About What You Want Music to Communicate

The entire process of filmmaking is about giving the audience information. We do this in many ways, including lighting, set design, costumes and music. Carry the idea of information-giving right through the scoring process. Your film's score can help the audience attach to characters, allowing audience members to gather and process information. Clearly communicating your intention for music is your goal for achieving the best score for your project.

Discuss This Topic in the Filmmakers Interactive Forums Online Moderated By Experts at
studentfilmmakers.com/forums

21 Ways

How To Make Scenes

Adding Obstacles, Conflicts & Traps

By Sherri Sheridan

Conflict determines audience interest and you need to come up with different ways to add tension to each scene. The way the character accomplishes each scene goal needs to have a sweet surprise that is unexpected. They do not just waltz into the room and grab the plot goal. Sneaky plans need to be made, and then everything should go wrong, as they are forced to think on their feet and improvise.

What types of scene conflicts might a character run into while trying to summit Mt. Shasta? Bears, avalanches, evil competitors, aliens, bigfoots, rock slides, ice falls, crazy hunters, other climbers making mistakes, freezing to death or slipping off steep drop. Notice how the setting determines the types of conflicts in many ways.

First think of the scene plot goal then list what obstacles could stop the character from accomplishing their scene goal in that location. You can add these ideas to each scene or throughout a short film to make it more interesting. Never do the same thing twice or it loses impact. Show the character accomplishing the goal at the end of the scene, or later in a surprising way, after failing at several attempts.

1 Inner. Psychological, intellectual or emotional problems. Flaws, fears, obsessions, pride, schizophrenia or jealousy. Protagonist overcome by debilitating fear like snakes in Indiana Jones. Stresses out so bad he starts to shake. Hears voices in her head. Look for new ideas around characters interacting with conflicts during scenes to see what might come up.

This character splits into three with one positive and one negative helping to navigate scene goals. See how instantly you have more ideas to play with for dialogue by putting the new characters opposite?

2 Personal. Character has a bad attitude and is fighting with everyone. Show character having conflicts with people, family, pets, neighbours, friends or coworkers.

3 Social. Show character getting kicked out of school, fired from a job, getting arrested, demonstrating or being chased by rival gang.

4 Spiritual. Character doing things based on spiritual guidance. Mystical forces. Strange accidents, games of chance, signs, coincidence, synchronicity, moral choices, ethical codes, supernatural forces, gods or paranormal world occurrences. Sacred statues may come alive and try to kill hero. Lightening bolts strike down character. Ghost tries to mess with him.

5 Environmental. River crossings, wars, jungle, mountains, possessed tree, gauntlet, security lasers, sharks, electrical cords in water, fire, armed border or protective case. Look at each scene location for original genre ideas.

6 Visual Ticking Clock. Adds tension through time pressures to each scene. Usually this is a bomb in the corner or time limit of some kind. What new form of countdown can we watch in your story? The viewer needs to see the numbers or gauge getting lower each scene.

Ticking Clock Ideas: Race starts, event begins, deadline, character is due to arrive, stars line up, meeting takes place, disaster about to strike, fuel running out, air low, door closing, window of opportunity gone, treasure melting or plot goal mute after a certain time. Setup the ticking clock first by saying "We better not run out of this thing or we will die." Two scenes later show important thing leaking. Three scenes more and everyone finds out they are almost out.

7 List Goal Oppositions. Who or what is trying to stop your protagonist from achieving their goals? If your character's goal in the scene is to walk across a room and get a statue, make a list of all the things that could prevent your hero from getting that thing. The more impossible the feats the character overcomes, the larger than life they become.

8 New information makes plot goal mute. Forces bigger plot goal to be established. Evil man dies, world ends, statue shatters.

9 New Information or discovery requires change of plans. Map under statue with scorpion in it, scans room and sees invisible security, gets a call on his cell phone warning him police are coming.

10 Character accomplishes first goal but sees bigger new one now. Character changes mind. Protagonist decides it is too hard, gets hurt, has to retreat or gets blackmailed to double cross employer.

11 Character On Selfless Quest. Have them be on a mission of some sort or have a virtuous motivation to accomplish scene goal. This makes the audience root for them more to succeed.

12 Even Higher Stakes. What happens if your character fails to achieve scene goal? In The Matrix if you die in the game world, you die in the real world. This is an irrevocable loss that raises the stakes considerably. Personal loss, impact on greater world, family loss, death of some kind (emotionally, spiritually, physically) all increases the level of conflict. The stakes can also be raised for what good things happen if they win to make it more interesting. Character bets everything on a gamble.

13 Unexpected event occurs. Earthquake, ambush, flood, accident, death, shot from unknown place or transportation breaks. What happens if your kidnapper bad guy, gets into a car accident with your hero tied up in the trunk, during the get away? A much more interesting and tense scene takes place then just driving to the next place.

What unexpected event could happen to character trying to make a ransom payoff in Golden Gate Park? They could get held up, trip into the water, earthquake, falling tree, Pit Bull dog attack, assassin dressed as jogger could chase them or an angry owl could attack them unprovoked. Do you see how the money drop scene just got a lot more interesting? Notice how these conflicts are different from the Mt. Shasta ones based on location.

14 Mistake or misunderstanding further complicates situation. Wrong statue, breaks object, sets off alarm, sprains ankle on waxed floor.

15 How could you combine these conflicts? A character could get struck by lightening every time she goes off his path. Show how she is being guided by an unseen force while also hearing crazy voices in his head.

These dog headed detectives in Prague are trying to figure out who stole all the bone prizes before the big dog show starts in two hours (ticking clock). What types of combinations of conflict could they run into? Scent trail of thief gets ruined by rain, several dog gangs in the area fighting, one of these detective dogs stole the bones but is pretending to be looking and keeps blocking progress by hiding clues, lead innocent dog has trouble getting along with other dogs while questioning them, theme is loyalty and all the dogs struggle with love of bones verses loyalty to dog show. List scene conflict ideas then put them in the order they might occur to make a riveting film.

16 Character Fails. Show plans going all wrong and they give up. Have you ever given up?

17 Unexpected character appears who either helps or hinders protagonist. Guard, pizza man, a flower delivery occurs with a plot note or an assassin.

18 Character outsmarts opponent or gets tricked and captured. Kills antagonist or outwits security guard.

19 Character suddenly changes mind. Says it is too hard, too scared, it is a fake or thinks they are out of time.

20 Characters act in surprising way. Acts strange. Threatens blackmail or changing loyalties. Owner shows up to make a deal, cop shows up, other thieves or guard wants to help.

21 Theme Controlling Scenes. Think also of how the invisible theme is controlling plot events in each scene. If desire leads to suffering you will show the characters suffering greatly after each big desire scene. In the movie African Queen, the characters go from experiencing spirituality in a church, to a direct one in nature fighting to stay alive. A glint of sunlight saves them from a gunshot. This shows the theme and controls the conflict.

From the new book "Filmmaking Script To Screen Step-By-Step" coming soon.

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Understanding Microphone Frequency Response

A microphone is a transducer that transforms sound pressure waves into electricity. Something that's typically not given much thought, is actually pretty neat when you stop to think about it. And in this process of changing sound pressure waves in the air into electrical current, very often what comes out of the microphone is different from what went in.

This difference can be described by a frequency response specification. In short, a microphone's frequency response tells you how it "colors" the sound it receives.

Therefore, the frequency response specification is a major piece of information that can help you determine the sound quality of a microphone and help you to determine in what situations and on which sound sources it will be best to use.

Some Basics About Sound First

It's a little difficult to have a discussion about frequency response without first understanding some basics. When we talk about frequency, we are referring to how many cycles a soundwave undergoes in a second. This measurement is called Hertz (Hz). The range of human hearing generally goes from 20 Hz to 20,000 Hz.

The frequency of a soundwave determines its perceived pitch. In general, low frequencies are heard as bass and high frequencies as treble. The audible frequency spectrum can be effectively broken down into segments that are commonly referred to as bass, low mids, mid range, upper mids, and highs.

Keep in mind though, there is no objective standard for these segmentations. You may find other sources that list different boundaries, or even more segments than what's in the chart above. But this chart gives a general idea and something to refer back to.

Loudness is the other factor to consider in frequency response. The whole question centers around how much louder or softer is a particular frequency once it passes through a microphone? Loudness is measured in decibels, or dB. Not To make things more complicated, but there are different kinds of dB too. For now, suffice it to say when we talk about microphones, dBV is often what is used. (That is dB with a reference of 1 volt = 0 decibels). And when we talk about the loudness of sound in air, we use dB SPL (for sound pressure level).

The Frequency Response Chart

A lot of times all you get to see as a frequency response specification is a simple statement like this: 20 Hz – 20 kHz. This is used as shorthand for "the microphone picks up the full frequency spectrum." However, this lacks detail.

The missing piece is the microphone's sensitivity to each frequency in that range, especially at the fringes. For more detail it's best to look at a chart. Here's an example of the frequency response of the SGM-250 shotgun microphone.
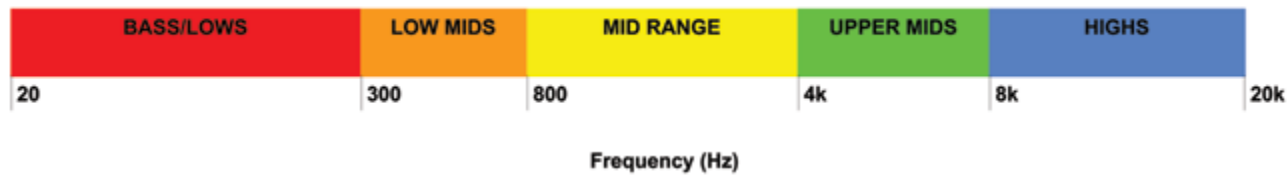
The chart above plots the microphone's output level across the frequency spectrum providing much more detail. For instance, there is a bump up in sensitivity in the upper mids and some of the highs. This is where sibilance in human speech is most pronounced. This frequency response is suited very well to accentuate the hard consonants in speech (sounds from T, S and CH for example), which would be quite handy if you're trying to pick up dialogue in a noisy environment.

You'll also notice that the response remains fairly flat throughout the bass, low mids and mid range. We can conclude from this that the microphone should produce a well-rounded sound that isn't too bass heavy or thin sounding.

To determine the full range of sensitivity variation we can take the difference between the highest and lowest points on the chart. These seem to be about -36 dBV and -44 dBV, respectively. This is a range of 8 dB. From this we could state the following: the frequency response is 20 Hz to 20 kHz, ±4 dB.
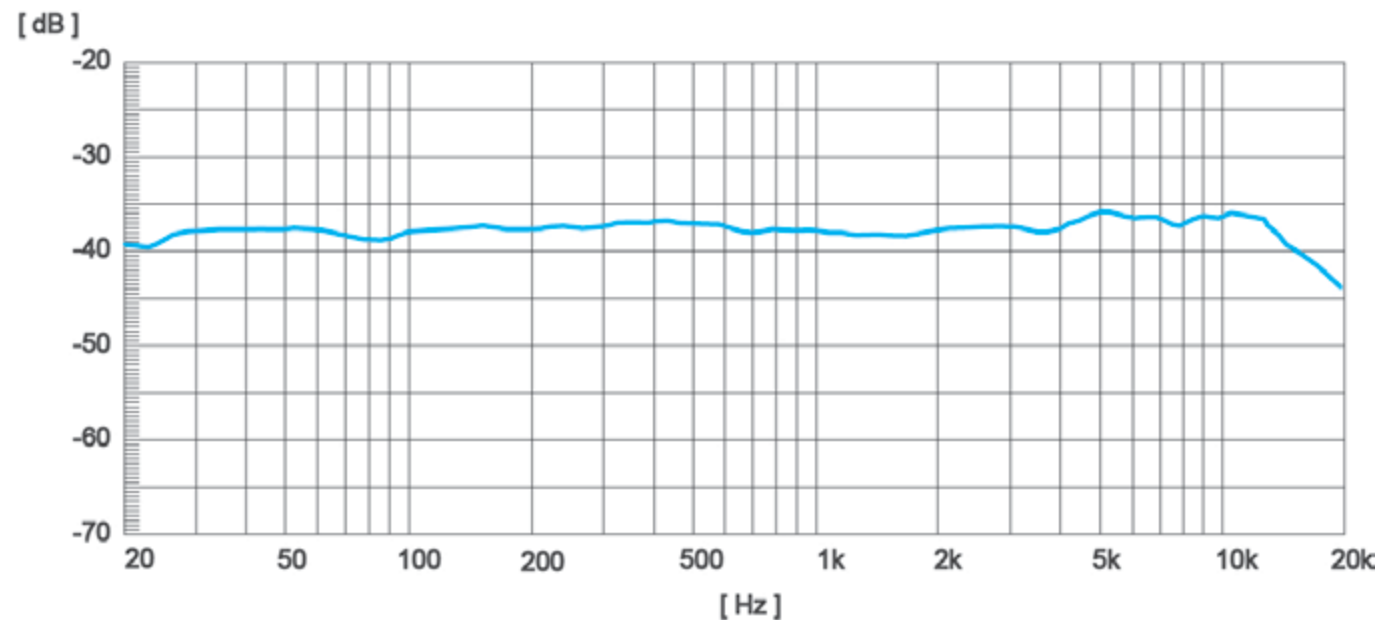
Wouldn't it be better for a microphone to pick up all frequencies equally?

Good question (glad we asked it). It depends. If your goal is to create a reference microphone that can accurately measure sound levels across all frequencies, then yes. There are indeed microphones that are created for this purpose. But when it comes to recording speech, different musical instruments, or various sounds out in the world, you're going to want a microphone that's suited for each situation.

For example, we just looked at the SGM-250 microphone which is designed for dialogue. It had a boost in the upper mids and highs to help bring out sibilance. Let's contrast that with an extreme example of a microphone for a kick drum on a drum set. For this we'd probably want something with a boost in the bass for extra thump, and in the mid-range to capture more attack from the beater. What we don't want is all the extra noise from the tom and snare drums and cymbals, so maybe we'll want to see a dip in the low mids and the high frequencies.

By having a microphone that is tailored for the situation, you're more likely to end up with the sound you're looking for without the need to adjust it afterward (often referred to as EQ'ing). This is why manufacturers try to sculpt a microphone's frequency response to compliment the sound source they are intended to record.

With an over 60 years history in electronics manufacturing, Azden creates audio products for filmmakers and video creators. Their product line includes shotgun microphones, camera-top video microphones, wireless systems and portable mixers. For more information, please visit azden.com.

HOW TO USE
360 VR Tools

By Al Caudullo

As you might already have heard, Adobe has its own 360 Immersive toolset with Skybox. But there are some other VR Tools sets that are quite good from BorisFX. Continuum, Known as The Swiss Army Knife of Plugins features the VR Unit.

Five very powerful VR Plugins in one unit.

And for those of you in Avid World, they bring 360 workflows to Avid Media Composer. Here is the full list of host that support Boris Continuum VR Init.

- **Adobe:** Creative Cloud, CS5.5- CC 2018 – After Effects and Premiere Pro
- **Avid:** Media Composer 6.5+
- **Blackmagic:** DaVinci Resolve 12.5+
- **Sony:** Vegas Pro 13
- **Magix:** Vegas Pro 14+
- **Foundry:** Nuke 9+
- **Apple:** FCP X & Motion 5

For graphics cards, it is recommended that you run the latest graphics card driver version supported by your host application. A graphics card with a minimum of 1GB of RAM is required; 2GB of RAM is recommended.

Let's take a look at how to use each one of these valuable VR Tools.

VR Insert

VR Insert allows users to easily insert a secondary source clip, title, logo, etc. into a 360/VR shot in true 360/VR space in either mono or stereo format in addition to providing a full array of controls to reorient the source in 360/VR space.

When we first place one of these elements into a 360 spherical space, the result is a 2D flat object in a spherical format. The sizing is just not right, and if you look at it in an HMD, it is obvious. By applying the VR Insert tool and selecting the appropriate settings.

There are a few things to keep in mind here.

First, when you apply the VR Insert, you need to select which layer the item is on

that you are applying the effect to.

Second, in the Insert Apply mode be sure to select Replace instead of normal. If not, you'll the corrected spherical tile and the original showing at the same time.

And lastly, in the Insert Anti-aliasing, I like to use "Best."

Using the Insert Group, you can control various aspects of the title position, scale, opacity, etc. of the clip that is being inserted into the filtered 360 VR shot.

Insert Latitude: Use this to control the position of the insert along the vertical axis.

Insert Longitude: Use this to control the position of the insert along the horizontal axis.

Insert Distance: Use this to control the position of the insert along the Z-axis.

Insert X Orientation: Use this to angle the insert along the X-axis (spin).

Insert Y Orientation: Use this to angle the insert along the Y-axis (tumble).

Insert Z Orientation: Use this to angle the insert along the Z axis (rotate).

Insert Order: Controls, whether the clip is inserted before or after the Reorient operations, are applied, thus controlling whether the inserted clip maintains its current position in relation to the filtered source as you apply Reorientation.

Before Reorient – The insert is composited before the Reorient, so the insert is affected by Reorientatioin.

After Reorient – The insert is composited after the Reorient, so the insert does not move in response to Reorientation.

Insert Scale: Use to control the transform scale of the insert.

Insert Opacity: Use to control the opacity of the insert.

Insert Convergence: Only available when the Stereo Input Format is

selected and is used to set the stereo convergence of the insert

Insert Apply Mode: Use to select whether the filter source is included in the render. There are two options:

Normal – will composite the selected insert over the filtered source.

Replace – will render the selected insert without the filtered source.

Insert Anti-aliasing: Contains options for smoothing the edges of the insert. Higher values will increase render times slightly.

None
Good
Best

Insert Repeat: Use to automatically clone the insert along multiple sides of the cube map.

Off
Four Sides
Front+Back
All Sides

Additionally, in the Reorient and Overlays modes, you can adjust the Orientation and the effect of the Overlay parameters.

Reorient Group

Contains parameters for reorienting the source clip in 360 VR space.

Enable Reorientation checkbox: This control offers a quick way to toggle between the orientation of the unfiltered original source clip and the reorientated source clip.

Tilt (X-axis): Reorients the shot along the X axis

Pan (Y-axis): Reorients the shot along the Y axis

Roll (Z axis): Reorients the shot along the Z axis

View Mode: Contains options for setting the current view mode of the filter. Be sure to set the View Mode back to Full before rendering. The options are:
- **Full –** displays the full reoriented source image in its original format
- **Preview –** displays the reoriented source image as if it were viewed through a headset
- **Left –** displays the left face of the reoriented source image as if it were viewed through a headset
- **Front –** displays the front face of the reoriented source image as

if it were viewed through a headset
• **Right –** displays the right face of the reoriented source image as if it were viewed through a headset
• **Back –** displays the back face of the reoriented source image as if it were viewed through a headset
• **Top –** displays the top face of the reoriented source image as if it were viewed through a headset
• **Bottom –** displays the bottom face of the reoriented source image as if it were viewed through a headset

Preview FOV – Use this to set the field of view (FOV) for the preview mode. Useful when you want to pull back from the shot. This feature is only available when the View Mode is set to Preview.

Preview Left-Right – Use this to shift the view along the horizontal axis, side to side. This feature is only available when the View Mode is set to Preview.

Preview Top-Bottom – Use this to shift the view along the vertical axis, up and down. This feature is only available when the View Mode is set to Preview.
Overlays Group

Contains parameters for displaying guides that can assist in setting up the effect. Note that these options should be disabled before rendering the effect or they will be burned into the output.

P.I.P. Mode: When enabled, generates a convenient picture-in-picture effect, which displays the unfiltered source clip in its original format superimposed on top of the filtered result.
• **Off –** PIP is disabled. This is the default state.
• **Top-left –** Displays the PIP in the top-left quadrant of the viewer.
• **Top-Right –** Displays the PIP in the top-right quadrant of the viewer.
• **Bottom-left –** Displays the PIP in the bottom-left quadrant of the viewer.
• **Bottom-Right –** Displays the PIP in the bottom-right quadrant of the viewer.
• **P.I.P Scale:** Use this to set the size of the PIP overlay.

Overlay Guides: When enabled, displays an outline of the 360 cube map onto which the source clip is mapped.

Overlay Faces: When enabled, overlays a different color for each face of the cube map.

Overlay Text: When enabled, overlays a text identifier for each face of the cube map.

Overlay Opacity: Use to control the opacity of the color overlay for each face of the cube map.

As you can see this is an immensely powerful effect.

Next up is the VR Flicker Fixer.

This is an indispensable tool for me. I live most of the time in Asia and 50HZ power land but shoot at 30 or 60fps. When working with native 50Hz lighting sources, the result is a very nasty flicker from the lights. VR Flicker Fixer reduces or eliminates flicker from the live action 360/VR source footage, providing 3 different methods for removing flicker. Apply the Frame Analysis method on clips with uniform flickering throughout the frame – e.g., a flicker that is caused by unintended shutter speed or aperture variations from frame to frame. Apply the two Temporal Smoothing methods on clips where flicker varies from pixel to pixel within the frame – e.g., a scene that is lit partly by natural light and partly by flickering artificial light.

The compare tool is especially helpful to see the before and after results right away. Also, you can use the Limit Sampling controls to isolate the analysis phase to just a sub-portion of the image. Furthermore, you can use the Mask and key controls to isolate non-flickering part of the clip and prevent the average flicker correction from being added.

VR Reorient

I could not get by without this tool, VR Reorient enables users to reorient a 360/VR shot in true 360/VR space in either mono or stereo format. This enables you to place the 360 cameras in the optimum position for exposure and composition for the shoot, then lets you optimize the shot in post to reorient for the subjects. The filter includes a set of intuitive overlay controls that map each section of the 360 source clip to its respective face in the 360 environments, emulating the view that a user would experience when consuming 360 media via a head-mounted display system like Oculus Rift.

Again, this control has a deep set of adjustments available to use, all grouped for easy access.

Source group

Contains options for specifying the VR source input to, and output from, the filter.

Input Format: Set the source format:
• Mono
• Stereo Top-Bottom
• Stereo Left-Right
• Stereo Bottom-Top
• Stereo Right-Left

Input Horizontal FOV: Set the input source field of view:
• 360 degrees
• 180 degrees

Output Format: Set the output format:
• Left Eye
• Right Eye
• Stereo Top-Bottom
• Stereo Left-Right
• Stereo Bottom-Top
• Stereo Right-Left

Reorient Group

Contains parameters for reorienting the source clip in 360 VR space.

Enable Reorientation checkbox: This control offers a quick way to toggle between the orientation of the unfiltered original source clip and the reorientated source clip.

Tilt (X-axis): Reorients the shot along the X axis

Pan (Y-axis): Reorients the shot along the Y axis

Roll (Z axis): Reorients the shot along the Z axis

View Mode: Contains options for setting the current view mode of the filter. Be sure to set the View Mode back to Full before rendering. The options are:
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• **Back –** displays the back face of the reoriented source image as if it were viewed through a headset
• **Top –** displays the top face of

How to Create a Budget Lighting Rig
With a Massive Spread and Enough Power to Boot

By Gabriel Garcia Rosa

My friend Danny Mirabal shared with me this affordable lightweight lighting kit for $198 that we use once in a while when we don't want to carry heavy equipment. I just wanted to share this affordable kit that can be used in any shoot, particularly in documentaries.

This is what you will need:
● 2 Aputure Amaran H198 LED lights.
● Triple Camera Flash Speedlite Mount Holder Cold Shoe Mount Flash Stand Bracket Adjustable Hot Shoe Adapter for Speedlight.
● Octagonal Speedlite, Studio Flash Softbox, Foldable Umbrella Reflector.
● Impact Umbrella Bracket

You hook up the Impact Umbrella Bracket to the light stand. Then put on the Triple Camera Flash Mount Holder then the Octo Softbox. Add the Aputure H198 lights and lastly put on the diffuser. This light is the equivalent of a 300 watt light. It will give you massive spread and enough power to boot. It's lightweight enough to move from location to location without any trouble. It is also quick enough to rig up, so you won't miss anything when shooting a documentary.

the reoriented source image as if it were viewed through a headset
• **Bottom –** displays the bottom face of the reoriented source image as if it were viewed through a headset

Preview FOV – Use this to set the field of view (FOV) for the preview mode. Useful when you want to pull back from the shot. This feature is only available when the View Mode is set to Preview.

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Overlays Group

Contains parameters for displaying guides that can assist in setting up the effect. Note that these options should be disabled before rendering the effect or they will be burned into the output.

P.I.P. Mode: When enabled, generates a convenient picture-in-picture effect, which displays the unfiltered source clip in its original format superimposed on top of the filtered result.

• **Off –** PIP is disabled. This is the default state.
• **Top-left –** Displays the PIP in the top-left quadrant of the viewer.
• **Top-Right –** Displays the PIP in the top-right quadrant of the viewer.
• **Bottom-left –** Displays the PIP in the bottom-left quadrant of the viewer.
• **Bottom-Right –** Displays the PIP in the bottom-right quadrant of the viewer.
• **P.I.P Scale:** Use this to set the size of the PIP overlay.

Overlay Guides: When enabled, displays an outline of the 360 cube map onto which the source clip is mapped.

Overlay Faces: When enabled, overlays a different color for each face of the cube map.

Overlay Text: When enabled, overlays a text identifier for each face of the cube map.

Overlay Opacity: Use to control the opacity of the color overlay for each face

of the cube map.

VR Blur
The VR Blur filter generates out-of-focus effects by emulating the look of shooting with soft focus or a lens diffusion filter. Designed from the ground up to operate in 360/VR with multiple edge wrap modes to process pixels that reside along the edge of the 360 seam. (Non-VR aware filters will generate a hard line across the seam and will not create a convincing look.) VR Blur includes independent controls for the amount of blur along the horizontal and vertical axis, making it easy to emulate fast camera pans.

There has been a good deal of discussion about how you can direct your audience to watch a certain area, VR Blur is a wonderful way accomplish this. For my example, I have gone to the extreme with the blur but to be effective, you may only need a small amount of VR Blur to accent the area that you want to highlight and draw your viewers attention.

VR Sharpen
VR Sharpen uses state-of-the-art image algorithms to enhance image detail while minimizing artifacts associated with traditional sharpening tools. The core sharpening algorithm performs up to four passes on Fine, Small, Medium, and Course pixel arrays, targeting physical details that have wider and wider pixel dimensions with each stage.

Pixels, pixels and more pixels. It's become the mantra of the day in 360 videos. But more pixels doesn't always mean quality pixels. Using VR Sharpen alter either subtly or dramatically as you see fit.

Once again, you the editor are given an almost infinite number of choices and controls for VR Sharpen. While you likely won't need these everytime, they are certainly nice to have. Here is the complete list of what you can adjust with this filter plugin.

Compare Mode
The BCC Compare Mode provides a convenient mechanism to compare the effect result with the original source layer. It provides several variations on basic split-screen views with the filtered clip placed next to the unedited original.

Source group
Contains options for specifying the VR source and destination format.

Input Format: Use this to set the source and destination format:
• Mono
• Stereo Top-Bottom
• Stereo Left-Right

Input Horizontal FOV: Use this to set the source and destination field of view:
• 360 degrees
• 180 degrees

Sharpen Strength – Use this to set the global sharpen amount

Fine Detail Radius – Controls the radius of the finest sharpening band.

Detail Tuning group
Contains options to fine-tune the level of sharpness which is being applied to the image.

Sharpen Master – Use this as a master controller for the Fine / Small / Medium / Sharp parameters

Sharpen Details Fine / Small / Medium / Large – Individual controls for the amount of sharpening across the fine, small, medium and large bands

Inter-band Radius Scale – Adjusts the radius of each band relative to the previous one. E.g. if Fine Radius is 2, and this is 1.5, then the 2nd band will be radius 3 (2 x 1.5) and so on.

Sharpen Threshold – The starting threshold for the image sharpening algorithm. Values below the threshold are ignored by the filter which can help reduce unwanted noise or grit in some images, although this control can also introduce discontinuities in other images and should be used sparingly.

Smoothing Control: Specifies whether the sharping is applied to all channels or just the luma channel.
• **Luma –** only the luma channel is sharpened.
• **Independent Channels –** each channel is sharpened individually.

Edge Mode: Only available when the Source -> Input Horizontal FOV pop-up is set to 180, this pop-up contains options for how blurred pixels are treated along the edge of the seam.
• Repeat
• Reflect
• Wrap (default)

There you have it. The new BCC VR Uint add some impressive tools for monoscopic and stereoscopic 360 videos. My favorite is definitely the VR Flicker Fixer, but all of them are great. While Adobe products feature the almost identical toolset with the Skybox group of tools, Avid Media Composer, DaVinci Resolve, Nuke, FCP and Vegas Pro 360 video creators will definitely want to get these VR Tools along with the must-have MochaVR.

Sound Shark

The 'Zoom Lens' of Audio

Compiled by Ladson Mark Jones

The Sound Shark creates a truly flexible recording tool – the same lavaliere microphone used on your subject's collar one moment and can be mounted inside the Sound Shark parabolic collector a few moments later to be used as a long distance microphone.

Sound Shark is Ideal for:
▶ Independent Filmmakers
▶ Production Companies
▶ Hybrid Photography
▶ GoPro Videographers
▶ Amateur Videographers
▶ Wedding Videographers
▶ Event Videographers

The Sound Shark Parabolic Microphone Will

Extend Your Range
The Sound Shark can record quality audio from long distances. Normal conversations can be recorded from up to 30 feet – usually more! A Sound Shark parabolic microphone 30 feet away from the source provides almost the same signal level as a standard microphone 5 feet from the same source.

Enhance the Equipment You Already Own
The Sound Shark parabolic microphone allows customers to use a standard lapel (lavaliere) microphone as a long distance microphone. Sound Shark's performance is comparable to, or better than, high-end shotgun microphones.

Eliminate Those Embarrassing Moments
With the Sound Shark parabolic microphone you will not need to thread mic cables through a subject's clothing or worry about the "ugly bulge."

Resist Wind Noise
The Sound Shark's parabolic dish shields the microphone from the wind. This feature makes the Sound Shark less susceptible to wind noise than a shotgun microphone. And, the available "dead cat" wind screen provides even more resistance to wind noise.

Eliminate the Boom
The Sound Shark parabolic microphone's long range eliminates the need for a boom, and the boom operator, in most instances. It's small size allows the unit to be mounted directly to a video camera using the hot shoe mount. The hot shoe adapter can also be removed which allows the Sound Shark to be mounted to a light stand, Magic Arm, or just about anything with a 1/4-20 thread.

Expand Your Wireless
The Sound Shark can be used wirelessly with a wireless lapel (lavaliere) microphone system such as a body pack. Using a wireless microphone lets you place the Sound Shark parabolic microphone nearly anywhere relative to your camera. The distance is limited only by your wireless system, not the microphone itself.

Sound Shark Design Features:

Proven Technology
The Sound Shark is based on the same technology that television networks have used to pick up the on-field sounds of professional sports for many years. Klover Products, our parent company, made the parabolic microphones used at the 2014 Super Bowl and the 2014 World Series.

Precision Manufacturing for Great Audio
The Sound Shark's dish is manufactured to very tight tolerances, only a few thousandths of an inch, to insure the best possible audio signal. The inexpensive parabolic dishes that you see offered on eBay or in magazines will not provide the quality audio that the Sound Shark provides.

Break-Away Joint Protects Your Equipment
The Sound Shark's design allows the frame and dish to break away from the mounting block, if a collision should occur, without damaging your video camera. After testing the break-away joint in various situations we recommend leaving two screws in the joint if you are mounting the Sound Shark to your camera. If you are mounting your Sound Shark on a stand or bracket, using all four screws will provide a bit more stability. Obviously we can not take responsiblity for damage to your camera that may occur if it is dropped or hits another object. The video below shows a sample of our testing.

Some Thoughts on
Shooting Reality

By David Appleby

Getting started...

Find a Subject

What are you going to point your camera at, and why? These are questions that all documentary filmmakers ask themselves. What are you interested in that others (assuming you are producing a piece for an audience) will want to watch? We're all aware of the usual answers: celebrities (movie stars, musicians and politicians), exotic places, freaks, wars… and that's fine, but as a student, it's helpful if your subject matter is close to home. In the 1930's, John Grierson (who coined the term "documentary") referred to these as "films of the doorstep" – stories and subjects that are close at hand but overlooked. The filmmaker has the ability to make people appreciate their community, town, city, and the people they share those with by "making the ordinary, extraordinary."

There are many filmmakers who find subject matter in their own families, touching on universal themes that resonate with audiences around the globe. But you don't have to stick to family and friends. Most people would be flattered to know you'd like to make a film about them. The camera and recorder have a way of opening doors, allowing you into locations you never otherwise would have gone or been allowed to go.

It's also true that things are said when a camera is running that may never otherwise be revealed. The camera can bring out (perhaps instigate) performances, remembrances and information that happen because the camera is running, and you get to be there as witness.

Approaches

There are many ways to approach shooting reality. In the early days of documentary one often had to get people to perform particular actions for the camera because the gear was too bulky to capture life on the go. The cameraman would have to constantly stop someone in mid action, move the camera to the next position, and have them start up again. What you'd end up with is a person acting like himself, which isn't the same thing as "being" himself. Even so, many of these films maintained a good deal of naturalism (see "Nanook" 1922, "Night Mail" 1936 and "On the Bowery" 1957).

In the 1960's, cameras got smaller, film got more sensitive and sound gear more portable. These innovations allowed filmmakers to observe their subjects in their natural environment in real time. The practitioners of "direct cinema" rarely asked questions or gave direction. They sought only access, believing that if they observed carefully over a long enough period of time, they would be able to capture "decisive moments," wherein the "truth" of the situation would be revealed.

The same equipment allowed other filmmakers to go out into the world and talk to people. French "cinema verite" largely consists of conversations between the filmmaker and her subjects. When done well, the interview can be as revealing as action, and "talking heads" can be as entertaining and informative as any other form of storytelling (see "Chronicle of a Summer," and "Le Joli Mai").

Narration

So many documentary films have used a "voice of God" narration that it can be hard to imagine one without one. These voices are often those of well known actors – people who can bring a quality vocal performance along with some added cache and credibility. Early documentaries that were filmed silently needed this voice, added in post-production, to convey necessary information. And as television grew out of radio broadcasting, it was natural for the voice to be given primacy. Narration continues to be used in the majority of documentaries and you shouldn't shy away from using it if the alternative is to not get your message across. Like any other writing, narration is an art and can be done terribly or well. If it attempts to convey too much information, or is redundant, it can be awful. Many "boring" documentaries can be blamed on bad narration. But the right words at the right time can be the difference between a sequence that works and one that doesn't.

Ideally, the narration should emerge naturally from the footage and the experience of making the film. To write narration beforehand, and film solely to illustrate what you have written, works in some situations but avoids the documentary experience – the process of exploration and interaction with the subject that the filmmaker goes through before expressing the result of that process through their film.

The Interview

If you are going to do a formal interview, you should pay attention to and practice the following :

Don't pre-interview. Very few people are as engaged – or engaging – when telling you a story for the second time. Talk to your subjects in generalities when you are discussing what you may be talking about but avoid falling into the interview before the camera is rolling. It's perfectly alright to say, "That's really interesting, but let's save that story for the interview."

Let the interviewee know what they're in for. Tell them the size of the crew, what equipment will be used, that some furniture may have to be rearranged to get the best shot, and how long the process will take. If your presence is an unpleasant surprise, it will negatively affect the result.

Prepare well. Know what you want the interview to accomplish but don't be afraid to follow other tangents that emerge from the conversation.

Have notes to remind you of things you want to cover but *NEVER LOOK AT THESE NOTES WHILE YOUR SUBJECT IS TALKING!* Eye contact is extremely important for any conversation.

Don't begin asking the next question as soon as your subject stops speaking. Maintaining eye contact and waiting can result in the continuation of a thought, providing fresh insights from the interviewee.

Questions should be asked in ways that discourage short replies. "Can you tell me how you were feeling at the time?" is better than "Were you scared?"

Don't be too quick to wrap the interview. It's very common for the subject to come out with their best material while the crew is striking and the pressure is off. When you think you're done, keep the crew and equipment ready so, if this happens, you can say, "That's terrific, let's roll and get that on tape!" If the subject remains seated at the end of the interview, keep the camera rolling. You never know.

Where should the interview take place? Obviously it should be in as quiet a place as possible and either relate to the subject matter or, at least, not distract from it.

It's always safer to light an interview than to use daylight. Sun and sky are not consistent, making editing difficult. This is especially true for long interviews.

Pick a chair for your subject that won't allow them to rock, pivot or slouch.

If possible, sit your subject away from a wall. Room behind them will allow shadows produced by your lights to fall unseen below the frame. Not having a close, flat background will also add some depth to the shot.

Keep the camera position as frontal as possible. Obviously, you can't be directly behind the interviewer but you want to be just far enough off axis to allow for a clean MS, and CU. (or an O/S MS and a clean MCU and CU.)

Remember that the lit, sit down interview is an artificial situation and may be uncomfortable for some subjects. If you find this to be the case, you can interview someone while they're engaged in a common activity. The fact that the subject is doing something familiar may make all the difference in their comfort level while speaking. This may present some audio problems but it can be worth it in terms of content and delivery.

Reaction Shots

If you're doing a piece in which the interviewer is also a "performer" (think 60 Minutes or Barbara Walters), then you will want shots of them asking questions, and reaction shots listening and responding non-vocally to answers. Having the interviewer on camera allows the audience to see who is asking the questions and the reaction shots can be used as cutaways to cover edits in the conversation. This can be accomplished by using two cameras, or by moving the camera after the interview and getting the needed shots of the interviewer repeating the questions and reacting (a very common ploy of journalists on single camera shoots).

If you want the interviewer to remain off camera, but want their questions in the show, be sure to mic both people – recording them on separate tracks. If you don't plan to use the questions in the final film, you may want to record them anyway just in case you get a great answer that requires the question for context. If you have only one mic, you can still use an occasional comment from "off camera" but the quality will be greatly reduced (actually, this can sometimes be a very effective device).

Coverage / Cutaways

There is no such thing as getting too much cutaway material related to your subject. Any images you can shoot, scan or download that can illustrate what your narrator or interviewees are saying will be invaluable in post-production.

Reenactments

Reenacting an event can be a very useful means of illustrating what occurred at a time when the camera wasn't present. The events portrayed may have occurred earlier that day, a year ago, or hundreds of years earlier. These portrayals will "stand in" for the original activity and will probably be perceived as such by the audience – as an exact account of what occurred. This puts the onus on you to get it right. Because memory and records may be faulty, and documentarians tend to have points of view that they bring to the "performance," many filmmakers frown on using reenactments, seeing them as contaminating the reality being conveyed.

Sound

You can mic the interviewee with a boom or a lav.

The boom provides the most natural sound. It can be held in place with a C-stand but needs to be repositioned by an operator if the subject leans forward or changes position in any way. As usual, bring the boom in from the fill side to avoid shadows in the shot.

A lav has a closer perspective than the directional mic on a boom but it rejects background noise better. While the lav can be hidden, you risk clothing rustling and they are so small now, and used so often, that audiences don't seem to mind them being in the shot.

Editing the Interview

If the interview is to be a primary source of information, contributing more than a line here or there, it needs to be cut so that information is conveyed smoothly and clearly. Doing that almost always entails multiple edits to cut out pauses – vocal (um, ah) or silent – and to keep points as concise as possible.

I suggest cutting the material for your ear first. Forget about the picture and edit it as if it was a radio interview. You're not changing the meaning of what was said. Rather, you are molding the material into an articulate, efficient track that delivers information and emotion efficiently, something that the interviewee did not have to do during your conversation.

Depending on the style and structure of your film, place the interviews where they are needed. Because they were cut for audio only, the image will be a long series of jump cuts that, in most cases, you will want to disguise with cut-away material – sometimes referred to as "B-roll." This material should feel natural to the subject being discussed, rather than looking like a band-aid to hide a jump cut. If this is done well, the information will be conveyed smoothly and no one will know that the interview has been altered. As long as the meaning of what was said remains the same you shouldn't have any ethical problems with this practice, but it's always good to remember that anything you manipulate, while creating something that proposes to be "real," is rife with ethical issues that you should be concerned about.

The majority of documentaries are hybrids of these earlier forms, covering action in a direct manner (contemporary or archival) and either intercutting interviews or using them as voiceovers.

As Dialogue Goes By

By David Landau

Casablanca. Enough said.

The true irony here is that the film was based on an un-produced play "Everyone Comes to Ricks", which is one of the earliest lines in the film, and was considered a B-movie at best. Many actors turned down the film and those that did it did it strictly under contract. 15 years ago a screenwriter played a trick on the industry and sent out the screenplay under the original title, only changing the character names and with his name as the screenwriter. The screenplay was turned down by all development executives except two. One replied, "This would have worked years ago, if it had stars like Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Berman". The other responded "It's been done before."

Why was one of the most beloved classical films rejected by so many Hollywood people? First, they felt it was too talky. The screenplay is heavy on talk. But talk sets up character, such as in this early scene with Rick in his bar

       YVONNE: Where were you last night?

       RICK: (his back to her) That's so long ago,
           I don't remember.

          A pause

       YVONNE: Will I see you tonight?

       RICK: (matter of factly) I never make plans
           that far ahead.

This is choice dialog, character driven, crammed with back story which establishes his character so quickly and precisely.

Second they felt it was slow paced and took too long to get started. After all, Rick isn't introduced until page 10. That's ten whole minutes into the film without the protagonist. That's a long set-up. But of course, the set up works, It establishes time, place and circumstance. And with the arrival of the Nazi General, the antagonist, the stories false antagonist Renault gets to display his own character, by telling the general not to worry about picking up the killers of the couriers.

       RENAULT: Oh, there's no hurry. Tonight he'll be at
          Rick's. Everyone comes to Rick's.

They also complained about the ending. The hero didn't get the girl at the end. What kind of ending was that? Nobel. Something most stories today seem to be lacking in.

Last they complained that the film needed to be opened up. It almost entirely took place in the café. Yes there were a few scenes at the police station and one at another café and one or two at a hotel - but Casablanca may lack visual expanse and diversity, but because of that, at least in part, it has incredible intimacy.

Who hasn't read Casablanca at least once? Many people in Hollywood it would seem. But what Casablanca helps to re-enforce is that if the dialog is truly motivated by the characters (The male characters best demonstrate this with Renault, Rick and Ugarte) it doesn't seem to matter how open the script or almost how long the scenes. If the audience is carried along with the story, if the characters talk moves the story forward and reveals more character - dialogue is a treasure almost forgotten in today's Hollywood. And this is something to be remembered, as time goes by.

X-Rite ColorChecker Video and i1 Filmmaker Kit
Get to Your Ideal Color Place Faster From Capture to Edit

Compiled By Ladson Mark Jones

ColorChecker Video charts make your workflow faster, more consistent and more color balanced. They allow everyone on your team – from producer to cinematographer to editor to colorist – to work with consistent color information. They save you time, from pre-production through production, and help you get to your creative look faster. Sounds pretty ideal, doesn't it?

Achieving the proper color balance and exposure for video can be challenging. F-stops in cameras don't always match. Ambient lighting conditions change. Multiple cameras and lenses have different looks, even if they are the same brand and model. All of this adds up to quality control challenges and increased workload in post-production for your colorist or editor. Here's what ColorChecker Video offers:

VIDEO COLOR TARGET. Speed up your color grading workflow by achieving ideal exposure and color balance, whether shooting with one camera or multiples. This color chart includes a series of chromatic color chips, skin tone chips, gray chips and illumination check chips. The layout is designed for ideal performance when used with vectorscopes and waveforms, whether on camera or in software.

Chromatic Colors: two rows of six chromatic color chips, both saturated and desaturated, specifically designed to align with the color axis on a vectorscope. These colors provide two levels of color information to more quickly achieve an ideal color balance.

Skin Tones: ranging from light to dark with subtle undertones to better reproduce accurate flesh tones. This row of chips is positioned on the outer edge of the target for easy alignment.

Large Gray Levels: four larger steps for even gray balance, including white, 40IRE gray, deep gray and high gloss black. These levels are ideal for determining proper exposure whether you use a waveform, zebras, or false colors. Use these levels to align the exposure and contrast of cameras you are matching and ensure that mid-tones are rendered accurately. These chips are positioned in the center of the test target for maximum exposure, even on a wide set.

Linear Grayscale: six color chips for achieving even gray balance. This row addresses highlight and shadow regions.

Illumination Check Chips: black and white chips at two corners to better assist in determining even illumination across the target.

WHITE BALANCE TARGET. *Starting with an accurate white balance ensures the colors you capture are true and provides a point of reference for post-shoot editing.* The White Balance target found on the reverse side is a spectrally flat target that provides a neutral reference point across mixed lighting conditions that you encounter during a video shoot. Since the target reflects light equally across the visible spectrum, creating an in-camera custom white balance can properly compensate for varying lighting.

With this chart, you'll be able to: eliminate color casts; improve the color preview on your camera's display so your histograms are more reliable; and make post production color correction and editing faster and easier by eliminating the need to neutralize each frame individually.

Why can't I use just any white object for white balancing? White balancing on a piece of paper or other gray element in the scene may seem like a simple workaround, but most objects are not actually neutral under all lighting conditions; and they're certainly not consistent. An inaccurate white balance will result in color casts, and a lack of consistency between lighting conditions, making color corrections extremely time consuming.

Shoot for Ideal – From Capture to Edit. The i1 Filmmaker Kit was created for discerning filmmakers looking for the highest level of on-screen color accuracy and the ability to achieve ideal color balance from shoot to edit. The i1 Filmmaker Kit consists of the **i1Display Pro** calibration device and software, which offers the perfect combination of unrivaled color precision, speed and control for the highest level of on-screen color accuracy, including mobile devices and projectors; and the **ColorChecker Passport Video**, a convenient pocket-sized target kit to quickly get you to a worry-free, color balanced and consistently neutral place with ideal camera exposure.

Benefits for your color workflow include professional control for on-screen color accuracy, whether in studio or in the field; match multiple cameras; obtain perfect exposure; achieve ideal color balance; reduce editing time; and get to your creative look faster.
Learn More: www.xritephoto.com/i1-filmmaker-kit; www.xritephoto.com/colorchecker-video

Interview with Daniel Le Blanc

Musician and award-winning music producer, composer and arranger, Daniel LeBlanc has based his career and life on the belief that success involves passion, drive, hard work, situational awareness and a willingness to embrace change while employing a 'never quit' attitude.

He scored and composed songs for TV and film projects that included Adventure Inc., Psi-Factor, My Scene-Masquerade Madness, Freakshow, Balance of Power, Outcast, Beyblade, Bakugan, Carebears, Rogers Sportsnet & Hockey Night in Canada. At the same time he was writing songs/producing records with talent such as Julian Austin, Dean McTaggart, Alanis Morisette, Harry Hess, Emilie-Claire Barlow, Rockie Lynne, Melanie Doane and Saskia Garel. LeBlanc has received gold and platinum awards and has been nominated for CCMA Record Producer of the Year three times.

As a solo artist, Leblanc has released 100 albums in various genres, which are all available on streaming services worldwide. In addition to the albums, he has created a massive production music library that has grown into one of the largest and most diverse independently owned catalogues on the planet. In 2017 LeBlanc established production music licensing company Sid Sonic while at the same time continuing to sub-license his library through other sources world-wide.

You've written theme songs and scored projects for television including animated TV shows, commercials and episodic television series. How do you start? What is your process? What are some challenges that come up and how do you solve them? What are some of your composing techniques?

Daniel Le Blanc: Okay, so the first thing that happens is getting hired. This usually happens through someone you've already worked for or pitching on a project. It's much harder getting the gig through pitching as you are often not in direct contact with the creative team and have to submit based on a fairly broad creative brief. Not to mention going up against a significant amount of composers. At this point you have some choices;

How close do you stick to the brief?

Daniel Le Blanc: I usually find that it varies depending on who the client is. I think you have to go with your strengths and try not to mimic or create something that is not in your wheelhouse. Often it is luck of the draw and you either hit it or you don't. There are tons of talented composers and it will come down to a subjective feeling from the people in charge of making the choice.

How many options do you submit?

Daniel Le Blanc: I usually try and submit a couple of things. One version that is close to the brief and one that I would create without a brief.

Once I've been hired, I move on to the executing phase. Here, I try to do my best to deliver what the producer is looking for. Composers sometimes forget that they are part of the project and not the feature. I want the client to be happy. I think language is very important. I try to understand what the producer means when he's describing what he/she wants. Two people can say the exact same sentence and mean something completely different. Keeping the team in the loop throughout is also vital in my experience. Make everyone feel like they're part of the process. This will keep the surprises to a minimum later on.

Challenges come up when someone comes in late to the party and needs to throw their opinion around. This usually ends up with change for the sake of change and very late nights. Not much you can do but accept that this is a big part of being a supplier to a project.

My techniques are different depending on the project and style of music. For orchestral scoring, I really focus on melodies first. The better the melody, the easier it is to orchestrate in numerous ways without sounding repetitive. For more modern scoring, it's really a mixed bag. I sometimes start with grooves and then build from there. I also spend time building a pallet of sounds that will create a musical identity for the project before I begin.

If you can share a few pointers with filmmakers and creatives around the world, what would you say are your Top 3 Tips on Producing Music for TV and Film?

Daniel Le Blanc: My top tips for producing/composing music for TV & Film.

1. Be a good collaborator. Everyone wants the project to be great. Check your ego at the door and work for the greater good of the project.

2. Don't be afraid to think outside the box creatively. Add instrumentation that is unique and will give the score an identity.

3. Understand that the composer's role is to support and enhance what is on screen. Work around dialogue and allow room for sound effects. Too often composers will not leave enough room for other elements and then end up being mixed lower in the final version to the point where the score doesn't work and is just distracting.

Has technology and workflow in relation to Music and TV/Film changed over the years? If so, how?

Daniel Le Blanc: I'd say yes. In one way, it has allowed budgets to come down and very good work can be produced at home studios. I still think it comes down to a good idea though. A good melody, a good song. It's much easier to make a track sound good because of technology, but a crappy song is still a crappy song.

There are huge benefits for filmmakers and creatives, as well as for musicians and composers, in relation to working with stock music. These benefits range from technology aspects, workflow, speed and meeting deadlines, saving costs, and more. Can you tell us more about this from your perspective and the benefits of working with stock music?

Daniel Le Blanc: As a composer I'm of two minds with regard to this. I think stock music has come a long way over that last 5 years. You can now find amazing music in every genre. This means you can edit your project to tracks that you can license for just a few dollars each. No more temp tracks that you can't use that your client will fall in love with. The composer you hire often can't measure up to this. Obviously, stock music is much cheaper than hiring a composer. You are also committed to one person's skills and that can sometimes be problematic if the composer isn't very diverse.

A good composer however, can give your project a cohesive identity that stock music cannot. I'd say a combination of the two can be a perfect marriage.

What would you say are your Top 3 Tips on Working with Stock Music?

Daniel Le Blanc: 1. Don't go with the safe option. There is so much music available that you can find interesting options to make your project feel like you're using original music.

2. Download preview versions of music in different genres and put them up against your visuals or voice over before you decide. It's amazing how music changes things. You'll find that sometimes an oddball track that you didn't like on its own gives your project new and interesting personality and helps it to stand out.

3. Make sure the music works with the voice over and sound effects. Music with strong (and loud) melody lines will often get in the way and become distracting.

What sets Sid Sonic apart from other stock music websites and licensing companies?

Daniel Le Blanc: 'm a little biased, but here goes. We are the only major production music company that owns 100% of its content. This includes masters and publishing and means absolutely no issues with copyright. The ability to license via individual tracks or unlimited subscriptions gives our clients the utmost flexibility and is also unique to us. I'd also like to mention our search engine. We include genre, tempo, description and versions for every track.

www.sidsonic.com

Conversation with *LaCie's* Clement Barberis and Connie Wai
HD, 4K, 6K, 8K and Beyond Workflow *Interview by Jody Michelle Solis*

How has workflow and storage changed over the years?

Clement Barberis, LaCie Marketing Manager: Not so long ago, it was difficult and very expensive to have access to computing power, therefore workflow to most Creative was limited to setup they could afford.

So computer equipment was the main bottleneck to workflow and resolution being worked on. With the launch of the Thunderbolt technology in 2011, it suddenly became affordable to have access to real computer power (faster than fiber channel), which was also a robust technology (more robust than fiber channel) and as simple as being plug and play (as opposition with fiber channel). This broke a lot of workflow boundaries, and opened access to HD, 4K, 6K, 8K and beyond workflow. On top of that, platform like Vimeo and Youtube really improved their bandwidth to the point that today it is easy, free to share your workflow in high definition (up to 4K). Consequently, sharing one's work moved from being extremely elitist to become extremely accessible. To the point that today, anyone has a chance to Create, Share and being Recognized for one's work. This explosion in potential content creators translated into an explosion in storage needs, moving from what used to be around 1TB to be today up to 10TB for one project.

How does LaCie determine and address the needs of filmmakers, creatives, and people who work in different motion picture formats?

Clement Barberis, LaCie Marketing Manager: LaCie has closed to 30 years experience of serving the content creators communities. We've learned with them as technologies evolved. Being able to always offer best-in-class and cutting edge technologies with best performance and reliability and listening to our audience is driving to alway rethink our product portfolio to focus on the solving everyone's biggest challenges. Our job is to limit as much as possible boundaries to creativity. We believe that technology should not a be a show stopper, and instead should supporting the largest and biggest porject, at every level, whether you work for a multinational production or you are a single independent filmmaker. We offer solutions made for big ideas.

Can you share with us some of the key features and benefits of the LaCie DJI Copilot?

Connie Wai, DJI Copilot Marketing Manager: Creative professionals know that backing up their work as soon as possible is critical. As a result, backup happens as close to the point of capture in the creative workflow as one can manage. The LaCie DJI Copilot is designed to address this need by allowing professionals to backup in-field, on the set without needing a computer.

The LaCie DJI Copilot allows you to ingest content directly from SD cards through its integrated SD card reader so you can hike to a remote location to capture stunning shots and back them all up on the spot without having to bring a laptop. The direct connection provides you with the necessary speed for large volume transfers and the computer-less ingestion lightens their load. You can also connect other USB devices like a USB card reader to ingest directly from other types of memory cards such as CF cards. The embedded USB Hub means that you can even ingest from other hard drives as well as cameras and drones.

The Copilot status screen displays critical information such as how your backup is progressing, the amount of capacity left, and battery status keeping you well-informed of key information while additional control can be accessed via the Copilot BOSS app.

With the Copilot BOSS app and included dedicated cable, you can connect your iOS or Android devices to play back video up to 4K resolution and view uncompressed RAW images in full resolution with no lag time so that you can preview your shots on the go. You can also sort and organize, and rename your files with the app as well. This means that you can organize your files anywhere, any time without having to pull out a laptop or get back to your editing station.

We've really worked hard to consider the feedback from our Creative Professionals and make this a valuable addition to their equipment lists. The LaCie DJI Copilot can be used as a backup battery to charge your USB rechargeable devices if you find yourself in a power pinch--and let's face it, who hasn't had that experience even with just your own cel phone at some point--and it's also designed for rough handling. It's both drop resistant and IP54 dust and water resistant. You can be out on location where it's rugged, remote, and rainy. The last thing you want to do is pull out a laptop to backup your footage. And you don't have to anymore. All you have to do is pull out your LaCie DJI Copilot. It will recognize your card or device, hit the button, and it will back up for you.

What makes the LaCie DJI Copilot stand out from its competitors?

Connie Wai, DJI Copilot Marketing Manager: The auto detect and easy-to-use one-touch button allows you to begin ingesting data in under 20 seconds which is pretty notable. The plug-and-play connection to mobile devices combined the Copilot BOSS app provide quick and easy viewing of 4k video and RAW files on your smartphone and tablet. Professionals working with large, high-resolution files will appreciate the speed that comes with the direct connection and with the Copilot BOSS app, you are truly viewing the file as it is--there's not interpolation.

Independent Filmmakers Collaborate

On Vampire Musical Series

By Scott Essman

Based in New York City, the new vampire-slaying musical series *The Hunted: Encore* is the result of a dynamic interaction among many key creative cast and crewmembers. Now airing on their website, www.thehuntedencore.com, plus other platforms, the eight episodes of the show, a spin-off of the long running web series, *The Hunted*, represent season two of a hybrid project which posits onscreen action with Broadway-style musical compositions.

The series' star, Megan Dorn-Bagala, has a BFA in Musical Theatre from The Boston Conservatory and has been in Actor's Equity Association for three years. "Having shot season one," she said of *The Hunted: Encore*, for which she also co-wrote an episode, "I had a good idea of who the character was and where she was coming from. We had a pre-shoot read through and on set camera rehearsals. We did rehearse all fight sequences extensively prior to shooting, as well as blocking it in the space, and for camera."

Needless to say, Dorn-Bagala, a natural performer, most enjoys the shooting process. "I love being on set," she conveyed. "There is something so amazing about the energy of a group of people working toward a common goal; the focus and drive is unparalleled—I love the camaraderie. [Director] Crystal Arnette is brilliant—Crystal's aesthetic is so clear, that she is able to communicate what she is looking for very quickly. When you're not matching her aesthetic, she'll let you know."

In unison is Dorn-Bagala's husband, musical director of *The Hunted: Encore* Marcus Thorne Bagala, who has been writing music for National Public Radio's acclaimed radio show and podcast *This American Life* for just shy of two years and was the synth designer for the first two seasons of Showtime's *The Affair*. "I studied film scoring and songwriting at the Berklee College Of Music," he said. "My songwriting major had a concentration in musical theater writing."

When producer, co-writer, editor, and performer Ned Donovan decided to bring in Preston Max Allen to write the majority of the songs for season two of *The Hunted: Encore*, Bagala's primary tasks including finding ways to take the songs and "sprinkle just enough analog 80s synth vibe to bring them even more into the world" of the show. "A modern action project has specific scoring needs," he said, pointing to 'big drums' and musical drama. "We looked for places we could use that vintage 80s horror feel to enhance and play with the heightened nature of the show. We also had much more cinematic visual language this season, thanks to Crystal [Arnette]. Once we had established the sound of the show for the music team, we then found places we strategically break that, and, in doing so, enhance the humorous moments."

For Bagala, his chief duties on *The Hunted: Encore* took place before the commencement of principal photography. "Due to the nature of shooting a musical, the songs were 85% locked before we shot anything," he said. "When the picture was finally passed back to the music team, we ended up cleaning things up and 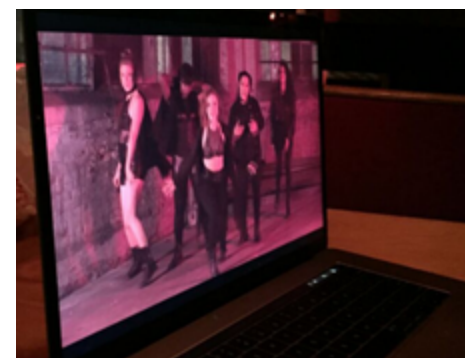finding little places here and there that we could enhance the picture with some extra orchestration. All the music was recorded in my home studio in Astoria, New York, [and] most of the instruments were played by either me or Will Melones."

In the end, Bagala noted that the idea of what a modern musical can be and sound like is drastically expanding. "When you can look at what's on Broadway now and see shows like *Hello, Dolly* next to *Hamilton* or *Waitress*," he related, "I don't think you can say that 'musical theatre' is a genre so much as a form of storytelling — I definitely think that's how we approached *The Hunted*."

Entirely self-taught filmmaker Crystal Arnette studied at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts in their School of Drama before making her own films with Canon's DSLR series of cameras. Once she moved to New York City, Arnette continued to work as an actor on all types of sets, absorbing all of the knowledge she could. Soon, her own filmmaking career beckoned, which now has included creating hundreds of videos, many of which advertise off-Broadway ventures.

On her sets, including *The Hunted: Encore*, you will never find her in a trailer between set-ups. "I'm usually in video village, watching setups, watching takes, seeing what works and what doesn't," she stated. "Through my projects over the past six years, I have refined my vision and taught myself every aspect of the filmmaking process."

For season two of *The Hunted: Encore*, Arnette came on board just four days before principal photography began. "While I did not have a hand in sculpting the scripts, most of casting, or location decisions," she revealed, "I had full command over the look of each song and episode from filming to post-production. In post-production, since I am also a professional editor, I worked closely with Ned [Donovan] on the edits of every episode and did some finishing editing on two of the episodes."

Arnette explained that in the narrative parameters of *The Hunted: Encore*, an actual filmmaker is following Megan Dorn-Bagala and the which also utilizing a Canon 7D & Mark III used for many of the 'vlogs' and several additional angles for another specific sequence. For handheld scenes, Arnette and cinematographer Garret Kafchinski implemented a Zeiss zoom lens, while, for musical sequences, they often switched to using Zeiss prime lenses. "We primarily stayed on the 35mm, with notable exceptions on the [song] "How I Saved The Day" which uses the 18mm for its exaggerated wide-angle, and the verses of "In The End" which were on the 50mm to add shallower depth to the slow-motion portions," Arnette detailed.

Co-star and visual effects supervisor Bob Chapin sought to get involved in production of *The Hunted: Encore*'s various scenes as soon as he could to inform key crewmembers which desired effects were going to be relatively easy and which other ones were going to take considerable time and money. "Most often, even when I'm working on TV and feature films, what you see is what you get, and you often have to rebuild a shot from scratch," Chapin noted. "Fortunately I was on set for *Encore*, and I could tell the show's director that it was entirely possible to hit someone with a car or jump 40 feet down from the rafters. I was also able to add fangs in several shots which saved precious time on set."

Though he is a veteran of major productions, on *The Hunted: Encore*, Chapin aimed to use as a few effects as possible to minimize time required in post-production to create believable yet economical effects. "I think we ended up with about dozen or so shots for season two," he explained. "Luckily I had time off from my day job, so I was able to breeze through it in a few weeks. I typically use Maya and Nuke at work, but I have various other tools I use at home such as Mocha, After Effects, Premiere — whatever gets the job done!"

Noteworthy is that Chapin began work on the parent show, *The Hunted*, in the days of "video the size of a postage stamp that took 20 minutes to download on a dialup 56K modem." Now, over 15 years later, Chapin has watched this show expand in every sense of that word. "It's gotten exponentially easier to shoot content thanks to cameras, editing systems, software and hardware, but creating a project that can sustain itself has always been a challenge," he said. "Fortunately, we have a simple no-budget concept that's fairly easy for anyone to shoot. And thanks to a continuous stream of user content and our online fan base, The Hunted is still kickin.'"

Creative hyphenate Ned Donovan's Charging Moose Media has received positive feedback on all of its projects to date, *The Hunted: Encore* being no exception. "Everything just continues to get better and better," he said. "We have two albums, a podcast, and *The Hunted*. I was the stunt coordinator on a feature film that is now on Netflix and other video on-demand services, a zombie romantic comedy called Night of the Living Deb."

Also a self-taught filmmaker, Donovan has training in fight choreography and stunt work and has served in that capacity on many stage plays and student films. With a BFA in musical theater from Ithaca College, Donovan brought numerous skills to *The Hunted: Encore*. "I am the show runner and executive producer for the series," he said. "I wrote the first draft of the script for season one in May 2016, and we filmed it in July. I was also in charge of casting, location scouting, as well as stunt coordinating, along with Andrew Mayer."

In concert with Marcus Bagala, Donovan brought in the series' composers and worked with them to write and produce the songs for use in *The Hunted: Encore*'s first season. Additionally, for postproduction on season two, which was spread out between New York City, Maine and Los Angeles, Donovan handled all the editing and color grading, skills which he learned on his own. "I am intricately involved in every single aspect of the show, and I know it like the back of my hand," Donovan remarked. "For me, the hardest part is not being able to fully invest 100% of my attention into being an actor because I'm making sure we get everything we need for postproduction, ensuring that food is available for everyone, making sure everyone is safe with their fights, and prepping shots, managing the locations, getting playback up and running for the songs."

To finalize the eight episodes for season two of the show, Donovan edited in Final Cut Pro X, used ColorFinale to grade the footage, and utilized NeatVideo to clean up the artifacting in lower light situations. Photoshop was used to make the vlog frames, and Apple's Compressor application was used for final exports. "The show is made to be fun, compelling, and funny, while still having interesting characters and worthwhile plot lines," Donovan commented. "We're making a product that we feel is wholly unique in the landscape of web media, but it is a challenge still to be heard amongst the other web shows jockeying for position. In our minds, all you can control is quality, and we feel our show has that, so now, it's about getting it in front of people, and letting them decide for themselves."

Note: The official soundtrack to *The Hunted: Encore* will be available on Bandcamp with availability on iTunes, Apple Music and Spotify to follow soon thereafter.

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Tell us about your current projects.

Roman Falkenstein: I've just finished a short drama, "En Garde!" directed by local, talented director Daniel Yoffe. It's a story of a young fencer on his way to manhood, wrestling with fears and a feeling of guilt, after the loss of an important adult.

Film music is not my only passion. I compose chamber music as well, and there is a piano ensemble project I'm involved at the moment.

Can you share with us one of your projects, an achievement or event that you feel has impacted your work and career in a significant way?

Roman Falkenstein: I think, that was my trip to Film Fest Ghent to a World Soundtrack Awards 2015 ceremony where I met and communicated with many Hollywood film composers - Alan Silvestri, Patrick Doyle, Stephen Warbeck, Bruno Coulais and other great people. There was a Young Film Composers Competition, and luckily, I was among three finalists. We were nominated for the SABAM Award for Best Young Composer and invited to Ghent. Brussels Philharmonic performed the works of the finalists. I didn't win but the experience and emotions were on the fantastic level!

Can you share with us your thoughts on film composing, music, or the film industry in Latvia?

Roman Falkenstein: Unfortunately, we don't have big production companies and many independent filmmakers in Latvia. That's why as a film composer, mostly I work with the directors from abroad. Thanks to modern technologies there is no need to travel further than my studio. We communicate with the directors and producers via skype, emails and so on.

And I found out that this is an amazing experience to explore different personalities and get to know wonderful people. I have a wide geography of connections - USA, UK, Russia, Israel, Scandinavian and Baltic states.

Can you share with us a film composing or music-related "Challenge and Solution"

Roman Falkenstein: Every director wants to have a special soundtrack, the unique sound that fits to his film perfectly. So, any time I start scoring a new film I have a challenge how to find a fresh palette. I try to use rare instruments like bass and alto flutes, bass clarinet, contra-bassoon, celesta. Not from the sample libraries but performed by live musicians - only then there is a sense.

I studied in the Department of Percussion Instruments in the Music Academy in Riga, so drums and percussion are close to me. In my recent projects, such as "My Mother is a Woman" by Anastasia Safronova or "Whining Low" by Sergio Zaciu, you can hear kalimbas, tank drums and even glass xylophone, which is made in Latvia by local craftsmen.

Can you describe your process for composing for film/video/media?

Roman Falkenstein: You can say I am old-fashioned, but on the first stage, I compose with pen and paper. Usually, I try to hear in my head how it sounds, the current cue I am working on.

Of course, times when composer just plays a piano, sketches to director, seems a Stone Age today. I prepare audio mock-ups for the whole score, and when director and producer accept everything, we re-record all the instruments with live musicians at the studio.

I use sample libraries only for mock-ups. If you want to sound fresh and with a good feeling, drive and mood, you need to have real performers who know what they are playing, what is this film about, and invest their own soul into your music.

Luckily, I am working with a wonderful musicians and very talented sound engineer, Sergey Laletin, who knows how to make the recording sound perfect.

You can argue that it is more expensive. I agree, but every time we compare mock-ups with re-recorded music, we find that it was worth doing.

If you could share your Top 3 Tips related to film composing or working with film projects what would they be?

Roman Falkenstein: Oh, I'm not a famous Oscar composer to give such an advice. However, I can share my point of view about some stuff.

Firstly, I try not to use sample instruments in the final music cut. The difference between sample music and real performers is like the difference between Art and Craft.

Another important thing is education. There is an aphorism I like: "He learned from his own mistakes but those where more successful who learned from books." Knowledge of Classical music, theory, harmony orchestration and all these other tools are crucial if you want to grow up as a composer. Also, film music basics are important - I am very thankful to Jack Freeman, my instructor from Berkley-online for giving me this.

And finally, don't score films that don't bring anything good to the world. Of course, money is important, but art is always in the first place for me.

Writers:
Be a Self-Starter but Seek Advice

By Neil Landau

A paradox exists in the writers' room. You need to absorb information and find your own way through observing how other people behave in the room, reading draft after draft to see how they evolve and come up from that early writer's draft through network notes and the process of refinement. If you get an opportunity to go on a location scout or to sit in on a music spotting, color correction or editing session, take advantage of it. Just sit there and absorb.

You also have to be smart, politically savvy and diplomatic enough to know when to keep your mouth shut and when to open it. You need to learn not only how to write for a given show, but also how to read a room. One option is to say, "I take it that I'm here to observe and learn. If you'd like me to participate, please let me know. Tell me what's appropriate." That's a good question to ask on staff, because if you just assume things, you can alienate people and commit career suicide without even being aware that you've done anything wrong. Ideally, mentorship should naturally emerge in a writers' room from a hierarchy. It behooves them and the show for the more seasoned people to take the new writers under their wings and mentor and explain things to them. On some shows, in some writers' rooms, that does happen. But often people have their own scripts to write, their own problems, personal lives and multiple projects. You're not necessarily a responsibility they want. They want you to come in, be low maintenance, fend for yourself, not get in the way and be a professional. That means being a proactive yet humble listener and learner.

An edited excerpt from Neil Landau's latest book, "TV Writing on Demand: Creating Great Content in the Digital Age" (Focal Press, 2018), amazon.com/TV-Writing-Demand-Creating-Content/dp/1138705713

COMPOSER:
Finding the Emotional Ark of Each Scene

By Steve Myers

Every time a director approaches me for original music, I get a little nervous. Whether it will be a pre-score (music before any picture is shot) or a post-score (music after the picture is locked), the first round of conversation either revolves around something they have heard and might think will work, or something they have not heard…yet. If it's the former, I know that the end product cannot sound like something that already exists. If it's the latter, how do I get in the director's head and join in the vision for the project so I can extract a sense of the musical direction? I prefer to pursue both directions at the same time.

I'll encourage the director to bring in samples of anything, and I mean anything: music photographs, sound effects, YouTube clips, old scratchy slides, an interesting-shaped piece of wood that washed up on shore - anything to start a conversation. I will also bring something/anything into the meeting. Once there is a small seed of an idea, I can record something. We'll listen and either throw it out or save it for another scene. Either way, the process has started.

Next, I'll keep track of what the director likes and dislikes. Eventually I will have some kind of musical pallet to start with. After I've produced a few scratch tracks (with digital sampling instruments), we can line them up with scenes, and I can start to get an overall vision of what the director is thinking and the emotional arc of each scene. There will still be give and take and many revisions, but that is the process.

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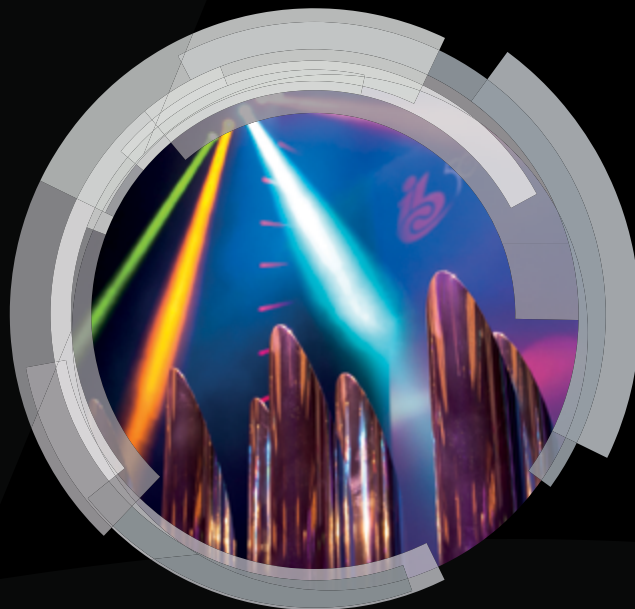
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