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PANORAMA

OF AMATEUR FILM & VIDEO

SUR LE FILM ET VIDEO AMATEUR



The Publication of the SOCIETY of CANADIAN CINE AMATEURS / SOCIETE DES CINE AMATEURS CANADIENS (Inc.1969)

Cover Photo

Tony Bifano on the job shooting a Wedding Video sequence. Tony "tells all" in his story "WEDDINGS" on Page 10.

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If you would like to submit an article that would be of interest to other members send them to:

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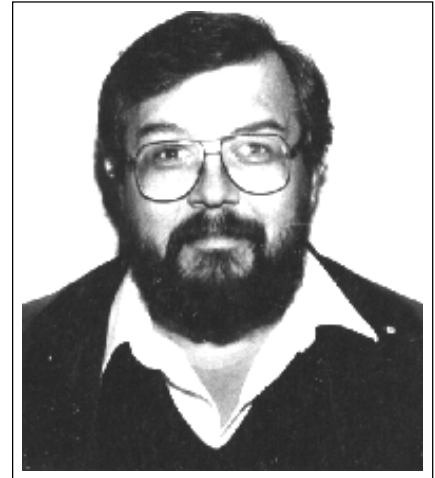
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Member, n.

*Distinct part of a complex structure...
A person belonging to a group, society
or organization.*

The Start

I have, over the past couple of months, met two people who work in the video business... but, it appears, are not part of the "fun of video" world. Both of these gentlemen are employed in the making of video productions as a livelihood, have been for some years, and appear to make a good living from it. To both of these men, I asked the question, "Do you shoot for your own enjoyment... for yourself... for fun"?

One had a look of surprise on his face, kind of 'I never considered that as a possibility' while the others body language said 'you must be joking'. Why was I not surprised? How many times have I seen this response before? What is the meaning of life?

Am I the odd one out here... (and you do not need to answer that question with a smirk, lizardbreath... I know what you are thinking) ...am I the only person who makes a living (ha-ha) from producing industrial videos and shoots non-paying videos, just because I enjoy it? Do you know of others who act like this?

Why is there such a division between those who work in television, but don't seem to enjoy the act of producing a video for fun and those who make a living by some other method, but love to get the camera out, shooting and editing for fun?

Does working in the moving images industry make one jaded about getting personal pleasure out of the medium?

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CLUB NEWS

by Wallace Robertson

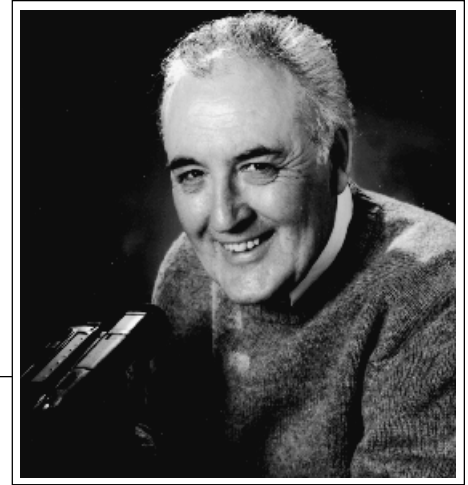


Photo "By Ross"

Each morning I stagger down the hall to the bathroom, flick on the light and gaze into the mirror. First, I'm shocked, then surprised! How did this total stranger get into my bathroom? There in front of me, staring back, with bleary eyes, is an older man with thinning hair and pale skin. The only thing I recognize about him is the pair of Cuban-made, Wal-Mart pyjamas. Is this really me? Where I once saw the handsome reflection of a young Rock Hudson or a fresh faced James Dean, now I only see Ed Crankshaft, that critically cantankerous curmudgeon from the comics.

There is not much I can do about looking like Crankshaft, but there is certainly something that I can do about becoming single minded and critical. Which in a round about way brings me to my point. If I may digress?

Last October I attended the Big 4 Convention in Victoria. There were a great number of wonderful films shown, including a few from younger producers. One or two of these drew strong criticism from some older viewers who felt they were too violent and/or too vulgar. I should make it clear, I'm certainly not in favour of coarse language, gratuitous sex or violence in movies, but I do believe we should allow our young people some latitude in their approach to film making. When viewing films we should remember that young people are trying to find their way, the same as we did at their age. Look past the content of the film and judge on the quality of the production. Ask, was it a good story, well told? Did it have good acting, sound, colour, continuity, camera work, etc.? Did the director excite or amuse you? In other words did the production sparkle with imagination and creativity, and in particular did it show a high degree of hard work and determination. When judging I would think these would be

some of the more important elements.

As we mature, we realize we must become more imaginative and creative when obstacles are put in our way. Today, directors appear to have few constrictions. As a result films become more mundane and prosaic while at the same time more shocking and repetitive. After a while though audiences become weary of such exploitation. Young people eventually grow out of this phase. I'm reminded of the little boy who caught his friend looking through a knothole in a nudist colony fence. When he approached his friend he asked, "What's in there?"

"A bunch of people", replied the second boy.

"Wow", said the first, "What can you see?"

"Nothing", said the second, "They have no clothes on. !

If you leave nothing to the imagination, all the fun goes out of it.

Presently, the competition season will be upon us and you may (fortunately, or unfortunately) have the opportunity to judge some productions. Being a judge brings with it the responsibility of being unbiased. First, we should examine ourselves and determine whether this would take a large leap or possibly just a short hop into a different attitude or mindset. Either way we should try to curb our "Crankshaft" mentality.

In reading the numerous newsletters and bulletins, it appears there will be a heavy turnout of contest entries, not only at the club level but also nationally and internationally.

Victoria Video & Film Club recently announced the winners of their Annual Contest. Jack & Juanita Lenfesty took First Place with "A Moving Experience", Morris Aldersmith, Second with "Polynesian Centre" and in 3rd place, "On Green Pond" by Eleanor Haire. The Assigned Subject Contest, "Roads that Lead To..." has an April 29th deadline and Contest Chairman, John

Jones is no doubt looking for lots of entries from this very active group.

Across the Strait **The Vancouver Film & Video Production Club** are also gearing up for some great entries in their April workshop competition. This month the Five Minute Assigned Subject will be "Colour". David Cooperstone, Co-ordinator, mentions that the May workshop competition will be "One Minute Videos" and the audience will have the opportunity to vote on its favourite.

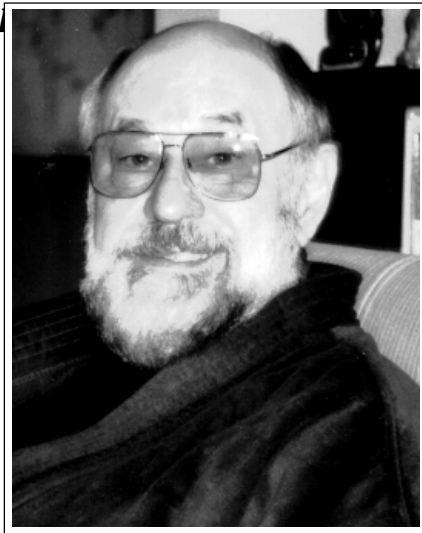
Although the **Winnipeg Amateur Moviemakers** will not be having an Annual Competition, Don Rodgers, Programme Co-ordinator, said that they will be looking into the possibility of entering a production into this year's SCCA Club Competition. He figures that an assigned subject like "Strike Out" might peak the interest and bring out some interesting ideas from their members. If not, there is always the annual Winnipeg Beach Trophy coming up later in the year.

Although, there has been no word in **"It's a Wrap", (London Videography Club's monthly newsletter)** about upcoming competitions they are still quite active. Entertaining interesting guest speakers, conducting workshops, like Thom Speechley's recent "Slides to Videos", and preparing a new CANUSA tape, under the watchful guidance of Jim Town.

Frank Birch, Programme Chairman of the **Brantford Video and Movie Maker's Club**, reminds members that the "Commercial" competition is coming up shortly and although entries can be up to five minutes in length, even a thirty second "Commercial" is acceptable. Frank also mentioned that March's programme would feature,

Continued on Page 14

VIDEO INSERT FEEDBACK EDITING



by Bryan Belfont

A couple of years ago, I wrote an article entitled "Audio Feedback Editing" which generated a lot of interest. This time, I want to introduce you to **Video Insert Editing**. This is an interesting variation of insert editing that allows you to perform a **video** insert and at the same time transfer the original audio from the **linear mono** track onto the **HiFi stereo** track.

Let's recap! In a normal video insert, you insert **new** video along with its own new audio onto the video/stereo track while at the same time keeping the **old** audio on the mono track.

In the following procedure, you are able to insert **new** video plus keep the **old** audio by feeding the audio from the mono track onto the stereo track while recording a new video signal. An example may make this process clearer: You have a video of a "talking head": what the person says is interesting but the visuals are dull. So as the speaker talks about various items, you are able to insert visuals of those items (cars, birds, flowers, etc.) without losing the original narration.

Remember: you can only record stereo HiFi audio at the same time

that you record video. You cannot audio-dub, onto the stereo HiFi track.

EQUIPMENT

Player: You will need a camcorder or a VCR as a **source**. This can play a tape you have previously recorded or if you are using a camcorder, it could be live images.

Recorder: A HiFi stereo VHS VCR as before.

Audio Mixer: Almost any audio mixer will do but it's best if the mixer has at least two line inputs and 1 mic input. VU meters are also useful. A headphone input is essential.

SET-UP

The set-up is a little different from the Audio Insert Edit. In this case, we need new video as well as old audio.

■ First, connect your source camcorder or VCR video cable directly from the player to the record VCR into line 2 at the front of the Record VCR.

You only need to connect the yellow composite cable if you have an 8mm camcorder and a VHS VCR. If you have a Hi8 camcorder and an S-VHS VCR, use the S-Video cable only

■ Second: Connect the audio cable from the camcorder to the audio mixer at "tape-in".

■ Third: Connect an audio cable from the rear of your VCR (line 1 out) to the audio mixer at "tape/aux in".

■ Fourth: plug a mic into the audio mixer if you intend to add a voice over. Use headphones plugged into the audio mixer.

■ Finally: connect an audio cable from the audio mixer (main out) to your VCR's audio input jacks (line-2 in).

Your mixer should have a volume control for each input and a master volume control for output.

VIDEO INSERT PROCEDURE

Player:

Select the beginning of the new video on the tape in the player or turn the camcorder to camera if you intend to insert live video. Play the tape and check how much footage you have. Set the tape to the start of the video image to be inserted.

Recorder:

Play the tape in the recorder VCR and decide which portion of the video you intend to replace. Select the end

point of the old video image. Push the counter re-set button to re-set the counter to zero.

Most VCRs will stop automatically at zero when you are in the insert mode. Some VCRs require you to put the "memory" on to accomplish this.

■ Now rewind the tape to the start of the video scene you intend to replace. The VCR counter will now show a minus number. If you have a real-time counter, this tells you exactly how many minutes and seconds you have for the video insert.

■ Put the record VCR into play-pause mode and set to "video insert" (check to see that the "video insert light comes on)

Do not push the "audio insert" button. The "audio insert" I replaces the audio on the linear mono track. We want to keep the old mono audio, in fact, we want to transfer the old mono audio onto the stereo audio track while we insert new video.

Do not push the "record" button. This would erase all previously recorded audio and video.

■ Put the player VCR or camcorder into play-pause mode.

■ Both machines are now ready. If you have a synchro-edit cable connected between the two machines, you need only press the synchro edit button on the record VCR. If not, then you must release both pause buttons at the same time.

■ As soon as both machines start rolling, you can control the audio level at the audio mixer. You will see the new video on your TV monitor and hear the old audio through the headphones. If you have judged everything correctly, the video insert will stop at the end of the scene when the counter reaches zero.

ADDING NEW AUDIO

If you wish, you can add the sound of the new video to the old narration. Example: the narrator is discussing cats and dogs and you want to show a new video insert of the cat and add the sound of the cat to the voice of the narrator.

RESULTS

You now have the new video inserts along with the original audio all married together on the Video/Stereo track. At this stage it does not matter

whether the playback is done on a mono or stereo VCR.

■ On mono, you will hear the old audio and see the new inserted video.

■ On stereo, you will hear the new inserted audio (which is actually the old mono audio) and see the new inserted video.

If you now wish to add music or sound effects, you can refer to the audio feedback editing procedure and do an audio insert from the stereo track (with the original speaker) to the mono track to add more audio. See earlier article in March/April 1993 Panorama - "Audio Feedback" Editing. The major benefit of this set-up is the ability to add new video to the tape on the video track and at the same time transfer the linear mono audio to the video track. In essence, what you are doing is inserting new video images but keeping the old audio.

SUMMARY

As you can see, the possibilities are endless: keeping the old video and adding new audio or keeping the old audio and adding new video or even adding new video and new audio. And this can all be performed on a second generation edited master! If your camcorder is an S-VHS or Hi8 format and the VCR is an S-VHS format, you can now copy to a VHS tape for your

clients or friends with excellent video quality with the audio playable on mono or stereo VCRs.

I hope this step-by-step procedure will help you improve your editing techniques ■

Biography: BRYAN BELFONT

Bryan has been involved in education for over 30 years since his graduation from UBC in 1965 with a B.A. and a B.C. Teaching Degree. His involvement has encompassed teaching High School in Vancouver from 1965 to 1970 and providing educational material to Universities and Colleges through his position as the General Manager of Pathfinder Press, a publishing house in Toronto 1970-1980.

Bryan's specialization in audio/visual education and videography really got into gear in the early years of consumer video, 1980-1984, with a position as the Audio/Visual Instructor for a School District in Winnipeg. While in Whitehorse, Yukon in 1984-1986, Bryan was employed as the Project Manager for YCTV Community Cable Television station and began his own free-lance business called "Video Productions".

Since 1987, Bryan has been the Video Instructor for the Vancouver School Board's Career and Community Education Services. Bryan teaches a

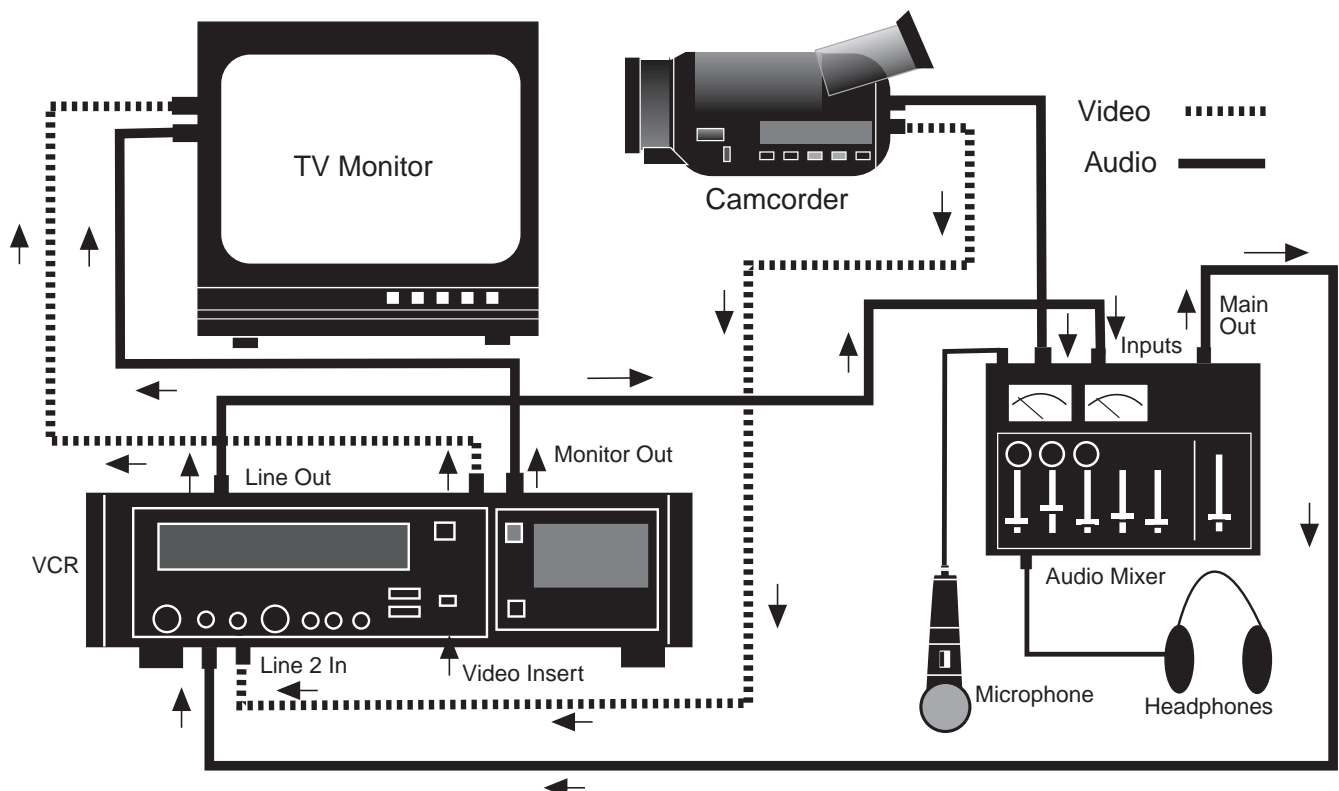
number of different video courses and workshops such as: Camcorder Techniques; Camcorder Creativity; Vacation Video; Editing for Fun; Basic Editing; Creative Editing; and Desktop Video.

Bryan has published three textbooks: "Video Camcorder Techniques", "Basic Video Editing" and "Advanced Video Editing" and has collaborated with Jan Piros on a fourth volume entitled "Desktop Video for PCs". These texts are revised and updated every six months.

Bryan is a member of the Vancouver Film and Video Production Club and a frequent contributor to "Reel Talk" and "Panorama" magazines. He recently gave a workshop, "Audio Over Video" at the B.C. Festival of the Arts in Penticton, May 22-24, 1996. He was a guest speaker at "Digitally Speaking", the Joint Convention of the American Motion Picture Society, the Society of Amateur Videographers and Cinematographers (SA VAC) and the Society of Canadian Cine Amateurs (SCCA) which was held in Victoria, BC, October 3-6 1996. His topic was "From Analog to Digital: What it All Means".

Bryan can be contacted via e-mail (belfont@mindlink.bc.ca) and he invites you to visit his web site at <http://mindlink.bc.ca/belfont>.

VIDEO "FEEDBACK" EDITING CONNECTIONS



WIDEANGLE '97

AUGUST 7&8 1997 KITCHENER, ONTARIO

Those who have read the previous article about the 1997 SCCA Convention in the Winter Issue of PANORAMA, already know it will be held in Kitchener, Ontario, on August 7 and 8, and we'll try not to bore them here with too much repeat information. However, for those who didn't read that article, a little catch-up will be needed.

Hotel

The site is the Four Points Sheraton Hotel (formerly the Valhalla Inn) in downtown Kitchener, at 105 King Street East. The hotel has comfortable, attractive rooms featuring hair dryers, pay TV movies (which you won't have time to see), and coffee/tea makers. There's also an extensive Fitness and Recreation Centre including an indoor pool (adjacent to the bar), sauna, room size whirlpool, bowling lanes, mini-golf, darts, billiards, ping pong, etc., (which you'll also never have time to use). The Four Points is easy to find driving into town from the 401 Highway along Highway #8, which turns into King Street, because the hotel is attached to the Market Square Shopping Mall by a glass-enclosed skywalk over the street. Go under the skywalk and turn left.

Theme

Convention Themes are the norm, but we have so many themes for this one that we've named it **WIDEANGLE '97**. Basically, we want to entertain you, educate you, and provide many opportunities for interesting shooting. But success is in the details!

Lectures, Seminars, Workshops

Our first goal is to make the convention the most fun you can have vertically, and we've come up with several ways to do it. We're keeping a few secret, but there are many we can trumpet. First, we're determined to keep all talks, demonstrations,

speeches, and other program items **SHORT!** (And you won't hear JPEG, MPEG, or SCCI mentioned!)

Secondly, some of our speakers have been chosen specifically for the entertainment factor. Among those is Jamie Saunders, Video Unit Manager of the Niagara Regional Police Service. We'll give you all the details about Jamie's own credentials at the convention: here you need to know about the Video Unit, a small group of three civilian video professionals working as an arm of the NRPS. The Unit does most of their work for the training section, but much of the work is forensic. "These days it seems every robbery is on tape" Jamie says, "and since video has such a huge impact on presenting evidence, it's only logical to call on us for prints and enhancements." (If this doesn't sound rousing, trust me!) Over the past ten years the unit has won nearly sixty awards from the International Television Association, the Ministry of the Solicitor General, the Canadian Police Video Awards, the Law Enforcement Video Association (LEVA), Crimestoppers International and the Law Enforcement Television Network, for its training videos, and, to quote Government Video, a U.S. publication, "they've found a sure fire way to keep their audience awake; laughter." Jamie says "Humour makes it easier to pay attention. And we've found that the programs that work best are the ones where the audience doesn't know they're being trained." We'll see some samples of their work and Jamie will tell us how to use humour effectively.

Another speaker who should keep us on the edge of our seats is Randy Butcher, a professional Stunt Performer, Stunt Coordinator, Actor, and Director who has worked in the profes-

sional television and film industries for more than fifteen years, with credits in *Rescue 911*, *Due South*, *The Santa Clause*, and *Johnny Mnemonic*, among others. But Randy's long-

time ambition is to be a writer, and when not working on a production, he writes scripts three or four hours a day. He has recently formed Crystal Films Inc. and is about to shoot an action-biker film currently titled "Heat Score" That film should be in the can by August, and Randy should have time for another of his loves - teaching - this time, us! We don't know whether he'll be telling us about stunting, writing, directing or producing, but odds are he'll hit all four, going wherever the questions lead him.

Rick Gajdecki of John Gajdecki Visual Effects (one of those "bi-coastal companies" with studios in both contenders for the title "Hollywood North" on the Pacific Coast and Lake Ontario Coast [not Hamilton this time] who produces many of those spectacular visual compositing effects you've seen in *Road to Avonlea* and *Outer Limits*. The company is especially well known in the industry as a model maker and Rick promises to bring some of their models and tell us how they're used.

We hope to pair Rick up with a demonstration of some of those tiny video "spy cameras" and the world's smallest video transmitter (made in Concord, Ontario). To get the most out of that equipment you'll need some tips from Steve Gray of Flite Craft Model Co. Inc. of Kitchener, who builds and flies model helicopters equipped with both film and video cameras for productions like *Forever Knight*. Steve's helicopters can go where full size helicopters can't, like between downtown buildings.

We're slipping into another important category; "things you can't see at home or in your own club". For another example, Mark Lehman, the President of EDCOM MULTIMEDIA

PRODUCTS (with branches in Mississauga, Windsor, London, and Kitchener), will tell us what his company has learned working with the new generation of Panasonic DVC Pro Digital Production and Editing Equipment (and show samples of their results).

And we have a big scoop in the works. For its first Canadian showing, we'll be presenting Real Depth™, Floating Images Inc.'s revolutionary new 3D system which is viewed without any kind of glasses, introduced by inventor Eugene Goldoff (on video tape, from an address just last February to the International Society of Optical Engineering at the Electronic Imaging Science and Technology Symposium at the San Jose Convention Center).

To "educate members" we're trying very hard to provide information which we can all use to solve our real problems as video makers. While not yet ready to announce the details, we've been working on a presentation on Copyright, by people who really know about which they speak.

For several months we've searched for easy techniques and affordable equipment which can help you, and the quest continues. Richard Taylor, an owner and user of the product, will demonstrate a unique hardware/software solution to the problems of cataloguing large quantities of raw footage, transcribing the spoken words to paper, making a quick-and-dirty rough edit (or paper edit), or even preparing a storyboard for a client,

We've also arranged for demonstrations of two moderately priced products that are just now hitting the shelves: Pinnacle's VideoDirector Studio 200 and Videonics Video Toolkit 3.0. Both are aimed at the amateur with a minimum of equipment; an 8/Hi8 Camcorder (or VCR with LANC), infrared controlled recorder, and a PC. What are the differences? Will one work for you? See for yourself!

We've found a bargain collection of buy-out (reproduction rights included) stock music, a low-cost shareware computer program for editing it and other prerecorded music, an even less expensive MIDI Sequencer for anybody with a PC and a Sound Card, and a very reasonable and extremely capable solution for those without any musical knowledge or talent whatsoever who still want to avoid copyright problems completely and produce quick and easy custom built professional-sound-

ing music tracks.

For those with a old or inexpensive Sound Card in a Pentium (or 586) computer, we've found a dirt cheap way to make it sound like the Cadillac of Sound Cards. And for anyone with Microsoft Word running under Windows (3.1, 95 or NT), we have an absolutely free add-on program that will turn it into a Script Writing Program that formats your script in the industry standard format. (But the creativity is still up to you!) We've even arranged for Don "Tinker" Svob of Wellandport to update everyone on all those inexpensive versions of video equipment that he devises from common objects around the house!

All the listed products and programs, and more, will be demonstrated, some in the main room to everyone at once, and some in smaller rooms to smaller audiences, so you can get a closer look and feel freer to ask questions. The number of demos keeps growing, so you may need to pick those subjects which interest you most, passing up something you find less interesting.

Optional Spousal Tours

By now we can hear some of the wives saying "Boring!" Not so fast! We have an optional program for them! On the morning of August 7 they'll go to the St. Jacobs Outlet Mall, where they'll have time to explore the brand name stores in Ontario's first Outlet Mall, and the huge St. Jacobs Market next door, an indoor/outdoor farmers market/flea market/craft market with pony rides for the kids, strolling musicians, and even a real cattle auction! Later they'll gather at the Log Cabin to board a horse-drawn trolley for a Countryside Tour and a visit to an old Mennonite farm. Then it's on to the historic Village of St. Jacobs. Here they can lunch in one of the village inns or restaurants, browse (or shop) in the many local handicraft shops, or watch local artisans practice their crafts - glass blowing, pottery, weaving, blacksmithing, jewelry making, leather working, broom making, quilting, etc., before returning to the hotel for supper with their husbands.

On Friday afternoon another Optional Spousal Tour will leave the hotel for the historic Joseph Schneider Haus museum and gallery to revive the earliest roots of Kitchener's Mennonite past. After a guided tour they'll continue on to Woodside, the boyhood home of Canada's tenth prime minister,

William Lyon Mackenzie King. Originally built in 1853, the house and grounds are maintained by Parks Canada as a site of national historic significance, and have been reconstructed and restored to represent the period of King's residence, 1886- 1893. After another tour by a guide in period costume, they'll return to the hotel in plenty of time for the Honours Awards Banquet.

And, ladies, the best part is, all that technical stuff will be saved for those left back at the hotel. We're scheduling the most entertaining programs for Friday morning, (and the evenings) when you can all be there!

Screenings

On Thursday evening there'll be a presentation of some of the Finalists in the Annual CIAFF Competition, and on Friday evening after the Banquet there'll be a screening of the SCCA Annual Contest Winning Entries and the Presentation of the Contest Awards.

Auction

We'll also be holding an auction while the ladies are out Friday afternoon. (That seemed like a sensible time!) Bring your audio, video, photographic, and computer equipment which you no longer use, and register it Thursday morning. You'll have the rest of Thursday, and Friday morning, to look over other people's stuff, ask the owner about its use, condition, etc., and try to make your best deal. Anything not sold by auction time goes on the block. Don't worry! You can put a reserve bid on anything you value highly. (Your own stuff, that is. We know you won't value anybody else's stuff highly!) The reserve bid won't be announced, but if the auctioneer can't get that price, it'll be withdrawn from sale. The owner will pay **WIDEANGLE '97** five percent of the last price bid, just so we don't have people bringing outrageously expensive items which people won't buy at an auction, or imposing unrealistic reserve bids. There'll be no other fees for the auction as the point isn't to make money, but to provide an opportunity to recycle equipment, and, above all, to have fun!

Optional Tours

You may remember, way back at the top, we listed "providing an opportunity for some good shooting" as one of the priorities. Well, there'll be two optional tours Wednesday, and another on Saturday.

The first will leave the hotel Wednesday at 9:00 AM for a trip to Stratford, the home of the world renowned Stratford Shakespearean Festival, where we'll tour the backstage of the Festival Theatre and the Festival's Costume Warehouse (if we have a minimum of fifteen people). Those who wish to attend one of Stratford's world famous productions (at an additional cost) will have their choice of Lerner and Loewe's Camelot at the Festival Theatre or Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman at the Avon Theatre. Shakespeare's Richard III at the Tom Patterson Theatre is already sold out for that performance. (It's No Cameras Allowed for either performance or for the backstage tour! OK for the Costume Warehouse.) The rest of us will tour leisurely around Stratford's elegant downtown and picturesque parks along the Avon River while waiting for the theatergoers.

Shakespeare isn't everyone's cup of tea, so for those who seek a less literate, primal adventure, a second group will leave the hotel at 10:00 AM for the African Lion Safari, where 1,500 exotic birds and animals (132 different species) roam freely on large reserves (five to fifty acres) and people are "caged" in cars and buses. Attractions include the game reserves, a scenic railway, a cruise, daily animal and bird shows, and a family of rare white tigers. There are more than 50 lions on three reserves, and the park has been successful in breeding more than 30 endangered species and 20 threatened species. Cameras are definitely allowed here!

Both tours will return to the hotel before supper. After allowing you time to wash away the smell of the grease paint or scrape the hippo poop off your shoes, everyone who wants to join us will be bussed to the Concordia Club for supper. Remember the fun? We know some people aren't interested, so this part's optional, too.

The Concordia Club (concordia: Latin for harmony, friendship, unity, alliance, etc.) was originally founded in 1873 as a male choir and has gone through a succession of name changes, club houses, etc. (The whole long but interesting history can be read on their placemat.) The main building has a 200 seat restaurant and a 480 seat banquet hall. Oktoberfest in Canada began here in 1967, and has since grown into a community wide festival and the largest Bavarian Festival in North America, second only to that of Mu-

nich. During the nine-day festival the Concordia Club erects a tent on the grounds which holds another 3,900 people. Pity we couldn't hold the convention in October, but we'd never get the hotel space! So we'll meet in the restaurant. Their menu includes Soups, Appetizers, and 13 Entrees ranging from \$6.95 to \$13.50, plus Seafood, a Vegetarian meal, Desserts, and about a dozen Late Night Snacks from \$2.50 to \$6.75. It should go without saying that their beverage specialty is Beer! Whether you've been with us on one of the tours or have just checked into the hotel, you're invited to join us for Gem FCllichkeit, supper, or just a social evening at the home of Oktoberfest. If you're at the hotel in time to catch our bus, hop on. If you drive to Kitchener, anyone in town can tell you how to find the Concordia (429 Ottawa Street S.). Or you can catch a #2 or #3 bus (\$1.60) for the short ride between the hotel and the Concordia Club. Those without their cars will be taking the public bus back to the hotel, as we can't keep the chartered bus that long!

The Optional Saturday Tour will leave at 9:00 AM and stop briefly at St. Jacobs Farmers' Market and again at the Village of St. Jacobs. We'll stay just long enough for those who weren't able to take the Thursday Spousal Tour to get a few shots of the market, the Mennonites, and the village shops and streets, and for those who were, to pick up those things without which they decided later they can't live! Then it's off for Fergus and the Fergus Highland Games in time for lunch and the Traditional Opening Ceremonies and Massed Bands. There's so much to see and shoot here — International and North American Scottish Heavy Events Championships, Tug-of-War Championships, Highland Dance Competitions, Piper's and Pipe Band Championships, Individual Pipes and Drums and Drum Major Competitions, the Avenue of the Clans Highland Heritage Tent, Scottish Marketplace, Scottish Foods, Refreshments, Tea Garden, Celtic Artisans, Highland Cattle Displays, Celtic Entertainment on various stages, etc., (and flying kilts everywhere!), that only a few will want to take the short ride downtown to wander among the 200 19th-century Scottish architecture limestone buildings. Nevertheless, we'll provide the opportunity.

Later, in nearby Elora you'll have time to get a little supper, wander through the old streets and shops, view

or shoot the waterfall (with your camcorder), or even hike along the river through the Elora Gorge Conservation Area, before returning us to the hotel in Kitchener. Along the way we'll stop at the West Montrose Kissing Bridge for more videography.

Costs

It all sound terribly expensive, doesn't it! Not really! Look over the enclosed Registration Form. Note the inexpensive Convention Registration and the liberal reduction for Individual or Family SCCA Members. Even the moderately priced Honours Awards Banquet is optional. Except for the Banquet, you control all your meal costs. The hotel is right downtown and there are many restaurants nearby, in a variety of price ranges. We can recommend Schatzi's, the Four Points' first class restaurant, for the Buffet Breakfast and supper, and especially their \$10 Lunch Buffet. (The hotel will provide a private room adjacent to the dining room and buffet when our numbers warrant.) We invite you to join us at the Concordia Club for supper Wednesday, or after supper if you prefer. No meals are included in many of the Optional Tours. Instead we'll provide opportunities for you to choose where you eat, splurging or economizing when and where you will. Tour prices include transportation and all admissions with the exception of the Stratford Theatre Tickets which you can see is a separate and additional option. At first blush they may seem high to some, but not when compared to theatre tickets in Toronto or New York, and the productions really are comparable, and probably superior. We'll buy the best seats available at or near that price, depending on their availability and the number wanted. (We can get a better price if we purchase a minimum of 15 tickets spread across the three theatres, and consequently can purchase better tickets, if available, for the money.)

Hotel Room Rate

The Special Convention Rate for your room at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel is \$82 Canadian (plus 5% P.S.T. and 7% G.S.T.) for one, two, three, or four people in a room! (Not bad for a couple, and a steal for four guys sharing a room!) The hotel is holding a block of rooms till July 6. After that date they'll be released and put on a first come, first served basis. You must make your reservations through the

Four Points hotel — 1-800 -483-7812, and mention the SCCA Convention, Wideangle '97. This price is lower than their Corporate Rate (\$109 Can.+ taxes). If you make your reservations through Sheraton's International 800 Reservation Number you will be charged the much higher Rack Rate (\$139 Can.+ taxes)! After receiving your room reservation by phone they'll mail you a confirmation and hotel brochure. We encourage you to stay at the Four Points Hotel (with Free Covered Parking for Overnight Guests) because it's a fine hotel with very nice bedrooms, and some of our costs depend on the number of hotel rooms taken.

Canadians may pay for **Wideangle '97** Registration and Options by personal cheque, Money Order, or by VISA. Americans should note that all prices above are in Canadian dollars and those on the Registration Form are in U.S. Funds, and should pay in U.S. Funds either by International Money Order or by VISA. The latter has been instituted especially as a convenience for our American members. (No personal checks, please.)

We're hoping to have a worthwhile prize for a draw exclusively for those whose Registration is received before July 1, but arrangements were not yet made at press time. We'll continue to work on it and we expect success. Meanwhile, we advise you to get your Registration in quickly to take advantage of any such deal that may come too late to be announced.

We're looking forward to greeting as many of you as possible at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel as early as Tuesday evening, August 5. ■

by Fred Briggs



Kingston City Hall

Care and Maintenance of Your Video Gear

by David Cooperstone



To make the most of your investment in your video gear consider the following. The points I wish to make will also make sure it is working to its best abilities and will not fail you at a crucial time. Much of this may seem to be common sense, but it never hurts to be reminded.

1. Get the Extended Warranty on your video camcorder (as long as it covers at least one servicing, head cleaning, general maintenance a year) This is normally a \$75 charge with out the Extended Warranty

2. Do have your camcorder and VCRS serviced at least once a year. This is preventative maintenance. Well worth the money. It will prevent more serious and expensive repairs down the road. Most warranties that you get with a camcorder or VCR do not cover this cost.

3. Go to only a authorized repair center. One that services your brand of camcorder or VCR.

4. Write down clearly what the problem is and bring along a tape that illustrates the problem if you have one.

5. Try to meet the actual technician (I use the term loosely) that will be repairing your unit. Find out how long it will take and then call a few days after that time and

start bugging. (It may take that.)

6. When picking up gear check it out before leaving the repair depot. Use gear extensively right away before the repair warranty period runs out.

7. Insurance. Make sure you have it and are covered for all uses of the camera you make (personal and / or professional) Get complete replacement value. Have coverage out of home, province and country.

8. When traveling have a good steady case. Take camera on plane with you (You never know when you may crash...great shots) Always have camera firmly in hand or around neck. Never have even your accessories out of sight.

9. Photo copy the manual, receipt of sales, any service records. Keep in safe place. When you go to resell your camcorder its value may increase with all this documentation.

10. Avoid extremes in temperature and moisture. Don't boil or freeze or drench it. Video equipment needs to be treated like a kid... Thank god you don't have to change its diaper.

11. For camcorders place a UV filter on lens. Use lens cleaning tissue and fluid only.

12. Other Video gear cover with dust covers when not in use.

13. Use only recommended power supplies.

14. Don't drop or throw your equipment around.

15. Label all your gear by engraving your SIN number and placing a tag with your name and address. Keep an up to date inventory list of all your gear noting, make, model, serial number, cost, location and date of purchase, and any repairs.

16. Tape. Use only name brand tapes; avoid magnetic fields; fast forward and rewind new tapes, store upright in plastic cases.

17. Do not use camcorders in adverse conditions as dirty, dusty, sandy, salt water. (When around these conditions take care.)

18. Talk to your machine, nicely it can't hurt and will at least make you feel better. Just make sure no one is around when you are doing this.

19. Respect your equipment.

20. Use it and learn it well. Read your manuals completely. ■

David Cooperstone of Studio Video Facilities, is a teacher of video, and a member of the Vancouver Film & Video Production Club. He conducts club workshops and seminars in various areas of the Vancouver Lower Mainland.

“Weddings” or “I Do, I Do, I Do, Honest.. I Do.”

by Tony Bifano

Biography:

Tony Bifano owns and operates ANTON Video Productions in Hamilton, Ont. Since he started doing weddings in 1982, Tony has video taped and edited over 1,000 matrimonial events. He is also the current President of the Hamilton Video/Film Makers.

Cameras are being cleaned, batteries are being charged and in the back of my mind, I am remembering what happened last year. The nervous brides, anxious grooms and good old uncle Joe who is always willing to help... or get in the way.

I have been doing weddings for fifteen years and I always look forward to a new matrimonial season for a couple of reasons. One, I am fresh and well rested, and two; it's like a hockey or football season... you just never know what lies ahead.

There have also been numerous times (usually early on a Saturday morning) when I would ask myself, “Why am I doing this?”

Some say it's because I am nuts, but personally, I seem to like the challenge. The groom looking over your shoulder to show that he is the man in charge, the bride not laughing at any of your jokes because she's worried about her dress and the mother-of-the-bride wanting all the relatives in some crazy group shot!

There is a lot of hard work and dedication in producing a good quality wedding video, so you have to overlook some of these obstacles... or look out for them. ***Always expect the unexpected...*** be prepared at all times, because on this day I am the last person the bride and groom want to or will think about!

As in all movie productions, of which the “Wedding Video” is just another version of story telling, the pre-production process is very important. I arrange for all the couples to come into my office and then try to ask as many questions as possible, gaining



all the information I will need to ensure that unexpected surprises are kept to a minimum.

Things like... “How many are in the wedding party?” (a group shot of 22 people is harder to control than a group of 4)... “How many guests are expected?” (an answer of “500” presents more problems than “50” would)... “What type of ceremony will be conducted?” (a full high Mass or a short civil event), and very important, “Are both parents still alive and/or together?”. This information will save you the embarrassment of loudly calling for the brides' father to join in the shot... then learning he recently passed away... or asking for the parents to give each other a kiss, then being sharply kicked in the shin as the maid- of-honour whispers in your ear that they are divorced and all the knives in the house have been hidden!

In fifteen years I've seen many strange things happen. From the groom and his father in a fist fight over a beer to invited guests bickering because of nationalities. Over the years we've recorded many funny moments, such as the man dancing wildly, then his pants fell down... the groom who brought his cat, all decked out in a top-hat and tails... to the sad ones, when one of the ushers had an aneurysm and collapsed onto the dance floor. Of course I stopped recording.

A wedding videographer must have

respect for the parents, relatives, bride and groom and most of all... the wedding ceremony. When they know you respect them and their wishes and that they can trust you, then you can count on them to do almost anything for you. This alone will pay great dividends.

Irrespective of your personal beliefs, the wedding ceremony is very important. You must show that it means a lot to you... show the priest, rabbi, minister, judge or whomever, that you care and most important, that you will obey all their rules.

I always introduce myself to the presiding official before the ceremony, (sometimes a day or so in advance of the wedding, if they are new or I don't know them) so that they know who I am and so that I can confirm the rules. This again is called “respect”. By doing this I am establishing a friendship with the clergy or judge and hopefully, they will let me do everything that I need to do to produce a great video.

This is important because it will make my day much less stressful or if you are planning to make a career shooting wedding productions, odds are that sooner or later you'll be back in this venue to do another wedding. I am very proud to tell my couples that I know their priest or that I've shot at their selected church before. This makes them feel more at ease and really helps close the deal with new clients too.

Photographers play an important role in weddings. They usually set the pace and they seem to have a lot of control in what happens during the day. Despite what we may think of the importance of our craft, bridal parties tend to pay more attention to the photographer than to the videographer, so I make it a rule to work closely with all photographers.

They can make your day hell if you get on their bad side, but then again a poorly organized video cameraman can also make life a nightmare for the photographer. I've had photographers

blame the videographer for poor photographs or say that we took far too much time with the bride and groom, so much so that they couldn't do their job properly. If the photographer felt that their company should have been awarded both the photo and video contract, then you may be in for a rough ride no matter how nice you are.

Of course I've also worked with photographers that made the whole day a joy to be part of. We have shared the carrying of equipment and helped each other with the lights. The day can go ever so smoothly if you offer a hand in setting up the bridal party or holding the reflector or flash... remember, the bride and groom are always watching... more winning points!!!

Besides, you may end up with the band and the photographer, all sitting at the same table during the meal. It's much easier if you can all get along together, especially if they are serving spaghetti.

Each wedding has both different requirements and similar requirements. The service, and part of the reception will always be required in the final video production. Most of the time, an array of photos from the past will be incorporated as well. Where the differences appear will be in the house, park or studio and the reception. Will they or do they want "house preparation" shots included... can you assemble them into humorous skits or are they staid traditionalists... will they let their hair down before the drink makes them?

If my days work is starting at the brides house, then I usually arrive about two hours before the ceremony, however, this becomes three hours before kick-off time if I start at the grooms abode, apartment or hole from hell. Usually, this will allow me set-up or free shooting time before the photographer gets there.

The bride, bridesmaids, groom or ushers should be at the appropriate house when you get there. It does not do much good for you to be ready, but the bride is still having her hair done and the groom has decided that now is a good time to change the engine in his sports car. We have usually worked out in advance (at one of the pre-planning sessions) the time and I have suggested that everybody that will be in the production be there as well.

We try to get some fun shots, but always keep in mind that this is a wedding and you *must* get all the required basic shots as well. A variety

of material is always good as this will give them a choice in the final edit and give you some back-up if something goes wrong. Don't put the bride and groom in every single shot. Any good production needs cut-aways and general interest shots. Don't forget the bride pinning the boutonniere on her father and the corsage on her mother, but also get uncle John with the lampshade on his head.

This mixture makes interesting videos. Have bridesmaids, parents, and out-of-town guests say a few words. This can be hilarious... or it can bring a few tears. Find out who the most important guests are, such as the sister of the mother who came half-way around the world to be present on this day. Don't rely on them to tell you where and who these people are, go and talk to the best man because he is supposed to know everything, everybody and generally what is happening and when for the whole day.

I try to videotape the set-ups being taken by the photographer, albeit from different angles of the room and with their permission. Ask about constant lighting and if it will affect them. Like most people working at their job, they really love the courtesy and it's more brownie points for you.

Do you see how this works?

Have the bride (looking into the camera) say a few words to her future husband (since he is not at the brides house, hopefully), to give a nice ending to the pre-nuptial shots.

If you do go to the groom's house, it's a little less hectic and a lot more fun. The ushers probably will have some skits in mind (like throwing the groom into the shower, maybe worse) or, if not, just keep it to the basics again. Have the groom say something to the bride... it's guaranteed to bring tears to her eyes in a few weeks when she views the video.

The church and the resultant wedding ceremony is usually the most tense part of the day.

It's the point at which you don't appear to have any control whatsoever. You can't go back and shoot that flubbed shot over again. This is when you pray (out loud and with eyes cast upward) that all your equipment continues to function properly. This is when you curse (under your breath) because the florist has delivered a thirty foot bouquet of flowers and put it sixteen inches in front of the only location that the clerical dictator has assigned to you. Of course if he allows you to move the flowers or yourself to a better location he has suddenly become a clerical saint.

Most of the time I can't control the lighting and we are very lucky if we're allowed to use a light on the camera. *You can't*... ask the minister to talk louder... do the ring shots from three angles... have the bride and groom do the vows twice more... or most important of all... you can't stop the ceremony in anyway!

I always try to get shots of the outside and inside of the church, guests arriving, flowers, pew bows and programs, again, everything the bride has spent time deciding on.

Get last minute advice from the best man to the groom... ushers saying a few words and escorting guests to their seats.

I always get the limousine, horse & carriage or lear jet arriving, as well as the bride getting out of the vehicle.

The newly-weds like having their invited church guests recorded because, they usually don't get a chance to see, or more often remember, who attended their wedding ceremony. I have many times, at the later viewing sessions with the couple, heard comments such as "Oh look, Bert and Hilda were there after all". Remember that as well as being great cutaway footage, some people attend the ceremony but do not go on to the reception afterward.

I set myself up for the best possible shooting angles of the procession and the ceremony, looking at lines of sight to the bride and groom as well as the bridesmaid, ushers and the important relatives. I always make sure that I record the entire ceremony, checking first to ensure that I have enough tape left on the reel that I am presently using.

I try to get close ups of the bride and groom saying their vows and not forget to include shots of their hands during the exchange of the rings. Making sure you get the signing of the registry and the recessional is sometimes a little bit easier as the clergy will generally allow me to set the shot, but it is really considered a "faux-pas" to start a camera fight with the photographer at this point. Personally speaking, however, I do think that the law should be amended to allow the photographer and videographer, at this point, the right to do great bodily harm to those relatives and friends who step right in front of the lens and wipe out your perfect shot at the most inopportune time.

Outside of the church, I get some

of the guests and wedding party congratulating the happy couple. Lighting can sometimes be a problem, but generally this is when you can get some great shots from either being hand held and in close or on a tripod, high on the church steps. I keep my eye open for the interesting faces as well as the required ones.

I remember one wedding where the bride's father had cooing doves for the couple to release into the air after the ceremony. Unfortunately, these poor animals were so scared that one did a doo doo on the bride's dress. I was told that this was good luck!...ya right, what else were they going to say.

As time edges on toward the reception hour, I gently persuade them to get in the limo, carriage or Volkswagen... open the champagne and, arms entwined, sensually sip a toast to each other.

Some wedding parties go to the park for their photo session and some directly to a studio or the reception hall. Assuming that they go to the park, now is when I can have some real fun with the wedding party.

We like to have them do whatever they want. Some have skits in mind, some do commercial spoofs and some are just themselves. We allow them to be romantic, fool around, be conservative, or embarrass themselves as well as the bride and groom. If we have developed a good relationship with the couple from the start, they will trust us and this is the point at which you can get some real choice material. Of course I also remind them that it is only on video tape and can be left out of the final product should the need arise. I was once able to talk the whole party into getting on a local bus and riding to the next stop. The sound and visuals were great and worked well into the final edit.

It's important not to forget to get the photos being taken of the parents, relatives and wedding party. Setting up the camera on a tripod and standing a few yards back can result in some great cutaways and candid shots. I like to end it off with the bride and groom taking a romantic walk on their own. Here you can incorporate scenery, wildlife (depending on the location, and I don't mean uncle John) and work with creative angles as well as making great use of the natural lighting.

The final shot will have them leaving the park, into the limo and off to the hall.

Once we're at the hall, I always get

the location shots... the front of the building... inside... set-up of the hall... wedding cake... head table... the gift table and the receiving line.

Record everything that you think you would like to have as a keepsake. In other words everything the bride has spent time on or time deciding on what should be recorded... for example, flowers, decorations, napkins, matches, etc.

If they have a receiving line, I usually record a few minutes of people greeting them. This is a situation where faces tell the story. I move from shooting behind the guests, looking toward the wedding party to where I am behind the wedding party, shooting the faces of the guests

If the wedding party are being announced into the hall, I make sure that I have positioned myself to get the best possible sight lines without interfering with the wedding party, and that my lighting is operational.

During the evening, I always go to all the tables to get the guests to say a few words or just wave hello (trying not to get them while they have food in their mouths unless you figure it's going to be a winner on America's Funniest Home Videos).

I make sure that I get all of the speeches and toasts, the cutting of the cake, the first dance, second dance and any others that may contain special music or mean something to the wedding party, the father and the bride, mother and the groom, a mix of other dances (fast and slow) throughout the night, the removal and flinging of the garter and of course... the last dance.

Tired yet? It's now 1.30am.

If you were along with me, and you've just put in eighteen hours... having fun?

You Can Have Tomorrow Off !!

P.S. I forgot to tell you, We have a Christening to shoot in the morning!

Tony Bifano

We would like to hear from you now. Have you got an interesting, funny, weird or special story about an event that occurred at a wedding you were shooting at or where you were a guest and watched it happen to the videographer? Write to PANORAMA and let us know your experiences.

NARRATION

by George Cushman

Never talk about what is on the screen. Never talk about what is not on the screen.

Tell us things the picture does not say. Do not tell anything irrelevant, stick to the subject.

Verbal Comments

What does the subject do. What scene does not explain, narration must explain. Lengthy explanation does not help audience, break it up.

Narration

- 1 Explanatory
- 2 Informative
- 3 Supplementary, or extra narration
- 4 Emphatic narration

Call attention to some aspect in scene which maybe overlooked.

Narration to entertain

Narration can entertain and inform. Poor humour is worse than no humour. Dialogue - is bridging two unrelated scenes for example. Jumps from one place to another. Break continuity. Unrelated, there are two types of narration, comparison and contrast.

Example:- Description of the snow, scenery, lake and beauty of a mountain scene. In contrast, a dusty, dirty little village in Mexico.

Two scenes are linked together by contrast.

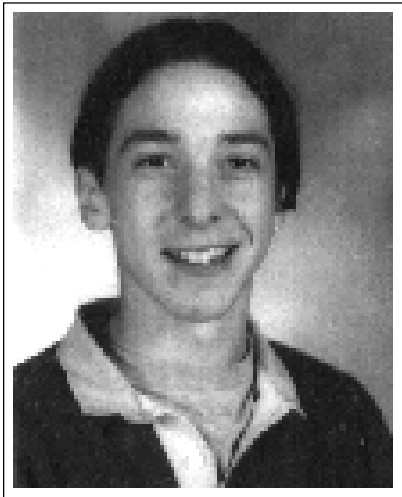
Picture and story come first in writing narration. Never discuss in words what the scene tells. Do not tip off what might be coming. Do not tell the obvious. Include only what scene does not include. All films made with definite purpose and people in mind. Adults, maybe children.

Example - a scientist would appreciate names in Latin. Emphatic narration suitable for children but not for adults.

Professionals have rich, mellow voices. Monotonous voice can ruin film. Break monotony, alternate voices, male then female and maybe a child.

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PROFILE



ANDRE DUPUIS

My foray into the dramatic arts began in grade five when I became interested in acting.

In the summer of 1992, I was fortunate to be an extra in the movie, "The Search For Bobby Fisher". Unfortunately, I ended up on the cutting room floor.

After watching the many people involved in a professional movie, and admiring the mass of lighting and camera equipment, I was motivated to make a movie of my own. It was called "The Butt Team" and was a comedy about a bunch of cops that has yet to see a public screening (and it probably never will).

For the next couple of years, until I reached grade eight, I made several unfinished movies and short experimental flics. Sadly none of them went on to win an academy award, but I was having a lot of fun and learning at the same time.

When I got to high school, it all started to come together. There was access to better equipment with video cameras, editing suites and a studio with lighting. The teacher fuelled my enthusiasm even more, letting me try several different ideas along with the required school course.

I volunteered to work at a local cable television station (Cablenet, Cable 23 in Burlington, Ontario), which taught me a lot of the basics of camera work and editing. If you are looking toward a career in full time movie making, the local cable access station is a great place to play with other peoples toys (they still don't like it if you drop a camera).

Round about 1995 I started attending the meetings of the Hamilton Video/Film

Makers club, whose members taught me and inspired me to further development. It wasn't long afterwards that I also became a member.

I currently attend St. Mary's Catholic High School in Hamilton, Ontario where I took the technology and media course in grade 10. This year my main course load is English media (including script writing, graphics and video production). Everyone knows that I can usually be found in or near the video studio. I have produced and as a crew member worked on several short videos for the schools daily video announcements, as well as using the medium of video for some of my curriculum projects.

In the summer of 1995 I created a promotional video for my first commercial client, "Woods Martial Arts".

In February of 1996 I made a two minute short video on glass recycling ("Its Cool To Recycle") for the fourth annual conservation video contest sponsored by Glass Works of Burlington, Ontario. The video included live action as well as computer animation of a glass bottle named "Cool". The bottle was chased through the streets of Hamilton, eventually being saved from falling into the trash, and instead being put into the recycling bin. I placed first, of the almost two hundred entries in the contest, which was open to all elementary and secondary schools across Canada. I also received a letter of congratulations from UNEP (United Nations Environment Program).

At the Hamilton clubs' October meeting it was announced that I had recently returned (Wednesday, Sept 19th) from a whirlwind trip to New York city where I received awards and accolades for one of my computer edited video productions at the Interactive Multimedia Association - Expo '96.

At the show Miro Computer Products, Inc. introduced the winners of its first annual "Masterpiece Video Competition" as well as introducing their latest computer card (miroVIDEO DC30) and demonstrating their Firewire Technology.

Participants in the contest were asked to submit their best videos in any of three categories, "corporate", "commercial" or "student".

"Its Cool to Recycle" has also won awards from the CIAFF (Canadian International Annual Film Festival) and the SCCA (Society of Canadian Cine Amateurs).

I received FIRST PRIZE in the student category for my video production "CAMP BREBEUF" (Catholic Youth Organization summer camp) and received prizes valued at over \$3,000.00. I also had the distinction of being the only Canadian prize winner in the contest which was open to all

North Americans.

I used a Sony 3CCD Handicam Pro Hi8 camcorder (V-1000) for the video portion of the shoot and a Pentium 120... 16 Meg RAM... EIDE 2.1 Gig HD... 4.0 Gig Micropolis AV HD... with a miroVIDEO DC-1 in/out board, Adobe Premiere, Autodesk 3D Studio 4.0 and Adobe Photoshop 3.05 for the computer portion of my production. The resulting video is a combination of live action and keyed animation.

Paul McCabe, VP of sales & marketing for Miro, said, "We were delighted by the quality and the originality of the videos submitted. What drew us to the winners was the high level of creativity and effective use of the products." The judging panel was comprised of company executives and prominent editors from high-tech publications including Digital Video Magazine, MacHome Journal and InterActivity.

In March of 1997 I opened the mail one day to find a letter from the Brewers Association of Canada, announcing that my animation "Life On Tap" was a semi-finalist in their national contest "Stand Up. Speak Out, Be Heard". The objective had been to prepare a message "to reach people who are prone to misuse alcohol and to use the words and voices of responsible people to do it". I received a cheque for \$2,500.00 and another chance to stand before the Hamilton Video/Film Makers and tell them how I did it. This computer animation had over 200 hours work in it.

I am currently working on a video/animation with a friend, that will be entered in the MuchMusic 1997 temp. contest, as well as formulating other projects. I am planning to be at the SCCA convention during August in Kitchener, Ontario, where to I know I am going to learn a lot more. Talking to club members and hearing their comments has helped a lot in my learning about what people see, hear and like in a production.

I want to direct feature films in the future and am already looking into universities and colleges with the best programs. My favourite directors include George Lucas, Stephen Spielberg, James Cameron and Quentin Tarentino. ■

In the 1996 CIAFF competition (195 international entrants from 13 countries) Andre placed 2nd in the Amateur animation category. The video was be shown at the CIAFF festival in Campbell River, B.C. in October 1996. The video won three awards in the SCCA competition... First, Class "C" Novice - First, Best Visual Special Effects - First, Best Teenage Entry.

"How to Conduct an Interview" and a slide show on "The Bruce Trail".

Down the road and around the corner from Brantford, the **Start Middle End Group of St.Catharines/Fonthill** are busy moving from one club assignment to another. Bob Wiley, Secretary and Editor of their monthly newsletter, announces that assignment video for April, will centre on a "Montage of Stills". The February assignment was a competition with "Valentine" as the assignment topic. The winners were: First place, Bob Wiley, Second Place, Jim McDonald, Third Place, Luigi Sebastinelli, whose video was entered by Sam Marchioni. Their Annual Audio Video Flea Market scheduled for the Royal Canadian Legion Hall in Fonthill on Sunday April 6th has proven to be highly successful in the past and the good folks in the SME Video are hoping for as good a turn out as they had previously. Good Luck St. Catharines!

Hamilton Film/Video Makers have a number of competitions and contests going on. Most recently, the "Winter Wonders" contest which was won by Jon Soyka with his entry "Hard Water Sailing". Close runners-up were Art Bowes with "So This Is Winter" and Joan & Joe Bochsler's "Ice Jam on the Grand". There seemed to be some light hearted leg pulling by Fred Briggs in "Reel News" when he reported the winners of the Foto-Video Contest for Hamilton Video/Film Makers promotional videos. If we read it correctly Joe Bochsler, placed First, Fred Briggs, Second and Ben Andrews, Third. April 1st was to be the deadline for entries in the "Strike Out" group contest.

"Shots & Angles", the monthly publication of the **Toronto Film & Video Club** is requesting that entries for the Annual Contest meet the March 20th deadline. Also, on that date they will be entertaining entries for the "5 Minute Contest". Editor, Robert Porter in the "Past Programme Recap" section challenges their membership to submit an entry into the SCCA's "Strikeout" competition. Looks like there may be some heavy contenders for Hamilton this year.

Contest officer, Doreen Higgs, of the **Ottawa Film & Video Makers** reports in the March issue of "The Caszette" that the April meeting would be the absolute deadline for submitting entries for the 1997 competition. The films can be

on an open topic and may be group or individual productions, of up to 20 minutes in length. All first place winners will be screened at their Annual Banquet on Wednesday, May 7th.

Buffalo Movie-Video Makers will be honouring some excellent films and filmmakers at their Annual Banquet at "The Screening Room" on Sunday, April 27th. Fred Zasowski, Chairman of Special Activities, says that in order to compete for those special awards members must have their contest entries in no later than Friday, April 4th. Lizzie Finnegan, a young filmmaker who has produced some impressive work during her career in New York City, will be special guest speaker.

SAVAC (Society of Amateur Videomakers and Cinematographers), our American cousins, and sister group to the SCCA, have just released information on "**SAVAC Contest '97**". Anyone interested in entering this prestigious competition can receive entry forms and contest information by contacting Alan Mund, Contest Chairman, at P.O. Box 2002, Vista, California 92085 or if you're in a big hurry phone him at (619)630-1468 or E-mail to SAVAC <savac@iname.com>.

Across the Atlantic, our British cohorts in the **IAC** (Institute of Amateur Cinematographers) so preparing for their annual competitions. Liz Dolan, Editor of "**Film & Video Maker**" magazine states in the latest issue, "Judging is over for another year as we anxiously await "Movie 97" to see the results of this year's "International Film and Video Festival". All indications are that this competition will be bigger and better than ever. So you can readily see competition is building not only here but also across the globe. Where will the best videos and films be produced? The answer -- everywhere! Who will the winners be? Everyone! Because, as the old adage goes, whether you win or not, you are still a winner because you competed. Oh! By the way....**Good Luck!** ■

Does being a member of an elite 'broadcasting' or high-end industrial production team mean that you can only work with other Betacam product users? Is it true that those of us who slog along with Hi8 or S-VHS or are breaking ground with consumer digital images are the scum of the earth. Why can't these so called professionals become members of a local club and have some fun without having to network all the time?

The Middle

In each of the video clubs across Canada (and most likely, the rest of the world) there are at least a couple of members who do not work in video, do not own video equipment, have no intention of ever producing a video or being part of one... but still show up each month to find out what those of us who do produce movies, are up to.

Why do they come to this club? Are they hoping to learn something? Will they ever contribute to the enlightenment of others in the group? Are they secret spies for the copyright protection industry?

Some of these bodies used to be physically involved in the art of making movies, but other interests, technology, lack of confidence, new faces doing other things, age, or a sense of being left behind have contributed to an overwhelming desire to sit and watch others 'do it'.

I thank each and every one of you for showing up each month. You are the audience that keeps the rest of us producing. You are the eyes and ears that encourage the young upstarts in the club, you reassure the prolific producer that he/she is just going through a bad patch and their next movie will be a hit, just you wait and see.

You attend the banquets and visitors nights, providing the award recipient and the guests with welcome applause and friendship, you provide the continuity that each club needs to carry on.

Your membership is most valued, but don't forget that you are just as welcome to show an old production as to join in on a new one.

The End

As you read through this issue of Panorama give thought to how you can assist in making the SCCA, a Society for Film and Video Makers, a better

and more exciting organization to be a member in.

We are working toward providing you as an individual and your club as a group, with better information that you can use in your everyday videos, more opportunities for differing ideas and viewpoints to be examined, more chances to expose your productions to a wider viewing audience.

We are working toward getting more involved with schools and the new breed of videographers that are ready to bring their style of work to the screen. You may not agree with how they say what they have to say, but they need their chance to experiment and grow. With help from all of us we may one day have someone stand up before a national audience and say "I got my start in a local club and I am a member in good standing with the SCCA".

If you feel that you can't write an article, for one reason or another, then write a letter to the editor about an experience you had while shooting or editing a video. Send us a tip on a shortcut or a product that you found.

I want you to be a part of this society of video and film makers. Although we are not really a complex structure you can be one more distinct member. **Please fill in the registration form in this issue and become a full time MEMBER of the SCCA, a Society for Film and Video Makers.**

A donation to one of our award funds will be put to good use in helping someone progress in the art of movie making or audio production or animation. We are not asking for a lot from just one or two of you (but we will happily take it if you offer) rather we would prefer to see each member from all of the clubs become a member of the SCCA.

It is your organization - become a member, NOW, and receive your regular copy of PANORAMA.■

Jon Soyka

President, SCCA

Net Surfing

by **Christine McGregor**

Reprinted from *Ottawa Film Club Newsletter "The Caszette"*

A few years back, I wrote an article for the Caszette about the Internet, and how you could get access to its newsgroups via National Capital Freenet. Well, time does not stand still in the computer field. In those few years the Internet has exploded to the World Wide Web, homepages, and net-browsers. What this means to you and me is lots more information, available in attractive graphical formats, including pictures, sound, and even video clips. The film & video-making community has some interesting sites in Netland, such as:

- Cyber Film School
- Independent Filmmakers Page
- Video Production "Course"
- Motion Picture Industry Daily News
- Internet Movie Database
- Digital Movie News Webpage
- Cinematographers Online Bible
- Screenwriters Online
- Directors Guild of America
- Film Editing Page
- Sound Lecture notes

What exactly do you get from such net sites? Well, lets take Cyber Film School, for example. It greets me with an opening page that offers various subjects or "chapters", for my perusal. I can choose from things like editing, cinematography and feature interviews, where I can read information just as I would from a book or "down load" files that contain relevant information. This is how I acquired a 7 page template of a Picture Budget that will help me plan some future opus. — Also a Camera and Lighting Log Sheet beautifully laid out and printed up (ready for that same opus), and a SMPTE color bar file.

On Drew's Script-o-Rama Web page, I browsed through several dozen titles of major feature film releases, made my choices, and downloaded 3 complete feature film scripts - then printed them out on my own computer printer. I could have downloaded them all if I was greedy (- or had unlimited paper,— they are, after all, 120 pages each.) Of course, you don't have to print them out. You can just store them on disk and read them on your computer monitor.

I also picked up some nifty format-

ting macros for my word processor that will put my screenwriting efforts in the proper industry format.

There's lots more to see and do - I haven't even explored a quarter of those top 30 film-sites yet. There just aren't enough hours in a day, eh?

I must reiterate - as I did in my previous article on Freenet - that all this doesn't cost me a penny. Those who don't have a home computer can use a terminal at any Ottawa Public Library. (I'm not sure about costs to print out pages). If you're ready to get surfing, here's the address that will open the door:■

<http://www.inforamp.net/~bpaton>

Narration cont. from page 12

If soft music in background do not use narration.

Narration

Ask question, what should I say? Show film to your friends, ask them to write down any questions they wish to ask. You answer the questions, write them down and use as a narration for a film.

Never use sentence, "This is a" it is a worn out phrase. Just talk about it using present tense. 99% of time use present tense about picture on screen.

Use good grammar, even if you have to go to the local high school for assistance.

Remember pauses. Real narration read out aloud sounds different than silent or just reading to oneself. Reading aloud you may find some words that do not fit.

Timing

First time the novice writes narration it is too long. Easier to cut out than add. Similar scenes of a common subject should be spliced together in a sequence as this allows more words to be spoken, than if subject matter is broken up in editing.

Professional films when subject is finished, they never return to it. In silent films with music the scenes must be shorter than with narration.

Leave scenes long, then write narration, cut film to fit narration.

Narration delivery must suit picture. Must be right delivery where it fits. ■

SCCA Competition

This is an open invitation which is going to all of the SCCA Clubs, to take part in the Annual Clubs Film/Video Competition. A trophy already exists but has not as yet been won in the past two years because of lack of entries.

The standard SCCA entry form can be used to enter and the length can be up to 30 minutes.

Entries to be received by Ben Andrews, Festival and Competition Director by the 15th of June.

The club can produce the entry in any way it chooses. A team effort, by group competition, by individual competition are only examples; it is the club's decision on how the entry gets made.

The topic chosen is "STRIKE OUT." Any interpretation of the topic or theme is not excluded.

It would be good to have an entry from all the Clubs who are members of the SCCA.

Any questions should go to Ben Andrews, 25 Eugenia Street, Barrie, Ontario, L4M 1P6.

AMPS

AMERICAN MOTION PICTURE SOCIETY

There will be a Three Way Convention, to be held in San Diego, California, from...

October 23rd to 26th, 1997.

Location:

FOUR POINTS HOTEL
8110 Aero Drive,
San Diego, CA 92123
Groups involved are:

Contact Person:

**AMPS
SAVAC**

Ten Best of the West

**Howard Lewis, General Chairman
1661 View Way
El Cajon, CA 92020-2948
Phone: 619/444-1262**

The SCCA Honours Committee

The following is a list of the Present SCCA members who have in the past, received recognition for their work and devotion to the principles of the SCCA. The SCCA honours were awarded "In recognition of contributions to the advancement of the arts and sciences of photography combined with elements of service".

The honours were awarded on recommendations by SCCA members. The proposer must be an individual member of SCCA in good standing who knows the candidate personally. The proposer must also obtain an endorser who is a member in good standing. This all sound a bit official. But what it comes down to is that some of the many SCCA members, who have made consistent contributions to the "arts and sciences of photography etc." are rewarded by their peers. These contributions can be at the local club level. Or of work in the SCCA. They can consist of artistry in film or video making. Or in the ability to judge the work of others. If you think you know somebody who would qualify let me know so we can mail you the forms with a description of the requirements. The Honours Committee will consider your proposal and, if necessary, give advise to strengthen it. The final results are passed by the Honours Committee for consideration to the SCCA Executives which in turn puts the list up for a vote at the 1997 General Members meeting. Don't hesitate to call on me if you think I could be of some help in filming up your proposal. That is my job.

Jan Bekooy, Chairman
SCCA Honours Committee.
27Alexandre Tache' Blvd.
Hull, Que.,
J9R 1L7
(819) 777-5078

HONOUR LIST OF PRESENT SCCA MEMBERS

Hon. F.S.C.C.A.

Ben Andrews

F.S.C.C.A.

T. Victor Adams
Dr. E. Fred Attridge
Armand Belanger (LM)
Fred Briggs
Patrick Cappello
Mrs. Margaret Conneely (LM)
Mrs. Lois Fowler

Gordon Fowler
Lilian A. McKibbon (Hon LM)
Jack Ruddell
Mrs. Henrietta Schlager
Linda Smith
Miss Helen Welsh

ASSOCIATE S.C.C.A.

Jan Bekooy
Mrs. Edna Brekenridge
Mrs. Carolyn Briggs
J.J. (Jack) Carey F.R.S.P.
Miss Francis Crutcher
Mrs Rose Dabbs
Harry Francis
Miss Marguerite Hann
Edwin Neidhammer

LM denotes Life Member

Hon. LM denotes Honourable Life Member

SAVAC CONTEST '97 37TH ANNUAL

SAVAC, The Society of Amateur Videographers and Cinematographers, will be accepting entries to its 37th annual contest from August 24 to September 25, 1997. The contest is open to all video and film makers who make films for the love of it and not for commercial purposes. Maximum entry running time is 20 minutes. Entry fees are \$ 10 for members; \$20 for non members. Consult entry form for more information.

Winning entries will be shown at the SAVAC Annual Convention which will be held conjointly with Ten Best of the West and the American Motion Picture Society from October 23 to October 26 in the warm and beautiful city of San Diego, California. Please join us for exciting workshops, presentations, and viewing of the best work of 1997.

For entry forms and other contest information, contact

Alan Mund, Contest Chairperson
P.O. Box 2002 Vista, CA 92085 (619)630-1468 E-Mail the organization at <savac~iname.com>.

For Convention Registration Forms, contact:

Howard Lewis 1661 View Way El Cajon, CA 92020-2948 (619) 444- 1262 E-Mail the organization at <savac~iname.com>.

Real-Depth^(TM) 3D Video Breakthrough

The following has been “compiled” and edited by Fred Briggs from copyrighted sources on the Internet, particularly <http://www.floatingimages.com>, by permission.

There is some confusion over the name of the process or product as the company seems to use Floating Images(tm) in some papers and Real-Depth(tm) in others. The author has arbitrarily chosen to use Real-Depth(tm) for the current product and Floating Images for the basic technology and for a second generation technology still under development.

Floating Images, a Westbury, NY startup company, has developed the software and hardware for a new, patent pending, “floating 3-D, off-the-screen” display technology. This technology has the potential to become the next standard for home and arcade video games computers, corporate presentations, Internet/Intranet viewing, and television.

The company unveiled a prototype accessory and software for TV and PC monitors at the Electronic Imaging: Science and Technology Symposium in San Jose last February. Founder-President Eugene Dolgoff indicated that the first software capable of use with the accessory won't reach shelves until Christmas of 1998. The likely first target for the under-\$100 accessory will be the PC and dedicated console videogame market, he said, and the company already has met with numerous game and interactive video developers including Sega of America officials. Dolgoff also said the company has held discussions with Microsoft on incorporating 3-D imaging in productivity software. He hopes eventually to convince broadcasters to include the software in programming so that the adapter can be marketed as a TV accessory, although he conceded that isn't likely to happen until the turn of the century.

Gene Dolgoff is the inventor of the Real-Depth(tm) technology. He has more than 35 years of extensive technical background in optics, 3-D imaging and TV electronics. One of the

first holographers (1964), Mr. Dolgoff later reinvented the first practical holographic printing process (1971), which is commonly used on credit cards today. In 1972, he formed DHI, a company engaged in holography and laser R&D, and in the early 1980's, worked with Dr. Raymond Damadian to develop holographic MRI imaging. By 1984, Mr. Goldoff had made the world's first LCD projector and received broad patents on optical depixelization, optical brightness enhancement, and thin profile video projection systems. Some of this technology was licensed to

Matsushita (Panasonic) and Samsung. From 1988 to 1995, he founded and acted as CEO, President and Chief Scientist at Projectavision, and Floating Images was founded in 1995. Gene Dolgoff has published many technical papers, has close to 40 patents issued or pending, and is a member of prestigious standards and task force committees.

The most common type of 3-D visualization systems today are classified as stereoscopic or autostereoscopic. In both methods, slightly different views of a scene are produced that are supposed to correspond to the different views seen by human eyes. These right-eye and left-eye images are designed to produce binocular disparity, one of the four key conditions for 3-D. Dozens of different configurations of these systems have been developed, but all are geared toward delivering independent right-eye and left-eye images to those respective eyes.

Stereoscopic systems require the user to wear some sort of optical device. Red and green colored glasses were popular for the 1950's vintage 3-D movies. Polarized glasses, and newer LCD shutter glasses, are more popular today. The latter allow a sequence of right-eye and left-eye images, which are produced on a screen or direct-view display, to be delivered to the proper eye. Alternatively, optical systems can also be used to separate the right and left images. Stereo-microscopes are the best example of

this application.

Autostereoscopic systems, on the other hand, place the optical element on the direct-view display or display screen. Again, the goal is to direct right-eye and left-eye images to the correct eye without requiring the user to wear anything. Lenticular lenses, prisms, light-blocking barriers and other devices have been used for these systems.

A major complaint, and a fundamental problem with stereoscopic and auto stereoscopic systems, is that they can produce fatigue, headaches and eye strain. Until recently, the cause of these symptoms was little understood. Dolgoff, and Co-founder of Floating Images Louis Tullo, have now discovered why. The problem is a conflict between convergence and accommodation.

Accommodation refers to the need to refocus the eyes as one shifts attention from objects at different distances. Physically, the cornea and lens of the eye change shape to produce a sharp image on the surface of the retina. There is a limited region in space, the depth of focus, over which an object will be sharp and in focus. Objects outside of this region quickly become blurry. This is exactly how optical systems work.

Convergence refers to the need to reaim the eyes when shifting attention from a distant object to a closer object. If you drew a line from the center of each eye toward an object, these lines would converge at some point on that object. Since each eye has a slightly different view of the scene, the brain must converge these two images so that the two areas of sharp focus coincide with each other. Although we seldom realize it, most of our world is out of focus and appears as a double image except for the small area of our attention.

In the real 3-D world, convergence and accommodation always coincide with each other. We aim our eyes at an object and focus on that object at the same point in space. As our attention shifts to another object, our eyes reconverge and refocus at a different

distance. The human brain has learned to interpret the muscular actions associated with both convergence and accommodation to know objects are at different distances.

With stereoscopic and autostereoscopic systems, convergence and accommodation occur at different points in space, which is now believed to be the source of eye strain and headaches. In these systems, the source of the image is a two dimensional display, such as a CRT-based or LCD-based computer monitor, TV or projector. Even though objects can appear to be either in front of or in back of the display, the images are generated, and are in focus at only one distance: the display surface. Consequently, accommodation makes our eyes focus at the display surface.

Objects however, can appear to be either in front of or in back of the display surface. This is a result of binocular disparity. Since these objects do not appear to be at the display surface, we aim our eyes at the points in space where we think these object are (convergence). The result is that attempts to use accommodation and convergence to view these images are sending conflicting signals to the brain. We want to focus at one distance but aim our eyes at a different distance. This is not the way we are used to seeing and can result in eyestrain, fatigue, and headaches. In fact, the further the object from the display surface, the greater this conflict and the harder it is to see the 3-D image.

Floating Images has now developed a better 3-D visualization concept that eliminates the shortcomings of these systems. Real-Depth(tm) imaging allows accommodation to coincide with convergence to produce 3-D images that more naturally reflect the way humans see. Most graphics rendering systems use 2-D cues to produce a 3-D effect. Stereoscopic and autostereoscopic systems focus on binocular disparity, but also provide parallax. But perhaps the least amount of attention has been devoted to depth disparity. When people focus on an object, other objects at different distances are out of focus. Consider looking down a city street at the sequential street signs. Focus on one, and the rest are blurry. Refocusing on the next one gives us a visual cue that the sign is further or closer than the last one.

The patent-pending solution that Floating Images has conceived is

simple and elegant. In order to produce depth disparity, one needs simply to produce a virtual image plane in a different location in space. In its most elementary form, it is like looking at two transparencies, one behind the other, but separated by a short distance. Focus on the first one and the second disappears in a blurry haze. Switching from one to the other is as easy as changing your focus, however.

Floating Images(tm) technology, in addition to providing traditional depth cues such as perspective and background image occlusion, also provides both horizontal and vertical binocular parallax (the ability to look around foreground objects to see previously hidden background objects, with each eye seeing a different view at all times) and accommodation (the need to refocus one's eyes when shifting attention from a near object to a distant object) which coincides with convergence (the need to re-aim one's eyes when shifting attention from a near object to a distant object). Since accommodation coincides with convergence, Floating Images technology does not produce headaches, fatigue, or eye strain, regardless of how long it is viewed (unlike stereoscopic and autostereoscopic displays).

A Real-Depth Adapter can be fabricated for consumer and business applications to retail for under \$80. The optics consist of a fully reflecting mirror and a partially reflecting mirror, both of which can be made with inexpensive plastic optics. A plastic enclosure will house the optics and provide a viewing port. The adapter will simply fit over any existing TV or computer monitor, and be secured with Velcro. The adapter can be flipped up if not in use or lowered when needed.

Clearly, source material must also be available to take advantage of Real-Depth (tm) 3-D imaging. Here, a number of options are possible, but soon, very inexpensive format modification software will be available that opens up several application areas. It is important to note that these reformatting modifications can be done directly to the source material, such as a computer game, or broadcast directly as Real-Depth(tm) TV signals. The total bandwidth of all source material remains essentially the same. It has merely been reformatted to allow separation of the image into foreground, background, and 3-D volume components. Also under development are algorithms that will eventually allow real-time reformatting

of standard broadcast video into the Real-Depth(tm) format.

One of the most basic applications, called Floating Windows(tm), allows users to position two Windows-based applications in foreground and background positions. Typically, the foreground image would consist of a spreadsheet or text-based application. The foreground is made transparent, so that the background image is visible through the foreground application. The background image can be another spreadsheet application, video or game application, Internet or financial tracking program. It could even be a charting program linking to the foreground spreadsheet. Change a number in the spreadsheet and see the graph change in the background. Implementing Real-Depth(tm) imaging with 2 levels is quite easy. But for compelling and natural looking 3-D environments, objects and images must be able to move within a 3-D space. As these applications become available, they can be viewed in full 3-D using the same inexpensive Real-Depth(tm) Adapter as described above, or more sophisticated free-space imaging systems, as described later.

The first task is to find methods that determine what objects or features belong in the foreground or background. For animations or computer-generated graphics, this process is more straight forward than for other source materials, such as video. With computer-generated graphics, various features can simply be tagged with location coordinates to designate their foreground or background status. With video, other methods, such as spatial frequency filtering, are being investigated. Spatial frequency filters evaluate the visual appearance of various areas of the image frame. Are as of high detail, like edges, have high spatial frequency. Areas of low detail, like background sky, have low spatial frequencies. These areas can be identified using electronic filters and separated into separate buffers for display in the foreground and background fields. The second challenge is to find ways to fill the space between the foreground and background image planes with 3-D moveable objects and images. Some objects, such as characters, must move within these planes. But other features, such as walls, may need to span the space from foreground to background.

A number of methods to accomplish these needs are now under develop-

ment at Floating Images. For example, modification of the various 2-D cues can be used quite effectively to produce 3-D visualization. In many ways, Real-Depth(tm) imaging is quite compatible with the methods used to construct computer graphics and virtual reality worlds, since three dimensional coordinates are assigned to the component elements of many of the objects and features within these applications. Floating Images is now initiating contacts with major developers of computer graphics, animation's, games, and 3-D virtual worlds to learn how Real-Depth(tm) imaging can be incorporated with these applications. Of particular interest is the multi-player, Internet-based game market for home entertainment.

Products like the Real-Depth(tm) Adapter are designed to add a third dimension to a direct view display, such as a PC monitor or TV. But perhaps the most compelling applications of the Real-Depth(tm) technology is with free-space imaging systems called Floating Images. With these devices, images can now float in air with such realism that viewers will be tempted to reach out and grab the image. The technology has applications for advertising, education, business presentation products, location-based entertainment, and public information booths, such as kiosks.

For Floating Images free-space imaging systems, the concepts of Real-Depth(tm) imaging remain the same as do the requirements for developing suitable source material. But there are changes in the device configuration that make it suitable for free-space imaging of the 3-D images.

The company has several prototype Floating Images free-space imaging systems that have been developed to analyze various design configurations. (The geometries of the optics are too complicated to be explained here, but can be found in the white paper at Floating Images Web Site at www://floatingimages.com/). Perhaps the most impressive device is used to float images of a bust of Beethoven and a cube. Both move back and forth and rotate in free space. This demonstration is visible with standard room lights on and is so striking that projected objects appear to float over real objects that are many feet in front of the free-space imager.

Clearly, such devices could have an enormous impact on many types of

products. Floating 3-D advertising, floating 3-D images in the classroom, or 3-D public information centers are some of the possibilities. Arcade-style location-based entertainment or Disney-like entertainment experiences are also feasible. Even standard business presentations could be enhanced with a free-space imager that floats images in air.

This new technology was introduced to the International Society of Optical Engineering in San Diego last February, and has been demonstrated at the New Animation Technology Exposition in Pasadena, March 24-30. It is scheduled to be shown at the Computer Game Developers Conference in Santa Clara, April 25-29, the Society for Information Display International Symposium, Seminar and Exhibit in Boston, May 11-16, the Interactive Digital Software Association Electronic Entertainment Expo in Atlanta, June 19-21, the 24th International Conference on Computer Graphics and Interactive Techniques in Los Angeles, August 3-8, **and the Society of Canadian Cine Amateur Convention in Kitchener on August 7 and 8. See it wherever you can!** ■

Tripods continued from page 20

For nature photography outdoors, I use a tripod about 60 percent of the time — scenes that need careful composition, graduated filters, telephoto lenses, or intended panning. Scenario films or videos are another example of tripod need. I never carry a tripod on long or difficult mountain hiking trails where one may also encounter wildlife; I keep the camera steady and think of it as being on a tripod, sometimes supporting it on top of my walking stick.

I have also found that the monopod at times serves well where a tripod is indicated but difficult to use, such as fixed seating places in an arena, or crowded public gatherings and tight quarters. A monopod allows a large degree of movement, takes very little ground space, is easily maneuverable and yet gives sufficient support to help hold the camera steady. When not supporting a camera you can use a monopod even for a walking stick.

So, my advise to beginners and to those needing to improve their camera work is to learn to appreciate image steadiness and smooth camera movements. Instead of memorizing strict rules, learn to judge situations when and where and if a tripod is needed and learn to practice steady camera holding. You don't need the latest model digital camera to produce steady, smooth pictures. ■

MARGARET CHAMBERLAIN

We especially remember Margaret Chamberlain at this time. She is now resting at home after hospitalization and to add to her problems, her son Richard, spent five weeks in the hospital suffering from a serious illness, but is now at home recuperating.

Margaret is Western-Vice President of the SCCA and was Chairman of the Convention in Victoria last October. She was unable to give the closing speech at that time.

We appreciate the excellent job she did of the Convention and our best wishes are with her and Richard for a complete recovery

Thank you Margaret for your outstanding support and a job well done.

Linda Smith

Editor

USING TRIPODS — CURSE OR BLESSING ?

by Leo Niilo

A retired veterinary scientist, living in Lethbridge, Alberta. Learned photography in the 1930s and used it for hobby, freelance and scientific purposes. Took up amateur cinematography in 1956 with particular interest in film animation. Entered films in international competitions in Canada, USA, UK, Australia and New Zealand, achieving a Three-Star status by PSA in 1982. Took up videography in 1991, while keeping an eye on its technical changes and practical applied aspects. Has been an SCCA member since the early 1970s. Also a PSA

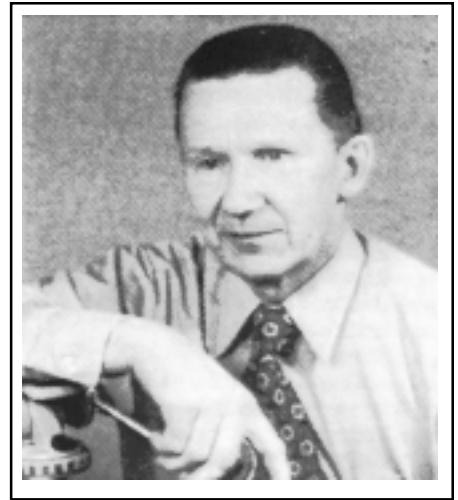
A funny thing happened on the way to the Rockies. On a scenic viewpoint at the side of a mountain were a group of tourists and several bighorn sheep milling about in the roadside clearing. The tame-looking animals, particularly a large ram with huge curly horns, mingled freely among the sightseers, looking for handouts or licking the bumpers of parked cars. The animals were obviously a focal point to the people around them, but observing the scene from a distance drew my interest on the reactions and behavior of these people. In the group was a man with a camera on tripod trying to photograph the animals. He seemed to make determined efforts to locate his tripod among the constantly moving animals and people while others were casually snapping pictures with their point-and-shoots. Wherever the tripod was placed, the subject had moved away or others blocked the view by the time the photographer was able to get his eye to the viewfinder. In a moment an inconsiderate bighorn jumped and almost knocked the camera over — but before that happened, an athletic type with a camcorder in hand, rushed from his car and started shooting. He swung the camera left and right, up and down, between the legs and between the horns; every which way. He was fast,

happy and excited. The scene looked hilarious, worthy of a documentary movie clip of the Candid Camera genre.

This funny episode reminded me of two previous similar happenings I had seen — also in the mountain tourist spots and involving wildlife and sightseers with tripod-mounted cameras or camcorders. It also made me think and analyze the actions of those frustrated photographers attempting to set up tripods in situations where tripods are a hindrance. Clearly, they were beginners, but serious enough to take a tripod along. What kind of visuals were they after? What kind of training or instruction had they received?

In my philosophical approach I figured that many beginners learning the basics of photography, cinematography or videography tend to follow rules. And often one of the rules — learned from either a textbook or through an instructor of a course — states: “Always use a tripod.” This statement is based on the premise that the use of tripod induces care and discipline and leads to serious, quality results. However, there are exceptions. A religious adherence to “always use a tripod” is just as bad as “never use a tripod.” Students should be instructed in the principles and reasons of when, where and why to use tripods. Otherwise they learn the hard way: by mistakes. A great deal of image quality depends on steadiness of the camera, regardless of how technically advanced features the camera may have. There is nothing wrong with handholding a camera if it can be held steady and be under the operator’s control. Sometimes it is really advantageous for a handheld camcorder to freely follow fast action shots and quick cutaways. I think everyone has seen how TV newspeople shoulder their heavy cameras in taping public events — and the resultant images look steady. Although those shoulder-balanced machines are easier to keep steady than to stabilize a small lightweight camcorder, the operators have learned to use their equipment effectively.

I learned steady handholding of cameras long time ago by practising on an empty cine camera with a long telephoto lens. Some books describe camera stabilization by showing pictures and diagrams of grip, stance, body positions, bracing, supporting and other methods. It’s fine to keep those basic positions in mind, but it takes some practise to make sure that



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they work for you. Observing an image in the viewfinder and paying attention to the frame edges while trying to keep the camera as still as possible, free of jitters, shakes and bumps — or panning smoothly to follow action — is the way to practise. A telephoto lens magnifies the shakes and vibrations in the viewfinder: if you can reasonably stabilize a camera this way, you would be able to get an almost rock-steady picture with a wide angle lens. This allows you to experiment with different positions and ways until you find one that is the most stable position. It may not be the most comfortable or elegant position for you, but a stable position for the image. Such practise fosters awareness and skill in camera steadying, which become beneficial even when your camera is on a tripod.

There are many camcorders on the market now that have an electronic image stabilization system, claimed to give you the “perfectly” steady picture. I haven’t tried one, so I can neither praise nor curse that feature, but based on the experience I’ve had with some other newfangled automatic doodads on cameras, I am not too eager to get excited about it. But if it works for you, fine!

I counted my tripods: there are eight of them in various shapes and sizes, and a monopod. So I must be a tripod nut! I use them 100% for copy work and macro applications, not only for mounting cameras, but also for holding miniature subjects, shades, reflectors, props and so on. One old elevator tripod is fitted with a platform which I use for oversize copy work. Two table tripods find their use in macro work.

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