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# PANORAMA

OF AMATEUR FILM & VIDEO

SUR LE FILM ET VIDEO



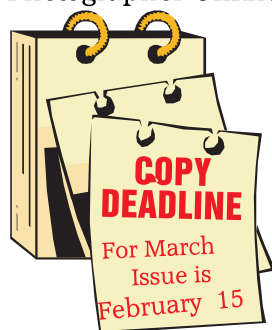
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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



*Photo by Joseph Bochsler Jr.*

### Fred Briggs, FSCCA

**T**he break from bad news is certainly over. Winter has hit us hard from coast to coast, even before it officially began, and our members have been digging out from Victoria to Newfoundland. There's no expectation that it will be easier this year, and beside the annoyance of the weather, we know that it always brings with it an increase in the death rate.

The first that we know of has been John Hanson, a member of the Society and the Hamilton Video/Film Makers. John hasn't been making meetings for some months now as he was fighting a long and painful battle with cancer.

John passed away peacefully at home at the age of 63 on Sunday November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2008, survived by his wife Karen (also an SCCA Member), two daughters and their spouses and the four grandchildren, a sister and brother, their spouses and children, and both John's Parents.

John had 36 years as a manager at Stelco Steel, and on his retirement became a member of the Stelco Salaried Pensioners Organization, and spent a great deal of time in court and negotiating with lawyers on behalf of that organization when Stelco was in Bankruptcy Protection. Later he was co-founder and Chairman of the Canadian Federation of Pensioners and the Stelco Pension Advisory Committee.

John was also a former Commodore of the Burlington Sailing and Boating Club, and retired manager of the La-Salle Park Marina, and he actively promoted the newly-formed Able Sail Program, which today teaches up to 50 people with physical handicaps to sail.

It was under his leadership that that Marina became the first to qualify for the award of Ontario's Most Ecologically Responsible Marina, mentioned in the Spring 2007 PANORAMA in an article about the then upcoming convention in Hamilton.

The above is only a partial listing of his recent accomplishments. I had very much wanted to tap John's abilities for the SCCA Executive, but his load was consistently so heavy that I was always waiting for a better time, which never came. The Burlington City Council honoured John with a Civic Recognition Award, but I'm not certain if that was immediately before or after his passing.

After the funeral Karen gave me a copy of the 2009 World Wildlife Federation Calendar, which carries a photograph of a bee that John had made. Karen told me that John wanted me to have that Calendar.

While it isn't exactly a secret, it isn't well known either that the SCCA prints a few copies of the new PANORAMA, and mails them out to a very small handful of longtime members who are in advanced age and don't have computers, and thus no email. One came back recently, that had been mailed to Muriel Frazer in the Bronx. It was marked by the U.S. Postal Service as Attempted – Not Known, and Muriel's telephone number is not longer in service. We have no idea whether she has entered a retirement residence, moved away to live with a son or daughter (she would be in her 90's now) or has passed away. I contacted the Membership Chairman of AMMA, Pat Otto in Florida, and she has not heard anything from Muriel for about a year. If anyone has any information about Muriel Frazer's present condition, please let us know. We have also lost contact with Roy Pachkowski in Vancouver and Hugh Dimaline in

Newfoundland, and would appreciate information about the situation of either of them from anyone who knows.

Our Membership currently consists of 8 Affiliated Clubs, 8 Family Memberships, 31 Individual Members, 6 Honourary Members, and 1 Life Member, with faint hope that any more currently in arrears will submit their Membership Fees this year.

The Ottawa Video/Film Makers have generously offered to host the 2009 SCCA Convention in The Amateur Movie Capital of Canada this year, but there is some question whether an SCCA with such a small Membership will be able to support any more conventions, especially at some distance from the largest concentration of members, southwestern Ontario.

If a convention in Ottawa appeals to you, and there is any chance of you attending, please let me know by email ([Pres@sccaonline.ca](mailto:Pres@sccaonline.ca)). We aren't asking for a commitment, but we would like to get some indication of whether or not such a convention is still viable.

If you would consider attending, our host has selected two possible weekends – Labour Day Weekend (September 5-7) and the following weekend, September 12 and 13, with their first preference being Labour Day Weekend. They are making tentative plans now and the convention would include some local tours, so if you might attend, please let us know about each of those dates. We need your input soon as time flies and bookings will have to be made.

We have also received an invitation from UNICA to become a Member of that organization. You will find some information about UNICA on [Page 10](#). The SCCA Executive has made no decision regarding membership, and will be putting a number of questions to UNICA before making a decision. Your opinion counts, and we would like to take it into consideration in our deliberations. Please read the article and let us know what you think, either through any member of the SCCA Executive, your Club SCCA Representative, or directly by email to me. ■

# CLUB NEWS

By Thom Speechley



*Wasn't it just great to have a "white Christmas" from coast to coast? I don't hear a lot of cheering. But there were some good video opportunities. It would mean going outside into some very low temperatures. I could have shot a lot more but the inside of my car window kept steaming up.*

## BRANT VIDEO MAKERS

*Brant Camcorder News* editor, Dan Kennaley

The October meeting included a discussion about possible subjects for the November topic, "Death". The club then enjoyed two old productions by Frank Birch. Videos by Joan Jacquemain and Dan Kennaley, and the compilation of video shot at the 2007 Hamilton Caribana parade and edited by Wayne Schaler of the Ottawa club, were also shown. Special guest at the November meeting was Iain Caulder, a professional training tutorial producer, who demonstrated the current capabilities of Microsoft "PowerPoint" presentation software. In addition, he demonstrated software for converting Powerpoint presentations into video files and a free Microsoft product for producing slide shows in Windows media format. (These products are discussed in this month's column on Internet utilities.)

## BUFFALO VIDEO-MOVIE MAKERS

"Camerama" editor John Weiksnar

There were six entries in this year's "Shorty Contest". Members submitted ballots awarding points to each entry. Points will be tallied and the winner will be announced at the November meeting. The prize is an XLR camcorder adapter, which improves sound quality. Four additional member's videos were also shown.

Members were challenged to produce for the November meeting, a short video with the subject of a "meal". The video must not contain dialog or narration.

In the November newsletter, Emil Novak offers some hints for using typical 'film noir' clichés. Two examples: *Doomed Characters*.

A. As they say, there's one in every crowd. And he can be the loudmouth that brings down the party.

B. Consider, including that one doomed character, the one that simply brings down the attitude of survival.

"Shorty" contest winners announced at the November meeting were: A tie held by PHIL and REBECCA UTECH for "The Drive Home" and CHUCK AMADORI for "Pale Dark". Second place went to Emil Novak for "Dark Alone". Featured guest speaker was Len Tobin of "The Voice Squad", a local group of 'voice' actors. He used sample clips from several professional productions to illustrate the value of good voice-over and narration. The

November challenge was to submit short videos about food, but with no narration or dialog. Five were shown. Rock City by Emil, The Forgotten, by TERRY KIMMEL & Rebecca, Minding Dog-Boy by Chuck, French Cheese by Alex Szatmáry, and in AVCHD, Spurts 'n Squirts by JOHN P WEIKSNAR.

Special guests at the December meeting were producers of the upcoming feature film "Nicholas of Myra", Robert Vincent Jones, Paul Mergenhausen and Matthew Messler. You can see previews of this film at:

[http://www.nicholasofmyramovie.com/nicholasofmyra\\_small.htm](http://www.nicholasofmyramovie.com/nicholasofmyra_small.htm)

Additional member's videos were shown before the second half of the meeting that was devoted to the annual holiday celebration.

## HAMILTON VIDEO/FILM MAKERS

*Reel News*, editor Dave Stewart



The November newsletter reported on the October "Visitor's Night". This traditional event did not seem to be as well attended as former years but the meeting was a success and included some entertaining video. A more significant feature of the evening was the celebration of the club's 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!

President Dan Copeland and Ralph Trouten, the club's longest active member, cut the celebratory cake, which

was provided by Agnes and Adam Houston. Photo by T. Speechley



At the November meeting, Barron Thompson gave a presentation of the BREVIS 35mm DOF lens adapter. This device is used on camcorders to produce a shallow depth of field and is considered necessary due to the relatively short focal lengths of camcorder lenses. After the break, several videos were shown, including "Ice Dive" by Rick Doelle, "Harley Ride" by Rick Gaunt, "The Art of Mums" by Dan Cope-land, "The Burlington Jazz and Blues Festival" by Jack Simpson, 1994 HV/FM Garage Sale" and "1993 HV/FM Open House" by Joe Bochsler, "War Hero" by Alex Szatmary, "Rocks" by Mary Cosgrove and "A Chat with Pam" by Harold Cosgrove.

### LONDON VIDEOGRAPHY CLUB

*It's A Wrap* editor, TBA

The November meeting was devoted to questions and problems concerning the "archiving" of old analog media, VHS, Hi8 etc to digital. Thom Speechley demonstrated three commercial devices for converting analog video to digital format and suggested methods to produce the best final copy in DVD format.

Phil McLeod showed his summer hi-def production of an auto trip through the Canadian Rockies. Hugh Pitts also showed a hi-def video of a visit to the annual heritage celebrations held in Prescott, Ontario. The December meeting was the club's annual Christmas party and also gave everyone an opportunity to watch the "Bag Shoot" productions from the October meeting. Also shown were a few videos from former years to celebrate the passing of another club year.



Ellen and Jim Town catch the action

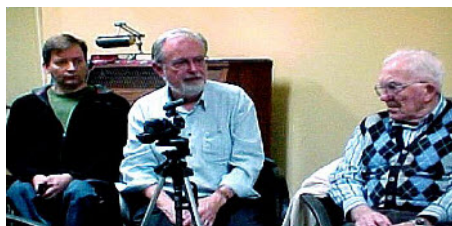


Rael Wienburg and Doug Taplin

### VICTORIA VIDEO CLUB

*The Bulletin*, editor James Hatch

The October meeting was dedicated to an in-depth look at microphone techniques. Several types were used in test footage and the relative effectiveness of each alternative was discussed.



Members discuss the merits of the 'shotgun' microphone.

From the November news bulletin: "ANYTHING GOES RESULTS"

"With many thanks to Gordon Wicks for the time spent in going over these competition offerings for him to judge. So here below are the entries and the results."

1st: "The Sky and The Dawn"

Entered by: Michael Verronneau.

2nd: "Cat's Play"

Entered by: Margaret Chamberlain.

3rd: "Antelopes"

Entered by: Jean Rawlings.

4th: "The Great Escape"

Entered by: James Hatch.

### WINNIPEG AMATEUR MOVIE AND VIDEO CLUB

*Bulletin* editors,

Wallace and Jeanette Robertson

The October meeting featured a film by Fred Schlanda of Beluga whales taken this past July during a trip to Churchill. Fred also talked at length about the beautiful setting on Hudson's Bay and the historical significance of the area. You can enjoy a series of panoramic views of Churchill's Fort Prince of Wales at:

<http://www.panoramio.com/photo/5336373>

The showing of the film apparently stimulated an open discussion about possible club projects for the coming year. James Robertson had sent in a suggestion for short productions on the subject of "Guess What I Found", each of which would feature some object which had been saved for sentimental or historical reasons.

At the November meeting two videos from the late 1990s were shown. Lorne Strick's "Threshing Machines from the Past" was shot at an annual "Threshermans" reunion not far from Winnipeg. The event is noted mainly for the opportunity to watch antique equipment in action. Norm Fredrickson's

film "Harvest Gold and Steel" recorded the scene of a large train derailment near Laclu in the Kenora district. The 'golden' just harvested grain was spread over a length of almost a mile of track. This issue also includes a reprinting of an article from the New York Times, which attempts to explain the long-term intrinsic social value of "home movies".

In the January Bulletin, President Al Ross relates a chance meeting of a local actor at a Christmas Dinner party. This encounter resulted in the actor, Mary Jane Zonneveld, and her husband attending the club's December meeting. In addition, the evening featured the showing of one of Mary Jane's performances in a local production. Al believes this experience suggests that we should never hesitate to let people know, in these occasional encounters, that we are involved in amateur video/film production. Hopefully it could help attract new members. In a final note, editor Wallace Robertson mourns the passing of AMMA. Adrian Robertson warns, in a separate note, that we should protect the LCD screens of our cameras and camcorders during these freezing days and nights.

### INSTITUTE OF AMATEUR CINEMATOGRAPHERS (IAC)

*Film and Videomaker* editor, Garth Hope

The December issue announces the details of the 2009 BIAFF, which will be held this year at Chesterfield, Derbyshire, in April. Competition entries must be received no later than January 31st.

Two productions, which won major awards in the 2008 CIAFF as well as the BIAFF, are featured in articles by their creators. Phil Martin, "In The National Interest" and Ernst Auhuber, "Mosel Gold", describe in detail how they were inspired to begin their creations and what challenges they faced in their completion.

On the subject of festivals, Lee Prescott writes a report on the 2008 Cotswold event. Regrettably, he also reports that because of diminishing participation and rising costs, there will be no Cotswold in future. In a related article, Dave Watterson pays tribute to Lee, who was the originator and "driving force" behind the festival for almost ten years. During that time, the event gained worldwide recognition.

Excellent technical articles this month include a review of the editor plug-in "Mercalli" from 'proDAD', which is a "stabilizer" to remove camera shake during Editing. This program works like electronic

[Continued on Page 16](#)

# .... BREAKING NEWS AND UPDATES ....

... Interest in 3D for Hollywood Films, Home Television, and even hobbyists is still mounting. The following link, and the links to 3 more pages when you get there, will give you a good background of what's been developing ...

<http://www.eetimes.com/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=210500115>

... Dolby introduced their way to present 3D video on your home television screen using Blue-ray, HDMI and MPEG with present formats, and either active (read "shutters") or passive (polaroid?) glasses, at the Consumer electronics Show in Los Vegas during the week beginning on January 5<sup>th</sup>. Nvideo showed a new product for viewing 3D Video Games on home computers ...

[DOLBY & NVIDIA](#)

... Panasonic is pushing for 3D Standards, maybe by March, and 3D in your TV by 2010! ...

[PANASONIC](#)

... The big hit of the show, just before Nortel filed for Bankruptcy Protection, was their virtual reality demonstration, using EpicGames/UnrealGaming Technology, of Web.Alive, an internet shopping experience where your "avatar" enters a showroom, visits items of interest, walks up to "store staff" to ask questions, and can consult with knowledgeable shoppers who can give good advice. This was so big that it just might be the saviour of Nortel! ...

[http://products.nortel.com/go/product\\_content.jsp?parId=0&segId=0&catId=W&prod\\_id=69040](http://products.nortel.com/go/product_content.jsp?parId=0&segId=0&catId=W&prod_id=69040)

... Hear a podcast interview with Nortel and Epic spokesmen, and about a new kind of 3D Sound!

... [http://podcast.nortel.com/podcasts2/nortel\\_web\\_alive\\_7961.mp3](http://podcast.nortel.com/podcasts2/nortel_web_alive_7961.mp3)

... Curious about the Gaming Engine? ...

[www.unrealtechnology.com](http://www.unrealtechnology.com)

<http://www.unrealtechnology.com/technology.php>

... And the leader is ... from Montreal! ...

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/28659228/>

... Recently we have been hearing predictions that very soon television sets will be hooked up to an internet connection over which HD movies will be delivered to your home on demand, and that the DVD is as good as dead, and so is Blue-ray! The fact is, HD Downloading to your TV is already here, and there were several new internet ready TV sets at CES. For another view, check this out ...

[http://reviews.cnet.com/8301-18438\\_7-10142913-82.html?tag=nl.e404](http://reviews.cnet.com/8301-18438_7-10142913-82.html?tag=nl.e404)

... VHS is already dead! Isn't it? I recently heard about the last VHS distributor dumping those he can't sell to Remainder Companies. But then along came CES! Check this one out! ...

[http://news.cnet.com/8301-17938\\_105-10140442-1.html?tag=nl.e404](http://news.cnet.com/8301-17938_105-10140442-1.html?tag=nl.e404)

... Well, I've still got a large library of VHS tapes, and a couple of working players, but if you hear of a new Betamax Player you'll let me know, won't you! I've got tons of stuff on Betamax, and there are no parts available for my old SONY machines! I'm resigned to dumping my old 3/4" U-Matic tapes. I don't even know what's on those! ..... Fred Briggs .... ■

# FAKE MAKE GET THE SHOT!

BY FRED BRIGGS

Since the Spring 2008 Issue and in the last few of these articles, I've been promising (and meaning it) to consider various ways of animating a series of still pictures, always finding that more possibilities were opening up to me and that I needed to do more research.

In the September Issue I turned my attention to the problem of getting better quality stills to work with in the first place, and improving the quality of stills extracted from video, using Photo Acute. I also touched on removing objects that are moving through the frames, or appear in some frames but not in others, and promised to return to that trick later in an article on image stitching.

I picked up on that image stitching topic in the November 2008 PANORAMA, and identified a few programs that do a great job of correcting unequal exposures and various aberrations and geometric problems, provided information about removing moving objects, and finished the article with a promise to get back to turning video into animated paintings in the January Issue.

Since that article went to press, I discovered another problem with some of the panoramas I tried to construct from a series of shots, so before turning to a new topic, I'd like to clear that up first.

Occasionally when I need to scan a very large photograph, painting, drawing, or map, I scan it in sections using the glass I described in the Winter 2008 PANORAMA a year ago. There seems to be no problem stitching these scans together because there are absolutely no geometric problems, and the Serif Panorama Plus and the Autopano Pro do a wonderful job of stitching them without any shading problems, or variation in lighting from scan to scan.

However, some of the shots I had made of paintings just couldn't be stitched because they produced unintelligible ovals! I knew I had done something wrong, but couldn't figure out what.

I think I can solve that issue now. Some of the shots of that long painting of the school I described weren't made the way you would shoot a landscape, or a city-

scape, turning the body from the waist and shooting successive shots, or shooting successive stills, panning the head of a tripod remaining in a fixed position between shots. No, I had tried to emulate the action of a scanner, moving the tripod on a dolly along the smooth floor of the college hall, remaining at the same distance from the wall on which the painting hung without turning the pan head at all, and stopping for each shot.

I had also tried to copy another large painting by setting up my camera on a tripod aiming down to the floor, placing one corner of the painting on the floor under the lens, shooting a still, moving the painting to shoot the other corner and shooting again, then turning the picture 180° and successively shooting the other two corners.

According to the literature for Autopano Pro, this isn't supposed to work! They're planning (hoping?) to add this feature in a future release!

Meanwhile, I'm planning a third trip to that university when the weather is nicer, and this time I'll shoot those stills with my back to the wall with the tripod set up opposite the centre of the painting, zoom far enough out of wide angle to just shoot smaller parts of the painting, and more of them, in at least two horizontal rows, rotating the camera between shots but not moving it. And I advise you to shoot all your panorama sets of stills from one place near the centre of the scene you're covering.

So that corrects/finishes the November article. Where do we go next?

First, I'd like to point out that two months is a lot shorter than three months, especially when you throw in Remembrance Day, Christmas, Boxing Day, and New Years!

Secondly, I had wanted to consider, and test, Morphing as a possible means of turning a series of successive stills, no matter how they were obtained, into a video sequence, but here again we run into that old problem of every path leading to several others, and different programs having a different set of features.

On top of that, one of those paths has led me on a quest that has caused me to invest considerable time, and even more money, because it seems to have great potential for solving many problems I face with my video that I haven't even mentioned before in these articles (the problems – I know I've mentioned the video!).

Let's start with the word Morph. Googling Morph has turned up a great many programs, many that had nothing to do with the meaning for morph that I had in mind. This has led me to a vast array of software for creating "3D" graphic animations (not the kind of 3D we've been following in Breaking News of late – there we go again with multiple meanings). I've been spending hours, long days, and far into the night searching for software, (some very expensive and some free), characters, models, clothing, props, poses, and animations (again, some expensive and much of it free). I'm a long way from being competent to handle an article (or series of articles?) on that subject yet, but it may eventually make some interesting reading. Heck, there's an article just in the series of discoveries and inspirations that have drawn me into that demanding hobby!

So for now, under the pressure of time and having wasted so much of it in the past few months, I've decided to return to the theme of something simple and easy that you can do to some stills to make them more useful in your videos.

I have found two programs that will let you put water into your stills, and animate the water!

My search for Morphing Programs brought me to [Xiberpix](#) who have a FREE Morphing Program (Sqirlz Morph), and there I discovered that they also have a "reflections" program ([Sqirlz Water Reflections](#) - also FREE). They also have a few other programs that I'll look into later, including a program to change perspectives, something I'm going to need when I try to "map" one map onto another to show changes over time in my history video, but we'll look at those later when I finally get around to Morphing Programs.

When I first found this site I downloaded Sqirlz Water Reflections (version 1.3 at that



time, I think) and found it produced an excellent effect, so I should bring the program to your attention.

Time passed. I lost the boot drive on one computer, and the motherboard on another, and the program was lost and forgotten. Eventually I remembered that I had it before, and went on the hunt to find it again. I came across a similar program by [Nufsoft](#), [Nature Illusion Studio](#) with many more features, but with a purchase price of \$24.95 for the Standard Edition and \$39.95 for the Pro Edition. You can download a FREE Trial that works for 30 days, and I believe this is the Pro Edition. There is very little in the Pro Edition that isn't available in the Standard Edition.

One additional feature is the ability to add music to your animation which might be important to those who want to use the program to make Screen Savers or Animated GIF Files, but we will want to export an AVI file to add to a video, and we'll use the sound facilities of our video editing program.

The only other additional feature in the Pro Edition is the ability to add animated objects to your scene. The only two provided in the FREE Trial are crows and a large white bird but I understand that you could prepare your own objects from image files or animated GIFS.

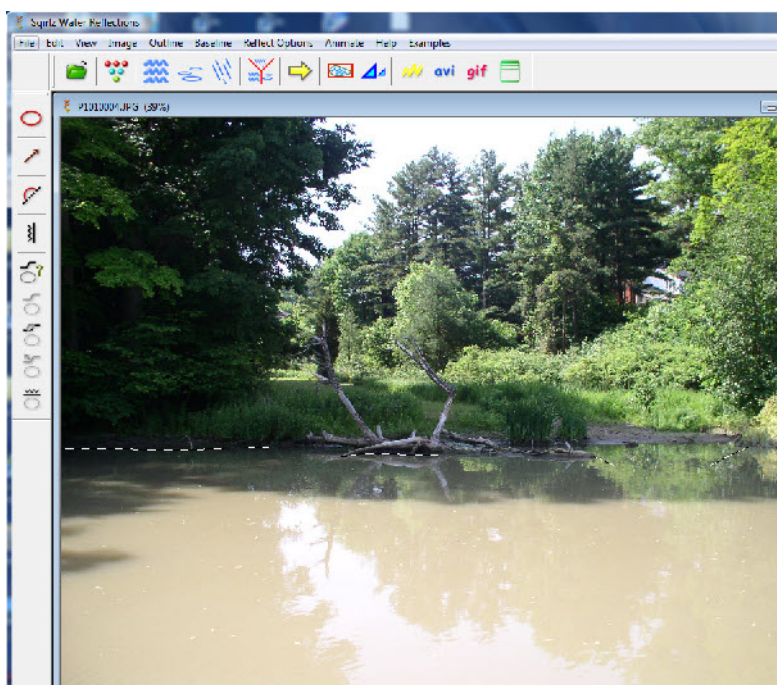
I'm not sure if that additional feature is worth another \$15, but that would be up to you to decide.

There's lots to play with in the Standard Edition. There are 6 Masks (maybe only 4 in the Standard Edition?) which can be applied to your image simultaneously, and the parameters of each can be set up separately. The Parameters that you can vary are Amplitude, Frequency, Ripple Effect, Distortion, Speed, and Direction, plus you can choose Vertical or Horizontal Waves and Perspective Waves, and Reflections can be turned on or off. This system lets you use different parameters for different types of waterfalls and for the water in the pool at the bottom. The masks can be applied with a "pen" of variable size, or with a "fill tool".

But it isn't only water that can be affected by these masks and parameters! Low frequency horizontal waves will produce a breeze in the trees, and the literature on the

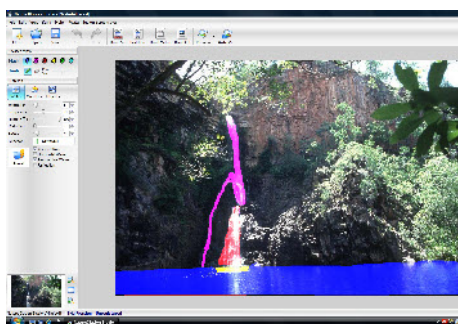
web site lists "Fire" as a possibility. There's no further reference to Fire, but I suppose if you had a still shot of a burning building, or possibly a campfire, you could animate the flames (or maybe the light areas?) by using an "up" direction. I don't think I have a shot like that in my collection for testing!

You can also apply rain or snow falling to the entire image, varying the Particle Count, Speed of decent, the Opacity, the Wind, or the Length. Rain (or sleet) is very convincing, but the Snow tends to look like Hollywood Snow except at a very high Particle Count (2,000 Maximum), minimal Size, a high Speed, and a moderate Opacity. As in the Water Effects you can play with the Parameters till you get just the effect you like.



**Dollier's & Galinée's 1670 Wintering Place on the Lynn River at Port Dover. See Next Page for Sqrلز Version**

It's very easy to make a change, click on the preview button, and immediately see the effect on a full screen image. Move your mouse a tiny bit (no click needed) and you're back to the setting window! A wonderful interface!



**Marking Nature Illusion's Water Types**

Meanwhile, I kept looking for Sqrلز and finally found it again. To sharpen an old saw, "Time flies when you're having fun, and others are getting things done!" Sqrلز was now up to version 2.5, still FREE, and now with some of the features found in Nature Illusion Studio, and others found only here.

First I should point out that Nature Illusion Studio is used to animate water (and possibly vegetation, fire, etc.,) that already appears in the original photograph. Sqrلز *simulates* water by introducing a reflective surface that reflects the remainder of the image, and then simulates ripples on the water by bending or distorting that image as would waves. If a body of water is present in your original image, Sqrلز replaces it with a "flexible mirror". If the water was

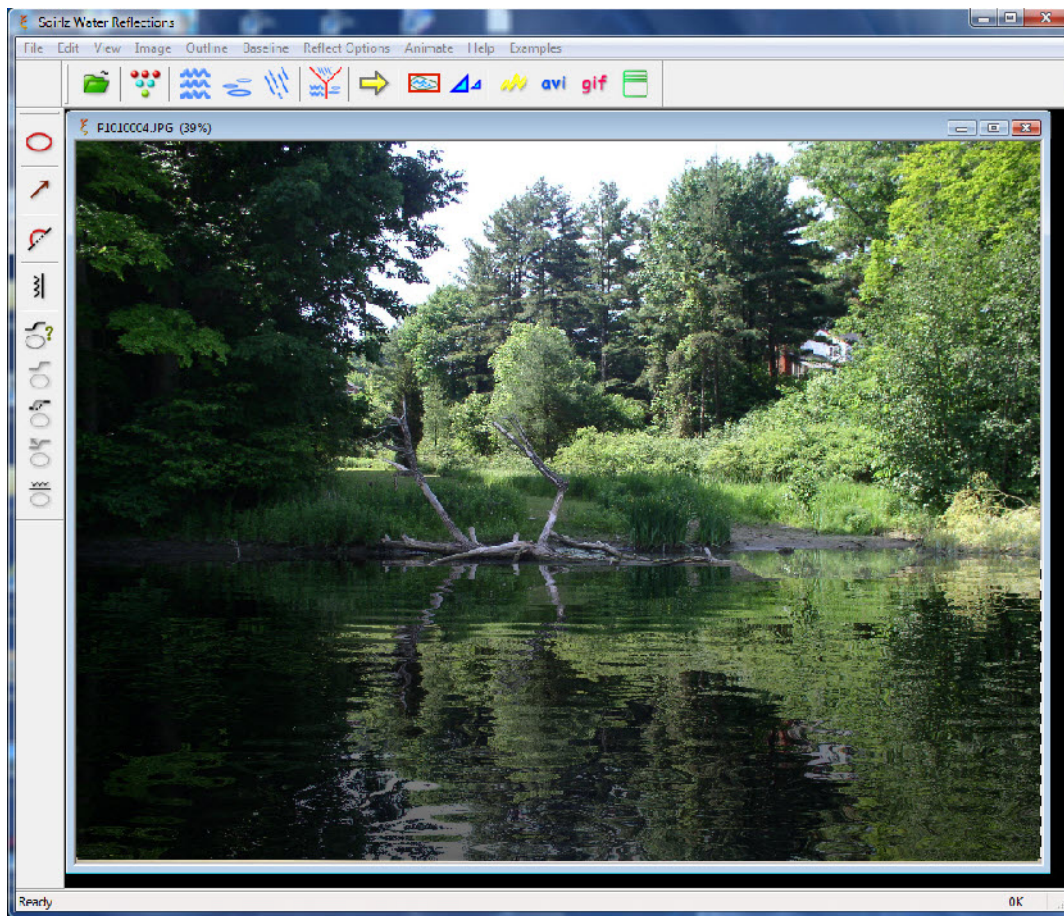
muddy, the replacement isn't! However, you can adjust many Parameters in this program, too. We can adjust colour throughout a full spectrum – Red, Green, Blue, Hue, Saturation, and Brightness by the Numbers or with a Colour Picker, and Grey Scale from White to Black with a Slider. There are separate sliders for Wave Strength, Wave Separation, Perspective, Blur, Texture (Speckle), Transparency, Wave Contrast, and Underwater Scene Rippling. In other words, you could let a sandy beach show through by adjusting transparency, and darkening the "water" a bit is better than using a perfect mirror.

There are five Motion Types for Basic Ripples, but the Preview for the Water Reflections is so slow that it's hard to see

what they are! (Actually, there *is* no button for Preview. I think what you watch is the Animation being Rendered when you click on Run Animation.)

This program has Rain/Snow, with Parameters for Number of Raindrops/Snowflakes (Maximum 10,000), Length (Rain only), Brightness, Softness, Depth Of Field, Width, Speed, Transparency, and Direction Variation, with checkboxes for Snow, Avoid Outline, and Within Outline Only, with the last two referring to the area that you have outlined to specify where the Water should be. With all these variables to play with, it's very possible to produce rain and snow that looks more convincing that can be done with Nature Illusion Studio!





The Muddy Lynn River has been Replaced with Rippled Reflections by Sqirlz, and on Video the Ripples and Reflections Move!

This program also brings something new to the table – Ring Ripples! There is a Combination Picker that offers Basic Ripples Only, Ring Ripples Only, Rain/Snow Only, Rain/Snow And Basic Ripples, and Rain Snow And Ring Ripples. This is very handy to work with each element separately, but it's still very slow to see thing working.

And best of all, Sqirlz isn't limited to adding effects to a still picture and then exporting the animation to Flash, Animated GIF, or AVI. You can also import an AVI Clip and add reflections, or Rain/Snow, to it! That's quite an accomplishment for a FREE Program!

I've tried both programs with several of my own photos as above, and find the results very suitable to insert into video. I've observed that the more subtle use of these programs is more convincing, so I don't think there's any way I can use either program to fake the gale that whipped up on Lake Ontario in the middle of an 1813 naval battle!

Where might you use it? Many years ago, in the days of Kodachrome Slides and Super8 film, Carolyn and I took the long rail excursion to [Agawa Canyon](#). The long train is jam packed with tourists like ourselves, and it's a long trip in, and another back. In between you visit the "Picnic Grounds" where you walk the trails, buy your lunch in the restaurant, shop for souvenirs, and enjoy the four waterfalls. One of them is only visible from close-up, and you take a small side trail in to the viewing point, and continue on out along another trail (both one-way!) When you get to the viewing spot, you take a photograph, but you don't spend long because there is a long line of people waiting their turn, all with their cameras. I wanted to shoot movie film, tilting the camera down from the top of the falls to the bottom, but I remember being very conscious that I was holding up the line! If I ever go again, I'll shoot a digital still, and then animate it when I get home!

Sqirlz Water Reflections comes with some brief Tutorials in little Pop-ups within the program accessed from *Examples* on the Top Line. You can also download some tutorials on their web site, but I wouldn't even bother because they are for old versions and more bother than they are worth. You can see a couple of samples [here](#) and [here](#). There's a nice group [here](#). Click on the individual pictures to see a larger view of each animation.

You can view a couple of YouTube videos of [Nature Illusion Studio](#) at the bottom of the page.

So which one should you choose? Why choose? One's FREE and the other's FREE for 30 Days! Download them both now, install Sqirlz now, play with it with your own pictures, then install Nature Illusion Studio and test run that to see if you want to add it to your arsenal, too!

Download Sqirlz [Here](#) !

Download Nature Illusion Studio [Here](#) ! ■



*On January 2<sup>nd</sup> I received the following email from Jan Essing, Secretary General of UNICA. I forwarded a copy to each member of the SCCA Executive and asked them for their questions on this matter. I also answered Jan and told him of my action and that when a decision was made, I would inform him. No decision has yet been made. We would like to have your opinions, questions, and thoughts about this in general. The Executive will take all opinions received into consideration before making a decision.. Here is the letter. Jan included two links so you can easily look into UNICA. There's a lot to look at here, and you may find it difficult to find the List of Fees. Our Fees would be 175 Euros per year, and that is currently about C\$300.*

Dear Mr. Briggs FSCCA, President of SCCA

Having read that one of the members (and a dear personal friend) of NOVA (Dutch amateur film makers organisation) Vladimir Murtin won a prestigious prize in the CIAFF of 2008 for best amateur scenario, I became interested in (the website of) your organization.

Allow me to introduce myself and the UNICA organization to you.

My name is Jan Essing, an amateur film enthusiastic in the Netherlands (Europe), but besides that secretary-general of the UNICA. The Union Internationale du Cinéma (UNICA) is the world organisation of film amateurs, seated in Switzerland. UNICA is (through its seat in the board of CICT/IFTC) a member of [UNESCO](#).

UNICA comprises of over 30 national umbrella organizations like your SCCA in various countries, mostly in Europe, but also comparable organizations in South Korea, Tunisia, Argentine and Iran are members with UNICA. Unfortunately the AMMA/AMPS (USA) ended their membership some years ago (because of financial reasons).

UNICA is an independent, non-governmental and international organisation. It is a not-for-profit organisation. In a spirit of peaceful co-operation and friendship between peoples, UNICA promotes international understanding and co-operation, in particular in the field of art, culture, education and science, in accordance with the principles of UNESCO.

UNICA, as a rule, achieves its purpose with the following activities:

- a) congresses and General Assemblies;
- b) international competitions;
- c) international exchange of films;
- d) international seminars;
- e) debates on new concepts about art and culture;
- f) film shows and exchange of experience between countries;
- g) publications.

Every year UNICA organizes a film congress and annual competition, which in 2009 will be held in Gdansk (Poland). In 2006 we visited South Korea, 2007 in Slovakia and 2008 we were in Tunisia. In the annual contest every national member of UNICA presents a time limited program (minimum 60 minutes) of their most interesting (or even best) films to be shown during eight days during festival. Regularly over 300 congress participants view all films because films aren't screened simultaneously but successively.

A jury of seven well-known (amateur) film makers and professionals judge all (over 120) screened films, but merely 30 of them are discussed in a public jury meeting at the end of the festival. This festival can be seen as the World Championship of (Independent/Amateur) Films.

You can observe anything you wish to know about UNICA at [our web site](#).

Unfortunately the national organizations don't preserve their individual websites for the annual UNICA congress and the website for 2009 Gdansk is hardly filled. But all other information on UNICA (statutes, members, committee, membership fee and goals) you'll be able to observe.

I would be very much obliged if you would spend some of your valuable time considering UNICA membership for SCCA. If I can help to provide any information you need, I ask you not to hesitate sending e-mail. As you may understand I'm seeking new membership on the North American continent.

I send a copy of this message to vice-president of UNICA, Mrs. Jeanne Glass (native English speaking).

With kind regards,

Jan Essing,

UNICA secretary-general. ■





# 2009

## SCCA ANNUAL COMPETITION

### ENTRY RULES - CLASSES - AWARDS

1. Open to all Canadians. Open to non-Canadians who are members of the SCCA or of an SCCA affiliated club.
2. Only amateur film/videos are eligible. A film/video is considered amateur when the producer has no financial or commercial object in making the film/video, and when it has not been the subject of any sale or rental agreement prior to entering the competition. Also there must be no direct professional help except for the use of professional services which do not affect the creative values of the film/video such as conversion to DVD, etc.
3. The use of unauthorized copyright material for public performance is prohibited by law. The clearance for use of all submitted materials is the sole responsibility of the maker of an entry, and shall not be the responsibility of the Executive and/or Officers of the SCCA, the Contest Chairperson, or the Judges.
4. Films/videos may not exceed 30 minutes in length.
5. Non-members shall pay an entry fee of \$15.00 for each film/video entered. Individual members and clubs shall pay a fee of \$10.00 per film. An individual may submit up to three films if the individual is the creator of each. The entry fee for the script contest shall be \$8.00 for non-members and \$5.00 for members, per script.
6. Competition entry forms must reach the contest officer not later than June 15th. The entry fee, made payable to "Society of Canadian Cine Amateurs", must accompany the entry form. Please ensure that your entry form(s) are completely and accurately filled in, to avoid your entry being misplaced in an erroneous category.
7. Videos should be sent by registered or insured mail courier.
8. Entries, including Film, must be submitted on VHS Tape, miniDV Tape, or DVD.
9. It is a condition of entry that award winners will consent to have the film/video screened at the SCCA Annual Convention and other SCCA sponsored screenings.
10. Script entries shall be typed single space on white bond. A two-inch (50 mm) margin shall be on the left side. It is a condition of entry that the SCCA may use the script for future contests.
11. The best possible care will be given by the Society to all entries. The SCCA and Contest Officer bear no responsibility for the loss or damage to films or scripts, either during judging or subsequent showing. The films and scripts are entered entirely at the entrant and/or owner's risk.

**DO NOT SEND ORIGINAL COPIES OF FILMS OR VIDEOS – NO ENTRIES WILL BE RETURNED!**

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## DIVISIONS OF THE COMPETITION:

**Class "A" (Advanced) -The Betty Peterson Memorial Trophy** is awarded for the best film/video submitted in the competition at the advanced level. Rules 1 - 11 apply - there are no further restrictions in the competition.

**Class "B" (Intermediate) - The Toronto Film and Video Trophy** - open to individuals or groups of individuals who have not won an award higher than "Intermediate" in this or any other competition, and have won no more than two first place awards in an intermediate class of a competition other than club contests.. An award in a competition without class levels, such as the CIAFF, will be considered to be an award above the Intermediate level.

**Class "C" - The Eumig Trophy** - open to individual groups of individuals who have not won first place in the Novice Class or an award in a class higher than Novice in this or other competitions, other than club contests.

**Class "D" - The Garlick Trophy** - this competition represents the best SCCA Club film/video of the year. Each SCCA club may submit one film, preferably the winner of the club's annual contest or the best film/video shown at a club meeting during the year. An individual may not submit a film/video him/herself, but the film/video entered by the club may be an individual's film, a group film/video or a club film, provided it has been produced within the organization and completed within two years prior to the closing date of the competition. The film/video may be already entered in any of the other SCCA Competition classes.

**Class "E" - The Inter-City Trophy** - open to individuals or groups. The theme or title selected for this competition is compulsory. Film/video length may not exceed 10 minutes. An entry in this class is not admissible in another SCCA class in the same year, with the exception of the Garlick Trophy, but will be eligible in another year. The themes are published each year in PANORAMA. For the year 2009, the theme is "Good Trade".

**Class "F" - The SCCA Award** - Presented for the best script and should be an original simple single story. The treatment shall not exceed 1200 words. It should describe the story, as it will unfold on the screen, by giving the producer and production crew a clear picture of the writer's mental concept of the action transpiring. Locations should contain sufficient description to enable the director to establish time of day, mood, atmosphere and pace. Outline the story in terms of its major scenes. Keep narration to a minimum. Complete verbatim dialogue is not necessary. The idea is more important than the verbiage. However, a sample of a scene or sequence of dialogue will be expected. A "shooting script" is not required. Simplicity should be its chief value.

## OTHER AWARDS

**"Most Humorous Film"** – The SCCA Trophy for Humour will be awarded if, in the opinion of the judges, an entry in Class "A", "B", or "C" merits recognition for its amusing content.

**"Best Visual Special Effects"** - The SCCA Trophy for Visual Special Effects will be available to all classes, (except Class "F") if the judges find that an entry merits this special recognition.

**"Best Cinematography"** - The SCCA Trophy for Cinematography is available to all classes, (except Class "F"), and it will only be awarded by the judges if an entry merits it because of its technical and artistic qualities.

**"Best Use of Sound"** - The SCCA Trophy for Best Use of Sound is presented for the entry which, in the opinion of the judges, has the quality and choice of sound which contributes the most to the success of an entry in classes "A", "B", or "C". (Note that commercially or professionally recorded music is not eligible for judging for this award, even when cleared to comply with Rule 3.)

**"Best Editing"** - The SCCA Trophy for Editing is awarded for editing in classes "A", "B", and "C" if, in the opinion of the judges, the editing makes a significant contribution to the interpretation of the theme.

**"Best Teenage Production"** – The SCCA Trophy for Best Teenage Production is attainable by persons under twenty years of age. It will be awarded if, in the opinion of the judges, the entry demonstrates the film/video-making potential of the young entrant by its construction, originality, technical qualities, awareness and observance of recognized film-making rules. It should have a clear theme or message and hold the attention of the viewers.

**"Best Scenario Video"** – The SCCA Trophy for Best Scenario is available to all classes, (except Class "F") and is awarded for the best Scenario film/video, which demonstrates, in the opinion of the judges, a superior scenario production, (a film/video with a pre-planned and pre-scripted story or plot).

**"Most Original Movie"** - The SCCA Trophy for Originality may be awarded for an entry that, in the opinion of the judges, has the most original treatment.

**"Best Film/Video of the Contest"** - donated by Ben V.W. Andrews and to be known as the BEN ANDREWS TROPHY, this award is for the film/video that in the opinion of the judges is the most outstanding film/video in the contest. (Not applicable to the Script Contest.) ■



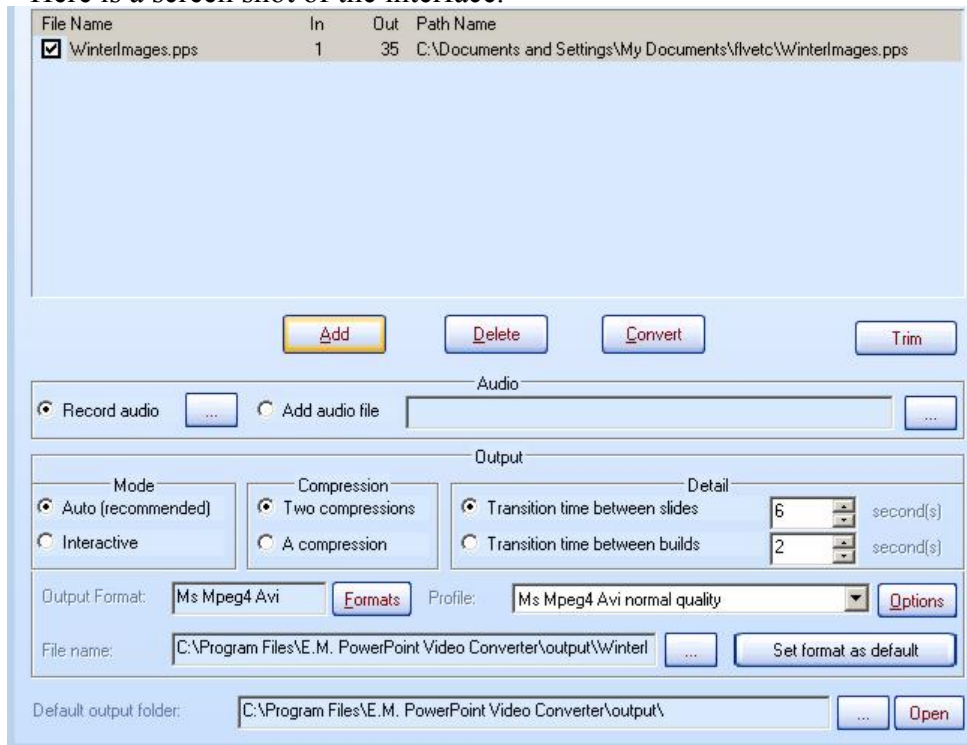
## “PowerPoint” Add-on

In November, three members of the London Videography Club visited Brantford to see a presentation by Iain Caulder who demonstrated the latest version of Microsoft PowerPoint. One interesting feature of his presentation was a piece of software that converts a Powerpoint presentation or slide show to various video formats. The purpose, for Iain, is to be able to send finished presentations to his clients by e-mail or to burn them to DVD. His clients may then forward the presentation on to their employees or contacts. It seems that such a program could be useful to any video maker who has created or received a Powerpoint presentation and wishes to preserve them. Iain uses a professional version called PPT2DVD, which sells for about \$100 CDN. If anyone wishes to explore the idea, there are a few free versions available for download. One is called “ispringfree” and can be found at [Ispring Solutions](http://Ispring Solutions).

This program opens Powerpoint creator but only works with versions 2006 or later.

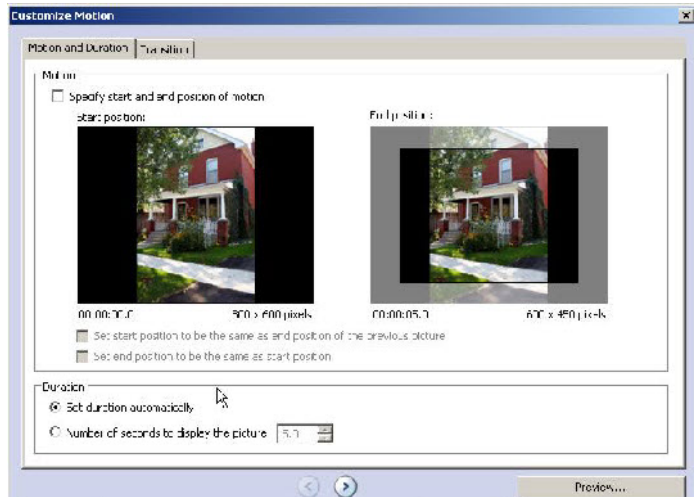
Another program which works independently is “EM PowerPoint Video Converter” available at the [EffectMatrix.com](http://EffectMatrix.com) web site.

Here is a screen shot of the interface.



Conversion to several formats is possible and appropriate quality levels can also be selected.

## “PhotoStory”



At the same Brantford meeting, Iain Caulder also demonstrated a program available from Microsoft as a free download, which will create a slideshow from selected still pictures and save them in Windows WMV video format. One very interesting feature of this program, “[PhotoStory](http://PhotoStory)”, is the ability to scan and pan on individual pictures or frames of a slideshow.

Several issues ago we talked about a program called “Rostrum Camera”, which we recommended for achieving the so-called “Ken Burns Effect”. This is very useful for creating the sensation of moving objects in a still picture. Unfortunately that free program created only a pan or a zoom, not both at the same time. This amazing little MS program allows you to do both at once.

After selecting a picture, or group of pictures, the window above is where you select the start and end points of the scan and the area scanned at the beginning and end. The final WMV format is not normally

used for editing but if you start with the best resolution in your original picture and the best quality for the scan, you can later convert the file to AVI or MPG for adding to your editing timeline. Quality is really not bad on samples I have made. Note that images used can be almost any dimension consistent with the desired result. I have placed a [short sample at my website](#), which you might want to see.

Note that before downloading, Microsoft asks for your permission to check your computer to insure you are using a legal registered copy of "Windows XP" or "Vista".

## A New Converter

On the subject of file conversion, I recently downloaded a very versatile program which handles several formats, including images (JPG, PNG etc.) audio (MP3, WAV, etc.) and many alternatives for video conversion. It is a free open-source creation called "[Format Factory](#)".

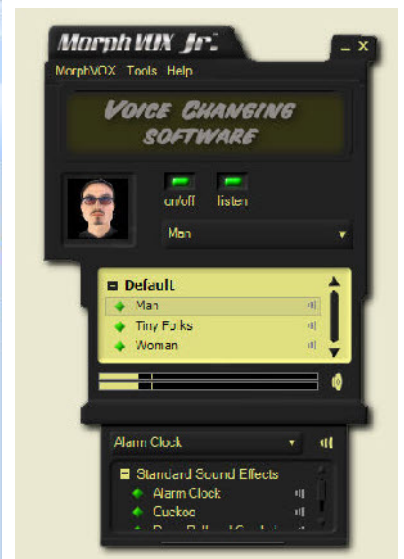
Here is a list of the various functions.  
All to MP4/3GP/MPG/AVI/WMV/FLV/SWF.  
All to MP3/WMA/AMR/OGG/AAC/WAV.  
All to JPG/BMP/PNG/TIF/ICO/GIF/TGA.  
Rip DVD to video file, Rip Music CD to audio file.  
MP4 files support iPod/iPhone/PSP/BlackBerry format.  
Source files support RMVB.

This is not only the most versatile conversion utility I have used but also the default settings and codecs have given me excellent results.

## Sounds Strange

Your correspondent is occasionally guilty of many of the usual gaffes committed by videographers. I was elected to shoot a short club production recently and after years of habit, before leaving home I inserted a dummy plug in my external mic input and recorded a few seconds of black video. Pure habit, since it is totally unnecessary with DV. It wasn't until after the shoot that I discovered that I had neglected to first remove the dummy plug. The result: no audio! (Maybe that's why they call it a "dummy" plug!) So, in order to salvage the production I had to find some way to replace the missing audio. I solved the problem, in a fashion, by narrating and recording the lines of the four characters and changing the voices with a combination of software. The first, "MorphVox Jr." allowed me to select from two synthesized voices. I then used "Nero WAV editor" to further modify the other two. The results were quite obviously faked but that simply added another measure of comedy to the production. It wasn't a great hit when shown at our December meeting but was more effective than it would have been with subtitles. I'm not suggesting that this becomes standard practice but you might have a little fun with the free program. Maybe even create something wild for your answering machine. You can get MorphVOX Jr. At [ScreamingBee.com](#).

The free version is fairly limited but if you become addicted, you should investigate the 'pro' version. ■





# PRESENTATION AUDIO

Another Set of Royalty Free Music Has Been Added To  
The SCCA MUSIC LIBRARY



**P**resentation Audio, by Network Music LLC, is a set of five CD's, recorded in WAV format.

Each CD has a different type of music, classified as Business/Office, Pop Culture, High Tech/Electronic, Environments/Atmospheres, and Comedy/Animation, but don't let those classifications mislead you. Just because your video doesn't take place in a Business or Office setting, that doesn't mean there is no music on that CD that will fit into your video. "Epic" might be a better description here! The music is fully orchestrated, and as I listened to it, thinking of my own historic epic video project, I found pieces perfectly suited to a scene showing a party of French explorers and First Nation people paddling across a peaceful lake and approaching the place where I was raised, and another scene of two opposing fleets sailing toward a naval battle in the War of 1812! (And that was on the Business/Office CD!) You can't judge a book by its cover, or a piece of music by its title, or someone else's classification of its category.



Each CD contains thirty themes, and each theme has a 60 second version, a 30 second version, and a tag. The music, of course,

could be shortened, or extended, in your editing, but it isn't meant for "lazy editing" by those who are looking for one piece the exact length of the scene!

There's no point in going on about this excellent collection of 150 different pieces when you can listen to *each and every one of them* for yourself, on your computer, just by going to its [page](#) on Sound Ideas' web site, and clicking on a few links.

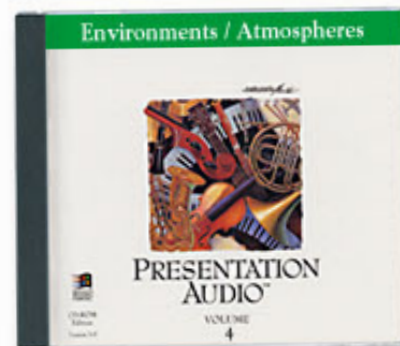
But that's not all. This set also has 900 Sound Effects, and there's no way for you to hear these in advance. We've already added these to the FindSounds Palette 10000 Database (now at 5,900!) already on a computer, and they are searchable first by name, and then by similar sounds, so once we find one sound with, say, "adding" in its name, we can find other "adding machines" by comparing all the sounds in the database to the one we have selected, regardless of the name given to the samples. For more information about our FindSounds Palette



Database or how you can get these SFX samples for your own video, read the article on Page 17 of the [Spring 2007 PANORAMA](#).

Again ... But that's not all! There are also 900 "Production Elements". It's very difficult to explain these WAV files. They are short clips of sound from about 2 seconds to 20 seconds, usually, or mostly, music, useful as audio punctuation - links, separators, etc. You can't hear them over the internet.

I can't describe them all, and it won't be easy for you to tell me what you're looking for! And if you try to tell me, how do I find it?



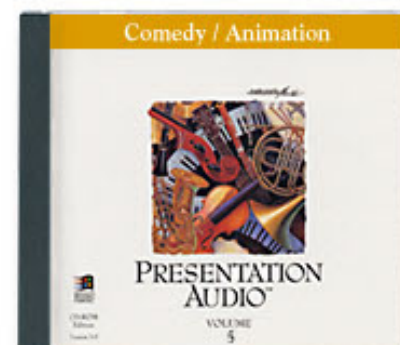
This set comes with a small program to help me find a piece of music by selecting a type - Action, Aspiring, Bravery, Carefree, Chase, etc. The list is very long, and differs with each CD, but we don't really need that. You can listen to the clips on the internet and ask for it by the actual Title and even CD Number or Title.

There's also a very long list of Sound Effects (almost as long as the number of SFX files) for each of the 5 CD's, but you won't need to have a copy of all the lists: just tell me what you want, and I can look for that, as already described above and earlier, using FindSounds Palette!

The real problem is these "Production Elements". You may never need them. However, if you've never heard them, how do you know that you don't need them? Properly chosen, and used sparingly, they might be just the thing to move your production up a notch!

So here's the list of what I can search for using the Presentation Audio program:

Audio Logos	Hits	Punctuators
Bursts	Jets	Snarls
Clip Sounds	Kickers	Sparkles
Drones	Lasers	Sprays
Explosions	Missiles	Stagers
Flybys	Musical	Sweepers
Glides	Loops	Wild Things
Guitar	Phone	Winds
Graffiti	Graffiti	Zaps



[Continued on Page 16](#)

# What's PHSC, And Why Do I Care?

By FRED BRIGGS

**T**his is so good that I don't know where to start! So I guess I should start at the beginning, or more accurately, where it started for me.

Many of you know that I collect old movie making equipment, and those of you who have been in my house know that the collection threatens to push us out of house and home. Over the years I've attended many photographic flea markets, jumbo sales, and swap meets, but none compare with those held in Toronto each spring and fall by the [Photographic Historical Society of Canada](#). (Some of you may remember a visit to the [PHSC Spring Fair](#) on the Bus Trip to Toronto from the [1998 Eastern Regional Meeting](#) (See Page 6). They also hold an [Annual Auction](#), but I had to stop going to that because of my addiction!

But this isn't about the Flea Markets. It's about the [Society](#) (established in 1974), their Quarterly Journal ([Photographic Canadiana](#)), their [January Newsletter](#), and their [Web Site](#)!

The name of the organization suggests that they operate across Canada, or that they may have local Chapters. In truth, they are firmly centred in Toronto (actually in North York) where they hold ten monthly meetings each year, but they undoubtedly have members across the country. For those too far from the meetings to commute, the main attraction is probably the excellent Journal (published five times a year in spite of the description "Quarterly").

Though I'm involved in so many organizations that I haven't found it convenient to attend a single monthly meeting, I have been a member of the Society for a few years, though just now, while looking around for a recent copy of the Journal, I discovered that my Membership has apparently lapsed! I'll have to renew my membership – there was a meeting just a couple of months ago that I desperately wanted to attend, except that I had an important prior engagement for that same evening.

I'm proud of PANORAMA and the SCCA web site, but the PHSC Newsletter and their web site each make me green with

envy! The Journal is mailed and the Newsletter is emailed, but excerpts from the Journals, and all of the newsletter issues since 2001, are available on their web site.

I should explain that the members of the Photographic Historical Society of Canada have a variety of interests. Many are collectors, some specializing in large format cameras, some in 35 mm. equipment, some in dark room paraphernalia, and others in cinematography equipment. Some of them collect old photographic prints, or lantern slides, or books, or even panoramic photographs. Stan White, a former teacher of photography at Sheridan College (and a Speaker at FAST FWD>>93, the 1993 SCCA/SAVAC Joint Convention), assembled the PHSC collection of stereographic equipment originally housed at Sheridan College, but now in the Royal Ontario Art Gallery. [Robert Gutteridge](#), who spoke to us at Keith Stata's [Highland Cinemas Complex](#) in Kinmount at the Rewind 01 Convention, has a collection of very rare, very early movie cameras. There are others who specialize in pinhole cameras, or Kodak Brownies, or Leicas, Russian cameras, stereographs, free-viewing 3D photographs, ... I could go on and on (as you probably know) but just because you are into digital video and cameras and consider yourself on the cutting edge of forward looking, doesn't mean that there's nothing here for you. Recent topics at their meetings included "Modern Panorama Technology – The Broader View", "Back to the Future: Photography in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century", "Photography BC and AD – The Digital Evolution", "Recent Changes in the Professional Photographic Lab", and "The Production of Modern Digital Prints". Sorry you missed these? A descriptive review of each of those programs, and many, many more is available on their web site.

The webmaster is Robert Carter. Robert Lansdale is the Editor of both Photographic Canadiana and the monthly newsletter, and both men are artists.

The [web site](#) is deep and broad: take an afternoon to explore it. The [Newsletters](#) are amazing and I'm sure that you will find much there of great interest. If you email [Bob Lansdale](#) there's a very good chance that he will put you on the emailing list. I did, and I get one every month. I now have fifty-seven of them on my hard drive, full of great stuff. That's why I couldn't find a good place to start. See for yourself! ■

## Music Library

[Continued from Page 15](#)

While some of those titles read like sound effects, they really aren't – just a shorthand description!

I'd be surprised to hear any of these Production Elements in your Wedding, Vacation, or Tribute Video. A few might be used in a Drama (as in CSI, Murdock Mysteries, etc.)

Many would be very useful in a Comedy, others in a Sci-Fi Flick, and many more would be very appropriate in some (most) animations.

I'm looking forward to receiving your requests ([MusicLibrary@sccaonline.ca](mailto:MusicLibrary@sccaonline.ca)) and trying to fulfill them. I'm especially anxious to see the use to which you put these things!

The only restriction on your use of these Music, SFX, and Production Elements is that they may not be used for Broadcasting, though they can be used for presentation over the internet (YouTube, etc.) Of course, it should go without saying that you cannot redistribute the tracks themselves. Like all the other Music Tracks in the SCCA Library, the name of each piece used should be shown in the End Credits. ■

## With The Clubs

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stabilization in a camcorder but after the fact. It enlarges the frame and moves the central image around within the new frame to offset camera movement.

One result is the loss of some information at the edges of the picture. According to author Mike Shaw, it does an amazing job of treating a small selected area or the entire picture. Canadian prices quoted at the [proDAD website](#) are \$178 CAD for the 'pro' version and \$88CAD for the 'light' version. Coincidentally, a portion of Tom Hardwick's regular column also refers to digital methods in editing to permit alternative camera stabilizing tricks. Elsewhere in the article, Tom observes that since TV sets with 1.78:1 screen ratio are becoming obsolete, perhaps we should all shoot only in 16:9 in future. Tom Hardwick and another writer, David Machin, have each started articles (to be continued) on their experiences with HD and Blue-ray technology. I'm anxious to read further to compare with our experiences here. ■