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Review: JVC GY-HM200

Review: Sony 4K Action Cam

“The Dressmaker”

Which Mic and How?

All About Foley

Mercalli 4 is all New!

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**Vegas gets
Mercalli V4.
Suite!**



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from the editor

A mixed bag this month covering lots of things. Audio, video, reviews of both hardware and software, interviews and a chat with one of the Aussies that colour graded the movie "The Dressmaker"



We have our first JVC review for a very long time and our FIRST ever JVC Pro camera review at that, a 4K beauty. Speaking of 4K we also managed to obtain a 4K Sony Auction Cam that is very impressive.

In the software department, we review the brand new Mercalli 4 plugin for Sony Vegas Pro, and an NLE we had never heard of called Lightworks. It is Win, Mac and LINUX compatible, so if you are a disgruntled Mac user, this will be worth a look.

In the audio area we have a look at the various types of mics and how they should be used, and delve into the world of Foley.

"The Dressmaker" I just heard, bumped "The Martian" off top spot for Australian movie goers, so it is timely we got to interview one the senior members of the Colour Grading team.

And finally, there is an interview with experienced actor Kim "Bid" Bidstrup.

Next month we'll have a special gift section for Chrissy among lots of other things with, we hope, a truck load of accessories.

Remember, if you are reading this and are not a subscriber, you can get 12 issues a year delivered to your very own email address for just AUD\$38.00 per year.

Until next issue, as always thanks for the support,



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UWP-D wireless mics cover a wide range of frequencies within the new 520-694 MHz range, and utilise Sony's Digital Audio Processing technology.

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- Headphone monitoring output



Sony's UWP-D wireless system in use with HXR-NX3 camcorder



Information on new product announcements, updates, trade shows and much more condensed into two pages all sniffed out by Budweiser The Dog



Boris BCC 10 for AVID

In its biggest release to date, a joint venture between Boris FX and Imagi-ner BCC 10 is now shipping for AVID

- BCC 10 for Avid:
- mocha's Academy award-winning planar tracking & masking tools are now integrated into the BCC Pixel Chooser!
- Beauty Studio – A state-of-the-art skin retouching/digital makeup tool to make your talent look perfect.
- Title Studio – The next generation 2D & 3D titling and motion graphics tool for designing and animating at any resolution. Support for Maxon C4D models.
- New Image Restoration Tools:
 - o BCC Remover fills in missing pixels & removes objects with clone and auto-fill options.
 - o BCC Dropout Fixer restores tape based damaged footage with field dropouts.
 - o BCC Reframe reformat and stylize “vertical cell phone footage” into 16x9 for broadcast.
- New Effects:
 - o BCC Light Leaks adds organic & naturalistic “in-camera” light and exposure effects.
 - o BCC Video Glitch recreates the distressed look of compression artifacts, signal loss & corrupt digital video.

- New Transitions:
 - o BCC Cross Glitch mimics abrupt digital signal transitions.
 - o BCC Cross Melt conveys a new organic look and feel.
 - o BCC Lights Leak Dissolve creates a light exposure-based transition.
 - o BCC Cross Zoom combines zoom, glow, and dissolve into one simple transition.

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- BCC Multi-Host Annual Subscription (Avid, Adobe, OFX): \$595 (one low yearly price, includes all Hosts!)

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Blackmagic Design News

URSA Mini B4 Mount: \$295. Available November 2015.

A B4 lens mount modification for our new URSA Mini PL camera designed to replace the existing PL lens mount on Blackmagic URSA Mini PL, turning it into a B4 camera for HD. To install the B4 mount, customers simply take the PL lens mount off where it is normally removed for shim-ming PL lenses and bolt on the B4 lens mount.

This is a true lens mount

replacement that features precision glass optics specifically designed to match Blackmagic URSA Mini's sensor with high definition broadcast B4 lenses. The B4 mount also features spherical aberration correction so customers can use their lenses wide open with no blooming effect. It can be used with both 4K and 4.6K PL models of the URSA Mini.

Decklink Quad 2: \$995. Available Q4 2015.

A new high performance capture and playback solution that puts the power of eight DeckLink cards onto a single circuit board that plugs into a single PCI Express slot. Designed for developers and OEMs, DeckLink Quad 2 is the ideal solution for media play-out servers, multi screen digital signage servers, real-time processors and more.

DaVinci Resolve 12: \$995, or free of charge for existing DaVinci Resolve Studio customers. Available Now.

The final release of DaVinci Resolve 12 is now available for download from the Blackmagic Design website. The new DaVinci Resolve 12 is the software's biggest update ever and includes incredible new features, making it both the world's most powerful editor, as well as the most advanced color grading system.

Please note these are US pricing.

Summer School@AFTRS Open

AFTRS Open's introductory and in-



all the news that counts

intermediate-level film, TV and radio short courses offer practical and hands-on learning to extend your skill set. All courses are taught by industry professionals in the

state-of-the-art facilities of Australia's premier film school.

Highlights include the Six Week Doco School, Three Week Film School and Three Week Radio School, all starting in November. Plus in January there's the brand new Six Week Film School as well as popular five-day intensives in screenwriting, filmmaking, TV presenting, camera skills, videomaking, prop-making, radio and much more!

Plus you'll receive a whopping extra early-bird 20% DISCOUNT if you book before Thursday 1 October, and if you book two or more courses at the same time you'll get an additional 5% discount (SAVING 25%), so it's well worth getting in early!

FILMMAKING

The Three Week Film School

Are you looking to fast-track your filmmaking skills and get an opportunity to use professional equipment and studios? This is your chance to immerse yourself in all areas of film studies and filmmaking.

Mon 23 Nov – Fri 11 Dec 2015 // 15 days // \$3750 (\$3000 with Early Bird Discount)

The Six Week Film School

This is thirty days of AFTRS' biggest and most intensive filmmaking course, including documentary and short-film screenwriting! Led by AFI and ADG Award-nominee Lucy Gaffy, this course has been designed for new and emerging filmmakers who are

looking to take the next step. Places are limited!

Mon 11 Jan – Fri 19 Feb 2016 // 30 days // \$6900 (\$5520 with Early Bird Discount)

Filmmaking Intensive

In this five-day filmmaking intensive, you'll get busy in the AFTRS state-of-the-art studio to take a class-selected short film from script to screen. Experienced industry filmmakers will guide you with lectures and fast-paced practical exercises to conquer the major areas of directing, cinematography and post-production.

Mon 18 – Fri 22 Jan 2016 // 5 days // \$1250 (\$1000 with Early Bird Discount)

Videomaking 101: Shoot Edit Publish

Do you – or your staff – want to shoot, edit and upload your own short videos for your corporate website, social media marketing for just for your own interest? Then this course is for you. Two different dates are available.

Mon 23 – Fri 27 Nov 2015 OR Wed 27 – Sun 31 Jan 2016 // 5 days //

\$995 (\$796 with Early Bird Discount)

TV Shooter Producer Intensive

Anyone entering the TV industry now needs to be able to 'do it all'. It's essential to be able to use a camera competently, and this five-day course will give you the confidence and skills to say 'I can do that'. This is a five-day version of AFTRS' popular 'TV Shooter/Producer' course, which also includes lighting tuition and more location practical.

Mon 30 Nov – Fri 4 Dec 2015 // 5 days // \$995 (\$760 with Early Bird Discount)

TV Editing Intensive (NEW)

This ten-day intensive course (delivered over two consecutive Monday-to-Friday weeks) will combine technical teaching in the use of Avid Media Composer – the non-linear film/video editing application used extensively in most

television productions – with an introduction to the creative art of editing for television and practical, hands-on exercises. Students will have the opportunity to get Avid User Certification within this course.

Mon 4 – Fri 15 Jan 2016 // 10 days // \$2500 (\$2000 with Early Bird Discount)

Prop Making & Scenic Art Intensive (NEW)

Are you interested in learning the practical skills required for scenic art / set finishing techniques and prop-making for film or television productions? Each student in this course will create a set or scenic piece and prop/s based on a specific design 'inspiration' and take away photos of their work, shot in studio on day 5 of the course.

Mon 30 Nov – Fri 4 Dec 2015 // 5 days // \$950 (\$760 with Early Bird Discount)

Production Design Intensive (NEW)

Are you interested in production design and want to learn how to go about doing it? AFI-winner Michael Phillips (Garage Days, The Well, The Night We Called It a Day) leads this five-day course focusing on everything you need to know to pursue a career in the art department, from runner to production designer.

Mon 27 – Fri 31 Jan 2016 // 5 days // \$950 (\$760 with Early Bird Discount)

Got a question? Contact AFTRS Open at open@aftrs.edu.au or on 1300 065 281.

To view all courses and events, visit the AFTRS Open website.

ikan



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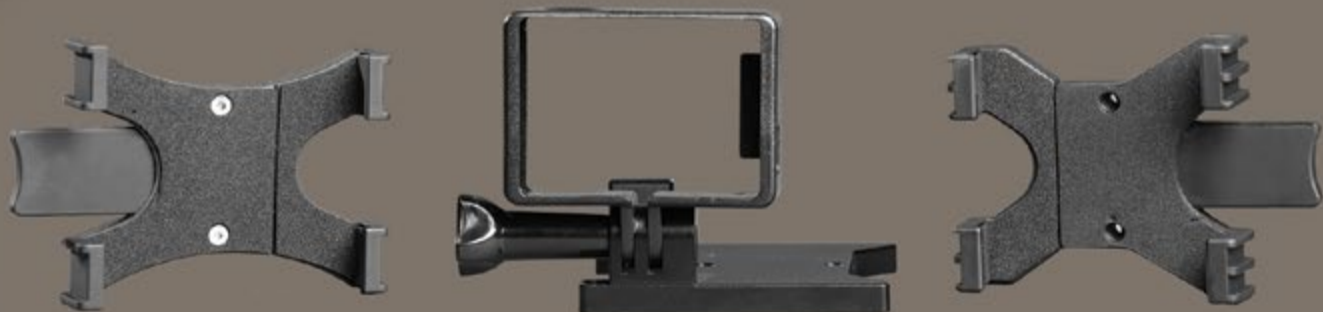
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review: jvc gy-hm200

JVC is certainly in the Big Four of pro camcorder manufacturers and it's been a while since we have reviewed one. I jumped at the chance.



It's been a long time for us between drinks on reviewing JVC professional cameras, but thankfully, the drought is over and last week I got my hands on the [GY-HM200 4K](#) model. So eager was I to have an immediate play, I charged the battery up and went outside the front door just to get some test shots without any preliminary investigation or manual reading.

Very unlike me!

Now there are those that say 4K is a waste of time as no programming is being broadcast in 4K. In fact, you say, we get sod all stuff in HD so there is really little point there too – we have an HD TV for DVDs and Blu-ray and stuff.

That if I may say is a very secular view. For example, in the US currently, HD programming is carried by all major television networks in nearly all DMAs, including ABC, CBS, NBC, FOX, PBS, The

CW, MyNetworkTV and Telemundo; and on many independent stations. All but a select few of cable networks offer an HD broadcast to cable and satellite companies.

I suspect this will change to 4K as time rolls on, and certainly, the cable / satellite networks will sooner rather than later.

But back to the case in hand.

There is a USB 2.0 on this camera as well as USB 3.0. But unlike many 4K cameras that use only XQD cards for storage, the [GY-HM200](#) thankfully uses gold level XC/HDSD cards. You'll need some high capacity ones mind you, as 16GB is less than 12 minutes of 4K footage and if you use USB 2.0, transfer will be slow. Better by far to use a card reader I found.

And what glorious footage it is too! I was lucky enough to score a sunny day in the middle of the SE Queensland storm season (there was a wild storm later in the day) and

even after only a cursory shoot of the street outside and some flowers, a longer play is certainly called for. But even this short session proved the quality in the optics of this model.

Ergonomics

The [GY-HM200](#) is a handheld camcorder with a top mounted handle holding duplicate transport controls, an external mic mount and dual XLRs. On the left hand side at the front is a transparent covered panel for audio controls. There is also a threaded mounting point towards the rear. The handle assembly is detachable if space is required or for some other reason.

The right hand side of the main body has the aforementioned USB 3.0 port at the rear, a further rubber covered port at the front for USB 2.0 and HDMI and a separate cover for SDI. On the horizontal surface are the zoom rockers, record button and an expanded focus button.

The left hand side is a little busier to say the least. It is of course dominated by the flip out LCD which tilts through 270 degrees underneath which are twin SD cards slots, overseen by



hardware

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review: jvc gy-hm200

a slot select button, which in turn is flanked on the right by three buttons for LoLux, C.Review and Zebra. Below these are two more buttons for Display and Status. Above it is the power switch and Mode button.

Along the bottom are three-way flick switches for Gain and White Balance, followed toward the rear for OIS, AE Level and Shutter. In a vertical row at the front is switches for Focus Assist, TC/2 and the 3 way ND Filter. Finally, below this again are the AF/MF selector and Full Auto switch.

The last control apart from the full size focus and zoom rings is a rotary control knob on the front next to the lens barrel for a 9 stage white balance control.

The 1.56 colour viewfinder is able to tilt through 80 degrees vertically, and the 3.5" LCD has 920K pixels and an auto focus assist function.

The [GY-HM200](#) also comes supplied with a lens hood which is detachable, and of course a battery and charger.

Technical

The [GY-HM200](#) is not short on technical wizardry.

It is powered by a single 1/2.3"

CMOS with 12.4 million pixels. The integrated lens has a 12x zoom and focal length of F1.2 ~ F3.5 equivalent in 35mm terms to 29.6mm – 355mm. Not too shabby. A lossless 24x zoom is created by a dynamic and HD process combining optical zoom and pixel mapping.

4K recording can be made at 150Mbps and HD to 70Mbps.

A party trick for the age is the option to play live data out of the HDMI port enabling true live streaming built

controls are in logical positions and the viewfinder was crisp and clear with both it and the LCD displaying all the information you need. The dioptre focus was easy to setup, and important to me, rotating the eyecup as I am left eye dominant not too much of a wrestle (we did review one pro camera once where you couldn't do that at all! Not a JVC I hasten to add).

I thought the camera was nicely balanced, and even though of course you shouldn't quite easy to keep steady in handheld shots.

But the proof is always in the pudding and that is the quality of image.

A web video cannot really do it full justice, so I strongly suggest if you are looking for a run and gun camcorder in this price range (AUD\$4838 SRP), go and have a test shoot at a JVC Dealer.

This particular camcorder was lent to us courtesy of [AV Group Technologies in Homebush Bay \(Sydney\)](#) and we thank them for the great opportunity.

I'd buy it.



An IP based network controller can control remote viewing, metadata editing and ftp.

In Use

I found the [GY-HM200](#) a delight to use. All

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review: sony 4K action cam

4K has come to action cams, and there are none better than the Sony Ultra 4K Action Cam thinks
David Hague



Like most tech, so-called action cams have gone through a series of evolutionary steps, from, looking back, quite crude devices to highly sophisticated and versatile little beasts, adaptable for a variety of uses.

They have been bolted to mountain and motorbikes, drones, cars, aeroplanes, animals, model planes, skateboards and even a balloon to photograph space! I am sure there are others I haven't thought of (let me know!)

The latest models are of course the cream of the crop 4K ones, and many manufacturers have them including GoPro, Panasonic, AEE and of course, [Sony](#).

We have been sent one to trial and here's what we found.

Ergonomics

Unlike the majority of action cams we have tested recently, the [Sony 4K Ultra HD Action Cam](#) (also called the FDRX1000V) doesn't have the familiar rectangular

shape, nor the barrel of the Panasonic HX1, but instead the electronics are housed in a splashproof rounded rectangular shotgun-style body with the lens mounted at the top front, underneath which is the internal stereo mic.

The top of the camera contains the record on/off/Enter button as well as a hold button.



Underneath is a tripod mount and an external mic port.

Finally, the back contains a hinged door where the battery and SD card are fitted as well as USB and HDMI ports.

Technical

The "engine" of the [Sony](#) is the tried and proven Exmor CMOS sensor capturing

through, also well developed, a Zeiss Tessar F2.8 lens. This gives you a very wide angle view of 170 degrees. Shot video is stabilised internally.

As well as being splashproof as is, when the waterproof housing is fitted, the camera

body is also shock-proof and dust-proof meaning lots of environments can be shot in. In fact, the [4K Action Cam](#) has a full IPX-4 rating that dictates that standard.

Aiding in the excellent image quality of the Zeiss/Exmor combo is a bit rate of 100 Mbits/sec. HD is captured at 50 Mbits/sec.

To capture the full 4K UHD you'll need to use fast SDXC cards,

Shooting

A number of modes are employed in the Sony 4K Action Cam, further increasing the versatility. These include Loop Recording, Interval and Still image shooting, Upside Down Flip Capture and Live Streaming. Unlike most action cams on the market, the Sony also has a manual mode letting you take control of how the imagery is taken and

hardware



review: sony 4K action cam

hardware

looks. These settings include white balance and AE shift to optimise brightness and hue. One advantage of this is the ability to colour match footage from other camcorders to get standard looking video across the board when editing footage from multiple cameras.



An optional extra is a Wi-Fi Live Control, a wrist mounted remote complete with LCD for monitoring the image.

This unit also permits multi-camera control.

third party industry out there making GoPro accessories. The Sony by way of its design doesn't fit this mould, and so Sony has made available a large range of mounts and accessories. These include a dog harness, head mount, chest mount, hard lens cover, carry case and the aforementioned remote and waterproof housing. There is a GoPro adaptor included.

Standard flat "sticky" mounts are included as standard.

Conclusion

It is our opinion that the footage from the [Sony 4K](#) is superior to other cameras we have tested of which the best so far has been the AEE S71. At \$599 it is not the most inexpensive 4K action cam, but nor it is the dearest (currently that crown belongs to GoPro with its Black Hero 4).

If you are looking for a quality Action Cam, and 4K is on your specification list, we'd have no trouble recommending the Sony.

Accessories

What can make or break the success of an action cam is the wealth of accessories available. Many manufacturers have just made their units' compatible with the GoPro system, and indeed, there is also a busy



Click to play video - awaiting a Gold Coast storm





the dressmaker

“The Dressmaker” is currently showing in cinemas. We were privileged to ask Jonathan Burton, digital imaging supervisor at Soundfirm that colour graded the film about the process.



THE DRESSMAKER

REVENGE IS BACK
IN FASHION



feature

Colour grading is considered by many as a mystery. How would you describe it for the layman?

Essentially colour grading is the finishing process for the picture side of post production. The Colourist is the last person to creatively work on the visuals of the film and it is their job is to work with other film creatives (primarily the Director and the Director of Photography) to adjust the look of the pictures in order to set the final aesthetic tone of the film. The process is both creative and technical and is about firstly bal-

ancing all the images in the film to achieve visual photographic consistency, and then setting the creative look and aesthetic of the pictures.

Should everyone from the casual short film maker to events videographer all colour grade?

Yes absolutely! The colour grade is the final visual polish of the film, weather you are making a corporate video, a music clip, a shortfilm or a feature this is your opportunity to make your project shine!

What is the best way to learn the process?

As with almost any art form the best way is

to learn by doing! As colour grading is also highly technical as well as creative, a great start would be to work with a professional and learn from them. Short of this, there are many tutorials online as well as reading material which can begin to give you the feel and understanding of the basics to get you started.

How long does an average length film take to grade?

This really depends on the film, the level of variety and consistency in the images, the intended aesthetic outcome, and of course the skill





feature

and experience of the Colourist. Anything between 80 to 150 hours of grading time is typical for a professional feature length film, but depending on the project this can vary enormously.

Can you describe the process and workflow? (e.g. is it done in conjunction with shooting or only applied to the completed film)

Typically the grade is the last step in the post production process. In reality it is often being done in parallel with other work such as VFX, but ultimately the Colourist is the last person to creatively affect the visuals of the film before it is finished. The colour grade happens in what is called the DI stage of post production. DI stands for Digi-

tal Intermediate and is an older term carried forward from the days before the digital revolution in film capture. The DI process brings together the final full quality version of the pictures and VFX after the film has been edited and is essentially the mastering process for the picture side of film post production.

Is it a different process for film as against digitally acquired footage?

In short, no - The term DI comes from the days of film acquisition when digital was used (as the name suggests) as an intermediate process before being printed back onto film for distribution in cinemas. Today

the majority of productions shoot digitally, but the Digital Intermediate is largely the same - Once the film is cut, the digital footage is graded, and then finished digitally to be distributed to cinemas.

You use Blackmagic Design DaVinci Resolve. Have you always used this?

Da Vinci Resolve is a staple and popular tool in the DI process both for the colour grade as well as a number of other tasks that both precede and follow it. At Soundfirm we use Resolve as the backbone of much of the DI process as it is a highly versatile platform which integrates well with the rest of our systems and workflow.

What made you choose Blackmagic Design DaVinci Resolve?

Same as above.





the dressmaker



feature

What current project(s) are you working on?

2015 has seen a vast variety of projects come through Soundfirm including a number of feature films such as *The Dressmaker*, as well as smaller arthouse productions, shortfilms and television shows.

How would you suggest an aspiring person start in the field?

Learn as much as possible and be proactive about doing so. There is no single or clear pathway into a career in post production, but being persistent and passionate with a thirst for knowledge and a positive attitude goes a long way. Be willing to

work on any worthwhile project that may further your learning and be outgoing about finding them. There are also a number of film schools in various avenues of higher education that can be an excellent start both for learning the skills and meeting like minded people.

Vegas gets Mercalli V4. Suite!





tutorial: using mics

Choosing and using a microphone is not as simple as it sounds. Here's a quick guide to help through the process.



Audio is so important in video of all types, but it seems to be treated as an afterthought by many, or not even thought of at all. The inbuilt mic on the camera is used and deemed "good enough".

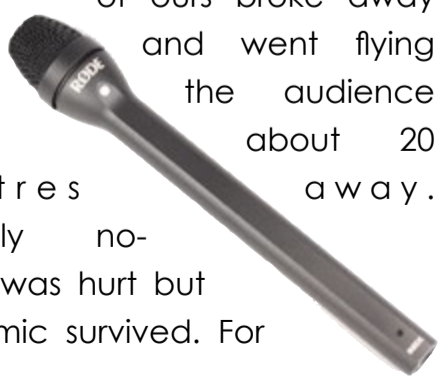
Well it might be for a family holiday say, but anything more and a LOT of time should be spent setting up the mic(s).

The first question is "which type"?

The Handheld

The most common type of mic and one I suspect many would turn to to get external audio. This should not necessarily be the case.

The handheld "ball" type mic is useful as a mic when doing vox pop interview style shooting as it allows you to go from person to person easily. A singer on stage could also use one, and as a bonus they are pretty solid when dropped. (A well know Aussie pop singer in '70s had a penchant for swinging the mic on the end of its cable around in an arc when on stage. One of ours broke away and went flying into the audience about 20 metres away. Luckily no-one was hurt but the mic survived. For



those around in those days, this was at the "Herdy" in Perth).

They are also inexpensive.

On the negative side, they are always in view and can be distracting. Additionally, if the interviewee manages to grab it – and they won't know how to use it properly – you'll have the devil's own chance of getting it back!

The Shotgun Mic

The shotgun mic – shottie – is a fabulous mic for getting dialogue. It is directional so only picks up sounds it is pointing at as distinct from the handheld mic which is unidirectional.

As it is usually on a boom over someone's head, it is also frame making

out
ing it
ideal



for short films & long films alike. And audio quality is excellent.

A disadvantage is that you need a second crew member to operate it by holding the boom, unless your subject is stationary in which case a boom stand may work depending on the circumstance.

Whilst not inexpensive, a shotgun is a very worthwhile investment. If you have a camera that doesn't support XLR plugs these commonly are equipped with, or are not capturing externally, then adaptors to the standard mini jack can be got for around \$10.



(Lapel)

Microphone

The Lav, also called a clip mic by some, is a very versatile mic indeed, especially if it is a radio type. Unobtrusive, excellent quality (as long as you choose wisely) and allowing freedom of movement, the lav is not a cheap mic. You have to spend some serious coin to get a good one, and as the rules in Australia changed on Jan 1st this year (2015), make sure a new one conforms to the new radio mic digital standards. Additionally, certain areas are also restricted by frequency. The [Australian Communications and Media Authority \(ACMA\)](http://www.acma.gov.au) has full details on its website.

Mic Placement

As important as the mic type is the placement of the mic to get the best quality audio. The actual position of course varies according to the mic type, but as guide, the following are examples and advice to follow.





tutorial: using mics

Spoken Word (Handheld)

The microphone should be around 12cm from the mouth, but depending on the mic you may need to experiment a bit to get optimum quality. Also, make sure it is angled upwards or downwards to minimise "popping" on letters such as 'p' and 't'. If possible fit a pop filter as well, and if in windy conditions, make sure there is a wind screen attached.

Reflective surfaces should also be avoided as any reflected sounds will be distorted and affect the overall quality.

Make sure you are always talking directly into the mic; any deviation of this such as turning your head sideways will make any audio dull.

Vocals (Handheld)

A different technique is used for vocals as against the spoken word. You want to get some of the ambience as well as the singer's voice, so an omnidirectional mic is often used, held in front of the mouth with a slightly off axis (centre of the pickup pattern) placement to minimise popping.

Shotgun on a Boom

This is trickier than it sounds; as well as placement, the operator needs a certain amount of stamina as the arms can get very

weary!

Get the mic as close to the subject from above as possible while of course keeping it out of shot. If the pickup angle is outside the axis, quality drops noticeably and dramatically.

If recording a static subject, or one keeping to a script where any movements will be known ahead, this is no problem, but a news gatherer / run and gun operator needs to be very conscious of the pickup angle being constant during movement.

Lavelier Mic

There are a number of factors to this making it a potential challenge in some cases, not the least being the subject's modesty during placement!

Rustling fabric is the biggest culprit hence why placing on ties is so popular. Another technique is to have a ball of gaffer tape on the back to keep the mic flat. The biggest things to avoid are taping it inside a person of ah, hirsute-

ness, shirt or directly to skin, rough fabrics, starched shirts and multiple layers of clothing.

Also avoid placing it on a collar as audio quality will be degraded with the sideways location.

Australian mic experts RØDE can be of huge help here with their on-line [Soundbooth](#) showing all their mics in all aspects of video shooting (indoor and outdoor interviews, voice over live music and so on) complete with location and placement descriptions and even sound bites from each mic.

Glossary of Audio Terms

Ambient Audio: The background noise present in a scene or recording location.

Balanced Audio: A type of audio signal which uses two inverted voltages as a way to prevent unwanted noise being picked up by cables.

Compression: A method of "evening out" the dynamic range of a signal.

Decibel (dB): Logarithmic measurement of signal strength.

Equalization: The process of adjusting various audio frequencies to correct or enhance the sound.

Gain: The amplification level of an audio signal.

Peak: The highest level of strength of an audio signal. Often refers to an unacceptably high level, where the signal begins distorting.

XLR: A lockable connector, available with various numbers of pins. The most common XLR in audio work is the 3-pin XLR.



tutorial





red giant: beeples & plugins

Inspired by a fellow artist in May 2007, Mike Winkelmann set out to create a new piece of art every day

It's not often that a small project can turn into a big break, but if you work on your craft everyday like graphic designer Mike Winkelmann has, you just might get to work with big name musicians like Flying Lotus, deadmau5, Tiësto and Zedd.

Inspired by a fellow artist in May 2007, Mike set out to create a new piece of art every day – aptly named “Everydays” – for his website Bleep, an online wonderland filled with what he calls “art crap” (and for the record, we disagree). Today, Mike has over 3,000 days worth of art up on his website, not to mention a bunch of new skills on his resume.

“I started out doing drawings with paper and pencil, but I saw that the ‘Everydays’ were a good way to learn new skills,” Mike says. “I wanted to learn about digital photography and Adobe Illustrator, so I started doing more of that, and somewhere along the way, I taught myself how to use [CINEMA 4D](#).”

CINEMA 4D is a 3D modeling and animation package. With it, Mike is able to model characters or scenes and incorporate them into short videos, a medium which he has become particularly good at. So good, his films

have been screened at onedotzero, Prix Ars Electronica, the Sydney Biennale and other festivals. But before Mike could teach himself how to use CINEMA 4D, he first had to discover his passion for video.

Mike's fascination began in college after goofing around on a couple of short films with his friends; he found that he really enjoyed postproduction work. His personal style led him to the abstract, weird, 3D-animation-type projects that were more computer-oriented as opposed to live action. Learning how to use CINEMA 4D through

project, commercial or non-commercial. If Mike had been on the map before, his VJ clips put him in Times Square.

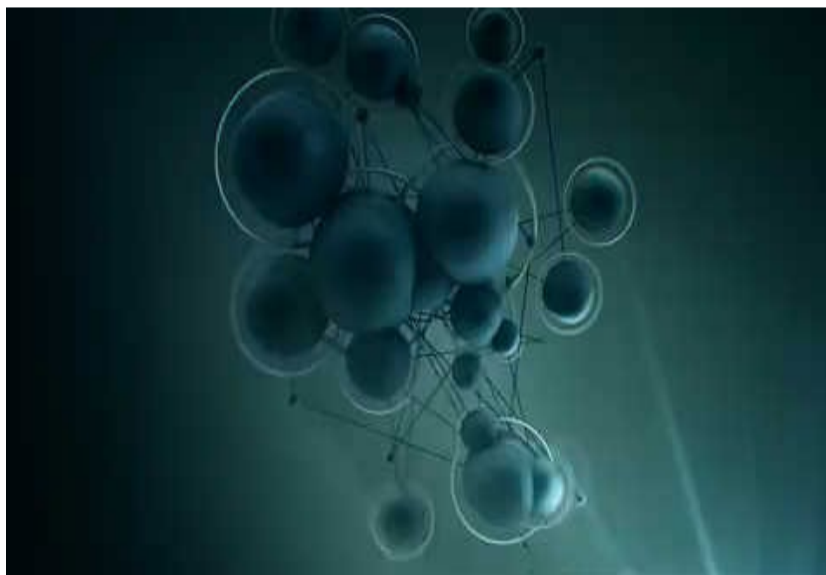
“People started finding me through the internet and asking me to make customized VJ clips,” he says. “They were like, ‘Okay, look. The free clips are cool but we’d rather have something that’s a little more branded toward us.’ That’s how some of the bigger artists found me.”

Enter chart-topping electronic artists like Skrillex, Avicii, Taio Cruz and many, many more. When Mike started getting calls from big stars wanting customized Bleep graphics for their shows and music videos, he got to break out the big guns. Although he still keeps up with his personal creative work (when Mike says “everyday,” he means

it), much of his time is now spent on these larger projects. And because time is hard to come by, Mike swears by [Red Giant](#) plugins to push quality content out faster.

Going 3D with FlyLo

Mike uses a number of tools to get the perfect look, and many times, working in post is his chance to let his creative juices flow. For his videos, he says that he can get 80% of the way



Click above to play

his “Everyday” creations and short videos proved to be invaluable. His work began to take on a unique look that caught people's attention – and not just anyone.

When Mike began releasing VJ clips about five years ago, or source material in the public domain for other motion graphics designers to use, it became one of his primary projects alongside his “Everydays” and short videos. His VJ clips are short – 10 to 30-second long pieces of video that anyone can download and use for any





red giant: beeples & plugins

there in CINEMA 4D, but because it is so time consuming to tweak, process the file and re-tweak, he tends to do the last 20% in [After Effects](#) using Red Giant plugins.

Red Giant's [Magic Bullet Looks](#) is one of Mike's favorite plugins to give footage that final touch it needs to be truly great. He benefits from all of its options and presets, and he likes working off of them to create his own presets, which he saves for later projects. This way he can quickly scan the list and see if one of his presets would be perfect for upping the look of his graphics to the next level.

"The interface is super simple," he says. "That's one of the reasons I like it so much. It offers many different looks, and now I actually use it quite a bit in Photoshop to do post stuff on my 'Everydays' because it's such a powerful and intuitive tool."

A simple interface in post colour correction gives Mike a lot more time to work on the graphics in CINEMA 4D. That way, he can use colour to emphasize a graphic rather than overwhelm it. For EDM artist Flying Lotus's song "Kill Your Co-Workers," Mike created a music video that put his best 3D skills to the test. Colour was important to sharpen this project's visuals, giving it an enchanting effect that pulls the viewer into the graphical world of make-believe.

"Everything you see in 3D has been through Magic Bullet colour production in After Effects," he says. "Everybody does post colour correction, and among those

people using After Effects, almost everyone uses Magic Bullet Looks and other Red Giant plugins. As soon as you start using AE, you'll run into Red Giant plugins because they're extremely popular. They're so engrained in how I use AE now that sometimes I forget they're even plugins."

Of [Trapcode Particular, Red Giant's organic 3D particle generator](#), Mike says there is no substitute. For example, he uses it when he is doing a fly-through in an environment. Usually, he will draw out the basic geometry in CINEMA 4D and then take it into After Effects, using Trapcode Particular to perfect the look of the particles. Because Particles can be tweaked and re-rendered in After Effects a lot faster than in CINEMA 4D, Mike doesn't have to spend hours rendering video and can cut down an incredible amount of time for an essential look.

Preparing for the Sound Check

Mike loves creating concert visuals, and he enjoys the challenge of creating a unique look and feel for each music genre that will sync up and make a high impact in a live setting. Many times, he has to work with interesting aspect ratios or different requirements depending on how the stage will be set up, so each project is a completely different experience for him. Recently, Mike has been hard at work on Russian-German DJ Zedd's upcoming fall tour promoting his newest album. He even got to listen to the fresher than fresh tracks from Zedd before its release date, allowing him to conceive the perfect graphics to parallel the beats.

"We're building all these worlds for the tour, and I don't think there's a single clip that I didn't use Magic Bullet Looks on to do colour correction, if not other Red Giant plugins as well," Mike says. "In a huge portion of them I use Particular for particle effects, as well as Denoiser."

Because of its ultra fast rendering capabili-

ties, Denoiser is helping Mike more than ever with the video for Zedd's tour. Typically, it can take ages to render even a second of footage – just one seven-second clip can take four or five days to process on a computer. For a project like this, rendering alone could take weeks.

"The longer I render clips out of CINEMA 4D, the less noisy they'll be in terms of graininess, so it makes it clearer the longer you wait," Mike says. "Unfortunately, I just don't have that kind of time. Denoiser is amazing at getting rid of that grain. I've used it on the majority of clips so the render times aren't absolutely crushing." This allows Mike to cut CINEMA 4D render times shorter, without sacrificing quality of video. "I don't even know how much time it's saved me. Not even just days of rendering – it's been more like weeks."

When it comes time for Zedd's tour, the graphics will be so out of this world that the audience will be on a different wavelength altogether. Mike is thankful that he not only has the opportunity to make striking effects with Red Giant plugins, but that he has plenty of time to perfect them, as well.

"I'm such a huge fan of Red Giant products," Mike says. "They've got so many fast, easy-to-use plugins. I'm just a super, super huge fan. I can't say it enough."

For more on Mike's projects, check out his [website](#). Many of his clips are available under Creative Commons licencing.





tutorial: mercalli v4

We have often spoken of ProDRENALIN from ProDAD for stabilising footage. Now meet Mercalli v4, sort of like a ProDRENALIN on super steroids



I have some footage I took a while back and never got around to doing anything with it. I decided to run the new [Mercalli v4](#) plugin for Sony Vegas Pro 13 through its paces and see if I could clean it up a bit.

Before I committed to a long piece, I thought to throw a short clip at it to test the result.

This was shot on a [Sony Action Cam](#) and as we all know by now, these throw aberrations into the footage due to the characteristics of the CMOS sensor. (Figure 1)

[Mercalli v4](#) has a new feature designed to fix these CMOS horrors and it is the first thing you should do before using [Mercalli's](#) other tools.

ProDAD applications are embedded into the VideoFX tab of Vegas,. With Mercalli, there are actually separate entities, the CMOS Fixr and the Stabilizer. It's the CMOS Fixr we use first but we can throw them both on the timeline together. Now it IS important that you run the CMOS Fixr before anything else. As such, it should be first in the chain as shown

Once you have added it, a new window opens for [Mercalli](#) showing the options available. If you also loaded the [Mercalli](#) plug in



Sony Action Cam



Figure 1 - click to play



Figure 2

case study





tutorial: mercalli v4

the playback window shows a reference to that and video analysis. Ignore this for the moment, or simply turn it off by removing the check mark for the plug in for now.

There are a few options available to you in the CMOS Fixr. For starters, you can use a precise CMOS Fix or a Superfast one. Here I am going to try the precise to get the best I can.

Under the Render option, there are more options as you can see. Again to get the best fix, I am choosing Precise GPU. The rest of the options there I didn't worry about for this first test.

Next is sensor. The fixer needs to know what the exact characteristics of you CMOS Sensor are, and this is where the video analysis comes into play. This is activated by clicking the Estimate button. The time this takes depends on the length of the clip. You can just select a portion to speed this process up. In this case the CMOS Fixr Analyzer a sensor speed of 1.17. (Figure 4)

If you now look at the View Mode, there are separate options for how the CMOS Fixr is displayed in the playback window. You can view the resultant video after CMOS Fixr has done its thing, a side by side or top to bottom comparison of before and after or simply the source footage. I chose Horizontal Compare (side by side)

You next press the Render button and see the result of the CMOS Fixr.

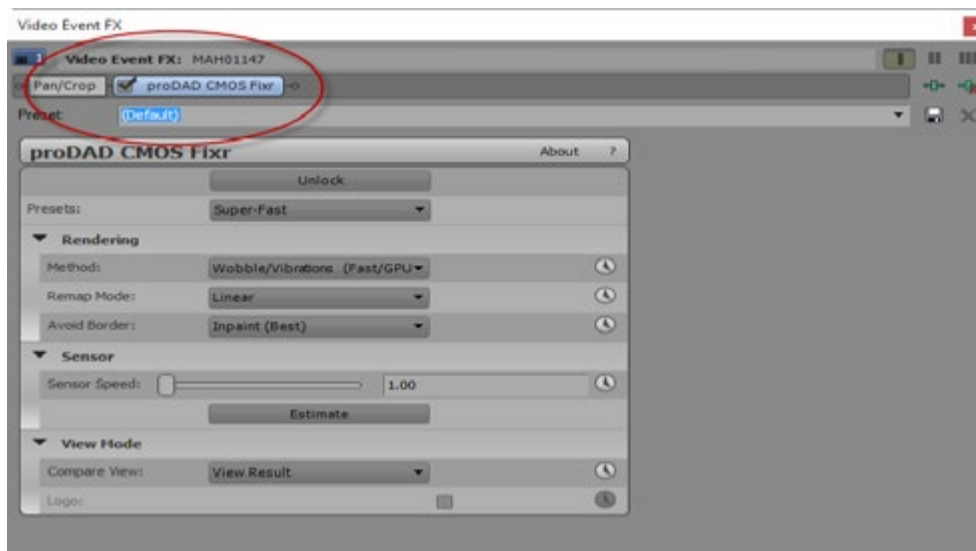


Figure 3

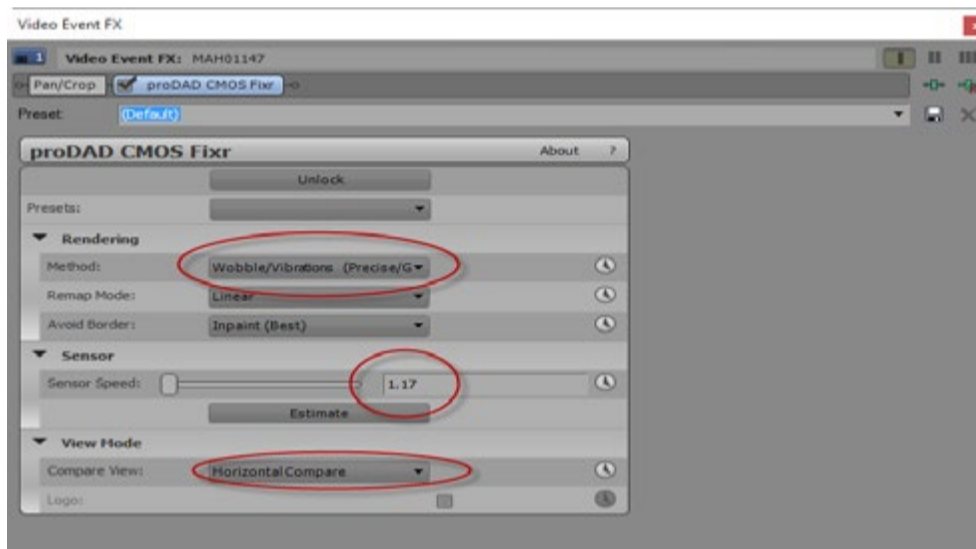


Figure 4

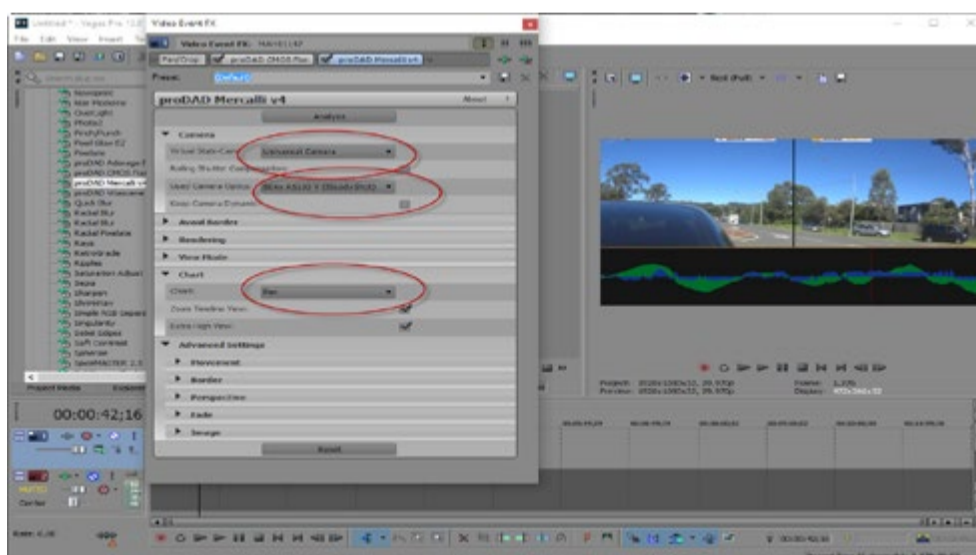


Figure 5

tutorial





tutorial: mercalli v4

Now we can use the [Mercalli](#) plugin.

Again you need to tell [Mercalli](#) some information, and the first is the actual camera type used. As you can see there is a bunch of presets there but if yours isn't, just choose universal. I have used this many times in earlier versions of [Mercalli](#) with great results.

The rolling shutter compensation can actually be turned off as the CMOS Fixr has done that for us as we ran it first.

For fisheye, as I was using the Sony, I chose this option. (Figure 5)

Once again now we Analyze the source video. Again I just chose a small section. Once it has finished, to see what [Mercalli](#) found, (Figure 6) I opened up the charts for each parameter, and this shows a graph of the actions Mercalli took for each.

There are a lot more parameters I can tweak, but for the sake of this exercise I can now render the whole clip. (Figure 7)

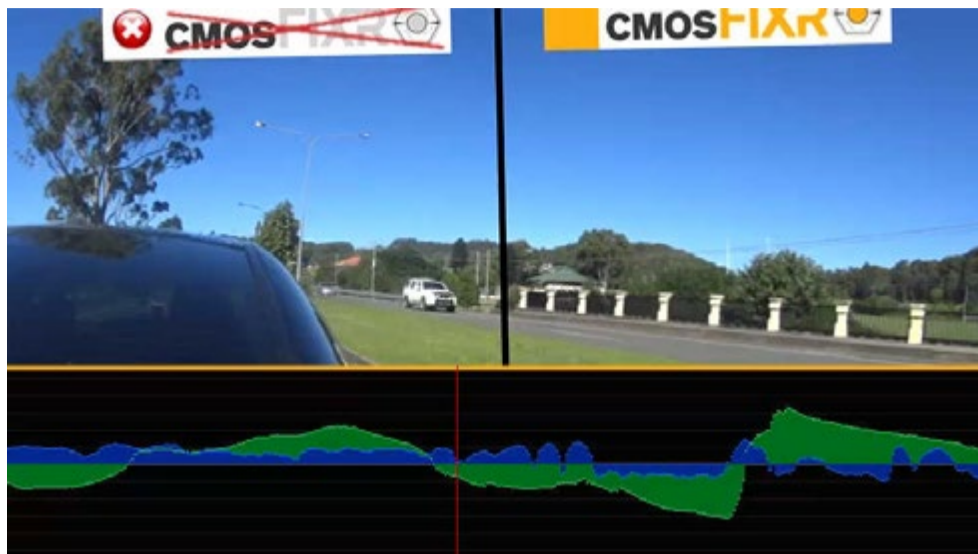


Figure 6 - click to play



Figure 7 - click to play





learning about smartphones

Smartphones are complex beasts with lots of apps incl. camera and videocamera. Gareth Powell shows you the best way to learn.



I have been having a difficulty in describing mobile phones that take movies and record sounds and do who knows what else? Smartmobile has been suggested and it works and it is what we will use in the future.

Comment has already been made of the difficulty with working with the manuals that come with smartmobiles. The focus has been on the Samsung Galaxy Note II as that is the one I work with the most -- at the moment.

Pretty much all manuals are difficult because so many departments are involved in the final product -- marketing, technical and, final disaster, legal. No readability department is involved. This could be restricting the quality of the movies and stills you get from your smartmobile, or even stop you using it for either of these purposes.

What should the poor user do?

What we need to do to get value for money is get over the Pareto Principle, sometimes called the 80/20 rule. If you follow your printed manual, listen to your mates, and let the nice person in the shop help you then you will end up understanding how 20 per-

cent of your new smartmobile works. The other 80 percent remains a mystery so you are losing out on value for money.

On your desktop go into Google. Put in the exact title of your smartmobile -- in this case Samsung Galaxy Note II -- in the search box. Press return and up will come a list of

Next select the sites with the introductions to your smartmobile you find most helpful and understandable and then go through them again following how they work with you own smartmobile. The demonstrator does this; you halt the computer screen then you do it on your smartmobile.

First time around you will be wandering through the jungle not quite sure which way lies the true trail.

The second time through it will all be much easier.

The third time a doddle but if there are any bits you still find difficult -- with me this happens all the time but I am a technonumpty (good word, that) -- repeat them. At which point you really own your smartmobile. You know what it will do and how you can get it to do it.

At this stage you will probably find that two or three sites are better than the others. OK. Make those sites

into icons on your computer and you can have a smartmobile refresher course any time you feel you need it.

It beats the living daylight out of struggling with the manual provided by the manufacturer which will, if over used, threaten your sanity

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sites. Many of them dedicated to showing you exactly your smartmobile works. Either all the features or a selected few which are named.

Sit there with you smartmobile in your hand and go through each of the screens. Make it a weekend pastime -- it is a pleasant experience which should not be called a task.



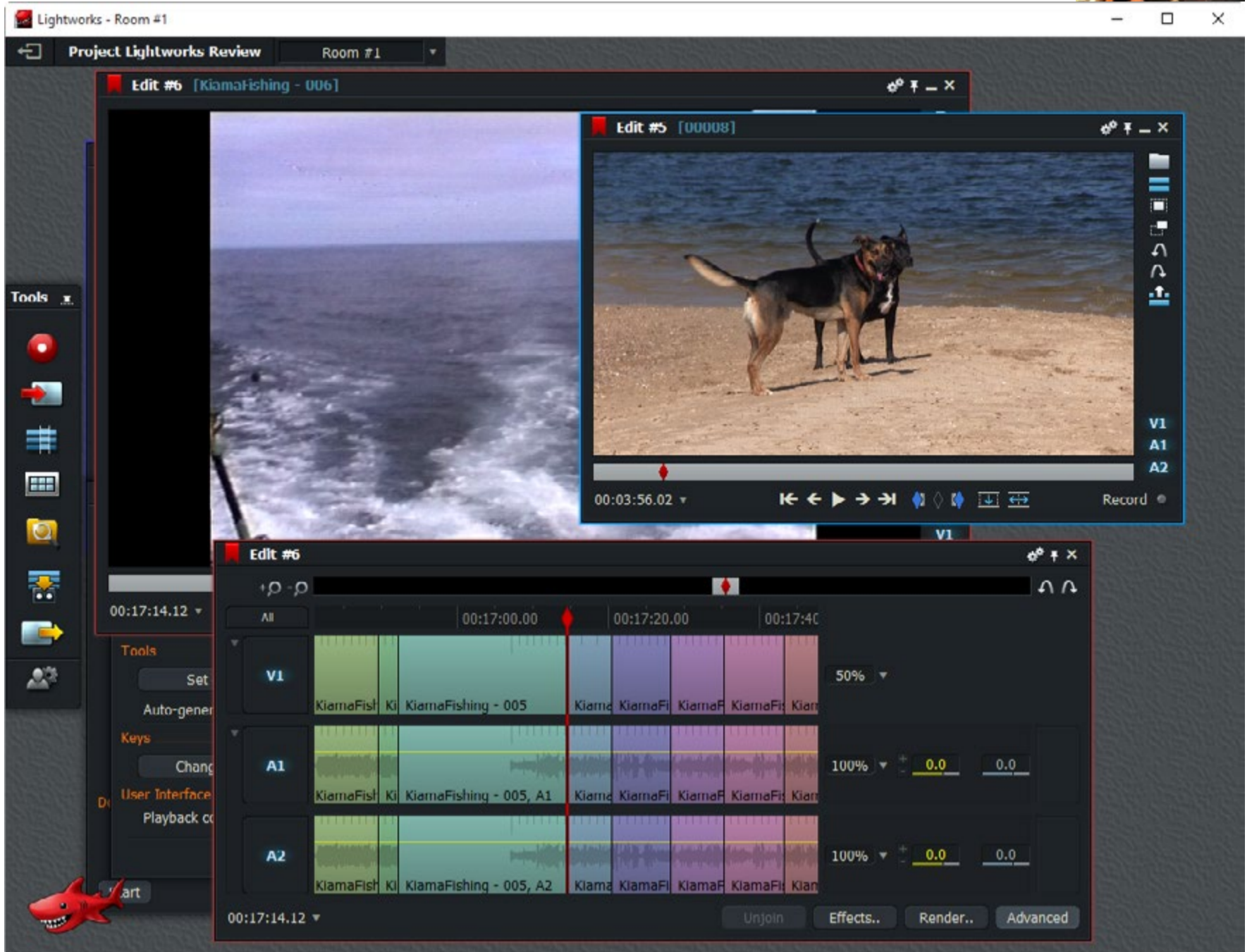


review: lightworks

If like me you hadn't heard of Lightworks, take a look at this NLE for Windows, Mac and LINUX



software



Main Screen With Timeline and 2 EDits in Viewers

I had never actually heard of Lightworks, and it was a coincidence that the name fell across my desktop in a request for something else. It must have been around for a while though as it is up to version 12.5 and is available for Mac, PC and LINUX.

There is a free "try before you buy" version; we requested a real one and the UK based company was

very quick sending us both a Mac and Windows version keys, and registered us as genuine users on the database.

To learn the product as fast as possible, I found a series of [10 tutorials covering the basics](#) of the application and there is a further 13 online for the Advanced topics.

In hindsight, the basics will get you going and you can then fine tune later.

Installation and Starting a Project

Installation is straightforward as you'd expect

these days using a web download, all you need to do after the process is complete, when starting the program, you need to enter the serial key.

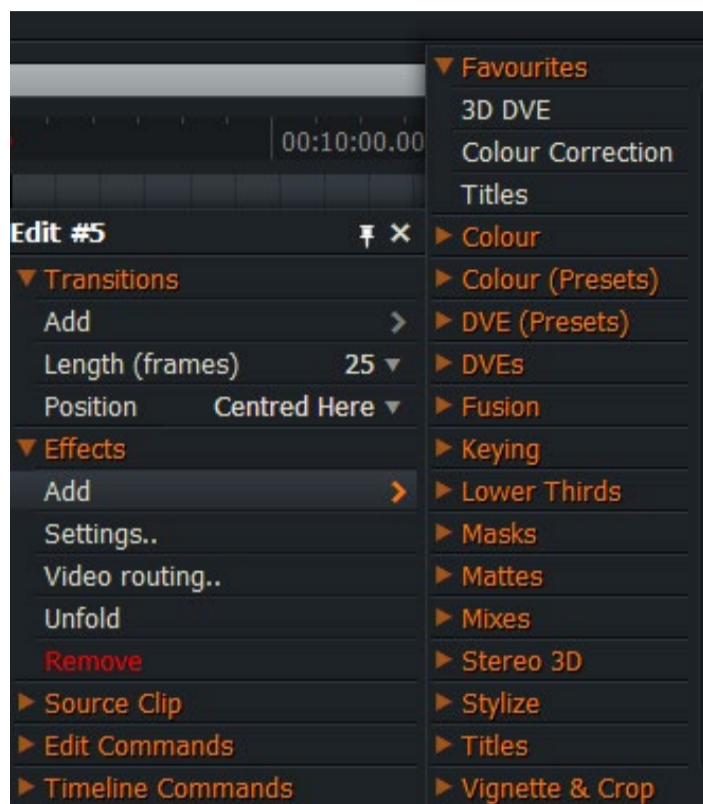
Upon starting, you are first presented with a window called the Project Browser showing a list of all the projects you have created thus far. At this point you can name a new project and set its frame rate (or use auto if it will have multiple clips with different frame rates). If you choose





review: lightworks

software



Add Effects

Auto, Lightworks will set it to 24 fps and you can the modify this at the output stage.

Apple ProRes, Broadcast Wave with non-drop timecode, IMX, RED, DVCPRO and DVCPRO and

main toolbox is located initially on the far left, but is free floating to be placed anywhere you wish.

The tools available at this stage are Record New Clip from Tape, Import Clips or Edits, Create New Edit, Browse Project Contents, Search for Clips or Edits, Play an Edit Out To Tape, Export Edits Clips or Bins and Editor Preferences. If you haven't told Lightworks what your output device is, a small warning "Hint" pops up. Hints can be turned off or kept on permanently.

Lightworks can import an impressive range of formats including the latest XDCAM, Cinema DMG as well as the more expected ones such as AVCHD, MPEG, Mov and so on.

After clicking the Import button any selected clips will show in the Content Manager window. To catalogue imported clips into bins, select and press the + icon to create a bin. It can be renamed to what you prefer.

You can also drag and drop from the File Manager panel and the Content Manager can be launched at any time by clicking the icon in the toolbox.

Clips in individual bins can be dragged from one to another thus organising clips by type or content and bins can be further categorised into separate groups.

When a clip is in a bin, its content can be played by pressing the space bar once the clip is highlighted. To see a larger version double click a file, and a viewer opens with standard transport controls. In and out points can also be set at this point and a clip then becomes an "edit". Edits can be named.

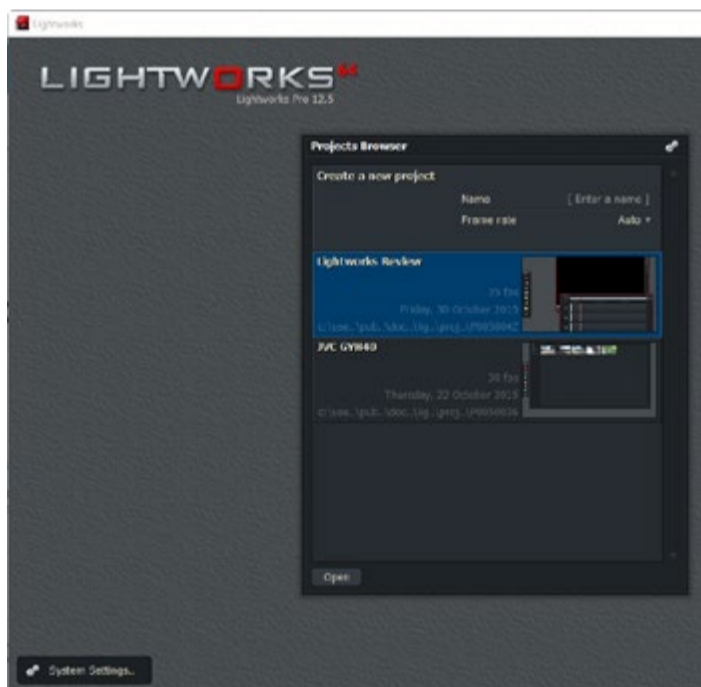
Basic Editing

To enter editing mode, select the icon in the toolbox. Right clicking on this icon (it looks like a timeline) allows you to change any edit setting such as number of tracks and their length. The set button makes these the default.

Once pressed, a new window opens with a timeline and the track(s), plus a viewer. Double clicking a file in the bin brings it into a source window. In and out points are created as per standard ways in all editing software, however if no output is set, the end of the clip is deemed to be the outpoint.

As clips are added to the timeline, they each given a different colour to identify them. To add a cutaway, the edits are made in the preview window by marking in and out points and clicking replace once the position has been decided.

Standard clips are added using the replace button and to insert a clip and shuffle clips to the right to compensate, use the insert button. I find the use of the "replace"



The Project Browser

When finished, Lightworks opens the Import screen.

Importing

To set the properties of a Project, a small gear icon on the top right of the Import screen is clicked. The

Organise

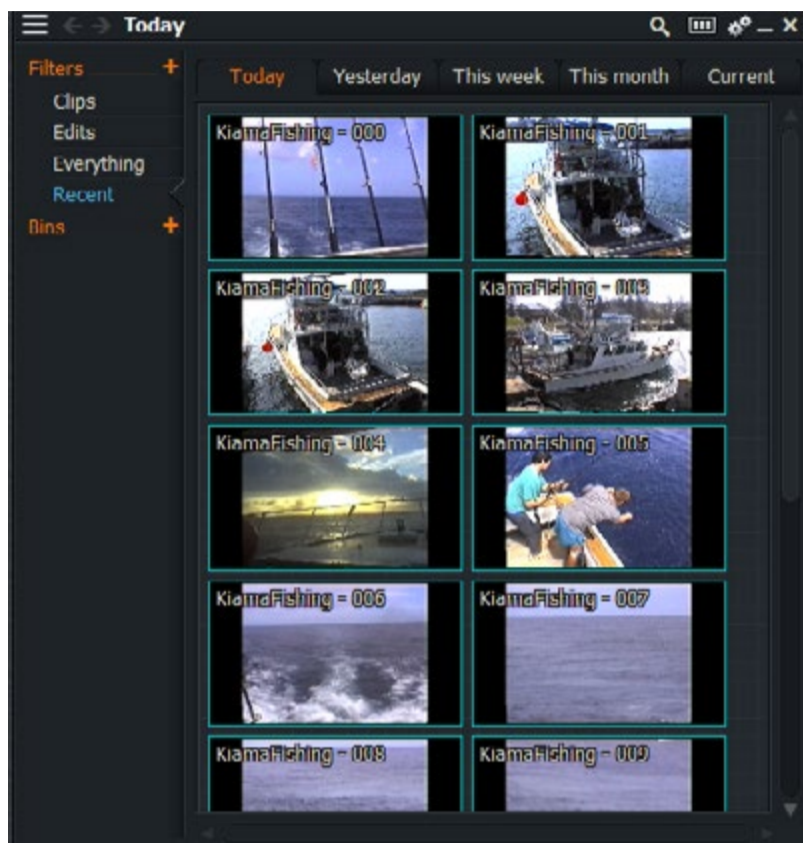
With the Content Manager open, the display of assets can be filtered to show only certain types or by date and you can change views between files and lists. The display in terms of what data per clip is available can be customised.





review: lightworks

software



Clip Browser

terminology a bit strange as against say, "add". Effectively I can't see that you are replacing anything, but maybe I have missed something here?

To remove sections of a clip that is on the timeline, the reverse process is performed but edits are made on



the preview window and the delete key pressed to remove a section.

As in most NLEs, a swathe of keyboard shortcuts is available and to assist in this, the developers of Lightworks (EditShare) have available a [customised keyboard](#) with different coloured keys. I have used one of these for years (along with a Contour

ShuttlePro) designed for Sony Vegas and can vouch for their usefulness.

Editing can also be done en masse by dragging and dropping clips either from the bin, edit viewer or timeline.

Trimming, slip and slide edits as well as L cuts are made possible using a combination of the mouse, timeline, and keyboard. When doing

fine tune edits both the source and preview windows show changes.

Transitions and Effects

Transitions are selected from an effects panel and a duration set in a drop down menu or you set transition in and out points. Right clicking a cut point will also let you apply a transition. Keyframes are available.

Effects such as Chromakey, Colour Correction, Blending and so forth are chosen from an Effects Panel. Keyframing is allowed and all in all, it's a pretty powerful engine. For things that are beyond its compositing scope, Blackmagic Design Fusion can be used as a plugin to get some serious grunt indeed. Fusion is of course a bargain being available at no cost, so this is indeed a bonus!

At present you also get free copies of Boris Graffiti and FX so even better value (but only for full licences).

Export

Lightworks can export in a wide range of formats, including direct to YouTube, Blu-ray

and DVD. File formats range from AVI to H.264/MP4 and a bundle of camera formats such as XCDAM, P2 and XAVC thus satisfying the pickiest of pro editor.

Conclusion

The workflow takes a bit of getting used to as it is slightly different from the norm, but there is no doubting Lightworks could be pitched directly against the likes of [Sony Vegas](#) and [Adobe Premiere Pro](#) for example.

I am not sure it packs the same compositing wallop of the former, but the inclusion of Fusion from Blackmagic solves that issue to large degree, albeit at increasing the learning curve.

NLE versions for Mac, Windows and LINUX is reasonably rare so if you are cross platform, this could be an asset, or if you share with cross platform workflows, it means you have a broader selection than just FCX or Premiere Pro.

You can buy Lightworks with a month by month licence, an annual licence or outright. See the [website](#) for pricing.

Download the [sample](#) and have a look. I think after a play and a run through the [base tutorials](#), you might be pleasantly surprised.



introduction to foley

Foley is the art (science) of creating sounds to add to movies. Here's a short intro and some ideas to get you started.



We have said many times that audio is often overlooked in the fine tuning process of a video/movie. By that we generally mean not much attention is paid to the quality of the audio, or extraneous sounds have crept in (car going past, fridge starting up, dog barking etc).

I have a theory that this may be partly due to people being scared off by the "magic" behind correct audio. The terms such as noise gate, compression and decibel confuses and frightens people.

Let's look at another angle of audio often overlooked altogether and that is the art of the Foley, named after Jack Foley in the early 20th century.

In you are not familiar with the term, Foley is the name giving to adding sound effects after the film has been recorded. They are created using everyday props or sources. For example, the "shhsh" sound of the StarTrek doors was created by sliding a piece of paper out of a large envelope!

It may or may be a myth that the brilliant Spike Milligan of Goon Show fame threw a monster hissy fit when for a particular sound effect, he wanted some cold, wet custard in a sock to hit against a wall, and the BBC canteen didn't have any!

So in the name of art, I thought I'd do some digging and see what effects and their methodology I could find to pass on. There are ones you will identify with as well as ones you might like to try yourself. Thanks to the [BBC](#) for many of these.

Famous Foleys

For a horse race, the sound of the hooves is not the real race but in many cases a herd of buffalo. The sound is slowed down. The sound of the RingWraith in Lord of the Rings was two plastic cups rubbed together and a bit of doctoring after.

The [Dalek voice](#) you can easily reproduce at home if you have an audio package such as Sound Forge or Audacity. It is made by adding a Ring Modulator to the normal speaking voice. There are loads of tutorials on the 'net for this one using different other ways but this is how Terry Nation, their "inventor" first did it and it continues to this day. Fig shows how.

In Jurassic Park the T-Rex roar was actually made by combining a slowed down baby elephant trumpet with the roar of a tiger and alligator. For Toy Story the sound of Bullseye licking Woody's face was a cow licking peanut butter off a crew member's face.

Foley Suggestions

- *Tightly curl a phone book into a cylinder, wrap it in gaffer tape, and use it to smack things. Great for punches, body falls, dinosaur feet, etc.*
- *Simulating a lit fuse can be done with a common everyday sparkler (\$3 for 8 at Woolworths in the Party section)*
- *Hit a head of lettuce or cabbage*

(especially for head impacts)

- *Wrap uncooked dry spaghetti in a damp chamois and crush it. (Breaking Bone)*
- *A small bunch of kale can give you a very realistic, dense foliage sound.*

A huge list of Foley techniques is at this [website](#).

There are also many Foley libraries available on the internet, many of them free. For example try [here](#).

Creating A Dalek Voice

1. *Hook up a mic (or get an audio sound file)*
2. *Start Audacity ([available here](#))*
3. *Record your voice (or open start file)*
4. *Choose **Effect > Killerringer**. Set the sliders to very low levels. Try Root pitch 0.003, Speed 0.01 and Amount 0.01*
5. *With the sound highlighted, choose **Effect > Normalise**. Keep both boxes ticked and click OK.*
6. *Highlight the sound and choose **Effect > Delay**. Don't apply too much; we found decay amount 5, delay time 0.04 and number of echoes 1 worked well.*
7. *Play Back and fine tune if needed.*





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ONLY \$38!

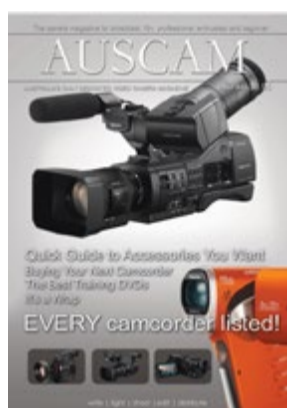
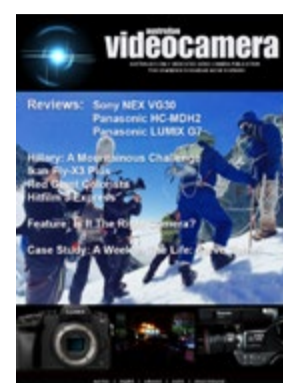
Australian Videocamera is published as an e-book 12 times a year, and is Australia's only dedicated magazine on all things video.

It is aimed at; the person who takes the occasional footage with a smartphone, the casual holiday memory video fan, those capturing precious family memories, sports fans, enthusiasts, short film makers, event recorders and broadcast professionals.

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If “diverse” had a photo next to it in the dictionary, I think the odds are that this man’s image might be it!

He worked for 28 years in Radio & Television, in SA, WA, NSW, Europe, UK & USA. He has reported for news agencies and magazines in Australia, Europe and the UK, as well as writing radio and television commercials, documentaries, multi-media marketing presentations, newsletters and promotional material for a wide variety of clients.

He has tutored in Broadcast Journalism at Curtin University, and instructed in Media Training at St John Ambulance and a host of other organisations.

And he has appeared in more than 40 feature and short films, television movies, docu-dramas and series, as well as a host of stage and multi-media productions.



Meet Kym “Bid” Bidstrup.

1. How did you start your acting career?

I like to think this occurred in three stages. None couldn't have happened without the others.

As a teenager I took every opportunity to perform during my high school years. From school plays to debating to dabbling in the most basic acting lessons.

I was terrible. This is not being self-deprecating. I was shocking. Shy,

self-conscious and with nothing to “say” as a performer.

Nevertheless, I announced to my parents that I wanted to perform for a living. They gave me the “get your haircut and get a real job” speech.

And so I did.

What followed was 28 years in broadcast journalism all over the world but always with the strongest emphasis on the performance aspect. For example, I became a news reader, did my own radio talk show, narrated and presented documentaries, fronted an entertainment segment, be-

came a “foreign correspondent” and a bureau chief in London.

There, a generous chance remark by an interview subject, the actor Martin Shaw, that “I should be an actor” never left me.

Finally, disillusioned with journalism – this is the understatement of the century – I quit. I slowly, tentatively, awkwardly moved my way towards more creative work.

Then in my late 40's, I was not so much cast, as thrust, into a minor role in a docudrama when another actor pulled out through illness, literally at the last minute. I was hooked from the first moments. I loved

everything about the work and the environment on set. I felt I belonged. At the first morning break I rang my wife and said simply; “I can't do what I've been doing any more. I have to do this.” She was amazingly supportive. I immediately went back to serious acting lessons, took every course I could find/afford, secured an agent and I haven't regretted a second of it.

2. As an actor, what sort of work might you be involved in?

I'm always interested in interesting projects. That might sound a bit flip but it's true. If a subject, character, storyline, issue, whatever - grabs me, I'm in.

It's a cliché but it really does all start with a good script.

That doesn't necessarily mean a cracking plot, by the way. As an actor (and director) compelling characters are far more important.

I always tell my students; “if I don't care about the characters, why would I care about what happens to them?”

My preference in acting roles is drama. Then again, who doesn't like making people laugh?

3. Is this restricted to WA?

Not necessarily. And in the past, certainly not. But the reality of my age and stage, as well as the state/nature of the industry, effectively means yes. I'd love to work





in the industry - kym bidstrup

further afield, however.

4. Are you working in something specific at the moment?

I'm currently re-editing (I'm a director and editor as well as an actor) one of my own earlier short films "The Man Who Loved Bears." I also do a regular podcast "The Call Me Sir Ben Podcast" - you can find us on SoundCloud and Facebook - and I'm in the planning stages of a mock-u-mentary I will direct on the subject of a flawed guru. I have a novel chugging away on the word processor too but it's stalled at the minute.

5. Do you consider a professional qualification a necessity in your craft? Is it seen by potential casting agents as an advantage over others?

In a personal sense, I'm proud to have achieved a Diploma of Screen Acting from Fremantle's Film & Television Institute at the ripe old age of 58 but I can't honestly say it's helped, or hindered. I have never, repeat never, had a casting agent remark on it. Make of that what you will.

6. What actors inspire you or do you particularly admire?

I love the detail and authenticity of Sir Anthony Hopkins. I am in awe of the risk taking of Johnny Depp. I could watch early Al Pacino all day. Nicholson and early Brando, likewise. I'm also drawn to the everyman quality of actors like Jeff Bridges. But I have a special place for so called "jobbing actors" - the actors, male and female, who always bring truth to their portrayals, no matter how peripheral the characters may be. For me, that's an actor like Ed

Harris, Maggie Gyllenhaal or Mary Louise Parker.

7. Any particular film or TV show you'd have loved to have been/be involved in?

I would have to have delusions of grandeur to imagine I belonged.... but "The West Wing" stands out for me as writing, acting, television of the highest order. It is absolutely outstanding in every department. In a very different way (because I'm also a



have been physically ill. I feel considerably less nervous before film/ tv work but the doubts and fears are always there. I have learned that this is just a measure of how much we care about what we do.

11. Many major actors love "treading the boards" Your take on this?

I'm a rarity - and I mean no disrespect to my fellow actors more drawn to the stage - but theatre work does little for me. Of course there's a connection with a live audience that is unique. But I find the precision and technical aspects, the collaboration, and the visual texture of film work so much more challenging and satisfying.

12. How do you deal with the stress of it all and how do you relax when not working?

Not very well! But I'm getting better. I have a wide variety of interests that enable me to switch off and I have the best family in the UNIVERSE.

13. If you started today to decide to become a professional actor, would you approach it any different to what you did previously?

I don't mean to imply that I've had a perfect career, or that I've never put a foot wrong. But I honestly wouldn't change anything. I have had the most wonderful, supportive collaborators, colleagues and mentors along the way. If I have one minor regret, it is that I didn't learn what I call my 3 Golden Rules for film acting sooner. Trust. Allow. Get Out Of Your Own Way.

Not a bad set of rules for Life either.

voice actor) I would love to have been involved in "The Simpsons." There are soooo many films I could mention but (perhaps) above all, "The Godfather" and "The Big Lebowski."

8. What is your favourite acting genre? Action? Romance? Thriller? Anything else?

Drama, hands down. And within that genre, inter-personal, psycho-sexual or relationship drama.

9. What process do you employ to learn lines? Anything special?

I'm not sure that it's "special" but I use (particularly) Meisner techniques in preparation and I often use Harold Guskin's work to break up sentences into images, individual moments of meaning, and emotion. Then I rehearse, rehearse, rehearse IN CHARACTER. Learning a character must be an holistic experience for me. I actually learn the lines in my head, heart and body.

10. Do you get nerves prior to a gig?

Prior to stepping on stage I feel so anxious I



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