www.StudentFilmmakers.com Workshops | Forums | Network | Showcase | Tech Focus

studentfilmmakers

2012, Vol. 7, No. 4 The #1 Educational Resource for Film and Video Makers US$5.95



It Ain't Rocket Science

3D Filming Wild Horses in the Gobi Desert

Spider-Man is Amazing Again

It's a Great Time to Write for Television

Canon EOS C300 on the Run

Publisher's Desk



The summer continues to be filled with exciting back-to-back industry tradeshows and conferences, workshops and seminars, and other great educational, networking and inspirational opportunities. Students, Teachers & Faculty, and Schools, *are you ready for Back to School?* The Back to School section in this issue gives you a preview of new film and video making solutions.

Check out the article, "NightLights," by William Donaruma and John Klein. The feature was shot using RED MX, Panasonic AF100, and DSLR cameras. In "Filming Wild Horses in the Gobi Desert," Al Caudullo shares his experience shooting a 3D documentary with Panasonic AG-3DA1 cameras. While filming around the globe with his new C300, Carl Filoreto goes more in-depth about his first impressions of the C300 in the article, "Canon EOS C300 on the Run."

StudentFilmmakers.com and *StudentFilmmakers* Magazine returns to Hollywood, California, to exhibit at WEVA 2012, the Expo for Wedding & Event Film/Video Professionals. You might be browsing and visiting exhibits at WEVA with this very edition in your hands as we speak! Check out the article in this issue, "Solo Shoots," by Patrick Moreau. Don't forget to stop by the StudentFilmmakers.com Booth #104 at WEVA, where you can pick up complimentary print editions and free DIGI subscriptions.

I hope that all of the articles in this wonderful edition will help you get warmed up, excited, and inspired for Back to School. We invite all of you to attend our continuing education workshops held at *StudentFilmmakers* Magazine headquarters in Manhattan, New York City. New Yorkers, come meet other New York filmmakers and videographers at the workshops. If you're not from New York, well, it's one of the many perfect reasons to come visit the Big Apple. *www.studentfilmmakers.com/workshops*

Enjoy the magazine!

Truly,
Kim E. Welch
Publisher/Editor-in-Chief

studentfilmmakers

The # 1 Educational Resource for Film and Video Makers

Publisher / Editor-in-Chief Kim Edward Welch
Senior Editor Jody Michelle Solis

Contributing Writers
Thomas Ackerman, ASC, Jack Anderson, Anthony Q. Artis, John Badham, Charlie Balch, Christopher Ball, CSC, Karl Bardosh, Adam Biddle, Joe Brewster, Terence Brody, Kevin Burke, Julia Camenisch, John Carrico, Steve Carlson, Al Caudullo, Chris Cavallari, Pete Chatmon, Nash Choudhury, Vicky Collins, Michael Corbett, Sky Crompton, Vanessa Daniels, Carsten Dau, Todd Debreceni, Jeff Deel, Christina DeHaven, Zachary Steven Houp, William Donaruma, Dana Dorrity, Pamela Douglas, Scott Eggleston, David E. Elkins, SOC, Scott Essman, Bryant Falk, Carl Filoreto, Jon Firestone, Jacqueline B. Frost, Sean D. Gaston, Daniel Gaucher, Fred Ginsburg, CAS, Ph.D., MBKS, Dean Goldberg, Todd Grossman, Leonard Guercio, John Hart, David K. Irving, Larry Jaffee, Ian Johnson, Catherine Ann Jones, David Kaminski, Michael Karp, SOC, Sam Kauffmann, Peter Kiwitt, Christopher Keane, John Klein, Tamar Kummel, Naomi Laeuchli, Richard La Motte, John Manchester, Dave Lent, Adam Matalon, Matthew Marshall, Thomas McKenney, Jonathan Moore, Patrick Moreau, M. David Mullen, ASC, Stacey Parks, Elizabeth Raymond, Mark Sawicki, Myrl A. Schreibman, Dr. Linda Seger, Sherri Sheridan, Mary Ann Skweres, Pamela Jaye Smith, Tim Smith, Scott Spears, Michele Stephenson, Ira Tiffen, Jeff Turboff, Melissa Ulto, Mike Valentine, BSC, Saro Varjabedian, William F. Vartorella, Ph.D., C.B.C., Ric Viers, Tony White, David Worth, Dean Yamada, Kevin Zanit

studentfilmmakers.com

Advertising & Sponsorship Opportunities:
Kim E. Welch 212.255.5458

Event Photographer: Edmund Olszewski

Contact StudentFilmmakers.com
http://www.studentfilmmakers.com/contact.shtml
212.255.5454 (US and International)

Subscriptions, bulk orders, and collections:
https://www.studentfilmmakers.com/store/

1-Year Subscription: US$24.95. 2-Year Subscription: $42.84. 3-Year Subscription: $58.90.

For subscription, mailing address change and distribution inquiries, go to http://www.studentfilmmakers.com/contact.shtml

StudentFilmmakers Magazine, established in 2006, is published in New York by StudentFilmmakers.com. Opinions are solely those of the authors. Letters, article queries, photos, movie stills, film submissions, and unsolicited manuscripts welcome, but returned only with SASE. Submissions are subject to editing for style, content, and to exclusive rights provisions in this publication. Advertising: Rate card upon request.

Copyright 2012 StudentFilmmakers.com (All rights reserved.)

Printed in the USA. Postmaster: Send address change to StudentFilmmakers, Magazine
1123 Broadway, Suite # 307, New York, NY 10010.

Table of Contents 2012, Vol. 7, No. 4









Camerawork
4 Law # 1: It Ain't Rocket Science
Composition is Brain Surgery
by David Lent

3D Documentary
10Filming Wild Horses in the Gobi Desert
by Al Caudullo

Directing
14 After Casting by Peter Kiwitt

Production
16 VRRR-Zoom! The Sound and the Fury of Next-Gen Cars in Hollywood Film
by William F. Vartorella, Ph.D., C.B.C.

20 *NightLights* - Feature Film Shot Using RED MX, Panasonic AF100, and DSLR Cameras

Screenwriting
22 It's a Great Time to Write for Television by Pamela Douglas
24 The Lure of the Dark Side by Pamela Jaye Smith

Editing
26 Spider-Man is Amazing Again
Editors Alan Edward Bell, Michael McCusker, and Pietro Scalia.
by Scott Essman

Shoot-Out
30 Canon EOS C300 on the Run: First Impressions
by Carl Filoreto

Film Business
34 Reaching the Audience Event Horizon by Sky Crompton
36 Filmmaking Back in the Day... by David Worth

Event Video
38 Solo Shoots: Push yourself to be a better storyteller.
by Patrick Moreau

42 Open Calls
44 Back to School
48 Filmmakers Networking

On the Cover:
Carl Filoreto (center) shoots on location in Accra, Ghana.

Law # 1:

It Ain't Rocket Science

Composition is Brain Surgery

by David Lent

How to *think* about a camera is as important as knowing how to use it. Mastering camerawork begins with understanding the medium and the relationship between a camera and the viewer.

(1.) Think of the video camera as a *microphone for your brain*, transmitting what's on your mind to other minds. Every shot becomes a statement about who you are, what you have to say and how well you can say it.

(2.) Think of the camera not only as your 'microphone', but as *the viewer's brain*. Cradled in your hands, this brain wants order, clarity and meaning in an image. Composition - *an operating procedure performed on the viewer's mind* – is as much a form of brain surgery, and no less invasive, as the kind performed with a scalpel.

According to Marshall McLuhan, "All media are extensions of some human faculty - psychic or physical." In this sense, the video camera is an extension of the brain, enhancing all of our senses. Think of it as a *tactile* medium rather than a visual one. Not "tactile" as in touching an object with your fingers, but the feeling we have when the senses are working in harmony—being *in touch*. By manipulating a video image, you are rearranging the order of another person's perceptions. Viewers may be thousands of miles away and exist in the present or far into the future, but your work takes place as much in their brain as it does in your hands.

Beams of light are translated by the lens and camera and displayed as video images. These images are received by the eye and focused on the retina. There, millions of rods and cones translate these beams into neural impulses. Using dozens of processors, the brain interprets these impulses, allowing it to understand what it is seeing. The result of this blend of camerawork and brainwork are new perceptions, new emotions, new thoughts.

Rules of thumb.

The business end of a camera is the lens. The skill with which you use it to shape an image can set your work apart from the crowd. Get the best glass you can afford, find its strengths and weaknesses then use it to do what it does best.

Put the viewer on solid ground. Painters and photographers call it the Figure/Ground theory. The *figure* is the essential subject or object of the frame, such as a person's face. The *ground* is what is behind or in front of the subject that allows perspective - the illusion of a third dimension. Suppose, for example, you're shooting an interview with someone in the crowd at a political rally. If you place the subject - *the figure* - to the side of the frame, revealing the stage and part of the crowd - *the ground*, you give the viewer a sense of where they are and how it *feels* to be there. When interviewing someone on the street - the figure - you can provide the ground by revealing all or part of the person asking the questions.

Make some space. In an interview, the subject's face is the center of interest - the "star" of the frame. Unless speaking directly to the camera, a human subject should rarely be in the center of the frame. Add logic (ground) to the frame by creating *negative space* - the side of the frame where the interviewer is positioned (if the interviewer is on your left side, frame the subject on the right) - or an object of interest that adds meaning to the content of their comments. Eliminate distractions at the edges and make sure nothing appears to be sprouting from the subject's head.

Panasonic
ideas for life



"This camera surprised us. The image quality in every situation – studio, live events, out in the field, in low light – rivals anything I've seen, even from much pricier equipment. In edits, clients marvel at how good it looks. The HPX370 really shines for us in rigorous shooting conditions."

Paul Grosso
Vice President, Media Production
JPL
Harrisburg, PA



In a business where image is everything, the AG-HPX370 amazes wherever it goes. This P2 HD shoulder camcorder features 10-bit, 4:2:2, full 1920 x 1080 resolution with AVC-Intra recording. Its advanced 1/3" 2.2 megapixel 3-MOS U.L.T. imager offers the high sensitivity and signal-to-noise ratios of larger imagers. Delivering high-quality images and a faster P2 workflow is just another way we're engineering a better world.

panasonic.com/hpx370 1.877.803.8492

© 2012 Panasonic Corporation of North America. All rights reserved.

SOLUTIONS FOR PRO VIDEO

Experiment. Look at a wide, medium and close shot of a subject. What is unobtrusive or appealing in the wide shot may be distracting or confusing in the medium or close shot.

Use the lens as a telescope. Objects or people unremarkable at first glance can be captivating in close-up, or in composition with something else. The telephoto end of a lens allows you to privately explore your surroundings without pressure to shoot.

The rules for effective writing are as relevant to the video image as they are to a sentence, paragraph, drawing or machine.

Omit needless information. Composition is as much an *eliminative* process as a creative one. The less unnecessary work for the viewer's brain, the more accessible is the image. What is essential in the frame? Emphasize or exaggerate it. What is obvious or irrelevant? Leave it out or make it vague.

Eliminate excess headroom. Unless the space above a subject's head is essential, eliminate it. On a wide shot, consider including a *grounding* object in the foreground to create perspective and depth.

When in doubt, pull out. I usually stay wide when I'm handheld but I will zoom to various compositions - especially to shoot groups of people and faces without being noticed. Often I'll walk in with the camera for close compositions or move away for wide ones. I'm steadier and more versatile this way and don't have to think so much about focus or steadiness.

Include body language. When shooting the performance of an athlete or dancer, include the *entire body,* so the viewer won't miss something that you might not have anticipated. Check out Ginger Rogers/Fred Astaire dance scenes. Astaire understood this concept and insisted that no part of his body, during a dance scene, be excluded from the frame.

Apply the golden triangle. During an interview, a viewer's eyes move between the subject's eyes and lips. On a close shot, the triangle formed by the eyes and lips should be the *horizontal center* of the frame. It may sometimes be necessary and appropriate to cut off the top of the subject's head.

Frame the master shot - the one you'll stay with during most of the interview - *no wider than head and shoulders*, but not so close that the viewer feels forced into intimacy. We've all seen interview moments when the shooter zooms in to a tight shot of a weeping face. I turn away - not because I feel the subject's personal space is violated, but because *mine* is.

When the destination of your video is a computer monitor, frame an object or interview subject more tightly than you would for a large screen.

Add tension to the frame by including something the viewer can identify but not see entirely. Suppose you've composed a 2-shot in which one person is doing most of the talking. Frame off *part* of the silent one. This composition will help focus the viewer's attention on the person doing the talking and also provide visual context (ground). Conversely, widen out to reveal things in the environment that are relevant to the scene or the story.

Be opportunistic. Often, you'll find yourself in an environment where people are hypersensitive or even spooked to the presence of a camera. Set up the camera and compose a shot - not from a tripod, which will draw unwanted attention, but cradled in a ShotSpot or another unobtrusive camera support. Press record, then, walk a short distance away from the camera for a few minutes - *never letting it out of your sight*. Because it appears to the subjects that no one is shooting, they ignore the camera and resume behaving naturally.

Trust yourself. Unless you are being directed, you are the ultimate authority on how you shoot. So if *you* don't like the shot, chances are nobody else will either. Are you bored with the image? Try something different. Do you sense that this person is not concentrating on what he or she is saying? Stop recording and talk about it.

Camera Movement

Advanced biology. Viewing an image from a black and white viewfinder involves only the peripheral vision, the part of the eye that processes changes in movement. Black and white vision wants movement or it gets bored. This helps explain why so many shooters, looking at a black and white viewfinder, zoom, pan and tilt excessively. The viewer, however, is looking at a color image. Color vision is processed by the macula, which is concerned with changes in hue and texture. Color vision prefers gentle