

FILMLOOK^{INC.} NEWSLETTER

SUMMER

www.filmlook.com

2005

FOCUSING ON UNSCRAMBLING THE EGG

Digital compression of video for recording, editing and display is an unfortunate but necessary evil in production and post-production. With vast amounts of data involved in HD and even SD digital recording, some type of compression is necessary to make that entire digital media that is used in a typical program manageably fit onto tape or disc. Due to the high compression rates involved, it is important to choose wisely when acquiring, editing and finally delivering your project for network or direct-to-video consumption. Currently, there are dozens of different and incompatible HD and SD equipment, formats and compression schemes to choose from, and using the wrong one—or transferring back and forth among too many of them—can create irreparable problems down the road if you're not careful.

Let's take for example HDV, a format that squeezes 1080 lines of HD video onto a DV tape. You now have 1080 line high definition compressed to 25 megabits per second (the same data rate as normal standard def DV). If HDCAM is 140 megabits per second and D5 HD is 276 megabits per second then HDV is a lot of compression. Also, HDCAM & D5HD formats are already compressed, but it's not all as bad as it sounds. The HDV compression scheme is similar to what's used on DVD's and works quite well even though the ratio of compression is high. Although the compression may look great, it is not lossless. If you de-compress and re-compress (as in rendering transitions, dissolves, effects, or even tape to tape dubbing by way of analog or codec conversion) image quality can suffer and quality was supposed to be the idea when you started shooting in HD – even if you're shooting SD with some compression. If you re-compress too often you may end up with something unacceptable. Don't forget, if this project is delivered to broadcast or mass duplication you're compression ordeal is not done yet. The delivery tape format requirement (in the case of HD) may be a relatively lesser (differently compressed) format like HDCAM or D5HD – that's fine except, later when it's put onto DVD's or digitally broadcast (cable, satellite, etc.) it will be compressed again. It may look worse than your delivery copy and that's what everyone will end up seeing.

What about 7.5 or 0 for black? Remember, in the digital world there's no "set-up" – you don't artificially alter the black signal level, but in the analog world for NTSC, black level should be set to 7.5 IRE (Japan's setup is at zero however). Sometimes people forget or get confused about this and the black level (after some different generations) can be erroneously high or too low.

Then there are all the other increasing number of tape formats, camcorders, and camcorders that don't use tape. Besides the above-mentioned formats, there is DVCPRO 25, 50, and 100 (HD - as in Varicam), Viper/Venom, IMX, and HDCAMSR. There are already disc and card recording schemes being introduced (Panasonic). Sony has two XDCAM units and an HD XDCAM on the way. Don't forget that Betacam is not completely gone and DigiBeta is still the SD broadcast quality format of choice. The possibilities are endless not to mention the ATSC (Advanced Television System's Committee) table 3 list of digital TV image formats for broadcast – see: <http://www.digitaltelevision.com/publish/dtvbook/appendixa.shtml>

In short, getting all this sorted out sometimes can be like unscrambling an egg. For you to avoid getting egg on your face please call or email us for assistance.

PASSING WITH FILMLOOK

HOLLYWOOD—Desert Flix has produced "The Passing," a suspense thriller shot entirely in HDCAM and color corrected with FILMLOOK Inc.'s daVinci 2K system for film festival, theatrical and later home video distribution.

"The Passing" centers on a young woman's inheritance of an estate where supernatural events and gruesome deaths occur. Shot on 24P high definition cameras, the completed film was brought to FILMLOOK Inc. for final color timing.

NINTENDO MAKES THE CUT AT FILMLOOK

This past May marks the return of The Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3), "Where Business Gets Fun." It is the world's leading trade event exclusively dedicated to showcasing interactive entertainment and educational software and related products. J-Nex Media was commissioned to create

an electronic press kit of Nintendo's convention showings for Nintendo of Europe. FILMLOOK Inc.'s newly added Final Cut Pro suite was put to good use in this two-day turn around project. Nintendo of Europe Exec.'s left Los Angeles for London with a final product in hand.

KCET AIRS VISIONARY

This June KCET aired a special program congratulating Steven Sample, President of The University of Southern California, for his work in building the University and the surrounding community with their KCET Visionary award. Prior to the airing of the special on KCET, a shortened version was screened at an event in Steven Samples honor. J-Nex Media was on hand to produce these projects with FILMLOOK Inc. offering up the editorial.

DIAMONDS ARE FILMLOOK'S BEST FRIEND

The Diamond Information Center kicked of a daylong spa and gathering at the Noho House in the Hollywood hills this February right before this years Academy Awards. The Diamond Aquifer spa attracted celebrities from Demi Moore, to Debra Messing to experience a relaxing assortment of treatments all involving real Diamonds. J-Nex Media was invited to take a look at the sparkling event and utilized FILMLOOK Inc.'s editorial for post.

FLATBUSH IN FESTS

Congratulations to Karim Karmi for his film "Flatbush," which has been showing at the Palm Beach International and Santa Cruz film festivals. "Flatbush" is the story of a woman who, after meeting her half-sister, is finally forced to deal with her father's abandonment while exploring the

difficulty of acceptance and the power of forgiveness. The short was edited and color timed at FILMLOOK Inc. prior to its arrival at film festivals.

TAKING STOCK IN FILMLOOK

Some recent projects and clients that have used FILMLOOK's services... "The Comeback Show" Lisa Kudrow pilot for HBO Productions... "Indy Car Racer: Chevy 500," National Geographic Channel and New Dominion Pictures... "Disney/Pixar Block Party" and "Walt Disney's Parade of Dreams" for Disneyland advertising... "Invasion Iowa" for Spike TV and GRB Productions... "He Say, She Say..." and "Fabric of a Man" by Urbanworks Entertainment... "Perfect Stranger" feature for Kelly's Filmworks.

INGRAM ENTERTAINMENT POCKETS "8 BALL"

Ingram Entertainment has secured North America distributing rights to the FILMLOOK processed urban comedy "Up Against the 8 Ball" from MEE Films. Ingram is one of the largest independent video, DVD, and computer game distributors in the US. It also distributes software, audio books, electronics, and used videos and games.

"Up Against the 8 Ball," which has been screening nationwide at festivals such as the Pan African Film Festival, Women of Color Film Festival and the Spaghetti Junction Urban Film Festival, will be available soon in retail outlets nationwide. The film, about two women who resort to pool tournaments to finance their final year of college, was color corrected and processed in FILMLOOK. This is the first feature for MEE films and was in theatrical release last year in Philadelphia, Atlanta, Chicago and Columbus.

SMILING POLITELY WITH FILMLOOK

LOS ANGELES—Smiling Politely has produced the feature "The Lonely Ones," a horror

thriller that was shot on DV then color corrected and processed in FILMLOOK. The feature, shot in less than two weeks, is seeking distribution and will be available on video and DVD.

“The Lonely Ones” tells the story of a group of teenagers stalked by legendary vampire-like monsters who seek new flesh. The feature was shot on the Canon XL1, edited on Final Cut Pro and brought to FILMLOOK Inc. for final color timing and film simulation. We will keep you updated on the distribution status of “The Lonely Ones” as well as other new features in future newsletters.

FLEISHERFILM GRABS 2ND TELLY

Congratulations to fleisherfilm’s producer Carol Fleisher who has picked up a second Genesis Award for her FILMLOOKed documentary “Papa Bear” which aired on Animal Planet last winter, is the story of one naturalist’s efforts to raise orphan black bear cubs and raise the public’s awareness of the cruelty of sport hunting. This is the second fleisherfilm documentary to win a Genesis Award, the first was for the FILMLOOK processed “Why Dogs Laugh and Chimpanzees Cry,” also for Animal Planet.

BATTLEGROUND FOR FILMLOOK

HOLLYWOOD—Morningstar is producing a series of specials for the History Channel featuring famous battles and the strategies of war. “Battleground: The Art of War” is a behind-the-scenes style documentary of such turning point battles as Alexander the Great’s Battle of Gaugamela, Napoleon’s Waterloo and WWII Battle of the Bulge. The entire series, including interviews, computer animation of the battles and dramatic re-creations, was shot and posted in HDCAM and brought to FILMLOOK Inc.’s daVinci 2K suite for final color timing for air and DVD release. Check the History Channel for future airings and encore presentations of “Battleground: The Art of War.”

FIFTY YEARS WITH FILMLOOK

NEW YORK—Pathway Productions’ “50 Years of the Final Four: Behind the Lens of Rich Clarkson” is a look at the famous sports photographer’s career and the story behind some of his most memorable final four photographs. The special, aired on ESPN Classic in April, combines archived film, photos and interviews that were entirely shot in video and sent to FILMLOOK Inc. for final color timing and film simulation.

YOU CAN'T BLAME FILMLOOK

NEW YORK—Pathway Productions is producing the series “Five Reason’s You Can’t Blame” for ESPN, a provocative investigation of legendary sports controversies. The series challenges conventional wisdom of such incidents as Kobe Bryant’s suspected dismantling of the Lakers and the White Sox throwing the World Series with fresh insight and new evidence. The series interviews are color corrected and processed in FILMLOOK to emulate the look of archived and microfiche film prior to air. “Top Five Reasons You Can’t Blame” is currently airing on ESPN Classic.

*If you have a news item for the FILMLOOK Newsletter,
please email us at anna@filmlook.com and it will be included in our next issue.*