

FILMLOOK^{INC.} NEWSLETTER

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FOCUSING ON SLOW MOTION EFFECTS

One feature that film cameras have had for years has up until recently not been available for video cameras—the ability to create slow motion images. It is the graceful, fluid-like motion of overcranked film that mesmerizes audiences during flashbacks, romantic interludes and action scenes. If you don't think overcranked film is all that mesmerizing or necessary, try to imagine the “bullet-time” sequence from “The Matrix” without slow motion.

The only way to achieve the overcranked look for video is to either to slow down normally shot 60-interlaced video (which looks less like overcranked film and more like slowed down video) or use the Panasonic Varicam system or Viper Filmstream, which records 60P imagery and can then slow down the images to 24 fps, thus giving the appearance of slow motion film. Another method is to use a special camera coupled with a hard drive recording. Both of these methods have their advantages and also have unique inconveniences. Fortunately, these issues are addressed in a unique high speed HD camera currently available.

Both Varicam and Filmstream require external tape or disc based recorders, as well as additional equipment in post production to create the slow-motion effect—Panasonic offers the Universal Frame Rate converter as its solution. Thompson's Viper requires similar manipulation in post to convert the 60P imagery into 24 fps slow-motion. Both systems require separate (and expensive) camera, recording and playback equipment to achieve slow motion. Even with all this camera equipment and manipulation in post, the slow motion may not be adequate for all productions, since the cameras can only slow images by a factor of 2.5 to 1.

Phototron manufactures a high-speed video system that can capture images up to 3000 fps, either internally or to a computer hard drive. The camera/drive system is relatively inexpensive compared to rental of the Varicam and Filmstream. Typically, the Phototron camera images are adequate only for industrial or military applications, and will not have the resolution and clarity of a typical broadcast video camera nor the colorimetry and exposure range of film. Also, because of data bandwidth limits on the cables, the camera can only be a few feet away from the computer.

A better option offered by Band Pro Film & Digital of Burbank is the Cine SpeedCam. This camera can capture images up to 1000 fps at HD resolution, or 4000 fps at SD. Using a single CMOS progressive scan imager that can capture at 1536 x 1024 resolution, the Cine SpeedCam can use true PL mount 35mm or Nikon B-mount lenses. It can even accommodate matte boxes, follow focus, and viewfinder options. Like the Phototron, images are captured to a hard drive as uncompressed TIFF sequences or AVI files. Unlike the Phototron, this camera can be placed up to 100 meters away from the computer. Since the camera can accommodate film style lenses and the CMOS imager is scalable for SD or HD resolution, the camera is able to capture images with stunning clarity and colorimetry, like the Varicam and Filmstream and yes, film cameras. However, unlike film, if there is a false start or the event to be captured in slow motion is not quite

right, you can erase the file and start over. This is a very viable option for productions that need the look of slow motion film in a digital camera that has all the controls and options necessary for professional results.

The main advantage that all of these systems have over film is obvious—the cost of shooting hundreds if not thousands of feet of film for a few seconds of slow motion can be exponentially greater than shooting digital video. Also, film processing is necessary to see if you have got a useable take, whereas video playback on set is instantaneous. Depending upon how much slow motion is necessary and where it will ultimately be seen will dictate what system is the most cost effective for your production.

TRADING FOR FILMLOOK

The FOX reality series, “Trading Spouses,” is now being color corrected at FILMLOOK Inc. by colorist Mary Lee Parisi. This is the third season for this series, which is set for a premiere this fall.

FILMLOOK ON THE HONOR ROLL

In addition to “SportsCentury,” “Top Five Reasons You Can’t Blame” and “Who’s #1,” ESPN is producing “Honor Roll,” an anthology series for ESPN U that gives top 10 rankings of best college quarterbacks, stadiums, traditions and controversies. This series is brought to FILMLOOK for FILMLOOK® processing and color correction before airing.

MAGICAL “AIR” WITH FILMLOOK

Media 8 Entertainment and Magical Elves is set to go international with their film-out version of “Air Guitar Nation,” a feature length documentary covering the air guitar championships held in the United States that will lead to the world finals in Oulu, Finland. The feature recently premiered at the 2006 AFI Film Festival in Los Angeles. The film-out version was uprezed to HD, color corrected and titled at FILMLOOK Inc. Already a critical and audience success, the feature has won the SXSW Film Festival Audience Award and is set for a nationwide and international theatrical release starting in Spring of 2007 by Media 8 Entertainment.

CORY IN THE HOUSE WITH FILMLOOK

The Disney Channel and It’s a Laugh Productions, which are currently producing hit series, “The Suite Life of Zack and Cody” and “Hannah Montana,” are in production on “Cory in the House,” a spinoff of another FILMLOOK processed series, “That’s So Raven.”

The series features Cory and his dad Victor who has accepted a job as head chef in the White House. Cory is now a high school student in Washington DC. The series is brought to FILMLOOK Inc. for da vinci 2K color timing and FILMLOOK® prior to airing on the Disney Channel. This is the fourth series that FILMLOOK Inc. has worked on for the network. "Cory in the House" is set to premiere in January 2007.

DREAMING WITH FILMLOOK

Disneyland Advertising has used FILMLOOK Inc.'s da vinci 2K suite for color timing selects for "Disney's Year of a Million Dreams," a new campaign for the Disney Resorts. The HD footage was shot in 720P, then brought to FILMLOOK for final color timing and down-conversion. The color corrected footage will be utilized in upcoming Disney vacation videos, commercials and holiday television specials.

TRUMPING FILMLOOK

Mark Burnett Productions recently used FILMLOOK's da vinci 2K suite for enhancing the main title and various shots for the upcoming 6th season of NBC's "The Apprentice". This season, The Donald's home is in Los Angeles, where he plans on developing his Southern California real estate interests.

CHRISTMAS EVERY DAY

Retromedia has produced the television special, "Christmas Every Day," a feature length movie that was brought to FILMLOOK for final HD online and titling. Starring Jay Mohr, Daphne Zuniga and Adrienne Barbeau, the movie is set to premiere on ABC Family this holiday season and be available on DVD.

LAGUNA MOVING TO HD

Laguna Productions is moving into HD feature production for its Latin marketed motion pictures, using FILMLOOK Inc.'s da vinci 2K suite for final color enhancement and mastering prior to DVD and international television release. Previously shooting in standard definition on DV equipment, Laguna is now preparing to build a library of HD shot and posted features films for international distribution across Latin American and Europe.

*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.*