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Chairman
David Martin

Chairman's Chat

Coming to a TV near you!

Last month we launched our 2019 Annual Competition which includes a number of innovations which aim to provide more value for SoCo members as well as making it easier to enter. So, what does it mean for you?

Well, if we assume that, in addition to the pleasure it gives us personally, we make our films for others to see and hopefully enjoy.

So, this year the film(s) you enter can be seen by everyone who enters the competition. Every person who enters a film will receive a DVD set which will contain all of the entries. So, you can see how your film stacks up against the rest without having to travel and at a time convenient to you knowing that everyone else will be able to view your film.

These DVD's could also be great for clubs by providing a video showcase and discussion base for a club evening.

Each of us wants viewers to like and enjoy our efforts - but do they? The best way to ensure that they really will enjoy what they see is to get unbiased comments about your video and take note of what is said. You don't have to like everything that is written, but our competition Judges will tell it the way they see it. Read the critique and take it on board...it's the best way I

know to make your next production even more enjoyable.

To provide even greater independence, this year we are inviting our judging panel from outside of the region.

Again, new this year, we have introduced a 5-level grading system. Entries will be allocated a grade, based not on comparison with other entries, but against the grade criteria. ([see the rules on page 9](#))

We also want to make it easier to enter the competitions, so as well as accepting Blu-ray, DVD and Memory Stick entries by mail, this year you can send your video and pay the entry fee via the internet. How easy is that!

There is more about the competitions on [page 7](#) as well as the entry form and competition rules.

So, if you make films simply because you enjoy it and not for money, and you are based in our Region, why not enter this year's SoCo Regional Video Awards Competitions – it's designed for you!

Remember, the closing date for entries is 31st July 2019.

David Martin
Chairman SoCo Regional Council
davidmartinsoco@gmail.com



Pip Critten
Writes...

Editorial

And so the controversy about competitions, inspired by Mike's letter, still runs on with more letters and a response from Lee Prescott.

Very different views on the same subject being vigorously debated.

I think before we all agree on competitions rules and regulations we will have left the European Union and be trying to rejoin it!

Having been the SoCo News editor for over ten years I have had the privilege of

making many friends in the movie making world.

Many of them have been active contributors to this magazine and every article, review and letter being valued equally. Special thanks to our overseas writers that help make this an international magazine.

Please continue to support your magazine by keeping the articles coming, even if you wind people up!

Keep Smiling, Pip
pipcritten@googlemail.com



Readers Letters

Dear Sir,
Bristol's Come-uppance

As a postscript to the recent debate through your reader's letters column regarding the professionalism of Bristol Film and Video Society, three of the correspondents, Mike Szewczuk, Tim Smart and Will Dallimore, found themselves in the same room recently when their clubs vied for the Gloucester Trophy, in an interclub competition hosted by Gloucester Film Makers.

Bristol Film and Video Society waded in with a ponderous twenty minute docu-drama called "Bristol Downs", directed by Tim Smart. It was technically superb, and billed as a 'whimsical wander through time and space', however its whimsy wore a little thin after about five minutes, with the judges saying that it was "too long with too many special effects".

Mike Szewczuk's interest was as the writer, and an actor, in a psychic drama called 'Telekinesis' for the Stonehouse and Stroud Video Unit. What Mike failed to predict was that club-members are not always the best actors, and like a chain, its strength lies with its weakest link.

The plaudits of the day went to Tewkesbury YMCA Movie Makers who took the top two places. A documentary on Tewkesbury Abbey Tower, made by ninety-year-old, Norman Bevan, was runner-up to a short comedy called 'Herman's Hermit', penned by Will Dallimore, using local actors from the Twynning Players. The film was directed by Matt Butwell, whose grandfather was one of the instigators of the weighty 'Gloucester Trophy', some fifty-two years ago.

The moral of the story is that you can outsmart your rivals, but only through taking a professional approach to an amateur competition.

Will Dallimore
Chairman, [Tewkesbury YMCA Movie Makers](#)

Tewkesbury YMCA Movie Makers

Hi Pip,
Here is a tip that you might find room for:
https://youtu.be/umo2rGij_hc



Regards,
James Hatch

Dear Sir,

Reference: My colleague Mike Szewczuk's letter and the responses thus far are precisely as expected! The subject has been raised in this publication previously as Off Screen / Off Stage rumblings and mutterings still continue on and off as I have heard myself!

At least Mike had the guts to raise a valid point. Valid, no matter which way it's looked at as it is associated with concerns about the lack of entries in competitions, particularly the SoCo Competition.

Recently I was happy to be invited as a judge along with Pip and Graham Pitt. At that time from memory there was a "glorious" entry of 8 yes - 8 videos! I note that concerns continue! In this regard the SoCo Competition has now been reappraised, a fact in which both myself and Mike were consulted and happily took part.

Apart from this in another well known competition, I notice that the published information bordered on the "pleading" for entries!

Mike, in raising this matter, re offered the previous suggestion acceptable or unacceptable!

Whether we as members like it or not IAC means "The Institute of AMATEUR Cinēphotographers" Not the "IP/RPCP"!

A few years ago suggestions were made and new titles offered to the hierarchy but all were rejected for a number of reasons. I first joined the IAC when it was only thirty years old – it now approaches its Centenary, if it continues to exist.

Of the three "critical" responses that from the BFVS is not only reasonable as expected and informative. Note here that the BFVS was only referred to as an example of a wider problem in our hobby and not meant in any way to be PERSONAL! As for the responses from Messrs S. Mackay and W. Dallimore and their comments about Mike's opening words of "This is not sour grapes" their comments are typical, meaningless and unoriginal in today's society! As I have stated above, the question needed to be raised and why.

As for BFVS's "cheating", as they have said, no such suggestion was made and is not made. Neither is their suggestion of "misinformation", "half truths" (note not "whole truths"), etc. Mike nor anyone else has or is making any such suggestion. As for their comment regarding hard work – of course other people work hard too! More so than the responders realise and YES we would all no doubt, take advantage of professional and ex professional availabilities, if such were available face to face!

FOOT NOTE: Quite recently a quite good video, a drama structured by Mike, was entered in a historic local competition. It received a very good reaction from the audience. However the judge's sheet, (judges from a well known regional club – not BFVS I add), shows quite plainly that the video was deliberately "down marked". A fact which the organising secretary called "interesting" in an attached note!

Also, when I spoke to them before the show started enquiring about a friend of mine in their club – the guy in charge of the team literally "spat out" at me saying "We know who YOU are"! True. What's happened to the supposed Club Friendliness? Obviously, any IAC member cannot and must never raise any genuine points! No wonder I can't get people and our Youngsters to join the IAC. I intended to but it's as well that I didn't bring any of them along! "Enuff said"!

Lee Prescott. F.A.C.I.



Penny Cup - Results



John Simpson

Reports on the Penny Cup

Penny Cup 2019, 27 entries

1st Overall - "The Race to Deaths Door" – 1st Overall, Sutton Coldfield Movie Makers

2nd Overall - "Count to Three" – , 2nd Overall, Bristol Film and Video Society

3rd Overall - "Haul Away Joe" 3rd place overall, James Chambers, Cheshire

Penny Cup, Straight Drama, 13 entries

1st Place, "Short Cut", - 5th place overall, Sutton Coldfield Movie Makers

2nd Place, "To have lived", , 6th place overall – Gordon Clarke, Weybridge

3rd place, "Seconds Out", , 8th place overall, Mid Cheshire Movie Makers

Other entries

"Oasis" – Paul Vernon, Solent Moviemakers

"Sarah's World" – Teign Film Makers

"Journey to Embarrassment" - Peter King, Swan MovieMakers Club, Wirral

"Mary Mary", Historical Drama – Dave Morton, Leeds Movie Makers

"Double Insurance" – Peter King, Swan MovieMakers Club, Wirral"

"Filton Fives" - Bristol Film and Video Society

"A day to remember" - Gordon Clarke, Weybridge

"Just One Wish" - Gordon Clarke, Weybridge

"Golden Wings" - Gordon Clarke, Weybridge

"A Dream Come True" - Gordon Clarke, Weybridge

Penny Cup, Documentaries, 9 entries

1st place "Haul Away Joe" - 3rd place overall, James Chambers, Cheshire

2nd place "Why is America Called America?" - Bristol Film and Video Society, 4th Place Overall

3rd place, "Looking Good", , 7th place overall, Alan Wallbank, Portsdown Video Makers

Other entries

"Past Historic, Future Perfect", Gordon Young, Bristol Film and Video Society

"Full Steam Ahead" John Bartlett, Isle of Wight Film and Video Club

"It's a wild wild world" - Don Mouatt

"Nirvana", - Alan Wallbank, Portsdown Video Makers

"Windermere", - Terry Roberts, Altrincham Movie Makers

"The Jewel in the Crown" – Jeff Jessop, Harrow Film Makers

Penny Cup, Comedy, 5 entries

1st place "The Race to Deaths Door" 1st Place Overall - Sutton Coldfield Movie Makers, 1st Overall

2nd place, "Count to Three" - 2nd Place Overall, Bristol Film and Video Society, 2nd Overall

3rd place "Second Chance" - 9th place overall, Reading Film and Video Makers

Other entries

"Behind the Signs" - Sutton Coldfield Movie Makers

"POV" Robert Fairbrother, Miller Centre Moviemakers, Caterham.



A appreciative note from John Simpson, the Weymouth Penny Cup coordinator:

The Weymouth Penny Cup film competition is going from strength to strength. We had 27 entries this year and the standard was very high. I would have liked them all to be the winner and have the chance to have their name engraved on the Penny Cup and get a cash prize of £25, but sadly that is not the nature of a competition and our funds would soon run dry!

To clubs and individuals who entered films, the profile of your films and club has been raised. When people have taken so much time and effort to make amateur films it is important that films are seen by a wider audience.

Professional short film budgets are tens of thousands of pounds and the budgets for professional feature films often go over £200 million. This makes me think what the Penny Cup contributors have achieved on very small budgets is nothing short of miraculous! Thank-you.

Thinking about professional films; they sometimes make some of their clips like home-movies although they are shot with modern equipment. As a film maker myself I don't think we should be afraid of the home-movie style or genre, it is of value. I know many people want to make their films perfect and that is good but there will always be some sort of constraint. In my opinion communicating ideas is as important as technical quality and ability. At Wimborne Moviemakers we had a film competition for films made just using a mobile phones, that was fun.

Whether you are a super serious film-maker or someone just having a bit of fun we are happy to watch and critique your films and, all being well, we shall do so again next year in the Penny Cup Competition.



Neal Reville

Tech Review

Blackmagic Pocket Cinema Camera 4K

You must have been walking around like an Ostrich with its head in the sand in the second half of this year if you have not noticed the sudden flurry of interest in the Blackmagic Pocket Cinema Camera 4K. Which the rest of the world seems to be calling the P4K. Why the fuss? Well, the first bit seems to be the Arriflex Alexa. The Alexa, in various formats, is currently the King (Queen?) of movie cameras. It's the camera that around 90% of current cinema blockbusters are shot with. Its picture quality is legendary. It just so happens that the P4K's picture, examined side-by-side with the Alexa's, is effectively indistinguishable! That made the world sit up. Because the P4K is available in Brisbane in the \$1600 range. *And* that includes a full Studio copy of DaVinci Resolve, the world's leading colouring/editing software, worth around \$400.

real. The camera is pretty heavy on current draw. They have used a smallish Canon battery (to save weight and size) and it's barely up to the job. In fact, it goes flat in around 45 minutes. No problem, are saying many forum goers, the camera is so magic I'll carry more batteries.



Blackmagic PK4, \$A1600+



Arriflex Alexa, \$A75,000+

It's not just the price. The P4k shoots every common format including Cinema DNG Raw, the format that makes its way into many cinemas and the full new ProRes range from the highest quality right down to ProResLT, a quality just above the typical consumer level. Output from the camera, just now making its way onto computer screens, looks stunning even there. On top of this, the camera is a real sideways step in design concept. From its high definition viewing screen to its super-simple menu system to its multi-choice recording system (all devised on previous cameras), carbon-fibre construction and much more. Certainly, it's a brave step outside conventional design. Will it pay off?

So, why do these batteries suddenly run out of charge in around 30 minutes and then jam in the camera? Because they are not Canon batteries. But I paid for Canon batteries and they look like Canon batteries they fail. The truth, apparently, is that the world is awash with counterfeit, big-name branded batteries. Checking on Canon forums, as well as those for Panasonic, Sony, any big brand, reveals the same story. Why do these third-party batteries jam? It appears the current draw is such, in some cameras that the batteries overheat, expand and jam. They can be *very* difficult to remove. Most serious users appear to be happily powering the camera from an external battery which lasts 2–3 hours and is easy to do.

It seems so. BlackMagic has been swamped with orders. In three months, the BlackMagic Rep in Singapore has apologised for slow deliveries as they have received "tens of thousands" of orders and are building cameras "as fast as our component suppliers can manage". A couple of days ago, B&H, the big NY camera store admitted they had "over 8,000 cameras on back order" and CVI, apparently a large camera chain in London, admitted having "many hundreds" of back orders. In Brisbane, an enquiry last week, revealed a "six to ten week delay" in delivery. Not bad for a Company from the back-blocks of Melbourne.

That's a very small and incomplete rant about this camera. One question. Does it have any competitors? Yes, one. The GH5s. Both the P4K and GH5s have "similar" sensors — micro 4/3 and dual ISO. Which means that both cameras can take beautiful video in very low light. Pictures around town, taken in available light at night are magical. But, alas! The Panasonic shot itself in the foot. Perhaps because the Pana is also a stills camera, or perhaps someone thought it a good idea, the high-ISO files have some compression and have been artificially sharpened. It shows and noise becomes apparent as the ISO rises. And it costs around twice as much. I think we will all hear a lot more about the P4K in the coming year.

Neal Reville

Anyone looking to move to a 4K camera would do themselves no favours by failing to look at this one. So, is it perfect after that wrap? No. If you want to shoot at the higher quality end, file storage needs to be considered. It will record on SSDs, CFAST cards or HDSC cards. Most "faults" appearing tend to be "dislikes". Like the non tilting viewing screen, no continuous follow-focus (but it does have spot focus) and so on. But the battery fiasco is

Editor's note: This article was originally published in Australian Movie Maker Magazine. Neil, the writer, comments, "The article is probably dated by now. Things move so quickly these days. For instance, the camera has had two recent updates so most of the early problems no longer exist and recently Blackmagic RAW (BRaw) was added, providing the only easy to use, super high quality format on the market. It still takes around five months to get one though, and I believe the back-order queues are getting longer, rather than shorter."



STONEHOUSE & STROUD VIDEO
UNIT
[Youtube](#) and [Vimeo](#)



Gloucester Film Makers

Hi, here's the latest update from SSVU: Mike has now completed the story and shooting script, acquired actors, to creep into the dark dramatic world of the goolies... Sorry I mean ghoulish. We just can't escape from it living in an area somewhat noted for confirmed supernatural events. (I could explain more but I wouldn't want to cause you sleepless nights, you're probably experiencing enough already)!

The story line involves activities in an area where the townspeople are baffled by it. One young character meets with it when he has some rather strange experiences when inadvertently meeting "Orlock"!

Further, I had quite a surprise, (makes a change)!

One March afternoon I turned on the Television and in doing some channel hopping found little of interest, so I clicked the remote on "Apps" and selected "Youtube". Up came "Recommended Viewing". There sat Bercow MP. "Commons Speaker" gabbling on about the terrors of "Brexit" together with a heap of privately obsessed MPs.

Then separately there was a further section of the so called "Brexit debate"... Sandwiched between these two reports some comic genius at YouTube had put our comedy film "Admiral Lord Nelson in the 21st. Century". Yeah. No doubt he/ she/they, thought; what would Nelson have made of the current ridiculous performance of the MPs! Noting the fact that the dialogue in our film makes references to our Continental neighbours! This must be a first for any Club!

Lee Prescott. F.A.C.I.

The major recent event for our club was hosting the 52nd Gloucester Inter Club Film Competition on March 16th in our club room.

Five clubs entered and nine films were shown to an appreciative audience.

Tewkesbury YMCA Movie Makers had a very successful afternoon winning the Ray Toleman Trophy for Best Film, Herman's Hermit, then claimed second place with their film about the Tewkesbury Abbey's Norman Tower.

The latter was awarded The Vale Trophy for Best sound. Congratulations to them.

The Gloucester Club were also in the mix and our film Saul Junction was placed third and our Voices of Volunteers won the Cheltenham Videomakers' Trophy for Best Visuals.

Many thanks to judges Ernie McKenna, Frank Lake and Alan Campbell from the Frome Film and Video Makers.

Sadly Phil Marshman was unable to judge, as originally planned, due to him needing urgent attention to an eye problem. We hope that he is now well on the road to recovery. We missed you Phil.

Our club programme continues and seven competitions have been held to date with four more ahead.

Our Video Road Shows continue apace with a very full diary. Archive films of Gloucester are proving to be most popular and repeat bookings are now quite common. A good sign and they do help the bank balance!

John Greene,

[Gloucester Film Makers.](#)



Alan's thoughts

Following recent letters about some clubs always winning competitions, I have to say that film making is not a level playing field, never has been and never will. Yet that should not deter the film maker, doing something they find enjoyable. I agree it's nice to win, but I get so much satisfaction from producing a good film that will be seen by others.

I entered one of my films into the Weymouth Movie Makers Penny Cup this year and have just received the result. Considering the number of entries I felt I did quite well, with a positive response from the judges whose comments and suggestions were 'spot on'.

This film was made using old technology, so it just goes to show that you don't need the latest equipment to get good results, just find the right subject and put in plenty of effort.

I know it's difficult to find projects, but a rich source of ideas is only a fingertip away. For many years, I have collected postcards on a whole range of subjects which are mostly bought on Ebay. If you look for cards of your area or the county, you will probably see one that could be turned into a film. The images for my last film were

almost entirely bought on Ebay and recently another purchase has given me another project to pursue.

The downside is the cost of some cards, but there are countless subjects to choose from. The older the better as there is less chance of having copyright issues.

A few weeks ago I found a booklet printed in 1994 and funded by the Hampshire County Council, titled 'Home Movie Makers' and it covers the historical background of film making. One paragraph caught my attention and from the 1930's, 'Early local cine clubs like those at Bournemouth and Portsmouth, turned to group film making after a while.

They made drama's, sometimes with local amateur dramatic societies and showed the results to sizable audiences. The article also mentions the IAC.

There were occasions when I was in the Portsmouth Club that we used amateur actors, but for competitions such as the Albany the club members did all the acting and we did reasonably well. We didn't have anyone who had any experience in film making, but at least we enjoyed ourselves.

Alan Wallbank

Muses...



The year seemed hardly to have started when suddenly it was March 4th and four minute competition time at Teign Film Makers Club. True to form, the members responded with enthusiasm and imagination and we had a total of eight films to judge.

First on the programme was Suzie's 28 day challenge film. Having identified and overcome the technical difficulties that prevented us seeing it previously, it was generally agreed that it had been well worth the wait.

The showing and audience judging of the eight competition films followed and, after the totalling of the points the top three were announced:-

1st) Richard - Peter Hiner - The real history of King Richard The Lion-heart.

2nd) Temples - Peter Hiner - The surprise of Greek temples and statues in Sicily.

3rd) Whirling Dervishes - Ivan Andrews - Performance in Cyprus by members of the Muslim sect from Afghanistan.

The scores for all the films were close and the other five films are deemed to be placed joint 4th.

We viewed a short "test piece" brought along by new member Chris and he proved himself to be well on his way as a competent cameraman. As a finale, members discussed ideas for the club project for this year and the consensus was that a comedy was favourite. Ideas and stories will now be decided on and developed. The aim this year is to have all club members appearing on screen.

Monday 18th March was a "background music" evening. Chairman, Ivan Andrews, Vice chairman, Peter Hiner and member, Roger Western each gave presentations, including visual examples, on the use, variation and value of background music in films.

The presentations and subsequent lively discussions and comments from members illustrated that there are as many options and opinions as there are people.

Additionally, the three presentations and subsequent comments were filmed by Peter Hiner and have been posted on Youtube. Access is via the TFMC website.

Also viewed was a film produced by Jim Gill starring both himself and wife Mary which included reminiscences of times gone by and some clever "green screen" footage.

The main part of the meeting on April 1st was taken up with the 'Film that Tune' competition, the criteria for which are that the visual images should reflect the type, tempo and mood of the music chosen by the film maker and should be edited to the beat.

Seven entries, were viewed and voted on by the members present and, following the refreshment break, Chairman Ivan Andrews announced the top three.

1st) You Make My Dreams by Suzie Topolska - an excellent production of a lively 'duet for one' using clever filming, editing and split screen techniques.

2nd) Stillscapes by Roger Western - a somewhat experimental piece (for a film club) using still photos cut to the beat.

3rd) Autumn Leaves by Ivan Andrews - Cleverly edited scenes illustrating Autumn with all of its colours.

In his comments, Ivan said that the voting was very close in all but one instance and that instance was the

winning film which stood out. The result was met with warm applause and our congratulations go to all who entered but especially to Suzie who won with her first entry into a TFMC competition. One to watch.

Member, Roger Western showed his video which demonstrated the effect that different distances and different microphones had on the quality of recorded sound. This production should soon be available on Youtube via the club website.

Connected with the previous video, members also heard the results of tests carried out by Peter Hiner involving two different lapel microphones connected to a sound recorder.

To conclude a successful evening, Peter Hiner, in his capacity as competitions manager, confirmed the news that, having entered the 2018 club project film 'Sarah's World' into the British International Amateur Film Festival, it had been awarded 4 stars and is to be shown at the festival in Birmingham at the end of April.

Five stars is the maximum attainable so all club members involved should be very proud of this 4 star result, our first foray into National competition for some time. The actors should be pleased as they contributed greatly to the quality and believability of the production.

As a form of celebration the film was screened again at the end of the meeting and this also showed our new members, who had not been involved in the production, what the club and its members (with some inspired actor outsourcing by director Caron Parke) are capable of.



On April 15th, the club was treated to an extremely interesting and eagerly awaited cake making presentation by Roger Edwards. What? I hear you ask.

Roger has been involved in filming parts of the recently screened Channel 4 tv programme 'Extreme Cake Makers' (still on air, weekdays at 5.30pm at time of writing) and he gave an illustrated talk about the mixture of fun and not so fun ingredients when filming the contents of the programme (see what I did there, cake making - mixture/ingredients/contents - never mind).

Members and guests from Tiverton were provided with a fascinating and entertaining insight into the worlds of both the cake makers and a professional cameraman. Or, in this case, Producer/Director. Our thanks again to Roger for giving his time once more to the club. Thanks also to Tiverton club members for making the journey and adding to our enjoyment.

Our club welcomes visitors both local and not so local and if you want more information about the programme, events and updates please visit the website:-

<http://www.teignfilmmakersclub.org> or visit the [Facebook page](#).

SoCo Regional Completions - Basics

SoCo Regional Video Awards Competition 2019

Competition Basics

The Basics

To enter the competitions, you need to be based in the SoCo region, which covers the counties of Avon, Berkshire, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Gwent, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Somerset, Glamorgan and Wiltshire.

The competitions are for films made by individuals, groups or clubs for pleasure and not for commercial gain, other than for the benefit of their club or a charity. Members of the production team, including actors must not have been paid for their time

Films must not be offensive in any way and must be legal.

The Competitions

You have a choice of competitions

Dolphin and Baby Dolphin

Apart from their duration, the two Dolphin competitions have the same criteria, The Dolphin has a maximum run time of ten minutes whilst the Baby Dolphin can run for up to one minute.

In both cases the definition is taken from the IAC Mermaid competitions as the winners from each competition will go on to represent the SoCo Region in the IAC Inter Regional Competitions later in the year.

The film must be light hearted. It can, on one hand, be a farce right across the spectrum to a gentle film that creates a gentle chuckle. Either way the viewer should simply come away with a smile on their face.

Top of the Clubs

This competition aims to provide the regions video clubs with the opportunity to compare the best they have to offer with that from their peer group.

The entry does not have to be a film made by the club itself, (although it can be), but it must have been made by a member of the club and entered on behalf of the club. Maximum running time is 30 minutes.

There are some really high-quality films being made and this is a great opportunity to showcase the best that your club and members have to offer.

Regional Award

This is for entries of any genre subject only to a maximum length of 30 minutes. Whether your entry is drama, documentary, travel, holiday, animation, a tutorial made for YouTube, or anything else that is legal and of good taste, this competition is the place for you.

Entries from the Top of the Clubs and the two Dolphins will also be included in this competition.

Contact

The [Competition Rules](#) and [Entry Form](#) are on pages 9 & 10 but should you have any questions or require a hard copy of the Entry Form, please write to me at:

ELD Imperial Court, Park Hill Road, Torquay. TQ1 2EP

Or email tony.colburn.soco@gmail.com

Closing date

Closing date for entries is 32st July 2019.

Tony Colburn

SOCO Regional Competitions - Grading

Competition Special

Grading of Entries

New this Year

This year, for the first time, all entrants will not only be provided with comments about their production(s) but the judges will be asked to agree into which of the following grade bands the entry sits.

Grade Guidelines

Level 5

An excellent production demonstrating high levels of creative and technical ability. It will be appealing to the audience and all round very satisfying to watch.

Level 4

The film maker will have demonstrated a good grasp of the art of cinematography and have told a good story. Technically it will be very good although there may be occasional minor lapses which let it down.

Level 3

Films at this level show a reasonable level of competency but lack sufficient creativity and/or technique. Attention to detail within editing, such as loose cutting, poor continuity or variable sound quality/mixing may occasionally be an issue.

Level 2

The film maker is on a learning curve and whilst some techniques are demonstrated others have yet to be fully developed. Work in progress, but on the way.

Level 1

There is much to learn and the basic skills have yet to be applied - the viewers interest is unlikely to be maintained for very long.



SoCo Regional Competitions - Rules

SoCo Regional Video Awards Competition 2019

Rules

1. The SoCo Regional Video Awards Competition is open to amateur film makers and video clubs throughout the SoCo Region.
 2. There are four competitions:
 - a. **Regional Award**

Open entry for amateur filmmakers and video clubs from within the SoCo Region.
(Max running time 30 minutes) *
 - b. **Top of the Clubs**

For video clubs within the SoCo Region to enter a film to represent their club. Film of the Year might be a good start.
(Max running time 30 minutes) *
 - c. **Dolphin**

A light hearted film. The winner of this category will be entered into the IAC Mermaid Competition
(Max running time 10 minutes)
 - d. **Baby Dolphin**

A light hearted film. The winner of this category will be entered into the IAC Mini Mermaid Competition
(Max running time 1 minute)
- Note** In addition to films entered directly into the Regional Award Competition, each entry in the Top of the Clubs, Dolphin and Baby Dolphin competitions will be automatically included in the Regional Award Competition.
- *It may not be possible to include entries of more than 15 minutes in the Show DVD, in which case an extract will be shown.
3. Closing date for all entries 31st July 2019
 4. Entry fee: £5.00 per film. Cheques, to be made payable to "IAC (SoCo)" or by Internet Transfer to Sort code 30-93-25 Account No 01569535 Using the entrants name as your reference
 5. The competitions are for films made by individuals, groups or clubs for pleasure and not for commercial gain, other than for the benefit of their club or a charity. Members of the production team, including actors must not have been paid for their time.
 6. Only one title per disc or digital transfer. However, there is no limit to the number entries from the same maker, but a separate entry form and fee must be supplied for each entry.
 7. Entries will be accepted in the following formats: DVD, Blu-ray, USB Memory Stick mailed to the address in the entry form or uploaded electronically via www.WeTransfer.com to tony.colburn.soco@gmail.com
 8. Name(s) on the entry form will be used on any certificates that may be awarded.
 9. Copyright clearance of all material, both sound and vision, is the sole responsibility of the entrant who must sign the declaration on the entry form.
 10. For entries to be included in the Regional Award Show DVD and published on the IACSOCO website, entrants must confirm their agreement by ticking the appropriate box on the entry form.
 11. The decision of the judges is final and no correspondence can be entered into.
 12. Whilst every care will be taken of entries, the SoCo Regional Council cannot accept responsibility for any loss or damage.
 13. All entrants will receive, their copy of the 2019 SoCo Award Show DVD, the Judges comments that relate to their entry and their original entry(s) (excluding internet transfer) on or about 30th September 2019.
 14. The SoCo Regional Council will rule on all matters concerning the competition.

SoCo Regional Video Awards Competition 2019 Entry Form

Closing date for entries 31st July 2019

Please tick to indicate which competition this form relates to:

Regional Awards Top of the Clubs Dolphin Baby Dolphin

TITLE: _____ RUNNING TIME: _____ mins

FORMAT: _____ ASPECT RATIO: _____ STEREO MONO

NAME (Individual/group/club) _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____ COUNTY _____

Post Code: _____ Telephone _____

Email: _____ IAC Membership no _____

If applicable

Please tick to confirm your agreement that this entry may be included in the Regional Awards DVD and be uploaded onto the IAC SOCO Website

For films containing copyright music, insert IAC licence or details of clearance obtained

ALL ENTRANTS TO COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING DECLARATION:

I have cleared all necessary copyright relating to my entry and agree to abide by the competition rules

SIGNED _____ DATE _____

PRINT NAME _____

I enclose cheque £5.00 entry fee.....
Cheque Payable to: IAC (SoCo)

I have paid the entry fee using Internet Bank Transfer.....
SoCo Bank Details: Sort Code 30-93-25 Account No 01569535 Reference:.....

Send to:

By Mail to:
Tony Colburn
Flat ELD Imperial Court
Park Hill Road
Torquay.
TQ1 2EP

By Internet via :
www.WeTransfer.com
addressed to
tony.colburn.soco@gmail.com



Comedy Duo's

Lee Prescott
FACI

Shares his views



William Budd Abbot and Lou Costello met while working as entertainers in the burlesque scene. Costello had tried to make it as an actor in Hollywood working as a stunt double and as an extra. Abbot ran his own burlesque touring company from Coney Island. When they met they became one of the most popular Duo's of the 1940's and 1950's becoming famous for their "Who's



on First Routine".

Laurel and Hardy were probably the greatest film comedy Duo of all time. The number of films (shorts and features), the excellence, variety, and originality of these comedies, the fact that relatively few of them they made during their last decade are below their usual standard.



I'm happy to call them the greatest.

You may be appalled by the high regard given to **The Three Stooges**; others will be appalled that they aren't number one. However they were the low-brow of all comedy teams, by no stretch of the imagination were they actors. On the other hand, they were very original, their characterizations in every incarnation of the act, were funny, unique and memorable. This above all: 220 films, 190 of them those Columbia comedy shorts. Yes, there's virtue in quantity, even if they did repeat themselves on many occasions. Their appeal lasts among millions to this day.



The Marx Brothers are the greatest comedy team in history, some say. The Marx Brothers are hobbled by their relative paucity of films and the ratio of bad ones to good ones. Of 13 features, about half are good most of the rest not so. They started making films fairly late in life. Chico, the oldest, was 50 years old by *A Day at the Races* (1937), the start of their decline. By the time they made *Love Happy* (1950), their last as a team, he was 63.

I'm not saying you can't be funny when you're old but the Marx Brothers at their height were an act based on energy. Pace is only one of many factors why the team and their films were not up to their own standards for a good half of their cinematic career.



Calling **Bob Hope and Bing Crosby** a comedy Duo is perhaps a bit out of line here as each had incredible solo careers. They only made seven comedies together. Of the seven, the first was pre typical as they weren't yet a duo and the last was less than good, that doesn't leave much numerically. Their "Road Movies" are magical, so indelible that we often think of them as one of the archetypical comedy duo's, despite the fact that the partnership was just a lark they indulged in from time to time.

Bob Hope and Bing Crosby forged successful solo careers and were at the height of their comedic genius during their series of seven Road films, from 1940-1962. They worked brilliantly together in the standard formula of playing cons out to make a quick Dollar. Crosby played the brains of the duo with Hope forging the plan. They would generally swear off women for the duration of the plan, only to both fall for a girl during the process (Dorothy Lamour). Crosby usually got the girl, leaving Hope on the shelf!

The most successful comic Duo of the 1950s must have been **Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis**! As well as their making 17 films together, they also worked on radio, television, on stage, in nightclubs. They were originally hired by Hal Wallis as the comic relief in *My Friend Irma* (1949), then they signed a lucrative contract with Paramount Pictures. Over the next 7 years, Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis made hit movie after hit movie. Despite

Lee Prescott continued...

this commercial success, the partnership become sour. Martin became disillusioned with playing the straight-faced character. The critics began to focus on Lewis as the success within the act and arguments flared between them. Martin saw red in the late 50s and apparently told Lewis that he meant little more than a dollar sign to him. After *Hollywood or Bust* in 1956, they parted ways.



Both found individual success afterwards. Martin finally achieved his time to shine, both as an actor and a singer, and became a member of Frank Sinatra's "Rat Pack". Lewis continued to use his comedic talent in such films as *The Bellboy* (1960) and *The Nutty Professor* (1963), but his popularity began to wane by the early 1970s. They managed to put aside their differences and privately reconciled.



Probably Britain's greatest comedy double act, **Morecambe and Wise** found great success on television. As with many comedy double acts, they worked in music hall sketches moving to radio, later to television in 1954. Although their TV show proved enormously successful, their feature film work did not fare so well.

The first three films were produced in the 1960s and were not very successful due to cinemagoers likings for big epic productions. The Duo's final film *Night Train to Murder* (1983) was completed after 16 years from feature film work. It failed to make it in the comedy scene, not least because Morecambe seems to have hardly any interest in his role - mostly likely as he was suffering from illness during the time of production. Despite the lack of success, these feature-length films brilliantly showcase the Duo's talent.

The combination of physical, slapstick comedy and humorous lines make the film work of Morecambe and Wise as enjoyable today as when they were at the height of their fame. Many argue that their feature length work does not compare to their television sketches. LOL!



The Two Ronnies. There are lots of crafted one-liners, because Ronnie Barker was a writer himself. "I liked going to school on Monday saying, Zachariah Mild, the world's untidiest man, died yesterday and is currently lying in a state". Very likeable is the wordplay comedy, of which Ronnie Barker was a master. From being on *Mastermind* and giving the answers to the previous questions to 'Four Candles', it's really appealing. Ronnie Barker enjoyed words.

Barker and Corbett caught their big break by accident when they had to fill time during an awards ceremony which happened to be attended by the BBC's head of light entertainment. He was so impressed he offered them their own show; "The Two Ronnies" (1971 – 1987) took over from Morecambe & Wise's show as the BBC's flagship entertainment program when it ceased in 1978. Ronnie Barker is also a key comedy actor face in British sitcom history having starred memorably in "Porridge" (1974 – 1977) and "Open All Hours" (1973 – 1985).



Little and Large a British comedy Duo with straight man Syd Little (Born Cyril Mead in 1942) and comic Eddie Large (born Edward McGinnis in Glasgow in 1941). Forming their partnership in 1962, and originally as singers in local pubs around the north-west of England.

After deciding to concentrate on comedy, their big break came in 1971 when they appeared on the ITV talent show *Opportunity Knocks*. Going on to win the programme's vote (*Opportunity Knocks* viewer votes were subsequently alleged to have been disregarded in favour of a rigged result), They became household names almost overnight.

Within five years, the Duo had their own prime time show on ITV called "The Little and Large Telly Show". It began with a pilot episode in 1976, which earned the pair a commission for a series in 1977. They later transferred to BBC1 with a new show called "The Little and Large Show" from 1978. They stayed on BBC1 for several series until cancelled in 1991. At its peak, it was viewed by an estimated 15 million people each week.

Lee Prescott FACI



Tom Hardwick

Kit review.

Phone cameras or should it be camera phones

As manufacturers clamour to get you to upgrade your perfectly good smart phone, they're selling more and more on their phone's photographic capabilities. Pixel counts are rising, optical zooms are being included, multi lenses are the norm, super slo-mo near stops time in its tracks and the in-camera post processing available is nothing short of miraculous. No wonder (proper) camera sales are on the decline, and the compact camera is now effectively dead and buried.



I find the camera on my Samsung Galaxy Note 8 to be mighty fine, and the post production differential focus to be nothing short of miraculous. In post you can choose, using a slider, a how sharp or blurry you want the background to be, and you can save multiple copies of the picture with different levels of bokeh. It's highly impressive. At first I thought the camera must be using face detection to isolate the subject, but it's a lot cleverer than that.

Pixel-peeping the picture of my granddaughter on the railway station platform shows that far from it being a constant background blur, the blur increases with distance, just as if the picture had been shot using a wide aperture lens on a big chipped DSLR. This is all the more remarkable when you consider that my phone has a tiny 1/2.4" 12 megapixel CMOS chip, and a 6mm optically stabilised lens is used at maximum aperture.



Equipment Reliability

I've been given lots of Hi8 camcorder tapes to convert to digital, so I'm playing the analogue tapes in my 1995 Sony TR2000 which still performs beautifully. The nicad batteries it came with 24 years ago have long since died, so I run it off the mains.

But the viewfinders back then! Utterly dreadful black and white CRTs. Soft contrast, woolly definition, tiny image - how on earth did we make any sort of video looking at that picture? LCD side screens were still off in the future.



But I should say I'm impressed with the mechanical and electronic quality of the Sony products from that 1990s era, especially as my old Hi8 camcorder is chockablock full of tightly toleranced, delicate mechanical components. If you've ever watched the loading and transporting of video tape, you'll know that it's a highly complex sequence of events. For goodness sake, the lubricant used for so many moving parts must've evaporated many years ago, yet the mechanism sounds as sweet as ever.

I have a Panasonic S-VHS HS900 VCR that still performs beautifully. It was a lot of money in the early 90s, but has done Stirling work for 25 years or so and has never so much as hiccuped. Only this week it was playing back tens of VHSc camcorder tapes that a client wanted digitising. I suspect it has a gear drive mechanism rather than using perishable rubber drive belts, though the latter made for quieter machines, at the expense of making them far less reliable.

More on Film Transfer

Back in the day I never used anything but two frame Würker splices on my Super 8 films, and I must admit I've never bothered to remove them from my digital transfers, even though it's easy to do. I've had cement splices come apart on me, but never tape. Another advantage of tape over cement was the invisibility of the tape splice on screen, in both the video and the audio.

Post production image stabilisation of transferred film footage would scare the pants off me because of the image quality sacrifice, but I'm thinking that if there's an improvement in the overall look of the film then it's worth checking out. What I have done though is mask my old 4:3 films down to something like 15:9. I know that means taking quite a drastic image quality hit, but I do feel the results can often be worth it. 4:3 footage shown on a 16:9 TV can have years added to its age just because of its aspect ratio.

It's often worth sweetening the film's audio, as today's silent projection offers you much more subtlety in the audios dynamic range.

I've got to say that as my equipment improves my transfers get better year on year. Lately I've been using the big chipped Sony A7RII to refile the screen, and without a doubt they are the best transfers I've ever done, and I've been doing them since 1995 (24 years). The beauty of the big chip and the 85mm Zeiss f/1.8 is that that lens is bingly sharp, so I can use any aperture to get the exposure right - though I avoid f/11 and 16.

Tom continued....



Using the $\frac{1}{2}$ " chipped Sony NX5 and its ilk mean you're limited to using two or three of the widest apertures simply because of diffraction losses, and having to vary the gain or vary the shutter speed to give correct exposure during digitisation is not a good technical solution.

There are pros and cons of doing the transfer into a video camera (Sony FX1) vs a still camera (Sony A7). The tiny $\frac{1}{2}$ " chips in the FX1 mean that it's less sensitive, so underexposed footage might well require (noisy) gain up.

The full frame chip in the A7 means video noise is never a problem, even at silly settings such as 1600 ISO. So the lens can be set at smallish apertures (5.6 - 8, say) to ensure enough dof of the projected image. In fact for unpredictable footage auto-ISO is a good method of transfer, so that you stay locked (important) to 1/50th sec and f/8, and let the variable gain take care of exposure problems.



I know my 'project and refilm' is technically questionable, but for most people's footage this will give them DVDs that show their old films better than they've ever seen them. The only slight giveaway is that sometimes the off-axis transfer shows up in film titles.

Of course direct film-frame, on-axis transfers are the proper way to do it, but this is generally costlier if it's done right.

Interestingly using my Sony FX1 CCD camcorder as the digitising device allows for a goodly tolerance in the 16.666 FPS projector speed. But using the CMOS chipped A7 camera means the projector must be accurately set at 16.666 FPS, or flicker becomes noticeable.

Home Cinema Vs Cinema

I'm more and more convinced that the home OLED experience and healthy surround sound easily betters the local cinema. A flat panel TV screen adds no distortion to the image whereas a projection lens varies in sharpness across the frame, it vignettes the image and of course adds distortion and chromatic aberration.

The 4DX rocking chair cinema I experienced was fun for a one-off, but I'd have swapped it any day for a sharper image. When even the scrolling digital credits aren't sharp you know it wasn't directorial intent to soft focus Densel Washington's face.

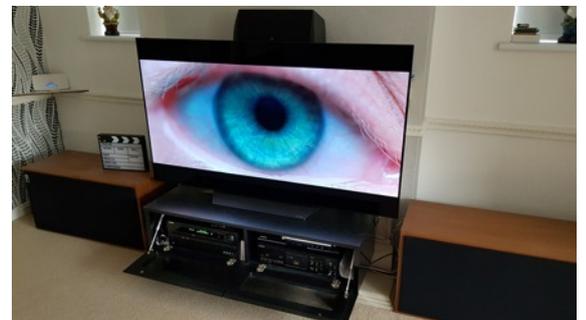
On top of that the the enjoyment is diluted by having popcorn-crunching patrons sitting next to you. The exit signs and aisle LEDs are on permanently - diluting the image, but worst of all the blacks are an insipid grey at best. Then a hi-gain screen can add a hot-spot to the image, and I find that highly distracting. Thank goodness there's no cigarette smoke in the air any more.

Audio. Yes, the cinema's Dolby Atmos is hard to replicate in a living room, though not impossible if you have the money. In fact you need more money to get good quality audio than good quality pictures these days. You can have very high quality images if you live in a flat, but raising the volume to war-film levels can be antisocial, so limiting your enjoyment.

Anyway, I'm only putting Blu-ray into a 4k TV up against the local multiplex cinema screen; using UHD 4k Blu-ray here at home would of course be even more superior.

Conclusions. The TV removes at a stroke the compromises inherent in accepting the unavoidable loses of projection. While the laws of optics still apply, the TV wins hands down. The cinema screen may be physically big, but it's the angle subtended at the eye that matters. It's easy to sit 2 meters from a 65" and have the image as large as a 6m screen 8m away.

I rest my case.



Tom Hardwick FACI

Hello Pip,

Many thanks for the last news letter. All that has changed from my last article is that the club that I belong to has changed it's name from Mylor Film Makers and Editing Club to "**Mylor Movie Makers**". A much more catchier name I think. I can see the queue of prospective new members now waiting outside the Tremayne Hall in Mylor, on the 1st Tuesday of the month to join up (!) at our next meeting.

The hall post code TR11 5NA Meeting start time 7.30pm. Any other details please call me on 01872 572385

All the best. Richard Abran



The language of Film

One of the things that's always fascinated me is the language of film. I'd like to know more about it. At best film can communicate on an emotional level. If it makes you cry it's a tearjerker, if it makes you laugh it's a comedy and if it makes you gasp it's a thriller or horror film. These responses didn't happen by chance. So it seems one of the first 'rules' of film language is to decide on a genre.

Melvyn Dover

A word of warning when buying a video camera

One of the first examples of film language I found in a book called *Making a Movie*, written by Alan Cleave and illustrated by Bennie Green. It's part of The Project Club series (#138) and was published by the dairy industry. It's a book aimed at children who want to make use of their movie camera. In it is a paragraph headed 'New Order, New Meaning'. There are three illustrations. The first, a baby crying. The second a close up of a lollipop. The third the baby smiling. Clearly shots in that order indicate the baby likes lollipops. Then the same illustrations are shown in reverse order, and the meaning of the sequence instantly becomes the opposite, the baby dislikes lollipops.

This is followed by illustrations of the various types of shots: long shot, medium shot, close up, referring to the size of the object on the screen. These are the building blocks. The linking of shots is important, and one method is to think of cause and effect (something I mentioned in a previous article). The book gives the example of a boy throwing a stone (cause). The audience then want to know the result of this action (effect).

The book goes on to mention the use of cut-aways to shorten or expand time, and offers advice on continuity of movement.

A few more clues I gleaned from another book: *Film Acting* by V. I. Pudovkin, a Russian oft quoted by learned film scholars (along with Eisenstein). It came out in October 1935, but don't let that worry you. There's a chapter in it that deals with the editing of dialogue. First there's the ping-pong method, where actor one speaks, cut to actor two, who speaks, then back to actor one, who speaks, and so on. This gives equal importance to both speakers. Pudovkin then gives examples of how to make one speaker more important than the other.

This is done in editing by deciding how much the words should precede the image or the image the words. If what actor one is saying is of greater importance, then

when they finish speaking the words of actor two may be heard before actor two appears on the screen. The film maker is in effect saying, 'I don't want to tear attention away from actor one and transfer it to the second'. The converse applies - cutting to actor two before actor one has finished speaking in readiness for actor two to speak, make what they have to say more important. It would be interesting to watch PM's Question Time in parliament in the light of this information!

One film where dialogue is important I saw again recently at Weymouth Movie Makers. It's a BIAFF 2014 offering called *Karen's Room*.

<https://www.theiac.org.uk/movies/biaff2014/karens-room.html>



It's directed by Geoff Harmer of Fraught Productions, and is well made and very classy. Karen (Lauren Shotton) wakes up to find a stranger (Andrew Coppin) in her room, and the repartee and chemistry between them is excellent. The dialogue is by enlarge what I've called the 'ping pong' type, with cuts on the sound as each person speaks, giving each actor the same importance. There are elements of comedy, thriller and sci-fi - so much for my first 'rule' of film language, to choose a genre! I personally would prefer not to see the alien, leaving that to my imagination - I thought the same of *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. Nevertheless it's a superb film and one I'd be proud to have made.

Of course analysing movies to try to understand film language is a lot easier after the event. It's knowing how to 'speak it' in the first place that's difficult.

Happy filming, Melvyn Dover.





Question?



Gordon Young

Poses a question

Competitions v Screenings

In 2017 I entered a film, *An Italian Dream*, in competitions. It was an account of Charles Dickens's first visit to Venice. It ended with just two names in the credits: Dickens for the script, and mine for the filming. It did well in competitions except for the Weymouth Penny Cup where it only managed third place.

Fast-forward to now: I have another Venice film, *Past Historic, Future Perfect*, the story of an obscure fascist, Filippo Marinetti - his futuristic plans proposed the demolition of Venice and its replacement with a modern port. It tackles a little-known subject and required a lot of research but it is a unique film and holds an audience when I show it at public gatherings.

Will it perform well at Weymouth this year? Well, not really. It made ninth out of twenty-seven, and was fourth out of nine documentaries so was 'unplaced' in racing terminology. The brief verdict from the judges praised it as a mammoth undertaking, excellent camera work, good juxtaposition of ideas expounded by Ruskin, Henry James and Marinetti, etc. In fact the only criticism was that it was 'a bit long' (at 15 minutes).

I was disappointed at the outcome . . . for about a minute. Then I received a couple of requests for film shows next year. I now have bookings stretching off from this month until June 2020 – local history organisations, AGMs, Probus, W.I. and community groups generally. They watch my Bristol documentaries and the Venice ones, too – I find that on a dark winter evening, audiences love sunlit scenes of lagoon water, shimmering marble and polychromatic mosaics.

So . . . to filmmakers who fail to carry off silverware at competitions, I say this: don't get disheartened, instead, get known on your local 'speaker' circuit and start screening your works of art. You will get unflinching attention from audiences and loud applause at the end. And a cheque (£40 or £50). I have never advertised; word of what you do just spreads around and you'll get approached. Be assured – it is really exhilarating to see a roomful of people who have taken the trouble to leave the telly and venture out on an evening to see your films.

For me, it is more fulfilling than winning competitions. Audiences engage with your films; in competitions you have no idea of the quality of other entries alongside yours, so you are like a horse in a race wearing blinkers.

I suspect, however, that films need to be documentaries that will interest folk. Dramas and comedies will be harder to sell.

My current Venice film is *Alphabetical Venice*, an A to Z list of places and people in the city. I can guarantee that it will be seen by hundreds of people when it's finished. Will I enter it in next year's Weymouth Penny Cup competition?

Well, no need for hand-wringing or soul-searching, trying to decide. At 30 minute' potential length, it will be too long.

Gordon Young LACI

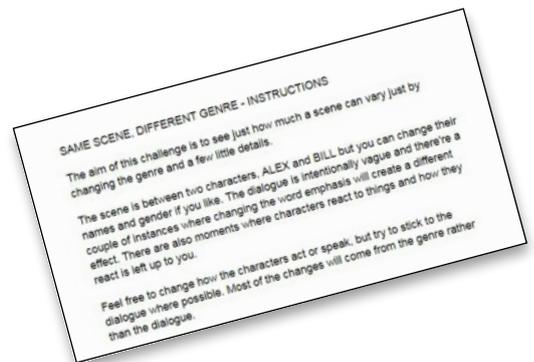
Bristol Film & Video Society

My final news from Reading.

At RFVM, we are nearing the end of our 63rd year as a club, and I would say another successful season. I will step down as Chair at our AGM on 7th May, since I feel it's time for others to take the lead. I have been on the committee for almost 7 years now, and much of that time very much hands on with the programme, and also marketing of the club. I am happy that I leave the new Chair and Committee with the club in a healthy state with around 40 members and financially sound too. Time for me to just be a member again. I will encourage our new Chair to write in future editions of SoCo..

We were unfortunately let down by 3 planned guest speakers this season. I have done a lot of programme planning for a few years now, and find this the hardest part. Everyone enjoys a guest speaker, or hopes to. No guarantees of course, unless they come highly recommended. We can afford a few good speakers each year, but it's finding them that is the problem. And if they are working, then I can appreciate that committing to a date, months in advance, is difficult. I am also a member of a Photography Club and in those circles, speakers actively market themselves for hire, but in the world of Video they are very elusive. Suggestions welcome if anyone out there has more success with this.

A recent practical challenge on a club night was called "Same Script Different Genre". A one page script was supplied to everyone a couple of weeks before the planned evening. 4 members then showed an interest in directing a script in a Genre of their choice. So 4 crews were sorted out, and we used 4 rooms of varying sizes in the hall that we use. The edits are yet to be shown (at our AGM), but I know that the Genre were Thriller, Comedy, Sci-Fi and French Subtitled..... All with the same dialogue!



My idea was the French one, which I decided would be shot on a dark, wet night under a street lamp. We were of course in a church hall, but I think I may just have pulled it off. Mais Oui!

If of use to you as an idea for your own club, the script we used can be found on this link.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1KQrR3VZSUBGTAQ2Yv2qDr-aH8VazexbFyB4ZvuDB84o/edit?usp=sharing>

I hope that you have enjoyed reading through my news from Reading in SoCo over the years.

Best wishes to all clubs out there from all the members at Reading.

Anne Massey

CHAIR



Analysing Videos

Analysing videos sounds like a pretty dry activity. Not something, you'd think, is very rewarding. But how wrong you can be!

Once you adopt a framework to guide your analysis you'll soon find yourself unconsciously analysing everything you watch. So what is this framework? Well like the good sermon it consists of three words, genre, symbols and conventions, for three concepts.

By genre we mean a style or type of video; such as documentary, travelogue, drama, horror, action, thriller, science fiction, westerns.

Symbols in our videos are such examples as:

- 1) The use of colours to suggest feelings; blue for coolness, red for heat, life or love.
- 2) In the old Saturday matinee western serials the "baddies" always wore black hats and the "goodies" white hats. This symbolism even carried through to the Star War movies where once again the baddie is in black and the good princess is in white.

Conventions are the accepted practices used in each of the genres. In the documentary and travelogue genres there is often a faceless narrator or a presenter that talks direct to the camera. In the Film Noir genre there is always the femme fatale, the female character with questionable background and dangerous intent. While in the drama genre there is a significant event around which the story is built and which tests the main character.

So using these three concepts let us examine the winning club video for 2002, Pot Luck by Brian & Liz McCauley. It can be viewed at:

<https://vimeo.com/214456917>



This video fits into the drama genre. A brief synopsis of the plot is how a chicken manages to foil the chief's attempts to be turned into an Italian Chicken Casserole. It is in the drama genre as it is about an event, the making of a chicken casserole, and the main character, the chicken, finds itself in a very difficult position, it may have its head cut off.

The plot is developed so that the audience cares about the welfare of the chicken and throughout the attempts of the chief to cut the chicken up, the audience is willing the chicken to escape the knife and the pot.

In drama the main character must have some measure of vulnerability or weakness and this is presented in the video in how roughly the chicken is handled, its stuffing in the pot and its forceful holding onto the chopping board. The premise of drama is that life is fragile and this is clearly presented by all of the chicken's attempts to avoid death and injury.

The second half of this premise is that life goes on, and in Pot Luck, we have a happy ending with the endearing shot of the chicken back home again covered in a blanket to keep warm, as it has lost all its feathers. The drama genre needs resolution of the event. In Pot Luck this comes with the chief giving up on his attempts to cut up the chicken and his use of a packet instead for the casserole.

There are symbols in Pot Luck. The chicken itself is a symbol for all the hapless people in the world who have little control over their lives and are forced to continually fight just to survive. The half climbing, half falling of the chicken out of the pot onto the stove top symbolises the old saying of out of the pot into the fire, as it is straight after this that the chicken ends up on the chopping board. The chicken's wink in the final scene is a symbol of the irrepressible life force in us all that rejoices in surviving each day and the readiness to fight and face another day.

The prime convention used in Pot Luck is stop frame animation to give life to the chicken. Another convention used is that they all lived happily ever after. The humans get their chicken casserole and the chicken survives to live another day. The story is told in the classic narrative convention of a linear time frame.

Brian & Liz McCauley's secret in this movie was to make the audience really interested in and want to know the ending to the story and that is why it was Video of The Year in 2002.



Quick update....

"I'm currently making a cutting hedge documentary"

*Keep Smiling
Pip*



Robert Paget

Reflects on using
drones

A Drone of his own

“Don’t you think you would like your own Drone?” – Oh thank you for saying those words Dawn. That ended up with my first drone lasting about three months.

However I was very pleased with the material I recorded from the very first. I was not that interested in the fast or acrobatic flying aspect, and knew that safety and responsibility are vital with these powerful machines.

I only wanted it for filming, and once you have made that first flight, you realise that you need to plan before take-off exactly what you want to film, capture the shots you want and to then land.

Waiting for passers by to clear the site before take off is vital, as well as avoiding those who approach you and are desperately keen to talk to you when you are concentrating and flying.

Initially there was a temptation for me to look at the phone view screen for framing, just as though I was lining up a camera on a tripod, but this is not advisable when you are slowly moving the drone backwards but are very close to trees and branches. Because all of the camera and controller settings are accessed on screen, altering the parameters of speed of response to the joysticks and camera tilt control was my first task, so that I could achieve smooth and slow “reveal” shots.

Sending the drone into a bright blue sky, looking away and then not being able to see it, followed by a “not so smart phone problem” led to “tree hugging”, which damaged and bent the light alloy gimbal unit – it never completely straightened out! The upgrading of software in the drone made it fly and take off in a far less stable manner, and the final collision with a wall after going into a derelict lock chamber and out of sight of satellites, led to an untimely watery end.

Before any flight, I check the online weather forecasts for wind speed and gust speed, and obviously do not fly in rain. Keeping it in line of sight is for me vital, and because of the wide angle lens, you do not have to fly particularly high or far away to get good material. With a wide angle fixed f2.8 aperture lens means that the electronic shutter will be using some incredibly fast shutter speeds possibly way above 1/1000 sec, all very good when you want to record a sharp individual still photograph, but entirely counterproductive for a film where elements of motion blur will improve the final slickness of the film.

Ideally the drone footage needs to have the same “look” as your main video camera which you may well have restricted to 25fps or 30fps to give a more cinematic look. Providing that you can attach one, an ND8 filter (say) may well be the first filter you will need to use to significantly carve down that shutter speed. The other filter for which you will be unable to modify the image in any subsequent software is a circular polarizer. My drone camera servo motors will not support two filters at a time, and I also need to protect the lens on landing because it offers the camera “down” to within millimetres of the ground as soon as you shut down the drone.

When I wish to enhance the look of clouds, and intend to fly pointed at 90 degrees to the axis between the sun and myself, I add such a filter: holding the filter up to the light and rotating to identify the maximum effect, before adding to the drone camera in that position. (There are

several online videos dealing with this and explaining how and why you will not be able to add this effect later).

With bright sky reflected off the surface of the phone and generally trying to watch the drone rather than the control screen, I have found that switching on the drone control screen “Zebra hatching” gives me a rapid and better idea of image framing when the horizon is in shot.

I have been surprised with the camera’s ability to deal with bright sunlight directly into the lens, and hence to produce “light leak” effects, however, my drone has large rotors which can cast a shadow across the camera, and when filming “contre jour” the sparkling light of a waterfall with an altitude similar to or below the weir crest, this produced horizontal dark bars on the film for part of the shot, and which I had not spotted on the monitor screen. I now have a petal lens hood for when I next attempt this type of shot. Fairly low level shots are very interesting, although flying extremely low will disclose the small amounts of “wander” to its course (which you can disguise with cutaways), and it can make a really good “slider” by moving left or right at 90° to the camera- subject axis.

When adding sound effects to drone shots, I generally add different audio and different audio levels, each depending on the altitude of the shot, with smooth and overlapping fades.

The “reveal” shots, so easily filmed by drone, have encouraged me to attempt similar “reveal” camera movements using a tripod mounted wide angle action cam. In effect the drone has made me rethink some of my basic camera work, and has provided a whole extra rage of cutaway material for films.

Morning and evening can be the excellent times for drone photography, and we all benefited from seeing the more experienced pilots in operation. My short drone film fared badly in the BIAFF competition with a judge not liking the recorded voices which sounded “disinterested” and “hoping I flew safely.” Words failed me!

Just as with any other film clip, aerial footage becomes boring and self-indulgent if left on screen too long. If it has no relevance to the film story, then don’t use that clip. It is important that all of the flight safety limitations are in operation on the controller, but I find that I rarely fly much higher than 150 feet or so, which looks seriously high as a wide angle shot, and avoids that “Google Earth” look, where the drone is so high that it may as well be a map and there is less detail as a result. It allows me to be able to find where it is in the sky, and not to have to rely on the return to home instruction.

Whilst I have yet to attempt some of the “Point of Interest” and “Fly by” modes, I am experimenting with patterns and sequences of shots, and some of these are in this film:

<https://youtu.be/vFGUJ5SRvyc>

Our holiday last summer gave me ideas for several films, some of which would benefit from Drone shots and for which I shall probably go back to various sites when weather conditions suit and I have checked online to verify that I can fly in those areas.

Enough of my droning on...

Robert





One To Watch

A Few from Lee Prescott

A Few from Robert Paget

Selected
Movies
from
the
World
Wide Web

Send your
contributions to
piperitten@googlemail.com

South America - Sublime and alone!
<https://vimeo.com/305431535>



How to make a skateboard film.
<https://vimeo.com/291418576>



You may have already read a lot about this article 13 amendments etc, which potentially could stop small organizations, such as video clubs, uploading and hosting the videos of members etc.

Obviously badly thought out by eurocrats who have little idea or even care about the consequences.

It appears that we shall still be able to use our individual YouTube /Vimeo channels. I always thought Europe was the centre of artistic creativity, but perhaps that is now ending.

A couple of online links I found:

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=article+13+youtube&view=detail&mid=891579396D8A876D82EB891579396D8A876D82EB&FORM=VIRE>



So young kids make videos!
<https://vimeo.com/306425000>



<https://saveyourinternet.eu/act/?noredirect=true>

Select your country to see a directory of your Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and to discover how they voted during the crucial European Parliament Plenary session vote on the new EU Copyright Directive on 26 March, 2019.

If you want to check out a more in-depth overview of MEPs' voting behaviour, covering all EU Member States, please see our [inter-Subject in Twitter](#) (with graphics) [chart](#).

Not a video - Website link

found [here](#), see pp. 50-51 for the procedural vote on the possibility to change the final text and pp. 52-53 for the final vote on the Copyright Directive.

Don't forget to follow [@FixIt_EU](#) for updates on copyright & to follow [@edri](#) for more general updates on digital and fundamental rights issues.

An "aliens" eye view of The World Below!
<https://vimeo.com/306705787>



This hyperlapse and timelapse film is so creative:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MclAkcxBujA>



SoCo Committee

The SoCo Website can be found here: <http://iacsoco.webs.com/>

Chairman: David Martin

Email: davidmartinsoco@gmail.com

Vice Chairman: Tony Colburn

Email: tony.colburn.soco@gmail.com

Secretary/Treasurer: Eileen Colburn

Email: eileen.colburn.soco@gmail.com

Competition Officer:

Email:

SoCo News Editor: Pip Critten

Email: pipcritten@googlemail.com

Committee Members

Lee Prescott

Email: anglovideogxy@talktalk.net

Mike Sczewczuk

Email: mikeszew@outlook.com

Trevor Matthews

Email: tbmatthews@madasafish.com

Melvyn Dover

Other Committee Members:

Anne Vincent

Phil Marshman

John Simpson johnsimpson57@yahoo.co.uk

Changes

New & Rejoined:

Change of address / contact:

Resigned:

MR T.J. HADDLETON, Teignmouth

MR ARTHUR BARRY, Gloucester

MRS M. DENNIS, Braunton

MR M. PATERSON, Weston-Super-Mare

Cancelled:

Deceased:

Moved into SoCo Region:

Change of Name

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<http://bhvideoclub.com/latest-news/soco-news-letters/>



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For a full list of national and international events

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