



SEPTEMBER 2008

# Audio Visual News



## From the Chair

Greetings to all members of the Division,

I'm looking forward to APSCON in Launceston and I hope to meet some of you there. Although public speaking is most definitely not my thing, I will be required to be on stage at some time, so if we haven't already met, you will be able to recognise me. Please seek me out, I would like to meet personally. And please do come to the AV Division meeting to be held on the Tuesday afternoon.

Judging Day for the National was eventful, and long. The AV's covered many topics and it was good to have entries from some people who had taken courage in both hands and entered for the first time. Unfortunately, the very nature of AV's means that in a convention such as this, there is simply not enough time to show all the acceptances, but we will be aiming to show a good cross section of sequences.

We received 31 entries over all, from 12 entrants. Of these we had entries from **SA** (7), **NSW** (5), **NZ** (4) and **Victoria** (15). For next time it would be good also to see what is being done in the other States. There were four entries in Diaporama, 14 in Freestyle and 13 in Photo Harmony.

One recurring problem which we encountered was the issue of the standalone EXE files, some of which were not standalone and

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## From the Chair continued

presented a menu. This is definitely not embraced by the technical operators on either judging day or exhibition day as it completely messes up the programming. I will attempt to find a tutorial to publish for those who are confused, but in the meantime any reader using a PC or MAC who is willing to write a short tutorial to be published in the next newsletter will be welcomed by both myself and John Guthrie.

Your contributions are always welcome.

*Barb Butler* (Chair)

## AV Committee

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## Contributions

Please let us have some contributions and feedback so that the newsletter can be relevant to your needs

## From the Editor



Hello Everyone,

Welcome to the September issue, for those going to APSCON have a great week.

You will have read in “From the Chair” that a tutorial on preparing AV’s for competitive presentation seem highly desirable for some of the entrants to competitions.

Preparing an AV for judging is quite different from the AV which we make for our own enjoyment or to show at clubs.

Yet even different requirements are needed to put an AV on a website and I know that several of you have done this very successfully.

Both Barb and I need your feedback and input for this. Do we need a slightly different tutorial for each of the popular programs which members use?

*John Guthrie*

### **Some websites that you may find interesting**

<http://www.avpeter.com>

<http://www.diaporama.be>

<http://www.media-maier.de/index.php?>



## The Audio Visual Division 2008 Autumn National

There still seems to be some confusion over categories, for both entrants and (unprepared) judges, and it was felt that quite a few sequences were in the wrong category.

**Freestyle** had 14 entries.

**Photo Harmony** had 13 entries.

**Diaporama** had 4 entries.

It was interesting that several sequences which did very well in Autumn did not get accepted this time around, and others which didn't do so well last time, got very good results this time.

That's judging for you I guess, regardless of section.

There were nine PC sequences which did not play well due to the way they were formatted and five MAC ones which had inappropriate "advertising" included in the sequence. These were included in the judging this time but everyone there agreed that for the sake of fairness and smooth running programs this should not be acceptable in future.

This is a matter of educating future entrants.

Now a brief report on the National Judging Day and preparing for the APSCON meeting.

In the past when this Division was chaired by Barbara Mullins and Peter Manchester, the AV judging days were held quite separately from the rest of the National. Although it was my preference to conduct the judging in the same way, I was persuaded to join in with the rest of the National all on the same two days.

Unfortunately, this resulted in some confusion - the date and times were changed and so two very reliable and well prepared judges came on the wrong day, we had to co opt others to take their place, we were having to share the facilities with the EDPI judging, being asked to split the AV judging session mid-category (that didn't happen!) and pressured to finish up before the judges had a chance to confer on final results.

My heartfelt recommendation is that we go back to the old ways and have a judging day exclusive to AV's. We did that for the last Autumn National and it ran like a dream.

## 2008 Autumn National continued



Congratulations to John (Hodgson) and his wife Judith for great results in the APSCON National AV section.

.Although the reports were sent out telling participants that all acceptances would be shown at APSCON, I hope you will all understand that is not possible with AV's at this stage.

We only have half an hour, and 20 acceptances. I have double checked with the APSCON organising committee and nothing has changed. I have put together a program of top sequences from our two Nationals which fits nicely into the half hour slot, this gives a good variety of topics and makers, and from discs which I know have no formatting problems.

For the "AV Division Presents" segment, I have invited Marie Tresidder to very briefly speak of the Adelaide AVFest in March. I have Peter Coles' AV celebrating 50 years of Diaporama in hand, and Ian Bateman (one of the judges at AVFest) is sending me two of his sequences to show. This fills up that half hour quite nicely.

*Barb Butler*



## **Flanders Image Festival 2008**

### **Congratulations to Barb Mullins!**

Barb has been invited to participate in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Flanders Image Festival in Belgium in October. Her AV "Boy set apart", the story of Sir Sydney Kidman will be shown at the festival in Kortemark, along with the work of many other leading international AV makers.

As this is a "by invitation" Festival this is quite some achievement, and I am sure that all members of the Division will wish Barb well."

**A brief summary of the festival that I have translated from the Dutch language.**

### **FIF 2008 A look on the World Kortemark, Belgium 10-12 October**

**Jointly presented by The Diaporama Club of Belgium and Kordial Multimedia**

The Flanders Image Festival is not a traditional competitive festival, currently it is a by invitation only festival. This means that the organizers during the previous two years have followed and sometimes been present at international festivals. By means of the results and awards gained in these international festivals a number of authors have been invited to send in work for FIF.

All work shown will have received one or more awards, therefore a guarantee for quality in itself. All our chosen authors have accepted our invitation, for which we are sincerely thankful. The result is an international projection with AV productions from Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Luxembourg, Great Britain, Northern Ireland, Italy, Poland, and Australia. This without doubt allows a much broader palette of work than what is offered by some foreign festivals.

On Saturday there three different projection sessions, in total 39 productions shows, the work of 45 authors. Instead of organizing a traditional jury we in the FIF have given the jury's task to the public. On Sunday 12 October during the gala projection the public prizes are distributed.

By the international character of productions we are now sometimes expressly faced with the inevitable language problem. But this mixture of languages used can only reinforce our willingness to appreciate different cultures. Because both picture and text in good AV production must form an entity with the sound track, is surprising how sometimes the vision of the author can nevertheless be experienced correctly, although one does not understand the language.

## Flanders Image Festival 2008 continued



Thereby it will certainly not escape the viewers that every country has its own AV-style.

Kordial Multimedia presents during this festival gala projection within the framework of the thirty one year old existence of the Diaporama Club of Belgium.

Here is a link to the website of the Diaporama Club:

<http://users.telenet.be/vanhautestef/DCB/>

Unfortunately for us here in Australia the website is only available in either the Dutch or French languages. For those of who speak either Dutch or French please accept my apologies if I have made any mistakes in this summary.

*John Guthrie*

**You can also find some more information at:**

<http://www.kordialmultimedia.be/Kordial%20Multimedia/FIF%202008/Uitnodiging%20FIF%202008.pdf>

<http://www.media-maier.de/index.php?>

<http://www.avpeter.com/2008/01/20/events-and-competitions/>



## Is photography ruining AV?

by Richard Brown

Nearly thirty years ago when I first became interested in AV and started attending RPS distinction panel meetings, there was an interesting phenomenon, which came and went. Namely, excellent photographers who had applied unsuccessfully for distinctions, particularly Fellowship, in the slide categories, would present a collection of images put together with some music to the slide-sound sequences panel, in the mistaken belief that gaining their distinction in AV would be easier than in “proper” photography. Applications of this type were almost invariably rejected and quite rightly. A parallel occurrence which I observed in my own club and several others, was that of good photographers who saw AV and decided to have a go. They made one or two sequences, usually of the type just described and then lost interest when they realised that good AV’s are a lot more difficult to make than they appear.

The point is that a successful sequence is much more than a collection of images, however outstanding they may be as individual pictures. My own thinking on this was formed a long time ago by a pamphlet for beginners in AV written by Lady Doreen Pollock. In it, she stressed that the conception, the sound and the pictures were of equal importance and crucially, that their inter-dependence was vital. The photographs should take their place alongside the other elements. When the pictures in effect become the sequence, we have in my view moved away from what AV is really about. Years ago, FIAP had a special category in international festivals for what they termed “slide series”, which were shown and judged separately. Although I am certainly no cheerleader for FIAP’s more recent attitude towards AV, I do think that with regard to the slide series they got it right.

So why am I concerned about this issue now? Well it has to do with the advent of digital technology. In the past, there was a certain craft skill attached to AV production. Handling slides and projectors, tape recording and editing, pulsing and showing, all required some technical mastery of the processes involved. Now, with everything on the computer screen and PTE (Pictures to Exe) making the assembly of a simple sequence so easy, virtually anyone can have a go at being an AV producer. Professional photographers have certainly taken to AV-style presentations for showcasing their work – great images changing nicely to a piece of background music. Don’t forget that PTE started life as a tool for doing just that. It still refers to the soundtrack as the “music”.

The problem as I see it, is that people who are coming fresh to AV see this type of presentation and think that’s what AV is all about. And, more worryingly, looking at the results from

## Is photography ruining AV? continued



quite a lot of recent competitions and festivals, some judges seem minded to encourage them in that view, to the extent that this is what top award-winning AV is all about.

Some of the prize lists from last year's Digital Super Circuit make particularly depressing reading. The message going out seems to be "don't worry about having any sort of narrative; don't bother to find out about script writing or sound recording, editing and mixing; don't concern yourself with the use of dissolves or effective changes of pace; don't bother about having a beginning, middle or end; in some cases, don't even bother to take any of the photographs yourself". As one observer put it to me recently "If you want to make a Grand Prix winner, go into W.H Smith and find a book someone has published of pictures of homeless people, scan them in in any order, get a copy of Streets of London by Ralph McTell, press "fit to music" in PTE and collect the gold medal!" He was only half joking and sadly, on present evidence, he was more than half right.

I'm not criticising people for making sequences like this, it's a free AV world after all. What I am asking is that people charged with the responsibility of influencing the direction AV takes i.e. judges, look more carefully at the material they're presented with and ask if sequences which seem to me to satisfy so very few, if indeed sometimes any, of the requirements Lady Pollock envisaged, should really be considered as top award winners.

Maybe I'm over re-acting. Styles in AV come and go. In the old days, scripts and voice-overs were rare and no one style dominated. Then documentaries ruled the roost. Then, much more personal messages were the successful genre. But each of these changes was a development on what had gone before, taking the medium forward. What is happening now seems to be going backwards at breakneck speed. Perhaps this is a passing phase. I hope so. I've been chasing around competitive AV for well over half my life and I've never felt as low about the state of international competition as am right now. If this current trend continues, if photography does indeed ruin AV, I think I'll take up amateur video instead.

*Richard Brown*

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## AV Tips, Sound Effects CD's



In the last issue I promised that I would list some sound effects cd's for you. Well this is not a very comprehensive list there are far too many out there! I'm sure that by a little bit of searching you can find some that I have never heard of. When you go looking either in the Store, library or internet remember that the phrase "sound effects" is often abbreviated to Sound FX or SFX.

Here is starter list for you. Should be available from ABC shops.

### **BBC Sound Effects Library :**

**I believe that the collection is 40 cd's in total however some of them are pretty exotic**

SFX 001	BBC SOUND EFFECTS
SFX002	EXTERIOR ATMOSPHERES
SFX 003	HOUSEHOLD
SFX 004	INTERIOR BACKGROUNDS
SFX 005	TRANSPORT
SFX 006	ANIMALS AND BIRDS
SFX 007	HUMAN CROWDS, CHILDREN AND FOOTSTEPS
SFX 008	COMEDY, FANTASY AND HUMOUR
SFX 009	INTERNATIONAL
SFX 010	COMMUNICATIONS
SFX 011	WATER
SFX 012	BRITISH BIRDS
SFX 013	INDUSTRY
SFX 014	CITIES
SFX 015	NATURAL ATMOSPHERES
SFX 016	CARS
SFX 017	SPORT & LEISURE
SFX 018	BANG!
SFX 019	ELECTRONICALLY GENERATED SOUNDS
SFX 020	WEATHER (1)
SFX 021	WEATHER (2)
SFX 022	SHIPS AND BOATS (1)
SFX 023	SHIPS AND BOATS (2)
SFX 024	AMERICA

## AV Tips, Sound Effects CD's continued



SFX 025	AIRCRAFT
SFX 026	CHINA
SFX 027	BABIES
SFX 028	HOSPITALS
SFX 029	AFRICA: THE HUMAN WORLD
SFX 030	AFRICA: THE NATURAL WORLD
SFX 031	EQUESTRIAN EVENTS
SFX 032	GREECE
SFX 033	ADVENTURE SPORTS
SFX 034	LIVESTOCK (1)
SFX 035	LIVESTOCK (2)
SFX 036	FARM MACHINERY
SFX 037	HORSES (1)
SFX 038	HORSES (2) AND DOGS
SFX 039	SCHOOLS AND CROWDS
SFX 040	SPAIN

Don't forget that each of these cd's can contain 40 or more different sound effects, the printed catalogue is 77 pages!

**Then there are the BBC Essential Sound Effects Series of cd's:**

BBC Essential Sound Effects  
BBC Essential Crowd Sound Effects  
BBC Essential Foreign Sound Effects  
BBC Essential Weather Sound Effects  
BBC Essential Transport Sound Effects Vol's 1& 2  
BBC Essential Science Fiction Sound Effects

Finally one very good cd that I forgot to mention in the previous article about music was the Mystic Moods Orchestra "One Stormy Night" absolutely amazing weather sounds and good music into the bargain.

*John Guthrie*