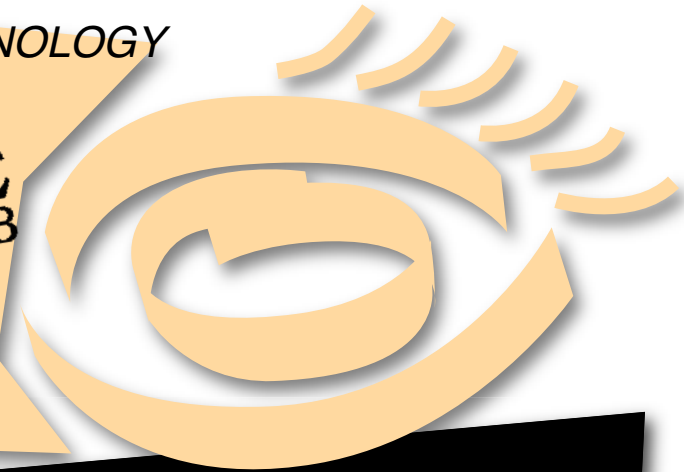


ENJOYING VISUAL TECHNOLOGY

**NORTHSIDE
CAMCORDER CLUB**
SYDNEY



ELECTRONIC EYE

NEWSLETTER

2008

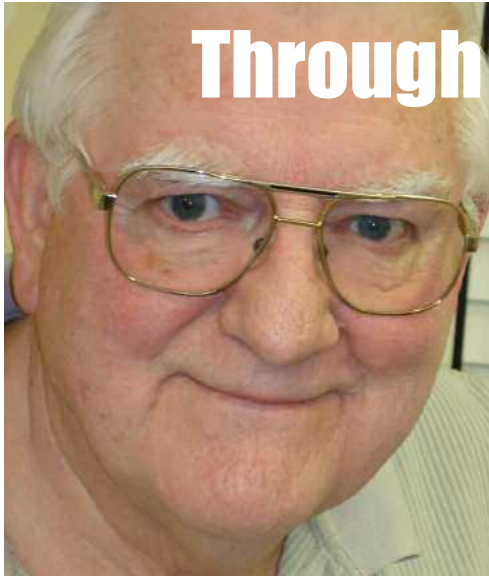
May 2008

- 2-3 Through the (vice) President's Lens
- 4-5 May Focus Night
- 6-7 African Womens Lunch
- 8-13 Interview Techniques
- 15 Tropfest Entry?



**Next Meeting
WEDNESDAY
28th May**

www.ncc.asn.au



Through the (vice) President's Lens

Peter is off on a holiday for a bit so I borrowed his lens and I am having a look through it on his behalf.

May Focus night we had a very productive evening about sound capture. Andy Doldisson and Chris Seville inspired us all with their skill and techniques so much that we will be using some of these on the May Club Night. Our major presentation May Club Night will be about interview techniques. After supper we will get into a few groups and do a bit of hands on interviewing. I am pleased to say that Andy and Chris have agreed to lead a couple of the hands on groups. By the time this EE goes out on the net we will have rounded up some others to bring along the bits and pieces of equipment we need to make it all a success.

Along different lines, I have been talking with our Treasurer and whilst we are not in financial distress we have had to delve into the kitty a fair bit of late. Unfortunately a declining membership with less income from subscriptions does not help. Most of you will know that we have had to repair the Sony mini DV recorder player at considerable cost. You will all understand if we have to run a few raffles in the near future to help with our

financials. Beryl Stephens has agreed to lead the push running a few raffles and I ask that you give her your support as she undertakes this task.

Glenn Booth and Ernst Chung are pushing ahead with an upgrade to our website so that it will have a more modern look and be more user friendly. If you have any ideas on how it might be improved to serve the Club better please drop an E-mail to Glenn who is open to any useful suggestions.

Looking ahead to June Rob Nercessian has been able to arrange for an experienced director to come along to our club night and give us a few tips on directing actors and action, should be an interesting night. Our June Focus night will be about achieving some simple but effective “tricks” with graphics to enhance your titles and introductions. If there is a particular effect you want to master let one of the committee know as early as you can and we will try to get into that program.

Oh and don't forget VOTY is not too far away get you entry on the go. Now!

Ian Scott

Vice President NCC

SOUND ADVICE ---



On focus night 13th May we were treated to an exceptionally interesting overview about capturing sound. Andy Doldisson and Chris Seville brought all their “good gear” along to show us the tools to be used and the considerable differences that microphone selection and positioning make on the final result.

Andy and Chris were ably assisted by Rob Nercessian who performed as busker at large on violin and mandolin. The audience was invited to record a bit of the sound action on their own cameras. Later we played back excerpts from various cameras and reviewed the differences.

Andy kicked off by explaining the equipment collection and how it could best be employed to get good sound results. A variety of microphones were reviewed both mono and stereo and the various application attributes of each explained.

The very obvious variations in results related to microphone positioning became clear. Andy stressed the importance of getting your microphone as near to the sound source as possible. The room air conditioner noise provided us with a very good



example of extraneous noise and microphone positioning strategy to minimize the “noise” became very clear.

A short interviewing was used to cover the techniques for sound capture related to the interview situation, this particular demonstration used wireless microphones to good advantage.

Our thanks to Andy and Chris for such a graphic review of sound capture devices and strategies for their use and positioning.

Of course the evening would not have been the same without the musical renditions provided by Rob. Very versatile, self taught he says, anything from the Hungarian rhapsody to the Sailors Hornpipe.

All attending agreed that it was a very enjoyable and productive evening.

Ian Scott



AFRICAN WOMENS LUNCH FILM SHOOT

Practice makes perfect, or so they say:

Here is an opportunity for our members to participate in a fun group activity on the 21st of June 2008 at Canley vale.

This is a real Video event in which you can taste the immediacy of filming 500 African women dancing, talking and who knows what else. We will not get paid but this is the next best thing to visiting the dark continent!

Elizabeth Ban, NCC member, suggested this activity. It is an Australian community initiative to help African women get together and have fun. Our documentary may be used later to generate small funds for them.



As all participants are contributing on voluntary bases there is no pressure on our members to produce an award winning production; suffice it to say that we will enjoy being together, eat cous cous, wash your hands then vastly improve your own Video skills.

Elizabeth will tells us at the shoot meeting more about the nature of the function eban@optusnet.com.au. This activity is open only to financial NCC members.

This type of function can be a bit daunting, busy and noisy to shoot it (99% gregarious females). We should have a "plan of action" so that we can "stay focused" and capture some good footage regardless of any potential disarray or distraction by the public.

As Andy Doldissen mentioned earlier; To make a proper film production we will need a director, producer, sound man or woman, camera operators and interviewer. If we employ such proven principles we should get a reasonable product.



So think up what you would like to do yourself and we will have a pre-shoot meeting to discuss the approach, although it would be good if everyone had a turn in doing everything.

Now put the theory into practice and join the NCC production team by emailing robncc@hotmail.com and arrange car pooling if needed.

Get your camera, tripod (essential), microphone, lights and batteries ready and join the team.

Rob Nercessian

INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES



When the word Interview is used many of us will immediately assume we are talking about a studio style session where an Andrew Denton or the like explores a subject with a visitor. In this style of studio interview there is probably a script and the visitor will have agreed to the questions to be asked. We will come back to the studio interview later as we can learn a lot by studying the setups used under ideal conditions.

A variant on studio interview is often used with VIP subjects. The interview is conducted at a location very familiar to the VIP. This approach is often used to put an interview subject at ease rather than have them under the “bright lights” of a studio, or to interview a subject who is not disposed to visiting your studio (usually politicians who are too busy serving the Electorate, Oh yea!). The interviewer and his support team try to set up the VIP location just as they would in the studio.

If the interviewing team is “out in the field”, as might occur to gather content for a news item, or information about some place or person to be used in a documentary. Here the team will not have the easy setup support from the studio. However they must still adhere to a number of well established interviewing principles when setting up and shooting.

Many of us here at the club can use interviews within our videos. The technique is useful to add detail into the video not otherwise visible. We are most likely to use the “out in the field” interview and in many cases the action will be quite ad hoc, but must still

adhere to basic principles to be a success. If we do manage to conduct a more set piece interview then we will have a bit more time to set up and control the content progress. We might for example be getting information for the family history from an ageing relative at their home. Here we can do a VIP style interview. The good news is that the basic principles apply in some degree to all the interview styles we have described.

There are three critical themes to be managed for a successful interview;

- *Content*
- *Sound*
- *Vision*

I have not listed them in any significant order as they are all important and must have some attention to succeed.

CONTENT

Let's take content first. It can range from being fully scripted and rehearsed to a simple ad hoc question and answer interchange in the field. The most difficult might be the ad hoc interchange, because people might just say anything. Most rational people will answer the question you ask, (unless the respondent is a politician) and therefore what is said can be to a degree be controlled by the questions asked.



So it follows that if you are planning to interview people that you cannot rehearse then you need to think up some questions that will draw out the type of answers that you need. Remember you can't make people say what you want but you can steer the overall

content by asking the relevant leading questions. You might be at a flower show for example and you want to find out what visitors think of the show. You could ask a number of people question such as;

- *Do you come every year?*
- *Are you a keen gardener?*
- *Do you have or grow a favorite flower?*
- *Will you come again next year?*

Now these questions lead to fairly specific responses, however remember that if your question can have positive or negative reply you need to have follow up questions that take account of the direction of response.

If you ask open ended questions who knows how long the response may last or where the content will go to!

- *What do you think of the show?.....etc.*
- *Do you agree with the Judges selection about?....etc.*

All we need is a bit of commonsense appraisal of the event and a set of prepared questions to pose to our subjects. A common set of questions will assist you to build a theme in your documentary about the event in hand.

SOUND

Our second theme to be managed is sound. Suffice to say if you can't hear the interviewer or the respondent then you might as well not have the interview at all. If we are indoors and have a reasonable degree of control over our environment then we are well advised to get our microphone into a location where both people are at equal distance from the microphone to capture a common sound level. If you have the resources that you can use multiple microphones and control input levels. If you are stuck with using your camera microphone you might need to record the interviewer's questions separately and mix them in later, this enables you to set up the camera to get the best view of the subject being interviewed without having to worry about the camera microphone position. You will still get sound from the camera to assist you identify the sound clips from the separate recorder. Of course you will need to ensure that the interviewer's lips are not clearly visible so that the post mix does not run into lip sync problems.



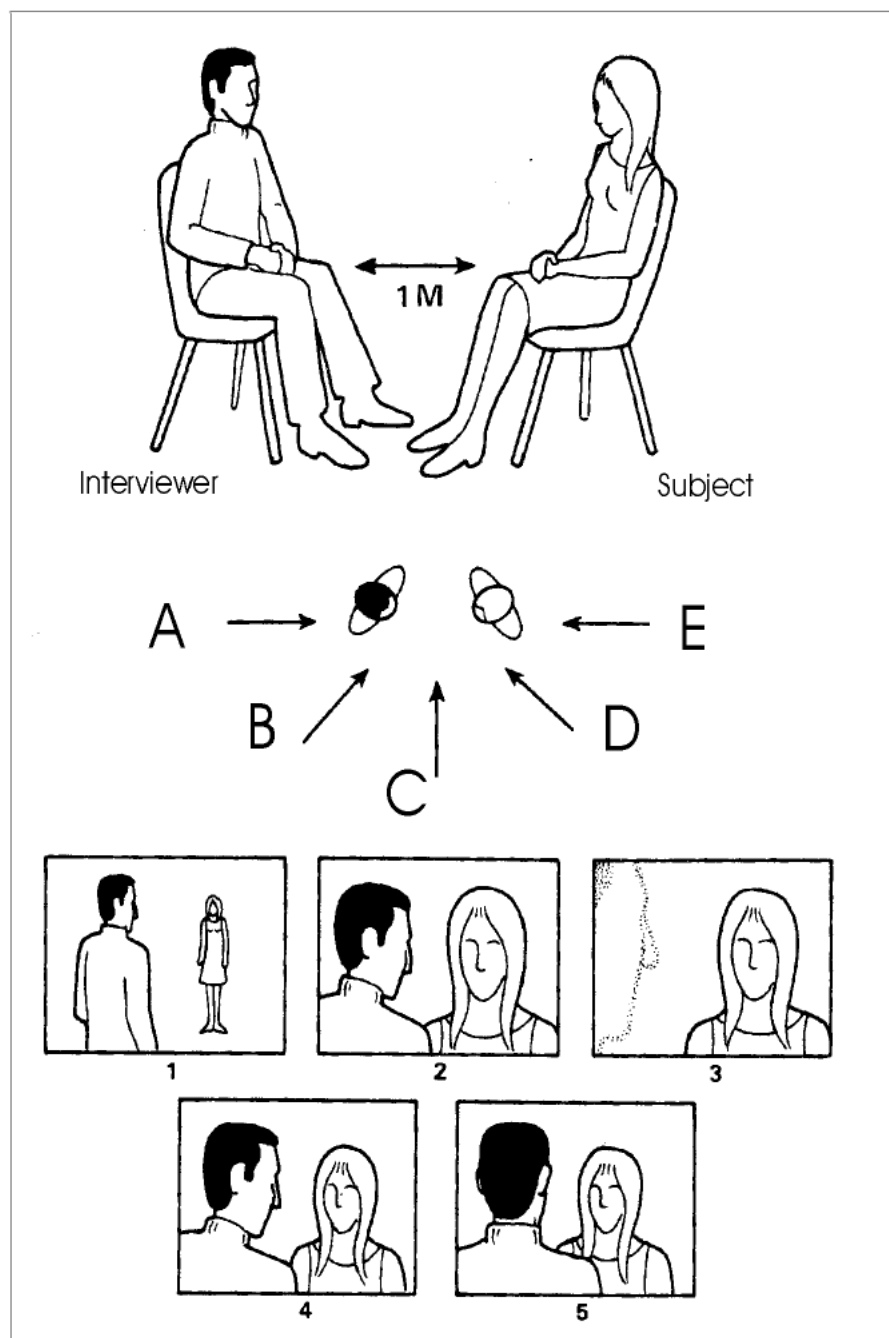
If you do have a couple of radio microphones they can capture good sound just so long as there is no interference. If we are out in the field then the interviewer will most likely use a radio mike to avoid leads dangling around between camera and microphone. The interviewer will have to manage the microphone and direct it to interviewer or subject whomever is currently speaking. Particularly outdoors we must get that microphone as close to the subject as we can to minimise extraneous noise capture. If you can't fit an external microphone to your camera then you might need to borrow a mini recorder of some description to get good clean sound, this does introduce a bit of a challenge matching the sound and vision capture during edit.

VISION

Our final theme to be managed is vision and of course there are two points to note, what you can see and how well you can see it. Now I won't dwell on the lighting, focus and so on assuming that you will apply all the normal skill onto those two factors. Just use as many techniques as you can to do the best possible with lighting and focus in the situation at hand.

What you see needs a bit expanding. Look at the diagram. Now no matter what style of interview you are dealing with you will have two persons involved.

If it is a studio or VIP situation you will probably be able to sit them down. As our diagram shows place them about a meter apart. Get the sound capture organised. If we are in the studio or have the resources we can use two cameras and they may well be placed at B and C. The two cameras allow for an on line vision editor to select the appropriate camera in line with the interview action and content, or it can be done later as an off line edit. If there is only one camera available and you want to



simulate the two camera look you just do the interview once for real with the camera at B concentration on the subject. Then you repeat the interview with the camera at D concentrating on the interviewer. After edit it will look the same as a two camera setup, just a bit more work and of course it can't be "live on air". For a one camera situation we place the camera at C but probably a bit off towards B to put emphasis on our subject. We include both persons at once and record our interview.

Out in the field our people will usually be standing. Our interviewer has probably stopped a subject "in the street" to ask a few questions. To keep the viewer in the plot a short CU talking head from the interviewer explaining what is going on will have already been screened. So now that the viewer knows what is what there is no need to show much of our interviewer as we capture our subjects point of view. In fact we can shoot from behind the interviewer as shown in frame ups 1 to 5. Framing of the subject in 1 is too distant for interviewing but might be a useful lead in as we approach the subject. Framing in 5 has too much interviewer "back of the head" and 3 is too close to our interviewer. Framings 2 and 4 are the best as we get some profile of the interviewer, framing 4 is the better of the two as the slight difference in head sizes give some depth to the image.

If your subject is doing something, like carving for example you will adhere to the same principles but adjust the frame content to include some of the "art" even a bit of CU of that as it might be very useful for editing as now doubt the interview will be related to what the subject is doing.

With those few tips in mind why not get out and have ago at some interviews. Try adding some interviews into family events. Many years later you will be delighted at the reaction of an unsuspecting 21 year old when the interview taken at their tenth birthday party is show during their twenty first party send up. I just did it a week

or so ago it was rewarding. It is sometimes useful to interview your travel companion during travel it adds some information about where you are etc in a much more interesting way than with a voice over added at post edit.

Go on give it a go. You will learn heaps as you experiment.

Ian Scott

Projector Auction

As the Club has a new HD- capable projector, the old projector will be auctioned at a Club event (with a reserve price). The 'old' projector is an Elmo (a re-badged Hitachi). About a third of the life of the projector lamp has been expended. Elvio Favalessa can supply specifications.

email is efavalessa@mitchels.com.au

As you can read below Ernest Cheung is anxious to pull a NCC team together to do a Triopfest entry.

If anyone is keen to be Ernest's Sydney Producer please contact Ernest direct on his HK website: ewoc@netvigator.com

HELLO FROM ERNEST CHEUNG IN HONG KONG

Hi everybody. I am coming to Sydney in late August for about a month and will be attending our Club meeting.

At this moment, I am working on a script intended for the Tropfest Competition in January 2009. I was hoping to form a NCC team to do this production. Since I am not in Sydney most of the year, I am a bit restricted doing any organising.

I need a Producer to do all the Sydney liaison and other organizing. I was wondering if any other member would like to join with me in the organising, and help with gathering together a team of club members to be involved.



Last year, I entered my video the Plot but didn't win anything. I think mainly because the storyline was too weak. This time I have a much better story. A preliminary script should be ready in mid June, and if an NCC eventuates I can send a draft script to "My Producer"

If anyone interested in knowing about Tropfest, they can get all the detail on: <http://www.tropfest.com>

See you all in August

Regards

Ernest

Club Dinner: Tuesday 22nd July



The venue for this club social event is the Austrian Schnitzelhaus restaurant at 163 Victoria Road, Gladesville, Arrival time is 7 pm. There is ample parking on site. The restaurant is a sandstone building on the left hand side of Victoria Road as you head toward the City just below the Gladesville shops [between Junction Street and Batemans Road, next to the Gladesville Motel and opposite Peter Shipway Real Estate.] The restaurant is b.y.o for wine only and is fully licensed. Dinner is by candlelight. The restaurant has its own web site--- austrianschnitzelhaus.com.au.

Members intending to attend this function should give their names to Mike Elton at the June Club night—alternatively email him at [mikeelton @ iprimus.com.au](mailto:mikeelton@iprimus.com.au). A group booking is intended.

CLUB CONTACT DETAILS

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Membership Secretary	<i>Glenn Booth</i>	9401 6677
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Librarian	<i>John Maher</i>	
Visitors Host	<i>Ron Cooper</i>	9982 1147
Competition Manger	<i>Mike Elton</i>	
Copyright Registrar	<i>Jim Whitehead</i>	9416 7162
Video Director	<i>Terry Brett</i>	9451 1851
Audio Director	<i>Garry Murdoch</i>	9807 3706
Catering	<i>Bob & Margo Hallett</i>	9587 6925

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