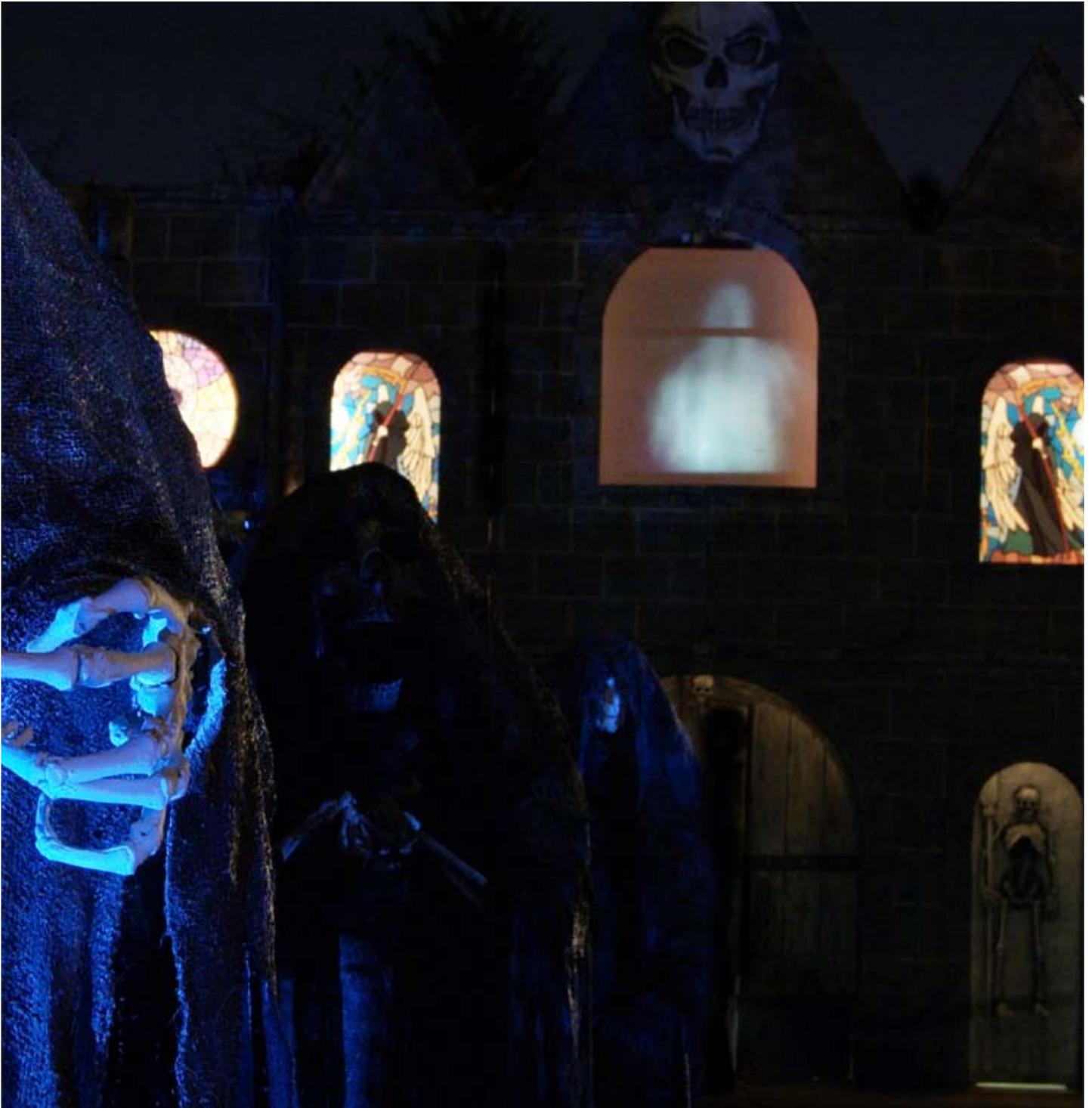


DAVIS GRAVEYARD

Hauntcon 2008

Using Video Effects in your Haunted Graveyard





Video Effects

Jeff & Chris Davis, The Davis Graveyard

Get your ghost on!

Why video effects?

They are a lot easier than you think. With a few simple tools and some creativity you can create an effect that will out perform any "crank ghost".

Video Taping

How we make a ghost.

A digital camcorder is the easiest way to transfer your video into the editing software.

A Firewire 1394 cable makes for faster transfer of the video directly to the computer.

Mount your camera on a tripod. Keeping the camera still during filming is important and easy

with a tripod.

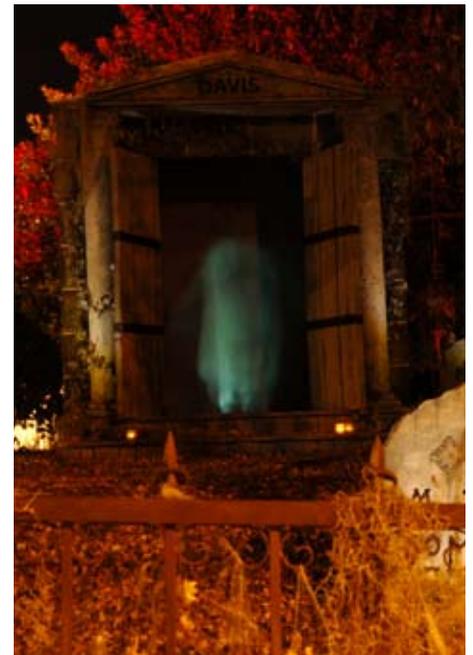
We hook a small TV to the video out on the camcorder and face it to the actor. This makes it easy for the actor to see how they are being captured on video and when they step out of frame.

Film against a black backdrop, including the floor (we use roofing paper for the floor so actor does not slip.) It makes is easy to edit the video when you convert it to black and white.

Film in a well lit or daylight area. Contrary to what you would think, you need light for filming.

When you are filming a ghost for a doorway, put the camera on it's

side and capture the actor in full height.



Editing the Video

Simple video effects.

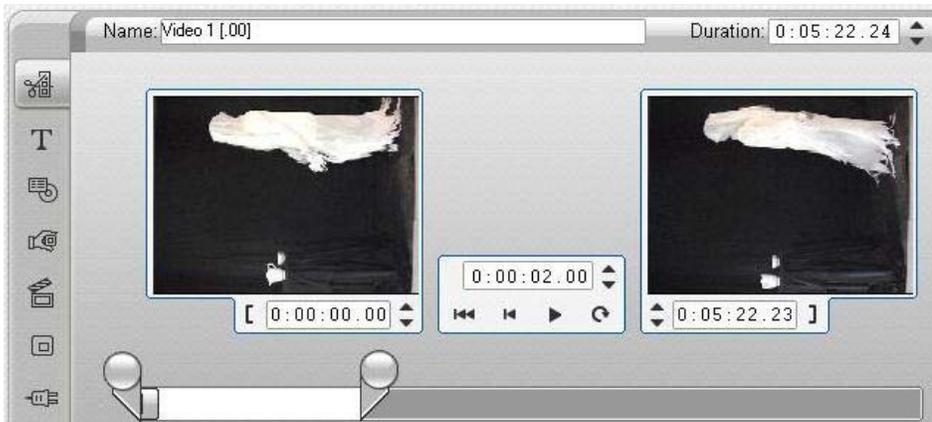
For our simple effects we use Pinnacle Studio 11. It is a simple and inexpensive program that you can get for around \$100 or even less on ebay. In this presentation we will show the process using Pinnacle.

Importing the Video

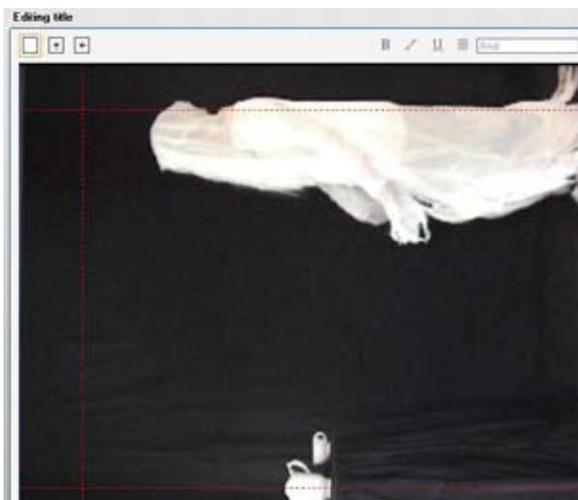
First you need to import the video into the software. You can do this by hooking the camera to the computer via a firewire cable.



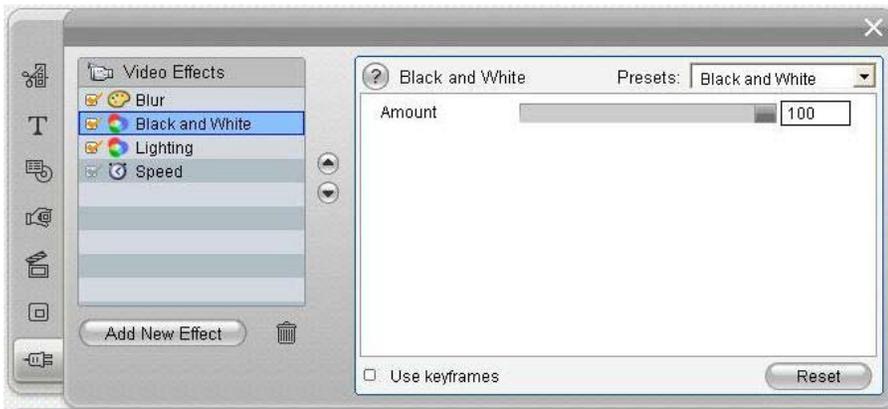
Editing the Clip



Mask the unwanted area

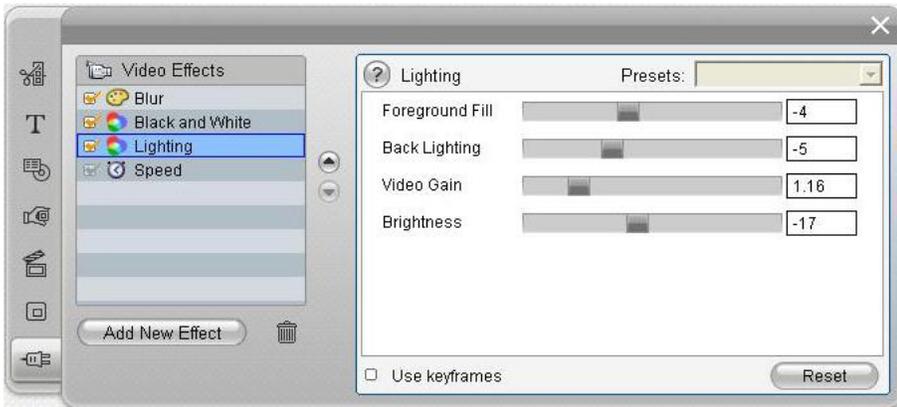


Use an effect to convert the video to black and white



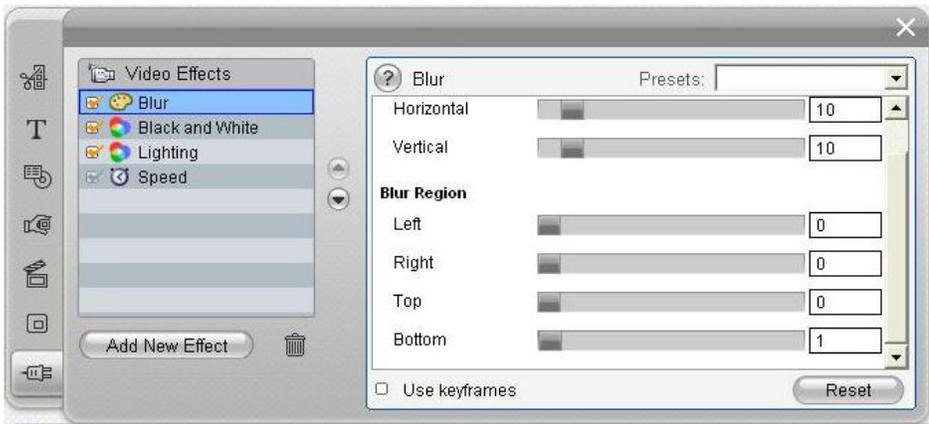
For this ghost we turn the video 100% black and white

Use and effect to adjust the contrast



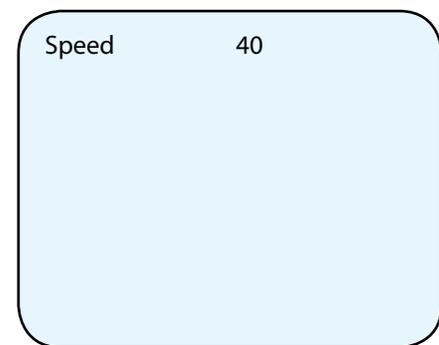
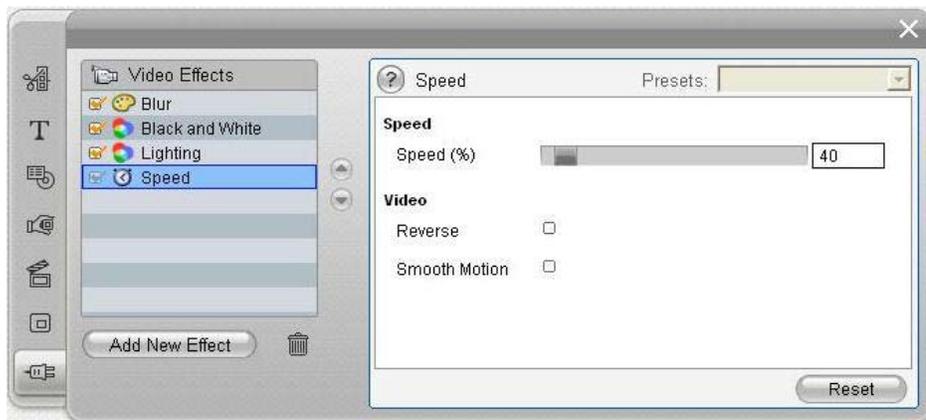
For this ghost we are using
Foreground fill -4
Back lighting -5
Video gain 1.16
Brightness -17

Use and effect to blur the video



Horizontal 10
Vertical 10
blur regions
Left 0
Right 0
Top 0
Bottom 1

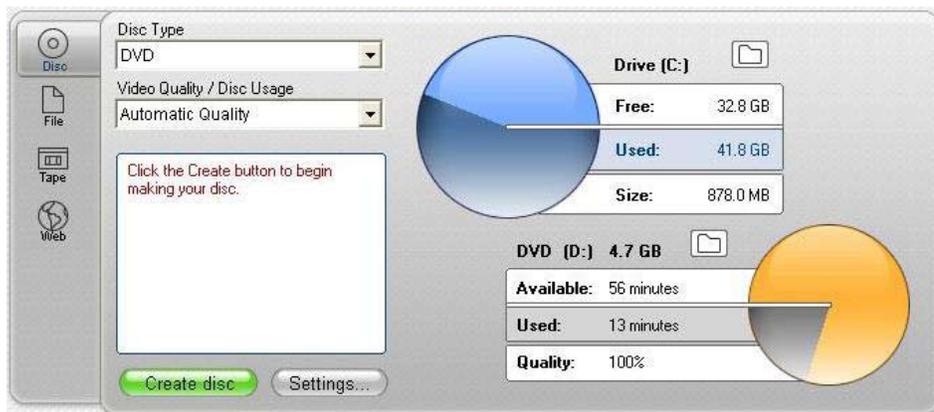
Use the speed effect slow down the video



Add sound and music in the audio track

You can import sound and music files into Pinnacle, suppress the taped sounds and lay the imported music over the existing track.

Create the DVD



Projecting the Video

The best projector for the job.

We use used projectors we purchase on ebay for most of our video effects. These older units have low resolution and less power lumens - which is fine for this effect. When purchasing a used projector, look for a unit that has a decent bulb life. The bulb is the most expensive piece to replace (\$250) a free projector that needs a bulb, is not a deal. Used projectors go from \$50 - \$300 with a bulb.

Cheaper alternatives. If you are using this prop indoors (less or no ambient light) the new Zoombox and Torpedo projectors are a cheap alternative. Their bulbs are cheap to replace and the Zoombox has a built in DVD player. Because of their low lumen bulb, they are not a good choice for effects in lighted areas.

Project on black

Project your image on a black surface. The video we have created in this example has a high contrast effect that shows up well on an all black surface. If your projection will be from the front, you can use any black surface to show your video.

Rear projection

If you are projecting from behind the screen you will need to purchase rear projection screen material. This material is designed specially to prevent a "hot spot" (from the lens of the projector) on the projection screen.



Welcome children and I will tell you a story
from a time long ago.....

Talking Head

Advanced effect

Tell it like it is

When creating the video head effect it is a good idea to start with the story that you want the actor to tell. You can use the rules or the tale of your haunt. Be creative

Excuse me, what did you say?

Find someone who is a good speaker or has done voice talent. You are looking for someone that can recite a story with clear diction and a style that suits your haunt. You will be using the track as it is recorded, so someone who can complete the whole speech from start to finish clearly is important.

Don't move your head

It is important that the actor not move during filming. It is easier to keep the face aligned with the bust

if the head does not move. This is a particular example of when to let the actor see what they look like. Hook up a monitor for the actor so they can watch how still they are holding their head.

Melt into blackness



With this effect it is important that you only see the face of the actor. We use a black nylon balaclava on the actor for filming. (I believe that when you order one of these, you will end up on an FBI list somewhere :)

You can use many of the same techniques that you used to make the ghost. You can add audio tracks on the video, but you will need to keep

the original actor script.

How not to be an alien

You will need a larger head than a wig head to project the effect. Because of the throw of the projector, the video needs a larger surface. We recommend that you create a large



round head out of Styrofoam and do some simple sculpting to create a "face".

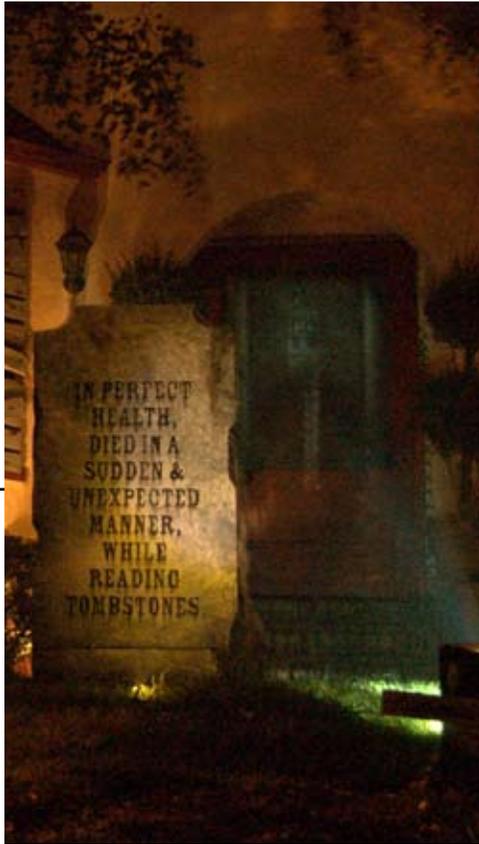
If you try to use the large round head without any features, your effect will look something like a talking alien.

The best way to create features is to project the effect onto the round oversized head and take sculpting or



clay and put on a nose, eyebrows and lips. Just a few simple features make a tremendous difference.

Visit our web site at www.davisgraveyard.com for more information on this effect.



That ghost just appeared out of nowhere, it must be real!

Ghost in the yard

Advanced effect

What if we just...?

We found that you can project on other surfaces with amazing success. We decided to try a ghost walking out of the front door of the house. It was a simple effect that required a bit of advanced editing - but well worth the time.

Tale of two videos

First you need to film the background of your effect with no actor. A minute or so of footage should do the trick.

They make separate video of the actor in the scene. In our case we had an actor in a costume walking

down several stairs and right to the camera.

Both of these videos can be shot in the daylight or in a lighted area.

Walking out of thin air

Now we are going to need to put those two videos together. This will create the effect of a ghost appearing out of thin air.

Take the first video without the actor and crop it to just the area the actor will appear in. Use several of the techniques from the ghost effect to slow the video down and add some contrast.

Then take the actor video and

import it into your existing project and crop it to match the background.

Use the fade effect to fade the actor video on to the existing background. If you need more background time. Just copy the background video and paste it onto the end of the track as many times as you need.

Fade the actor track out at the end to create the ghost illusion.

Lumens make a difference

With this effect is important to have a good projector. As that you may not be projecting on a black surface you will need a bright projection. In a well lit or outdoor area, the Zoombox or torpedo will not work. Use ebay to find a good used projector for this project.

I hear someone coming

In our display we showed the ghost walk out of a door and down some stairs. When the ghost appeared and started to walk, we added some eerie echoing foot steps that continued after the ghost had disappeared.

This gave the illusion that the cost was still walking in the yard....but where did he go? Very creepy.



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Nevermore