



# FILTERS AND LAYERS

## 1. INTRODUCTION

There is of course possible to buy different filters for your editing software. Serious Magic is for instance one company that offers great filters for Avid, Adobe and Apple among others. But for most of us, we don't have the money it takes to buy all this extra software and plug-ins.

In this tutorial, VE will show you how you can make your own filters and also apply other layers to your project with the help of the chroma key. The focus is still images, but the techniques will work with movie clips as well.

## 2. MAKING YOUR FILTER

Some of the software let you apply filters and set the transparency directly. Adobe Premiere is one example (using the title editor). But with a photo editing software, you can make this layer outside your project and import it as a "layer" – or filter. In Fig. 1, VE has started Photoshop and opened a new document. Note the settings – size, transparency and color scheme. Into this file, VE imports a picture (the green screen image marked with red arrow) you can see in Fig. 2.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

After placing this image, you simply adjust the transparency on the green layer so that it will reveal images underneath it when imported into your video project. It can be tricky to get right, so you might need to experiment a little to get it just the way you want it. Experiment with colors and level of transparency. Also remember to save your file as a format that let's you keep the transparency. TIFF is perhaps the best one and supported by most editing software.

## 3. MAKING USE OF THE FILTER

Inside Pinnacle Studio (Fig. 3), you can see the original movie in the main timeline. Thereafter you add a title and open this one. Having opened the title editor you find your filter (saved as an image), apply this while making sure it covers the entire clip – or parts. And as you will see from Fig. 4, the effect is a much "greener" movie. Back on the timeline you adjust the duration and you have applied a filter. Not quite as fancy as it was done in "Matrix", but will work to a certain extent.



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

#### 4. LAYERS

There are a couple of other tricks VE will try and teach you in this tutorial, and that is how to add transparent pictures and the use of the chroma key.

The way it's done in Fig. 5, is that a normal picture is imported into Photoshop and the background color is removed. It's very simple and easy to achieve. But it is crucial to remember which format you are saving the image in. Using JPG will cause the background to be white. As mentioned, TIFF is preferable for this task (Fig. 6). Also crucial is to be accurate when removing your background color in order to avoid "leftover" color, which will be visible in your project.



Fig. 5



Fig. 6

The image is saved with the transparency and imported into the project in Pinnacle Studio. In Fig. 7 you can see how it turns out. The photo is above the movie clip and will stay there for the duration of the clip onto which it's added.

#### 5. CHROMA KEY

The principles for adding another movie on top, is the same. A bit trickier, but still it's very easy. It would of course be best if you have a clip with a solid background color, which will be easy to remove using the chroma key. If not, the result might not be that great.



Fig. 7



Fig. 8

In Fig. 8, VE has tried to do this with a video clip (marked with red arrow), removing the white with applying the chroma key effect. But since there is no constant background color, the outcome is rather poor. But if you had recorded a movie with a solid green background for instance – it would cause no problems at all. (That's the way most weather forecast is made on the TV).

Also keep in mind the different settings. Which exact color to remove, how much similarity and so forth. The chroma key effect could have been an individual tutorial, but the subject is addressed very often elsewhere, so this is just meant as a brief description. It's much more fun to try a bit for yourself - exploring the possibilities as they are outlined in this tutorial. Record narration to be added to the project, portraying your self in one corner for instance, can be very cool indeed.

## 6. CONCLUSION

All this might sound a bit difficult, but it isn't that hard. You need a couple of timelines, a chroma key effect and a decent photo-editing program. But besides that, it's up to your imagination how this turns out. Using one movie clip on top of a second with transparency applied to it might look very cool. Or just apply a black filter you have made to darken everything. ■■