

HOLS? TAKE THE CAMERA - YOU NEVER KNOW!

### The Fall and Rise of Mr Punch

by Dave Skertchly



The story is one of our times. The ageing "Professor" is unable to cope with the pressures of "woke" on his traditional seaside show and turns to drink. In accordance with the best traditions the Professor confides in his puppet Mr Punch and ironically through the power of cinema Mr Punch comes alive. It's an old-old story the best known of which is Pinocchio. The Professor is forced to make Mr Punch redundant.

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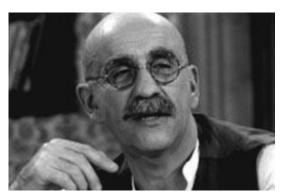
The irrepressible Mr Punch goes to the Job Centre to claim benefits and we are treated to a master class of straight faced acting by Gillian. She plays the incompetent civil servant who claims to have been specially trained to get to the truth of false benefits claims, "not much will get past me". Ironically she goes on to award full British Citizenship and benefits to a 380 year old Italian glove puppet with a 300 year old baby. Oh the irony! Eventually Mr Punch gets a job teaching the Police how to handle protestors by hitting them with his big stick while shouting Mr Punch's catch phrase....."that's the way to do it".

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On the face of it the film is a right wing rant by us oldies who have difficulty adapting to Woke changes in our society. It was Johnny Speight, the creator of Alf Garnet, the infamous right wing bigot, who pointed out that you can see it from both sides. My film wants to say that not only should our generation try to better understand



Johnny Speight (left) and Warren Mitchell aka Alf Garnet (right) created the genre of the frustrated oldies ranting about the younger generation, in the now infamous BBC series 'till death us do part. It is nothing new.



The infamous bigot Alf Garnett inspired Mr Punch

Woke but that those who are pushing changes to society (Wokeists?) are inflicting pain and anguish on people who don't deserve it and maybe they could try to better understand the older generation. We are going to stop neither woke nor oil, but we will all be dead soon so just please give us some room to adapt in our twilight years. The good news is that new young professors are adapting and improving the Punch and Judy story often using crowd funding, so the tradition will continue and after all "that's the way to do it" as Mr Punch would say.

I had long wanted to make a puppet video, it is a kind of extension of my love of animation. Sadly, like animation, I will never be any good at it since it is a lifetime skill and I am now 70. The tradition of people and puppets interacting goes back to the beginning of cinema and in particular to TV. Let's remember fondly puppet characters like Muffin the Mule, Sooty, Gordon the Gopher, Basil Brush and of course Jim Henson's Muppets. The Muppets played brilliant sketches with some of the greatest names in comedy such as John Cleese.

I had originally wanted to make this film on my own but I decided that I would be dead before it got finished so shared my ambition with Jim, who was kind enough to understand my enthusiasm and it is his drive that has resulted in the film you now see.

Here are some puppet facts. I wanted to make a puppet with moving eyes, mouth and arms but eventually due to the lack of time we settled for a rather nice puppet complete with a string of sausages bought on Amazon for £20.00. Although quite large he was obviously designed for children since the internal glove was very small. During the making of the film my ability to create a characterisation improved enormously.



Dave squeezed himself under the green table acting out Mr Punch's parts. No wonder Mr Punch tended to lean to the right.

One big problem is that he leans to the right. Apparently this is a challenge for right handed professional puppeteers too which they have to be careful to avoid. Modern puppeteers on TV use monitors under the stage to watch their acting.



Jim setting up to film Mr Punch walking.

I would have liked this luxury but we didn't think of it until it was too late.

Other problems included the blood draining out of my arm and the Director unsympathetically requiring my wrist to rotate by 360 degrees, ouch!

Finally, we decided to make Punch walk. I had not wanted to do this but on Jim's insistence he was suspended on green threads and his legs activated through green painted dowels. The effect was rather Thunderbirdsish but was used effectively in the final cut.

On a final note I will mention how I created the traditional voice of Mr Punch. I made a squazzle which is a kind of Kazeoo, from an elastic band and two lolly sticks. Over the weeks I then developed the skills to use it.



Dave demonstrates the Squazzle used to voice Mr Punch.

It is very hard to talk about script development, characterisation, gag writing, storytelling and acting in the club, but then that is my niche, I hope you enjoyed it.



Professor Mr Wizz helped us enormously.



Mr Punch finds a new niche in the Security Services fronted by Jo as the rather eccentric aristocratic Lady Cabstanleigh from Beachcomber.

### The making of the Fall and Rise of Mr Punch

by Jim Reed

Knowing that at least part of the video was going to utilise Green Screen, it was important to start with the backgrounds first.

Fortunately Dave had the opportunity to take ample photographs of the inside of a friendly Professors Punch and Judy stall. We used three of those for the interior shots.



TENT 1 One of the interior shots of the tent

Next, we needed to record the professor in the correct position to get the right perspective. We can electronically move Dave (or Punch) in both up and down directions (X and Y axis) after recording, as well as alter the scale. However, what we can't change in editing is the rotation in the third direction (Z axis), so that was the one we needed to focus on.

In order to ensure that the Professor looked as realistic as possible in the tent we used OBS on my computer (until it crashed!) and Mike's software on his so that we could see a live key. This meant that we could adjust Dave's position in real time to fit the tent and 'look correct'.

The correct eye line was created by using the auto-prompt in the position that punch would occupy, and two cameras recorded the takes. One was beside the auto-prompt, the other about 45 degrees towards the front. Using two simultaneous cameras meant we could cut between then without too much concern about continuity issues. Peter managed the cameras, and also recorded clips for a 'behind the scenes' video. The sound was recorded using Jack's Lav mics and he also provided the lighting for the talent.

Punch's video was recorded in a similar way, again checking that the orientation on the Z axis was correct, and using two cameras with the sound captured on the Lav mic attached to Dave.

Recording Punch and the Professor separately meant we could individually move them for fine tuning, and if either Punch or Dave needed to be re-recorded we didn't have to change them both.

It did mean that Punch had a lot of hanging around - and Dave had to stop him from drinking the props...



Punch drinking between takes

Whilst it might seem overly complicated, recording then talent separately and then composing then on the timeline gave the maximum flexibility in the edit.

To ensure that the two characters were looking at each other in the final cut, we only needed to adjust the X and Y axis in post, as can be seen below:



1 How Dave was altered in size and angle.

For a while we did consider hiring a room to use for Gillian's scene, but desks weren't quite as I'd wanted, and the costs were prohibitive. Several hundred pounds for a half-day.

Instead I searched for a suitable image from Pixabay.com, which is an excellent source of free or low cost copyright free images and videos. I found two static images of a suitable boardroom, and with a minimal amount of alteration, so we were good to go.



Office long view



Office side view



2 The same for Punch



3 The finished shot, with correct eye line

All we needed was to ensure that Gillian aligned with the side view correctly, again checking on a live key. The final side view was made up of three layers; a solid background, Gillian in front of it - scaled to fit, and then a masked version of the background to overlay the other two:



1 The background layer



3 The final layer, the checkered section has been removed and shows as transparent



2 The background layer with the addition of Gillian



4 The three layers together, neatly placing Gillian in the right location, and completing the illusion.

Mike and Ric had already recorded the street scene at the Job centre, so we animated Punch to walk into shot and then into the Job Centre. One small point here was that the petrol station sign (LED) produced a pulsing light, so it needed a bit of keying to fix it. The same technique as above was used to enable Punch to move into the Job Centre behind the shrubs and light, but remain in front of the garage. We used green rods to enable the walking and then further animated Punch in the edit.



Dave using the green motion rods.

Mixing Punch with the TV footage was fun. It really came down to finding appropriate shots we could add Punch into. Once they were located it was fairly easy. Punch jumping off the back of the carriage was created by using a recording of Punch turning towards the camera, pausing, bending his legs slightly and the straightening them, then remaining static whilst he waved his arms. The movements in X and Y axis were added in post. And walking with the police was much the same. Because Punch has no distinguishing features we could also mirror his image without it being obvious.

I particularly like the shot of Punch at the end of Jo's piece, where it appears he's listening to what she's saying and is reacting to it. In this shot he appears to be very menacing.



Menacing Punch

That's partly caused by zooming in on him whist trying to keep his eyes as level as possible. Plus his face is made slightly darker. What's interesting about the video is how a character with no facial changes can appear to take on different moods just by subtle lighting and position changes. His voice also adds a great deal to him as well, and can convey a range of other emotions.

I've previously made green screen videos, and so already knew that bright overcast day is the best light to key in. But when we were recording it was bright sunshine, and that would have been disastrous because of the strong shadows. So I set up a green screen with a lighting rig using high rated CRI tubes away from the sun.



Setup for Green Screen

Although an unevenly lit background can be keyed, even-lighting of the cloth makes keying much easier, and helps when having to deal with any unexpected shadows that might occur, particularly such as under Punch's legs.

We used Sony 4k cameras to record the shots and that enabled us to cut in closer during the edit without losing high definition resolution. However, the cameras only offered 25p in 4k, whereas in HD they can shoot at 100 frames per second. Previously, I have used 100p for green screen and the reduced motion blur has helped good keying. The 25p we used gives quite a lot of motion blur, and that made some of the keying much harder when Punch moved quickly.

Although we were about 3 feet in front of the green screen, I'd try to increase that in future because in some shots the nap of the cloth was in sharp focus, giving a slightly grainy effect.



Hat recorded too close to the Green Screen backcloth

Overall, it was great fun to shoot, but even greater fun to edit and add special effects.

#### Give it a go!

Some time ago I made a green screen tutorial, and it might be of interest to anyone thinking about trying it. Click the Link HERE.

## CAMERA NUT

Filming at the Goodwood Festival of Speed this year I came across this piece of kit being used by a professional film crew. A helmet fitted out with a full camera rig. As a car went past at speed and fairly close, the operator just needed to look at it and follow it past by turning his head.

Wow! That beats panning or trying to follow with the tripod head at so close a distance. Its OK for the TV guys with their super kit at distance and high above the crowd but not so easy up close at trackside.

Being so crowded I couldn't get close enough to talk to the crew, who filming at trackside, but it turns out to be a *Cyclops Focus24*. Designed as a point of view camera system, what you look at is what you capture.

Actors can wear it and the person you are having the conversation with can still make eye contact. It's also been used for action movies and makes you feel really involved in what's going on.

It appears that the guy with the box on his chest can wirelessly operate the camera. Zoom gears are built into helmet and focus can be manual or auto. The mind only boggles at what the handle on the top of the helmet is for, the assistant can give a bit more twist to his head (ouch), helping to pull him out of tight spots or perhaps pull the helmet off at the end of filming. Any ideas contact the editor...!

OK - That's a Challenge, so ...



Photo 1: You've got the light bit, lucky blighter!

Photos and Text by Dick Grainger



Photo 2: Oh blimey! My head's going to drop off!



As concocted by Peter Frost

Our Reporter, Racing Dick Grainger, while on location spotted videography competition in the form of the Cyclops cameraman with his Director attired in cool blue cap and sunglasses at rest, taking up their positions at trackside.

Fighting his way through the crowd, Racing Dick, was able to capture this impressive shot of neck breaking head mounted Cyclops camera system mounted atop the brains of the regulation black T-shirted Operator, who's already having to grip his head due to the weight (pic 2). The idea being that the Camera Op just needs to twist his neck and follow the action in a 'look-no-hands' sort of manner.

Notice the handle used to lift the poor guy up when the weight drills him into the turf! Also that the Director has an iPhone to either record his crew member's demise or actually to take the track action shots needed and the Cyclops is just a front to impress the crowds and appear proper professional!



Photo 3: Professional? Neither the Director nor Cameraman are looking at the car!



One of the questions arising from Mr Punch was why was the film made using green screen when it could have been made on location? The answer is simple, most film and TV is made in studios.



Experienced set builders can knock up the front room of a 19th century terrace or a space station in just a few hours.

Working in a sound studio allows the technical team to have total control of the environment including lighting and sound. They can spend hours getting all their settings right (no more shouts from the Camera Man of "I wonder why it did that") before the actors and Director turn up for the shoot. With the actors in character and the technical bits all working the Director is able to focus on the arty bits like acting and characterisation, something Surrey Borders films are rather short on it has to be said.

More and more the professionals will make just a little bit of the set and the rest will be green screened in later. Even Coronation Street uses Green screen for some sets!



For the shots in the Punch and Judy tent I took 35 shots inside and around the tent which could be used and backgrounds and even re-coloured and layered. Some backgrounds were even drawn.

Having broken through the barrier the Odd Bods now have an experienced team which is more confident with green screen and are happier working in a studio with virtual sets. This frees us up to make films in locations that no-one could previously have dreamed of and of course to focus on the art of acting for TV/Film. This answers the artistic bit and no-doubt Jim will fill us in on the detail.



For our production I took 35 shots of the Punch and Judy tent to use as virtual sets.

Just maybe rather than a new projector the club could invest in a small green permanent sound stage...maybe.

# The Quick Alternative - Keyper by Philip Morley



With the power of AI now reaching all elements of post production, an instant alternative to Green Screen is a Plugin called **Keyper**. This enables you to either cut or alter the background where there are people in the foreground. The key is instant and can be tweaked in the same way as the more traditional keyer available. While this only works for people and not other objects at the moment, I am sure it will only be a matter of time before it is possible to select any item to be keyed. Could this be the beginning of the end for Green Screens? Check it out HERE.

### Final Cut Pro for iPad

#### By Philip Morley

For many years, Apple has kept away from producing an App to support Final Cut Pro.

We have had to use software such as LumaFusion, if any form of edit was required on the move.

It's great to see that Apple unveiled Final Cut Pro for the iPad. We can now unleash our creativity in new ways that are only possible on an iPad. Final Cut Pro for iPad brings all new touch interfaces that allow us to enhance our workflows with the immediacy and intuitiveness of Multi-Touch. The new App introduces a powerful set of tools allowing us to record, edit, finish, and share, all from one portable device. But there is a price to be paid as this App is to be subscription based. After a month free, it will cost either £4.99 per month or £49 per year. It was released on the 23rd May.

The use of the touchscreen and the pencil bring a whole new set of useful tools, when editing your movies. The newer iPads can operate with a keyboard, including a touchpad, which brings an additional advantageous interface to the software. For those who are used to working with a mouse, this can also be activated on the iPad.

Many of the already recognised professional features of Final Cut Pro which includes multicam are included. New, is a comprehensive collection of sophisticated, built-in titles, transitions and effects billed as being better than those in the FCP OS version.

The background removal feature is promoted to be a replacement for green screen filming.

Providing the talent is well lit and against a single colour, it is said to be able to achieve the same affect as filming with a green screen.

Being able to import from iMovie or directly from the iPad's camera (all in Apple Pro Res), it will be easy for footage to be combined. A drawback currently is that whilst you can export your movie, to Final Cut Pro on your computer, you cannot export it back to the iPad for further editing.

More information on a 1 month of using it will be in the next edition.













#### FILM IN AN EVENING 2023 - RESULTS

by Kathy Butcher

Film in an Evening has had a few name changes and rules since it's inception several years ago, but it still remains a popular event which is especially good for involving new members. During the Covid lock down in 2020 it was not possible for groups to get together as usual to create their films. However this did not prevent several club members from submitting entries under the heading of 'Film from Home' and two of the groups managed to create films via online meetings and some clever editing. The Oddbods group produced a film called 'Lockdown News 'and the Pioneers group produced 'Father of the Date'.

This year the name 'Film in an Evening' still remains but with revised rules. Three groups submitted films. The first film shown was by the Oddbods group called:

#### 'The Fall and Rise of Mr Punch'.



Based on an idea by group member Dave Skertchly the film told the history and sad demise of the popular children's (and adults) Punch and Judy shows. Although a lot of the film content was produced online, a suitable location also had to be sourced for parts of the film and Farnham Castle became the perfect choice. Dave Skertchly said the film was quite a challenge to create but with Jim Reeds editing experience and Mike Sanders extensive green screen knowledge a film was created that was brought up to date with political comedy and an addition of a King's Coronation scene complete with Mr Punch in attendance was magically created. The audience had many questions about the making of the film, in particular the use of green screen.

The second film was created by the Pioneers group and titled: 'Mrs Symm's Royal Affair'.



The drama depicted a house clearance requested by Mrs Symms, club member Dave Kershaw and Michael Young played an excellent roles of the house clearance operatives who arrived at Mrs Symms house in a very authentic looking business van, a standard van had been cleverly transformed with sign-writing using a software package by group member Tim Stannard. The story unfolded to reveal that items thought to be a genuine Picasso letter and painting by the house removal men were in fact worthless fakes that they had taken away, but an item taken to a charity shop thought to be of little value was worth a fortune. The acting was very good in this film and the fun which was had making it was apparent in the 'Making of' film which followed.

The third film was made by the Weyfarers group and was a comedy take on the popular Repair Shop tv programme called:

#### 'The Despair Workshop'



The film was shot completely on mobile phones and used minimal technical equipment. Two new club members Deepa Craig and John Smith acted the parts of two Repair Experts very confidently as did Peter Frost as he welcomed the visitors with their repairs, especially member Tony Goodearl who walked in with the Kings Crown needing an urgent repair. This was a very good fun tongue in cheek comedy film.

After the coffee break a past club film called 'The Great Dictator' by Brian O'Connell was shown, this was filmed by Surrey Border Movie Makers at the Kempton Steam Museum where members of the visiting public were invited to take part in acting roles.

This was followed by Tim Stannard presenting a silent movie made by Staines Video Makers called 'The Great Director' which showcased the talented work of Graham Large. After the film was shown the audience enjoyed a 'Making of' which highlighted the many hilarious out - takes.

Jim Reed was also presented with the **Albany Competition Best Editing Award** for his excellent work on the club film **'Turning Back Time'**.



Jim Reed was also presented with the Albany Competition Best Editing Award for his excellent work on the club film 'Turning Back Time' The next meeting will be on Friday 4th August 2023 when a selection of SERIAC (South East Region of the Institute of Amateur Cinematography) films from their latest showreel will be shown and discussed

If you are interested in any aspects of filmmaking, we always welcome new members. You can find out more about us by visiting our website www.surreyborder.org.uk or email secretary@surreyborder.org.uk. We meet on the first Friday of each month at St Joan's Centre, 19 Tilford Road, Farnham GU9 8DJ there is plenty of parking and your first visit is free. Find us on Facebook HERE.

## Making your iPad work for you by Philip Morley

A common reminder to upgrade your apple products is the battery losing its ability to retain a charge. My 9 year old iPad was one such item.

It's replacement was a iPad pro with the new M1 chip and 1 terabyte of memory. The change was amazing. It was like moving from a bicycle to a F1 racing car. Everything just worked at lightening speed.

Utilising the power, I set about incorporating it into my movie making tool kit with the addition of some helpful apps.

I collected a number of very useful Apps to start to build my movie makers folder.

These are:

#### **FilmicPro**

This App has been extensively reviewed in past editions, and has now become the go to Pro iPhone/iPad App. It has recently been upgraded to include an all new remote setting which allows complete control of the App from another device. See the next issue for more details. Check it out HERE

#### LightTrac

This App enables you to know, precisely which direction the Sun will be shining at any given date and time. This is very helpful when planning a shoot at a specific location where the suns position is important. Check it out HERE

#### Final Cut Pro for the iPad.

Providing many of the features found in the full Final Cut Pro application, enabling you to assemble your movie on the fly and transfer it to Final Cut Pro on your computer for further editing. Check it out HERE

#### **Propy Smart Plus**

A simple Teleprompter that just works. Import your script, set the speed you want to speak at and then hold up the iPad for the talent and it will scroll. A convenient feature is that it stops scrolling what is the talent stop speaking? Check it out HERE

#### **HollyView**

With a neat little wireless transmitter device mounted on your camera, and plugged into the HDMI port, this software enables you to monitor what the camera is filming on up to 3 Apple devices. It enables the Director to check all of the important aspects including focus, aperture and white balance. Other members of the crew can take pictures of scenes to help in future retakes when continuity is important. Low resolution movies can also be taken to help perfect the actors. These features are especially useful when filming in very tight locations. Check it out HERE

#### Sony IEM

This is Sony's own wireless app, enabling remote control of the camera from the iPad. Although limited in its applications, it does enable the camera operator to start and stop the camera if it is placed in a position where he cannot easily access it.

#### DigiSlate.

A very useful app, turning your iPad into a clapperboard. This has the facility to show date and time and operate using timecode. It enables notes to be made very quickly to help the film editor in post production. Check it out HERE

#### **Sidus Link**

A number of Members now owning Aputure MC lighting units which can all can be controlled from the Sidus App with many features that make lighting a scene and adjusting temperature and intensity on the fly an absolute breeze. Check it out HERE

With these Apps all loaded and running in the background members of the crew and the Director can access all the features by just swiping up and selecting them from the desktop or even faster swiping along the bottom of the screen.

GO iPad!!!

### Rita's Rib Ticklers

By Rita Wheeler



I went to the psychiatrist today. She told me I had a split personality and charged me 160 dollars.

I gave her <mark>80 dollars and told her to get the rest from the other idiot.</mark>

I'm best man at my buddy's second wedding... Is it appropriate to open my dinner speech with "Welcome back everyone"

COMMON SENSE
IS LIKE DEODORANT.
HE PEOPLE WHO
EED IT MOST
EVER USE IT.



MY KIDS LAUGH BECAUSE THEY THINK I'M CRAZY.

I LAUGH BECAUSE THEY DON'T KNOW IT'S HEREDITARY.

I tried to re-marry my ex-wife.
But she figured out I was only after my money.



A married man's honest confession :







"I always read my wife's horoscope to see what kind of day I am going to have..."

### **SUMMER SOCIAL**









Our thanks to Rita and Al for hosting another great Summer Social event at their home. Read more about this most enjoyable gathering, written by Jim Reed, HERE.

### Editor's Note

The weather has been pretty bleak this month with huge differences between North and South, but that has not stopped SBMM members from making films. It's great to see how many members have been involved in making movies this month. With Brian's new block buster getting under way and Mike Sanders filming a wedding and complex training movies lots of skills have been put to the test.

As can be seen from the content of this edition, Green Screen is a concept much in vogue at the moment. Thanks to all who have contributed to this GREEN! edition.

Philip and Brian



### Next Meeting

Friday 4th August - Films from SERIAC to be shown and discussed.

### More Dates

Competition. Any subject – max 20



Did you find the the answers last in last months edition?

**Director** 

Actor **Producer** 

Crew

**Romance** 

Comedy

**Box Office** 

**Production** 

Music

Film

#### Contributors!

Thanks to all members and guests who helped us by contributing to this issue: Peter Frost, Dave Skertchly, Kathy Butcher, Dick Grainger, Jim Reed, Brian O'Connell, Philip Morley, and Rita Wheeler.

**COPY DEADLINE! September 2023 issue** will be 14th of August so keep it coming. Late copy will be carried over to the next month. Thank you for your co-operation -Eds!

## Come and see what we

O! See what other movie makers are up to and

you may get inspiration for your own projects. We always welcome new members and you can sound us out for free, too. You can find out more about us by visiting our web site www.surreyborder.org.uk

or email the secretary: secretary@surreyborder.org.uk

We are also on Facebook:

### www.facebook.com/SurreyBorderMovieMakers/ timeline

Meetings are held at St Joan's Centre, 19 Tilford Road, Farnham GU9 8DJ, on the first Friday of the month, starting at 8.00 pm and finishing at 10.00 pm. If you are interested then email: secretary@surreyborder.org.uk

St Joan's Centre is 200 yards south of Farnham station and

is in the grounds of St Joan's Church. The entrance to the church is by a narrow road opposite the junction with Alfred Road, and St Joan's Centre is to the right of the church. There is ample parking.

Friday 1st Sept - Documentary minutes.







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Kathy Butcher Philip Morley & Brian O'Connell Rita Wheeler and Gillian Gatland Your contributions for inclusion will be appreciated together with photographs if possible. Please send them to The Editor Border Post for the next issue:

