

Review from Ken Stones Review Site

"It has been some time since I have taken a look at what's new on the market of tutorial DVDs for Final Cut Pro Studio. I found this one from all4DVD and was not disappointed. Focusing on the editors actual workflow as they go from Final Cut Pro to Soundtrack and back again before round-tripping to Color, Motion and DVD Studio Pro, narrator Ernie Schaeffer sets and keeps the perfect pace and demeanor as he sets about bringing you through a Swiss Tourism project that calls for the use of all the applications of Final Cut Studio.

Final Cut Studio HD Workflow is presented as a Flash based seminar, with 22 individual chapters containing varying numbers of sub chapters. After an initial setup in Final Cut Pro he guides you through creating a 'beat track' in Soundtrack Pro, making a rough edit back in FCP before making a quick u-turn back to Soundtrack Pro where you create the score. Along the way you are introduced to many of Soundtrack Pro's effects and mixing techniques and plenty of tips & tricks. Color, still an Apple application that causes intimidation to many, is then the next part of the workflow and where, in my opinion, this DVD tutorial really shines. "Hey, Color's not so bad after all", may be just what you'll be saying after working through many of the frames of your rough cut with Mr. Schaeffer. He really does make it seem so easy, and the steps he guides you through all make sense because he makes sense out of them for you. In other words, you are not just following directions without the necessary comprehension as to why you are following his guidelines. Making 'Color' an integral part of your workflow can only be beneficial. That is, unless you screw things up. The Final Cut Studio HD Workflow disc makes sure that doesn't happen for you.

That is often a major weakness in DVD tutorial discs. Often the user simply follows the directions being given to create a project but does not really understand what they are doing. Basically, they're just following orders. Hopefully, the familiarity of the tools can be translated over to their own projects, but often it never does. The Final Cut Studio HD Workflow DVD really makes one feel at home and relaxed. You couldn't ask for better pacing as I never felt hurried to complete a task hoping I would not have to rush back to the DVD as it was continuing. For those somewhat new to Final Cut Studio and the editing tools that Final Cut Pro offers, this disc serves to demonstrate the use of the slip, slide, roll and ripple tools in as clear a manner as I have seen. It may seem basic to those already experienced with FCP but these tools remain a mystery to the uninitiated. Ernie Schaefer does a great job explaining how they are used and when they should be used early on when creating the Swiss Tourism project you will be working on. Very clear instructions and explanations are a highlight of this DVD.

It was suggested to me by the all4DVD representative that it was perfectly ok to play the tutorial off the disc in the Mac Pro's DVD player, which I did despite the Mac Pro's fans revving up to high gear. The image quality, as well as the audio, is excellent and the DVD can be played on either a PC or Mac. Unfortunately, because it is a Flash based tutorial, you cannot use the J, K, & L keys to speed or skim through any chapters to get to a section you may want to review, and the fast forward arrow at the bottom of the tutorial does not seem to work. The reverse arrow simply brings you back to the beginning of the chapter. If you try to take the playhead to a different location in the chapter it would reload itself or stall. I did not attempt to copy over the entire Flash tutorial to my hard drive, which might have ameliorated these small issues. I did, however, as would be expected, copy over the project media files, audio loops and clips which all looked quite nice and of high quality. Switching

between lessons by clicking back on the 'Menu' button worked like a charm. All applications within Final Cut Studio 2 are incorporated in creating and finishing the DVDs learning project.

There are appropriate times for all learning situations. I've never cared for large seminars for a multitude of reasons. Many books are a great resource for when you are stuck on an editing issue and just need a reference for clarification. However, learning anything is a combination of different modalities, audio, visual and tactile. Probably, if we could all have our way we would chose a one on one expert to teach us. Not always having this opportunity, a DVD tutorial such as all4DVD's Final Cut Studio HD Workflow may be the next best thing. It encourages you to look at the bigger picture of all that Final Cut Studio can do for you and how properly round-tripping between Studio's applications is to your advantage. Prior to this review I wasn't aware of the all4DVD company, yet I had reviewed Adrian Ramseier's Apple Pro Training series book from Peachpit Press, 'DVD Studio Pro 4'. Having now discovered all4DVD, I look forward to seeing their other DVD tutorials. I'm certainly impressed with this one."