

BORIS BCC 9

By David Hurd

The new Boris BCC 9 is a great set of plug-ins for video editors or visual effects artists seeking a comprehensive set of VFX tools in one easy-to-use package. It's designed to be useful for editors and compositors, as it includes features that can streamline both workflows. With over 30 new effects that include over 20 new transitions and new tools added to Image Restoration, Film, Stylize, Compositing and Lights groups, every editor could easily benefit from utilizing this software.

Since time is money, it's worth noting that BCC 9 has many features that can save time while making your life easier. For example, the Pixel Chooser and Motion Tracker let you easily isolate effect regions and track them, while Beat Reactor allows you to automatically animate your effects to music. These are only a small fraction of the powerful VFX offered in the BCC 9 package. Boris has also sped up the way computers process these plug-ins, and the company has added new Open CL and CUDA acceleration to the old Open GL. Also, specially redesigned Blurs and Glows render at least two-times faster, and many VFX seem about 40-percent faster.

I reviewed the BCC 9 with Adobe CC on a 12-core Mac Pro 2.93GHz machine with an NVIDIA Q4000 card, BMD 4K Extreme card connected to a Boland 32-inch broadcast monitor, and a pair of GSPEED eS Pro RAID boxes with an ATTO R680 SAS controller card. Over the years, my review system usually involves 3,000 to 5,000 plug-ins from a dozen different companies. With that many plug-ins it's easy to see relative rendering speeds and which products play nicely with others when used on the same clip. In my experience, Boris FX has always offered fast renders and platform stability, so it's no sur-

prise that BCC 9 is fast and user friendly.

Another time-saving aspect of BCC 9 is that the plug-ins are laid out in a logical way, making it an easy-to-use VFX toolset for beginners and experienced post-production professionals alike. The presets really help to speed up the selection process too. There are usually several presets to choose from that will help the new guys to get started, and the controls allow professionals to dial in exactly what they need.

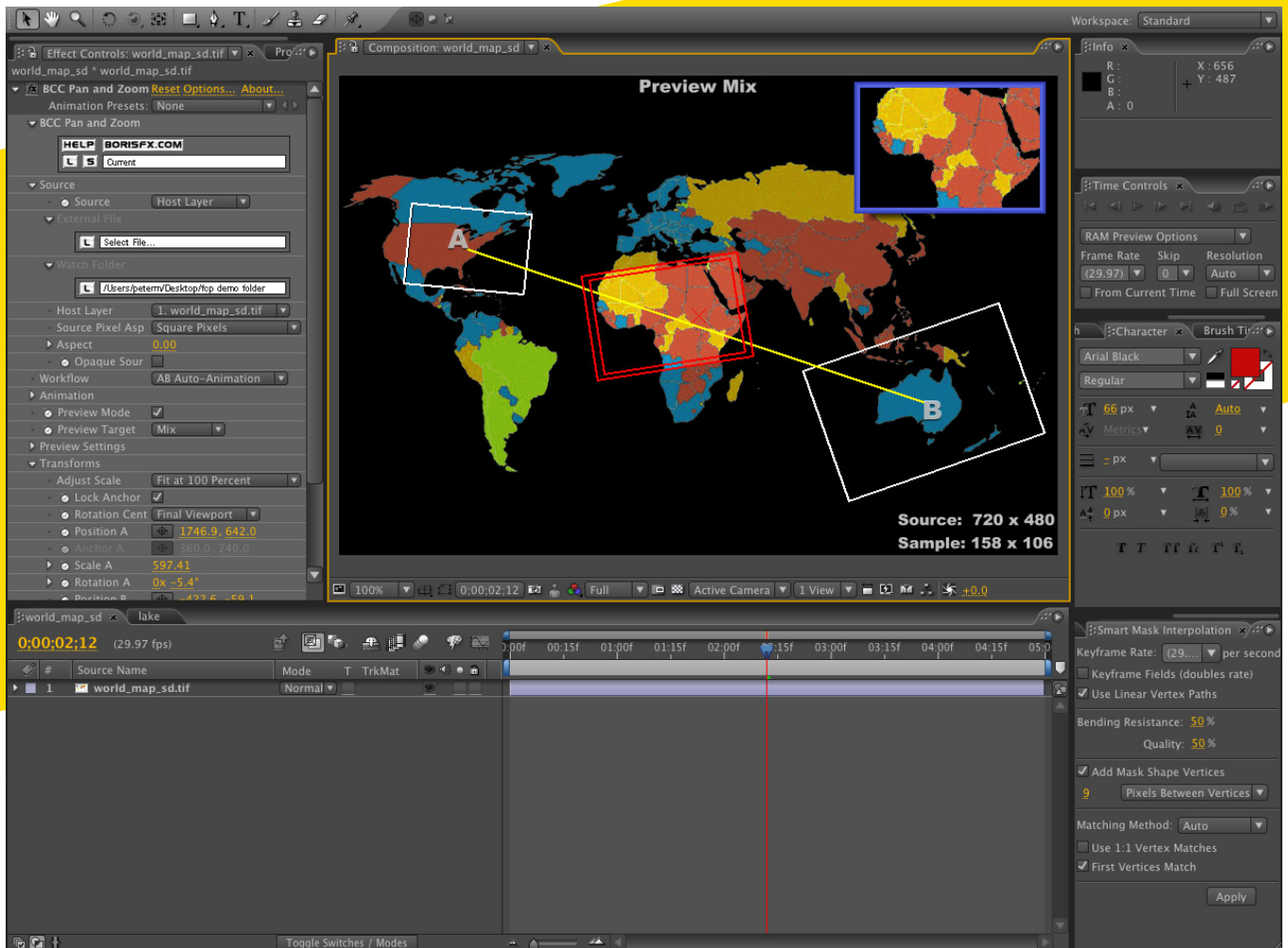
Finding VFX is also easier with an awesome new feature, the FX Browser. There are two ways to use this browser: You can go into your Effects panel and select the standalone version, or just click to open the interactive version in the Effects control panel for whatever plug-in you're using. The standalone version (placed in its own browser category) is where you can view presets from multiple filters or entire categories of filters. Some VFX names are deceiving, so being able to actually see a thumbnail of a VFX preset makes any task much easier. The FX Browser tracks browsing history in a special History Panel, which is another time saving feature. So when your producer says, "I liked the fifth one you showed me," you can go right to it.

The interactive and standalone browsers both open up in a separate window that is a compositing application in its own right. It has many desktop features, such as drag and drop, resizable sub-panes, saved custom workspaces, multi-resolution previews, and even a mini timeline. When inside either FX Browser, you have access to full video clips from the host application, which you can trim to preview the effect over a shorter duration within the mini-timeline. This really helps you to visualize what different plug-in presets will look like with your clip.

To see exactly how the effect is changing your image, the Split View feature provides a quick comparison against the unfiltered image. When you first play back the clip in the viewer it might not be in real time, but the built-in Preview to RAM will soon loop over the chosen segment at the full frame rate. In the standalone version, you can see all options from any of the BCC 9 plug-ins, but only in the interactive version can you select one and apply it to your clip. So, only after you have applied a BCC 9 plug-in to a clip, can you click on the integrated version of the FX Browser button in the effects control panel, quickly see all of your preset options, and apply one of them to your clip.

easily customize the timing and strength of transitions, without making a single keyframe. When you get it like you want it, you can copy and paste the modified transition to whatever clips you select, or save it for future use.

All of the new BCC additions are a huge benefit, but here's a brief overview of my favorites. The BCC Two Strip Color emulates the historical Technicolor two-strip process, which results in an easily recognizable color look of early Hollywood productions, sometimes re-created on purpose in modern cinematography (as seen in *The Aviator*). At first I wasn't too excited, but by blending it in with the original clip, you can really take the video look out of your digital footage. I'm also a big fan of using vi-



Boris BCC9 featuring the new pan and zoom feature.

Previous versions of BCC included high-quality transitional effects, such as Swish Pan or Lens Blur, but BCC 9 elevates transitions to a whole new level. I used the Glow dissolves on a sports sizzle reel, and it looked nice right out of the box. There's an endless variety of quick drag-and-drop choices, further enhanced by presets that can be accessed via the FX Browser. If you click on one of these new transitions after you've dropped it on the timeline, you'll find out why these things rock. A click opens up an overlay adjustment curves window that lets you

gnettes to focus the viewer's attention on certain areas of the image. The BCC Vignette now makes it easier to take vignette creation much further. It emulates the true peripheral defocusing of a physical camera lens, thus creating a much more convincing look with fewer steps. You can easily add color, blur or both to your vignette, with superb controls that can go from harsh to organic looks.

The Boris BCC 9 has so many great features, too much to cover in this space, but you can download a free 14-day trial version and test it yourself.