



ON THE CD

All the files you need to complete this tutorial can be found in the folder marked Tutorial\Best on this issue's CD

TIME NEEDED

1 hour

SKILLS

- Flash: masking
- Collapse transformation

INFO



Designer and writer Paul Wyatt specialises in design for the internet and motion graphics. He's produced websites and animated creatives for such prestigious clients as Smirnoff, 2Entertain, Fox and Sony/BMG. Go to www.paulwyatt.co.uk.

→ FLASH CS3 • AFTER EFFECTS CS3

3D ANIMATION

Web and motion graphics pro Paul Wyatt explains how you can export your *Flash CS3* animations as *QuickTime* movies and start breathing some 3D life into them using *After Effects*

→ Fancy making some 2D/3D animated magic? Well, with the combined power of *Flash CS3* and *After Effects CS3* you can do just that.

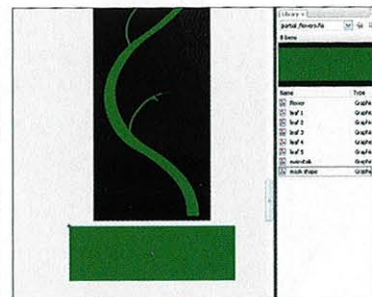
Many designers are now making full use of the advanced set of drawing tools available within *Flash*. There's almost no need to venture into *Illustrator* now that the workflow has become so seamless – you can draw, animate and then export the SWF all from within *Flash*. But let's take this a step further and look at how you can export your animated creations into *After Effects*.

With the enhanced *QuickTime* export settings you can now breathe new life

into your *Flash* animations. Let your creativity go wild with all the filters and blends at *Flash*'s disposal, and then export the animations and add them into the *After Effects* 3D environment.

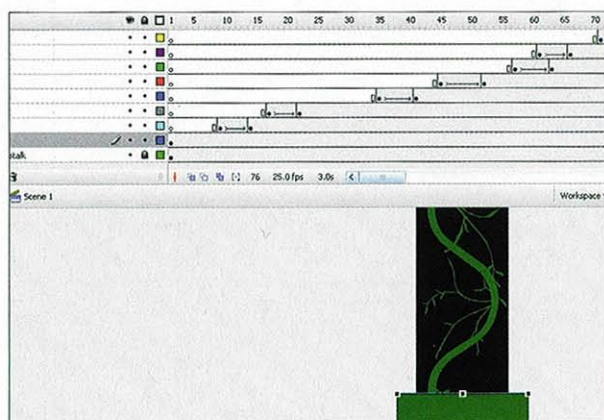
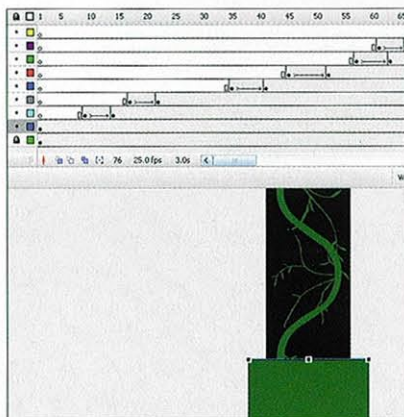
In this tutorial you'll create some animated flowers in *Flash*, then export them as a *QuickTime* movie, complete with an Alpha Channel straight from *Flash*. Then you'll create a photorealistic phone box for the flowers to inhabit.

Illustration and tutorial by Paul Wyatt
www.paulwyatt.co.uk

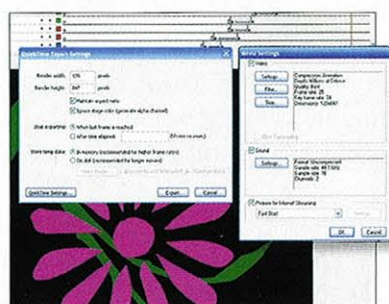


1 In *Flash*, open the composition named *partial_flowers.fla* from the CD. The Main Stalk and Leaf layers are already in place. Create a new layer above the Main Stalk and name it Mask. Drag an instance of the Mask shape from the library into this layer and position it underneath the stage.

2 Create a new keyframe at frame 76. Select the Free Transform tool, hold down Alt and stretch the symbol up until it covers the stage. Right-click on the first keyframe and select Create Motion Tween. Right-click on the Mask layer and choose Mask and Show Masking.



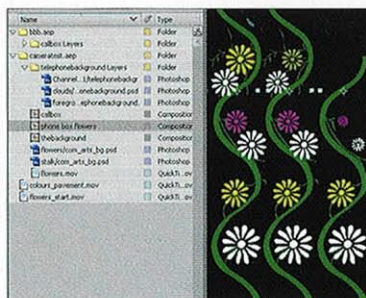
3 Hit Ctrl and Enter to preview the movie. The stalk will appear to grow. Add additional layers for the flowers. Into these drag instances of the symbol Flower and animate their scale using the Free Transform tool. Colour each flower in the Properties palette using Color:Tint and the Colour switch to change colour.



4 Choose File→Export→ExportMovie. Name your file Flowers_start.mov. In the dialog box, make sure Ignore Stage Colour is selected so that an Alpha Channel is produced. Click QuickTime Settings to choose compression settings. Maintain as much quality as possible by using the Animation compressor with Millions of Colors+. Now hit Export.

MORE EXAMPLES

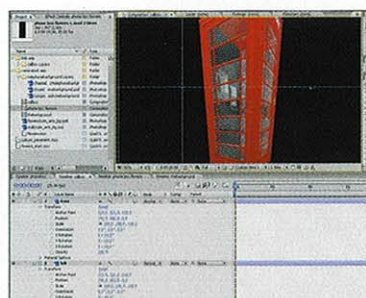
You'll find a QuickTime movie called animated_sequence.mo on the CD, which illustrates how this technique can be developed. This is part of a sequence from *Same Sky, Different City*, which can be viewed in full at www.paulwyatt.co.uk/titlesequence. It uses photorealistic objects constructed in the same manner as in this tutorial.



5 In After Effects, open Flowers_in_telephone_box_incomplete.aep. Hit Ctrl+N to create a new ten-second comp of 360x847 pixels and name this Phone Box Flowers. Choose File→Import Footage and bring in the Flowers_start.mov. Drag three instances of this from the project library and position them side-by-side in the composition window. For the best timing, offset each one in the timeline.



6 To create the 3D phone box, select File→Import→callbox.psd as a Footage layer with Cropped Layers. This file has all the sides to a phone box that you need to position in the 3D space. First make the layers 3D by clicking the small square 3D Layer symbol for each of these.



7 To make the layers match up you need to rotate them around their anchor points. You'll need to find the centre point for each of the box layers (front, left and back). Each layer is 421 pixels wide, so the centre point will be 210.5 pixels (421 divided by two) behind the centre of the selected layer.



8 Select the Front layer and set the Z-axis anchor point to 210.5. This will move the anchor behind the layer by 210.5 pixels. Change to Custom View, select Left and use the same value for the anchor point, but change the Y rotation to 0x+90. Do the same for Right, but change the value for Y rotation to 0x+270. For Back set Y rotation to 0x+180. Use the same principle to create the rest of the phone box.



9 Drag three instances of the Phone Box Flowers composition into the Callbox timeline. Change the second instance's rotation to 0x+90 and the third to 0x+270. Use the red, green and blue arrows to nudge the animations to the correct position behind the glass layers.



10 Open the background layer and drag a copy of the Phone Box composition into its timeline. Select the star icon to Collapse Transformations, which will 'pop' it out into 3D. The animation will now work independently of the timeline. Position the box in the most accurate way so it looks part of the street scene. **arts**