

It takes two to tango with rich media

With apologies to Macromedia and Adobe, I must confess that our editorial lineup for this issue took an unexpected twist between the time the plan was set up and the time we went to press.

Originally, it seemed obvious that, with fresh copies of Macromedia Studio MX 2004 and near-final betas of Adobe Creative Suite in hand, the team would quickly bunny hop through both these massive upgrade suites in the short time available and deliver at least an overview of what these new versions offer, both as individual applications and as whole working environments. By the time the next issue was due, we would have had an opportunity to do a thorough boogaloo with all this terrific new software and report our findings in detail.

Well, you can still count on a great deal of fandango about Adobe CS and Macromedia Studio MX 2004 for next time. Space doesn't permit me to tell you how Macromedia has cha-cha'd up Flash, Dreamweaver and Fireworks to create a more cohesive and expanded set of Web tools. Nor can I spell out in detail Adobe InDesign CS's whole conga line of new features (which, with any luck, may give Adobe time to make InDesign CS backward-compatible to v2, and restore the Save as HTML option so that web designers aren't forced to use GoLive exclusively). Or the way InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop and GoLive have been transformed into a veritable Version Cued polonaise of integrated applications—with Acrobat 6 and PDF 1.5 the chorus for all of them (if only rich media in a PDF worked properly on a Mac, as it does in Windows).



But you can be sure we'll be devoting a lot of space to all these new releases in our next issue, as well as examining the way these major developers are moving to integrated multi-application models for design and production.

However, in the midst of shimmying through our editorial agenda, we found ourselves tuning in to another song-and-dance that suddenly forced us to switch our coverage from a two-step to a one-step.

As the rumba caused by the Eolas Technologies/Microsoft legal battle over the right to have unencumbered access to interactive media in Web pages grew louder, we started tapping our toes. Then in mid-October, when Eolas began its beguine to stop Microsoft from distributing Internet Explorer, and Redmond announced its hokey-pokey for the upcoming version of its browser, we felt compelled to scratch CS and MX in favour of the escalating sword dance being performed by these two companies—a merengue that has now embroiled even the inventor of the Internet itself, Tim Berners-Lee.

The Internet Torn Asunder, on page 12, is a pas de deux by Bob Connolly and yours truly that dips into what could turn out to be the most critical Internet story of the year—or even the decade—and one which has the potential to affect every single Web user, designer and developer on the planet. If you haven't been tracking it, this article will help bring you up to speed; but since the outcome was still in limbo as we went to press, you may want to go online to update yourself once you've finished reading it.

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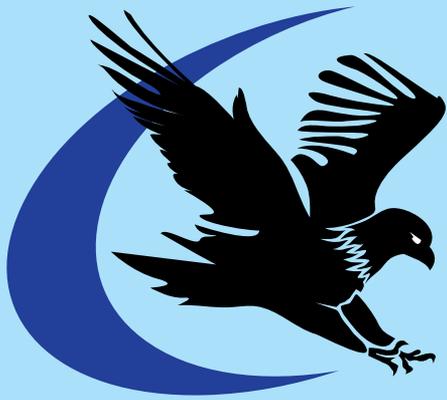


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PUBLISHER'S NOTES

Because the developments surrounding this case could have a significant impact on both Macromedia and Adobe (not to mention many other software development companies), we hope they don't mind us highlighting its importance and choreographing this issue a bit differently than originally anticipated.

However, we haven't ignored Adobe's current product releases entirely. Over the last little while, digital artist/photographer Ron Giddings has been testing digital images with a veritable barn dance full of plug-ins for Photoshop CS, with an eye toward figuring out how to get them to *Look Sharp*. On page 16, he waltzes out his first batch of results, with special attention to the tricks he's discovered for getting the maximum amount of detail out of RAW format pictures.

And knowing that still photography isn't the only way to trip the light fantastic, Peter Dudar adds to our tarantella of digital camera exposés with a detailed study of one of the best-kept DV-CAM secrets—the Sony DSR-PDX10. In a thorough discussion entitled *Native 16:9 and XLRS in a handheld camcorder* (page 34), he hulas through what he liked about this moderately-priced multi-purpose cam. Just like in the early days of desktop publishing, Watusi isn't what you get (all together now—big groan). But in this case, that's a good thing.

In the polka dot world of video production, what you hear can sometimes be even more important than what you see, so listen up. If you go to page 20 and read *Hear This: Surround sound DVD comes to the Mac*, Bob Connolly explains how producing DVDs with Dolby 5.1 surround sound is a virtual cakewalk with Apple's new DVD Studio Pro 2—plus a little Emagic.

However, not everything we do is salsa for the screen—or at least, not yet. There are still times when we need to fox trot a job to print, and when that happens, it can be a real Mexican hat dance trying to make sure files are press-ready. And we all know that these days, PDF is to printers what the Charleston is to South Carolina. But how do we check our PDFs to avoid hora-ble disasters on press?

When it comes to preflighting, our resident prepress expert Lerrick Starr isn't one to frug around—in fact, for this issue, he put three leading PDF preflight alternatives through every break dance he knew. And in *The original preflight tool does PDF, too* on page 31, he tells us whether Markzware's brand new FlightCheck Professional 5 can can-can with Enfocus PitStop Pro or Acrobat 6's new built-in file checking tools furnished by callas.

Last but not least, this issue's shindig includes our choices for the annual Graphic Exchange Digital Art Awards in digital illustration and digital photo art. Just soft-shoe back to page 37 to see the top six in each category.

Okay, I guess the jig is up. Time to take a Highland fling and samba out of here—I'll just let out one last turkey call and tap dance off stage until next issue.

Hey, I think they're playing our song.

Care to dance? I'll even let you lead... 🍷