

THE FILM MACHINE



A set of Photoshop™ actions by Panos Efstathiadis

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USERS MANUAL

1. INTRODUCTION

The **FILM MACHINE** Photoshop¹ actions create 15 different filmstrip effects using your images. The package contains three action sets; the **FILM MACHINE 2 PICS**, the **FILM MACHINE 3 PICS** and the **FILM MACHINE 4 PICS**. The first set uses 2 images to produce the effect. The second set uses 3 images while the third set uses 4 images to produce the final filmstrip. The actions are designed for Photoshop v.7 and higher. Since there are a number of memory demanding steps (copy, insert path, etc), I recommend you free up computer memory in advance, by closing any other applications, if your system resources are limited.

2. THE ACTIONS

Each one of the three sets contains 5 actions (figure 1). In detail, each set contains the following actions:

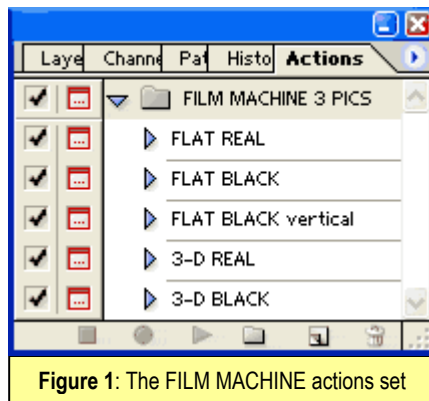


Figure 1: The FILM MACHINE actions set

- The **FLAT REAL** action produces an impressive and distinguishable flat filmstrip. It is called 'real' because its color and printed marks make it look quite like a real filmstrip.
- The **FLAT BLACK** action also produces a flat filmstrip. This time the filmstrip color is black and there are no marks on it. This is a filmstrip effect used frequently in presentations, web pages etc.
- The **FLAT BLACK Vertical** action produces a flat black filmstrip. Unlike the other actions of the set which produce horizontal filmstrips, this one produces a vertical effect. This is very handy in certain cases.
- The product of the **3-D REAL** goes beyond that of the FLAT REAL action. The use of bending and shadowing techniques gives the final product a 3D impression.
- Similarly to the 3-D REAL, the **3-D BLACK** action produces a 3D looking black filmstrip.

On the next page you can see some examples of the final products of these actions. The examples are from the **FILM MACHINE 3 PICS** action set.

¹ Photoshop is a registered trademark of Adobe Systems Inc.



The **3-D REAL** action produces a curved horizontal filmstrip of *brown color*. To add to reality, the low film edge is decorated with marks similar to those of real filmstrips. The shadow effect emphasizes the curved surface.



The **3-D BLACK** action produces a curved horizontal filmstrip of *black color*. The shadow effect emphasizes the curved surface.



The **FLAT REAL** action produces a flat horizontal filmstrip of *brown color*. To add to reality, the low film edge is decorated with marks similar to those of real filmstrips.



The **FLAT BLACK** action produces a flat horizontal filmstrip of *black color*.



The FLAT BLACK VERTICAL action produces a flat vertical filmstrip of black color.

3. LOADING THE ACTIONS IN PHOTOSHOP

After having downloaded and saved the actions in your hard disk, open your Photoshop. If the actions palette is not visible, select **Window > Actions**, on the menu.

On the top right corner of the actions palette, there is a right arrow within a circle. Click on it and on the flyout menu select "**Load Actions**". Load one of the three **FILM MACHINE** sets.

Click on any of the five actions of the set and then click on the *play* button (the little triangle at the bottom of the actions palette). The action starts working.

4. LOADING THE IMAGES

At the beginning you will be asked to open your images, one by one. Depending on the action set you will be asked to load from two to four images. The first image you load will be the first in the row. The second image you open will be the second image on the film roll, etc.

COLOR MANAGEMENT WARNINGS

Depending on your Photoshop working RGB profile, you may get an "Embedded Profile Mismatch" warning when you open an image. This message simply warns you that the image you are going to load has a different embedded color profile. You are given three choices: you can either use your image's embedded profile, or convert it to your working profile or even discard the embedded profile. It is upon you to decide what you want to do. I personally find that the **Adobe RGB (1998)** is an excellent RGB working space for my images.

You need to remember 2 things when loading the images:

- a. The actions are optimized for LANDSCAPE layout images

These actions will give best results when used with images of **landscape** layout and ideally of the popular 4:3 width / height pixels format.

Although you will get no errors if you load **portrait** layout pictures, the final result will look unusual and distorted (figure 2).

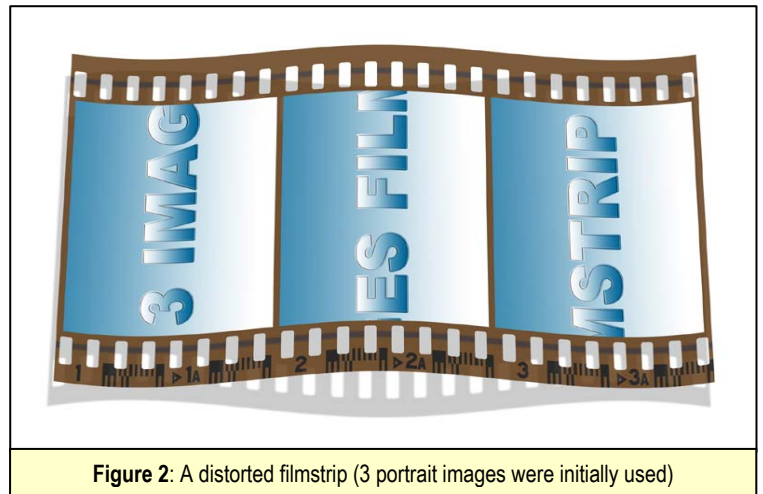


Figure 2: A distorted filmstrip (3 portrait images were initially used)

- b. All images **MUST** be of the same size!

It is imperative that all the images are of the **same** size (just like in real filmstrips). Otherwise you will come up with bizzare filmstrips like the one in figure 3.

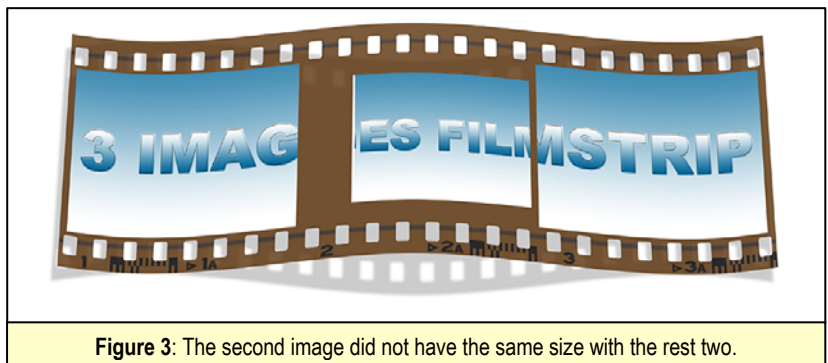


Figure 3: The second image did not have the same size with the rest two.

5. CUSTOMIZING THE RESULT

The actions are designed in a way that requires the minimum of your effort to produce the final effect. Your involvement is required in order to create the shadow effect when running the 3-D actions. In addition, you can tailor the effect to your liking by playing with the opacity of the film and shadow layers:

a. Customizing the look of the filmstrip shadow

In all filmstrips there is a shadow added in order to emphasize the overall effect.

- In the FLAT filmstrips the shadow is created by making use of the *drop shadow* style on the *film* layer. Therefore if you want to change the look of the shadow in flat filmstrips, just double click on the drop shadow of the *film layer* and change the *distance / spread / size fields*.
- A different approach is used in the 3-D REAL and the 3-D BLACK actions. This time an individual shadow layer is created to emphasize the 3-D look. In real life shadow outlines are not crisp but blurred. Photoshop's *Gaussian Blur* filter is used to blur the outline of the shadow layer. A dialogue window allows you to change the amount of blur. Keep in mind that the optimal value depends on the size of the original image. By default I'm using a radius value of 3. Move the Gaussian blur slider to the left or right, until you are satisfied with the result.

b. Customizing the opacity of the film and shadow layers

The three "FLAT" actions of each set produce an image that is made up of 3 layers:

1. The *photo layer* (your images)
2. The *film layer* (the filmstrip frame)
3. The *canvas layer* (the white background)

Layers 1 & 2 are linked. By default I have set the opacity of the *film* layer from 75% to 80%, depending on the action. In order to change this, on the layers palette (*Window > Layer*) click on the *film* layer and amend the opacity figure on the top right corner of the palette window.

The two "3-D" actions of each set produce an image that is made up of 4 layers:

1. The *photo layer* (your images)
2. The *film layer* (the filmstrip frame)
3. The *shadow layer* (the filmstrip shadow)
4. The *canvas layer* (the white background)

Layers 1 & 2 & 3 are linked. By default I have set the opacity of the *film* layer from 75% to 80% and the opacity of the shadow layer to 15%. Again, you can customize these values until you are satisfied with the overall appearance.

6. UNDOING THE LAST TRANSFORMATION STEP IN THE 3-D ACTIONS

The last step in the **3-D REAL** & **3-D BLACK** actions applies a perspective transformation to the filmstrip. This is done in order to further emphasize the 3-D impression. If for any reason you don't want the filmstrip to be transformed you can press Control + Z (the *undo* keystroke) in order to go back one step. Pressing Control+Z again will redo the transformation.

7. MERGING LAYERS

If you want to merge the final product (except for the canvas layer) you can select *Layer > Merged Linked* on the Photoshop menu or make the Canvas layer invisible by clicking on the eye icon on the left of it and then press Control+E (equivalent to the menu command *Layer > Merge Visible*).

8. AFTERWORD

Thank you for having purchased the FILM MACHINE set of actions. For any suggestions or questions you can contact me at my site www.PanosFX.com

Check out regularly my site for goodies, tips, tutorials and updates to the existing files. In addition, I will be uploading free add-ons to be used with the commercial action sets, such as this one and let you produce extra effects.



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