

## CROSSFADE ANIMATION with AFTEREFFECTS

Consider using the Internet as a new presentation medium for photographs. The fluid nature of the medium allows the removal of photography from its present static state, and allows for dynamic change. The trick is to make the dynamics non-narrative and minimal to avoid making a video piece. It is possible to create a dynamic photographic sequence with AfterEffects from a series of jpeg picture files created in PhotoShop.

### CREATE the PICTURES

create a series \_\_\_\_\_ of pictures in PhotoShop  
use a size \_\_\_\_\_ that will fit nicely on screen with sufficient borders  
512 x 384 is a reasonable size  
save the pictures \_\_\_\_\_ for the web using FILE> SAVE FOR WEB [CMD] [OPT] [SHFT] s  
use jpeg medium \_\_\_\_\_ to retain quality as well as reduce file size  
leave progressive \_\_\_\_\_ turned off

### CREATE the AFTER EFFECTS PROJECT

The composition should appear in the PROJECT window when finished.

create a new project \_\_\_\_\_ with FILE> NEW> NEW PROJECT [CMD] [OPT] N  
create a new composition \_\_\_\_\_ with COMPOSITION> NEW COMPOSITION [CMD] N  
set the width and height \_\_\_\_\_ to match the picture sizes  
adjust the frame rate \_\_\_\_\_ if desired  
12 fps is reasonable for the web  
set the duration \_\_\_\_\_ to the duration of any single frame  
(*ex: for 5 seconds set duration to 0:00:05:00*)  
AE thinks in minutes:seconds:frames (*video speak = 30 fps*)

### IMPORT the PICTURE FILES

The pictures should appear in the PROJECT window when finished.

import the picture files \_\_\_\_\_ with FILE> IMPORT FILE [CMD] I  
navigate \_\_\_\_\_ to the desired folder  
shift click on all files \_\_\_\_\_ to be imported  
do not click on \_\_\_\_\_ jpeg sequence  
hit [OKAY] \_\_\_\_\_ to import all file at once

### SET the STAGE

All pictures need to be dragged onto the stage to be animated. The first picture needs to appear twice. The pictures will appear in the TIMELINE window as icons on separate LAYERS.

click \_\_\_\_\_ on the first picture in the series  
shift click \_\_\_\_\_ on the last picture in the series  
this will select all picture files in the PROJECT window  
drag all pictures \_\_\_\_\_ into the TIMELINE window, under SOURCE NAME  
all layers will have a duration equal to the full length of the composition  
select only the first picture \_\_\_\_\_ of the series in the PROJECT window  
drag the first picture \_\_\_\_\_ into the TIMELINE window  
place it \_\_\_\_\_ at the bottom of the stack of layers  
all tracks should be the same duration (*ex: 5 seconds*)

## CREATING the ANIMATION

### RESET the DURATION

open Composition Settings \_\_\_\_\_ COMPOSITION> COMPOSITION SETTINGS [CMD] K  
reset the duration \_\_\_\_\_ to the duration of the **entire** piece  
(*ex: number of pictures \* amount of time each picture will appear*)  
(*ex: 10 pictures \* 5 seconds each = 50 seconds 0:00:50:00, or -*  
(*14 pictures \* 5 seconds each = 70 seconds 0:01:10:00*)  
the display may look funny until you reset the duration

### SETUP the ANIMATION

select all layers \_\_\_\_\_ with EDIT> SELECT ALL [CMD] A  
set up the sequence \_\_\_\_\_ with ANIMATION> KEYFRAME ASSISTANT> SEQUENCE LAYERS  
click on \_\_\_\_\_ overlap  
set duration \_\_\_\_\_ to half the length of the layer duration  
(*ex: 5 seconds each picture duration / 2 = 2 1/2 seconds 0:00:02:15*  
AE thinks in minutes:seconds:frames (*video speak = 30 fps*)  
set crossfade \_\_\_\_\_ to front layer only  
this will fade the front layer out, revealing the layer behind  
(that remains at 100% opacity) keeping overall density consistent

### TRIM for the LOOP

cut the length \_\_\_\_\_ of the **first** layer to half  
drag the start point \_\_\_\_\_ to half the length  
cut the length \_\_\_\_\_ of the **last** layer to half  
drag the end point \_\_\_\_\_ to half the length  
drag all layers \_\_\_\_\_ back to time zero  
select all layers \_\_\_\_\_ with EDIT> SELECT ALL [CMD] A  
drag the first layer \_\_\_\_\_ to time zero  
all others will follow, maintaining their relative positions  
reset \_\_\_\_\_ the composition length if necessary  
use \_\_\_\_\_ COMPOSITION> COMPOSITION SETTINGS [CMD] K  
reset the duration \_\_\_\_\_ to the new duration of the **entire** piece, if necessary

### TEST the ANIMATION

play the animation \_\_\_\_\_ by hitting the play button in the control palette  
turn on \_\_\_\_\_ looping

### EXPORT the ANIMATION

The best way to get the animation onto the web is with the Flash/ Shockwave format commonly called a SWF. This generates a small file size, by a factor of between 5 to 10% of a QuickTime movie!

export the file \_\_\_\_\_ with FILE> EXPORT> MACROMEDIA FLASH (SWF)  
a SAVE AS dialog box will open  
navigate \_\_\_\_\_ to the desired disk and folder  
set the name \_\_\_\_\_ as desired  
click [SAVE] \_\_\_\_\_  
an SWF SETTINGS dialog box will open  
set quality \_\_\_\_\_ to JPEG medium / 5  
ignore \_\_\_\_\_ unsupported features  
leave audio \_\_\_\_\_ off  
set options \_\_\_\_\_ loop continuously, prevent import