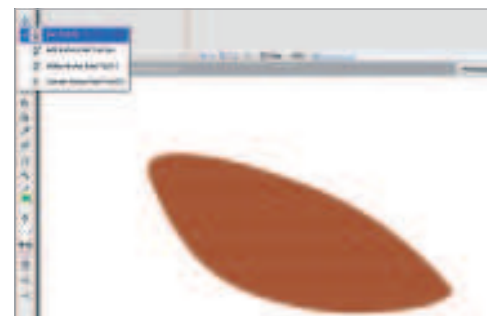




/Flash/create an interactive movie Part two

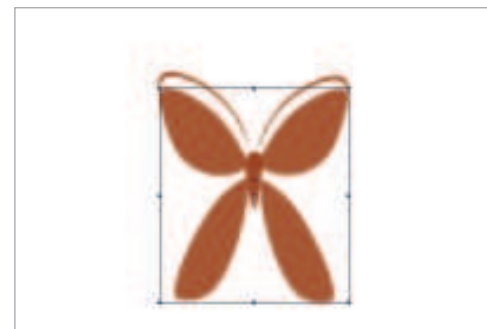
This second Flash section of .net carries on from the greenscreen shoot, so now Paul Wyatt takes you into the postproduction suite to apply a little pizzazz



START Draw butterflies Open 'animated_version fla' and create a new movie clip, "butterfly flapping slow". Use the Pen tool and draw a leaf shape on the stage. Fill with colour and Ctrl+C to copy it. Paste three other versions onto the stage.



2 Create the body Name the layer "wings" but don't turn these shapes into movie clips just yet. Position them into the form of butterfly wings. Create two new layers and use the Oval tool to click and drag out the shape of the body. On another layer, use the Pen tool to create antennae shapes.



3 Squash the bug In the "wings" layer, add a keyframe at frame 45 and one at frame 23. Select the wing shape with the Free transform tool. Hold down Alt and drag one side of the bounding box towards the centre. This causes the whole wing shape to squash into the centre.

What you'll build Add some sparkle to your Flash work with some creative animated effects. They may look complicated, but these are deceptively simple to master. Part two of our Flash project lets you in on some of the animated tricks of the trade. This tutorial shows you how to make a butterfly fly and how to electrocute a beautiful girl. Wonderful!

Knowledge needed An understanding of Flash CS3 and After Effects

Requires Flash CS3, After Effects

Project time 30 minutes (production time)

It's not an easy life for our young woman as she relaxes near the local gasworks. She's prone to attracting butterflies and aliens! Part of the fun of working in After Effects, Photoshop and Flash is that you can make such impossibilities happen. Following on from part one of this tutorial, we'll have a closer look at some of the animated elements in our video project.

This will be an eye-opener on some very simple but effective animated techniques. Hopefully, these will inspire you to add your own and to take our example site a few steps forward. Perhaps you want

flying animated butterfly buttons that periodically fly around the page with new menu items on them. Start right here. Learn how to make one fly!

We've also got some advice straight from the pros. Cartoon Networks' Tom Baker gives us his top tips for animating, while Weeworld's Tom Harding shares some insight on using colour and imagery in your animation and site work. ●



About the author

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My favourite superhero is ... Spider-Man

In depth Cartoon Network's Tom Baker with his top animation tips



Tom Baker

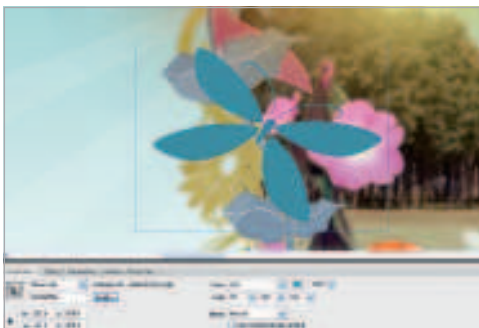
Occupation Freelance animator
Areas of expertise 2D character animation
URL www.bakeranimator.com



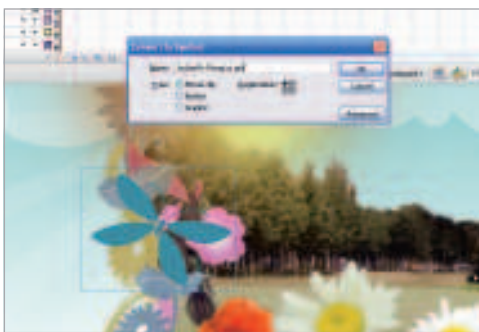
It's Skatoony! Produced at the Cartoon Network in London, Skatoony is now in its second series www.cartoonnetwork.co.uk



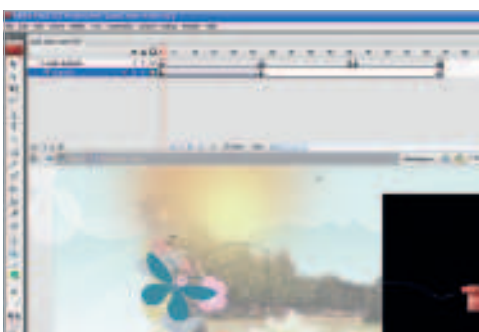
4 Preview At frames 1 and 23, right-click and select **Create shape tween** and Enter to preview the animation. You now have a looping butterfly animation. On the main stage, create a new layer: "butterflies". Drag an instance of "butterfly flapping fast" and place where you'd like it to fly from.



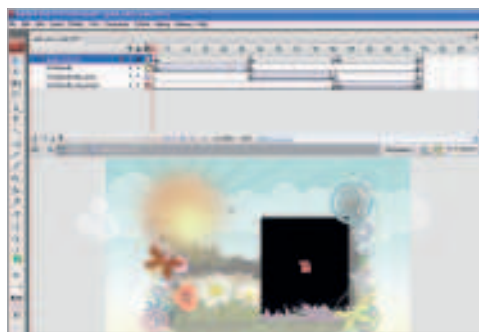
5 Tricks of the trade As our FLV file uses cue points to set off movie clip animations in the main timeline, it's important to be able to position these accurately. All of the animations in this project use the same technique for adding them to the stage.



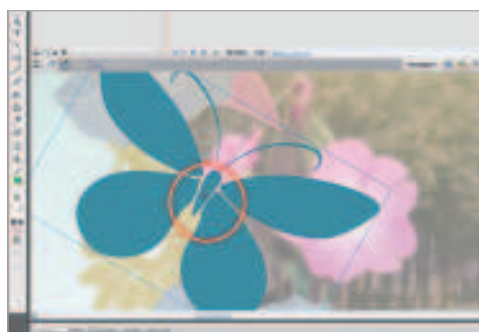
6 Making clips The trick is to select the instance of "butterfly flapping fast" on the stage, then hit F8 to convert it to another clip ("butterfly fly to girl"). The first frame of the new clip retains the position of the original. Right-click the new movie clip and choose **Edit in place**.



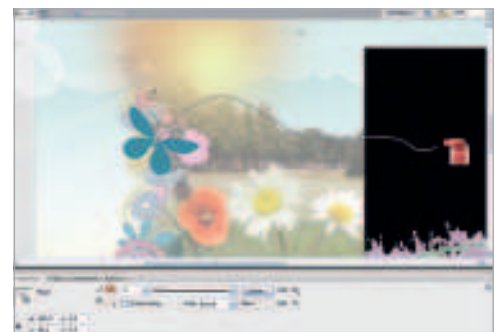
9 Animation path Drag the "butterfly" layer under the word "guide" in the layer above it. The "butterfly" layer has become indented. This is an indication that the two layers have become interconnected. The "butterfly" layer is now able to use the guide layer as an animation path.



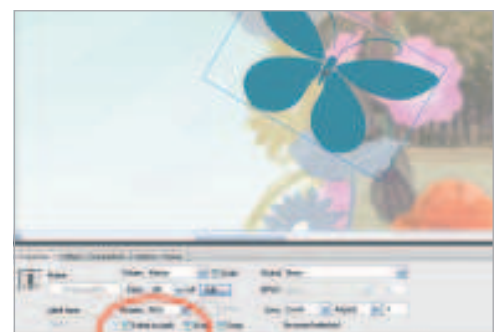
7 Accurate animation We now have a fading view of the stage, but with the timeline for "butterfly fly to girl" visible. However, Flash doesn't enable you to preview FLV files directly from the timeline. This involves a lot of movie previewing if you have animated elements interacting with video ones.



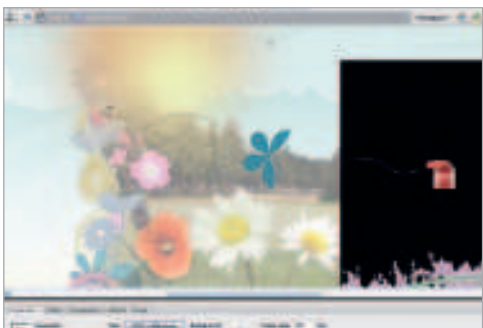
10 Snap it up Select **View > Snapping** and ensure **Snap to objects** is selected. Attach the butterfly to the guide layer by clicking its small circle in the middle of the symbol. As you come closer to the edge of the guide layer, the butterfly will snap to it.



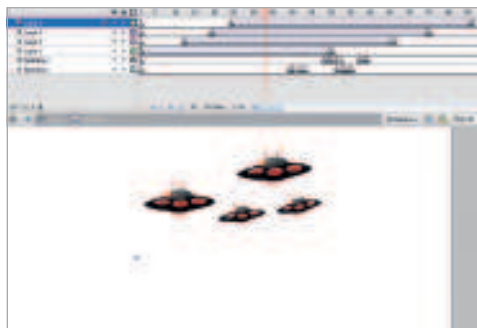
8 Motion guides Click the **Add motion guide** icon at the bottom of the layer names palette. This layer acts only as a guide for other elements and usually takes the form of a path created with the **Pen** tool. Draw a curved line from where the butterfly currently is to where you imagine the girl's hand is.



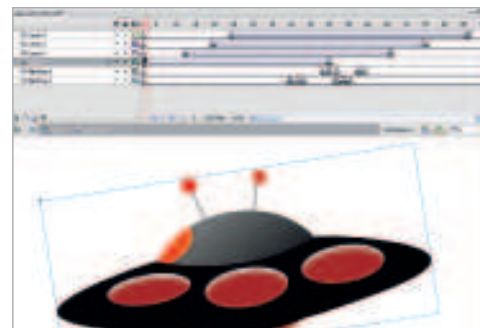
11 Flutter by Create a keyframe at frame 27 and move the butterfly to the far end of the guide layer. Right-click on the first frame to create a motion tween. Click this first frame and, in the **Properties** palette, check **Orient to path**. This will cause the butterfly to face the forward motion. >>



12 Preview again Preview the animation. You can add new layers with more butterflies. These will automatically be indented and synched with the guide layer. You can also change the shape of the guide layer by adding keyframes into its layer and drawing a new path.



13 Invaders attack Open up the “spaceships” movie clip. This was positioned the same way as the butterflies clip. A spaceship movie clip was created, positioned on the stage and then turned into another movie clip. The resulting movie clip was then right-clicked and edited in place.



14 Scale and rotate The “spaceships” clip relies on motion tweens, and scaling and rotating, to achieve the effect of flying into the distance. Click in layer 1 on frame 2 to see how the ship has been rotated using the **Free transform** tool. By frame 50, the scale and angles have changed.

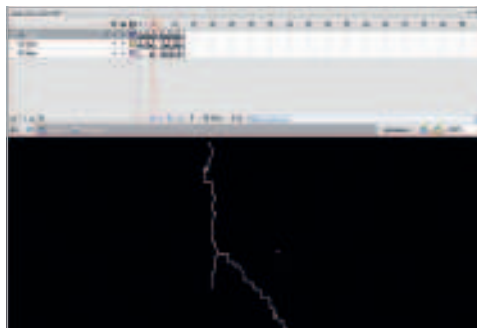
Resources Tom Harding’s tips

Colour – Experiment with different colour combinations. Some really useful colour picker sites are popping up such as kuler.adobe.com

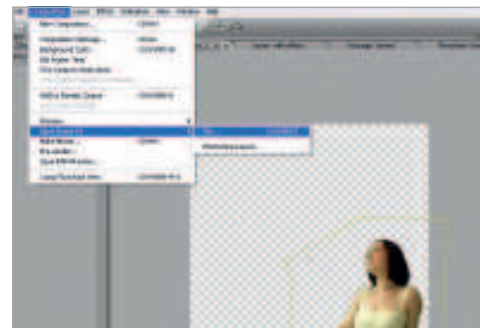
Photography – If you can’t afford rights-managed images, try www.sxc.hu. It’s a free stock photography and community site.

Alignment – In Photoshop, I find it handy to create a blank shape and use it as a spacing guide to align visuals from the hard edge of my artwork. This is a lot quicker than using the tape measure.

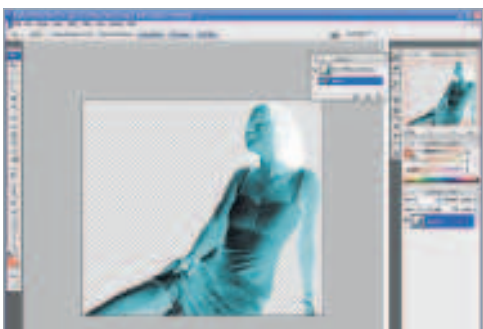
Tom Harding is a top designer at weeworld.com



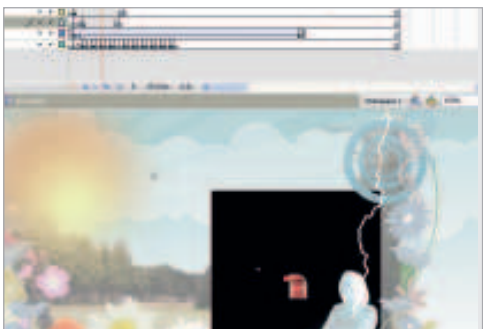
15 Lightning Open “electricity”. Our lightning bolts are simple 10-frame animations – a jagged white line. Nine new keyframes are then created, and the line is redrawn or reshaped in each. When multiple instances are added below our ships, it gives the impression of rapid-fire lightning bolts.



16 Zap-happy Open up the “girl zapped” movie clip. This originated as a PNG file of the girl reclining. This was exported from After Effects from our original composition. From After Effects, choose the frame to export and select **Composition > Save frame as > File**.



17 Inverse The exported After Effects file was then brought into Photoshop and reduced in scale to 214x191 pixels. The image was made to look like a negative by hitting **Ctrl+I** in Photoshop. This was then saved as a PNG file with transparency via the **Save for web** export option.



18 Import the file A new layer was created in Flash called “zapped girl” and the PNG file was imported into the library, and a movie clip (“girl in sun”) was produced. Placing this in the same position as the girl in the video can be tricky, as the video cannot be seen in the timeline.



FINISH Complete The clip is converted into another: “girl zapped”. This is edited in place to ensure accurate positioning and a lightning clip is added. A white tint is set at varying levels over 20 keyframes, to give the illusion of a flash of light.