



## INTRODUCTION TO GRAPHICS

# Fire and Camera Shake in After Effects

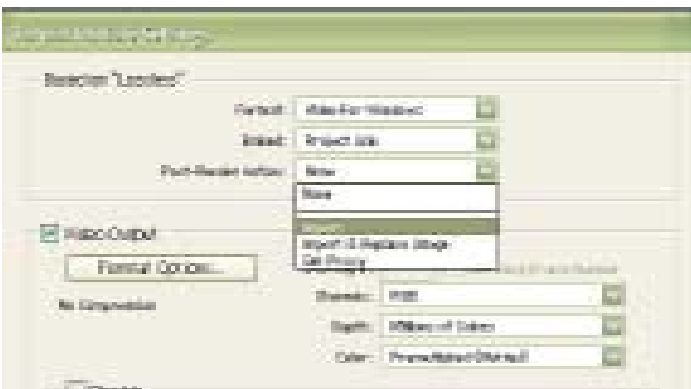
Information Sheet No.



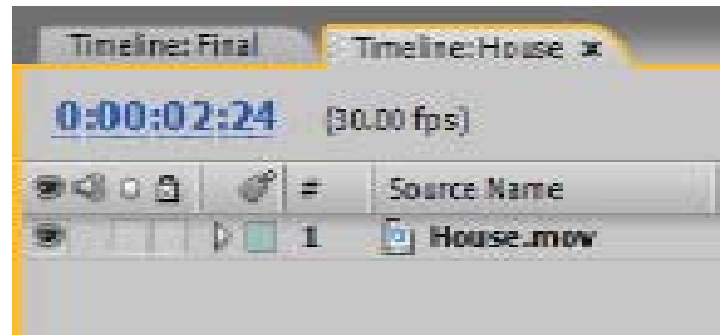
You're going to wrap up your force field effects shot exercise by adding a violent camera shake and a fireball explosion. It's not that hard with Trapcode Particular 1.5 and a quick expression.

After completing part 3, there is a good chance your computer is starting to slow down as it attempts to cache all of the information for each and every preview. Even though this installment is not that render intensive, we can save our computer from grinding by first rendering out everything we have done so far.

**Step 1:** With the Final Comp selected, press Command+M or Control+M to open the Render panel. Click on the Output Module, and in the Output Module Settings panel, make sure you select Import as the Post Render Action. As the name implies, when the movie finishes rendering out, it will automatically be imported into your project.



**Step 2:** Create a New Composition and add the rendered movie to it.



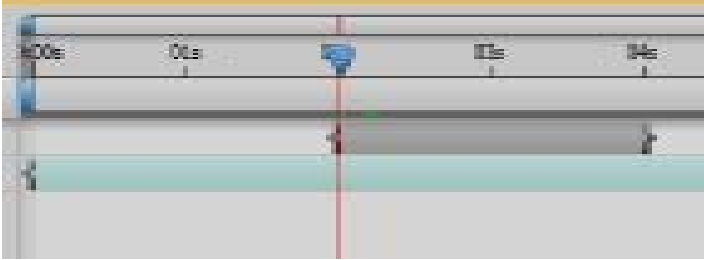
**Step 3:** Let's add an explosion to the shot. You'll use the excellent Trapcode Particular Explosion Preset that have posted in the project folder for your use. Just load them into your After Effects plug in folder. If you want to try this at home or outside the lab, you can find them here: <http://www.dmnforums.com/cgi-bin/viewarticle.cgi?id=43018>. If you don't have Particular, you can find it at [www.trapcode.com](http://www.trapcode.com) (<http://www.trapcode.com/>). This is an excellent plug-in for doing particles and the low price should fit nicely into anyone's budget.

For this exercise, you'll be using Explosion 2. It is a nice fast fireball with some debris that falls about.



**Step 4:** Load the Explosion Presets into your project, then add the Explosion 2

comp to the timeline. Adjust the start time for the layer to just before the force field is disrupted. In this example, that would be right about the 2:00 mark in the Timeline.



**Step 5:** As great as these presets are, we are going to have to tweak them if we want the right effect. The first thing we need to do is move the layer in the Comp Panel to the point of impact. This is roughly 210 on the X-axis and 143 on the Y-axis.

**Step 6:** This looks good, but we can enhance the explosion by scaling the image slightly over time. Move to the in point of the layer and lower the Scale amount for the Explosion 2 layer to 57% and set an initial keyframe by clicking on the Stopwatch icon.

**Step 7:** Move the Current Time Indicator ahead a few frames to around 2:07 and increase the Scale amount to 90%. This sizes the explosion nicely in the frame.



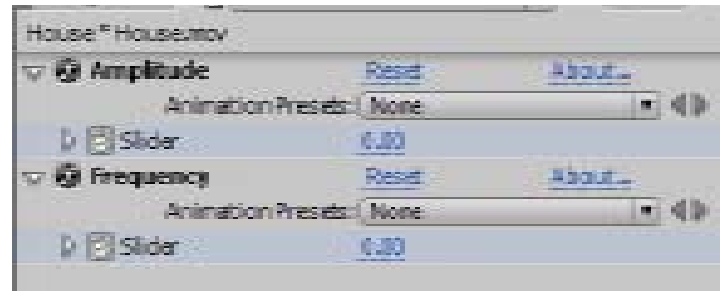
**Step 8:** With the sheer size of the explosion there is a good chance our camera would jolt with the impact. There are a few other tutorials floating around the Internet that show how to use Wiggler to accomplish this, but in this exercise we'll create a more realistic camera jolt using an expression.

If you examine a seismograph you will notice that the initial shockwave starts out hard then gradually tapers off – the camera jolt doesn't just stop moving. We are going to create this effect using expression sliders.

With the House layer selected in the Timeline add Effect>Expression Controls>Slider Control to the layer.

In the Effect Controls Panel, rename the Slider to Amplitude.

Apply another instance of the Slider Control to the House layer and rename this slider to Frequency.



**Step 9:** Move the Current Time Indicator to 2:00 in the Timeline and set an initial keyframe for both slides.

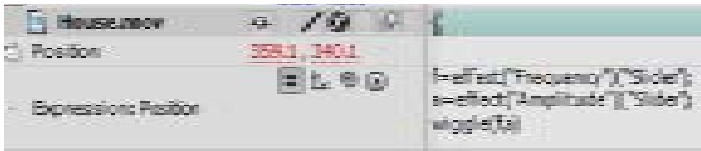
**Step 10:** Now move to 2:03 and set the amounts for both Amplitude and Frequency to 20.

**Step 11:** Finally move to 3:10 and set the amounts back to 0. What you have done is animate the values so they start off with a hard bang, but then gradually ease back to normal.

**Step 12:** With the House layer selected in the Timeline, press the P key to bring up the Position property for the layer. Alt-click (Option-click) the Position property Stopwatch icon to activate expressions.

Enter the following expression as shown

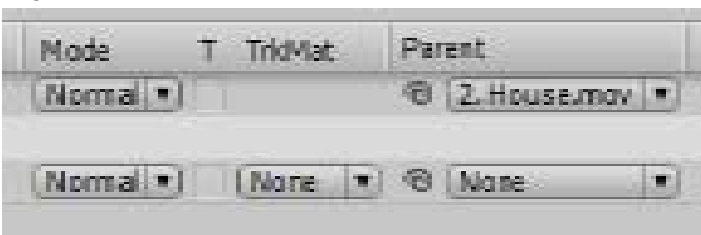
```
f=effect("Frequency")("Slider");  
a=effect("Amplitude")("Slider");  
wiggle(f,a)
```



**Step 13:** When you click off the layer, the expression will become active. If you scrub through the Timeline, you should see the layer shake. However, because of the size of the layer, portions of the edge of the screen will become visible. This will quickly destroy the effect we are going for. Fortunately, this can be corrected with Motion Tile. Use the following settings to fix the problem.



**Step 14:** If you make a RAM Preview now, you'll notice that while we have a nice effect, the explosion layer doesn't follow the movement of the House. The easy solution is to parent the Explosion 2 layer to the House layer.



**Step 15:** Finally, turn on Motion Blur for both layers, and turn on the Master Motion Blur button at the top of the Timeline Panel.

You've now completed a fairly detailed effects shot.