

Epicurean Video Production Thread (Especially Blender and Other Open Source Video Software)

Post by “Joshua” of April 29, 2023 at 1:29 AM

Quote from Cassius Admin Edit

[Admin Edit from Cassius 050323: I am hijacking Joshua's thread and changing the title to make it more generic and hopefully extend it. I have seen the first draft of Joshua's map video. It is excellent and it is a reminder of how effective and far-reaching that good video can be.

We need to encourage everyone who is even slightly interested in creative video production to try their hand at this. We can use this and other threads to share information about tools and methods and ask each other questions.

I entitled the thread with a reference to free and open source software, because I think it is highly desirable that we use tools that are available to others and with which we can better share our expertise. However I know that some of the most powerful options are not publicly offered, so don't let that stop you from posting about what you are using, especially if the cost is relatively low. But thinking ahead to what will be most effective in getting other people going, options which are totally open and low or no cost are probably going to find the widest adoption.

We have lots of creative people here and it would be great if we could encourage each other to produce work like this. Now for Joshua's post which started this thread:

I am not proficient in the use of the this software by any means, but I did want to share some progress on a video I'm working on that focuses on the early Epicureans. Just two images: before and after. The first map I pulled from Wikimedia. The second map is zoomed, showing some of my progress in blender, and with a little bit of added texture. Hopefully I can get it to look more like paper. Anyway, once I have the map looking the way I want it to, I can set the 'camera' to follow a track around the map; panning across the Aegean, zooming in on a city or an island, etc.



<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/3041-epicurean-video-production-thread-especially-blender-and-other-open-source-video/>



Much better! Looks very papery. Next step is camera work, but that will have to wait until tomorrow afternoon.

Post by “Cassius” of April 29, 2023 at 4:38 AM

Very nice! I have long heard that Blender is great software but I have never tried to use it so looking forward to this for a variety of reasons.

Post by “Joshua” of April 29, 2023 at 9:38 AM

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/3041-epicurean-video-production-thread-especially-blender-and-other-open-source-video/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9-44yRfQ-A0>

I'm using this as a guide on how to proceed, but I'm finding that there is a steep learning curve.

Post by “Godfrey” of April 29, 2023 at 1:37 PM

I've been interested in Blender for 3D modeling, but haven't tried it yet. I didn't even know that it does what you're doing with it, [Joshua](#) . Thanks for posting!

Post by “Joshua” of April 29, 2023 at 1:58 PM

I'm just learning it as well, [Godfrey](#)! I realized yesterday when I installed it that I already had an older version on my computer, so I guess I've tried using it before but just couldn't figure it out.

There have been significant changes over time, so it can be difficult following tutorials as well. I spent nearly two hours trying to figure out the node system before I realized that the geometry nodes and shader nodes have been split into different panels. There's a million little buttons, toggles, sliders and menus and I don't know what 95% of them do. But this project is relatively simple so I should be able to get something put up this weekend, and then I can continue to expand on it over time.

Post by “Godfrey” of April 29, 2023 at 2:52 PM

Sounds like it's a multipurpose bundle of goodies! Basically an open source version of Maya? Most of the people who I've run across that use Maya use only a tiny bit of it: it's so comprehensive that nobody can master the whole thing.

Post by “Martin” of April 29, 2023 at 3:17 PM

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/3041-epicurean-video-production-thread-especially-blender-and-other-open-source-video/>

Blender is good for people who draft free hand for 3D modeling. I prefer numerical (or even better parametric) input and found no simple way to do that in Blender except by manually editing every datapoint, which is too tedious. Most of the free samples for Blender lack resolution, probably because free hand with high resolution is extremely tedious.

Post by “Joshua” of April 30, 2023 at 10:29 PM

Ok, as of now a handful of people have gotten the sneak peak of the video I'm working on called "The Early Epicureans". I thought I would take some time to outline the process so far.

- The Map
 - I started this project by taking a map from 5th Century Greece from the Wikimedia Commons website. The license for the map is Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International. "Share-alike" means that anything I make with the map has to use the same license--It has to be Creative Commons, and I have to give attribution to the creator of the map. Creator: *Fut.Per.*
 - Link: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Anci...century_B.C.svg
- Editing the Map
 - The first editing I did was to upload the map to BeFunky, an online Photo editor. (Need a better alternative to this...) I recolored the map to black and white, and then gave it a warmer tint.
- Blender: Used for; Animation
 - I installed Blender 3.5, a free, open source 3D computer graphics software used for modeling, animation, rendering, and much more.
 - I imported the map as a texture, allowing me to alter it's surface from a flat plane to a more paper-like texture. The video above shows how to do this.
 - I then animated the in-software camera to follow a path around the map, and rendered this animation in several segments and still frames.
- OpenShot Video Editor.
 - I installed the latest version of OpenShot, and began to edit the animations and still frames into a video.
 - I also imported several audiovisual assets for use in the video. With one public domain exception, all of them are licensed Creative Commons Non-Commercial Attribution Share-Alike or similar.
 - Audio Files
 - J. S. Bach, Cello Suite 1 in G major

- License: Public Domain
 - Link: <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/comm...r%C3%A9lude.ogg>
- "Light a match Sound Effect"
 - Creator: Garuda 1982
 - License: Creative Commons Attribution 4.0
 - Link: <https://openverse.org/audio/43ee365e...=candle%20video>
- "Guitar Strumming Verse pt. 2"
 - Creator: deleted_user_2968900 (?)
 - License: Creative Commons Attribution 4.0
 - Link: <https://freesound.org/people/deleted.../sounds/269048/>
- "Relaxing Forest Birds Chirping in the North Woods"
 - Creator: taavhaap
 - License: Creative Commons Attribution 4.0
 - Link: <https://freesound.org/people/taavhaap/sounds/528661/>
- Visual Files
 - Burning Candle from opening title
 - Creator: MixailMixail
 - License: <https://pixabay.com/service/terms/>
 - Link: <https://pixabay.com/videos/candle-...ess-light-4101/>
 - Burning Candle from end credits
 - Creator: HopeShop Dyani
 - License: <https://www.pexels.com/license/>
 - Link: <https://www.pexels.com/video/lighted-candle-4506677/>

The video will be uploaded to the YouTube channel of [Cassius](#) Amicus in the coming few days, as soon as I can figure out the best way to get it to him. The license for the video itself will be Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International.

Post by “Don” of April 30, 2023 at 10:33 PM

Can't wait to see it! 😊

Post by “Godfrey” of May 1, 2023 at 12:20 AM

[Joshua](#) have you tried GIMP instead of BeFunky? It's an open source program similar to Photoshop, if that's what you're looking for.

Post by “Joshua” of May 1, 2023 at 12:29 AM

Great suggestion, Godfrey! I have used BeFunky in the past for it's filters, but I would prefer something completely open source. I'll look into GIMP, I'm sure it has everything I could ever need.

Post by “Don” of May 1, 2023 at 12:42 AM

There's also Paint.net that's a stripped down GIMP alternative... Although as I understand GIMP is much more robust.

Post by “Cassius” of May 1, 2023 at 7:48 AM

I presume rendering the final product to MP4 will be the best format Joshua (?). Then we find a way to send a large file.

Post by “Eikadistes” of May 1, 2023 at 8:59 AM

Regarding open-source solutions, I am a big fan of <https://sketch.io/sketchpad/>.

Sketchpad is the tool I regularly use. I used it to make the *Epicurean Communities of the Ancient World* map: [Epicurean Communities of the Ancient World](#)

Post by “Joshua” of May 1, 2023 at 11:18 AM

Thank you, @Nate! That map is such a great resource. We'll link to it when the video goes up.

Post by “Cassius” of May 3, 2023 at 9:09 AM

I am hijacking Joshua's thread and changing the title to make it more generic and hopefully extend it. I have seen the first draft of Joshua's map video. It is excellent and it is a reminder of how effective and far-reaching that good video can be.

We need to encourage everyone who is even slightly interested in creative video production to try their hand at this. We can use this and other threads to share information about tools and methods and ask each other questions.

I entitled the thread with a reference to free and open source software, because I think it is highly desirable that we use tools that are available to others and with which we can better share our expertise. However I know that some of the most powerful options are not publicly offered, so don't let that stop you from posting about what you are using, especially if the cost is relatively low. But thinking ahead to what will be most effective in getting other people going, options which are totally open and low or no cost are probably going to find the widest adoption.

We have lots of creative people here and it would be great if we could encourage each other to produce work like this.