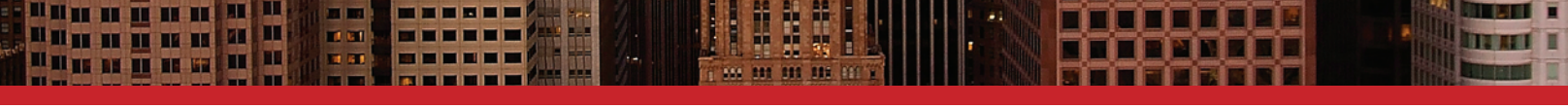
Adobe® Flash® CS3

The Professional Portfolio

AGAINST THE CLOCK

mastering graphic technology



Managing Editor: Ellenn Behoriam
Cover & Interior Design: Erika Kendra
Copy Editor: Laurel Nelson-Cucchiara
Proofreader: Angelina Kendra
Printing/Bindery: Prestige Printers
Cover photo: Win Wolloff

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10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

978-0-9764324-7-0 (spiral bound)

978-0-9815216-3-3 (perfect bound)

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800-256-4ATC • www.againsttheclock.com

Acknowledgements

About Against The Clock

Against The Clock has been publishing computer arts educational materials for more than 15 years, starting out as a Tampa, Florida-based systems integration firm whose primary focus was on skills development in high-volume, demanding commercial environments. Among the company's clients were LL Bean, The New England Journal of Medicine, the Smithsonian, and many others. Over the years, Against The Clock has developed a solid and widely-respected approach to teaching people how to effectively utilize graphics applications while maintaining a disciplined approach to real-world problems.

Against The Clock has been recognized as one of the nation's leaders in courseware development. Having developed the *Against The Clock* and the *Essentials for Design* series with Prentice Hall/Pearson Education, the firm works closely with all major software developers to ensure timely release of educational products aimed at new version releases.

About the Authors

Erika Kendra holds a BA in History and a BA in English Literature from the University of Pittsburgh. She began her career in the graphic communications industry as an editor at Graphic Arts Technical Foundation before moving to Los Angeles in 2000. Erika is the author or co-author of more than fifteen books about graphic design software, including QuarkXPress, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe InDesign, and Adobe PageMaker. She has also written several books about graphic design concepts such as color reproduction and preflighting, and dozens of articles for online and print journals in the graphics industry. Working with Against The Clock for more than seven years, Erika was a key partner in developing the new Portfolio Series of software training books.

Gary Poyssick, co-owner of Against The Clock, is a well-known and often controversial speaker, writer, and industry consultant who has been involved in professional graphics and communications for more than twenty years. He wrote the highly popular *Workflow Reengineering* (Adobe Press), *Teams and the Graphic Arts Service Provider* (Prentice Hall), *Creative Techniques: Adobe Illustrator*, and *Creative Techniques: Adobe Photoshop* (Hayden Books), and was the author or co-author of many application-specific training books from Against The Clock.

Contributing Authors, Artists, and Editors

A big thank you to the people whose comments and expertise contributed to the success of these books:

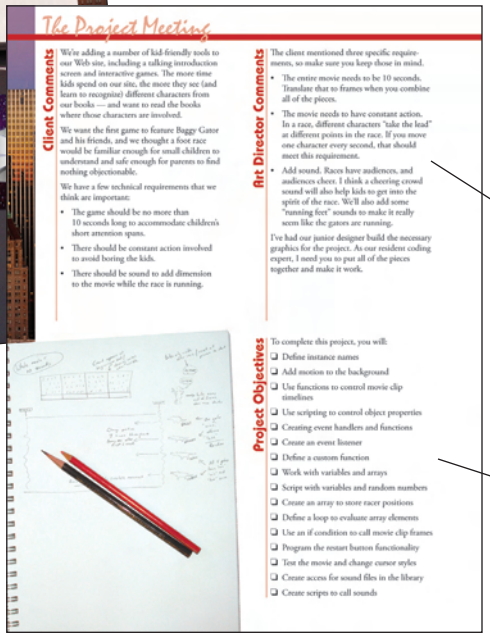
- **Sharon Neville**, Technical Communications Consultants
- **Kara Hardin**, Pensacola Community College
- **Janet Frick**, Training Resources LLC
- **Dean Bagley**, Against The Clock, Inc.
- **Debbie Davidson,** Sweet Dreams Designs
- **Feroz Hassan** and **Sudha Iyer**, Teqnium Consultancy Services

Thanks also to Laurel Nelson-Cucchiara, editor, and Angelina Kendra, proofreader, for their help in making sure that we all said what we meant to say.

Walk-Through

Project Goals

Each project begins with a clear description of the overall concepts that are explained in the project; these goals closely match the different "stages" of the project workflow.

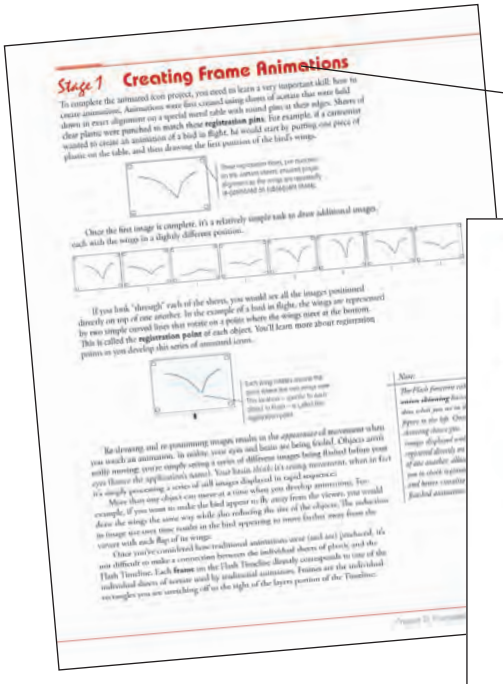


The Project Meeting

Each project includes the client's initial comments, which provide valuable information about the job. The Project Art Director, a vital part of any design workflow, also provides fundamental advice and production requirements.

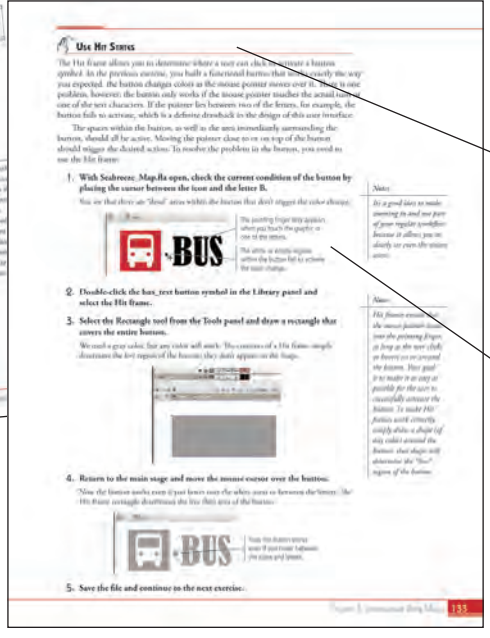
Project Objectives

Each Project Meeting includes a summary of the specific skills required to complete the project.



Real-World Workflow

Projects are broken into logical lessons or "stages" of the workflow. Brief introductions at the beginning of each stage provide vital foundational material required to complete the task.

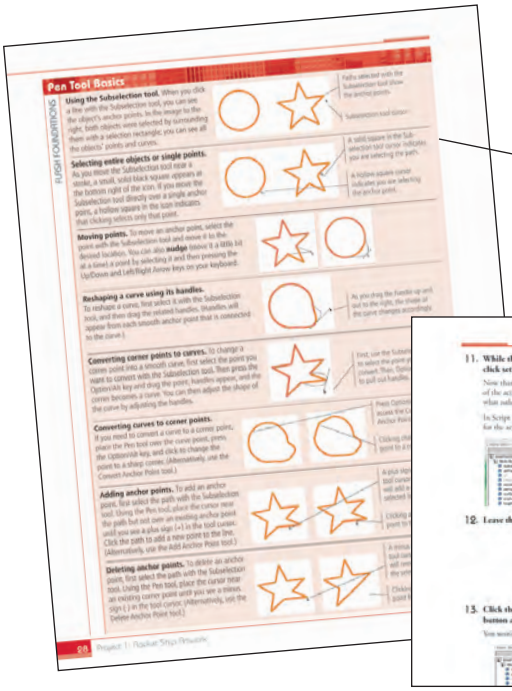


Step-by-Step Exercises

Every stage of the workflow is broken into multiple hands-on, step-by-step exercises.

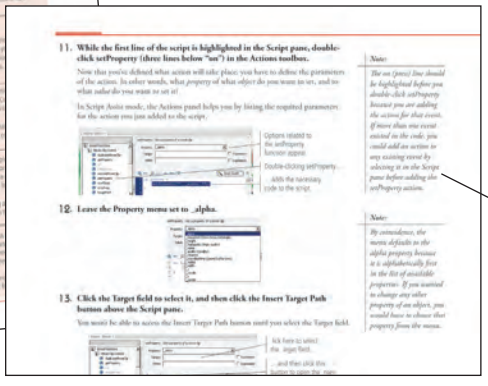
Visual Explanations

Wherever possible, screen shots are annotated so students can quickly identify important information.



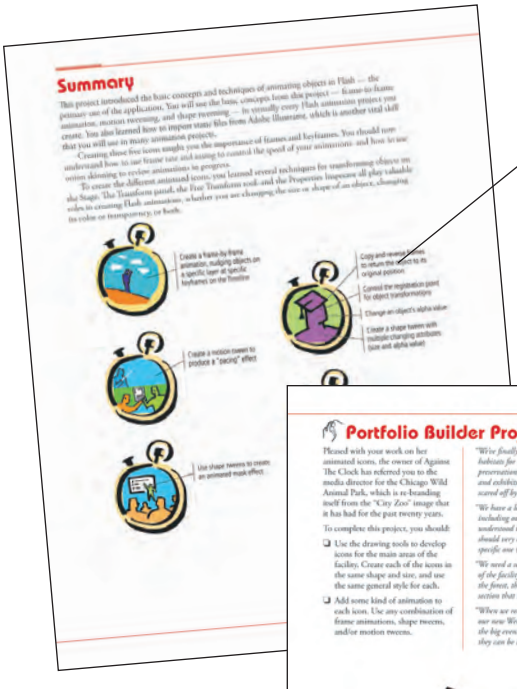
Flash Foundations

Additional functionality, related tools, and underlying graphic design concepts are included throughout the book.



Advice and Warnings

Where appropriate, sidebars provide shortcuts, warnings, or tips about the topic at hand.



Visual Summary

Using an annotated version of the finished project, students can quickly identify the skills used to complete different aspects of the job.

Portfolio Builder Projects

Each step-by-step project is accompanied by a related freeform project, allowing students to practice their skills and exercise creativity, resulting in an extensive and diverse portfolio of work.

Projects at a Glance

The Against The Clock *Portfolio Series* teaches graphic design software tools and techniques entirely within the framework of real-world projects; we introduce and explain skills where they would naturally fall into a real project workflow. For example, rather than providing an entire chapter about publishing files (which most students find boring), we teach publishing where you naturally need to do so — when you complete an animated project.

The project-based approach in the *Portfolio Series* allows you to get in depth with the software beginning in Project 1 — you don't have to read several chapters of introductory material before you can start creating finished artwork.

The project-based approach of the *Portfolio Series* also prevents "topic tedium" — in other words, we don't require you to read pages and pages of information about text (for example); instead, we explain text tools and options as parts of a larger project (in this case, as static text in a solar system model and as dynamic text in a video playback module).

Clear, easy-to-read, step-by-step instructions walk you through every phase of each job, from creating a new file to saving the finished piece. Wherever logical, we also offer practical advice and tips about underlying concepts and graphic design practices that will benefit students as they enter the job market.

The projects in this book reflect a range of different types of Flash jobs, from animating a series of icons to building a model of the solar system to programming an interactive game. When you finish the eight projects in this book (and the accompanying Portfolio Builder exercises), you will have a substantial body of work that should impress any potential employer.

The eight Flash CS3 projects are described briefly here; more detail is provided in the full table of contents (beginning on Page viii).

Project 1 — *Rocket Ship Artwork*

- ❑ Setting Up the Workspace
- ❑ Using Layers to Develop Artwork
- ❑ Drawing in Flash
- ❑ Painting and Coloring
- ❑ Using Gradients

Project 2 — *Animated Icons*

- ❑ Creating Frame Animations
- ❑ Creating Motion Tweens
- ❑ Creating Shape Tweens
- ❑ Animating Scale and Transparency

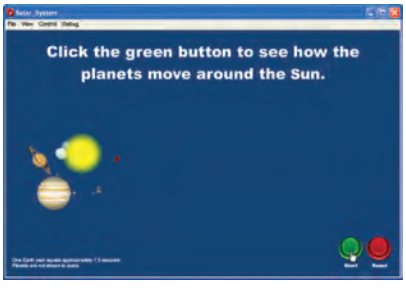
Project 3 — *Interactive Park Map*

- ❑ Creating Symbols
- ❑ Creating Buttons
- ❑ Creating Movie Clips
- ❑ Programming with ActionScript

Project 4

Solar System Model

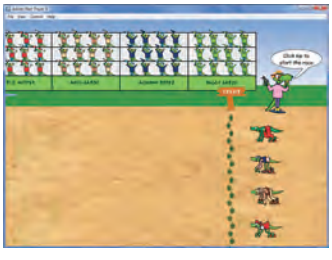
- ❑ Modeling Complex Animations
- ❑ Aligning Objects to a Path
- ❑ Working with Text
- ❑ Adding Movie Controls



Project 5

Gator Race Game

- ❑ Preparing for ActionScript
- ❑ Working with ActionScript 3
- ❑ Creating Event Handlers and Functions
- ❑ Working with Variables and Arrays
- ❑ Scripting Loops
- ❑ Adding Sound with ActionScript



Project 6

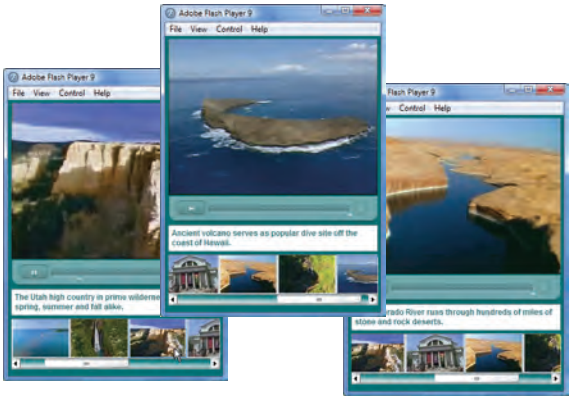
Talking Kid Site Intro

- ❑ Importing Sound into Flash
- ❑ Synchronizing Sound to Animation
- ❑ Integrating ActionScript

Project 7

Travel Video Module

- ❑ Encoding Video for Flash
- ❑ Working with Components



Project 8

Seabreeze Web Site

- ❑ Building Site Navigation
- ❑ Loading External Content

Some experts claim that most people use only a fraction — maybe 10% — of their software's capabilities; this is likely because many people don't know what is available. As you complete the projects in this book, our goal is to familiarize you with the entire tool set so you can be more productive and more marketable in your career as a graphic designer.

It is important to keep in mind that Flash is an extremely versatile and powerful application. The sheer volume of available tools, panels, and features can seem intimidating when you first look at the software interface. Most of these tools, however, are fairly simple to use with a bit of background information and a little practice.

Wherever necessary, we explain the underlying concepts and terms that are required for understanding the software. We're confident that these projects provide the practice you need to create sophisticated artwork by the end of the very first project.

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Prerequisites

The entire Portfolio Series is based on the assumption that you have a basic understanding of how to use your computer. You should know how to use your mouse to point and click, as well as to drag items around the screen. You should be able to resize and arrange windows on your desktop to maximize your available space. You should know how to access drop-down menus, and understand how check boxes and radio buttons work. It also doesn't hurt to have a good understanding of how your operating system organizes files and folders, and how to navigate your way around them. If you're familiar with these fundamental skills, then you know all that's necessary to use the Portfolio Series.

Resource Files

All of the files that you need to complete the projects in this book are on the provided Resource CD in the RF_Flash folder. The main RF folder contains eight subfolders, one for each project in the book; you will be directed to the appropriate folder whenever you need to access a specific file. Files required to complete the related Portfolio Builder exercises are in the RF_Builders folder.

The Resource CD also includes a WIP folder, which also contains (mostly empty) subfolders for each project in the book. This is where you will save your work as you complete the various projects. In some cases, the location of a file will be extremely important for later steps in a project to work properly; that's why we've provided a specific set of folders with known file names.

Before you begin working on the projects in this book, you should copy the entire WIP folder to your hard drive or some other recordable media such as a flash drive; when we tell you to save a file, you should save it to the appropriate folder on the drive where you put that WIP folder.

System Requirements

As software technology continues to mature, the differences in functionality from one platform to another continue to diminish. The Portfolio Series was designed to work on both Macintosh or Windows computers; where differences do exist from one platform to another, we include specific instructions relative to each platform.

One issue that remains different from Macintosh to Windows is the use of different modifier keys (Control, Shift, etc.) to accomplish the same task. When we present key commands, we always follow the same Macintosh/Windows format — Macintosh keys are listed first, then a slash, followed by the Windows key command.

System Requirements for Adobe Flash CS3:

Windows®

- Intel® Pentium 4 or higher or equivalent
- Microsoft® Windows XP with Service Pack 2 or Windows Vista™ Home Premium, Business, Ultimate, or Enterprise
- 512MB of RAM
- 2.5 GB of available hard-disk space
- 1024×768 monitor resolution with 16-bit video card
- DVD-ROM drive
- QuickTime 7.1 required for multimedia features

Mac OS

- PowerPC® G4 or G5 or Intel-based Macintosh
- Mac OS X v.10.4.8
- 512MB of RAM
- 2.5 GB of available hard-disk space
- 1024×768 monitor resolution with 16-bit video card
- DVD-ROM drive
- QuickTime 7.1 required for multimedia features