

Reviews



Morph Age 4

by L. Davenport

Morph Age is a program that will Morph images together - similar to the morphing faces in Michael Jackson's Black and White video. In addition, Morph Age will Warp (deform) a single image - treating it like clay that can be pushed and pulled to distort its image. The resulting morph/warp can be saved as a still image or as a QuickTime movie. BTW: The Pro version will also let you morph between two QuickTime movies.

When you first start, you are presented with a window that has three empty panes. Simply drag the images that you want morphed into either of the two left panes (or access them through iPhoto's media browser; or from iMovie if you have the Pro version). Under these panes are small drop-down menus that let you access all of your images (if you have more than two). All of the images that you bring in to Morph Age are also listed in the upper right hand corner of the window. You can grab one of these images and move it up or down to change the morphing order.

Before you can morph your images, you must first use Morph Age's Bezier Spline tool to drop points around the head and facial features. As you drop the points in the first image, corresponding points drop in all the other images. Since no two faces are alike, you next need to drag each group of points around the second (third/forth/etc) image so that the head, eyes, nose, and mouth match up. Once Morph Age knows the matching points/features it can easily morph between all the images.

Other available tools;

Layers let you set what areas sit on top of the other. If you look at Figure 3, you will see the chin of a man enlarging over his neck tie.

Colorizing lets you gradually change the color of a certain area. In Figure 3, you will see a male face changing from green back to normal - à la. the Hulk.

Blending lets you set how much of the first image combines with the second image.



Figure 1



Figure 2

My first experiment was morphing between photos of Mark, Jeff, and Gerry (Figure 1).

As you start inserting, pulling and pushing points around the faces, you can immediately see if you are getting the desired results by clicking on the play button. The right-most pane is a preview window which will show you how the morph looks in real-time. The Preview in Figure 1 is currently showing the morph between Jeff and Gerry.

In my first attempt, I just put points around the head and features, but I soon discovered that the shoulders didn't gradually morph between the three photos. They would just become visible. I redid the points to include the shoulders and now they slowly raise and lower between the three photos.

My first attempts at placing points were very simplistic - I made circles around all of the features. This worked fine for my needs, but if you want a more refined morph, Morph Age lets

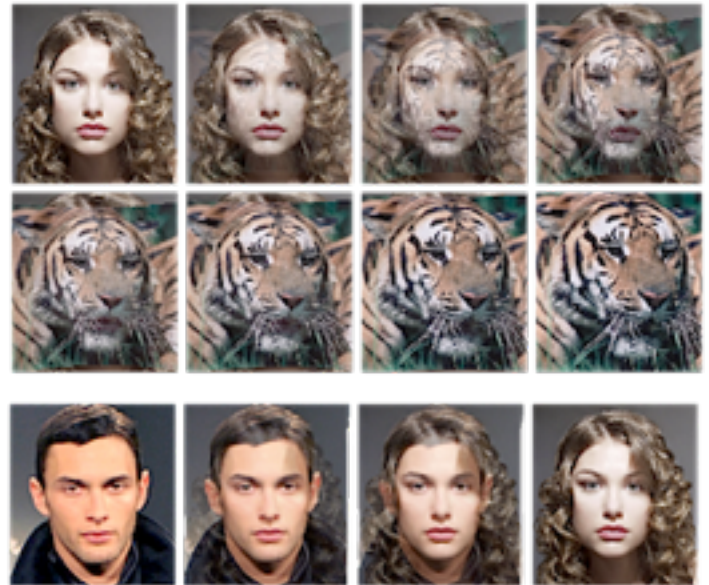
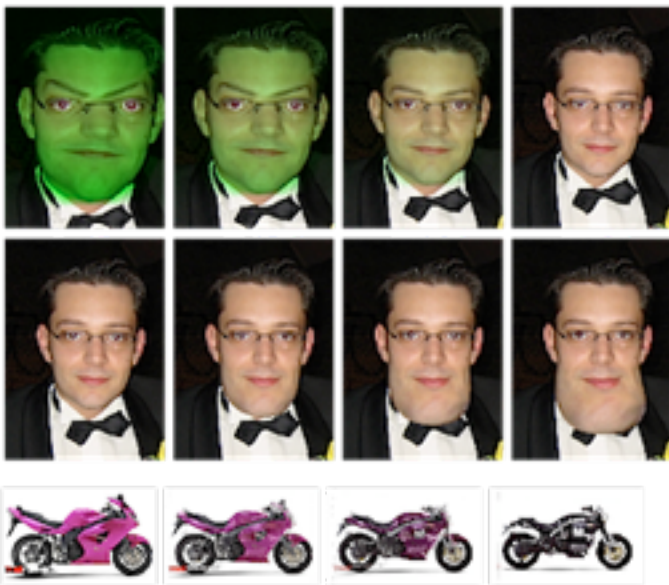


Figure 3

you enlarge the images so that you can use the Bezier points to conform exactly to the shape/contours of the features.

As mentioned earlier, Morph Age can also Warp a single image. Figure 2 shows a Warping of Jeff's face. I reduced the size of his forehead, moved his mouth up and enlarged his cheeks. The final warp can be saved either as a single image or as a QT movie that shows the gradual warping of his face.

In Morph Age's Timeline window, you can set the duration of the transitions (Figure 4).

The Morph Age PDF manual starts out with a step-by-step tutorial on how to do both the warping and morphing. It was fairly easy to follow and will have you up and running in no time. But being a person who hates to read manuals and wants to just jump in, I was able to get fairly decent results on my own. Though I did need to read the manual to learn all the fine points of the program.

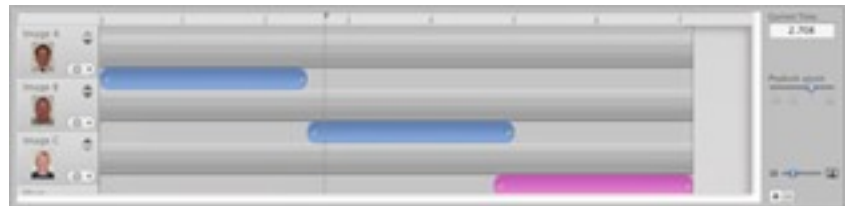


Figure 4

Since seeing something done is easier to understand than reading about it, the Creaceed web site has quite a few video tutorials that show you how to use Morph Age. They also give you several picture examples of morphs between people, people and animals and even between motorcycles (Figure 3).

I did not have the Pro version so I couldn't test morphing movies together. But one of the tutorials shows the morphing of two movies. Morphing movies together is not for someone in a rush. Since a lot more moving around of Bezier points is required.

Finished still images can be copied to the clipboard or saved as a TIFF, GIF, JPEG, PNG. Morphs are saved as QuickTime movies with the user setting the quality and frame rate.

According to the documentation, If your computer has the horsepower, Morph Age can work on images up to several mega pixels.

If you would like to see the finished morph between Mark, Jeff, and Gerry or another morph (from Creaceed) of a man morphing in to a tiger, go to Gerry's iDisk: Finder> Go menu> iDisk> Other user's public folder> Member name: gsimonson> Morph Age Folder> double-click on either the Mark/Jeff/Gerry or the Man-Tiger movies to play them. When you are done, open any window on your desktop and look for "Public" under Devices> Click on the eject button next to Public - this will disconnect you from Gerry's iDisk.

The Skinny

Evaluation: I was surprised that not only can you morph between two images, but you can morph between several images (the maximum that I tried was five pictures - I couldn't find any info on the total number of photos that you can morph between). Rendering seem pretty fast.

Requires: PowerPC or Intel Macs running OS 10.5 or higher - Including 10.6x, 64 MB of Video RAM (Graphics card).

Company: [Creaceed](#)

Street Price: (Regular version) \$59.95, (Pro version) \$149.95

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