

by L. Davenport

I reviewed Boris Continuum complete 3 way back in 2005. Sadly it went by the wayside when I upgraded both my Mac and Final Cut Pro. Now that 16 years have passed, I was curious to see how it has evolved. It turns out that the 2021 version is completely different. It has been rebuilt from the ground up with new filters and technology that renders everything on the graphics processor, resulting in significant performance boosts over previous versions of Continuum.



Figure 1. This is the FX Editor for the Film Stocks filter. The canvas is also split in half so you can see the before and after preview of the chosen filter.

Continuum FCP 2021 comes with a set of 90 creative effects (HDR compliant) and 1000s of professionally-designed drag and drop presets. These can be used in both Final Cut Pro and Motion.

Legacy Filters:

The new Continuum FCP filters do not share any common resources with the legacy Continuum FCP filters. As mentioned earlier, Continuum FCP 2021 is a brand new product. If you have a FCP or Motion project that includes instances of the legacy Continuum filters then you will need to keep the legacy Continuum filters installed and then install the new Continuum filters. Once you do this you will find all of the legacy Continuum filters, transitions, and generators along with all of the new Continuum FCP filters in a side-by-side configuration. BTW: This is what did and I am pleased to have access to both sets of filters. This review however will only cover the filters that come with the 2021 version.

FX Editor

An FX Editor preset browser is integrated into every Continuum FCP effect (Figures 1 & 3). The editor lets you browse through the presets, seeing how your video footage would look if you



Figure 2. There are filters that let you change the tint of your footage along with adding light rays.

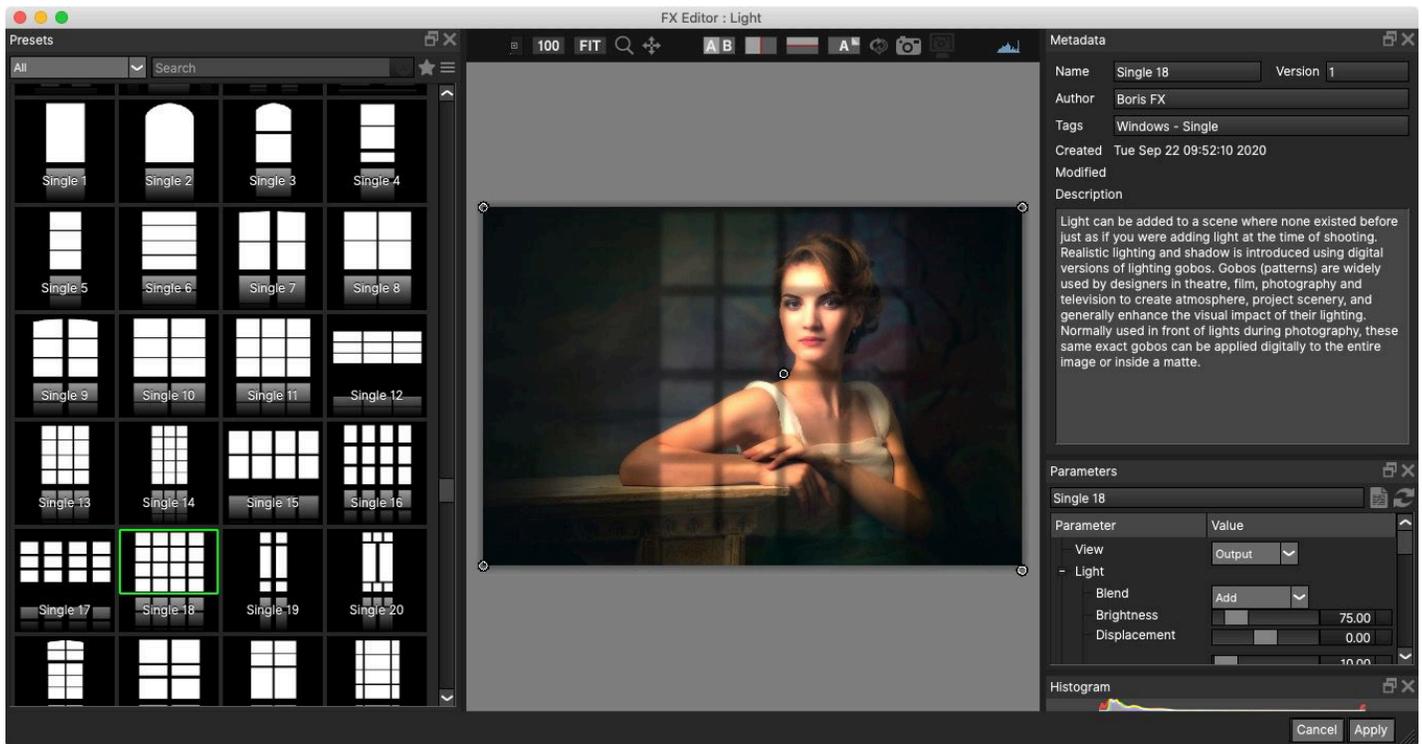


Figure 3. This is the FX Editor for the Light filter. It is showing part of the large Gobo preset library. FYI: A Grobo simulates real-life shadowing such as making it appear that light is streaming in through a window and onto the objects in your video. There is also a Displacement slider that makes it appear that the light is wrapping over objects in the image. →

applied the different film looks and effects. The effects are grouped in these categories: Art Looks, Blur, Color & Tone, Film Style, Grads & Tints, Image Restoration, Key & Blend, Lens, Lights, Optical Diffusion, Perspective, and Textures.

There are options for a 4-way color corrector, RGB color curves, a visual histogram, OCIO color management, before & after compare modes, and more. You can use these built-in parameter controls to easily create the exact look you want. Afterward, you can save your custom preset and use it at another time.

Film Stocks

Continuum FCP comes with many retro analog film stock looks. You can transform your digital video or stills into Kodachrome 35mm film, Polaroid process prints, and tons more with over 300+ drag and drop presets based on physical film scans from the world's leading film stock developers: Agfa, Fuji, Kodak, Ilford, Polaroid, Rollei, and more.

Set the desired film stock, control the film processing, and finish your look by setting the final print stock.

Color grades

Would you like to replicate the greenish hue of Aliens, the faded warmth of The Godfather II, or the golden tones that defined Titanic? The Continuum FCP's Grade filter gives you access to 100 presets developed by the world's leading colorists. You can now apply the same color grades as classic movies (listed by film title) with just one click.

Additional color grading options include grain generation, color correction, diffused lighting, gradient tints, gel overlays, lab processing emulation, and more.



Figure 4. The

Optical Filter Emulators

Continuum FCP Includes 8 filters and 110+ unique cus-

tomizable holdback mattes that allow the diffused or color-corrected light to push through user-defined areas to deliver added depth to shots.

Cinematographers can get the exact look they want without the added hassle and cost on set. They can quickly test out the digital equivalent of glass optical filters with a simple click. Control light and color, add soft-focus blur to the foreground in a scene, simulate rack focus, add fog, and more.

Photographic Gels

There are 200 lighting gels and 95 photographic filters with the same industry-standard names used in production. So you can easily warm up a shot with a “22 Deep Orange” or a “23A Light Red” glass filter emulator, cool a scene with “L725 Old Steel Blue”, isolate the effect to the foreground or background, and carefully control the light exposure.

Light Rays & Glows

The Light filter lets you add volumetric and atmospheric lighting effects to a scene where none existed before, just as if you were adding light at the time of shooting (Figure 2). For instance, you can add a God Ray in post with the option to include a user-defined light source positioned anywhere in the frame. It includes integrated shimmer and texture options.

Flat or mundane shots can be elevated into gorgeously deep glowing scenes with any of the 30 glow presets.

Grobos

Realistic lighting and shadow can also be added using digital versions of lighting gobos (for those who don't know, gobos make it look like light is streaming in through a window or door and onto the objects in your video).

The digital gobo library features 750+ options categorized by Abstract, Doors, Elements, Foliage, Snowflakes, Textures, and Windows (Figure 3). Continuum FCP also lets you import your own images into the Lights FX Editor so you can create your own custom library.

Some of the adjustable light parameters are:

- **Bend:** The user can set the blend mode to be used to add the light, choosing between: Add Screen or Subtract.
- **Brightness:** Sets the intensity of the light.
- **Displacement:** Displaces the gobo by the luminance values of the image. This “fakes” the effect of light wrapping over objects in the image (Figure 3).
- **Blur:** Sets the softness of the light.
- **Gels:** Photographers, cinematographers and lighting designers use colored filters or gels in front of lights to create mood. This filter has the colors needed to achieve the mood that you are looking for.
- **Color:** Sets the color of the light through the use of a standard color picker.

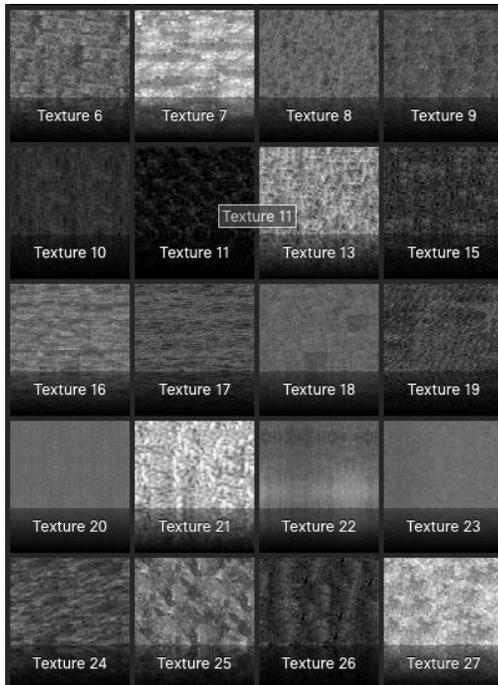


Figure 5. There are over 100 customizable textures that you can overlay on your video clips.



Figure 6. This is a small sampling of the 90 different lens flairs that you can apply to your video.

Silicon Summit

- **Shadows:** The user can set the intensity of the shadows. The Brightness parameter will darken only those areas that are not being affected by the Light settings.



Lens Flares

The Lens Flare filter has over 300 realistic flare presets. You can add subtle natural flares, flashy flares (like seen in sci-fi films), or anything in between. Simply drag and drop a lens flare onto your footage.

You can modify the flare with options including edge trigger, integrated apply modes, occlusion, and flicker.

The Flare Editor also lets you create your own custom flares by adding or removing elements and then you can save it for future use.

Texture generator

There are over 100 customizable textures that you can overlay on your video clips (Figure 5). There are parameter sliders that can be used to adjust the Amount, complexity, and Randomization of the chosen texture.

Auto-Animating 2D/3D Titles

There are around 70 auto-animating and fully customizable title templates, lower thirds, and graphics (Figure 7). Just select a title template from the Titles group and add it to your scene. Then double-click the text in the viewer window to add your own words.

The Title templates include animated text objects, integrated cast shadows, mirrored shimmering reflections, lens flares, semi-transparent backdrops, glows and glitches, and banner reveals.

Particle Illusion Generator Freebee

Whether you purchase Continuum FCP 2021 or not, you should take advantage of the free [Particle Illusion Generator](#) (stand alone application) that BorisFX is currently offering. This is a paired down version of their \$250 Particle Illusion premium filter but it still comes with tons of animated particle effects. These effects include Fireworks, Sparks, Smoke, Meteor trails, a Wall of fire, Glow beams, Water sparkles, TV snow, Rippling grass, and much more.

Particle Illusion lets the user quickly and easily add amazing particle effects to any image, animation or video. These can be used for motion graphics, visual effects, titles, lower thirds, and background graphics.

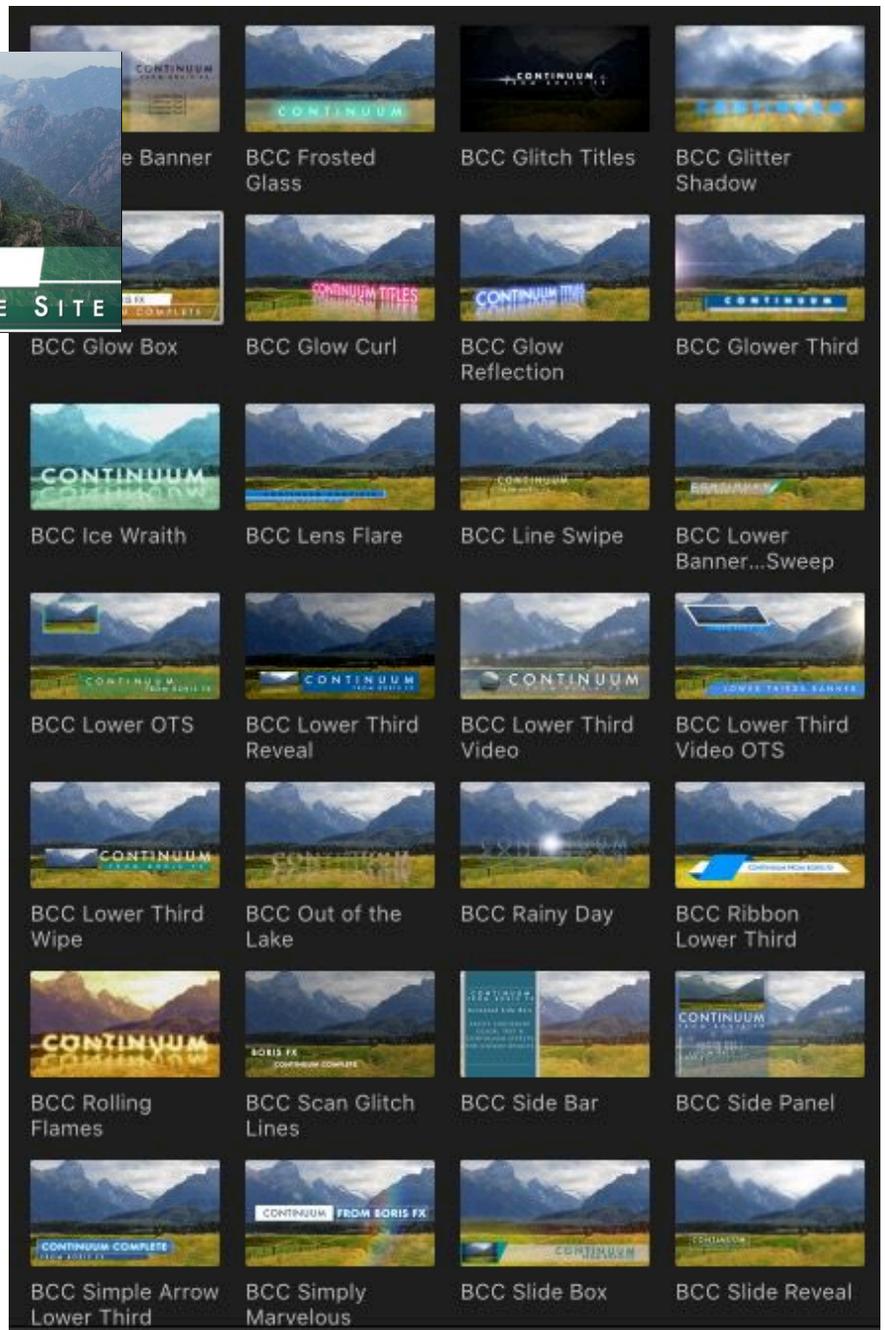


Figure 7. Continuum FCP also comes with a wide variety of 2D and 3D animated titles that you can add to your videos.

The Skinny

Evaluation: These are professional quality filters that anyone would be happy with adding to their videos. I like that I can have the best of both worlds - use of both the new Continuum FCP 2021 filters and the Legacy filters. This gives me tons of filters that I can use.

Requires: FCP 10.5.4 or higher, macOS 10.15.6 or higher, Intel CPU with four or more cores, M1 is supported in Rosetta 2, Memory: 8 GB or more, Disk: High-speed disc array or SSD storage

Company: [Boris FX](#)

Price: There are two options - a Perpetual (one time) license: \$295 or a Subscription Monthly Plan: \$25 or Yearly Plan: \$195

[Available Trial Copy](#)