



Creative Content

Australian Videocamera Magazine

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January was reviews month!

After a bit of a drought in product, January became very much a month of doing reviews. And a diverse range of products it was oo!

There are cameras of all different types - from "standard mirrorless, full frame models like the Panasonic LUMIX S5X II and Canon EOS R8, through to a special sports tracking camera and even a dedicated planetary camera.

All of these are included in this edition

Of course there had to be a gimbal in there too.

However I did find the time to put together the special edition Drone e-Magazine and the take up has been very gratifying - thank you! *(If you are not aware of it yet, this is a free download and you can get it at <https://cre-8.com.au/e-mag-download/> where you'll also find the free GoPro e-Magazine.)*

Finally it appears there is stil a bit of a gremlin in the system with regards to the weekly newsletter getting sent multiple times. I am looking at this as we speak and will get it sorted I promise and apologies.

As always, thanks for the support. And please feel free to contact me with any suggestions or gripes.

David Hague
Managing Editor / Publisher

Contact Me

Phone:

+61 (0)456952227

Email:

david@creativecontent.au

Website

<https://creativeconent.au>

Facebook:

CreativeContentAU

X/Twitter:

@CreativeContent

Instagram:

CreativeContent

TikTok: David Hague

YouTube: @CreativeContent_

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In Case You Missed It...

In each monthly e-magazine I'll publish a short summation, with links, of interesting stories and other information that was posted to the website over the preceding period.

This way you can go straight to the ones that interest you rather than having to browse the entire website and search out stories.

Canon Reveals RF 16 28mm F2.8 STM Lens

Canon Australia today announces the new RF 16-28mm F2.8 IS STM, an ultra-wide full frame lens that's small yet powerfully creative. Thanks to an expansive 16-28mm range and a fast f/2.8 aperture, plus 5.5-stops of optical image stabilisation[1],[2] and weather-resistance[3], it's a

lightweight and compact zoom that's ready to reward with incredible stills and videos.



With a design that's based around performance and practicality, the RF 16-28mm F2.8 IS STM lets you capture compel-

ling travel and landscape shots as well as impactful architectural and interior views, with a perspective that packs more into the frame. A wide aperture also inspires a more creative approach to your photography and videos, allowing you to isolate a subject at f/2.8 or keep shooting when light levels drop. And when luggage space is limited, the lens makes a compact companion for travel photography because it retracts to 91mm

The full story is [here](#)

Sony Electronics adds more features to upcoming BURANO

Sony Electronics has announced new features and operational improvements that have been added to the upcoming BURANO

NO Version 2.0 firmware update.



Planned to be released in March 2025, BURANO Version 2.0 offers many new features and improvements requested by the user community, including new recording formats, new 1.8x de-squeeze, and monitoring improvements.

The full story is [here](#)

Geofencing removed from DJI Fly app in the US

Just over a week ago, DJI an-



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news and information

In Case You Missed It... (cont'd)

nounced updates to its geofencing system which apply to its consumer and enterprise drones in the US. These changes affect the commonly used DJI Fly App



that is available as an app for both iOS and Android smartphones as well as being built into DJI dedicated controllers.

With this update, DJI's Fly flight app operators will see prior DJI geofencing information replaced to display official Federal

Aviation Administration (FAA) data. Areas previously defined as Restricted Zones or No-Fly Zones) will be displayed as Enhanced Warning Zones. In these zones, in-app alerts will notify operators flying near FAA designated controlled airspace. This effectively places control back in the hands of the drone operators.

The full story is [here](#).

Firmware Updates for Pana LUMIX S and G Series Cameras

Panasonic has announced a series of new firmware updates for its full-frame mirrorless LUMIX S5II and S5IIX, as well as its Micro Four Thirds mirrorless GH7 and G9II cameras, aimed at improving the shooting experience and

enhancing functionality

Aaron Waters, Product Marketing Manager, Imaging, Panasonic, said: "In line with the LUMIX commitment to supporting creators, this latest firmware adds value by further upgrading the capabilities of key S and G Series cameras. Users can enjoy streamlined



operation with features such as expanded LUMIX Lab app compatibility, enhanced subject de-

tection, multiple frame markers and MP4 (Lite)."

The full story is [here](#).

Netflix Approved Camera

I am not personally sure why a camera should make any difference as I thought the content would be the deciding factor but there you go. Anyway, Blackmagic Design's Ursa Cine 12K LF



model has been added to the Netflix Approved Camera List.

Apparently Netflix requires 90%

In Case You Missed It... (cont'd)

of a program's final total runtime to be captured on approved cameras, which now includes the URSA Cine 12K LF alongside the Blackmagic URSA Mini Pro 4.6K G2 and Blackmagic URSA Mini Pro 12K OLPF.

The full story is [here](#).

Anti-Drone Technology. Better Get Used To It

In my Twitter / X Feed the other day I noticed an image of the Trump motorcade, and some of the vehicles had some weird antenna things on 'em. So I did a bit of digging, and for my readers who are into drones, it turned out they were part of a drone detection system.

A little more digging, and I discovered this info on just what types of anti-drone technology there is. I figured we'd probably best start to get used to it.

The full story is [here](#).

Photoshop unlocks creative collaboration with Live Co-Editing

Now, multiple creators can simultaneously access and edit documents from different computers—unlocking shared creativity and collaboration. This game-changing advancement, informed by community input, accelerates content creation, streamlines communication and improves creative collaboration for creators, teams and educators.

- Multiple designers can simultaneously work on a Photoshop document, splitting tasks to tackle and complete projects more efficiently, together.

- Creative teams at large enterprises can collaborate on highly matrixed projects, solicit stakeholder input and address feedback all in a single file.

- Creators can collect client feedback more intuitively by inviting them to directly collaborate on a file, view edits and make comments.

- Students can follow along live as educators demonstrate workflows and teach techniques in Photoshop.

Comments and edits can be made directly in a student's document by teachers to help enhance learning and contextualise feedback.

The full story is [here](#).

Zhiyun Offers Price reductions

In a special promotion to celebrate Chinese New Year, ZHIYUN is offering big savings of up to 20% on professional photography and video-making gear. There are limited-time offers on ZHIYUN's popular camera and smartphone stabilization systems, and portable lighting, including best-selling models from the Crane, WEEBILL and FIVERAY series

To get all the details, click [here](#)

Review: Canon EOS R8 v Canon EOS 5Ds

I decided to approach this a bit differently

To test the Canon EOS R8, I approached it from a different angle than the norm. Ordinarily, I'd probably take landscapes photos, or if at the right time of the year some motorsport shots. But this time, I thought why not? It's been a full moon, so why not use the R8 for some astrophotography?

So I asked Canon if they could also send an adaptor with the review unit so I could use my EF lenses I have for my own 5Ds and also the T-Ring adaptor for my Skywatch reflector telescope.

As it turned out, it was brilliant to use. The biggest difference was the weight. At nearly 1Kg (body

only), the 5Ds is a heavy camera whilst the R8 at ½ of that was less cumbersome when connected to the telescope.

The controls were easier too as the evolution of the design of Canons has to my mind simplified things somewhat and added easier functionality to basics like setting aperture, shutter speed and ISO.

Another advantage is with the LCD. The 5Ds has a fixed LCD screen, which when the camera can be at odd angles for astrophotography as is often the case, makes it hard to see be hard to see making focussing and framing difficult. Conversely, the R8 has a swing out LCD with 270° ro-

tation negating these issues.

One other major difference though swung in the favour of the 5Ds – battery life. The R8 is rated at 370 shots against the 5Ds at 700 so for astro stuff where you can take a lot of individual images to later “stack” into a composite, a larger battery capacity is a good thing.

But the pendulum goes back t'other way when it comes to ISO capability. The 5Ds maxes out at 12800, where-

as the R8 goes up to a whopping 102,400. And yes, I know I once queried who would ever use



that sort of level but later recanted when my good mate Ross Gibb from Ross Gibb Photogra-

Review: Canon EOS R8 v Canon EOS 5Ds (cont'd)

phy, a genius at nature photography and eminent motor sport snapper extraordinaire, gently

shoot race cars in low light and with headlights on using very high shutter speeds.

Conclusion

Pitting one camera against another on picture quality alone is potentially fraught with danger. There is always the one variable that cannot be calculated and that is the skill of the photographer. Give

chided me and gave me an example. He often uses high ISO to

someone who knows little about taking images or video, and no

matter how good the camera is, you'll not get decent results -or at least, not up to the capability of the camera.

This was proven to me many years ago on a vendor junket to Lady Elliot Island where about 8 journos were all given the exact same camera as a very well-known Aussie pro landscape photographer. This camera was a basic point and shoot that sold for around AUD\$600 at the time, and we were told to all take exactly the same photo – a beach sunset image – at exactly the same time.

Everyone could still tell which image was taken by the pro despite the fact all the images were identical

In this case, where I have pitted two cameras based on a specific usage, overall the R8 would be my choice. They both take excellent images, but the ergonomics of the R8 coupled with the lighter weight is the deciding factor.

The 5Ds when it was available (it is now discontinued) was AUD\$3299 body only. There are quite a few around on the 2nd hand market for AUD\$1600. The Canon EOS R8 brand new can be had for between AUD\$2000 and AUD\$2400 depending on who has a sale going, and in truth, battery life aside, you get a lot more camera for your money.

Mini Review: XBOT Go Chameleon

Now THIS is different.

Something that is a little left of field is the XBOT Go Chameleon. I've actually had this gadget sitting on my desk for a while now as I wasn't sure just how to approach reviewing it.

The XBOT Go Chameleon is nothing like we've seen before at a consumer level; it's a team sport tracker with different modes for different sorts of sport and uses your smartphone to get the imagery.

Follow Play

For example, take a basketball game. By putting the XBOT Go Chameleon / smartphone combo on the sideline and choos-

ing the FollowMe mode, it will automatically track the flow of play up and down the court. Additionally, the XBOT Go Chameleon will autonomously track players or the ball and intelligently zoom and pan.

Player Number Track

Additionally, you can set the XBOT Go Chameleon to track a particular player by their player number allowing athletes and team coaches to capture individual performances.

Because all sport is different, the developers have designed different algorithms for tracking for differing sports and these are se-

lected according via an app for the smartphone. Currently there are algorithms for soccer, basketball, golf and ice hockey, but in beta form at this stage, are additional algorithms for tennis, badminton, fencing and others. The app also supports the in-

Mini Review: XBOT Go Chameleon (cont'd)



corporation of a live customizable scoreboard into recordings which could be super useful as

live streaming to any RTMP supported service such as Facebook or YouTube is also available.

automatically optimizes the video for each platform.

Footage can be edited in the app so key moments say of a match can be extracted and shared with others via social media. Highlight reels created and the app

You also get 20GB of free cloud storage.

I haven't had the opportunity to try the XBOT Go Chameleon in a team sport environment at this point.

Getting the necessary permissions could be a hurdle for someone not directly involved with a team I would suggest.

In Testing

However, I did successfully test that it very successfully followed me around a room with no issue once I worked out that although an outstretched palm is the signal to go into "selfie" mode, it appears the XBOT Go Chameleon also needs to see your face.

My next test was to see if it would follow a DJI Mini 3 drone but had no luck on that score – as yet anyway.

Conclusion

At AUD\$509 (optional remote is a further AUD\$80) it isn't a casual purchase and it is a purpose built device, but the XBOT Go Chameleon is a clever piece of technology no doubt, and I am sure sporting families, fans and coaches / trainers will find a very good use for it.

This will be especially true with the expansion of differing algorithms for different disciplines.

For more info, see <https://xbotgo.com/>

Review: Panasonic LUMIX S5X II

Possibly the best I have used

In my experience, the majority of dSLR / mirrorless cameras were originally designed for still photography first and video has been a sort of afterthought. As the usage of dedicated video cameras / camcorders has dwindled though, more emphasis has been placed on the video side of things.

Design

Personally, I am still of the opinion the design of a dSLR / mirrorless is not ergonomically suited to the rigors of video shooting – although the addition of a gimbal such as the Zhiyun Cinepeer Crane 4E helps a lot – but the Panasonic LUMIX S5IIX shows that technically at least, they have caught up to a dedicated unit quite substantially.

Where to start?

Probably the video formats are the best place as via its 24.2MP sensor this full frame hybrid camera can shoot 4K 60p 4:2:2 10 bit and supports 6K RAW output in ProRes 422 if you plug in a USB based SSD recorder. I successfully used a Samsung T5 I normally have on my Blackmagic Design Pocket Cinema Camera 6K.

Speaking of which, the LUMIX S5IIX can also shoot Blackmagic RAW, but you do need a dedicated Blackmagic Video Assist unit if you wish to do that. Additionally, HFR/VFR 10 bit are supported as is V-Log.

SSD Supported

If no SSD is available, you can record to dual UHS-II slots. The ability to record proxy files whilst shooting makes maximum use of this feature. You can also live stream via WiFi or

via a tethered USB port.

Panasonic claim that as long as the ambient temperature is kept below 40° C, overheating will never be a problem.

Auto Focus

The auto focus system is impressive too, with a 779-Point Phase-Detection AF System. This ensures fast and accurate focusing on subjects, improving the quality of both still photos and video footage.

To minimise any camera shake a 5-Axis Sensor-Shift Image Stabili-



Review: Panasonic LUMIX S5X II (cont'd)

sation is used.

Other notable features include a 9 fps manual shutter or 30fps electronic one which is ideal for wildlife and sport shooters.

To view your images whilst shooting, there is a 3.68m-Dot 0.78x-Magnification OLED Live View Finder and a 3.0" 1.84m-Dot Tilt/Free-Angle Touch-LCD. Both were eminently usable in bright sunny conditions.

Weather Sealed

Speaking of sunny, the LUMIX S5IIX is fully weather sealed and

resistant to weather conditions like rain, dust, and snow.

The review model I have is married to an 85-200mm lens, almost perfect for my preferred shooting, and beautifully balanced. All the controls are logically placed, but one criticism is that the titling on each is not the standard white but a more grey-ish colour etched into the buttons and dials. This makes them a little hard to read what your setting is in less than perfect light, although I accept you'd learn pretty quickly which button is which.

Another issue I had was the flap cover for the mic and headphone ports wouldn't close and stay shut, which was irritating.

The Best?

Accepting these things though, the LUMIX S5IIX is possibly the best full

frame camera I have had the pleasure of using.

For the professional, at around AUD\$3K for the body only, the price is not in the stratospheric range, and you can get it with a 20-60mm lens for about AUD\$3500 (although I did find prices cheaper than this online so shop around).

The LUMIX S5IIX has a 5 year warranty.

Conclusion

I'd urge you to go to your local retailer and have a look and a play in store, and after doing so, I suspect you'll be as impressed as me.

For more information, see the Panasonic LUMIX website

review

review

Review: Zhiyun Cinepeer Crane 4E

Well priced and very, very functional



The DJI Ronin series of gimbals has long been touted as the industry leader. And with good reason. I have had the RS4 Pro for some time, complete with all the accessories you can get. And whilst the average user would never go to this extent and need all that grunt, it is an impressive piece of kit.

Camera Support

But Zhiyun also make some very impressive gear and seem to release it at a huge rate of knots. Latest to cross my desk is the new Zhiyun Cinepeer Crane 4E, a lightweight version of the respected Crane 4.

The Cinepeer Crane 4E supports an impressive array of camera makes and models right out of the box, such as those from Canon, Sony, Panasonic and Nikon, including full frame models like the Canon C70. From my own point of view, it also supports my Blackmagic Cinema Pocket Camera 6K Pro and Canon 5DS (but sadly not my Fujifilm X-S10).

One thing Zhiyun has concentrated on across all its latest models is ergonomics and ways of reducing operator fatigue. My review version did not come with the wrist rest or sling system that Zhiyun says decreases effort by 50%, but nonetheless I was able to operate the Crane 4E for a 20 minute stretch without too much issue, even with my dud right wrist (post carpal tunnel surgery y'know!).

If you wondered, the Sling Mode allows for adjustment of the grip's length and direction, making changes in shooting angles much easier and giving a dual-handle mode for different filming options.

Review: Zhiyun Cinepeer Crane 4E (cont'd)

Negates Bad Ergonomics

My one complaint about using dSLRs and mirrorless cameras for shooting my own thing, motor-sport, is almost negated by the use of a gimbal and sling system, and the smoother motion you get is of course a bonus.

For those that (for some reason) prefer to shoot in a vertical format, the Crane 4E has a clever orientation switching design without needing to add extra accessories, thanks to the integrated quick-release structure, thus saving time and increasing efficiency.

For those with compatible cameras, Bluetooth shutter control is available and there is an all-in-one follow focus system via a

built in wheel for quick adjustments of camera parameters and compatibility. Two servo focusers, enhance visual control over focus and zoom for sharper imagery.

The front dial is customizable letting you apply your favourite settings making them available at a touch.

To power the Crane 4E, the unit has a fast-charging 2600mAh battery allowing for a full charge in around 2 hours and giving 12 hours of operation on a single charge.

Zhiyun make sure that you shouldn't need to go looking for accessories to make it all work too. In the box were the Crane

4E, a screw in tripod mount, lens support bracket and screws, two quick release plates with both 3/8" and 1/4" screws, a heightening pad, Panasonic control cable, USB-C cable and even a M4 Allen key plus a Quick Start Guide.

Balancing

Balancing a camera on a gimbal has become second nature to me these days, but I have to say the Crane 4E is one of easiest and fastest I have come across. One thing, that on the surface might seem minor, but in the real world makes a heap of difference, is clear diagrams showing where the unlocking switches for each arm are.

So many times, I have had to visually hunt these down as some companies seem hell bent on disguising them!

All the operation controls are self-evident, and the touch sensitive display screen is very easy to read and follow in order to set everything up correctly. In fact, I was up and running within 10 minutes at most.

Conclusion

If you need a topflight gimbal, have a look at the Cinepeer Crane 4E. Take your camera with you and try it out in your local Camera House or wherever. I am sure you will be pleased with what you see and get for your AUD\$699.

Astrophotography

Part 3a

In my quest to get some half decent astrophotography images, I came across something I didn't know existed. It is from a company called ZWO and is called a Planetary Camera.



Astrophotography Part 3a

I'll be doing this part of the overall tutorial on Astrophotography in 2 Parts...here is part 1

The company makes a range of these, and the one I was advised to try was the AUD\$279 Model 662.

These cameras contain a small sensor made by Sony and are designed only to take astral images. And when I say a "small" sensor, I do mean small. The sensor in the 662 I was sent measures 4.8mm x 3.55mm with a resolution of 2.7 MP.

Compare that to say, the Canon EOSR8 I have been playing with that has a sensor of 24.2MP measuring 36mm x 24mm!

To use this planetary camera, instead of placing a standard camera into the viewfinder tube

on the telescope, the camera is inserted with a USB-C cable connecting it to a computer.

The resultant image the camera picks up is displayed in specialist capture software, with settings available to change exposure, gain and so on.

Software

ZWO has its own package for this that contains modules to capture planetary images or deep sky images, as well as for "stacking" captured images.

Once you are happy with the framing of the moon, Jupiter, Mars or whatever, you then hit the record button in the software

and a video is shot for a predetermined time. You can either set this or let the computer determine the time.

Once the capture is complete, the stacking software is then used to extract individual frames from the video and "stack" them together to form a composite image.

In theory, it all sounds very simple, but as I am finding, the reality is not quite that easy!

There is a lot of trial and error in getting the right image. Experts tell me the best way to learn is to use the Moon to start with, get that



perfected and then move onto Mars and Jupiter.

But even before trying that, just to get an image you can look at proudly and say you did it, to get a sense of achievement, some-



feature



one suggested using the free Stellarium software I have mentioned before to find a patch of night sky with LOTS of stars and shoot that.

At the moment, the Moon rise and set times and phases are not quite suitable – I'll have to wait a few weeks for that so I am going to try this second option.

There are also familiarity issues with the software, as with this camera, there is no auto white balance due to the sensor size, so if you try and get everything

aligned with the telescope and spotter scope to make lining up planets in the telescope easier, it does need a bit of playing around as in daylight, all the colours seem “wrong” – for example the leaves on a tree become bright red!

Additionally, with a small sensor, that alignment has to be spot on otherwise you will have a hell of a job getting something in the centre of the frame.

So as always, there is a learning curve. I'll keep you posted.

But one thing is for sure, looking at the results my peers are getting will make it all worthwhile when I have it right!

Editorial, Reviews, Tutorials and Interviews

While some people like to read reviews or see a tutorial in written form, more and more are obtaining their information via videos.

Earlier this year, I decided to expand what Creative Content / Australian Videocamera offered by including video tutorials and reviews, broadening this out to editorial and interviews as and when time and access to relevant content becomes available.

I also identified that the attention span of many is not long; for reviews, probably around 5 – 7 minutes. Consequently, all the videos I created are short form only.

This is NOT the complete list, but the more popular videos - for an absolute up to date and complete list of all the available videos, please visit my [CC-TV web page](#) or [YouTube channel](#)

Oh, and if you could register and give me a like, it will be greatly appreciated (and any suggestions too of course)!

Reviews



- [USB Chargers – Verbatim versus Belkin](#)
- [DJI Neo First Flight](#)
- [DJI Neo Voice Control](#)
- [GoPro Hero - The Right Camera?](#)
- [DJI MAVIC 3 Pro](#)
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