Keying with Boris Continuum Complete in Adobe After Effects

Both Boris Continuum Complete and Boris Continuum Complete AVX 3 provide a comprehensive suite of fully native filters that allow you to create precise keys. This tutorial combines multiple filters to solve some complex (but common) keying issues. Although the tutorial uses four filters, the BCC Chroma Key, BCC Matte Choker, BCC Color Balance and the new BCC Light Wrap filters, you will see how quickly you can create accurate keys using BCC or BCC AVX version 3. This is true even when you work with difficult-to-key DV footage.

This tutorial uses two QuickTime movies as example footage. The Clarissa chromakey footage was provided courtesy of the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network, www.aptn.ca. The underwater background was provided courtesy of ArtBeats, www.ArtBeats.com. You can complete this tutorial using your own media. You will need a greenscreen or bluescreen clip and a background clip. Keep in mind that some parameter values may vary slightly depending on the media that you use.

1. Edit your greenscreen footage above your background footage in the timeline. In this example, the Clarissa.mov appears on V2 above VUS127.mov on V1 in the timeline. This exercise will work with any bluescreen or greenscreen footage that you want.

2. Select the greenscreen clip in the timeline and choose Effect > BCC Keys & Matte > BCC Chroma Key.

The effect is applied to the selected clip and the filter parameters display in the Effect Controls window.

3. Use the eyedropper to choose a key Color from the image background.

If you are working with a human subject, pick a color from a background location close to the subject’s hair line, but not in the hair itself. If the default key Color pulls a matte which removes a lot of the source image, it can be difficult to use the eyedropper to select a different key Color. Temporarily hide the filter and pull the correct matte color from the unfiltered image.

4. Choose Show Matte from the Output menu. Show Matte allows you to view the matte as you adjust it. Set the Output menu to Composite before rendering.

5. Lower the Density to about 78. Decreasing Density makes transparent areas more transparent and opaque areas more opaque. Too much Density can degrade the matte.

6. Return the Output menu to Composite.
Notice that edges are a little bit of a problem. You will fix this by adding a second filter.

7. Choose **Effect > BCC3 Keys & Matte > BCC3 Matte Choker**.

BCC Matte Choker is a tool for the often frustrating task of adjusting mattes that are not quite right. A first-pass matte often has unwanted holes in areas that should be opaque, and/or unwanted spots in areas that should be transparent. These problems can usually be fixed with the Matte Choker.

8. In the Effect Controls window, scroll down to view the controls for the BCC Matte Choker filter. You may want to click the **disclosure triangle** next to the BCC Chroma Key filter.

9. The default values for the BCC Matte Choker filter achieve what you want; they clean up the edges of the key. However, in the example footage, the Clarissa.mov is warm and saturated while the background VUS127.mov is cooler and less saturated. You will fix this by applying another filter.

10. Choose **Effect > BCC3 Colors & Blurs > BCC3 Color Balance**.

11. In the Effect Controls window, scroll down to view the controls for the BCC Color Balance filter. Color Balance performs a true photographic RGB color correction, allowing you to make independent adjustments to the red, green, and blue channels of the image.

   Now you will adjust the color balance to make the foreground more closely match the background. **Red Balance**, **Green Balance**, and **Blue Balance** adjust the relative intensity of each corresponding RGB channel.

12. With the example footage, you might try increasing Blue Balance. However, since she’s more saturated than the background it’s probably better to set **Red Balance** to around -40, **Green Balance** to around -20. Leave **Blue Balance** at 0.

13. Choose **Effect > BCC3 Keys & Matte > BCC3 Light Wrap**.

   The BCC Light Wrap reflects a background image around the edges of a foreground image to form a border. This creates the illusion that light from the background image is reflected onto the foreground image. This creates a more convincing composite by making it appear as if the images were shot in the same environment.

14. In the Effect Controls window, assign your background track to the **Background menu**. In this example, the VUS127.mov is assigned as the background.
15. Set the View menu to Wrap on Black. The View menu lets you choose how to display the image. Wrap on Black displays only the wrap (and not the source image) composited over a black background. This is useful when setting up the effect.

16. Now you will adjust Width to makes it look like light from the tank is reflecting on her. Width controls the width of the reflection or wrap that is generated. Higher numbers result in a larger border. Set Width to 25.

17. Set Softness to 13. The Softness parameter softens the edges of the border image that is reflected or wrapped.

18. Slightly increase Lightness. Lightness sets the lightness value of the reflected image. Negative values make the reflection darker and positive values make the reflection lighter.

19. Return the View menu to Normal.

Now you’re finished. You’ve keyed your image, choked the matte you created, color corrected the foreground and added a Light Wrap filter to create a more realistic key.