



**VISUAL  
QUICKSTART  
GUIDE**

**ANDRE PERSIDSKY**

# **DIRECTOR**

## **FOR MACINTOSH & WINDOWS**

*Teach yourself Director the  
quick and easy way! This  
Visual QuickStart Guide uses  
pictures rather than lengthy  
explanations. You'll be up  
and running in no time!*

**VISUAL QUICKSTART GUIDE**

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# **DIRECTOR 7**

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Visual QuickStart Guide

## **Director 7 for Macintosh and Windows**

Andre Persidsky .

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# INTRODUCTION

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This book teaches the fundamentals of using Macromedia Director, an exciting and challenging program for creating animation and multimedia productions for CD-ROM, your local network, or the Web.

With this *Director 7 Visual QuickStart Guide* you learn how to perform all the steps involved in creating Director projects, or *movies* as most people call them. The book covers how to:

- ◆ Create and assemble cast members in Cast windows.
- ◆ Animate cast members on the stage.
- ◆ Build a movie frame-by-frame in the score.
- ◆ Create and edit cast members in the Paint window or new Vector Shapes window.
- ◆ Control movie playback, set scene transitions, alter color palettes, and add interactive controls to your movies using drag-and-drop behaviors.
- ◆ Produce a Shockwave-format file for distributing a movie on the Internet.
- ◆ Use Xtras, add-on modules that provide extra features.
- ◆ Introduce yourself to Lingo, Director's scripting language.

## About This Book

In the Visual QuickStart Guide format, this book provides clear instructions, supported by many illustrations. Where necessary, you'll find concise explanations—without any distracting fluff. The idea is to get you up and running as quickly as possible through practical examples.

## How to Use This Book

If you have used any other Visual QuickStart guides, you will find this book familiar. Each chapter offers a series of step-by-step instructions for completing essential tasks. As you work through the tasks, you gain an understanding of the program features and how to exploit them. Occasional tips provide hints for working efficiently, and illustrations demonstrate the techniques clearly.

The chapters unfold sequentially. The early chapters assume that you don't know anything that I introduce in a later chapter. You can use this book with the index to find out how to do something, but it's set up to make it easy to learn from scratch as you go through the book from chapter to chapter. You could skim some of the later chapters in the book because they detail how to do perform tasks that not all Director users need, but I recommend that you follow chapters one through five in order. Those first five chapters build on each other to help you quickly learn how to make and play a simple Director movie.

## New in This Edition

This new edition of the book covers the latest version 7 features. Like the program itself, this edition of the book is completely updated to make it even easier to use than previous versions. Also, for the first time both the Macintosh and Windows versions of the program are covered in this one book, although you still have to buy two versions of the program to make movies for both platforms.

## About Conventions in This Book

Different computer books use terms differently, so it's important to know how this book uses common terms.

*Click* means pressing down and releasing the Macintosh mouse button, or pressing down and releasing the left mouse button on Windows.

*Drag* means to hold the mouse button down and then move the mouse. You release the mouse button when you finish dragging.

### Menu Commands

This book writes menu and command choices in the form of Menu name > Command > Subcommand. For example, if I need to tell you to choose Media Element from the Insert menu and then to select Bitmap from the submenu that pops out to the side, I can save us all a lot of trouble if I say instead, "Choose Insert > Media Element > Bitmap."

### Keyboard Shortcuts

This book scatters keyboard shortcuts for commands sparingly throughout the book. There are two reasons for being stingy with the keyboard shortcuts in the step-by-step instructions:

- ◆ It's distracting to have a choice of how to do something when you're trying to learn techniques.
- ◆ We all have so many PINs and passwords to remember that it's smart to be selective about what new things we commit to memory. Once you have worked with the program, you will know which commands you use so repeatedly that it's worth the trouble to learn the shortcut. Then refer to Appendix B for a handy reference to the menus and their keyboard shortcuts.

## About Cross-Platform Issues

Director 7 for Windows and Director 7 for Macintosh differ very little. That's why it makes sense to produce a single book that covers both versions of the program.

### Illustrations

Figures that illustrate the tasks in this book come from both Mac and Windows versions of Director 7. Only a few elements of the program actually offer different choices in the two versions, and the other differences in the figures are merely cosmetic.

### Command and Modifier Keys

Modifier keys for keyboard commands differ on the Mac and on Windows. Where I use the command and modifier keys (such as Shift, Alt, and Option), I say which keys to look for. Here's an example: "Hold the Alt key (Windows) or Option key (Mac) while dragging the Lasso."

The Shift key works the same way on both types of computers.

The Command key on the Mac is the one that has the apple and cloverleaf symbols on it.

### Features That Differ on Mac and Windows

Some techniques are performed differently on Windows and the Mac. Thus, in a few places a step has one method for Mac and one for Windows. Those steps are clearly labeled (and there aren't very many of them).

Even rarer are tasks that differ completely on the two types of computers. In those cases I've written totally different instructions, and I tell you about it in the heading for the task. For example, only the Macintosh can record sounds into Director, and so there is a task called "To record sounds directly into Director (Mac)."



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# DIRECTOR BASICS

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Macromedia's Director is an extensive multimedia development tool. Use it to create animation, interactive movies, marketing presentations, technical simulations, and even full-scale commercial productions such as entertainment titles for CD-ROM and the Web.

Director's powerful tools take some getting used to because they work differently than any other program you may have used. (If you've done sound-sequencing or digital video editing, you might be in more familiar territory.)

Let's begin with a visual overview of the program so you can see how its parts work together. If you're new to Director, you'll find it worthwhile to take a few minutes to go through this chapter even if you're itching to get started. And you'll be rolling up your sleeves and plunging into the program before the end of the chapter.

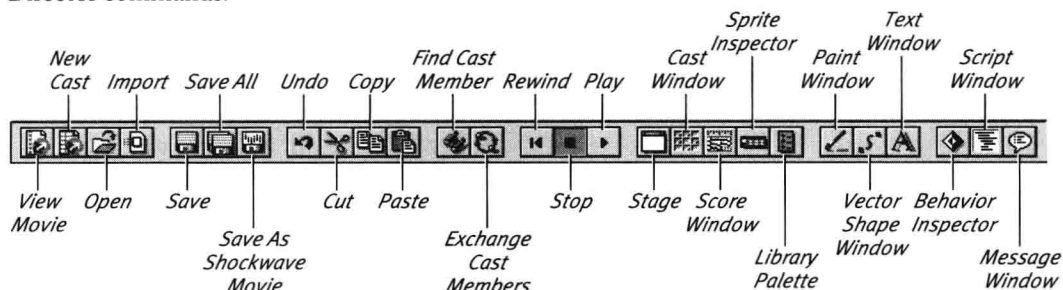
In this chapter you'll learn how to open the program, start a new movie, update movies produced with earlier versions of the program, use the Help system, set preferences, and find shortcuts. You'll also see an overview of the workflow for completing a project.

If you're someone who begins to learn a program by cruising through all the menus, turn to Appendix B, Menus and Shortcuts, for a complete array of the Director menus.

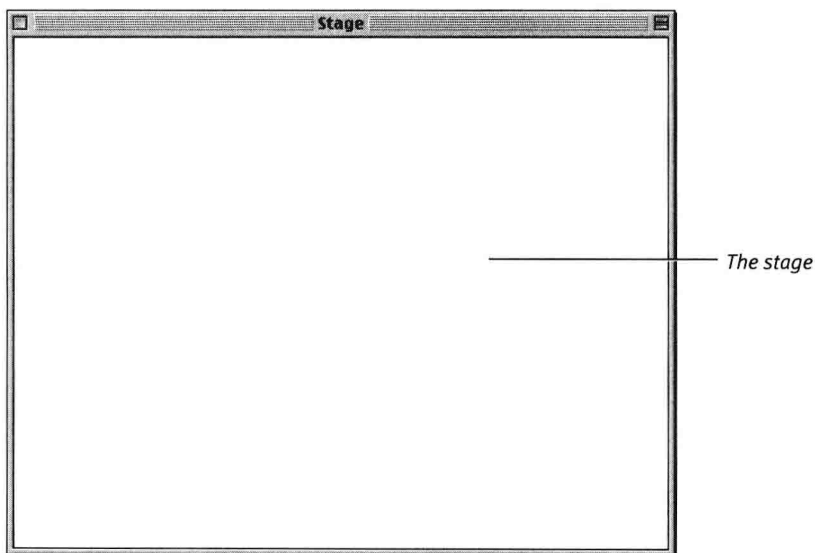
## About the Stage

The Director stage (**Figure 1.2**) serves as the window to the visual elements of a Director movie. Naturally, the stage is empty when you first open the program; it's your blank slate, awaiting your decisions about what to include in the movie.

The toolbar (**Figure 1.1**), which is nearly always visible while you work with Director, provides quick access to the most important Director commands.



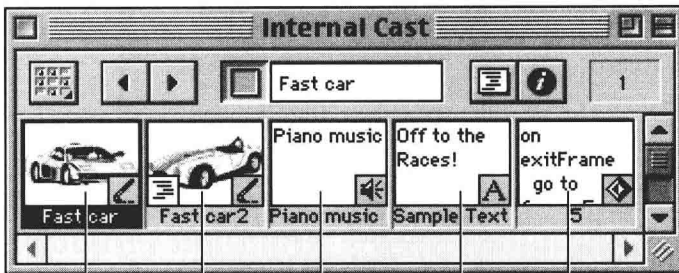
**Figure 1.1** The toolbar provides buttons that act as handy shortcuts to Director commands.



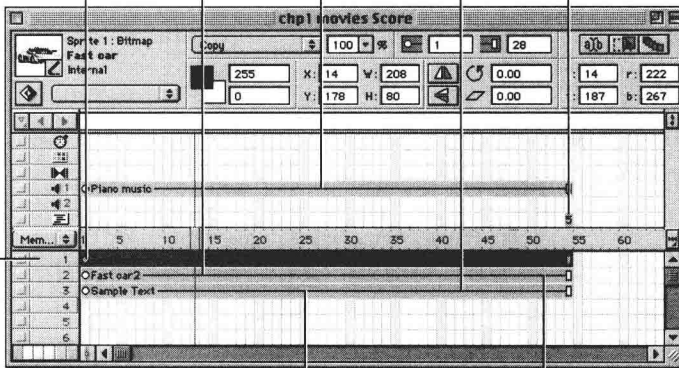
**Figure 1.2** The stage opens empty when you first launch Director. Here you compose elements of your movie and play it back for review. On the stage you control the position of visual elements within the playback area.

## About Cast, Score, and Stage Interaction

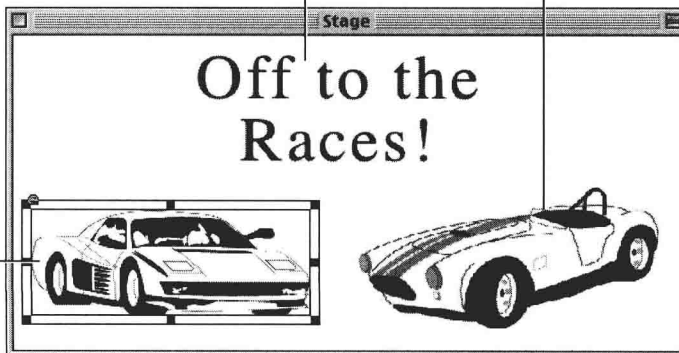
You build a Director movie by organizing cast members (**Figure 1.3**) in the score (**Figure 1.4**). This is the only way to control nonvisual elements that you can't see on the stage (**Figure 1.5**). You also use the score to set how long things remain active in the movie.



**Figure 1.3** Cast members, stored in Cast windows, are the multimedia elements that comprise a movie. Cast members can be images, animation sequences, text, sounds, GIF animations, transitions, and more.



**Figure 1.4** The score shows a detailed grid that represents all the details of a movie—over time.

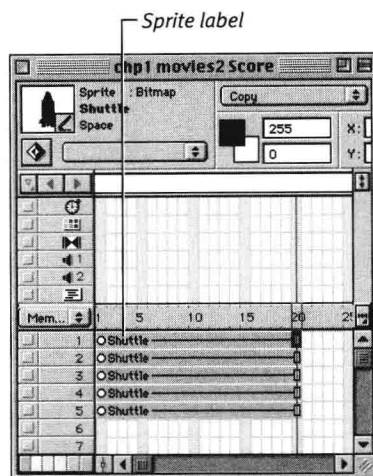


**Figure 1.5** You arrange images of the cast members in position on Director's stage to set the scene for one frame of the movie, which is a lot like a single frame of a Hollywood movie, or a single photograph in a roll of film. Then you rearrange the cast manually or with Director's commands to animate the scene over a sequence of frames.

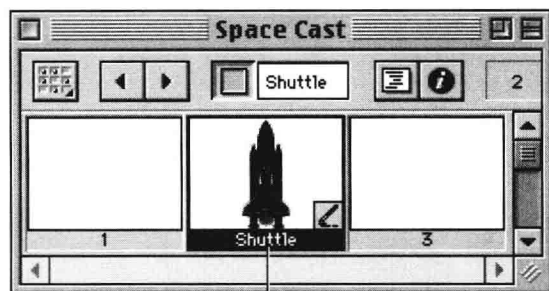
## About Sprites and Cast Members

When you add a cast member (**Figure 1.6**) to a frame, you don't add a bulky copy of the cast member; you add an object called a *sprite* (**Figure 1.7**). The sprite points to the cast member but takes up very little space on disk and in computer memory, so you can make a movie of many frames populated with many sprites without overflowing your hard disk.

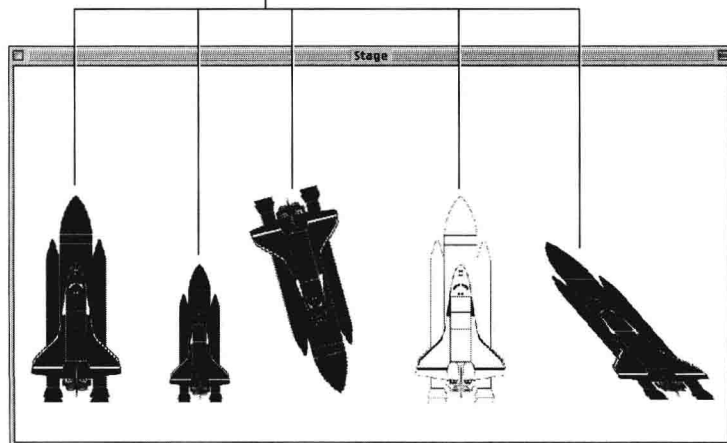
You can base many sprites on a single cast member. Each sprite of a cast member can have unique properties that define how, where, and when the cast member appears in a movie. You can think of a cast member as a template, and a sprite as an instance of the cast member. You can build a scene with only a few sprites (**Figure 1.8**).



**Figure 1.8** Look at the sprite labels in the score to see that all five of the sprites come from the shuttle cast member.

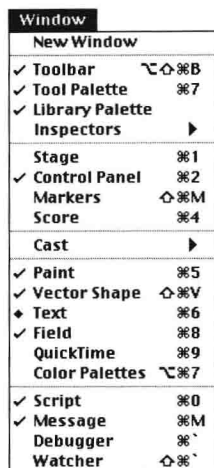


**Figure 1.6** You can create many sprites in a movie from a single cast member. They can all look alike, or you can change their appearance and add effects so they look very different.

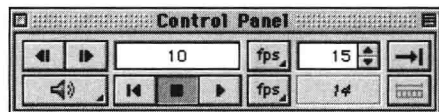


**Figure 1.7** All these shuttle sprites come from the same cast member.



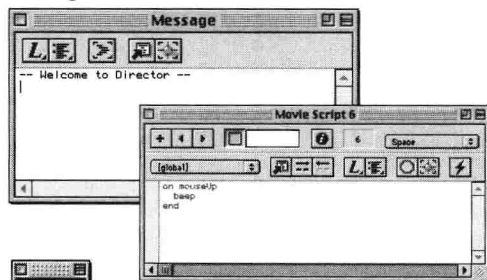


**Figure 1.9** A checkmark along a Window menu item means that its window is open. A diamond indicates the active window.



Playback Control Panel

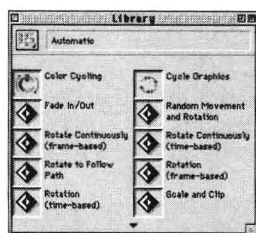
Message window



Script window (for writing and editing control code in Lingo)



Tool palette

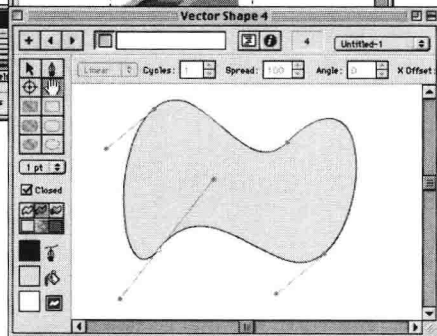
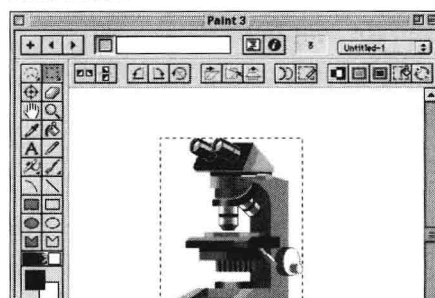


Library palette

## About Director Windows

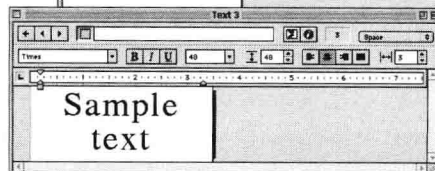
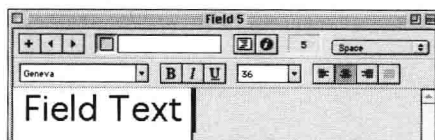
In addition to the stage, score, and Cast windows, Director provides work windows for specific tasks that you perform as part of making a movie. The Window menu lets you access the work windows and tools of Director. Later chapters explain how to use these tools.

Paint window



Vector Shape window

Field Text window



Text window