Application Reviews for April

Comic Life 3 for the Macintosh
and
Comic Life 3 for the iPad and iPhone
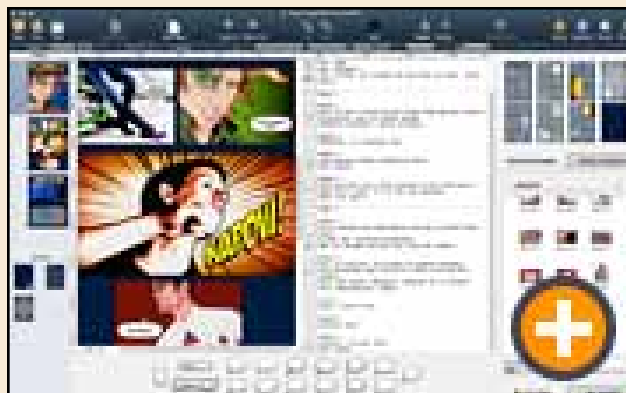
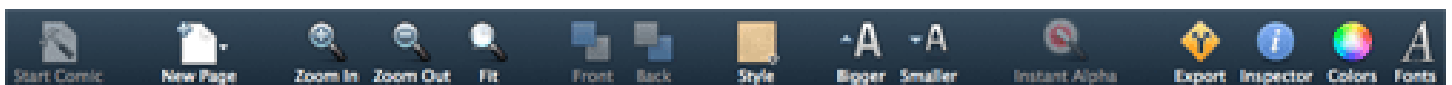# Comic Life 3
for the Macintosh computer

application review by Virginia Chilcote

Comic Life 3 by Plasq is an application that allows the user to show photos in a new way—the comic way. Some call it comic book software. If you are a story teller, this is a great way to tell that story with photos. The newest version 3 gives us:

• The new Script Editor with the SmartScript recognition system is for those that want to make a comic book out of a story idea you might have.

• Advanced Filters (18) to change the way your photos look such as Hatched + Border which is shown on my example on the right in the bottom left corner. The middle photo has been changed to Painted + Border.

• Instant Alpha which allows you to knock out the backgrounds. You can knockout a background, then place that regular photo in one of the scenes that have used the advanced filters. This gives an amazing look.

•More editing controls with connecting tails on the talking bubbles.

• There is a Master page for things that you might want on every page. This way you don't have to place them again and again.

• Balloons, captions and titles are here to make your new photo cartoon and story more interesting.

and winter), world travel to name a few. Once you open one of these templates, anything that is on the page can be changed and you can add to it with your photos.

You can navigate quite easily when starting to create your comic photo. When Comic Life 3 opens we are asked to either choose a pre-designed template or start with a blank page. You can adjust the sliders to see the icons of the templates larger or smaller. You can open an existing file, also, to complete a project previously started.

If you cannot decide how you want your page/s to look I highly recommend using one of the 35 included templates to get started and to learn this application. Example of some of the templates include: Retro, Mesa, Future, Urbana, early writer, newspaper, casual, office, night out, photo album, road trip, seasons (fall, spring, summer

The open document will have a toolbar (as shown above.) The toolbar allows you to make quick changes such as making text smaller or larger, zoom in/out, new page (yes, your document can have more than one page), style, inspector window, colors and fonts. If you want more control over your settings, the inspector window is the place to be.

Inspector Window

A lot of control here.
Some of the settings available in the Inspector Palette are:

Comic Life 3 for the Mac
..continued from previous page

Document settings—Page size can be set here as well as facing pages desired and margins.

Numbering—Yes, you can number your pages.

Graphic Settings—The color fill with opacity and outlines (strokes) of various kinds and if desired a shadow with opacity setting for this also.

Balloons—If you don't like the speech balloon type you have used in your Comic Life 3 document and have already typed in the text, you can change it here. You don't have to delete and do over. Example types of text balloons are *speech, thought, exclamation, whisper* and others. The tail on these balloons can be moved to wherever you like, usually toward the person in the photo making the statement that you typed inside of the balloon. The tail can be set to curved, straight or jagged and also thin, medium or thick.
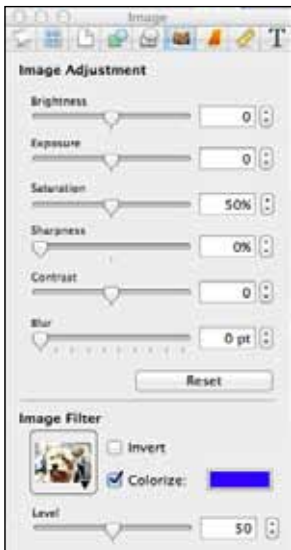
Image—This is where the edits are completed to the photos, As shown in example on previous page, changes available here are *brightness, exposure, saturation, sharpness, contrast and blur*. There is also an *Image Filter*. Click on your photo and then click on the Image Filter and there are many different ways to show that photo. You can leave it with no changes or choose any one of the many filters. On the center photo I used the Painted + Border filter. On the bottom left photo I used the hatched2 + border. As you can see these give an entirely different look to photos.

Text settings—As you can see in the example to the right you can set the text color, spacing for character, line and before and after the paragraph. You can use the fonts that you have in your system or use additional fonts that come in Comic Life 3. Plasq uses some unique fonts, some with unusual names such as Anklepants, BabaBoom, Barbatrick, BarBrawl, Zork, WetPaint and many more like this.

Script Editor. I have not worked with the powerful Script Editor because I haven't found a need for it yet. I don't think I am at that level yet. Its powerful SmartScript™ recognizes what elements appear depending on the text that is entered. Scripts let you get your thoughts organized before you do your layouts.
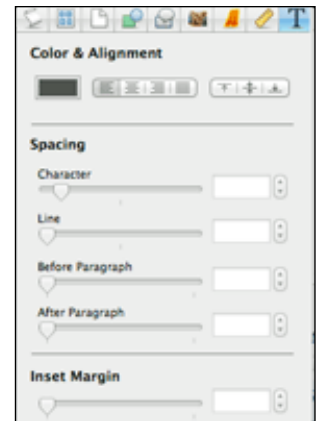
A panel of alternate templates appears when you open your document and they match to the particular template with which you started. Drag an alternate to the new page and it will change to your desired layout or start an addition page and it will take one of those templates. See example below.

When your comic document is completed it can be exported to various formats such as .pdf, Facebook, iPhoto, ePub and others

Comic Life 3 manual
http://tinyurl.com/qcwdw6t

ComicLife 3 for the Macintosh by Plasq,
http://tinyurl.com/kx3pnfg

Try it for 30 days for free or purchase it for $29.99 Upgrade from previous versions for $14.99.

# Comic Life 3 for the iPad *app review by Virginia Chilcote*

Comic Life 3 for the iPad gives the same results as on the Macintosh version as shown by my example of my completed comic on the iPad as shown bottom right, this page. Getting there is another animal. I do like using the app on either computer or iPad but found it easier on the computer. But it is great to create these when on the go with your iPad, too.

Every feature that is on the Macintosh is on the iPad version but if you are used to using a mouse and pointer then plan on a little more time to get used to the commands and where they are on the iPad and how to use them.

Tap on the app and it opens. If you have a file created already, that will show on the screen. Tap the plus on the top left corner and a pull down will show Create Comic. At this point you will see the templates to choose from with categories such as Creative, Education, How To, Life Stories as well as blank script, intro script, Blank with and without styles. I chose Night Out under the category Life Stories. (see template example).

Double tap on "Your Title Here" and you can replace the text shown with your own. There is also an undo on the top menu if mistakes are made. You can click on any text block inside the speech bubbles to replace text also. Click on the middle of the picture frame and it will ask you if you want to use your camera, the Photo Library or get web images. When I clicked on web images, Flickr came up and I chose a picture from there at one point to just try it out and see what would happen. The finished product shown has photos from my iPhoto Library.

Anything on your page/pages can be moved or changed. The stars shown are part of the library of graphic clip art that comes with Comic Life 3. In fact there are quite a few of these for you to use. If you click on the + sign, for instance, you can see various shapes such as arrows, triangles, stars and you can even draw your own shape if you like or edit the one that you choose. More additional clip art in this area are shown in the shapes and clip art examples to the left. The template at the top right of this page also shows the speech bubbles, lettering and text blocks to grab and pull up to your working document. You can also change the background color. Click on the paintbrush and you can choose a color.

shapes

clip art
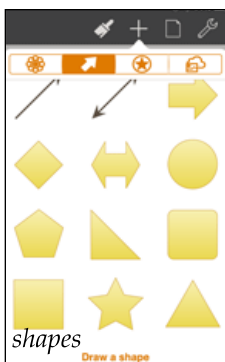
Comic Life 3, released this year, is a great way to show your photos in a different way. I highly recommend this full-featured app. Comic Life 3 can be family-shared, also.

Compatible with iPad 2 or better, iPhone 4 or better and iPod Touch 5th generation or better. Requires iOS 7.1 or later.

Price: $4.99 and can be purchased right from your iOS device at the App Store.

Template when first selected

Completed Comic Life 3