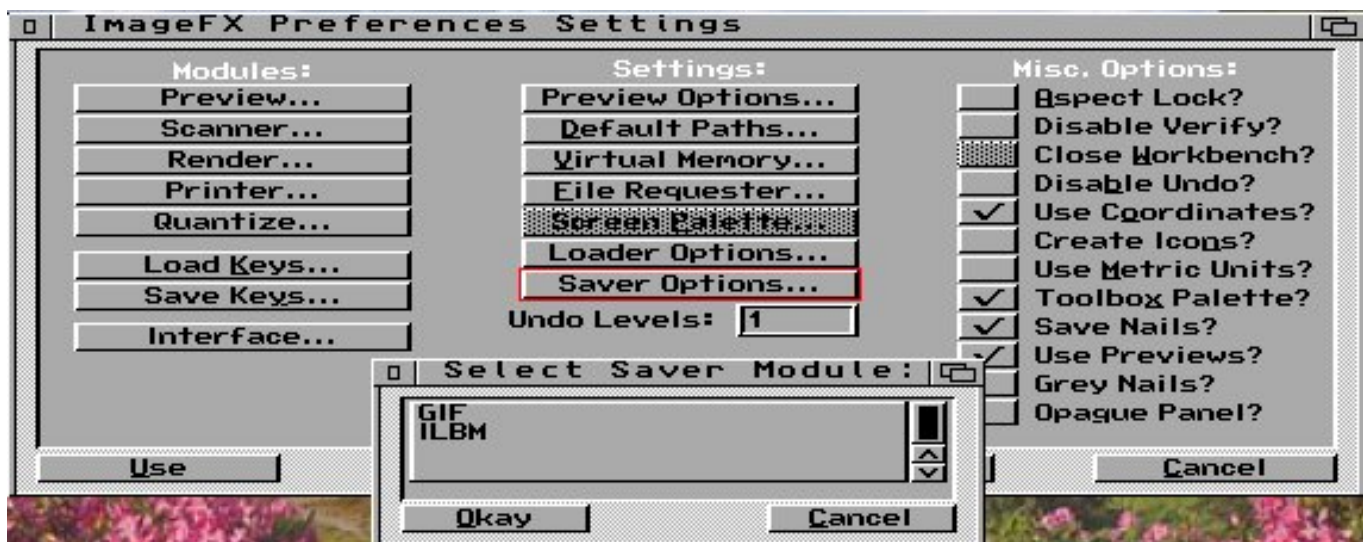


How to use the GIF saver in ImageFX4.5

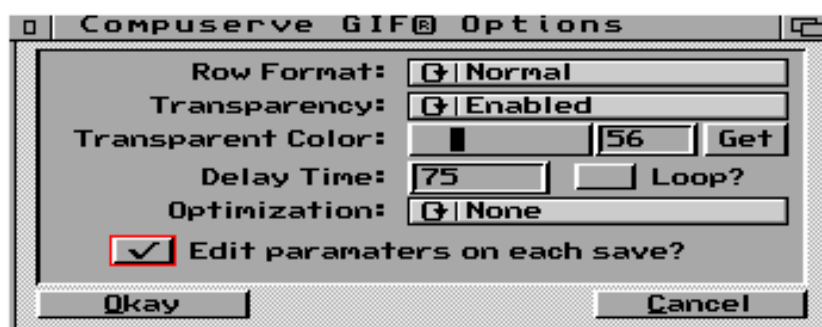
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It has come to my attention that *Some* of you folks are having a bit of trouble saving gif anims properly. Like: how to pick the transparent color, looping, changing the delay time of the frames (basically the frame rate). Well, get ready because you are about to be let in on the **BIG SECRET!!!**

First thing you should do is make sure you have the Gif loader and saver files in your **ImageFX4/Modules/loaders/** and **ImageFX4/Modules/savers** directories. They should already be there if you used the ImageFX4.5 Studio CD to install IFX.



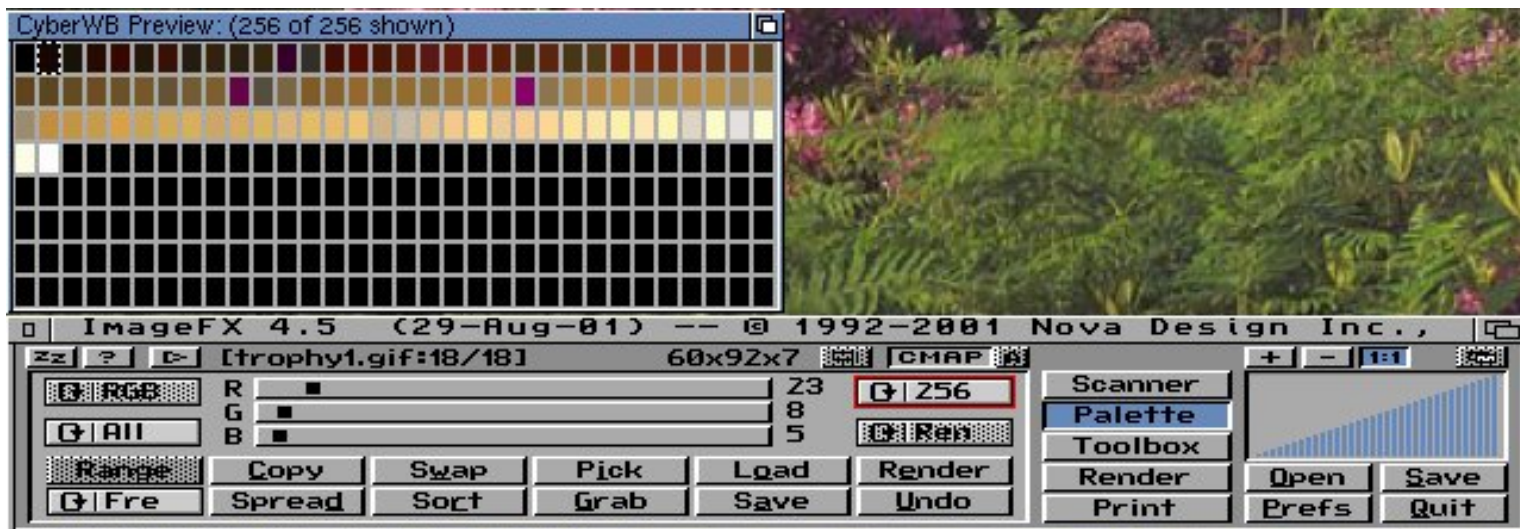
Ok, the next thing you need to do - after starting ImageFX, of course - is click the Prefs button. In the Prefs is a button called "**Saver Options...**". This brings up a little window with the saver modules listed. Click on Gif. This, in turn, will bring up the Gif Saver window.



See the left most box (that I cleverly outlined in **RED**) that says "Edit paramaters on each save?" Clicking that ON will mean that each time you want to save a Gif file, this window comes up and you can then make whatever additions and changes to what you want included in each particular Gif file just before you save it.

This is where you can indicate if there is a transparent color and which one it is. This is where you make it loop more than once. And this is where you can control the frame rate ("delay time").

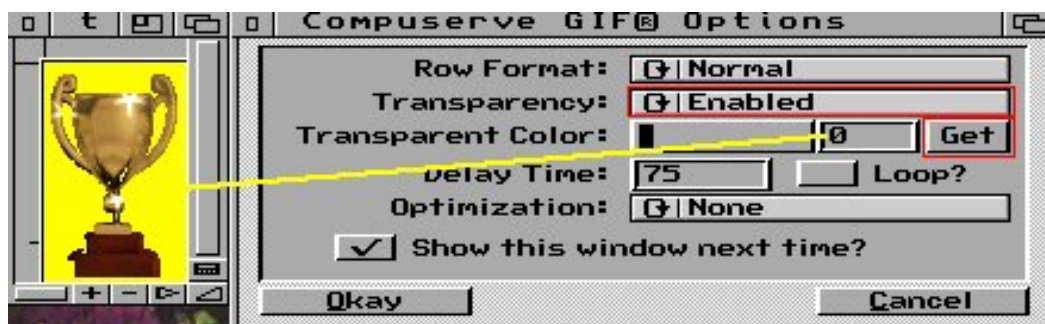
At this point all you have to do is click on the **Box** so the window always comes up when needed, then click "**OKAY**" and save your prefs.



Let's say you have just made the most Fabulous Anim ever known to man and it's **Time To Save It!**

Maybe you've already decided how many colors it will end up being, maybe not. But it's best to open the Palette GUI and look at the whole 256 color registers at once. Click on the palette **Numbers** so they read all 256 colors. Now, go to the Toolbox and "**Color/Convert To CMAP....**". You can decide to reduce the colors to: 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, or 256. Now, what I do is start from a higher color than I need and see how the image changes when it gets converted. I then Undo and pick the next lowest number. I keep doing that until I get to the lowest number that still retains the look of the image it had when it was 24bit. Notice that with this image it shows a lot of color registers which are black - a good indication that it doesn't need the whole 256 registers. The idea is to decrease the numbers of colors without the picture ending up looking like crap!

While I'm here I also decide which color is going to be the transparent color (if this particular anim needs that). In the Palette GUI I usually click on **PICK**, then click on the transparent color in the picture. If the picture is now a CMAP this will cause this color register to become selected. I then count the location of the register so I know the number. If you look at the picture to the left you can see that the second color register is selected. You can't always know where the transparent color may actually be. And it doesn't really matter. I've had pictures where the transparent color register was somewhere in the middle. All you have to do is make a note of its location.



It's time to hit the **Save As** button, and - Yippy! - the Gif Options window pops up! The first choice is **Interlaced/Normal**. Interlaced is really only for Gifs used for web pages to help them load quickly. Strangely

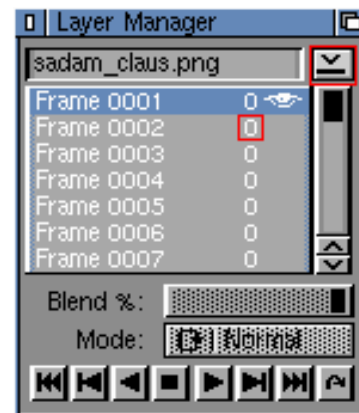
enough I don't think I've ever used this. And I'm not sure why. Next is **Transparent Color** which can be **None** or **Enabled**. Once you turn it on, then you can access the color register the transparent color happens to be. You can do this either using the slider which will slide between every numbered color register, or the field where you can type in the number.

ImageFX tries to guess which color is transparent. Sometimes it guesses right, and sometimes it guesses wrong. This is why you should have found which color register the transparent color exists in as you were making and converting your Fabulous Anim into a CMAP. (You did follow my advice, right???) By

the way, the color registers start at "0", not "1".

In addition to the slider you can also click on "**Get**" to force it to guess. As you can see from the picture here, when the transparent color is selected it turns (temporarily, Don't Panic!) a **yellow**. This just helps you see if this is really what you want for a transparent area. And if ImageFX still is guessing wrong for some reason, you just type in the number of the color register right in the box. It couldn't be easier!

Delay Time does the same thing as **Set Frame Delay** in the **Layer Manager** (Look at the picture to the right. In the Layer Manager when you add frames they default to a frame rate of "0", and you can change that **number** from the **Menu**). This controls the speed of the anim. If you feel the anim needs to be slower, increase the number. If you are patient you can change each frame's rate one by one. If you are incredibly lazy like me, select one end of the anim and then Shift-click the other end of the anim to select ALL the frames at once. Then when you go into the menu to change the frame rate it will change all the frames in one move.



Back in the Gif Options, the number in the **Delay Time** field is whatever number you have decided should be the speed of the entire anim. **Loop** means, well, loop! And **Optimization** can be **None/Changes Only** and seems to be another way to reduce the size of the file. Again, for some unknown reason I've never used this. Hm, I must try it just for the hell of it.

Ok, boys and girls, that's the basics. It's fairly simple and while I've noticed an odd habit of the **Loop** switch to only loop the anim on a web page about 16 times instead of indefinitely the only way I've been able to "fix" this is by changing certain things in a Hex editor. And, I don't think I want to get into that in this particular HowTo.



By the way, don't forget that the way you access the Layer Manager is to click that **Button** just to the left of the RGBA buttons. See it? Now, I always have that window open as soon as ImageFX starts up. And the way you do that is to Open whatever windows in IFX you want and put them where ever you want on your workbench and Then **Save** your Prefs! This saves the entire setup - every window just

where you want it. It's easy!