**Join
TechCrunch+**

Login

Search 🔍

Startups
TechCrunch+
Audio
Newsletters
Videos
Advertise
Events
More

Review: Aperture 3

Devin Coldewey

@techcrunch / 6:15 PM CDT • March 19, 2010

If you're a photographer and use a Mac, chances are you're using Lightroom or Aperture. Pr
Aperture is less popular among pros — and the latest version seems to be an acknowledgm
added in version 3 are clearly intended to draw casual shooters using iPhoto to the paid ima
so many of these amazing new features are direct side-loads from iPhoto, it smooths the pro
program as a whole more approachable, though whether existing Aperture users will find the
Brushes, on the other hand, are a welcome addition to any photographer's toolset, and depe
are, may be worth the price of admission.

Invasion of the iPhoto features

As long as I've been using Aperture, I've considered it a *processing* application. Its photo ma
here and there, and iPhoto had the best ways of showing off your shots, but I dealt with it sir
libraries of the same photos would be disk space suicide. I've only used Lightroom a little bit
but all my friends say that it just has a better workflow for serious photo work — importing a
scrubbing through them, doing the necessary adjustments, and outputting to the necessary f
trouble doing that in Aperture, but apparently it's faster and better in Lightroom.

Confronted with such a fearsome opponent, Apple decided that it would be better to flank tha
Hence the expansion of Aperture's incorporation of iPhoto features Faces and Places. I ques
photo processing application, but given Apple's tendency towards coalescing functionality, I'r

eventually be Aperture: Gimped Edition, and the only real choice for organizing and messing
photos will be Aperture.

Join
TechCrunch+

Login
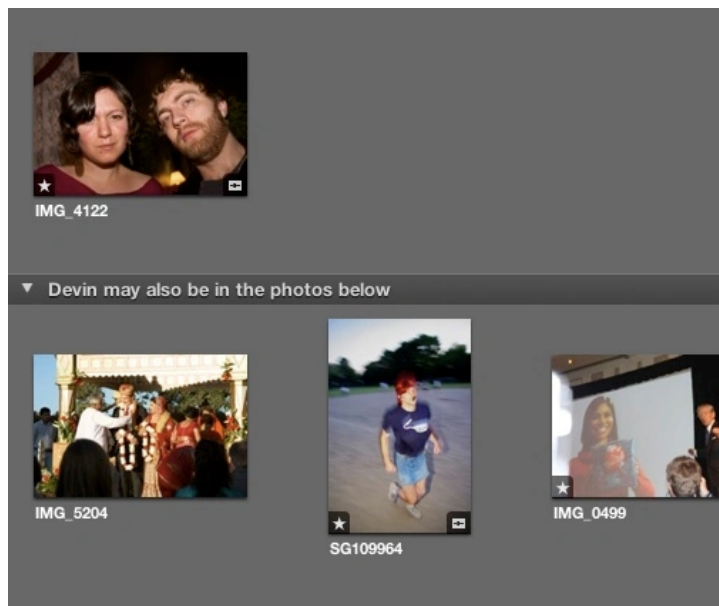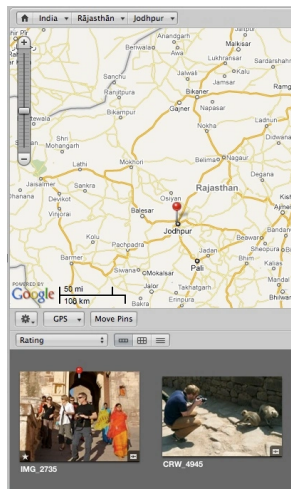
Search Q

Startups
TechCrunch+
Audio
Newsletters
Videos
Advertise
Events
More

There are some kinks to be worked out. Faces plainly doesn't work. After it spent literally five
photos (about 1000 per hour), this is what it has come up with:

No, it didn't have a lot to go on (I hadn't "trained" it much yet) but *really* now. After giving it a
looked like, it still mistook a three-year-old tow-headed girl, my friend Monica (who is Indian,
some E3 booth babes, and Casio president Kazuo Kashio for *pale, bearded, Devin Coldewe*
background is jarring (you can change it but the corny, inefficient "polaroid" interface and fon
for going through your shots is terrible. I realize this is a technology still being perfected, and

Places is useful if you have a geotagging camera (still rare) or want to spend a few hours dr
onto the map. It can be fun, actually, if you take a lot of pictures of your friends, and want to
night onto the location you went to; it's like creating a different kind of album ("Linda's Tavern
make a browsable smart album from locations. If you're like me, you won't feel complete unt
less where they were within the city, and not all grouped in a single pin, smack in the middle
some promise, but with a backlog of several thousand shots, getting a library up to date in P
wish on my worst enemy.

It's a mistake to judge Faces and Places by simply saying "well we were fine before them," b
we found ways of working in the old system of organization (Project>Folder>Album) that app
features do. But I don't think it's wrong to say they just don't really do much, and feel out of p
work at them, or shoot for them, in order for them to really be worthwhile. Still I have to give
you just consider Faces and Places new columns to organize by (like rating or date) then the
flagship features, though, they're duds.

Lastly, the slide show thing. It's like finding a trout in the milk. Not that it doesn't *work* — it wo
and I suppose it's better to have than not. It's just a little weird to have a sort of… aftermarke
next to the serious editing tools. Its little presets are, like in most Apple programs, 25% solid,
of all that is holy is going to pick "Shatter" as their slide show transition? It's ghastly.
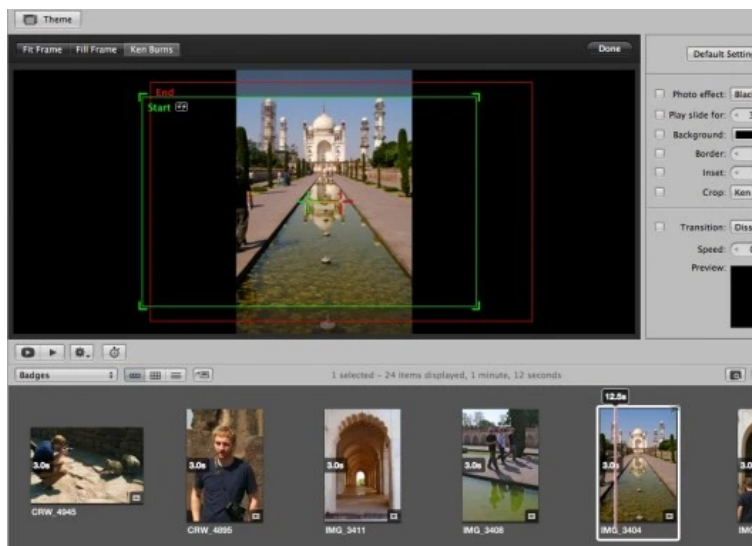
The new features are very well explained in little videos accessible through the "Welcome" s
for new users — if they can find the screen after they close it (it's in Help>Welcome to Apertu

So if the iPhoto features are icing, the actual cake is the RAW editing, adjustment tools, and with what I would say is the best new feature: Brushes.

You can see a pretty thorough overview of the feature at Apple's site, but the gist is that it alle effects in limited areas using a brush of adjustable size and intensity. That's great! I can't cou vacillated between two versions of a photo where an adjustment necessary for one part end or I just wanted to bring out the color in the eyes but not in the background. A lot of fiddling c effect I wanted, but it would be so much easier to just use a brush. I'll be using the hell out of perhaps the only real step Apple took against Adobe in this update.
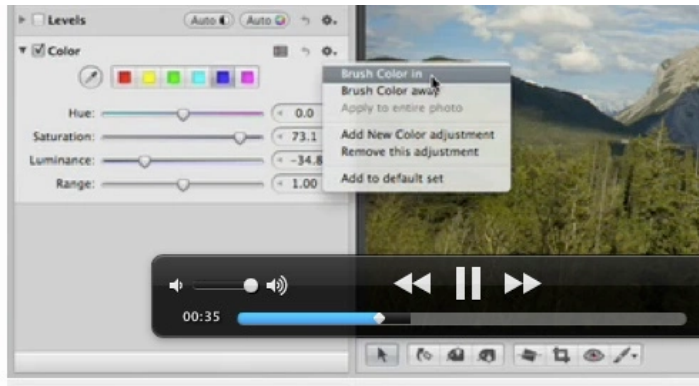
(combination Brushes and Help Video screenshot)

The brushes are non-destructive, like any of the dials and curves you can play with in the ad feel free to experiment, layer, and try out different effects. One thing I often have to do when emphasize the color of LEDs, but if the subject is well-lit, the LEDs are going to be barely vis little brush, add in a little contrast right there, bump the saturation just in the one area, and be thumb. Brushes are useful for lots of little things like that.

The new full-screen browser is handy but not really a revolution. They've added the ability to little more, which is nice, but it's not as streamlined as the regular browser, which is always a keystroke. The fullscreen presentation has definitely been improved, however, and when sh clients, it's a better option than either the plain editing window or a slide show.
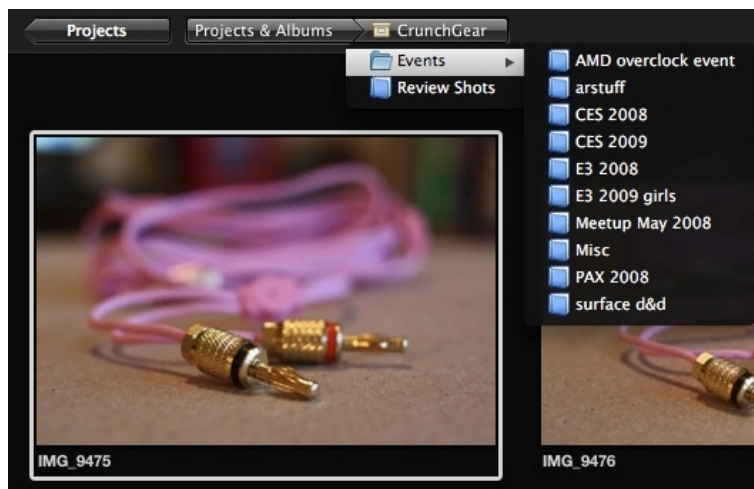
The preset adjustments, I think we can agree, are being blown way out of proportion; Apple's them up to be quite the killer feature. Unfortunately, these are the same kind of "professional been able to apply on cheap point-and-shoots since the beginning of time. There are a few c

be honest, these are just filters. I'd like to be able to say that they're carefully adjusted so you
effects, blackouts, or blowouts, but the fact is every one I tried looked cheap and overdone.
balance and so on, seem pretty redundant considering the actual controls for adjusting those
away in the same window.

Click to see it larger. You can't really tell here, since this photo isn't very high contrast, but in
tried this on, the vintage look was *really* purple, cross-processing was *really* green, and toy c
way too far. Subtle adjustments these are not.

The good news is that people new to the program might try a couple, see that they were crea
color bars around, and then make their own. I've had my own "base" adjustment for years no
accessible and just as customizable, though limited to a single adjustment category. Putting
using this feature might be easier now than before, but it's still just a toy at this point.

The ability to have multiple libraries is nice; splitting work and personal stuff would be my mo
crashed into TC HQ (or, more likely, I'm fired for insubordination), I could free up a couple gig
also convenient for backing up and sharing; "here's my whole 'wedding' library, feel free to d
than "here's a folder full of RAW files." (**Update**: my mistake, multiple libraries were already a

A quick note

Just a PSA: installation of Aperture 3 took ages. Plan on losing at least a working day to 100
converts your library, searches for Faces, and reprocesses your RAW files with the new prof
against Apple (it's a LOT of data to sift through) but it's just something to be aware of.

Conclusion

Aperture is still a great program, in my opinion, and the budding photographer would be a lot
iPhoto if they're planning on doing anything more than collecting snapshots. I've gotten used
they haven't changed it much in 3, in fact they've provided a couple serious improvements w
Places and Faces — you know, if you're into *that* kind of thing.

The trouble I see is that Aperture, once a rather single-minded program, is being diluted with
to do with its core functionality. Why not have a new program, called "Collection" or somethir
libraries, allows for creating robust slide shows, exporting directly to Facebook, and all that s
junk into Aperture is doing to it what Apple has done to iTunes: once a sleek and straightforw
grown bloated beyond comprehension; it's a bit like seeing a once-great fighter gone to seed

DOCKET ALARM

Explore Litigation Insights

Docket Alarm provides insights to develop a more informed litigation strategy and the peace of mind of knowing you're on top of things.

Real-Time Litigation Alerts

Keep your litigation team up-to-date with **real-time alerts** and advanced team management tools built for the enterprise, all while greatly reducing PACER spend.

Our comprehensive service means we can handle Federal, State, and Administrative courts across the country.

Advanced Docket Research

With over 230 million records, Docket Alarm's cloud-native docket research platform finds what other services can't. Coverage includes Federal, State, plus PTAB, TTAB, ITC and NLRB decisions, all in one place.

Identify arguments that have been successful in the past with full text, pinpoint searching. Link to case law cited within any court document via Fastcase.

Analytics At Your Fingertips

Learn what happened the last time a particular judge, opposing counsel or company faced cases similar to yours.

Advanced out-of-the-box PTAB and TTAB analytics are always at your fingertips.

API

Docket Alarm offers a powerful API (application programming interface) to developers that want to integrate case filings into their apps.

LAW FIRMS

Build custom dashboards for your attorneys and clients with live data direct from the court.

Automate many repetitive legal tasks like conflict checks, document management, and marketing.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Litigation and bankruptcy checks for companies and debtors.

E-DISCOVERY AND LEGAL VENDORS

Sync your system to PACER to automate legal marketing.

fastcase
Smarter legal research.