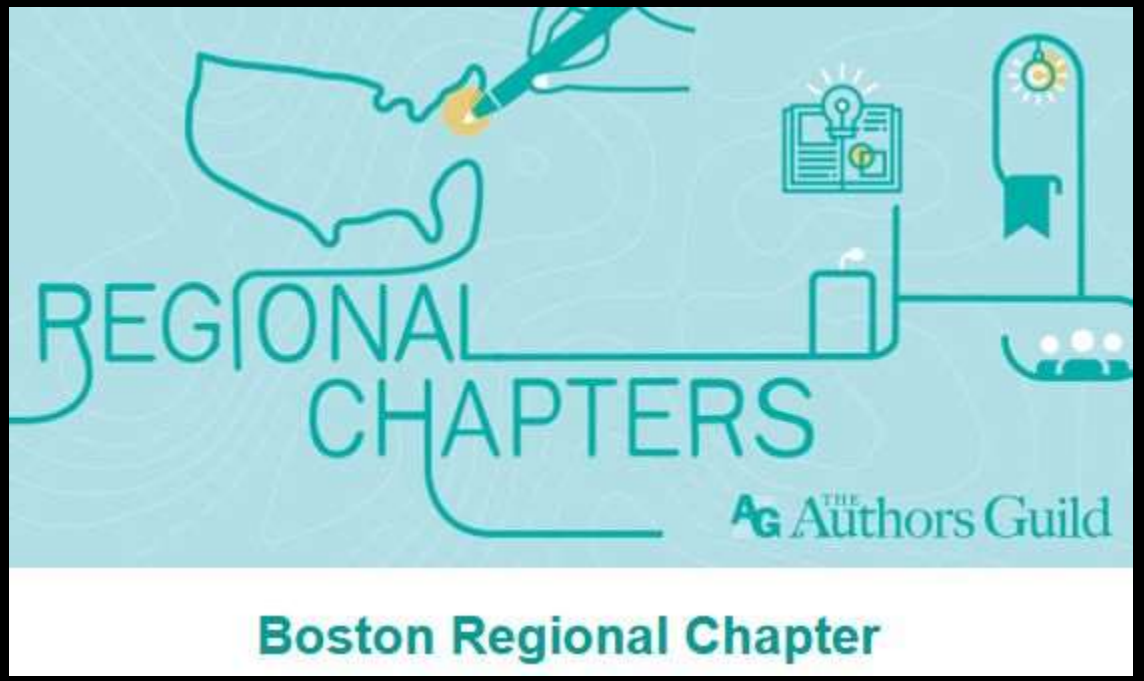
The Book Trailer: An Authors Guild Workshop

by

Randy Ross



Presentation available at randyrossmedia.com/talks

Table of Contents

- Why a book trailer
- What's in a book trailer?
- DIY!
- Content
- Video editing software

- ***this presentation and links at randyrossmedia.com/talks***



Why a Book Trailer?

-Professionalism?

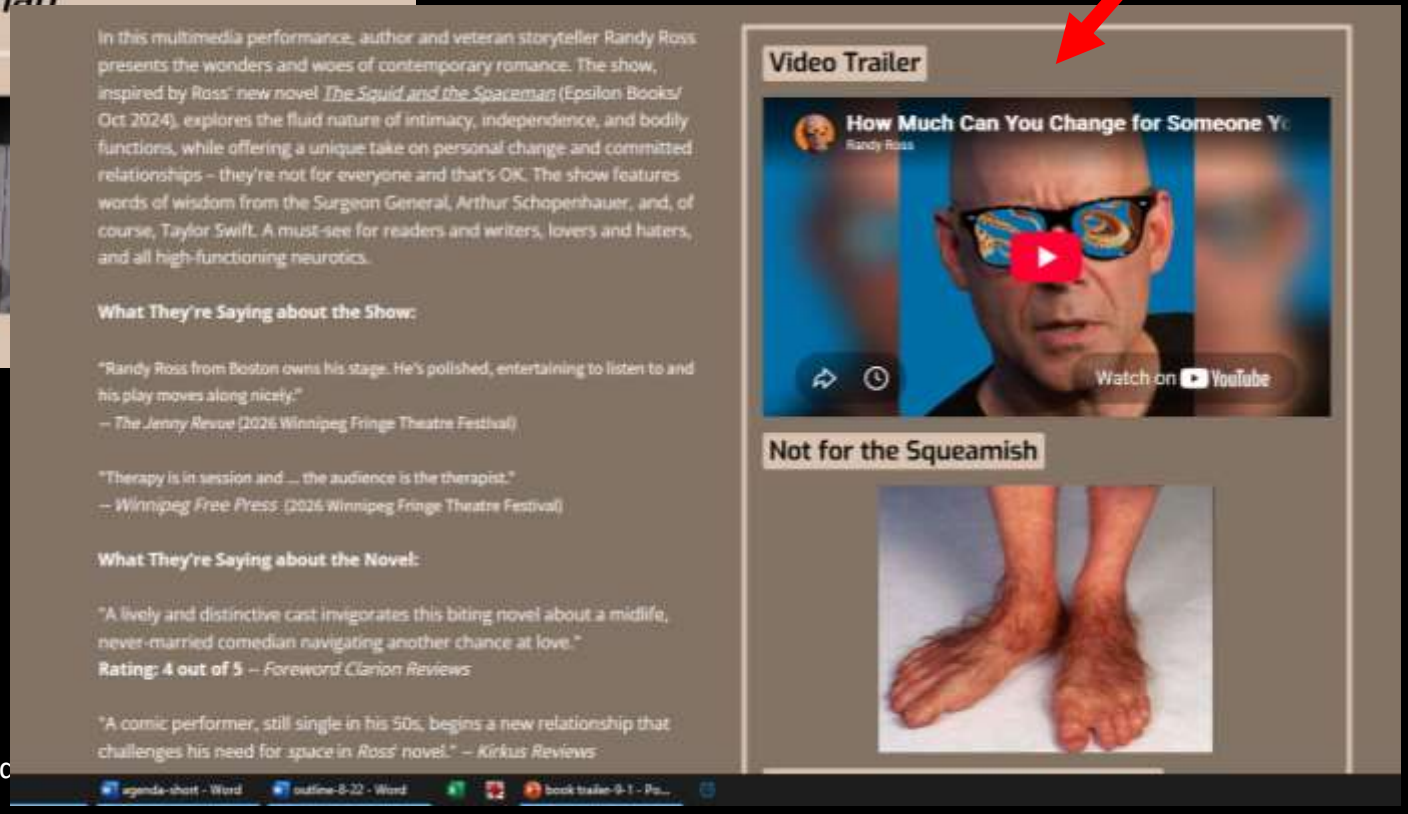
- Social media clicks?

-Satisfaction/fun



Looks Nice on Web Site





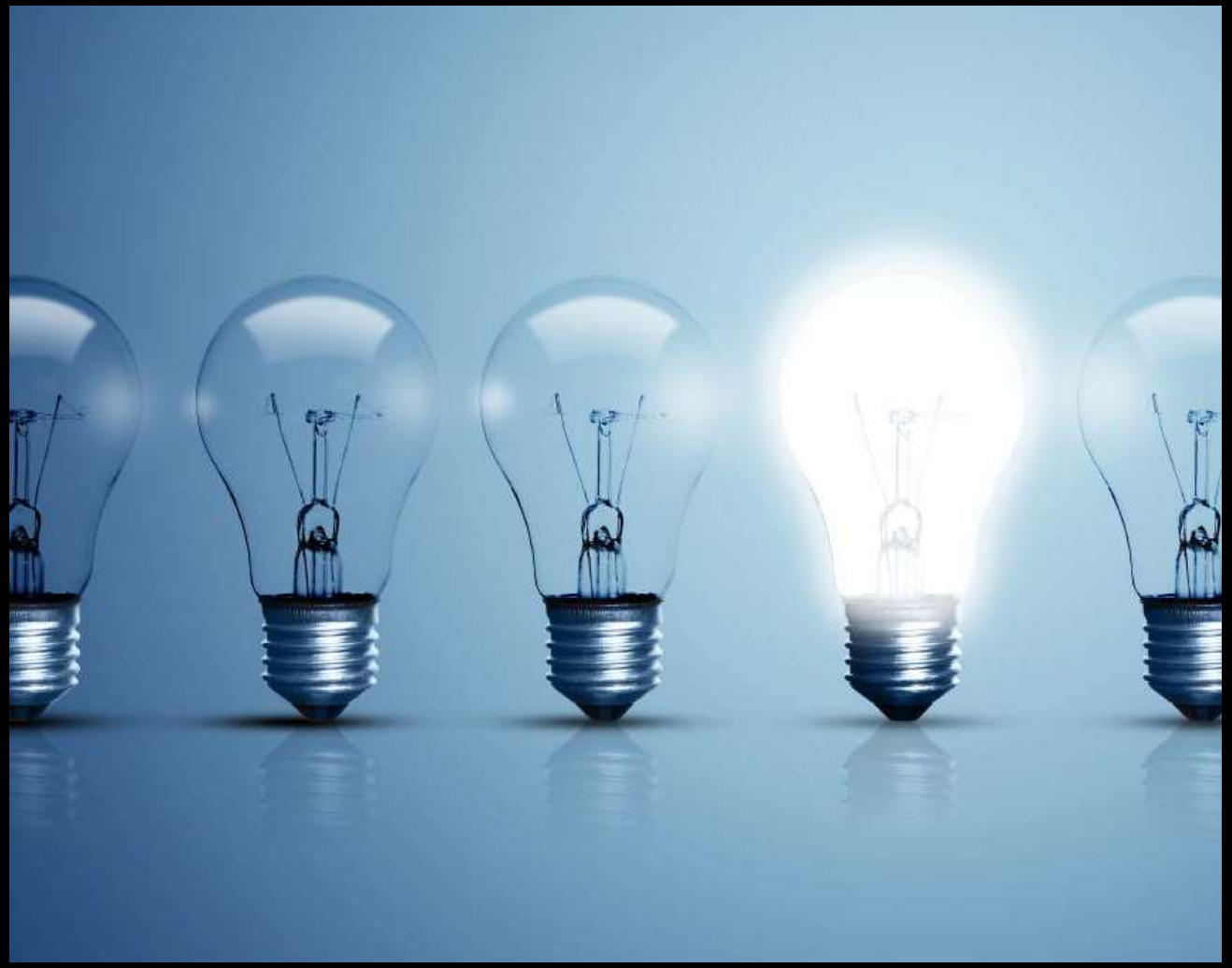
What’s in a Trailer: Query, Flap Copy, Reviews

Non-fiction: Easier

- Facts and figures
- Pictures
- Topics
- Reviews

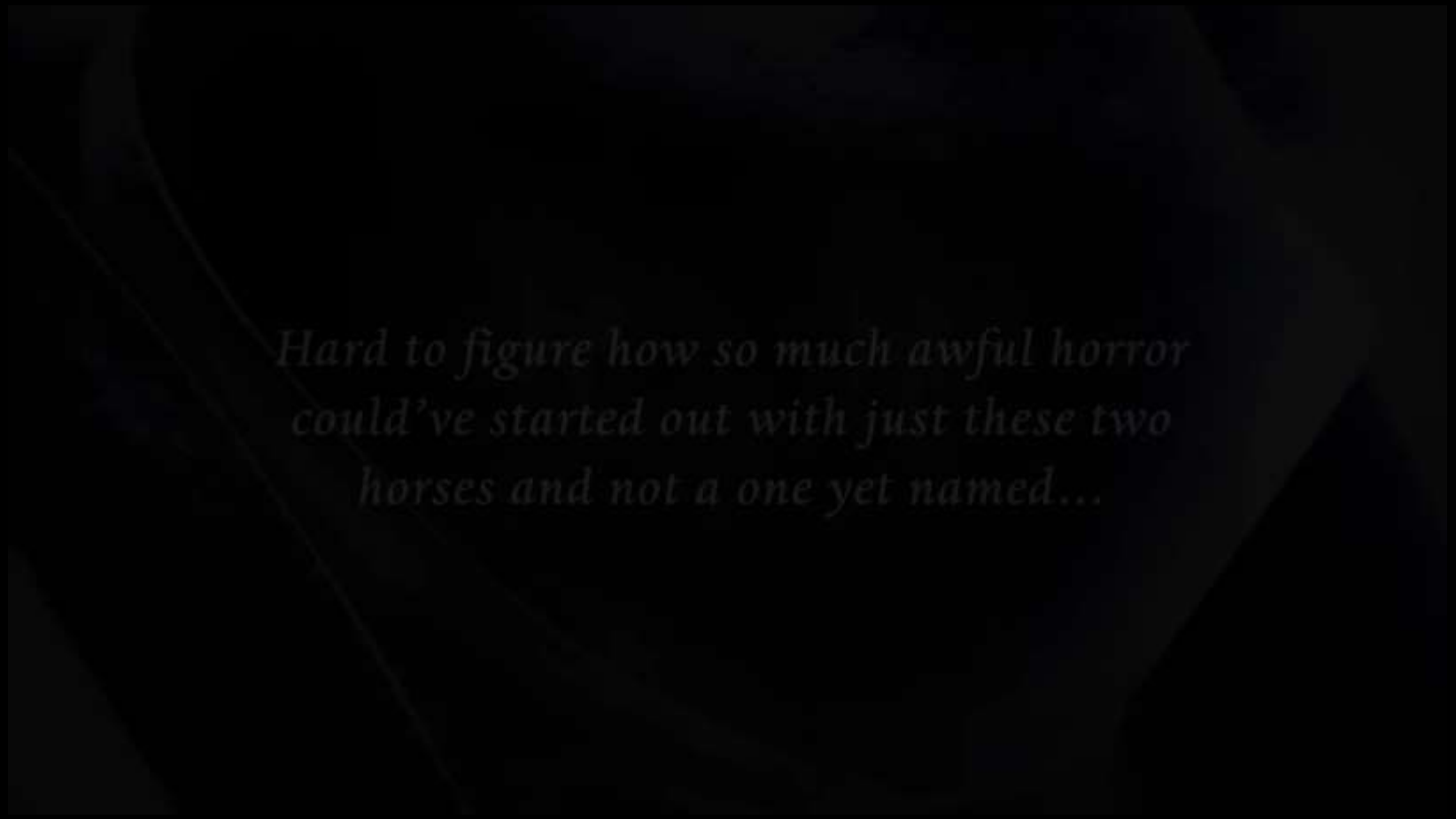
Fiction/Memoir: Harder

- Genesis/research
- Themes
- Plot teaser
- Reviews



randyrossmedia.com/talks

Fiction: 30-Second Teaser



Fiction: Another 30-Second Teaser



Non-Fiction: Summary of Content

Hire Out or DIY?





DIY: The Steps

- Script for one minute or less
- Content: images, videos, audio
- Tools: video, image editor
- Post for feedback?



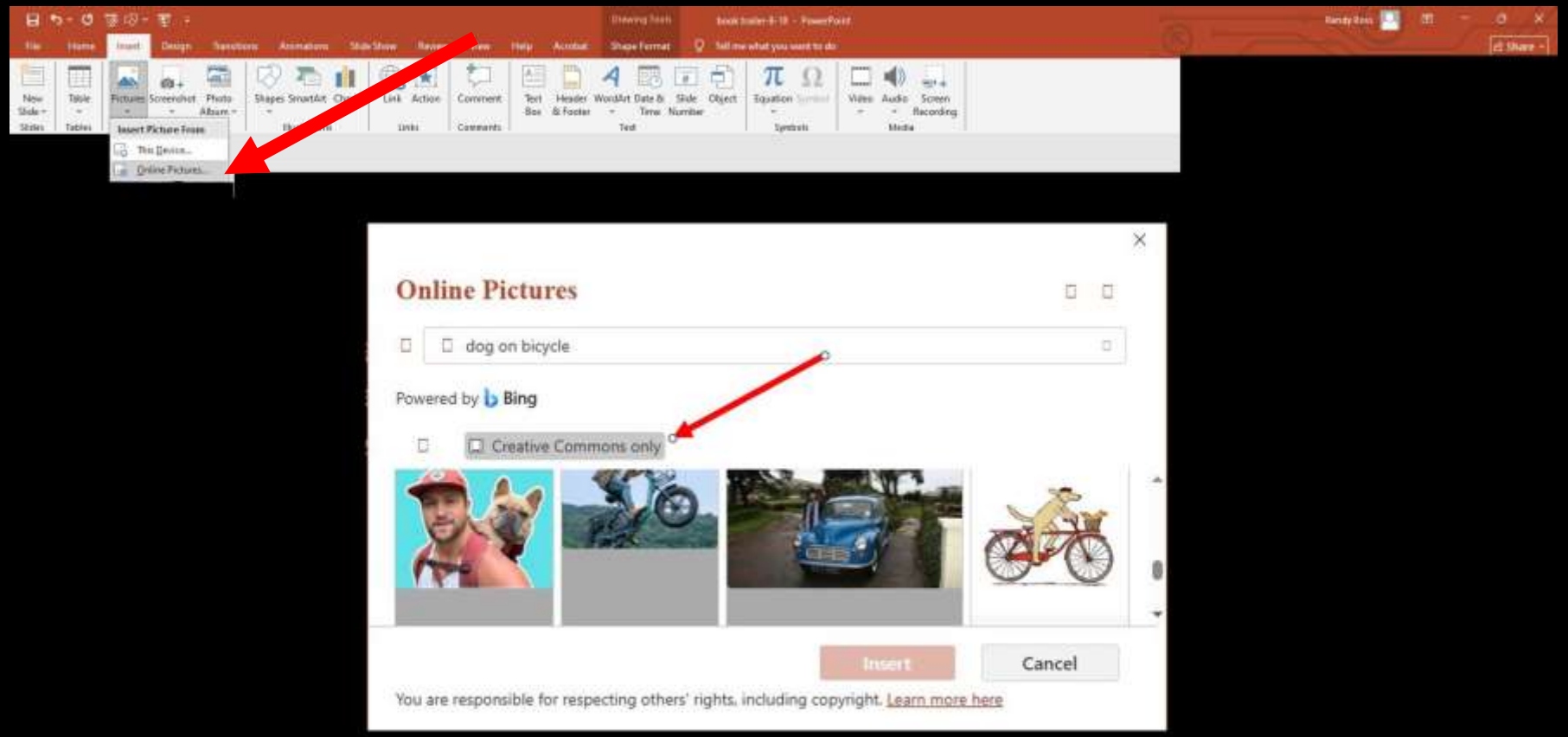
Free Copyright-Free Content

- Images, Audio, Some video
  - Existing programs: Powerpoint, Canva, Capcut
  - Free sites
  - Read licenses, avoid problems



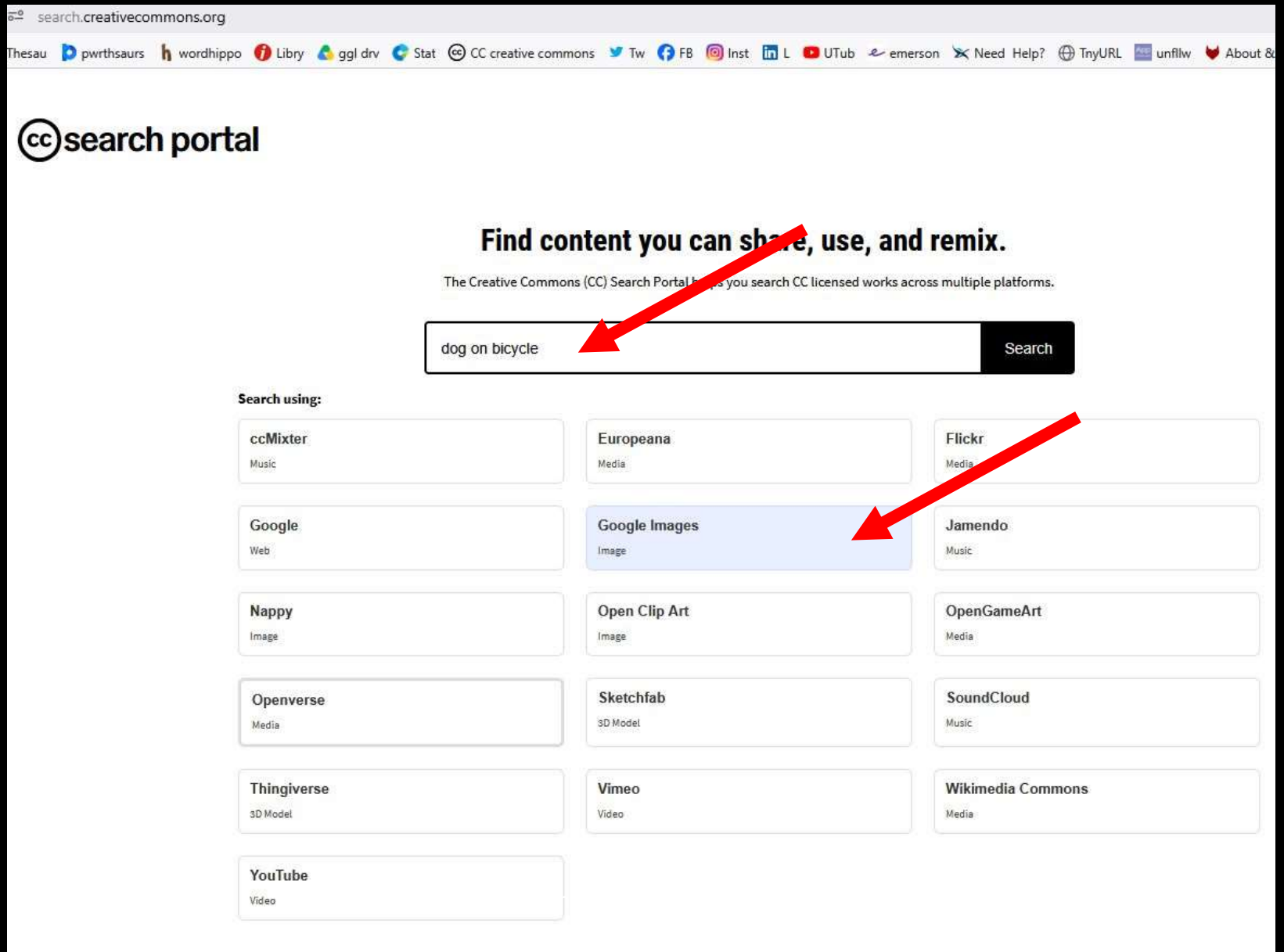
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Freebies in Powerpoint

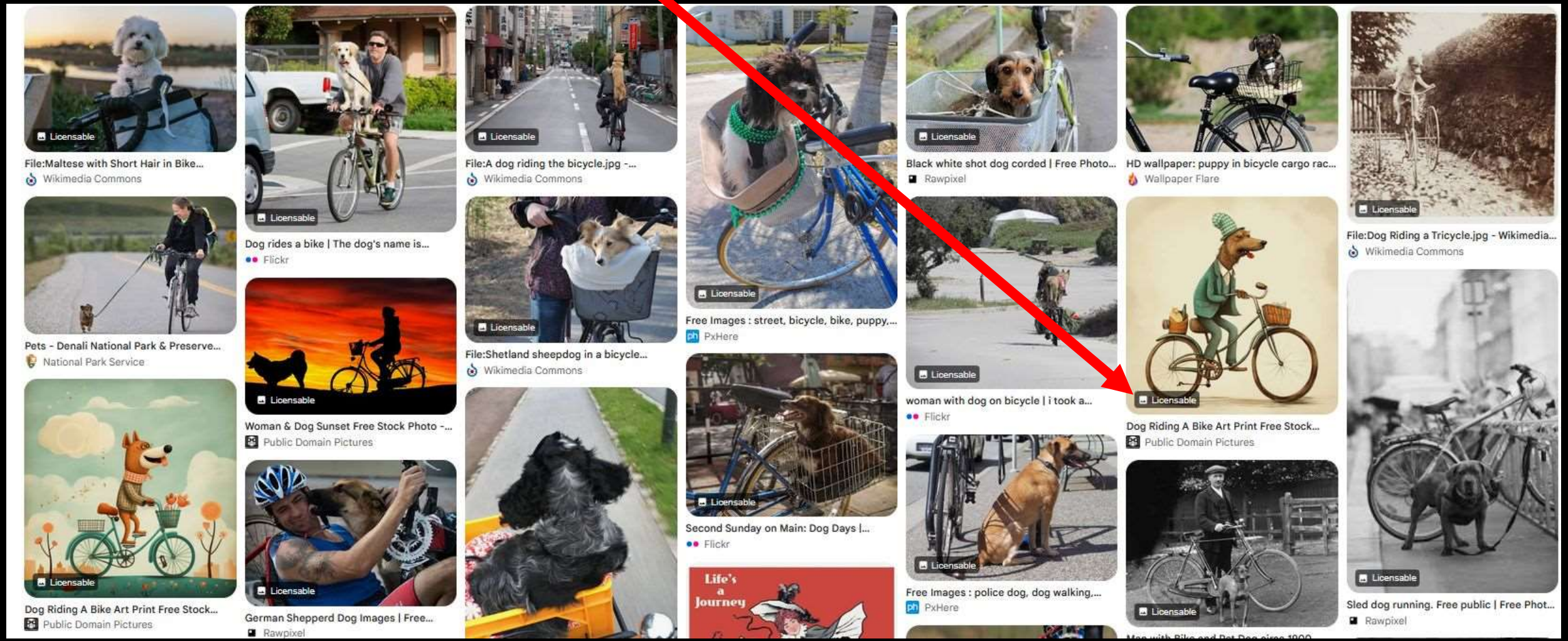


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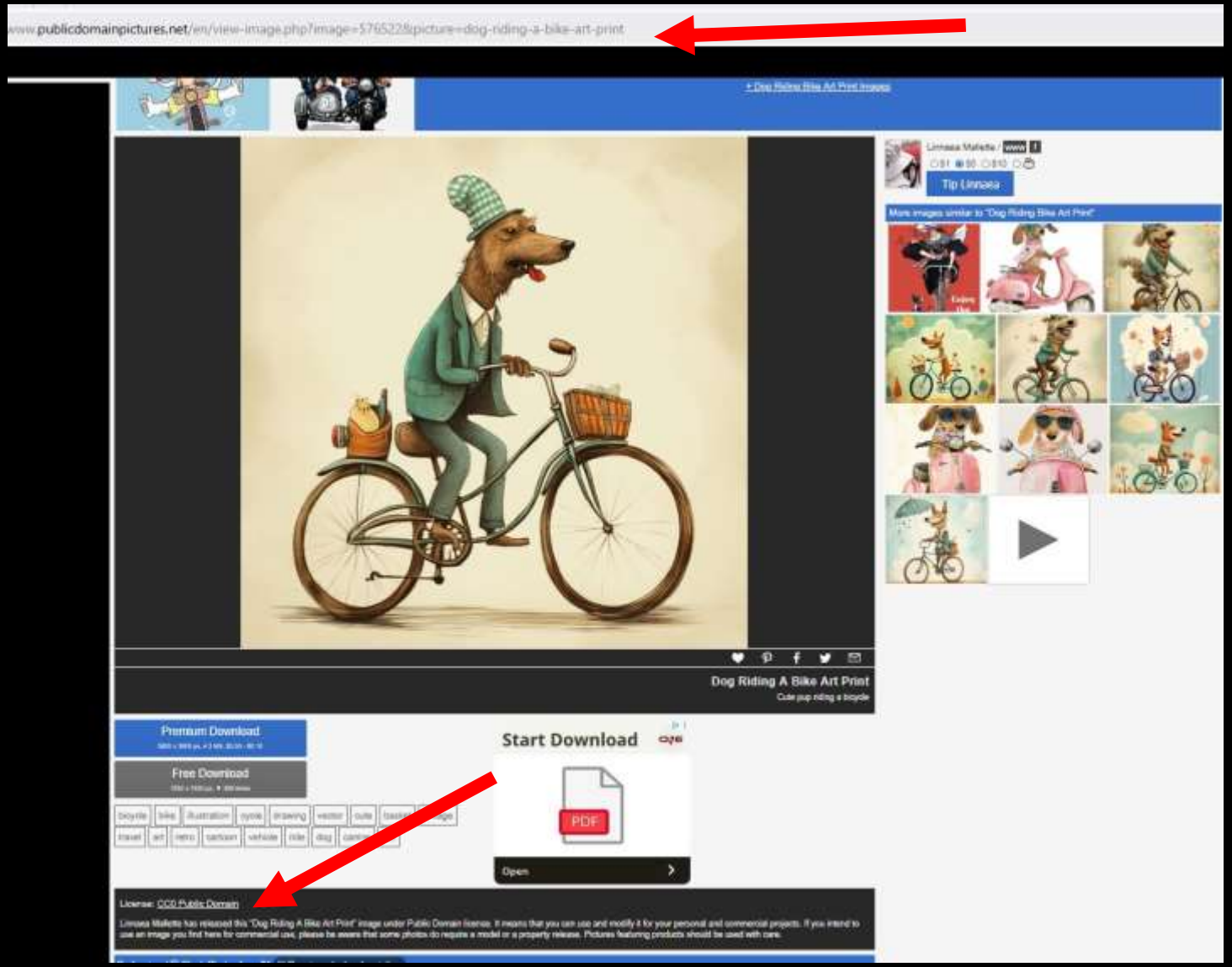
Free Site: search.creativecommons.org



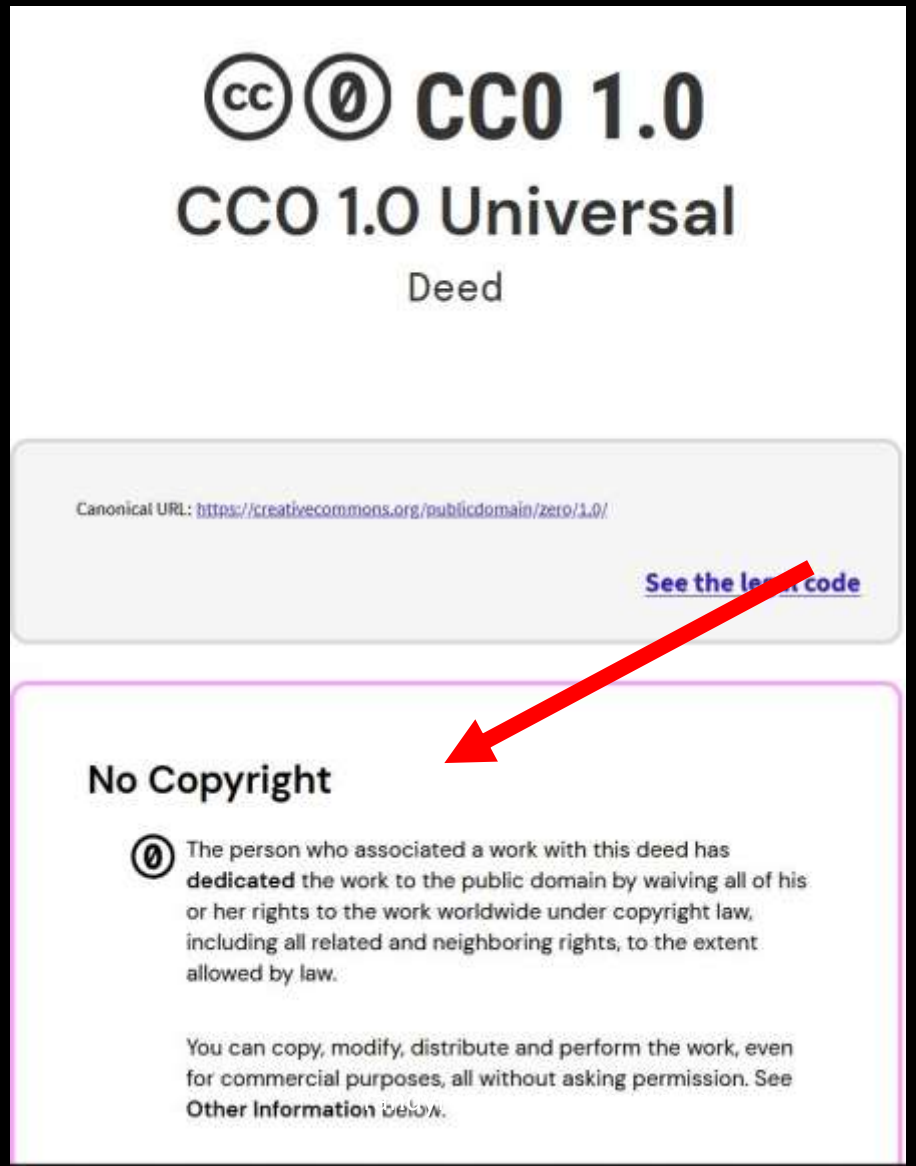
Select “Licensable”



Check the License



Winner!



CC0 1.0

CC0 1.0 Universal

Deed

Canonical URL: https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/

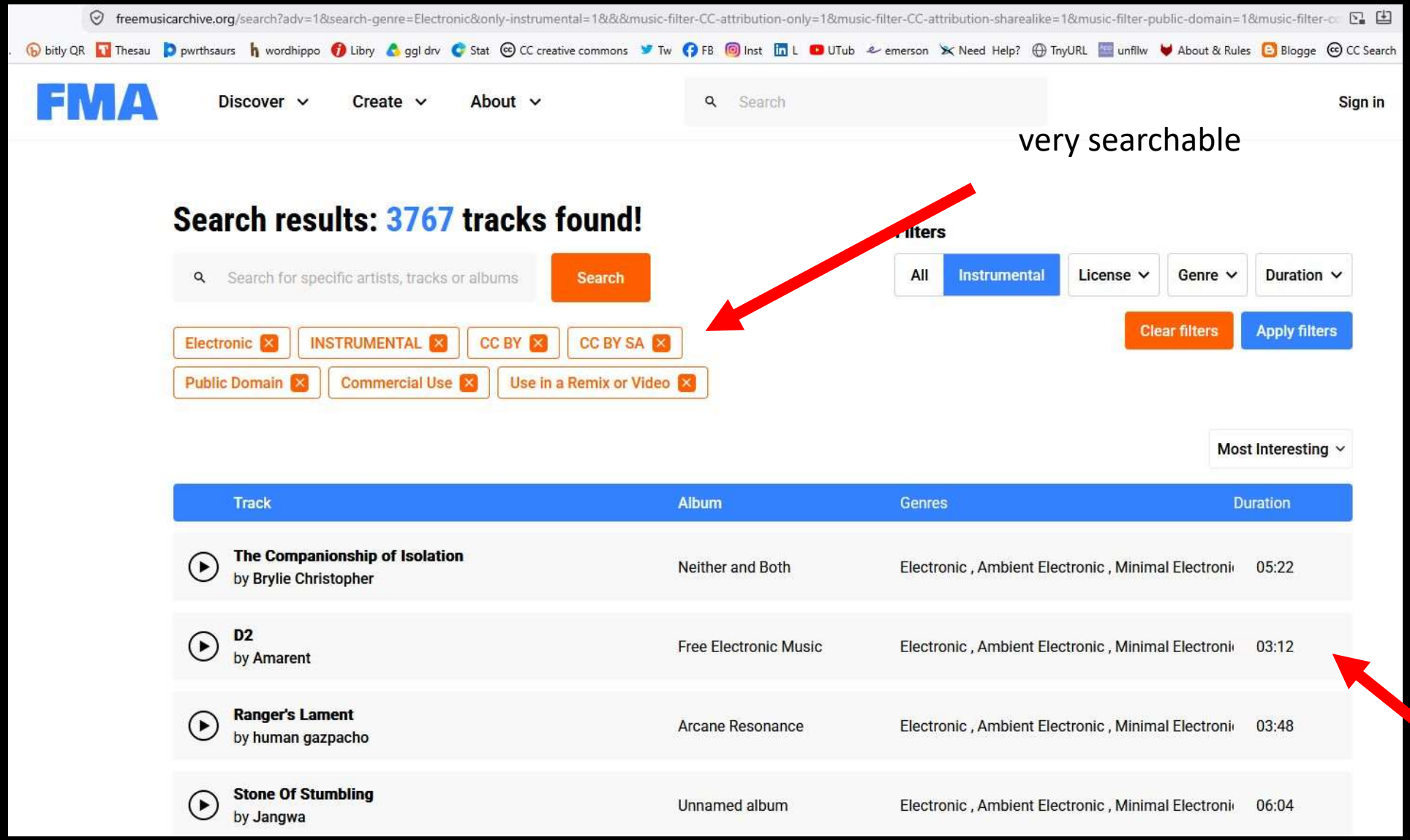
See the legal code

No Copyright

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You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, all without asking permission. See **Other Information** below.

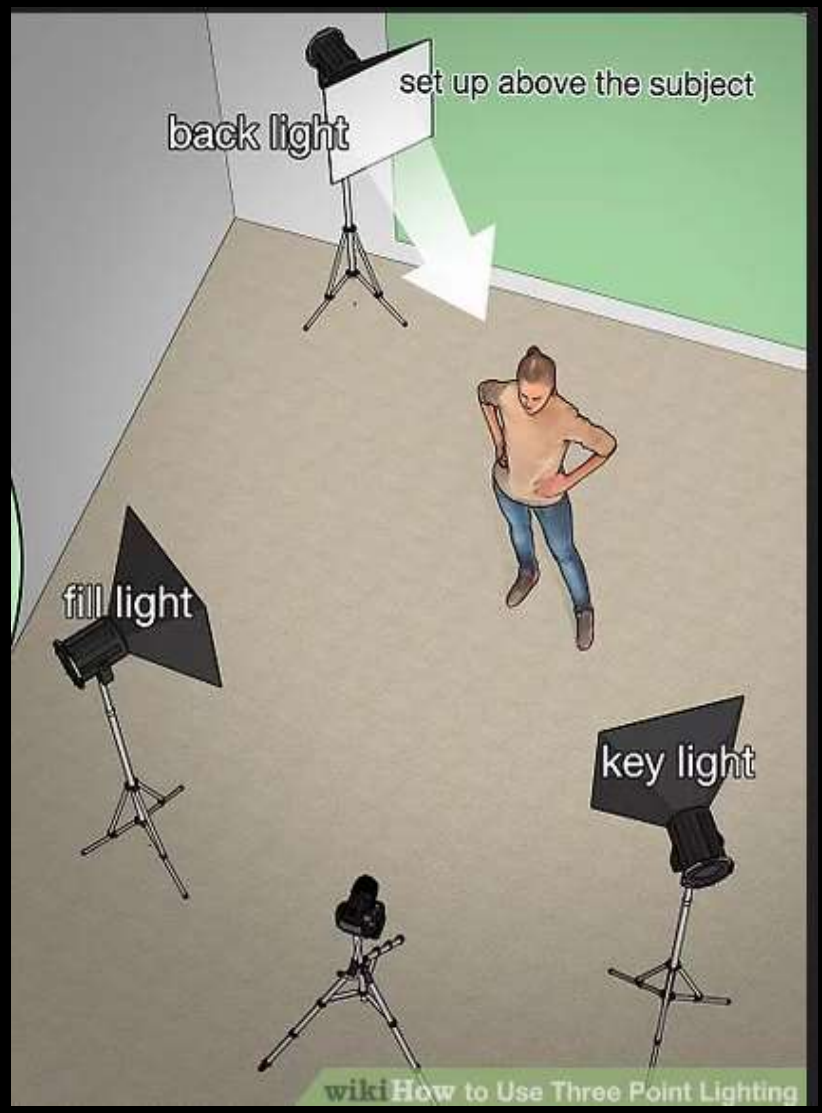
Free Site: Free Music Archive



https://freemusicarchive.org/music/amarent/

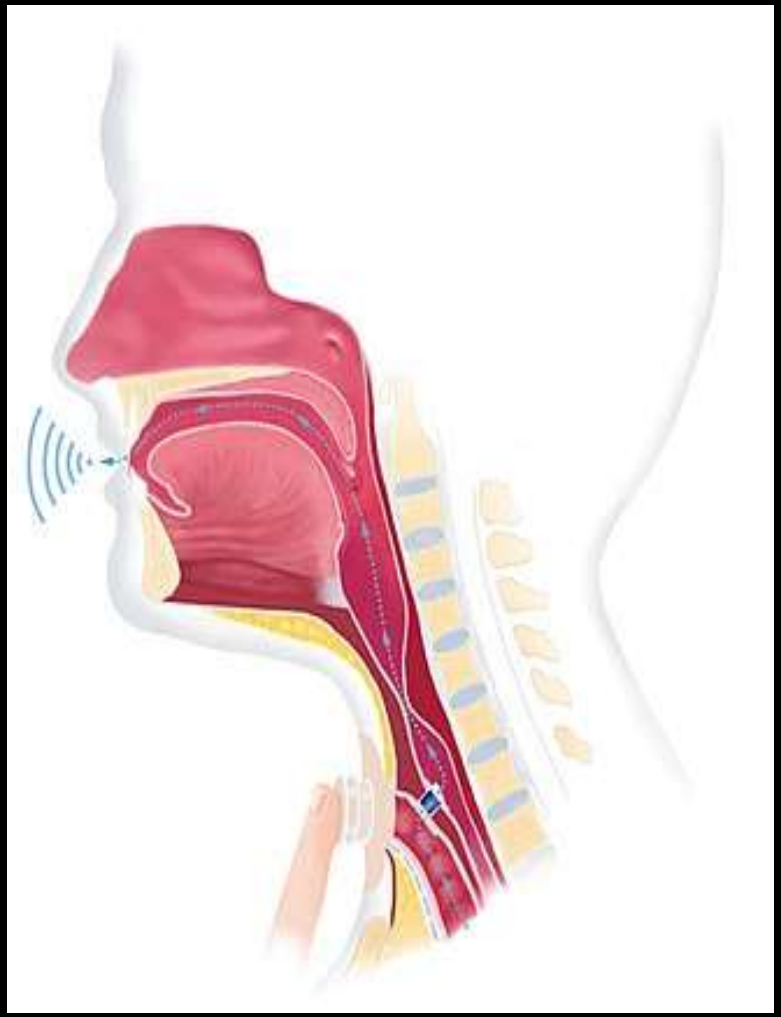
DIY Content

- Photos and video:
- Phone is fine
- Google “three-point lighting”

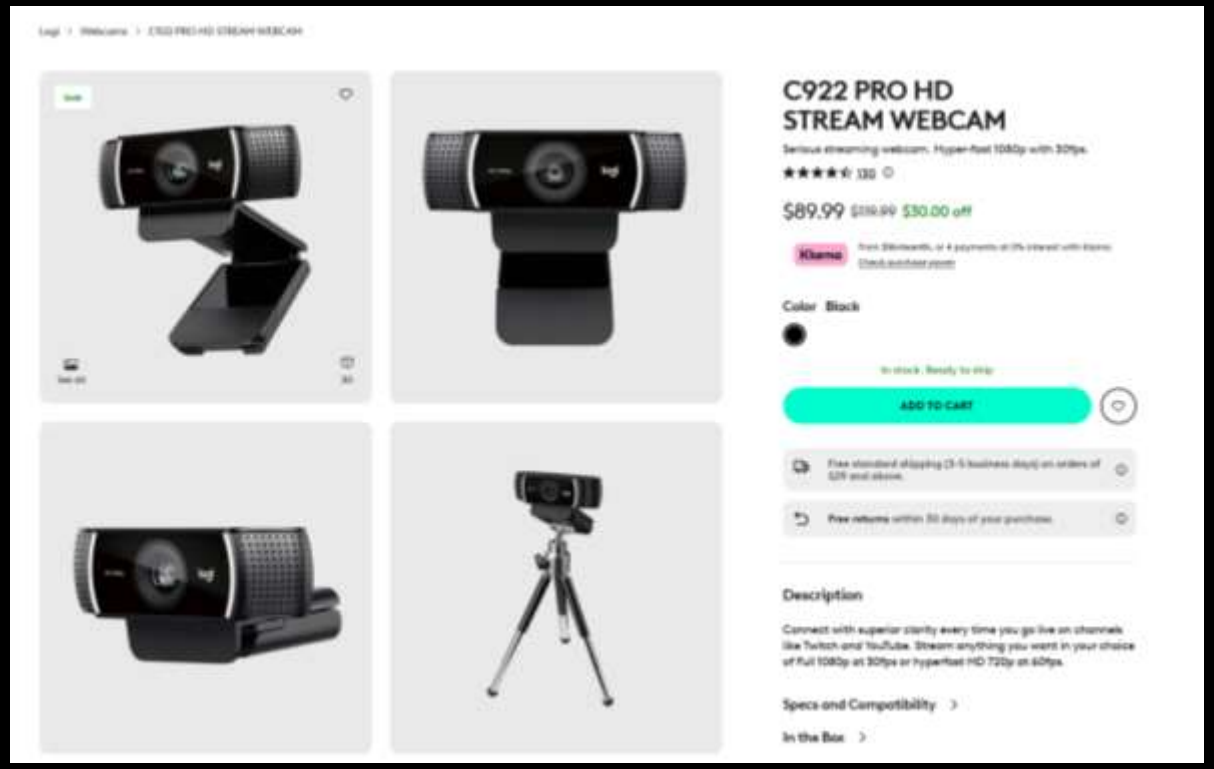


DIY: Audio/Voice Over

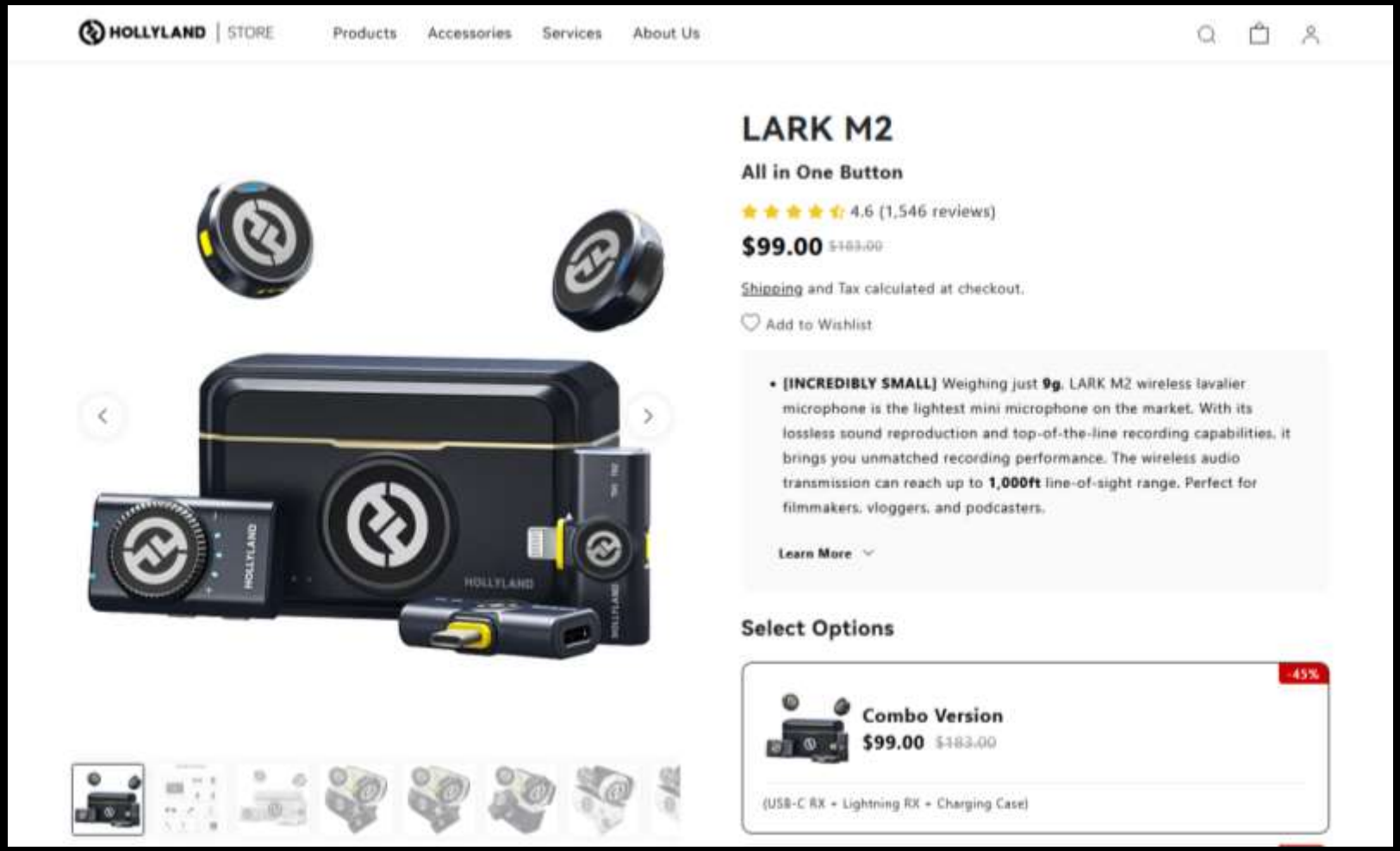
- Phone is OK
- Good computer audio is OK
- Lavalier mic is best



Webcam I’ve used for video/audio: Logitech



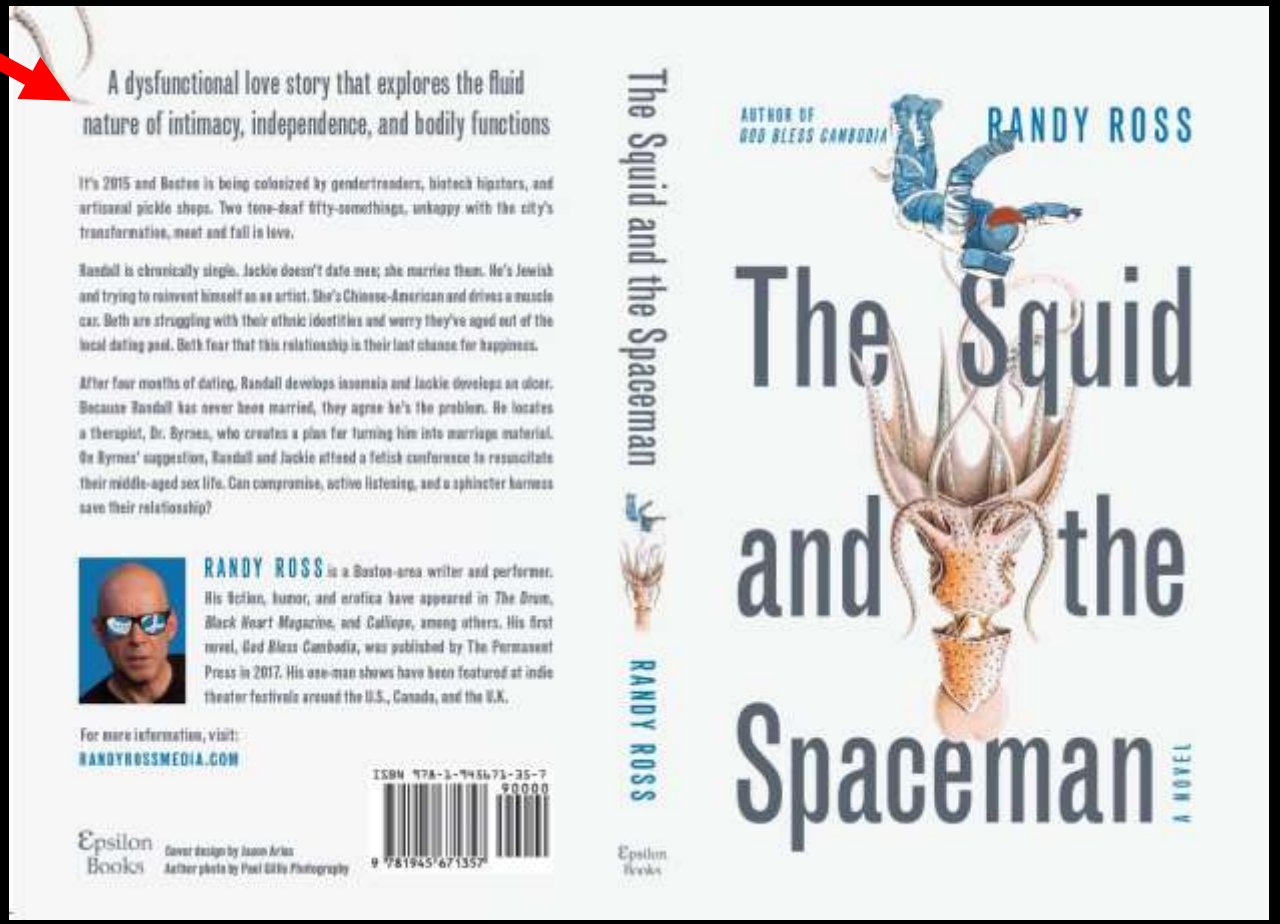
Lavalier Mic that Works with Phone or Camera



Example: Novel “The Squid and the Spaceman”

- Script Ideas: flap copy, query letter, reviews
- 8-10 images for 1-minute trailer (3-4 seconds each)
- Create folders for content*
  - *may need to resize with image editor.
- Load into Video Editor

Plot Teaser



A dysfunctional love story that explores the fluid nature of intimacy, independence, and bodily functions

It's 2015 and Boston is being colonized by gendertreaders, biotech hipsters, and artisanal pickle shops. Two tone-deaf fifty-somethings, unhappy with the city's transformation, meet and fall in love.

Randall is chronically single. Jackie doesn't date men; she marries them. He's Jewish and trying to reinvent himself as an artist. She's Chinese-American and drives a muscle car. Both are struggling with their ethnic identities and worry they've aged out of the local dating pool. Both fear that this relationship is their last chance for happiness.

After four months of dating, Randall develops insomnia and Jackie develops an ulcer. Because Randall has never been married, they agree he's the problem. He locates a therapist, Dr. Byrnes, who creates a plan for turning him into marriage material. On Byrnes' suggestion, Randall and Jackie attend a fetish conference to resuscitate their middle-aged sex life. Can compromise, active listening, and a sphincter harness save their relationship?

RANDY ROSS is a Boston-area writer and performer. His fiction, humor, and erotica have appeared in *The Drum*, *Black Heart Magazine*, and *Calliope*, among others. His first novel, *God Bless Cambodia*, was published by The Permanent Press in 2017. His one-man shows have been featured at indie theater festivals around the U.S., Canada, and the U.K.

For more information, visit:
RANDYROSSMEDIA.COM

ISBN 978-1-945671-35-7
90000
9 781945 671357

Epsilon Books

Cover design by Joann Arias
Author photo by Paul Gillis Photography

The Squid and the Spaceman

RANDY ROSS

Epsilon Books

AUTHOR OF *GOD BLESS CAMBODIA*

RANDY ROSS

The Squid and the Spaceman

A NOVEL

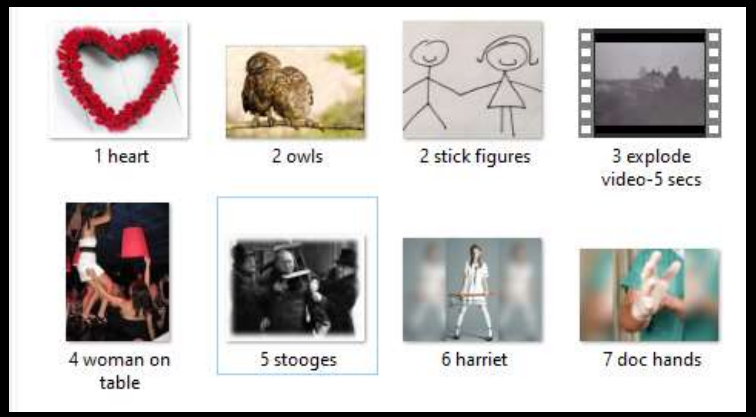
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Folders with 8-10 Images

Beginning



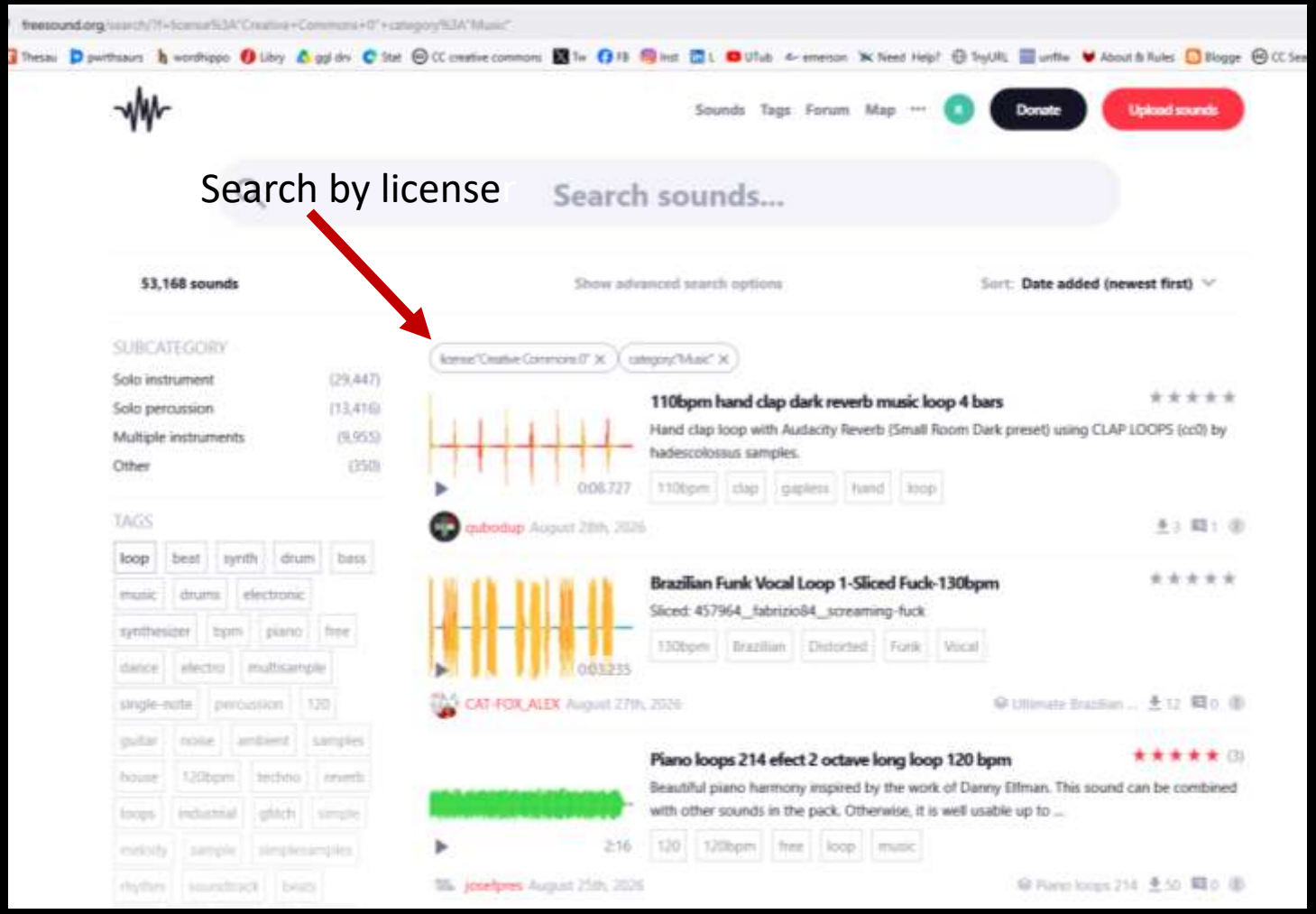
Middle



End

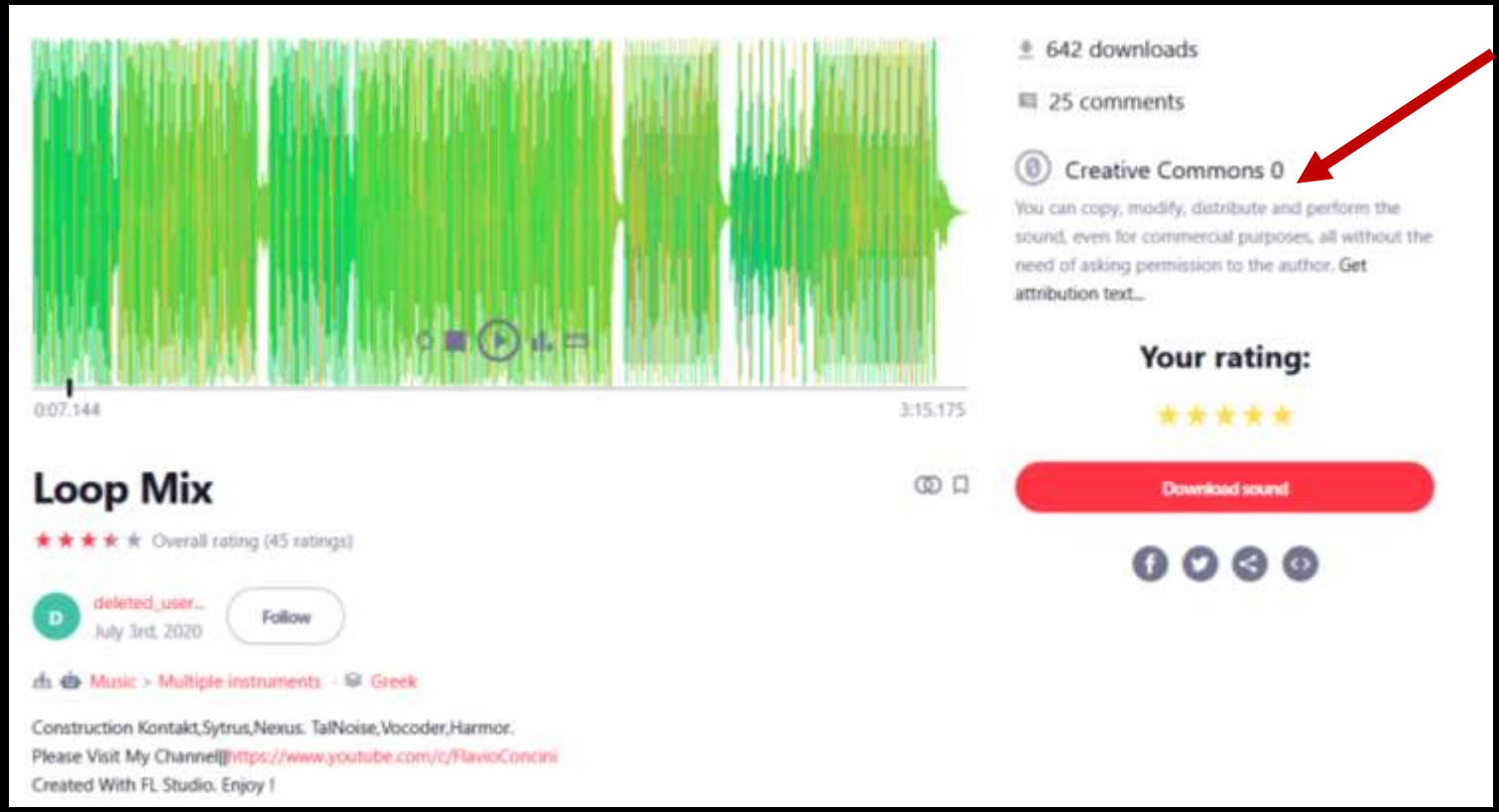


Background Music



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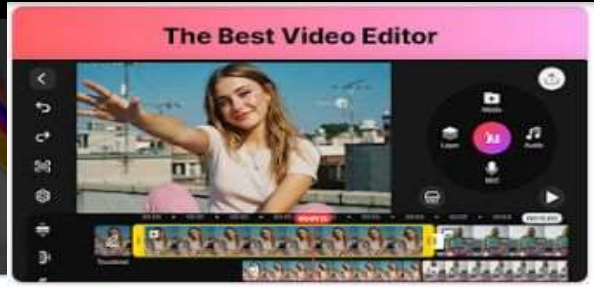
Free and Licensable



Pick a Video Editor



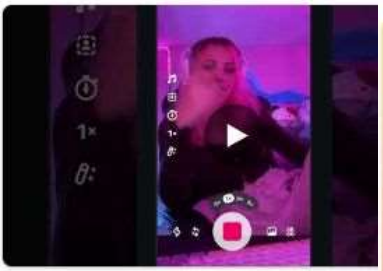
Video Editor & Maker - InShot
InShot Video Editor
4.8 ★



KineMaster - Video Editor
KineMaster, Video Editor Experts Group
4.4 ★



Picsart A
PicsArt, In
4.0 ★



Edits: Video Editor
Instagram
4.7 ★



Adobe Express: AI Photo, Video
Adobe
4.6 ★



YouTube
Google LL
4.6 ★



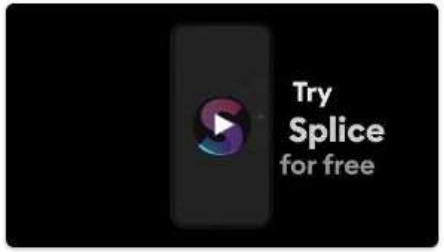
PowerDirector - Video Editor
Cyberlink Corp
4.2 ★



AI Video Editor - VivaCut
Ai Propulse2026
4.3 ★



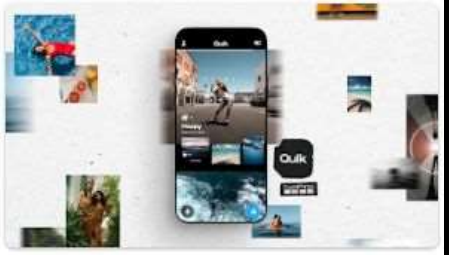
VivaVide
QuVideo I
4.3 ★



Splice - Video Editor & Maker
Bending Spoons
3.6 ★



B612 AI Photo&Video Editor
SNOW Corporation
4.1 ★



GoPro Quik: Video Editor
GoPro
4.5 ★



Videoleap: AI Video Editor
Lightricks Ltd.
4.5 ★



VSCO: Photo Editor
VSCO
3.6 ★



Filmora: AI Video Editor&Maker
Wondershare Filmora
4.0 ★



AI Video Editor - Vidma Cut AI
Vidma Video Studio
4.6 ★



Wink: Video Enhancer & Editor
Meitu (China) Limited
4.5 ★



Meitu
Meitu (China) Limited
4.5 ★



KwaiCut - Video Editor
Kwai Technology Limited
4.4 ★



PixVerse: AI Video Generator
PixVerse
4.5 ★



Alight Motion
Alight Motion
3.2 ★

Popular Ones I've Used

- Simple and free:
  - Apple iMovie
  - Microsoft Movie Maker



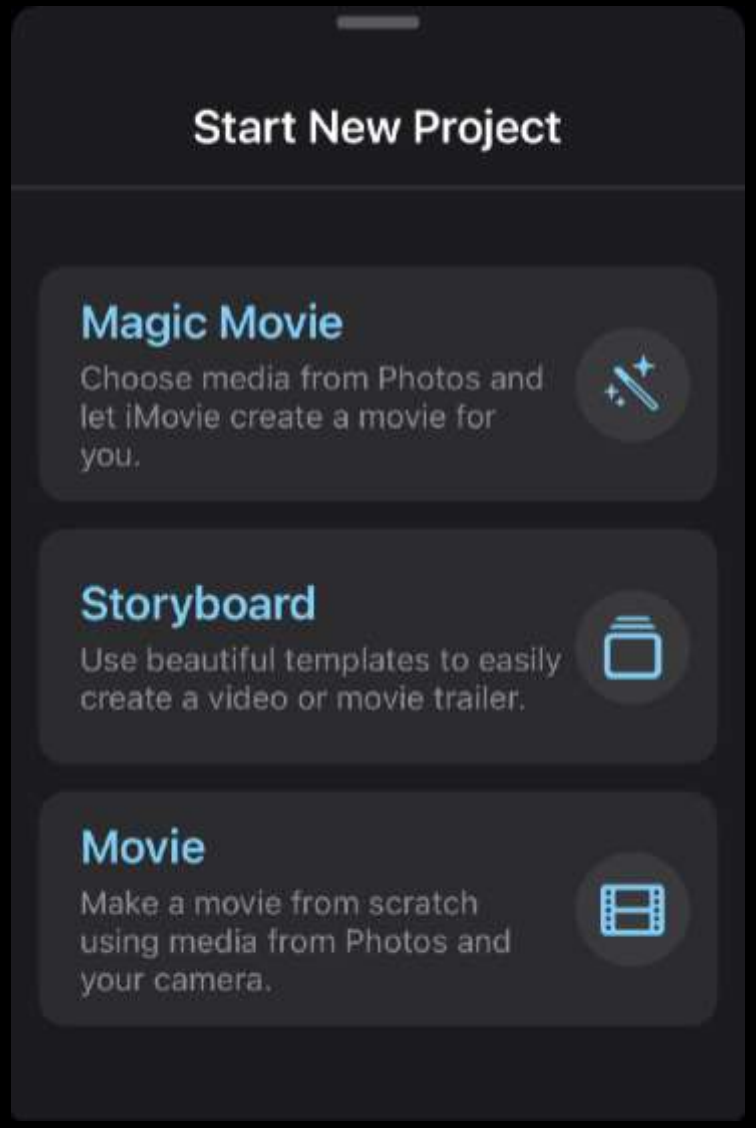
- Intermediate: free but better features cost
  - Canva: online, image and video editing
  - Capcut: desktop and online



- Professional:
  - Premiere

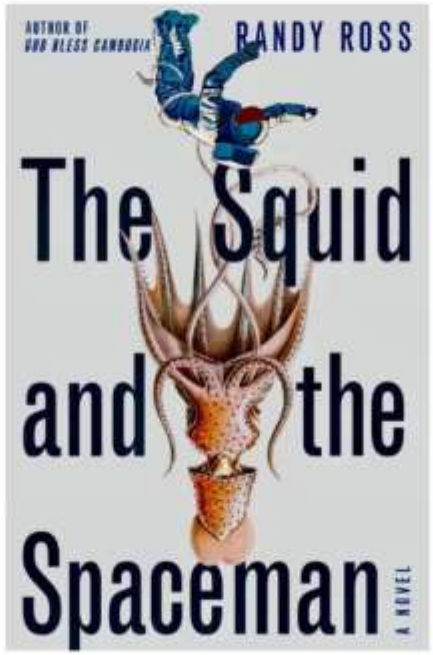


Simple and Free: iPhone iMovie “Magic Movie”





A “Magic Movie”



Windows Movie Maker 2012



- Simple to use
- Minimal system requirements
- Free
- Lives on computer – you own the files.

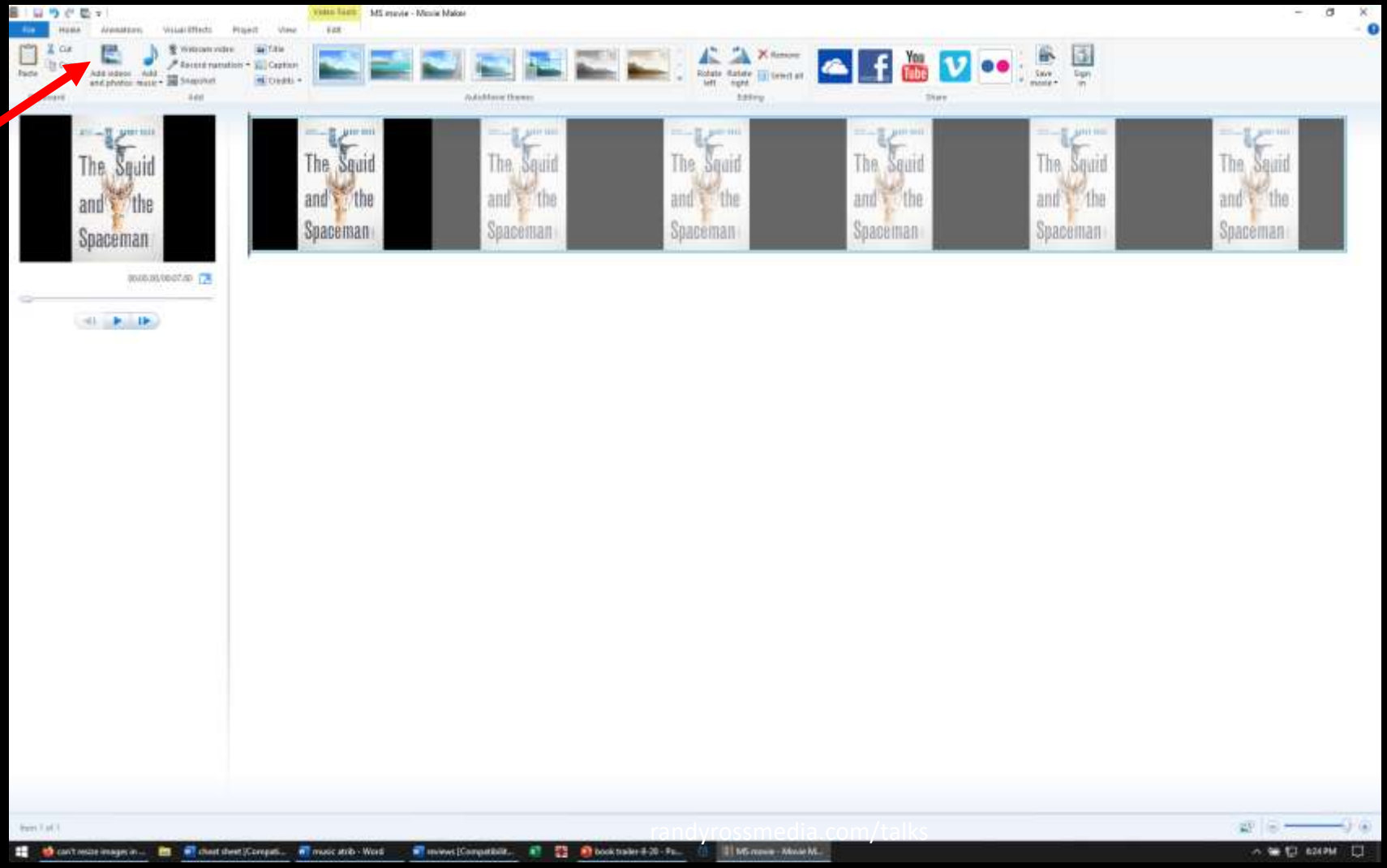
Windows Movie Maker 2012



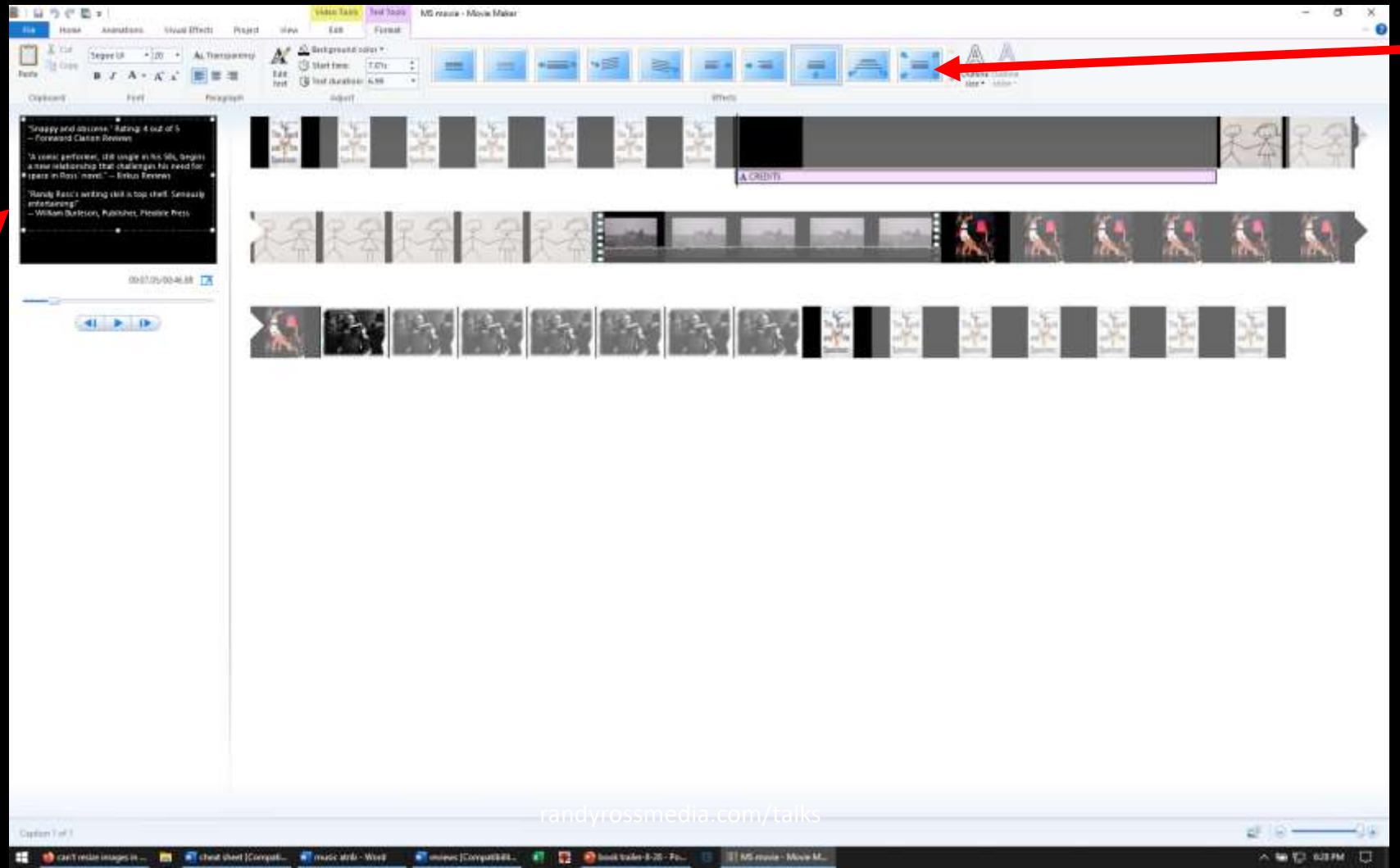
- But:
  - Windows only
  - Limited features and free content
  - No tutorials

- Download: archive.org/details/wlsetup-all_201704
- Manual: https://www.scribd.com/document/491205621/Windows-Movie-Maker-2012-Notes

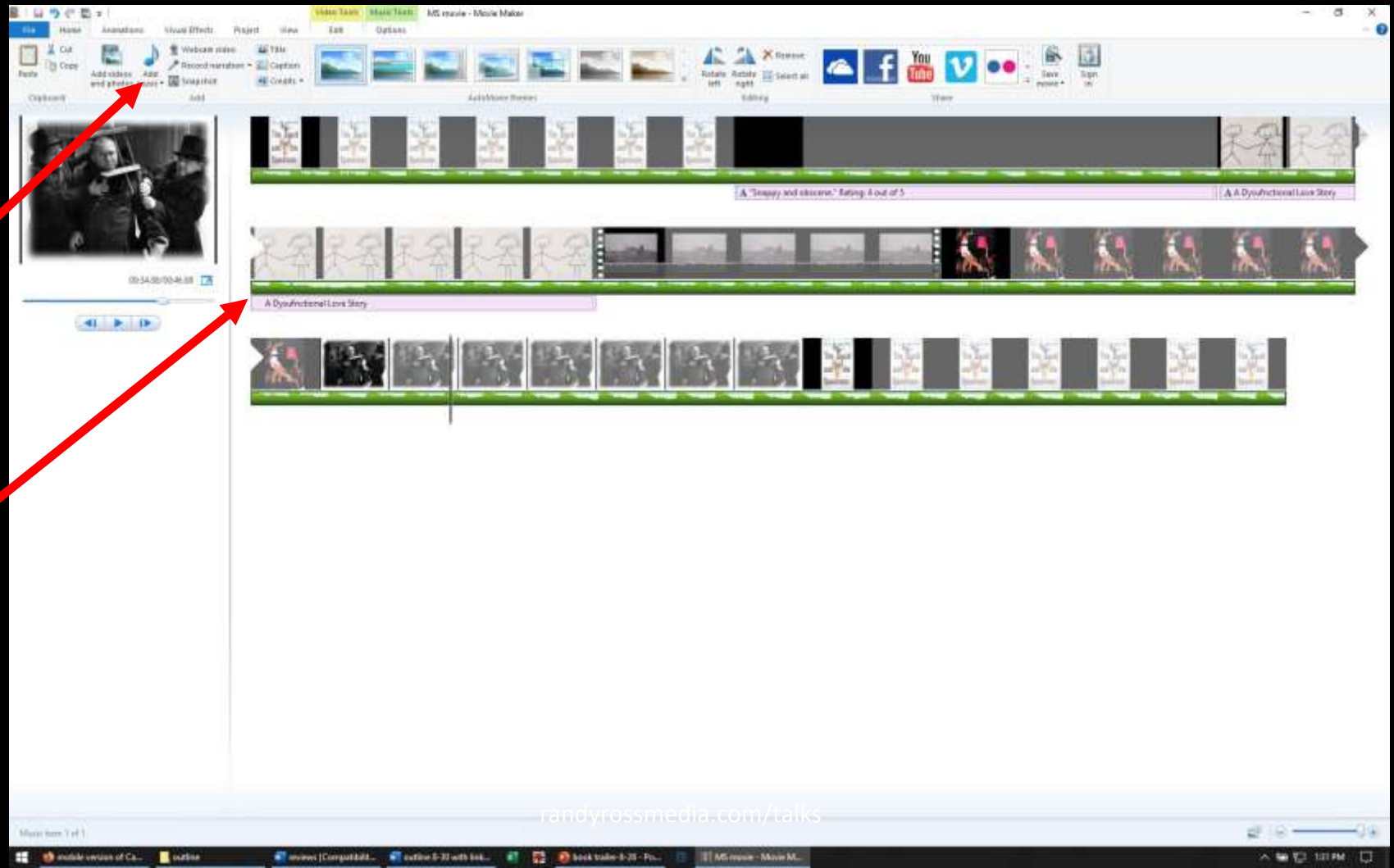
Add Files



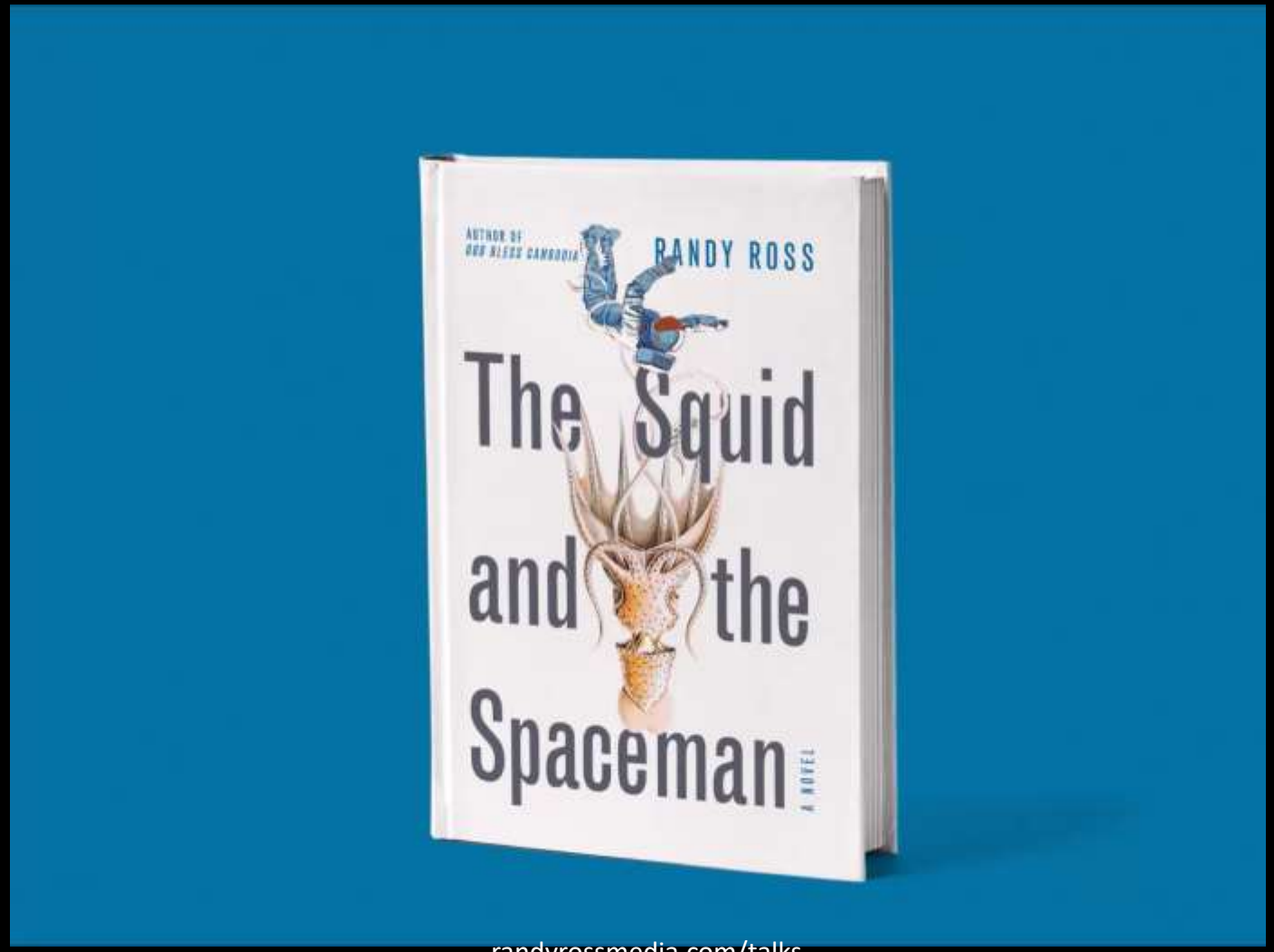
Add Text and Animation



Add Captions to Images, Music



30-Second Finished Product



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Canva: More Advanced



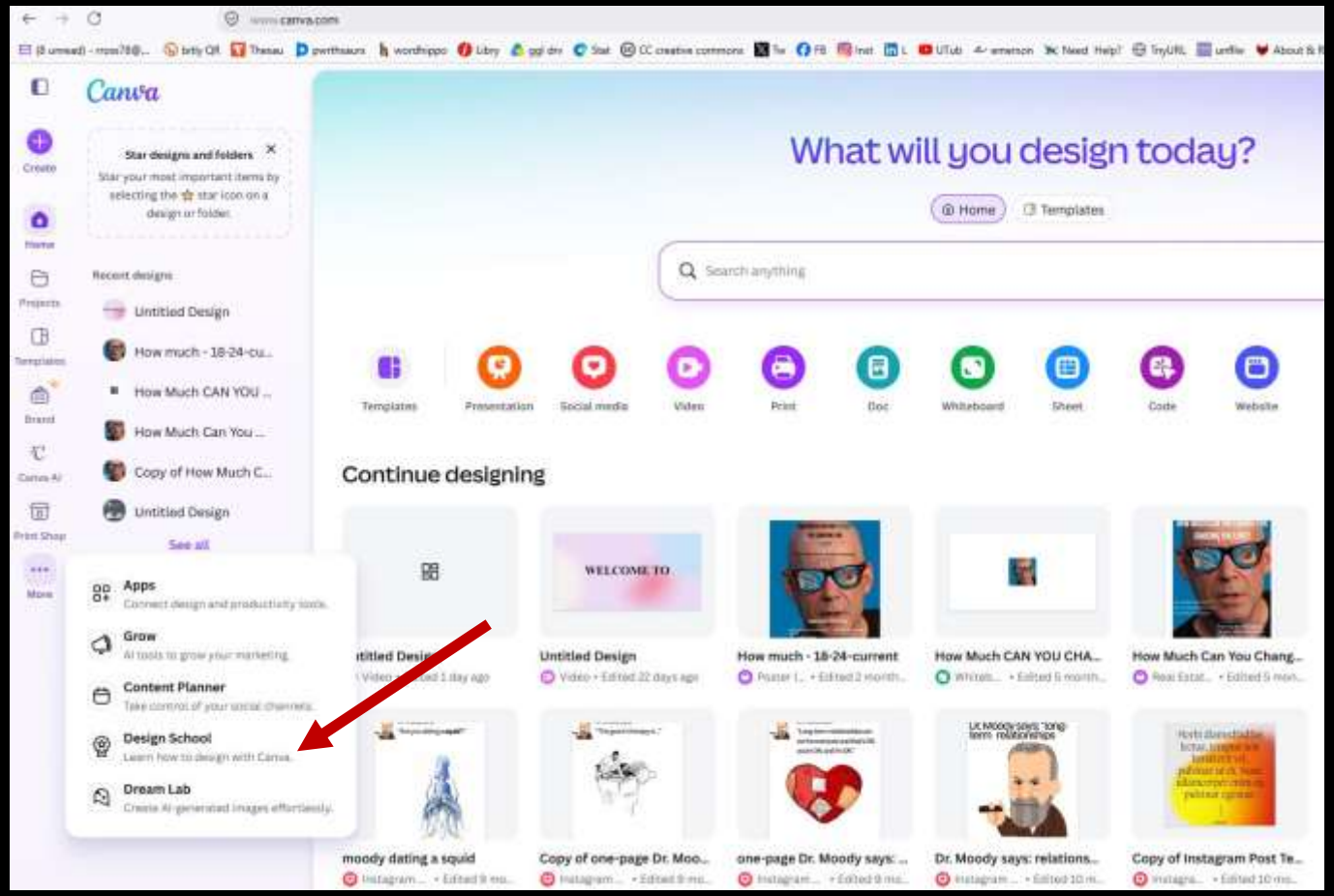
- More features: animations, editing
- More free content
- More templates for social media
- Tutorials

Canva: More Advanced



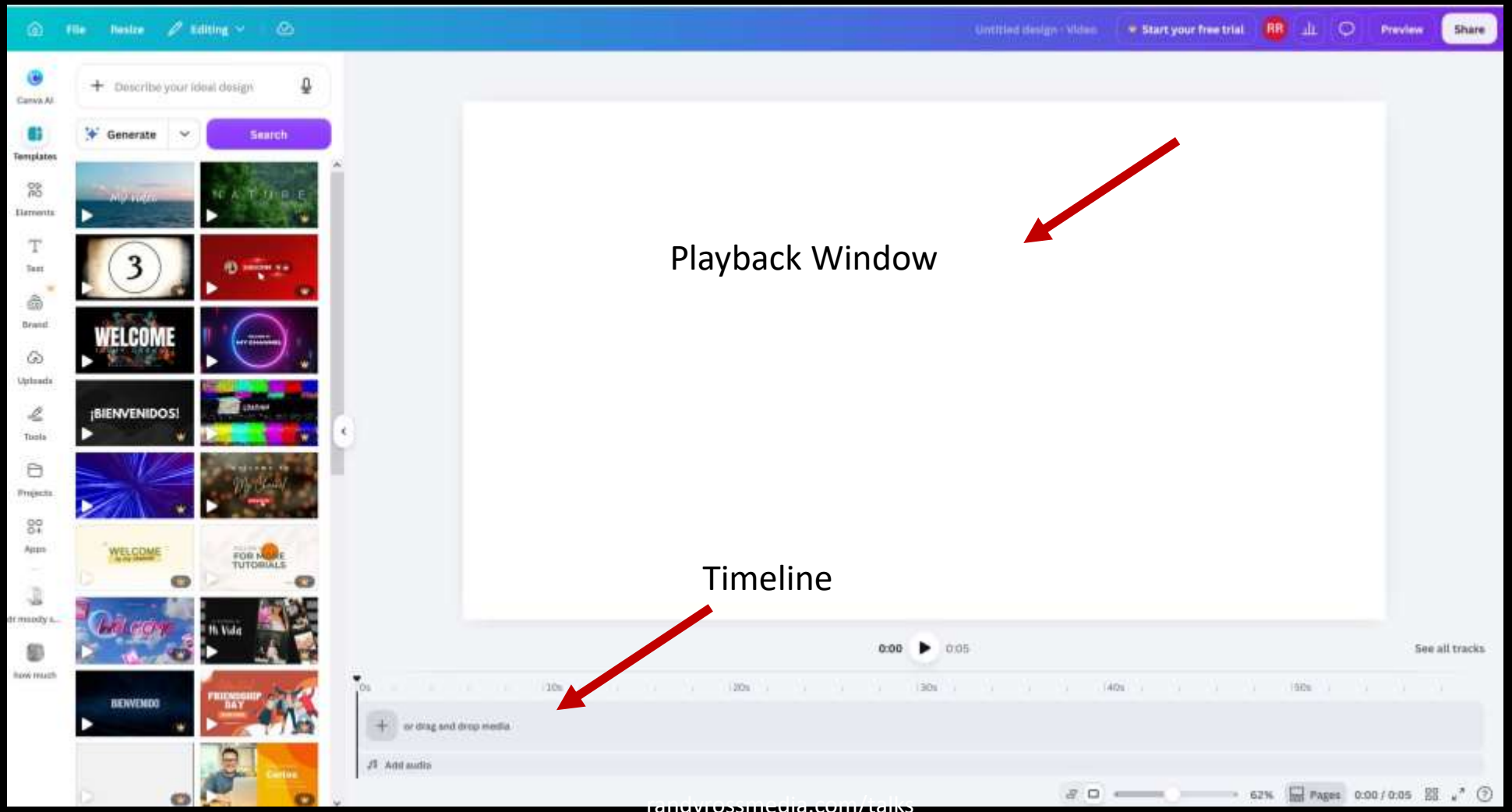
- But:
  - Lives on Web: They own working files.
  - Free version requires image editor to resize photos
  - Owned by Australian company.
  - Better features/content in Pro version ($18/month)

First Time Canva? Do a Few Tutorials

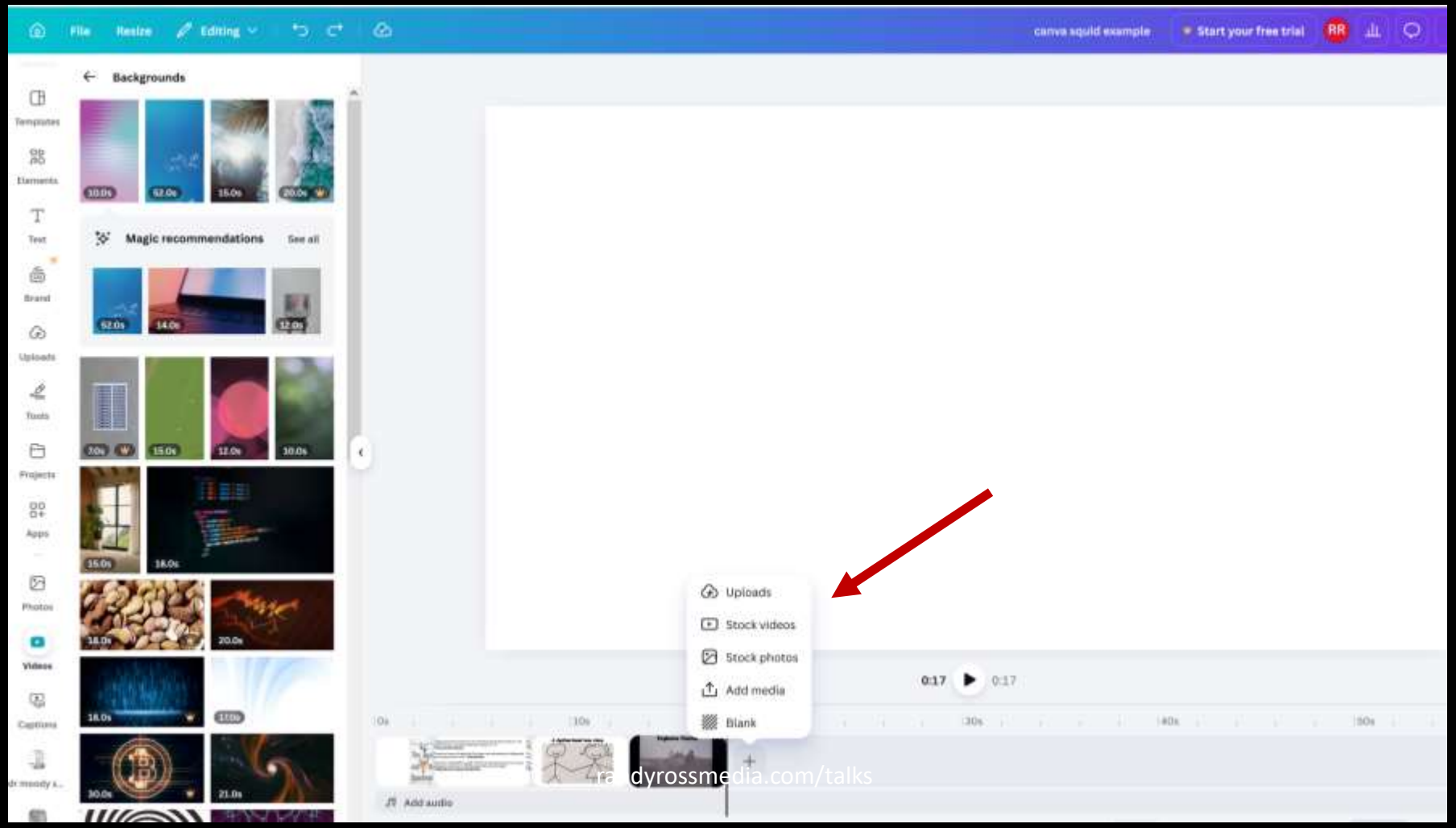


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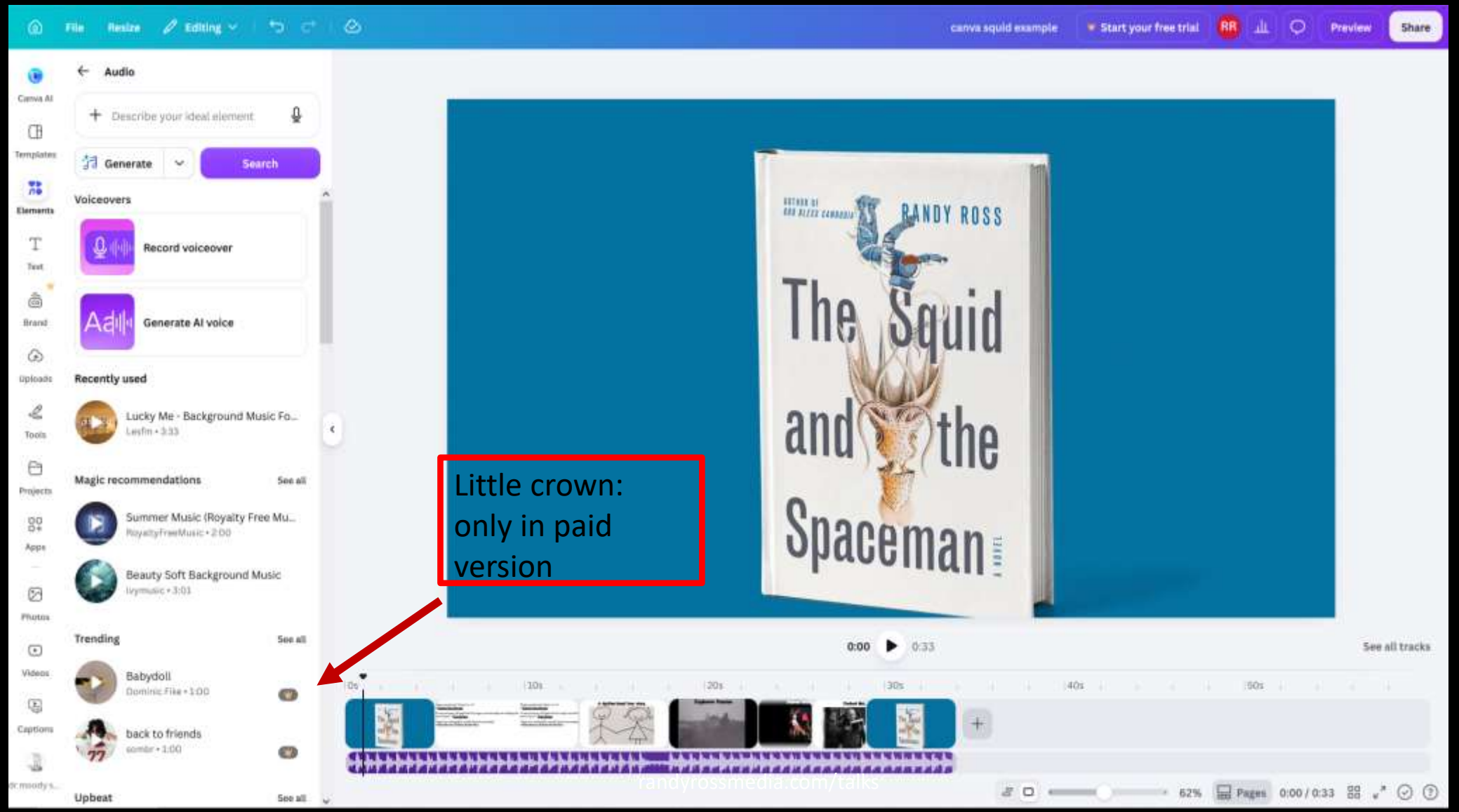
Parts of a Real Video Editor



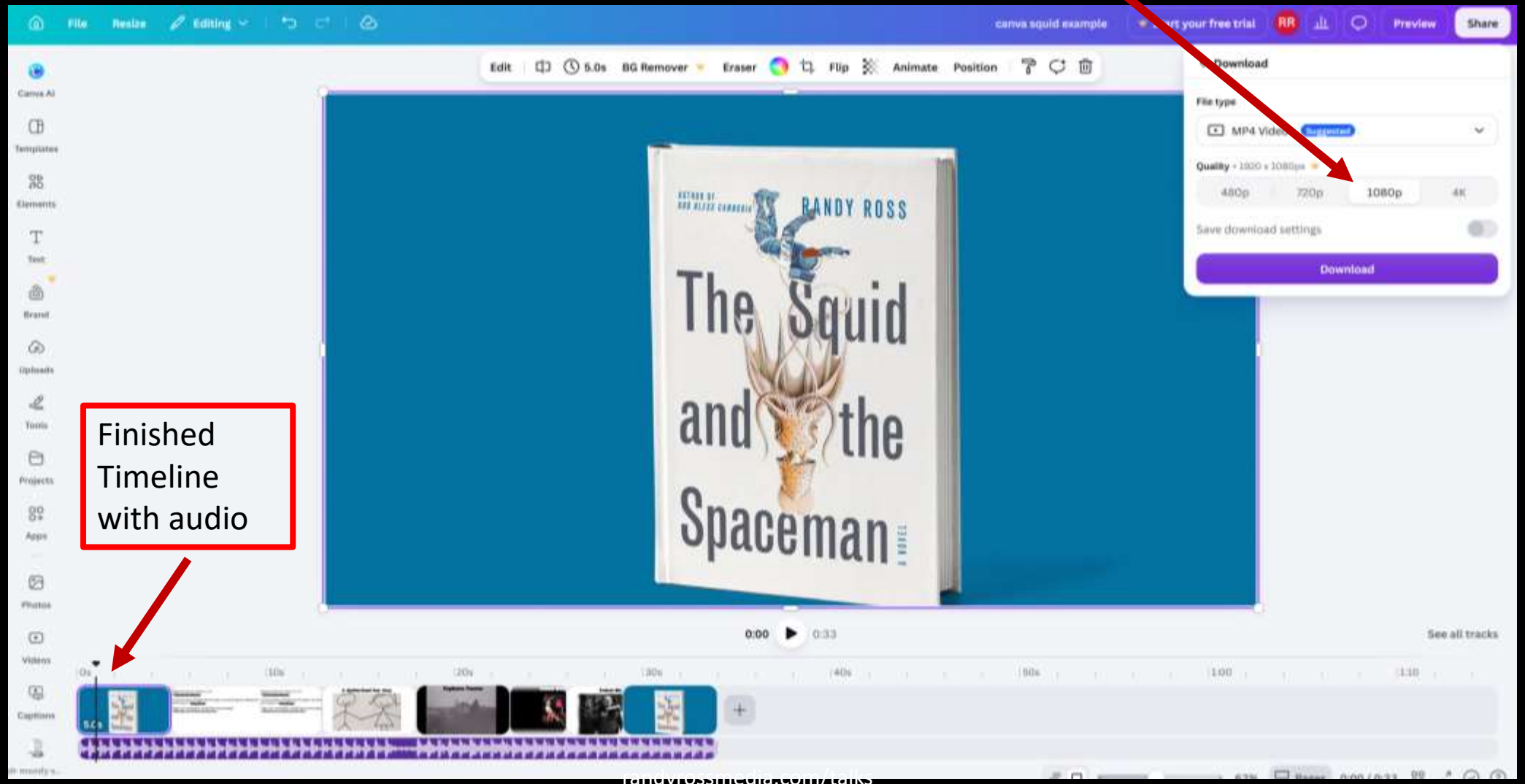
Add Files


File
Resize
Editing
canva squid example
Start your free trial
RR
Backgrounds
Templates
Elements
Text
Brand
Uploads
Tools
Projects
Apps
Photos
Videos
Captions
Magic recommendations
See all
Uploads
Stock videos
Stock photos
Add media
Blank
0:17
0:17
Add audio
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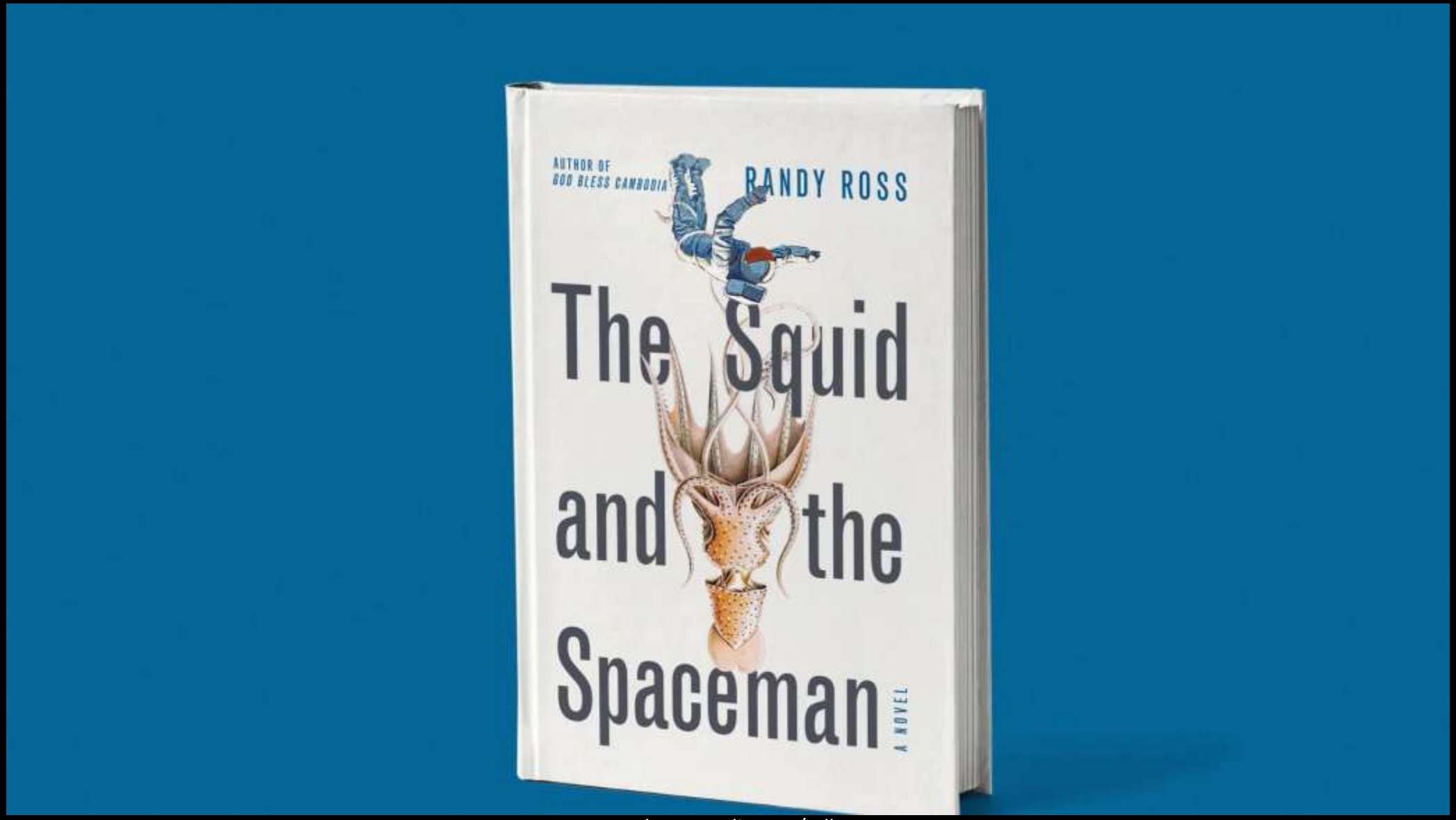
Limitation of Freebie: Content Unavailable



Add Audio, Download File

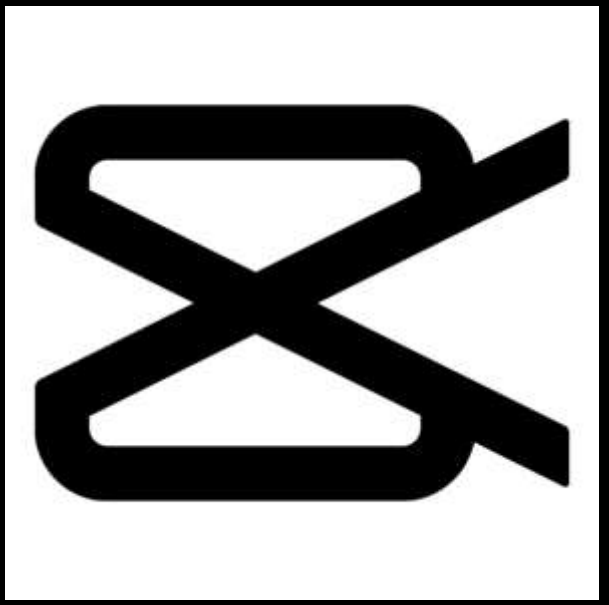


Canva Example



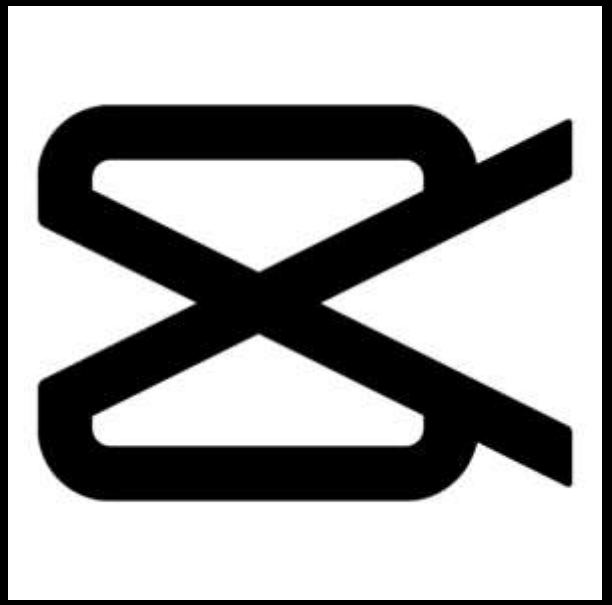
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Capcut: More Powerful



- More features, more free content
- Desktop versions for Mac and Windows
- Runs on older computers vs. Adobe (requires Windows 11)
- Great for short videos and social media content

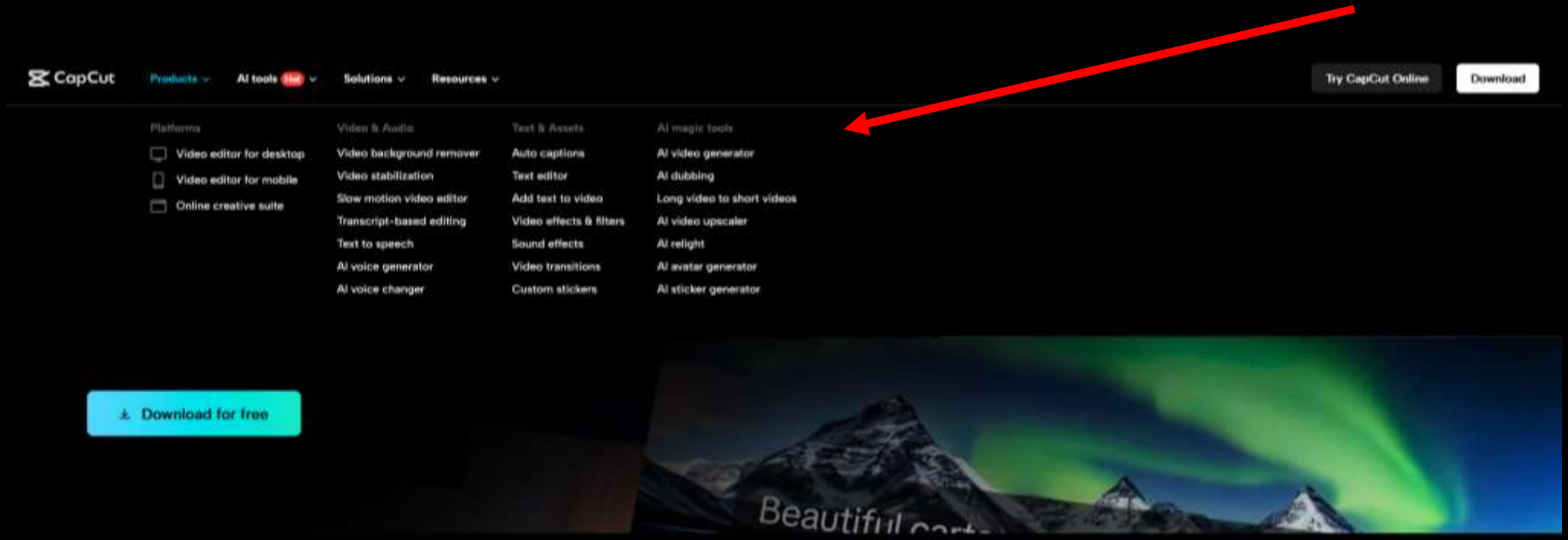
Capcut: More Complex

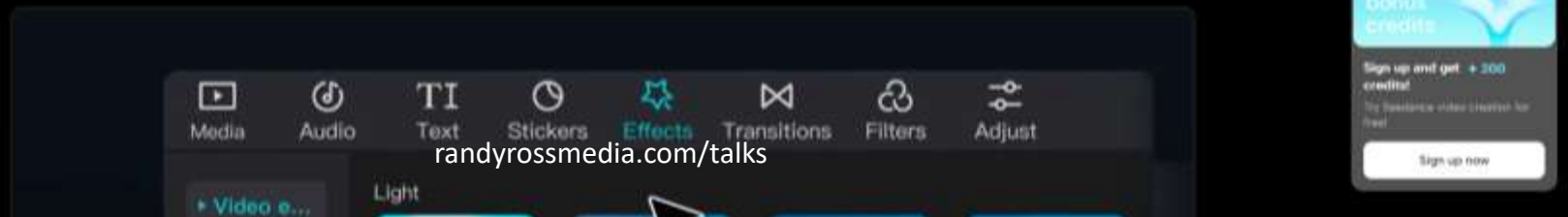


- But:
  - More features = more decisions
  - Owned by Chinese company that owns TikTok
  - Annoying ads, key features only in paid version. ($19.99/month)



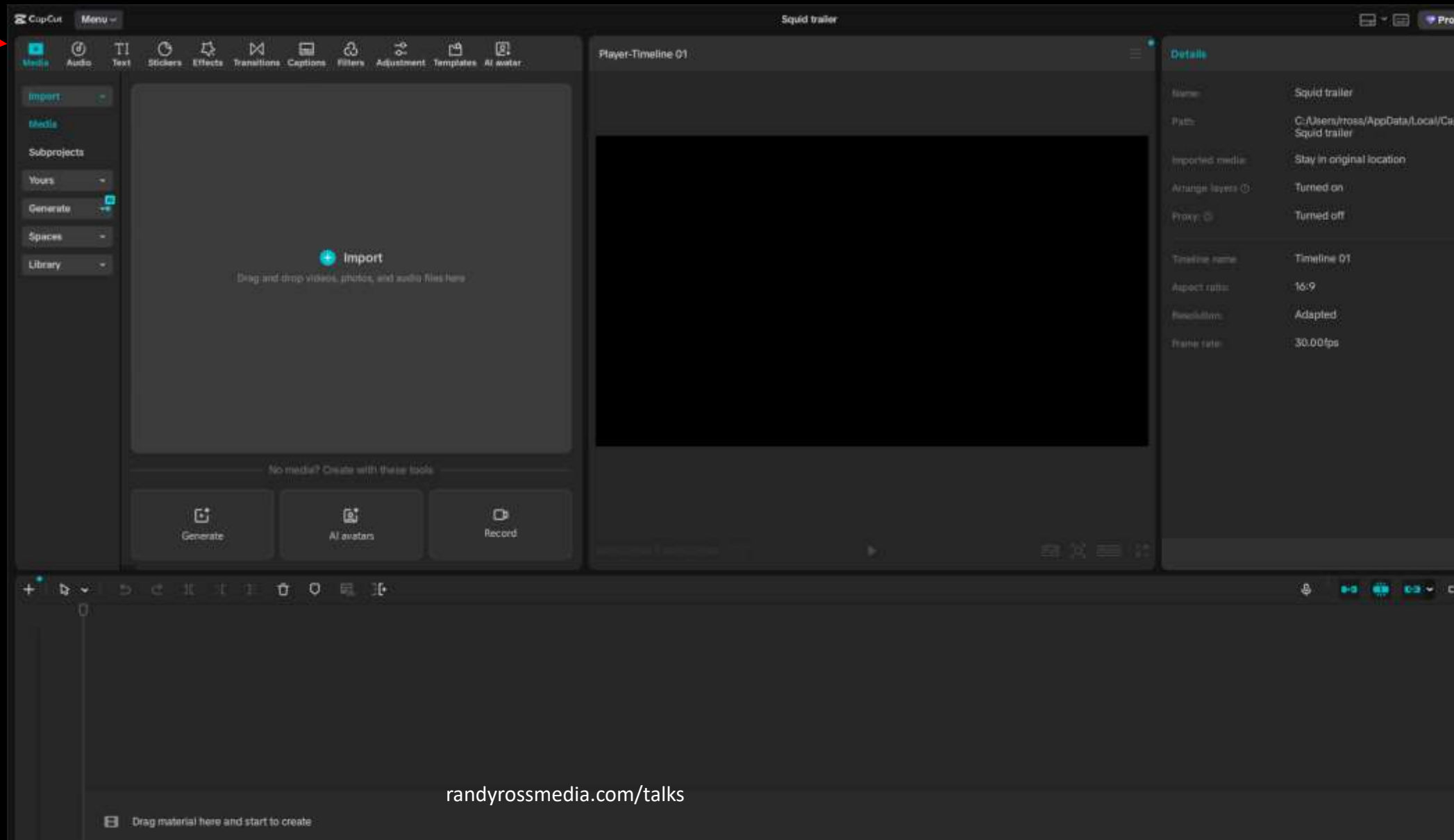
CapCut: More Features, More Complexity





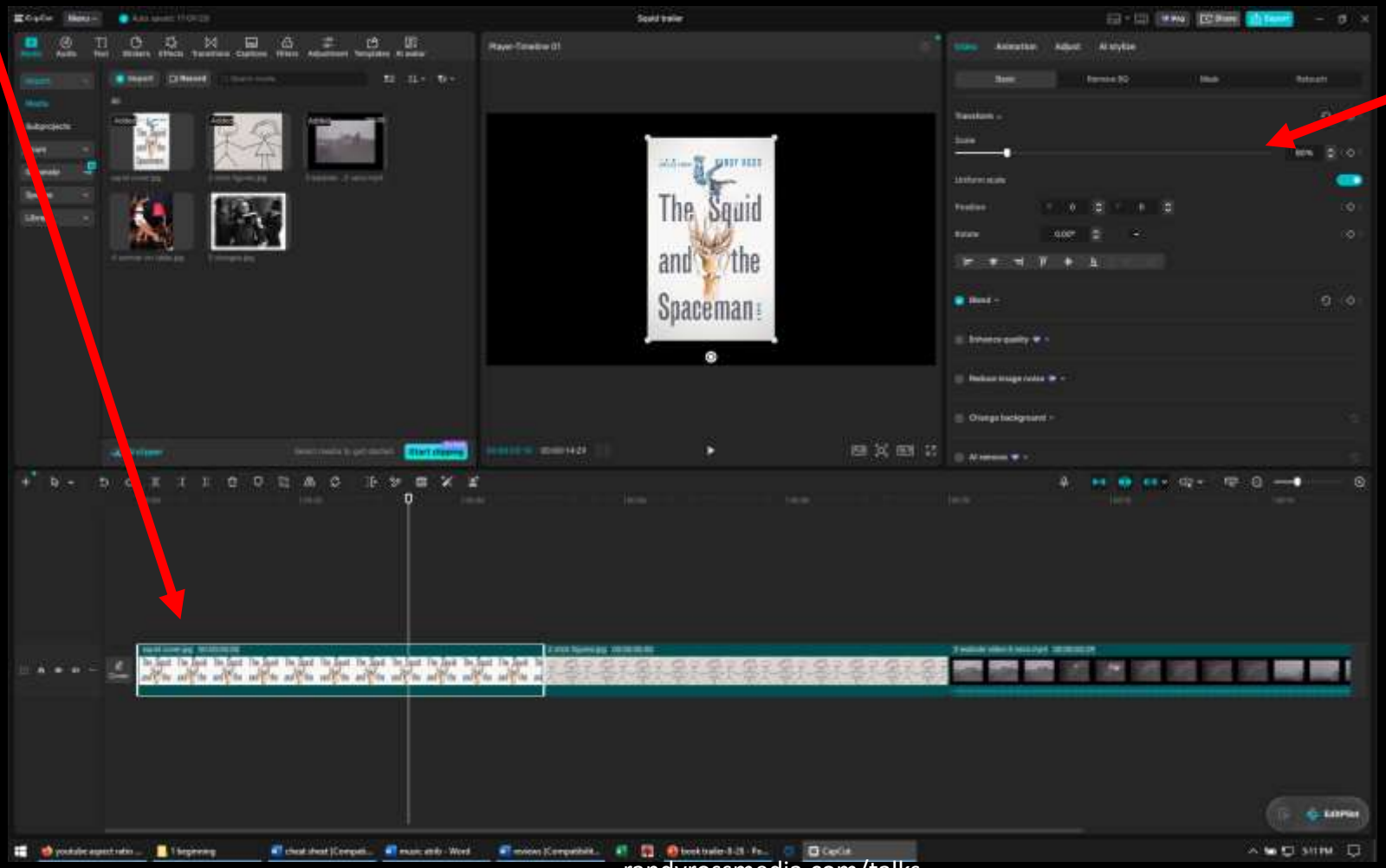
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Real Video Editing Tools

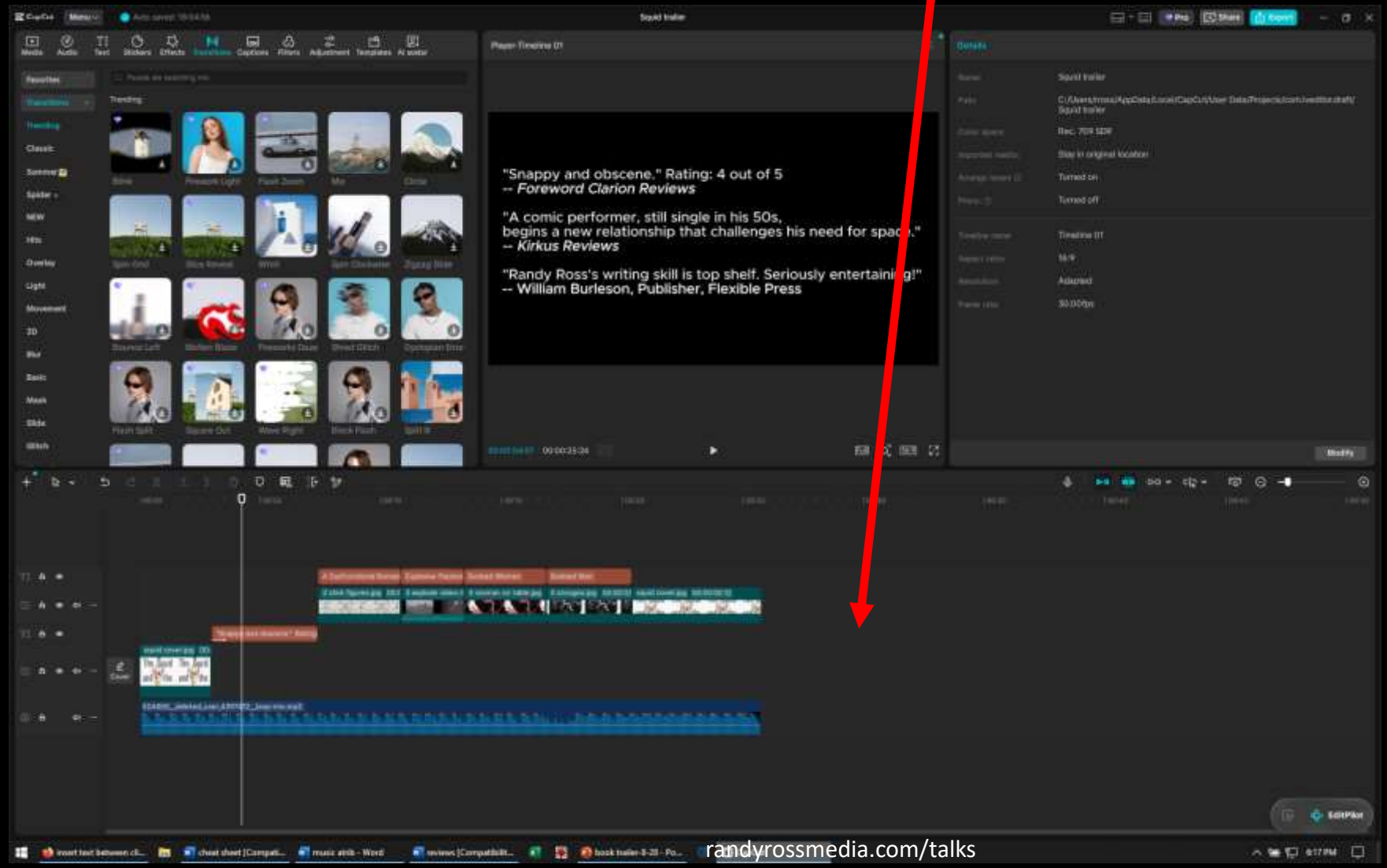


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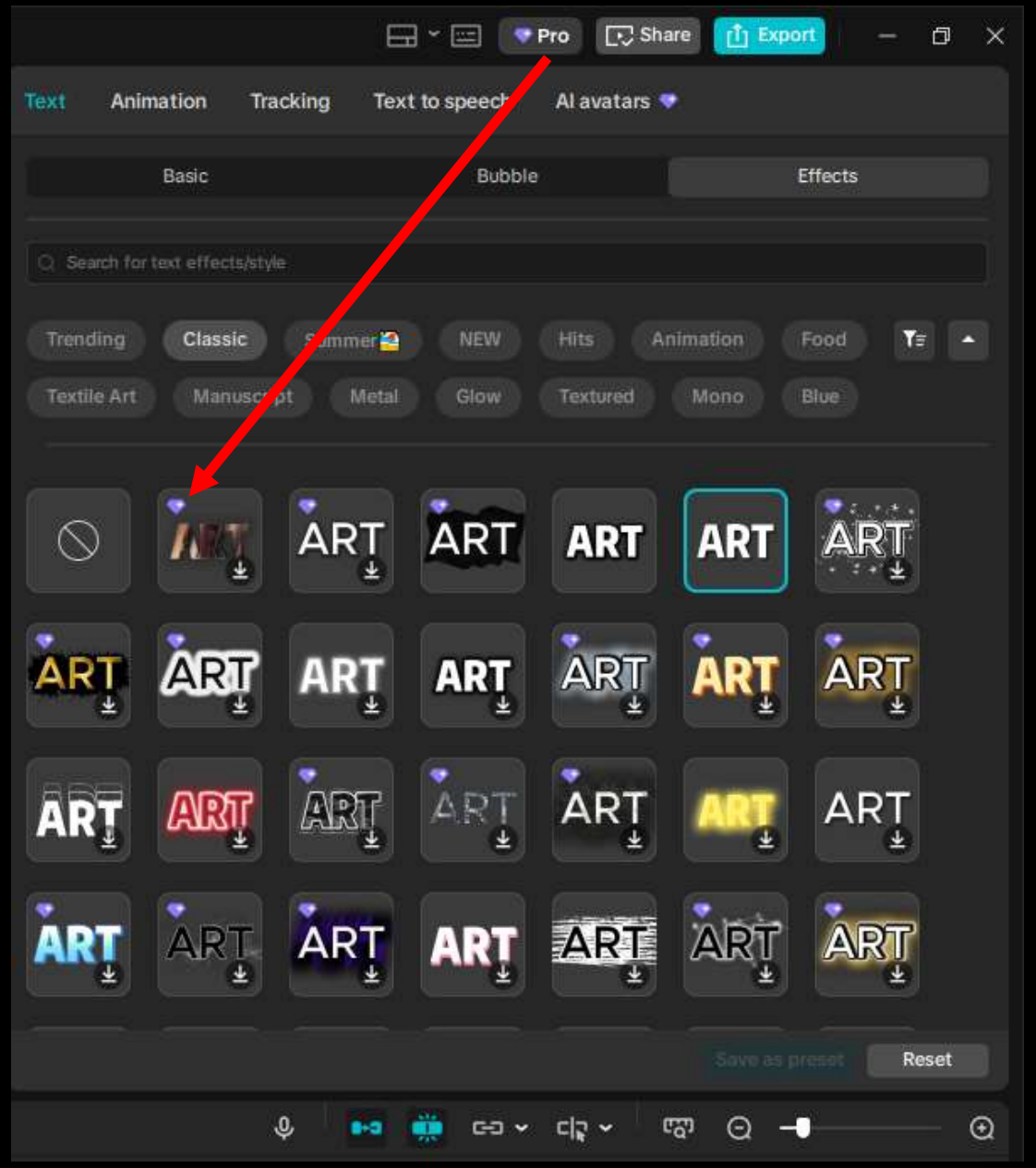
Add Images, Scale to Fit

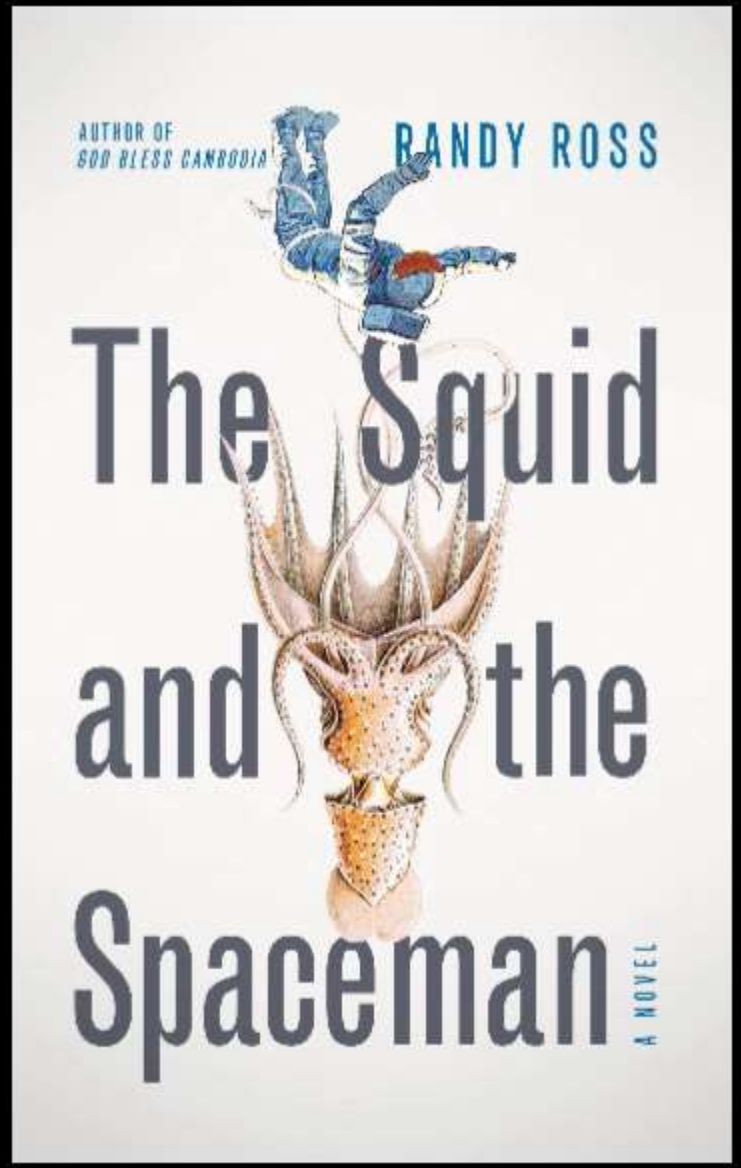


Add Audio Multi-track Timeline



Purple Hearts = Paid Features





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Advanced: Premiere



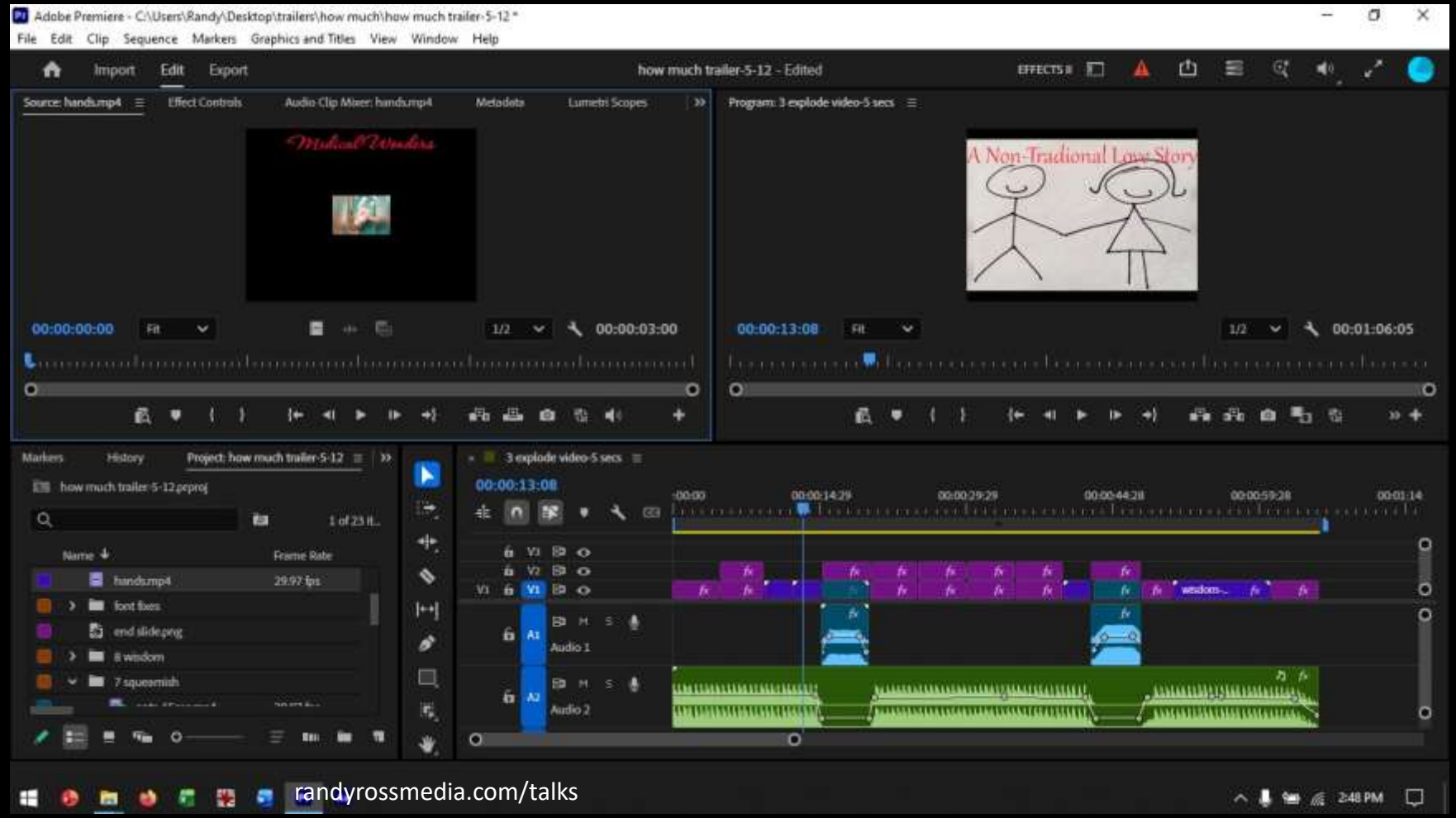
- Industry standard
- In business since 1986, based in CA.
- Better for long videos
- Part of suite with Audition (audio), After Effects (animation), Photoshop, Illustrator.

Advanced: Premiere



- But:
  - More expensive: $23/month ($80/month for suite)
  - Requirements: for Windows, 16GB RAM, Mid-high CPU (i7), Windows 11.
  - Complicated to learn
  - Emerson offers classes for $492 (get student rate for Adobe suite for $40/month)

Premiere Interface



Helpful Free Tools

- Tweaking photos and images:
  - Canva
  - Irfanview
  - Powerpoint
- Adjusting volume, formatting, trimming/combining audio
  - audacity
- Downloading Youtube videos:
  - Clipgrab

DIY Tips



If you get stuck:

- Try to figure out for 5 minutes then Google: “In Canva, how to I …”
- Try another tool you already have: Powerpoint for graphics and special effects.

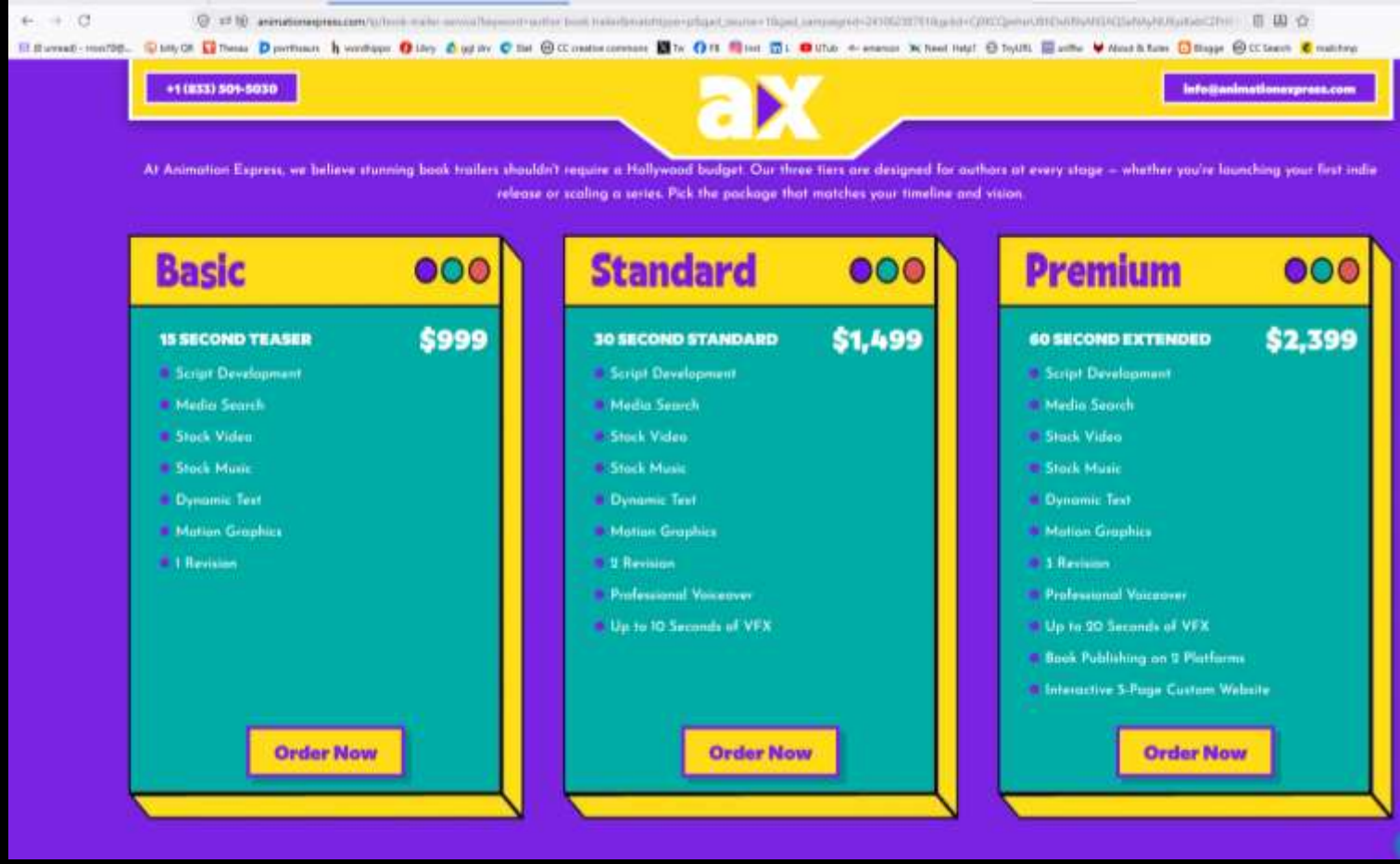
Don’t need to win Academy Award

Hiring Out

-Fiverr, Upwork: $50-$400+

-$2,400?

-Good to know what’s involved



Tips for Hiring a Contractor

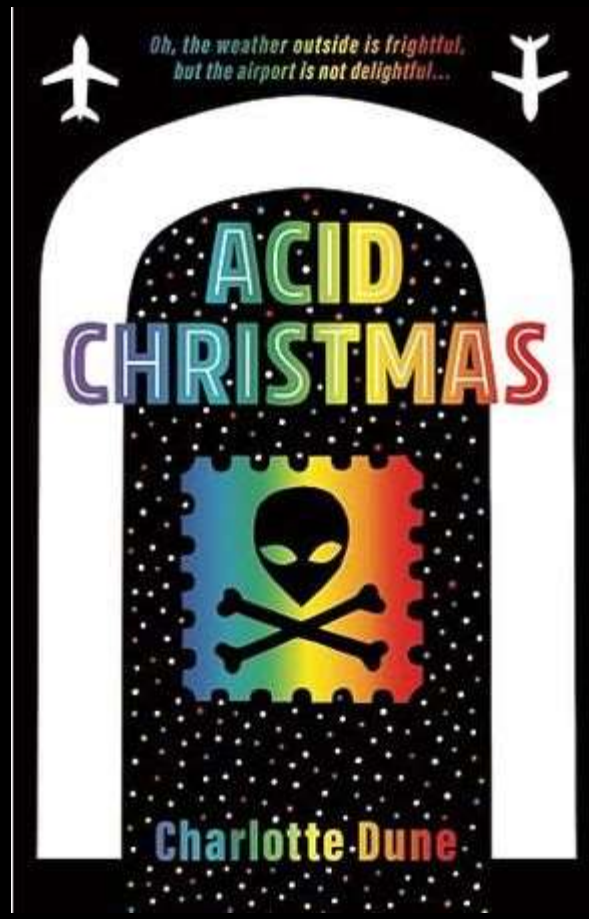
-Send cover, description, samples

-Send content: music, images?

-Details: revisions? rights?



What to Include in Your Contractor Ad



Source:
charlottedune.substack.com/p/i-paid-three-fiverr-artists-to-make

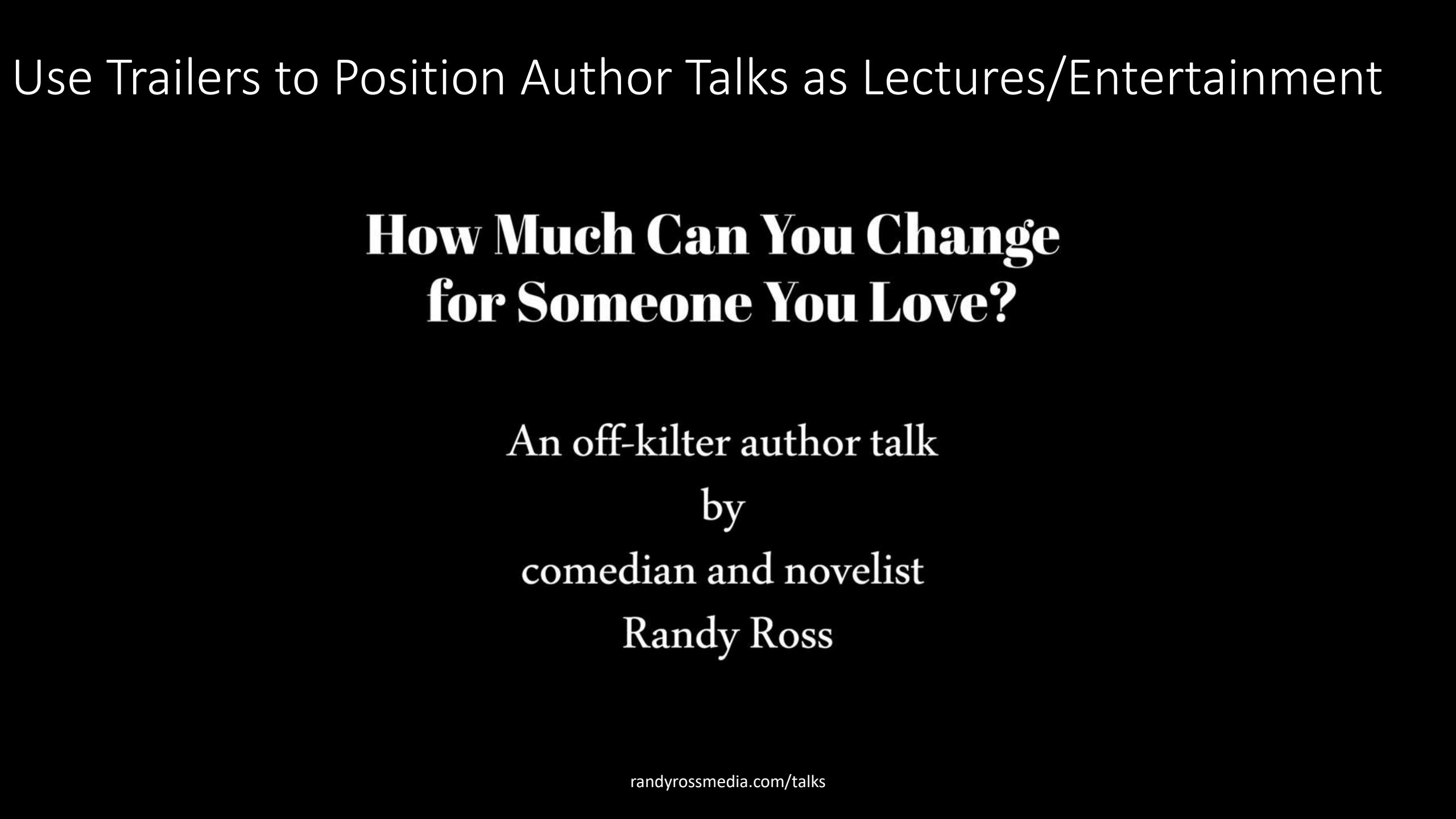
Charlotte Dune's Lagoon

Inspired by the hilarious Fiverr test videos of bass player Davie504, where he hires multiple Fiverr pros at different price points, I began my own "fun" Fiverr experiment, and I found three different Fiverr video creators, at three different price points, and gave them all the same source files (including the book cover art) and instructions.

- Make a book trailer under 30 seconds long.
- Include the cover.
- This is the plot of the book:
  - **Acid Christmas is a dystopian holiday tale with a packed airport, unending snow, and a mysterious book of LSD.**
    Weary and worried about an impending funeral, flight attendant Candi is on her way home to Vegas when a sudden blizzard grounds her flight. Delayed in Toronto without a winter jacket, she waits for the snowstorm to end; only it

- The trailer must include the book cover.
- Dystopian, creepy music, even better if it has bells or a creepy holiday sound.
- I also sent them both of the book trailers above as examples.

Use Trailers to Position Author Talks as Lectures/Entertainment



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Tales of a Reluctant World Traveler

a comedy of

adventure and self-discovery

Slides and Links at

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