

Sunday, August 1, 2010

### **2010.04.26: Karyn Decore for Avenue Magazine Edmonton**

During a month of shooting mostly commercial architectural interiors and events, Paige Weir's request for me to shoot Karyn Decore, president of Decore Hotels, for Avenue Magazine Edmonton's Style Q&A feature for June was a welcomed invitation. A bit of research revealed that our subject-to-be was also very attractive and in excellent physical condition . . . I was excited. We discussed locations and toyed with the idea of shooting at one of the Edmonton celebrity's hotels without making it look like we shot out of town and while I sense that there was a realistic possibility that we could shoot outside of Edmonton considering that Karyn was actually in Banff when we began discussing the shoot, certain scheduling and support staff elements made it much more desirable for the team as a whole to shoot in Edmonton.

Fortunately, Paige has hookups. Years ago, I shot my first billboard for Derk's Formals in the Red Strap Market space just east of the Edmonton provincial court house. Since then, architect Gene Dub had purchased the building and it had become more difficult to book time in the space to shoot but Paige made the arrangement and, once again, I was in the space where I did my first shoot for my first commercial fashion client. I did a building walk through with an interesting and eccentric Austrian gentleman who works for Gene and we spoke briefly. Some things about the building have changed but, for what we needed the building for, much has remained the same. I walked through the ghostly floors observing the windows which had now been plastic-wrapped over to help reduce energy loss. Some floors had a dense layer of fine dust that was largely undisturbed and may have collected over several months or even years. The space had become more beautiful and more characteristic with unoccupation.

Below are some photos I shot during the walkthrough taken with the Leica M7 and the Zeiss Biogon 35mm F/2 on Fuji NPZ.

On the third floor. For the Derk's shoot we used this floor only for photos after dark because it didn't have enough light for what we needed to do with it. However, this floor and the broken ladder became the setting for my favourite photos from our shoot with Karyn Decore.

Under previous management we weren't allowed to use the top floor because of the exposed insulation but this time no one stopped us from using this spot. Shooting in the other direction, Craig Hobbs, co-shooter on this shoot, created what would become the cover for Avenue Magazine Edmonton's June issue.

We used these west-facing windows as primary lighting for the Derk's billboard. We shot Karyn with lens axis perpendicular to this wall and directly adjacent the south wall for the portrait-oriented full length.

Craig selected this area to shoot Karyn in piece from Edmonton designer Natasha Lazarowich's line Temna Fialka. The white wall parallel to the windows affords a photographer a lot of working room with generous fill light which we sought out to complement Karyn's dark hair and high cheekbones.

Having Craig on set gave art direction and I the confidence to shoot exclusively 4x5 film while Craig shot his D3. In fact, more of his shots ended up being published. Below, all photos shot with existing light on Portra 160NC with the jade green Toyo VX125 and either the Schneider Symmar-S 210mm F/5.6 or the Schneider Symmar-S 135mm F/5.6. Film processed by ABC Photocolour in Vancouver and wet-mount drum scanned in house on the Howtek Scanmaster 4500 driven by Aztek's Digital Photo Lab Professional software suite.

Craig's shot with similar pose and same location ended up on the cover. Depth of field at F/5.6 even on the 135mm lens was very shallow and with the slightest bit of subject movement the subject's face became slightly out of focus. The cover would require the image to be cropped to about 1/5th of its original area. That said, due to the low levels of enlargement required to get even an aggressive crop of a 4x5 shot to full page size, the softness was not visible at final enlargement size, matching the sharpness of Avenue Edmonton's May cover shot by Bleacher and Everard, the American photographers that Avenue contracts for their US Style Q&A features. Shutter speed was approximately 1/8th of a second.

A full length published with approximately 1:1 enlargement for the story.

My favourite shot from the shoot. Fortunately it made it to print but at reduced size. Subtle front tilt, swing, and fall applied. I had forgotten to tap the film holder to ensure that the film was sitting square but there was enough cropping room left to correct for the rotation. I didn't fully correct the rotation here because Karyn's posture and the ladder's position seemed more natural with this much rotation even though the straight lines of the space emphasize the residual rotation.

Karyn was a lot of fun to work with being very patient and charismatic with lively eyes and she pulled off many outfits that most women don't have the physique to make work. Her support team consisting of her hairstylist (sorry, I don't recall her name), makeup artist, Bonnie Paxton, her stylist/stand-in/modeling coach Kendall (a former international model) and designer Natasha Lazarowich helped move the shoot along smoothly and made all of the looks very polished.

In the extended body of this entry you'll find some behind the scenes shots taken with the Leica M7, Zeiss Biogon 35mm F/2 on Delta 400 pushed to 1600 in Kodak Xtol in stock concentration.

The Toyo VX125 setup to compose the first shot of the day: the vertical full length in the animal print dress.

Karyn getting initial hair and makeup applied.

Bonnie applying makeup as her hairstylist looks on.

I think our hairstylist is taking out hot rollers but I'm not sure.

Few makeup artists I've met are cool enough to have their own director's folding stools.

Paige making sure we're all doing our jobs. With taller models my pop up dressing room is a lot of fun because most model's heads are totally above the top as they change.

Ravi brings Karyn's and his standard poodles to the shoot. We try to use her for a few shots but we failed to control this element well enough to consistently shoot deliverable photos.

Craig and Hardy discussing some history and particulars of the building.

Kendall helps Craig direct Karyn in the narrow split level area where he shoots her in one of Natasha's outfits.

Another view.

Posted by Klyment Tan in Shoots at 18:47