

Wednesday, May 23, 2007

2007.05.23: How do you shoot a 14 x 48' billboard?

A Pattison Superboard is 18 x 14' giving it an aspect ratio of 3.43:1. Quoting to shoot a series of photos to refresh a client's portfolio of billboards is a more complex task than I had originally imagined. Pattison's "S14 Superboards" pose a unique problem for a photographer looking to use a single frame to fully cover the entire area of the billboard as the aspect ratio of these boards is 3.43:1. Cropping a 4:3 sensor area like that from most medium format digital backs means you're left with only 39% of your camera's pixels ($4/3 \times 1/3.43 = 0.388727$). Cropping a 3:2 aspect ratio sensor leaves you with 44% of your pixels. Cropping a 1:1 aspect ratio sensor leaves you only 29% of your pixels. One may argue that there is the possibility of using a sliding digital back adapter or some other panoramic shift system to elongate the aspect ratio of a frame by doubling its width so you'd end up with 8:3 (80%), 3:1 (88%), and 2:1 (58%) aspect ratios (remaining percentage after crop). However, that makes it unfeasible to have non totally-stationary elements (like people) cross the centre of your frame. There is also the prospect of shooting film. If one were to shoot 6x17 (56 x 168mm actual size), making the controversial assumption that a typical ISO negative film (with hopes of improving on the exposure latitude of a higher resolution slide film) shot 24 x 36mm has the equivalent power to resolve about 8 megapixels worth of information, you're looking at approximately 100 pixels per linear mm. 6x17 has an aspect ratio of 2.83333 meaning that to crop to Superboard aspect ratio we'd be down to about 83% of total resolution ($56 \times 100 \times 168 \times 100 = 94,000,000$). One may also suggest shooting bigger film (17cm is just under 7" giving the cropped resolution of a 6x17cm shot very similar to that of a cropped 5x7" shot) but until you hit 8 x 10 you are not realizing much benefit, if at all and with 37% efficiency after cropping you realize that you just aren't gaining that much, you have to use significantly larger and heavier equipment, and you are paying much more for processing.

Posted by Klyment Tan in Clients at 05:24

Sunday, May 20, 2007

2007.05.20: Perpendicular recording for hard drives

Leanna's 3year old Fujitsu convertible tablet PC's hard drive recently started showing symptoms of imminent failure so she requested that I order her a new hard drive. Her current hard drive is an older Toshiba 4200RPM 2.5" 40gigabyte hard drive. Her new drive will be one of the newer Seagate Momentus 5400.3 120gig HD's. I was hoping to find a quantitative comparison from a database of tests including her old drive and one of the 5400.3's but I came upon something a lot more interesting. In a highly-positive review of the 5400.3, I found a link to Hitachi's animation explaining perpendicular recording which is employed in Seagate HD's as well. I found the animation entertaining and educational and the amusement value of this musical animation is something even non-geeks can appreciate.

Posted by Klyment Tan in General at 15:14

2007.05.20: Markins Q3 Emille Arca-Swiss Style Tripod Ball Head

Photo courtesy of Markins. I think that the anodized red will be a nice touch to add to a future carbon fibre tripod. The blue anodized ones are all sold out but I have too much stuff that's blue already . . . like most of my clothing bicycle frame, and one of my bicycle rims, hahah).I've delayed this purchase long enough as the lack of a really efficient, lightweight head with good plates were chronically preventing me from using a tripod more during shoots. After much consideration of weight (only 0.84lbs . . . lighter than any other professional ball head that I researched), weight capacity rating (65lbs, more than triple my heaviest camera set up with the Bowens 3000W/s ring flash which I rarely use but keep trying to use to take decent photos), price (the only "professional" level ball head I found that was less expensive than this was the Acratech Ultimate which is 1lbs and is rated for only 25lbs and doesn't have a spirit level on the standard clamping platform, price for this head in red was just \$340CDN), and shipping (the North American distribution centre is in Langley, British Columbia, Canada . . . 3day ground shipping for just \$15, no brokerage) I selected the Markins Q3 Emille. With the Q3, there is no option for ordering just the ball head only with the platform. I would liked to have used a large Kirk platform but after finding information on Loctite's manufacturer's website for removing a Loctite'd platform I know that I have the option to change the platform in the future after better understanding my needs. Jonathan's father will be working on CNC machining a custom Arca-Swiss style dovetail quick release plate for the Rollei 6008 AF. The design is for a 4.5" long plate with an anti-skew lip on one end to latch onto the body and enormous bottom coverage, much greater than any plate I've seen from Kirk Enterprises, Really Right Stuff, or Markins. Thanks, Jonathan's dad. Changing from the Manfrotto 329RC4 head (2.6lbs) that I currently use will shave almost 2lbs off of my tripod. However, I'll likely be looking to switch from the aluminium Manfrotto 055 Pro (5.3lbs) to a lighter, stiffer carbon fibre tripod. A few carbon fibre tripods are available that are less than half the weight, offer an additional 10" of elevation without raising the centre column, and have higher capacity ratings.

Posted by Klyment Tan in Equipment at 05:41

Wednesday, May 16, 2007

2007.05.16: Wahoo! 100% Recycled Epson 7800/9800 Ink Cartridge Packaging!

I opened my latest ink shipment and was pleasantly surprised. A sample of one of the original boxes is at the left and at the right is the new, 100% recycled material box. Props to Epson as I'm sure most users couldn't care less how the packages looked. I'm hoping that manufacturers will start using recycled bases for some inkjet substrates and more polyolefin films and other recycleable/recycled signage materials will start replacing scrim vinyl used in aqueous inkjet printers.

Posted by Klyment Tan in Equipment at 19:08

Thursday, May 10, 2007

2007.05.10: Fresnel spot lamp fluorescent conversion

I snapped a couple of test shots of my compact fluorescent lamp conversion of an old 6" fresnel theatrical spot lamp. I started the conversion I finally tired of looking at these lamps hanging out in the studio literally covered in spider webs. I managed to hack together a conversion of a 240V 750W theatrical Fresnel w/ a 6" lens into a fluorescent light source the equivalent of about a 100W tungsten. I'm still experimenting with it and I'm hoping to acquire larger fresnels and convert them to fluorescent as these light sources may not be powerful enough for stage lighting but are certainly powerful enough to light one or two people with soft, specular, zoomable light at short distances and give the photographer the ability to use colour temperatures significantly colder or warmer than strobes for motion blurred accents in photos. Demonstration of the circle of illumination of the lamp at narrowest zoom. Demonstration of light quality on a three dimensional object.

Posted by Klyment Tan in Equipment at 04:58

Buying and Selling

I am looking to acquire the following items: Accessories designed for the Franke & Heidecke Rollei 6000 series cameras: Schneider Super-Angulon 50/2.8 PQS (Preferably AF) Schneider Tele-Xenar 180/2.8 PQ (Only interested in AF) Schneider Apo-Symmar 90/4 Makro PQS 7 and 17mm extension tubes Also looking for the following for the same system but I have very finite price offerings for these (assuming all in mint condition): Zeiss MakroPlanar 120/4 PQS (\$800US) Zeiss Planar 110/2 PQ (\$1200US) Schneider Super-Angulon 40/3.5 PQ (\$2100US) Bowens Quad system stuff: Fresnel spot lamp heads/attachments Universal spot attachments (or something ellipsoidal and focusable that will mount onto Bowens heads and handle at least 2000W/s pops and 300W modeling power and support steel gobos) Bowens Quad system extension cables (I believe that the Calumet extensions don't fit) Beauty dish larger than 15" Standard 7" grid reflectors and matching barn doors Other lighting equipment: Pencil lights (Any vintage, as long as it works and has a working flash tube)

Posted by Klyment Tan in Equipment at 02:28

Wednesday, May 9, 2007

2007.05.08: Dream Tea House

Hahah . . . creeeepy . . . Photo by Sarah Chung, I think.

Posted by Klyment Tan in Shoots at 04:32

Tuesday, May 8, 2007

2007.05.08: Problem with Pocket Wizard Multimax

What kind of bullshit response is this? I thought that 1/1000s is 1/1000s or else it wouldn't be called that and I'm not aware of any other camera systems with 1/1000s leaf shutters/flash sync.-----Original Message-----From: Klyment Tan
Sent: Sunday, May 06, 2007 1:32 AM
To: info@mamiya.com
Subject: Pocket Wizard Multimax w/ 1/1000s leaf shutter sync question
Hello, I am a Rollei 6008AF user and I have some Pocket Wizard Multimax transceivers. I've had problems syncing at 1/1000s even after following the instructions to put the receiver into fast mode. The PQS lenses that I use with the 6008AF are all capable of 1/1000s and with sync cables they sync perfectly at this speed. With PW's I usually get much darker images when using flash than I would expect compared to my light meter and this problem doesn't occur at 1/800s but I am often shooting outdoors and need all of the ambient light control that I can get. Is this normal behaviour for these transceivers? I'm using them with a variety of Bowens QuadX and Explorer power packs. Thank you.- K
From: Garry Montalbano [garrym[at]macgroupus.com] on behalf of info@mamiya [info[at]macgroupus.com]
Sent: Tuesday, May 08, 2007 9:45 AM
To: Klyment Tan
Subject: RE: Pocket Wizard Multimax w/ 1/1000s leaf shutter sync question
Hello, Multimax can work up to 1/1000th of a second but some cameras may be slightly faster than that. Not all cameras 1000th of a second are equal. Best Regards, Garry Montalbano
The MAC Group
8 Westchester Plaza
Elmsford N.Y. 10523
Tel: 914.347-3300

Posted by Klyment Tan in Equipment at 11:06

Monday, May 7, 2007

2007.05.07: Quick Update

After an extremely busy week during which I left my voicemail box full and untouched I finally decided to empty it. I'm getting back to e-mail slowly, a piece at a time. The week was booked pretty solid with large format printing, shoots, and discussing business with a new-found colleague in the printing industry who also does importation and distribution (who's professional relationship with Jonathan's father hold several similarities to my relationship with Jonathan . . . which, contrary to what Jonathan's girlfriend believes, I am not Jonathan's second girlfriend . . .). Anyhow, a few photos with more details to follow. Christina's and Aaron's shoot. I refuse to call it an engagement shoot even though the primary reason to schedule this shoot was to prepare a photograph for this couple's wedding invitation. Concept and transformation of a large industrial warehouse into this set by the couple. Drop me a line for their contact information if need a set built. Bowens Quad X 3000 x2. One positioned to the left of the frame powering a Quad head boomed above Christina with a Plume Wafer 75 and 40degree Lighttools Soft Egg Crate. Another behind the background fabric with grid and barn doors on reflector to illuminate some elements in the background. On the right, Plume Wafer 140 w/ 30degree Lighttools Soft Egg Crate pitched about 7' off the ground and tilted down about 15degrees to illuminate around Aaron and his area. Another Quad head w/ barn doors hidden behind the desk to illuminate some of the canopy and the divider behind Aaron. Shot with a Nikon D80. Jonathan and Evan surveying a set shortly before we were kicked off of it. If you ever want to use the top floor of the Edmonton Centre East parkade be sure to contact Oxford Property Management M-F 8am-4pm at 780.426.8400. Rollei 6008 AF w/ Schneider AF Xenotar 80/2.8 PQS HFT and Phase One P20 digital back. Totally unedited photo from Baker Optical's most recent shoot . . . it just happened that the lighting used illuminates every hair on a model's neck . . . she's definitely not this hairy-looking in person. Sorry. =(Styling: Charissa Harychan. Model: Larissa. Makeup: Elecia. So many details and so much stuff shot that I can't remember who made these frames anymore. 2xBowens Quad X 3000 power packs, two Quad heads from the back modified with Plume Wafer 75's and Lighttools 40degree Soft Egg Creates. Light from above modified with a Lightrein 36" octagon. Backdrop light cast with the 7" Bowens grid reflector, 40degree spot grid, and a basic snoot. Nikon D2x w/ 135/2 Defocus Control Nikkor. Blue Willow Restaurant's most recent shoot. Thanks to Patrick Mah for helping break the mould when it comes to awful Asian food photography (i.e.: photos of Asian food, not Asians shooting food . . . Dong does great food shots). Special thanks to Sarah Chung for help with shot styling and Aaron Yakem for helping eat (and occasionally help with the shot). Nikon D80 w/ 17-55/2.8 AF-S DX Nikkor. Two Wafer 75's . . . one from top left of frame and the other from bottom of the frame to fill. Julie and Trevor. Due to miscommunication from my end we were without professional makeup for this shoot. Sorry, everyone. This photo was actually shot by Ellison Richmond. I remember teasing him about his very unfilled frame composures but many of his shots turned out very well. Hahah, Julie and Trevor have matching eyes. Rollei 6008 AF w/ Schneider AF Xenotar 80/2.8 PQS HFT and Phase One P20 digital back. Unedited shot from a shoot which wrapped up six hours ago. Kevin Gillese and Arlen Konopaki of Scratch had this new concept that they wanted to try for this year's promos for their improv comedy troupe. A huge thanks to Breeanne and her father who own Colchester Stables for hooking up the team with Bailey and a great shooting location. Bowens Explorer 1500 battery-powered pack with two Quad heads. One head is in the top left of the frame with a Bowens Softlite 15" parabolic reflector mounted without grid diffuser. Other is positioned near lens axis with a basic Bowens grid reflector. Cropped from a square frame from the Rollei 6008 AF/Phase One P20/Schneider 80/2.8 combination.

Posted by Klyment Tan in News at 04:29

Wednesday, May 2, 2007

2007.05.01: Canvas coating in stock again soon!

The long-awaited replenishment of my canvas veneer is at hand - shipment due Wednesday morning. Sorry for the delay and thanks for your patience . . . all matte printing orders that require this veneer along with the scheduled switch back to glossy black on the Epson 9800 will be complete within the next two days.

Posted by Klyment Tan in News at 00:03

Tuesday, May 1, 2007

2007.01.27: Penang, Malaysia - missing Leanna

I wish you were here

Posted by Klyment Tan in Personal at 07:19

2007.01.26: Penang, Malaysia: Butterflies

We took a break from my grand mother's burial proceedings and did some sightseeing. I was caught in Penang's famous butterfly conservatory without any lens but the 17-55/2.8 DX Nikkor. All images in this entry shot with the D2X and that zoom, wide open. A clump of butterflies just hanging out. With wings spread open each is about the size of my palm . . . and I have big hands. This butterfly's little brother (or sister) hitched a ride on my shoulder and followed me out of the sanctuary. I asked it if it wanted to get off and I lowered my shoulder down near a stem where it could hop off but it hung around. Once outside it flew away and left me with a puddle of wet butterfly poopie on my shirt. The red in this flower pushed the limitations of the gamut of my camera . . . and of every normal desktop monitor. The difference is dramatic. If you wish to see more of this photo's original colour you are welcome to drop by my studio to view it on my display or as a print.

Posted by Klyment Tan in Personal at 01:37