

NEWS...NEWS...NEWS...NEWS...NEWS...

BETTER LIGHT 2nd Annual OWNERS' CONFERENCE

Location: Polaroid 20X24 Studio, 588 Broadway #1010, New York, NY

NOTES ON THE 2002 CONFERENCE

BY LARRY GUYER

Second year met with equal success and enthusiasm, as compared to the first Conference last year in our Better Light offices in San Carlos. The event was held in the Polaroid 20x24 Studio in New York City following PhotoPlus Expo East in November, 2002. We've had about 50 people each year. This year there was a higher percentage of people involved in art reproduction - over 1/3 of the audience - from museums, color labs, and independent service bureaus.

Panoramic photography was the hot topic...several owners showed their work with the unique accessory for the Better Light, which makes it the only 4x5 digital panoramic system. Peter Grote, specializing in mountain landscapes, gave a program on his preparation and planning for location work with the pano, and showed some beautiful images using the SCENE mode. The Pano/WideView™ Adapter, accompanied by the Better Light ViewFinder™ software, also has the ability to create ROLLOUTS of cylindrical objects using the optional table platform on the motorized base. Objects such as a decorated vase can be captured as one continuous image – much like removing the label from a can of coffee. This Rollout capability as well as using the OBJECT mode – which accommodates the capture of a sequence of images as an object is rotated on the platform in front of the stationary camera – were of interest to the museum people to address the 3D imaging needs of the museums for web site, interactive CD and kiosk applications.

We got a double-hit of high end product photography from Igor Perchuk of Brooklyn and Josh Haskins in Manhattan, both outstanding photographers who shared techniques in working with jewelry, glass and metal.

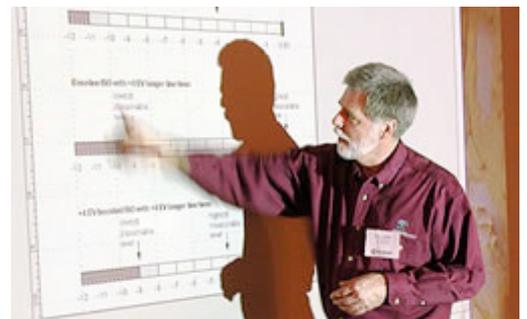
We've discovered that much of the magic of this two-day event is the bonding and relationships developed with other shooters. Not only do we as commercial photographers get to meet with others who share the same high-quality ideals and equipment, but the museum and art photographers especially seem to benefit, as they don't have associations or events where they can share their ideas with each other. At each coffee or lunch break small groups would huddle up around someone's computer or portfolio and the learning continued. There was an electricity in the room, with everyone interested in learning and sharing and no feelings of competition.



Igor Perchuk shows some of his extraordinary jewelry and product photography with the Better light scanning back.



(L to R) Anthony Peres of the Getty Museum in LA, Mark VanderSys, Pixel Light Digital Imaging, Garden City, Id, and Brad Flowers of the Dallas Art Museum continue Photoshop discussions after Mark's presentation.



Mike Collette discusses options in ISO settings on the Better Light Scan Back.



The unique thing about Better Light as a product and company – and the Better Light owners – is the passion for perfection and the quest for ultimate quality. Everyone was eager to learn how to “do it better.” Mike Collette contributed to this quest with two sessions: “Getting the Most Out of the Scan Back,” which described in detail how the Better Light scanning camera captures light and processes the information from analog to digital. “We do things differently than any other competitor,” stated Collette, “and these extra efforts in the electronic design have made a big difference in the superior quality of the images that our scan back produces”. He explained how the resolution was controlled in the system, and what were the best choices in adjusting exposure time and ISO levels to optimize image quality.

In a presentation on the second day, Mike went over the ViewFinder software in detail to reveal some of the new functions and improvements in the latest 5.3 version of the software and clarified some of the proper procedures to improve workflow and image quality.

Other speakers included Mark VanderSys from Boise, ID a certified Photoshop expert. Mark also spoke at the first Conference and volunteered to share some Photoshop actions and tips that would improve workflow and the handling of the volume of digital images that our owners are now producing.

Eric Somers is working with the Museum for the Preservation of Illustrative Art and gave an interesting overview of the museum’s purpose and the work from magazine publishing that they are preserving as digital files and reproducing for varied purposes. Erik Landsberg of the Museum of Modern Art in New York showed how MOMA is using the Better Light scan backs to complete their total conversion to digital.

Mike Richardson, scheduled to speak on “Profits and Projects with the Better Light Scan Back,” got a last-minute assignment from one of his major clients that diverted him to Houston, Texas. He had to practice what he was going to preach...but called on Tuesday afternoon to wish everyone well and share his favorite saying: “Better Light Rocks”!

Without a doubt, the Better Light Owners’ Conference will continue to be an annual event – alternating between East and West Coast venue. There are even rumors spreading that the 2003 Conference will be held in Hawaii to commemorate Better Light’s 10th year in digital imaging!

fields questions during his presentation.



Mike Collette directs one of the attendees to move the camera for the final step of parallel alignment with the artwork using the Zig-Align mirror system.



(L to R) Anthony Peres of the Getty Museum in LA, Laurie Seniuk of Photo Design in Philadelphia, and Erik Landsberg of MOMA, NY gather at the break to continue the information-sharing.

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