Getting Started in Commercial Photography with John H. Siskin

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Lesson #4: Architectural Subjects

Welcome to Week 4!

This lesson will discuss photographing interiors. But, first, let's talk about going on location.

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Since we have a bunch of equipment, we have to figure out how to take it with us. If you are careful about this, you can reduce your need for an assistant on location.

We will start with the rules. There are rules, and these are the rules. You can ignore the rules, but there may be a price to pay.

Rule #1 Do not set up a case you cannot lift when it is full.
Rule #2 You should be able to stand on at least some of your cases.
Rule #3 A wheeled cart is more useful than wheeled luggage.
Rule #4 Luggage that does not draw attention is safer for your gear.
Rule #5 Be redundant. Be redundant.
Rule #6 If you travel by air be prepared to lose some of your luggage.
Rule #7 Prevent heavy gear from crushing light gear.
Rule #8 Put tape on the outside of your cases.

Rule #1 - So I have know several photographers who violated rule #1, they thought that one big case is better than many little cases, but, of course, you have to have help to move the damn case. A large wheeled case does make sense if it will be used in the studio only. If you have a desktop computer, a power pack and 3 or 4 heads in one case, along with reflectors and accessories, you will not be able to lift it. I know a guy who felt that since the case fit into the back end of the pickup and he could pull it off the truck he was Ok. Ok until he had to put the case back into the pickup at the end of the day.

Rule #2 - I knew a photographer who took a stepladder on every job. Why would you want to do that when you can just stand on a case? I think that

you can make a case more useful if you pay attention to the possibilities. Several of my cases, including the military surplus cases above, will hold my weight.

Rule #3 - My wheeled cart is one of the best accessories I ever bought. I use it for moving everything from flowerpots to props. It's better than wheeled luggage, first it's actually easier to use, and second I can move everything with it.

Rule #4 - I used to have an aluminum case with a big radioactivity symbol on the side. Very handy for getting an extra seat on a train, but it drew too much attention. Now I have military surplus ammunition cases. These draw some attention, but not like the radioactive symbol. The real deal is to avoid any case that says "hey, expensive photo gear, steal this!" So, I do not like Halliburton cases, but I do like Pelican cases, the Pelican cases are much more understated.

Rule #5 - Some things you can easily have two of: two sync cords, two camera body caps. Some things you should always have at least one more than you need, for instance slaves.

Rule #6 - The key here is to start by taking out the gear you want for the job, then decide if you can take it all. When you know what you can take resist the temptation to put like with like; for instance don't put all your cameras in one bag, if you lose it you lose the shoot. Each bag should have some lighting gear, some camera gear and some grip gear. That way if you lose some of your luggage you can still do a shoot. By the way the most important camera and the computer should go as carry-on luggage.

Rule #7 - Basically, this means don't put your umbrellas in with tripods and light stands. I usually use duffel bags for this stuff. You'll notice I have two duffel bags on top of the cart. I also got these at the military surplus store.

Rule #8 - This is more of a tip actually. If you put pieces of gaffer tape on the outside of your cases when you forget the tape, and this happens to all of us, you will still have some tape. This only works with gaffer tape, everything else is junk when you remove it, gaffer tape is good for years. Also it makes your cases look junky, see Rule #4.

Now the cases I actually use come from 3 sources: military surplus stores, thrift stores and Home Depot, no credit for guessing which cases come from which source. I really like the ammunition cases for my Norman 900-series strobes, especially because the power packs fit so well into these cases. The ammunition cases are incredibly tough and they are waterproof. I do not know if you could find a military case that would suit other gear as well. I really like Pelican cases, and when I see one used I buy it immediately, unfortunately this almost never happens.

Part of the problem is that some surplus and used cases are not big enough to hold a strobe system, so finding a couple of them used is tough and buying a couple of them new could cost more than another strobe head. Consequently I find myself running down to Home Depot or Lowes. Both of these companies, and I know there are others, sell a bunch of different tool cases, probably one or more will fit your needs.

Norman 1250 Power Pack Case
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Don't be afraid to modify your cases to fit your gear. I have used carpet in side my military cases to better fit the power packs.

Now we haven't finished with how cases hold lights we can modify our cases to serve as light stands. I have a hole in the top of my military cases that I use to attach a stud for a light stand.

Strobe Case/Light Stand
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Strobe case/light stand detail
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You can get these studs for both sizes of light connectors, 3/8th inch and 1/2 inch. This page at the Calumet website has an adapter for 1/4X20 thread to 3/8 stud: www.calumetphoto.com/item/BG5003.html. This is what I used on the case above. By the way the 1/4X20 tread is the same as the tripod screw, so this same adapter could make a tripod into a light stand, could be handy to have a few of these. Of course there is another adapter for 1/2inch lights.

On the case for my Norman 200B lights I have been a little more creative, which I can do because each head weighs less.

Here I glued a nut into the top of the case (1/4X20) and attached either the pole shown here or a light stud, both are Bogen/Manfrotto products. Two things I'd

like to point out about this case, first I can stand on it. Second the little drawers in the front of the case keep things like slaves and sync cords separate: easier to find and less damage. This is a great case for the Norman 200B system.

Strobe Case/Light Stand
Norman 200B
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Laptop Table
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While we're on the subject of going on location I wanted to mention something for a new piece of location equipment, the laptop. Where are we going to put it? I made a table top for an extra set of tripod legs I had, and this has worked out very well.

I took a piece of plywood the size of the bottom of my laptop and put a 1/4 X20 thread in it, then it fit onto the tripod legs. This is really easy to do, go to a hardware store, Home Depot or Lowes or whatever, and buy a 1/4X20 T-nut, as in this next photo.

Laptop Table Detail
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Drill a 1/4 inch or slightly larger hole into the plywood, in the middle would be nice. Hammer the T-nut into the hole. Now your table-top fits onto the tripod. I would nail some elastic, as I have onto the bottom of the table to keep the computer from being knocked off the table. I've been really happy

with this project!

An Approach to Interior Lighting for Photography

Please understand I am not offering rules, but an approach to architectural lighting.

First, examine the room for existing light sources, everything from lamps to windows. The thing you want to do is classify those resources, something like friend or foe. So a window that throws diffused light into a room is a friend, and a mercury vapor lamp is a foe. Fluorescent lamps are generally foes, but they can be used under some circumstances, especially with digital.

This understanding of the lighting in the room will give you the information you need to choose the dominant color spectrum you can use in your shot. If you have a lot of daylight, then you would certainly light with daylight balanced lights. But if your light is mostly from tungsten sources, traditional bulbs and halogen lights, you would want to work with a color balance of 3200ºK, as this is closer to the color of the bulbs. While I would use strobes for any architectural lighting situation, I would balance the strobes to a spectrum similar to the room.

One of the advantages to filtering strobes is that these lights will definitely not be included in your picture, which means that you don't have to hide the filters. When I first examine a room, I am more interested in the choice of color spectrum than the details of how I will work in that spectrum. Color spectrum is somewhat similar to the key of a piece of music, it tells you what will fit easily and what will be dissonant. Really, you have three choices: daylight, tungsten and fluorescent. Fluorescent is the most difficult spectrum to work in because the bulbs can be wildly different.

The next thing to do is consider where a light can be hidden, or where it will be out of frame. Generally there are only a few places you could possibly put a light. Lights outside of the frame are easy to make look natural; a light from either side can always look like a window. A light inside the frame will need to be much more subtle. You can put a light on the other side of a kitchen island to bring up the values on a stove, but if you add a lot of light in a place like that it will look really weird. One important source to consider is bounce light off the ceiling. This can look very natural, but you want to keep the bright ceiling out of the frame and if the ceiling isn't white your color can be ruined.

Finally, I look at the room in terms of the best camera positions. Circumstances, such as the important characteristics of the room and the needs of the client will come into play here. Of course, I will integrate all three of theses considerations into the decisions about light and camera, but the first action I take is to place the camera.

The camera needs to be first because shadows and reflections are only

important from the camera's point of view. The camera position needs to be designed to show the key characteristics of a room, so if you are trying to show size you don't want to back up and use a normal lens. Rather, you would use a wide-angle lens to emphasize size. The height of the camera can also affect the feel of a room, so be aware that eye level is not always the best position.

Architectural photography is a very detail oriented specialty, in order to be sure I get everything right I will tether the camera to a lap top computer whenever possible. There are wireless systems that will allow you to preview your images on a laptop, but a wired system, available with Canon and Nikon, will work perfectly in this situation. Once you set this up, you might want to take a quick capture of the shot. This could be done on auto exposure, but it will be the last shot that you take on auto. Examine the shot for angle and any particular problems.

A Lighting Set-Up
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Now, except in the unlikely event that the shot you just made was perfect, it is time to set up the first light. Lighting is the trick. In almost all circumstances, I will set up my first light as near to the camera as practical and as high as possible. I use a 750 watt-second monolight for this. I used a more powerful light when I shot 4X5 film. I will bounce this light off the inside of a 60-inch umbrella; I would use a larger umbrella if I had one.

The purpose of this light is to open up any shadows from the existing light sources, which brings down the contrast. The large umbrella softens the light and makes any shadows from this light source smaller and lighter. In any situation, a large light source lights a subject from more angles so the shadows have a softer transition. Also, a large light source creates more bounce light that will fill in all the shadows. Since the light is above the camera shadows will fall behind objects and, hopefully, reflections will not go toward the lens.

Next, we will try to bring the light into the same spectrum. If you are shooting daylight spectrum with strobes, you don't need to do anything, but if you are shooting in tungsten you will want to put a Rosco 3407 CTO, or equivalent, filter over your strobe. This will make the light about 3000ºK,

which is a movie light spectrum. You may need additional filtration, but you won't know until you shoot a test exposure. If I am trying to balance to fluorescent tubes, I will probably use the Rosco 3315, which is the 1/2 Plusgreen. It has worked better for me than the Fullgreen.

You can change the color of the light sources in your shot, but this is not always necessary. If you control the exposure so that the light source has a very bright value, but doesn't add much light to the surroundings, you may not need to worry about color. So if the lamp is bright but the light doesn't fall on anything, you are probably OK. If the lamps are critical, you can replace a tungsten bulb with a photoflood BCA bulb. This runs at almost 5000ºK similar to daylight. I can't stress enough that doing this is dangerous. The bulb runs MUCH hotter than a normal bulb, so only turn it on when you are actually exposing.

You can also use a Britek or similar strobe with an Edison base, but these do not spread light like a bulb, so they don't always look natural. Additionally you can put a Rosco 3202 CTB Fullblue over a light bulb, but this will also reduce the output of the bulb very substantially. You can also use a Rosco 3308 Minusgreen filter over a fluorescent light source. But because fluorescent tubes are so unreliable, this doesn't always work. The colors of various tubes are very different. And in any building the tubes may have been replaced at different times with different color tubes, really annoying.

You can certainly do much of this color control after the shot in Photoshop. There are good reasons for doing so, including the fact that you don't need to buy filters or bring them with you. But there are occasions when you should fix the color while you shoot. If there is a client watching, you would prefer not to tell him/her "Oh, the color? I'll fix that later in Photoshop." Another consideration, if you are shooting a large number of images that will require a similar fix: It may be better to avoid having to do a lot of fixing after the shoot. I think it is always advantageous to reduce post-production so you can deliver images to your client sooner.

When you shoot your next test, the first thing to check is exposure and color. But don't forget to check for reflections and other problems. In order to use strobes and balance the exposure with daylight, there are a few important things to understand. The strobes go off instantly when triggered and have duration of about 1/1000 of a second. So if part of the sensor is covered when the strobes are triggered that part of the sensor won't be exposed by the strobes. You camera uses two curtains to control the shutter speed and at any speed faster than the sync speed some part of the sensor is covered by a shutter curtain during every part of the exposure.

If you use strobes at any speed faster than the sync speed of your camera, some part of the frame doesn't get the strobe light. You can use any speed slower than the sync speed with strobes. Different camera models have different sync speeds, so you need to check your camera instructions for

your sync speed. This also means that changing the shutter speed, if less than the sync speed, doesn't affect the light from the strobe. If you were to take a shot with strobe in a completely dark room, it wouldn't matter if the shutter were set to 1/125th of a second or 125 seconds.

This is really useful because you can effectively change the continuous light sources in your shot without changing the light from the strobes. For instance, if you have too little light from the windows, but everything else looks good, you can just increase the shutter speed and the strobes won't change. Alternatively if your light fixtures are too bright in a shot just decrease the shutter speed, the lighting from the strobes won't change, but the lamps will. This property, and the capability to change the power of the strobes gives you a lot of control over exposure.

Using the Laptop
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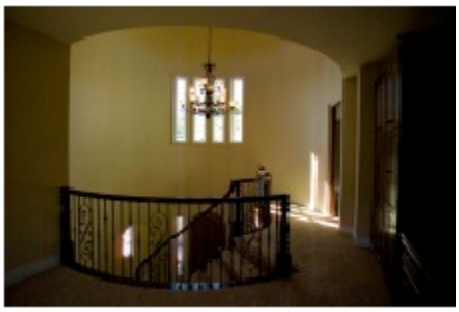
As you know, your camera meter can't read the light from the strobe. You could use a strobe meter to do this, but you have more information available to you in the camera. Especially if your computer is tethered to a laptop. What a meter really does is give you a first guess. You would still need to perfect the exposure by manipulating light and aperture and shutter speed. So I'm going to suggest a first guess, ISO 100, 1/60th of a second F8 and the strobe set to 1/4 power. While this won't often be right, it will give you a starting point, and that is the point. You want to check the exposure, particularly this histogram on your laptop or the back of the camera. If the histogram is pressed against either side of the graph, your exposure is probably more than a little off.

You might want to start by making a capture with out the strobe; this will make it easier to see what you want to change about ambient exposure and what you need to change about the strobe. One of the great things about digital is that these test exposure are almost instant and free. You should capture your images in camera raw, as this will make it easier to create the perfect exposure after the shot. Camera raw gives you extra exposure information, as a color negative did with film cameras.



Existing Light
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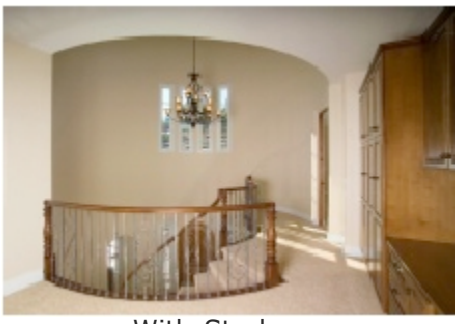

With Strobes
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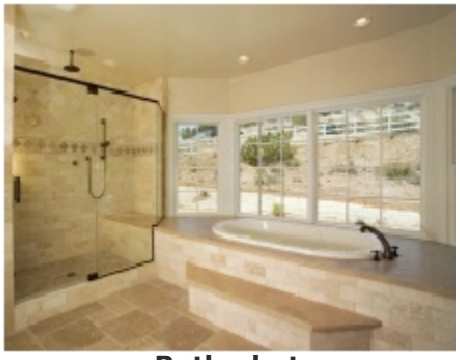
If the contrast were too great, I would try increasing the power of the strobe. If the windows are too dark, then you need to increase the shutter speed. If a single lamp is too bright, you might want to put metal window screen over the bulb to reduce the light from that lamp, or put a smaller bulb in the lamp. A metal window screen is really helpful at reducing the light from a bulb or a strobe. You will also need to examine the color and look for problems with the strobe placement. Of course, this is also a good time to look for reflections or problem shadows.

Now for many small rooms this one light will work, and for other jobs it might be good enough. But, of course we would really like more than good enough. So let's look at the tools that will allow us to fix those remaining problems.

Umbrellas are the first and best tools for this interior work because they spread light evenly over a large area and create soft light at the same time. As I mentioned I start with a large umbrella. I usually bounce light off umbrellas rather than shoot through light them. This gives me a little more control over the light. However when I am pressed for space I will use a shoot through umbrella. Also

If I am shooting a small room, such as a bathroom, I will set up an umbrella as a shoot through. This is especially good in a bathroom because the light that bounces back off the umbrella will bounce again into the shot, and it will soften the overall light as well. This extra bounce is the reason I don't have as much control over a shoot through umbrella. Most of my umbrellas have a white satin interior with a removable black back, as this facilitates bouncing light and shooting through the umbrella. I have a couple of silver umbrellas for cases where I want a little harder light or where I need the extra efficiency of this kind of umbrella. While I set-up the monolight with a sixty-inch umbrella, most of the other umbrellas are forty-five inches, and I have a couple of thirty-inch umbrellas for tight spaces.



Bath shot
The difficulty is to balance the light through the window and in the room.
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I also use the lights with just a reflector much of the time. This lets me put more light on a specific part of the shot. In addition a light with just a reflector will add contrast to the area illuminated. This can help identify some part of the shot as a focal point for the image. I almost always use a barn door attachment when I use hard light in a shot. This lets me control what part of the shot gets the light. I also take along some cine foil, which is a kind of heavy-duty black aluminum foil. It is incredibly useful for controlling light. It won't burn, but you can certainly make it smoke, so you might not want to put it on top of a tungsten light source. A small amount of hard light on top of a softer light from an umbrella can add a sense of three-dimensionality to an image. So I will sometimes use hard light from a similar angle to an umbrella.

Kitchen
4 strobes. One is a small strobe hidden behind the kitchen island. I used a juice bottle over the light to make the reflection on the stainless steel better.
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There are a couple of trick light sources I use to get me out of a tight space, literally. The first is a bare strobe tube, called appropriately a bare bulb. This

is not usually my first choice, but it fits into a small space and it illuminates 360º, which can be incredibly helpful. There are a couple of variations on this tool that I use: the first is a translucent juice bottle from Trader Joes.

This is just a pint bottle that fits over the bare bulb. It spreads the light slightly, softening it just a bit. It spreads the light a little more evenly and reduces the output, which makes it useful for a light hidden inside a shot. I have another bottle with the part that was the bottom of the bottle cut off. This spreads light out the sides and gives me a bounce light out the top. This is a pretty useful accessory for a former juice bottle. I use it behind short walls; it gives good light out the side and a ceiling bounce that is easy to hide. While I can imagine using a snoot or grid spot in a shot I don't keep them in my location pack. I would imagine using them to bring up a very specific part of a shot, had this been something my clients specified.

I should say a few things about slaves. These are devices that trigger a strobe when another strobe fires. Having as many strobes as I do I also have a lot of slaves. I generally use a radio slave to trigger the monolight and then use optical slaves to trigger the rest of the strobes. Optical slaves are not always as reliable as one might like, so it is best to have a couple of extra slaves on hand. I often have to put the slaves on extension cords so that they will be close enough to the main strobe to trigger. Still, slaves do let you use a lot of strobes without running cables everywhere, so they are an important part of the tool kit.

The tools in Photoshop that I find most useful are perspective control and lens correction. I usually use perspective control with the cropping tool, which makes my workflow a little faster. While I have a perspective control lens, I prefer the perspective of a lens wider than 28mm, so I need Photoshop for this. I have noticed that my lens has some barrel distortion - straight lines bow outwards a little - so I really like lens correction. You'll find this tool in filter under the distort menu.

Photoshop also allows you to fix a number of problems with an architectural image, especially reflections. If there is a reflection of one of my lights in a window, I will make a second capture of the shot with my lights turned off. I can then use the image, without the reflection, to fix the image with all the lights working, in Photoshop. While I would like to be able to fix everything when shooting I can't always get my lights to cooperate.

Of course, it requires some patience when you try to make everything work together. I often find that I am working with half a dozen lights, so sometimes I don't know where the problem, is. One important technique is to turn off each light individually. This will let you know where the problem is. I would also emphasize working tethered to the laptop. This will save you hours of grief. It is important to remember that musicians like Eric Clapton and Luciano Pavarotti practiced so that they could play.

Finished File

In this shot, the reflections have been removed, by using a second file made without strobes. The perspective has been fixed. The exposure and color have been adjusted. The repair can be accomplished quite quickly. It is important to make the extra shot with out the strobes, or you can't repair in this way.

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Original Shot

This is a simple conversion of the original raw file. It shows some of the problems with the shot. You might want to notice the reflections in the windows.

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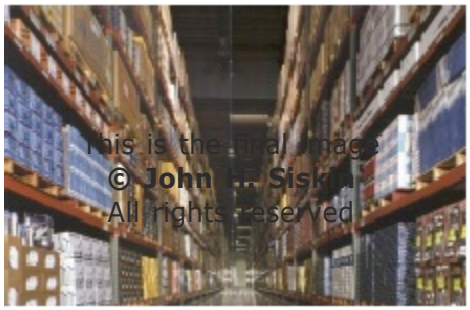

This is the final image

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IMC Warehouse, original transparency

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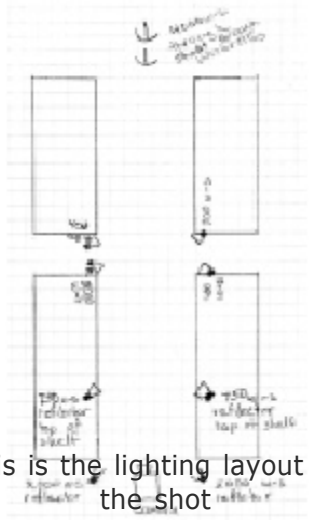

This is the lighting layout of the shot

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This warehouse shot was made for IMC, an automotive parts distributor. The image communicates the large volume of parts that they stock. I am starting with this image because it requires lighting a huge area, but doesn't require maintaining the feel of the original lighting. This shot is far from simple, because of the area involved. The nature of the solution is raw power than subtle placement and filtration of light.

The camera is a 4X5 Toyo with a 75mm lens. This lens provides a 90º angle of view similar to 22mm on a full frame 35mm camera. In order to have depth-of-field necessary for this image I need to be stopped down to at least f16, and f22 would be better. So the questions becomes "Where am I going to put lights?" The answer simply put, is wherever I can.

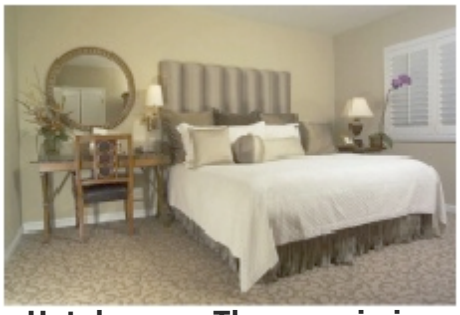
First to the side of the camera lighting the front of the shelves, this is particularly important to the client, as the front product has been chosen specifically to satisfy suppliers. I would have liked to diffuse this light, but there just wasn't enough light, 2000 watt-seconds each side. Next lights are halfway down the first set of shelves, but on top of the shelves. These 2 lights had 750 watt-seconds each. This will be out of the final image and help to keep separation in the first set of shelves.

Next there is a break between shelves and I place two lights on each side, lighting front and back 1200 watt-seconds on each side. Finally two lights, visible to the camera, were placed at the end of the row. These used another 4000 watt-seconds. The image of these lights was removed from the final image in Photoshop. These two lights were diffused through shoot through umbrellas. We needed these lights to keep detail in the back of the shelves.

Total 11900 watt-seconds. If I had done this shot with a full frame digital camera, my Kodak or a Canon, I could have made the shot at f8 and used 1/4 the amount of light! I wouldn't have had to work quite so hard either.

Although only four monoblock lights were used in this shot (the two on top of the shelves and two halfway down) they would have been more useful if I had needed less power, with digital I would have needed about 25% as much power, to do the same thing. I was using studio strobes in this shot and I had cords running all around the place. One thing that worked better than my expectations were the slaves in this shot, I had very long distances between shots and the slaves performed great.

This idea of placing light where you can is really very important. The first thing I ask myself in lighting an interior is where can I place a light. Then I ask where can I place the camera, and given the camera in that place does it give me any more places to put a light?



Hotel room, The mosaic in Beverly Hills
The mirror has been retouched in this image
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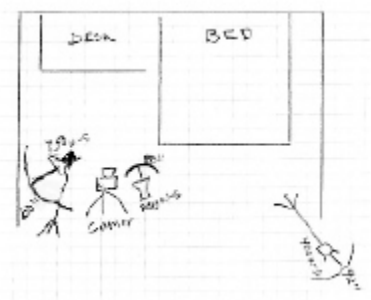

The Lighting layout for the Mosaic Hotel room
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This shot was done in digital, using a combination of Monoblock lights and DC lights, as I described above. I shot this on my Kodak DCS Pro 14n with a Nikor 28mm perspective control lens. This lens gives the shift/rise-fall movements of a view camera to a 35mm camera. If the client wasn't there I might not have used the shift lens. The client needed to see that it was fixed.

This was important to developing an appropriate perspective on the bed. Clearly the bed is an important part of a hotel room. One difficulty in this shot was the mirror: you can see my stuff in it. This was fixed in Photoshop, of course. There are lights placed to the left and right of the camera. On the left of the camera (facing the subject) are two lights, high and low. The high light, as close to the ceiling as possible, is a monoblock set at 750 watt/seconds; I am using it with a 60" umbrella. Of course the large umbrella softens the light and reduces shadows.

Near the floor, I have another monoblock set at 200 watt/seconds. I am using

a 30" white umbrella as a shoot through. This "shoot-through" technique spreads the light to about 180º and softens it. This means that the low light will fill and soften the overhead light even more. On the right side of the shot is a 400 watt-second monoblock set up with a 48" umbrella. This helps to maintain the sense of open shadowless lighting. The lens is set between f8 and f11, that will provide sufficient depth-of-field. The shutter speed is set at about 1/30 of a second. The longer shutter speed provides an opportunity for the lights visible in the room to look "on".

Covered Porch, Pool and Landscape
This photograph was made for the designer Mark David Levine.
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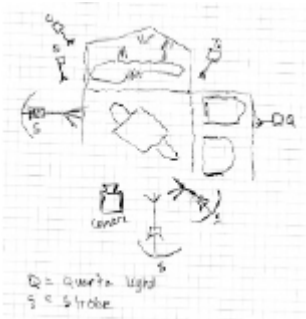

Lighting for covered porch
This is the layout for the shot above.
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In some ways, this final shot is more like the warehouse shot than the hotel room shot. First it is done in 4X5 so it took a lot of light. Second there was very little existing light, so I didn't have to meld in the existing light. I did however use two different types of light and meld them together. This is why I wanted to present this shot. Once again this is a Toyo camera with a 90mm lens this time. And, of course I'm going to need a lot of light to accomplish the depth-of-field necessary. The final exposure was f22 at about 30 seconds!

I split the exposure into two parts by lighting the outside with continuous quartz lights and the interior with strobes. This enabled me to choose my f stop at my camera, and then adjust my strobes to fit that aperture. After I set-up my strobes I could adjust my exposure for the outside and the fire by adjusting the length of the exposure. Remember that the length of the exposure doesn't affect the strobes! The only problem with this is that my strobes are balance for daylight and quartz lights are balanced for tungsten (3200º) light.

When I decided how to do this I choose to use tungsten film because it handles long exposure better than daylight-balanced film. So what I did was to filter my strobes to match my film and my quartz lights. The gels we use for adjusting our lights are made for movie usage. I usually use gels from the Roscoe Company; be sure to get the tuf gels, they don't burn! The best

reason for getting gels made for movies is that they are usually non-flammable.

I set up the light in the room with one 4000 watt-second pack. I had three lights the one to camera left had 2000 watt-seconds. The two strobes on camera left had 1000 watt-seconds each. I was using 1-60" umbrella on camera left and 2-42 inch umbrellas on the other side. This gave me a soft light on the inside area. On the outside I was using just reflectors, as there was so much area to light! The light outside looked like outdoor lighting at night since that is usually flood lighting anyway. I had an area of at leas hundreds of square feet to light so I needed a lot of heads pointed in a lot of directions. Even so the exposure was half a minute long.

What made this image work was the ability to adjust the lighting in both areas at the camera. I could slightly increase the exposure in the room by making changes in the aperture; remember large changes would have changed my depth-of-field. Then I adjusted the exterior exposure, and the exposure of the fireplace by changing the shutter speed. I actually had to do this job twice, the first time there was a high wind and the trees in back were blown into a green blur.

I hope that you will also check out an article I did which has some more information on this topic. Go to my website (www.siskinphoto.com). Next, go to the magazine articles you will find it there under the title: Interior Lighting: How The Pros Do It. The thumbnail image is the hotel image I used above. In addition, check out the article with Richard Lynch.

In order to light this room, I used two lights with umbrellas on the second floor with the camera. Each light was a Norman 200B at full power. On the bottom floor I had a Calumet Travelite 750 to the left of the camera, this strobe was on half power. I used a 60inch umbrella to smooth this out. I had another Norman 200B in the kitchen with just a glass diffusion dome.

Beeler Job, HDR file
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I like the light here, but I did make a few more changes in Photoshop.

Beeler Job, After Lighting
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Beeler Job, final Image
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There isn't a lot of grass in the last shot, but what grass there is I brought with me. I knew if I had a little bit of grass and cloned it could look more natural than any thing else I could drop in. I stopped and bought sod on the way to the shot. This is the level of preparedness I like to achieve for my clients. I also adjusted the perspective in this shot and fixed a few other problems. No prize for figuring out what they were. The client was very happy with the shot! The ability to adjust perspective in Photoshop is tremendous. I usually use the cropping tool, but there are other ways to manipulate perspective. The best part is if you are wrong about how you do the manipulation you can do it again.

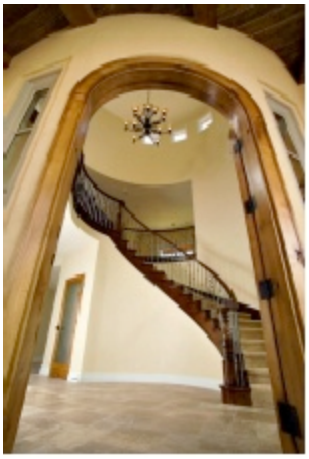
Your Assignment: Photograph Architectural Subjects

Shoot an image of a living room or other large room with a large window in the shot. The first goal is to use your lights to balance the interior with the outdoor light. I want you to do a daytime version of the shot and an early evening version. The idea is to use your lights to control the balance of light in the shot; a shot with sunlight coming through a window will be very different from a shot with the sky just after sunset.

You will want to make at least 5 shots: without your lights, daytime with your light, evening with your light and as many set up shots as you need. I would expect that you would need to change the light between the daytime and evening version of the shot.

You do not have to use your own living room, but this will work better with a large room. You do need a place where you can rig lights, so a public space won't do. If you want to try this more than once that's great, but please do not send more than one set of shots version. Practice is important on this kind of

shooting. Look at others work. Commercial Photography is like Felix the Cat: a big bag of tricks will get you out of a fix. So watch how others solve problems.



Entry Way
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Beeler Job, final Image
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Have a good time.

Thanks!

John
If you'd like me to critique your assignment you can arrange that at my website. Please visit www.siskinphoto.com/workshop.php . I suppose you could also make a donation at the site.

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