Part II

Cinematic Lighting

Once you have your master plan in place, it's time for execution. Your lighting strategy makes up the lion's share of that plan. Lighting makes the image, and it's critical that you get it right.

Your lighting approach can be considerably different from a stills shoot. It starts with how you visualize it in your head while considering mood, story, and environment. You can then break open your toolbox, plug in the light, shape it, and alter it to your taste.
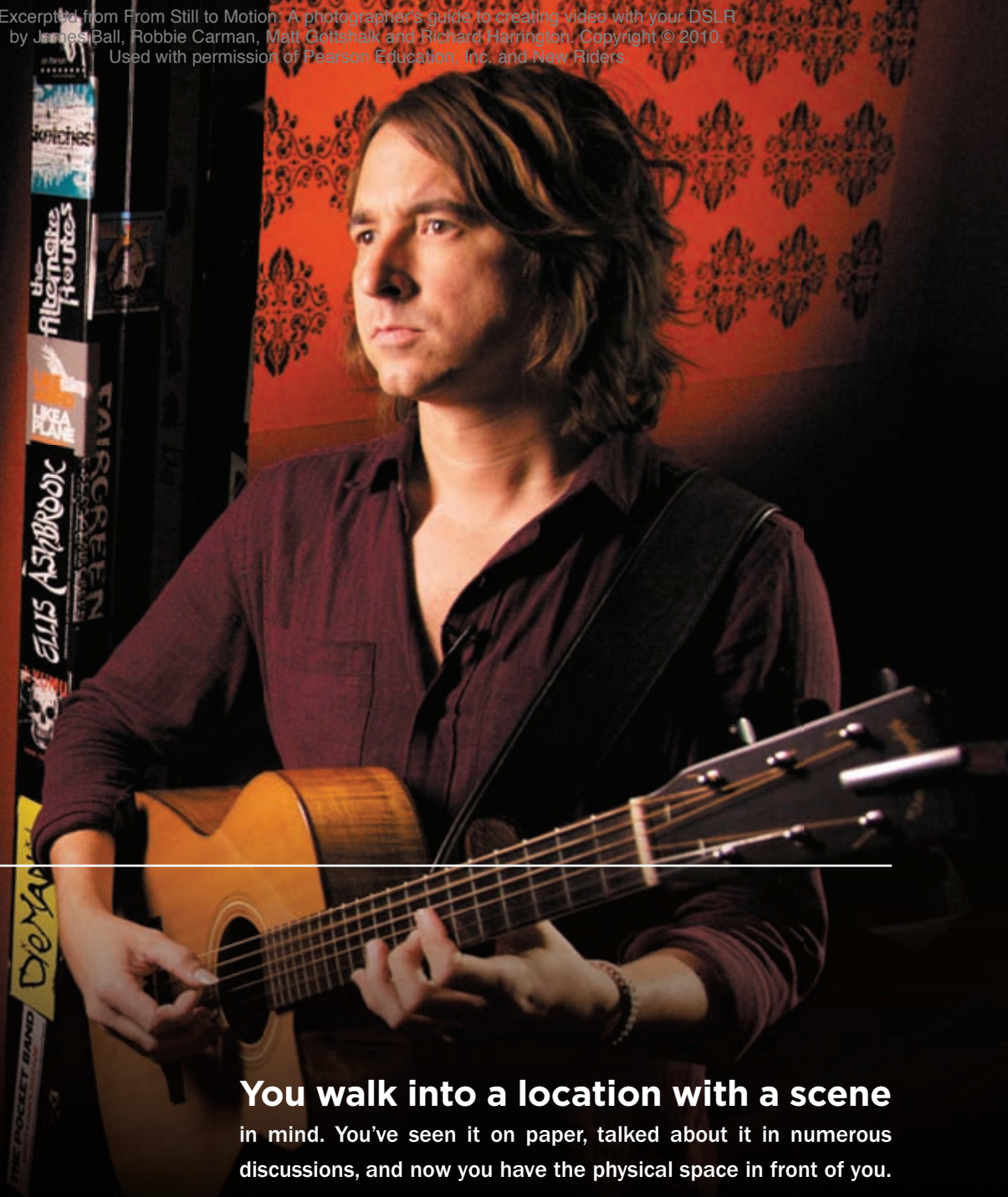
Lighting is one of the front lines where art meets the practical. You must transfer your vision into real-world results. Several tools are available to choose from, some naturally occurring (like the sun) and some that come from the bottom of your low-budget light kit.

Playing with the Light

Bringing Your Subject to Life

CHAPTER **5**

You walk into a location with a scene

in mind. You've seen it on paper, talked about it in numerous discussions, and now you have the physical space in front of you. This is where your project comes alive.

The space will need some type of illumination. Whether it's for artistic or technical reasons (or even a little of both) you'll need to adjust the light in the space you're shooting. Through your efforts, you will shape, focus, and direct the light to get the desired results.

LIGHT IS THE PRIMARY INGREDIENT IN BOTH PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY.

From the perspective of a videographer, lighting is the most effective tool for telling a story photographically. An incredibly varied and versatile tool, light is the principal filter through which you'll interpret your story.

Start your approach to a scene with the lighting in mind. Although it may seem intangible, we like to start from an emotive angle: Determine the mood and theme that needs to be created. Should it be sadness or joy? Fear or anger? Even though it may seem a little removed from the technical side of shaping light, you need to have an emotional response in mind.

Next, try to attach more tangible concepts to these emotions so you can bridge the gap between the story concepts and the physical world. You need to connect the emotions to your scene by deciding where they need to be staged in terms of light. Should the lighting be cool or warm? Soft or harsh? Industrial, gray, radiant, flat, directional, shadowed? Well, you get the idea. Make these decisions before you think about any practical lighting or technical approach. You can likely determine your lighting mood before you even see the location.

These days a lighting setup can be created from scratch. Lighting plans only need to follow one simple rule—make the subject look good. Consider this an opportunity to unleash your creative visions and draw on your knowledge of how light works.

In this chapter, you'll explore the power of light to evoke feelings. This begins your journey of playing with the light: Be prepared to change how you approach the subject.

Think Fast and Go with Your Gut

You walk onto your set; now what? Welcome to the first physical manifestation of all the ideas and concepts you've been kicking around in your head. Truth be told, it's very easy to become overwhelmed when trying to decide how to light a location. The natural tendency of most when presented with a blank canvas is to pause.

But it doesn't have to be that way. Let's take a look at a practical approach to breaking down a location and lighting a scene. You'll begin by making a few observations.

Analyze the Room

Before you start adding light, determine what you have to work with. What is the quality of the light in the room to begin with? Is it indirect? Harsh? Flat? Soft? What is the color temperature? Is it warm or cool?

Walk around the space and identify the current light sources in the room. Are there any practical light sources like lamps? Is the room plagued by mixed sources, such as fluorescent lighting with large windows?

The big decision you need to make is whether you want to completely create your lighting approach from scratch or if you want to augment the existing sources. Be sure to always analyze the light that already exists in your location. It is often a lot easier to work with what you have than to try to fight against it.

Consider the Action

You must consider the action that is being staged, or covered, when lighting. Where best can you play it out? Can you control the action of the scene, or is it unpredictable like a sporting event? Will it be static or moving? The events you are shooting will provide you with clues about a lighting plan. If subjects are moving, will they cast shadows? Does the action move from indoors to outdoors? The more you know about what's happening in front of the lens, the better you can make the scene look through lighting.

▲ Taking stock of the strengths and limitations of a location will guide you in your lighting strategy.
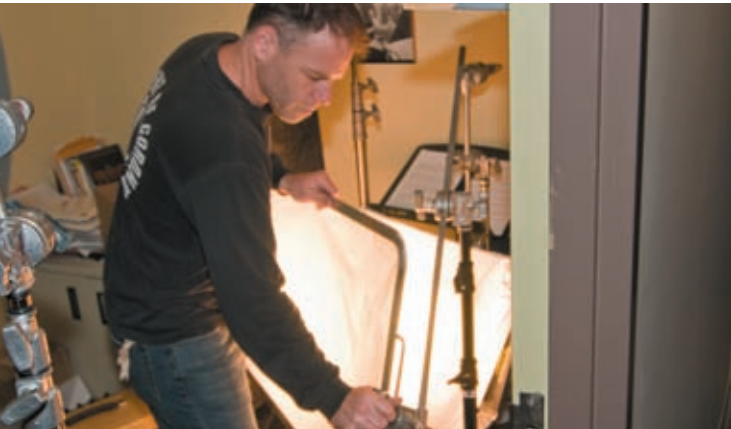
▲ A Kino Flo (through two layers of diffusion) creates a soft, wrapping key (left). The soft diffusion on the lights creates even lighting on the reflective surface of the guitar (right).

Determine the Mood

You must consider the appropriate mood for the scene. Will the existing environment or an alternative time of day motivate it? Can it be manufactured or manipulated by the production? How long does the mood need to last? For short periods of time, you can use natural lighting sources without having to worry about continuity. Longer shooting times mean controlled lighting (the sun tends to move on you). Condensing hours of shooting into a few minutes of screen time where the lighting matches throughout is a true skill. This is a real departure from still photography and is the essence of great camera operators. Keep in mind that lighting should enhance performances without being overly noticed.

Establish a Schedule

Evaluate time and resources compared to the amount of lighting coverage needed. It's all about relative equations: The more time and resources you have to expend, the more controllable the coverage. As allotted time and crew size decrease, compromises need to be made in either quality or quantity of lighting coverage.

There's a balance between the two (but it might take a "polite" argument to find it). You'll need to reach an agreement with your client or the director as to how much time can be spent lighting each angle within a scene. These decisions should be based on the evaluation of the space (it's always a matter of negotiation).

Work the Room

Now it's time to place your lighting sources to get the desired effect. Lights can be placed outside through the windows or get rigged in the ceiling. Lights can be set on stands or walked in and out on cue by crew members. They can be visible practicals (such as lamps) or even placed on the floor. They can be bounced, flickered, dimmed, colored, diffused, and so on. Your decisions are motivated simply by what works. Choices can be made for tangible reasons, like the camera needs to see 360 degrees, so you'll have to hang your lights. Or your choices can be based on your observations of the natural movements of light bouncing around in a room that indicate the light is more pleasing coming off the warm hardwood floor than gray linoleum ceilings.

Where your lights go will determine how much time and how many resources you'll need to light the scene. There are pros and cons to each scenario. Setting up

◄ Our soft source in action giving Luke a nice wrap. We allow the spill on the background to bring out the interesting art direction.

a difficult, time-consuming lighting rig may enable you to cover a scene in a single shot that sees in multiple directions. As a result, the time spent setting the rig ultimately becomes a time-saver in terms of allowing you to light the room only once.

Making 'em Look Good

One important consideration when lighting is getting the optimum quality of light on your subject's face. Decide how you want the light to wrap around your subject's face: Should the subject's face be broad or narrow? Hard and chiseled? Soft and shadowless?

The eyes are essential because they evoke all expression. So when you're lighting the face, the eyes should be your starting point. The face provides you with clues to the placement of the key light. Here are a few lighting suggestions:

❯ Broad sourcing (which leaves a large area of the frame open for motion) puts the key on the eye-line side of the camera. This works well for narrow, angular faces.

❯ For a fuller face, try a narrow side key (the opposite side of the eye-line).

❯ Look at the quality of the skin. Is it oily or reflective? What is the subject's skin tone? Is it smooth or pockmarked? All these surface features have an impact on your lighting choices.

▶ #05

▲ Even if you are going for a more side-lit look, it's always good to bring out the eyes.

VIDEO #5: GET STARTED LIGHTING
This lighting overview discusses our approach to key scenes in the finished video.

▲ Fluorescents like this Kino Flo Diva make a soft, pleasing key light.

▲ Soft lights create a lot of unwanted spill. Grip stands and flags help to control its direction.

The Essentials of Three-point Lighting

Three-point lighting is the basic starting point for film and video. This method utilizes three light sources focused on the subject from different angles. Mastering this technique is the foundation for more advanced lighting strategies. The goal of three-point lighting is to properly light the subject while also separating the subject from the background. This approach is the basis for portrait lighting, but it can be used in other situations as well.

Key Light

The key is generally your most intense light and is placed 15–45 degrees to the side of your subject. The main purpose of the key is to wrap the face in the appropriate quality of light based on the subject's features and the story you want to tell. Using a broad, soft source of light like that produced by a soft box or fluorescent fixture such as a Kino Flo is a popular choice when shooting interviews. If you have the room, a bounce key can be even more pleasing: The light is bounced off a flat surface or card and is reflected onto the subject's face to create soft light.

Ideally, you'll determine essential information about your subject before you light the shot. You'll want to identify important factors like skin tone and texture, hair color (or lack thereof), and wardrobe, so you can light accordingly. You'll also need to know the "color palette" of your subject so you can achieve the right lighting balance.

Fill Light

The fill is your secondary light and is generally placed on the opposite side of the key. Its purpose is to fill in the shadows cast by the key light. To what degree you utilize your fill light is a matter of taste. Ideally, you'll use a small lighting fixture or bounce the light off a card or flat surface. Often, you can use some reflected light off your key to produce some fill.

Selective use of fill light can have considerable impact on the mood you create. Try varying the amount of light used and look at your monitor or viewfinder after you make adjustments. The amount of falloff you use for the key (which creates shadows or transition) can really change a viewer's reaction to your subject's face. This light can significantly affect the mood of the portrait you are shooting.

You'll also need to experiment with the quality of fill light. When creating fill, you'll almost always choose

▲ When working in limited spaces, you can put the diffusion right on your light. It makes it easier to control the spill.

to reflect the lights off an indirect surface. Whichever surface you choose can make a big difference. Some are shiny and specular, whereas others just soften a source like butter. A shiny surface will not give you the same feel as a matte finish. Use the way different skin tones take the light as a reference point. You can also use a gold reflector to warm up your light. Just be sure to consider how reflections can affect the mood of the shot.

Backlight

Backlight is the third element in three-point lighting. Its purpose is to highlight the edges of your subject, separating it from the background, which creates more of a three-dimensional look. The backlight is identical to the hair light you might use in a portrait setup. Placement of the backlight is usually behind and above your subject, but it can depend on the shape and quality of the human (or other) head.

Sometimes the backlight works best close to the floor or off to the side (it is then called a *kicker*). The purpose is still the same, which is to create a multidimensional feel to draw the viewer's attention to a subject. The quality of this light can be as varied as the key and fill. A bald head often looks best with a bounced backlight, whereas a subject with a full head of hair can usually benefit from more of a direct treatment. Always look at your monitor to gauge what's best.

Luke Brindley Interview Setup

CAMERA A

CAMERA B

However, kickers and edge lights are not assumed for every shoot. Not every scenario requires a backlight. They just may not fit with the mood of your setup. People don't walk around in the world with little halos around them!

But you'll still want to separate the subject from the background to keep the viewer focused on the subject. You can accomplish this by lighting the background with the appropriate amount of contrasting shadow and highlight. In the right circumstances, this might be a more natural way to create separation. You can also do this through color variance, with warm colors making up your foreground and cooler tones receding into your background.

Putting It All Together

Once you understand three-point lighting you're well on your way to understanding the art of lighting. As photographers you probably know much of this. The new challenge you will have with videography is to maintain your three-point lighting sources throughout a moving shot, a moving subject, or multiple cameras, which can be really fun and open you up to some new challenges.

You can see the final result of combining the key, fill, and backlight on the adjacent page. When done correctly, the scene can be shot with multiple cameras.

◄ Small fresnel lights like the LTM Pepper are great for adding small highlights and edges to your setup.
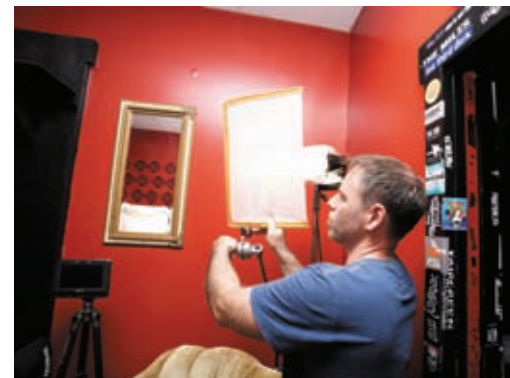
▲ A Dedolight 150 is employed for an edgelight. Without a stand-in, your fist can serve as a makeshift "head" to aim your beam. A small silk serves to soften and broaden your source.

▲ A background can be lit hard or soft. In this case, it's a 36" Chinese lantern creating a soft wash on the back wall of the set and lighting the space.

▲ The lighting here was placed to light the room in a dramatic way. The performers were later blocked in the best place to take the light.

Preparing the Scene

As the Director of Photography, you'll need to form a basic philosophy about location lighting. You'll want to develop ways of lighting that work in all situations. The following three approaches are essential and will affect most other creative decisions.

Light the Space

When lighting the space, the goal is to make the location look its best. Subjects then move through the lit space and land in predetermined areas that are flattering or scene appropriate. With this approach, the space is the subject you need to light. You might consider this method when the existing light sources in the room are your motivation for the overall look.

You'll want to *block the scene* by having the talent or stand-in act out the scene in a practice run. This will give you a picture of how big your set is—not only the performance space, but also the room you need for gear. You should put floor marks down for talent, camera, and sometimes lighting placement. You'll want to light only what's necessary to save time, and then

develop a strategy for all camera angles and lighting adjustments to accommodate what you need to light.

Ideally, you performed a site survey during the preproduction stage. This should have given you some idea of what lights are needed for the space you are using.

Light the Subject

Lighting the subject is the right approach when you want to achieve the best look for a person. Although it's not as flexible as lighting the space, it works well for individual portraits or small group shots. You build the portrait and then work in your backgrounds. Subjects have their own optimum lighting treatment, which is dictated by their appearance and the mood or story you are capturing.

Lighting a subject generally requires more lights to work together to create your desired images, so using a stand-in is a great idea. Ideally, you might want to find a person who somewhat resembles your principal talent in height, hair color, skin tone, and so on. But in a pinch anyone will do, and it beats lighting the

▲ The angle of the incoming window light was too direct, so we blocked it off and added our own source.

air! Also, you can work the scene without testing the patience of your real talent. An added advantage is that everyone on the crew gets a rehearsal of the action to come.

A Balance of Both Approaches

Most shoots implement a combination of both philosophies: lighting the space and lighting the subject. Your experience and willingness to experiment will determine the balance. Lighting is all about creating an emotion.

Constantly ask questions that are relevant to your desired outcome. For example, how do I physically achieve certain emotions with all this electricity, metal, glass, and heat? Once you find the fundamental answers, it'll just become a matter of good-old fashioned problem solving.

▶ #06

▲ The incoming natural light from the background worked and matched our foreground key. So we used it!

Techniques for Controlling the Light

The environment surrounding a subject—the background and foreground—is the key element in creating a multidimensional space on the screen. If portraiture is the sculpture of the face with light, lighting the subject's space is sculpture on a grander scale. Remember that digital image technology works best when you give it enough of a contrast range to work with. You'll need to control your light to work with as broad a contrast range as possible without sacrificing details in the highlights and shadows. You can do this in several ways.

Create interest: It's not always about lighting, especially if you're short on time and resources. In your initial assessment of a space, try to find interesting features or apply a bit of art direction to create depth and contrast.

Identify physical elements: Color, shapes, and angles fill our world. Look for these elements so you can add lighting to augment, emphasize, or minimize them.

Strike a balance: Creating the right balance of highlights and shadows is the game. A well-placed hot window or shard of stray sunlight can start you off.

Use natural light sources: Look for natural light sources and attempt to use them. Just keep in mind the passage of time because those sources may change during the shoot and cause continuity errors.

Highlight shapes and textures: Try edging an interesting shape (like a plant, sculpture, or doorway) or up lighting a textured surface with dedicated lighting.

Remove lighting: Very often it's about taking away light; white walls need darkening; stray sunlight needs shaping or even elimination if it's not going to be consistent.

It is critical to keep the quality and shape of light consistent through your entire scene, which means you'll need to use the right tools and the right techniques. We'll continue to explore several lighting fixtures and options throughout this book. But here we explain some essential pieces of equipment and techniques you should use to place and control your lights in a scene. You don't need all of them to get started, but over time your collection will likely grow.

▼ Interesting art direction can make your lighting job easier. The lens you put in front of your fixture controls the spread of the beam it puts out.

▲ **Flags offer more precise light control than barndoors, if you have the room. Bounce cards are more controllable with a clamp such as this Quacker clamp.**

Flagging

A solid flag is one of several tools used to shape the light. Generally, a flag is a solid, black cloth in a metal frame that is used to literally cut the light to keep it from lighting anything you don't want illuminated. Flags come in many sizes, and it's not uncommon to see a virtual forest of them around a large fixture. A flag is the chisel that sculpts the lighting into the appropriate mood on your set.

You can also use barn door attachments on lights to shape them. These too can isolate the light into a narrower area.

Bouncing

You'll generally bounce light when you want a soft, less directional source. The hardware used for bouncing comes in several varieties. The gear is typically defined by its surface color, texture, finish, and positioning.

There are a few industry standard tools for bouncing, such as flexfill discs, bead boards, foam core, and reflectors. But the best thing about bounce illumination is that almost anything can be used as a legitimate tool for bouncing light—bed sheets, wooden floors, clothing, newspaper; it all works! Bouncing doesn't

need to be just for soft light. Mirrors of all shapes and sizes are used every day to steer that big beautiful sun onto film sets.

What's the easiest way to tell if light is bouncing? Just wave your hand in front of a reflector and see if a shadow appears on your background or subject. You should also know if the bouncing introduces any additional color cast on your subject. The color may be desirable, or you may need to adjust the white balance of your camera to compensate.

Diffusing

Softening a directional source is often done by putting some type of material in front of the light to disperse the beam. Broadening the source this way creates a more natural wrap on your subject. The larger diffuser you use, the less "lit" it's going to look. It also prevents shifting the color of the light (which often happens with dimming).

A good number of fabric and gel materials have been designed and are available for diffusion. Some have sexy names like Opal Tough Frost, Bleached Muslin, or China Silk. Others just use a manufacturer's number.

▲ In this scene, the lighting director is using a bounce card and a flag to control the lighting.

Whatever they are called, the name indicates the amount of light dispersal. You can experiment greatly with diffusion. Try combining multiple sources. You can also try diffusion in combination with other techniques, like a bounced source through diffusion. Just remember to keep the mood of the scene in mind.

Netting

Nets are another useful light subtraction tool. Although they are similar in appearance to flags, they are less powerful (allowing for greater flexibility). A net is not completely opaque, so it can let some light through. Think of a net as selective exposure control, only it's being done outside the camera. The light can get through a net, although a lot of those pesky little photons get caught like fish in a drift net.

You can use a single, double, or even triple strength net to lessen the intensity of light on a subject. Add nets to your forest of flags to get more precise control. Nets work well, say, if your actor is wearing a white shirt and you need to reduce its brightness, or if you need to reduce the brightness of an overexposed background.

Color Correcting

Although current camera system menus often have very selective color controls, there is still something organic about manually manipulating your color balance while lighting a set. Sometimes it's just easier to pin a color-correcting gel on a light and see the results immediately without any electronic middleman.

Color corrections can be done for purely technical reasons (the lamps available don't match the existing light) or for mood reasons (to create depth and contrast through color layering). Sometimes color correcting is not about gelling but actually replacing a bulb source. This is a very common practice if you are using existing sources (or practicals) in a room but the bulb color temperatures conflict with your desired color palette. Again, you can color correct with the trusty white balance in your camera, but when you want selective, varied color within your scene, it can be a lot easier to make adjustments to the lighting.

Matching

The matching process works together with color correction. Very often different fixtures in the same family of lamps do not match in color temperature. Such is the world; however, in an effort to control the mood of a scene, you must decide how much you want variances in color to slide.

Cameras are less forgiving of such differences than the human eye, so you need to make them see like you do. Whatever the discrepancy, there are correction gels in fractured increments (⅛, ¼, ½, full) that bring the renegade lamps into line with their siblings. If conflict is what you desire, then don't worry about matching the lights! Experience and preference will dictate the adjustments you need to make. But you still want to be technically aware of the impact of temperature. A color meter is a great investment for matching lighting.

You also need to be mindful of lighting changes as you move through a scene and move a camera. If the sources illuminating the scene shift in color, quality, or direction, they can jolt a viewer right out of a story, and that is not good!

The idea is to be invisible with your work, and consistent. You don't want lighting to look artificial, nor do you want it to shift throughout the day or scene. This

▶ **The lighting director shown here has used two layers of diffusion to soften a light. You may need to stack diffusion to properly disperse light.**
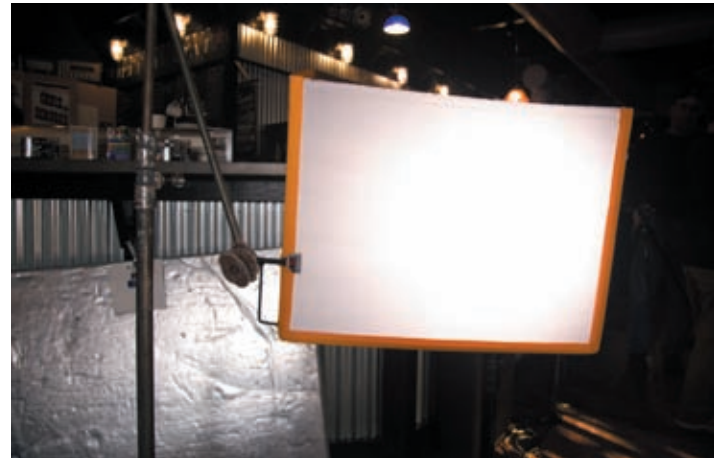
▲ A correction gel (1/2 CTO) is added to a day-light-balanced HMI to warm up its output.

▲ Chris, the gaffer, replaces existing bulbs to get a better color match. Matt walks the scene looking at the monitor to detect unwanted changes in light quality and temperature.

can be tricky, especially if you shoot scenes out of sequence by hours or even days. It's possible that you will need to shoot a scene over the course of several days that lasts onscreen for a few minutes and have it all match as if it happened in moments.

How do you do this? You can use a great tool that you already have in your hand—a still camera! Shoot the setup, the overall set, and whatever you need to document to remember how you shot the earlier pieces. Then you use all the lighting tools at your disposal to shape, control, or duplicate the consistent, invisible lighting.

Dimming

By controlling the electrical voltage to a light source, you can vary its intensity. Dimmers vary in size and scope, from little household boxes to multichannel computer-controlled boards. You might want to carry a few of the small dimmers (500W or less) to control any practical lamps you may encounter on a set.

For large lights, variable dimmers are available in all ranges to manage the job. Be aware that dimming an incandescent or quartz bulb will also change its color temperature. If that is not desirable, it might be better to control the light intensity by netting or *scrimming*

(little metal nets that go into the fixture to partially block the light).

But be careful what you plug into a dimmer these days! Anything with a ballast will either fry or short out. Specialty dimmers are made for those family of lights and are often built into a ballast, like a Kino Flo or a Dedolight.

Dimmers are even made for neon lights, so you can use that cool beer sign in your background without using lots of messy color-correcting gel. Of course, another treat in motion picture shooting is to use a dimmer control for a variety of on-camera effects. For example, try doing a gradual illumination effect while rolling cameras as an interesting way to open a scene.

LIGHTING SUPPLIERS

Here are some of our favorite lighting vendors:

› www.adorama.com   www.arri.com
› www.fjwestcott.com   www.kinoflo.com
› www.litepanels.com   www.lowel.com
› www.zylight.com

▲ This 2K Magic Gadget box has both dimmer and flickering functions.

Standard Packing List for a Portrait Setup

- ☐ 1 650W Fresnel
- ☐ 1 Chimera soft box with speed ring
- ☐ 1 300W Fresnel with barn doors
- ☐ 1 100W Fresnel with barn doors
- ☐ 4 lighting stands
- ☐ 1 gel and diffusion jelly roll
- ☐ 4 300W dimmers
- ☐ 4 ground-wire killers
- ☐ 1 tungsten/daylight reflector
- ☐ 1 lightbulb box
- ☐ 1 Kino Flo 400 - 1 bank
- ☐ 2 bounce cards (white card stock)

- ☐ 6 C stands with arms
- ☐ 6 10-pound sand bags
- ☐ 2 6-port power strips
- ☐ 3 10-foot 3-port extension cords
- ☐ 2 25-foot extension cords
- ☐ 20 clothespins

Profile Lisa and Ian Robinson

© Jeffrey Prehn www.jeffreyprehn.com

Lisa and Ian Robinson are a married duo specializing in wedding and event photography. Their company, SoftBox Media (www.softboxmediaphotography.com), is based in the Washington, D.C. area. This award-winning team has been recognized by TheKnot.com and WeddingWire.com for outstanding wedding and event photography. Not ones to be limited by traditional photography, both Lisa and Ian have taken advantage of video-enabled DSLRs to broaden their creative storytelling options when shooting weddings and events.

Traditionally, photographers *and* videographers have covered weddings. Although wedding photography is still the Robinsons' bread and butter, more and more they've been breaking with tradition and also shooting video for the weddings they cover. "We love the art of still photography. Sometimes though, video can add life to a typical photo slide show DVD," says Ian.

With so many photographers in the wedding industry, wedding photographers arguably have the largest field of peers from which to set themselves apart in hopes of catching the eye of a potential client. Lisa and Ian have found a way to incorporate video into their photography and offer something unique in the vast marketplace of wedding photography. "We see it [video] as value added; however, we do recognize the difference between a photographer and a videographer. And while we don't intend on ever becoming true videographers, we see the benefits of including video into what we do," says Lisa.

The transition into shooting video for Lisa and Ian, like other pro photographers, has been a bit bumpy at times, not only at the production stage of a project but also in post. For many photographers, learning new things about production and post can be intimidating. But Ian and Lisa have a pragmatic approach to shooting video with a DSLR.

"Let's be honest; shooting video and shooting video well are two completely different things," says Ian. "There's a fair amount of technical knowledge required, not only in the shooting phase, but also in editing and output. As you shoot, you need to have a firm grasp of what types of shots you'll need in order to achieve a successful edit. Likewise, you need to have a firm grasp of your editing software so you know exactly what you can or cannot achieve in post."

Lisa agrees and adds, "With video, you have to be able to consider sequential time and different camera options to add visual interest. For example, not just shooting video with your camera locked down on your tripod, but framing the action in and out of the frame, using rack focus techniques, utilizing depth of field, zooming, etcetera—all of these techniques help add visual interest and take your video from ho-hum to something special."

Shooting stills and video at weddings has presented three main challenges—"low light, audio, and stabilization," says Lisa. "Low light because you don't have the editing freedom stills have to 'clean up' the noise potentially generated in low light, audio because that's yet another area of technology many photographers have much to learn about, and stabilization because a lot of the good stabilization equipment can be very expensive."

For Lisa and Ian, the challenges of transitioning from still photography to video are worth it because they see video as being able to enhance the emotional aspects of wedding photography. "Video can help tap into another layer of emotion. It has motion, sound, and color, all things that happen in day-to-day life, and [that's] how people's minds work," says Lisa.

Ian shares a sentiment that is common among many photographers. "With still photography you only have the image—no motion and no sound—which leaves much open to the viewer's interpretation. It's exciting to think that video-enabled DSLRs allow us to use both mediums. We can become even better storytellers and weave the two together to come up with the most complete story."

The fusion of stills and video that SoftBox Media has been able to bring to its work has only been made possible by the gigantic leap forward in DSLR technology. "The coolest thing about them [video-enabled DSLRs] is that you can shoot both high-quality stills and high-quality video at the same time. Previously, you could never do that on one piece of equipment," says Lisa.

Ian sees a bright future for video-enabled DSLRs. Already a proponent of a raw still workflow, he sees this ability coming to mainstream video DSLRs soon. "Raw video, much like raw still photography, would be awesome; the video shot on these cameras is of high quality but it's still highly compressed. Hopefully, the future will bring less compression, and even more."

GEAR LIST

- › 2 Canon 5D Mark II,
- › Canon 5D
- › Canon 30D
- › Canon 20-105mm L f/4
- › Canon 17-40 L f/4
- › Canon 50mm f/1.4
- › Canon 85mm f/1.8