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Strobist Photo Trade Secrets Volume 1: Expert Lighting Techniques (One-Off)



Synopsis

Strobist Photo Trade Secrets volumes 1 and 2 are all about giving you the inspiration and tools to help make your photographs the best they can be. It doesn't take hundreds of pages of instructions or piles of complicated theories to take great photographs. Photo Trade Secrets uses microlessons--each with a simple-to-understand diagram, tips, and a clear description accompanying an inspiring image--so you can spend less time reading and more time shooting. Photo Trade Secrets postcard books are high-quality trade paperbacks, with perforated pages of thick card stock--so you can simply tear them out and take individual microlessons with you when you shoot. Whether you duplicate the photos in the book or use the techniques as a take-off point for creating your own dynamic family photos, killer commercial shots, or eye-catching masterworks, you'll find Photo Trade Secrets to be the fastest, most fun and effective way to take your photography to the next level. Grab your Photo Trade Secrets and get out there and shoot! Learn to Light Your Photographs Creatively Learn to light your photographs creatively using small flashes and other lighting gear with 24 inspiring examples from contributors to David Hobby's famed website. On the reverse side of each photo you'll find a lighting diagram and helpful tips. Tear out individual cards and take them with you for quick reference on your next shoot! Examples

Front Back Front Back

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Strobist blog has achieved an almost legendary status amongst photographers concerned with using flash to take pictures. Now the Strobist seems to be moving into the print field with "Strobist Expert Lighting Techniques: Photo Trade Secrets Vol. 1" by Zeke Kamm. The book consists of twenty-four six and one-half by four and three-quarters inch photographs from individuals who have contributed to the Strobist site. On the back of each photograph is a lighting diagram to show how one or more flashes was used to illuminate the image. The pages are printed on heavy cardboard, and can be torn out of the book, supposedly to take along for quick reference. The pictures themselves are all of high quality and most photographers would be happy to have taken any of them. Unfortunately all one gets is a great image and a lighting diagram. There is nothing to instruct you as to any of the settings involved or any of the theory behind any of the photographs. For example, there is an image of an automobile and on the back it is revealed that the image was made by shooting in low light for a long exposure and walking around the car and illuminating it with a shop light. No discussion of painting with light, or calculating how long an exposure, or any theory. All that you are getting is a bare-bones tip. I'm reminded of the saying that if you give a man a fish, you feed him for a day; teach him to fish and you feed him for life. I seldom consider the relationship between price and product in examining photo books. In this case however, the book just doesn't seem worth the money. One would be better off buying, say, Joe McNally's "The Hot Shoe Diaries: Big Light from Small Flashes" for only a little more money and learning the theory as well as seeing many more images and lighting examples.

When I see cool pictures, I always wonder how they pulled that off. More often than not, it's a matter of lighting. Zeke Kamm presents a series of images along with the lighting configurations in his book Strobist Photo Trade Secrets Volume 1: Expert Lighting Techniques. This isn't a huge book with lots of detail. Instead, it's a series of images with the lighting set-up explained on the other side. You'll be able to read through the whole book in about 20 minutes, but it will give you hours of material for trying out some of your own ideas based on what you read. This is best targeted at someone who's already comfortable around their camera, and who has a couple of detachable strobe flashes to play with. With those in hand, you can take a shot at most of the items pictured here. You could also take the idea and concept for a particular shot and try your own take on it. Fortunately, the setups don't require thousands of dollars of professional gear to pull off, so you can get started right away in making lighting a more integral part of your photographic compositions. Since I want to start digging into photography in 2011, I'll keep this book around for reference. There's plenty of cool

shots to aspire to here. Disclosure: Obtained From: Publisher Payment: Free

What a great tool for ANY photographer, amateur or professional, to study up on some really useful lighting tricks of the trade. The photographs are beautiful and the diagrams that expose the lighting tricks behind the beautiful images are simple and straightforward. I would highly recommend this book for anyone looking to try some different approaches to lighting amazing photographs.

If you like your lighting education in small, easy-to-digest chunks, the post-card mini-lessons in this series will give you the basics. Great photos, useful instruction. We just wish there was more of it. (Actually, there is, but you have to buy Volume 2 to get it.) If you want in-depth lighting information, get any book by Joe McNally. If you want to start off with painless ease, you can't do better than these little picture-perfect post-cards.

This book seems to push all of the right buttons for me on a creative level. It has card stock pages with the photos on one side and lighting schematics on the back, and the pages are perforated so you can remove them and flip through them like glossy note cards. That design decision appeals to the way my brain is wired. I pulled all of the cards out of my copy and find myself flipping through them frequently. It may be due to my love of baseball cards when I was a kid, but being able to get the information this way puts me in a creative headspace, as opposed to the academic headspace I enter when I'm looking at a conventional book. I'm still cutting my teeth as a photographer, but I believe that the best learning comes from doing, and "Photo Trade Secrets" is an excellent tool for doers. The cards fit neatly in the outside pocket of my gear bag and serve as convenient inspiration when I'm in the field and looking for ideas. The simplicity of the lighting schematics also gives me hope that, as my skill level grows, I might one day be able to take amazing pictures like these.

We have reviewed Trade Secret Cards in the past and loved them. What I liked about them was that they were not meant to be copied exactly as displayed, but to inspire. By seeing the final image AND the complete lighting setup it's easy to follow (and understand) how things were done (how a lighting effect was achieved), what could be done with light (the possibilities), and to stimulate your own creative juices enough to go out and try something new, different, and adventurous. Well, Trade Secret Cards have been improved in two (big) ways, first the size... each lighting "card" is significantly bigger. When it comes to old men like me bigger (print) is better and second, because the old version were individual cards you could more easily "misplace" a card. The new cards are

bound in book form, but each page is also perforated as well so if you prefer to remove one (or all) you can, the best of both worlds. One thing has not changed, the quality. The cards are done on firm card stock, they are beautifully printed, and are also coated so should the need arise you can wipe them down without the fear of harming them. And even though they are now bigger and better, the price has increased only slightly. We have produced a video demonstrating the difference between the old and the new cards, I also show how I added my own little hack to the new cards so please check it out ([...]).

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