Headshot Photography











VOLUME 4

The Insight + Inspiration Series dives into Headshot Photography and features articles from professional headshot photographers who all share their tips and tricks on how to coach your subject, lighting, post-processing and more.

Actor Headshot

by Alaina Lutkitz

The concept of this headshot session was to get my client, Burke, a variety of shots to show the range of roles he can play as an actor.

For lighting, I use the Peter Hurley Flex Kit by Westcott. To showcase different looks for Burke, I used multiple lighting setups. My favorite look is what we refer to as triangle lighting where 3 flex kit panels are used to wrap the subject with nice, even lighting. I also separated the triangle to shadow the subject up a bit and used one of the panels as a kicker for a few of the shots.

Shooting tethered allows me to see the light and make any adjustments I see necessary, but more importantly, it allows me to coach my client into the perfect shot. We analyze the different angles of the face and use tethering to select the shots that are genuine and real...no stiff, fake, cheesy smiles here.

My biggest challenge would be getting my clients to understand and apply the crazy antics I coach them through, but that challenge is eliminated with the ability to tether. Once my client can see the difference from pre-coaching to post coaching, they trust me completely. The trust is quickly established, and we can create magic together.

After the shoot, very little post processing is involved, simply minor color and exposure adjustments in Capture One.

ONCE MY CLIENT CAN SEE THE DIFFERENCE FROM PRE-COACHING TO POST COACHING, THEY TRUST ME COMPLETELY.

GEAR LIST:

- Canon 5D Mark III
- Canon 70-200 2.8
- Tether Tools Tether Table Aero
- TetherPro USB Cable
- Peter Hurley's Flex Kit by Westcott
- HP Laptop
- Capture One







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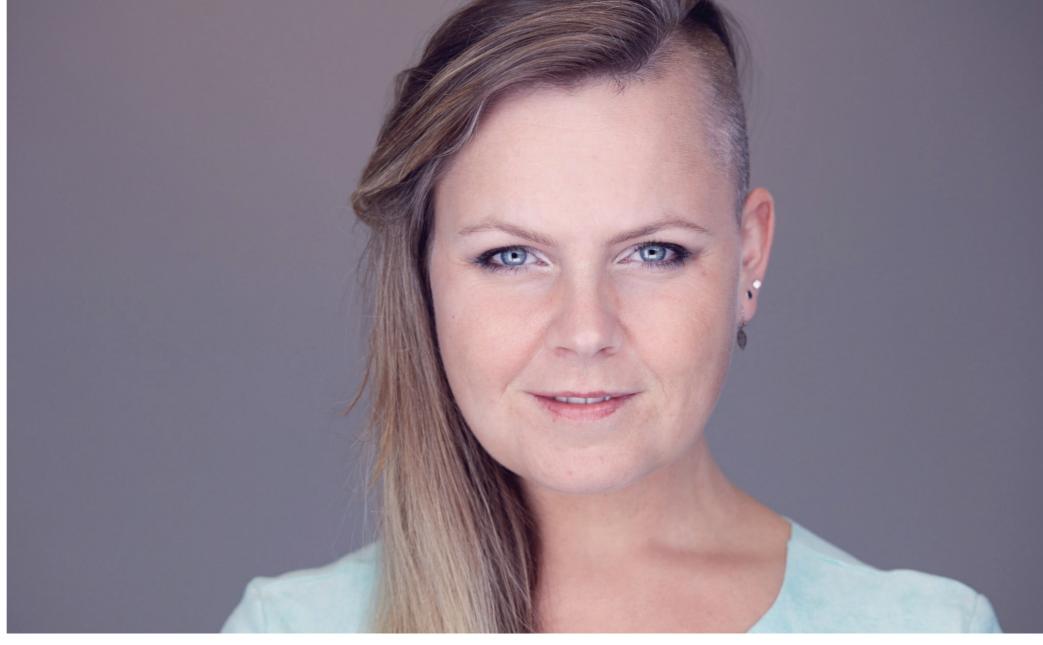




Alaina Lutkitz is a headshot photographer based in Greenville, South Carolina.

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Maurice Jager is a business portrait and headshot photographer based in the Netherlands.

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Corporate Portrait

by Maurice Jager

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The concept of the shoot was to create a headshot, an image for promotion of the client. I predominately shoot headshots and corporate portraits for people to use on their social media and personal branding. During the shoot, I pull whatever curveball I can think of to get a genuine expression based on trust and reaction while making it as fun as possible for the person in front of my lens.

I shoot a Canon 5DSr teamed up with a Canon 100mm F2.8 L macro lens, which always sits on my Feisol CT-3472LV tripod. My current go-to lighting for headshots is the Westcott Peter Hurley Flexkit. I set everything up with Manfrotto 1051BAC light stands and attach

the Tether Tools Aero Table to one of the light stands and I always make sure to bring my Tether Tools cable to shoot into my Apple MacBook 13".

Because most of my clients have no idea what their face looks like most of the time, I use tethering to show them the results of what I've shot in Capture One Pro. Tethering is a vital part of my photoshoots, to coach and educate my clients to achieve the expressions they and I are looking for. My clients are not used to being in front of a camera and showing them the amazing results, we get during the shoot works as a confidence builder and helps me to get better shots going forward during the shoot.

I shoot straight into Capture One during a shoot and most my post-processing consists of working the white-balance, tint and color balance in Capture One. I'm a firm believer of getting it right in camera. It's much easier to just stop the shoot for a second, fix a stray hair or straighten a piece of clothing than to have to go do it in post-processing. I always go for the best quality of light, so my lights are tightly set up, so I must go into Photoshop to remove the lights out of the frame. Fortunately, that's a two second job these days and that's about all I do to my images.





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The TetherBlock and TetherBlock Arca lock your tethered cable into place, keeping your cable or cord plugged in and your camera's sensitive data port protected from damage.



Four Lighting Setups

by Tausha Dickinson

When the Paul C. Buff team and I discussed working together on this shoot we decided to focus on headshots. I wanted to showcase a traditional headshot as well as something a little more creative since this is the approach I take with every headshot session

We had two models and four very different, but simple lighting

Shooting tethered is absolutely essential to me when taking headshots. On this particular shoot we had two people who felt very comfortable in front of the camera, but more often than not many people feel uneasy in front of the camera. I find tethering helps

to ease people's worries and make them see how great the images are looking. If needed it also helps me adjust the way I am shooting if there is something about the way they look that they want to be less noticeable.

The biggest challenge on this shoot was capturing the perfect moment when I was taking photos of Leon walking toward the camera since he needed to be in the "perfect" spot lighting wise as well as capturing him with the "perfect" expression.

For post-processing, Lightroom was used for basic color correction/contrast and then every image was taken into Photoshop for final retouching of skin/hair.



Moody Lighting Setup with Leon

- KEY LIGHT Einstein 640 w/ Paul C. Buff 64" Umbrella w/ White Front Diffusion at 45 degree angle to the right of subject
- FILL LIGHT Einstein 640 w/ Paul C. Buff Rectangular Box Gridded at 45 degree angle to the left and behind subject



One Light Setup with Leon

- KEY LIGHT Einstein 640 w/ Paul C. Buff 64" Umbrella w/ White Front Diffusion at 45 degree angle to the right of subject
- FILL 43 inch Silver reflector for shadow fill





Outdoor Shadow Fill with Jill

- KEY LIGHT Natural Light
- FILL LIGHT Einstein 640 w/ Paul C. Buff Beauty Dish for Shadow Fill

Clamshell Beauty with Jill

- KEY LIGHT Einstein 640 w/ Paul C. Buff 64" Umbrella w/ White Front Diffusion placed directly above subject
- FILL LIGHT Einstein 640 w/ Paul C. Buff Rectangular Box placed directly below subject

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THE TEAM:

- Wardrobe Stylist/Photog Assistant: Emily Goodin @emilygoodinstyles
- Hair and Makeup: Dayna Johnson @dayna.anne
- Model: Leon Graves @itsthatbrownguy
- Model: Jill Meriwether @jcmeriwether
- Paul C. Buff Team Video/Assistants/Producers: Anthony Romano & Kimberly Nail



Tausha is a headshot, fashion, and commercial photographer based in Nashville, Tennessee.

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Headshot For Talent

by Richard Waine

As a headshot specialist, my clients come to me for headshots that authentically represent their personal and/or corporate brand. Whether they are actors or models, attorney or doctors, everyone needs an amazing headshot. This is their digital identity, their virtual handshake and their introduction to the world.

Jay is an actor, who was in need of updated headshots for marketing purposes. My goal was to pull amazing expression from him, where he would appear confident, approachable and likeable within the framework of his unique personality.

My go-to lighting is the Peter Hurley Flex Kit, made by Westcott. I light my backgrounds independently of the subject. This allows me greater flexibility to adjust the lighting on my subject while maintaining a consistent background from frame to frame. I light my backgrounds using two Einstein E640 monolights, made by Paul Buff.

For this image, I used 3 of the 4 flex kit panels. I placed a 1ft x 3ft flex panel on camera left, vertically, but turned towards my subject so as to illuminate their face from the left. This panel functioned as my key light. I placed another

1ft x 3ft flex panel on camera right, as my

Once my subject was positioned correctly, I adjusted the placement of my lights. The key light was angled forward, towards the subject, and inwards towards their nose. This is to reduce the harsh transition from light to shadow, which would appear down the center of their nose. The fill light was adjusted by swinging it inward and outward, towards and away from my subject until the desired amount of fill was apparent. The more I feathered the light away from subject, the more shadow would be apparent.

The third panel was placed behind the subject and to camera right, at around a 45 degrees angle. I used a 1ft x 2ft panel as a kicker light, which provided a kiss of light on an otherwise shadowed side of the subject's face.

The two monolights are set to the sides of the seamless background, and at around shoulder height.

Tethering into a computer allows me to see the images taken in real time. It allows me to make adjustments to light, composition, and is a great coaching tool.





Richard Waine is a Lancaster, Pennsylvania based headshot photographer.

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Occasionally, I bring my subject out from the lights, and show them the images, paying attention to what is working and what isn't. That visual is very helpful in achieving the looks and expressions that we are aiming for. I may also spot details, which require attention or things that I really like, and want more of. All of this is nearly impossible to do on a 3" screen. In essence, shooting tethered has saved me hours of work, and has made my job easier and workflow significantly smoother.

For this particular image, my post processing was not overly involved, at all. In Capture One, I made adjustments for color, contrast, and exposure. In Photoshop, I cropped the image, removed any visible blemishes, and applied some light dodging and burning to even out the skin

Since I usually choose to keep my lights relatively close to my subject, I often have to remove at least one panel from the image in post-processing.



WATCH THE VIDEO



GEAR LIST:

- Peter Hurley Flex Kit by Westcott
- (2) Einstein E640 monolights by Paul Buff
- (2) Manfrotto Column Stands with sliding arms
- (3) Pocket Wizard Plus III transceivers
- MacBook Pro 15" retina display
- Capture One Pro 10
- Tether Tools Tether Cable
- Tether Tools JerkStopper
- Tether Tools Aero Table Master
- Tether Tools Aero Cup Holder
- Tether Tools ProPad
- Nikon D800
- Nikkor 70-200 f/2.8 VRII
- Induro AT313 Tripod
- Benro G2 Ball Head
- Savage 107" pure white seamless background

Creating Identity

by Ryan Parker

Mark first contacted me just over a year ago, needing to update his 10+ year old headshots. He's an actor/director who was visiting Edmonton for a production. I was stoked to get him into the studio, as he's an artist I really respect. Then, a couple of weeks before the session, he called with a very heartfelt apology explaining he had to cancel. "Ryan, they need me to shave down to a moustache. I can't get my new headshots with a moustache. I look a little too hillbilly; we'll have to wait until the next time I'm in town." So, nearly one year to the day later, Mark contacted me to report he was on his way back for another production (this time directing) and he MUST make it work. I was more than pleased to finally get him into the studio.

Mark was looking for some standard acting headshots, but he also mentioned the need for something he can use as a director. For these, he wanted something more artistic. Before our session, as with all my headshot clients, I invited Mark to send me any of his old headshots and discuss what he liked and didn't like about them. This step in my work has always proved to be insightful. His use of describing what he liked (effortless and open) compared to what he didn't like (forced and staged) helped me immeasurably in understanding not only his needs but also the types of words I should use when directing him.

With every headshot client in front of my camera, we're working together to tell the story of a confident and approachable person. It depends on the client and their use of the headshot to find out what amount of confidence and approachability is needed to make the shot perfect for their needs. There is no hard line with expression, it's completely dependent on variables associated with the use and individual.

The biggest challenge Mark and I had was his tendency to display mouth tension when he was going for a more subtle, tiny smile. This is very common in headshots: humans hold a lot of tension in the mouth and jaw and it can be really hard to let that go, especially when you're standing in front of a camera thinking, "I should be smiling." Tethering makes this challenge so simple to fix that I actually look forward to the process. With tethering, I review every image taken with the client as we shoot. Along the way, we delete what we don't like, and during that process we talk about what we both think is working and what we can improve on. It's a collaboration. Mark mentioned things were looking forced, which was the result of a bit of mouth tension. I gave him a bit of direction and nailed down why this was happening and we were good to go.

Here's the catch, the image I'm showing you today wasn't actually tethered... but let me explain. 90 percent of Mark's session was tethered. The last 10 percent was not. At the end of our session, we wanted to move to something a bit more

artistic and portrait-like for his director headshot. So, we left the headshot setup area of my studio and moved to the portrait setup. I like to shoot my headshots on a Canon 5D Mark IV, but I've recently been shooting most of my portrait and environmental/editorial work with my Fujifilm Xpro2. So, I picked up that trusty camera with a 50mm on it and lit him with a panel from the Westcott Flex Kit, which I DIY'd into an Elinchrom Deep Octa. The backdrop you see is a Parker Backdrop (www.parkerbackdrops.com) which is a backdrop company run by my me and my wife.

So, this image wasn't tethered... but by this point in the session, after an hour of tethering and reviewing, neither of us needed to be reviewing. The tethering, along with my direction had led to a very short-hand, almost mind-reading relationship. This all comes from the trust that my subject has in me, and that trust was built through giving directions and showing the results on a tethered laptop. Tethering and reviewing is the ultimate for collaboration in your headshot work. Trust me, I resisted it for years because I was too shy to show my images, but the moment I got over that hurdle my work and my clients' experiences shot through the roof with positivity and incredible results. It empowers my clients to collaborate with me to create their brand



Ryan Parker is a headshot and business portrait photographer based in Edmonton, Canada.

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HEADSHOTS

PAUL C. BUFF, INC.

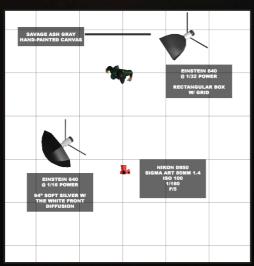
I always love the ability to quickly change up my lighting during headshot sessions. I can go from a traditional corporate style shoot, to something a bit more moody that lends itself to an individuals personality.

The Einstein[™] from Paul C. Buff, Inc. is not only powerful, but versatile and allows me to switch up my setup easily and efficiently.



TAUSHA DICKINSON Photographer taushadickinson.com







Einstein™ E640 Flash Unit

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Additional Equipment:

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24" x 36" Foldable Softbox

24" x 36" Foldable Softbox Grid



MODEL: Leon Graves

PHOTO: Kimberly Nail

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versatility and greater lighting control.





Dentist Office

by Vanessa Joy



I run a Headshot Photography Studio in NJ and was hired to do a set of standard headshots for a dentist's office, Red Bank Smiles. It was a very typical and easy shoot that any professional photographer should be able to pull together. Our goal is to show their friendly side, making their office appealing to new clients.

I used three Profoto D1 strobes. One with a zoom reflector making the background super white. Two with 3x4 softboxes lighting the face - all attached with RFi speedrings. I had my Canon 1DX, Profoto Air Remote, Canon 70-200 2.8mm lens, MeFoto tripod and Tether Tools table and cords tethering my images to Lightroom.

With every headshot client, I first photograph them dead on, looking left, and looking right. I do this in order to determine their best side. While I might photographically know what their best side is, clients don't always agree with me. I love doing this first "practice" set of images tethered so they can come over and look at the images side-by-side and together we

agree on which is their best side, and which side we'll focus on photograph-

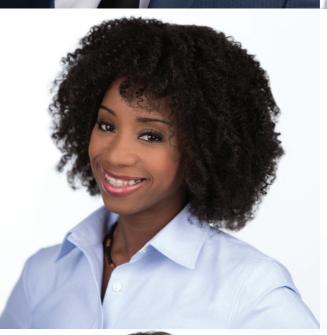
After the shoot, they pick their included four headshots to be sent off for minor clean-up retouching. Being tethered lets them choose their images right there on the spot, completely eliminating the proofing process, which saves me a ton of time, aggravation and money.

Almost no post-processing for this image! With tethering I can get it next to perfect right in camera and then tweak maybe the contrast or highlights in Lightroom before sending it off for retouching with my editor.

A combination of the knowledge of headshot photography in the studio and making sure I pose each client to look their best is really all there was to it - not a ton of gear. So much of photography when working for everyday people has to do with how seamless the process is for them and focusing on the friendly and positive experience you can give them.

















Tracy Bosworth Page specializes in entertainment

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I USED THE CASE AIR WIRELESS TETHERING SYSTEM FOR REVIEW WITH THE CLIENT SO WE WERE BOTH POSITIVE THAT WHAT WE HAD WAS EXACTLY WHAT WE NEEDED TO CAPTURE.

Natural Light

by Tracy Bosworth Page

My workflow is very organic. When the actor comes in we review the wardrobe to suit their character essences and types and chose wardrobe to suit those needs. Then with each change up I consider what situation will put their body and mind into the character and we shoot that. We always take color into consideration in every aspect, everything we do is designed to communicate with a casting director and lead the image to the eyes of the actor.

For this shoot, we were updating client Gabrielle Byndloss's headshots. I have been working with Gabrielle annually for the last 5 years and have been a part of her team as her career has soared. Gabrielle needed to update her headshot with curly hair now that her hair has gotten a little longer and we focused on images that she may be missing from her already fairly completed portfolio of images. She is a full-time working actress repped by Atlanta Models & Talent, which is Atlanta's oldest talent agency.

On set, I am using my Nikon D850 camera body coupled with a Zeiss Otus 85mm f1.4 lens and of course, the Case Air Wireless Tethering System to capture for review with the client so we were both positive that what we had was exactly what we needed to capture. The ability to instantly review the images via tethering is an advantage. The client and

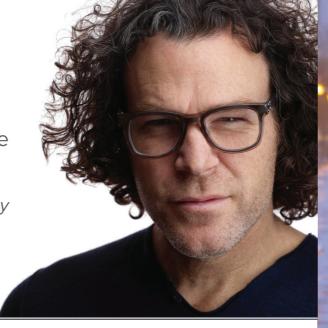
I both have the confidence that we've nailed what we need and can move on to the next set up. My sessions go very quickly!

For actors we focus on natural light wherever possible. All of these shots were captured with natural light whether indoors or out. It is what is expected in the industry and really is very flattering and gives me just a little bit more eye color than what is possible with a studio strobe. I always try to communicate with and through the eyes in my images. The eyes are key to catching the attention of casting -- it is the actor's chance to tell their story.



"You better believe I shoot tethered! I feel like my hands are tied when I'm not tethered."

- Tether Tools Pro Peter Hurley



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Peter Hurley SHABANG! Tethering Kit



Tether Table Aero Traveler



Aero ProPad Traveler



Aero SecureStrap



TetherPro USB Cable (choice)



TetherBlock (choice)



Cable Organization Case Standard



JerkStopper Aero Clip-on Support



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engage with nature









Mood Lighting

by Gordon Clark



Gordon Clark specializes in headshot photography and is an Associate Photographer in The Headshot Crew, based in Vancouver, British Columbia.

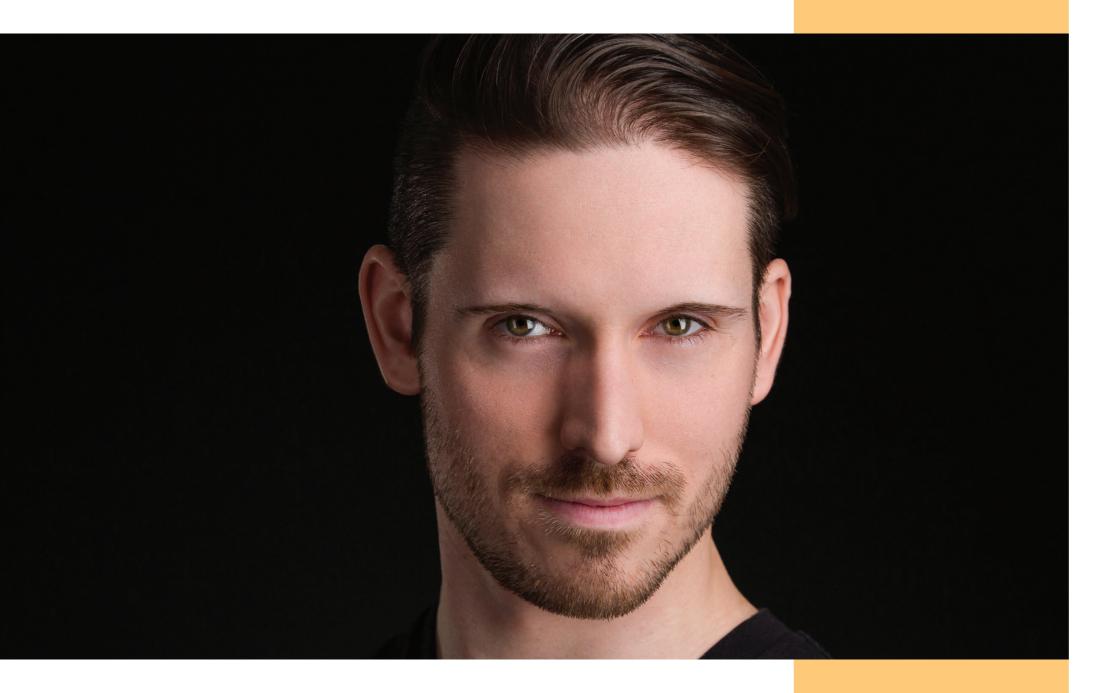
☆ gordonclarkphotography.com☑ instagram.com/gordonclarkphotography

The concept of the shoot was pretty simple - A headshot session! Specifically, a headshot session for a male actor/model. We were going for a moody/edgy look.

I have a go-to lighting setup for guys. My key, fill and kicker lights were LED Flex Lights by Westcott Lighting. I use the Peter Hurley Flex Kit. As this shot was intended to be a bit more on the edgy side, my key light was set to a higher power and placed much closer to the model than the fill light. I added the third "kicker" light to provide some highlight on the model's jaw, as well as a bit of separation from the black background. In addition, I used one flash head to give the background a hint of light. The light I used was an Elinchrom Ranger RX Speed AS 1100 portable battery pack unit, with one S-Head connected to the B port.

Shooting tethered is critical to my workflow and pretty much a necessity. It enables me to see so much more than I can on the back of my camera. It's a very important tool for the technical aspects, such as lighting and composition, but even more important when reviewing images with my client. I use it as a coaching tool. It allows my client to get instant feedback and they can see what a big impact subtle changes in position and expression can have on the shot. Together, this gives the client more confidence and builds the photographer/client trust.

I shot tethered into Adobe Lightroom, where I did basic RAW adjustments. I then exported a PSD into Adobe Photoshop for skin re-touching. Final color grading was completed in Adobe Lightroom.



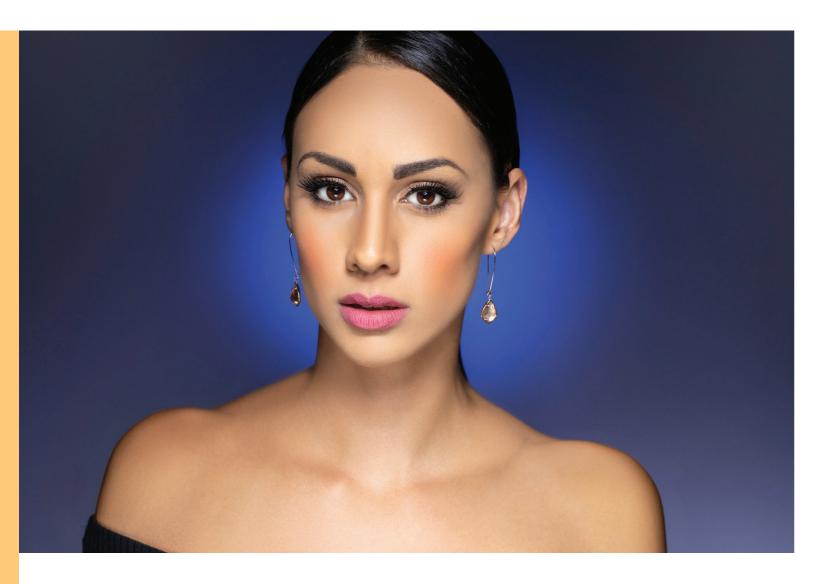


GEAR LIST:

- Westcott Flex Peter Hurley Kit for key, fill and kicker light
- Elinchrom Ranger RX Speed AS for background light
- Hurley Progear Black Proboard for background
- Canon 5D Mark III
- Canon EF 70-200mm F2.8L IS II USM
- Apple 13" MacBook Pro
- Tether Table Aero
- Aero ProPad
- TetherPro USB 2.0 Mini-B 5-Pin Cable
- JerkStopper
- JerkStopper Aero Clip-on Support

Consistency

by Yaneck Wasio



Our headshot set up is consistent whether we photograph in our studio in San Diego or on location at the client's office or big conference as part of the WASIO faces Headshot Booth.

When it comes to camera of choice, we rely on our Canon 5D Mark IV or Canon 1Dx. Our lens choices are Canon 70-200 f2.8L Mark II or Canon 100mm f.28L Macro. They are both very sharp, provide pleasing compression and colors. Since both lenses provide image stabilization it's important to turn it off when shooting on a tripod.

We always use a very steady tripod. We have the Induro CLT403 tripod with Induro BHL3s ballhead. This combo provides top stability, proper height, and smooth movement to adjust the camera when needed.

Our camera is tethered to our Dell XPS 15 laptop. We use the Tether Tools TetherPro USB 3.0 cable with TetherBoost Pro USB 3.0 Core Controller. This combo gives us the rock-solid performance with fast file transfer but most importantly reliability especially if we have to tether to Adobe Lightroom.

For our Headshot Booth we use Tether Tools Tether Table Aero Standard. We attach the Aero table to a light stand with Rock Solid Master Side Arm and Rock Solid Master Clamp, both from Tether Tools. Then for our kiosk stations where people can see their headshots as we shoot we use two Microsoft Surface Pro and Tether Tools AeroTab Universal Tablet System to attach them to light stands. The AeroTabs hold the laptops securely for multiple days without a need to adjust or tightening them. It's all about reliability.

When we are in our studio or on location photographing for our WASIO faces Headshot Booth we use a 43-inch LG monitor (43UD79-B) to display the tethered headshots as we shoot. This LG monitor is huge (has a WOW factor when people see it) with good colors.

To have consistent colors across all our monitors and laptops we use X-Rite i1Studio and i1Display Pro to calibrate all our display devices. You don't need to have both devices. Choose one based on your needs. Calibrating all our monitors gives us proper colors and brightness. Most monitors and laptops out of the box are too bright for photography needs. Since we have two main workstations, 4 monitors, and 4 working laptops this color consistency is critical for us to provide quality headshots to our clients. We also use X-Rite Passport for color swatches and to set up white balance. For exposure measuring we use Sekonic meters which are the industry standard at this point.

For lighting we use two Profoto D2's as our main lights. They recycle extremely fast, gives very good color consistency, and have minimal number of misfires even when we shoot headshots for 9 hours straight. These Profoto strobes are almost unbreakable. We often photograph headshot for 8-9 hours straight and these lights never over heat and maybe have had 5 misfires for the whole

For light shaping we use a deep Raja soft box from Phottix and a Westcott Rapid Box XXL. These two lights give a nice soft feel with minimal shadows and pleasing colors. Sometimes we run the two lights at the same power but often we vary the powers depending from which direction our subject's face is pointing. We also use a white reflector from below to open the shadows.

Our other set up is two Elinchrom strip boxes and a reflector below. Of course, we often like to adjust our lighting set up and sometimes add rim light(s) or a hair light. However, our top set up are the two soft octa soft boxes or the two strip boxes.

If we use white backdrop we add two more Profoto strobes to light the white backdrop. We use a combination of bare Profoto B1 and B2. For our backdrops we always use seamless papers, canvas, collapsible backdrops, or backdrop stands from Savage Universal.



WATCH THE VIDEO





Based in San Diego, California, Yaneck & Sasha Wasio are the founders and owners of WASIO photography, WASIO faces, and WASIO Master Print.

- ★ wasiophotography.com
- instagram.com/wasio faces



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