

WOMEN'S EDITION V2

HOW I GOT *the Shot*



Photo by featured photographer:
RACHEL NEVILLE

INTRO

In honor of International Women's Day, Tether Tools is proud to share our second annual ***How I Got the Shot: Women's Edition (V2)*** with you.

The women featured in this guide are some of our industry's most creative, passionate and talented photographers. We are honored that they have chosen to share their stories, and the work they create for their clients with all of us. Through an eclectic body of work featured throughout this guide, we are inspired by the unique craft, style and approach each individual woman possesses. The work submitted exemplifies the purpose, passion and perseverance that is brought to each story they've shared.

When not creating incredible work, you can find these women leading photography workshops, sharing their process online and teaching and inspiring others at every turn. We honor these creative women, and all women in the photography industry and look forward to continuing to learn and grow together.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lauren K. Simons".

Lauren Simons
Co-Owner and VP, Business Development
Tether Tools



SHAVONNE WONG

Singapore-based Shavonne Wong is an award-winning fashion photographer with 8 years of experience under her belt. Having started out as a self-taught photographer armed only with passion, a diploma in IT and a dash of stubbornness, Shavonne started her photography career from scratch to what it is today. She shoots to tell a story, to give viewers a glimpse into someone else's world. She especially loves a good challenge from adventurous clients who enable her to push the boundaries of their project concepts.

🏠 shavonnewong.com

📷 instagram.com/shavonne.wong

Pose for the Camera

by Shavonne Wong

During a recent trip to America, I had the fantastic opportunity to photograph Billy Porter, Broadway megastar and fantastic actor from the TV series Pose.

When it comes to working with celebrities, shoots are always planned according to their schedule. I was lucky enough to be able to get him booked for three hours inclusive of makeup and styling which gave me just enough time to shoot six looks.

The studio I had booked for this shoot had huge windows that allowed beautiful natural light into the space. The second I walked in, I knew that natural light was going to be the main light source. In order to make sure there is enough light on Billy while still keeping the look very natural, I had one light with a silver umbrella hitting the white wall at the back and another light with an octa to make him pop a little more.





As with all my shoots, the shots are tethered from my camera (Fujifilm GFX 50S) to the software Capture One on my laptop. Tethering into Capture One allows me to see my images tweaked to my liking in real time. This means that the celebrity, his crew and mine can all see the images closer to what the finished product would be like. The makeup artist and stylist are also able to clearly see how their work looks and if any adjustments need to be made.

Additional retouching was done in Photoshop and final colour grading touches from the Infinite Color Panel.

Gear

- Fujifilm GFX50S
- FD 45mm f.28
- GF 63mm f2.8
- GF 110mm f2
- 2 Profoto Heads
- 1 Silver Umbrella
- 1 Octa
- 1 White V-flat

The Team

Photographer: *Shavonne Wong Photography*

Talent: *Billy Porter*

Stylist: *Sam Ratelle*

Grooming: *La Sonya Gunter*

Styling Assistant: *Ashley Dai Stephens, Alexandra Bucokova*

Dancers: *J'royce Jata, Malik Berry, Malachi Vaughn*



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RACHEL NEVILLE

🏠 rachelneville.com

📷 instagram.com/rachelnevillephoto

Rachel Neville is a New York City-based dance and movement photographer. Rachel creates unique, powerful, transformative visuals for dance companies and editorial publications that are designed to stop viewers, captivate their imagination and bring them into the theatre. Rachel has spent many years shooting dance for a variety of clients including Boston Ballet, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, Dance Spirit Magazine, Dance Theatre of Harlem, 10 Hairy Legs, and Grishko.



Ethereal Dancer

by Rachel Neville

Each year as winter is on the cusp of turning to spring, we shift our focus in my studio from individual dancers to dance companies and commercial clients. Professional ballet companies tend to lay out their upcoming season 8 to 10 months in advance, and there is always a mad dash to shoot marketing materials in the spring, often without the costumes, sets or even the dancers knowing some of the choreography. Impactful, eye catching marketing images are integral to the survival and thriving of arts organizations, and ballet companies in particular. Creating images that bring more people into the theaters, thereby uplifting and creating inspiration for communities, is one of the things I'm wholeheartedly dedicated to in my career.

It's such a rewarding experience to work with professional companies. Of course, there is the opportunity to shoot professional dancers, often those who are at the top of their careers. But creatively speaking, as a photographer I'm often in on the ground floor of the creative process; brainstorming ideas with the marketing department, supplying thoughts to the creative department, and making sure that the campaign is also aligning with the vision and direction of the Artistic Director. Each company we work with is very different - a different audience, different repertoire and different marketing needs. There is no 'create, rinse, repeat' in this world, which makes it an even more compelling, interesting, and fulfilling field to work in.

This year's shoot for Carolina Ballet's 2020-2021 marketing materials was a standout for me. Carolina Ballet is a wonderful company with strong direction and fantastic talent, year after year. Not only do they have a lovely and dedicated creative team who bring eight full productions to the city of Raleigh every year, but they like to change it up, take creative chances, try new things, while continually pushing their boundaries. The process typically starts about two months prior to the



shoot date. Once we have an idea of what the next year's rep is, we work up different theme ideas and the marketing department consults with the artistic team. This year, we wanted to go beyond images shot on seamless paper with added graphics and move into the theater where Carolina Ballet performs. The idea was to give the audience a glimpse into their world with a strong sense of story and drama, in addition to an intimate look "behind the scenes." We often travel to companies outside of NYC. Aside from grip, we bring the majority of our studio with us! This can include 8-12 heads, modifiers, and our entire digital station.

Gear

- Nikon D5
- Nikon D810/850
- Nikkor 70-200 f/2.8
- Nikkor 24-70 f/2.8
- Nikkor 14-24 f/2.8
- Nikkor 50 f/1.8
- Nikkor 85 f/2.8
- Profoto D2s
- Profoto Air Remote
- Chimera modifiers: 2x3, 1x4, 3x4 softboxes, and a 5' octa, with grids for all
- Profoto modifiers: 1x3 strip softboxes, reflectors, & beauty dishes with grids for all
- Tether Tools TetherPro Cables
- Tether Tools TetherBlock
- MacBook Pro
- Wacom Tablet
- Eizo Monitor
- External Hard Drives

From the pre-light day through to the end of the 10-hour shoot day, it's extremely important for everyone on the shoot to be able to instantly see not only what our light is doing but how the dancers are working. Dancers are trained to move and flow in a 3-dimensional space, whether studio or stage, but how we transition that to a 2-dimensional screen or print is an entirely different thing! Dancers who have worked with us previously understand many of my 'tricks,' shifts and modifications that ensure their years of hard work and dedication to their art is translated to its fullest effect and integrity on the screen. Tether Tools is an integral part of that process for us!

I love mixing light. I just love it. So, this year's campaign was especially wonderful to work on. I had the opportunity to work with Carolina Ballet's in-house theater lighting designer in addition to using my strobes. It was a lovely challenge to balance theater lighting, while retaining the fully surgical precision that is a staple of my style of lighting. The resulting effect was wonderful: atmosphere and total control at the same time! The shoot was particularly ambitious in that we moved locations on the stage and in the theatre about 16 times throughout our shoot day, so everything needed to be planned out with a precise amount of detail in advance.

For a dancer to perform well during a shoot, we need to create safety for them. Being able to see themselves on screen immediately after a shot is taken is incredibly helpful to assess any minute details that we need to work on. A successful image will stop you in your tracks - there is a vibration that runs through your body when you see something that moves you. When this happens, we know we've got the shot! At the end of the day, this project was a wonderful success. We worked with some incredible dancers, in a super cool location, and everybody walked away happy with the results! Thank you so much to Tether Tools inviting me to be a part of this publication, and for being an integral part of my process and workflow, and for the excellent technology that helps our shoots run smoothly without fail!





Alison Conklin

Celebrated the 12th Annual Go Red for Women luncheon in Lehigh, PA by creating these images for the American Heart Association. We want to celebrate her involvement by sharing them with you.

LEARN MORE ABOUT GO RED

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LEARN MORE ABOUT GO RED



JUDY HOST

Born in Baltimore, Maryland, Judy has created a successful business in photography for over 25 years. Judy has redefined the portrait photography world with her unique talent for capturing the heart and spirit of each individual she photographs and has earned her the respect and recognition of her colleagues. Her photography has been internationally recognized for its innovative style and technique. Recently her work was selected for exhibition in the Valade Family Gallery in Detroit, MI, the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento, CA and the Albrecht-Kemper Art Museum in MO.

🏠 judyhost.com

📷 [instagram.com/judy.host](https://www.instagram.com/judy.host)





Available Light

by Judy Host

For most of my career I have always used available light to help tell my story. I spent 25 years photographing children and families and whether inside or outside, available light has never failed me. Finding the light is the most intuitive thing I do. Once you “See the Light” you can never not see it. So with that in mind, when I’m scouting a location and looking for the perfect place for my subject, I’m looking to see where the light is the prettiest, and where I can best tell my story.

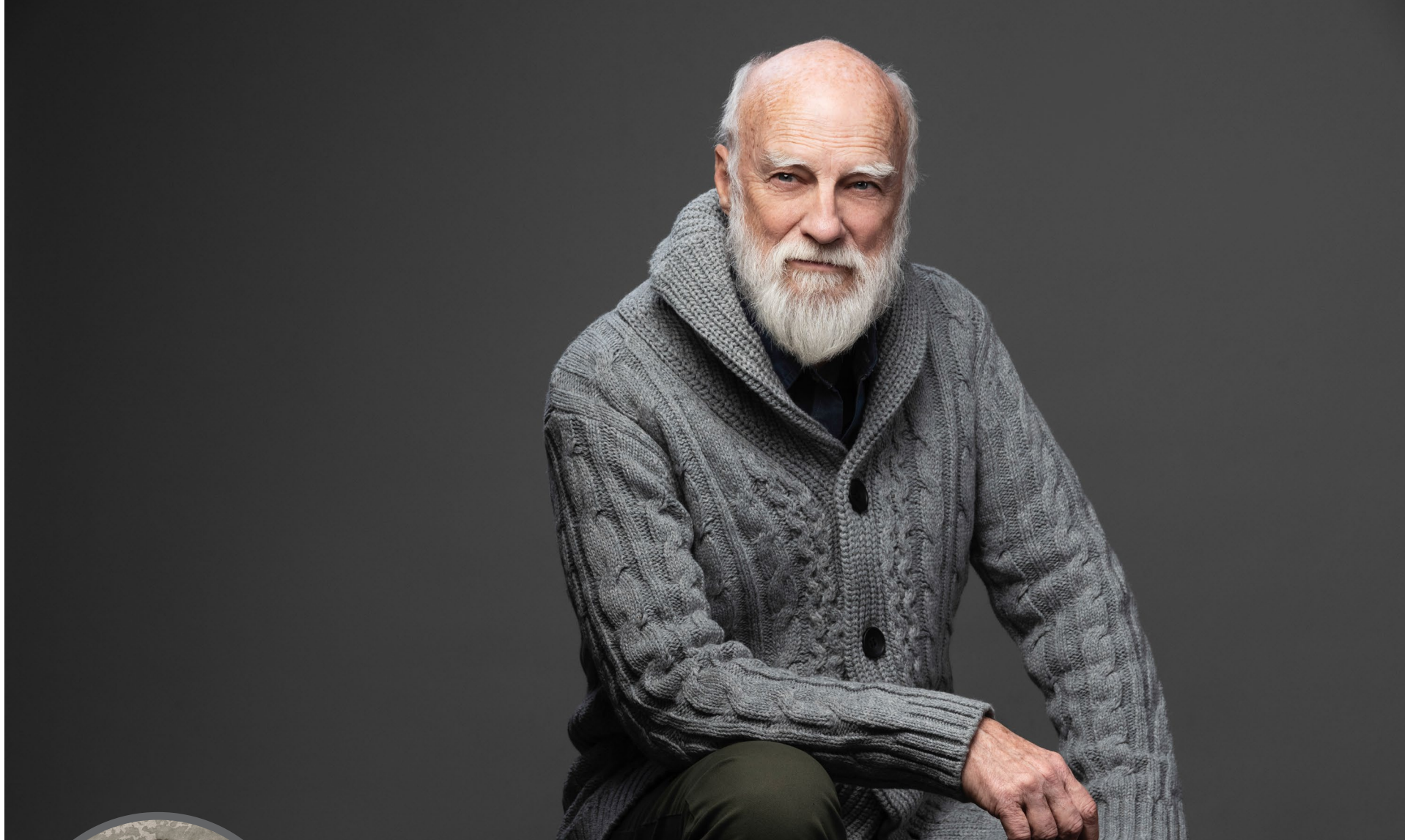
This image you see here was created in the middle of the day, pretty harsh light and not usually a good light to create a portrait of a beautiful young dancer. Learning how to use this kind of light was key for my business. Typically, the best times to photograph outside would be in the morning hours and the late afternoon hours when the light is soft and kind to its subjects. Unfortunately, it’s really difficult to run a successful business when you can only photograph outside during those time frames. Learning how to use the light at other times of the day without modifiers is something I learned very quickly.

This image of Josie was possible because of the harsh light bouncing off the hot white cement and into her face just like a reflector would - only this is more organic. The open shade of the entrance to this building with the stained glass made for the perfect setting. This light is softer and adds to the look that I have become known for.

My equipment is simple. I photograph with a Canon 5D Mark IV and Sigma lenses, in this case Sigma’s 24-105mm f.4.0 Art lens, my workhorse. For this portrait, my focal length was at 24, as wide as I can go. Typically, you see wide-angle images as a horizontal, but in this case, I used it as a vertical image. I think it’s more interesting that way.

I’ve been shooting tethered for years. Not just for my clients, but also at conventions and in my workshops. It’s so much easier when you can actually see what you’re doing in detail so you can make whatever changes are necessary. Having your client working with you to get the right image is key to your success. Having your audience see what you’re doing while you work helps the teaching process as well.

I’m a bit of a Photoshop junky and use graphics and textures in my work. In this case, I used a single texture to darken the background so Josie would pop out of the image. I want the viewer to see her first and the entire image second.



KIRA DERRYBERRY

🏠 kiraderryberry.com
🏠 getyourshoottogether.com
📷 [instagram.com/shekira](https://www.instagram.com/shekira)

Kira Derryberry is a Tallahassee based photographer focused on Family and Commercial portraiture. Kira has spent the last 10 years of her career photographing hundreds of clients all over the southeast as well as sharing her knowledge with thousands of photographers across the country as an educator. When not slinging a camera or volunteering for her favorite photography organizations, Kira is a wife and a mom who publicly loves karaoke jams and bad science fiction.

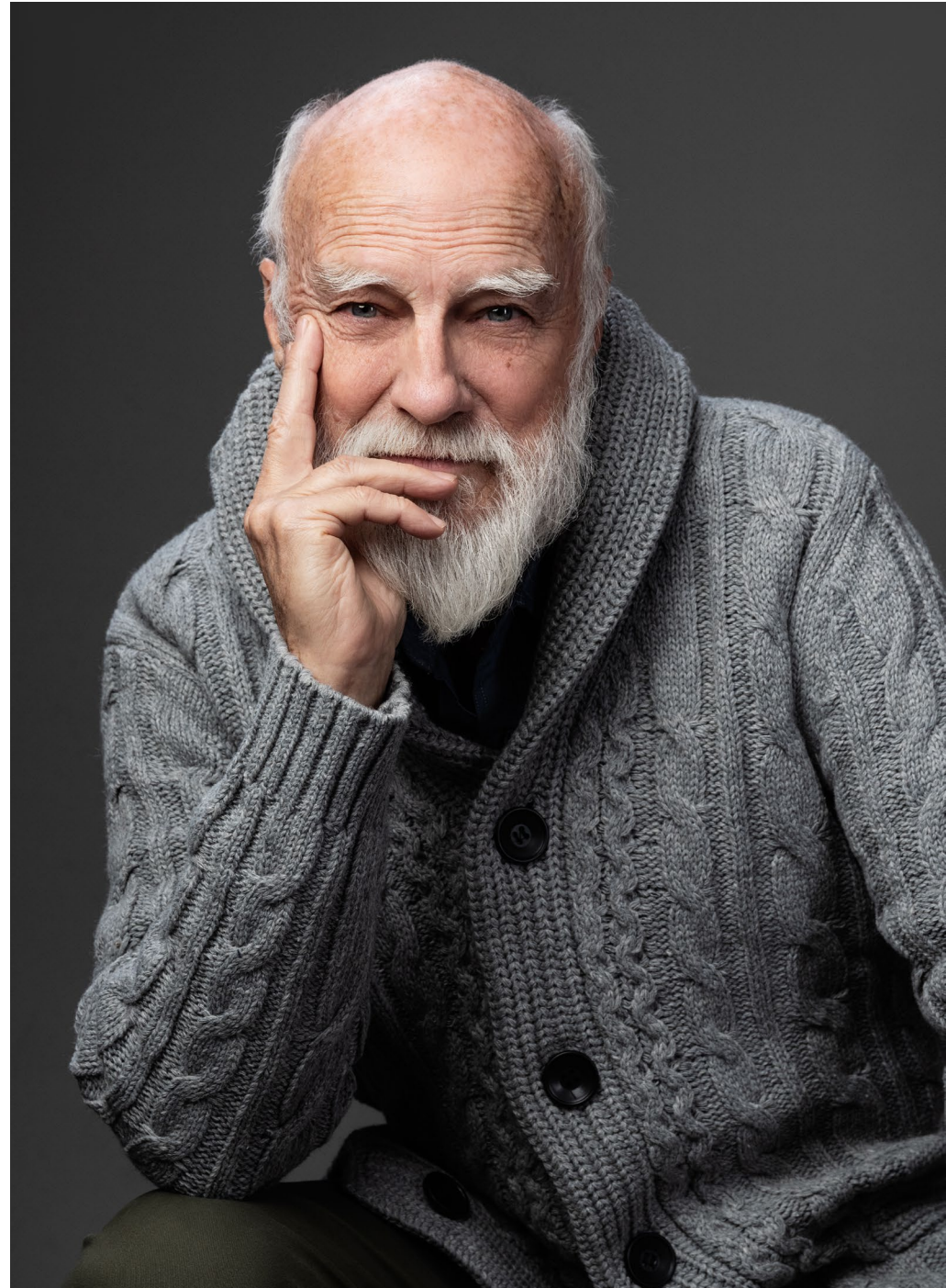
Portrait of a Gentleman

by Kira Derryberry

I spend about 50% of my business time in commodity portrait work for headshots, advertising, and branding images and I spend the rest of it in family portraiture. Both areas are rewarding but do require a bit of consistency and repetition in lighting, posing, styling, etc. That doesn't always allow me to flex my creative muscles as much as I'd like. To feed my artist side, I try to set time aside every couple of months to do something for me. Those personal projects often end up being single person character portraits because it was that kind of portraiture that made me want to be a photographer in the first place.

With portraits I want to convey personality. It's helpful to be very familiar with the person being photographed. That familiarity affords me the trust I need to get the expression I want and the opportunity to be more creative with the lighting and styling. Creating trust with a client is also easy to do when shooting tethered because you can quickly show them the images as you go to build that confidence. For this project, I asked my very sweet and supportive dad, John, to pose for me. Lucky me, he said yes!

Styling this shoot was incredibly fun. I mean, how often do you get to pick out an entire outfit for your dad? I wanted Dad to be stylish and cool while also accentuating the texture in his beard and skin. I chose a gray textured sweater with an interesting collar to pull out the grays in his beard as well as the blue gray of his eyes. I tend to be very monochromatic, as you can see from the background and subject matter, but that little pop of olive green on





Gear

- Nikon D750
- Sigma 24-105 f/4 Art shooting between 82mm-90mm at f/11
- Main Light: 47" Octabox with Paul C Buff Digibee 800
- Separation/Hair Light: 12x36" gridded with Paul C Buff Alienbee B400
- Fill Light: 12x36" gridded with Paul C Buff Alienbee B400
- Negative fill with V-Flat World v-, black side
- Background: Savage Seamless Paper, Fashion Gray

Software

- Adobe Lightroom Classic
- Adobe Photoshop 2020
- Alien Skin Exposure X2

his pants brings just enough color back to compliment the tiny bit of red in his cheeks and anchors the image back down from being too muted.

Speaking of texture, let's get into the technical aspects of the image. I didn't want to over correct the skin or hair on this image. His character is sharp and wise with a bit of devilishness that needs texture to feel like it's coming off the image. I shot this at f/11 for that reason. I wanted absolutely everything to be tack sharp. For the light, I wanted a darker mood, but I didn't want hard light exactly. I chose a large modifier for my main light. I placed it close and just in front of him to feather light across his face and create a fast fall off for the shadows.

My studio is all white, so lots of light bounces around. To control that, I used the black side of a v-flat opposite that main light to deepen my shadows on the face and create dimension. To light his clothing and bottom right of the image, I used a small strip box with a grid attached for fill to give a controlled narrow beam of fill lighting to the camera right side of the image without canceling out the negative fill I was getting from the v-flat.

And finally, I used the same sized gridded strip box behind and overhead to create a subtle separation for his head and shoulders from the background. Generally with a subject that is bald or has white hair, I won't use a hair light so I won't have to deal with too much shine in post, but because I had it on a very low power and gridded, I was able to get just enough light to illuminate his shoulders. I took care of the small amount of shine on his head in post while still leaving the highlight that lends to the dimension overall of his head shape.

I kept my postproduction as simple as I could. Since I tethered while I shot, the image looked pretty great right out of camera! One of the nice benefits of tethering is the ability to see things you may need to correct quickly on set so you can spend less time editing. The only things that I modified outside of my Lightroom capture was white balance and a small amount of burning down his beard in Lightroom, very mild hair and skin clean-up in Photoshop using the Frequency Separation technique, and then some color grading and contrast adjusting using Alien Skin Exposure X2. I finished it off with a +10 to the clarity adjustment in Lightroom just to give it that extra crispness.

I really love the way these portraits came out. They are just so my dad in so many ways, right down to that subtle smirk in his close up. I hope this has inspired you and given you some ideas of how you can level up your next personal project. Happy shooting!

The Team

Photographer: *Kira Derryberry Photography*

Behind the Scenes Photographer: *Adieren Narro*

Talent: *John Dodd*

CONCLUSION

After reading this How I Got the Shot Educational Series, you may find that there is no one formula to 'getting the shot' – and that's okay. As a photographer, and as an artist, you know that sometimes you need to break the mold, that there's no such things as rules; merely suggestions.

Above all else, we hope that you're able to take something from this How I Got the Shot Educational Series, be it a tip or technique, that will help you become a more well-rounded photographer. Now that you've got some inspiration, it's time to get to work!