

NEWSLETTER

MICHAEL CLARK

PHOTOGRAPHY



SPRING 2015



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SPRING 2015 NEWSLETTER

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Cover Image: Dawn Glanc mixed climbing on a test-peice put up by the late Mark Miller in the Ouray Ice Park in Ouray, Colorado. Opposite Page: A portrait of John Fullbright, shot at the Taos Ski Area near Taos, New Mexico while testing out the brand new Elinchrom ELB 400 battery-powered strobe. Newsletter edited by [Katherine Mast](#).





Staying on Track

Managing time and schedules to achieve this years Goals

In the last issue of the Newsletter, I wrote in this editorial about the goals I had outlined for 2015 in a [B&H blog post](#). So far this year, every month seems to get progressively busier and busier, but I have still managed to work towards the goals I outlined for myself in that B&H blog post. Namely, those goals were to further my skill set, work on my video skills in particular, meet with clients face-to-face, make more prints, get less stressed out on assignments and to have more adventures.

Already this year, I have shot two major portfolio projects, one of which, [Hypersync Ice Climbing](#), is featured here in this issue of the Newsletter. The second will be announced soon. I also just got back from Washington D.C. and New York where I met with a dozen or more current clients, sponsors and potential new clients and showed my latest print portfolio. I have also just wrapped up another project for Elinchrom and PocketWizard, which will be live on the Elinchrom website just as this Newsletter goes out. In between all of these projects I have managed to squeeze several assignments.

I also managed to get in a week of “intentional” assisting with renowned celebrity photographer [Andrew Eccles](#), which is an extremely rare thing for me as I have never really assisted that much. I have known Andrew for a number of years now and I sought out Andrew on

purpose to learn some of his phenomenal lighting techniques and to further my own lighting and portraiture skills. Andrew didn't disappoint; he is one of the few working photographers I would consider a true “lighting master” and he is one of the very best portrait photographers anywhere. He also happens to be incredibly savvy when it comes to the business side of being a pro photographer, and my conversations with him were priceless. I cannot thank him enough for allowing me to jump in and assist him for a week.

Managing to stay on track with the goals I outlined at the start of this year has been a lot of work, especially given my busy schedule. But, I have to say it has already made 2015 a phenomenal year. I look forward to further expanding my skill set and seeing where this year leads in terms of assignments and adventures.

Opposite Page: A surfer on a relatively small wave at Sunset Beach on the north shore of Oahu, Hawaii. This image was made using a Nikon D4, a 16mm Fisheye lens and a CMT carbon fiber surf-style water housing.

Recent Clients: Apple, Nokia, Microsoft, Red Bull Photography, Red Bull, Elinchrom, National Geographic, Rolling Stone Magazine, Men's Fitness (UK & Australia), Powder Magazine and New Mexico Magazine.



Joining the Ilford Masters

Michael recently included in the Ilford masters Program



I am very happy to announce that I have become an Ilford Master and an ambassador to their great line of inkjet media. It is a great honor to be included among the Ilford Masters alongside such legends of the photography world as Sebastião Salgado, Eric Meola and Gregory Heisler.

Over the last few years, I have tested out dozens and dozens of baryta and fine art papers that I use for test prints, my print portfolios, fine art prints and for prints that I offer my clients. No other papers have impressed me as

much as the Ilford line of papers. Ilford Gold Fibre Silk is by far the best baryta-type paper I have ever printed on. It gives my images the impact I meant for them to have when I shot them, especially when printed large, and the color gamut of this paper is truly phenomenal. One of my other favorites, for those times when I want the fine art feel of a matte paper surface, is Ilford Gold Cotton Textured. It has a rich feel and a mysterious luminance that makes images glow as if lit from behind. My thanks to the folks at Ilford and the team at MAC Group in the USA for your support and confidence in me.

Hypersync Ice Climbing on Elinchrom.com

Michael's latest ice climbing images featured on the Elinchrom.com Blog

HyperSync Ice Climbing

Michael Clark

In 2011, while ice climbing in Ouray, Colorado at the Ouray Ice Park, I met Dawn Glanc, one of the strongest female ice climbers in the world. The following year, in 2012, I set up a portfolio shoot with Dawn where I lit the ice climb she was on from above with an Elinchrom Ranger RX Speed AS battery-powered pack and the Ranger A "Action" head.

The resulting images were very well received and I was able to license several of the images to a wide variety of high-end clients.

That same year, I also started playing with Hypersync flash technology. I first tried it out in Tahiti while shooting surfing. I was able to light a surfer on a wave while shooting from a boat nearly 100-feet (30m) away. There were many variables on that shoot, which didn't allow me to actually get the image I wanted, but the seed was planted in my brain for future experiments. With more experimentation, and a marked improvement in the Hypersync technology, I was able to reliably overpower daylight from 60 to 70 feet (20m) away using the Elinchrom Ranger RX Speed AS pack and the Ranger S head along with the high performance reflector.

"I was able to overpower daylight from 25m away using the Ranger RX"

Michael's To Go Set

Ranger RX Speed AS - S Head Set

High Performance Reflector 48" 26 cm

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Earlier this year, I worked with professional ice climber Dawn Glanc to create another set of lit ice climbing images in the Ouray Ice Park in Ouray, Colorado. This time around, I wanted to experiment with Hypersync strobe techniques. Hypersync is a technique that allows us to sync strobes at shutter speeds above the normal 1/250th flash sync speed, and in some cases all the way up to 1/8,000th second shutter speeds. Hypersync is only possible when using the PocketWizard ControlTL transceivers, namely the Mini TT1 and Flex TT5 wireless transceivers, and a compatible strobe system. For this shoot I used the 1,100 Watt/Second Elinchrom Ranger RX Speed AS battery-powered strobe along with the Ranger S flash heads and a high-performance reflector. This setup allowed me to shoot at a 1/1,000th second shutter speed and light up the 165-foot deep gorge in the middle of the day.

For the full story and behind the scenes images from this portfolio shoot head over to the Elinchrom blog where they have published a full article and a number of images. You can also see an extensive article, with a bit more detail about the shoot right here in this issue of the Newsletter starting on Page 22.

My thanks to Dawn Glanc and her sister Kristy for all their hard work on this photo shoot. These brand new ice climbing images are without a doubt some of the very best ice climbing images I have ever produced. Stay tuned for other photo shoots where I have used Hypersync to push the envelope of the impossible.

workshops

Photography Workshops

An overview of workshops and seminars with Michael Clark

Each year I teach several workshops on a variety of topics including adventure sports photography, big-wave surfing photography, digital workflow and artificial lighting. Below is a listing of the workshops I will be teaching and seminars I will be giving in 2015 and early 2016. For the full description of these workshops and seminars and to find out how to register, go to the [Workshops](#) page on my website.

Adventure Photography: A Multimedia Experience

Santa Fe, NM - May 11-14, 2015

Adventure photography can be an adventure in itself, involving breathtaking locations, extreme conditions, and working with elite athletes in risky situations. It requires a host of skills, including technical excellence with the camera, familiarity with a sport, and the ability to be mindful of your goals and safety at all times. Capturing motion footage and still images adds even more complexity and equipment.

During our five days together, we work with incredible athletes in easy-to-access locations to create stellar still images and compelling motion footage. We concentrate on creating unique images of rock climbing, whitewater kayaking, mountain biking, and trail running. Working with elite athletes and using Northern New Mexico's

breathtaking landscape as our backdrop, we explore innovative ways to capture the essence of each sport and location.

Topics covered include research and preparation; composition and camera angles; equipment selection and utilization; use of natural light, fill flash, and battery-powered strobes; autofocus techniques; and the all-important time management. Classroom time involves daily editing and critiquing sessions, as well as one-on-one meetings with Michael. In addition, Michael shares his experiences in—and insights into—the adventure marketplace, elaborating on career development, portfolios, and how to photograph for stock, editorial, and commercial clients.

To register for this workshop please visit the [Santa Fe Workshops](#) website.

Mentor Series Photo Trek – Grand Tetons

Jackson, WY - June 25 – 28, 2015

I will be leading this Photo Trek with fellow photographers Layne Kennedy and Bob Smith. A message from Bob Smith: "Nature photography has been my passion for the past 20 years. Our subjects will include iconic landscapes along with huge scenes of the West." Highlights of the workshop will include sunrise shoots at Glacier

View Turnout and Schwabachers Landing, where you will witness the mountain peaks and early morning light perfectly reflected in the glass-like surface of the Snake River. Photograph the iconic barns and homesteads at Mormon Row and views of the Cathedral Group of peaks from the Chapel of the Transfiguration. We will be on the lookout for moose, elk, deer, eagles and American bison at Jenny Lake, and beavers tending their dams at Oxbow Bend.

A visit to a local ranch will provide an exclusive opportunity to photograph fly fishermen and ranchers with their horses and other livestock, as well as cowboys in their typical gear. Experience the quiet beauty and history of one of our nation's most cherished national parks and emblems of the American Frontier. For more information and to register for this photo trek please visit the [Mentor Series](#) website. Use Code "MC50" for a \$50 discount on this workshop

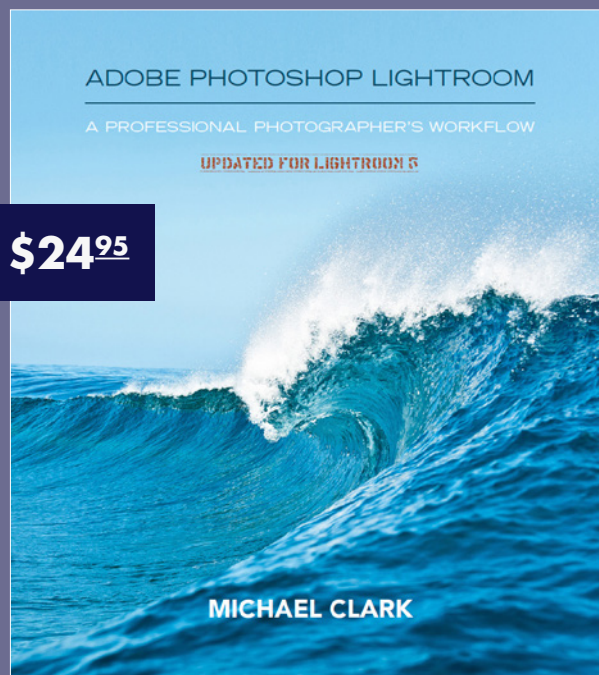
Rio Chama: Capture to Print

Santa Fe, NM - August 27 - August 31, 2015

Ready for a different kind of photographic adventure? Some of Northern New Mexico's most breathtaking and dynamic landscapes are along the Chama River, which winds its way through Abiquiú country, a favorite area for artists and photographers including Georgia O'Keeffe, Ansel Adams, Laura Gilpin, and Elliott Porter.

Explore your creativity while expanding your visual and technical skills as you learn about the natural

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The Adobe Photoshop Lightroom Workflow, a 435-page e-book, is a workshop in book form. Updated for Adobe Lightroom 5 and Photoshop CS6, this e-book was completely re-written and presents a workflow that can be adapted by any photographer, professional or amateur. I can honestly say that I have not seen any other book on the market today that includes as much detailed and comprehensive information as this e-book does on digital workflow.

To purchase *Adobe Photoshop Lightroom: A Professional Photographer's Workflow* click on the website link below. Payments can be made with any major credit card or via your PayPal account. For more information on the workflow and exactly what is covered go to Michael's website.

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and cultural landscape of this area during a three-day, 33-mile river trip. We begin in Chama and finish near Abiquiú. Our guides from New Mexico River Adventures provide all the necessary equipment, including setting up camp and preparing our meals. Each night's camp is located right on the river's edge, which presents excellent opportunities for hiking as well as exploring hot springs, homesteads, ancient Indian ruins, and dinosaur tracks.

Our final two days together take place in The Workshops state-of-the-art digital lab, where we process and print our images. Michael reviews, discusses, and guides your image processing workflow, placing special emphasis on color management and archival digital printing using both Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Lightroom. Participants enhance their understanding of the photographic process from capture to output. From spending long days in the field capturing the dramatic beauty of your surroundings to seeing your work come to life in print, you savor an invigorating and well-rounded photographic experience.

For more information and to register for this workshop visit the [Santa Fe Workshops website](#).

Adventure Sports Photography

Telluride, CO - September 29 - October 1, 2015

Adventure photography can be an adventure in itself, involving breathtaking locations, extreme conditions, and working with elite athletes in risky situations. It requires a host of skills, including technical excellence with the camera, familiarity with a sport, and the ability to be mindful of your goals and your safety at all times. In this three-day workshop, we will work with incredible ath-

letes in easy to access locations to create stellar images.

Designed for intermediate to experienced photographers, this workshop concentrates on creating unique images of rock climbing, mountain biking and trail running. Working with elite athletes and Telluride's incredible landscape as our backdrop, we explore innovative ways to capture the essence of each sport. Topics covered during the workshop include research and preparation, composition and camera angles, equipment selection and use, using natural light, fill flash, and battery-powered strobes, and auto-focus techniques. We also learn how to work with athletes that are taking risks and how to manage that risk.

Classroom time includes daily editing and critiquing sessions. In addition, Michael shares his insights and experiences in the adventure marketplace, including career development, portfolios, and how to shoot for stock, editorial, and commercial clients.

WHAT IS INCLUDED: Photographic guiding and instruction, critiques, post-processing instruction, models is included as well as some transportation. Lodging and meals are not included.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW: Working knowledge of digital workflow and manual mode on your digital SLR camera.

EQUIPMENT: Please bring a laptop, editing software camera and lenses, and external hard drives to back up your images.

For more information on this visit the [Telluride Photo Festival website](#).



Cerro Torre looming over a section of the Patagonia Ice Cap in southern Argentina. On the Patagonia Ice Field traverse we will pop out from behind Cerro Torre on the least few days as we head back to El Chalten. This will be an incredible adventure and I hope you can join us.

Across the Patagonian Ice Field – Life on the Ice

Argentina - January 25 – February 4, 2016

As far as we know, a photographic workshop has never before been held on the Patagonian Ice Field. We are extremely thrilled to announce this first-of-its-kind expedition for photographers. You have surely seen thousands of images of the iconic mountains Cerro Torre and Fitz Roy. But how many photos have you seen shot from the other side of these mountains? That's right – not many. Yet the views from the ice cap are far more striking than those from the easily accessible viewpoints by the road. The Patagonian Ice Field is the third largest mass of ice on Earth and is a virtually untouched remote wilderness.

The adventure will be led by two highly experienced mountain guides and the American outdoor photographer Michael Clark. Michael's work is used by many notable organizations. The expedition is eleven days long, and you will spend a week of this trekking across the ice cap and photographing the stunning Marconi glacier, Cerro Torre, Fitz Roy and numerous other majestic peaks rising straight from the ice. The experience may be similar to landing on the Moon, in that the landscape will be unlike anything that you have photographed before. This workshop is limited to six participants. At the end of this expedition, we will spend an entire day recovering in El Chalten, working up images and critiquing the images created on this expedition.

This is a strenuous trek in a harsh environment. No technical skills or previous glacier walking experience are required, but participants must have camping and trekking experience prior to starting the expedition. You should be fit to hike with a 50 pound (25 kg) backpack for 6-8 hours per day (unless you wish to hire a porter and trek just with your camera gear). For a detailed itinerary and much more information on this exciting workshop visit the [Vertical Shot Expedition](#) website.

DISCOUNT CODE: CLARK400: Available only to Newsletter subscribers for the next 30-days, get a \$400 discount on this workshop, using the code CLARK400 while filling out the booking form.

Workshop Testimonials

"Michael set an incredibly high bar for his workshop. He gave 110%, covered a broad range of topics and did an outstanding job." - Chris Council, Adventure Photography Workshop, Summer 2010

"Thanks for running such a great workshop. I couldn't have chosen better photo shoot locations, and the post-shoot critiques were invaluable. It's the first time I've had my work reviewed, and I learned a ton from each session. While I didn't go into the workshop expecting to pick-up too many marketing and business tips, I've come out of last week inspired to set-up my photo website in earnest." - Jeff Hylok, Adventure Photography Workshop, Summer 2010

"I just finished Michael Clark's Adventure Photography Workshop at the Santa Fe Workshops in April 2013. I had a terrific time with the group of people - one from China,

another from Seattle, another from Wyoming, me from Michigan - you get the picture that we came from everywhere. We came because of the Santa Fe Workshop's reputation of presenting an intense learning experience guided by fantastic instructors. We got both. Michael Clark really knows his stuff and has a lot of excess energy, which he focused on us, and he can also teach. He read our skills and weaknesses quickly and went to work to improve each of us technically. He sorted out our individual goals, even when we couldn't really articulate them. Then he gave us plenty of time to address those goals and ask question after question after question. The rough environments in which we photographed were great fun to explore. Couldn't be better." - Tania Evans

"Thanks again for such a terrific workshop. I have taken one other two-day Lightroom workshop, but your's is the best!" - Vance Thompson, Lightroom Workshop, 2011

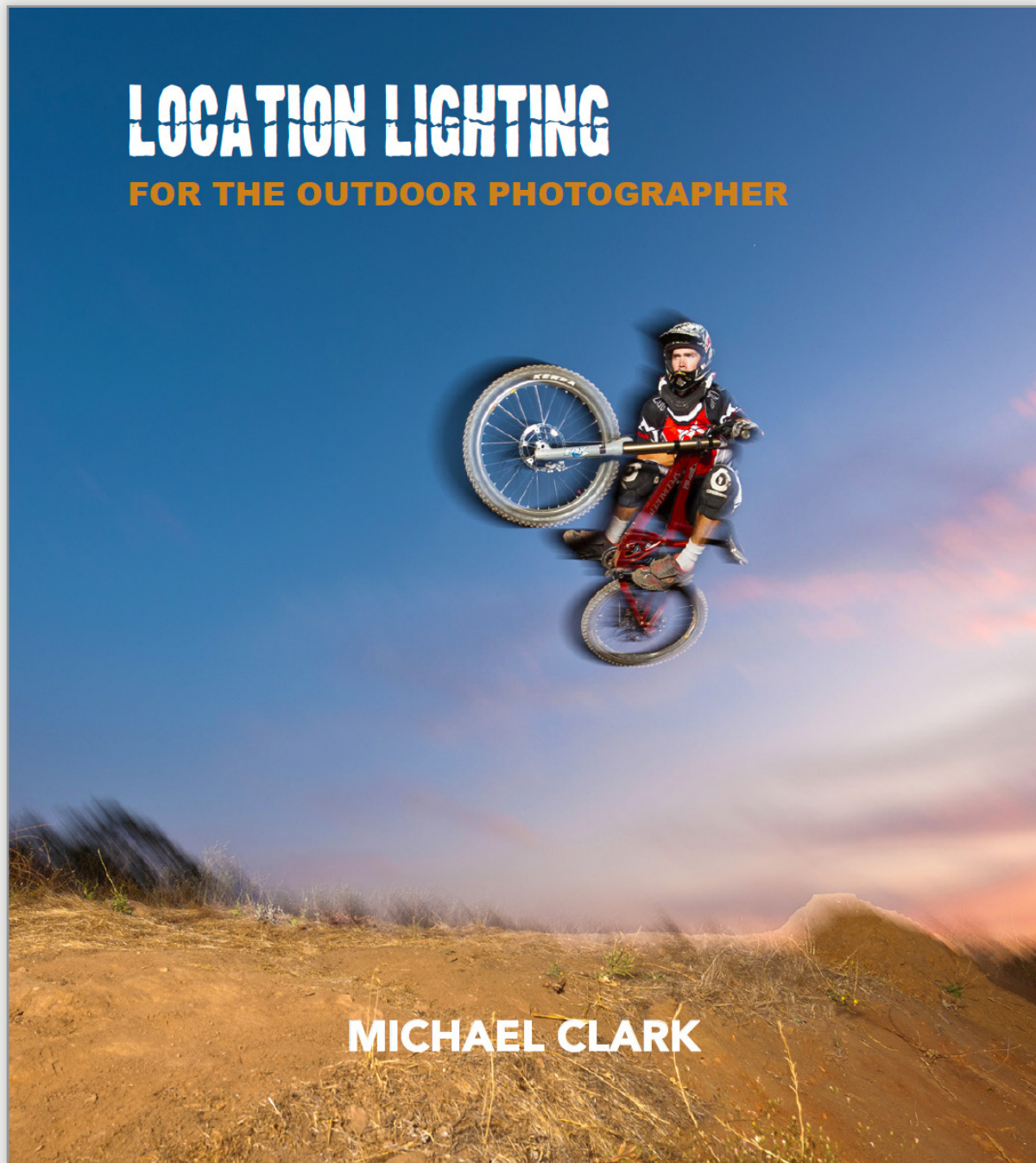
"I really enjoyed the surfing [photography] workshop! It was great on every level. I really can't thank you enough and I hope to take another of your workshops in the near future." - Ben Reed, 2013 Surfing Photo Workshop

"Your workshop at Santa Fe was too good. The level of expertise that shared was top-notch and I hope to repeat this experience again. Thanks for such a great workshop!" - Participant in the 2008 Balloon Fiesta workshop taught by Andy Biggs and myself.

For more information on my upcoming workshops, or to read more testimonials, please visit the [Workshops](#) page on my website. Hope to see you at a workshop here soon! If you have any questions about any of my workshops please don't hesitate to call or email me.

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equipment review

Introducing the Elinchrom ELB 400

A review of Elinchrom's latest battery-powered strobe

DISCLAIMER: I am sponsored by Elinchrom and have received some of my lighting gear as part of that sponsorship. Regardless of my sponsorship, I look for the best equipment that suits my needs and I was already using Elinchrom lighting equipment before receiving any gear as part of my sponsorship. I was not paid to test out the ELB 400 and give feedback to Elinchrom and I was not paid to create and post this review of the ELB 400.

Over the last few months, I have had the honor of testing out the new Elinchrom ELB 400 before it was announced. The ELB 400 is an updated version of the venerable and well-loved Elinchrom Quadra Hybrid RX. Elinchrom has simplified their naming convention to make all of their product names more uniform. The “ELB” portion stands for “Elinchrom Battery” and the 400 signifies that it is a 400 Watt/second (Ws) strobe. With this update, Elinchrom has added quite a few new and exciting features into this lightweight strobe, which in my mind makes it one of the most versatile and advanced strobes anywhere.

Before we get into this review, a little background on my experience with the Quadras, which I have used since they came out almost six years ago. I currently have both the Elinchrom Li-Ion Hybrid Quadra and the first generation Lead-Gel Quadra and both have served me very well.



I have taken the Quadras to the extremely humid jungles of the Amazon, on ice climbing shoots where they sat in freezing snowy conditions for hours and I have used them in Patagonia in some wild, wet weather. They have survived it all and my units barely even have a scratch on them. They have also been incredibly reliable. I have never had one of my Quadras go down on me, ever.

The reason that so many adventure sports photographers use Elinchrom strobes is that they are the most weather-proof strobes on the market – and they can deal with a fair amount of abuse and continue to keep on firing. As in the image on the next page, a little rain or snow isn't a big deal with the ELB 400. In fact, ten or so years ago, when



While on this shoot with the new ELB400, I gave it the full snow test. As you can see in this image, there was quite a bit of snow and moisture sitting on the pack. Here there are water droplets all over the side of the power pack. The ELB 400 didn't miss a beat and reaffirmed my belief that these the Elinchrom battery-powered strobes are the most weatherproof units on the market.

the Elinchrom Rangers were developed, Elinchrom buried units in the snow for five days or more at a ski race and they continued working the entire time. I know that Elinchrom doesn't like me to say that these units are water resistant but in my experience they can deal with a lot.

The first thing you will notice about the ELB 400 is the new OLED display on top of the power pack (see the image on Page 18). The new OLED display is very easy to read and shows just about every bit of information you

could ever want. It also makes diving into the custom settings and menus a much simpler and easier task than with any previous version of the Quadra.

Aside from the new display and a cleaner, easier to understand button layout on top of the pack, the build quality and form of the ELB is reminiscent of the Quadra Hybrid RX Li-Ion. I know for many that the amount of plastic in the flash heads was a point of concern with the Quadras. The flash heads for the ELB 400 are practically



Expert skier John Fullbright skiing at the Taos Valley Ski Area near Taos, New Mexico. Shot with the Elinchrom ELB 400 and the Pro Flash Head. Since I wasn't using Hypersync with the Pro Head, I instead opted to create a motion blur of John flying by my position. Image Data: Nikon D4, Nikkor 24-70mm f/2.8 lens @ 24mm, ISO 100, 1/250th sec at f/7.1.

identical, though the cables that connect the flash head to the power pack have been slightly refined. After traipsing all over the world with my Quadras for the past five years, I have yet to damage a flash head. I am not crazy hard on my gear, but I don't pamper it either. I love the lightweight nature of the flash heads and when they are mounted onto a light modifier like a softbox they are really easy for an assistant to hold and the flash head itself seems to mold into the light modifier.

To test out the ELB 400, I headed up to the Taos Ski Valley, where they had received over four feet of fresh powder, to shoot some skiing with my buddy John Fullbright, who is an expert skier and whitewater kayaker. I had the ELB 400 along with a Pro Flash Head with me on this shoot. It was a bluebird sunny day at the Taos ski area, which meant with only 424 Ws of light output we headed into the trees not only for the shade but also for the bottomless powder. The ELB 400 easily lit up John in the

trees (as can be seen on the previous page). The amount of light output these little units can generate is incredible, especially when considering the weight.

One thing you will notice about this ski image, which I have to say isn't a phenomenal ski image by any means, is that John is blurred in the frame. This is because I had the Pro Head, which has a t0.5 flash duration of only 1/1,200 second at full power (424 Ws). Because of this limitation, I chose to create a motion blur of John as he skied by my position. If I had used the Action Head, I would have had a much faster t0.5 flash duration of 1/2,800 second, which would have frozen John's movement completely. And if I had used two Action Heads, one each plugged into the A and B ports, I could have gotten an amazing t0.5 flash duration of 1/4,000th second at full power. Note that for this shoot, with the Pro Heads, I could have also used the PocketWizard ControlTL transceivers to trigger the ELB 400 in Hypersync mode at a shutter speed up to 1/4000th second with the Pro Heads, but I didn't have those with me for this shoot.

I also shot a few portraits of John (See image on Page 3). Since John wasn't moving for the portraits, I could easily freeze his motion and the images are tack sharp. Also of note, since I was able to get the flash head closer to John, I also had to turn the power output down to less than half power. At full power, I could have easily overpowered the sun in this scenario by moving the flash head in closer and cranking up the power.

Along with the new display on top of the pack, Elinchrom has also added some very advanced flash modes and extended the battery life. Here is a list of some of the exciting new features of the ELB 400:

OLED Display: The new OLED display on top of the ELB 400 makes it very easy to see what is going on with the unit. Changing power settings is much faster and very responsive. Diving into the menus is easy and very straightforward when it comes to changing settings. I didn't even need a manual to figure out the custom settings menus. Hurray for not having to pull out the manual to change custom settings!

Extended Battery Life: At full power, the ELB 400 will give you 350 flashes on a fully charged battery. At minimum power it can put out up to 6,000 flashes on a fully charged battery.

Faster Recycling Times: The ELB 400 recycles at full power in 1.6 seconds, almost a half second faster than the Quadra Hybrid RX. At lower power settings the recycling times are much faster — nearly instantaneous.

424 Watt/seconds (Ws): The new ELB 400 actually puts out 424 Ws of light.

Strobo Mode: The ELB 400 has a "stroboscopic" mode where it can fire up to 10 flashes per second (10 Hz) within a single frame. For the best results, you will need to use a lower power setting in a dark location and use the Action flash head, which has a very short flash duration to stop the movement of the subject. On Page 19 is an example of the stroboscopic effect, created using the Elinchrom ELC Pro HD strobes, which have the same Stobo Mode capabilities. For this image I had the shutter open for 0.8 second at ISO 50 and let the flash fire five times in that period.

Sequence Mode: This mode allows you to sequentially



A look at the new OLED display on the top of the Elinchrom ELB 400 battery pack. As you can see the new display simplifies the layout and makes the ELB 400 a hundred times easier to configure. I found that I could figure out the OLED display and how to move through the menu options and select different configurations extremely easy. This is a huge improvement to the older Quadras and one of the main reasons to upgrade.

trigger up to 20 separate ELB 400 packs so that you can shoot at a high framing rate, like say 11 fps with a Nikon D4. I have yet to try this out but I am very much looking forward to working with this option.

Delayed Mode: This mode allows you to shoot in a “second curtain” or “rear curtain sync” mode with cameras (like Canon cameras) that don’t have this feature built into some of their camera models. For Nikon users, this mode isn’t necessary.

Two different Flash Heads to choose from: Elinchrom offers the Pro Head and an Action Head. The Pro Head is the standard flash head while the Action Head offers significantly faster flash durations. If you are trying to stop the movement of a subject you are better off with the

Action Head. If you are using Hypersync techniques, then the Pro Head is the way to go.

Easy to use new Strobe Port Closures: The new port closures on the top of the power pack are much easier to open and close than the old screw top closures and also stay out of the way while attaching a flash head cable.

Fast Flash Durations: With two Action Heads plugged into the unit you can get flash durations as short as 1/4000th second (t0.5) at full power. With one Action Head in the B Socket you can get down to 1/5,700th second (t0.5). While 1/4000th second flash duration may not sound that fast realize this is at full power. Most other units out there (like the Profoto B1) are down around 1/1000th second (t0.5) at full power, which is not fast



An example of the Strobe mode on the Elinchrom ELB 400. This image was created using the Elinchrom ELC Pro HD strobes, which have the same Stobo Mode capabilities as the ELB 400. For this image I had the shutter open for 0.8 second at ISO 50 and let the flash fire five times in that period.

enough to freeze motion as can be seen in my ski image of John Fullbright on Page 16.

Consistent Color Temperatures: As with all Elinchrom strobes they are extremely accurate and vary only plus or minus 150 °K from flash to flash.

Hypersync: Using the Pro Flash Head and the PocketWizard ControlTL system you can shoot at much higher sync speeds with the ELB 400 than normal. With my Nikon

D4 and D800, I can get up to 1/4000th second shutter speeds using the Hypersync function, which really comes in handy when trying to overpower daylight with only a 400 Ws strobe in those situations where you can't move the flash head close to the subject—as when shooting adventure sports and your athlete is launching off a cliff.

With so many new features, and advanced capabilities, the new ELB 400 is bound to be popular. It is the most advanced battery powered strobe that I have used and

certainly the most versatile as well. After testing this unit out, I will certainly upgrade my older Quadras. Shooting adventure sports, the key features for my work are the lightweight yet durable construction, the fast flash durations at full power and the ability to use Hypersync. Because the ELB 400 offers two different flash heads, that opens up a lot more options when it comes to creating the image in mind. I just pop on the Pro heads if I want to shoot using Hypersync or I can choose the Action heads to freeze the motion. Of course, it is also awesome to have the new Strobo mode, an easy to use display on top of the pack, faster recycling times and 350 full power pops on such a small rig. I still can't believe we can get 350 full power pops out of this unit and it weighs only 6.02 lbs (2.7 Kg). That is incredible.



A look at the new port closures that are much easier to open and close and still maintain the weatherproof sensibilities of the Quadras.

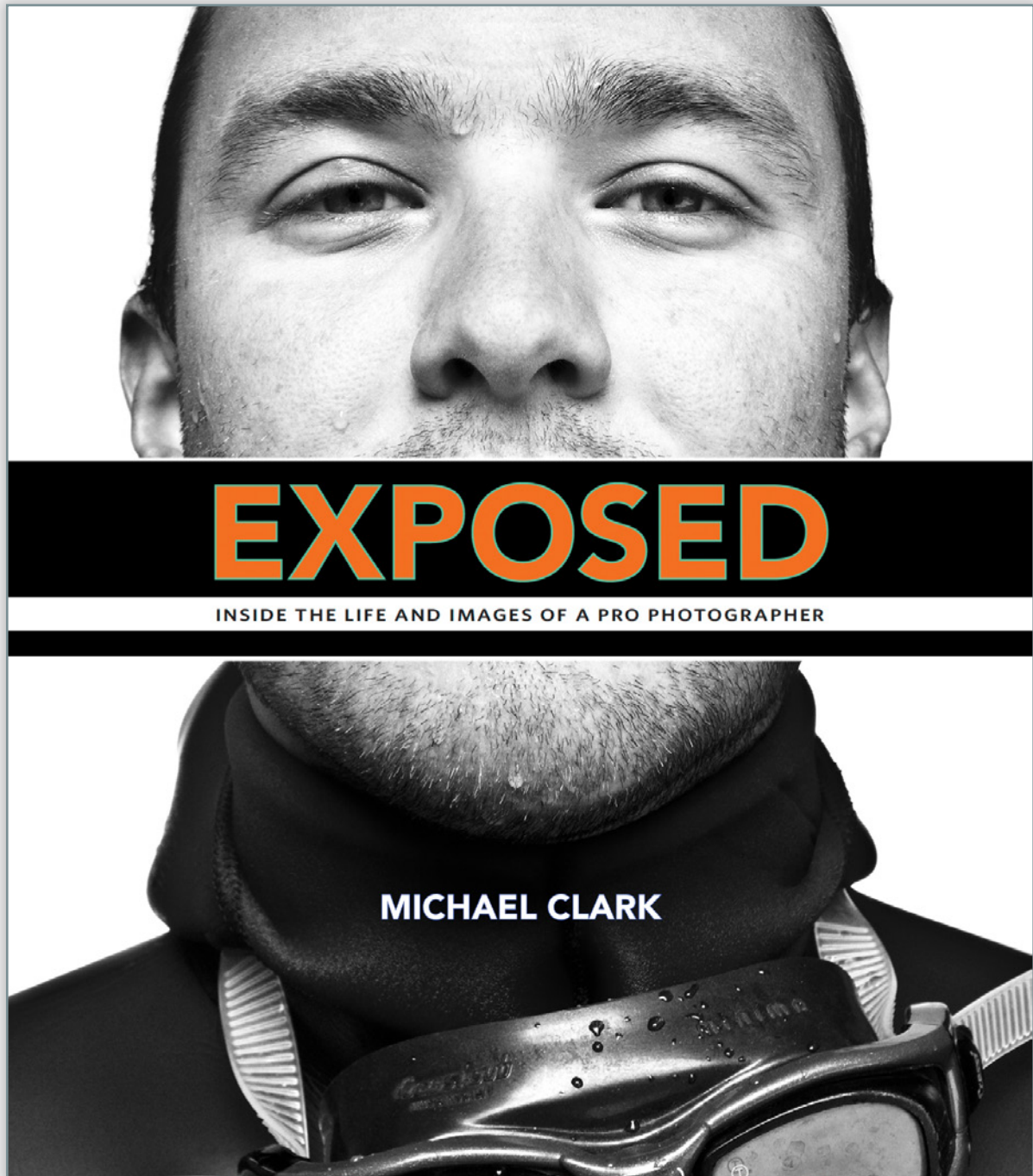
On top of all these new features, Elinchrom still makes, in my view, the best modifiers in the business. There is a reason you see so many Elinchrom Octabanks on other manufacturer's strobes. With the addition of an adapter, the ELB 400 can use any light modifier Elinchrom makes. This is a big reason to go with Elinchrom strobes, since they are optimized to be used with their light modifiers.

Lastly, I know another manufacturer (Profoto) has been making a big deal out of the fact that their latest battery-powered flash is an all in one style monobloc design with no cords. I am very happy that Elinchrom has chosen to keep the separate pack and head design with the ELB 400. I own a few mono bloc strobes and while they are great in the studio, once you put them up high it is a pain to have to lower the flash head and modifier to change a few settings on the back of the unit. I realize that many settings can be changed on the transceiver on top of the camera but in all cases there are some settings that can't be changed anywhere but on the monobloc. Monobloc designs are also quite a bit heavier when it comes time to mount them on a light modifier, like inside an Elinchrom Octabank. I wouldn't dare mount my monobloc strobe inside an Octabank as it would stress the mount quite a bit and be a beast to lock down. With the separate power pack and head design of the ELB 400, and especially the lightweight nature of the Pro and Action flash heads, they are so lightweight that you can get away without even using a stand and they don't require a big, hefty light stand to put them on. Since this is meant to be a fast and light strobe system, this is a critical fact that you may not think about when standing in the camera shop debating which brand to go with.

My thanks to Elinchrom for allowing me to test out the ELB 400 and to give them feedback. For more information on the ELB 400 visit the [Elinchrom](#) website, which has also been completely redesigned. As a bonus, visit my blog for an in-depth comparison of the [Elinchrom ELB 400](#) and the [Profoto B1](#). The aim of this comparison is to cut through all of the marketing speak and compare the features for real world usage. There is also a lot of good information in the Comments of that post as well.

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on assignment:

HYPERVISING ICE CLIMBING

Dawn Glanc climbing a WI 5 ice pillar in the Ouray Ice Park in Ouray, Colorado with her sister, Kristy Glanc, belaying at the bottom of the gorge.



In 2011, while ice climbing in Ouray, Colorado at the Ouray Ice Park, I met Dawn Glanc, one of the strongest female ice climbers in the world. The following year, in 2012, I set up a portfolio shoot with Dawn where I lit the ice climb she was on from above with an Elinchrom Ranger RX Speed AS battery-powered pack and the Ranger A “Action” head. The resulting [images](#) were very well received and I was able to license several of the images to a wide variety of high-end clients.

That same year, I also started playing with Hypersync flash technology. Hypersync is a flash technique that allows for certain cameras and strobes to sync at shutter speeds much higher than the normal 1/250th second flash sync speed. To achieve this a flash head with a relatively slow flash duration (in the 1/800th to 1/1000th second to 0.5 range) is used along with the PocketWizard ControlTL transceivers, namely the Mini TT1 and the Flex TT5 transceivers. The [Elinchrom Ranger RX Speed AS battery-powered strobe](#) with the [Ranger S Flash heads](#) are a perfect option for this technique. Using the Rangers and the PocketWizard [Flex TT5 transceivers](#), I can easily overpower daylight from 60-feet away, or farther, at shutter speeds up to 1/4000th second with my Nikon D4 or D800.

The explanation of what is actually happening when using Hypersync is a bit complex. Basically, the transceiver is timing the flash sync so that when the shutter slit opens and closes it does so during the brightest part of the flash burst, which in this case is longer than the actual shutter speed. So, in effect, you are using a slice of the light emitted by the strobe to light your subject. The ability to use a much higher shutter speed allows us to darken the background and therefore overpower daylight. As

you might expect, if I am using an 1,100 Watt/second strobe like the Elinchrom Rangers, when using Hypersync at full power on the Rangers, I am not using all 1,100 Watt/seconds of the light emitted by the strobe because I am only using a slice of that light. When using Hypersync, dialing in your exposure settings can be tricky because a light meter would read the entire flash output not the slice of light actually used. To get a correct exposure using Hypersync, I adjust the flash output and the exposure settings until the histogram is lined up just right on the camera’s rear LCD. I have heard some photographers call Hypersync “voodoo” lighting because it requires a bit of experimentation. And I will confess, it does require some experimentation and the right gear to make it work, as I will discuss. But in my experience, it is fairly easy to figure out and when you get it dialed in, it can help to create stunning images as shown here.

I first tried using Hypersync with my Elinchrom battery-powered strobes in Tahiti while shooting surfing. I was able to light a surfer on a wave while shooting from a boat nearly 100-feet away. There were many variables on that shoot, which didn’t allow me to actually get the image I wanted, but the seed was planted in my brain for future experiments. With more experimentation, and a marked improvement in the Hypersync technology, I was able to reliably overpower daylight from 60 to 70 feet away using the Elinchrom Ranger RX Speed AS pack and the Ranger S head along with the high performance reflector. Having gotten Hypersync to work reliably, my mind started spinning with ideas for possible shoots. One of the first thoughts I had was to go back and shoot ice climbing with Dawn, but this time using Hypersync.

Fast forward a few years, to this January, when I had



some free time for another portfolio shoot. I planned another ice climbing shoot with Dawn in the Ouray Ice Park and I was hoping to improve on my previous outing. I took with me the trusty Elinchrom Ranger RX Speed AS pack and the Ranger S head this time, along with the PocketWizard ControlTL transceivers that make Hypersync possible. Note that I also used the PocketWizard [Power ST4](#) adapter with the Elinchrom Rangers so that they can communicate effectively for the Hypersync setup.

After shooting with Dawn in a few different areas of the park, I set up the Ranger and a flash head on the bridge that spans the gorge above the ice climb. I set up the flash head and the high performance reflector so that it created a shaft of light on the intended ice climb. I dialed in the exposure settings by using the histogram on the back of my camera. Having tested out my settings the day before, I was able to get near-perfect illumination of the ice climb in the first shot. Once Dawn and her sister Kristy rappelled into the gorge, it was go time. I moved around and shot from various angles above and to the side of the climb from the opposite side of the gorge. I also shot with telephoto, standard and ultra-wide angle lenses so that I had every possible variation.

For these images, I shot at around 1/1,000th second at either f/5.6 or f/5 at ISO 400 for the entire shoot. With the shaded nature of ice climbing, the Hypersync setup was reliably lighting the entire climb all the way to the bottom of the gorge 165 feet down. I shot over 230 images as Dawn made her way up the dead vertical ice climb. Because I was shooting at such a high shutter speed, this allowed me to move around much more easily and capture a greater variety of images than on my previous outing, where I had to use a tripod. It also meant that

I did not have to worry about sharpness issues with the Nikon D800 that can occur at around 1/125th second, and even up to the standard flash sync of 1/250th second, because of motion blur caused from camera shake. The upshot of all this is that the final images are incredibly sharp.

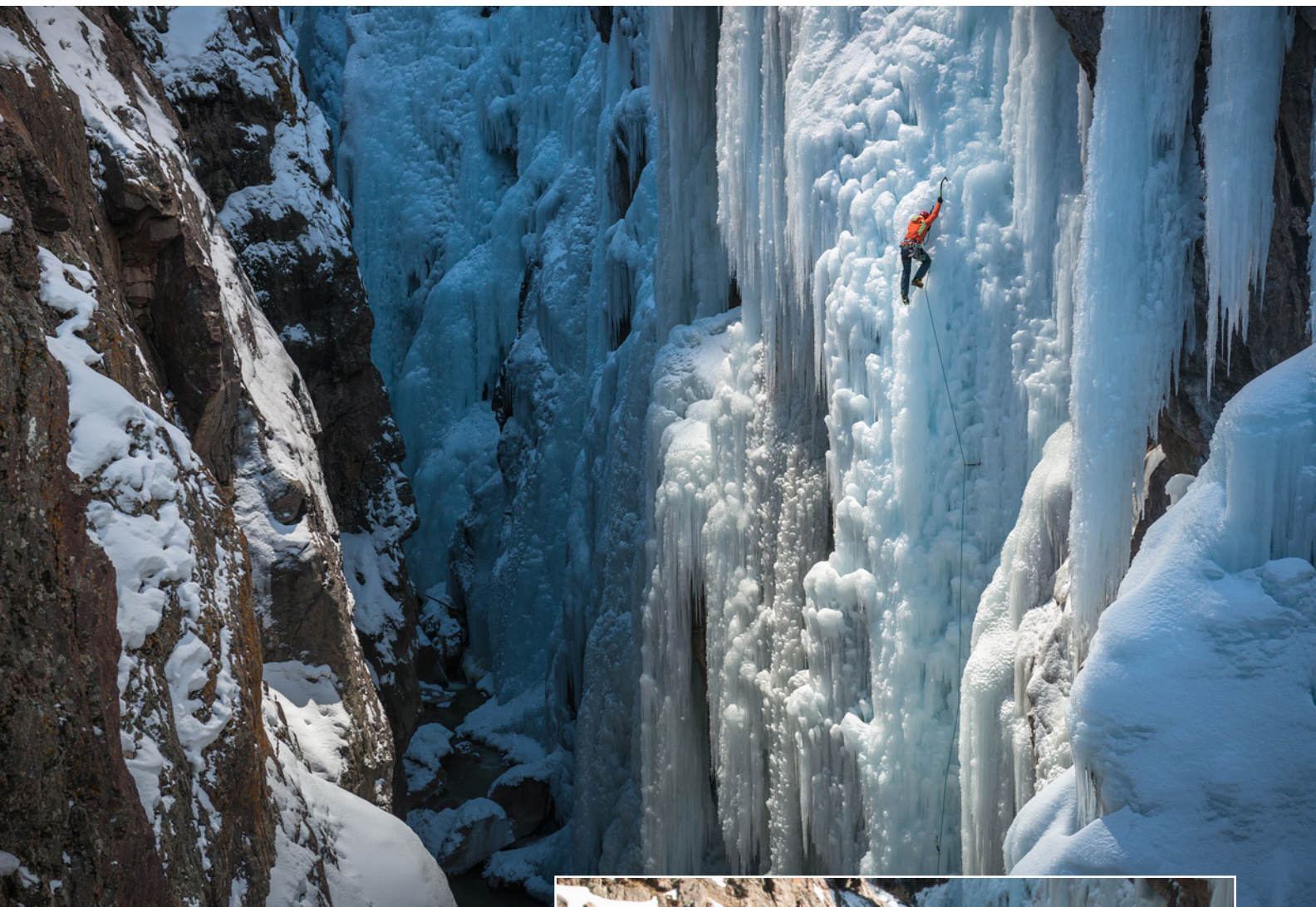
As a side note, I would expect the high performance reflector to be a very hard light and generally it is, but in this instance, with the light bouncing into the ice and flying all over the place the light quality was softened quite a bit. The opposite side of the gorge was also lit from the light bouncing off the ice and acted as a fill light. On other shoots, where I have used the high performance reflector, I am constantly amazed at how nice the light quality generated by this metal reflector can be and especially how subtle the light fall off is towards the edges of the beam.

In the end, the results were stunning. I can say unequivocally that these are the best ice climbing images I have ever created and they wouldn't exist without the Hypersync abilities of the Elinchrom Ranger. I don't think there is any other strobe on the market that has the power and the ability to overpower daylight (or in this case the open shade) as the Ranger Hypersync setup did that day. This shoot has inspired me to try applying Hypersync flash to many other hard to illuminate sports. Hypersync has opened up a whole new world in terms of what can be lit—especially without a Hollywood movie budget. I am very excited to see how far I can take it by creating new and exciting images that have never been done before. My thanks to Dawn Glanc and her sister Kristy Glanc for putting in all the hard work to help make this shoot a reality. Also, thanks to Martina Zandonella for the behind the scenes images.



Page 25: Another shot of Dawn Glanc climbing a WI 5 ice pillar in the Ouray Ice Park in Ouray, Colorado. Above: Dawn Glanc climbing around the base of a dead-vertical WI 5 ice pillar just before stepping onto the steep ice in the Ouray Ice Park in Ouray, Colorado. Right: A behind the scenes image of me setting up the strobe and dialing in the lighting on the upper bridge at the Ouray Ice park. My thanks to Martina Zandonella for this behind the scenes image.





Above: A shot of Dawn Glanc higher up on the climb and shot from farther down canyon in the Ouray Ice Park in Ouray, Colorado. Right: A behind the scenes image of me photographing Dawn from one of the viewing stations across the gorge at the Ouray Ice park. Image by Martina Zandonella.



Right: A behind the scenes image of me photographing Dawn under the upper bridge at the Ouray Ice park. Image by Martina Zandonella. Below: A shot of Dawn Glanc as she gets onto the ice pillar shot from a lower angle in the Ouray Ice Park in Ouray, Colorado.



portfolio





Traversing the Patagonian Ice Cap

Introducing a new breed of expedition-style Workshops for 2016

Earlier this year I was approached by [Vertical Shot Expeditions](#). They inquired if I would be interested in leading an expedition to traverse the Patagonian Ice Cap in 2016. Having spent a fair bit of time in Torres del Paine National Park in southern Chile, and having seen the ice cap several times, traversing the ice cap has been on my “bucket” list for some time. Hence, when I got the email about leading this expedition it was a no brainer. I signed on immediately.

This expedition also happens to be a photography workshop of sorts as we are looking for six adventurous souls to come along with me and two guides (who know the ice cap very well). We already have a few folks who have signed on. This is a new breed of workshops, where participants will have a bonified adventure while learning about photography. Phenomenal images will be out there all around us at all hours of the day and no matter what happens, we will come back with insanely cool images.

On this expedition, we will have eleven days to really explore the craft of photography in-depth as we traverse the ice cap. Unlike many of my workshops that explore the world of adventure sports for four or five days, this workshop will be an adventure in and of itself and an extensive time to really put into action a wide variety of photographic techniques. If you have ever wanted to follow me along on a real-world shoot this is your chance.

As the Vertical Shot Expeditions website says, “this is a strenuous trek in a harsh environment. No technical skills or previous glacier walking experience are required, but it is a must to have camping and trekking experience prior to starting the expedition. You should be fit to hike with a 50 pound (25 kg) backpack for 6-8 hours per day.”

This expedition will be the most realistic workshop experience I have ever been a part of. Every possible issue that comes up on my assignments will come into play on this trip, including camping in remote regions, dealing with cold, wet conditions, making wise choices about camera and outdoor gear as well as thinking critically about the images while out on an extensive shoot. Once we get back to civilization, we also have a full day scheduled to edit and work up images and critique them as well. I predict this will be the most exciting photo expedition I have ever been a part of. If you are in shape and have the time, I hope you can join us on this incredible adventure. For all the glorious details check out the [Vertical Shot Expedition](#) website. Please note that Vertical Shot Expeditions is a European Company and all payments will go through them. Please email me if you have any questions.

\$400 DISCOUNT CODE — CLARK400: Available only to Newsletter subscribers until May 29, 2015, get a \$400 discount on this workshop, using the code CLARK400 when filling out the booking form.



A Diversified Strategy

by Michael Clark

To put it bluntly, a diversified income has allowed me to have a career in photography. Without the diversification built into my business from early on, I would not be in business today. I can't say I planned for a diversified income stream. It just happened that way. I was working every angle that came my way and, as it turned out, I had a knack for writing and teaching and I liked to shoot a wide variety of images to keep my career interesting. Within five years, I was shooting assignments for a wide range of clients in the outdoor industry, producing stock photography, teaching a few workshops each year and also producing this Newsletter, which led to writing several books later on in my career.

The main focus is always shooting assignments and creating top-notch images. I will admit, when you have so many different revenue streams that need to be managed it can take time away from the main focus of creating images. For myself, I have to keep everything else subservient to producing new work. If I get to the point where I am teaching too many workshops, I cut back on the number I commit to. Stock photography was once a great way to make a little extra money on the side but for most of us the money just isn't there like it used to be. These days, selling fine art prints and licensing images directly to clients seems to have picked up the slack. Having a diversified income means I can have a few of these revenue streams dry up and I don't have to freak out.

For those looking to diversify their income, I would suggest looking into revenue streams that will support your images and not be a distraction when clients come to your website. For example, with my workshops, I make sure that I don't commit to more than four or five workshops in any given year. I don't want workshops to get in the way of my assignment work and I certainly don't want clients to think that I am making a living from teaching workshops instead of working as a photographer. In a similar vein, all of the books I have written support my legitimacy as an adventure sports photographer. Hence, they are not a distraction from my other work and they were a spectacular promo piece that I sent out to 250 of my best clients or clients I wanted to work with—and those book promos got me a lot of assignments.

In the emerging "freelance" economy, and as the photo industry continues to change, a diversified income is now more important than it has ever been for professional photographers. In the very near future, I can see that only a select few photographers at the top of their genre will be able to make a full time living. The rest will have part time jobs and make the bulk of their income from other revenue streams. If you aren't already at the top of your genre, then creating a diversified revenue stream is paramount. Even if you are at the top of your genre, opportunities will certainly come your way to help diversify your business and add to your income.

parting shot



Exploding waves during a big swell at Shark's Cove at sunset on the north shore of Oahu in Hawaii.

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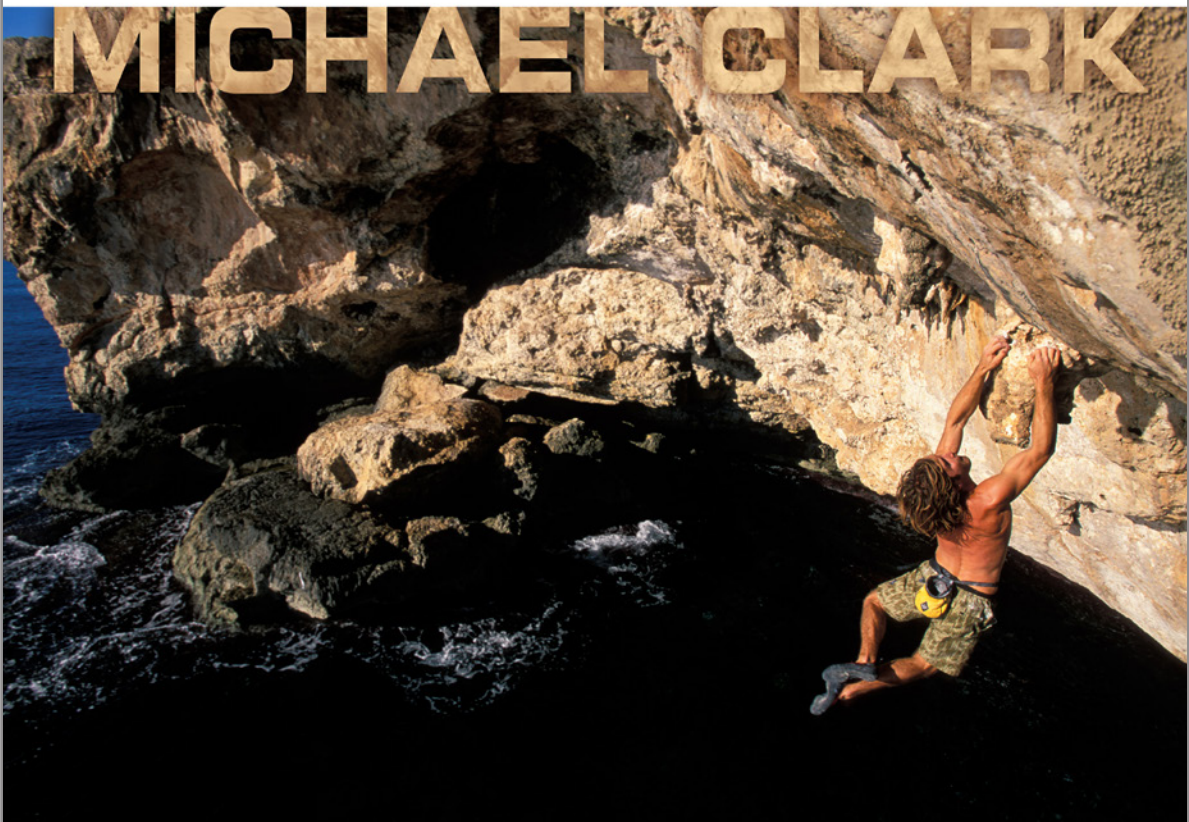


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