



F o c a l P o i n t

Special 'Race for the Cure' Issue

October 14, 2010



Baltimore Mayor Rawlings-Blake at the start of Race for the Cure

Photo by Steve Dembo

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F o c a l P o i n t

FROM YOUR EDITOR:

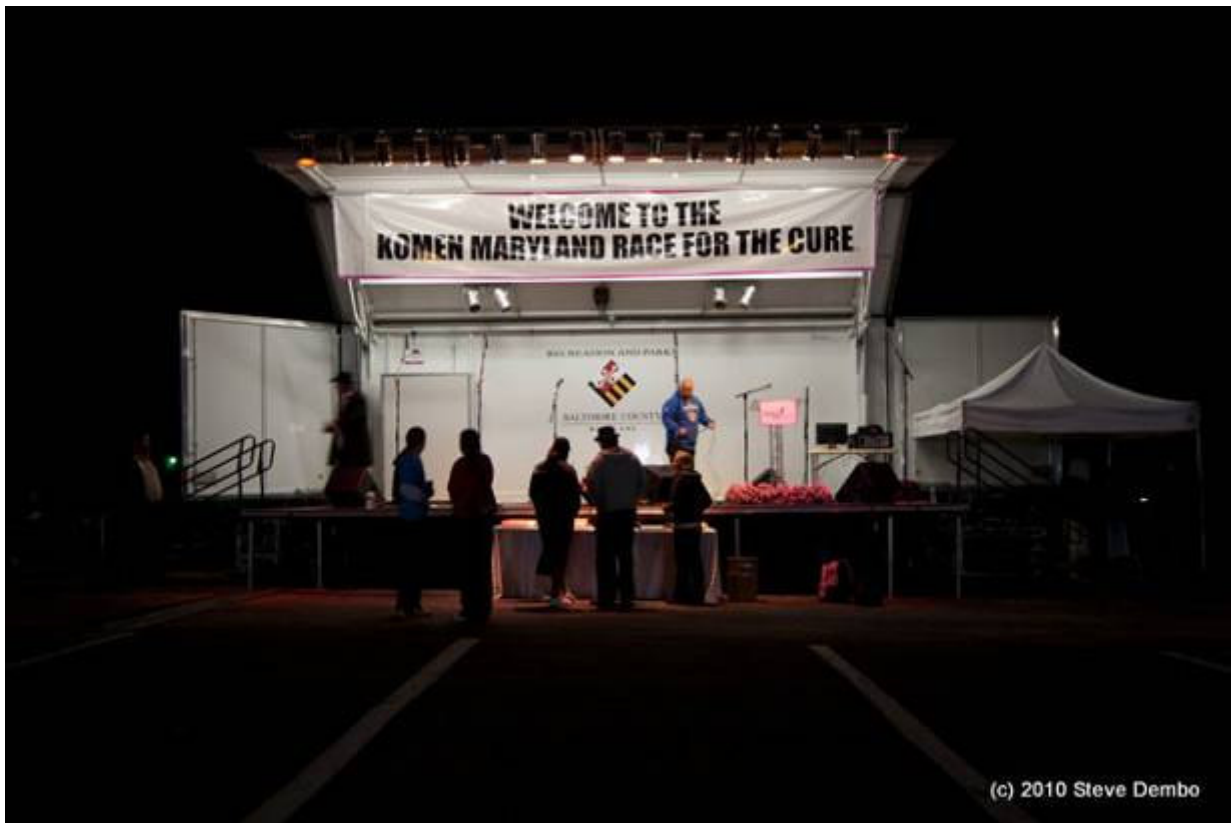
I was privilege early this month to be able to contribute my time as a volunteer photographer to the Susan B Komen "Race for the Cure". It was an emotional experience (My mom and several of my friends & relatives are survivors and some not so fortunate).

So, I was able to combine my passion for photography with a very worthy cause. You'll find some of my pics at the end of this issue.

You will also find some great articles by regular contributors Arthur and Gordon and another appearance by Bob Knill. Enjoy!

Thanks to Bib Knill, Gordon Risk and Arthur Ransom for their contributions this month.

BCC Gets Out



(c) 2010 Steve Dembo

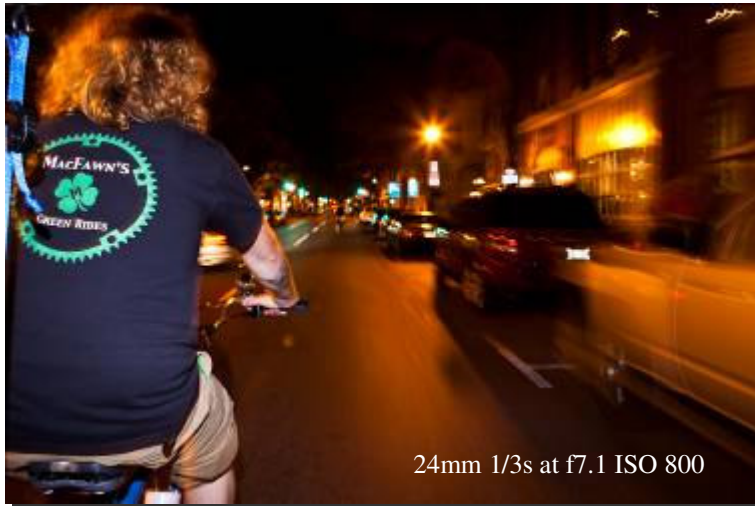
Arrival time – 5 a.m. (o dark thirty).
Some volunteers and set up people had arrived much earlier (set up began on Friday)



F o c a l P o i n t

Rear Curtain Huh?!?

By Bob Knill



24mm 1/3s at f7.1 ISO 800

Ya know, rear curtain sync. Perhaps you've heard it called second curtain sync, or glossed over those words while reading your camera manual, but never gave it a second thought. What does it mean? It relates to flash photography and in its simplest terms it means that your flash fires **BEFORE** the shutter curtain closes. Well, okay. But what does that mean and what can I do with it?

To understand this a little better, it helps to think about exactly how a shutter functions in most digital SLR cameras. For the purpose of this explanation we are going to assume that you are shooting in low light and you have your hot shoe flash mounted on top of your camera. Sure sure, we know that you should be trying to get your flash off-camera any time you can, but when you are shooting events and moving around a lot you are sometimes forced to leave your flash mounted on your camera.

In ordinary flash photography, when you press the shutter release the shutter curtain opens, the flash fires, and the curtain closes. Seems simple enough, so what is all this about a second curtain? Shutters actually have two curtains.

When you press the shutter release, the first curtain falls, exposing the sensor to the light as directed by the aperture. At the end of your set shutter speed, another curtain falls which cuts off the stream of light to the sensor.

Let's slow this down a bit. Let's say you have your shutter speed set to 1/30th of a second. You press the shutter release and that first curtain falls. Your digital sensor is now recording all the light that you send its way: all the ambient light from your subject and its surroundings as well as that huge burst of light from the flash. Okay, so you tripped your shutter release dropping that first curtain. If your camera (or your flash...more on this later) is set to its default setting of front curtain sync, the flash will fire as soon as that first curtain drops. At the end of the 1/30 of a second, the second curtain will fall and your exposure will be done. One important note to think about here is that the typical flash duration is about 1/1000th of second. But you've got a shutter speed set (1/30th) that is much slower than that. So your shutter is staying open much longer than the flash is lighting the scene. Therefore, your sensor is still recording light long after the flash has fired and gone out. See where I'm going with this?

When you open your shutter for a long time with a normal sync flash and there is any kind of motion, you essentially freeze that motion with the flash, but if the shutter stays open longer, then any motion you have with your subject will continue to be recording and blur any kind of frozen image you just tried to create. To put this into visual terms, imagine that you are shooting your buddy's fully restored '56 'Vette outside a cool diner. It's obviously your buddy's Vette because you're a working photographer; you can't afford a Corvette. Let's say you want to get a shot of him driving slowly past the diner from left to right. You set a slow shutter speed because you want to incorporate some blur in there to convey a sense of motion, some speed. Let's say you set your shutter to 1/2 second. But you still want to get a clean shot of the car; you just don't want to record a blur with no definition. With your flash on and your camera set to normal sync, here is what will happen: your friend will drive past you. You'll trip the shutter, and the flash will fire. But he will keep on rolling and your sensor will keep on recording all the light from the scene including all the ambient light that is falling on the car.



F o c a l P o i n t

Rear Curtain Huh?!? (cont.)

So anything after the flash fires will record as an indistinguishable blob. When you look at the exposure afterwards, that nice clean shot of the car has become a big out of focus streak since all that ambient light kept on coming into the camera after the flash had fired, turning your nice, focused image of the car into... well, something other than that.

Rear curtain sync fixes all that and allows you to incorporate motion into your flash photography, while maintaining that nice clean shot. Now let's say you have the same settings (1/2 second) but you set your camera flash to rear curtain sync. This time when you hit that shutter, the first curtain will fall, exposing the sensor to any light that is available. Without a flash, you would get a nice blur of the car, but that's it. But this time, the flash will fire immediately before that second curtain falls, freezing the action before the sensor is cut off from light. This will give you a nice blur of the car right up to the point where it is frozen in space, and you will have your clean, crisp car image at the front of the blur.

In the above photo of the Pedi cab, you can see this in action. I hopped on one of the cooler forms of green transportation in Frederick these days and had him drive me up and down Market Street. I set my flash to rear curtain sync and experimented with the shutter speed to get the motion I wanted. If you look at the car on the right hand side of the frame, you will see the blur of the silver SUV is out IN FRONT of clearer shot. This is a parked car, so we were moving from the rear of it towards the front. When I tripped the shutter, the front of the car was out in front of us. But when the flash fired at the end of my exposure, the front of the car was further past from where I hit the shutter release. This conveys a sense of motion and almost as if that car were driving backwards. In reality, it was stationary and we were moving forward past it.

A better example of the technique can be seen on image of the amusement park ride. This was shot at the foot of the Yo-Yo at the Howard County Fair this summer. With a slow shutter speed and my camera set to rear curtain sync, I stood below the ride and fired away as the riders passed overhead.

The blur leading to the rider indicates that I tripped my shutter, but the flash didn't fire immediately so the ambient light of their movement was recorded right up to the point the flash fired just before the second curtain closed. This is what gets the blur trailing out from the back of the subject in motion, instead of the motion blur obscuring your flashed subject.



24mm 1/6s at f 6.3 ISO

What should your aperture be? That depends on the lighting, of course. I exposed for a normal flash exposure first, making sure to set my shutter speed slow enough to record the blur I wanted. Since I had my flash on my camera, I could use TTL metering and used my flash exposure compensation to give me just a little light, but not enough to blow out my subject.

Play around with this, but be sure to check your manual on how to set your rear (or second) curtain sync. On my camera and flash, I can set the rear curtain sync on the flash unit which will override the normal sync of the camera. And I have a hunch that the upcoming Lantern Parade in Patterson Park will be a great opportunity to try this out. It has all the ingredients for some great rear curtain sync photos: low light, movement, and interesting subjects.

Visit Bob's Blog at <http://bobknill.wordpress.com/>



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Collector's Corner

Cameras in Disguise

by Gordon Risk

In the early days of photography there were many ideas on camera design. Generally, they were bulky and awkward to handle. Because of that, candid photography was not easy to do without arousing attention to the shooter. Disguising cameras was the obvious solution. Some took the shape of books, guns, watches, walking sticks, cigarette lighters and binoculars. Sometimes cameras were hidden in gentlemen's waistcoats, hats, and ladies pocketbooks. Recent years have produced even more novel disguises. Here are a few of the many types:



The Echo 8 and two versions of the Camera-Lite, all made in Japan to resemble Zippo cigarette lighters.

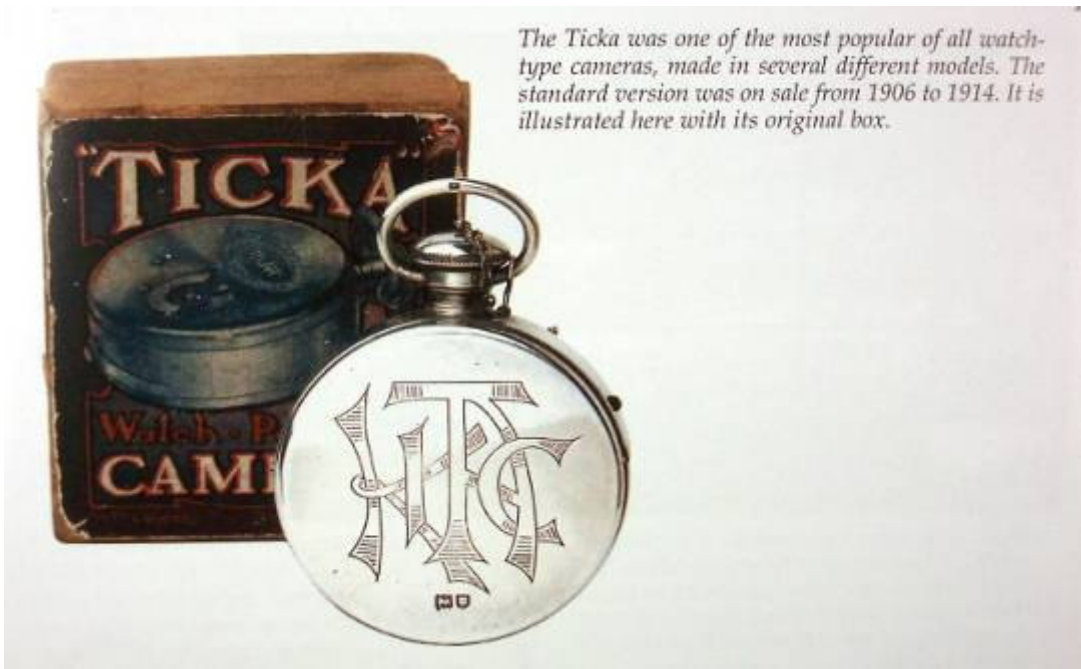


Plain-clothes cameras took many forms. Here is Dr Krugener's patent **Taschenbuch Camera** (notebook camera) as made by Haake & Albers, Frankfurt a. Main (French patent 188476, 1 February 1888). The apparatus took 24 40x40 mm (1 1/2 in) plates, changed by pulling a knob. Rapid rectilinear lens, 60 mm, f/12. Double guillotine shutter.



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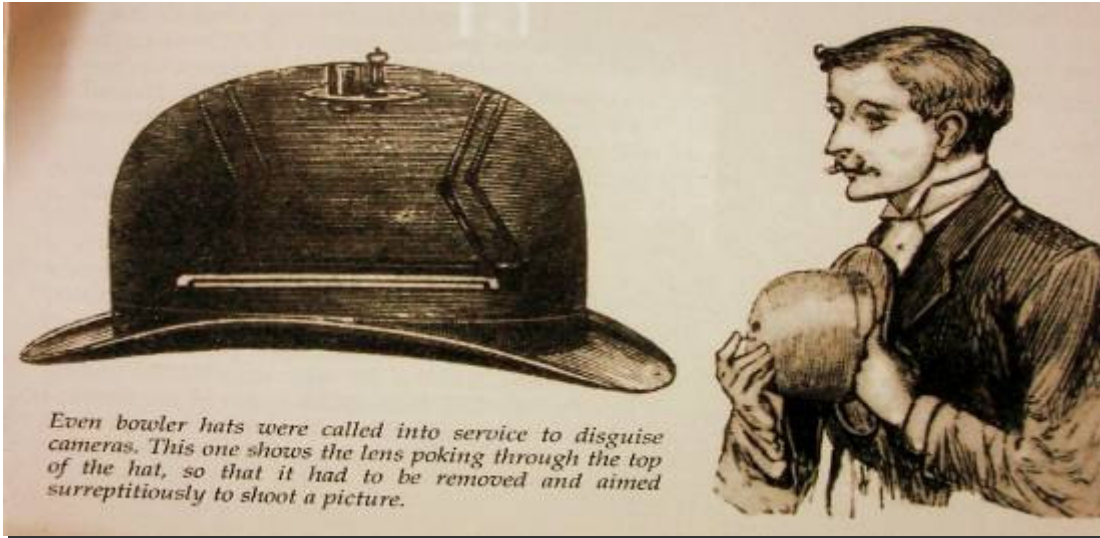
Collector's Corner (cont.)





F o c a l P o i n t

Collector's Corner (cont.)



Even bowler hats were called into service to disguise cameras. This one shows the lens poking through the top of the hat, so that it had to be removed and aimed surreptitiously to shoot a picture.



THE ROLLFILM REVOLUTION
The Ben Akiba camera took the form of a walking-stick handle and could be mounted on a suitable stick to complete the illusion. The handle also incorporated storage space for three spare rolls of film.



The Watchface Ticka, sold in 1912, was one of several cameras that were disguised as pocket-watches. This one differed from most models by adding a fake watch face, whose hands acted as a crude viewfinder.



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Collector's Corner (cont.)



The Photo-Revolver de Poche of 1883 had a 'bullet' chamber that held ten small glass plates, each of which was pushed forward into position as the chamber was rotated. The lens was in the barrel, conventional gun sights were used as a viewfinder and the shutter was released as the trigger was pulled. It is believed that only around fourteen were made.



F o c a l P o i n t

Endless Summer

By Arthur Ransome

A traveling fair would visit the small village where I grew up in the North East of England towards the end of each summer. While it was always something to look forward to it also reminded us that the summer was almost at an end and that the long, cold winter lay ahead.



It was always exciting to see the flashing lights of the rides and hear the shrieks and screams of people as they were flung around at unbelievable speeds. The smell of different foods filling the warm night air is one of those things that you always remember.



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Endless Summer (cont.)

I envied the people who worked at the fair, they were able to spend a few nights at a given place and then move on to somewhere else. It was like they were chasing the sun, searching for an endless summer. As I got older the traveling fair stopped coming to my village and I couldn't help but wonder if the workers had succeeded in their quest to find the endless summer, while the rest of us were left to prepare for the coming winter.





F o c a l P o i n t

Endless Summer (cont.)



These images were taken at the Howard County Fair.

www.aransomephoto.com



F o c a l P o i n t

Club Announcements

Important Rule Change

At last Thursday's board meeting the Board approved a rules change for digital competitions.

Images submitted must (now) be no longer than 800 pixels on the longest side - vertical or horizontal. All other rules remain the same. All images submitted for digital competitions beginning with November must follow the limitation of 800 pixels on the longest side. Please note that images which placed in September (or may place in October) will need to be modified to conform with the new rule for the end-of-year competition.

I understand that there may be questions regarding the reasons for this change. I will be happy to answer such questions. Please post your comments to the forum where this message is also posted.

Karen Dillon

Name: Evan Oliver Foster
Born: September 8, 2010, at 5:26 am EDT
Birthplace: Baltimore, MD (Johns Hopkins Hospital)
Weight: 8 pounds, 2 ounces
Length: 21 inches.



Diane (Bovenkamp) and Brian

And

Please welcome our new family member,

Matthew Ryan Faulkner
Sept. 29, 2010

Arrived at 6:05pm weight 6 lb. 9 oz.
Mom and dad doing well.

Grandmom and Granddad are very excited.

Regards,
L.Gary Faulkner
aka: Bryce Kid



F o c a l P o i n t

Photos from Race for the Cure (10/3/2010)



To the
Survivors



Photos by Steve Dembo



F o c a l P o i n t

Photos from Race for the Cure (10/3/2010)





F o c a l P o i n t

Photos from Race for the Cure (10/3/2010)





F o c a l P o i n t

Photos from Race for the Cure (10/3/2010)





F o c a l P o i n t

Photos from Race for the Cure (10/3/2010)



For more Photos please visit:

<http://adcieohost2.com/guest/2010%20Race%20For%20The%20Cure%20Photos/album/index.html>

