

Exploring the world of Canon EOS photography

# EOS magazine

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## Personal perspective

David duChemin is a visual storyteller

## Sensor size

We debate the merits of megapixels

## Slide copying

Two ways to digitise transparencies

## EOS 1D Mark IV

Fast, powerful, high-resolution performance for news, sport and wildlife photographers



# How was it shot?

**Photographing indoor dancing tournaments requires both technical know-how and a little bit of luck. Rainer and Simone Hoffmann use various techniques to achieve different effects.**

WHEN WE'RE not photographing wildlife in Africa we can be found at formation dancing tournaments in northern Germany. Dancing is an indoor sport and usually takes place in poorly-lit venues with a mix of natural and tungsten light. Fast lenses and/or flash are necessary. Our favourite lenses are the EF 300mm f2.8L USM and the EF 500mm f4L IS USM. Sometimes we use the EF 70-200mm f2.8L USM. We rarely use wider lenses because we like tightly cropped pictures of details and faces of the dancers.

If we don't use flash, a high ISO of 800 to 1600 is mandatory. We rarely shoot hand-held, mostly using a monopod. Our preferred shooting mode is aperture-priority, typically at f2.8 or f4.0, shooting RAW, so white balance is done in the RAW converter.

## Basic technique

At high ISO and the aperture wide open at f2.8 or f4, exposure times are between 1/60 second and 1/500 second and normally the movement of the dancers is frozen (below). This works best when the dancers stand still for a few moments, which they do at certain times during the performance. It helps to know



the choreography so that you can anticipate the best moment and press the shutter release at just the right time.

## Fill-flash

Often we use some fill-flash to lighten up the face or details of the dress. This is usually necessary when the main illumination is from above the dancers. In order to freeze the movement we set exposure mode to either shutter-priority or manual. The flash is set to between -2/3 to -1.5, depending on the illumination of the room.

## Long exposure and flash

The use of flash to freeze the action, combined with a long exposure, is one of our favourite photographic techniques. Due to the fast movement the results are never predictable, and consequently most of the pictures are not useable.

Exposure times vary between about 1/15 second to 2 seconds. We set shooting mode to manual and adjust the flash power as necessary to get the desired effect, depending very much on the illumination of the room. Thanks to the LCD display on the camera it's quite easy to gauge when you've got it right.

Because the dancers move backwards almost as often as they do forwards, it's usually not relevant whether we use first or second curtain synchronization. The main image (left) was shot with second curtain sync and shows the typical motion blur associated with this technique. However, in some images (above) it is not clear in which direction the dancers are moving and we could have used either first or second curtain sync. •



## Rainer & Simone's kit

2 x EOS 1Ds Mark II  
2 x EOS 5D (as back-up)  
EF 24-105mm f4L IS USM lens  
EF 300mm f2.8L USM lens  
EF 500mm f4L IS USM lens  
EF 70-200mm f2.8L USM lens  
Speedlite 580EX; Flash Extender

**Right** EOS 1Ds Mark II with an EF 500mm f4L IS USM lens, 1/2 second at f8, ISO 200.

**Below** EOS 1Ds Mark II with an EF 500mm f4L IS USM lens, 1/10 second at f8, ISO 400.

**Bottom left** EOS 1Ds Mark II with an EF 300mm f2.8L USM lens, 1/500 second at f2.8, ISO 800.

**Top left** EOS 1Ds Mark II with an EF 500mm f4L IS USM lens, 1/4 second at f5.6, ISO 100.

For more of Rainer and Simone's images visit:  
[www.hoffmann-photography.com](http://www.hoffmann-photography.com)

