

TIME LAPSE PHOTOGRAPHY

By Albert Yap

WHAT IS TIME LAPSE?

- ▶ **Time-lapse photography** is a cinematography technique whereby each film frame is captured at a rate much slower than it will be played back.
- ▶ When replayed at normal speed, time appears to be moving faster and thus lapsing.
- ▶ Processes that would normally appear subtle to the human eye, such as the motion of the sun and stars in the sky, become very pronounced.

*From Wikipedia

THINGS NEEDED TO FILM TIME LAPSE

- ▶ A DSLR
- ▶ A steady tripod
- ▶ Intervalometer (Timer)
 - ▶ Internal, External and Software
- ▶ Video Editing Software
 - ▶ Quicktime Pro
 - ▶ Proshow Gold/Producer
 - ▶ Windows Live Movie Maker
 - ▶ And many more
- ▶ And a scene with both static moving subjects

WHAT IS INTERVALOMETER?

- ▶ Basically it counts intervals of time automatically.
- ▶ Some camera like Nikon D5000, D7000, D300, D700 and etc has internal intervalometer built in.
- ▶ There are also software that has intervalometer features such as Canon DPP, and Nikon Camera Control Pro.
- ▶ External Intervalometer are also available for most camera.



SO HOW DO WE STARTS?

- ▶ Setup tripod and camera at desired location.
- ▶ Set your focus to the main subject and lock it, make sure it does not change during the shooting duration.
- ▶ Decide on your exposure, white balance and depth of field.
- ▶ Once everything is set, initiate the intervalometer and starts shooting.

SO WHAT ARE THE TIPS?

- ▶ Depend on your subjects, you'll need to decide on the interval between shots.
- ▶ Generally, on fast moving subject such as moving traffic you'll need interval speed around 2-5 seconds between shots; As for slow moving subject such as sun's path across the sky, you will need at least 30sec in between.
- ▶ Shutter speed usually is about half of your interval speed for short interval, and long exposure for long interval speed.
- ▶ For shooting across sun rise and sun set, you'll need to put into consideration between the big changes of exposure, in this case, a EV-compensation with auto-exposure mode work better.

WHAT ELSE?

- ▶ You'll need to calculate how many shots you need in total.
- ▶ Typically your final video will be at least 24fps for playback; If you use an interval of 3sec, you'll need to shoot 240 photos for a 10sec clips.
- ▶ It is always better to shoot with more photos with multi-cams as time lapse is a time consuming process and you don't want to miss anything.
- ▶ Shoot with reasonably sized Jpegs, you don't need to use thousand of RAWs for time lapse. They tends to make thing harder and more time consuming converting photos.
- ▶ Consider your remaining capacity of memory cards and the battery life before shoot.

NEXT, PREPARE THE PHOTOS

- ▶ You'll probably have a lot of photos from the time lapse, one of the quickest way to manage them is with Adobe Photoshop Lightroom.
- ▶ If you intend to post-process the photos, do it now such as cropping, colorize, enhance and etc
- ▶ You will need to do the same editing to all the photos.
- ▶ I recommend crop the photos with a 16:9 ratio, and export them to 1280 x 720 for 720pHD Video, or 1920 x 1080 for 1080pHD Video.

COMPILING THEM INTO A VIDEO

- ▶ Load all the photos into your editing software.
- ▶ Adjust the duration between shots to desired transition effect.
- ▶ Add in background music if needed.
- ▶ Adjust the video output sizes and type.
- ▶ Export the video, and share!

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Photography