

▼ Akurat Lighting A1 On-Camera Video LED Light

Highest Color Rendering Index with V-WHITE Violet Chip Technology
Review by Erik Vlietinck

With dual color balance using two sets of diodes and the ability to mix color temperatures in various combinations, the A1 manages to achieve the highest CRI values in the industry with an Ra of 98 and an R9 of 97. The A1 throws about 1100 lux on your subject.

The A1 is small enough to fit comfortably on top of a video camera, be it a professional ENG camera or a Sony A7. Made out of aluminum, it weighs next to nothing. Optional barndoors use strong magnets for mounting and include a separate diffusion glass.

The A1 can be powered by any type of battery used in the video industry. I chose to have the Sony NP-F adapter fitted. Equipped with an NP-F970 battery, the light has about 4–6 hours runtime. You can also power the A1 with an optional power adapter, or by using your own 6–14 Volt DC adapter.

I tested the A1's luminous output and its color accuracy with a spectrophotometer. The A1's claims are no exaggeration, with only slight differences between what's on the control knob and the measured temperature, even when using the mixed color output settings.



The barndoors and diffuser option are meant to control the light. Using magnets on the front bezel, they're extremely easy to attach and detach from the unit. The diffuser glass sits loosely between the unit and the barndoors and does double duty as a protection for the LEDs. You don't lose f-stops when using it.

The A1 comes with a jointed mounting system that gives you more accurate targeting of the light. It lets you aim the A1 only in the horizontal and vertical plane. This system is also made of metal and can be replaced if desired. ■

Company: Akurat Lighting, Sp. z o.o. Price: \$449.95 (Barndoors: \$79.95)

Web: www.akuratlighting.com Rating: ◆◆◆◆◆

- ▲ Hot: CRI values; luminous output; size; quality of build
- ▼ Not:

▼ NEC MultiSync EA275UHD

27" 4K LCD Desktop Monitor
Review by Daniel M. East

As the design and digital imaging industries continue to move into 4K as the standard for displays, the product choices are becoming more competitive. As one of the leaders in this migration, NEC delivers an excellent option for those who want to balance form and function with a price-point that won't break the bank: Enter the MultiSync EA275UHD 4K monitor.

While your best view with this display is head-on, the nearly 180° of clear viewing is impressive. In fact, it's one of the first things you may notice before calibration. Like its larger sibling, the PA322UHD, the EA275UHD has touch controls and a clarity that cannot be ignored. This is an excellent display with natural, neutral contrast, plus excellent light and "human" sensors to accommodate nearly any ambient lighting situation.

The EA275UHD has an ECO mode that saves more than 50% of power consumption on an already lower power drain monitor. Further, it's Energy Star, TCO, and RoHS environmentally compliant. The closest competitor to the EA275UHD is the Dell 27 Ultra HD, which is \$100 less, but its image quality isn't as balanced, nor does it have the viewing angles or vertical viewing capabilities of the NEC. The sound quality of the internal speakers is the only



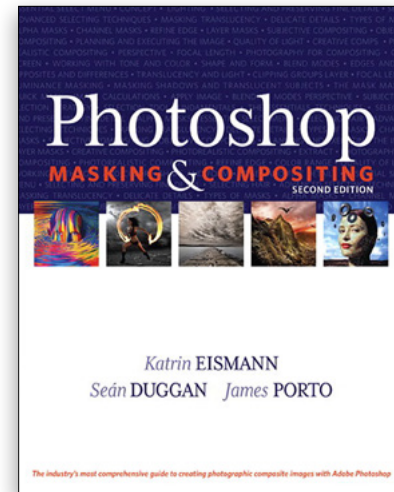
stumbling point for this display (as it is for so many manufacturers). The "barky" 500Hz–2Khz sound is barely listenable and harsh to the ears so, in this case, the real purpose of this monitor is sight over sound.

When it's time for an upgrade to a new monitor that provides more features than its competitors' at a midline price, the NEC 27" EA275UHD is worth your consideration. While it may not be as inexpensive as some of their competitors' models, the overall image quality, features, and functions of this monitor make it an excellent choice and a standout in this category. ■

Company: NEC Display Solutions Price: \$799

Web: www.necdisplay.com Rating: ◆◆◆◆◆

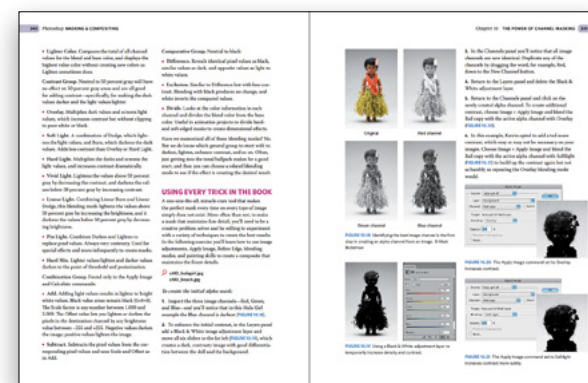
- ▲ Hot: Image quality; text clarity; viewing angles; fast startup
- ▼ Not: Speaker quality



Photoshop Masking & Compositing, Second Edition

By Katrin Eismann, Seán Duggan, and James Porto

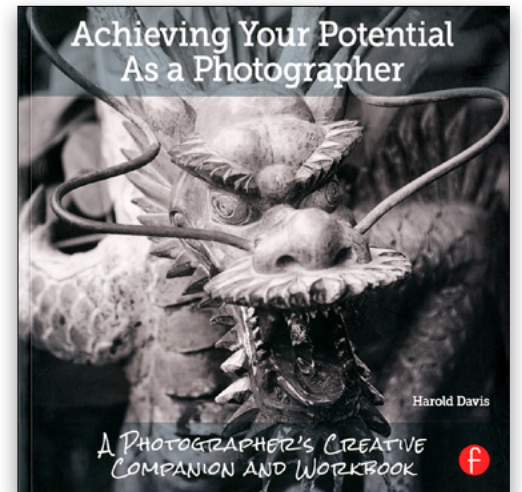
While there's no doubt that this book is worth sixty bucks, there's no need to pay that much. You can purchase the paperback directly from www.peachpit.com for \$47.99 or from www.barnesandnoble.com for \$44.99. Peachpit.com also offers digital versions in the formats EPUB, MOBI, and PDF (reviewed here) for \$38.39. The Barnes & Noble Nook version runs \$30.49. Okay, now let's talk about the five-star rating: If you do anything more than red-eye correction and color balance to an image, buy this book. You'll learn to make selections that isolate part of an image that needs a specific adjustment, how to combine multiple images into a single piece of art, and do those things that separate common photography from great compositions. With red-eye correction, you're isolating one part of the image (or two) for adjustment. Imagine being able to do that to anything or any part of an image!



Publisher: New Riders Pages: 487

Website: www.peachpit.com

Price: \$59.99 Rating: ◆◆◆◆◆



Achieving Your Potential As a Photographer: A Photographer's Creative Companion and Workbook

By Harold Davis

This book is also less expensive at www.barnesandnoble.com and www.amazon.com, and is also available as an eBook on Amazon and the Apple iBooks Store (but at the list price). Much of the book is designed around the workbook. The author displays many of his own photos, often with information about how he took the photo and what decisions he made in the process. Other images are for illustrative purposes. This book is intended for photographers who want to spend disciplined time and effort in order to improve their work. The introduction explains the author's intent. Some of the chapters provide very specific information about a technique or process, while others (such as the "Artisanal Print Making" chapter) offer only some generalities. Likewise, some of the exercises in the workbook have very specific instructions and goals; others (like the exercise on printing) aren't related to the chapter content.



Publisher: Focal Press Pages: 257 (including 48 page workbook)

Website: www.focalpress.com

Price: \$34.95 Rating: ◆◆◆◆◆