

# Light painting



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Light painting has also been called by other names such as light graffiti or light drawing. It is a photographic technique which is achieved through exposure that is mostly done in a dark place and it is done by moving a camera or by use of a light source that is held by the hand. In most cases the source of light is not part of the image. The images that that were first known to use this technique were by Man Ray and they were called “ Space Writing”.

Light can be used to illuminate some parts of the object selectively or the light can also be used in painting the picture, through the light shining the object to the camera rays directly. In the light painting the shutter speed should be slow. With the advent of digital cameras and their popularity, the light painting has become popular, this is also enabled further since the digital cameras can allow the user to have a view of the work he has done immediately. Light painting can have the same effects as a quick sketch by a pencil. One great photographer of light painting is Pablo Picasso who has made several light painting. A Flash light or light pens are known to create a Full Bleed images. It is also known that some different colored lights are known to be projected on the LCD. Painting with light is another not very usual aspect of light painting, this will involve the projection of transparencies but most of the time it is not done in a screen (Perkins 2003).

Camera painting is a form of light painting in which the camera is moved. In a a relatively dark room, the camera can be ued as the paint brush, the night sky will be the canvas and the cityscapes are used as a palette. The camera is moved by stroking lights and in doing these patterns is made and by

laying some background it can help in creation of abstract images popularly known as camera toss.

Light painting is not a must it should be done in a dark room or in the darkness of the night, some artificial light such as LED and also the light from mobile phones or even the sunlight beam a well curtained room can create a shadowy effect that will be good in making of light painting. The uses of a mirror have an effect of creation of a double image which in actual fact makes the image to be more creative and very attractive.

Some of the equipments that are necessary in light painting area are a tripod for the camera which is very important to the photographer due to the long time of exposure that is needed in making the painting. If there is no tripod stand, the camera can be placed in either a table or in a firm support. A self timer and also a shutter release cable are essential so that they can minimize possible camera shakes. A color gel can come handy in coloring the sources of light. A number of sources of light can be used, these include; flash lights, Hosemaster which is known to use the fiber optic pen, lighter flints, some glow sticks, candles and matches are good light sources for light painting (Freeman 2007).

The use of manual focus is important in light painting and widely used as autofocus will not work very well in a low light environment. Also for the photographer to achieve good results he will use low speed or a low ISO setting in a good digital so as to minimize the digital noise and thus increase the level of exposure. This is crucial because it is a big challenge for one to be able to adequately evaluate the exposure of the image.

An aperture is crucial in light painting; use of Small apertures will help to produce a sharper image and preserve the required depth of the field and also create a sense of focus in the image. Examples of small apertures are f16 or f22. For the technique of using small apertures to be successful, there is need for a longer exposure and it helps to create some very fascinating work of art. Large apertures in most cases blur the lines that have been drawn by the LED source.

Light painting, is an ephemeral approach to art and a great form of expression that uses the movement of light to help in creation of some very incredible images and can be created in the streets, studios and nature, by an artist who uses his creative impulses which transcend the traditional media. Light graffiti can produce as performance art, and at times capturing it with photography and video, this will create an incredible viewing (subotnick 2003).

Light painting is a great method of expressing ones ideas, thoughts and emotions. It is a cheap method of and the newest trend of putting up graffiti in a way that is unique and has no mess and no vandalism. This technique allows artists to draw images they would never have been able to draw with the normal painting equipment