



Epson at Photokina Trade Show, Cologne, Germany







Epson exhibits at Photokina 2004.

Epson has been a phenomenal success in digital imaging as a result of several factors

1st, **Epson is in synch with their audience.** Epson makes sure it stays in touch directly with their users. Epson has popular photographers display in their booth, but I mean popular (not merely stuffed shirts). The kinds of photos these photographers produce are eye-catching too. Not dull. You don't fall asleep in an Epson booth.

2nd, **Epson dealers are even more in synch with their audience.** All across the USA you can find Epson dealers who sell all the photo equipment to handle giclee, fine art photography, color management, and everything else.

3rd, **Epson gets people enthused at entry level** and then moves these Epson-lovers upscale one printer model at a time. Many people have bought three, four, or six or more Epson printers, sequentially over the years.

4th, **Epson has phenomenal brand loyalty,** like Macintosh. It is like a religion almost, just like Mac vs PC (with Epson it is piezo vs thermal technology (HP, Canon, Encad, and ColorSpan all having thermal printhead technology)).

5th, Epson booths are exciting

At trade shows an Epson booth is a happening. And not just teenies getting a free photo and a free print as in other booths. Epson “speaks” to the pro, prosumer, and dedicated amateur. Serious people with serious money to buy serious Epson products.

Photokina is an excellent example.

- Epson was in an atrium; with a high ceiling.
- Kodak had its Encad printers blocked by a formidable wall, as if it did not want anyone to get near enough to really look closely at the print.
- HP was stuck under a low ceiling in a corner.
- Canon’s printers were just one row in the Canon booth; Canon camera division was clearly in charge, not the printer folks.



Since HP preferred no photos, we can't show you the HP booth; so here is the wide format printer area of Canon at Photokina; about 2% of the Canon exhibit area. The other 98% was devoted to Canon cameras



Here is the wide format printer area of the Canon booth at DRUPA. Even though this was a printer trade show, the Canon camera division operated the booth and got most of the display area

There are a host of other things that Epson is doing well¹, but this report mainly wants to show what Epson does really well, and that is to stage a great trade show booth at Photokina.

HP's exhibit area at DRUPA trade show in May was one of the most popular in Duesseldorf. But the HP exhibit at Photokina in Cologne (late September) was dark and at a dead end in the exhibit hall. A pleasant HP lady said no photography was allowed (even though I was taking shots in the PosterJet RIP area); I did not want to upset her by saying about half a million people a year read our reviews, so I did not identify myself, said nothing, and politely went to the PosterJet area of the Canon booth and got plenty of photos there. Also got a nice personal hello and welcome in the Canon booth. So we are sorry we can't show any photos of the HP booth.

But one thing I will say about HP, they sure do provide outstanding tech support in their booth. The HP service tech person at Photokina provided all the tips and manuals we needed to understand how to handle an intransient printhead. I was very impressed at the ability of the HP printer to cure itself through the sophisticated testing routine. So we give HP a 10 out of 10 for personalized tech support in this instance.

¹ FLAAR is also consultant to industry. One of the several things we are good at is documenting what each wide format printer (each make and model, and each manufacturer) is good at, where they stumbled, and how each competing company is doing better, or not so good, in comparison. FLAAR has impressive statistics on end-user preferences, everything from piezo to thermal to media choices, RIP choices, to general and specific likes and dislikes. Our analysis (and analysts such as Dr Nicholas Hellmuth), are available as consultants, under NDA, for manufacturers, distributors, and print shop owners.

Summary

The Epson booth at Photokina, PhotoPlus and at some PMA shows are so full of eager photographers and artists that I can't get pictures inside the booth due to the crowds of exited buyers. At other trade shows, especially devoted to sign printers, the Epson booth is often empty, but any show related to art or photography, Epson excels at attracting, and holding, a happy and contented audience.

Once you decide which printer you will look for, realize that it takes more than a printer to create a great giclee print. In addition to a printer you need all the studio equipment to photograph oil paintings and watercolor paintings so you can turn these paintings into giclee prints. So when you shop for a printer, find a company that also offers the top cameras for fine art photography (Creo Leaf Valeo is one; the Kodak SLR/n and /c is another; we have produced exhibit quality prints with both: all printed with the Epson 7600). What you want to find is an Epson showroom that is also a veritable giclee atelier, with exhibits on the wall from photographers around the US.



Epson booth at PMA 2004

When people ask us where they can buy other brands of printers (which are perfectly capable of printing giclee), how many printer dealers can provide the cameras, scanners, training and tech support for the complete giclee workflow? This is why we do ratings and write recommendations of printer dealers, because not many can provide the full range of services that are required. You won't be successful trying to produce fine art or giclee prints if you buy your printer in a box from the Internet: none of the sales people will be able to explain the giclee workflow, much less how to accomplish linearization.

Once you decide on your favorite brand printer, then FLAAR can provide all the supporting information, tips, help, and training to scan, digitally photograph, and handle the giclee workflow.



Epson booth at SGIA 2004



Epson booth at Photo Plus 2004



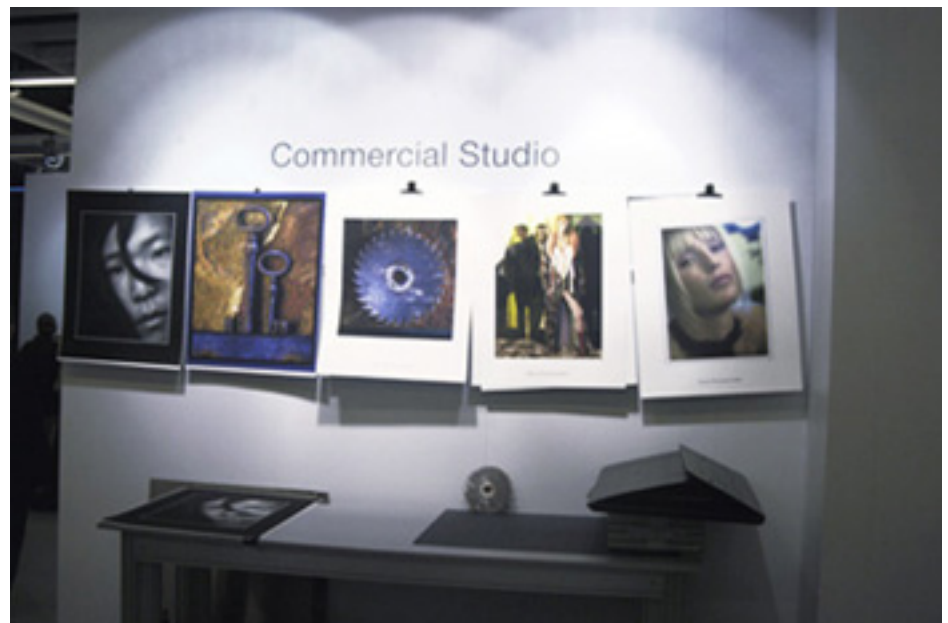
Epson scanners are considered to be the best of the entry-level scanners, as good if not better than Microtek and Umax. We don't have any Epson scanner, but we do not sources who know all the entry level scanners from personal experience, and they rate Epson scanners highly.



Epson has significantly increased their offerings of photo and fine art media. The advantages of using Epson branded media is that the ICC profiles are built into the printers, especially into the new ColorBurst RIP being offered with the Epson 4000.



Epson listens to what users want to know about. Epson is up to the minute in real time with digital imaging reality. Epson can react more quickly than Kodak, Fuji, or Canon. People on the scene can make clever decisions on trade show design and focus without being hobbled by a stodgy bureaucrat somewhere back in corporate headquarters who is in another parallel universe (out of date, and definitely out of touch with the actual people who want to buy inkjet printers).



Again, notice the diversity, liveliness, passion, of these photos.

And Epson photos tend to be new every year. You don't get the same old tired worn out themes year after year after year. The few shots that do return are worth it; you want to see some images more than once.



This image looks good enough to eat.



What more can we say, except that this was the best photo exhibit of any inkjet printer company at Photokina.





With a Press Pass it was possible to get into the halls before the crowds arrived. Since the Epson booth was packed the minute the doors open, I had to come early one day to get some more thorough views of everything that was on the walls, before the crowds blocked my view.



Not only are the photos themselves of high quality, the exhibit area, the exhibit architecture, is young, fresh, exciting, alive.



This image is not as exciting as others, but there were so many “others” that the overall booth display was worth visiting (and worth photographing and publishing).



Great color gamut.



Kudos to Epson. I do not know the people in Epson Europe, but whoever designed this booth deserves an award.

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RIPing



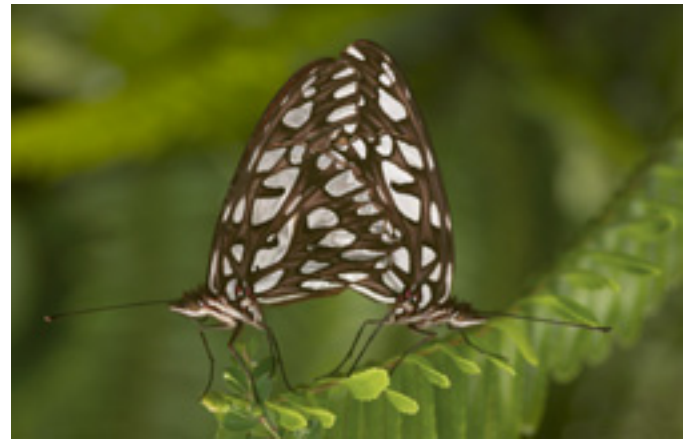
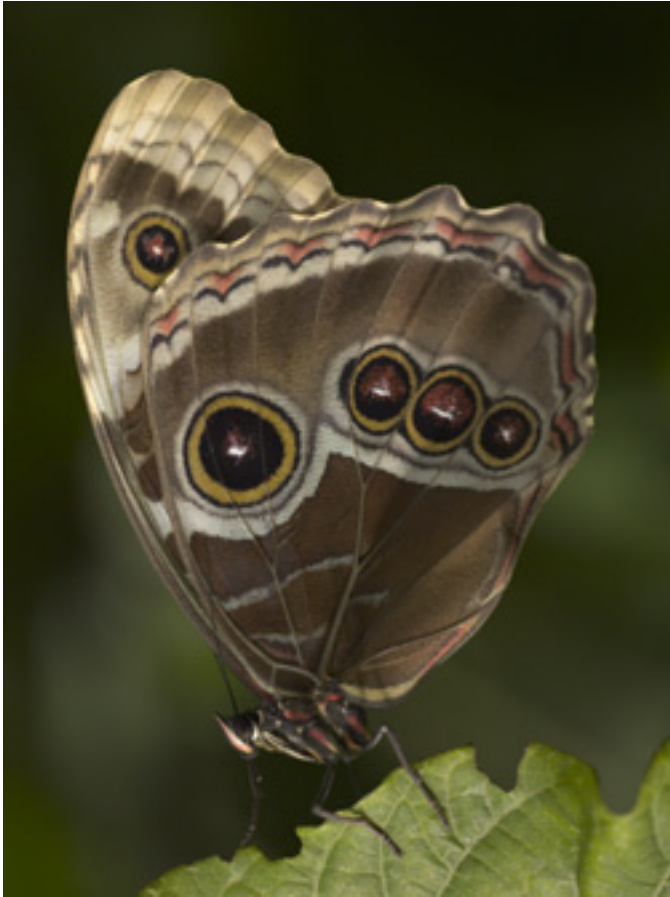
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FLAAR Exhibits of Photos by Nicholas Hellmuth now also use Epson Printers



Here is one of several exhibits of FLAAR photos, that is available to galleries, museums, libraries, or individuals, to sponsor as an exhibit anywhere in the world. Four years ago we printed all our exhibits with the HP 5000. This printer is still great if the prints are on canvas or watercolor paper. But if you want to use satin, luster or matte photo paper, and if you want or need to avoid a grainy dot pattern, the Epson 4000, Epson 7600, Canon w6200, Canon w8200 and HP 130 offer a finer image quality.

At the time we organized this exhibit we did not have an Epson 4000 or Canon w6200, and have no rolls of photo paper for either our HP 30 or 130, so we used an Epson 7600 for this particular exhibit. You ought to download the comments of visitors to the exhibit to see how they reacted to the combination of Nicholas Hellmuth's dramatic photos of orchids and volcanic landscapes of Guatemala, printed on an Epson 7600.

We intend to do lots more exhibits in the future, using the new generation of printers that is overdue to appear during 2005.

Click here


to download comments of the
visitors to the exhibit






“Through the Digital Lens” is an exhibition of photographic high-resolution giclee prints by Dr. Nicholas Hellmuth, director of the Large Format Digital Imaging Division, Center for Applied Technology, Bowling Green State University

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