

Phase One delivers P45

John Henshall was a little apprehensive when Phase One's Eric Joakim said he had a P45 for him

When Phase One announced it in July, some of the competition scoffed and said it was simply 'vapourware'. But – with the reliability we have come to expect from the Danish company – it is now available and I have been able to make some exposures with it.

The name inevitably causes a reaction in the UK, where 'P45' is the name of the government form you're given when you're fired or otherwise leave an employment.

You might imagine from the name that the P45 back has a 45 megapixel sensor. It does not – it uses a 39MP sensor, the same area as the identical-looking P25 back, which has a 25MP sensor.

This means that the sensor almost completely fills the imaging aperture of a 6 x 4.5cm camera. In fact the magnification factor is only 1.1x.

Each individual P45 pixel is 6.8 microns square, compared with 9 microns in the P25. This is how so many more are packed into the same area.

P45 images are made up of 7230 x 5428 pixels. Using Phase One's lossless compressed file format, each raw image takes up about 40MB on a CF card. Processed 24-bit (3 x 8-bit RGB) TIFFs each take up 112.3MB of storage

space. The 16-bit per channel images we processed during the shoot each occupied 224MB. This meant that only two images would fit on each of the 14 CDs which Eric Joakim burned for me.

My test a year ago showed that the P25 was at least as good as 4 x 5 sheet film and came close to 8 x 10.

The fact is that fewer and fewer photographers are using 8 x 10, so who could possibly need a 39MP back?

I certainly don't think that you would use this back to photograph weddings, or even – as I have used it – for portraiture. It would be far too revealing for all but the most perfect of complexions. My thanks to the lovely actress Anjali Guptara for allowing me to photograph her in such close up.

For this shot, the P45 back was fitted to a V series Hasselblad body, with 100mm Zeiss lens and studio flash. I set the lens to its closest focus distance and moved in until Anjali's eyes were in focus. Studio flash exposure was at f/11.

The double page enlargement overleaf is a section from the whole shot, which would measure 163cm (64in) x 122cm (48in) if printed – equivalent to the area of over thirty of these A4 pages.

The likely market for a back of this resolution is commercial photography

of the highest quality, shot by photographers commanding the highest fees who will settle for nothing but the very best state-of-the-art technology.

When shooting finely woven fabrics, moiré patterning can be a particular problem of digital fashion photography. Higher capture resolution will help to overcome this annoying effect. Phase One is acutely aware of the problem and its celebrated **Capture One** raw file acquire software has a tool to mask any which remains.

Although sales of medium format backs is declining, sales of medium format digital backs have never been better. The numbers aren't huge when compared with DSLRs, such as the Canon 1Ds MkII, but they are large enough to sustain specialist companies such as Phase One and a few others.

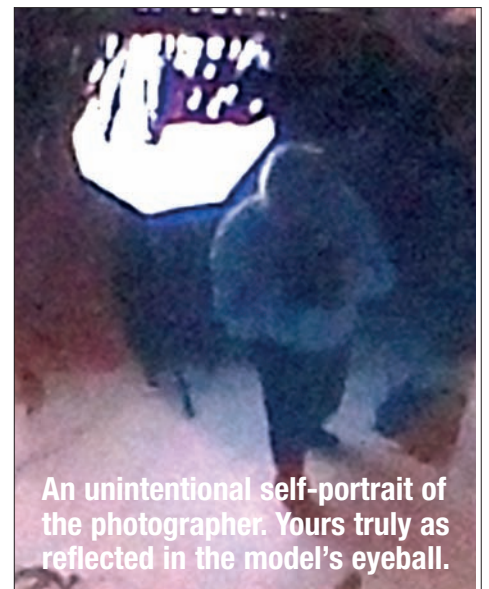
The Phase One P45 looks and handles exactly like the other Phase One integrated backs, such as the P20 and P25. Using it is as pleasurable as meeting a well-known friend.

If you are looking for the highest resolution single-shot back in the world, look no further. This is the one.

For further information contact Eric Joakim of Phase One +44 (0)1903 741821, mobile +44 (0)7970 746755 or by email at EJO@phaseone.com. The Phase One website is at www.phaseone.com



Section from 62 x 83cm (24 x 33 in) print.



An unintentional self-portrait of the photographer. Yours truly as reflected in the model's eyeball.





The new Phase One P45 is the highest resolution single shot back in the world. Its sensor has an incredible 39 million pixels.

This double page enlarged section is taken from the full shot shown above. The Phase One P45 digital back was mounted on a 'V' series Hasselblad body, using a 100mm Zeiss lens.

The whole image would measure 163cm (64in) x 122cm (48in) if printed – equivalent to the area of over thirty of these A4 pages. The full image is 112.3MB and is made up of 7230 x 5428 pixels.

This new back is unlikely to be used for social photography, however, as its super-high resolution would be far too revealing for most subjects.

The likely market for a back of this resolution is commercial photography of the highest quality, shot by photographers commanding the highest fees who will settle for nothing but the very best state-of-the-art technology.

The Phase One P45 is available now at a list price of £21,000, which includes the highly acclaimed Capture One software, a three year warranty and a loan back if required.