



Orange County Convention Center · Orlando · Florida · USA · 20–23 February 2005

# NEW FILMS DEBUT AT PMA

**Y**es, it's absolutely true. PMA 2005 saw the advent of two new professional and three new consumer emulsions.

Who wouldn't expect a new super-fast grain-free ISO 64,000 see-in-the-dark film to steal the headlines and set back the march of digital?

In reality, though, it's not like that. The developments are evolutionary, not revolutionary.

Agfa speaks of, "Even more vivid colours and greater depth, resulting in an enhanced three dimensional effect."

Kodak tells us, "Kodak MAX

versatility exhibits consistently bright, vibrant pictures across a wide range of lighting conditions and accurate skin tone reproduction for natural-looking 'people pictures'."

Fuji announced **Fujichrome Velvia 100**, in addition to the recently announced Velvia 100F, "To deliver finer grain and twice the speed [of the soon to be discontinued Velvia 50] while offering the high colour saturation and choice that have made Velvia 50 the film for leading landscape and nature photographers."

Ironically, the demise of Velvia 50

has itself led to increased film sales.

Glyn Edmunds wrote to me describing the imminent passing of Velvia 50 as, "The last straw," saying that he had whipped off an order for 150 rolls to keep him (and presumably his freezer) going for five years.

Good for you Glyn. The best way to keep film alive is for those who depend on it to buy more. Film will not die because I say so, so don't shoot the messenger.

Film will not die if photographers buy it and thus sustain manufacture and profitability. So, **buy more film.**

Copyright © 2005 by John Henshall john@epi-centre.com

Setting up the multitude of interesting small booths at PMA 2005





Meanwhile, despite these new films, the digital march continues.

The pace, however, has slowed down. It could not go on at the same exhausting rate forever.

When you have DSLRs as good as the Canon EOS-1Ds MkII, Fujifilm Finepix S3 Pro and Nikon D2x, the quality of film has already been equalled or exceeded and the pace of development has reduced.

Maybe it was partly because of this – and partly because it's only a few months since Photokina – and Orlando is not as popular a show venue as Las Vegas – that this year's PMA certainly seemed lower key.

Nonetheless, PMA is still the world's largest annual imaging event by far.

This is not to say that there were not a large number of exciting innovations but they were not in the pixel-busting DSLR department – with one exception, which was the major highlight.

Canon already has a superbly positioned range of DSLRs, to which is now added the **Digital Rebel XT** (as it's known in the US) or **EOS-350D** (as it's known this side of the pond).

The new camera is 23% smaller and 13% lighter than the EOS-300D which it replaces. Pixel count goes up from 6MP to 8.2MP but, although this sounds a lot, another 2.2MP doesn't actually give you much more in the way of print size.

The new 350D feels rugged for its size, though it may feel small in large hands. In this case, just buy the battery grip accessory.

The camera has a 14 frame buffer at JPEG fine and now boasts some of the menu features previously available on the 20D but not on the 300D – such as the ability to select focus and metering modes – are now included. Flash metering is now TTL.

This camera would be a superb back-up for the 20D – or even the 1Ds MkII for that matter.

Best news of all is the price – a penny under £800 in the UK. Our friends at LCE Reading (+44 (0)118 959 2149) tell me that they will be knocking it out for only £689.99 including a 18–55mm lens and VAT. That's only £586.37 if you're VAT registered.

Wacom showed the mother of all tablets – the **Cintiq** – which combines an LCD monitor with the control and productivity of a pen and tablet. Retouching is carried out directly on

the screen image.

Nikon's **D2x** was showing in the US for the first time, though we'd already seen it at Photokina. The huge prints produced from it were testament to the beautiful image quality obtainable from this fine DSLR.

One of the problems with the very tall DSLRs such as the Canon 1Ds MkII and Nikon D2x is that there was no backpack deep enough to house them.

Lowepro's new **Computrekker Plus AW** will take even the biggest, together with a host of lenses and a seventeen inch laptop in its own reinforced compartment. Internal (orange) bags are designed to house such items as cables, batteries and chargers.

Texas Instruments designs the guts of many well-know companies' digital compacts – including Kodak's – combining features from a host of smaller suppliers. This would make an interesting article in itself.

I saw just one enlarger at PMA.

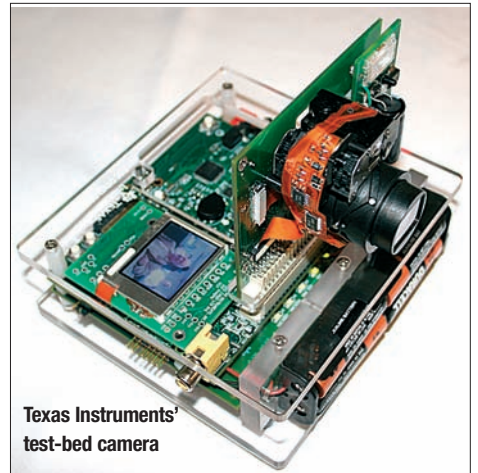
The **De Vere 504 DS** prints onto photographic paper from digital files.

It was good to see the ebullient **John Boyce** of De Vere who has single-handedly managed to convert digital imaging back to silver halide.

If only John could do the same for the rest of photography . . .



Canon Rebel XT (EOS-350D)



Texas Instruments' test-bed camera



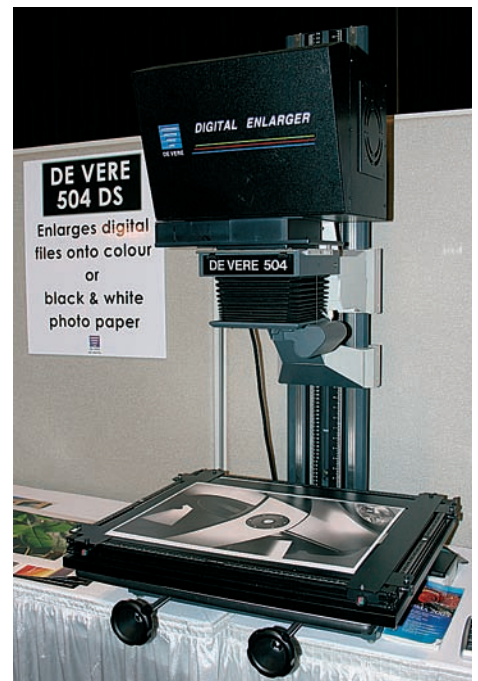
Lowepro Computrekker Plus AW



Huge prints from the Nikon D2x



Wacom's Cintiq LCD pen/tablet



DE VERE 504 DS  
Enlarges digital files onto colour or black & white photo paper

Copyright © 2005 by John Henshall john@epi-centre.com