

Peter Rieck presents engaging studio lighting workshop



– Courtesy David Cornwell from ETECH magazine

DWR Distribution hosted an informative studio lighting workshop at the company's offices in Roodepoort, Johannesburg. This well-attended full-day session was run by Peter Rieck of Rieck's lighting, who provided an overview of both basic lighting principles and advanced lighting techniques. Rieck also answered questions from the participants, illustrating his responses with specific examples from his long and varied career as a lighting director.

With the vast majority of the workshop attendees being young professionals working in the industry, the workshop underlined DWR's commitment to investing in the next generation of South African gaffers and lighting technicians.



"DWR's slogan is *It's all about the people*," commented Duncan Riley, company director. "But obviously an important aspect of this mission is training and educating the people, so that we can make a positive reinvestment into the local industry. We felt it was very important to launch this kind of brand-agnostic workshop, where we really focus on principles and techniques – and not specific items of gear."

According to Peter Rieck, the idea for the workshop emerged from the fact that there simply was no equivalent course available for "beginners and others just starting out in the field, who want to understand their job more deeply."

He explains that "lighting is about five things: exposure, modelling, depth, mood and effect. These are the same principles that were established in the early-1900s and they haven't changed, even though technology has advanced since then. If we gain a clear understanding of how these different elements operate and interact with each other, you start to learn how to bring a real sense of life to your two-dimensional medium. And if you have

this technical knowhow – and you see issues coming up in your work environment – then you are empowered to fix the problem before it gets to edit.”



Duncan Riley and Peter Rieck

The workshop also covered helpful hints about the way that lighting rigs and cameras interface, delving into technical tools and concepts like F-Stops, CRI, TLCl, colour temperature, waveform monitors, vector-scopes and makeup; solid general guidance on topics such as hard versus soft lighting and how to light faces for different effects; handy techniques for attendees to try out for themselves, such as using small ‘eye lights’ to “help the audience connect more deeply and quickly with dramatic characters or interviewees”; and an introduction to related topics such as rigging, networking and power supply and distribution.

The workshop prompted lively conversations in the room, such as about the difficulties of attaining the perfect camera white balance on set, leading to Rieck sharing the following pearl of wisdom with the group: “Some of the best teachers I’ve ever had were visual controllers.”

In Duncan Riley’s opinion, the “response to this first workshop shows that there is definitely a desire in the market for training and development initiatives like this. We will definitely be following up on the success of Peter’s workshop in the future.”

This positivity was reflected by two of the workshop’s attendees: Gillroy Barmann (dB Audio Namibia) and Anthony Mtsweni (802 Media, Edenvale). According to Barmann, “The training covered all the aspects of the job that are most important to learn about,” while – for Mtsweni – “the best part of the workshop is the chance to ask questions and get feedback right away, with the opportunity to actually see examples of the different things we are learning about.”

For more information about Rieck’s Lighting, please visit www.rieckslighting.com

