

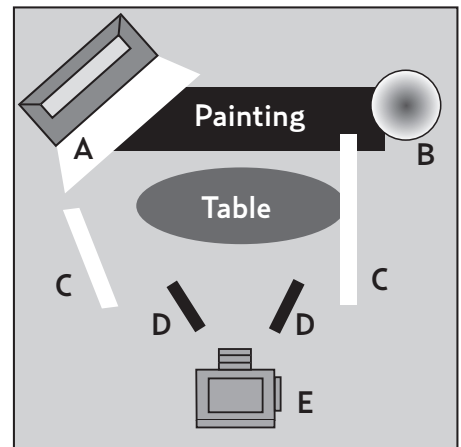
Tampa-based photographer Jay Carlson deconstructs how he captured his commercial image, “Taming the Lion.”

## Studying still life



This month we introduce readers to Jay Carlson, a Tampa-based commercial still life photographer, who's had successful studios in San Francisco and New York. His clients have included Mercedes Benz, Sam's Club, Thompson Cigar, Capri Album Co., the Danbury Mint, Christian Brothers Brandy, Beringer Vineyards, Frito-Lay and Cott Beverages. Carlson serves on the Board of Directors of the American Society of Media Photographers. For starters, we asked Carlson what went into creating this warm, appealing image (left) that we spied on his Web site, [www.jaycarlson.com](http://www.jaycarlson.com).

*If you have a question about set design or product styling you'd like Carlson to answer here, e-mail it to [lhunt@ppa.com](mailto:lhunt@ppa.com).*



A. Chimera Softbox with Speedotron 2400WS generator set at 800WS. B. Mole Richardson 1000K Fresnel spotted. C. White cards. D. Black Flags. E. Mamiya 645 AFD and Imacon Ixpress 132C digital back with 150mm lens, f/5.6 at 1/60 second.

## BEHIND THE IMAGE

**THE REASON:** "Taming the Lion," part of a series of photographs featuring liquids, was produced for self-promotion. My objective was to add warmth and whimsy to my personal portfolio of stock image candidates.

**THE BACK STORY:** Composed in collaboration with a stylist, the setting was inspired by a painting of the same name by John Hull, whose rich colors and whimsical style have always intrigued me. Note the etched bas relief lion heads on the stemware and the golden glow of the stylized lion's head seen in soft focus in the background.

**THE SETUP:** The lighting was simple. One Speedotron 2,400-watt-second generator with single light, fitted with small Chimera light bank, positioned at the back of the set to create an edge light for the bowl of pistachios and the decanter, while illuminating the lion-faced stems of the glasses. White cards bounced just enough fill light into the shadows and created shape. A small white card behind the decanter helped illuminate the liquor inside. The background was lit with a Mole-Richardson 1,000-watt Fresnel spotlight, which caused a slight falloff of light around the edges and added to the overall warmth of the image. This light also contributed to highlighting the translucence of the liquor by lighting the natural gold tones in the lion's mane in the background.

**THE CAMERA SYSTEM:** A Mamiya 645 AFD camera body with a 22-megapixel Imacon Ixpress 132C digital back and a 150mm lens, mounted on a Bogen tripod. Shot in RAW format at f/5.6, ISO 50, at the daylight balance setting on the Imacon's FlexColor 3.9.2 software.

**POST CAPTURE:** The shot was transferred to a Power Mac G4 workstation running OSX 10.3.8. FlexColor 3.9.2 software opened the RAW file for basic post-capture work, and Adobe Photoshop CS finished the job with minor retouching. ■