

Nikon adds even more versatility to its flash system by taking the light in close.

BY ELLIS VENER

# Small is *beautiful*

NIKON R1C1 WIRELESS  
CLOSE-UP  
SPEEDLIGHT SYSTEM



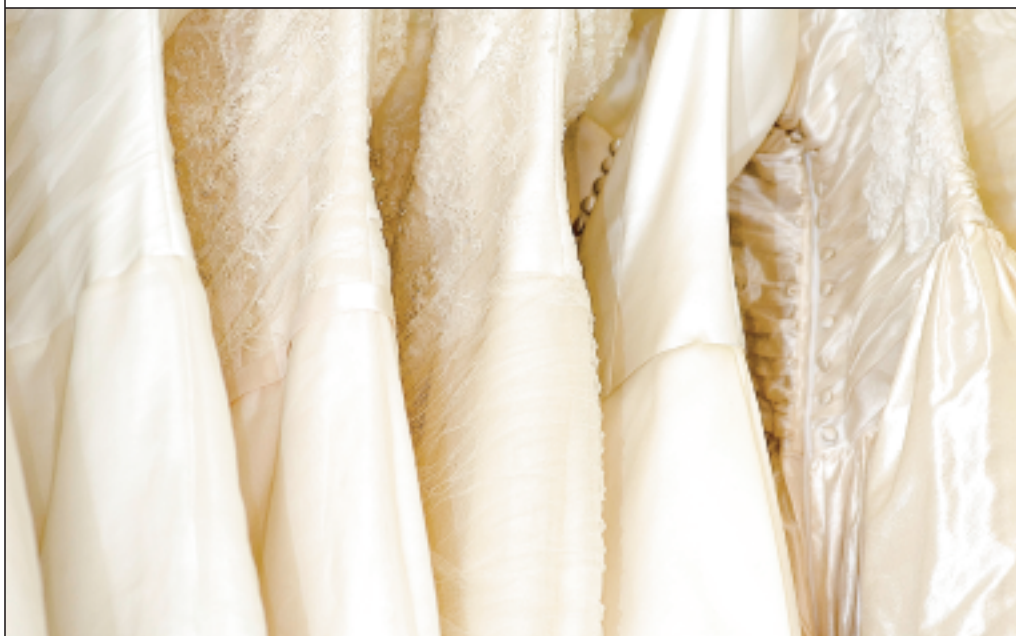
Nikon extends the versatility of its brilliant flash system with the new and equally expandable R1C1 Wireless Close-Up Speedlight System. Nikon's iTTL has proven itself to be the most consistently precise TTL-controlled electronic flash available today, and for product design and interface, the hallmark by which other flash systems should be judged. Without much effort, a photographer can set up any number of SB-800, SB-600, and now the SB-R200 Speedlights, arrayed in up to three groups, four channels per group, and precisely control them in third-stop increments from a master unit attached directly to the

camera's hot shoe or the pop-up flash mounted in the D70/D70s, D80 and D200 bodies.

The R1C1 Wireless Close-Up Speedlight System comprises two SB-R200 Speedlights (Guide Number 33/ISO 100), an SU-800 Wireless Commander, a mounting system to attach up to four SB-200 units directly to a lens to create a shadowless ring-light effect. (Up to eight R200 lights can be attached to the ring if it is not mounted on the lens.) The package also includes small light modifiers and various other mounting and grip bits. The SU-800 and the SB-R200s are each powered by a single 3V CR123A

lithium battery, good for approximately 290 full power flashes or, in the case of the SU-800, 1,200 transmissions. The SB-R200 recycles in 6 seconds or less depending on light output, with flash duration of about 1/60,000 second.

If you understand the basic laws of light (angle of reflection = angle of incidence; size of light source relative to the subject determines contrast; specular vs. reflexive highlights; and basic lighting ratios), then right out of the box the R1C1 will give you sophisticated results with easy control from the camera over output of several different lights. Because the SB-R200 Speedlights are small (2.7x3.8x2.3 inches), you can tuck or clamp them into small nooks, as long as you maintain a sightline or have a good bounce



This handheld shot was taken with two SB-200s mounted on the lens ring, using a 105mm f/2.8G AF -VR Micro Nikkor lens. I exposed for 1/250 second at f/4, ISO 200.



for the wireless communication between the camera and the Speedlights. You can achieve some seriously fun lighting without a lot of the old headaches.

To set lights into groups and channels, simply assign the Speedlights to a group (A, B, or C) and channel (1, 2, 3 or 4), then set up the same arrangement on the SU-800. You can turn groups and channels on or off and set the relative amount of illumination from each group-channel combination with the settings on the SU-800's large LCD. You can adjust the output in a group in third-stop increments from -3 stops to +2 stops (relative to the overall exposure).

Who will find the RIC1 useful?

Aside from photographers specializing in shooting insects and hummingbirds, the RIC1 is a powerful addition for food, fashion, beauty, still life and jewelry photographers. It also opens up intriguing possibilities for portrait and industrial photographers. ■

I photographed this toothbrush with a Nikon D200 set to iTTL Color Matrix II metering, ISO 400, using an 18-200mm f/3.5-5.6 G ED-IF AF-S VR DX Zoom-Nikkor lens, exposing for 1/250-second at f/16. Two SB-R200 units plus an SB-800 Speedlight provided the light. With the SU-800 mounted in the camera's hot shoe, I set up the SB-R200s, one on either side of the toothbrush, roughly 2 feet from the subject. The background is a white scrim, backlit with the SB-800. A white fill card was placed just beneath the lens. I assigned one SB-R200 to Group A and the other to Group B; the SB-800 was placed in Group C. This allowed me to precisely control the output of each light from the camera position through the controls on the SU-800. With flash duration of about 1/60,000 second, the SB-R200s perfectly froze the motion of the water droplets being flung from the electric toothbrush rotating at 7,600 rpm, and the motion of each bristle. Total studio time for the shoot was slightly less than an hour from conception to the last of more than 50 variations. The second view is a 100-percent enlargement of the original image.

## specs:

### Nikon RIC1 Wireless Close-Up Speedlight System

**COMPATIBLE BODIES:** All Nikon iTTL capable bodies

**MSRP:** \$819 (includes SU-800 Wireless Commander, two SB-R200

Speedlights, and various accessories and attachment rings). Additional SB-R200 speedlights, \$179 each.