

A powerful monolight cuts down on cables and allows for lower ISO, smaller apertures. No more tripping the light—fantastic!

BY JOE FARACE

Light *bright*

ADORAMA FLASHPOINT II 2420 MONOLIGHT



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Adorama recently announced two additions to its Flashpoint II series of affordable monolights. The first is the compact 320 model that I reviewed recently for *Professional Photographer Online* (www.ppmag.com); the second is the more powerful 2420 model, which delivers 1,200-watt-second output for photographers who need extra power for large group photos, studio product shots, or working at small apertures.

Self-contained like all monolights, the Flashpoint II 2420 doesn't need to be connected to a central power pack, which reduces cables and makes for fast setup. With a MySlave 60TX Digital Radio Slave, which has the tiniest transmitter and receiver I've found, you need even fewer cables (see "Wireless Tripping").

The Flashpoint II 2420 uses the standard 1/4-inch phone plug interface, and the MySlave 60TX includes a cable that plugs right into the 2420 synch socket. For traditionalists and those who prefer to save money, Adorama includes a 16-foot synch cable to connect the camera to the

For this image of Zoe, I placed a Flashpoint II 2420 fitted with a Westcott 45-inch Optical White Satin umbrella with removable black cover at camera right. A Flashpoint II 320 monolight with another 45-inch Optical White Satin umbrella with removable black cover provided fill at camera left. Exposure: 1/20 second at f/20, ISO 200. Lens: Canon EF 85mm f/1.8.

THE GOODS: PRO REVIEW



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monolight. The flash synchronization trip voltage is just 6v, making it safe for all film or digital SLRs. Press the remote button on the back to fire the monolight via its built-in switchable slave. The slave allows the 2420 to be tripped by another Flashpoint monolight or an on-camera flash. *Tip: When using the 2420 with a shoe-mounted flash, be sure to place the on-camera flash in bounce mode to avoid ugly secondary shadows behind the subject.*

The Flashpoint II 2420 has an undistinguished yet rugged metal housing. It offers continuously variable power settings from full down to 1/8 power. The five buttons on the back of the unit control several functions. The first powers the modeling light. The second activates a flash-ready beep to supplement the Flash

In a makeshift basement studio, I photographed Adam with three Flashpoint II monolights. I positioned a 2420 fitted with a Westcott 45-inch soft silver umbrella at camera right. For fill, I placed a Flashpoint II 320 monolight with a Westcott 45-inch Optical White Satin umbrella at camera left. I placed a second 320 with the standard reflector behind and to the right of the subject. Exposure: 1/40 second at f/16, ISO 200. Lens: Canon EF 28-135mm IS at 95mm.

WIRELESS TRIPPING

Using monolights helps minimize the number of cables I could trip over. To further that goal, I've also been using a MySlave 60TX Digital Radio Slave from Booth Photo (us.boothphoto.com). This compact, shoe-mounted transmitter is much smaller than the Canon ST-E2 unit, and the receiver is just as small. The system has a range up to 98 feet, more than enough for my studio. It has six-channel capacity and operates on a radio frequency of 315 MHz. You can also trigger the transmitter via synch cord connection if that works with your camera. The receiver fits any 1/4-inch monolight connection, but you can get an adapter at Radio Shack if you want to plug it into lights with mini plugs. The kit costs \$289; additional receivers are \$199 each.



specs:

Adorama Flashpoint II 2420 Monolight

MAXIMUM POWER OUTPUT: 1,200WS

VARIABLE POWER CONTROL:

Full-1/16 stepless

GUIDE NUMBER (ISO 100): 300

RECYCLE TIME: 1-6 seconds

COLOR TEMPERATURE: 5,600K

MODELING LAMP: 250W adjustable

BUILT-IN SLAVE: Yes

DIMENSIONS: 15.5x5.6x7.5 inches

PRICE: \$499.95

Ready LED. The third button sets the modeling light to vary with flash output, dimming it when the flash is fired and

bringing it up after the flash recycles. The fourth button test fires the monolight, and the fifth controls the reasonably quiet built-in fan.

Two Flashpoint II 2420s would be an ideal lighting package for corporate and group photographs, including really big wedding parties, with enough power to shoot at small apertures for maximum depth-of-field so that everybody in the shot is in sharp focus, from the front row to the back. With a single subject, the Flashpoint II 2420 power makes it possible to use your lowest ISO setting to squeeze the maximum image quality from the digital file. What the Flashpoint II 2420's external housing lacks in style, it makes up in power and value.

The flash tube and modeling lamp for the Flashpoint II 2420 are user replaceable, and Adorama includes a power cord, sync

cord, and modeling light. Get a spare; they're cheap at \$14.95. The monolight also includes a reflector with an opening to accommodate the umbrella shaft holder that's built into the side of the 2420 body. You can mount or remove the reflector to the front of the monolight with a bayonet mount that's compatible with every accessory made for Flashpoint II series monolights, including the snoot (\$44.50), Four-Leaf barndoors (\$39.95), or 24x24-inch Softbox (\$59.95).

The Flashpoint II 2420 is available as a single monolight or in kits. Monolight Kit includes a single model 2420, light stand and 40-inch white umbrella. Also available is a Flashpoint II 2420 Portrait Wedding Monolight Kit with two 2420 monolights, two light stands, two 40-inch umbrellas, and a carrying case. ■