



Nomadic
Retail
→

Café & Take-away
BESCHLE
Outdoor

KLARA

ENW

NOMADIC RETAIL

On the 26. November the department of Visual Merchandising, Schule für Gestaltung hosted an event called Nomadic Retail in Klara, Basel. I was commissioned to document the event, under guidelines from the creative direction as to what should be shown specifically through those images.



Relief flooded through me as I entered the location and I realised how necessary it was to have a speed light with me; it had arrived per post only just the day before! The lighting was so low that even with a F point of 2.8 and on a GM lens no less, without an additional light source - this mission was futile. Of course, for some shots I could have compensated with the aperture but this was a real live event unfolding. In order to capture the full impression, the background needed to be enough in focus too. That led me to the shutter speed, here I couldn't compensate either, not with everyone zipping about all the time! (Of course, we basically just forget the ISO ever even existed and leave it on the lowest setting possible before the picture starts looking more like rice than pixels...) This was the first time I was shooting with a speed light attached directly above the camera. It wasn't until later that day when I'd returned to the atelier that I realised, damn. The foreground of these images are all over exposed because of the direction and intensity that the extra light had come from. Luckily, no need to fret - this is where the magic of Camera Raw and the technique of masking literally, saved my life. Okay, not literally but it definitely relieved a lot of the anxiety I was at that moment, definitively experiencing.

The next challenge I encountered was in the presentation hall - I thought to myself - "How the hell am I supposed to show that the room is full without showing anyones face?" Plus, how do I prepare the camera that there's enough focus in the background - because that's where the focus point is - but at the same time - make sure the presenter is in focus - even if they are, with all do respect, at times, flailing their arms around the room like DC Comic book hero the "Elongated Man". How do I achieve all this, how do I set the camera in a way which ensures the integrity of the pixels and where do I compromise that the image doesn't turn into a rice field?

I can't use the flash, because it will disturb the audience and distract the presenter. What I can do, is focus on the presenter - I can't go under 125 with the shutter speed, because they're moving. I can remember that the ISO does exist because I'm using a Sony Alpha 7 II and I can up it to max 800. With the remainder of the shadow, I can play with the aperture somewhere between 4 and 6 and manually focus on the presentation, so that the audience is blurred and that their faces are now neither recognisable nor distinguishable. Then not to forget in between shots, I can take the camera off my neck because after 3 hours, with the weight just shy of 1kg, the 24-70mm F2.8 GM lens is bending my body into new and honestly, undesirable shapes...



It was approaching the end of the event and I was preparing for the remaining few shots, close ups which required a model. And so I started a conversation with two of the students from Visual Merchandising. Our conversation turned toward the similarities and differences between their study of Visual Design, and mine of Process Design. This leads me to my visit at the Schule für Gestaltung on the 10. December, where I was invited to come and meet the students and see their projects.

WHY VISUAL MERCHANDISING?

On the 10. of December, I was honoured to visit the students of Visual Merchandising in their communal atelier at the Schüle für Gestaltung, Basel. I bore witness to a comfortable atmosphere, constructed and fed from a healthy and productive feedback culture. I hardly felt as a guest, as they made an effort to include me in their friendly banter!

I didn't exactly know what to expect as I opened the door to room CEG8. Although foreign to this space, I entered and was welcomed to take a seat. Presentations were in process and by the end of two hours, I could finally grasp an essence of the task at hand.

The space was held by Felice Dittle, who appeared confident in his feedback. He was on the one hand informative, direct, and yet still supportive of the works being shown. This constructive critiquing left me in a kind of wonderment and awe, that this was living proof of a healthy feedback culture, where everyone was heard and taken seriously. As a student in general and as a kind of designer, this touched me deeply to see this small community interact, share and be vulnerable with one another,

in such a genuine way. I don't think I'll be quick to forget what I saw for myself, in this space.

After the formalities of the presentations of the students work, I had the opportunity to speak with everyone and hear about why they choose to learn here. I was grateful for the chance to try and understand what their drivers are and why this kind of design holds importance to them.



"To further my education in design and conception and develop a deeper understanding of colours and approaches. My main competence is to learn the approach in the design process. The communication and spatial representation and presence of a brand is becoming increasingly important. How does this relate in everyday life? I work, among other things, as a trade fair manager and can (could, if trade fairs were held) implement this. How could my professional future look? I could work in a communication agency like Aroma in creative or architecture fields with focus on communication concepts in space such as retail, trade fair, point of sales promotion, etc.."

- Roger Riedo



"I take this path for self-knowledge and further development of education. We purposefully design different creative projects. Make independent project related decisions. Learn new ways to set goals. With every successful realisation we strive for success and enjoyment of different things. The goal is to leave creative traces in every place." - Shanon Neukom

"The versatility of design possibilities in visual merchandising and interior design have fascinated me for a long time. The study program offers a platform to examine design, technical and marketing strategic topics in more detail and to deepen them. In the course of study, the design eye is trained and the many different subject areas of good conceptual design are illuminated. Thus, we not only gain insight into a beautiful design work, but we are always aware of the aspects that need to be considered and the possibilities that the individual areas can offer us."

- Michelle Bernhard