ADVERTISING PHOTOGRAPHY

BY

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" In photography one must remember the photograph is created through your eyes

and your lights; the client is buying your eyes (Saunders 1988:9).

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INTRODUCTION

Commercial photography today is a huge part of business today. Page through a magazine and you will see photographic advertisements of food, beverages and nowadays images that are generated digitally.

Advertising photography can be divided into two sections: location and studio advertising. When doing location advertising it is important to choose the correct environment that will suit the client's product and brings out the product's qualities and advantages. Shooting and advertisement in the studio is totally different because the photographer are able to control the environment as well as the set-up.

The author wants to achieve a good image by making use of simple lighting techniques. The author likes to experiment with light. It might seem difficult, but in practice is not difficult at all. Small but important aspects of a set-up that are difficult to enhance can be brought out by making use of the painting with light technique.

The script consist of the purpose of advertising photography, different roles of advertising photography, the advantage of using scamps and the basic studio set-up. Appendix A will consist of all the illustrations of the author's work and appendix B will be a short historical background on advertising photography. Diagrams will show how certain lighting set-ups were done.

All the images will be shot with the Sinar 4 X 5 " large format camera. The author prefers to make use of the large format camera because of the good quality that can be achieved. The images will be shot on transparency because the author enjoys the rich colour of the film especially when under exposed by a quarter of a stop.

The author hopes that the script can be used by up and coming advertising photographers as future reference to advertising photography.

CHAPTER I

PURPOSE OF ADVERTISING PHOTOGRAPHY

Advertising photography is illustrative photography that embodies or expresses a predetermined idea. It is to sell its subject matter, either literally by making the viewer want to purchase the product or indirectly by, creating a positive attitude towards the activities presented and to introduce new products and organizations as prolifically strong.

Photographic illustrations are used in more than just newspaper and magazine advertisements. They are a major part of catalogues, brochures and promotional literature as well as posters.

In technique and application, advertising is probably the most encompassing area in the field of photography (Appendix A, Fig, 2).

CHAPTER II

ADVERTISING PHOTOGRAPHY

DEFINITION

Advertising is a paid non-personal communication form, an identified sponsor uses mass media to persuade or influence an audience (Greyling 1994: 18).

Advertising photography can be divided into two categories namely location photography and studio photography.

LOCATION PHOTOGRAPHY

More than any other graphic art, photography is used to record and report, to capture images of the world as it is rather than how it should be. It is bound to reality in a way that illustration and painting are not, to record the actual appearance of things. There is still room for various approaches, but the raw material of photography on location is the visual record of real objects, place and peoples (Appendix A, Fig. 3).

This simple fact has ensured that photography on location is influenced as much by circumstances as by the photographer's preferences. The situation always makes certain practical and technical demands that must be met, regardless of how any photographer wants to interpret the subject. Photographers may take a passive or innovative role, but in either case they are observers and hardly ever directors. Most location photography trends are towards the realistic, rather than the imaginative (Appendix A, Fig. 3).

STUDIO PHOTOGRAPHY

On location and in the field, the photographer is completely at the mercy of the prevailing conditions. The subject, on the whole, has to be accepted as it stands, and if the lighting and weather are unsuitable, there is no choice but to wait, or the give up the shot altogether.

A studio in contrast offers the photographer almost total control over every aspect of the photograph. In particular it allows photographers to arrange the setting and the lighting in just the way they want.

Studio photography inevitably loses some of the sense of reality that is important in many location work. Studio photographs are indeed more artificial. In commercial fields such as advertising and fashion photography where the photographer must be able to guarantee results, the predictability of the studio environment is invaluable. This is not only the case in advertising photography but also in fields such as fine art photography, portraiture etc. (Appendix A, Fig 4).

ROLES OF ADVERTISING PHOTOGRAPHY

According to Dick Ward advertising can be explained in terms of the functions it has in business and society. The four different roles that have been identified for advertising are:

Marketing role

Communication role

Economic role

Societal role

MARKETING ROLE

Along with sales promotion, public and personal selling, advertising is one of the vehicles employed by a business or organization to communicate to its customers. Marketing is of utmost importance and by means of a photograph it is the best medium to sell the company and the product. Although advertising photography is just one of the a company's demands, it is the most visible.

COMMUNICATION ROLE

Advertising photography is a form of man's communication. It transmit different types of market information to match buyers and sellers in the market place. The most important role for an advertiser is to get the market to notice the advertisement, either by seeing, reading or watching it. Communication between the photographer, stylist and client must be very good to achieve the best result.

ECONOMIC ROLE

Little is known about the true nature of advertising photography in the economy. Charles Sandage, an advertising professor, provides a different prospective. He sees the economic role of advertising as: " helping society to achieve abundance by informing an persuading members of society with respect to products, services and ideals" (Wilms-Hursts 1989: 57).

SOCIETAL ROLE

Advertising photography has a number of social roles. It informs the customer about new and improved products and teaches us how to use these innovations. It empowers the consumer, because he/she can compare different brands of the product/service and choose the most suitable one.

CHAPTER III

① INTRODUCTION

Now the practical side of advertising photography is discussed such as planning the lighting set-up composition etc.

② SHOOT TO SUCCEED

For an advertisement to stand out from the rest it must fight for the reader's attention. Magazines are usually bought for their editorial content, not for their advertising. Therefore, the picture must have enough impact to create immediate interest. By putting witty slogans with the picture you can also get immediate interest and if you have the attention of the reader you have won half the battle. An intriguing advertisement will make people stop and think: "what does this mean?" or "I really like this picture".

Advertising must understand the audience, the aim to reach and always to talk to them in the language they can relate to. A lot of times the market is missed due to the fact that the target group is connected to the wrong market. For example, being to aggressive when talking to women and to gentle when talking to men. A further example of understanding the audience, is that children's shoes are mainly bought by mothers, therefore, it is wise to put the advert in a women's magazine rather than to put it in a men's magazine that advertises hunting guns. When aiming at the mothers, the message can take on mot an emotional approach because they are softer and can be convinced more easily in such a way. On the other hand, if you want to convince

young boys to join the army, you would rather use very hard, tough black and white photographs to show them what they are letting themselves into.

③ SCAMPS

If you want the shoot to be successful, pre-planning is very important. Here the drawing of scamps are very useful. With the scamps the client can get more or less an idea of what you plan to do and if you are on the wrong path you can be stop immediately and money can be saved for yourself. The scamp can come in handy when you start your set-up in a studio.

An example of more or less what a scamp looks like. With the scamp and in the layout the type of lighting to be used can be determined. In this case of soft lighting was used. It is a women's perfume, therefore, using the soft lighting, you can almost smell the perfume through the picture.

④ STUDIO SETUP

Another important side of pre-planning is the studio set-up.
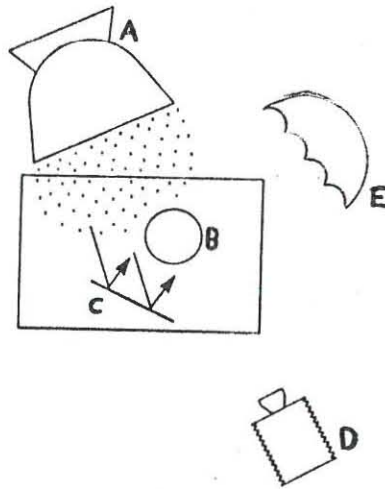
A. Light-box with diffusion panel.

B. Subject that are photographed

C. Reflective panel

D. Large format camera

E. Umbrella

A very basic set-up in the studio suitable for a very busy studio is as follows: When busy with a shoot, it is important to make use of props. By using props the subject that is photographed can be enhanced for example "keys". It is, however, important not to over-prop the shoot. Your main subject may disappear in the props.

Many professional studios are equipped with an infinity curve on which it is pleasure to work on. There are no background lines that can cut your photograph in half, resulting in the break down of the final image.

5 LIGHTING

Experimentation with lighting is very important in advertising photography. Sometimes hard and soft lighting is necessary for a shoot to be successful. When advertising beverages and perfume, it is very important that the name of the product can be seen clearly and that there are no hot-spots. It can easily happen that the light fall on the name from the wrong angle and the name is so blown out that you would not be able to read it. With hard lighting feeling of roughness can be created, an example is a blown out face or a black and white photograph with no tones, only black and white. Just a few examples of what can be accomplished by using lights.

End
Book II.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION OF AUTHORS WORK

WINGS

The photograph of wings perfume was done on a Sinar 4 X 5'' large format camera. The photograph was lit with a softbox from the back, that formed the whole backdrop. One strobe light with a grid from the front lit both bottles. Unfortunately, there was just the one softbox and I had to use it for the back. If I had two softboxes, one could be used from the front, lessening the hot spots.

A 240 mm lens was used and the photograph was shot on F11. F11 gave enough depth of field that the bottle in the front is completely in focus and the rest out of focus. The fact that the rest of the photograph is out of focus keep the attention with the bottle in the front and that was exactly what the client wanted. The water drops in the front was used as third element otherwise the front would have looked too empty. Another problem that can be identified is the fact that the breathing space in both sides of the bottles is not enough. With more breathing space the photograph would look a lot better.

This is not a studio shot but was made in the living room of a house at night. No studio lights were used, instead a portable light kit was employed. Just one exposure was made using Agfachrome 50 ASA Professional film.

OLD ST ANDREW SCOTCH WHISKEY

With this shot, the bottle was places on the infinity curve - Five light sources were used. These are:

1. Softboxes

2. Spot lights

3. Strobe lights

The softbox was in front and basically lit the whole bottle. One spot was put just on the name so that it could be seen clearly. Strobe light was underneath the infinity curve and was two stops stronger than the rest of the reading. Therefore, it look as if the bottle is floating in the air. The other strobe light was from the back to bring the colour and richness of whiskey out.

At this stage, everything was fine except for the fact that the neck and the cap of the bottle disappeared in the back drop. The photographer took another spot light and shone it through a red screen not exactly in the center of the cap because the bottle was already standing dead center. That brought the neck and cap out from the back drop.

The photograph was done on a large format camera with a 300 mm lens Wide open aperture of F8 was used. By maybe using a smaller aperture of F16 or F22, the neck and cap of the bottle would also be in focus. The bottle is well lit except for the fact that the lower part is maybe a bit over-exposed.

EERSTE RIVIER GRAND RESERVE

The shot was done on 4 x 5'" Sinar camera with a 360 mm lens F5.6 to get the back ground out of focus. The in focus bottle and glass stand out from the rest, one of the main reasons why the photograph works as an advertising photograph. The composition is not involved, the bottle and glass is put next to each other, but still the shot works.

The fact that the glass is well-lit and shiny, definitely enhancing the photograph. The bottle and glass pre-standing on a marble platform, were lit with two softboxes, one from the back and one to lit the label and the glass. Very soft lighting was used. One problem I encountered, is that the softbox is reflecting a bit to much on the bottle which makes part of the label unclear. This is not distracting, but it is breaking the image slightly down.

You can see a definite white line on the right side of the bottle near the neck, preventing the bottle disappearing in the background. The triangle was formed by two pieces of cardboard. This holding the photograph together. At the moment, not enough light is falling on the triangle, making it appear black. Even though a green triangle could have been appealing, the black is working very well. The photograph was done on Agfa Professional film 100 ASA.

AMSTEL LAGER

Composition wise the photograph is working quite well. Something completely different from the usual beer advertisements. By just using the neck of the bottle and a bit of glass on can clearly read the name while the shape of the glass is just creating that bit of specialness. The beer looks as if it will attract more classy beer drinkers. The name is well lit, maybe there could have been more emphasise on the beer in the glass.

Another point one must take into consideration is the fact that the bottle and glass received that same amount of light. Maybe the attention will slip from the bottle to the beer in the glass and the shot fail as advertising. There could be a bit more lighting on the foam running out of the glass and the bottle. It would give the shot a whole lot more impact.

The shot was lit with one softbox in the front to lit the glass and the bottle. Two spot lights, one from the back to lit the beer in the glass and the other to lit just the name a bit more. It was shot on a black background so that all the attention stay with what is going on in the front. There is no distractions.

The photograph was shot on a 4 X 5" large format camera with 360 mm lens at F11. Agfachrome Professional slide film was used with an ASA100. Two exposures were made. The first one was to capture everything as it is at 1/125 of a second. The second exposure was a time exposure of more or less 45 to 60 seconds. I used a torch and lit the bottle from the back to create that glowing effect. The mixture of daylight and tungsten creates the glowing yellow and warm effect.

XS-MEN'S PERFUME

The image was done on a 4 X 5" Sinar large format camera with a 300 mm close-up lens. Agfa 100 ASA professional slide film was used to create the image. Two F8.5 exposures were made.

By going in really close and slightly off center create a different angle. The bottle is in the shape of a Zippo lighter and, therefore, the lit is opened a bit to create the same feeling. The bottle was placed on a rusted plate. The completely out of focus back ground keeps the attention on the bottle. The waterdrops sprayed on the bottle creates an after shower feeling. It is, however, a pity that some of the waterdrops dried away as quickly, leaving marks on the bottle that can be seen clearly. The waterdrops on the metal part creates a special feel to the photograph.

Three light sources was used, a spot light to bring out the name, so that it can be read easily. The second light was used to lit the main part of the bottle from the left. By possibly using a forth light to lit the right hand side, the shot would be more clear. However, this did not bother me. The third light was used to lit the background to bring out the rust colours. By possibly using a brighter colour for the back the shot would probably be clearer. However, I think that it works well as it is.

Food colouring was used to put a bit of colour to the name. The one light was slightly strong and the name was a bit unclear. I think that this shot is bordering on good.

SO PERFUME

Composition wise, the bottle was placed on the base of a wine glass. The base was filled with green food colouring to add a bit more colour to the image. The bright red and green with the bright, almost blown out white, in the background is making the shot good. It is not eye catching but the bright colours make the shot interesting and it makes you look more than once. It brings images of the Citi Golf Advertisements with the bright coloured cars to mind. The green gel in the background creates a slight reflection on the bottle. The main ideas, however, was to break the bright white in the background.

The bottle was lit with two lights. The main light source was from the back, using a softbox. The second light was a spot light from the top, basically to lit the top of the cap. Without the light is was just a black spot in the image. It was done on a 4 X 5" large format camera with a 300 mm lens and was shot on FS6 to get the background out of focus. The back lighting made it possible that you can read the name clearly. Normally, the name is in red, but he backlight turns it black.

Two exposures were made. After the first exposure the film was developed and found to be slightly under-exposed. In the second exposure, developing was pushed with one step resulting in the final image. Agfachrome 100 ASA Professional film was used and produced a good end result. Saturation wise, Agfa film gives very rich bright colours.

WINGS FOR MEN

A rusted plate, bend to form an infinity curve, was used as background and to place the bottle of perfume. The rusted plate gives you the feel of a man, while the strange shape of the bottle and the blue colour bring out the weakness in the man. It makes the statement that no matter how strong you are, somewhere you have a weak spot.

It was done on a large format 4 X 5" camera with a 300 mm lens. One exposure was made on F8. The open F stop is working well to get the background out of focus but I feel that you need to get the whole bottle in focus. The fact that the top part is just on the edge of out of focus is slightly distracting, resulting in the writing on the cap to be unclear. The reflection from the softboxes in the cap creates a little bit of brightness, preventing the shot from being without impact.

The rich colour of the background is working quite effective to bring out the blue of the bottle. When the set-up was complete, a piece of white paper was positioned at the back of the bottle, giving the bottle a glowing appearance.

Water was poured around the bottle to create the feeling that the contents is flowing out of the bottle, towards you. The slight reflection further enhanced the impact of the image. It is positioned in a third of the frame and the fact that there are no third element can have a negative influence on the image. However, the rich colour of the background as well as blue of the bottle is effective to sell the product. Although slightly underexposed, I like this photograph and do not find this disturbing.

SOL: MEXICAN BEER

The two bottles and glasses were placed on a marble tile. The whole photograph is very clean and the composition work well. One criticism is that the name is not well lit. However, the reflection in the bottle in the front as well as the black in the glass enhance the whole image and give the beer a classy feeling. It is lit mainly with a softbox from the back, giving the beer a nice deep colour A single spot light in the front to lit the name was, unfortunately, not strong enough.

Two exposures were made on F8. The shallow depth of field worked to keep the attention on the bottle in front. The out of focus bottle in the back was mainly used as a third element. The image was done on 4 X 5" Sinar camera with a 300 mm lens. Agfachrome 100 ASA Professional was used for the best results.

TUSCANY: BLACK AND WHITE

Something completely different from the rest of the work. Tuscany was done on Agfa 50 ISO black and white negative film. The negative was put on line film to get a black and white positive. High contrast developer were used to get only black and white. Something that is disturbing is the inscription on the bottle in the back which is to clear and in focus. This somewhat breaks the image down. The out of focus bottles at the back create nice feeling. It is unfortunate that the leaves in the front turned out black.

It was shot on the infinity curve and four light sources were used.

1. Two softboxes

2. Cone screen

3. Spot light

The softboxes lit the whole set-up, while the other two lights were used to create a feeling. The light from underneath was overexposed with three stops to fake the idea that the bottles are floating. The spot in the back was there to make the background go completely black. It was something different that the author tried and proved to be only partially successful.

SAN MARCO SAMBUCA

The bottle and the glasses was lit with the two softboxes from the front, one light lit the colour paper in the back and a spot to lift the bottle out form the marble base. Lighting was straight forward.

The out of focus colours in the background give the a nice feeling to the photograph, something completely different. If the background was more out of focus it would looked much better. I wanted the colours to blend into one another with no definite lines. The in focus reflections in the glasses and the bottles gives it a tropical feeling and enhance the photograph quite a lot, without that it would be very boring. The angle chosen to shot, also work well when done a bit higher from where most of the advertising photographs are done from and give it a slight different dimension. One criticism is the fact the beans disappear on the marble plate and one can see them only if you look very closely.

This photograph was done with a 4 X 5" camera with a 360 mm lens of F8.5. Agfachrome professional slide film was used for the best results.

GUCCI: NOBILE AFTER SHAVE

The bottle was placed on an infinite curve made out of aluminum foil. The set-up was lit with two softboxes and a spot light. The spotlight was used to create a glowing appearance to the fluid in the bottle. The one softbox was used to lit the name and the cap. The second light box was used to lit part of the bottle but mainly the background. A purple gel was placed in front of the light box to add colour to the photograph. The uneven patterns of the aluminum foil creates a nice atmosphere and put emphasis on the bottle. This feeling is enhanced by the shiny bottle against the background.

Two transparencies was shot, both of them with a 300 mm lens on a 4 X 5" camera. At a F-stop of Figure 8. The one transparency was developed with F6 (slide) chemistry. The second transparency was crossed processed with C41 (negative) chemistry. Although the colours differs completely from that in the negative, the author considered it to be successful. An almost solarised image was the result. The author think that the negative can be used for advertising because of the deep, rich colours. It also appears to be sharper on the negative than on the transparency (picture A is the slide and picture B is the reversal (negative). The shot was done on Agfachrome 100ASA Professional slide film.

OLMECA TEQUILA

One aspect that makes this photograph a success, is the reflection of the name through the glass. Very simple lighting was used, mainly back lighting so that the name can be read clearly trough the fluid in the glass. The close cropped image really works well and there is no elements that distract your eye. Everything in the image adds to the end result. Nothing is unnecessary, the glass, the bottle and the orange in the glass of tequila. A orange slice was used in place of the traditional lemon. The reason for this is the brighter colour of the orange peel than that of the lemon. The light sources used are as stated above. One light box from the front lit the glass and the front part of the name of the bottle. Lastly, a spot was put in place to add more light on the slice of orange for extra colour.

Always remember the bigger the format the better the result will be. This photograph was also shot on a 4 X 5" camera with a 360 mm lens at F32 to get a maximum depth of field. The photograph work well. It is crisp and clear and one can almost taste the tequila by looking at the picture.

CONCLUSION

It is important to create a socially acceptable advertisement because the public eye must be caught, so that the product will sell.

A wide range of social and cultural groups exist and every group's needs must be catered for. Having the wrong approach to a product can cause the photographer to miss the market totally. A simple example is not to advertise pork in a Jewish magazine.

It can clearly be seen that the author achieved the simplicity he wanted in his photographs. It is important never to over prop a shot, because the actual product can disappear in the props. The viewer may also be confused by what the actual product is The image will then immediately loose its credibility.

The author enjoys shooting close cropped images for example the Amstel Lager and the XS perfume advertisements. The advantage to close crop images is that the viewer's attention stays captured.

The author hopes that he can create a positive attitude within aspiring photographers towards advertising photography because it has such a wide field and opportunities are limited to a creative mind.

"The golden eye of print advertising gave us an ever present, ever changing art gallery" (Saunders 1988: 9).

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APPENDIX A

Figure 1:   Computerised image

Figure 3:   Heineken

Figure 4:   **Amstel Lager**

Figure 5:   Old St. Andrews Scotch Whiskey

Figure 6:   **Eerste Rivier Grand Reserve**

Figure 7:   **Amstel**

Figure 8:   **San Marco Sambuca**

Figure 9:   Sol

Figure 10:   Olmega Tequila

Figure 11:   Tuscany

Figure 12:   Wings

Figure 14: Tuscany

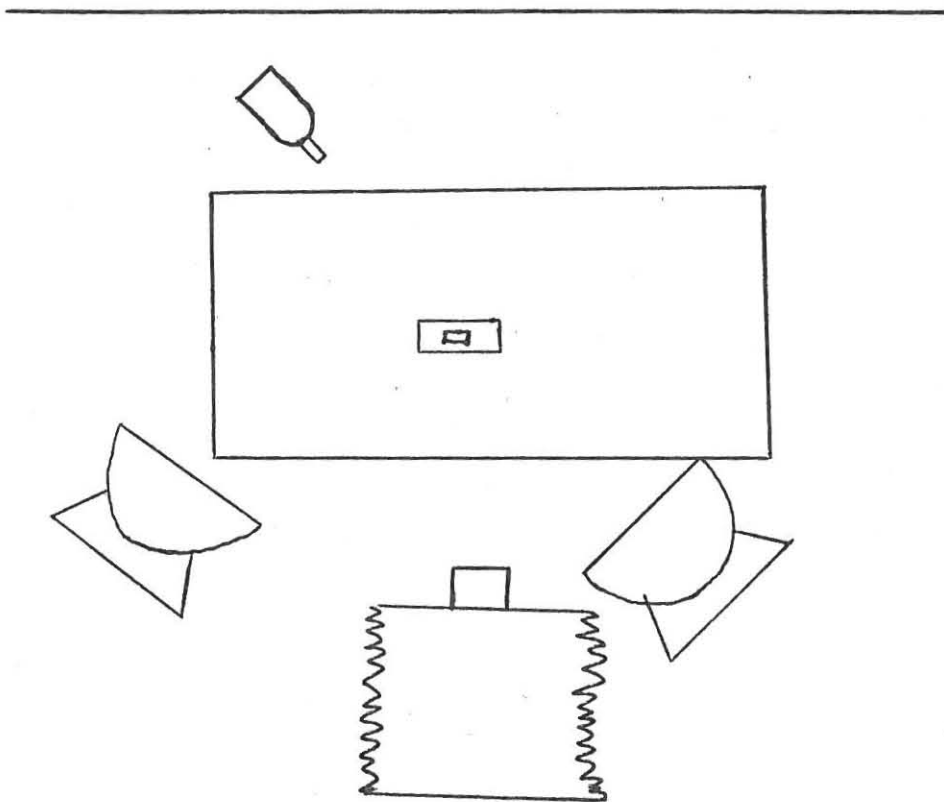**Figure 16:** XS for Men
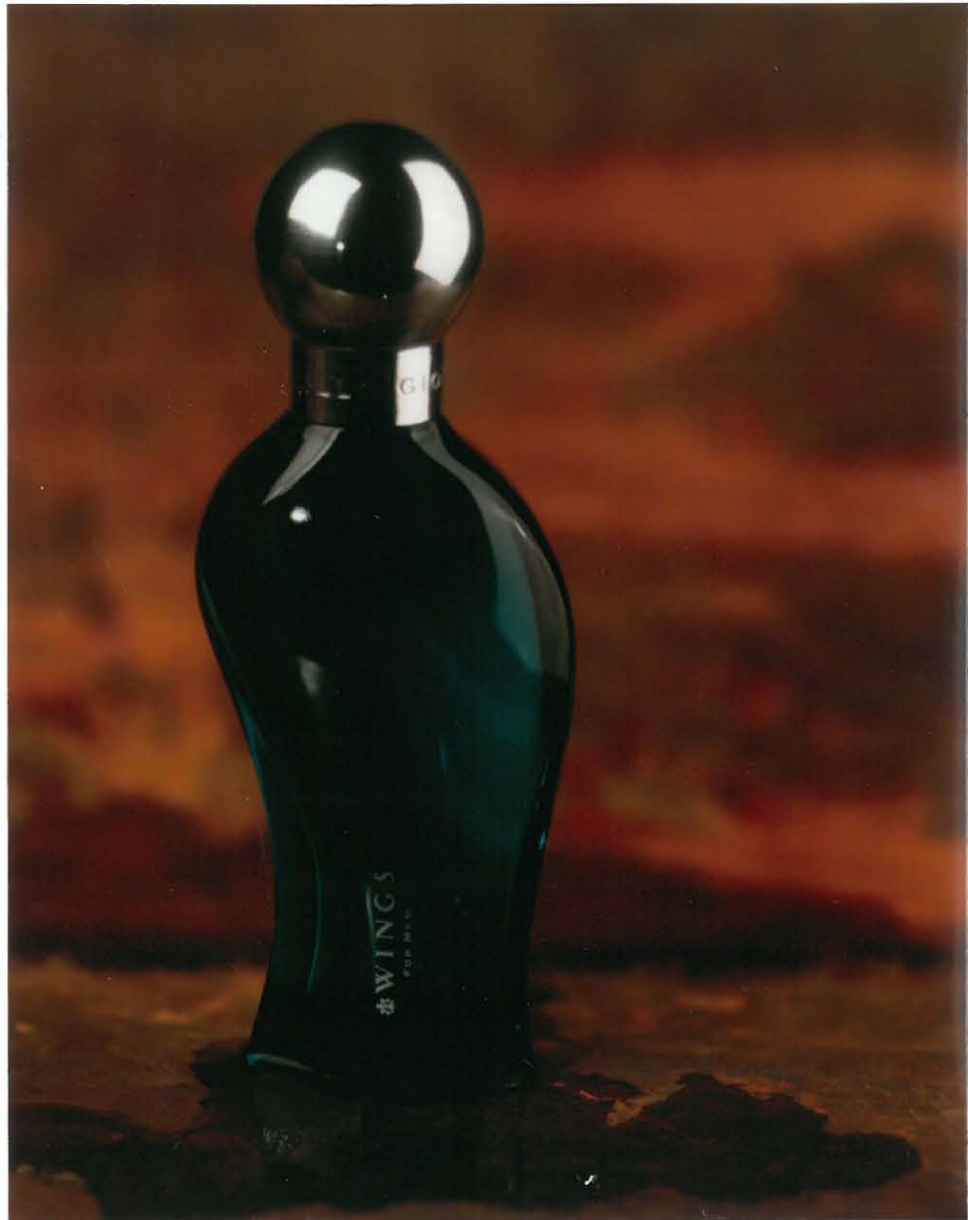
Figure 17:   **Wings for Men**

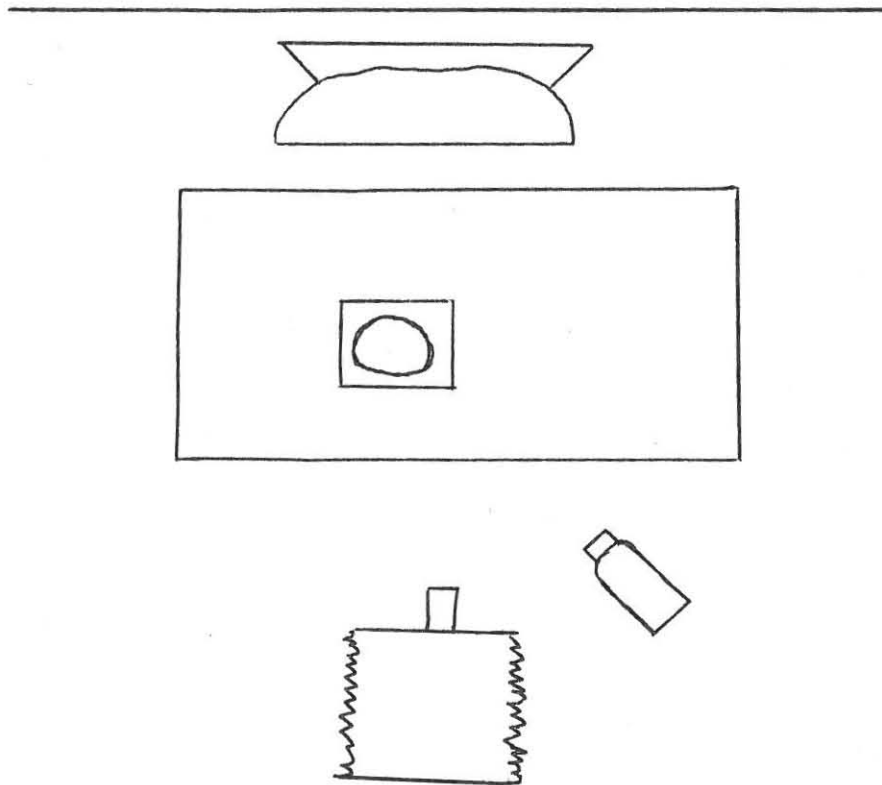**Figure 18:**   Diagram Amstel Lager

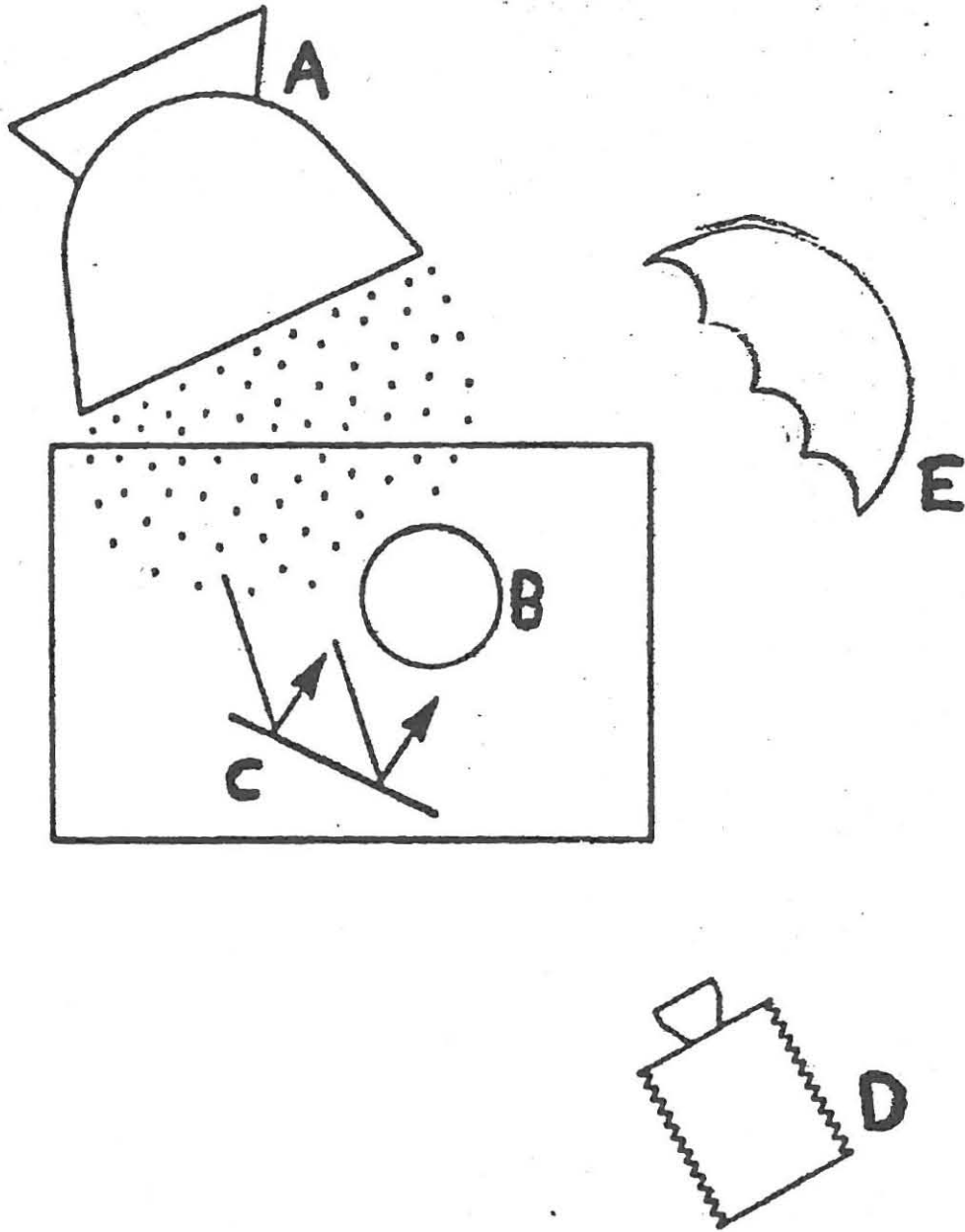**Figure 20:**   **Diagram Gucci After Shave**

Figure 21:   Studio Set Up

APPENDIX B

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Since the inventions of Louis Daguerre and Henry Fox Talbot were announced in 1839, photography has evolved through 150 years of existence. It's uses have been numerous and varied.

During 1842 most capital of Europe and several cities in North America had photographic studios. The public literally queued to have their pictures taken. The new profession took most of the business of miniature painters and photographers started making money with their pictures.

In 1954, a Parisian photographer, Desderi began marketing a new portraiture commodity - Visiting card size pictures. "Carte-devisite" photographs became an international cult (Langford 1974: 21). Card photographs of products were sold to news agents and bookshops as a form of advertising.

The Eastern Kodak company knew very early who would be its main clientele and advertised accordingly: "A collection of these pictures may be made to furnish a pictorial history of live as it is lived by the owner, that will grow more valuable every day that passes" (Encyclopedia of Practical Photography).

The world wide economic crisis had a depressive effect on commercial photography. Even so photographers were beginning to specialise. Photography for advertising for example was slowly becoming an expressive rather than solely reproductive medium.

The immediate pre-second world war years provided a slow increase in the volume of photographic illustrations used in advertising. although all this was of the conform-to-layout large format camera type, and in black and white.

As industrial uses of photography grew and more money was spent in commercial studios, it made economic sense for many more large and medium industrial companies organizations to set up their own units with staff photographers. The most important influence was that by now photographs had grown to become the preferred form of illustration for magazines, books newspapers, posters and advertising of any kind.

Photography has taken over as the most popular and existing medium for advertising with new developments everyday for example digital computerised images (Appendix A, Fig. 1)