

JOURNAL ENTRY 2 - LIGHTING AN EGG

After hearing about the 'lighting an egg' example from Rob during one of the lectures, I thought it would make a good, short project for one of these journal entries. I took to the internet and found a website¹ and video² both showing how lighting an egg can be a useful undertaking. I could not find a white egg in my local shop and I don't have an infinity screen or flash modules. However, I do have a camera, a white sheet and a polar bear ornament, so I thought i'd give it a go anyway. The main objective in learnmorephoto.com's article is getting a good photo from a low contrast environment, so that would be my objective too. This should help me with my understanding of lighting control and get me some practice with lighting a subject with a specific requirement.



The Polar bear and white sheet I will be using for this project.



My initial setup.

As you can see from my initial setup, I blacked out my room, duck taped the sheet to my wardrobe doors and placed the polar bear on the sheet. The wooden diabolo is what I rested the camera on. I used my halogen desk lamp as a work light, this was the result:



¹ Lighting the Egg Photograph (no date) Available at: <http://learnmorephoto.com/flashes-speedlights-strobes-lighting/egg-photograph.php> (Accessed: 30 September 2015).

² Joe Edelman (2010) Photography Lighting Lesson - Remember the EGG. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qM7CcUrUD2g> (Accessed: 30 September 2015).

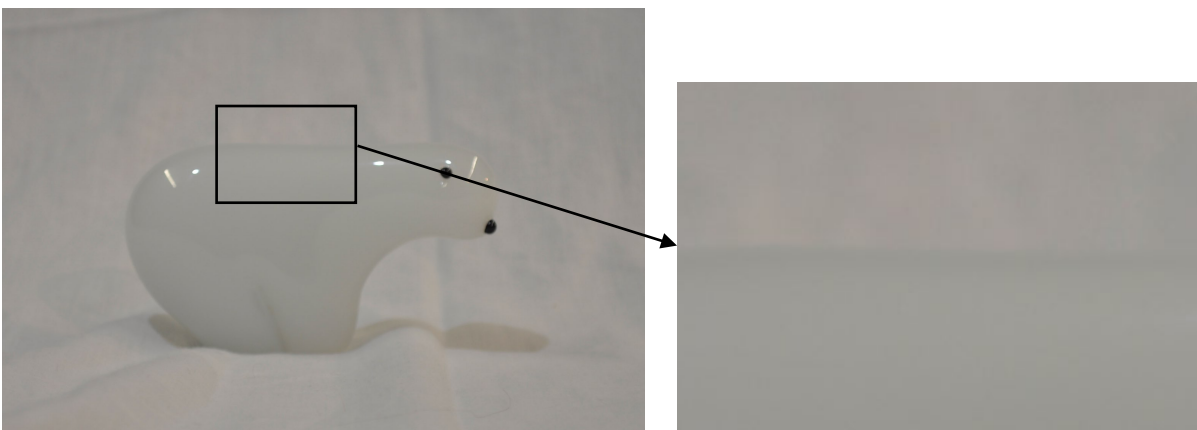
I liked it, however, it was far too dark. There was lots of grain in the image and the background had deep shadows. I was also not happy with the light spot on the polar bear's head and the shadow on its hind. For the fun of it and while I had everything set up, I decided to use the camera's built-in flash. This was the result:



The image in general is still very dark and has bright reflective spots from the flash. The image needs to be much brighter.

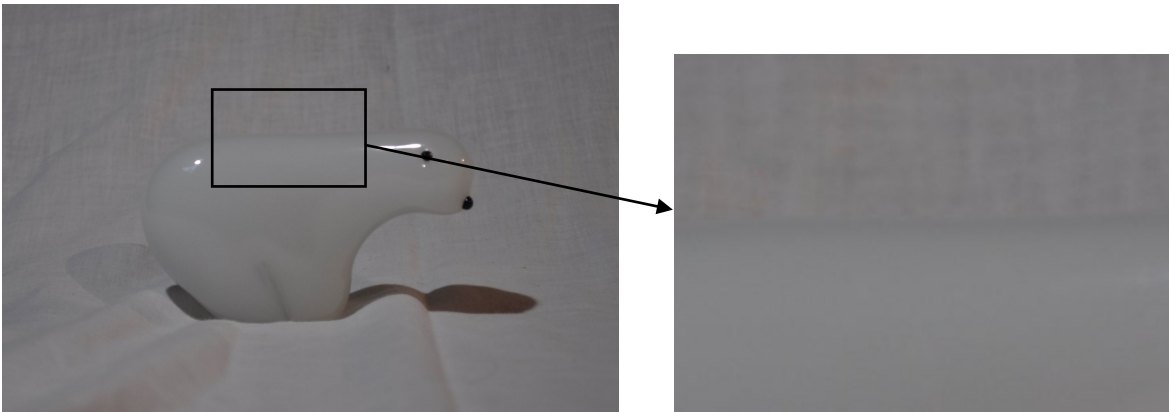
To try and improve the image, I tried several different setups. I tried pointing one light at the sheet to reflect as a diffuse backlight. I also tried shining two more from the front through the sheet to remove the light spots. I also tried from directly above and using dedos to model the subject with the room light on to diffuse the shadows. I played with the brightness values of the lights too, however, I had the same two problems each time.

In the images below, I have the room lights on and am using spotlights to model. Despite the shadows being very diffuse, there is almost no distinction between the subject and the backdrop.



Below, you can see a picture I took with only the spotlights modelling and the Swit used to fill in the backdrop. You can see that the distinction between the subject and

backdrop is much clearer now, however there is a very harsh shadow underneath the subject.



I have learned from this exercise that getting a good low-contrast image isn't as easy as it seems. It requires a good balance of diffuse light and soft but direct spotlights. As photography is not my strong suit, having the light sensor to help me set my camera, rather than relying on auto mode, has helped me learn my camera's controls; however, the images still do seem quite dark.

Bibliography

1. Lighting the Egg Photograph (no date) Available at: <http://learnmorephoto.com/flashes-speedlights-strobes-lighting/egg-photograph.php> (Accessed: 30 September 2015).
2. Joe Edelman (2010) Photography Lighting Lesson - Remember the EGG. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qM7CcUrUD2g> (Accessed: 30 September 2015).