

Off camera flash

Lighting techniques in photography

Beach or studio ?

It was July in Barcelona and we could have gone to any beach to do the photo shoot for the cover of [Clara](#) for August. But for various reasons the photograph was done in the [Hymsa / Edipresse](#) studio. There you can have a complete control of the light, but the difficulty is almost always the same in the photos ...They seem made in a studio!



■ LAS RECETAS MÁS FÁCILES, ORIGINALES Y REFRESCANTES

CLARA

Nº 167 1,80 € Only Spain (Exc. Canarias 1,95 €)

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Clara cover



Model : Alexandra

The idea was for the photo to look like it had been made on the beach and therefore the main light had to be like the sunlight on a sunny summer day, without clouds. Sunlight is very harsh unless it is filtered through a cloud or if it is a cloudy day. Outdoors, heaven helps lower the contrast of light produced by the sun and fills the shadows, but in the studio this contrast is higher and has to be carefully controlled.

As main light we used a [Bowens 1500 W/s flash](#) with a Maxilite reflector and the result was great. It was important that the main light was hard, and a flash with a standard reflector – as is the Maxilite – situated far from the model it becomes a small light source and generates a harsh illumination, without gloom, and is wide at the same time ..



Bowens Gemini con Maxilite

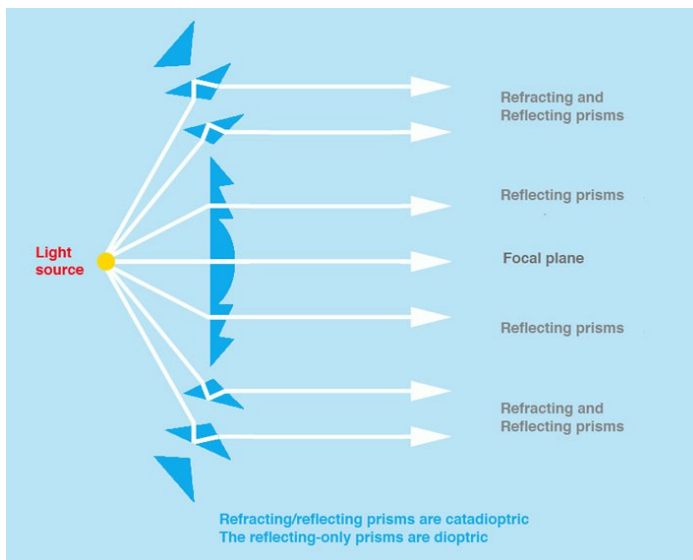
Fresnel Lens

I could have used another more efficient type of accessory like a reflector with a Fresnel lens but it was being used in another set and hence I could not dispose of it.



Broncolor flooter

These accessories make the light beam of the flash look as the sun by using an optical element. This causes that the rays of light – instead of dispersing – are projected parallel.



Fresnel lens

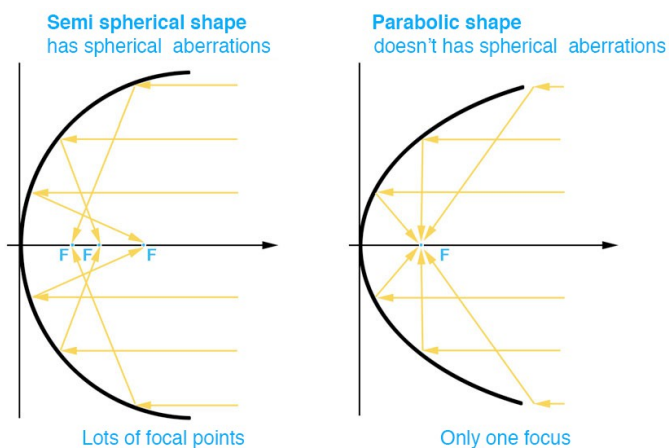
The Shape of a parabola

I could also have used a parabolic dish like the reflectors from [Broncolor](#) such as the Satellite Evolution parabolic dish with a perfect parabolic curvature.



Broncolor Satellite Evolution

It was only a matter of positioning the light in the right place and that way we would have a very direct and hard light. But we did not have this accessory in the studio!



Hemisphere vs paraboloid

It would have been even better having one of the fantastic parabolic umbrellas from [Briese](#), but the budget was limited and few studios in Spain have this fantastic German brand.

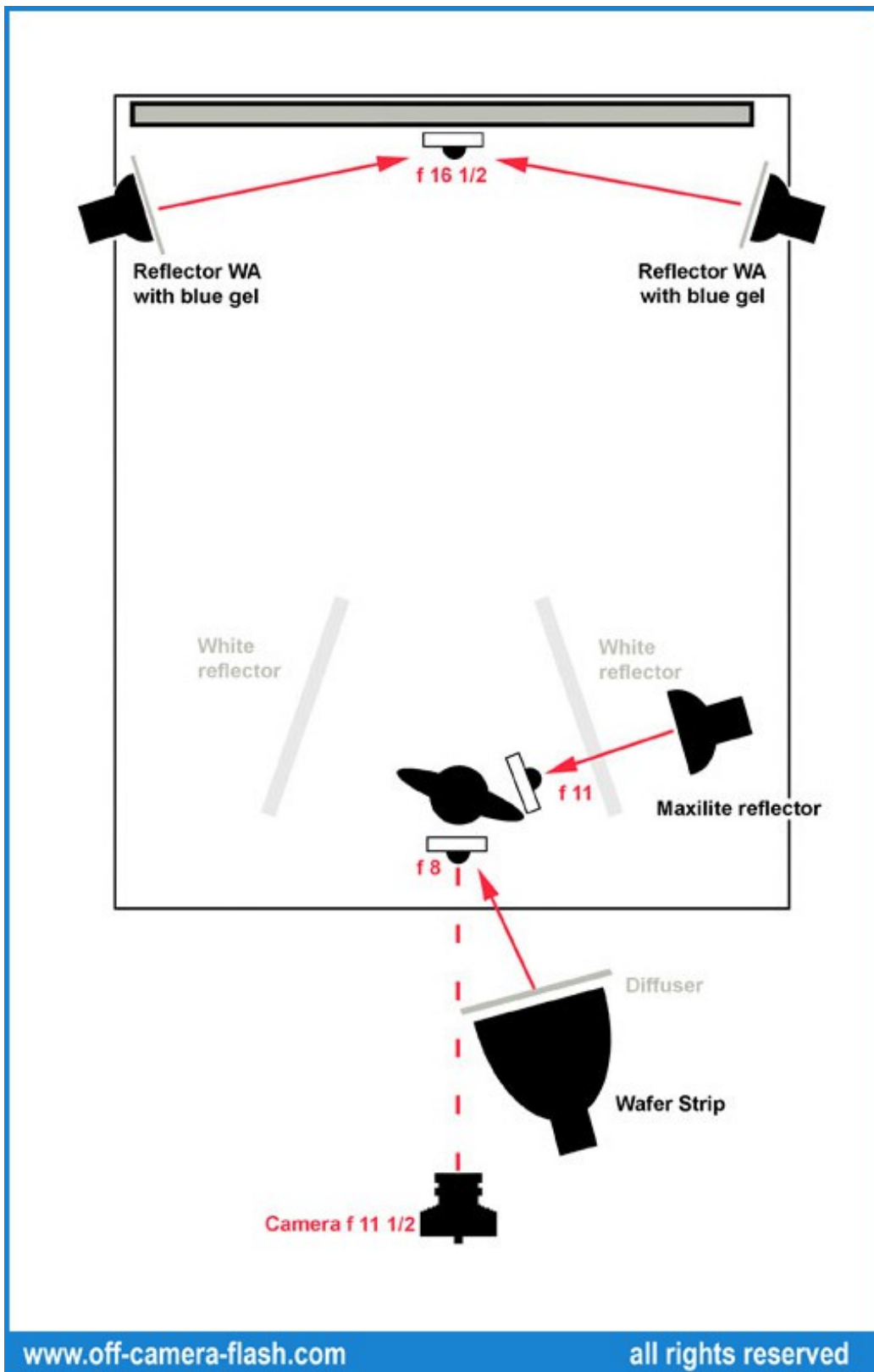


Briese 77

Because of their parabolic shape, these accessories allow that the distribution of the rays is parallel (in theory) and thus resembles the sun. I will speak about the Briese accessories in another post because its design is spectacular. The effect it produces is like the one of a Fresnel with a very spectacular light, and at the same time very enveloping. Amazing and true!

Final take

Let us return to the studio to see how the illumination for the set was done. A [Wafer Strip](#) light box acted as secondary light to decrease the contrast caused by the direct light from the principal flash, and it was put at a rate of -1.5 EV. The background was overexposed $+1$ EV so that the blue gelatine in front of the flashes that were illuminating the background would burn it a bit. This was to decrease the saturation of the blue color so that the background color would seem more celestial, like the sky.



Lighting diagram

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