Piezography, Ltd.

Booth J-84 / J-86
PMA Trade Show
March 3-5, 2003
Las Vegas, NV

Media Kit

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Piezography Announces the Reincarnation of PiezographyBW
System is now ICC compliant and available on a wider variety of printers

LAS VEGAS, NV – Mar 2, 2003: Piezography, Ltd, announced today the re-incarnation of their flagship product line, PiezographyBW, the highest-standard digital monochromatic ink-jet product of the industry. The new PiezographyBW being introduced at PMA supports Canon printers. This is the first time in the three year history of the product that a non-EPSON printer platform is being supported. The bigger announcement however is that PiezographyBW is no longer a proprietary system dependent upon its own printer drivers, file formats and software architecture. The new PiezographyBW is ICC compliant, is compatible with any image editing application, and prints directly through the OEM printer drivers, yet delivers the same highest-standard quality.

The old PiezographyBW first introduced in 2000 by Cone Editions Press, was a completely proprietary system which used its own printer drivers, its own media profiles format, and its own Adobe Photoshop plug-in software architecture making Photoshop a prerequisite for use of the system. These proprietary restrictions were necessitated by the low quality of OEM printer drivers in 2000. The original platform, the EPSON 3000 did not have the hardware resolution or printer driver screening algorithms to allow for high-quality black and white inkjet printing using non-color inks.

In 2003, inkjet printers have significantly more resolution than they did in 2000. Nearly all utilize more than four ink positions, use dilutions of ink to produce significantly smoother output, and have highest-standard printer drivers that adhere to the ICC color management workflow.

Photographers are in a fantastic position to be able to afford large-format inkjet printers that have output qualities sufficient to replace their darkrooms. “The notion of making a photographer or photo-lab purchase special software or an expensive inkjet printer RIP in order to print great black & white is ‘old-school-thinking,’” said Jon Cone, President of Piezography, Ltd. He adds “Our responsibility as a cutting-edge company is to lead the direction that the industry is moving towards, not to holdi it back.” The Company recently developed new technology which allows the same high-quality black & white output, at a more affordable price and with universal compatibility.

Printer manufacturers are constantly upgrading their printers with features that make them attractive as potential PiezographyBW platforms. The Company can now quickly develop solutions using their inks and ICC profiles. Previously the Company required as much as a year to develop unique printer drivers in order to produce linearization of their monochromatic inks. The linearization for individual media is required in order to produce the high-quality PiezographyBW is known for.

The Company tried turning to major manufacturers of color management profiling software for a solution. But that industry is focused on color and there were no tools for black & white. The Company then developed in-house, an innovative ICC printer profiling application which produces monochromatic
ink profiles that reduce the presence of visible ink dots, produce an accurate on-screen preview, and most importantly differentiate between 256 levels of gray while linearizing between dMin (paper white) and dMax (ink black).

With the invention of the profiling application came the freedom to produce profiles for any printer. "We decided to utilize this new technology in a completely novel way for a printer which we could not previously support", said Jon Cone. The Company began parallel development of the first-ever-available pigment ink set for Canon printers. The Company now plans to completely reincarnate their PieographyBW for EPSON products. An upgrade for more than 4,000 users of that system is planned for April. The new profiling system will allow the Company to also produce an inexpensive black & white inkjet system that will take advantage of the 7 ink positions of the EPSON 2200, 7600 and 9600 printers to produce more than one tone and to produce split-toning.

Piezography® is a registered trademark of Cone Editions Press, Ltd. of East Topsham, Vermont. The new PiezographyBW system is the latest development associated with Jon Cone who founded Cone Editions Press, the world’s first digital printmaking studio in 1980, well known for printing and publishing the works of important contemporary photographers such as Gordon Parks and Richard Avedon. In a continued effort to further the development of digital printmaking, Jon Cone develops innovative software, inks and media. Jon Cone developed his first monochromatic inkjet systems of ink and software in 1994 for IRIS Graphics, Inc. In 1999, Jon Cone was recognized as one of the five top Digital Innovators of the Year by Photo District News, for his invention of the first quad-black ink and software solution for inkjet printers

The new PiezographyBW system for Canon printers is available only from Piezography, Ltd. and its authorized resellers as a value-added package for Canon s9000, s950i, s900, s830, s830D, s820, s800 and BJC-8200 printers. The starter kit includes Mac- and Windows-compatible ICC profiles; 6 archival, pigmented black and gray cartridges of PiezoTone warm neutral ink, 20 sheets of new Piezography-brand papers, and a user’s guide on CD-ROM. The kit retails for $195.00. Additional inks are available for only $14.00 per cartridge. They are compatible with Canon inks so that the user does not need to prepare their printer in any special way.

Information about the new PiezographyBW system for Canon is available on the Internet at http://www.piezography.com The system is available to preview at the Piezography, Ltd. Booth # J84–J86 at The 77th Annual Photo Marketing Association Trade Show, March 3-5, in Las Vegas, Nevada.
Piezography BW System for Canon Bubble-Jet Printers Offers Significant New Features and Enhancements

LAS VEGAS, NV – Mar 2, 2003: Piezography, Ltd. announced today the new PiezographyBW system for Canon bubble-jet printers, a complete, high-quality black-and-white printing solution that rivals or exceeds traditional darkroom exhibition prints. Ideal for anyone producing black-and-white prints — from hobbyists to professional photo labs — this latest black-and-white Piezography product has been newly engineered from the ground up. It includes archival, monochromatic carbon-black, pigment-based inks. (Six densities of PiezoTone gray replace the standard Canon color inks.)

Pure pigment now compatible with Glossy Paper

“There are so many new milestones with this release of PiezographyBW,” said Jon Cone, President of Piezography, Ltd. A true glossy monochromatic all-pigment ink jet print has been the number one request of the more than 4,000 users of the original PiezographyBW system. The new PiezoTone monochromatic ink set for Canon has been designed for compatibility with high gloss inkjet paper, a first for an all-pigment monochromatic ink system. PiezoTone inks for Canon are also the industry’s first pigment ink set for Canon. The company plans to release a color version later this Spring.

Canon Printers Offer Unique Features for PiezographyBW Users

Jon Cone, one of the most vocal and recognized proponents of monochromatic inkjet printing for EPSON printers said, “Many of our long-term EPSON PiezographyBW users may find it hard to believe we would choose Canon as a leading-technology-base for our new system.” Photographers will be able to produce prints just as high in quality as those who use our EPSON PiezographyBW system, but at a rate four- to eight-times faster: An 8x10 in only sixty seconds on a Canon S series printer.

Canon’s user-replaceable print-head is a phenomenal enhancement to the process for two reasons: first, the head can be rinsed under clear water to remove any ink or paper fiber residue, and second, the user can purchase an additional head for OEM color inks. The ability to switch quickly between black-and-white and color ink sets in the same printer will be a real boon to users.

A New Color Management System for Black-and-white: A New Generation of ICC Profiles

PiezographyBW ICC profiles are industry-standard color-matching printer profiles that have been produced using a sophisticated profiling application invented exclusively by the Company. The ICC profiles, which have been produced for PiezoTone inks and specific media, allow the PiezographyBW system for Canon printers to output 256 distinct shades of gray, and are specially tuned to eliminate printer dots and visible artifacts that would otherwise interfere with a continuous-tone output. It is believed that this is the industry’s first profiling application that takes into account OEM inkjet dithering.
“One of our goals with the new system is to help photographers and photo-labs utilize contemporary workflow solutions,” said Jon Cone. He adds, “We’re the only company with a complete, end-to-end solution which does not require the use of ‘old-school-thinking’ technology such as proprietary RIPv3, software and file formats.” The new PiezographyBW system for Canon printers allows the user to print directly through the OEM printer-driver software that Canon provides.

PiezographyBW is Now Compatible with Many Types of Imaging Software

“No longer are proprietary printer drivers, expensive RIPv3s, and the prerequisite of owning Photoshop necessary in order for photographers to print with our inks” said Jon Cone. Photoshop users will now be able to enjoy accurate on-screen previews of their print before they start printing – an industry first for monochromatic inks. But photographers can now use any image editing application of their choice to print with PiezographyBW. Many seeking high-quality black & white will be delighted to learn that PiezographyBW now works as well from iPhoto or free imaging software as it does from Photoshop.

The Latest From Jon Cone

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Information about the new PiezographyBW system for Canon is available on the Internet at http://www.piezography. The system is available to preview at the Piezography, Ltd. Booth # J84–J86 at The 77th Annual Photo Marketing Association Trade Show, March 3-5, in Las Vegas, Nevada.
Piezography, Ltd.   Press Release
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Piezography Features B&W Photographs by Joel Pickford in its PMA Booth
Four different PiezoTone pure-pigment ink sets are featured

LAS VEGAS, NV – Mar 2, 2003: Piezography, Ltd. booth #J84-J86 features four large format photographs by photographer and filmmaker Joel Pickford, printed with the PiezographyBW archival black and white inkjet printing system. The photographs have been printed on an EPSON 9000 printer using the new PiezoTone pure pigment monochromatic inks. Four different photographs are featured, each with one of Warm Neutral, Selenium Tone, Carbon Sepia, and Cool Neutral inks.

PiezoTone inks do not exhibit visible metamerism making them ideal for exhibition printing. The inks have been tested against other inks in their class and offer a rate of fading unprecedented by any rival: a deltaE difference of 2 or less, and density fading of 5% or less, which are indistinguishable to the human eye.

About one of Pickford's haunting photographs on display, photography critic C. Kevin Smith wrote, "In one portrait, "George," the subject's cloudy eyes lead us to wonder: What has this man seen? What can he no longer see? What worlds can we imagine, looking through his fading vision?"

All of the prints on exhibition have been printed with the new PiezoTone inks at Cone Editions Press in East Topsham, Vermont. Cathy Cone, Managing Director of the Cone Editions Press said "We are delighted to be able to produce works for photographers which have significant chances of reaching well beyond the 150 year indoor ratings of constant display." She adds, "More and more of this studio's output is being acquired by museums in which proper storage will allow these photographs to be enjoyed for many centuries." PiezoTone inks offer significant improvements over the original PiezographyBW formula.

Joel Pickford remarked, "Piezography takes fine black and white printing one step further into the digital future. With the addition of new tonal colors like Carbon Sepia, the creative possibilities have been expanded. Not only are there now four different ink sets to choose from, but the prospect of creating your own custom split-tone prints by combining inks from different sets multiplies the possibilities. I look forward to reprinting my negatives from the past twenty-five years with a fresh interpretation, matching each series of images to an appropriate combination of ink colors, paper stock, and print dimensions."

"In the past, inkjet prints needed to be very large to be effective, due to their relatively low resolution and weak blacks. But with recent improvements in the spray pattern of EPSON printers and the increased dMax of Piezography blacks, it is now possible to make smaller prints that have the same
impact as larger prints. With the PiezographyBW system it is easy to produce matching editions of large prints for museums and smaller prints for individual collectors."

Piezography, Ltd. has prepared a limited edition of 6 x 8 inch samples of the 4 Pickford photographs. They are available for the asking at PMA while quantities last.

Piezography® is a registered trademark of Cone Editions Press, Ltd. of East Topsham, Vermont. PiezoTone™ is a trademark of Cone Editions Press, Ltd.

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So tell me about the new PiezographyBW. How is it new?

Its new because it doesn’t require any specialized software or expensive RIPs. Its new because although its a quad black ink product, it is used in the same way any third party ink product is used when the inks differ in color or hue substantially from that which the manufacturer supplies. I think the biggest news is that PiezographyBW now works with ICC printer profiles which have been produced especially for it. No other software needed. Or I should say, no software needed. ICC profiles are not software.

Does it still work from Photoshop?

It works from Photoshop. But it is not necessary to use it from Photoshop. In other words it is not a plugin for Photoshop. Its not software any more. Its an ink product with exceptionally good ICC profiles. The profiles can be used with the printer driver. They work directly with the OEM printer drivers. The user does not need to add anything to their system to make this work now.

Can any software be used to print with the PiezographyBW system now?

If the software can open a grayscale image and print it, then the answer is yes. For example, iPhoto can. Even some inexpensive shareware can be downloaded from the Internet and used. The reason being is that all MacOS9 and MacOSX and Windows operating systems from Windows 98 Second Editions forward employ ICC or ICM color management. This is where the new ICC profiles are used. It could not be easier.

The old PiezographyBW plugin was able to distinguish between 256 levels of gray, should we expect any less from the new system?

Of course not. You should expect more actually. The profiles are designed to differentiate between 256 levels of gray. But they are designed around the manufacturer’s printer software and that is a big bonus. Using the manufacturers printer driver means better dithering and smoother transitions from each of the quad black or hex-black inks in the system. There just isn’t any way to accomplish the same level of dithering that the manufacturer can. These new profiles take into consideration the manufacturer’s dithering algorithms so that they are optimized to produce virtually dotless images. And of course ICC profiles give the user much greater printed accuracy when used with ICC compliant software such as Photoshop because they can be used to preview.

256 levels is 256 levels is it not? Why is the new system more accurate?

If the ICC profiles are utilized for soft proofing such as in Photoshop, then the user sees on their monitor not only the color of the paper and hue of the inks, but they also see the contrast of their image and the precise tonal range. So by accuracy I mean that they are able to predict precisely what the image is going to print like before they print it and they therefore have far more control over the entire process.

Tell us about the Canon printers. Are you moving away from EPSON?

We are going to support both platforms. Canon printers are faster then EPSON printers. They have user replaceable heads which is a very significant enhancement to the process. The user can wash the Canon head in the sink. Cleaning EPSON printers is as everyone knows a process that relies on the cleaning function in the EPSON software and sometimes entails sending the printer in for repair. With Canon if the user experiences a dropped nozzle that the software can
not clear, they can remove the head and clean it with warm water. But also, they can acquire an additional head to use with color inks. So a Canon is able to serve the user with color inks and with the new hex-black inks. But the speed is going to be the reason why EPSON users would switch if they are looking for a dedicated black & white printer. It's a fringe benefit for Canon owners.

How much faster is a Canon printer than an EPSON printer?

At least 4 times faster. The new i950 is exceedingly fast. But an 8x10 comes out of the s9000 in about a single minute. A 13x19 comes out in maybe 4 times faster than it does on the EPSON 2200. By contrast that same size print on an EPSON 3000 requires nearly 40 minutes with the old PiezographyBW plugin.

You also have new printing media. Are these fine art papers for which you’ve been known for?

There are some fine art papers in the line and we will continue to add more. But the papers we are very excited about are the PiezoGloss which is the first paper we’ve been able to print our pure pigment inks on without rub-off or dusting. It is a high gloss surface after printing and this is going to be very popular with those looking for gloss. But the paper only glosses with the PiezoTone formulation for Canon. Also the new PiezoProof is a wonderful acid-free paper with a smooth fine art surface in a lighter weight which is suitable for proofing for the more expensive fine art paper we sell as PiezoMuseum. That paper is 100% rag and very smooth too. Finally we have a bright white PiezoMatte which is contrastier than the other media, and a PiezoBuff which is an off-white sheet with a slight texture. In general, these are all very photo suitable papers. So actually the fine art or watercolor type textures is missing.

Did you reformulate the inks for the new system?

The inks are new from the ground up. We call them PiezoTone inks because they are available in four different tone sets. Warm Neutral, Cool Neutral, Selenium Tone, and Carbon Sepia are the four tones. Each tone set is comprised of the gray dilutions. Each of the grays is made only of pigment and a mild base. There are no strong solvents. The inks are much better performers than our original ink set. The original inks used dye in conjunction with carbon pigment and there were some problems with the formula which made it difficult to use. We learned a great deal and we produced a formula that is especially suited for the purpose rather than adapted. When we looked at the competing inks we noticed that dye was a rather large component of these pigmented inks. Our challenge was to make an ink without any dye what-so-ever and still achieve the density and hue we required.

Have these inks been tested for longevity?

They have been tested. We had them tested twice. Rochester Institute of Technology was the first to test them and we were not disappointed by their results at all. But we were disappointed by their testing evaluations which permit up to a 30% fade for a 100 year rating. Our inks had less than a 2% fade in their conditions. By contrast our original inks had about 15% fade and I think that that is just too much. So we tested our inks again and we tested them against two competing all black ink sets. But this time we decided to test them in the industry’s longest and most grueling test. We put them all against each other in a 1000 hour Xenon test. Xenon actually gives a better prediction of how an ink will perform than the accelerated fluorescent tests. Xenon imitates the more complex types of illumination including direct and indirect sunlight. After 1000 hours we were the only inks that had an imperceptible fade between 2% and 5%. The other ink brands were significantly higher. We know we have a winner here.
What is the equivalent years rating of 1000 hours of Xenon testing?

The equivalent would be 3 years of outdoor without any perceptible fade. By contrast, RIT and Wilhelm have given 100 year ratings for inks which will have a 30% fade in illumination levels of 450LUX for 8 hours per day. Outside the LUX can be 50,000 for up to 8 hours per day. I don’t know if I can even do the math without a calculator but its at least 1000 times more illumination per day. An ink that can only with stand 450Lux for 30 years would not last a month outdoors.

What other measure of longevity is there besides years?

Fade! If an ink fades 30%, how can that last 100 years? If an ink does not fade. That is, if the human eye can not detect it, then how long does that last? The problem with the new testing facilities which use 450LUX and 30% fade is that an ink that fades 28% and an ink which fades 2.8% are going to be given the same longevity rating. I do not know how that serves the public. I think the more fair approach is to put them into a Xenon chamber together and see which inks fall apart and which do not. The public will hopefully buy the ones that don’t fall apart.

What’s next for Piezography?

Well we have a pure pigment color inkset coming for Canon which is exciting. We will also release a color inkset for EPSON. They’ll have less metamerism and better longevity that the OEM inks. And we will release a monochromatic system for the EPSON 2200, 7600 and 9600 that use our new ICC profiles and produce different tones from a more complex ink set. We will also be on Roland in just a few months. Really, with ICC profiles we can be about wherever we want to be because we do not need to develop any special software. I think that the day of the expensive approach to specialized printing through RIPs is coming to a close. It is just a matter of time before Photoshop will be able to handle more complex image layouts. Really, with the low cost of memory, it isn’t difficult more expensive to configure a Photoshop system to combine images into one large layout for printing through profiles.

Does this mean you have obsoleted the need for a RIP?

I think that many professional shops are going to want the RIPs because of their spooling and queue features. But the average photographer who purchases a $2,500 used EPSON large format printer is not going to want to spend another $2,500 for a quad ink RIP. And he shouldn’t have to. But that is where we come in. For one tenth the price of the RIP they can have our new system up and running. So maybe we have obsoleted it for the photographer who did not have a choice, until now. But we are planning to produce PiezographyBW ICC profiles for RIPs which are ICC compliant so that their users can load our inks and enjoy printing the highest quality in complex image layouts or long unattended spooling.