

# Making Portfolio-Worthy Makeup Shots in Minutes with Your Cell Phone in a Badly Lit Basement

– Tara Maginnis, KCACTF Region VII 2016 Conference

## Framing the Face

- Ears or necks that don't match, incongruous modern clothing, hair or clothes that clash, all don't help the look of the makeup
- Anything at all that color coordinates and/or blocks out these distractions is an improvement
- Even a plain black t-shirt can work in a pinch for almost all stylized makeup by pulling the face through the neck-hole sideways and massing the body of the shirt around the face like a wimple like frame
- Background distraction can also upstage the face, so look for blank walls, especially gray cement walls that help your camera to color-correct
- Mostly monochrome makeup nearly always looks best with a black background of some sort
- Tutus on the head
- You can improve the shot with any random stuff that matches the makeup that can be quickly pinned or tucked to form a frame
- Shirts made into a Wimple
- The Kitchen Sink: As we move into the Fantasy Mythic Creature Finals the makeup is often more complex and abstract. The main rule for quickly framing these faces is to run to the costume studio and grab ***anything at all*** that has similar colors and textures to the makeup, and quickly swath a face with a frame of it.
- Headpieces need not be stable. You can keep things on your models heads by having them lean against the wall that they are posing against
- A strip of fur or feathers can hide human neck or ears on animal makeup to make the face paint stand out, even if it is the same stupid scrap of fur from one photo to the next.
- Ditto for a Feather Boa

## Lighting:

- Look around your available space for different types of light: Incandescent (yellow-orange), Fluorescent (greenish), Daylight (blueish). Put the makeup in the light that flatters it.

- Try to find a place with the maximum broadly diffused light, and a couple of places with strong directional light.
- Most 2-D makeup looks best under diffused light. If there is no place with diffused light, make a diffuser, or grab a piece of white poster board to serve as a bounce-diffuser.
- 3-D makeup sometimes needs directional light to show off. If there is no place with a strong directional light, buy a LED flashlight.
- Why do you want to take your photos outside the makeup room? Because, even with lots of lightening and contrast they still look awful
- Even fairly simple makeup can look amazing if you wrap it in black, find a place where there is a single light bulb, and have the wearer emote up towards the light.

## Camera Angle:

- Cell Phone Cameras are Great Fish Eye Cameras if you get really close. A Fish Eye Camera enlarges whatever is closest to the lens. This lets you emphasize whatever features flatter the makeup and or the wearer.
- Down angles in  $\frac{3}{4}$  profile tend to flatter most people and feminize faces.
- Up angles make jaws look bigger and more masculine.
- Side angles with contrast show wax noses better.
- To show mask-like makeup to advantage, stand further away and zoom in to widen & flatten.
- Cat makeup looks best down from above front, with a bit of the forehead cut off to turn the face into a triangle.
- To photograph a neck makeup without fattening it have the model stretch the neck forward like a turtle.
- Take deer in headlight photos for making student Face Outline Sheet
- You can get some flattering “down” angles by posing people on the floor.....
- Cell Phone Cameras are Great Fish Eye Cameras if you get really close. A Fish Eye Camera enlarges whatever is closest to the lens. This lets you emphasize whatever features flatter the makeup and or the wearer:
- Drag Glamour: Shoot from above, close to one eye ( $\frac{3}{4}$  profile) to make eyes bigger, and chin smaller, have model open eyes as big as possible, by looking up if needed, cover Adam’s apple with boa.
- The same tricks work to improve the look of “corrective” makeup for 95% of humans. The 5% that are the exception are men with no chin.

- For Beards on women, shoot up. It shows the beard and gives women smaller eyes and a more masculine jaw
- Noses: Side Views and  $\frac{3}{4}$  views *with contrast* show off wax noses better than front shots.
- More Contrast with background is better than less for profile shots
- The Cat Trick: Get close, Tilt down from above, chop out the top of the forehead to make the skull look more triangular, with larger eyes and smaller chin, like a cat.
- If the neck is cool, feature it.
- **Face outline sheets** help students do better renderings for themselves. To make one of these, shoot the student straight-on while he/she has the mouth at rest, and eyes open fully in an unflattering “deer in headlights” look.

## Poses

- Poses to create context: Zombies attack, bodies on the floor with tape around, etc.
- Poses for showing design: Always take a photo of a good rendering with the makeup to show it off, and demonstrate you can plan ahead
- Poses to improve background: Floor shots, hiding or lying in bushes.
- Poses to improve shooting angle: On staircase with model standing on steps below and looking up at camera
- Mirror shots: good for high contrast makeup and 2 sided makeup. Use dressing room mirrors rather than makeup room mirrors if possible.

## Software

- **moreBeaute2** The app you want for making your photo shy relatives happy to see your pictures of them. It automatically blurs away zits, and lightens mid-tones to fix bad lighting, so you look like a cover photo.
- **Photo Lab** has a feature that puts decorative swirly stuff around a clear center, so it can sometimes deal with photos that have distracting elements like ears and necks without makeup, or amp up whatever decorative edges you have put around the makeup.