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USER REPORT

Frezzi Super Sun-Gun Lights Up New York

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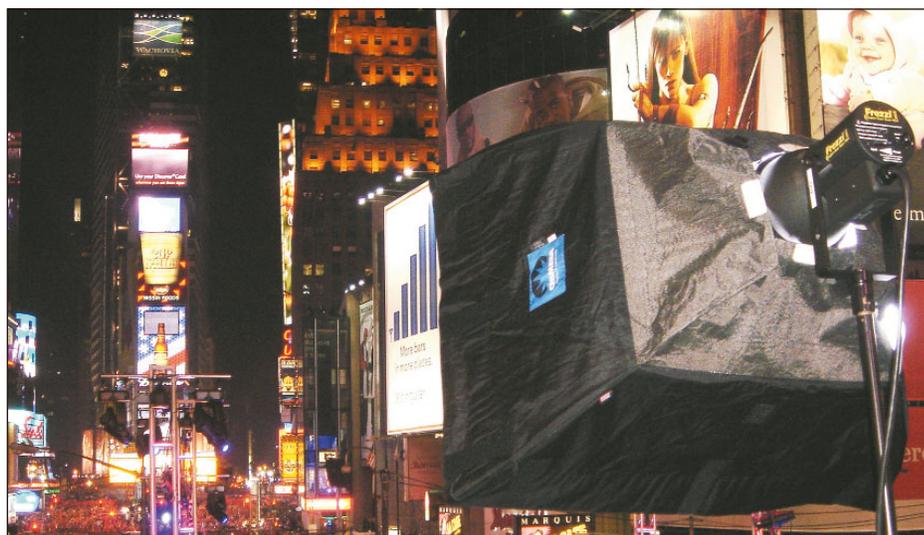
NEW YORK

As a freelance cameraman, I travel all over the world. I may go from shooting live shots in the California desert one day to taping the unveiling of a new Airbus in Toulouse, France the next. Selecting the right equipment is vital to having a successful shoot. Nowhere is this more important than in lighting equipment. Most people are familiar with HMI lights. The daylight balanced color temperature, efficient light output, high color rendering index and low heat compared to tungsten lighting, make HMIs one of the most versatile tools available.

I have been using the Frezzi SSG-200 200 W HMI since 1999 and have found it to be invaluable in terms of size, weight, durability and unsurpassed light output. While the Frezzi SSG-200 puts out nearly as much light as most other 400 W HMIs, I still run into situations where I need more "punch" from the light and I often put up a second SSG-200 to achieve the needed output. When I heard that Frezzi was developing a 400 W version of their HMI, I couldn't wait to try it.

TRAVELING LIGHT

I spend about 320 days a year traveling on various productions and news stories, so size and weight are big considerations. I was pleasantly surprised when I learned that the new Frezzi SSG-400 was only 1/2-inch longer than the SSG-200, and the weight was nearly the same. All the accessories from my existing collection of lights, such as speed rings and barn doors, fit. The new ballast is about one inch bigger in each direction, and



The Frezzi 400 W HMI light Super Sun-Gun brightens Times Square on New Year's Eve.

it weighs less than one pound more.

The quality and output of the SSG-400 are truly amazing. The focusing range of the light covers any spread I have ever needed. The beam is nice and even, and is entirely usable without any added diffusion. As for the output, it is simply incredible. On a recent golf shoot in Puerto Rico, we placed the SSG-400 next to competitor's 400 W HMI, and the Frezzi was noticeably brighter; so much so that we had to move the competitor's several feet closer to the subject.

I shot for a major news channel in Times Square for the New Year's Eve festivities, and the SSG-400 really earned praises. For New Year's, crews are up on risers about 40 feet in the air. Each crew has a space about 3-by-8 feet in which to work. As you can imagine with talent, producer, sound tech and cameraman plus gear, space is at a premium. Lighting for New Year's here is always tricky. The ambient lighting is 5,600 K and very bright. There is no space to put big HMIs with their ballasts.

Power is also at a premium. We were able to put up the SSG-400 HMI with a Chimera and light for three crews and still have an exposure matching the bright neon signs in Times Square. I don't know of any other light that would make this possible.

The Frezzi HMIs are not marketed as waterproof, but I have used the light outside, exposed to the elements, during multiple hurricanes without a problem. It has also never let me down while running for hours on an inverter in the sweltering heat of Death Valley. One of the most important things that a freelancer has is their reputation. I can't afford to have gear that breaks easily or won't hold up to the demands of field production.

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