



Above: When faced with a large reception area, Marcus says his assistant can use the Gunlight (GL-1) and point a spot-focused beam at each table. **Below:** In front of the chuppah at a wedding in Mexico, before (left) and after (right) light painting was used.

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 Lowel GL-1 Gunlight
www.thegunlight.com

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www.kelbytraining.com/course/dblack_lightpaint

BRIAN MARCUS New York, NY

Light painting is second nature to Brian Marcus of Fred Marcus Photography, who has been using the technique for about a decade. "In the event and wedding photography business, there are a lot of different uses for this type of light painting—to paint in shadows, to enhance detail in images that wouldn't otherwise have detail," Marcus explains. And, he points out, light painting is particularly useful for décor shots in large rooms: "The difference between a shot with light painting versus one without is amazing. When you use flash, you can lose the ambient light," eliminating the beautiful atmosphere and detail that the bride and groom planned and paid for.

When faced with a large reception area, Marcus used to have his assistant illuminate each table with a flash during a long exposure to bring out centerpiece and place setting details while maintaining the soft, beautiful ambient light of the room. Then he traded the flash for a video light, although his assistant had to hide it while running from table to table. If the assistant is visible in the shot, Marcus would re-touch him out and if the room is especially large, making it impossible for the assistant to cover the entire space in one exposure, he might capture two shots and stitch them together in post.

More recently however, Marcus has been using the Gunlight, an interesting lighting solution that he and his partner John Solano developed and is now being produced by Lowel. This handheld light was presented as the GL-1 and demonstrated at the Tiffen booth at WPPI 2012. The GL-1 offers a number of benefits, including giving Marcus' assistant a little rest. Marcus says the focusable beam of light can reach distances of about 30 feet so his assistant can stand next to or near the camera and point a spot-focused beam at each table—at full power; Marcus estimates the light illuminates each table for about 1 ½ seconds.

At a recent, beach wedding shoot in Mexico, Marcus photographed the couple at night, in front of the chuppah (see before and after images below). Marcus had five minutes to create the shot but nailed it right away (he only took two shots) with a 30 second exposure at f/6.3 at ISO 125. His assistant walked along the pathway with the Gunlight/GL-1, creating a design on the walkway and illuminating the bridal couple and the chuppah individually for about 8 to 10 seconds each. Marcus knew what he wanted to do even before his plane left New York, and even for a seasoned pro, it's a great feeling to bring an idea to life.



BEFORE



AFTER