Quantum Qflash T2

The second generation is even better than the remarkable original

by the Editors

Most flash systems today can be broken down into three basic groups. The most popular is a battery-operated flash designed to work with 35mm cameras. This small portable flash fits in a hot-shoe on top of the camera and works with the camera's TTL system. At the opposite end of the scale, you have the studio flash, usually AC powered, big, powerful, and flexible for any professional lighting situation.

The third flash type is a very specialized hybrid that incorporates the best features of both flash types. It is designed to work in all photo situations with most any camera system. The Qflash T2 is a second-generation flash system from Quantum Instruments that takes flash flexibility to the limits. Although the target market for the T2 is medium-format photographers, its versatility also makes it ideal for the 35mm shooter.

The Quantum Turbo battery is the workhorse that keeps the Qflash operating at a fast full-power pace. This high-powered rechargeable acid battery gives extremely fast recycling and long-lasting power. When the Qflash is used at full power the Turbo can deliver up to 200 flashes per charge. The Turbo also has an Ultra Fast mode for high-speed motor drive and stroboscopic functions. The battery is protected with a soft slim case and can be worn over your shoulder or strapped to your belt. It has a power gauge that tells you when the battery is at 100%, 75%, 50%, and 25% power capacity. The Quantum Turbo battery can be recharged in 3–10 hours depending on how much the battery is depleted.

***Top:* The back panel contains the LCD panel and buttons for setting all the versatile modes. *Bottom:* The Quantum Qflash T2 and Quantum Turbo battery combine to give you 200 full-power flashes per charge, with an ISO 100 GN of 160 (feet).**

To fully understand the Qflash's capability we will take you through a quick tour of the flash head. The flash head has a four-pin socket that holds the high-powered removable flash tube. A circular flash reflector fits around the flash tube. locking into positions to give a reflected angle of 55° or 70°. The reflector can also be removed for 360° bare-bulb flash exposures. A swivel base allows the head to rotate 90° with stops every 15°. The flash head itself can be adjusted 180° up and down.

The base of the Qflash has an LCD display panel that provides a variety of information about setting up your flash and monitoring its functions. The first row of buttons includes the flash-fire, light, mode, and set functions. The mode button sets the flash up for manual, auto, TTL, or stroboscopic operation. Once you have selected a mode, you can then fine-tune your selection with the up/down or set buttons.

In the manual position you will find 19 possible power selections from full to 1/64 power. A special coding is used to minimize space in the LCD display. The "+" indicates an increase of 1/3 stop of power and a "–" shows 1/3 stop less power. The f-stops range from f/2 to f/32 and use the same coding (+ and –) to indicate 1/3-stop variances.

A third m anual display gives you the flash distance corresponding to that exposure. Pressing the set button three times will also allow you to adjust the ISO film rating. As you change this setting, the flash shows you the new effective flash distance.

The Qflash can be used in auto mode by using the mode button and the up/down arrows to select one of the f-stop settings in 1/3-stop increments. The film ISO can be selected by using the set function and the up/down arrows. The window will display when the flash is ready to fire, ISO number, mode, f-number, and flash distance for that f-stop.

The TTL function of the Qflash works in combination with a special TTL cord for your specific camera type. Because the TTL function is primarily controlled by the camera, the only display you will see is flash ready, and TTL mode. The TTL cord is ordered separately when you buy your flash.

If you like special effects, the Qflash has a special stroboscopic mode. Once you have selected stroboscopic you can set the frequency of the flashes from 1–50 per second, the number of flashes from 1–20, and the power output for each flash. When the Qflash is set in this mode it can be tripped via a slave to fire the entire stroboscopic sequence.

The final program mode allows you to select up to four setups of manual, auto or TTL and store them

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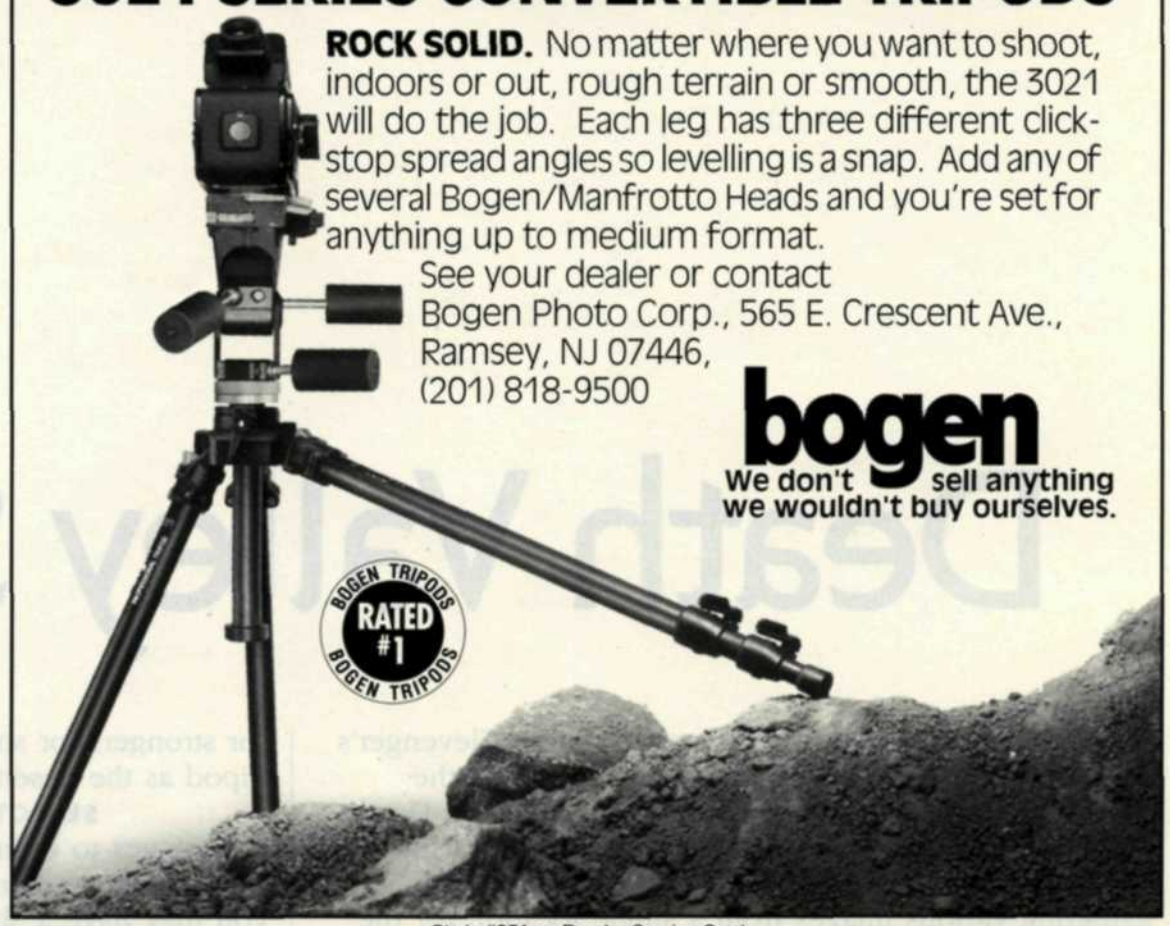

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Quantum Qflash T2

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for future use. This comes in handy if you have a specific combination of settings and want to use them later. The next time you use the flash, you recall that program number and the settings are loaded in. These settings remain in the flash even when the power is off.

The options button allows you to change from feet to meters, and turns the flash speaker on/off. A single beep indicates the exposure is correct, and a series of three beeps signals an incorrect exposure. When the speaker is turned on, you can plug in the small earphone so that only you can monitor if you have a good/bad exposure. The earphone is great for occasions like weddings when beeping sounds may be annoying to people around you. There is also a reflector position setting that gives the photographer the correct distance listings in manual and automatic modes.

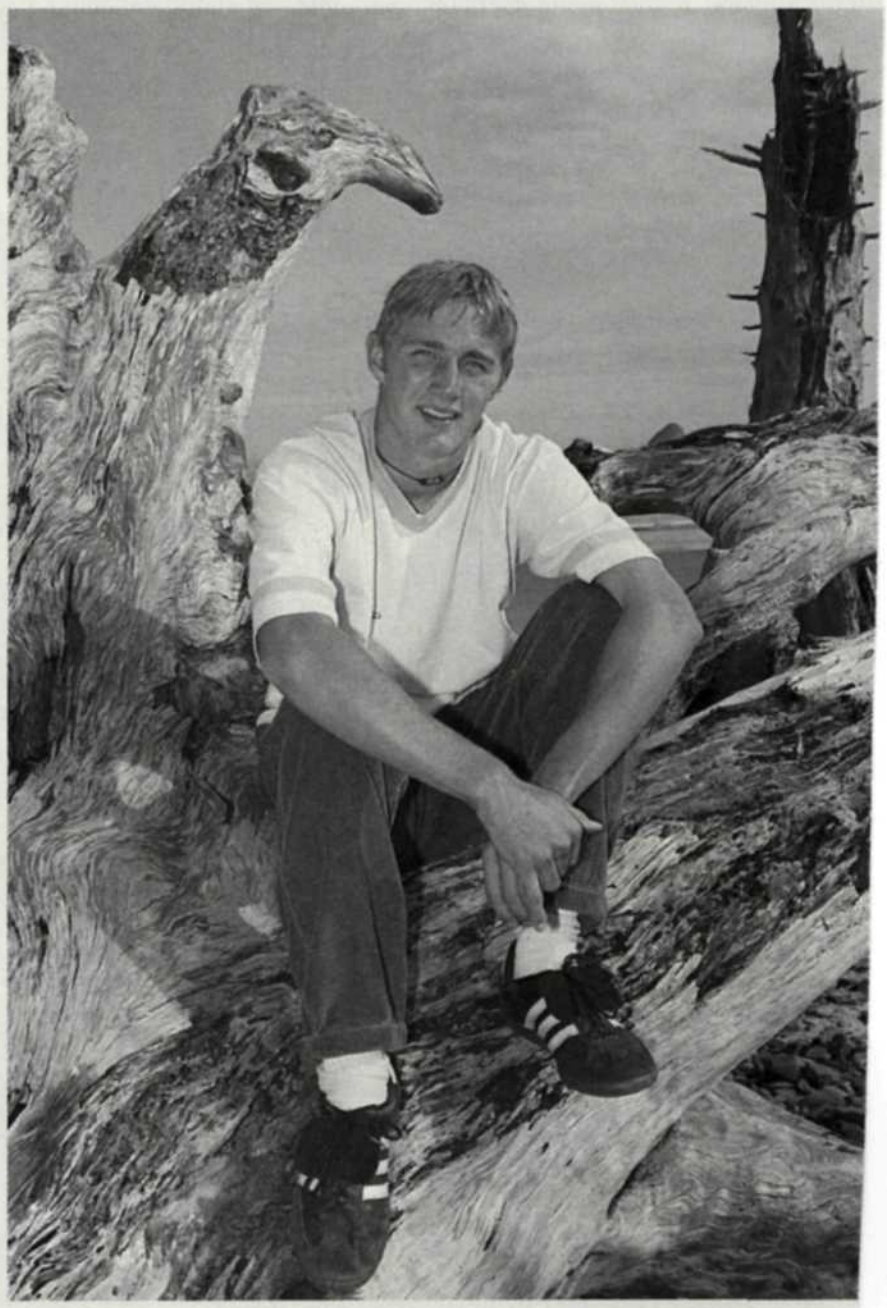
If you want to operate the Qflash as a slave, an optional sensor is available from Quantum. It comes with a three-foot cord that can attach to the hot-shoe. When this sensor is attached to the flash, the LCD display changes to SENS mode. The sensor is not affected by sunlight or incandescent light and can operate up to 500 feet from the trigger flash.

You can also trigger the flash up to 350 feet away via the Radio Slave 4i. The sending unit can mount to the hot-shoe of the camera or camera bracket, and is designed to fire in rapid succession when using a fast motor drive.

We found Quantum's Qflash (street price around $360) to be one of the most flexible portable flash units we've ever tested. It offers full flash control if you prefer manual mode and yet the possible combinations with auto and TTL are almost limitless. The Quantum Turbo battery proved to be a powerhouse providing fast recycle times and great power output that increased the adaptability of the Qflash.

Quantum also offers the similar Qflash X2, which is powered by a Lumedyne or Norman pack of 200 or 400 W/S and incorporates a 16- or 32-second-duration modeling light.

Quantum Instruments, 1075 Stewart Ave., Garden City, NY 11530; 516/222-0611; Internet website http://home.navisoft.com/quantum/homepage.htm. ■



Below: **The Qflash T2 is great for outdoor fill-flash, operating TTL with your camera's accessory TTL flash cord, and providing lots of flexibility when used in manual mode.**