

STUDIO-SERVICE BACHT

by Renate Gervink

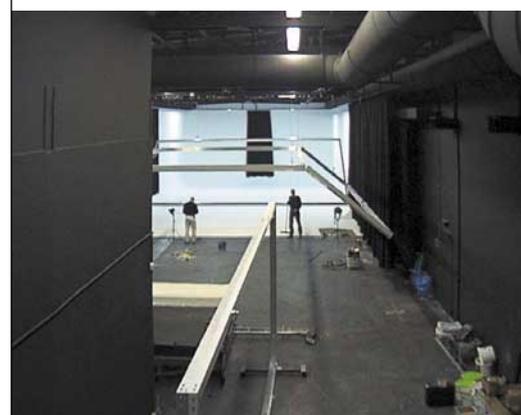
NEW BMW GROUP STUDIO

Flexible is what the new photo studio was to be, when BMW decided in 2000 to create its own photo studio at the works. Moreover, it was to reflect the high design requirements that BMW places on its car models, especially in their photographic illustration. There were two prerequisites on the room itself: it had to have sufficient space and have no pillars.

Peter Mischok, BMW-project manager for photography and Till Jenninger, who was commissioned with the studio construction, finally found a location within a huge assembly shed that once belonged to a former works railway site. Refurbishment took place over an area of 44 x 12 meters and 6 meters height in a side aisle of the shed.



The requirements were clear: the studio fitter had to be especially flexible, be able to adapt to the room available and simultaneously be able to meet the high standards set by the BMW photographers. The Studio-Service Bacht GmbH from Essen could assist: the company offered a completed program of studio equipment and proper accessories; no matter whether it's a cove, a ceiling rail system, stands or special lamps it all comes from the one company. A further advantage: General Manager Christoph Bacht is himself a photographer, he "speaks the same language" and knows from his own experience how a studio production functions. Crucial for the decision was primarily the "made-to-measure" tripartite diffusion screen, which was then unique in the car photography and had already been constructed by the Studio Service Bacht for Asatsu photo studios. The advantages are obvious. The tripartite diffusion screen enables to create the optimal light conditions for car models: It can be tilted like a light tent around the car and adapted to its shape. Using this achieves the same results as when using a flat screen 2 to 2.5 times larger. As early as the construction phase the decision proved to be the right one. In only two and a half



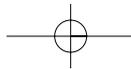
View in the completely assembled studio

month the highly modern and technically efficient photo studio was equipped.

THE „SPECIAL CHARM“ OF AN OLD ASSEMBLY SHED

Before actually equipping the photo studio, it was necessary to take care of the specific requirements of the room:

A wide expansion joint ran directly through the middle of the shed where railway lines used to lie. The Bacht team conducted the levelling of the floor it-



self. Bumps and offsets were removed by applying a cement grout to acquire a homogenous, level surface.

Heating pipes were situated exactly within the planned working radius of the bridges. Only the direct cooperation between the studio fitter and the air



The diffuser of the 45 m² screen is mounted. In the background: The tripartite diffusion screen without clothing

conditioning technician ensured the successful mounting of the ceiling rail system.

HIGHLY EFFECTIVE UNCONVENTIONAL MEASURES

Subsequently, Bacht-Team metal workers, electricians and stucco plasterers got down to the “real” work. First, they mounted a ceiling rail system consisting of three length way 32 metre rails and bridges and transverse rails of 9 metres. The long rails



Finishing of the cove

extend well beyond the cove area, enabling diffusion screens, spot lights and space lights that are attached to moveable stages to be placed or “parked” outside of the studio area without time consuming

mounting and demounting.

At the rear part of the future cove a live ring was installed on to the fixed bridge at that location. A 9 x 5 metre large diffusion screen on four cable winches was then attached to the live ring. Owing to a diameter of 3.60 metres the live ring is unique and is a very versatile piece of apparatus: height, position and inclination can be adjusted fully motorized and by remote control. And the nine-metre long diffusion screen also has its “properties”: it has neither transverse braces nor seams and therefore can be even used as a diffusion screen.

After finishing the ceiling system the skilled workers commenced construction of the cove. Again, Bacht did it his own way: The structure consists of a frame of metal, which is a method used in dry lining construction.

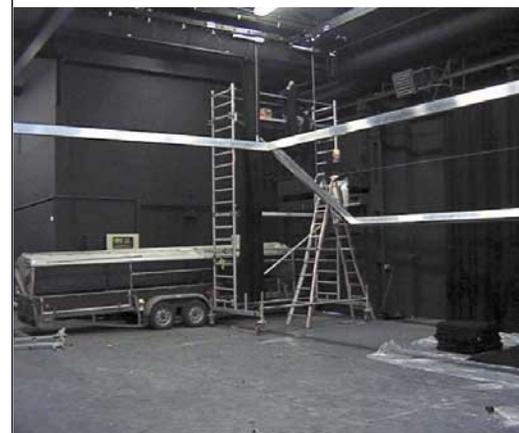
The curves at the base were constructed using a frame as is done in ship building. That guarantees a sta-



Final inspection of the diffusion screens

ble backing. The Bacht stucco plasterer makes the cover itself of gypsum. Here again this unusual application of material has considerable advantages: gypsum is physically suitable in constructions and most of all resistant. The uses of these materials precisely satisfy the high requirements of such a cove and at the same time prevent the formation of cracks.

Finally, a special curtain rail system was installed around the interior space of the 11 x 16 m cove. Ball-bearing rollers enable an unproblematic and particularly easy movement of the heavy, 6 metre high curtains. These rails also extend wide beyond the cove area, which makes it possible, like the other equipment that is not required for the shooting, for the curtains to be positioned outside of the studio



Assembling of the curtains

area. This also simultaneously provides some privacy from inquisitive glances. Christoph Bacht points out the advantages of the simple design: “the simple curtain system gives you the option of blending in partial reflections or conducting long term and multiple exposures without having to repaint, the whole of the cove.”

MADE TO MEASURE, NOT OFF THE PEG!

As is the case with all the fittings for the BMW-Studio, the curtain system was especially assembled, produced and installed for this particular application by Bacht. Standard rails from the Deco selection were found to be unsuitable, due to size and weight of the six metre high curtains.

The three part diffusion screen, a “highlight” of the studio, was constructed by hand especially to meet the individual dimensional needs of the BMW studio. During the planning phase the size and the positioning was changed several times until the ideal of design was attained. In the end it was mounted diagonally onto adjustable bridges and travelling stages driven by six motorised winches enabling it to be moved vertically and to change its inclination. In addition the two side wings of the screen can be moved up and down independently.

Today, one and half years later the studio has proved one’s worth. Owing to the extremely versatile technology and the highly flexible equipment photographers are lot more freer than they used to be as regards lighting and light characteristics. They experiment considerably more and have often blended elements provided by the studio equipment as stylistic elements into the photo production.

