



# Taek Yang

Successful marketing—especially direct marketing—is about creating a piece of visual communication that stops your target in their tracks. Commercial photography, whether for a stunning direct mail piece, a catalogue or any other marketing collateral, can achieve that instant cut-through. Dimension Studios' **Taek Yang** creates arresting and moody images that never fail to tell a story about a product, service or brand.

## About the photographer

Taek Yang was born and raised in South Korea and began his career path by studying Economics at university. It was not until his move to Australia that he became aware that photography was his true calling. This led him to study both Fine Art Photography and Commercial Photography in Adelaide in order to combine skills in both concept development and photographic technique. Influenced primarily by flawless and highly-disciplined Japanese art and culture, Taek has been creating exciting and emotive images in the years since. He has received numerous awards over the years including several Australian Institute of Professional Photography (AIPP) Awards. His work has been selected and published in the Australian Commercial and Media Photographers (ACMP) Collection Books. Taek was awarded the Hair Fashion Photographer of the Year in 2000. He is currently working as the senior fashion/advertising photographer with Dimension Studios in Sydney.

## About the studio

Dimension Studios is one of the largest photographic companies in Australia, with five studios in Sydney and 11 in Melbourne. It caters for a number of different vertical markets, from simple product photography for image libraries such as dLibrary, plus editorial, fashion for retail and advertising. Dimension Studios has worked hard on developing its advertising photography with the support of its in house creative retouching team, who adds the final finish or CGI element to highly creative images.

Dimension Studios employs over 40 staff nationally in photography from photographers, stylists, producers, set builders and importantly in its QC and retouching teams, however it is always looking out for fresh new talent, be it a photographer, assistant or stylist.

"The range of experience we have across all our photography team means that we have the skill and know how to photograph almost anything we are asked to, be it a simple one-off product, high volume contracted work, or a creative advertising shot" says Ian Cook, the national manager of Dimension Studios.

"Our photography is also complemented by our own creative team who can work with a client on creative direction on their photography or can deliver a complete concept for catalogues, DM, press ads and online advertising." **p**

## Photographer at work

**DIRECT magazine:** Can you take us through your process when you're working on a job?

Taek Yang: I'm heavily influenced by Japanese art and culture. It's always about trying to balance and blend the client's idea with my style and those Japanese disciplines and techniques. I try to produce something that is creative and also meets the client's needs. Often my approach depends on what the client says they want. I do quite a lot of research. I get a number of images to look at the lighting and style that client is looking to achieve. So there's quite a bit of pre-production work that goes into it. When I'm working for a client and I have free time, I organise with the team to experiment and try out those ideas that I've always wanted to do.

**DM:** How do you work with clients to make sure that the outcome is what everyone wants?

TY: I try to get as much information out of the client about what they want. It's always hard to get into someone's head and figure out what they really want. On the shoot day I will do a rough set up, and shoot some shots, show them to the client and make sure that they're happy. I want my clients to walk away with more than they expected. I really believe in treating the studio as my own business and I have an individual responsibility to give my clients an end product that goes above their expectations. All around I want to give a good experience to the studio's staff, the client and the talent. I get a lot of feedback from the talent agencies telling me that a lot of the models

are really happy to have me shoot them again, because of that positive experience.

**DM:** How do you use your images to tell a story?

TY: I draw a lot on the ideas of my friends who study film. You can talk about the image a lot but sometimes you have to put them into a situation where they can visualize things. When I'm doing a shoot I always have a rough story that I'm working off. I talk to the talent and I tell them "I want you to be this kind of person." Often it's about using those acting techniques so they can get into a certain character. That way you can get more emotive expressions out of the talent. And also it's about the energy and relationship between the talent, the team members and me. **p**

In this image I was playing around with the technique of having light shooting into the camera. I wanted to try out and recreate the effect of a spotlight hitting a camera as it pans across the screen. I wanted it to look like he's coming out of a backstage area, and the light behind him is a massive spotlight just hitting him from behind. Maybe he's just finished an awesome concert or a play and he's got that satisfied feeling, and it's the mood of retreating into the backstage area after a great performance, the beams shooting across him.



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This one was inspired by something I saw in Italian Vogue, which was shot in a Turkish bath house. So that was the idea I was working on, something a little bit similar. We were trying to relocate the feel and we found this place in the Eastern Suburbs [of Sydney]. It's actually someone's balcony but it had that same quality of the roughly rendered concrete wall. The jewellery featured is actually a very expensive piece—I was splashing water over the model then found out that the necklace was worth \$15,000! I also took shots from the front and side and I chose this angle because of the movement in the composition. I diffused the sunlight coming over the top of the balcony, to make it look like the shot was indoors.



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I shot this for Camilla Franks, the designer. She had this awesome fur range, and I was shooting the look book, which is typically a very basic shot —just designed to show how the clothes look, often with a plain white background. So I wanted to do something different, really create something amazing. The texture of the fur is incredible but you don't get that when the model is just standing still, it doesn't capture the movement. So I shot her jumping up and down, to really show off the movement and texture of the garment.



I had this beautiful piece of gold fabric that looked like it came out of some Middle Eastern palace. The woman is this mystery person, maybe a princess—I wanted it to look like she's a Persian princess, looking outside the palace window. I set it up with a really strong light, like sunlight, coming through the curtain or the veil as it falls onto her. This image was really about trying to create a nice, intriguing mood.