

ZM 50/2 Planar T*

Contributed by Fuwen
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The natural perspective: ZM 50mm f2 Planar T*

I had been thinking about the 50f2 for quite a while. The main reason was with the 40mm Sonnar that I am using and the range finder disengagement at 0.8m, I found for some of the composition taking kids I am not close enough. A good solution will be to use the 50mm as a shot tele, though in the title above it is suppose to be a natural view point like human eye. Also the 40mm depth of field sometimes is too much and the 50mm narrower depth of field will be more ideal. Then came the announcement of the 50/1.5 Sonnar that is so tempting. Firstly it is the Sonnar design, which is different from the many Planar that I have been using on my Rolleiflex and Contax SLR systems. Then it is the compactness for the high speed. However, the f1.5 Sonnar can only close focus to 0.9m. I know that I wanted something closer, though may not be significant in practical sense. Then I realised there is this focus shift character of the Sonnar, especially at f1.5, but many Sonnar lovers had found the shift insignificant for most practical purposes. Then one day I managed to find a good deal for a used 50f2 at a price quite comfortable to me, so in the end I have this wonderful 50f2 Planar with me.

Cosina did a good job. All the ZM lenses I owned so far I am very please with the workmanship and feel: the 21/2.8 Biogon, the 28/2.8 Biogon, the 35/2 Biogon, and this 50f2 Planar. Comparing with the made in Germany 15/2.8 Distagon, I do not see or feel a significant difference in terms of product quality, but the Germans ZM have better focusing smoothness. The chrome ZM lenses match nicely with my 35RF.

I am very happy with the 50f2 in its practical performance. So far I used it confidently at f2 and f2.8 at close distance. When I need more 'space' in the composition I will go for the 40mm. If I want a tighter feeling I will use the 50f2. For situation requires f1.4, I would still prefer using my Contax Aria or RTS III SLRs.

I have using this lens and taking photos at close to wide open aperture. I am very happy with the results, both with the picture quality and the focusing accuracy at close distance. At 8R enlargements I can hardly see any flaws at the corners.

Sembawang MRT station Singapore, f2.8 1/125 50/2 ZM Planar T*, 1 April 2007

Rollei 35RF, UC100

I like the above photo very much. There is a high key effect due to the strong back lighting. It was not my original intention to create this effect though. The new series of ZM lenses are all very flare resistance. You hardly get any softening effect or flare when shooting directly into strong light.

f2.8 1/125 15 March 2007

f2.8 1/60 10 Mar 2007

Rollei 35RF, 50f2 ZM Planar T*, Kodak UC100

f4 1/125 50f2 ZM Planar T*

Rollei 35RF UC100 10 Feb 2008

Rollei 35RF 30 Mar 2008

f4/5.6 1/250 50/2 ZM Planar T*

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