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www.nhk.or.jp/strl

NHK Technology

Hi-Vision HARP Camera: For shooting nighttime scenes in TV dramas

Hi-Vision HARP cameras are used to record vivid video footage of newsworthy events occurring at night. We thought this outstanding capability of the HARP camera could be exploited to shoot natural nighttime scenes for dramas, and together with the NHK Production Operations Center, we are studying the feasibility of this idea.

The HARP camera's original propose of news reporting meant that we had to prioritize its sensitivity over other characteristics, such as the picture quality necessary for shooting nighttime scenes for dramas. TV dramas also differ from movies in that they are typically viewed in a bright room.

Our shooting experiment for dramas involved a nighttime location shoot for the new Friday historical drama series "Yagyu Jyubei Nanaban Shobu," which begins in April. The experiment revealed that the HARP camera captures images of the contour and slight shadow of a subject in dim light, creating a depiction with a heightened sensation of depth and reality compared with images shot with a conventional

camera. It also clarified that there still are issues that need to be dealt with because some of the shot scenes possessed a slight light fluctuation that appeared as noise in the dark portion of the TV screen.

We believe that by enhancing the camera's sensitivity to the red color spectrum, for which the present camera has a relatively low sensitivity, we can reduce the influence of noise. The resulting higher picture quality HARP camera would be suitable for drama program production.

(Tomoki MATSUBARA,
Advanced Broadcasting Devices)

* For information on a nighttime shooting experiment for the movie "Umoregi," directed by Kohei OGURI, please refer to the New STRL Newsletter no. 64.



A scene from test shooting for the Friday historical drama series "Yagyu Jyubei Nanaban Shobu"

From the Editors

This year's open house celebrated the 75th anniversary of STRL. Its theme was "Learning from human possibilities, taking a leap toward more advanced broadcasting technologies," and visitors were impressed by the event. The exhibitions of Super Hi-Vision, digital terrestrial broadcasting for handheld receivers, and an ultrahigh-speed high-sensitivity camera attracted an especially high level of interest. Digital terrestrial broadcasting services for handheld receivers will start in spring 2006. The mobile receivers will likely be cellular phone or handheld TV sets. They will not only be for viewing TV programs but will offer useful services that integrate data broadcasting with cellular phone Internet communications. Attractive contents for this new service are also being planned.

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Address: 1-10-11, Kinuta,
Setagaya-ku, Tokyo,
157-8510, Japan

Phone: +81(0)3-5494-1125
Fax: +81(0)3-5494-3125

<http://www.nhk.or.jp/strl/>

Editors

Kazumasa ENAMI, publisher,
Director-General
Shuichi FUJISAWA, editor-in-chief
Yoshiaki SHISHIKUI, editor
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Yoshiro TAKIGUCHI, editor
Naohiko IAI, editor
Kyoko KIMURA, editor

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Yohko OHTA, Masami OHNISHI,
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