PHOTO SCANNER

# Epson Perfection 4870 Photo

## A KEENLY-PRICED SCANNER THAT DELIVERS FAST, HIGH-QUALITY SCANS FROM FILM AND PRINT ORIGINALS.

Epson's latest flatbed/film scanner hits the market at the same price as its illustrious predecessor, the Perfection 3200, which was reviewed in our August/September issue. Offering higher resolution and faster scan times, the Perfection 4870 is ideal for photographers who require both film and flatbed scanning capabilities and want the best possible results in each case. You'll need a computer with plenty of memory (including at least 256 MB of RAM), a reasonably fast processor, a recent Windows or Mac operating system and either FireWire or USB 2.0 support to take advantage of the many features this exciting new model offers.

The Perfection 4870's superb scan quality is partly due to a specially-designed moving carriage transparency unit, whose precision is such that film grain is revealed in the highest-resolution scans. And its maximum optical density of 3.8D can detect high levels of shadow and highlight detail, allowing photographers to obtain optimum dynamic range from film-based images. It is also one of the few flatbed scanners supplied with ASF's Digital ICE technology, which automatically eliminates the effects of surface dust, scratches and fingermarks without modifying image quality in any way. This application is popular in high-end film scanners and professional digitising equipment but rarely found on under-$1000 units.

Like its predecessor, the Perfection 4870 is designed for use with TWAIN-compliant software. Epson has bundled this model with Adobe's Photoshop Elements 2.0 plus Lasersoft Imaging's excellent SilverFast SE, a professional scanning application that capitalises on the full bit depth of the scanner, allowing it to produce colour images with the full 48-bit output and greyscale images at 16-bit quality. SilverFast SE is a brilliant scanning system with a powerful but easy-to-use interface and some useful functions such as, selective colour restoration, dust and scratch removal, grain and noise elimination, colour cast removal and a superb SC2G (Selective Colour to Grey)

conversion system that lets you produce greyscale scans from colour originals.

For users who prefer a simpler interface, Epson's own Smart Panel application supports three user modes: full auto, 'home' mode and 'professional' mode. The latter lets you scan documents larger than 216 x 297 mm and both it and the 'home' mode support dust and scratch removal, colour restoration, removal of moire patterns, brightness and colour tuning plus optimisation of text and line art scans. Users can also scan several prints or 24 frames of 35mm strip film, 8x 35mm slides, 3x 120/220 film frames or 2x 4x5-inch format film sheets at the same time.

Although we were pretty impressed by the performance of the Perfection 3200, the Perfection 4870 has all the capabilities of its predecessor and is roughly three times faster. We recorded the following scanning times (from scan initiation to the appearance of the image in the editing application) in our tests:

- 10 x 15 cm colour print scanned at 300 dpi in Smart Panel's Professional mode for same-sized output – 2 min 25 sec (file size 6.09 MB)
- 15 x 20 cm B&W print scanned at 300 dpi (greyscale) in SilverFast for same-sized output – 15 sec (file size 3.58 MB)
- strip of six 35mm colour transparencies: pre-scan – 40 sec; time to scan one frame for 10 x 15 cm output at 150 dpi – 35 secs; time to scan one slide at 300 dpi for 15 x 20 cm output – 1 min 30 sec (file size 13.34 MB); time to scan one frame for A4 output – 2 min 25 sec (file size 148.2 MB).
- eight mounted slides scanned at 300 dpi for 10 x 15 cm output with Smart Panel's Full Auto mode – 3 min 20 sec for first image to appear then 1 min 10 sec for each subsequent image.

The output quality we achieved with the test unit was the best we've seen yet from a flatbed/film scanner and film scans came very close to matching those from a

dedicated film scanner costing roughly double the price. This makes the Perfection 4870 an excellent buy for quality-conscious professional photographers and serious enthusiasts. It is also ideal for anyone with large numbers of slides and/or negatives to archive. The ability to scan a number of images simultaneously and handle them in batches makes what would otherwise be a time-consuming and demanding task simple and straightforward – provided you have sufficient RAM to handle the processing, adequate HDD storage and a fast USB 2.0 or FireWire computer connection. ■

## SPECIFICATIONS

**RESOLUTION:**
40,800 x 56,160 effective pixels at 4800dpi; scanning resolution 4800 x 9600dpi; output resolution 25dpi to 12,800dpi

**BIT DEPTH:**
48-bit colour

**SCAN SPEED:**
16.9 msec/line at 4800dpi; 4.1 msec/line at 600dpi

**SCALING:**
50% to 200% in 1% increments

**INTERFACES:**
USB 2.0 and FireWire (Windows and Mac compatible)

**POWER CONSUMPTION:**
24W operating, 16W in stand-by mode, 4.5W in sleep mode.

**DIMENSIONS:**
304 x 476 x 134mm

**WEIGHT:**
6.7Kg

**RRP:** $899

**DISTRIBUTOR:**
EpsonAustralia; (02) 8899 3666; www.epson.com.au