PORTLAND, Ore. – Jan. 12, 2011 – The competition to create the world's largest digital photo was in full force in 2010. From panoramas of Dresden to Dubai to Rio de Janeiro, the size of these digital images exploded, and now a new gigapixel image of Shanghai has taken the top spot. The photo tops out at 272 gigapixels and, if printed, would be the size of more than 700,000 billboards. To zoom in and view the intense level of detail in this amazing gigapixel image, seeing details of daily life in one of the world's largest cities, go to GigaPan.com.

Photographer Alfred Zhao shot the remarkable image of the Shanghai skyline using the GigaPan EPIC Pro robotic camera mount. Zhao was inspired by earlier record-breaking photos, including the 26 gigapixel image of Dresden, created by German photographer Holger Schulze in December 2009. At the time, it was considered the world's largest image. One year later, Zhao's image of Shanghai is more than 10 times that size.

"It was the gigapixel image year. I never imagined such fierce competition," says Zhao. "This is not the end of my panorama journey, it is a new start, challenging the limit is an infinite process. New records will appear in the future, it is only a matter of time."

Zhao shot the photo using a Canon 7D camera coupled with GigaPan’s EPIC Pro robotic mount, which took 12,000 pictures over an eight-hour time frame. With the help of GigaPan Engineers Randy Sargent and Paul Heckbert, they stitched together the thousands of photos into one very large image and uploaded it to the photo-sharing site, GigaPan.com.

To view the Shanghai image and earlier record-breaking images, including the 45 gigapixel image of Dubai or 152 gigapixel image in Rio de Janeiro, go to GigaPan.com. Explore Shanghai's buildings and streets while getting a glimpse of life in this populous city. Can you find the orange flip-flops or girl in the red stilettos? Post comments on what else you can find in Shanghai on GigaPan's Facebook page.

Zhao’s image has been called the “world’s largest photo” due to the number of gigapixels it contains. Zhao notes, “The creation of this panorama is intended to explore the limit of photo equipment, computer hardware, network resource and various other contributing factors that limit the size of a panorama image. This is by no means a perfect image; there are many aspects to be improved.”

What constitutes the world’s largest image, in your opinion? Is it pixels, image resolution or another aspect? Join the discussion in the comments.

WHAT IS A GIGAPAN?
Gigapans are gigapixel panoramas, digital images with billions of pixels. They are huge panoramas with fascinating detail, all captured in the context of a single brilliant photo. Phenomenally large, yet remarkably crisp and vivid, gigapans are available to be explored at GigaPan.com. Zoom in and discover the detail of over 40,000 panoramas from around the world.

ABOUT GIGAPAN
GigaPan EPIC series is based on the same technology employed by the Mars Rover to capture the incredible images of the red planet. Powerful GigaPan technology is the result of a joint research project by scientists at Carnegie Mellon University and NASA. Now everyone has the opportunity to use technology developed for Mars to take their own incredible images here on Earth.

GigaPan Systems was formed in 2008 as a commercial spin-off of a successful research collaboration between a team of researchers at NASA and Carnegie Mellon University. The company’s mission is to bring this powerful, high-resolution imaging capability to a broad audience. For more information, visit gigapansystems.com.

GigaPan is the leader in gigapixel imaging. See how BBC, MLB and National Geographic are using GigaPan to change the way you see the world.

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GigaPan EPIC Series
Capture brilliant gigapixel cameras with almost any camera! The GigaPan EPIC, EPIC 100 and EPIC Pro make it fun and easy. Which EPIC is right for you? Visit gigapansystems.com

GIGAPAN NEWS UPDATES
NEW! The newly released GigaPan iPad App brings the best images from GigaPan.com to your iPad for the most natural gigapixel browsing experience available.

• Browse the collection of 40,000+ panoramas hosted at GigaPan.com
• Learn! See more information about each gigapan
• Explore! Pan and zoom using multitouch gestures
• Share! Send your friends links to your favorite panoramas

Arca-Compatible EPIC Pro
New EPIC Pro accessory –
Arca-Compatible Camera Mount Clamp and Foot

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• Very robust and secure mounting design
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SHANGHAI SKYLINE GIGAPAN IS NEW RECORD-BREAKER

GigaPan EPIC Pro Continues to Capture Phenomenal Images