VCC

Close-Up

"Diaphanous" by Hanna Cowpe

SONY®

Sony α9

A new dimension of photographic speed

The mirrorless camera that delivers next-generation high-speed performance far exceeding SLRs. It's equipped with the world's first 35 mm stacked CMOS image sensor with integral memory for 20 times faster overall readout speed.

- Silent, vibration-free, anti-distortion shutter up to 1/32,000 sec.
- 693 Phase Detection AF points over 93% frame coverage
- Continuous view blackout free OLED Tru-Finder with 100% frame coverage
- Wi-Fi, NFC, QR code, FTP file transfer
- Dual media slots (Slot 1 UHS-II SD Card compatible)
- 5-axis in-body image stabilization, 5.0 step shutter speed advantage
- Full-frame 4K video with full-pixel readout and no pixel binning
- Robust magnesium alloy body with dust and moisture resistant design

Sony α 7 III

Dramatically enhanced image quality

With outstanding imaging capability and high-speed performance contained in a compact body, the a7 III gives you the power, precision, and flexibility to capture once-in-a-lifetime moments just as you like.

- Advanced 24.2 MP Back-Illuminated 35mm Full-frame Image Sensor
- 15-stop dynamic range, 14-bit uncompressed RAW, ISO 50 to 204,800
- Up to 10fps Silent or Mechanical Shutter with AE/AF tracking
- 693 phase-detection / 425 contrast AF points with 93% image coverage
- Eye-AF with AF-C; Direct AF point 4-way multi-selector; touch AF
- 4K HDR Movie with full pixel readout, no pixel binning or crop

Trade in Trade up™

We now accept trade-ins on cameras, lenses, flashes and video cameras at these locations. The Best Trade-In Value. We will beat any photo gear trade-in price by 15% (of the difference). See in-store for details.

LONDON DRUGS®

Colwood Corners Shopping Centre · 1907 Sooke Road · (250) 474-0900
Harris Green Village · 201 - 911 Yates St · (250) 360-0880
Saanich Centre · 127 - 3995 Quadra St · (250) 727-0246
Tillicum Centre · Y003a, 3170 Tillicum Road · (250) 360-2654

✓ Price match guarantee

"Sunset Sail" by Vanessa MacDonald

Established in 1944, the Victoria Camera Club is a group of people who share the love of photography. We come together to appreciate each other's images, to learn, both from the feedback on our own images and from the images of others, and to exchange tips on how and where to take effective photographs. Our focus is on continuous learning. Our media include both film and digital and our expertise ranges from novice to master.

Events

We hold a number of events including:

- Three meetings a month from September to April (excluding December)
- Field trips
- Workshops
- Special Interest Groups (SIGs)
- Competitions within the Club and externally

Meetings begin at 7:30 PM at Norway House, 1110 Hillside Avenue, Victoria, BC.

Membership

Annual fees include all workshops (except studio shoots and special events), meetings and all field trips unless travel/accommodation is involved. Annual fees are: Individual, $85; Family, $128; Student, $43.

For current event information and locations please go to the website *victoriacameraclub.ca* where you can also read or download the colour version of *Close-Up*.

Close-Up is the magazine of the Victoria Camera Club.

Copyright ©, Victoria Camera Club, 2019, all rights reserved. Mailing address: PO Box 46035, RPO Quadra, Victoria, BC, V8T 5G7. Editor, Richard James, e-mail to *editor@victoriacameraclub.ca* for submissions or to advertise in *Close-Up*. Deadline for submissions for the July/August 2019 issue is June 1st 2019.

For additional information: please contact:

Membership: *membership@victoriacameraclub.ca*
Workshops: *workshops@victoriacameraclub.ca*
Field Trips: *fieldtrips@victoriacameraclub.ca*
Meetings: *meetings@victoriacameraclub.ca*
Website: *webmaster@victoriacameraclub.ca*
Close-Up: *editor@victoriacameraclub.ca*
President: *president@victoriacameraclub.ca*

What's Inside

PSA Award-winning Website and Newsletter
2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2017 and 2018
CAPA Award-winning Newsletter 2015

Please support our advertisers.

Remember to tell them that you saw their ad in *Close-Up.* Member Discounts: VCC members can take advantage of discounts. Details are on the members section on our website.

The Victoria Camera Club is a member society of the Victoria Arts Council, Canadian Association for Photographic Arts (CAPA), and the Photographic Society of America (PSA).

Calendar

Our workshop and field trip program is too extensive to list in *Close-Up.* Please go to the calendar page on the website (*www.victoriacameraclub.ca)* for the latest details of all our workshops, field trips and meetings.

May 2nd: Competition Night. This is the Annual Competition and Awards Night. Join us in honouring our competition winners and the Frank Turner Award recipient for 2018-19.

Thursday night meetings will resume in September.

April 19th - May 5th: Print Show at Victoria Arts Council Gallery, 1800 Store Street.

Workshops: The Art of Seeing, Image Post-processing. **Field Trip Highlights:** Ancient Forest Conservation Photography, Saturna Island, Botanical Beach.

Cover Image: Diaphanous by Hanna Cowpe. The subject is the seed head of the wildflower known as Common Salsify. It is often seen growing on verges along roadsides or scattered in uncultivated fields. Although I have a fairly structured garden, I am easily swayed to let nature have a hand in its design. After frequently seeing this plant growing near my home on public lands and along the Island Highway, I located it in my wildflower guidebook and learned its identity and characteristics.

Some time later I was delighted to find it had set seed in my garden. Although I didn't recognize it in its initial leafy state, I let it grow to a lush green plant with long strappy leaves and lofty height. When the bud appeared and opened to reveal the lovely purple daisy-like flower with a yellow centre I was delighted.

The flowers eventually produced their amazing seed heads; a beautiful globe of shimmering "goblets". One day, as I viewed it in the distance from my window, I noticed how the flowering plants in the garden provided a rainbow of colours as a background for the diaphanous specimen. I took a succession of shots from this very close up one to more distant ones that included the entire head. Each of these produced more detail of this fascinating plant.

I chose to use my 100 mm macro lens to capture the fine detail of the delicate gauzy fibres along with the strong skeletal structure of each umbrella-like seed. The image was shot with a Canon EOS Digital Rebel XT at 1/200th second, f4.5 and ISO 200. The fairly wide aperture gave me the shallow depth-of-field that I wanted.

President's Message

As I come to the end of my first year as President, I started to reflect on how I thought we did as a Club. Improvement is never ending and you should always work to improve whatever you do, be it photography or just life. These are just a few highlights from the past year.

Throughout our season we had 1,475 images submitted by Novice, Intermediate and Advanced photographers in our internal competitions. The numbers were slightly down from previous years so I encourage more Novice photographers to enter. For external competitions we entered into a record 25 events as a Club with PSA, CAPA and a few others, and we did extremely well. The highlights are in the President's Year-end Report.

Our field trip and workshop committees really stepped up and provided us with some great opportunities to improve our photographic skills. Our new special events committee set up fun and games at our Christmas Social and raised $1,530 for donations to two worthy charities. Our print show showcased 97 images from members at the Victoria Arts Council's new gallery on Store Street. It was an amazing opportunity to show off the talent of our club members. This talent was also in evidence during our successful Member's nights.

Our ever-evolving website continues to be award winning thanks to our webmaster and his hard-working crew. It really highlights how much we do as a Club. *Close-Up* is the other way we get the word out about the Club. The editor and his team have created an award-winning magazine of which we are very proud.

I would like to thank the outgoing executive members Pam Irvine, Richard Marshall and Jacqui James for their contributions and dedicated work during their time as Members-at-Large and Secretary. They were especially helpful as I learned my role throughout the year. I am looking forward to working with our new executive team bringing fresh ideas to the table for the coming year. As always, we are an open executive and are always receptive to members bringing ideas that could help improve our Club.

Lastly, I would like to thank all of you, our members. Without the dedication of your time and talents volunteering to help run the Club we would not be as successful as we are. We have achieved a lot this past year and I am looking forward to our continued success in the coming year.

Teri VanWell, President

Altered Reality

by Pearson Morey

I have been asked to elaborate on what makes me go off on some of my photographic tangents. There is no real trigger that ignites my imagination to explore one of these creations. I've always been one to ask myself, "I wonder what's beyond that next bend or where does this road end". It usually begins with a normal picture that I work on for the Tuesday group postings. As I work through the editing process on some pictures, I say to myself, "I wonder what would happen if I used some of the effects available in the various editing programs that I use"?

I wait until I have the picture edited to the point that I'm satisfied with it and post it on the Tuesday group gallery. I then explore and see what I can discover using the various tools and software processes available in Photoshop Elements, Corel Paintshop Pro Ultimate, ACDsee, and Picasa plus a little gem of a program that I bought in 2002 called Picture It.

Using these programs, I try the effect to see if I like what I see. I save what I have and then proceed to the next effect. They all do basically the same thing but may have differences in how they affect the end result. An example would be this "rule of thirds" picture.

"Rule of Thirds"

After posting my "normal" picture I started to play with the image some more. The sky was dramatized using NIK Effects, (compare pictures 1 and 2). Then to Paintshop for Geometric Effects, I picked the Circle effect, with a black background and saved it as a new file. Continuing with Paintshop but now under Artistic Effects, I used Balls and Bubbles and chose Single Ball. I adjusted the Surface Treatment, maximized the size, then under Surface I adjusted the opacity, the shininess and the gloss effect that I wanted. I then played around with the amount of illumination required and saved it again under a new name.

"Rule of Thirds - Edited"

Next, I went to the Picture It program, selected a blank canvas and prepared it with a black background. Then I transferred the Globed image into it and added a line and different shades of grey to the canvas. Then under Effects, I embossed the whole image to produce the third image.

The desire to change a picture is an exploration of what you can do with the various tools that you have at your disposal. Photoshop Elements has over fifty different effects that can be played with to change the photo from full colour, to change selected items to be coloured and leave the remainder as line drawings or washed out colours. Another is Out Of Bounds. A portion of the picture is displayed outside the frame. Photoshop Elements is easy to use, just follow the steps explained with the program. Painter has a whole arsenal of effects to mess around with.

"Rule of Thirds - Globe Transform"

I find the effects work better when I've converted my images to JPEG. I start with a "saved as" picture and I identify them with a, b. c etc. as I jump from effect to effect. Approach with an open mind and just start trying different items in the effects column. If it doesn't work, delete and try another one. When you like what you see "save as" and then just keep adding different ideas and eventually you end up with something you like. Now try different borders and post it to see what the world thinks of your effort. Try fiddling with your pictures. It's fun.

Shooting Sports

by Clive Townley

Sports photography is great exercise for your equipment and often for the photographer as well. It pushes the limits of the iso/speed/aperture compromise and rewards the photographer with insights into the excitement, fears, and success of athletes pushing their limits.

"Fast primes are helpful in challenging light conditions."

Equipment: Equipment does matter when photographing sports. In reality, with most sports, longer zoom lenses get you closer to the fray and give you more flexibility in post-processing. You probably need at least 200 mm to get in the action and in my opinion the 150-600 mm zooms by Sigma and Tamron offer ideal focal lengths as do Canon's 100-400 mm and Nikon's 200-500 mm lenses. These are best suited to daytime sports.

Low light and stadium sports are more demanding and the benefit of a faster f2.8 lens is significant. In most cases these are heavier primes, and you probably need another camera over your shoulder with a fast 70-200 mm lens to capture the action when it is in your face.

A good solid, easily adjustable monopod is a great place for your heavy lens to reside. It saves you from tiring yourself out during longer games, doesn't get in the way if you need to move rapidly and gives you an edge when shutter speeds demand steadiness. Some sports, such a surfing, benefit from a tripod as you could be waiting for some time between wave sets. Pro equipment can usually handle some light rain but for everything else,

having a rain sleeve in your bag will keep you shooting when the storm rolls in. Remember, no flash photography around athletes please.

"Panning an image gives a sense of movement."

Settings: Use the highest ISO your sensor can handle without excessive noise. On a bright sunny day, ISO 400 to 800 will work but, indoors, or with night-time stadium lighting, may need you to go to ISO 3200 or even higher.

A minimum shutter speed of 1/500th sec seems to apply to most sports; higher speeds will result in more "keepers". When panning motor or cycle sports to enhance the sense of speed, shutter speeds can be as low as 1/15th sec. Be prepared to take lots of images to get just the right formula for each occasion.

Camera permitting, use aperture priority mode when possible. A wide-open aperture will give you faster focus, better subject definition and, usually, results in better bokeh in the background.

"Eye on the ball."

Spot focusing is the most accurate but if two players are interacting you are at risk of focusing right through them to the crowd on the other side. Often, increasing the number of focus points will avert that issue. Check that you are using continuous focus. Nikon 3D tracking/Canon Servo AF are useful tools for tracking moving subjects. Go for the maximum frame rate that your camera will allow and keep your shutter finger pressed down. Don't start the action too soon as the camera's

buffer could quickly fill up and suddenly your frame rate drops at a critical moment. If this is an issue, shoot multiple short bursts or shoot JPG images only, if you must.

Remember to check your white balance. Strange things can happen under floodlights. If your camera has a "flicker reduction" mode, this may help if flicker is an issue with the lighting. Check each venue first to see if it helps.

Positioning: Know the sport you are about to shoot and, if you don't, learn as much as you can about the sport before attending the event. At the event take some dummy runs before the game starts. You should be tuned up and ready to go the moment the action starts. Do check your images periodically but don't miss out on some awesome play because you're chimping (checking out every image taken).

"A long lens and tripod will do the trick for surfing shots."

As with many photo subjects, get as low as you can. Kneel or get down on your belly, although with the latter option, consider what you would do if twenty plus big guys come thundering towards you. They have the right of way so don't expect them to be polite.

The sun, where is the sun? Avoid shooting into the sun if you can by going to the other side of the field if possible.

In most field sports, you can be 100 meters from the play, so figure out which is the stronger team and position yourself close to the other team's goal. Moving around helps find the best locations.

Be wary about your background such as people standing on the sideline, tents and overt advertising that can be a distraction. Remember, don't interfere with the spectator`s view of the game.

Pictures: Actual images are more within the realm of subjectivity so these are my preferences. In my opinion, blood and mud make the best sports photos. Of course, you are always likely to get that nose, or cheek, crunch

"Crop the image, or preferably, get as close as you can."

shot regardless of the weather. With any ball sport it is important to have the ball in the image. Follow it and try to figure out where it is going next.

Close engagement with the athletes can tell a whole story about their engagement with their sport. Emotions of determination, anxiety and anticipation are often written on the faces of focused athletes.

"Games within games, who is thinking their next move."

Games within games can tell great stories if you can spot then but are usually only recognized at the processing stage. For example, you have two players engaged in combat: Yep, you got that shot nicely, but what are the other players around them thinking and what is their plan of action?

For action shots, I feel a little blur in parts of the image will avoid the artificial "frozen" look, especially in sports involving wheels. To make sure you have the right moment, take lots of pictures and be ruthless culling your images in your first pass through post-processing.

Remember, these athletes, whether amateur or professional, are trying their best at their sport and maybe we should too.

An Invitation to Enchantment

by Vanessa MacDonald

My exploration of the Altered Reality genre has arisen through my desire to find new ways to convey a sense of romance, magic, fantasy, otherworldliness, illusion and dreaminess in my photos. A true romantic at heart I have always loved folklore and esoteric or supernatural subjects and themes, so I try to think about ways I can incorporate these types of elements into my work. The genre is all about departing from reality so anything your imagination dreams up is fair game.

I would encourage anyone considering a dive into this style of photography to indulge in a flight of fancy. This is an opportunity to go beyond a strictly realistic, mechanistic and rational mindset. Think about whether there is a story or myth that captures your imagination or perhaps a favourite book or film with fantasy, sci-fi or surreal themes. Ask yourself, how could something mundane and everyday be made magical or mysterious? Maybe you keep a dream journal, like ghost stories, or the idea of reincarnation, astral-travel, levitation or life on other planets. Think back to when you were a child, and what inspired your sense of wonderment and imagination? Or perhaps you just like experimenting, well, become a mad scientist and have some fun while you're at it! These are all rich source-points from which to fuel your creative vision.

"Celestial Rhythm"

Once you know what you are drawn to, you might consider planning a shoot with a specific concept or vision in mind or you could create something totally original and mind-bending from a set of images you already have. There are multiple ways to produce an altered reality image including in-camera techniques like camera rotation, double exposure, or Intentional Camera Movement (ICM) as well as using software or apps for transforming or blending images together. I have ex-
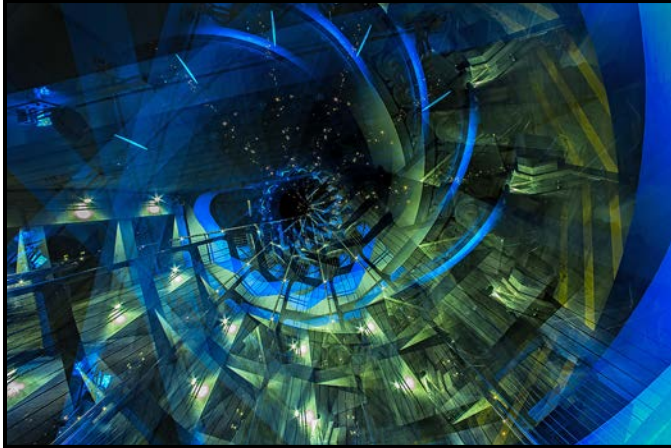
perimented with both in-camera techniques and soft-ware manipulations.

From the outset, I was just having fun playing with phone apps like Pixlr, MirrorLab, Prisma, TinyPlanetFX. But after a while I wanted to go beyond just letting an app do all the work for me, and somehow felt like it would be cheating if I entered those kind of images in a competition.


"Warp Drive"

An area of strong personal interest has been night photography and light painting so, for a recent project, I challenged myself to combine these two styles with Photoshop manipulations to create a series of fantasy images that I dubbed the "Cosmic Portraits Project". The vision and intent from the outset was to transform light-painted silhouettes of my friends into Spirit beings or Goddesses inhabiting an enchanted environment.

I was already familiar with double-exposure effect images and felt that this could be a reasonably straight-forward technique for an intermediate level photographer to pull off in Photoshop. My friend, Ann-Marie Hak, volunteered to pose for a series of light-painted silhouettes using different colours of Electro-Luminescent (EL) wire. This looks like glowing smoke when you waive it around in a long exposure

These silhouette images were then experimentally blended in Photoshop with other night images. For the background layer I settled on an image of the enchanted grove at the Butchart Gardens, which seemed to have that "essence of magic" I was looking for. For me, this place conjures up the idea of a bioluminescent forest or maybe a fairy realm.

I like to share this example because it did not require any "advanced" Photoshop abilities, just knowledge of a few basic blending techniques and making selections.

A good strategy that I would suggest for those new to Altered Reality is to acquire these techniques in Photo-
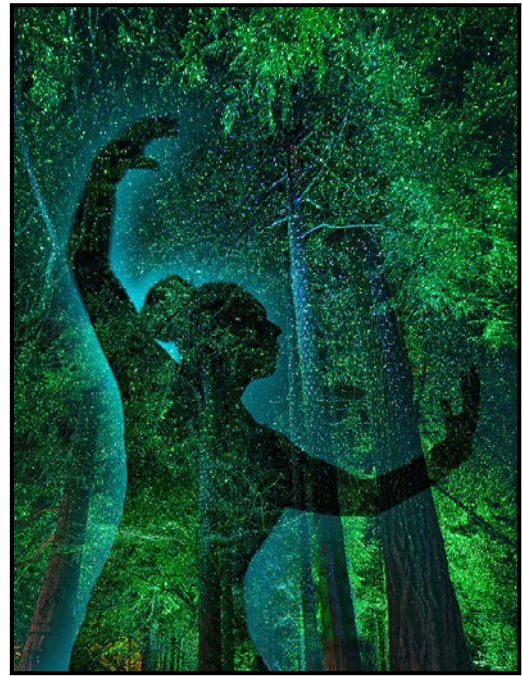
"Forest Enchantress"

shop in a step-wise fashion. Learn them one at a time and practice over and over with a few different images until you feel pretty comfortable with that technique. Your repertoire of Photoshop skills will gradually build from there and it feels much less intimidating.

External Competitions

by Leah Gray

So, your image was selected as a Club entry for an external competition. Fantastic! Perhaps your image was not selected. You may feel disappointed. Why is one image selected while another is not? There are many considerations when selecting images for External Competitions. The purpose of the External Competition committee is to select images submitted by our members that the majority of committee members believe will score the highest in that specific competition.

First of all, what type of competition is it? Images are selected for CAPA, PSA and other external competitions. If it's an "Open" competition the committee will try to select a variety of images from those submitted, looking for powerful or "wow" images. Selecting several images of grizzly bears, for instance, may not be the best decision for a strong entry. In any case if your image is not selected for a specific competition, please consider re-entering it into another External Comp. There have been many cases when the committee felt both images submitted by a member were worthy of selection.

Images are initially scored out of 20 points by individual committee members scoring remotely. Committee members are not permitted to score their own images. The committee then meets to discuss the images and view the averaged scores. There is often some lively discussion over which image merits inclusion over another. There is often input from a VCC member acting as a "guest" judge. The committee selects one image per author, per competition. The author's names are not visible to the committee when evaluating and selecting images. Away from the view of the others, one committee member checks the authors during a meeting to ensure we have not selected two images from the same member.

Photographs chosen for External Competitions need to be exceptional. All submissions are considered for selection, including those from committee members. The committee must evaluate images as they are submitted. Please read the specific rules of the competition. Ensure that you have not entered an image in the same competition through another club, or the same image as your individual entry. After all of this careful consideration, don't forget to enter! You might have the next "Best of Show" image.

If you have any questions, please speak to me or email me at *extcomps@victoriacameraclub.ca*.

March 2019 Competition Judges

We extend our sincere thanks to the external judges for the March Intermediate and Advanced competitions: Derek Hayes, Rick Leche, Robert Laramée and Gregg Eligh. We would also like to thank our in-house Novice Judges: Normand Marcotte, Martin Wright, Steve Lustig, Anne McCarthy, Caspar Davis, Suzanne Huot and Lorna Zaback. Images and judges' comments are available at: *victoriacameraclub.ca/Competitions/CompetitionResults.aspx*.

Robert Laramée: Open and Theme. Robert rejoined the RA Photo Club (Ottawa) in 2002 when retirement gave him more time to devote to photography. He started studying at the School of the Photographic Arts: Ottawa in 2006, where he completed a Part Time Studies Certificate in Analog Photography in 2009. He taught digital photography for the City of Ottawa and currently teaches at Académie des retraités de l'Outaouais. He also runs workshops and recently started private coaching and mentoring. He recently completed the CAPA photo judging training and is currently working at becoming a CAPA certified judge.

Derek Hayes: Altered Reality. Derek lives in White Rock, BC and is a certified CAPA judge. He enjoys a wide range of photographic styles including travel photography. Derek is a renowned historian and the prolific author of the best-selling Historical Atlas of the Pacific Northwest, the Historical Atlas of Canada, Canada: An Illustrated History, and other fascinating historical books. *derekhayesphotography.com*.

Rick Leche: Wildlife and Natural World. Rick currently lives in Black Creek, BC and is an avid photographer of anything or everything. He never leaves home without his Canon gear, whether it is traveling around the world or around the Comox Valley. Rick is a member of the Comox Valley Photographic Society where he and his wife Donna act as mentors in photo editing. He was the recognized as the top image maker for 2012-2013 by his peers in the Club. Rick is an enthusiastic judge with a keen eye and a great sense of humour. *ricklechephotographer.zenfolio.com*.

Gregg Eligh: Prints. Gregg is a good friend to the Club and well known around the Club for his judging over the years and his interesting workshops. He currently teaches continuing education photography courses at Camosun College. Gregg has worked across North America doing corporate, editorial, catalogue and advertising photography. Gregg's work can also be seen in several gallery shows every year. *gregg@elighphoto.com*.

Advanced Altered Reality Digital - 2ⁿᵈ
"Strolling the Moss Street Paint-in" by Hanna Cowpe

Judge's comments: Nice image especially figure on the left. Good impression.

Advanced Wildlife Digital - 2ⁿᵈ
"Great Egret" by David Axford

Judge's comments: Very nice image! Well seen and superbly captured. The whites are pleasingly displayed without any obvious blown-out areas. The motion is very nice, tack sharp. This image appears to have been shot in challenging light conditions. Thanks for sharing this lovely image!

Advanced Monochrome Print - 1ˢᵗ
"Outdoor Coffee Stop" by Richard James

Judge's comments: This is a good "story" of life on the street. Good focus and depth of field. That look you are getting creates the moment, and you got it. A very snappy print.

Advanced Nature Print - 1ˢᵗ
"Safe" by Leah Gray

Judge's comments: Great moment, well captured. Framing the little one with the adult is creative and tells a story. Excellent perspective.

Advanced Open Digital - 1ˢᵗ
"Skateboard Contemplation" by Normand Marcotte

Judge's comments: Beautiful warm black tones, a panoramic crop that suits the image, the placement of the girl, all the elements work well together. Stunning image!

Advanced Natural World Digital - 1ˢᵗ
"Dead Trees - Deadvlai, Namibia" by Steve Barber

Judge's comments: Wow this image has impact and pop. The way the sand dunes in the back replace what otherwise would be sky or other background is incredible. It gives the image an other-worldly feeling that lives in harmony with the foreground trees and layers of light. The image is sharp, has a wonderful colour palette, well composed and there is nothing that I would dare say to fine tune the image. It is exceedingly well done. Thank you for sharing this image!

Advanced Theme Digital - 3ʳᵈ
"Shopping Red Line" by Garry Schaefer

Judge's comments: It is a little difficult to decipher this image but the geometry of the big red element against the much finer patterns of tiling make it most interesting. The diagonals are well placed. Great composition, very good work.

Advanced Open Print - 3ʳᵈ
"Desert Rothko" by Steve Lustig

Judge's comments: This is a curious but strong composition. Clean, sharp detail, minimalist design. Is it missing something, or not?

Intermediate Digital Theme - 1st
"Geisha Arriving at Teahouse" by Judy Johnston

Judge's comments: Stunning! The subject matter and the treatment (colour and vignetting) make this photo timeless. Very nice detail and great capture of facial expressions. Excellent work.

"Intermediate Open Digital - 1st
"Adrift at Night" by Daniel Rondeau

Judge's comments: It is all in the eyes! There are many elements in the image, lots of small touches of bright colours and textures, all of them bringing us back to those wonderful eyes. All the little imperfections, loose hair, unretouched skin, etc. make this portrait so very natural. Superb work.

Intermediate Wildlife Digital - 2nd
"Portrait of a Red Fox" by Mary-Lee Sampson

Judge's comments: Superb! Full stop, any suggestions that I could make would be irrelevant. I love the eyes. Thanks for sharing.

Intermediate Altered Reality Digital - 1st
"Venetian Alley Hustle" by Rea Casey

Judge's comments: Good Attempt.

Intermediate Natural World - 1ˢᵗ
"Drift Ice on the Okhotsk Sea" by Mark Sicherman

Judge's comments: Very nice image! Great white balance, depth-of-field, composition and dynamic presence! Thank you for sharing this wonderful photo!

Novice Digital Open - 2ⁿᵈ
"Rose in Legislature Rose Garden" by Rita Ballantyne

Judge's comments: This is a beautiful shot of a wonderful rose specimen. The camera settings used have worked well to give us a lot of definition in the petal area without being overblown or over-saturated. Good composition and sharpness.

Novice Open Print - 1ˢᵗ
"City Street with Bus Stop Shelter" by Robert Paterson

Judge's comments: Interesting to see an image that celebrates a more objective, dispassionate record of our everyday local environment. It brings to mind the inspiration of the Düsseldorf school and New Objectivity. Well composed, exposed and sharp. Technically astute.

Novice Wildlife - 1ˢᵗ (Tie)
"Monkey Face" by Wendy Clay

Judge's comments: He doesn't look amused. The fur is almost tangible. Sharp image and well exposed. There is something about the almost center placement that keeps us paying attention even without being able to see the eyes. Is he glowering at us? Very well done.

Novice Natural World - 2nd
"End of a Great Day" by Frank Thirkettle

Judge's comments: An interesting capture of how the desert light creates a very specific set of colours. Santa Fe comes immediately to mind. The sky is amazing.

Novice Theme - 2nd
"Blue Yukon" by Terri Kott

Judge's comments: The location has provided multiple textures and light contrasts. Good choice to keep the icy foliage placed against the lower dark band of blue in the sky. The crispness of the foliage is well captured.

Member Profile: Hilary Goeller

I have been member of the Victoria Camera Club for about three years. I moved here from Toronto with my husband. At first I didn't put any images in competitions but after a while I decided to be more adventurous. I had belonged to a camera club in Toronto which was very much geared to competitions and technical perfection. Although rather daunting, I learned a lot from the comments and discussions. Here in the VCC I have found the workshops, field trips and Special Interest Groups equally helpful and worthwhile. The discussions about the creative aspect of an image and the importance of the story are extremely stimulating to me.

"On a Snow Shoe Trip in Ontario"

My photography is the product of our travels. Having immigrated to North America we have been drawn to trips on this continent. We have travelled across the continent many times in our small camper van, along the east and west coasts, up to Haida Gwaii, and many years ago, to Alaska. Last year we drove to the Chilcotin area of BC, through Williams Lake to Bella Coola, then back through Lillooet and Gold Bridge. This trip came after a wonderful presentation at the VCC by Chris Harris. I was captivated by his photos and descriptions of the area.

"Chilcotin River"

So, "What do I do with all these photos?" Entering competitions is great for feedback. I print some to put on our walls and make cards for birthdays etc. I have made photo books from holidays and family events, and I am now struggling with scanning and editing the photos of our children's lives. My interest in photography has shown me how to see more in the world around me, and the world therefore has become more interesting. I love finding the small unusual things like mushrooms, fungus, frost flowers and once a young owl splashing in the water.

"Frost Flower near White Lake: "

I enjoy editing images and have now become a convert to Lightroom after excellent workshops at the Club. My initial aim has always been to get the picture as I want it in the camera. I am now becoming interested in more creativity both in-camera and with editing.

My first camera had a rather short life as I lent it to my brother who left it on a rock on a climbing trip. I had a variety of small cameras, mostly to take family photos. Then I bought a Minolta SLR and started taking more care with composition and technique. I have a small digital camera to carry in my pocket and a Canon G12 which is easy to carry and great when shooting flowers and gardens, and grandchildren, both of which I like to do. I have a Nikon DSLR D5000 with an 18-140 mm lens which is great for landscapes on our travels, and a 50 mm prime lens. I also have a Nikon 18-300 mm lens that, although compact, I now find too heavy so I use it on a tripod. I would like to combine all these into one camera, probably a mirrorless one with a couple of lenses. I would still keep a small pocket camera.

I often go wandering about alone or with my husband, or with a friend. I am mostly interested in nature and the colours and patterns that are found there. I find people the most difficult to capture. I shall continue trying to improve my technique and composition but the art, the story, and different ways to be creative with the images are becoming more interesting to me.

Camera Straps

by Matt Speight

I can confidently say that we have all used a camera strap and have even tried out different designs. You probably have a strap attached to your camera right now. I was never a great fan of the camera strap. My reasons for not liking traditional camera straps include:

- They often get in the way when composing a shot.
- I don't like having a strap dangling from my camera when it's on a tripod.
- Because I am a fast walker, the average strap causes my camera to act like a pendulum swaying from side to side. This results in self-injury or my camera knocking into something inanimate which causes a panicked camera check to make sure everything is still working.
- Straps are generally uncomfortable, usually digging into your neck or shoulder.

Now, from what I understand, camera straps also apparently have their advantages:

- It's a safety thing, if your camera slips out of your hand a strap will normally save your gear from hitting terra firma.
- Your hands are freed up to do other things like eating ice cream or changing a lens.
- You are less likely to have your camera stolen if you have it strapped to you.

Thankfully, ways to carry you gear on the body have progressed, so we are no longer tied to using the ordinary camera strap. Let's go over some of the better options on how to carry your gear on the body when not in a camera bag.

The Black Rapid Strap: This was the first design to defy the convention of what it means to be a camera strap. The strap doesn't sit around your neck. Instead, it rests on your shoulder and goes across your body, sling style. The padding and angle over your shoulder spreads the weight of the camera across your body making it more comfortable.

The strap attaches to the base of the camera using the tripod socket, allowing the camera and lens to lie flat against the body. This is great for larger zooms lenses that are heavy and awkward.

The camera is attached to the strap by a loop. It's this loop that slides up and down the strap, which means the strap doesn't get in the way when you grab your camera to take a shot.

Unfortunately, no strap is perfect and the Black Rapid strap does have some drawbacks. As it attaches to the tripod mount you need to detach the strap, or buy a $50 specialized adapter plate (which will only work with Arca-Swiss and Manfrotto RC2 compatible clamps) if you want to put your camera on your tripod.

Due to its slide design you can't cinch the strap really tightly to your body when the camera is sliding up and down the strap via the loop. This can cause your gear to move while you walk.

The camera lying flat against your body, lens facing downwards, can cause some consumer-level lenses to creep (extend to their long zoom length by themselves), because gravity works.

Peak Design Slide Strap: Knowing that Black Rapid were perhaps onto a good thing with their sling strap, Peak Design, through a KickStarter program in 2017, developed a strap with all the benefits of a sling strap while fixing the flaws.

The strap attaches in either the normal camera strap loops on the camera body, or to the tripod socket on the baseplate so you have a choice of carrying styles. It is not a simple sling strap. With the quick adjusters, you can adjust the strap from 100 cm to 149 cm in length. This means you can easily cinch the strap nicely against your body keeping it on the front, side or even on your back.

I recently did a photoshoot while mountain biking with the camera tight on my back. It worked well as the camera was safe and still accessible. You can also flip the strap to the grippy side, which has a silicone grip, or keep it so that it slides with ultra smooth webbing, depending on whether you are shooting or heading to your next shot.

The camera is attached to the strap by an anchor link system that allows you to quickly clip the strap on and off your camera. Great for when you are using a tripod or squeezing the camera into a tight spot in your camera bag.

With my camera safely and comfortably secured, not bouncing about with my stride or moving around my neck while cycling, and my shot now clear from dangly strap bits, I am finally a camera strap-user convert, thanks to the camera strap's evolution and the clever people who made that happen.

Does Focal Length Matter?

by Richard James

How and why do you decide which lens to use for a given shot? Do you arrive at the location, look around, put on a mid-range zoom lens and start shooting? Or do you walk around, looking at the subject from different distances, consider the background and foreground relationships to the subject, the lighting angle vs. shooting angle and then consider which focal length lens will give you the interpretation of the scene that you envision in the final image?

In the good old days, before zoom lenses were considered "good enough", we used single focal length (prime) lenses. If you wanted the subject to be larger or smaller in the image you changed lenses or you could move closer or further away. However, moving makes a fundamental change in the appearance of the image; the perspective changes.

Now, zoom lenses are the norm and we use them to frame our images. But is this the best way to do it?

The laws of optics say that the perspective (relative size of objects) varies with the relative distance between the camera, foreground, subject and background. With a given focal length, the magnification of an object in the scene is proportional to its distance from the camera. Two objects of the same height, with one twice as far away as the other, will appear as if the second one is half the height of the nearer one. Since magnification is dependent on distance, if images taken with different focal length lenses at the same camera position are cropped to the same subject size, the perspective will be the same.

If we want to keep the framing of the subject the same while we move further away, we need a longer focal length lens, if we move closer, then we need a shorter focal length to achieve the same framing of the main subject. However, this means that the perspective changes.

But you may say, if I use a wider-angle lens, I can get more of the scene in from the same camera position. This is true but the perspective will be the same. However, to make the subject height in the image the same you will have to move closer to the subject. This changes the perspective and gives rise to "wide-angle distortion" where closer subjects look much larger than they should, and further apart from the background. With longer focal length lenses, you have to move further away and the image appears to be flattened with the distance between objects compressed.
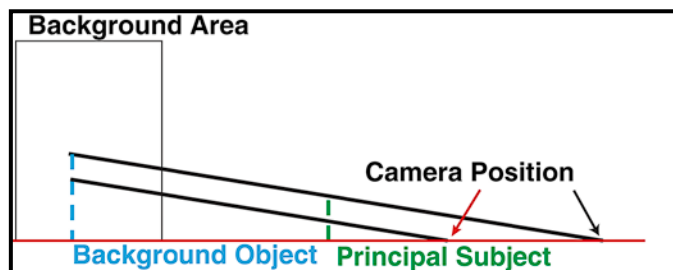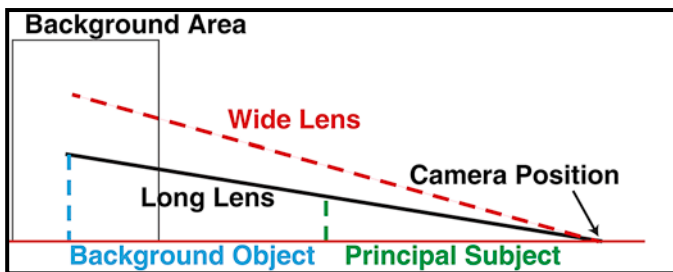

Comparing Camera Position

In this graphic we use the same focal length lens at two camera positions. The height of the principal subject in the image changes but the height of background objects, relative to the foreground object, changes because the perspective changes. The subject is closer, therefore its magnification is greater and fills more of the frame.
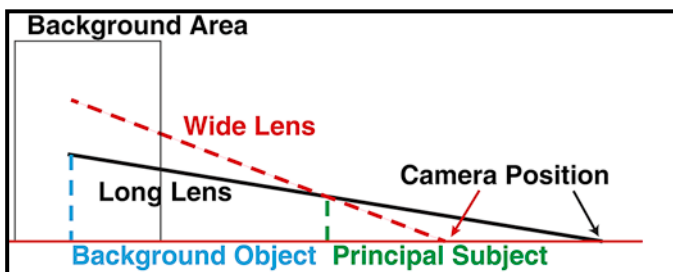
Comparing Camera Position and Lens

In this graphic we compare two lenses and the camera position so that the subject height is the same. If we are close, and use a wide-angle lens, more of the background is included. This reduces the relative size of background objects. If we move further away and use a longer focal length lens there is less of the background included, and the background objects appear relatively bigger.

Comparing Focal Length

In this graphic we simply change the focal length of the lens at the same camera position. This changes the size of the principal subject but not the relative height of the background objects, so the perspective is the same.

Another factor comes into play; depth-of-field is dependent on the aperture and magnification, which is dependent on focal length. So, by changing the focal length, we can alter the perspective as well as the depth-of-field. Depth-of-field is an important factor in how we interpret the image. Since perspective and framing are of primary importance, we usually use aperture changes to determine depth-of-field but focal length should not be forgotten.

Let's look at a real-life example. These three images were taken from the same camera position on the top of a cliff near the Sherringham Point Lighthouse in Shirley, BC, to assess the best focal length to use for the shot.

"Wide-Angle, 24 mm lens"

The first image is the "big picture" shot; it sets the scene but has a messy foreground. The upper left triangle is "empty space" that does not add much to the shot.

"Normal, 56 mm lens"

The second image is close to a "normal perspective" shot, 56 mm vs. the 45-50 mm focal length that is considered representative of human vision.

"Short Tele, 70 mm"

The third image is a tighter shot taken with a short tele lens to isolate the subject more.

Since these images were all taken from the same position, the wider ones could be cropped to the same subject size as the short tele image and have the same perspective. In this case the images cropped from the wider shot would have a somewhat greater depth-of-field as it was taken at a smaller magnification. However, the resolution of the cropped images would be less than that in the short tele image.

The final image was taken on a later day and earlier in the day (9:30 am vs. noon) when the lighting was more appropriate and the sky was better. There were clouds, not a plain blue sky. It is also a long exposure, two minutes, although the sea-state was not as high as I would have liked, resulting in no "mist" around the rocks. The focal length used, 44 mm, was based on the intention to crop out the foreground and have a bit more in the image on both sides than the previous 56 mm shot (I also had a 30 mm shot for comparison).

"Final Image 44 mm lens"

So far, we have discussed perspective in the image without reference to how the image is viewed. In real life we are viewing a 3D image and our eye/brain system focuses on a small part of what the eye can see. When looking at a 2D representation of the scene on a print or screen there is considerable information lacking with one of the unknown variables being the true perspective of the scene.

True perspective is gained if the image is taken at a focal length approximately equal to the diagonal of the sensor (usually taken as 45 mm for a full frame sensor) and viewed at a distance roughly equal to the diagonal dimension of the print or screen. At other distances the perspective is distorted and indeterminate.

For a 16" x 20" print, or screen image, the viewing distance is approximately 26 inches, for an 11" x 17" print it is approximately 20 inches. For an eight-foot-wide projector screen it is approximately 14 feet.

How I Did It

Lightning at Sea

by John Clarke

Prior to our cruise around Cape Horn, I researched the photographic opportunities I might find. I found out there would be a lunar eclipse so I packed my small tripod. The eclipse was to peak at 1:30 am and my anticipation increased as I saw the full moon rise early in the evening. My excitement began to fade as wispy clouds started to flow across the sky and the full moon faded into the night.

One week later, while cruising off the coast of Argentina, we encountered an early evening lightning storm. Our stateroom had a small balcony appointed with a table and two chairs. Having only a small tripod, I set the table on top of a chair and gingerly set the tripod and camera on the table. The lens just cleared the balcony railing.

My primary challenge was that I was on a moving ship. I wanted to shoot at ISO 100 in order to have as clean an image as possible. I took several test shots with my Tamron 16-300 mm lens and found that a focal length between 20-30 mm provided the best composition.

Once I had my ISO and focal length decided I had to play with aperture and shutter speed. I used my remote shutter release with image stabilization turned off. I found my best test shots were using an aperture between f13 and f22 and shutter speed of 1.3 to 2 seconds.

With technical aspects done, I poured myself a glass of wine, stood by my makeshift tripod and watched the night sky. Predicting nature's lightning strikes is difficult. I took over 100 shots, at one point taking a photograph every 5 seconds, hoping that I would capture one decent image. Out of the 100 images, I ended up with three decent lightning strikes.

Sidney Pier Crystal

by Lindsey Millar

Being new to photography I am always looking for creative ways to use my camera and lenses. I learn best by doing so. My eyes are always peeled for inspiration that requires me to think about camera settings, composition, lighting, or editing, and sometimes all of the above. The Sidney Pier Crystal was one of the images that I took that gave me a chance to stretch my creative muscle and learn along the way.

Lens Balls, which are crystal-clear glass balls that come in a variety of sizes, are readily available on Amazon and are reasonably priced. I paid about $38 for the one I purchased.

With a Lens Ball, a camera, and a creative mind, you can set up some truly unique shots. I encourage everyone to look up Lens Ball images on Google or Instagram. The variety and creativity is truly amazing.

I created this image by placing the Lens Ball and my camera (Canon Rebel 3Ti) directly on the pier. I had an 18-200 mm lens with me, which worked well to get just the right clarity and detail in the ball. I set my focus directly into the middle of the ball so the image inside would be crystal clear. My goal was to draw the viewer's eye through the ball and use the surrounding image as the backdrop.

With some trial and error I got the exact shot I had envisioned. The detail of the wood in front of the ball and the colour of the sky just before sunrise really added "pop" to the shot. While working on the image in Lightroom I chose to use a more artistic than realistic editing style as I thought the image allowed for that extra bit of creativity in the final stages.

I hope you enjoy viewing the image as much as I did creating it.

Tuesday Shoots

by Jim Fowler

Join the friendly Tuesday Group photographers for a variety of photographic shoots followed by lunch at a local pub. This is a great way to get to know some of the regular Club members.

May 7th: B. C. Aviation Museum. Located at the Airport Authority property at 1910 Norseman Road, North Saanich, this society is dedicated to the preservation, restoration and display of aircraft and artifacts that document the history of aviation in Canada.

May 14th: The Bay Centre Food Court. 50 mm, the lens that sees "as we do". Shoot your images using only a 50 mm lens. If you have a prime 50 mm then use that. If you only have zooms, set your zoom to 50 mm and keep it there.

May 21st: Government House. Natural and heritage flower gardens cover this "Little Eden" tucked away in Victoria. Come armed for deer; this area is a gastronomic delight for our local hooved residents.

May 28th: The Bay Centre Food Court. Most landscapes are wide-open spaces of natural beauty. This week we are looking for the beauty of the urban landscape.

June 4th: Beacon Hill Park. Meet at the children's petting zoo. You can go into the zoo, or wander further afield. The heron colony should be in full "chick-rearing" mode and the duck ponds are always, well, ducky.

June 11th: The Bay Centre Food Court. Fashion is the theme this week: avant-garde, commercial or traditional, and everything in between. Modern, vintage, or whatever is walking around in Victoria.

June 18th: Willows Beach, Cattle Point and Uplands Park. From the Garry Oak grasslands to the shore, this area abounds in natural flora and fauna.

June 25th: The Bay Centre Food Court. The Summer Friendly Shoot-Out begins. Please bring three photo theme ideas to be drawn from the hat!

Some events require registration and a fee or donation may be requested. Please check the Club calendar for details related to each field trip. Some destinations require a minimum number for special arrangements. The group leaders count on the registration record to reserve a lunch table so please register.

Weekend Shoots

by Vanessa MacDonald

Now that summer is upon us, most Club activities and events tend to wind down for the next four months. We will endeavour to schedule some field trips and some may come up on short notice. Watch for email notifications about new trips posted in the calendar. If anyone would like to lead a trip over the summer, we are more than happy to schedule it so please get in touch with us at *fieldtrips@victoriacameraclub.ca*. Anyone can lead a field trip, so don't be shy!

May 4th: Ancient Forest Expedition, Conservation Photojournalism. Join us for a full day in the Port Renfrew area with Josh DeLeenheer, our group leader and guide. He is an avid wildlife photographer and keen to share his enthusiasm for conservation photojournalism with the rest of the Club. The goal of this trip is to capture images with a conservation message; highlighting the distinctive beauty of the flora and fauna of Vancouver Island's ancient forests, as well as the devastating impact of deforestation practices. Target locations will include: Avatar Grove, The Big Lonely Doug cut block (with Canada's second largest Douglas fir tree) and Fairy Lake.

May 18th: Saturna Island. For those of you who missed our first trip in December, here's another chance to visit this beautiful and less frequented Gulf Island with your Club friends! Saturna Island resident and Club member Andree Fredette has kindly offered to host a group of photographers for the day. We will visit a number of points of interest, including East Point in Gulf Islands National Park Reserve, Mt. Warburton Pike, and other special locations which may include a working farm and vineyard, or "The Mill" with decaying old cars, equipment and a workshop area.

June 22nd: Low Tide at Botanical Beach. Join us for our annual summer trip! When the low tide at Botanical Beach is below 1.3 m a magical world opens up for the photographer. Here in the intertidal zone, you will find tide pools teeming with sea life: snails, chitons, sea anemones, sea urchins, and starfish, not to mention the beautiful sandstone formations and cliffs which allow for some unique seascape shots. Bring your polarizer, tripod, wide-angle, macro, and long lenses as there are a nearly infinite number of possibilities on this trip depending on what you like to shoot. We will head to the Pub in Port Renfrew for a late lunch.

If you have any further questions, please contact Vanessa and Gita at *fieldtrips@victoriacameraclub.ca*.

Exploring Long Exposures

by Mike Murchison

If you have seen a nighttime cityscape with trails of lights on the streets or a seascape where the ocean is smooth and creamy and the clouds are streaks in the sky, you have seen a long exposure photograph. Long exposures are easy to create with the right gear and offer an interesting creative tool to add to your photography.

What Is Long Exposure Photography? It is an image in which the exposure time is lengthened for the purpose of showing motion in the frame or using the motion of elements within the image to alter or distort the reality of the scene. There isn't a set shutter speed that defines a long exposure image as it can vary depending on how fast the elements in your frame are moving and the desired effect. For example, it may take only 1/60th of a second to blur out the wings of a flock of flying birds or over five minutes to stretch out moving clouds in the sky.

Eight second exposure to show movement in the pool and smooth out the waterfall.

When to Use Long Exposure? It can be used creatively in every photographic genre. Anytime you have a moving element in your scene, lengthening the shutter speed to use that movement creatively is an option. Your results are only limited to your imagination. Here are a few common elements that will help you get started.

Water: In landscape photography, water is probably the most common element with which to use long exposures. You can lengthen the shutter speed to create soft, flowing waterfalls. You can shoot in the surf to create patterns on the beach. You can lengthen your exposure to smooth out ripples or waves on a lake. You can create the feel of movement in a river or stream. Almost

anytime you are including water in an image there is the opportunity to use the effects of long exposures.

Six minute exposure to smooth out the ocean.

Clouds: These make great subjects for long exposures. It's a good idea to take a look at the clouds and think about how fast and in what direction they are moving. Clouds moving toward or away from the camera can create beautiful leading lines in photographs, while clouds moving perpendicularly in your composition can create interesting geometry in your backgrounds. To capture cloud movement you will usually need to lengthen your exposures into minutes rather than seconds.

Four minute exposure to show cloud movement.

Light: Moving light sources can create beautiful long exposure images. Consider shooting fireworks, light trails from cars, steel wool spinning, star trails or painting with a light source to take advantage of moving light sources in your compositions.

Anything that moves is a candidate for long exposure photography, so don't limit yourself to these suggestions.

Composition Tips: When composing long exposures, you have to learn how to visualize the way that shutter speed will affect your final image. Long exposures can provide an interesting effect in the image but you still need to have a strong composition. It is usually import-

A blend of 50 - 30 second exposures of fireflies.

ant to have some static elements in your frame to create visual contrast between stationary and moving elements.

What Gear Do You Need? There are a few pieces of gear you'll want to consider as you embark into the world of long exposures.

Camera: You can do long exposures with any camera but if you want to try exposures over 30 seconds, you will need one that has a bulb exposure mode. This allows you to extend the shutter speed of most cameras.

Tripod: A tripod is a must-have piece of gear for long exposure photography. Generally, your shutter speeds will be too long to hand-hold your shots, so having a solid base for your camera is necessary. If you want to explore exposures that creep into minutes rather than seconds then the sturdier your tripod the better.

Shutter Release: A remote shutter release is helpful in reducing the chance of camera shake. With wide-angle lenses you can probably use your timer but for longer lenses a shutter release is necessary. If you want to shoot exposures that require bulb mode a shutter release becomes necessary to open and close the shutter.

0.6 second exposure highlighting the contrast between stationary and moving elements

ND Filters (ND): These are darkened filters that go in front of your lens to reduce the amount of light hitting the sensor. They allow for longer exposures when the light is too bright or for when extremely long exposures are required to achieve your desired effect. You can buy filters in several strengths; they are rated by how many stops of light they block. Some common filter strengths are 3-stops, 6-stops and 10-stops, which will increase your shutter speed an equal number of stops.

How Do You Set Up Your Shot? Successful long exposures require a little time and care when setting up your shot. Often you will be shooting for minutes, not seconds, in which case getting your shot right the first time is a great time saver.

The first step is deciding on your composition. Take your time and get it right by taking a few test shots at faster shutter speeds. Once you're happy with your shot you can start to think about turning it into a long exposure.

Think about how long you want your shutter speed to be and then decide if you can get to that setting without the use of filters. If you can, you are good to go, but if you need to use ND filters, there are a few things to do before you attach the filter.

It important to set your focus before you put the filter on the camera as you likely will not have enough light to use your camera's focus options. Once you have your image in focus, zoom into the image on the LCD screen to make sure you have appropriate depth of field and that your image is sharp where you want it to be.

At this point note your camera settings and switch to manual mode (if not already there) and change the settings to match. You should also switch to manual focus. You are now ready to attach your filters to your camera.

Once your filters are attached you need to recalculate your exposure time based on how many stops of light your filter is blocking. There are smartphone apps available that will do this calculation for you, but if you don't have that available you just double your shutter speed for every stop rating of the filter (e.g. a one second exposure with a three stop filter would require an adjusted shutter speed of eight seconds [1 > 2 > 4 > 8]). If your final shutter speed is over 30 seconds you will have to switch to bulb mode. You are now ready to open the shutter and create your image.

Long exposures are a great tool to allow your creativity to run wild when you are out shooting. Don't limit yourself to the examples given. Let your imagination run wild and enjoy adding this technique to your tool box.

Histograms, a Tool to Understand

by Josée Ménard

Unbeknown to most photographers histograms can be conquered. Once discovered and appreciated for their invaluable information they quickly become a great tool for any photographer. If you love numbers and axes you will quest to find out the tonal values of colours. A well-used histogram helps to achieve your goal while on-site and in post-production.

The image histogram can be found in digital cameras on the LCD screen while in live-view or playback modes. Set the playback information menu to full detail to see each histogram. In post-processing it is displayed in the sidebars. The colour data is usually shown in red, green and blue channels. Yellow or another colour can appear when channels overlap. The histograms may be in tones of grey depending on your camera model or during editing in black and white.

The information is contained in the rectangle with the peaks and valleys. The vertical axis shows the quantity or concentration of tone/colour while the horizontal axis provides the brightness value from pure black at the left all the way to pure white at the right. In other words, from 0 to 255 in value. Its categories are known as black/0, very dark, dark, mid-tones, light, very light/255 and as shadows and highlights in post-processing. The higher the peak, the higher the concentration at that brightness point. As it lowers, so does the quantity.

Compare the histograms superimposed on these three images of Steveston Harbour. They represent the captured tonal values for each image. While the scene and lighting remains the same, the peaks vary in brightness, position and height. Let's discover one of the beauties of understanding histograms.

The first two images illustrate clipping as areas are over or underexposed. It explains the peaks positioned right at the white and black ends of each histogram. This re-

"Over Exposed"

veals that the scene detail is fully lost without the possibility of recovery. The overexposed harbour is harsh to look at with all the blown-out whites. Even the blue sky is mostly lost. In contrast, the underexposed image loses detail in the blacks and nearly so in the dark shadows.
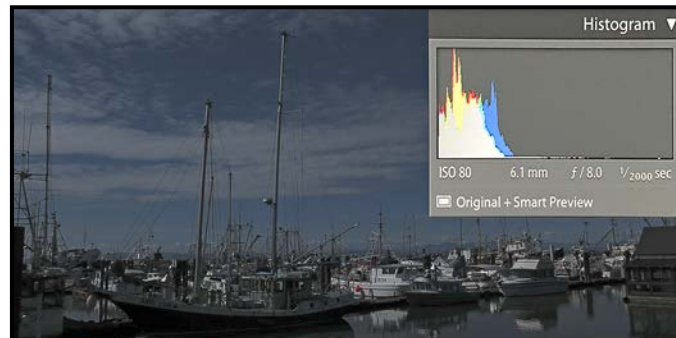
"Under Exposed"

Finally, thanks to finding the correct exposure combination, either by +/- compensation or by adjusting other settings, the desired image is captured. Since nothing peaks at the ends of the axis, there is now room to accentuate the highlight tones and some editing will recover detail in the dark shadows. No pure blacks, no blow-out whites.

"Good Exposure"

On a sunny day, get ready to capture images. Get into the habit of reviewing histograms to spot a clipping problem that can be corrected while on-site. After reviewing the histogram, compensate the exposure by turning the +/- wheel. Decrease compensation to reduce the peak in the whites. In the new image, the peak that touched the white edge of the histogram should have distanced itself from the edge. No more annoying blown-out whites, no detail will be lost in the highlights.

Now increase compensation and history will repeat itself for the darks. No more blocked-up, detail-less shadows. In other modes, getting used to changing the aperture, shutter speed or ISO can produce similar and more personal results. Using another scene, apply these setting tips and see how the histogram and the image change.

How do you know it is correct or perfect? You do not really. It all depends on you, the photographer. One thing is for sure. Avoid peaks at the edges, just come close.

Close-Up