



Close-Up

Inside:

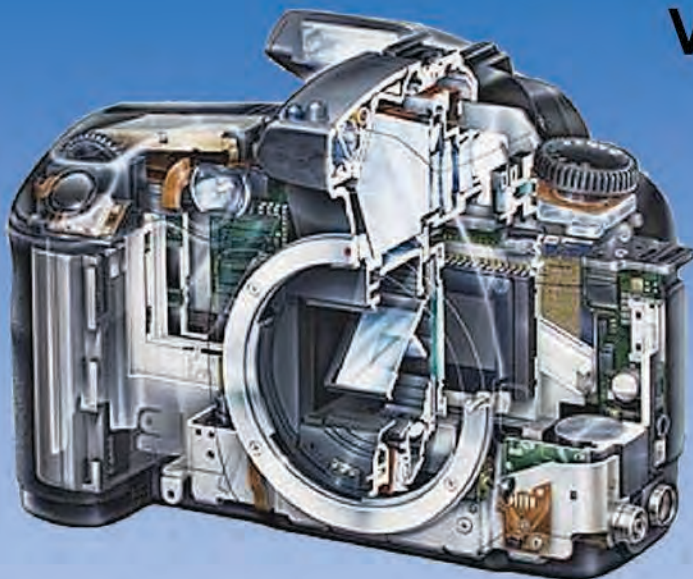
Travel and Photography
Where Goes the Eye That
Peers Through the iPhone?

Long Exposure
The Hands Execute but
the Eye Judges

Beginners' Corner:
Springtime Photography
Refractography: The Science
and more.....

"Mystic Mask" by Lydia Dagg. This composite is a close-up image of model Kelsey to which has been added a brimmed hat and other shapes and components of some of my paintings.





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Victoria Camera Club

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

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Mailing address: 2642 Quadra Street, PO Box 46035, Victoria, BC, V8T 5G7.

Deadline for submissions for the July/August issue is June 5th 2014.

Editor, Richard James, e-mail to newsletter@victoriacameraclub.org
for submissions or to advertise in *Close-Up*.

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.org where you can also read or download the colour version of *Close-Up*.

For additional information: please contact the appropriate Committee Chair:

Membership: membership@victoriacameraclub.org

Workshops: workshops@victoriacameraclub.org

Field Trips: fieldtrips@victoriacameraclub.org

Meetings: meetings@victoriacameraclub.org

Website: webmaster@victoriacameraclub.org

Close-Up: newsletter@victoriacameraclub.org

or call Lloyd Houghton, President at 250-580-7154.

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Member Discounts: VCC members can take advantage of discounts offered by several retailers in Victoria. Details are on the members only page on our website.

The Victoria Camera Club is a member club of the Community Arts Council of Greater Victoria (CACGV), 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.org) for the latest details of all our workshops, field trips and meetings.

Thursday, May 1st; Annual Competition and Awards Night

The Annual Competition competition results will be presented. This is also our awards night and the wrap-up to our winter activities. Our next Thursday night meetings will be in September.

Workshops and Field Trips

These continue through the summer months. Please check the calendar pages for details. (victoriacameraclub.org/pages/kalendar.php).

Featured Workshops

A Day with Professional Photographer Lilo Binakaj

Nature Photography: Wildlife

Featured Field Trips

Sandcut Creek and Falls (beyond Sooke)

Christie Falls (Ladysmith)

Meeting, field trip and workshop visitor policy:

Visitors are welcome to attend any three events in a two month period subject to the availability of space and a \$20 per session fee for workshops.

Cover Image

The cover image this month is “Mystic Mask” by Lydia Dagg. I have been working on a series of masks to reveal how many of us hide behind something from time to time, whether of our own choosing, or due to antiquated laws or customs. We all realize how difficult it would be if that was everyday life for us, like it is for so many people, especially women, around the globe.

For this composite a close-up image of model Kelsey was the beginning. In Photoshop I added a brimmed hat and other shapes, adding components of some of my paintings to give the feeling that the time is ripe to express oneself. This woman is nearly on fire as sweeping changes occur all around her. Is she free? Is she able to express her feelings and stand tall for what she believes in?

President’s Message

As outgoing President, I want to thank you for the privilege of representing you this past year and to express my thanks to the officers and members of our club for their trust, support and invaluable counsel. The time and commitment of the leadership team has helped the club grow and strengthen, and it has been an honour to serve with a group of highly skilled leaders.

The executive team was committed to running the club in a way which was aligned with the interests of our members, and with the support of the membership behind us, we have accomplished a great deal this past year.

Our club continues on a course that few could have envisioned with the humble beginnings of our club 70 years ago. Many things have changed over the years; however, much remains constant, to the credit of this great club.

The club has remained strong and vibrant throughout the years and other camera clubs look to Victoria Camera Club as setting high standards in membership service.

A few notable accomplishments this year included:

- Involvement in a variety of activities fostering closer relationships with community organizations
- Sharing our photographic expertise with youth by participating in a scout rally with a photography theme
- Promoting a greater awareness of photography as art by staging two high quality print shows
- Successfully organizing two public events featuring internationally acclaimed photographers, Steve Simon and Andre Gallant
- Development of a 70 year anniversary logo
- Addressing the needs of our members by establishing a mentorship program, a new member survey and meeting night greeters
- Expanded learning opportunities through workshops, field trips and competitions
- Organization of a guest night to promote our club and grow our membership.

Change in leadership helps keep an organization healthy by introducing different points of view. As I leave this position I am confident that the club will prosper and grow under Lloyd Houghton’s leadership. Lloyd understands the needs and complexities of managing such a vibrant and focused group and will bring a new and dynamic level of leadership to the position. I look forward to continuing on the board as “past-president” and continuing to help move the club forward.

Lois Burton, President.

by Willie Waddell

Wow! You have made a decision to take your first Photography Trip to a more distant locale. Although I mention my trips to India, the comments apply to any trip “away from home.”

Decisions regarding when, where, and how you will travel have been made. If you have a main focus: people, wildlife, street, cultural events, architecture or landscapes; take that into consideration along with climate and culture. This will help in determining your gear. Will your trip be with a group, self-travel or solo travel? All of these present very different scenarios that will influence the gear you take and how you travel within the country.

Travel: Groups are the easiest way to get around and most have local guides, but often opportunities for taking photos are limited unless it is specifically a photographer's trip. Self-travel with another person might be optimal in terms of security and control over where you go and what you shoot, while solo is the most challenging in terms of personal safety and protecting your gear. I have travelled in all three modes in India and enjoyed them all for different reasons. When I first started travelling I always went with a group; now I do a mix of group tours and solo. On my own I will often hire a local guide who has first-hand knowledge of the area and doesn't mind schlepping my tripod. This not only adds to the local economy but gets me to places I would not have had access to. I have hired guides in Nepal, China and India when travelling alone. I find that when accompanied by a local person most people are easier to engage with and photograph, plus there is the added factor of safety and an opportunity to learn about the culture. I had a wonderful experience in Kolkata (Calcutta, India) when I was travelling on my own and was invited to jump the fence surrounding



thousands of Muslims at prayer by a photographer with The Times of India Press. When it was finished I then became the subject of many cell-phone photos!



Gear: Be well prepared and familiar with your equipment. Start with the absolute essentials for the length of your trip and decide what you are willing to carry based on the type of trip, your personal ability and the images you want. This could be a Point and Shoot or a Full Frame DSLR camera. Then base the rest of your equipment choices on that. Make lists and review them before you leave. It is often difficult to buy or replace equipment on the road. Maybe you want to carry an extra camera for “backup,” or so you don't have to change lenses as often, but personally I have never done this.

Protecting your gear: The most valuable things you carry are your memories, cameras can be replaced. Overcome the desire to travel with new clothes and shiny new equipment that is easily identified by brand names. I usually shop at Value Village for travel clothes which I know are least likely to make me and my gear a target for thieves. I may not look like the latest ad for “Lands' End” but I do fit in! Bags, straps and cameras are best without advertising on them. You don't want everyone to know that you are carrying the latest greatest Nikon with D800 blazoned on the strap! I use generic straps and black duct tape over prominent logos. Don't put “patches” of all the amazing places you have travelled to on clothing or equipment. I have small locks for my bags and always carry some type of cable lock so that I can cable my bags together and tether them to the seat in buses and trains. At railway or bus stations in India I hire porters to carry my main bag, find my seat and secure my bags. On one rail excursion an entire family tried to get me out of my seat but my bags were secured and I wasn't budging!

Essentials: For a short trip these would be my essentials: a camera bag sized to hold all my camera gear, the older the better and make sure it is comfortable and secure, plus a small bag for “shoots”; a camera and lenses, the size based on your type of travel, for example an Olympus OMD E-M5 with 2-3 lenses, 1 long zoom, 1 short zoom and one fixed focal length prime; at least 2 large, 16-32 GB, memory cards, which I remove from my camera at the end of each day and keep in a zip-lock bag in my money belt; filters, a polarizer and some Neutral Density filters; at least two batteries with a charger; rain cover(s) for your camera bag and camera, which are readily available at camera stores; and finally a cloth for cleaning the camera and cleaners for the lenses, a Microfiber lens cloth and a Lens Pen which has a felt end and a brush end for dust.

Electricity is often 230V and must be converted to 110V so that you can use your North American devices. You must carry a “converter” and an “electrical plug adapter.” Both are readily available here at London Drugs. In some rooms there may be only one power outlet so I always carry a short extension cord with multiple outlets.

Optional: a remote shutter release and travel tripod with a ball head. For long trips I take a small laptop or notebook computer with a card reader to download and transfer images to two separate 500 GB external hard drives which I keep in 2 different places. I never edit while on a trip so I can maximize my tripping around and shooting. Also, a small tool kit with Allen Keys, pliers, duct tape and Swiss Army Knife are packed in my suitcase.

Research: I have found reading travel guides such as Lonely Planet and researching the country online before you go to be invaluable. There is much important information on festivals and sites to visit, as well as pre-



cautions to take. You might also like to talk with other photographers and travellers who have visited the area you plan on going to. Many people are happy to share their experiences and ideas. Locals and other travellers are often a good source of information about sites and events. Just by chatting with a local on a recent road-trip through South Dakota I was told about the Annual Buffalo Round-Up in Custer National Park so I stayed for a few extra days and had a great experience. I also like to go online to sites such as Digital Photography School, digital-photography-school.com for travel tips.



I generally like to travel as light as I can and not let gear burden me down and spoil the travel experience! I learned this lesson when I did a solo walk along the 700+ km El Camino de Santiago in Spain. Fortunately I had done enough reading and research to avoid most of the pitfalls, mainly carrying too much weight! Starting in Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, France, this pilgrimage trail goes up the Pyrenees and right across Northern Spain ending in Santiago.

My total weight including a small camera and gear was eight kg. There were places that I would have liked a bigger camera and a tripod but the trade-off to lighter gear was totally worthwhile. I simply let go of technical perfection and focused on emotional impact. My next trip to India will start with a Photography group, so I will probably take my big DSLR and when the tour is finished, leave that camera with a friend in Delhi and switch to my small Olympus for solo travel. My point here is that there is no one-size-fits all in travel photography situations.

My best tip is to smile a lot: it works and has let me get some great up-close and personal shots without saying a word.

Bon Voyage!



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Tech Tip: Fill Lighting

Lighting is critical to most subjects. With a few exceptions, natural lighting, primarily by direct sunlight, is rarely ideal. So, we often have to modify the lighting to get the effect that we want.

There are many simple tools that you can use to achieve this. These include reflectors, translucent sheeting, and go-bos (literally an object that “goes between” the light and the subject).

You can buy these in many sizes and colours but they are really easy to make yourself. A reflector is simply some aluminum foil stuck to a piece of spare mat board. Translucent sheeting is mylar sheet available from any drafting supply store and a go-bo is literally any piece of spare cardboard cut to the desired size and shape.

Direct sunlight is very harsh with bright highlights and hard, dark shadows. To correct this we need to fill in the shadows by reflecting light into them (called fill lighting). The reflector is placed on the opposite side of the subject to the sun. In the case of a flower this may be underneath it rather than level with it to throw

the light into a downward facing flower.

Another way of dealing with harsh light is to soften it by using a translucent sheet between the sun and the subject. This changes the essentially point source of the sun to a large, diffuse light above the subject allowing the light to wrap around the form of the subject.

Yet another lighting problem, especially in shaded or forest areas, is that the lighting on the background is different to that on the subject. In this case, we need to adjust one to match the other. Typically you would add light to a dark background with a reflector to make it lighter, or shade it with a go-bo to make it darker.

You need not limit yourself to one way of doing this for a given image. For example, you could add fill light to the dark side of the subject, and shade, or brighten, the background using different modifiers.

The old “shoot with the light over your shoulder” rule does not produce the best images. These notes give you some ideas that will allow you to shoot a subject from the best point of view and manage the light so that it works the way you wish to interpret your scene.

by Gregg Eligh

[Editor's note: Gregg Eligh is a professional photographer in Victoria who has judged many of our advanced and intermediate competitions and made presentations to our club. This material was part of Gregg's presentation at our Competitions Night in April.]

Today there were hundreds of photographs taken. It could be thousands, more likely, hundreds of thousands. If you think about how many globally, I'm sure there were millions of photographs taken today by uncountable numbers of people on a limitless range of tools, from cameras of varying levels of technical design to tablets and phones.

The world has discovered that pictures are truly of limitless worth. At least 1000 words. But it also seems to me that some actually seem to be increasingly treated as worthless.

We, the general, wandering around public, seem to be making images "just because we can," of stuff that seems to hold importance primarily for those who grabbed the image, not even to record something for posterity, for our children, or to be creative, or to introduce ideas to others. Just capture whatever happens to be in our faces. I've seen too many individuals photographing their food in restaurants. I've even seen it happen at my own dining table, I've witnessed it. I was not the creeper with the culinary camera.

Is the current accessibility of photography enlightening the world to a heightened state of visual fluency? Are people really becoming more interested in the language of image? Is photography enjoying a renaissance with the accessibility that digital has provided? Or, is the limitless blur of images making us all desensitized to the potential power and romance of the fleeting rays of light that flit across our digital sensors?

There are islands of hope and excitement in the field that has been my profession for more than three decades, and the one most obvious, to me, in the Victoria community is the Victoria Camera Club. Now, that can sound a bit patronizing, seeing as I'm writing this piece for *Close-Up* magazine, but as I look around in my community to take count of the state of photography in the current digital age, the highlights seem to be diminishing, rather than multiplying.

LUZ Gallery and Workshops are providing a specialized and in-depth centre for the study of creative approaches to, primarily, historic processes. Although now, what

has been traditional, mainstream darkroom work for the past uncounted years is seen as a historic process in art schools and photography co-ops everywhere. The attraction to producing photographic images that can be received/perceived as "art" relies on the hands-on, intricate, involved, but also polluting, messy, and wasteful techniques of years gone by. Digital seems to hold limited attraction as a creative tool. There is much value in what they are keeping alive for creative talents to cultivate, but should that not also apply with as much interest to contemporary methods, as well?

The Western Academy of Photography has closed its doors after almost 30 years of providing an outstanding education for career-driven lovers of photography. It has morphed and adapted to changes in technology and "the market" and the interests of their clientele. But, in the end the advances in digital photography have made it such that there is so much free information and digital education available on line and has simplified the operation of the tools to the extent that a poodle can operate a camera. WAP failed to attract any canines to pay the tuition so, it seems that it didn't/couldn't adapt sufficiently to remain relevant to those who were inspired to photograph their lunches.

The annual event "*Photographers at Painters*" (Lodge) in Campbell River has been a successful draw to workshops that include the creative and technical, the analog and digital, the ethereal and the practical. It has provided a forum and social hub for those interested in making interesting images that can hold appeal to an audience. It is a wonderful creative weekend that spans the various photography disciplines, creative energies, and skill levels to provide a welcome atmosphere for creative interaction.

Will the iPhone photographers that swamp us with undisciplined images, from wherever, become the voice of this era? iPhonography is a valid and legitimate technique and style indicative of these times. There are some brilliant images being made with the ultimate of what was recently sneered at, the pocket camera, in the format of your phone.

Ultimately, we must remember it is not the tool that makes the image. It's the creative eye and spirit that operates whatever is being used. You can still put the top of the line camera in the hands of the FAUXtographer and they'll continue to produce the mundane. The passionate image maker can continue to demand our attention by shooting with the simplest of tools. The tools are merely the vehicle

of the creator, the spirit is what creates the image.

That brings me back to the Victoria Camera Club, which is celebrating 70 years of sharing information and images, inspiring newcomers and challenging the more established to “look where no photographer has looked before” (sorry Star Trek). Camera clubs everywhere can learn from the success of VCC as a centre for the sharing of news and technology and creativity. VCC has a wide-ranging educational component and workshops, lectures, field-trips and competitions. For some the word “competition” has no place in a friendly, artistic environment. But it can be a useful tool in assisting even the most hardened artsy-fartsy type to learn and aspire to new approaches and greater exposure.

Why do I put so much faith in camera clubs? These are not all a bunch of amateurs taking artsy-fartsy images or shots of ducks, so look at the motivations. For a discipline that can be quite solitary and singular, clubs are a powerful social connection. Having members with experience share their knowledge on lighting, Photoshop, night exposures, dance, movement and models, Lightroom software for image management and editing cover content that many schools of

advanced photography studies are struggling to find audiences for. In a club, the participants are involved voluntarily, and hopefully eagerly. With the personal contact club members are schooling each other and enjoying the learning process.

Having new goals and horizons is a tool for artistic incentive; to strive for “*Our reach must exceed our grasp*” can be our objective. It is my belief that this is the role of the camera club in the photography community in the current photography environment.

Fear not the nerd with the Canon 6D who is shooting his drinking buddies on Auto to post on Facebook. Do not sneer at the wanna-be photographing hot shoes in the mall to post on Twitter. But search out the results of the creative mind and eye that is excited by exploring new personal limits and is eager to communicate them with others who are also inflicted with the thrill of doing that which expresses their own creative growth and exploration. And a hearty congratulations to all the members of the Victoria Camera Club on their collective 70th Birthday.

Photographers are communicators that “speak” in silent 1000 word bites. How very eloquent.

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Competitions: a look back and preview for next year

by Doug Ambridge

Another season is coming to a close for the Competition Committee. It has been a very good year. First we would like to acknowledge all of the members who submitted images and prints this year to help make the year the success it has been. I'm sure that all of you have benefited in some way from the judges' comments and suggestions to help you to hone your photographic skills. We would like also to congratulate all of those members who placed 1st, 2nd, 3rd or Honourable Mention during the year. Here are some statistics on the number of images submitted this year.

Novice: 153 images, average of 26 per month

Intermediate: 460 images, average of 77 per month

Advanced: 489 images, average of 82 per month

Of concern to the committee is the number of prints submitted by the Novice group, only 13 prints. The Committee is going to look into this for next year to see how we can increase these numbers. For those of you who are thinking about submitting a print, but are a little unsure of the process, there are detailed instructions on our website on how to prepare prints for competition.

April is a busy time for the Committee as we are preparing for our annual year-end judging event and the Awards night in early May at the final competition night of the season. Congratulations in advance to all of you who are entered into this event.

The themes for 2014-15 are:

September: Back Lit, a lighting challenge

October: Delicate, this could involve tiny flowers, children, etc

November: CAPA Theme, TBA

January: Entrance Ways, more general than doors

February: Weathered, anything affected by the passage of time

March: In-flight, use your imagination

Please watch the calendar on the website and *Close-Up* for any announcements regarding these themes. Also in progress are articles in *Close-Up* and workshops to help you with these themes.

So, keep those cameras at the ready. You never know when the perfect image will present itself.

March 2014 Competition Judges

We extend our sincere thanks to the judges for the March Intermediate and Advanced competitions, Wes Bergen and Dave Hutchison. We would also like to thank our in-house Novice Judges for March, Pam Irvine, Willie Waddell, Paul Ross, Caspar Davis and Suzanne Huot. Note: All images and judges comments are available at: victoriacameraclub.org/vccccompetitions.

Wes Bergen (Digital Nature, Digital Open, Theme and Creative): Wes has been a keen amateur photographer for over 45 years. He has experience in producing B&W and colour prints as well as slides, and has used medium and large format cameras as well as 35mm and digital cameras. Over the past 10 years, he has shot exclusively in digital medium.

Wes has been a member of the Lions Gate Camera Club for over 44 years and has held many executive positions including two terms as President. He has been a member of CAPA for almost as long. He has had numerous acceptances and awards in international competitions and has sold many of his images for use in calendars, tourism brochures and other publications. Wes has taught Photoshop courses for about 10 years. He has written columns in Lions Gate Camera Club's *Photolog* and in CAPA's *Canadian Camera* magazine. He is a frequent judge and presents workshops at local photography clubs and seminars.

Dave Hutchison (Nature Print, Open Print and Monochrome Print): Dave really started serious photography when he started taking images of his whippets when racing them about 10 years ago. Capturing the animals in motion was the beginning of a profound journey that has seen Dave venturing into remote locations to record wildlife (and landscapes) in its natural habitat. With a B.A. from Brock University, Dave is now resident in Sidney, BC. The coast and its vast stretches of wilderness have provided a unique setting for his nature and wildlife photography. Dave is drawn to search for rare animals, allowing glimpses of wildlife in their natural habitat for those who are not able to see it for themselves. This aspect of photography, the revelation of the truth of the subject matter, is an ongoing source of inspiration for Dave. He strongly believes in nature conservation and the idea of bringing nature home, allowing access that doesn't normally happen. Dave has also recently won his Accreditation in "Nature" with the Professional Photographers of Canada. Visit Dave's website at: www.davehutchison.ca



Advanced Digital Nature - 1st
"Grizzly's Antler" by James Kissinger

Judge's comments: Excellent exposure and beautiful soft back-lighting. Very good depth of field and nice catch-lights in the eyes.



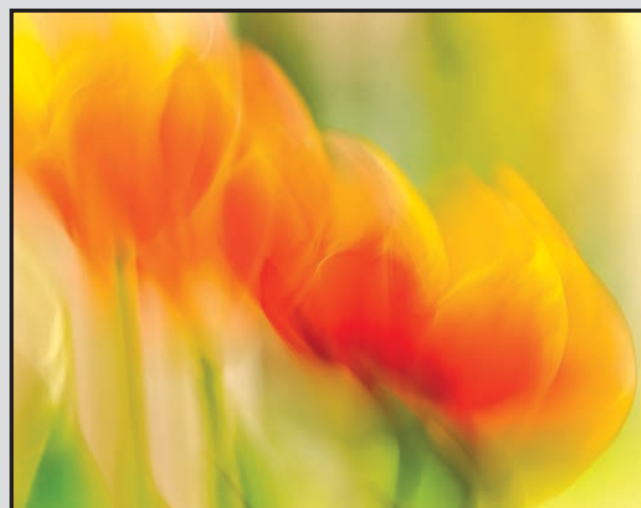
Advanced Digital Theme - 1st
"For Sale" by Dan Takahashi

Judge's comments: Very professional looking architectural shot. Excellent lighting and colour. Great use of trees for framing.



Advanced Digital Open - 1st
"Bethany" by Barbara Burns

Judge's comments: Technically flawless, and visually pleasing image.



Advanced Open Print - 1st
"Tulip Dance" by Richard Webber

Judge's comments: Effective use of camera painting. Colour and quality of image are great. Congratulations.



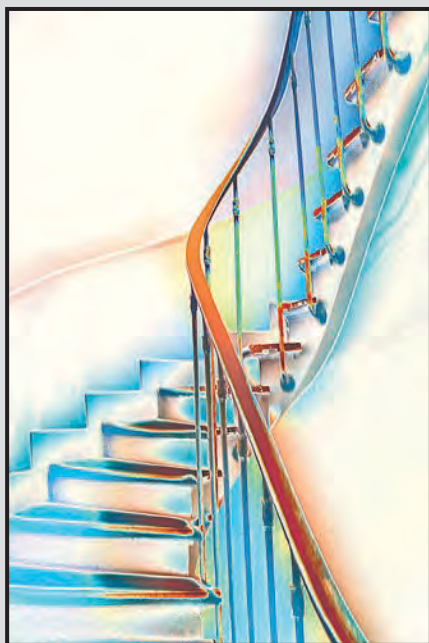
Intermediate Monochrome Print - 1st
"Corks" by Gita McCormick

Judge's comments: I can imagine this as a large poster. Lots of character and interest but not too busy. Congratulations.



Intermediate Nature Print - 1st
"Gold Dust Day Gecko" by Doug McLean

Judge's comments: I like the sharp image. Seeing the eye is also a big plus.



Intermediate Digital Creative - 1st
"Stairway to Heaven - Paris" by Ian Crawford

Judge's comments: Very strong composition. Love the treatment, colour and mood.



Intermediate Open Print - 3rd
"Easter Bouquet" by Joan Potvin

Judge's comments: Beautiful arrangement and colours. Overall well done.



Novice Digital Theme - 2nd
“Form Plays with Midday Light”

by John Schilling

Judge's comments: Beautiful use of light and shadow. Nice framing of cactus.



Novice Digital Theme - 3rd
“Pinehurst - James Bay” by Jane Taylor

Judge's comments: Charming period house showcasing Victoria architecture. Great exposure, focus, colours and composition.



Novice Digital Open - 2nd
“Artist's Palette, Death Valley, CA”
by Ove Christensen

Judge's comments: Great shot with the hiker giving dimension to the rocks. Beautiful colour, good focus.



Novice Digital Nature - 1st
“Thinking of Tomorrow” by Michael Hofmann


Judge's comments: Very well done close-up of this crusty old subject. Excellent exposure, focus & catch-light in eye.

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A Sample of Our Courses

Start Dates

| | |
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| Digital Cameras for Absolute Beginners | May 3 |
| WordPress - Create A Simple Website And Return To Write About It | May 5 |
| Photoshop CS6 - Level 1 | May 10 |
| Illustrator CS6 - Level 1 | May 20 |
| File Management For Macs | May 22 |
| Fly Fishing - Introduction | May 23 |
| iPhone/iPad Artography | May 24 |
| Adobe Acrobat 10 - Level 1 | May 26 |
| Computers Level 1 - Seniors | May 28 |
| Photoshop Elements 10 - Level 1 | May 30 |
| Spanish Level 2 | June 3 |
| WordPress Level 2 - Take Control | June 23 |
| Spanish For Travellers - Summer | July 10 |



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Long Exposure

by John Roberts

One of my personal favourite types of photography has been the long exposure; the cotton candy look of moving water, the ability to make a busy downtown street in broad daylight look abandoned. It is just fascinating to me!



I started off with using all my lenses at f22 - f32, depending on the lens, I eventually graduated into the Neutral Density (ND) filters. I started with the reasonably priced 3-stop filter, which is easy to obtain, and gives you a taste of long exposure. It does not cost a lot upfront, so if it is not what you are looking for, you are not out of pocket by a lot. That started me down the road of wanting to do really long exposures! The bug hit me, and hit me hard. I started to stack ND filters or use a Linear Polarizer with a Circular Polarizer (C-Pol) to get the strength I was looking for. I found out fairly quickly that this sometimes caused odd colour shifts or other odd results.

I then started looking into some ND filters that came darker, 6-stop, 9-stop and 10-stop. I now own the B+W ND110 (10-stop) and the Hoya NDX400 (9-stop), and I definitely use the B+W more. While the 10-stop is sometimes too much for what I am doing, I find that the Hoya sometimes just gives this slightly greenish cast to the image. While easy to correct in post-production, I am still a film shooter for some things,

and that colour cast becomes a whole new problem. While slightly more expensive the B+W ND110 is a completely neutral colour, allowing for a much cleaner image without a colour cast that needs fixing in post-production. I have heard other people say that they have noticed colour shift with the B+W as well.

I prefer not to have to do too much with the camera settings when I am shooting these really long exposures. You want to shoot at the lowest ISO that is native to your camera, ISO 100 or 200. Try to avoid the "Low" modes as you do lose some image quality, like clipping of the highlights or more noise when you do that. I prefer to do a manual white balance, but if you prefer to shoot in RAW and correct in post that also works. I photograph a grey card and then set white balance to that for a completely neutral white.

If you are using an SLR, you should compose your image first and then put the filter on. Otherwise you will not be able to see through the viewfinder. If you are using a mirrorless camera or live view, then you should be able to see your composition.

Image: Olympus OM-D E-M5, 12mm lens, B+W ND110 filter and 6 minute exposure at f5.6.

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by Steve Smith

[Editors note: This article was initially prepared for the author's own information. It is based on his interpretation of the images that were judged in the Novice level categories. It is intended purely as a statistical analysis, not as a comment on the judging. Judging is largely subjective and different judges will have alternative opinions of the same image.]

The Victoria Camera Club displays an attractive, characteristic style in the photographic art entered in the club competitions. The VCC style is one that I can't reproduce and it is one that I want to learn. None of my images fit the VCC style as the greenhouse example below shows.



The VCC has a completely open and transparent system for its competitions. This is a huge plus and is something that should be supported and celebrated. I am a biometrician and I like to analyze things. Heck I thought, why not build a statistical model that mimics the scores awarded by judges in novice competitions? I named my statistical process "Gonzo". Neither Gonzo nor I are qualified judges. This article describes our attempt, not to simulate the judging thought process, but simply to predict the scores given by the judges.

The Data: The nine variables shown in table 1 were chosen to represent an image:

| Variable name | Possible Values | Variable name | Possible Values |
|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Sharpness | 0,1,2 | S-curve | 0,1 |
| Exposure | 1,2,3 | Dutch angle | 0,1 |
| Colour | 0,1 | Focal point | 0,1,2 |
| Rule of thirds | 0,1,2,3,4 | Depth of field | 1,2 |
| Leading lines | 0,1 | - | - |

Table 1: Variables measured

A sample of 52 images from the October and November 2013 and the January 2014 novice competitions were assigned values for the nine variables listed in table 1. For each image, the score awarded by the judges was added to the data set. For this analysis sharpness was defined as "that part of an image whose resolution exceeds that of the human eye."

Principal Components Analysis: "Principal Components Analysis" provides a way to reduce a complex data set to one which reveals the hidden, simplified dynamics that underlie it. Because cross correlations between variables can obscure information, the variables are usually rotated to remove cross correlations and to yield "orthogonal" variables. For the 52 Novice competition images, Principal Components Analysis using Varimax rotation was applied. Although all of the variables in table 1 are integers and some are presence/absence variables, I treated them as continuous variables.

Exploratory analysis suggested that only four of the nine variables in table 1 are important in Novice competitions. These variables were: image sharpness, colour, exposure and composition as represented by the "rule of thirds."

Table 2 below shows the results of the analysis when only the four important variables were included. The table tells us that four components, labelled 1, 2, 3 and 4 account for the total variation in the four variables. Each component is made up of different combinations of our four variables. The four components have different weights. The weights are called latent roots.

| Variable | Latent Roots (Eigenvalues) | | | |
|----------------|----------------------------|--------|--------|-------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | 1.790 | 1.053 | 0.600 | 0.557 |
| | Rotated Loading Matrix | | | |
| Exposure | 0.151 | -0.010 | 0.968 | 0.200 |
| Sharpness | 0.962 | 0.127 | 0.154 | 0.184 |
| Rule of thirds | 0.185 | 0.009 | 0.204 | 0.961 |
| Bright colour | 0.115 | 0.993 | -0.009 | 0.009 |

Table 2: Principal Components

Looking at component 1, we see it has the largest weight of 1.79. The numbers in the column below this weight represent the coefficients for each of our four variables in component 1. Inspection of the variable coefficients in component 1 shows that sharpness has by far the greatest value (0.962).

For that reason we can associate component 1 with sharpness. Component 2 is associated with bright colour, component 3 with exposure and component 4 is associated with composition as represented by the rule of thirds.

The latent root values tell us the weight applied to each component. The sharpness component had a weighting that was three times the weight given to composition. The bright colour component had a weighting almost twice that given to composition. Proper exposure had about the same weighting as composition. Of the four components, there are two principal components here: image sharpness and bright colour.

Predicting the Judges' Scores: Using the factor loadings and the coefficients for each of the four variables within each of the factors, an equation to predict novice competition scores was derived:

$$Y = 2.05 * \text{sharp} + 1.125 * \text{colour} + 0.857 * \text{exp} + 0.998 * \text{rule}$$

Y = predicted judge's score, sharp = sharpness

colour = brightness of colour, exp = exposure

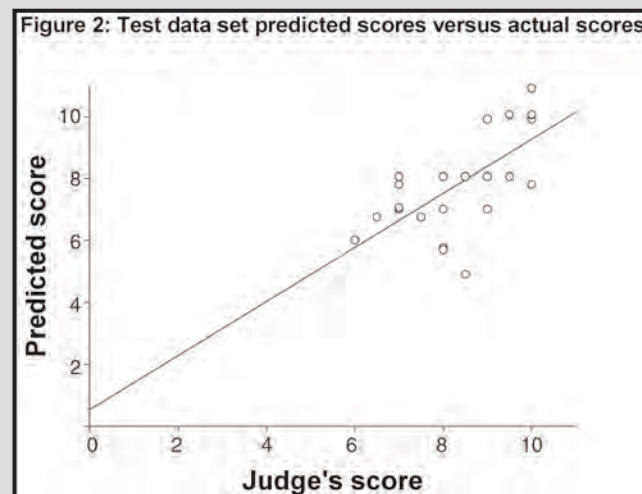
rule = rule of thirds

Figure 1 shows the scores given by the equation compared to the actual scores awarded by the judges for the 52 sample images. The correlation between predicted and judged scores was 0.635, statistically significant at the 1% level.



Testing the Predictive Equation: To test the model a second data set of 27 previously judged images, not used in the statistical analysis, was assigned values for sharpness, colour, proper exposure and composition. Predicted judges' scores were calculated for the 27

test images. Figure 2 shows the scores given by the predictive equation compared to the actual scores awarded by the judges for this additional test data set.



For the test data set the correlation between the predicted and judged scores was 0.657, statistically significant at the 1% level

Discussion: These results apply only to the Novice category of VCC competitions. They cannot be extrapolated to the Intermediate and Advanced competitions.

In scoring images, the judges in Novice competitions favour sharp clear images that are brightly coloured. According to our statistical judge Gonzo, correct exposure and good composition are considered a bonus. Now a real human judge might disagree with Gonzo. As for me, I refuse to referee disputes between Gonzo and the real judges.

Some standard independent empirical checks of the statistical results supported the conclusions of the analysis. Over the summer I plan to use my predictive model to help me produce images that VCC judges prefer. To the main elements of photography, "light, subject matter and composition" I have added two more: "tack sharp and brightly coloured." The wonderful competition images of other VCC members will help me learn how to improve the techniques and the expression in my own photographs.

Art and science share a common purpose, which is to give a coherent account of human experience. In reference to art, Michelangelo is supposed to have said "*the hand executes but the eye judges*". The judges in our VCC novice competitions are carefully following the instructions given them by the Italian ceiling painter.

Glass Sky

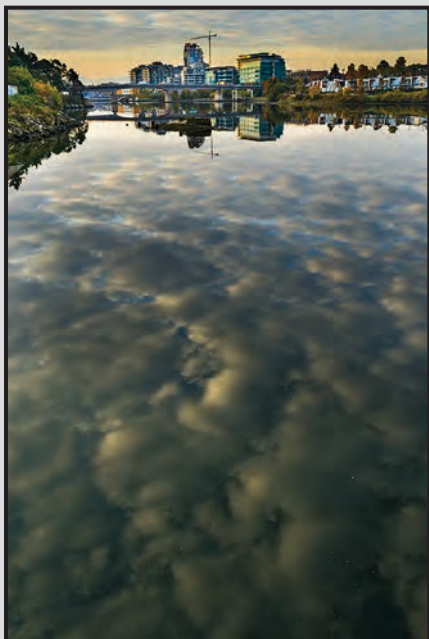
by Meherzad Romer

A wise man once told me that the best way to take good pictures is to carry your camera at all times. This particular morning I decided to carry my camera sling-bag with me as I rode my bicycle into work, and I'm glad I did. I took this picture just a couple of minutes from my office. I was initially drawn to a metal recycling plant nearby, and while I was there, I decided to also take a picture of the bridge. It wasn't until I put the camera up to my eye that I noticed the reflection of the clouds on the water surface.

I used a Gorillapod (a small flexible tripod) attached to the railings for stability and took a dozen pictures with different compositions. I wanted to get as much of the reflected sky as possible and also include the bridge. In this photo, I didn't follow the rule of thirds because I felt that the reflections of the clouds were more important than the bridge itself.

Using Adobe Lightroom 5, I slightly increased the contrast, clarity, vibrance, and saturation for the entire photo. I then used the adjustment brush to both decrease the exposure of the sky and the top two thirds of the cloud reflections and increase the exposure and saturation of the buildings and the landscape.

Equipment and technical information: Nikon D3100, 18-55 lens at 18mm, f9.0, 1/40sec, ISO 100. Gorillapod.



Blues Man in Black and White

by Don Peterson

Musicians and other street performers make excellent subjects for informal portraiture. You will find them to be particularly cooperative if they realize that you are a "paying customer." A small cash contribution while making eye contact is a great way to quickly establish a cooperative relationship between photographer and "model." A quick gesture to the camera almost always generates a friendly smile and signal to go for it. I have found that street performers will often pose for the camera giving you lots of opportunities to capture a memorable image.

This photograph was taken on St. Catherine Street in Montréal which must be one of the best cities in Canada for street photography! This particular individual was cooperative but was also totally immersed in his music as is evident from the great expression on his face.

My "street camera" is a Fuji XE-1 with a 35mm prime or an 18-55mm zoom. My ISO was set at 400 to allow a 1/500th second shutter speed and an aperture of f5. These settings allowed me to freeze the movement of his fingers while providing a depth of field large enough to capture the whole subject.

In post-production, initial adjustments like exposure, contrast and cropping were made in Lightroom. Once the image was adjusted to my liking, it was converted to monochrome using Google/Nik's Silver Efex Pro.



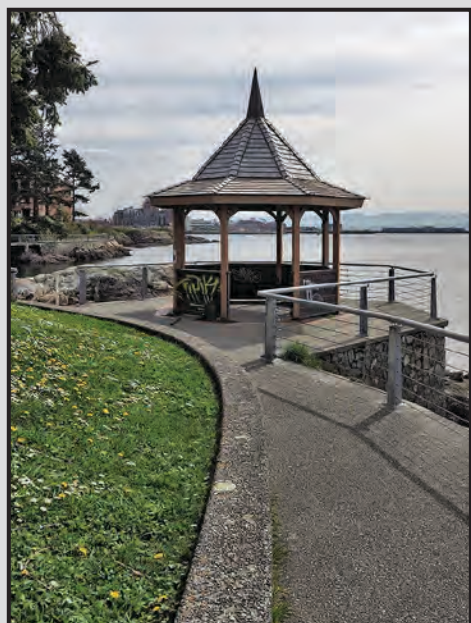
Tuesday Shoots

by Garry Schaefer

May 13th: Front/Backyards of Homes in James Bay.

For the month of May our venues will move from our downtown Victoria haunts, this time to the historic James Bay neighbourhood. Fanning out from James Bay Square, the area is replete with a mix of heritage homes and modern infill housing. Our target will be yards, with their interesting gates, fences, gardens, lawn art and any other aspects which catch our fancy.

May 27th: Songhees Walkway. Heading out in either direction from Spinnakers, the Songhees Walkway stretches from the Blue Bridge to West Bay. You will encounter a mix of urban and natural themes. Catch the resident great blue heron or a float plane taking off against the backdrop of the Olympic Mountains. From rocky foreshore outcrops to the boats of West Bay, a wide assortment of attractive subjects await.



June 10th: Choose One Subject. Find a defining characteristic of your chosen subject and then shoot as many of them as you can. For example, it could be shoes, red; door knobs, round; chairs, metal; etc. This should make for an eclectic post-shoot gallery!

June 24th: Clashing of Colours. The presence of intense colours from the opposite side of the colour wheel is often a recipe for a clash. Today we will seek that discord by a deliberate search for those clashes in subjects which feature combinations such as red and cyan, green and magenta, and blue and yellow.

Weekend Shoots

by Dave McLean and Donna Robertson

In May and June two field trips being planned.

Sandcut Creek and Falls: A small creek has sculpted its way through its sandstone bed, separates into two channels, and then falls about 15 feet to a small pool on the sea shore. Photo opportunities include the falls, with the sea and horizon as backgrounds, or you can focus on a smaller scale at the creek itself as it carves its way through the sandstone. If you choose to wander further up the creek-bed, you will find a number of creek riffles and small reflecting pools that reflect the green, moss-covered trees and other vegetation.

Christie Falls: near Ladysmith, has been a popular destination for field trips for several years. It is a beautiful falls that provides opportunities from a number of different perspectives. If one needs additional inspiration, or incentive to visit this falls, look up Richard Webber's photograph "Water and Light" in the October, 2012 Intermediate Nature Print competition. A short walk is required to reach the first falls. A more difficult walk is required in order to reach the other falls.

While tripods are not required, they are certainly advised when shooting the falls. One of the advantages of the tripod (consider also mirror lock-up, remote shutter release, or self-timer) is that you can reduce the shutter speed below which one could hand-hold the camera effectively.

The picture below, by Richard Webber titled "Dancing with Light" is an HDR image of upper Christie Falls taken in July, 2013.



Springtime Photography

by Nancy MacNab

Spring has sprung! It's time to dust off that camera, unearth the tripod and dig out the hats, footwear and sunscreen in preparation for another spring and summer of photography. Longer days and better weather tend to bring out the photographers but, after a winter of hibernating, are your skills a bit rusty?

Before you head out the door, check your batteries and make sure they are fully charged; a winter of doing nothing may result in some loss of energy (that's assuming you remembered to charge them before you packed away your equipment for the winter). How about your memory cards, have they all been downloaded and readied for re-use? Gently clean your lenses and filters, too. And does your camera's sensor need to be cleaned?

Now is also a good time to spring-clean your camera bag. Remove the accumulation of old wrappers and stale snacks that tend to pile up and replenish them with fresh supplies. Make sure that your emergency hiking supplies are up-to-date and ready for use. Reorganize your bag so you can quickly and easily reach the equipment you will be using most frequently.

After reading *Close-Up* from cover to cover, check out some of the photography magazines and books to get some more creative ideas. What are some techniques you've been meaning to try? Review the how-tos and start now! Are there some locations you've wanted to visit but never quite made it? Make a list and start checking them off. Local media and visitor magazines are good sources of information for local events and festivals that may be worth a visit. Still not sure where to start? Here are some suggestions:

Panning: When you pan your camera, you follow your subject with the lens and release the shutter button while continuing to follow the subject. This results in the subject being in focus (more or less) and the background being blurred. It helps to convey a sense of motion or speed. It takes practice, so go somewhere with lots of activity and try it with dogs playing, cyclists, passing cars, joggers and walkers, etc.

Flash: Maybe you've been meaning to learn how to use that fancy flash you got for Christmas. Now is a good time to read the manual and give it a try. Still lifes can be set up on rainy days, and your kids or pets can be fun, if challenging, models. Local churches make

great architectural subjects.

Beacon Hill Park: This large park has ponds of Ducks and Ducklings, Peacocks, Herons nesting, manicured gardens, sports fields and wild areas with Camas and other wildflowers. Just across Dallas Road is the waterfront, with the beaches and cliff faces providing another source of potential subjects or backgrounds.

Elk and Beaver Lakes: Elk and Beaver Lakes have a variety of birds, flowers and wildlife for you to discover on the various trails. It is also where the rowing club practices, as well as fishermen in their boats. Some areas of the park are used for training dogs, holding horse shows, and flying model aircraft.

Mill Hill Park: Trails from the parking lot lead you from Fir and Cedars in the valley to Arbutus and Garry Oak at the top of the hill, with great views of Victoria, the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and the Olympic Mountains. This park is known for its wildflowers, including White Fawn Lilies, Camas and Sea Blush. Some of these wildflowers are rare or endangered, so watch your step and where you plant your tripod when you're photographing.

Abkhazi Gardens: A great alternative to Butchart, this one acre garden is a beautiful and peaceful spot in Fairfield, with Garry Oaks, rocky outcrops, and a variety of blooming shrubs and flowers. Afternoon tea is delicious!

Victoria Highland Games and Celtic Festival: Takes place at Topaz Park (kitty-corner to Mayfair Mall) on May 17th and 18th. People in kilts, whisky tasting, caber-tossing, putting the stone, hammer tossing and other Scottish events make for great photographic challenges. Tickets are cheaper if purchased in advance.

Swiftsure International Yacht Race: The race starts on May 24th, but the festivities begin on May 22nd. From the vendors and people to the boats and birds, here's your chance to hone your street photography skills.

Take advantage of the club's many workshops and outings as well as those offered by local professional photographers. Start planning your vacation and practicing to take those amazing holiday photos. You will want to know your camera inside out and back to front before you go so you're not fumbling for the controls and missing the images you want. Make sure you take the time to learn the capabilities of any new equipment before you leave so you are aware of its potential uses and limitations.

by John Coenraads

Refraction is the bending of light as it crosses a boundary from one transparent medium, such as air, into another, such as glass. Refractography, as the name suggests, exploits refraction. However, similar results can be obtained using reflections, and refractographic images are often the result of both reflection and refraction. We won't use the term reflectography, however, since that refers to a technique that uses infrared light to probe under the surface of a painting.

At a recent combined meeting of the Lighting and Creative SIGs, club member, Richard James, demonstrated the technique for creating refractographs and his results are stunning (Figure 1). The fact that one can dispense with a lens in front of the camera makes these beautiful images seem even more mysterious. By exploring some of the underlying science, I hope to remove some of that mystery, although it is not my intent to "unweave the rainbow."



Figure 1: A refractographic image showing the flowing curves and rays typically produced. (Richard James.)

For those who missed Richard's presentation, the following online tutorial outlines the basics. Figure 2 illustrates the setup. petapixel.com/2013/04/08/how-to-create-and-photograph-incredible-refractographs/

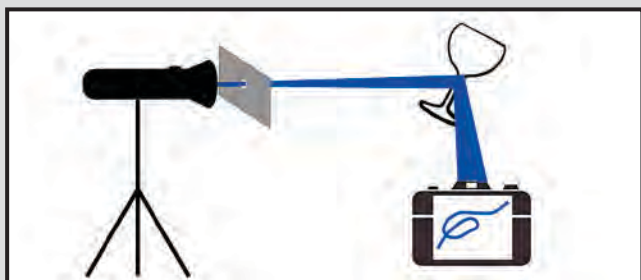


Figure 2: The simple right angle arrangement of light source, subject and lensless camera.

Lensless Photography

Sharp images require that, at some point, the light rays creating the image converge to a point. A lens is designed to take light diverging from a point on the subject and focus it to a point that lies in the plane of the sensor. In a pinhole camera, the light rays converge at a point consisting of the pinhole itself. But sharp images can also be created by using a light source that itself is a point source. Think of shadow puppets for example, or of how X-rays from a point source pass through the patient and create an image on the film underneath. And so it is with refractography; a point source of light is needed for illumination.

The Light Source

In my mind, a laser pointer immediately suggested itself as being an ideal point source of light. But then it struck me that this won't work.

1. A laser is purely monochromatic, so if you would like to introduce a variety of colours, white light is needed. Colour is normally introduced by holding one or more colour filters in the path of the light, either between light source and subject or the subject and the camera. A diffraction grating (search through your box of special effects filters) should yield a very nice rainbow effect.
2. A laser is not a point source because the beam is sent out as a narrow pencil that does not diverge. To get a feel for what problems this creates, imagine replacing the hole in a pin-hole camera with a soda straw.
3. Because a laser beam does not diverge, there is little loss in intensity with distance. Thus shining or reflecting the beam onto the sensor has the potential for creating damage. Since the power of a typical laser pointer is only a few milliwatts, a brief accidental flash is unlikely to do harm but I would avoid it, in the same way I avoid direct exposure of the sensor to the sun or a flash.

A white LED flashlight with a single LED, not an array, works well as a point source. Richard recommends an output of at least 150 lumens to achieve reasonably short shutter speeds. Refer to his presentation notes on the club website: victoriacameraclub.org/pdfdocs/P2014/Refractography.pdf

But even then, it makes sense to pass the beam through a small hole to reduce unwanted ambient light, i.e., any light not actually falling on the subject. A point source will also appear smaller (more point-like) with distance, say a meter or two from the subject.

Caustics

The flowing patterns often observed in refractographs are technically known as caustics. Quoting Wikipedia, *“In optics, a caustic is the envelope of light rays reflected or refracted by a curved surface or object.”* As such, it has a strong connection to string art and the phantom curve or “envelope” that the eye perceives to be there. Figure 3 shows the caustics produced by a simple glass of water. More complex shapes can produce caustics of amazing beauty. For example, complex networks of caustics are produced at the bottom of a pool when sunlight is refracted by ripples on the surface.

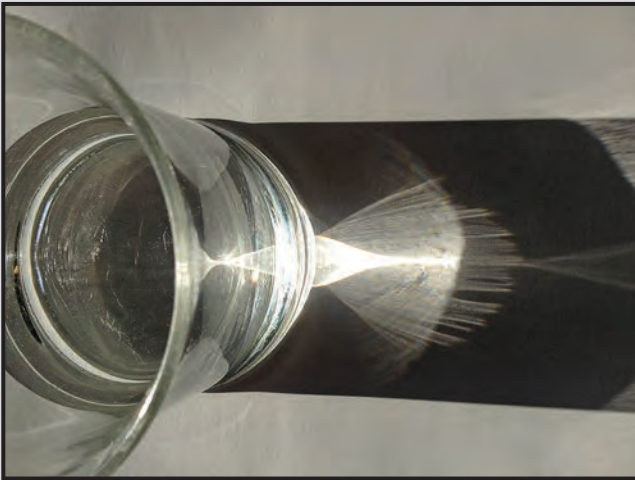


Figure 3: Caustics produced by what is essentially a transparent cylinder. Here the sun, by virtue of its distance, makes an excellent point source.

Caustic comes from the Latin “causticus” meaning burning, as you’ll understand if you’ve ever placed your hand in the caustic produced by a magnifying glass aimed at the sun.

Total Internal Reflection

Anyone who has seen his or her reflection in a window knows that a transparent substance also partially reflects: for glass, typically ten per cent, depending on the angle. But a more important contribution to a refractograph is made by light that undergoes total internal reflection. This same phenomenon contributes to the brilliance of a diamond, helps create rainbows and traps light inside a fibre optic cable.

To get a feeling for total internal reflection, imagine lying face up at the bottom of a swimming pool; what does the world look like? The sun, shining straight

down from above, will still appear to be straight overhead. But a puppy at the edge of the pool will have light coming from it refracted downward as shown in figure 4. The eye, which assumes that light travels in a straight line, will see the puppy appear at the edge of a cone that encompasses the complete above water scene. So what will our diver see outside this cone? Answer: the reflected sides of the pool. Outside the cone, the water behaves like a perfect mirror. This results in total internal reflection. Thus, in the making of a refractograph, light entering a transparent object may undergo one or more total internal reflections before escaping thus contributing to the complexity of the resulting caustics. It also means the resulting image will be highly dependent on small positional adjustments to the refracting object, so experimentation is in order.

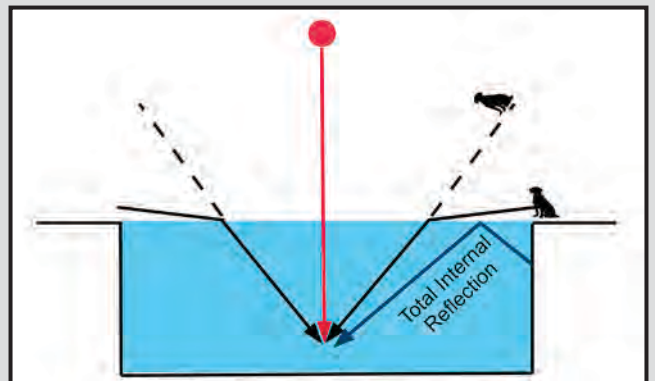


Figure 4: The complete above water view is encompassed within the (dotted) cone. The water lying outside this cone reflects like a perfect mirror.

Projected Refractographs

The caustics, which create a refractograph, can also be projected onto a paper screen and photographed normally using a camera with lens. That is how the caustics created by the glass of water in figure 3 were photographed. But if you want silky smooth black backgrounds, as in figure 1, you will want to eliminate all ambient light and project the image directly onto the camera sensor. Although LiveView and, preferably, tethered shooting are your friends here, you may find it convenient to temporarily slide the camera out of the way and place a white card where the image sensor was located. Then, as you make adjustments to the light, object and camera position, the image projected on the card will show you whether you are getting anywhere. Then, when the result looks interesting, slide the camera back into place.

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