



# Close-Up



**Car Art**  
**Henri Cartier-Bresson: The**  
**Decisive Moment**  
**Adjusting Tones in Photoshop**  
**Member Portfolios:**  
**Barbara Burns and**  
**Dan Takahashi**  
**About Filters**  
**Film Noir and Soft Lighting**  
**Beginners' Corner: Elements of Colour**  
**and more**

**"Violet and Suede" by Sue Ferguson**

**Victoria Camera Club**

**January 2018 Volume 71 Number 1**





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# Victoria Camera Club



"Victoria Harbour Full Moon" by Ian Faris

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](http://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, 2018, all rights reserved. Mailing address: PO Box 46035, RPO Quadra, Victoria, BC, V8T 5G7. Editor, Richard James, e-mail to [editor@victoriacameraclub.ca](mailto:editor@victoriacameraclub.ca) for submissions or to advertise in **Close-Up**. Deadline for submissions for the February 2018 issue is January 5<sup>th</sup> 2018.

For additional information: please contact:

Membership: [membership@victoriacameraclub.ca](mailto:membership@victoriacameraclub.ca)

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**January 2018**

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.ca](http://www.victoriacameraclub.ca)) for the latest details of all our workshops, field trips and meetings.

## January 4<sup>th</sup> 2018: Competition Night

The November competition results will be presented. The January theme competition is “Geometric Shapes.” The deadline for submissions is January 4<sup>th</sup>.

## January 11<sup>th</sup> 2018: Presentation Night

Tony Bounsall will suggest that we “Get Out of the Monkey Trap” by using Photo-Based Mixed Media. He has been working professionally as a commercial photographer/graphic designer for thirty years.

## January 18<sup>th</sup> 2018: Members’ Night

Presentation of members’ images, field trip slide shows, prints or short technical topics.

## Workshop and Field Trip Highlights

Basic Lightroom Workshop, Hockey Night Field Trip.

**Cover Image: “Violet and Suede”** by Sue Ferguson. This was an interesting photo-shoot which I did in November 2017. The pony (Suede) was rescued and then, deemed dangerous and untrainable. Through persistence and love, and against all advice to sell him, his owner persevered and he became the best-behaved, gentle pony anyone could ever wish for. He is ridden regularly by two young girls aged five and eight and never puts a foot in the wrong place.

Here he is with his owner’s granddaughter “Violet” (age four) who trusts him completely. His owner, Paula Leweke, hopes to write a book about his journey.

“Black Background” shots are extremely popular in the horse world. This was taken in the doorway of a large barn at Coastal Equestrian in North Saanich. I shot this with my Canon 5Ds using a Canon 70-200 f2.8L IS II USM lens in natural light. Shot at 80 mm, f4.5, 1/250”, ISO 2000.

In post production, I removed the halter and lead from the pony, and did some minor colour adjustments. Since there wasn’t any snow in November, I used a snow overlay in Photoshop with some light masking. I hope you enjoy it!

# President’s Message

Early in 2005 I left my photographic “home,” the Manitoba Camera Club, and made a big move from Winnipeg to Victoria. It did not take much time to determine that the Victoria Camera Club was the primary target for a landing here. That was soon confirmed through a discussion with Gordon Simpson, the then Acting President.

This got me to thinking about what, for others, might be considered to be a photographic home, or whether that is even a relevant concept. While I tend to concentrate the largest fraction of my photographic endeavours on the activities of the VCC, I recognize that the mix might be quite different for many of you. Perhaps the Club is just one way-station along a multi-faceted route as you pursue your passion for things photographic.

I always experience great interest and considerable pleasure when I have a chance to view the works of our members in venues outside of our Club. Most recently these cases have involved print shows. Individual shows by Daniel Brimacombe and by Leah Gray stand out in my mind. More recently, in December, a show by members of the Photo Editing Group featured prints by Neil Boyle, Richard James and Richard Webber. Another avenue for pursuits beyond the Club lies in competitions sponsored by various commercial and community entities. In the fall, it was a pleasure to come across entries in the Monday Magazine Contest from Laurie MacDonald, Gerry Thompson and John Clarke.

Those are just a few instances that I have come across during the past year in which Club members have taken advantage of opportunities beyond the confines of the VCC. Members have come to us from meet-up groups and continue to participate there. I am aware that other members participate in small groups which meet to review and discuss prints and/or digital images. Some participate directly in photography in support of outside entities, such as Ballet Victoria. In recent years, Dan and Gail Takahashi have provided leadership in that activity. One can extend this narrative to an even greater extent when one considers the commercial realm. Undertakings range from the production of cards, calendars and other offerings to full blown commercial work in print making, framing and real estate photography.

I hope this excursion has indicated that there is a rich tapestry of photographic pursuits being undertaken by VCC members beyond those which take place within the Club. I feel that those enrich us all, directly and indirectly.

Happy New Year! *Garry Schaefer, President*

# Car Art

by Monica Reekie

The pin-ups in my school locker were all cars, that was highly unusual in a girl's school. I've always had a love affair with cars, and that affair is fickle. From the Horseless Carriage and Model A to Pierce Arrow, Rolls Royce, Deuce Coupe, Lamborghini or Dragster, and almost everything in between. (Yes, almost. Some do not ring my bell.) On occasion, an elaborately modified Chopper has been known to turn my head as it rumbles by.

My first film camera was an inexpensive plastic model purchased with babysitting money when the going rate was 25 cents per hour. It had one button, a dial to advance the film and a viewfinder. Point, click, advance and hope that something recognizable is printed! I went with a friend and her father in their DeSoto to every car show, I discovered a plethora of subject matter and developed a fascination with the shapes, colours and highly polished details of these classic beauties, endlessly snapping pics of these magnificent works of art. "Sleeping Beauties," derelict ruins to some, altered by the elements, adorned with rust, dents and dirt, are also dream finds for a photographer.

Living in Victoria, the seemingly endless number of car shows makes choosing which one(s) to attend a challenge. Thousands of cars to shoot and tens of thousands of spectators to avoid. Capturing an entire car is impossible. Focus on the details, reflections, contrasts, shapes, colour blocks, hood ornaments, or the reflection of a Packard on the hubcap of a Chevy. When focusing on a hood ornament, use the colour of the car beside it for a blurred background. A highly-pol-



*"Blues Band"*

ished chrome bumper reflects everything, legs, Hawaiian shorts, dogs, pavement, litter, you, trees and so much more. Use those reflections to your advantage; capitalize on the buildings, a flash of a bright pink shirt walking by, the colour of the next car. Keep an eye on the periphery, both for "incoming" interference and also for opportunities to use a reflection. Be ready, you only have a second or two. Changes in the position of the sun can dramatically alter an image, so if you find a car you love, go back several times. Cloudy days are no reason to stay home, they present more opportunities, and car dust doesn't show as much!



*"Nymph"*

Wear neutral colours so that you are not the "interference," unless you want to be. Stand straight, legs together, elbows in, and move ever so slightly to either side until you find the tiny space where you will not be visible in a reflection.

Since the skyrocketing popularity of "selfies", random people stop and mug endlessly when they see a camera as you try hard to get a photo without them in it. Find your desired shots, plan them, and turn away. In a few seconds, the humans will lose interest and leave you in peace with the car to quickly get your desired shots. I stress the word quickly. You have only seconds to get your image before someone else steps into it. If there is a car that you fall in love with, strike up a conversation with the owner who may be receptive to a private photo shoot at a later date. Take a quick snap of any information cards that might accompany a car of interest, it's a valuable source of reference.

Always bring extra batteries and memory cards; tripods and telephoto lenses can stay home. Travel light as you will be moving quickly.

Finally, never delete an image until you see it on a large screen. You never know what wonderful surprises might await you.

# Henri Cartier-Bresson: The Decisive Moment

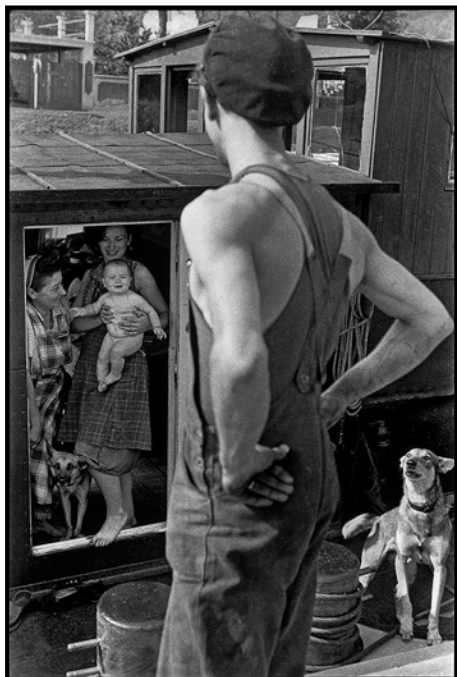
by Martin Wright

This article is a brief summary and discussion of Henri Cartier-Bresson, his work, and influence as a photographer in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. If you are familiar with his work I hope you will be interested in my perspective. If you are not aware of his work and place in the history of photography I hope it will be a meaningful introduction to one of the world's great "candid" photographers.

Cartier-Bresson is best known for his street photography. However his influence on photographic techniques remains influential. He stated many times that he thought cropping an image was unnecessary. In the early 1930s he was one of the first photographers to use the combination of 35 mm film and camera in news photography.

Henri was born in France in 1908 and died in France 2004. He is often quoted as saying his first and last love was painting and drawing. Nevertheless he discovered that photography could do what painting could not do. He is quoted as saying, "Reality has the last laugh." However by 1975 he had more or less abandoned his photographic career and returned to painting and drawing. It was during the intervening years that he produced a staggering body of memorable images.

These images reveal his deep compassion for the human condition. In 1952 he published the book "Image à



*"Bargeman on Seine River, 1957"*



*"Abruzzi, 1953, Woman with Tray of Bread"*

la Sauvette" which in English translates as "The Decisive Moment" (Publ: Magnum Photos, 1952, out of print). I imagine most photographers naturally understand what he meant. It is that entirely personal moment when we decide to press the shutter. In a sense it is, for better or worse, always our own "Decisive Moment."

I was thoroughly captivated the first time I saw his work fifty years ago. Today it is the same; I feel an exhilarating mixture of awe, delight and admiration for his work.

Cartier-Bresson used a small range finder 35 mm Leica camera with a fixed 50 mm lens to take some of the most memorable images of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

As a photojournalist he seems to have had a sixth sense for being present with his camera at some of the most significant moments in 20<sup>th</sup> century world events. He was for example interviewing Mahatma Gandhi shortly before he was assassinated. In his career he witnessed wars, assassinations, political and social upheavals, and the extremes between wealth and poverty in many countries around the world. Henri also produced many truly memorable portraits of prominent writers, artists, and politicians of his era. It is worth searching out his unique portraits of Albert Camus, Coco Chanel, Sartre and many others including a memorable image of Henri Matisse shortly before he died.

Magnum Photos is a photo agency that Henri founded along with other photojournalists of his generation. He writes that he never did his own printing but relied on his colleagues at Magnum to do it for him.



As with many great artists what he said and what he did was not always consistent. My research shows that some of his images were cropped and all his images required some manipulation such as dodging and burning.

If you wish to know more about his printing philosophy I recommend the film, "Henri Cartier-Bresson, The Impassioned Eye." It is available on DVD at the Greater Victoria Public Library (GVPL).

So what did Henri have to say about the Decisive Moment? He wrote, "To take photographs is to hold one's breath when all faculties converge in the face of fleeting reality. It is at that moment that mastering an image becomes a great physical and intellectual joy." According to Henri there are two important phases when creating a photograph both of which require a degree of subtraction. Firstly by removing confusing elements in the image you tell the story simply and honestly. Secondly, in the editing phase, you delete the weak images.

My own sense of his work is that of a visual story told simply in poetic imagery. The elements, which are so compelling in his work, combine both form and content beautifully. Consistently two aspects of his photography illustrate his genius. They are composition and empathy for his subjects. In so many of his images the eye never strays out of the frame. He uses geometric shapes such as circles, triangles, leading lines and diagonal lines to keep our eyes flowing around the image.



*"Muslim Women Praying. Srinagar, Kashmir, 1948"*

The image, "The Bargeman on the Seine River, 1957", is one of my favourites. It is not for an advertisement, but is the work of an artist who with his profound sensitivity for the nuances of daily life captured a single moment so universal and at the same time so unique to this loving family

His picture, "Abruzzi, 1953, Woman with Tray of Bread", perfectly illustrates this point.



*"New York, 1947"*

His empathy for his subjects can also be seen in the picture "New York, 1947". A poignant moment between a man and a cat set against a narrow deserted alleyway in New York.

At first, these images might appear to be so simple but, Cartier-Bresson's stature as a great artist is in his ability to recognize transitory moments in time and space and to reveal something timeless. These are wonderful moments when form and content merge. To have repeatedly achieved this throughout his career is a testament to his artistry.

Henri travelled the world and was witness to some of the defining moments in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and yet, his images are not filled with horror, or examples of humanity at its most brutal and ugly. For me they are more like random acts of kindness. He was not a war photographer: some of his brave colleagues at Magnum such as Robert Capa took on that responsibility.

Henri's image of the "Muslim Women Praying. Srinagar, Kashmir, 1948," is an example of what I mean. He did not send back to Magnum images of the Taj Mahal or of the fighting after Ghandi was assassinated. He sent this enigmatic image. It is a private moment, personal and yet universal at the same time, made universal by his choice of camera position and lighting. We see the women privately praying from behind in diffuse undisturbed light.

He simply left room in his images for us to interpret his intent in our own way. They are ironic, tongue in cheek,



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profound, full of pathos, funny and many are breathtakingly beautiful.

To quote Henri, "To me, photography is the simultaneous recognition, in a fraction of a second, of the significance of an event as well as of a precise organization of forms which give that event its proper expression."

If you are interested in delving deeper into Henri's work there are a number of books in the library as well as the DVD titled "The Impassioned Eye," a film by Heinne Butler. In the film the playwright and writer Arthur Miller describes Henri as having "fundamentally a tragic vision."

If you are new to the work of Henri Cartier-Bresson I hope I have inspired you to seek out more of his images and philosophy. Or if, like me, you have already been influenced and inspired by his work and want to see more there are copies of his books in the library. I will finish with one last quote from Henri Cartier-Bresson, "Approach the subject on tip-toe even if a still life."

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# Adjusting Tones in Photoshop

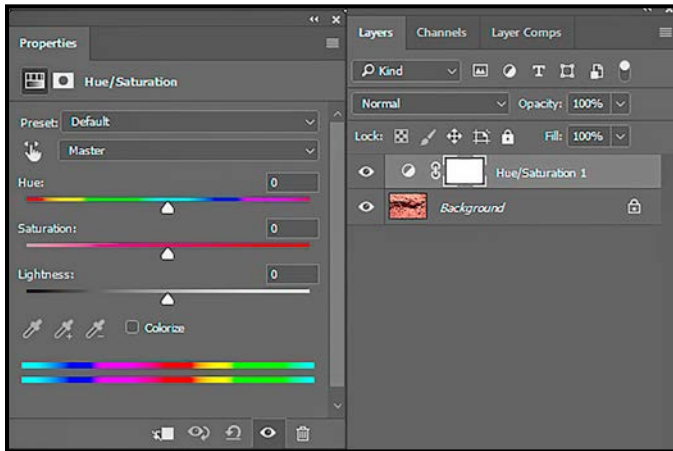
by Richard James

In the December 2017 *Close-Up* I reviewed the general uses of adjustment layers. Let us now look at a specific example of how to use them. For this article I'm going to use tone adjustments that can be applied to both colour and black-and-white images.

Although we primarily see colours, tone plays an important part in how we perceive objects. In the absence of colour it becomes absolutely critical to separate objects from each other.

In his recent workshop, "Fundamentals of Black-and-White Photography", Ed Monitz went to considerable lengths explaining and demonstrating how important tone is to obtain the best possible image rendering in both black-and-white and colour images.

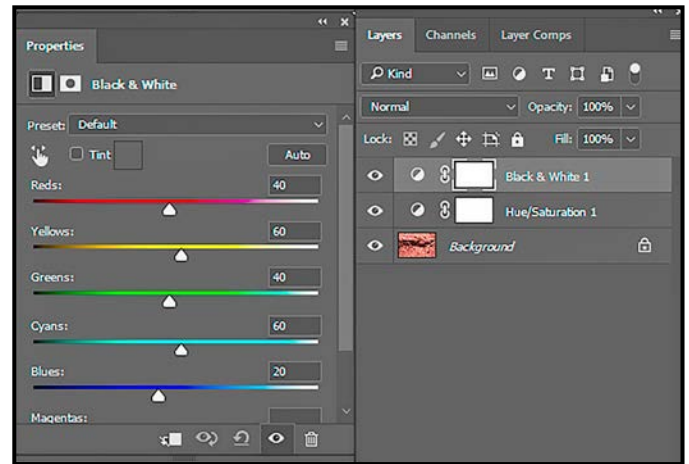
These adjustments can be done in Lightroom, Photoshop or any other image editing program. Here, we will use Photoshop adjustment layers.



*"Hue/Saturation/Lightness Adjustment"*

For a colour image you need to make the adjustment in the Hue/Saturation/Lightness panel (HSL) using the saturation and lightness sliders. This will apply the same change across the whole image. If you select the default "master" set then the same change applies to all colours. What we need to do though is to change individual colours to change their tonal value. To do this, you click on the "master" drop-down and you have a choice of six colours: red, green, blue, yellow, cyan, and magenta. By using the saturation and lightness sliders for the appropriate colour you can change its values and thus its position in the tone range within the image.

To get an idea of what the image might look like in black-and-white (B/W), and the effect that your changes are



*"Black and White Adjustment"*

having on the tonal range, add a B/W adjustment layer above the HSL layer. Click on the "auto" button to let Photoshop determine what it thinks is an appropriate conversion. Now, without changing this go back to the HSL layer and move the sliders around for the colours you want to change and see their effect on the tones. If your final image is going to be in colour, then you can turn off the B/W adjustment layer.

Once you have an image that looks good in colour you can focus on the B/W conversion using the colour sliders in the B/W adjustment layer. Your objective now is to fine-tune the greyscale representation. The goal is to have both whites and blacks with detail rather than burnt-out highlight areas, or bottomless black areas. After this, most images will look best with good grey-scale separation in the mid-range of tones.

These basic steps using adjustment layers apply the changes to the whole image. However, it is sometimes necessary to make changes to specific parts of the image. This can be done using multiple HSL or B/W adjustment layers with masks so that each area gets the adjustments that are most appropriate. The masks can be made as selections, by painting on the mask, or by creating luminosity masks which allow you to select areas by luminosity rather than colour or shape.

Another option to combine with fine tuning using adjustment layers is to do some of the adjustments at the RAW conversion stage in Lightroom or Photoshop, or by using the Camera Raw Filter within Photoshop. This allows you to make overall changes to tones by moving the highlights, whites, shadows and blacks sliders.

These changes affect the selected tone ranges for the whole image. They are seamless in that masks are not explicitly used so you don't have to match the edges but since they are global changes you will probably still have to do some fine tuning with adjustment layers.

# Friendly Competition is Awesome!

by Richard Letourneau, Internal Comps Committee

Competition is awesome. Why? Because it motivates you to be your best self.

Friendly competition is not meant to put anyone down, to criticize, or to hurt feelings. It is meant to help one another produce our best work, through thoughtful feedback, critiques and the opportunities to view images of others.

Our Club has an energetic team of volunteers on the Competitions Committees: eight members for Internal Competitions; five members for External Competitions; and seven members who judge the Novice Competitions.

The Internal Comps Committee reviews and updates competition guidelines each year, and sets up and manages all online and print entries for monthly competitions.

Six Internal Competitions are held from September to November and January to March. There are three skill levels, Novice, Intermediate and Advanced. It is this Committee's responsibility to select the monthly themes and to disseminate information via *Close-Up* and the website.

We review all images to ensure they are entered into the correct category (theme, natural world, wildlife, altered reality, open, or print). They are also checked to ensure there is no "hand of man" where there shouldn't be, or that the image hasn't already been entered into a previous internal competition. Members are notified if there is a question about a particular image. Occasionally, members who may be unfamiliar with the guidelines may enter the same image into multiple categories. This is not allowed and the member is asked to choose one entry category only. Prior to Competitions Night we review the judges' critiques for completeness and rankings, and assemble a slide show of all images for that month.

The committee organizes our Year-end Competition and Awards Night. All digital and print images that received rankings of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, or Honourable Mention during the year, are re-judged by a panel of external judges. The Committee procures a large screen monitor for the judges to view the digital images. We also set up the print display stands, with studio lights, for the judges to view the print images.

And then it's time to celebrate another successful year and to congratulate the Competition winners on their best work! We encourage all of our members to participate! It's awesome!

# External Competitions

by Mike Wooding, External Comps Committee

This is an ambitious year for External Competitions in the Victoria Camera Club. We will be entering nine CAPA competitions as well as the North Shore Challenge, the Lion's Gate Celebration of Nature and the annual VCC-Eastwood event. The big change this year is that we are also participating in two PSA (Photographic Society of America) Interclub competitions, something that we have not done for over 50 years. The Nature comp consists of three rounds and the Open consists of four. The PSA competitions allow us to compete against some of the finest camera clubs in the USA and around the world.

**PSA Interclub Digital Nature Round One:** The VCC came in 4<sup>th</sup> out of 38 clubs. This was a significant achievement, and congratulations go to the six members whose images formed our submission, especially to James Kissinger, whose "*Grizzlies on Tundra*" image took 3<sup>rd</sup> place out of 228 images, for a PSA Award of Merit.

**CAPA Digital Fine Art Competition:** We finished two places out of the money by ending up in 8<sup>th</sup> place. 33 CAPA clubs took part in this competition, so 8<sup>th</sup> place is definitely respectable. Dan Takahashi provided a significant bright spot by taking third place overall out of 190 images that were judged, earning him a CAPA Merit Award ribbon for his excellent image, "*The Moment*."

**CAPA Digital Nature Competition:** The VCC has an enviable track record when competing in Nature and Wildlife competitions. Last year we came 1<sup>st</sup> in the Lion's Gate Celebration of Nature and, as stated above, we did exceptionally well in our first experience with the PSA Interclub Nature Competition. So it was a disappointing surprise to come in 16<sup>th</sup> out of 35 in the CAPA Fall Digital Nature Competition. We felt that we had submitted a strong entry, but obviously we were up against some impressive competition.

**CAPA Fall Print Competition:** This year was the first time in quite a while that the VCC had submitted an entry to this competition, so it was really gratifying to be awarded the Bronze Medal for 3<sup>rd</sup> place. We believe that print making is a very important part of photography and thanks to the print competitions managed by our colleagues on the Internal Competitions Committee, we have many fine prints from which to choose.

The External Competitions Committee would like to thank all members who have submitted images so far this year. Please keep them coming!



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## Member Portfolio:

### Barbara A. Burns

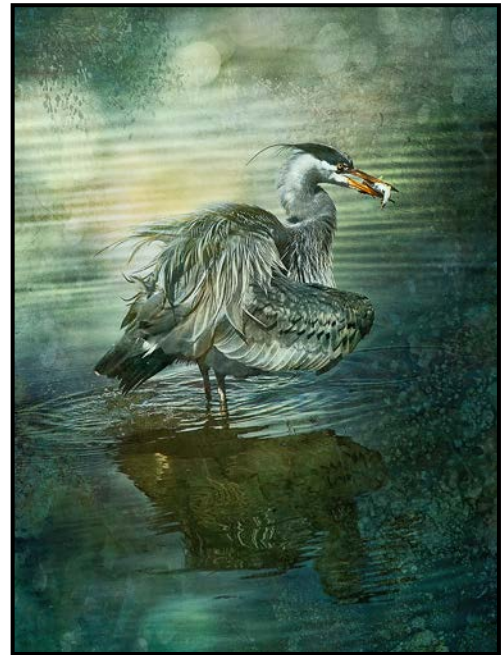
I grew up in an artistic family and, as a child, I was encouraged to experiment artistically in various media including oil paints, watercolours, pastels and clay. I developed a love for the visual arts that has remained with me throughout my life. I have taken numerous art courses at such schools as Emily Carr University, Langara and Camosun Colleges and the University of Victoria. I particularly focused upon acrylic and multimedia painting and collaging.

In 2001 I bought my first camera, a 3 mp Olympus digital point and shoot. My initial intention was to photograph scenes and objects I could later paint. Then I took a Photoshop course at Emily Carr College and fell in love with the digital world. Needless to say, my painting life never recovered. The focus of my early photography was primarily landscapes and birds. I was captured by the beauty and grace of nature, particularly of birds in flight.

In 2006 I inherited from my son, a jewelry photographer in Los Angeles, my first good digital camera, a Canon EOS 1Ds DSLR with some good quality lenses. Today I shoot with a Canon 5D MkIII and a variety of Canon "L" lenses. My go-to lenses for most of my work are the 24-70 mm and the 70-200 mm L lenses. In the same year I purchased my first studio lighting gear (very inexpensive continuous lights with soft boxes) and set them up in my spare bedroom. I began to explore studio photography, primarily tabletop and macro shooting.

Then I joined the Victoria Camera Club, took Herman Surkis' and Richard James' workshop "Lighting 1-2-3" and participated in the model shoot at the end of the course. Then the Lighting SIG was born and a few of us began to pursue studio work seriously. Encouraged by my son again, I purchased Paul C. Buff studio strobes and a variety of light modifiers and stands. Herman, Scott Laird and I spurred on each other's gear purchases, and we would pool our resources for shoots. Again with a nudge from Herman, I began to photograph dancers in the studio and in rehearsal. I was in love!! Just as in the past when I had so admired the grace and power of birds in flight, I now sought to capture the perfection of skilled dancers in motion.

I am also passionately engaged in making digital art in Photoshop (PS), using my photographs as the underlying bones of my compositions. I try to enhance the qualities that most appeal to me in the original capture. I have sold numerous artistic prints over the years, particularly at the Sidney Fine Art Show.



*"The Fisherman"*

The base image for this composition was one of my old images of a Great Blue Heron shot at Reifel Bird Sanctuary. I patiently watched this heron hunting for his lunch and I was lucky enough to capture his moment of success. I used a Canon EOS 1Ds with a 70-300 mm lens. As the light at the time was rather flat and uninteresting, I processed the original capture to achieve a greater richness, depth and atmosphere. I have overlaid various textures, colours and bokeh layers in PS to enhance this otherwise fairly ordinary image.



*"Mr. Big"*

The base images for this composite were another old Reifel Sanctuary image of Sandhill Cranes in mating season and an interestingly-patterned cliff face near Duncan. It was actually inspired by the unique look of the cliff face that seemed to contain a miniature landscape. Using PS I layered in rocks, trees, shoreline, water ripples, clouds and the sun. I added texture layers and then edited it further with Levels, Curves, and Saturation layers for atmosphere.





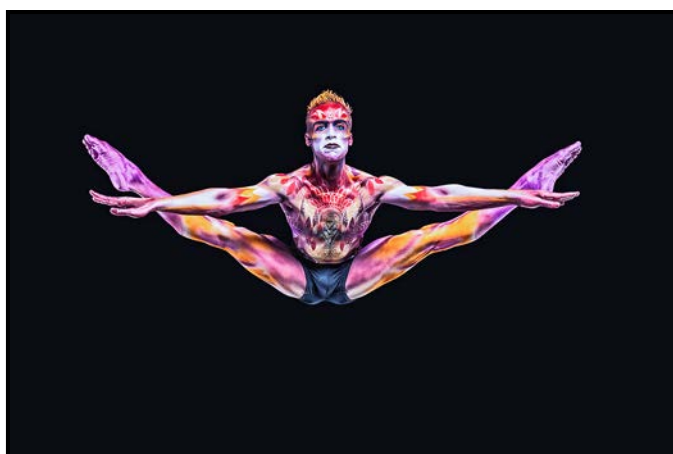
*"Storm"*

The base images for this composition were a shot of Fisgard Lighthouse and one of high stormy seas at Clover Point. I wanted to emphasize the incredible power and ferocity of some of our Pacific Northwest storms by making the waves seem to threaten the lighthouse. Using PS I layered in images I had of rocks, extra waves, shorelines, trees and clouds and then added texture layers. I altered the colours to make the piece predominantly cold and chilly looking. I then experimented with painting on the whole surface with Corel's Particle Shop, a plug-in for PS that I find very user friendly and a good beginner's digital painting tool.



*"Dancing on a Cloud"*

The base image and inspiration for this composition was a studio shot of a lovely ballerina clothed in a gorgeous white costume I had made. As she was shot on black, I had to extract her from the background (with the PS Quick Selection Tool) and then place her on a background of sky and clouds. I added layers of fractal textures I had made in Frax, butterfly wings, a globe and then painted on it with Particle Shop. This image, printed on canvas, was sold at the 2017 Sidney Fine Art Show.



*"Lord of Fire"*

I have enjoyed working with the talented Victoria artist Kristin Grant who painted this dancer to look like a fire demon. It was shot in the studio with a three-strobe set-up with two 80" PLM modifiers and a beauty dish. Where there is sufficient space I like to shoot dancers with my 70-200 mm lens but in this case I had to use my 24-70 mm lens. I rarely ever use a tripod in the studio as the strobes freeze action so effectively that camera shake is not an issue. I particularly like the way this image shows off both the body painter's skill and the dancer's grace and power.



*"Dress Rehearsal with Ballet Victoria, The Gift"*

From time to time I have the opportunity to photograph a ballet dress rehearsal. It is extremely challenging because the dancers are in almost constant fast motion and because the dark stage lighting compels you to shoot at high ISOs (e.g. 6400). Getting a sharp and interesting image with an acceptable level of grain does not happen easily. In addition, even a really excellent image, from a photographic perspective, must be discarded if the dancer's position does not meet exacting professional ballet standards.



*"Dark Lady"*

The base image and inspiration for this composition was a studio shot of a beautiful Victoria ballerina lit with five strobes, in four strip boxes and an octabox (or beauty dish, I can't remember). Smoke was pumped into the studio from two smoke machines, at upper and lower angles, operated by lighting expert, Herman Surkis. I decided to enhance the mystery and moodiness of the original capture by compositing in PS. I layered in images I had extracted earlier of rocks, trees, vegetation and hills to give a sense of place. I added more fog effects to balance the composition and finished by increasing the contrast and light using Levels and Curves. I used Nik Silver Efex to render the image into Black and White.



*"Dancing with my Shadow"*

Other than some darkening, colour toning and a contrast increase, this image of a graceful Victoria ballerina is almost straight out of the camera. It was shot in the studio and lit with seven strobes and strip-boxes. I used my Sony 6000 mirrorless camera with the kit 16-50 mm f.3.5-5.6 lens at a 2 second exposure, f5 and 160 ISO.



*"On Fire"*

This image of a Victoria professional dancer was shot in the studio with seven strobes in strip-boxes. The costume was made for me by a local designer. I asked her to create something that would look like flames around the dancer. I used a Canon 5D MkIII with a 70-200 mm L lens. My camera settings were ISO 200, f7, 1/160 sec.



*"Witchy Woman"*

This image of a wonderful Victoria dancer was shot in the studio lit by a three strobe soft-box lighting set-up. The dancer was body painted by Kristin Grant. This gave the model such an otherworldly, occult appearance that I really wanted to enhance it with compositing. I added images of crows and smoke, and gold toned textures and lines to give richness and depth to the composition.



# Member Portfolio:

## Dan Takahashi

My journey in photography began in Southern California in the late 1960's with a Minolta SRT 101 (manual 35 mm SLR with TTL metering) camera. Right out of high school, a good friend of mine joined the Navy and ended up as the ship's photographer. It was a benefit for me as he had access to unlimited film and processing. When that situation ended, I realized just how expensive the hobby was.

A few photography classes at Long Beach City College, a few weddings for friends, a few concerts, a few of this and a few of that kept me involved but only as a hobby.

Being an entrepreneur for most of my life, I followed opportunity a lot. Fast forward through quite a few chapters in my life, two states, three provinces, raising three boys on an Ontario farm ending up back in Southern California to get the real start of my current photography story.

The real start of my photography lifestyle was taking early retirement in 2007, buying a 36 ft. motor-home that pulled a modified rock crawling Jeep, and traveling the western US and Canada. Armed with a Nikon D100 and a few lenses, I called myself "The Nomad Photographer."

Among my travels, I hooked up with a group called "The Nikonians." They held week-long workshops in places like Yosemite, Yellowstone, Grand Tetons, Grand Canyon and Arches. Being with fellow photographers for trips like these advanced my photography skills a thousand fold.

Health issues had me move to Victoria and looking for a camera club to join. After visiting all three clubs in the area, I decided on the Victoria Camera Club and joined in 2010. Soon after I met Gail on a field trip and began helping in the kitchen. We were married in 2012 and we are still very active in the Club and photography. Life is good.

My various Victoria Camera Club roles include being a Vice-president, on the Comps committee for six years, still making coffee and doing dishes in the kitchen after seven years; taking the lead in Nature, Lighting and Creative SIG's and leading specialized field trips and sharing information whenever I can. In 2015 Gail and I were honoured to be joint recipients of the Frank Turner Award, the Club's highest award for service and photographic skills.

I am a Nikon shooter and have had the D100, D200, D300, D7000, D7100, D800, D810 and currently the D850. Along with the cameras came all the gear.



*"Sedona Reflection"*

Landscapes became my major love and I sought out places and scenery throughout the western US and Canada to photograph but not just to photograph, but to create that feeling and magic, and bring the soul and beauty of what I saw and felt to a visual art image.

These are some of the first HDR photographs that I took. I was hooked on HDR! Striving to learn which lenses to use, which filters to use and when and how to properly bracket exposures, I found that asking and talking to other photographers is the very best way for me to learn. Watching others and not being afraid to ask questions, I found most fellow photographers are more than willing to share. This extends to finding the best ways of post-processing. Bracketing for HDR photography is only successful if you process the images correctly.

Again, I was fortunate to have others show me the basics to get started. I try to pass these techniques on to others when I can. I use a tripod, a remote trigger, and a ND filter when it is sunny and bright. I usually shoot in aperture priority, and take five shots, 1 f-stop apart. I have been using Photomatix for over 10 years and have learned to get what I like from it. HDR Panoramas are also a forte of mine as seen in the VCC website banner last year.



*"Arches Sunrise"*

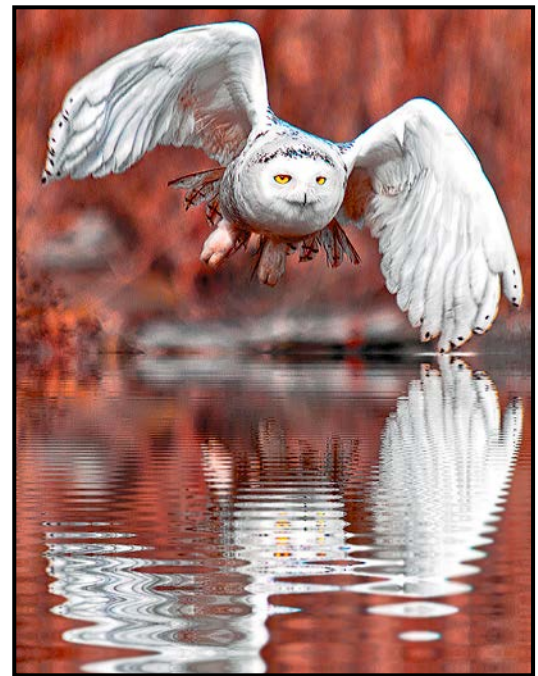


*“Osprey in Flight”*

Following my keen interest in HDR came anything with wings. Eagles, owls, ospreys, hummingbirds, dragonflies, all took my interest in a whole different direction.

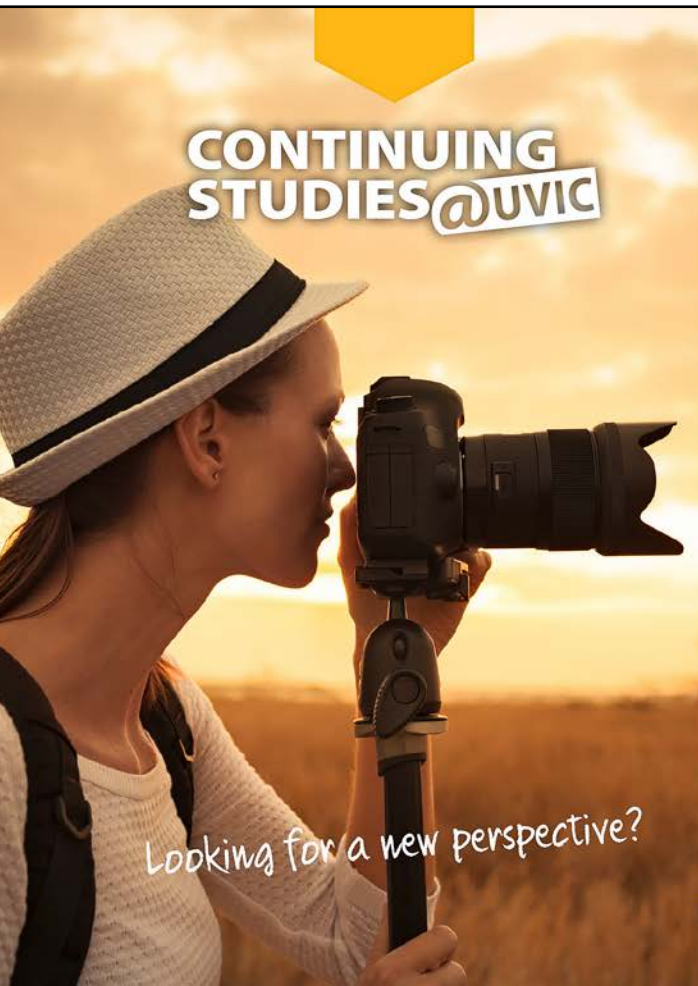
In came the need for longer lenses. The 70-200 mm became the 80-400 mm that became the 200-500 mm zoom lenses.

With help from Club members like Mike Wooding, Suzanne Huot, and Richard James, I became not bad at birds in flight and dragonflies in motion.



*“Snowy Owl Reflection”*

It takes lots and lots of patience, and then more. You see the bird perched and get in the best position possible and wait for an action shot, and wait. The gear gets heavy, your eyes get tired and then most times, the moment you relax or look away, the bird takes flight!



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I was fortunate to have followed two families of Osprey's over the past four years. I got to know their habits and calls, watched them making babies and raising their young and even named them. The Osprey photo here is Mr. O bringing back a fish across a quarter moon to Mrs. O and their two babies, near Esquimalt Lagoon. The Snowy Owl was at Boundary Bay. It was a long cold day, hundreds of missed shots, but one that made it all worthwhile.



*"Wain Road Home"*

I found a niche in taking photos for the real estate industry. Thank you, Gita McCormik. I adapted and applied my landscape HDR techniques to shooting the interiors and exteriors of houses for a few realtors.

Adding some twilight images to my portfolio got me into the higher-end real estate market. These are probably the hardest to do. I do a lot of light painting with an off-camera flash and flashlights to pull out the darker landscaping and in one photo shown here, the water in the fountain. This almost always takes two people as, when the magic blue hour comes, it gives you less than 35 minutes to get that magic money shot. Mine have made several commercial magazine covers.

My Nikon D850 with a Nikon 14-24 mm lens and tripod are my key equipment. I rarely use a flash inside.



*"Humber Road"*



*"On Pointe"*

A unique photographic opportunity that I am currently involved with is the role of the Dance Art Photography Facilitator for Ballet Victoria. Leading and teaching a small group of photographers in the art of capturing ballet dancers in their element in the studio and on stage is very difficult but ever so rewarding for an artistic photographer.

Shooting under stage lighting conditions and very high ISO settings, a bit of "spray and pray," we call ourselves the "6400 Club." Our photos are all critiqued by the Artistic Director and the dancers themselves. What may look like a drop dead gorgeous image to us can get torn to pieces by the dancers for technical flaws.



*"The Moment"*



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# About Filters

*by Matt Speight*

I was always a purist when it came to filters in front of my camera lenses. No polarizers and certainly no UV filters, (kept on all the time as lens protectors), were worth the risk of degrading the optical performance of my expensive lenses. Many years ago, more than I care to admit, something happened that would make me question my attitude.

I was in French Polynesia, Moorea to be exact. I was in a photographer's paradise. The skies were blue, the sand was white and the foliage, a thousand greens. Everything seemed to be perfectly placed for photography. I had spent the day taking the usual postcard pictures.

While walking along the beach I saw the shot I wanted. My heart started beating a bit faster and I felt a pang of excitement, but I couldn't quite get the shot from the beach. I'd have to wade into the water. As you know, it's a balance of how much do you risk to get the shot? I was now waist-deep in the crystal-blue ocean, composing my shot and after a couple of blissful minutes, turned back to the beach, satisfied. In my haste to exit the water, however, the camera and lens got the slightest splash of water.

I wiped down the camera first, then the lens barrel. Very carefully with the same cloth, I cleaned the front element. To my horror there was now a scratch. It wasn't very big, but it was deep. I was devastated. As I inspected the cloth, I saw the culprit, a speck of translucent sea salt that had caused the damage. I quickly dismissed my thoughts about how a filter might have saved my favourite lens. I still believed I made the right choice in keeping my optics pure and filter-free.

Today however, the same purist attitude would hardly be justified, simply, because there have been great advances in filter technology in the last few years. Sigma, Kenko, (re-branded as Hoya in North America), and B+W are some of the brands making advances that even a purist like myself would now be smart to use.

Let's start with Sigma's protective ceramic glass. Sigma WR Protective Filter uses a special heat treatment resulting in microcrystals of a mineral called spinel. These crystals are throughout the glass, making it ten times stronger than conventional filters. You now have a glass filter that is much more resistant to cracks, chips, scratches or impacts. If you have ever tried to take off a severely damaged filter, you will understand the safety

benefits of this. It's no fun blowing fragments of broken glass off your equipment and hands!

Sigma added a multi-layered coating to reduce flaring and ghosting. The water-repellent (WR) coating repels water and oil. Water easily comes off and oily fingerprints are a breeze to clean. Dust is also less likely to be an issue due to the anti-static nature of these coatings.

With a high transmission of 99.76% the performance of the lens will not be affected to any perceivable level. As a point of reference, the older high quality single-coated optical glass has about 96% transmission.

Kenko's Celeste filters, the highest quality series of filters made by Kenko, have a similar water-repellent coating to Sigma called ASC, (Anti-Staining Coating). They, alas, don't have the ceramic glass but Kenko's multi-layer coating is very impressive with 18 layers in total. With a transmission of 99.8%, it's the most transparent filter ever made. The filters are also very slim which helps when using extremely wide lenses; the risk of vignetting in the shot is eliminated. The outer frame has a matte black surface to prevent any reflections from bouncing onto the front element of the lens.

B+W, another big player in the market, have three main levels in their filter line up. Their MRC, (Multi-Resistant Coating) and MRC Nano are the ones to consider if you want great optical performance. They are coated with 14 layers of multiple coatings plus the additional MRC coating on each side. Like the ASC and WR coatings from Sigma and Kenko, the MRC coatings from B+W have similar properties. Their Nano coating does go one step further, however, with fantastic water repellency. Liquid takes an almost spherical form as it rolls off the glass. The transmission of the B+W filters is an impressive 99.5%.

What makes the B+W stand out is their use of brass in the construction of the filter frame. Brass is less likely to expand and bind to the lens it's mounted on. This can be particularly handy if you are putting on more than one filter as it's easier to separate them.

With these recent advances in filter technologies with all their multi-coatings and easy clean water-resistant coatings, I am now a convert and all my lenses have filters on them.

Though I regretted scratching my lens 20 years ago, I didn't ever want a filter to compromise my shots. Now they don't have to. I look forward to my next adventure, finding the perfect balance of risk for the perfect shot, using an awesome protective filter on my new favourite lens.

# Creating Art from Mundane Subjects

by Garry Schaefer

Art? The very word has a pretentious air about it. Considering my approach to photography, I might have chosen different words for the suggested title. I have recently read “Mind of the Raven” and “Gifts of the Crow.” Anecdotes and scientific research indicate that corvids play and that they do so because it is fun. Hence, when I think photography, both play and fun leap to mind.

The motto for VCC Tuesday shoots, from their inception, has been to have fun. In that spirit and in keeping with the above theme, I have used a recent shoot below Dockside Green along Harbour Road as the source material for this article.

In the case of “Fence Top and Beyond” I was peering through the fence into the construction site beyond. There were some nice colours and geometry on the containers in there. But what of the foreground itself? Yes, those intricate twists of metal and that gorgeous length of pipe. Put these together and I had what I wanted.



*“Fence Top and Beyond”*

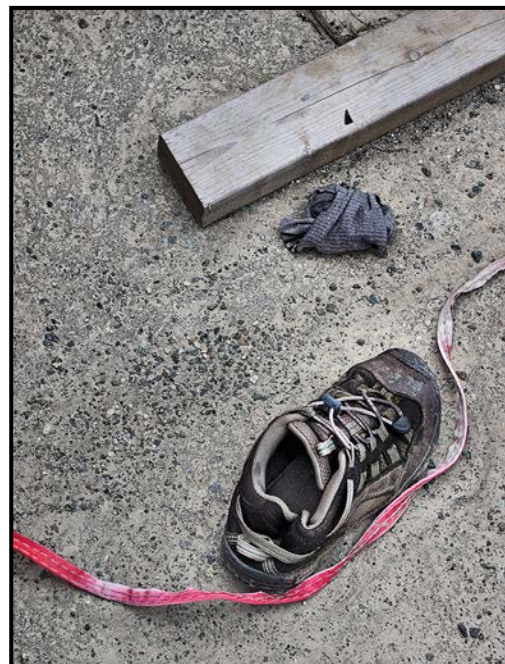
A little further down the road, a chance to step inside the perimeter of the Point Hope Shipyard’s grounds. First up, a length of large-link chain affixed to a concrete block. A bit of rust just beginning to show. Another ready-made subject there for the taking. Put the camera into portrait orientation, tweak the exposure a little as indicated in the live-view EVF and capture the image. Small tweaks in post-processing and “Chain” was done.

A scene then came into view which took slightly more time to gel. A length of red strapping caught my eye, then a running shoe, then a sock. This in a dusty, industrial work yard in a corner of the city. These few



*“Chain”*

items spoke of hard times and abandonment, both of the footwear and of the person whose they once were. My impulse to press the shutter button was based on the geometry of the scene. The back story followed, along with the title, “Abandoned.”



*“Abandoned”*

It is often simple geometry which catches my eye. The industrial buildings along Harbour Road were replete with examples. Corrugated sheet metal cladding seemed to be almost ubiquitous on the large structures in the Port Hope Shipyard. The grey of the building easily lent itself to a B&W conversion. The pattern suggested a larger reality beyond, hence my title, “Skyline Echo in Sheet Metal.”





*"Skyline Echo in Sheet Metal"*

Harkening back to my opening paragraph, I recall the home page of my very first website, created in the late 1990s. It featured a crow atop a gate in far-off Winnipeg. This time a canny member of the dark black species was enjoying what appeared to be a handout from his human friends. I used the title, "Opportunistic Crow" to capture the essence.



*"Opportunistic Crow"*

Like the corvids, that play for the fun of it, I had fun taking and making these images. These subjects abound, wherever one's feet take one. Even when visiting familiar haunts, yet again, new subjects constantly pop into view, mundane though they may be. Using minimal post-processing, these are quickly turned into results which I enjoy. Whether that adds up to art I will leave to others to decide.

## PSA Membership Benefits

PSA (Photographic Society of America) offers a wide range of benefits to both individual and club members. These include online courses, study groups, image evaluation, mentoring services, travel aides plus discounts on software, equipment, workshops and more. Details of these are available on PSA's website, [psa-photo.org](http://psa-photo.org).

**Online Courses:** Those currently available include image analysis, creating competitive images, photography instruction (students work with instruction), portraits in available light, still life photography, the history of photography, and creating portfolios.

**Study Groups:** Study groups consist of a small number of members who submit one or two images per month for review by other group members and the moderator. In the projected image division there are currently over 70 different study groups including general, nature, monochrome, HDR, iPhone photography and more. These cater to beginners as well as seasoned professionals. Other PSA divisions run study groups including nature, photojournalism, photo travel and pictorial print.

**Image Evaluation:** A member volunteer will evaluate submitted images and provide guidance on how they may be improved, or how well they meet the guidelines for submission to PSA competitions.

**Mentoring and Consulting Services:** PSA currently offers mentoring by volunteer members in 18 different image categories. Another group of volunteer members offering specific consulting services in 20 different categories. These categories include such topics as publishing books, organizing photo-based school activities, file and print preparation, entering PSA recognized exhibitions etc.

**Travel Aides:** This service is intended to allow members to contact others living in specific geographic areas who have offered to assist visitors to the areas with which they are familiar. There are PSA members in more than 70 countries, not just in the USA or Canada.

**Discounts:** PSA has arranged a large number of discounts available to members. Many of these operate as coupon codes from the manufacturer. Discounts vary from 10 to 30% on software, photo equipment, some workshops and tours, and more.

If you have any questions about PSA please contact our PSA rep, Rick Shapka, at a Club meeting, workshop or by email at [psa@victoriacameraclub.ca](mailto:psa@victoriacameraclub.ca).

## How I Did It

### Vimy Ridge Anniversary

by Steve Smith

The battle of Vimy Ridge took place in World War I from April 9 to April 12, 1917. The Canadians were ordered to seize the high strategic strong point of Vimy Ridge, on the northern flank of the British attack. Attacking together for the first time, the four Canadian divisions stormed the ridge at 5:30 am on 9 April, 1917. More than 15,000 Canadian infantry overran the Germans all along the front. Incredible bravery and discipline allowed the infantry to continue moving forward under heavy fire, even when their officers were killed. The Canadian capture of Vimy Ridge was an important success, but 3,598 Canadians were killed and another 7,000 wounded. After the war the battle became a symbol of an awakening Canadian nationalism.

I took this photo on April 8, 2017, during the 100-gun salute to Vimy Ridge at Fort Rodd Hill National Historic Site. The salute began soon after darkness fell. I was at the front of the crowd kneeling down. I watched the guns fire for a while until I had learned the cadence of the gun crew commands. I couldn't hear the words but came to recognize the command that came directly before "fire!" Then I tried a few shots with different settings of different cannons in the firing line. When I recognized the command that preceded the command to fire, I pressed the shutter. That allowed me to capture the muzzle flash.

For this shot I used a Sigma 35 mm f1.4 prime lens at 1/80 of a second, ISO 1600, f3.2 on a Canon 70D. The fast lens allowed me to capture a RAW file with all the shadow information retrievable. In post-processing I had to lighten the shadows and manipulate the gamma profile to retrieve all the data from the RAW file. I reduced some of the highlights in the muzzle flash. This gave me some separation in the important tonal zones in the image.



### Westcoast BC Forest Canopy

by Peter Reid

This photograph was taken on a group hike in Seal Bay Regional Nature Park in Comox. I used my Pentax K-3 APS-C camera with a 12-24 mm lens at 12 mm (18 mm full-frame equivalent). ISO was 200 with no filters and 1/60 at f11. Vibration reduction was on as the photo was hand-held. I was using live-view as it was easier to see the image while looking straight up than using the viewfinder.



I developed the photo in Lightroom, with levels set to extremes of shadows and highlights. I added clarity and sharpness and removed chromatic aberrations. The uncropped image was rotated all four ways, ending up with the original orientation.

This deceptively simple type of photo is hard to take successfully. I took three shots of the canopy, keeping the third after a gut feeling that I had taken a successful photo. There were several considerations that I consciously or unconsciously made. I was in the center of a bit of a clearing, so there was not a "fat" tree trunk dominating the picture. The canopy was not too thick, obscuring the sky, or too thin, showing too much sky. The tree tops were not overlapping thus, good silhouettes. The "vanishing point" in this case is not quite dead centre. If cropped square, I would have placed the vanishing point in the centre to make the final photograph appear more abstract.

What made me stop and photograph this scene was the maple tree that contrasted with the firs, while the back-lit leaves gave eye-catching colour in the final image. Treetops are in a constant swaying motion, so I needed an exposure faster than about 1/30<sup>th</sup> second.

I have always enjoyed "looking up" in my photography and, in this case it paid off. Remember to crane your necks once in a while.



## Tuesday Shoots

by Daniel A. Roy

I hope everyone enjoyed the holiday season.

If you happened to find a new piece of camera gear under the tree with your name on the tag, please bring it to the next field trip for the Tuesday Shooters and show us your new toy. It doesn't matter if it's as basic as a lens duster, we would all enjoy seeing it in action. Just kidding. If it's anything less than a new piece of glass, we won't be all that interested.

**January 9<sup>th</sup>: Ride the Bus.** For this field trip some of us may need to reach deep into our bag of tricks. We will hop onto a city bus, taking a route of our choosing and photographing anything we see of interest, either on the bus or through the window.

Since there are no rules for the Tuesday Shoot, I suppose one could get off the bus at some point along the route and capture images at or near a bus stop. Just be sure to get back on another bus in time to be in the downtown area by noon for lunch, where we will enjoy each other's company and discuss the experience.

**January 16<sup>th</sup>: Oak Bay Marina.** We will meet in the Marina Coffee Shop at 9:30. However, there are no demerit marks for showing up at the crack of dawn in order to catch the early morning light. There might even be a mist over the water; one never knows. You'll kick yourself if you make the decision to sleep in and a foggy morning actually comes to pass. Some of the best images I have ever seen were created in this type of setting.

This picturesque location offers a wide variety of subjects to photograph. Things you might see: seals, otters, herons, and cormorants. Things you will see: sailboats, powerboats, rowboats, kayaks, dinghies, docks, rigging, reflections, seagulls, and seascapes, unless it's foggy.

**January 23<sup>rd</sup>: Portrait of a Person Working in Their Environment.** This exercise in street photography and portraiture requires the photographer to capture the person's face and integrate the subject with their working environment. This is a daunting experience for some photographers, so you may want to consider working in pairs or small groups. This theme is scheduled for the VCC March Competition.

Some events require registration and a fee may apply. Please check the Club calendar for details related to each field trip.

**January 2018**

## Weekend Shoots

by Teri VanWell and Vanessa MacDonald

Well, folks, it's officially Winter. It's cold and it's grey, but that doesn't mean the fun or enjoyment of photography is over for the next few months. Not everyone will have a chance to go on travel photography vacations to warmer climes, so we plan to keep the schedule full with opportunities to go out and shoot with your friends in our beautiful local area. We will look forward to seeing your lovely smiling faces at some of our upcoming field trips. Here's what you've got to look forward to in January:

**January 5<sup>th</sup>: Hockey Night at Panorama Arena.** Get some practice with fast action photography during a Friday Night Game. This is a great opportunity to shoot indoors during the winter months, and it's not just for sport photography enthusiasts. This will be great practice for anyone looking to test out their auto-focusing system, and improve their skills with using a telephoto lens.

**January 13<sup>th</sup>: The Butterfly Gardens in Saanich.** Enjoy the feeling of being transported to a tropical paradise with colourful winged beauties fluttering all around you. This is your chance to take a much-needed break from the dreariness of the Victoria winter and get those macro or zoom lenses out to focus on nature's most delightful insect. Of course, I'm talking about butterflies, 70 different species of them, to be exact. And what's more, you can photograph a variety of other wonderful tropical creatures like flamingos, parrots, frogs, and tortoises, all to a backdrop of interesting jungle foliage.

**January 27<sup>th</sup>: Witty's Lagoon.** A little pocket of heaven in Metchosin, with lots to see and experience for photographers with a range of different interests. This park features a stunning expanse of soft, rippling sand, with many mirror-like pools of water and varied shoreline. The beach extends out in the direction of the Olympic mountain range, with sand bars exposed at low tide. There are plenty of birds populating the lagoon, and this park has been widely described as a 'birder's paradise' with up to 160 different species visiting the area. In particular, you will find an abundance of graceful herons and many other water birds that may catch your fancy. If birds aren't your thing, go and check out Sitting Lady waterfall or have a walk through the forest trails or along the shoreline. Bring your tripods, long lens, wide angle, macro, polarizer, ND filters, whatever you feel like. There are so many photographic possibilities on this trip!

If you have any questions about field trips, contact Vanessa and Teri at [fieldtrips@victoriacameraclub.ca](mailto:fieldtrips@victoriacameraclub.ca)

# Film Noir and Soft Lighting

By Karl Schoepp

Film noir is one of my personal favourite lighting styles. It originates from a lighting style of the 1930-40s as seen in American feature films of the period. It is unnatural, moody, glamorous, and typically extremely high in contrast. Carol Reed's "The Third Man", and Orson Welles' "A Touch of Evil" are two of my personal favourite films from this period.

One of the most enjoyable aspects of film noir lighting is that it has no rules, and begs the photographer to experiment and use techniques and lighting positions never used in other styles of lighting. The film noir lighting style in the modern era can be seen in colour neo-noir films to this day. "LA Confidential", "Blade Runner", and "Sin City" are all great examples of neo-noir, and prove that noir also works amazingly well with colour.

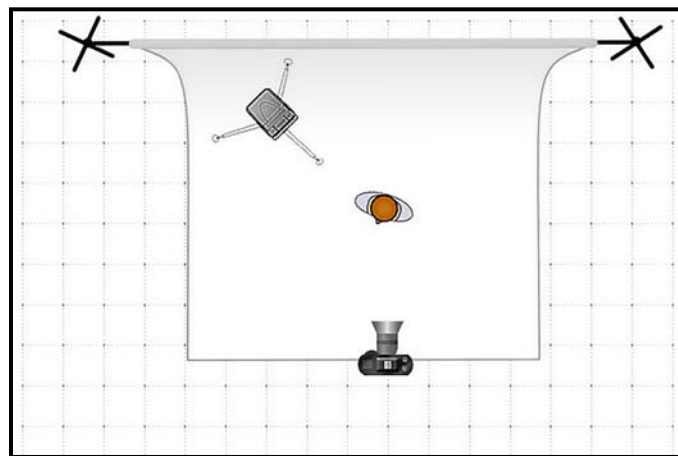


*"Film Noir lighting"*

A quick and simple way to create the film noir look is to position one light source behind the subject at a 45 degree angle to the left or right, and at 45 degree angle downwards (see diagram, from [lightingdiagrams.com](http://lightingdiagrams.com)). This is called  $\frac{3}{4}$  back key lighting as the key or main light comes from behind the subject from one side.

It is often not necessary to diffuse a  $\frac{3}{4}$  back key light, however, it may be preferable to use a very light diffusion when using this technique.  $\frac{3}{4}$  back key lighting tends to work better with male subjects or still life subjects rather than female subjects. A female subject would most likely require a fill lighting source or fill bounce board.

Another simple but very effective type of film noir lighting is top lighting. In top lighting the light source originates from on top of the subject. You will need a lighting stand with a boom, c-stand with arm, or studio lighting grid to accomplish this lighting position. In top lighting it is ideal



*" $\frac{3}{4}$  back key lighting set-up"*

if the lighting source is positioned so that it hits the subject at a ninety-degree angle straight downward.

This method of lighting is great for creating silhouettes, moody lighting, and making your subject look powerful and evil. It is typical that top lighting requires a small amount of fill light, as the subject's face will be in shadow, with heavy shadows under the eyes. Once again, the fill light source could be a bounce board or a separate lighting source.

A great film noir lighting technique to use with female subjects is butterfly lighting. Butterfly lighting involves simply lighting your female subject with a light source at ninety degrees straight on. The height of the source is recommended to be just above the subject's head with a very slight tip down. It is recommended to diffuse your butterfly light with a small piece of heavy diffusion (therefore it is a heavily-diffused small source). This form of lighting truly makes a woman look glamorous, and nicely hides any facial blemishes.

Another great technique from film noir style is an eye light. An eye light is simply a light source or bounce that helps make the subjects eyes stand out. One common issue with portrait photography is dark, dead looking eyes. This can simply be corrected by placing a bounce in close proximity to the subject, as you will see the bounce reflected as a pleasing gleam in the subject's eyes. If you do not want additional bounced fill light by using a bounce to create an eye light, simply add an artificial lighting source of your choice as an eye light. Use your artificial lighting fixture to target only a small portion of the subject's face to create an eye light.

The recommended technique to create an eye light is to light the subject with a very heavily-diffused slash of light across both of the subject's eyes. The effect without diffusion, would give them a noticeable white slash of light across their eyes only.



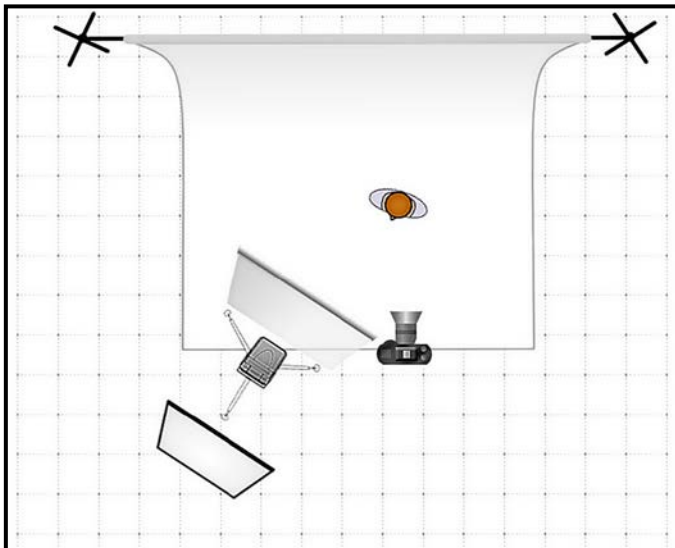
Lastly, in all noir lighting it is extremely important to use the environment in which you are shooting to aid your lighting motivation. For example, lighting through venetian blinds, a door frame, a gate, or a fence can create wonderful patterns. You can even purchase an affordable and portable small set of venetian blinds for use in the field.

On the other end of the lighting spectrum is low-contrast soft lighting. Soft lighting is what most photographers tend to use when taking the majority of photographs as it is simple, quick, affordable, and is typically very flattering.

The photographer could potentially use one large soft lighting source or multiple soft sources. These sources could consist of light sources with diffusion, light sources with softboxes, or shooting with soft ambient window light indoors.

Affordable ways of creating soft light include softboxes and octoboxes (for speedlights or studio strobes), Chinese lanterns, large bounce boards, and other large diffused sources. Affordable diffusion and bounce materials such as Muslin (white bed sheets), and Hi-Lite (frosted shower curtain), Korolite (white Styrofoam), and show card (white matte board) can help create stunningly soft lighting sources.

Painter's tape can be used to attach the bounce board, fabric, or diffusion material to walls or stands without potential surface damage. As we covered with 3-point lighting in the December issue of *Close-Up*, it is always best to set any light we use (unless butterfly) at a downward angle of approximately 45 degrees. A soft light is no exception, and should be set so that it creates a small amount of contrast by creating appropriate shadows for the shot.



*"Book light set-up"*

The book light technique is a wonderful way to create an extremely natural looking soft source (see the November 2017, *Close-Up*). A book light combines a light source, bounce, and diffusion all in one large light set-up. The light produced by this is virtually shadow-less, and extremely soft. It replicates natural light very effectively, and can be seamlessly combined with natural light or other studio lights.

Typically, when creating a book light, a piece of muslin or Styrofoam is used as bounce material, and muslin, Hi-Lite or commercially produced diffusion is used as the diffusion material. One drawback to a book light, is that you will lose a lot of light intensity from your lighting source, as it is being both diffused and bounced.



*"Book light"*

We must ensure that even though we are using soft light, we take the time to set our lighting sources correctly. Every lighting subject and every person that we light deserves unique attention.

One common mistake made with soft lighting is to use the same lighting set-up with different models. It does not take 10 seconds to move a light, adjust intensity, or diffuse a light to ensure that our model is lit correctly. Taking the time to adjust our soft lighting will make our photographs much better, and always ensure that our subjects are satisfied with the results.

When using any form of soft light, it is extremely important to clean up any unwanted spill light. Although soft light looks wonderful, we must be careful not to let the light spill onto unwanted areas of the frame. These can include the background, different areas of the subject that we do not wish to highlight, and parts of the frame we do not wish to draw attention to. An example for each would include lighting an ugly or wrinkled background, lighting a subject's face less than their body, or lighting up busy or ugly clutter behind, or in front of, the subject.

# Beginners' Corner

## The Elements of Colour

by Josée Ménard

As we begin a new year, I wish to close the Fall series of articles on Elements with the component of colour, a familiar topic to many, yet, not understood enough for its power on images. Colour, just like the other elements introduced in this series, is key. Naturally present in our everyday world, it is available to the photographer to have in his or her tool belt. Through practice, the keen photographer will learn how to use colour as a creative advantage. So, have fun this year as you discover the amazing world of colour. Know it well. Use it to its full potential.

Colour influences our emotions, choices, and lives. Marketing departments have used the psychology of colour to sway our consumer needs and desires. Our body clocks amazingly awaken with the vibrancy and luminosity of the array of Spring and Summer hues and tones. In contrast, as leaves and plants naturally transform their spectrum into darker ones, Fall and Winter lead us to retreat and wish to hibernate. As you plan activities to deepen your understanding of colour, Fall and Winter is a perfect time to cocoon at home, review some of the web links provided by Craig Harris in his July/August 2017 article in *Close-Up*. The links he provides in "Colour Palettes" allow you to mouse about, if we can say that, and spin the wheel of colours. Before your eyes, colour mixes and combinations abound. Quietly observe and reflect on your eye's and body's reactions to the various combinations you create. If you are more adventurous, bundle up in warm layers. Explore the calmer and more subdued aspects of the colours that nature provides you. Compare the impact you feel when you are out on a sunny Winter day versus a rainy one. Revisit the same landscape, this time on a snowy day. Register in memory your experiences and feelings and their influence on you as the viewer.

At Le Musée national de la Marine in Paris, it was a pleasure to capture light passing through the prism of a lighthouse lens. Thanks to our neural processes, the spectrum created is visible to our eyes due to the refraction of light. Basically, white light broken down into its component colours.

Taking this into account, plan colour observation outings starting with Mother Nature. A pattern emerges. You begin to see how she can magically combine colours before you in the correct tones, saturations, and proportions. Having discovered several favourite locations, expand your horizons by varying the time of day that you visit them. How does lighting impact the colours



*"Rainbow of Light"*

you are familiar with? Compare the colours in morning light, at the blue hour, at dusk, in the full moon and even in the dreaded mid-day sun. If you dare to sit outside for a good while, how does colour change before your eyes? What is shade's role? After the snow-storm, what happens to the white of snow in the shadows? How can it be white then grey as light moves amongst objects? Are nature and light playing a trick on your brain?

Let's flip the coin. Take a quick look at colour from the human perspective. Observe the colours architects chose for buildings, modern ones versus older ones. In the warmth of the mall, what colours are fashion designers choosing to juxtapose. Flip through different magazines. How are colours used by advertisers? Study top photographers and see how they apply colour ranges along lines, space, texture, and focal point. No matter what, our senses are drawn to colours.



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