



# Close-Up



**"Shooting Stars" by Caspar Davis**

**Creativity  
Landscape Photography  
The Creative Box  
Member Profile: Caspar Davis  
Does Sensor Size Matter?  
Printing: Moving Beyond Ctrl-P  
A Compositing Experience  
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## Victoria Camera Club



*Close-Up* is the magazine of the Victoria Camera Club,  
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Mailing address: PO Box 46035, RPO Quadra, Victoria, BC, V8T 5G7.  
Deadline for submissions for the May/June issue is April 5<sup>th</sup> 2017.  
Editor, Richard James, e-mail to [editor@victoriacameraclub.ca](mailto:editor@victoriacameraclub.ca)  
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.ca](http://victoriacameraclub.ca) where you can also read or download the colour version of *Close-Up*.

For additional information: please contact:

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

### April 6<sup>th</sup> 2017: Competition Night

The March competition results will be presented. April is the "Annual Competition" Please see the website for submission guidelines The deadline for submission is April 6<sup>th</sup>.

### April 13<sup>th</sup> 2017: Presentation Night

Professional photographer Doug Clement will be discussing Night Photography and the art of Light Painting.

### April 20<sup>th</sup> 2017: Members' Night

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

### Workshop and Field Trip Highlights

Basic Photoshop and Travel Photography workshops

Downtown Langford and Wildflower field trips

**Cover Image: "Shooting Stars"** by Caspar Davis. I took this picture in a Metchosin churchyard that was carpeted in flowers, mostly Fawn Lilies. Although the Shooting Stars were extraordinary, the background was a cluttered mess of out-of-focus Fawn Lilies and greenery.

In most cases I would have sent it to the trash, but I liked the Shooting Stars enough to try to find a way to save this shot. I was inspired by one of my favourite Topaz filters, but I just used Lightroom's tools. First I used the radial filter to create a white vignette so strong it washed out the background almost entirely. The outer Shooting Stars were also quite washed out, so I used the adjustment brush to carefully paint them back in by reducing their exposure. I also moved the Blacks slider to the left to deepen the colours. Blacks and Whites are very powerful sliders, but unlike many people I often use them last, with an eye on the histogram.

I love Shooting Stars and have taken hundreds of pictures of them, but I have seldom captured their lightness of spirit. This time the cluttered background forced me to do something that caught what I felt when I saw them.

## President's Message

The Book of Ecclesiastes states that, "There is no new thing under the sun." Bob Dylan states that, "The times they are a changin'." This dichotomy brings to mind some discussions that have occurred within the club regarding the subject of video. Granted, our principle pursuit has been, and remains, the still image. That, itself, has evolved, particularly given our new digital tools for capture, processing and display. Fundamentally, photographs lie at the base.

Nowadays, though, our chosen cameras increasingly offer the capability to delve into the world of video recording. Hybridization of systems brings what were once specialized video tools into the hands of still photographers. How many among us have begun to tap into this other stream? How many would like to give it a try? Would you like to see the VCC offer more opportunities to learn and develop skills in this area?

As with a number of my previous monthly messages, this one was triggered by events that have arisen naturally within our program. Members' Night encourages us all to step forward, sometimes at the edge of our comfort zone or even a little beyond. In my own case, I concluded a couple of slide shows in recent years with brief video clips that seemed appropriate to me at the time. Stills of Iguazu Falls were set off with a demonstration of the power of flowing water best shown in video, complete with a sound track lifted from the Internet. In a second case, shots of penguins on Magdalena Island were supplemented by a brief clip showing the gleanings of nesting material on a barren, windswept corner of the earth.

Clearly, though, there are fellow members in our midst with much more developed skills in the realm of video. I was particularly impressed by the smooth and skillful way in which Robert Benn blended video with still images as he portrayed the beauty of waterfalls and seashores in a recent Members' Night show. Earlier Daniel Brimacombe used footage from a cell phone to provide the documentation and the feel of a horse being rescued from a serious fall. Perhaps these are examples of new members to the Club boldly bringing new options before us in a way that will encourage our own further exploration and development. While I have been principally focused on still imagery over the years, my few tries with video and these strong examples from others of their effectiveness may well entice more activity in that direction in coming months. How about you?

*Garry Schaefer, President*



by Normand Marcotte

Creativity can be defined as “having the qualities of something created rather than imitated.” In photography, this can be achieved through the use of techniques such as camera panning, long exposures, multiple exposures or composites, and/or software (Photoshop, Lightroom, Exposure, Nik Collection etc.). For images to be successful they need more than just the application of a blurring filter. The whole of the image must tell a story or bring an emotion to the surface.



*“Into the Unknown”*

In this image, I wanted to represent the vastness of nature, adventure, exploration and the unknown. There are four images in this composite. The top layer is a long exposure of the waves for added texture. The second layer is the bright kayak viewed from above. The third layer is the seascape with a band of black clouds used as background for the kayak. The fourth and final layer is the head of a sea lion, which I placed near the top in the lightest part of the clouds. I kept the image in black & white except for the kayak, I wanted it to attract the attention of the viewer first. Then the eye is free to wander around the image to realize that the kayak appears to be going straight up in the sky. I toned down the sea lion to make it appear as if it is hiding in the clouds observing the kayakers enter its territory. This image was created in Photoshop Elements 14 with final adjustments in Lightroom 6.



*“Angry Birds”*

When I worked on “Angry Birds,” I did not have Photoshop. I had Lightroom 4 (no HDR capability) and a simple image-blending program called LR Enfuse. Enfuse is a plug-in program to do HDR and focus stacking (free for PC users, and by donation for the Mac Lightroom crowd). I decided to use it to blend two different images (as compared to an exposure bracketed HDR series).

“Angry Birds” is a blend of two photos. The crows and trees were on the first image and the storm clouds were on the second image in the background. Out on a “walk-about,” I caused this murder of crows to suddenly take to the air very noisily. Seeing this mass of birds, I just snapped a few pictures more by reflex than anything else and at the time I wondered why the crows were mad at me. The sky was overcast and uniformly grey.

Looking at the image on the computer screen later on, I wanted to express the feeling that the birds were angry and that I had, in a second, turned their world upside down. The first step was to convert the image to a high contrast black & white with the black birds against a white sky. To add more drama, I decided to change the background to storm clouds, also in black & white.

The first blend trials did not seem “angry” enough. I tried again with both images “inverted” (reversing dark and light tones) in Lightroom before the blending process. I also added split toning in Lightroom to the cloud image. I was very surprised and happy with the result.

The possibilities in creative photography are endless, so go out and shoot! Think about how images can be manipulated or combined to go beyond the simple snapshot. Sometimes the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

by Jill Turyk

My photography hobby took hold when I retired in 2010, although all my life I have had a keen interest. I progressed through my two point-and-shoot cameras and four years ago I got a DSLR camera. People would ask me what type of photography I like. Portraits? I don't have the equipment. Wildlife? I don't have the patience. Landscapes? Worst of all! I thought that landscape photography was something you found in the over-saturated Canadiana calendars on the sale rack.

I wanted to be an artist and taking photos of mountains and rivers just did not qualify as art. I sniffed at the thought of landscapes and, despite my deep love of nature, I felt I had something else to offer than more photos of the great outdoors. I held that belief until I began planning my trip to Iceland. I was going for a nine-day photography workshop led by Victoria's Mitch Stringer ([mitchstringer.ca](http://mitchstringer.ca)), and Iceland's Snorri Gunnarsson ([snorigunnarsson.com](http://snorigunnarsson.com)). I had no idea before I went how much I was to learn in those nine days. I have outlined a few of the things I learned on that trip, both specific and general.

I planned to get every bit of knowledge out of that trip, and I checked out Snorri Gunnarsson's website beforehand to see how he, as a local professional, treated Iceland. I found beautiful, amazing and totally unbelievable landscape shots. I was aware of Iceland's raw beauty, but I was nonetheless surprised at how much his photos resonated with me. They were interesting, otherworldly and even magical. Granted, it is pretty hard to take a bad shot in Iceland, (although I did manage a few!), but his shots captivated me. I looked at his work and found one of the things that make his photos so interesting, landscapes are more interesting with something in the foreground. This seems somewhat trite and obvious when hearing it from an instructor in a class or at a workshop, but when I saw it in his photos, I was sold. Snorri uses grass, shells, rocks, bones, and countless other items in the foreground of his beautiful landscapes and that make them fascinating. I decided that I would emulate this on the trip.

We were at a black sand beach on the south coast at the small town of Vic. Reynisdrangar Beach is so named for the basalt sea stacks that protrude from the ocean. It was dusk, getting on to midnight, and the black beach looked cold and eerie. It was a perfect chance to "blur the action" and get some shots of the water moving as it rolled in and out over the beach. When I took my first shots I felt I had the cold and eeriness portrayed, with good motion of the water, but the photos were some-

what boring. Maybe I had been right all along, and this landscape stuff is not all its cracked up to be. Then I remembered Snorri's shots and my idea to emulate them. After searching the beach for some foreground to use, we put a large rock in the water, so that the movement would increase in my shots. Here is the result.



*"Reynisdrangar (Black Sand) Beach at Vik"*

I really like this shot. It is not full of drama, but it has the feel I was going for. The water moving around the rock in the lower left foreground gets your attention, and the crest of the waves carries you across the picture to the right, toward the sea stacks in the distance. Many of my subsequent shots have a more interesting foreground that I intentionally put into the shot. I was often moving seaweed, rocks and shells around and arranging all sorts of finds from the beach. This photo was one of the lower-key scenes and it benefited greatly from a small change. It demonstrates the point.



*"Witch's Hat"*

I also learned the value of starbursts which I had previously viewed as cheesy and melodramatic. When over-used, I still think they are, but in moderation they work. These two were unintentional, and were the result of my penchant for shooting into the sun. Kirkjufellsfoss Waterfall/Witch's Hat in western Iceland is iconic and



any photo collection of Iceland will likely have a version of it. I took some shots without the starburst and they look like many of those that I had seen before. The starburst in this shot gives it the sense of wonder that I felt while I was there.

The second starburst happened at a different section of Reynisdrangar Beach than shown in my first example. It was early evening getting on to dusk and, again, without the starburst, it could have been a boring shot. I felt very insignificant in Iceland, with its imposing geography and long stretches of coast. This photo portrays that feeling of being small and the starburst adds a mystical presence to the shot.



*"Black Sand Beach"*

I came away with a deep respect for landscape photography and it has become one of my greatest interests.

As far as both technical and general knowledge goes, I could not begin to convey how much I learned about photography from Mitch. The trip was non-stop learning from beginning to end. His knowledge of photography seems limitless and we all benefited from that each day. I knew many of the small tips and tricks but had really not embraced them in action. Things such as the importance of routine, having extra accessories, and getting your gear ready for your next shoot when you put it away at the end of the day, are things we usually learn the hard way. In distant locations and once-in-a-lifetime circumstances, the value of these habits cannot be overstated.

The best things I learned from Mitch came from watching him. We would arrive at a new location, eagerly jump out of the vehicle and quickly set up our cameras. Mitch would walk around slowly, checking out the area. Finally he would get his gear and get ready to shoot. I do this now and it has had a very positive impact on my work. It brings to mind those little sayings that I have heard from so many instructors. "What are you trying to say?" "Re-

member to look behind you." "Find the best shot." And my favourite, "Don't just spray and pray."

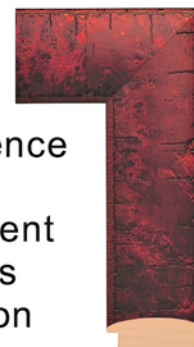
I had an opportunity to put that to use on our last night in Iceland. I was overwhelmed when I arrived at my long-term #1 Bucket List destination, Jökulsárlón Ice Beach (Diamond Beach) on the southwest coast. It was just as I had imagined. We were losing light and this was our last night in Iceland. Feeling under pressure, I began quickly snapping pictures. I heard in my head "What are you trying to say?" "Don't just spray and pray," "Look for the shot." Because of that I was able to get myself on task and to get the shots that I wanted.

The trip was utterly humbling. Strangely, I felt I knew less about photography after the trip than before. This is because I found out how much more there is to learn. I always considered it to be an intriguing combination of technical complexity and art. What I brought home from Iceland is the understanding that photography has power. It has the power to make you see the world differently, the power to take you where you otherwise would not go, and the power to create camaraderie among photographers transcending skill level, experience and preferred genre.



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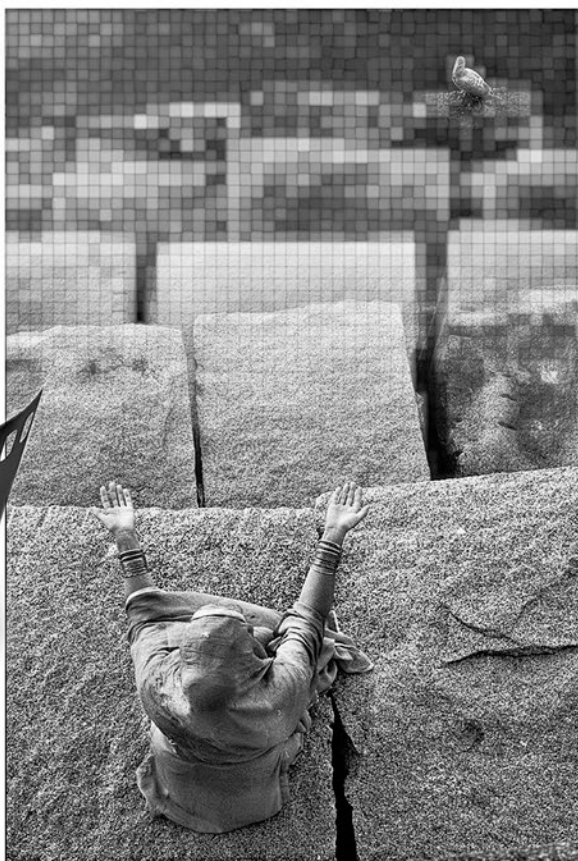
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*by Richard James*

Are you stuck in a creative box, shooting the same type of images most of the time? Or maybe you don't have a plan, you shoot anything in sight, and then wonder what you're going to do with it?

In both cases it might be a good idea to "break out of the box." If you are stuck in the box, try thinking of what else might interest you. If you are mainly a wildlife person then try photographing people. They move too. If you are primarily a documentary photographer, try something creative. If you don't have a plan, then maybe it's time to sit down and think about what really interests you, and what images you can produce that will interest other people.

Yes, this will likely involve learning new techniques and possibly even a new piece of equipment to help you get the shot. The time and money invested should be worth the effort.

Our field trips are a good way to try out something new to you and where other members can provide guidance, either by simply watching what they're doing, talking to them about how they do it, or asking about something that you need to know about.

Our workshops are another good source of information on a new technique or approach. If you haven't done much nature or creative photography before, then join in the Nature and Creative SIGs which are a great place to see and discuss what other members are doing in these genres and to look for feedback on your own work.

Apart from our SIGs, another way of seeing how you're doing, and getting valuable feedback, is to show your work to a few trusted friends and see what they think. I am a member of two small groups outside of the club who meet monthly to share images and discuss our work. One is a group of printers. We share and discuss our images with time to really understand the content, much different from the five seconds in a slide show. The other is a group focused on creative photography where we share and discuss our techniques. These groups include people who have a diverse photographic background, and in some cases are professional photographers or artists in other genres. Their input is extremely valuable as it comes from outside of the "club sphere."

Of course there are all sorts of information available out in the wide world of the Internet. This is a great source of ideas and I picked up several that I have explored in the last couple of years. You may remember

"refractography" that I explored a couple of years ago. More recently I experimented with shooting liquids in liquids (dyed liquids dropped into water).

One way of focusing on reinventing your photography is to deliberately stop doing some aspect of it that you have been doing. It might be shooting a particular type of subject or it might be something a little more drastic like taking a break for a year from competition, which is what I am currently doing.

Another aspect of the creative box is being hidebound by artificial rules as to what makes an appropriate image. For example, unless your images are purely documentary (photo-journalism, or in a strict sense, forensic photography) there is absolutely no reason to not modify them to show your artistic intent. If the best shot you have of a particular bird happens to have a twig in the wrong place (sticking out of its head) why should you not remove it to project your vision of the subject?

The "rules of composition" are there to be broken! Whilst they are time-tested ways of producing images that conform to perceptions, with the appropriate content in an image you can often break these rules and come up with an image with more impact or meaning.

In a previous article I discussed cropping images to suit the subject rather than a rigid format such as the 3:2 ratio of traditional 35 mm film or the 1400 x 1050 ratio of our Club projector. By sizing the image to fit the subject you might achieve greater impact with less dead space.

Do you need to upgrade your knowledge of artistic techniques? Do you need to understand more clearly how the elements of an image work together, shapes, texture, perspective, and how the colour palette that you choose for an image works.

Sure, some of your work will not look that good at first. You might even call the images failures. But the only way of learning is to try. So come up with a couple of topics, research them, develop a plan of what you need to do and then execute it.

So, where do we go from here? Goal-setting is important. Can you develop a project or a theme to follow for a group of images? Developing a number of images around a particular subject or theme can help you focus your attention on specific details or techniques. Another driver might be to start a "shoot a shot a day for a year," or a theme a month project.

## Lions Gate Nature Competition

by Pam Irvine

The Lions Gate "Celebration of Nature" Photographic Competition (LGCN) is one of the premier natural history competitions held in Canada. The Lions Gate competition is only open to camera clubs and photographic societies from British Columbia and the Yukon. Submissions by individual photographers are not permitted. Each club can enter eight nature/wildlife images by eight different members.

In January 2017, we received the results of the eleventh annual LGCN competition, where the VCC took first place from among twenty-nine clubs entering.

The Victoria Camera Club has a distinguished history at Lions Gate. In the last six years, we have finished second twice, third once and no worse than 6<sup>th</sup>. This year we finally finished first, ahead of the Lions Gate Camera Club and the North Shore Photographic Society. It was a close finish, with less than 4% separating first and third places.

Three of VCC's members won individual awards. Peter Koelbleitner was awarded first place in the Mammals category with his Sea Lion image which also took second place in Best in Show. James Kissinger won second place in the Mammals category with his Grizzlies which also won third place in Best in Show. Neil Boyle was awarded an Honourable Mention in the Mammals category with his Vampire Bat image. Other members who contributed to our win are Margarita Huang, Suzanne Huot, Carrie Cole, Leah Gray and Hanna Cowpe.

All of the winning entries by the Victoria Camera Club can be viewed on the VCC website under [Competitions/External Competitions](#).

The VCC currently competes in twelve external inter-club competitions, including a unique annual event with the Eastwood Photographic Society of Glasgow, Scotland. In order to put together a strong club entry, we need all members of the Club to consider entering their best images. As you spend the summer shooting great images keep in mind the external competitions that the Victoria Camera Club enters as a club. By starting to prepare now for a fall competition, you will have the luxury of taking time to work your image in post-processing. Be sure to check the requirements for each competition to determine what level of editing is allowed.

## February 2017 Competition Judges

We extend our sincere thanks to the judges for the February Intermediate and Advanced competitions: Derek Hayes, Hazel Breitzkreutz, Francois Cleroux and Kelsey Goodwin. We would also like to thank our in-house Novice Judges: Caspar Davis, Suzanne Huot, Steve Lustig, and Normand Marcotte. Also thanks to Leah Gray, Phil McOrmond, Mars Romer and Martin Wright who judged the Novice and Intermediate Prints. We were thrilled to see 19 prints in the novice/intermediate print category this month. All images and judges' comments are available at: [victoriacameraclub.ca/Competitions/CompetitionResults.aspx](http://victoriacameraclub.ca/Competitions/CompetitionResults.aspx).

**Hazel Breitzkreutz (Open):** Hazel is a member of the Crescent Beach Photography Club in South Surrey and a CAPA certified judge. She has won awards for both her photographic art as well as her paintings. Hazel enjoys sharing her experience, ideas and inspiration by teaching courses and workshops.

**Derek Hayes (Wildlife and Natural World):** Derek lives in White Rock, BC and is a certified CAPA judge. He enjoys a wide range of photographic styles including travel photography. He has taught photography and hosted a photographic tour of historic Spain. Derek is a renowned historian and the prolific author of the best-selling Historical Atlas of the Pacific Northwest, the Historical Atlas of Canada, and Canada: An Illustrated History. [Derekhayesphotography.com](http://Derekhayesphotography.com).

**Francois Cleroux (Theme and Creative):** Francois was introduced to photography early and photographed for the Province and Vancouver Sun newspapers during high school. He currently lives in Delta and is a CAPA certified judge and a past-president of the Delta Photo Club. He has done volunteer work for a variety of wildlife organizations. [www.eyesonphoto.com](http://www.eyesonphoto.com).

**Kelsey Goodwin (Advanced Prints):** Kelsey is a professional photographer in Victoria. For the past six years she has specialized in International Wedding photography. She has been working professionally with photography since she was 16 and shot her first wedding at 18. She has won numerous awards for her work and was chosen as one of the 30 Most Inspiring Canadian Wedding Photographers in 2015. Kelsey filmed herself judging the February Advanced prints. It is very educational to watch the process a judge goes through to judge a print. The video can be seen on you tube at <https://youtu.be/bM-PDzJnWac>. [kgoodphoto.com](http://kgoodphoto.com)



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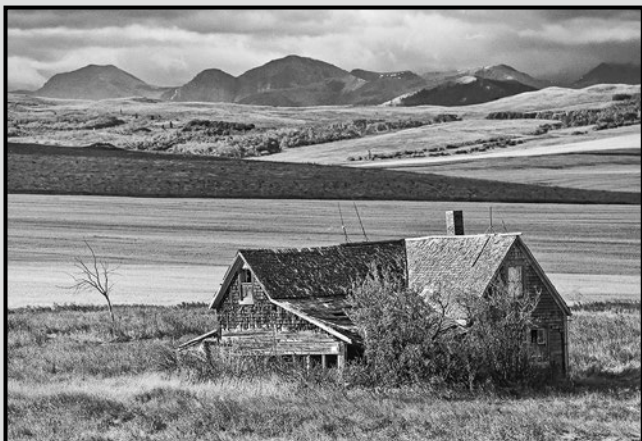
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*Advanced Monochrome Print - 2<sup>nd</sup>*  
*"Abandoned Dreams" by Doug McLean*

Judge's comments: The cabin has been sharpened by exactly the right amount. Images are often oversharpened resulting in artifacts, this is not the case here. The background is a bit soft but it brings the viewer's focus to the cabin. The cabin is nicely placed on the rule of thirds. The horizon is straight. The tree on the left heightens the feeling of "abandoned."



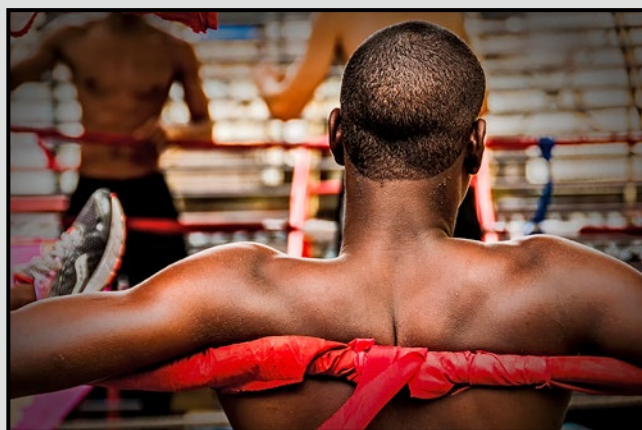
*Advanced Digital Wildlife - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*"Rufus Hummingbird: Female" by Don Peterson*

Judge's comments: Just about perfect composition, colour and sharpness. Movement has been caught at exactly the right moment giving an almost "ballet dancer" effect. Well done.



*Advanced Digital Natural World - 3<sup>rd</sup>*  
*"Bristlecone Pine, White Mountains, California"*  
*by Neil Boyle*

Judge's comments: Great attempt at a difficult subject.



*Advanced Digital Open - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*"Waiting for Round Two" by Steve Barber*

Judge's comments: Beautifully divided space with the main subject's back facing the viewer adding mystery and power. There is enough information included here to see that this is a ring where men are competing. The tennis shoe on the left showing slight movement adds to the tension as well as directs the viewer toward the main figure in the right front. The depth of field is perfect allowing the people in the background to be recognized as participants captured with slight movement building tension. Very powerful image, good strong composition and consistent colour balance throughout.





*Advanced Nature Print - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*"Cross Roads" by Leah Gray*

Judge's comments: This image was taken at a good time of the day giving the lovely light on the mountains in the background. The horizon is straight. Perfectly exposed, there is detail in the light and dark areas. Sharp throughout. Foreground and background elements play off each other nicely.



*Advanced Digital Creative - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*"Hot Fiddle" by Ian Crawford*

Judge's comments: Quite a number of processes combined together creating an interesting graphic image. The fireworks (?) overlay works here especially where the bow meets the strings but in some ways also hinder the underlying image by making it very busy throughout.



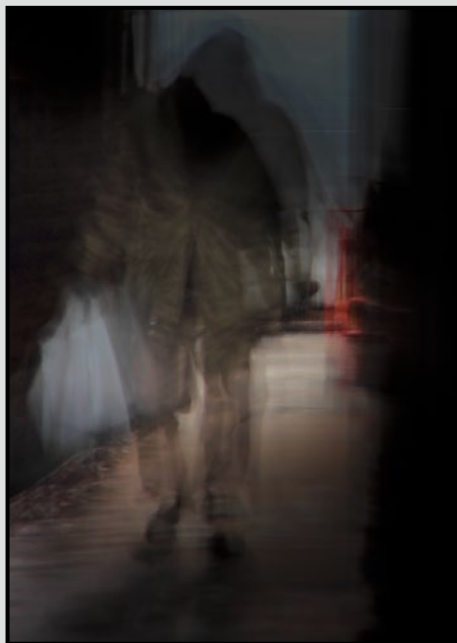
*Advanced Open Print - 2<sup>nd</sup>*  
*"Montefabbri for Sale" by Steve Lustig*

Judge's comments: Lines are straight which is important in architectural photographs. Sharp focus shows all the details. Leading lines create a nice flow through the image. Light and exposure are perfect.



*Advanced Digital Theme - 2<sup>nd</sup>*  
*"Open for Business" by Garry Schaefer*

Judge's comments: The simple elegance of this image is its power. The contrast of the structure against the great (perfect for this image) sky adds everything this image needed. A busier sky or a plain blue sky and this image would not have scored as well. The off-kilter composition also adds to this image by making it more dynamic and avoiding it being very static. Normally the whitest structure in the lower left side would be a very distracting component. It works here as it counter-balances the bright white clouds on the upper right very nicely. It still draws the eye to it but the eyes easily return to the picture. Nicely seen. Great exposure for this image.



*Intermediate Open Print - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*"Dark Alley" John Clarke*

Judge's comments: An excellent image with great impact. A fine example of either slow shutter speed or multiple exposures. High marks for technical details and the possibilities of the photographic art fully displayed.



*Intermediate Digital Open - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*"Snow on Skylights" by Blair Ross*

Judge's comments: A very creative image well placed in the picture space. An important element is to include the white lines in the upper corners creating lovely triangles. The orange splash of colour in the right upper star adds an accent and punch to the graphic design. Image would become stagnant and humdrum were it not for the colour.



*Intermediate Digital Natural World - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*"Waves at Sandcut Beach" by Richard Letourneau*

Judge's comments: Here attention to detail and processing has produced a superior image from an ordinary subject. Has definite zap and is nice and sharp with perfectly saturated colours.



*Intermediate Digital Theme - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*"Seatcorner" by Richard Lay*

Judge's comments: A beautifully seen image. The combination of many compositional elements (three windows, layering, path, dynamic lighting, well balanced) all add up to make for an excellent image. The added bench facing the lone light also adds to this image. Unlike many images that look better when the skies are filled or dotted with clouds, this image works even better because there are no clouds. Excellent exposure. Compositionally this image is very sound and it is well balanced.





*Intermediate Digital Creative - 2<sup>nd</sup>*  
*"Floating Through Yellow" by Mary Weir*

Judge's comments: A great colour study. Printed very large on metal this could be hanging on a boardroom wall in some corporate office or in a gallery. This is very well done and handled for something that can be very difficult to master. The hues and tones become so important in creating enough interest and eye movement to prevent it from being too static. Well balanced. Beautifully done.



*Novice Digital Natural World - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*"Mushroom Trio" by David Axford*

Judge's comments: A nice composition and depth of field, with very effective use of selective colour. A great eye to see the possibilities of the frozen effect in the monochrome background.



*Intermediate Digital Wildlife - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*"Life on the Edge" by Tony Knowler*

Judge's comments: I like the environmental aspect of this shot, showing the animal in its surroundings. Main subject at one third from the top aids composition. The snow and animal are exposed correctly, which can be difficult to do.



*Novice Digital Open - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*"Children of Angkor Wat" by Robert Barlow*

Judge's comments: This compelling portrait makes effective use of depth of field to separate the subjects while establishing a strong sense of place with the blurred ruin in the background. There is good lighting and the expressive faces have considerable impact. Their placement in the picture is perfect.





*Novice Digital Wildlife - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*"A Pod of Pelicans" by Kim Smith*

Judge's comments: Very nice composition, sharp and good exposure. The camera was nice and low, and the colours are good. It looks as though the pelicans are circling around, although of course they aren't. Good stuff.



*Novice Digital Theme - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*"Victoria Catacombs" by Donald Round*

Judge's comments: Great idea, very good exposure, and effective post processing. Well done.

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In September, 1967, I was in a small plane over Padre Island, Texas, snapping pictures of a mobile home park laid as flat as if someone had taken a can opener, and unfolded the homes. Moments later, we were over sixty-foot-deep Brownsville Harbour, looking at wrecked shrimp boats supported on the surface by sunken hulks beneath them.

I'd driven to the South Texas Gulf Coast from the San Francisco Bay Area, invited by acquaintances who'd found a Spanish treasure ship and asked me to take pictures of their discovery. Two days later, Hurricane Beulah bought 160 mile per hour winds, and an evacuation order that sent us to a motel 50 miles inland. When we returned, their wreck had been lost to the shifting sands and my friends found work salvaging sunken boats in the harbour. I wish I still had those pictures.



*"Bear on Its Back"*

At that time I had a second-hand fixed-lens 35 mm Zeiss camera. Like most people, I'd taken pictures on and off throughout my short life. My first camera was a hand-me-down Kodak folding bellows camera with a little right angle viewfinder mounted above the lens. In the late 70's, I got a Pentax MX with a couple of lenses. I used the Pentax mainly for family snapshots on Kodachrome.

The emergence of digital cameras got me clicking a lot more. In January 2003, I got a Fuji 3800 and started shooting everything in sight. I was interested in birds and some of my first pictures with that camera were of Robins in the snow in our May tree.

In those days we spent most of our summers on a sailboat cruising around the Broughton archipelago. The Fuji was OK for scenery but useless for birds; at best I got pictures for identification. A big crop could help me identify the bird, but lost all detail. In 2006 I got a Panasonic with a longer zoom lens, but the bird pictures were still disappointing. Then I discovered Art Morris's "Birds As Art" website and I yearned to get pictures more like his.

One of Art Morris's best bits of advice was to buy only the best photographic equipment. If you're on a tight budget, you can find good used equipment that was state of the art just a little while ago. You may also save a lot by buying Chinese substitutes on line, but when it comes to basic gear, cameras, lenses, and tripods, do the re-search and get good stuff, even if it's used.

In 2008 we sold the boat and I bought my first DSLR, a used Canon Rebel XSI. I wish I'd done it years earlier, but DSLRs were expensive in those days and I couldn't justify getting one while we had the boat. My first adventure with the Canon was a trip to the Southwest USA in April, 2009. I had a great time with the scenery and also spent an afternoon and a morning, arriving before dawn, at Bosque del Apache, a wildlife reserve on the Rio Grand in New Mexico. I finally started getting some decent bird pictures.

I joined the VCC early in 2010 and began to learn what I was doing, really for the first time. I did the beginning Photoshop and various camera handling workshops, as well as the CAPA judging workshop. I began to use more of the camera's controls and slowly got more confident.

I dabbled in Photoshop and finally began to understand Lightroom. I did several free trials before LR 4 came out and I bought Laura Shoe's excellent videos. Now I use LR for 90% of my edits. I use Photoshop rarely, and then mostly for the Topaz and Nik filters.

My greatest pleasure in photography is sharing the beauty of the natural world, and for the last four years I've had the privilege of producing a wall calendar for the local Sierra Club.

I now use a Canon 7DII which, with the 100-400 mm II lens, is as good as you can get without spending a major fortune. I'm also trying to lighten the load and am experimenting with a Fuji X70 for general shooting.



*"Glacier National Park, Montana"*



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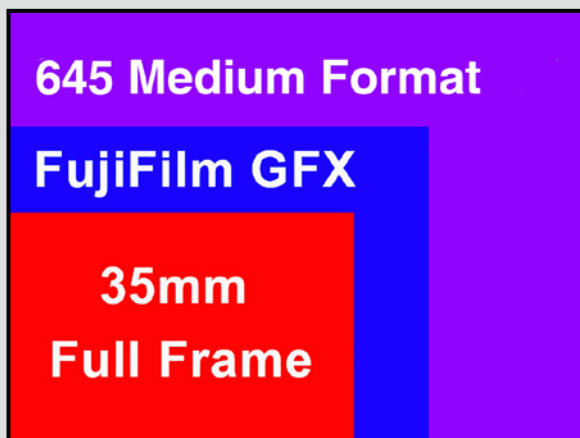
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by John Roberts

One of the things that gets brought up regularly is sensor size, and why it matters. We are now at a time where Digital Medium Format is coming down into the realm of reasonably-priced equipment that is attainable for some people, so I thought I would answer some common questions about this.

Let's first talk about crop sensor 24 x 16 mm (DX) vs. full frame 24 x 36 mm (FX), and what that can do for you. For this article, we will assume that both have the same 24 mp count as we know one manufacturer has cameras with those sizes and pixel counts. Given that the pixel count will not be changing, that means that each FX pixel is going to be physically bigger than its DX counterpart. With that alone you will get better low light and high ISO performance because each pixel is gathering light more efficiently. But the larger sensor will also do more for us. If you take the same lens on each of these cameras and compose the image comparably, the FX camera will have an image that has a shallower depth of field. This is because the depth of field is inversely proportional to magnification and FX sensors have a larger magnification than DX lenses for the same image framing.



*Sensor Size Comparison*

Each time you step up camera sensors, from cell phones to point-and-shoot cameras, to 1" sensor, to m4/3, to DX, to FX, and now to digital 645, you will see a noticeable change in the depth of field over the previous size. It is not just the depth of field where you will notice a change; there are other areas of image quality that improve by going bigger.

That is one of the reasons why many of the point-and-shoot cameras with a 1" sensor have been so sought after by photographers. The image quality they are produ-

cing over the other compact point-and-shoot cameras is so much higher. Photographers everywhere are loving it, especially when they are looking for a pocket camera to carry with them rather than their bigger DSLR. I have used several 1" sensor cameras and I love the quality of the image for the size of the camera; it is small enough to fit in my jacket pocket for the most part. The same can be said for someone that has a mirrorless camera as their everyday camera over their DSLR, which may only get brought out when they know they are going to do serious photography that day.

The same applies if you take one of the full frame (FX) cameras with a 50 mp 24 x 36 mm sensor, and compare it to a new digital medium format camera from a different manufacturer that has a 44 x 33 mm sensor. That size difference, even though the pixel count is fairly comparable to one another, means that the pixels in the medium format sensor will be physically bigger. So, there will be an improvement in dynamic range, colour, and depth of field in the images, just like when you jump from DX to FX. All those benefits you previously gained with the DX to FX jump in sensor size you will have again going up to the new digital medium format 645 sensor from FX.

While there are a few cameras out there with bigger sensors than 44 x 33 mm (one had a 56 x 56 mm sensor) I am fairly certain that there will be full frame 60 x 45 mm sensor cameras in the foreseeable future and then, hopefully, 60 x 70 mm. The good old Pentax 6x7 is one of my favourite medium format film cameras to use for the aspect ratio, depth of field and multiple other reasons. So, I very much look forward to the day that a manufacturer breaks the code, or the boys on Oak Island find the Ark of the Covenant, and it gives us all the answers to make this happen. Whatever it takes to make full frame digital medium format sensors, I am willing to wait, but I would love to see this happen.

So while the price of the current digital medium format cameras is still not for the faint of heart, or all that pocketbook friendly, it is improving, and the price will come down as the technology improves and the products become more mainstream and offset the higher production costs.

I am hoping to get my hands on one of these digital medium format cameras soon to test out, and to report back to you on the quality of these new cameras. I hope this helps. If you have any questions, or comments, please feel free to contact me at [jrphotography-bc@mac.com](mailto:jrphotography-bc@mac.com).

by Terry Zlot

Sure, all those positive comments on your last Facebook post were a boost to your confidence, but we all know real photographs need to be printed! With modern inkjet photo printers offering impressively accurate colour right out of the box, producing outstanding prints yourself has never been easier. Regardless of where your prints come from, understanding a bit more about the process can be a big help.

**Home prints vs lab prints:** Home printing isn't for everyone, but for some it will be a revelation. The instant feedback, the satisfaction of seeing your image come to life, the ability to produce on demand, and to control the entire process are great reasons to buy your own printer. If you are like me, every new paper type will be an exciting opportunity to investigate.

There are some added benefits to purchasing a pro grade printer as they offer consistency, accuracy, and archival performance that no 1hr photo lab can match. Dry-Lab printers found in 1hr photo labs produce 4 or 6 colour dye-based prints. They are the ultimate "cheap and cheerful" printers, with high speed, low cost, and vibrant (often over-saturated) output that appeals to a wide audience. In contrast, a professional 8+ colour inkjet printer will put you in a whole different class of output. In fact the most expensive wide format printers on the planet can't match the output from a \$1000 pro photo printer, they can only print bigger, faster, or cheaper.

**Which printer should I buy?** Does that mean you need a \$1000 printer? Not necessarily. Even a 4-colour printer (cyan, yellow, magenta and black) can produce a good print. Moving up to a 6-colour printer will usually match 1hr photo print quality and will handle highlights and skin tone better.

However, if you are serious about printing and want neutral greys with accurate, repeatable colour you are going to want to invest in an 8- to 12-colour pro inkjet (like an Epson P-series or Canon Pro series). The most important feature of these printers is 3 or 4 densities of black ink (commonly a matte black, photo black, light black, and light light black), giving you near perfect grey balance, and much improved colour accuracy in subtle tones. Try a test and order a B&W 4 x 6 print from every 1hr photo lab in your neighbourhood. The odds are none will match and all will have some sort of colour tone to them. Try the same test on a dozen "pro" inkjet printers and every one should look virtually the same.

**Understanding Colour Management:** Even if you have a pro printer, a pro screen, maybe even a monitor calibrator, you still may not be getting accurate prints. Assuming your screen is appropriate, this is where things start to get a bit tricky. Everything you use as a photographer from your camera to your screen to your software, and even each type of paper in your printer, are part of a colour management system. Where everything is set correctly, you end up with predictable colour. If not, things can be enormously frustrating. "Colour Spaces" are the core of this colour management system. In simple terms, they define the amount of colour (gamut) that you can work with in your file:

**sRGB:** All consumer cameras, printers, 1hr-photo labs, and the internet run in sRGB. It provides an "average" amount of colour that most printers and monitors can reproduce reasonably easily.

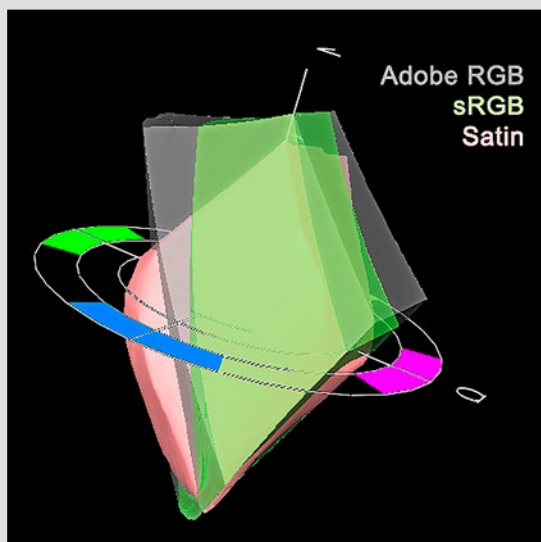
**AdobeRGB:** The most common "pro" colour space, it can reproduce a wider range of colour than sRGB but should be used only in a properly colour managed environment such as with some professional printers. This is the suggested working space for most "pro" photographers, a bit more colour than sRGB, but not too much that things start to get weird.

**ProPhoto RGB:** An extended colour space that reproduces an even wider range of colour. This colour space is so wide there are no monitors that can accurately preview it, making printing in it rather unpredictable. This should only be used by a colour expert so I would recommend you stop reading right now, open Lightroom, and make sure ProPhoto is not your default colour space for exporting or external editing!

Figure 1 shows a comparison between sRGB, Adobe RGB, and a satin paper profile. As you can see, the printer's colour is very different from Adobe and sRGB, both of which are available as presets in its driver. Every device and paper has a distinct colour profile and is only capable of emulating a target colour space, not matching it precisely, so even under ideal circumstances you won't get a perfect match to your screen.

**Why Colour Space Matters:** You might think more colour equals better colour but, unfortunately, it's not quite that simple. Most of the world is not colour-aware. If you have ever sent a file off for printing at a 1hr photo lab and had the print come back flat and mushy, it's likely because you sent them an Adobe RGB file. Unlike Photoshop, 1hr photo lab equipment is not colour-managed and will print the file as if it is sRGB regardless of





*sRGB vs. AdobeRGB and Satin Paper Profile*

its actual colour space, resulting in a poor print. Does your image look fine in Photoshop but flat on Facebook? Same thing, exporting or converting to sRGB first will work as expected.

This concept can cause problems in your own print workflow. Let's say you purchase a high-end wide-gamut Adobe RGB IPS monitor. If it's not set up correctly, or if you are using it to view images in a non-colour-managed application, everything on that screen is going to appear overly saturated. If you colour correct it to make it look normal on screen the result would be flat prints. The instinctive solution might be to switch your printer to Adobe RGB which if done incorrectly can in turn over-saturate the output. You now have a matching screen and print, but in fact your file is still flat and can't be used properly in another environment.

Therefore, it is critical to control every part of your process. Know what colour space Lightroom is exporting to, make sure both the print settings in Photoshop (or whatever program you print from), and your print driver settings are all correct, and convert everything to sRGB before sending it anywhere.

**Viewing conditions:** It (almost) goes without saying but a decent IPS monitor is essential for accurate editing. Even with a good screen and a pro printer with all print settings correct, many people still have problems with prints coming out too dark. This is a surprisingly common issue that usually boils down to your monitor brightness being set too high for your viewing conditions. You don't need a calibrator to fix this and even if you calibrate you may still need to adjust brightness from the presets provided. Take a sheet of blank photo

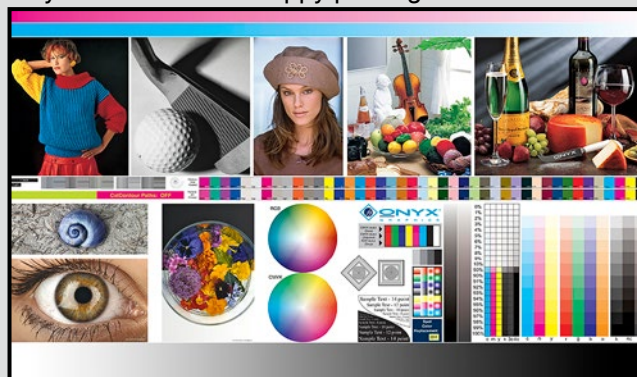
paper and stick it to a properly lit wall. Your screen should be about the same level of brightness, perhaps a little bit whiter, but it should not "glow." There should be no need to brighten up your file just for printing on a properly adjusted screen. Doing a colour check on a white background is an excellent way to evaluate your image on screen, even a severely underexposed image can look fine on an overly bright screen with a dark background, but if it looks good on a paper bright white background your print should match nicely.

Try to do your colour correction in a reasonably lit, consistent environment, ideally, with daylight balanced lighting that doesn't change too much. A big window can drastically affect both the colour and brightness of your workspace as the day progresses. At a minimum make sure you adjust your brightness as the light changes and be aware that daylight has lots of UV light that will heavily shift optically-brightened papers when compared to low or UV-free lighting at night.

Lastly, don't try holding your print right up to your screen to see if it matches. This is an enormously difficult task to achieve correctly and requires tightly controlled conditions. Judge your print where it hangs, away from your screen, then go back to your screen to adjust.

**Testing your process:** To keep everything on track, you'll want to establish a baseline, a test target. There are plenty available online that you can download or you can build your own from some relevant images. You can send this to a pro lab for an accurate reference and use it to evaluate new papers or processes as you experiment. A test target should contain B&W, colour, skin tone, high-light detail, shadow detail, and some primary colours with perhaps a gradient or two for good measure.

It might take a little time to get this all squared away but it is well worth it to give yourself a solid foundation for your future work. Happy printing!



*Printing Test Image*

## Architectural Vancouver

by Joseph Finkleman

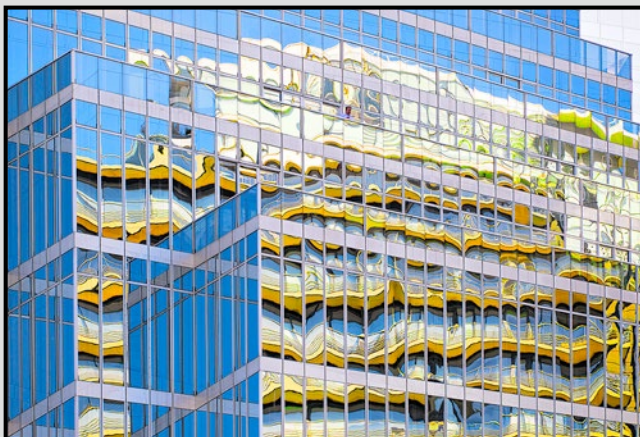
We make things: small things, big things, things we admire, things we use. They reflect who we are and what we do. I am energized by human endeavour. The kilocalories expended to make a glass and steel edifice are staggering and deeply spiritual to me.

I look for relatively small sections of very large buildings. Some of my images are compositions of buildings in juxtaposition to each other, lining up one building so that visually it touches another. In others, the reflections of buildings across the street are captured on the surfaces of the subject building.

This image is an anomaly. Out of over 100 images in this series, this is the only one that has a human in it. I thought it terribly funny that, amidst what is literally a work of art, was a reminder that, from his point of view, this was a building divided up into offices, subdivided again into work spaces that he could escape for a moment, step out onto the balcony and enjoy a cigarette. For him, the building was something to use; for me, it is something to admire. That contrast added to the tension of the image.

I generally use a lens that encompasses anywhere from a 7° to 3° angle of view. When I can, I use a tripod, but mostly I do not. I choose an ISO appropriate to the circumstance, so it varies from 100 to 1600. I generally use f5.6 to f8. I use either a Nikon d800 E or a Fuji XT 2. All of my lenses are manufacturer's lenses.

In my processing of the capture I use my standard workflow. However for my both urban and natural landscapes, I add a second pixel layer directly after my foundational pixel layer; I use Google/NIK Silver FX pro to save time.



## Selling Memories

by Ali Khashei

I am a great fan of flea markets. You can find them in many cities and neighbourhoods all around the world. People present what they don't need anymore in a flea market so by spending a short time there, you can learn many things about their lives and culture. It's as if you are invited as a guest in a lovely living room full of artifacts.



Last summer, on a hot Sunday afternoon, my wife and I visited "Mercat dels Encants," the most famous flea market in Barcelona, Spain. Unlike other parts of the city, you could hardly find any foreign tourists there, while quite a number of locals were going through the booths and searching for something captivating. You may think there were more interesting things to do in a city like Barcelona but believe me, it's worth going to the "Mercat."

At first glance, the booth, the subject of the image, caught my eye. Each of these artifacts was a piece of memory to someone, therefore all of them were valuable to me and I had to focus to them.

What about the salesman? Should I show his face in the picture? I didn't think so. For me, he was important, but just as a salesman waiting for a customer. The real subjects were the artifacts for sale. Therefore, I selected a high viewpoint and went up a ladder.

The image was taken with my Nikon D750 at an aperture of f9, with a shutter speed of 1/30<sup>th</sup> of a second, ISO 400, with a focal length of 82 mm, manual focus and pattern metering. All I had to do post-capture was crop the image in Photoshop.



## Tuesday Shoots

by Daniel A. Roy

April is here and spring brings new life. What a wonderful time of year to be outdoors, especially here in Victoria. We have an interesting lineup for the month, so grab your camera and join us for a few hours of fun.

**April 4<sup>th</sup>: Downtown Langford.** Langford was established by Captain Edward Langford in 1851 but not officially incorporated until 1992. Goldstream Avenue's core element is a vibrant street-scape with red brick sidewalks, a musical fountain, and a variety of retail boutiques.

**April 11<sup>th</sup>: You Say What?** Take four or five images from this shoot and post them to convey a single message. An example: Three or four images of books and an image of a clock might suggest: "So many books, so little time." This may be a shoot that you might want to give some prior thought to. Having a message in mind and finding the right images may be the best approach to this challenge.

**April 18<sup>th</sup>: Esquimalt Lagoon.** This is one of my favourite places to shoot. The migratory bird sanctuary is home to a large variety of waterfowl such as Green-winged Teal, Northern Pintail, and American Wigeon. A vast diversity of subjects from wildlife to seascapes, is available for the taking. Be sure to pack an assortment of lenses and have a tripod available.

**April 25<sup>th</sup>: Odd or Unique.** There are many objects in the downtown core that some may consider to be "Odd or Unique." We will depart from the Bay Centre Food Court at 10:30 sharp to find and shoot these strange objects.

Check out the Club calendar for details related to each field trip and be sure to register.



## Weekend Shoots

by Teri VanWell

April is flower month on south Vancouver Island so we will be dedicating most of our field trips this month to photographing wild flowers. This offers the opportunity to dust off your macro and close-up lenses and practice photographing with shallow depth of field. You might even want to try to get "bokeh" shots. As it is difficult to predict the weather and the availability of wild flowers, please check the website and your email regularly for updates. Two field trips are confirmed and more flower trips will be scheduled as the season evolves.

**Date TBA: Gore and Oak Haven Parks.** These two small parks provide easy access to some beautiful wild flowers. They are both Garry Oak ecosystems with a mix of Garry Oak meadow and second growth conifers. An easy 15-minute walk to the summit rewards you with spectacular views of the Peninsula, Saanich Inlet, and Sidney and James islands.

There is a variety of wild flowers including: Satinflower, Camas, Shooting Star, Calypso Orchid, Fawn Lilies, California Buttercup and Red Columbine. For close-up and macro photos you need a tripod with a removable column or a homemade alternative. Complementing ambient light with flash and/or reflected light gives an opportunity to be creative. This trip is weather dependent.

**April 29<sup>th</sup>: Hunter Jumper Show.** Join us at the Saanich Fairgrounds for this event. Beautiful eyes, velvety noses and graceful movement are all attributes of horses. At this competition, you will have the opportunity to catch these magnificent beasts and their riders as they leap over obstacles in an outdoor ring. In the stables you may be able to capture horse portraits or "street" images. There should be lots of interesting opportunities as riders warm up and cool down their horses, brush and bathe them and tack up.

When photographing horse shows, a longer lens is essential because sudden movement spooks horses. Avoid getting low and being quiet; this is a sure way to scare a horse. Never use flash around horses as it startles them. Working with a long lens is also a good way to take interesting shots of riders interacting with their equine partners. Simply speaking to the riders may get you an invitation to come closer. This is the beginning of the horse show season and there is a possibility that we might return in May. Stay tuned!

by Richard Letourneau

**Concept:** My vision was to create a personal and unique “Happy New Year” message, comprised of a composite of original photographs. I knew that I wanted to include three images using American Sign Language (ASL) for the words, happy, new, and year.

In order to actualize my vision, I enlisted the assistance of Ken Johnston, a photographer and fellow Victoria Camera Club member, to take some photographs of me that I could then manipulate into one final composite image. All images in this article have been used with Ken’s permission.

**Background:** The fact that I have a deaf relative prompted me to learn ASL many years ago. I am a founding member and past president of the National Association of Sign Language Interpreters. I am currently the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Island Deaf and Hard of Hearing Centre in downtown Victoria ([idhhc.ca](http://idhhc.ca)) the only non-profit agency of its kind on Vancouver Island.

**Photo Shoot Day and Set-up:** Ken and I had a brief pre-shoot meeting to discuss my concept including the number of shots that would be required. No additional lighting was necessary for the shoot as there were large windows with closed venetian-style blinds, to the model’s right. I was the model, provided the wardrobe, and completed the post-production work independently.

Ken noted that his 14 mm lens would be wide enough to capture the breadth of the set-up. The following equipment was used: a Canon EOS 1D X with a Canon EF 14 mm f2.8 lens, tripod and remote cable release. Sample settings were ISO 800, f10, 1/30 second, manual focus and no flash.

Manual focus for each shot was achieved by using Live View together with image magnification to get optimal sharpness of each subject. The camera was fired by remote cable release.



*“Adjusted Images”*



*“Background Image”*

Four or five consecutive photographs were taken for each pose. This increased the chances of obtaining acceptable shots without the distraction of closed eyes or movement of the model. In total we shot 47 images, in 11 different poses, over the span of two hours.

The light changed appreciably over the two-hour shoot, especially since extra time was needed for multiple wardrobe changes. Even though the blinds were closed in the room, there was enough ambient light so that flash was not required. Due to a partly sunny day and the depth of field required, the first two-thirds of the shots were taken at f10 and when the sun came out the aperture was changed to f11, a decrease of 1/3 stop, for the remainder of the shots. This change of light was an important factor when it came to post-processing.

*Tip: Do not move the camera! Once the camera is in place and securely locked on the tripod, it cannot be moved for the duration of the shoot.*

**Post-Production:** Disclaimer, using Lightroom (LR) and Photoshop (PS) for only a couple of years makes me a relative newbie. There are multiple ways to achieve an outcome. What I describe here is the way I assembled this image.

Ken provided me with the RAW image files. They were brought into Lightroom CC 2015 and after reviewing each of the 47 RAW files, I selected six images to be used in the composite.

I followed an identical workflow for each of the six images in Lightroom. First, in the Lens Corrections panel, I selected Remove Chromatic Aberration, and Enable Profile Corrections, for Ken’s camera. Second, I used the eyedropper tool, located next to WB (white balance), and consistently selected the same grey area of the carpet to



set a custom white balance. As mentioned previously, changes to the natural light needed to be corrected on individual frames. Third, I observed the histogram while making slider adjustments to set exposure, highlights, shadows, whites, and blacks. Finally, the last step was to apply a bit of sharpening and noise reduction.

Satisfied with the preliminary adjustments that I made to the six images, they were now ready for compositing in Photoshop. I moved the images one at a time, by right clicking on the image to be moved, then selecting "Edit in Photoshop." I have since learned of easier ways to get the images into one file. In Lightroom, select them all and then "Open as layers in Photoshop." Or, open all of them in Photoshop and just drag each image into the base image while holding down the shift key.



*"Reveal Man in Black Tuxedo"*

**Adobe Photoshop Process:** One image was selected to be the Background image. I chose the "white dinner jacket guy," into which the five others will be composited.

From this point on, the process was the same for each image. Click on the second image in the PS tool bar to select it. In my case, I wished to insert the man in the black tuxedo. Once the image has been chosen and is visible in the workspace, it needs to be selected and copied.

To select "all" and "copy" the image, I used keyboard short-cuts, Cmd-A (for Mac) or Ctrl-A (for Windows), this will select the entire image. To copy this selection, use Cmd-C or Ctrl-C.

Now that the second image has been selected and copied, the next step is to add it to the original document with the gentleman in the white dinner jacket. Locate that image in the menu bar, click on it and it will reappear in the workspace. You will see a thumbnail of the white dinner jacket image in the layers panel on the right-hand side of the workspace.

To add the second image into the working document, I clicked on the thumbnail (white dinner jacket) and used Cmd-V or Ctrl-V, to paste. You will notice a new thumbnail has been created above your original image.

The next step is to create a layer mask on the new layer. The most important thing to remember about masks is that black conceals and white reveals.

To create a layer mask using the menu, I clicked on the thumbnail image on which you want to create a mask, in this case the man in the black tux. Then use your cursor and from the top menu select Layer, Layer Mask, Hide All. Alternatively, to create a mask using the keyboard, click on the thumbnail image, i.e. man in black tux, to make it active. Then depress the Alt/Option button and click the mask icon in the layers panel. Both of these methods, result in a layer mask, filled with black, which is now "active."

Basically, all that has happened is two images have been placed one on top of the other, however the top layer is entirely filled with black, so only the bottom image is visible. To reveal the man in the black tuxedo, so he will be seen in the bottom image, we can use a white brush to reveal him.

I started by typing "D" for default, which will set the foreground/background colours to black/white respectively, then press "X" to make white the foreground colour. Select a brush tool, about 150 px size, with 100% hardness, normal mode, 100% opacity and flow 100%, and paint over the area you wish to reveal.

Then repeat this process for the four remaining images, crop and voila, a composite photo with the centre three men using ASL for "Happy New Year!"



*"Happy New Year from Richard"*

## Planning and Preparation - Part 2

by Josée Ménard

Last month, in Part I, we covered the equipment component of planning and preparation. In Part II, we are discussing the research and planning of your shoot location as well as the impact of the light on your images. These components are interdependent and require your attention. Because of my love for travel and photography, I personally do not mind all the scouting involved.

In terms of location, let's continue with our Galapagos trip. Some photographic trips close to home allow you to make multiple visits. For others, you may visit them a few times by chance or by planning. Lastly, some are once-in-a-lifetime opportunities. This trip is the latter. For its entirety, you encounter never-been-to-before locations for only a short time. You are on the move, hiking from rare spot to rare spot, rare species to rare species. How can you plan?

Thanks to Google Earth, the Internet and various publications, unlike Darwin, you can scout ahead of time from the comfort of your chair. Rare species await your lens. For success to present itself, you will need to identify the species you wish to capture, their natural seasons, their favoured islands or side of island, their habits and natural preferences. Plus, ensure that the Galapagos National Park has that island open rather than closed for a recovery period. And finally, be sure that your naturalist guided group stops at this beach, and does that hike to the only Galapagos Albatross nesting area. Luckily, thanks to your planning and research, the males have just started to arrive and are busy getting the nest ready. Plan A: no females yet, but many males! Plan B: nest-building iguanas along the way, or Plan C (spontaneous) beak-kissing Boobies. Success!

In a similar fashion, for every photographic trip, you should plan and research, whether by mental note or through a catalogue of location notes. If you have been there before, your possible locations and compositions are known. For example, on your last time there, you may have spotted a new angle to shoot from on the next rainy day. Plan A becomes for a pedestrian to have a yellow umbrella, Plan B, for someone with a brighter one, Plan C is for a yellow raincoat to be perfectly energized by the wind. As for lesser known locations or ones to explore, build your catalogue of notes according to your needs and wishes. Think of including samples of photos with their name and location: ideal time of year, day, positioning for certain shots; maps

including topography for effects or limits to consider; tides, sun and moon phases, and so on. Good sources include travel and photo magazines as well as websites such as Flickr or 500px. Your research will help you prepare for the fact that, unlike in Canada, sunsets near the equator happen at a fast pace of 10 minutes followed by an amazing gradual show of colours. With that in mind, you need to ensure you have given yourself enough time to be ready at the right place and at the right time. If you prefer portraits, consider how your location will impact your choices for props, clothing, model, layers to stay warm, breaks, release form needs, "studio time," and how busy or not locations can be. By knowing your location and subject, respecting its habits and nature, visualizing the images you wish to capture, you increase your chances for success.

Another key factor in your planning and preparation is the light component. Books, articles and apps about photographic locations, seasons, the sun, and the moon are valuable as locations and the light are greatly influenced by the earth's rotational axis and its angle throughout the year. Think of your favourite park or your backyard and how the sun rises and sets at a slightly different spot through the seasons. The same occurs at your destination of choice.

In your research or catalogue of notes, start noticing how the different time of day, month, or season impacts the scene you wish to capture. What is the best light time period for your location and subject. If you can, scout the location and see how different composition angles are impacted by the light. Think about how a new high-rise will create shadows for your shoot. How is your subject barn and its landscape different through the lights of the seasons? When you have more time, scout around to see from which angles you can capture the barn. Some favourite applications are "The Photographer's Ephemeris", "The Photographers Transit" (both for iPads only), or "Plan-It!" for Android devices. Equatorial light is harsh in the Galapagos so prepare by noting the impact of harsh light on your subjects. How do photographers compensate for it? Research ways to successfully capture black land iguanas on black lava. Plan a practice shoot of black dogs at the beach or on dark rocks.

In the meantime, when you attend the VCC Members' Night, go on some field trips, read some *Close-Up* articles, and start a personal catalogue of photographic destinations you can create your own bucket list of images to capture.



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