

Close-Up

VictoriaCameraClub.ca



Drone Special Interest Group
Historic Processes: Cyanotype
March Workshops
Tech Tips: Shooting Flowers
Colourful Images
Member Profile: Graham Budd
Close-up Lenses
Brighten Winter Days With B&W
Photoshop Calculations for B&W
Photography
Beginner's Corner: Musicians

Victoria Camera Club

"Snowboarding at Night" by Bill Cubitt

March 2022 Volume 75 Number 3

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"Victoria Cityscape" by Cindy Stephenson

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
- Shared Interest Groups (SIGs)
- Competitions within the Club and externally

Meetings begin at 7:00 PM. All meetings, workshops and SIGs are currently on-line only.

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, \$107; Student, \$36.

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

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March 2022

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



VICTORIA ARTS COUNCIL



Calendar

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

Workshops, Meetings and SIGs are currently on-line only. Please check the calendar for updates.

March 3rd: Competition Night. The February competition results will be presented.

March 10th: Presenters' Night. "The Joy of Symmetry" with Richard Hulbert.

March 17th: Members' Night. Presentations of members' images, field trip slide shows, print reviews or short technical presentations.

Workshop Highlights: Introduction to Astrophotography and Capturing the Creative Spirit in Photography.

Field Trip Highlights: Street Photography, Full Moon Rising, Evening Ghostly Walk, Christ Church Cathedral.

CoverImage: "Snowboarding at Night" by Bill Cubitt. Calgary is known as the Stampede city but don't miss out on its many winter activities. Canada Olympic Park, a multi-purpose training facility, is within the city limits. During the day we were enjoying photographing the World Cup Freestyle Mogul races but came back at night for the Snowboarding Championship.

Doing sports photography at night under artificial lights is something we don't get a chance to do very often. This photo really appeals to me because it feels unique. While we were somewhat free to walk on the sides of the ski hill, we remained back far enough to ensure the safety of both the competitors and ourselves.

As snowboarders raced back and forth in the half-pipe, they would gain air and do flips to score points with the judges. As this competitor came to my side of the half-pipe, he did a jump right in front of me. I love how the snow shines in the lights, adding another dimension to my photo. Some of the racers had dark jackets but I was lucky with this racer as he wore a bright yellow coat that night.

I process my raw files in Lightroom. I darkened the night sky even more and then added additional clarity to the athlete. I find you can get away with a lot of clarity with male sport images. It gives the final image a grittier feel.

President's Message

April and our AGM are fast approaching. Hopefully, by then we will be coming out of current restrictions with new opportunities to take the Club forward, starting with a return to a sense of normality which will certainly seem new. I hope it will not be repetitive of me to remind you that we need new people to volunteer for the board before the AGM. The board is where the business and planning for VCC take place. Please contact one of the current board members if you want to know more.

Despite restrictions, we are doing very well operating almost completely online. Membership has continued to grow each month for this entire season. We added 12 new members in December and January, bringing our membership up to 254. All our online events and our field trips are going strong. The mentorship program has 18 mentors, and 29 mentees. The information and schedules for all our events are on the website.

Our Club is turning 80 in 2024. It seems almost too far away to mention but planning for the celebration has already started. Lead times for venues and for speakers can be up to two years so it requires early and detailed planning. With that in mind there will be a member survey coming out later in the year. We'll be looking for general information that will help us continue to deliver the right programming to our membership and assist us with the planning for our 80th anniversary celebration.

At our last board meeting, Bob Law, our treasurer presented the budget for 2022. We are financially healthy with projected revenue of \$49,500 and with projected expenses of \$50,835. The small deficit in this budget will be more than offset by our previous year's surplus. In our budget planning, not raising the dues is always top of mind and this budget has no such increase. It also assumes we will begin partial in-person sessions later in this season, with a full resumption in September. The budget passed unanimously.

The 2022 BC 55+ games are coming to Victoria this summer. There will be over 30 sporting events taking place at more than 30 venues from September 13th to 17th. Thanks to a large group of volunteers, Victoria Camera Club will be providing the photography for the entire event. The images will be posted on our website and on the Flickr site of the Games Committee.

Thanks again to all the volunteers who make this Club as successful as it is. We couldn't do it without you.

Steve Sproston, Acting President

Drone Special Interest Group

by James Dies

I have noticed that there are a number of photographers in our Club who also dabble in drone photography. It might be a good idea to start a Club SIG to promote drone photography. That way we get the benefit of the support of the Club. The plan would be to meet to discuss techniques, equipment, and photo ideas as well as to discuss our images. We would learn from each other and improve our images.

My first thought is to get together with like-minded drone photographers and have a meeting and/or field trip to discuss how we want to organize ourselves and maybe do some practice drone flying. For those whose machines are over 250 gm it might be a good idea to go over the legal requirements for flying drones.

Right now, I'm still looking for a legal and safe place to fly and to practice a little. Nothing too challenging on the first field trip, it's just to get a feel for the group and our skill levels.



"Gun Emplacement"

A good place to start is to re-read the *Close-Up* article "About Drones" in the April 2021 issue. If you don't have a copy, go to our website under the "Close-Up" tab and in the middle of the page at "FREE download" click on "Documents and Files".

Since the article came out the government has made flying easier. You can now submit a flight plan using an app from NavCanada on your phone. Go to Drone Flight Planning-Canada to get it.

One question that will surely pop up is "Can the Club do videos?" Yes, you can, and a lot of what is needed is common between still and video photography. The biggest difference is in how you can tell the story behind the images.

My feeling is that there is no other organization on the island that represents drone photography, and we could become the go-to group for people interested in this fascinating hobby. It could draw in new members to this club who are interested in learning more and getting guidance and maybe get more Club members to take it up. We could even help them get their pilots licence and registration, as well as give them practice exercises to improve their flying skills and photography. Maybe even enter some competitions with other drone flying organizations.

You may get some useful ideas from websites such as: Drone Photo Awards 2022, Drone Photography Awards, and Sienna Awards. Some competitions have awards of up to \$500. As you can see some of this photography is truly mesmerizing and utterly amazing. These competitions will help you get a feel for the level of photography we would be joining. I'm sure we have talent in our Club to compete.



"Winter Rose Garden"

What I love about drone flying are the skills you need to master it. You need to be able to fly competently and skillfully as well as having photography skills.

One of the things that you can do to improve your flying skills is to go to YouTube and search for "Drone Practice. Drones are just flying cameras except they are cameras that can get hung up in a tree or crash into something.

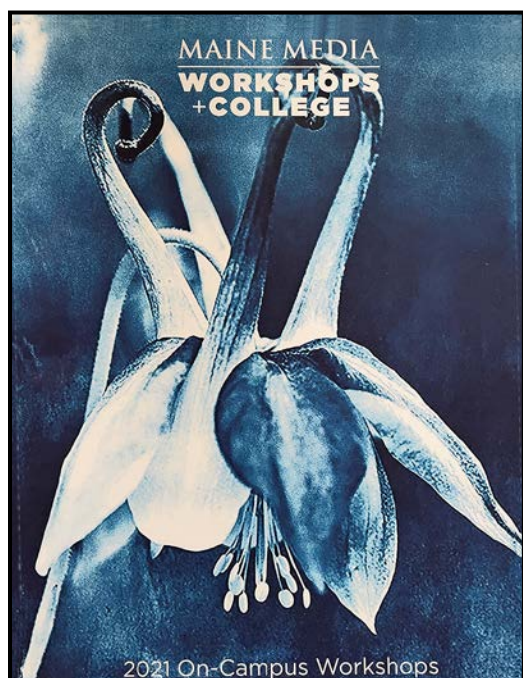
If this is of interest to you, contact me at directoratlarge1@victoriacameraclub.ca and if we get enough people, I will arrange a field trip or a meeting to discuss more.

Historic Processes: Cyanotype

by Danielle Labonté

Sometimes do you yearn to make images without having to engage with technology as much as today's digital workflows require? Maybe you would like to explore a more organic way of making images?

Recently I returned to analog photographic processes. I was attracted to the aesthetic of film and to its slower mode and had access to the very well-equipped darkroom at the School of Photographic Arts in Ottawa. Once again, I fell in love with the darkroom: the anticipation of developing the film, enlarging the negative, dodging and burning and sloshing around in the various baths. The hours went by. Sometimes it was contemplative. At other times, expletives might have been used.



"Columbine No. 1" Maine Media 2021 Course Catalog

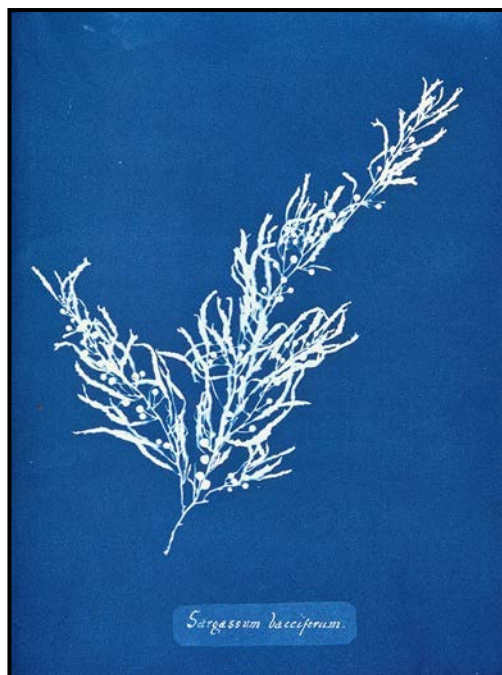
This led me to explore various historic printing processes including cyanotype, dry plates, wet collodion on tintype and platinum/palladium. I discovered a large like-minded international community of visual artists actively sharing their work and methods at www.alternativephotography.com. The rewards of these practices include learning something new, creative play, an element of surprise and the resulting unique print defined by paint strokes, ambient temperature, type of substrate and the exposure time.

When learning about historic processes many begin with cyanotype because of its relative ease and accessibility (inexpensive, not as toxic as other processes and

does not require a darkroom). Cyanotype was invented in 1842 by Sir John Herschel, a renaissance man who was also renowned for mathematical and astronomy skills and wide-ranging curiosity. It was the first photographic process not based on silver.

The earliest use of cyanotype was for architectural blueprints. Paper would be coated with the solution, a drawing would be etched on glass and placed on top of the paper and exposed to UV light. The finished print would show the drawing etched in white onto the blueprint, a term which remains in use today.

Anna Atkins was another early user of cyanotype. A botanist, she was the first person to produce a scientific book containing hundreds of handmade photograms of plants and feathers. Photograms are made by using flat objects instead of a negative to imprint the paper with an image.



"Sargassum Bacciferum"¹

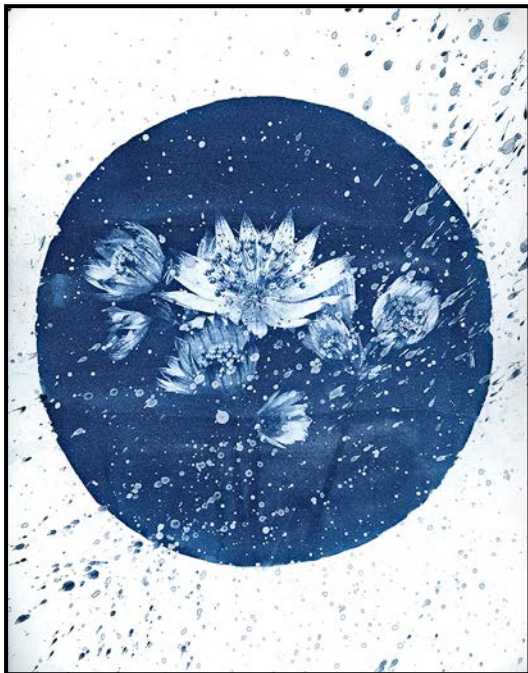
Cyanotype has enjoyed renewed interest in recent years with thousands of practitioners. Some galleries have dedicated exhibitions to cyanotype prints and artists from around the world contribute to "World Cyanotype Day" and its virtual exhibition.

Beyond its relative ease to master, another appeal of this process is the wide range of substrates that can be used including paper, textiles, wood, and glass. It can also be toned to achieve colours other than Prussian blue. Relative to other more sophisticated processes its drawback is that it has a short tonal range.

So, if your curiosity has been piqued, the rest of this article outlines the basic process to get started.

You will need:

- Ferric ammonium citrate and potassium ferricyanide.
- A brush (all wood, metal rusts and the bristles fall off)
- Thick art paper (e.g., Arches Platine or similar)
- A stiff board and a piece of ¼" thick glass
- Plastic or glass containers and latex gloves
- Tape and pencil to mark the paint area
- Plant material or some other flat objects to use for a photogram
- A sunny day or other UV source.



"Hattie's Pincushions"

The process begins with combining two chemicals: ferric ammonium citrate (light sensitive) and potassium ferricyanide (adds colour) in equal amounts. Once mixed, the chemistry is sensitive to UV light but tolerates normal room lighting conditions.

Cautions:

- Poisonous if swallowed
- Avoid getting it into your eyes.
- Wear latex gloves while handling the solution and coated paper
- Avoid looking at the UV light source
- Avoid solution coming into contact with metal

For a first try a photogram is usually recommended using plant material or another flat object. Later you can use film or digitally-produced negatives. As this is a contact-printing method the size of the image will be the same as the negative. In a room without UV lighting put lots of newspaper underneath your intended work area. Then, pour the pre-mixed solution down the center of your paper in an even straight line. Next, start painting the liquid in large

vertical strokes along the edges of the area you want to be your background (this could be the entire paper or a portion of it). You can be liberal about your edges showing the sign of the brush or try to be perfect by pre-taping down the area you want to work within.



"Photogram: Knit Lace on Cotton"

Leave the paper for 20-30 minutes until it is completely dry. During that time you can mock-up the layout of your photogram to be ready to transfer it to the coated paper. After the paper is dry, transfer it (face up) to the back board, apply the photogram to the surface, place the glass atop to keep everything still essentially creating a "cyanotype sandwich".

You are now ready to take it outside to let the sun do its magic. Knowing when the image is exposed is by trial and error in the beginning. The paper will eventually turn a greenish colour. Depending on the strength of the sun this could happen in minutes or hours. For more certainty you can build or purchase a UV box for indoor use. By doing test strips you can then figure out a reproducible exposure time. Finally, once the exposure is "ready", remove the glass, put your paper in a tray and bring it to gently running water. Let running water wash over the print for 5-10 minutes until all traces of yellow emulsion in the highlights has been washed off. Lift the paper by a corner, let the water drip off and hang the print to dry. As it dries the image will oxidize and turn into the Prussian Blue that is characteristic of this process. Enjoy your print!

¹ All images are by Danielle Labontè except the image "Sargassum Bacciferum" by Anna Atkins from the New York Public Library Digital Collections.

March Workshops

by Jim Fowler

Here we are already on the verge of spring. Easter lilies will be blooming before the month is done. What better time to review your landscape photography techniques? On March 7th, Kate Silvia will present “Planning to Succeed in Landscape Photography” via Zoom. She is an experienced photographer who believes in practice and planning. Kate has run workshops both in her native Charleston and at a variety of other locations around the United States. She has published a couple of e-books. Go to katesilviaphotography.com to view her work.

In Kate’s photo gallery, it is clear that she uses all the known “best practices” from selecting the best light (dark foreground and sky sandwiching a bright horizon), telling a story (foot trails in the sand leading to a turtle), selecting the decisive moment (bird bill just breaking the water surface) and true leading lines (dead branches pointing to a dramatic sunset).

Then throw in intentional camera movement, wide-angle lenses, close-ups filling the screen and long exposure where appropriate. Juxtaposition of sharp focus and background blur are used to illustrate depth. Even painterly post-processing software is used to create a certain “soft” beauty of hanging blooms. In other words, Kate uses all the tried-and-true techniques to assemble a broad portfolio of well-balanced photos.

Are you bored with photography? Do you not feel very creative? Presenters’ Night and the workshop committee have co-ordinated their forces to provide a solution. For Presenters’ Night on March 10th, Rick Hulbert will talk about “The Joy of Symmetry”. Rick brings to photography a lifetime of achievement in the world of architecture. What is it about architecture that makes former architects’ great photographers? Is it their heightened awareness of space?

Rick is one of those photographers who really delves into how we see the world and how we can use that knowledge to benefit our photography. He is no stranger to our Club. Two years ago Rick told us that “We photograph volumetric space as defined by edges revealed by light.” In practical terms, that might mean you should allow a little space between repeated columns. The great thing about good teachers of photography is that they combine the theoretical with the practical. Catch a little bit of Rick’s enthusiasm on Presenters’ Night. Symmetry is a key consideration in finding balance in composition. But wait, there’s more!

Following Presenters’ Night, on March 12th and 13th, Rick will present an in-person (COVID rules permitting) workshop here in Victoria, to be followed by a Zoom review of the participants’ work. Therein lies the cure for your boredom: Rick believes that creativity can be fostered. Be inspired by someone who has explored what is known about vision. While the spatial relation of things is part of what we all see, some people “see” more than others. Imagine what a difference it might make to your vision if you had spent decades working on the three-dimensional arrangement of a complete living space designed for thousands of people.

If you want a primer on the science of vision, the Greater Victoria Public Library has a copy of Margaret Livingstone’s *Vision and Art: The Biology of Seeing*. Or you might take Guy Tal’s recent advice and read Rudolf Arnheim’s *Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye*, available online as a pdf. Arnheim begins by examining balance and the hidden structure of the pictorial rectangle. Learn how weight and direction affect balance, while spatial depth, size, intrinsic interest, isolation and shape can all affect weight. Why do we distinguish more between up and down than between left and right? Is gravity to blame?

I mention these books because expanding your visual knowledge will increase what you get from Rick. Learning about the fundamentals of seeing can give you a critical foundation for your visual judgment. Then give your vision a jump-start by attending Rick’s workshop. This is a unique opportunity in which a world-renowned teacher is coming to Victoria. Don’t miss out. There is a fee of \$295 for members for this workshop.

Finally, for those who really want to get out of this world, John McDonald is presenting a Zoom introduction to astrophotography on March 15th, followed by a hands-on night workshop (depending on weather, nights to be chosen) followed by a photo review on March 29th. Register only if you can attend both sessions. Registration is limited. See workshop for details. In the discussion portion, John will cover techniques and equipment, including using what you have as well as what you might purchase. He will talk about how to find subjects in the sky using specialized software. He will cover settings and strategies, post-processing techniques and photographing with telescopes. The night in-person session will include a chance to use a telescope or tracking device. From everyday views of the Milky Way to unique events like eclipses and comets, learn how to find and capture what seems to be less and less a part of our daily experience.

As always, check the Club’s web page for details and registration dates.

Tech Tips: Shooting Flowers

by Richard James

Well, March is spring, isn't it? So maybe some tips about shooting flowers are appropriate this month. First, the distinction between "flowers" and nature photography of flowers. To qualify as nature photography flowers need to be growing in the wild and be botanical species not horticultural cultivars. There are lots of beautiful gardens around Victoria but if you shoot flowers there you should not be using them in a nature category. Similarly, you can be very creative in post-processing with flowers but then they would go in an altered reality/creative category.



"Satinflower" (Olsynium douglasii)

Unless you are shooting a field of flowers as a landscape, possibly using a wide-angle lens and being close to the foreground flowers, you are probably going to want to use a macro lens so that you can fill the frame with your flower of choice. A macro lens is regarded as a lens that focuses at close to life-size (one-to-one) or larger on the sensor and has a fixed focal length. These lenses are designed for optimum resolution at close distances and generally have a very flat focus plane. Zoom lenses with a "macro" setting usually do not achieve these desirable criteria.

Once you get really close to a subject, you often run into the depth-of-field issue. This is where the depth-of-field is much shallower than the parts of the subject that you want to be in focus. The best way to overcome this is to use a technique known as focus stacking which is the subject of a Club workshop in April.

Related to depth-of-field is the appropriate aperture to use. You can use a wide aperture (small f-number) to minimize depth-of-field and emphasize a small part of the subject or a smaller aperture (large f-number) for a greater depth of field. However, all lenses have an optimal aperture that is usually somewhere in the range of f5.6 to f8 where their resolution is highest. With a smaller aperture the resolution is degraded by diffraction around the lens diaphragm. That doesn't mean you shouldn't use a small aperture but focus stacking is a better solution.



"Tripod with Rail to get Low"

While we normally see flowers from above, often the best images are from "eye level" which for a flower is generally down on the ground. To get there you need a tripod with legs that flatten out or a reversible column so that you can literally hang the camera under the tripod. My tripod does not have a column at all I use a camera rail to achieve the same effect and it's much more stable.

Backgrounds are important in any image. For flowers you really have three choices: show the environment, blur the background out by controlling the depth-of-field or shooting against a very distant object, perhaps the sky.

Selecting the best-focus start and end frames of a stack is critical. You can also include the most distant frame to give the most-blurred background

Brightness and colour are also important and unless you check carefully you may end up with distracting high-lights or colours behind the subject. An "edge patrol" is also useful to identify and remove objects caught on the edge of the frame. Judicious "gardening" to tidy up the area that will be in the image is often required. I have a pair of tweezers and a small paintbrush in my camera bag for this.

Devices to hold unwanted vegetation out of the way are useful. Short pieces of wire and a "Plamp", a pair of clamps on a short flexible arm, are also useful. (Made by Wimberly (tripodhead.com))

Internal Competitions

by Lorna Zaback

In July each year the Internal Competitions Committee puts out a call for judges. Not everyone on our list of potential judges responds but those who do seem eager to work with our Club. As the Chair this year, I have had the opportunity to communicate with a number of our judges and have found them to be supportive, encouraging and enthusiastic about our members' work.

We provide prospective judges with clear instructions about using the software, about CAPA guidelines, etc. Once images are judged each month a committee member reviews the judges' comments, mostly checking for spelling or grammatical errors, but we also want to ensure members are being treated fairly and respectfully by judges. Although we recognize that not everyone will be satisfied with every critique of every one of their images, we will pass on relevant feedback and suggestions to judges. That being said, as a committee we try not to micro-manage the judging process.

Are competitions important to VCC members? After a slow start in September it is gratifying to see that participation in January 2022 was on a par with 2021, with Novice submissions being the highest in months. I hope we can take that as a "Yes!"

External Competitions

by James Dies

We have restarted External Competitions. These competitions are of great importance to the Club as they represent us to the world. We have won many prestigious awards and much of our work has been shown and hung internationally. We entered two easy competitions, the North Shore Challenge, and the Eastwood vs VCC competition. To our great surprise we beat all expectations with over 70 participants in each competition. Out of those 70 or so submissions the Selection Committee chose the images that will go forward to be judged by North Shore and Eastwood and the winners will be announced in March.

Unfortunately, we still don't have an External Competitions Committee and we need one to run External Competitions. It takes four or so people and a committee chair to run it. Of the 70 plus members who entered we need four or five of you to step forward and take on this challenge. The Club wants the External Comps to succeed and there will be as much support as we can give you. We know how important your work is to the Club.

January 2022 Competition Judges

We sincerely thank our external judges listed below for the January Intermediate and Advanced digital competitions and Advanced print competitions. We also extend thanks to our in-house judges for the Novice digital competitions: Pam Irvine, Lorna Zaback and Nicci Tyndall. Images and judges' comments are available at: www.victoriacamera-club.ca/Competitions/CompetitionResults.aspx.

Michael Breakey: Wildlife. Michael Breakey is a professional photographer in Kelowna. His passion is landscape and available light portraiture. Michael has presented numerous workshops, specializing in Photoshop and Lightroom. He is currently the Director of Education for CAPA, which includes overseeing the judging course.

Wes Bergen: Open. Wes has been a keen amateur photographer for almost 45 years. He has been a member of the Lions Gate Camera Club and held a number of positions there. He has also been a member of NAPA and CAPA for almost as long. Wes has taught local Photoshop courses and is a frequent judge and presents workshops at local photography clubs and seminars.

Glenn Bloodworth: Theme (Minimalism). Glenn is a member of CAPA and the past Chair of the RA Photo Club of Ottawa (RAPC). A Certified CAPA Judge he judges extensively in national and international competitions. He is a juried member of the Foyer Art Gallery of Ottawa as well as Past Chair of the Board of Directors, School of Photographic Arts in Ottawa.

Francois Cleroux: People. Francois currently lives in Delta and is a CAPA-certified judge and a past-president of the Delta Photo Club. Among other genres he has worked in fashion and wildlife photography. Francois lectures and teaches various photography workshops and classes.

Larry Brietkreutz: Altered Reality. Larry has enjoyed the inspiration and challenge of all types of artistic images, whether created with the camera, software, or brush and paint for over 35 years. He is a Certified CAPA Judge and teaches photography courses for Surrey Recreation. He is currently the Past-President of CAPA.

Mike Byrne: Advanced Prints. Mike is one of the co-founders of Clock Tower Images in Victoria. Mike grew up in Alberta's Rocky Mountains and has always pursued outdoor activities. As a natural extension, he started to produce outdoor adventure films and videos. Mike leads international photography workshops with emphasis on wildlife.

CONTINUING STUDIES@UVIC

Spring 2022 Photography Courses

We are pleased to offer the following online, live and interactive photography courses this term:

These courses will be offered online and in real time:

- Taking Great Travel Photos with Your iPhone/iPad
- iPhone/iPad Artography

The following course will be offered in class at UVic campus:

- Travel and Street Photography Basics

Visit our website for complete details about all of our photography and visual arts courses or call 250-721-7797.

continuingstudies.uvic.ca/photography



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PRISM IMAGING

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Advanced Altered Reality - 1st

"Waiter, There's a Boat in my Soup!" by Steve Smith

Judge's Comments: A splendid collection of thoughts and ideas. Well executed. Contrast of shapes in unusual sizes adds drama and interest.



Advanced Open - 1st

"After the Rain" by David Clow

Judge's Comments: Excellent lighting, details and tonality. Pleasing composition with an unobtrusive background. Great depth of field, the unsharp area in lower left is not objectionable.



Advanced Wildlife - 1st Tie

"Open Wide" by Steve Lustig

Judge's Comments: Good image of what seems to be sibling play time. Detail in the two bears is good. Depth of field is well handled giving enough detail in the background while not being distracting. The story and environment give a total package.



Advanced People - 1st

"Alter Ego Clint" by Anne McCarthy

Judge's Comments: A great portrait. Many great elements of a great portrait here, A "character", great lighting, and seems natural in the cowboy/Mexican get up. What looks like overdone editing creating the halo around his head is mostly from the ceiling light that is well positioned for the shot. A very well-done image.



Advanced Theme - 1st
"Solitary" by Lorna Scott

Judge's Comments: Compelling composition, well done. Strong technical and organizational factors reinforce the pronounced emotional components of mood, impact, subject and imagination.



Advanced Nature Print - 1st
"Pelican Fishing for Dinner" by Mary-Lee Sampson

Judge's Comments: This is a beautiful capture, with great sharpness and nice light. It conveys movement, a good story, displays the peak of the action and is a strong composition.



Advanced Monochrome Print - 2nd
"Mirror Drop" by Nick Delaney

Judge's Comments: The sharpness in critical areas adds impact to the strong composition. A great reflection in the water droplet and perfectly composed.



Advanced Open Print - 1st
"Corn Reflected" by Jim Fowler

Judge's Comments: Beautifully lit, nicely composed, wonderfully sharp.



Intermediate Open - 1st

"Reflecting on Orange and Blue" by Mary Weir

Judge's Comments: Very creative and daring composition. Striking complementary colours. The complexity of the wiper at lower right balances the eye-catching orange on the left. The viewer's eye bounces back and forth from one to the other, which is part of the game.



Intermediate Altered Reality - 1st

"Field of Poppies" by Danielle Labonté

Judge's Comments: Beautiful abstract with great colour contrast. Placement of one bright red spot in the top right helps to balance the heavy visual weight of the lower left corner.



Intermediate Wildlife - 1st

"Casper and her Cubs: Chilko River, BC" by Karen Towne

Judge's Comments: This is a good capture of Casper and her little ones. The bears are in their environment, which, in this case shows the time of year adding colour and texture to the overall image. This is a case where shallow depth of field would lower the quality of the image. Well done.



Intermediate People - 2nd

"Prepared to Head up the Creek" Maureen Reid

Judge's Comments: A great grab that captures the story very well. The story is clear as all the elements come together perfectly. From the layered background and foreground to the subject to the clothes and even the equipment he is carrying. The subject matter is sharp and clear and I love the sharp tuft of grass on the deck that adds another interest within the image. The colour contrast of the prominent blues with the yellow highlights of the can and oars work very well together. Perfectly cropped.



Novice Open - 1st
"Wachin Village Boy near Mandalay"
 by Douglas Layden

Judge's Comments: This is a nice portrait of a boy looking at the photographer. Nice catch-light, tilting of the head. This image instills an emotional reaction.



Novice Open - 3rd
"Minimalism Havana BW" by Jennifer Carlstrom

Judge's Comments: Original treatment of the subject. Really strong composition. The photo is sharp and has impact.




Intermediate Theme - 1st
"Autumn on Beach" by Wendy Clay

Judge's Comments: Displays excellent technical and organizational considerations. Good use of colours, light and cropping with a strong composition.

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Colourful Images

by Steve Barber

I have always been attracted to intense colours. In the last ten years I have been fortunate to have traveled on a number of photo tours to some of the most colourful places on the globe. The images in this article illustrate some of the results.

In November 2010 I participated in a photo tour to Venice, Italy with Richard Martin, one of Canada's foremost photographers who is based in Kingston, Ontario. On this tour we spent a day on the island of Burano in the lagoon outside Venice. Burano is 7 kilometres from Venice, a 45-minute trip from St. Mark's Square by vaporetto, a Venetian water bus.



"The Blue Bicycle"

Since before the Venetian Republic, Burano has been home to fishermen and legend says that the houses were painted in bright hues so the fishermen could see their way home when fog blanketed the lagoon. Our group was ecstatic with the photographic opportunities these vibrant houses presented or, as Richard described it, "We were drunk on colour!" The Blue Bicycle image attracted me with its symmetrical arrangement, and juxtaposition with the orange wall and green shutters. (f8.0, 1/250th second, ISO 400, Nikon D300.)

In "Window and Tree" what appealed to me was the way the tree trunk divided the blocks of colour on the walls. I also liked the contrast between the natural texture of the green tree bark and the smooth man-made planes of the house and window shutters. (f3.2, 1/4 second, ISO 400, Nikon D300.)

In 2014, I went on another photo tour with Richard Martin, this time to Morocco. One of our most exciting stops was in a city called Chefchaouen in the north-west corner of the country. Founded in 1471, the city



"Window and Tree"

has a unique medina, or old town, with narrow pedestrian alleyways in a maze of whitewashed buildings of Spanish and Moorish architecture. Almost the entire centre of the town is painted in shades of blue.

There are a variety of theories of the origin of the blue colour. One story says that the immigrant Sephardic Jewish community brought with them a tradition of painting buildings blue because it reminded them of the sky and the presence of God. A different version of the story attributes the blue to the Jewish community, but this time to Jews who arrived in Morocco fleeing Hitler's incursion through Europe.



"Cat, Chefchaouen, Morocco"

A third, radically different interpretation says that Chefchaouen became the blue city in Morocco in an effort to repel mosquitos and prevent malaria. This photo of a cat was taken in one of the numerous alleyways in the medina. (f5, 1/250th second, ISO 1250, Nikon D300.)

Roussillon is a small town in Provence in southern France. It is located in the very heart of the biggest ochre deposits in the world and is distinguished by a wide palette of flamboyant colours. Traditional ochre rendering is used throughout the village, providing heat and sun resistance to the sun-soaked houses. The walls of the



“Colours of Provence”

houses have been washed with the traditional ochre rendering, resulting in unique colour schemes. I was enticed by the rich colours of the walls punctuated by the green shutters and doors and accentuated by the white stucco frames. The abstract composition reminded me of a Mondrian painting. (f8 1/160th second, ISO 200, Nikon D300.)



“Street Scene, Trinidad, Cuba”

This image was created in Trinidad during a photo tour in 2016. Near the south coast of central Cuba, Trinidad is one of the best-preserved cities in the Caribbean from the time when the sugar trade was the main industry in the region. Founded in 1514, the central old town section of the city is recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site because of its importance as a centre of the sugar trade in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The cobblestone streets are lined with pastel painted houses with black wrought iron grilles covering the windows. Taken with a zoom lens set at 90 mm, this image emphasizes the vertical columns and doorways, plus the pastel colours of the walls. The man with the red shirt and blue trousers serves as a focal point and contrast to the wall colours. (f9, 1/200th second, ISO 250, Nikon D300.)

The last image shows a series of torii, (gates) constructed along a pathway to the sacred Mount Inari in

Kyoto, Japan. It is a religious shrine and complex of structures dedicated to Inari, the Shinto god of rice. The highlight of the shrine is the rows of torii gates, known as Senbon Torii. The custom to donate a torii began in the Edo period (1603 – 1868). A torii can express gratitude or a wish. In the 1300 years since its establishment in 711AD, people have gathered here to pray for bountiful harvests, business prosperity, the safety of their home and family and the fulfillment of all kinds of other wishes. Along the main path there are around a thousand torii gates. Each of Fushimi Inari Taisha's torii was donated by a Japanese business. Since the trail is visited daily by thousands of tourists, the challenge was to compose a photo during the few seconds when there aren't dozens of people in the shot.



“Fushimi Inari Taisha Shinto Shrine, Kyoto, Japan”

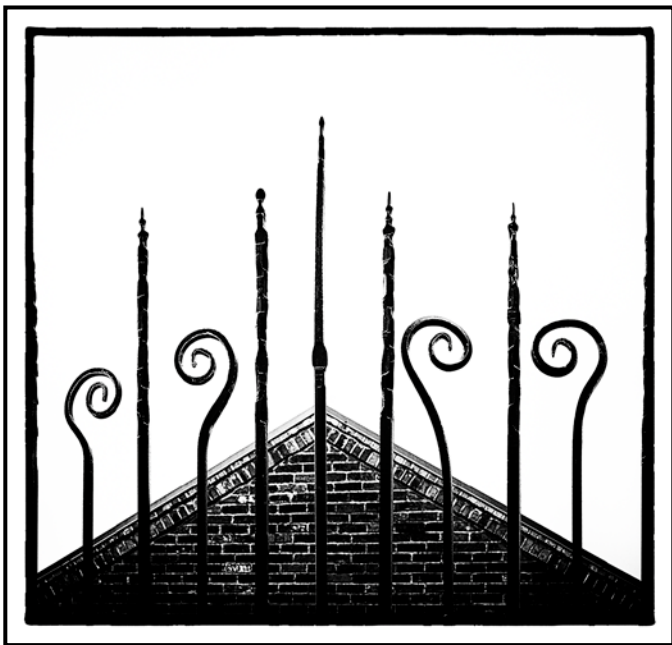
Of course, tripods were out of the question, due to the narrow passage and large crowds. We had arrived early, when the site first opened, to try to avoid the worst crowds. The lone figure dressed in black was the perfect centre of interest, balanced by the lantern on the centre right. The saturation was increased in post-processing to highlight the orange colour. The visit was part of a photo tour of Japan in 2019, organized by Richard Martin. (f5.6, 1/80th second, ISO 6400, Nikon D300.)

The key element in the composition of these images was to isolate the key blocks of colour and simplify the image to eliminate distracting background elements. This involved telephoto lenses of various lengths. As many are architectural compositions, it was also important to ensure the vertical and horizontal elements were as accurate as possible.

You don't need to venture across the globe to capture colourful images. Victoria's rich collection of historic buildings in Old Town are often painted in vibrant colour schemes and provide numerous opportunities similar to the examples shown in this article. Similarly, many of our city's historic houses feature flamboyant Victorian colours. So, get out and explore!

Member Profile: Graham Budd

Growing up in Ireland we spent summer mornings fishing and our afternoons going to the movies using the money we had earned from selling our catch. Although I had no money or interest in photography, I was intrigued by cinematography, particularly the editing, that drew me into the story. The classic weekly serial ended with our hero's demise, only to be reborn the following week when his plight was viewed from a different camera angle.



"Inspired"

Twenty years later I purchased my first camera, a Canon A-1 and two lenses. Having no idea what to shoot and balking at developing and printing costs, I tried to register for a B&W film course at our local college. Although it was full, I showed up on the first night and managed to convince the instructor to allow me to register. Seeing images appear before your eyes in a darkroom is remarkable and something all digital photographers should experience at least once in their lifetime. Learning the basics of dodging and burning using an enlarger has translated well for me in the digital arena.

One portrait of a five-year-old was well received by his parents and served as a catalyst for me to continue but not without a twenty-year hiatus first, as we had two kids to raise. When I returned to photography, digital was the game. A tax refund produced a new Canon DSLR and I made an excellent decision to join PSA, the Photographic Society of America. I joined a review group sharing one image per month for comments. I did this for five years and learned a great deal about making images. One of the participants became my first mentor, a fantastic photographer who had held exhibitions on

all seven continents and won every PSA award. I learned so much from Donovan by just viewing his work. He took me under his wing, a kindness so often repeated in the photographic community, and shared generously of his time and knowledge. Looking back, I have him to thank for transforming my hobby into something more.

Travelling to workshops and conventions throughout North America was a wonderful experience. We photographed many places we would never have considered visiting without PSA. With a focus on landscapes and wildlife, snapshots gradually began to be replaced with more interesting images, the pursuit of which resulted in all too frequent visits to the vendor booths along the way.



"Stereo"

Although I enjoyed PSA a lot, I wanted to experience something local, so after trying a small club up-Island, I joined VCC about eight years ago and volunteered to help with workshops for several years before starting and hosting the Mobile SIG with Jason Frank in 2020.

Photography provided an excellent way to document our lives, the places we visited and the things we experienced. For ten years, this became the focus of my photography. That changed for me three or four years ago after completing a "365 Project" which surprisingly found me at its conclusion lacking inspiration and the desire to create images. The project became more about getting a shot, any shot, without regard to the creative process. It was then that I came across a quote by Vincent Van Gogh, "I try more and more to be myself, caring relatively little whether people approve or disapprove." The quote resonated with me, and now I shoot only for myself. Landscapes and wildlife have morphed into abstractions, architecture, composites, street and creative iPhoneography using some of the many apps available for iOS, rekindling my enthusiasm along the way.

Close-up Lenses

by Roger Botting

Switching cameras has always been an interesting issue. Lose some things you like, or not, and it is time for a fresh start. And new issues. So, a new camera body and a do-it-all 24-200 mm lens. The only thing is that the new lens does not focus that close. So, a close-up lens gets added. I bought the NISI close-up lens and an adapter ring to fit. But it also fits many of my older lenses.

Close-up lenses work by modifying the apparent focal length of your lens. When you place a positive diopter lens in front of your camera lens it creates an optical combination with a shorter effective focal length. The shorter focal length of the combination allows for a closer focusing distance. Do not buy the cheap sets of close-up lenses; they do not have the optical quality of the more expensive lenses like Raynox or NISI. They were likely designed for film cameras and modern lenses are far sharper than most vintage lenses.

But as you get older and wiser you will discover bifocals for your eyes. After you get over the problem of not being able to see your feet you will discover the joys of being able to read a map and drive without changing glasses, although you shouldn't. You can do the same for your camera.

A popular trick in movies is the Deep Focus look where a shot is taken with one subject up close and another subject in the background, both in focus. And the mid-ground is often out-of-focus.

This is an easy trick in Photoshop and in the days of view cameras lens tilts were possible with some effort but with today's digital camera it is not easily done. You could always buy an expensive Tilt/Shift (T/S, PC) lens but there are less painful ways. Split-diopter lenses come to the rescue. These are the bifocal equivalents of a close-up lens. Half the lens is curved as you might expect and the other half of the lens is missing.

Digging through my bins of rarely-used equipment I found just such a filter, bought in the late 1970s. A quick look on the internet reveals that you can find some expensive split-diopter lenses from Tiffen and Schneider. These are what movie professionals use, but there are some less expensive ones available.

So, I made a new split-diopter lens. I disassembled an old 77 mm +1 diopter close-up lens and cut it in half.



"Split-diopter Close-up Lens"

I placed half of the lens back into the filter ring. I then took some photos of an object one meter away and the other object at infinity. The photos came out as expected, both halves of the photo were in focus. That's good and bad. The bad was that there was a very visible transition between one subject and the other. That is workable should the subjects not share a common object from front to back. No amount of stopping-down your lens will cover that great a focus range.



"Split-focus Image"

More rummaging produced a Cokin filter holder and a clear filter. Using some Crazy Glue, I attached the other lens half to the clear Cokin filter. The advantages came through quickly. I could rotate the lens fragment and also move the lens to have only the desired subject be affected by the close-up part.

Unfortunately, over time the Cokin clear filter has deteriorated so the new combo is only good for photographing subjects needing the soft-focus look.

With garden season coming I can now take photos that include the flowers in the foreground and the distant mountains, both in focus, with one shot. Or try free lensing (wikipedia.org/wiki/Freelensing).

Brighten Winter Days With B&W

by James Gardner

The dreary, wet days of winter on the West Coast can be a challenge. In this article I describe and illustrate a local solution where persistence and attention to B&W imagery have brightened my days and photographs. Why I produce certain images takes precedence over the how. With representational outdoor photography as a focus, the most important part of the how is getting out in all weather which provides new opportunities to explore the B&W medium. Articles, workshops, presentations and photo tours have addressed many aspects of B&W photography. Repetition of the basics is not needed.

My appreciation of B&W imagery came through influencers such as Frank Hurley, Herbert Ponting and Vittorio Sella, all of whom were burning and dodging well before Ansel Adams raised the bar. My introduction to the practice of B&W photography came in 1966 when a professor declared that, for field research, one must carry two cameras, one for colour and one for B&W. The latter was important because it was published in scientific articles, more precise in depicting details and was the medium used in earlier photography against which you could make comparisons of change over time. Though conversion from colour to B&W was possible but not ideal, I followed the suggested path until digital innovations allowed for a less weighty kit.

The following images are from the James Bay shore area during the recent December to January period. They come from an iPhone Pro13 with conversion to B&W and some post-processing in Apple Photos. Life in this area provides reminders that we live in a dynamic environment with seasonal, daily and hourly weather changes agitated by oceanic, topographic and human influences. Daily excursions make one mindful that winter dreariness is more imaginary than real, though, with winter's low light, there is a moodiness about it. The mix makes for a potpourri of photographic opportunities at the doorstep. To represent this dynamism provides the why of my photography. "Dark Horizon" illustrates that point. B&W has been used to convey mood, something illustrated in cinematography before talkies and colour. This image reminds me of the gloom and wind of the day and my imagination expects the ghost ship the *Flying Dutchman* to materialize from the horizon.

Dark days of winter sometimes produce snow, with brightening effects adding other photo opportunities. The resultant high contrast is both a gift in providing strong and distinctive shapes and lines and a chal-



"Dark Horizon"

lenge in managing the light photographically. An oil painting teacher during my teen years kept telling us, "Snow should not be white. Have a look at an A.Y. Jackson painting." The muted colours and tones inherent in snow cover are important ingredients in photographic and artistic expression of moods and feelings. B&W removes distractions of colour placing focus on tonalities that can be enhanced through darkroom or post-processing by burning and dodging. Another gift of snow cover is that it removes detail and distractions, especially in landscape scenes. It simplifies a scene.

"Enduring Peace" illustrates a quality that conveys a feeling of peace while the subtle tones and grass stems provide depth, further enhanced by the contrast and grain of the tombstone.



"Enduring Peace"

In some situations snow can provide an opposing effect, that is to enhance detail especially when pattern or texture are desired effects. The inherent contrast and tonalities of snow scenes are served well in B&W which also simplifies distractions brought by colour. "Tree Burst" from Beacon Hill Park conveys a sense of exuberance

and joy. The burst-like pattern comes out in the contrast seen in the snowy tree branches and lower bushes and extended by the tones seen in the foreground drifts.



"Tree Burst"

Many of our dark days are graced by rain and I believe that B&W photography can brighten those as well. It is a challenge along the Juan de Fuca shore where rain drains the scene of colour and contrast and adds the complication of nasty wet glare on flat surfaces. However, a close low-angle look may reveal some tonality within the glare that can be enhanced by adjusting neutrals and tone in post-processing. "Aftermath" illustrates this with the added advantage that the resulting elongated tones, including that of the tree reflection, further enhance perspective within the leading line of the path.



"Aftermath"

Some winter mornings are cloaked in fog, calming the visual landscape and seemingly muffling sounds. By fog, I mean a complete amorphous but translucent engulfment of what is visible from the ground up and out as distinct from drifting mist that often is detached from the ground. Fog softens colour and detail in the landscape except for the most immediate contrasting lines and shapes. The soft contrast has been exploited by photographers to produce a calming but moody feeling with subtle tones in the washed-out visage being usefully



"Park Walk"

represented in B&W. Also, the progressive decline of object detail with distance produces an illusion of depth or third dimension. When coupled with existing leading lines in the image it further enhances perspective. "Park Walk" illustrates these effects with the sharp detail and contrast diminishing with distance and fog depth while enhancing perspective provided by the marginal path.

Photography on winter excursions makes me mindful of the dynamics of the season, the photo opportunities arising, and the possibility of B&W brightening the memory of some dreary days.



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How I Did It

Overflowing

by Heather Thompson

This image of Sandcut Falls is proof of what you can achieve with a hobbyist camera (Canon 80D) and out-dated software (Lightroom 6).

I had been to this location just once before but the light was harsh and uninspiring. I decided to return another day to capture the falls in more flattering light. The first hour after sunrise and last hour before sunset are referred to as “the golden hour”. The sun is at a low angle in the sky so the light is softer and more diffuse. The atmosphere filters out the blue light, resulting in warmer yellow, orange and red tones. Shadows are longer, enhancing the terrain in a 3D-like effect.



In planning my photoshoot, I needed to confirm the position of the sun in relation to the falls during the two golden hour periods. PhotoEphemeris, PhotoPills or PlanIt are some recommended apps. The morning sun would not reach the falls until mid-morning so that option was out. The afternoon golden hour would begin at 6:08 pm, with the sun setting that day at 6:50 pm.

My composition included both waterfalls and the shoreline to add depth and interest to the image. A tripod is a necessity for long-exposure photography. I used a wide-angle lens and shot in Aperture Priority. To achieve “silky” water, I experimented with various apertures and shutter speeds. A wider aperture will result in a faster shutter speed, “freezing” the water droplets. A narrower aperture results in a slower shutter speed, smoothing out the water. The trick is to find the right setting to give the desired effect. 1/4 second at f/16 and ISO 100 was perfect.

This image was awarded first place in the November Intermediate Nature category.

Tulip Abstraction

by Gordon Griffiths

In April 2021 three Club members generously invited me to join them on a shoot at the Horticultural Centre of the Pacific “HCP”. We were fortunate to have a bright, sunny day for this shoot.

What attracted me to this tulip was the warm sunlight making the flower almost glow. I was happy with the image as processed in Photoshop, but I thought it would be even better if given a painterly treatment. With one exception, all of my family are competent and talented artists. Unfortunately, I have not graduated from the stick-man level.

However, Topaz Labs has come to the rescue. To give this image a painterly feel, I took it into Topaz Impression. What I was hoping to do was to imitate some of the wonderful effects Georgia O’Keeffe gave to many of her flower paintings.



John Barclay, in his Topaz workshop, presented to the Club earlier this year, demonstrated how to give images a painterly feel using Impression. This software gives you the ability to choose among a number of brushes and an array of settings to create painterly effects.

I experimented with several of the brushes available and made several adjustments to the sliders before I achieved the effect I was seeking. One has to be very patient and be ready for failures when doing this kind of experimentation. “Patience is a virtue” is never truer than in photography.

Shoots Around Victoria

Ghostly Walking Tours

by James Dies

Do you like being scared? Do you like being spooked by dark and eerie places? Do you like to hear ghost stories? If that is the case, then one of the more fun and exciting photographic field trips is the Ghostly Walking Tours in and around Bastion Square in Old Town Victoria. They say the spirits of those who departed are still around and, on some nights, you can see their apparitions in the alleys and back lanes of Old Town.

The old Supreme Court building in Bastion Square is reputed to have some ghosts as it was built on the site of a former city jail and its first gallows. Many condemned men were hanged on a tree beside the old jail, and some are still buried underneath it.



"Spooky Ghost"

Victoria's famous, or infamous, red-light district is now Market Square and Chinatown. They both have many stories of the supernatural. The ghosts here frequented the saloons, brothels, gambling halls and opium dens that used to be in Old Town. Many of these establishments were along Fan Tan Alley.

One story is about a well near the old jail-house that had been filled in long ago. It was the scene of a grisly death, and the ghost of the deceased is still around. A far cry from today's trendy and hip shops now here. Chris Vardy of the Field Trip Committee has put togeth-

er an evening guided field trip in March that will take participants to haunted areas where ghosts have been seen and if you have your camera ready you might catch them before they vanish into the darkness.

If you missed getting on the field trip you can still book a guided tour yourself or for a few friends and do an evening tour of Bastion Square and Old Victoria. These tours are led by some of the finest storytellers in the city. They will tell you stories about a paranormal pub and the infamous Helmcken Alley. The evening is a great opportunity to take some captivating photos of the historical district of Victoria and learn some history. Please go to: discoverthepast.com/ghostly-walks for more information.

A good idea is to do a web search under "Photoshop" and "Creating Ghostly Images" before you head out. Some tips for capturing ghosts are to use long exposures and use ND filters, if you have them. If you don't have ND filters, using polarizing filter sometimes will work as it will give you 1-2 f-stops less light depending on the filter. If you have a partner, then they can be the "ghost actor" in your photo. To shoot ghosts, it's best to go in a group of two or three. The best time is near sunset or a little later. Have your actor wear the same colour for the top and bottom, all black or all white. If you want, bring along a long flowing white or black gown or robe and have the actor wear it at the shoot. Set your camera for a 5 to 20 second exposure and use a ND 8 or higher filters. Auto Focus on your subject then lock your focus and start your shoot. You will have to experiment repeatedly until you get your shot.



"Looking for Lunch"

Photoshop Calculations for B&W Photography

by James Holkko

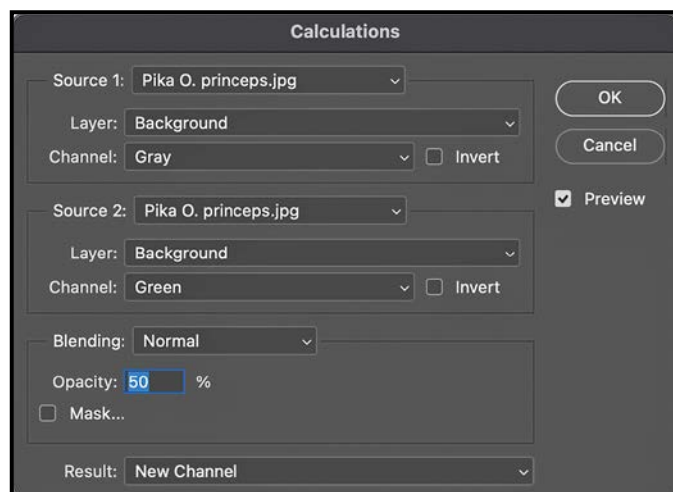
There's a quick and easy way to produce beautiful black and white conversions of your photography with an image adjustment in Photoshop called Calculations. In a bonus tutorial I'll also show how calculations can quickly create complex selections.



"Common Pika: Original Image"

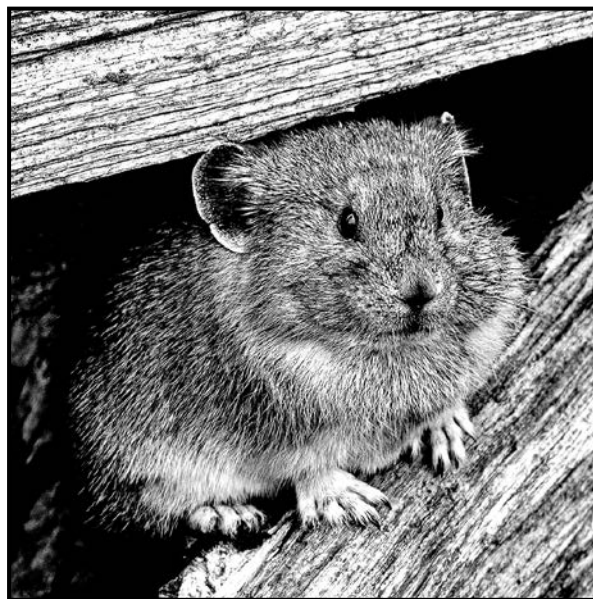
Let's convert this photograph of a Pika into a black and white image. With the photograph opened in Photoshop, select the Channels Tab in the Layers palette (see page 25). When selected, each colour channel will display a different intensity of black and white. A review of each channel will determine which to use in Calculations. This photograph has an overall red tone so the red channel was washed out, the blue channel was dark, and the green channel had a good balance. The next step is to adjust the image in Calculations.

From the menu bar select Image then Calculations. I like to select Gray for the Source 1 channel. Then select the Green Channel for Source 2. Reviewing the Blending Modes will provide different black and white choices. To better review these options, I reduce the Opacity to 50-70%. Selecting "New Channel" as the Result will create an Alpha Channel layer below the Blue Channel. This layer can be selected then copied and pasted into a new layer in the layers tab for further editing (to save the image in a variety of formats the Alpha channel will need to be deleted from the channels tab). In this step review the different blend modes from the Blending drop-down menu. For this example, the Overlay section provided



"Calculations Panel"

several nice options. Overlay, Soft Light and Hard Light produced a subtle range of contrast. I narrowed my choice to Overlay, I right-clicked and held on the word Opacity, then moved the mouse left and right to find a good balance at 55%. For greater contrast, Vivid Light, Linear Light and Hard Mix produced a pen illustration effect. This is an example of Vivid Light at 45% opacity.



"Vivid Light Blending Result"

Experiment with colour channels, blending modes and opacity to see the different options. Once I've added the B&W result to a new layer or document, I fine-tune the image using the Adobe Camera Raw (ACR) filter by selecting the layer in the Layers palette. Then, from the menu bar select filter/Camera Raw Filter from the drop-down menu. Keyboard shortcuts: CMD/Ctrl+Shift+A. Then select the Basic menu in ACR.

Holding the Opt/Alt key while adjusting several of the sliders will white or black out the image and show when the setting is clipping. Once the clipping is re-

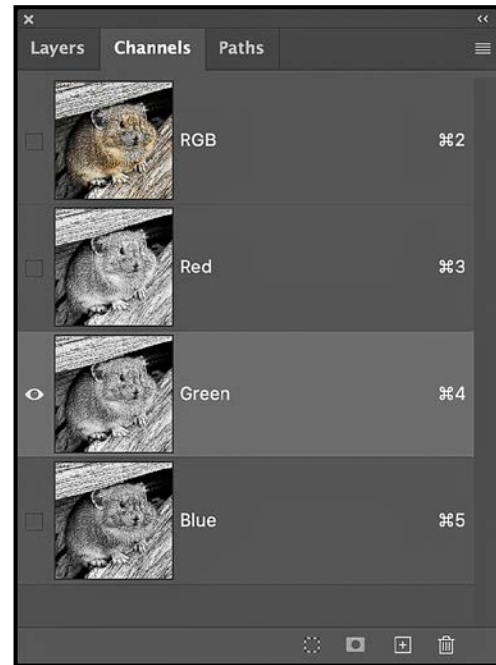


“ACR “Basic” Panel”

vealed, release the Option/Alt key and fine tune the setting. I find adjusting Shadows and Highlights easier while referencing the image. Texture provides a subtle range of sharpening. Clarity can produce dramatic contrast, even to the point of a High Dynamic Range (HDR) effect. Depending on the type of image, I'll add grain to simulate the look of film. When shooting with colour or B&W film to capture action or working in low light, a higher ISO film is used, and this produces grain in the photograph.

There are several 3rd party applications available to render B&W images. DXO's FilmPack, DxO, Nic Collection and Exposure X provide options for colour and B&W films. B&W photography has been the medium for Henri Cartier-Bresson's explorations in composition, Annie Leibovitz's striking portraits, the breathtaking landscapes by Ansel Adams and so many more great photographers. Peter Lindbergh once said, "My imagination was indelibly marked by the blunt realism in the faces immortalized by documentary photographers such as Dorothea Lange and Walker Evans. Although humans see reality in colour, for me, B&W has always been connected to the image's deeper truth, to its most hidden meaning."

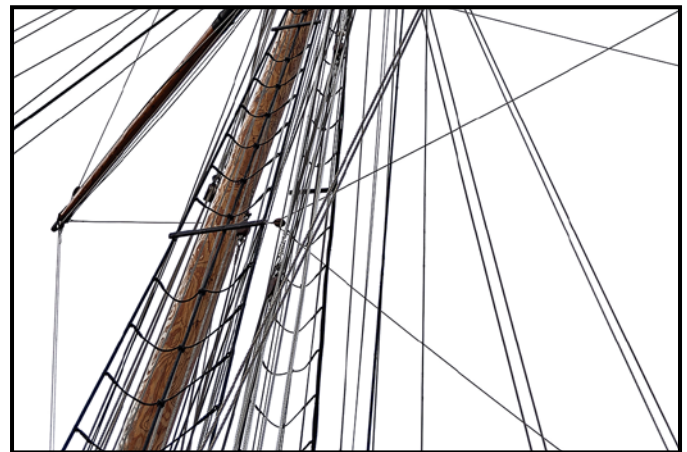
Bonus tutorial. To create a complex selection utilizing Calculations I'll work with this photograph of a boat's rigging. Isolating all the rigging from the sky would be nearly an impossible task with any number of Photoshop selection tools. Calculations has a built-in selection tool to take advantage of its ability to isolate colours using channel colours and produce the necessary



“Channels Tab”

contrast for refined selections. I found selecting gray for the Source 1 channel colour and blue for the Source 2 channel colour created the greatest contrast. Reviewing the Blending modes showed Vivid Light at 100% Opacity produced the most refined contrast.

Choosing "Selection" as the result will create a selection of any non-white elements in the image. Depending on the type of edits required, Inverting the selection and copying the selection to a transparent layer might be useful. To invert the selection choose Select from the menu bar, then Inverse or CMD/Ctrl+Shift+I. To create a copy of the selection on a new transparent layer, from the menu bar select Layer, New, then Layer Via Copy or CMD/Ctrl J.



“Rigging”

Utilizing Calculations to create beautiful black and white conversions or as a powerful selection tool will illustrate the capability of this seldom used Photoshop tool.

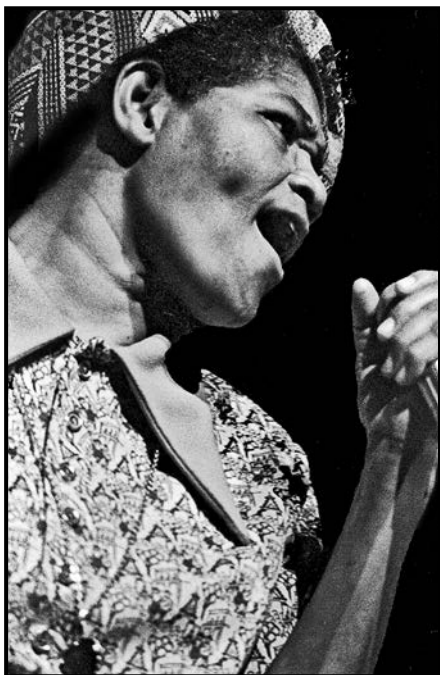
Beginner's Corner: Musicians

by Joseph Finkleman

Musicians are a very interesting subject to photograph. The music itself gives us tremendous clues and cues in order to time the moment precisely. The emotions exhibited by the musicians are definitive small human truths and, as such, easily relatable to all of us. Unfortunately, however, they rarely play in uncluttered well-lit spaces where photographers can easily stand.

Indoor venues are often very poorly lit; think small clubs with one-point lighting, often with a low wattage lamp or with very bright spotlights and almost no fill lighting. Some side-lighting is often used, coupled with coloured gels.

Most venues do not want photographers to be directly in front of the stage, either prohibiting that altogether or giving only a very brief moment at the beginning of the concert, usually of the warm-up band. For photographers who want to photograph acoustic concerts another problem is shutter noise which can be quite annoying.



"Mama Mae Thornton"

There are a few solutions. Talk to the promoters and get them to authorize you to photograph the concert. Another is to do the same with the band if you can. Sometimes the venue itself will authorize an individual photographer to set up and be able to work. I have done all of these things and consequently have photographed quite a number of bands. Additionally, I have been paid to photograph these events. In summary,

the gatekeepers can be the promoters, the band and the venue too.



"Musician"

Another solution is to get far away from the stage area. The perfect spot is at the back of a sloped auditorium. You need a long lens for this but I have found it to be ideal. A long zoom lens can easily be adjusted for an establishing shot and also for close-ups.

Outdoor concerts are much easier using this same setup since the further you are away from the elevated stage, the flatter the angle becomes from you to them. Plus, the lighting is so much better during daylight hours and, oddly, often at night.

You need to shoot with a high shutter speed. At a distance, depth-of-field is either, not a problem, or a much smaller one. Indoors I shoot at ISO 6400, wide open, and that usually gives me a shutter speed of about 1/100th to 1/250th second. I use a 100-400 mm lens with IBIS on a Fuji camera. However, I have used prime lenses ranging from 200 to 300 mm. Remember that I have been doing this for fifty years and in that time equipment and materials have improved vastly.

I do not recommend ultra-fast lenses. They are usually shorter focal lengths and so you have to be much closer to the stage. The very narrow depth-of-field is usually not useful. The only time a short ultra-fast lens can be useful is in venues where the band or the venue has given you free rein. I have stood on stage with BB King and photographed him for the venue and the sponsor. Back then the black and white film I used was rated at ISO 2500.

Lastly, shutter and mirror-slap noise are objectionable in acoustic concerts. My recommendation is to use a mirrorless camera. Also, shooting a raw capture and then processing it for black and white solves a lot of colour temperature problems.

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