

Close-Up

VictoriaCameraClub.ca

Santa's List

Capture One

Camera Techniques

Autumn Magic at Butchart's

Japanese Garden

Dark Skies

Colour Me

Member Profile: Jim Gardner

Polarizers

Painting with Brushes in Photoshop

Commercial Photography

Beginner's Corner: How I Process a

RAW Capture in Lightroom

"Milky Way at Whiffin Spit" by Richard Letourneau

Victoria Camera Club

December 2021 Volume 74 Number 9

C A P T U R E W I N T E R

FIND THE BEST ASSORTMENT OF CAMERAS, LENSES
AND ACCESSORIES. SHOP ONLINE AT HENRYS.COM
OR IN STORE AT OUR VANCOUVER STORE



555 WEST BROADWAY, VANCOUVER
HENRYS.COM



HENRY'S
CANADA'S GREATEST CAMERA STORE



PRINT • MOUNT • FRAME • PRINTLab!

You love photography, and so do we!
From simple prints on a wide range of archival media, to
canvas, metallics, and gorgeous finished custom frames, we
work with you to achieve the perfect result.
Visit us online to get started with your project.

www.theprintlab.ca • 250.590.3373 • 3350 Tennyson Ave

THE
PRINT
LAB



"Esquimalt Lagoon" by Richard Letourneau

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 SIG's 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*.

PSA Award-winning Website and Newsletter

2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2017,
2018, 2019 and 2020

CAPA Award-winning Newsletter 2015

Please support our advertisers.

Remember to tell them that you saw their ad in *Close-Up*. Member Discounts are listed in the member's section on our website.

December 2021

Close-Up is the magazine of the Victoria Camera Club. Copyright ©, Victoria Camera Club, 2021, all rights reserved. Mailing address: PO Box 46035, RPO Quadra, Victoria, BC, V8T 5G7. Editor: Richard James (editor@victoriacameraclub.ca) for submissions or advertising in **Close-Up**. Deadline for submissions for the January 2022 issue is November 21st 2021.

For additional information: please contact:

Membership: membership@victoriacameraclub.ca

Workshops: workshops@victoriacameraclub.ca

Field Trips: fieldtrips@victoriacameraclub.ca

Meetings: meetings@victoriacameraclub.ca

Website: vccweb@victoriacameraclub.ca

Close-Up: editor@victoriacameraclub.ca

President: vccpresident@victoriacameraclub.ca

What's Inside

Calendar and President's Message.....	4
Santa's List.....	5
Capture One.....	6
Camera Techniques.....	8
Competition Information.....	10
Autumn Magic at Butchart's Japanese Garden.....	17
Dark Skies.....	18
Colour Me.....	20
Member Profile: Jim Gardner.....	22
Polarizers.....	23
Painting with Brushes in Photoshop.....	24
How I Did It.....	26
Shoots Around Victoria.....	27
Commercial Photography.....	28
Beginner's Corner: How I Process a RAW Capture in Lightroom.....	30

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) for the latest details of all our workshops, field trips and meetings.

All meetings and workshops are on-line only. Please check the calendar for updates. victoriacameraclub.ca/club/clubschedules.aspx.

Dec 16th: Christmas Potluck. Online meeting.

Jan 6th: Competition Night. The January competition theme is “Minimalism”. The November competition results will be presented.

Jan 13th: Presenters’ Night. Creative Abstract Photography with Ursula Abresch.

Jan 20th: Members’ Night. Presentations of members’ images, field trip slide shows, print reviews or short technical presentations.

Workshop Highlights: Minimalist Photography, Tones of Grace/Place.

Field Trip Highlights: Full Moon Rising, Xmas Parades.

Cover Image: “Milky Way at Whiffin Spit” by Richard Letourneau. I had been to Whiffin Spit in Sooke the night before I captured this image but there was a lot of low cloud and a fog bank was rolling in. Determined to capture a better image I ventured forth the following evening, August 10, 2021. The conditions were very favourable weather-wise. I was warm enough, there was little wind and the stars were plentiful. It was near midnight when I captured the shot and I remembered the silence and how close the Milky Way appeared to be.

I used my tripod-mounted Canon R5 mirrorless camera with an RF 28-70 mm lens. The settings were ISO 2000, 28 mm, f 2, at 10 seconds.

My set-up was such that I was facing the ocean, with the Sooke Harbour lights behind me. However, over the course of a 10 second exposure I reaped the benefit of the foreground being lit naturally from ambient light. I didn’t have to introduce any light painting whatsoever. In fact, in post-processing I had to desaturate the yellow bench as it was very vivid, right out of camera.

Truly a night to remember!

President’s Message

Our Christmas Social this year will be held on December 16th at 7 pm. We will be holding this event online again and the Christmas Social committee is hard at work putting the evening together. Please look for more information closer to the date. The committee would like to encourage members to donate what you would have spent at the in-person event to a worthy charity.

As the end of the calendar year approaches, some look back at what they have accomplished and start to plan for the coming year. Let’s look at the Club’s past year.

Our website guru, Richard Letourneau, is in his last year as Webmaster and is looking for someone to come forward to take over at the end of the season. His trusty team has been working hard to keep the website in tip-top shape and up to date.

Our internal competition committee has been working hard reviewing images, organizing judges, and showing the results on Competition Night. Lorna Zaback is doing a fabulous job ensuring everything runs smoothly. Thank you, Jill Turyk, for your years as Competition Chair (and board member) and for continuing on the committee.

Our Field Trip Coordinators, led by Rilla Ballantyne, have been busy organizing some amazing field trips for us to attend all over the Island and parts of the mainland. The Tuesday Field Trips continue to inspire us to think outside of the box and photograph in and around Victoria with a theme in mind.

Our Workshop Coordinators, led by Steve Lustig, started us off with a bang at the beginning of the year and have kept going. They have been giving us plenty to try out and practice so we can make those award-winning shots. Jim Gardner and Alec Lee have continued to provide us with wonderful guest photographers in their Nature SIG. Kevin Keliher and Normand Marcotte have been taking us on a creative journey into our imagination in the Creative SIG. The Mobile Photography SIG, led by Graham Budd and Jason Frank, is now in its second year and has proven to be a popular event. Of course, there is Richard James and the team at *Close-Up* who give us plenty to read nine times each year.

Our Club is growing and expanding what it offers to our members and it’s all because of our volunteers, whether you’ve been here for 10 years, or are a brand new-member. To you all I say thank you and wish you Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year.

Teri VanWell, President.

Santa's List

by The Chief Elf

Santa and his faithful crew of elves have been hard at work once again this year producing all sorts of goodies for photographers and their friends. They've had to deal with parts shortages and COVID restrictions, so they have found that a few things are hard to get.



"Santa on His Way"

Lighting tools are in demand, be it a small collapsible reflector for directing light up into a flower, under a mushroom, or a bigger studio-sized model for studio work. You may also find adapters for speedlights useful such as the Rogue FlashBender, Garry Fong's LightSpheres or the Opus Easy-Go soft-box system. Flash triggers are useful whether you are shooting in a studio or in the field. Suppliers include Pocket Wizard, Godox etc.

Straps and holders are always usable. If that heavy lens and camera hanging from your shoulder or around your neck is a problem, then look at the Cotton Carrier that is produced by a company in North Vancouver. This supports your camera from both shoulders with a waistband for added stability. It's quick-release clip lets you "grab and shoot". There is also a belt clip for your second camera. Conventional neck and sling style straps are also available from Peak Design and Black Rapid.

If you shoot flowers, you will often find you need to keep something out of the image, or to hold the flower stalk still. Miniature bungee cords and clamps are available from any hardware store. More specialized clamps are produced by Manfrotto, Wimberly ("Plamp"), SmallRig and others.

If you don't have a quick release system for your tripod Santa recommends that you buy one that is designed for the Arca-Swiss style and includes anti-twist features.

These are available from Kirk, Really Right Stuff and other suppliers. They consist of a camera plate (the best ones provide both vertical and horizontal mounting) and a clamp for the tripod head.

If you are using a tripod for stability then you really need some sort of cable or remote system to release the shutter. These vary from the simple wired release button to more complex timers and wireless-controlled remote releases. There are also specialized shutter release systems for remote photography of wildlife or for controllable waterdrop photography. If your camera supports Wi-Fi or Bluetooth you may also be able to control your camera wirelessly from your phone or tablet computer. Suppliers include Miops, CamRanger, Helicon and more. Some of these also work with a USB cable.

For night photography headband-mounted LED lights are useful. The best ones provide white and red light. Red light does not impact your night vision as much as white. Are you tired of trying to read your LCD screen in the sunlight? A good, shielded loupe such as the Hoodman Hoodloupe will solve that problem for you.

Have you made the move to mirrorless cameras and found that your camera bag is now way too big? Maybe it's time to downsize and look at bags from companies like LowePro, Think Tank or Tamrac. Santa reminds you that a backpack needs to be really secure which means heavy quality construction beats out low quality and low price.

Memory cards are always needed but beware of the "really sgood deal" from an unknown vendor. Fake (not the stated capacity) or low quality (didn't meet the standard) cards are not uncommon so buy well-known name brands from a reliable dealer.

Lens and sensor cleaning kits are essential supplies. The good old dustless lens tissue and cleaning solution still work well. A puffer brush helps remove grit from your lens and filters. Sooner or later you will get dust or other material on your sensor's filter. They're easy to clean with the right tools. Visible Dust is a Canadian company that's been around for a long time. Buying from a reliable source is critical here as anything that touches the sensor filter must be absolutely free of grit or lint.

Products mentioned are not endorsed or guaranteed by Santa, the Chief Elf or the VCC. Please support our advertisers by buying from them and telling them that you saw their ad in *Close-Up*.

Santa and the Elves wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

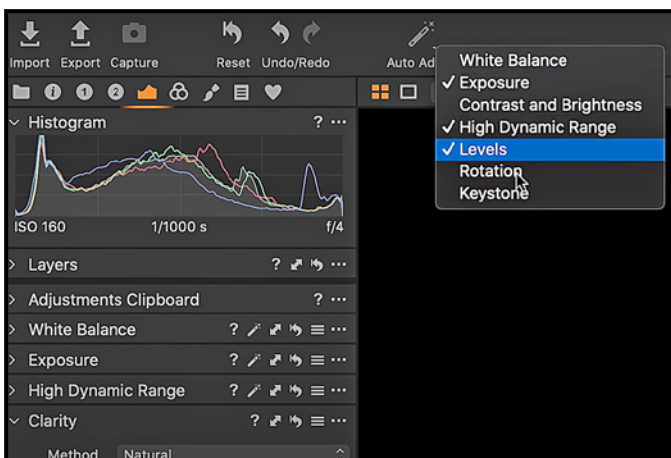
Capture One

by Tom Stewart

I love Lightroom. I have used it for years to work with thousands of images from my Nikon DSLRs. So why am I writing about Capture One, an alternative to Adobe's Lightroom? A couple of years ago I was smitten by the charms of the Fuji mirrorless cameras with their old-school look and feel, compact size, fine selection of top-notch lenses and their X-Trans APS-C sensors. It was the X-Trans sensor that led me to Capture One. I was persuaded early on that Capture One did a better job than Lightroom at rendering the Fuji raw files.

Since becoming comfortable with Capture One, I have become enamoured with many aspects of working with the software, a few of which follow.

The Interface: The Capture One workspace is incredibly customizable and can be configured to have a look and feel that would make a Lightroom user comfortable. After all, both programs need to import, edit, repair, export, and organize groups of photos.



"Histogram Tool Tab"

Each of Capture One's top tool tabs can have dozens of different tools to support your workflow preferences. The same tool can be included under different tool tabs if you like so you could include the histogram, for example, under both the Colour and the Exposure tool tabs. Additional tool tabs may be added and populated from a list of available tools. Tool tab icons can also be customized to have more relevance to you.

Catalogs or Sessions: In Capture One, you may select a Catalog or a Session workflow. A catalog could reference your shots from a number of photo shoots, or years, while a session would generally reference your images from a single photo shoot, date, or location.

The Catalog workflow should be familiar to Lightroom users. It is great for organizing and editing images from multiple folders or different drives. I usually work in session mode just processing the images from a day's shoot as a batch. The images from a session can later be imported into a catalog if desired. Capture One creates four additional folders in the source folder for each new session: Capture, Selects, Output, and Trash. This useful setup is a legacy of Capture One's origins supporting tethered shooting with the images (captures) going directly to the computer.

Layers: Photoshop users are aware of the benefits of using layers for adjustments and it's easy to send an image on a round-trip to Photoshop from Lightroom. Capture One brings the layers feature under its own roof. Whether you are performing a lens correction, adjusting colour, cropping, sharpening, adjusting exposure, any other adjustment, you can perform one or more of these adjustments on individual layers. Making these adjustments on a layer means you can easily discern the effects of the adjustment or undo it entirely by turning the layer on or off. A user can create up to 16 different adjustment layers for each image and the opacity of each can be set for best effect.



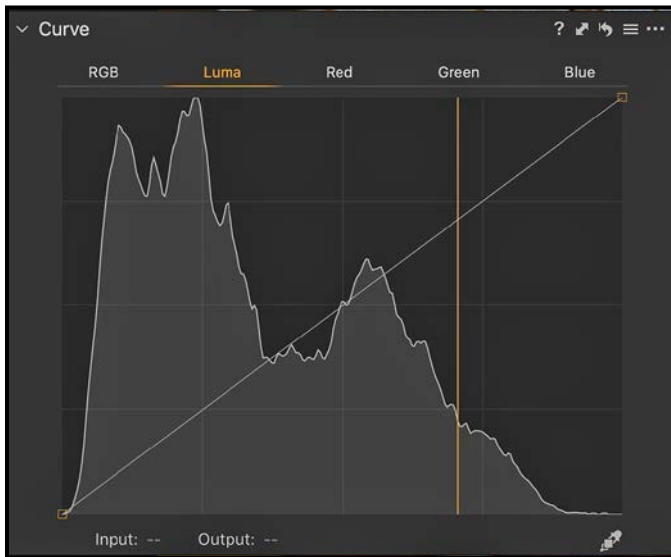
"Colour Editor"

Colour Editing: Capture One's colour editor tools can be used to select a single colour or range of colours, and modify their hue, saturation, and lightness (HSL). The tools can be used to quickly create layer masks.

In the "Basic" tab, you can select a colour range identified by the eight coloured boxes and use the three sliders to adjust the HSL characteristics of that range. Alternately, you may use the direct colour selector to choose a specific colour by clicking directly on it. With

the colour selected, you drag up or down or side to side to adjust the HSL characteristics of that colour.

However, Capture One's real magic is evidenced in the "Advanced" tab; that offers maximum control and precise adjustments. You define a colour range by using the colour picker to select the colour that you want to adjust. The editor then presents a suggested colour range as a triangular band within the colour circle. Use the outer handles to broaden or narrow the colour range then drag the inner or outer radii of the range to modify the saturation levels to which the selection will apply. The smoothness slider controls how sharply or softly the edges of the selection are distinguished from other parts of the image. The click of a button desaturates the non-selected parts of the image making it very easy to see the selection itself. Another click turns the selection into a mask that can be used to apply many other attributes as well as HSL. The third part of the Colour Editor tool is a dedicated module for skin tones. One of the key features is the ability to reduce the discrepancies in skin appearance such as between face and shoulder or arm for example.



"Luma Curve Tool"

Luma Curve: Part of the Curve tool, the Luma (luminosity) curve adjustment allows brightness levels to be adjusted while the hues and saturation of the colours are kept constant. This provides richer, cleaner shadows without muddying highlights. Using the RGB curve adjustments in the tool will affect hue and saturation as well as brightness resulting in apparent colour shifts.

Levels: The Levels tool in Capture One provides an excellent way to improve the tonal range of your image by allowing you to set the white and black points in a very visual and intuitive fashion using the tool's histogram-like display. Moving the black and white markers

at the bottom towards the center remaps tonal values, boosting overall contrast. These markers represent the input values and are connected to the markers at the top that represent the output values. If there are areas of the image that are blown out or pure black, moving the top markers in a little usually corrects those problems. Moving the gamma marker in the center of the tool changes the mid-tones in the image.



"Loupe Tool"

Loupe: Selecting the loupe tool and hovering over any part of the image pops up an enlarged high-resolution circle of the image which lets you better assess the characteristics within the selection to determine which, if any, further adjustments are required. It's one of the Capture One tools that invokes a sort of analog feel for anyone who has inspected printed output with an old-fashioned optical loupe.

Another Capture One tool that conjures up an analog feel, despite having no direct antecedent, is the before/after slider. I just enjoy dragging that slider across the screen to compare the original to the adjusted version at any part of the image.

One thing to keep in mind about Capture One is to have your output in mind when you start making adjustments as all of the adjustments you make will be targeted to the currently selected "Process Recipe" (output mode).

Capture One offers several versions of the software, some restricted to the files of particular camera brands and some that will work with images from any source. The current version is Capture One 21. Version 22 is scheduled for release in December 2021 and should include HDR and Panorama editing. A 30-day free trial of a fully-functional version is available. For me, although I enjoy working in Lightroom, I like working in Capture One even more. I have a hard drive full of Nikon images which need to be processed and edited as well so I will be no stranger to Lightroom either. It's like having my cake and eating it too.

Camera Techniques

by Jim Fowler

Most of the time we take pictures of things that interest us with the intention of producing a final photo. If you were learning to play the piano, however, you would not just work at musical “pieces”. You would have to play scales and exercises to improve your technique. What can you do to improve your photography? Here are five exercises you can do to improve your awareness of composition. Some of these exercises require manual settings to control depth of field and focus. Try them and have fun.



“Why Did I take this Picture?”

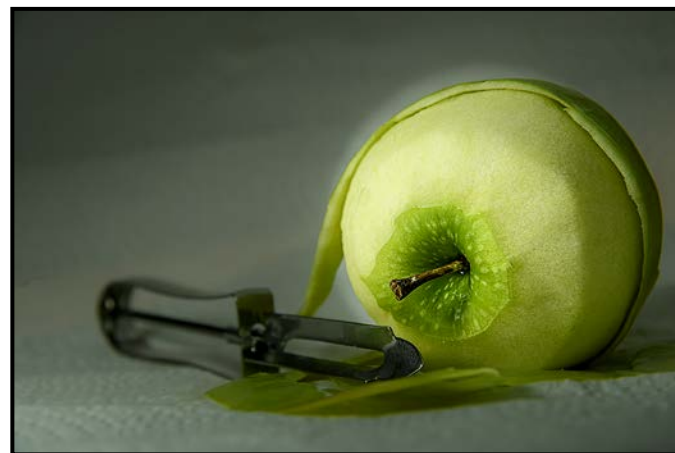
Take a photo of a scene that appeals to you but avoid a “minimalist” subject. Alternatively, find an old photo which makes you ask, “Why on earth did I take that photo?” Examine the photo carefully and choose two or three severe crops that make different photos from within the original photo. Don’t worry about loss of pixel detail: you are only looking for pictorial structure. Feel free to choose “minimalist” images in your crop. Pick parts of the picture that seem uninteresting and try to find a picture within that. Decide which of the crops you like the best and if you can, go back and take a photo of just that part of the original photo. The point of this exercise is to enable you to see what is suitable for a photo instead of just recording what is in front of you. See what you overlooked before. It is best to try to imagine, before you take it, what you want your picture to look like when it is done.

Choose two objects that are somehow related to each other. The two objects can be anything you like as long as they relate to each other. Examples of two related objects would be an apple and a paring knife, a sock and a shoe or a wrapped present and some scissors. Choose something that appeals to you but limit yourself to just two objects. Decide which of the two objects will



“A Forest of Masts”

be more important in the picture that you are going to create. Now arrange those two objects in such a way that makes it apparent which object is more important than the other and illustrates their relationship. This is the essence of the “story-telling” exercise. Keep the background neutral, blurred and indistinct. The tools available to emphasize one thing over the other might include light and shade (including vignetting), focus and blur, occlusion (one in front of the other), colour and the lack thereof, or any other techniques you like, so long as it is clear what the things are and which is more important to tell the story. Can you tell a visual story without words? Do you think about the story, or only subjects when you create your photographs?



“Peeling an Apple”

Choose a subject that has some obvious depth in your eyes. Avoid great depth from foreground to infinity and obvious lines of perspective. Now choose your lens and aperture to make your photo contain as few indicators of depth as possible. Try to make your photo look two-dimensional. Remember that the five indicators of depth that are available to photographers are shading, occlusion, haze, sharpness contrasted with blur and

perspective. Flat lighting helps to avoid contrast. A long lens tends to compress the subject. Small apertures increase the depth of field. Avoid the separating effect of sharp focus in front of blurred backgrounds. Perhaps soft focus or universal haze will help. The purpose of this exercise is to gain more control over the illusion of depth by creating flatness. It is like pushing the “de-haze” slider in an app into the negative making more haze, just to see what it does.



“Flattened Distant Hills”

Take a picture of a single subject but avoid placing that subject anywhere near the centre of the photo, or even on a “rule of thirds” point. Place your subject in an extreme position either against an edge or in a corner.

The object of the exercise, though, is still to create a balanced picture, but you must achieve that balance using the subject and negative space, or some secondary subject that does not overpower your subject. You want to avoid making a photo that looks like you “almost missed the shot” but, at the same time, you are purposely avoiding the usual formulae of centering your subject, or using a “rule of thirds” placement. A human figure in a bottom corner, for example, can emphasize the smallness of a single human against the vastness of nature. By intentionally using extreme placement, you free yourself from the natural tendency to center subjects and break free from slavish adherence to the



“Great Blue Heron in a Corner”

rule of thirds, plus you must try to find “balance” in an awkward visual situation. Can you “balance” a photo when the only subject is in one corner?

Make a photograph in which the sole tool for composition is the distribution of light and dark on the subject. The subject is irrelevant, but always choose something that interests you.

Think of “Night Watch” by Rembrandt. He lit the face of every single figure in the assembled guard. Those lit faces are spread across a mostly dark canvas. You can do this in a studio with controlled lighting to add highlights to an otherwise dark image, or you can choose harsh light outdoors with deep shadows or in post-processing, add light spots and shade where you please but use only the distribution of light and shade as your guiding principle of composition.



“Lighted Faces”

Maybe you want to do this in monochrome, but it can work just as well in colour. If you want to make it abstract, you can do that too. Perhaps an intentionally blurred photo will allow you to concentrate more on light and dark and forget about the “things”.

How will you know if you have succeeded in any of these exercises? This is not a contest, the intention is that by concentrating on a single aspect of composition you will become more aware of the tools available to you every time you take a photo.

Look at your own photos and you can decide if you met the goals you have set. If you have opened your mind to just one new way of imagining a picture, your time was not wasted.

Now that you have done your practicing, you may go out and play.

January Theme: Minimalism

by Bob Barlow

When asked to write a description of the theme “Minimalism”, my first draft was simply “Self-Explanatory”, which I felt tied in rather nicely with the theme. The article “Minimalist Art and Photography” by Kathryn Delany in the November 2021 *Close-Up* goes into more detail. However, I will attempt to be more descriptive. Wiktionary’s definition of Minimalism is, “A style of art that emphasizes extreme simplicity of form”.



“Daisies”

This snowy flower image may be one example of the concept. However, nature photos can be simplistic but be full of form, lines, textures, shadows and highlights all at the same time.

People can also be portrayed in minimalistic fashion, as below. The forms and lines are minimal, but the scene invites the question of why the kite is to one side while the wires are leading directly above the subject. Architecture and animals serve as good subjects for portraying minimalism as well.

The theme of Minimalism is wide open and limited only by your imagination and creativity. Enjoy the process!



“Kite-Surfer”

October 2021 Competition Judges

We sincerely thank our external judges for the October Intermediate and Advanced digital competitions and Novice/Intermediate and Advanced print competitions, Michael Breakey, Gilles Vezina, Dan Jones, Gregg Eligh, Larry Breitreutz and Mike Byrne. We also extend thanks to our in-house judges of all novice competitions: Pam Irvine, Lorna Zaback, Nicci Tyndall and Lorna Shaw. Images and judges’ comments are available at: victoriacameraclub.ca/Competitions/CompetitionResults.aspx.

Michael Breakey: Wildlife. Michael Breakey is a professional photographer based 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 and oversees the judging course.

Gilles Vezina: Open. Gilles has been an active member of the RA Photo Club since 2003 and is currently Vice-Chair of the Club. Gilles is an experienced Certified CAPA judge, an eclectic shooter at ease with nature, sports, dance, travel and event photography.

Dan Jones: Theme (Reflections or Shadows). Dan has been a member of the Camera Club of Ottawa for 23 years and has achieved the level of Master Photographer. As a part time professional photographer his work includes stock photo fine-art prints, and he enjoys judging for a variety of photo clubs.

Gregg Eligh: People. Gregg is a good friend to the Club and well known around the Club for his judging and interesting workshops. He currently teaches continuing education photography courses at Camosun College. Gregg has worked across North America and the Caribbean doing corporate, editorial, catalogue and advertising photography.

Larry Brietreutz: 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: Novice/Intermediate & 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 next term:

These courses will be offered online in real time:

- The Other Vancouver Photographers
- Taking Great Travel Photos with Your iPhone/iPad
- Introduction to Digital Photography
- Digital Photography... Without Boundaries
- Garden Photography
- iPhone/iPad Artography

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

- Travel and Street Photography Basics
- Documentary Photography: Creating the Personal Project

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

continuingstudies.uvic.ca/photography



Film Services on-site (C41, B&W, E6)
Retouch & Restoration
Fine Art Reproduction
Custom Printing Services



PRISM IMAGING

PRISMIMAGING.CA 250-386-7787 791 FORT ST. VICTORIA, B.C.



Advanced Altered Reality - 1st
"3x3x2" by David Clow

Judge's Comments: Perfect! Great arrangement of the bodies. Interesting postures. Most unusual treatment. No distracting elements. Unique.



Advanced Nature - 1st
"Bald Eagle - Heading Home" by Jill Turyk

Judge's Comments: A well exposed and composed eagle action image. In this case, because of the uniformity of the grasses in the background, the depth of field is fine. The eagle is in focus wingtip to wingtip. Wing and feather detail are excellent.



Advanced People - 1st
"Four Taking Five" by Lorna Zaback

Judge's Comments: Very well designed and composed. The space you have included assists this a great deal. Simple, but tells a good story.



Advanced Open - 1st
"Along the Yukon River" by Peter Koelbleitner

Judge's Comments: Superb image with each layer capturing the attention of the viewer. The panorama format is an excellent choice.



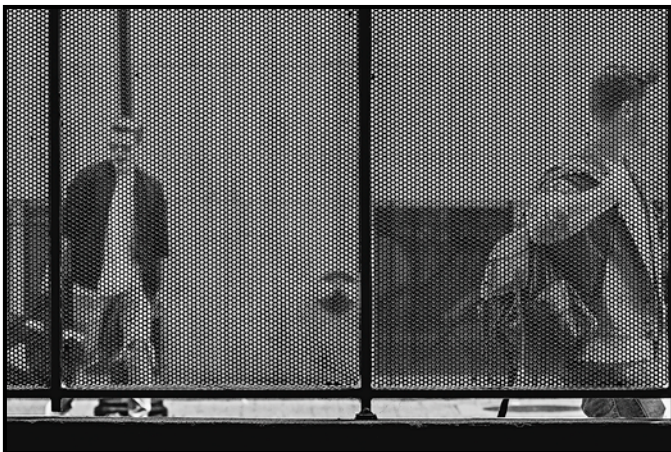
Advanced Theme - 1st
"Mirror Mirror" by Kathryn Delaney

Judge's Comments: A largely white subject that is surrounded by black with blue highlights in the water makes for an eye-popping image with high impact. The gull looking toward the camera and the top half of the bird's reflection looking sharp and unblemished by rippled water makes this image even more compelling. Great directional lighting that places the emphasis on the front of the bird. I love the swirl of blue in the water around the legs of the gull. A strong, simplified image, well deserving of a first-place finish.



Advanced Nature Print - 1st
"Back Road Waterfalls" by Mary-lee Sampson

Judge's Comments: Beautiful image, demonstrating a great handling of light, the image feels almost magical.



Advanced Monochrome Print - 1st
"Street Shot" by Steve Barber

Judge's Comments: This is a very cool image that almost looks like pointillism. Nice image.



Advanced Open Print - 1st
"Composition with Decomposing Tomatoes"
by Jim Fowler

Judge's Comments: I think this image has great impact due to the interesting subject matter, good light and composition. Great photograph!



Intermediate Altered Reality - 1st
"Safety Mirrored View" by Blair Ross

Judge's Comments: This is quite a fascinating image. At first glance all one sees is total chaos. But on closer inspection the lines and shapes provide a strong structure to the chaos with a story-line running through it. The repeating circles in the image provide stability and reduce the tension caused by the chaos.



Intermediate Open - 1st
"The Ethereal Japanese Maple" by Heather Thompson

Judge's Comments: Nice composition and subject, slightly off-centre. Good exposure providing control of highlights and some details in the trunk of the tree. The square format works well.



Intermediate Nature - 1st
"Puffin Portrait" by Merna Forster

Judge's Comments: A well exposed portrait of a Puffin with dinner. Depth-of-field helps to make the Puffin stand out from the background. The image is in focus and details of the head and dinner are well rendered.



Intermediate People - 1st
"Wading at Witty's Lagoon" Ian Clay

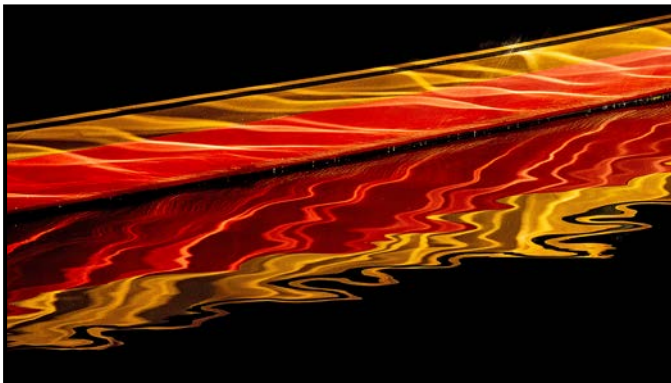
Judge's Comments: This is a lovely, simple and understated moment. Nothing more needs to be said. Good use of the open beach space without distractions. Often less is more.



Intermediate Theme - 1st

"Shine on Harvest Moon" by Maureen Reid

Judge's Comments: This gorgeous composition was made at just the right time, with the beautifully detailed full moon rising into the royal blue sky. The natural light of the moon and the artificial light from the lighthouse are superb and create lovely trails of textured reflections upon the water. The warm orange and cool blue complimentary colours add lovely contrast to the scene. A well planned and crafted image that would look great hanging on someone's wall.



Novice Theme - 1st

"Hull with Reflection" by Douglas Layden

Judge's Comments: The bold colours and wavy lines of the reflection make this a stunning image. Focus and exposure are good, we can see water dripping from the boat. The diagonal line of the boat mixed with the wavy lines of the reflections capture the viewer's eye. The black areas create a nice contrast to the bright colours. A simple yet powerful image.

December 2021



Novice Open - 1st

"Stars over Saturna Island" by Jerome Rozitis

Judge's Comments: Good for you to try astrophotography. Getting the focus right and the long exposure time correct can be tricky. The added external light to illuminate the house is good.



Novice Theme - 2nd

"Oak Bay (7:36 a.m.)" by Robert Paterson

Judge's Comments: This photo creates an emotional reaction through the peacefulness of the water and the reflections. The calm water gave the chance for sharp reflections. Sharpness is critical and it adds impact to the image.

Kenya SAFARI

Accompany award-winning photographer Monica Reekie on an extraordinary and stunning journey in Kenya. As guests of three unique Conservancies, you will experience a perfect mix of exhilaration and calm relaxation, viewing wildlife in their natural element and meeting the local people who protect them.



**YOUR INVITATION
TO KENYA**



NOV 23 - DEC 6, 2022

Monica Reekie | Email: khyllah1@gmail.com | Telephone: 250-744-2047

Autumn Magic at Butchart's Japanese Garden

by Draga Jovic

I moved to Victoria from Ontario some 30 years ago and often miss the splendid array of the varying yellow, red, orange and burgundy colours of the native maples. I often went to Butchart Gardens, but it was only about five years ago that I discovered the magic of the Japanese Gardens. At the entrance is the bright red Torii gate, flanked by two magnificent purple beech trees. On my first visit I was blown away by the orange, red and yellow fall leaves of the Japanese Maples. The colours were breathtaking, and I was hooked on going for yearly visits.

In 1906 the cement plant owner's wife, Jennie Butchart, had a remarkable vision for the land in front of their house. With the hiring of Isaburo Kishida, a Japanese Landscape artist, the Japanese Garden was created and completed over the next six years. Today there are over 74 Japanese Maples with some being over 100 years old.



"Fall Colours with Reflection"

In this image I captured the array of red, orange and yellow colours along with the greens and the dark brown earth. Exposure bracketing was used to capture the full spectrum of tones. A calm morning produced a gentle reflection in the pond, to the right of the first staircase.

You will find many ponds and brooks winding through this garden which adds to its tranquillity. There are also reminders of the former cement plant as the pagodas, concrete benches and railings were all produced there.

In Japanese gardens some stepping-stones will often be placed in an area of wet or muddy ground. This image reveals the zig-zag placement of the stones. This pattern brings mindfulness to the activity of walking we all take for granted. On a sunny day, there is the chal-



"Stepping Stones"

lenge of highlights being blown out, yet on a cloudy day there is the challenge of the colours being less vibrant.

As you continue through the Japanese Garden you can see more closely the various bonsai maple trees. The third image is my favourite maple bonsai tree. The red-orange leaves are complimentary to the green bottom foliage and the dark brown trunk offers structure to the image. Climbing the final concrete staircase, you are again reminded of the beauty that was built next to the cement plant. Jennie Butchart's vision was to create beauty next to what was referred to as "the beast next door".



"Bonsai Maple Tree"

Photographers are interested in knowing when the peak of the autumn colours occurs. The plant identification supervisor explained that "Each year towards the latter part of October the colours are dependent on weather, colder night temperatures, wind and rain but the exact dates cannot be predicted". Some years the "peak" is very short-lived and in others the "peak" gets better and better for a number of days then suddenly it is over. The leaves fall; the gardener is seen raking. The garden prepares for winter. I'll be back next year!

Dark Skies

by Mary-lee Sampson

In the last few years, I have been a little obsessed with night skies. I am intrigued by the way the world slows down and becomes quiet. If shooting by the water I'm lost in the sounds of the surf, the odd gull squawking and just the sounds of silence, I feel at peace within the darkness and the magic of our universe. To start to find dark skies wherever you may be, head to the Darksky website: darksky.org.



"Milky Way in Strathcona Park"

Sometimes I go alone but nowhere too isolated, mostly for fear of animals. I camped at Ralph River in Strathcona Park in 2019 to shoot the NEOWISE Comet with a back-drop of our highest peaks on the island. What was more incredibly beautiful was the way I could very clearly see the Milky Way, like I've never seen it before. It was my first time finding it without any knowledge of apps or even where to look.

It was dark. So dark that I couldn't see my hand in front of my face. I was exhilarated. I was hooked. I watched for hours enjoying every minute as it traveled quite quickly across the sky. I had one camera set up looking north-east for the comet and then would switch to the south and shoot the Milky Way. An unforgettable night!

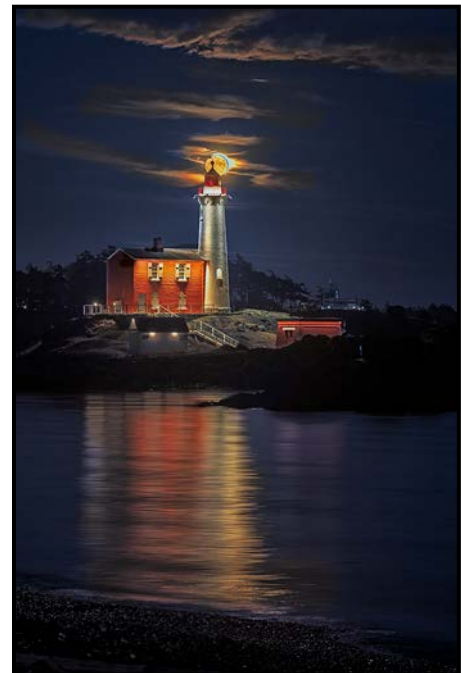
So then my mission was to find similar locations without having to drive five hours and camp out. It is said that our dark sky area is Cattle Point, so off we went to shoot the Milky Way. Although beautiful, it's very faint with the lights from the city.

It's a lot more challenging finding the Milky Way in skies near an urban area so I am in the midst of learning the PhotoPills app. It is not just for the Milky Way, which is only visible here from March to September. Having a poor sense of direction and being relatively new to the area I struggled with sunrise and sunset spots as well.



"Milky Way at Cattle Point"

Also, where is the moon going to rise and set? I had no idea. That's when I started to successfully figure things out whilst dragging camera club members out to see if I was on the right track. Urging them to use the app also helped with collaborative ideas and pinpointing where we should stand and what lenses we should use to get the desired effects. Who knew it was to become a passion and something I would thoroughly enjoy sharing? This is why the Fort Rodd and Fisgard Lighthouse overnight field trip got into the schedule this year. Here is the moon lined up with the top of Fisgard Lighthouse on September 20th, 2021.



"Harvest Moon at Fisgard Lighthouse"

I also went out with a few Club members to shoot Star Trails at Hatley Castle. Surprisingly it was a great location even with the amount of light pollution on the grounds. I used the free Star Stax app to stack the images. However, when processing I noticed that my shots weren't quite lining up as hoped. I will try it again; I just need a clear new-moon night.



“Full Moon over the Empress Hotel”

To find Polaris, which points to the North Pole, just look for the North Star in the Ursa Major constellation or use the free Stellarium app. I wanted a full moon rising over the Empress Hotel. Well, with the Photopills app, I was surprised to see that the full moon in August would work. Five of us piled onto the rocks on the Songees Walkway as it was “the spot”. Once again, I was praying that I was right. No room for error here as we were on a cliff.

But clouds abounded so we were not very hopeful and then the magic happened. There it was! The skies unbolted the clouds for us! We got our shot! But wait, it was a white blob! So, I tried to expose quickly for the moon and then shoot the correct exposure for the Empress. It is such a high dynamic range to be dealt with. Photoshop skills to blend the photos are very helpful. We were happy with the results so moved on to another location in Oak Bay for the next night’s show.



“Milky Way at Tower Point”

A week or so break in chasing the night skies allowed me to work on planning the next shot. I wanted a darker sky for the Milky Way so off we went travelling down Highway 14 to Jordan River, away from most of the bright lights of Victoria and Port Angeles.

After waiting for night to fall we could see that the fog was getting thicker and thicker, so we headed home, not disappointed though because the sunset was absolutely spectacular!

Driving back through some fog and rain we thought we would check out Whiffen Spit in Sooke, just in case. We pulled into the parking lot and the skies had cleared, and there was the Milky Way! It was shining brightly for us.

Hurriedly, we grabbed our gear and frantically searched for a composition. I got two, maybe three, shots in before it disappeared again behind fog and clouds. Here’s the shot I got.



“Milky Way Generator at Whiffen Spit”

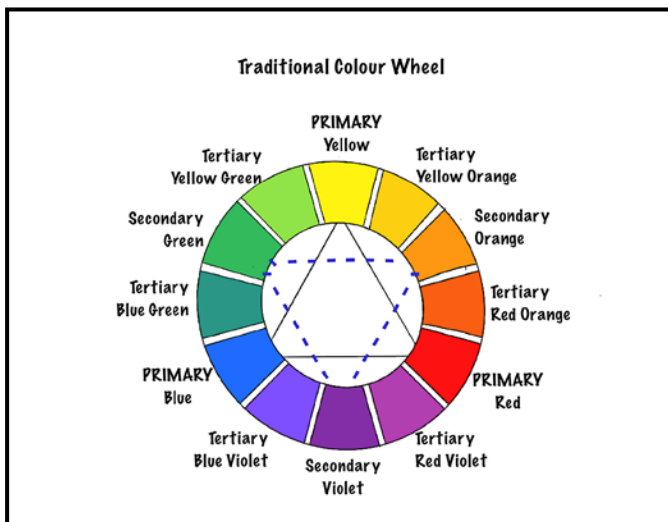
So, for all those wondering about Photopills, it provides a wealth of information. For instance, for the Perseids meteor shower it gave me a free downloadable e-book on exactly how, when and where to shoot it.

It offers you guides for star trails, solar/lunar eclipses, drone photography, moon guides, and the Milky Way, to name a few. It’s a bit of a learning curve and I have only touched the surface so far but it provides you with tools to learn with videos, calculators, articles, blogs, calendars and planners and a widget for your phone. You couldn’t ask for a better tool for our toolbox.

Colour Me

by Kathryn Delany

Let's talk about colour. Seeing colour and all its nuances is an important tool for creatives. Knowing why colour combinations work and are pleasing is part of the success of an image. This is why colour theory is something that you should be conscious of and understand a bit more in your photography. The first question to ask is, "What is colour?" The terms hue and colour are used interchangeably when talking about colour and get confused with each other. When we say colour, we are talking about every hue, tint, tone or shade we see. Hue refers to a dominant colour family of a specific colour like blue or green. Since colour theory is a big topic, I will start with the traditional art colour wheel to provide some brief definitions. A colour wheel is based on three primary colours placed evenly around the wheel: red, blue and yellow (RBY). Mixing these three colours results in many combinations. The traditional artist's colour wheel shows the three primary colours (RBY) plus the secondary and tertiary combinations.



"The Colour Wheel"

Here is a simple refresher. Secondary colours are formed when two primary colours are mixed together such as yellow and blue to give green. Tertiary colours result when mixing a primary colour with a secondary colour. Analogous colours are those colours on the colour wheel that are close to each other and have a harmonious relationship. Think of Monet's waterlilies. This example, "Iris-es", demonstrates the use of analogous colours.

Complementary colours are those colours opposite to each other on the wheel which result in a striking contrast like orange and blue or yellow and purple. Van Gogh used complementary combinations very successfully to create tension in his work. Colours are defined



"Iris-es" by Donna Robertson

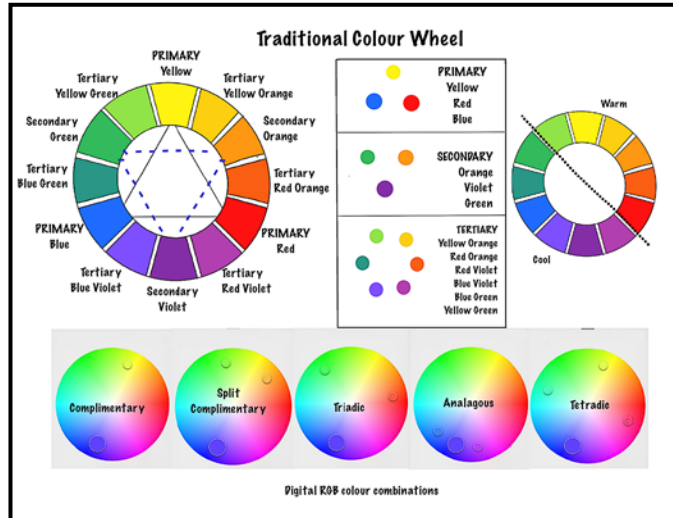
as warm or cool, with warm colours being dominant and cool colours being receding and thus less dominant. The next image, "Fall Colours", shows the use of complementary colours in photography, blue (receding colour) with orange/yellow the dominant colour.



"Fall Colours"

The next nuance of colour theory to consider would be colour variations such as temperature, hues, and tones. The colour wheel breaks the wheel into warm and cool colours. While most of us think that a red is warm, it depends on where in the wheel it is. If it is toward the yellow/orange scale it will be a warm colour, if it is toward the purple/blue then it will be cool. A tone/hue of a colour is pure colour mixed with a neutral grey to bring down the intensity of the colour. Shade refers to how much black is in the colour and so ranges from much lighter than the original colour all the way to almost black. Finally, we have saturation and luminance to consider as well. Saturation is the intensity or purity

of the colour. Luminance is how bright or how much light is in a colour. This image illustrates some of the possible colour combinations.

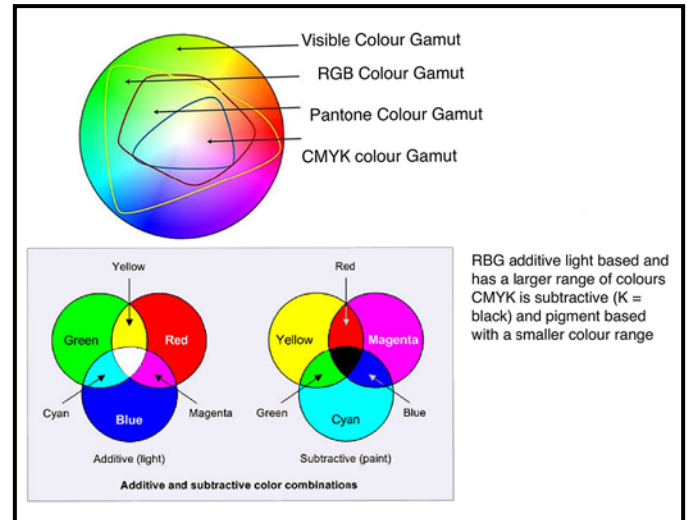


"The Colour Wheel and Variations"

Switching to your computer and the RGB model, the colour principles are the same, however, your computer does not "see" yellow as in the RBY colour model. As a note of interest, the way we see colour and perceive light is similar to the RGB colour model. The RGB colour model uses red, green and blue (no yellow). sRGB (standard RGB) was developed in 1996 by HP and Microsoft primarily for monitors, printers and the Web using the technology of the time. Some monitors and printers are now capable of showing more colours than the restricted sRGB colour-space. Adobe RGB (aRGB) and ProPhoto RGB colour models offer a wider range of colours designed specifically for photography. The most commonly used colour space is sRGB which is used in HDTVs and many computer displays. It is the colour space of choice for consumer applications.

CMYK vs RGB. CMYK is cyan, magenta, yellow and black (K) used by printers. It is a four-colour print-process based on four-ink plates. CMYK colours use light-reflecting cyan, magenta, yellow and black inks while your monitor is transmitting light. Thus, you can have a big brightness/contrast and colour shift from your computer to your print. For this reason paper companies provide their printer profiles for the papers they produce. All papers will also have some form of tonal bias for example toward yellow or blue. Paper weight will also affect the colours that are printed. Since no yellow light is used in your computer screen to create a colour, this can lead to printing challenges when printing greens and yellows. Having a colour-calibrated monitor and printer profiles together with soft-proofing in Photoshop, etc. help to resolve this. If you use Photoshop, or similar software, you can normally run an ICC

colour profile to see a soft proof of what your image will look like as a CMYK image.



"CYMK Colour Space"

Now it is the time to tap into the meaning of colour which has been used throughout history to convey emotion and to stimulate our responses. What is your colour bias? Do you lean toward the orange/yellow and blue complementary colours, or toward a gamut of green/red? Colours have many meanings. For example, the colour red is associated with power, passion, love, leadership and energy. Understanding your colour bias will become evident in your photography. Take a look at your work, do you like to photograph cool or warm colours. Do you find yourself using vibrant, saturated colours or more subdued, softer colours? Take the information here and use this understanding of colours, tones and hues as another tool to gain a better understanding of how to see the world of colour with a camera.

Sometimes we just want to use a monochromatic colour scheme for a particular subject.

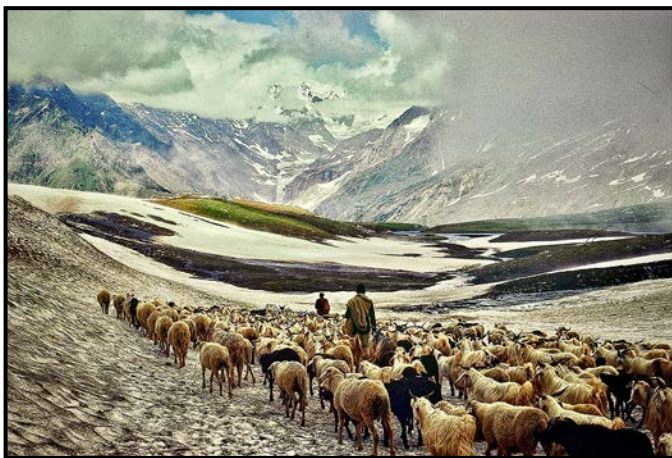


"Sunflower Dance"

Member Profile: Jim Gardner

I set forth on my photographic journey in the summer of 1955 with a new Kodak Brownie camera. I was invited to join my father and two of his friends on their annual backpacking adventure that year to the Lake of the Hanging Glaciers in the Purcell Mountains in south-eastern BC. Sadly, the glaciers are no longer hanging but the photographic lessons remain with me today. My father carried a Paxette 35 mm camera while his friend carried a Leica 35 mm. There was much chatter about settings, hyperfocal distance and light meter readings. However, remaining with me is the memory of the patience and care spent waiting and manoeuvring for the best light, composing images and knowing when to give up. When I look at their images today, they stand the test of time and new technologies.

With the Brownie I set out to document my adventure. Making images to illustrate and convey stories remains the fundamental purpose of my photography today. I realized that I could see things through the viewfinder that might otherwise be missed. When Freeman Patterson's *Photography and the Art of Seeing* appeared in 1979, it struck a common chord. Soon, I was using the Paxette to document mountaineering adventures that distracted me from my university studies but developed an interest in earth sciences. This formed a bond between adventure and livelihood in which photography was a part.

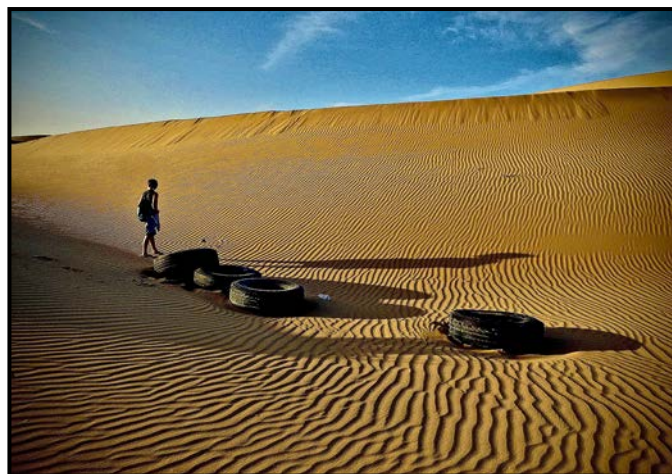


"Herders in the High Himalaya, India"

On graduation, a Miranda SLR replaced the Paxette and became an essential tool in my post-graduate research in northern Québec and later in the Canadian Rockies. A Yashica large format camera soon joined the toolbox. A year spent exploring Europe with my wife and the Miranda, opened my eyes to new adventures and photographic subjects. All this set the stage for many years in an occupation that facilitated, and was facilitated by, a photographic avocation. Whether in roles as a univer-

sity teacher, researcher or administrator, photographic opportunities emerged in many places over many years that took me to high mountain, coastal, desert and polar regions of the world.

The images, "Herders in the High Himalaya" and "Waste in the Empty Quarter" tell stories from such places. A Pentax SLR and assorted lenses replaced the Miranda and, in turn, was replaced by Olympus EM5 Mark I and Mark II, various point-and-shoot cameras and iPhones. I shoot primarily in jpeg and do minimal post-processing. Many of my photos have been published in scientific journal articles, books, and magazines for their necessarily illustrative rather than photographic merits. I have used them in presentations and lectures for many years.



"Waste in the Empty Quarter, UAE"

I moved to Victoria in 2000 and joined VCC in 2012. I have been active in field trips, Tuesday and Alternate Tuesday shoots and the Nature SIG, as well as regular Club meetings. The Tuesday shoots are gratifying in that they represent one of my few opportunities over 66 years where the primary purpose is photography.

While I formally retired in 2006 I have continued with some university work that, together with vacation travel has provided more photographic opportunities. Among these are six seasons of lecturing and guiding aboard a small adventure cruise ship in the Southern Ocean and Antarctica.

That, and all other travel, came to a shuddering halt in March 2020 with the onset of COVID and a mad dash to get home from southern Argentina. But there have been photographic benefits. My photographic eye has sharpened to focus on the immediate day-to-day surroundings of where I live, as in the sky, shore, water and forest where clouds, seaweeds, trees, lichen, fungi, neighbourhood crows, gulls, peacock and deer, and visiting birds and sea-life present a photographic feast and endless learning opportunities.

Polarizers

by Roger Botting

The lowly polarizing filter is one of the most misused tools in any photographers' tool kit.

Often used for darkening the sky, it is often used in a hit or miss way. It is best used at a 90-degree angle to the sun and with normal and longer focal lengths. If there is a lot of mist in the sky it just turns the sky into a grey/blue mess. Better to either use a graduated filter or use Photoshop to selectively darken the sky. When the polarizing filter is used on a wide-angle lens you will often get part of the sky darkened while leaving the rest of the sky unaffected. Not a good look.

The polarizing filter is best used to tame reflections. Shiny non-metallic surfaces create reflections of polarized light. Rotating the polarizing filter to a position that reduces the reflections is the goal. You won't eliminate all of the shiny reflections, just enough is enough. A careful viewing through your viewfinder is adequate.



"Without (Left) and With (Right) Polarizing Filter"

But wait, there's more.

When you photograph scenes with a computer screen or camera display, the careful rotation of a polarizing filter will block out the display. This is caused by cross polarization, where the light coming from the screen is polarized and the polarizing filter blocks that light. A good way to not reveal company secrets.

Try not to use a polarizing filter on portraits. It will reduce the skin glare and make the skin look dead. If there is too much skin glare, just turn the filter a little bit as you do need the highlight texture.

How do you know if I have a circular-polarizing filter? Hold the filter up in front of your eye, look at an LCD screen and rotate the filter. The screen will either go

dark or change colour and slightly darken. Turn the filter over and repeat and you should get the opposite effect. If so, then you have a circular-polarizing filter; otherwise it's a linear polarizing filter (dark from both sides).

If you have been photographing since the days of film, then you probably went through the transition from linear-polarizing to circular-polarizing filters. The auto-focus and metering functions of many cameras depend on polarized light so using a linear-polarizing filter defeats its proper operation. The light becomes cross-polarized and the sensor blacks out. A circular-polarizing filter has an additional element (a quarter-wave plate) in it to convert the linearly polarized light into circular-polarized light

Both types of filters give the same results relative to the subject, but you want to use the circular-polarizing filter to make your modern camera work properly. But don't throw out your old linear-polarizing filters yet as they will work well over the light source for cross-polarized lighting.

Using polarizing filters on your lights is a way to reduce unwanted glare in your still-life photos. You can buy them on Ebay but you should make sure that the filters are large enough to cover your light source(s). You could also ask your friendly computer geek to dismantle a broken LCD screen to get a linear-polarizing filter. Set up your lights as you normally would, then attach the filter.

Rotate the filter while observing the results. You will notice that the glare will go away except on polished or metal objects. For example, shiny leaves will have some glare reduced, reflections off food plates can be reduced and you can tame the highlights without resorting to matte dulling spray or difficult-to-use gobos.

For a convenient source of polarized light use an LCD computer screen. The screen image that you see is polarized light. Or shine a light through an old-style linear polarizing filter.

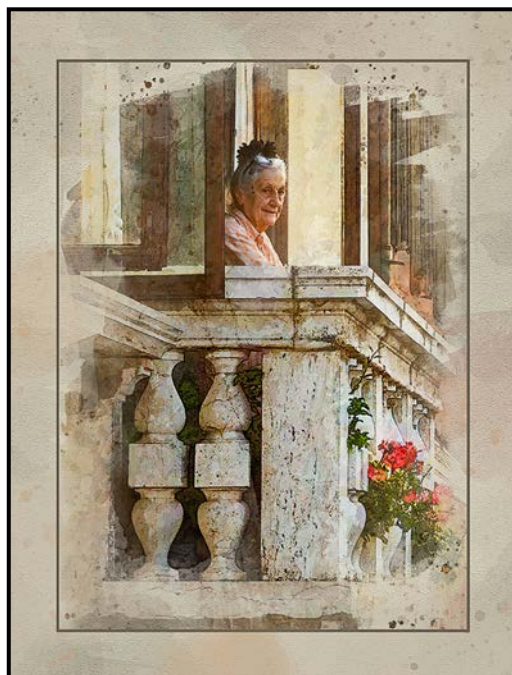
The most interesting visual effects come from cross-polarization, that happens when you illuminate your subject with polarized light and then view it through another polarizing filter. This usually works best with transparent objects. Shine polarized light through the object and you will often see a swirl of colours. This indicates strain in materials such as transparent plastic moldings. With crystal structures such as calcite or some other crystals you will also see lots of geometric patterns and colours. Try Epsom salts or vitamin C crystals for a nice safe start. Just mix up a strong solution and let dry on a piece of glass

Painting with Brushes in Photoshop

by Jackye Mills

In addition to the built-in selection of brushes in Photoshop there is an unlimited supply of free brushes to download. All these can be incorporated into your digital workflow to obtain whatever brush stroke and content styles that you choose. Here is one simple method that I use with brushes in Photoshop.

I was a watercolour and silk painter in my working career so using these brushes is a natural step for me in creating a painterly effect on a photograph. The process that I follow is quite simple. I followed the steps below to create this finished image.



"Venice Balcony: Finished Image"

I do basic editing on my image in Adobe Camera Raw (ACR) and Photoshop and then apply a painterly filter using Topaz Impression or one of the artistic filters available in Photoshop. I use the find lines filter (Filter > Stylize > Find Lines) to add an outline. I then de-saturate it and mask away many of the small details, leaving a dark line to emphasize the centre of interest that I want to draw extra attention to (image at right).

Next, I unlock the background layer and hit control/new layer which will place a new layer below the background. To make the image border I increase my canvas size to make it about 10% larger than the background. I then fill the new layer with white or a soft colour from the photograph and use the texturize filter to give it a canvas-like appearance. I then select all

the layers above the bottom fill layer and put them into a layer group. Keying in alt and the mask button with the layer group selected will apply a black mask to the group so only the fill layer will be visible.

Now is the time to try out those brushes. I will either make my own or search for free brushes on the internet. I get most from Adobe where there are great collections including acrylic, impressionistic, watercolour and numerous other choices. They are simple to download and add to your brush collection.

To add brushes to Photoshop, with Photoshop running simply double-click on the downloaded .abr file and Photoshop will install it. There is a good sample of brushes from Adobe here: adobe.ly/3BZCDNN. For more information on creating and using brushes in Photoshop see Adobe's help file here: adobe.ly/3FYXmDU.

I use a selection of brushes resembling watercolour strokes and splatters varying their size, direction, shape and opacity. I paint with white over the black mask to reveal the image. It's important not to let the stroke be too repetitive. The goal is to create an art piece with dimension and life to it.

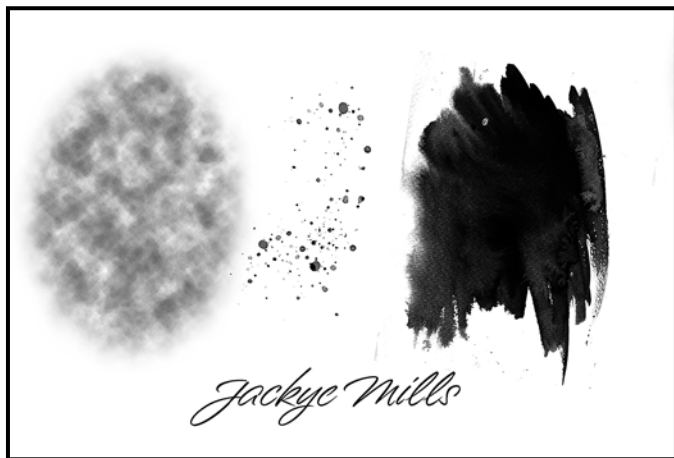
When I am happy with the areas I have revealed I add a new blank layer below the group and use the same brushes to paint into my border and soften the edges with colours from the photograph. This layer can be adjusted to have more contrast or intensity or have the opacity reduced to make it very soft.



"Enhanced Line Detail"

The final step is to adjust the whole image for any contrast or saturation issues with the camera raw filter (Filter>Camera Raw Filter). I will often add a stroke line to resemble a painting mat.

Creating your own Photoshop brushes is an easy task as you can define a brush from any scribble, line draw-



"Making a Cloud or Signature Brush"

ing, painted splotch or your signature. Making your own brushes will make your artwork truly individual. To create your own brush, create a new document in Photoshop then go to the render filter (Filter > Render) in the menu and click on "Clouds". First draw out a circle or elliptical shape with the marquee tool around the area that you want to use. I use select, modify, feather 90 pixels. I make one brush at a soft reduced opacity and name it. Then you can build it up by adding more stokes from an existing brush then add a splatter look or darken the opacity to create a different look for a new brush as shown on the right. Save your brush by going to edit, de-

fine brush and give it a name. You can make your own signature brush with the same process creating a new document then either using an Adobe font or scanning your own signature. Once you define the brush it will appear in a folder at the bottom of your brush collections.

Brushes can be much more complicated than my description. There is a whole world of brushes that I haven't really explored. You can assign properties to a brush so when you drag it, it will change shape, size, direction and opacity. Some people add a blending feature to their brushes or a smudge. You can have a brush mix your foreground colour with the colour on your image. Digital painters use brushes to create cartoons or illustrations or enhancements for brochures.

Using a Wacom tablet allows you to change the brush strength by how much pressure you apply to the stylus and, I imagine, many other enhancements. There is a very informative article on Wacom tablets written by Kevin Keliher in the November 2021 issue of *Close-Up*.

I am unable to use a tablet but I expect it would open another world of possibilities to explore. The internet and You Tube offer many articles and videos on using brushes and downloading them. Your inner artist is dying to give this a try!

new photographers
GALLERY

Showcasing works by contemporary
Canadian and International photographers

www.newphotographersgallery.com

2449-1 Beacon Ave • Sidney, British Columbia
Telephone 250-656-9882 V8L 1X7

Options
PICTURE FRAMING

Do it Yourself and Professional Framing

Serving Victoria since 1976

optionspictureframing.ca
250-381-4022

Professional Quality - Personal Service
Mounting, Matting and Framing
for all Types of Artwork
Hundreds of Frame Styles
and Mat Colours
15% Discount for VCC Members

We have moved - visit our new location
774 Spruce Ave., off Douglas south of Finlayson

How I Did It

A Slow Day in the Workshop

by Maureen Reid

This image was taken at the BC Forest Discovery Centre in Duncan, BC on one of the Club's field trips. It was a hot late summer afternoon and more than a few of us were swooning at the light filtering in through the hazy windows. I immediately took two photos but didn't like the composition of either one. There was a wooden barrier interfering with getting the composition I was after. I used Live View and stretched my arms over the barrier to get a composition with the large pulley in the foreground.



I used my 24-70 mm lens with settings of ISO 100, f2.8 and 1/80th sec. I could tell by looking at the LCD screen that I had a good image. I think the strength of the image lies in the composition and even more so the lighting.

I processed the image in Lightroom to enhance it although it only took a few minor tweaks to make it look like what I saw with my eye. I brought up the exposure a lot (+.73) to bring out more of the details in the shadows. I brought up the shadows even more to +52. I took the highlights back down to -74 to increase the opacity of the windows.

Next, I took down the colour temperature to bring out some of the blue tones in the shadows and tone down the bright afternoon sun. To bring out more of the details in the scene, I increased the texture and clarity. I also added a touch of dehaze until I liked the look of the scene. I then used Topaz Sharpen.

This image taught me to strive harder to find scenes with interesting light as they are inherently more compelling.

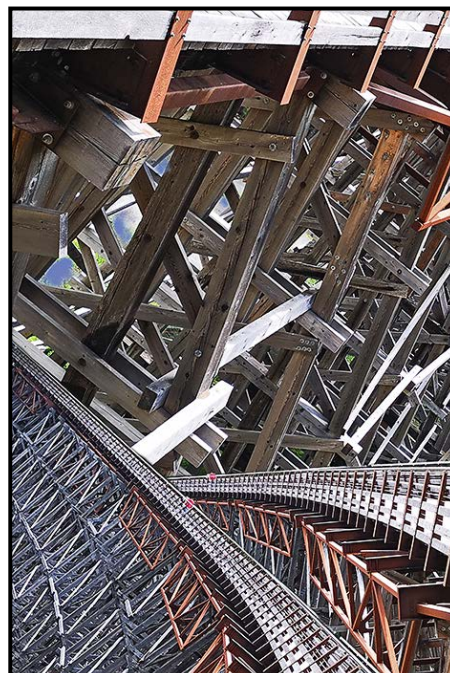
This image placed 1st in the September Intermediate Open Digital competition.

Twisted Trestle

by Jim Fowler

This picture of the Kinsol Trestle was taken on my phone camera while I was scouting for locations.

The trestle structure was great but the surrounding grass and trees were of no interest whatsoever. I thought, "Why not fill the frame with the trestle?" How would I fit them together? I made a rough sketch of a rectangle filled with curved triangles, making sure to vary the direction of the curves. I was going to have to double the canvas size to fit in a few variations.



I opened the image in Photoshop, doubled the canvas size, and made a copy. I selected just the trestle. When I was happy with the selection, I duplicated the selection layer several times.

My idea was to rotate and turn the trestle selections to match the rough sketch and fill the space as much as possible with "trestle". As I turned or flipped each layer I renamed it to match its location in the composite: "curve left from right" or "curve left and back", and so on.

I added a colour fill layer to make any gaps between trestles look like blue sky though little sky was necessary.

Finally, I rearranged the order of the layers for the most pleasing visibility of as many different layers as possible. In all, there are five layers visible, including the blue-sky layer. This image gained an Honourable Mention in the September Advanced Open Digital competition.

Shoots Around Victoria

Fort Macaulay Ruins

by James Dies

One of my favourite hidden gems are the Fort Macaulay ruins in Macaulay Point Park in Esquimalt. I go there quite often to shoot and to do a little hiking on the trails. The best of both worlds.



"Gun Emplacement"

The ruins of the fort include five concrete and steel gun emplacements built in 1878 and abandoned in 1956. There are also red brick outbuildings from that period still standing.

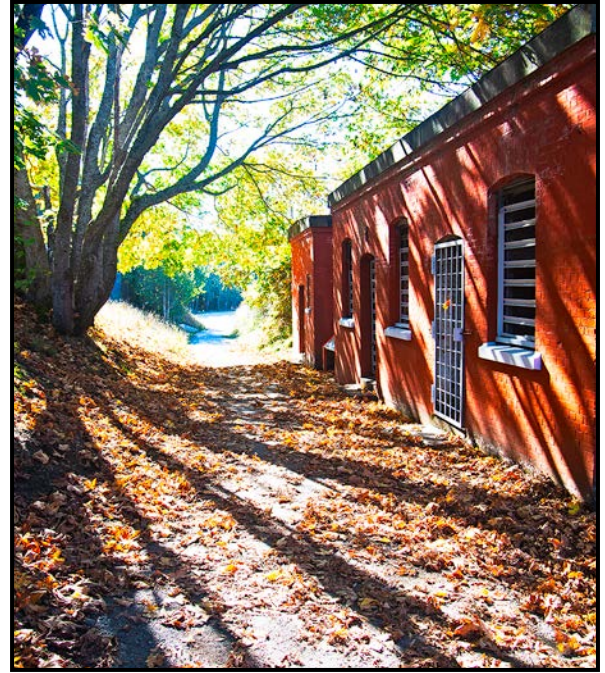
I like shooting the concrete emplacements in black and white because of the starkness of the white-painted concrete and the black fixtures, and the sharp shadows they cast. There are a lot of interesting angles to shoot from.

The outbuildings are compelling to shoot as the bright red paint and the earthy colours of the trees, grass and dirt pathways make an engaging composition. A sometimes-spectacular scene, if the sun is just right, is when the Oak tree leaves change to oranges, golds and yellows in the fall against the bright red of the buildings.

It's an easy climb to the observation tower on top of the hill where you can get an awesome view of the ruins below. You will also get views of the sometimes-misty Olympic mountains across the strait. There is usually a lot of freight-ship traffic in the strait as a foreground to the mountains. There are two ways to get to the tower, the easy way and the hard way. The easy way is around the corner of the red outbuildings and through the tunnel.

There are trails with cedar split-rail fences along the rocky cliffs that overlook the strait. In stormy weather, especially with south-westerly or southerly winds, the waves crash against the cliffs. The trails take you to

views across the bay to Esquimalt to the west and the City of Victoria across the bay to the east. Occasionally you may catch sight of an eagle or other birds soaring on the air currents as they rise from the cliffs.



"Outbuildings"

There is a protected area with a Marine Meadows habitat with rare plants and flowers found in very few places along the west coast of Canada such as Dense Flower Lupin and Purple Sanicle. These plants were quite common on the island but have been reduced to a tiny fraction of their range by habitat loss.

Just as you enter the park from the boat ramp you will come across an area called Buxton Green. In the summertime medieval players sometimes put on enactments of medieval life there with colourful tents and flags. I have caught them there a couple of times.

To the left of the green is a high cliff that rock climbers use to practice on. When the sun shines on the cliff it really brings out the colours of the granite rocks. It's a good background to any colourful rock climbers hanging there.

The trails are mostly compacted gravel. There is some elevation gain but even those riding scooters should be able to get to almost all locations easily. For access, use the boat ramp area at 1101 Munro Street (GPS 48.4209, -123.4103).

Parking is free but sometimes it fills up early. The Esquimalt Anglers Association building is there and the washrooms are usually open.

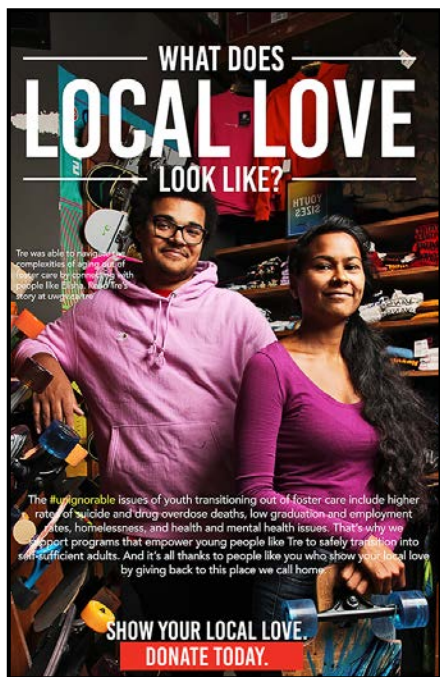
Commercial Photography

by Gregg Eligh

[On occasion Close-Up will invite an outside author with specific expertise on a topic of interest to members to write an article for us. Gregg Eligh is well-known to us as a judge, workshop presenter and as a working professional photographer in Victoria.]

For many creative types the idea of being able to turn talents and developed skills into a well-paying profession can be very attractive. Creative talents such as, music, dance, theatre, painting, sculpture or photography, all thrive with an attentive audience. But for creative minds to morph into a working professional type requires a major shift in character.

I am told that these are functions of opposing brain hemispheres. Often an individual would be described as being practical, functional, analytical or, creative, free-thinking, impulsive. It is not often that these two divergent personas can meld to produce a business-like, creative mind.



“Location Portrait: Studio Lighting on Location”

Becoming successful as a professional photographer truly requires skills from both mind sets. It goes without saying that a creative, talented eye can produce head-turning images. Photography allows for many talented people to find a wonderful release for their talents.

But to then turn those skills into a profession that is capable of serving the needs of others, art directors,

designers, mothers-of-the-bride, or whoever, requires a radically different skill-set to come to the forefront.

There are the obvious requirements of understanding all the settings and tools of current elaborate, multi-platform cameras to knowledgeably, repeatedly and continuously produce the results necessary to earn the money to pay for those tools. A working professional photographer has to keep on top of these technical tools before even looking at the skills required for post-processing the images captured. The opportunities and options are now seemingly endless.

Then the business side needs to be considered, a whole different thought process again. The business knowledge is the component of being in a photography business that is too often neglected when someone decides they want to make a living shooting. At Western Academy of Photography, where I taught for several years, we saw an endless parade of creative, skilled photographers producing stunning images who then disappeared into the shadows when attempting to offer those skills to clients. And Western offered a healthy business program that was a requirement for graduation.

It has been quite saddening, as an instructor in a creative field, to see so few succeed and maintain a solid career in the few years following graduation. This was not unique to this school but was a persistent and predictable outcome for most creative programs.

The component of starting a professional photography business that does most photographers in and kills that dream is a lack of business knowledge and skills, more so than limited photography skills.

So, my bottom line for a creative person to begin and survive in the professional photography community is to be clear, first and foremost, on the skills required to build and operate a small business, separate from the creative and technical skills necessary to compete in an aggressive market.

With a mentor for guidance, I found it an exciting process to solve and build a successful independent business that I eventually moved to Toronto where I blossomed in a community that is as demanding as you can find anywhere. It was exciting to achieve success and learn so many details that I had never before been confronted with.

I'd like to explain how I experienced getting established. Following three years of art school in Ontario, then three years of photography school in Vancouver I pretty quickly jumped into the photography community, totally naive

and with just blind, eager energy. I started by assisting an established photographer where I had been for a three-week practicum in school, so it became a good connection. That gave me a door into the professional community where I could make some money assisting my “mentor” and also to have a studio space to use when I began developing my own client connections. Sometimes I traded assisting for shooting time in his studio.

Step 1: Find a mentor. I learned many of the business practices and systems required to present myself professionally from my mentor, and even got some spin-off work from him. At one time he was being audited by the tax dept. Yup, it happens to all small businesses. When I chatted with the auditor, he told me this photographer had “the best set of books he had ever worked with”. So, I got the name of the photographer’s accountant.

Step 2: Get an accountant. The accountant gave me advice on bookkeeping, filing, incorporating or not, and endless suggestions that came up over the next thirty years. I was still his client when he retired. Always be open to suggestions from experience.

Step 3: Jump in with both feet. Though I had very limited experience, I knew I had solid technical and creative skills. Art school and photography school helped me put together a portfolio illustrating my level of competence. Okay, that is a link to what is next.



“Food Package: Product Shot Lit In Studio”

Step 4: Have relevant work to show your market. You can talk all you want but, in this business, it comes down to “What can you do?” This isn’t built overnight. And the tip in #4 is “relevant work”. Lovely pictures of scenic landscapes and your dog won’t cut it. If you want to do weddings, have “editorialized” shots of good-looking couples, young and old, and families. If you want to do commercial work, try a great food shot (mentor fits in here) or architecture, or business executive. Think what your clients are going to want. But if you want to get creative and put your unique slant on the image, this is a great time to step up. You could also include a couple of totally self-inspired images that have no client direction to show your own creative energies.



“Fashion Shot: Studio Lighting”

Step 5: Know how to light. These days, with no photography schools left out there to learn from (mentor?) most new “professionals” learn what they can on-line with YouTube. Mainly, you’re learning from other self-taught wanna-be “professionals”. But working your camera is only the basic first step in being in control. You will definitely be confronted with situations beyond simply exposing for an image. Lighting is one of the primary creative components in photography. Boring lighting creates boring images. Get good tools that are versatile and allow you to handle as much as you anticipate being presented with (mentor). Good lighting is exciting. To create good lighting is even more exciting.

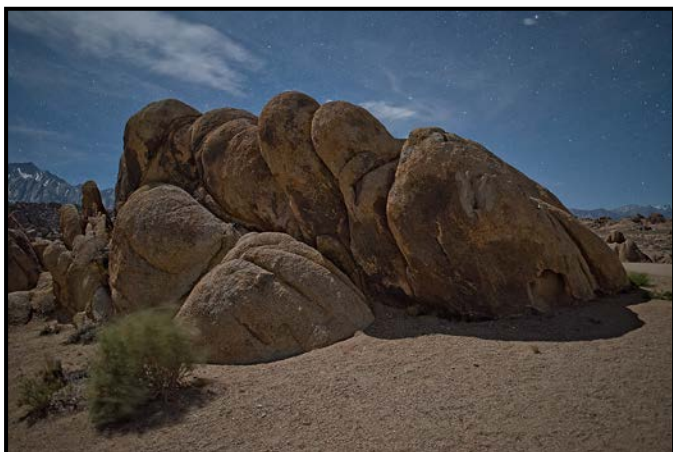
Step 6: Don’t put yourself into debt. I only bought my gear as I earned the money to pay for it. One lens at a time. I also got a good, but basic, lighting system I could build on and have it be a positive investment. One of my classmates bought a full Hasselblad system on credit pretty quickly after graduating. He found himself scrambling every month with a newby’s billings to cover his payments! I would never have been able to handle that much stress. Buy good gear, it is an investment for a long time. And don’t get sucked into the pseudo professional’s game of having to have the latest, newest model of whatever because it’s got more bells and whistles. Big business mistake. You should not need to upgrade more than a couple of times in a lengthy career, unless the industry shuffles again as it did from analog to digital.

Step 7: Have a wonderful, understanding partner. Enough said.

Beginner's Corner: How I Process a RAW Capture in Lightroom

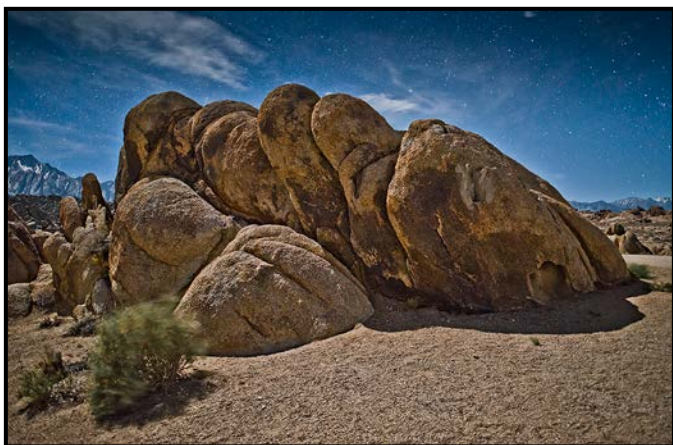
by Joseph Finkleman

I generally process my raw files in Photoshop but that takes me 20 minutes per image. Sometimes I want to see a close approximation of what the image will look like so I do what I call a “Quick and Dirty” one to two-minute process in Lightroom. Here is my workflow:



“Unprocessed”

1. Adjust the colour temperature. There are three approaches to this. One is to adjust the temperature by eye to what looks good to you. Another is to know what the colour temperature was when you shot it and adjust precisely to that number. I usually do the third which is to split the difference between “as shot” and “auto.” It is safest to split the difference and it will usually be close, although there are times when I do one of the first two suggestions.
2. Carefully compress the exposure so the histogram falls between the left and the right wall by moving the highlight slider slightly to the left and the shadow slider a great deal to the right. Do not make the im-



“Processed”

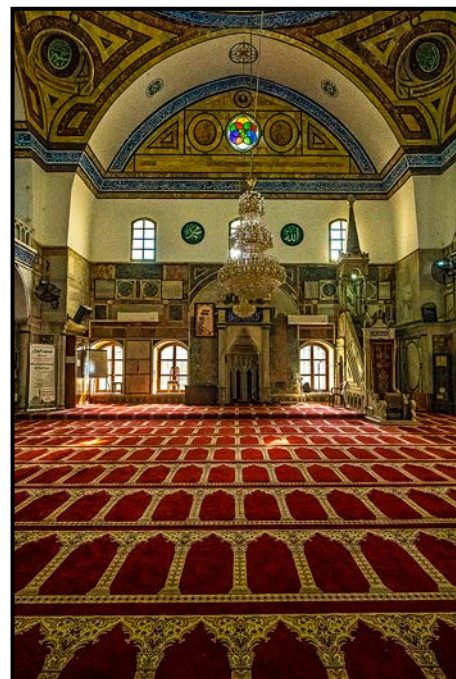


“Unprocessed”

age look weird but do it enough that the tonal values look a bit flat.

3. Adjust the “Clarity” slider between “a little” to “half-way to the right”. This is the middle tone contrast and is the crucial adjustment. Don’t overdo it, make use of this.
4. Finally, move the dehaze slider a bit to the right.

This is like seasoning the soup in that all these suggestions are “to taste”. This is strictly a quick and easy way to vastly improve a raw capture or an in-camera JPEG.



“Processed”

**VICTORIA
CAMERA**
SERVICE
LTD.

WE REPAIR ALL
MAKES & MODELS

250 383 4311

www.victoriacameraservice.com

Sensor Cleaning, Repairs and Service



Open Monday to Wednesday 9:30 to 4

**Don't let the
weather get
you down!**



FUJIFILM

Brave the winter with weather resistant cameras and lenses from Fujifilm! The new XF 23mm f/1.4R LM WR and XF 33mm f/1.4R LM WR on the 26.1 MP X-T4 body will keep you out there year round.

Beau is an independent shop with personalized service to help you find exactly what you need. We also have an extensive rental department, film, paper and darkroom supplies.



Beau Photo Supplies

1401 W. 8th Ave. Vancouver, BC

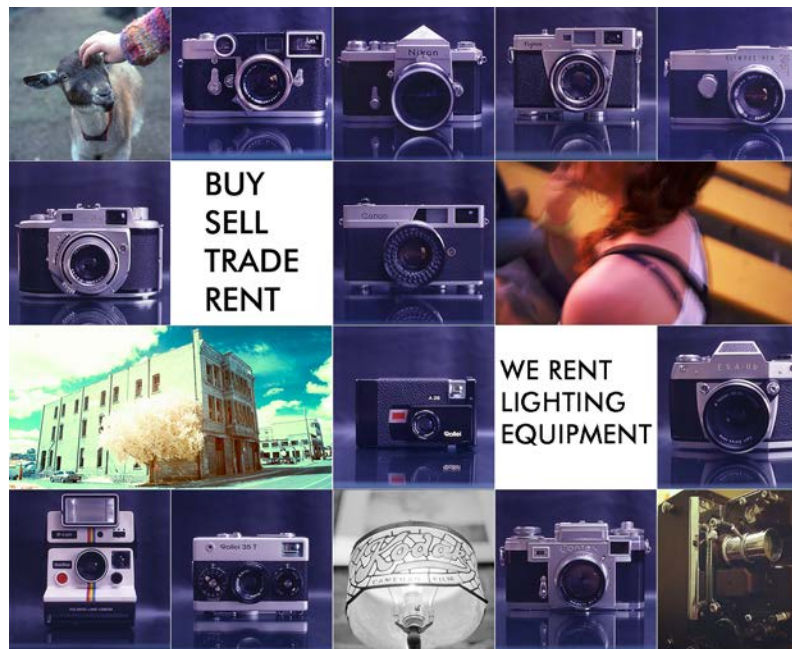
604.734.7771

@beauphotostore

www.beauphoto.com/blog

www.beauphoto.com info@beauphoto.com

f Beau Photo



**BUY
SELL
TRADE
RENT**

**WE RENT
LIGHTING
EQUIPMENT**



**CAMERA
TRADERS**

Discount for
VCC Members

110-560 Johnson Street,
Victoria, BC., 250-382-6838
www.camera-traders.com

CAPTURE the savings



**KERRISDALE
CAMERAS**

WWW.KERRISDALECAMERAS.COM



Facebook.com/KerrisdaleCameras

Twitter.com/KCLvictoria

VISIT US AT 3531 RAVINE WAY, SAANICH, BC

By Tim Hortons in Saanich Plaza | 250-475-2066