



# Close-Up

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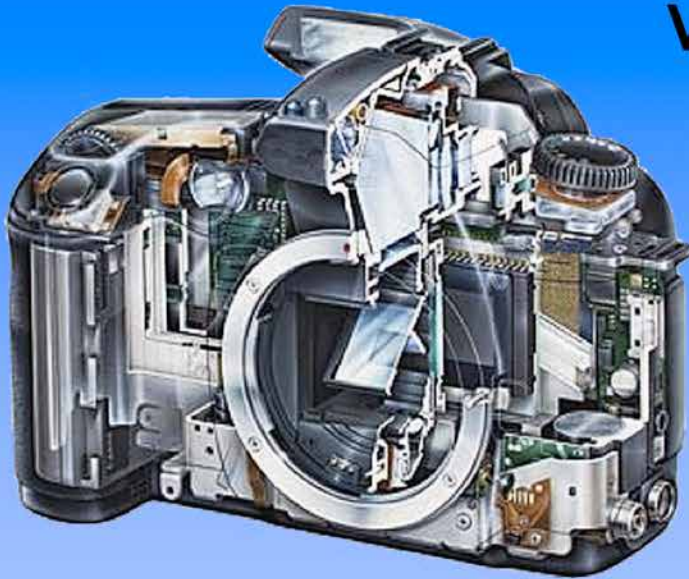
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*"Sunset Flight" by Lois Burton*

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## Victoria Camera Club



*Close-Up* is the magazine of the Victoria Camera Club,  
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 Mailing address: PO Box 46035, RPO Quadra, Victoria, BC, V8T 5G7.  
 Deadline for submissions for the December 2015 issue is November 5<sup>th</sup> 2015.  
 Editor, Richard James, e-mail to [newsletter@victoriacameraclub.org](mailto:newsletter@victoriacameraclub.org)  
 for submissions or to advertise in *Close-Up*.

Established in 1944, the Victoria Camera Club is a group of people who share the love of photography. We come together to appreciate each other's images, to learn, both from the feedback on our own images and from the images of others, and to exchange tips on how and where to take effective photographs. Our focus is on continuous learning. Our media include both film and digital and our expertise ranges from novice to master.

### Events

We hold a number of events including:

- Three meetings a month from September to April (excluding December)
- Field trips
- Workshops
- Special Interest Groups (SIGs)
- Competitions within the club and externally

Meetings begin at 7:30 PM at Norway House, 1110 Hillside Avenue, Victoria, BC.

### Membership

Annual fees include all workshops (except studio shoots and special events), meetings and all field trips unless travel/accommodation is involved. Annual fees are: Individual, \$85; Family, \$128; Student, \$43.

For current event information and locations please go to the website [victoriacameraclub.org](http://victoriacameraclub.org) where you can also read or download the colour version of *Close-Up*.

For additional information: please contact:

- Membership:* [membership@victoriacameraclub.org](mailto:membership@victoriacameraclub.org)  
*Workshops:* [workshops@victoriacameraclub.org](mailto:workshops@victoriacameraclub.org)  
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*Close-Up:* [newsletter@victoriacameraclub.org](mailto:newsletter@victoriacameraclub.org)  
 or call Lloyd Houghton, President at 250-580-7154.

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



## Calendar

Our workshop and field trip program is too extensive to list in *Close-Up*. Please go to the calendar page on the website ([www.victoriacameraclub.ca](http://www.victoriacameraclub.ca)) for the latest details of all our workshops, field trips and meetings.

### Thursday, Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>; Competition Night

The October competition results will be presented. One of the judges will review selected images. The Theme for November is “Silhouette” and the deadline for submission is November 5<sup>th</sup>.

### Thursday, Nov, 12<sup>th</sup>; Presentation Night

Mike Byrne, an independent professional photographer and filmmaker, will make a presentation entitled “Sports Action Photography.” Mike’s presentation will discuss the visual and technical aspects of capturing the exciting action and the vivid colour patterns of sports. He will show you how to take advantage of the unique shooting opportunities that action sports provide. Amongst other assignments Mike was an official photographer for the cross-country skiing venue at the Vancouver Winter Olympic Games.

### Thursday, Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>; Members’ Night

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

**Cover image: “Sunset Flight”** by Lois Burton (1<sup>st</sup> tie in Advanced Nature Digital). This image was taken on a trip to photograph the sunset at Canon Beach, OR. A flock of sandpipers was working the shoreline, scurrying along in unison. Every once in awhile they all took flight and landed further down the beach. As I watched them heading towards me I thought that it would make a well composed image if I could capture them in flight silhouetted against the setting colours of the sun. I also noticed that there was just enough moisture in the sand to create a mirrored reflection of their flight pattern.

The image was processed in Lightroom and adjustments were made to reduce shadows and increase contrast. The exposure was reduced slightly for a more dramatic image and the tint was adjusted to enhance the colour.

The image was shot with a Canon EOS 5D Mark III using a 24 - 70 mm lens, ISO 800, focal length 70 mm, 1/3200 sec at f2.8.

## President’s Message

First things first, make sure you go to see our print exhibition at the downtown gallery of Art Atelier 546, see page 21 for the details. We are thrilled at the opportunity to exhibit examples of the skill and diversity of our club in such a high profile location.

I recently read a non-photography text on the idea of purity and simplicity. It discussed how we have a habit of trying to improve things by adding and embellishing, but quite often end up diluting the purity and cluttering the simplicity. That got me thinking about photographs.

What is the purity of a photograph? If it is “to have a single meaning,” then purity could be the ease with which viewers get the single meaning. Purity is diluted by additional or contrary meanings and by distracting content.

What elements can be used to show the meaning in an image? This could be a long list, but it must include: the subject matter (its physical condition); the focal point (that can be defined by differential focus, leading lines, tonal values, etc., but unthoughtful use of these can create more than one focal point and create conflicting or distracting meanings); the colour palette, and texture.

What about simplicity? What could that be? It must be something like conveying the meaning with a minimum of uncomplicated elements. As much as possible, only things that assist with conveying the meaning should be inside the frame.

Achieving purity and simplicity does not always come easily. Identifying what made you stop and consider taking the shot is a start. What is it you want to tell someone with your image? Anything that dilutes or clutters should be left out before you fire the shutter. These factors don’t just apply to an individual photograph, they also apply to any collection of images, typically these are an exhibition or portfolio of prints, or a book.

Recently, I sought help selecting images for a book from some artist friends. They were ruthless in ensuring that only those images that contributed to the overall meaning of the book were included. Dilution and clutter were turfed out. There was a large number, including examples of conflicting colour palette, distracting content, and multiple focal points. I was guilty of including images because I liked them, not because they belonged in the collection. A personal example of dilution and clutter.

*Lloyd Houghton, President.*

by Richard James

*This month we are starting a series of articles providing more details about shooting locations around Victoria and further afield. These are intended to encourage you to get out and explore new shooting locations. Some locations may be included in our field trips but the purpose of this series is to cast the net wider. In this issue there is another shooting location article on page 20, the Coupeville area on Whidbey Island, WA.*

**East Sooke Park area:** This includes Alyard Farm and Iron Mine Bay, as well as the nearby locations of Pedder Bay and Matheson Lake. Access to the area is from Metchosin Road and East Sooke Road, or from Highway 14 and Gillespie Road (immediately west of the Seventeen Mile Pub).

The Alyard Farm area includes the shoreline and forest as far west as Beechy Head. The coast trail provides various along-shore vistas starting with Creyke Point to the left of the fields at the parking area, then heading West past the Becher Bay Beach area, Alldridge Point and its petroglyphs, to Beechy Head. Just beyond here the trail descends towards the water before ascending into the steep and rugged section to Iron Mine Bay. This is a good place to turn around and either head back along the coast trail or follow the interior trail (mostly an old logging road) back to your vehicle at Alyard Farm.

In September this area is a staging point for a major raptor migration across the Strait of Juan de Fuca to the Olympic Peninsula. The Beechy Head Lookout, or if you are less energetic, the field at Alyard Farm, provides good observation points.

Iron Mine Bay is a short hike down an old logging road from the end of Pike Road.

Along these trails you can find ocean vistas, shoreline scenes, marine life, birds, some of our native forest flowers and, in the appropriate season, various fungi.

Good hiking boots, water and snacks are suggested for this area. The CRD website, [crd.bc.ca](http://crd.bc.ca), provides information and maps for East Sooke, and the nearby Matheson Lake and Roche Cove Parks.

Further West along Highway 14 are a number of other interesting locations.

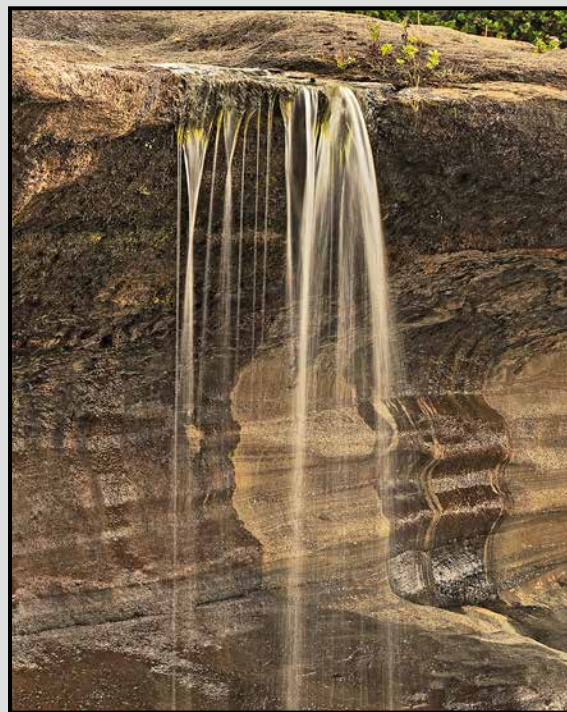
**Whiffen Spit:** Lying at the entrance to Sooke Harbour the short trail to the end provides many opportunities

for photographing shorebirds and ducks, especially in the winter. Access is from Highway 14 just beyond downtown Sooke.

**Muir Creek and Beach:** Further along Highway 14 west of Sooke the area provides oceanfront access adjacent to the creek with the beach leading to an exposure of siltstone containing fossil marine shells, and the bones and teeth of marine mammals. Further along the beach another creek empties into the Strait. Shooting opportunities include seascapes, wildlife (birds, River Otters, and even the possibility of a Sea Otter), and of course macro shots of the fossils.

**Sandcut Beach:** Continuing West along Highway 14 beyond the Point No Point Resort you come to Sandcut Beach. Parking is adjacent to the road after crossing the creek and immediately after a left-hand bend.

The best shooting opportunity here is to head East along the beach to the Sandcut Creek waterfall. You can shoot the waterfall at various angles from the beach, or scramble up the low cliff to the left to access the rock shelf that the creek flows over above the waterfall. Further upstream, beyond the road, there is another waterfall but access may be limited by the amount of water in the creek. On the rock shelf there are many shallow pools at low water levels. When the creek is higher, access to this area is not advised.



*"Sandcut Creek Falls"*

by Christina Aitchison

As a relatively new photographer, I've yet to find my niche. The positive is that there is no shortage of material with which to learn and explore, but the downside is not focusing enough on one element to really improve technically.

I have fully realized I am not a technical shooter. Trying to calculate f-stops and hyper-focal distance might as well be in another language. I rarely plan shoots or have an idea in mind but rely on my surroundings for inspiration. This is the challenge for all photographers in the field as you never know when the stars will align, so to speak, and you're lucky to have fantastic subject matter, background and lighting all come together. Fortunately we do experience these moments once in a while and even if we don't end up with a great image, it is the notion that these images are out there that keep us going on our quest.

I was extremely fortunate to have had the opportunity to join the trip to the Palouse this past June. It was such a great experience being in such a unique landscape so completely different from our own. The trip was also a huge challenge as we didn't have much time at each location to get a feel for the scene. The landscape constantly contradicted itself. Among the rolling hills I sometimes felt claustrophobic, as all you could see was sky while at other times, at the crest of a hill, you could see for miles. On this day despite the 45°C temperature, I fell in love with an old Victorian farmhouse. As a history buff I have a sweet spot for old homes and I could easily picture it in its former glory and imagine the porch door slamming shut as children ran in and out and the adults relaxed on the porch after a hard day's work. Despite the bright sunshine and clear blue skies you could still sense the desolation of the once beautiful home. The 1876 house is owned by the 5<sup>th</sup> generation of the Weber family and they have plans to restore it.



*"Weber Homestead"*

On my way home from the Palouse I decided to take a detour to Mt. Rainier. My timing happily coincided with the alpine flowers in bloom. I went for a hike straight up towards the glacier and was rewarded with remarkable scenery and views. There were marmots and chipmunks running all around the meadows and the flowers were absolutely gorgeous. It was worthwhile lugging my tripod up on the hike so I was able to take this image of the flowers with the mountain looming beyond.



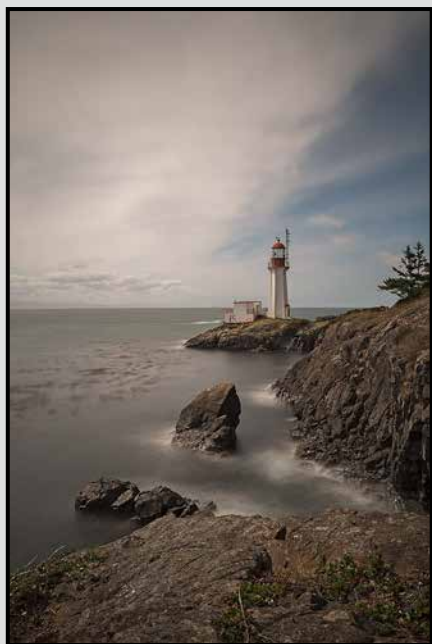
*"Mount Rainier"*

Luckily for us we don't have to travel far for spectacular scenery. My favourite place to visit on the island is definitely Tofino. The raw unspoiled beauty of it is so inspiring to me. One could walk back and forth on the beach all day and see a continuous scene unfolding. Between the light, tides, wildlife and people on the beach there is a seemingly never-ending story to tell. I was so pleased when this pair of surfers decided to walk along the bay. They seemed exhausted but utterly content after a wonderful afternoon riding the waves. It was a lucky moment when they were momentarily isolated against the backdrop of the bay with the pounding surf and rugged coastline defining their surroundings.



*"Heading Home"*

Closer to home we are still able to enjoy the jagged west coast shoreline. Recently I was finally able to visit the Sherringham Point Lighthouse in Shirley. Despite driving through that area on numerous previous occasions we never seemed to have had time to stop. It was well worth the drive; what a beautiful place. I think I could have sat perched on that cliff for hours just mesmerized by the waves and birds flying by. There were just enough breaks in the clouds that I thought there was potential for an image. I used my 10-stop ND filter and hoped the wind would ease off enough for a decent shot. There are currently efforts under way in the community to ensure that public access to this heritage lighthouse is not cut off by pending development.



*“Sherringham Point Lighthouse”*

Goldstream Falls is another spectacular location to visit. Despite having camped out at Goldstream, I didn't realize these falls existed and was introduced to them by a fellow camera club member. I love the way the froth from the falls moved down the stream and swirled around the rocks. I would like to return in the fall while the leaves are at their most colourful as they were artfully arranged all around the base of the falls.

Currently my most photographed subjects include various locations and wildlife within walking distance of my house. When the opportunity presents itself, few things recharge my batteries more than grabbing my backpack and strolling down to the sea to sit at the water's edge and watch the rhythm of nature unfold. During the winter months I am continually checking the various webcams around the city to check for any storms



*“Goldstream Falls”*

or interesting cloud formations coming in. One website that lists a number of cameras in Victoria and around the island is [bigwavedave.ca/webcams.php](http://bigwavedave.ca/webcams.php).

However my favourite subject matter in my neighbourhood are the resident bald eagles. I think that they are the most magnificent birds and I am continually amazed by their beauty and intelligence. I have been very privileged to experience some amazing moments while observing them.

One day the tide was unusually low in McNeill Bay and there were many birds congregating on the shoreline. As I was walking I noticed one of the eagles fly down and perch on an exposed rock near the shore. I made my way down to the beach and crouched low against the seawall. It wasn't very long after that she came swooping down towards me and landed a short distance away on the beach. I managed to get a series of shots before she grabbed this dead fish and took off. About an hour later this happened again. I look forward to their return this fall when they come back from their summer fishing grounds.



*“Catch of the Day”*



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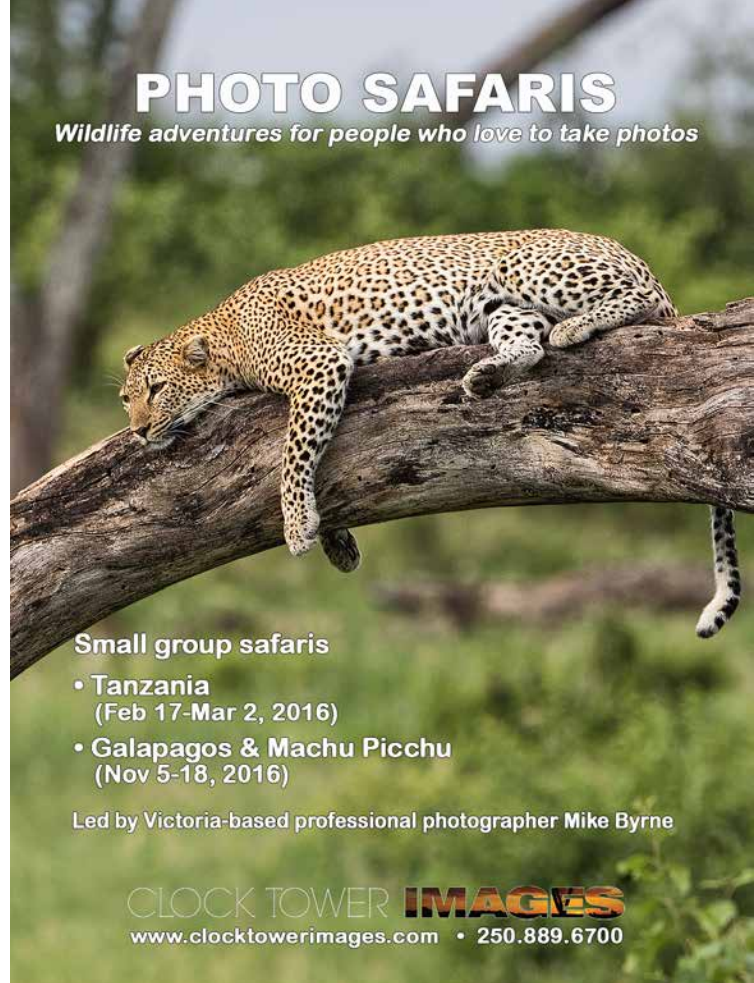
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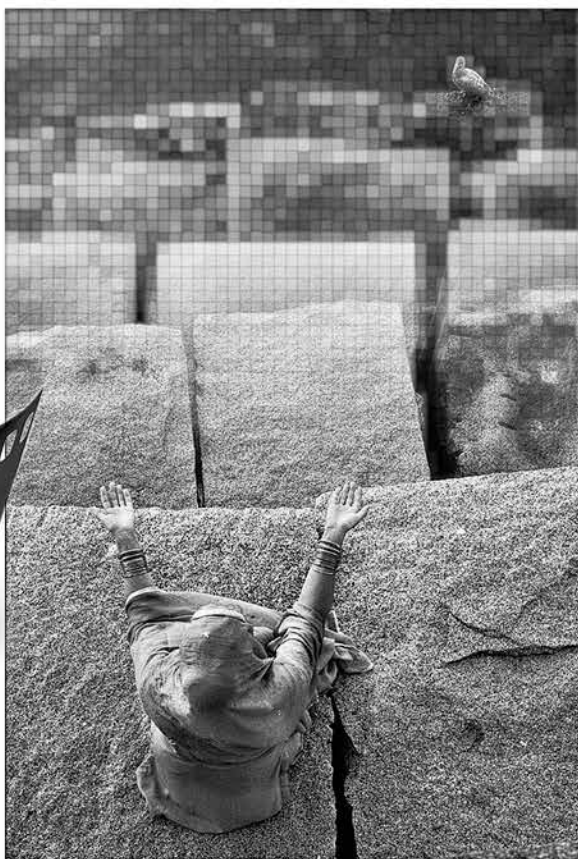
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Bridging Photo Technologies



by Richard James

*This short piece is an introduction to our “How and When to Use Flash” workshops scheduled for November. This workshop will include demonstrations and practice of how to set up your camera and flash unit. There will be two sessions, one for Canon users and one for Nikon users. Users of other equipment are welcome to attend either of these sessions.*

Consider this situation, you are out shooting but there is not enough light on your subject (in the foreground), or the lighting is coming from the wrong angle, so what do you do?

The simplest answer is to modify the light, either with a reflector, a translucent screen or to use flash. In this short piece we will discuss some of the basics of using a flash with your camera.

The biggest differences between flash and sunlight are that you can control flash lighting, but the amount of light falling on the subject varies with the distance between the flash and the subject. Both of these are the opposite of what happens with sunlight.

Light follows the inverse square law which means that its intensity is inversely proportional to the square of the distance between the source and the subject ( $1/d^2$ ). In terms of distance this means a subject 1.4 times ( $\sqrt{2} = 1.4$ ) farther away will get one half of the illumination (1 f-stop), a subject twice as far will get one quarter of the illumination (2 f-stops).

To put this in terms of aperture it means that if you could use f11 on a subject 3 m away then you would need to use an aperture of f8 if the subject was 4.2 m away. If the subject was twice as far away (6 m) then you would need an aperture of f5.6.

Then if you think about sunlight, the sun is roughly 150 million km from Earth, so if your subject moves around relative to the camera its distance from the light source, the sun, is the same.

The next important issue is whether the flash is built into the camera, an external flash unit on the camera, or an off-camera flash unit. Each has its uses, benefits and drawbacks. Fill light (just enough to fill in the shadows a bit) close to the camera can work, but the main light on, or too close to, the camera tends to give rather unnatural lighting.

The relative positions of the flash and the sun (or other light source) influence what surface texture the lighting picks up as well as how and where the shadows fall. Both of these are important to producing a good image. To learn about this I suggest you join the Lighting SIG.

Lighting that is coming primarily over your shoulder to the surface of the subject will be very “flat” meaning minimal shadows and will not emphasize texture. Conversely, light striking the surface at a very low angle will reveal much of the texture with relatively long shadows. This is one reason landscape photographers like shooting near sunrise and sunset, the landscape texture and shape are emphasized.

Using flash with nearby subjects allows you to manage where the shadows fall. With off-camera flash, you can emphasize shadows, or the opposite, fill-in the shadows on an otherwise side-lighted subject.

You can also alter the colour of the flash light by using “gel” filters on the flash and soften it by using reflectors.

Flash units from the major camera manufacturers can be used in fully automatic, semi-automatic and manual modes to give you a choice of how you control the device. Some other brands (and older models) can only be used in manual mode, but this is not that difficult to master.

Using these controls you can easily set up fill flash (filling in the shadows a bit), balanced flash (where the flash and daylight are balanced to give a more uniform lighting effect), or you can set up the scene where the primary lighting is the flash.

Next, remember that the light from the flash is controlled by the lens aperture (f-stop) and the light from the sun is controlled by the shutter speed. This is because the duration of the flash pulse (1/10,000 to 1/1000 sec) is considerably shorter than the shutter speed which is normally limited to 1/250 or 1/200 sec when using a flash in its normal mode. There is a special mode known as “high-speed flash” that allows you to use a higher shutter speed but at the expense of considerably reduced effective flash power.

By adjusting the flash power or distance from the subject, aperture, and shutter speed you can change the relationship between the sunlight and flash to give you any number of lighting effects.

So now is the time to go out and learn to use your camera with artificial lighting.

## January Competition Theme

by Pam Irvine, Competitions Chair

The theme for January is Street Photography. The goal of street photography is to capture scenes that show a natural story and subject, unaffected by the presence of the photographer. Story and subject are possibly the most important aspects of a good street shot. Check out Henri Cartier-Bresson's work on-line.

**Where to Shoot:** Concentrate on a small area. Choose places where people interact with one another. Street performers, parades and other street entertainment can be great subject matter.

### How to Shoot:

- Stand close to people and use a small, wide-angle lens, you will look more conspicuous when you are standing across the street with a long lens.
- Ideally you need to anticipate moments between people before they happen. Use continuous or burst mode. Watch the scene develop and change, and capture the image you were hoping for.
- The street is a busy, moving place so make sure your shutter speed is fast enough. 1/125 or more with an ISO of 400 is what many pros recommend.
- Learn to work fast, you will not have time to think, so know where the key controls on your camera are without looking.
- Avoid being spotted when shooting street scenes. Wear dark clothes; bright colours will make you stand out. Keep your elbows in when you're shooting. Have the camera set. Don't play around with exposures too much. Be ready to shoot and go.

**Composition:** What's going on behind your subject can actually make or break the shot. Billboards, signs, graffiti and other visual elements can really make a statement. Shots which challenge the 'norm' in terms of composition and story/subject matter can be powerful. Look out for 'surprising' subject matter. Find ways to get up high or down low, these new perspectives on subjects that are familiar can lead to eye catching shots.

Photographing people in public places is OK as long as you are not trying to catch them in an unflattering or embarrassing way. You only need permission/releases if you're going to sell the picture for commercial use. Smile, be polite and be willing to delete images if people protest. Street photography is tough but with practice you will find the results rewarding. The deadline is Thursday, January 7<sup>th</sup>.

## September 2015 Competition Judges

We extend our sincere thanks to the judges for the September Intermediate and Advanced competitions: Frank Pali, Paul Tedrick, Karen Stoyles and Rick Shapka. We would also like to thank our in-house Novice Judges this month **Willie Waddell, Steve Lustig, Caspar Davis, Suzanne Huot and Judy Taylor**. All the club judges have taken the CAPA judging course. All images and judges' comments are available at: [victoriacameraclub.ca/vcccompetitions](http://victoriacameraclub.ca/vcccompetitions).

**Frank Pali:** Intermediate and Advanced Nature and Open. Frank is an award winning photographer with an enthusiasm for capturing a wide span of images, from contemporary portraiture through commercial imagery, landscapes and wildlife. Frank's high level finishing and attention to detail is evident in every photo, many of which are represented by a number of the world's largest stock agencies. Frank is a certified photography judge and member of CAPA as well as a member of the Delta Photography Club. His website is: [www.frankpali-photography.com](http://www.frankpali-photography.com).

**Paul Tedrick:** Intermediate and Advanced Monochrome Print. Paul is a graduate of the world-renowned Brooks Institute of Photography with a B.A. degree in Photography. His award-winning career in Environmental Portraiture and Commercial Photography has taken him to such locations as Hollywood, Aspen, San Francisco and finally to Victoria, BC. Paul has a successful career in Victoria, ranging from photographing weddings to portraiture, to advertising and landscapes. His website is: [www.paultedrick.com](http://www.paultedrick.com).

**Karen Stoyles:** Intermediate and Advanced Theme and Creative. Karen lives in Brantford, ON and is an active member of the Brant Camera Club. Her main photographic interests lie with wildflower, macro and creative photography. Karen has been judging photography for over 10 years for camera clubs, local organizations and fairs. Some of her images can be found at: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/kabstoyles>.

**Rick Shapka:** Intermediate and Advanced Nature Print and Open Print. Rick is a CAPA certified judge and a former member of the executive of CAPA. He is also a member of North Shore Photographic Society, although he has recently moved to Victoria. He has a keen interest in creating abstract images. His latest trip was to Northern Ontario with the North Bay Photo Enthusiasts. His website is: [www.rickshapka.smugmug.com](http://www.rickshapka.smugmug.com).

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*Advanced Monochrome Print - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*“Kayra’s Boathouse” by Don Peterson*

Judge’s comments: Great detail throughout the image, good use of depth of field. Pleasant composition and perspective. My eye is directed to the marina and then back to the boathouse interior where I get to look at the rich details. Good use of tones, whites, blacks and greys throughout the entire image.



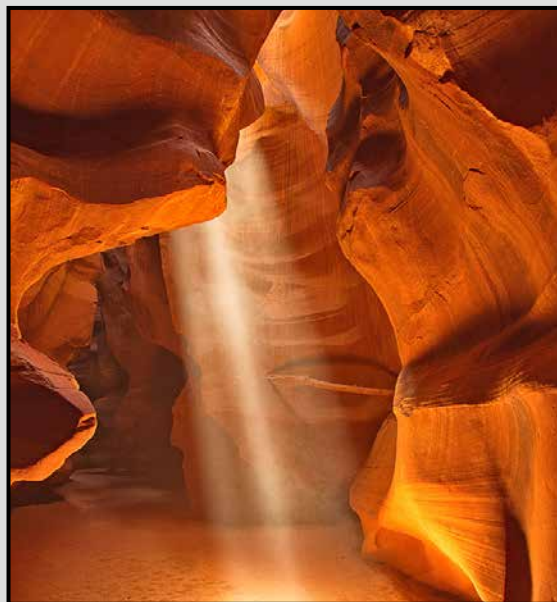
*Advanced Digital Open - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*“Cowichan Lake Sunset” by Dan Takahashi*

Judge’s comments: The colours in this image are fantastic, the exposure is really well handled. The layering in the photo keeps our eye to the center. The viewer is drawn into the middle of the image. Being brighter than the edges take us to the wonderful colours of the sunset. Nicely composed, you have just enough detail in the dark areas. Very well done long exposure.



*Advanced Digital Creative - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*“Out Of The Fire” by Gail Takahashi*

Judge’s comments: Wow, lots of impact in this image from the colours to subject. Lovely sharpness in the subject’s face. Technique very well handled. A very well done image.



*Advanced Digital Nature - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*“A Ray of Sunshine in Antelope Slot Canyon”*  
*by Ove Christensen*

Judge’s comments: Good use of colors. Well composed, excellent use of saturation, perfect exposure for this image, this image has detail throughout.



*Advanced Nature Print - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*"Head Wind" by Rene Pauze*

Judge's comments: Great detail throughout the image. Lens-exaggerated size of the wing and tail feathers highlights their importance to the bird's flight. The image is very sharp on the eyes. Demonstrates excellent understanding of camera handling skills for a flight shot. Symmetry attained with a central composition works well. Very well done.



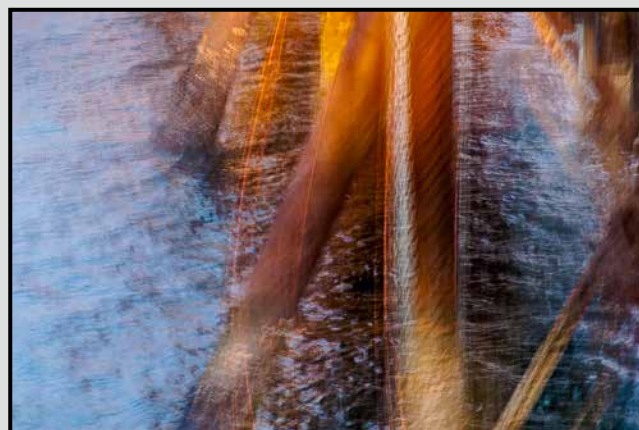
*Advanced Digital Theme - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*"Moonlit" by Willie Waddell*

Judge's comments: Beautifully created image. Image displays texture, good composition and well-handled technique. Nice, crisp sharpness adds to the image. Very well done.



*Advanced Open Print - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*"Bright Feathers" by Leah Gray*

Judge's comments: Conveys a good story. The tightly cropped, central composition works well to attract the viewer's eye to the dancer. The out of focus background separating the main subject from the background is an excellent decision by the photographer. The face and head of the dancer is sufficiently sharp, but with some apparent motion from the headdress and feathers to show action. The leading line of the bottom foot, to the right foot, and to the chest regalia turquoise color is a bonus. Excellent image.



*Intermediate Digital Creative - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*"Beneath The Sidney Pier" by Steve Barber*

Judge's comments: Wonderful use of colour and texture. The viewer can imagine the pier and water, yet still have a well-done abstract image to view.



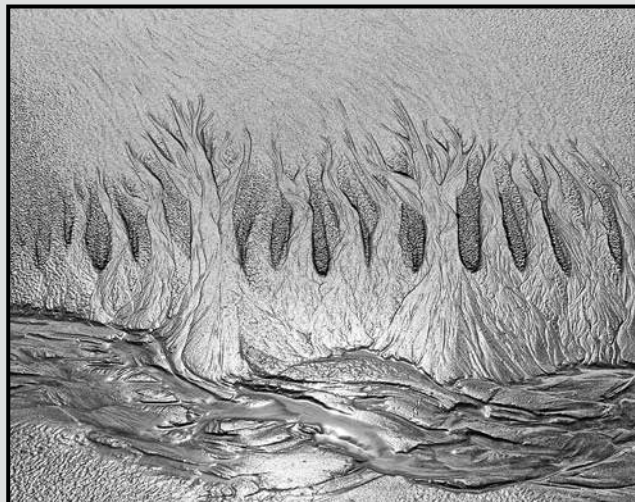
*Intermediate Open Print - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
 “Shonbrunn Palace, Austria” by Del Lucas

Judge’s comments: Conveys a good story, with good use of colors. Exposure and depth of field are handled very well. Image maker has taken a thoughtful camera position to place the horse and carriage. While all the building is not shown, the choice to include (the length of staircase) and/or exclude elements works well. It is important in an architectural photograph to have the building appear “square and upright” which indicates care and attention to detail. Appropriate amount of foreground pavement, and background, sky adds to the image symmetry.



*Intermediate Digital Nature - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
 “Helping Mum Hunt” by Susan Knowler

Judge’s comments: Conveys a good story with good use of colors. You have a great image showing the animal’s environment, you were able to capture the motion of these two animals and still have a sharp focus throughout. Well done!



*Intermediate Nature Print - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
 “Sand Pattern on South Beach”  
 by Normand Marcotte

Judge’s comments: A very fine abstract image created by the photographer. Black and white printing shows excellent tonal range. The flow in the foreground of the image assists the eye to move across the image, and the twisted tree trunk shapes move the eye to the top of the image. Different textures throughout the image create the appearance of depth, adding significant interest.



*Intermediate Monochrome Print - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
 “Historic Farmstead, Grand Tetons”  
 by Carol Christensen

Judge’s comments: A nice capture with good leading lines starting from image left leading right through the scene. The far left tree frames the image well and the 45 degree slope of the mountain keeps my gaze at the center of the image, following the fence line. Very nice contrast and rich tones on the wall of the barn and parts of the fence.

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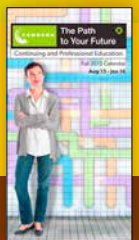
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*Intermediate Digital Open - 1<sup>st</sup>  
"Focused" by Steve Smith*

Judge's comments: The children are so natural. The nice background colours complement the colours in their clothing. Tack sharp image. The exposure is handled to perfection. Being at eye level brings the viewer to feel a part of the image. Vibrant complimentary colours are what makes this work so well.



*Intermediate Digital Theme - 1<sup>st</sup>  
"Rosa Lily Burst" by Gita McCormick*

Judge's comments: Good use of colors. Love this image, showing creativity and thinking outside of the box. Very nicely done.



*Novice Digital Theme - 1<sup>st</sup>  
"Macro Flower" by Teri VanWell*

Judge's comments: This dreamy image with soft focus and lighting is well suited to the theme of Floral Artistry, good composition with gradual darkening at the bottom grounding this flower. Very well done.



*Novice Digital Theme - 2<sup>nd</sup>  
"Buttercream Rose" by Virginia MacDonald*

Judge's comments: Soft focus, color and lighting lend themselves to the artistry of this image. Well composed with soft curves and diagonal lines. Very well done.





*Novice Digital Nature - 1<sup>st</sup>*

*“Northwest Alligator Lizard” by Mark van Arragon*

Judge’s comments: Full marks to this image for sharp focus on the animal. Great composition, nice lighting with appropriate depth of field to enhance the animal and blur the background. Excellent sharp focus in the eye. Well done.



*Novice Digital Open - 1<sup>st</sup>*

*“Sunset Swim, Sri Lanka” by Anne McCarthy*

Judge’s comments: Conveys a good story, good use of colours. Great Image with high impact as the swimmers anticipate the surf. Sharp focus with beautiful lighting; Well composed with the diagonal line of the swimmers and the reflections on shore. Very well done.



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My dad gave me my first camera, a Nikkormat FTn, while I was in university and planning to spend a summer travelling through Europe. That summer I shot hundreds of images using Kodachrome slide film. Back in North America, I tried my hand at “artsy” black and white shots for a while, using Tri-X film. However, graduate school, and then family life, intervened and kept me too busy. The Nikkormat gathered dust on a shelf, and was later replaced with a small point and shoot Canon that chronicled our son’s childhood and family vacations, and then I used a Lumix LX-5 to do the same.

Throughout the years, I have always been drawn to photographic images, and they are what I first seek in museums and galleries. As retirement loomed, I thought about wanting to pursue photography as a hobby and Googled “camera clubs in Victoria.” This was during the summer of 2010, and I discovered that a small group was meeting at a coffee shop in Fairfield. I went to a meeting and remember hearing strange terms like shooting RAW (which I thought meant being naked), L-brackets, battery grips and ball heads; I nodded knowingly, and wrote the terms down to look up later.

I joined the Victoria Camera Club in the fall of 2010 and it has been the primary source of my photographic learning, taking courses, shooting with members, and asking many questions. Once I developed the courage to enter competitions, the critical feedback obtained was invaluable. I also decided that intensive workshops would allow me to immerse myself in photography, and to learn whatever was being taught. I spent a week with John and Barbara Gerlach shooting hummingbirds, a week with Jack Lien in the Palouse, a week with Freeman Patterson learning “how to see,” two days with Steve Simon learning about settings and custom menus on my camera, and a day with Andre Gallant doing impressionistic



“Palouse Landscape”

photography. I also attended conferences like APAC and took some courses at Luz Studios. The more I learned, the more expensive this hobby became, as I discovered and developed GAS (gear acquisition syndrome). I bought a Nikon D7000, which then morphed into a Nikon D800. In addition, I have a Gitzo travel tripod, a heavy-duty Manfrotto tripod with a RRS ball head, neutral density and polarizing filters, a filter holder, remote release, and various lenses.



“Djupavik Herring Factory, Iceland”

Djupavik is in the Northwest corner of Iceland, about 175 km off the main highway. The last 60 km are on a narrow gravel road hugging a cliff along the Arctic Ocean. The reward for this rainy, dark, freezing endurance drive was photographing an abandoned herring factory. This photo is a 5-shot HDR converted to B&W/sepia.

Photography has changed my travel experiences and my bucket list of places to visit. Trips to Cuba and Iceland were driven by photographic interest, as are Morocco and Portugal, two of my future destinations. Although I enjoyed my “hummingbird period,” I most enjoy shooting landscapes, street scenes, and abandoned interiors. I shoot mainly color, but am now trying more black and white as well as HDR.

My processing is done in Lightroom 5 with plug-ins such as Silver Efex Pro, HDR Efex Pro, and Photomatix Pro. I am excited to see what learning lies ahead from workshops, travel and from other VCC members.

The most interesting comment I heard about photography came from Freeman Patterson, who said, “If you can’t see what’s in your backyard, how can you see what’s in Morocco.” My emphasis going forward will be on composition and “good seeing,” which is also what Freeman emphasized. With all that I have learned and will learn, my ultimate goal is to make extraordinary photos from ordinary subjects.

I come by my interest in nature photography honestly. My Dad, Fred Wooding, author, photographer, film maker and naturalist, authored major works on two distinct wildlife topics, fish and mammals. He was also a member of the College of Fellows of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society. Although I have always owned a camera (starting with a Brownie Hawkeye), it wasn't until I retired in 2006 that I had enough time to allow my hobby to evolve into a passion. Little did I know then that I was embarking on a journey that would lead me to some of the most beautiful wild places on the continent, from the Canadian Arctic to the deserts of the American Southwest.



*"California Quail"*

I believe that there were three significant developments in my quest to become a wildlife photographer. In 2008, I joined the Victoria Camera Club and became exposed to some excellent work by members who were already at a level to which I aspired. I was particularly inspired by the work of Michael Lambie and Margarita Huang, whose exceptional nature and wildlife images were consistent winners in our monthly competitions. Back then, we only had one level of competition, as opposed to the three we have now, so taking the plunge and going head to head with the likes of Michael, Margarita and others was somewhat daunting, and my efforts in that first year were not very successful. I remain convinced that entering competitions is an excellent way of accelerating one's rate of improvement, and would recommend it to anyone, especially now that we have the three-tiered system.

The second major event in my wildlife photography career was the acquisition of my first 500 mm lens. This opened up a whole new world for me, especially in my chosen specialty of bird photography. It's safe to say that well over 90% of my avian images are taken with this lens.



*"Great Grey Owl"*

Finally and most significantly, I had the good fortune and privilege of becoming friends with one of the finest nature photographers in the country, Tim Zurowski. Tim has been photographing all aspects of nature for over 35 years, and has been most generous in sharing his knowledge and experience with me on numerous trips and outings. If I have achieved any level of proficiency in my craft it is largely due to his mentorship.

My goals are simple. Each year my images will be better than the year before, I will add more species to my collection, and I will produce a book for my family and close friends. I am now nine years into my personal journey through the world of nature and wildlife photography and hopefully I have many more to go. It's been a great ride so far!



*"Mike at Setup"*

by Gordon Griffiths

Coupeville, located on Penn Cove on Whidbey Island in Puget Sound, is the second oldest town in Washington. The first European to visit the area was Captain George Vancouver, and the town was named for Captain Thomas Coupe who settled on this site in 1852. Coupeville has a population of approximately 1900 people.

Tourism and artistic workshops are the primary economic mainstays of this town. The most prominent features of Coupeville are its iconic pier and government dock and the heritage waterfront buildings. In addition, the town also contains a number of restored Queen Anne Victorian heritage houses.



*“Heritage House”*

There are many varied photographic opportunities for photographers in Coupeville and the surrounding area:

- In Coupeville, the pier, waterfront buildings and Victorian houses provide both wide angle and macro photographic opportunities;
- Nearby, the Ebey’s Landing National Historic Reserve, Fort Casey State Park and Fort Ebey State Park contain heritage buildings including original pioneer homes, block houses, “saltbox” style houses, old gun, armoury and fort emplacements and related structures;
- For nature photographers, there are miles of shoreline and water views located in and outside the state parks;
- Deception Pass State Park has pullouts providing views and photo opportunities for a massive steel arch bridge and the channels beneath;
- Area farms provide interesting opportunities. We visited a lavender farm that also contained large ornamental flower gardens and another farm filled with a significant collection of rusty antique farm equipment and other vehicles;

- If the light is poor, visit the local cemetery that reflects the history of the area. It contains interesting figurines and monuments;
- Don’t put your camera away if it rains, Coupeville has a vintage bowling alley that will make you think you are back in the 1950’s, and we spent three hours photographing the various artifacts and the local bowlers in action. We also photographed the interior of a bed and breakfast filled with antiques and artistic objects collected by the owners during a lifetime of diplomatic service overseas;
- Often special events take place on Penn Cove. We were lucky to photograph the annual sailing regatta. The sailboats are so close that a medium telephoto is adequate;
- Local residents are used to seeing photographers and painters in the town and surrounding area and do not mind people respectfully photographing them and their property.



*“Old Time Gas Station”*

Reflecting the number of artists who live in the Coupeville area, the Pacific Northwest Arts Centre is located in the town. It offers courses in photography, painting, mixed media and fibre art, and one of its courses provided my introduction to this area.



*“Sunrise”*

by Bobbie Carey

Photographers can either have a whole lot of equipment, a moderate number of pieces, or only one or two: a camera and maybe a tripod. In our Club we find a wide variety of photographers with a wide variety of toolkits. Several of our members have very special cameras, a wide assortment of lenses and filters, reflectors and diffusers, remote shutter releases, flashes and more.

On some of the very first Club field trips I joined, I must admit to having felt more than a little intimidated by all the equipment some members were carrying. My first generation digital camera (not a DSLR) was a somewhat embarrassing novelty among the “real” cameras. Over the years I became one of those members, acquiring more and more equipment, treating myself to bigger and better cameras and lenses and tripods and, of necessity, bigger and heavier camera bags.

Two things occurred to radically change my approach to photography: I developed arthritis in my wrists and I planned a photographic trip to India. It was clear to me that I had to lighten my gear and simplify my camera. I don't plan on endorsing one camera or piece of equipment over another; we each have our favourites. What I hope to achieve here is to share my experience with a smaller camera and to provide some encouragement to members who may not have the desire or the financial wherewithal with which to purchase complex equipment similar to what they see some other members using.

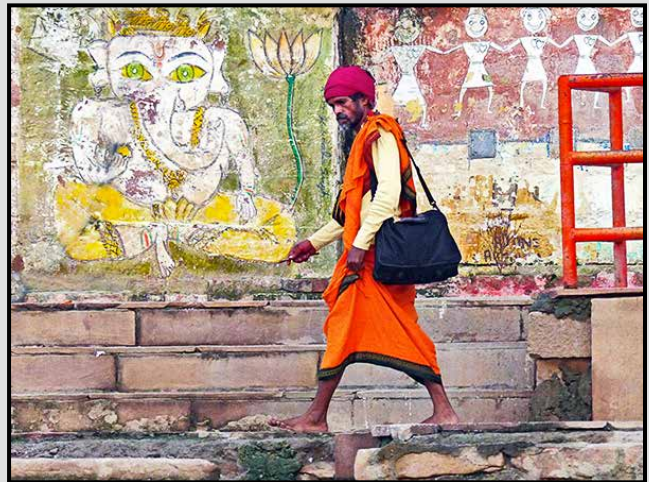
It can often be intimidating, and maybe even a little embarrassing, to be photographing with your simple camera next to someone who seems to be so much better equipped. Let those feelings go. With many people achieving amazing results with their smart phone camera (with the iPhone 7 aiming for 12 megapixels!) and with bridge and mirrorless cameras becoming more popular and most of the better ones ranging between a fairly affordable \$500 and \$900, there is really no need to invest in a complex system, unless you want to.

The results for me, with the bridge camera that I purchased for the trip to India, were most satisfying, providing a number of important advantages over the big DSLR I owned previously. I could manage the new camera with one hand, if necessary.

Bridge cameras weigh much less than a DSLR, coming in at around 600-800 grams, so I could easily carry it in my shoulder bag, without the extra weight of the various

lenses a DSLR generally requires. Most of the bridge cameras are optical heavyweights, with zoom lenses ranging from equivalent focal lengths of 21 - 1365 mm, and optical zoom ranges of up to 65x. The camera I settled on has an f2.8 maximum aperture across its entire zoom range of 25-600 mm (24x). There are also numerous shooting options, including full manual settings.

In India, with fast, colourful motion everywhere I looked, I benefited greatly by having a small, fast, easy-to-handle camera. While on a boat on the Ganges River I was able to shoot sharp, satisfying photos of subjects way up on the fairly distant shore, such as the “Ganges Pilgrim.”



“Ganges Pilgrim”

On other occasions while riding in a bus, I switched to the “Through Glass” setting, and snapped some of the eye-catching street action of India. This mode is one of 17 scene modes, in addition to a full Manual Mode, Aperture and Shutter Priority, and an all-inclusive, extremely efficient automatic setting (Intelligent Auto).

There is no doubt that a DSLR has more “camera” to it than my current SLR-like camera has, but the smaller camera has a 24x zoom Leica DC lens with a f2.8 aperture which makes it redundant for me to carry other lenses in my bag, though somewhat complicated wide angle and telephoto conversion lenses are available. It is a super-fast little camera that provides me with photos whose quality seems to be, to my unprofessional eye, quite as good as what I got from my DSLR.

These cameras are worth your consideration if you are planning to invest in a new camera. Naturally, you must consider your photographic interests. Think about the subjects you have in your collection so far and gear your camera needs to your obvious interests. As for me, I have not yet regretted my move to smaller equipment.

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*Photo Courtesy of Wendi Donaldson Laird*

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by John Roberts

Over the past few years several people I know are picking up film cameras again. Being a film shooter myself, I thought I would take a moment to talk about how I shoot with film, and what sort of things I do to get the results I do.

There is something to be said about the look of film, even in an age where there are 1.2 million presets available to make digital files look like film. I might be exaggerating on that number, or I might be underestimating. I actually did not count how many presets there are available.

But, there is still something to be said about the image quality. Nothing quite beats the look of “good grain” in film, even if it is scanned. With the right scanner, the look of the grain or, “the feel of film,” as I prefer to call it, can be preserved. To me, a film image has a feel to it that no digital preset can fully replicate. So, I prefer to have all the feels!

But for my feels, I do some things to my film, that not everyone does, or knows about, and I would like to share some of those tips with you.

Over-expose the film, especially colour negative film that has a much higher over-exposure latitude than digital cameras, and it can be over-exposed by quite a bit, to give you a different look than when you shoot it without any compensation. It is softer, warmer and just gives a great look to the images. There are a few exceptions to this rule, which I will get into shortly.

There are a couple ways to get the right over-exposure. Some people prefer to use a hand-held light meter, with a dome that can be retracted and then aim that at the ground and meter that way. This gives you 1-2 stops over exposure compared to metering through the lens.

Another way is by manually setting the ISO of the film to make it over-exposed. This is my preferred method so that I do not have to think about aiming the light meter at the ground. So for instance, with FujiFilm Pro400H, depending on the lighting, I tend to over-expose it by rating the film at either 200 ISO if it is a bright sunny day, or at 100 ISO if it is an overcast day.

Let me tell you, on an overcast day, with Pro400H rated at 100, the images are pure gold! Skin tones are soft and silky, and there is an overall warmth to the image. For me it is truly why I shoot film in the first place.

This reminds me, certain films react well to this sort of treatment; some do not. Depending on the film you are using you may get some odd results. The Kodak Portra 400 reacts very well to this sort of treatment. While others, such as the Kodak Ektar 100, get an odd magenta tone if you over-expose too much.

Conversely, the Kodak Portra 400 pushes well, you can use it at 1600 ISO (2-Stops under-exposure), and tell the lab to push process it. It turns out very nicely. There are some very well-known photographers who have made a decent living with their photography shooting solely with Kodak Portra 400.

For the more classic crowd, B&W film can give you the most latitude of all. Again it depends on which film you use, some of the B&W films are super-contrasty and do not have as great a dynamic range from the whites to the blacks, such as Ilford Pan-F+ 50, a rich and punchy contrast film, great for architecture and landscape, but not so awesome for portraiture.

Then there are films such as FujiFilm ACROS 100 which is awesome for portraiture, and is decent for everything else, but not as awesome as it is for portraiture.

But again, I do not shoot B&W film rated for the speed the box says, I also under-expose it. For Fujifilm's Neopan 100 Acros, I rate it at 50 ISO, and put a yellow filter on the lens, which in turn gives a wonderful skin tone which almost glows.

Other B&W films I do not over-expose as much, such as Ilford FP4+ 125, which I rate for 100 ISO. This takes the heavy grain that FP4+ is known for, and just softens it a touch and so makes it not such a hard film. However, there are times you want that hard gritty look that Ilford FP4+, HP5+ or Kodak Tri-X will give you. Street photography for instance is a time where you want that chunky grain, to give it the feel of the grain.

I could go on for hours about how you can use X B&W film with Y film developer to get Z results, but I really do not have enough room in this column to describe all the options. Give me an e-Book, and yes, I can give you as much detail as you need to know, unless you were willing to bear with me through a 14-part series, but actually an e-Book might not be a bad idea.

If you have any questions about shooting with, or processing, film please feel free to contact me and ask your questions. [jrphotographybc@icloud.com](mailto:jrphotographybc@icloud.com)

by Barbara Burns

By far the most useful feature in Photoshop (including Photoshop Elements) and the one that in my mind distinguishes it from other photo editing software is its Layers feature. Photoshop's sophisticated capacity to layer images and adjustments in a stack on top of each other is simply not available in any other software. While many photographers do very nicely without ever using this feature, those of us who love to create digital art from our photographic images would say that Layers is the absolutely most important and rewarding tool in our kit. None of the creative images that I have done in recent years could have been done without it.

There are five important topics that you need to understand well to begin to use Layers effectively and creatively. They are: the conceptual basis for Layers, the Layers Palette, Pixel vs. Adjustment Layers, Layer Masks, Layer Blend Modes and adding all or part of another image as a layer in your piece. A detailed explanation of these topics is well beyond the scope of this short article, so I will touch only briefly on each one. There are many good YouTube videos and e-books on these specific topics and on the subject of Photoshop Layers in general.

A helpful conceptual model for understanding Layers in Photoshop is to think of an initial foundation (the base image or background) with a series of transparent and non-transparent films layered one on top of the other above it. The image you actually see is as if viewed from the top of the stack looking down into the original image. It is a composite of the effects of all the layers.

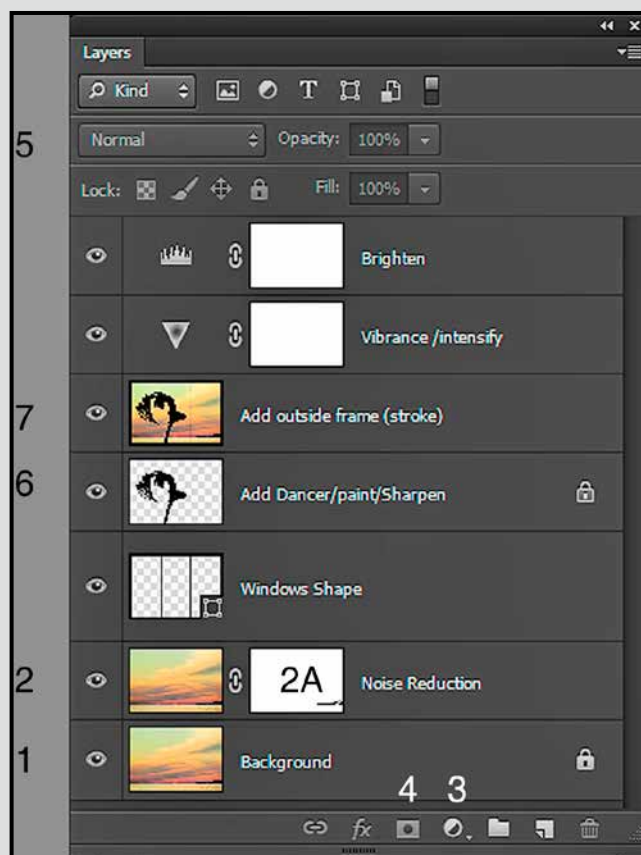
When you start using Layers in Photoshop you will have to configure your workspace so that the Layers Palette is always visible on the right side of your screen (Window>Layers). You will want to explore which of the numerous palettes you want readily available to you while you are working. I always keep the History Palette as well on the screen in order to easily go back or remove changes that I have made about which I am doubtful (Window>History). Once you have your workspace set up conveniently it is wise to save and name it (Window>Workspace>New workspace).

It is important to get to know the Layers Palette well and to feel comfortable working with it. I have included a screen shot of one of my simple creative images showing the Layers Palette for the image. You can see that each layer I have created is named and stacked

on top of the previous one. The image you see on the full screen is the combined effect of all the layers.



*"Sunset Dancer"*



*The Layer Stack*

The first one, usually named "Background" (1), is generally locked to prevent destructive changes. The normal first action is to create a duplicate layer (2) to work on (Layer>Duplicate Layer), so that all your changes are made to subsequent layers, preserving the original until you flatten the image. Although it does use up disk space, I always keep a layered copy of the full working



image with all its layers so that if I want to change or improve upon it later, all of my work is still available to me.

There are two kinds of layers: Pixel Layers and Adjustment Layers. Pixel Layers have all the image data in them and must be used when you are altering the actual pixels. Some of the tools such as the clone stamp will only work on a Pixel Layer.

Pixel Layers increase the size of your image so when possible, use an Adjustment Layer, as it does not do so. Adjustment Layers act as overlays that change the appearance of the image but not the pixels themselves.

In the screen shot image there are 5 Pixel Layers and 2 Adjustment Layers (the top two). As a rule, I try to keep the Adjustment Layers at the top of the stack, as they are by nature transparent. As a result, if I later make a change on a Pixel Layer below, the Adjustment layers then affect that Pixel Layer with the new changes without requiring any alteration themselves.

To add an Adjustment Layer, click on the little round black and grey icon at the bottom of the Layers Palette (3). A list of all the available Adjustment Layers will appear (e.g. levels, curves, color balance, hue and saturation, brightness and contrast etc.).

A Layer Mask is an overlay that is added to a layer to selectively hide or reveal the effect of the layer itself. They are generally black or white. Just remember: “white reveals, black conceals.” A Layer Mask (2A) can be painted upon using the Brush Tool set for white to reveal or black to conceal. The white portion of the Layer Mask reveals the effect of the new layer, thereby changing the whole image accordingly, while that portion of the Mask that is black will block or conceal the effect of the layer, making no change to the overall image. In the screen shot, the second layer (noise reduction - 2) has a white Layer Mask revealing the adjustment but there is a darker area of the mask (2A) where I have blocked the noise removal in an area of the image (thus showing the original “background layer” (1) in that area.

By varying the opacity of the Brush Tool while painting on a Layer Mask one can apply a grey area to the mask that will only partially reveal or conceal the layer effect in that particular area of the image.

All Adjustment Layers come with a Layer Mask. For Pixel Layers one can add a Mask by clicking on the small rectangular icon with a circle (4) at the bottom of

the Layers Palette. To change a Layer Mask from white to black and vice versa, click on the mask to highlight it and press Command (Ctrl) + “I.” One very common error that can be quite frustrating is to confuse whether one is working in the layer itself or in the Layer Mask. Always check to see that you have activated the one that you want to work on by clicking on either the layer icon or the Layer Mask box in the layer. A bold four corner framing effect appears around the one that is currently active.

Layer Blend Modes are a wonderful creative tool. They allow you to vary, often quite dramatically, how one layer interacts with another. For example, the “Multiply” Blend Mode will eliminate all whites in a layer, allowing only the darker tones of the layer to take effect in the image and the “Screen” Blend Mode does the opposite. This is very useful when bringing in elements from another image without having to mask out unwanted portions. My favourite Mode for creative compositing is “Soft Light.”

You access the Blend Modes by clicking on a drop-down menu on the upper left of the Layers Palette. In the screen shot included it is the menu currently reading “Normal” (5). The best way to learn about Blend Modes is to create a duplicate layer of your Background, and while it is active, scroll through the different Modes, observing the changes it makes to your image. A lot has been written about Layer Blend Modes and their immense creative potential.

There are several ways to import another image (or layer) onto your layer stack as a new layer. The one I use is the following: with both the first image (“original”) and the second image (“source”) open on your screen (Tiled), click on the source image or layer, create a duplicate of it and click and drag the duplicate onto the original image (shift + drag will align the two images).

The source image will now appear as a new pixel layer on the top of your original image layer stack. You may need to resize the new layer, add a Layer Mask or change the Blend Mode if you want only part of the source image to be visible or if you want to artistically vary its effect. In the included screen capture, layers 4 and 5 (6 and 7) have been imported into the image from other files.

I hope this discussion has piqued your interest in Photoshop Layers and has inspired you to explore this fabulous creative tool.

## Storm Clouds East

by Garry Schaefer

Experience indicates that both convective clouds and green vegetation produce strong returns in the infrared spectrum. I was familiar with the harbour scene from my fourth floor balcony. All that was required was to await the arrival of a suitable skyscape. The image was captured using my Panasonic G3 micro-4/3 camera, which was converted to deep B&W infrared by LifePixel near Seattle, WA. (Thank you Graham Budd for your workshop and Richard Webber for his personal experience with that particular camera.)

The shot was hand-held using my Panasonic 14-42 mm MEGA OIS lens at 18 mm, f5.6, 1/125th sec, ISO 160. I shoot in monochrome mode and save the results at the highest available settings for jpeg quality and file size. I process the images in Corel Paint Shop Pro X8. In this case, I set the black and white points using the curves auto-contrast function, adjusted as required, and finish off with the local tone-mapping function to enhance the separation of the mid tone elements.

Although it is early days in my exploration of infrared photography, the basic approach described above has proven fruitful on a number of subjects. Since I am most taken by the pure, strong contrasts of these deep B&W images, I have been enjoying the pursuit and look forward to experimenting with a greater variety of subject matter in coming months.



## Misty Morning

by Doug McLean

I was up early on our first morning in Queen Charlotte City, Haida Gwaii. A light fog had settled on the inlet, and I was watching for a shot. As the sun rose to the ridgeline, I could see a silhouette developing, back lighting the giant firs. I had a long lens and luckily was not too close, leaving the foreground in the composition. Only the intense circle of the sun, which over-powered the mist, revealed the detail of the trees. Along the ridge, the other trees remained a blur in the fog.



Key aspects of the image include exposure, focus and sharpness, contrast and lighting. I managed to avoid a burnt-out sky, yet kept detail in the deep shadows. Consideration was also given to contrast, colour balance, lighting and background distraction. It is important to master these basics to eliminate distraction from the composition and from the impact of the image. Compositional and design elements help the appeal, uniqueness and impact we seek in our shots.

In *Misty Morning*, the eye is immediately drawn to the dominant subject, contrasting crisp detail of the backlit trees, with the softened features from the fog. The diagonal ridgeline coupled with the three simple bands of light grey, dark fog and a base of trees. The subject was placed off centre with the use of the placement of thirds.

The image has only minor post-processing adjustments including, exposure and shadow to deal with the high dynamic range.

Simplicity is a great asset in a photo. Good fortune plays a big part in capturing it, but so also does recognition of the moment. Always be alert to the possibilities as they develop.

## Tuesday Shoots

by Wayne Swanson

### November 10: All Indoors

Don't worry about the weather for this one as we won't be going outside. The choice of subjects, from potted plants to manikins to sales clerks, is wide open as long as they are within a building. Perhaps you can convince some shopper to pose for your shot. Get creative in looking for something interesting to put in front of your lens.

Here is your chance to play with your flash equipment or to experiment with your camera's white balance to correct for your light source. You can set your ISO or adjust your shutter speed to capture images in lower light conditions. Think of this shoot as an opportunity to get to know your camera better.

### November 24: Street Photography

Here is a chance to get the shot for the VCC January Theme Competition, which is street photography. The focus will be on people whether they are bundled up to fight a violent storm or basking in the morning sun.

Whatever they are doing, your shot will tell the story. You just have to be ready to capture that "Kodak moment." It may be one of those times when you want to use your auto mode to let your camera adjust for focus and lighting so you don't have to. It may be a time when you want to get grainy black and white photos to have a more dramatic impact. Just remember to grab the story.



"Finding the Way"

## Weekend Shoots

by Steve Smith

Three field trips are planned for November. Please check the calendar for further information and dates.

**Nicholson Manufacturing:** With over 60 years of experience, they are a world class Heavy Equipment Manufacturer for the logging industry located in Sidney. By using the latest manufacturing technologies, capabilities, and processes, their 10,000 m<sup>2</sup> facility gives them one of the most modern and complete machining and fabrication/assembly shops on the West Coast of North America.

They are prepared to open the factory to VCC members on a weekend depending on their work schedule. Photographic opportunities include large machined and cast parts, partly built and completed feller bunchers and yarders. This trip supports the March competition "Industrial" theme.

**Delta Bird Trip:** An all-day field trip to the Fraser Delta to photograph birds is planned for November 14. It will include visits to the George C. Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary, Delta farmland and Boundary Bay.

The Fraser River Estuary is on the Pacific Flyway, the path of migrating birds stretching from Siberia and Alaska to Central and South America. It is a critical feeding area as millions of migrating waterfowl and shorebirds converge on the mudflats, marshes and shallow tidal flats of the estuary on their way to wintering grounds in California, Mexico, Central and South America or the South Pacific. Some species spend the winter in the estuary.

**Long Exposure:** If you attended Neil Boyle's workshop and field trip last year you will know that it was well worth the effort to round up neutral density filters, tripods and cable releases! This year Neil will again lead a field trip to take shots of frothy wave and cloud action.

Long exposure sharply captures the stationary elements of images while blurring, smearing, or obscuring the moving elements. It captures one element that conventional photography does not: time. The paths of bright, moving objects become clearly visible. Clouds form broad bands, head and tail lights of cars become bright streaks, stars form trails in the sky and water smooths over. The inclusion of motion is the main factor to add intrigue to long exposure photographs.

by Neil Boyle

In the September/October issue of *Close-Up*, I wrote an article, "An Introduction to Architectural Photography." I described the basics: the scope of this genre, the tools of the trade, and some guidelines. Now to talk about the next step, how to make artistic architectural photographs.

A basic architectural photograph is a record, a document of a building or a manufactured structure, or some detail of these. It conforms to some basic rules or tenets, such as vertical lines should be vertical, the structure should be in focus, environment is needed for context, avoid distortions etc.

A photographer becomes an artist when moving from record-keeping to creating a unique image of the structure. As any artist knows, there are many, if not innumerable, ways to make an image artistic. I am going to discuss some techniques used by the masters. Google would be happy to help you investigate those that appeal to you, or to find the many concepts that I don't have space for.

The first step towards artistry is knowing when to break the rules. Two common ways of breaking the rule of vertical lines: shoot the building from the centre of its base, camera tilted up, to allow the vertical lines to converge; or shoot it from off-centre, camera again tilted up, keeping the base of the building horizontal, but allowing the vertical lines to both tilt in the same direction, still converging. These are exaggerations or distortions of perspective, and need to be prominent enough that they make a statement; too little and they appear to be errors. A tilt-shift lens can keep a building tilted away from the photographer completely in focus, but perhaps having only a small strip of the building in focus can be used to bring emphasis to a specific feature of the building. Environment undoubtedly contributes to the overall image, but lack of environment may focus the attention, create mystery or ambiguity, or just lead to simplicity. Planned distortion is a wonderful tool for making the viewer take time to understand the image.

The masters use many touches or tricks of the trade to increase the interest in or the attractiveness of their image. Buildings are often shown reflected in the windows of another, and this can be further enhanced by the use of perfect or defective reflections (in perfectly placed or irregular windows), and the angling of the reflector may produce interesting distortions. Conversely, something of interest in the environment may be reflected in the windows of the subject building. Reflective techniques

can make use of other substances: water (ponds, wet surfaces), metal, polished marble.

The components or elements common to all images work well with architecture. S-curves, circles, and triangles are universally attractive shapes. Symmetry, especially if exaggerated, or even distorted, can be very attractive.



*"Brooklyn Bridge Park Pilings"*

Your image needn't be restricted to the structure, it can include the environment, people in the image, colours, and shapes. Positive and negative spaces can be used to draw attention to the subject, just as leading lines can. Silhouettes, both of the main element or in the environment, draw attention. Image placement affects the emotional response of the viewer. A structure might be placed in the centre of the image for a static emotional response, or off-set to the one third position, adding negative space to one side, for a more dynamic look.

The environment of an architectural study gives great room for the artist to play. The clouds and the weather have a huge impact on the feel of an image. For one example among many, consider rain: light, heavy, driving, bouncing off the pavement, angled or straight down, visible drops or sheets, and umbrellas. Note the clouds, the source of this rain: cirrus, nimbus, mist, seen from below or above, hiding or revealing structures. These all bring to mind images one has seen, and the different emotions evoked. The environment obviously includes location (rural/suburban/urban, inside/outside), but it also includes time, sunrise/day/dusk/night and season. The golden hour is just as magical in the architectural world as in any other photograph. When chosen well, the environment of an architectural image can set the desired mood, busy/calm, modern/old-fashioned, or technical/organic.

If the structure isn't right, perhaps a feature of it is. Some fragment, enough to be recognized, can be isolated by cropping, framing, selective focus, lens focal length, lighting, or a myriad of other photographic techniques. Windows, stairways, doors, or even just enough of the structure to suggest the whole, may be all that is needed to make the image.

One of the oldest means to create an artistic image is to start with a beautiful subject. This is both the simplest to do, and the hardest to do well. Consider all the inherently beautiful structures whose images bombard us every day, such as the Eiffel Tower, the Flatiron building (Manhattan, New York City), Tower Bridge, the Golden Gate Bridge, the Taj Mahal, the Sydney Opera House, etc.

These images are simple to make because they are familiar, and the work of finding them and the site to shoot from has been done many times. They are the hardest to shoot, because for a unique image, you will need to do a lot of work to find a new view, and a new way of showing the image. It can be done. For example, check out the image of the Eiffel Tower on the site: <https://blindnessislove.wordpress.com/tag/the-kills>. Analyzing this image will teach you a lot about making something unique. There is nothing wrong with the idea of shooting what has been shot many times. It is a good place to start, to learn from the masters, to try out what other people have made work well.

Another old and new technique is to present an image in a way that hasn't been done which is easier for modern architectural photographers, with so many new techniques now available. Here are a few.

**B & W:** a tried and true old friend of architecture, for all the reasons it has always been loved, simplicity, contrast, timelessness, separation from reality, and so on. Almost every photographer of structures has played with it, but some modern ones have taken it in new directions, often combining it with other techniques.

**Post-processing:** Once photographers were freed from the limits of the dark room, and given the tools of Lightroom, Photoshop, Capture One, Photodirector, DxO Optics, etc., the options became infinite. Now the structure can look as you remember or better yet, as you wish it had looked. People or things you don't want can be removed in a variety of ways. Or put in. The environment can be anything you want. But it's still easier to get it right in the camera.

**High Dynamic Range (HDR):** This tool solves the problems of too much contrast, and a dynamic range that is too large. Mostly. Or it gives you the option to go where Photoshop has never gone before. Maybe. To see examples of this, seek out the HDR image master, [Trey Ratcliff](#).

**Night:** Architecture can look unusual and very interesting, lit at night by ambient or artificial light, or light-painted.

**Long exposure (LE):** Produces very beautiful effects, under certain circumstances. Especially good for clouds and water in the environment of the architectural image, or at night. But, on a practical note, also useful for removing moving objects. Local world-famous masters include [Marc Koegel](#) of Vancouver and [Michael Levin](#).

Two of many remarkably good modern fine art architectural photographers worthy of following are [Julie Anne Gospodarou](#) and [Joel Tjintjelaar](#). They combine B&W, LE, and post-processing to a new degree, and they are willing to share their methods. They both write about their styles and techniques, lead workshops, and they've both written blogs or books worth reading, so I will leave you to delve deeper into their sites.

Our club periodically runs workshops on post-processing, HDR, long exposure and night photography.



*"The Chrysler Building"*

The real joy in all photography comes in discovering something you have not seen photographed before. For this, one must get out, travel, look, see, interpret, and look again at what one has already seen and dismissed. Perhaps under different light, in a different weather pattern, from a new place. Perhaps one just needs to take the road less travelled by.

## Winter Challenges

by Nancy MacNab

As the days get shorter and the weather gets chilly, if not downright miserable, do you put your camera away and sit down to dream of the wonderful photos you will take once spring arrives and to plan your holiday to an exotic location? And then, once the days are longer and warmer, you find that you spend the first few outings trying to scrape the rust off your technique, re-reading your camera's manual, reminding yourself of the elements of composition, and trying to connect your vision to what you see through the camera's viewfinder.

Instead of letting your cameras gather dust this winter, consider keeping your skills active and acquiring new ones by starting some projects or setting challenges. These can be done on your own or with a friend or two.

You may want to start by carefully reviewing the images you've made in the last year or so and deciding if there are consistent problems that you keep seeing. Do you tend to over-expose or under-expose? One winter project may be to learn more about exposure and how to control it.

Do you normally shoot using automatic or program modes, but really want to learn how to use manual mode? Or perhaps you realise that you don't pay enough attention to the background and edges of the image, with the result that you have branches growing out of someone's head, or messy, brightly lit objects distracting attention from your subject.

Maybe you tend to trim people down to size by cutting off their feet or giving them an unplanned haircut. Practicing paying attention to the necessary aspects of composition would also make a great winter project.

If you feel you are getting a bit stale or bored with your results, try shaking things up by shooting something completely outside your comfort zone. Do you usually shoot street scenes? Try focusing on macro. You have a wide-angle lens permanently attached to your camera? Switch to your telephoto for the next month.

Do you always use natural light? Draw the drapes and photograph using only artificial light sources, ranging from lamps to flashlights to candles to Christmas lights. Learn about the different colour of light and how it reflects off shiny objects to give specular highlights.

Winter is a great time to learn how to use that new piece of equipment which you purchased recently, but haven't really had time to spend using. Whether it's a new lens or a new filter, a flash or other fancy new whatchamacallit, they all take time to get to know. Your goal is to be able to use it automatically, without having to stop and mentally walk through the steps. That way you will be more likely to get those fantastic images next year.

If you're the sociable sort and prefer to involve your friends, you can set challenges for each other. They can be similar to some of the ones above, or you can pick a word or theme and see who can best illustrate it. Have you ever tried to photograph a sound, or a smell? Select a piece of music and photograph the CD cover for it, or illustrate a poem. On a bright sunny day, deliberately set out to shoot at noon.

Another fun challenge is to go to a specific location with some friends for a shoot, followed by lunch or dinner. Then meet again the following week to show each other your best five or eight (you choose the number) images from the previous week. You can even add one or two that "didn't quite work" and ask for their help improving them. This can be very interesting as your friends may spot things to photograph that you never even noticed, even though you were at the same location. Or they may introduce you to a completely new camera or processing technique.

Another variation is to pick a household object: kitchen utensils are great, and take a set number of photographs of it, usually 30 or more (to make it challenging). At least some part of the object must appear in every image, and every one must be different. If you are doing this as a challenge with a friend, then again, you can meet the following week to show your best shots.

Sort through your vacation images (or choose your theme, children or grandchildren, pets, your garden?), and turn them into a book. These can be given as (Christmas?) gifts, or simply kept as an easy way to share your images with family and friends. While you are doing that, set the images to music and turn them into a show for Members' Night at the club. We'd love to see them!

Whether you are brushing up on long-known techniques or learning new ones, or simply keeping your creative juices flowing, projects and challenges are great ways to keep your camera active this winter.



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