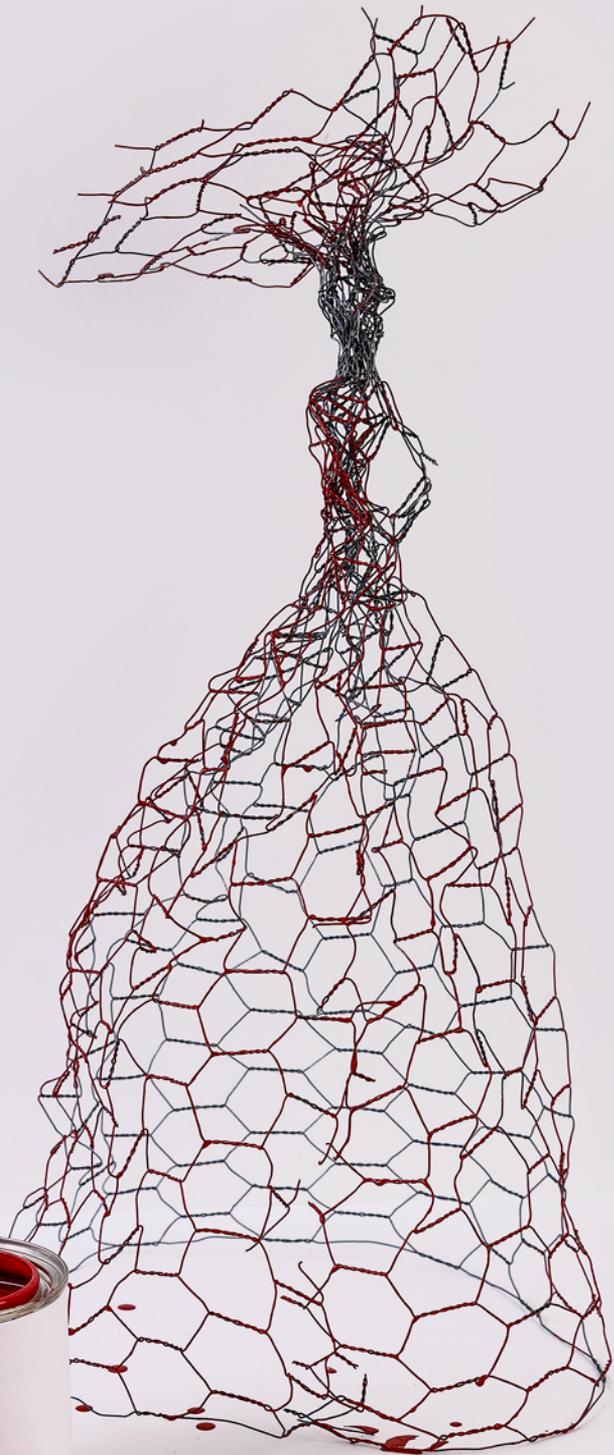


Close-Up

VictoriaCameraClub.ca

VCC's Mentoring Programme
Minimalist Art and Photography
Retro Photography Gear
Creative Photography and Photo
Expressionism
Photographing People in the Street
Member Profile: Deb Thurlbeck
Macro Flash
Wacom Tablets
Photoshop Layers, Masks
and Blend Modes
Beginner's Corner:
Pet Photography



"Painted Lady" by Lorna Scott

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“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*.

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November 2021

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



VICTORIA ARTS COUNCIL



Calendar

Our workshop and field trip programs are too extensive to list in *Close-Up*. Please go to the calendar page on the website (victoriacameraclub.ca) 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.

Nov 4th: Competition Night. The November theme is “Water Life” (see Sept-Oct CU page 10). The October competition results will be presented.

Nov 11th: Presenters’ Night: Photography for Advocacy: Saving Wild Horses with Sandy Sharkey.

Nov 18th: Members’ Night: Presentations of members’ images, field trip slide shows, print reviews or short technical presentations.

Workshop Highlights: Processing B/W Images, Composition Tools and Techniques, Minimalist Photography.

Field Trip Highlights: Royal Roads mushrooms, Delta birds, Sheringham Lighthouse/Sandcut beach.

Cover Image: “Painted Lady” by Lorna Scott, ACA-PA. This metal form was fashioned from chicken wire and pliers. I saw something on Pinterest that inspired me to create this form. It took quite a while to bend the chicken wire to the form that was in my mind. Chicken wire is a somewhat forgiving medium to work with but I had to wear gloves to stop it from piercing my skin! I think this medium is something that I will work with again in the future.

When CAPA came out with the “Red and White” theme, I decided to paint the form. I sent my husband to Home Depot and told him to buy the smallest tin of red paint he could find. I sat the form on some white paper and proceeded to paint it. I just dabbed away with the paint and thought that I would move the paint can and brush for the final image, but I rather liked the scene with the drops, paint can lid and brush. I deliberately spilled the paint down the side of the can, it added colour and depth to the image.

The image earned 1st place in the Club’s September 2021 Advanced Altered Reality competition and an Honourable Mention in the CAPA Red and White competition in April 2021.

President’s Message

I am grateful this year to be working with an exceptional new group on the executive. Our executive structure gives us a strong foundation on which to build and we are always looking for innovative and creative ideas that have a positive impact on our Club.

One example of this is our new Mobile Photography SIG which is now in its second year. This group has now inspired other clubs around BC to get into this type of photography.

We are always looking for new people to join our Club community. With our membership currently standing at 242, I am pleased to welcome all new members who joined during the summer and fall. I encourage new members to join one of the field trips that we offer so they can meet some of our other members.

I am thrilled to see so many people signing up for the online workshops and presentations that have been organized by our coordinators. As well, with our special interest groups (SIG’s) continuing to be online this year, the participant numbers have been encouraging.

SIGs are a great way to delve deeper into a chosen area of photography with other like-minded members and develop meaningful friendships as well. Thank you to all those who have stepped forward and volunteered their time and knowledge for the betterment of others.

As I am writing this message I am looking out at the colours that are changing with the season as the weather starts to cool down and those warm sweaters are pulled out. The blue skies of summer have been traded in for the cloudy days of November.

It can be easy to just stay at home and work on our photos that are already sitting in our computer but I encourage you all to layer up and get out exploring our wonderful Island. Go somewhere you’ve never been before. This time of year offers so many wonderful things to photograph (hint, field trips).

I recently decided to head out to one of my favourite waterfalls near Mill Bay. I love that every time that I visit this waterfall it has a different look. It is never the same waterfall twice. I could honestly sit by it for hours, enjoy the sounds and marvel at how green the island can be. Lots of photos were taken and I enjoyed my time.

In the end the journey was worth it. Where will you go?

Teri VanWell, President.

VCC's Mentoring Programme

by Kim Smith

Do you have questions about an aspect of photography? Have you googled the daylights out of it to no avail? I sure have. However, there is another way. It is so much easier talking with someone about a process, a setting or a camera function than it is to spend hours googling to find your question is not being answered anywhere!

The photography knowledge in this Club is exceptional. This fall the Club introduced a new Mentorship Program, "members helping members". It is off to a flying start! Let me tell you a bit about the program.

Before we started we researched mentorship programs throughout North America and discovered that the London (Ontario) Camera Club uses a similar format to the format we were proposing. In a sense, they are mentoring us with the overall program!

The people offering to assist are "Mentors". The people being assisted are "Mentees". Both groups fill out a similar form, indicating three subjects that they would like to mentor or be mentored in. These mentorship forms can be found on the website under the 'Members Only' tab. Once submitted, and a match is found between Mentor and Mentee, an email is sent to both parties to facilitate a connection.

A mentorship session is intended to last four hours. It can be conducted in the field, through Zoom, the phone or any way the two people involved would like to connect. It can also be broken down to one hour at a time or whatever variation of four hours works best for the two people involved. It is the participants' decision.

Once the initial mentorship period is finished, a form is sent to both parties requesting feedback. Each party can then sign up again for the same or a different topic with the same or different people. There is no pressure to continue for either party; it can be one-time-only or an on-going relationship. We hope it will be an enjoyable experience for everyone involved.

What can a mentee ask of a mentor? It is up to the two of them to discuss and develop a plan for what can be accomplished within the time frame. For example, bird photography can be about camera settings, wind, time of day or lighting. Post-processing can be a discussion about a specific image with an outcome in mind but not knowing how to achieve it, or how to use a specific editing or file management tool in Lightroom or Photoshop.

The following is a list of categories. A few new ones (highlighted) have been added since the program was introduced at the first Club meeting in September:

- Architecture
- Bird Photography
- Black and White
- Camera Basics
- **Creative Photography**
- HDR
- Image Composition
- Post-Processing in Lightroom and Photoshop
- iPhone Photography
- Macro Photography
- Motion Photography/Panning
- Natural Lighting and Flash
- Nature/Landscape
- Night Photography
- Panoramas
- Portrait Photography
- Still Life Photography
- **Street Photography**
- **Social Documentary**

How does mentoring differ from workshops? A workshop gives general information to a group of people. Mentoring addresses specific questions or gives specific guidance on how to do something to one person. This one-to-one relationship allows you to hone your skills. Both styles of learning are important to eventually excelling at this craft.

It is important to realize that Mentors do not have to be at the Advanced level to mentor someone. We're very fortunate that we have such a wide range of skills within the Club and this program provides us with an opportunity to grow the collective skill set in the Club. It is also a wonderful way for members to meet other members with similar interests.

We have had strong interest and there is definitely room to grow the program. Improvements to the program can be made based on feedback given and we ask for that so the program can work for you.

Potential Mentors: We are always looking for more volunteers. Please consider mentoring someone. It can be a rewarding activity for both you and the mentee.

Potential Mentees: Take advantage of this opportunity! You'll be amazed at what you'll learn!

Minimalist Art and Photography

by Kathryn Delany

Minimalism started as an extreme form of abstraction. It emerged in the mid-1960s in New York as a way of rejecting work that embraced traditional concepts of art and materials. It focuses on the most essential and elemental aspects of an artwork. Minimalism aims to reduce content to a strict clarity by stripping away any objects that are not essential. The resulting artwork is comprised of simple geometric shapes based on the square and rectangle (according to a Tate Gallery definition).

Minimalist artworks have a sculptural feel and take into account the space around the art, blurring boundaries between painting and sculpture, where the painting often looks like sculpture hanging on the wall. Key characteristics include: clarity, simplicity of form with emphasis on pure shapes, repetition of form and a monochromatic colour palette.

With these characteristics in mind, creatives can find inspiration for the direction their work takes by following (or breaking) these minimalistic “rules”. The challenge is to exclude distracting elements in order to draw the eye to the main story of an image.

If you were to apply this philosophy to your photography, what should you consider? Minimalism relies on a high degree of simplicity with a small number of compositional components like shape, colour and line. Look for the abstract architectural elements in a scene. Mist is a wonderful tool to introduce calm and simple compositions to your work. Minimalism is a popular genre in photography precisely because the images are visually calm and soothing with lots of breathing room or negative space.

As an artist I am not a minimalist but I am always on a quest to keep my work from getting too cluttered and busy. Sometimes I succeed, though most of the time I have to acknowledge my love of details and texture. My work combines calm negative spaces as well as areas of detail. I keep reminding myself that the observer does not have to have every element explained in order to have an understanding of the intent of a piece. A balance of negative space and keeping the shapes simple enough to convey a recognizable object is my goal. Minimalism can incorporate organic elements, shapes and architectural structure.

For my pen and ink illustrations negative space plays a central role to help keep a balance in the overall design.



“The Headdress”

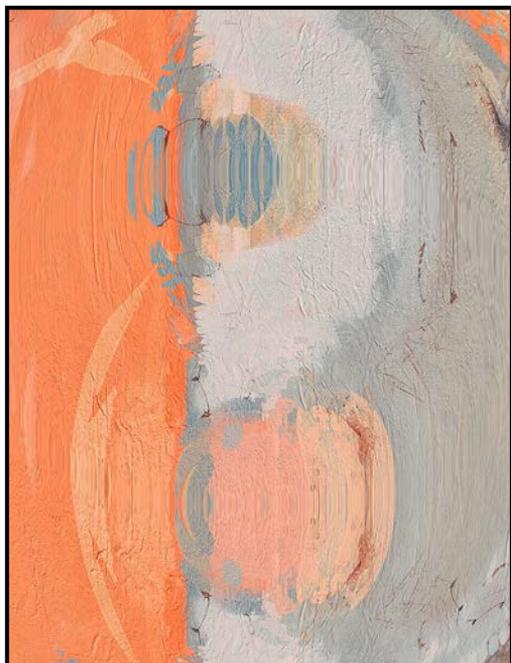
Less is more and I normally keep these images monochromatic with just a splash of colour for interest. The use of a square to frame the point of interest makes use of the shapes that minimalism is based on. “The Headdress” is a good illustration of how I consider the use of shapes and white/negative space to tell the story and lead the eye. While I have textural elements present, this art can fall into the minimal definition. Why? Consider the square canvas frame. This shape is one of the cornerstones of minimalism. Additional rectangular shapes to the side of her head and a second almost square shape at her lower back utilize geometry. The repetition of patterns and small colour accents further promote symmetry and isolate the point of interest. All these elements help keep the eye moving around the design.

“Just Peachy” follows a minimalist principal with two rectangular shapes and repetition of form and colour. The muted colour palette helps keep a sense of calm and yet the circular shapes give a certain energy to the art. The use of texture echoes the use of industrial materials in that it feels like a concrete or stucco surface.

There is uniformity and use of negative spaces/shapes based on the square or rectangle. Surfaces are neutral, showing slight texture which speaks to the use of industrial materials. Symmetry and isolation of an object is common. Less is always more. There is no narrative/anecdotal content here and there is an absence of metaphors or self-expression.

When designing your image try to find symmetry in colour and shape placement. My use of the a cruciform design embraces the use of geometric shapes, and can provide breathing spaces around the work. Consideration of sym-

metry and the balance of all elements is a large part of using the cruciform layout. The resulting negative shapes become really important.



"Just Peachy"

Using an asymmetric cross shape is evident in the painting of the Great Blue Heron. I kept the colours monochromatic with a tiny balance of complimentary warm tones. Overall, this is a calm painting with a lot of "air" helping it tell the story.



"Great Blue Heron"

In "Serene Swan" use of low/high key techniques aids in achieving a minimalist image. This photo demonstrates a good use of negative space, symmetry, and isolation

of the focal object. I find this a very calming image and the white space makes this a good minimalist photo. The central placement of the point of interest and the mirroring of top and bottom help that isolation further.



"Serene Swan"

The "Trumpeter in the Mists" photo demonstrates a minimalist composition with the focal point of the swan mirrored in the water while balancing a less-important object of the rock at the top left. This composition makes the viewer aware of the space surrounding the swan. The basic shape of the rock and swan are similar and so creates a repetition of form. Mist and fog add a sense of mystery and loneliness that are a strong use of incorporating a minimalist approach to your photography.



"Trumpeter in the Mists"

Study some of the original minimalist artists like Agnes Martin, Donald Judd, Robert Morris. Also visit the website minimalistphotographers.com for some inspiration and ideas.

The goal for your minimalist photography is to convey a concept/idea that provokes an emotional response or unique visual experience. The compositional elements should be kept to a minimum and what is left should convey the overall idea or symbolism of the photo. Eliminate non-essential data to tell the story.

Keep some of these ideas in mind when considering creating photographic images that embrace minimalism.

Workshops in November

by Jim Fowler

I find myself in the awkward position of wanting to tell you about all of the upcoming workshops while I am presenting one! Dare I “blow my own horn”? Am I not, as Cole Thompson is fond of saying of himself, “uniquely unqualified” to teach photography? In the case of Cole Thompson (see below) his photos are his qualifications. I am on the other hand still learning.

Here’s what I can tell you about my workshop on composition. This is my fourth presentation, it has been well received; and my views continue to evolve. Putting into words what I have learned has changed the way I look through the viewfinder. Understanding why photographs never look like the image we first saw is crucial to composition. If you want to know the scientific origins of the immutable imperative that the “eyes must always be in focus”, or if you want to see how to use Rembrandt’s balancing of light and dark applied to photography or you just want to see all the principles of composition illustrated with interesting photos and famous paintings while I “guide” you along, join me on November 15th on Zoom. I love talking about photos. I even get excited when I rehearse. Okay, too much about me.

Last April I reported to you some of the unique aspects of Cole Thompson’s presentation. His black and white fine art photographs are well known and for good reason. We are lucky that Cole is returning to us (via Zoom, of course). This time he will talk about how he processes black and white images in six simple steps. “Only six” you ask? When he says something, he means it. He would never, ever, try to baffle people just to show how clever he is. If you wonder whether you should attend or not look at a few of his photos online. They truly are his qualifications. This is another brick in the solid foundation of black and white photography our workshop committee is building. Cole’s presentation is on November 22nd, 2021.

On November 29th Judy Hancock Holland will talk about Minimalism. A resident of Nanaimo, Judy is another example of a photographer who has developed her own craft by following what she loves.

She believes Leonardo da Vinci’s advice that “simplicity is the ultimate sophistication”. I think of Judy’s work as another path toward learning how to see. She believes in figuring out what really attracts her to a subject. It might be a detail or a feeling or a mood. Then take away all the clutter. Use negative space to focus

the attention. She can feel more when she sees less, provided what she sees really matters.

Judy will doubtless tell you that she may not be a true “minimalist” in the sense that she does not always take minimalism to the extreme but she does take it to a level that evokes a heart-felt response in her. She shows an example of a photo of a hummingbird. Then she zooms into the image so that a very dainty tuft of hummingbird down is the centre of attention. It was the daintiness that made the bird attractive. The little bit of down exemplifies the daintiness.

Her work is like a kind of personal meditation. She talks about looking at old photos and looking for the minimalist photos within them. A lighthouse, for example, might be reduced to a tiny window and a few painted stones. Ultimately, the idea is not to discard pixels because you included too much but rather to crop in the camera viewfinder so as to include only the essence in the first place.

She shows a portrait she took of a cellist and then, a later “portrait” that shows only the cellist’s neck, hair and the cello head. It is very effective. It is a melding of cellist and cello, using only a few parts.

Whether you want to be a minimalist or you just want to simplify your images, Judy is on that journey and her examples are worth seeing.

Lastly, on December 6th Dave Brosha will present “Tones of Grace/Place”. If you go online, you will find a series of essays Dave has written about photography. He was essentially a landscape photographer but, along the way, and to his own surprise, once he started taking portraits of people he was hooked. Read his essay on “A face is a Face”. He never thought he would love photographing people, but now he says, “Give me a face, any gender, any age.” He has made some surprising portraits. I love the one where the head and torso are made into one central core (by the subject leaning toward the camera) but the arms and legs form a giant “X” radiating out from the core. Okay, its not really a face portrait but what a visual coup!

I’m guessing that Dave probably learned to get down on the ground, climb up cliff sides and wade into the water taking landscapes but now, he and his subjects do all that and more. He reminds me a little of Annie Liebovitz in that he tries to inhabit the world of the person he is photographing, sometimes getting some truly remarkable results.

As always, watch our website for registration openings and class size limits. Don’t miss out.

Retro Photography Gear

by Richard James

This month I would like to enter the time machine and take a walk back in time to the 1970s and 80s. You may recollect that those were the days when film was king and images were processed in a wet darkroom.

There were very limited opportunities to modify an image after it had been shot. Yes, you could do some things in the darkroom but if you were shooting slides your hands were tied. How times have changed. Now we do most of our special effects in post-processing software.

In the old days special effects were done primarily with filters or other devices attached to your lens. These included multiple-image prisms, starburst filters, constant and graduated neutral-density and colour filters, and even a sneaky device for taking images at ninety degrees to the camera. Some of these devices are still available although you may have difficulty finding larger filter thread sizes to fit modern lenses.



“Marexar Squintar”

The Marexar “Squintar” attaches to the front of the lens and enables you to shoot to the side, above or below. You can shoot around corners with it or surreptitiously photograph something to your side.

Colour filters were divided into three major groups, contrast filters for black-and-white film, colour correction and colour effect. Contrast filters for black-and-white film were used to block certain colours to increase contrast. See the article “Filters for Black and White Film” in the September-October 2021 *Close-Up*.

Colour correction filters were used to change the effective colour temperature of the lighting to match that of the film. With these you could, for example, shoot day-

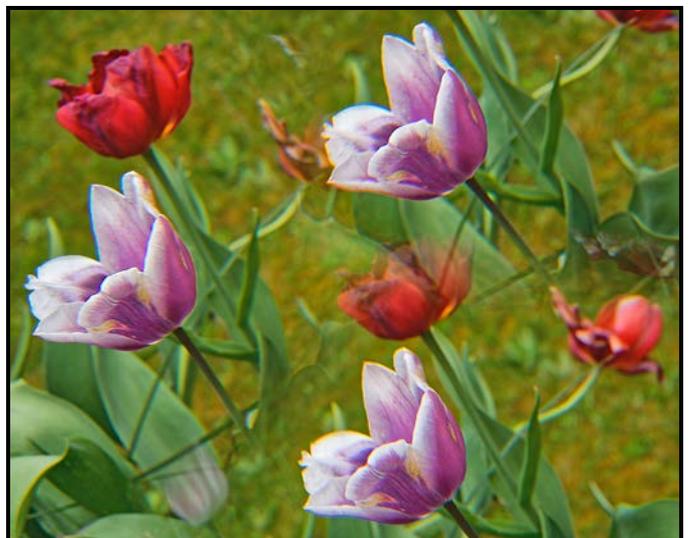
light-balanced film in incandescent (tungsten) lighting and not have a major colour cast problem. Colour effect filters were much stronger and used with the intention of giving the image an overall colour. Some filters were single colour but others could be adjusted to give you multiple colours between two endpoints such as between red and blue or to vary the intensity of a single colour. Originally, these were two-part filters with a linear polarizer which performed the adjustment. Later, some filters were available without the polarizer which were cheaper as you only had to buy one polarizing filter.



“Spectrastar Filter Effect”

Another colour effect filter, “Spectrastar”, produces circular rays of rainbow highlights. Other filters could be used to produce soft circular vignette effects around the edges of the image.

Prism filters are made by several companies and range from three to multiple segments. By altering the rotation of the filter, you could move the multiple image components around the frame to achieve an acceptable composition. This seems to work best if you have a well-defined subject with a simple background.



“Triple Prism Filter”

Some Thoughts on Competitions

by Lorna Zaback

Our aim, as the Internal Competitions committee, is to make competitions as inspiring, fun and supportive as possible for members who want to take part in them. However, the September competition was a bit disappointing in terms of numbers. Although we don't want to jump to conclusions about why competition entries in September were the lowest they have been in a while, we do find ourselves wondering.

Is this merely coincidence or is it something else? Could COVID fatigue, continued restrictions on gathering and travel, with fewer opportunities for shooting unique subjects in less familiar settings, be diminishing our eagerness about entering our work into competitions? Could enthusiasm for competitions be waning? Or are these lower numbers just a bump (or a pothole) in the road? Novice entries for September were particularly low. We hope that changes we have put into place at the Novice level and to the Novice/Intermediate print judging are not discouraging Novice entries. It might seem as if reducing the Novice categories to Open and Theme is restrictive, but we were hoping that encouraging Novices to enter up to two images into each of these categories would balance things out and allow for more flexibility.

Competitions have been an integral part of VCC activities for many years. Members who participate say they gain a lot from participating. Regularly entering competitions pushes them to objectively evaluate their work and inspires them to learn and improve their skills. Most competitors find the judges' feedback most valuable and being awarded a high score or a placement can definitely be a boost to the ego. Some claim that they enter to "compete with themselves" rather than against other members. As one member put it, "I like competing because it is a chance to get my work 'out there', even if my images don't receive high scores or rave reviews". We have seen some stunning images in competitions over the years from photographers at all levels. A number of those images have gone on to win national and international awards. We have also seen new members tentatively entering their first competitions and receive a Distinguished Photographer Award a year or two later.

Competitions are not for everyone. Some members might prefer just having their images reviewed by more advanced photographers in a non-competitive atmosphere. As the Internal Competitions committee it is our job to promote healthy, supportive competition within VCC. We hope to encourage you to join in the fun!

September 2021 Competition Judges

We extend our sincere thanks to the external judges for the September 2021 competitions. We also extend thanks to our in-house judges for all novice competitions and intermediate prints: Pam Irvine, Richard Webber, Nicci Tyndall, Lorna Scott and Lorna Zaback. Images and judges' comments are available at: victoriacamera-club.ca/Competitions/CompetitionResults.aspx.

Karen Stoyles: Altered Reality. Karen lives in Kitchener, Ontario and has been judging photography for camera clubs, local organizations and fairs for over 15 years. Her main photographic interests are wildflower, macro and creative photography.

Dan Jones: Nature. Dan has been a member of the Camera Club of Ottawa for the past 24 years and has achieved the level of grand master photographer. As a part-time professional photographer, Dan has worked for a number of stock agencies, a calendar publisher and creates fine-art photographs. Dan has enjoyed judging for a variety of photo clubs over the years.

Robert Laramee: Open. Robert joined the RA Camera Club (in Ottawa) in 1975 but left in 1984. He returned to the (renamed) RA Photo Club in 2002. When retirement gave him more time to devote to photography he started studying at the School of the Photographic Arts Ottawa. He has taught digital photography for the City of Ottawa for several years. Robert is a CAPA certified judge and trainer.

Gregg Eligh: People. Gregg is a good friend to the Club and well known around the Club for his judging over the years and his 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.

Derek Hayes: Theme (Humorous). Derek lives in White Rock, BC and is a certified CAPA judge. He enjoys a wide range of photographic styles including travel photography. He has taught photography and hosted a photographic tour of historic Spain.

Ed Moniz: Prints. Ed studied black and white photography and printing and completed a one-year mentorship program with George DeWolfe. As a member of Professional Photographers of Canada he earned accreditation in night photography and designation as "Craftsman of Photographic Arts". Ed is a former VCC member and presented workshops for 10 years.

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Advanced Altered Reality - 1st
"Firebird" by Steve Smith

Judge's Comments: This image conveys a good story with good use of colours and cropping. The use of light instills an emotional reaction. An original treatment of the subject. Sharpness in critical areas adds to the impact of the strong composition. An exquisite image in both subject and technique.



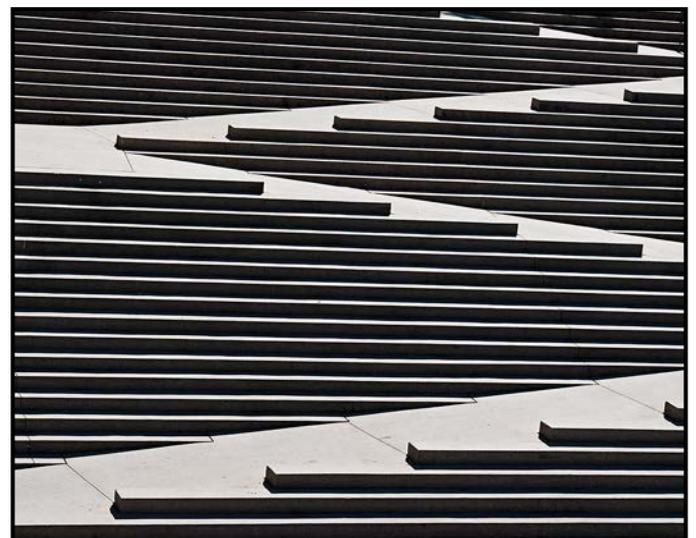
Advanced Nature - 2nd
"Black with a Pink" by Daniel Rondeau

Judge's Comments: This portrait of a black bear with a good-sized fish in its mouth is an image that captures the peak of the action. Notice the water still streaming from the prey. The lighting on the black bear really brings out the detail in its fur and also highlights the eyes. The bear stands out well against the lighter blurred background. Congratulations for a well deserved second place finish.



Advanced Theme - 1st
"Make Music and Sing!" by Richard Letourneau

Judge's Comments: This image conveys a good story and the peak of the action. There is good use of colours and cropping. Caught so that everyone is in the "right" position compositionally speaking.



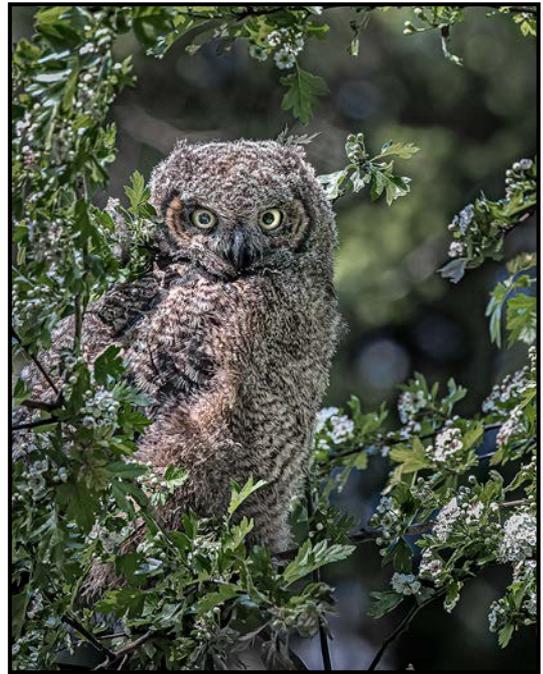
Advanced Monochrome Print - 1st
"Zig Zag" by Steve Lustig

Judge's Comments: This is a great image.



Advanced Open - 2nd
"Bald Eagle Capture" by Nick Delany

Judge's Comments: An image with much impact. A very good capture of an interesting subject. The composition is great, with the bird in a diagonal and the water at the bottom providing a solid foundation for the image. Exposure in such strong light is a compromise. Good work.



Advanced Nature Print - 2nd
"Juvenile Great Horned Owl - Wary but Interested"
by Jill Turyk

Judge's Comments: This image has great composition and shows good detail.



Advanced People - 1st
"Gotcha" by Cindy Stephenson

Judge's Comments: I like the spontaneous and real moment captured. The simple environment has minimal distractions and excellent depth carrying the viewer in the direction this couple is headed.



Advanced Open Print - 1st
"Chesterman Beach at Low Tide" by Garry Schaefer

Judge's Comments: This is a great composition with great treatment of desaturation of the colours. The people are strategically placed on the S curve which really adds to the image.



Intermediate Altered Reality - 1st
"Quiet Sunset" by Mary Weir

Judge's Comments: This image shows good use of colours and light to instill an emotional reaction in this original treatment of the subject. There is a lovely painterly feel to the image. Colours are complimentary, the softness adds to the ethereal quality.



Intermediate Open - 2nd
"A Hint of Blush" by Gwen Long

Judge's Comments: A nice representation of softness. The light is directional without being too strong. The exposure is well controlled and the detail in the highlights is preserved. The crisp detail in the central part of the flower is rendered properly. Composition is good and the slight white vignetting is appropriate. Good work.



Intermediate Nature - 1st
"Come Dance with Me" by Don Piper

Judge's Comments: The impeccable timing of this great action shot of two birds interacting with each other won this image first place. The positioning of the Herons with their outstretched wings, face to face orientation and uplifted feet greatly enhances the magic of the momentary interplay between these magnificent creatures. Congratulations to the photographer for successfully capturing this special performance.



Intermediate People - 1st
"Companionship" by Wendy Clay

Judge's Comments: This is a lovely, warm personal moment where the bold environment adds to the space and is not a distraction. Nicely done.



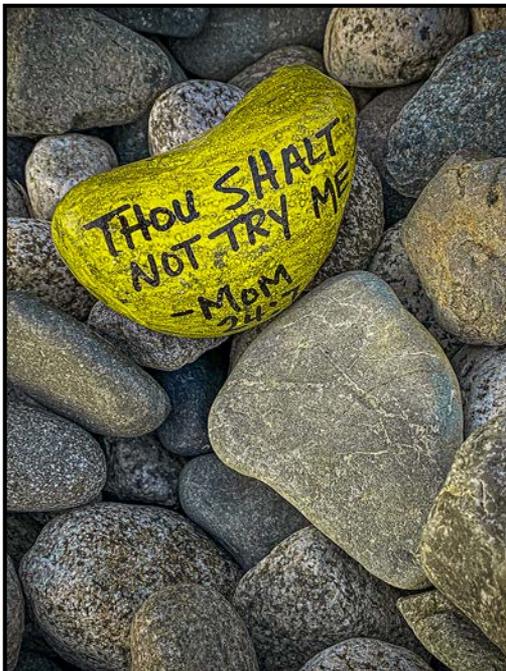
Intermediate/Novice Open Print - 1st
“Bowker Creek (Green Field by Haultain Street)”
 by Robert Patterson

Judge’s Comments: This image has very strong perspective lines and leads our eye from the lower left to the end.



Intermediate Theme - 1st
“Beware of Dog” by Maureen Reid

Judge’s Comments: This image conveys a good story with good positioning of the sign with the dog.



Intermediate Theme - 2nd
“Thou Shalt Not” by Barbara Bolton

Judge’s Comments: This image conveys a good story with good use of colours and light. The sharpness in critical areas adds to its impact. Nice colours.



Novice Open - 1st
“Sunrise in Oak Bay” by Jerome Rozitis

Judge’s Comments: Good use of the foreground elements leading our eye into the frame. There is beautiful light and good sharpness throughout. The strong colours in the chairs are effective. This image emanates a sense of peace.

Creative Photography and Photo Expressionism

by Steve Barber

The Club's Creative Special Interest Group often features the work of members with a sophisticated grasp of complex Photoshop techniques for blending a number of images together. There are also simpler techniques which members can use to participate in the Altered Reality category of monthly competitions.

At a presentation by the noted Canadian photographer André Gallant, I purchased one of his books "Expressionism: Digital Dreamscapes and other Techniques". One of the techniques he describes is "Mirror Montages". The first step in creating these images is to find a suitable photo to transform.



"Museum of Human Rights, Winnipeg"

I had taken a shot looking down into the central atrium of the museum which features a series of angular walkways connecting the upper floors. These ramps are faced with white Alabaster and are illuminated with LED lights. A mirror image copy was created in Photoshop by duplicating the image, flipping it 180 degrees and blending the images together. The geometric design worked well in creating an abstract expressionist photograph. It is important when creating these types of images to not use examples which are too dark as the details can get lost in the overlaid colours.

For this image I used an image taken in the museum "Montejo 495" in Merida, Mexico. It was of the back of a rattan chair painted white with an intricate design of rattan which, when mirrored, created some interesting patterns. The light tones of the chair combined successfully when overlaid and a single decorative flourish on the top created a ghostly echo as it was overlaid on the dark background.



"Weaving a Different Reality"

Creating mirror images gives the photographer the opportunity to go back into their collection of images and use their imagination to create different expressions of their photos.

This image was taken on a photo tour of Venice in 2010 with Richard Martin. We were there in early November so, of course, there was always a chance of rain. Richard, being the creative photographer that he is, decided to take advantage of the situation and suggested to our small group that we take shelter by standing under some of the awnings sheltering outdoor cafes.



"Rainy Day in Venice"

We then had an opportunity to use slow shutter speeds to record some of the pedestrians passing by with their colourful raincoats and umbrellas. When these are combined with a slight upward swoop of the camera, an impressionistic image was created of the scene. (This image was taken with a 200 mm lens on a Nikon D300, f7 at 1/13th second.)

Of course, there was a great deal of trial and error so lots of the images did not work. Also known as "Intentional Camera Movement", this technique is described in Andre's book under the subject heading "Panning".

Photographing People in the Street

by Tim Agoston

I've had an interest in observing people, their look and how they interact with their surroundings, from a very young age. I also delight in capturing the beauty and variety of nature, the grace and power of wildlife. While I enjoy photographing these subjects, people in the street tell a deeper, more personal story for me. Often, people's soul and history are written in their faces; it's all about them.

Sometimes my shots are quite literally "taken from the hip" and the subject has no idea that they have been photographed. While asking for "permission to intrude" upon someone's space, can be far beyond the comfort level of many a photographer, myself included, it can provide a great connection with the subject and sometimes the camera itself has the ability to start a conversation. "What's your name?" or, "Tell me your story."

In once such instance, several years ago at the Victoria Day Parade, I noticed a rather distinguished looking gentleman sitting on a bench. I approached and asked if I could take his photograph. His immediate response was "Why?" and I replied that his look reminded me of an old smoke-filled jazz club in New Orleans and that he likely had great stories to share.

I was somewhat shocked by his reply, "I'm a pretty cool looking N.... aren't I?", but I laughed and replied, "Yes,



"Innocence of Youth"

you are!" I learned that his name was Ed and he taught social studies at one of the US schools participating in the parade. He happily allowed me to take his photo on the condition that I send him one of the images, which I did.

On the other hand, we were travelling in Cambodia when I saw this young boy from a distance as we walked along the road in a small local village. His innocence and wonder drew my attention. Not wanting to lift up my camera and lose the moment, I took this image from the hip. Being in the right place and being at the right time is often the photographer's gift.

While visiting the beautiful temples at Angkor Wat, I was ready to photograph the leading lines in the main temple complex when the woman in the bright yellow dress walked directly into my field of view. I thought, "Bingo!" What a great photo this could be with the moody look of the temple and the contrasting colour of the woman's dress. At one point she had looked directly at me but then she turned away. I was so grateful that she didn't step back into the hallway when she saw my camera. I feel that her looking away adds mystery and interest to the image.



"Mystery in Yellow"

People photography is certainly not everyone's style as it can be intimidating and scary. How do you approach taking photos of people? Try to hone your observational and visual skills by intentionally people-watching and searching out good subjects. Become aware of the people around you. Often, if you wait to take the shot, it's already gone; they appear in the moment and only for a moment.

Member Profile: Deb Thurlbeck

I withdrew my savings from the bank, walked across the street and opened an account at the Trust company. Their promotion was giving a camera with every new account. I was about 10 years old and already spending my time doing crafts and learning to paint.

A new camera added one more layer of creativity and I began documenting what I saw. My introduction to developing and printing was joining my brother in the cold room which doubled as his darkroom.

The plastic camera was replaced with a point and shoot, later upgraded to a DSLR. Along the journey I continued to photograph family, vacations and whatever unique objects or situations that caught my interest. A recent project found me culling the years of photos, creating albums for the meaningful memories.

After retiring and moving to Victoria, I switched to digital photography, bought a Nikon D7000 and signed up for Mitch Stringer's beginner and intermediate courses at Camosun College. Subsequently, a group was formed that met once a month to discuss photos until Covid ended in-person meetings.

I also joined VCC for the workshops to continue learning. Joining the Club also gave me access to the rest of the programs and the opportunity to connect with other members to share photos, discuss techniques and the latest photo gear.

I enjoy the field trips and am a regular at the Tuesday/Alt Tuesday shoots and became the Tuesday Shoot coordinator. Be it theme or location, these shoots challenge me to become a better photographer.

Although we could not meet in person, I am grateful for continuing on Zoom as we stay connected. The Alt Tuesday group has now returned to location shoots.



"Cool Skoolie"

My interest is still travel and family photography, creating a digital photo book for every vacation plus a yearly calendar for family members to share my photos and remember our year. I also enjoy making costumes and finding props and setting scenes to shoot when I can find a willing model. I challenge myself by trying new techniques and there are continuous learning opportunities with post processing.



"Light up the Night"

I came across "Cool Skoolie" in Parksville. Having an appreciation for old vehicles, this restored school bus quickly caught my eye. I chose to post-process it with selective colour.

For "Light up the Night" I took advantage of a rare snow day to head to the forest to spin burning steel wool. With sparks flying, the forest needs to be wet before attempting this. Indulging in my affinity for B & W, I converted the photo to black-and-white.

In my garden there is gorgeous clematis growing in shades of peach. I post-processed this in Lightroom, adjusting the Temp and Tint sliders to create "Clematis in Shades of Purple".

Subsequently I printed it and attached it to card stock to send to my cousin who is a fan of all things purple.



"Clematis in Shades of Purple"

Macro Flash

by Roger Botting

It is fall, it's getting darker and wetter so how do we light macro subjects in the field? Let us use mushrooms as an example. For the dark woods you will need a tripod and some supplemental lighting. For the tripod you will want one that allows you to work close to the ground. That means one that allows you to remove or move the centre column and to splay the legs.

That was easy enough. Now for the hard part which is lighting! You will notice that the light levels are low and usually in deep shadow. Daylight, in the shadows, is usually of a low intensity and often blue or green in colour, not ideal. So, what I do is use supplemental lighting, a chance to practice your studio photography in the field.



“Typical Setup”

Of course, you can use flash on-camera but we want better photos. While you can hand-hold your light, a short light stand is ideal. Possible light stands include your old Gorilla Pod or a small tabletop tripod. I have a couple of Manfrotto pocket size tripods.

To move the light into the position that I want I use a Magic Arm. My old Manfrotto Magic arm is too big and clumsy to use in a small woodland setting. It would need too big a base to make it stable.

Instead, I use a [SmallRig 11” Articulating Arm](#). I attach the arm to my tabletop tripod and sometimes I use a rock or camera bag to keep it from falling into my shot.

To connect the arm to your tripod go to a hardware store and get some ¼-20 connecting nuts. Get several, if you only have one they will walk away, usually in the woods. It doesn't hurt to have a few more. Now, we shall move onto the lighting.

The light? You can easily use a flash, either slaved off your pop-up flash or better yet, a hot-shoe extension cable for the flash. It will give you full automation and have your flash off-camera. Or go all the way and get a radio transmitter and receiver system.

The Godox flashes that I use have receivers built in. One less thing to forget to take. Or you can use your camera's pop-up flash to trigger your external flash. Off-camera flash looks so much better.

Recently I have been using pocket-size LED flashlights. Smaller and lighter than my flash they let me preview my shot. Most current LED lights are daylight balance, but you can easily create a white balance pre-set in-camera using a neutral grey card.

I attach my lights to the articulating arm with small clamps from SmallRig. Get one with a small articulating arm and the cold-shoe adapter. You will find them useful. The larger size clamps would let you connect your lighting arm to your tripod.

Once you get your lights set up then it's time for fun. You might want to create a small snoot out of duct tape to allow you to better focus the light.

You can use coloured gels on the lights, create a back-light, use a small sheet of tracing paper to create a diffuser, set up a card to block unwanted light falling on your subject or, go for the ultimate, Christmas lights. A small string of LED fairy lights might be all you need to put things way over the top.

And last, don't limit your photo craziness. You will be photographing in low light in a limited space with lots of your own light. Create several shots using different lighting and merge the best parts of them in Photoshop. Doing this allows you to use one light to do several lighting setups in your shot.



“The Result”

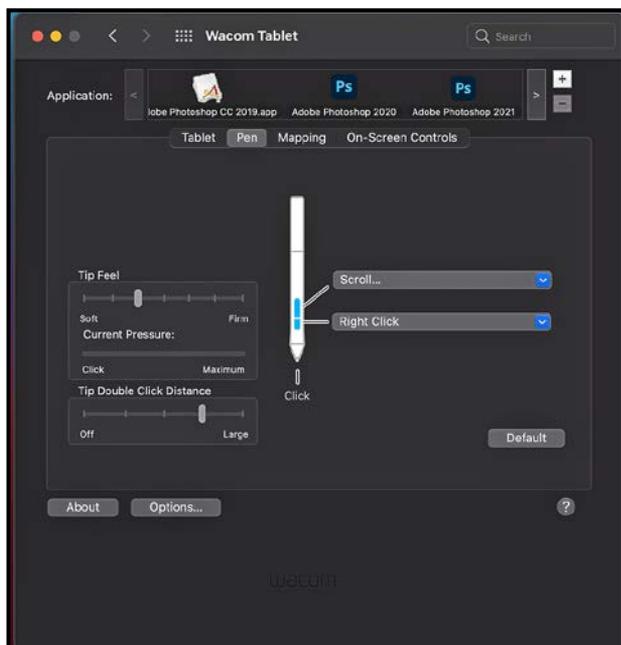
Wacom Tablets

by Kevin Keliher

Wacom (wacom.com) introduced their first pen tablet in 1984. Pen tablets are designed to supplement or replace a mouse or trackball and many users prefer them as they find it easier to literally “draw” with their hand as if they were drawing on paper.

For graphics work you can use the pen to select from menus by tapping on the item with the tablet pen. However, they are most useful for anything that involves painting or selection by drawing on an image.

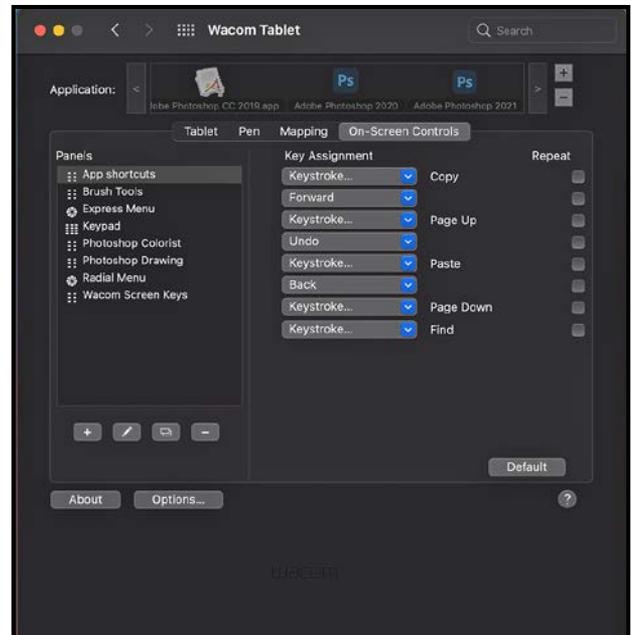
I purchased an inexpensive drawing tablet from Amazon about five years ago. I mostly found it a frustrating and unproductive experience. About three years ago I got more serious about creative photography/digital art and purchased a Wacom Intuos MED BT Creative Pen tablet for \$259. It worked so much better right from the get-go. Now I find it indispensable.



“Pen Set-up Menu”

The features that I like about the Intuos are the pen pressure sensitivity, its accuracy and that the pen is battery-free. It works well for either right or left-handed use and connects to your computer via a USB cable. The active area on my medium size Wacom is 216 x 135 mm (8.5 x 5.3”). It now comes with a software bundle (Corel Painter Essentials 8, Corel Aftershot Pro 3 and Clip Studio Paint Pro). It is compatible with Windows, Mac, Android, and Chrome operating systems. In addition, the Wacom pen has right and left click buttons that function like a mouse.

One of Wacom’s main competitors is Huion. It has a slightly lower price and much higher-pressure sensitivity (i.e., 8192 vs 1024 on the Intuos). However, the Huion lacks Bluetooth capability which is available on some Wacom models.



“Application Set-up Menu”

On my Wacom there are four “ExpressKeys” at the top which allow you to work quickly. I tried assigning common tasks to these keys but found I reverted to using familiar keyboard short-cuts on my laptop. If you are interested, the Wacom settings allow you to adjust/customize the ExpressKeys for the Tablet, Pen, and On-Screen Controls. The on-screen controls afford you a long list of key assignment options (App short-cuts, brush tools, Photoshop Colorist and Photoshop Drawing etc.).

I was instructed to use the Wacom for everything I did on the computer (email, Word etc.). I was surprised at how quickly I became accustomed to it. I find it far superior to a mouse/track pad. One feature I use all the time is moving around an image in Photoshop. While holding down the space bar I simply touch the Wacom pen to the tablet and drag the image where I wish. The pen/tablet feels very intuitive. This manoeuvre is much more difficult using the laptop track pad.

I also appreciate that I can place the tablet on my lap while working. At one point about a year ago, I developed tendonitis in my right shoulder after a home project. As a result I started tweaking my computer ergonomics and found having the Wacom on my lap relieved my shoulder symptoms. It affords good posture for my back and shoulders which can become a problem when putting in a lot of time trying to make the next competition deadline.

You can just sit back in a good and relaxed alignment and do your Photoshop editing.

What is so special about the drawing feature of tablet pens? It definitely feels like you are putting pen to paper but why is that such an advantage? Drawing on the tablet is a very different experience to using a mouse. As you make drawing movements you receive real-time visual and touch feedback. When I was "painting" in the blue sky from one image over the dull grey sky in another image I put down the pen and continued "painting" using my laptop track pad just to see the difference. Immediately, there was a huge drop in the speed and effectiveness of my actions. Worse, due to the lack of feedback I felt a deadness and noticed I was quickly becoming bored. It seemed so tedious. I felt like I was interacting with a lifeless computer. However, when I returned to the tablet, I was back interacting with the image. On some level I felt like I was more in the image, moving around the tree leaves, making drawing gestures with my hand/arm that were in sync with the contours of the landscape. It was a more pleasurable experience.

The pressure sensitivity feature in tandem with say, brush settings gives you direct control over the line thickness, flow and opacity, all critical qualities in making art. These features alone are worth the investment.

In conclusion, if you can afford to purchase a drawing tablet like the Wacom Intuos your productivity will increase significantly and time spent post-processing images and creating digital art will be a much more pleasurable experience.



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How I Did It

Harbour Mist

by Jackye Mills

This image was taken on the first VCC workshop that I attended, led by former member Lloyd Houghton. I have always been attracted to dreamy abstract images so this was especially interesting for me. The goal with Intentional Camera Movement is to show a blur or movement in your image by moving your camera during a long exposure.



“Harbour Mist”

It's a very easy technique to try as there are no rules. My suggestions are to shoot in raw with your camera on manual. I use a low ISO, a small aperture and a six to ten stop neutral density filter. The shutter speed must be long enough to capture the movement across the camera sensor. I usually use between 1/3rd and 2 seconds.

I am looking for contrast in the colour and composition and good lighting balance. Starting with a strong subject helps keep a centre of interest. I take bursts of shots and try many different random movements with the camera, panning right to left, up and down, diagonally, with short sharp jabs or loose fluid rotations. Each image is always unique and very different. Most go in the big blue recycle bin but sometimes there is that magical, unique, image that is perfect. Trying various types of camera movement on a single subject will help build your understanding of what to expect.

This image was taken panning the camera up following the lines of the ship masts (5 seconds, f11, ISO 100, 10 stop ND filter). I did some basic adjustments in camera raw, changed the colour profile and cropped out some uninteresting edges. This image placed 2nd in the February 2021 Intermediate Altered Reality competition.

Quarantine Party

by Richard Letourneau

Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic we all spent a great deal of time during 2020 isolated in our homes. Like many, I experienced bouts of loneliness, anxiousness and depression. It was difficult to find much joy. The one thing that has always sustained me is my passion for photography.



“Quarantine Party”

One day in September 2020 I decided to throw a party, a party for one that is, and “Quarantine Party!!” was born. At that time, I was still shooting with a Canon 7D Mark II. I chose a 24-70 mm lens as well as my tripod. No flash lighting was used.

I decided I'd need a total of four wardrobe changes and gathered all of the clothes and accessories. Having travelled to Hawaii, the Caribbean, and French Polynesia multiple times, I had the right tropical wardrobe including shirts, hats and beads. As far as props, I searched the entire house for anything that remotely looked like it would help achieve a festive party atmosphere. Since my diagnosis of prostate cancer on March 3rd, 2021, I stopped drinking alcohol but last year I had an adequately stocked bar which I used on the prop table.

Then it was simply a matter of determining the story I wished to convey, and which character would be doing what. Five images were taken at ISO 640, 27 mm, f11, 1/8th second, using a 10-second shutter delay to allow the model time to get into position.

The images were post-processed in Lightroom and then opened in Photoshop as separate layers and composited together. Layer masks were used to reveal each model in turn. It was a fun and enjoyable day!

This image received an Honourable Mention award in the September 2020 Altered Reality Competition.

Shoots Around Victoria

Fraser River Area Birds

by Christine Hutchins Gallagher

For all of those photographers who are enthralled with the many birds that visit and reside in British Columbia, heading to Delta in the fall is a must, especially if you want to see Snow Geese, Short-Eared Owls, Northern Harriers and more.

A good place to start is George C. Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary. This is a protected area in the Fraser River Estuary. In its 300 hectares there are marshes, wetlands and dike pathways. It is managed by the BC Waterfowl Society for Environment Canada. Birds in the area are Sandhill Cranes, Bald Eagles, Spotted Towhees, plus migratory birds such as Lesser Snow Geese, Yellowlegs, Dowitchers and sandpipers. It is located on Westham Island and at this time all visitors are required to have reservations in order to visit the sanctuary.



“Sandhill Crane”

Another area to explore is Brunswick Point. It is located in Delta at the end of River Road West, beyond Westham Island. There is a nice trail along the dikes of the Fraser River. It is very popular place for bird watchers and photographers of course. Birds that can be seen from the dikes are Northern Harriers, Kestrels and hummingbirds along with dozens of ducks and other coastal birds.

The third is Boundary Bay that is accessed from Ladner Trunk Road and located at the end of 72nd Street.

This is a wildlife management area and encompasses all of Boundary Bay straddling the border between BC and the US. This is a good area for Short-Eared Owls, Northern Harriers as well as shore birds from the dike.



“Northern Harrier”

Blackie Spit Park, a part of Boundary Bay, is one of the most highly-rated bird watching areas in Canada. Being an important “rest stop” as birds migrate up and down between North and South America, it attracts thousands of migrating and wintering birds. In the spring the migrants start arriving around mid-March to the end of May and during the fall migration birds usually start arriving mostly in late August each year. It is located in Crescent Beach (South Surrey). The nature trail around the park is approximately five km long. There is an Environmentally Sensitive Area that has been set aside for rare and sensitive plants and animals along with migrating birds.

Next on the list is Terra Nova Rural Park in Richmond. The attraction here are the Snow Geese on the foreshore that allow for flight shots. As one of Canada’s areas with the highest counts of overwintering raptors, winter is the best time to see Short-Eared Owls, Northern Harriers and Kestrels along with waterfowl. The best times are around high tides in the early morning.

The Park includes a great diversity of attractions besides the birds such as farms, gardens, a network of trails, heritage buildings and more. First Nations people would use the area to set up seasonal fishing camps during the sturgeon and late fall salmon runs.

Last but not least is Iona Beach Regional Park. It is known for its long beach and outfall jetty as well as being in the midst of the Pacific Flyway which means that it sees thousands of migrating birds such as Snow Geese. The Northern and Southern ponds are great for birding but access is restricted.

Photoshop Layers, Masks and Blend Modes

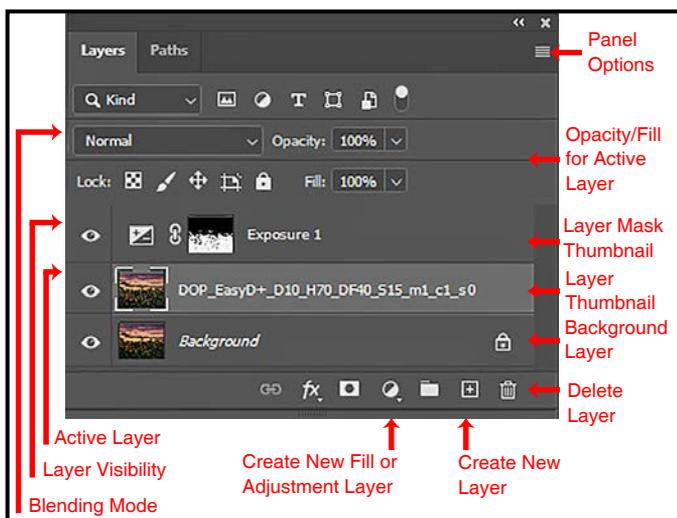
by Lorna Scott, ACAPA

Photoshop is a wonderful magical and complex software program many of us use for editing our photographs. There are many different ways of accomplishing a single task in Photoshop.

Layers: Understanding layers is probably a good starting point when beginning to learn this program. Layers are like sheets of stacked acetate. You can see through transparent areas of a layer to the layers below. You move a layer to position the content on the layer, like sliding a sheet of acetate in a stack. You can also change the opacity of a layer to make the content partially transparent.

There are many types of layers available in Photoshop. A layer may contain image elements, be a fill layer, an adjustment layer or a text layer.

Layers in Photoshop allow you to work non-destructively by stacking images on top of other images without interacting and mixing the pixels of images. It is very important to name your layers. If you have many layers it will save you lots of time if you take this advice.



“Layers Panel”

We can start with adjustment layers that allow you to make non-destructive edits. Photoshop has a total of 16 adjustment layers and they all have different uses.

1. Brightness/Contrast makes adjustments to the tonal range of your image. The brightness slider is for adjusting the highlights in your image and the contrast slider is for adjusting the shadows in your image.

2. Levels modify the tonal values in an image by adjusting the values of the shadows, mid-tones and highlights. This is one of the most used tools.
3. Curves let you adjust multiple points throughout the entire tonal range of your image and is the most precise tool for editing the tones in an image.
4. Exposure lets you adjust exposure levels with three sliders: Exposure, Offset and Gamma.
5. Vibrance modifies the vibrance of an image in two ways. Saturation increases the saturation of all the colours in the image. Vibrance modifies the level of saturation in all the colours too but more selectively, focusing on the least-saturated colours and avoids over-saturation of skin.
6. Hue and Saturation lets you adjust the hue, saturation and lightness of your entire image or a specific range of colours in your image.
7. Colour Balance changes the mixture of colours in an image.
8. Black and White lets you make greyscale versions of your images. You can customize select colours with this layer.
9. Photo Filter adds different colour filters on top of your image.
10. Channel Mixer modifies the colours in your image to create tinted or greyscale images.
11. Colour Lookup comes with a selection of pre-packaged looks.
12. Invert makes a photo negative effect by inverting the colours of your image.
13. Posterize produces a flat, poster-like appearance by reducing the number of brightness levels.
14. Threshold turns your image into black and white.
15. Gradient Map converts the greyscale range of an image to a custom-gradient fill. This tool comes with a selection of different gradients which can all be adjusted to your liking.
16. Selective Colour selectively modifies the amount of a primary colour without modifying the other primary colours in your image.

These examples are only a small taste of what each adjustment layer can do. Each layer has many sliders and adjustments within the tool so an amazing array of adjustments can be obtained by using one of these layers. The adjustment layers can be stacked in your original photograph as well.

The intensity of the change made by an adjustment layer can be altered by lowering the opacity.

Adjustment layers can be clipped (or attached) to one layer or a group of layers. This enables you to make multiple adjustments to a layer or group of layers.

Many effects can be added to layers. They can be used to add shadows, glow effects, bevelled and embossed edges or simply add a stroke around the edge of your image in your choice of colour.

Text can be added as layers. There are lots of different fonts available in Photoshop and if you don't find the type of text that suits your needs there are many different ones available from Adobe (free) or for download on the internet. The texts can be sized, italicized, bolded and slanted in different ways.

If you wish to add a bird, smoke, cloud or whatever you imagine, just add an empty layer and go to the brush setting. Brushes can also be used with any colour found in the swatches menu. There are many brushes available in Photoshop or they can be easily made or can be downloaded from the internet. Opacity can be lowered to make the brush stroke less noticeable.

Layers can also be used to combine images, for example, a texture might be added to the original image, or maybe you want to add a component to make a composite image. Layers are the basis for all these tasks and explaining all of the wonderful options layers give us would take way more than a two-page article.

Layers can be grouped together making it easier to see what you are doing in your layers panel. Also, a group of layers can be controlled separately. Layers can be turned off or on by clicking the eyeball on the left of the layer.

Remember the number of layers that can be added are only limited by the memory on your computer!

Masks: A Photoshop layer mask controls the transparency of parts of the layer they are attached to. In other words, the areas of the layer that are hidden by a layer mask become transparent, allowing image information from lower layers to show through.

Masking is a technique that is used to hide or show parts of layers. This gives us more control over edits. Masking is superior to erasing as it is non-destructive, and so, can quickly be changed without any damage to the layer. Masking is used extensively in exposure blending and in creating composites.

A white mask shows all and a black mask hides all. To hide portions of a white mask you can simply brush over the mask with a black brush. The opacity of the brush can

be changed to reveal more or less. 100% black hides all of the items or portion of items or adjustments on a layer, by decreasing the opacity of the brush. This changes the amount of the item or component that it hides. A black mask hides all layers and items or adjustments can be revealed by painting on the mask with a white brush. The same opacity rule pertains to how the white brush works on the mask.

Blending Modes: Blend modes are used to determine how two layers are blended with each other. Currently there are more than 20 blend modes available in Photoshop. However, the 10 most useful modes are:

1. Darken only blends tones and colours where the original layer is darker.
2. Multiply is like an in-camera multiple exposure.
3. Soft Light lightens or darkens colours on the top layer.
4. Lighten only blends tones and colours where the original layer is lighter.
5. Overlay is where the top layer maintains the light and dark areas of the original layer underneath.
6. Screen is the opposite of multiply. Where the layer was darker than white, the result is brighter.
7. Difference can be used to establish exact registration of two similar images.
8. Luminosity creates colour with the hue and saturation of the base colour and the luminance of the blend colour.
9. Hue is taken from the top layer while the brightness and saturation of the original layer remain intact.
10. Hard Light combines the Multiply and Screen modes.

Each group of blend modes affect the overall look of the image. Darken, Multiply, Colour Burn, Linear Burn and Darker Colour affect the overall darkness of the image.

Lighten, Screen, Colour Dodge, Linear Dodge and Lighter Colour affect the overall brightness of the image.

Overlay, Soft Light, Hard Light, Vivid Light, Linear Light, Pin Light and Hard Mix affect the lightness and darkness.

Difference, Exclusion, Subtract and Divide create inverted colour effects.

Hue, Saturation, Colour and Luminosity deal with the colours of the image.

To try blend modes you can scroll through them by pressing the up and down arrow keys in the blending tool box and observing the effect on the image. Opacity can also be adjusted with each layer's blend mode.

Beginner's Corner: Pet Photography

by Joseph Finkleman

Two of the easiest types of photography to do in terms of technical requirements are pets and small children. Ironically, two of the most difficult subjects to photograph are pets and small children. The only technical requirement for photographing pets and children is enough light. Crossing light is the ideal but, in reality, pets generally have such dramatic angles of facial structure you do not need crossing light in order to define the planes of the face and children have such fine grain skin structure that you do not need diffused, directional light for them. So, from a technical point of view, pets and children need only the quantity of light necessary in order to make a recording which, in today's world means reading light is more than adequate.



"Rose Sayer"

However, the non-technical technique needed to photograph these subjects is much more difficult. Pets and children really do not like to pose. They are usually at their most interesting when caught unawares, often in environments that are as cluttered and filled with distraction as can be conceived.

I begin by identifying an area, or areas, where the pet or child is normally comfortable in. My cats, for example, will claim different pieces of territory at very specific times of the day, one cat here and another there. Some areas of the house are not conducive for me to work in. Others are very comfortable for me to hang out. However, my home, like everyone else's home, looks like we live in it.

My solution is to set up little stages or control the lighting so that the image is simpler and/or dramatic. We bought some coloured pillows to prop up like backgrounds for the cats. In one place, I bought some coloured cloth and hung it as a background.

In another situation I set up an off-camera flash and used a radio transmitter to fire the flash. That was not popular with the others who live here, since it was in the way but, as a temporary thing it was tolerated.

A small light-weight flash can be set up stuck to a wall or set up on a bookcase permanently. Using a transmitter on the camera, it is fairly simple to get a window light effect by bouncing the light off of a wall. At the very least you can use an on-camera flash and bounce the light off a wall or the ceiling. Learning how to bounce light effectively is very useful.



"Darius Lev"

Never be afraid of high ISOs. Any camera made in the last five years handles 6400 ISO quite well. My nearly ten-year-old Nikon D800 handles 6400 ISO flawlessly. That does not mean you don't need noise reduction but properly exposed 6400 ISO is quite usable. I often use this ISO, along with bounce flash.

This high ISO gives you two options. The first is natural light. However, a flash bounced off of the ceiling looks like natural light.

All a bounce flash does is raise the total room light a good number of levels. I use a very small flash with a rotating head and it raises even big room light levels sufficiently so that I can utilize a telephoto lens and never worry about stopping the action.

Knowing that the child or pet is going to be in a very specific location, with the simplest of set-ups, you will be able to get some very pretty portraits or even action shots without resorting to extensive retouching.

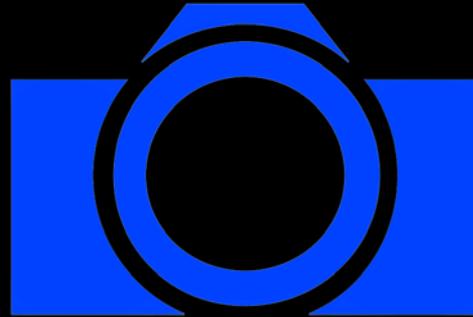
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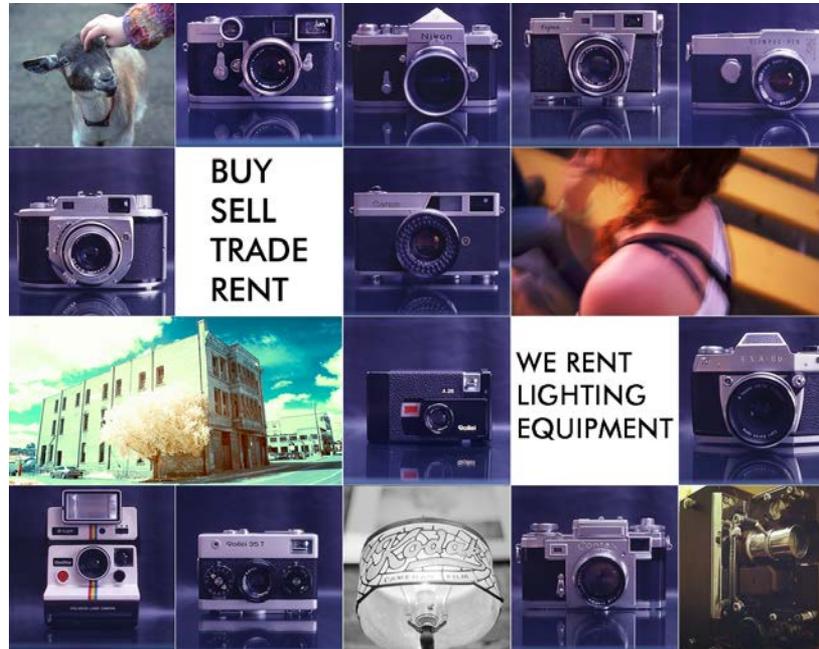
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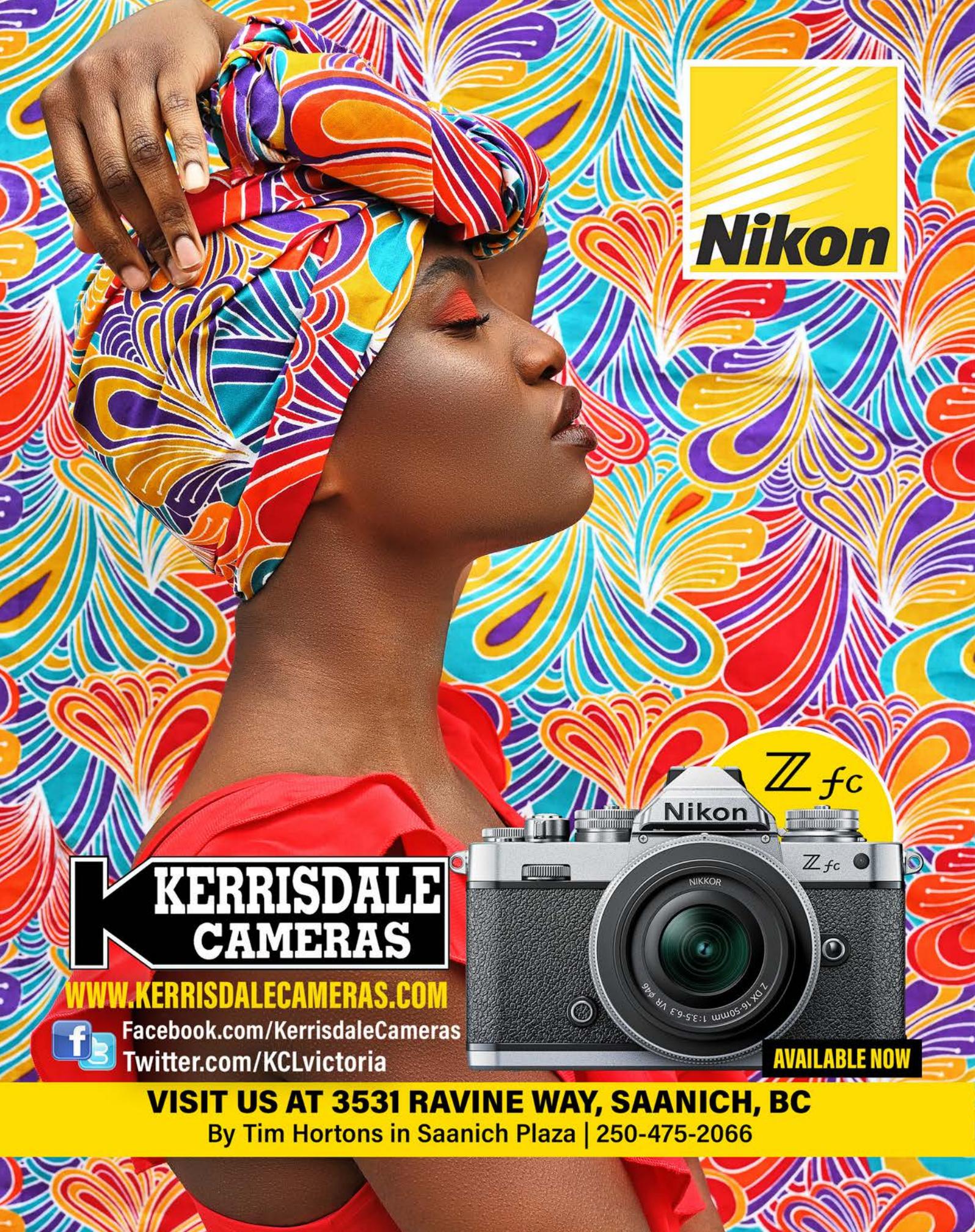
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