



Close-Up

Copying Slides
Beating Photographer's Block
Member Profile: Evan Guengerich
Camera Bags
Flickr and Me
How I Did It
No Longer a New Member
New Lightroom Features
Beginners' Corner: While you Wait

"Sitting on a Rock by the Bay" by Michael Murchison

Victoria Camera Club

April 2019 Volume 72 Number 4

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We now accept trade-ins on cameras, lenses, flashes and video cameras at these locations.

*As of February 13, 2019



Victoria Camera Club



“Sunset Sail” by Vanessa MacDonald

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

Events

We hold a number of events including:

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

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

Membership

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

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

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April 2019

Close-Up is the magazine of the Victoria Camera Club.

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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).



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

April 4th: Competition Night. This is the Annual Competition submission deadline. Please bring your winning prints from this years competitions. The March competition images will be shown.

April 11th: Presentation Night. Our guest speaker is Tony Puerzer who will be talking about Capturing the Universe: An Introduction to Astro Photography.

April 18th: Members' Night. Presentation of members' images, field trip slide shows, prints or short technical topics.

April 19th - May 5th: Print Show at Victoria Arts Council Gallery, 1800 Store Street.

Workshops: The Art of Seeing. **Field Trip Highlights:** Mystic Beach.

Cover Image: "Sitting on a Rock by the Bay" by Michael Murchison. One of the things I love about living on Vancouver Island is that you don't have to travel very far from home to find beautiful landscapes. This particular January morning, I woke up before sunrise and drove 20 minutes to East Sooke Regional Park hoping to find an image. Without a specific image in mind, I started walking and found myself at Creyke Point. After trying a few compositions of a well photographed rock formation, I scrambled down to the base of the formation and noticed this scene.

I composed this image trying to allow the lighter areas of the ocean and sky to provide a path for the viewer to explore the image. Once I had a composition I was happy with, I took a look at where the sun was about to rise and moved the tripod, so the sun would be blocked by the rock formation to the right of the image, while hopefully allowing the morning light to highlight the rocks on the left. As the sun broke the horizon, the image came together as I hoped. A little luck helped me at this point as some beautiful clouds blew into what had previously been a clear sky, providing a beautiful backdrop to the scene.

The image was captured on a Sony A7R II with a Sony FE 16-35 mm f4 lens at 21 mm with a circular polarizer. Camera Settings: 8 seconds, f16, ISO 100.

President's Message

A few years back I received a fancy new digital camera for Christmas. After I took some photos with it I quickly realized I had no clue what I was doing. The pictures I took with my Nikon D90 were OK, but I quickly realized that it should be able to do more and I wanted to learn how. I took a class at Camosun, Mitch Stringer's Photography Level 1, and discovered that there was more to photography than just learning to use a camera, a lot more. That was why I became a member of the Victoria Camera Club.

I began to see photography as a form of art and became conscious of all the many genres and elements that make a good image. Going to Club meetings, workshops, and field trips have become a route to self-discovery to understand what I like, what makes a good image, and how much more I can learn.

I spent the first few years mostly as an observer and then in 2016 I became a field trip coordinator. This allowed me to meet more fellow photographers and learn more about the city I call home. I then started to submit my photographs to competitions which, as a novice was a giant leap for me but one I do not regret. It helped me to take the quality of my images to a whole new level.

The encouragement of my fellow photographers inspired me to try new things, to push the boundaries of my capabilities and to grow in my understanding of photography. I am proud to now be on the executive as your President and lead a group of incredible volunteers who are devoted to bringing its members an opportunity to flourish in their photographic endeavours.

One of the ways for us, as a Club, to celebrate our accomplishments is during our annual Print Show. This year our Print Show is taking place at the Victoria Art Council Gallery at 1800 Store Street. Our opening reception is on April 20th from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm and the show will run Tuesdays through Sundays until May 5th. Come out and see what your fellow photographers have been up to.

As I write this message, our epic snowfall has almost melted (at least where I am on the Peninsula). It reminds me of how lucky we are to live in such an amazing place and what opportunities we have to get out and photograph the beautiful surroundings of our city and up-Island. So, get out there and explore!

Teri VanWell, President

Copying Slides

by Neil Schemenauer

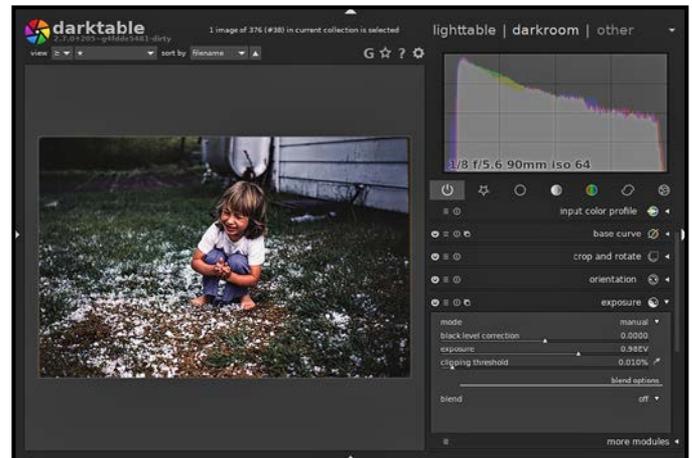
This is how I go about digitizing my collection of old colour slides using a digital camera. The basic setup is a macro lens, a white light source to put behind the slide, and some kind of camera stand. I used a Nikon D850 camera, a Tamron 90 mm 1:1 magnification macro lens, a Kaiser Slimlite Plano 5000K (LED light source), and a home-built steel camera stand. Instead of a macro lens, a long focal length lens combined with an extension tube would also work. You want a lens setup so that the slide fills your sensor area. Instead of a specialized light source, a computer monitor displaying a white image could work, too.

As is typical in macro photography, the shallow depth of field is a challenge. Choose an aperture that balances blur due to diffraction with focus blur due to warped slides. A rule of thumb for the best aperture for lens sharpness is two or three stops from wide open. I used f8 most of the time but perhaps f11 or f16 would have resulted in sharper images. The slides were old and somewhat warped and so diffraction was probably the lesser problem.

Some slides were mounted in metal holders. To speed up the digitizing task I did not bother to remove them. I used the live-view option on my camera and set it to auto focus and shutter release then I touched the LCD screen. Because of the variable thickness of the holders and mounts, manual focusing would require many adjustments. The slides were old and the camera used to capture them was not high quality. For slides taken with a high quality film camera, manually focusing using a zoomed-in live-view could produce sharper results. Some people use a piece of glass on top of the slide to hold it flat. In my case, I did not bother. Using a “tethered” camera setup would have been convenient but I didn’t have the cables necessary.

Use the lowest native ISO setting, since increasing exposure time is easy. I used manual exposure settings and adjusted the shutter speed for each slide. The dynamic range of slide film is low, perhaps seven stops, and so a modern digital camera will have no trouble to capture it without clipping. Increasing exposure time to make the image as bright as possible without clipping will maximize the signal to noise ratio of the captured data (known as “expose to the right”). I used the RAW image format, medium resolution and 14-bit lossy compression. Because the dynamic range of the slides is low, 12-bit instead of 14-bit RAW should also work fine.

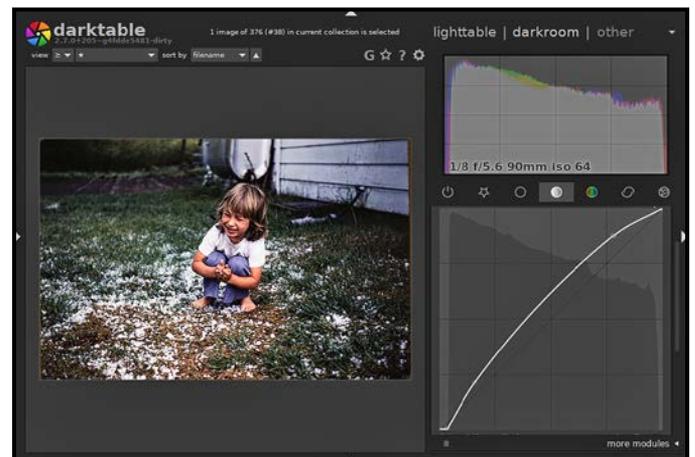
If the original slides were taken with a better camera, I would have used maximum resolution. Using RAW rather than JPEG is essential in getting good final results in post-processing.



“Out-of-Camera Raw File”

Some post-processing is required to optimize the images. First, adjust the white-balance setting. I had some success in using “auto” or “spot” white-balance. However, some images needed manual white-balance adjustment before they looked natural. For some, I also had to do more extensive colour corrections. Next, adjust exposure and the white and black points. Computer screens have an extra stop or two of dynamic range vs the slide film and so you want to take advantage of that.

I found that making adjustments using the tone curve tool improved images significantly. Slide film like Kodachrome has a gamma optimized for viewing with a “dark surround” e.g. a projector in a dark room with the image surrounded by a black wall or screen. To get an image that looks better on computer screens or in print, gamma correction is required. The slide has tones concentrated in the dark parts of the image and so increasing the slope of the tone curve on the left side makes the desired correction.



“Typical Tone Curve Correction”

Beating Photographer's Block

by Hanna Cowpe

There are times when any photographer will find themselves in a creative slump, lacking enthusiasm or inspiration for creating pictures. Packing up gear and venturing out to an interesting location with exciting subject matter does not always come easily. Sometimes life presents issues that rob us of motivation to search for photographs. This could be just the time to change our attitude and approach.

If you are one who generally photographs in the company of others, perhaps going it alone will make you more aware of seemingly insignificant details. Field trips and group shooting can be fun as a social experience and sharing ideas and knowledge are invaluable but solitude allows concentration on your surroundings, where conversation might distract from the main goal. Don't hesitate to revisit familiar locations. However many times you return to a location, there will always be changes through different seasons or times of day, source of light both natural and artificial, and weather. These can all affect how we see and interpret the scene. Even personal mood has an effect on what we notice and find inspiring.

Rather than choosing a location with a theme or plan in mind, consider going for a walk in any general area. This could be a natural environment, an urban setting, an industrial site or a combination of all these and more. They can be found within most small towns and in all larger cities and often close to home. The greater variety of scenes, the better.

The important thing is to venture out with an open mind, open eyes and open ears. Look beyond eye level, up, down and all around. Turn around and look in the direction from where you started. Squat, sit or even lie down to change your vantage point. Shooting through trees toward a blue sky will give you beautiful blue and green displays and bare trees will show striking skeletal patterns. Photographing flowers from the back will capture intricate botanical detail that is often overlooked. There is no need to feel driven to actively seek out something to photograph. Simply enjoy the surroundings with all the sights and sounds, and be observant of, and receptive to what attracts your attention. Inspiration will come naturally.

Pay attention to the changing light and how it affects shadow, perspective and depth of field. Nothing should be dismissed as too mundane or simple. Keep in mind the often-used phrase "less is more". Practice mind-



"Skyward"

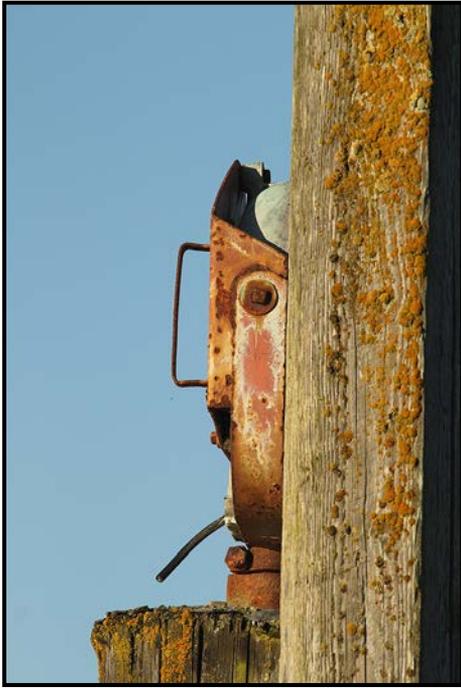
fulness, as used in Eastern meditation. I have greatly enjoyed the book "The Tao of Photography". Reading it and other material can improve your understanding of mindfulness and how it can help you to develop this approach to your photography.

Seeing an everyday object that is normally missed or dismissed can take on new significance. This can occur through the beauty of simplicity or through humorous characteristics or other features. It may be immediately striking or it may take a few moments to "see". Be sure to observe colours and textures. Urban industrial settings offer subjects and materials such as wood covered in many layers of peeling paint or rusting metal with its warm tones producing pleasing abstracts. It is best when these are photographed with a macro lens in order to achieve depth of colour and textural detail. Sites such as scrapyards, neglected buildings, antique farming or industrial implement museums and more will provide a wealth of possibilities.

Sunshine or strong light can cast shadows that produce geometric shapes and patterns. Shadows and low light can also create complex and moody images. Reflective surfaces make stunning images that can create a



"Metalmorphosis"



“The Postman”

range of effects such as symmetry, juxtaposition, irony, humour and more. Abstract images can also be attractive and offer endless possibilities. Reflections in windows, in puddles, or in metallic surfaces all offer opportunities. There are endless variations. Even taking a few small steps to change your position will morph the reflection into continually evolving pictures.



“Simple Symmetry”

Consider viewing the scene through a telephoto lens to locate through the viewfinder something you wouldn't notice with the naked eye. This can be particularly effective in a natural landscape where there are multiple layers of trees, shrubs, and wildlife. Zoom in on one aspect through these layers and isolate a small detail through the use of a large aperture, producing a shallow depth of field. This will bring your prize into focus and render the foreground and background into a soft frame. There are occasions when humans can introduce inspiration for images. Rather than portraiture or

busy and complicated street photography, the inclusion of a solitary or a few figures in a natural or uncluttered setting can bring an interesting nuance.



“Autumnal Pendant”

Photographing people from behind will make a candid photo more likely and can also reduce detail, such as facial features, which could complicate the desired simplicity. Silhouettes can have a similar effect. These will result in a more graphic style that will add interest to the image without making it too people-oriented.



“Elusion”

All these options can provide a new dimension through experimentation with camera movement. If your light conditions are less than ideal or if it is windy, impressionist style images can be a happy escape from weather constraints. Although this leads into a whole other field of photographic style, it is an opportunity to dabble in some fun and produce surprising results.

No matter your location or circumstances you can have a successful and satisfying photography experience. Simply disregard perceived obstructions and free your heart and mind to see and accept all stimuli presented to you. This will allow you to interpret them in whatever way they express the story that you wish to tell, and, most importantly, to enjoy yourself.

Editing Beyond the Basics

by Richard James

Last month I covered some basic editing steps. The next step is how to apply selective edits using selections, layer masks and luminosity masking. These allow you to restrict the edit to part of a layer or an individual layer within the image file giving you much more control over how these edits are applied. While you can emulate some of these techniques in Lightroom, this article is focused on doing it in Photoshop, which allows you much more control over the process.

Selections: Being able to select an individual component or area within the image is critical to the editing process. As usual with Photoshop, there are many ways of doing this. The three lasso tools allow you to draw a random line around part of the image. The rectangle and the elliptical marquee tools select these shapes; the elliptical marquee can also draw a circle. If a geometric shape doesn't work, then the quick selection and magic wand tools select areas based on content. You can also use the pen tool to outline areas point by point. With all of these tools you can start a new selection or add to, or delete from, an existing selection.

After you have created a selection, you can refine it using the drop-down Select > Select and Mask panel from the menu bar. This allows you to refine the selection, smooth, increase the contrast at the edge or shift the edges as well as feather the edges. Some selections require hard edges others very definitely need feathered edges to produce a soft transition at the edge of the area. You can also adjust the distance from the selected edge that will be used for the refinement.

Selecting around hair, human or animal, is a challenging task, but can be done. Search the Internet for "Selecting Hair in Photoshop" for guidance.

Layer Masks: Having selected a part of the image, the next step is to apply a change only to the part that is selected. To do this you place the selection on the target layer as a mask. In the Layers panel you select the layer, typically an adjustment layer, and click on the "add layer mask" symbol at the bottom of the panel. This will then show the mask on the layer icon in black-and-white. To show it on the image itself, click Alt+Shift (Opt+Shift on Macs). You can invert the mask by clicking on its icon and pressing Ctrl+I (Cmd+I).

Luminosity Masking: There is another way of creating a selection that is based on luminosity rather than on



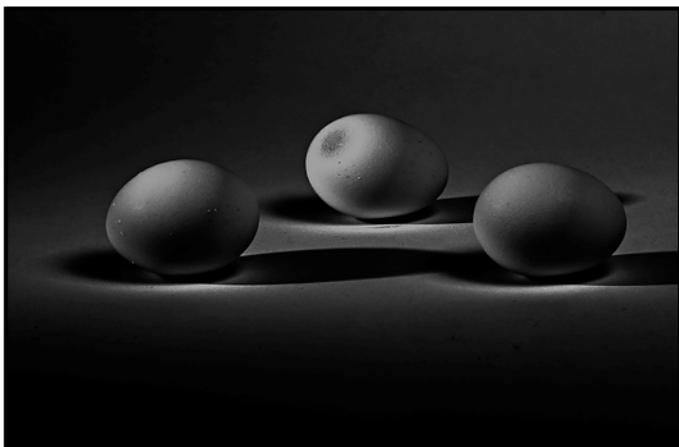
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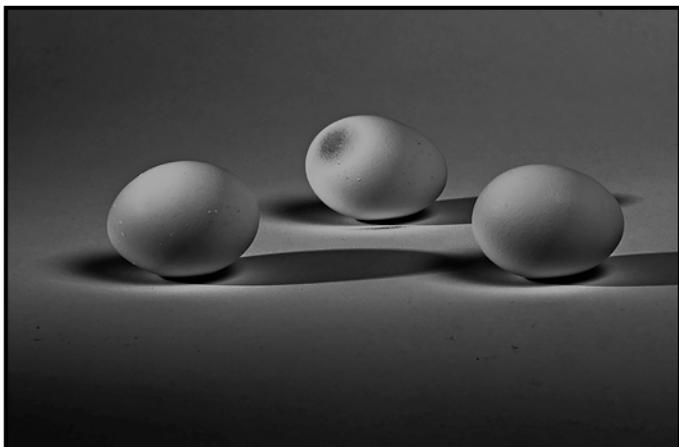
shape or content. This technique allows you to select areas throughout the image that have the same luminosity without having to manually identify each area. You can thus take different luminosity areas of, for example, shadows or highlights and apply a mask based on these to any adjustment layer. This allows you to bring out more detail in these areas without changing other luminosity areas adjacent to them. One significant advantage is that, by definition, they produce soft edges which blend very well into the adjacent areas.

Luminosity masking is a complex task which has been simplified by a number of Photoshop plug-ins. Petapixel.com has a step-by-step guide to creating simple masks, and there are others to be found on the web. However, if you wish to make extensive use of this process and produce more complex masks, or those covering a narrower luminosity range, you should investigate a number of plug-ins that do this. These include products by Tony Kuyper, Greg Benz, and Sven Stork.

These two images show the luminosity mask (in black) at two different highlight levels for three white eggs on a white background. The paler areas will have more of the effect applied to them and the near black areas will

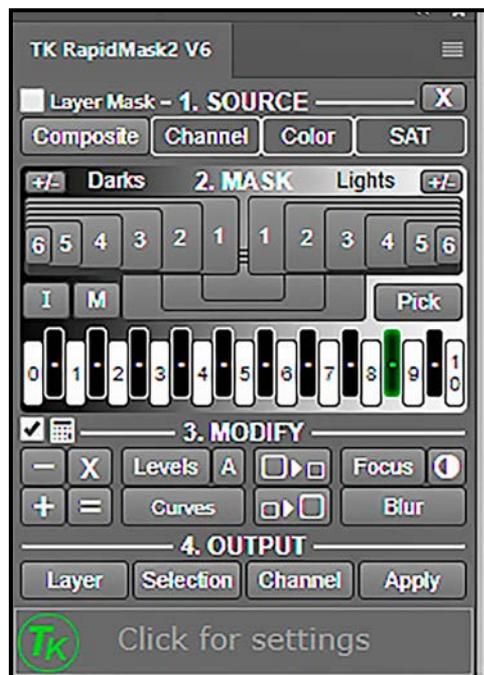


“Zone 9, Highlights”



“Zone 8.5, Wider Area Selected”

have little change shown. The rapid mask panel from Tony Kuyper's panel is also shown.



“Tony Kuyper’s Rapid Mask Panel”

These are powerful tools that take a while to learn and understand, however, it is well worth the effort to get better images in your work.

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September Theme: At The Beach

by Pam Irvine

You have the whole summer to work on a great photo for September's theme of "At the Beach". There are no restrictions on style or editing in the theme category so your image could be a people shot, a landscape, abstract or altered reality, whatever inspires you. The only requirement is that a beach is part of the image.

A few tips for beach photography:

- Look for a focal point such as a child playing in the sand. Avoid crowds. A cluttered image can leave the viewer confused about where to look.
- Be careful taking photos of children unrelated to you. Get the parent's permission (preferably written).
- Wildlife at the beach can include animals, birds, insects, crabs, etc.
- Noontime light can be harsh so try for the blue hour in the morning or the golden hour in the evening. These times have beautifully-coloured light and side lighting to give your image contrast and depth. If you are shooting people at noon, consider using a fill flash to lighten the shadows on the face.
- Play with shutter speed. Try a slow shutter speed to blur the waves.
- Painting with light. Try going to the beach at night with sparklers or any light source and paint light on foreground objects.
- Make sure your horizon is horizontal. Avoid having the horizon line cut through a subject's neck or head.
- Use spot metering on a mid-grey object so the reflected light from the sand does not fool your camera's meter.
- Don't be afraid to try black and white especially for patterns in wood or the sand.
- Look for reflections in tidal pools or water on the sand.
- Look down. Maybe the best shot is a close-up of an interesting pattern in the sand or a shell on the beach.

With all of the reflected light off the water and sand, you will probably want to use a polarizing filter. The filter will eliminate the glare, boost contrast and give you truer colours. Keep in mind that the polarizing filter can reduce the light reaching your sensor by about two stops.

We are lucky to be living on an island surrounded by sandy as well as rocky beaches. Have fun, keep the sand and salt spray out of your camera and tripod and don't forget the sunscreen.

February 2019 Competition Judges

We extend our sincere thanks to the external judges for the February Intermediate and Advanced competitions: Francois Cleroux, Mike Byrne, Gilles Vezina and Frank Pali. We would also like to thank our in-house Novice Judges: Normand Marcotte, Martin Wright, Steve Lustig, Anne McCarthy, Caspar Davis, Suzanne Huot and Lorna Zaback. Images and judges' comments are available at: victoriacameraclub.ca/Competitions/CompetitionResults.aspx.

Gilles Vezina: Open. Giles is a photographer based in Gatineau. He has the opportunity to explore the beauty of the Ottawa region, both on the Quebec and Ontario side. He considers photography to be a very versatile form of artistic expression. Photography allows him to find beauty wherever it is. Photography is a passion for him and nothing makes him happier than to share this passion. gillesvezina@me.com.

Francois Cleroux: Theme and Altered Reality. Francois was introduced to photography early and photographed for the Province and Vancouver Sun newspapers during high school. After school he did photography for the fashion industry and worked for Minolta at Expo 1986. He has done volunteer work for a variety of wildlife organizations. Francois currently lives in Delta and is a CAPA certified judge and a past-president of the Delta Photo Club. Francois lectures and teaches various photography workshops and classes. www.eyessonphoto.com.

Frank Pali: Wildlife and Natural World. Frank is an award-winning photographer with a passion for capturing a wide range of images. His images have graced numerous magazines, brochures, packaging materials and books. Frank is a certified photography judge and member of CAPA as well as a member of the Delta Photography Club. He leads wildlife and bird photography tours to Costa Rica a couple of times a year. frankpaliphotography.com.

Mike Byrne: Prints. Mike is one of the co-founders of Clock Tower Images in Victoria. He grew up in Alberta's Rocky Mountains and has always pursued outdoor activities. As a natural extension, he started to produce outdoor adventure films and videos. Mike worked as a photographer for the 2010 Vancouver Olympics and as a photography manager at the 2012 London Olympics. He has been the official sports photographer at several sporting events. Mike leads photography tours to a variety of exotic locations, Namibia and Iceland are on the schedule for 2019. www.clocktowerimages.com.



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Advanced Altered Reality Digital - 1st
“Dahlia Delight” by Richard Letourneau

Judge’s comments: When creating manipulated flower images it is important to make sure the base image subject/lighting is spectacular and that you do things a little differently. The maker has accomplished this! This image looks like a blended composition made up of 3 different flowers. They are blended together very well including the transparency. The colour choices also work very well. The final process filter has enhanced the subjects and the final image. Creative, beautiful. Well done!



Advanced Wildlife Digital - 1st
“Mallard Drake in Flight” by Steve Smith

Judge’s comments: This image is very well handled. The shot is sharp throughout with nothing distracting in the background.



Advanced Open Digital - 2nd
“Riding Herd” by Leah Gray

Judge’s comments: Dynamic composition and sharpness of foreground subjects, well done.



Advanced Nature Print - 2nd
“Cub on the Riverbank” by Evan Guengerich

Judge’s comments: This is a nicely composed image with interesting subject matter.



Advanced Theme Digital - 2nd
“Kilts” by Steve Barber

Judge’s comments: A fun quirky image of the kilted men! Yes, for those of Scottish heritage, seeing the kilt at almost anytime brings up memories and tradition. Well done. Exposure and sharpness are great.



Advanced Natural World Digital - 3rd
“Ice” by Peter Koelbleitner

Judge’s comments: This is a great panorama shot, with great use of light and the colour. The use of the vignette is perfect, it keeps our eyes focused on the main subject.



Advanced Monochrome Print - 1st
“Mary-Vine Falls” by Richard James

Judge’s comments: This image really appeals to me, excellent handling of lights and darks, solid composition, and high impact. Great image.



Advanced Open Print - HM
“Radiant Maple in Koyasan Temple”
by Normand Marcotte

Judge’s comments: I really like this image even though the subject matter doesn’t appear to be that compelling. Somehow the image has more impact than it deserves, it must be the light and composition



Intermediate Digital Theme - 1st
“Grand Finale - 29th Annual Symphony Splash”
by Vanessa MacDonald

Judge’s comments: A great well-themed image. How can most people not get the tradition of growing up going to the fireworks when they see this image. The background view of the city and water is an excellent setting for the fireworks and view where the photographer has placed the viewer, well done. The image is well exposed, sharp and well handled for the fireworks..



“Intermediate Open Digital - 1st
“Sidney Sunrise” by Bob Law

Judge’s comments: Very interesting composition with strong lines, both the square angles of the pier and the soft natural distant landscape. Aligning the structure with the shoreline is also a strong point. Beautiful colour palette as well.



Intermediate Wildlife Digital - 2nd
“Gentoo Penguin Babies” by John Clarke

Judge’s comments: Great shot showing the interaction between animals.



Intermediate Altered Reality Digital - 1st
“We Walked into a World of Grit and Glitz”
by Anne McCarthy

Judge’s comments: Ethereal, other-worldly, hard to properly describe but definitely unique! This image which looks like In Camera Movement (ICM) is not a particularly spectacular ICM but combined with the colour palate, the lights and streaks and the added and exaggerated grain all combine into a well-balanced composition. A fun image to look at and explore.



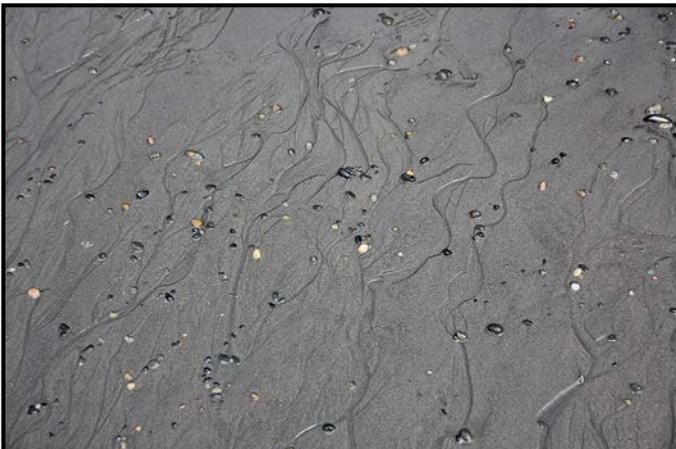
Intermediate Natural World - 2nd
"Sun Kissed" by Lindsay Millar

Judge's comments: Nice to see the maker taking this shot from a low perspective. In doing so it creates a fantastic layering effect. It is sharp from the foreground to the background. The focal point rock is correct as there is a lot of water included in the foreground.



Novice Digital Open - 2nd
"Winter Stark Beauty" by Johanne-Pascale Audet

Judge's comments: There is a compelling softness to this shot reminiscent of an image embedded in glass or wax. It looks like a cold day. Overall a very successful and intriguing image..



Novice Open Print - 1st
"Patterns and Pebbles in the Sand" by Sylvan Burnside

Judge's comments: The patterns here are reminiscent of the kelp forests close off-shore. The judges appreciated the composition and calmness.



Novice Wildlife - 2nd
"Sparkle Beak" by Peter Amundsen

Judge's comments: The title works well to ensure that the viewer spends a little more time looking at the beak. Exposure, sharpness, composition and light are all excellent. The reflection shows well in this water. The judges thought this was a very good image.



Novice Natural World - 3rd
"Spring Thing" by Penny Authier

Judge's comments: The title sets us up to be presented with a single object, presented pretty well in mid-centre. But being off-centre, just a bit, allows us to see the next layer of background foliage. The depth of field chosen gives an attractive soft background which helps to isolate the main subject.



Novice Theme - 1st
"Buddhist Water Blessing, Cambodia"
by Frank Thirkettle

Judge's comments: The pyramid-like composition and rich warm colours work well to add to the story in this photo. The exposure is good.



Photo by: Thomas Yee

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Member Profile: Evan Guengerich

Although my photographic history goes back a long way, it is only in the past few years that I have truly grown to appreciate the way it enriches my life. I've come to realize that photography is an important creative outlet that allows me to leave the stress of work and life behind for a while and lose myself in the beauty of the world.

Photography came naturally to me as some of my earliest memories involve watching my father, who is still an avid photographer at the age of 85, documenting our family life with his camera. I remember watching slide shows for hours and losing our washroom to darkroom equipment and chemicals.

I got my first camera, a compact Nikon L35AF, when I was relatively young, but it wasn't until my early 30's that I approached photography with any degree of seriousness. While living in Texas, I visited the beaches and wetlands of the Gulf Coast with my Minolta SLR and Sigma 400 mm f5.6 lens in pursuit of herons, egrets, pelicans, and alligators. I also dabbled in medium format and had a darkroom. I'm not sure I created many noteworthy photos during that time, but it provided a solid foundation.

As my children entered the frame, my photography reverted to family snapshots and documenting vacations. But years later the convergence of my daughter playing competitive soccer and the purchase of my first DSLR brought me back. I became the unofficial team photographer, posting photos to a site for team members and parents to download. As the team travelled to tournaments, provincials and even Sweden, the challenge and my enjoyment of photography in the new digital world rekindled my enthusiasm.



"Golden Bear"

As our family nest began emptying, I decided to undertake a personal "Project 365". Every day for a year I took some photos. The subject matter was at times mundane, but it was an exercise in trying new things and learning to see a composition in the routine. It was a great experience and I came away from that year with an improved ability to visualize and compose photographically.



"The Serengeti"

Two years ago, I decided to join the Victoria Camera Club. Developing friendships with talented photographers, seeing their work, sharing my photos and receiving encouragement has been inspiring and motivating. Participating in internal and external competitions has provided useful feedback and challenged me to make stronger photos.

Throughout this time, I rediscovered what it was that attracted me to photography many years ago while living along the Gulf Coast: birds, wildlife and the natural world. As David DuChemin, one of my favourite photography writers says, "The more you understand what inspires you, the more readily you can put yourself in its path."

As I begin to have more flexibility to travel, photography is leading me to explore places I would otherwise never see. It is giving me moments of wonder and beauty I will never forget, from watching a grizzly sow share a salmon with her cub to seeing the sun rise across the Serengeti Plains.

My journey as a photographer will continue as I work to create more compelling images while exploring the natural world both near and far away. I understand now more than ever that the path is a long one. The more I learn, the more I realize how much there is to learn. And the more I explore, the more I realize how little I've actually seen.

To quote David DuChemin again, "When no one else is there, the camera becomes my means to say to a wider audience, 'Did you see that? Look at this!'" My goal going forward is to say that many more times and in increasingly impactful ways.

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Camera Bags

by Matt Speight

There are many different camera bags styles: shoulder, sling, backpack, hardcase, roller, messenger and holster.

I thought I would go over a couple of my favourite camera bags that have some clever design features.

There are certain basics you should look for, no matter what the type of bag:

1. Will all your gear fit in it? This is obvious I know, but this could mean taking all your camera gear to the store and trying it out.
2. The point of entry and removal. How easy is it to get to your camera and lenses, etc? Do you have access while wearing the bag? You don't want to miss a shot because you chose a "oh-so-cool" retro-style bag with impractical buckles.
3. Comfort is so important. So, you find a bag that fits your gear but, does it fit you? Make sure you try the bag on with all your gear inside and that it's comfortable from the get-go. As you'll likely be spending a lot of time with your bag, you want to have a good relationship with it and, even better, experience that spark of excitement, like your first love or eating exquisite chocolate.
4. Pockets. Are there enough for all your batteries, memory cards, cables and keys?
5. Weather proofing is icing on the cake, but an important consideration here in our temperate rainforest. Is the outer fabric water resistant? Are the zips covered with flaps or a weatherproof design? A zip is often the weakest part of any bag for letting in stuff you don't want on your gear like liquids, or dust. If the bag is not weatherproof, does it come with a waterproof cover you can put on the bag in a downpour?

There are several features that make the Lowepro Protactic different from the average backpack. This bag comes in two sizes, the 350 and the 450. You get to choose the size that works for you and your gear. The ease of access to your gear in both bags is awesome. Unlike most backpacks, you don't need to put the bag down to get your gear. It has four points of access which are at the top, both sides and the back.

The harness, (the part you strap to your body), has light weight, breathable and comfortable shoulder straps. The padding at the back of the bag is contoured to allow airflow on your back to reduce overheating on long

hikes and the removable waist belt gives you good lumbar support.

The tripod pouch and cinch straps can go on either side or on the front of the bag. The military webbing on the outside, coupled with the supplied cinch straps, allow you to strap stuff other than camera gear to the bag like a helmet, hiking poles or a jacket. It also comes with a water bottle holder, that like the tripod mount, is modular and can fit in several positions on the bag.

While the zips aren't weatherproof, the nylon shell is. The rain cover hides in its own pocket on the outside of the pack so it doesn't take any room away from your gear.

The Peak Design Everyday Messenger 15 is one of the most innovative bags out there. This bag has several features that make it stand out from the average camera bag. Its outer shell is constructed from 22 compressed EVA foam pieces that allow the bag to compress or expand to your changing gear. A five-step magnetic ladder locking system on the front of the bags keeps the bag tightly closed as you compress or expand it. It doesn't have the traditional stiff foam dividers of normal bags but they are flexible and foldable and that gives you more adaptability in how to place your gear. It also comes in two sizes, the 13 and 15, which correspond to the laptop size the bag will take.

A weatherproof zip on the top of the bag allows you quick access to the gear inside without lifting the main flap.

The strap on the bag, by default, is a traditional shoulder strap but can easily be cinched smaller and tighter and, with the aid of the hidden stability straps, you have a messenger bag that can go on your back. The bag is also designed so the stability straps can go around your waist so you can take some weight off your shoulders.

There is a sleeve sewn into the main flap covering the bag that allows you to slip a tripod leg through it. This makes the Peak Design Messenger Bag the only messenger-style bag to comfortably carry a tripod. The waxed coating and durable water-repellent finish make this bag very weatherproof and durable.

Bag design has come a long way since I bought my first padded box. They are now being created by passionate designers who are photographers and who truly want to make something better than what's already out there. The Protactic and the Peak Design Messenger Bag are prime examples of this and since my wife has a habit of overusing her coffee mugs until they leak, I have a great excuse to buy myself a new bag to make sure my gear is fully protected.

Flickr and Me

by Peter Koelbleitner

For a start, a few statistics about flickr. It was founded in 2004 and is used by around 75 million photographers in about 65 countries, posting up to 25 million images per day and, at the end of 2018 had about 10 billion images on file. For the last couple of years the most popular camera used is the iPhone.

Fourteen years ago, my son gave me a subscription to flickr for my birthday and I got hooked. I have since posted over three thousand photos, which works out to over 200 photos per year so you can consider me an active flickr user.

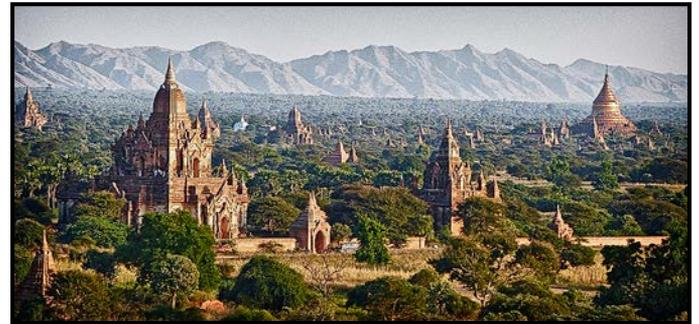
At one time we collected photos in albums and we still have a cabinet full of such albums, not to mention the photos stored in boxes. Unfortunately, these hardly ever get looked at and are starting to fade. Slides also just linger in their boxes and in many instances are slowly deteriorating. I have started to scan some of the images and slides but the time and effort is substantial and this project will most likely never be finished. In addition, so many of the old photos have neither date nor any other information associated with them.

Now I store my photos on hard drives which allows nearly instant access, no loss in quality and mostly sufficient data. On flickr, I post photos as memories of trips and outings or photos which happen to appeal to me at the moment. Flickr, to a large extent, replaces the photo albums of the past, except that I do not post any personal photos for reasons of privacy. See “caveats” below. Many times, I open flickr to answer the questions of, “When were we there or what was it called”?

Not that I do not like to exhibit my photos. Why would I post them to groups if not for them to be looked at, faved and sometimes even commented on? I think that nearly all photographers have the wish to exhibit and share their images. Now that we are in the digital era and have all these processing tools, the ability to make adjustments to our photos has become so much more accessible and a creative facet has been added which we like to display.

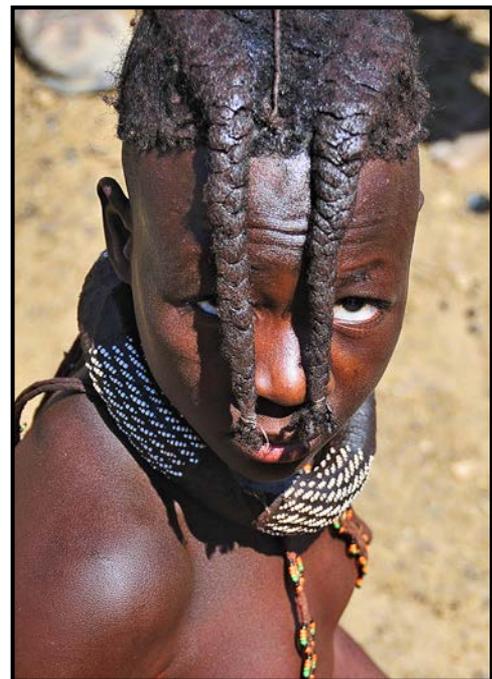
I have been following a small number of photographers whose work appeals to me and it has been interesting to see how they have developed over the years. Although I do not use flickr as a social contact site, I appreciate comments on my images and will reciprocate whenever time allows.

Flickr provides information on the number of views, faves and comments, which presumably relate to the popularity of an image. I say popularity rather than quality as you can see for yourself if you wander through this site.



“Bagan Temples”

Three of my recent photos that are the most popular are of the Bagan temples, the Himba girl and the Scottish sheep. I do not think that there is anything wrong with these photos but I would not have ranked them at the top of my photographic output.



“Himba Girl”

You may rightly ask me what I consider some of my best images but I have to confess that my selection keeps changing every time I try to come up with a list. However, the last two images “Waiting for the Bus” and “Interruption”, at least at the time of writing this article, are two of my favourites.

I think that both of these photos tell a story and have interesting elements. The outdoor photo was shot during the classic “golden hour” and the soft light gives it a painterly feeling and the sense that I was an outside observer. In the classroom picture I am clearly part of



"Scottish Sheep"

the action, having caused the interruption and drawing the eyes of some of the students towards me.

Another great feature of flickr is that I can preview locations that I plan to visit. I find it better to search by specific "photo" location, as groups such as "country" will be too general. This way I get ideas not only of what could be photographed but also suggestions on light and angles.

The quality of the images on flickr covers the whole spectrum from awesome to awful but even if only a small percentage of photos are of high quality, considering the vast number of available images on flickr, there is still a tremendous amount of excellent photography to see.

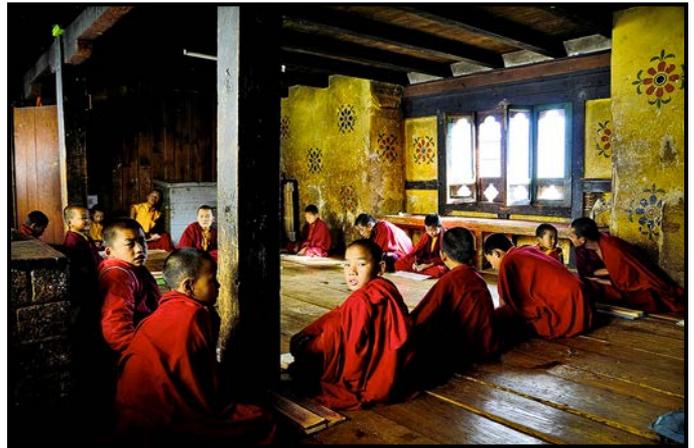


"Waiting for the Bus"

If you have ever visited my flickr pages, [bekop \(Peter Koelbleitner\)](#), you will notice that I post mostly travel and wildlife photos. It also shows that I like architecture photos and that I am hesitant about photographing people.

I like to think that over the years my photography has improved partly due to better equipment and processing but, also, from what I have learned from my interaction with other photographers. Reviewing my photostream, sometimes points me in the direction where improvements are needed the most.

These days nearly all my images are processed in Lightroom where I also grade the memory card contents. As a minimum I will check that the horizon is level and crop to achieve a composition to my liking. I think of cropping as being one of the most important steps as it releases me from the constraints of the sensor geometry and lets me optimize the composition. This is followed by adjustments to light, colour and sharpness. Occasionally, I will use a plug-in for an HDR effect. I also made it a habit to always frame the image. Years ago, I tried to match frame colours to image colours but have now settled on rather narrow black and white frames. Images which I consider suitable for flickr are saved into a "temp" folder for future consideration.



"Interruption"

I strive for variety in my photostream, preferably in subject matter, but at least in colour. All my images have titles and tags and, frequently, location data together with the basic camera data.

Now the question. How safe are my photos on flickr? The simple answer is, they are not. When I joined the Club, I submitted a photo to a competition. I was asked to confirm that this photo was in fact mine, as it could also be found on well over a dozen different sites. My image had clearly been downloaded from flickr. Flickr has improved their privacy settings and gives you quite a nuanced choice, with "All Rights Reserved" being the default.

However, remember, there are always means of illegally accessing anything on the web. If you want to ensure that your images will not be stolen, don't post them on any web site. Another thing to remember is that flickr is a company; they can change the rules, get sold or even close down. So it might be a good idea to keep all your flickr images on your hard drives just in case something not to your liking takes place.

We are all different and what works for me may not be the right thing for you. I enjoy flickr and find the bit of effort and time worthwhile.

How I Did It

Dragonfly

by Jim Fowler

On a nice day in July you can always find dragonflies at the south end of Beaver Lake or at the Beaver Lake ponds. I shot this dragonfly using a Nikon D810 with a 200-500 mm f5.6 zoom lens at 500 mm. It was shot at 1/320th of a second at f5.6, and ISO 400. Even in summer, it can be gloomy at the forest edge, though there was direct sunlight this day. The lens was on a tripod, and I used a remote shutter release and live view for maximum stability.



“Dragonfly”

The very narrow depth of field available using the lens's maximum aperture of f5.6 worked in this case only because of the face-forward position of the dragonfly. The bonus of a wide aperture was the nicely blurred background. Camera stability was critical for this slow shutter speed. The forest provided the nice dark background. The 36 mp sensor in this camera allowed me to crop from 7360 x 4912 pixels down to 2316 x 1509 pixels, and still have good detail.

For a still subject, I find the best technique for very fine focus is to use live view and zoom-in for manual focus adjustment. Luckily, the dragonfly did not mind holding still for a minute or so while I fiddled with my equipment.

I do all my basic post-capture editing in Lightroom. If major cropping is intended, I do that first. Then, after any adjustment to exposure, I convert to black and white and set the black, shadow, white and highlight clipping points. Going back to colour, I will work with clarity, edge-masking and sharpening and then use graduated and radial filters for localized adjustments. The goal is to emphasize the subject, eliminate distractions, and remedy any unwanted weaknesses in the image.

Eye-Spy

by Kelvin Nelson

It is early morning, with great light, about an hour's drive into the Ngorongoro Crater, Tanzania when we happen upon a pride of lions resting and playing after a night spent feasting on water buffalo. One lioness stopped for a drink before wandering over to check us out. Little do I realize that she will walk directly towards us and rub the vehicle as she passes.



“Eye-Spy”

The first thing I did was crop to a 5x7 aspect ratio and center the eyes at one-third in from the top. In hindsight I should have cropped to the size of my phone screen. Next, I auto-adjusted the white balance. Then I used linear gradient masking and adjustment layers to bring down the highlights on the side with the sun and lighten the shadows on the other. This is called “dodge and burn”.

I wanted a dramatic and very bold picture so I bumped up the orange and yellow. Then I over-sharpened the image and cranked up the contrast. I then maxed out the structure and raised the clarity.

Then I tried to add a vignette in Capture One but I could not get the blacked-out surround that I was looking for. It was then back to Lightroom to get the falloff I wanted. Finally, I transferred the image to my phone, which crops the sides to fit its screen. Now I annoyingly show it to everyone who is willing to look. Because of that I am encouraged to enter it in a VCC competition (where it won an honourable mention).

Details: Nikon D7100, lens at 200 mm, ISO 1000, f8, 1/1000th second.

Tuesday Shoots

by Jim Fowler

The Tuesday Group meets twice monthly at the Bay Centre and then spreads out around downtown Victoria. The Alternate Tuesday Group goes outside the downtown core to include the West Shore, Saanich Peninsula and occasionally the Cowichan Valley.

April 2nd: Thetis Lake Regional Park. This 834 hectare Regional Park is in View Royal. Take Six Mile Road off the Island Highway then go under the Trans-Canada Highway to the parking lot. This was Canada's first nature sanctuary, established in 1958. With wild flowers (fawn lilies and shooting stars) and a lake trail to enjoy, you can take a long hike around the lake, or just search out flora and fauna close at hand. Lunch at the Six Mile Pub.

April 9th: Texture and Pattern. Make the texture so real that you can feel it. Let the rhythm of the pattern captivate you. Use light to enhance the texture with contrast. Use repeated elements, lines, shapes, tones or colour, to create interesting images. This is one area that few photographers emphasize. We meet at the Bay Centre Food Court.

April 16th: Playfair Park and King's Pond, Saanich. Access to Playfair Park is at 1198 Rock Street, off Quadra, 1 block north of Tattersall Drive. This 3.7 hectare park has mature rhododendrons and azaleas. It also has a restored Garry oak meadow, with fields of camas lilies, shooting stars, and if you look carefully at the base of the oaks, chocolate lilies. Walk around, not in, the restoration areas. Alternatively, King's Pond is nearby. Take Queensbury Avenue east off Blenkinsop Road. Wood Ducks are a favourite here. Meet for lunch at the Phoenix Bar and Grill at 3944 Quadra.

April 23rd: Transportation. Cars, buses, bicycles, boats, planes and people abound around downtown and in the inner harbour. How many different modes can you get in one shot? Maybe you want to make a social comment by taking a documentary approach, or maybe use your "pattern" awareness from the previous shoot to create a pattern of mechanical precision. Meet at the Bay Centre Food Court.

Some events require registration and a fee or donation may be requested. Please check the Club calendar for details related to each field trip. Some destinations require a minimum number for special arrangements. The group leaders count on the registration record to reserve a lunch table, so please register.

April 2019

Weekend Shoots

by Vanessa MacDonald

Spring is finally here and we are looking forward to getting out and enjoying the best of what this season has to offer. We are excited to announce the following field trips through the month of April.

Saturday April 6th: Mystic Beach Sunset Hike. Join us for an afternoon hike down to beautiful Mystic Beach, located along the Juan De Fuca Trail! This is one of the most spectacular attractions on the Southwest side of Vancouver Island with a stunning sand beach with large smooth boulders strewn about, sandstone cliffs, a waterfall and sea caves. It is a perfect spot for wide-angle seascape shots, as well as other nature and wildlife photography. We will visit during the low tide, so we'll have the best opportunity to explore around the beach and hopefully catch a sunset, too! The hike down to the beach will be via a short-cut access trail to make this field trip a bit more accessible to people from a range of different fitness levels. Total hike distance is 1.1 km each way. It will be dark by the time we hike back out (safety in numbers), so bring your headlamp and spare batteries! Your group leader is Mary-Lee Sampson.

April Wildflowers (dates t.b.a). Wildflower season is upon us and we will be scheduling field trips to several wildflower hot spots around Southern Vancouver Island throughout the month. They will be arranged on short notice to best coincide with wildflower bloom times so the dates will be announced via email. Target locations may include: Cowichan Garry Oak Preserve, Mt. Tzouhalem, Mill Hill and Thetis Lake. Your group leader is Gita McCormick.

April 29th - May 2nd: Hornby Island Spring Wildflowers. Don Peterson and Richard James will be leading this annual multi-day trip to picturesque Hornby Island. Spend an unforgettable four days exploring this photographer's paradise during the peak of spring flowering, with a boat trip to Flora Islet. There will be opportunities to capture some gorgeous coastal landscapes as well as wildlife (sea birds, sea lions, whales, eagles, etc.).

Club member and co-leader Don Peterson is a Hornby Island resident, so you will benefit from his local knowledge and guidance for the weekend. Trip cost is \$475 per person and includes lodging and three sumptuous meals per day.

If you have any further questions, please contact Vanessa and Gita at fieldtrips@victoriacameraclub.ca.

No Longer a New Member

by Jim Fowler

Last year I wrote my “new member” confessions. You may have read them. I confessed that I had discovered that I wasn’t a very good photographer. This is a progress report, given in the spirit of encouragement to all members, but especially to those who compete.

In one of my first competitions I received the advice that I should “take more pictures”. I did not appreciate the advice at the time but I did take more pictures. Ten thousand more, and then, another ten thousand. Once in a while, I took a good one.

Another year of membership in the Victoria Camera Club went by. I read books, took workshops, and looked at photos and paintings by artists I admired. I read the comments posted after every competition night.

I bought a really sturdy tripod and learned to use Lightroom and Photoshop at a much deeper level. I deleted thousands of pictures. I improved a few good ones. I got peed on by a dog while setting up a panorama. It’s a long story.

I still don’t always like what the judges say about my photos but I am more philosophical about it. Judging is subjective. Sometimes we “fall in love” with a photograph for inexplicable reasons when, frankly, it isn’t very good.

Now I know my camera well enough to shoot in the dark. I use a tripod all the time. I take fewer pictures. I often decide that what I see through the lens just isn’t interesting. I’ve photographed that before. It didn’t work then, and it won’t work now. It would be better to move on and try something else.

I’ve boiled all this down to my seven rules and, you guessed, I’m going to share them with you.

1. Know your camera. Know what it can do and how to do it. In the dark.
2. Sharpness is quintessential to photography. If any part of your picture is less than tack sharp, there had better be a reason for it. Blur without reason is a technical flaw. Decide what you want in focus and whether or not you want some part of the picture out of focus.
3. There has to be a reason for other people to want to look at your picture. Something in it needs to be spectacular, if not the subject, then the colour or texture,

or the lighting or point of view, or maybe the story. I read on Mary Meeker’s Internet Trends (at recode.net) that in 2014, 1.8 billion photos were uploaded to the Internet per day.

4. Look at the whole photo. Something caught your attention in the first place but what else is there? Remember, we see what interests us; the camera sees everything in front of it. Look all around the frame, into all four corners. Decide if there are things you don’t want.
5. Ignore the Rules of Composition at your peril. Study painting. Painters were working at composition long before cameras were invented.
6. Shooting in good light improves the chances of getting good visual quality in a photograph. Shooting during the hours after sunrise and before sunset will improve the look of most landscapes. Shooting at the subject’s eye height improves most wildlife and people photos.
7. Assuming you shoot RAW (and why wouldn’t you?), the image recorded is never more than an approximation that requires fine-tuning to become the best it can be. We are lucky to have access to amazing software. Your advanced camera is designed to give you the data you need to make a great photo. Set yourself a routine by which you adjust every photo.
8. Most photos cannot be made into prize photographs, they contain nothing of interest, or are fatally flawed. Do yourself a favour and delete them. Be ruthless.

This is a photo I took recently. As it came out of the camera it was flat, lacking contrast and detail, with an ugly lamp-post in it. Now, after a few touch-ups and deletions it looks like this.



“Doorway”

Now if you’ll excuse me, I have some more deleting and editing to do.

New Lightroom Features

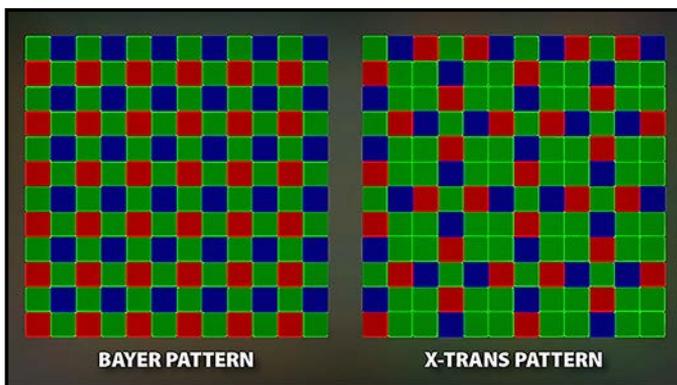
by Neil Boyle

In the days of film, chemical processes took you from an undeveloped negative to a printed image. It's a totally different game in digital, with entirely different problems.

One of the problems is that sensors record light entirely in black, white and shades of grey. To convert this grey-scale data to colour, each pixel in the image is made up from a pattern of red, green and blue filters. Most camera companies use the Bayer pattern but Fujifilm uses a pattern called X-Trans.

The conversion results in data that is a little soft and blurs fine detail with abrupt colour changes between pixels and artifacts in the final image, moiré patterns, inaccurate colour patches, blurring on the edges of the image, and, one specific to the X-Trans filter, worms.

Each company has put a lot of effort into minimizing these issues by using demosaicing algorithms to tweak each pixel based on the colour and intensity of the surrounding pixels. The computing work is relatively simple for areas of the photo that have smooth gradients or constant colours and hideously complex in areas that have textures, fine details, repeating patterns and sharp edges.



“Filter Patterns”

Adobe, in Camera Raw for both Lightroom and Photoshop, has produced their own algorithms for all sensors. In their updates they have improved them but made little fuss about their progress. Their results have been a steady improvement with all the issues appearing less often and when they do, they are less severe.

Enhance Details: With their latest upgrade to Lightroom (version 8.2, Feb 2019), Adobe have dedicated a specific command (under menu item Photos) to demosaicing an image, one in which the full processing power of the computer is used for a much longer time to produce a significant improvement. According to Adobe's press re-

leases, they've named this process Enhance Details. It is the result of a major research effort involving artificial intelligence, machine learning, and new features in the Mac OS and Windows 10 operating systems to optimize demosaicing for maximum image quality. They are claiming a 30% improvement in areas of fine detail.

It is important to note that it is designed for specific problems in specific areas. It is not intended to be used on all photos and most images won't benefit from it. It is intended for images with artifacts, and images that would benefit from an increase in details in busy, complex areas. It works only on raw files, so it must be used before converting to a TIF or a JPG file.

It works only on Mac OS 10.13 (High Sierra) and Win10 (version 1809, Oct 2018) or later versions. The enhanced image is stored as a DNG file which is larger than the raw file. My raw file (39 mb) produced an enhanced DNG file of 144 mb. It takes a lot of computer power, which means it takes noticeable time, but this can be ameliorated with a faster GPU (graphics processing unit). Using an iMac (built in 2013 and tricked out with lots of memory and a fancy NVIDIA external GPU) on images from a Nikon D800e (39 mpx), the Enhance Details process took between 30 and 60 seconds.

How good is an improvement of 30%? Psychological research has shown that most people don't notice an improvement in computer function until it exceeds 15%, either for speed or quality. Most people found an improvement of 100% to be “significantly better”.

So, 30% is good, but not great. Is it worth the time and the storage space? That depends on the purpose of the photo and how picky the user is. If you are submitting a photo of a bird, with lots of fine feather detail, to a competition requiring large images, a 30% improvement in sharpness might be the deciding factor. But in the real world, with the original complex image beside the enhanced version on the monitor, I had to pixel peep to see the difference. In summary, a useful tool for a restricted range of images.

Customize Develop Panel Order: For heavy Lightroom users, Adobe now offers a tweak in the Develop module. You can customize the order of the panels on the right side of the screen to suit your workflow. The mechanism is simple: in the Develop module, right click (Windows) or Cmd click (Mac) on a panel header, select the “Customize Develop Panel” option, drag the panels into your desired order, save, and re-launch Lightroom.

Simple, straightforward, it works. It's one of those things that you set once and forget forever. Until you need to do it again.

Beginners' Corner: While you Wait

by Josée Ménard

While you wait, what do you do? Think, observe, people watch or nature watch depending where you are. The images in this month's article are fun and selected from time spent practicing my photography while I was waiting.

Magazines, the web, clubs and friends share skills and tips to improve our photography. Photography is always on my mind as I see fun, good, great composition pretty well everywhere. The following photos were taken with my iPhone when I did not have my pocket camera with me, or my high-end camera when out on fully planned outings. From jpgs to raw it does not matter much during this exercise as the plan is to practice, create, compose with an open mind. Just having fun, while you wait.



"Guy's n Dolls"

Guys and Dolls found me in transit with seconds to react to what was before me. Looking around, all of a sudden, here are these incredible shoes near this man's shoes. Typically for me, comfy and chilled, my iPhone is not fully ready, I barely captured this image. Can it be submitted for competition? I'm not sure due to its unusual horizontal crop. In a collection of photos maybe it remains yours to enjoy. If you practice collage it's a great image to include.



"Low Tide (Original)"

One day, low tide found me waiting for a ferry on the West Coast. Leaving my camera bag behind with my trusted husband who preferred to chill while he waited in line to board on foot, I left with my camera secured on its strap.

This meant I was not prepared to capture the mature bald eagle that swooped down at low tide to feast on unsuspected sea creatures.

Nor was I prepared to capture this low tide reflection. My lens was too wide, a longer zoom would have been preferable. No matter, cropping it down should be possible, just pay attention to framing it well with enough room in the image to crop.



"Low Tide (Cropped)"

Oh no, my polarizing filter was left up above with my other gear packed away in my camera bag. We shall see when we return home how much of the blown-out white shells I can salvage with Lightroom or Photoshop.

Take a look at the cropped version of Low Tide. Thanks to the wide-angle lens, there was enough room to frame the reflection with the seaweed, puddles, shells and sand that pleases and guides the eye just enough to let it enjoy the reflection. It allowed me to have just enough of the pattern to appease the mind and let it identify the reflected shoreline structure.

Bright shell-wise the image is saved. Using the touch-up brushes allowed me to tone down the brightest blown-out whites. The eyes are now not too bothered by them. Thank you post-production software. This is now an image to enjoy.

Now it is your turn to have fun while you wait. However, please learn from me and take your polarizing filter with you.



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