

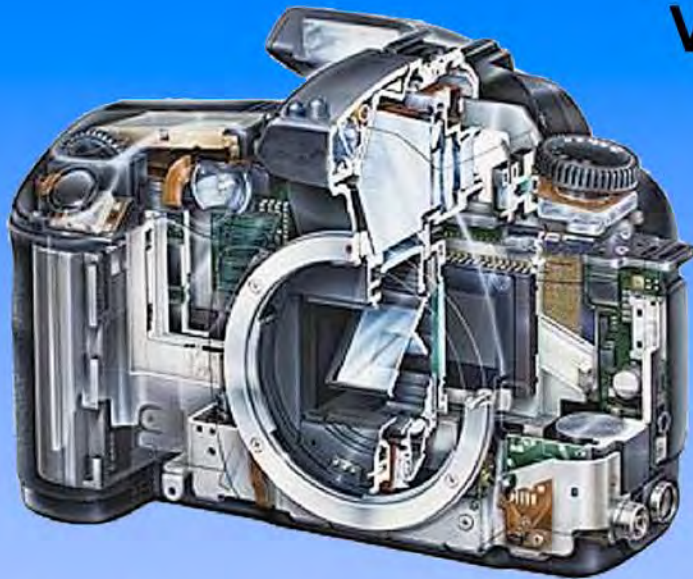
Close-Up

Inside:

Exhibiting and Selling Photography
Buying a Camera
Anti-Alias or not to Anti-Alias?
Portfolio - Linda Anne Baker
Poems from the Streets:
Seen Stories and Bold Tales
Beginners' Corner
Custom Filters: Part Two
.....and more



"Lady in Blue" by Linda Anne Baker. This portrait of a young Cuban woman won **first prize in the People category in an "Islands" magazine photo contest.**



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Victoria Camera Club



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Mailing address: 2642 Quadra Street, PO Box 46035, Victoria, BC, V8T 5G7.

Deadline for submissions for the February issue is January 5^h 2014.

Editor, Richard James, e-mail to newsletter@victoriacameraclub.org
for submissions or to advertise in *Close-Up*.

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

Events

We hold a number of events including:

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

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

Membership

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

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

For additional information: please contact the appropriate Committee Chair:

Membership: membership@victoriacameraclub.org

Workshops: workshops@victoriacameraclub.org

Field Trips: fieldtrips@victoriacameraclub.org

Meetings: meetings@victoriacameraclub.org

Website: webmaster@victoriacameraclub.org

Close-Up: newsletter@victoriacameraclub.org

or call Lois Burton, President at 250-652-6940.

What's Inside

Club Calendar.....	4
President's Message	4
Exhibiting and Selling Photography	5
Buying a Camera.....	8
Anti-Alias or not to Anti-Alias?	9
Portfolio - Linda Anne Baker.....	10
Tech Tips - Photoshop's Smart Objects	15
Poems from the Streets:	
Seen Stories and Bold Tales	16
How I Did It.....	18
Shoots Around Victoria	19
Beginners' Corner.....	20
Custom Filters: Part Two	21

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



Calendar

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

Note: Dates changed for January 2014 only!

Thursday, Jan 9th; Competition Night

The November competition results will be presented. One of the judges will review selected images. January's submissions are due; the theme competition subject is "Light Painting."

Thursday, Jan 16th; Presentation Night

Our guest speaker is Paul Saturley who will be presenting a program on the Creative Process. His work includes landscapes, still life, studio portraiture, illustration and composite imaging.

Thursday, Jan 23rd; Members' Night

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

Featured Workshops

Advanced Lightroom - 4 sessions.

Featured Field Trips

Christ Church Cathedral, see page 19 for details.

Snow Geese and Shorebirds - one or more trips to Delta/Richmond to shoot some of our winter visitors.

Meeting, field trip and workshop visitor policy:

Visitors are welcome to attend any three events in a two month period subject to the availability of space and a \$20 per session fee for workshops.

Cover Image: "Lady in Blue" by Linda Anne Baker. This image of a young Cuban woman was taken in the town of Trinidad, Cuba, a world-heritage site. She started to pose in front of a white wall, but to add more colour Linda had her move to a nearby blue wall. Linda reconnected with her two years later on returning to Trinidad, bringing her copies of the photograph and some small gifts.

Portfolio: For more of Linda Anne Baker's work, see the portfolio beginning on page 10, which includes some of her bird photography and two pages of her abstract and experimental work.

President's Message

Time is the theme of my message this month. When I think about the qualities of time I think of it as resilient and unpredictable. Sometimes time passes way too slowly, and sometimes too swiftly. Time passes like a stream flowing past us. Future events become the present, the present fades into the past and one year slips into another. Most of us don't give conscious thought to this until January rolls around marking the start of a New Year and once again we find ourselves saying "I can't believe that another year has passed!"

We personify time as an old bearded man carrying a scythe and hourglass who passes the duties of time at the stroke of midnight on December 31st to the New Year Baby. The hourglass symbolizes the endless passing of time. It is continual; old lives are taken, new ones begin; a continual cycle lasting throughout eternity.

When we are young we think our time on earth is endless. It is only as we grow older that we realize that it is limited. It seems like just yesterday that I was a young woman starting her life. But it was actually a long time ago. I only need to look back at old photographs to be reminded of this and witness time's inevitable alteration of my appearance.

You can't stop time, but as photographers we can capture a moment in time. The moment may be gone forever and impossible to reproduce, but a photograph can preserve the memory of that experience forever. In this way, photography is extremely powerful. It captures the fleeting moments that occupy our lives and remembers the details of that experience long after we have forgotten them. Photographs are the legacy to the lives that we have led that we can pass on to future generations. Time really does fly and each New Year we are reminded to stop and take a look back on what we have achieved and what we would like to achieve.

This year I am going to seek out the people who are important in my life and capture their faces in portraits or preserve a moment in their life before they are gone. This way these moments and the people they are attached to will live on forever.

In 2014 as we look forward to our 70th anniversary, our thoughts turn gratefully to our past and present members who have contributed to the success of Victoria Camera Club over the past 70 years. Our 70th anniversary is more than a celebration of the past, it is a starting point for the future.

Lois Burton, President

by Elaine Freedman

This is my personal journey from a novice photographer to exhibiting and selling my work. I learned the fundamentals of photography in the Visual Communications Programme at the Medicine Hat College 15 years ago. At the time I was doing mostly fibre arts and painting. After the introductory course in photography I liked it so much that I decided to focus on it exclusively. I began with film photography, mostly black and white, and was doing my own darkroom work. I was reluctant at first to embrace digital technology. I have gone through many digital cameras and am now using a Nikon D800. The darkroom is in the past for me and even my black and white photographs are shot in colour and post processed in Photoshop and Google/Nik Silver Efx software.



It is not easy to sell art, and photography is even more difficult to sell. Digital cameras have taken a lot of the mystery out of image making and everyone is now a photographer. People often look at a photograph and are convinced they could take it themselves. I have only recently begun to sell my images although they have been exhibited for many years. As for making images that sell I believe it is important to make images that are your own creative vision as your first priority and if others like them and want to purchase them, then that's a bonus. As I create many different styles of image from nature subjects, portraiture, photojournalism and photo-based art, my work has been purchased by people with many different tastes in photography. I think that people now recognize me as an art photographer whose work is now worth buying. I think that having my work exhibited in galleries, especially solo exhibitions, has been a big factor.

When I started to study photography seriously I did not envision selling my work. Entering competitions,

especially with the Victoria Camera Club, helped me develop as a photographer and gave me critical input on ways of improving my work. Workshops have also been valuable and the week long workshop I took with Freeman Patterson and Andre Gallant stretched me technically and creatively. My friends in the Medicine Hat Photography Club and the Victoria Camera Club have helped and inspired me.

In my mind, recognition of my work is the key to selling it. It took me 10 years to get my first solo exhibition. I cultivated a relationship with the curator of the gallery through showing my photography at every possible group show, by putting on my own solo shows, keeping a record of my competition wins, who has collected my photographs and by promoting the Medicine Hat Photography Club's first exhibition at the Esplanade Museum and Art Gallery. I also had her visit my home studio and gave her exhibition proposals. The "Birds in Paris" images were sent to her as a complete series which she decided to exhibit. As each individual curator decides what to exhibit, it is important to look at the mission statement for the gallery and to know what they want. The gallery exhibits many travelling exhibitions but also endeavours to showcase local artists. My "Birds in Paris" series was accepted not only because the curator liked the work but because it complemented an installation that was also being exhibited.



In 2012 I had my first public gallery show at the Esplanade Gallery. The solo show consisted of 23 montages, a published book of all 32 images of the series and an interview video done by my son Bryan Skinner, a Victoria-based filmmaker. I received an artist's fee for my exhibition as well as a speaker's fee and two images went into the permanent collection for the Esplanade, one purchased and one donated. I sold several images privately as the Esplanade does not sell the work on display.

The curator of Inspire Gallery became familiar with my work from a solo show I had as well as other group shows. She asked if she could represent me in her gallery and I will be doing a collaborative exhibition on elephants with her this fall.

In 2013 I had another public gallery show “*African Mammals and Montages*” at the Yuill Gallery at the Medalta Potteries Museum. I did not receive an artist’s fee but sold many images from this show. This gallery takes a 40% commission as does Inspire Gallery which also shows and sells my work. The curators at these galleries actively promote and sell my photography.



I have metal exhibition frames (22”x28”) in black and silver. A gallery show usually consists of 25 to 30 images. With my own frames I can deliver a series ready for hanging. Frames can also be rented at most galleries. I sell my photography framed in exhibition frames with white mats or will sell the prints individually for the purchaser to frame. Currently I am selling my prints for \$100 and a framed image for \$285.

I have lived in Medicine Hat for over 30 years and been an established member of the art community there. I know most of the artists in other mediums and attend all the openings of their work. Trading photographs for other art works is a great way to get your images hanging on walls. I also trade photography for tax receipts, gifts in kind and other goods and services such as massage therapy. I donate my photography to charity fund-raisers for silent and live auctions. This has been great exposure for my work and makes people comfortable with owning the work without buying it from a gallery. I have had repeat sales after people have purchased at auctions and from people who see my work displayed at friends’ homes. Also I have donated images to non-profit institutions such as the Medicine Hat Women’s Shelter,

the YMCA, Medicine Hat Community Foundation and the Medicine Hat Exhibition and Stampede office. I also send images to the Medicine Hat News for local wildlife and photojournalism opportunities.

I try to show my work in the most professional manner possible. I have a website, elainefreedmanphotography.com. The website highlights my exhibition work and digital art. I have posted links to the two photography clubs I belong to, Victoria Camera Club and Medicine Hat Photography Club as well as a link to Blurb.com where two of my books that are available to the public can be purchased. I have a link to my website from the Victoria Camera Club website. No sales of my work have come directly from the website but in speaking to people about my work I found it very convenient to direct them there. My business card simply has my logo, cell phone number, e-mail address and website URL. I have closed my Flickr site but often show my work on my Facebook page along with family and vacation photos.

Supporting the arts and culture in Medicine Hat has been important to me. I have donated to fund-raisers and held offices in many arts organizations. I chaired the fund raising committee for the Esplanade before it was built. In 2006 I received the Medicine Hat Civic Recognition Award for Culture. I think that this support for the arts has also helped with the recognition of my photography and the resulting sales of the work.

The saying “*The harder I work the luckier I get*” seems to hold true for me. I entered the Victoria Camera Club’s members’ competitions for two years before I even placed with an image. Twenty years of showing my work and ten years before having a public gallery show has paid off in my photography finally beginning to sell. Photography continues to be my passion and I hope to continue learning and sharing my images with others.





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by Lloyd Houghton

Deciding which camera to buy can be a bewildering exercise. I know; I've just done it.

The camera being replaced was my trusty Canon G9. It has served me well for five years, four of that taking the impressionist images that some of you will be familiar with. Being small in size allowed me to take it everywhere; it was always in my pocket or in whatever bag was over my shoulder. I'd been thinking about a replacement for a while. The smallest aperture of f8 and the fixed lens had been niggling at me for some time. Discovering a scratch on the lens that was causing flare when shooting towards the light was the tipping point.

There wasn't a limitless budget; so putting a cap of around \$1,000 on the cost could limit the amount of looking. But I would still be left with a lot of choices. Though I was only now seriously looking, I had thought about this before. Advertisements for the Sony α NEX 7 had got me thinking. One of our club members had done the research for something smaller than a DSLR and was very pleased with the α NEX 7. But maybe there were others out there that I should consider.

The sensible thing was to really think about what I needed. If it was going to be business as usual then I didn't need anything larger than the G9's 1/1.7" sensor and image size of 12 mp. But I wanted to add conventional landscape and street photography style to my repertoire, which really pointed towards a larger sensor. What else was I after? Interchangeable lenses were a must; I'd often wished the G9 could shoot wider and farther. The fixed lens meant that I was limited to its 35 mm equivalent of 35-210 mm zoom.

Now what? The next thing I looked at was camera size. A lot of my impressionist successes were captured because the G9 was always with me when opportunities arose. I rarely left home for a walk without the camera. Anything much bigger, and the camera would not have been with me when the opportunities presented themselves. I very rarely used the viewfinder to compose my shots. Lifting the camera to my eye turned it into a weapon that a lot of potential subjects shied away from. Coupling use of the LCD monitor with some well tuned sneaky techniques got me a lot of shots that a camera at eye level would never have got close to. All this was telling me that I wasn't really looking for a DSLR.

In the middle of this, I got to asking why I had a camera at all. Something I'd read about story telling got me

onto this unexpected track. If every picture told a story, what were my stories? I had often read about photographers having a story to tell and then going after the images to tell that story. I didn't think I took pictures to tell stories, but then I realized that what I said when I was showing the images to my friends was my story. Further than that, I got to thinking about how I showed them the images; on a little screen, a big screen, a print, or a book, and what implications that would have on sensor and captured image size. The prints were clearly going to be the factor that determined this. The largest print size I needed was about 19"x13".

Recapping where this had got me to so far: I needed something with a bigger sensor and image size than the G9, interchangeable lenses, LCD screen with live view, and something not so large that I'd be reluctant to take it everywhere. This seemed to be pointing me towards some form of mirrorless camera.

My first serious camera was a Canon AE1 and the last one, still a film camera, a Canon A1. I'd always had a good run with Canon, so I checked out the Canon EOS-M. It didn't seem to get good reviews. Now what? One of the things we decided when we moved to Canada was not to do the same things we did in New Zealand. So, in the absence of anything really demanding from Canon, I crossed to the light side and looked at what Nikon had to offer, the Nikon 1 V1. A friend bought one of these to complement his DSLR. The main thing that turned me away from this was the 1" sensor size.

Where to now? I trawled though all of the other makers' mirrorless offerings. While I looked closely at the Olympus OM-D E-M5, I kept getting drawn back to the Sony α NEX 7. This seemed to meet all my requirements. Then I started to compare it with its sister, the α NEX 6. The α NEX 6 has faster autofocus, was quicker to startup, $\frac{2}{3}$ of the body only price, some of the frustrations of the menu system had been dealt with by introduction of a programmable function button, and it had a dedicated mode dial.

So the decision was made. I bought the standard α NEX 6 with the two lens kit; the 16-50 mm (26-80 mm 35 mm equivalent) f3.5-5.6 and the 55-210 mm (90-330 mm 35 mm equivalent) f4.5-6.3. I've had the camera for three weeks now. I'm happy with the controls, and the camera is very comfortable to hold and handle. While it still doesn't feel as easy to use as the G9 yet, it will in time. I have no regrets at all.

by John Roberts

I am sure everyone has heard the term lately; this camera has no Anti-Aliasing filter, but that one does, this one gives you a moiré pattern (repetitive fine wavy or curved lines), that one does not, this one gives you slightly sharper images, but this one you touch up in post-processing. For those people that do not follow this information daily, it is almost too much to take in and figure out. So I will break it down for you, so you can make the choice as to which is best for you.

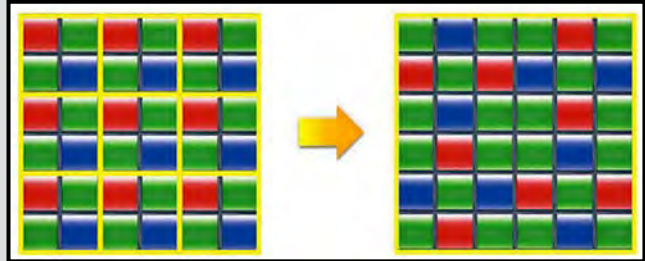
Most digital cameras today use a repetitive colour scheme for their sensors, (Green-Red-Green-Blue), which is called the Bayer Pattern. It is because of this repetitive pattern that our cameras give us moiré under certain circumstances when our image contains an element with a fine repetitive pattern such as a chain link fence, a dress shirt with lines, etc. While not something we would experience in every photograph we take, it does come up enough that it is an issue, and manufacturers have had to put a Low Pass (Anti-Aliasing) Filter in front of the sensor to combat it.

The Low Pass Filter (LPF) is known to slightly soften the image, which is why cameras have a default setting of a bit of in-camera sharpening, or if you are a RAW shooter, why you have to apply some sharpening in your editing software. So for many people, when they say that their images just are not as good as their film images, or that their images are just slightly soft, it could simply be that they do not have the in-camera sharpening set high enough, or that they are not doing it on the computer afterwards. That is a very important step that must be taken to give you the results you desire, and it is sometimes overlooked.

Now, what if you have a camera without the LPF, and you get moiré in a few of your photos? Do not panic; this is quite fixable. Most modern editing software has a tool with which you can reduce the moiré. It is a slider that you move back and forth, and you will see right on your screen what the effect is. Some cameras without the LPF, also have settings built in to the camera to give you the effect of an optical LPF, without actually having one. Most with this feature have multiple levels of intensity that you can set, mild, medium or hard; hard being for that time you are photographing a sharply dressed gentleman in his best pinstriped suit with a tartan

vest, while standing in front of a brick wall! OK, maybe an extreme example, but you get what I am driving at.

There are only two companies in the DSLR/rangefinder camera arena that have dared to venture into the waters where there be dragons and do not use the Bayer Pattern colour array, FujiFilm and Sigma. FujiFilm has developed a new colour array, one that is not as repetitive and it appears to be more random. Sigma have developed the Foveon X3 array that stacks the 3 RGB cells on top of each other instead of side-by-side.



With the Bayer Pattern on the left, and the FujiFilm X-Trans on the right, you can see how the change is subtle but at the same time, totally changes how the camera sensor sees the image. The total number of colour pixels in a given area remains unchanged; just the order in which they appear on the sensor is different. This allows FujiFilm to remove the LPF and also allows them to not get moiré in their images at the same time.

While the FujiFilm and Sigma cameras are more of a niche market item, not everyone wants to use a rangefinder style camera. I am certain that other manufacturers are working out their solution to this issue. FujiFilm and Sigma just patented their solutions first.

With their D800 camera, Nikon has taken a slightly different approach. They have chosen to offer this camera in two versions; with (D800) and without (D800E) the filter. Their reasoning is that for most subjects the problem doesn't arise so you get a higher image resolution without the filter. They then provide the ability in software to deal with the issue if it occurs.

So to sum up, if you are the kind of person that wants full control over your final image, then you will be interested in the cameras without the LPF. If you are the kind of person that would rather get it all done in the camera, then a camera with the LPF built in is the one for you. There you have it, the quick and dirty version of why you may or may not want an Optical Low Pass Filter on your next camera.

Having spent a good part of my life as a “perpetual student,” I was, let’s say, well on in years before I could afford my first “real” camera, although the fun I had as a child taking family photos with my Brownie Hawkeye suggests the interest was always there. The first trip taken with my SLR was to Venezuela, where I was invited to a birthday party in the jungle, taught salsa dancing and how to sing “Happy Birthday” in Spanish. The music issued from a boombox hooked up to a battery!

When I started pursuing photography seriously, my strong interest in birds made this my initial focus. (I would not recommend this to others since bird photography does not always lend itself to good habits such as careful composition.) Besides, birds “eat” a tremendous amount of “film” as well as copious quantities of birdseed and it’s too easy to unwittingly disturb them, even if you think you know a great deal about bird behaviour. Other natural subjects soon engaged my attention and I gradually tried to develop expertise in other areas such as landscape and travel photography. Trips to Cuba and Mexico provided great opportunities to work on portraits and architecture.

Photographing birds has led to some amusing adventures. Birds sometimes land on my head, perhaps mistaking my hair for a nest! While photographing a Clark’s Nutcracker in Manning Park, Yellow Pine Chipmunks and Golden-Mantled Ground Squirrels scurried all over me because they could smell the peanuts in my pocket. On another occasion, I took “a swim” at Presqu’île Marsh in Ontario: while crouching to photograph a Marsh Wren in the reeds, I backed up a little too far and landed bottom-end first in the water. (Of course, I had my hands held high to salvage my camera gear!)

Placing a large emphasis on composition in my work, I particularly enjoy creating abstract images. My objective is to achieve what Ansel Adams has called “intuitive rightness” in terms of compositional elements falling into place. To many, the act of lifting the camera and snapping the shutter is so easy, particularly with today’s digital cameras, that they vastly underestimate the artistry involved.

My passion for photography compels me to try everything, to keep moving forward in terms of my own artistic development. Long a frustrated painter, I’ve always had a particular interest in creating painterly and impressionistic images using in-camera techniques such as motion blur, double and multiple exposure and montage. Courses in darkroom techniques led to experimentation with infrared, cross-processing and using lithographic film.

Further creative expression included hand colouring images and making transfer prints. I particularly enjoyed the Polaroid SX-70 camera, whose film remained uniquely capable of being manipulated with a blunt object for about five minutes after exposure. This film is no longer available and attempting to mimic the process using filters such as “Liquify” in Photoshop does not produce the same effect.

For me the pleasure of photography extends beyond the mere capture of images. It stems from what I do afterwards, putting the images to music. To me, it’s like adding the choreography to figure skating, with the caveat that if you don’t skate well, so to speak, you won’t look good, no matter how beautiful the music. What has always drawn me to photography are the opportunities to do something creative and to capture the extraordinary beauty of the world around us. Hopefully my own intense caring about wilderness preservation is expressed through my images and influences others to feel the same way. I often aim to touch people on a deep emotional level, and using music as an accompaniment to my slide shows helps this process. When someone tells me my photography moved them to tears (hopefully for the right reasons), then I know I have succeeded!

Although mostly self-taught, tours and workshops with top photographers such as Freeman Patterson, John Shaw, Nancy Rotenberg, Richard Martin, Joe and Mary Ann McDonald and most recently Victoria’s own expert bird photographer Glenn Bartley, have helped provide inspiration.

My images have been published in magazines such as *Photo Life*, *Canadian Camera*, *Islands*, *Seasons*, *Lake Superior*, *WildBird*, and *Birds of the Wild*, as well as in the books, *Rendezvous with the Wild: The Boreal Forest*, and *Birds of the Kingston Region*. In addition to being on the cover of *Rendezvous with the Wild*, my image of a Great Grey Owl was used by the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society for an advertising campaign. I’ve also been a winner in enough national and international competitions to supply me with binoculars and spotting scopes for life. Twice an invited speaker at Canadian Camera Conference (CCC), I taught photography workshops while still living in Kingston, Ontario.

Since moving to Victoria eight years ago, I show and sell my work at a number of events and at the Coast Collective in the lovely, old historic Pendray House on Esquimalt Lagoon (www.coastcollective.ca). Since retirement I have also finally had the opportunity to pursue my artistic aspirations further by taking up watercolour and Chinese Brush painting.



"Green-breasted Mango"

This image was taken at the world famous Rancho Naturalista, a rainforest retreat in the Caribbean foothills of Costa Rica. Over 875 species of birds and over 9,000 species of flowering plants are found in this country. Using a Canon 60D and Canon 300mm f4 L IS lens, the bird was shot at 1/250 sec with a multi-flash set-up.



"Audubon's Warbler"

Photographed on my deck in Victoria, BC, I liked the over-the-shoulder portrait pose of the warbler. He was lured to the natural perch I had set up in close proximity to my feeders and was shot at 1/1000 sec without the use of flash.



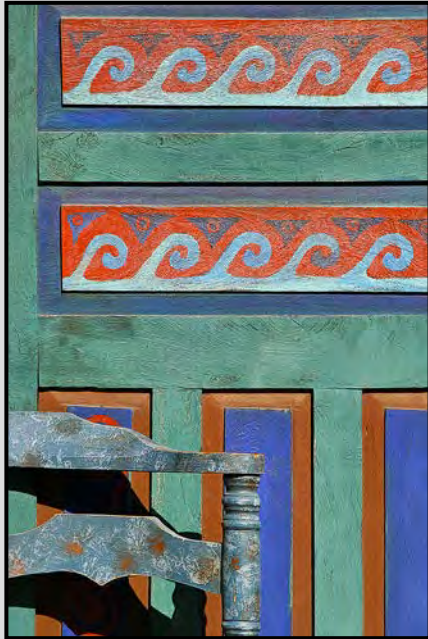
"Violet-crowned Woodnymph"

Also photographed at the Rancho Naturalista, this hummer was captured at 1/125 sec using only an on-camera flash. I used selective focus (f5.6) to simplify the naturally occurring vegetation on which he was perched. The Costa Rican images were taken on a bird photography tour with Glenn Bartley, whom I consider to be one of the world's top bird photographers. We also photographed birds, frogs and mammals in the mountains and in the true jungle of the Caribbean lowlands.



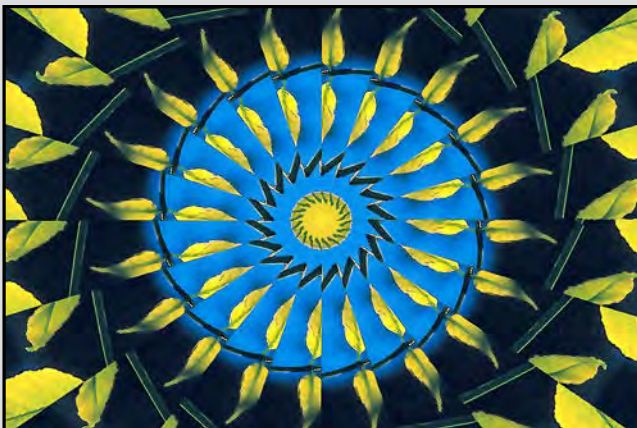
"Bushtit"

Again photographed on my deck in Victoria, not quite four meters away from me, the Bushtit was shot at 1/2000 sec using only natural light. In some situations such as this one, the use of the square format seems more appropriate.



"San Miguel Abstract"

In the village of San Miguel de Allende, the Mexican love for colour is apparent everywhere. Here we are looking at a well-loved chair obviously intentionally placed by the owner in front of an intricately coloured garage door. Photographic opportunities abound both in San Miguel and the nearby town of Guanajuato.



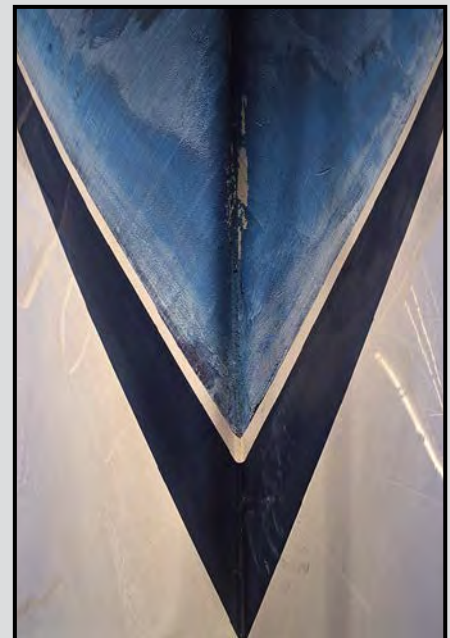
"Kaleidoscope"

On initially acquiring Photoshop, one of the first things I did was design an action (set of commands that can be automatically applied to any image) to produce this kaleidoscopic effect from photographs I had taken. No doubt it's now readily available as an app!



"The Dragon"

Experimenting with different novel techniques is something I've always enjoyed doing. To create this image, food colouring was dropped into an aquarium filled with water set atop a light-box. The water was then swirled until a desirable pattern emerged and the shot was taken with slide film.

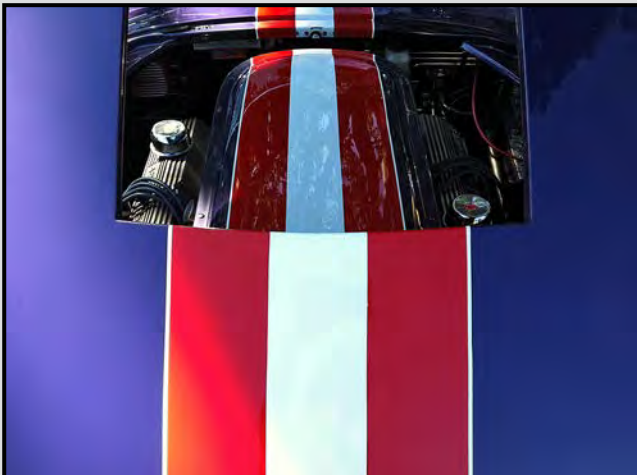


"Prowess"

Again taken in the days of slide film (my favourite was Velvia 50 for its rich colour), I crawled underneath the belly of a boat dry-docked for winter and used a wide-angle lens to get the shot. I love doing abstracts that produce a bold graphic effect.

*"Patience"*

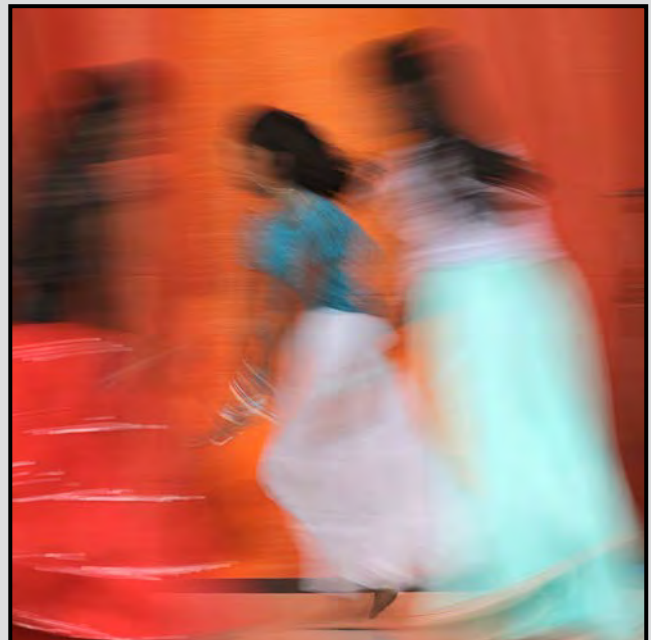
In the little town of Trinidad in Cuba, the town centre is paved with cobbles and closed to modern vehicles. The photo was taken with a Polaroid SX-70 camera and manipulated with a blunt object to create a more painterly image before the emulsion had hardened.

*"Racing Stripes"*

Taken at a car show in Oak Bay, BC, I love the ambiguity of the appearing and reappearing racing stripes in this image, which hopefully provokes the viewer to take a second look. Car shows can make great hunting grounds for abstract photographs.

*"Awaiting Guests"*

At a restaurant near Oaxaca in the central highlands of Mexico, again the Latin love for colour is displayed everywhere, making such places a dream for photographers. An "Orton" effect was applied afterwards to soften the image: this is done by combining two different versions of the same photograph, one slightly out of focus, either in-camera or using post-processing.

*"Up the Stairs"*

Taking photographs using the motion blur technique has been a passion of mine for many years. This image was taken at 1/15 sec using f16 in shutter priority mode with my Canon 60D and a Canon lens at 125 mm.

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Photoshop's Smart Objects

by Richard James

Adjustment layers have been available in Photoshop since Photoshop 4 in 1996. Updated in CS 4 (2009) to provide easier access and better functionality, they allow you to make changes to all or part of the image and then go back and adjust them later. However, not all of Photoshop's features use adjustment layers, and many plug-ins have no means of saving the settings so that you can go back and adjust them later. With the introduction of Photoshop CS 2 Adobe implemented "Smart Objects" which allow you to edit many more adjustments and plug-ins.

So, what are Smart Objects and how do they work? They are special layers that contain image data as well as information about the source's content with all its original parameters. It is these original parameters that allow you to perform non-destructive editing to the layer.

Things that you can do include:

- Transformation: you can scale, rotate, skew, distort, and change perspective or warp a layer and yet be able to go back and change it later
- Take vector data from software such as Adobe Illustrator and retain the ability to edit it in that format instead of converting it to an image (rasterised) in Photoshop
- Make many filters and plug-ins non-destructive
- Use layer masks on or within the Smart Object
- If the Smart Object is an external file, then you can edit it separately and all linked instances of it will be automatically updated

There are a few restrictions on Smart Objects which include using operations that alter pixel data such as burning, dodging, cloning or patching and painting and creating a Smart Object from a non-image layer.

You can make a file a Smart Object when you convert it from the RAW image, when you open it in Photoshop, or you can make an image layer within the file a Smart Object. You can also have multiple Smart Objects within a file. Having multiple Smart Objects literally means you can use the same technique on different elements within the file which is an extremely powerful tool.

To create a Smart Object within a file, simply right click on the layer and select "Create Smart Object" from the menu. It's that simple! Now that you've created the

Smart Object you can start doing things with it such as use a Photoshop filter or adjustment that is not in itself an adjustment layer, or use a plug-in.

When a certain software application came out I looked at it and thought "Why do I need this? It's just a bunch of presets with adjustments and once you've done something to it, it's cast in stone." Then one day the light turned on, and I thought "Ah, if I make this a Smart Object, then I can use it and come back later and change it."

Now for the practicalities, remember that a Smart Object has to include image data. So, to include several adjustment layers and apply another function to this group, you have to create a layer with image data. The process is quite simple:

- Select all the adjustment layers and at least one image layer
- Drag them all together into the "Create New Layer" icon at the bottom of the layers palette to make duplicates of each layer
- With the duplicates selected, right click and select "Convert to Smart Object." Then rename the layer

It is important to do it this way because if you simply select the layers, right click and then select "Convert to Smart Object" Photoshop will merge the layers without creating a duplicate so you have lost your original work.

Now, with this layer selected choose your filter or plug-in. Examples could include creating a blur layer or using an external plug-in such as Google/Nik Silver Efx Pro.

Select your filter or plug-in and it will open (possibly with a warning that you're working with a Smart Object layer). Make your adjustments and exit the filter plug-in.

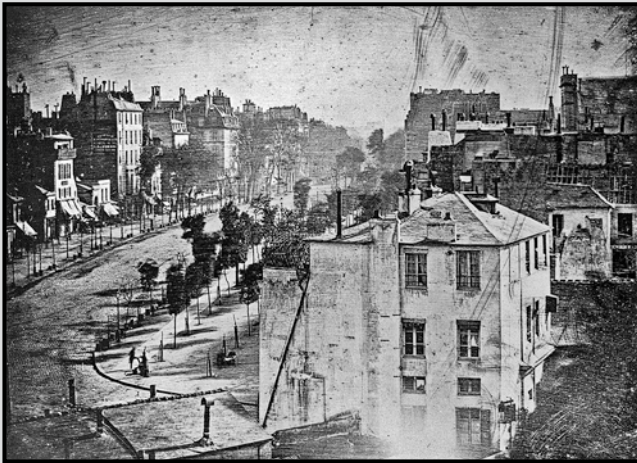
In the layers panel you will see this listed as a layer within the Smart Object. If you need to change it, then double-click on the Smart Object and you are returned to the function that created it with the parameters set as they were before. You can now change it and exit again.

Now here's a little trick. If you simply change it and exit then you've lost your previous version. If you create a copy of the Smart Object before you go back and edit it, then you can turn off your 1st attempt (not delete) go to the 2nd version and change that. Then you can flip between them to see which one you prefer. Remember to change layer names as some plug-ins and filters cannot have duplicate layer names; your 1st layer will be overwritten. Now that's really smart!

by Tom Gore

Mrs. Dempster, the wife of the Baptist parson, was felled by Percy's snowball and, as a result, went into early labour, delivering Paul. Thus Robertson Davies' novel *Fifth Business* began. Davies reported having seen a photograph of a small boy throwing a snowball as a couple walked through a winter street scene. The picture made him wonder what would happen to the people in the picture after that moment of frozen time. This sums up the fascination of street photography.

Great street photographs have perfect balance; they are of a decisive moment, an exact second when disparate moving elements achieve a moment of visual perfection while at the same time letting the viewer wonder what came before and after.



Louis Daguerre made the first street photograph in 1838 (*Boulevard du Temple, 1838*). Taken from a high point of view, it encompasses a streetscape devoid of traffic. The ten minute long exposure allowed horses, carriages and people to move through the field of view without leaving any trace. The only human record is of a man having his shoes polished by a bootblack. They are perfectly positioned at the street corner, framed by curb and trees. This Daguerreotype is the first known picture of a person and in many respects it has all the elements of great street photography; description, composition and narration.

By 1860 techniques had hugely improved with the wet plate process. Charles Marville made some 425 photographs of the narrow streets and crumbling buildings of Paris at the moment they were threatened with demolition for Haussmann's grand boulevards. In Marville's pictures life is frozen, people and horses are static but only momentarily, life was caught on photographic flypaper. There followed a period when

photographers radiated outward from Europe through the whole world, bringing back scenes of exotic wonder from places such as Egypt, India and Japan. Du Camp, Bourne, Beato and Thomson were only a few of those who brought back visual tales of lives only previously read about.

Thomas Annan was perhaps the first photographer to use photography for social change. In 1866 he was commissioned to photograph slum areas and the work, entitled *The Old Closes and Streets of Glasgow* began a tradition of the concerned street photographer. Twenty years later, on the other side of the Atlantic, Jacob Riis photographed the impoverished immigrant communities of New York (*Bandits' Roost, Mulberry Street, pre-1890*). Riis' *How the Other Half Lives* appeared in an 1889 edition of Scribner's Magazine with his photographs rendered as line drawings. Conditions improved as a result of both Annan's and Riis' documentation of slum life and Theodore Roosevelt called Riis "the best American I ever knew."



In 1935 the U.S. Farm Security Administration commissioned eleven photographers to document the impact of the depression on America. One of these was Walker Evans and in 1938 his *American Photographs* was published. His work is laconic; the photographs are emotionally distanced from the streets they describe and, unlike work by Annan and Riis, there is no direct judgment. Lincoln Kirstein wrote of Evans' "exhaustive detail and poetry of contrast and, for those who wish to see it, their moral implication." Like Eugene Atget a generation earlier, Evans recorded streetscapes that were to be lost as the modern world continued its ruthless advance. While some of his work concerned people, more is about architectural streetscape than the individuals who inhabit it.

By the 1930s Henri Cartier Bresson brought perfect timing and a keen eye for composition along with existential distance to his portrayal of life on the streets. In his 1952 book *The Decisive Moment* each picture is a piece of analytic perfection, sliced with microtome precision out of the confusion of everyday life. Soon after, William Klein was working the streets of New York, Moscow and Rome. His work was edgier than Cartier Bresson's, his use of wide angle brought him closer to his subjects and his pictures are more chaotic and at the same time more involved. His often low shutter speed resulted in blur that gives his work energy. As Marshal McLuhan might have put it, Cartier Bresson's work was cold while Klein's was hot.

McLuhan called the photograph a brothel without walls and visual reports lacking in syntax. He agreed with Joyce's claim that photography was the "*abnihilization of the etym.*" The photograph and its stepchild, film, turned contextualized reality into Joyce's "*allnight's newsery reel.*" Photographs are built of fragmented syntactical particles expropriated from reality without any obligatory context.



Robert Frank's 1958 book *The Americans*, (*Parade, Hoboken, New Jersey, 1955*) was a critique of Evan's work and of American reality. Frank returned over and over to themes of flag, automobiles, race and cafes. His depth of emotional comment was met by reviews that accused him of "*meaningless blur, grain, muddy exposures, drunken horizons and general sloppiness.*" Since then the book is considered by most to be the seminal photographic work of the fifties. Jack Kerouac wrote "*that crazy feeling when the sun is hot on the streets and the music comes out of the jukebox, that's what Robert Frank has captured with the agility, mystery, genius, sadness and strange secrecy of a shadow.*"

The Museum of Modern Art's 1966 show *Contemporary Photographers: Toward a Social Landscape* fea-

tured work by Bruce Davidson, Lee Friedlander, Garry Winogrand, Danny Lyon and Duane Michals. Friedlander and Winogrand (*American Legion Convention, 1964*) especially brought a new, edgier vision from the streets, a vision influenced by the lively but unsophisticated vision of the lowly snapshot. They returned to the emotional distance of Cartier Bresson but with a vision less constrained by geometry. In the exhibition's catalogue, Nathan Lyons said "what must be considered is the confusion caused by using photography as a pawn in the controversy: what constitutes the meaning of reality in pictures?" That question rose to dominate critical thinking about photography in the eighties, when deconstruction, drawn from semiotic theory and literary analysis, revealed layered meaning and cultural appropriation in every image.



More regionally focused photographers include Max Yavno in San Francisco, Fred Herzog in Vancouver and Birney Imes in Mississippi. Herzog and Imes along with William Eggleston and Stephen Shore brought colour to what had been a study in grey. Colour brought new emotional vibrancy to photography of the streets but was difficult to use well. MoMA curator John Szarkowski said: "*Most colour photography has been either formless or pretty. In the first case the meanings of colour have been ignored; in the second they have been considered at the expense of allusive meanings.*" The constant struggle for photographers is to have both form and substance: to make meaningful pictures that deconstruct and critique reality and have visual structure that is aesthetically successful.

Continuing this investigation dominates photography today with new poems from the streets. What critics call the postmodern crisis of uncertainty gives rise to new challenges and new opportunities when the camera itself has become ubiquitous. Every phone has one and every moment is recorded. Out of this vast plethora of images comes a new composite truth.

Balancing Water Droplet

by Dave McLean

The set-up for photographing water droplets is the most important part of the project, and it took a lot of trial and error.

I first built a small frame out of spare wood that would fit around a shallow container filled with water to support the eye dropper that I was going to use to release the water drops. I drilled a hole in the wood at the top of the frame, where I placed the eye dropper to ensure that the water droplet would land in exactly the same place each time in the container below.

I then dropped a piece of string from the eye dropper hole and focused the tripod-mounted camera on the string. Once I was satisfied with the focus, I turned the camera to manual focus and left it alone.

To get exposure right I experimented with a few droplets and settled on an ISO of 640, an aperture of f11 and a shutter speed of 1/200 of a second. For illumination I used a flash mounted about a foot to the left of the camera.

I wasn't happy with the reflections of the background that I was getting in the water, so I placed a piece of green plastic behind the shallow water container. This resulted in the greenish look to both the water and background. In order to add more interest, I also added red food colouring to the water I was using in the eye dropper.

I used a Canon 7D which takes 7 frames per second to increase the likelihood that I would get an image that I liked. I experimented with releasing just one drop, then two, or more in quick succession.

This image was the result of one droplet rebounding up and just meeting another droplet on the way down.



Morning Flight

by Gordon Griffiths

This photograph was taken in the fall of 2013 at Witty's Lagoon. Usually, at this time of year, the most desirable locations for photography at Witty's are located along the river, at the waterfall and around the banks of the lagoon. I wanted to shoot at the beach along the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

I was attracted to this scene initially by the sunbeams shining through breaks in the clouds. However, this scene alone was quite static. That morning, the geese were leaving the lagoon in groups for their feeding grounds. After a long wait, one group flew in the general direction I wanted, and I got the shot which I was anticipating.

I took a single image to capture both this scene and the flight of the geese. A significant amount of dodging and burning in Photoshop was required to compensate for the lighting conditions. In particular, the sunbeams, the beach in the foreground and the trees on the left side of the photo were lightened, and extreme highlights were burned in. The image was converted to monochrome in Google/Nik Silver Efex Pro software.

I had originally intended to enter this image in a nature competition, but because of the extensive editing involved and the light beacon that appears in the photo, I entered it as a monochrome print.

The metadata and technical information are: Canon 1D Mark IV camera, Canon L Series 24-70 lens at 28 mm, ISO 400, f11, 1/350 second, with a polarizing filter. The camera was mounted on a Gitzo tripod with an Arca-Swiss ball head.

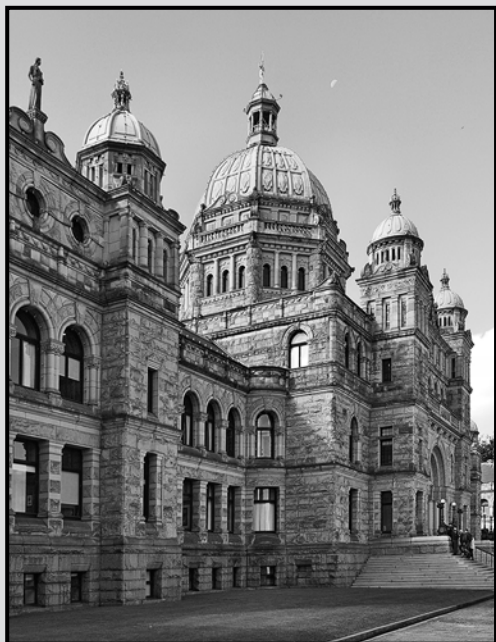


Tuesday Shoots

by Garry Schaefer

January 7th: Looking Back Through History. Downtown Victoria provides a rich history, going back to colonial times in the late 1800s, through to the early part of the twentieth century. What most readily meets the eye is the architecture of those times, preserved in the facades of lower Johnson St., the structures of Canada's oldest Chinatown, and in major buildings such as the Empress Hotel and the Legislature. Cathedrals, churches and other places of worship also dot the urban landscape. Reflections of still earlier times are present in the totem poles and other aboriginal art. Our challenge is to come up with new ways of seeing these and other treasures, particularly those which evoke sentimental yearning for the past which they represent.

January 21st: Repetition. Our challenge of the day is to photograph actions, events or things which depict recurrence over time or space. This provides a broad scope for creative results, particularly when considering the range of possible scales that could be dealt with. Check out the architectural details on the face of a large building, or the ceaseless flow of automobiles coursing down a main arterial street. Move to the medium scale to a row of parking meters, making use of a telephoto lens for limited depth of field. Or go down to a close-up or even a macro view to bring forth the fine-scale details which abound, often unnoticed, below the limits of our normal walk-about foci of attention.



Weekend Shoots

by Donna Robertson and Dave McLean

January 18th: Christ Church Cathedral. Meet at 10:00 am. We will be able to get into the upstairs chapel with its beautiful stained glass windows as well as the sanctuary. In the past people have found lovely architectural images and images of single items, candles, windows, organ pipes, etc. Fortunately we are permitted to use tripods, which are almost essential in this low-light area. Please don't come early, as the Cathedral has an early morning service.

The Cathedral presents a challenge to photograph, due to its wide range in light levels. If you want to capture the beautiful stained glass and various parts of the interior, then you will most likely have to do bracketed (HDR) images. The "simple" one exposure over, and one exposure under bracketing will likely not suffice, due to the high range of light within the Cathedral. If you wish to take a minimum of HDR images, then consider shooting on the north side of the Cathedral, as the light coming through the stained glass is not as bright as the south side. For both north and south side exposures, you would likely want to take a spot meter reading of the stained glass that you wish to include in your frame and a reading of the darkest area in your frame, then take a sequence of pictures covering all the exposure levels between. This could easily result in nine exposures, especially if you're using a south-facing stained glass window and there are a lot of shadows.

The stained glass at the Cathedral is some of the best in Victoria. Consider focusing on only the glass, perhaps even part of a stained glass panel, or use a macro lens and focus on even a smaller portion of the glass. Some stained glass with its texture, bubbles and imperfections, makes a wonderful abstract photograph.

On a sunny day with a south-facing window, set up your tripod, focus on a stained glass window (and other items to frame your picture). Walk into the scene and start waving your arms (better with a fan or book (Bible?), to fan the air) and disturb the dust in the surrounding area. Once you've moved out of the frame, hit the shutter, and you will likely see the sunbeams highlighted with the dust particles that you've disturbed. While cleanliness is next to godliness, it's very difficult to keep 8,000 square feet of Cathedral dust-free all the time.

Please register for this field trip so we can contact you if the church has to cancel it.

Looking Behind your Subject

by Nancy MacNab

When getting ready to take a photograph, it is very easy to get caught up in your mental checklist of things to be considered: aperture and shutter speed; do you need to under-expose or over-expose from what the meter says; diagonal or leading lines; “rule of thirds” (really a suggestion), and so on. Once all of these have been satisfied, here is one more item to check off your list: what is in the background? Do these two images have a good background? What would you do to improve them?

Because we all tend to focus on the subject of the photograph, it is all too easy to overlook what is visible behind the subject. And yet the background can play a major role in creating a sense of place. It can highlight your subject, giving it a sense of grandeur and importance, or diminish it so that the background almost becomes the dominating theme of the photo. It can be one plain colour, as in a studio portrait, or it can show where the subject lives. With landscape photography, you can almost say that the background is the subject!



So how do you control the background? Depending on your choice of aperture and how close your subject is to it, the background can be sharply in focus or a soft blur. The placement of your subject within the frame will also affect how much of the background is visible.

If your subject is moving, then panning the camera can leave the subject sharp while the background is blurred, conveying a sense of movement. Doing the opposite, keeping the camera still while the subject moves, will result in a blurred subject and a recognizable background. The feeling of movement is again present, but consider the different result you get with these two methods. Now go and experiment with your own camera.

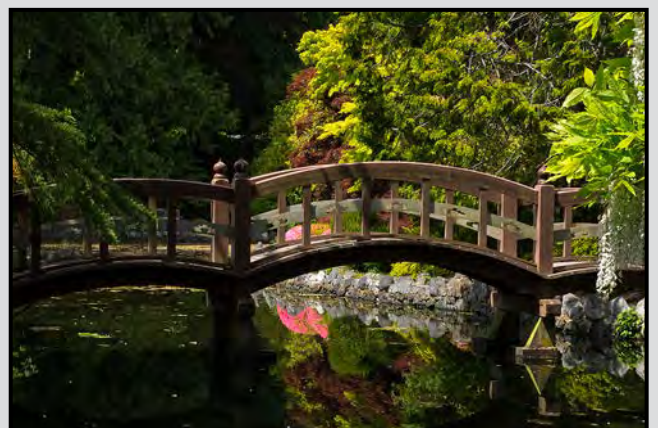
Another thing to think about is what to include in the background. Do you really want that metal roofed building with the light reflecting off the roof in the top left corner, creating a blinding white spot? What about that branch poking into the corner of the picture? And did you really mean to include the old pop can or candy wrapper in the grass or on the beach? Keep an eye out for intrusive objects that do not add to the image you wish to convey.

Reflections can be a challenge, both the identifiable objects that show on shiny things like mirrors, windows, and water, and the white areas that appear where light reflects off shiny leaves or plastic. Be prepared to shift your position or angle of view to make sure you exclude such things from your images.

The usual warnings for composition always apply: keep your horizons level, unless you are deliberately shooting on an angle, in which case make sure that the angle is great enough that it is obviously deliberate; make sure there are no branches growing out of people's, or birds', heads; look out for lines that seem to bisect your subject, and so on.

Looking behind your subject should become a habit when taking photographs, to ensure that you have the background you want. Making changes to your position by moving your tripod, raising or lowering the camera, or changing your angle of view, can save you a lot of tedious time on the computer, trying to “clean up” a background that could have been quickly and easily changed if you had just taken the time to look at it before clicking the shutter.

Add “check the background” to your mental checklist for the next time you go out shooting, and keep at it until it becomes a habit.



by John Coenraads

In the previous issue of *Close-Up*, we explored Photoshop's Custom filter (filters>other>custom). We saw the roles played by the Central Multiplier (CM), Scale and Offset. In this issue, we release the full potential of the Convolution Matrix. Although the matrix is 5 x 5, I will illustrate the examples using only the 3 x 3 central core of the matrix.

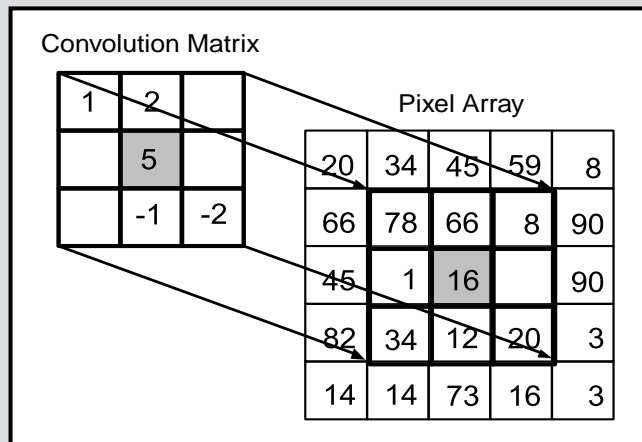


Figure 1: The convolution calculation

The convolution calculation is illustrated in figure 1. Visualize the matrix superimposed on top of the pixel array containing the millions of pixel values in the original image. The CM (in grey) is centred on the pixel being recalculated (also in grey), and the following calculation is performed. Each element in the matrix is multiplied by the corresponding element in the pixel array and the resulting products are added together. After dividing by Scale and adding Offset, the new pixel value is placed in the pixel array representing the new image. Then the matrix is shifted over to the next pixel and the calculation is repeated until all the pixels in the image have been recalculated.

Pixel Mashing:

Here is another way of thinking of it. The matrix lets you specify the recipe for how a new pixel value is to be calculated by specifying the proportions in which the original (central) pixel and its 24 nearest neighbours are to be combined. After mixing, many of the resulting pixel values are likely to be outside the visible range (0 - 255). The pixel values can be compressed by dividing by a suitable Scale value (typically the sum of all the multipliers), or the values can be shifted up or down by adding/subtracting the Offset.

Clearly, each pixel now becomes "contaminated" by its

neighbouring pixels, and it would seem that this is highly undesirable. But instead, with suitably chosen values, some surprising and useful effects are produced. You are invited to load an image into Photoshop to see for yourself. Since Custom filter only has a range of two pixels, the effects are most pronounced on rather small images featuring subjects with well defined edges, a few megabytes at most. Figure 2 shows the key elements of the Custom filter interface. Note that Scale = 1 and Offset = 0 are default values to be used unless otherwise specified. CM represents the central multiplier as before (default = 1) and M the value of the four nearest neighbours (default = 0).

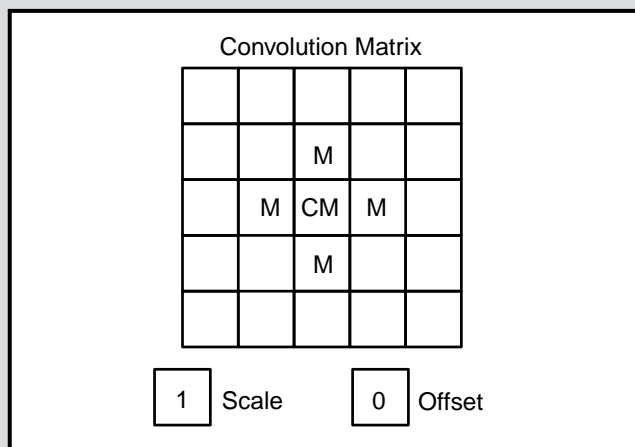


Figure 2: Key elements of the Custom filter interface

In the Custom filter window, Preview is normally checked (on) although toggling it lets you compare the new image with the original in the main window. Clicking on the small preview window also lets you compare any portion of the new and original image. I like setting it to 400% so changes are clearly visible at the pixel level. It is also worthwhile having the Histogram window open. Setting it to RGB lets you compare the new and original histograms as you make changes. Throughout, do not click on OK until you wish to save your new image. There is also provision for saving a library of Custom filters should you be enamoured of what you have achieved.

Sharpening: CM = 5, M = -1, Scale = 1, Offset = 0

This is the classic sharpening matrix. Since the values in the matrix sum to one, Scale can be left at its default setting. Clearly the new image is grossly over sharpened, but clicking on the small preview window (at 400%) lets you clearly see what has happened at an edge; the lighter side is lightened further and the darker side is darkened.

Sharpening (Subtle): CM = 120, M = -5, Scale = 100, Offset = 0

By setting Scale to 100, multiplier values can now be thought of as representing percentages thus giving more subtle control over the sharpening effect. By clicking OK and then repeatedly using Ctrl+F, the filter can be applied many times until the desired effect is obtained. Interestingly, if the filter is applied a lot of times, the new image eventually stabilizes. Hint: Observe the colourful changes at 1600% magnification.

Blurring: CM = 1, M = 1, Scale = 5, Offset = 0

If subtracting the values of neighbouring pixels results in sharpening, then it makes sense that adding these values results in blurring, and indeed it does. Note how Scale is set equal to the sum of all the multipliers.

Edge Detection: CM = 4, M = -1, Scale = 1, Offset = 0

This is similar to sharpening except that the sum of the multipliers is now zero. As a result, the image largely disappears except where edges are located.

Embossing: CM = 4, M = -1, Scale = 1, Offset = 128

Edges become embossed by adding grey to the image by setting Offset = 128.

High Contrast: CM = 5, M = 10, Scale = 3, Offset = -999

Extreme values yield extreme effects. Experiment with different values for Scale.

Obviously there is lots of room for experimentation, but most of the effects obtained will be variations on the above. For example, instead of using the nearest neighbours, try using the diagonal neighbours.

Or try using the neighbours that are farther away. This extends the "reach" of the sharpening or blurring. Using negative values for the multipliers can lead to colour inversions which are always interesting. If the image goes all white or all black, the pixel values are out of range. They can be brought back into range by adjusting Scale or Offset.

Other important effects are achieved by introducing asymmetry into the matrix. For example, blurring can be constrained to a particular direction, whereas asymmetric sharpening will give the illusion that a

directional light source has been introduced. The possibilities are endless.

A dandy embossing filter is obtained with CM = 1, Scale = 1, Offset = 128 and a single -1 placed in the lower right corner. The directionality of the effect depends on the corner chosen. Now replace the -1 in the corner with -2. As shown in figure 3, this small change results in a filter which, when applied to the cover image "Lady in Blue," yields an effect that is totally different. The colours have become inverted as would be seen in a colour negative on film, but without the orange mask.

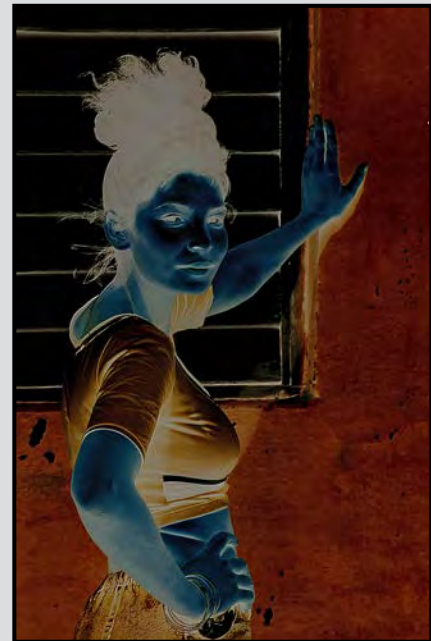


Figure 3: "Lady in Blue" becomes "Blue Lady"

What makes Custom filter so addictive is the unpredictability of the effect. For example, I tried CM = -1, M = 1, Scale = 1, Offset = -200. By itself this is not particularly interesting until one clicks on OK and then, using Ctrl+F, repeats the application of the filter a few dozen times. I don't know how one could predict the appearance of this strange texture. As another example, apply the embossing filter from the previous paragraph to an image a few dozen times. Weird!

The basic convolution algorithm used in Custom Filter can probably be implemented in only a few dozen lines of computer code. It would be interesting to know how many of Photoshop's canned filters rely on this same convolution kernel. The different effects are achieved by varying only the numbers in the matrix. Such is the versatility of convolution.

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