



Close-Up



Capture One Pro Overview
Studio Lighting
Did I get it Right?
Member Profile: Martin Wright
Inkjet Printers
Photographing Fungi
Apps for Phone Camera Art
Beginners' Corner: Sharing Images

"On the Hunt" by Dan Takahashi

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Victoria Camera Club



“Victoria Harbour Full Moon” by Ian Faris

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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November 2018

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

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What’s Inside

Calendar and President’s Message.....	4
Capture One Pro Overview	5
Studio Lighting.....	6
Did I get it Right?	8
Competition Info	10
Member Profile: Martin Wright.....	17
Inkjet Printers	19
Photographing Fungi	20
How I Did It.....	22
Shoots Around Victoria.....	23
Apps for Phone Camera Art	24
Beginners’ Corner: Sharing Images	26

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.

November 1st: Competition Night The deadline for submissions for the November competition is November 1st. The theme competition is "Urban Wildlife." The October images will be shown.

November 8th: Presentation Night Our guest speaker is Christine Gallagher who will present a review of her travels around BC, "A Photographic Tapestry of the BC and Pacific Northwest."

November 15th: Members' Night Presentation of members' images, field trip slide shows, prints or short technical topics.

Workshop and Field Trip Highlights: Basic Photoshop Skills and Novice Image Review workshops. Christie Falls and Fraser Delta Birds field trips.

Cover Image: "On the Hunt" by Dan Takahashi. This image of a male grizzly bear was taken in the Toba Inlet area north-east of Campbell River. In September Gita McCormick organized a great grizzly bear trip for the Club. The trip launched from April Point on Quadra Island with a very scenic two-hour boat ride through the channels and islands north of Desolation Sound to Toba Inlet.

We were greeted by a friendly First Nations guide and taken upriver by bus to a few prime viewing spots to witness the Grizzlies fattening up on Salmon for the winter. It was well organized with spotters up and down the river to announce by radio the direction the bears were traveling. The guides made sure that safety was first and were always aware of the bear's location.

Surprises can still happen when a bear decides to come up the river bank and over the bridge that we were all standing on, instead of following the river under the bridge. Mass panic for a moment. The guides were prepared and positioned between us and the grizzly with bear spray.

I was shooting with a Nikon D850, a 200-500 mm lens, and a tripod because of rain. Camera settings: f5.6 1/320s, ISO 5000. Auto white balance. Spot focus. Raw capture. You can find some of my images here: nomadphoto.ca.

President's Message

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

With our membership currently standing at 262, I am pleased to welcome all new members who joined during the summer and fall. I encourage new members to look at the field trips that we offer so they can meet some of our other members. I also encourage you to bring your friends and loved ones where you can share the amazing art of photography with them.

I am thrilled to see so many people signing up for the various workshops and field trips that have been organized by the coordinators.

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

As I am writing this I am looking out at the weather and the colours that are changing with the season. The blue skies of summer are being traded in for the cloudy days of November. It can be easy to just stay at home and work on our photos that are already sitting on our computer but I encourage you all to layer up and get out into the Island. Go somewhere you've never been before. This time of year offers so many wonderful things to photograph.

I recently decided to head out to Port Renfrew and check out Fairy Lake. There is a bonsai-looking tree that has grown on an old log sticking out of the water that I have always wanted to see. It was a beautiful day and I enjoyed the drive along the south coast of Vancouver Island.

There are so many places one can stop at along the way that one trip is definitely not enough. Once I arrived at the lake I was not disappointed. It was so nice to see life growing wherever it can. Lots of photos were taken and I enjoyed my time.

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

Teri VanWell, President

Capture One Pro Overview

by *Graham Budd*

Adobe Lightroom (LR) remains the choice for post-processing for the vast majority of photographers using DSLR or mirrorless camera systems. Users get a mature product suite that combines excellent digital asset management with an easy-to-learn interface, LR offers both mobile and desktop versions and comes packaged with Photoshop (PS) for \$10 US per month.

Despite its dominance, cracks have begun to appear, as some users express dissatisfaction with Adobe's move to a subscription model and comment on performance issues along with the lack of support for some camera systems, specifically Fuji RAF files. It was these last two issues that sent me looking for an alternative despite having 10 years' worth of images resident in my Lightroom catalogue. Ingesting, building previews and applying local adjustments became frustratingly slow, even though I was using a new Mac with lots of RAM and a SSD. The wormy artifacts I saw when processing some of my Fuji files was the catalyst I needed to seek other options.

I tried products from a number of companies but settled on Capture One Pro 11 (C1) from Phase One, a leading manufacturer of medium format camera systems. Six months ago I committed to shelving LR and using Capture One for the balance of 2018 to see if it would prove to be a better option for me. It was a struggle, but with three months to go, I am confident that C1 will be my RAW processor of choice going forward.

Before I outline the reasons I prefer C1 over LR, let me preface my remarks by saying that what works for me may not be appropriate for you. Lightroom has some features that Capture One does not and, if they represent an integral part of your workflow, then staying with what you know and like makes sense. Also, it's important to note, that despite their differences, both programs offer similar non-destructive workflows including, but not limited to, Exposure, Contrast, Highlights, Shadows, Saturation etc. Thus, despite a plethora of small sub-menus and drop-downs, LR users can expect to feel somewhat at home when viewing the basic Develop interface in C1. It is worth noting, however, that some sliders with the same name in both programs act somewhat differently, Saturation is a good example. In C1 it acts more like the Vibrance slider in LR. Saturation in LR terms is found elsewhere in C1.

Let's begin by looking at what features LR has that are missing in C1. They include the Radial Filter, HDR and

Pano Merge, Editing History, Direct Connection with social media sites such as Flickr, up-to-date responsive RAW support for existing and new cameras, compatibility with nearly every plug-in and external editor and a mobile, cloud-based option when using Lightroom CC. With such an impressive feature list, why would anyone switch? Read on.

Here's some of what C1 can do that LR cannot: highly customizable workspace, two workflow options, Sessions and Catalogues, open and view multiple catalogues at the same time, sophisticated Colour Editor (far better than LR), Layered Workflow Support, Focus Mask (highlight areas of focus in an image), Luma Curves (adjust contrast without affecting saturation), Lens Cast Correction (remove all dust spots across images in one click), Sony-specific versions available at a discount, Subscription or Purchase options available, and a 30-day free trial that renews each time a new version is introduced.

The compelling reason for changing is that C1 ingests and generates previews faster than LR on my system and adjustments never lag. C1 keeps up no matter how quickly I work, offers more preview options and I prefer the way it processes my files right out of the box. Colours and sharpness are better. The camera profiles C1 uses has made me double check to make sure I am not viewing the jpeg file instead of the RAW. There are articles outlining how the same look can be achieved in LR with some adjustments. Fair enough, but if I can get results I like with less work, then I'll take it.

Although LR works seamlessly with PS, C1's layered workflow often negates the requirement to use both. C1 supports PSD and TIF files and will move the files non-destructively out and back to PS and other editors automatically, although layers applied in PS must be flattened before being returned to C1.

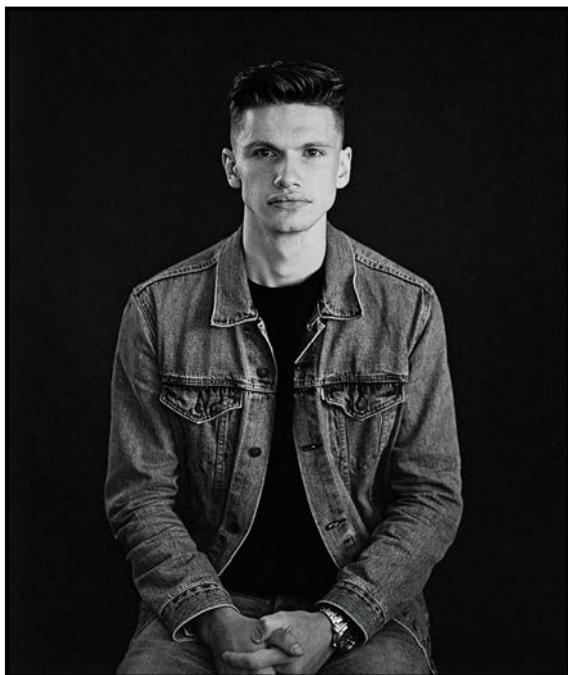
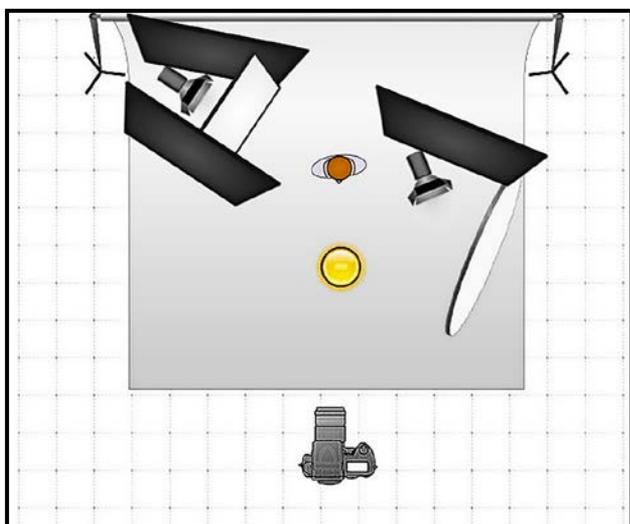
It is not possible to fully outline the differences between these two programs in a short article. If you decide that C1 might be worth considering, download the trial, watch some tutorials that will appear when you open the program and commit to dealing with a steep learning curve that will leave you frustrated at times. If you can battle through the challenge of something different from what you are used to you may find that, like me, you actually prefer the C1 interface.

If you are about to throw in the towel with C1, take advantage of the customization I referred to earlier, go to the main menu and select Window/Workspace/Migration and you will be presented with a workspace that more closely reassembles what you are used to seeing in Lightroom.

Studio Lighting

by Karl Schoepp

Organizing and carrying out a studio shoot with lighting equipment is both a wonderful and overwhelming experience. A shoot with artificial lighting fixtures will typically require the most equipment out of any type of photographic shooting. As with camera equipment, the type of lighting equipment that you use is irrelevant in creating the photograph; it is up to the user to create the look they desire with the tools available. A good starting fixture would be one affordable speedlight and stand or one continuous light and stand. Below are examples of two studio lighting techniques with vastly different looks.



“Soft Lighting - Three Lights”

For the first example, a soft lighting setup with three continuous lighting sources was chosen and could be used with both male and female models. An identical effect could be achieved with strobes or speedlights using umbrellas or a similar bounce material. I was shooting with a low ISO sensitivity and required my aperture to be stopped down significantly and, therefore, a lot of light was required for the shot.

Regardless of the medium, shooting at low ISO and shooting in the lens' optimal aperture range is a wise starting point. Although one can use high ISO settings with modern cameras it makes sense to always shoot at the lowest ISO setting possible. A lens' optimal aperture range is the range in which it performs the best optically. Typically, this would be found in the mid-range of apertures so it is unwise to shoot studio portraits close to wide open because of lower optical performance and problems with depth of field. A shallow depth of field is dangerous in portraits as it can leave parts of the subject's face out of focus.

I used a bounced 2000w tungsten incandescent Fresnel continuous light to the camera right as my main source of lighting for this shot (set at f4, 1/60th sec). I decided to bounce this light off of a white bed sheet (or muslin) to soften it before it hit the subject. The light was positioned approximately 60 degrees to the camera right to minimize spill light on the background. When bounced, the angle of incidence (the light's direction) equals the angle of reflection.

A flag (or cutter) was also used on the camera right side of the bounce source. This served to minimize spill from the soft bounced main light onto the black background.

I decided to use a 500w ECT photo-flood bulb in a Chinese lantern (yellow ball by the camera in the sketch) as a fill light to even out the model's face. The fill light was set at two stops below the main light at f2 to give a contrast ratio of 4:1 between the main and the fill light intensity.

Lastly, I used a 650w incandescent Fresnel back-light through light grid cloth (heavy diffusion) to give the subject slight separation from the background. The back-light was set at one stop under the main light at f2.8. If I could take these shots again, I would soften the main light a little bit more, and up the intensity of the back-light by one to two stops. This lighting set-up worked very well with both male and female models, but required slight adjustments for each subject.

With Ebonie (one of my female Tongan models), I decreased (brightened) the fill light ratio closer to 1.5:1 to give their faces a nice smooth look. To create an



“Soft Lighting - Three Lights with Female Model”

even higher contrast look with my male model, Curtis, I could have simply turned off the fill light to add more depth to the shot.

The second example of a studio lighting set-up features a much more dramatic lighting style. This type of high-contrast lighting tends to work better with men that it does with women.

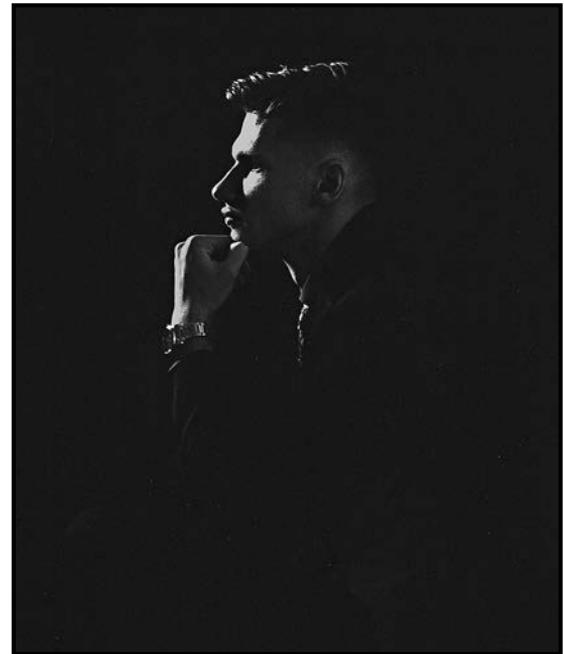
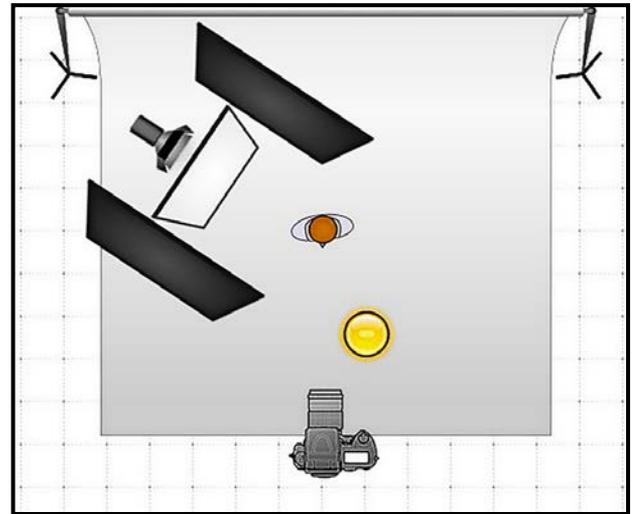
In this example, I used a 1000w incandescent PAR $\frac{3}{4}$ back main light (a light 45 degrees to the camera left behind the subject and tilted 45 degrees downwards) at f5.6, $\frac{1}{60}$ th of second. The $\frac{3}{4}$ back main light was diffused with Lee Filters 216 (or Rosco 116) full white diffusion to soften it significantly.

For the fill a 500w ECT photo-flood bulb light inside a Chinese lantern (30 degrees to the camera right at subject eye level) was set to f2.

A three stop difference existed between the main and the fill light giving an 8:1 contrast ratio between main and fill. Again, I was careful to control the lighting with flags (cutters) to avoid spill onto the background. A small amount of spill on a black background or dark set can ruin a high contrast shot.

Although there are some parts of the shot that just fall off, that was the intentional effect. Some photographers may be afraid of darkness but only showing what needs to be shown can give a very dramatic effect.

As you have learned, women tend to photograph better with soft light and men can be photographed under most



“Hard Lighting - Two Lights”

lighting conditions. When shooting a portrait of a female subject keep the light soft but controlled. Add depth to any female portraits by creating contrast with soft light. Always ensure that you clean up any spilled or unwanted soft light as stray soft light tends to ruin any shot with any contrast. Contrast can also be created by decreasing the fill light intensity or by increasing the back-light intensity.

In conclusion, remember to keep your aperture to realistic values to keep your depth of field under control. It is also wise to shoot at the lowest ISO possible to keep grain to a minimum.

A wonderful way to challenge your photographic skills is to give studio lighting a shot. You may find yourself challenged shooting with models and with positioning lighting equipment but the experience and results you will remember forever.

Did I get it Right?

by Richard James

From time to time it is a good idea to go back and review the fundamentals of what you are doing. You need to start with the camera which is the focus of this article.

Do you know what your “default” settings for your camera are and where to find them? Do you have different sets for different types of photography stored in different menu items? If your camera has a number of programmable buttons do you know what each one is set to and is this what you would currently use a button for? If your camera has a “my menu” option for the LCD display have you set that up with the menu items that you most commonly use?

Maybe it's time to review the camera manual, or a book with more explanation about how the camera really works rather than the terse “this button/menu item does that” which you are likely to find in the manufacturer's manual.

Now, let's get to a few things that you should consider as you set up each shot. I'm not going to be talking

about “composition” but rather the generic things that go along with how you set the image up.

Normally the horizon appears horizontal to us and upright objects appear at or close to 90° to the horizon. This applies to almost all buildings but only generically to some natural things such as trees. In an image on paper or a screen having the correct horizontal reference is critical. Use the camera's built-in level or one attached to the hot shoe, to ensure that the camera is truly horizontal left to right and back to front. Even so, there is one “gotcha”: the diagonal seashore disappearing towards the true horizon that may or may not be in the image.

Related to the horizon is how building faces are represented. We intuitively know that buildings are vertical even though we may be looking up at them because our brain interprets them “correctly.” The laws of physics mean that if the camera is angled up at the building face then it will appear to be falling over backwards and to not be square. Ensure that the plane of the sensor is parallel to the plane of the face of the building. So long as the building elements appear vertical it is quite acceptable to have a street scene appear to recede into the distance by having the sensor plane angled to the side if that is your deliberate intention.



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So what do you do if the height of the building doesn't fit in the frame when you abide by these geometric guidelines? You can move further away with the same lens focal length, use a wider angle lens, or possibly use a tilt/shift lens. Remember that using a wider angle lens changes the relative size of near and distant objects and thus how we perceive the depth in the image.

Another "gotcha" with wide-, and even more so, ultra-wide-angle lenses is that objects towards the edges will be distorted if they are not parallel to the plane of the sensor. If you can't avoid this then the problem may be mitigated in software if it is not too far out, at the expense of cropping (shoot wide) and reduced resolution in the image.

What about the edges? You naturally focus your interest on the key subject which is likely to be away from the edges of the image. However, it is important to look around the edges to make sure you haven't trimmed off a person's hand, the end of a bird's tail or some other important part of the image. You also need to look for small parts of extraneous objects that have strayed into the image and adjust the framing to deal with both of these issues. It is sometimes acceptable to cut larger chunks off of an object if this fits with the composition and the intent of the image; it's the little bits that cause problems.

What about positive and negative space? The important parts of the image are regarded as positive space, the area where we want to draw the viewer's attention. The unimportant parts are known as negative space. Negative space can play an important role in an image in containing the viewer's attention to the subject. A very out-of-focus background is negative space but a cluttered background where details are too easily discernible is not.

How do you get the viewer to look at the primary subject? You can plant the subject's face in the middle of the image but that will probably be a little boring. It is critical to have this point really crisp and in focus. That means having not only "the point" in focus but enough depth-of-field to ensure the rest of the subject is crisp enough. This is achieved by selecting the appropriate lens aperture where a larger f-number indicates a smaller aperture and thus a greater depth-of-field.

There are a number of things that you can do beyond that. One common method is to use "leading lines", lines that point towards the key subject. They may be edges or objects that point to or contain the subject. A classic example of leading lines is a long object disappearing into the distance. Imagine railroad tracks pointing towards the entrance to a tunnel.

What about the image depth? Almost any subject, except flat artwork or a book, has depth. We have to create the impression of depth on a two-dimensional print or screen. Lighting plays a role in this in that shadows show shape (which implies depth) with the highlight hitting one side of the subject with a shadow on the opposite side.

Another way of showing depth is the arrangement of objects in the image where those that are further away appear relatively smaller as they do to our unaided eye. A longer focal length (telephoto) lens makes objects appear nearer and closer together thus reducing the effect of perspective. A wider angle lens exaggerates the perspective effect making closer objects relatively larger and distant objects smaller in comparison to the normal lens (nominally a 50 mm lens). Bear this in mind when considering which focal length to use, or is it better to move the camera position nearer to, or further from, the subject?

Layering objects in the image so that they overlap gives the impression of distance, as does the phenomenon of "aerial perspective" where distant objects appear much less contrasty and less detailed due to aerial haze. A good example of this is a landscape with a series of mountain ranges receding into the distance, such as you can often find in the Gulf Islands and Vancouver Island.



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November Theme: Small Wonders

by Lorna Zaback

Hoping to gain some insight into how to approach this topic photographically, I checked the Merriam-Webster online dictionary. It suggests that a “wonder” can be defined as “a cause of astonishment, admiration, excitement or amazement”, something “awesomely mysterious or new to one’s experience, or even eliciting “a feeling of doubt or uncertainty”. “Small” refers to “having comparatively little size or slight dimensions”, “not big” but also “of minor influence, power or rank” or “lacking in strength”. Is this at all helpful?

Googling “small wonder” images at first wasn’t terribly useful. Mostly what came up were hundreds of screen shots from a 1980s comedy series of the same name about a family that created a robot child whom they then pretended (over four long seasons) was their daughter.

However, a Yahoo search was more fruitful. A colour palette at the top of the page offered a few interesting ideas in reds, greens, pinks, purples, etc. Clicking on “Shop Small Wonders at Amazon - Huge Selection at Great Prices”, one of my associated cookies, took me to a list of books entitled Small Wonder(s), with subtitles like Jean-Henri Fabre and His World of Insects, Life Portrait in Miniature by Tatsuya Tanaka, Late Gothic Boxwood Carvings from the Low Countries, and The Amazing Story of the Volkswagen Beetle, to name a few.

The Beetle reference might cause us to question the issue of size. How small is “small”? That would be for you, the photographer, to decide. Some subjects more obviously fit the criteria than others: an insect, a bouquet of violets, water droplets clinging to a blade of grass, for example.

Focusing in on any of these, shooting with a macro lens, or cropping so that the subject completely fills the frame would still leave us with no doubt that the image was something of “slight dimensions.” Other subjects might require creating some sense of scale to depict “smallness” or “comparatively little size” and my guess is what epitomizes a “wonder” is even more open to interpretation. What seems perfectly ordinary and insignificant to one person might be exciting or awesomely mysterious to someone else.

How you define “small wonder” for this competition is completely up to you. We want to encourage you to be as creative as possible. This is not strictly a close-up or macro competition, it is open to broad interpretation. Use your imagination and astonish us!

September 2018 Competition Judges

We extend our sincere thanks to the external judges for the September Intermediate and Advanced competitions: Karen Stoyles, Pierre Gautier, Gregg Eligh, Derek Hayes and Jesse Hlady. 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.

Karen Stoyles: Wildlife and Natural World. Karen lives in Brantford, Ontario where she is a member of the Brant Camera Club. Her main photographic interests lie with wildflower, macro and creative photography. She likes to travel the back roads of Ontario where she finds many varieties of wild flowers. Karen has been judging photography for over ten years for camera clubs, local organizations and fairs. See her images on Flickr.

Pierre Gauthier: Open. Pierre is a long-time and active member of the RA Photo Club in Ottawa. “The proper evaluation of an image is to find the qualities of the various components of an image and to discern how they work together as an expressive and significant whole.”

Gregg Eligh: Theme. Gregg is a good friend to the Club and well known for his judging over the years and his interesting workshops. He currently teaches continuing education courses at Camosun College. Gregg has worked across North America and the Caribbean doing corporate, editorial, catalogue and advertising photography. Gregg’s work can be seen in several gallery shows every year. gregg@elighphoto.com.

Derek Hayes: Altered Reality. Derek lives in White Rock, BC and is a certified CAPA judge. He enjoys a wide range of photographic styles including travel photography. He has taught photography and hosted a photographic tour of historic locations in Spain. Derek is a renowned historian and the author of the Historical Atlas of the Pacific Northwest, the Historical Atlas of Canada, and Canada: An Illustrated History, as well as other historical books. derekhayesphotography.com.

Jesse Hlady: Advanced Prints. Jesse is one of Canada’s leading wedding, portrait and event photographers. Jesse has given presentations on portrait photography and he occasionally judges. He also does portrait workshops, photo restoration and provides a photo-booth for parties. “I am one of those lucky people who gets to do what they love every day. I will never stop learning, never stop creating.” jessehlady.com.

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Advanced Altered Reality Digital - 3rd
"Sea Village" by Richard Webber

Judge's comments: A pleasant panorama which gets its main appeal from the colours and reflections of colour.



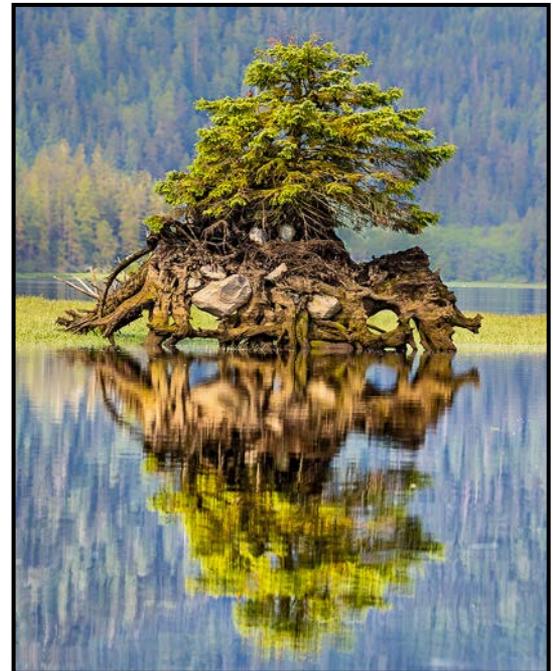
Advanced Wildlife Digital - 2nd
"The Wrestlers" by Steve Smith

Judge's comments: Kudos to the maker of this image. This image not only conveys a story, but the maker has given us tack-sharp subjects with wonderful exposure, texture and depth of field. Very nicely done.



Advanced Monochrome Print - 1st
"Saker Falcon" by Richard Letourneau

Judge's comments: Very well executed. Your print definitely shows better than the online display, which is nice to see. A black and white print should have true, rich blacks, nice contrasty whites and all the tones in between and you have achieved that here so, well done.



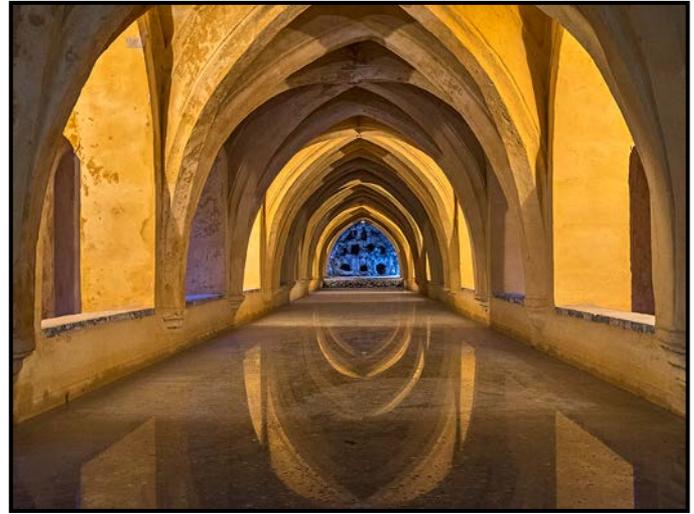
Advanced Natural World Digital - 1st
"New Life" by Leah Gray

Judge's comments: This is a lovely image and reflection. Though the tree and reflection are centred rather statically, it does add to the overall effect of the image. Very well done.



Advanced Nature Print - 1st
“The Fisherman Returns” by Suzanne Huot

Judge’s comments: Very nice image, great use of shallow depth of field. Exposure is perfect, rich blacks and true whites both maintaining detail.



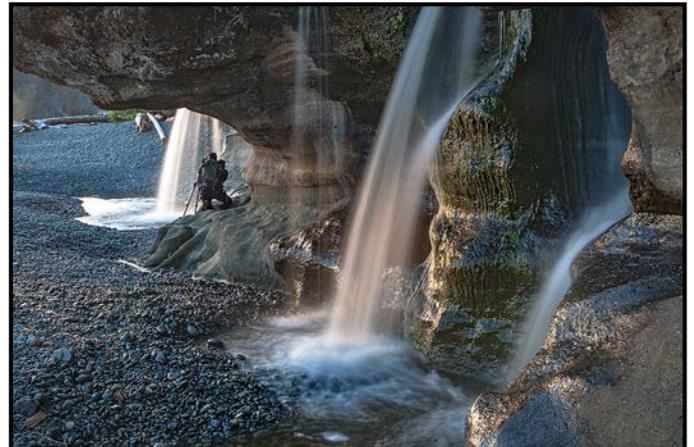
Advanced Open Digital - 1st
“The Royal Baths, Seville” by Steve Lustig

Judge’s comments: A powerful combination of light and shadows, reflections, lines and shapes to create an image that speaks of stability, depth and peace. Flawless exposure and composition.



Advanced Open Print - 1st
“Around We Go - Saanich Fair 2018” by Richard James

Judge’s comments: Very cool subject matter and you have presented it very well.



Advanced Theme Digital - 2nd
“Photographing Water” by David Gariepy

Judge’s comments: Well done! Including the figure creates a story and illustrates scale. Excellent direction of lighting and depth of location.



Intermediate Theme - 1st
“Reflection on Swan Lake” by Bob Law

Judge’s comments: A beautiful, simple, rich image! This subject is truly the hero! No distractions or diversions. A pure image. I love it.



Intermediate Digital Open - 1st
“Steptoe Sunrise” by Kim Smith

Judge’s comments: Excellent composition placing the different elements of the image in a well-balanced peaceful yet exciting moment when the first rays of the morning sun perfectly highlight the form of the land. Exposure and post processing are perfect. Perfectly planned making of a great image.



Intermediate Wildlife - 1st
“Living in Duckweed: The Garter Snake, its Friend, and their Meal” by Daniel Rondeau

Judge’s comments: Wonderful catch! The subject is placed very effectively for the composition giving lots of room in the line of vision of the snake. The colours are vibrant and depth of field is very well done.



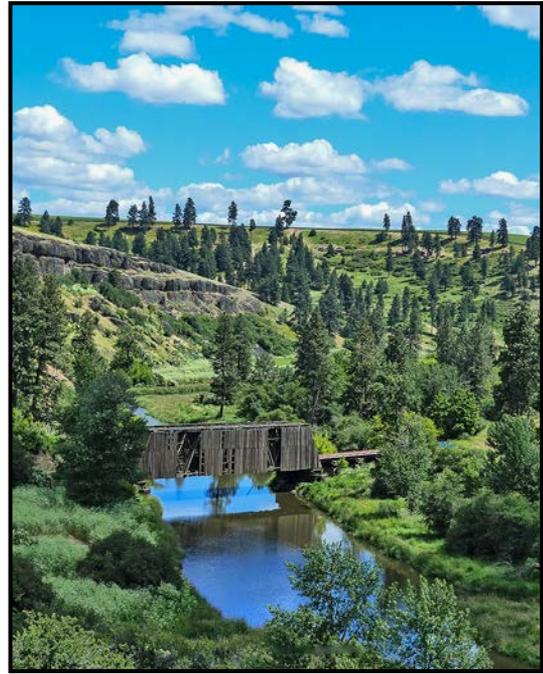
Intermediate Altered Reality - 1st
“Ghostly Watchers” by Vanessa MacDonald

Judge’s comments: An attractive composition adds to the appeal and the star highlights are a nice touch.



Intermediate Natural World - 2nd
"Seymour Waves" by Tim Agoston

Judge's comments: Moody, stormy image with angry clouds and turbulent waters. The maker certainly has given us an image with lots to look at. Overall the image is very well done from composition to exposure.



Novice Open Digital - 1st
"Palouse Old Bridge" by Robert Barlow

Judge's comments: Covered bridges are becoming so rare that you are lucky to have seen this decaying beauty. We hope that you didn't venture inside. Excellent composition with the horizon line at the upper "third" and the bridge and track at the bottom "third." The layout of this photo makes the subject and its scale quite clear.



Intermediate/Novice Open Print - 1st
"Bald Eagle with Handler" by Jim Fowler

Judge's comments: An unusual capture indeed. Were it not for the glove the expression on the handler's face would be markedly different. Such a predator. The judges felt that this powerful shot captures the young eagle's head and the expression of the handler in the background. Wonderful depth into the eye. Very sharp. The tight crop and the semi-gloss paper works very well.



Novice Wildlife - 1st
"American Robin" by Sharon Mosey

Judge's comments: Alert and poised. One of the judges mentioned that robins are frequently an overlooked subject. The overall colour and focus of this shot is well done. Great detail and appropriate depth of field. It makes a difference that you got down to ground level to give a full side view.



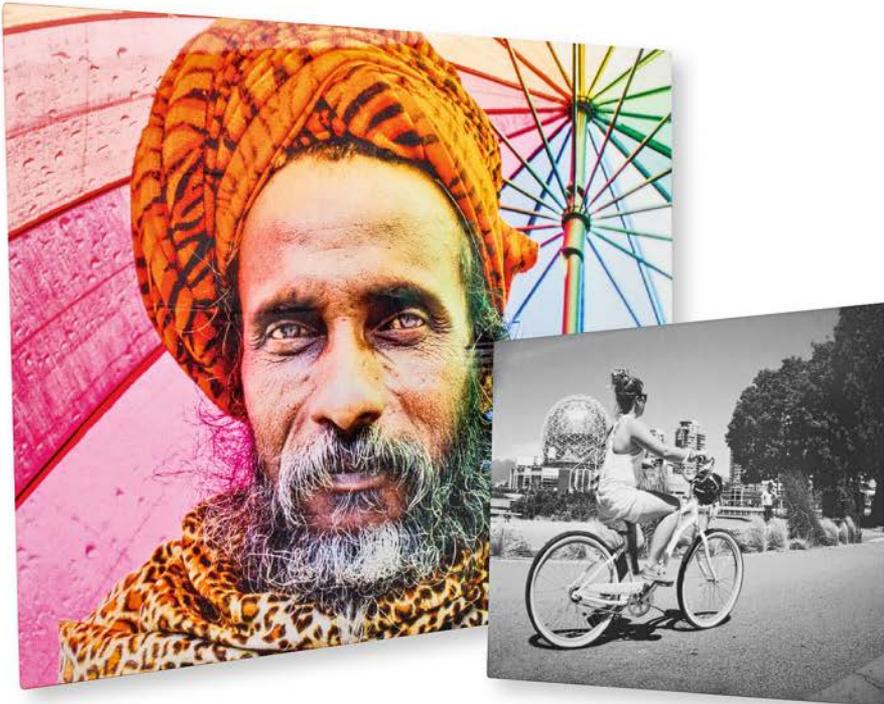
Novice Natural World - 1st
"Flora Island" by Rilla Ballantyne

Judge's comments: Lovely colour contrast in the purple ground cover and the dark blue of water and mountain. This is a nicely balanced composition with the opposing angles and triangles. Well exposed and focused. Well done.



Novice Theme - 1st
"Insane Optimist" by Peter Amundsen

Judge's comments: Great title. It seems completely impossible that any fish could make it up this torrent. Including the fish in the picture gives us a sense of scale and intensity of the water flow that wouldn't catch our emotions otherwise. We wondered how many hundred shots this image took. Excellent exposure, choice of shutter speed and the sharpness throughout.



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Member Profile: Martin Wright

Since retiring in 2014 I have concentrated my creative energy on photography. Like many photographers raised to the sound of water running in my darkroom as the next print magically appears in the developing tray, I have chosen to embrace the digital world. Thinking digitally was a challenge at first but today sitting at my computer with all the software bells and whistles at my finger tips there is no going back. I use two Nikon D90s and a selection of lenses.

I joined the Club in 2015 and had the audacity to describe myself as an advanced photographer; no earning “my stripes” through the Club’s intermediate route. However I am reminded to stay honest when, as a judge on the novice committee, I see a “20” score. There is really no reason to feel advanced. The categories we use to evaluate a given image are based on a mix of subjectivity and objectivity using CAPA guidelines as a basis for our decisions. I think these guidelines are particularly useful for all but especially for novice photographers.



“Havana”

My photographic interests began as a boy growing up on the Isle of Wight in England. The Isle of Wight is famous for international yacht racing, coloured sands, and rock festivals. The island also has a darker history involving romantic poets cavorting on chalk cliffs and the smuggling of wine and liquor from France.

Of interest to photographers, the island was also a temporary home of Julia Margaret Cameron, a woman who pioneered the art of portrait photography between 1864 and 1875. Julia Margaret Cameron’s importance to portrait photography occurred when very few people were treating photography as an art form. This debate had been consigned to history and has now resurfaced. With the advent of millions of images produced daily anyone with a cell phone might think they are producing “Art.” I think it is a challenge for studied photographers to be taken seriously enough as creative artists to sell their work.

My early influences were the photojournalists working in the 1950s and 60s. I modeled myself on their documentary work that was popular in the magazines of the day.

Excited by the prospect of travel in 1966, I took to the road. With camera, guitar and a tent I remember experiencing culture shock in Tangiers and the joys of picking grapes in Southern France with three guitar chords and “Blowin’ in the Wind” as my mantra. Eventually, reality struck and the next few years were a mix of education, career, births, deaths and marriages (and divorces). “The whole catastrophe” as Zorba the Greek proclaimed.



“West Coast”

Today, the Victoria Camera Club plays a significant role in my life. It is a stimulating mix of information and inspiration. While I like to be sociable during meetings, unfortunately, my hearing is very poor, so you may notice that I move in closer in order to hear over the general noise.

The Creative Special Interest Group is a favourite of mine with lots of information about editing skills and camera techniques as well as terrific images illustrating topics already under discussion.

Recently, several members had work accepted in the 2018 Sooke Fine Arts Show. Congratulations here to those members who had their work accepted. My two images here were accepted at the show. “Havana” was captured on a recent trip to Cuba, (Nikon D90, 1/250th sec., f5.6, ISO 400). “West Coast” was taken in November 2017 on a Club weekend in Tofino. (Nikon D90 1/15th sec., f5.6, ISO 400). Using camera movement is a technique I learned at one of the Club’s workshops.

As mentioned above, my early influences were photojournalists. However, a photograph need not, for example, depict war, famine, or natural disaster to elicit a powerful response. Equally, a landscape need not be a gorgeous sunset or a breathtaking sunrise to witness our planet’s visual wonders. The same holds true for all the other “categories” we assign to photography. Focus, aperture, shutter speed and ISO are the same for all of us.

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Inkjet Printers

by Matt Speight

I recently printed a photograph, framed it and put it up on my wall. This is something I hadn't done for a long while and it got me thinking about how printing our images can contribute greatly to completing the vision we have, when we take our shots.

To expand, when I had access to a darkroom I would take a photograph and know exactly what paper I would print it on, maybe homemade photographic paper using liquid light or a high quality, fibre-based paper where I brushed on the developer. The print process is the completion of our final vision. A print is something tangible in your hand that you can touch, a true reward for your hard work. So how do we get printing creatively again? There are many options to choose from. There's the jack-of-all-trades, master-of-none, all-in-one printer, scanner and fax machine, to the freestanding wide-format pro printers. I will go over two of my favourites, the entry level pro printer Canon Pro 100 and the higher end, Canon ImagePROGRAF PRO 1000.

One reason I chose these two printers as examples is because they use two different types of ink and it would be good to discuss the pros and cons of both systems. The Pro 100 uses the more common dye inks that you find in most ink jet printers while the Pro 1000 uses pigment inks.

The Pro 100 uses an 8-channel dye ink system, three of which are grey/black. These three inks help the printer create good tonality and add deep blacks to your black and white art, without the cyan or magenta colour cast that can plague some inkjet printers. Along with the usual Magenta, Cyan and Yellow inks, the Pro 100 adds Photo Cyan and a Photo Magenta. These extra photo inks give an increased dynamic range and a wider colour gamut to your images. The Pro 100 can take a variety of paper types from fine art, water colour paper to glossy paper and all paper sizes up to 13"x19." With 13"x19" capability, it's a larger printer at 20 kg and a footprint of 68 x38 cm.

The Pro 100 will connect to your home Wifi network giving you the flexibility to print from any room in the house. The Pro 1000 has no Wifi capabilities.

The Pro 1000 ink system is pigment based. The big plus to pigment inks is that they are more archival. Used with archival paper, Canon's pigment ink will last 60 years before fading, 300 years if stored in an al-

bum. A Pro 100 print with its chroma dye ink, (one of the most archival dye inks), will last about 25 years if framed, 200 years if in an album. The disadvantage to pigment inks is that they are not as vibrant as dye and more prone to clogged print nozzles.

However, the Pro 1000 gets around these issues a number of ways. It has 18,432 print nozzles and if one gets blocked, a sensor detects the blockage, and uses the nozzles around it to compensate, knowing it's redundant. This saves ink and time doing nozzle maintenance. It also agitates the ink while printing, helping to reduce clogging and improving colour consistency.

To add to the complexity of the printer, there are two black inks, one for matte paper and one for glossy. Pigment inks sits on top of the paper while dye ink is absorbed. Glossy ink doesn't look that great on matte paper, so the printer will change it to matte black ink.

The Pro 1000 has an impressive 12-tank ink system including red and blue inks which will increase the gamut of the already impressive Pro 100. One of the ink tanks is for the chroma optimizer. This combats the issue of the pigment system lacking the vibrancy of a dye system on glossy paper. It increases the density of the blacks and saturates colours. It also evens the surface reflection of the print as black inks are prone to have a pooling effect and often reflect differently on glossy paper when the print is viewed at an angle.

The Pro 1000 also has a very impressive vacuum feed for its paper so the print head and paper are always at the optimal distance for amazing ink droplet accuracy.

As you would expect, with all this fancy technology, from switching inks to anti-clogging tools and the use of a chroma optimizer, a pigment printer will cost you more than a good dye printer because there is more involved to get the desired results. You do pay a premium for a pigment-based system that's going to be reliable. A Pro 100 retails for around \$400 and Pro 1000 is in the \$1400 range. I should also note that the Pro 1000 can print up to 17"x22" in size which will account for part of the price differential.

Having a good quality printer at home with the amazing choice of papers available to us, from a subdued water-colour paper to an aggressive metallic paper allows you to add another creative element to your work and can be very rewarding and convenient. There is also a lot to be said about archival prints. If you are selling your work, you want that peace of mind and confidence that your art is not going to fade away on someone's wall. Is it worth the premium? You get to choose!

Photographing Fungi

by James Holkko

While many are reluctant to warmly embrace rainy autumn days, mycologists and mushroom enthusiasts are gearing up for one of their favourite seasons. With the cool, moist conditions starting early this fall, it bodes well for an exceptional mushroom season.

An introduction to fungal diversity and habitat will provide useful insights for photographing fungi in the field.

Species diversity: Many people purchase a mushroom field guide detailing only edible mushrooms. This is why many think there is only a small number of fungal species and that most are edible. I would be remiss not to mention most edible fungi have poisonous look-alikes. In British Columbia alone there are over 3,000 named species of macrofungi (species large enough to see).



“*Armillaria* sp. (Honey mushroom)”

14 major fungal types: Another common misconception, besides the traditional toadstool, is that fungi are generally gilled. While it's true that roughly half the species disperse spores along gills, there is a general guideline categorizing fourteen types of spore dispersion methods by macrofungi. These include gilled, boletes, polypores, toothed, veined, morels, cups, bird's nests, corals, clubs, jellies, crusts, puffballs and truffles. (Illustrated and photographic examples can be found in “Keys to Mushrooms of the Pacific Northwest” at svims.ca/council.)

Habitat: Of these fourteen types, many macrofungi fall into one of two categories: those having a mycorrhizal (a type of symbiosis) relationship with plants, and other fungal species that decay plant matter. Mycorrhizal fungi such as chanterelles, would seem to require moisture in the forest floor to produce fruiting bodies, while plant decay fungi obtain the necessary moisture gathered in plant matter. So in a wet season a person can expect to



“*Cyathus striatus* (Striate birdsnest)”

see both types of fruiting bodies and during a dry season, more attention is placed on decaying plant matter such as fallen trees to find fungi.

Photographing fungi: Over the last fifteen years, one of the most rewarding areas of my photographic pursuits has come from documenting fungi. The fourteen fungal types create a rich array of subject matter and every season reveals new species to document.

Compared to other subjects, fungi will pose for as long as it takes to obtain a portfolio quality photograph. That being said, various challenges will be encountered. Over the years I've found myself experimenting with and developing techniques to significantly improve how I photograph fungi.



“*Cantharellus formosus*”

Low light: It's safe to say the portfolio quality fungal subject is waiting in the deepest, darkest forest setting. Very often I'll need an exposure of several seconds in order to maintain a low ISO. This requires using a tripod, a remote to trigger a mirror-up shutter release, a flash for fill light and, sometimes, a flashlight to help the camera focus.

Tripods: Having a tripod capable of flattening to ground level is useful for documenting the many parts of a fun-

gus in a single photograph. Manfrotto tripods have a patented 90° column mechanism which easily positions the camera close to the ground. When fungi are growing along the side of a tree, the tripod will often need to be set to its tallest settings.

Remotes: Having a wireless or corded remote for triggering the shutter release is very useful. I prefer to use the mirror up setting, which reduces vibration during the shutter release. Alternately, using the camera's time delay works well in avoiding vibration during an exposure.

Flash: Generally, I use a -2 stop exposed fill-flash to illuminate detail in the subject. It's a tricky balance to add just enough fill light yet produce an image looking as though no flash was used. It's important to set the proper exposure or the final result will appear to have the subject under a spotlight and the background will be too dark.



"Lycoperdon perlatum (Gemmaed puffball)"

Flashlight: I bring along a small LED flashlight to illuminate the subject in case a setting is too dark for the camera to find focus. Once I've acquired focus, I switch to manual focus (a quick method to lock the focus) and then let the camera determine the proper exposure prior to taking the photograph.

Macro photography: Many fungi are small enough to require a macro setup to fill the subject in the frame. Using a 1:1 macro lens is a preferred choice. Additionally, if using a camera with a telephoto lens, adding extension tubes or a threaded close-up lens works well in producing macro photographs.

Photo stacking: Also known as focus stacking, image stacking, z-stacking and focus blending. The most difficult part of macro photography is depth-of-field. At 1:1 there is roughly a millimetre of focus to work with. This is where photo stacking becomes a very useful tool. By slightly adjusting the focus through a series of photographs and then blending the images together, a greater depth of field is produced in the final composite. It would

require a full article to cover this subject in detail, however there are many useful on-line tutorials if you'd like to learn more.

Wide-angle photography: Commonly, wide and ultra-wide lenses are used to encapsulate the grandeur of landscapes and amazing feats of architecture. However, many people are surprised to learn their wide-angle lens can achieve near-macro results. One of my favourite uses for this type of lens is to position it within inches of a subject and still obtain much of the surrounding setting. This technique can produce an array of uniquely framed photographs



"Stropharia ambigua (Questionable Stropharia)"

Cross-polarization technique: Tired of your flash producing glare along reflective surfaces? While using a polarizing filter on the camera sometimes works, there is a more effective way to mitigate the problem.

Cross-polarization can eliminate much of this unwanted illumination and has played an integral part in my fungal photography. This requires a polarizing filter attached to the camera's lens and a strip of polarizing film covering the flash. Adjusted properly, the two allow the subject to be illuminated by the flash, but cancel out glare from the flash. Please refer to the many useful on-line tutorials if you'd like to learn more.

Cleaning up the scene: Usually there are twigs, pine needles, leaves and other loose debris covering or surrounding a fungus. It's not uncommon to carry tweezers, a small paintbrush and/or use a lens dust blower to remove unwanted elements before taking a photograph. Keep in mind, removing these elements in post-production will disqualify the photograph from being entered in many nature competitions.

Taking the time to be observant on a leisurely stroll through the forest is a joy in itself. Finding a rich array of fungi to photograph along the way can inspire a new appreciation for those rainy autumn days.

How I Did It

Heritage Rose

by Tim Agoston

When I was asked to write something for *Close-Up*, my first thought was “why me?” I realized that as I have learned many things from other members in the Club, perhaps I can share something that new members may also find useful and be willing to try.

This image was taken two years ago with a Nikon D7000 and my Nikon 18-105 mm f3.5-5.6 lens. It was shot hand held, at 1/200th sec at f14 and ISO 500.



In Lightroom, I did the adjustments that I often do; drop the highlights and open the shadows, adjust the white and black points and add a little more exposure and clarity. White flowers can be hard to do as they can lose detail and get blown out quickly.

After seeing many different processing techniques used in Club competitions, I decided to step outside my comfort zone and try something new. The two textures I added are from On1 Photo 10 in the Layers panel under Extras. The first texture is “Backdrop 12” at 50% opacity. The layer on top is “Cracked Paint” at 40% opacity and a final masking brush was applied lightly over the rose at 20% opacity.

When I had finished playing in On1 Photo 10, I sent the image back to Lightroom and adjusted the colours for a little more enhancement and added a small vignette to darken the edges.

As it started to come together, my vision for the image was for it to appear as an old photograph that might be sitting on a mantle in a 1920s home. I feel that I have accomplished this through what may just have been a happy accident.

Spin, Spin, Spin

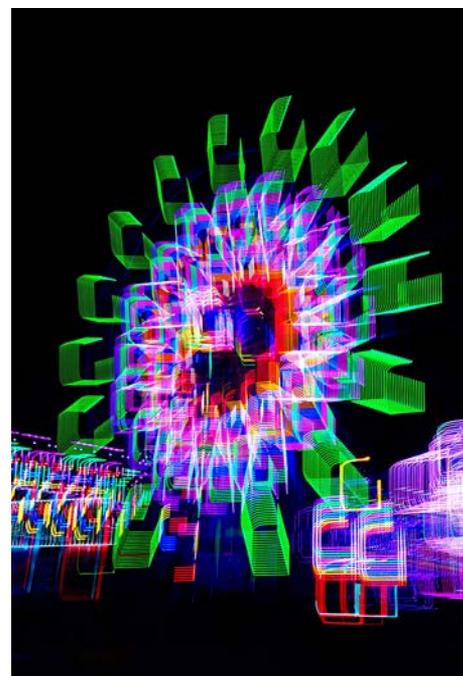
by Linda Angelo

I was convinced my photography colleagues all knew the precise settings required to get the perfect Esquimalt Carnival Ferris wheel night shot. It was obvious having a tripod was part of the equation. Truth be known I really didn't feel like setting up my tripod and as for the right settings, I had no idea. I continue to work on building a positive relationship with my tripod but I am not there yet.

So, how was I going to capture the colour and movement of the Ferris wheel against the dark sky without the use of a tripod? I figured I needed a longer shutter speed as I wanted a fluid sense of motion. I wanted the night sky as dark as possible so I knew I would need to control how much light was coming in. I suspected that moving my camera would help create a sense of motion. It seemed logical to move the camera in sync with the timing and movement of the Ferris wheel. I began to play.

I could soon anticipate when the wheel would start to spin and when it would stop. I moved my camera in a smooth circular fashion following the rotation of the Ferris wheel. Then I played with slower and faster movements including a more angular movement of the camera. The more angular, boxy movement resulted in the boxy shapes in *Spin, Spin, Spin*.

I was glad I took the chance and experimented as it resulted in interesting and colourful images. This shot was taken with a Fuji XT-2, ISO 200, lens at 22 mm, f20, 1 sec.



Tuesday Shoots

by Jim Fowler

As we head into winter, keep your creative juices flowing with the Tuesday shooters. The small group of regular attendees at the Tuesday shoots is always ready to share their photographic experience. Attendees post photos in the web gallery afterward. See what others saw. Compare your photos. Be stimulated and amazed.

November 6th: Heritage Acres. Step back into the past and explore this wonderful collection of artifacts and technology from the past. A Saanich pioneer, the late Willard Mitchell, saw the historical significance of old tools, farm and household equipment. The Saanich Historical Artifact Society maintains a great collection of artifacts. From outdoor farm equipment to inside tools and telephones, blacksmith shops to an old schoolhouse, there is something for everyone, rain or shine.

November 13th: Small Wonders. The emphasis will be on close-ups of small things. Dust off that macro lens, or add an extension tube to your 40 – 60 mm lens. Test the nearest focus limits of your zoom. Get in close and capture those small details that are often overlooked. Jump-start your photos for the VCC January Competition Theme. Shooting with a particular purpose sharpens the mind and improves your photography more than you might think.

November 20th: Swan Lake. The Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary is a nature reserve in the heart of the urban landscape. There are two separate ecosystems: the lake marshland with a 2.5 km trail around it, and the rocky Garry Oak highland. The floating boardwalk has been refurbished, providing easy access to open water views. The Nature House (admission by donation) has information on native flora and fauna and a live bee hive.

November 27th: Sepia. Monochrome with warm tones. Expand your vision and your results by intentionally creating sepia photos. No longer do you need to bleach your print and “re-develop” in selenium sepia toner. Do you know how dynamic range is affected by a common colour cast? Come and experiment with us.

Some events require registration and/or 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.

November 2018

Weekend Shoots

by Vanessa MacDonald

Here is our line-up of field trips for November. A few more trips are pending, depending on the weather and leader availability, so stay tuned for updates via email, or check the calendar over the next few weeks.

November 10th: Christie Falls. This field trip offers the opportunity to capture several different waterfalls along a beautiful forested section of river in the Ladysmith area. They are located along a trail that starts near the Bush Creek Fish Hatchery. This area is off the beaten track and is less well known, but has a very spectacular series of falls, each one unique in its own way.

Bring your polarizing and ND filters and shutter remote control or cable release, as this will be an ideal location for daytime long exposures of flowing water. Other nature and wildlife photography opportunities will abound in this wilderness area.

We have the gate keys to access the site and can park closer to the trail-head leading to the falls. You can anticipate 20-30 minutes of hiking along a well-defined, but rugged trail to reach the waterfalls.

November 17th: Fraser Delta Birds: Owls, Harriers and Eagles. Time to get out your long lens for a full day of bird photography!

The primary objective will be to capture some of these fantastic birds of prey that frequent the Fraser Delta area in the late fall and winter. Our plan will be to look for them at Boundary Bay and Brunswick Point. If we don't find any at one location, then we can move on to the next.

We recommend bringing a telephoto lens with minimum focal length of 300 mm. Your group leader is Suzanne Huot, a seasoned bird photographer. Carpooling will be arranged to cut down on the ferry cost.

Fraser Delta Birds: Additional trips. Look for a few more bird photography trips in the calendar in November. We will be announcing the dates later when we have a better sense of conditions and timing for the arrival of the migratory birds.

If you have any further questions, please contact your field trip coordinators, Gita and Vanessa at fieldtrips@victoriacamearclub.ca. See the calendar to register and for more specific details.

Apps for Phone Camera Art

by Kevin Keliher

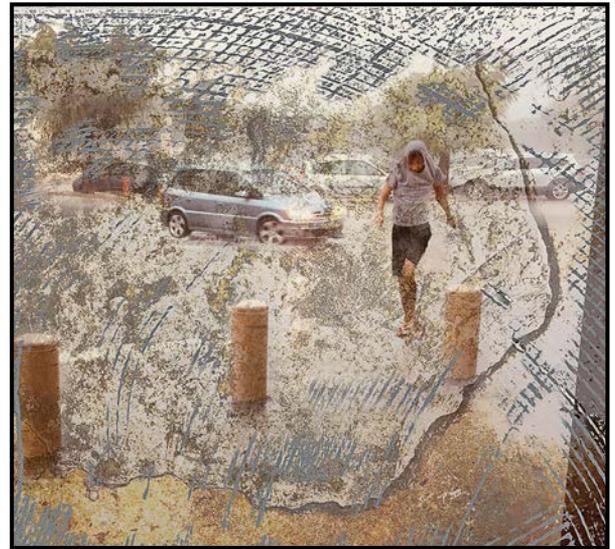
I recently attended a two-day class with Tony Bounsall (tonybounsall.com) entitled iPhone ARTography. He took us through the details of several amazing photo editing apps. I will be touching on six of those apps in this article. Tony offers classes at Camosun College, Monterey School, MISSA etc.

Mobile photography as it is called appears to be a burgeoning field. Some apps available are very basic. However, there is a growing number of apps with capabilities that almost match the power of Photoshop and Lightroom. By using several apps on the same photo you can pretty well achieve the same results. In addition, the more “hands on,” intuitive and simplified interface makes the whole post-processing experience quicker and more enjoyable. Here are six apps for the iPhone/iPad that I especially enjoy. When possible, I will indicate the android equivalent.



“Union”

Union: This one is my favourite photo editing app because of its power, ease of use and the extent to which you can control the editing process. You start by choosing a photo for the background layer. You can then adjust its aspect ratio, exposure, contrast, saturation, colour temperature and invert the colours. Next comes the foreground image. Again, you have all the adjustments available plus the opacity of this layer. The final and most powerful layer is the mask, allowing you to choose what parts of each layer you want included in the final image either through the erase/draw tool (with adjustable opacity and brush size) or from a selection of different shaped masks. You can expand the image (finger spread motion) for fine detail adjustments. With just a few stokes of the screen you can transform a set of photographs into an inspiring image. Union also has a few associated tutorial videos. unionapp.co.



“Image Blender”

Image Blender: Similar Android apps are Photo Layers, Ultimate Photo and Blender Camera. Image Blender is an awesome way to combine two images and gives you the choice to use a mask and several filters. It does not have the same control of the editing process that Union affords but can still produce a very pleasing result. jhnd.me/imageblender, en.uptodown.com.



“Waterlogue”

Waterlogue: Similar Android apps are Picas and Vinci. This is a simple but mighty app that easily allows you to transform your photo into a detailed watercolour painting. You have twelve different watercolour styles to pick from. tinrocket.com, picas.tech.

Snapseed: This one comes in both Android and Apple versions. The way you adjust the different controls on this app are the most intuitive and quickest of all the apps reviewed here. Just upload your photo and select from twelve filters and twenty-eight tools that allow you to adjust the features of your image. For example, you can fine tune the image’s perspective, HDR, graininess, sharpness etc. and play with tools (e.g., Grunge, Retrolux, Healing, Curves and Dodge & Burn). Once



“Snapseed”

you have picked a tool, you can adjust its intensity by sliding your finger from left to right across the screen. Describing all that Snapseed offers is way beyond the scope of this article. It is amazing in the range and fine detail adjustments it offers. *Google* or *Apple Store*.

Repix: Comes in both Android and Apple versions. It has thirty-two effects which you can brush across your image. These include, flares, rain drops, bokeh, raven, scratches, stains, cracks, edger, sepia, vintage, hatching etc. Repix also provides twenty-four filters, the regular adjustment sliders (e.g., colour temperature, exposure,



“Repix”

contrast, vibrancy), and a selection of frames to choose from. I especially love how quickly and dramatically you can transform an image by applying the abundant selection of brush affects. *sumoing.com*.

Hipstamatic: A similar Android app is Kultcamera (Retro Film Camera). Once you load this app, the screen of your tablet or phone becomes a touch camera. You are seeing the back of a vintage camera with several analog controls at your fingertips. These include aspect ratio, flash on/off, flash strength, shutter speed, ISO, double-exposure and several lenses and film types. It also, offers a great editing suite with twelve presets and twenty adjustment tools. *hipstamatic.com*, *Kultcamera*.



“Hispamatic”

Finally, where does mobile photography fit in the history of photography? Tony mentioned that photographers as early as the 19th century were using soft focus lenses, cheesecloth over the lens, and hand-working paper negatives to produce a more painterly approach to image making. Leonard Misonne and Alfred Stieglitz’s work are examples of their attempt to align with the soft romantic, atmospheric visual art style at the time. Just like many of us today they wanted a way to show that there was a trace of the photographer’s “hand” in the image making.

The New York Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) has published articles at www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/themes/photography which posit that photography has been used throughout history as a mode of communication and critique in our increasingly visual culture. The medium is being continually reinvented and rethought; it is shaped as much by technological advances as it is by the ever-changing dialogues surrounding photography’s use.

We are contributors to this dialogue. To me photography can be a vehicle for self-expression, a statement of what is important. For some of us a well-executed photo is not enough. We want to transform the image into something more, different, underscoring an opening we see into a different way of viewing the panorama.

Beginners' Corner: Sharing Images

by Josée Ménard

Photography is a hobby where practice does make perfect, well, maybe one day. Why one day you may ask? The answer is that, photography is a process in which you improve through trial and error, and through the experience of sharing and learning from others. Within this process, let's address the sharing portion.



"To the Heart of the Flower" (Original)

Sharing can happen in different ways. Friends or photography buddies can give an opinion. A photography club can also provide an opportunity to submit images digitally, or in print, during mutual sharing or judging evenings. Some groups remain non-competitive where the submitted images are commented on by peers following a specific criteria and commentary dialogue. Other groups are mainly competitive where judges, advanced level photographers or local professionals, voluntarily evaluate your images. No matter your choice, your photographs will be evaluated by a friendly eye.

As you read this article intimidating thoughts might be emerging in your mind. Submissions and competitions provide you with a great opportunity for growth as a photographer. Subdue your growing fears as you are not alone. The more you submit, the easier it becomes. Part of sharing is to become able to decide on the photograph to submit. In other words, the image that best invites the viewer's eye to the subject and maintains its attention within it. Awaken your eye by asking yourself why you like this shot more than another. What is it that attracted you first? What detail allowed your mind to wander? Not easy to identify at first. Look for a few seconds only. What draws you in? What draws you out?

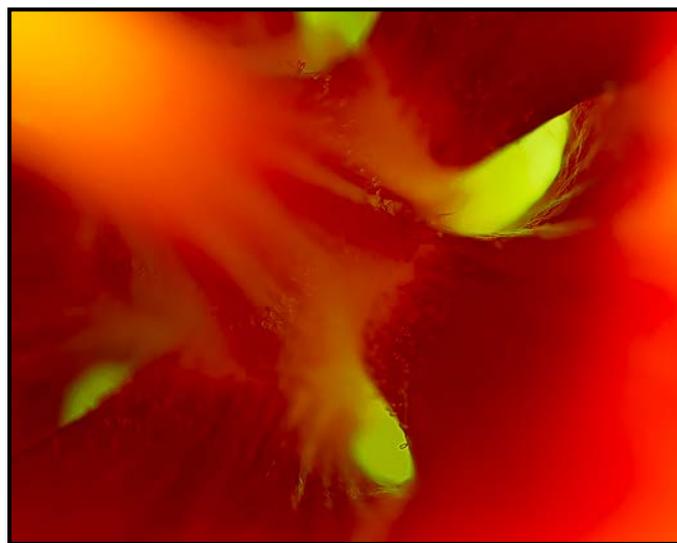
In the photo "To the Heart of the Flower", the judge or the viewer is clued in to the fact that the photographer's subject has to do with the centre of the flower or pistil. When you share images, you must include a title. Ensure it is descriptive since the viewer, presenter or judge will refer to it. It is your one chance to communicate with them.

As I captured this flower, a hibiscus, my aim was to draw the viewer into the heart of the flower. My angle, my choice of a macro lens, and using the light to illuminate its petals were all factors in the success of this image.

I was happy with the result of all my chosen components of the composition. The vague and dreamy light yellow brings you to a warmer tone where deep inside the eye discovers the delicate in-focus pistils. At this point in my photography, I am good with it and, in order to consider criticism as a positive stepping stone, I am ready to hear what you have to say as a judge and viewer.

From this point on, a series of questions come into play. In order to keep the viewer's eye captivated and directionally oriented, I still need to selectively crop the image.

After cropping, it is now "perfect", as this action eliminates some of the more distracting overexposed areas of the petals. The preplanned camera angle, allows me to easily position the hibiscus center pistil in the upper left corner in order to invite the eye in. If not, the eye can be naturally welcomed from any of the illuminated edges or other corners. From there, the eye can travel spirally in towards a focused micro pistil.



"To the Heart of the Flower" (Cropped)

Done. For a few days I look at it. Be it close or at a distance, nothing disturbs my eye. I am ready to share it with you.

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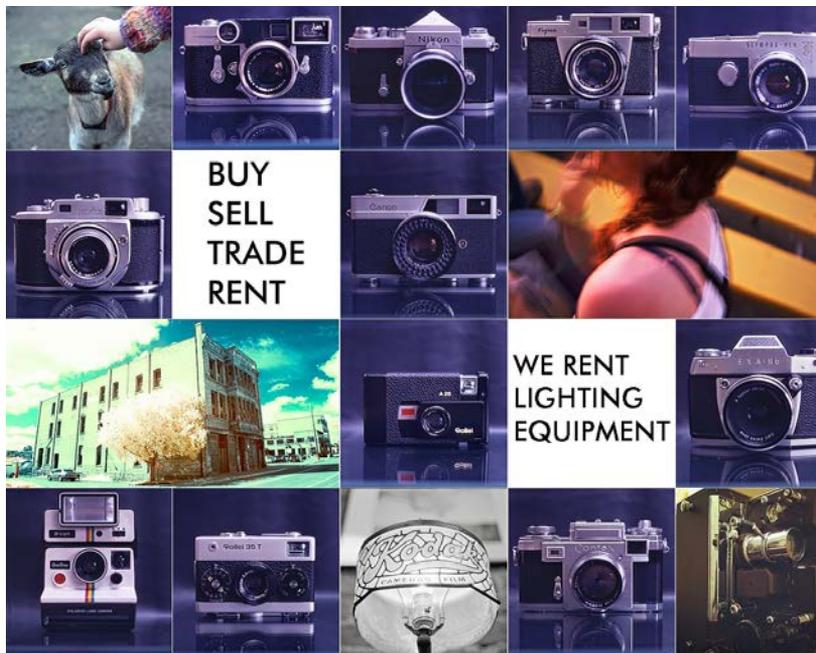
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