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The Viewfinder

EDITOR THEVIEWFINDER@YAHOO.COM

DECEMBER 2021

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Bonnie Forman-Franco

It is with great privilege that I welcome our Syosset Camera Club members to the first newsletter this club has produced for the past 7 years. We have been fortunate to have the talents of Barry Goldstein as the editor, as he was for the eleven years the newsletter was in production. He took a sabbatical for these past 7 years and is now ready to come back stronger and greater than ever.

One of the goals I set as President was to make the Syosset CC THE premier camera club on LI. Although we lost a few members this year, we also gained the talents of 8 new members. I encourage you to invite all your camera toting

friends to join as well, so they also can benefit from membership in our club.

The introduction of this newsletter represents one of the innovations being brought to the club. To the best of my knowledge, we are the only club with a newsletter and one free of commercial advertising. We welcome any and all thoughts on how you like it and what perhaps you may want to see written inside. Please feel free to write something for Barry to consider inserting. All future writers are welcome.

One of the other new additions to our club, has been the google groups emails which is chaired by Roni (and myself). Based on your feedback,

these articles have been quite successful and are being well received.

Thank you all for taking the time to let us know how your are enjoying this addition.

Although not new, our program chair Lorraine has been providing some excellent quality presentations and topics of interest. She has many great programs lined up for the balance of our club year so look for her announcements.

Alan and Marty continue to provide great photographic input at our critiques. This allows you, the maker to consider their suggestions and perhaps take a different view as to what

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The least Understood Tool

Good photographs are the result of good technique and previsualization. With few exceptions, the equipment is irrelevant. The first step must be to 'see' the composition in your mind. Image creation is the product of thought. The whole process is orchestrated by a collection of cells organized in a synaptic beauty known as the brain. This is a tool capable of learning and like every other learning process, the key to excellence is practice. To practice, is to go through the steps ... slowing down... using a tripod and studying the scene. You need to look at every vantage point and angle and to decide if the composition will be sharply focused throughout, or benefit by selective focus and the set the aperture appropriately. Forget the 'Auto' setting for aperture. Your camera wants everything sharp.

The camera's viewfinder can be the enemy of the creative process because it reinforces the habit of



eye level composition. Landscapes frequently benefit from a low vantage point by including foreground elements in the composition. Additionally, it is a viewpoint that adds tension and that is unfamiliar to the viewer, which adds interest. Pictures of animals are almost always better at the animal's eye level.

Why the tripod? With high ISO and stabilization the need for a tripod for steadiness is arguable, but the tripod has another function. It forces deliberate planning of the composition.

These are a few of the ways your image can approach your vision. Use them before artificial intelligence takes those decisions away from you too!

Ed



Polarizers for Dummies

There are two filters that have not been rendered obsolete by digital cameras and post processing software. At least not so far.

- Neutral density
- Polarizer.

A polarizer eliminates unwanted reflections, improves contrast, color saturation and apparent sharpness by blocking polarized light. It is irreplaceable for rendering skies and pictures with water, pictures through glass, cars, Fall colors and metallic objects. But—there is no free lunchthere is a price. Depending on the filter, you can expect to

lose 1-3 stops of light with a polarizer, but it is a cheap price to pay, in my humble opinion. Speaking of cheap, prices vary widely by brand. Look for percent transmission and thickness. A high percent of transmission means less light loss and a thin mount is important for wide angle lenses to prevent vignetting. The bottom line; like the credit card, don't leave home without it.

That's the short story on polarizers. read the full story on page 4.

Ed



Size Matters—or does it?

sensor size, pixel size and file size. They are all important but not equally.

A sensor that is the same dimensions as a frame of 35mm film is considered—get ready for it- 'full frame.' A rather arbitrary frame of reference (pardon the pun). Before the invention of 35 mm film (24x36mm), 8x10" was 'full frame.' Improvements in resolution made it possible to produce professional quality images with 2¹/₄" x 2¹/₄", then 35mm and even half-frame. Digital photography made the APSC a practical choice. And,

don't forget the half-frame, the format that made Olympus famous.

The advantage of a larger sensor is not just more pixels and not the biggest advantage. The big advantage is in the size of the pixels. Pixels turn light into data, the bigger a pixel is, the more data it collects. If all other factors are the same, a bigger pixel size means that the image will be higher quality.

Larger pixels produce less noise, have greater

bit depth and less cross contamination between pixels, hence better contrast and dynamic range. A medium format camera which has a sensor larger than full frame, such as Hasselblad, Pentax 645Z, or Fujifilm GFX will outperform any full frame camera. But, for prints up to 11x14 it is a challenge to tell the difference between a photo taken on APSC and Full Frame camera. The same could be said about half-frame cameras *Continued on page 8*

Polarizers

everything you need to
know and some other stuff

In nature, light waves normally move (oscillate) in all directions. However, light from a clear blue sky and light that is reflected from most surfaces is polarized, otherwise referred to as collimated or coherent. That includes light reflected from, glass, metallic surfaces, Autumn leaves, etc..

Circular polarization of a light wave is a state in which, at each point, the electromagnetic field of the wave has a constant magnitude and is rotating at a constant rate in a plane perpendicular to the direction of the wave.

Reflected light in the form of glare is the enemy of contrast and saturation. When I tried to dive deeper into the subject of 'glare' I got:

$$L_v = 9.2 \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{E_i}{\theta_i(\theta_i + 1.5)}$$

So let's not belabor that point. A polarizer can eliminate most of the glare associated with reflected light, and



Not intended to be composition advice, but to find the sweet spot while using a polarizer, turn your fingers into an L shape. Point your forefinger at the sun, then pivot your wrist. Wherever your thumb is pointing is the best direction to aim your camera.

that gentle reader, is the secret sauce. By reducing glare we deepen saturation, eliminate unwanted reflection, improve contrast, especially micro contrast, and enhance apparent sharpness.

Unlike other filters, are not passive, they are active devices. To work, they must be oriented in relation to the light. Maximum effect happens at a 90 deg. Angle from the light source.

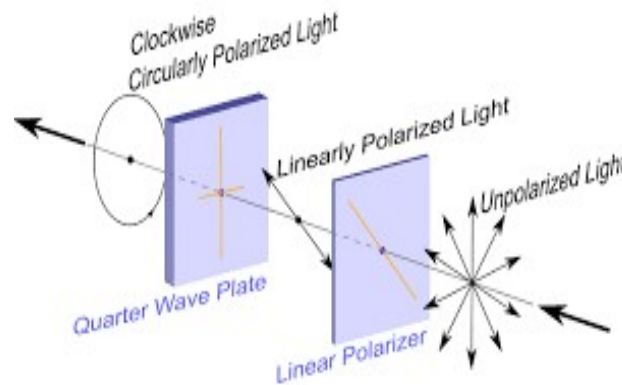
Polarization means that the light waves will oscillate in a single plane, Linear polarizers will only let light waves pass that are in alignment with that plane and the filters invisible crystalline 'grid.' Linear polarizers very effective, but alas interfere with the autofocus and metering systems of DSLRs which use beam splitters in their exposure and focus systems. Linear polarizes may also defeat the action of the anti-aliasing filter on the imaging sen-

Continued on page 3

Polarizers: continued from page 3

sor.

Thankfully, there is another type of polarizer, the circular polarizer. It is more complex than a linear one, but solves the problems associated with the linear polarizer. They are called circular because the light



needed. Fortunately this does not pose a problem for the auto exposure system.

Good polarizers are expensive, so it makes sense to buy one that fits your largest diameter lens and use step-down rings to adapt it to smaller

There are two types of polarizers;

- Linear

leaving the rear element is polarized in a circular pattern. By using a second element called a 'quarter wave retarder' behind the front polarizer, the light leaving the retarder will be polarized

diameter lenses.

The effect of a polarizer is variable depending upon camera position relative to the light source and the physical nature of elements in the scene being photographed. The most effective orientation is to have the sun at 90 degrees from the di-

rection that you are aiming the camera, in other words, over your left or right shoulder. You can judge the effect of the filter through the viewfinder. As you look at the composition, turn the

once more and compatible with the camera. With either type of polarizer, turning the filter in its mount adjusts the degree of polarization. At maximum blocking effect, an additional exposure of 1 to 3 stops will be

In case your wondering, variable neutral density filters are made by combining two linear polarizers in a single mount such that one can be rotated in front of the other. As their polarizing planes conflict, the amount of light transmitted is reduced; hence variable ND.

rection that you are aiming the camera, in other words, over your left or right shoulder. You can judge the effect of the filter through the viewfinder. As

you look at the composition, turn the

Continued on page 6

FOR SALE

FUJIFILM XH-1

Got equipment you don't use? List it here

'Flagship' Mirrorless camera. with Vertical battery grip. A professional quality camera. Gently used in like new condition Complete with original packaging, 3 Fujifilm batteries and charger. Camera was only used a few times. Asking \$850



- 24MP X-Trans APS-C sensor
- 5-axis in-body image stabilization (rated at 5EV)*
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Polarizers continued from page 3

filter to see the effect especially on the sky. In the absence of polarized light, a polarizer is nothing more than a 1 to 2-stop neutral density filter. A polarizer won't do you any good in non-polarized light.

Because polarizers frequently have a thicker mount than ordinary filters, beware of vignetting on wide-angle settings. You can buy a filter that has a relatively thin mount. But it will be priced accordingly.

Here's a cool trick: If you are unsure of the type of polarizer you have, simply hold it up to a mirror. If the areas where the filter and its mirror image overlap appear black, turn the filter around, If the overlapping area is now clear, It

is a circular polarizer. If the overlapping area is clear in either orientation the filter is a linear one.

I bet you didn't know that before....

Hold the filter up to a mirror. If the areas where the filter and its mirror image overlap appear black and clear when you turn it around, it's a circular polarizer.



NEUTRAL DENSITY FILTERS

There are occasions when you need to use a shutter speed that is slower than what you can get at the lowest ISO and aperture combination for a given shutter speed. For example; to blur moving water. Similarly, there are times when you need to use a larger aperture for shallow depth of field and cannot do it under the prevailing conditions. Like isolating a subject from the background. This is where the ND filter shines.

The ND filter is tinted glass or polycarbonate that reduces the light entering the lens by a fixed

amount with no effect on color. Simple enough but naming them is not.

There are as many ways to name a neutral density filter as there are Jerusalem

Avenues in Long Island. The most straight forward is the number of stops of exposure that the filter reduces. For example, a filter

that reduces the light by 4 stops has a filter factor of 16 (2, 4, 8, 16 or ND16), which means it passes 1/16th as much light as no filter and has a density of 1.2 ($10^{1.2}$) and may also be known as an ND104.

A very useful filter used extensively by Landscape Photographers is the graduated ND. This filter applies the density in a gradient from top to bottom, allowing the darkening of a sky without affecting foreground exposure. They are available in many densities and in a variety of transition smoothness. Graduated NDs are most useful in a square filter design because they can be adjusted vertically in order to place the density in the area that needs less exposure and position the transition

point appropriately. For example, ND filters also come in a variety of non-neutral tints which can be used for effects in color photography. Graduated ND filters do exist in screw in models but practicality is limited.

A word about Square filters: Square filters are available from many makers including some economical ones you can find online.

f-stops	Density	ND Factor	ND Numb
1	0.3	2	ND101
2	0.6	4	ND102
3	0.9	8	ND103
4	1.2	16	ND104
5	1.5	32	ND105
6	1.8	64	ND106
7	2.1	128	ND107
8	2.4	256	ND108
9	2.7	512	ND109
10	3	1024	ND110



Size Matters

continued

with prints up to 8x10.

An 11x14 print with print resolution of 240 ppi requires only 8.87 MP.

Need I say more?

Based on that, there isn't as much advantage in having a camera with over 12 MP resolution as one might think. The Nikon D4 is a powerhouse professional cam-

era and it has only 16MP. The lowest megapixels count cameras available are more than sufficient for

The pixel size for a Nikon D700 is 8.45µm whereas the pixel size for an iPhone 5 is only 1.4µm.

most purposes in terms of resolution. In fact the sharpness of the lens is more important than the number of pixels.

The challenge for images from small pixel count cameras is to compose the image so that a minimum amount of cropping is required.

So the answer to the question is, yes-size does matter but not always..

Ed

HOW BIG CAN I PRINT MY DIGITAL IMAGE?

Megapixels	Pixel Resolution	BEST @300ppi	BETTER @200ppi	GOOD @150ppi
3	2048 x 1536	6.82" x 5.12"	10.24" x 7.68"	13.65" x 10.24"
4	2464 x 1632	8.21" x 5.44"	12.32" x 8.16"	16.42" x 10.88"
6	3008 x 2000	10.02" x 6.67"	15.04" x 10.00"	20.05" x 13.34"
8	3264 x 2448	10.88" x 8.16"	16.32" x 12.24"	21.76" x 16.32"
10	3872 x 2592	12.91" x 8.64"	19.36" x 12.96"	25.81" x 17.28"
12	4290 x 2800	14.30" x 9.34"	21.45" x 14.00"	28.60" x 18.67"
16	4920 x 3264	16.40" x 10.88"	24.60" x 16.32"	32.80" x 21.76"
18	5184 x 3456	17.28" x 11.52"	25.92" x 17.28"	34.56" x 23.04"
35mm film, scanned	5380 x 3620	17.93" x 12.06"	26.90" x 18.10"	35.87" x 24.13"
24	6048 x 4032	20.16" x 13.44"	30.24" x 20.16"	40.32" x 26.88"

Average Scores After Nine Entries

It's too early in the season to determine First Second or Third Place standings

- but -

the chart on the right shows the average score per entry for those who have competed with a total of nine images in a category in the three competitions through Nov.

Is there a correlation between the average score after 1/3 of the season and EOY standings? That is what we will find out.

CREATIVE

Chastain	8.3
Goldkranz	8.3
Scheinerman	8.3

DIGITAL B&W A

Chastain	8.3
Dubitsky	8.1
Forman-Franco	8.4
Nightingale	7.8
Sommer	8.8
Weisler	7.7
Woulfin	8.0

DBWSALON

Agdern	7.8
DeBiase	8.6
Gallagher	8.2
Goldkranz	8.7
Scheinerman	8.1

PROJ. A

Dubitsky	8.4
Gallagher	8.2
Goldstein, B	8.2
Kirshenbaum	7.8
Nightingale	8.1
Scheinerman	8.6
Sommer	8.6
Weisler	8.1
Woulfin	7.9

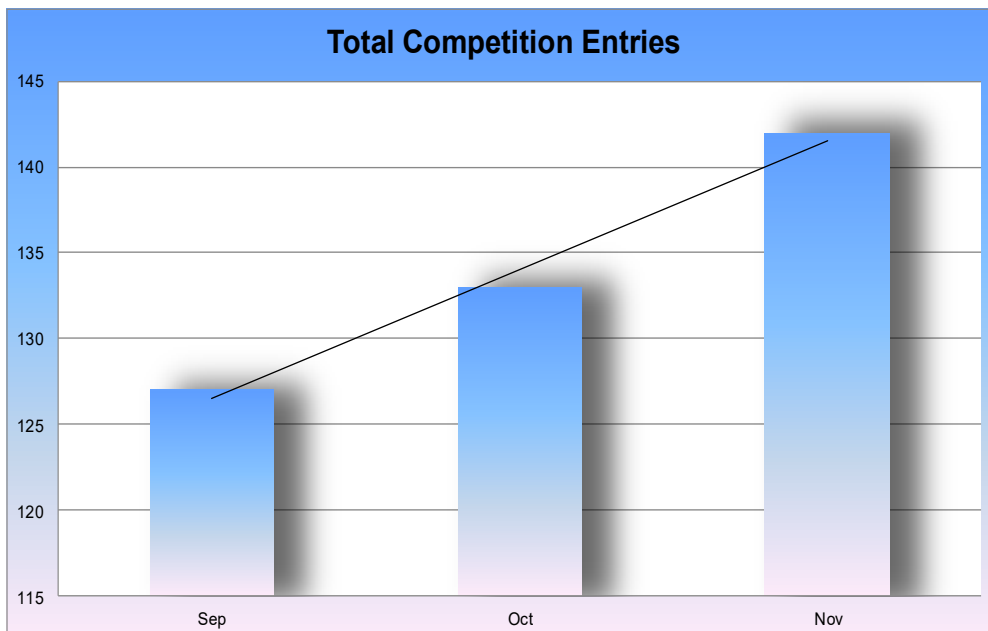
PROJ. B

Grotas	8.2
--------	-----

PROJ.SALON

Agdern	8.2
Chastain	8.4
DeBiase	8.9
Ferrara, C	8.4
Forman-Franco	8.8
Goldkranz	8.6

Member Participation



News from the nearly useless information department.

The participation trend is encouraging. The number of image entries has increased for each of the 3 competitions to date.

Sharpness; not so simple

There are four factors that effect the sharpness of an image:

1. Aperture
2. Focus
3. Movement
4. Lens acuity

Aperture:

We know that smaller apertures produce greater depth of field and that the widest aperture for a given lens is usually the softest. One could therefore, make the inference that the smaller the aperture the sharper the image— NOT!! True, the smaller (*higher f-number*) the greater the depth of field and that is true throughout the entire range of apertures, but when the aperture becomes very small, like $f16$, the phenomenon of diffraction becomes noticeable. This would be a good time to define just what diffraction is.

Diffraction occurs when a light wave passes through an aperture that approaches the size of the light's wavelength. *This won't be on the test, just thought you would like to know.* The scattering of light caused by diffraction effects contrast and sharpness. One must weigh the benefit of using very small apertures as the case dictates. To do so, you need to be familiar with the characteristics of the

lens. In many cases the advantage of greater depth outweighs the diffraction effect because the apparent overall sharpness is greater. That's

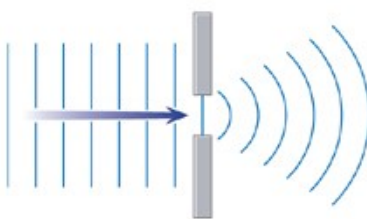
why lenses have $f16$, $f22$ and even $f32$. It is a good idea to test each of your lenses to determine the sharpness at each aperture, using a fixed test target like a sheet of newspaper. You can get fancy and print a more comprehensive test chart from online sources. This test will reveal the "Sweet spot" for your lens as well as the point at which diffraction becomes a limiting factor.



The effects of diffraction were discovered by [Francesco Maria Grimaldi](#), and were published posthumously in 1665. [Isaac Newton](#) attributed them to inflexion of light rays. [James Gregory](#) (1638–1675) observed the diffraction patterns caused by a bird feather, which was effectively the first [diffraction grating](#) to be discovered. [Thomas Young](#) performed a [experiment](#) in 1803 demonstrating interference from two closely spaced slits. Explaining his results by interference of the waves emanating from the two different slits, he deduced that light must propagate as waves. [Augustin-Jean Fresnel](#) did more definitive studies and calculations of diffraction, made public in 1816 and 1818, and thereby gave great support to the wave theory of light that had been advanced by [Christiaan Huygens](#) and reinvigorated by Young, against Newton's particle theory.

Sharpness continued

The “Sweet Spot” is the aperture that provides the sharpest result at a given plane of focus. As a general rule, it will be two stops smaller than the widest aperture. So for a f2.8 lens, the sweet spot will probably be f5.6. But high quality lenses produced in the last few decades, in many cases produce results that are largely indistinguishable between large and small apertures except when diffraction sets in. To the best of my knowledge, There is no lens design that eliminates diffraction.



Diffraction illustration

Focus:

Seems too obvious to mention, but focusing on the wrong spot as a result of depending on the camera's autofocus system is the reason for a 'soft' image in most cases. The focus point may be set somewhere other than where you want. So, before shooting, verify that the focus indicator is where you want it. All too often, we focus carefully on a spot and then re-compose, but the camera refocuses on a different spot because we failed to hold the shutter button in the half-press position. A cure for this problem is to set the camera

so that focusing and auto-exposure are decoupled. That is to say half-pressing the shutter release will set the exposure but not the focus. Focus is achieved by the AE Lock button on the back of the camera; hence the term “back button focus.” Now when you set the focus by pressing the AE button, it will stay there until you focus on something else.

If manually focusing, and you have a mirrorless camera, turn on focus peaking. Do not depend on the camera's preview to see if the image is sharp. Size matters here

too. The screen on the back of the camera is just too small for that.

Movement:

Technically, movement is not a sharpness issue but nevertheless just as important for getting an image that appears sharp. I won't talk about tripods because you are not going to use one, so you need to understand the practical limits of shutter speed and image stabilization systems. Obviously, in order to work the stabilization needs to be

As a general rule, the sweet spot will be two stops smaller than the widest aperture.

Continued on p. 12

Sharpness continued

turned on, both on the camera for bodies with sensor image stabilization and on the lens if so equipped.

Even with image stabilization it's a good idea to use the rule of thumb for minimum shutter speed as $1/\text{focal length}$. Using that rule of thumb, for a 100mm lens the minimum shutter speed for a sharp image would be $1/100$ second. You can then account for sensor size and IS. If the system has 5 stops of stabilization the $1/100$ becomes $1/10$ sec. Since the 'Reciprocal Rule' assumes a full size sensor, if your camera has a crop sensor then the crop factor can also be applied which further reduces the minimum shutter speed for a 1.5X crop camera to about $1/8$ sec. (the closest shutter marking). People with a natural tremor should use a tripod.

Lens Quality:

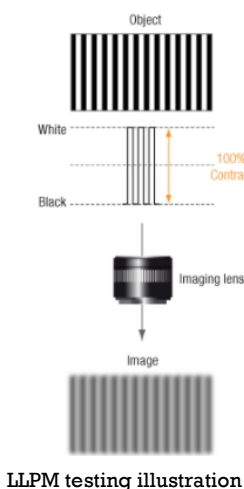
When we talk about lens quality, the issues are aberrations, flatness of field, build quality and of course sharpness. Sharpness is usually measured in line pairs per millimeter (LPMM or LPM) or by the size of the blur on the sensor in microns (circle of confusion). In a lppmm test, a target consisting of white and black alternating bars at increasingly small

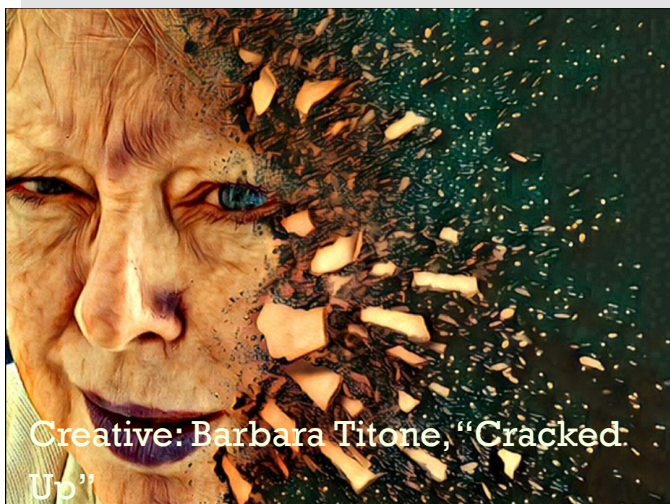
intervals is photographed and the smallest separation at which the lines can be seen distinctly, which equates to the number of lines per millimeter is the resolution of the lens.

There is another dimension of lens quality that looks at the aesthetics of the image. Some lenses prized for portraits render relatively soft images with pleasing bouquet. Like a prized musical instrument, there are lenses beloved by their owners which have qualities not found on the spec. sheet. Another consideration not found in the specs is the

quality of bouquet, or the appearance of out of the focus areas. Some lenses good in other respects render ugly out of focus backgrounds such as doughnut shaped circles, while others produce out of focus areas pleasant to look at.

How much do you have to pay for sharpness? Before buying a lens check the reviews. Make sure the reviewer is independent of the manufacturer and if he or she owns the lens it was not a gift from the manufacturer. In many cases, the lens has been sent to the reviewer by the manufacturer for review and may or





Creative: Barbara Titone, "Cracked. Up"

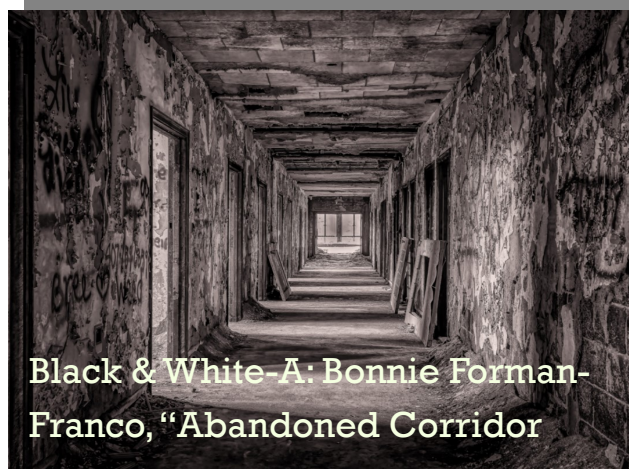


Color- A: Doreen Rose, "Cosmo Duo"



Color-B; Robert Kaplan, "Anhinga in Black"

November's Images of the Month



Black & White-A: Bonnie Forman-Franco, "Abandoned Corridor"



Black & White-B: Melanie Grotas,



Black & White-S: Barry Goldstein,



Color-S: Bonnie Forman-Franco, "Car Repair Cuban Style"

Sharpness; Continued from page 12

may not be subject to bias. You have to check the reputation of the reviewer in that case. Also, check to see if the reviewer has a portfolio of work to back up his or her statements. The following three examples of macro lenses have all received good reviews for sharpness and range in price from \$399 to \$1,399. Do you need to spend the extra \$1,000? You be the judge!



Sigma 105mm
f2.8 EX DG OS
HSM Macro \$569

“very sharp even wide open at $f/2.8$. For max. stop down to $f/5.6$. There are traces of corner softness at $f/2.8$, which settle down at $f/4$, and disappear at $f/5.6$. Diffraction limiting sets in by $f/11$, No practical impact on sharpness until $f/16$. At $f/22$ we see some softness across the frame.



Tokina atx-i
100mm f2.8 FF

“The optical performance of this lens is sublime even at $f2.8$. Beautiful background blur and simultaneously sharp to the corners. No field curvature.” *Editor’s note: The AF capabilities may not be up to par with newer camera. Best to use manual focus.*



Canon 100 mm IS
f2.8 Macro IS USM
\$1,399

“very sharp even at $f/2.8$. Stopping down only improves these results, reaching absolute tack-sharpness at $f/5.6$. The lens continues to be sharp all the way to $f/16$, where diffraction limiting has set in. At $f/22$ it's a bit more obvious. At $f/32$, things are quite soft”

SCC Brochure

Please help recruit new members. To help, you will be receiving a brochure for use as a recruiting tool. Originally created some years ago by Jules and yours truly, it has been updated. Please print out a few copies and keep them in with you. When you meet a willing victim, give him or her the brochure. Besides, you never know when you might need a piece of paper.

Ed

President's message continued

you envisioned your image to be. You have the benefit of two award winners who have been entering competitions for years now, so take advantage of their wealth of experience.

Thankfully we acquired new image software this year for competitions. A real game changer for our club. We need to thank Barry, Ira, and Andrew for keeping our competitions moving and without glitches. Thanks to Alan for

running our zoom events.

We might not always agree with the judges scoring of our images, nevertheless, we do have to thank Valerie for providing new and interesting people to judge our photographs. Our most recent judges in particular, have provided extensive critiques on our images. Hopefully, we all learned a little something.

All of the chair people put in a lot of time and effort making

your club such a success. A big thank you— full of gratitude— is extended to all who keep our club alive.

In looking forward to the year ahead, I wish you and yours a very happy and healthy holiday season. I hope you all stay safe and I look forward to seeing all your fabulous images in the year to come. Continue shooting and enjoy yourselves.

Bonnie

NEUTRAL DENSITY FILTERS *continued*

They use a filter holder that consists of two parts; an adapter ring to match the lens diameter and the holder which comes in a number of sizes and attaches to the adapter. By using a system large enough for your largest lens,



one system will work with all of them. The holder will typically have 3 slots so that filters can be 'stacked.' Stacking ND filters is a good way to achieve multiple den-

sities with only a few filters. Two filter gives you 3 possible combination, 3 filters gives you 6 combinations.

If you do a lot of landscape photography and are serious about it, a square filter system should definitely be considered.

Ed

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December

- 2 Critique
- 9 Presentation – Jim Zucker-
man 3D & Composites
- 10 PFLI Competition
- 16 Competition

January

- 6 Plan B – Dble Print Comp.
- 7 PFLI Competition
- 8 PFLI Print Comp.
- 13 Critique
- 20 Presentation -Alan Agdern
- 27 Competition

February

- 3 Plan B – Dble Print Comp.
- 10 Critique
- 11 PFLI Competition
- 17 Virtual Webinar: Artist

Spotlight featuring Harold Davis on **May**

- Lite Box Photography
- 24 Competition

March

- 3 Open
- 10 Critique
- 11 PFLI Competition
- 12 PFLI Print Competition
- 17 Presentation – Hazel Mer-
edith: Topic to be Decided
- 24 Competition

April

- 7 Plan B – Dble Print Comp.
- 8 PFLI Competition
- 14 Critique
- 21 Presentation – Nick Stover:
Topic to be Decided Inter-Club
Program:
- 28 Competition

- 5 Open
- 12 Competition
- 13 PFLI Competition
- 14 PFLI Print Competition
- 19 Virtual Webinar: Artist
Spotlight: Cole Thompson, Why
Black & White
- 26 EOY Competition

June

- 10 PFLI Dig. LV Competition
- 11 PFLI Print LV Competition

