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PHOTO NEWS

VOLUME 24, NO. 4 / WINTER 2015-2016 / $6.98

PORTFOLIO: PETER BAUMGARTEN
Magnificent Manitoulin

TONY BECK
Tips for Sharper Images

FRANCIS AUDET
Star Trails

CHRISTIAN AUTOTTE
Mastering Exposure

MICHEL ROY
Magic of Post-Processing



Photo by Peter Baumgarten

Plus:

DR. WAYNE LYNCH
Backyard Safari

KRISTIAN BOGNER
Maui Adventure

and more!

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Focal Point

BY **NORM ROSEN**, EDITOR | *editor@photonews.ca*

WHEN THE SNOW FLIES...

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Questions or comments? Please send me an e-mail at *editor@zakmedia.ca*

I grab my camera and head out into the brisk winter air.

As an avid skier, a retired snowmobile magazine photographer, and a hockey fan, I take a very positive approach to the winter season. I have always felt that the challenge of cold weather photography is part of our Canadian identity – a logical extension of the pioneer spirit that binds us together as a nation that celebrates our triumph over winter. When it is so cold that the snow squeaks under your feet, and your breath freezes as you traverse the icy landscape, photo opportunities beckon with a siren song that cannot be ignored.

This issue of PHOTONews contains a range of features designed to inspire you to a new level of winter photography adventures. If you enjoy getting out in the cold, Michael DeFreitas can help you embrace the season. Francis Audet turns his camera to the sky to capture star trails, Dr. Wayne Lynch takes us along on a backyard photo safari, and Tony Beck shows you how to get sharper shots – even if you are shivering in the snow.

If you prefer to avoid the winter chill, Michel Roy reveals some of the magic of retouching, and Kristian Bogner shares images from his recent Maui adventure.

We are proud to present a portfolio from Peter Baumgarten, Canada's first Olympus Trailblazer, whose inspiring images of winter on Manitoulin Island may have you searching for your mittens and mukluks so you can add photos like these to your collection.

All in all, a very cool issue – so sit back and enjoy some of Canada's finest photography!

Explore the online components of PHOTONews Magazine at our website ***www.photonews.ca*** , at the new YouTube channel *PHOTONewsTV*, the *PHOTONews Flash* newsletter, and the Facebook, twitter, and flickr® groups.

*To participate in the PHOTONews Challenge and the Reader's Gallery please visit the PHOTONews Gallery flickr® group – **www.flickr.com/groups/photonewsgallery/** where you can enjoy our interactive discussions and meet some of Canada's most enthusiastic photographers.*

PHOTONews
Volume 24, Number4 / Winter 2015-2016
Cover photo: "Spinning with the Perseids"
by Peter Baumgarten

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© 2015 PHOTONews Magazine, Zak Media
Printed in Canada • ISSN 1185-3875

Canada Post Publications Mail Agreement No. 40040669

Undeliverables to:
Photo News Magazine
22 Telson Road, Markham, ON L3R 1E5

PHOTONews is published four times per year (Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter) by Zak Media, and distributed to imaging and adventure enthusiasts throughout Canada.

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SUBSCRIPTIONS – Address change
Visit **www.photonews.ca** or contact :
PHOTONews Magazine
22 Telson Road • Markham, ON L3R 1E5

Subscription rates:
FREE for photographers in Canada – available at photo retail shops throughout Canada, and by mail – please see the subscription page at www.photonews.ca for FREE subscription information.

U.S. and international readers are invited to read the magazine on-line at www.photonews.ca where you may enjoy FREE access to the digital edition archives.

CCAB BPA WORLDWIDE PMA

Published by
Zak Media
189 Alfred-Desrochers
Saint-Augustin, QC, Canada G3A 2T1
Tel: 418 871 4294 • Fax: 418 871 4295
www.zakmedia.ca

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What do you think?

PHOTONews readers are invited to contact us – e-mail addresses are on the masthead of the magazine, or you can add your thoughts to the discussion thread at the flickr® group www.flickr.com/groups/photonewsgallery/discuss/72157626731715927/

Sue Thompson says

I would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone at PhotoNews. I have been published several times and it's always so exciting to get "That package" in the mail. The latest arrived today.

Big thank you to you all!
Sue.

And a big Thank You to you, Sue for participating in every one of our PHOTONews Challenge contests at the flickr® group – www.flickr.com/groups/photonewsgallery/

Pavel Muller says

I am new – I just signed up. I am glad that you exist, glad that there is an emphasis on Canadian content. I have gone back several issues in PDF format and I checked out also the websites of many of your contributors. The technical quality and the composition of the images of your team is first class. The layout is a bit busy for me, but I understand the need to have a sizeable advertising content - that is why I am getting a magazine of this calibre free.

What I find however is that there is a lot of travel photography to exotic places and photographs of exotic animals and a lot of portraiture. For sure I (and most readers) enjoy seeing that and want that. However, I would like to see more experimental work, art work, collages, some work that reminds us that if we open our eyes, we can discover wonderful things on our doorstep. I would like to see more work that draws us closer to the modern painters in aims, and encourages us to experiment and discover new directions as painters did when they were pushed out of representational work by the advent of photography.

An interesting concept, Pavel, and a suggestion that we will discuss at the next meeting of the creative team. The abstract images in your photostream are spectacular – if you don't mind, let's share the link with our readers: www.flickr.com/photos/pavel_photophile2008/

Tina Hluchaniuk says

I think PHOTONews and the flickr® group has been a great venue for beginning/emerging photographers to be inspired (like myself) as well as a place for all photographers, no matter the skill level, to showcase their artwork ... and (like everyone else says) it's CANADIAN!! It's so much more inspiring to read a magazine/look at a website that has SO MUCH Canadian content... it is for sure very refreshing to see :)

Thank you for giving me pride as a photographer to showcase my work!

Thank you, Tina, for participating in the photo pool at the flickr® group.

Don Robinson says

I quite honestly think that "PhotoNews" Magazine and the flickr® site have been a great asset to me and my photography. I am a hobbyist photographer and through aids like this and my association with the great photographers in the Kennebecasis Valley Camera Club, I know I have improved.

Thank you, Don. Have you had a chance to check out the PHOTONews TV channel on YouTube? It is filled with interesting videos on equipment, technique, and new approaches to imaging. Check it out at www.youtube.com and search for PHOTONews TV.



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BRIGHTENING YOUR WHITES IN THE SNOW

BY **PETER BAUMGARTEN**, OLYMPUS TRAILBLAZER



0.0 EV +1.0 EV +1.3 EV +2.0 EV

Winter can be a great time to do some outdoor shooting, even in the cold and snow. Unfortunately, one of the greatest challenges (besides keeping your fingers warm) is to get the proper exposure. Camera sensors are designed to average out the light so that a scene is neither under- nor overexposed.

When shooting a snow-filled scene it's pretty typical for the camera to dull the whites and make them gray (18% gray, to be exact). The problem becomes even more pronounced when shooting under overcast skies.

Fortunately your camera comes with a few features that can help alleviate that issue. One of the easiest ways of "fighting the grays" is to use exposure compensation (see product manual or FAQs for details on how to access). When shooting in one of the Manual Modes (A, S or M) or the Program Mode, purposely overexposing the image can help whiten the snow and add brilliance to colours in the final photograph.

To really see the difference, take a shot with no exposure compensation (0.0 EV). Then gradually bump up the exposure for subsequent images (+0.3 EV, +0.7 EV, +1.0 EV, etc.). The amount of compensation will depend on two important factors – the amount of snow in the scene and the quality of light. A bright sunny day will need less compensation than a dull overcast day.

Shutter speed changes quite dramatically when you apply exposure compensation. A tripod might be necessary if you go down to very slow shutter speeds.

Finally, another great feature built into most Olympus cameras is Beach and Snow, one of the Scene Modes. It automatically adds a bit of exposure compensation to the final image. It just doesn't correct for yellow snow!

www.getolympus.com/us/en/12tips/tip3_controlling_light

0.0 EV



+1.7 EV





ABOUT PETER BAUMGARTEN
Peter has been a dedicated Olympus shooter for over 30 years, and he has found a way to combine his passion for photography with his love of teaching to develop photography and graphic design courses at the high school and community college level.



For my winter adventures, the weather resistant OM-D family of cameras offer a unique combination of light weight, easy handling, and superlative exposure controls. I match the cameras to a range of M.Zuiko lenses to capture the creative side of cool compositions.



MYTH:
Your new OM-D camera will be obsolete in a year.

Image shot with the Olympus OM-D E-M1 and an M.Zuiko ED 12-40mm f2.8 PRO lens by Olympus Trailblazer Peter Baumgarten.



MIRRORLESS TRUTH: Firmware upgrades let you love your camera longer.

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Filter Your World



For better pictures in a wide range of situations, avid photographers turn to filters to enhance, enrich, and adjust the light passing through the camera lens. Whether you select a UV filter to protect the lens from the elements, a neutral density filter to allow the use of slow shutter speeds in bright light, or a polarizing filter to remove glare and intensify colours, your best choice is a filter that meets or exceeds the quality of your lens. Rodenstock filters offer the finest quality in a full range of models and sizes – the ideal addition to your kit! See the full array of filters at **http://www.rodenstock-photo.ca/**

Mastering Light



Tired of guessing about exposure for your photo and video projects? Take a look at the meters professionals choose to measure light in the studio and in the field, and discover how easy it is to make perfect exposures every time!

From simple light meters to the most sophisticated models that measure flash and ambient light,



Gossen has a model to match the demands of any scene. Check out the latest in light technology at **http://www.gossen-photo.ca/**

Cool Shade!



Whether you shoot weddings, tropical vacation venues or ball games, there are times when your lens hood just can't block all the extraneous light – but the days of flare in your photos are over, because there's a new wave in lens shades that fits every lens in your bag! The Flex Lens Shade is a ballistic nylon light blocker that attaches to your lens with a Velcro™ strap. You can bend the shade to block light, or use it to protect the lens from rain or snow... the possibilities are endless!

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Tamron 16-300mm PZD Review

by Dustin Abbott



"Where's the zoom?"

Do you love taking photographs but are unhappy with the limited range of your 18-55mm kit lens? Finding that having to carry two lenses to be a pain? Then Tamron's all-in-one 16-300mm F/3.5- 6.3 VC PZD and its 18.8x zoom range is for you!

Tamron's 16-300mm lens has the greatest zoom range of any DSLR lens, having both the widest angle and the longest focal length. This is truly a "do it all" lens.

The lens is moderately-sized, compact, quite light, and easy to use. The focal range is perfect for capturing all of life's moments - landscapes, portraits, your kid's football, soccer, or hockey game. It even takes macro images!



16 mm 1/160 sec at f / 9.0 ISO 400

Tamron's lens adds a number of nice touches in its handsome, discrete body and its unique PZD (Piezo Drive) ultra-sonic focus motor provides speedy and quiet autofocus while still having the ability manually focus at any time – just grab the focus ring and twist! Your videos are even better with a quiet, smooth autofocus on supported cameras. Tamron's superior VC (Vibration Compensation) system that allows you to handhold images at much lower shutter speeds than a lens without VC. The lens is even moisture resistant.



300 mm 1/500 sec at f / 8.0 ISO 800

Most importantly, Tamron has done a great job of designing a lens that produces great images at any focal length, from 16mm all the way to 300mm. Rest assured, you will never miss any of life's moments, whether the action is near or far away! So whether you want a one lens solution for travel or just for life in general, Tamron's 16-300 F/3.5-6.3 VC PZD lens is one of the top picks for your Canon, Nikon, or Sony DSLR. Available at your favourite camera store.

ZENELLI GIMBAL HEAD

Italian Flair!

For wildlife or sports photography with telephoto and super-telephoto lenses nothing beats a gimbal head for smooth, solid support. The Zenelli line of gimbal heads is now available in Canada, bringing top quality lightweight technology and world-class Italian design to your photo and video assignments.

The Zenelli design features a weight balancing panoramic axis and an Arca-Swiss type plate with safety travel stop to let you position your camera and lens precisely with the focal point of the optical path aligned with the pivot point of the gimbal head. This balances your camera for effortless movement and facilitates a full range of fluid pan and tilt mobility. All of the pivot points have dampening adjustments and locks. The head features a backup locking mechanism that prevents unwanted camera movement when you carry the tripod, and a "save lenses" lever to prevent accidental detachment.



The Zenelli heads are available in four series: the Carbon ZX model is the world's lightest gimbal head, weighing just .98kg (2.16 lbs) with a load range of 70kg (154 lbs). This full-featured head has a carbon-fibre arm to absorb vibration and a forged mount bracket. Quick release levers with safety stops let you control all of the pivot points. The head has a precision leveling adjustment and balance adjustment. The Carbon Z model has locking knobs instead of the lever design mechanisms of the X series.

The Zenelli Kevlass Series features similar technology at a lower price point, utilizing a composite blend of Kevlar and glass fibre that is stronger than aluminum. The Kevlass ZX model weighs just 1.36kg and has a maximum load of 50kg. The Kevlass Z model uses locking knobs rather than QR levers to lock the tilt, pan, and balance adjustments.

Zenelli gimbal heads carry a two-year warranty, extendable to five years. Accessories include a neoprene and Lycra camo pouch and wrap. For more information, and a great series of video tutorials on the use of a gimbal head, please visit **www.greatgearyouneed.ca**

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LumiQuest accessories are designed to fit most standard speedlights.

For more information, please visit **www.lumiquest.ca**

Panasonic



Johan Sorensen

PORTRAIT OF AN ARTIST

SOME ARTISTS PAINT WITH A BRUSH; OTHER ARTISTS PAINT WITH A LENS.

My name is Johan Sorensen and I have been creating my art with a camera and lens for over 35 years. As a photographer, I often look to the art world for inspiration–music, movies, paintings, sculpture – they all fuel my creativity. I also enjoy working with models that have an artistic background as they tend to understand the creative concepts I am striving to achieve.

In my job, my equipment is one of the keys to my success. I demand a lot from the camera bodies and lenses that I use in my day to day work. I need to have something small and portable as I shoot on location quite often. I also require sharpness and resilience from the lenses that are in my bag. That's why I enjoy using the Panasonic Lumix brand of cameras. The bodies are packed full of features but they don't weigh me down. I can carry two bodies and four lenses in a small bag. That allows me to follow my creativity wherever it may lead me.

Many of the Panasonic lenses are designed by LEICA. Any photographer knows that the LEICA brand means phenomenal quality lenses, very sharp and accurate. When I am "painting my canvas", I can rely on the ultra-fast focusing and superior optics of the Panasonic lenses to get the job done right. My images are crisp and sharp every time.

The new Lumix GX8 is a camera that I have been using quite often to realize my creative vision. The 20MP sensor delivers quality images in file sizes that don't bog down my computer. This is an added plus in my line of work–I can speed up my workflow and still deliver fantastic images.

Panasonic Lumix..... It's now my "go to" brand both personally and professionally.





LUMIX

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Inspire Your Creativity

The **LUMIX GX8** is the photographer's equivalent of an artist's palette – it has all the tools you need at your fingertips. Featuring Dual Image Stabilization for steady hand-held shots even at slow shutter speeds, plus a 20MP Four Thirds sensor that delivers crisp images with a simple shutter press. Ultra-Fast focusing and **4K** resolution ensure you don't miss a shot. The **GX8** is truly a work of art.

Photography © Johan Sorensen
Artist: www.juliegladstone.com

LUMIX

4K

Panasonic Lumix Challenge

Congratulations to the winners of the PHOTONews "Colours" Challenge, who participated in the contest thread at our flickr® group at www.flickr.com/groups/photonewsgallery/.

Our winning photographer will receive a special prize – a Lumix LX100 from Panasonic Canada, our PHOTONews Challenge sponsor for 2015.

You could be the winner of the next PHOTONews Challenge and have your photo published in the Spring issue – for more information please see page 66.



Winner

Curves and Colours

Serge Daigneault of Montreal, Quebec, captured this image of two of Dale Chihuly's vases at the Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, Florida, with a Nikon D5100 and Nikkor 18-200 lens, shooting at 1/320 second and f/5.6, ISO 400. *"I studied the vases from many angles in order to create a composition that showed the curves and colours."*



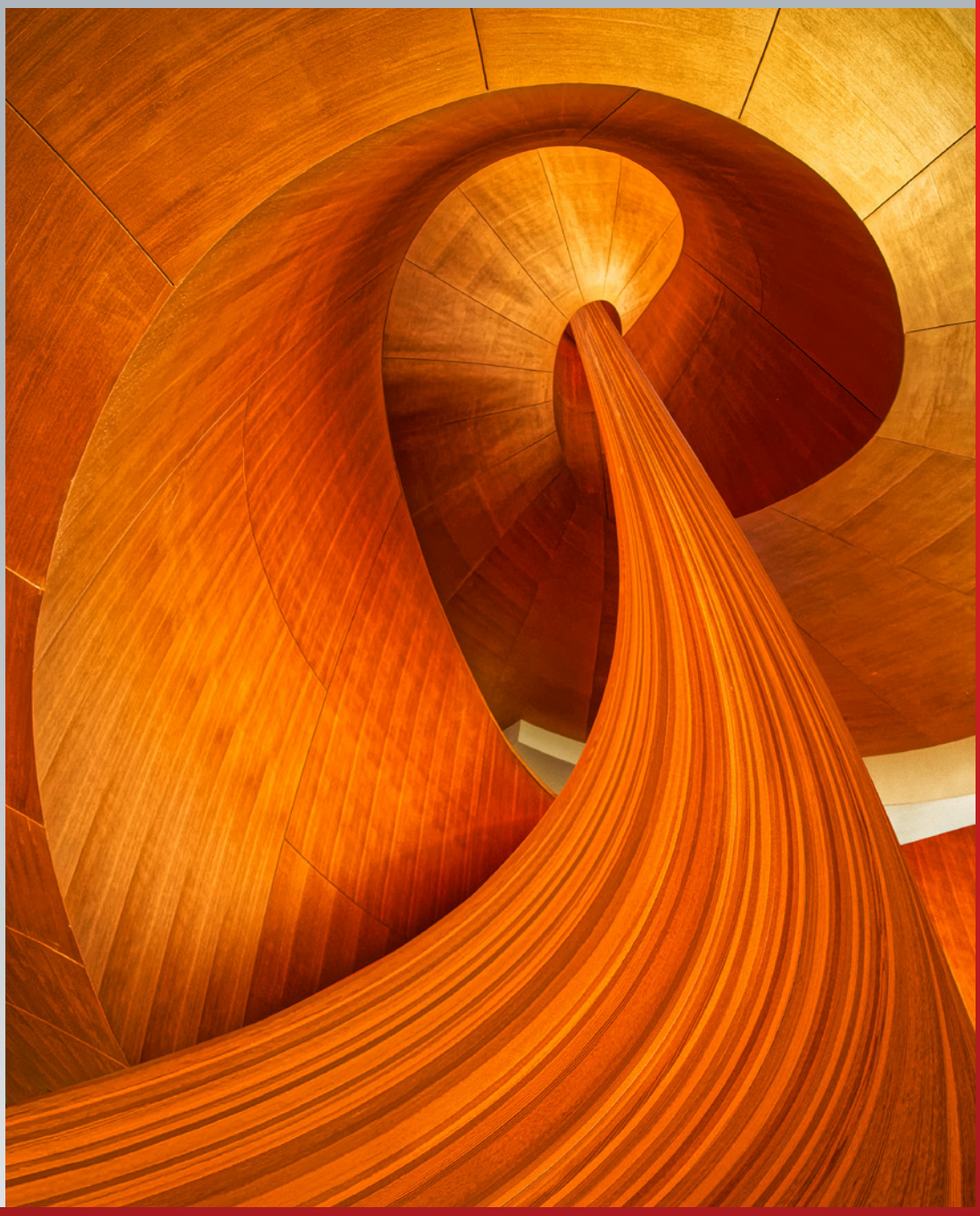
Kirkjufellfoss

Brian Krouskie of Kitchener, Ontario, captured this image of the Kirkjufellfoss Waterfall in Iceland with a Nikon D600 and Nikkor 17-35mm lens, shooting at 25 seconds and f/22, ISO 50. *"Most often photographed as a foreground element in images of the Kirkjufell Mountain, I thought this pretty waterfall deserved its own moment in the sun"*



Canoeing the Rouge River

Tom Freda of Toronto, Ontario, captured this image with an Olympus Pen E-PL2 and Olympus M.14-42mm lens at 14mm, shooting at f/5.6, 1/350 second, ISO 200. *"Being a big fan of leading lines, I composed this scene so the river's curve would compliment the subject, the reflected fall colours and the action of the paddle and water. The high-contrast, late afternoon light was dealt with by shooting in raw and pulling up detail in the shadows during processing."*



Water Spout, AGO Toronto

Pavel Muller from Toronto, Ontario, photographed the signature staircase designed by Frank Gehry for the Art Gallery of Ontario. Pavel used an Olympus EM-1 and a 7.5mm fisheye lens, shooting at f/8, 1/125 second, ISO 250. *"The image was pre-processed using DXO to reduce noise and then imported into Photoshop for further processing. The goal was to bring out the wonderful rich colours and wood textures of the staircase and to reflect the wonderful sense of flow and liquidity created by Gehry's design. The "water" panel was created by distorting and moving the wooden handrail of the staircase. Shadows were added as needed to give the image a greater sense of reality."*

READER'S GALLERY

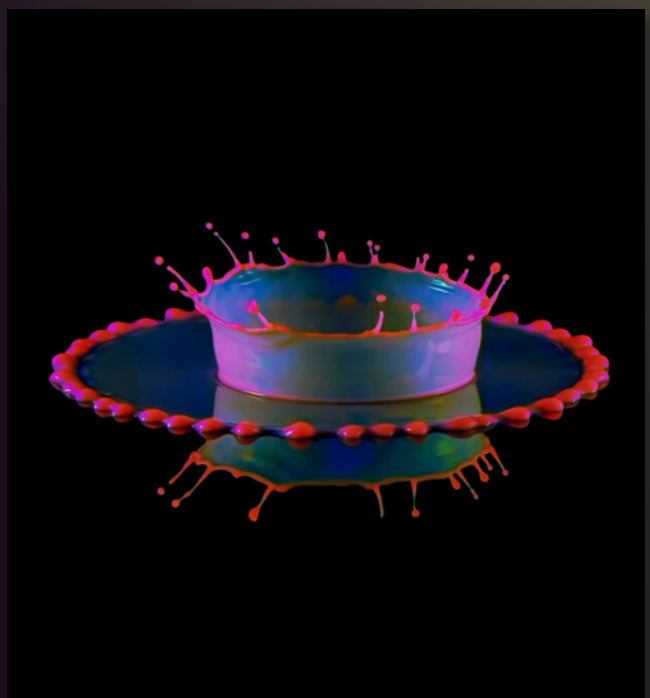
Each issue, PHOTONews presents a gallery of spectacular images from our readers, as posted in the pool at the flickr® group.

To view the full array of images from PHOTONews readers, please visit the pool at www.flickr.com/groups/photonewsgallery/pool



Aurora Over the Taiga

Adam Hill of Hay River, NWT, photographed this image of the aurora on a January night with a Canon 1Dx and 16-35mm f/2.8 II L, shooting at f/3.5, 2.5 seconds, at ISO 2500. *"It was my first night photographing the aurora with two bodies, one for time lapse and one for stills. I was in waist deep snow trying to manage my second camera for the time lapse when the aurora in the west snapped and I had to run to my first camera for the stills - I nearly missed this shot!"*



Water Coronet

Vladimir Kapichen of Toronto, Ontario, captured this image with a Nikon D810 and Tamron 90mm f/2.8G USD Di macro lens, shooting a long exposure at f/16, ISO 640. *"I set the camera to (M) "bulb", and used three flash guns set to synchro with StopShot Studio module."*



Moody Skies are a Feast for the Eyes

Barbie Krushlucki of Regina, Saskatchewan, captured this image in the beautiful rugged Canadian Rockies with a tripod-mounted Nikon D5200, shooting at f/6.3, 1/1600 second, ISO 400. *"I took this picture while on vacation in Banff, Alberta, and I am thrilled my photo is being considered for publication in the magazine – this is an absolute first for me!"*

Images featured in the PHOTONews Reader's Gallery are selected from the photo pool at the PHOTONews flickr® group – why not take a look, join the group, and post a few pictures! ***www.flickr.com/groups/photonewsgallery/***



Smoker

Jacek Moszej of Mississauga, Ontario, captured this self portrait with a Sony A7S, shooting at f/6.3, 1/320 second, ISO 2000. *"I enjoy smoking good Cuban cigars, and I took this self portrait while practicing my skills of shooting portraits in natural light."*



Bald Eagle Landing

Eric Rossicci of Surrey, BC, captured this image at Boundary Bay, BC, using a tripod-mounted Canon EOS 30D with an EF100-400mm F4.5-5.6L IS USM zoom at 250mm, shooting at f/36, 1/250 second, ISO 3200. *"This juvenile Bald Eagle didn't show any fear of humans, too young and inexperienced I guess, he kept flying and coming back to this perch."*



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Photo: Jean-Denis Boillat

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23RD ANNUAL JURIED PHOTO SHOW

SEPTEMBER 30 - OCTOBER 31

The 35th Blue Mountain for the Arts annual Juried Art Show is one of the signature events sponsored by the BMFA, whose mission is to promote, showcase, and award exceptional artists and artisans.

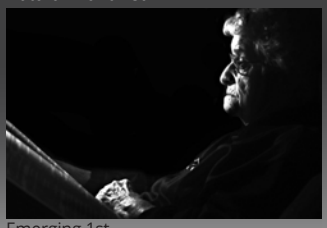
This year's show attracted 318 entries and the winning entries were:

Place	Category	Title	Photographer
1.	Altered Reality	Praying for Myanmar	Gail Edwards
2.		Caged	Kathy Sitarski
3.		Firey Growth	Peter Mather
1.	Collingwood	A Fun Place	Richard Dewey
2.		Beacon	Gillian Mendham
3.		Kite Festival	Eden Watt
1.	Embracing Humanity	Only Man Keeps Time	Neeltje Montgomery
2.		African Artistry	Bonnie Fox
3.		Woman by the Lake	Mary McCain
1.	Emerging	Old Woman Reading	Leah Denbok
2.		Jump	Sam Martin-Chase
3.		Walking on Water	Emma West
1.	Natural World	Eye-to-Eye with a Snowy Owl	Diane Doran
2.		Dry Footing	Hilton Tudhope
3.		Mississaugi Hilton	Doug Galloway
HM*		Clown-Faced Horned Puffins in Alaska Rain	Diane Doran
HM*		Strangest Tribe	Melissa Woodward

* Honourable Mention


Natural World 1st


Altered Reality 1st


Emerging 1st


Embracing Humanity 1st


Collingwood 1st


Emerging 2nd


Embracing Humanity 2nd


Embracing Humanity 3rd


Natural World 2nd


Altered Reality 2nd



Collingwood 2nd


Natural World HM


Altered Reality 3rd


Collingwood 3rd


Natural World 3rd


Natural World HM


Emerging 3rd

See the whole collection at **bmfa.on.ca/juried-photo-show.php**



Special Feature | The Magic of...

BY **MICHEL ROY**

RETOUCHING AND MORE...

In this age of computer assisted imaging, it seems that every photographer spends time post-processing and retouching their images. Many photographers will tell you that life without Photoshop would be better, more fair, and more realistic, but we have to live in the modern world. If you want to succeed in photography, you will have to master the skills of retouching your images.



Difficult lighting almost always requires post-processing.

Bio

Michel Roy, from Quebec City, is the owner of *Digital Direct Photos & Videos*, specializing in a full range of photography and video from corporate assignments to weddings. For a visual adventure, visit the website at **www.digitaldirect.ca**.

Retouching can be as simple as removing a dust spot on your image or as complicated as creating a sophisticated composite image with many layers of masks and effects. Before you begin, please remember one rule for retouching digital images: never work on your original–use a copy!

My reference library includes dozens of thick books on Photoshop. There is no way you will learn Photoshop just by reading a few pages in a magazine, and that is not our goal–the idea here is to show you that there is no high end photog-

raphy without a bit of post-processing magic. Do you want to become a better photographer? Search Google for techniques and videos about Photoshop, the web is full of tips for using this software, and libraries are filled with books and magazine articles that are invaluable learning tools.

Let's face it, most or all the pictures in this magazine have been post-processed in Photoshop or similar programs to adjust a range of elements from colour correction to HDR, composites and special effects. This is the way that today's digital photography works. When you want something perfect, you start with a lens and an idea, and complete the assignment with a good computer program and a calibrated screen.

The world of post-processing is not as complex as you might think, but it can be as creative as your imagination. Most photographers get by with the basic retouching tools– these are the ones you should learn first: Clone Stamp, Pattern Stamp, Healing Brush, Patch and Color Replacement. Master the basics within these tools, and you will be able to repair images, apply patterns, clone a part of the image, and adjust your image for greater impact.

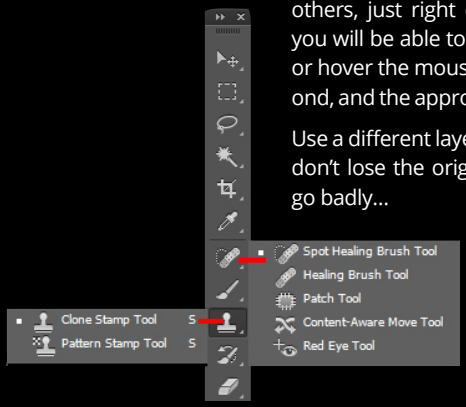
These are the first steps to practice with, and then you can go deeper into Photoshop and have great fun creating stunning images. Please remember that Photoshop is like a double edged sword – use it too much and you can ruin an image.

Practice makes perfect, so take pictures and have fun experimenting with them in many ways–it's all about creativity!

From a simple backlit image taken late in the day, I changed the background with multiple effects. The result would be almost impossible to get in-camera.







In Photoshop, some tools are hidden under others, just right click on the mouse and you will be able to choose a range of tools, or hover the mouse over the icon for a second, and the appropriate menu will appear.

Use a different layer for your effects, so you don't lose the original if your experiments go badly...



With practice you will be able to create great souvenirs for your kids.

Retouching tools

The Clone Stamp tool and Healing Brush clone (copy) pixels from one part of an image to another, and this can be applied to another layer or even to another image. The difference between the Healing Brush and the Clone Stamp tool is that the Healing Brush in Photoshop takes into account the texture, illumination and shadows of the processed image. As a result, the fragment processed by the Healing Brush blends more easily into the rest of the image.

To clone an area with the Clone Stamp or Healing Brush, follow these steps:

Step 1: Choose the tool from the Toolbar.

Step 2: Set the parameters for the tool in the "Options" panel: size, blending mode, the amount of opacity and others.

Step 3: Check "Use All Layers" if you need to work with several layers at once.

Step 4: Check "Aligned" to create one clone selected from the area around a starting point. The mouse button can be released and new fragments selected. Also, the mode and size of the tool can be changed. If "Align" is unchecked, then each application of the tool will create a clone from the same starting point.

Step 5: Set a starting point. Do this by holding ALT, and then left-click on the point from which the clone will be taken.

Step 6: Move the cursor to the location where you want to copy the fragment.

Step 7: Press the left mouse button and the clone will be applied. If the Healing Brush is used, then the cloned fragments, texture, luminance, and shadows will be processed in relation to the pixels of the background image.



Photoshop can transform any beautiful woman into an angel...



Many hours of post-production are needed for a green screen shot when you want to replace the foreground and background.

Patching an Image

The Patch tool repairs an area with pixels copied from another area or image. Like the Healing Brush, the Patch takes into account the texture, luminance, and shadows of the background image.

This tool can be used in one of two ways:

Define the place where the clone will be applied, then drag the tool to the source point.

Follow these steps:

Step 1: Choose the "Patch" tool from the Toolbar.

Step 2: Choose the shape and size of the tool in the Options panel, and select "Source" in Patch's options.

Step 3: Draw a line with the Patch tool around the part of the image that needs to be restored.

Step 4: Drag the selected area to a new spot, from which the clone will be created.

Define the source, and then drag the tool to the damaged area.

Follow these steps:

Step 1: Choose the Patch tool from the Toolbar.

Step 2: Choose the tool's size and shape in the Options panel, and in Patch's options select "Destination".

Step 3: Draw a line with the Patch tool around the part of the image that will be cloned.

Step 4: Drag this area over the part of the image that needs repair.

Using Pattern Stamp

The Pattern Stamp tool works by drawing with a repeating pattern. This tool can be used to create a frame or design for wallpaper or for retouching the texture of part of an image. A pattern is selected from the Pattern Palette in the Options Panel.

To use this tool, follow these steps:

Step 1: Choose the tool from the Toolbar.

Step 2: Set a pattern by choosing it from the Pattern Palette in the Options Panel.

Step 3: Choose the size and shape, blending mode, amount of pattern opacity and other parameters for the tool in the Options Panel.

Step 4: Press the left mouse button and drag the tool into the image.

A repeating pattern can also be used with the Healing Brush and Patch tool. To do this with the Healing Brush, in the tool's options select "Pattern for the Source" and choose a pattern from the Pattern Palette. To do this with the Patch tool – begin by using the tool to draw a line around an area (or use a previously selected area), then choose a pattern from the Pattern Palette and press the "Use Pattern" button.

More advanced tools like Content Aware and others are available, search the web for more details.



Two separate images blended together in Photoshop can make a dramatic moment. Wolf and squirrels were not harmed during this process.



Photo Destination

BY **WAYNE LYNCH**

BACKYARD PHOTO SAFARI



Regular readers of my column know what a lucky guy I am to travel to the far corners of our world to photograph exotic wildlife. Having said that, some of my favourite photo opportunities occur at backyard bird feeders close to where I live in Calgary. If your yard is too small for a feeder perhaps you have friends with feeders where you can set up for a backyard photographic adventure.

Bio Bird feeder photography is the best way author Wayne Lynch knows to brighten the dreariest of winter days. Visit www.waynelynch.ca

American Pine Marten



There are plenty of places to take a photo safari close to home. Many local nature centres and municipal parks maintain winter bird feeders. Stores that specialize in selling bird seed and feeders may also be helpful in locating people who don't mind allowing respectful strangers to visit their property to photograph birds. On winter trips close to home, even if I am in an area for just a few days, I will often bring along a bird feeder. The local wintering birds invariably begin to use the feeder within a day, giving me many fun-filled hours rich with photo opportunities. Here are eight tips for photographing backyard birds in winter.

#1 Feeders don't have to be fancy

Birds are interested in food, not aesthetics. In fact, food simply scattered on the ground will lure many species within camera range. One common and inexpensive bird feeder is a clear plastic tube, filled with seeds, and studded with perches and feeding holes. These feeders are popular with small agile birds, such as chickadees, redpolls and pine siskins.

A simple shelf feeder, elevated on a stump or post, is another good choice. Larger birds such as grosbeaks, finches, crossbills and mourning doves are attracted to these.

A nylon mesh bag, filled with suet, is another cheap way to attract hungry birds.

Today, you can purchase feeders to suit every whim and wallet. I have seen feeders shaped like tugboats, cathedrals and farm houses, but the funniest one was a replica of the Canadian parliament buildings in Ottawa. The builder clearly saw the link between birdbrains and politicians.

#2 Stale bread is not good food.

Food scraps and other garbage will mainly attract birds such as starlings and house sparrows–the flying rats of the avian world. The food you choose for your feeder will largely determine which species of birds you will attract.

Unshelled sunflower seeds are probably the most popular choice. Energy-hungry birds love the oil-rich kernels, and for most birds, the thin shells are relatively easy to open. If you buy sunflower seeds as part of a prepared mixture, sold in bags at a grocery store, they are usually quite expensive and contain "filler" seeds, such as canola, which few birds will eat. You get greater value for your money if you buy pure sunflower seeds from a garden outlet, feed store, or bird specialty shop.

Millet is another good choice. These small seeds lure fox sparrows, tree sparrows, juncos, rosy-finches and redpolls. If you've got your sights set on gamebirds such as ringed-necked pheasants, grey partridges, bobwhite quail, ruffed grouse or wild turkeys, then scatter cracked corn on the ground.



Willow Ptarmigan



Northern Saw-whet Owl

Frozen suet is also a very good food for winter birds, especially woodpeckers, nuthatches, and chickadees, which readily hammer off tidbits of fat. Suet and seeds may also attract furry critters, such as squirrels, rabbits, hares and mice. One of my most exciting bird feeder photo experiences was with an unwary pine marten that loved sunflower seeds.

#3 Locate a feeder where birds can escape.

Shrikes, hawks, and small owls, which are great photo subjects themselves, soon learn that bird feeders attract a wealth of prey for them to hunt. Because of this, most songbirds prefer feeders with nearby shrubbery or bushy conifers where they can escape when an unwelcome raptor swoops in for dinner. Knowing this, you should always position a feeder near a cluster



of trees, or near bushes. Even an old Christmas tree, propped beside a feeder, will increase the number of songbirds that will visit, and improve your shooting opportunities.

#4 Install an attractive perch.

Most birds will perch nearby to scan for predators before they land at a bird feeder to eat. Watch the birds for a while to see if there is any pattern in the way they fly to and from the feeder. If there is, that's where you can set up a temporary perch. I use old dried branches for this. Avoid freshly broken ends that look unnatural, and pick thin branches that mirror the delicacy of the songbirds you wish to photograph. Textured bark, adorned with lichens, is a real plus if you can find it. I will sometimes spend half an hour searching for just the right perch. Once you have found a pretty perch you can lash it to a tree limb, or jam it into the top of a fence post. You can also tie the perch to the head of a spare tripod and position it beside the feeder. A perch gives you a clean predictable location where you can focus on the birds.



Ring-necked Pheasant


Red Squirrel

#5 Beware of distracting backgrounds.

Feeders in urban areas often have distracting backgrounds–the side of a house, a garage, a fence, or a driveway. You can use an old tarp to mask the side of a building or a chain-link fence.

Seeds scattered on the ground always attract birds, but the background often looks messy and distracting. If you place your bait in a shallow trench and then shoot from ground level, the seeds are hidden, the background is more pleasing, and the photograph looks more natural.

#6 Blind photographers get more photographs.

Within a flock of grosbeaks, redpolls, chickadees or waxwings, there are always a few naturally unwary individuals, many cautious ones, and some that are extremely shy. Using any kind of photo blind makes all the birds more relaxed and you will have a greater number of individuals to photograph. When you photograph without a blind, any slight body movements may frighten the wary members in a flock and cause the entire flock to flush and scatter. I often use a pocket blind, which is simply some camouflage cloth that I drape over myself. Songbirds quickly ignore the blind and go about their business. In the past, birds have even perched on my head and on the end of my camera lens.

#7 Hope for cold weather.

When a cold front sweeps in, wintering birds must eat more food to fuel their internal furnaces. That means they will spend more time foraging at bird feeders. On a warm winter day, birds may visit a feeder for just a few hours, but when temperatures plummet the birds may spend most of the day at the feeder. Cold weather usually brings clear blue skies with lots of sunshine.

#8 Improve on nature.

Winter birds look especially nice when they are perched on snow-covered branches. The only problem is, fluffy snow rarely stays on branches very long before the wind blows it off. To give nature a helping hand, I sprinkle fresh snow on the boughs where birds are apt to perch. Invariably, the effort yields a stronger, more pleasing "wintertime" image.


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Sedona 51

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Portfolio
PETER BAUMGARTEN

TEACHER, PHOTOGRAPHER, ARTIST...

Stumped

An old cedar stump had washed ashore and became the perfect anchor for this sunset photo.

Olympus E-30, f/20 Lens – Olympus 14-54mm f/2.8-3.5 II, 2.0 sec., ISO 100



"There is no greater joy than seeing a student's eyes light up when you pass on the power of creative thought and expression."

PHOTONews is proud to present the photographic creativity of Peter Baumgarten, from Manitowaning, Manitoulin Island, Ontario. A dedicated photographer, elementary, high school and post-secondary school science and photography teacher, and Canada's only Olympus Trailblazer, Peter enjoys writing, acting, directing and singing. Peter has combined his teaching and photographic expertise by developing photography and graphic design courses for both youth and adults.

Peter's passion for photography began at the age of 12 when his father encouraged him to buy his first "real" camera, an Olympus SLR. Over the years, his photographic skills developed and he was an early adopter when digital cameras entered the consumer marketplace. His work was immediately recognized by friends and family, and he soon became part of the annual Manitoulin Art Tour. His career as a photographic artist was launched.

Today, Peter shoots with the Olympus OM-D line of cameras and a range of lenses and accessories in the Olympus system. He enjoys his role as a mentor in the Olympus Trailblazers program, and the opportunity it presents for him to lead photographic adventures in locations throughout North America.

We asked Peter to share his thoughts on his 30-year adventure in photography. "In my youth, three people influenced how my photography would develop. My father encouraged me to purchase my first SLR camera at the age of 12 and helped pay for the countless rolls of film and developing. My high school geography teacher, Victor Last, was a published photographer and challenged me to develop my skills. My greatest influence, however, was Freeman Patterson and his book 'Photography and the Art of Seeing.' It taught me to look past the actual subject and see the world in a different way."

Peter resides with his wife on Manitoulin Island, amidst the comings and goings of six adult children. Living on the world's largest freshwater island, Peter has a special connection with the natural environment, the land and waterscapes that characterize the region. "My photography has been shaped by the places in which I have lived. I have spent my entire life around water, and it is an enduring theme that runs through many of my images."



Lighthouse at Night

Over the past year I have developed a real love for astrophotography and the creation of star trails using the Live Composite feature in Olympus cameras. This image was built right in camera over the course of one hour.

Olympus E-M1,f/2.8, Lens – Olympus M.12-40mm f/2.8 PRO, Live Composite, Base exposure – 4.0 sec, Total exposure – 60 minutes, ISO 1000

Arctic Explorers

I don't include a lot of people in my landscape images, but having this mother and daughter scramble over the rugged terrain helped to show the scale of the ice features that had formed.

Olympus E-30, f/22, Lens – Olympus 14-54mm f/2.8-3.5 II, 1/320 sec., ISO 100



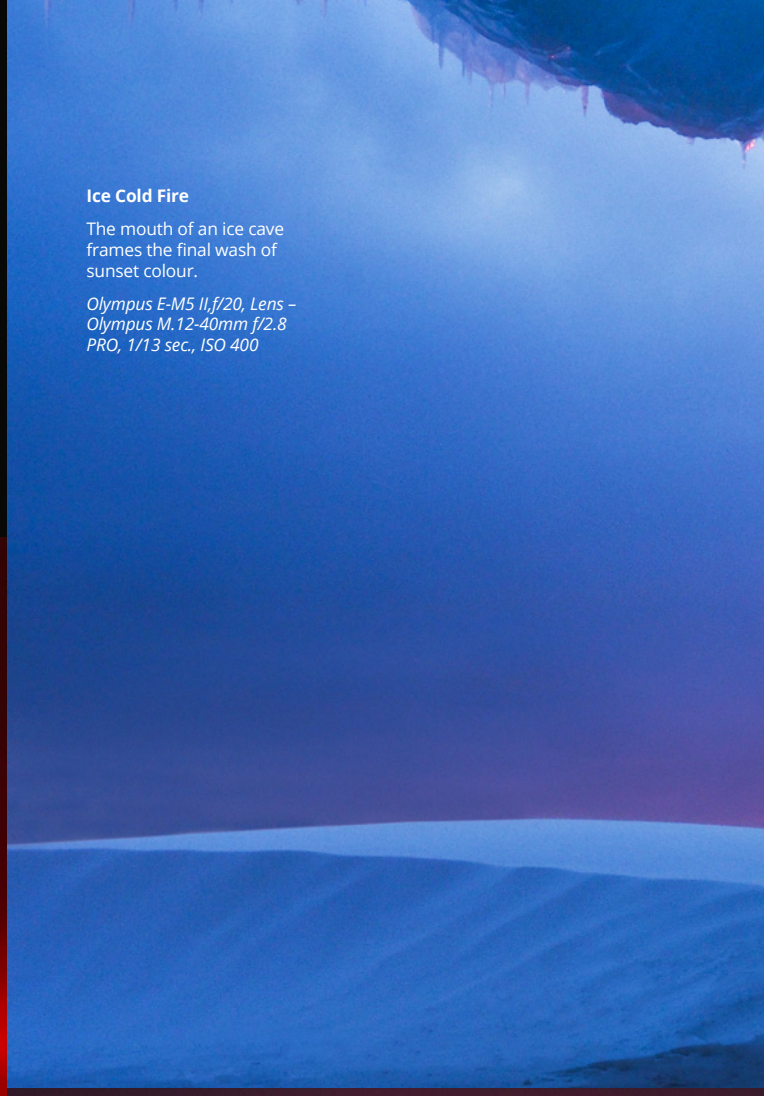
Vanilla Frosting

My family is used to me pulling over on the side of the road to capture something that has caught my eye. On this particular morning I was driving my youngest son to the bus station after the Christmas holidays so that he could get back to college. As luck would have it an amazing display of hoar frost had formed overnight. I think I stopped about 10 times along the way, but in the end my son did catch his bus.

Olympus E-30, f/5.0 Lens – Olympus 70-300mm, 1/200 sec., ISO 100



As with many Canadian outdoor photographers, Peter has a special relationship with the seasons, and he embraces the artistic potential of each day. “Photography has rejuvenated my love affair with winter. The instant the leaves of autumn hit the ground, I find myself looking forward to the first blanket of snow. It freshens the landscape and forces me to see the world in new and ever-changing ways. Winter is typically thought of as a bleak and monochromatic season. But colour exists, and when I find it, my heart races and my passion for the craft is reignited.”



Ice Cold Fire

The mouth of an ice cave frames the final wash of sunset colour.

Olympus E-M5 II,f/20, Lens – Olympus M.12-40mm f/2.8 PRO, 1/13 sec., ISO 400

Ice Serpent

My home overlooks Manitowaning Bay where this shot was taken. It is not unusual for me to check out the early morning sky from my dining room window and if there is potential for a great sunrise, to quickly head down to the bay to see what I can capture. This small ice feature became the perfect foreground to an amazing backdrop.

Olympus E-30,f/16, Lens – Olympus 14-54mm f/2.8-3.5 II,6.0 sec., ISO 100



Icy Dawn

This was photographed at the beginning of freeze-up on Manitoulin Island and many small ice sculptures had formed overnight. I love the way light refracts through the translucence of ice so I decided to prop one up and use it as a point of interest.

Olympus E-M1, Olympus M 12-40mm f/2.8 PRO, f/18, 1/4 sec., ISO 200







Antarctica sans Penguins

The past two winters have been long and cold. These conditions created some very impressive ice features throughout the Great Lakes. This photograph was shot from within one of many ice caves that formed along the shoreline.

Olympus E-30,f/20, Lens – Olympus 14-54mm f/2.8-3.5 II, 1/100 sec., ISO 100



Peter has recently become the first Canadian Olympus Trailblazer in the Olympus Visionary Program. The program is comprised of 12 industry-leading professional and emerging photographers who travel the world with Olympus products to capture beauty and splendour. "I am thrilled that I can apply my love of photography and teaching to a much wider audience as an Olympus Trailblazer."

The Olympus Visionary Program is Olympus Imaging America Inc.'s official program for professional and emerging photographers. Its mission is to define the state of digital imaging and to promote both the individual artists and Olympus' highly-regarded and widely-acclaimed digital camera systems.

Olympus Visionaries are established, award-winning professional photographers who travel the world with Olympus products to capture life's beauty and splendour. The elite members of the program include several Pulitzer Prize winners, as well as artists whose careers have included assignments around the globe.

For more information on the Olympus Visionary events and knowledge base, please visit the website at www.getolympus.com/us/en/visionaries

Please take a few minutes to browse Peter's collection of images at his websites, **www.creativeislandphoto.com** and **creativeisland.500px.com/**.



Do Ewe Love Me? – I live in a rural area of the country and will often drive the back roads looking for something to shoot. It is not unusual to see wildlife, but the tamer fauna, like these sheep, can also make for great subjects.
Olympus E-510,f/4.5, Lens – Olympus 70-300mm,1/200 sec., ,ISO 100



Drip Drop – This feather caught my eye while walking along the shoreline. I decided to photograph it with a fisheye lens but wanted to ensure a straight horizon. I ended up sticking the battery grip in the water in order to achieve this perspective.
Olympus E-M5 II,f/10, Lens – Olympus M.8mm f/1.8 PRO fisheye, 1/100 sec., ISO 400

Solar Peeking

I have always loved the layered effect that you can capture with a telephoto lens, some hills and a bit of mist. An autumn, pre-dawn hike into the denuded LaCloche mountains presented the perfect conditions to capture such a moment just as the sun was ready to peek over the horizon.

Olympus E-M10,f/13, Lens – Olympus M.75-300mm f/4.8-6.7 II,1/50 sec., ISO 200





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Andrew Peacock, www.footloosefotography.com

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Perspectives

BY KRISTIAN BOGNER

MAUI EXPERIENCE

Planning to escape the cold for a warm weather holiday this winter? These travel photography tips will help you capture spectacular images right off the plane!

As much as I enjoy shooting the magnificent winter scenes in beautiful B.C., there are times when a trip to a tropical paradise can inspire you to expand your creative perspectives. In this issue I will share some images shot on a recent vacation with my fiancée Sarah in Maui, Hawaii, and give you some insights into the fine art of vacation travel photography.

Pack Light but Effectively

Without a doubt, your choice of equipment for a vacation trip differs from the gear you select for a professional photo assignment. When you want to travel light but prepared for any photo opportunity, a trio or a quartet of zoom lenses is a great idea, as they maximize your focal range while minimizing lens changes and weight. I always carry my Nikon 14-24mm, 24-70mm, and 70-200mm zooms and for this trip I also took along the newly released 200-500mm.

Lighting in the field can be a challenge when you are on vacation. I recommend a small silver/white circular reflector to fill in faces and for close up photography. It can also double to protect your gear from rain or salt spray or you can use it at the beach to put your gear on to keep the sand off. I always pack a small lightweight tripod so I can capture sunsets, stars and drag the shutter for waterfront images.

Carrying your gear is another important consideration. Choose a backpack that can carry all your camera gear, as well as snacks, clothing, sunscreen and water. Don't forget to bring plenty of lens cleaning cloths to wipe your lenses from sea spray, waterfalls, humidity, and dust.

Bio

Kristian Bogner is a commercial, architecture, adventure, fashion, sports photographer, and brand Ambassador for Nikon Canada, Broncolor Canada, and other suppliers. For some inspiration and more pro tips check out ***kristianbogner.com*** or attend one of his photography workshops: ***photographicrockstar.com***

Hula Girl
I was able to get close to the action at a luau with the Nikon 200-500m lens and use a relatively high ISO and Vibration Reduction to get a razor sharp subject with a shallow depth of field to produce a softer background.
Nikon D750 with AF-S Nikkor 200-500mm f/5.6E ED VR lens at 500mm. f/5.6 at 1/500 second, ISO 3200.





Red Throated Anole Lizard
I spotted this beautifully coloured lizard showing off and luckily had my big lens near. I shot at a relatively fast ISO and shutter speed to ensure that at 500mm this moving creature was sharp and full of detail.
Nikon D750 with AF-S Nikkor 200-500mm f/5.6E ED VR lens at 500mm, f/10, 1/1250 second, ISO 800.



An emergency sensor cleaning kit isn't a bad idea - I find sensors are harder to clean in humid conditions, so bring extra swabs. I like to bring a waterproof jacket/shell wherever I go just in case there is a downpour. On our trip to Maui we spent some time in small boats–the waves were big and sea spray was a constant factor. I was able to quickly wrap my camera and lens in my jacket and keep it dry and less salty.

Get Ready and Set before You Go

Apply your sunscreen well before you go out and wash it off your hands well so that you don't get oils on your camera grip and lens.

Attach a large lightweight locking climbing carabiner to your camera pack. You can quickly lock it to your beach chair or a restaurant chair. It won't prevent your pack from being stolen, but the 30 seconds it takes for someone to figure out how to unlock it could be a big enough deterrent.

If you are sleeping in an air conditioned cool environment and then you go out into a hot and humid climate your gear may suffer from some major condensation. Let your camera acclimatize, leave it in your closed pack and bring it outside to warm up gradually instead of pulling it out immediately.

Be prepared and have your camera and favourite lens ready to shoot. We were on a boat and all of a sudden someone spotted a pod of spinner dolphins. I had my camera out and around my neck so that I could respond immediately and get some great images before they went back under water.



Freeze Frame
I was playing with colours here and a fast shutter speed to get an interesting abstract image. Water can be really fun to freeze with a fast shutter of at least 1/1000 second or faster. I had my picture control setting on VIVID and saturation on full to make the colours pop.
Nikon D750 with AF-S Nikkor 200-500mm f/5.6E ED VR lens at 500mm, f/7.1 at 1/1250 second, ISO 400.



Maui Sunset
I shot this hand-held while standing in the water and dragged the shutter slightly at 1/125 of a second to get the impression of motion in the water. I used a cloudy white balance setting to give the sunset a bit of extra warmth.
Nikon D750 with AF-S Nikkor 24mm f/1.4G ED lens, f/9, 1/125 second, ISO 320.

Shooting Tips

One of my most important tips is to shoot for the highlights. If you are in a tropical location, chances are there are beaches or water in your shot. A key to a great image is having detail in the whites of the water without overexposing the whitecaps of the waves. Some newer cameras like the Nikon D750 actually have a highlight-weighted metering mode which I recommend in these situations. I like to preview my images in highlight alert mode where blown-out highlights blink so I can quickly evaluate if I need to adjust my exposure. This is especially helpful in bright sunlight where it might be hard to see the back of your camera screen but you will be able to see the blinking clipped highlights. In these cases it only takes a second to adjust your exposure manually or use exposure compensation.

Use your ISO capabilities to their best advantage. A lot of people have newer cameras but they remember the limitations of early DSLR cameras, so they tend to be reluctant to use higher ISO settings. Travel is the perfect time to see how far you can push your camera. Take a few minutes before you shoot important scenes to try 800 ISO, 1600 ISO or even 3200 ISO, then pick your favourite result and set the ISO for the scene. If you dial-in a high ISO setting you can shoot hand held at a dinner show or capture a sunset beach scene without a tripod. Experiment and then zoom in to 100 percent and see how grainy/noisy the image looks. You can also play with your Noise Reduction settings and test ISO combinations with that as well. I shot an entire Luau at 3200 ISO or higher with my D750 and I was amazed with the results. In the digital world ISO is an under-utilized game-changer in photography and it can be a wonderful tool once you find your comfort zone.

The last big tip, and I say this a lot, is to play with your camera settings. I constantly adjust my in-camera Nikon Picture Control saturation and sharpness controls depending on the subject and I also use D-Lighting to fill-in certain subjects. These settings can make a dramatic difference in the look of your image.



Taking Flight
I precomposed this image using Single Point focus selection so that there would be some space to the left of the windsurfer to give the viewer a sense of movement. In order to really freeze this extreme sport fast moving subject and water I shot at 1/3200 of a second, that's what makes the image look explosive.
Nikon D750 with AF-S Nikkor 200-500mm f/5.6E ED VR lens at 500mm, f/8, 1/3200 second, ISO 400.

Stories and Insights from the Trip

Freezing the Action and the Water

One of my favourite sports to shoot is windsurfing, so we went to Ho'okipa, where the world class windsurfers hang out. On this trip, the winds were uncharacteristically offshore and poor. Disappointed, I went back several times and nobody was windsurfing. I persisted, and finally, on my last day before flying home there were some big waves and decent wind and I captured some beauties. Sometimes the shots don't come easy but perseverance pays off. I try to shoot water sports at about 1/3200 second to really freeze the action and the splash. A fast shutter speed really gives the effect of explosive action and adds a ton of impact. It also makes it easier to hold your camera steady in lots of wind and not get any camera shake. I recommend turning off your Vibration Reduction if you are shooting that fast because I find the water sometimes gives inaccurate results. I really enjoyed shooting with Nikon's new 200-500mm; it is a fantastic sports lens that is small and light enough to take anywhere and gives you a huge focal length range to work with. It will definitely be in my bag on future trips and expeditions.

Sunsets and Stars

Another great Maui adventure was driving from sea level to the top of Haleakala Crater at 10,000 ft. I had shot the sunrise on another trip so we decided to experience the sunset this time. The night view was fantastic, and sticking around to shoot the stars afterwards, when almost everyone went home, was a magical experience. For night photos I use my sticks (tripod), set my camera to exposure delay mode and manual focus, and use my iPhone light to set my focus distance to infinity. I try to keep my exposure to 30 seconds or less for night photos if I don't want too much movement in the stars and I push the ISO to about 1600 to really make the stars pop I often use the "painting with light" technique, moving around the foreground during the exposure to make sure my body didn't cast a shadow.

Keep Your Camera Close

I was literally sitting on my deck in Maui when I spotted this Red-Throated Anole Lizard (see page 42) doing a mating dance and puffing his red neck on a nearby tree. I immediately grabbed my camera with that 200-500mm zoom and captured him in the perfect light. Shortly afterwards he moved into the shadow of the tree and the moment was gone. I find those 30 second photo opportunities come often, and being ready to respond quickly to those challenges can make all the difference. Be prepared, make sure your camera is near, locked and loaded so you can shoot when that moment strikes.

When you are on vacation to try not to get hung up on the technical aspects of photography or you might miss the moment entirely. Let yourself be creative, travel is the perfect time to play, practice and enjoy the art of photography. I believe the secret ingredient is passion. If your shot doesn't turn out the way you wanted it to, then learn from that opportunity and try something else and learn from that. Keep striving for that shot you are really proud of, and you will eventually get it. It's the striving that brings us to excellence.

For more travel photography tips and videos check out Kristian's photo blog at **kristianbogner.com** or sign up for one of his photography courses in the Rocky Mountains and throughout Canada at **photographicrockstar.com**

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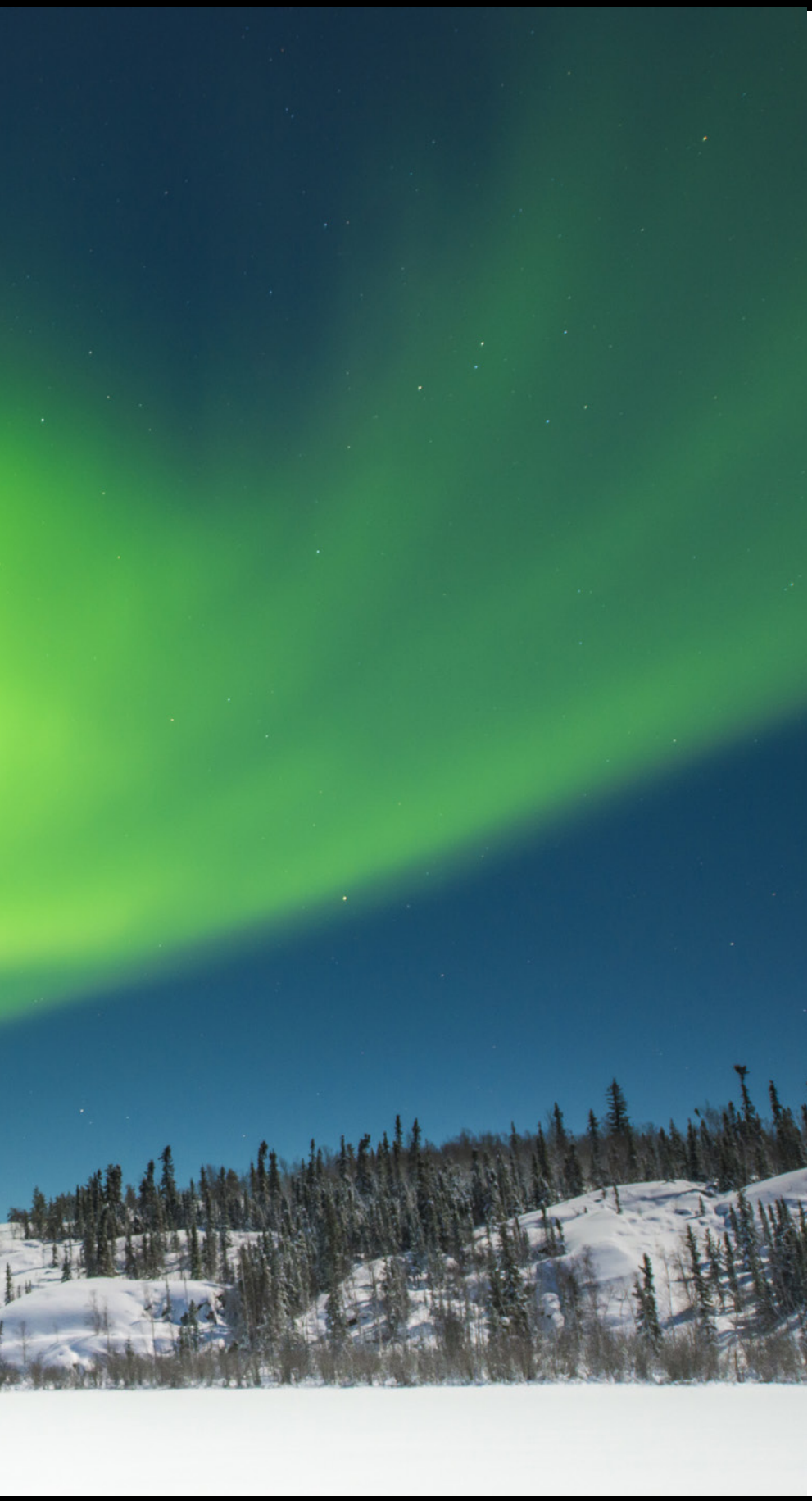
Shooting Tips

BY **MICHAEL DEFREITAS**

EMBRACE THE COLD

Many photographers put their cameras away in winter – and miss some amazing photo opportunities!

Northern Lights (Aurora) Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. Nikon D800, 20mm, f/2.8, 8 seconds, ISO 400.



It was almost midnight when I parked my car on a frozen, snow-covered lake a few miles north of Yellowknife, on a quest to photograph the Northern Lights. After I pre-set my camera controls I trudged through the foot-deep snow to set up my tripod a short distance from the car. As I walked I recalled an earlier comment by an Inuit guide who said that he could tell how cold it was by the noise the snow made when he walked on it. I didn't need the squeak of my footsteps on the snow to tell me how cold it was. Let's just say that -46° Celsius is *very cold*.

After aiming my camera at the northwestern sky (where I was told the Aurora would most likely appear), I hustled back to the warmth of my car. Soon after removing my gloves to warm my hands, I noticed a faint wisp of green light in the *northeastern* sky. I instinctively sprinted back to my camera and grabbed the tripod with my bare hands to swing it around. Big mistake! A burning sensation shot through my hands and up my arm. I instantly released my grip and luckily the tripod fell away. As I retrieved my gloves from the car I chuckled at the thought of trying to open the car door with my hands frozen to a tripod.



Gentoo penguin family Neko Cove (Harbour), Antarctica. Nikon D300, 200mm, f/9.5, 1/250 second, ISO 200.

PHOTO TIPS CAPTURING THE NORTHERN LIGHTS COLD

November to March are prime Aurora viewing months in the NWT, when the Aurora usually appears between 10 p.m. and 2 a.m. Plan on spending four to five days to make sure you see them. It is not difficult to take pictures of the Northern Lights, and you do not need elaborate equipment – you can take pictures of the Aurora Borealis with your cell phone, but you will get much better results with a digital SLR camera, tripod, remote shutter release and wide-angle lens in the 14mm to 28mm range.

Start with these camera settings:

- shoot in manual mode
- set ISO to 200, and aperture to f/4
- set shutter speed to 8 seconds

Adjust shutter speed depending on the brightness of the Aurora (weak 10 seconds, active/bright 5 seconds). If you don't have a remote shutter release, use your camera's self-timer to eliminate camera shake. Include a bit of foreground – trees or buildings are a good choice to add perspective. Check out Canada's Northwest Territories website at **www.spectacularnwt.com** and Astronomy North **www.astronomynorth.com** before planning your trip.

By the time I got back to the camera Mother Nature had switched off her lights, but the Aurora gods were on my side that night, and a few minutes later green streaks of light burst across the *southeastern* sky. They swirled and danced like enormous silk curtains blowing in the wind. For the first time that night I didn't notice the biting cold as I snapped dozens of pictures before the mesmerizing lights faded into the darkness.

The Northern Lights are just one of the great photo opportunities waiting for those who brave the cold. I love the contrasts of snowy landscapes and the bright colours people wear when they are playing in the snow. Yes, cold weather photography has its challenges on equipment and your body, but with some simple preparation it can yield spectacular images.



Harp Seal pup on ice flows in Gulf of St. Lawrence. Nikon D2x, 150mm, f/11, 1/250 second. ISO 100.



Research vessel Antarctic Dream in Neko Cove (Harbour), Antarctica. Nikon D300, 145mm, f/18, 1/160 second, ISO 200.



Snowshoeing in Lake Louise Alberta, Canada. Nikon D800, 17mm, f/19, 1/125 second. ISO 100.

Winter Exposure

Besides staying warm, the most difficult aspect of shooting snowy scenes is setting the exposure correctly so you actually get white snow. This problem is less noticeable with cameras offering matrix metering, but I find I still have to adjust the exposure. Most cameras use mid-grey biased meters that tend to render whites darker by reducing the exposure, so if you shoot on auto without any exposure compensation you are likely to end up with grey snow.

Winter photography pros often use a hand-held meter to take an incident light reading – just hold the meter so the measuring sphere receives light at the same angle as your subject. You can also use your camera meter to take a reading from an 18% grey card – hold the card at arm's length, and angle it so the light strikes the grey card at the same angle and the same intensity as it strikes the scene, and set your exposure manually or dial-in the appropriate exposure compensation. These readings will change when you shoot at different angles to the sun, so re-check exposure when you compose a different scene.

If you don't have a hand-held meter or a grey card, and you shoot in jpeg mode, you can guesstimate the exposure compensation and bracket your shots. Take a few shots at different settings and review the results to determine the best exposure compensation, and then set your exposure compensation dial – snow scenes usually require +1 or +2 (you will need to try a few settings). Forcing your camera to overexpose should yield whiter snow. Of course, if you shoot in raw mode you can snap away and adjust the exposure in the warmth of your home with image software.

The other big problem with cold is keeping condensation at bay. Never bring your camera from the cold straight into a warm moist environment like a car or a house. Place the camera in a plastic bag, and try to squeeze as much air out of the bag as possible before entering the warm environment. Allow the camera to reach room temperature before opening the bag. This will keep most of the moisture from the warm air from condensing on and/or in your camera. Just to be safe I toss in one of those silica gel bags to help absorb the moisture.

It goes without saying that a big obstacle to shooting in winter is keeping warm. Dress in layers for the worst-case situation and remove layers when you get hot. You don't want to perspire because that will only make you feel colder. Use two sets of wool gloves, one with the fingertips missing, and mittens over top. Also, I wrap a scarf over my mouth so my breath doesn't ice up my camera.

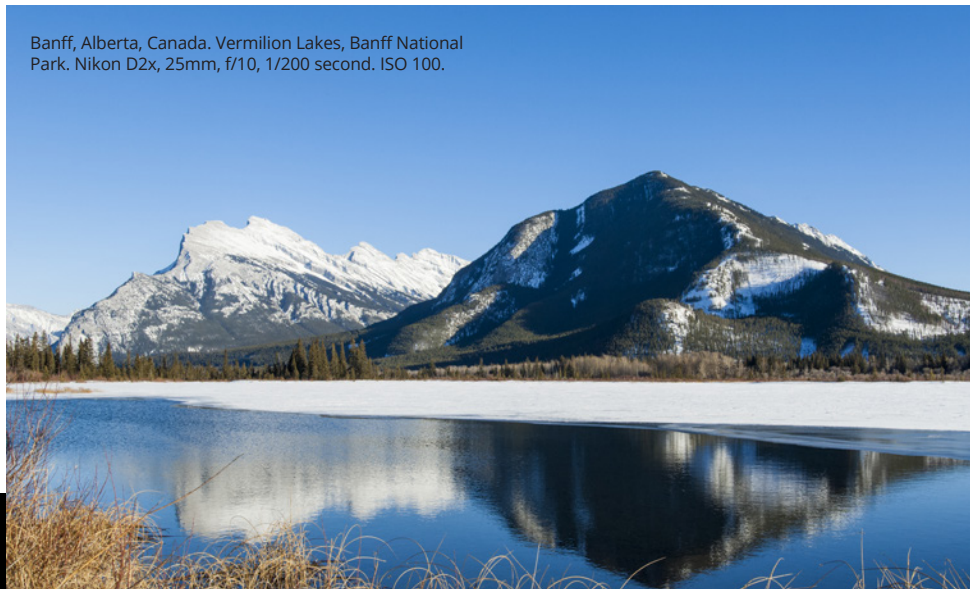
Ready to take it to the next level?

PRO TIPS FOR SHOOTING IN THE COLD

- Make sure your batteries are fully charged. Keep a spare set in your inside coat pocket.
- In extreme cold the skin on your face may stick to the camera's metal surfaces. I dab a bit of lip balm on the likely metal spots where my face contacts the camera.
- Flat snow lacks contrast. Look for contours, tracks or shadows from uneven surfaces to add a bit of contrast to large sections of snow.
- Straight snow scenes tend to look monotone. Add a dash of colour when possible – perhaps include a person in a red or yellow ski jacket.

GEAR UP

Snowy daylight scenes tend to have a bluish cast because of the reflection of blue sky on the snow. Try setting your camera's white balance control to 'cloudy' to warm up the scene, or attach a warming filter to your lens. Warming filters come in three styles: 81A, 81B and 81C, in ascending order of strength. I often use an 81A filter – these cost about $20 -$50 depending on filter size.



Banff, Alberta, Canada. Vermilion Lakes, Banff National Park. Nikon D2x, 25mm, f/10, 1/200 second. ISO 100.



Tech Tips | Exposure

BY **CHRISTIAN AUTOTTE**

GETTING THE LIGHT RIGHT

With all the auto and semi-auto exposure modes, does the camera meter always set the lens and shutter for the right amount of light?





Left: William Street. Here is an example where the wrong metering mode can lead to trouble. The ideal is usually to go for "spot metering" and measure only the subject's face. That way the dark background or the spotlights will not influence the reading.

Right: This composition could be more problematic. With the dark background and several spotlights the light meter could be fooled and render a picture either too light or too dark. Best go to "spot meter" and read the light on the subject's face.

Unfortunately, the answer is a resounding NO, and the reason will often bewilder novice photographers.

How does your camera measure light?

All cameras, whether they cost $400 or $4,000, are designed to expose for an average amount of light, often referred to in photographic jargon as "18% grey". Why? In the majority of scenes which include a range of light and dark elements, this exposure will usually be right on the money. Take the everyday family picture or a summer landscape and that 18% grey average will be fine. But what if that landscape is a winter scene with lots of snow? Or a portrait of a bride all dressed in white in a white room? The camera meter is then fooled into thinking that there is too much light in the scene and it will reduce the exposure to give an average "grey" image. The bride will not be happy... The opposite is also true: shoot a jazz musician dressed in black against a black backdrop and the meter will try to compensate by adding more light; the result might be a grey background and a performer with a washed out face.

Here is an exercise that can open anyone's eyes: with the camera set on P (Program), take a shot of a white, grey, and black cardboard. Look at the result with the histogram option on the LCD screen. All three images should come out virtually identical, with the histogram more or less centered. To get the white properly exposed more light should be added, and inversely less light if the subject is mainly dark. In full automatic metering mode that is typically impossible, as the camera takes total control of the exposure. In semi-automatic modes (Program, Shutter Speed, Aperture) it is possible to adjust the amount of light with an exposure compensation dial (see your manual for specific methods).



When a scene is of average brightness the light meter will usually give the proper amount of light. This is an example where the "matrix" mode will usually give the proper exposure.

When working in manual exposure mode, the photographer must adjust the ISO, the speed, and the aperture according to what is required for accurate exposure of the subject. A light meter will indicate when the settings give the proper neutral exposure. Left and right of the "0" will mean more or less light in the picture. When exposing a white subject, the speed or aperture must be set to "overexpose" so that the dot on the meter scale is not on the "0" but more to the "+" side. A dark subject will require "underexposure", the "-" side of the scale.

The histogram proves to be invaluable to decide what the proper exposure should be. These wiggles confuse more than one beginner, but nothing could be simpler. A histogram is merely a graphic representation of the light being photographed. It goes from black on the left, to white on the right, and medium grey in the middle. Should the scene being photographed include a certain amount of light tones, or the white dress of our bride, the histogram should reflect it with some of those wiggles extending to the right. If not, give it more light (by reducing the speed, opening the aperture, of playing with the compensation dial) and shoot another picture.

Most cameras are also equipped with another tool for measuring light: the metering modes. Instead of measuring the whole image, the camera can concentrate on smaller areas to increase their precision.

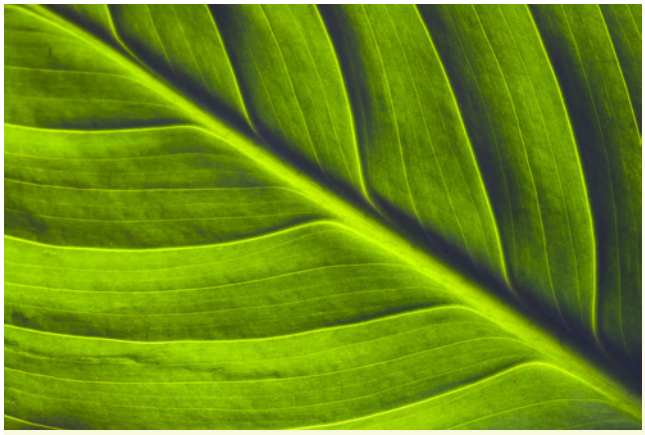
The basic mode is often called "Matrix mode" or "Evaluative metering", some camera manufacturers call it "Multi mode". Basically, the camera divides the image into a certain number of squares, analyzes the light in each area, and averages the results. Most cameras will also favour the areas where the focus was made (which should be the subject). This is the standard metering mode of most modern cameras, and the one

Without exposure compensation, the camera metered the white area and underexposed the image. The histogram shows nothing in the white end of its spectrum.



Changing the shutter speed added more light to the image. Now the histogram has moved to the right, to the lighter part of its scale.





With neutral subjects, such as these green leaves, the light meter can be trusted to give the proper exposure. With this kind of subject any metering mode will do. The "matrix" or "center-weighted" modes are designed to deliver good results.

that should give the best results for most subjects and for most photographers.

Another metering mode is called "Center-weighted", as the camera gives more importance to the center of the image. That is fine if you tend to zero in on the subject, but it can lead to some metering errors when the composition has the main subject is off to one side of the frame.

The final metering mode is called "Spot" or "Partial metering", in which only a very small area in the center of the scene is measured, usually between 1 to 5% of the whole image. This mode can be very accurate so long as you point at the right area and know how to read the results. Spot metering is a technique often considered better left to the more advanced users.

Whether you choose one metering mode or another, the goal should remain the same: get a properly exposed picture. With some practice and judicious analysis of the histogram, that goal should be easily achieved.



With part of the image being pale or while, as with these flowers, the histogram should push to the right, otherwise the image will be underexposed.

BOTTOMLINE



The Meter Never Lies

In the days before digital cameras, LCD screens, histograms, and Photoshop, we always used a hand-held light meter to achieve accurate exposure. The hand-held meter, like this Gossen Variosix F model, measures the incident light falling on the subject. Unlike the meter in your camera, which measures light reflected from the subject, the incident meter reads the light illuminating the subject. This reading is not affected by the colour or surface texture of the various elements in the scene.

Once you have taken a meter reading, you can scroll through the various aperture and shutter speed combinations available to achieve proper exposure at your desired aperture or shutter speed.

Many of the light meters available today can measure ambient light, flash, and a combination of light sources. Some meters let you measure the lighting contrast range within a scene – very useful for HDR images, as well as providing functions for cinematography and video applications. Some of the more advanced models can also measure colour temperature, so you can avoid lengthy post-processing sessions.

The bottom line in exposure metering is this: why guesstimate exposure of difficult subjects or complex lighting situations when you can take a meter reading and get the shot right the first time?

For more information on light metering products and techniques, please visit **www.gossen-photo.ca**



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SPECIAL FEATURE | TECHNIQUE

BY **FRANCIS AUDET**

STAR TRAILS

TRACING LIGHT AS THE WORLD TURNS

Photography is a fantastic tool to explore your world, especially when you create images that are normally invisible to our eyes. Nightscapes often reveal untold treasures in the sky, when long exposures can make the stars swirl like a heavenly dream.

What exactly are star trails, and why do they appear in long night exposures? Quite simply, stars are always at the same place relative to Earth's position in the grand scheme of things. Just like the Sun and the Moon rise in the East and set in the West, as the Earth turns, each star slowly traverses the night sky. A star trail photograph captures an image of this celestial motion.

The best way to create an image of star trails is to take multiple exposures of the starry sky and combine them in post processing. While it is possible to take one very long exposure, the heat coming from the camera sensor can cause hot spots in your final image.

To achieve success in your quest for a spectacular star trail image, the most important decision is to use a tripod to stabilize your camera during the long exposures. You will also need a cable release so you can take several pictures one after the other without touching your camera.

Keep in mind that long exposures take quite a bit of power, so always begin with a fully charged battery.

During the night the air often becomes cooler and humidity will condense into dew and fog on your camera lens, so keep the lens warm by wrapping it with some hand warmers.

For locations in the northern hemisphere, the North Star (Polaris) does not move significantly in the sky, and all other stars rotate around it, completing a full circle in 24 hours. Having Polaris in the frame will create circular trails around it. If you are not familiar with the exact position of the North Star, simply set your camera to bulb mode and take a long exposure in the neighbourhood of 4-5 minutes. This should give enough of a "spin" for the stars to help you pinpoint the center of the celestial circle.

Autofocus can be difficult to achieve during the night. It is best is to focus manually on a bright distant object, such as a streetlamp, or on a flashlight placed a few hundred feet away.



34 images, 8mm, f/4.5, 30 seconds, ISO1600

20 images, 26mm, f/5, 10 seconds, ISO160 (lower values because of the presence of the moon)

Bio

Francis Audet, a master of light and perspective, is the founder of the Photo Planet Project, and a leader of seminars and webinars on a wide range of photo topics. For a stunning array of visual images, please visit **francisaudet.com**



49 images, 8mm, f/5.6, 25 seconds, ISO800 with 25 seconds gap between shots (Noise Reduction)

Using Manual Mode, select a large aperture to ensure you have the greatest amount of light entering the camera. Leave the shutter speed at 30 seconds and try taking a test shot at ISO 1600 to see if you can see the stars in the image, and then adjust ISO accordingly. Make sure you turn your in-camera noise reduction off because it will require an additional 30 seconds after you make your exposure to do the noise reduction, and you will end up with little gaps in your star trails.

Post-Processing

To combine your images (stacking), I recommend a free program called StarStaX which is easy to use and does a great job. Just point StarStaX to the folder that contains all the star trail exposures, select "lighten" as the blend mode, and let it go to work.

Don't neglect composition! As with any good landscape photograph, you should be able to visually navigate through the image. A foreground element is very helpful, and having water in the scene is a bonus – the stars will reflect off the surface of the water. The image should not only be about the stars, but how they interact with the landscape.



300 images, 17mm, f/2.8, 30 seconds, ISO1250

Star Trail Tips

To make a striking photograph of the stars, there are a few requirements when it comes to choosing the right place and time.

- You must be far away from any city lights since any ambient light will make the stars less visible.
- Plan your star photography adventure for a moonless night, or at least shoot from an angle where the moon will not be above the horizon.
- Your goal should be to shoot on a clear night with no clouds.

Enjoy the spin!



SPECIAL FEATURE | FIELD TEST

BY **ERIC STEWART**

TWO NEW TAMRON FULL-FRAME PRIMES

SP 35mm f/1.8 Di VC USD | SP 45mm f/1.8 Di VC USD

Smooth, silent, and astoundingly good!

Whenever I get a new lens, the first thing I do is take it into the studio and photograph test targets. This allows me to get a sense of the lens's limitations. All lenses will show aberrations, as there is always some compromise in lens design. The process of testing a lens in the studio with charts allows me to identify potential issues when using the lens while making actual photographs.

For the two lenses in this review, as with nearly every lens, the issues lie in the corners. There is slight chromatic aberration in the corners of both lenses and a very slight vignette. These two issues are easily compensated for in software. The 45mm 1.8 also has longitudinal chromatic aberration when wide open, an issue that takes a little more work to deal with.

Knowing what to look for, I took the 35mm lens on a nighttime walk in Vancouver's historic Gastown. I was blown away by what this lens can do. Its autofocus is nearly silent. You literally have to hold the camera next to your ear to hear it autofocus. The edges of the image are perfectly straight, making it an ideal lens for architectural photography. The vibration control, the first I've seen on a wide angle lens of this quality, is unbelievable. By using every handheld stabilizing trick I know, coupled with the vibration control, I was able to consistently create sharp handheld images at 1/4 second. It really is shocking just how good the VC is on this lens.



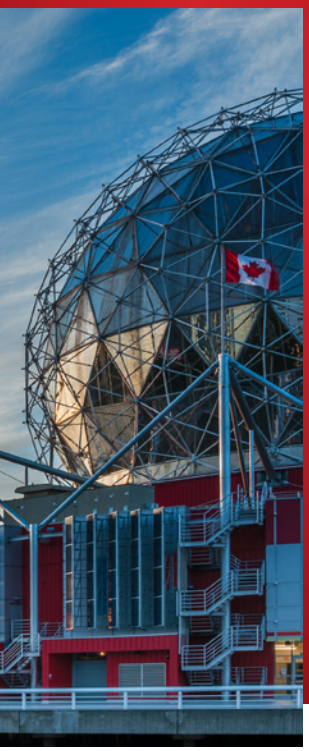




I am a big fan of 50mm lenses for portraits, so I was interested in how the 45mm lens would perform. I love it! As with the 35mm lens, the autofocus is silent. When creating images at wide apertures, the bokeh is beautiful. I adore the close focus capability of the lens as I was able to capture details without having to switch to a macro lens. This would be a huge benefit to baby and wedding photographers who often have to move quickly to capture those details. As with the 35mm Tamron lens, the vibration control works beautifully.

These two lenses look expensive. They are sleek, metallic and shiny. They feel pretty good too. The manual focus ring rotates easily, and the buttons for vibration control and manual focus feel solid. In the sweet spot, they would not be the sharpest lenses in my bag – my Tamron SP 90mm f/2.8 Di VC USD and SP 60mm f/2 Di II macro lenses share that title, but in absolutely every other way, they are astoundingly good. The autofocus is virtually silent, the lens issues that I found in the studio are minimal, but for me, the reason to own these lenses is the low light capability. If you want to make photographs without a tripod in low light, you are going to want these lenses in your bag.

For low-light images the fast f/1.8 aperture and excellent vibration control makes the 35mm Tamron an excellent choice.





I love the way a large-aperture portrait lens separates the image from the background. The Tamron 45mm has wonderfully soft bokeh, enhancing the impact of a portrait.

Focus on the eyes for the best results in a portrait, and let the wide aperture create the mood.





Tamron SP 35mm f/1.8 Di VC USD

The Tamron SP 35mm f/1.8 Di VC USD is the latest update to a classic and very versatile fixed focal length lens, combining sophisticated optical layout and VC image stabilization for enhanced image quality. The lens features one Low Dispersion element, one eXtra Low Dispersion element, and two aspherical elements help to control a variety of aberrations and distortions for consistent and even illumination and sharpness, as well as reduced color fringing. Tamron's eBAND and BBAR coatings work to suppress flare and ghosting for increased contrast and color fidelity.

The lens has a ring-type USD motor, for quick, quiet autofocus performance with full-time manual focus capabilities. Minimum focusing distance is 7.9" with a maximum magnification of 1:2.5. The lens has various seals to protect against moisture, as well as a fluorine-coated front element to resist fingerprints, smudging, and water.

This wide-angle prime lens is designed for full-frame Canon EF mount DSLRs, and is also compatible with APS-C models where it will provide a 56mm equivalent focal length. The rounded nine-blade diaphragm produces a pleasing out-of-focus quality when working with shallow depth of field techniques.



Tamron SP 45mm f/1.8 Di VC USD

The Tamron SP 45mm f/1.8 Di VC USD is a normal-length prime lens designed for full-frame DSLR cameras, and is available in Nikon mount compatible with NikonFX and DX models (where it provides a 67.5mm equivalent focal length), and in Canon mount, for full-frame models and APS-C models (where it will provide a 72mm equivalent focal length).

The lens features a sophisticated optical layout and VC image stabilization for enhanced image quality. One Low Dispersion element and two aspherical elements help control a variety of aberrations and distortions for consistent and even illumination and sharpness, as well as reduced color fringing, and eBAND and BBAR coatings suppress flare and ghosting for increased contrast and color fidelity.

The 45mm f/1.8 lens has a ring-type USD motor, for quick, quiet autofocus performance with full-time manual focus capabilities. An inner focusing design and Floating System aid in achieving a minimum focusing distance of 11.4" with a maximum magnification of 1:3.4. Moisture-resistant construction incorporates seals to protect against moisture, and a fluorine-coated front element to resist fingerprints, smudging, and water. A rounded nine-blade diaphragm produces a pleasing out-of-focus quality when working with shallow depth of field techniques.

SILKYPIX Developer Studio 4.0 for Tamron software is included with the lenses, enabling basic raw processing and image adjustments. This software uses dedicated optical data from Tamron's SP-series of lenses to correct various aberrations, including color fringing, distortion, and peripheral light fall-off.

For more information please visit **www.tamron.ca**





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Photo by Nina Stavlund

Technique

BY **TONY BECK**

TIPS FOR SHARPER IMAGES

My very first photographic challenge was avoiding soft images to achieve tack sharpness.

Decades ago, it was easy to create colourful works of art with Kodachrome or Velvia film. All I had to do was release the shutter. A few days later I would have results I could study and enjoy, but even though my work radiated rich hues and contrast, I often discovered that subtle details were absent, especially when I used longer focal length lenses. The slides were not as clear and sharp as the images in publications or fine art prints.



Chinstrap Penguin, Antarctica - When photographing people or animals, always focus on the eyes. Even if the rest of the subject is out of focus, your image still has impact.

Bio

Freelance photographer Tony Beck describes himself as a "naturalist", specializing in a wide variety of wildlife and nature subjects. Based in Ottawa, Ontario, Tony and his wife Nina Stavlund operate a small company called "Always An Adventure" offering a variety of photography, nature, birdwatching and tourism related services including workshops, courses, excursions and short trips.
For more information please visit **alwaysanadventure.ca/**



Light-mantled Albatross, Drake Passage, Antarctica - Photographing a moving subject is like dancing, you establish a rhythm and move with the flow. "Panning" is a technique typically used with slow shutters.

I learned very quickly that sharp images come mainly from steady cameras. Working from a solid base prevents "camera shake"–the recording of a camera's movement as the shutter remains open. My instructors insisted that we should always use a tripod, and that hand-holding was unprofessional–a recipe for poor quality work.

I will agree in part–a tripod ensures a stable camera and prevents unwanted shake from spoiling image clarity. A tripod is essential equipment for all photographers, especially when using slow shutters during activities like night photography, or intentionally creating motion blur.

Choosing a Tripod

The most field-worthy tripods are light and flexible, yet sturdy. The leg locks should be strong while allowing you to extend or retract the legs smoothly, quickly and effortlessly. Your system should include a versatile and solid tripod head. To further maximize stability, a cable release or remote trigger allows you to keep your hands off the equipment while releasing the shutter. Keep in mind that tripods are sturdiest when the legs and central column are lowered to their most compact point.

Don't skimp on quality. Buy the best you can afford. You are only as good as your weakest link. All too often I see photographers invest in expensive lenses, only to place them on tripods with flimsy legs and a tiny head. Instead, make sure the support system complements your equipment. It should feel well balanced, comfortable and secure. Although more costly, carbon fibre products provide the greatest combination of stability and light weight.

Choosing the best head depends mainly on your equipment or style. In many situations, I prefer the quickness and simplicity of a ball head, with its single friction control knob. I also like the solid stability of a pan/tilt head. Some photographers like the speed, precision and dexterity of a gimbal head, especially when using heavy lenses. For video or spotting telescopes, you'll want the smooth panning ability of a video/fluid head. A quick-release adapter makes any head more effective and efficient.

Using a Tripod

I try to use a tripod whenever possible, but I have an aversion to carrying extra gear. As a birder and tour guide, when conducting field excursions I am already encumbered with countless other tools-of-the-trade. Can I effectively reduce the size and weight of items needed for field work? I say: yes! Although nothing replaces a good tripod for stability, there are several options to help maximize image sharpness, especially if you combine these with good field craft.



Carbon Fiber tripods (like the award-winning Vanguard Alta Pro series) are light, quick, versatile and user friendly. For still photography, I like to match it with a simple and quick ball head.

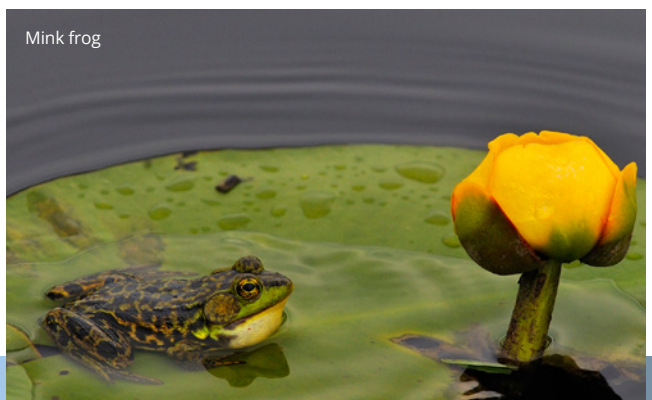

Antarctic tern

Monopods offer a convenient and highly effective substitute to tripods. Response time is dramatically reduced when you only have a single leg to maneuver rather than three. For additional flexibility and speed, I compliment my monopod with a pistol grip head. It's a quick and effective way to keep your horizon straight or enhance composition.

Gunstocks or shoulder supports offer additional stability while affording more freedom to respond quickly as compositions change. The camera basically becomes an extension of your body. They create more surface area for you to brace the equipment. For best results, keep elbows down and remain calm while focusing on your subject.

Lens and camera stabilization features like VR or IS make a remarkable difference. If you've got them, use them. Some photographers reject equipment unless they have these features. Although not a cure for the shakes, they help counter the effects of sensor movement, often stabilizing equipment down to shutter speeds as slow as 1/60 second or even slower.

Be resourceful and adaptable. Look around you for natural support. If possible, lean against anything solid like a tree, rock or post. I like to explore Canada's adventurous back roads with a car. A vehicle can act like a camera blind, hiding your intentions from roadside wildlife. Turn the engine off before resting your lens against an open window. If you are concerned about scratches, keep a bean bag handy in your glove compartment for such situations. Better still, use a window mount like the Vanguard PH-304 – a clamp device that fits over the open window of your car, providing a 3-way pan head with quick release.


Mink frog

The Eyes are the Keys to Sharpness

Proper focus is critical for sharpness. Whenever I photograph people or any cooperative living creature, I always prioritize the eyes. Eyes are the windows to the soul. I use single spot focus on continuous, moving the focus point to the subject's eyes before releasing the shutter. Although it's nice to have my entire subject look sharp, when the eyes are in focus, there's little need to be concerned about anything else.

Speed it up for Sharper Shots

The most important technique for achieving sharp images is to use a fast shutter speed. A guideline from the film days advises to make your shutter speed faster than a fraction of the focal length. For example, if your lens is 200mm long, the shutter should be 1/200 second or faster.

Guidelines aside, I recommend speeds faster than 1/1000 second regardless of focal length. These high speeds freeze the action as well as dramatically reducing camera shake.

I am more offended by blur than noise. Although low ISO settings provide better contrast, colour and detail than higher ISO, and small aperture openings have greater depth of focus than larger ones, when faced with low light conditions I always raise my ISO and open my aperture before lowering my shutter speed.

Camera Settings for Sharper Images

If you are uncomfortable with manual exposure, read your camera manual to see what automatic options you have. Most new cameras come with "action" or "sports" options in the scene mode. Look for the "running man" icon in your menu. This feature typically defaults to faster shutter speeds when setting exposure.

Post-Processing

I frequently add a touch of "unsharp mask" during the editing process. Although this helps make a sharp image look sharper, it can't make a soft image sharp. Sharpness must be produced during field activity. Although you can fix a lot of image imperfections with photo editors like Lightroom or Photoshop, it is nearly impossible to add sharpness if it's not there in the first place.

The bottom line for achieving sharper images is to get the best equipment you can afford, familiarize yourself with it, adopt good field practices that include fast shutter speeds and some form of camera support, then get out and practice as often as you can.


For quick action in the field I often use a monopod. This Vanguard model, outfitted with a pistol grip head, has become a favourite tool for sharper images.

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FIELD TEST | EPSON SURECOLOR P600

BY **ERIC STEWART**

EXHIBITION QUALITY PRINTS

AT HOME OR AT WORK



My first impression of the Epson SureColor P600 printer is one of simplicity. This printer is very well made with a wonderful user interface. The high quality touch screen has large digital buttons and the ability to easily scroll through well thought out menus, and common operations are easy to find. Built-in tutorials help with operations such as loading the paper and changing the ink cartridges. These tutorials have simple step by step instructions with clear diagrams.



The Epson SureColor P600 printer easily connects to the computer with three different options: USB, Ethernet or Wi-Fi for cable-free printing. The roll paper brackets attach easily, if a little precariously, and changing different rolls of paper is simple and fast. Changing paper thickness, something that is often a pain for users who have a wide variety of printing papers, is simple with the P600, as each size goes into a different slot on the printer. The built in "Load Guide" tutorial makes figuring out which paper goes where very easy.

When I tested the printer, I had a variety of different papers, including different thicknesses of sheet paper and 13 inch rolls of canvas and Premium Luster paper.



The 13 inch roll paper loads fairly easily. When loading a new roll, the curl of the paper makes it slightly awkward to feed. However, once the curl is taken out, inserting the paper into the printer and holding it for 3 seconds starts an automatic feed process. I was disappointed that the printer does not cut roll paper automatically, but a manual cutting process is made simple by a dotted cut line and enough space to use full size scissors. Once cut, the paper is automatically fed back into the printer.

Loading sheet paper is very easy as well. Thin papers are fed from the back, while thicker papers need to be loaded from the front. Loading thick papers is an involved process, but the step by step tutorials make it pretty easy.

The printing is slow, but the quality is very good. Out of the box, and with profiles downloaded from Epson, the printer makes decent colour prints. I did have some slight shifts in the magenta tones. As I do with every printer I use, I created custom printer profiles for a variety of papers, and these prints are nearly perfect in terms of colour accuracy.

I printed on Epson and Awagami papers, and I was thrilled with the print quality. There are virtually no dot patterns in the papers, even with metallic paper. My black and white images, printed with matte ink on Awagami paper, look awesome.

Overall this printer is a bit slow, but for ease of use, it's great. For print quality it is outstanding, and despite the fact that I have to cut the paper after each print, I love the roll paper capability for doing long panoramic images. I have used many printers over the past few years. In terms of image quality, this is one of the best.

The **SureColor P600 Inkjet Printer** from **Epson** is a very good choice for creating exhibition quality prints up to 13" x 129". With 5760 x 1440 dpi maximum resolution and nine UltraChrome HD ink cartridges the P600 produces exceptionally detailed color and black and white images and borderless printing up to 13 x 19" is possible. A roll holder gives you the flexibility of using long paper rolls up to 13" wide. Minimum cut sheet size is 3.5 x 5".

Epson's auto-switching black ink technology lets you switch between matte and photo black ink cartridges. High capacity 25.9 ml ink cartridges are easy to replace. Three-level black ink technology produces smooth gradations and fine black & white prints, and there is an Ink Save mode, and an advanced Black & White mode for neutral or toned prints.

The front panel of the P600 has a tilting 3.5" color LCD touch screen, so adjusting settings is quick and easy. The printer has a top-loading feeder, a front media path for handling specialty media and CD/DVDs, and roll holders. You can use Wi-Fi Direct, Epson Connect, Epson iPrint Mobile App, Apple AirPrint, and Google Cloud Print options for direct printing from mobile devices

For more information please visit **www.epson.ca**

"SMILE!"



Berber's Smile – Jean-Denis Boillat of Quebec City, QC, captured this image of a berber carpet seller at the "Musée berbère» in the Aït Tizgui, Morocco, using a Canon EOS 60D with a EF-S18-200mm lf/3.5-5.6 IS lens at 120mm, shooting at 1/20th second and f/7.1, ISO 6400, manual evaluative metering. *"I did not have a tripod or monopod with me, so I steadied my camera on a chair and used the Live View mode to compose the shot. Post-production was done with the Snapspeed app on my iPad."*

The PHOTONews Canada Winter 2015-2016 Challenge theme is "Smile!" Your assignment – to photograph a winning smile from friends, family, or creatures in your life.

The contest is open to all Canadian photographers. You may enter by surfing to our Facebook site at PHOTONews Canada, then click on the Photo Contest tab, or join our flickr® group at ***www.flickr.com/groups/photonewsgallery/*** and look for the Winter 2015/2016 "Smile!" Challenge discussion thread, where you will find additional details, samples, suggestions, and technique tips.

It's fun, it's free, and it's a friendly environment for photographers of all ages and skill levels.

The contest deadline for entries for the "Smile!" Challenge is January 16, 2016.

See your pictures in print!

It is always a thrill to see your pictures in a national magazine. PHOTONews Canada selects reader's images from the photos posted in our PHOTONews Canada Reader's Gallery flickr® group pool – so take a look, sign in, post a few of your favourite photos, and enjoy our interactive photographic adventures!

The PHOTONews Canada Challenge is sponsored by Panasonic Canada, who will present a special prize for the most interesting image selected for publication in the next issue.

Panasonic LUMIX Challenge

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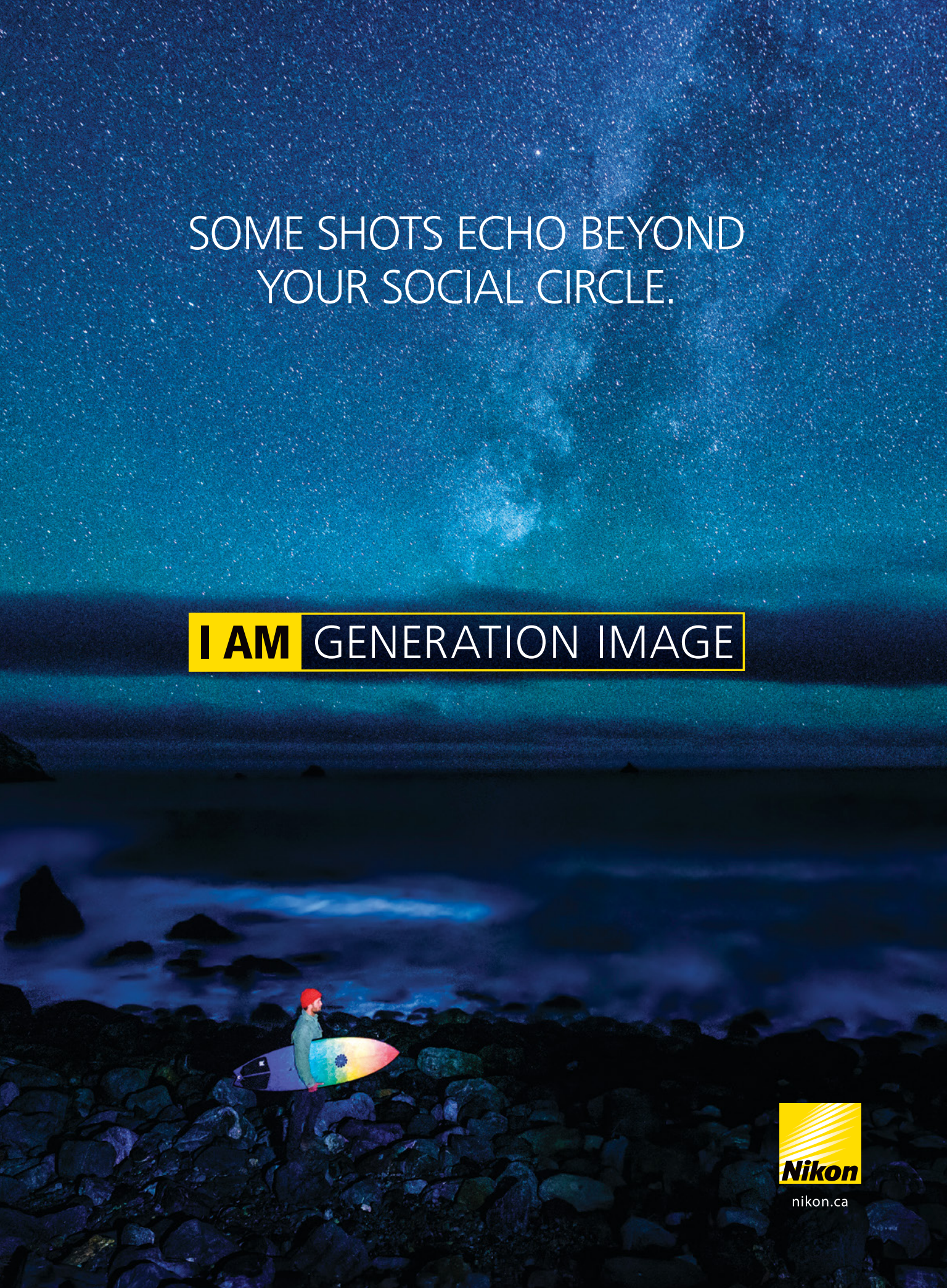
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