



The Image

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE COASTAL CAMERA CLUB

March 2010

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Coastal
Camera
Club



VIEW FROM THE BOARDROOM

By Mark Janke

I've been very lucky in my choice of a wife. She told me right off that she's not into stuff (she hates to shop), but that she is into experiences (read that as interesting vacations). So, I have been privileged to have gone to many exotic, far away places. Most people would consider any one of these many trips as the trip of a lifetime. And I try to take that attitude with each and every one of them. Being a photographer makes me want to savor and capture every thrill or interesting thing that I see on our trips. When we get home, Chris and I team up to make an album of each trip. Chris with a daily journal of the trip and me with the photos to back it up. Of course, I try my best, as time permits, to take not only snapshot records of where we've been, but also some shots that I'd be willing to share with others in an exhibit or in competitions. After all, why take photos unless someone is going to view them. Not all of us can expect that we'll sell our photos to National Geographic, so for me, I do something that is within my capability...I exhibit my work, not just in our CCC exhibits, but on my own (or in some cases with another brave soul like Maryann or Deanna).

The purpose of this diatribe is to extol the benefits of creating exhibits and to encourage everyone to try it. The first task is to pick a topic or theme. For me, that's easy. I just pick one of my trips. For some of you, it may be a special photographic project that you set out for yourself...or one of your favorite subjects to photograph e.g. butterflies or garden flowers or whatever. Do you have to have a theme? Of course not, you can make it just a collection of your best or favorite photographs. But sometimes a theme makes things a little easier. First it cuts down on the selection process. Secondly, a theme tends to tell a story, and often a photograph that's good at promoting that story doesn't need to be a prize winner. I'm not saying use sloppy or bad images, but you may get to use some very interesting shots, that tell a great story, but are technically just good. not great. Its always good to have a few show stoppers, but not all of the images need to be there.

The first benefit to creating an exhibit is that it forces you to look critically and objectively at all the image candidates. Does each image add or detract from the story and impression that you are trying to convey. This helps you become a better judge of good photography. Starting on your own work in the comfort of your own study certainly beats doing it at a club competition...and the scotch is usually better, too. Another benefit is that you are more likely to spend some trying to do at least a little polishing on your choices for the exhibit in photoshop or lightroom, etc. So you get to practice those skills. Lastly, it's just plain fun to relive the experiences you had while taking the photos. For me, I enjoy my vacation all over again.

Hopefully, if you've succeeded in developing your story, you will get feedback from viewers of the exhibit that show that they get the same pleasure or excitement or sense of quiet reflection that you did when creating your showcase. That's the ultimate satisfaction and compliment that I have received in my photography. It makes all the work worthwhile. Don't be shy, give it a try.

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The Image is published monthly by the Coastal Camera Club. We welcome all members to contribute to the newsletter. The deadline for submissions is the third Friday of the month. Please e-mail all submissions to Louis Secki at lou.secki@gmail.com.

Membership dues for the Coastal Camera Club are:

\$35.00 Individual

\$60.00 Family

\$5.00 The Image

Happenings

April 26, 2010

George Zip will be at the Charter Oak Photographic Society presenting "Bird/ Raptor Photography." For more information visit their website at www.charteroakphoto.com.

May 17, 2010

Ray Guillette will be at the Charter Oak Photographic Society presenting "The Creative Process." For more information visit their website at www.charteroakphoto.com.

George Lepp Seminar

George Lepp will be giving an all day seminar at the University of Connecticut, "Captured the Possibilities"

Remember

Check www.coastalcameraclub.org for more updated information on all activities.

April Meetings

April 7th

CCC/SECC Joint Competition at Coastal Camera Club, Special Categories; prints "Floating", Digital "Feather". This meeting will take place in Madison, CT.

April 21st

Paul Peterson, will give a presentation "You be the Judge". This program is a how to on judging. Paul is on the Board of the New Haven Camera Club and the NECC. He is an experienced camera club judge who believes in positive comments when critiquing images.

Informal one on one critique at 6:30 pm.

Flickr Group Update—April 2010

For March the topic of the month is "Words." This one is designed to be a little bit of a challenge. We can all describe our photographs with words but can you express the printed word creatively in a photograph? Have fun and upload your images so we can see how creative you are. If you have any questions about the group or flickr.com in general drop me a note at lou.secki@gmail.com and I will try to help you out.

If anyone has a topic they would like to see covered here send an email to lou.secki@gmail.com and we will work it into the mix.

The Coastal Camera Club meets at 7:00pm on the first and third Wednesdays of the month at The Depot Meeting Center on Route 79 in Madison, Connecticut.

Tidbits 60—Fill Light

By Archie Stone

Interesting. As I began to do the research for this tidbits I went to one of my favorite websites “The Luminous Landscape” I then went to their essay section and clicked on “L” in the hope that I would find an article on Fill Light. Already had been to “F”. While I did not find what I was looking for, I did find an essay on “Learning to See”. After reading the article I realized that, in my “View from the Board”, I had hit on every suggestion for improving your image’s composition and subject matter that the author did. All of my research must be finally paying off. Now to continue to follow my own advise. On to the next subject.

Fill light (part 1)

This is going to be a multi part article on fill light which will cover the what, where and how using reflectors as well as fill flash.

What is it

As we are going to discuss it in this article, fill light is any source or type of light, other than the primary (main or key) light which is used to control contrast in the photograph. Contrast is the difference in the amount of light reflecting from the dark or shadow areas of the scene and the light areas. By using fill light the Dynamic Range between the blacks, midtones and whites are reduced, without effecting the upper midtones and highlights, allowing for more detail in the shadows or dark areas. The amount and direction of the fill light used will determine how much detail is shown in the dark areas or how much shadow is eliminated.

While fill light is primarily used to reduce contrast, there are times when you would use fill light to increase the contrast in order to bring out or highlight an object or part of a scene. This type of fill light is usually done in still life (table top) or studio photography where the light for every part of the scene is set up and controlled. Rim lighting on the hair to separate it from the back ground is just one type of fill light which gives more light to the subject than the main light. The one area in nature where fill light may be used to increase the contrast would be in close up or macro photography where we use fill light to light the subject so that the background will go dark or under exposed.

Fill light to increase the contrast is not going to be discussed in this Tidbits as it is a subject unto its own.

Why is it needed

The human eye, along with the brain, has the ability to shift between the highlights and dark areas of a scene and pick up detail in both. The brain then combines these multiple images into what the brain tells us we are seeing. Therefore we can see the detail in the face shadows created by the baseball cap and in the dark interior of a barn on a bright day where the camera can not. The camera can record the highlights or the shadows (darks) in detail, but not both at the same time. It, unlike the brain can not record two separate light levels simultaneously and show detail in each, especially when they are close to or exceed the Dynamic Range of the film or sensor. This is why we have split neutral density filters and HDR (High dynamic Range) procedures for capture and HDR programs for digital processing

When do you use it

Fill light should be used anytime you see that the film or sensor is not going to record the full Dynamic Range of the scene. Or, if it can record the full range you would like to reduce the contrast to bring out more detail in the darks or shadows.

This is especially true in portraiture where with shadows we loose to much detail. The problem can be caused by one side of the face or body being in to much shadow with side lighting, under the chin and on the neck or in my case with deep set eyes, a term known as raccoon eyes, if the light comes from directly above, or if lit from behind (back lighting) the whole subject is dark. Last but not least fill light is great for putting a catch light in the eyes. I use some type of fill light, usually flash, for just about all of my people, animal or bird photography if they are within range of the strobe.

Fill light is for more than portraiture, though in reading the articles you would never know this. It can be used to balance the foreground light with the rest of the scene in landscape photography and fill dark parts of the room in interior architectural work. It plays a big part in table top or still life work and macro photography. I have seen lighting diagrams for still life where they have used everything from a large piece of white foam core to fill the whole scene, to a small mirror, kitchen spatula or polished spoon to get light on a very small area or object.

In fact, fill light can be used just about anyplace where you want to reduce the contrast in the scene or in some cases expand the contrast so long as you stay within the Dynamic Range of the film or sensor

How does it work

I think one of the hardest concepts about fill light for people to grasp is that you can add fill light to the whole scene and it will not affect or have very little affect on any part of the scene in which the light value of the scene is greater than the amount of light you are adding. **Huuhhh! What the heck is he talking about, of course if you add more light on the whole scene it will affect the**

Joint Competition Meeting, April 7th

Our first meeting in April will be our annual joint competition with the Southeastern Connecticut Camera Club which we host this year. For those new to the club we started this competition many years ago. Each year we switch venues and while we are suppose to be competing on photography it has also developed into a food fest.

For those entering prints or willing to help take in prints, we will meet at the Depot by 6:15 pm to set up for the receiving of prints and food.

We will be following our competition rules which can be found on the website. Remember to send digital images to ccc.images@gmail.com, subject line "joint competition" by March 29th.

The special category for prints is "floating". The special category for digital is "feather".

Please understand while the use of the special category does carry additional weight in scoring it still must be a good image. One last note you are allowed no more than three (3) entries in each category, and a total of 10 entries.

All members are asked to bring finger food, hot or cold, for the meeting. As I said in the first paragraph, in addition to the photography competition it has also turned into a food fest competition. We are trying to tone the food part down some so simple finger food is fine. The club furnishes the drinks.

Tidbits, Con't...

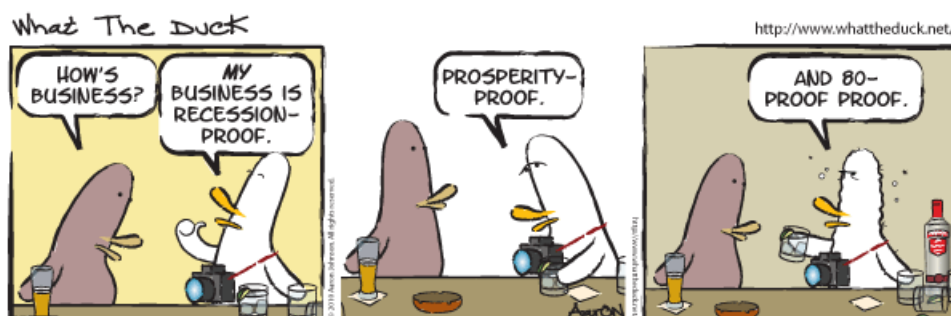
whole thing. Please bear with me. Why, Because as photographers the first sentence is correct. But please do not ask me why. It is one of those things you have to accept or find a physicist that can explain it to you. Don't believe me, then experiment, find a very contrasty scene, preferably one in which the light is constant like a room or part of a room at night. Be sure the scene you select has a well lit area, a partially lit area and a dark area. Take a picture with no fill light, then a picture with fill light that is one or one and one half stops less than the meter reads. Bring both images up on the computer side by side and compare them. You will see that the upper midtones and the highlights have not changed or changed so little you will not see it. Only the lower mid-tones and blacks will be lighter. By the way, if you do not have the ability with your built in flash or external strobe to set fill light ratios then use a piece of white whatever to reflect light back into the scene. Remember we are talking about fill light here not just fill flash.

For those of you who like to challenge factual statements like the one I made above, Here is an excerpt from an article I found at <http://www.woodlandsphoto.org>.

"The fill flash technique uses the flash to fill in the shadows or adds a little highlight to dark areas. At this point, many photographers may be concerned that this technique may add too much light to the highlights. The reality is that observed light is not cumulative. If you take a flashlight outdoors on a bright sunny day, you do not see the light shining in front of you. Try it. Take a flash light outdoors into the bright sun with deep shadows. Shine the flashlight on a spot where an object is partially in the sun and partially in deep shadows. You will notice that the deep shadows will have more details. At the same time, the portion of the object lit by the sun has not increased in brightness. When configured for fill flash, your auxiliary flash unit will accomplish the same thing. It will just add light to the shadows area."

And yes as the fill light approaches the value of the main light you may see some change in the highlights or upper midtones because the closer the fill light gets in value to the main light the more it may effect the whole scene as it is now moving towards being another main light. If you look closely at the histograms of two images where the fill light is less than say 1 stop different than the main light, and assuming the histograms are sensitive enough to show subtle changes in light values, you may see that the highlights have moved just ever so slightly to the right. Why, because it does have an effect on the overall scene the closer it comes to the main light value. But it is so insignificant that for all intent and purposes you will never notice it. Of course if you set a ration of only $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$ under your primary light source than you may see more change in the upper midtones and maybe the highlights. But most fill ratios start at minimum of 1 stop to 2 stops under the main light.

To be continued



NECCC Annual Conference

Mark your calendars for the NECCC Annual Photography Conference. The dates for this year's conference are July 16 – 18 and will be held on the campus of UMASS –Amherst.

The conference starts Friday afternoon and runs through lunchtime on Sunday. There is a little something for everyone interested in photography. There are multiple speakers every hour in different locations around the campus and the topics range from the highly technical to creative. Some are all about how to focus your getting the picture you wanted while others might give you ideas about how to achieve the look you want in Photoshop. If sitting in a lecture hall listening to a speaker isn't your thing there are some sessions which are just there for entertainment, gaze at slideshows and let them inspire you to greatness. There are also some hands on opportunities for photography. Usually they have some Hi-jinx stuff setup, some still life's to shoot in studio lighting environment and some models that are there to smile and let you shoot them.

If you are interested in attending let one of the board members know and we will see what we can do to convince you to attend this year. If you just have questions and want to know more just get a hold of one of the board members. You can also go to www.neccc.org for more information.

2010 Glennie Nature Competition—Results

The Glennie Nature Competition had record participation this year with 111 clubs from seven different countries submitting 1100 images. That's the good news; the bad news is that we were tied with three other clubs for 93rd place with a total of 201 points. The winning club was the Cape Cod Viewfinders Camera Club in Chatham, MA with a total of 246 points.

For those who aren't aware, the Glennie Nature Competition is an all digital competition Hosted by the Merrimack Valley Camera Club in North Andover, MA. Clubs submit a total of 10 images by at least 5 different makers and these images are scored on a 30 point scale. The highest total combined score wins.

I don't think anyone will argue with me when I say the Coastal Camera Club is not known for being a "nature" club. So when we score 201 points out of a possible 300, it's not totally unexpected. Our score improved over the 2009 competition where we only scored 192 points, so that is a step in the right direction. Question is, what can we, as a club, do to bring our score up even more for 2011? If we could have scored even one additional point on each of our 10 images we would have moved from 93rd place to 68th place. With a little more focus on nature photography I am sure we can do even better next year.

Here is how our images scored:

Tiger Swallowtail Larva	Maryann Flick	23 (Merit Award, Close-up Small Objects)
Mallard Drinking	Allison Maltese	23
Tufas-Mono Lake Sunset	Maryann Flick	21
Baboon	Dianne Roberts	21
Fierce Red Tailed Hawk	Allison Maltese	20
Coopers Hawk	Ellen Wagner	20
Seven Seals	Jayne Miller	19
Seagull	Deanna Broderick	19
Bee & Thistle	Deanna Broderick	18
Red Leaf	Dianne Roberts	17

More information about the competition as well as the winning images can be found on the Merrimack Valley Camera Club's website mvcameraclub.org. Let's put our nature hats on this summer and get ready for the 2011 Glennie Nature Competition.

March Meetings—Refreshments

At each meeting, members are responsible for bringing a snack of some sort. Drinks, cups and paper goods are supplied by the club and brought each meeting by the hospitality chair.

April 7th *Everyone Brings Snacks*

April 21st *Nick Carlino*

Coastal
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The Image Newsletter



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First Class Mail

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Address correction requested