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The Lens and Eye

North Bethesda Camera Club

Volume 44 Number 1 <http://www.nbccmd.org> Editor: José Cartas nbccleandeye@yahoo.com September, 2008

Calendar

September, 2008

- 2 PCR: 7:00 pm.
- 3 Competition Night: 7:30 pm.
Judge: Sherwin Kaplan.
Hospitality: Melissa Clark, John Grupenhoff.
- 10 Workshop: 7:30 pm; Ferrell McCollough.
High Dynamic Range Photography.
Hospitality: Jim Hawkins, Chuck Lee.
- 17 Board Meeting: 7:30pm; Davidson's.
- 21 Field Trip: Battle of St. Leonard Creek.
- 24 Program: 7:30 pm; Ian J. Plant.
Photographing the Chesapeake Bay.
Hospitality: Nancy Garwood, Carol Lee.

October, 2008

- 1 Competition Night: 7:30 pm.
- 7 PCR: 7:00 pm.
- 15 Board Meeting: 7:30 pm; Hanson's.
- 18 Field Trip: Antique and Classic Car Show.
- 22 Program/Workshop: 7:30 pm.
- 29 Program/Workshop: 7:30 pm.

Competition Assignment

Open

**Any photograph taken on or after
June 1, 2007**



Workshop, September 10 Ferrell McCollough on High Dynamic Range (HDR) Photography

Evelyn Jacob

Have you struggled to successfully capture a landscape scene with bright sky and foreground in shadow? Or an interior shot that included un-curtained windows on a bright day? As you know, these kinds of scenes with a high dynamic range present real challenges for photography.

Graduated neutral density filters are one way to handle this challenge, but they work best when there is a straight line dividing light and dark areas. Or one can take two shots (one for the light areas and one for the dark areas) and then combine them in your editing software using masks. Now, there is another option: high dynamic range photography. In high dynamic range photography, one takes multiple shots to cover the dynamic range in the scene and then combines them using software designed to blend them. Photoshop CS3 can be used, as well as other programs such as Photomatix and FDRTools.

We are very lucky that Ferrell McCollough, author of a top selling book on the topic, will discuss HDR photography at NBCC on September 10. Ferrell will provide an overview of HDR photography,

Cont'd on p.4

Program Night, September 24 Ian J. Plant on Photographing the Chesapeake Bay

Nancy Garwood

Ian J. Plant has been photographing the natural world for fifteen years and is known for his dramatic and evocative landscape and wildlife images. His work has appeared in a number of books and calendars, as well as national and regional magazines, including *Outdoor Photographer*, *National Parks*, *Blue Ridge Country*, *Adirondack Life*, *Wonderful West Virginia*, and *Chesapeake Life*, among others. His sixth and most recent book is the critically acclaimed *Chesapeake: Bay of Light. An Exploration of the Chesapeake Bay's Wild and Forgotten Places*. Ian's work has also appeared in five books of the *Wonder and Light* series. Ian is co-owner of Mountain Trail Press, a publisher of nature photography books and calendars. Ian also leads photo workshops and tours through Mountain Trail Photo. To see more of Ian's work, visit www.mountaintrailphoto.com, and also <http://ipphotography.com>.

Cont'd on p.4

**Changes to the
competition rules**

See details on page 5

Member Profile

Una Flynn



Una and her husband, Ed Flynn, were the founders of the NBCC. The club began in March 1965 with a meeting held at the Davis Memorial Library in Bethesda. Sixty-one persons attended and most became members. The membership has steadily increased to this day.

Una won awards with her images immediately and consistently. She excelled at both slides and prints. In many years, based on accumulated points from competition awards, she was "Photographer of the Year." Often one of her creations was chosen as "Slide of the Year." Finally, the trophy for excellence in the slide competition was re-named for her: "The Una Flynn Color Slide Photographer of the Year" award.

Una was born in London, England in 1920. She was the child of Adventist missionaries and lived much of her childhood in missions in India and Burma. When on home leave, her parents split their time between England and the United States as they had relatives in both countries.

Una's first camera was a Kodak Brownie Box, which she used to photograph family and friends and document her travels. She always had a creative bent and felt that she had inherited her talents from an aunt who was an artist, and from her father who enjoyed the arts.

When her parents retired, they decided to live in America. Una's mother suffered from rheumatoid arthritis and had sought the help of specialists in the U.S. for her condition. Una, who had been educated in both England and the U.S. and had had two years of college in India with a major in business, was not eligible to be employed by an American firm because she was not a citizen. She applied for citizenship several times but was unable to gain acceptance because her fingers would not "print" on the application. After many years, an exception was made and Una became a citizen. In the meantime, she found employment at the British Embassy and took up golf.

She met Ed on the "back nine" of the Rock Creek Golf Course. As she recalls, that was in 1953. Ed worked for his father at the Edmund J. Flynn Co., a realty firm. He and Una found that they had many interests in common, among them, traveling, golf and photography. They were married in 1955 and settled into an apartment in Foggy Bottom.

Ed and Una both wanted children, but Ed felt that there were already too many children in the world who needed homes. They decided to adopt and so added Sharon and Dennis to their family. These "siblings," from two different family backgrounds, are only months apart in age.

Sharon now works for Hope, an international relief organization. She has two children, a girl, aged 19 and a boy 13. Dennis lives in Charlestown, West Virginia and has two girls, ages 6 and 12.

Ed and Una moved out to the suburbs with their children and purchased a home on Grosvenor Lane in Bethesda. Una was offered a better job at the Embassy of Pakistan and her new boss gave her a Leica camera as a gift. Her interest in photography was renewed. Ed built a wet darkroom in the basement of their home and both learned how to process and print black and white and color images. When they wished to expand their horizons by buying more lenses, they found Leica products too expensive and switched to Nikon.

Ed thought it might be fun to meet other people who liked photography as a hobby and form a group. He envisioned a club where everyone might share their images, have friendly competitions and learn more about technique by shooting on assigned topics. There were a few camera clubs in the Maryland suburbs but none close to Bethesda. Ed wrote an article advertising the first meeting of a new photography club and distributed it to the *Washington Post and Star*, the *Maryland Monitor*, the *Gaithersburg Gazette* and the *Bethesda Advertiser*. He hoped for maybe 20 or so attendees and was amazed when over 60 people showed up.

The first club met on the last Thursday of the month and featured a speaker and a slide competition. The Novice and Advance categories were instituted later, as were competitions in black and white and color prints. The club met all year around, had an awards banquet in July and, from the onset, kept members informed with a monthly bulletin dubbed *The Lens and Eye*.

Field trips and parties were as much a part of the club as informative lectures and instructional workshops. As Una remembers it,

the club was small enough that you knew everyone.

Many people formed groups and traveled out west together to shoot in Arizona and on the Oregon Coast. The NBCC obtained guides and organized its own tours. Una remembers traveling to Tanzania, Burma and India. Members who moved away would invite other club members to come and visit. Una still writes to or phones people she knew from the original membership of the NBCC.

Around this time, the Flynns purchased a farm in Delaware as vacation property. Ed took up duck hunting and Una added two hunting dogs to the household. Then, in 1983, the house on Grosvenor Lane was gutted by fire. The wet darkroom and most of the camera equipment was destroyed.

Ed decided to rebuild in a different area. He sold the Delaware farm and the Grosvenor location, and purchased two acres on Celtic Court in Rockville. He designed a new home for his family and supervised the construction. With all the additional land he had acquired, he decided to take up gardening and soon earned his "Master Gardener" certificate. In order to keep his garden intact, he waged a constant battle against countless rabbits and a herd of 25 deer that considered the area to be their personal grazing ground.

Ed passed away last June. He was a smoker since adolescence and could not break the habit. He died of emphysema and other causes. Una is just beginning to look over his books and papers. His things in the house are still as he left them but, in the yard, the deer are breaking into the garden.

Una divides her time between the Rockville home and her son's address in West Virginia. Her son is now divorced and Una's two granddaughters are glad to have Grandma come to cook and care for them. He is diabetic, crippled from an auto accident, and recently suffered a heart attack. He cannot hold a regular job, but does some volunteer work at a nearby children's camp.

Una's sister, Vera, calls her every day from her home in Georgia. Una knows every detail of Vera's life, including what she is cooking for dinner for herself and her husband that day.

On Mondays, Una meets in the basement of a neighborhood Lutheran Church to make rugs with a group of 15 ladies, three of whom are over 90. The rugs are 100 percent wool and are braided and sewn by hand into oval, round, or rectangular shapes. They feature wonderful combinations of color. Una gives hers away as gifts and exhibits some of them at the Montgomery County Fair. Several have won ribbons.

The walls of Una's home feature many framed prints, mostly hers, as well as artifacts from years of world travel. I was quite amazed at some of the prints. I think they might still win awards at the NBCC today. Unfortunately, Una has given up photography. She doesn't own a digital camera and is completely baffled by computers. Ed was the computer person. I described some of the wonders of Photoshop CS3 to her and she was impressed, but thought it might be a little beyond her right now.

Text and photo by Jean Hanson

September Competition Judge Sherwin Kaplan

Jim Hawkins

Sherwin has been a member of the Northern Virginia Photographic society since 1986 and has served in various NVPS Board positions, including President in 1990-91. In June 2005, NVPS awarded him the "Joe Acheson Memorial Award" for his service to the club.

He uses Nikon 35 mm equipment, and has recently begun his belated transition to digital photography with the purchase of a Nikon D300. He specializes in nature, wildlife, macro, travel and landscape photography. He uses a tripod for just about everything. Prior to his purchase of a digital camera, he shot slides exclusively using Velvia film.

He has been NVPS' "Photographer of the Year" six times in the Advanced Slides competition category,

won NVPS' "Slide of the Year" twice in that category, and won numerous awards when he entered GWCCC competitions, including First Place in Master or Advanced competitions in the Architectural, Pictorial and Nature categories. Three of his slides were included in the submission to *Nature's Best* International Photo Competition that won First Place in the Camera Club category for NVPS in 2003. As a result, one of his images was published in the magazine and exhibited in the Smithsonian Institution. He has also judged and presented programs at numerous camera clubs and other forums in the Washington, D.C. area.

When not involved in photography, Sherwin is an attorney in the Washington, D.C. office of Thelen Reid Brown Raysman & Steiner, specializing in Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) compliance, litigation, pension and health law matters.

September Workshop (cont'd from p.1)

from shooting through processing and post processing. He will discuss how to take the shots, options for HDR processing (including comparing Photoshop CS3 and other software), and how to deal with problems such as ghosting (which occurs when something moves in the scene between shots).

Copies of Ferrell's book *Complete Guide to High Dynamic Range Digital Photography* will be available at the meeting. To view Ferrell's HDR images go to www.flickr.com/photos/beforethecoffee and for his HDR blog, to <http://beforethecoffe.wordpress.com>.

Ferrell McCollough's experiences with HDR and his book show that he is a photographer that enjoys challenges. About two years ago he started researching HDR photography, and within a month LARK Books asked him to write a book on the subject. HDR was a new technique: he had no pictures and little knowledge of the concept behind HDR. Ferrell began booking flights and traveling to scenic locations to accumulate high quality images for the book. He worked long hours researching the existing literature and then began the work of processing images.

Processing was slow, the HDR programs were full of bugs and crashed. He became a beta tester for several HDR programs. For four months Ferrell worked 12 to 16 hours per day testing, researching and writing the book. His wife delivered food to the office and he kept plugging away, hoping for the earliest release date possible.

While writing the book, Ferrell experimented with flash and HDR, and found a way to combine images taken with a handheld flash and merge them to HDR—he calls this *flash merging*. This added a whole new twist on HDR and another chapter in the book.

In May 2008 the book was released, and according to Neilsen Book Scan it is presently the number one selling photography book in the United States.

Ferrell is a creative and gifted photographer. His photography extends (way) beyond HDR. To see some of his other creative work, visit www.ferrellmccollough.com. In addition, Ferrell has developed several photography products: McClamp, ShutterHat and ShutterHut.

Be sure to join us on September 10 for Ferrell McCollough's presentation on HDR photography. You will learn, you will be inspired, and you will have fun.



September Program Night (cont'd from p.1)

Ian will be presenting some of his favorite wildlife and natural landscape images from his book, *Chesapeake: Bay of Light*. Ian will discuss how each image was made, where the images were taken, and he will explain some of his favorite wildlife and landscape photography techniques. He will also talk about his experience with self-publishing.

Copies of the book will be available for sale following the presentation, at a discount for club members.



PSA News

Judy Burr, NBCC PSA representative

Henry Ng, who spoke to NBCC last spring, is the featured photographer in the June issue of the *PSA Journal* and one of his pictures is on the cover. The article, *Distinctive Image*, includes several of Henry's photographs as well as his "Artist's Statement" and a brief comment on his equipment and High Dynamic Range. The June issue also has interesting articles on using smoke to make dramatic images and painting pet photographs.

Just in case you are in the Mid-West in September, the North Central Camera Club Council Annual Convention is September 25-28. For more information see www.N4C.US.

The July issue of *PSA Journal* has reviews of several new books and a review of Photomatrix PRO from HDRsoft, which has been in the news for some time. For those who do not know, PSA has a Travel Aide Service and this issue describes the experience of New Jersey's Ridgewood Camera Club in using it for a trip to Washington, D.C. Some of their photos can be seen at www.ridgewoodcameraclub.org. Other articles cover photographing athletes, water in landscapes and painting with light. The Photographic Guild of Nova Scotia is the subject of *Focus*. It is the largest club in Atlantic Canada.

In November, Fred Drury, who writes digital articles for the *PSA Journal*, is presenting a Photoshop Workshop in Santa Fe. For more information, see www.santafeworkshops.com.

Two NBCC members have joined PSA: Stu Mathison and Alex Guo. Perhaps, we will see their work in *The New Member Gallery* in a future issue.

July, 2008, Splinters from the Board

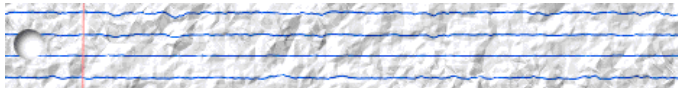
Tom Sullivan, President

Not all the surplus club equipment offered for sale to club members was sold through our auction. We will try to sell the remainder by the use of e-Bay.

The Board voted to continue hospitality at meetings. However, at some meetings we will have only club provided "finger" food like pretzels and cookies, rather than the normal member provided stuff.

Membership Chair, Chuck Lee, is looking to hold a "New Member Social" to have our new members get acquainted with the club and some of its members.

Several changes to the competition rules were presented by Competition Chair, Judy Switt. More details of these are being provided in this issue of *The Lens and Eye* (see next column) and on the club's website: www.nbccmd.org.



Treasurer's Year End Summary Report

July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008

Starting balance as of 7/1/07	\$ 9,660.03
Income:	
Membership Dues (2007-2008)	\$ 3,035.00
Membership Dues (2008-2009)	\$ 5,620.00
Awards Event 2008	\$ 2,368.00
2007 Club Picnic Contribution	\$ 138.00
Total Income	\$11,161.00
Expenses:	
Rent	\$ 3,400.00
Lens and Eye	\$ 708.21
Speakers' Dinners and Gifts	\$ 296.07
Awards Event Expenses	\$ 3,304.20
Club and Equipment Insurance	\$ 455.00
Photo Essay	\$ 313.55
Miscellaneous Operational Costs*	\$ 1,066.68
Total Expenditures	\$ 9,543.71
Ending balance as of 6/30/08	\$11,277.32

* Printing, refreshments, PSA membership, web hosting, exhibit expenses, equipment repair, etc.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert H. Dargel, Treasurer

Important Changes to Competition Rules

Judy Switt and Tom Field

The 2008-2009 competition season gets underway at our first meeting of the year, September 3, 2008. There are a few changes that competitors need to know about.

First of all, **we welcome back the Altered Print Category**, which is restored after a one-year hiatus.

The definitions of Unaltered Images (Rule 9) and Altered Images (Rule 10) have been standardized across prints and electronic images.

Images which are **partly monochrome and partly color** are considered **Altered**.

Limited cloning (up to two percent of the image area) **is permitted** in the Unaltered Image categories. The intent is to allow removal of small distracting elements that existed in the original scene by pasting over them with background pixels **from the same image**. Example: you may replace a bit of tree branch at the edge of a photo with adjacent sky pixels, or replace small litter with adjacent background pixels. **The intent is not to enhance the scene by adding elements**. Example: you may not replicate azalea blossoms to fill in a gap or uneven portion; such alterations should go into the Altered categories.

Rules for print presentation have been clarified. In particular, **all prints must be mounted on rigid boards no thicker than 1/4 inch, and without conflicting markings on the back**. Prints that won in monthly competitions and are entered in the year-end competition must be **the exact same prints as originally presented**, including the original NBCC award sticker on the back of the mounting board.

The **deadline for submitting entries to the Electronic Image Competitions** has moved to **Sunday evening at 7:30 pm**. You are encouraged to submit early (up to one week), in case there are any transmission problems. See the EIC Submission Guidelines posted on the NBCC website.

A final note: at NBCC, the term "Novice" in the names of certain categories is traditional and does not imply beginner status. Instead, the Novice categories are intended for all competitors below the Advanced level, including highly-skilled intermediates. We all want to see the Novice categories thrive with strong competition. Those who are not truly among the advanced photographers in the club are encouraged to participate in the Novice categories, where available.

NBCC Exhibit at BlackRock Center for the Arts

Angelique Raptakis

The NBCC Exhibits Committee is pleased to announce that we have arranged a major exhibition at the BlackRock Center for the Arts (www.blackrockcenter.org) in Germantown, MD. The exhibit will run from November 26, 2008 through the end of December. Our photographs will be displayed in the Exhibition Gallery, which can accommodate up to 75 photographs, depending on their sizes. Current dues-paying NBCC members will be eligible to submit up to three images for consideration.

The exhibit, entitled "At Home and Abroad," will feature photographs that capture grand landscapes, sweeping vistas, pacific settings, intimate portraits of people from other cultures, and familiar locales. Images submitted are expected to be acceptable for exhibition in a public space (e.g., no nudes).

There is no time limitation on when the image was taken. Digital images may be submitted for jurying.

The tentative schedule is as follows:

September 7: Deadline for indication of interest. Please email exhibits@nbccmd.org if you are interested in having your work included in this exhibition. Based on the number of members responding, we will determine how many images each member will be allowed to submit.

October 6: Deadline for submitting images for the jurying process. (Details on submission formats to follow).

October 17: Jury selection process.

October 22: Latest date by which members will be notified if their images have been juried into the exhibit.

Late November: All framed work, ready for hanging, will be delivered by the photographer to the BlackRock Center for the Arts on a date and time to be determined.

November 26: Exhibit opens.

December 7: Artists' reception.

NOTE: Requirements for submission, matting and framing are described on page 7 of the Club's handbook, in the section entitled "NBCC Exhibit Guidelines," with framing requirements as noted below.

For this exhibit, framed images of 16"x20" and larger may be exhibited. Anyone considering printing their image greater than 11"x17" (PRINT size, not frame size), should submit a test print for jurying, close to

the final size envisaged, so the judges may consider its suitability for inclusion in the size desired.

All matting must be **white** or **off-white**; not cream, gray or other colors. Framing should be in standard **black** wooden or metal frames.

As stated by Rule 9 on page 7 in the NBCC handbook, a member may not exhibit the same photograph more than twice in any club exhibit, regardless of the exhibit location.

At the moment, this is the only exhibit we have planned, so please consider participating!



PCR Update

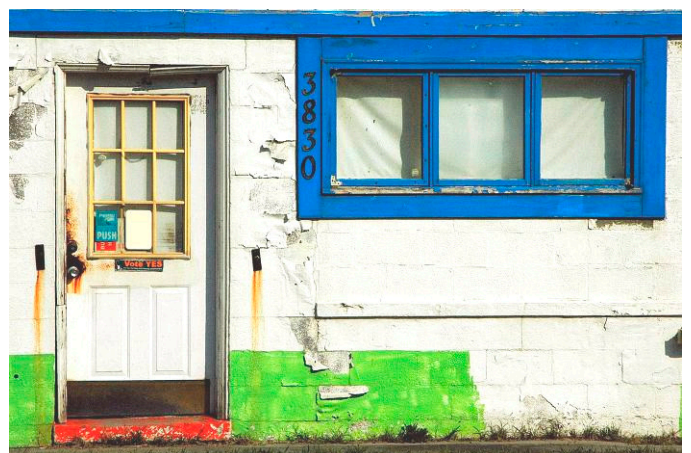
Are you interested in assisting us with teaching photography to the Potomac Community Resources *Phabulous Photographers* camera club? The time and dates for the remainder of this year are as follows:

All meetings take place between 7:00 and 8:00 pm on the first Tuesday of the month. The only exception to this time will be in November, when the first Tuesday will be election day. The November meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 18.

We look forward to another wonderful year of photography with the members of PCR's *Phabulous Photographers*.

Hope you can join us.

*Joel Hoffman, Chairman
NBCC Outreach Committee*



"Blue Window" © Janet Myder Hammack

NBCC Field Trip – September 21

Battle of St. Leonard Creek

John Barnes

On September 21, NBCC members will journey back in time to two days in June of 1814 to observe the reenactment of the battles of St. Leonard Creek from the war of 1812. The event will be hosted by Jefferson Patterson Park, which is located on a point of land where St. Leonard Creek flows into the Patuxent River.

On June 10 and June 26 of 1814 a hastily built flotilla of crude gunboats under the command of Captain Joshua Barney—a hero of the Revolutionary War—engaged a vastly superior British fleet in these very waters in an effort to lift the British blockade of the Chesapeake Bay. The event created only a small diversion, as the Americans were defeated at the battle of Bladensburg (August 24) and the British burned Washington.

That is not as important to us as the fact that hundreds of dedicated aficionados of archaic military matters will be decked out in period costumes and uniforms, and equipped with authentic armaments and camp fixtures. They will simulate some of the actions from the engagements by firing artillery and performing movements of military units to simulate skirmishes. They will be assisted in these efforts by a number of "tall ships" from the Chesapeake region. Camp life of the period will also be enacted by "camp followers," primarily wives and children of the soldiers.

Further information about the park and this event can be found at www.jefpat.org/GrandTactical2008.htm. The



"The Americans Retake the Battery" © John Barnes

images from the 2007 event, which can be viewed at <http://albums.phanfare.com/4697117/2093951#imageID=28890091>, provide a rough idea of what to expect in the way of photo opportunities.

We have decided to make the trip for a second year in a row because park officials convinced us that this year's "Grand Tactical" will be much grander than last year's. The marching orders for the units involved certainly seem to confirm that. We have chosen the Sunday as the date for our visit because the tall ships will participate on this day.

The event runs from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. Look for me around 9:00 am at the Visitor Center in the park. There is an admission charge of \$7 per adult (13 years and up). Children under 12 are admitted free. Maryland Historic Weapon Standards will be in effect, which determine that everyone must remain 30 yards away from any black powder weapon that is being discharged. Depending on what type of lens you have, this shouldn't be a problem. The park officials assure me that there will be long lines of visibility and various angles to choose from.

Keep an eye open for updates to this notice on the NBCC web site, Gordiegrams, or the Yahoo group message forum.



"Death on the Battlefield" © David Davidson

Directions:

From Washington Beltway (approx. 1 hour):

Take Route 4 (Exit 11) south towards Upper Marlboro, keep going south to Prince Frederick.

Go through Prince Frederick, continue on Route 4 for three miles, and turn right on Route 264 (Broomes Island Road).

Follow Route 264 for two miles, then turn left on Route 265 (Mackall Road) and follow for six miles. Turn right into Park entrance.

Follow driveway into Park. The Visitor Center will be on your left. Parking is on your right directly across from the Visitor Center.

Why Go to All of that DAM Trouble?

By John Barnes

Photographers have had to cope with handling their "assets" ever since the days when these consisted of piles of glass plate negatives and prints with a few penciled annotations on the back. Even in the present day it is quite common to find people who are reluctant to part with the thousand of slides, negatives, and prints that they have accumulated from their travels and family lives.

The problem gets worse in the digital age because the fruits of our labors are salted away in the form of microscopic magnets arrayed by the billions on spinning disks. We need complex electronic devices to simply visualize the product, let alone share it with anyone else. Also, let's not forget that axiom of the Computer Age: "sooner or later you WILL lose data." How much agony are you prepared to suffer when that happens?

Fortunately, there is an evolving discipline named "Digital Asset Management," hereinafter labeled simply "DAM," that provides us with tools and protocols for working with the plethora of images that we easily and quickly record on our digital cameras.

The Four Cornerstones of DAM

DAM deals with (1) establishing and maintaining durable archives of image data, (2) describing and cataloging their contents, (3) enhancing the images to make them more engaging to the viewer and (4) sharing them with their intended audience(s). This process is typically called a "workflow" and most photographers have devised paths that suit them.

In this article I am more interested in planting the idea that it is best to approach workflows in a methodical fashion than I am in touting any particular hardware or software. My thinking on this is guided by Peter Krogh's seminal book *The DAM Book: Digital Asset Management for Photographers* [1]. The first chapter of the book is available as a free download at www.thedambook.com. A number of you own the book and I encourage the rest of you to download the introductory chapter and peruse it carefully. The flow chart on page 9 details the primary activities involved in DAM in a very compact and understandable way.

The book is a bit dated by now because there has been a lot of progress in the software arena since it was first introduced, but the concepts are still meaningful. A careful implementation of a DAM system enables the user to preserve images for posterity, to go back to them when the need arises

and to create new products from the originals with a minimum of fuss.

Conversations with fellow NBCC members reveal that only a few of the most serious members have done anything to implement methodical workflows. Most acknowledge that it would be nice to do so, but they are bewildered by the variety of products that are available and are afraid of possible learning curves. Most are reluctant to spend extra money when they have already invested in some flavor of *Photoshop* that may or may not have come with a copy of *Bridge*. Others have worked out ad hoc workflows based on filing conventions and *Photoshop* actions that suit their purposes, and see no need to learn new regimens to replace what they already know.

The DAM Explosion

A quick look into the DAM software marketplace reveals a wide range of products. There is also a lot of evolution going on, with new products and new versions appearing at a steady rate.

My own very first exposure to DAM came when I tried *iView Media*, a product that is now known as *Microsoft Expression Media 2* [2]. I later won a copy of *Extensis Portfolio* [3] in a drawing. I do know that some media such as *National Geographic* and the *Washington Post* were using one, the other or both of these products in the early days, but I found them too tedious to use for my limited requirements at the time.

Back around 2000 I started to get involved with more serious digital photography and videography and I got into using *iPhoto* and *iMovie* on my Apple Macintosh computers. It did not take me too long to see that these were not robust enough to be products for the "prosumer" market, although they did a fine job in the consumer market as long as the user did not demand too much of them. Later incarnations of these products in the *iLife* [4] product line still represent good, inexpensive entry-level choices as long as the user is willing to live within the restrictions placed by their rigid definitions of asset libraries.

Adobe originally helped Apple Computer create its *Aperture* product, but the fact that the product is limited to fairly muscular Macintosh computers has kept it from having much of an impact. Tutorials on the recently released *Aperture 2* are available at the Apple website [5].

I think it is fair to say that *Adobe Photoshop Lightroom* is the current class leader in the DAM software arena for photographers. Version 2, incorporating new features for localized image editing, is

now in beta test, with a Gold Master release by the time you read this. There is a rich literature of user reviews that can be accessed by simply googling "Adobe Lightroom Review 2008." John Nack has published links to interesting collections of *Lightroom* tutorials [6].

The situation with respect to manageability of our digital asset collections is only going to get worse as time goes on. I know that my personal collection is getting up into the 500 GB range. Working with terabyte data collections is very time-consuming, even if media costs are plummeting. I also need to rationalize it by getting rid of useless library formats and duplicate collections that I have created over time on the theory that "redundancy is the best defense against data loss." That may be so, but it is not much good if you do not know what you have got.

If I live long enough, I may even be able to scan in some of my earlier photography from pre-digital days to recapture some of the exciting times that I lived through.

Making your own DAM decision

Links at the end of this article allow the reader to thoroughly explore the features and behavior of the products that I have alluded to above. In evaluating these products it is important to answer the following questions:

1. Does the act of building a library and cataloging it alter your access to your original images?
2. How easy is it to attach meaningful metadata to your image files? Does this metadata carry along when files are exported?
3. How easy is it to convert proprietary RAW files to standard formats such as DNG, TIFF, JPEG, etc. for permanent archival storage on external media?
4. How much flexibility do you have in enhancing your images?
5. What happens when you invoke *Photoshop*?
6. How easy is it to undo changes?
7. How easy is it to build "collections" or "albums" of related images for printing, export to web galleries or slideshows?
8. How easy is it to "grade" images for subsequent culling in order to create manageable libraries for long term use?

All of the vendors that I have mentioned provide free trial versions of their software. Be sure to download and install any that interest you before plunking down

the money for a product. While these products cost some money, I think you will find that they pay for themselves by buying you time to more fully enjoy the best of your creative works.

Links

[1] *The DAM Book: Digital Asset Management for Photographers*, published by O'Reilly Media, Inc., Sebastopol, California, 2005. 296 pp, ISBN 0596100183

[2] www.microsoft.com/expression

The following links to online tutorials are intended to give NBCC members something of the "live" flavor of the DAM applications mentioned above.

[3] www.extensis.com/en/products/Portfolio7_Video_Demos.jsp

[4] www.apple.com/ilife/tutorials/#iphoto

[5] www.apple.com/aperture/tutorials

[6] http://blogs.adobe.com/jnack/2008/02/a_wealth_of_lig.html



New Members' Corner

The NBCC eGroup

The purpose of this eGroup is to allow members of the North Bethesda Camera Club to communicate with each other about impromptu field trips, technical questions, advice about cameras and equipment, and notice of equipment for sale. It is by invitation only and therefore cannot be joined by anyone not in the club. It is not advertised on Yahoo and you can only find it if you know the eGroup name. The group moderator is Nancy Garwood.

If you are new to the NBCC, or not yet part of the NBCC eGroup, you are cordially invited to subscribe to Yahoo's NBCC email list. To do so, simply go to <http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/nbccmd/join>, log in, and follow the three easy steps to join the group.

New (and old) members can direct their questions on NBCC's issues to nbccclensandeye@yahoo.com.

Sign Up for Hospitality

A Day Trip in Moscow

Text and photos by Mark Segal

What to do to shake off the jet lag from a 27 hour trip to Moscow ending at midnight with my second scariest ride from an airport to a hotel? (Try topping Cairo, also at midnight, on the last day of Ramadan!) You get out in the sun and see the city.

I awoke groggily the next morning, determined to keep my business travel routine, to acclimate myself and see what I can. So I collected my map and guidebook, borrowed from a colleague, and headed



out. The hotel was out at the edge of the city, near the Lomonosov State University, but only a few blocks from a subway entrance at a park on the river.

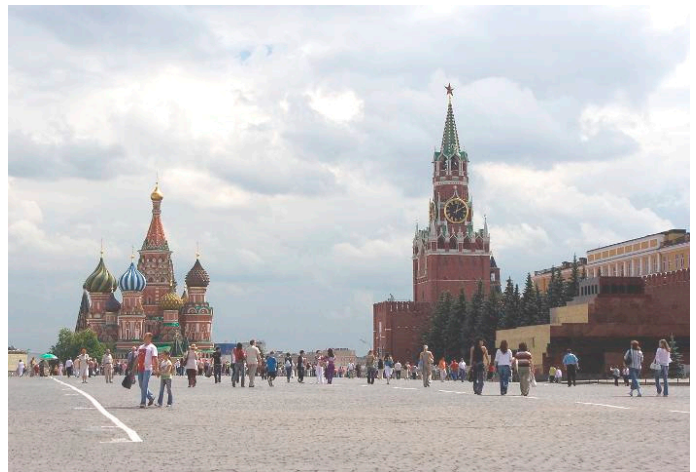
Priority one, see the subway. Moscow's subway is not just a means to get from one place to another. It is also an immense showplace of 1930s Stalinist art. You may not love the garish framework or the life sized Lenins, but ya gotta love their enthusiasm! This patriotic style is not so different from similar stuff I see everyday in the celebrated historic New Deal murals of the same era in the Ariel Rios building downtown where I work. But the subject matter is certainly unique.



These images celebrating the Communist lifestyle are in almost every station, especially in the inner ring. Each station is different. Photos, by the way, are still verboten. Don't ask how I got away with it! I hopped on and off as many stations as I could before I had to finally head to Red Square.

I met up with an English language tour guide—located with the help of my hotel concierge—whose office was a little hole in the wall in the basement of a

building a few blocks from Red Square. I ended up with a small group that included a Malaysian diplomat taking an afternoon break after a morning of negotiations. He was decidedly not interested in anything the guide had to say.

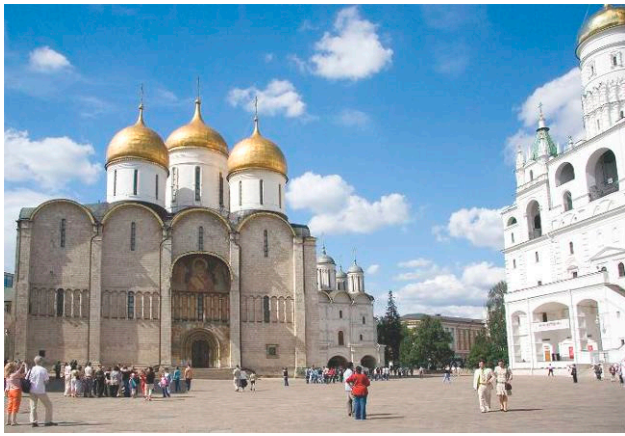


We entered Red Square via an old red brick archway, the History Passage, fronted by an impromptu market for souvenir hunters and backed by a small church from which there wafted the deep basso strains of an Orthodox chant, which drew in the 'babushkas' to service. But through the arch streamed the tourists headed for the immense brick paved space of the Red Square, with GUM—the famous Moscow department store, now a mall—on the left, St. Basil's straight ahead and the great towers in the red brick wall of the Kremlin and low stone Lenin's tomb on the right. St. Basil's is that incredible 16th Century onion domed structure which is actually comprised of nine independent chapels, each unique, intended to celebrate victories by Ivan the Terrible.

To see the Kremlin you really need a guide. They get you through security and escort you to all the places you can see, providing a stream of facts along the way. The gate through the first tower leads to a space dominated by administrative buildings and the ugly Palace of Congresses, whose insides you have seen in numerous news clips. Guards are all over and little cannons dot the lawns around the yellow and red brick administrative buildings.

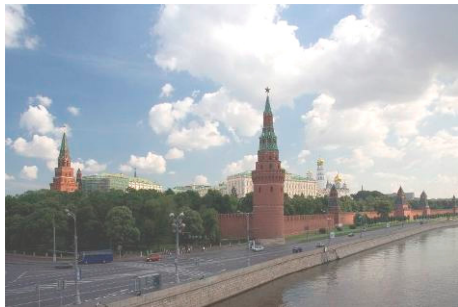
Turn the corner, past the enormous, and useless, Tsar Cannon and Tsar Bell, and all of a sudden you are in another world, another time. Buried in the middle of the Kremlin is a plaza





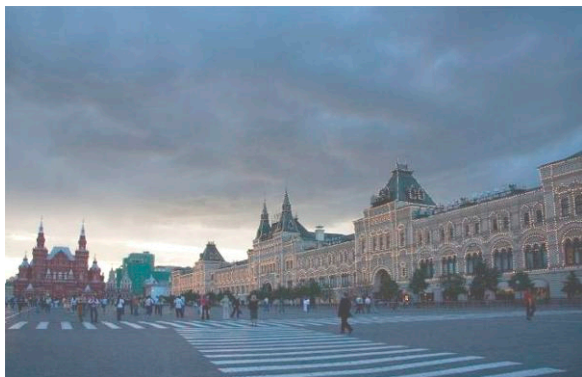
dominated by cathedrals and bell towers: Cathedral Square. The most famous of the structures is the ancient Cathedral of the Annunciation, built in the late 15th Century for Ivan the Great by Rudolfo (Aristotele) Fioravanti, a Bolognese engineer and architect brought to Moscow by Ivan's wife Zoe (Sophia), niece of a Byzantine Emperor, but with Italian connections. It is open (no photos, again) and has some amazing gilded treasures displayed within its soaring five-domed interior.

Beyond the ecclesiastical center of the Kremlin, the grounds also contain an official residence, more administrative buildings and the Armory, which now houses a museum of Tsarist treasures, from clothes and jewelry, to carriages and, yes, armor. Again, no photos (notice a trend here).



When your two hour tour is done, take a walk around the Kremlin to see it from all sides. All the towers are different and most are named, each with their

own story. And by all means, come back at night when Red Square gets lit up and the crowds gather.



Tim Grey's Digital Darkroom Questions

Can you explain your technique for fixing really bad color casts in an image?

This techniques comes across as being pure magic (which is why I like to present it!), and it can be incredibly helpful when you have an extreme color cast. This can happen with digital captures when the color temperature is set to a wrong value, but usually this degree of color cast comes from things such as old color photos that have become faded or otherwise shifted in color with time.

The first step is to create a copy of the Background image layer by dragging that layer to the Create a New Layer button at the bottom of the Layers palette. Then you need to determine the color of the color cast so you can compensate for it. To do so, select Filter > Blur > Average from the menu. This will convert this layer to a single color that represents the average color of all pixels in the image. Of course, this is the problem color, so you need to determine the opposite of it so you can apply it as a compensation for the color cast. To determine that opposite color, select Image > Adjustments > Invert from the menu. This will convert the layer to the opposite of the average layer, which means it is the opposite of the color cast.

To apply this color to the underlying image, set the blend mode to Color using the dropdown at the top-left of the Layers palette. This blend mode will cause the layer to alter only the color of the underlying image, completely offsetting the strong color cast. The problem is, this will result in too strong an effect, with a color cast that is the opposite of the original, but much stronger. To tone things down and produce an image without a color cast, simply reduce the Opacity using the slider at the top-right of the Layers palette. Adjust the value until you have a perfectly neutral color in the image.

The final result will represent relatively accurate color, but it will probably appear a bit flat and possibly lacking saturation. To compensate for this you will need to boost saturation (using a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer) and contrast (using Levels or Curves).

Reproduced with Tim Grey's permission from his e-mail service (www.timgrey.com).



Exhibits

Richard Avedon – Portraits of Power

With unparalleled access afforded by his fame and his work for such magazines as *Harper's Bazaar*, *Vogue*, *Egoiste*, and *The New Yorker*, Avedon photographed important figures of the American political scene throughout his career. In addition to single portraits commissioned to accompany magazine profiles, the artist made several extended photographic essays with political themes. Juxtaposing images of elite government, media, and labor officials with counter-cultural activists and ordinary citizens caught up in national debates, this exhibition explores a five-decade taxonomy of politics and power by one of our best-known artists. The exhibit includes approximately 250 photographs from the 1950s through the artist's death in 2004, displayed chronologically and grouped within Avedon's specific editorial projects.

At the Corcoran Gallery of Art, from September 13, 2008 to January 25, 2009. For more information visit www.corcoran.org.

Georgia O'Keeffe and Ansel Adams: Natural Affinities

The exhibition celebrates the deep commitment to the American landscape by these two iconic artists, and includes forty-three paintings from public and private collections and fifty-four photographs borrowed primarily from the Center for Creative Photography in Tucson, Arizona, which holds the largest single collection of Adams' work.

At the Smithsonian American Art Museum, from September 26, 2008 to January 4, 2009. For more information visit

<http://americanart.si.edu/collections/exhibitions.cfml#57>.

Lee Goodwin: Great Falls, the Potomac River and the C&O Canal.

This exhibit features twenty-one landscape images, most of them medium format black and white darkroom prints, but also some digital color photos.

At the Delaplaine Visual Arts Education Center, Frederick, MD, From August 16 to October 19, 2008. Opening reception: Saturday, September 6, 2008 from 3:00 to 5:00 pm.

For more information visit www.delaplaine.org.

Still running

Ocean Views, a selection of Nature's Best photography competition, at the National Museum of Natural History, through November 2008.

Courses/Seminars

Glen Echo Park

For more information and to register visit the Park's website at www.glenechopark.org.

Portraits with Available Light. Explore the use of available light in creating expressive portraits. The fundamentals of lighting will be introduced: quality and direction of light, modifying and controlling light and how to use fill-flash.

Instructor: Sheila Galagan

Saturdays, September 20 to October 4, 1:00 pm.

Documentary Photography: Digital or Film. Taught by the acclaimed author of *Serenissima: Venice in Winter*, this course will help students document their world and more easily photograph people. Students will initiate or continue a project on film or in digital. Lighting and darkroom instruction available.

Instructor: Frank Van Riper

Thursdays, September 25 to November 6, 7:00 pm.

Smithsonian Institution

For more information and to register visit the Resident Associate Program's website at

<http://residentassociates.org/help/lectures.aspx>.

Dynamic Color in Photography. Skilled use of color contrasts distinguish fine-art color photographs from those merely recorded in color. This class teaches photographers to recognize those contrasts and apply them in their work.

Topics of discussion include: the history of color photography; the photographer's color wheel and why it differs from the painter's color wheel; the components of color (hue, saturation, and value); the seven color contrasts; the use of both pure and tonal color; use of light sources and white balance to create color; and monochromatic color photographs.

Instructor: Shannon Ayres

Tuesdays, October 7 to December 2, 6:30 pm.

Fall Landscape Photography on the Potomac.

After a classroom orientation session, photographers record fall's progress from both Maryland and Virginia locations in this beautiful and ecologically significant area. A class critique is held after two field trips and is followed by three more excursions and two more portfolio reviews. Four class critiques begin at 10:00 am, and other field sessions may begin as early as sunrise to take advantage of the specific lighting conditions.

Instructor: Barbara Southworth

Fridays, October 17 to December 12, 10:00 am.

On-Location Photography. Students visit locations on the National Mall to explore various lighting conditions. Loosely structured assignments, field trips, and class critiques are included. Class field trips alternate with critique sessions, allowing students to develop an eye for understanding the correlation between what you do when you take the picture and your results. Students develop strategies for minimizing the difficulties of an outdoor shoot, including the ability to compensate for lighting, contrast, and exposure problems.

Instructor: Bruce McKaig

Sundays, October 19 to December 14, 1:30 pm.

Washington School of Photography

For more information and to register visit the School's website at <http://wsp-photo.com>.

Monumental Fashion. Spend the day with a great combination of D.C.'s sights: experienced fashion models and our National monuments. Go over the basics of shooting in public, shooting fashion on marble and grass, and using the available light. Students will receive detailed instruction, tips, and tricks while shooting their own fashion shots.

Instructor: Lynn Devore

Sunday, September 28, 9:00 am to 3:30 pm.

Focus on Composition and Design. Having a good subject alone is not enough to make a great photograph. In this workshop students look at all aspects of composition, learning to eliminate dead space, boring presentation and distracting details. Covered are compositional techniques that allow the photographer to capture the viewer's attention and direct the eye. Participants will bring their work to class for critique.

Instructor: Joe Yablonsky

Mondays, October 20 and 27, 7:00 pm.

One-Light Portraiture. This new workshop will explore the extensive possibilities of creative portraiture working with just one light, ranging from use of a single beauty light for exceptional headshots, a single flash head or monolight in umbrella or softbox (with and without a reflector), to a single 150 watt light and umbrella. Particular attention will be given to exposure control to provide high quality images requiring minimal post-processing. Special emphasis will be placed on use of black or dark backgrounds and the creative use of shadows as compositional elements. This is a shooting workshop, and all participants will have the opportunity to shoot every setup.

Instructor: Don Becker

Saturday, November 8; 10:00 am to 4:30 pm.

"A photograph is a most important document, and there is nothing more damning to go down to posterity than a silly, foolish smile caught and fixed forever. "

Mark Twain

Did You Know?

Anita van Rooy

1. If you apply a Layer Style to one layer and you then would like the same effect on some other layers, just select the layer that contains the layer style, then hold Alt (Mac option) and drag the little f icon to the other layers you want to apply it to, and that is all! The same style is now on all the other layers.

2. Any time you want to change the opacity of the layer you are currently working on, just switch to the move tool (V) and press a number key on your keyboard 4=40%, 5=50%, etc. If you want it even more exact, just type in a percentage such as 52% but do it quickly, otherwise you get 50% and then 20%.



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Focus on NBCC Members

The attached image, "Rose" by Janet Myder Hammack, was one of her entries to the Brookside Gardens 2009 calendar photo contest, and was selected to be an inset image for the month of June to accompany the featured image for that month.

An entry by NBCC member Alan Simmons won as the November featured image.



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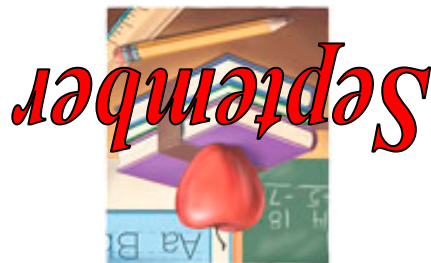
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