

Camera club Communiqué

June 2018 U3A ACT Australia

Being Polite to the Locals

Years ago, friends and I were travelling by taxi from New Delhi to the hill station Mussourie. On the way, the taxi driver stopped so we could all get a drink from a roadside stall. I was the last to get back into the cab and doing so, noticed one of those “must-have National Geographic type” photos: a toddler burrowing himself into his mother’s beautiful blue burq’a. As I paused to take the photo the taxi driver yelled “Quick Sahib, jump! in”! He sounded so alarmed that I forgot that once-in-a-lifetime photo and did as he warned. Our car sped off at a rate of knots, narrowly avoiding the outraged husband and his mates running towards us, all shouting, their fists raised and angrily punching the air...

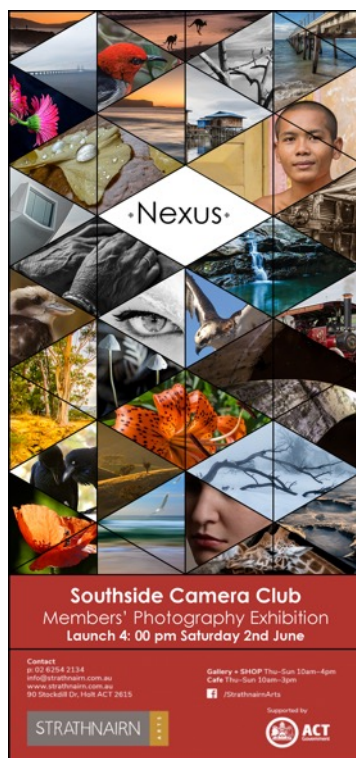
In a timely post at <https://digital-photography-school.com/avoid-5-major-mistakes-travel-photographers/>, Andrew S. Gibson warns (among other things), how important it is to be aware of cultural sensitivities and the laws in other countries. In Spain for example, it is against the law to photograph people in the street without their permission while in Greece, you might be charged with spying if you photograph certain buildings and even air shows. He makes the point it is up to us to know about local laws and customs and, most importantly, not to treat people as though they were exhibits in a zoo.

Judging by what we see in monthly exhibitions, I am not alone when abroad in liking to photograph interesting people and situations in the street. Although I very much doubt I would have been given permission to photograph the man’s wife back there in upstate India, it is usually a good idea to ask permission before aiming the camera and clicking away. However, even that might be difficult if you don’t speak the local language. Nonetheless, a bare minimum of polite words will usually stand you in good stead. So, in Spain (or Portugal also, for that matter) the customary *Por favour* will generally do the trick. If in Bali, *Permisi* is equally helpful. The best idea, of course, is to learn a couple of useful words before you start your travels.

A long time ago there were tiny pocket-sized books called *Vade mecum* which were carried by gentlemen on their Grand Tour. Such expressions as “Où est la plume de ma tante?” (Where is my aunt’s pen?) were once all the rage but these days you are probably better to see how you can say “Please”, “Thank you”, “May I...?” Even a simple “Good day” can be important: some years ago in Paris I committed the *faux pas* of walking into a bakery and stating my order without prefacing it with the customary “Bon jour, Madame” My face is still red.

The modern equivalent to the erstwhile *Vade mecum* are the many apps on the market. Last Christmas in Japan I discovered how useful Google *Translate* can be: not only will it translate words and phrases for you, but it also allows you to photograph labels and menu items and all sorts of other things and then translate them. This was particularly useful in Japan where we hadn’t a clue how to read Japanese characters.

Even if you cannot pronounce the words your app helpfully supplies, in most cases you can show the person you wish to photograph the screen on your smart phone. Of course, that won’t work if they cannot read... But there are apps which will also speak your message (e.g. *iTranslate 10*). What’s the bet it won’t be long before talking translators are built into camera phones?



South Side Photographic Exhibition “Nexus”

An exhibition by members of the South Side Camera Club opens on May 31st at the Homestead Gallery, Strathnairn and runs until 24th June. The exhibition will be opened by Jeremy Thompson, an ABC photojournalist and a finalist in the National Photographic Portrait prize at 4.00pm Saturday 2nd June. The gallery is open 10.000am – 4.00pm Thursdays – Sundays.

The 2 Things Beginners Should Learn First

Al Sanchez from phototechniques.info posted on *Picture Correct* an article which, in his forthright style, was headed “The 2 Things Beginners Should

Learn First". It is worth reading his whole (short) article which he introduces by saying the two things are, first, *ultimate control over your camera and equipment*; and second, *compositional expertise*. Critically, he adds,

Experts have these two down pat, and you as a beginner must try to develop these areas of expertise as best as you can. When expert photographers take photos, they spend very little time composing a shot. Instead, they focus their attention more on the message, the style, and what they want the photo to do to the viewer. That's art!

<https://www.picturecorrect.com/tips/the-2-things-beginner-photographers-should-learn-first/>

What's it Like to Walk in Space?



Or would you like to see the wonders of the Aurora Borealis in Alaska? If "yes" to either then check the *10 of the best 360° videos ever filmed* as suggested by *Digital Camera* in a recent post. Others include digging for fossils in the Gobi Desert, a total solar eclipse as seen in

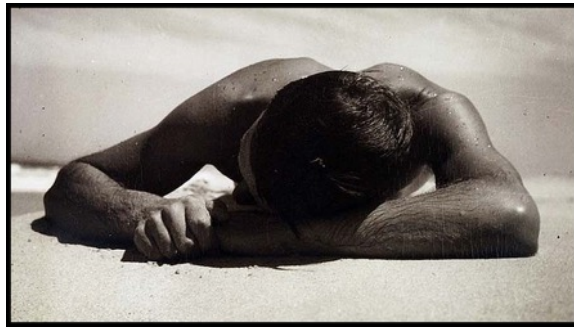
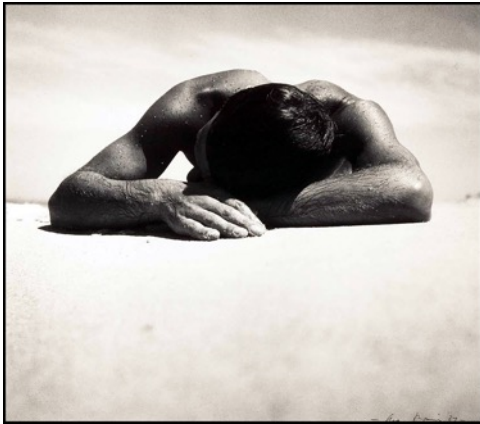
Indonesia and a couple of visuals of the air battle against ISIS... Not quite Virtual Reality but still impressive 360° photography. Check them out at: <https://www.digitalcameraworld.com/features/10-of-the-greatest-360-videos-ever-filmed>.

A Camping Trip with the Greats

Two of the great names in Australian photography are Max Dupain and Olive Cotton. Friends from childhood, they were married for a brief 2 years before divorcing. However, they remained friends for the rest of their lives and today are ranked among the most important "Modernist" photographers in Oz.

In 1937 Max and Olive and several other friends went on a camping trip to Culburra Beach south of Sydney. With them was the British builder, Harold Salvage, Dupain's mate and his model for the iconic *Sunbaker* photo. A collection of photos, now lodged with the State Library of NSW as the "Vandyke Album" records that camping trip in interesting and often very candid detail. Under the heading *Camping trips on Culburra Beach, N.S.W., 1937 /Max Dupain and Olive Cotton* this long-lost souvenir can be seen at

http://digital.sl.nsw.gov.au/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=FL3301555&embedded=true&toolbar=false



"Sunbaker": two views by Max Dupain 1937.

Interestingly, there are 2 versions of this image. The one on the left is the one we normally see but the right-hand photo, in which Harold Salvage has his hands clasped, was Dupain's preference.

More on Macro

Many members are keen bushwalkers or gardeners—or both—and so it comes naturally to want to photograph things up close. Strictly speaking, "macro" means 1:1 ratio or better but usually, "close up" is close enough. An excellent article by Spencer Cox in *Photography Life* is not only most informative but also beautifully illustrated: well worth the read at <https://photographylife.com/macro-photography-tutorial>

And More on Composition

Composition is a topic we read a lot about in camera magazines, on-line blogs and resource sites. Some articles are better than others but one of the best available recently was posted on the *Digital Photography School* blog at <https://digital-photography-school.com/composition-checklist-beginners>.

DxO Labs Confirms Bankruptcy but Will Update Nik

The French firm DxO has filed for Chapter 11 Bankruptcy Protection but says it will still go ahead with updating both the *Nik Collection* which it bought recently from Google, and its flagship RAW processing program *DxO PhotoLab*. The official press release says that DxO "...is now in the process of restructuring the business," but this "...will not affect our customers in any way."

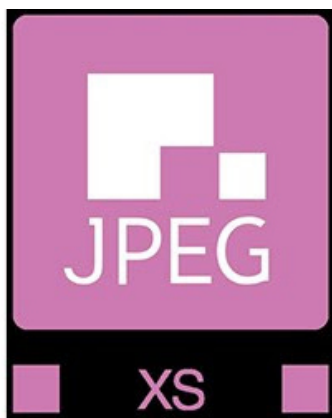
This month the newly updated *Nik Software Collection* and *PhotoLab v1.2* are scheduled for release. The latter is an excellent RAW processing

program which members might consider as an alternative to *Lightroom*. Many members have already downloaded the free *Nik Collection* from Google who sold it to DxO in late 2017. DxO confirms it is committed to the “perpetual licence” rather than “subscription” model which allows users to update their software as they need it.

This comes at a time when the market leader, Adobe has not only continued its subscription method of hiring out software but is also pushing photographers towards storing their images and doing their processing all in the Cloud. In response to this action, many photographers, both professional and amateur, are looking to alternatives to the various *Lightroom* versions currently available. Later this year, the Camera Club+PhotoGroup will run a workshop exploring and comparing several RAW processing products which members might care to look to as alternatives to *Lightroom Classic* if they don't want to be committed to paying Adobe forever for the use of its program, or for that matter, storing their images off-shore.

There have been several worthy contenders released recently, including *Luminar*, *ON1 RAW 2018*, and this update of *DxO PhotoLab*. *DxO PhotoLab* is available at two levels, Essential (US\$129) and Elite (US\$199). PCMag said of it: *While it won't always turn a decidedly bad photo into a good one, DxO PhotoLab can make a decent photo great. That's enough for this remarkable piece of photo software to retain a PCMag Editors' Choice award for high-end photo editing.*

The company, DxO is also responsible for all those “corrections” we can apply when processing our files to remove distortions due our camera + lens combinations.



New JPEG File Format

To quote *Digital Camera World*, *The Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG)* has introduced the JPEG XS as a companion to the standard JPEG, not a replacement. It uses a compression process that's simpler, faster and more energy-efficient than that of a standard JPEG, so while you end up with image and video files that are a little larger than standard, they are higher quality and faster to download. The

standard JPEG compresses images by a factor of ten, whereas the JPEG XS will compress them by a factor of six.

<https://www.digitalcameraworld.com/news/makers-of-jpeg-to-introduce-jpeg-xs>

Understanding Histograms

Although most modern cameras will show you a histogram, few of us actually make use of them when taking photos. Perhaps more of us do pay attention to them when processing our images, partly because they are more prominent on the computer screen. A good explanation of what histograms are, how they work and how they can be used in B&W

photography can be seen at

<http://www.shawacademy.com/blog/understanding-histograms-with-black-and-white-images/>

Of course, understanding histograms is also important help in taking and processing colour as well as monochrome, but B&W is perhaps easier to understand when first coming to grips with these colourful graphs. In another article, *How to Get the Perfect Exposure with a Histogram*, Dahlia Ambrose explains how to use a histogram to get correct exposure:

<https://www.lightstalking.com/bite-size-tips-how-to-get-the-perfect-exposure-with-a-histogram/>

Expanding Colour for the Colour Blind



Not all people see colour in what is roughly called a “normal” manner. Colour-related eyesight anomalies affect 1-in-12 men (8% of the male population) and 1-in-200 women (0.5% of females). That means there is more 300-million people in the world who are what is commonly called “colour blind”. Of course, most are not “blind” to colour, they just see the different wavelengths of light differently (a very rare condition does exist in which people see only in black and white). Many are not aware they are colour blind; they simply accept that what they see is normal. To test whether or not you are colour blind, you need to ask your doctor to arrange

someone to test you with the *Ishihara Test*. That just means looking at some colour plates and saying what numbers you see.

While not reliably diagnostic, if you think both the above images are the same, then you might be colour blind. For people with “normal” Red/Green vision, the left-hand one is distinctly more colourful than the other. Strangely, for those interested in trivia, the right-hand picture is much as your dog would see this garden.

Of interest to people who are red/green colour blind is the recent development of glasses which help discriminate between red and green. This is not a cure but these *Enchroma* glasses might provide an exciting boost to colour perception. For more on the glasses, go to <http://enchroma.com/> and for an on-line test, <http://enchroma.com/test/instructions/>

If you choose to do this on-line test, be aware that only the *Ishihara Test* can properly test your colour vision (ie., there are many reasons this on-line test might not be completely accurate, including how well your computer monitor portrays the various colours). Colour vision, of course, is of interest to us as photographers and being aware of any colour anomaly you might have is important for colour post-processing. (As a personal comment, I did the on-line test and it showed that I have a slight problem distinguishing blue and green, a form of blue-green colour blindness. Although fully tested when I was young and shown to have normal colour vision, this change can be because I am diabetic, take medicines for hypertension and am 82, an age at which “age-related” changes can be expected. Apparently, these and many other factors can cause one’s colour vision to change over time). For more, go to <http://www.colourblindawareness.org/colour-blindness/acquired-colour-vision-defects/>



Photographing Wildlife

Even if you are not in a position to photograph tigers in the jungle or cranes dancing, this article in *Photography Life* by Madhu Manicka is well worth looking at because the images illustrating it are glorious.

Malabar Giant Squirrel

But it is also worth reading for its technical help on lighting, composition and more, even if your “wildlife photography” takes you no further than birds in your back garden.

<https://photographylife.com/creating-stunning-wildlife-photos>



15 of the Best Apps for iOS and Android devices

The British magazine *Digital Camera World* has listed what it believes are the 15 best photo apps for iOS and Android devices. Some, like *Snapseed*, have been around

for a while now but others are much less well-known. If you use your smart phone as a very portable camera, take a look at:

<https://www.digitalcameraworld.com/buying-guides/best-photo-apps?>

If you have been interested in the present fad for “creamy” waterfalls and seascapes but have been put off trying your hand at this technique because you did not want to invest in neutral density filters for use on a dSLR or other camera, then *SlowSpeed* might be the answer. But do use a tripod!



A Word on Portraits

Melbourne photographer, Sarah Milton, has some good words of advice for beginners on *Recommended Camera Settings for Portrait Photography*

(<https://photographylife.com/portrait-photography-settings>).

This is clearly written and well illustrated article, first published in *Photography Life*, says in a very short space most of what you need to know to take decent portraits.

Another source of good advice can be found at <https://digital-photography-school.com/10-ways-to-take-stunning-portraits/>

Although not all your photos taken following these tips will have the promised “wow” factor, the ideas expressed here can help create portraits with a difference.

Bob Hay, Co-Presenter U3A Camera Club

