

Camera club Communiqué

April 2020 U3A ACT Australia

The U3A Camera Club *Communiqué* is part of a newsletter sent to members of “The Camera Club”, which is a year-long course run by the University of the Third Age in Canberra, ACT. For privacy reasons, class notices have been omitted from this public version. The U3A Camera Club can be contacted at u3acanberracameraclub@gmail.com

A System to Pick the Right Shutter Speed, Aperture, and ISO
Anything Spencer Cox writes is always worth reading but no less expert and easy to understand are his video tutorials. In this one he demonstrates



how ISO, Aperture and Shutter Speed can be manipulated to obtain correct exposure. While he labels the video “Beginner friendly” it is also the kind of tutorial more experienced photographers should also watch from time to time. Cox, and others publishing on

Photography Life are among the

best in the business at explaining photo technology, up there with the likes of *Cambridge in Colour* and the subscription-based *Luminous Landscape*.

<https://photographylife.com/shutter-speed-aperture-iso-system-video>

Photographing the 10 Elements of Composition

Another video by Spencer Cox is this in which he sets himself the task of taking photos which demonstrate what he calls *the 10 elements of*



composition, all within 24 hours on some sand dunes in Colorado. This is not your usual “Tips on Composition”, a plethora of which we have seen on-line so far this year: it is an entertaining, beautifully presented and illustrated video which, rather than giving dubious “rules”, sets

out what Cox considers to be the 10 main points of composition. To do so, Cox gets behind the usual “recipe book” approach and relies on the psychological principles of perception, surely the most important sense we photographers exploit in our art.

<https://photographylife.com/elements-of-composition-video>

Another post, also on composition but this time by a man who identifies himself as “an amateur photographer” and not as a professional, Terence Starkey, also takes a slightly different approach to the topic at

<https://www.picturecorrect.com/tips/composition-guidelines-for-great-photography/>

Why Nikon Should Not Make DSLRs Over 36 MP

Communiqué does not normally include items about specific brands of camera – there are too many to deal fairly with all and on-line resources such as *dpreview*, *Tech Radar* and *SLR Review* do that job anyway. However,



this article by Nasim Mansurov, the principle and colleague of Spencer Cox at *Photography Life*, while of special interest to those who own Nikon cameras and their lenses, is also worth reading, at least skimming, for the main point Mansurov makes: that the race to produce higher and higher megapixel counts is pointless if the lenses

do not have the resolution to match. For Nikon owners, he lists test results for different models and allied lenses: surprisingly, there are many lenses which cannot give the resolution the camera claims.

<https://photographylife.com/nikon-dslr-resolution>

Paris Musées launches online portal with thousands of historic photographs

According the *dpReview*, “Paris Musées”, the public institution that manages all of the museums in Paris, has launched a new Collections portal

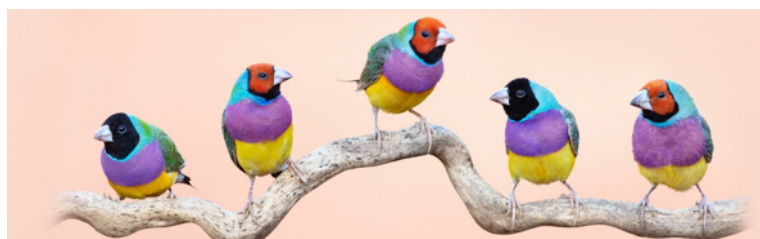


that offers the public access to more than 100,000 high-resolution digital reproductions of classic artwork and photography.

Eugène Atget: Maison de Balzac, 16th arrondissement, Paris, 1857.

All of the content offered in the Collections portal is available under a CC0 license.

<https://www.dpreview.com/news/3612437510/paris-musees-launches-online-portal-with-thousands-of-historic-photographs>



The Seven Elements for Better Bird Photography

Interested in photographing birds? Jan Wegener is a well-known

bird photographer who has released a series of Youtube videos – see the list at <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL339bf4mAcMfqIv9ESUbNX28QN00QkzDh>

As Ryan Mense at <https://fstoppers.com/animal/seven-elements-better-bird-photography-445382?> says when announcing the latest in Wegener's videos, *Wegener has a very particular style of bird photography that is quickly recognizable, however he is not recommending these seven elements based on achieving a copy-cat look. This tutorial is much less about dictating exactly how your images should look in the end, and they are more tips on what to think about when trying to capture that winning photo for yourself.*



Fashioning Fantasies with Bella Kotak

SmugMug hosts a web page where photographers can display their work and, if they wish, sell them. Recently, in their newsletter they published an article on photographer Bella Kotak and her advice on taking what she calls

“creative portraits”. Apart from a film about her on the page, Kotak also listed 10 tips for getting started in this rather more ornate and romantic style of portraiture. These include *Tip #1: Try everything once to learn what you like; Tip #2: When you find a focus, begin with what’s familiar; and Tip #3: Be crafty; be thrifty; and be social.* What those words mean and of course, the remaining Tips are available at <https://www.smugmug.com/lens/Community/fashioning-fantasies-with-bella-kotak>

Current Best Monitor Calibration Devices



The US manufacturer of photo papers, *Red River*, a couple of months ago released their recommendations for the best calibration devices that are in the shops and usually, available on-line. Interestingly, the reviews are divided up into levels, *Enthusiast* and *Pro*, which is important because there is not much point investing in a device designed for a Pro level of dedicated monitor if you are using an ordinary computer as your editing screen.

<https://www.redrivercatalog.com/infocenter/articles/Current-Best-Monitor-Calibration-Devices.html>

Handling Memory Cards

If you have ever had a memory card fail, you will know just how absolutely essential they are to photography. It is merely a hassle if you can go back



and re-shoot the shots which were lost, but it is fatal if the event was a once-in-a-life-time occasion such as a wedding or graduation.

Roger Lee, a Johannesburg photographer, has some common-sense but vital advice on *Picture Correct*. Among his suggestions are

such life-savers as always format a new card or if you are putting an old one in another camera; always format instead of erasing; never fill the card 100%; use a good card reader rather than download files directly to the camera; and before you format your card after you have downloaded, always make sure you have two successful back-up copies on different drives.

<https://www.picturecorrect.com/tips/memory-card-handling-tips-for-photographers/>

Best Ringflash for Macro Photography in 2020

This post on *dpReview* by Chris George and Matthew Richards, is worth reading if you are thinking about trying your hand at macro photography where a ringflash is a valuable accessory. Because in macro you have to



get very close to your subject, be it bug or butterfly or the extraordinary inner secrets of your favourite flower, there is always the danger that you will cast your own shadow over your subject. Also, because

small apertures can be desirable, you need a source of light which will be strong enough — and portable enough — to cope. Ringflash seems generally agreed to be the best option. Of course, you can try using a hotshoe flashgun but regrettably this often means that the flash causes a shadow of the lens to be cast across whatever it is you want to capture.

Ringflash is a specialised flashgun which is attached to the front of the lens. Not only does this avoid casting a shadow but it also provides even lighting to maximise detail and colour in the final photo. Of course, ringflash is not only used for macro: it is a favourite tool among forensic and medical photographers — check out your favourite TV murder investigation movies. This article not only outlines that buyers need to consider when buying a ringflash but also reviews a number of units on the market.

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



International Garden Photographer of the Year

On February 7th last, the winners and finalists were announced at Kew Royal Botanic Gardens for the 13th International Garden

The winning photo by Albert Ceolan

Photographer of the Year. The over-all winner of £7,500 was is Albert Ceolan of South Tyrol, Italy.

The head judge, Tyrone McGlinchey, said *"Albert has documented a scene which is simultaneously shocking as it is well composed. The photo cleverly shows both the destruction and the remaining trees symbolising hope. IGPUTY introduced the new category 'Plants & Planet' for this very reason to stimulate discussion and arouse awareness of changing global weather and our current climate emergency"*.

<https://www.dpreview.com/photography/0348102268/slideshow-international-garden-photographer-of-the-year-s-winner-and-finalists>

The Best Portable Hard Drives for Photographers in 2020

Ben Andrews, writing for *Digital Camera World*, says: *If all your shooting is filling your computer's storage too quickly – or you need to keep your digital portfolio portable – it might be time to invest in a portable hard drive. With capacities now reaching a whopping 4TB, you'll have enough space to save many thousands of ultra high resolution Raw files, or around 16 hours of high-bitrate 4K video.*

Among the considerations to be taken into account when buying a portable hard drive, Ben adds, are whether you want (and can afford) a hard drive or an SSD; whether it is formatted for windows or Mac or both; transfer speed; the type of connection (USB etc); and also those “little extras” which some manufacturers bundle with their drives, such as Cloud storage, backup software and so on.

<https://www.digitalcameraworld.com/buying-guides/best-portable-hard-drives-for-photographers?>



Photographing Elegant Still Life Images

Those of us who are proud owners of Olympus cameras will probably have already seen this article by Peter Baumgarten who basks in the title of “Olympus Visionary” and whose experience is occasionally shared in an Olympus blog.

Photo: Peter Baumgarten: OM-D E-M1, M.Zuiko ED 60mm F2.8 MACRO. f/2.8, ISO200, f/10, 0.6s, ISO 800, -1.7EV.

Here, he talks us, step by step, through a technique for what he aptly termed “Elegant Still Life Images”, in this case, flowers.

<https://learnandsupport.getolympus.com/learn-center/photography-tips/macro/photographing-elegant-still-life-images>

The Importance of Emotion in Landscape Photography

Ansel Adams, the iconic landscape photographer, once said *“A great photograph is one that fully expresses what one feels, in the deepest sense, about what is being photographed.”* Nigel Danson quoted this in his article by this name in *dp Review*, adding *When you think about landscape photography you may not immediately connect it with emotion in the same way as if you see a portrait, documentary photo, wildlife photo or indeed pet photo (that emotion is why my dog, Pebbles, gets more love than me on YouTube!). But as with all art forms, landscape photography should connect with the viewer in a way that means something, and it has the potential to be more than just a gorgeous scene.*

Danson’s “gorgeous scenes” which illustrate this thoughtful piece more than amply illustrate his thesis. Read what he says at:

<https://www.dpreview.com/opinion/3459940633/the-importance-of-emotion-in-landscape-photography?>

Now for Something You Might Not Have: A Pancake Lens

A *pancake* lens is a lens which is shorter than it is wide. That means it is smaller and much lighter than more conventional prime lenses and certainly, more so than a zoom. For example, the lens illustrated here, the



Canon 40mm, has only 6 elements whereas a zoom typically will have somewhere between ten and twenty pieces of glass in their barrel. And the good news is that pancake lenses are not only lighter to carry around but also lighter on the pocket — with fewer pieces of expensive glass, they cost lots less to produce.

There are other advantages also. For one, they don’t over-balance the camera like some long, heavy zooms do so that it is much easier to hold the camera steady while shooting.

Andrew Gibson, on *Picture Correct*, finds his pancake lens excellent for portraiture and close up but warns that they might not be at their best for landscape.

<https://www.picturecorrect.com/tips/pancake-lens/>

In Search of Creativity

This article by Alister Benn on *Picture Correct* is perhaps best described as a guide to being creative but with reality checks along the way, all the while highlighting the photographer's individuality.

<https://www.picturecorrect.com/tips/in-search-of-creativity/>

Bob Hay
Presenter