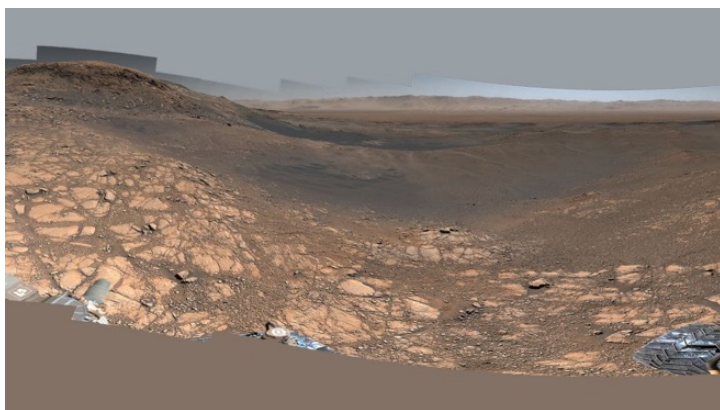


Camera club Communiqué

May 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

U3A Camera Club and other U3A events are closed until further notice
but *Communiqué* will continue to be published.



This 1.8 BILLION Pixel Panorama of Mars!

That's right – 1.8 billion! The 360° panorama with this incredible resolution was taken by NASA's "Curiosity" rover which, although it has been on the Red Planet now for over 6 years, is still working away, sending back images of our smaller

sister planet. Ashwin Vasavada, Curiosity's project scientist at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, in a report on Phys.org, said: *This is the first time during the mission we've dedicated our operations to a stereo 360-degree panorama. To ensure consistent lighting, the images were all shot between 12 noon and 2pm. In total the task took six-and-a-half hours over the four-day period, and required some complex programming from the Mastcam operators.*

<https://www.digitalcameraworld.com/news/this-18-billion-pixel-panorama-of-mars-is-out-of-this-world>

If the low-res image is not enough for you and you have 2.43 GB to spare, you can download the full resolution version of the panorama from the JPL.

Focus Bracketing & Stacking in Landscape Photography

This article by Peter Baumgarten is directed particularly to those of us lucky enough to own an Olympus OMD camera and selected lenses but, as an explanation of focus bracketing/stacking and a DIY guide, it is also an excellent read for photographers with other makes of cameras and lenses equipped for the process. Baumgarten illustrates his post with some beautiful examples of his own focus bracketed landscape images, making the point that the technique is not limited to macro photography as is most commonly believed. Bracketing/stacking allows landscape photographers also to increase the DOF greatly to encompass objects very close to the camera as well as more distant parts of a scene.



For those who are wondering about the difference, *focus bracketing* allows you to take up to 999 images which are later merged in a computer; *focus stacking* permits only a maximum of 8 images which are merged in camera (that is, with Olympus cameras: other makes might vary the numbers slightly, although numbers for stacking will always be much smaller).

Peter Baumgarten: OM-D E-M1X | M.Zuiko ED 8mm F1.8 Macro PRO, 1/50s | F7.1 | ISO 200

Baumgarten simplifies his shots by sticking to a simple combination of settings on his camera: he always used Auto with ISO 200 (may vary according to light but *never* Auto ISO); f5.6-f7, focus point is single, nearest foreground object; and 8 shots with focus differential 3. The point that he never used Auto ISO for focus stacking is to avoid changes during the multiple exposures. He

is, of course, shooting in RAW. He processes each individual image in *Lightroom* and then in *Photoshop* before merging them. Another point he makes is that with landscape, it is not always necessary to use the full number of images captured: sometimes you can select fewer because the DOF in landscape is so much greater than in Macro.

<https://learnandsupport.getolympus.com/learn-center/photography-tips/landscapes-nature/using-focus-bracketing-and-stacking-in-landscape>

A point to note for owners of Olympus gear: focus stacking/bracketing depends not only on the camera but also on the lens. All Olympus “PRO” lenses will work and a few others do also – those current lenses that do are listed in the article. Also, usually the most recent firmware update must be installed. Owners of other camera and lens combinations should check with the manufacturer, but note that camera manuals which came with the camera might not be up-to-date.

Photography as Social Conscience

Over the almost 200 years photography has been in existence, there have been photos which have carried such a message that they have changed not only individual attitudes and



Lewis Hine: *Pennsylvania coal breakers* (“Breaker Boys”), 1912.

behaviour but also public opinion and even resulted in law change. One of the photographers who was a fairly early pioneer in this *genre* of photography as social conscience was Lewis Hine whose documentation of the plight of child workers in the US initiated modern child labour laws. At the time Hines was working, there were 1.75 million children aged 10-15 working in factories, mines, plantations and other dangerous environments.

Hines was an academic, a sociologist, whose interest in the working conditions of children and his skill as a photographer, in 1908 led to the National Child Labour Committee commissioning him to document the situation of child workers across the country. He also documented the conditions of immigrants, particularly at Ellis Island.

An interesting footnote: Hine taught Roy E. Stryker who, on behalf of the Farm Security Administration (FSA) commissioned Dorothea Lange to document the conditions during the Dust Bowl era in America. It was Lange, of course, who took the iconic photo known as *Migrant Mother*, as well as many others documenting the Great Depression.

<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/gallery/2018/feb/15/lewis-hine-photographs-child-labor-ellis-island>

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ddiOJLuu2mo&feature=youtu.be>



Let's Talk about Dorothea Lange

You might not know her name, but you certainly know her iconic photo taken during the Dust Bowl era in the US which is commonly called *Migrant Mother*. Allison Johnson's post on *dpreview* not only shows some of her less well-known images but tells a few facts about this remarkable photographer. Incidentally, philatelists might like to know that *Migrant Mother* was reproduced on a US postage stamp as part of the 1998-2000 Celebrate the Century Stamp Series.

<https://www.dpreview.com/articles/4338309450/let-s-talk-about-dorothea-lange?>



Protect Your Camera in High Humidity Conditions

If conditions improve and travel to warmer climes during our Canberra winter becomes possible, it might be necessary to protect your camera from the high humidity in some of those countries which offer refuge from the cold. Robert K. Baggs on *fstoppers* posts 5 simple but common sense ways in which to

protect your camera from the problems encountered by high humidity. His tips include always carrying an absorbent towel with which to dry the camera; keep a lens cloth handy with which to wipe away any condensation on the lens; and, if possible, avoid changing lenses too often because you don't want moisture to get on the sensor.

<https://fstoppers.com/originals/5-ways-protect-your-camera-high-humidity-conditions-461869>

How to Take a Self Portrait

A self-portrait has been a popular *genre* in photography as well as in other art forms but, as most photographers already know, it is not as easy as it might at first appear. Certainly, you don't have the hassle of persuading



someone to sit for you and if you are satisfied with what is commonly called a “selfie” then the process is almost instantaneous – that is, allowing time for adopting the customary weird poses and doing strange things with the your hands and faces.... But, if you are serious, then Autumn

Lockwood’s post will suggest a few ways in which you can obtain a self-likeness which you don’t mind handing down the generations (although she also warns against being satisfied only with self-flattering images):

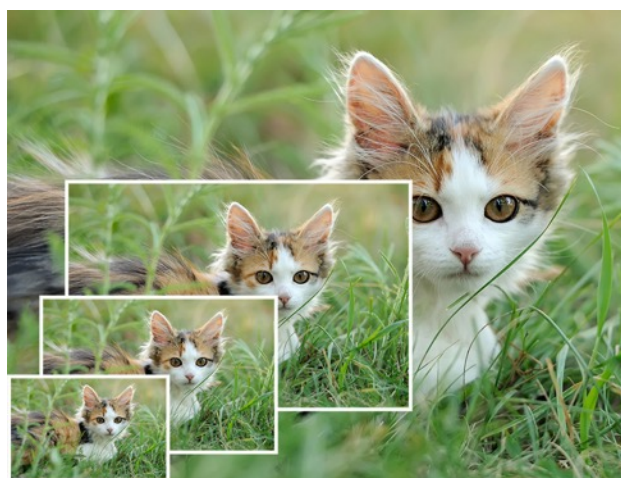
<https://www.picturecorrect.com/tips/how-to-take-your-self-portrait/>

Butterfly Photography Tips and Techniques

Just as there are “bird photographers” there are also those who concentrate on pictures of butterflies. Both, of course, come under the more general heading of “Nature Photography”. Just as it helps with photographing birds, so it also important to have a knowledge of these tiny creatures, not only their beautiful colours and patterns, but also their habits. If you are to plan a shoot efficiently, you need to know when various species are likely to be around, whether or not they sit still for long enough to capture their image, the kind of flowers or other plants they favour and so on...

In his post on *Picture Correct*, Bart Heirweg discusses his passion with suggestions as to the equipment you can best use. He also raises the point most photographers will be aware of, that the Depth of Field can be very small when photographing close-up to these little beauties.

<https://www.picturecorrect.com/tips/butterfly-photography-tips-and-techniques/>



How to Resize an Image in Photoshop

This article by Jonathan Lam at <https://design.tutsplus.com/tutorials/how-to-resize-an-image-in-photoshop--cms-34360> is pitched at *beginner level* using a photo of a cat to step the reader through the several processes necessary to change the dimensions of an image. To this end, the original cat file can be downloaded so readers can treat the article as a practical DIY guide.

If you don’t have *Photoshop* or *Photoshop Elements*, there are many other programs which will permit resizing, some of which are free. One example is a program called *Fotosizer*

which is available for Windows. Try <https://www.fotosizer.com/Download>. Note that this program has not been tested for *Communiqué* (which is compiled on a Mac). Mac users already have a resizer program built into their OS called *Preview*. This is the default image viewer on this platform – all you have to do is select a file, press the Space Bar and you get to see the image. For resizing, take the further step of clicking twice on the file name and up will pop not only the image but also a top menu which includes *Tools/Adjust size*.

Note: when resizing, always adjust the Resolution first before entering the new dimensions.

Large Format

Back in the days before digital, of course we all used film cameras, mostly 35mm or 6x6mm, but a few ventured into the realm of large format. Some of those enthusiasts used film cameras such as the famous *Graflex Speed Graphic* or *Linhof*, cameras much favoured by the



Press in their day. Others enjoyed cameras of an earlier time, those beautiful machines made of mahogany and gleaming brass which could take photos up to 10x8 inches or, occasionally larger, on glass plates.

Now, in the digital age, film is making a comeback and some of us might even be tempted to dig out a forgotten large format camera and enjoy the higher resolution of the Good Old Days when grain was always on our minds.

While we would also have to enjoy the delights of developing the film, most of those who take this course of action would probably then scan the negatives to obtain a digital file from which to print the final picture.

Just in case you are tempted to try large format, Tobias

Key at <https://www.picturecorrect.com/tips/large-format-film-camera-photography-tips/> walks readers through considerations of equipment and other considerations when using these large forerunners of the tiny mirrorless or even smartphones of our day.

How to Disinfect Your Camera, Lenses etc.

It is all very well to wash our hands diligently and keep the requisite social distance from our fellows, but what about our cameras and other equipment which is handled so often? Roger



Cicala was once a physician but he gave it all up for photography so, in this article, he is well qualified to tell us ways in which we can disinfect our cameras, lenses and the other gear we handle so often. (If you are wondering why a man would need so many big lenses, Roger runs his own company, *LensRentals*)

<https://www.digitalcameraworld.com/news/how-to-disinfect-your-camera-lenses-and-other-equipment>

8 of The Most Important *Photoshop* Tools for Photographers

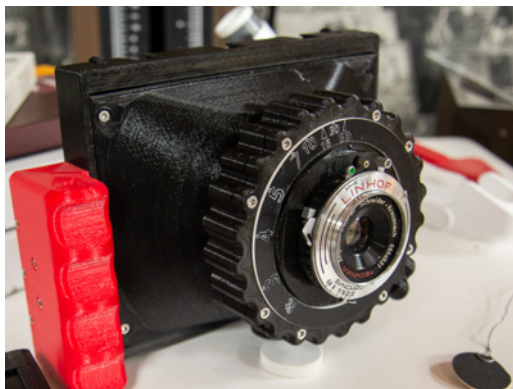
Antonio Leanza owns the London School of Photography, so he is in a good position to know what tools are the most important for people learning to use *Photoshop*. However, the *grande dame* of photo editing is now not alone because other, more recent programs have been developed which not only do much the same job but often more — and come at a much more affordable cost. Examples of these alternatives are of course, *Affinity Photo* and *ON1*. What Leanza has to say about *Photoshop* tools in this article can usually be translated into the equivalents in other programs. If no more, his suggestions at least point to the features of images we most need to consider processing:

<https://www.picturecorrect.com/tips/8-of-the-most-important-photoshop-tools-for-photographers/>

Film Photography Has Found its Feet Again

It is not so long ago that photographers were arguing which was better, film or digital. No one seems to worry about that anymore. Rather than a competition, according to Hamish Gill, both seem to have interacted with each other and making a contribution to the evolution of photography.

<https://www.dpreview.com/opinion/4909160716/analogue-photography-is-not-what-it-used-to-be>



The illustration is the *Cameradactyl OG*, an affordable 3D-printed 4x5 camera (Photo: John Whitmore)

<https://www.poppphoto.com/cameradactyl-og-4x5-hand-camera-is-cheap-fun-way-to-try-out-4x5-film-photography/>

Of course, it isn't necessary to divorce yourself from digital just because you would like to try one of these funky (or should that be "cool"?) large format cameras — or any other film camera for that matter: We can always experiment with a vintage camera or one of the new breed of analogue machines, take the photo and then develop the negative but, rather than set up a whole new darkroom with enlarger, scan the negative and from there on, go digital. The advantage of the large format cameras is that their negatives can be contact printed. However, the ideal, in some minds at any rate, would be to use an antique plate camera... You can even buy new "old" lenses, such as the new generation of our grandparents' prized Petzval. <https://shop.lomography.com/en/lenses>. And if you want to go back in time even further, there are now "new" lenses of the type used to take Daguerreotypes:

<https://shop.lomography.com/en/lenses/daguerreotype-achromat-art-lens>

Just imagine taking a photo at f64....

Thinking about Spending a Stack of Cash on a Film Camera? Read This First!

Tempting as old cameras are, some can cost more these days than they did new. After all, they are no longer being manufactured and, as with vintage cars, spare parts are not as available as they once were. So, it is not surprising that prices are rising. That in itself is probably not a bad thing — it means that the old are being re-cycled and their value re-assessed by the present generations of photographers. Some of us interested in collecting (and using) old cameras do so because they remind us of our younger days and the cameras we loved so much; others, of course, collect them because we value them, not for nostalgic reasons, but for their workmanship and best of all, the aesthetic of the images they produced. Not all collectors build darkrooms and get back into the D&P (Developing and Printing) of years gone by, but there are others who value the experience in the darkroom of seeing the print gradually emerge from the sheet of erstwhile plain paper when in the developing bath, or even the smell of the stop bath into which we plunged that sheet of paper when development had reached finality.

<https://www.35mmc.com/22/01/2019/thinking-about-spending-a-stack-of-cash-on-a-film-camera-read-this-first>

(Note: anyone interested in collecting, buying or selling old cameras and other photographic equipment should contact the *Canberra Photographic Collectors Society*)

Pancake Lenses

We've missed Pancake Day (Shrove Tuesday, 25th February) but another kind of pancake — the lens — is good all year round. Pancake lenses are designed not to protrude so far in front of the camera and to do that, they are thinner, smaller and lighter than our usual bulky darlings. Because of the 2x crop in Micro Four Thirds cameras, pancake lenses complement the small size of these popular cameras, especially for anyone wanting to carry less weight in their travels. *Digital Camera World* in their round-up of pancake lenses ranked as their favourite the Olympus 14-42mm f/3.5-5.6 EZ Pancake (shown left). Measuring only 60.6 x 22.5mm and



weighing in at 93g, this little beauty, DCW say, that ...*you really can slap this one single lens on the front of your camera and be covered for almost any shooting situation – making it a perfect choice for street shooting, travel photography, or just everyday walkabout use. In fact, it's so slim that you can leave it on your camera in place of a body cap, so that you can always grab your camera and shoot without faffing for a lens.*

Of course, there are many other similar lenses on the market suited to each and every brand of camera. While their size commends them to us, there are sacrifices to be made if you use one of these lenses. For one thing, there is usually no stabilization; most are fixed focus. But there are others, like the Olympus already mentioned, where the smaller sensor on Micro 4/3 cameras make it easier to design small zooms. So, for example, the Nikkor Z DX 16-50mm f/3.5-6.3 VR is a pancake zoom which, when attached to a Nikon Z50 is also an excellent travel and street combination.

<https://www.digitalcameraworld.com/buying-guides/happy-pancake-day-the-best-pancake-lenses-for-canon-panasonic-and-more>

Program Mode on Digital Cameras

While most camera users these days stay on Auto, those of us who want greater control over how we make our pictures either go for Aperture, Shutter Speed or Manual modes. There is even a hot debate over whether Auto or Manual is the best and by imputation, more sophisticated mode to employ. But there is usually another mode on the dial of most digital camera, the “P” or Program Mode. While most photographers tend to ignore this, considering it perhaps in some way *infra dig*, as Keith Jones points out there are times when this mode has its advantages.

<https://www.picturecorrect.com/tips/p-mode-on-digital-slr-cameras/>

Bob Hay
Presenter