

Camera club Communiqué

December 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

New Features in Photoshop and Lightroom

At its annual [Adobe Max](#), Adobe showcased its new and updated features for *Photoshop*, *Lightroom* and *Lightroom Classic*, and for those who do video, *Premiere Pro*. In *Photoshop*, among several innovations, users will find a new "Refine Hair" button. This will allow you, for example, to select a portrait head with all the fine, stray hairs, to copy this and then paste it against a new background. The *Object Selection* option introduced a couple of years ago already does a good job of this kind of operation, but apparently the new features will improve even upon that.

Another new feature is the ability to replace the sky in landscape photos with one which is more interesting or exciting. In the old days, photographers kept a library of sky negatives to do just this same replacement; more recently, Skylum's *Luminar* has been able to perform this magic; and now, Adobe is getting in on the act. All this is done with the help of what Adobe calls its *Sensei*, a Japanese word for "teacher" but which, in this case, is a form of AI. As for *Lightroom*, it gains GPU accelerated adjustment tools and enhanced zoom, all of which will make post-processing faster and easier.



There is also a video which demonstrates [an advanced colour grading tool](#) in Lightroom, Lightroom Classic and Adobe Camera Raw.

The 10 Best Photo editors of 2020

According to *Techradar*, there are 10 photo editors worthy of being called the best of 2020. These are [Adobe Photoshop CC, Capture One Pro, Affinity Photo, Exposure X5, Luminar 4, ON1 Photo RAW, and DxO PhotoLab](#). Of course, of these both *Photoshop* and *Capture One Pro* price themselves out of all but the professional and most enthusiastic of amateur markets. There is also a widespread resentment towards programs licenced on a subscription platform, amateur photographers in particular usually preferring to buy a program outright and to consider upgrades as they become available.

Photographing Flowers

Now that Spring has come and Summer is upon us, our gardens are filling with colour and, if we're lucky, with fragrance. Most of us can't resist taking a few photos of our favourite flowers and as ever, there are fellow photographers keen to tell us how we can take the best images we can.



Wayne Turner frequently shares his experience on-line, so his latest [Garden Flower Photography Tips](#) is timely. He has some interesting suggestions, most of which we think we already know, but it is never wrong to be reminded. His tips include using a tripod, getting down to their level or even

climbing a tree to get a better perspective. He also suggests that it is not a sin to clean up the scene a bit, even using props to show off the flower to its best advantage.

Another contributor to *Picture Correct* who has also written recently on [How to take amazing flower photos](#) is Tushit Jain. He divides his article up into Indoor and Outdoor scenarios as well as adding notes on post-processing.

Slowing Down

Motion blur and even camera shake are not always a crime in photography. Sports photograph is an obvious example where motion blur can add a sense of movement to whatever the action is at the time. Albert Chi, in his [Sloooooow Down for More Creative Images](#), suggests panning as a starting point. The use of Neutral Density (ND) filters is another option. Intentional



camera shake (that is, using a slowish speed and moving the camera deliberately while the shot is being taken) can create unusual – sometimes unworldly – images. And of course, simply using a shutter speed known to be too slow to stop movement is also an easy way to obtain that creative blur.

There has been much written about the current fashion for pictures of waterfalls or seascapes in which the water is misty and romantic. Jamie Paterson in *How to [Create the Misty Water Effect in Photography](#)* also advocates for the use of ND filters. A useful reminder is to use a remote shutter release – with these long exposures it is too easy to cause camera shake.

Another photographer who has written recently about slow shutter speeds and motion blur as a creative tool is Tedric Garrison. In *[How to Capture Motion and Blur in Photography](#)*, Garrison says: *If you want to freeze things in mid air, think fast shutter speed or electronic flash. If you want some blur*



in the image, think slower shutter speed and a tripod. It's not rocket science, but even so, the results can never be fully predicted so, as in any creative activity, the thrill of the serendipitous effect is always its own reward.

Photo by Tuncay; ISO 200, f/22.0, .8-second exposure.

And, just in: Sudipta Shaw's *Neutral Density Filter Tips for Long Exposures During the Day* is more than just "tips", but more like a short workshop it is so comprehensive in its coverage of the topic. This is a "must read" article...

More on Birds

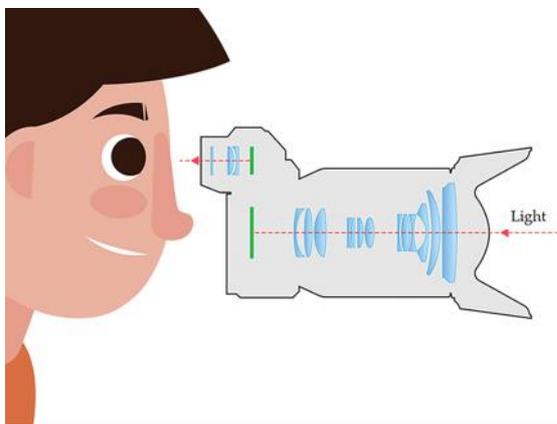
Just as there are always photographers aiming their cameras at flowers, so too there are those of us whose passion is birds. In Canberra, of course, we



have ample opportunity to photograph the birds who visit our gardens, especially if we consider their needs and have bird baths in amongst the flowers. [A video on bird photography by Tim Boyer](#) looks at the application of colour theory in this already difficult genre. In the video he

talks about how colour can be used to direct the viewers' eyes to whatever you mean to be the focus of interest and how colour can set the mood of the photo. These points are then demonstrated in the video.

In an article, [4 Basic Ideas for Photographing Birds](#), Sue Lindell writes that first of all, we must learn to appreciate our backyard birds and other local fauna. For us, they might be commonplace, but get to know them and their habits and they too can be full of personality. Also, we need to remember that what is commonplace to us, to others from elsewhere these birds too are exotic.



Autofocus Mode Made Easy

Ever wonder how your camera focusses so precisely on what is in front of its lens without any help from you? In manual mode – and in days of old - the photographer twiddles the focus on the lens and adjusts it so that whatever is to be the main point of interest is in sharp focus. Set the camera to AF and it does it all for us,

but how? In this rather lengthy and technical article, [Nasim Mansurov from Photography Life](#), explains how the magic happens. But don't be put off by the word "technical" – Mansurov is one of those rare technical writers who writes in plain English and whose style is a pleasure to read.

Best Films

Even if you have long ago exiled your old film camera to that great darkroom in the sky, you can these days afford to buy models which were once outside your budget, brilliant cameras which are still capable of taking wonderful pictures. And, suppose you no longer have a darkroom, it is still



possible to have the best of both worlds, digital and film, by developing your own negatives (developing tanks are not expensive), scanning them and then processing them in your favourite editor. But, given all that, what about the film? There are still some of the films of yesteryear available from sophisticated camera shops and on-line, but there are

also new films coming on the market. [Digital Camera World has listed what they consider the best](#) of the 35mm films, roll films and sheet films now available.

The top picks are: *for colour negative film* - Kodak Portra 400 (135, 36); *for 35mm B&W film* - Ilford XP2S (135, 36); *35mm colour transparency film* - Fujifilm Velvia 50 (135 36); and – among the many others, the best 120 B&W roll film - Ilford FP4 Plus 120. While this last brings back memories, there are other, well-loved brands and types still available. Read the list.

Bye-bye *Communiqué*

This is the last *Communiqué*, not only for 2020 but also for the future. In 2021, *Communiqué* will become a monthly in-house newsletter informing members of the U3A Camera Club photography class of upcoming meetings and other matters of class interest only. *Communiqué* began over 6 years ago when this class was first convened and originally served much the same domestic function as is proposed for 2021. Gradually it morphed into an extension of the training provided by the Camera Club by listing articles published in on-line photographic resources. In an abbreviated form, named our “Public” version, it was also re-published by the Southside Camera Club on their web page and so has enjoyed a much wider circulation than originally envisaged. As founder and Presenter of the U3A Camera Club, I am grateful for the Southside generosity in re-publishing *Communiqué* for all these years and I sincerely hope it has proved useful to photographers around the region.

As a result of the Covid19 pandemic and the isolation it has imposed, the U3A Camera Club will henceforth function as a “virtual class” using Zoom and a Web Page (<http://u3acanberracameraclub.smugmug.com>). These resources plus Covid-safe excursions and field trips, I hope, will allow us to continue, even if on a “home schooling” basis throughout 2021 and beyond if necessary. An informal blog I have been writing for members of the class since the pandemic lock-down began, will continue on a more-or-less

weekly basis informing them of articles they should read as part of their training, trends which might interest them and other matters photographic. I called this blog *Otium*, which Google *Translate* told me is the Latin for “Idle Hours”, plenty of which I supposed we would all have in self-isolation.

Have a safe and enjoyable holiday season and best wishes for 2021,

Bob Hay
Presenter.