

CABLE RELEASE

SILVER SPRING CAMERA CLUB

FOUNDED 1950

March 2014

Volume 55

Number 7

SSCCPHOTOGRAPHY.ORG

MEMBER ARTICLES

BEATING CABIN FEVER
WITH LENSBABY
LOOKING BACK
EXPERIMENTING WITH
FLASH DIFFUSERS

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E-mail addresses for officers are in the *Member Handbook*, others are available on request. Please contact Laurel Sharf at Lsharf@verizon.net.

Visitors and prospective members are welcome. Membership is open to all persons interested in photography. For more information, contact Laurel Sharf at Lsharf@verizon.net.

The *Cable Release* is published ten times each year, September through May plus Summer, for members of the Silver Spring Camera Club. Articles are written by members of SSCC, which is a community-based organization dedicated to the advancement and enjoyment of photography.

SSCC member submissions for the *Cable Release* should be directed to Editor, *Cable Release*, at pstu1219@gmail.com. More information is available at the SSCC Website: www.scccphotography.org

The Silver Spring Camera Club has been a member Club of the PSA since the club was founded in 1950. For information regarding the benefits of a PSA individual membership and for PSA sponsored activities, please contact our Club PSA Representative, Loretta Argrett.



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SSCC MEETING LOCATION

All FOUR major monthly meetings of the Club Year are held at the Marvin Memorial United Methodist Church at Four Corners in Silver Spring.

Note: The main parking lot is accessed from the eastbound side of University Blvd, and you cannot make a left from southbound Colesville Rd. onto University Blvd. If you are coming from College Park/Takoma Park: Go west on University Blvd. Cross the Rte. 29/Colesville Rd intersection and turn left at the loop just past McDonalds. Go back east on University Blvd., cross Rte. 29 and turn left into church parking lot A. If you are coming from points north of Four Corners: Proceed south on Rte. 29 and turn right onto University Blvd., move into the far left lane and turn left at the loop just past the McDonalds. Go east on University Blvd., cross Rte. 29, and turn left into the church parking.



MARCH AT THE SSCC

- 6 Speaker Night (7:30 p.m.)
- 8 Field Trip - Lonaconing Silk Mill (p. 9)
- 11 SSCC Board Meeting (7:00 p.m.)
- 13 Competition Night: Open (7:30 p.m.)
- 20 Education Night (7:30 p.m.)
- 27 Open Forum (7:30 p.m.)

Inclement weather: If Montgomery County schools close, SSCC meetings are canceled on that day.

For up-to-date info, go to
<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/>.

COMPETITIONS 2013-2014

DOUG WOLTERS, COMPETITION CHAIR

September: Open

October: Nature

November: Open

December: Street Scenes

January: Open

February: Water in any of its forms

March: Open

April: People but not formal portraits

May: Shadows and/or silhouettes

For further information on each competition topic and competition rules, please consult the *Members Handbook* at www.scccphotography.org. For further questions, please contact Doug Wolters at SSCCcompetitions@aol.com.

MARCH OPEN FORUM NIGHT

March 27 Open Forum. Bring a photo to talk about. This month's emphasis is "implied motion"... you decide what that means. We will place prints around the edge of the room and have time to discuss informally amongst ourselves ... a SSCC colloquium. During the formal part of the evening we will choose 10 or so prints (or digital images if someone brings a computer) for presentation to the whole group. Please bring just one image. There will be group discussion time on topics of interest and 5-10 minute presentations by several members.

EDUCATION NIGHT - MARCH People pictures, NOT portraits

Our April competition topic will be People but not formal portraits. To prepare for the competition and to get your creative juices flowing we'll learn about ways to make a strong photograph by taking pictures of people that's not a portrait. After the presentation we'll have an informal group critique of one of your people pictures. So, bring one picture you would like to display and have critiqued, it can be either digital on a flash drive or a print.

Michael Koren

**PROJECTED ENTRIES
DUE
MARCH 6
BY MIDNIGHT**

DIGITAL COMPETITION REQUIREMENTS

The specifications for digital competitions have caused some concern and confusion among members. So much so that it has probably discouraged some members, especially Novices, from submitting entries. Although computer applications can sometime have very exact technical requirements, experience has taught us that some of what we thought were requirements could better be termed recommendations.

We have, therefore, loosened the submission requirements to eliminate the "Image Dimensions," which seemed to be the most confusing of all the requirements. The maximum width (1024) and maximum height (768) will no longer be requirements. The software automatically adjusts the size of projected images (larger or smaller) to the capabilities of the computer/projector. You can control that by setting the dimensions yourself or let the software do it. It's up to you. If for artistic reasons you wish your image to be presented at a size smaller than full screen, then you must size your image and position it within a 1024 pixels wide x 768 pixels high **black** background image (canvas size in Photoshop).

The maximum "**File Size**" (not to be confused with Image Dimensions), which remains at **500KB(max)**, is mainly because of limited computer disk space.

The "**File Name**" requirements are very important and are dictated entirely by the software. Please be careful when entering this information. Nonconforming filenames can wreak havoc with the software. Use a tilde (~), NOT a dash (-) to separate the subfields (**Class~Maker's Name~Image Title**) of the filename. It is OK to include spaces within the name and image title subfields. Changes (or corrections) will NOT be made to the subfields; i.e., inserting spaces, changing spelling, etc. You picked the subject . . . you picked the title. Who's to question that?

The **Requirements** are now:

- Submission Deadline
 - Midnight 1-week before competition (SSCC's Speaker meeting night)
 - Send submissions to SSCCphotography@yahoo.com
- Monthly Images per member 2 (max)
- File Format JPG
- File Size 500 KB (max)
- File Name: **Class ~Maker's Name~Image Title.jpg**
 - Example: **Adv~Tom Jones~Washington Landscape.jpg**
 - The tilde ~ character separates the 3 subfields of the file name
- **Class** - Nov or Adv (capitalization not required)
- **Maker's Name** - spaces allowed
- Please use the same name throughout the year to aid record keeping.
- **Image Title** - spaces allowed
 - DO NOT embed commas (,) or tilde (~) in any of the File Name subfields

The **Suggestions** are:

- Image Dimensions
 - 1024 pixels wide (max)
 - 768 pixels high (max)
- Color Space - sRGB

Questions: Doug Wolters SSCCcompetitions@aol.com

Signing-in on the Projected Image register will NOT be required on the night of competition.

PRINT IMAGE ENTRY GUIDELINES

Mark the BACK of the matte with category (e.g., Novice Color), photographer's name, title of the image, and an arrow indicating the print's correct orientation. (See at right) Better yet, use the template provided on the SSCC website at http://www.scccphotography.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/SSCC_label_4.pdf.



Novice Mono
Mary Smith
"Flower in B&W"

COMPETITION COLUMN

Doug Wolters

We will have an open-topic competition for March 13. Think of this as wide open in terms of subject matter as well as techniques. Submit your most creative images!!

Looking ahead to April...

April: People but not formal portraits -This topic encourages the photographer to explore not only people's faces but also the hands and other symbols of the subject's essence (e.g., the hands and gloves of a construction worker, a violinist's hand holding a bow or a baseball player holding a bat, the feet of a ballet dancer, etc.). Images may portray one person or close group of people. The primary emphasis should be on the people (e.g., on the raised hands of several basketball players, but not on the basketball). Formal portraits, indoors or outdoors, are not permissible, but a "staged candid" is acceptable.

Note the detail. "People but not formal portraits" is much more than a picture of someone in front of the Washington Monument!

As you may know, Jim Rogers has had to withdraw from his position as the Projected Images Co-ordinator. I would like to thank him for his years of service to SSCC in this role. As I said in a recent email, his devotion and commitment to SSCC have helped make this club as special as it is.

Yaahov Gridley has graciously agreed to handle projected images on a temporary basis. He has also agreed to train anyone who would consider being the Projected Images Coordinator on how to use the software. We are exploring new software that would simplify the projected image competition process. If you would like to take Yaahov up on this offer, please contact me at SSCCcompetitions@aol.com. It would be great if I had the problem of having too many volunteers!

OPEN COMPETITION JUDGE: TERRY POPKIN

For a couple of years, Terry Popkin has brought his unparalleled vision to SSCC to judge our macro competitions. This season, however, we thought it would be interesting to give Terry freer rein and have him judge an open topic competition.

Terry has been creating elegant images for over three decades, and his photographs and articles have been published around the world. He believes that creativity is the basis for both fine art and fine photography and that the two are inseparable. As a result, his passion for both has led him to produce beautiful images that elicit feeling about people and about the environment.



In offering guidance to improve our photography, Terry encourages us to learn to expand our vision, to keep looking further and deeper. He advises that we take the judges' critiques to heart and learn to improve our images. Great photographs can happen when we know the light is perfect and we have carefully thought out the composition. In a practical vein, Terry notes that if we are limited by a selection of lenses, or even by a particular camera, we should plan our photographs around our equipment. Sometimes, all we have with us is a 24-70 mm lens, but that can be enough to create a significant image, full of feeling.

In an unusual right-brain / left-brain combination, Terry Popkin is both an artist and a scientist. He earned his BS in chemistry and physics and his MS in microbiology at Pennsylvania State University. For about 25 years, he was an NIH research chemist-microbiologist and an electron microscopist. Since 1972, he has been a professional photographer. In addition, he has been the president/CEO of The Children's Learning Center since 1994.

MARCH GUEST SPEAKER: ALAN SISLEN SPEAKS ON LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY

Our March speaker, Alan Sislen, has been an avid photographer for over 45 years. Landscape photography is his passion, and this month he will talk to us about the beauty and challenge of this discipline.

Alan has photographed in the US, France, Iceland, Italy, Canada, England, Chile, South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, and New Zealand. Although his

equipment might be state-of-the-art, Alan's style and technique are traditional. He has studied with well known British

landscape photographer Charlie Waite, former National Geographic photographer Bruce Dale, digital expert Thom Hogan, black and white master John Sexton, photographic artist and Photoshop expert John Paul Caponigro, fine art photographer Charles Cramer, color management/printing expert Bill Atkinson, and Photoshop expert Eliot Cohen.

In 2005, Alan was juried into Multiple Exposures Gallery at the Torpedo Factory in Alexandria and was then juried into the Torpedo Factory as a Resident Artist in 2006. He is a long-time member of North Bethesda Camera Club, where he has served on the Board and has been selected as Advanced Color Print Photographer of the Year, Black and White Photographer of the Year, and Advanced Electronic Photographer of the Year.

In Alan's presentation, he will discuss why, after more than four decades of doing photography, he has gravitated to and specializes in landscape photography. He will discuss the equipment he uses, but more importantly, what he looks for in a particular location to try to capture that elusive "great photograph." Pre-planning is always a major part of landscape photography, and Alan will talk about all the variables that should be



considered and how to deal with the unpredicted events that always occur. For a landscape photographer, more important than the scene that's being photographed is the light on the scene that's being photographed. He will use many examples throughout his presentation to demonstrate this critical element, as well as other important topics such as composition, aspect ratio, mood, and emotion, all of which can help make what might be an ordinary photograph, extraordinary.

Alan's photography may be seen at his web site: www.AlanSislenPhotography.com.

MEMBER NEWS

CALUMET TO EXHIBIT SSCC YEAR-END WINNERS

The Calumet Photo store in Rockville will be the site of an exhibit of our year-end winners' photographs throughout the month of July 2014. Year-end competition winners will be able to drop off prints by June 27th for exhibit through the end of July. Entry into the show will be based on the categories we award for the year-end competition itself. If some photographers choose not to participate, we will fill the available exhibit space with other "high-points" members. Calumet is offering discounted pricing for those who may need help with printing, matting and framing. Those details will be available as we approach the year-end competition. Watch for more details!

JOINING THE SSCC ON-LINE FORUM By Dan Sisken

The SSCC forum is on Google Groups, a very simple, well-known, intuitive system. To sign up, email me, Dan Sisken, at dan.sisken@gmail.com. All I need is your name and email address. I will send you an invite by email.

There are two ways to access the Forum. One is by email. You have the option of receiving each post by email, or getting a single, digest email approximately once a day with all of the posts in it. You can respond to all posts by replying to the email.

The other method is by going to the Forum's web site, which is

<http://groups.google.com/group/sscameraclub>

From there, you can read discussion threads, respond to a thread, and/or start a new thread. You can also adjust your settings so that you only receive a daily digest of posts instead of getting each one separately by email. See the "Edit my membership" link on the right.

If you've never been a member of an on-line discussion group, this may sound a bit complicated. But it's actually fairly simple. If you have questions, please see me at a meeting or just email me at my Gmail account (dan.sisken@gmail.com). See you on-line!

KERNELS OF KOREN

By Michael Koren

A few weeks ago, I noticed that Tony Sweet was advertising his Digital Photography Creativity Seminar on Meetup. I immediately signed up and, a few Saturdays ago, attended at a hotel near BWI. This is a multi-city seminar that made only one stop in Maryland. Cities visited were Portland ME, Raleigh NC, Richmond VA, Pittsburgh PA, Erlanger KY and, as mentioned earlier, Baltimore.

This was an all day seminar that started at 9:00 sharp and ended at 4:30 in the afternoon. As many of you know, Tony Sweet is an incredible photographer with a unique eye for composition. He is equally skilled at explaining the process and thoughts that go into creating his images. His combination of breathtaking images, clear explanations, and more than a few doses of humor made the day go very fast. At the end of the day, I finally realized I was suffering from information overload. I took lots of notes, knowing he would be informative, but there is only so much you could write as he moved from topic to topic. Thankfully, as promised, Tony emailed a complete set of notes with many instructional videos a few days after the event. This information alone would have been worth the price of admission!

Some of the topics Tony covered were composition, flower photography, panoramics, texture blending, creative effects in camera, and iPhone photography. Each topic was clearly

explained with images of before/after along with commentary. Questions from the audience were immediately answered and, if necessary, more time was given to a topic to make sure everybody understood the concepts.

So, what did I learn and why am I writing this review? Tony started the seminar with the quote from Albert Einstein, "Imagination is more important than knowledge." This cannot be truer. I know many people that have the knowledge of how to use a tool, whether it's a camera, paintbrush, hammer, spreadsheet, baseball bat, or a host of other tools; but the resulting work is uninspired and generally boring. The seminar helped me see through the eyes of a photographer, not an architectural photographer, or a nature photographer, or a studio photographer, or a portrait photographer, but a PHOTOGRAPHER. Tony Sweet's photography transcends all these genres, thus avoiding the pigeonholing of a restrictive title. I believe this is due to his imagination and being able to see the possibilities in a scene that would go unnoticed by an unimaginative photographer. What I learned that Saturday will affect my own work and my style of shooting pictures. More imagination can be learned. Especially when adding to your own imagination, this creates a cascading effect of inspiration and more imagination towards what you shoot pictures of and how you edit your images.

Finally, another quote from John Shaw, a photographer famous for his nature and travel work, "If I want to see reality, I'll look at it." Tony used that quote along with Einstein's to illustrate the point that special effects in the camera such as motion blur, multiple exposure, and HDR are different imaginative ways of interpreting a scene. Additionally, image manipulation in software such as B&W conversion, an infrared look, texture overlays, and image blending are also imaginative ways of rendering a perspective unique to your vision of a scene.

Please take the time to have a look at Tony's website and blog (<http://tonysweet.com/>) for his upcoming seminars. I recommend attending one if you have the opportunity; your photography will improve as he kick starts your imagination into high gear.

SILVER SPRING CAMERA CLUB BOARD MEETINGS - SUMMARY OF MINUTES

In the interest of brevity, I am publishing short summaries of the minutes from recent Board meetings. Full copies of the minutes are available on request from the Editor or any Board member.

January 30, 2014

A special meeting of the Board was held to review and revise the competition rules.

The objectives are to find ways to streamline the competition process, shorten the time taken for Second Thursday meetings and encourage greater member participation.

Competition Chair Doug Wolters prepared a summary table identifying competition features from 17 camera clubs. He led the meeting which addressed the first four of 15 proposed recommendations that would modify our existing procedures.

The four competition features discussed relate to [1] a Statement of Purpose for competitions, [2] the categories that are judged, [3] the number of entries allowed and [4] the number of honorable mention awards to be given.

The timetable will have any new Competition Rules drafted and reviewed by the full membership before enactment at the start of the 2014-15 season. The remaining eleven proposals will be addressed at the next Board meeting on February 5.

February 5, 2014

The Board held the second in a series of meetings to discuss the revision of competition rules, taking up issues that were not covered during the January 30 meeting.

Competition Chair Doug Wolters led the meeting in addressing 12 proposed recommendations to modify existing rules to shorten the time required for competitions and increase participation by Members.

The topics covered included the definition of a photograph, standards for image manipulation, repeat images, moving from Novice to Advanced level, presentation standards, dropping the slides category, a liability provision, and the deadline for print entries.

After covering those issues, the Board discussed the best way to narrow options for changes and seek input from the broader membership. They set the next meeting date for February 17.



Dave Mullen

SSCC FIELD TRIPS

LONACONING SILK MILL FIELD TRIP - MARCH 8TH



Greg Holden will be leading a field trip to the abandoned silk mill in Lonaconing, Md (outside of Cumberland). The mill is privately owned and protected and still contains all the machinery, tools, and personal effects from when it was shut down in 1957. There is lots to explore in this three-story factory - check out Greg's photos from his past visits:

http://imagesunderfoot.com/Home/Collections/Pages/Lonaconing_Silk_Mill.html.

Our club will have exclusive access from 1-5 p.m. We will carpool from our usual location at the Giant Food parking lot off Flower Ave and Arliss Street in Takoma Park at 8 am and stop in Cumberland

for lunch before heading to the mill. Cost is \$25/hour per person but I recommend you stay the complete four hours. To avoid running into each other, we will limit this trip to 12 people. Email Greg to register or if you have questions: ggholden@imagesunderfoot.com.



CELEBRATE MARYLAND'S ANNIVERSARY MARCH 22 AT ST. MARY'S

Come out and celebrate Maryland's anniversary in Historic St. Mary's City (HSMC), a delightful mix of living history, hands-on activities, archaeology, and nature trails, all of which provide interesting photo opportunities.

Admission is free on March 22, and the annual program will take place at 1 p.m. Enjoy March winds to enjoy a colonial pastime - kite flying - with HSMC "colonists" in Mackall Field from 10-12. Enjoy kids' crafts, join a scavenger hunt, and try your hand at "jousting." Don't miss St. Mary's College of Maryland's *a cappella* chorus, PING, performing in the Chapel at noon and 2:30 p.m.



Jim Turner, "White Magnolia"

CHASE AWAY CABIN FEVER!

Take an on-line class to learn something new

By Coriolana Simon

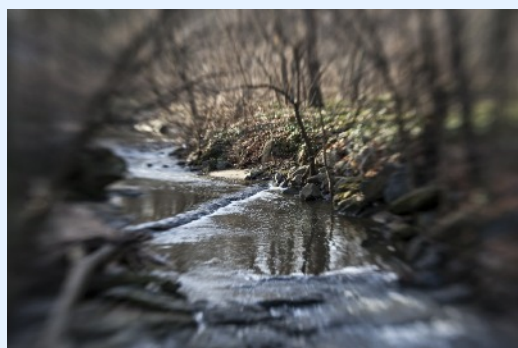
Have the polar vortex and winter snow and ice slowed down your photography? If taking the camera outdoors in extreme weather doesn't appeal to you, why not try something different? An on-line photography class! It's a great way to keep learning and practicing.

For Christmas, Doug signed me up for a month-long course with Bryan Peterson's Perfect Picture School of Photography (PPSOP). The subject: Lensbaby. I confess I'd had a box full of Lensbaby equipment for a couple of years but had found it too frustrating after a few tries.



How did the class work?

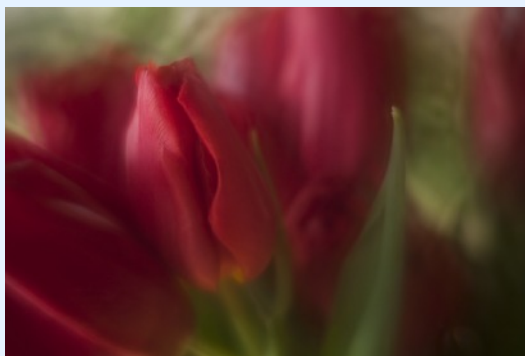
Once registered, I got a member log-in from PPSOP. When I clicked on my course, I created a personal profile. Each week, I downloaded a lesson with narrative and plenty of sample images from the instructor. In addition, I got an actual shooting assignment, usually three different kinds of subjects or equipment to experiment with. From my week's practice, I uploaded my three



favorites to the "class photo" page, giving tech specs and a short description of what I did and how I did it.

What I hadn't expected was the camaraderie among the other students in the class - about 29 of us from many different countries. We all posted comments about each other's images and had spirited

discussions on our Q&A page. At the end of each week, our instructor wrote critiques for every photo that



had been submitted. After going through her comments, we could also register further thoughts or ask questions. While the class was supposed to be four weeks with four lessons, the instructor gave us a "bonus lesson" with additional information on the equipment. Even though the actual course is now over, I still have access to the lessons for two years, so I can review points that may not have been clear initially.



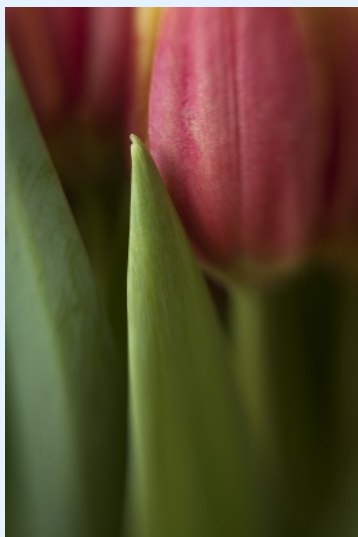
So what is Lensbaby all about, and what did I learn?

Lensbaby comprises a system of lenses, optical elements, and accessories to mount on the camera. The basic characteristic is that the lenses literally bend, and the degree and angle of bending determine what part of the image is in focus. This selective focus approach creates unexpected and often beautiful effects. Most of the Lensbaby elements have one spot or circle of sharpness, larger or



smaller depending on the aperture. Then, as one goes out from that spot, the lens creates progressive blur. The Lensbaby “bendy” lens is really nothing more than a holder or mount for various “optics” that produce different effects. It goes without saying that the Lensbaby does not communicate with the camera’s electronics, which means shooting in manual or aperture priority. In fact, to switch apertures, there are no dials or knobs; instead, one manually inserts an aperture ring onto the optic, using a small magnet. The aperture rings, each marked with an *f*-number, live in a small separate case. Strange!!

The majority of my photography is macro, botanical and otherwise, so I decided to concentrate on macro with Lensbaby, as well. (Of course, one can use Lensbaby for landscapes, portraits, and everything else.) For the last few years, I’ve worked hard at creating macro images that are almost surgically sharp. So, turning to Lensbaby caused a brain and eye revolution. The floaty, gauzy, poetic interpretations did not feel comfortable at first, but now I’m enjoying this new visual language.



Here’s an example. With traditional super-sharp macros, the background always presents a problem; it’s jumbled, it’s distracting; and we do everything possible to minimize it. That big piece of black velvet gets a real workout. But, with Lensbaby, where the background is already soft and out of focus, creating an interesting background becomes as important as showing off the primary subject.

Another feature of Lensbaby that surprised me: I’m accustomed to shooting at *f*/22 or *f*/29 for macro, which means rather long exposures and relatively high ISOs. With Lensbaby, I mostly shoot at *f*/4 or *f*/5.6, so I can stay at ISO 100 and use much faster shutter speeds. Of course, the tripod remains a necessity.

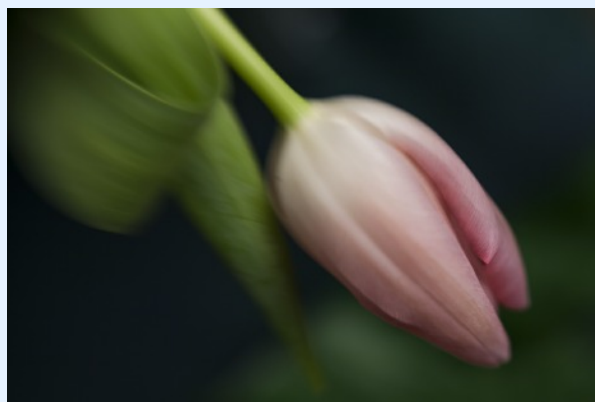
My editing procedures, too, have changed. Overall, I might add a tiny bit of contrast or clarity

in Lightroom, but the bulk of the editing is concentrated on the small portion of sharpness. Because the Lensbaby lenses are not designed to be crisp like regular lenses, I find that images need much more sharpening and clarity on the “sweet spot” than I would use on a traditional macro photograph.



After I got the hang of working with the standard Lensbaby equipment (the Composer Pro with the Double Glass Optic), I experimented with other pieces. The Soft Focus optic has no sharp spot and can be made more or less soft overall by changing little inserts that go over the glass. Its effect can be pleasing and poetic, and the eye still finds key elements to rest on. The Plastic Optic gives results more like a toy camera or Holga – very soft, with odd glows and ghosting and sometimes strange specular highlights. The Edge 80, a very different kind of Lensbaby equipment, produces a slice of sharpness across the whole image, vertically, horizontally, or diagonally. It’s almost like a poor-man’s tilt-shift lens – with a super-steep learning curve.

I’m still learning and experimenting with Lensbaby, but I’ve already added it to my photography arsenal. Who knew that a dreary winter month could bring so much fun!



TIP OF THE DAY - LOOK BEHIND YOU

By Ted Ringger

When it comes to picture-taking, there is nothing I like more than walking with the camera through beautiful country and grand spaces. Hiking through majestic forests, scenic shorelines, mountain trails, even the narrow streets and alleys of old cities, you can find terrific images.

Sometimes, the footing requires your attention so you may not be looking at much more than what is in front of you. All I'm saying is that when you slow down long enough to frame and capture a shot of what's in front of you, turn around once in a while and check out the view behind. There just might be a shot worth your attention.

In May 2007, I was walking through the Mariposa Grove of giant sequoia trees in Yosemite National Park. It is REAL easy to be awed by what's in front of you. Ginormous trees with great, red trunks stretching too high to see where they end. One can imagine that, with trees over 200 feet tall, not much direct light reaches the forest floor. It was a wonderful place to wander and it was so easy to be drawn further down the trail to see what the next grand scene might look like.

It's helpful for me to write this because I don't do it enough. Often, when I turn around now, I remember this day when I did turn around. There was this fresh, green, youngster of a tree ... with a sunbeam shining right on it ... directly in front of a big, red mass of a tree. Like Ansel Adams described how he made his iconic "*Moonrise, Hernandez, New Mexico*" image, I had enough time to snap off one shot before the sunbeam moved on and the scene had changed dramatically. Don't miss the chance to capture what may be right behind you.



"Mother and Son"

FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY: DIFFUSION DOME VS. SOFTBOX

By Bob Peters

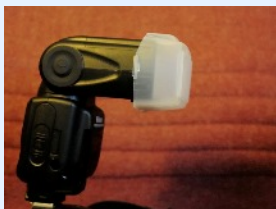
When I bought a new strobe (Nikon SBT 910), for an additional \$16 more I purchased a kit with rechargeable batteries and a Vello soft box attachment for the flash. The softbox attaches to the flash head as shown in and with supplied Velcro and folds flat for storage. Additional colored filters are supplied that slip inside the soft box. The flash comes with a diffusion dome and a bounce card. The question I became interested in is how the soft box compares to the diffusion dome. Which would be better? Would the combination of both the diffusion dome and soft box be best? Would the soft box soften shadows and produce a more natural look than the diffusion dome? Pictures 1 and 2 show how the soft box attaches to the flash. Picture 3 shows the diffusion dome attached to the flash.



Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3

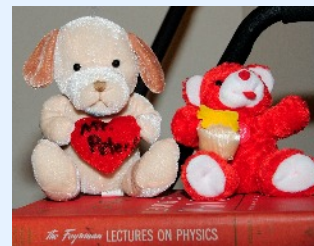
To answer these questions I ran a test with the following setups:

- Forward facing flash
- Bounce flash
- Forward facing flash with diffusion dome
- Bounce with diffusion dome
- Forward flash with soft box.
- Forward Flash with diffusion dome

Shutter speed was set at a maximum speed for flash, 1/250 sec at f/8 to show shadows better by minimizing ambient light. However, the measurements were taken in a small room with white walls, which reduced shadows.

The subjects were two stuffed animals sitting on top of a physics book and shiny black half height cabinet. The shiny cabinet was included to show reflections of the flash. The arm of a treadmill was included to produce a shadow against a wall.

Picture 4 shows the results of a straight flash. There is a dark shadow on the wall from the treadmill arm. The fur of the animals sparkle, something they do not do in normal soft light.



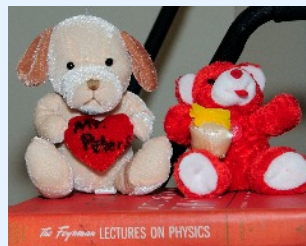
Picture 4

Picture 5 was with bounce flash with no attachments. There was no shadow. The fur looked natural. There was sparkle in the eyes, but at the top of the eyes as the soft light from the bounce flash came from the ceiling.



Picture 5

Picture 6 adds the diffusion dome to the forward facing flash. There is some improvement; the shadow is not as dark. There is about the same sparkle in the fur, as with the straight flash shot in Picture 3.



Picture 6

Picture 7 shows the effect of bounce flash with diffusion dome. This is a compromise between forward flash and bounce flash. There is a soft

shadow, but the glint in the eyes is facing the camera unlike the straight flash where the glint was toward the ceiling.



Picture 7

Picture 8 was forward flash with the diffusion dome and the soft box, i.e., the configuration in picture 6 with the soft box added to the diffusion dome. The result was darker shadows with the soft box than without it. The soft box made the picture worse.



Picture 8

I repeated pictures 6 and 8 to make sure I did not make a mistake and got identical results. Why did the soft box make things worse when added to the dome? My explanation is the soft box has a translucent front but is supported by an opaque structure. With the dome, the soft spreads out in all directions. With the soft box, the light only comes out from the front direction. Even though the light is spread out in the forward direction, that does not compensate for the light blocked from the sides and back. This result might not hold true in a large room.

For these pictures I kept the camera in the manual mode and the flash in the auto (TTL) mode. Only later did I realize that this did not allow me to compare the loss of light for the various configurations.

The result of this exploration is a recommendation of a diffusion dome over a soft box. Bounce light with the diffusion dome was the most appealing to me.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"Photography suits the temper of this age - of active bodies and minds. It is a perfect medium for one whose mind is teeming with ideas, imagery, for a prolific worker who would be slowed down by painting or sculpting, for one who sees quickly and acts decisively, accurately."

- Edward Weston

"So often I find myself engaged in a composition, thinking and refining and contemplating, when my subject remains static, when nothing other than my thoughts is changing, where Mr. Cartier-Bresson would have died of boredom waiting for a decisive moment; and yet I am so elated and immersed in the experience that no other thought even enters my mind. Worries disappear, discomforts never registers in my conscious mind, and nothing else deserves attention until after the click of the shutter."

- Guy Tal

"The Problem with Moments"

<http://guytal.com/wordpress/2014/02/01/the-problem-with-moments/>

"But of course over the years I learned that where one opportunity is taken away a myriad of new ones are given to you, if only you are open to seeing them. And the latter really only happens if you can let go of expectations. It took me awhile to learn this lesson but once I did, I found a whole new world opened up to me and the creative energy flowed. No matter what the light or the conditions, there are always great things to photograph everywhere if we just learn to see beyond our expectations."

- Darwin Wiggett

"Expectations Kill Creativity"

<http://www.oopoomoo.com/2014/02/art-and-culture-of-photography-expectations-kill-creativity/>

CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS

DAVID BLASS

Capital Photography Center

- Fourteenth Street at Night, Fri. Mar. 7, 5:40-8p.m.
 - Introduction to Photoshop and Photoshop Elements, Sat. Mar. 8, 9a.m.-5p.m.
 - HDR at Architectural Salvage Shop-Second Chance, Sun. Mar 9, 9a.m.-4:30p.m.
 - Monuments at Night Photo Safari, Fri. Mar. 14, 7-9p.m.
 - Abstracts and Still Lives, Sat. Mar. 15, 2:30-5p.m.
 - Take Your Photography To The Next Level, Tues. Mar. 18, 7:30-9:30p.m.
 - C&O Canal and Pennyfield Lockhouse Field Shoot, Sun. Mar. 23, 3:30-6p.m.
 - Cherry Blossoms at the Tidal Basin Photo Safari, Tues. Apr. 1, 9:30a.m.-12p.m.
- And others at
<http://capitalphotographycenter.com/classes/>

Horizon Workshops

- Creative Vision: 3 Day, May 24-26
 - Eastern Sierras & Yosemite, June 22-29, 2014
 - Ireland: Landscapes & Locals, Aug. 10-17, 2014
- And many more at
<http://www.horizonworkshops.com/>

Washington School of Photography

- Introduction to Digital Photography, Sat. Mar. 1, 8, 15, 22, 10a.m.-1p.m. Also given other days.
 - Focus on Composition, Sat. Mar. 1, 8, 15, 22, 10a.m.-1p.m. Also given other days.
 - Smartphone Photography, Wed. Mar. 12, 7-10p.m.
 - Shoot Around (5 different subject-shooting sessions), Sat. Mar. 22, 10a.m.-5p.m.
 - Food Photography, Tues. Apr. 1, 8, 15, 29, 7-10p.m.
- And more at
<http://www.washingtonschoolofphotography.com/index.php/calendar>

Frank Van Riper and Judith Goodman

- The Umbria Photo Workshop--The October 2014 workshop is booked, contact Frank and Judy at GVR@GVRphoto.com about the 2015 workshop

Joseph Van Os Photo Safaris

- Aurora Borealis, Fairbanks, Alaska, Mar. 3-10
 - Patagonia's Mountain Landscapes, Apr. 10-26
 - Essential China, May 7-22
 - Yosemite in Spring, May 11-17
 - Ultimate Galapagos, May 17-June 3
 - Spitsbergen-the Pack Ice Voyage, June 29-July 10
 - Brown Bears of Katmai National Park (Alaska) in Summer, July 6-11
 - China's Unknown Landscapes, Sep. 9-23
 - Tibet-Roof of the World, Oct. 7-22
- and others at www.photosafaris.com

Art Wolfe

- Iconic East Africa, Mar. 8-23
 - Bhutan, Apr. 2-13
 - Olympic Peninsula, WA, June 6-8
 - Glacier Bay Alaska Cruise, June 18-24
 - Mount Rainier Workshop, Aug. 22-24
 - Antarctica, Nov. 20-Dec. 8
- and more at
<http://www.artwolfeworkshops.com/>

Suzi Eszterhas

- Custom Photo Tours in Monterey Bay, year-round, custom dates available
 - Alaska Bears and Eagles, June 23-July 1
 - Orangutans of Borneo, Jan. 10-23, 2015 (2014 tour is full)
- <http://www.suzieszterhas.com/toursWorkshops/>

Glen Echo Photoworks

- Advanced Master Darkroom Printing, 10 sessions, Tues. Mar. 25-June 10, 7-11p.m.
 - Introduction to Adobe Lightroom, Sat. Mar. 29 and Apr. 5, 10a.m.-1p.m.
 - Large Format Photography, 7 sessions, Sat. Apr. 5-May 10, 9:30a.m.-2:30p.m.
 - Night Shoot Workshop, Tues. May 13, 8-10:30p.m.
- and more at
<http://www.ssreg.com/glenechopark/classes/classes.asp?catID=4403&pcatID=4379>

EXHIBITS AND EVENTS

TED RINGGER

Meade Brothers: Pioneers in American Photography - A collection of 19th century daguerreotypes. Through June 1. National Portrait Gallery. Eighth and F Streets, NW, Washington, D.C. 202-633-1000. www.npg.si.edu

A Day Like No Other: Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington - Forty black and white images of the march. Through May 31. Library of Congress. 10 First Street SE, Washington, D.C. 202-707-9779. www.loc.gov

Nature's Best Photography Awards - Through March 31. National Museum of Natural History. Tenth Street and Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 202-633-1000. www.mnh.si.edu

Portraits of Planet Ocean: The Photography of Brian Skerry - An underwater journey through different marine environments. National Museum of Natural History. Tenth Street and Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 202-633-1000. www.mnh.si.edu

Unintended Journeys - Images and videos by Magnum Photos examine the plight of those displaced by natural disasters and global climate change. Through August 13. National Museum of Natural History. Tenth Street and Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 202-633-1000. www.mnh.si.edu

One Cubic Foot: Portraits of Biodiversity - Photographs by David Littschwagger. Through March 31. National Geographic Society. 17th and M Streets, NW, Washington, D.C. 202-857-7588. www.nationalgeographic.com/museum

Africa Re-Viewed: The Photographic Legacy of Eliot Elisofon - Showcases the photographer's images of African culture. Through August 24. National Museum of African Art. 950 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, D.C. 202-633-4600. www.africa.si.edu

Lines, Marks and Drawings: Through the Lens of Roger Ballen - Photographs of homes and windowless rooms in rural Africa. Through July 20. National Museum of African Art. 950 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, D.C. 202-633-4600. www.africa.si.edu

Civil Rights at 50 - A three-year changing exhibit follows the Civil Rights Movement from 1963 to 1965 with images and front pages of newspapers and magazines from the time. The Newseum. 555 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 888-639-7386. www.newseum.org

Creating Camelot: The Kennedy Photography of Jacques Lowe - Intimate shots of the president's family taken by his personal photographer. Through March 16. The Newseum. 555 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 888-639-7386. www.newseum.org

Yousuf Karsh: American Portraits - The first of two exhibitions of the famous Canadian portrait photographer. Through April 27. National Portrait Gallery. Eighth and F Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 202-633-8300. www.npg.si.edu

Eyes of the World: Ara Guler's Anatolia - Iconic snapshots of medieval Seljuk and Armenian buildings from 1965. Through May 4. Arthur M. Sackler Gallery. 1050 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, D.C. 202-633-1000. www.asia.si.edu

CALLS FOR ENTRY

DAVID BLASS

Vermont Photo Workplace

The Art of Travel, Deadline: Mar. 3

Finding the Light, Deadline: Apr. 7

The Human-Altered Landscape, Deadline: May 5

<http://www.vtphotoworkplace.com/>

Linus Galleries (Signal Hill, CA)

The Senses, Deadline: Mar. 1

Figurative, Deadline: Mar. 3

Earthly Possessions, Deadline: Mar. 17

<http://www.linusgallery.com/call-for-entries.html>

The Kiernan Gallery (Lexington, VA)

In the Abstract, Deadline: Mar. 21

<http://kiernangallery.com/>

Black Box Gallery (Portland, OR)

Grayscale, Deadline: Mar. 6

Shadow and Light, Deadline: Apr. 9

<http://blackboxgallery.com/CallForEntry.html>

Mpls Photo Center (Minneapolis, MN)

Mobile Photo, Deadline: March 2

<http://www.mplsphotocenter.com/exhibits/exhibit-competitions.php>

SlowArt Productions/Limner Gallery (Hudson, NY)

Art Biologic, Deadline: Feb. 28

<http://www.slowart.com/prospectus/bio.htm>

New York Center for Photographic Art

Animals, Deadline: Mar. 30

<http://www.nyc4pa.com/#!same-but-different>

Brooklyn Waterfront Artist's Coalition

Wide Open 5, Deadline: Mar. 10

<http://wideopenartshow.com/>

Sierra Art Trails (Oakhurst, CA)

Valley View, Yosemite Trails, Currents and

Visions, Deadline: Mar. 10

<http://www.sierraarttrails.org/>

Annmarie Sculpture Garden & Arts Center (Dowell, MD)

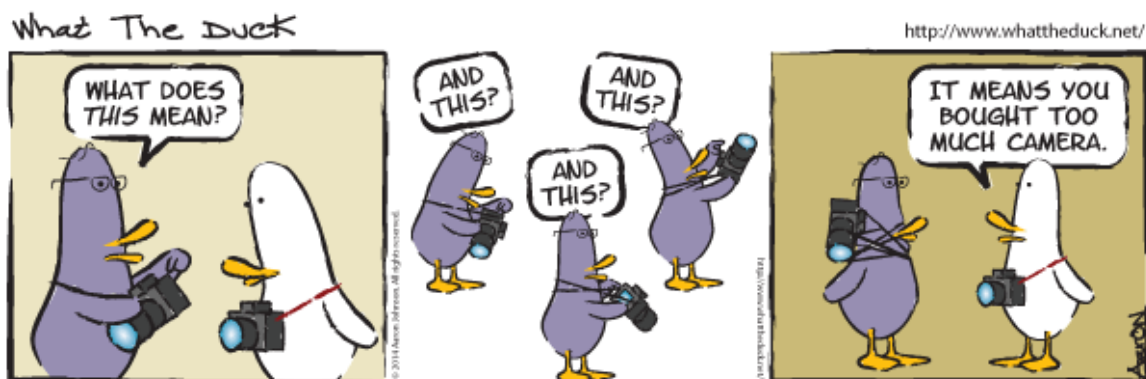
Beach Comber Art: seaside discoveries, Deadline: Apr. 1

<http://www.annmariegarden.org/annmarie2/node/112>

Photographer's Forum Magazine

34th Annual Spring Photography Contest, Deadline: May 12

http://pfmagazine.com/photography-contest/?idev_id=1017



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Lewis Kemper, a Canon Explorer of Light photographer based in Sacramento CA, will present "Getting the Most Out of Your Digital Camera" including the pros and cons of Auto White Balance, RAW versus JPG, bit depth, shooting modes and rear button focusing, file formats, the digital workflow and more.

Lewis Kemper's keynote address at 3:00 pm will be entertaining and informative as he explores composition to expand your ability to "see" images.



Leo Howard Lubow, a nationally known, award-winning photographer will discuss "Finding Your Vision in Black and White". Reviewing the works of great masters, Lubow will explore such elements as tone, texture and form to help you refine both your eye and craft as you shape your own photographic vision.



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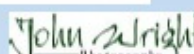


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March SSCC Calendar Upcoming Events

- 6 Speaker Night (7:30 p.m.)
- 8 Field Trip - Lonaconing Silk Mill
- 11 SSCC Board Meeting (7:00 p.m.)
- 13 Competition Night: Open (7:30 p.m.)
- 20 Education Night (7:30 p.m.)
- 27 Open Forum (7:30 p.m.)

Submissions for the Cable Release are due
by the **24th of the previous month.**

Inclement Weather Policy

If Montgomery County schools close,
SSCC is closed.

For up-to-the-minute information
go to www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org



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