The IMAGE

View from the Board

by Rob Nardino

Somewhere along the way, I'm not sure when or where, I became interested in abstract photography. It wasn't a conscious decision. At first, it was a random image here or there, when on one of my nature outings; usually a close-up of something showing repetitive detail. It progressed to the point now, where I might spend an entire outing with macro photography of rocks or leaves, or weird reflective patterns in moving water. It has been a little bit of an internal struggle, as I consider what I think I should show at our exhibitions, competitions and other photography sharing opportunities, versus what I derive personal satisfaction from. It is deeply ingrained in me that a good photograph should have a strong center of interest and should tell some sort of story. I haven't completely convinced myself that abstracts do that – more accurately, that my abstracts do that, because I feel that there are some stunning, non-literal photographs that accomplish these tasks in masterful fashion.

Abstract photography certainly highlights the basic elements of art: texture, form, space, shape, line, color, value (or tone, light versus dark, contrast). In fact, I would say it emphasizes them. An abstract depends on taking one or more of these elements and making it the focal point (am I allowed to say that without sounding cheeky?). Speaking of the basic elements, photography consists of some fundamental components that have a relationship to these elements; light quality has a relationship to value, angle of view affects shape, form and line, framing and composition are related to space. I am not trying to get too esoteric here; I bring up these things because conscious attention to these elements could lead to better photography. Having said that, I have the sense that really great photographers unconsciously incorporate these ingredients into their art – like a virtuoso violinist or top level athlete, they are operating at a level where they don't have to think at all about what they are doing; their actions are innate. I seem to have veered off on a tangent – consider it abstract thought (by the way, type in "abstract" and "tangent" together into your favorite web browser and you'll see some interesting images – as well as some scary math equations). As I am writing this, it occurs to me that Howard wrote a piece called "In Defense of Realism" just a few issues back. I don't intend this as a counterpoint to his compelling argument. Actually, I think

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DECEMBER ASSIGNMENT

Since the world is filled with the signs of the holidays the December Assignment is "Holiday." Grab the best shots you can of whatever "Holiday" means to you, and post them to our flickr group.

As usual, have fun and be creative, upload them to your flickr account, and post the three best to the Coastal Camera Club's flickr group.

December Meetings

December 5, 2012
Gladeview Exhibit Opening

November 21, 2012
Annual Christmas Party

NEED MORE INFORMATION? TRY LOOKING ON ONE OF THESE SITES:

If you need something, you can probably find it on the Internet. You just need to know where to look. For Coastal Camera Club information, please try these sites:

www.coastalcameraclub.org - the official club website

DECEMBER REFRESHMENTS:

December 5, 2012 ....Scranton Opening - Everyone Brings Finger Food

December 19, 2012 ....Christmas Party - Everyone Brings Food and Snacks

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Follow these rules when submitting any image to the Coastal Camera Club:

Files must be named using the following format:

X#$Coastal$LastName$FistName$ImageTittle$YYYY-MM.jpg

Where X=the type of file (**O**pen, Digital **A**rt, **B**lack&White, etc) and YYYY-MM is the year and month of the event for which you are submitting the file. For example, O2$Coastal$Smith$John$The Red Barn$2011-01, this is an image titled *The Red Barn* by John Smith of the Coastal Camera Club to be submitted to a competition in January of 2011.

Please remember the maximum size for competitions is 1024 pixels wide by 768 pixels tall. If the files are to be used in a club critique, they can be full size.

Images must be submitted to ccc.images@gmail.com with the subject line indicating the event for which you are submitting.

If you have any questions, please contact Lou Secki at lou.secki@gmail.com.

The Coastal Camera Club meets at 7:00pm on the first and third Wednesdays of the month at the new Madison Senior Center located at 29 Bradley Road in Madison, Connecticut.

VIEW FROM THE BOARD

many images that can be considered abstract still meet his definition of actual representation. And there is no question that Ansel Adams, and many other great nature photographers, have produced images that are stunning, capture a moment and have an abstract quality (see Adams' "Dune, Oceano, CA, 1963" as a case in point).

Anyway, consider trying to create some abstracts. Macro photography of everyday objects could be one way to go. Look for patterns or interesting lines. Reflected or diffracted light through glassware might be another challenge. Large landscapes could be formatted in an abstract way (see above). Selective framing of architectural elements can definitely qualify. It seems like the possibilities may be endless!

COASTAL CAMERA CLUB PROJECT - 2012

The 2012 club project is an oldie but a goodie. Its been several years since we have put together an *Alphabet Safari*. In fact the last time we did one was on slide film and before many of you were members.

It's a simple yet challenging project. Go through the alphabet and photograph something for each letter: *A is for apple* is an example--you photograph an apple. Please try to be as creative as possible with your choices and with your images. We want to see your best work. We hope you have been working on this over the summer. If not, you still have time, so get out there and get shooting.

PHOTOGRAPH YALE HOCKEY

Coastal Camera Club member Nick Carlino has graciously offered to bring an "assistant" with him to shoot hockey at a Yale Ice Hockey game. As an "assistant" you will be able to shoot along side Nick and get some great action shots. Even if Hockey or sports in general aren't your thing, its a great learning experience and a lot of fun. If you are interested see Nick at an upcoming meeting or shoot him an email at townimages@gmail.com.

DO YOU PRINT AT HOME - RED RIVER PAPER OFFER

At NECCC I met the rep for Red River Photo Paper. He mailed me sample packs for club members who print their own photos. I passed them out at the last meeting. I still have a few left. If you were not there and would like a sample pack please let me know. I can keep it for you until the next meeting or you can pick it up at my house.

There is a 10 % discount on paper only which expires FEb 28th. The code is COASTCT

It may be cheaper to order in groups and then save on shipping? I plan on ordering some of the metallic paper and possibly another type. It is also possible to share some packages if ordering together. Be sure to download the paper profiles from their website for the different papers. It does make a difference. Let me know.

Dianne Roberts

SCRANTON LIBRARY EXHIBIT NOTICE

Receiving Photos: Saturday, December 1, 2012 12:00 to 2:00 pm.

Reception: Wednesday, December 5, 2012 7:00-9:00 pm (come early for setup)

Pickup Photos: Saturday December 30, 2012– during hours of library operation.

- Five (5) photos allowed per entrant, with only two (2) in the general category.
- CCC exhibit rules and entry tags are on the website for downloading.
- Pictures must be ready to hang, in frames with glass – Wires only (no loops or hooks) Without wires, they cannot be hung!!
- Please, no damaged glass or frames.
- No photos accepted after 2:00pm, without prior arrangement with Mark Janke.
- Entry tags must be taped to front and back of photos.

Please do not pick up photos prior to January 1, 2011. (If you're not going to be available on that date, make arrangements with Mark Janke to have your images picked up)

> *Scranton Library*
> *801 Boston Post Road*
> *Madison CT 06443*
> *203-245-7365*

Please Note: Neither the Scranton Library, Mark Janke, the Coastal Camera Club, nor its agents assume responsibility for loss or damage to any image during the handling, judging or duration of this exhibit.

TIDBITS #81 - FILL LIGHT

This is part two of a multi part article on fill light which will cover the what, where and how using reflectors as well as fill flash.

I need to add some information here that should have been in the first part.

The main or key light is the primary light source. It can be artificial light, such as another strobe or studio lighting, but it can also be the ambient (available) light. What is ambient light? It is the sun or overcast sky or a street light, interior lights, window light, etc. In a nut shell ambient light is the light that is there when you arrive at the scene regardless of its source. Now back to where I was.

How do you use fill light

First you must look at the scene, analyze the light and then decide if fill light is needed. In some cases it will be done automatically, such as my using a minus 1 ½ to 1 2/3 fill flash on all people, animals and birds if they are within range of my external strobe. Even if there are not hard shadows I want a catch light in the eyes. After analyzing the scene and determining that you need fill light you then have to determine what type, fill flash, flash light, etc or reflectors and then how to apply it. You need to determine how much you want to lighten the dark areas or how much shadow you want to remove. Yes, fill light is controllable as to amount and even color.

Why would you need to determine how much to lighten the darks or fill the shadows? With the blacks or other dark colors we are not out to make a lighter color, but just add enough light to bring out more detail. With shadows we do not want to eliminate them as the contrast in a photograph is what adds the third dimension, depth, to a two dimensional object. We just want to lighten them enough to reduce contrast

SOME SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES REQUIRE SOME PREPARATION. THIS LIST OF DATES WILL GIVE YOU SOME ADDITIONAL ADVANCED NOTICE.

10/21/2012	SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR FIRST CRITIQUE
12/1/2012	SCRANTON LIBRARY HANGING
1/5/2013	SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR FIRST IN-HOUSE COMPETITION
1/20/2013	SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR SECOND CRITIQUE
2/2/2013	HOSPICE EXHIBIT HANGING
4/27/2013	GLADEVIEW EXHIBIT HANGING

and bring out hidden details. If you were to eliminate all shadows we would have the same flat looking image that we get when taking a picture on an overcast day. It is for all intent and purpose lifeless.

With fill flash we will normally be flashing everything we see in the viewfinder, but as explained above this is ok on a brightly lit scene or if the fill is at least a minus 1 stop or more. We do have the ability, if we have a static scene, to control the fill flash and limit the amount of coverage. This is done with adaptors that will control direction and spread of the light. You would use this in still life (tabletop) or studio work and to some extent in macro.

While harder to use, and usually requiring an assistant, reflectors are a great way to add fill light. They can be as big as a 4 X 8 foot sheet of white foam core (even larger in studio settings) or as small as a piece of mirror or even a spoon. The nice thing about a spoon is one side concentrates the light the other side spreads it. In my camera bag I carry a 4 X 8 inch piece of mat board, white on one side and with crumpled aluminum foil re-flattened and glued to the other side. It is great for adding light in macro work and can easily be held in one hand if the camera is on a tripod.

Why are reflectors harder to use? Because you are not using a direct light source such as the flash for the fill, but are redirecting some of the main light source back into the scene. Reflectors work on the same principle that creates red eye, the angle of incident is the angle of reflectance. This simply means that the light reflects off of the surface of the reflector at the same angle that it struck the surface. This requires you to place the reflector opposite the main light source and then move the reflector around while at the same time watching the subject to see where the light is striking and how much. It also limits where the reflector can be placed and still place light on the subject. To be effective most reflectors are placed close to the subject and if not careful will be seen in a corner of the image.

The closer the subject being photographed is to the reflector the more intense the reflected light is. As you move the reflector farther from the subject the light intensity will fall off. This allows the maker to adjust the main light to fill light ratio simply by changing the reflector to subject distance. This would be the same as dialing in a change in the amount of light to be put out by the fill flash.

Both fill light and reflectors can add color to the scene, fill light by using colored gels over the flash head or bouncing it off of a colored surface. Reflectors by changing the surface color of the reflector or by reflecting light that already has a color in it, such as sunrise or sunset or incandescent light. So if you are using a reflector or bouncing your fill flash off on a wall, ceiling or any object you must look to see the color of the reflective surface or the color of the light being reflected.

MEMBERS'
SPOTLIGHT

Two more images from the Bauer Park Harvest Festival Photo Contest which won awards are from Deanna Broderick

Allison Maltese won First Place in the Bauer Park 2012 Harvest Festival Photo Contest , "Our Community Garden " category.

"Spittle Bug" Second Place - Nature Loves Bauer

Members Deanna Broderick and Maryann Flick had images accepted to 2012 TOPS in CT. Deanna also received a Judge's Choice award for one of her two accepted photos. Possible scores are 15 to 27, a score of 24 was required for acceptance. 102 images were accepted from 338 digital and 80 prints submitted. The showing will be presented at the CAP banquet on April 27, 2013 and will include commentary on the accepted images.

Broderick, Deanna
Galapagos Sea Lion at Rest
26 points
Judge's Choice

Broderick, Deanna
Junior Bee Keeper
25 points
Accepted

Flick, Maryann
Blue Dasher
25 points
Accepted

"Boy Bee Keeper" First Place - People In The Park

MEMBERS'
SPOTLIGHT

Sally Perreten had her photo "North Cove Sunrise" accepted to the   Mystic Arts Center 56th Regional Juried Show. The show is an all media, juried show open to all artists. It ran from Aug 2 to Sept 22, 2012

She also had her photo "Low Tide" accepted to the Mystic Arts Center's annual photography show, Photo Show 34. The show features original photography from local and regional artists and was juried by Lindsay Elgin, teacher and advisor for Rhode Island School of Design's   Continuing Education Digital Photography Certificate Program. The show runs from Sept 28 - Nov 10, 2012.

Fill light is in addition to the main or key light. The main light in nature or the outdoors is where ever the sun puts it. In a studio the main light is usually off to the side, most times at a 45 degree angle from the camera/subject line and above the camera level.

Fill light is also useful for side and back-lit pictures. For instance, a backlit scene may have enough bright areas in the background to provide an "average" brightness for the entire picture, but the actual subject is left in the dark. Fill light balances the scene so that the subject is properly exposed, and the background is left alone.

Types of lighting

Built in or external strobes (flash)

As most people have built in flash or an external strobe we will address fill flash first. Most point and shoot cameras have a setting to fire the flash not only in low light but when you want it. You may have to take the camera off of the creative modes or select the creative mode such as portrait that will turn the flash on. This information should be in your camera manual. Some cameras such as Canon will analyze the scene and if deemed bright enough will automatically make the flash fill light by reducing the output by an unknown number of stops. Again read your camera manual to see if your camera does this. The better (more expensive) point and shoot cameras will have the ability for you to manually turn on the built in flash and then adjust the amount of flash output either under or over the cameras meter reading. Most cameras have a fill flash range of + or − three stops. The minus setting is puts out less light, while the plus setting is putting out more light than the meter reading. If you are using an external strobe, you may have the ability to adjust the output on the strobe or you may have to do it through a camera setting. Again your strobe and or camera manual will tell you. And here again price will tell. Small compact lower end external strobes may not have the ability to let you set fill ratios. You need to look at the camera manual and see with what strobes the camera can control fill flash and how it is done before you buy the strobe or for that matter the camera. In the Canon line there are some camera and external strobe combinations that will not allow you to set fill flash at all, some that allow you to do it through the camera only and some that will allow fill to be adjusted either through the camera or on the strobe.

Another method of fill flash is used with static (nothing moves) scenes and that is off camera flash units. This would include studio work (including portraits), architectural interior photography or still life (table top). If you can hold the flash in one hand and the camera in the other, or have a flash bracket that holds the flash off the camera, then you can use it on Macro work outdoors. Years ago this was done with flash cords connected to the camera and the flash, or by radio or light transmitters (where the transmitter set off the fill flash which had a radio or light receiver attached to trigger it). Now we have the fill flash receivers and transmitters built into the flash units and controllable from the camera.

By placing a single fill flash on the camera axis we spread the light evenly over the whole scene and the fall off of the light is from front to rear. If we take the fill flash off of the camera or add additional fill flash units we then must take the time to balance the light. This can be done by setting the fill flash units to minus settings and with digital doing test shots and looking at the lighting. With multiple fill flash units they can all be set to give different amounts of light to help balance the over all light in the scene.

Bounce Flash with fill

Why would we want to bounce flash? With bounce flash, as the main light source, we get a more even spread of the light and by changing the angle of the light hitting the subject we can remove red eye and those dark shadows from behind the subjects that show up with direct flash. We have all seen them especially if our subject is to close to a wall. If we are using bounce flash, redirecting the main light off of a surface such as a wall, ceiling or reflector, we can still add fill flash. One way to do this, especially with a

single external strobe is by inserting a white object partially into the light path as it leaves the flash but before it strikes the surface it is being bounced from. By doing so we send a small amount of light directly at the subject. Just enough to lighten shadow areas on the subject and put a catch light in the eye, but not enough to become the main light. The small white object can be a 3x5 card held on the flash head with a rubber band or on the high end external strobes, the white plastic card stored in the flash head. And of course if we have them we can use a second external flash for the fill light.

To be continued in Part 3

Photo Opportunities

Please let us know if you are planning a little photography excursion and would like some company. In an effort to get club members out and shooting more, we would like cultivate some spur-of-the-moment photography-related meet-ups. Let one of the board members know, and we will try to get the word our for you. Obviously, the more notice you can give, the better chance you will have of getting some other club members to join you.

Louis J. Secki
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