Los Gatos/Saratoga Camera Club Newsletter

www.losgatos-saratogacameraclub.org

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Reminders

More Volunteers Needed

Thank you to all of the members who volunteered for jobs at the club.

We still have openings for the following volunteers.

- Assistant for PA system

End of Year Signups

Be sure to sign up for the End of Year potluck December 19, 2011. You can choose from seven different categories and you should bring enough for eight to 10 people.

Start Gathering Your Winning Prints

Any prints that placed during the year need to be brought back to the club between now and December 5, 2011 to enter in the annual competition.

Annual Meeting

The annual meeting will be held before the December 5, 2011 competition. We will vote on the changes to the Club Constitution and on the new officers for 2012.

Coming Club Events

See the Events page or Event Calendar on our web site for updates or further details.

Saturday, November 05, 2011
Deadline for entering digital images for November club competition

Monday, November 07, 2011
5 PM Deadline for submitting thumbnails for Prints Competition
Nature, Color, Monochrome
Judge - Dick Stahlke
Refreshments - Ron Rossen, Mike Sabes, Uwe Schmalenbach

Wednesday, November 16, 2011
Deadline for emailing digital walk-ins for Nov 6C

Saturday, November 19, 2011
6C's Competition
Bi-monthly competition between member clubs.
Walk-Ins and Winners from our Oct & Nov Competitions.
9:15am Print Walk-Ins due
9:30am - 12:30pm Prints
1:30pm Projected Images

Monday, November 21, 2011
Program
Travels with Jason - China
Refreshments - Michael Schneider, Don Schremp, Roberta Schwartz

It's All About The Print

For several months now as VP of prints for the Los Gatos/Saratoga Camera Club I have been thinking about writing a newsletter article about why members should print some of their images instead of projecting them. My first thought was to do a survey of club members to find out more about why they would rather submit projected digital images for competitions than make a print. Next I would publish those results in the newsletter. But being an extremely insightful person ;-) I guess I already knew the answer to that question without doing the survey. Prints cost more money to make because you need a good printer or a photo lab. You also need special paper, ink, matting, matte cutter, and mounting supplies. Printing and matting also take lots more time than just dropping a .jpg image into the club website to create a projected image.

Above I have given you some reasons for doing projected images. Next let me give you some reasons why you might want to consider printing your images. Before computers and digital technology creating a print was not something many amateurs did. Almost everyone took their film to a lab for processing. But now with dawn of digital cameras, computers and software an amateur can create a print that is as good as any professional photographer can produce. Learning to print your images helps you grow as a photographer and expands your current skill set. Ansel Adams said "the greatest photographers in the world are the greatest printers but the greatest printers are not necessarily the greatest photographers." In other words a good photographer needs to be able to do both. To print good images or even to take them to a photo lab for printing you need to understand things like:

- How do color gamuts like sRGB, Adobe RGB and ProPhoto RGB affect your image and which one should you use.
- How does the color gamut change from camera to computer software to printer.
- What are the effects of different printer papers and ICC profiles on your image.
- How do you recreate the color and tonal qualities that you see on your screen in the printed image.
- What supplies should be used in the matting process that makes your print archivable.

Now that I have given you some of pros and cons of printing your images let me tell you why I print most of my images. To start with I am a bit of a perfectionist and a control freak therefore I would rather do something myself than have someone else do it for me. My mother always said 'if you want something done right then do it yourself." So for me being able to control the paper types and textures is important. I also want to control the color, tonality and lighting subtleties of my images in a print so they look like they did at the time I released the shutter on my camera. Managing these variables gives me a lot of satisfaction. When I go out on a photo shoot I get up very early in the morning and stay late at night to get the best possible light for my photographs. The golden hours are what photographers call those times of the day. So photography is all about the best possible light. What I see in the viewfinder when I am composing my image is reflected light. A print is a two dimensional representation of the reflected light that I saw at the time I took the photograph. Projected images on a screen are transmitted light and are gone the minute the projector is turned off. Prints last forever.

There is more! I like to hold a print in my hands to feel the texture of the paper and look closely at the image I just created. After all, the print is really my voice or vision isn't it? That vision really starts with my composing the image in the camera viewfinder and continues through post processing and finally ends with the print. Everything I do from image capture and post processing is in service of the print. Ansel Adams once said 'the negative is everything but the print is all." What we as photographers display at the local coffee house or Los Gatos city chambers is a print not a projected image. So if you don't print your images why not expand your horizons and give printing a try?

Here are a couple of good links about printing. http://www.naturescapes.net/docs/index.php/category-technical/138-getting-started-with-inkjet-printing and http://www.naturescapes.net/docs/index.php/category-image-editing/37-image-editing/168-ten-tips%20-for-better-prints#8. If you have any questions about printing please e-mail John Perry at: muselburgh@aol.com.

Competition Winners Tell Us How They Did It

We asked each of the makers of the October first place images to send stories about what their image was, how it was made, and when, where, and why it was taken. Clicking a winning image will take you to a larger version on our web site.

October 2011 First Place Monochrome Print

Bay Bridge At Midnight
John Perry

My monochrome image "Bay Bridge At Midnight" was taken from the Embarcadero at approximately midnight in December 2010. That night it was so cold outside that I was thinking about asking one of the homeless people hanging around if I could borrow one of their blankets. However I decided that wasn't a good idea.

In order to get the old pier pillars in the foreground I had to wedge my camera and tripod on top of the concrete sidewalk railing. I was a bit concerned that my camera, lens and tripod would all tumble into the water. I guess some risks are worth taking to get a good photograph.

For this shot I used a Nikon D700 with a 14-24mm lens @ f/13 and an ISO 160. The real trick for getting the correct exposure was to use the "bulb" setting and a cable release that allowed the shutter to be open from 40-70 seconds.

October 2011 First Place Monochrome Digital Projected Image

I recently took a backpacking trip into the Ansel Adams Wilderness. I had heard about Ediza Lake and wanted to visit it and take some pictures. A friend mentioned that she had been to Iceberg Lake above Ediza and really loved it. I decided to visit it while at Ediza. Iceberg lake empties into Ediza and is right at the base of the Minarets.

Even though I was up there in early September, there was still snow on the mountains and the streams were running strong. The hike from Ediza to Iceberg was not difficult, but it was clearly still winter up there. The lake had little mini-icebergs in it and part of it was frozen over. There was snow on the Minarets all around it. I took several shots of the Minarets and lake, many with reflections on the lake; both with and without ice.

I originally liked this image in color, but when I converted it to black and white, I thought it was much better and decided to enter it.

Even though Ediza and Iceberg Lakes are at 10,000 feet, they can actually be hiked as a long day-hike from Agnews Meadows near Mammoth Mountain. It's a strenuous hike, but well worth it!

Iceberg Lake and the Minarets
Rick Whitacre

October 2011 First Place Creative Print

Cactus Flower Collage
John Perry

My winning creative image is a composite consisting of seven cactus images blended together using layers in Photoshop. I suppose a more correct title would have been "Cactus Flower Montage" but the current title had a better poetic sound to it.

Anyway, this past April/May while in Tucson, AZ I started taking my camera for walks around the neighborhood where we live taking photos of cactus leaves and flowers. It was a particularly good spring for cactus flowers even though we hadn't had much rain. I ended up with 100+ cactus images using a combination of lenses and cameras.

My intent from the beginning of this process was to create some sort of composite print using cactus flowers and leaves. Therefore I had to think about which photographs might make good anchor images and which photographs would look better blended on top of the anchor image. This means that in shooting the individual images I had to think about how they might look together in the final composite.

In creating my composite I choose a close-up of a purple prickly pear cactus leaf as my anchor (background). The other cactus flowers on top of the background are; saguaro, prickly pear, hedgehog and cholla. Can you pick them all out?

October 2011 First Place Creative Digital Projected Image

This photo is a composite of 4 images. The sand dunes were taken during a workshop in Death Valley with John Paul Caponigro, http://www.johnpaulcaponigro.com/ (who is the keynote speaker at this year's Fotoclave).

This was the 3rd day of the workshop and before going into the dunes JP asked each student to come up with a word or phrase that they would think of while shooting. I picked sensual curves and while out shooting I realized that a lot of the curves in the dunes reminded me of the curves of a body and the idea to merge the two occurred.

When I returned home I went through my old photos and found several photos from past model shoots that would work well with the shape of the dunes. However I couldn't find one for the 3rd dune so at my next model shoot I posed the model to match the shape of the dune.

The post processing was fairly simple; each photo was put on a separate layer in Photoshop and by using free transform, changing the opacity, and masking each model I got them to blend into the dunes. I also adjusted the overall color of each model to make them appear to match the sand color.

Sensual Dunes
Craig Colvin

All photos were taken with a Canon 5DmkII and Canon 24-105 f/4L lens. The dunes photo was captured at 1/80s, f/11, ISO 320. The model photos were all done in the studio 1/160s, f/11, ISO 160 using Alien Bee Strobes

October 2011 First Place Pictorial/Color Digital Projected Image - Advanced

Row Boats at the Ready
Don Schremp

This photo was taken at Pyramid Lake in Jasper Canada. I got up before sunrise (which is just unreasonably early during the summer that far north) to take pictures but it was just a dull cloudy morning without any interesting light.

I spent some time taking pictures of a mother loon and her chicks at the lake. After the sun came, the clouds started getting more structure and spots of light moved across the mountain. Since it was still early and almost no one else was out yet, the lake remained perfectly still providing a great reflection.

I took a number of pictures with variation on this composition moving up and down and closer and farther from the row boats to get a good balance between the boats in the foreground, the lake, and the mountains.

October 2011 First Place Pictorial/Color Print - Advanced

Reaching For The Stars
Larry Rosier

John Perry asked me to join him on a three-day trip to photograph bristlecone pines in the White Mountains north of Death Valley. We also spent some time in the Tioga Pass region of Yosemite, Mono Lake, Convict Lake, the Laws Railway Museum, and Bodie. This photograph of a bristlecone pine was taken at an elevation of 11,286 ft. The bristlecone pine is thought to be the oldest living organism with an age of nearly 5,000 years.

The shot was taken with a Nikon D700 (20 sec., f/2.8, 14-24 mm lens at 14 mm, ISO 1600). Focus was done using the moon, but at the time the shot was made (9:26PM) the moon had set. The bristlecone pine was illuminated by six seconds of light painting using a small flashlight. With the focus set to infinity the depth of field of the 14mm lens at f/2.8 is 7.58 ft. to infinity.

A rule of thumb for achieving sharp stars is to choose a focal length in mm and shutter speed in seconds such that the product is less than 500 mm sec. For these shots it is important to plan the shot before it gets dark.

October 2011 First Place Pictorial/Color Digital Projected Image - Basic

Trick or Treat!
Molly Gaylord

We have had more than the usual number of spiders and webs in our backyard this past summer. The webs are beautiful and one day in early September I noticed that one spider was in the center of her web. It was mid-morning and she and her web were in open shade. The background behind the spider was a wall of ivy with some of the ivy leaves covered in birch tree debris (the orange areas).

I don't have a macro lens so I used my 18-105 mm lens on my Nikon D90 DSLR. The camera was on a tripod with the lens set at 105 mm focal length. I set the camera on the macro setting which pops a little flash with the built-in flash on the camera. I got as close to the web as the focusing on my camera would allow and used matrix metering.

The capture was shot at f 5.6 at 1/13th of a second at ISO 500. In Photoshop I adjusted levels and vibrance and did a little dodging and burning. The capture suggested the colors of fall and the spirit of Halloween.

October 2011 First Place Pictorial/Color Print - Basic

Three Yellow Flowers
Mark Emanuel

Last year, on a Friday afternoon in June, my wife and I decided to visit Filoli Gardens for lunch. After lunch we spent the afternoon walking through the gardens taking pictures to add to my collection of flower pictures.

As this year's October competition approached, I began looking through my collection of flower pictures and came across the pictures that I took last year at Filoli Gardens. The picture that I liked was a picture of five yellow flowers that formed a circle.

The picture appeared too busy with the five flowers so I cropped two flowers out of the picture leaving three flowers that added an interesting composition to the picture. I chose the simple title: "Three Yellow Flowers".

Meet Rebecca Smith-Coggins

I grew up in Detroit...oh, alright not exactly in Detroit, but 1.5 blocks from the Detroit line, where Altar Road demarcates two cultures. As a girl, I was fascinated with what lay beyond Alter road where there was little more than booze and Twinkies on the store shelves. The colorful spray-painted designs on boarded-up, hauntingly empty homes and the dimples of the kind elderly woman with one wandering eye are examples of the appealing memories in an otherwise desolate area. Perhaps this is where I developed a fondness for stark beauty. Though I moved away before I outgrew wearing knee socks, I still consider myself a Midwesterner.

College took me to upstate New York. During the summer of my sophomore year at college, I was offered the position of background researcher for a documentary film on Narcolepsy. Having nothing more than a good work ethic to offer, they hired me to help create "Keep Us Awake" which was produced by Dr. James B. Maas.

This experience opened my eyes to the world of photography. I bought an Olympus OM2 and we became fast friends. During medical school in Philadelphia and residency in Chicago, I treasured the time I could venture out with my camera.

My husband, newborn son and I moved to the Bay Area in 1987 when my husband matched in Cardiology at UCSF. I joined the faculty of the school of medicine at Stanford and am still teaching and practicing Emergency Medicine a quarter of a century later. During these two decades, I did little more than document the family antics photographically, but with three sons, there was ample material!

I decided to splurge on a Nikon D700 in the fall of 2008 when my second son departed for college. Since then, I have taken two photography courses with Stanford Continuing Studies (I recommend both of them): one with Thom Sempere "Going Digital with Techniques and Esthetics" and the other with Don Feria " Capture the Moment". I also recommend the six volume series of Petersen's Photographic magazine. You won't find them on news stands, but you can order them from mailto:Sherry.Swim@sorc.com or call (888)453-8012 ext 3.

John Diephouse, an accomplished photographer in Michigan (website is http://jdiephouse.zenfolio.com/), is a friend from the American Board of Emergency Medicine and he recommended that I join a local art club. Jeff Owen, a sculptor who I know from work, researched local photography clubs for me and encouraged me to join LGSCC which I did in March, 2011. His website is http://www.jeffowenartworks.com/.

I am fortunate to be able to travel (Nepal, Kenya, Tanzania, New Guinea, Australia, Ecuador, Mexico, Palau, Bonaire...) for pleasure and work in developing countries. Though I have been taking photographs for years, I am only now starting to figure out what I like best.

What inspires me is the challenge of trying to highlight the visual impact of something that is not inherently beautiful. I like the medical arena for this reason. I also enjoy photos that tell a story. I took this photograph, in the streets of Kathmandu.

Thanks!

A huge thank you to the member who made an anonymous laptop donation to club! The Dell laptop has a 500G hard-drive, 15" 16:9 LCD screen, and has a dual-core processor. It is a fast, modern laptop that will fill our needs for years to come

Field Trip Los Gatos World Wide Photo Walk 2011

Here are some photos from the Los Gatos World Wide Photo Walk 2011.

The Coach by Dick Stuart

Dad Better Catch Runaway Cyclist by Gary Marcos

Bridge Photographers by Charlie Gibson

Pumpkins Here, Pumpkins There, Pumpkins Everywhere! by Bart Smith

Key Contacts

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