

# LGSCC Camera Club

[losgatos-saratogacameraclub.org](http://losgatos-saratogacameraclub.org)

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## In this issue

- March meeting to be online – Covid-19 Issue 12
- Member biography - Nancy Roberts
- 1st place winners from February tell their stories
- Improving Your Photography Using Focus Stacking
- Clubs, Competitions, & Critiques
- The Magic of Computational Photography
- Program night recap
- Club "Sounding Board" list



## Next Competition - Creative/PJ March 1st

Judge for March 1st will be Terry Toomey, a member of the Alameda Photographic Society for many years. *Philosophy* - it is the judge's duty to point out what works best and what might be done differently and let the photographer decide if they agree.

**Creative** - photography is producing an image through the use of imaginative skill or originality of thought including the altering of reality. No image should be eliminated from competition simply because it looks realistic, provided it shows originality of concept. . . [MORE](#)

**PhotoJournalism** - Photojournalism entries are images with informative content and emotional impact, reflecting the human presence in our world. The journalistic (story-telling) value of the image should receive priority . . . [MORE](#)

## Club Virtual Exhibit Available Now at

<https://artspaces.kunstmatrix.com/en/exhibition/3285424/los-gatos-saratoga-camera-club>

The LGSCC in association with the JCC have developed a captivating virtual photographic exhibit. More than 100 images are displayed in an art gallery setting where viewers can stroll through rooms with image subjects including landscape, nature, photojournalism, travel, creative, and a room with a featured theme - *The Drama of Black and White*. Don't miss the March 14th zoom reception where registered members of LGSCC/JCC and their guests can ask questions of available photographers. Check your email for the private reception link or click here - [Exhibit Registration](#)

## Notices and Coming Events

See the [Calendar](#) on our web site for updates or details.

**Mon. March 1st, Competition - Creative/PJ**

7:30 p.m. See deadlines and more info on the website



Previous winning creative image



Previous winning PhotoJournalism image

## Meeting March 1st will be virtual

Check the website home page for zoom link

### A few points:

- Attendance will be via Zoom meetings
- Categories – Creative, PJ, Color, and Mono
- Submit images same as usual (projected only)
- You can submit up to 2 projected images

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### Member Biography - Nancy Roberts

My interest in photography started while attending college at San Jose State. Majoring in Graphic Design, I took a black/white photography course which taught me the basics of photography and darkroom printing which I've used throughout my work career, and as a lifetime hobby.

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*“amazing to have experienced the evolution from the film cameras to digital cameras and the power of today's editing software!”*

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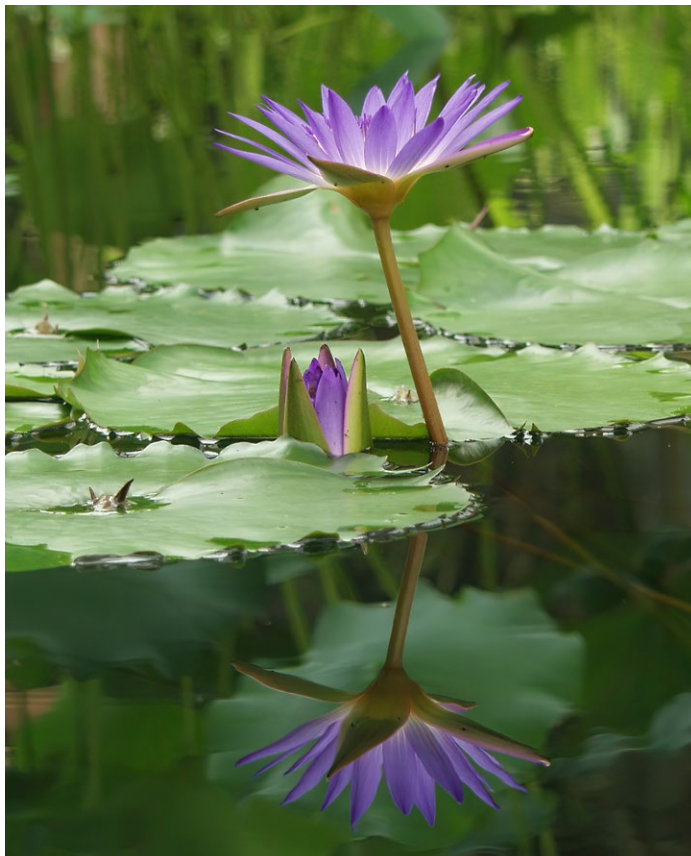
After graduation, with my Pentax Spotmatic SLR packed, I took a six week tour of Europe that gave me the “travel bug” for more travel and photography. My first job was with a large corporation as a package designer and photographer. Then I later moved on to the tech world starting as a technical illustrator for product manuals. When photography became a more expedient media to replace illustrations, I used my photography/darkroom experience to shoot product photos and do airbrush retouching to correct the last minute engineering changes before printing. It's been amazing to have experienced the evolution from the film cameras and airbrush days, to digital cameras and the power of today's editing software!



Nancy Roberts



*End of the day in Waikiki*



Now retired, I am more actively enjoying taking photos and culling through my old photos to scan the best from the past. I find my photography as an eclectic mix of subjects ranging from wildlife, flowers, landscapes, people and travel, to macro, studio, creative or whatever inspires me. I joined LGSCC because I am inspired by the members' variety of great photography talent, and the judged competitions to learn and improve from. My passion for photography is that it makes me slow down to stop and look to see the beauty in the world around me ... to compose and capture a moment ... to share that moment ... and to later relive that moment, even from long ago.

*Lilly pad reflection*



## February Competition Winners Tell Us How They Did It

### A Refuge at Sunset, Serena Hartoog, Nature Projected

For bird photographers, The Merced National Wildlife Refuge is the closest and best place to photograph Sandhill cranes and snow geese. The largest place is Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge in New Mexico, however you can go to Merced with a one day trip without traveling to NM.

I went to Bosque del Apache with a friend on January 9th, this year. Despite Covid-19, there were lots of bird photographers. During the sunset hours, there are thousands and thousands of Sandhill Cranes flying in the sky over the marsh land which makes a very spectacular scene.

Canon 5D Mark IV, ISO: 400, AV: f/11, shutter speed: 1/400 sec., lens: 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6L IS II USM with extender EF 1.4x III.



### ◀ Enjoying a Run Down a Large Sand Dune in the Atacama Desert, Chile – the Driest Place in the World, Jerry Held, Travel projected

The Atacama Desert in northern Chile is an extremely dry, stark but beautiful place. I highly recommend visiting. There are a wide variety of activities available that let you enjoy the very unusual landscape, flora and fauna. On this day, we hiked to the top of a giant sand dune and then had a chance to run down. The background landscape was great but I thought that capturing some action in the foreground would add interest and scale. I sat on the sand dune as people ran down and kept shooting until I had an image with sand flying to show motion and a position running into the frame. Interesting side note – the next day I climbed a peak like the one in the background and reached the summit at 18,400 feet. Nikon D800 Nikkor 28-300 1/640s @f/11 ISO 320 @82mm

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## February Competition Winners Tell Us How They Did It (continued)

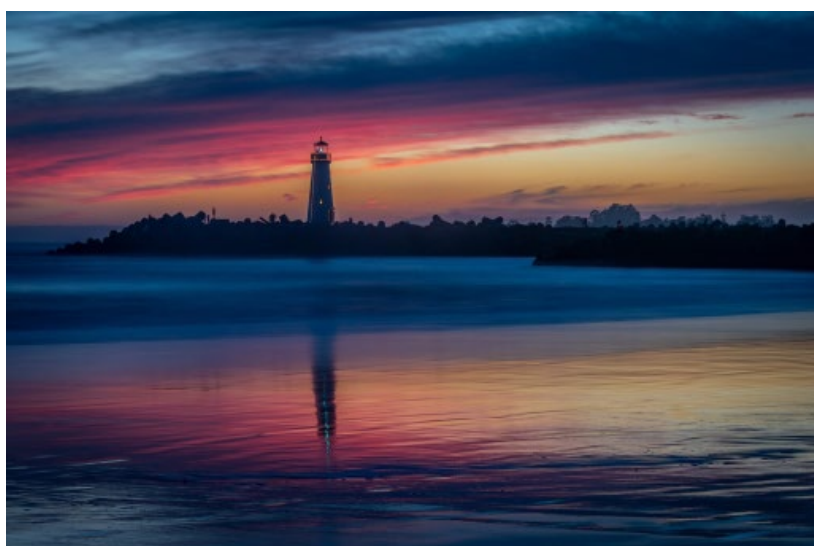
### Up and Around, Don Schremp, Monochrome projected ►

This image is of a stairway going up the side of an oil tank at a refinery in Richmond. It was taken with a 400mm lens to isolate a section of the stairway; excluding some distracting elements and focusing on the expanding stairway shadow. Lightroom was used to convert to black and white, adjust the exposure, contrast, and add a vignette. This was a lucky capture. For years I had been on the lookout for this kind of stairway, but had never found a location where it was possible to capture. I was on the way to another photo location and noticed the tank. Not only did I feel lucky to find a place to capture the stairway, I just happened to arrive when the sun was in the right position to make the expanding shadow as the stairs wrapped around the tank. The unusual shadow was an unexpected bonus to the stairway picture.



### ◄ A Splash of Color in the Sky, Ling Kuo Lee Pictorial projected

This image was taken at Twin Lakes State Beach near Santa Cruz. I was shooting the sunset behind the Walton Lighthouse. After the sunset, the sky suddenly turned very colorful. I took this shot with my Nikon Z7 mounted on a tripod. I used a Nikon AF-s 28-300mm, f/3.5-5.6 lens with the aperture set to f/16 to give enough depth of field. The ISO was set to 100, and the camera set the shutter speed to 20 seconds. Since the color palette is already very rich, I didn't have to make many adjustments during post-processing. I simply made some basic adjustments in Lightroom, then exported to Photoshop to remove some of the ghost images caused by the long exposure.



### Improving Your Macro Photography Using Focus Stacking

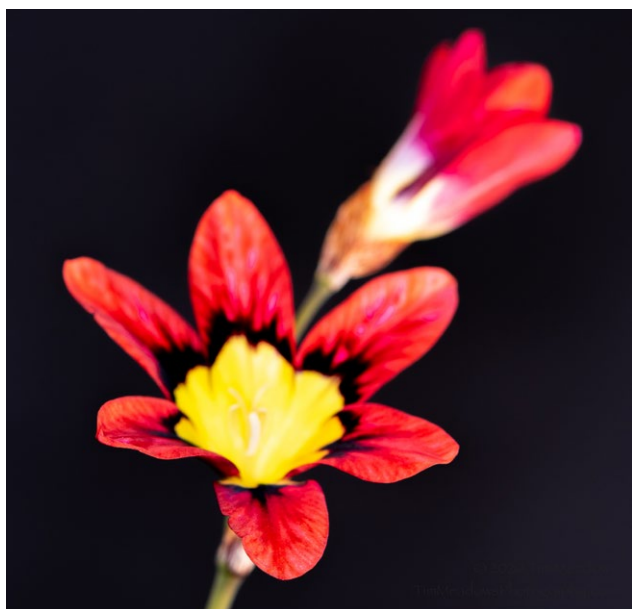
By Tim Meadows

Everyone's seen close up photos of flowers, bugs, and the like and noticed the use of selective focus, where not everything in the image is in focus. Sometimes you'd like the whole subject to be in sharp focus, but in one exposure this is not always possible. In this article, I will share some of my experiences in making macro (close-up) photographs using focus stacking techniques to ensure tack-sharp focus across the image. Here are two images, one a single shot and the other a focus stack, showing the dramatic difference in focus that is possible.

Equipment needed: a camera, a tripod, a remote shutter release, a focus rail, and Photoshop or a dedicated focus stacking application like Helicon Focus. A "macro" lens is not necessary, but they generally allow you to be closer to your subject. (A note about the need for focus rails: many late-model cameras today have built in features that automate the capture of a set of focus-adjusted images. This feature eliminates the need for a focus rail and dramatically speeds up the image capture process.) If your camera does not support automatic capture of focus-adjusted images, you must use a focus rail. The purpose of a focus rail is to allow for the manual adjustment of the focus to modify the distance of the lens to the subject, thereby moving the focal plane in precise increments of focus.

Some tips for better focus stacking results:

- One key is having a solid tripod. Use a remote shutter release or use shutter delay mode of 2 seconds or more.
- Typically, f8 is a very reliable aperture to use.
- For best quality use ISO 100.
- Set the white balance a fixed mode (not auto) to avoid tonal variations from image to image.
- If possible, use your camera's manual mode and set the aperture and shutter speed manually to prevent differences in exposure.
- Start by focusing on the nearest edge of the subject where you want focus to be sharp and then move to the back in small, consistent increments.
- If your camera supports the automated capture of focus-shifted images, make sure to select a small step width to ensure that there are no areas out of focus.
- Take more shots than you think you need as the focus stacking software will disregard out of focus areas.
- There are several choices for software to stack and render your images. It can be done in Photoshop, Helicon Focus, Affinity Photos, and others.
- Here is a tutorial for photoshop  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ifWPtCQIGX0>



*Single image shot*



*50 images focus stacked*

I hope you'll try this technique. It can open exciting new doors for your macro-or landscape photography. If you have questions, or would like to learn more about the workflow I use, feel free to contact me. - Tim



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## Clubs, Competitions, & Critiques

*Below was edited from a longer January 24th, 2021 article in The Contact Sheet by David Duchemin*

A photographer recently reached out to me about her frustrations with the camera club in which she was a member. She felt like the black sheep; that she and her photographs just didn't seem to belong. It felt to me like she was relaying that experience in search of some solidarity, and even permission, to allow her membership to lapse and not feel guilty about doing so, both of which I gave her. But in the weeks since that conversation, I have wished that I had answered more fully. So this is my chance to do that—both to her and to anyone who has ever been stung by an insensitive critique, a competition loss, or the frustration of trying to learn in a group what is often best, and sometimes only, learned on our own.

At some point, most of us will be in a context in which we open ourselves, through our work, to the feedback of others. It might be a camera club; it might not. Maybe it's online. Sometimes that feedback will be completely unsolicited, often by people who share only this one thing in common with us: they have cameras with which they make photographs and opinions about how this should be done. In other words, they've got a hoof pick, and they plan to use it!

Beyond that, those who weigh in on our images and offer feedback might come from different backgrounds and share no common photographic influences with us. It's likely they want to achieve different things with their photographs than you do with yours, and have different reasons entirely for picking up the camera in the first place. Some have been using their cameras for a very long time; some still routinely forget to take the lens cap off, so new are they at this craft. But still, they rush in to offer advice and opinions. And it is most certain that these complicated and well-meaning people not only have different ideas about what makes a photograph "good," but they have a powerful will to share that with others.

In another context—competitions—our work is judged by people rarely as sensitive to what we were trying to accomplish with that work as we are ourselves. I judged a competition recently; it was my first, and it'll be my last. It killed me because, yes, some photographs among the entrants were the result of much more technical skill, experience, and vision than others. But to judge them as "better" when I was so aware that some of the "lesser" images probably represented more significant progress

and braver steps forward for the photographers who made them was painful for me, especially without having a way to explain my reasoning or reassure them that my choice of one image over another was based on metrics that might have had nothing to do with what they were trying to accomplish—or the courage that it took them to make and share the image in the first place.

Competitions and drive-by-critiquing do not measure how far you've come. In fact, they don't even tell you where you're at right now on your journey; they tell you where your work is relative to the expectations and tastes of others. Not to how brave you're becoming. Not to the risks you are taking. Not to the discovery of your vision or the refinement of your voice. They say nothing about how much stronger your composition is becoming or whether your images are becoming more poetic. They tell you, really, what other people think.

I often wonder how the photographs of Uta Barth or Saul Leiter would be critiqued at their local camera club or how they would fare in your average competition if they were to drop by and add their images anonymously to the pile. What about William Eggleston, Wynn Bullock, or Daido Moriyama? Would the quality of that work be decided by consensus, or by the prevailing tastes within the group?

The great temptation of popular photography culture is to forget the difference between teaching aspiring photographers to use a camera, and influencing what they say with it and how they say it.

As you head into 2021, remember that your journey can't be measured by the metrics created by other people. Learn everything you can from every source you can. It doesn't matter where you are relative to others, but that you're taking the next steps that get you closer to a destination only you will recognize. Happy New Year, my friend.

Click to see entire article - [https://davidduchemin.com/2021/01/clubs-competitions-critiques/?mc\\_cid=b13d655acb&mc\\_eid=09c8ab6523](https://davidduchemin.com/2021/01/clubs-competitions-critiques/?mc_cid=b13d655acb&mc_eid=09c8ab6523)



*From her series, "... and to draw a bright white line with light" (2011) by German-American photographer Uta Barth*

# The Magic of Computational Photography

Howtogeek.com by Vann Vicente, January 19, 2021

Computational photography uses digital software to enhance the photos taken by a camera. It's most prominently used in smartphones. In fact, computational photography does the heavy lifting to create the great-looking images you see in your smartphone photo gallery. The rapid improvement in smartphone cameras over the last few years can largely be attributed to improving software, rather than changes to the physical camera sensor. Some smartphone manufacturers, like Apple and Google, continuously improve the photo-taking capabilities of their devices year after year without ever drastically changing the physical camera sensors.



There are a few computational photography techniques smartphones use to create fantastic images. The most important of these is stacking. It's a process in which multiple photos are taken by a camera at different times, and different exposures or focal lengths. They're then combined by software to retain the best details from each image. Pixel binning is another process utilized by smartphone cameras with high-megapixel sensors. Rather than stacking different photos on top of one another, it combines adjacent pixels in a very high-resolution image. The final output is downsized to a more detailed, but less noisy, low-resolution image. Today's great smartphone cameras are often trained on a neural network, which is a series of algorithms that process data. These neural networks can recognize what constitutes a good photo, so the software can then create an image that's pleasing to the human eye.

## Why Does Computational Photography Matter?

How a camera digitally captures a photo can be roughly divided into two parts: the physical component and image processing. The physical component is the actual process of the lens capturing the photograph. This is where things like the size of the sensor, lens speed, and focal length come into play. It's in this process that a traditional camera (like a DSLR) really shines.

The second part is image processing. This is when the software uses computational techniques to enhance a photo. These techniques vary from phone to phone and manufacturer to manufacturer. Generally, though, these processes work together to create an impressive photograph.

Even the most top-end phones tend to have tiny sensors and a slow lens due to their size. This is why they have to rely on image processing methods to create impressive photos. Computational photography isn't necessarily less or more important than physical optics; it's just different.

However, there are some things a traditional camera can do that a smartphone camera cannot. This is mostly because they're much larger than smartphones, and they have gigantic sensors and swappable lenses.

But there are also some things a digital smartphone camera can do that a traditional camera cannot, and that's all thanks to computational photography.

Entire article - <https://www.howtogeek.com/659806/what-is-computational-photography/>

## Program Night with Steve Gettle and Nicole Sudduth

*Below is an edited short list of excellent techniques and tips as communicated in the February program night with 168 attendees from multiple photo clubs.*

### Composition & Finding the Picture in Nature Photography

Technical considerations aside, this is where the artistry of nature photography is, the process of composing an image is actually a group of decisions.

- Decide what made you stop and take a second look
  - Slow down and decide what you want to communicate
  - Great images communicate something to the viewer.  
It could be anything: look how pretty this is, look how interesting, look at this pattern, texture, shape, etc.
  - Isolate the subject or idea as dominant and fill the frame
  - Control the background, a clean look without hotspots. A complimentary colored background adds to the image
  - Decide whether the image is a vertical or horizontal  
Your subject will usually dictate this but try doing it both ways whenever possible
  - The rule of thirds divides the frame into thirds horizontally and vertically. Where lines intersect are power-points, so place the center of interest at or near these power-points.  
Use points as a rest stop for the journey through the image.
  - Lead the viewer's eye through the image with leading lines, but don't enter or leave the frame at the corners. Curves are better than straight lines to allow a stroll through the image.
  - Leave room for motion to occur by being aware that your viewer is going to follow the gaze of any living subject.
  - Three is usually better than two and avoid straight lines between two major elements.
  - Establish visual dominance within the frame. Closer is usually more dominant than farther, brighter is usually more dominant than darker
  - Don't bullseye your subject in the frame
  - Diagonals are usually better than straight lines because they do not run parallel to the edge of the picture.
  - Use complimentary colors when possible
  - Use of positive and negative space to visually balance the elements in the frame with less is usually more.
  - Be aware of the direction of light. Use light to emphasize texture, depth, backlighting.
  - Low contrast light is good for most subjects including details in flowers, birds, mammals, landscapes if they do not include the sky.
  - Warm light is especially good for landscapes, usually at sunrise and sunset
  - Edge light is where I do my macro work. It usually happens a half hour before sunrise and a half hour after sunset.  
Fog is another type of edge light that can soften the image.
  - Harsh light usually at full sun has more contrast than the sensor can handle so need to shoot front lit subjects and fill flash can help
- 
- Photo by Steve Gettle*
- Decide your perspective. A high perspective tends to flatten things out and a low perspective emphasizes intimacy with animals and can often help with backgrounds. A low perspective emphasizes the foreground in landscapes and wide angle lenses emphasize depth
  - Depth of field might be the most important consideration when controlling the background, creating a focus point to isolate your center of interest, macro work, and achieving visual depth through maintaining focus from near to far.
  - Set the f-stop to communicate your intention, so if you need to maximize depth stop down, to isolate your subject open up.
  - Situations where shutter speed is an important consideration. When freezing action, intentional blurring, milky waterfalls.
  - Make the picture- it is something you created not something you took. Work the subject by looking for other pictures.
  - Shoot stories by shooting behavior, shooting environments
  - Pre-visualize your image by putting yourself in situations to realize your vision
  - Don't be shy to study the work of other photographers and learn from it.
  - We all have a bag of tricks: different techniques and ideas that we have used before in our photography. Adding to this bag of tricks is how we grow as photographers. Whenever you approach a subject, think about how you can apply some of these techniques and ideas to the situation before you. See more [www.stevegettle.com](http://www.stevegettle.com)



## Information from the Education Team

Below is a list of people who have volunteered to be a “sounding board” to share their knowledge on some topic of interest to others. Should you have a FEW questions these are the people to ask. And of course to be done virtually (Zoom or phone).

General Area	Specific	Details	Resource	Email
<b>Date</b>	Jan 5, 2021			
<b>Travel</b>				
	Travel Planning	Building itineraries	Susan Dinga	susandinga27@gmail.com
	Travel	Antartica - what to expect and what equipment needed	Rick Whitacre	whitacre.rick@gmail.com
	Travel		Richard Ingles	Avi8or@att.net
	Travel	On the road travel (trailer), scouting locations, image processing on the road and then back at home.	Gina Dias	Gdias6@gmail.com
	Travel	Preparation for field trips and extended travel photo vacations	Harvey Gold	hsgold61@yahoo.com
	Travel	Nepal, Burma, Nepal, Everest Base Camp, Argentina, Patagonia, Buenos Aires, India, Ladakh, Turkey, Desert environments (dust, heat, cold, wind), Africa (Kenya). Gear for extended trips, backups.	Gary Marcos	gary.e.marcos@gmail.com
<b>Technology</b>				
	Club Website	How to use	Jim Katzman	jimkoolkat@gmail.com
	Club Website	Mentoring - how to use, rules of competition, photos in series	Larry Rosier	lrosier9@gmail.com
	Lightroom/Photoshop - Beginner		Jim Katzman	jimkoolkat@gmail.com
	Photoshop		Lawrence Shapiro	leshapiro@att.net
	Lightroom	Specifically, Develop Module	Susan Dinga	susandinga27@gmail.com
	Photoshop	Beginner to expert levels.	Eric Gray	eric@gdacreative.com
	Lightroom	Lightroom	Jeffrey Balfus	jbalfus@gmail.com
	Focus Stacking	Focus Stacking	Tim Meadows	tmeadows@comcast.net
<b>Printing</b>				
	Printing	20+ yrs experience, graphic arts, industrial printing and more	Boyd Jones	Boydjones@sbcglobal.net
	Matting/Mounting		Jim Katzman	jimkoolkat@gmail.com
<b>Photography</b>				
	Astrolandscape	Equatorial tracking, general astrolandscape	Rick Whitacre	whitacre.rick@gmail.com
	Nature	Macro to telescopic		
	Nature	Birds, Lighthouses	Airdrie Kincaid	airdrie@att.net
	Macro	Macro (lenses, extension tubes, Depth of Field, Focus Stacking...	Mary Ellen Kaschub	mekaschub@comcast.net
	Still life / Light painting	Still life / Light painting	Lawrence Shapiro	leshapiro@att.net

### Great Photography Articles or Videos

Tim Grey, getting sharper images - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cbnkRdLfwZ0>

The used market DSLRs - <https://petapixel.com/2021/02/22/the-used-market-has-fallen-to-mirrorless/>

Photoshop 2021 Review - <https://www.techradar.com/reviews/adobe-photoshop-cc-2021>

Huawei Folding Mate X2, Features Leica Camera- <https://petapixel.com/2021/02/22/huaweifolding-quad-camera/>

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