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July 6, zoom meeting only, 7:30 pm

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*Featured Cover by Irina Nekrasova
(see makers description on page 7)*

Notices and Coming Events

See the [Calendar](#) on our website for latest updates or details.

Next Competition - Mon. June 1, Zoom only

Submission Rules – Members may enter a maximum of two projected images. On months with prints, a maximum of three images may be submitted as three prints or a combination of print(s) and (up to two) projected images.

Our meeting judge for June will be Bruce Finocchio. In stating his philosophy, he says, “I feel judging should be a learning experience—to share ideas, explore feelings and techniques . . . and have fun.” He is an avid naturalist and loves to get close to the beauty of the earth in its most natural setting. His hunting is with his camera to preserve images of the beauty of all flora and fauna in its natural environment. Website: dreamcatcherimages.net

Categories for July - Besides the monthly categories of Mono and Color the challenge categories will be Creative and Journalism Projected.

Creative Projected Category

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. Creative images may include modifications in the darkroom, on the computer, or in the camera, as well as unusual points of view, imaginative use of subject matter or lighting, or any other presentation that begins with the maker's photograph or a collection of photographs. HDR w/o further changes are not considered “Altered Reality”. Images are judged both for . . . [MORE](#)

Journalism Projected Category

- 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 over pictorial quality.
- Images that misrepresent the truth, such as those from events or activities arranged specifically for photography, or of subjects directed or hired for photography, are not eligible.
- The title should identify the activity (answer who, what, where, when and why) and complement the story as shown in the image and is restricted to 200 characters including spaces in this category.

Allowed editing techniques:

- Cropping, straightening and perspective correction.
- Removal or correction of elements added by the camera or lens, such as dust spots, noise, chromatic aberration and lens distortion. . . . [MORE](#)

Print Competitions Schedule

Prints will be judged every other month along with projected. For the rest of 2026, prints will be judged in . . .

August - Nature, Travel, Mono, Color

October - Journalism, Creative, Mono, Color

December - Nature, Travel, Mono, Color

Special Interest Group Links below

(Click on any SIG title for detailed information)

[Special Interest Group - Seeing in Sixes](#)

[Special Interest Group in Monochrome Photography](#)

[Special Interest Group in Photoshop](#)

[Special Interest Group - Novice Only](#)

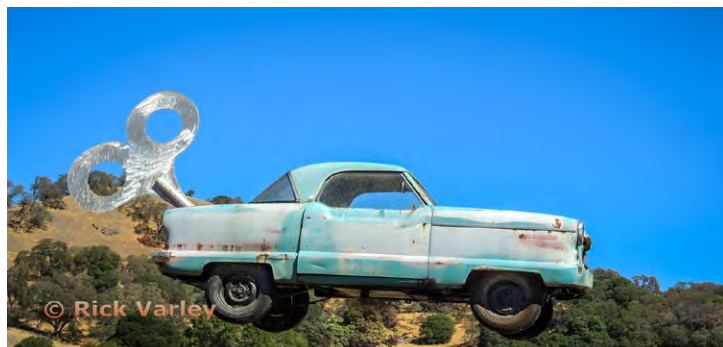
[Special Interest Group - Bird Photography](#)

[Special Interest Group - Hands-on Editing](#)

[Special Interest Group - Astrophotography](#)

[Special Interest Group - Eastern Sierra Photography](#)

[Special Interest Group - Landscape Photography](#)



Creative image from 2019



Journalism image from 2017

Monthly Hands-on Photo Editing Session - register to attend – Check the Club Calendar for dates, usually the last Wednesday of the month 3:45 - 5:45 at the Saratoga Library.

We'll edit photos you bring. **How to Register:** - Log-on to club website, Click event under “calendar” Questions, email [here](#)

June Competition Winners Tell Us How They Made It



© Tim Meadows

◀ In the Land Before Time - Mt. Bromo, Indonesia, Tim Meadows, Color Print

I had seen compelling images from this remote, volcanic area on the Indonesian island of Java, and I wanted to experience the otherworldly, dramatic landscape for myself, so this became an important destination on the trip. It turns out that many people visit this area daily mainly for the special view of the sunrise that can be had here. That required a 2:00 am wakeup, and a jeep ride at 2:30 to beat the snaking line of jeeps that wind their way up to the ridge overlook. At 7,700 ft elevation it was in the low 40s at this

pre-dawn hour. Once there, we hunkered down in a tea house complete with a small fire in the center of the floor and hot tea to stay warm. About an hour before sunrise, we hiked a bit to find the vantage point that would produce the best composition, and waited for first light. Much to my amazement, we had clear skies, fog below and a very cooperative volcano in the background that spouted plumes of smoke and gas, not once, but twice in the soft, early morning light. This was a “pinch me” moment and a highlight of my recent photographic adventures for sure.

Technical specs: 5-frame pano stitched in Lightroom, Nikon Z7, ISO 100, f10, 6 sec exposure, 24-200mm zoom at 48mm. Processed in Lightroom with sharpening in Topaz Sharpen AI.

“I Surrender!” A brown pelican immediately pulls back to redirect his flight when a peregrine falcon appears in front him. The falcon’s nest is nearby and he will attack to protect his newborn., Kelly Zhang, Nature Projected ▶

This brown pelican immediately pulls back to redirect itself when it sees a peregrine falcon. The falcon’s nest is nearby and the mother falcon attacks anything that comes close.

This image was shot by Sony A1, a 600mm fixed lens with a 1.4x converter.



© Kelly Zhang

June Competition Winners Tell Us How They Made It



◀ Wrapped in layers against the haze and chill, they stand silently between departures and arrivals, Kamalapur Train Station, Dhaka, Bangladesh 2025, Pam Perkins, Travel Projected

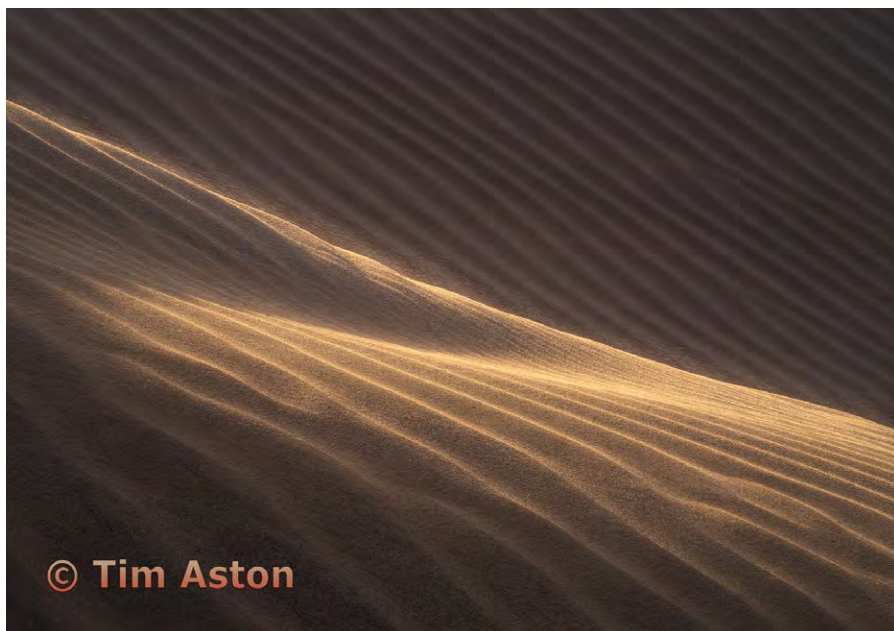
In December 2025 I traveled to Dhaka, Bangladesh and spent a day at the main railway station called Kamalapur which is very photogenic. It's a fascinating place with crowds of travelers, porters, families waiting, vendors, and just the rhythm of daily life. It's an easy place to photograph human stories which is what I like to do. That day was chilly with a low hanging damp fog making it challenging photographically. The light was crummy. However, when I saw this couple waiting on the platform, I saw a human story

with both a beginning, a middle and an end. Who are they? Where are they going? Or where are they coming from? I liked the curve of the track and the background of the train. When the woman wearing the veil turned and made eye contact with me, I took the picture.

Leica SL3, exposure 1/125; f10, iso1000. 70mm. focal length.

Light Wind, Tim Aston, Color Projected ▶

It was the perfect kind of windy day at the Mesquite Sand Dunes. There was enough wind for moving sand to be visible, but not enough to prevent lens changes. The wind direction was running perpendicular to the sun, so I looked for side lit compositions. A dip in a west facing dune allowed a small spotlight to hit this section of diagonal patterns, so I trotted over and waited for the light to clarify this shape. I prepared by experimenting with shutter speeds and the number of images I would need for a focus stack from the ripples nearest the lens to the lit ridge. The last image in the stack (focused on the ridge) was taken 10 seconds after the automated focus stack to catch a gust of wind blowing the sand.



A7RV with 70-200 @200mm, 20 images focus stacked (Helicon Focus) at ISO 200, f/11, 1/250.

June Competition Winners Tell Us How They Made It

NW Face Route, Half Dome, Yosemite, 2nd of 3 days, Larry belays while I lead a pitch. With multi-day technique, pitch leader then hauls supply bag as 2nd climber ascends lead rope, Chris Cassell, Journalism Print

I wanted to enter an image from the most serious climb of my lifetime, exactly 40 years earlier! The title gives journalistic info on our multi-day climbing technique. Left unsaid was that we were just a bit above average climbers and how, just a few hours before I took this, we were passed by 2 of the top climbers of the era; John Bachar & Peter Croft. They were climbing with minimal gear and accomplished an amazing first feat that day; an ascent of The Nose route on El Capitan followed by this route on Half Dome, *both* within 24 hours! That set a standard for years to come, though passing us cost them a few minutes.

Olympus-XA rangefinder film-camera (35mm fixed focal length) and Kodachrome 64. Camera was small & convenient for climbing, but generally too wide in coverage. But it worked well here.



◀ This photograph has raised surfaces and was specially made to be touched. Judge, please touch but be careful — it's barbed wire, Eric Gray, Creative Print

The inspiration here was for more in the series of photos you can touch. I wrestled with the idea of featuring barbed wire because people would expect something prickly. I decided to push myself a bit further and actually took some rusty wire I had in the garage and poked it through from behind at just the right location. I added a light coating of clear silicon to hold the wire in place while softening the poke from the wire.

The horse was standing in a field in south San Jose and the top row of wire was the only row in the shot. I selected the top row and repeated for the other rows while flipping them horizontally and offsetting them from the row above. The background was placed on its own Photoshop layer and a gaussian blur was applied. All of the wire is raised to be tactile but the bottom row is the only set of barbs that actually have real wire poking through.

Nikon D750, ISO 1250, f11, 1/400 sec.

June Competition Winners Tell Us How They Made It

Moon and Venus, Jim Lamb, Monochrome Print

When a planet appears very close to the Moon in the sky, it's called a conjunction (specifically a lunar conjunction).

On the night of May 18th 9:03 pm, there was a lunar conjunction with the moon, Venus and Jupiter in the West sky. Venus was much brighter than Jupiter which is why I picked Venus. The 3 objects were in a line, Venus, Moon and Jupiter. I decided to only have 2 objects in the image. I exposed the image to get crater detail in the moon. I also wanted the far side of the moon to be slightly lighter than the rest of the sky. There were no stars visible at the time I took the picture. I took a number of images with different exposures to be able to pick the best image in Lightroom.

Image Information: Camera Canon R5, Lens RF 200 - 800mm F6.3-F9. Exposure 1/200 sec at f 6.3 ISO 500. Focal length 258 mm, Location Saratoga CA.

Print: Printed on my Canon 9100 printer. Printed on Canon Pro Luster paper. 12" x 12" image with a 1 inch white border. Cut a square mat border 16" x 16". The opening in the mat border was 12.25" x 12.25" so there was 1/8" of the white paper visible around the black image. The matboard was not as white as the exposed print surface to provide better contrast against the sky black.



◀ Symphony of the Ocean. Davenport Beach, Irina Nekrasova, Monochrome Projected

This photograph was taken under challenging conditions, close to noon when the light was at its least forgiving. At the time, I had no great expectations for the image. Yet in monochrome, the scene revealed something more. Stripped of color, the photograph is less about documenting reality and more about interpreting it—capturing not simply what was visible, but what the place seemed to express. The result is an image shaped as much by feeling and atmosphere as by the scene itself.

July Second Place Competition Winners



© Paul Dileanis

Monochrome Projected



© Edward Stein

Color Print



Travel Projected



© Kent Bossange

Monochrome Print

[All results and all images from a competition can be seen by clicking here.](#)

July Second Place Competition Winners



© Jim Katzman

Journalism Print



© Charlie Gibson

Color Projected



© Jim Katzman

Creative Print



© Mercury Freedom

Nature Projected

[All results and all images from a competition can be seen by clicking here.](#)

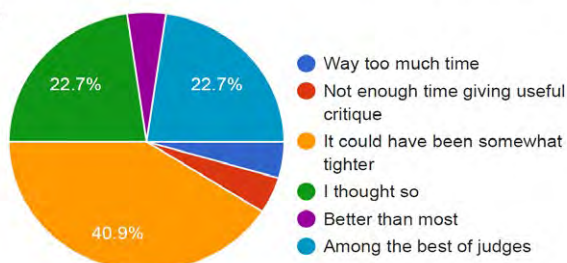
Our Best Judges Based on Survey Results

Survey says – *the two best judges so far in 2026 are Becky Jaffe and Ouliana Panova. We wish to thank them for their expertise and valuable critiques of images at LGSCC.*

Ouliana Results

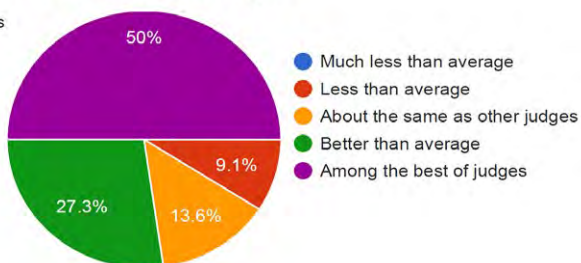
The judge spent an appropriate amount of time in the critiques

22 responses



The judge offered insightful critiques

22 responses



Comments about Ouliana

Her comments were quite different than many other judges I've heard at the club. I enjoyed her high energy and creative observations, which represented a different, often more artistic perspective. It's hard for me to say better or worse, but certainly interesting and fun. Sometimes her comments were less actionable, at least for me.

Enthusiastic, positive, creative narratives (interpretations of images) and sound technical advice.

Extremely knowledgeable and insightful

For some reason (perhaps the judge's long descriptions) this meeting took longer than usual although we didn't seem to have that many more pictures.

She had an extensive vocabulary to describe and critique the images. She commented on the types of paper that the prints used and how it enhanced the final photo. Her comments were enthusiastic and on target. Her commentary usually touched on what I'd call the "philosophy of photography" which I thought brought up many useful considerations. She did go on too far on many images.

Her cropping suggestions were right on

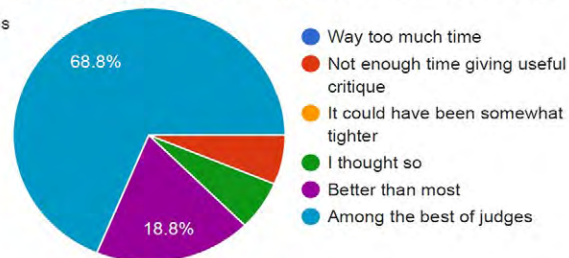
Liked: Pointing out specific post-processing and composition errors that detracted from photo or merited a deduction. I liked her references to painters and other artists in her assessments. I liked her energy. Disliked: On some of the photos where she spent additional time, brevity would have been a better choice.

Ouliana provided insightful and entertaining commentary. Though her commentary went a bit long on time, that time was full and useful.

Becky Results

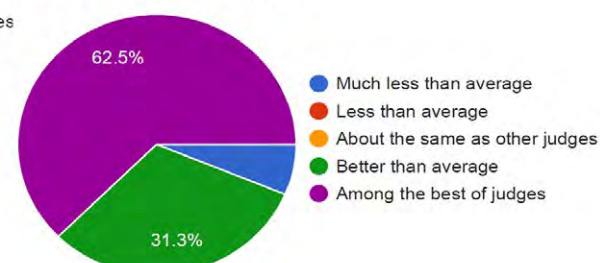
The judge spent an appropriate amount of time in the critiques

16 responses



The judge offered insightful critiques

16 responses



Comments about Becky

The images from this competition were all wonderful, so there wasn't much to offer critically; however, I think she gave appropriate feedback. Becky gives thoughtful, feedback with broadened contexts also she kept within the one minute request as best as she could and her critiques were helpful.

Well versed in the arts including photography

As always, Becky provided commentary that was insightful, helpful, and entertaining. The depth of knowledge and experience that she brings to this is obvious. She did very well too at keeping her commentary to within our time guidelines. Didn't have much that was negative to say about the images or about their improvement, and could have used "Wow!" as a first response a bit less.

Concise critiques informed by Becky's experience and knowledge in art, and history. in addition to photography. She drew on the emotional impact of the images in addition to the composition and technical features.

Brings an editorial view to the evaluation of photos

Becky's eloquence and thoughtful commentary make her judging style engaging and often a pleasure to listen to. Her ability to articulate what she sees in an image adds a meaningful dimension, although on this particular evening she referenced how challenging it was to say anything negative. Good sign for us! I have one more comment. Because submissions are intended to be anonymous, it may be helpful to avoid speculating about or identifying the maker during judging. Mentioning a photographer by name, especially prior to the awards, can unintentionally create the perception of bias.

Bird SIG Trip to Harkin's Slough

from Charlie Rath

The event was held on Tuesday, June 16, 2026.

Osprey Nest at Harkins Slough. Two juveniles not quite ready to fledge, a 6+ year old female with a 3+ year old male partner (info is thanks to local birdwatchers who have followed the nesting activities). Other birds seen included White Pelicans, Double-crested cormorants, various Gulls, and swallows that buzzed around the edge of the slough where we viewed the Osprey nest.



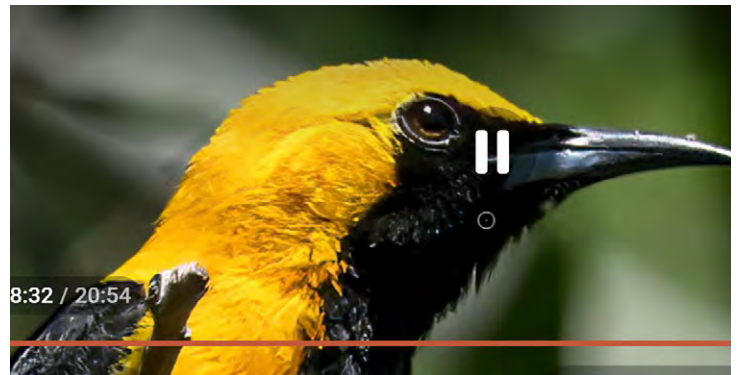


by Alex Cooke - full article here <https://fstoppers.com/education/how-sharpen-wildlife-photos-lightroom-and-photoshop-and-when-use-each-903061>

How to Sharpen Wildlife Photos in Lightroom and Photoshop (And When to Use Each)

Sharpening is one of those steps that separates a finished image from a raw file sitting on your hard drive. Get it wrong and your subject looks either mushy or artificially crunchy; get it right and the feathers, fur, or eyes in your frame look exactly as detailed as they should.

Coming to you from Terry Vander Heiden, this practical video walks through sharpening a wildlife image two ways: inside Lightroom Classic and inside Photoshop, so you can see exactly what each approach gets you. Vander Heiden starts in Lightroom's Detail panel, pushing the sharpening slider into the mid-90s, then holding Option (or Alt on PC) while adjusting the Radius and Detail sliders to get a precise read on what's actually being sharpened. From there, he uses Lightroom's object selection tool inside the Masking panel to isolate the bird and push a bit more sharpening into the subject specifically, rather than applying it globally across the frame.



There's an extra step after the mask that a lot of people skip. Because any selection has an edge, the transition between the sharpened bird and the unsharpened background can show a faint halo or fuzzy fringe. Vander Heiden creates a merged composite layer on top, loads the mask selection back, inverts it so he's working only outside the bird, hides the selection so it doesn't interfere visually, and uses the Clone Stamp tool to clean up that transition zone. He works along the edge gradually, resampling a new source point as the background tone shifts, especially through lighter areas near the wing. It's methodical and takes a few minutes, but the result is a sharpened bird that blends naturally into a still-soft background. The before-and-after comparison at the end, with both the Lightroom and Photoshop versions side by side, makes the difference hard to argue with. The feather detail, the stick the bird is perched on, the area around the eye: the Topaz-sharpened version holds up noticeably better at close inspection.

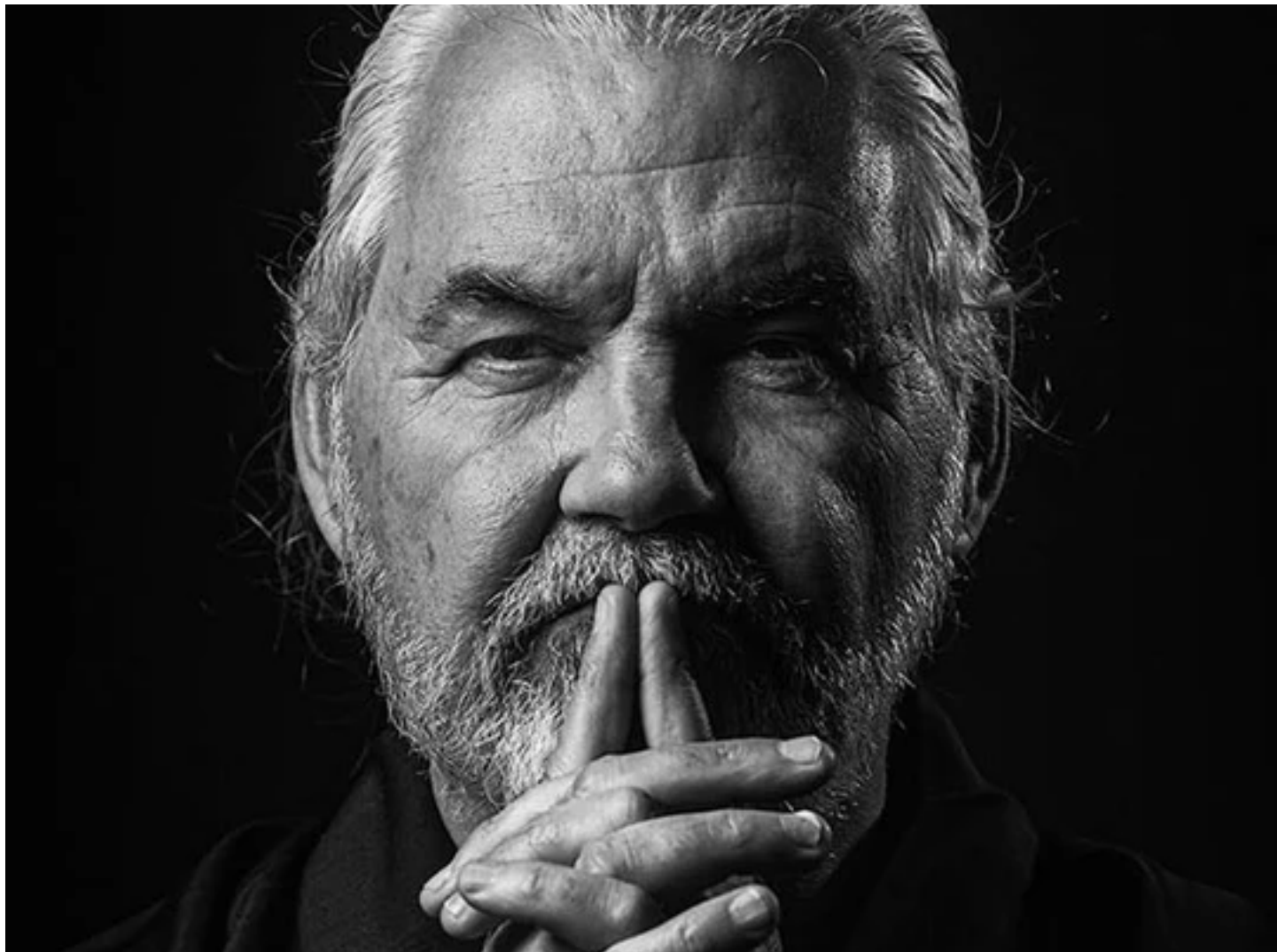
<https://fstoppers.com/education/how-sharpen-wildlife-photos-lightroom-and-photoshop-and-when-use-each-903061>

Inspiration - Where do you get it?

by Simon Burn from fstoppers.com - <https://fstoppers.com/education/where-get-your-photography-inspiration-and-influence-714521>

Where Do You Get Your Photography Inspiration and what influences you?

Inspiration and influence—these are things I’ve been thinking about lately. Why? Because it’s clear to me that so many new photographers are getting their influence from other photographers on social media. This isn’t always a good thing.



“Be Yourself, Everyone Else Is Taken”

Poor Oscar Wilde is probably turning in his grave at what’s going on. Why on earth anyone would want to jump on a trend bandwagon and create images that look like someone else’s would be beyond his comprehension. It’s certainly beyond mine. Scrolling through some social media feeds, so many images look similar—similar color grading, similar focal lengths with shallow depth of field, similar selfie poses at honeypot locations. There’s a large number of uncreative sheep mindlessly following a flock out there.

Showing an interest in specific looks and understanding how they are created is a good thing. You can then go off and create your own interpretation. You can be influenced by it, and other looks and techniques, to curate your own way of approaching your photography. But so many people don’t. They just copy.

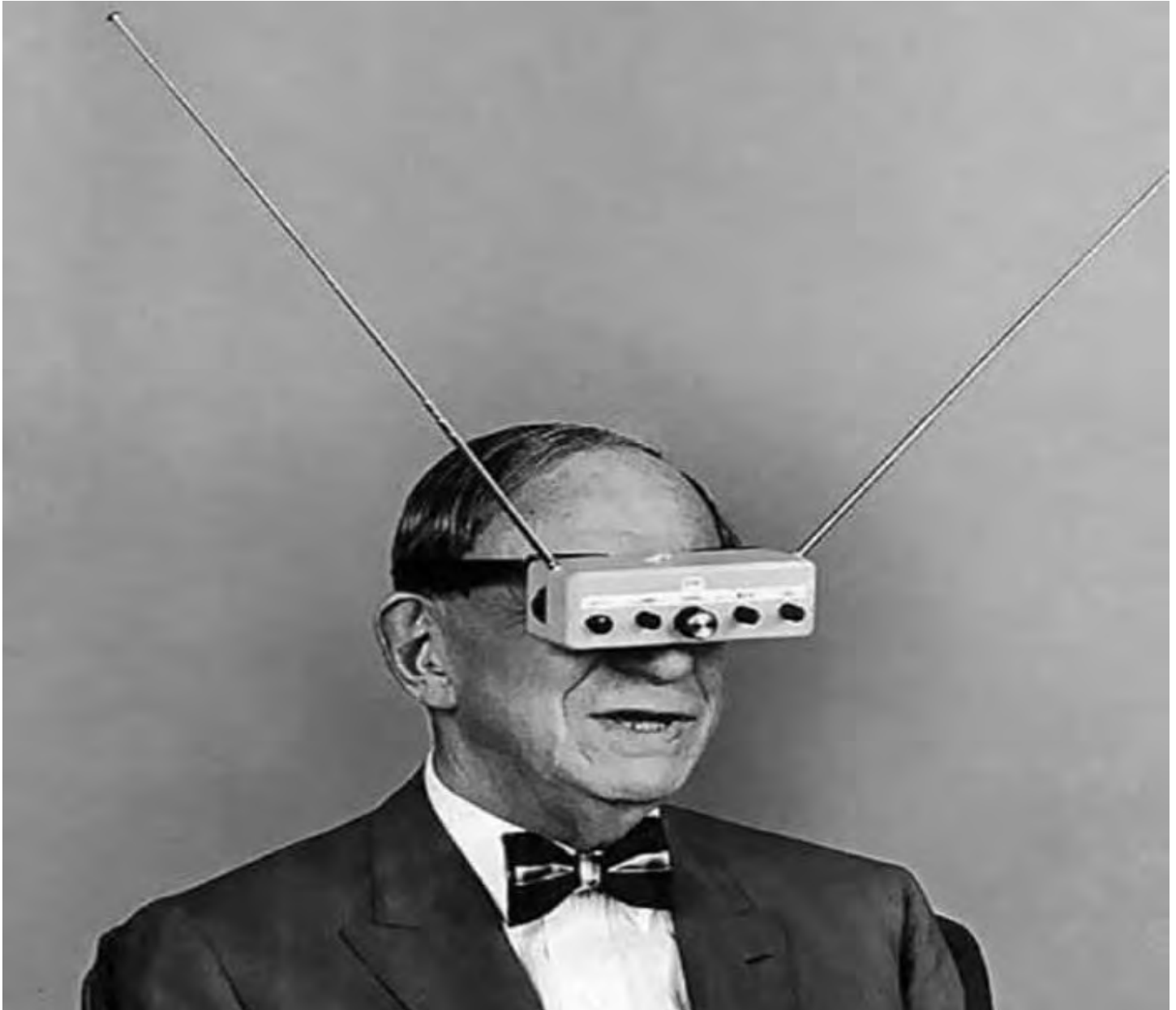
Where I Get My Inspiration and Influence

I say “get” rather than “got,” because after many decades of being a photographer, I still get inspired. Despite the popular saying — you can teach an old dog new tricks. ... [MORE](#)

Iconic Photo Back Story

from [Google AI](#)

The 1963 “teleyglasses” were a pioneering head-mounted display created by sci-fi pioneer Hugo Gernsback. Featured in a famous Life magazine profile, they were an early, primitive ancestor to modern virtual reality and smart glasses.



How They Worked

Display: They utilized two small, miniature cathode-ray tubes (CRTs) mounted in front of each eye to deliver stereoscopic video.

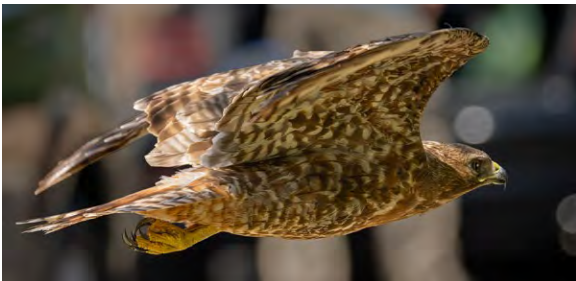
Connectivity: The headset required thick wires connecting to a separate external tuning and battery pack.

Weight: At roughly 140 grams, the glasses were surprisingly light—weighing about the same as some modern high-end VR headsets. While visionary, the goggles were bulky, limited in image quality, and primarily remained a non-functional mock-up and publicity stunt rather than a practical consumer product. Despite this, Gernsback is frequently celebrated as the man who envisioned modern wearable tech decades ahead of its time.

Google Source - <https://spectrum.ieee.org/the-man-who-invented-vr-goggles-50-years-too-soon>

Annual Club Picnic

About 20 club members gathered for good food and stimulating conversations about the world of photography. Some members came early looking for bird and wildlife photos and the rest of us grouped around the picnic tables at our spot in Vasona Park.



Top left photo by Irina Nekrasova, all others are by Alan Levenson except Red Shouldered hawk by Mercury Freedom



[Great Photography Articles/Videos](#)

Apple Keynote Camera Starts at 1:01 - [Apple Developers Conference Keynote Photo Announcements](#)

Video - How Many Megapixels - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ThpQWhOfKO4>

The Hidden Advantages of More Megapixels- <https://fstoppers.com/gear/hidden-advantages-more-megapixels-696812>

Historical Master Photographers - <https://121clicks.com/inspirations/master-photographers-transformed-perception-of-world>

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