



Photo by Ken Sellers

## **APC ACTIVITIES**

### **Next Meeting**

Sept. 17, 2018 7:00 PM

### **PhotoShows**

Sept. 17, 2018

Action/Sports

### **Board Meeting**

October 1, 2018 7:00 PM

Nov. 19, 2018

Leading Lines

### **Programs**

Oct. 15, 2018

Guil Johnson

“Trail and Photography”

### **Field Trips**

October 20, 2018

Old Salem

(Winston-Salem)

Dec. 17, 2018

Christmas Social/Slide Show

## President's Comments—September 2018

### Behind the Lens with Mike King

After looking at the presentation last month by Phil Archer on Ansel Adams and Dorothea Lange, I got to thinking about the changes in photography we have seen since the early days of capturing images. Adams and Lange for instance carried around large cases of 4 x 5 and 8 x 10 view cameras and film backs and large heavy wooden tripods to steady them.

In the early days a photographer only had a few tries at capturing those once in a life time images. Cameras were all manually operated, and film was in its infancy. Film speeds were very slow in comparison to the advancements in film that followed. Using the view camera, you had to extend the lens bellows to a length to fit the lens. You would then tilt and move the back and front to adjust for correction. After these setups were made the photographer would open the back of the camera and view the image on a glass plate for focus. To make things a bit more challenging the image was projected onto the glass focusing plate upside down! Once the image was focused, you had to calculate the exposure. No meter in those cameras. This is when a seasoned photographer would read the subject and try to expose for highlights and shadows and try to do that in as few sheets of film as possible. Now that you have captured the images, the real work starts. Most photographers in the early days mixed the chemicals and developed the

film themselves and then had to print them on an enlarger, sometimes out in the field. A lot of the equipment, processes, chemicals and paper were less than perfect.

Many of us who have been photographers for a while remember the days of 35mm rolls of film that needed to be assured that it was loaded correctly. We had to set the ASA on the camera's built in light meter so the meter would give the correct exposure settings. Once a setting was read in the viewfinder of the SLR, you had to make sure the combination of shutter speed and f stop would be correct for the subject. Aim, focus, shoot, advance the film.

Now that the film has made its way out of the film cassette, you must remember to push in the rewind release button and then crank, crank, crank the film back into the light-tight film cassette. Develop the film yourself or take to a store and wait a week at times to receive the results. Once you pick up the prints, you can hopefully see if the images are good.

"The good old days of photography"!  
Do you miss it?

**Mike King**

**APC President**

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**336-260-0379**

## MEMBERSHIP MEMO

By: Carole Barnard

Can you believe it is September already? It seems that summer has passed in a flash.

But, cooler days and early nightfall is upon us as we move on to another season and new photo opportunities as we are out and about.

At our August meeting we were pleased to welcome to the Club **Anna Trzonkowski, Anne Albright and Keith O'Leary**. It is a good idea to come to our meetings a bit early and take advantage of that time to socialize and get to know our new members. I am at the check-in table by 6:30 and ready to see all the smiling faces enter the Gathering Room!

Do you have your photos ready for the next PhotoShow? Be sure to participate and make this another evening to enjoy all the images submitted from your fellow shutter bug enthusiasts. The subject **Action/Sports** will really provide us with a variety of exciting shots! See you at the meeting.

Carole—Membership Chair

## APC BOARD

President	Mike King	Publicity Chair	Bob Finley
1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> V/P and Program Chairs	Debbie Chandler Dave Kaplan	Exhibit Chair	Sandra Whitesell
Secretary	June Siple	Membership Chair	Carole Barnard
Treasurer	Nancy Jacobus	Twin Lakes Rep.	Len Barnard
PhotoShow Chair	Ivan Baez	Web Master	JP Lavoie
Co-Chair	Herbert House	Past President	Len Barnard
Outings/Field Trips	Hugh Comfort	Editor	Ray Munns

## Attention Please!!

- ◆ Club Members Gallery One of the most satisfying and enjoyable things about our Alamance Photography Club is the time we spend with other members – getting to know them, seeing their photos, going on photo outings, learning from each other, becoming friends, etc. This “Club Members Gallery” page or two will help us get to know each other better with respect to our photo interests, travels, life activities, and more. Having a monthly bio and photos from a member (who volunteers) will help us all get to know one another better. This can only strengthen our club. With the September newsletter we are introducing a section dedicated to one member each month. See pages 6 and 7.
- ◆ Volunteers are needed for 2019 officers in the positions of Co-Vice President and Secretary. If you are willing to help in one of these positions, please contact Mike King at 336-260-0379 or [Mking0379@gmail.com](mailto:Mking0379@gmail.com).
- ◆ Club tradition is that at our December meeting we have a slide show of members’ photos that were taken in the current year. These 2018 photos can be from club field trips, exhibit photos, and daycation/vacation photos. If you have some you would like to show, email them to Mike King at [Mking0379@gmail.com](mailto:Mking0379@gmail.com). About 15 images per member will be great.

## September 17<sup>th</sup> PhotoShow—Action/Sports

Ivan Baez, PhotoShow Chair

We encourage ALL members to submit photographs to our bimonthly Photo Show and would like to see EVERYONE represented!

We try to keep the number of photos to 50. To accommodate this we ask that you submit a maximum of two (2) photos. We may only use 1 of your photos based on the number of entries. You will be asked to indicate your preferred photo in the file name of each photo (1 or 2). Please see the File Name section. If you have any issues with formatting, please let me know ([apcphotoshow@gmail.com](mailto:apcphotoshow@gmail.com)) and I will be happy to help.



### Submission Details

#### Number of Entries

Two (2) entries per member. Please indicate your preferred photo with the number 1.

#### Size

As large as you can send it. Please do not submit anything smaller than 1024x768.

#### Format

.jpg or .png

#### File Name

Please rename your photos using the following format: first name\_last name\_ 1 or 2 (preferred photo) \_meeting date (month and year only).

Example: Ivan\_Baez\_1\_9-18.jpg, Ivan\_Baez\_2\_9-18.jpg

#### Email

Email Address—Send all images to: [apcphotoshow@gmail.com](mailto:apcphotoshow@gmail.com)

Email Subject line—Please put the month and your initials. Example: September IB

#### Entry deadline

9AM on Monday, September 10, 2018

## CLUB MEMBERS GALLERY

### *You CAN Get Here From There*

By Bob Finley

As a ten year old I played at photography with my mother's Kodak Brownie. At age 21, serving as a Navy medical Corpsman with the Marine Corps in Okinawa, I bought my first 35mm camera, an Olympus OM-1. That's when my life-long affinity for photography



began. Today, 56 years later, I use a Nikon D7200 with my older Nikon D7000 as a backup. I have gradually evolved (equipment gets heavier as I get older) to using a Tamron 18-400 lens for 95% of my photos. The other 5% is an autofocus macro lens for flowers and insects and a Sigma 150-600S telephoto for birds, Blue Angels and bears.

Professionally I have worked in the trucking industry, was a banker for 14 years, an Industrial Engineer in the textile industry, created and managed a video production facility, was a production manager, was a safety director for a company in three states, dealing with both state and federal OSHA, Safety Director for the Town of Chapel Hill, and retired as Safety Director for the City of Burlington.

I've always enjoyed travel. My souvenirs are the photos I capture and share. My wife of 56 years, Sarah, doesn't share my enthusiasm for photography but she does generously gift me with equipment. We have been blessed to experience many national parks (Acadia, Arches, Bryce Canyon, Denali, Gateway Arch, Glacier, Grand Canyon, Grand Teton, Great Smoky Mountains, Kenai Fjords, Mesa Verde, Petrified Forest, Redwood, Rocky Mountain, Sequoia, Shenandoah, Yellowstone, Yosemite and Zion). We've also toured the Canadian Rockies,

Nova Scotia, London and Paris. My photo buddy, Ray Munns, and I like to camp in state parks in North and South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia and Tennessee and photograph the areas around them. Ray and I have camped on the sand just above

the high tide line at the foot of Cape Lookout Lighthouse and at the other end of the state, in the Mount Mitchell campground in winter ice and snow and wind chills of minus 20 degrees. Alligators and wood storks in South Carolina, waterfalls in West Virginia and wild ponies in Virginia. You don't have to go far from Burlington to find something to point a camera at.

I like landscapes, wetlands, flowers, sunrise and sunset, old buildings, boats, barns, birds in flight, animals of all kinds and grandchildren. I like Army, Air Force and Marine air shows. My favorite place to hike is the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area in southwestern Virginia.

These days Sarah and I spend a lot of time in doctors' offices which cuts down a bit on traveling. But as a published author of fiction on Amazon.com E-books, I put my home time to good use.

This past year I have converted to 'back button focus' on my camera because it almost always assures me of sharper photos than allowing the shutter release to do it for me. It was awkward at first but I quickly adjusted and wouldn't think of going back to the 'old way'. Never stop learning. And never, *ever* give up.

# Photos by Bob Finley



ISO 200, f/6.3, 1/4000<sup>th</sup> sec, 370mm



ISO 400, f/6.3, 1/640<sup>th</sup> sec, 600mm



ISO 320, f/11, 1/500<sup>th</sup> sec, 50mm



ISO 320, f/6, 1/320<sup>th</sup> sec, 155mm



ISO 1600, f/6.3, 1/80<sup>th</sup> sec, 600mm



ISO 200, f/6.3, 1/4000<sup>th</sup> sec, 470mm

# APC Fall 2018 Field Trip—Old Salem

Hugh Comfort—Outings/Field Trips Chair

Our original plan for a field trip on September 29 had to be changed due to prohibitive photography restrictions. The new plan is **for a trip to Old Salem (in Winston-Salem) on October 20<sup>th</sup>**. To quote from the Old Salem Museums and Gardens website, *“Old Salem Museums & Gardens presents an authentic view of the rich cultural history of early Southern life to diverse audiences—with special emphasis on the Moravians in North Carolina—through the preservation and interpretation of historic objects, buildings and landscapes.”* [See <http://www.oldsalem.org/> for detailed information]. The museums require tickets, but the streets are public and do not. Flash photography inside is not permitted, but otherwise photography such as ours has basically no restrictions [see their photography policy at <http://www.oldsalem.org/visit/photo-policy/>.] As part of our field trip, we will plan to make reservations for lunch at the historic Tavern for those who are interested. In addition, those who were enticed by our August program can plan to make a side trip to the Reynolda House to view the Dorothea Lange photography exhibit, which is located a short distance from Old Salem.

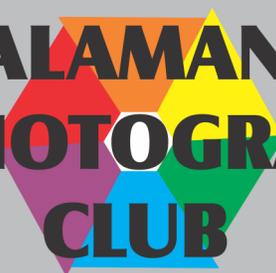
Our first sign-up opportunity will take place at our September 17<sup>th</sup> photo show. More detailed information will be provided at that time.

## Chihuly at Biltmore

Those of you who may be thinking about visiting the Biltmore Estate in Asheville in the near future may want to consider doing it sooner rather than later. Until October 7, 2018 Biltmore has a wonderful exhibit of glass art by Dale Chihuly, with large pieces in many locations around the estate, some inside but most outside. The sample shown at the right is from the water gardens adjacent to the house. For more information see:



<https://www.biltmore.com/visit/plan-your-visit/buy-tickets/chihuly-at-biltmore>



**ALAMANCE  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
CLUB**

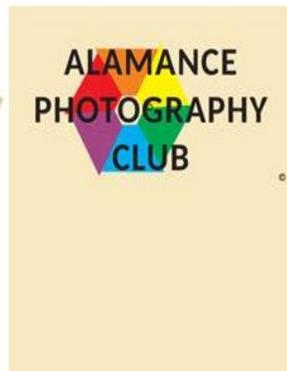
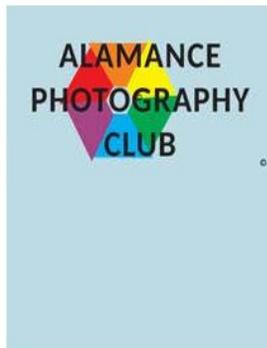
©

**Would you like to have either**  
**an APC**  
**Logo T-Shirt / Polo Shirt**

By Len Barnard

Please see the APC LOGO on the left corner above and also on our monthly APC Newsletter. Thanks to Russell Stott who designed this LOGO a few years back; now we feel it is time for our members show their Colors!

Currently we are planning to have some handsome men and a beautiful lady modeling some T-shirts with our LOGO at our next meeting September 17<sup>th</sup>. **The actual LOGO on the shirts will not have the grey background.**



### **T-Shirts**

We have 3 colors to chose from— Light Blue, Ivory (tan) or Ash Grey. From my knowledge I would suggest ordering a larger size than normal. I can wear a large but I am ordering an XL.

The price for T-shirts will be \$18.00 cash/ check at time of placing ordering. This will cover tax and shipping. These shirts are digitally printed.

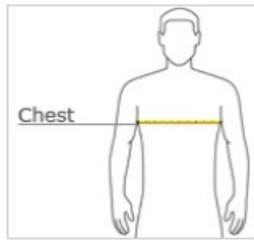
If ordered at our September meeting, I would I hope to have them at our October meeting.

**All Pricing may change pending evaluation tax and shipping cost**

## For those who are interested in polo shirts

If you so desire, you can also have a polo shirt with a LOGO. However, polo shirts will only have our LOGO embroidered on the front left side of the shirt. Our LOGO will not be on the back as shown for the T-shirts.

### HOW TO MEASURE



**CHEST**  
With arms down at sides, measure around the upper body, under arms and over the fullest part of the chest.

### SIZE CHART

	XS	S	M	L	XL	2XL	3XL	4XL	5XL	6XL
Chest	32-34	35-37	38-40	41-43	44-46	47-49	50-53	54-57	58-60	61-63

### COLOR INFORMATION

								
Black PMS NTR BLACK C	Blue Lake PMS 2129C	Deep Orange PMS 173C	Forest Green PMS 553C	Gold PMS 1235C	Grey Concrete PMS COOL GRAY 9C	Iron Grey PMS 7540C	Kelly Green PMS 341C	Lime Shock PMS 375C
								
Maroon PMS 504C	Purple PMS 7672C	Texas Orange PMS 7584C	Tropic Blue PMS 7474C	True Navy PMS 533C	True Red PMS 200C	True Royal PMS 7686C	Vegas Gold PMS 4525C	White

### Polo Shirt Pricing (including tax and shipping)

Cotton ————— \$29.00

Blend ————— \$30.00

Polyester ————— \$32.00

Cash or check payable at time of ordering.

**All pricing may change pending final tax and shipping cost evaluation.**

# 7 Tricks for Sport and High-Speed Action Photography

Photographing subjects in action is one of the most challenging but rewarding aspects of photography. With little time to think, and no room for error, it's easy to be overwhelmed by situations such as the ones you encounter when doing sports photography, wildlife photography, and similar niches with high-speed subjects.

There are seven tricks however, that everyone can use to improve their percentage of 'keepers' right away.

## 1. Focus Tips

Most DSLR cameras feature continuous focusing, also known as AI Servo or Continuous AF. These modes will allow you to track moving subjects.

Keep your center focusing point on the subject with your shutter held halfway down. As you follow the subject through your viewfinder, the camera will automatically adjust the focus as it gets closer.

When you are ready to make an image, simply press the shutter all the way down. For even more responsiveness, change the burst mode from 'single shot' to the continuous high speed option. This offers more frames per second to capture even the fastest of action.



## 7 Tricks for Sport and High-Speed Action Photography . . . Continued

### 2. The Right Lens

Even if you're restricted to the bleachers, it's possible to capture frame filling action shots. Perhaps the most helpful piece of equipment for sports photography is a longer lens. With a telephoto zoom between 70-300mm, you can cover the entire field from your seat.

This gives you the ability to photograph subjects that are further away. It also means you won't have to jockey for a place in the front row. To get a different perspective you may even want to stand on a small stool near a fence.

Bring a few business cards as people in the stands will most definitely ask what you're doing. They may even ask you to focus on a player they know. A small notepad is very helpful to jot down jersey numbers and contact information for potential sales.



## *7 Tricks for Sport and High-Speed Action Photography . . . Continued*

### **3. Shutter Speeds**

When photographing competitive sports, or any high action scenario, you will need to push the shutter speed even faster. Many of my favorite action sports shots were taken at 1/500. It's quick enough to freeze an athlete sprinting down a field without showing any motion blur.

As you work with shutter speeds this fast, it's important to understand how it's affecting your exposure. Since the actual shutter is only open for a brief duration, it does not allow much light to reach the sensor. The raised ISO along with a wider aperture like /f4 will compensate accordingly.

Lightning fast shutter speeds like 1/1000 give us the ability to seemingly pause life. Thanks to advances in technology, you are capturing instances that the human eye wouldn't catch.

I reserve this specific setting for the type of heart pounding action you find at air shows, or in extreme sports. To get a sense of just how fast this is, 1/1000 will freeze the spinning blades of an industrial strength room fan. It will also stop an F-22 jet as it zooms past at 500 miles per hour.



## 7 Tricks for Sport and High-Speed Action Photography . . . Continued

### 4. Shallow DOF

If you flip through the pages of Sports Illustrated, you'll notice how most of the players are sharp while the fans are out of focus. The wide aperture chosen by the photographer not only creates that shallow depth of field, but it also lets a great deal of light into the camera.

As such, it's possible to use a fast shutter speed to freeze the action. If you are serious about sports photography, a lens that opens all the way to f/2.8 is worth the investment. You may even hear people refer to them as 'fast lenses'. This describes the speed in which the wide aperture lets light into the camera.

Set your lens to the widest possible aperture. Depending on your specific gear, this will likely fall between f/2.8 and f/5.6. This works to throw the background out of focus, bringing full attention to the players.

You don't want the cars or houses in the distance to distract from the action. In addition to creating a shallow depth of field, a wide aperture lets in a great deal of light. This is helpful for making a proper exposure even on poorly lit fields.



## 7 Tricks for Sport and High-Speed Action Photography . . . Continued

### 5. Use the ISO to Your Advantage

You may be surprised to learn that a high ISO can even be helpful on a bright sunny day. For example, if you are photographing sports, the shutter speed can be no slower than 1/500 to prevent subject motion. As noted previously, you'll also be using a wide aperture around f/2.8.

With these two decisions made, you may take your photo only to find that it's too dark. This is where the ISO comes to the rescue. Simply double the ISO number and watch as the photo gets brighter. Still need more light? Double the ISO again.

By incorporating ISO control into your image-making process, exposure is no longer limited to just aperture and shutter speed. With this new technical knowledge, it also increases your photographic opportunities.

With the ability to shoot anywhere, the possibilities are nearly endless. Use the ISO to your advantage and you'll see a definitive improvement in your craft. Problematic scenes that were once too dark are now well within your reach.



## *7 Tricks for Sport and High-Speed Action Photography . . . Continued*

### **6. Raw or JPEG?**

With all of this fast-paced action, you will likely burn through many memory cards rapidly. I used to bring a portable hard drive with me and download the contents of the card while continuing to shoot. This is no longer necessary as large capacity cards of 64GB are now very reasonably priced.

For the most control and best image quality, shoot in RAW format whenever possible. However, if you are short on memory cards, you may want to consider shooting in the Large/Fine JPEG format. This will allow you to fit more images on the card than RAW.

There are some fast paced situations when shooting RAW is just not feasible. For example, for sports photography, I prefer the JPEG Large/Fine setting. This affords a bigger buffer size making it possible to shoot more frames before filling up.

For example, a modern DSLR can shoot 31 RAW shots consecutively, but a whopping 1090 in JPEG. This is a huge advantage for those who never want to miss a moment. By starting with a JPEG file, you also eliminate the extra step of RAW processing when you get home. This is a key consideration for those working on a tight deadline.



## 7 Tricks for Sport and High-Speed Action Photography . . . Continued

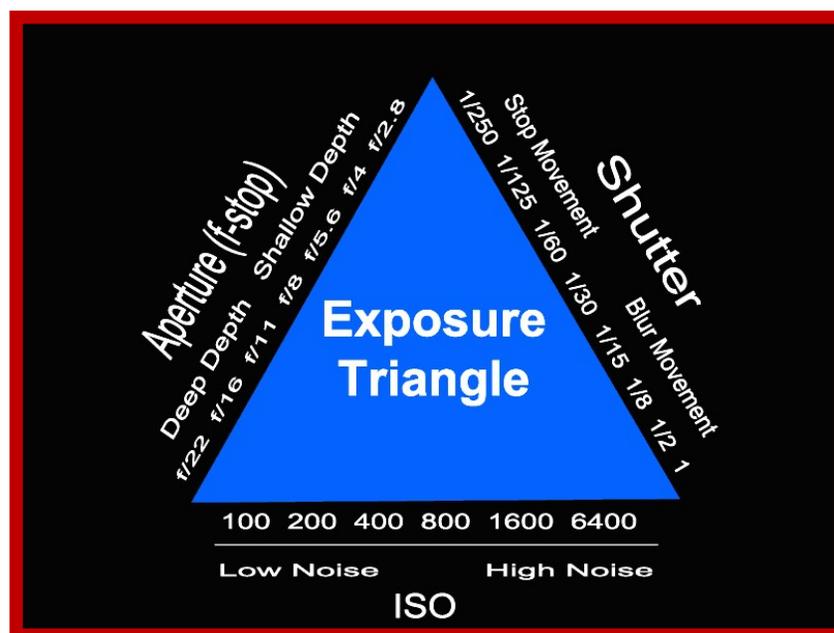
### 7. Try the Rule of Thirds

When you look through your camera's viewfinder, you'll likely see a faint outline to indicate the center of the frame. This is typically how people learn to compose photos. They aim, center their subject, and capture an image they hope will succeed.

Truth be told, there are many centered compositions that work. However, by working with the rule of thirds as well, you are expanding the potential for truly artistic results.

In the photo on the previous page, the balance is off, but it's still an effective image. The key to making this work is the direction in which the quarterback is looking. By having his head facing the open space, we are witness to the play unfolding.

The surroundings which fall outside of the frame are a mystery. This leaves us to wonder what will happen next. Had the player been centered, none of this drama would exist and the image would be much more static.



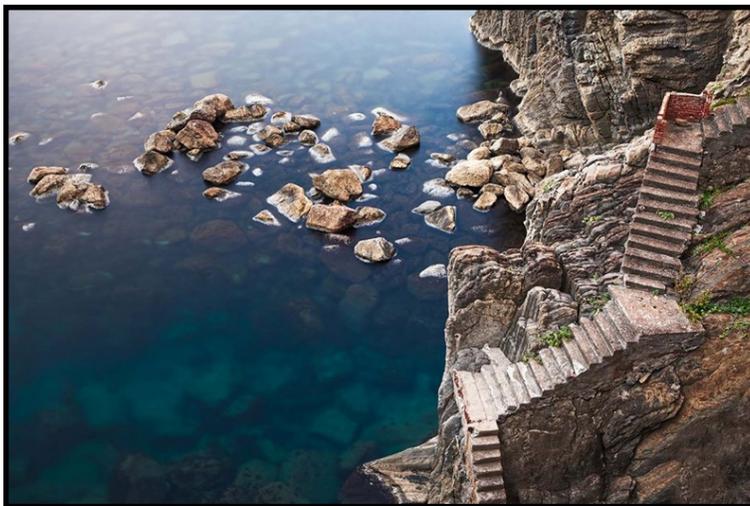
# 3 Reasons Why You Should Switch to Back Button Focus

By: James Brandon

Over the past couple of years (and really since writing my eBook) I've become a huge advocate for making the switch to back button focus. It was one of the most revolutionary changes I ever made to how I take pictures. It seems like such a small thing, yet it's such a huge difference in the way your camera works. I honestly don't know why this isn't the standard setting on all cameras because, after getting acclimated to this setting, I honestly can't understand the meaning for or use of the 'shutter half way down' method.

## No More Switching Your Lens to Manual Focus

This little advantage takes some getting used to, mainly because for the first few weeks after switching to BBF you'll likely keep switching your lens to manual focus out of habit. When your focus is set to your shutter button, you have to switch your lens to manual focus so your camera doesn't refocus when you go to take the picture. Otherwise, you'd set your focus manually, then press the shutter half way down and the camera would override what you manually set. How annoying! When you switch to BBF, you no longer need the focus mode selector on your lens because the camera will no longer refocus when you press the shutter down. In most cases, your AF-ON button will be used for focus and focus only. So you're free to use your shutter button as just that, a shutter!



*For this shot in Riomaggiore, Italy, I had my camera up on a tripod and dialed in the focus manually using Live View on the back of my camera.*

### **3 Reasons Why You Should Switch To Back Button Focus . . . Continued**

#### **No More Refocusing Every Time You Let Go of the Shutter**

This was one of the most frustrating things I ran into when I used the 'shutter half way down' method of focusing. Sure you can lock in focus by holding the shutter half way down, then focus will stay locked as long as you hold your shutter in limbo. But then you have to hold your finger there! If you really think about it, doesn't that sound absurd? If you let go or accidentally lift your finger just a little bit, the camera will refocus as soon as you press it down again. Or press the shutter a little too hard and you will take a picture before you're ready.

With BBF, you can set focus and it will stay set until you decide to change it. For wedding photographers, that means that you can be at the end of the aisle while the bride and groom are giving their vows. You aren't moving and neither are they. You can use the center AF point and focus on the bride's face with your telephoto lens and then you're set for as long as you're in that position. With the old method, you'd have to refocus on the bride or groom's face with each shot. That's how you end up with throw away shots where you accidentally focused on the minister's face instead of the bride or groom. And let's just hope you don't have to hand over a set of photos of the kiss with a blurry bride and groom and a sweaty, tack sharp minister.

*Once I set focus on the town of Varenna on Lake Como, I no longer needed to worry about focus (with a subject this far away focus was at infinity). With BBF I didn't have to worry about my camera refocusing when I was ready to press the shutter down.*



### **3 Reasons Why You Should Switch To Back Button Focus . . . Continued**

#### **Use Servo for Almost All of Your Focusing Needs**

The two main types of auto focus on your camera are (on a Canon) One-Shot and AI-Servo. On a Nikon they are called AF-Single (AF-S) and AF-Continuous (AF-C). One-Shot means that when you press your AF-ON button (or the shutter half way down) your camera will set focus one time based on where the subject is at the given time. If your subject moves or if you move, you have to reset your focus. This method wouldn't work very well if you were photographing your kids running around the sprinkler in the summer, or photographing a football game with fast moving subjects.

That's why there's another method of focusing called AI-Servo (AF-C on Nikon). This method blew me away the first time I discovered it. Servo focusing actually tracks focusing on moving subjects. So if you're at the park with your dog playing fetch and your dog is running full sprint to bring the ball back to you, you can place a single focus point of him in Servo mode and fire off as many shots as your camera can take before the buffer runs out. Assuming that you have a fast enough shutter speed, you should have a very high percentage of sharp, in focus images.

So the thing I started to notice about having the camera in Servo mode is that I could use Servo just like One-Shot. You see, to use Servo focusing with BBF you have to continuously hold down the AF-ON button to track focus. So if you have a still subject you can simply tap the AF-ON button and focus will stop adjusting when you let go of the button. I've found that if you have a still subject and hold down the AF-ON button in Servo mode, the camera will keep trying to work to find focus. So the subject will start going slightly in and out of focus because the camera thinks it should be looking for a moving subject. But again, if you simply tap the AF-ON button and let go when you see that your subject is in focus, you are good to go.

When you practice this and it becomes second nature, it's a very fast process that really takes no brain power or time at all .



Digital  
Photography  
School

# How to Photograph Shapes Instead of Landscapes

By David Johnston

I believe that the three biggest concepts in photography are gear, composition, and post-processing. The smallest of those three is gear, the second smallest is post-processing, and the one that is most essential is composition. If I had to attach percentages to them, it would go like this:

Gear: 10%

Composition: 65%

Post Processing: 25%

Your photography gear won't make your photographs better just because you spent more money on it than your previous camera body or lens. Your post-processing won't make a bad photograph great no matter how many layers or sliders you apply to it.

A healthy composition is the glue to any great photograph. With a great composition, a photograph is anchored to quality. Without one, the photograph never comes together properly and eventually falls apart.

Now, we all know about the strategies to creating some fantastic compositions; rule of thirds, foregrounds, leading lines, and the list goes on. You can certainly achieve some fantastic photographs following those rules, but until you truly understand what you're putting together, you won't have the complete grasp on what is making up your photograph.

When I was first starting out in photography, I participated in various local pop up galleries and art shows. One show I had someone come up to me while I proudly stood in front of my work.

"So, what makes this a great photograph?" He asked.

I stood in shock of his question. Not that he asked, but that I couldn't exactly tell him what the answer was. One of the reasons I love photography is that you can never stop learning and diving deeper into the rabbit hole. I decided from that moment on that when someone asked me a question like that, I would be able to tell them more than they ever wanted to know.

## *How to Photograph Shapes Instead of Landscapes . . . Continued*

So, I started to study my own work and the work of some of my favorite photographers. Why did I find certain photos compelling, and what was it that made them compelling? That's when I discovered that it wasn't subjects that made up my composition; it was a series of shapes.

You see, the world around us is constructed of various shapes. Even as I write this article, I can look around and see a wide range of ovals, circles, squares, rectangles, and triangles. I can even see the illusive quadrilateral and parallelogram (thanks high school geometry).

As photographers, we have a great responsibility to show other people the way we see the world around us. So, we need to take the initiative to understand what we see. In fact, when we see the shapes surrounding us and can put them into a quality composition using the concepts we already understand, a whole new creative door is unlocked.

The biggest series of shapes we can see are often repeating shapes. This is an artistic concept that is called repetition. It's an unusual (and often unnoticed) quality that people are naturally drawn to in art and photography. When we notice the repetition of shapes in nature, we can set up the camera to capture the repeating shapes we see.

So, what are some repeating shapes that come off the top of your head? Well, think about some of the most classic features in outdoor photography. Mountain ranges are nothing more than a series of triangles and are always visually pleasing. Bridges are full of square, rectangle, and triangle repetition.

I remember when I saw this photograph I knew it would be compelling because of the shapes. There are a series of triangular shapes both in the rocks in the foreground as well as in the negative spaces in between the rocks. The foreground naturally forms triangles that actually point to the main subject of the photograph which is the waterfall itself. Each triangle is curved to point directly to the subject, thus making it a compelling foreground due to its shape!



## *How to Photograph Shapes Instead of Landscapes . . . Continued*

Staircases are another great repeating shape easy to find in any city. Are they technically outdoor photography subjects? I guess it depends on where you find your staircases! But, this helps me prove my point with shapes.

Circular stairwells especially have a great example to repeating half circles, curves, and ovals that are naturally pleasing to anyone's eye. Even if they don't like photography, people always find the visual representation and perspective of shapes appealing and interesting.



Shapes don't always have to be used in repetition, though. Yes, they're nice to look at, but they aren't always easy to find. That's why when you see obvious natural repetition, you should shoot it. But what happens when you can't necessarily find those unique repeating moments in shapes?

Look for mirrored shapes.

The best place to find any mirrored shapes are in water, but not just any water. Look for still standing water to find your best mirrored shapes. Mirrored water will be like... well... a mirror to the shapes and features above it. That's why it's your best bet for this technique.



Take Grand Teton Range for example. Below the range sits a large lake called Jenny Lake. If you go to this lake in the morning, you can usually find it sitting unusually still because the winds haven't picked up enough to cause a lot of ripples or movement. The mirroring effect goes into full effect when the sun comes up and illuminates the triangular mountain peak rising above the lake. To get even more reflection, you can even put on a circular

polarizer and spin the polarizer to reflect more light off of the water. The triangle mountain peak reflects a triangle mountain peak!

## *How to Photograph Shapes Instead of Landscapes . . . Continued*

You can also use light and shadows to create unusual mirrored shapes, either on top of one another or side by side.



Here's another shot from Grand Teton National Park. It was late in the afternoon and the sun was getting low in the sky. Some clouds behind the mountain range blocked the sun for a while, but when the rays finally broke through, there was an obvious mirrored shape effect going on. The triangular mountain peak on the left was shaded while the area of the right was glowing yellow, also resembling a triangle. I quickly photographed this detail because it's an unusual mirrored shape in nature.

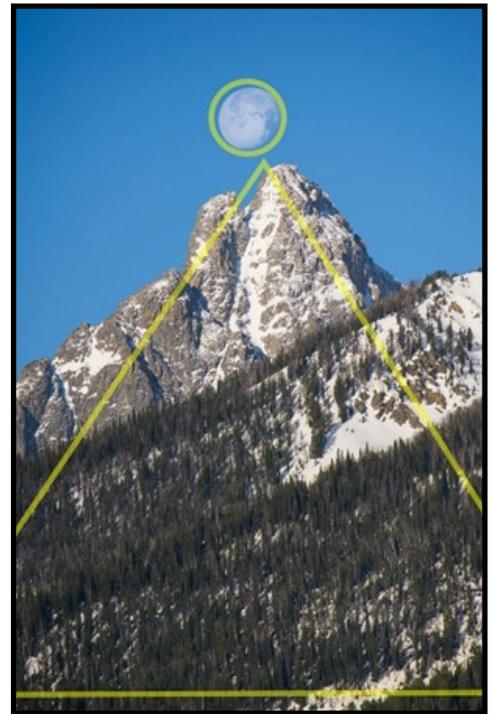
Shapes can also reveal other shapes. Everything doesn't have to be the same shape within a composition. What about when you get two or more shapes within the same frame? It sounds like a creative composition to me! One morning I was walking back to my car after a successful sunrise shoot. I noticed the moon was still hanging in the sky and that it was on track to set right above one of the mountain peaks.

A circular moon sitting down on top of a mountain peak? Translation: the triangular peak will act as an arrow pointing directly to the circular moon sitting down on top of it. I got out my 70-200 lens and waited for the moon to follow its path. Sure enough, everything fit perfectly together.

Sometimes shapes are noticed because they are always there. Sometimes they move into place. It's the photographer's job to notice these shapes and construct an interesting composition around them.

So, next time you're out photographing, develop the mindset of a five year old and ask yourself "why" constantly. Do you see an interesting foreground or detail shot in nature? Why do you like it? Why do you find it interesting enough to shoot? Why did it catch your eye?

Chances are the answer will be because of the shapes you see.



# How to Shoot the Perfect Picture

by Wayne Turner

An image does not just appear in front of your lens and you press the shutter button and there it is. Neither is it luck or pure chance. The perfect image starts long before you press the shutter. It starts when you are far away from the scene you are about to photograph. How to start that process and what route to take to get the image is what I am going to help you discover on this exciting journey as you learn digital photography.

I discovered many years ago that great images and those dramatically inspired photographs don't just happen. If you were to speak to a National Geographic award winning photographer, you'd find out that there is a process that leads up to the outstanding image. Now, I am not going to give you the keys to that type of image, because I wasn't part of the photographer's process. I am going to give you some basic steps to get you moving toward your personal goal of that perfect image. Before we go on, I need to make it clear that the perfect image for you is one that is in your mind and nobody else's. So here are some tips to head you in the right direction.

## 1. Define yourself as a photographer

This is really simple and not as difficult as the step sounds. Defining yourself as a photographer means discovering what you like to shoot and what genres you want to focus on. This might be landscape, portrait or close-up and macro. If you don't do this you'll be a generalist and never focus on what really motivates you to take photos. As I said, the perfect image starts with a process and this is the first step.

## 2. Learn to think

Once you know what you want to shoot and have an idea of what you really like, it's time to take a step back from the actually shooting and learn to think. Take time out to think about what the final result will be. Begin with the end in mind. If you love close-ups, is it that green tree frog with bright red eyes? Or, perhaps the bee on a bright red flower? Start to visualize what the final images should look like and what you need to do to get to that point. Where you need to go, at what time of day, and what equipment you need to take with you or plan to buy now or in the future. The perfect image comes from a lot of thought and planning.

## 3. Take your time

Perfect images can never be rushed. As the golfer who takes a lucky swing and gets a hole in one so are the chances of you getting the lucky shot. By taking your time to find the right location, setting up equipment properly, and thinking about the image, you will increase your chances of that perfect shot. Passion and enthusiasm are sometimes hindrances to great photography because they induce haste and speed, which are big negatives to the process.

## *How to Shoot the Perfect Picture . . . Continued*

### **4. Plan**

This is a key component to realizing a great image. It includes finding the best location for a perfect photo, preparing your equipment, working out the technical aspects of the image, and understanding what the best lighting and other weather conditions will be. Those who fail to plan, plan to fail. A good plan will increase your chances a hundredfold of shooting the photo of your dreams.

### **5. Experiment**

Although you have a plan and a series of steps you need to take to get the image in your mind's eye, don't be afraid to experiment. Make sure that you implement your plan carefully; this is number one. But be prepared to try out other ideas, angles, and settings. You never know what will happen, and a variation of your plan may just result in something dramatic and an image that is beyond your wildest dreams.

### **6. Practice makes perfect**

If at first you don't succeed, try and try again. Practice makes perfect is what the old adage says. If the plan doesn't work out, then try it again and again and again and vary it, as I said when experimenting. You may get 70 percent of the plan right or even only 50 percent. Don't give up, but keep on trying because next time it will be 75 or even 90 percent right. As you go along, you'll find yourself perfecting your techniques and repeating the successes more often. All this adds to the process, and you will find yourself getting nearer and nearer to that perfect image.

Once again, the perfect image is one that is in your mind and not someone else's. Nobody can prescribe to you what that image should be. It may look like something in a travel magazine or on the cover of Nature magazine or National Geographic, but it is still your image. Take the time to plan, experiment, and practice until you reach that perfect goal in your photographic journey. As you learn digital photography, you will learn something new every day, so build on it, and soon you will become an accomplished photographer. Happy shooting!

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***“There is nothing worse than a sharp image of a fuzzy concept.”***

***Ansel Adams***

*Rm*