

S SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

ONLINE PUBLICATION OF SEPPA

FEBRUARY 2010

Jamie Hayes

Chocolate and Charity

Cheri MacCallum

Floral Paintings

John Woodward

Custom White Balance



COVER ART
"Sophia Jewel"
Allen Griggs



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from the editor

While at ImagingUSA, in Nashville, I once again was moved by the presentation of the "Photographers Prayer." It was set to beautiful background music and incredible images. The voice-overs, reading the prayer, were those of trusted colleagues who helped pave the way for all of us. I have included the words below.

"Oh God, as I bring my subject into focus and prepare to make each Portrait, never let me forget that I'm creating treasures for some family, a keepsake for loved ones..."

Make me sensitive to the qualities and virtues of others, that I may draw out into the light, the beautiful radiant belongings of their hearts....

Help me Oh Lord, to be an artist, collecting the beauty of every soul, the glow of youth, the wisdom of age, the gentleness, the laughter or tears of each life that is precious in thy sight...

Deeper than a means of livelihood, give me the perspective to see my photographer's art as a service to others, making life richer and more memorable....

And, Dear Lord, between the lights and shadows, the ups and downs and the rolling years, keep me from getting out of focus or off center, so that my life and work may be framed with dignity and colored with contentment..."

AMEN

Doug Peninger
Editor
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Working with Children

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High Key Composites

CHERI MACCALLUM
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MARY FISK-TAYLOR
Shooting for Brides and Vendors

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"CAROLINE"
by Mary Fisk-Taylor, M. Photog., Cr., CPP

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SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

Southern Exposure magazine is an online publication of SEPPA and is published monthly.

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Deadlines

Article & Ad Submission
5th of each month

Proofs
20th of each month

On-Line Publication
1st of each month

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...more information coming



Jamie Hayes

For the Love of Chocolate and Charities



I am very fortunate to have such a great friend and business partner, Mary Fisk-Taylor, and as many of you probably know she is big on giving back to others not only in our photographic world through PPA Charities but also in our community as well.

This month's image was created for a charity campaign for CHIP (Children's Health Improving Parents) an organization to benefit families through home health care training. One of our clients is on the board and has been instrumental with raising money for CHIP through an annual event called Chocoholics. We have been one of the sponsors of this event for years (last year we sponsored the Chocolate Martini Bar! Yum!!) as well as providing photography services to the families involved. This year we were asked to create images that CHIP could use to market the event and also for the website. I thought it appropriate for February.

The focus of this image was to be of course chocolate, and as many types of chocolate we could put into one shot. I thought a red satin background would be a great start since the event is held in the month of February each year. Now I am not a commercial photographer and do not claim to be so for those of you, and you know who you are, who possess the skill and talent to be one please forgive me for any mistakes I have made in creating the following images.

I selected my 4x6 Larson Soff Box for the main light. One because I wanted a large soft diffused light that would hopefully properly show off the detail in both the different surfaces and textures of the chocolate and the silver platters and serving pieces that were selected to hold all of the chocolates. (Photo2)

Photo 2



I tried to use a fill light, behind the camera to fill in the shadows, but found it only flattened out the image and created problems with the reflections from the silver, so I choose to use a second main light opposite the primary main light. This is something I would never suggest to use for portrait or wedding images but it seemed to work for this image. I used a 3x4 Larson Soff Box for this light. (Photo 3).



Photo 3

I love to use accent light to add depth and dimension to many of the images I create so why not apply the same technique to this image. I set up a 14x18 Larson Soff Box on my Profoto Compact 600 strobe placed to the left and slightly behind the chocolate fountains to add specular highlights and separate the two fountains from each other while lighting the container holding the pretzels. (Photo 4).



Photo 4

CONTACT

Hayes & Fisk: The Art of Photography
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www.hayesandfisk.com
jamie@hayesandfisk.com

I also turned on the bounce light I use to light our backgrounds (more on that next month) shown in Photo 5 the setup shot. This light added still a little more detail to the overall image and also to the background.

The final image was cropped and the edges of the image were selectively darkened and softened using NIK Software's Viveza (This is one of the things you would have to pry out for my cold dead hands!)

Select areas of the entire image were photographed as close up images in addition to the beverages that would be available the night of the event. I didn't have to change the lighting for these images because the entire set was so well detailed.

*If you were wondering,
we did eat all of the
chocolate!!!!*



Once I added this accent light, the right side of the image and especially the small chocolates in front seemed to be a little flat, lacking in detail. I tried to add a second 14x48 strip light to the right side but the whole image looked too bright and lost a sense of depth so I selected a smaller 17x17 soff box instead (I used my Profoto Acute 600B for this light because I had used all of my Compact units) . By using the smaller more harsh light, as compared to the larger boxes I was already using, I was able to keep a little more of the contrast I had envisioned. This light also added more depth and dimension to the chocolate flowing from the fountains and the cookies, both on the tiered platter and in the small dish just under the pretzels.(Photo 5).



EQ
equipment

Camera: Canon 1DS Mark III
Lens: Canon 35-350 L Series 3.5-5.6 Zoom Lens set at 90 mm
Exposure: 1/60 sec @ f/11 100 ISO RAW File Capture and jpeg (for viewing purposes only)
Light Meter: Sekonic L-358
Light Modifiers: Larson 4x6, 3x4, 17x17 Soff Boxes, 14x18 Soff Strips
Strobes: Profoto compact 600 and Acute 600B

X page

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Starting in May 2010,
Page X
will feature work by
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members who love nature
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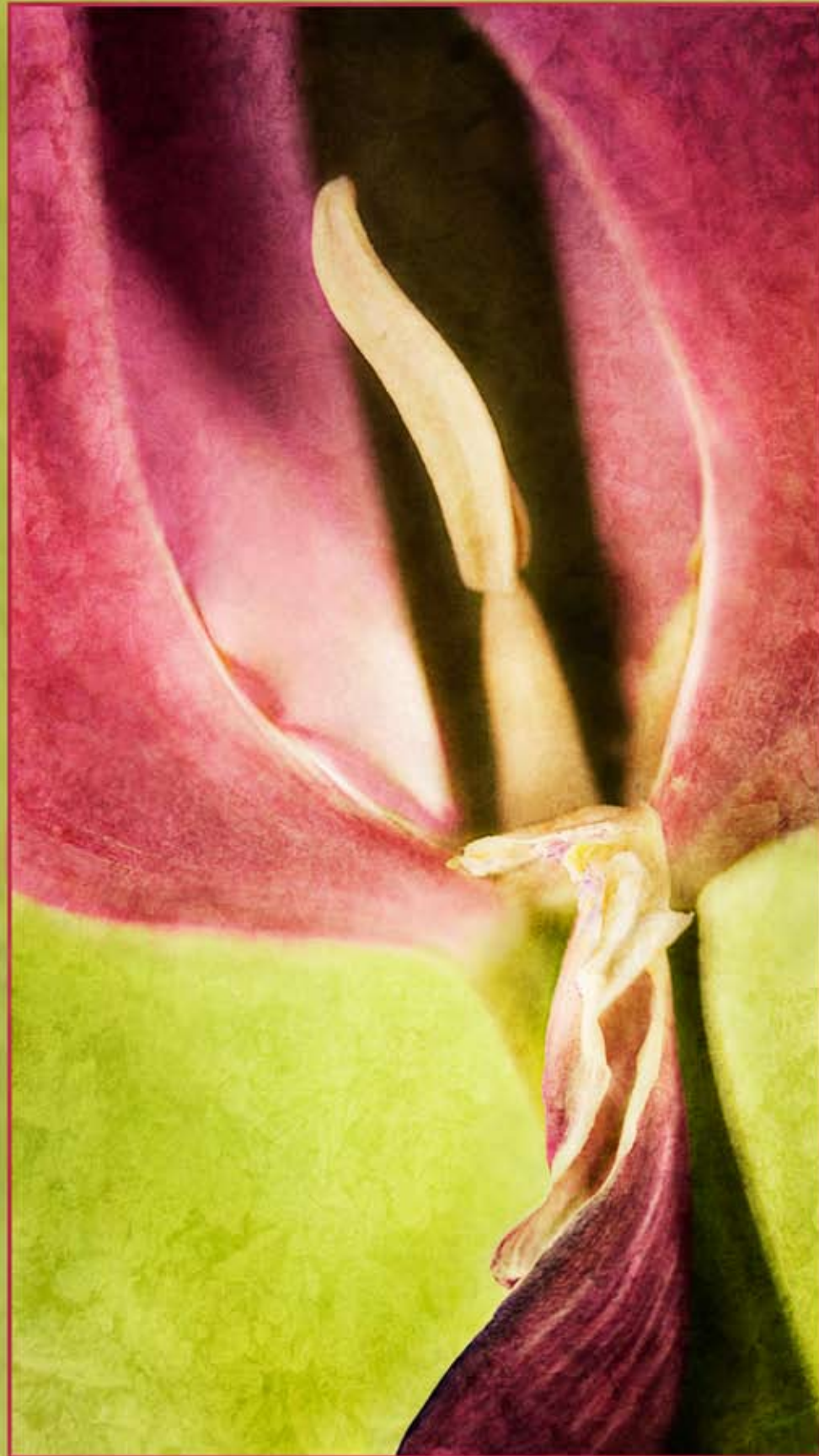
Submit your image with
your 2010 Print
Competition Case. Your
image must be on a
separate disk marked
PAGE X.

Be sure to include your
image, headshot, bio, and
all image info, including
how you shot the image.
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Images may be a vertical or
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"Deconstruction of a Tulip"
by Cheri MacCallum



Pirates of the Caribbean

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The Finer Points





Kevin Newsome

A Few Moments with...

Major news networks and magazines all have editorial features. CBS has Andy Rooney. Sure, he has his opinions, just like any of us. SEPPA is lucky to have our very own Kevin Newsome. Kevin is featured each month as he gives us his latest rant. Some things may hit home, some may be surprisingly poignant. When it's all said and done, it's just Kevin's opinion and he thought he should share it. We, at Southern Exposure, hope you will enjoy this month's installment of

"A Few Moments With...". This month, Tax Audit.

(Click on the title, Tax Audit, and you will be linked to the video.)

A word to the faint of heart, fasten your seatbelts!

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Janet Boschker

Working with

Children... Survival!!!

We are headed into an age with children that only one word describes - survival!!! The third and final session in the "Year in the Life" is the milestone stage of walking.

If you're lucky, the mom will bring her child in when he is just taking a few steps, a little unsteady, and not running full speed ahead. That's rare! Most of the time the little darlings are running around, too young to follow directions or play games, and our job is to get that classic, standing pose. YIKES! To say the least, it can be challenging. At this age, children are exploring everything they can about their world - and everything is exciting to them. All day, every day they are busy discovering new things with virtually no restrictions, so why in the world should they come to us and stay still? Persistence on our part and reassurance to the mom that their child is behaving exactly the way they should goes a long way. And as always, have a plan of action.

I use a lot of natural light for photographing children, but this standing pose is an exception. I use a large softbox, (I prefer Larson). The design of the box is shallow and great for small studios. The large light source allows the child to move around and still get good directional light. Place the bottom edge of the softbox at the child's shoulder height and your catchlights will be in the proper position for pretty, 3-dimensional light. I shoot at f11 for maximum depth of field while little Suzy is moving back and forth and all around. I am totally dependent on autofocus at this stage of my career and not ashamed to admit it!



I have come to realize that if I can't get that classic standing pose in the first few minutes, it's probably not going to happen. I have the element of surprise on my side! The child is a little wary, still figuring out where he is, what is going to happen next. I simply have the mom bring the child to a predetermined "spot", stay with him until I get focused, composed and then when I get his attention, she steps to the side and out of the shot. This is effective for about - well, not very long - so you must be ready and fire away, or the opportunity will be lost. If luck is on your side, the child will take a step or two, begin to interact with you, give a variety of expression and you will be all set to move on to different things. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of being matter of fact in getting the mom to cooperate with the least amount of interaction with the child - they are small, but smart - and know how to get control of the situation! If you have a "clinger" on your hands, the best remedy is to get the mom to stop talking or interacting in any way while you (not mom) introduce little intriguing items (big marbles, tiny books, white cars, tiny white stuffed animals) that are simply too hard to resist. If you have a "busybody" that is way too interested in everything but what you want him to be interested in, the only solution is to find something that will stop him in his tracks - hopefully where you have planned for him to be. What works for me is - okay this sounds weird - a dog toy that is really a tennis ball made to look like a frog. The bouncing noise gets the child's attention, and the friendly frog keeps it. Most kids have never seen anything like it, so it is entertaining for them. Again, be ready to fire away, because the next thing to happen - he is charging straight for it! The child will come around, you just can't give up. I use very few props, but I do have a small white rocker I picked up at a flea market - the secret weapon. Most of my clients don't like any props at all - so it is only as a last resort that I pull out the rocker and kind of let the child go with it. The mom will want to sit the child in the rocker, but I gently suggest that we just see what happens and shoot while the child is climbing, exploring and generally having a good time doing what they do.



CONTACT **contact**

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Janel Pahl

This is the Second, of a series, from Janel Pahl, as she takes you on her life-long journey. Janel will be the opening day speaker for the 2011 convention in Athens.

the GIFT



Part Two of Receiving the Gift

I supported myself for twelve years by making clay animals and selling them at art fairs.

However, photography was always in the back of my mind. I started taking photography classes at the local community college and realized this was where my passion was. I was ready for a change from the monotony of ceramics. I decided to make photography my profession. After all, I had such a vast knowledge of image making from a my experiences at the Jr. college. (little did I know).

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I interviewed for a job at Albert and James Studio. Their business was solely senior portraits. The studio had not one woman photographer out of about ten. I'm not sure why I was hired, but I believe to this day that it was because of one thing I said to a senior when I was having to photograph her in front of "the boss". The words were simple and natural to me. The girl seemed uncomfortable and I really did want to make her feel good about herself, so I said "Your sweater is so pretty, the color matches your eyes exactly." After the session Mr. James asked me if I had said that just to make an impression on him. I answered with a quick "no." His inquiry insulted me a bit. It can be annoying when you do something genuine in life and you are questioned about its sincerity. Complimenting and saying positive things to people only works when you are sincere and genuine. That one little comment to that girl 15 years ago has made a big difference in the way that I treat my customers today.



I struck out on my own with little experience, but lots of determination. Having a commercial site for a studio, has never been an option for me. I am a mother first and photographer second. My children are, and always will be, my first priority. My first "home studio" was in a two-car garage and I never did anything to convert it. When customers came in they would walk right past the washer and dryer (sometimes they would be churning away washing clothes). Getting great smiles from the children was what I was best at. I must admit that everything else; lighting, posing, clothing, composition and emotion were absent from all of my portraits. I really did not have a clue. Unfortunately, I thought I did. I found myself saying that I never wanted to take any classes because I did not want to pick up any one else's style. The truth couldn't have been further away. I became frustrated with weddings and always left them feeling unsettled, because I never felt that I had the time, right light or whatever else that hindered me from getting better images.

I was frustrated, bored and wanted to do something more, but didn't know what. My thinking was that maybe bigger and better props would help. I purchased five huge 18-inch snowflakes and taped them up on my backdrops. Two brightly colored 5-foot toy soldiers towered over my tiny subjects. I had a silk Christmas tree decorated with tinsel and lots of brightly wrapped packages below. Each session became more and more cluttered with "stuff". I found myself saying, "Where are the children in the photographs?" I became apathetic but worse, I had turned into a machine. The "magic" of photography had definitely worn off and unfortunately I was not aware of this. It was difficult to be objective about myself. I just knew that I was bored with photography and was becoming very tired of weddings.

(Janel Pahl continues in March with part three.)



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Multiple image composites are fun and clients love them, but sometimes they can take a long time to create, especially if they are creatively cutout and layered together. Masking each image for cool blends and overlaps can be extremely time-consuming, but here is an awesome trick that will make your high key comps practically effortless!

The key to this technique is photographing your subject on a clean white background; ideally, it should read from 250-250-250 to 255-255-255 pure white (Fig 2)



Fig 2

Step One For this composite, I started off with a 12x12 document at 300dpi, filled with white

Step Two

I chose my background image and dragged it onto the new document, then turned down the opacity for a pale effect. Then I added a layer mask so I could hide the black part of her pants that showed on the right. I painted black on the mask to hide the unwanted area. (Fig 3)



Fig 3

Step Three

I chose another image to drag on top of the first, but as you can see, it covers the first image. (Fig 5) Instead of masking as before, I just put the mode of the layer into Darken. The Layer Mode is found on the layer palette, just under the Layer tab. (Fig 6)



Fig 5



Fig 4

Fig 6

Step Four

Wow, just like magic, all the white vanishes, leaving only the darker pixels! How easy was that? (Fig 7)

Drag on more images, putting each one in the darken mode to create a fun composite effect. Some images may show through the other layer's detail where you don't want it, (Fig 8), like the edge of the arm can be seen through her face. To fix, simply add the mask to the bottom layer (it already has one in this case) and paint black on that spot to hide the offending portion. (Fig 9)

Fig 7



Fig 8

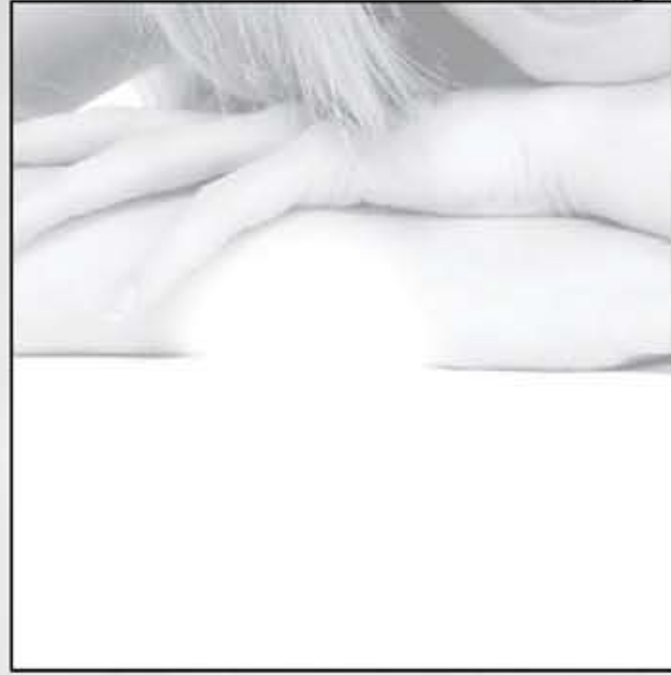


Fig 9

OK—I'll admit this demo is prepped with "easy" high contrast images for this to come together without snags.....So how about doing this with color images that happen to be a little darker around the edges and not such a "perfect demo"? Well, here's a "real life project" for you to see how easy it still is~with straight images!! You will be amazed!

(Fig 10a, 10b)

For this comp of Hollie, I created a 10x20 and filled it with white – not pure white, but white with detail (245-245-245). How?

Take the Curves adjustment layer and click on OPTIONS to set your white and black colors to be 245-245-245 and 9-9-9 in the options. (Fig 11)

Then click on your white background with the white dropper and it will be 245-245-245!

Fig 10a



Fig 10b

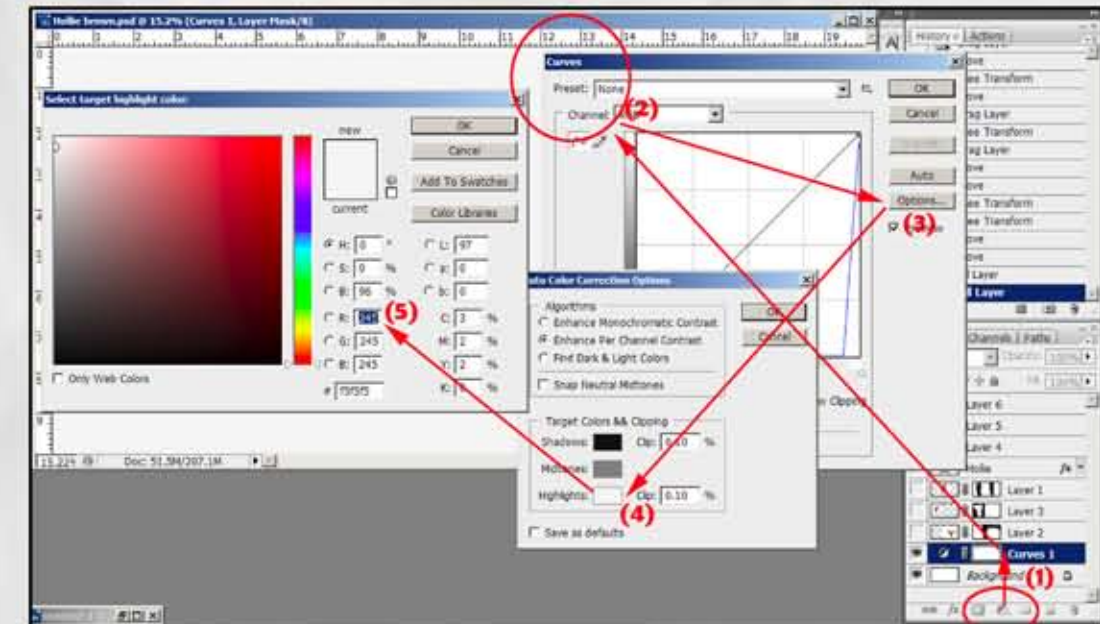


Fig 11

Then take each image and use an adjustment layer of curves and click with the white eyedropper near the center (near her body) to make it the same 245-245-245. (Fig 12)

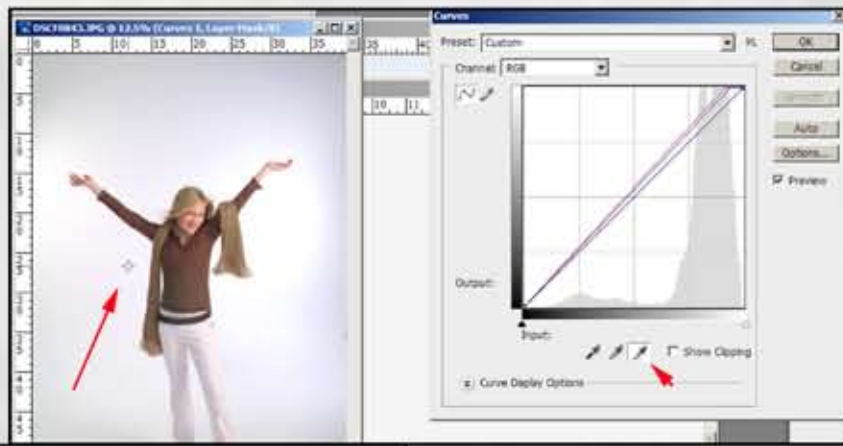


Fig 12

The edges are still slightly grey, but that's ok. Flatten the image and drag onto the base doc. (Fig 13)



Fig 13

Add a mask and use a HUGE (900-1200px) brush in black and paint off the outer edges with one swipe!

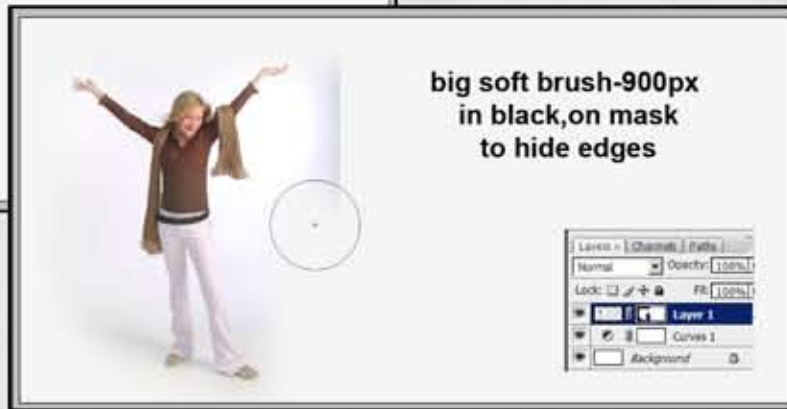


Fig 14

(Fig 14) Fast and Easy!

Repeat with the next image....and the center image. (Fig 15)



Fig 15

Now put the center image in darken mode so it doesn't fog the others and Ta-Da!! Piece of cake! (Fig 16)



Fig 16

This cool technique also works with a Black background too – Just use the Lighten blending mode instead! (Fig 17)



Fig 17

**I have since purchased a "winged starfish" soft box from Larson Enterprises that hangs above my background and makes the most awesome smooth and evenly lit white backdrop....without stands and cords and hassle! No more dark corners and hot spots either!!! How did I ever live without it before?? (Fig 18)



My studio camera room showing Larson Winged Starfish (1) and the 4x6 Soffbox (2)...no shadows or hotspots! (yes, this is an untouched image!)

Fig 18



Cheri MacCallum

a soft f Floral painting

Part one: The Enhancement

While I love what I do, commissioned portrait paintings for other photographers,

floral and landscape paintings are a passion of mine.

Whether it's a macro image of a flower or a sprawling landscape, there is just something about the beauty of nature that inspires me. If you've seen the last two articles, we prepared for and painted an oil with brushy and textured brushes. With this floral we will be using softer mediums.

You'll notice some similarities with the image prep in "part one" of this series, but the brushes and blending techniques in "part two" will be a little different.

This image was taken by my husband Drew MacCallum who is graciously allowing me to use his image. I've always liked it and thought it would be a fun image to paint.

We will begin with image prep in Adobe Photoshop. The first thing I'll do here is to pop the highlights and deepen the shaded side and shadows just a little to add depth. I duplicate the layer by holding down the alt key while clicking on the "new layer" icon on the bottom of the layers palette (the one that looks like a little piece of paper with the corner turned up). This will bring up a dialog box. (image_02). I change the blending mode to "overlay" and click the bottom box that reads, "fill with overlay neutral color (50% gray)". Now notice in the layers palette a new layer that is gray. This is the layer that we will do all of our highlight and shadow work on.

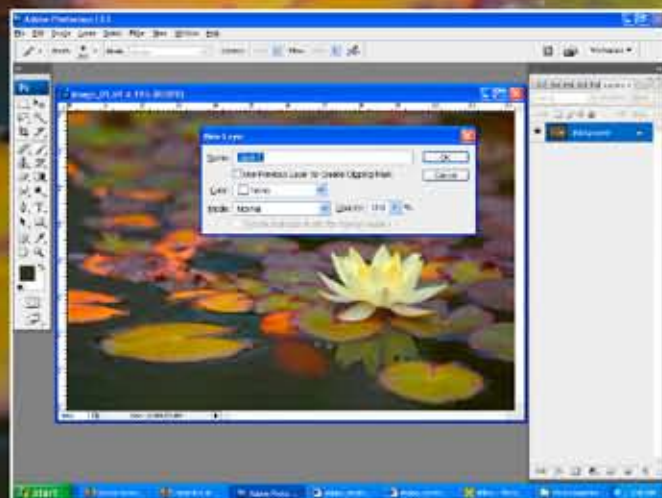


image 2

I get my paint brush, in normal mode, in the brush option bar at 5-10% opacity. I make sure my colors are back to default by clicking "D" on the keyboard to bring up black and white (the colored squares at the bottom of the tool bar). We will paint with white for highlights and black for shadows. I look over my image seeing where highlights are naturally falling and begin slowly building up more highlight in these areas. (image_03).

I will concentrate the highlight and shadow work on, and around, the water lily itself being careful not to go all the way to the edge. This will help keep the focus on the lily and immediate area. Some highlights will already be light enough; lightening them would blow it out. Use judgment here. Making sure the brush is relative to the area we're working in will keep our strokes from being too streaky with too small a brush, or over doing the area with too big of a brush.



image 3



Next I'll work on the shaded side and shadow areas. Here again just working in the area on and around the lily. (image_04). There are a lot of darker areas in this image, so I won't be doing much with the shadows. We now have an image that is ready to paint (image_05), so make sure to check back next month when we will turn this photograph into a soft painting!

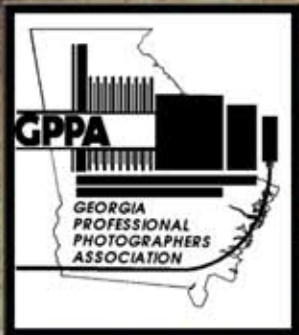


image 4



image 5

Cheri MacCallum is the owner of Art by Cheri where she specializes in the painting, fine art printing and finishing of commissioned portraits for professional photographers. Cheri is a regular speaker and workshop instructor on "Painting Portraits in a Digital World."



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happenings with

Print Competition = Green Merits Too!

Sarah L. Johnston, M.Photog.Cr., CPP, F-PPANI

Looking for ways to improve your business? I suggest something that has worked well for photographers around the country, including myself: print competition. Guild, State, Regional, and Professional Photographers of America's International Print Competition...enter print competition at all levels!

The real education takes place when you sit in the room as the prints are judged. Listen to what the judges say when they challenge a score – you hear what the judges see in an image. Listen as they point things out, whether it is something that needs improvement, or something that the maker has done so well that a judge wants to score the image higher.

After the competition, consider asking a judge for a critique. It can help immensely. This one-on-one conversation has given me more detailed insights for further improving my everyday images.

Print competition is also a fabulous marketing tool. With every ribbon comes a chance for a press release to your local newspaper, getting your name in print even if the image didn't score an 80 or higher. When your image merits, or "goes loan," it's even better.

In fact, one of the reasons I use images from my daily studio work for competition is the marketing value. (And I believe I should always be capable of creating merit-worthy images for my clients.) We make sure to put every award, with the image, into our studio newsletter. We want everyone to know how happy we are that an image created of little Billy, for his second birthday, did so well in print competition. Judges Choice ribbons, Best of Show ribbons, and more are displayed in the studio. If a client's image is accepted into the PPA Showcase or PPA Loan Collection book, I purchase a copy for the client. They are so excited that they make sure everyone knows how well "their" image has done.

Keep in mind that this is also great information to add to your website, blog, Facebook, Myspace, and Twitter accounts. Post those awards anywhere your clients are! (Viral marketing is the current "thing" to do and is much cheaper than direct mail newsletters, but that's another article.)



Professional Photographers of America

When I ask the judges for ways I can improve my images, it's not just so I might do better in competition and earn awards.

Rather, I want to create better images for my clients and improve my business. And that is why it is worth the expense to enter images in print competition. The education I have received and the constant improvement in the images I create has been priceless.

Get ready for the 2010 International Competition – deadline May 3, 2010 (more information will be available soon at PPA.com's Competitions page). Check with your affiliate association for upcoming print competition entry deadlines and rules. Send questions about regional or international competitions to **Jim Dingwell** (jdillingwell@ppa.com).

for Additional information

Be sure to visit PPA.com to learn more about the events and happenings throughout PPA. There, you will find numerous links to assist you in every facet of your photographic career. If you are not a member of PPA, be sure to visit the links for membership.



Mary Fisk-Taylor

Photographing for the Brides First... Photographing for the Vendors Second

At Hayes & Fisk the
Art of Photography
we still
LOVE
to photograph
weddings

and are so happy when we can go out on a given date and create beautiful images for the bride and groom and their family and friends. I am most proud of our images but the fact that we still insist on delivering custom designed wedding albums and presentation portraits really sets us apart in this "shoot and burn" wedding world.

I am still flattered when a couple comes in and chooses me to capture their day, trusts me to deliver my eye's work and designer albums to grace their homes forever. One day they will sit with their children and grandchildren and look through my images and design. This still really makes me happy and I do feel blessed to be a part of this tradition. I know that our determination to deliver finished albums and portraits is not a popular decision amongst my competition and even many consumers today. However, I must stay true to my mission as a wedding and portrait artist and finished presentations is the only way I want to deliver my work.

The sunny side of this decision comes to us in so many ways, the sheer gratitude and often tears of joy when the albums are designed or picked up, the referrals from our brides to newly engaged friends and family members and the mommies to be that usually start calling after a year or so and asking us to start capturing the next phase of their family's journey. Becoming the visual historians for our brides is the best compliment of all.

I must confess that there is a downside. Our studio has definitely experienced a drop in wedding bookings because I cannot compete with the lower priced studios that are delivering DVDs and/or proof boxes. I really need my artwork to leave the studio finished and for this I have to sacrifice some wedding bookings. We have experienced a definite drop in the number of wedding we photograph each year. Wttte have gone from about 35 weddings a year to 22 weddings a year. However, the weddings that we do photograph we do so with confidence and a shared vision with the clients.

Each year I try to discover ways to share my message and concept of wedding photography with the brides and grooms that come by to visit my studios. What I realized a few years ago is that it is equally important to share and educate our philosophy with the other high-end wedding vendors in my market area. If all of the wedding vendors are sharing and educating the bride on the importance of full visual coverage and finished, printed products then it will become a theme in weddings not just the photography studios mission. The way that I started working and educating the vendors was by going into their studios, stores and boutiques and capturing light commercial images for them, creating press printed advertising and books for them and brand new fresh marketing pieces. This takes a little more work on my end but believe me it has paid off!! We are already above our wedding bookings from last year and are now turning brides away for certain dates.



Mary Fisk-Taylor is continued on page 36.

CONTACT

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whcc

➔ IT'S ALL HERE.

White House Custom Colour, Your Professional Photographic and Press Printing Partner

Photographic Prints



Color consistency and quality make WHCC the choice for many professional photographers. We offer photographic prints on Kodak Endura professional papers in lustre, glossy, and metallic in a variety of sizes from wallets to 30x40 and larger.

Gallery Wraps



Fine art and photographic Gallery Wraps are available in three different paper options, three protective laminates, two depths and custom sizing. Orders include free UPS ground shipping and typically ship in two days.

Press Printed Cards



Press Printed Cards are available in 4x5.5, 5x5 and 5x7 sizes as folded and flat styles as well as 5x7 Wide Format, 5x5 Trifold and 4x5.5 Accordion. Cards come in quantities as low as 25, include envelopes, and are offered in five papers.

Press Printed Books

WHCC Press Printed Books are unmatched in print quality, craftsmanship, and turnaround with most books shipping the next day! Books are available in nine sizes with eight cover options including a custom metallic photographic cover. Inside pages are printed on a magazine style text weight or lay flat hinged paper in standard or pearl.



White House Custom Colour is a full service, professional photographic lab and press printer. In addition to the showcased products, we offer a full line of products and services to make a positive impact on your goals for continued success in building your photographic business. For more information visit our website, www.whcc.com

Visit pro.whcc.com/go/Start today to open your WHCC account.

Cover Artist

Allen Griggs

Allen Griggs has been a professional photographer for 20 years. With his wife Jennifer, they have owned and operated their studio in Nashville, specializing in children's portraits. Allen and Jennifer feel very blessed to have a career that is so rewarding. Passion is the motivating force that inspires them to create daily in everything they touch. Allen has won numerous awards and attributes much of his success in their business to print competition. "Sophia Jewel" is a portrait of his beautiful daughter.



"Sophia Jewel"



Note: Images chosen for the cover of Southern Exposure are first place or distinguished award winners from the annual affiliated judging.

Two Crucial Steps

There are two crucial steps to making this vendor marketing really successful and they both take some extra time and money but it is well worth it in the long run. I would rather budget these types of advertising costs into my marketing budget and cut back a little on a wedding guide ad or bridal show space. Or, even better, find other local vendors that would be willing to partner with you on the printing of any albums or press printed marketing materials. You may be pleasantly surprised how many businesses would be willing to pay for advertising in a wedding book at the local wedding coordinator's shop or share in booth rental at a bridal show. We are all local businesses and unless they are your direct competition you may find lots of willing partners that would love to work with you on advertising pieces, etc.

My initial goal is to capture images that truly represent my vendors and give them a ton of variety. I can do this in two different ways. Obviously when I work a wedding I make sure that I know each and every vendor for the event. So, I can go in and create different and fresh images for the reception facility, the wedding coordinator, the cake baker, the caterer, the florist, the gown boutique or designer, the invitation and paper company, etc. After I have created the images for the bride and groom I always steal away for a few minutes here and there and try to create more dynamic images that I think that vendors have not seen a hundred times before and that they would love to use on their marketing pieces, websites and sample albums.



I categorize the images after each wedding and make sure that I have a folder for each vendor. I then go in and create a DVD for each vendor with their images on it, now each image does have my copyright stamp on it and it is small enough to place on their website, email or create an Animoto slideshow. I also use my top few images and create a designer 4.5x5 press printed card from WHCC for each vendor. The cards have my name, website and phone number on them along with the vendors information on the back. These cards are reasonable and easy to make and I know that the other vendors hand them out during consultations and bridal shows. I do this from each wedding. After a few weddings have come through production and I have enough variety for each select vendor I will then create a business card or marketing piece that is specific to that vendor, for example business cards, cake tasting worksheets, appointment cards, etc. These are always a HUGE hit!! My vendors are not photographers and when I can create cool and different marketing pieces for them they are both relieved and grateful to me for doing the work and giving them beautiful marketing cards and pieces. Once or twice a year I will also design and deliver a finished wedding album that is a great representation of their product or venue. I choose to use the WHCC press printed books because they are economical and offer the most variety with a speedy turn around time.

My next plan of action is to arrange a lunch meeting or coffee break with the owner of the business and/or the marketing director. I will usually schedule this around the same time that I am delivering some new marketing pieces, DVDs of images, albums, etc. That way I can walk in with cool gifts for them and it starts the meeting off on a really positive note. I am always scouting out their location looking for opportunities to display our portraits and albums and many times will ask or mention that we would be happy to donate artwork for the walls. For example at a local very high-end bridal dress boutique I talked to the owners about us coming in and photographing details and highlights of their designer gowns, shows and headpieces. They were thrilled because it saved them the money and effort to buy from the designers and each piece was very specific to their store. It was a great success! Another suggestion I always make is to let us come in one morning and create fun headshots of each sales associate and employee. This way we can create different marketing pieces and thank you notes that include their headshots and store images. The owners and marketing directors love this because it sets them apart from any other shop in town. I also give them the headshots and images for use on their websites. All of them have my logo on it so it's free advertising for my studios.

Saks Fifth Avenue

So, with all of these ideas taking place, images being taken, marketing pieces being designed, products being delivered, etc., etc., I am hopefully setting myself apart in the market place as the "vendor's choice" for photography. This is testimonial and referral that I cannot buy, because it has to happen organically. I believe that by focusing my energy on these other wedding vendors and their needs and their marketing pieces I am able to grow my wedding business through goodwill and great referrals. It does take a little extra work and organization but it is well worth it. And, I know that it will pay off with extra weddings in 2010!

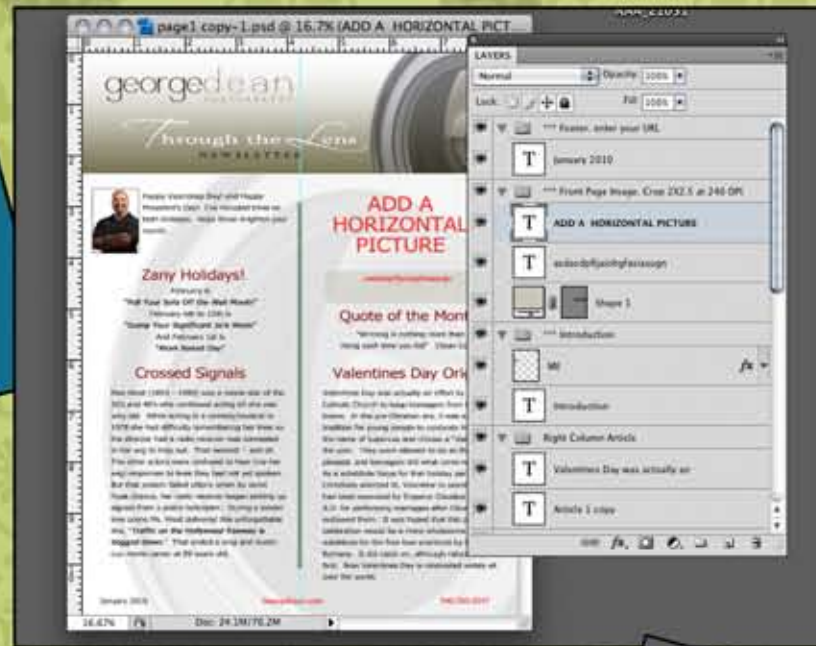




Victoria Kelly

Extra, Extra

Read all About It



Photographynewsletter.com is the brainchild of George Dean, a marketing savvy photographer in Denton, Texas. The premise is simple...he writes a newsletter that's 90% complete, you download it, customize it with your information and mail or email it to your clients. And, yes, he even offers a service that will print it, stuff it and mail it for you.

The newsletter for the next month is posted on the website by the 5th of the preceding month. He's made it pretty simple to customize...the newsletter comes as a layered PSD file and he's even made the layers that you need to change a really bright red color. Any of the articles that you don't need in any given newsletter can be stockpiled and used at a later date.

The first newsletter I downloaded after signing up for the service took me a whopping 30 minutes to get ready to mail. I actually took a little extra time and made a template using my studio information and header and saved it in my marketing folder. My next newsletter was ready to be printed in about 15 minutes.

If you're going to work a newsletter into your studio routine, think about how often you want to distribute it. Many studies show that a person needs to see your name at least 4 times before it sticks...so a publish rate of 4 times a year should be your minimum. For optimal visualization, though, consider sending your newsletter monthly. If that just isn't in your marketing budget, try a hybrid solution: email your newsletter 8-10 months of the year and supplement with the printed copy the other months. I do a spring and fall portrait event in my studio in April and October so my newsletters for March and September will be more robust than what I send out the other months.

Visit the website at www.photographynewsletter.com and download the sample. You'll also want to watch the video on customization. And then you'll be thinking that March is a pretty good time to start reminding your clients why they chose you for their photography needs.

To sweeten the deal even further, George is offering a \$10 discount on a monthly subscription if you use the code "SEPPA" when you sign up. Don't put off joining, though, because the discount offer ends February 28th.

So...the next time you're wondering why your phone isn't ringing, think about what you should be doing instead of rubbing your lucky rabbit's foot and wishing on a star.

CONTACT

Victoria Kelly
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www.victoriakellyphotography.com

It's February 1st...do you know where your clients are?

Perhaps more importantly, do your clients know where you are? Does your name come to their minds when the subject of photography arises? If you're answering anything other than "yes" it might be time to revisit a couple of marketing basics.

You're probably familiar with the 80-20 rule...you know, the one that says that 80% of your revenue comes from 20% of your clients. But what are you doing to keep that 20%? While you're out searching for new blue ocean strategies, take care not to overlook the clients you've already invested the marketing dollars to find. They're "in the boat", so to speak, and are less expensive to maintain than the new client you don't have yet.

Let's take a new look at an old standard...the newsletter. I know what you may be thinking...that between blogging, tweeting and facebooking there just isn't enough time in your day to even consider doing a newsletter.

What if someone wrote it for you? What if all you had to do was put in YOUR pictures and studio information, write a couple of sentences about what's going on in your studio and you'd be done? Would you be interested if someone printed it, stuffed it, put the postage on it and mailed it?

Such a horse of a different color does exist...and I'm going to tell you about it.





Rick Gibbons

FOLKS

“Choose a job you love,

and you will never have to work a day in your life.”

Confucius

How lucky is the man, or woman, who enjoys their chosen career so much that it spills over into other facets of their life, personal, social and family?



Beginning in the 1960s, Deuel has traveled extensively, almost always bringing home a souvenir from exotic locations. Three Copodimonte figurines from Italy would easily command three to four thousand dollars in the right market.

Lladro porcelain, Hummels and Tom Clark figurines are mixed into an eclectic collection that also includes cameras made from Sprite cans. The most unique could be the figurine of an underwater photographer made from glass and gold, but then Deuel also has several Kodak Brownies, just like his (and many of ours as well) first camera as a child. He gets enthusiastic when he talks about the Kodak #1 8x10 that arrived in pieces from Woodstock, NY. Totally restored now, the camera utilizes 8x10 sheet film.



Lladro
Copodimonte
Hummel



Studio displays of his collectibles through the years have been a conversation starter for his clients, who bonded with Deuel, his wife Barbara or other staff members while relaying stories about the collection. Some clients have even contributed to the collection of over 200 cameras and over 500 figurines. Now that he is a man of leisure, he has considered a fire-sale on Ebay to decrease the surplus but not quite yet. The biggest hassle is where to put everything since he and Barbara recently downsized their home. Curio cabinets, shelves and boxes take up lots of space.



CONTACT

You may contact Deuel White at:
deuels@frontiernet.net
or call 931-526-4533

to contact Rick Gibbons with a nominee for features in your area
rickg@triadbiz.rr.com
or call 336-883-7104

* all images courtesy Deuel White



Melanie Burney, assistant print salon chair

Print Competition



"The Gatekeepers Daughter"
by Lissa Hatcher

The time is drawing nigh when you must make a decision..... little ballerina in a pink tutu and converse sneakers or that majestic bird that you captured while visiting relatives. Decisions, decisions! I mean why only 4? What if I make the wrong decision?! Yikes!

I know you are probably thinking about now "What is she talking about?" Well it is one of the most educational tools that we as SEPPA members have.....it's simple, the mystery answer is Print Competition!

Print Competition is one of the best benefits of SEPPA. Every year about this same time there are several hundred SEPPA members that are starting to prepare and some even putting final touches on their print cases. Why enter you may ask yourself and the answer is pretty simple yet complex. The answer is education! The education gained from print competition is education that cannot be taught in a classroom or convention center. The critiquing and judging of your work in front of a panel of judges as well as your peers can be a scary thing; however, you will learn more in that 1 minute (give or take a few) than you will learn in a week long class.

There is more than education to be gained, this is where the complexity takes over. By entering in the SEPPA Print Competition, all PPA members that receive a sealed print (80 or above), receive a PPA Merit if you submit your image to PPA the same year. By receiving these merits, you work towards earning your Master of Photography Degree as well as the respect of your peers.



"What a Wonderful Life"
by Jim Carpenter

Each category receives a First Place and two Distinguished Awards (if applicable). This year will be the first year that all prints earning a score of 80 or higher at the SEPPA Print Competition are eligible for awards. Each of prints will be judged head to head for all awards. In the past, head to head was only used to break a tie.

There are many awards given at the Awards Banquet for Print Competition. There are the Kodak Elite Gallery Awards as well as the Fuji Masterpiece Awards just to name a few.

The 2010 SEPPA Print Competition is sure to be one that you will want to be a part of with many new changes taking place this year. Print Rules and Online Registration will open up as soon as PPA approves all rule changes as well as documentation. You will receive a email as soon as print rules are posted on the SEPPA website.

Now for those who have never entered a print SEPPA competition, we actually have a award just for you. It is the Buddy Stewart Scholarship. This award is presented to the First Time entrant with the highest print case average. This recipient receives Tuition to a PPA Affiliate School within the SEPPA Region. Now you may be saying to yourself, what if my prints do really bad? What if I don't have four images? What if one of the judges doesn't like one of my prints? These are just to name a few of the "what if's" that you may have. You are not alone in this thinking. No one knows who the prints belong to because the name is listed on the backs of the prints so no one will ever know if your print did poorly. So what if a judge or several judges don't like one of your images. That is just their opinion and that is why we have a panel of judges. If you never enter print competition, you will never know how you stack up against your peers. "You may just surprise yourself and them.

The valuable education obtained just by entering Print Competition is priceless. Find yourself someone who has entered and you feel comfortable asking for advice. I have found that too many opinions can be very confusing and everyone will see something different. What one likes another may dislike. Just remember that when you ask for advice and help please know that you need to be open and ready to learn. It's amazing how one small little detail that you missed will keep your print from earning the recognition that it should. You need to find someone that will be brutally honest with you, as much as it hurts, because a candy-coated critique doesn't gain you the recognition you deserve.



"Don't Hiccup"
by David Carlson

SEPPA 2010 affiliated print judging will be hosted by Tennessee Professional Photographers Association, during their Spring Seminar April 10 - 12, 2010. Judging dates will be April 9th and 10th. Deadline to receive your print case will be Wednesday, April 7, 2010. Be sure to check out next month's magazine for rules and other important information.



"Isabella"
by Enrique Munoz

Good luck as you embark on furthering your education by entering the 2010 SEPPA Affiliate Print Competition. So now, I know you have decisions that you have to make..... little ballerina in a pink tutu and converse sneakers or that majestic bird that you captured while visiting relatives. Decisions, decisions! I mean why only 4? What if I make the wrong decision?! Yikes!

Should you have any questions regarding the 2010 judging, contact Randy McNeilly at (704) 482-0011 or randy@mcneillyphotography.com.

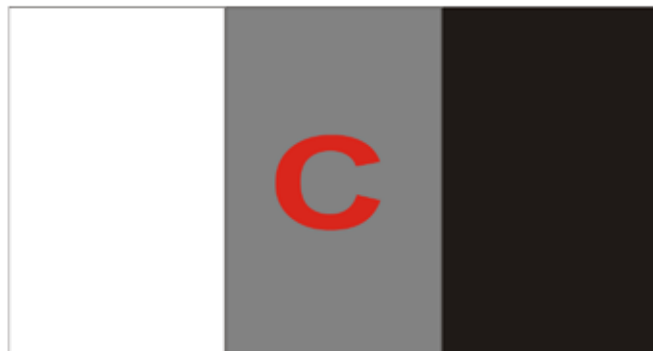
The 2009 Print Award Winners can be viewed by following this link <http://4seppa.com/SEPPA/Photos.html>



John Woodward

Creating a Neutral Target

Examining Custom White Balance



How important is neutralizing your images?

It is the second most important variable you can eliminate, correct exposure being the most important. Many cameras on the market today require some operator assistance in defining what is "neutral." In most cases the term used is "custom white balance." The problem is that white balance came from video technology. White balance was a procedure where a news gathering crew for a television station aimed their camera at something white to eliminate any color deviations. This was an effort to maintain uniformity with other news and camera

crews. By doing this white balance, theoretically, all of the video news reports on that station would be reasonably similar in color so that the TV wouldn't appear to jump in color and tone from report to report.

The problem we have today is that our sensors are designed for single capture and not continuous imaging. They are much more sensitive to slight color shifts. For that reason, the old-school "white balance" will not yield consistent results. Most current cameras allow for custom balancing. We need to avoid white balancing and embrace neutral balancing. Let me explain the examples in figures A-D.

CONTACT
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woodward2@aol.com or
become his friend on Facebook

As an analogy, let's say it's four in the morning and you need to get your navy blue socks out of the dark socks drawer. You don't want to wake your significant other so you don't turn on the lights. You find it impossible to differentiate the dark blue socks from the black socks. Does that mean the dark blue color is not there? No. It means that you have reached the end of your visual acuity. You can't see the difference because the physiology of your eye does not see color well in dark conditions. The "cones" in your retina are not receptive to low light levels. That's when the "rods" predominate your vision perception and as we all remember from 5th grade biology, cones see color, rods see tones of gray. In the dark sock drawer, you can't tell the difference. Both examples A and B exhibit this inability. As you look at examples A and B, realize that I have placed two boxes in each of them which are shaded with different colors. Depending on how your screen presents this or how your printer prints this example page, you may not be able to see these shaded boxes at all. However, like the blue socks in the drawer, the colors are still there. Your camera sensors would see them, even though your eyes cannot. When you are outdoors, if you use a white balance target, it is being affected by all the colors around you.

In all circumstances, your eye, while looking at that white target, makes a mental adjustment so the target always looks white to you. But your eyes are easily fooled. This white target is not going to look white to your camera sensor, especially indoors under fluorescent or incandescent light sources. The only way you can create a neutral custom balance is to start with a neutral target.

Example C shows a white, gray and black target. Ultimately this cannot be accurate when compared to example D. Example C, on a histogram would show three spikes, two of which would be at the anchor points on each end of the range. The central gray would be somewhere in the middle of the histogram, assuming your exposure is correct. Because white and black are involved, additional colors will be involved. If you can create a target as illustrated by example D, you will have your best chance to create a neutral custom balance and at the same time provide a reasonable exposure guide on the histogram. The target uses zones two, five and eight from the Zone system. Because the three spikes will be contained within the histogram and not at the anchor points, besides creating a neutral, you can be assured of a correct exposure just by centering the histogram. A free simple target can be created by using Benjamin Moore paint chips, number 2121. It's not perfect, but as close as I have been able to find. I hope this helps!



CONGRATULATIONS!!!

Rick Gibbons, former SEPPA President, is shown here with Mary Fisk-Taylor, PPA Charities President, at Imaging USA in Nashville.

Rick was presented the PPA Charities Legacy Award. He led the SEPPA region by chairing the Calendar Project in 2005. All the proceeds went to help Operation Smile provide cleft palate repair surgeries for children in need. As a result of the SEPPA calendar project, PPA Charities adopted Operation Smile as their national charity partner. At Imaging USA, a check in the amount of \$100,000.00 was presented.

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