

TIPS & TRICKS

Photography



Saffron

Photographer Kurt Kremlin

Kurt is a 30 year old photographer from San Jose. Recently Kurt started taking photography from an artistic perspective and is inspired by his daughter and portraits in general. He enjoys the photo journalistic style of people photography and loves to capture that priceless emotion. If you would like to see how Kurt created this photo, check out his article in this issue as well his website at www.kemlingimages.com

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We're Back!!!

Hey everybody!

Well it certainly has been a while, we spent a good chunk of the summer taking some photos and just generally relaxing. I would like to express our thank you for those concerned about what happened to Tips and Tricks Photography. With the summer winding down I imagine that issues will come out more regularly. We have a few new contributors to the PDFCast and are always looking for more. I imagine the majority of you got out to do some photography during the summer, so show us your work! The cover contest is still going on and we have a bit of a backlog in photos sent to use, so I imagine with a few more we could dedicate an issue to your photography. Also if you have learned a new trick share it with us, we are always looking for new content.

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Presenting Photographs

Ways to stop people from subconsciously sighing when you mention you have a slide show they might like.

— Written by Jeff Tindall

When someone mentions that they have prepared a slideshow there seems to be a subconscious reaction to the audience. Instantly, their memory is triggered of the 3 hour slideshow they were forced to endure from a relatives vacation or a wedding. Agonizing mental anguish occurs of them visualizing themselves stuck on a couch, forced to view 300 photos of the same thing that they are not particularly interested in, with at least half of them out of focus or some other major distraction that ruins the picture. Worst of all, not only are they stuck on the couch but there is no easy way to excuse yourself from the

situation without offending the presenter.

Does this sound familiar! Well perhaps not to the level I described but I imagine there has been a few situations where someone is presenting a slide show or just showing you pictures on the computer or in print and thoughts have come across your mind of “just how many more do I have to look at”.

I think the main reason I wanted to write about this was sparked from me going through my own photographs from the summer and trying to narrow down the good from the bad and perform touch-ups on

them. I got fairly behind in maintaining my photographic collection this summer. My mentality for the summer was to take pictures, download them to the laptop and enjoy the rest of the day. After all I could always



edit them on a rainy day. Well that never really happened so now I'm sitting here with hundreds of photos and people wanting to see them.

There is lots of ways to show off your photographs to people, you can do the formal slideshow, put them on a website or upload them to a photographic site like Flickr, or print out a bunch and pass them around. Regardless of how you show off your work

there are a few things to keep in mind. Below are a few tips that I have picked up to minimize the chance of you becoming the stereotypical slideshow presenter.

The number one thing to keep in mind and this applies to general presentations too, is **know your audience**. For example, it would be futile to show a recently divorced person a bunch of wedding photographs showing the joys of marriage. Chances are it would not go over so well. I think Brooks Jensen from LensWork photography put it best, "**the most important thing about a photograph is the mind state of the viewer.**" Your goal when showing off your work is to do so in a manner that will attract the audience and get them as interested in your work.

So how do you do that! Seems like a pretty big task, well it is. There is no sure fire way of encapsulating your entire audience, but there are things you can do to keep them more interested. One way of doing this is to **only show your best work**. There is no reason to show 10 photographs of the same thing. Find the best one and use it. This **keeps slideshows or presentation of photographs down to a limited number of pictures**. Honestly, in my personal opinion if a slideshow goes more than 20 minutes then its to long. Any more than 20 and audience excitement will begin to fade. If you are doing an actual slideshow that doesn't require you explaining any pictures then put music into the slideshow that suits the content. I find things can get awkward if there is complete

silence, if there is some music to lighten the mood or help express the photos put it in. Your audience may feel compelled to say something just to break the silence if they have had a good chance to look at the photo and are finished with it. I find music works best at a fairly low volume, enough for people to hear, but not so loud that the music dominates the photograph.

This brings up another good point. **Don't setup your slideshow to a predetermined time (i.e. 20 seconds per slide). You should be determining when the audience is finished looking at your photograph.** Photographs have a life of their own, some can be looked at for 5 seconds and the viewer is reader to move on while the viewer may want to study another photograph for a minute. If you're presenting the show, let the audience reactions tell you when to move on. This also gives you the opportunity to flip back if you happen to move on before the viewers were ready.



Always leave them wanting more. One way to make them excited for another slideshow in the future is if they leave the previous



slideshow satisfied, but not entirely fulfilled. If you leave them saying, "Ahhh, there is no more" or "That's all". Then you likely have peaked their curiosity and just smile politely and tell them that all you prepared, but should have some more in the future.

This article is more about general presentation tips. It is a whole other art for learning different ways to order photos that are presented. Perhaps we can tackle that issue in another episode.

See! Always leave them wanting more.



Selective Colour

Selective Colouring is a favorite technique of photographers.

Here's how to do it.

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— *Written by Kurt Kremlin*

With the adoption of digital technology both in the camera, and in post processing, the possibilities for a photographer have increased at an amazing rate. Similar to when the Wizard of Oz introduced color into a monochrome film; photographers can now create a beautiful hybrid print, exploiting the classic look of black and white with selective splashes

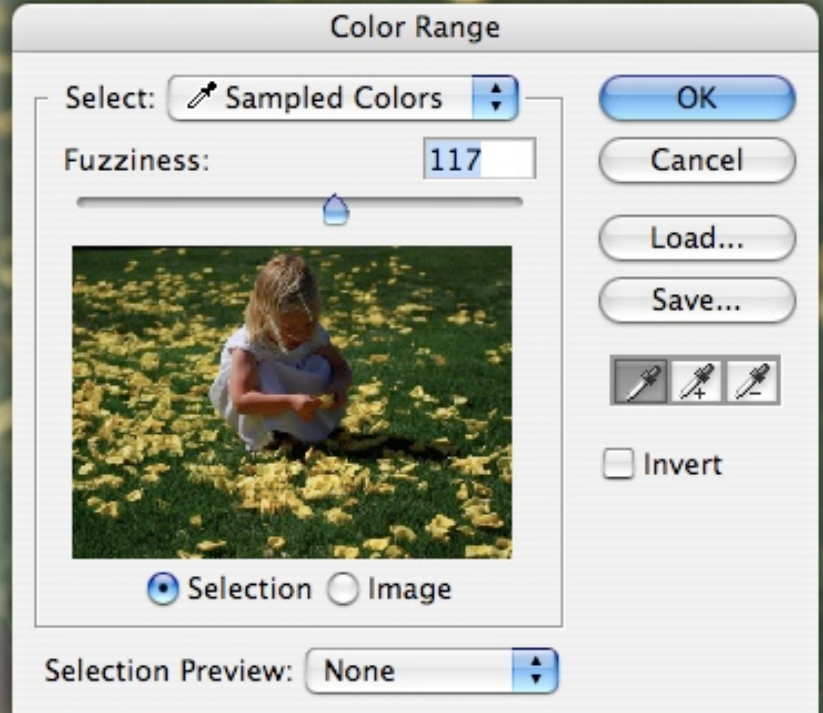
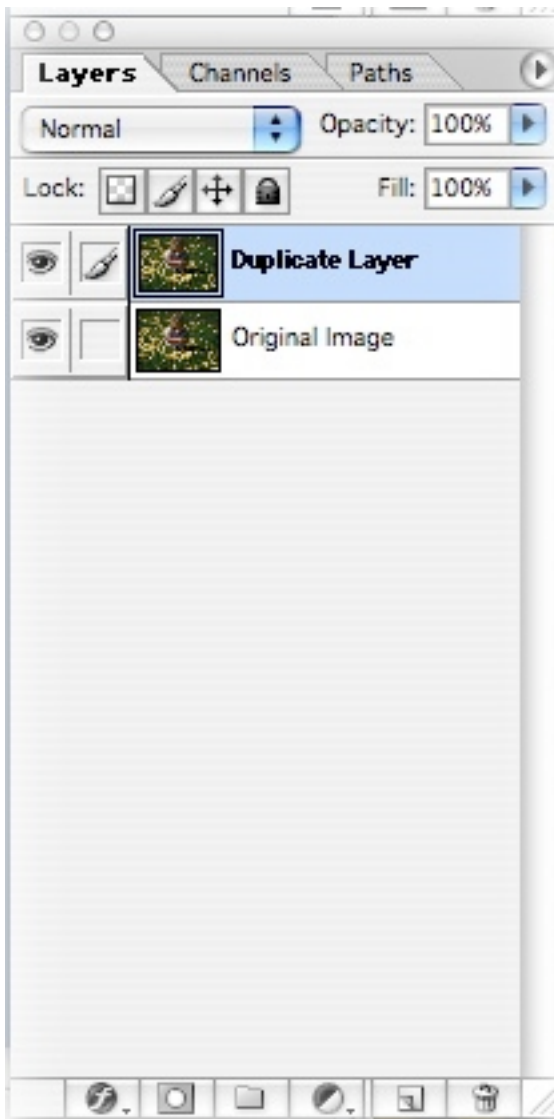
of color. This is a relevant example of how digital technology does not simply take over an older medium, but instead compliments it by making artistic expression more attainable.

Below I describe one technique, which can be employed to create an image like the one in this tutorial. Like many processes in Pho-

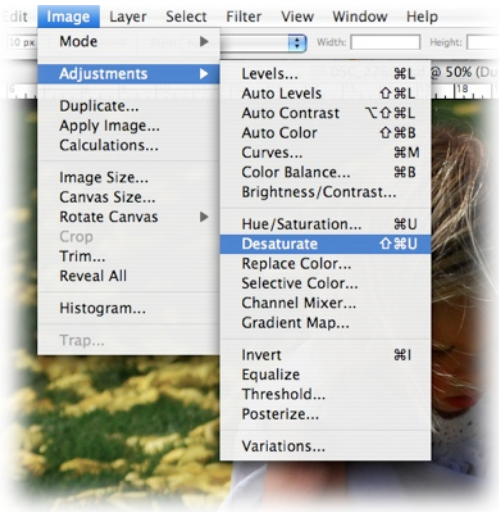
toshop, there are multiple combinations that can lead to the same end result. Whichever technique you use, it is important to play with it until you get the desired look. For many selective color processes, hand selecting a portion of the image and then de-saturating everything else is required. This can be very tedious but sometimes necessary. I'm going to show you

how to achieve a similar look, when there is one single color you want to retain (e.g., a red stop sign, a piece of clothing, or flower pedals as you see here). Obviously in this image it would have been time prohibitive to manually select each flower pedal. Instead, try the following:

1. Open the image and create a duplicate layer



2. Choose "select," "color range...," and choose "sampled colors" from the dialog box.
3. Use the eyedropper and select the color you want to retain.
4. Using the "fuzziness" slider you can control how much of the color you intend to retain. This is important when the chosen color appears in other areas of the photo. As an example the blond hair in this image required my selection to have a lower tolerance (fuzziness).
5. Once you are happy with the preview screen, hit "okay."
6. From the selection you have created, copy it to a new layer (command + J)
7. Now go the previous layer and de-saturate the image (image, adjustments, desaturate). Provided the top layer is active, you can now



- see the color you have retained on top of a black and white image.
8. Adjust opacity and any other settings to your liking.

9. You can also re-select your colored selection and easily “replace” the color to change the original color.

A Plea to the Readers

Hey everyone, if you remember back to a past issue (I think #3) I wrote about an experiment on making a variable neutral density filter. I was hoping someone would write me back and let me know if this actually works however I still haven't heard from anyone and don't know if it actually works or not. If you have a linear and circular polarizer, take a look at the issue, try it out and PLEASE let me know if it works and any limitations you may have found.

It would be very much appreciated.



The Basics of Bokeh

Your subject is only part of a photograph. A good photograph considers the whole picture

— *Written by Jeff Tindall*

I'm not sure how many of you have heard the term "Bokeh". You all know what it is and perhaps even considered it when examining your pictures. The term Bokeh put simply is all the stuff in a photograph that is not your subject. More specifically it describes the background blur in a photo and how pleasing it looks. If you have good bokeh, then your photos will generally have a

nice quality soft background that usually contrasts well with your subject. The goal of having good bokeh is make your subject 'pop' out from the picture (i.e. no distractions taking away from the subject). This is typically done by not having a cluttered background.

Is bokeh important? YES! Think about this or do a little exercise, start looking

through your photos and dividing them up into percentages. A certain percentage is of your 4x6 or 8x10 picture is dedicated to the subject and a certain percentage is dedicated to the background. Take a look at the title photo for this article, the subject is the lily, it is roughly 40 to 50% of the photo which means that roughly 50-60% of the photo is the background. That's a lot of space in a



photo that is not what you're interested in and since it is a large area can have a major impact on the aesthetics of your photograph. Take a look at some photos whose photos have not so good bokeh. The Morel mushroom picture. I like the mushrooms, however the background looks a little cluttered and distracts from the main subject. My eye is drawn away from subject.

What Influences Bokeh

Bokeh is influenced by a lot of things, from the lens design and the number of blades that make up a lens right down to technique. For the purpose of this article I'm not going to focus much on the technical limitations of some lenses, honestly I believe a lot if not all of these technical limitations can be overcome by good tech-

nique.

Probably the most obvious influence on bokeh is the aperture you use. Smaller apertures (larger f numbers, e.g. f22, f32 etc...) means more of the background will be in focus. Thus, to get softer bokeh, use a bigger aperture (f2.8, f4). Along the same lines as aperture another important influence with bokeh is the type of lens you use. Wide angle lenses keep more things in focus than telephoto lenses. If you have never tried this test, take a wide angle lens find a subject and take a picture, then throw on a telephoto move back so the subject is about the same size in the wide angle picture and take a picture. Your subject should look the same and be the same size, however the backgrounds will be dramatically different. The telephoto will not have nearly as much in focus.

NOW FOR THE BEST TIP IN GETTING GOOD BOKEH

So the reason I put this tip in uppercase is to really try and

get the point across. The best way to get good bokeh is to pay attention. When you find a subject that excites you there seems to be this almost irresistible urge to setup and take the shot and as many shots as you can. In some situations this may be necessary (particularly with wildlife on the move), however, in a lot of photography we can afford to take the time and setup properly and examine the whole picture. Often we focus intensely on the subject, exploring it from every angle, but neglect the blurry background. Then later when you examine your pictures at home all you see is your subject and minor distractions in the background that take away from your subject. So next time you are out force yourself to look through the camera for at least a minute before taking a picture. In taking the extra time to examine the picture you will start to notice the backgrounds and can change position to achieve the best result.

Two Pages of Quick Photography Tips

A Collaboration of Tips that Might Make your Photography Easier

Written By Jeff Tindall

Free Lens Hoods

Lens hoods are pretty much a must have, they're great for minimizing lens flare and generally improve the quality of your photo even when the sun isn't directly interfering with your shot. A lot of lenses come with a hood, however if yours doesn't, or if you lost or broke your hood, there is a great alternative. Go to <http://www.lenshoods.co.uk/> , they have patterns for lens hoods for almost every lens of the major brands. Just search the lens, choose the type of hood, print out on paper or cardboard, assemble and attach.

Easier Macro Photography

Macro pictures are a very popular type of photography, however, the thrill of getting close up shots can fade fast in certain situations. Macro photography often involves a lot of kneeling, crouching or lying down. This position can take the fun out macro photography fast, particularly kneeling on a hard surface like rocks. This awkwardness often leads to people not taking their time, but just quickly snapping one or two photos and then get up to feel more comfortable. The longer you spend on a subject the better your pictures will be, because you are able to explore your subject better, take more pictures and try new things. To make things a little more comfortable and keep you shooting longer pick up a pair of gardening kneepads. You may look a little odd to people around you, but your macro shots will definitely improve.

Geotagger & Google Earth (Mac Software)

A lot of the high end cameras have GPS abilities, essentially the picture you take has GPS coordinates in the EXIF data so you can see on a map where the picture was taken. Recently, I found out about [Geotagger](#), it's a program that works with [Google Earth](#) and allows you to use Google Earth to pick the location of where your photo(s) were taken and add the coordinates to the EXIF data. Another thing to consider when processing your photos. I think right now it only supports jpg's however, I imagine RAW will soon be added.

Avoid a Cold Tripod

If you own a tripod and live in a cold environment, then you're likely familiar with how cold the metal legs can get. You're probably equally familiar with how cold your hands can get when carrying around your tripod. Often people won't bring a tripod on a cold day simply for that reason. Consequently they usually aren't taking the best pictures they could be. One way around that is to use pipe insulation. You can get it at pretty much any hardware store, just wrap it around a leg and suddenly carrying your tripod in cold weather doesn't seem so bad.

Fake the Rain - Spray Bottle

Picture this, a dew soaked flower dripping with a bead of water hanging off a petal just about to fall, or perhaps an intricate spider web that managed to survive a rainstorm and is now lit up by the sun magnifying the light through the beads of water stuck on the web. Pretty nice images, eh! Here's the trick you don't have to get up at dawn to catch the dew on the flower, or run out after a rainstorm with your camera. Now I'm not saying not to do so, quite honestly, some of the best and most peaceful time to do photography is in the morning or after the rain. However if you are impatient or find a subject that you think would be a great shot if only it was had beads of water on it, then add the water. Grab a spray bottle and keep it in your photo bag. When you find that subject, just find a source of water and spray.

Avoid the Rain - Shower Cap

Well you planned a day to photograph, you're already to go and you look outside and see rain. Should it stop you? Well I guess it depends on how much of a risk taker you are. If you're not afraid to use your camera in slightly adverse conditions then YES go. Put on your poncho, and grab a see-through shower cap or these new food savers that wrap around your plate (essentially the same thing as a shower cap). Wrap it around the body of your camera, the elastics on the shower cap will grip around your camera protecting it from the rain and because it's transparent, you can still see your LCD screen to work menus or preview pictures.