

# REFLECTIONS



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THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE STONY BROOK CAMERA CLUB

VOLUME 30, NUMBER 6

June / July 2004

*From the desk of Mike Di Stefano:*

## How to Improve your Photography to Make Great Images

To take your photographic talents and skills to the next level, you need to consciously assess how you photograph now. Then, think what you can do to improve your knowledge, technique, creativity and vision.

One of the easiest ways to help yourself improve your images is to become educated about the world of photography. Subscribe to photography magazines, and read books about photography. Information is knowledge, and with knowledge about photography, you will be able to create better images. Some of my favorite magazines are *Outdoor Photographer*, *Peterson's Photographic* and *Photographic Techniques*. Photography books are wide-ranging in their subjects of coverage. Some of the best series I've read are Kodak's Workshop Series, HP Photobooks "Learn Photography" & "Photographic Techniques" Series, Amphoto books, & Amherst Media books. Many books can be found at camera shows, flea markets, & E-bay. A very good source I've found for new books at deep discount prices is Edward R. Hamilton Bookseller.

Similar to increasing your knowledge of photography by reading is to visually study the images of the masters of photography, such as: Ansel Adams, Eliot Porter, Edward Weston, Philip Hyde, John Sexton, and Freeman Patterson. The reason why these photographers are considered masters is that they learned the craft of photography and honed their skills to create great images. Look closely at their images, study the way they convey the sense of place or object. Study the image's composition. Try to determine what lens they used, or any filters or special equipment. Observe the lighting of the image. What did it do for the subject and mood of the image? How did the masters make their images stand out from everyone else? Ask yourself these questions and more as you study the images of

master photographers you admire and would like to photograph like.

To truly create and control the images you take, you must know how to work your camera. So, step one is to sit down with your camera's instruction manual and read it. Set your camera on manual (turn off all the bells & whistles) and learn how to set the aperture and shutter to create the effects you want with a correct exposure. Use the techniques of photography to get the most out of any situation. Depth of field is how much of the image is in focus. Setting the f-stop to f22 or f32 will render the greatest depth of field where everything (or nearly everything) will be in focus. Setting the f-stop to f2.4 or f4 will leave a much shallower area in focus in your image. Pan blur is panning the camera with the motion of the subject in your image. It may be a racecar or a person jogging, either way, the effect is a fairly sharp image of the moving object against a very blurry background. This will intensify the sense of motion of the image's subject. Fill Flash is a technique to help even out exposures in uneven lighting situations. A situation such as photographing a person's face that has the sun to their back would be difficult. The person's face in shadow would most likely be under exposed. The addition of a little TTL flash with an ambient exposure will even out the lighting for a more pleasing image.

Use all the other tools of photography to get the most out of any situation. A tripod is always a must. For the sharpest images the stability of the tripod is matchless. The use of a tripod also gives the photographer time to slow down and think about how to approach a subject. Different films should be used for different situations. Use the film that will best compliment the type of image your taking. For example: if fall foliage is what your subject is, than a vivid saturated film like Kodak EBX or E100VS is a good choice. If the lush green of a forest and ferns is what you're shooting, than Fuji Velvia 50 or

**STONY BROOK CAMERA CLUB WEB PAGE**  
<http://www.photo-ne.com/clubs/stony.html>



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Multi-screen	Martha Kerns

**STONY BROOK CAMERA CLUB**

**PURPOSE:** To promote enjoyment and proficiency in all aspects of photography through education by mutual exchange of knowledge and experience; and, to promote a broad appreciation of our environment.

**MEETINGS:** Meetings will be held on the first and third Thursdays of each month, except for no meetings in July and August. Other Workshops and Print/Slide Study Nights may be scheduled on the second and fourth Thursdays. Consult the SBCC Calendar of Events. All meetings start at 7:30 P.M. The regular meeting place is Stony Brook Audubon Preserve, Norfolk, MA off Route 115. At other times activities are scheduled in other nearby locations.

**DUES:** Individuals: \$30.00, Families: \$40.00, and \$15.00 for students and members over 65 years of age. To be eligible for competitions, dues must be paid by the first competition in November.

**NEWSLETTER:** Published six times during the year for Aug/Sept, Oct/Nov, Dec/Jan, Feb/Mar, Apr/May, and Jun/Jul and solely for the information, guidance and enjoyment of the Stony Brook Camera Club, Norfolk, MA

**OFFICERS:** Elected annually and serve as the executive committee with two past presidents. The Stony Brook Camera Club is affiliated with the New England Camera Club Council and is a member of the Photographic Society of America

Provia 100F is the choice to make. Film color bias sometimes alone is not enough.

Consider using filters to maximize your images in any situation. The most useful filter, in my opinion, is the polarizer. I never take it off my lens unless it will hurt the image I'm trying to get. The polarizer will remove haze from landscapes, increase the appearance of colors by eliminating glare and deepen blue skies, (who doesn't like deep blue skies?).

Composition is a make or break condition of great images. What you leave out of your images is more important than what you leave in your image. And age old saying, "Less is more" stands true in almost every situation and is the best advice and first thing you should remember when setting up a shot. Choosing the best lens to portray your vision of the final image is another important aspect of your final composition. A wide angle lens will encompass more area and consequently more objects to clutter the composition. But moving in close to a foreground object will increase its dominance in the composition and minimize or hide background distractions. Telephoto lenses have a limited angle of view and the longer the telephoto lens the narrower the field of view. Thus, they will inherently isolate a smaller portion of a scene. The other benefit of telephoto lens is that they have a shallower depth of field than lenses of short length. You should try shooting all subjects as many different ways as you can. This can be as simple as changing from horizontal to vertical format, or change the angle of view; get down to the level of your subject if it is a flower or a small child. Mostly, train your eye to see critically and expand your imagination for originality and good composition will follow.

Great images are only made during peak conditions. Peak conditions most of the time is the lighting conditions you're shooting in, but it can also mean a moment in time. For landscape images great lighting usually is early morning, or late afternoon. At this time of day the most drama will be found with the strong side lighting that shows texture and dimension in scenic images. Early morning is a classic time to transmit the mood of a brand new day breaking. An image of a still lake with steam rising off the water will enchant all who view it. Or an image of receding mountain ridge lines disappearing into the early morning fog and haze will instantly bring the viewer to relate to your feelings when you took the shot. Bright light is not always the right light for a scene. Many times indirect or defused light is best for a situation. Flower images many times benefit from this type of lighting.

If photojournalism is what you're shooting, than peak conditions is the moment when the action of the activity is translated in your image. Sports/action photography is very much like nature photography. In both cases you're trying to catch a moment of time when the story of your subject is told. Peak conditions may be a story telling or emotional moment. Translating the drama or suffering of life can make a very powerful image when captured, but as with nature photography, do not add stress or suffering to an already highly emotional situation such as a family losing all their positions in a home fire, or a homeless person just trying to survive.

The one aspect I believe is the key to making great images is Creativity. At some point you must stop taking the "status quo" type of shots. Making your images stand out from everyone else's is what differentiates average from great. We have all heard the oohs and aahs when a truly great image shows up during a competition or show. It is this instant recognition of all the about factors I've pointed out, coming together and

expressing the photographer's intent in capturing and translating his or her vision. Creativity is being able to approach scenes and seeing it in a different way. Creativity means making new images, even at photo icons, by putting your own personal twist to an image that has been shot by thousands of photographers before you.

A useful exercise to develop creativity is self assignments. Going out to shoot a specific subject will concentrate your vision on the subject and help you investigate the possibilities at hand. You can also force yourself to see new visions in the old by revisiting local sites you have shot before and try new approaches. Being open to new and different view points is the spark that will ignite the creative fire in you.

The art of seeing is what needs to follow creativity or develop at the same time. Now that you're thinking differently and creatively, you must put it together in a way that ties up all the loose ends into a nice neat package. To me this is developing your own style of photography. As I said earlier, "study the images of the masters," and dissecting their images will illustrate their styles. For myself, I love landscapes, and I try to show at least three planes or dimensions in my images. Using a wide angle lens is my means to including a foreground plane with some sort of item of interest. Then there is the middle plane where the majority of the image resides. But because of the wide angle lens it reduces in size and importance of the mid plane, but remains important as secondary subject matter. Then there is the background which can be the sky with nice textured clouds or a far distant mountain line. Adding more planes to an image can increase the sense of depth, but may cause the image to become cluttered. At this point you are now creating images not just taking them.

All in all, it is a delicate balance. Gaining knowledge, studying the masters, controlling the camera, using the necessary tools, adjusting the composition, shooting during peak conditions, cultivate your creativity, and developing your eye's ability to see and your mind to wonder. The possibilities are then unlimited.

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***Congratulations to the new officers for the 2004-2005 season:***

**President:** Paul Burke  
**Vice President:** Mike Di Stepano  
**Secretary:** Carol Adiletto  
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**THE WORLD INSIDE THE BOX**  
by Diane G. Robertson

If you like birds, and you love photography, sooner or later these two interests will come together. I can remember obtaining a 200 mm lens for my Pentax K1000 camera, and thinking that I could sit still in the backyard and soon capture a frame filling image of a chickadee, nuthatch, or whatever from 35 feet away. Big let down! There had to be a better way.

The obvious starting place was to position myself near the feeding areas for the birds. However, the birds didn't think much of this idea. The need for a blind was apparent, but the cost presented an impediment to my progress.

"Big enough to stand or sit in with a tripod, portable, adaptable and easy to store" were the thoughts that came to mind for a blind of my own creation. A cardboard shipping carton for a refrigerator would work. It is big, lightweight, can be flattened out for storage, and could be cut into with a knife. Availability was not a problem, I found, after checking the local appliance store.

The box I obtained went through an evolution. A door and a lens port were added with the help of a jack knife, and a stool was set inside. Now the fun began.

As I spent hours inside this makeshift blind, I began to recognize the approaching birds by their sounds, and I actually found my heart pounding as my first photo subject neared the target area of my lens. A sudden movement, and the opportunity was lost!

My failures were greatly outnumbering my successes, and some changes and additions to the set up were needed.

#1 To help in dealing with occasional harsh lighting, or lack of good lighting, as the case would be, a flash was added. This would be placed off camera, outside of the box on a stand, tree branch, broomstick or whatever else works.

#2 Since the birds were aware of my movements, seen through the lens port area which was about 12" by 12", a sheer piece of curtain with a hole from which the lens could protrude was taped over the lens port. I could now watch the birds easily, but they could not see me.

#3 A "survival kit" containing extra film, batteries, eyeglasses, Kleenex, a small flashlight, snacks----everything I might need while ensconced in my box, were packed in bag.

Now that the logistics for photographing had been addressed, effort could go toward creativity. If backgrounds were a problem, a "set up" could be assembled and placed on a porch railing, a stump or

anywhere that provided some distance between the subject and what would become the background. A piece of driftwood, a rock, a cattail stuck in a bottle, a pine branch----all could be made to look natural, and, as long as I placed some birdseed near the designated landing sites, the birds would come.

By the way, birds don't care if the box has "REFRIGERATOR THIS SIDE UP" printed in it. They don't care what color it is either. I just gave these little guys a few hours to find the food at the set up and then placed the box nearby. (6 to 10 feet away, depending on the lens capability). Within a day I entered the world inside the box, and have beautiful images of my backyard birds for my trouble. I invite you into my world. All it takes is patience.

#### NECESSITIES FOR BIRD PHOTOGRAPHY

1. 35 mm interchangeable lens SLR or digital camera with lens capabilities of SLR equivalent 200 to 500 mm
2. Lens in the 200mm to 500mm range. (200 is pretty minimal )
3. Film
4. Tripod
5. Big box
6. Stool

#### NICE TO HAVE FOR BIRD PHOTOGRAPHY

1. Flash with TTL capability
2. Cord for off camera flash
3. Stand for off camera flash

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#### ***From the desk of Harry Davis:***

The lagoon at the south end of Fort Myers Beach Florida is a great place to find a large number of tropical birds in a concentrated area. Many bird watcher and photographers have found this locale. This lagoon begins at the Holiday Inn (a good place to park) and continues for about one mile. At low tide, it is a mud flat and at high tide, it is only knee deep. On one short morning stroll, I spotted the following birds: cormorant, brown pelican, great egret, snowy egret, great blue heron, little blue heron, yellow-crowned night heron, ibis, osprey, sandpiper, oyster catcher, willet, dowitcher, plover, and varieties of gulls. There were no roseate spoonbills that morning and their appearance varies with the season and early morning low tide.

Many of the species are human tolerant allowing the photographer to get quite close.

So, get your tripod, take off your shoes and walk through the muck and wade out. This is salt water so when washing the mud from between your toes, also rinse off the tripod legs.

## June Calendar

**June 3 Ray Guillette "The Power and the Glory"**

**10**

**Awards Banquet and Member Slide Show**

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### **Print and Slide of the Year Results**

Black & white print:

Steve Tierney - "Lotus & Bee #3"

Color Print - Class B:

Mary O'Connell - "Hope for the Future"

Class A - AA :

Dennis Goulet - "Eileen Donan Castle #2"

Creative:

Ray Guillette - "Dreams in Fog"

Class B slide:

Mary O'Connell - "Hawk Watch"

Class A slide -General: -

Mike Di Stefano - "Framed Left Mitten"

Nature:

Richard Shirley - "Daddy "

Class AA -General:

Dennis Goulet - "Approaching Storm"

Nature:

Dan Charbonnet - "Crab Spider with Carpenter Bee"

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**Another reminder...send in your registration.**

***Don't miss this fun and educational weekend!***



**59<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Photographic Conference  
July 16,17,18, 2004  
UMASS - Amherst, MA**

**For those of you who may not have seen Bob Sheppard's email, here is the excerpt of the Gary Stanley article that was in Vivid Light. As Bob says, it's a great article from a local photographer about getting back to the basics:**

### **Fine Tuning Your Photography**

by Gary W. Stanley

The emergence of digital photography over the last few years has somehow changed the way we look at photography. I have seen everyone from amateur to pro showing a renewed excitement for photography. They are trying new techniques, experimenting and just plain having fun. Other folks I know are still taking a wait-and-see approach, preferring to stick with a tried-and-true formula that film has given them over the years.

It has become quite obvious to me that we all have our own opinions in the "digital versus film" controversy. Which one is best? I'm sure you've heard this comment: "it feels like you're cheating when you use digital." We could probably do an entire forum on the subject, but it would only be one more added to the many that are already out there.

Having been on both sides of the fence, shooting film for some twenty-five years and now shooting digital, I can sympathize with both film and digital shooters. A person emailed me the other day expressing interest in one of our tours. He said he was interested, but we talk so much about digital, that he figured he might not be welcome with his film camera. Wow! I didn't mean to come across that way, but I guess my new found excitement could confuse folks into thinking that anyone not shooting digital should pack up and go home. Not at all!

One thing I have mentioned many times over the past few years is whether you shoot with an old Pentax K1000, a 4x5 view camera, or the latest digital SLR, you still need to exercise good technique. You still have to focus, you still need correct exposure, and you still need great light and good composition. After all, it's still photography, and my message to you is this:

**It's time to get back to the subject of photography, to concentrate on doing what we love to do. I don't care what equipment or tools you use to do it, as long as you just do it!**

To view the entire article, go to:  
<http://www.vividlight.com/articles/3604.htm>

**Here is information about a June PhotoShop Seminar in NH by iHelpConnect:**

### **"June Seminar Overview**

Would you like to learn how to easily create digital negatives, organize your images and track the details of each shot, automatically? How about a little help with time saving tips on quick image adjustment techniques?

Learn four easy methods for selecting part of an image from the background and when each type works best? These are just a sampling of the skills you will learn in iHelp Connect's June 11 Photographer's Photoshop.

This seminar is for everyone who wants to learn the techniques the pros use to create eye catching images and improve their workflow.

Friday, June 11, 10am - 5pm, Portsmouth Courtyard by Marriott, Portsmouth, NH.

Costs only \$99, including the workbook!"

For details go to:

<http://www.ihelpconnect.com/Seminars/PhotoPS.htm>

**Here is the new Multi-Screen list. Let's all work on it this summer!**

### **Multi-Screen 2004-2005**

- |                |                      |
|----------------|----------------------|
| 1. After Dark  | 13. Machinery        |
| 2. Bicycle(s)  | 14. On the Beach     |
| 3. Blue        | 15. Part of a Flower |
| 4. Boat(s)     | 16. Photojournalism  |
| 5. Broken      | 17. Seashore         |
| 6. Church      | 18. Shadow(s)        |
| 7. Clock(s)    | 19. Softness         |
| 8. Door(s)     | 20. Speckled         |
| 9. Graveyard   | 21. Sports           |
| 10. Green      | 22. Tree(s)          |
| 11. Lighthouse | 23. Window(s)        |
| 12. Lock(s)    | 24. Winter Activity  |

**Have camera equipment you want to sell? Looking for used equipment? Place an ad in Reflections!**

### **For Sale**

**Nikon N80** outfit. Includes:

Nikon N80  
28mm – 80mm zoom lens  
80mm – 210 mm zoom lens  
52 mm UV filter  
58mm UV filter  
2 extra Lithium Batteries  
Lowepro case for all the above  
Owners Manual  
Magic Lantern Series book on Nikon N80  
All equipment is like new. \$375

Contact Bob Sheppard, 508-528-9539



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  - Camera Repair
  - Passport Photos
  - Portrait Studio (Franklin Location)
  - Prints Made From Slides
  - Photos Made From Prints, While You Wait - Up to 8x10
  - Fax Service
  - Black & White & E-6 EKTACHROME Slide Processing
  - Authorized Dealer for CANON, FUJI, KODAK, MINOLTA, OLYMPUS, SAMSUNG and YASHICA CAMERAS.
  - Film Developing (1HR Available for 35mm & APS film)
- NEW DIGITAL PRINTING CAPABILITIES:  
 - Direct Prints From Slides to 12 X 18  
 - Prints From Digital Media on Photo Paper!



STONY BROOK CAMERA CLUB members who present upon purchase their SBCC Membership Card are eligible for a 10% discount on film, E6 and print processing.



**STONY BROOK CAMERA CLUB "REFLECTIONS"**

*A PSA Award-Winning Newsletter*

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PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY OF AMERICA  
 86<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL  
 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF PHOTOGRAPHY  
 SEPTEMBER 6-11, 2004  
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