

REFLECTIONS



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THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE STONY BROOK CAMERA CLUB

VOLUME 34, NUMBER 2

October / November 2007

Wild Adventure in Montana

Mary O'Connell

Against the background of Glacier National Park at a 5:30 am photo shoot was the beautiful but fearsome bear, the early morning sunrise reflecting off its golden brown fur.

On a trip to Kalispell, Montana: I am still in awe of the beautiful animals I was able to be with and photograph in a controlled environment: large, large enclosures with a trainer in a completely natural northern forest habitat. I was able to see and observe the animals' behavior, although there is controversy and debate with professional photographers regarding this type of setting, for a serious amateur it is a wonderful experience!

It was early June and so many of the animals had had babies. Pretty awesome don't you think to be right there with a mother cougar and her three babies. I will admit to having just a touch of fear as mom decided to go behind us while searching for her baby.

The rules: no sudden moves, no kneeling or bending down – nothing to it!!!

The real hams were the baby wolves. You would think they were professional models. Leaning on a log, they would put on a performance; kissing, nuzzling and just being cute – so much of the babies' behavior was not so far from human baby behaviors as they romped and played tug of war. The bear cub was just rolling around in the wild flowers so innocent with a "who me?" expression.

There were also three coyote pups and their mom who were next to impossible to catch on film together as they scattered into tree trunks, bushes, and whatever they could get into.

It's so hard to understand the controversy that surrounds wolves. They are such beautiful animals and have endured so much. Hopefully enough land will remain and not become an endangered species.

There was a baby fawn, raccoons, bobcats, and mother fox with her two baby kits that were very, very bush with an anthill. Last but not least was a beautiful Siberian tiger -- such a beautiful animal and what an exceptional opportunity to photograph her. She was big. She stalked, she ran, she splashed in the water and continuously watched you as "potential prey". And though it wasn't the wilds of Siberia, it was the next best thing: the animals on the gram ranch are often times orphans from the circus, from people who couldn't care for them or from abusive homes.

It's so nice to know there is a place for them, given attention and an opportunity for people to come close to Mother Nature's creatures.

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Toys for Tots...it's that time of year again!

Henny Smith

It isn't too early to start thinking about Toys for Tots. For those members new to the club, we have been collecting toys since 1998! For anyone wishing to contribute, I'll be collecting toys from November until our Holiday party on December 13th. All toys must be new and unwrapped since the Marine Corps will be sorting them.



Last year we collected 60 toys! Anyone wishing to donate gifts for older children (soccer balls, footballs, radios, books, etc.) would be greatly appreciated.

Let's make this a happy holiday for the children who may not otherwise know the joy and magic of a special gift just for them on that special morning. They are all our children; please help us make this a happy holiday for them.

If you have any questions, or if you can't make the meetings and still want to contribute, please call me at (508) 528-2229. Thanks for your support all these years!

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James Jones Past Presidents
Mike DiStefano

FLUID MASK 3 THE RIGHT TOOL FOR MASKING AND CUT OUTS Shiv Verma

If you have ever wanted to tear your hair out trying to cut hair out from an image then Fluid Mask 3 is your savior.

VERTUS Tech Fluid Mask 3 is viewed as a professionals' choice in still image cutting. It comes as a stand-alone version as well as a plug-in for Adobe's Photoshop (CS2/CS3) and Elements. It works on Mac (OS.10.3+) and Windows (XP and Vista).

With Fluid Mask 3 you can make incredible mask selections using new sampling and selecting tools. A new complex hair blending algorithm that automatically gets great results even from multi-colored wisps of hair or fur.

The software has a new Patch technology with its intuitive tool-set for working on those difficult problem areas with compression artifacts, poor edges and complex backgrounds. There are a slew of new features such as selecting areas for local detailed edge finding and blending that make masking challenges simple to overcome.

Where Fluid Mask 3 excels is in the creation of cut-outs when the object you're trying to cut out has hair or trees and leaves that have has details that interfere with the background like skies and clouds.

I have used two products in the past, one an earlier version of Fluid Mask and the other MaskPro from OnOne Software and realize a vast improvement in this product with the introduction of Version 3. Improvements not only in accuracy but in time too. It now takes less than half the time to create an accurate cutout as compared to all the selection capabilities and new tools in Photoshop CS3

Photoshop Plug-in or Stand-alone

Even though Fluid Mask 3 comes in two flavors: a Photoshop plug-in and a stand-alone version., my preference is to use the plug-in version as it has no file limitations and works with 16 bit images (the prior version worked only in 8 bit mode).

The user interface is well laid out and for simple images a simple command like the Auto-Fill Image allows you the sit back and watch Fluid Mask generate a near-perfect cut-out.

Fluid Mask's algorithms use image contrast and color differences, similar to the way our eyes see as a basis to determine the edges. Where the software detects adequate contrast between two color areas, the application concludes that it has found an edge. It is these edges that are treated as boundaries for applying a cut-out. This works great except in those images where the contrast becomes too low, particularly where colors of close proximity at the edge make it difficult even for our eyes to differentiate. In these situations a bit of tweaking is necessary. You will have to set the edge detection system to different levels of intelligence, and in most cases you will need to

COMMITTEES:

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Slide/Print study | Ray Guillette |
| Equipment | Dan Charbonnet |
| Field Trips | Jim & Jessica Jones |
| Reflections | Denise Maclachlan |
| Workshops | Ken Wiedemann, Bob Sheppard, Ray Guillette, Harry Davis, Andre Bourque, Shiv Verma, Jim Jones |
| Refreshments | Melba Armour |
| Judges | John Fuller |
| Database | Dan Charbonnet |
| Nominations | Bob Doyle |
| Scholarship Fund | B. Manning, J. Cormier, V. Schepps, G. Browning |
| Digital | Bob Sheppard |
| Webmaster | Shiv Verma |
| PSA Representative | John Fuller |
| NECCC Representative | Ray Guillette |

COMPETITIONS:

| | |
|--------------|----------------|
| Color Slides | Jessica Jones |
| B&W Prints | Bob Doyle |
| Color Prints | Ray Guillette |
| Digital | Bob Sheppard |
| PSA/NECCC | Dan Charbonnet |
| Multi-screen | Jim Jones |

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 every Thursday of each month; no meetings in July and August. Consult the SBCC Calendar of Events. All meetings start at 7:30 P.M. The regular meeting place is the Wrentham Senior Center, 400 Taunton Street, Wrentham. Mailing address: Stony Brook Camera Club, P.O. Box 20, Wrentham, MA 02093-0020

DUES: Individuals: \$50.00, Families: \$75.00, and \$25.00 for students and members over 65 years of age. To be eligible for competitions, dues must be paid before the first competition.

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, Wrentham, 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.

isolate the difficult part of the image, so Fluid Mask can more easily detect the differences in contrast, hue, and luminance between the areas you're trying to differentiate from each other.

To help the user Fluid Mask 3 has a number of tools. Of significance is the patch tool that allows you to isolate an area and apply different "recognition" settings to that isolated area. The "Patch" tool allows you to make changes affecting a selected localized region without affecting the rest of the image.

"Patches" can be easily selected with a highlighting brush tool rather than relying on a standard box shaped patch. Once a "Patch" has been selected, you can call up the most popular editing options with a simple right click of the mouse.

This Patch tool works in conjunction with the Color Workspace tool that enables you to isolate colors and designate these as good, bad, or undecided.

You use the Color Workspace on an image to sample the colors that you define as the keep colors or that will now belong to the Keep Mask. Fluid Mask provides color and visual aids to help you further identify the keep areas from the reject areas.

The "Color Workspace" palette includes a "Color Sampler" which enables you to select specific colors from an image and see where else within that image the same color appears. Additionally, in the "Color Workspace", a 2-D color map enables more accurate color selection.

Localized "Edge Detection" tools enable the automatic detection of hard to find edges within a Patch. In the same way, localized edge blending techniques are used in Patches to overcome common problems such as masking hair and complex colored foregrounds and backgrounds.

Fluid Mask 3 works with tablets like the Wacom and provides a pressure sensitivity control to regulate brush size.

VERTUS has provided a few good tutorials that will help you get started and the software has a well structured help file. Additionally, Fluid Mask 3 comes with context-based help system accessible on the lower right of the user interface.

VERTUS is offering a \$20 discount to NECCC Clubs' members by using a coupon code: MSHEVERTUS22. You can purchase the software using this code from: http://www.vertustech.com/fm_buynowUS.htm

For members wanting to try the product, you can download a trial version from http://www.vertustech.com/fm_freetrial.htm

Meetings in Review...by our Members

September 6 -- Glenn Browning

Stony Brook Camera Club opened its 2007-08 year with a show by members entitled "What I Did This Summer." This is our traditional opening meeting, allowing members to display images taken during the summer break. The new meeting hall at the Wrentham Senior Center was filled to capacity for the start of the year. Our new president, Shiv Verma, talked about the upcoming year and some of the changes we will be experiencing. Mark Higgins showed us an image he took from the devastation following Hurricane Katrina, which has won a juried competition and which will be displayed in a number of shows across the US. Congratulations to Mark. Other members also placed well in a variety of competitions and that information can be found at: <http://www.stonybrookcc.com/index.htm>.

Congratulations to all of these members. Glenn Browning explained this year's programs will feature a lot of instruction in the basics of photography and will try to meet the needs expressed on the club survey. Paul Burke started up the Triple 50 club again this year. When the members finally got the chance to show their images, we experienced serious to humorous images, travel images, experimental images, and portrait images. The high quality of photography that is typical of SBCC was clearly evident again.

Unfortunately, SBCC has also, for the first time, experienced a cap on membership caused by the facility capacity. The board is working on a solution to keep as many people as possible happy, but the club cannot currently accept any new members. A waiting list has been created.

September 13 -- Denise Maclachlan

Dick and Joan Shirley combined their many talents to create their latest show "Digital Kodachrome." It contained eleven segments encompassing their many travels and interests, intertwined with their breathtaking images, creativity, and personalities. I especially enjoyed the creative segment set to Paul Simon's "Kodachrome" where the lyrics were demonstrated in their show. So much fun! Thank you Dick and Joan!

September 20 – Competition

Greg Crisci judged our first competition consisting of A Slides (Gen & Nature), Color Prints (A&B), Digital Creative, and Digital Open.

September 27 – Jim West

This week’s meeting consisted of presentations from three of our members. Dan Bitar discussed some of the basic concepts behind proper exposure. Using slides containing notes and sample images, Dan discussed the importance of proper exposure and ways to deal with images containing both highlight and shadow information which quite often may be beyond the range of both digital and film capture. Much of the discussion centered on the need for proper exposure metering and histogram interpretation.

Michael DiStefano discussed optical filters and how to use them to improve your photos. Using slides containing images both with and without a filter, Michael demonstrated first hand how proper filter usage can enhance a photograph. Also discussed were points such as a rundown of some of the filter manufacturers and the need for good quality when choosing a filter.

Lastly, Pam Medeiros discussed some of the finer points of underwater photography. Pam demonstrated the underwater equipment she uses and some of the techniques and difficulties behind obtaining good underwater images. Pam’s slide show demonstrated a number of beautiful and very colorful images of underwater life.

Our thanks to Dan, Michael, and Pam for sharing their photography expertise with the club and their work in preparing these discussions.

October 4 – Competition

Art Vaughn judged our second competition consisting of B slides, AA Slides (Gen & Nature), B&W Prints, and Digital Nature

October 11 -- Jim Bougioukos

Tonight Shiv had a workshop on Matting and Framing. I found it very informative. We learned what tools we would need to cut mats and the way to measure them properly to fit our prints. We also learned what was required for making prints that would last long term without fading. I thought it was important to know that archive quality inks and paper do not necessarily mean that they will last long term, and that different manufacturers have different scales for what qualifies as archive quality

materials. There were also some great brownies on the snack bar that I would like the recipe for!

October 18 -- Image Study Night

Ray Guillette hosted our first image study night.

October 25 – Diane Plouffe

Competing against the Red Sox’s in the 2nd game of the World Series, Tom Golota proceeded to successfully present, in a comfortable and informative manner, an instructive program on the interpretation of basic digital camera operations. Tom’s teaching approach coupled with his practical advice, illustrations and examples of this subject matter really helped SBCC members understand the material presented.

This is what a Camera Club is all about. Teaching, learning and helping all whom attend to expand their knowledge.

Good job Tom, and thank you.

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The Mass. Audubon Visual Arts Center is hosting an exhibit entitled “The Great Marsh” -- Photographs by Dorothy Kerper Monnelly. It is open Friday through Sunday, 1-5 pm, through January 20, 2008. The Mass. Audubon Visual Arts Center is located at 963 Washington Street, Canton, MA.

For more information regarding this exhibit and other programs available, see their website at: www.massaudubon.org/visualarts

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SBCC members at the NECCC conference in July at UMass/Amherst. Thanks to Ann Bertulli for sharing her picture!



2007-2008 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

| <u>DATE</u> | <u>PRESENTER</u> | <u>MEETING THEME</u> |
|-------------|--|--|
| 11/1/07 | All SBCC Members | Competition #3: A Slides (Gen & Nature), Color Prints (A&B), Altered Reality, Digital Open |
| 11/8/07 | Ray Guillette | Soulsapes |
| 11/15/07 | Tony Mistretta, Paula Currivan | Photoshop Basics |
| 11/22/07 | No Meeting | Thanksgiving |
| 11/29/07 | All SBCC Members | Competition #4: B Slides, AA Slides (Gen & Nature), Digital Creative, Digital Nature |
| 12/6/07 | Mike O'Connor, Diane Robertson, & Dan Charbonnet | Light, Composition, Depth of Field |
| 12/13/07 | SBCC Members | Holiday Banquet - Digital Slide Shows |
| 12/20/07 | No Meeting | Week of Christmas |
| 12/27/07 | No Meeting | Week of New Year |
| 1/3/08 | All New SBCC Members | New member show - prints, slides and digital images |
| 1/10/08 | SBCC Panel | The Creative Process |
| 1/17/08 | Shiv Verma | NECCC print competition - winter |
| 1/24/08 | All SBCC Members | Image Study Night (moderator Ray Guillette) |
| 1/31/08 | All SBCC Members | Competition #5: B Slides, A Slides (Gen & Nature), B&W Prints, Altered Reality, Digital Creative |
| 2/7/08 | Jake Mosser | Out Your Backdoor |
| 2/14/08 | John Kerns, Dan Charbonnet, & Shiv Verma | Hands on Workshop |
| 2/21/08 | All SBCC Members | Ask The Experts - Speed Information |
| 2/28/08 | All SBCC Members | Competition #6: AA Slides (Gen & Nature), Color Prints (A&B), Digital Open |
| 3/6/08 | All SBCC Members | Humor Night |
| 3/13/08 | John Fuller | Cuba or Penguins Show |
| 3/20/08 | All SBCC Members | Image Study Night (moderator Ray Guillette) |
| 3/27/08 | All SBCC Members | Competition #7: B Slides, B&W Prints, Altered Reality, Digital Nature |
| 4/3/08 | Jim Jones | Multiscreen Selections |
| 4/10/08 | All SBCC Members | Competition #8: A Slides (Gen & Nature), B&W Prints, Altered Reality, Digital Nature |
| 4/17/08 | Kristin Gleason | Night in Australia Show |
| 4/24/08 | All SBCC Members | Image Study Night (moderator Ray Guillette) |
| 5/1/08 | Bob Singer | Flash Workshop |
| 5/8/08 | All SBCC Members | Competition #9: AA Slides (Gen & Nature), B&W Prints, Altered Reality, Digital Nature |
| 5/15/08 | All SBCC Members | Business Meeting and Select Images of the Year |
| 5/22/08 | Dan Charbonnet | PSA Nature |
| 5/29/08 | Glenn Browning | Voice of Photography |
| 6/5/08 | Donna Leonardo | Untitled Show |
| 6/12/08 | SBCC Members | Annual Awards Banquet - Slide Shows |

MULTISCREEN 2007-2008

All competition photographs must be taken May 1, 2007, or later.

DIGITAL

| | | | |
|----------------|---------|------------|-----------|
| Animals | Elderly | Lucky | Tangled |
| Black & White | Emotion | Mysterious | Teeth |
| Blue | Fashion | Numbers | Texture |
| Broken | Friends | Scary | The End |
| Child Under 12 | Lace | Storm | Weathered |
| Creative | Liquid | Speed | Wrecked |

SLIDES

| | | | |
|-------------|----------|---------------------|-----------|
| Broken | Failure | Peaceful | Square(s) |
| Celebration | Glowing | Pets & Their People | Stormy |
| City Lights | Graffiti | Relaxing | Teeth |
| Cracked | Hat(s) | Rustic New England | The End |
| Crowd | Lace | Scary | Wall |
| Downtown | Orange | Skimpy | Wildlife |



STONY BROOK CAMERA CLUB "REFLECTIONS"

A PSA Award-Winning Newsletter

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