

HORIZONEWS #2

INTERMITTENT NEWS & THOUGHTS FROM HORIZON PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS

“Practice and thought gradually forges many an art.”

Virgil (70-19 B.C.)

STUDENT PHOTO : CLOSE-UP



Cargo Ship & Pilot Boat, C & D Canal Photos by Renie Poole



Thirty-nine steps from our Chesapeake City studio flows the C & D Canal, which serves as a huge shortcut between Philadelphia and Baltimore harbors. Every day some of the world's largest ships chug past our diminutive town at a brisk 8 mph. These Goliaths aren't guided through the canal's turbulent waters by tugboats but instead by local pilots who board the ships from a small red and white boat, while both boats are in motion.

Immediately after posing for our student group portrait with one of these big ships as backdrop, **Renie Poole** whirled around and captured the moment of boarding, which lasted only a few seconds. Renie was familiar with her equipment and knew what she wanted so there was no hesitation. “I’ve lived in Chesapeake City for twenty years [Horizon students come from all over . . . even our own backyard], and I’ve taken many shots of these ships. I finally captured the image I’ve seen in my mind’s eye for all these years.” Renie sent us two versions, the second being a crop of the first. (Let’s hear it for shooting in high resolution which facilitates cropping!) We—and she—like both pictures immensely; the top emphasises context, the bottom graphic impact. We’re partial to the detail for its drama and touch of mystery . . . which reminds us of quote from author Henry James: “The art of being wise is the art of knowing what to overlook.” Or to rephrase his thought for shutterbugs: “Photographers must know what to look at . . . and what to overlook.”

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QUICK TIPS

We are frequently asked: “What tripod should I buy.” We’ve heard some photographers say buy the best you can afford. Others advise buying one large enough to solidly support your largest camera-lens combination. Still others recommend a particular favorite model. Each of these answers has merit, but our advice is somewhat different: “Buy a tripod that’s light enough so you’ll actually carry it and use it.” We always have a tripod at hand, not just to steady the camera but to take double exposures, to create self-portraits, to enable us to hand-hold a flash far off-camera, and to help us compose with maximum deliberation. Our guiding rule: “A tripod in hand is worth two in the car.” Our preference: a 2.2 pound tripod that we take everywhere—it’s not that solid and doesn’t like our biggest lenses, but it works effectively in most situations—and a “big guy” stored in our car’s trunk for special occasions.

SNAPSHOTS

Horizon has *DRAMATICALLY EXPANDED* its course listings and stable of photographer/instructors. Excuse our pride when we say it’s an outstanding group. Don’t take our word for it: check out our revised website where you can read their bios and see their work. (By the way, our web address has been simplified to: www.horizonworkshops.com). Speaking of outstanding instructors . . . Two members of our expanded team have books on press as you read these words. *Digital Close-Up Nature Photography* by Jon Cox, and *Fine Art Flower Photography* by Tony Sweet. Keep an eye out.

To provide additional studio space for our new courses, Horizon boasts three exceptional new locations in addition to Chesapeake City; all are historic, photogenic, and, we expect, a dramatic change from the environment you’re coming from. All are in Cecil County. Check our web site for photos, descriptions and maps.

We were amused by a recent New Yorker cartoon by Alex Gregory. A camera salesman points to the top of a camera he is holding and says to a customer: “And this light here lets you know when the camera is obsolete.”



END FRAME

Photo by Jim Cleary

Our Baltimore colleague Bill Denison, dropped in for the “Your Creative Vision” workshop in late-January. Bill, whose grin you see on the left, wanted to get the feel for the course and the location since he’ll be substituting for Steve Gottlieb now and again.

Winters in our Maryland locale are fairly mild but the Saturday of our workshop was interrupted by a wicked, windy snow storm. The storm didn’t dampen students’ enthusiasm, including New York’s Jim Cleary, who took this shot of Bill and Steve. Whose idea it was to pick up the picture frame from our neighbor Paul Roger’s front porch? We can’t remember. Nor can we remember whose idea it was to pose Bill and Steve together.

And we can’t remember whose idea it was to tilt the frame, or who said what to elicit the lighthearted expressions. And who cares? Portraits are—or should be—collaborations between photographer and subject(s), and some of the best come from an easy and rapid give and take. You often can’t remember who did what or said what to make things happen, you just remember the final product. Thanks for the memories, Jim! ###