

HORIZONEWS #13

NEWS, THOUGHTS AND IMAGES FROM HORIZON PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS

The work of most photographers would be improved immensely if they could do one thing: get rid of the extraneous. If you strive for simplicity, you are more likely to reach the viewer.

William Albert Allard

STUDENT PHOTOS: CLOSE-UP



“The eyes are the window to the soul” it’s often been said. Well, maybe yes, maybe no. Not all eyes are equally revealing, not all viewers are equally perceptive and, since people are complicated, you shouldn’t read too much into any one photograph. What can be said definitively about the eyes is that in portraits it is generally the single most important facial feature. Eyes are the first thing we look at and the first thing we connect with (or don’t connect with). If at least one eye is in sharp focus, the viewer is comfortable; the rest of the face can be soft. Given the eyes’ importance, it is striking how little attention is paid to how it is treated photographically. Most people haven’t gotten beyond a “look at the birdie” approach (the close companion of “say cheese”). We like eyes that look right at us in a photo. It can give the feeling—whether real or illusory—of seeing into someone’s soul, of penetrating the surface. But let’s hear it for variety, for getting unstuck from the predictable. Try shooting individuals where they are not looking at the camera, as in Nancy Everds’ image of the baby. Such shots feel candid and alive, even when the subject is posing. When photographing groups, don’t force everyone to look at the camera; let some people look elsewhere, which they’ll do naturally if you don’t push them otherwise. Don’t the eyes in Michael Ricca’s shot of the Fekete sister’s portrait give it a spontaneous, dynamic feeling?

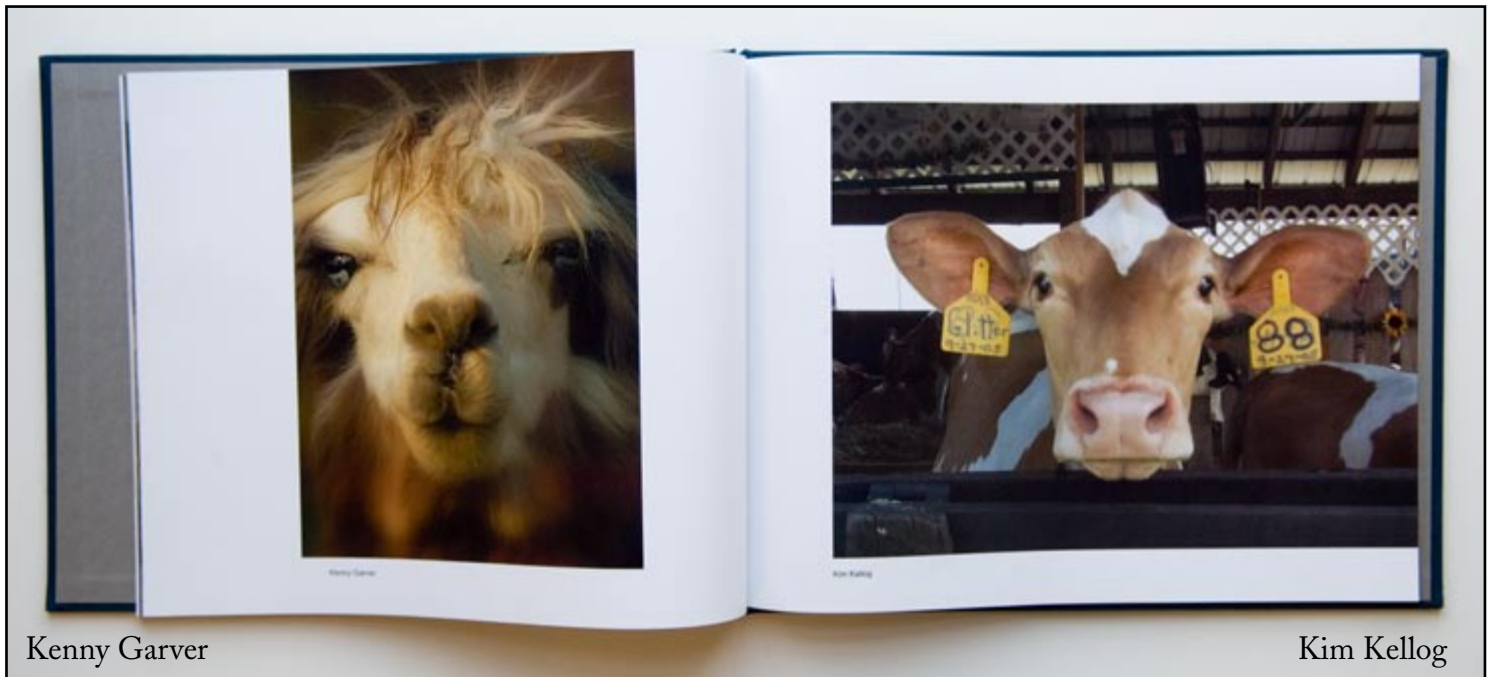


ANNOUNCEMENTS

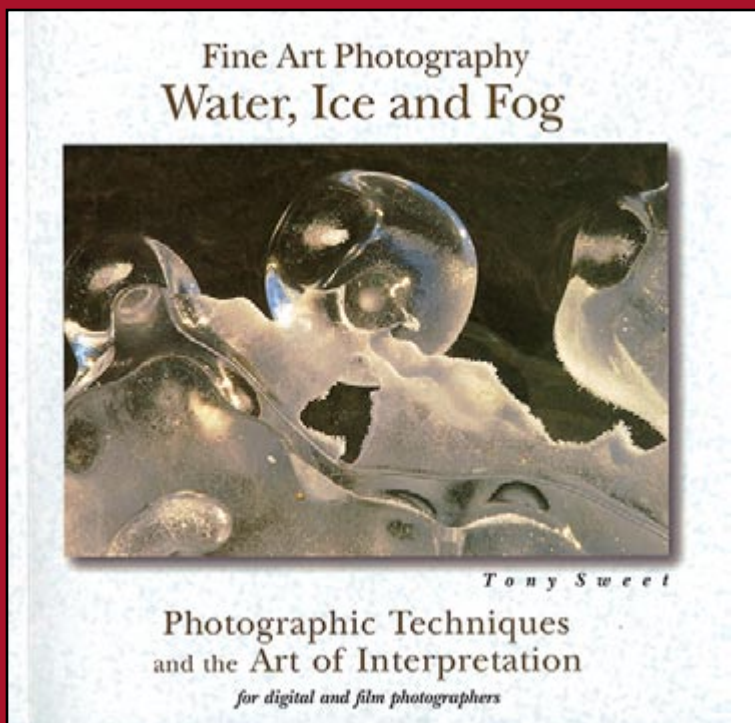
- We have just added two (and a half) new workshops: “Weddings,” with Boston’s Louise Michaud and “Shooting with Canon” with Virginia’s Barbara Ellison, a long-time professional tech rep from Canon. The “half workshop?” Barbara will do an occasional one-day workshop on “Printing with Canon” that will follow some weekends of “Shooting with Canon.” Class schedule and other details will be posted shortly on our website course page.
- The daily schedule for the Horizon Annual Summit on May 4,5, 6. will be posted on our website shortly. Ten instructors will join us for this event.
- HORIZONEWS, which is going on two years old, just logged in its 3,500th subscriber!

QUICK TIPS: PHOTO ALBUMS CREATED ONLINE

One of the wonderful products arising out of the digital revolution is the photo album produced by online publishers. As part of his source material for an upcoming article for Shutterbug magazine on this subject, Horizon Director Steve Gottlieb created an album of some favorite student photos. The result is a portfolio that will be treasured. We'll display it where everyone can see it and, we hope, be inspired by it. Why not take some of your old photos and breathe new life into them by creating an album...or give yourself a photo project and make a book of it. And if the spirit moves you, why not write something to accompany your photos. The process of creating these albums is fun, easy, and creative. And they're not expensive, either. Steve's tips for how to create an online album with maximum visual impact will be detailed in Shutterbug.



BOOK REVIEW



Horizon's Nature instructor, Tony Sweet, has just published his third book, entitled *Water, Ice and Fog: Photographic Techniques and the Art of Interpretation*. To put it simply, this book is on a par, maybe even better than, his prior books, which is to say it is one of the most exceptional collections of nature photographs by one photographer ever assembled. Tony has a combination of vision and technical prowess that is absolutely breathtaking...and there is an admirable consistency of quality from image to image. As if that weren't enough, Tony's extended captions get you into his own head, explaining why and how he did what he did. Few great visual artists have the ability to communicate verbally with such self-awareness and lucidity. (\$19.95; www.stackpolebooks.com)