

HORIZON NEWS #15

NEWS, THOUGHTS AND IMAGES FROM HORIZON PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS

When the eyes see what they have never seen before, the heart feels what it has never felt.
Baltasar Gracian y Morales (1601-1658)

STUDENT PHOTOS: CLOSE-UP



For most amateurs, and even many professionals, motion is largely unexplored photographic terrain. Yes, most of us have used slow exposures to make waterfalls look milky and runners and bikers look blurry, but beyond that we want sharp photographs; if there is motion in the scene, we try to freeze it. For a change of pace, try adding motion where you haven't before. Here are some techniques to get you started...and don't be timid about experimenting. In time you can become a "Master of Motion."

1. Take a slow exposure and jiggle or rotate your camera during part of the exposure. **Rob Tuttle** (photo left) did this to great effect, using a one second exposure. (If the scene is too bright for a long exposure, you can slow it down significantly with a polarizer and/or a neutral density filter.)

2. Move your camera like a skeet shooter, i.e., start moving your camera *behind* the still subject, then click when your subject comes into the viewfinder. There are lots of variables here...for starters, try a 1/15 of a second, then check you LCD screen and adjust shutter and camera/hand speed from there.

3. With moving subjects that aren't far away, mix flash with ambient light; the flash freezes motion while the ambient reveals it. Experiment with different intensities of flash output.

4. With camera on tripod, try "panning" (following the object that's in motion) as you release the shutter. The object should appear relatively still while the background appears in blurred movement.

5. When shooting at night where there are many point light sources, secure your camera on a tripod and using a long exposure zoom out (or in) during the exposure for light-streaking affects that have a motion feel.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Reminder: The Horizon Annual Summit is coming up on May 4, 5, 6. Many different classes, canal boat ride, models to shoot, mini-field trips and more. Go to: www.horizonworkshops.com/summit
2. Noted photographer and writer Howard Millard, author of a vast number of articles and book reviews about photography for many leading photo publications, has just joined the Horizon team. He'll be teaching three classes: Photoshop Tools & Techniques, Digital Photo Art, and Panoramic Digital Photography. Check the schedule on our course page, www.horizonworkshops.com/schedule.html. On that page is a PDF schedule for all Horizon classes which can be printed.
3. Steve Gottlieb and Tony Sweet are speaking at the huge New England Camera Club Council Annual gathering in Amherst Massachusetts on July 13, 14, 15 .
4. Due to unanticipated problems, we have scotched our plans for a Guest House for our students.

QUICK TIPS: SIMPLICITY

Simplicity can be riveting. As is commonly said, less is often more. Creating simplicity is not, however, always simple. First, you need to find a subject that has sufficient power to command our attention. Then you must isolate that subject with thoughtful choice of camera position and lens selection, and place it in the frame with a background that “works” to give an effective composition. Finally, you must remove any “extraneous” objects that are in the picture. In a modest way, you are acting like a Hollywood set designer, which can be another aspect of photographic creativity. (Those with a photojournalistic bent may not choose to tamper with the situation that is right in front of them. One can debate endlessly whether the use of a wide angle or telephoto lens, or a polarizing filter, or a blur-creating slow shutter speed, and so on, which photojournalists do routinely, is “tampering with reality.”) For non-photojournalists, is there any good reason--laziness is not a good reason!--not to alter what’s in front of you if it creates a stronger image?

Umesh Bhatt’s photo of a chair in a room is an outstanding example of riveting simplicity. We weren’t there when he took this haunting shot, but would be willing to bet the price of a good lens that he moved the chair to get it exactly where he wanted it. Perhaps he moved something out of the photo as well. The image is enhanced by some deft Photoshop work, but it’s the subject matter and sparseness of composition that make it memorable.



END FRAME



Question: If you’re serious about travel photography, should you travel with a companion? Based on experience and observation, our advice is a definitive “It Depends.” Some companions anxiously pace, waiting for you to finish, not understanding what takes so long or perhaps why a subject interests you. Result: Two unhappy travelers, and your pictures suffer. Some companions encourage you, even inspire you...and when you’re done there’s someone to share what you’ve seen and done, someone who really “gets it.” Result: An enhanced experience and better pictures. Of course, there’s everything in between these extremes. We recently saw an example of the most positive end of this spectrum: Horizon Travel Workshop students **Lisa Kalvaitis** (left photo) and husband **Ron** (right photo). A happy, productive couple!

