

HORIZON NEWS #20

IMAGES, THOUGHTS AND NEWS FROM HORIZON PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS

Intensified observations lead to exciting discoveries
Ruth Bernhard

STUDENT PHOTOS: CLOSE-UP



Anthony Bogdan (top) Doug Good (below 2)

We encourage students to include diagonal lines in their pictures. Diagonals usually add a more dynamic, energized feeling than vertical and horizontal lines. Why is that? Perhaps diagonals lead the eye across an image in a way that straight lines don't. Perhaps there are other reasons that words can't express. Words, after all, can't always explain our reaction to visual stimuli. Can words really describe why we like images of sunsets or rugged mountain peaks or baby animals?

Which way should the diagonal point in Doug Good's leaf detail below? We didn't ask him. Instead, we played with all four options and had a strong preference...we hope Doug approves.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

>> Advance registration discount for Horizon's 2008 **Summit** on May 2,3,4 (\$225) closes on March 15th. A detailed schedule of weekend classes and events, plus bios of this year's 15 outstanding instructors, are all posted on our website. There will be a Friday night party for all participants and instructors. www.horizonworkshops.com/summit.

>> Horizon goes **international!** Horizon's **Jon Cox**, a veteran Tanzanian traveler--he's on a first name basis with the indigenous animals and natives--is making arrangements for February, 2009.

>> **Upcoming Workshops:** Mar 14-16 **Flash Magic**; Mar 26-28 **Intro to Digital**; Mar 27-30 **Canon & Weddings** (both full); April 11-13 **Portraits on Location**; April 18-20 **Travel / Cecil County**; April 25-27 **Travel / Washington, DC** (full) (For full workshops, sign up for our waiting list.)

QUICK TIP: CONDENSATION

Condensation: an occasional scourge to photographers. It comes from two basic sources. Bring a very cold camera into a warm place and the lens glass (or filter) continuously fogs until the camera warms up. Solution: place your cold camera in a plastic bag or very tight camera case until it warms up to something close to room temperature. The second cause of condensation is a very humid environment, like a rainforest or a wet greenhouse. Solution: keep plenty of soft, water-absorbing material handy to continually wipe your lens.

For the creative photographer, condensation has an upside, as shown in these two student photos, both taken in a damp, warm greenhouse in February, when the air outside the greenhouse (and hence the camera) was cold. Renie Poole used a dry cloth to wipe the *center* of her filter. Presto...she made herself a selective soft-focus lens. By wiping only the center of the lens, the edges of her picture became soft and dreamy. (If you're going to wipe the lens element directly, i.e., not the filter, then wipe exceedingly gently with material specifically designed to clean lenses.) Depending upon how you wipe, you have some control over where the soft area of the image will be and the degree of softness. A wider f stop will generally give you more softness.

Anthony Bogdan made a different creative use of condensation, by shooting fellow student Joan Ayers through the greenhouse glass that was coated with thin strips of water induced by condensation. The thoughtful placement of hands helps identify the glass "barrier" and adds drama, and note also how the subdued colors give the photo a nice feel. Suggestion for improvement: Joan's expression could use attitude or animation. Surprised? Happy? Imprisoned? Quizzical? Funny? Anthony probably didn't want to deny Joan her own shooting time, but when you've got a great situation like this, it's time to be a little "selfish;" push yourself and your subject until you get your shot just right.



Renie Poole



Anthony Bogdan

END FRAME



Among the joys of the big lens: getting close to animals in the wild, great light gathering power so you don't need bright sunlight or 1600 ISO to give you a fast shutter speed, and miniscule depth of field, especially with a wide f stop, so when the critter's in focus, whatever is right in front or behind isn't. Alas, the cost of these specialized tools put them far out of range for even most pro photographers. Everyone should have the thrill—and the challenge, too—of handling one of these behemoths. Horizon Instructor **Jim Clark** (seen at left during his Blackwater Wildlife Refuge class) graciously allows his students to take his for a test drive.