

HORIZON NEWS #25

NEWS, THOUGHTS AND IMAGES FROM HORIZON PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS

It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge.

Albert Einstein

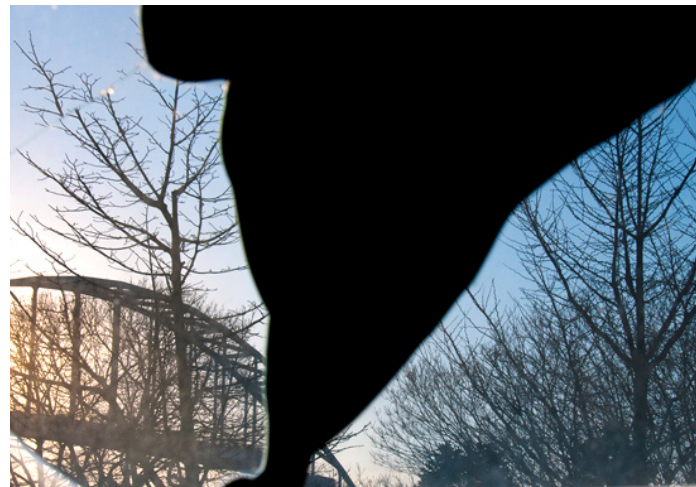
STUDENT PHOTOS: CLOSE-UP



Tiffany Hallett wandered the grounds of Elk Landing one Sunday morning, perusing the historic home, the red barn, and the rock wall remnants of 19th century buildings. Then she declared flatly: “Nothing here inspires me.” We know that feeling. It overcomes photographers often; that’s part of the reason we like to travel. That next great subject sculpted by beautiful light: it’s just around the next corner...or maybe in the next county...or state...or country. That’s one reason photographers are filled with wanderlust.

When nothing in front of you flicks your aesthetic switch, don’t be too quick to jump into your car or board the next plane. Try transforming your vision. Before leaving the location that hasn’t inspired you, look for subjects you might have ignored. Find new ways to see familiar things. You were focusing on broad landscapes...now find intimate details. Attracted to color? Look instead for shapes. Flowers not in bloom? What about faces? Make a conscious effort to change your mind-set; observe things from new perspectives.

With that in mind, we suggested to Tiffany that she try photographing a subject that she was so familiar with that it became invisible: namely, her sneakers. That led



to this vibrant “self-portrait.” **Hugh Davis** recognized that on a bleak winter day the color palette is limited, so he switched mental gears and sought out interesting shapes. A broken window turned an otherwise bland reflection of the Chesapeake City bridge and winter trees into something quite dramatic.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Upcoming Workshops: **Nudes: The Female Form:** Mar. 21-22; **Architecture:** Mar. 21-22; **People & Portraits:** Mar. 28-29 (one space left); **Canon Experience:** Apr 2-5 (*Special Alumni Discount*); **Weddings:** Apr. 2-5; **Historic Chesapeake City:** Apr. 17-19; **Washington, D.C.:** Apr. 17-19; **Longwood Gardens: PA:** May 2; **Gardens of NY:** May 2; **Gardens of Central Park:** May 3; **South Dakota:** May 12-17 (Diane Shapiro will join Steve Gottlieb as co-instructor); **Manhattan:** May 16-17; **Retouching Images:** May 16; **Creative Vision:** May 22-25; **Camera Basics:** May 22; **Cape Cod:** May 29-31.

Instructor News: **David Wells** (Cape Cod-Autumn) has received so much recognition lately that we can’t even summarize it in this space. Check out his web site: www.thewellspoint.com.

Newsflash: **Horizon** will be the subject of a feature in the April issue of *Southern Living* magazine.

QUICK TIP: WHAT MAKES A GOOD PHOTOGRAPHER?



How do you judge if someone is a “good” photographer? And how do you judge yourself? Looking at **Sandy Pagnotti’s** images got us thinking about these questions. On the Saturday of one workshop, students shot nature, people and buildings. During the evening critique, Sandy’s images did not stand out. Even accounting for the subjectivity of judgments about creativity, no one would say—including Sandy—that there were signs of great potential. The following day, students were asked to photograph an apple. Sandy gave this task some thought, and then produced a series of images, two of which are seen here, that were truly impressive. She demonstrated a sensitivity to light, color, and composition. Her pictures had originality and variety. By any standard, it was a *tour de force* for a relative novice.

Photography is not a monolithic, one-dimensional field. There are specialties, from wars to weddings, people to products, animals to architecture, and more. The instincts, skills, and temperament that makes one excel in one specialty may not transfer to others. Fine still life photography, for example, places a greater premium than most other kinds of photography on controlling every aspect of what’s in the picture and on working with the highest degree of meticulousness and deliberateness. If Sandy honed her natural talents and instincts with the right training, we expect she would shine as a still life photographer. But is that where her interests lie? We don’t know. When you discover your photographic strength, you are fortunate if that coincides with the kind of photography you most enjoy.

END FRAME



“Luck,” said the first-century Roman philosopher Seneca, “is what happens when preparation meets opportunity.” Under that definition, this seagull photo is a classic example of luck. Preparation: Francis Bacon had perfect focus, perfect exposure, and perfect tracking of a fast moving subject. Opportunity: two birds lined up in near perfect registration; Francis confessed that he actually thought he was photographing one bird. Alas, most people would assume that this perfect juxtaposition was produced by Photoshop, not by Seneca-type luck.