

THE CAMERA CLUB OF CENTRAL MINNESOTA



The Newsletter of the Camera Club of Central Minnesota

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Club Meetings and Other Bits of Information

The **Camera Club of Central Minnesota** has decided to meet on different days in order to provide access to our meetings for more people. We will be alternating between a Thursday of one month and a Monday of the following month at the Public Library in St. Cloud from 6:45 to 8:45 pm.

The club has monthly photo topics, image sharing and critique, hands on demonstrations of photographic gear and software, member online gallery links, discussions about photography, and is open to all.

The monthly topics for the next few months are:

Monday, March 7, Bremer Room 104: *Sports*

Thursday, April 7, Bremer Room 104: *Sunrise or Sunset*

Adobe Releases Boundry Wrap

In a brand new update made available only to Lightroom's Creative Cloud subscribers, Adobe has launched a feature that is sure to delight panorama fanatics: Boundary Warp.

The object is to protect parts of a stitched image that would otherwise be cut off with a typical rectangular crop. Lightroom's Photo Merge feature simplifies the process of photo stitching, and the new Boundary Warp offers a greater degree of control than in the past.

Even if you shot your images in vertical orientation with height in mind, Lightroom's panorama feature might still cut off outlying edges of your stitched image. As you shoot, it's sometimes hard to tell exactly what you'll have to later discard.

This oddly named feature restores full edge content to panorama landscapes. Here's how to use it.

1. Launch Lightroom and choose the Library module to select the images you want to include in your pano.

Import images directly from your camera card, Dropbox, or a folder on your hard drive.

A panorama consists of two or more images, shot in sequence, which can be stitched together to display the kind of broad scenic expanse that the eye can easily perceive but which the camera does not automatically capture.

You don't need any special equipment or preparation to create a pano: Just use your favorite camera and a standard lens, choose a vista, and frame a series of shots as you gradually rotate your body. A tripod is extremely helpful for keeping each frame in alignment, but it is not strictly necessary. If your camera has a built-in level, that will work just fine, too.

Choose the images you want to include from your Lightroom library.

Vertical images are generally preferred for panos to capture as much height in the image as possible.

Note that your pano is not constrained by the number of images you use, but by the output size supported by the app. Both Lightroom and Adobe Camera Raw have a maximum image size of 65,000 pixels on the longest edge or a total of 512 megapixels, whichever is reached first.

2. Once you have chosen the images, switch to the Develop module and find Photo > Photo Merge > Panorama.

The Photo Merge tool has two built-in functions: HDR and Panorama, and you can choose to use both on your pano images.

After selecting your photos, find the panorama option under the Photo menu.

Bracketing each image will give you a choice of the best exposure for your pano, letting you use the HDR function to start off with the



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CLUB MEETING AND OTHER BITS OF INFORMATION **1**

ALWAYS BE PREPARED



The Camera Club of Central Minnesota

Always Be Prepared



WHEN YOU ARE CLICKING THAT SHUTTER, NOTHING ELSE MATTERS. YOU BECOME ONE WITH YOUR CAMERA, AND YOU FEEL IMMORTAL.



You never know when a good photo opportunity will present itself to you.

I'm not sure if you know this— but I'm actually a Boy Scout — and “always be prepared” was our motto. Whenever we got ready for a camping trip, we made sure we had all of our supplies, and we always planned for contingencies or “what-ifs?”

I've tried to always be prepared in many different ways in my life. For example, I try to add a buffer to my schedule when making appointments (if I think I will be able to meet a friend at noon for lunch, I add an hour-buffer and tell them to meet at 1pm for lunch), I try to add a buffer to my finances (I try to live below my means, although this is very hard, and try to keep cash in the bank just in-case for emergencies).

The most important case of being prepared in photography is to always have your camera with you— for those “what if” scenarios.

I am usually quite good about this— I always keep my Canon SX50 HS in my backpack. It is small, compact, light, and easy to carry with me everywhere I go (without adding any additional burden). The downside of carrying the camera with me is small (tiny bit of added weight), but the upside of carrying the camera with me everywhere I go is massive (the potential to make meaningful photos).

Let me give you an example — a while back Liz and I took a trip to the Gulf coast and stayed in a sleepy town right next to the ocean. We stayed at a lovely B&B right next to the water — we were so close that we could smell the sea, hear the crashing of the water, and one of the mornings we decided to do a walk by the beach.

Although I started off as a nature photographer (I shot landscapes like any good amateur photographer), but nowadays I'm not that interested in photographing “landscapes” or “nature.” But when Liz suggested that we go on a walk by the ocean, initially I was going to keep the camera in the house (to just enjoy the walk with Liz) but then the thought appeared in my mind: “What if?”

I didn't want to have any regrets; and because the camera is so compact (it fits in my front jacket pocket) I thought “Well, why not?” and brought it along.

And boy, I'm glad that I did.

Walking along the beach was such a beautiful experience. We saw the wonderful waves crashing against the rocks, we saw the nice mist enveloping the horizon, and the sound of the ocean— roaring blissfully.

I kept the Canon in high-contrast B/W mode, and was amazed to see what I did through my LCD screen— true minimalist beauty, rendered in monochrome.

I kept the camera in “P” mode and started to make a bunch of photos of Liz walking by the water. I clicked like a madman. I wanted to capture every single moment. I found immense amounts of beauty in the moment of me walking with the love of my life, right next to nature and the beauty of the ocean.

I also quite enjoyed taking photos of the sand, making nice diagonal/curved compositions. None of the photos were particularly interesting, but the act of making the photos and exercising my compositional skills was a joy in itself. Which made me think: even though nobody else might think these photos are any good (even myself), the process of trying to compose and make nice photos is a joy.

Enjoy the process of shooting

I think one of the things that brings me the most happiness in photography is to be totally absorbed in the moment. When time stops. Nothing else is important. All the stresses, anxieties, and trouble of life disappear like mist into the fog.

When you are clicking that shutter, nothing else matters. You become one with your camera, and you feel immortal.

It sounds a bit dramatic, but when I am really in the “zone” (or a “flow state”) this is when I feel 100% alive. And this is what brings me the most joy in photography. Of course the result of my photos

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is important (I want to make nice images), but the process of shooting brings me far more joy.

I think most artists and writers would agree — the process of creating art is more enjoyable than appreciating the final outcome. And it is the struggle which is often the most sweet part of the journey.

I did a lot of hiking and backpacking when I was a Boy Scout, and seeing a beautiful view from the top of a mountain wasn't enjoyable unless you strained and struggled to get to the top. If I just got dropped on the top of Mount Everest without putting in any effort in getting to the top, I don't think I would enjoy or appreciate it all. It is kind of how as a child you labor in selling lemonade — and that \$1 is far sweeter than if your uncle or aunt just gave you a dollar for doing nothing.

We feel a lot more pleasure in working for what we want.

Never settle

I think in photography it is the same. Make photos that challenge you. Make photos that force you to be more courageous and brave (street photography, for example). Make photos that stretch your creative potential. Don't settle for what is an easy photograph (another landscape or a sunset that might be cliché).

But above all this; always be prepared. You never know when a good moment might happen, and you want to be ready to capture that beautiful moment, and freeze that

moment within your film or your digital sensor.

I also feel that it isn't enough to be prepared with your equipment — but to be prepared with your mind, heart, and soul.

A photographer is nothing but a "noticer" — a person who notices beauty in the world.

I think a great street photographer isn't someone who can make fancy compositions and layers, but someone who can notice the beauty in the mundane — the beauty of the real world, which others are blind to.

One of the biggest benefits of going back to nature is to appreciate the beauty and majesty of the world. Trees that have been around for thousands of years, cliffs that have been beaten by crashing waves for millennia, or even little sprouts working hard to grow up to be great plants.

I think in terms of street photography, it is to find the beauty in ordinary people. No matter how different others may be from us; there is always some sort of inherent beauty in them.

Someone also told me something which stuck with me: the fault never lies in others, it always lies within ourselves.

For example, if you go to a party and you think everyone is boring — it is your fault. Why? Because you're not trying hard enough to

find what is interesting about these strangers. In-fact, you are the boring one. Because everyone is interesting in one way or another — you just need to dig deeper. After all, could you find oil & gold buried deep in the ground, if you didn't dig deep?

Dig deep

To make better street photos is to dig deep. To really get to know a place or really get to know a person.

When I am shooting "street portraits" of strangers; I generally don't make good photos unless I try to engage them and get to know their life story. Very rarely do I get an interesting portrait of someone if I just click and quickly move on. I need to take time with that person — to get to know their life story, and to find points in which we are more similar than dissimilar.

I also make a mistake in street photography: I get bored too easily with a single location. I want constant novelty — so I will constantly flit from one location to another.

However if you want to make better photos; travel to fewer places, and get to know one place very well.

For example, whenever I travel to a foreign city, I make it a point to get to know one area really really well, and be consciously ignorant and to consciously avoid not going to all the touristy hotspots. When I was in Munich with Liz this past summer, we only stayed in the old city area, instead of trying to see everything in Munich (I even missed out seeing the Holocaust memorial).



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So if you plan on embarking on a new photography project — try to get to know one area really well, or one person really-really-well; and the deeper you go, the more interesting “truths” you will discover.

Shut out distractions

I feel also when you want to “dig deep” — you need to breed “selective ignorance” — meaning; to shut out distractions and remove more “noise” from your life.

I love the internet and social media; but honestly, it is more addictive and distracting than crack cocaine or crying babies on an airplane.

Do you remember when you were in the middle of doing real “work” and you had to go on Facebook to “check something really quick” and 30 minutes later you wonder what you were doing?

Or when you were writing something, and you went quickly on Google and Wikipedia to check something, and suddenly you fall into a random rabbit hole and emerge totally lost and confused?

With your photography — you might be pursuing your own artistic vision; but one trip to Instagram might get you tempted to buy a new camera, to try out a new aesthetic in your photography, or feelings that you aren’t “good enough” as other photographers you see online.

I’m not saying shun all of your friends, family, and loved ones. What I am say-

ing is know what your poisonous distractions are; and know what you would consider “noise” in your life — and if you want to break new ground in your artistic vision or your thinking — you need more peace and quiet in your mind and your life.

For example, I love my friends and family, but I consider the iPad one of my biggest distractions. I constantly check my messages, check the Google play/App store for new “revolutionary apps or games”, and before I know it I am going down a rabbit hole of distracting blogs. So if I need to get any “real” work done, I need to physically turn off my iPad (it is off right now, and I feel like I’m in the “zone” in writing this).

I know this is a modern luxury to be able to disconnect. I remember at my old job, not answering an email within 10 minutes could sometimes inflame anger in a co-worker. So if your job doesn’t allow you the luxury of turning off your phone or your email; make sure to just turn off your phone when you leave work, or disconnect your internet on the weekends. Once again, these are just personal suggestions that have worked well for me— which has caused me to feel less anxiety, less stress, and less frustrations.

If you consider your mind like a pool of clear water— you don’t want to disturb your inner-serenity. Listening to too many podcasts, music, reading too many blogs,

seeing too many Snapchats, text messages, reading emails, will disturb that clear pond of water.

Reality through a viewfinder

I don’t know about you; but whenever I look at reality, I see it through a virtual viewfinder.

I am grateful for this— because I appreciate the beauty of life so much more.

Nowadays I find myself taking fewer photos, but being more appreciate of life around me. There are a lot of moments that I see and appreciate, without feeling the “need” to make a photograph of it.

For example, I can now enjoy a lovely home-cooked meal with Liz and me without the incessant need of “documenting” the food. I have personally found that food tastes a lot better (and I appreciate it more) if I don’t take a photo of it. The same thing is with fireworks on New Year’s — I purposefully no longer take photos of the fireworks so I can just enjoy it.

I know I am contradicting myself a bit — I’m saying that you should always be ready to make photographs, but at the same time you should also know when not to make photographs (and just be present in the moment).

So what I will say is this: always be ready, always be present, and always know how to appreciate the moment. But if your soul tells you that you must make a photograph — listen to your instincts and guts. And if your



SO IF I NEED TO GET ANY “REAL” WORK DONE, I NEED TO PHYSICALLY TURN OFF MY IPAD.



soul tells you to leave the camera at home, listen to what your heart tells you. And if it happens to be that your heart tells you that you must take a photo of this moment— don't disobey what your soul tells you.

Instinctive photography

Photographer Anders Petersen says that when he goes out and shoots in the streets, he shoots from the gut, and then when he goes home he edits (chooses his best work) with his brain.

I have been quite interested in how a lot of Zen Buddhists place emphasis on intuition and instincts of the body and mind — rather than just trying to “rationalize” everything.

One of the great things I learned from Steve Jobs is the importance of following your intuition — that inner-voice (which is often quiet, but begging for you to listen to it). This is why Steve Jobs distrusted market research — innovations like the iPad wouldn't have been made if he asked people what they wanted (when the iPad first came out, everyone thought it was the worst idea, but it quickly went to becoming one of the quickest-selling consumer commodities in history).

Have you ever walked on the streets, and you see something simple that you really wanted to photograph, but your “rational” mind told you: “No, don't take a photo of that, it is cliché. Nobody will care anyways.”

This happens to me all the time. But now I have learned to listen to my guts, my instincts, my intuition more —

and I take the photograph anyways. 99% of the time the photo is not interesting; but that 1% chance that it might be interesting — taking that chance is worth it. After all, what is your downside, just another few megabytes of storage on your hard drive? Technology is so awesome that a few terabytes only costs you about a hundred bucks or so. And with the cloud — data in storage is becoming effectively “free”.

Always be prepared emotionally

I feel that one of the hardest things of being a human being is to be loving, compassionate, and to have an open heart— especially to strangers.

I make it a point to always chat with strangers whenever I can. I will make small-talk with the guy who I'm renting my car from, the cashier I bought my fish from, and the barista making my coffee. I also make it a point to be brutally honest whenever possible with strangers.

For example, in America people always ask, “How are you?” Then we respond, “Fine, thanks— and you?” “Fine.”

This is the fakest type of conversation that exists.

This is what I try instead:

The cashier goes: “How are you doing today?” I go, “Kind of horrible— I didn't sleep that well last night, but I'm really excited for this cup of coffee, I know it will make me feel better!” The

other person (looking surprised, like it was the first time they ever heard someone really speak their mind) says, “Oh no! I actually feel the same, I stayed up until 2am because I had insomnia — and coffee made me feel a lot better.” Then at that moment — we share some sort of real human connection, and I feel a lot more emotionally bonded to that person. Genuine smiles occur; and I ask them for their name, and they tell me theirs, and I tell them mine. I then remember that connection and that moment — and the next time I see them, they remember my name, my order, and sometimes (if lucky) I will get a free coffee — everyone is happy.

I think honesty in street photography is very important — to be honest about what you're photographing, how you're photographing, and to not lie.

For example, if you're taking photos candidly without permission — and someone comes up to you and asks, “Did you just take my photo?” the best policy is to not lie — and to be truthful. After all, you are doing nothing wrong.

I've been in similar circumstances, and I have been tempted to lie and simply say “no.” But now-a-days I try to be honest and tell them honestly, “Yes” (without a hint of guilt). Often people are still disgusted, and want an explanation. And I will be real with them — I will tell them, “Yes, I took a photo of you because I thought you were caught in a beautiful



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STEVE JOBS IS THE
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CAMERA CLUB OF CENTRAL MINNESOTA

Membership is \$25 per year. Members should provide: Email Address, Mailing Address, and Phone Number.

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The Camera Club of Central Minnesota publishes a monthly newsletter which is distributed via e-mail. The newsletter will contain information about up-coming meetings, summaries of previous meeting, recommendations for photographers, announcements of photographic workshops, and other material that seems appropriate.

If you would like to send suggestions, comments, or other communications concerning the club or newsletter, please send your e-mail to rheath@tds.net.

moment, and I wanted to document that.” The person is often confused and ask, “why?” and I will just speak my mind — truthfully and honestly. The less “crap” I give the stranger, the more they trust me. And 99% of the time these issues get swept under the rug— and they just move on.

In the rare instances that they get really angry and want you to delete the photo, you just want to ask yourself: “Is this photo worth it?” Then make your own personal judgement call.

Always be ready

So friend to end this article — always be prepared in your photography and your life. Know that beauty exists everywhere

you are, regardless of how “boring” or “cliche” the city you might live.

Street photography isn’t just about making images — it is about being more open, more receptive, and more perceptive. It is about finding the beauty in the mundane, and about opening up your heart and soul to others. It is to document what you find wonderful in this world, and to share it with humanity.

You have a great task as a street photographer — don’t take your job lightly.

Always be positive, don’t forget to smile, and walk slowly.



Boundry Wrap (continued from page #1)

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best images. But it is not strictly necessary.

Tip: If you do use both functions, start with HDR first, and then follow with Panorama. But you can easily build a beautiful pano with a series of single shots.

3. Choose a projection model for your final image.

Lightroom’s pano stitching feature offers several options: You can let Lightroom automatically pick a projection model for you or choose one yourself. Beginners will do just fine letting Lightroom do the work, but a quick click through the different choices shows you a preview of what the finished sequence will look like with each.

The Spherical projection is best for land-

scapes. It distorts the image as if it were based on a sphere. Most often, Lightroom will automatically pick this projection.

4. Adjust the image manually by using the Auto Crop and Boundary Warp slider together.

But you may not want to restore every detail from the four corners of your image, so if you enable auto crop, you can move the slider to cover just the part of the image you’re concerned about and stop when you’re satisfied. Then click Merge.

You can use Boundary Warp with Auto Crop or by itself, if you want to preserve edge content.

Lightroom will then process the pano and deposit it in your Library.

