

THE CAMERA CLUB OF CENTRAL MINNESOTA



The Newsletter of the Camera Club of Central Minnesota

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February 2019

Club Meetings and Other Bits of Information

The Camera Club of Central Minnesota will be meeting on the first Monday of each month with the second Monday of the month as back up starting in January 2017. We will meet 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.

Remember, all your photo assignments and meeting dates are online at:

<http://cameraclubmn.com>

Assignments

Monday February 4, 2019, Bremer Community Room 104, **Very Little or Very Big**: use your imagination and look around you to find interesting scenes or items.

Monday March 4, 2019, Bremer Community Room 104, **Color**: the color "Red" is suggested. It should be the dominant color or have a significant "Red" object in the photo.

Monday April 4, 2019, Mississippi Community Room 106, **Sunrise or Sunset**: Sunrise in our area at this time is about 6:30am and Sunset is about 8:00pm. An hour before or after these times are great times to shoot.



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Get Ready for Winter Photography

Winter is a memorable time for photographers who enjoy the challenges and the rewards that come with photographing the season. Dedication comes to mind when we think of photographers who enjoy going on adventures in freezing temperatures to capture images in conditions that other photographers would not be willing to consider.

A trip to the park in summer means hot weather, overcrowding and congestion. On the other hand, winter is the perfect time to try shooting some unique perspectives of your favorite places. The solitude and peacefulness of a winter scene allow us to see the landscape in a whole new light. What makes winter unique for the photographer is the chance to experience nature on a more intimate level, to think more deeply about what one is trying to capture and how one is going to relate this to the audience.

Winter photography can be very rewarding if you're prepared for the challenges of colder temperatures. There are a few simple

tips that will make your winter adventures more enjoyable. Your clothing, protection for your camera equipment and a different approach to the picture-making process are equally crucial to the enjoyment of winter photography. Common among these elements is the notion of preparation for all winter conditions you may encounter. A lack of planning for winter photography can stop you from fully experiencing its beauty.

Clothing & Protection For Winter Photography

When it comes to shooting in the winter, the weather can be very unpredictable. The best way to prepare is to expect anything—dressing appropriately for the situation is fundamental. When it comes to apparel, it is necessary to plan for weather that may change suddenly and significantly.

Photography in colder temperatures causes your body temperature to shift dramatically between hot and cold, as it often means varying activity levels. Anticipating this, wear



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Travel Photograph (continued)



**TODAY'S CAMERAS
THAT ARE
WEATHER SEALED
TYPICALLY
PERFORM VERY
WELL IN COLD
TEMPERATURES**



clothing that can be easily opened with zippers in specific areas of the body for fresh ventilation, and be careful not to wear too many layers that cause you to overheat. For a photographer who already carries heavy camera equipment, dressing in layers adds extra weight and is not ideal. The kind of clothing recommended is some form of loose-fitting, breathable jacket that's suitably insulated for the expected conditions and that has zippers, allowing you to open and close it quickly, depending on your level of activity. It is also important to leave no area of the body exposed to the colder temperatures. Always wear a warm hat to avoid excessive heat loss through your head. Research shows that 70 percent of one's body heat can be lost by not wearing a winter hat in colder climates.

In addition to a warm hat, wear pants that are fully waterproof yet comfortable and flexible so as not to inhibit your movement if, for example, you want to kneel for a lower perspective on your subject. The ability to move around comfortably and stay dry is critical.

Regarding footwear, boots need to be waterproof, insulated and tall enough around the ankles to prevent snow from creeping in. A pair of gaiters—water-resistant covers that go around your footgear from the ankle to below the knee—keep snow from getting inside your boots.

The one piece of equipment that photographers often wear incorrectly is gloves. You may be tempted to choose gloves that do not have fingertips, thinking that fingerless gloves

will allow you to manipulate the camera controls more easily. The truth is that most winter conditions are cold enough that exposed fingers will hinder any refined control of the camera, thus making it more difficult to operate the camera properly. The better option is to wear gloves that have five-finger touchscreen capability. Make sure the gloves are both waterproof and windproof. When it comes to enjoying your time in winter, the right type of clothing can make all the difference between a good and bad day.

Protection For Your Gear

The most frequently neglected consideration of winter shooting is winterizing your camera equipment. What do I mean by "winterizing?"

Today's cameras that are weather-sealed typically perform very well in cold temperatures, but there are a few important considerations to be aware of when preparing camera equipment for winter. Keeping your batteries warm is one. Depending on how cold the temperature is, battery life can be greatly reduced. Results vary depending on the temperature and camera model, but it is safe to assume that batteries might only last a few minutes in cold weather. I hold one of my hand warmers on the camera to keep the battery area warm. This action helps extend the life of the

battery. I also carry backup batteries and keep them close to my body for extra heat—the batteries should be in a location as close to the body as possible. Throughout the day, switch out the cold batteries with the warm ones for longer shooting.

Another common problem with camera equipment in winter is the condensation that occurs from changes in the environment. Frigid air has very little water vapor and is dry. When a camera comes from a cold outside environment to a warmer and more humid environment like a heated vehicle, water vapor can condense on the outside and inside of the camera. Water inside the camera can cause the electrical components to malfunction or even be permanently damaged. To avoid this, bring a large Ziploc bag and seal the camera inside it before moving from a colder to a warmer environment, and leave it there until the temperature inside the bag is roughly the same as room temperature.

Ease Into It

Mistakes are common when you are new to winter photography, and every individual will have different things that work for him or her. Success comes with perseverance, and learning from mistakes is the key. Experiment with different types of adventures, varying the length of time you're in the field, your weight loads and locations. Take some early trips near home, and figure out what works for your style.

These “starter” trips also give your body a chance to acclimatize to the colder conditions and build tolerance over time. Once you’re accustomed to the clothing, equipment and physical effort required, you’re ready to start making some great images.

Setting The Right Exposure

The main technical obstacle to winter photography is the challenge of exposure. When evaluating exposure, your camera meter might not provide accurate readings for white subjects like snow or ice. This error occurs because snow fools the camera meter into trying to average out the luminosity of the snow, and the camera ends up turning the snow gray rather than white. To get around this challenge, you must increase your exposure by one or two stops to retain the highlights. Bracketing with exposure compensation in one-stop increments beginning at an even exposure bias (0) and extending the exposure bias by plus/minus two stops at either end can help ensure that at least one of your exposures will be good. Another solution is to take a reading with your camera set to spot meter mode from a non-white subject, such as the trunk of a tree.

Winter’s Qualities Of Light

A critical element in improving your winter photography is paying close attention to the light. In wintertime, the light quality is unique, as frequent changes in weather take place. These weather changes make the clouds susceptible to more movement; thus, there are more opportunities to capture the transient light. Transient light can be described as changing ambient light occurring when clouds interact with the sun’s luminosity. The diffused light at sunrise or sunset can lead to dramatic, colorful lighting that is accentuated by its contrast with the white snow.

Sunrise and sunset light lasts longer in winter, allowing the opportunity for more extended periods of shooting. To capitalize on this opportunity, look for situations that will enable side lighting that pronounces a subject’s features. Light from the side not only enhances the contours and shapes of the main elements but also gives the image depth, which draws a viewer in and makes the photograph more interesting.

Capture Unique Elements Of The Season

To make the most of winter weather, track weather sys-

tems in your local area and be present when these weather changes occur for dramatic skies as a backdrop of your scene.

Snow is a natural reflector of light, so incorporate subjects into your composition that will reflect color into the image. Elements that can add impact to compositions in winter situations include icicles, ice-rimmed and frosted subjects, and natural shapes outlined in the snow.

Pre-visualizing your photograph—“seeing” the image you want to make beforehand and how your subject will react with the light—will help you plan and time your shoot and lead to more compelling images.

Preparation is the unifying concept that ties all of these recommendations together. Success follows for those who are well-prepared and envision what they are trying to capture.

Winter is a great opportunity to get out and try something new. Take the time to enjoy what you are doing, and you’ll come back with beautiful images.



ANOTHER SOLUTION IS TO TAKE A READING WITH YOUR CAMERA SET TO SPOT METER MODE FROM A NON-WHITE SUBJECT, SUCH AS THE TRUNK OF A TREE.

Macro Photography

Do You Want Brilliant Macro Photography? Here Are The Accessories You’ll Need

Macro photography is certainly one of the most challenging and most demanding genres of photography. In addition to very specific gear

requirements, you also need to deal with tricky conditions such as shallow depths of field, long shutter speeds and tight working spaces.

The following list of macro photography accessories will help you understand better

what kind of gear you really need in order to make some striking photos of flowers, insects and similar subjects.

Macro lens

The word macro is nowadays basically synonymous



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Macro Photography (continued)



with close-up photography, but it's important to make a distinction between macro and close-up images. Typically, those lenses which are labelled as "macro" can reproduce small objects at up to 0.5x life size on a camera's sensor.

However, those premium macro lenses can go further, enabling full 1.0x or 1:1 magnification at their closest focusing distance. It is the exact point at which we pass from close-up images to real macro.

Generally speaking, macro lenses with a focal length of between 90mm and 105mm are most popular. They are quite affordable and they have a rather convenient minimum focus distance of roughly 30cm.

Reversed lens adapter

Amazingly, it's possible to take macro images without using a macro lens! All you need to make this come true is a reversed lens adapter. Using this kind of adapter is surely the simplest and most affordable way to get really powerful macro images.

This adapter is a very straightforward accessory and it does exactly what its name says – it allows you to mount your lens reversed onto your camera body. In the reversed position, the lens acts like a high-quality magnifying glass.

If you have a standard prime lens such as 50mm, it can become a great macro lens alternative!

Extension tubes

These tubes are another ac-

cessory that every macro photographer should become familiar with. Extension tubes work by increasing the extension of lenses – they look like hollow and opaque cylinders that can fit between the lens and camera mount. They allow you to move your lens further from the camera and closer to the subject.

Extension tubes aren't expensive and they are true lifesavers for those on a tight budget. There are many inexpensive extension tubes on Amazon or eBay.

It's also important to mention that extension tubes work best with lenses of short or medium focal length. They aren't really effective with telephoto lenses.

Lighting

When it comes to lighting in macro photography, there are plenty of options. You can shoot in daylight using only available light, but you can also introduce flash on or off the camera or use continuous light from LED lights or reflectors.

In case you decide to use a speedlight for macro photography, bear in mind that you'll have to use various light modifiers in order to get the most out of your flash. The best way to use speedlights is definitely off-camera, which means that besides light diffusers you'll need radio triggers, a TTL cord or a PC sync cord.

On the other hand, if you're looking for more advanced lighting options, the most common one for macro pho-

tography is the ring light. This type of light can illuminate your subject evenly and it's well known for its soft and diffused look.

Light diffuser

A light diffuser is an absolutely necessary accessory for outdoor macro photography that takes place during the daytime. Shooting macro images in the direct sun can be quite frustrating.

Diffusers allow you to get rid of harsh sunlight and shadows, which results in a balanced soft light and consequently better images. There are countless options when it comes to light diffusers and some of them are available for under \$10.

However, if you want to get a truly reliable light diffuser for your macro photography, you should try a compact softbox or a dome diffuser.

These diffusers work great even when the light source is really close to the subject.

Bellows

A bellows system is an interesting piece of equipment that is extremely useful in macro photography. It allows you to vary macro distance by increasing or decreasing the bellows extension. The bellows must be mounted on a tripod to work properly.

This accessory works exactly the same way as extension tubes, but it's even more powerful.

To put it simply, a bellows system allows you to focus at extreme magnifications, no matter what kind of lens you have.

YOU CAN SHOOT IN DAYLIGHT USING ONLY AVAILABLE LIGHT, BUT YOU CAN ALSO INTRODUCE FLASH ON OR OFF THE CAMERA OR USE CONTINUOUS LIGHT FROM LED LIGHTS OR REFLECTORS.



A new year is a great reason to delve into new opportunities. It's like a blank canvas where you can start afresh. If you've been looking for some ideas to improve your photography, here are seven ideas to try out this year:

Get Out and Photograph!

Sitting at home watching photography videos might give you some additional knowledge. But, it's only when you go out with your camera and start taking photos that you get to develop your skills. So, go out to new locations and destinations. Take your camera with you and explore new areas around where you live. Instead of spending money on collecting gear, spend it on your travels.

"You've got to go out, get your camera, and start shooting. That is beyond doubt, the most important thing to do."

Further, when you travel, you meet new people and gather more experiences. When you look back at the photos, you remember the locations and the experiences you had, not the gear that you used.

Look Back at Your Older Images

Take the beginning of the year as an opportunity to look back at the images you took in the previous year. Be the judge of your own work and evaluate your successes and failures. Spend some time understanding what didn't work and how you can improve your work.

See if you can improve the composition of an image you took at a particular location. Or come up with a new concept to take the image. Also, see what lenses got you your best shots, and make a genu-

ine effort to improve the results you get using your other lenses.

Print Your Images

Presentation has a great impact on the way you see your work. Being present digitally is important, but not sufficient. Besides posting your images online, also make an effort to print your images.

You can get big prints made to place on your wall or small ones to put in a scrapbook. By maintaining a printed collection of your images, you can have a look at them at the end of the year. This way you can recollect memories, evaluate your work, and also see the progression of your photography over time.

Trust me, it is so much better having something tangible, something you can actually hold in your hands. It just makes a really big difference.

And don't worry if you don't own a printer. There are many online printing services available. They also tend to give out heavy discounts which you can utilize to print your own photo book.

Have a Secondary Genre

If you're serious about photography, you probably tend to stick to one genre. But it's a good idea to spend a little bit of time on a secondary genre. Your venture into a new genre can help you in developing skills for your primary genre. You can set a milestone for yourself, too. For instance, suppose you specializes in landscape pho-

tography, then you might make a conscious effort to have five shots that you'll be proud of in street photography by the end of 2019.

Shoot Local

If you cannot invest your time in traveling to distant destinations, shooting local can give you better reasons to get out more. Think of somewhere within a 5-mile radius where you can visit at different times of the year and also shoot at different lighting and weather conditions.

I'm sure, anywhere you are, there's going to be a park or a tree or a field, or some macro photography that you can do, and I think it will significantly improve your photography by going out more."

Take Notes

Make use of your smartphone to take notes. You can take notes in two ways: location related and shoot related.

If I go to a location a lot, then I'll build up notes and photos against that location.

You can type in notes, take photos, and also add map locations showing the best places to shoot in a particular location so that you can refer to it the next time you visit.

Additionally, you can take notes related to a particular shoot. For instance, take notes of things like the filters you used, the height of your tripods, and anything else that doesn't get recorded in an image's metadata.

Visualization

Processing your image is just as important as taking the image. It's essential to learn to visualize your final image before you take the image.

If you can't visualize what that



BY MAINTAINING A PRINTED COLLECTION OF YOUR IMAGES, YOU CAN HAVE A LOOK AT THEM AT THE END OF THE YEAR.





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.

Macro Photography (continued)

image is going to be after post-processing, then I think you'll then struggle to get that original image.

And the way you can get better at visualization is to get better at using post-processing software like Lightroom. By being better at editing, you will have a better understanding of how you can manipulate that image. If you don't use Lightroom a lot, I suggests that you pay attention to three things in Light-

room:

- Curves
- Hue Saturation Luminance (HSL) Slider
- Luminosity Masks

This is quite a comprehensive list of photography resolutions. Stick with even just a few of them and you're sure to have a great photography year ahead.



How to Create a Mystical Effect

The following easy and simple tips will help you create mysterious landscapes.

Lower the blues and reduce saturation

In order to give a certain spooky and grim vibe to your landscape, you have to make sure that there are no vibrant shades of blue in the sky. Generally speaking, the image shouldn't look lively in terms of colors.

You should click on Create Adjustment Layer and choose Color Balance. Here you can experiment and shift colors in the highlights, shadows and midtones. Pay attention to Yellow/Blue Slider – this is where you should lower the blues.

Afterwards, you can add a Hue/Saturation Adjustment Layer. This is where you can adjust different colors by selecting them. For instance, you can select Greens and set saturation to -50, in case you want trees and grass in your landscape to look faded.

Remove or add clouds

Landscapes can look mysterious either with clouds or totally cloudless, depending on your artistic intentions.

Before you start altering the existing clouds, click on the Background Layer and then go to Layer > Duplicate Layer to copy it. In this way, your editing won't be destructive and you will be able to easily shift between the original and edited image.

Use the Spot Healing brush on your duplicate background to zoom in closer to the clouds and remove them. Alternatively, if you want more clouds, you can copy the existing ones with the Clone Stamp tool.

Whiten the sky and darken the ground

You can enhance the surreal look if you whiten the sky and darken the ground – this will also make the atmosphere in your photo pretty

ominous.

In order to achieve this in a non-destructive way, create a new layer (you can name it "Gradient"), grab the Gradient tool and choose the Linear Gradient Style. The gradient you're supposed to use to whiten the sky is called Foreground to Transparent. You should set the color of this gradient to white and opacity to anything between 20 and 40%.

When it comes to darkening the ground, create a new layer and set its mode to Overlay. Then select Fill with Overlay-Neutral Color and use the Burn tool to darken the land.

Paint some mist and smudge it

It can be somewhat tricky to create a realistic mist, but you'll surely improve your skills over time. In the best case scenario, you should photograph a landscape that is already misty (such as mountains and rivers in the early morning) and simply enhance the mist in editing.

In case you need to create some mist in Photoshop, select Spatter 14 in the Brush Preset Picker. Then go to Window > Brush > Brush Tip Shape, set its size to roughly 300px and spacing to 50%. This will allow you to paint a nice and disperse mist that you can further improve with the Smudge tool.

You should set the strength of the Smudge tool to 50% and use it to smudge the white brush strokes into swirls of mist that rise up from the ground. Don't overdo it – it should look subtle and realistic!

Add some final tonal tweaks

After you have applied all these tricks, take time to evaluate your image and introduce some final tweaks.

You should probably add a new Curves Adjustment Layer to boost the contrast in your image slightly. In case you're still not happy with the colors, you can also add a Color Balance or Photo Filter layer to bring your image even closer to your artistic vision.

