THE AUSTIN SHUTTERBUG

Austin Shutterbug Club Newsletter **Austin, TX February 2024**

ASC President Brian Loflin will present a demonstration on a couple of complete start-to-finish edits in Photoshop. He will also demonstrate the process of image sizing for ASC competitions, publishing, and the web. If members wish, they are welcome to bring an image for processing on a thumb drive for Brian to complete. This will be a presentation for open discussion as well as Questions and Answers.

Why Are Your Images Not Sharp? – Brian Loflin

Your lens is not really clean.

If there is a film of fog, grease, or grime on the surfaces – front and back—of your lens, this will affect the optical quality of the image. Your lens must be impeccably clean. Do so before every shoot; and during, if necessary. Use a high-quality lens tissue (not a microfiber cloth) and specially designed lens cleaning fluid to clean both the front and rear element.

Your filters are not clean and/or of poor quality.

The same is true of filters you have mounted on the lens. This is especially true if you use a so-called protective filter on your lens. Assure the filter is also impeccably clean.
Some filters are cheap and of poor optical quality and they will degrade the quality of your optical image. Why would you put a $15 filter on a $2,000 lens? If you feel you must use a filter, assure it is of excellent quality and clean. There are times that call for a polarizing or neutral density filter. And it may be desirable to protect the lens' front surface in blowing dust, rain, and snow.

Your lens quality does not produce images, especially with high resolution cameras.

Newer cameras sensor resolution has outpaced the quality capability of older lenses. This is true regardless of brand. Older lenses design and materials are not up to the capabilities of modern glass. And newer lenses have better coatings applied that improve color acuity.

The aperture is too small.

Small apertures, such as F16 and F22, or greater, may cause a problem called image diffraction. This occurs when the aperture in the lens diaphragm is so small that when the image passes through it, some detail is lost. This is especially true in very bright light. There is known what is called a "sweet spot" in every lens' aperture. To know for certain about your specific lens, test it out at various apertures and look at the resultant images at 100% on a large screen monitor.

There is motion blur in the camera's capture.

Lots of things happen in your camera at the moment the shutter is released. Many of these cause movement of the camera or its components. DSLR cameras have a mirror system that moves out of the optical path just

before the shutter opens. This causes internal motion of the camera. To prevent this, use the mirror lock up feature of your camera. Another culprit is when your shutter speed is slower you physically move the camera an imperceptible amount causing a blurred image. And surprisingly, some lens stabilization or vibration reduction systems actually cause blur when activated and when the camera is on a tripod.

Your Depth of Field is too shallow.

While not a focus issue per se, often an image does not have a sufficient depth of field to render the field of view at its sharpest. Be aware of your aperture and assure you have an aperture that gives you the optimum depth of field.

There is subject motion blur.

Like camera motion blur, subject motion blur is caused by a shutter speed that is too slow to stop the motion. For humans and animals in normal conditions, shutter speeds of 1/250 second may be just enough to stop motion activities. However, for moving subjects, the shutter speed must be higher, even as much as 1/1000 second or shorter.

Long focal length lenses exacerbate these problems.

Longer focal length lenses by design magnify the image size on the sensor. And by doing so, they also magnify any camera or subject movement. A rule-of-thumb is to use a shutter speed number that is greater than the focal length number in millimeters. So, for a 200mm lens, the shutter speed should be faster than 1/200 second. A better practice is to double this rule-of-thumb.

The subject has moved out of the set Auto Focus zone.

When your camera's AF is activated, it will quickly focus the lens on the specific target. There's a catch. Cameras have AF systems that have either single-shot or continuous AF systems. Manufacturers have different names for this, but they work similarly. In one-shot AF, the AF focuses on the selected spot and locks the focus. But if the subject moves out of this spot, the image will no longer be accurately focused. To avoid this issue, continuous AF should be used. This selection will continue to change the focus automatically while activated as the subject moves until the shutter is triggered.

Your camera is set to the wrong Autofocus Mode

Modern cameras are provided with two AF modes: Single AF (AF-S) and Continuous AF (AF-C). Canon may call these Single Servo or AI-Servo. If you are shooting a still subject like a product or landscape, AF-C is the way to go because AF-S may still be "hunting" for something moving and focus on something extraneous like a blowing tree or limb.

Your lens AF is not properly calibrated.

And thus, it autofocuses incorrectly. This is especially with longer focal length lenses at 200mm and longer. Most modern cameras have a menu correction that allows movement of the autofocus point closer to the lens or further away. This correction is called AF Fine Tune by Nikon and AF Microadjustment by Canon. Serious photographers should learn how to make these AF adjustments and test them out frequently.

NOTE: Not all lens and camera systems are the same. Therefore, it is worthy to understand how your specific brand of camera works to achieve the best images possible. It is of value to test your camera and system components to discover the best settings for you. And practice until you are comfortable with your camera use in your workflow.

Still Life Photography Workshop – Brian Loflin

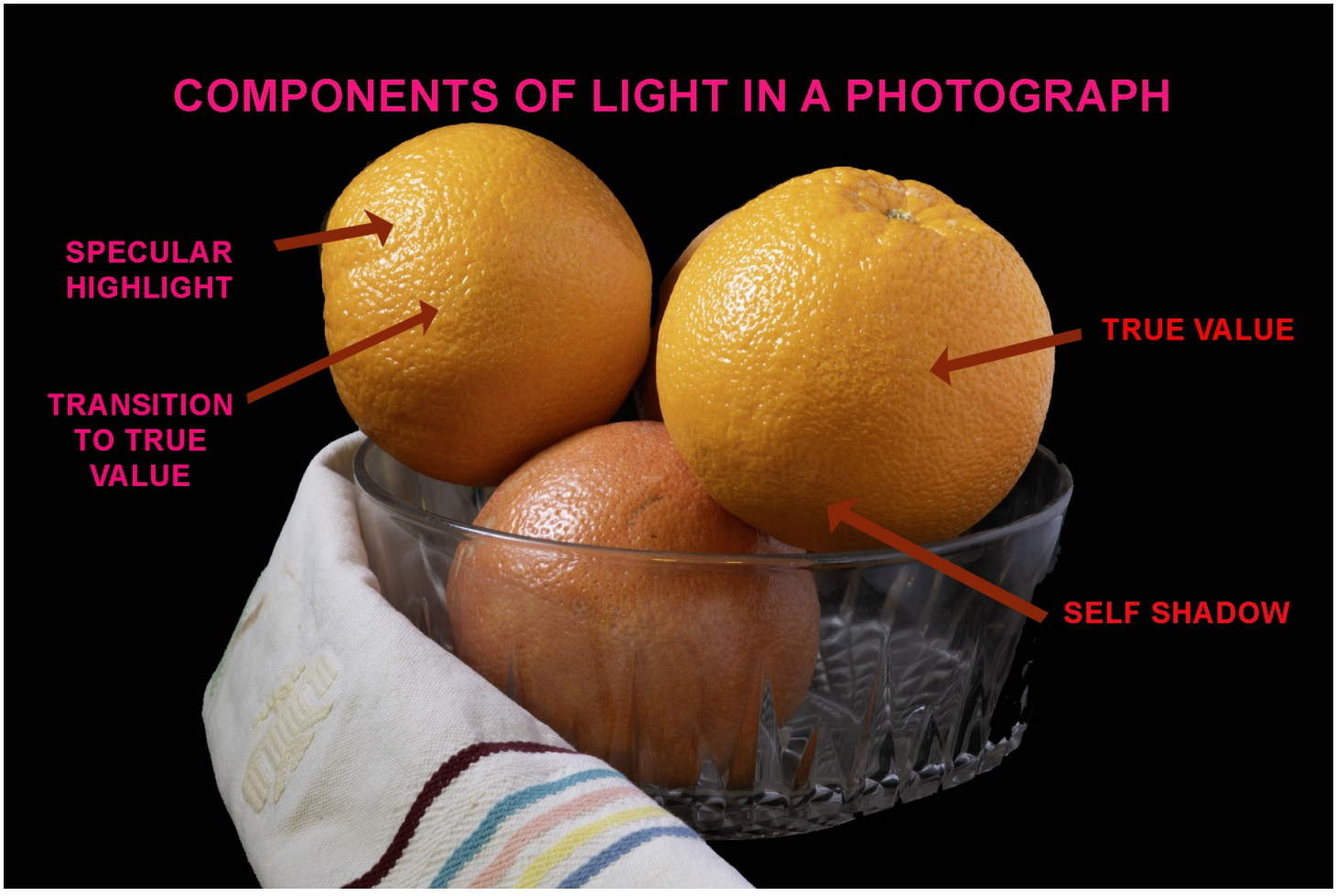
On Saturday January 20, sixteen camera club members met at the North Village Branch Library for a three-hour workshop on photographing still life images. Members were introduced to the art and techniques behind the production of masterful still life photographs. The setup consisted of a surface, background and light fixture with modifiers. Simple and inexpensive modifiers like foam core boards were featured.

Brian Loflin taught members the importance of critical mid-tone exposure and of light modification to provide high contrast or a wide dynamic range for impressive images. Detailed discussions and demonstrations were held about the importance of light and shadow. Demonstrations included the lighting of an orange for specular highlights, texture, value, and shadow.

Finally, a set including a kitchen grater and fruit was provided giving everyone in attendance hands-on photographic practice. Everyone took home some interesting images.

Lunch was at a nearby Chili's following the event.

Photo by Barbara Hunley



Solar Eclipse Photography

Mount your camera and long lens on the heaviest tripod that you have.

Set your tripod so that you can easily view the sun using live-view on the camera monitor.

Remember, the sun may be high overhead.

The sun and moon will move through your frame as the earth rotates. You should set your tripod so that panning with the movement is easily done.

Connect an electronic cable release or intervalometer, Shoot hands-OFF.

Add your Solar Filter.

Use Live-View ONLY to compose and focus-Do not use the optical view finder. Do not view the sun without a filter or special glasses.

Zoom to the shortest focal length to find and center the sun.

Zoom in with your lens to the magnification that you desire, remembering the movement of the sun.

Focus Manually on the edge of the moon or sun surface details. Enlarge the image in live view to focus critically.

With an appropriate solar filter, the exposure will be about:

- F8
- 1/500 to 1/1000 sec
- ISO 100
- Shoot in RAW

Bracket several stops with shutter speed watching details in the Corona. Not every Solar Filter has the same density, so exposures will vary.

1. Long lenses over 300mm are recommended. The sun will be about 50 percent of the frame with a 500mm lens. You can use a teleconverter for greater reach. Remember this will require exposure compensation.

2. Dedicated Solar Filters are required. Do not simply rely on ND- Neutral Density filters. They will NOT filter out harmful IR and UV wavelengths.

Select Filters for Solar Eclipse

From B&H Web Site:

Hoya 77mm ProND-100000 Neutral Density 5.0 Solar Filter (16.6 Stops) $109 **(OS)**

Formatt Hitech 77mm Firecrest Ultra ND 5.4 Filter (18-Stop) $196.00

MrStarGuy Adjustable Objective White Light Solar Filter (86-117mm OD) $49.95

MrStarGuy Adjustable Objective White Light Solar Filter (66-94mm OD) $49.95

MrStarGuy 77mm Thread-in White-Light Solar Filter $139.00

LEE Filters 100x100mm Solar Eclipse Filter $155.00 **(OS)**

DayStar Filters 70mm White-Light Universal Lens Solar Filter (Single, 65-89mm OD) $16.95 **(OS)**

DayStar Filters White-Light ULF Solar Combo Pack for Cameras (One Each 50mm, 70mm, 90mm) $54.00

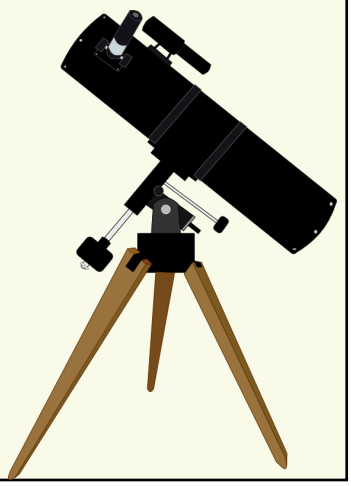
Thousand Oaks Optical:

Solarlite threaded Solar Filter 77mm $59.00

(OS) Out of stock at B&H as of May 27, 2023.

OPTIONAL:

4.5 x 4.25 inch (114 x 133mm) glass Welding Hood Lens, **Shade 14** $10.95
Available from most welding supply houses online. (DO NOT use auto darkening lens)



Total Solar Eclipse Workshop

Texas Hill Country

Monday, April 8, 2024

This will be an exciting and fun, **FREE** workshop featuring in one day excellent opportunities for sky features that occur very rarely. If the weather behaves, this will be one of the few times when everything comes into alignment. We will photograph the Total Solar Eclipse on Monday morning April 8, 2024, from a perfect alignment position near Inks Lake State Park.

All participants will meet as a group in Burnet, Texas for breakfast no later than 8:00AM.

Crazy Gal's Café • 414 Buchanan Dr, Burnet, TX7861

To be in position in time for the 12:17 PM start of the eclipse, we will depart together from our breakfast location. Once we arrive at our shooting location, we will have a camera, setup, and technique briefing.

The Eclipse begins at 12:17 PM, reaches totality at 1:37 PM and ends at 2:58 PM.

Every effort must be made to be set and ready to photograph by 11:30 AM.

After the eclipse is over, participants will have the opportunity as a group to photograph the famous hill country wildflowers along the county roads in Burnet County.

Dinner will follow for those who wish about 7:00 PM back at Burnet, TX.

Participants should bring:

DSLR or Mirrorless camera
Wide angle lens of 24 to 70 mm for landscapes,
A macro lens for wildflowers
Lens in the 200-300 mm range (or more) for the eclipse.
An eclipse filter for the long lens*
SturdyTripod
Intervalometer
Plenty of batteries for four -six hours of photography (for all equipment)

As always, I am available to answer any questions or address concerns at this email or 512-743-7009.

Many thanks for your participation,

Brian

Austin Shutterbug Club
Northwest Recreation Center

Meeting Minutes for January 4, 2024

The meeting was called to order by Brian Loflin at 7:00 pm. There were three guests attending. Brian discussed the subject of this meeting's assignment – photos that have been processed, showing both original and edited versions. In addition, photos will be shown from the Zoo field trip which were done based on a scavenger hunt for various categories. Photos can also be submitted in the General category with no date or assignment restrictions. Competition points are being reestablished so that there can be awards at the end of the year.

Brian discussed some of our upcoming meeting topics, workshops, and field trips which are listed on the web site. On Jan 20, at North Village Branch Library, there will be a workshop on Still Life photography from 10am to 1 pm and lunch somewhere nearby afterwards. Bring a camera with a lens in the 100mm range and a tripod.

Photos were shown and discussed. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30pm.

When words become unclear, I shall focus with photographs.
When images become inadequate, I shall be content with silence.

- Ansel Adams -

Visitors welcome!

NEXT MEETING DATE!

Thursday, February 8, 2024

7:00pm

Northwest Recreation Center

2913 Northland Dr, Austin, TX 78757

We are on Facebook!

Austin Shutterbug Competition – 2024

During the calendar year 2024, the Club will again hold bi-monthly image competitions. These will be scored during the meetings by a panel of judges. Points scored will go to an annual tally and, as such, will determine a pool of top scoring images* that will be submitted to an outside judge for annual awards. Annual Awards will include First, Second, and Third place in each of Assignment and General categories and Photographer of the Year. To be eligible for POY, any entrant must have submitted at least three top scoring entries in the Assignment category.

*Top scoring entries shall be those within the top 25 percent of scores of the annual submissions.

ASSIGNMENT CATEGORIES:

January

Image enhanced by significant Post-Processing –The image must be based on an actual photograph which has been artistically altered through the use of computer post-processing. Original and final Processed photos should be submitted for review and discussion of techniques. May be color or monochrome.

March

Bridges - Creative image of a bridge or multiple bridges or components thereof. Must be recognized as a bridge. Any process. Color or Monochrome.

May

Ruins - A man-made structure or edifice in major disrepair or state of deterioration. Any process. Monochrome only.

August

Threes - An image composed of a collection of three elements or subjects. Any process. No composites. Color or monochrome.

September

The Eyes Have It! - An image emphasizing the eye or eyes of an animal, human or not. Any process. Color only.

November

Doors and Windows - An image where the primary subject is a door(s) and/or window(s) of a building or structure. Composition is the key. Any process. Color or monochrome.