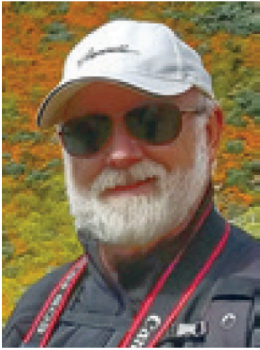


What I Did During the COVID-19 Lockdown



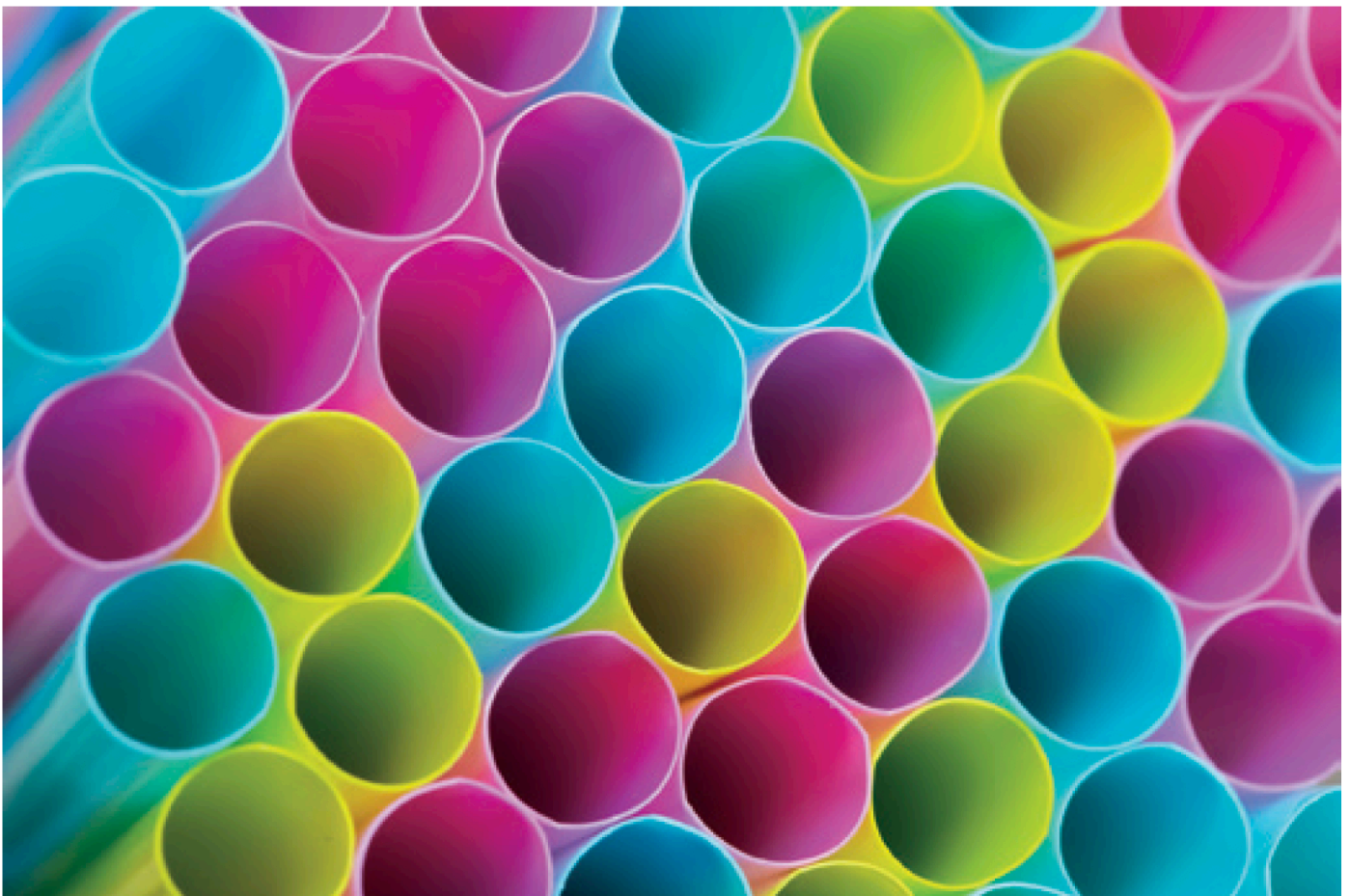
Larry White

I live in sunny Southern California where we have great weather pretty much year around, so I'm usually doing photography outdoors. But I have kept a list of things I want to photograph at home for those infrequent times when it does rain. My rainy-day list has sure come in handy during this Covid -19 lockdown. Never in my wildest dreams would I think of being stuck at home this long. When I started my rainy-day list, it included taking images of things such as colored pencils, colored chalk, colored straws, sea shells and black felt material to use as a background. Not having a lot of these items, over time I acquired things and stored them in a plastic bin in the garage. In addition to photographing what was on my list, I have found there are various items around home that make good photography subjects, such as flowers, plants, kitchen utensils, food, jewelry, tools, etc. I just look around the house and use my imagination to find potential interesting subjects.

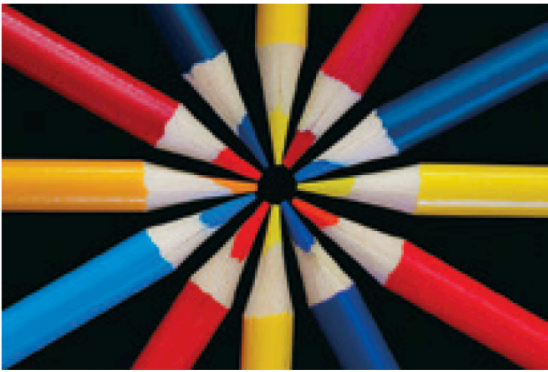
You don't need a studio to do photography at home. A lot of photography can be achieved in

a small space. I take over the dining room table for the days I shoot indoors and also shoot on my atrium and patio. I usually use black felt material as a background but when I want a different colored background, I use a sheet, towel or even a piece of clothing. It just depends on the color I want the background to be. I usually shoot using a shallow depth of field so the background material texture is not important because the background details won't be in focus or recognizable. Backdrop stands and clamps can be used to hang the backgrounds but I have used chairs, tables, a coat rack or whatever to drape material. I have even draped material over a broom stick between two chairs to use as a background. Necessity is the mother of invention.

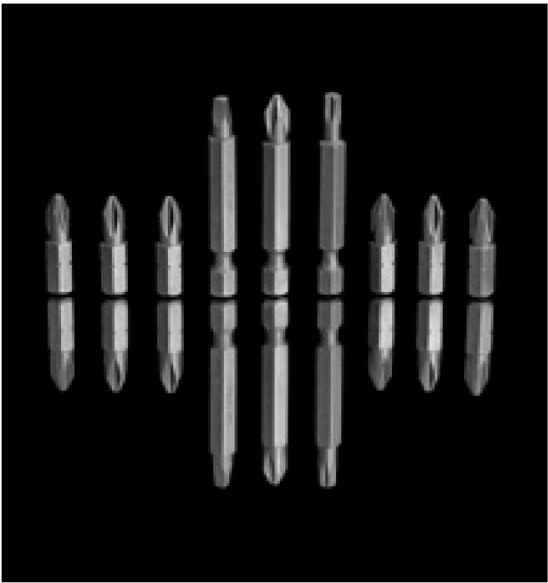
I have flash guns and studio lights for shooting indoors but prefer using natural light if available. In the dining room, I shoot with indirect natural light coming through a window and a sliding glass door and use reflectors to redirect the light as needed. When photographing on the patio or



A Rainbow of Straws



Harmonious Hues



Bits of Reflections

atrium, I use the same techniques as I do when indoors but stay in the shade because the quality of light is so much better than it is in direct sun light. When photographing outside one must also deal with the wind. Even the slightest breeze can move subjects and prevent me from getting a tack sharp shot. A reflector can be used to block the wind. I will clamp the reflector to something solid to hold it in place. If that is not an option, I hold the reflector in one hand and the camera's remote shutter release in the other. Did I mention being a contortionist helps tremendously?

Subjects are set up, paying close attention to the slightest details. This is always important but especially when shooting with a Macro lens because details are magnified when the subject is being photographed so close and the most minute mistakes will be noticeable. The camera's viewing screen on the back of the camera is too small to accurately evaluate the quality of photos. Therefore, after shooting a set up, photos are downloaded into the computer and viewed, each photo zoomed to 100%. In this way I can really scrutinize my photos, checking to make sure the composition, focus and depth of field are good. I also look for any distractions that may not have been noticed while looking through the camera's



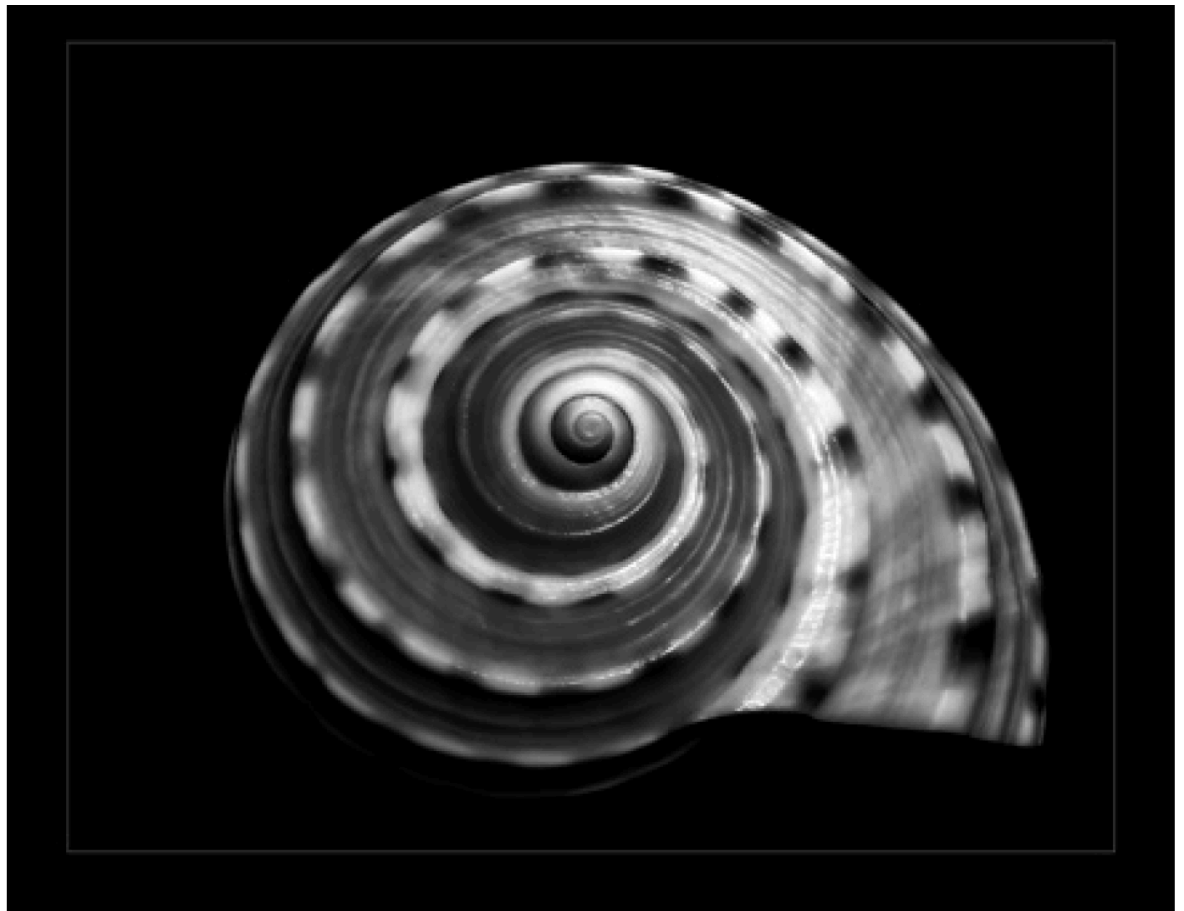
A Different View of Lily

viewfinder. I make sure I am happy with my shots before I rearrange or tear down a set up. I will often have to change camera settings or make various adjustments to the set up and reshoot before the results are to my liking. Once satisfied with the photos I've viewed in the computer, I rearrange the subject for another composition or set up a different subject. I have noticed that during the Covid-19 shutdown, I'm working more slowly than usual and taking more time with my photography. I'm not in a hurry. After all, I don't have anywhere to rush off to.

The equipment I use includes a Canon® Mark IV camera, Canon 100mm 2.8 Macro lens, tripod, remote shutter release and reflectors. At times I will use my Canon 70-200 mm 2.8 IS lens. I use my remote shutter release to reduce camera shake but if I didn't have one, I could use the camera's

Any mention of products or services in this article or anywhere else in the *PSA Journal* does not constitute an endorsement or approval of those items.

Photos © Larry White



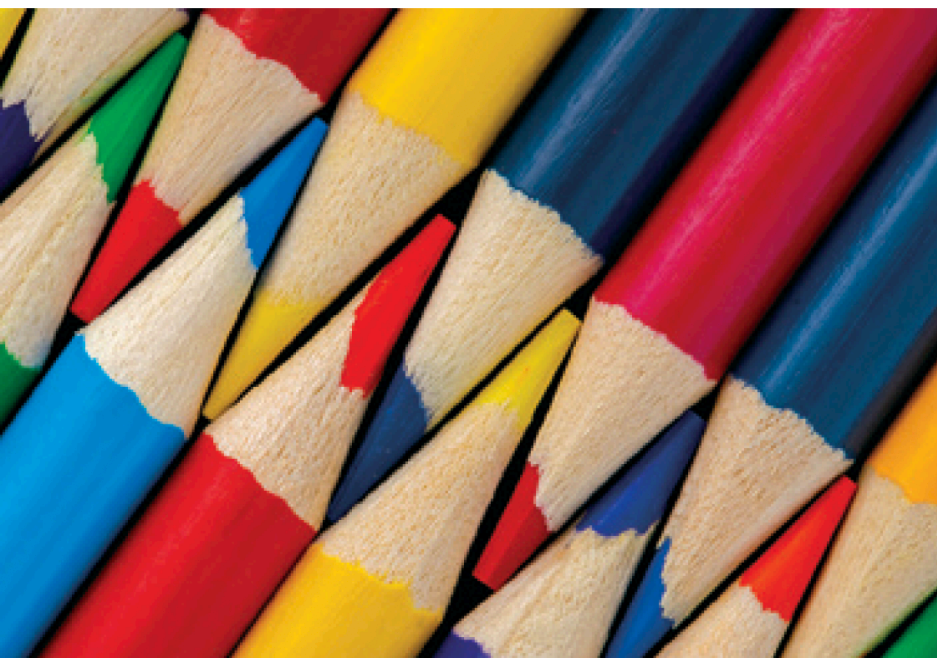
Seashell Study in Black and White

timer to fire the shutter to achieve the same result. Using a Platypod® is an alternative to using a tripod. The Platypod takes up less space than a tripod and can easily be used on a table top, floor or other surface.

I have also been working on improving my post processing skills, learning different techniques on post processing by watching videos, webinars and tutorials that are available on the internet and then practicing what I'm learning.

I am trying to keep a positive attitude and making the best of a bad situation. Through all this I have found being stuck at home does have its rewards. This is a great opportunity to try new things, experiment with different photography techniques and really expand and improve my photography skills and knowledge. I fully expect to come out of this Covid-19 lockdown being a better photographer.

The images in this article are examples of some of the projects I have been working on, I hope they will give you ideas to create your own rainy-day projects. ■



Clash of Colors



Red Hibiscus Detail