The Viewfinder
the Newsletter of the Syosset Camera Club

Volume 37 Number 9 **May 2006**

President's Message *Aileen Harrison*

It's so very good to be back. The next meeting which is April 20, will be "The Falkland Islands" presented by Ivan Rothman. This should be a winner. I have heard him speak before and look forward to hearing him again.

We are will be open to receive nominations for next year's Officers and Appointees now and during the entire month of May, Moshe has graciously accepted to head of nominating committee. Now is your chance to nominate someone you want. Voting will take place in September.

Start thinking about this years Honors Award Dinner at the Milleridge Inn on Friday, June 16th. I think most people enjoyed the raffle, so look for something to donate. I will have introductory letters at the next meeting, which makes asking for donations easier. Suggestions for prizes are: Dinner at you favorite restaurant, groceries from your Supermarket, Manicure or Pedicure from your favorite salon, etc. See you at the next meeting. Wishing you all a happy holiday.

Spotlight on new members

David Hoffer ***from an interview by Moshe Markewitz***

David Hoffer joined us during the 2005 season. David has been a photography enthusiast since childhood, taking pictures for his own enjoyment. He never used a darkroom nor was he ever before a member of a Camera club. David's media of choice is slides, preferring the color saturation and fidelity available with positive films. His camera of choice was a Hasselblad until acquiring a Nikon Digital Camera, which he now uses.

As a Physician and Surgeon David has used photography to document his patients and their pathological conditions, which he used as a teaching tool.

David was born and raised in Jerusalem where his 91-year-old mother still lives. He is the father of four children, one at Harvard Law School, one at Mount Sinai school of Medicine, one has been accepted to Cornell College and the youngest (a daughter), is in Middle School.

David Particularly enjoys the friendship and camaraderie of our club. He says that he learns something new about digital photography from our members each time he meets them. One gets the idea that it will soon be reciprocal.

Adjustment Layers -Why You Need Them

One of the most compelling arguments for digital photography is the inherent control that you have in creating an image, both in the camera and through editing software. This article explains how to

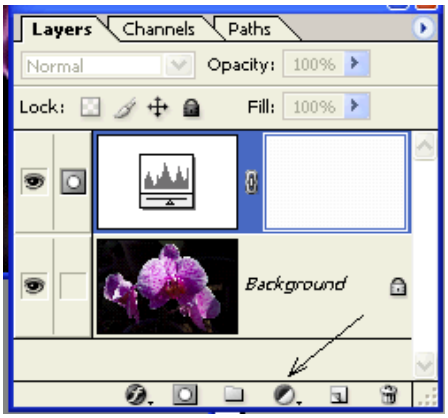
use Adjustment Layers in Photoshop, but the principles are applicable to other software programs as well.

> Every adjustment made to a digital image degrades the image to some extent

Most Photoshop beginners apply basic adjustments such as levels, curves, contrast, etc. without using layers. This is a straightforward and intuitive way of doing things but not the optimal way. The problem arises from the fact that every adjustment made to a digital image degrades the image to some extent. If you want to see just how much damage is done, just look at the histogram that comes up with the Levels control before you make any adjustments and then look at it after you have made all your adjustments. You will find gaps in the histogram indicating tonal values that are completely absent from your image. Another problem is that when you apply adjustments to selected areas using selection tools, it is frequently difficult to get an accurate selection in a reasonable amount of time.

Wouldn't it be nice if there were a way to make all of the adjustments to an image by overlaying them on the original image like acetate sheets, leaving the original intact? We could then fine-tune each adjustment without ever disturbing the original image. As we learned during Bill Schmidt's presentation, we can do much of that using the History Brush. A more comprehensive solution is through the use of layers. In particular, Adjustment Layers.

To create and Adjustment layer, click on the third icon from the right at the bottom of the Layers palette and select the type of adjustment you want to make from the pop-up menu. The new Adjustment layer will appear on the layers palette as a layer and a linked layer mask. The mask will appear as an empty white square indicating that adjustments will be applied to the entire image. Make your adjustment as you normally would.



Now here is where the magic comes in. Select the layer mask in the layer palette (click on the square icon with the circle in the middle) and paint on the image with a black brush to conceal the effect of the adjustment or with a white brush to reveal it. If you will be applying the effect to a small area, start with a black mask and use a white brush to reveal the effect in selected areas. You can toggle between black and white brushes by typing 'X' on the keyboard. You can similarly toggle between black and white masks, by typing CTRL-I. Keep in mind that all of the brush properties are applicable including opacity. You can exercise additional control by adjusting the opacity. Note also that you can paint with shades of gray, which has an effect identical to using less than 100% opacity for the layer. If you have an active selection when you create an adjustment layer, Photoshop will automatically fill it with black and white- the white part indicating the

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selection.

A layer mask effects any layer above it, so if you have multiple layers you can move the mask to effect all of them, some of them or one of them. To see a before and after of the mask effect, you can click the "eye" icon for the layer to turn it on and off.

See What Others are Doing?

Want to see some great photos? Check out the PSA (Photographic society of America) website at http://www. psa-photo.org and you will see some impressive work.

An adjustment layer can be saved separately from the image you are working on and applied to another image. How's that for a time saver. Here's how to do it. From the Layer menu or Layers palette pop-out menu, choose 'Duplicate Layer.' Now pick a file in the Duplicate Layers dialog box to attach the Adjustment layer to. You can choose an existing document and Photoshop will add the Adjustment layer to the image or choose 'New' and a new document will be created. That's easy enough, but it may be even easier to just drag the layer from the Layers palette of an image to the image you are working on. In either case, each image must have the same pixel dimensions.

You can even use an Adjustment layer to simulate a split neutral density filter. If you have an image with a very bright sky, you can make an Adjustment layer with gradient that darkens the top of the image and gradually fades to no effect as covers the foreground.

The only downside to the use of layers in general is that they consume more storage space than simply working with the background layer- but it's worth it. If you will be working on the file again, save it as a Photoshop (psd) file which will preserve the lavers. Keep in mind that each layer adds to the file size. If you "flatten" the image or save it as a jpeg, the layers will collapse into a single one and the size of the file will be reduced accordingly. The final product will be superior to that which would have resulted from making all of the adjustments to the background layer, if for no other reason than preservation of the original resolution and tonal range.

You can get comfortable with adjustment layers by ignoring the mask for starters. Just use it for adjusting Levels, Contrast, Brightness, etc. You will find yourself working with 3 or 4 layers in not time at all. Experiment!

Well that's Adjustment layers in a nutshell. There is much more to the subject and many techniques that have not been covered. There are dozens of books on Photoshop with excellent chapters on Adjustment layers. If you're lazy or prefer something more interactive, 'Google' *adjustment layers* on the Internet and you will find a number of tutorials.

Meeting Schedule

POB Community Center
Meetings start at 7:30 pm
http- //www.syossetcc.org

April

4/20	Presentation by Ivan Rothman, The Falkland Islands
4/27	Theme Competition "Architecture" Judged by Dave Green

May

5/11	Competition judged by Art Inselsberger
5/18	Presentation by Tom Mantana, "Travel."
5/25	End of Year Competition judged by Mel Ettinger, Sherman Paur and Andrew Kurchey

June

6/16	end of year Honors Award Dinner at the Milleridge Inn 6/16

Correction- Last month's Viewfinder indicated that the those going to the Marine Nature Study Area on May 6 should arrive at 6:00. **It should have read 5:30 am**. The gate will be locked at 6:00 am.

Digital Competition; a White Paper *by Gerry Harrison*

Some information about *Digital Competition*

Digital competition is very similar to Slide competition. One can scan a slide and use it for digital competitions as is or enhance it using a photo editor. This certainly allows for greater artistic

control than was available by retouching a slide or masking it in a special holder. The scanned image can be submitted after it is copied to your computer and changed to a prescribed format. For the many of us using digital cameras there is no need to scan as the image out of the camera can be submitted after it is copied to your computer and changed to a prescribed format.

The pictures can be sent to the Competition Chairman by e-mail. This is a great advantage to people who cannot get to meetings. It allows snowbirds, the disabled, and members that have moved to be active in the club. It allows you to enter competitions in far away places without the expense of sending you images to these places. It removes the possibility of damage or loss to your originals, which are safely stored at home.

The advantage of not having to spend time and money printing pictures is not a trivial consideration. It puts many talented photographers, who cannot afford the $50 to $100 dollars some of us spend on ink and paper a month, or the expensive printers we are using, into the running.

How will this affect the Slide photographers? In our club, the question is becoming less important every year. At the most recent competitions we were down to one “A” and one “B” entrant. Many clubs have combined Slides and digital competitions into one category called *digital projection*. I think digital competitions will put some life into the “projected images” competitions. The decrease in slide activity helps provide the meeting time required to do digital competitions. The slide makers can order a copy of their slides on a CD and enter them in digital competitions with all the advantages pointed out in this paper.

How will this affect the Print photographer? Maybe some of us will do less printing. Probably not, as the reason most of us submit 2 or 3 prints is that it gives us an advantage, as the top score is the one that counts. The other prints are used only as tiebreakers. I am in favor of letting one submit the same image in the projected image class and in the print category, at least at the club level. This will allow digital competitions to serve the function of a critique night if we allow the image to be further image edited and then submitted as a print. It might serve to keep the many prints we all have at the bottom of the closet to take up less room. It seems such a waste to me to spend hours working on a print to have a judge look at it for 30 seconds and for it to spend the rest of time on the floor of a dark closet.

If clubs had access to a digital projector it would encourage members to prepare presentations. It is less costly and easier to prepare a digital presentation than a slide presentation.

How does the quality of digital projection compare with slides? With respect to resolution and distortion, the XGA projectors in the sub $1200 class are adequate. These projectors use sRGB and therefore have a smaller color gamut than the prosummer cameras that support RGB. The results in the many clubs now doing this seem to be acceptable. RGB projectors are available but not yet in the right price range. The more obvious problem is the lack of color uniformity. The colors vary from manufacture to manufacture, from model to model and even with time. The differences are similar to the difference between computer displays. Calibrators are now available that work on digital projectors as well as on computer displays. This should resolve most of the color problems. To have your digital competitions images look like your home screen, more attention will have to be given to calibrating your home screen.

Many clubs have run digital competitions for the past year including three in NJ, and many others up and down the East Coast. We expect a large percentage of clubs to be holding digital competitions this coming year. Note Amherst is accepting digital submissions for this summer event. PFLI is planning to start digital competitions in the Fall. Why wait. The entry fee for the SCC

is low as we have three members willing to let us use their projectors until we decide what model we should buy. Please send me your comments and thoughts. gharriso@optonline.net

It's All About the Light

It is curious that photography is very much about light and the qualities that it imparts to subjects, yet at the amateur level there appears to be too little attention paid to lighting and its subtleties. It oftentimes seems that when the lighting is good, it's a fortunate accident. This tendency might be reversed if those who judge our work spent more time commenting on the appropriateness and/or quality of light in an image- how the light helps or deters from the intended effect. In an era where focus and exposure are not entirely, but damned near handled by the camera, the least we can do is to concentrate on the lighting.

One could benefit by reviewing the work of the fine art photographers. Better yet, look at the lighting effects used by the master painters like Rembrandt, Vermeer and others. They had scant means for controlling their light sources but appreciated directionality and understood the difference between diffuse and specular light sources.

Letters

Please send letters and comments to barry.goldstein@yahoo.com

There Will Always Be Prints- Thank you for the newsletters. The writing on digital was very interesting, and while I agree with some of it, digital is on its way. I imagine my grandkids thinking of film somewhat the way we think of rotary telephones - a fond memory. But there will always be prints - I will always want to see my work in print. I enjoyed your meetings. You have a lot of talented photographers, and a nice group of people. …….. ***Susan***

Dear Viewfinder Editor- We thought that you and the members of the Syosset Camera Club would be interested in an upcoming photographic exhibit at the Heckscher Museum of Art, "Man Ray" which features solarized photographs and rayographs. Please feel free to contact us if you need further information. …….. ***Ellen Boccio*** (ellen@cj2.com)

Rebuttal- In a letter to the Editor In the April Viewfinder, the writer opens with the Statement: " It is somehow difficult to understand why any serious photographer would want to replace prints with digital projected images." Has this person ever thought that slides, an accepted photographic technique for more years than I can remember, are analog projected images?

No group or person that I know of is suggesting replacing printing with digital images. It, like slides is another method of presenting an image. It has its advantages; consider showing your images to a group of over 100 people in an auditorium or entering your images in competitions in London and in NY at the same time. Consider the fact that you still

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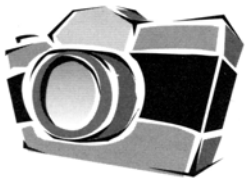

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have the original image and have no worries about the originals being lost or damaged. Another Viewfinder comment criticizes the technocrats among us. But rather than criticize the technocrats we should bow down and worship them. Otherwise we would be carrying glass plates and 12 by 14 cameras every Sunday. As far as the demise of camera clubs, I see it the other way.

The clubs center around learning, interchanging ideas, competition, and having a place to discuss topics of mutual interest. I can't see why adding another method of displaying images should significantly affect the existence of photographic clubs. I see adding this new technique as attracting new members into our club. As far as the Viewfinder writer comments that the submitted picture might not belong to the member, this is no different than when the picture is printed.

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Good images require work. Getting up when the light is soft takes effort. Getting to a location where interesting images exist takes effort, time and money. Composing the picture requires skill. Getting the image exposed properly, in focus, and in general technically suitable requires skill and decent equipment. *The best camera without a good photographer behind it produces nothing.* The March Viewfinder comments on how all it takes to capture an image with a modern camera is the pressing of the shutter button. Did one forget about the many menu settings and dial settings required to get an optimum picture before pressing the shutter? A modern camera helps us focus faster and more accurately and is especially useful to those of us that have poor eyesight.

It is an undisputed fact that the wet darkroom is close to a thing of the past, used only in special cases today. It has been replaced with the image editor, which in many ways is more powerful. It however, like the wet darkroom, requires a skilled operator and takes a long time to master. The time spent on a given image may be less or more than that spent in the darkroom depending on what one is trying to achieve.

Some additional thoughts on digital competition follow. Most of the prints I have so laboriously made lie on the floor in two foot stacks never to see the light of day. If I had submitted these as digital images, many dollars, many hours and many natural resources would have been saved. I'm in favor of allowing images that were "digitally" submitted to be entered at a later date as prints. What I would do is submit my high scores as prints. This in effect would give me another level of critique. I would now end up with many less prints on the floor and still have the best ones to exhibit in libraries or put on my living room walls. There are people who cannot afford to print three 20 inch or maybe six images each month, (if they also do B/W inch images). These people are now on an even footing with the big spender, at least in the digital category. …***Gerry Harrison***

PFLI March Competition Results

Judges - Dennis Golin Russ Popiel John Brokos

Black and White A

26	Robert Glick	'Got Milk'
25	Marty Silverstein	'Bengalese'
23	Gerald Harrison	'White Sands Yucca'

Black and White B

23	Al Herbst	'Deep Thinker'
22	Ira Scheinerman	'Oops'
22	Matthew Tropper	'Follow The Leader'

Color Prints- A

26	Gerald Harrison	'A Nutty Lunch'
24	Alan Agdern	'Flower 32'
23	Sy Roth	'Awesome Trio'

Color Prints- B

25	Marty Silverstein	'Snow Leopard III'
25	Ed Starling	'Indian Butterfly'
23	Maylan Monahan	'Lily In Bloom'
22	Aileen Harrison	'Dunes & Mountains'

Comment on scoring- I agree with the proposed changes in the competition rules as proposed in the last issue of The Viewfinder. I think that averaging all scores is the fairest and best way. In

April Competition Results

Eights and Nines

Judged by Barry Kurek

B&W
PRINTS - A

Silverstein, Marty	**Print of the Month**
Glick, Robert	9
Harrison, Gerald	9
Goldstein, Barry	8
Markewitz, Moshe	8
Ross, Alan	8

B&W
PRINTS- B

Tropper, Mat	**Print of the Month**
Metzger, Peter	8

COLOR
PRINTS- A

Glick, Robert	**Print of the Month**
Agdern, Alan	9
Harrison, Gerald	9
Markewitz, Moshe	9
Patwa, Ramesh	9
Schmidt, Bill	9
Bowie, Bill	8
Metzger, Peter	8
Ross, Alan	8

COLOR
PRINTS- B

Tropper, Mat	**Print of the Month**
Goldstein, Carol	9
Hollander, Charles	9
Rothman, Stan	9
Silverstein, Marty	9
Starling, Edward	9
Sunshine, Ira	9
Goldstein, Barry	8
Herbst, Al	8
Lloyd, Loretta	8
Monahan, Maylan	8

SLIDES- A

Patwa, Ramesh	**Print of the Month**

SLIDES- B

Volin, Linda	**Print of the Month**
Volin, Stanley	7

addition, ribbons should only be awarded for eights and nines. We used to ask the maker of the print or slide of the month to comment on it. I think that person should be asked to talk about his or her winner, providing as much information as possible for the edification of the club members. All entries should of course be the work of the individual member with the exception of printing. In the past we have permitted commercial printing, and I think that should be continued since not everyone has a large format printer. …. ***Stan Rothman***

A Faster Way to View the *Viewfinder*

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Equipment for Sale

The following vintage equipment is available free of charge. Contact Marie Zinerce at 516-579-8596.

Saticon Color Camera model QP84U, Sharp Color Video Camera model QC-52, Pentax VHS Movie Camera, Polaroid Pronto Land Camera, Polaroid One Step Camera, Yashica Auto Focus, Yashica FX-70 Quartz, Adox (probably film), Cannon AF35 mm, Cannon AE1 Program Model 2651655, Minolta Electro Control Himatic E, Kodk Tele-Ektralite 40 Camera, Vivitar 845 24-48 mm Telemotor, Polaroid Land Wink Light with Diffuser and Case, Polaroid 300 Film

Huntington Tulip Festival Photo Contest

The town of Huntington will hold a Tulip Festival at Heckscher Park on Sunday May 7, and will offer prizes for photos that best "express the spirit of the Huntington Tulip Festival." They don't say what that is exactly, but the festival is billed as "a free, annual, family-oriented Festival." Prizes are $350 for first prize, $200 for Second Prize and $100 for Third Prize.

You can get entry forms at: http://town.huntington.ny.us/permit_pics/347.pdf

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Nikon D50 Body	$599.99		
Nikon D70s Body	$829.99		
Nikon D2X Body ($500 Rebate)	$4599.99		

Digital Photography 101

Monday January 30th - 6:30pm - 8:30pm Amityville Store
Monday February 13th - 6:30pm - 8:30pm Syosset Store
Monday February 27th - 6:30pm - 8:30pm Amityville Store
Monday March 13th - 6:30pm - 8:30pm Syosset Store
Monday March 27th - 6:30pm - 8:30pm Amityville Store

Class Fee: $50 or *FREE* with camera purchase

SUMMARY: This 2 hour class will cover the basics of the exciting new world of digital photography. This course is geared toward new owners of Digital SLRs and Point-N-Shoot Digital cameras.
TOPICS INCLUDE: Digital Photography Terms, Camera functions, Resolution and Compression, White Balance, Shooting Techniques, Storage and Archiving, E-mailing Your Photos, Getting the Best Possible Print and Fun ideas for using your photos!

Digital 101 is held every 2nd Monday at our Syosset Store and every 4th Monday at our Amityville Store, unless noted

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