



The Viewfinder

the Newsletter of the Syosset Camera Club

Volume 38 Number 7

March 2007

President's Message *Aileen Harrison*

For those of you on vacation or otherwise unable to attend meetings and outings, here is an update some of the events that we have enjoyed this last month.

On February 25th, we were temporarily moved from our normal meeting place, so we met at Allen Park instead. The attendance was small but Gerry and I, along with Ira Sunshine, Alan Ross, Peter Metzger, Ed Starling, Moshe Markewitz, Al Herbst, Jules Weisler and Matt Tropper were there and the enthusiasm was large. We had a critique night, which was so successful that we would like to repeat it at other meetings. We brought in some pictures that we had not yet shown and we each offered a critique of the pictures.

At our last Sunday outing, when the weather was a whopping 17 degrees, five brave souls, Marty Silverstein, Peter Newman, Moshe Markewitz, Gerry and myself went to the lower east side. As soon as I stepped out of the car, I said, "Can we go home now?" Actually once we started walking it got better and better. We went to an Orthodox Synagogue, which has been in use since 1867. It is being renovated at this time but still has never missed a service since it was built. We had a docent explain all about it. You didn't have to be Jewish to enjoy his talk about refinishing and decorating the Synagogue. Of course the best part of the trip was the Chinese Restaurant we discovered in Chinatown. Ask me anything you wish to know about a "Hot Pot" and I will be glad to tell you.

Attending meetings, learning, competing, having a cup of coffee and a cookie are all enjoyable, but if you want to get to know fellow club members come to breakfast on Sunday morning. Even if you don't go out on a field trip, you get to talk about subjects we never have time for at the regular meetings.

This is new news: I hope you get to attend the **Spring Spectacular, which will take place April 22nd**. Tickets are \$25.00 and well worth it. We have gone to the last few and I can assure you will learn a lot about photography. Canon is sponsoring the event. There will be numerous door prizes. The guest presenter will be Rick Sammon, a very dynamic and entertaining speaker. Members of our club will be receiving PFLI awards at this function, so it will be nice to be there and to cheer them on.

PROGRAM 2006-07

February

8 Competition- Leon Hertzson

15 "Zoo Photography" presented by Sheldon Pollack

22 "How to Select a PC for Photoshop" presented by Bill Schmidt

March

8 Competition- Barry Kurek

15 "Orchids" presented by Bill Overton

22 Critique

April

12 Competition- Bill Rudick

19 Presentation TBA

26 Theme Competition- Manipulated images

May

10 Competition- Andrew Kurchey

17 Presentation by Ivan Rothman

24 End of Year Competition- Sherman Paur, Arnold Brower and Art Donnelly

Meetings are at the Plainview-Old Bethpage Community Center at 7:30 pm

Don't forget Sunday mornings, 8 am at the Celebrity Diner

Robert Glick At Syosset Library

“The Art of Construction” is a featured exhibition by Robert Glick, at the newly renovated Syosset Public Library. In this display Robert has created photographic interpretations of the library’s renovation. Other works by Robert are on permanent display in the Main Lobby of the library.

Megapixel Madness

This article was inspired by a NY Times article of 2/8 brought to my attention by Al Herbst. The main point of the article was to debunk the urban legend that has been carefully protected by camera marketers and salespeople, which claims that the more megapixels, the higher the image quality. The relative merits of a high megapixel count with pertaining to digital cameras has been covered numerous times, but the level of ignorance in that regard remains high as well. While quality is subjective, there are a number of things for your consideration that will help you in making a camera buying decision.

There are a number of factors that control image quality, and the pixel count is only one of them. A case in point is the fact that professional photographers do not always select the camera with the highest Megapixel number. I will go out on a limb here and state that the number of pixels is very important when the count is low, say around 3 megapixels and becomes less important as you approach the limits of your printer and your ability to resolve the ever contracting distances between pixels. Film photographers learned that there is a fixed number of grains in a silver halide negative and no matter how fine the camera and lens, the grain provided a barrier to unlimited enlargement. This meant that you must carefully compose your image to avoid cropping and the resulting enlargement of grain. The analogy holds true for pixels. In my own experience, a 3 megapixel camera can produce very fine 8x10 prints. To produce the same quality prints in 11x14 one would need 5.8 megapixels as follows;

$$11 \times 14 = 154 \text{ in}^2 \text{ and } 8 \times 10 = 80 \text{ in}^2$$

$$154 / 80 = 1.9$$

$$1.9 \times 3 = 5.8$$

As you can see the relationship between pixel count and dimensions has to do with area and not the linear dimensions of the print. Therefore, a 12 megapixel camera can be assumed to produce a 16x20 print of the same quality as that of a 11x14 print from a 6 megapixel camera. At some point, the pixel count will approach the limits of the lens to resolve further detail. I will not give a number

February Competition Results

B&W Prints - A		Color Prints- B	
<i>Glick, Robert</i>	9	Goldstein, Barry	8
<u><i>Goldstein, Barry</i></u>	<u>10</u>	Goldstein, Carol	8
<i>Harrison, Gerald</i>	9	Harrison, Aileen	8
<i>Ross, Alan</i>	9	<u>Herbst, Al</u>	<u>10</u>
<i>Schmidt, Bill</i>	9	Langholz, Alice	8
<i>Silverstein, Marty</i>	8	Monahan, Maylan	8
<i>Tropper, Mat</i>	9	Sax, Jerome	7
B&W Prints- B		Scheinerman, Ira	8
<i>Herbst, Al</i>	7	Sunshine, Ira	7
<i>Monahan, Maylan</i>	8	Weisler, Jules	8
<i>Sax, Jerome</i>	7	Projection- A	
<i>Starling, Edward</i>	8	Goldstein, Barry	9
<u><i>Weisler, Jules</i></u>	<u>10</u>	<u>Harrison, Gerald</u>	<u>10</u>
Color Prints- A		Newman, Peter	8
<i>Glick, Robert</i>	9	Silverstein, Marty	9
<i>Greenberg, Carole</i>	7	Tropper, Mat	9
<i>Harrison, Gerald</i>	9	Projection- B	
<i>Markewitz, Moshe</i>	8	Goldstein, Carol	8
<i>Patwa, Ramesh</i>	8	Harrison, Aileen	8
<i>Ross, Alan</i>	9	Sax, Jerome	7
<u><i>Silverstein, Marty</i></u>	<u>10</u>	<u>Weisler, Jules</u>	<u>10</u>
<i>Starling, Edward</i>	9		
<i>Tropper, Mat</i>	8		

here because there is controversy about the matter, but there are cameras available now that approach that limit.

Another critical factor is the quality of the sensor and the software algorithms that are used to translate the sensor output to an image that looks normal to human vision. Photo diodes that make up sensors and do not see things the same way that human eyes do. SLR sensors record light levels in 12-bit mode. This means that each red, green and blue pixel can record light levels in 4,096 (2^{12}) discrete steps. Relating the accuracy of those steps to the scene illumination as perceived by human vision is a sensor-software task that is never perfectly accurate, but some do it better than others. Shooting in RAW mode if you have the option, will give you the

Fare Well!

Arguably, the greatest camera of all time died recently. The main camera aboard the Hubble Space Telescope failed when a fuse blew due to a short circuit.

greatest degree of control in correcting the image.

A factor related to sensor quality is noise. This has been covered in last month's Viewfinder so I will not elaborate now, except to state that not all cameras are created

equal in this regard. Camera reviews will usually point out the ISO 'sweet spot', or the ISO sensitivity setting that gives the best balance between speed and noise. It is not always the lowest ISO but is in most cases. Almost without exception, newer models are better than their predecessors with regard to noise. Don't forget that you can use the noise reduction filter in Photoshop or one of the numerous third party offerings to reduce noise without significantly degrading your image.

PFLI 2007 Schedule

February

23 - Delegates Meeting 8:00 PM

25 - Educational Seminar 1:30 - 4:00 PM at POB Library

March

9 - Competition Night 7:45 PM

18 - Educational Seminar 1:30 - 4:00 PM at POB Library

23 - Delegates Meeting 8:00 PM

April

13 - Competition Night 7:45 PM

22 - Spring Festival- 9am to 3 pm with Rick Sammon

27 - Delegates Meeting 8:00 PM

May

11 - Competition Night 7:45 PM

20 - Educational Seminar 1:30 - 4:00 PM at POB Library

June

1 - Delegates Meeting 8:00 PM

8 - Leonard Victor Competition 7:45 PM

September 2007 - PFLI PHOTO EXHIBIT at the Plainview - Old Bethpage Library

Competitions and Seminars are held at the Plainview - Old Bethpage Library

CAMERA COLLECTOR WANTS TO BUY

- ◆ Quality Cameras- One or a Collection
- ◆ Accessories
- ◆ Photographic Literature

Daniel Zirinsky

Memberships: Leica Historical Society- 40 years
Great Neck Camera Club since 1960
International Center of Photography
Life Member Photographic Society of America

(516) 466-6111 Fax: (516) 466-2859

Email: camrbug@optonline.net

Collect Calls Accepted

Will Interchangeable Lenses Become Obsolete?

The rapid adoption of SLRs in photography starting in the 1950s, is mainly based on the ability to change lenses and therefore adapt a single camera to wide angle, telephoto and everything in-between photography. Secondly, the reflex camera (let's not forget the venerable TLR's like the Rollicflex), gave us a rather clear view of the picture frame as opposed to the viewfinder predecessors.



The evolution of the zoom lens from novelty gadget to a high quality optic nearly equivalent to a fixed focal length lens, has in effect reduced the need for lens changing, but not eliminated it. That is because until recently, there were no high quality zooms that encompassed all focal lengths from moderate wide to telephoto. But what if you had a zoom lens capable of a 35 mm equivalent of 36 to 432 mm. How often would you change that lens? This will become an increasingly meaningful question as camera makers continue to extend the range of zoom lenses while maintaining and even improving image quality.

A case in point is the new Panasonic DMC-FZ8, which will replace the DMC-FZ7. The camera features an 11 element with 3 aspherical elements Leica DC Vario-Elmarit 12X zoom lens with a focal length equivalent of 36 to 432mm. The camera also has optical image stabilization, a 7.2 megapixel CCD and RAW among other features.

The camera, which should be available in March, bridges the gap between high-end compacts and digital SLRs, offering a high level of control. If you do not normally shoot with a lens wider than 36 mm or longer than 432 mm, you would not miss lens interchangeability if you owned this camera.

Letters

Barry, I just read your article on strobe breakdown and offer the following. Voltage is not the only culprit. Semiconductor junctions are destroyed by temperature, not voltage. Heat is caused by current times voltage or wattage. The temperature depends on the wattage, the geometry and the thermal resistance to a heat sink and more. All these factors and wave shape make the subject hard to quantify. A semiconductor junction may breakdown without being destroyed. Zener diodes work this way. When a voltage is present, the impedance of the circuit is what limits the current. A good rule for most semiconductors is to limit the surge current to 1ma or less. So a 20-volt strobe would probably be safe if the circuit resistance was at least 20,000 ohms after the junction broke down. These numbers may be even smaller in today's transistors, but I doubt if the physics has changed. Repeated exposure of junctions to high temperatures, reduce the reliability of the semiconductor and eventually results in a permanent failure of the device. Gerry

Editors Reply- It is refreshing to get feedback from a Viewfinder article. I have no disagreement with your comments; however, the Viewfinder is aimed at a membership with broad interests and few with engineering backgrounds. Having said that, I stand by the explanation offered in the article. While temperature is almost always the culprit when a solid-state junction fails, the temperature as you imply, is a function of current, which in turn is voltage dependent. As you know, that is why transistors are rated according to emitter to base and collector to base breakdown voltages. What is amazing is the fact that camera manufactures have not built current limiting circuitry into their cameras.

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