



The Newsletter of the Syosset Camera Club

BARRY GOLDSTEIN, EDITOR

the Viewfinder



WINTER PHOTOGRAPHY

Linda Volin

The temperature may be dropping, but opportunities for photographing exciting winter scenes will be rising with each drop in temperature. Newly fallen snow, frozen lakes and ponds, and static waterfalls are exquisite views to photograph. Icicles dangling from eaves, lampposts and branches are part of winter's beauty. Leafless trees appear in fascinating shapes waiting to become pictures for eternity.

There are important steps for keeping your camera in great condition during winter months, so you will be able to continually capture special pictures. Should you venture into a snowstorm, keep your camera in a plastic bag, leaving an opening for the lens and viewfinder. If necessary, use a rubber band to keep the bag in place. Brush off any snow that appears on the lens. Don't blow it off because your breath may cause condensation. During low temperatures, be sure to keep the camera in a plastic bag before entering a warmer location. The bag would protect the camera from condensation as it goes from the cold into the heat.

Cold batteries can cause problems. The batteries should be kept warm because cold batteries will not hold a charge and will appear to be dead batteries. Alkaline batteries are recommended - and many extra batteries should be part of your camera equipment. With these suggestions in mind, you will be enabled to photograph wintry wonders that you will cherish in years to come.

Have a wonderful winter season and may you all accumulate beautiful pictures!

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

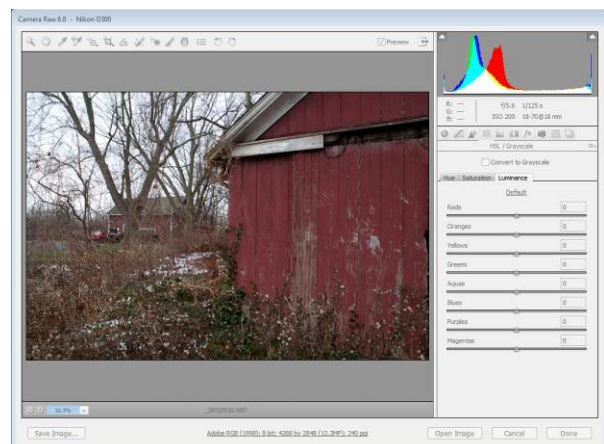
Camera Raw

The other Photoshop *Barry Goldstein*

The best way to process raw files is with the software that is distributed by your camera maker; right? Maybe not! With the constant improvement of Adobe's Camera Raw, the use of a separate program is less of an imperative. Furthermore, Camera Raw is not just for raw images. The program is a competent image editor in its own right. Used as part of a workflow it can automate many image adjustments, saving a lot of time, in much the same way as one might do in Lightroom.

When you install any version of Photoshop after and including CS3, you get a complete suite of applications including Bridge, Camera Raw and Photoshop. You therefore have everything you need for your entire workflow. You can start with Bridge to acquire and organize your images, use Camera Raw for essential adjustments and then move on to Photoshop for features not available in Camera Raw if you need them.

A Raw file is frequently referred to as a digital



negative. Like a film negative, you can develop various versions from the file. When you shoot in jpg, your camera is adjusting the image according to a preset algorithm, effecting color balance, exposure and sharpness in its built-in computer according the preferences that you have set.

Adjustments to images made in Camera Raw are nondestructive, meaning that the pixels are not permanently changed. Contrary to what you may have read and heard before, including in this newsletter, there are huge advantages to shooting in Raw. For example, you can adjust the "Recovery" and Exposure sliders in Camera Raw to recover lost detail in "blown out" areas. This can be done only with a raw file; not a jpeg. For most situations jpegs are just fine, but it is the exceptional photograph that we all strive for, otherwise why bother with Photoshop in the first place?

Controls in Camera Raw are laid out in a logical order according to an optimal workflow. The following is an explanation of what the basic adjustments are in Camera Raw which may also be applicable to other programs. It is not intended to be a complete review.

White Balance: Incorrect white balance is among the most frequent flaws in otherwise good work. The White Balance adjustment is used to correct color casts, so that white objects appear to be white and the other colors fall into their relative place in the color spectrum.

Exposure corrects for any error you may have made in the initial in-camera exposure. This is an extraordinary powerful feature that allows you to correct exposure by as much as 8 full stops (-4.00 to +4.00).

Fill Light is used to 'unblock' shadows. It is the digital equivalent of using fill flash.

Blacks establishes the darkest area in the image. The adjustment has the effect of moving the leftmost portion of the histogram curve to the ideal left edge that represents absolute black or as black as your ink can get.. In most cases, the presence of pure black in at least one area of an image will improve its impact.

Brightness is pretty much self-explanatory. You can use it to increase the luminance of the image in a fairly uniform way.

Contrast: "Contrast" adjusts overall contrast of the image, while "Clarity" adjusts mid-tone contrast only. Using the Clarify adjustment you can add "snap" to an image with little effort.

Saturation: there are two ways of adjusting saturation in Camera Raw. The "Saturation" slider adjusts overall saturation while "Vibrance" is used to adjust the saturation of already saturated colors..

Note: you can watch the histogram as well as the image as you make the above adjustments; it's a second chance to get it right if you didn't get it right in the camera.



January

- 13th Competition- judged by Dick Hunt
- 20th "Travel Photography" - Ivan Rothman
- 27th "Camera Modes" - Doreen Rose

February

- 10th Competition- judged by Joe Senzatimore
- 17th Scenic Spots on Long Island- Jane Leek
- 24th "HDR: - Valerie DeBiase

March

- 10th Competition judged by Andrew Kirchey
- 17th "Portraiture" - Gerald Appel
- 24th Competition (make up) judge to be announced

April

- 14th Photojournalism Theme Competition- judged by Leon Hertzon
- 28th "Flash Photography" Marty Silverstein and Critique

May

- 12th EOY Competition judged by Ed Sambolin, JoAnn Gazzola,
- 19th "Macro Photography" - Harvey Augerbraun

June

- 3rd End of Year Dinner, LaFamiglia, Plainview at 6:30 PM

PFLI Scores for December

COLOR A

25	Bill Bowie	'Mormon Barn'
	Marty Silverstein	'Giddyap Mommy'
24	Ed Starling	Fire Island Light'
	Peter Metzger	'Starry Night'
23	Ramesh Patwah	Lake Mcdonald'
	Valeri Dibiase	'View From Bridge'

COLOR B

25	Chris Ferrara	'The Lighthouse'
----	---------------	------------------

B&W A

23	Alan Agdern	'Surfer 811'
	Jules Weisler	'Monkey'
	Peter Newman	'Infra Red Study'

PROJECTION A

23	Marty Silverstein	'Butterfly Art'
----	-------------------	-----------------

The HSL/Grayscale panel contains self-explanatory sliders for the adjustment of each color along with a “Convert to Grayscale check box. The main story here, is powerful gray scale conversion tools. By selecting the “Convert to Grayscale” box, you can do a black and white conversion that is identical to that in Photoshop’s filter menu, allowing you to adjust the level of luminance that each color in the original converts to a shade of gray. “Split Toning” which is the next panel completes the gray scale conversion, allowing you to create Sepia tones, Platinum tone effects and so forth.

The Lens Corrections panel can be used to correct for lens aberrations, but perhaps more usefully, you can use it to add a vignette effect with a simple movement of the slider vignette. This means you do not have to use selections and layers to achieve the so called Ansel Adams effect so cherished by our judges.

The effects (fx) panel is the digital effects panel used mainly to add grain. After years of technological innovation with the goal of eliminating grain, we are now comfortable enough in

Helpful hint: double clicking any slider will set it to its default value.

After going through the basic adjustments, you can open the tone Curve panel to fine tune the highlights, lights, darks and shadows, then the detail panel which contains the tools for sharpening and noise

SCC December Competition

Ken Bausert, Judge

B&W PRINTS –AA

Silverstein, Marty 10

B&W PRINTS – A

Agdern, Alan 10
 DeBiase, Valerie 9
 Herbst, Al 7
 Klosner, Irv 6
 Newman, Peter 9
 Scheinerman, Ira 8
 Volin, Linda 6
 Weisler, Jules 9

B&W PRINTS- B

Ettinger, Burton 8
 Langholz, Alice 8
 Metzger, Peter 8
 Bowie, Bill 10

COLOR PRINTS- AA

Silverstein, Marty 10

COLOR PRINTS- A

Agdern, Alan 9
 Bowie, Bill 10
 DeBiase, Valerie 9
 Klosner, Irv 9
 Markewitz, Moshe 9
 Metzger, Peter 8
 Newman, Peter 8
 Scheinerman, Ira 7
 Starling, Edward 9

COLOR PRINTS- B

Chhatpar, Sunil 8
 Ettinger, Burton 9
 Ferrara, Chris 10
 Herbst, Al 8
 Langholz, Alice 7
 Silverstein, Marty 10
 Volin Linda 6
 Weisler, Jules 8

PROJECTION- A

Bowie, Bill 8
 Ferrara, Chris 8
 Goldstein, Barry 8
 Goldstein, Carol 8
 Harrison, Gerald 9
 Markewitz, Moshe 7
 Newman, Peter 8
 Patwa, Ramesh 10
 Scheinerman, Ira 8
 Weisler, Jules 7
 Woulfin, Gerald 9

PROJECTION- B

Katzenoff, Scott 9
 Langholz, Alice 8
 Rose, Doreen 8
 Serman, Fred 10

the knowledge that we can make a print with no perceptible grain (noise) that some people feel the need to add it as an artistic element or nostalgic throw back. Whatever the reason, here it is.

A very powerful feature of Camera Raw is the ability to use of presets. Presets allow you to save adjustments that you routinely make so that you can just click on the saved preset name to make multiple adjustments simultaneously.

The last panel is another very powerful tool. It's called "Snapshots" and it allows you to save different versions of an image within the single file that you are working with. For example, You may want to save several different crops or color and black and white versions of the same image. Using the Snapshot feature, they will all exist in a single file. Just click on the version you want and it opens.

How often have you wished that you had used a graduated neutral density filter to darken a sky or even a foreground? Do you even have a graduated neutral density filter? In camera raw it's a snap to simulate the effect. Simply click on the Graduated Filter tool and drag it from the top of the image toward the bottom. As you drag, the gradient adjusts to the space you give it and every aspect of it is adjustable. You can also do a gradient from the bottom up or from any side inward or a combination of them. Try that with your split ND. There are few landscapes that cannot be improved with this tool.

When you are done with all adjustments clicking on "Open Image" will open the image in Photoshop, or clicking "Save Image" will take you to the save dialog box skipping Photoshop all together.

MAKEUP COMPETITION

We will have a competition on March 24th to make up for the one that was cancelled during construction at our meeting place. Alan Agdern has consented to reschedule his program on "Light & White Balance" that had been scheduled for that date so that we can have our normal 9 competitions for the year.

End of YEAR Dinner

Last year's dinner was so successful that Peter has booked La Familgia again for this year. The date will be Friday June 3rd at 6:30. The cost will be the same as last year, \$50 per person, including soft drinks and wine. There will be a cash bar as well. The menu will be similar to last year, which means plenty of good food for everybody who attends.

GOT AN I-PAD?



If you have an I-Pad, you might consider getting a "Eye-Fi" wireless SDHC card. With that combo, it is possible to view your photos as you take them on the big screen of an I-Pad. It will also show a histogram and other information as well as provide ranking and organizing functions... all with an \$8.00 download.

Officers & Chair persons

President

Linda Volin

Vice President

Marty Silverstein

Second VP

Bill Bowie

Treasurer

Carole Greenberg

Secretary

Jules Weisler

Programs

Burt Ettinger & Peter Metzger

Judges

Aileen Harrison

Membership

Barry Goldstein

Records

Barry Goldstein

Exhibits

Vacant

Publicity

Linda Volin

Competition

Barry Goldstein

Viewfinder

Barry Goldstein

Webmaster

Frank Kirshenbaum

PFLI Delegate

Burt Ettinger

PFLI Liaison

Al Herbst

Digital Comp.

Chris Ferrara

Print Selection for PFLI Comp.

Marty Silverstein

Bill Bowie

Al Herbst

Contact Officers via the
www.syossetcc.org link

On December 23, Gerry woulfin did a presentation of "focus Modes." In case you missed it, the following are the notes from that meeting.

Focus Modes

Gerry Woulfin

Most low-end pocket digital cameras do all the focus work for you. These are literally "point and shoot" cameras. Furthermore even if you wanted to manually focus using such cameras it would have been practically impossible since they do not include a real optical viewfinder. Using the LCD to check for focus is useless as the LCD is not good enough to truly let you know if an object is perfectly focused or not. On the other hand, SLR digital cameras typically come with three unique options for focus including single auto focus, continuous auto focus, and manual focus modes. Each of these options have their place and are useful in different settings.

Manual Focus Mode- In this mode the camera does not automatically focus on the objects in the photo. You will have to manually set the focus as desired. This is accomplished by either pushing some buttons that in turn change the focus or more commonly by rotating a focus ring on the lens clockwise or counterclockwise as needed. You can see the results of changing the focus by looking through the viewfinder.

Single Auto Focus Mode (AF-S /OneShot)- The camera automatically focuses when you press the shutter button either all the way down to shoot a photo or half way down to lock the focus. In this mode the automatic focus process is carried out only once as soon as the shutter button is pressed. Once the focus is achieved it is locked and it is not changed until the next time the shutter button is pressed. If you keep the shutter button pressed half way down and then the camera moves or the object moves the focus might be lost. This mode is useful when shooting static objects. In most cases you will press the shutter button and hold it half way down. The camera will run the auto focus process. It will let you know when focus is achieved by displaying a green icon and by playing a short beep.

Continuous Auto Focus (AF-C /AI Servo)- in this mode the camera continuously focuses on the objects in the photo. Once the shutter button is pressed and as long as it is held half way down the camera continuously focuses on the objects in the photo. In this mode the camera continuously corrects the focus as the objects distance from the camera changes. This mode is useful when you shoot photos of moving objects such as a race car during a race or airplanes during an air show. You can hold the shutter button half way down and continuously move the camera to follow the object. The camera will continuously keep the object in focus. When you are ready to shoot the photo simply press the shutter button all the way down. One drawback of this mode is high power consumption as the camera continuously corrects the focus it uses the power hungry motors in the lens in order to move the optical components. Other examples are shooting pictures of a monkey swinging from the trees at the zoo or maybe of a basketball player running down the court in an NBA game.

AF-A or AI Focus- This is basically a combination of the two. It starts off in Single Auto Focus Mode (AF-S /One Shot). Then, if it senses movement, it switches to Continuous Auto Focus (AF-C /AI Servo) until the object stops moving.

Like any other feature automatic and manual focus modes have their pros and cons. The first step to using them to your advantage is to understand how they work and what they were designed for. The next step is to experiment. Shoot photos using different focus modes and different types of objects and see how the camera behaves.

Nikon focus modes

When you set your camera lens to AF (auto focus), digital SLR camera's offer the photographer a choice between interchangeable modes. Auto focus modes can vary between different digital camera brands. In the past, Nikon's two most popular modes were called **Continuous Servo AF** and **single area AF**. Nowadays, they are called **AF-C** (short for auto focus continuous) and **AF-S** (short for auto focus single). Many Nikon models also have **AF-A** and **MF** (manual focus) modes to choose from as well.

What are the differences between AF-C, AF-S, AF-A and MF focus options?

AF-C (AF continuous, sometimes called continuous servo) is good use when photographing moving objects. When your camera is set to **AF-C** and you focus on a moving subject, for example a dog running towards you, the focus will stay on the animal so long as your shutter button is held half way down. In other words, the camera will keep re-focusing as the animal moves. That is, so long as you keep your shutter button held half way down.

AF-S (AF single, sometimes called single area AF) mode, is good for photographing subjects that don't move, such as flowers or portraits etc. It locks the focus on the non moving object that you want to photograph. You can then recompose the shot and take the photograph.

AF-A is where the camera selects and goes between the last two modes. If it thinks the subject you are photographing is stationary, then it will automatically use **AF-S** focus mode. If it picks up that the subject you're photographing is a moving subject, then it will automatically use **AF-C** focus mode. This is also the default camera focus mode, unless you change the setting to **AF-C** or **AF-S**.

MF is the manual focus mode. It's unclear why this focus mode is included, because nowadays there is usually an option to switch between auto and manual focus on the side of the actual lens. Maybe it's in case you come across a lens that doesn't give you that option.

Why would photographers change between focus modes?

The default camera setting is **AF-A**. This mode guesses if the subject you are photographing is stationary or moving, and accordingly sets the focus to either **AF-C** or **AF-S**. Photographers don't always trust the camera to pick the correct setting, preferring to make the choice themselves.

Nikon (from D300 manual):

AF-Area Mode- AF-area mode determines how the focus point is selected in autofocus mode. To select the AF-area mode, rotate the AF-area mode selector.

The following options are available:

Mode Description -Single-point AF

User selects focus point manually; camera focuses on subject in selected focus point only. Use for relatively static compositions with subjects that will stay in selected focus point.

Dynamic-area A

- **In continuous-servo AF** (pg 62), user selects focus point manually; if subject briefly leaves selected focus point, camera will focus based on information from surrounding points. Number of focus points used can be selected from 9, 21, and 51 using Custom Setting a3 ([Dynamic AF area], pg. 269). If [51 points (3D-tracking)] is selected for Custom Setting a3, focus point will be selected automatically using 3D-tracking.

- **In single-servo AF**, user selects focus point manually; camera focuses on subject in selected focus point only.

Auto-area AF

Camera automatically detects subject and selects focus point. If type G or D lens is used, camera can distinguish human subjects from background for improved subject detection. In single-servo AF, active focus points are highlighted for about one second after camera focuses. Active focus points are not displayed in continuous-servo AF.

Auto focus

Single (or one) area focus — Camera focuses on a subject in the central area of the screen. Focus adjusts according to the distance of the subject. This focus mode is usually the most accurate because you, not the camera, decides where the camera focuses.

Continuous autofocus — Focuses continually on a subject. Continuous AF can be useful, though not always perfect, when shooting slow moving subjects. On digital cameras with video capabilities, continuous AF is usually the default focus mode.

Spot focus — Camera focuses on a very precise center area of the screen.

Multi area focus — Camera automatically focuses using multiple focus points. The focus positions change according to each subject, focusing on a number of objects within a scene. This mode can be less accurate than single area focus.

Face-priority AF — Face-priority AF is a digital camera detection program that scans for facial details. It controls the auto focus operation based on the location of the detected face in the scene. It may give exposure priority to the face as well. Some digital cameras let you lock focus on a specific face. If the subject moves, or the photographer recomposes the picture, focus remains on the subject's face.

Pre-focus- Pre-focusing can be effective when there is a pre-determined, similar distance between the camera and subject. Focus is fixed until you press the focus button again or switch to a different focus mode. Pre-focus allows you to lock focus on a subject, then recompose. Digital cameras have different methods of pre-focusing, so check the manual.

Manual focus

Manual focus area – Focus on a portion of a scene when not centered in the frame. This method is useful for close-up and macro shots.

Focus ring — Focus manually, from a few feet to infinity, by turning a focus ring near the lens.

Focus button — Depress a manual focus button and rotate a dial until the subject is in focus.

Focus Modes - One Shot or Servo? - Many digital cameras, particularly SLR's, give you the choice of either AI Servo or One Shot focusing. Again, what you choose normally depends on your own style and what you are photographing.

One Shot- This is exactly what it says. The camera will focus correctly for one shot and then you would need to release the shutter button and press again for a new focus point on your subject.

AI Servo- This is a bit more interesting and great technology for sports or wildlife photography as the camera and lens will constantly work together and focus on and adjust for any moving subject within the frame. **E.g.** Let's say you are on safari and a leopard is running towards you the rider as you shoot, and just fire away. By using **autofocus** in this scenario, it is just possible that the focus may stray to the background as you shoot and you miss the only shot of a rider making that jump...food for thought.

To get the old "Grey matter" working, think about your style of photography and where autofocus or manual focusing may help you.

at great speed. If you are silly enough to stay and photograph this monumental (or just mental) occasion, and yo your focus mode set to One Shot, you wouldn't be able to make good use of your continuous mode of 5 or 8 frames per second as you would need to be repeatedly pressing and releasing the shutter button to refocus each shot.

If you didn't, the big cat would become more and more out of focus as it approached with the original point of focus nicely sharp all the way!

If you had the camera set to AI Servo on the other hand, you could just keep your finger pressed firmly on the shutter knowing that the AI Servo tracking focus is taking care of everything, right up to the point of your untimely death!

Most modern DSLR's also have sensors amongst the focus points that determine which part of the image is moving, meaning you can set the focus points to **ALL** and be quite certain that the camera will track your subject. so for sports and wildlife photography, the best set up may well be to use all focus points with AI Servo focusing if your camera allows it, but again, it still takes a lot of practice to get it right.

Autofocus or Manual? For most of my work nowadays I make the most of the incredible advances in Canon's quiet and fast USM autofocus technology. I may be a bit biased here but I do also know that Nikon and Olympus, among others, have similar advancements in their own focusing systems.

Autofocus is so incredibly quick now, its speed has been said to be nearly as fast as the human eye, and is certainly faster than most of us could accurately focus manually! It is great for most subjects, especially as I said before, sports and nature photography.

There are of course, times when **manual** focus is not only very handy but also quite necessary:

Still life or studio work - If I am doing a job that has no time constraints and the subject is very unlikely to move, I like to know that I can put the camera on a tripod and lock in the focus manually to give myself one less thing to think about.

I tend to leave the camera "beep" function on so that I still get assurance that the subject is in focus each time I take a shot. I can then place each object or subject on the same spot each time knowing the focus is taken care of taking into account the depth of field.

Macro photography - With macro work, you have so little room for error it is sometimes best to rely on your own eyes rather than the cameras. For moving subjects such as insects, it may be worth using autofocus as your time is limited but for stationary objects, take your time and go manual.

Remember that with macro work, the depth of field is incredibly small even with small apertures and **especially** with telephoto lenses such as 100mm or 135mm. Focusing is critical and I would recommend a tripod and manual focus every time.

Sports Photography - This goes slightly against what I have said in the past but there are certain situations, not just in sports photography, where fixing a focus point manually will have great benefits. For example, if you are doing a rather laborious job and you know that you will be in the same spot shooting subjects at the same distance for a period of time, fix the focus manually on the point of interest so that you can guarantee sharp pictures on every shot (as long as you use a fast enough shutter speed). To use the same scenario as before, let's say you are shooting horses on a particular jump at an event.

It is a prime position and a difficult jump and you intend to sell the shots to each person as it shows off their skill as a rider. Once you have found your best position, you could set up the camera on a tripod, manually focus on the jump you intend to shoot, use a small enough aperture with good depth of field to account for any minor fluctuations in movement by you or