

THE PHOTOGRAPHER

Feb/Mar 2017



"Love Letters"
David Edmonson

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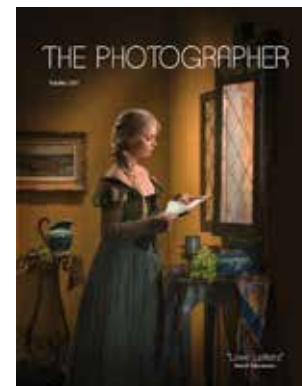


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THE PHOTOGRAPHER

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ON THE COVER

"Love Letters" - is one of a series of images created by David Edmonson, of Plano, Texas. "Centuries ago when a young lady would receive a love letter, she might read it many times," explains David. "It might even be saved in a precious box with other memories. Contrast that with today's texting and tweets and, even though we stay in better communication, we may not think out what we do and do not say." David was originally a commercial photographer. After joining forces with his son, Luke, in 2002, they both realized that commercial photography did not accomplish their goal of being able to work together, so they made the transition to portrait and wedding photography.

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- 4 In the Still of the Night
The World of Night Photography by Doug Box
- 6 Texas 10 Spring Workshops
Find One in Your Area by Steve Kozak
- 9 Basic: It's Not a Bad Word
Taking Another Look by Ralph Romaguera
- 10 TPPA's New Executive Director
Meet Steve Kozak by Bill Hedrick
- 12 Fashion & Agency-Testing Photos
What You Need to Know by Steve Ellinger
- 18 Successfully Photographing Children
How to Engage Their Minds by Beverly Walden
- 22 Food Product Photography
Introduction to the Basics by Bill Hedrick
- 26 Professional: More Than Just a Word
Standing Heads Above the Rest by Don MacGregor
- 30 Spotlight: Margaret Bryant
"All In The Family"
- 32 Portrait Magazines for Studio Profit
Inspiration from Tiffany's by Mary Fisk-Taylor
- 36 Lighting Options for Non-Flash
For Non-Flash Photographers by Nikki Harrison
- 38 Texas School 2017
A Spot Left for You! by Don Dickson
- 41 The Smart Phone Road Trip
Technology Making Life Easier by Russell A. Graves



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B.B. King's Blues Club
Memphis, Tennessee

Night shooting is one of my favorite available light situations. With the high ISO capabilities of the modern digital cameras, this is even more fun. If you do find noise in your night shots, you can use Nik Dfine 2.0 to remove it. It's a great product. Another way to prevent noise is to shoot with your camera on a tripod. Using a tripod will allow you to use a slower shutter speed, which will allow you to use a lower ISO. Remember, the lower the ISO, the less likelihood you will have noise in your image.

The image of BB King's Blues Club was made at ISO 6400 at f4 and 1/400, using a Canon 5D Mark II. There is almost no noise. Because there is a lot of neon and reflection, the center-weighted metering mode worked great. In the shot of the carnival rides, the blue sky added dimension to the image, which was made at f4 at 1/60 and an ISO of 800.

Metering for Night Shots - Metering is the most complicated part of night shooting. I usually start with the meter in center-weighted mode, especially if there is a lot of black sky. Then, I center the meter on the lightest area of the scene. You can use the matrix or evaluative mode if your scene has a lot of mid tones or does not have a large solid black area.

In this street scene of Mackinaw Island, I got up really early one morning because I knew they washed down the streets every morning and wet streets are great for night shooting. The image was shot at f4 at 1/8 and ISO 2500. Even though people were on bicycles, I was able to stop the action by waiting until the cyclist drove straight toward the camera.

In the Still Of the Night

THE FASCINATING WORLD
of NIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY



Doug Box, Instructor
Texas School of Professional Photography

Doug Box, M.Photog.Cr., is an instructor at this year's Texas School of Professional Photography where he will team with Randy Kerr to teach a class on "Nature, Macro, Floral, Landscape, Street & Travel." The class will take field trips to the Dallas Arboretum and other sites to provide students with plenty of hands-on photography experience. Doug is also an accomplished author of several books including, "Available Light Photography," published by Amherst Media. For more information on his class, go to www.TexasSchool.org.

Then, while walking along the harbor, I noticed the lights on the pier. I loved the sky (to the eye, it was solid black). For that image, I chose to be the subject because no one was around to volunteer. I used an exposure of f4 at 3.2 seconds and ISO 2500. I took a couple of shots and then selected the best one. For the long exposure, I had to remain very still. I found that, if I let all of the air out of my lungs, I could hold still.

Today's cameras make it easier than ever before to experiment with new techniques. So, don't be afraid to do some "after-hours" photography to give your portfolio a new and creative look.



Mackinaw Island, Michigan

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Jason Ulsrud

February 25 in Dallas/Ft.Worth, TX

Creative Family Portraits That ROCK



This workshop is designed to help you discover your inner creativity, and how to share it with the rest of the world. You can "take" portraits of families or you can "create moments and worlds" that truly capture the stories and personalities of their lives. Explore how YOU can be different, how you can make your difference work for you, and what it takes to technically create Amazing Portraits your clients will love. While everyone else is going right and tapping their feet, you will leave with a fresh look at Portrait Photography.



Alison Carlino

March 3 in Richmond, TX

Lighting Off-Camera Hands-On Learning



Let Alison show you how to control the color, quantity, quality, and direction of speed lights, reflectors, video lights, and strobes. Instruction will start with beginning techniques such as placement and power of the light, highlights and shadows, and the patterns that the light creates. Attendees need to bring a DSLR camera body, lens of their choice, transceiver for the hot shoe of the camera, speed light or strobe w/ receiver, light stand for mounting the flash, and softbox/umbrella if owned.



Malinda Julien

February 18 in Dallas/Ft.Worth, TX

Play With Your Food!



Food photography is about architecture and portraiture brought together to elicit a response of desire. Join Malinda Julien in Fort Worth at The Gardens Restaurant for a fun filled food photography day! Chef Jorge will



prepare some foods to photograph and the demonstration will begin with the basics about food photography, what equipment you need, styling and composition, along with lighting techniques and different styles. All types of lighting will be covered as well as post processing, and more.

Christy Dodson

February 27 in Granbury, TX

Epic Sports Banners



Vinyl banners are all the rage in High School and Youth Sports. Some photographers offer them for free in hopes of landing more profitable school work. DIY parents offer them to save the team money. But some savvy pro's are not only getting paid nicely for them but they're also getting more jobs as a direct result of them. Christy will cover the specific posing and lighting techniques she uses to really make her banners stand out from the rest, followed by a step by step look at her composite creation process using both custom techniques and speedy templates.



Marc Bailey

March 4 in Longview, TX

Location Photography Home of the Brave



In this fast paced class, you will go as a group on location to learn how to assess your shot quickly and be sensitive to the best that the outside world offers, be confident with location photography, learn dynamic lighting techniques and proper camera usage, explore the relationship between the subject and photographer, and use simple posing that sells. Images taken during the workshop will be viewed with a critique and tips afterward. The second part of the workshop will cover sales presentation and productive workflow.



Kellie Gann

March 4 in Lufkin, TX

Heirloom Family Portraits and Successful Selling



Join Kellie Gann in downtown Lufkin for a day of family portraiture – posing, lighting and more! Learn to create beautiful images that will wow your clients. Topics include lighting with strobes, timeless poses, and a sales



presentation designed to take your business to the next level. Those wanting to shoot should bring a camera. Bring a laptop with Lightroom if you want to participate in the workflow portion. Pro Select software will be helpful, but isn't necessary. Everyone should bring a notebook to take notes.

Karen Butts

March 7 in Cypress, TX

Marriage of Color & Composition



Color balance and composition are just 2 of the 12 elements of a merit image. By strengthening these elements, your images will be taken to the next level. Color has a language all of its own. It makes a statement and affects your mood. It can also augment the message you wish to portray. A good composition can have a positive impact on your image by causing the viewer to keep exploring within the frame. Materials will be provided to help you have a "hands-on" experience with Color and Composition.



Chelsea Williams

March 18 in Conroe, TX

See the Light And Shoot Anywhere



Chelsea believes that lighting is more important than location. However, many on location photographers feel confined to only the hours right before dusk and only sunny days. By understanding natural light and how to use it to your benefit, you will be able to shoot more hours each day without canceling due to a gray sky. Also, just because you are away from the studio doesn't mean you should give up your fill light or kicker. If you love natural light you should understand how to use it to shape your subject and light up their eyes.



Guy T. Phillips

March 4 in Highland Village, TX

Lightroom: The Basics



What does that button do? What's a catalog? How do I do that? Is there an easier way? These are questions often asked in the early stages of working in Lightroom. This course is all about understanding what Lightroom can do for you. Learn about productive workspace and build time-saving presets to help your workflow. Discover key components for improving each image and identify shortcuts to increase efficiency. Come with an open mind and leave with knowledge that will change your business – and your life!



Doug Box

March 10 in Caldwell, TX

Nature, Macro, and Wildlife Photography



This class will combine Backyard Wildlife, Nature Still Life, Macro and Close-Up Photography into a super fun day of learning and shooting! You will combine sharpness and camera movement with composition and light to create wonderful and creative images. The class will be held at the 3-B Photography Ranch, consisting of 110 acres of rolling hills, oak forests, four small lakes, antique farming equipment, wildflowers, cattle, birds, small mammals, insects, raptors, and still life subjects.



Randy Pollard

March 27 in Victoria, TX

Extraction & Compositing A Step Further



Extracting and doing composites is pretty easy... but difficult to do WELL! This workshop begins with a live shoot to create raw materials for extraction and compositing. You'll be taking things a step further with lighting and posing for extraction success and ease of extraction, matching lighting for believable composites, blending foregrounds with backgrounds, posing the foreground subject when the background requires interactions, and shadowing techniques for full-length composites.



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BASIC

It's Not a Bad Word

by
Ralph J. Romaguera, Sr.

One of the things people have asked me about the most over the years is how I have managed to survive and thrive in the photography industry for the past 46 years. Although there are many factors that have contributed to our studio's success, just like building a new home that you plan to enjoy for countless years to come, you start with a solid foundation. The foundation or 'basic' beginning to any process is so important. When you get to the symphony early, your hear musicians play their basic scales. When you get to a baseball game, you see the entire team practicing the most basic moves – fly balls, grounders, etc. So if these professionals practice their basics so often – we must ask ourselves, do we practice the basics of our craft as often as we should?

The last course I attended as a student at the Texas School of Professional Photography was "A Week with Dean Collins." In a class filled with Master Photographers, someone asked Dean what the class would be about. He responded simply with, "Basics, and all you guys with ribbons need it!"

Success for me as a photographer and our studio business comes from following the basic principle that continuing education is a must. It is imperative to be reminded how to pose and light subjects to make them



look as good or better than what they appear. Remembering basic lighting scenarios, ratios, the use of a light meter and that our cameras should be set on 'P' seldom to never.

As an instructor for the Texas School of Professional Photography, my choice was to bring it back to the basics. During that week, not only did I share the basics of lighting from strobes to hot lights to no lights, and the marketing and sales tools, but also the basic workflow we use to keep our sanity and become financially successful.

Photography is the study of light and design. These two seem to be the two things students find most challenging. To be professional, the photographer has to have confidence in his or her abilities. I have been in this profession for a long time and still every day I look at images to see what I like (or dislike) about them.

Your viewfinder is your palette, look inside – see what is wrong – correct it – everything left over is what's right!

Posing should be flattering! That's your job to make someone look as good or better than what they do. I like to teach the "Romaguera 2-Z" law. Whatever God gave you two of – put 'em on different levels; like feet, knees, hands, ears and eyes. Also be aware of the "One-Step" (take a step to the left or to the right, maybe up or down, notice the relationship of the subject to the background).

Lighting is another thing too many people are afraid of and it's really simple. Good lighting helps create a three-dimensional statement out of a two-dimensional piece of paper. Learn the three S's! Everyone deserves to be portrayed with an accurate skin tone. Anything less in value is a Shadow. Anything more in value is Specular.

Remember when it comes to going back to the basics, basic isn't a bad word.



Steve Kozak Named Executive Director of Texas PPA, Inc.

BY BILL HEDRICK



Steve Kozak and Jacqueline Wehr: Image by Tammy Graham

When Steve Kozak joined Texas PPA some thirty years ago, one of the first people he met was Walt Hawkins, the Executive Director of the association at the time. Steve noticed how Walt was such a nice guy and a personable point of contact for the association that he thought to himself, “I’d like to have that job someday.”

Some years later, Doug Box became the new Executive Director and again, Steve thought to himself, “Doug was a perfect choice for that job!” Still, Steve couldn’t help but think that he would be interested in applying someday when Doug decided it was time to move on.

Well, that time has come where Doug has chosen to retire and Steve Kozak was hired by the TPPA Executive Council for the job that he imagined over 30 years ago. Steve says, “I have to tell you, I have some big shoes to fill following Doug Box, but I could not be more excited that I am to be the Executive Director of TPPA.”

You will often find Steve’s “better half,” Jacqueline Wehr, working the registration desk at TPPA events, hosting in the hospitality suite or simply visiting with members who have questions or need direction. Steve admits that taking the job was a much easier decision thanks to Jacqueline. “Jacqueline’s love and support makes everything in my life, my home, and my job so much better. She is a people person and loves the Association and the members as much as I do,” says Steve.

Steve is quite familiar with all facets of TPPA and served through all of the chairs on the Executive Council. As President of TPPA in 2016, he spent much of his presidential year getting “on the job” training with Doug Box which included many trips between Grand Prairie and Caldwell and countless hours of phone calls between the two men.

“I have to tell you, Doug’s graciousness to endorse me to the Executive Council as his replacement and his willingness to teach me how to do this job has been a blessing,” says Steve. “TPPA is a stronger association, thanks to Doug. I will do my best to continue making TPPA the best association in the country!”



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Photos by Steve Ellinger, Abilene, Texas

Fashion & Agency-Testing Photography

One of the things I dearly love about photography is the diverse directions that photographers take in their career. I think most would agree that the money is made today in wedding, senior, and baby photography. But there are those that have been successful in one way or another doing a much more narrowly defined area of photography. I count myself among those in the latter. As a fashion and agency-testing photographer, I am among the few that have either chosen this direction, or have simply had luck guide me in this path.



STEVE ELLINGER, Instructor
Texas School of Professional Photography



Esmeralda Gutierrez, Ford Models, Chicago, and The Campbell Agency, Dallas

I am often asked about how one becomes a photographer that agencies may use at times. It's a tough path, one that becomes an endless challenge. I suggest finding a suitable subject that meets most agency standards of at least 5'-9", and a weight of about 125 lbs, with proportional measurements. Look at examples of what others have done on agency websites and try to shoot a similar look and style. Don't copy, but use the examples as inspiration. Then, if you are confident and have some thick skin, submit a few photos to some agencies and see what happens. With any luck you may find a nice response and some opportunities.

Agency testing seems to be a little understood area of photography that seems to break all the rules, and does not play by the same standards that most photographers subscribe to. So what is "agency testing?" "Testing" is industry speak for "portfolio updates." Professional agency models tend to vary looks frequently with new hairstyles, make-up techniques, trends, etc. It is critical that agencies always have a current photographic representation of their models.

I have agencies tell me that they like their models to test every six months, and if in the 13-17 age range, about every three months due to their rapidly changing figures. Keep in mind that an agency needs photographs that clearly illustrate how a model appears in basic lifestyle and studio settings. This of course is to allow the agencies clients to make model selections that will best suit add campaigns and promotional endeavors.

One of the most common mistakes that I see beginning fashion and testing photographers make is to try and shoot content that looks like a magazine cover significantly altering the basic state of how the model actually appears. The generally rule is "don't shoot a magazine cover unless it is for a magazine." Such photos are generally unusable to the agencies for testing purposes and will result in being rejected.

The difference in an agency being awarded a major contract and having their models selected is very much dependent on the accuracy of the models photographs.

Lily Mekeel, The Dragonfly Agency, Dallas



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Faith Lynch, IMG Worldwide Agency, NYC, and The Neal Hamil Agency, Houston



THE PHOTOGRAPHER Feb/Mar 2017

“Testing” is industry speak for “portfolio updates.”

There are basically three areas of photography agencies use. “Digitals” or at times called “polaroids”, “comp cards”, and their “look book.” Digitals, usually 3-1/2”x5” or 4”x6” size, are very simple photos that show the model with no make-up and with clothing, (most often swimwear) that will clearly show their figure. Often shot by the agency itself in their office in natural light against a plain white wall, the digital is a very honest representation of the models appearance in an unaltered state. Digitals allow the agency to book a model with absolute confidence in the models appearance. For a model to arrive at a shoot and not appear as represented is detrimental to future work with the agency.

Comp cards are what the model leaves behind at castings, or are sent out by agencies to clients. Although a size of 5-1/2” x 8-1/2” is usually listed as the standard, I have them in every size imaginable, especially from agencies in London and Paris. The card will have 2-5 photos of the model as well as their measurements and the agency contact information. These are printed by the agencies in small quantities as they are updated often as the model does newer work.

The “look book” is their portfolio. Books are almost always in a 9x12 size, which is to allow ‘tear sheets’ from magazines, etc., in which they have been featured. They also contain photographs from recent shoots and can be changed quickly to customize the content for a particular casting. A typical book will contain 8-15 images, just enough to illustrate the models look and ability. The book itself is provided by the agency, and usually has the agency logo, etc., printed on the cover.

The model takes the book to castings and “go-sees” to meeting with clients looking to book a model. An interesting fact is that they are often called “scuba books” by the sellers as they are covered in the same material as used in the fabrication of scuba diving suits so as to repel rain when models attending castings in rainy weather. Some now use I-pads with their portfolio, but the ability to open a real book and see real prints will never go out of style.

Creating good images for an agency is a combination of several things. First is a good understanding of photography, especially lighting and composition for agency testing that will show the model. Fashion and testing photography requires a totally different understanding of lighting that is normally used for portraits and senior picture photographers. In addition, it is critical to provide images that are simple, yet modern, and can promote the model, and not the photographer. Remember, it is about the model, not the person behind the lens.

In a studio setting, most really good testing work can be done with one light, and an appropriate modifier, such as large softbox or octabox and a roll of simple seamless. Depending on the purpose of the shoot, I may add additional lights, usually not exceeding four. Glamour lighting, which is totally different than lighting for testing may use six to eight lights. Do not let the background detract from the model. A good professional model will stand on-set, find the light, work to that light and deliver pose after pose with little to no instruction. Do not become a slave to typical broad and short lighting techniques. Leave that to portrait photography print competitions.

This type of photography breaks the rules.
But so does fashion in general

A testing photographer’s main task is to show the model, even if that means a flatter lighting technique than is typically taught. And by all means leave the liquefy tool alone. Accurate representation of the model is the key. A variety of images are needed including full-figure, ¾ figure, and headshots in a variety of complimentary wardrobes. The model should have minimal make-up and simple hairstyles. I prefer the 85mm 1.4 lens for my fashion and testing work as I find the focal length well suited for this type of work.

Postproduction should be minimal. Another huge mistake I see beginning testing photographers make is to follow the rules of photography, as odd as that may sound. As I said earlier, this type of photography breaks the rules. But so does fashion in general, and the two go hand-in-hand. Fashion is cutting edge design, so should the photography. Think about that for a moment. Typical techniques that you were most likely taught in photography courses and subsequently show up in a submittal to an agency will most likely not result in your work getting selected. I fully realize that ruffles a few feathers, but as I have stated, testing and fashion photography is unlike any other type and requires a totally different mind-set.

A technique that many fashion photographers use in cropping is to slightly cut off the top of the head, and at times the feet as this results in drawing the eye to the wardrobe instead of the model. I often use this as well in testing, resulting in filling the frame with the model. Very little if any “real estate” should be present around the model. Watch as well the “say cheese” smiles. Do you ever wonder why fashion models seldom smile? It is because doing so may draw attention to them rather than the wardrobe or other purpose of the image. Another thing that will result in your photos being filed in the round can by the desk is having your name or logo plastered on the photo. Leave it off!

And if you must plaster your name on the photo(s) for your own use, be discrete. It is well known that the bigger the logo, the lesser the quality of image. Remember these are not senior photos, and it is not about you as the photographer. And by all means leave the silly high dynamic range processing and looks to your own personal amusement. Hopefully by incorporating these techniques into your work, and if agency testing is something that may pique your interest, you will be better equipped to make your first agency submittal a successful one!

I am excited that I will be teaching a week long course on this very topic during the 2017 Texas School of Professional Photography in April. I will have many samples, examples and lots of shooting, working with professional agency models with critiques of work. You can read more at www.texasschool.org. More work by Steve Ellinger, CPP can be found at www.steveellinger.com.

Steve Ellinger will be an instructor at the 2016 Texas School of Professional Photography, April 23-28. His class, “The Fashion Side of Photography,” is an intense week of shooting agency type portfolio images and agency testing using professional fashion, print, and runway models. It is designed to prepare you to break into doing agency work. For more information on his class, check out: www.TexasSchool.org.



Whitney Pavell, The Wilhelmina Agency, Chicago and The Dragonfly Agency, Dallas



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SUCCESSFULLY Photographing Children

by Beverly Walden, M.Photog.Cr.

We have been photographing children for nearly three decades. I can remember only a handful of times we have had to re-shoot any children's sessions because we always worked at getting what we needed the first time.

First of all, I believe the base of all great children's portraiture is a genuine love of children. I always said we weren't really good at this until we had our own children and realized the great love moms and dads have for their own children. If you don't genuinely love to photograph children, it will show and you both will be very unhappy. I would suggest finding a photographer who does love children if you want your studio to pursue it or do another type of photography that you are passionate about.

The second most important thing we learned was while listening to a friend teach on a cruise ship. His name is Drake Busath and he runs a very successful studio in Salt Lake, Utah. What he said is both simple and profound.

He said, "To successfully photograph children, you must engage their minds." Wow! That hit home with us. It is not enough to get a "camera" smile, but the expression must come through the eyes, the windows to the soul. Their little minds must be engaged! How do you do that?

One way we do it is through playing simple games and asking questions. The games I am talking about are not ultra silly, but they require the subjects to pay attention. For example, if the children are old enough, we hold up our hands and ask them, "How many fingers am I holding up?" Of course, most answer very quickly, so we say, "OK, you are too smart! Here is a harder one!" Then we get faster or use both hands and they must add the fingers together. The idea is to get their mind off of the camera and onto the game.

"When you photograph a face . . .
you photograph the soul behind it."

Jean-Luc Godard

A game with younger children who may not know their numbers yet involves the photographer not knowing their animal sounds (wink wink)! We say, "Do you know what a cow says?" and before they can answer, we say, "Wait! Don't say! Let me guess!" Then we say, "Oink, oink." Well, that gets their mind going because they know a cow says "Moo." So their mind is engaged trying to figure out why any adult would not know what a cow says. You must be animated when you play these games. If you are not, most children will lose interest. However, if your voice is strong and interesting, most young children will play right along and they all love this game!

Another popular game is the guessing game where we guess everything from "What is your favorite food?" to "What is your best friend's name?" The trick here is to ask the question and then, very quickly, say, "No, don't answer! Let me guess!" And say it with force! This keeps them very focused on you to see if you can guess the right answer! This is a very powerful tool and will keep their minds engaged for a fairly long time. You need to be prepared in your mind with things to ask about.

The third point is this; the trick with anything you try is that you must have INTENSITY, gusto, be a little loud and demand their attention. You cannot be timid and be a photographer (my opinion)!

Even if your personality is timid, you MUST change into a take charge person in the camera room. We compare it to acting. In the camera room, you are on stage! You are IT! You must take control of every situation; this creates comfort in your clients because they trust you know what you are doing. So, learn to change your personality if you need to and you will find doing photography of children to be much more successful.

Here are a few more crucial tips.



If we are dealing with a toddler, we keep their feet off of the ground. When they come in for the session, we ask mom or dad to come out of the dressing room holding them up in their arms until we are done if possible. If we need to let them get down, we will use stools of different heights, standing them on the stool with mom or dad wrapping arms around them, both for safety and to keep them in one place.

Have you heard the saying, "Oh, let them run for a minute so they can get rid of that energy." IT NEVER HAPPENS! Once they are on the ground, it is very hard for parents to pick them back up. They don't want to be restrained at this point; they want to keep running. In these cases, our sessions become much more candid and interactive. So we work very fast in the beginning when the children are in arms or on posing stools with parents holding them. Then, if for some reason, they get down, we have what we want and we shoot a more loose style to finish the session.

If you need to photograph a small (and moving) child without parents in the photograph, standing the child on a short, padded stool works wonders. The padding causes the child to wobble a bit or feel a little unsure of their footing which gives you a little more time to get what you need. What we want to do in this situation is to catch





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**"To successfully photograph children,
you must engage their minds."**
Drake Busath

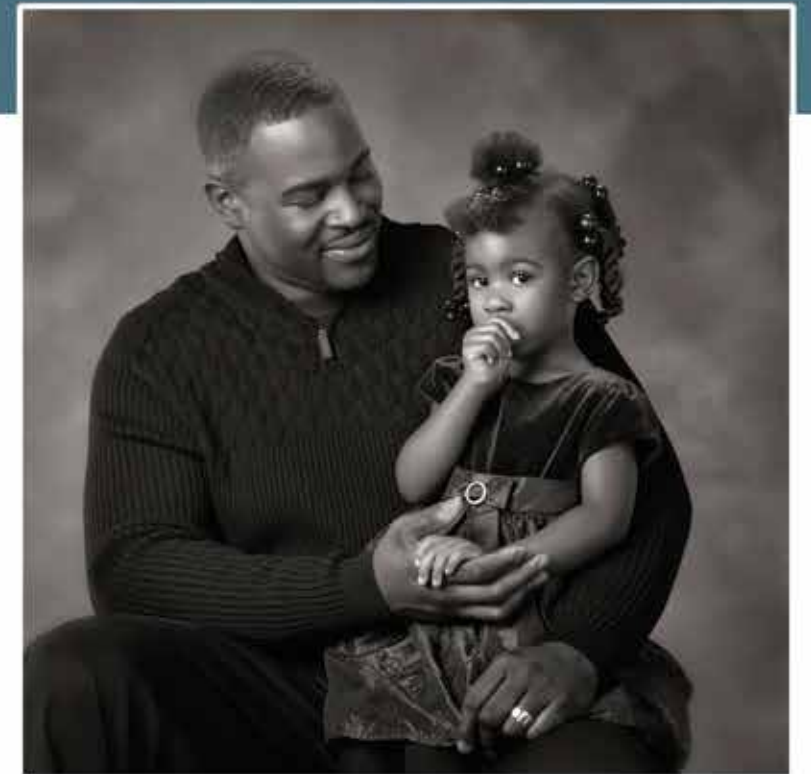
them "off balance" just for a few minutes to photograph them, but we don't ever want them in danger of getting hurt, so we use the parents as "spotters." The stool we use is only a foot off the ground. Even with 5 and 6 year olds who can't seem to stand still for a second, this idea works

This brings up another point and that is some of our best "One Hour" sessions last fifteen minutes. We don't promise we will spend an hour per session, we just tell our clients we have set aside up to an hour if we need it. Sometimes we do need it and sometimes not. It's all about the wording you use, so be careful that you don't promise one hour and then not use the entire time.

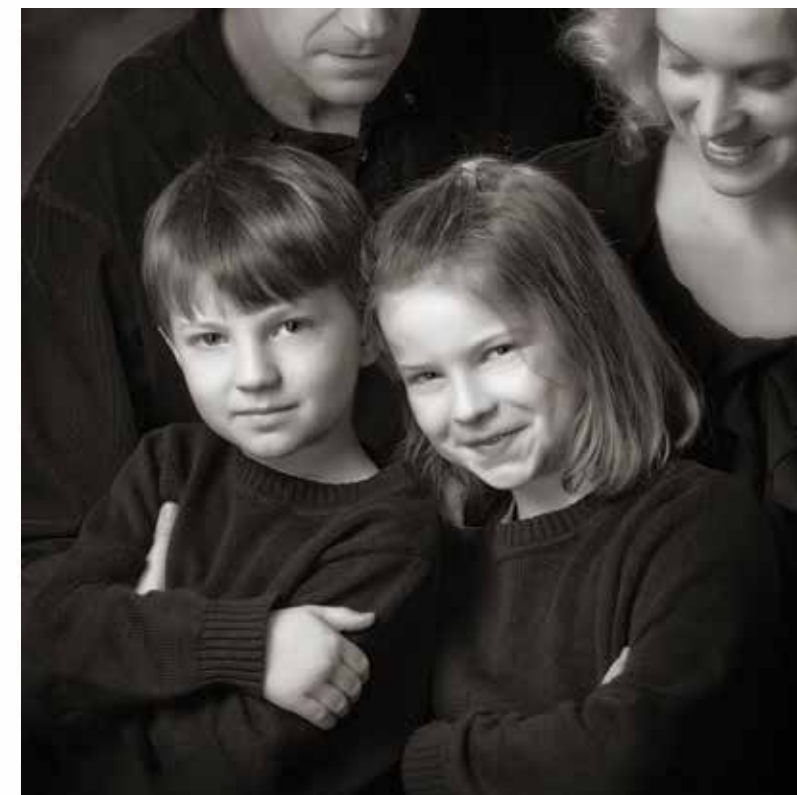
A final point is this. Children will mirror you, so if you want a crazy, silly and spontaneous session, you must be crazy and silly. If you want a controlled session, you must be quiet, quick and intense to engage a child's mind quickly (our preference.) We rarely get toys out unless we cannot get the response we want. It is a last resort as children often reach for the toy and if we don't give it to them, the situation can escalate pretty quickly. We would much prefer to use our communication skills to get the expressions we want. You must find out what pushes each child's button.

It is your personality which will make or break each session. In fact, when we train others, we teach communication skills first before we ever teach anything else. It is that important!

Grab the ideas that you like here and use them to create beautiful portraits for your clients.



Tim and Beverly took over Walden's Photography from Tim's father in 1980, taking the studio in an entirely different direction when they developed their trademark "Relationship" Black and White Fine Art portraiture. Today, they run a high-end studio in Lexington, Kentucky, providing beautifully crafted portraits in an elegant studio with impeccable customer service. The Walden's clientele know when they come to Walden's Photography, they will leave with a masterpiece that celebrates their loved ones in the most beautiful way possible. As they have continued their journey of more than three decades in the photographic industry, their hearts delight in teaching other professional photographers, passing down their knowledge and experience through their online site, private workshops and teaching classes across the U.S., Canada, Europe and Asia.



Food PHOTOGRAPHY

BILL HEDRICK, Editor
The Photographer Magazine



During my long career as a professional photographer, I've photographed my share of brides and babies and I'm more than happy to pass that torch on to younger photographers. Today, I prefer photographing objects that don't crawl away, cry, or that can be notoriously emotional. I love to photograph food!

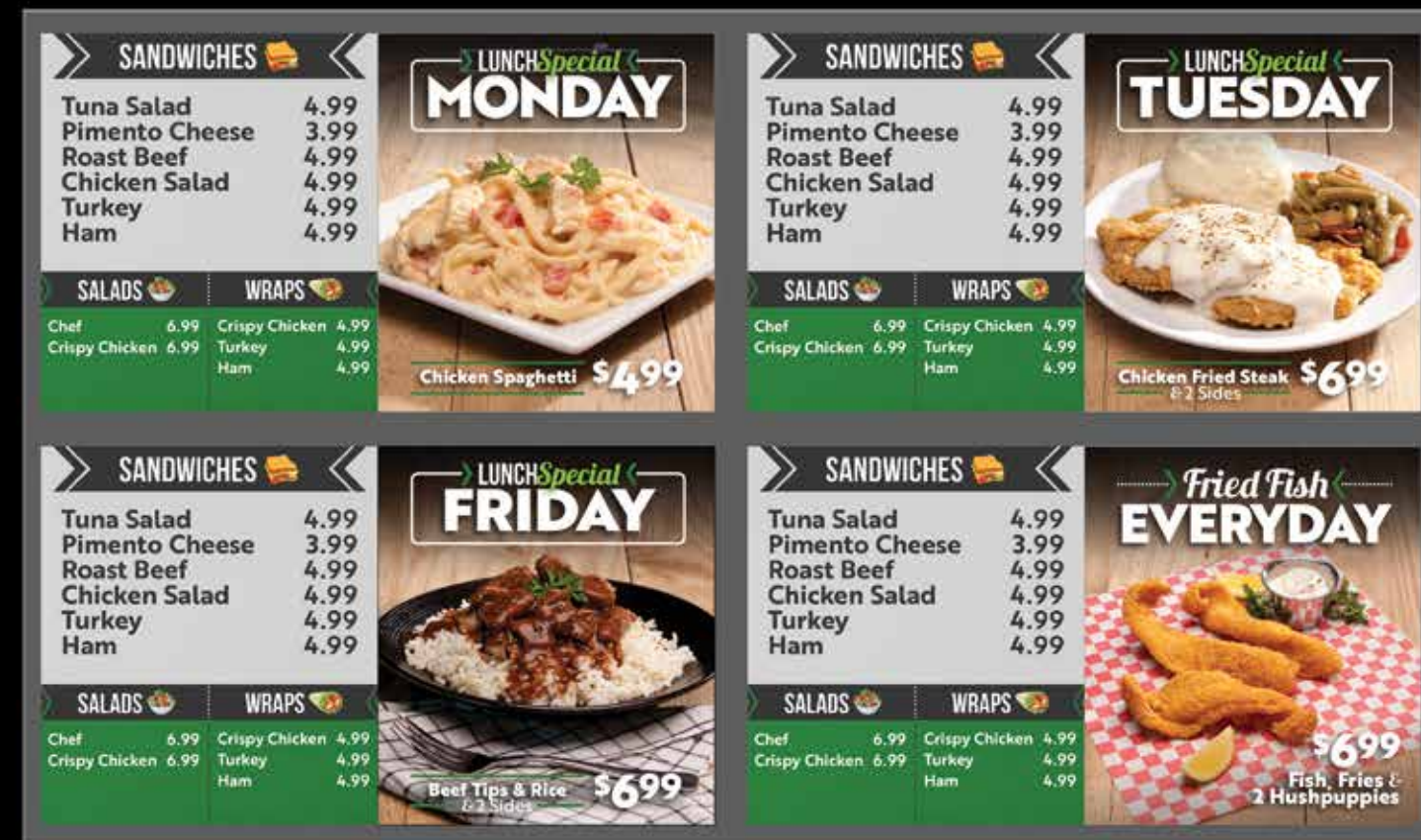
It's always been a mystery to me as to why experienced photographers who have mastered the art of lighting are so reluctant to photograph food or other table-top commercial products. If anything, it is much easier on the nerves than photographing a temperamental two-year-old. But, by the mid-1990's, I could foresee some big changes ahead in the portrait and wedding market so I decided to incorporate more commercial photography into my current business.

The first step for me was taking a commercial photography course at the Texas School of Professional Photography. The instructor I chose that year was Joe Glyda. He was the chief photographer at that time for Kraft Foods. What I learned in that course was that lighting an inanimate object was not unlike lighting a human being. Lighting was still used to enhance and show texture and to shape a subject. If you already knew the basics of lighting a

person, you were well on your way to lighting commercial products. But it was the simplicity of lighting table-top items that impressed me most of all.

The method that Joe Glyda demonstrated to us was basically a large, soft light source from overhead with strategically-placed "kicker" lights coming in from behind on either side. He even used some reflectors and small mirrors for that purpose. If you think about it, you are essentially duplicating nature. The soft, overhead light simulates an open, overcast sky. Kicker lights accent the image and provide texture as well as luminosity.

My lighting equipment consists of three PhotoGenic PowerLight 1250's. They've been a dependable "work horse" for many years. Although a larger softbox would be nice, my 24x30 inch square box is more than adequate for the job. Over the years, I've modified my basic lighting setup, adding



Graphics by Abbey Tyson, Kilgore, Texas

Careful preparation and planning are major factors in a successful product shoot.

a honey-combed grid to each of the kicker lights for more precise control and using reflectors as needed to fill in some shadow detail as necessary. When necessary, the soft box can be moved forward or backward and tilt as needed to provide more light on the front of the object or more of a back light from behind. But, if you decide to use this type of lighting setup, you would be wise to purchase a heavy duty boom and stand. Having your lighting collapse onto a food display might not be good for your image.

I shoot everything in RAW mode, along with a large JPEG. With the low cost and high capacity of flash cards today, it is a smart choice to shoot in RAW mode. My client receives a JPEG file that has been "tweaked" from the RAW file. When they open that JPEG and look at the histogram, they see a very nice JPEG that looks like it was shot right on the money the first time. If the client has a special request to adjust an image, I will go back to the original RAW file and give them a new file rather than throw away data on a JPEG.

Very early on, I was told that the services of a Food Stylist can make or break a commercial food product assignment. A good food stylist will see tiny details in a product that you will never notice and, quite often, that can make all the difference in the world in the final results. Even so, I've never had the privilege of actually working with a Food Stylist myself. Instead, I've worked on several assignments with the owner of a local advertising agency who has some experience in that field. But he had a good

understanding with the client that they were not paying for the services of a food stylist. Once he explained the additional cost of a Food Stylist, it became their decision not to use one.

Careful preparation and planning are major factors in a successful product shoot as well. If you are photographing for an agency, their art director will most likely have researched designs and will have made sketches of what he wants to achieve. Then, if he is the one arranging the product, your job is all that much easier. The more difficult assignment is one where there is no art director or if the art director has little or no experience with food products. In that case, it would be advisable to either do some careful planning with the art director ahead of time or do the research on your own. Just be sure the client is involved in the decision-making process.

What I would not advise is to agree to such an assignment without some level of experience. A wise photographer taught me years ago that you are better off to refer a job to someone else if you are not prepared to do it right. Your reputation is not worth the risk. Even so, many photographers have forged ahead blindly and paid the price in the end after botching a job they should never have done to begin with.

All of the food product assignments I've photographed over the years have been on location. They can't bring their kitchen to your studio. In many cases, they will be scheduled during non-business hours. But, in some

cases, we’ve had to work in a section of the dining room while customers were eating... and watching. Although this can be un-nerving for some photographers, I look at it as “free publicity” and an opportunity for me to demonstrate my own photographic skills.

I learned that lesson many years ago as a wedding photographer when I used to do the post-ceremony photographs after clearing the guests out of the building so they did not interfere with my job. However, one day I had a bride who insisted that she wanted the guests to remain inside during the photo shoot. So, to avoid confusion, I asked the minister to simply make an announcement as soon as the wedding party went out the front door for “everyone to remain seated for a short photo session.” To my amazement, this worked very well and the guests loved watching me in action. It was some of the best advertisement I ever received and continued to do that for many years.

Every product photographer has a few “tricks of the trade” and you will pick up your own along the way. I usually carry a small pump spray bottle of water to “spritz” things like vegetables and even some vegetable oil to provide a shiny, moist look where it is needed. A pair of tweezers and some toothpicks can also come in handy when working with small details in a shot. I even carry a bag of imitation fruit, vegetables, bread, cheese and other “knickknacks” that were purchased at a hobby-craft store. You never know when one will come in handy.

Another handy item to carry on food product assignments is a piece of 54 inch wide, off-white, vinyl fabric purchased at a fabric store. Along with some inexpensive spring clamps from the local hardware store, it comes in handy as a solid, sweeping, table-top background and cleans up easily if something is spilled on it and works much better than background paper for that same reason. Very often, an art director may want to clip out a background and this makes that job just a little easier.

One more important hint is to have an understanding with the cook or chef that he/she will need to prepare two of each item so that you can use the first one to nail down the lighting and arrangement before bringing out a “fresh” one for the final shot. Melted cheese does not photograph well after sitting for awhile and good ol’ Texas gravy takes on a glazed-over look after awhile.

Also, don’t be opposed to “using whatever is already there” in your photos. While some art directors prefer a solid-sweep background, one recent art



director preferred the rustic table tops of the restaurant as a backdrop and the light fall-off in the background worked out perfectly for her final presentation.

Photographing table-top setups is not as complicated as you might think and it can be a refreshing change from what you might be doing now and it’s the type of assignment that not everyone is willing to attempt.



Bill Hedrick, M.Photog.Cr., is a Past President of Texas PPA and the Editor of THE PHOTOGRAPHER since 1997. For the first 20 years of his career, Bill owned and operated a full-service studio in Kilgore, Texas, and became the first and only Master Photographer in Kilgore. During the 1990’s, he began transforming his photographic career to include more and more commercial photography. He is also a pilot and still does aerial photography from time to time. Retired from “people” photography, Bill concentrates primarily on commercial and industrial photographic assignments when he’s not performing his regular duties as Magazine Editor.



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Don MacGregor, Instructor
Texas School of Professional Photography

At ImagingUSA 2016, the late Ken Whitmire received the Lifetime Achievement award. His acceptance speech was a powerful message to all photographers who put the word “professional” in a new perspective. What does “professional” mean? Does it mean getting paid for a job? Technically, yes.

However, Ken defined it as meaning far more than dollars and also said that we should be PROUD to be a professional and that’s where Texas School steps forward. A real professional needs to have a depth of knowledge and skills to enable results that visually stand head and shoulders above those who focus on gear or “sexy” images or keep their cameras on motor drive hoping for something good.

The key components to professional images are Posing, Lighting and Composition. Family groups are often considered the most difficult and, without doubt, the most profitable. Good posing should reflect a relaxed contemporary approach, yet should still be flattering (to all sizes and shapes). In groups, each person should be showcased to belong to the family and have equal representation (unless hiding weight). Little details MUST be a part of the photographers final efforts. Often, simplicity is the very best approach.

Lighting should showcase the subjects, have a three dimensional feeling, and insure the expressions are alive and vibrant. Using pure, natural light can be amazing although we often need to add flash or reflectors. When doing so, the quality and quantity of the light should be consistent with the overall mood and concept.

Composition is a very important part of the process. Choosing environments that have natural beauty is easy. The challenge is to create the relationship between the subjects and background such that there is a repetition of design and color, yet showcase the family. Also, the position of the subjects in the overall frame can emphasize the family while letting your eye move through the image and embrace the natural beauty.



The image of the family on the farm on the page to the left is a good example of a relationship style of image which is very powerful and emotionally rewarding. The family is walking (in a straight row horizontally) and it was coached and practiced as everyone MUST be equidistant from the camera. The lighting was challenging because it was mid day and total sunshine with clouds dropped in later during enhancement. The family was essentially back lit (and a little side lit), so the exposure on the shadow side of the faces was approximately 3 stops less than the scene. Flash was used to fill the exposure difference, being careful to keep the flash as close to the axis of the lens as possible and slightly from camera right, which is the direction of the sun. In the composition, note how the silos are all tall and vertical. We had to make the family repeat that design and then “frame” them with the silos. The design screamed to be a long skinny horizontal. Don’t be afraid of selling images based on composition (not standard sizes).

In the example above of the family on the pier, the group is close together, yet each person has space. The body language flows horizontally for the most part. There is a sense of triangles that is powerful. The lighting is totally natural. There is a tall wall of trees to camera left which overhangs the subjects and an open panel of sky to camera right which provides the main light. The value of illumination on the background is the same as the subjects, so everything is in the same key. The composition breaks the rules. It is “bulls eye” composition but it works with the dark foreground and the elements of the grasses that “frame” the family.

A slightly different family grouping is shown in the image of the family photographed on the shore of the lake below. The tree stump was a natural to work with and allowed the opportunity of repeating the kids in the design of the stump and also a triangle. With most families, I often make two groupings... the parents and then the kids. You don’t want to make that separation too much because it can visually separate the family. The heavy umbrella of branches and foliage (not visible in image) subtracted the natural overhead light on this heavy, overcast day.

A Canon Speedlight flash on a long pole was used from camera right, set on manual. It added approximately 60% of the final exposure (light is accumulative and the current meters will give you the ambient, the flash, and the combined exposure). 60% is roughly one stop above the ambient reading. That makes a main light, but not aggressive or a head edge, transfer from highlight to shadow and the ratio is believable as it relates to the scene. In the composition, I constantly strive to find locations where there is a sense of natural depth and then figure out how to add people. Note how the diagonal line from the father leads through the mother and then to the daughter and a new triangle comes back up and down. In composition, triangles are awesome.



Do you need help with large groups? Consider this image of a large group on the beach. The key to posing large groups like this is to “divide and conquer.” A group of 15 (like this) is simply 15 groups of ONE, linked together using diagonal lines and triangles. Each person has their own space and no one is “hidden” or minimized in the group.

The lighting was totally natural, taken at sunset, with the sun setting to the camera right. It is a sunny day with no clouds. In a situation like this, you have to wait till the sun is setting right on the horizon line so you can use direct sunlight. The beauty is that the light on the subjects is the same as the light on the background, so everything is in key.

A large family like this MUST be a horizontal group composition in order to keep everyone sharp. Note how your eye goes to the family yet drifts through the complete scene from foreground to background. A shallow depth of field (5.6 to 6.3) works if all the people are on the same plane and allows the background to be there but not intrusive.

Finally, consider “relationship images” such as the example below. They bring out a lot of emotion and are great sellers. The key is to insure that everyone is showcased and the image is not simply a “sardine” can of



people jumping around on a couch. While candid or animated images are a wonderful contribution to a story or album about a family, they sometimes look too much like images that the clients can do on their own with the camera doing all the work. The young gals body language (arms) is a separate discussion. The parents felt it was “her” because that is what she did. It was natural.

The location for this family image was in a trail with a good sized opening in the trees to camera right. The left side and overhead was totally fall foliage and branches. I used an exposure of ISO 400, 1/60th at 5.6. When I scout locations, I look for the natural elements that might make a good pictorial. Then I work on how I can add the family and repeat the design. A “seated” composition, in this case, simply would not have worked

Creating professional images that set you apart from other photographers is the underlying theme of the Texas School of Professional Photography. But it is more than just a school. It is a chance to embrace the experience of so many talented people and adding those skills and attitude to your everyday approach. By the end of the week, you will totally understand what it is to be PROUD of being a professional photographer.

Don MacGregor, M.Photog.Cr.CPP,MPA,F/PPABC/A is from Vancouver, B.C., but is a true Texan at heart. A regular instructor for many years at the Texas School of Professional Photography, Don opened his studio in 1974 and specializes in wall portraits and wedding work. To learn more about Don MacGregor and his class, go to TexasSchool.org and sign up for a week of intensive study under one of the finest portrait photographers of our generation who is committed to the pursuit of excellence.



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“All In The Family” was made by Margaret Bryant of Carrollton, Texas. The most important thing to do when photographing animals is to give them the time to settle in and to get comfortable. I like to create an environment where the animals are comfortable and wonderful things can happen. Sometimes the animal comes up with a better pose than anything I could have dreamed of. I am regularly surprised by the poses that dogs come up with when they are comfortable. Patience and lots of it, is the key.

These dogs are Border Collies and Australian Shepherds. Not surprisingly, they are very smart dogs. Many of them are titled herding dogs. They come to me every year to have their photograph done. I rented a wonderful old golden colored couch and selected the blue seamless background paper to go with the couch. I then walked over to the couch and said, “Load up.” The dogs in turn jumped up on the couch and figured out themselves who would be comfortable where. I stood back, looked at how they arranged themselves, and coaxed the dogs blocking others to move over a little. I then took the shot. That’s it.

It’s all about the prep work in making the dogs comfortable. Even if they weren’t trained herding dogs, the principle of creating the comfortable environment would have made things easier no matter the animal being photographed,” explains Margaret.

To learn more about photographing pets, check out her class at this year’s Texas School of Professional Photography. In fact, she will actually be using some of these dogs as models! Learn more at www.TexasSchool.org.

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PORTRAIT MAGAZINE GENERATES STUDIO PROFIT

Mary Fisk-Taylor, M. Photog., Cr., CPP
Instructor, Texas School of Professional Photography

This year we tried something new at our studio and it is truly one of the best things we did all year. Operating from a very small home studio in Richmond, Virginia, our specialty is definitely large wall portrait installations and décor. After more than 22 years in business, we wanted to do something this year that would create a buzz and make a huge impact.

I decided to design a portrait magazine to publish on our website and email to prospective clients. In a world where we are inundated with email inquiries, I have found that just simply responding and asking them to reach out to me or make an appointment for a consultation was rarely working and that asking them to go to our social media sites or website was simply not happening. It seems that people today are just too darned busy for their own good and asking them to make a few more clicks on their computers or phones was too much to ask. To convert these inquiries into clients and sessions, it was necessary to make an impact right then and there.



They needed a simple link or document to click on and immediately see what we do, who we are and how our portrait work was different. I needed to have them understand from that initial email that we were portrait artists and we wanted to create beautiful heirloom portraits to grace the interiors of their homes. We were not a studio that sold files and images on CD's. We were portrait artists who custom design the perfect photographic memories for them.

I began to painstakingly go through my portrait images and images of my clients' homes. The easy part was finding images I loved. The hard part was editing it down to a select few images to reach a broad spectrum of people, show diversity, and grab the attention of potential clients enough to convert them to portrait clients. It was very hard to keep the presentation simple and to make sure it truly represented our style and brand. The process was a lengthy one but I was thrilled with the final result.

After the design process was finished, the next step was to create an online magazine using www.issuu.com and adding the magazine to our website. It was important that every single email inquiry that was received be provided with the link to the magazine so that potential clients could immediately, and with one simple click, take a glimpse at who we are and what we do. The GREAT news was that we saw immediate results. Where we previously got a small percentage of email inquiries, we now received a return email or phone call from most of them. It was thrilling and the feedback was very positive.

Some time later, I was walking from the mailbox looking through the stack of mail and immediately felt the rich beautiful paper of a Tiffany catalog. I LOVE these catalogs and love to look through and dream about things that could be mine some day or browse at things to leave as hints for birthday and Christmas presents. While glancing through the book, it occurred to me that, in my little corner of the world and after almost 23 years of building and creating a brand name, my very own portrait work was on a lot of people's wish list.

At that moment I decided to invest in printing the portrait magazine and mailing it out. It was a significant investment and, believe me, some people would have considered it very successful had I left it as simply a digital piece. But printing and distributing the book to not only our existing client base but to a very selective list of homes in our market area was a game-changer.

Just like that Tiffany catalog, I chose to use a higher end paper, beautiful heavy envelopes and mail each and every one first class with a hand-addressed label but it paid off in a huge way. This decision was definitely an investment but after tracking the calls and inquiries for the past 6 months from this mailing, I can tell you it paid for itself ten times over.

My personal theory is that, in this automated overly digital world, people really loved getting a beautiful piece of mail. It was evident that people opened it and read it because we booked so many portrait sessions from it.





A large number of our clients and now new clients have related that they could not throw it away and it resides on their coffee table or they shared it with a friend, family member or neighbor. It was thrilling to hear this because that is exactly how I feel about those beautiful books and catalogs that come in the mail to my house. I was very proud of the book and super relieved that it was so well received.

The great news is that we now have a win-win marketing piece. This magazine did a great job for me digitally when used for email inquiries and when printed. Regardless of the way it was used, it created interest and portrait sessions. I know for a fact that this single marketing piece contributed to a large percentage of our profit this year and that is indeed a good thing!

Mary Fisk-Taylor and Jamie Hayes will be teaching at the 2017 Texas School of Professional Photography, April 23-28. Their class, "The Best of Both Worlds," is all about business and photographic techniques that have grossed their business over \$1 million a year. More info about Jamie and Mary can be found at: www.TexasSchool.org.



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NON-Flash Photographers

Light Options for Light at Dusk or Dawn

by **Nikki Harrison, Instructor**
Texas School of Professional Photography

So, you are a natural light photographer but you never really caught on to using off-camera flash, or you are afraid of it, or you simply hate to haul all of that extra equipment around. I hear you!

On a number of my sessions, I use off-camera flash via a Prophoto B1 and love the results I get with it for outdoor portrait work. However, I will be the first person to admit that I'm lazy enough to opt for something a bit easier to carry around.

But what do you do if you are shooting on location in the early evening and you know you will need more light on your subject? If you already have issues with off-camera flash and you're just not too sure how to use it, what are your options?

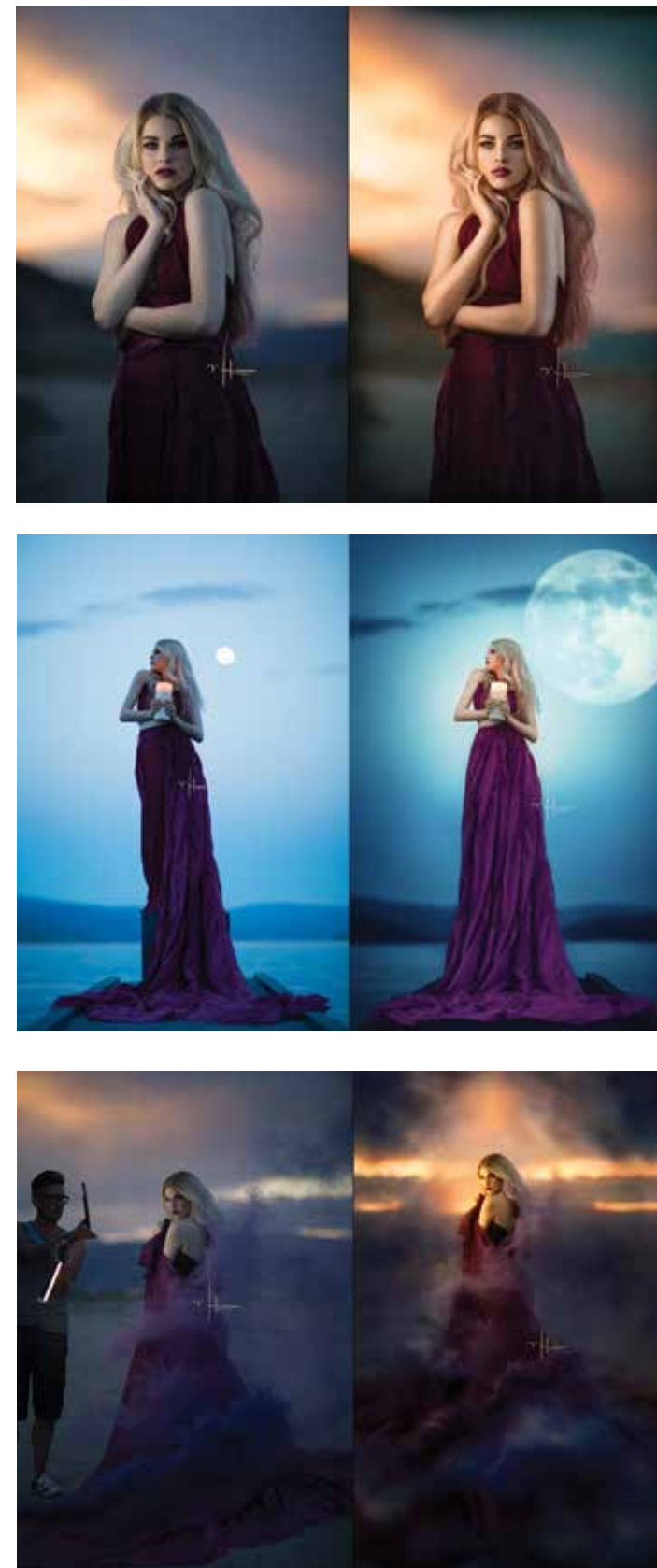
Personally, I love using continuous lighting. My preference is the Ice Light by Westcott, but my handy-man husband has also gerry-rigged some LED hand-made lights that work quite well. So, if you are one of those Do-It-Yourself'ers, you might want to try that as well.

You may be asking yourself by now if there are any benefits to adding this kind of light at dusk or dawn. Or, you may be wondering what effect it will have or if it is worth the effort. My reply would be, "Yes, there are many benefits to using continuous lighting and, yes, the amazing effects are well worth the effort!"

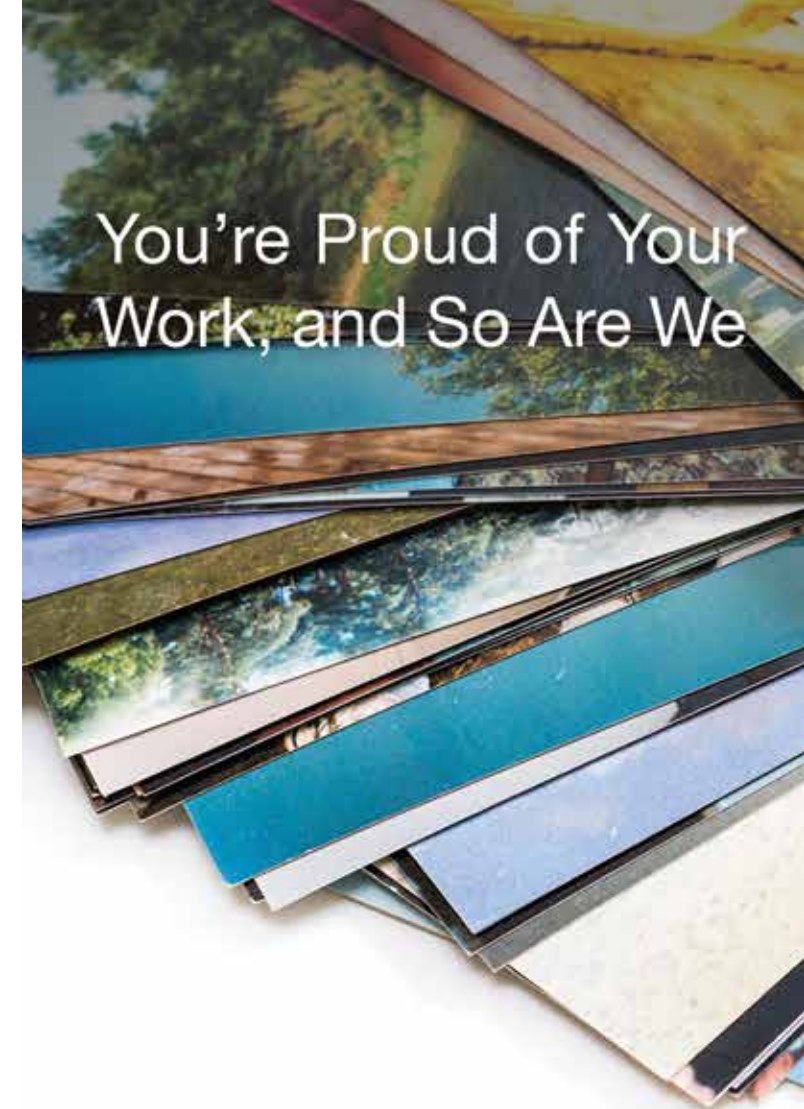
Here are some images I have taken at dusk using my Ice Light and with my homemade version as well.

Settings: I am a self-confessed Bokeh Lover. Therefore, I always go for the most shallow depth of field when shooting outdoors. My lens of choice when shooting at dusk will always be my Canon 85 1.2 for a couple of reasons. First of all, it is an amazing lens for darker situations. Secondly, I love the delicious bokeh it gives my images.

Other Options: What if you don't have a handy spouse and you are reluctant to invest in the incredible Ice Light by Westcott? Actually, you can use something as simple as a candle as seen in the above illustration.



Nikki Harrison is a Portrait Artist from Western Canada and an instructor at the 2017 Texas School of Professional Photography. Her class, "Whimsical-Ethereal Portraiture," demonstrates her flair for creating whimsical "versions" of her clients, consisting of mostly women and children. For more information on Nikki, check out her class at: www.TexasSchool.org.



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The Smart Phone Road Trip

By Russell A. Graves

I love road trips. For the past two decades, I've made a living as a professional writer and photographer traveling backroads in search of great stories to tell. In the past, planning trips took a little time and effort. Therefore, I'm always interested in the latest technology because it makes me more productive and efficient.

Today road trips are much easier and more spontaneous to plan with the advent of smartphones. With these phones, the paradigm has shifted. Instead of simply carrying a phone with them at all times, now road trippers carry a powerful handheld computer that just happens to make phone calls.

Hitting the Road - If you count the number of devices smart phones have pushed to near obsolescence, the list is extensive and includes all kinds of gadgets like alarm clocks or wrist watches. It's also taken the place of common travel accessories. There was a time when I had a dedicated GPS unit that I would switch from car to car when I'd travel. With my iPhone, I have a built-in GPS mapping program that I use to plan my trips. Once on the road, the same device gives me turn by turn directions until I reach my destination.



Besides mapping, I can also prepare for my trip by having an automobile insurance card on my phone, a gas tracking app that helps me identify the cheapest fuel stops along my way, and a playlist customized to play my favorite traveling songs while I'm on the open road. Along the way (while I'm stopped of course), I often check out Wikipedia on my phone's browser. The Wikipedia mobile site is GPS enabled and will suggest articles of nearby points of interest. It's a great way to immerse yourself in local culture and learn more about the people and places that make the smallest, most out of the way places interesting.

Photos on the Go - One of the items that smart phones have supplanted from our everyday lives is the dedicated still and video camera. You no longer need to carry a dedicated camera to capture your travel memories. In 2013, camera enabled smartphone sales topped over \$1 billion - a 38 % increase over the previous year. During the same time, mid and low-priced point and shoot digital camera sales dropped 36 %.

For photos, the in-phone camera app is a great place to start. The phone I use has settings for taking standard pictures in a typical 4:3 format, square format, and it even features a panoramic setting. I use the panoramic mode to take wide angle shots from the road and capture big vistas that smaller formats can't. While the standard camera settings are fine, I like using the apps that utilize the camera and the processing power of the phone's computer to give pictures a vintage feel. While Hipstamatic is my favorite app, there are a lots of others available on the Apple, Android, or Google formats that add effects like filters, filmstrip borders, frames, light leaks, and other creative embellishments.

For the traveler, one of the greatest tricks that a smartphone camera performs is embedding GPS information in each picture. Now, instead of guessing where pictures were taken once you've reached home, a host of low cost photo management software solutions will actually extract the GPS location from the photo and pinpoint the location on a software generated map. These maps are great for saving a trip for serendipity's sake and re-living the memories at a later date.

Aside from shooting still photos, smart phones these days are equipped with high definition video cameras with impressive results. Add to that the ability to shoot slow motion, use apps to record video with a vintage 8mm look, and on-the-fly editing and posting to social sites like YouTube or Facebook and it's easy to see that you have a powerful tool that's capable of faithfully recording and sharing your love of hitting the open road.

Staying in Touch - Speaking of social networking, wouldn't it be nice if you could take a picture on Instagram and cross post to other social platforms so you can post to all of your friends and followers with a single

touch of the screen? You can. Most social apps have the ability to cross post to a variety of networks. If you post to one site, you can post to many other social accounts on the go, all at once. It is a real time saver.

Speaking of staying connected, when you are away on your weekend getaway, you can completely monitor your home from the road. Most security companies offer ways to monitor your home alarm and watch home security cameras using your smart phone. You can also check to see if doors are locked or unlocked, close or open garage doors, and activate or adjust the thermostat remotely. I use a Nest Thermostat system that I can turn off when I leave, and half an hour or so before I arrive home, I can log in from my phone and turn on the heat or air so the house is comfortable when I walk in the front door after a trip.

On the Go Journaling - While it goes without saying that you should not divert your attention from the road by looking at your phone, you can use the notes or audio memo app on your phone to speak and record your thoughts. Recording an audio memo is just like it sounds: you talk to the phone and it records your voice verbatim. The notes or other speech recognition apps like Dragon takes your trip journaling a little farther. Using the voice recognition software built into your phone, you can speak to the phone and the voice recognition software transcribes speech to text on the screen. When you get home and you are ready to put your notes with photos or videos, it's easy to email your notes, edit them in word processing software, and then copy and paste them into a book layout or any other presentation method of your choosing.

I've found that I often speak to my phone and take notes on things of interest that I've seen, story ideas, great restaurants, or various musings that may come to mind. I've always had a good memory and paid attention to details but the ability to take notes without physically writing something down has really taken my efficiency to the next level.

Eating and Sleeping on the Go - There once was a time not too long ago when staying in a hotel or eating at a restaurant in which you were unfamiliar was hit and miss. Although it may be a national food or lodging chain, local variation in management practices may or may not live up to each person's sensibilities. Many downloadable apps double as a social network that gives input on lodging and dining. The hotels.com app, for example, finds available lodging in a given area, publishes the price, and provides user generated feedback as to the quality of the hotels amenities.

The bottom line is that the technology in your hand lets you focus less on planning and more on traveling. Smartphones are an indispensable tool for road trippers. The best tip however? When you get to that cool location, be sure to turn off your phone for a while and enjoy the view.

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