

# THE PHOTOGRAPHER

March/April 2024



**"The Assistant"**  
Chris Fritchie

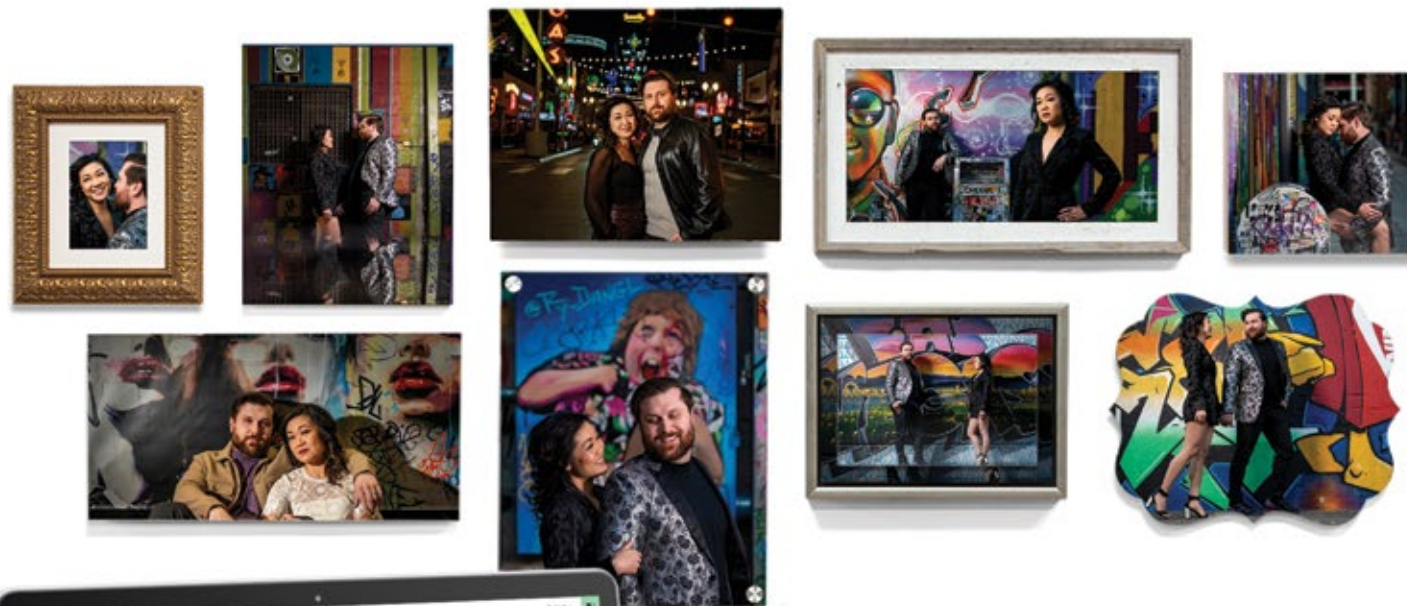




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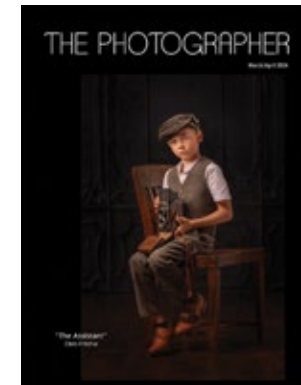


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# THE PHOTOGRAPHER

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### ON THE COVER

"The Assistant" was created by Chris Fritchie of McKinney, Texas. He captured this award-winning image during a fine art workshop in 2023. Dylin was a lot of fun to work with and there was a special connection with Chris. "Dylin's mom is a professional photographer, so holding the vintage Rollei camera seemed only fitting," he explains.

**Magazine Editor** **Bill Hedrick, M.Photog.Cr.**  
1506 E. Leach St.  
Kilgore, TX 75662  
903-985-1080  
[Editor@ThePhotographerOnline.com](mailto:Editor@ThePhotographerOnline.com)

**Executive Director** **Steve Kozak, M.Photog.Cr**  
5323 Fig Tree Lane  
Grand Prairie, TX 75052  
972-601-9070  
[Steve@tpa.org](mailto:Steve@tpa.org)

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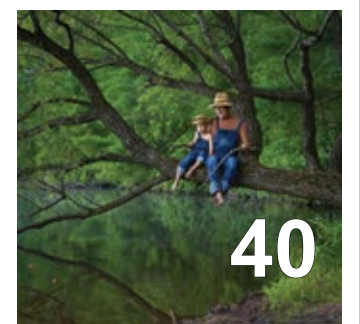
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mark@marksykes.com

1500 Nantucket Drive, College Station, TX 77845 (979) 690-1919

Executive Director • Steve Kozak

Steve@tppa.org

5323 Fig Tree Ln., Grand Prairie, TX 75052 (972) 601-9070

Texas School Director • Don Dickson

Don@DonDickson.com

1501 West 5th, Plainview, TX 79072 (806) 729-9358

Magazine Editor • Bill Hedrick

Editor@ThePhotographerOnline.com

1506 E. Leach St., Kilgore, TX 75662 (903) 985-1080

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Steve Kozak, Executive Director, 5323 Fig Tree Ln., Grand Prairie, TX 75052 Steve@tppa.org

March/April 2024 THE PHOTOGRAPHER

From the President

Guy T. Phillips, TPPA President

The Spirit of Volunteering

“Without volunteers, we would be a nation without a soul.” Rosalynn Carter

Few, if any, of our lives will make it into Wikipedia. We might never see our names associated as social influencers, but our concentrated efforts can lead to the success of others, one volunteer at a time. The Texas Professional Photographers Association exists because volunteers have given their time and talent freely, driving new ideas and delivering more value on behalf of the association and its members. Here are a few ideas of how you can become a volunteer.

TPPA has three major in-person events each year. In late April, we have the Texas School of Professional Photography. This amazing opportunity, led by Don Dickson, Director, and his group of trustees, has utilized volunteers for nearly five decades. Their efforts have led to an amazing event that is recognized as the very best of its kind (“The Best Little Photographic School in the World”). While there are numerous volunteer opportunities behind the scenes, the most visible is the role of the Wrangler.

As a class Wrangler, the volunteers (usually two per class) are tasked with ensuring that each instructor can lead their class without interruption and with complete focus on delivering quality content to the students. This can mean coordinating with the instructor to maintain daily focus on the schedule, awareness of the timelines and must-haves of each day, unboxing and setting up equipment during the week and, later in the week, repacking any equipment that is not purchased by the students, communicating updates from Don and his staff, encouraging participation in fundraising efforts for Texas School Charities and paying special attention to ensure the students get the absolute most from Texas School and maintain its great reputation.

To volunteer for Texas School, you must have attended at least one year, and you’ll need to commit to an entire week of focused efforts, balancing your interest in the class and your interest in helping others. For more information on becoming a Wrangler, contact Cindy Romaguera at: [Cindy@romaguera.com](mailto:Cindy@romaguera.com).

TPPA also depends on volunteers for our Summerfest event and our iHeart Photo Conference event. The roles are similar to those of Texas School and may also include acting as a “runner” or to pick up and drop off instructors and others from the local airports. For more information on becoming a volunteer at either of these events, contact Steve Kozak at: [Steve@tppa.org](mailto:Steve@tppa.org).

If you want to volunteer your time and treasure, consider submitting your application with information as a potential speaker for SummerFest or iHeart at <https://tppa.org/speakers-listing/>. If you prefer to volunteer for an online event, like our popular “What’s New In Lightroom?” and/or “The Joy of Editing” Zoom sessions, contact Steve Kozak at: [Steve@tppa.org](mailto:Steve@tppa.org).

Our TPPA Board is volunteer-driven as well with one-year Director positions that may extend to longer term Board leadership roles, including Secretary, Treasurer, President-Elect, President and Chairperson. Find out more and submit your information for consideration at: <https://tppa.org/considerations-for-tppa-board-of-directors/>. The TPPA Board also calls on Action Teams and Committees during the year for important topics including Image Competition and membership growth. These roles are by invitation, so be sure to respond as soon as possible when contacted!

“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, what are you doing for others?” Martin Luther King, Jr

Guy T. Phillips, TPPA President

If you are not a member of Texas PPA, this is my personal invitation to you to join! Email Steve Kozak, TPPA Executive Director, at [Steve@tppa.org](mailto:Steve@tppa.org) or call 972-601-9070.

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# DESTINATION: ALASKA

## A Wedding Photography Adventure

by  
Jennifer Beene

In the enchanting world of wedding photography, where emotions and landscapes unite, Alaska and Texas emerge as two distinct realms offering captivating backdrops for the celebration of love. From the icy wilderness of Alaska to the warm, rustic charm of Texas, wedding photographers navigate diverse landscapes to capture the essence of romance against unique canvases. Join us on an immersive journey through one couple's adventure to Alaska's arctic elegance and back to the heartwarming charm of Texas.

Neither my couple nor I had ever been to Alaska, but they chose a destination wedding to experience the land of untamed beauty for their love story to unfold against the backdrop of lush foliage, rugged mountains, and helicopter-accessible glaciers. I knew and understood that wedding photographers in the Last Frontier face unique challenges as they strive to capture the ethereal grace of couples exchanging vows in this icy wilderness. While located in Lubbock, Texas, how can I get ready myself and my equipment for significant weather fluctuations, manage limited packing details for both airline and helicopter journeys, navigate the challenges of capturing natural light on glacial landscapes, and ensure a precise timeline for a wedding day spread across three distant locations? However, it was precisely these challenges that I was ready for. I was determined to transform my couple's Alaskan wedding into a visual masterpiece full of true emotions and adventure.

Scaling down equipment for a destination wedding posed challenges, especially considering the weight restrictions of a helicopter and the limited space of one backpack. Instead of my usual 4.5-foot rolling equipment case with everything I could possibly need, including backups, a staging kit, and large light stands, I turned to the basics. A camera backpack with three lenses, a Canon R6 camera body, a foldable but sturdy light stand, a Godox AD200, a small light modifier, a neutral density filter, a camera rain cover, and extra batteries were all I packed. Being stripped of my usual collection of gadgets was both frightening and liberating.

A pivotal role in this journey was played by a professional wedding planner based in Alaska. The initial phone call established a mutual understanding of professionalism, setting the foundation for a seamless collaboration. Her thorough planning, from crafting a perfect itinerary to ensuring every detail was accounted for, contributed to a stress-free and enjoyable atmosphere. The planner helped keep the timeline flowing and navigated the different locations on the wedding day.

The wedding day began at the couple's tri-level Airbnb, where each floor accommodated different aspects of the preparations. With equipment restrictions, I was unable to bring my ring kit. Instead, I chose to capture the bride's details on top of a cast iron wood-burning stove that was in the master bedroom, and the window ledge that overlooked the mountains held her red bottom shoes. The top balcony provided picturesque settings, with the first look capturing a moment of sheer intimacy against the stunning Alaskan backdrop. The second part of this adventure was a 45-minute drive to our helicopter ride. During the drive, I was able to document the bride and groom discussing their wedding day, the beautiful mountains around us, and the bride swapping out her amazing high heels for more comfortable and practical snow boots.

One of the most thrilling chapters of this wedding photography journey unfolded high above the Alaskan wilderness. The couple had booked a unique experience for the bride to have a bridal session on top of a glacier! The helicopter, weaving through the rugged terrain, offered breathtaking views, setting the stage for an unforgettable adventure.

As the helicopter touched down on the glacier, the bride, adorned in her elegant wedding attire, stepped into a surreal world of ice and awe-inspiring landscapes. Navigating the challenges of wind, bright sunlight, and frigid temperatures, I captured a breathtaking moment of pure white and icy cyan. With my travel light stand and assistance from the pilot, the bride



bravely posed on the ice, letting her train and veil dance in the wind as melting ice merged into roaring waterways around us.

The couple's reactions to the glacial photoshoot encapsulated the essence of their desire for a unique and unforgettable wedding.



The helicopter flew us from the top of the mountain to the ceremony location, where the groom and close family eagerly awaited. Positioned on a picturesque boat dock, everyone was outside, buzzing with excitement to hear about our glacial experience. The vows exchange took place at Mat-Su Resort in Wasilla, Alaska. The couple exchanged vows at the top of a floatplane dock, surrounded by stunning Alaskan views that included the Wasilla Lake in the Chugach Range. The atmosphere was complemented by heavy cloud coverage, intensifying as rain began to fall. Just as a heartfelt kiss sealed the deal, everyone hurried inside to start an intimate dinner celebration while waiting for the rain to light up so they could finish up family photos. The couple posed in the enchanting Alaskan mist for some unforgettable wedding day images. As the day drew to a close, the clouds lifted slightly, revealing the snow-capped



mountain range and setting the stage for visual masterpieces of backlit photos bathed in hues of blues. This is exactly what I had envisioned.

Returning home to Texas, the couple hosted a grand wedding reception for all their family and friends in an old, reclaimed cotton gin turned into a venue. Tin Top Gin infuses industrial charm and elegance with an indoor and outdoor feel. Having experienced a first look in Alaska, the bride and groom decided on a unique twist as they prepared for their reception, opting for a shared getting-ready moment that added an intimate touch to their celebration. The amazing bridal suite has ample room with lots of natural light, allowing the photos to be captured in a candid way. As the newlyweds fastened buttons and delicately clasped jewelry, their four large dogs could run around the room and partake in their human’s celebration. The guests were treated to a display of their stunning Alaska wedding photos, a mosaic of large-format prints that showcased the journey’s highlights.

Back home, the towering mountains and lush foliage may be absent, but Texas unveils its own beauty through breathtaking sunsets. Crafting a meticulous itinerary, whether done by a wedding coordinator or personally-written, is crucial. Crafting the perfect wedding day requires more than just capturing moments; it’s about orchestrating an experience that all my couples will cherish. As a wedding photographer, my focus extends beyond the lens. I become the timekeeper, ensuring every element flows seamlessly. One key to this harmony is advocating for the “first look” magic, a moment when the



groom sees the bride for the first time, creating a relaxed atmosphere for the rest of the day. By completing most photos before the ceremony, the couple can fully savor their post “I do” celebration. Sunset portraits are non-negotiable, with careful calculations based on seasonal nuances, guaranteeing a breathtaking backdrop for their love story. In the realm of wedding photography, it’s not just about freezing moments in time; it’s about curating an unforgettable narrative that unfolds effortlessly for the newlyweds.

In the culmination of this captivating wedding photography adventure, the journey unfolds from the untamed beauty of Alaska’s arctic elegance to the heartwarming charm of Texas. Facing challenges ranging from equipment constraints to navigating diverse landscapes, the photographer’s determination to transform each moment into a visual masterpiece shines through. From the intimate preparations in a tri-level Airbnb to the exhilarating helicopter ride and glacial photoshoot, each chapter adds layers to the couple’s desire for a unique and unforgettable wedding. The ceremony against the backdrop of Alaskan vistas, marked by rain and mist, and the grand reception in a reclaimed cotton gin in Texas, where the journey is shared with family and friends, complete this extraordinary tale of love, adventure, and the artistry of wedding photography.

In the heart of Texas, where mountains give way to expansive skies and lush foliage yields to mesmerizing sunsets, the beauty takes on a different, yet equally enchanting form. The journey from planning a meticulous itinerary to orchestrating the day as a storyteller is not just about capturing images. It’s about crafting an enduring narrative. As a wedding photographer, my role transcends being a mere observer; it is a commitment to curate moments that resonate with the essence of the couple. Texas may lack towering peaks, but within its vast horizons, love unfolds against a canvas painted by the hues of captivating sunsets. In every carefully timed shot and artfully crafted moment, the story of the bride and groom is told, a narrative woven seamlessly into the fabric of Texas beauty and timeless love.

*Jennifer Beene is based in Lubbock, Texas, operating from a brick-exposed downtown studio since 2013. She specializes in weddings with the goal of providing that couples receive exceptional memories. She received her Master of Photography degree in 2021. To learn more about Jennifer, visit: [www.StudioJ.photo](http://www.StudioJ.photo)*



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# CONFIDENCE & SUCCESS

by  
**Gregory Daniel**  
Texas School Instructor

Is confidence a factor? Do you believe there is a major correlation between business success and self-confidence? Spoiler alert, I do!

Recently, Lesa and I were traveling to meet with the Professional Photographers of Oklahoma. By the way, PPOK is a talented group of creative individuals who love each other and have a bundle of fun. Our connecting flight was in Atlanta, no surprise there, and this is where our plane picked up 40 lively Georgia firefighters. They were gathered around in a group bantering back and forth with lively gestures, laughing, back slapping and welcoming new members into their circle as they arrived at the gate. Our seats were planted in the middle of these powerful men during our short flight to Tulsa. Lesa was extremely interested in their story and was able to ask lots of questions to one of the young men sitting in the window seat. They were all trainers heading to share their knowledge with others in their field. Later we found out they were part of the elite Georgia Smoke Divers.

Watching this powerful life-saving group mill about as they gathered their luggage, I turned to Lesa and said the one thing every one of them had was CONFIDENCE! I got to wondering, is this a common denominator of successful small business owners? Could this be a magical ingredient that we don't bother to mention or work to cultivate? So I went on a little Google search to see if I could find some information about our new firefighter friends.

Here's what I found on the Georgia Smoke Divers website: "The elite few, strong in mind and body. The mental aspect of the program is more difficult to describe or prepare for. The most important mental factor is that you want to be a Smoke Diver. If you decide to apply because you just want a challenge, your buddy did it, or you really aren't sure, then you are at an extreme disadvantage. Taking the course is a personal choice that you must make. This desire must be independent of anyone else's expectations of you. If you are afraid of failure then you are at a disadvantage also." Wow! Do you see how easily you could replace Smoke Diver with Photographer? (or any other entrepreneurial endeavor, for that matter).

As an aside, I also stumbled upon Annie Ashdown during my research. Annie has written a book titled "The Confidence Factor." She talks about stepping away from self-doubt and into your potential. I love that she equates self-confidence with potential. You can't have one without the other! This just might be the book for you to pick up to see if any of her seven secrets of successful people could be useful.

Let's consider the different areas of your business model and evaluate your own confidence factor.

**Branding** • Branding is a head-to-toe, top-to-bottom endeavor. It is anything and everything that tells a client who you are. It's the way you dress and present yourself. It's marketing materials. It's the look of your studio or home office. It's the car you drive. It's the professional (or less than professional) way you communicate and interact. Are any of these areas lacking confidence? Or, better yet, are any of these areas showing your own insecurity?

**Consultation** • Consultation confidence comes down to preparation. Are you prepared to discuss the client's needs before you share pricing? Now is the time to confidently communicate your value and the unique solution you have for your client once you find out from them what they're looking for.

**Session** • Session confidence is being prepared to execute the joint vision of you and your client. Do they feel you're in control of the session and in command of your craft?

**Order Appointment** • Confidence in the order appointment is key. It looks like knowing that you followed through on the needs and desires set forth in the consultation and that you have quality images to share. You know you have prepared them for the experience and pre-conditioned them with the potential products you had in mind and the range of pricing to expect.

**Delivery** • This might be the most important part of your client experience, and it's definitely my favorite! This is the time to put a bow on the experience. Would they consider your delivery over-the-top, personalized, memorable? Look to your experience with a favorite brand and how they finish the transaction.

Projecting confidence, even when you may not feel confident, is the key to communicating your value to your client. Take a look at each facet of your business and evaluate whether it is displaying your confidence in your abilities and your business. If it isn't, find a way to cultivate that confidence. You can look



at additional education and ask for testimonials from your clients to see where you really shine then build upon that. Just remember: The road of a business owner is a bumpy one, but the road to a successful business is always paved with confidence.



*Greg and Lesa Daniel are internationally recognized for their artistry. Though he is one of the most awarded photographers in the United States, Greg has the utmost privilege of living out his passion every day alongside Lesa in operating their portrait photography galleries in both Indialantic and Titusville, Florida. Greg was one of the youngest members to be inducted into the prestigious Cameracraftsmen of America in 1991, and a proud founding member of the International Society of Portrait Artists (ISPA). To learn more about them, go to GregoryDanielPortraits.com.*





“**Stairway and Beyond**” was created by Patrick Bertolino of Houston, Texas. The image was shot with a PC-E NIKKOR 24mm tilt-shift lens. “Instead of going all-in vertical and possibly dealing with distortion or too tight a composition, I slap on the tilt-shift lens and keep my camera in landscape. Next, I crank that shift knob all the way down, placing the field of view at the bottom of the frame. A quick, 3-shot bracket HDR at this low position helps sort out any exposure quirks as I shift upward,” he explains. “After that, I shift (not tilt) up to a more central spot on my subject and take another 3-shot HDR.” Patrick also used multiple shots as an opportunity to light up dark areas as he did on the home office in the middle. In post-production, bracketed shots are blended first with no distortion control or cropping. The remaining images are auto merged in Photoshop or Lightroom. “I don’t use this technique on every shoot. It is reserved for special moments when the composition demands a little extra flair.”

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# 10 Steps to Photographing **BBQ**

by  
**Malinda Julien**  
 MPhotog.Cr, CPP

Texas is the land of BBQ and, as a food photographer, it is no surprise that I photograph a lot of it. Let's face it, BBQ is just meat and muscles of the animals we consume. Photographing it as we taste it can be challenging. I think BBQ is pretty dramatic - the hunting, the butchering, all the spices, the fire, the big knives - so images of BBQ needs to follow suit. Drama means direct lighting, good shadows, and on-point color. The viewer needs to taste that photograph. Here are a few points I have found useful.

**Use flash** • When I think of drama, I usually think of long exposures with directional lighting. However, ambient light tends to glare off the fat and moisture of the meat, creating a glow... not what we are looking for. I might drag a shutter on flash, but, generally, I use studio strobes with striplights and ISO 100/f10/ 1/125 (somewhere around there). If I am trying to stop some liquid, I will use 1/160, and if I am trying to show just a part of the image, f2.8. If I am going to use a liquid, I shoot without pouring first, then shoot through and after the pour.

**Equipment** • I almost always use either a 100mm macro or a 90mm tilt-shift lens. A full-frame DSLR on a very steady tripod, shutter release, and tethering is a must. My choice for viewing images and releasing the shutter is Lightroom. This allows me to step off the set, which can be a bit tight with the lights so close, and still see the live image. Using the tether method to a laptop also keeps me from moving the camera as I move around. Food takes time, sometimes hours, to get just the right photo. Meat is no exception. The meat needs to be cooked to perfection and then allowed to rest, giving that tender look. Avoid meat that is cooked to well-done. It will look like a hockey puck. Go for 135°F and pull the meat. This will be rare in most cases (if you want to eat it later, you can always cook it a bit more if you don't care for rare). Note: Poultry has to be 165°F to be safe to eat. However, still only cook to 135°F so it will stay plump.

**Shoot from the front with a POV (point of view) angle** • I very rarely (no pun intended) shoot top-down on meat.

**Light from the corner for a main light and some slight fill with fill cards or slight, small flash** • I am usually about 4:1 or 5:1, depending on the client's request. Start with light from low on the rear corner then begin with the slightest movements to rake the light across the meat showing texture. Next, add a little light raking across the other side to offer some fill. Ribs are long and low so they take a bit more lighting. The knife used belonged to the client, so it had to be lit so the logo showed. A combination of the two lights created are laxing image for a rather coarse subject.

**Temperature** • The meat should remain room temperature. A lot of food is photographed cold, but meats need to sit, and the longer they are out, the better the shoot. The exceptions would be poultry, turkey, chicken, capon, etc. They will dry out more than a fattier meat. You need to work with them a bit faster.

**Touching up the food** • Some meats benefit from a brush of oil from time to time as the outside of BBQ is usually "bark" or the hard, almost burned edges or outsides of the meat. If you overdo this, the meat will look greasy. If you find it is a bit too wet, dot the oil off with a paper towel until you are happy with the look.

**Plating** • Meat needs something more than just a closeup. It benefits from a cast of characters to keep your image from just being brown. Using dishes, implements, other foods, sauces, salts, and the like can help bring the overall image to a delicious ending.

**Dealing with rare meat and the juice** • It should be noted the liquid coming out of rare meat is not blood but myoglobin (this is a protein which carries oxygen to the muscles). Even if we could convince people it isn't bloody and explain myoglobin, for a lot of people, it is gross. Some are even fearful of it! Personally, I am a very rare meat eater, so I see it and it makes my mouth water. However, in most photographs we don't want to see it. Therefore, letting that meat rest is always a good idea. As the meat rests, it re-absorbs the myoglobin and remains juicy, but not bloody This is why you never cut into freshly-cooked meat. It will loose all the juices and be dry.

How long? I rest meats for at least 30 minutes, depending on the size. A large pork shoulder might rest a full 45 minutes, chicken about 20 minutes, and beef depending on the size.

**Small meats need companions** • These lambchops (next page) are really small but a delicious meat to pull off the grill. I photographed this dish with traditional veggies. The green peas (which are frozen and just lightly thawed so they would stay plump and green), the pearl onions and mushrooms provide a monochromatic-style color palette. Here, the use of salt gave scale and attention while the fresh thyme added some movement. The silverware mimics the bone, creating a nice movement





drawing our thought process away from the fact we are looking at a bone. Pattern on the plate is complementary with the peas and mirror the green peas between the bones of the lamb chop.

**Using non-edible ingredients to make meat look delicious** • There was a time when food photography was more fake than it was real. The food was wasted and rendered inedible. There are still sometimes when we use inedible products to dress our food shoots. However, other than a little brush of oil all of these images are as they exist. BBQ is just too delicious to throw out - just wouldn't be Texan.

Fire up the lights and the grill! Get started on photographing that Q!



Malinda Julien, MasterPhotog.Cr.,CPP, is a commercial food photographer and owner of Julien & Lambert Photography and Phood Photo in Fort Worth, Texas. She is the author of the Sugar Biscuit Journey and Home Cooking Kitchen cookbooks, Paved Paradise, and ESSENTIAL books. Malinda is also the host of "Home Cooking Kitchen" YouTube™ channel and Instructor of photography through Julien & Lambert Photo Education.



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by Don Dickson

The 2024 Texas School of Professional Photography will once again be held at the Renaissance Hotel and Conference Center in Addison, Texas. Classes will be held April 28 through May 3, 2024. More than 1,000 photographers attend Texas School each year, and we look forward to another great year in 2024. The hotel, located north of Dallas, just off the North Dallas Toll Road, is the setting for this event.

The 523-room Renaissance Hotel has agreed to a room rate of only \$140, so more people will be able to stay at the host hotel. More information is available on the Texas School website at [www.texasschool.org](http://www.texasschool.org). The hotel room block with discounted rates opened in December. Watch our Facebook page and website for more information. Online registration for the 2024 Texas School began January 3. In previous years, the first class books in just seconds with several others booking within a couple of minutes! Please keep this in mind.

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# A BLAST FROM THE PAST

## Outsmarting a Thievin' Coon

by  
Bill Hedrick

It was the summer of 1963. The place was the Shady Lake Campground in Arkansas, and an Eagle Scout named Hal Dial was about to introduce a young Tenderfoot to the exciting world of photography.

In those days, Boy Scouts learned survival skills, and the comforts of lodging at summer camp meant sleeping on Army cots in an Army Surplus tent. There were no dormitories and access to drinking water at Shady Lake meant using a hand-pump while bathing meant a large group of kids utilizing a swimming hole in a nearby creek. There were no showers and no flushing toilets. The main luxury was that Troop 265 from Kilgore, Texas, brought along a hired cook, someone who knew how to cook over an open fire for a few dozen boys. We never understood exactly how he managed to bake a huge, mouth-watering peach cobbler, but he did this and more.

Each day was filled with activities that included hiking, swimming, and contests to sharpen those survival skills. There were knots to be tied, fires to be made, logs to be chopped, and trails to be hiked. One entire day included a 5-mile, mostly uphill hike to a hilltop called Tall Peak where it seemed you could see forever, later racing back down through the woods instead of using the winding road. At the end of one of those hikes, we came upon a beautiful swimming hole just below the dam of Shady Lake, and everyone shed their clothes and “skinny-dipped” in the cool, clear water. Little did we realize the road coming into Shady Lake was less than 20 yards away.

There was “Indian Day” where everyone had their own Indian name... Running Bear, Flying Hawk, Eagle Eyes... mine was Buzzard Bait. It included a fishing contest with the only rule that you could not use “manufactured” fishing equipment. Everything, including string and hooks, had to be made by hand from whatever resources the forest had to offer. I fashioned a somewhat successful club from a tree limb.

At the end of each day, there was what one might describe as “chigger cal” when everyone stripped down to a pair of shorts and lined up to have those chigger bites doctored with good old-fashioned Mercurochrome.

But there was a thief in our midst. The camp cook informed the Scoutmaster that food was being stolen each night from the supply tent and the culprit was successful enough to evade detection. Something had to be done. That’s when Eagle Scout Hal Dial came to the rescue. His impossible mission, as he chose to accept it, was to identify the thief.

Eagle Scouts are smart and creative. Hal decided that he would let the culprit “take his own picture” for that conclusive evidence needed to identify him. He positioned a camera a few feet up into a tree next to the supply tent and aimed it toward a spot on the ground below. Next to the camera was a dry-cell battery with wires attached to a flash bulb. For those who are unfamiliar with a flash bulb, email me and I will explain some things. The circuit from the battery to the bulb was cut, and all one would have to do is to touch the bare ends of the two wires together to complete the circuit and set off the bulb. To keep them from touching prematurely, Hal placed a popsicle stick between them with a string attached to the popsicle stick and the other end to a piece of bread on the target spot on the ground.

After the sun went down, and the sky was dark, Hal opened the shutter on the camera and let nature take its course. There were no street lights or security lights at Shady Lake, and the night sky revealed the Milky Way as well as all those constellations we were taught about in school. Then, as everyone else slept under the cool Arkansas sky, Hal set his alarm to get up before sunrise. Just as he had predicted, the bait was gone, and the flash bulb had been fired. He closed the shutter of the camera.

There were no one-hour labs in those days. We had to “mail in” film and wait to have it processed. At any rate, to a young Tenderfoot Boy Scout, the whole thing was magic. It was my first lesson on how film was exposed and how a camera could be rigged to take a picture without someone pressing the shutter. I was blown away with Hal’s ingenuity and inspired to become more like him. It was more than simply a photograph of a hungry, yet ingenious, raccoon. It was the process behind the photograph.

As the years passed, I would venture back to this magical place. The “skinny-dipping” swim hole is still there, and, yes, it is right next to the main road leading into Shady Lake. Other things have changed with time. There are rest rooms with flushing toilets and hot showers and RV sites everywhere. The open field where we pitched our tents is no longer open, filled with towering trees that are probably 40-years-old now. The old hand-pump is gone and running water and electricity is available throughout the park. Even so, I found the concrete slab where the pump once stood.



The Dam at Shady Lake in Arkansas

Shady Lake became the spot to go to when life gets me down and I need the peace and simplicity of nature to remind me how lucky we are to experience those things God has placed in our presence.

However, the story does not end there. One of the positive things about Facebook is that it allows us to reconnect with people from the past. I had not seen Hal since those Boy Scout days of the 1960s. In fact, I doubted if he even knew me from anyone else in those days. After all, he was one of the elite, and I was just another kid. But, by chance, I found him on Facebook!

I wasn’t even sure if he would accept a friend request from me, but he acknowledged it within minutes. Next, I sent him a message to confirm he was the same Hal Dial, Eagle Scout, from Troop 265 back in the 1960s. “One and the same!” came the immediate reply.

I went on to relate the story of the raccoon and how taking his picture had a lasting impression on me and how, many years later, I became a professional photographer myself. We talked about the method he used to “expose” that pesky raccoon over six decades ago, and

I was pleased to know that my memory was “spot on” as to the method. Life was good in those days. Memories of such times have a way of warming one’s soul and brightening even the gloomiest of days. You just never know how something as simple as photographing a food-stealing raccoon can make a lasting impression on someone else.



Although the original photo of “Bandit the Raccoon” has been lost to time, the black-and-white image taken back in 1963 was much similar to one captured by basic game cameras today.



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# Margaret Bryant's FUNNY, FURRY FRIENDS

by  
Bill Hedrick



Early in her photographic career, Margaret Bryant was photographing a family group that included several of their dogs. While the family members were cooperating nicely, one of the dogs simply would not look at the camera. It seemed as if this was the case in every family group that included animals, and she thought she was a failure.

However, when she showed the images to the family, they loved them! The images perfectly captured the personality of the dog. To Margaret's surprise, it turned out to be one of her largest orders and included a large wall portrait. It was a lesson she would never forget. From then on, she purposely included a goofy shot or two of the family dog in every sales presentation. "Sometimes the most goofy shot is the one that most perfectly expresses the personality of your subject," she says.

People took notice, and the word spread about her unique portraiture. One day, a man contacted her to help him with his idea of proposing to his girlfriend. His idea was for each of their three dogs to wear signs saying "Will you" and "marry" and "me?" After wrapping the finished 8x10 in a fancy box, he took his girlfriend to a nice restaurant where she opened it and, of course, said "Yes!"



Other interesting sessions would follow over the years to come. One bride wanted her two Boston Terriers to be included in her beach wedding without them actually being there, so Margaret suggested a bridal session in advance of the wedding. The dogs were "posed" with the bride in her wedding dress, with the flowers, and so forth. Then, Margaret suggested a shot or two of the dogs tugging on one of the garters. The bride loved the idea. Her dogs would "participate" in the wedding by having their photos displayed at the reception.

It was a scenario that would repeat itself over the years and Margaret's clients became more and more involved in planning the portraits of their pets. As word spread, her sales took off. "I love it when clients want to collaborate on an image."

Margaret's images of pets have created other opportunities for sales and have been used for other purposes as well. "Twice I have had clients take my images of their dogs and had them tattooed on themselves," she relates.

She also has clients who come to her on a regular basis for portraits of their pets. One client brought their two Portuguese Water Dogs to her with a topic in mind of "the dogs getting their favorite things for Christmas." On the front of the card would be the dogs writing their Christmas list for Santa. But it was the inside of the card that would be the real challenge. "One of the dogs liked toilet paper, and the other liked drinking out of the toilet," she explains. The latter would be the most difficult shot. So, before the session, Margaret measured the height of a toilet and set up a chair with a bowl on it that was the same height and had the dog eat treats from the bowl so she could get the dog's ears hanging over the edge of the bowl. Then, she photographed a toilet at Lowe's and composited it into the image. "Since both dogs loved bacon and socks, I added those to the image as well," says Margaret. Of course, the client loved it.

Margaret Bryant's interest in photography began as a child when she purchased her first camera with \$2 and two box tops from Luden's cough drops. By high school, she had a better camera and had converted her parents' spare bathroom into a darkroom. College brought an interest in television, but her small town didn't have a TV station, so photography went by the wayside for an interest in radio.



In 1976, she worked in the newsroom researching, writing, and airing news stories at a radio station in upstate New York. Two years later, she transitioned into radio engineering after obtaining her FCC First Class license. After designing, building, and maintaining radio stations in several cities and markets, Margaret landed a job in Chicago as Engineering Manager at WMAQ. But, after spending six years in Chicago, she decided to return to Texas where she designed, built, and maintained the Dallas operations of ABC Radio Networks.

While there, she expanded her world by writing for the broadcasting trade magazines, serving on the National Association of Broadcaster's Convention Committee, one of the larger conventions in the country, and was a six-time recipient of Radio Ink Magazine's most admired radio engineers. Over those years, she worked with Paul Harvey, Tom Joyner, Doug Banks, and the staff at Radio Disney.

During her time at WMAQ, Margaret revived her hobby of photography and soon decided to turn her photography into a part-time business. By 2006, she retired from 30 years in radio to do photography full-time. In the past 25 years, Margaret Bryant has accomplished a lot. She earned her





Master of Photography degree in 2009 and her Photographic Craftsman degree in 2012, followed by her Certified Professional Photographer degree.

As an active member of the Texas Professional Photographers Association, Margaret can always be counted on to help in any way. If you've ever been late paying your TPPA dues, chances are that you've

received a "reminder" card in the mail with an image of a very sad dog. That image was created by Margaret Bryant.

She is a popular speaker and has presented programs at various state and local PPA affiliates as well as Imaging USA and the Texas School of Professional Photography and the Animal Image Maker's Convention. Along with her very successful photography career, Margaret has raised more than \$40,000 for several animal charities. Many consider her the OG of pet photography.



Always ready for a new challenge, Margaret decided to go after the American Society of Photographers Educational Associates degree and, in 2021, succeeded with her paper, "Using Animal Behavioral Psychology and Operant Conditioning in Dog Photography." In addition, she has written three books: "Who Rescued Whom" about rescue dogs and "Dog Photography: How to Capture the Love, Fun and Whimsy of Man's Best Friend," first edition and updated second edition.

Margaret has numerous PPA Photographer of the Year recognitions, and two Grand Imaging Award nominations. She has written many articles for the Texas PPA magazine and served as the Dallas PPA president 2010. As if she did not already have enough to keep her busy, Margaret also teaches her workshop, "Dog Photography Boot Camp," with two other instructors and is available for one-on-one instruction.

With her long list of accomplishments and her record of service to others, it is no wonder that the Dallas Professional Photographers Association presented Margaret with the National Award from DPPA in November of 2023.

Those of us who know Margaret, realize that she still has tons of crazy ideas to capture in photographic form. So, watch out for more. She's not done yet!



The inscription on this coveted award simply reads, "For meritorious contributions to professional photography."



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# BIG CLIENT - SMALL LIGHT

## A McDonald's Burger Shoot

by  
**Dave Montizambert**

In a land far away... a long, long, long time ago... and I'm not going to say how long ago, but it was in the last century, my brother/partner Mark and I landed a big client through an ad agency. That client was the king of fast food, McDonald's. We won them over with our dramatic lighting style and started creating images for their local and national advertising campaigns. Interestingly enough, as much as they loved our look, the art director directed the scanner operator at the service bureau (or color separation house as they were called then) to open up the shadows of our film transparencies (4x5 / 5x4 inch positives). In other words, he wanted to make our carefully crafted "lighting drama" a little flatter!

Since printed work has a greatly reduced Range of Contrast compared to film or digital, we had carefully created our rich dark shadows to reproduce on press with all essential detail! A considerable amount of painstaking light metering with both incident and reflective meters was done to guarantee stunning printing results. So what gives?! It wasn't like we were creating our lighting willy-nilly. I guess they knew the aesthetic of their audience better than I, or they were playing it safe. At any rate, I'll drop that rant now. Besides, the work was really fun and challenging and paid really well.

Still, I don't get it. It's like two goldsmith jewellers I know who create beautiful hand-made, one-of-kind Baroque jewelry that garners so much attention from people browsing their shop. More often than not, the clients they land will say, "I love your work, but could you make something for me that is more normal-looking?" Subtext: "I love your work and I want you to craft a piece for me, but could you please make it boring?" It's not uncommon in the arts, but as my mentor Dean Collins said, "Beauty is in the eye of the checkbook holder!"

Pre-production for these shoots was very involved. By law, since the food subject was the product to be sold, the image had to be made with actual ingredients from McDonald's. So, there could be no substituting of ingredients that would photograph better. All the product (buns, sauce, meat patties, etc.) would arrive in the morning on the day before the shoot. We had a visit later that morning from the art director, the agency account executive, plus two or three marketing people from McDonald's, our food stylist, and assistant. All were there at my studio to see the ingredients and further discuss the image to be created. Let the casting session begin!

We went to great lengths to find the best ingredient candidates and were sent much more than two or three of any given ingredient. The craziest was the buns. All 200 of the buns sent to us were laid out on a long table for the mob to cast from. We would discuss the attributes of each bun, such as shape, color consistency, and placement of sesame seeds on bun tops.

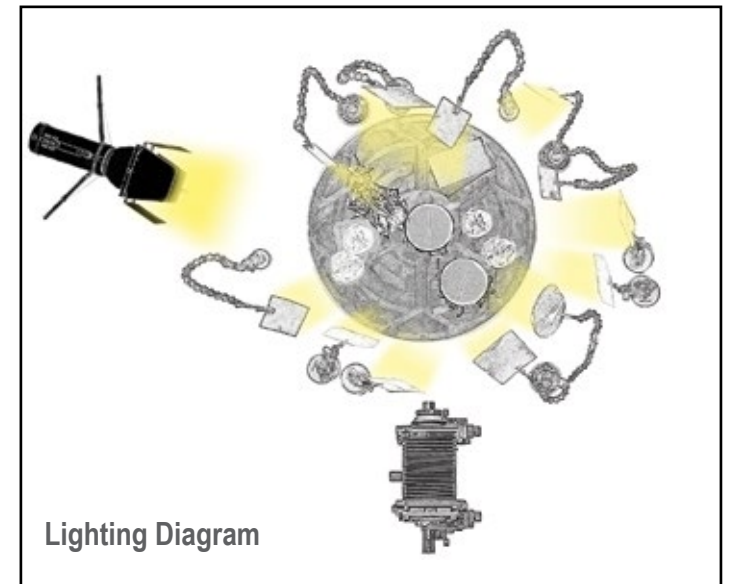
After cutting out half a dozen hero buns from the "bun herd," the food stylist would add and subtract seeds for a better look. Then it was on to the meat patties. These were submerged into a deep pan of oil to soak over night to make them really plump up. On the day of the shoot, our food stylist would make further modifications to the hero buns by partially hollowing out the bun tops and replacing the space with bunched up pieces of paper towel to make the buns less flat looking. As rigid as the rules were, it was okay to enhance reality as long as it was the actual client ingredients. Ah, truth in advertising! Sometimes, when people at parties asked me what I did for a living I would say, "I freelanced for the Department of Lies!"

On the day of the shoot, the food stylist would quickly throw together stand-in hamburgers for us to create and fine-tune composition and lighting. As the composition of subjects and lighting took place, there was much talk between myself, the agency, and the McDonald's people on the above. Sometimes the McDonald's representative would have to contact head office back east to confirm certain things like lettuce... "Is this the correct lettuce for this new burger?" That could take up to an hour or more since the head office time-zone was three hours ahead of us and more often than not the decision makers would be out to lunch, literally.

It all seems kind of crazy. But, in essence, we were shooting the "prototype" for a new, yet-to-be released product so there would be many last-minute changes and decisions made. As boring as it was to put the shoot on hold for an hour or more, we were billing full rate for everyone for the extra time. McDonald's was really good about this.

The title image is a good example of the kind of images we created for McDonalds. The lighting for this image (see diagram) was pretty much the lighting we did for all the McDonald's shoots. Usually, one studio strobe was placed behind and a bit to the right or left to backlight the subjects. Many small silver-card reflectors of varying size and shape were placed in front, behind, and to the side of the subjects. These cards caught light spilling over top the subjects from the backlight and strategically redirected it onto them.

The idea was to selectively light key areas and then use a fill reflector (a rectangle of white foam-board from above set) to bring up the shadow areas. Where the fill did not provide enough shadow detail due to the actual tone being a dark pigment, more silver cards were positioned, usually from the side to sweep across the area bringing out texture rather than fully lighting the tone. With this card in place, the shadow area would remain dark but with subtle texture running through it.



Once the lighting was set, we would mark the position of the stand-in burgers with small blocks of wood and then remove the stand-ins. Next, the food stylist would bring the hero burgers onto the set and we would painstakingly place them using the blocks. Once in place and the positioning blocks removed, a little fine tuning of reflector cards was usually necessary. Then the food stylist would finesse the burgers, often adding last minute mayonnaise and/or sauce and/or ketchup with a syringe that would slowly run down the meat and/or lettuce making the burger look mouth-watering tasty!

Even though these shoots were often one light setups, they were quite complex. The tabletop set was an absolute forest of light stands, boom arms, magic arms with silver cards, and gobos! Once again, look to my simplified lighting diagram of the two burger setup. We used a lot of sandbags to mitigate unwanted lighting changes due to bumping and tripping, but even with that precaution taken, our top-tier food stylist seemed only able to see his work and not the whole set and would charge into the lighting forest to tweak a piece of lettuce, often knocking a silver card or two out of place. Ahhhhhh!

The lighting we used for McDonald's was a dramatic cinematic style. With such small subjects, regular studio strobe lights with optical spots or grids would not be small enough. There are tiny optical spotlights available, but they are really expensive. On some of our food shoots we might require up to 30 of these. This is where the silver card reflectors came in. For under \$20 (Canadian) we could purchase a big sheet of silver board then cut out the actual shape and size we needed to do the job. So, even though this was a big high-end client, we didn't need to break the bank to get the job done!



*Dave Montizambert lectures internationally on lighting, digital photography, and Adobe Photoshop. He is also a published author having written two books on lighting and digital photography plus numerous magazine articles on these topics in North America, Europe, Russia, and Asia. Dave produces "DaveOnDemand" lighting tutorial-based photo training and also creates lighting & Photoshop tutorial DVDs for [www.software-cinema.com](http://www.software-cinema.com) and [www.PhotoshopCAFE.com/video](http://www.PhotoshopCAFE.com/video). Dave is available for lectures and workshops in your area and can be reached at: [www.montizambert.com](http://www.montizambert.com).*



# Preserving Photographic Legacies



by  
Bill Hedrick

It was in the hazy ambience of a bourbon bar filled with soft undertones of jazz that a couple of photographers and visionaries found themselves in deep conversation about establishing a registry for photographic images. “Hey, do you have a pen? Hand me that napkin,” one of them asked. Soon, an idea sparked to life: What if they could create something more? ...a platform where, not only the art, but the artist’s legacy could endure? What if this platform could ensure that lost or damaged art could be reborn, long after the artist had passed?

During this pivotal moment, scribbled hastily on a bar napkin, a visionary initiative to immortalize the art and stories of photographers for generations to come was born. It would become the foundation for the International Photographic Arts Collective (IPAC). At its core, IPAC is built around three fundamental elements: the registration of photographic art, artist pages for preserving individual legacies, and the recreation of art for future generations. In this digital age, where the ephemeral nature of art is a constant challenge, IPAC emerges as an essential ally, championing the timeless preservation and appreciation of photographic art.

IPAC is more than just a website. It places immense emphasis on the story behind each piece of registered artwork. Artists, in collaboration with their clients, are encouraged to provide detailed descriptions and narratives for their work. This narrative depth offers viewers and future generations an insightful window into the artwork’s creation, significance, and the artist’s vision, making each piece not just a visual spectacle but a storied treasure.

Categories encompass a broad range of photographic disciplines, catering to the unique styles and subjects embraced by photographers around the world. The platform includes, but is not limited to, categories such as Fine Art Portrait, Portrait, Wedding, High School Senior, Commercial, Landscape, Wildlife and Animal, Digital Art, Albums, and many more. In addition to these, IPAC accommodates numerous other categories, ensuring that every photographic artist, regardless of their niche or specialty, finds a place to preserve and showcase their work. This variety not only reflects the vast spectrum of the photographic field but also underlines IPAC’s dedication to acknowledging and celebrating every form of photographic expression. It is an inclusive platform for all photographers.

The importance of IPAC in the photographic community is best illustrated through the experiences and insights of its member artists. Each artist brings a unique perspective, shaped by their personal journey and professional ethos, highlighting the diverse benefits of IPAC. Rosalind Guder’s connection with IPAC is deeply rooted in her desire to see her work recognized and preserved in its most authentic form. With a career spanning both the USA and Canada and accolades that acknowledge her skill and vision, Guder finds in The IPAC a platform where her work’s integrity and legacy are honored. “IPAC is a haven where my creative expressions are not just stored but celebrated for their authenticity,” she explains. This sense of recognition and preservation is crucial for Guder, as it allows her to ensure that her artistic legacy will endure, maintaining the integrity and narrative of her life’s work.

Award-winning wildlife and portrait photographer Kevin Dooley also recognizes the need to have a platform for preserving photographic art. “The idea of a place to carry on the importance of an image and the ability to keep the image available after the maker has moved on to another world is so important,” he explains. “I love the idea that an image is both protected and made available for future purchase or replacement. I’m excited to watch this idea grow and prosper.”

Judy Reinford’s relationship with IPAC became a personal mission after experiencing the impact of loss through a lifelong friend’s tragedy. A fire had robbed her friend of cherished artworks from an artist that is no longer with us; the ability to recreate these lost treasures became a source of solace and purpose for Judy. The only thing her friend had left was a cell phone image of the original piece. With this image Judy recreated the art the original artist had created then registered it with IPAC giving her friend a sense of security that they never had. “IPAC’s role in safeguarding and recreating these irreplaceable

memories has been a beacon of hope, both for me and my clients,” Reinford reflects. Her passion for IPAC is fueled by its capacity to turn loss into enduring memories, offering a tangible sense of continuity and emotional healing. This personal connection underscores IPAC’s role not just as a digital archive, but as a guardian of personal and emotional histories.



The International Photographic Arts Collective stands out not just as a preserver of photographic legacies but also as a hub of educational excellence. In this realm, IPAC functions on a unique two-way street: it’s a place where members can both learn and teach, thereby broadening their professional horizons and personal brands. IPAC organizes a variety of educational programs, workshops, and webinars, led by industry leaders and renowned photographers. These sessions cover a broad spectrum of topics, from technical skills in photography and post-processing to the nuances of artistic expression and conceptualization. Members have the opportunity to learn from the masters of the craft, gaining insights that only years of experience and experimentation can offer. This continuous learning process is vital in an art form that is constantly evolving with technology and cultural shifts.

Conversely, IPAC provides a platform for its experienced members to step into the role of educators and mentors. By teaching, these artists not only impart their knowledge and skills to budding photographers but also enhance their personal brands. Teaching workshops or hosting webinars under the IPAC banner lends credibility and increases visibility within the community. This aspect of IPAC is particularly beneficial for members looking to establish or reinforce their status as experts in their field. Educational contributions can range from technical workshops on lighting and composition to more conceptual classes on storytelling through photography. For members like Judy Reinford, who has a passion for painted animal art, conducting a workshop on integrating painting techniques into photography can attract a niche audience, thereby expanding her brand’s reach.

IPAC encourages its members to take an active role in shaping its educational content. This collaborative approach fosters a vibrant community of educators, each bringing their unique perspective and expertise to the table.







For instance, a animal photographer like Judy Reinford can offer insights into capturing animals and turning them into art, while a portrait photographer like Rosalind Guder might focus on capturing the essence of a subject's personality.

Education at The IPAC is a dynamic and multifaceted endeavor. It's a space where learning is just the beginning, and teaching becomes a

pathway to personal and professional growth. Through its educational programs, IPAC not only nurtures the development of its members but also contributes to the enrichment of the photographic community at large. It hosts annual print competitions, offering a prestigious platform for artists to present their work. This competition is more than just a contest; it is a celebration of photographic artistry, providing recognition and engagement for a community that deeply values photographic excellence.

Furthering its mission, IPAC is engaged in dialogues with various industry bodies, including PPA affiliates and international organizations, to sponsor image competitions. These collaborations create a synergistic relationship, spotlighting the 'best of the best' in the industry and providing a digital home for these celebrated works.

IPAC stands as a testament to the enduring power of photography. It represents a new era where art is not just seen but felt and remembered, an era where the photographer's vision is immortalized. As IPAC continues to grow, it cements its role as a visionary force in the world of photography, ensuring that every artistic vision is not just captured but cherished and celebrated, transcending time and technology.

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# WHY SIZE REALLY DOESN'T MATTER

when photographing women

by  
Jen Rozenbaum



Photographers often ask me how I pose women who are curvy, short, skinny, older, etc. My answer is always the same. Each client is posed in a way that makes “her” look amazing. Her size, height, weight, shape, or age really doesn’t matter. What does matter is proportion. That’s right, I pose for proportion.

I have a Facebook group of more than 25,000 photographers and, every week, there are posts that read something like, “Please help! I have a woman coming into the studio who is a size 20. Spam me with your plus-size pose ideas.” But there are fundamental issues with such a question, so let’s break it down. First, you can’t judge how to pose a woman based on her clothing size. If I asked 10 women to come to my studio who are a size 4 and lined them up side to side and took a photo of them, it would be clear that, even though they all share a common clothing size, their bodies will all be different. The same thing would happen if I did this with 10 women who are a size 20, or any size for that matter.



What size clothing someone wears doesn’t determine how they should be posed. It doesn’t tell me where a subject carries her weight. It doesn’t account for the length of her legs. Clothing size doesn’t tell me if a client is an hourglass shape or more square or if she is more curvy or straight. I need that information before I can decide what poses will work best.

It would be easy to create a photo book illustrating hundreds of poses that I have captured over the years, hand it to you, and say, “Here’s the key to posing success!” You see, posing is not “one size fits all.” Yes, there are some standard poses that I go to over and over again and, yes, they work on most women. However, each pose, whether it is one you go to often or something newer, needs to be tweaked according to your subject and her unique proportions, how her body moves, and the look you are trying to accomplish. For me, that means actually seeing the client in person and observing her, allowing me to get a better idea of her body and what works best for that person.

Now that we’ve established that posing is about proportion instead of clothing size, I can better illustrate how I accomplish this with what I call the 8 Points of Posing. This is a method I use every single time when

posing women. If done correctly, it is foolproof. It takes a little practice, of course, but it is worth it. When you get good at it, this method makes posing easier and allows you to take more successful photos per session even though you will find you are actually shooting less! To understand how it works, you must know the eight points of the body... head, shoulders, elbows (arms), hands, waist, hips, knees, and ankles.

These 8 points are the main joints of the body, and I pose each client paying close attention to each of these points. Bending them, turning them, pushing them away or towards the camera, change how the body looks. Once I am done posing, I pick up my camera and scan the body, making sure all points are where I want them. If anything needs changing, I change it and scan again. Once it looks good, I take the photo, and then stop.

Stopping is the step that most photographers miss. You must stop and check the back of your camera to make sure what you see and what the camera sees is in agreement. If it is, by all means, keep snapping away. If not, then it’s time to adjust the 8 points again. This “stopping and looking” is very important. We think that our clients are paying us to take pictures, but the truth is that they are paying us for our knowledge that leads to great photos. The more time you take in posing and connecting and being detail-oriented in your work, the more your clients will trust you and, in the end, the more they will be willing to spend on the final product.

If you are looking to amp up your posing and your client satisfaction, then it’s time to let go of the cookie-cutter posing and start gaining confidence in working with each woman individually. Once that is done, it’s a game-changer for you and your clients.



Jen Rozenbaum, of Port Washington, New York, is a well-known boudoir photographer. However, in recent years, she has also turned the camera on herself to use art therapy as a way to heal from cancer and to inspire women and men who are going through tough times in life. Today, she spends time shooting, teaching, writing, podcasting, and working on another movement called “Life After Breast Cancer.”







# DARKROOM vs. TECHNOLOGY

## Burning & Dodging with RAW Files

by  
**Carl Caylor**  
Texas School Instructor

There was a time when I spent many hours in the dark or under a red light creating custom prints for some of the most talented photographers in the nation. Black and white as well as color work was an art in and of itself. I refined skills of burning and dodging, creating contrast and correcting color on the fly. It was a very elite skillset. Fast forward to the digital world. Here we are with unlimited opportunities for anyone to do what I did in the dark but with much more precision and control. It just seems that, like with anything that technology has made easier, maybe we would be better able to use the technology if we understood where the technology came from and some of the ways it was used in the past.

The very first concept is the RAW file. When digital first came on the scene and entered the professional world, I was still working in a pro lab. Folks from Kodak stopped in for a demonstration and training on how to work with the new age of photography. After one of them began explaining the RAW file concept, I said out loud, “It’s a negative.” He looked at me strange and said, “No. It’s a digital file.” Obviously, he never worked in a darkroom before. The RAW file contains information in exposure, color, and more in a range beyond that from which it was exposed. In a RAW software, that information can be altered after the creation was made as if it were being changed while creating the image. If I exposed for 1/125 of a second at f-5.6 on 400 ISO in camera, but realized later than it was overexposed, the RAW file and software can work together to make the correction to that exposure.

Film worked the same. We shined a light through the film for a length of time to create an image. More time or more intense light would make the print darker, and less light would make it lighter. The negative had an enormous amount of information on it when exposed correctly. With darkroom techniques, that information could even stretch beyond normal capabilities as Ansel Adams discovered with the Zone System. The fun part of making a “custom print” in the darkroom was that we didn’t need to settle for a constant exposure throughout the scene. We could pick and choose areas to make darker (burn) or areas to keep lighter (dodge) to make a vision more like what our eyes saw. There are many other more advanced tricks from my darkroom days, but in this article, I will share the correct way to dodge and burn in our digital world and hopefully help you create stronger images.



*My workflow for burning and dodging an image is simple. I tweak the exposure slightly if needed, then export it to a 16-bit tiff file, (Smith 001) to a folder on my desktop. I then decide what I want to burn and how much.*

First, you need to capture in RAW. Then choose a RAW conversion software. Many folks like Lightroom and that will work just fine. I have used Kodak’s DPP when I created with their camera. I used Canon Digital Photo Professional (DPP) when I worked with the Canon system. I did this because their software was written in conjunction with their camera files and Lightroom, as good as it is, is still a third-party software in relation. Lightroom has many more bells and whistles than both the Canon and Kodak software (now obsolete), but the files did process a little cleaner with the native system. If you use Nikon, I always suggested Lightroom as their software was not great in my opinion. I have been creating with Sony for many years now and moved to a dedicated RAW conversion software, Capture One. It has since encompassed all brand formats and has been a game changer for my work. Whichever software you choose to use, the concept will be the same.

Hopefully, you captured the original image correctly, meaning your exposure was correct for the given scene. My workflow for burning and dodging an image is simple. I tweak the exposure slightly if needed, then export it to a 16 bit tiff file (ex: Smith 001) to a folder on my desktop. I then decide what I want to burn and how much. I use the exposure slider to

increase the exposure to my liking, then export that file as a 16-bit tiff file (Smith 001B) to the same folder. I may want some areas even darker. If so, I slide further and export again (Smith 001BB). Then I decide on areas I may want to see lighter. I slide the exposure to make those areas where I want them to be and export the file or files to the same folder (Smith 001D).

Now I have a few files of the same image but with different exposure values all in a folder on my desktop. After this, all of the files are opened in Photoshop, beginning with my original, or slightly tweaked, file. That is my base exposure. I usually burn first. To do this: click on the (Smith 001B) file with my move tool. Drag it onto the Original. Before letting go of the mouse or pen, press and hold the option key. Then, let go of the mouse or pen. This will perfectly register the files one on top of the other. You can see this on your layers pallet (which I suggest you keep open on your screen at all times). I like to work positively, so I hide that dark layer (Option>layer mask). Then, select a soft brush with zero hardness with white selected and paint back the dark information where needed. The white reveals the layer below and black hides the layer below. You can switch back and forth between them by clicking the “x” key. Why is this important? If you went too far or painted outside the lines for your burn, by switching to black, you can put it back.



Back in the darkroom, I used my hands or a piece of cardboard with a hole cut in it to let the light shine onto what I was burning. The amount of time determined the final density. Yes, I did this all in the dark with that faint light on the paper. If I burned too long, the paper was wasted and thrown in the trash. Now, not only do we have the ability to add and then erase, but we can do it in any opacity we desire. The opacity of your brush is determined on the tool option bar from 0-100, but to

*As opposed to the old darkroom burning days, now we have the ability to add and then erase and we can do it in any opacity we desire.*



speed things up, just press any number key and that will be your opacity. (1 equals 10%, 5 equals 50%, a fast 55 equals 55%). To make things even easier, your brush can change sizes on the fly as well. The bracket keys control the size. Left bracket reduces the brush size; right bracket increases the size. This allows you to burn in very fine detail areas or large, open areas.

When I am all done burning the areas I wanted darker, I flatten the image and drag the dodging file over the original. I hide that layer, (option – layer mask) and dodge with the same technique used for burning. When I’m happy, I flatten the file and move on to whatever else I needed to work on. By using this concept, you can add anything to your original, i.e. contrast, saturation, color temperature and more.

So some tips: First, you may ask, “Why a 16-bit tiff file?” There is way more information on a 16-bit file. As I said above, I like to work with a soft brush. The reason for a soft brush is so the edges of my burn blend better with the surrounding areas. The problem with an 8 bit file is that the transition areas do not hold enough information and many times will create radiation like bands those areas. The 16 bit file handles the transitions much better.

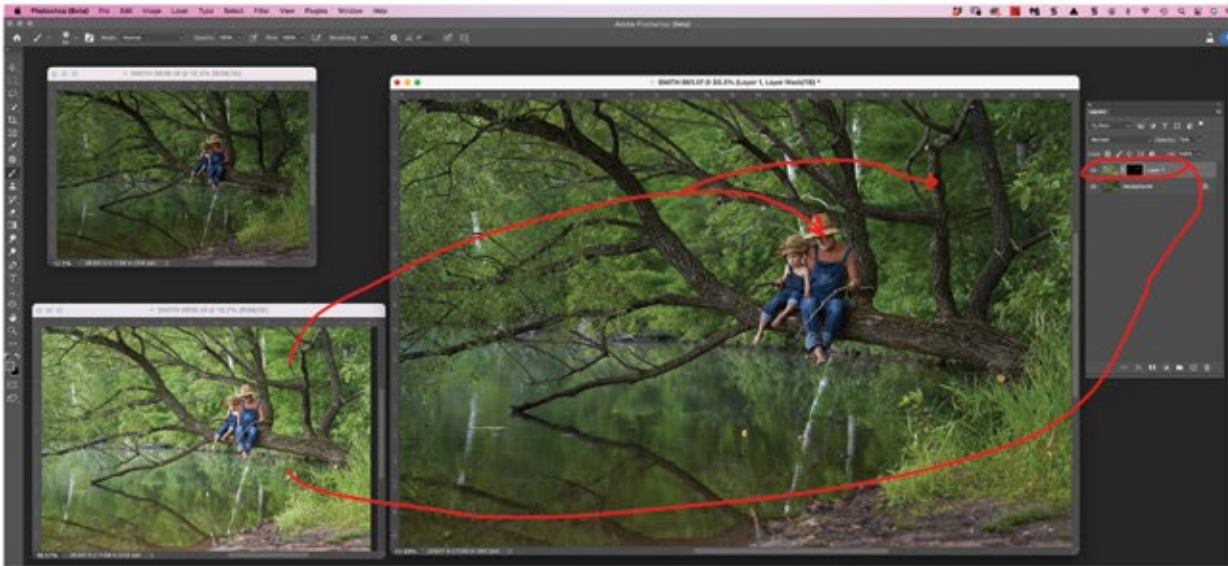
Second, I hear all the time, “I can do the same thing right in Photoshop with the burn tool, or by using a brush on multiply, or by using level or curves.” My answer: No, you can’t. It may seem like this will work, but Photoshop, as cool as it is, has no idea what image is in your creation. It knows 1s and 0s. Any time you try to darken a file in any way, Photoshop is just adding BLACK to your image. Any lightening will be adding WHITE. In some cases this works okay, but those colors on a detailed area will only contaminate the colors that were in the original file. That is why skin on a person turns RED when you burn in Photoshop without using files from your RAW capture. It is also why detail from a slightly overexposed wedding dress doesn’t magically show up when burning in Photoshop. That’s because it is not working with actual data from the scene. There is so much more we can pull from the RAW file and piece together to create a more powerful custom print.

There is an art to the physical part of using this concept, something that can’t be explained in text, but this is a beginning and now you have a concept you can grow on your own. With practice, you will develop skills to make this a speedy workflow and one in which results in a true custom print.

I will leave you with this: In my original training, it was stressed that, when looking at a print, nobody should be able to tell that anything was done to it. We shouldn’t see burn lines overlapping light areas and so on. We should just see a powerful image. The only time one should see a difference is if



Poor dodging techniques can degrade an image. Instead, use a layer mask where any work can be easily reversed and a 16 bit file which has more information for transition areas of a soft brush.



There is an art to the physical part of using this concept. One that can’t be explained in text, but this is a beginning and now you have a concept you can grow on your own.

you placed an original and a custom print side by side. If we do so, we had better see the transformation. Give it a try, you will be glad you did.



Carl Caylor began his career as a photo journalist and darkroom specialist. A beginning that would prove very beneficial to the new age of digital portraits in a Natural environment for both his guests and his students. He has shared his passion with photographers coast to coast in the USA, Canada, Mexico, and Korea. He is one of the most sought-after instructors in the country because of his “Hands-On” coaching approach. Learn more at: [www.photoimagesbycarl.net](http://www.photoimagesbycarl.net)

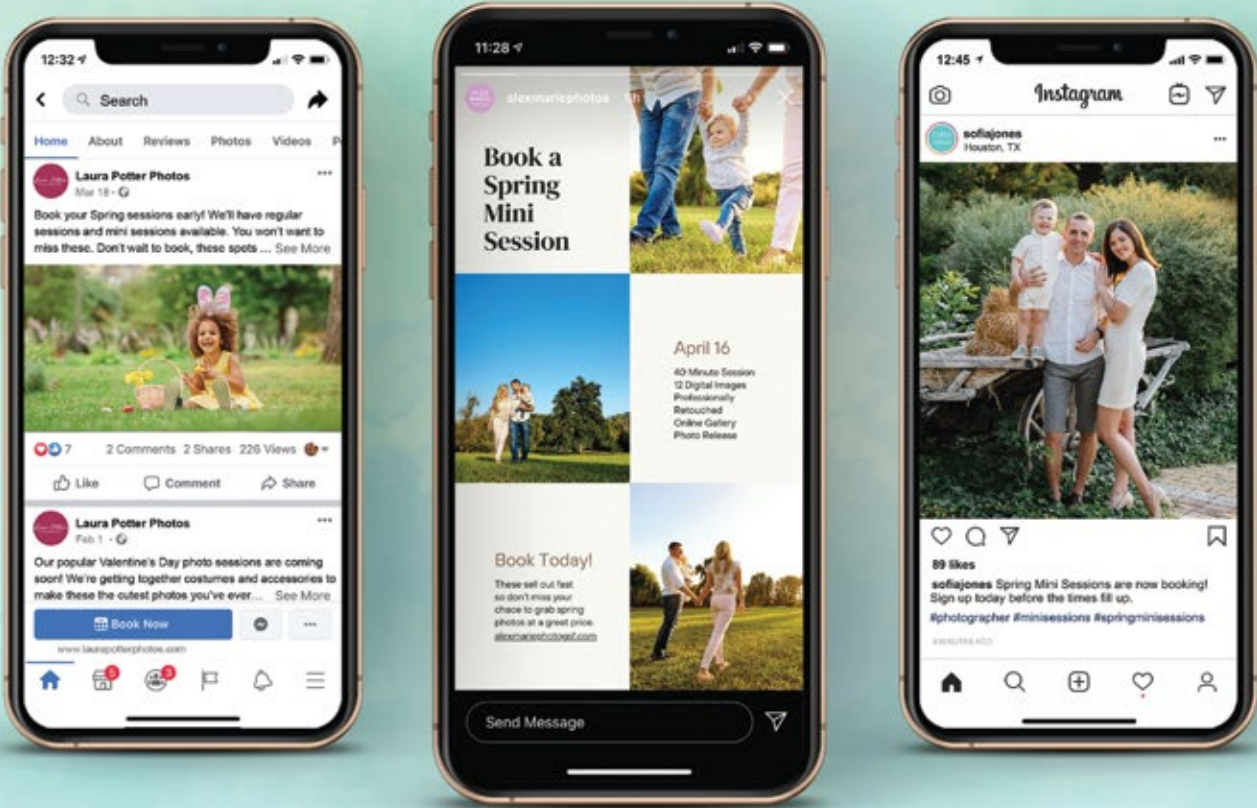
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