

Luminosity

The Doña Ana Photography Club Newsletter

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November 2019



Doña Ana Photography Club

November 2019

Serving the Community since 1955

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Photo Club Members Reach for the Stars at Spaceport America

by *Dave Brown*

On September 27, thirteen DAPC members met Spaceport America representative Charles Miller to trek out to Spaceport America. Although it was raining hard when we met it was clear and damp when we arrived at the spaceport just before dusk. Members gathered at a mock-up of the rocket-powered ship that will ferry people to space; we used the lightning storm as a dramatic backdrop.

After dark, we moved onto the huge concrete apron that surrounds the spaceport building. The building being brightly lit, much of the surrounding desert was illuminated. Looking east, away from the building, the storm was still providing its own lightning show.

Inside the hangar, we got to see *WhiteKnightTwo*, the carrier aircraft that will launch the suborbital

rocket-powered crewed spaceplane.

From there, it was back outside to set up cameras for Milky Way photos with the spaceship mock-up in the foreground. Surprisingly we could still see the light glow from Las Cruces. Members tried different exposures, swapped tips, did some light painting, borrowed lenses, and even took some selfies. The group called it quits around 11:00 pm, and we packed up and headed home. Click [here](#) for sample photos.

Editing Panel is a Success

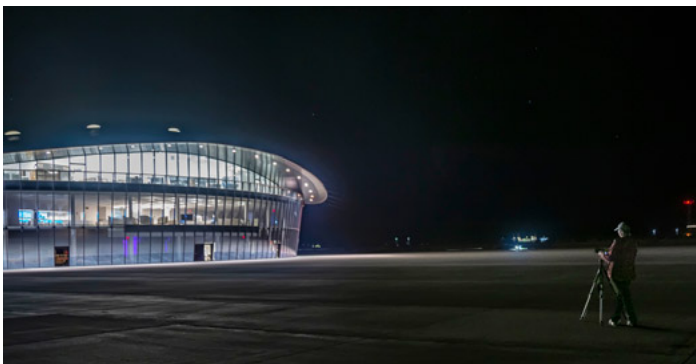
The October 1 meeting included a sequel to a program held earlier in the year. Three club members were given the same five unedited photos, and each was asked to come up with their own interpretation of how that photo could be best improved.

Debbie Hands, Seth Madell (in a repeat performance), and Dale Taylor all gave each of the photos their signature touches.

Despite working independently, each of the three editors found similar issues with all of the submitted photos. They differed in the methods they used to address those issues.

Of note, Debbie used Photoshop for her edits, Seth used Affinity Photo, and Dale relied exclusively on Lightroom to get the job done.

Check out some of the edits by clicking [here](#).



Kristi Dixon sets up for a shot [photo by Dave Brown]

Mark Your Calendar...

November 5, 2019 - 6:30 pm

Regular Meeting - DAPC
Cruces Creatives
205 East Lohman Avenue.; Las Cruces, NM

November 10, 2019

Submission Deadline for Photo of the Year competition
Send up to 3 JPG files to the [POY Mailbox](#)
More information by clicking [here](#).

November 16, 2019

Submission Deadline for Monthly Theme
"Faces - Real or Imagined"
Send to [Themes mailbox](#) to participate.

November 19, 2019 - 6:30 pm

Regular Meeting - DAPC
Cruces Creatives
205 East Lohman Avenue.; Las Cruces, NM

Astrophotography at Spaceport America

Doña Ana Photography Club members produce some fine exposures



Photo by Kristi Dixon



Photo by Debbie Hands



Photo by Dave Brown

More Photos from Spaceport America...



Photo by Linda Pinto

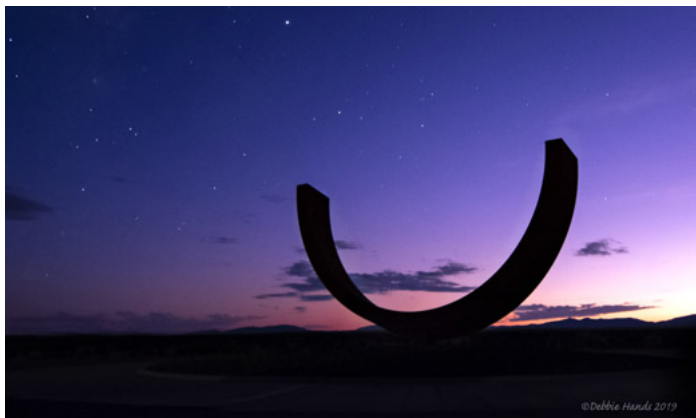


Photo by Debbie Hands

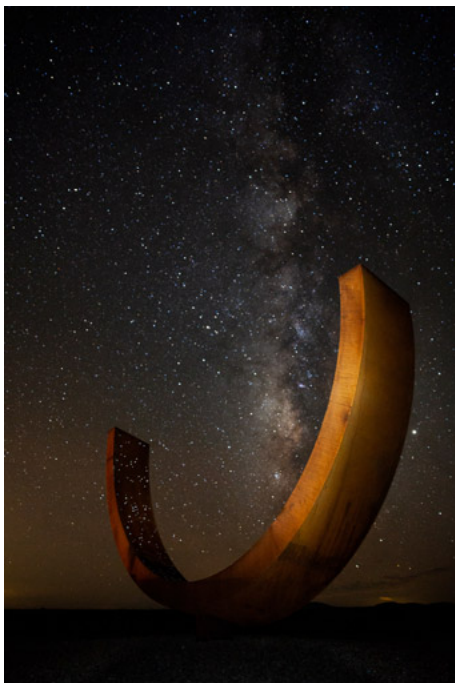


Photo by Anne Chase



Photo by Kelly Briarton (detail)



Photo by Kristi Dixon

Results of the Second Editing Panel
How the panelists handled two of the submitted photos

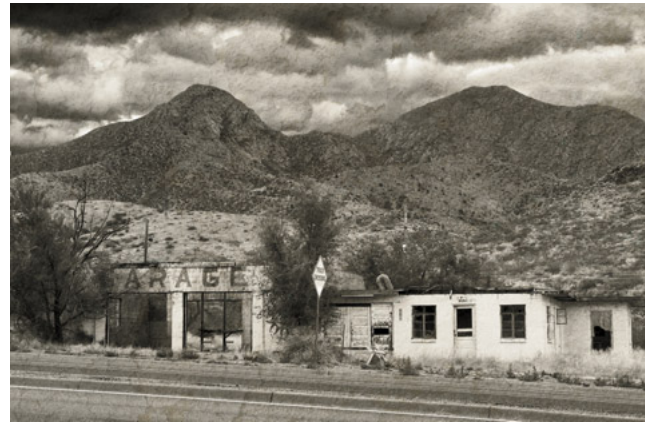
Originals



**Edits by
Debbie Hands**



**Edits by
Seth Madell**



**Edits by
Dale Taylor**



Solutions for Dodging and Burning

Dale Taylor's recent talk provided multiple methods to adjust a photo's tonality

by Dale Taylor

[On October 15, Dale Taylor's talk presented multiple methods for dodging and burning. -Editor]

Dodging and burning are tools for making localized exposure adjustments in an image. As such, any editing tool can be used as long as it (i) will adjust exposure; and (ii) can be controlled for the area in which it is applied.

The purposes of dodging and burning are twofold. First, the techniques can be used to lighten areas which are too dark, and darken areas which are too light. Second, in almost the opposite approach, dodging and burning can magnify shadow and highlight areas in order to provide an increased sense of depth and contour.

At the October 15 meeting, we covered a lot of material. I thought it might be a good idea to provide

a few notes to remind you about the techniques I covered. This might help when you want to dodge and burn your own images, or when you are looking for more information (such as a YouTube instructional video).

The techniques listed below are among those I covered at the last meeting. This is not an exhaustive list, as there are many ways to dodge and burn. Also, I have included notes about availability in Lightroom (LR) and Photoshop (PS); similar methods can be used in many of the editing applications available today, especially in those which handle multiple layers.

1) **Dodge and Burn Tools** (PS). These are round brushes with normal brush adjustments. They can be irreversible, so make a copy of the layer you are going to work on first. Be aware there may be a better way.

2) **Gradient Filter** (LR & PS). Useful when there is a long, gradual transition from dark to light to work on, and it can be defined as a straight line.

3) **Radial Gradient** (LR & PS) A round version of the above.

4) **Exposure Sliders** (LR) The blacks, whites, highlights, shadows and clarity sliders allow you to work on limited ranges of exposure in an image without affecting the whole image too much.

5) The **Color Panel** (LR) has sliders for luminance which allow you to adjust individual colors.

6) The **Adjustment Brush** (LR) can adjust exposure values and many other things. You can paint it onto the areas you want to adjust.

7) A **50% Grey Layer** with its blend mode set to Overlay (PS) allows you to paint with white or black onto a separate layer to lighten or darken the layer beneath. Keep flow to about 20% and use any brush shape you can find or make. Make fine adjustments with the layer opacity slider.

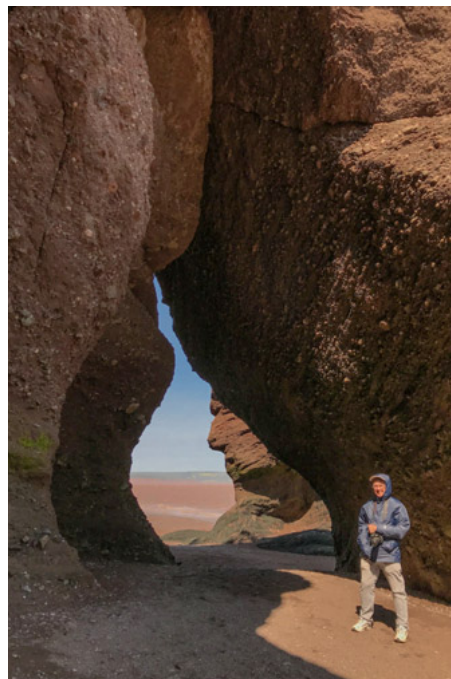
8) If you can select an area, you can make a **Mask**. Then you can use a PS Exposure Layer to adjust just that area.

At left are two versions of a photo from the recent editing panel talk. On the left is the original; on the right, one that has been dodged and burned.

That is just a sample of the options you'll discover. For more information check out these YouTube channels: Scott Kelby/ KelbyOne; PiXimperfect; Photoshop Training Channel; Terry White; Matt Kozlowski.



The original photo has areas that are too dark and areas that are too light.



Dodging and Burning have been applied to correct tonality

Processing Your Astrophotography & Milky Way Photos

by *Victor Gibbs*

I hope you got some great images of the Milky Way through the summer months. This article is about processing those images to best effect. There are a lot of variables to making the Milky Way outstanding in your photo, and a lot of ways to overcook them. Many software programs will help you to process your image to get you the best results, so I will stick with some of the basic things that are common to them.

White Balance

Depending on when you shoot your image, the Milky Way will take on different colors. Light pollution and the moon can also affect this color. Just after sunset, in a period called the Blue Hour, sky will be blue and there may be more ambient light on the horizon from the fading dusk (Figure 1: Windmill



Figure 1 - Windmill Blue Hour

Blue Hour). After the twilight, images will take on a red or purple color, with orange/yellow on the horizon from nearby towns (Figure 2: Windmill Night). Adjusting your White Balance to taste will help to make the image look natural. I tend to shift my images toward the blue end of the spectrum to get a pleasing effect. Adjusting individual color sliders can achieve the color for the horizon as well.

Noise Reduction

When images are brought into your software program in RAW (you are shooting in RAW, correct?), they look a little murky. There is a lot of data in there that needs to be adjusted. Adjusting the Noise Reduction and Details sliders will help to clean up the image. If you go too high on the noise reduction slider, the image will appear to smear, so be gentle. Tweezing noise from stars can also be tricky, so a little noise is ok.

One free software program that can help to reduce noise is Sequator for PC or Starry Landscape Stacker

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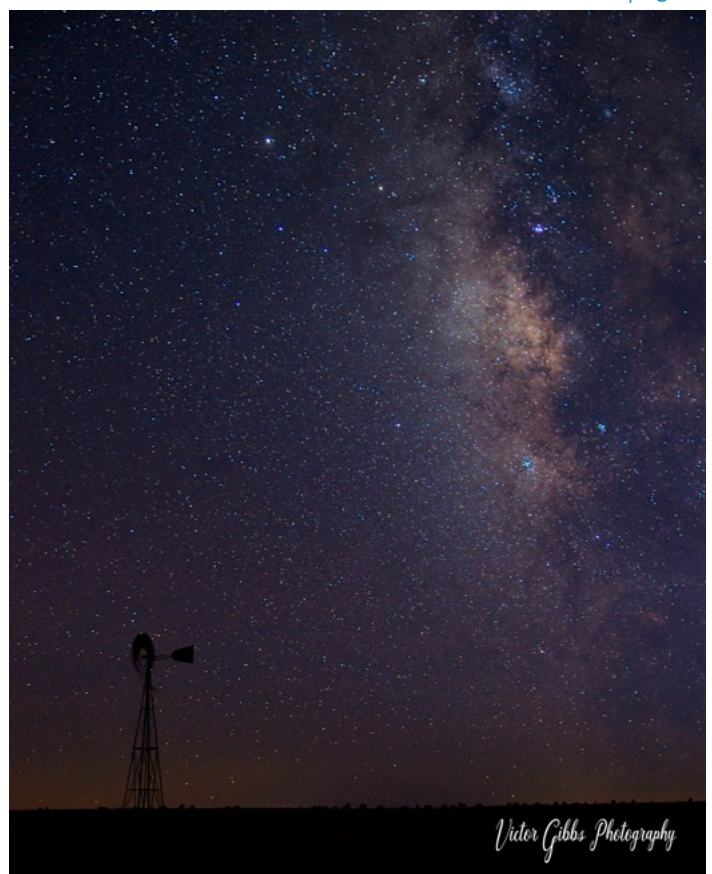


Figure 2 - Windmill Night



Figure 3 - Box Canyon Dam

for Mac. The goal here is to take several images at a high ISO in quick succession, then combine them together. Because of planetary motion, the process involves masking out the foreground to the horizon, to get the best sky image possible. The software then figures out what the area below the horizon should look like, and maps it back in. Because ISO noise is different in every image, having several images stacked together smooths out the noise. The image shot at Box Canyon Dam shows a clear starfield generated using Sequator (Figure 3: Box Canyon Dam).

Single Images, Blending, and Composites

A Milky Way image can be captured in a single shot. An interesting foreground or horizon of a mesa, tree line, or old car can be shown in silhouette to great effect. A small light in the foreground can be used on a low setting to great effect to gently illuminate the subject without blowing out the Milky Way.

If your software program has layers, two shots can be processed separately, one for the foreground to the horizon, and one for the sky. Better results are generally obtained by shooting the two images in the field at the same time, then blended together. If you add two images that were not shot at the same time, this is a Composite, which can be used to artistic effect, but the horizon and sky may not mesh together well (Figure 4: Ray's Liquor store).

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Image Icons

Historic and Inspiring Photos that Evoke an Event or an Era

The Weeping Frenchman - Photographer Unknown - September, 1940

This photo, nicknamed "The Weeping Frenchman," was taken in Marseilles, France in September 1940. It first appeared in print in the March 3, 1941 issue of Life magazine.

The French Army had been decimated by the Nazi blitzkrieg in the six weeks prior to this photo. The collapse of France was unexpected and stunning, as the French army was considered to have been the strongest and most powerful in Europe

The photo was taken in Marseilles (in the south of France), not in Paris as has been widely claimed, as the French regimental flags were marched through the streets following the country's surrender to Nazi Germany.



Channel Surfing – Part Five

Yes, there really are practical uses for Alpha Channels

by *Seth Madell*

This is the final chapter of our discussion of image channels. In this article, we will finally look at the practical, everyday use of alpha channels. This final installment has always been our goal; that is, how does the casual photo editor start making use of alpha channels in ways that matter?

Saving a Selection

We introduced the idea of saving selections in the second part of this series. A selection, as we noted, is really a sort of temporary alpha channel. Some of the pixels in our image are “active” (selected) and some are not. If we were to represent this active/inactive state with a greyscale alpha channel, we would see that the active pixels are white and the inactive (unselected) pixels are black. This is what we would expect, since once part of an image is selected whatever we do next only affects the active pixels.

However, selections are temporary. Once we deselect the selection, that delineation between active and inactive pixels is gone. And, anyone who has labored to make a great selection knows what it’s like to accidentally choose “Deselect” and lose all that work.

Photo editing software that lets you manage channels will also allow you to save selections. Doing this creates a new alpha channel. Once you’ve done this, you can “deselect” and know that your work is safe – the selection is stored as additional information that is more permanent.

Perhaps you’ve worked hard to select the sky in your photo, in order to help with a sky substitution. But you’re not done yet – the selection just isn’t perfect. And, it’s time for bed, or dinner, or anything else. What do

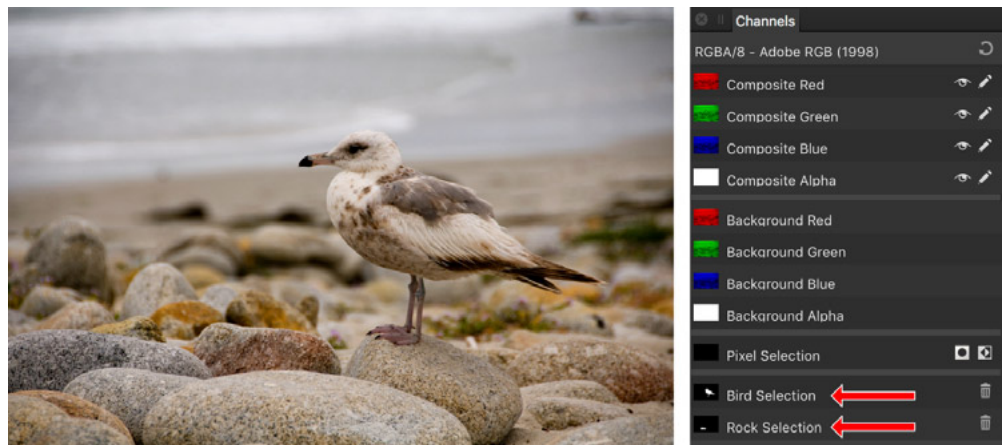
We’re going to avoid math, we’re not going to get too very nerdy, and we’re not going to discuss techniques that only three people on the planet would ever use. No, the goal is to make alpha channels accessible to everyone.

And, I’ll repeat what I’ve said before: alpha channels (selections and masks) are the difference between good editing and great editing.

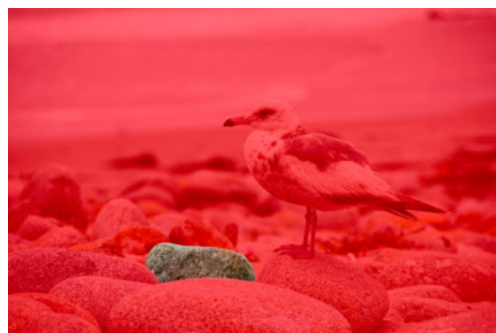
you do? Save the selection as an alpha channel so that you can continue working on it later.

Perhaps you’ve selected your subject (e.g., the face of the person in your portrait) and you know you’re going to want to make some adjustments to it, such as color correction, changing contrast, or adjusting tonality. Save your selection as an alpha channel, and you can use it multiple times for future adjustments.

You might even want to save selections of multiple areas of your photo. The photo below has two



This bird photo has two saved selections – the bird and a rock



The rock selection (with Quick Mask)



The bird selection (with Quick Mask)

[continued on page 10](#)

selections saved – one of just the bird, and one of just a nearby rock. You might want to use those selections for masking purposes, or to apply adjustments to

Compositing Layers

When photographers first start editing photos, they usually learn about masks in the context of merging two pixel layers. In this setting, one can “cut out” part of one photo and “paste” it into another. In general, this is the basis for everything from sky substitutions to the more mundane “put Brad Pitt’s face on my boyfriend’s body” type of change. Merging two or more pixel layers is known as compositing, since the image which results from it is a composite of the various pictures which went into its creation.

Compositing pixel layers will involve creating a layer stack of 2 or more photos. When you create a mask on the top layer, you can let the bottom layer peek through. So, if I put a landscape with a plain sky on top and a beautiful sky on the bottom I need to create a mask that will hide the sky on the top layer so that my beautiful sky (on the bottom layer) can show through.

The most straightforward way to do this is to work on the top layer, and make a careful selection of the sky. You must be careful to avoid including things like trees and their branches, architectural details on the rooftops, and other things that poke up above the horizon in your photo. Once you have that selection created, first invert it (so that everything BUT the sky is selected) and then click on the “Create a New Mask” button. This creates a “layer mask” attached to the top layer; it is an Alpha channel with the sky showing up as black (since it was not selected and, therefore, not active) and everything else showing up as white.

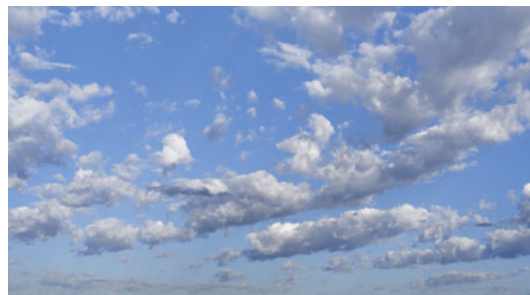
The result of all this will to hide the area corresponding to the black parts of the mask (the sky) and to reveal the white areas. If you have already placed the more beautiful sky on the bottom of the layer

those areas individually. You might also want to add those selections together to apply a filter (e.g., sharpening) to just those areas while excluding the rest of the photo.

stack, you should be able to see it in the areas that are hidden on the top layer.

Note, also, that you can move the bottom layer around (to position the new sky in the best way) and you can perform adjustments on the foreground and the sky separately, since they are on separate layers.

This type of compositing has the benefit of being non-destructive. Anytime you want to reverse course, you can just turn off the visibility of the mask layer, and prevent the top layer from having any transparent pixels. You can also edit the mask later, in case it was not perfect.



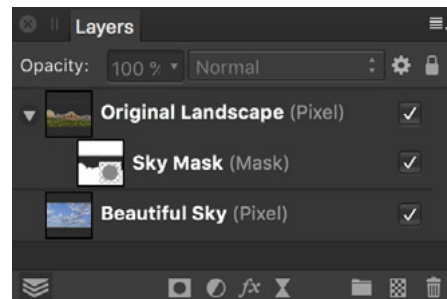
A landscape with a boring sky (left) and a more dramatic sky (right) for substitution



The original landscape with its sky masked

The completed sky substitution

At the right, you’ll see the Layers panel for this composited photo (taken from Affinity Photo). The landscape photo is on top, and there is a layer mask attached to it. Below that, there is a second pixel layer called Beautiful Sky. The mask on the top layer allows parts of the lower layer to be seen.



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Applying Adjustments & Filters Locally

Compositing pixel layers is the first step in understanding masks. It is a reasonably straightforward way to visualize just what's going on. It is the digital equivalent of creating a collage.

Once the idea of “revealing and concealing” parts of a pixel layer make sense to you, it's time to expand your horizons. Why not apply the same method to adjustments and filters? After all, if you can recolor, blur, saturate, and change exposure in a photo, why shouldn't you be able to do those things just to a small area of the photo?

Just what does that mean? It means applying a mask to an adjustment layer, or to a live filter (or, in Photoshop talk, a “Smart Filter”). While an adjustment is a simple change to a pixel layer (e.g., make everything brighter; or, make everything green) attaching a mask to an adjustment allows us to limit that change to a selected area.

Maybe seeing this in action will help. At right is a photo of a mom photographing her daughter near the Pacific Ocean. A selection was made of everything BUT the mom and her daughter (i.e., the background only) and an alpha channel was created. The alpha channel was then used to mask (i) an adjustment layer that desaturated and lightened the photo; and (ii) a filter layer that added a Gaussian blur. The end result is that the photo is desaturated, lightened, and blurred, but that these changes were applied only to the background, and not to the subjects.

Sometimes it's easier to use a paint brush to mask an adjustment. In order to do this, we add an adjustment layer and then add a completely black mask to the adjustment. The black mask completely obliterates the visibility of the adjustment (since a black alpha layer renders the layer to which it is attached completely transparent). Then, we paint on the mask with a white paint brush in order to selectively reveal the adjustment only where we want it.

The next set of images shows this process in action. The first image is a photo of a statue. The second image is the same photo, but a blue “recolor” adjustment has been added. In the third image, two things have happened: first, a completely black mask has been applied to the adjustment (which has hidden the blue recoloration completely); and second, a white paint brush has been used to paint on the recolor adjustment's mask. The blue recolor adjustment is revealed in areas where the mask has been rendered white.



Original



Recolor adjustment



Masked adjustment

Masks Based on a Color Selection

Sometimes a mask based on a specific color might be helpful. You might want to pump up the brightness or the saturation of a specific color without affecting other colors. You might want to change one color to another, without affecting the other colors in the

photo. You might want to darken, or sharpen, or reduce noise, or any of a dozen other operations, and limit your action to a single color.

You might want to start with the Red, Green, and

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The original mom and daughter photo



The alpha channel omits the subjects



The photo with masked adjustments

Blue color channels for your selection. Or, you might want to use whatever variant of “Select Specific Color...” exists in your software. In Affinity Photo, this

Luminosity Masks

Imagine you created a greyscale version of your photograph, and imagine that you turned that greyscale image into a mask. The greyscale version of the photo varies in tonality from black (where the photo is darkest) to grey to white (where the photo is lightest). Once this greyscale image becomes a mask, the light areas are whiter than the dark areas, meaning that the mask allows more visibility of the light areas and less visibility of the dark areas. This is a Luminosity Mask, since it assigns variable opacity of pixels based on their degree of brightness.

If you were to invert that mask, you would have one which favored the darker areas and caused the lighter areas to become increasingly opaque.

Luminosity masks are frequently assigned not to pixel layers but to adjustment layers. In other words, if I want to use a Curves layer to add contrast, but only

is called “Select Sampled Color...” and in Photoshop a very powerful panel called, simply, “Color Range” can help select specific colors from your image. A mask based on a color selection helps limit your edits.

want to do this to the highlights of my image, I can create a Curves adjustment and use a luminosity mask that favors highlights to limit the adjustment’s effects to only the lighter pixels.

Conversely, I might want to increase the exposure of the darker areas of my photo, without affecting the lighter areas. Using an Exposure adjustment and masking it with a luminosity mask that favors the dark areas is one way to accomplish this.

Consider the photo of Bryce Canyon below. The highlights are nice, and shouldn’t get any brighter. But I’d like to lighten up the darker areas and bring out the details in the shadows. I can apply a Levels adjustment along with an inverted Luminosity mask (that favors the dark areas). This lets my Levels adjustment affect only the dark areas, effectively leaving the light areas alone.



The original image



Levels adjustment applied



Inverted luminosity mask



Levels applied only to Darks

Other Advanced Masks

Any pixels in your photo that can be selected can be turned into an alpha channel. And that alpha channel can be used as a mask.

One of my favorite advanced masking techniques is a Saturation mask. The pixels in a photo are selected based on their saturation; the most saturated colors become the whiter portions of the mask, while the less saturated colors are blacker. The mask that results from a selection based on saturation is a greyscale image, similar in some ways to a luminosity mask.

However, a saturation mask is used for different purposes.

Typically, saturation masks are used to control changes in saturation made by adjustment layers (such as a Curves layer or an HSL adjustment). These adjustments can be attached to over- and under-saturated photos.

Applying this mask to an adjustment layer in an over-saturated image lets me lower the saturation

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Channel Surfing: [continued from page 12](#)

more for the already saturated pixels, while protecting the less saturated pixels from going grey. And

Finally, it's Over!

So now our journey is complete. We've explored the Red, Green, and Blue color channels and how they come together to define the color of each pixel. We've introduced the Alpha channel, and seen how it represents opacity and transparency in our photos.

Along the way, we've discussed the concept of

Editor's Note: The entire 5-part series on Image Channels has been compiled into a single PDF file, and can be found in the Resources section of the club's website. Access the web page by clicking [here](#).

Astrophotography Processing: [continued from page 8](#)

One fun free software program is Starstax, which makes composites of stars as they streak across the sky. The goal here is to take a lot of images, then process them to taste, then import them into Starstax. The images are all combined into a single image, which can then be composited to a foreground shot (Figure 5: River Starstax Composite).



Figure 4 - Ray's Liquor Store

Final Thoughts

This is a complex process, and each image requires a different level of adjustment. Be patient and experiment. Numerous resources exist on the internet, through Youtube guides and other written articles on Milky Way processing. Below are links I found to be useful in learning to process my photos. Good luck!

Techniques...

[The Ultimate Guide to Editing a Milky Way Photo](#)
[How to Process Milky Way Photos in Lightroom](#)

inverting the mask and using it when adjusting an under-saturated image lets me raise the saturation more for pixels that are less saturated themselves.

opacity in areas of our photos and its editing layers, as well as the nature of selections.

Most importantly, we've tied all this into the concept of masks. Masks are perhaps the most powerful tool in your photo editing bag of tricks. Learn to use them, and reap the rewards.

[Into the Night Photography](#)

Software...

[Starry Landscape Stacker](#)

[Sequator](#)

[Starstax](#)



Figure 5 - River Starstax Composite



Excursions

New Mexico Photo Opportunities

November is for *Dia de los Muertos*

by Anne Chase

Around the same time as Halloween, *Dia de los Muertos* (Day of the Dead) is celebrated in old Mesilla.

This is a celebratory day, not to be confused with Halloween. Day of the Dead is about celebrating the lives of loved ones who have died. If you engage with the people who have set up altars, they will share their memories of family and friends. Talk to them about the photos and mementos they are sharing.

People will dress in all kinds of costumes however, and love to have their pictures taken. Do not feel shy about asking if you may take their photos. They will be flattered.

A 50 mm lens is suffi-

cient, but a zoom lens in the 70-200 mm range will give you more flexibility. Use larger apertures to help blur the background and isolate your subject. A flash will give you catch light in people's eyes and will be useful in the evening.

This year, *Dia de los Muertos* will be celebrated on

Saturday, November 2 from 12:00 noon until 7:00 pm and on Sunday, November 3 from 12:00 noon until 5:00 pm.

Altars will be set up on the Mesilla Plaza along with vendors selling souvenirs. On Saturday evening, there is usually dancing and music.

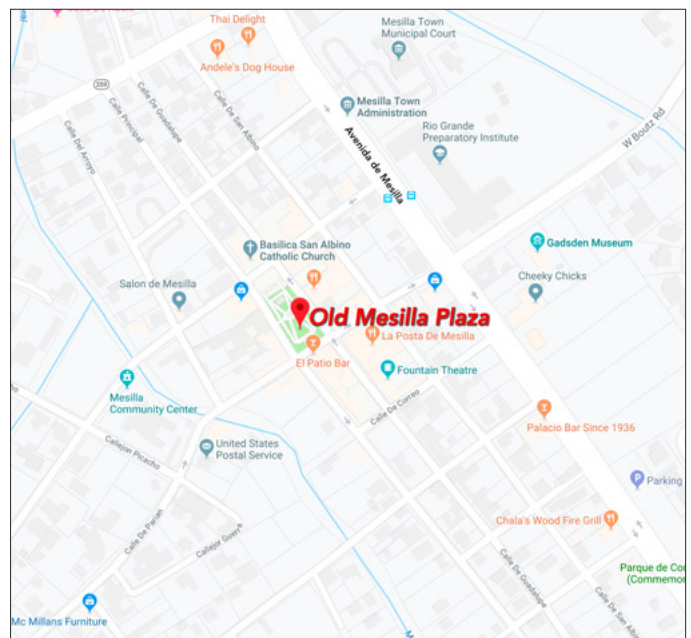
A word of caution about parking. Do not block driveways. You *will* be towed and the lot is not open to you on the weekend.



Photo by Anne Chase



Photo by Seth Madell



Photo/Photographer of the Year Competition 2019

Submission Deadline is November 10 – There's only a little time left to get your masterpiece entered for this year's contest

The 2019 *Photo of the Year* contest is upon us, and the deadline for submission of photos is November 10, 2019. No late entries will be accepted. Winners will be announced at the January 7, 2020 meeting. Send your submissions to the Photo of the Year mailbox, at poy@daphotoclub.org.

This has always been the highlight of the year for our club, and it brings out the best in everyone's skills.

There isn't much time left to get your photos in, but you can still slip in under the deadline!

Rules for the Photo of the Year Contest

- Photos must not have been submitted in the 2018 *Photo of the Year* competition, but photos entered in our quarterly print contests are eligible. There will be two categories: Color and Monochrome (grayscale or shades of one color).
- The image file name must consist of: the photographer's name and the photo's title (e.g.,: *John Smith-Taos Sunset.jpg*. Please don't use anything like "Untitled" as a title; judges will see the title, but not your name, so your titles should be unique.
- No watermark, copyright, or other visible information that could identify you may be part of the image.
- Images will be delivered to the judges with maximum dimensions of 1920 pixels horizontally and 1080 pixels vertically. If your image does not fit

within these dimensions it will be resized at your risk. If this is confusing, please ask for help.

- By submitting an entry, you are consenting to it being used (with credit) for photo club publicity.

How We Determine the Winners

- The image receiving the highest total score from our judges will be named the Photo of the Year and will be featured in club publicity and local media.
- The photographer with the highest total score for all three Photo of the Year submissions (50% weighting) plus all three 2019 Quarterly Print Contests (50% weighting) will be named the 2019 Photographer of the Year.

Rules for the Ribbons

- Entrants will be placed into two categories. Creating two separate classes for entrants allows everyone to compete with their peers. Class A is for members who have won at least one blue or two red ribbons in the last 5 Photo of the Year competitions. Class B is everyone else.
- Ribbons will be awarded to the top third of all entries within the following groups: Class A Monochrome, Class A Color, Class B Monochrome, Class B Color.
- Within each class, ribbons will be evenly split between red and blue ribbons.

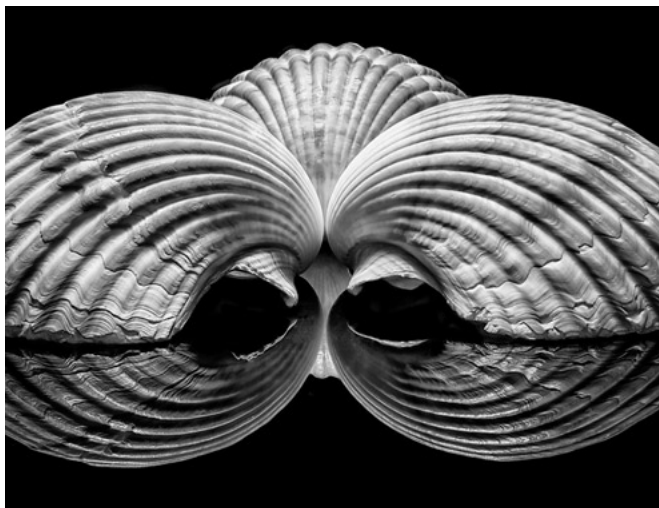


Photo of the Year 2018
Symmetry by Carl Maier

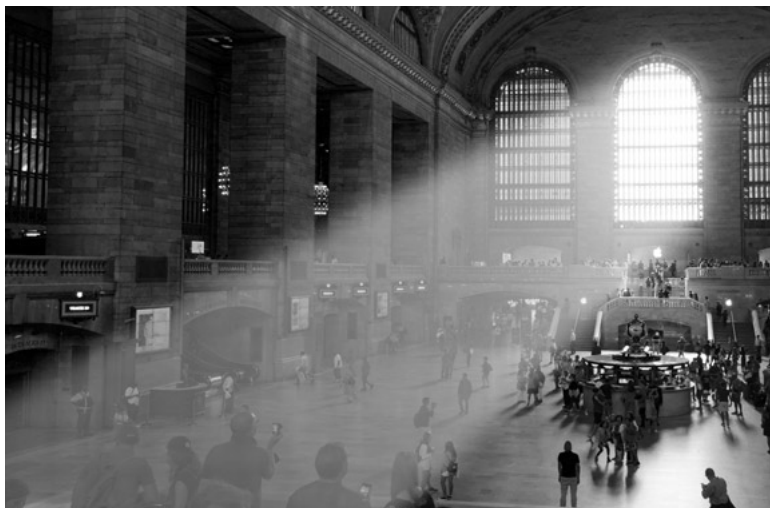


Photo of the Year 2017
Grand Central Terminal by Seth Madell



October Theme Presentation

Stormy

by Seth Madell

Mother Nature is an awesome force and when she puts on a show there's nothing quite like it. Thunderstorms and other intense weather events give us the opportunity for powerful photos, but a few tips are definitely in order.

Know What to Expect

Before you chase a storm, check the [Weather Channel](#) or the [Storm Prediction Center](#) for forecasts.. Storms are inherently dangerous, so information will not only improve your photos, but you'll be more likely to live to show them off.

Know How to Travel Light

Keep your gear to the essentials. Take your camera, a wide-angle and normal lens (or a good zoom that includes both), a tripod, and microfiber cloths to clean your lens. Consider a pair of cargo pants with deep pockets to contain it all.

Protect Your Camera and Yourself

You're probably going to get wet, and your camera could also. Keep it dry – even a heavy plastic trash bag can give you inexpensive protection. Always put a

UV or clear filter on your lens. Storms blow things around; let flying debris break a filter, not your lens.

Don't risk your own life. Lightning, especially, can kill you instantly. Keep your distance from a thunderstorm – at least 6-10 miles.

Shoot Raw

Shooting Raw gives you better control of white balance, and the ability to increase or decrease shadows and highlights while maintaining quality. Raw lets you show the world the drama you just witnessed.



Winter??
by Til Zimmerman

This month's presentation included 34 images submitted by 12 members. Most photos depicted scenes before, after, and during storms – often in the distance.

Next month's theme is *Faces – Real or Imagined*. Members should submit up to three images using the theme as your guide. Send them to Kristi Dixon at the [Themes mailbox](#). Each photo should be in JPG format, and its file size should not exceed 2MB. Dimensions should be no larger than 1920 pixels wide and 1080 pixels tall.

There is no theme presentation in December. The entire schedule of themes for 2019 can be found online [here](#).



Ice Storm by Dave Brown



Sunset Over Fajita Butte by Anne Chase

Constructive Edits

Highlights and features of photo editing software for more interest and best results



Photographers shooting architectural images are familiar with a type of distortion called **keystoning**. The keystone effect happens when a vertical surface is photographed with the camera pointed up. Because the camera's sensor is not parallel to the vertical surface, the surface (for instance, a skyscraper shot from the sidewalk) appears to be falling backward; the sides of the building converge inward and the top of the building appears much smaller and farther away than one might expect. This effect is made more prominent when using a wide angle lens.

[As an aside, this effect is not called parallax. Parallax occurs when an object is viewed from two different locations, and foreground objects do not line up with background objects in the same way. Hold your finger at arm's length and look at it with only your right eye, then with only your left. You will see that the background seems to shift. The most commonly identified source of parallax in photography occurred with rangefinder cameras, where composition was not done through the lens.]

Fixing the keystone effect requires a filter in post-processing software such as Photoshop, Affinity Photo, and others. Typically called a "Perspective Filter," this edit allows the photographer to alter the relationships between vertical and horizontal planes within the image. The underlying "grid" of the image is distorted so as to compensate for the distortion in the original image, as shot.

The included images (*courtesy of unsplash.com*) show some modest keystoning of the Brooklyn Bridge, and then show the Perspective Filter in Affinity Photo in the process of performing a correction of that sense of falling backward.



Note that our eyes actually expect some keystone effect to be evident when we look up at a skyscraper or other large, vertical structure. It is easy to go overboard with the correction. It is not necessary to make the object's sides perfectly vertical; in fact, leaving a bit of convergence may make the photo appear more natural.

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Educational Opportunity

Paul Ratje is the instructor for a course in Mobile Photography. The course is sponsored by Doña Ana Community College, and is open to the public. There are three scheduled class dates – November 14, 16, and 19 – and the



class will be meeting on the East Mesa Campus of DACC. Students will learn to harness the power of their mobile phones and software, helping them to create professional quality images with a smart device.

More information can be found on the [DACC website](#) and on the [instructor's website](#).



The Shooting Menu

A discussion of camera functions & shooting techniques

Here's a pretty common problem. You're taking a photo outside, maybe a portrait or a photo of some object nearby. But, the subject is facing away from the light. Maybe it's a sunset, maybe it's simply that the overhead sun illuminates the back of your subject's head. Whatever the specifics are, the ambient light is fine but your subject is in the shadow. Do you expose for the background and get your subject only in silhouette? Do you expose for your subject but blow out the background? Wouldn't it be nice if you could have it all? Enter **fill flash**.

Fill flash, in its simplest form, lets a photographer expose for the ambient light and then add some light from a different source to "fill" the under-exposed areas that are otherwise backlit.

You can do this with an off-camera flash in order to get great lighting and great shadows, like you would inside a studio. But it's simple and straightforward to use fill flash with either the built-in flash on your camera body or with a speedlight attached directly to your camera's hot shoe.

How to do it? Here's some easy steps.

First, turn the flash off and set up your shot. Try to leave the ISO at 400 or less, and make sure that the shutter speed is quicker than your maximum flash sync. That usually means either $\frac{1}{200}$ or $\frac{1}{250}$ sec. Make a note of the aperture, shutter speed, and ISO.

Turn your camera to Manual mode. (Don't be scared. Even if you never use manual mode in any other situation, it's a great way to use Fill Flash. Try it - just this once.) Dial in your settings.

Now, turn on your flash. Most recent DSLR and



The same backlit photo without fill flash (left) and with fill flash (right) [image courtesy MiZe via Wikipedia]

Mirrorless camera systems will let you adjust your flash's power output. Sometimes you'll do this on the flash unit itself; sometimes (especially if you're using the camera's built-in flash) you'll do this in the camera body. What you're trying to do is diminish the power of the flash so that it doesn't overpower the ambient light; you just want to supplement the light to get rid of the shadows on your subject.

Leave the flash mode on TTL (or iTTL, or eTTL – it's basically all the same here). This lets your camera judge the proper amount of light your flash supplies. Adjust the "Flash Compensation" to either -2 or -3 EV (sometimes you'll see the setting noted as 1/2, 1/4, 1/8, and so forth). Just make sure that the flash is at something other than full power.

Then, fire away. With any luck, you'll get your subject and the background both lit properly.

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activities has always been Horseback Jousting, so come prepared for some action photography.

DAPC Holiday Dinner

The annual DAPC Holiday Dinner is scheduled for Tuesday evening, December 3, 2019 at 6:00 pm. The dinner will be held at Lescombes Winery, which is the new name for the St. Clair Winery (same location and management – just a new name).

Like last year, members will be able to choose from 4-5 entree selections off the main menu. Members will be responsible for their own payments.



Sign-up will occur at a club meeting soon. More info to follow as the date gets closer!

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Announcements...

Upcoming Club Presentations

On November 5, Rob Peinert will speak about photographic composition and creativity, as well as presenting an overview of our annual Boot Camp.

At the November 19 meeting, Nirmal Khandan will talk about *Photographing Birds*. Also, the Theme presentation – *Faces, Real or Imagined* – and Anne Chase's latest installment of *Where to Shoot...* are on the schedule.

There are no scheduled meetings in December. The first meeting for 2020 will be on Tuesday, January 7. Until then, enjoy the Holidays!

Photo of the Year Competition

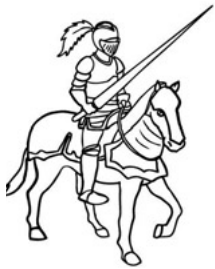
Submission deadline for the 2019 Photo of the Year competition is November 10. More info [here](#).

Photo Opportunities

The annual *Dia de los Muertos* celebration will be held in Mesilla Plaza on November 1, 2 and 3. Featuring altars, Day of the Dead artists, along with lots of food, music, and dancing, this is always an enjoyable festival and brings with it a plentitude of photographic opportunities. Look for the dancers in their multi-colored dresses and traditional poses. The Dia de los Muertos celebration is free to the public.



The *Las Cruces Renaissance Arts Faire*, another annual event, will be held on November 2 and 3 in Young Park. There is an entry fee of \$10 per person, and this entitles you to participate in one of the largest cultural events in Southern New Mexico. There are artists and crafts booths, entertainment galore, and plenty of food. One of the favorite



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About the Cover...

Photographer	Ryan Korpi
Name of Photo	Peekaboo with a Timber Wolf
Date Taken	March 15, 2014
Photo Location	La Verendrye Wildlife Preserve Quebec, Canada
Camera & Lens	Nikon D800 Sigma 50-500 mm Zoom
Shooting Info	f/6.3, 1/250 second
Additional Info	The cover photo is cropped from the original landscape orientation.

All photographs remain the copywritten property of the individuals noted, and should not be used without specific permission from the photographer.



About the Photo Club

The Doña Ana Photography Club is a group of photographers and other people interested in photography. Our meetings offer technical presentations, friendly suggestions for improving your photos, networking, and other activities for a wide spectrum of photographers and abilities.

Visitors are always welcome to our monthly meetings and programs, which are designed to improve photographic skills at all levels. We meet on the first and third Tuesdays of each month (except December). Our meetings are held at Cruces Creatives; 205 E. Lohman Avenue; Las Cruces, NM. Meetings begin at 6:30 pm and last about 2 hours.

Visit our website at: www.daphotoclub.org



DAPC is a proud member of the Photographic Society of America. We encourage you to consider becoming an individual member of PSA. For more information, please visit their website at psa-photo.org and see what they have to offer.

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