Calendar for March 2008

12 Pictorial Competition	Judge: Roman Kurywczak
19 Nature Competition	Judge: Phil Echo
26 Program Brian Szabo	"Shoot the Best Image Possible"

From the Editor

Spring is in the air I saw the first crocus blooming in the garden today.

On the very next page you will find an article written by Vinnie Kempf about our sponsor program and there is also a list of our new members and their sponsors. We have been trying to make this program work but it never really worked out as planned. Please make an effort to meet each other, it would make our hobby much more enjoyable.

In this issue is also a very technical article written by George Garbeck about sharpening. This article is not for everybody. You need the latest version of Photoshop or Lightroom to make use of it.

The rest of this issue deals heavily with print competitions.

Last month's issue had some problems with totals score listings, that was the fault of your editor. Sorry if it caused some unnecessary excitement.

Dieter

Happy

And

Connie's Pick of the Month

Lion Fish by Marjorie Forrest

PSA
Photographic
Society of
America

Ridgewood Camera Club

Your Sponsor
By Vinnie Kempf

When you become a member of the Ridgewood Camera Club a more experienced member volunteers to become your sponsor. The function of the sponsor is very simple, it is to acclimate you to the club and to make you feel at home. The sponsor will introduce themselves to you at the first general meeting after your have become a club member. After that it is up to you to use your sponsor as much as you need for anything concerning the club. If you forget who your sponsor is there is a Sponsors page in the Members Only section of the RCC website. You can also find their contact information by going to the Membership List page of the website. Feel free to send them an email or give them a phone call if you have a question. Your sponsor may not know the answer to your question but they will sure know the right member to address the issue. We have a lot of "experts" in the club that are more than willing to help you as you learn more about photography and the club.

The following is a list of new members and their sponsors not previously listed in the Focal Plane.

Mark Beerman _____ Camille La PlacaPost
Rose Becker _____ Alyce Parseghian
Peter Brannigan _____ Richard Braun
Martin Joffe _____ Chick Chakarian
Louis Kalman _____ Laurie Spina
Stephen Mantrom_____ Chick Chakarian
John Paulyson_____ Stanley Kantor
Dick Stanton_____ Joe Placer
Chew Wong _____ Bun Chan

Congratulations to Jerry Fornarotto!
Jerry has been awarded the PSA Gold Medal for his image "Reddish Egret Strike". Jerry entered this image into the San Antonio International. The judging was February 16th. This was a PSA exhibition, sanctioned by the Electronic Imaging Division, aka EID. Jerry has been actively competing in PSA Exhibitions for two years and this is his fourth PSA Gold Medal

Sharpen Your Sharpening Skills
## Capture Sharpening in Camera Raw & Lightroom
By George Garbeck

We've all know by now that digital camera sensors produce images that are not quite as sharp as film images. So it has been necessary early in the digital workflow to correct for this inherent softness by applying some form of what is called capture sharpening. This is different from the sharpening that is made near the end of the workflow after an image is sized for final production (projection, print, or web).

The conventional wisdom up until now has been to refrain from applying these early sharpening adjustments in Camera Raw and instead do this initial step in Photoshop. With the advent of the newer versions of Camera Raw (4.1) and Light-room (1.3), however, the much-improved sharpening controls they contain are so superior to Photoshop's unsharp mask that is now a good idea to do capture sharpening before bringing the image into Photoshop.

These new controls give us much more precision in how much sharpening we want and exactly where we wish to apply it. Also, these adjustments are applied directly to the luminance channel so this removes the need to do several extra steps that were formerly necessary in Photoshop to eliminate the possibility of color artifacts. The camera raw sharpening controls also have the added advantage of being non-destructive, meaning we can come back to an image at a later date and alter or remove the amount of sharpening we had originally applied.

Let's take a look at these sharpening tools and find out how to use them. The first problem we encounter is finding them. Don't search for the words 'Sharpen' or even 'Unsharp'. In the seeming infinite capacity of software producers to confuse us, the sharpening section of Camera Raw is now called 'Detail'. It's the third tab to the right under the histogram panel.
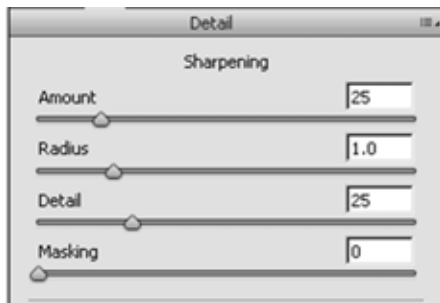
Opening this tab reveals four sliders called respectively Amount, Radius, Detail and Masking. At first these controls may seem intimidating, but fear not, after I briefly explain them I will show you a nifty trick to see what they are doing in real time while you use them that can help clarify what actually happens when you sharpen an image (If you want to skip the lengthy explanation and just want some numbers to plug in, go to the last paragraph).
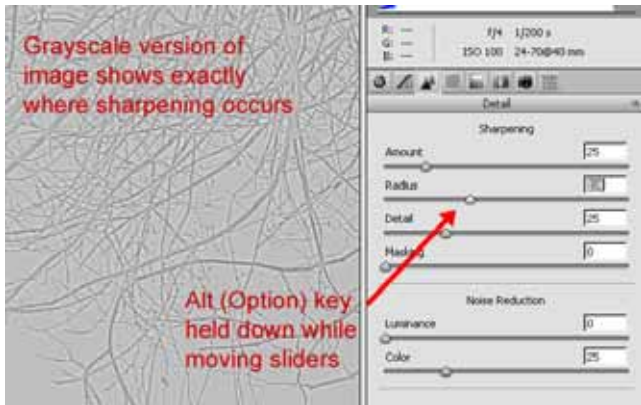
As we know sharpening is accomplished by increasing the contrast along all edges in an image, making the light side of an edge lighter and the dark side darker. Examples of edges could be the line where tree branch meets a lighter sky, where a dark eyelash delineates from the skin behind it or anywhere where texture is evident in an image.

The amount and radius sliders are similar to their counterparts in Photoshop. The amount slider does precisely what it's name implies, it increases the strength of sharpening contrast; how much lighter and how much darker we make the two sides of any edge. The only difference from the Photoshop version is that the numerical scale in Camera Raw only goes to 150 so in all likelihood you will use a lower number setting here than you would in Photoshop. Radius refers to how wide this change in tonality takes place along any given edge before it starts to gradually blend in. In conjunction, these two controls determine the degree of sharpening that takes place. Overdone, sharpening can result in the halo effect we so often see in poorly processed images. The strength of this halo comes from applying too great an amount, the width of a halo is a function of the radius setting.

The detail and mask sliders are used to dampen the sharpening effect we've applied and confine it only to the areas where we need it. The detail slider limits the halo effect. This slider works in the opposite way you might expect. A setting of 0 applies the most halo suppression and a setting of 100 has no effect. (Those software designers trying to confuse us again!) The masking slider concerns itself with high contrast edges in your picture versus larger flat areas with less contrast. A mask setting of 0 has no effect. Raising the masking setting hides or masks the sharpening effect in lesser contrast areas of the picture.

The effects of these controls are often difficult to visualize beforehand. Fortunately there is a way to pre-evaluate what the controls are doing. To view what is happening zoom your image in to 100%. Then hold down the Alt key on a PC (Option on the Mac) while you move any slider. Your picture preview will immediately turn into a grayscale image. As you move the sliders this grayscale image shows in real time exactly where in your image and to what degree the sharpening is taking place. For the radius and detail sliders the areas of the image that are a medium tone are unaffected by the sharpening and the areas that are lighter or darker are affected to the degree they differ from medium gray. For the masking slider the areas that are black are masked or hidden while the areas that are white are being sharpened. Try it, it's much easier to understand if you do.

Grayscale version of image shows exactly where sharpening occurs

Alt (Option) key held down while moving sliders

Of course all images are different and will require different sharpening settings to look their best.

Let me give you some numbers to set your sliders as a starting point. For a portrait image or any image where there are some details that require significant sharpening such as eyes or hair but there are other areas like skin that you would wish to remain softer: Amount: 35; Radius: 1.2; Detail: 20; Masking 70. For a landscape image or any image with a great deal of edge detail throughout: Amount: 40; Radius: 0.8; Detail: 50; Masking 0. For those of you who are using Lightroom these settings are available under the presets panel in the develop module. Start with these numbers and season to taste. Remember that capture sharpening should be done with a light hand and is just intended to compensate for digital camera softness.

NJFCC. Spring Print Competition Results

Natural Calligraphy	Eric Dong	Mono B	Merit Award
Wood Cabin & Daisy	Eric Dong	Mono B	HM
Autumn Stream	Rich Gheno	Mono A	Medal
Graphic Fish	Marjorie Forrest	Mono A	HM
Krissy's Portrait	Peter O'Malley	Mono A	HM
Elegant Egret	Connie Fox	Mono A	HM
Road on High Mountain	Eric Dong	Color B	Merit Award
Digital Photography	Marc Beerman	Color B	HM
Rabbitbrush Mono Lake	Bob Kane	Color A	HM
Flower Teapot on Window Sill	Peter O'Malley	Color A	HM
Canvas Back on Autumn Pond	Rich Gheno	Color A	HM
You Go First	Connie Fox	Color A	HM

Print Competition
February 20 2008
David Mills was judging

Class B Black & White

Honorable Mentions

Eric Dong ....Peggy's Cove

Awards

Eric Dong...................................... Portland Head Light

Class A Black & White

Honorable Mentions

Connie Fox ....Girl with Diamond Earring
Rich Gheno...................................Dragonfly Fantasy #5
Fernando Lopez.............................Vintage Shot
Della O'Malley ....Raccoon #2
Peter O'Malley...............................Preening Swan

Awards

Marjorie Forrest..............................Malacite Butterfly
Rich Gheno...................................Rushing Autumn Stream
Martin Joffe ....Death Valley Sand Dunes 8
Martin Joffe ....Bryce Hoodoos No. 4
Fernando Lopez..............................Chloe
Della O'Malley ....Portrait of Isabel
Peter O'Malley...............................Abandoned House

Class B Color

Honorable Mentions

Awards

Eric Dong ....Peggy's Cove after sunset
Eric Dong ....Lonely Musician
Alice Gunther ....Harriet Closeup 2
David C. Pierson.............................The Old Patriarch

Class A Color

Honorable Mentions

Marjorie Forrest...............................Liberty Flag
Rich Gheno.................................... Autumn Stream #5
Bob Kane..Early Departure
Fernando Lopez.............................Porsche #35 at Daytona
Della O'Malley .... White Ibis in Cape Florida
Della O'Malley ....Elegant Iris
Peter O'Malley...............................Great Egret Cypress Garden
Peter O'Malley...............................Southern Belle
Peter O'Malley...............................Irish Cottage
Alyce Parseghian............................ Wood Duck

Awards

Marjorie Forrest...............................Lion Fish
Marjorie Forrest.............................Lorikeet Profile
Connie Fox ....Portrait of Rosie
Connie Fox ....Cattle Egret with Chicks
Connie Fox ....Portrait of Buck with Antlers
Rich Gheno....................................Hereford Inlet Lighthouse
Martin Joffe ....Seed Pod No. 15
Martin Joffe ....Flower No. 117
Camille LaPlaca Post......................Iris Duo
Camille LaPlaca Post......................Valley Forge
Fernando Lopez..............................Self-Portrait
Fernando Lopez..............................My Pink Lady
Della O'Malley ....Beautiful Swallowtail
Alyce Parseghian...........................Monument Valley Sunrise

NJFCC Salon   **Marie Kane**

RCC members were very successful in recent New Jersey Federation of Camera Clubs competitions. Here are the results.

The Photo Travel Projected Image competition was held February 11th and hosted by the HUB Camera Club.

Merit Award:
Martin Joffe .... "Inca Woman Weaving #1"

HM's:
Alice Gunther .... "Sunset in Manhattan"
Eric Dong ...."Bai Ha Ba Morning"
Connie Fox ...."Ear of the Wind, Herding Sheep"
Martin Joffe ...."Heraro Woman at Okahandjo No. 1"
Florence Kantor ...."View from Brockway Mt. U P"
Florence Kantor .... "Blackwater Falls"
Camille La Placa – Post... "Vienna Reflections"
Gwenn Levine .... "Fishing Pier at Dawn"
Joel Schilling ...."Brugge Reflection"

The Tops in NJ – Nature Projected Image competition was held February 21st at the Camera Naturalists Photo Club.

First Place:
Marie Kane.. "Trumpeter Swan Stretching"

Merit Awards:
Della O'Malley..."Raccoon #2"
George Hall .... "Gorilla Pondering Sprig"

HM's:
Florence Kantor..."Puffin with Wings Spread"
Martin Joffe ...."Texas Cardinal #2"
R. Allen Simpson .... "Climbing Bittersweet"
Rich Gheno.. "Mating Julias"

CLASS A PRINTS

MEMBER	BLACK & WHITE	COLOR
Connie Fox	66	73
Della O'Malley	71	70
Fernando Lopez	66	70
Marjorie Forrest	56	69
Martin Joffe	63	69
Peter O'Malley	68	68
Alyce Parseghian		67
Rich Gheno	66	63
Laurie Spina	6	62
Andrew Vaccaro	12	60
Camille La Placa-Post		41
Norm Johnson	38	39
Bob Kane	27	31
Karen Kruger		20
Dieter Steinmeyer		6

CLASS B PRINTS

MEMBER	BLACK & WHITE	COLOR
Alice Gunther		64
Dave Pierson	17	62
Jia Han (Eric) Dong	49	47
Sonya Szostak		42
Mark Beerman		35
Rose Becker	19	19
Daisy Watson	17	19
Stephen Mantrom	7	6

We meet on the 2nd, 3rd & 4th Wednesday of the month at 8:00 pm
The Woman's Club of Wyckoff, 176 Wyckoff Ave. Wyckoff. NJ
Guests are always welcome at regular meetings

Assigned subjects for the 2007/2008 season

When Strangers Meet

Ridgewood Camera Club

**19 Smithfield Rd
Waldwick NJ. 07463**