



Upper Blue Mountains Camera Club Inc.

Newsletter

In photography there are no shadows that cannot be illuminated – August Sander



Since its inception, photographers have found weird and wonderful ways to create photographic images in amazing styles and many different mediums.

The first photograph, or more specifically, the earliest known surviving photograph made in a camera, was taken by Joseph Nicéphore Niépce in 1826 or 1827.

He used a polished sheet of pewter coated with a thin layer of bitumen, a naturally occurring petroleum tar, which was dissolved in lavender oil, applied to the surface of the pewter and allowed to dry before use.

As cameras have developed, and the popularity of photography increased the possibilities of the medium have grown, opening many new artistic avenues.

We're a creative bunch, so it's only natural that as technology progressed into the contemporary climate, advances

in technology such as the Photoshop presented a whole new realm of artistic possibilities.

Why would you choose to create black and white photographs in the era of digital cameras that are capable of accurately capturing millions upon millions of colours? Black and white seems to be a constant in the photographic history of photography, with colour technology only propagating itself into wider use around halfway between Nicéphore Niépce's first heliograph and . . . today.

While there's debate on both sides of the argument, for me it's a simple matter of aesthetics . . . a good black and white treatment has a way of stripping unneeded information from an image, helping to emphasize specific elements to the viewer without the distractions that colour can provide.

Digital Colour Print of the Month

McKinley Moens

"The Assassination"

This is an image of a Common Yellow Robber Fly.
They are also known as the Assassin Fly or the Bee Killer -
and they really live up to these names!

They have five (5) eyes: two (2) large compound eyes on the side of their head and three (3) small simple eyes in a triangular arrangement on the top of their head.

With this amazing vision, they can detect prey more than half a meter away in less than half a second - which is about the same ratio as a human seeing a moving book across a football field!

They ambush their prey in flight. After catching their prey, they inject a powerful neurotoxin with their proboscis.

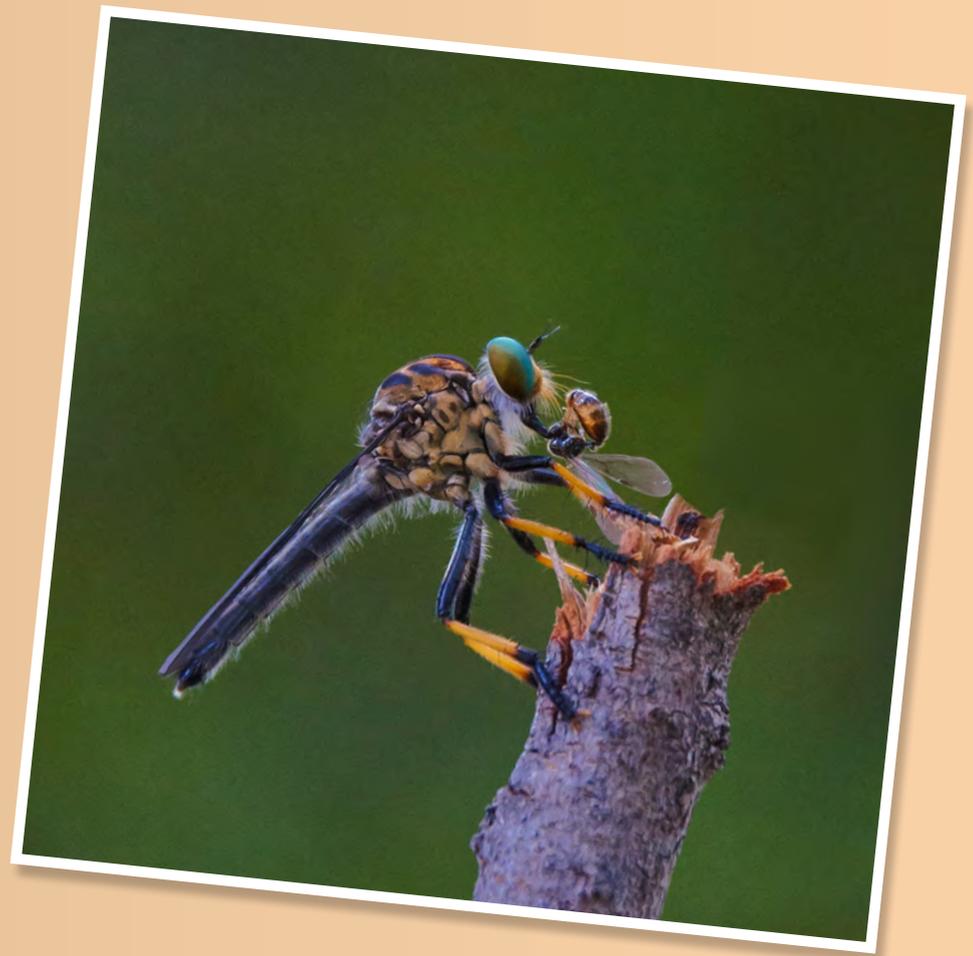
Enzymes help to digest their meal.

All that is left afterwards is the exoskeleton.

I find these guys fascinating, so whenever I see one I am always close behind with my camera in hand. I was observing this one in our garden recently. It landed a short distance away and then flew off. A few seconds later it landed again...and as you can see in the photo, the hunt was successful and it is devouring brunch!

I used a Sony A57 with a Sigma 18 - 250mm lens.

Photo taken @250mm, Aperture f6.3, ISO 2000, Shutter speed: 1/400s.



**COLOUR
PRINT**
*of the
Month*

“Morning! Flannels...”

Greg Wood

Well, you may have guessed, they are indeed, flannel flowers (Actinotus helianthi)

This shot was taken last November (2017) - interestingly on the 11th. Remembrance Day.

It was however, shortly after ‘sun-up’ - not the 11th hour.

This area, near Lincoln Rock, was devastated with fire just over 2 years prior to this.

Flannel flowers were everywhere and with the still many blackened trunks of the Shrubby She-oaks and the many rocks as a background the white flowers were absolutely stunning in the early golden light. They often occur with a soft green hue on the tips of the petals, or more precisely, the bracts.

It was a bit of a search to find a cluster of flowers that made the best composition with the early morning rays ‘hitting’ these small, but incredibly beautiful, flowers at the right angle.

Technical details — This photo was taken with a Nikon D7100 using my main ‘go-to’ lens - a Sigma 17-70mm Macro Zoom set at 70mm (equivalent to 105mm in 35mm sensor terms).

Other pertinent information:

ISO 400; Aperture f11 - for increased DOF;

Shutter speed - 1/640.

Processed in Adobe Photoshop (CS6) with the help of Nik software to bring out ‘the mood’.



**MONOCHROME
PRINT**

of the Month



Boy on a train

Harley Rustin

The image is a portrait of a friend's grandson. Cute, isn't he?
He was resting on the seat in an old carriage during a short journey on a steam train.
The scene was lit by the light streaming through the carriage window.
I converted the image to monochrome to create a nostalgic feel.

Colour, what's that?

The very first image I ever made was in black and white. It's a moment that you never forget as you watched the image slowly reveal its tones of grey, white and black as you swished the developer in a plastic tray. How many of you are smiling right now because you have the same memory? There's a magic, amazement, science, befuddlement and excitement of the moment running through your mind for 90 seconds as it developed. Gingerly using a pair of bamboo tongs with rubber grippers to grab the print from its home, you suspended it in the air for 15 seconds to let the developing solution drip back into the tray and then slowly you slipped it into the stop bath. There it lived for another 30 seconds. You grabbed a different pair of tongs, let the excess fluid drip from the surface and gently laid the print into the fixing solution. You had to leave it for three minutes before you could bring it into the light and study what you had created. It seemed like hours. The timer goes off and, using a third pair of tongs, you let the hypo drip from the print then placed it into a fourth empty tray, and with anticipation, you brought the print into the light. Yes, it was magic and from that moment on, I was hooked. I'll always have a special place in my heart for black and white as I spent many a day and night inserting negatives into the enlarger, exposing prints and repeating the process. Then, digital photography came on the scene and while I still love to make black-and-white images and having once been a devoted darkroom inhabitant the tools in Photoshop make it very, very easy to turn out top quality black and whites.

Click on the b&w Adjustment layer in Photoshop and the screen shot you see below will appear. What needs to be done is pretty straight forward after that and, combined with a few Levels or Curves adjustments, gorgeous images will be produced.

The B&W adjustment layer can be accessed in one of two ways–

- *Along the options bar at the top of the Photoshop workspace, go to **IMAGE>ADJUSTMENTS>B&W**.*
- *At the bottom of the layers palette, click on the half-white, half-black circle and scroll down to **Black and White**.*

Using either method to access the adjustment layer, the B&W panel appears.

*In the Preset drop-down option box, leave it at **DEFAULT** unless you want to apply a colour filter. What a colour filter does to the tones in a black and white is for another time.*

You can use the "Scrubby slider", that's the pointed finger with arrows on either side, to adjust the brightness values of each colour, but for the sake of simplicity at the moment, concentrate on the six colour slider arrows to make all your adjustments.

The way the sliders work is straight forward, each colour relates to the existing colour that lives in the original version of the photo., for instance, if you move the slider under the red bar to the right, any colour in the original that contains a red value will be brightened. Conversely, if you move that slider to the left, any colour in the original that contains a red

value will be darkened. It doesn't get much easier than that!

The next colour down is yellow.

Move the yellow slider to the right to brighten any yellows and to the left to darken them.

Continue using each slider until you adjust them all. If you don't see any changes, it means that the colour in the original that relates to the slider you're adjusting doesn't exist in the original image.

If you're just getting started using the B&W Adjustment Layer or never worked in a black-and-white darkroom, know that images with lots of clouds and interesting skies are great candidates on which to experiment.

So . . . dive into your colour files and look for photos that contain dramatic skies and use them to get started using the B&W adjustment layer.

Once you get immersed into the medium, when you convert an image to black and white and it makes you smile, you'll frequently think . . .

Colour, what's that!





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Now there has to be something interesting for everyone, and worth having a look . . .

There's a new photography skillset course starting up next week if anyone is interested.
<https://wsi.tafensw.edu.au/course/introduction-to-digital-photography-statement-of-attainment/>

Feel free to contact Nicola, if you have any questions.

Nicola Read
Photographer - Blue Mountains
Phone: 02 4759 3916 Mobile: 0408 056 578 www.nicolaread.com.au

Some upcoming events...

Tours of the Light Arms factory at Lithgow.

<https://www.visitnsw.com/destinations/blue-mountains/lithgow-area/lithgow/events/lithgow-and-site-tours-the-lithgow-small-arms-factory-museum>

“What the law says about a stranger taking a photo of your child without permission”

ABC Radio Brisbane
By Patrick Williams

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-04-16/what-law-says-about-taking-photos-of-people-in-public/9641488>

150 year anniversary or the Great Western Rail Line...

Steam trains and rides around Mt Vic and Lithgow. 26th and 27th May

<https://mountvictoria.nsw.au/great-train-weekend/>

Richard Bulley is going to judge at our next Exhibition night May 2nd.
See his work here . . .

<http://www.richardbulley.com.au>

Massive mural to transform Portland's silos | Lithgow Mercury

<https://www.lithgowmercury.com.au/story/5230539/massive-mural-to-transform-portlands-silos/>

The owners of the old cement works in Portland have attracted the talents of an acclaimed artist to transform an old industrial site into an outdoor artwork.


Len's School
<http://lensschool.com>

“ A few words on our last info night – while we did run out of time it was very satisfying to see such interest and enthusiasm from our newer members. ”

We're hoping to run a more comprehensive print mounting night soon.



Our next info night is going to feature a chat on Astro Photography by Emanuel.

More info to follow.

Beautiful Bokeh – Create a soft, out-of-focus background behind your subject by setting your fastest lens to its widest aperture. This effect, known as bokeh, can take on different shapes and sizes and is a great technique to use with the smooth pastel autumn colours that are about out there now.

