

Newsletter, April 2019



Simplicity: working with negative space

Your next club photographic challenge, should you choose to accept it, is to make images using negative space. Please have your six best images ready for the May info night. They must be in DPI size on either a USB stick or emailed to the DPI address no later than 13 May.

The best images have an emotional impact but if the viewer has to spend time scanning various elements in an image, that impact is lessened.

Simplicity is about having just enough to tell the story. Just enough to catch your eye or take your breath away. Simplicity can create a lasting memory.



X by [Fishkaa](#)

Keeping things simple is sometimes the best way to get a good photo. Look for uncomplicated backgrounds and try to focus on eliminating objects that may draw attention away from your subject.

Simplification does not mean dumbing down or minimising your images. It is the process of analysing the elements within your frame and removing those that don't add to, or detract from, your subject.

Having too much going on in your frame can mean the person who's looking at it just keeps searching for a point of interest and soon gets tired of looking when they can't find one. This doesn't mean you can't have

secondary points of interest; it just means you should make every effort to make sure they don't steal all the limelight.

Background

When planning your shot, think about the background and consider what is around and happening in it. Having a good background might mean the difference between an average shot and a brilliant one.

If the background doesn't strengthen the image, perhaps you need to reduce its impact by using a shallow depth of field, or possibly looking for a background that does strengthen the image.

Fill the frame

If your shot is in danger of losing impact because of a busy background or surroundings, crop in tight around your main point of focus, eliminating the background so all attention falls on your main subject.

This works particularly well with portraits when you are trying to capture something more intimate and focused, or are shooting



Laundry Day by [Micha Dmoch](#)

in a busy location where what's around them would just cause a distraction. Filling the frame could involve you capturing them from the waist up or, for more impact, showing only their face.

Simply get closer to your subject

In most cases you don't need to include the entire subject in the frame; the brain can figure out, for example, that the weathered door is part of a building, so get in close to the door and perhaps include some of the surrounding wall in your image.

Or to take it to another level, maybe the door handle is the most interesting part of the image. Why not let that fill the frame, this time including a little of the door?

What you are effectively doing in cases such as this taking advantage of how the brain works: our "working memory" scans the image but the incomplete image causes us

to draw on our experiences to fill in the gaps. It's the process of filling in those gaps that results in a more engaged viewer.

Negative Space

Negative space is the space that surrounds the main element of interest, which can be called positive space. When used

properly, negative space gives natural balance to the positive space in a scene.

The subject holds the power of the image by being emphasised by negative space. Note that negative space does not have to be emptiness devoid of colour or detail.

Our brains are full of preconceptions about the way objects look, in terms of size, shape, colour and texture. Preconceptions distort the way we view a scene, and this can lead to photos which look good in our mind but not so good in reality.

The key to overcoming these problems is to ignore the objects in the scene altogether and concentrate on the gaps between and around them. This forces you to pay more attention to your composition, and helps you see shapes and sizes more accurately.

When framing your photo, adjust your composition until the positive and negative spaces in the shot feel well balanced against one another.



Street candid portrait taken in Skegness by [edis08](#)

Be generous with the amount of empty space you leave, and don't feel you have to cram something interesting into every square inch of the frame.

Negative space not only introduces a story within the scene being photographed, but it also creates intrigue within the viewer's mind - questioning what is missing.

Summing Up

Simplify the scene you're photographing by focusing on one subject, or one subject matter. When you're photographing a scene, ask yourself: "What is my central subject of the photo?" and "What am I trying to communicate in this photo?"

Lee Anne White offers these strategies for decluttering images:

Know what compels you - make it the focus of your image.

Clarify your message - edit out everything that doesn't contribute meaningfully to that image.

Seek out the **strongest way of seeing**. Change your perspective by exploring different points of view. Move around your subject until you find what works best.

Search for **simple scenes** with **fewer elements**

Move closer - in complex or chaotic scenes, focus on details rather than the big picture.

Minimise your depth of field, blurring undesirable or distracting backgrounds.

Simplify your colour palette. Soft colour harmonies, a single shot of colour in an otherwise neutral scene, or a bold colour contrast can make a greater impact than a rainbow of colours.

Convert to mono to eliminate colour as a distraction but allows forms, shadows, strong lines or tones to shine.

Clean up your edges. Look around the frame before you click the shutter and again when editing the image. Make sure there's nothing to pull your eye back out of the image. Keep your focus where it matters most.

Use negative space to frame your image to remove any distracting elements from your image.

Some useful links

pixelcurse.com; tutsplus.com; Lee Anne White's [blog](#)

Pauline Pollock



? by [Julian E ...](#)

Coachwood Glen fungi shoot

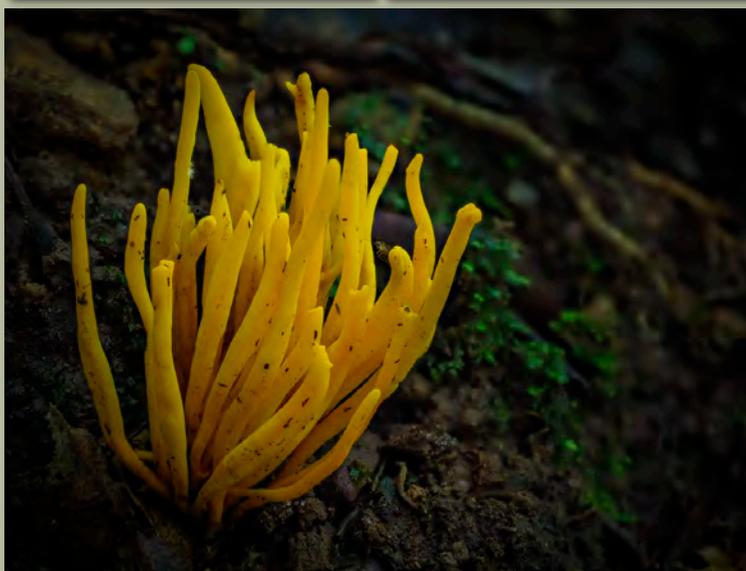
I was very pleased to see so many of you turn up for what turned out to be a great day.

I hope everyone got something out of it, and if you didn't score the perfect 15 photo on the day, you have about 6 weeks (weather permitting) to go back and play some more.

I would love to see your fungi photos but I won't be at the next club info night, so I hope I will get another opportunity to view them.

Thanks again to all who participated. You were all great friendly company, making the day very memorable for me.

Here are my shots from the day.



Emanuel Conomos

Members' choice DPI – “Weevil Dining”

We had a colourful display of paper daisies in our garden at Christmas and I noticed this weevil dining on one of them. He wasn't rushing, giving me time to grab a few shots.

By getting in nice and close with an extension tube on a macro lens, it was possible to fill the frame with that buttery warm yellow of the daisy.

Plenty of sunlight allowed for a fast shutter speed (1/160s) so I was able to hand hold and keep tracking the weevil. Since the in-focus area was so shallow I snapped off about 10 shots to get this one.

Post processing involved a little cropping, some warming of the yellow to make it glow and adding a tinge of purple to the weevil for extra pop and separation. All done in Lightroom in a few minutes.



Alan Daniel

Members' choice mono – “Blue Gum Admirer”

On a hike with a friend on a very misty day in the mountains, we decided to take shelter in Coxs Cave near Mount Victoria.

My friend was probably focused on the mist and wishing it would lift, rather than admiring the majestic Blue Gum that had captured my eye.

Later, when I was looking through my pictures of that day, it struck me that the Blue Gum would make a more interesting photo if it was converted to Black and White.

Nikon D3200, Tamron
18-270, f 3.3, 1/40s,
ISO 400.

Emanuel Conomos



Members' choice colour – “Nature’s Lanterns”



Fungi are an amazing species. There are literally millions and millions of different types, and they are found all over the world.

We are fortunate to have a fungi hot spot right here in the Blue Mountains, at Coachwood Glen just out of Blackheath.

The fungi in this shot are very small and must be very shy because they were well hidden in a crevice of an old decaying tree trunk.

I needed extra light to photograph them, which had the effect of highlighting their pale colour against the dark background. A little dodging in Lightroom conjured the lantern affect.

Olympus 12-40mm, f 3.5, 1/25s, ISO 200.

Emanuel Conomos

Diary

17 April Info Night - Fungi

Please send your six best images from the Coachwood Glen shoot or elsewhere, sized for DPIs, to ubmcc.dpi@gmail.com by 6pm **Sunday 14 April**, for the club info night slideshow.



All about printing

The April info night will also feature Nina and Mark from [Cottontail Press](#) in Mt. Victoria who will give a comprehensive talk on printing. All you need to know about papers, inks, file formats, colour space and so much more. Not to be missed!

Plant + Human, Australian Centre for Photography

On **until 27 April**, Tuesday to Friday, 10am to 5pm; Saturday, 11am to 4pm. Free.

The Australian Centre for Photography is tucked away in a corner in bustling Darlinghurst (21 Foley Street). Its current [exhibition](#) explores the relationship between humans and the botanical – something we are all familiar with in our photographic practice in the Blue Mountains.

Ironfest 2019 “Once upon a time”

Lithgow Showground, **27 and 28 April**. It’s best to purchase your tickets online. Click [here](#) for details.

15 May Negative Space Challenge

Please have your six best images ready for the **May** info night. They must be in DPI size and either brought on a USB stick on the night or emailed to the DPI address no later than **13 May**.

Sony World Photography Awards 2019

On **17 April** the Open Photographer of the Year award will be announced. To view other winners, click [here](#).

5 May Leura Harvest Festival @ The Mall, Leura



The Mall is usually jam-packed for this local festival, and there is plenty to capture the photographer’s eye. The Pet Chook Show should be the perfect spot for some wonderful images of owners and their favourite chooks.

A Frizzle Chook, image by horseandman.com

Moran Contemporary Photographic Prize



Dean Sewell's
Broken Wipers
(2016)

Each year, the Moran Contemporary Photographic Prize recognises the creators of the best photographs and photography informed artworks that capture the essence of everyday life in Australia. The winner receives a whopping \$50,000 from a total prize money pot of \$100,000.

One-time Katoomba resident and Sydney Morning Herald news photographer [Dean Sewell](#) was a runner-up in 2016 for his shot “Broken Wipers”, taken in snow on Lurline Street, Katoomba. Dean won the Moran prize in 2009.

The 2018 winner was James Bugg, then a 22-year-old photography school graduate, with a portrait of his friend Zack in his front yard in Frankston North, Melbourne (below). The prize is about celebrating and acknowledging photographic work that captures [everyday life in Australia](#).

There is a high school and primary school category, too.

Well worth a visit should you be in the city in May-June.

4 May to 2 June

Thursday to Sunday, 10am to 4pm,
Juniper Hall, 250 Oxford Street,
Sydney.



**UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CAMERA CLUB INC.
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
21st MARCH, 2019**

MINUTES

Attendance

Emanuel Conomos; Alan Daniel; Andy Horsfall; Daniel Jackson; Robert Lipscombe; Debbie Marsh; Michael Peck; Pauline Pollock; Des Pope; Paul Rowe; Lesley Shanley; Phill Shone; Robert Skinner; Eve Taylor; Selena Williams; Greg Wood;

Apologies

Geoff Atwood; Annette Douglas; Neil Flack.

Minutes

The minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting were tabled.

Moved by Rob Skinner and seconded by Eve Taylor that the Minutes be adopted.
— *Carried unanimously.*

Reports

The President's report was tabled —

Moved by Paul Rowe and seconded by Emanuel Conomos that the report be accepted. — *Carried unanimously.*

The Treasurer's financial statement was tabled —

- The current bank balance is \$3972.07
- Petty Cash on hand is \$11.55
- Stock Value – Mats on hand \$637.79

Moved by Eve Taylor and seconded by Andy Horsfall that the statement be accepted.— *Carried unanimously.*

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The current executive committee positions were declared vacant and nominations for those positions were called. The current committee members were re-elected to continue to hold office – *Carried unanimously.*

President: Alan Daniel; **Vice President:** Robert Skinner;
Secretary: Pauline Pollock; **Treasurer:** Selena Williams; **Public Officer:** Ray Douglas.

Committee: Programme Organiser ~ Alan Daniel; Outings Co-ordinator ~ Emanuel Conomos; Web Master/Publicity ~ Greg Wood; Newsletter Editors ~ Michael Peck and Liz Morgan; Exhibition Scorer ~ Emanuel Conomos.

GENERAL BUSINESS

- (1) Time Management of the club's exhibition evenings.

Increased volume of DPI's clogging up the judging system with the result mono and colour prints get 'short shrift'.

- (2) From the floor

A vote of "well done" to the committee for their work ethic in club matters and the general well running of the club and its activities. Compliments for the "Ironfest Outing", its advance notice and the opportunity to learn, and the new print viewing light

- (3) Club Fees and other member payments can now be effected using Direct Debit.
- (4) Club Issues. The following issues were raised and discussed. Further consideration by the Committee as to —

- The management of the club's exhibition evenings. while the committee has already identified this as a problem it is discussing alternatives such as: managing the evening's time better; a "time bell"; scoring before presentation, pre-judging in order to reduce the amount of work to be undertaken on the night; a display of the results of the pre-judging scoring
- Timely lodgement of digital prints for exhibition.
- The safe handling of member's prints offered for exhibition.
- Our Club will host the 2019 inter-club competition. Final determination of both the date and the venue is to be ascertained.

The issues raised under General Business will be discussed and given further consideration by the committee before implementation.

Contacts

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