



Upper Blue Mountains Camera Club Inc.

Newsletter

"The whole point of taking pictures is so you don't have to explain things with words." – Elliott Erwitt

One way to make strong images from simple subjects is to turn to Silhouettes

When the rich were taxed they would invariably resist and of course complain loudly and that's just what they did in 1757 when Etienne de Silhouette, France's new Minister for Finances, taxed them in an effort to balance the hopelessly indebted budget of King Louis XV. Members of the nobility who were previously exempt from taxation entirely complained they were being reduced to mere shadows of their former selves.

The new minister also had a hobby. He liked to cut profile portraits out of black paper, often called 'shades' or 'shadowgraphs'. So the joke of the day was that his taxes were doing something similar to the members of the first estate — turning them into shadows.

They managed to get him retired within eight months, but not before the expression 'being silhouetted' had become common.

In a way, those black paper portraits to which Silhouette's name satirically stuck were a sort of poor man's photography even before photography was invented. They were certainly much cheaper than hiring an artist to paint your portrait or sculpt your likeness, which were the only alternatives back then.

Before the daguerreotype arrived, solid contour portraits were widespread, used in cameos, framed pictures, and even Wedgewood pottery. But the camera changed all that. Photography took over mass portraiture almost



The hint of mystery

completely. On the other hand, it didn't eliminate the silhouette. Rather, it showed them up as naturally occurring. Photography is ideally suited to silhouettes because it reproduces shadows and dark shapes very effectively.

For over 150 years we

have become used to a very broad range of silhouettes appearing in photographs and the original facetious sense of the word is now long gone. A silhouette is to day defined in a general way merely as a dark shape outlined against a light background.

Silhouettes are attractive because they're so delightfully simple, yet at the same time they offer more than meets the eye. At its best, a silhouette uses very little to imply a great deal.

Basically you have just two tones and an edge, yet, if it's well done the viewer can infer depth and detail in the darkness. It's probably this *Gestalt Test** (see page 5 for an explanation) that makes silhouettes interesting; they have the power of suggestion.

A silhouette can bring a hint of mystery to the most mundane object because it conceals boring, fussy or confusing details, and leaves only the bold outline, something like a puzzle in which you have to identify a subject purely from its shape and guess at its blank interior. But like any puzzle it musn't be too difficult to solve that is if you want your viewers to respond.

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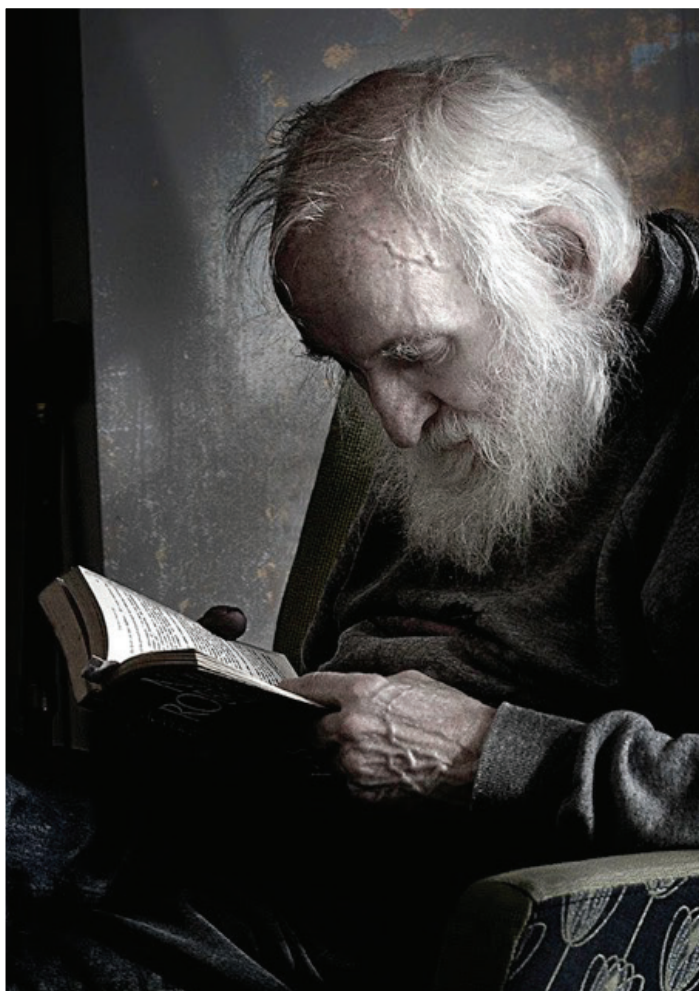
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Photography provides the opportunity to capture a millisecond in time and freeze it forever to share, and our camera is the vehicle we use to share these precious moments. Once you've made the photo, that moment can never be taken away. You own it, and it's preserved forever—and that's powerful! Greg's very powerful and emotive image "Solitary Solitude" depicts imagery from real life and that doesn't always offer room to manoeuvre in its capture. It gives way to inventive imagery and the answer is to push the limits and to experiment and from this comes experience to build on. Greg's work has very little to do with how a camera or software work, but a great deal to do with how we see things in front of us and how we frame and compose them. Congratulations Greg . . . we all continue to be educated by photographs.

"Solitary Solitude"

PRINTS OF THE MONTH

"Pool of Reflection"



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If you want people to pay attention to your photography and enjoy it, you have to give them a reason to look at it for longer than a glance. Harley's "Pool of Reflection" image is no exception with all the components of his image fitting together in a size relationship that is very satisfying. To the eye there's a general coexistence between everything in the image and



there's nothing in the image that jars it. What makes the image is the view of its completeness, as if it were meant to be one, everything fitting together seamlessly. Well done Harley, there's a sense of elegance created in the result from your having used no more than has been necessary to achieve the result.

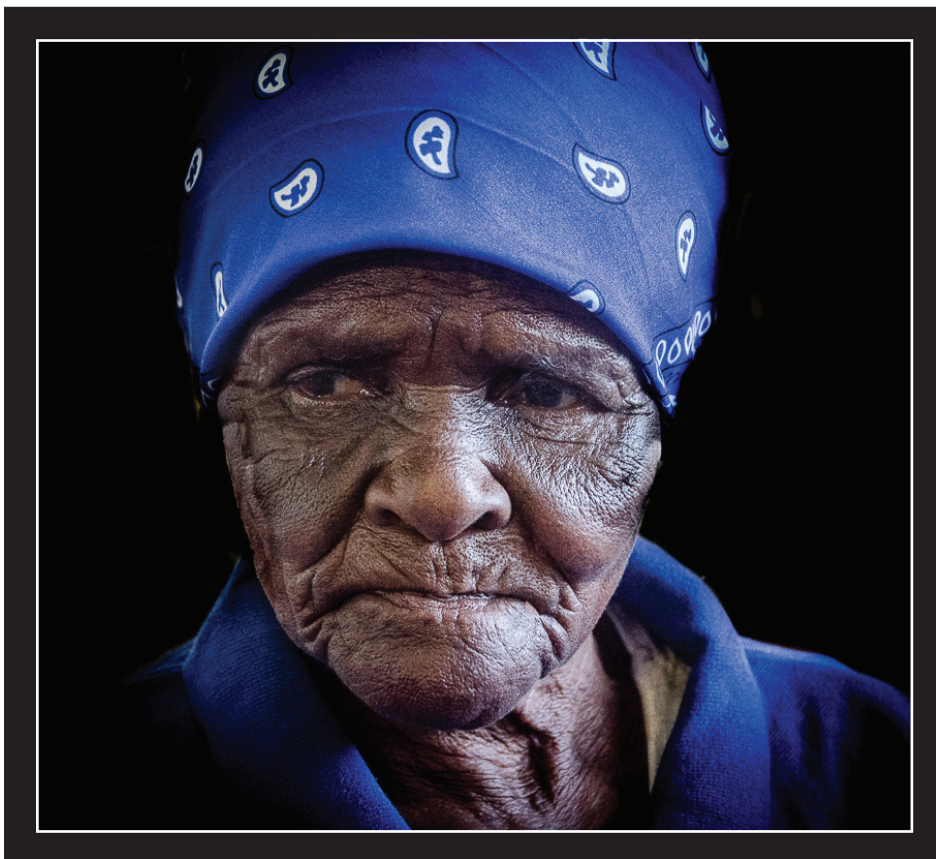
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There are always going to be subjects that attract people more so than others do and it's generally because they appeal to our emotions.

Photography's most high-attractant subjects are the key parts of the human face, especially the eyes and the mouth. Geoff's image "Ninety-Nine" has embodied the emotional aspect of photography along with colour, colour of the skin, colour of the clothes and in addition the image has some graphic elements on the head scarf. At first glance you see there is something unusual, something unexplained about the image. This has cause to invite you to search the image for information. It's been said that photographers believe they can control the way other people view their work!

Geoff's image has the added advantage of his image content being dominant and again this has given an identifiable influence to the character and to the composition of the image.

Great shot Geoff . . . well done!



DIGITAL PRINTS OF THE MONTH



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To take a photograph is to make a picture of an event.

That event may be brief — a matter of milliseconds or it may be long enough as in the change of daylight over a landscape. In Geoff's photograph "Silent Flight", it's in its timing . . . and that word invokes one of photography's most famous expressions "The Decisive Moment". Defined it says "inside movement there is one moment at which the elements of motion are in balance." Geoff's "Silent Flight" has seized on that "decisive moment" and has held the image immobile and as our Judge and resident Ornithologist pointed out against the dark background the owl in flight reveals its wing movement in only just a recognizable pattern. *Well done again Geoff, it's a well earned double for the evening!*



A “Captcha” Comment

Let your photography motivate you to move through life in a positive way.

Photography is “all about the light” and it’s the first thing you should seek out before you press the shutter.

*Optimally, while we’re all about pursuing great subjects in great light, you should also remember . . .
if there’s an ordinary subject in great light . . . still press the shutter!*



Rex Livingston Project’s photographer Mike Wall may not have had to hike long distances with masses of equipment but his passion for landscape photography, as was Ansell Adams’, is reflected in his unique style. Mike’s “Cloud Watching on Country Roads” picture above consists of 36 frames shot using an infra-red camera — three vertical and twelve horizontal — and stitched together photographically to achieve the magnificent panorama. The unique style of work Mike Wall has come to create begins with the influence and inspiration of Ansel Adams and exemplifies Adams’ camera technique, and darkroom mastery.

Use an unusual angle for impact

What is it that constitutes a successful image?

A good image is one that evokes an emotional experience. Then . . . what else is there that goes with that emotional aspect and constitutes a successful image? First and foremost is the quality of light. Add to the mix some great composition, a clean background, sharp focus, good exposure and a good subject choice, and by all accounts you have a winner! But there’s an often-overlooked key ingredient that nets those eye-grabbing shots with tremendous impact. Rather than simply raising the camera to your eye or creating a composition from atop a fully extended tripod, find an angle that’s unique yet still incorporates all of the above factors. Get down

low, find a high vantage point, walk around your subject and photograph it from the side or from behind, get up close and personal using a wide-angle, or simply tilt the camera on an axis somewhere between vertical and horizontal. Sometimes, a unique angle can be a simple matter of looking at your subject from one that many photographers may not use—in that the obvious one is to photograph the subject from the front. With people, go behind them and have them turn just their heads to look over their shoulder and capture them with a big smile. Have you ever explored the underside of a sunflower and photographed a small portion of it with a macro lens?



Gestalt –

... an organized whole that is perceived as more than the sum of its parts.

Origin: 1920s: from German Gestalt, literally 'form, shape'.

Gestalt psychology or gestaltism is a philosophy of mind of the Berlin School of experimental psychology.

Gestalt psychology is an attempt to understand the laws behind the ability to acquire and maintain meaningful perceptions in an apparently chaotic world. The central principle of gestalt psychology is that the mind forms a global whole with self-organizing tendencies.



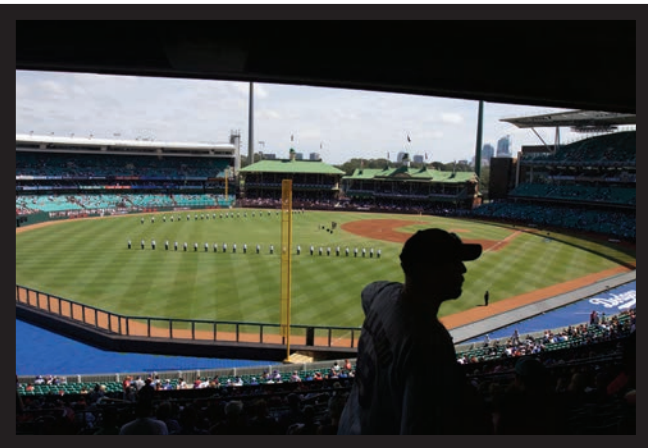
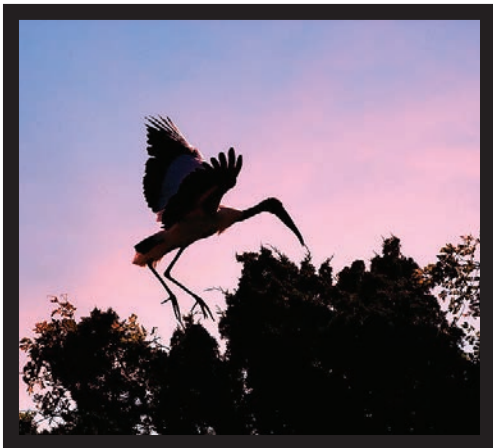
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It must be a recognizable outline. That's the attraction of those cutout portraits – you recognize a face in the contour of a single edge. For a silhouette in a photo it's likewise important to see the object from an easy to identify angle. That usually means separation of its elements, so as to avoid any confusing overlap with itself or items in the background. For example, wait until the horse raises its head, or the bird stretches its wings, or move around to get the fisherman in profile so you can see his rod and line clearly. Otherwise the silhouette may be hard to identify and just become a confusing black shape. With people it's best to go for a profile or a front/back view because these angles show arms and legs with

better separation from each other and the body.

When seen obliquely, the limbs tend to lose their obvious shapes as they merge with the body, unless, of course, an effort is made to hold them clear.

If there are other silhouettes in the same picture their position in relation to the other pictures must be that they don't overlap each other and merge confusingly. It takes some experience to pre-visualize the effect of a silhouette because when you're looking at the real thing you can see it in its real context. But what you're about to do in your photograph is to deny your viewers a great deal of that context, reducing it to a few visual clues. That's both the tease and the test. If you don't make the silhouette clear and recognizable they just won't get it!



EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP - What the Judges are Looking for

Guest Speakers David Miller
John Alessi
Leanne Alessi

All with Grand Master's of Photography with Australian Photographic Society

Topics include:

Image Capture - In Camera Creativity
Judging - What are the judges looking for
Processing - The Work Flow
Output - Print and Digital Projection
Aim for the Stars - a selection of award winning images
Open Forum - Questions and Answers



Workshop Fee - \$10 per person
When and Where

SATURDAY 24TH JUNE 2017

10:00 am to 4:00 pm

Host Club: Kiama-Shellharbour Camera Club

Venue: Warilla Bowls and Recreation Club

Jason Ave, Barrack Heights NSW 2558

SUNDAY 25TH JUNE 2017

10:00 am to 4:00 pm

Host Club: Narooma Camera Club

Venue: Club Narooma

88 Princes Hwy, Narooma NSW

SUNDAY 13TH AUGUST 2017

10:00 am to 4:00 pm

Host Club: Wauchope Photography Group

Venue: Wauchope RSL Club

Young St, Wauchope NSW 2446

Interested, please contact
Russell Field
E: fctreasurer@photographynsw.org.au
M: 0434 141 810



FEDERATION OF CAMERA CLUBS NSW INC | PO Box 49 Macquarie Fields NSW 2564



Entries are now open for the

29th Sutherland Shire National Exhibition of Photography
(SSNEP)

APS Approval 2017/18

An all digital exhibition

Website: <http://www.ssnepeg.org.au/>

Includes the following sections:-

- Open Colour
- Creative
- Open Monochrome
- Nature

Entries Close on 12th August 2017

We look forward to receiving your entries

A link you may find interesting.

<http://erickimphotography.com/blog/2017/05/07/5-photography-composition-tips/>

The answer to the riddle
if you haven't already worked
it out for yourself is . . .
The woman was a photographer.
She shot a picture of her husband,
developed it, and hung it up to dry
(shot; held under water; and hung).

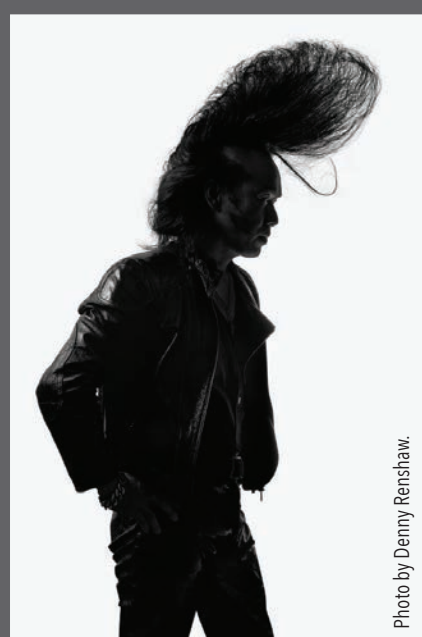


Photo by Denny Renshaw.

Above: A member of Japan's rock n' roll
obsessed subculture, the Roller-zoku.