

Newsletter, May 2020



Night photography: the lure of light in the dark

The second of the club's theme exhibition nights for 2020, on 1 July, is the broad-ranging topic of night photography, including astrophotography, light painting and simply taking photographs in dark or low-lit locations.

Night photography is "about finding the extraordinary in the ordinary", says US photographer Lance Keimig, whose short YouTube tutorial *Finding Your Way In The Dark* can be seen here

This writer claims no expertise whatsoever in night photography; the article simply aims to set out some broad ideas about night photography, what it might teach us about our photography more generally and to provide links to



Ever since he was first handed a camera Lance Keimig has had a passion for night photography. See more of his images, video tutorials, and follow his blog at thenightskye.com

websites, social media apps, books and articles that you can peruse for tips, examples and fantastic images to fire the imagination.

Thankfully, club member and night photography explorer Emanuel Conomos is going to take us by the hand and walk through some of the practical basics on Wednesday 20 May: What size of sensor is the best? Is bigger necessarily better in terms of the number of pixels? What are the best lenses?

Painting with light is another avenue some of us might want to explore. Emanuel can help with this, too, and these clear winter skies are just perfect for exploring the lure of light in the dark.

We are fortunate in the Upper Blue

Mountains to be at quite a distance from the ever-present orange glow of the Sydney skyline but this doesn't mean to say you'll necessarily get pitch-black conditions. Just when you think there isn't a shard of artificial light, your eyes will adjust and the dim streetlamp in the distance suddenly seems like a searchlight.

Ambient light is a great help when you're shooting in urban settings, to light up your subjects. This makes composing and framing your shots a lot easier than in a rural landscape, when it can be incredibly difficult to see much at all through the viewfinder. Live view mode can help here.

A headtorch is a fantastic tool in these circumstances, not only illuminating what you're doing and where you've put down your gear but also leaving both your hands free for setting up your camera and tripod. Don't leave the house without one!

The object

The object you choose to photograph is one that speaks to you, and it doesn't have to be the Milky Way or the Moon. Objects



Vulture Labs: *Generation X*, on ([Flickr](#)) and [vulturelabs.photography](#).

take on new personalities in the dark, and long exposures and wide apertures can light them up, as if by daylight.

Browsing for ideas and great shots

Photography journals

With the council and college libraries still closed because of Covid-19, your best starting point is

the internet. Before you get overwhelmed with information, try some photography journal sites first.

Some international competitions have night photography categories, and they are good places to see what others have done. The Hamdan International Photography Award (HIPA) is one example and you can see the finalists in the Photo Nightscape Awards [here](#).

Instagram

The #nightphotography hashtag on Instagram takes you to a page with more than 11 million posts (see you in the next life!) but for those of you who love browsing other people's work for ideas, this is a great resource.

Other hashtags to explore include: #nightimages, #astrophotography, and #nighttimephotography .

Flickr

This free, online photography sharing platform is teeming with night-time shots and groups. Again, there are millions of photographs to browse through. Searching on a night photography tag will narrow the field but it's still vast.



Beth Hamiti: *Reflection Tree*, on [500px.com](https://www.500px.com).

Flickr Groups like Night Photography And Beyond or Night Shooters showcase hundreds of different ways of doing night photography.

F-Stop Magazine

This online photography magazine is a good starting point for free tutorials by the professionals.

In this video professional wedding

photographer Patrick Hall tries his hand at “astro” for the very first time and talks the viewer through the challenges and frustrations.

He goes through the basics of lens choice, settings and post-production.

At the end of the day, he nails the shot and gets the reward – so you can, too!

Liz Morgan

Turning heads: Head On Photo Festival

This annual festival – proclaimed by the organisers as Australia’s premier photography event and a world-leading arts festival – is one of those quiet successes that manages to make a big splash.

It’s quiet because it doesn’t command much media attention and if you don’t live in inner Sydney you probably wouldn’t know it was on.

It makes a splash because it’s been successful in showcasing Australian and international talent, both through the festival and the Head On Awards that command a prize money package of some \$70,000.

Since its inception in 2004, the festival has toured in China, India, Europe, New Zealand and the United States and has helped bring Australian photography to the wider world.

Under normal circumstances (remember those?) Head On would be running more than 100 exhibitions in big spaces, and nooks and crannies, all over Sydney, as well as workshops, prize-giving ceremonies, public talks,



Shaylen Mawbey: *Hendricks Bag*, finalist Head On Student Awards

photowalks and street art. Not this year. The administration team has moved a mountain due to the Covid-19 lockdown by putting the whole shebang online – and it works, especially for those of who do not live in or close to the city.

Instead of setting aside one day and ‘doing’ the festival on foot and maybe catching two or three exhibitions, the online festival can be ‘visited’ as often as you like, from the comfort of your own home.

Sure, seeing photographers’ work only online is not entirely satisfactory but, boy, you can see a lot of work in two-and-a-half weeks on your computer.

This year, one panel talk of local interest was *Covering the Bushfires*, on 5 May, which focused a lot on the fires in the Blue Mountains, through the lenses and eyes of the Sydney Morning Herald’s chief photographer Nick Moir, a veteran of bushfire coverage.

If you’re taking up the Exhibition Night challenge of night photography, Canberra photographer Ari Rex is giving a

talk on astrophotography on 16 May. Click [here](#) for details.

All the events are free but you are invited to make a contribution, big or small. The Head On Foundation is a not-for-profit, so bear this in mind.

If you'd like to see the calibre of work that wins, click [here](#) for a complete back catalogue of competitions from 2004.

The categories are: portrait, landscape, mobile, student and moving image.

Online from 1 May to 17 May at www.headon.com.au.

Liz Morgan



Mat Beetson: *Dancing Mangroves*, finalist Head On Landscape Awards.

Members' Choice – “Sylvia’s Gold”

I came across this scene on 23 November last year. Back then the drought was in full swing and the mountains were 50mm down on rainfall for the month. And it was hot. It was so hot the trees were shedding their leaves and many parts of the state were on fire.

Things were indeed grim, but in the Valley of the Waters the creek was still flowing. Heading down early in the morning provided relief from the heat and the oppressive threat of bushfires.

As we reached the valley edge, Jan and I found it filled with fog. That always makes the backpack lighter and the feet move faster, so down we went at a gallop.

At the end of the steps Empress Falls was strewn with golden leaves from the heat-struck trees and the creek was burbling away. What a sight! It was as if someone had sprinkled gold dust all over it. The fog was doing nice things with the light, and there wasn't a breath of breeze. Incredible conditions.

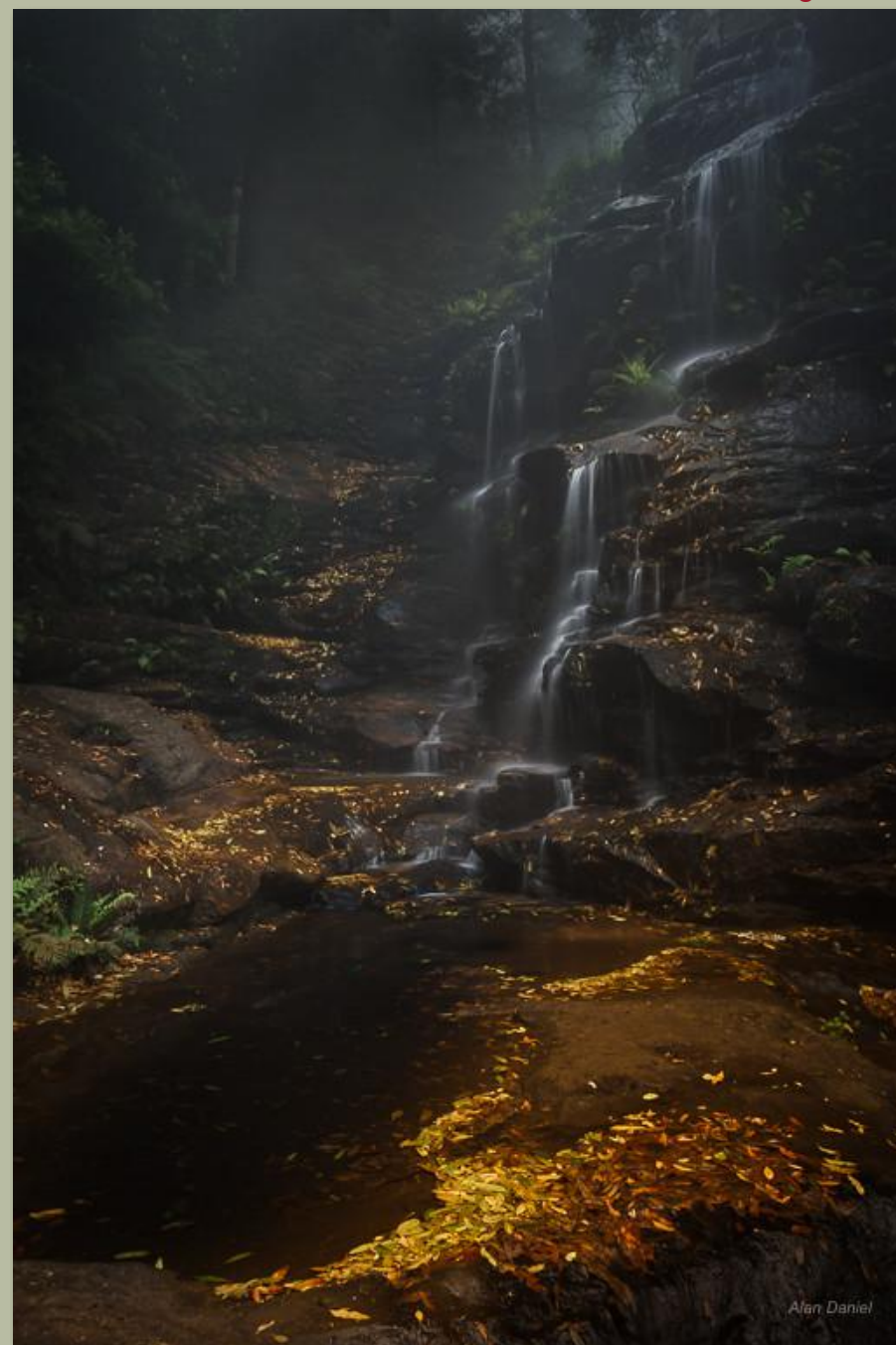
Empress was so good it was tempting just shoot it and call that a day. However, you always have to see what's around the next corner, so we moved on down to Sylvia falls.

And what you see here was what we found. The fog, the leaves, the low sun and zero wind all combined to make it one of those spellbinding moments you hope for, but rarely ever find.

Needless to say I took my time and made sure not to waste what I'd been given.

Pentax K1, Sigma 20-40mm @ 28mm with polarising filter, f/16, 3s, ISO 100, and a very patient wife.

Alan Daniel



Alan Daniel

Members' Choice – “Herd Immunity”

This is one of my favourite photographs and it taught me a very important lesson.

After a few weeks on the road traveling throughout Spain and Portugal we stopped in Bilbao, capital of Basque Country.

While we were there we visited the Guggenheim Museum, famed for their state of the art design. We were surrounded by its enormous titanium-clad building, water features and sculptures.

After spending a few hours visiting the art museum I started to relax. Instead of looking for publishable images to take, I began to photograph and compose the way I like, rather than the way others expect.

The results were infinitely more satisfying. The lesson: stay authentic and shoot the way you want to shoot.

I was looking for interesting angles to shoot surrounding architecture, then I saw the curved bridge arched over the foggy water.

The enormous sculpture of the

spider hung above the people who were wandering below at their leisure.

I shot this image at the time of global terrorism and the spider could symbolise ISIS spreading terror around the world.

Today our society seems to travel on a curved road rather than a straight one and the spider seems to be growing bigger.

What does our future hold?

Andrzej Krawzyck



Diary

Top Shot 2020

Due to Covid-19 the NSW Federation of Camera Clubs (FCC) will this year run the annual TopShot competition online.

The competition is open to all members of clubs that belong to the FCC.

Sadly we have missed the deadline for this year but we can watch the judging as the event will be live streamed on **14 June**. We'll have more details in our next newsletter.

Meanwhile, why not check out the FCC April newsletter [here](#) - there are some useful tips and links for photography under lockdown.

Next Zoom Meetings

The club will continue to meet online via Zoom until it is safe to hold our meetings in person.

20 May – Info night

27 May – Pub Night

3 June – Exhibition Night



Winning entry in the open category, Heritage Bank Photographic Awards 2018.

You will have received emails about Zoom from Alan Daniel and Greg Wood, so the best thing is to keep your eyes peeled for more updates and how-tos.

May's online exhibition was without a theme. If you haven't already seen the images, they're available through the club's website (click [here](#)) and on Flickr (click [here](#)).

Heritage Bank Photographic Awards

Entries are now open for these awards which have now been running for 32 years. Who knew!

There are two categories: open and photographs on the theme of resilience. The only condition is that you must be an Australian resident.

Prize money is \$50,000 and this year there are two additional

awards: a Young Photographer Award for photographers 17 years and younger, and a Mobile Phone Award for images captured on mobile devices.

Entries – which are free – close at 5:00pm on 5 June. Winners will be notified on 31 July, and an exhibition of the winning images plus the top 50 runners up will run from 1 to 23 September.

For further details, click [here](#).

WWW

International Garden Photographer of the Year

The winning image in this year's IGPTY competition (right) is a striking image of Cosmos flowers growing beside the photographer's summerhouse.

The judges noted that while turning any photograph into black and white is easy enough, "through clear intent, Anne chose the set-up before photographing to dramatic effect.

"This work uses black and white to add something special, not take something away. Both the black and the whites are punchy and incredibly detailed."

All the competition images can be viewed at igpoty.com, but for a quick view of some of the best images click [here](#).

BigPicture Natural World Photography Competition

English photographer Andy Parkinson's hard won image of a native mountain hare sheltering in place against a Scottish winter storm (following page) took the Grand Prize in this year's BigPicture competition.

Parkinson had to face weeks of icy cold and windy conditions before he had the chance to get his winning shot. Mostly the hares will shelter in burrows or hollows, so he was very lucky to encounter one sheltering out in the open by forming herself into a ball to conserve heat and minimise exposure to the inhospitable conditions.

You can view all the competiiton winners [here](#).



Anne MacIntyre: *Ethereal Cosmos*, winner of the International Garden Photographer of the Year B & W photo project.



Andy Parkinson: *Hare Ball*, Grand Prize Winner, BigPicture Natural World Photography Competition.

Be careful out there!



Ciprian Bot: *glavoi* at 00:00, on [500px](#).

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Submitting images



Apple Mail users: after attaching your images please ensure you select

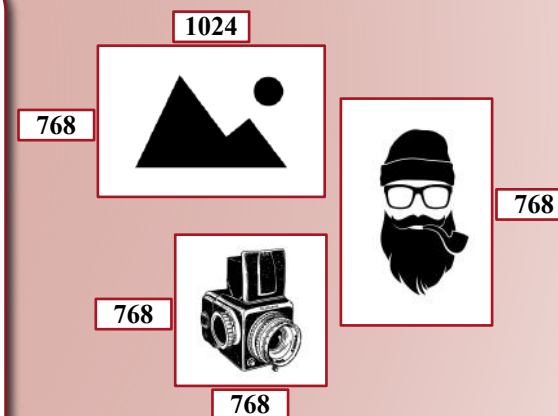
Image Size: Actual Size 

Whether submitting a DPI or digital images of your prints the required format to match the projector is a **maxium width** of 1024 and a **maximum height** of 768 pixels.

For a **landscape** image, set the longest side to 1024 ensuring shortest is no more than 768; for **portrait**, set the longest side to 768, and for a **square** image, all sides are 768.

Please name your image file in the following format: **[type] title_initials.jpg** e.g. [DPI] Womblings_JX.jpg.

The three image types are [DPI], [CP] and [MP]. Use an underscore, not a dash



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