

Newsletter of the



Poly Speaks

Edited by Jim Mildice

**Poly Photo
Camera Club**
San Diego, California

Volume 5, No.9

October, 2014



“Top of Burj Khalifa” – by Aseem Gupta

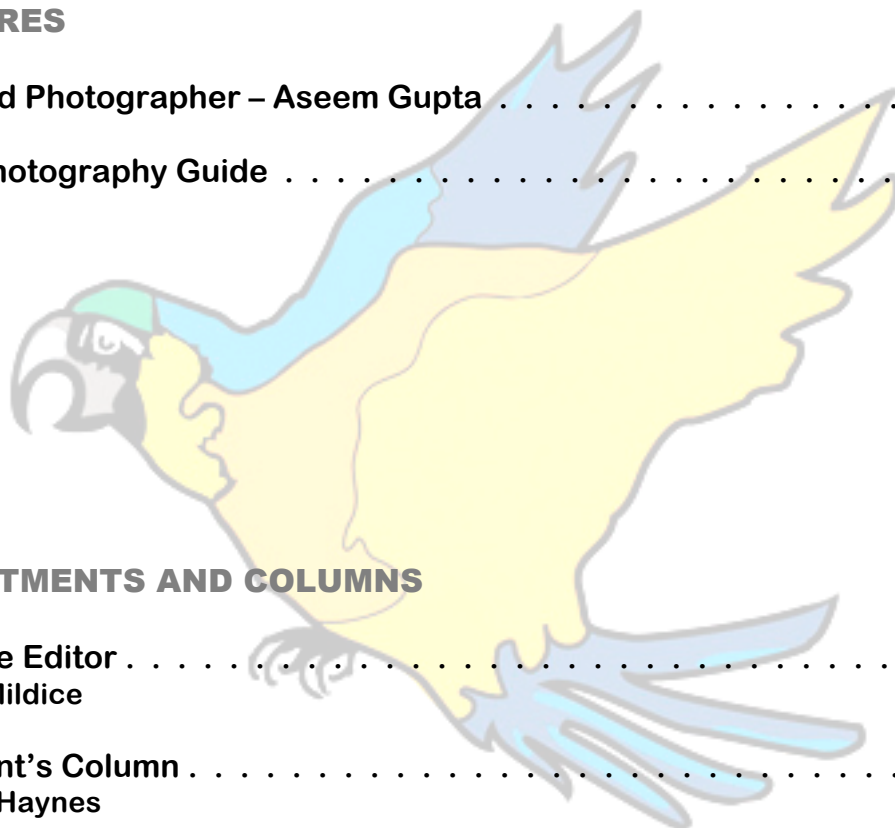
Should Poly Change Its Competitions?

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October, 2014 **Volume 5, No.9**

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Poly Speaks is published by the Poly Photo Camera Club, in San Diego, California. Editor – Jim Mildice
President – Alan Haynes | Vice President – Darlene Elwin | Secretary – Josi Ross | Treasurer – Beverly Brock

From the Editor

Pictures that I expected to see from Aseem Gupta, our featured photographer for this month, were his excellent images from exotic places. I especially like his depiction of the Taj Mahal, which is totally different from the view across the reflecting pool that we always see. It gives us a “sense of place” that the usual others don’t. But his selections for this issue have also shown us that he has a good eye for what he finds locally.

I find the picture we selected for our cover especially interesting. It’s taken from the tallest building in the world, in Dubai, and it shows that given the right perspective, big cities all over the world are more alike than different. Maybe that should be a lesson for how we think about “different” people.

Of course, the big item in the news this month is the proposal to change our monthly competition rules. It’s been interesting to me to see the different views that have been expressed so far, and the passion and conviction on both sides.

“Enter three images per person per month. Leave the rule the same as it presently is!! I want objective feedback on more of my images. We have plenty of time.”

“Allow only two images per person per month. Change the rule!! There are too many images for a single meeting and good feedback. It’s taking too long.”

Also, there seem to be some people with strong emotions on both sides. I would like to encourage you to try to put feelings aside and make a logical, unemotional choice about what is best for you and best for the Club as a whole. We certainly don’t want Poly to

follow the course of Bret Hart’s “*Society upon the Stanislaus*.”

With a proposal as contentious as this one seems to be, Clark has suggested that next month’s vote be by secret ballot. That sounds like a pretty good idea to me. At least, that way, the losing side (whichever one that is) won’t know who to be mad at.

I like night photography. Pictures taken at night often have high impact and people like them, perhaps because it’s difficult to get images from a light-dependent, artistic medium when there is not much light.

Most photographers know that a tripod is normally needed. And modern digital technology gives us the opportunity to see the results immediately to decide if the image is what we want it to be.

So we can try an exposure, and adjust whichever element of the exposure triad we want to get the final result we expected.

But it always takes me a while, with some trial and error, to find that baseline exposure. The chart on Page 8 helps to solve that problem. It lists common situations we might encounter in night photography. Then for

each condition it gives us a shutter speed for an aperture setting of f/16 and three different ISO settings. So it’s easy to take that first picture, and also easy to transpose aperture / shutter speed / ISO settings to other combinations.

The values given will not necessarily give us the final picture. But they will provide us with the first recognizable starting point image that can then be “tweaked” to give us what we saw with our subjective vision.



President's Column

Alan Haynes

As the competition year begins to wind down, it's time to seriously consider the discussion about the way Poly's competition meetings work. I'm talking about getting more out of our competition entries by changing an important competition rule. A motion for change has been made, and this change could be implemented in January if our membership votes to do so at the November meeting.

Competition Entries: 2 or 3?

For the longest time, Poly has allowed each member to enter three images in open competition each month. That policy worked fine when the club was smaller, but now that we've grown – 88 members at last count – we need to consider changing that number to two.

Here's why this would be an improvement:

1. Most members enjoy receiving feedback on their images from our judges. With 100 to 120 images entered in a typical open competition, we're getting shortchanged because the judge has to speed through the images to finish on time, so critiques are kept to a minute or less per image. With only two entries per member, the judge could spend more time on each entry.
2. Judges and members become fatigued after a couple of hours of looking at photos, no matter how good they are.

While members can leave when they want, the judge can't. If the judge gets tired – and a few judges have mentioned this issue to me – images shown near the end of the competition may not receive the judge's full attention which, again, results in an unsatisfactory critique. Fewer images means better critiques.

3. Because we need to vacate the PAB by noon in the summer months, so that it can be opened to the public, the judging needs to be finished by about 11:30 at the latest. This gives us time for our break and for the final viewing of the accepted and winning images. If we had fewer entries, we could finish judging *before* 11:30. Then, we'd have time to discuss some of the images during the review so that we can learn from each other as well as from the judge.

It comes down to a matter of quantity versus quality. Do we want to show a lot of images quickly or show fewer images so that we can consider each one more carefully? For members who want to share more images, Poly has a Flickr group and there are other options we can consider for critiquing each other's images online.

A formal rule-change proposal was presented last month to be voted on at the November meeting. So, start thinking and deciding about how you will vote.

Featured Photographer of the Month – Aseem Gupta

“Top of Burj Khalifa” – (on the cover) The tallest building in the world, Burj Khalifa, is located in Dubai. This picture was taken a couple of years back, when I went there to celebrate my first marriage anniversary. You can choose and book the time you want to be at the top. I decided to go at night to get this great view of the Dubai Downtown. I was lucky enough to find a clear, fog-less view that night.



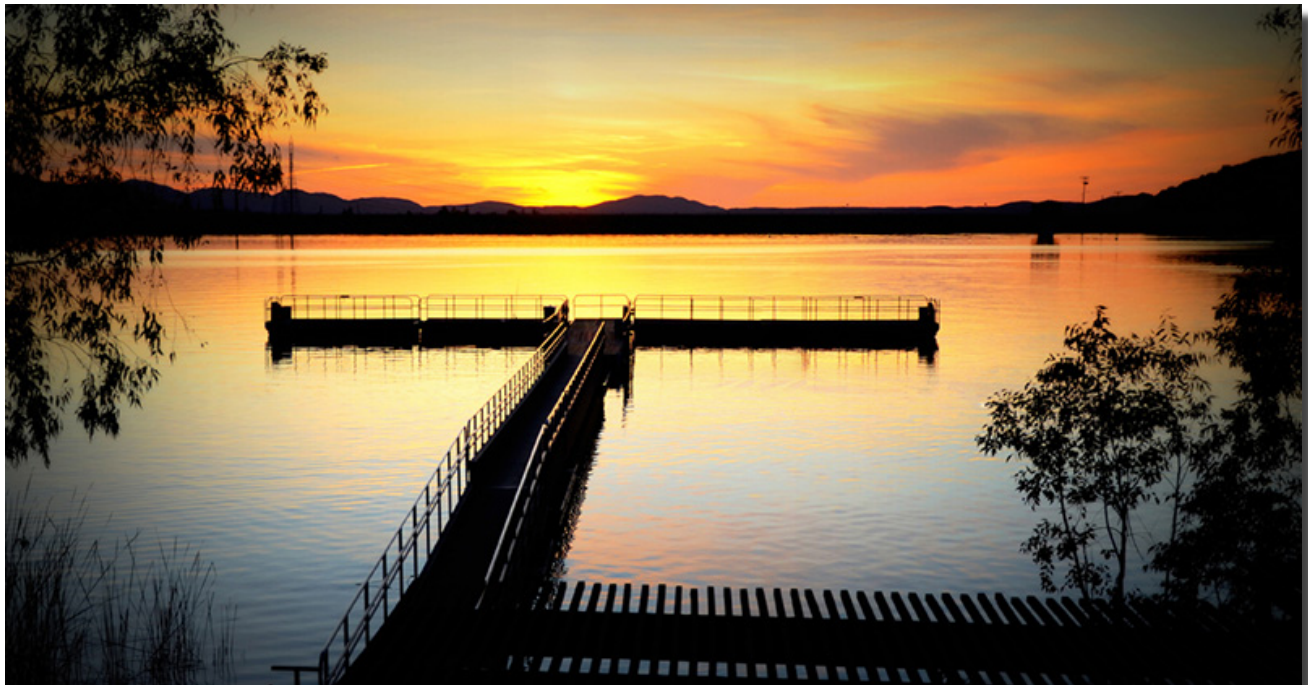
“Taj Mahal, India”– During my India trip in December 2013, I decided to spend one entire day just taking pictures of the Taj Mahal. My dad decided to accompany me for my trip, for which we took an early morning train from Delhi, India. Not lot of people know that there is even a way to go to the other side of river to shoot Taj Mahal. I planned myself to be there around sunset time to avoid harsh light. The sun in the background and animals in the foreground add to the beauty of the picture.



“San Diego Downtown” – This picture was taken from Harbor Island and is a combination of eight pictures stitched together to cover the entire downtown along with the Coronado Bridge.



“Pier at Lake Jennings” – The plan was to be there at the lake to take some sunset shots. However, by the time I reached the lake and could find a good spot to take my pictures, the sun had already set. The colors continued to be so dynamic that I couldn't resist taking pictures till it was almost dark.





“My wife’s Henna” – a picture taken couple of years back. I had just bought my external flash and wanted to try different things. The idea behind this picture was to capture some of the elements of Indian culture, henna and the decorative bangles, which are part of any Indian festival. The flowing water was to add some drama to the shot.

This and That

By Clark Winsor

At the meeting this month we will be hearing about the nominated club officers for the coming year and we could be discussing two motions.

The first one is the motion to change the number of competition entries from three to two. There has already been much discussion on this and I see no point in going over old ground.

There has been a little thinking out loud about another issue. That's how I heard about it. It's about the difficulty in getting building hosts to keep the PAB open (as required by the City) on Sundays (and Saturdays during the summer). This too, can have controversial

solutions and will have all of us talking about it. I don't think we're ready for a floor vote, so we'll just have to wait and see what ideas are proposed.

The voting for the competition changes will be in November. I request that our club officers use a secret ballot. It would be a shame if someone was influenced by seeing how other members were voting.

We'll look at the building host problem more next month.

Clark

SCACC News – September 2014

Mary Anderson

The bi-monthly SCACC meeting was held Tuesday 9/2/14. Not much new to report, other than the SCACC web site is still in process. It needs modernization/updating and several alternatives are being explored.

SCACC is in the black, due in large part to the income generated by John Watts and Larry Vogel workshops.

The Oct 11 Clydesdale Ranch photo shoot was discussed and all in attendance were requested to pass the info on to club

members. Here is the website to visit with all the information about this shoot:

<http://sandiegophotoshoots.weebly.com/>.

Unfortunately, the shoot coincides with the Poly trip to Paso Robles, so many members will not be able to attend.

The next SCACC bi-monthly meeting is Tuesday 11/4 @7pm at PAB. All Poly members are welcome to attend. Participation is always encouraged!

Quote of the Month –

“I am sure the next step will be the electronic image, and I hope I shall live to see it. I trust that the creative eye will continue to function, whatever technological innovations may develop.”

– Ansel Adams

How to Take a Night Photo

When taking pictures at night, modern digital cameras allow us to see the results with an actual image preview and histograms to adjust the exposure to what we want. But it could take a lot of trial and error to even get a recognizable evaluation image on your viewing screen.

The chart below provides a solution to that problem. It gives us an exposure for many of

the conditions encountered at night as a function of three different ISO settings (f/16 at *shutter speed*). You can easily calculate other settings for other combinations.

The exposures listed for different conditions will not necessarily provide you with a finished picture; but they will give you an image that you can then use as a basis for your final exposure adjustment.



Coming Events

Darlene Elwin

October 4 – Competition.

The “Project” subject is “*Humor with Pets or Other Animals.*”

October’s Judge will be Ron Ham. Ron has been the assistant coordinator for the photography exhibit at the fair for several years; and in charge of the event for the past few. He is the prime mover in the Fair Photography Exhibit’s evolution toward utilizing the advantages provided to today’s photographers by modern digital technologies. He implemented the Two-Tier judging methodology with digital submissions that is being currently used.

This will be his first time judging at Poly. But because of his long experience with the juried exhibitions at the San Diego Fair, he is well-qualified to offer commentary on our images that will help us succeed on the bigger stage that large, juried exhibitions have to offer to expand our artistic horizons.

October 10, 11, 12, 13

POLY Field Trip/Photoshoot

This will be a great photoshoot in beautiful wine country – Paso Robles. We always have a fabulous time of shooting, fellowship (and in this case wine tasting), and sharing of tips. Contact Sue Cerise at scerise@hotmail.com for reservations and more information. But you will need to make individual reservations for your own lodging. Here is some additional information about available hotels.

Paso Robles is having Pioneer Day the weekend of our field trip. There will lots of activities including a parade, a little cowboy and cowgirl contest, antique classic cars, and old gas engines. However, it also means that hotels are already quite full, so we need to book quickly. The two best budget motels, the Adelaide and the Melody Resort are booked. I am listing the rest that have availability with notes, and I think we need to book IMMEDIATELY! Hopefully most or all of us can stay at or near the same place.

I need your feedback and we need to make reservations ASAP! I think all but the Travelodge have a 72 hour cancellation policy.

PASO ROBLES:

Motel 6: 805-239-9090 Listed at \$92 on Kayak. Didn’t stop in to check because reviews were varied

Travelodge: 805-238-0078 \$99. Stopped in; OK but wants a nonrefundable deposit said he would work with you if you call.

Budget Inn: 805-239-3030 \$139-\$149. Clean, newly decorated, kings and queens available, best of the three

ATASCADERO:

Best Western Colony Inn: average \$139 (Fri & Sat \$159, Sun \$99). This hotel is about 10 miles outside Paso and includes breakfast. This is by far the best of all the hotels and would be my pick. We’ll be outside Paso most of the time anyway and this hotel has easy access to freeway.

Check out our new poster display board in the middle PAB room to see photos of this area and photos from our April trip to Zion.

October 18 – Workshop: Contemplative Photography, meeting in the Photo Arts Building.

Gazing at your naval? Staring at a flower? Meditative scenes? Contemplative Photography may be the way to turn these moments into expressive pictures.

Jan Handman, Steff Strachan and Dee Elwin will be presenting. You’ll want to attend this event to find out what is meant by Contemplative Photography – especially since the Project Topic for November is Contemplative Photography.