
Poly Speaks

Magazine of the

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



Volume 7, No.7

September, 2016



"End of the World" – by Drema Swader

Plan ahead for the Joshua Tree trip. (page 9)

CONTENTS

News and Views of Poly Photo Camera Club Members
September, 2016 **Volume 7, No.7**

FEATURES

Featured Photographer – Drema Swader 4

DEPARTMENTS AND COLUMNS

From the Editor 2
Jim Mildice

Musings from the President 3
Dee Elwin

This and That 7
Clark Winsor

The Photoshop Insider 8
Jeff Booher

SCACC Report 9
Mary Anderson

Coming Events 10
Josi Ross

Poly Speaks is published by the Poly Photo Camera Club, in San Diego, California.

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From the Editor

Our featured photographer this month is Drema Swader. Drema's great images are a success no matter where she takes them. She wins awards at Poly. Her pictures are acclaimed at the San Diego Fair. You can see her prints in the Darkroomers' display in the Photo Arts Building.

We can all see what judges think of her work. So, as we like to do in this feature, we asked her to show us those that she personally likes or have special meaning to her. When I looked through them, I was amazed at how far she travels with her camera. From the ice and cold of Norway and Iceland to the solitary (and difficult) wilderness of the Pacific Crest Trail, to the cities of Europe, to the plains of Africa. Well, look at these few pictures, and enjoy.

I also want to remind you about an opportunity to explore a highly specialized aspect of Photography next month – taking creative Astronomical (night sky) pictures. Les and Mary Anderson are real experts in this field, and their workshops are filled with practical information about all the techniques and equipment necessary for the practice of this discipline, and to top it all off, they are excellent teachers. Oh, and you'll get to see some beautiful night sky pictures along the way.

As an extra bonus, you'll get to put what you learn into practice (before you forget a lot of the details) the next week-end in the desert (with its clear sky) on the Poly field trip to Joshua Tree.

I know that it sounds like a waste of time to most of you, but I've been spending some time with my camera's instruction manual lately.

We talk a lot about the artistic side of photography (a lot) when we discuss making better images. But don't forget that there is a technology aspect we can't ignore. Modern digital equipment removes many of the camera considerations that were an integral part of making a picture in the "olden days."

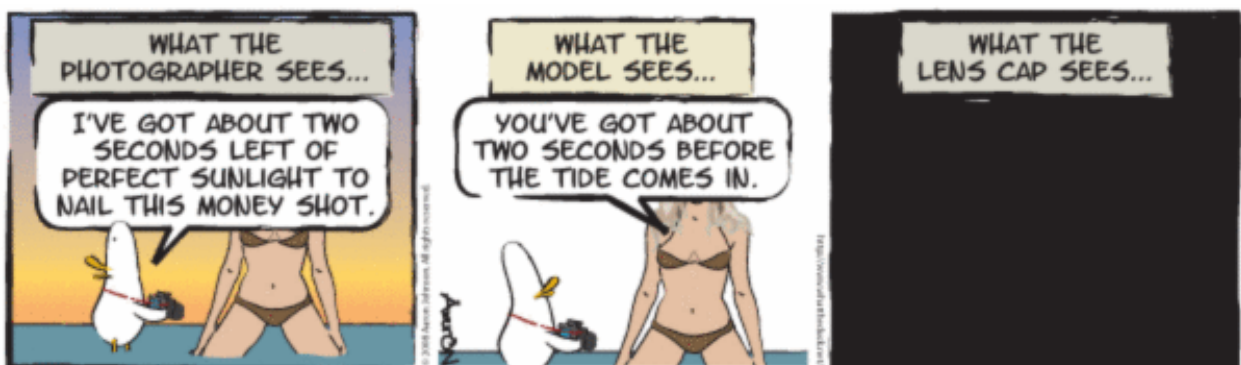
Auto-exposure, auto-focus, vibration-reduction, auto-ISO, auto-scene selection, and all the other "*autos*" could almost let us find and frame something that looks good, and then simply "*point-and-shoot*."

I've said before that having a camera that can do so much can help free the artist in us. We can focus more of the artistry of the shot if we don't need to pay so much attention to the mechanical operation of the camera. But we do need to understand what our equipment can and can't do if we expect to do our best work.

The digitally-enabled capabilities of our equipment can also help us do more as artists if we remember to pay attention to them. But we need to understand when and how to use them for the best effects. You know, aperture priority to enable depth-of-field control, shutter priority to control the appearance of motion, etc.

Finally, we also need equipment familiarity, practice, and understanding to avoid the "dumb" mistakes like those of the "*WTD*" photographer below.

Remember you do need to pay attention to your equipment too.



Musings from the President

It's summer and time for vacations and travel photography. On Saturday, August 20, Nick Agelidis gave a presentation on making photo books with your travel images. But the part I particularly enjoyed was in preparing for a trip. Nick shared some useful tips based on his personal experiences.

On one of his earlier trips, he showed how extremely detailed his plans were. Just about every hour of each day was meticulously plotted out. He pretty much stuck to his plan with the end result of his being exhausted by the end of that "vacation." Realizing that this was not a fun experience, he has since relaxed his idea of a well-planned photography vacation/trip.

The following are some things Nick suggests to consider when planning a photography vacation. What time of year are you traveling? What will the weather be like? What is the itinerary? What are your physical limitations? Do you have a theme? Of course, it's helpful to look at travel guides and the internet for "must see" places. Google Earth and an app to check the sun or moon's path over your chosen locations are helpful.

Are museums or exhibits in your plans? Check out the hours, days and admission fees. What about building restoration? Have you ever arrived at a destination only to discover scaffolding around a structure your heart is set on photographing?

"Be flexible!" Is Nick's advice. Make an itinerary, but be prepared to stray from it. It's simply a guide and still has useful information about museums, exhibits and distances from place A to place B.

Find original shots. Sure, it's OK to get iconic shots, but then look for unusual angles, composition or lighting to set your image apart from the masses. Bad weather? Look for opportunities in that, too. If the day is colorless and dreary consider a B & W conversion.

Additional tips from readings:

Avoid package tours. Traveling with many other folks on a tight schedule forces you to take snapshots (unless it's a photography tour).

Don't try to do too much in a short time. No matter how much time you have, you can't see it all. Plan on several days to scope things out in a particular location that looks promising.

Be adventurous. Don't limit yourself to the paths well-worn. Be willing to take that other "fork in the road."

Enjoy yourself! If you're not having fun, put down your camera and take some time to re-evaluate. Nick's advice? Take a break and have a really great lunch!

Happy Shooting!
-dee

Quote of the Month

"Why do most great pictures look uncontrived? Why do photographers bother with the deception, especially since it so often requires the hardest work of all? The answer is, I think, that the deception is necessary if the goal of art is to be reached: only pictures that look as if they had been easily made can convincingly suggest that beauty is commonplace."

— Robert Adams

Photographer of the Month – Drema Swader

“End of the World”

(Full-size image on the cover)

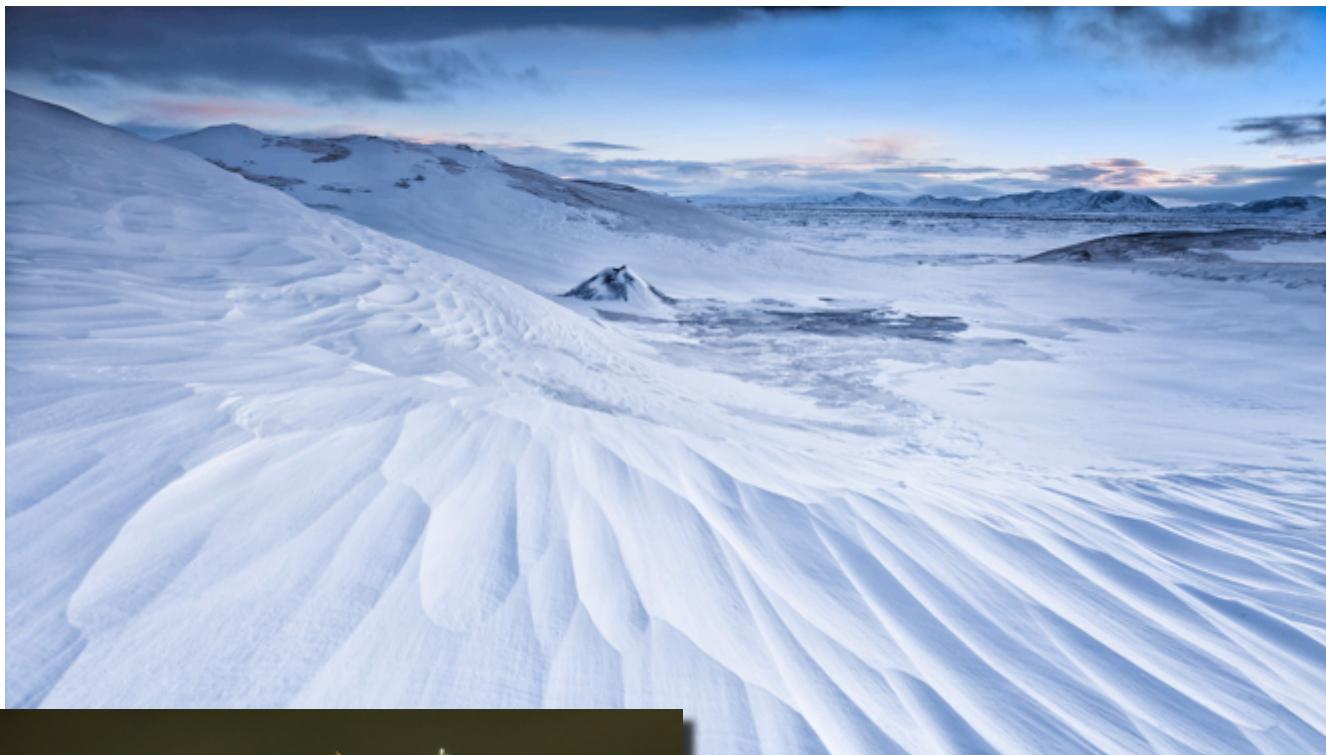
Footsteps in the ice and snow on the rock overlook just outside the village of † at the Lofoten Islands in Norway. † is the last letter of the Norwegian alphabet and this village is the last stop before the "End of the World".

This slightly low key photograph is looking south towards the last of the Lofoten Islands. The only signs of humanity are the footsteps left behind in the light dusting of snow.



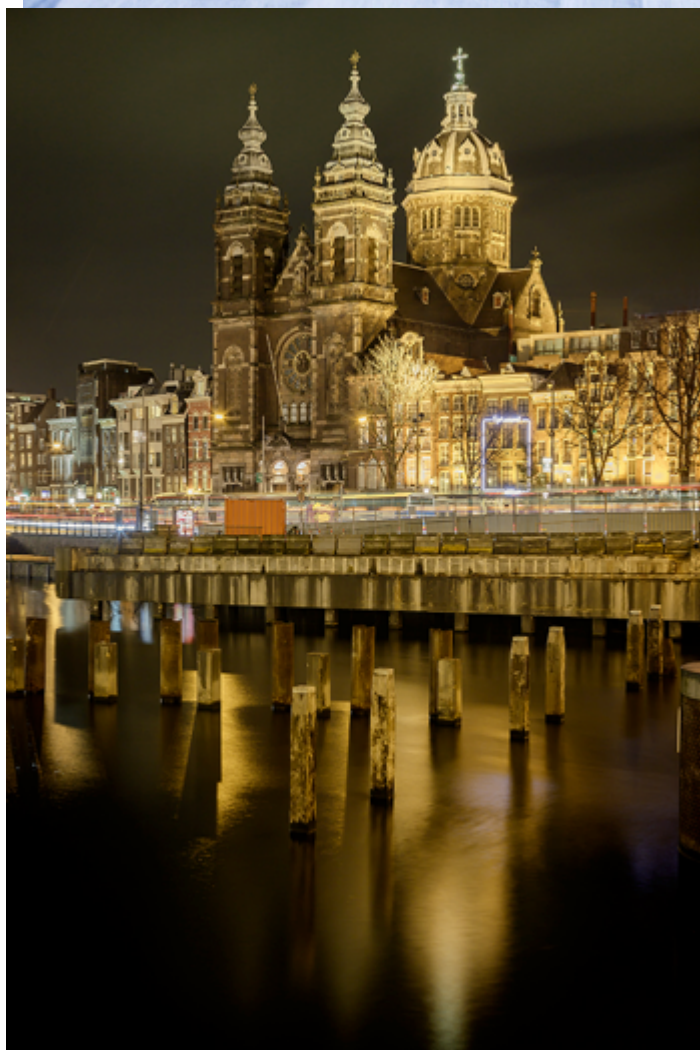
“Sunset on the Pacific Crest Trail”

Although some judges might say this photo is too bright in the upper corner and draws the eye there, I think of it as the light from the sunset pouring down onto the scene, and the eye follows the light. It leads the eye to explore the valley, and is guided up the canyon to the large rocks. It gives the viewer a look at the far off desert enclosed by the mountains on either side.



“Near Reykjahlid Village”

This picture is not one for which I have won any ribbons or awards, but it is one of my favorites for its artistry. I love the simplicity of this photo. The viewer can enjoy the patterned texture of the snow as the eye follows the leading lines into the ice laden valley with the small peak projecting from its center. The early morning colors of the sky and snow speak to the crispness in the cold brisk air.



“Basilica of St. Nicholas”

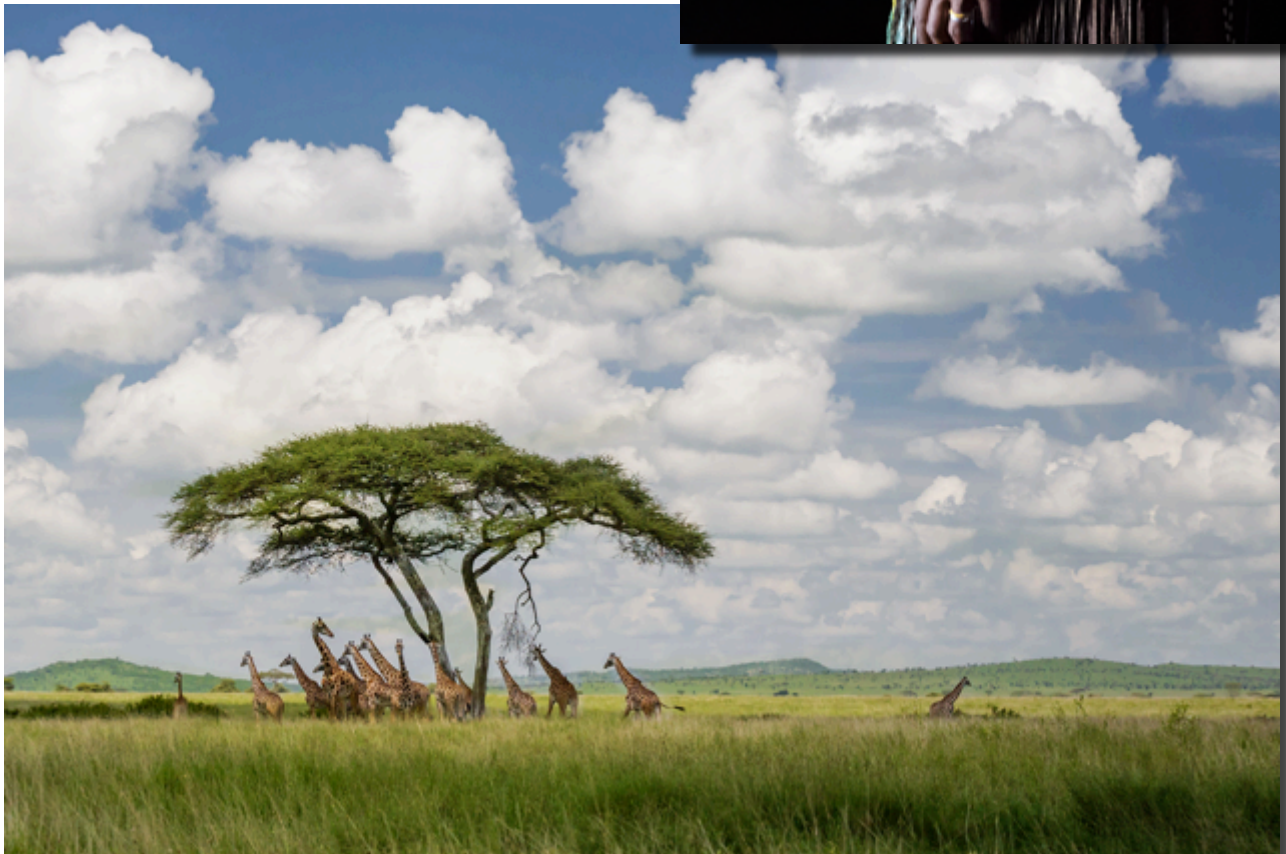
On a cold winter night the Basilica of St. Nicholas towered tall above the canal in central Amsterdam. This photo was a bit difficult because the heavy traffic crossing the bridge from which this was taken made getting a long exposure more difficult. For a 30 second exposure at F/11, I was lucky to get a pretty sharp image while trying to catch a time when the traffic wasn't shaking the bridge.

“Young Woman of the Datoga Tribe”

I mostly shoot landscapes, so this portrait taken in a hut of the Datoga Tribe in a remote area in Africa is a bit out of character for me. While watching a demo of one of the tribe's women grinding grain in the center of the dark hut, I noticed this woman standing near the door. The light of the door was lighting her face, and I was able to get this shot.

“Giraffes Under Acacia Tree”

The Serengeti Plain was picture perfect this day. The rains had turned the grasses of the plain green, and the white puffy clouds floated effortlessly across the sky. Our group was intent upon shooting a far off leopard across the road, but the real picture was the herd of giraffes in the opposite direction gathering underneath an Acacia Tree. Do you suppose the lone giraffe was on a “time out” or just not wanting to socialize with the others?



This and That

By Clark Winsor

When I was first asked to contribute to Poly Speaks, my idea was cover several topics, none in great detail. Looking back, I can see I got away from that approach. This month, I'll try to get back to my original idea for this column. The views expressed in this column are my opinions only, and do not reflect the views of anyone else who contributes to Poly Speaks.

Debbie Beals judged our August competition. I think that Debbie's comments, and her ability to express her thoughts, is the best of any of the judges in the SCACC pool. I hope we have her back often.

Change is coming to the way Poly presents its competition images. As I understand it beginning in 2017, we will have two competition divisions. One will focus on

Artistic Impressions, and the second is a Realistic Photography division. The maker will select which division his or her images will compete in. Since this will require a Bylaws change, we should hear more about this at our September meeting, so we can publish the proposal and vote on it in time for the 2017 competition year.

Kurt's Camera Repair has moved. Their new address is 7403 Princess View Drive, Suite B, San Diego, CA 92120. Their phone number is 619-286-1810.

Talk to you next month,
Clark



The Photoshop Insider

By Jeff Booher

Retouching in Lightroom

I use the Spot Healing tool in Lightroom quite a bit. It's a little more convenient than the Spot Healing Brush in Photoshop (and it's less versatile) but it can be a real time saver if you know use it. Here are my top 10 tips and tricks:

1. Lightroom selects what it wants to clone in automatically for you. The source is indicated with a circle and an arrow pointing to the destination.
2. You can drag either the source or destination to either heal a different area or choose a different source. While choosing a different source is obvious because Lightroom will often choose a source that is inappropriate, moving the destination may be less obvious. My workflow may require that I "Build-up" several passes with the spot healing tool in Lightroom to get the area blended the way I need it. Unfortunately, Lightroom does not let you do this easily so you must heal an area that doesn't need healing and move the destination and probably the source as well to get everything blended appropriately.
3. Use the forward slash (/) key to have Lightroom try to select a different source for you.
4. You can select a "Spot" and switch between "Clone" and "Heal"; maybe Healing works better than Cloning so switch back and forth to see which one works better. You can

adjust other parameters as well (Opacity, Feathering or Size).

5. "Spots" Do not have to be Circles. You can click and drag out all sorts of shapes however you will not be able to adjust the size of free-form adjustments.
6. Hold down the shift key and click to points to draw a straight line
7. Use an external mouse with a mouse wheel or touch control (Mac) to adjust the size of the tool as needed.
8. Use the "Visualize Spots" feature to remove sensor dust from your photos.
9. Press the spacebar and right click while using the "Spot Healing" tool to zoom in; drag the mouse while holding down the spacebar and clicking the left mouse button to pan around the photo (useful in Visual Spots mode).
10. Use the "Revert" button to remove all of your spot healing retouches or you can toggle the module on and off with the toggle switch on the bottom left corner of the panel.

I will be demonstrating these at the December 7th Darkroomers Meeting along with hundreds of other Lightroom and Photoshop workflows, tricks, tips and techniques.

SCACC News – September 2016

Mary Anderson

Lots going on at SCACC these days!

- We have been accepted into Balboa Park Cultural Partnership (BPCP) which, hopefully, will give us more exposure and access to more Balboa Park on-line resources. Just received notice of acceptance, so we still need to pay dues for one year, but that is coming soon. We have also been working with BPCP on more energy-efficient lighting for the building. The “regular” bulbs have already been replaced and gallery lighting is being examined next. This will not only reduce electricity use, but LED bulbs give off a lot less heat.
- You may have noticed Wi-Fi is stronger at the PAB. Balboa Park Online Collaborative has finished their install at Spanish Village and we have an extender to bring more Wi-Fi power into the building. Still testing to be sure coverage is strong and consistent. Easy to access “BalboaPark” Wi-Fi on your smartphone, no password, and it’s free!
- Hard to miss the construction going on in the bathroom area. The City is installing grab bars and a higher toilet in one of the stalls. We never can be fully ADA compliant, and are not required to be as PAB is a historical building, but this effort

by the City is a nice gesture to at least do what we can within the constraints of existing construction.

- Photo Artists Camera Club (PACC) president Mike Packard has decided to structure the group as a Meetup rather than a Club. PACC may join again as a club at a later date, but for now, the meet-up is available as “San Diego Photo Artists” on-line through the Meetup site.
- SCACC members did VERY well at the Fair this year. First Place Ribbons – 20%. Total ribbons (1st Place to HM) – 30%. Best of Show – 100%!! Congratulations Robin Stern!

Important upcoming dates:

The next SCACC meeting is **Tuesday September 6** at 7pm and everyone is welcome to attend.

Next Interclub competition is **Tuesday September 20**. Interclub consists of four SCACC clubs (Poly, Photo Nats, Darkroomers, and Fallbrook), which compete bi-monthly. Competition viewing is open to all and starts at 7:30pm at PAB.

Here are a couple of “plan ahead” reminders for next month.

Les and Mary's Night Photography Workshop – Oct. 15, 9:30-12:30 – PAB

Les and Mary Anderson have worked up a new and improved (according to them) “*Shot in the Dark*” workshop. Always entertaining and informative, Les and Mary will guide you through what you need to photograph the night skies. **This workshop is a must if you plan to attend the Joshua Tree outing.**

Joshua Tree Field Trip – October 21-23 (or any part thereof)

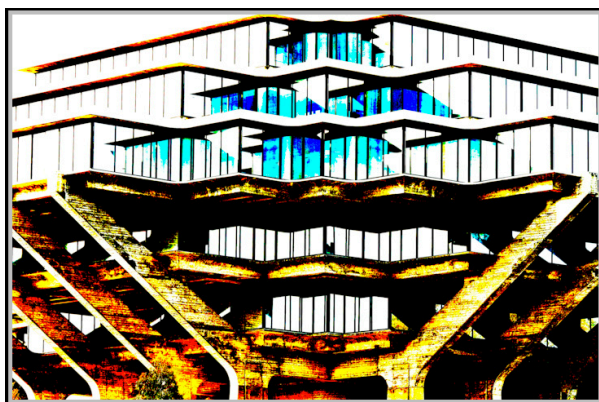
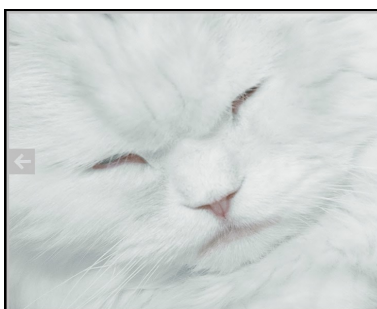
Now is the time to book your hotel! October is a great time to visit Joshua Tree. Cheryl and Larry Redman are heading up this next great Poly adventure. Plans are being set for a night shoot and hiking/photography during the day. A visit to Keys Ranch has been booked. Check polyphotoclub.com for more information regarding the hotels. Contact Cheryl at cheryl.redman@yahoo.com.

Programs and Coming Events

Josi Ross & Barbara Fletcher

September 3 - Competition August's Project Theme is "Unusual Signs/Graffiti."

Our judge for this month will be **John Sisti**. I don't think that John has judged for us before, so here are a few samples of his work. You can see more at johnsistiphoto.net/Gallery/index.html.



September 17 – Compositing Workshop – PAB

With Teresa Jackson

Theresa Jackson graduated from UCLA with a BFA in 1984. She has developed an expertise in photo retouching, photo composition and all matters related to pre-press and printing. She won the Photosop World

Guru Award for Excellence in Photoshop Design, Artistic Category 2010. She currently teaches at UCSD Extension.

If you have wondered how to put two images together without it looking like you put two images together, this workshop is for you.

Teresa will walk us through the mystery of Photoshop compositing. She will take us through the journey of creating a composite from start to finish, demonstrating:

- Compositing inspiration and planning
- Organizing ideas in Lightroom
- Working between Lightroom and Photoshop
- Finding stock images
- Photoshop layers and layer masks
- Selections and masking
- Layer Blend Modes
- Color balance and tones
- Adding Textures