

POLY SPEAKS

Magazine of the Polyphoto Camera Club



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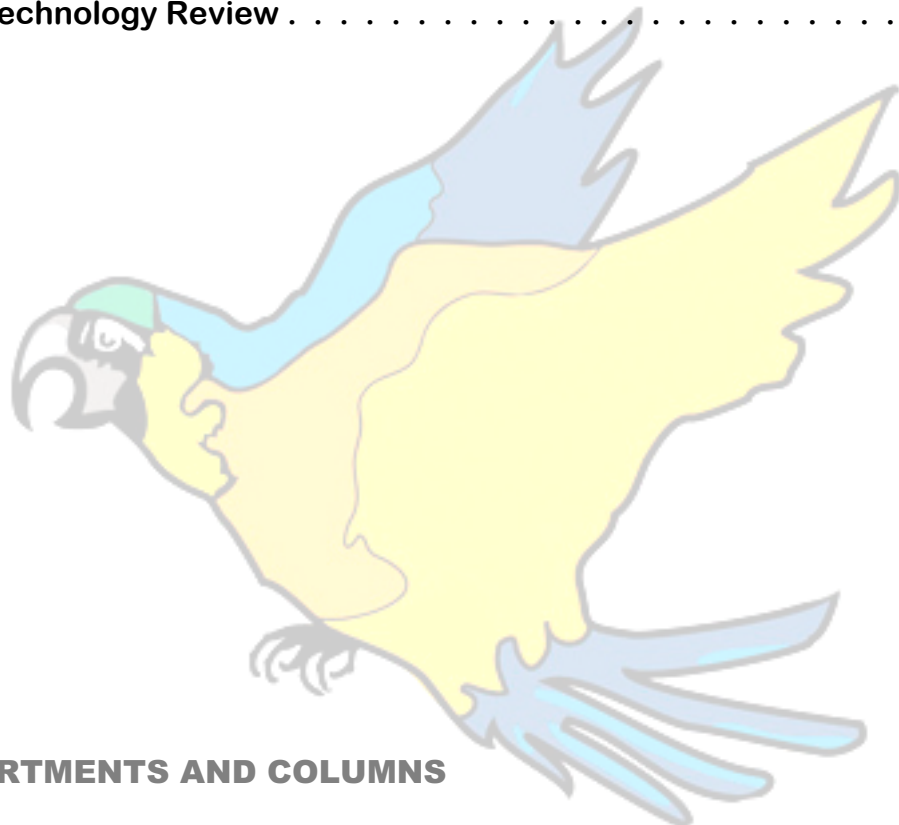
New Technology Issue

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From the Editor

In general, the feedback I have received about last month's issue focusing on a simplified interpretation of our Reality (R) and Altered Reality (AR) competition categories can be summarized as "*good, I think everyone should understand it now.*"

Of course, knowing people as we do, that's probably "a little" optimistic. But if we all pay attention, and even those of us who are the most resistant to change work at it, we can finally eliminate most of the problems and objections we have had so far.

That (and the "*Calvin & Hobbs*" cartoon on the cover) got me thinking about change from a wider point-of-view.

We live in a world of change! Everything changes, all the time. Sometimes, we don't even notice small changes until after they combine with others to make a "big change."

Of course, big technology changes are pretty obvious. Some of us acknowledge and embrace new methods enabled by new devices; and incorporate them into our lives (at a level appropriate for ourselves). Others of us are "dragged along, kicking and screaming," to a new (if different) level of acceptance.

As Calvin observes, a lot of changes sneak up on us (and that's good).

As photographers, we need to address change all the time. While a lot of our tools look more-or-less the same, today's equipment is completely different from what we used when most of us started, more than ten or twenty years ago.

We think that the change from film to digital photography was enormous, and it was, in total. But digital photography, as it exists today, developed in tiny, incremental steps along a forty year evolutionary path.

At first (in 1975), digital cameras only existed in Steve Sasson's lab at an Eastman Kodak experimental facility; where they were labeled (by Kodak upper management), "*An interesting trick, that would never amount to anything.*"

Considering what happened to their film business (and their company), they probably should have left it at that. But advancing technology will not be denied, and they continued to experiment.

They went on to create a real camera prototype by installing a sensor and its electronics in a Nikon F3. By 1987, they had a one megapixel sensor. In 1992, they announced the first commercially-available camera, the DCS-200. It was a Nikon N8008s with its removable back replaced by a Kodak sensor and electronics assembly. We should also note that by then, automation (focus and exposure) had already been developed for SLR film cameras.

After that, everyone jumped on the bandwagon, and the previous slow, incremental changes sped up until they started to go by in a blur.

Computers entered our realm through Photoshop and its post processing capabilities. Darkrooms disappeared. We entered the electronics realm of Moore's law, and capability doubled every year or two.

And now, just about everything related to the **technology** of photography is different, and it is still continuing to change.

Hardly anyone likes change. I think the key for us as photographers is to recognize and embrace those new things that make picture taking and artistic expression easier by allowing us freedom from many of the hardware demands and procedures of the past.

And remember, while today's technology will enable almost anyone to take a sharp, well-exposed picture, the things that a photographer needs to do to make it a **good picture** are the same as they always have been. And the camera (DSLR vs. SLR) still feels the same in my hands; what I see through the viewfinder looks about the same; and it makes the same kind of sounds when I trip the shutter. The only difference is in the mechanical overhead, so we can pay more attention to the art we produce.

Today's Emerging New Technologies

Photokina was last week, so I think it's appropriate to discuss what equipment manufacturers are going to be offering for next year.

Of course, I didn't go all the way to Cologne. But the reports coming from some of those who did seemed to focus on two "big" issues, high-end mirrorless cameras and more pixels.

Since both **Nikon and Canon have released full-frame mirrorless cameras**, many writers have focused on them. And of course, we are already seeing the usual comparisons (based on the inconsequential differences) between them and the well-established Sony equivalents.

Most of the mainstream photography writers usually act more like cheerleaders than evaluators, so I think we need to view their evaluations with the well-known "grain of salt." Therefore, many of the (obviously preliminary) opinions you will see here will be based on what some reliable bloggers have reported, and my own conclusions.

First, why should we want mirrorless cameras? For the camera body – Mirrorless should make it more reliable, have less vibration, and cost less (though we haven't seen any sign of that so far).

Vibration reduction at the sensor instead of in the lens – should simplify the mechanical lens design and make it less expensive.

And the biggest one we hear – smaller and lighter. I haven't actually used one of these high-end cameras; but reports I hear from people who have, made me wonder if this is one of those "inconsequential differences." It's true that the body is a little smaller and lighter; but by the time you put a telephoto or zoom lens on it and hold it to take a picture, you may not notice the difference.

Finally, my biggest disappointment in these cameras is that they have another new lens mount. Nikon has resisted temptation; and kept the original Nikon F lens mount for more than 50 years. I've been told that to get the best design for a mirrorless, full-frame camera system, you need a new lens mount; and I know

there's an adapter, and maybe, that will be (sort of) OK.

Second – more megapixels. The race to more megapixels has continued, unabated. **Fuji seems to be charging into the lead in this area** in their quest to turn the "big three" into a "big four." While the "big three" keep increasing their pixel count through higher pixel densities in their full-frame cameras, Fuji seems to be intent on going to bigger (medium format) sensors, with only slightly larger camera bodies.



While the traditional Hasselblad-style box continues in the medium format class, Fuji is offering its GFX50R that looks like slightly-enlarged, traditional rangefinder, 35-mm style body. And it's lighter than the Canon 5D Mark IV or the Nikon D850. It has a 51.4 MP sensor and costs about \$4500.

Fuji has also announced that a 100 MP version will be out soon.

In the professional arena, **Phase-One** has long been the megapixel champion. Its XF IQ4 camera system is 150 MP and (including lens) costs \$52,000.



Speaking of **Hasselblad**, if your photographic equipment budget is unlimited, you might consider their HD6-400cMS. It has a basic 100 MP sensor; and can shoot a series of four or six stacked exposures, while moving the sensor a pixel at a time. In the six exposure mode, it produces a 400 MP image. You can own it for \$48,000 or rent it for \$475 per day.



Of course, you can buy a less expensive Hasselblad X1D-50c (50 MP) (with lens) for about \$10,000 after a \$3500 B&H instant discount.

Leica, Panasonic, and Sigma have just announced the new L-Mount Alliance, a new collaborative effort based around the Leica L-Mount. The three companies will develop new L-mount full-frame and APS-C mirrorless cameras and lenses.

Leica and Panasonic already have an existing relationship. After pricing themselves into the specialty market, PetaPixel reports Leica has a history of rebadging Panasonic consumer and prosumer cameras as pricier Leica versions. The blogosphere is already wondering if we will see rebadged Sigma lenses on Leica cameras in the future.



Leica also introduced a silver version of their classic design CL camera, with nothing special but its name to recommend it. It's mirrorless with an APS-C sensor and costs about \$4000 with an 18-56mm zoom lens.

OK, enough about the high-end curiosities; there was plenty of the more practical stuff to entice us normal people.

I also noticed longer focal lengths and more extreme zooms

Nikon has taken the grand prize in this area for this year. It has introduced the Coolpix P1000. It's DSLR-styled and doesn't have interchangeable lenses, but its optical zoom range is 125x (that's 24mm to 3000mm) with an additional digital add-on to 6000mm. It's mirror-less, with an f2.8–8.0 lens, 16 megapixel sensor, and five stop VR. It costs about \$1000. If you are willing to settle for only a 2000mm optical top end, you can get a P900 for about \$500.

Sigma has introduced five new lenses; and they seem to really be getting serious about long zoom lenses. Their top end is now a 60-600mm f4.5-6.3 DG OD HSM Sports and a 70-200mm f2.8 DG OS HSM Sports. They have also added three f1.4 primes at 56mm, 40mm, and 28mm. to their line.

Most of the **second tier** camera manufacturers have introduced new DSLRs and/or mirrorless prosumer cameras, with a wide variety of "improved" features. If you are interested in any of their brands, you need to evaluate them independently to see if their improvements are something you'd like to have.

Photography **drones** are still big, and getting more capable all the time. DJI is still the big name, and keeps offering more capabilities and lower prices. Their Mavic family still looks like the best combination of capability, convenience, and price for photographers.

And of course, the **accessory manufacturers** also have many new offerings. No matter what you need for your kit, you'll find an improved version from many different suppliers.

This and That

By Clark Winsor

We have all heard of the saying, 'KISS'. 'Keep it simple stupid', but have you heard of the new revised version of that advise. It's 'PKIS' which means 'Poly Keep It Simple'.

Too bad we didn't come up with this sooner. Of all the SCACC clubs, Poly has the most complicated judging system. Our judging system uses a 5 point to 9-point system for judging our monthly competition images. The cutoff point has always been 7 points or higher are accepted, 6 points or lower are not accepted.

When I first joined the club our numbering system ran from a 3 through a 9. To simplify the system and make it compatible with our competition software,

we cut the numbering system to 5 through 9. The only judging rule that has stood the test of time **is *accepted images have to score at least 7 points.***

If our accepted images must have 7 points or higher, why not have 6's for all the non-accepted images. It is rare that any image is given a 5. When it does it only serves to embarrass the member and can discourage them. So, let's drop the 5.

In September, the Altered Reality category had eight images entered. Only, six members enter images in this category.

Clark

Even the cell phone was an incremental development



Programs and Coming Events

Josi Ross

October 6 – Competition

PROJECT – “Tatoos”

Our judge for this month will be **David King**. He has been teaching Professional Photography as well as Film and Video Production since the late 1970s in California and Colorado. In January 2000, he returned again to San Diego and taught as an adjunct professor of photography at San Diego City College and at Palomar College in San Marcos, CA. He also conducts workshops and seminars on various areas of photography, digital photography, and film/video production. In December 2004 he was hired full time and is now an Associate Professor of Photography at San Diego City College.

In addition to teaching, David has been a judge at the famous International Photography Exhibition at the San Diego County (Del Mar) Fair since 2000 and is a returning member of the “Digital Dialog” panel of experts in digital photography featured each year during the exhibition.

He has also started giving presentations to audiences at the Fair, for Photo groups, and at conferences and conventions. In addition to specific photo and digital photo related topics such as HDRI, Macro, Panoramics and Mosaics, etc. he also speaks on more general topics such as Creativity, Becoming a “Black Belt” Photographer, and “The Photo tips of Leonardo da Vinci.”

Now “retired” from the free-lance commercial world and no longer needing the constant stream of clients, and thanks to being a tenured professor, David is enjoying the time teaching. He loves that all by itself, because allows him to do more art oriented landscape and portrait work, and to return to writing and presenting. It’s all now “fun” again and is time to return some of the “stuff” life has pounded into him over the past years to try to help students accelerate their learning process and avoid some of the pitfalls he walked right into.

October 20

Fred Krakowiak

– “The Artist’s Safari”

Get ready to expand your creative eye with this out-of-Africa experience. Photographer Fred Krakowiak will give us an inspiring presentation on his photography and artwork from his trips to Africa.

Check his website at
maverickbrushstrokes.com

