

PSA News

AUSTRALIA

APRIL 2023



Welcome

Our new PSA member in March was:

Susan Robinson, Eleebana, NSW

This brings our individual membership in Australia to 171.

Congratulations

Ian English recently gained Galaxy 1 in Nature and Galaxy 7 in PIDC.

If you gain a new ROPA or Portfolio distinction, or achieved anything else that you would like to share with other PSA members, please let me know.

Thank you!

This month we have wonderful contributions from Geoff Wiggins, Jenny Hartman and Jacky Lee.

Please do not be shy about sending me your contribution for next month's newsletter.

PSA Journal

The April issue of the PSA Journal is available now and can be downloaded from the PSA website <https://psa-photo.org/page/journal> after you log in.

A Love of Birds

Geoff Wiggins FAPS.

When I found myself in Portland only a short distance from the only land based gannet bird sanctuary in Australia, I was in a photographer's heaven. As I arrived, the conditions were perfect for capturing the birds in flight and landing as they arrived home after a day's fishing. I spent some three days soaking up the performance of these birds and avoiding being hit by them as they flew close to my head on landing! I was well pleased with how they performed and the great opportunity they gave me to get a few pictures to share with you. I have found that it is easiest to hand hold the camera to get my shots. To avoid camera movement, 1/2000 of a second was used. Given the sunlight in Australia, I found an aperture of f8 with an ISO of 200 to be most effective. My love of birds goes beyond just taking a photograph. It encourages me to research the habits of such birds and find out a little about their way of life.

The gannets come to Portland's Lawrence Rocks and Point Danger from July when the sea starts to warm and small fish come to the surface. This is when the gannets enjoy squid, pilchards, krill and other such small fish. They dive from great heights of around thirty meters reaching speeds of up to one hundred kilometers per hour, as they stretch their wings back and pierce the sea to a depth of several meters to catch their prey using their swept back gills covered with serrations.

Gannets mate for life, having only one chick each year. Both male and female gannets share in the parenting tasks; quite something considering they can live up to thirty years.

From March onwards, once the fledglings master the art of flying, they embark on their annual migration. This migration often takes them west and they stay away upwards of three to four years before returning ready to breed. They have been tracked traveling over seven thousand kilometers to places like South Africa.



As they return to the roosting site, the customary ritual of heads bowing and sky pointing along with vigorous headshaking takes place for what seems forever.



I find it particularly difficult getting birds in focus as they fly towards me. The solution is to just keep taking photographs until I get one that works out!

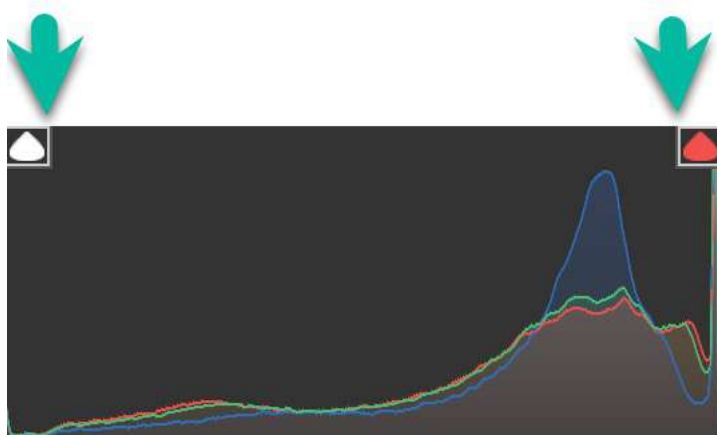


The purpose of traveling to Portland, apart from feeding, is to breed. This requires some effort and requires large quantities of seaweed.



Clipping Warnings

From time to time, all of us capture images in which either the shadows are under exposed or the highlights are over exposed (or both). In Adobe Camera Raw or Lightroom it is easy to reveal the extent of these problems by turning on the clipping warnings in the histogram window.



These clipping warnings do not exist in the histogram in Photoshop. However, thanks to Blake Rudis (one of my favourite online presenters) it is now possible to run a simple action in Photoshop to display shadow and/or highlight clipping. The action is available free here <https://f64academy.com/realtime-clipping-warnings-photoshop/>

In that video, Blake explains what happens ‘behind the scenes’ when you run the action - it is based on some neat tricks with the Blend If layer styles function in Photoshop. You do not need to be familiar with Blend If in order to use the actions, but I highly recommend that you watch Blake’s other video titled “What is Blend If” <https://f64academy.com/what-is-blend-if-in-photoshop-and-how-do-i-use-it/> Once you understand the power of Blend If you might be tempted to purchase Blake’s Blend If course and panel - which I highly recommend <https://f64elite.com/blend-if-yt>. (No, I don’t get a commission!)

PS Creativity Summit

The Photoshop Creativity Virtual Summit is on again - April 17-20. You can get details and sign up (its free) here <https://www.pscreativitysummit.com/> If you sign up, all the 36 classes can be viewed after the summit for a short period. Previous summits have been worthwhile.

Members Sharing

In an earlier newsletter I asked you to share some of your experiences using a few 'prompts'. Here is what *Jenny Hartman* has shared:

My favourite way of getting inspiration for photographs is to start with a specific focus, brainstorm ideas, entertaining all the ideas, including the silliest ones, building on them, sitting with them, writing a few notes over a period of days and letting my mind run free,.

For example

- Chose a specific item eg: leaves;
- Free associate to that word or item eg: trees, plants, book pages, departs
- Expand on each of these associations eg; leaves: green, bonfire of leaves, autumn leaves, dead leaves, new leaves, green leaves, plastic leaves, japanese leaves, bonsai
- See how it fits with the theme of what I am trying to create It often leads to silly ideas but the silly ideas sometimes lead to good ones. I also follow people on Instagram. Sometimes I talk to people who are not into photography and ask their ideas.

The things I like best about my photography club are; the amazing array of opportunities to learn, the friendliness and generosity of members, the fact that I can ask specific questions, feedback from judges, ideas, seeing amazing work of advanced photographers. The thing I like least is the lack of sleep. I get so excited, particularly by the creative sessions, that instead of going to sleep; I'm laying in bed thinking of new ideas and possibilities in the endlessly wonderful world of photography.

When I first started photography, I wish had listened to what someone told me, which was "to focus on one genre" at a time. For the first year, I did a bit of everything, including composites, because there are so many interesting and exciting areas. This being my second year, I have taken that advice: I'm focusing on portraiture and really enjoying the fact that I feel like my skills are developing and that I'm consolidating a bit and I'm feeling less fragmented. In fact Im enjoying everything more by being focused

Something I've really enjoyed about PSA is the Digital Dialogue Group, where each of the six member submits two images and then we each critique the images and the following month we get to read all the critiques. Recently i have joined a second Digital Dialogue group which focuses on portraiture.

In the next PSA Newsletter I would like to read about peoples experience of how they got to excel. . . .

Aerial Photography in Hong Kong

Jacky Lee

As a Hong Kong-based photographer, capturing the cityscape and landscape of this captivating city is my passion. Aerial photography has been my focus for several years, and I have been fortunate enough to have captured some breathtaking shots of Hong Kong from a bird's eye view before the enactment of the new drone regulation in mid 2022. At that time, the regulations were more relaxed, and I had the freedom to explore the city from above.

One of the key aspects of achieving stunning aerial shots is to pay attention to the composition. Composition refers to the arrangement of the visual elements in the photograph, such as lines, shapes, and patterns. When capturing an aerial photograph, it's important to consider the layers, the foreground, the middle ground, and the background, as well as the symmetry of the image. These elements add depth to the photograph, creating an image that is more dynamic and interesting.



I believe that aerial photography may sometimes require a different perspective, which can make or break a shot. The rule of thirds is a common technique used in photography that helps in composing an image. But, when it comes to aerial photography, the rule of thirds is not always applicable. It is important to pay attention to how the elements in the shot interact with each other.

The use of color and light is another crucial element to take into account when composing a shot. The golden hour or magic hour is one of the best times for aerial photography. Magic hour is a period of time just before sunrise or after sunset when the sun is low on the horizon, producing a warm and golden light. This light creates a stunning atmosphere, and the colours of the sky and the landscape are enhanced, making the images more dramatic. During magic hour, shadows are softer, and the colors are warmer, which adds depth and dimension to the image. I prefer to shoot during this time as it gives a stunning effect to the images.



However, obtaining great aerial shots is not just about the composition, colours, or lighting. It also involves understanding the restrictions and regulations related to drone operations. The new drone regulation has limited the usage of drones, particularly in the urban area of Hong Kong. The no-fly zones for drones have increased, and this limits the possibility of capturing some of the most stunning shots of the cityscape and landscape. One of the most restricted areas for drone usage is Victoria Harbour. The Harbour has been declared as a no-fly zone, which means that flying drones over it is strictly prohibited.

To operate a drone legally in Hong Kong, one needs to pass a drone pilot examination (not difficult at all) and obtain an operator's permit from the Civil Aviation Department (CAD). The CAD also requires drone operators to follow strict guidelines for drone operations, such as keeping the drone in their line of sight and not flying the drone over the height limit. It is also essential to respect other people's privacy and not fly the drone over crowded areas. In addition, it is crucial to follow the drone manufacturer's instructions and guidelines for safe drone operations.

All the photographic artworks featured in this article were taken before the enactment of the new drone law.

However, my goal as a photographer is to keep exploring new perspectives and techniques to capture captivating aerial shots, while also respecting the regulations in place. It is a constant learning process, and I hope to continue capturing the beauty of Hong Kong through my lens.

It is important for photographers to always be aware of the regulations and restrictions that come with drone photography, as they vary from country to country. Every country has its own rules and guidelines, and it's crucial to do proper research before planning a trip and bringing along a drone. For instance, in some countries, it may be illegal to fly a drone without a license or permit, while others may require you to undergo a training program or have a registered drone. As a photographer, it's our responsibility to abide by these regulations and keep the safety of the people and the environment in mind.

NOTE: PSA has an aerial photography policy which you will find here <https://psa-photo.org/page/division-definitions>. RK



The Photo Traveller

The Spring 2023 edition of the PSA Photo Traveller is available now and can be viewed here <https://cdn.ymaws.com/psa-photo.org/resource/resmgr/pdf/divisions/ptd/ptd-newsletter-2023-spring.pdf>.

Don't miss Nadia Filiaggi's "PTD Competition Corner" for some great advice on avoiding problems in Photo Travel images.

Some Upcoming Exhibitions

Southern Cross International Exhibition of Stereo Photography (PSA 2023-126). 3D digital - Open and Scapes. **Entries close 3rd April**. Full details here <http://www.oz3d.info/>

Queensland International Digital Circuit (PSA 2023-206). Two PIDC sections (Open, and a themed section of Weather and Seasons) and two PIDM sections (Open, and a timed section of Smoke, Fire, Fog or Steam). Approval from PSA, FIAP, GPU and APS. **Entries close 19th June**. Full details here <http://www.queensland-photo.com/>

VIGEX Digital (PSA 2023-247). Three PIDC sections (Open, Creative, Scapes), PIDM, Nature and Photojournalism. **Entries close 2nd July**. FIAP and APS approval. Full details here <https://vigex.org.au/>

A full list of all PSA-recognized exhibitions for 2023 is available here <https://listings.psaems.org/>

Thank you to all those who contributed to this month's newsletter. Everyone, please consider sending me some news or articles for my next newsletter!

Some Useful Resources from NECCC

NECCC is the New England Council of Camera Clubs in the USA - one of the Councils that are associated with PSA. They recently started a mini-series of webinars presentations for judges. These webinars are presented by prominent PSA members and you do not have to be part of NECC to view them. The recordings and handouts can be downloaded here <https://group.neccc.org/judge/>. The first two presentations are about Nature photography and the third is about Impact. The presentations provide very useful advice to photographers (not just judges) and they are well worth a few hours of your time. The “Impact” presentation took place today (1st April) so it may be a few days before it is available for viewing.

If you need help with any PSA matters please contact me.

Regards,

Roy

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