In the Eye of the Beholder

*Photographer Jeff Tindall*

Slowly but Surely

Welcome to Winter Everyone

The snow has hit and the freezing rain is next, what better thing to do then stay inside and finish out this issue. The frequency of Tips & Tricks Photography has been reduced of late. It's a busy fall/winter, but we are still working issues and hopefully are able to get them out more frequently.

Firstly, a correction from last Issue, I miss spelt the name of Tips and Tricks Photography newest contributor Kurt Kemling. You can check out Kurt's website at http://www.kemlingimages.com. We also got a review in Time Out Chicago Magazine, if your interested in reading the review from Laura Oppenheimer it can be found here.

T & T Photography have added Google AdSense to the website. Eventually we would like to host this PDFCast on a more suitable site. So we can add a form and other useful features. We are hoping that these ads will generate enough revenue to do so. There is also a poll on the website so feel free to stop by and cast your vote.
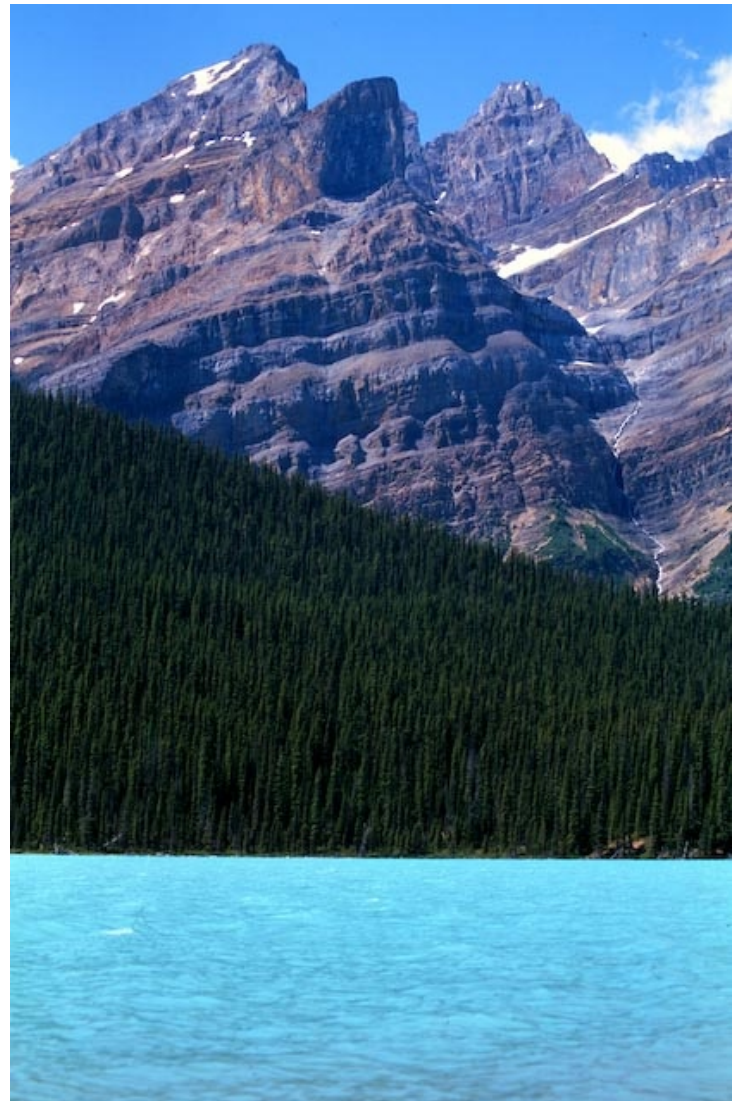
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Off Camera Flash

— *Written by Kurt Kemling*

In the world of photography, getting the flash off the camera is nothing novel. The benefits of this technique come through in images by eliminating harsh shadows, flat looking images, and the dreaded red eye. Often times you will see a wedding photographer or portrait photographer with an elevated flash bracket raising their strobe, tethered to a sync cable. This allows them to lift the flash higher than the lens while holding the strobe in their hands off to the side, with the sync cable attached. With the flash coming from camera left or camera right and at a downward angle, it creates more three-dimensional images while reducing red eye. With the advent of modern digital cameras and accessories, you can now control strobes with radio frequency, infrared, or flash pulses by your main on board flash or module and sync your strobe wirelessly. There is no longer a need for tethered systems when doing basic off camera

flash usage. This has tremendous advantages as you can carry the flash in a lens holster when not being used and simply take it out when you need it, adding flexibility. In addition, this wireless freedom comes with some

strobe in a doorway or window you want lit up, and shoot from around the corner. In addition, these wireless systems afford you the ability to control numerous strobes at once, while varying their output in various groups.
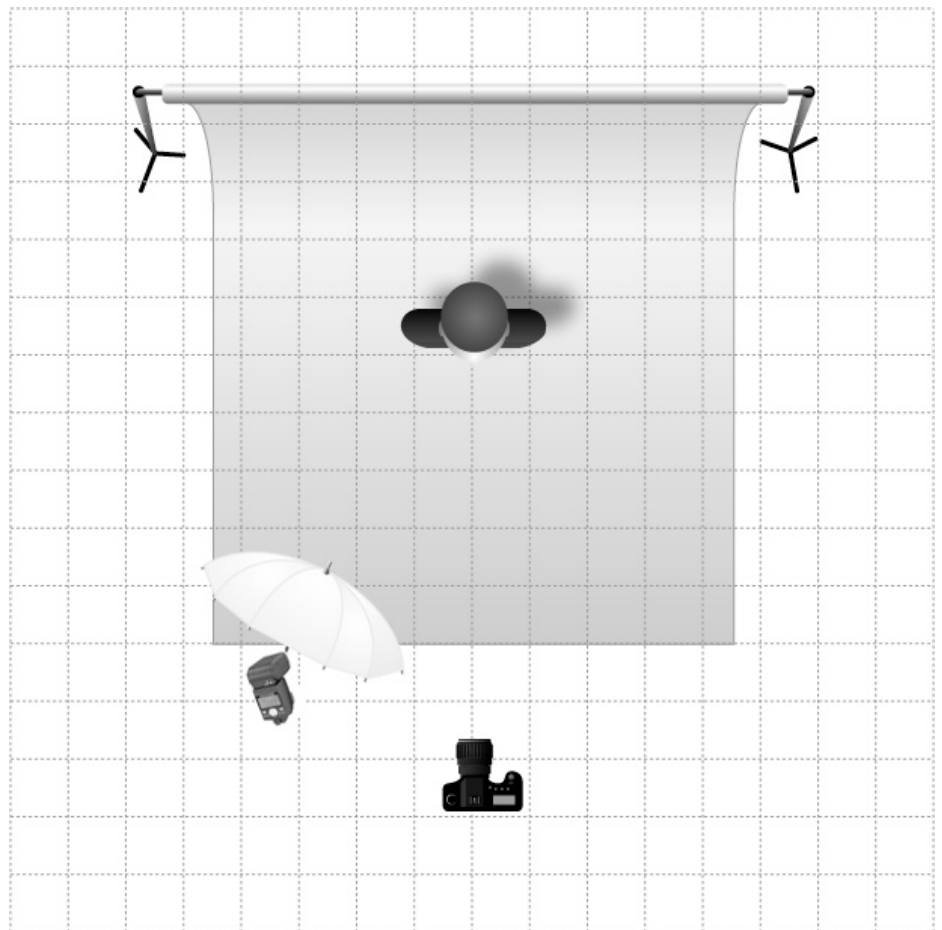
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ex-citing creative opportunities. For example, you can place a wirelessly triggered flash behind a subject to add hair or rim light. You can place a

Nikon offers this capability for free in most of their newer DSLR's and SB-600 or SB-800 strobes, while allowing you to control the output from the camera's LCD monitor. Us-

ing this CLS (creative lighting system) by Nikon, you can place strobes on stands, and shoot through umbrellas or other light modifiers. This simple studio setup can all being controlled right from your camera. As a wedding or portrait photographer, this can offer you superb portability and flexibility. If you don't own a Nikon, you can easily purchase separate radio triggers and receivers. One popular brand is Pocket Wizard. These are more costly, and allow you to trigger strobes from great distances without pre-flash pulses. For more information and tutorials on using wireless strobes with your DSLR, check out the Strobist: www.strobist.com

Now that you have your flash off of the camera, you will want to think about exposure a bit differently, especially when doing portraits. The easiest way to get professional looking portraits is to think of your camera as exposing for the background (the ambient or fill light), and the flash as exposing your subject. If you are hand holding your flash near your camera you can leave the flash unit in TTL mode as it should be pretty close to the on camera distance and power settings. It should be easy enough to adjust the compensation right on the flash or from your camera body if needed. If your strobes are on stands or placed in various locations, you will want to put them in manual mode, take test shots and change output as needed. Once the lighting is to your liking, you can focus on shooting. As for the camera, it is easiest to put it in manual mode for the background exposure. Expose for the background using ma-

trix metering (with the subject not in the frame). The following settings are a good place to begin: Start with your maximum flash sync shutter speed (typically around 1/250th of a second) and set your desired aperture for depth of field and sharpness of your lens. Then underexpose the background by around one to two stops (your meter in the viewfinder should display when that is). If you need more light, decrease your shutter speed to no less than 1/60th of a second. Anything slower will start to produce ghosting if your subject moves. If you still need more light, increase your aperture or ISO as you see fit. The result will be a perfectly exposed subject and slightly darker background, emphasizing your subject and having a nice three dimensional appearance.

Waterfall Photography

— Written by Jeff Tindall

Waterfalls are probably one of the more popular subjects of photographers. I remember getting excited and still do when I look into a nature book an see the token waterfall shot, complete with that velvet river of water and rich, often surreal colours. The aesthetic quality of these photographs always seem to inspire photographers, they look great, contain colours or textures that work well and relatively simple to do.

What Kind of Equipment is Needed?

The kind of equipment you need is dependent upon the type of waterfall picture you want to take. If you're looking for the basic shot that freezes the water capturing individual drops or splashes in mid air, than you can get away with using anything as basic as a point and shoot camera. If your looking for more the artistic look with the velvet looking water (like the photo above) than we are dealing with longer exposures and thus a DSLR and a tripod are strongly recommended if not a must.

Waterfall Types and Shutter Speeds

A lot of people new to photographing waterfalls wonder what shutter speed they need to

use. Unfortunately, or better yet, *fortunately* there are no set rules, the shutter speed and aperture combination you choose is solely dependent on the effect you are looking for. There are a couple of guidelines that you can follow to help you get the effect you want. The first guideline is the most obvious and generally works well in all photography: the faster the shutter speed the more freezing of the water. The problem with this when photographing water is that what is considered a fast shutter speed is relative to the speed of the water you are shooting. In other words photographing a raging river or Niagara Falls may require a different shutter speed than a small creek or babbling brook.

High Flow versus Low Flow

I like to think of this in terms of the amount of water that passes by the cameras sensor (or film) for the given time that it is open. The more water that passes by means a more streamlined or steady look. So water flowing at a fast rate will tend to look more stream-lined and steady than the same shutter speed on a small crick.

Other Useful Equipment

The use of neutral density and polarizer filters can be quite useful when photographing water. Neutral density filters or variable neutral density filters work well because it allows the photographer to play around even more with exposure with out risking blowing out part of the picture. Ultimately, the best neutral density filter would be a variable one however if your not willing to fork out the $300, than try out a [homemade variable neutral density filter](#). Comments on the filter suggest that there may be a colour shift so if you do use one it may be necessary to play around with the colours in the post-processing. A polarizers works well to alter or remove reflections off the water and saturate colours. For example, rocks or leaves surrounding the waterfall will often be covered in a thin layer of water and show a lot of reflections, the polarizers can remove those and make the photo pop.
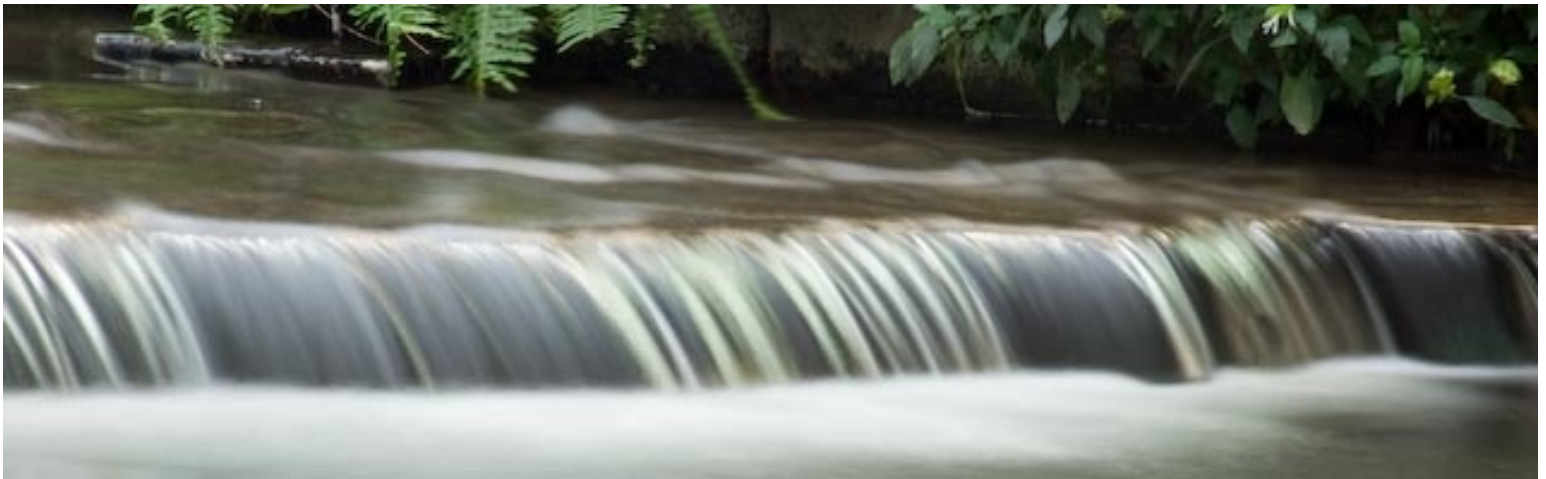
Take Your Time

There is something about rushing or falling water that excited people, making it easy to get caught up in the scenery and forget about the basics of photography, so take your time! When I first arrive at a waterfall, I often leave the camera in its bag while I explore and enjoy the sites. Wonder around (be careful not to slip) and look past the waterfall and see the whole seen including the plants, animals and landscapes. The more exploring you do the better the photos you will get, often people often react too fast to the big attraction,
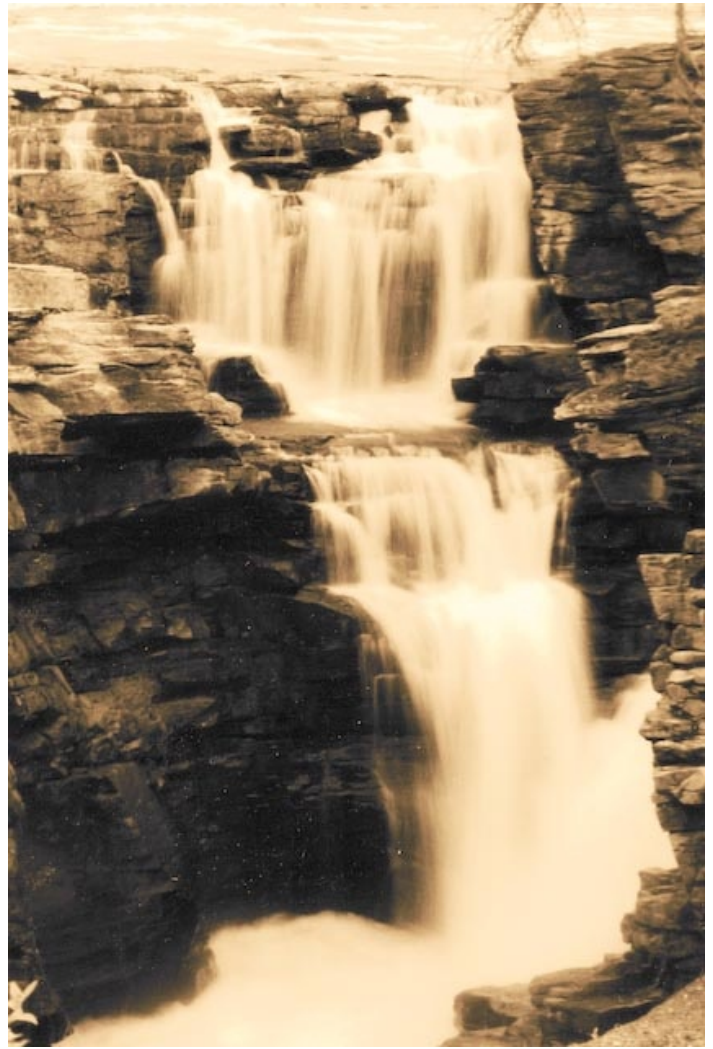
forgetting the basics which often leads to the preverbal telephone coming out of the head syndrome. This is where the excitement of a great photo overwhelms the photographer into not noticing obvious distractions. I find if you stay for a half hour or so and allow the initial excitement to wear off (or at least allow yourself to become habituated to it), when you do goto take a photo you can focus more on the composition and avoid distractions.

Keep in mind that what attracted you to come out and photograph a waterfall are the same thing that attracts other people and if your really lucky, a tourist bus! Try and get

there early, if you photographing a popular waterfall, rather than trying to shoot around people and having your 'prime' spot taken. The advantages of going early aside from avoiding tourist is the light is better (especially around sunrise) and you have the chance to just enjoy the seen.

Experiment

Trial and error is often the way to get the effect you want, bracketing, changing lenses or filters will show you what your doing right to get your desired effect or even show you different effects that you may not have thought of.

Safety

It's easy to get caught up in the excitement of a waterfall, but always keep in mind that there are a lot of hazardous conditions or situations that you can get into (even for small waterfalls). Don't take stupid risks, I often see people trying to get a close as possible, and casually hopping on wet rocks. Sadly, in my adventures to different waterfalls throughout Canada, I see too many signs telling telling a story of someone who got too close and slipped, usually with a fatal outcome. Be sensible, a lot of people think to get the best shot you need to get as close as possible, this is almost never the case. The risk of slipping on wet ground or rocks is very high around waterfalls (even small ones), likewise the water currents can be much stronger than what they may look like.

Photography Freeware

Photography software can be quite expensive. Here are some alternatives for both Mac and Windows that might be of use.

Photography software has really taken off since the explosion of the digital camera. However, with developers marketing their software at prices around $1000 it's also pretty obvious that the prices have really taken off too. Luckily, There is a wide range of software out there for both Mac and Windows that is completely free and often better then most proprietary software. With a number of programmers donating their time to writing a few lines of code and having no ulterior agendas for maximizing profits, these programs are constantly being updated and on the edge of what a great program is about. We have decided to showcase a few of the more useful programs that literally could save you thousands of dollars (but we know you're just going to blow that savings on a new lens anyway)!

Program	Windows	Mac	Description
Gimp	Yes	Yes	Gimp is by far the most popular free image manipulation program. Some go as far as to call it "Free Photoshop". While the name GIMP may seem a little odd (it stands for Graphic Image Manipulation Program), it can handle most of the tasks that Photoshop can. Programers are constantly working on updating the software to make it run more smooth and easier to use. Furthermore, various plugins can be downloaded and installed for all kinds of different manipulations.
GimpShop	Yes	Yes	GimpShop was designed for an easy transition for Photoshop users. Initially, the layout of GIMP was quite different to that of Photoshop, causing a lot of frustration. This program was designed to help eliminate this.
AutoStich	Yes	No	AutoStitch is an image stitcher, often used in creating panoramas. It require virtually no input from the user and works very well.
Qtpfsgui	No	Yes	Qtpfsgui is an open source graphical user interface application that aims to provide a workflow for HDR imaging.
PicMark	No	Yes	PicMark is a very convenient way to add to photographs

Post-Processing
Photoshop Fog

We've been finding that there is a lot of interest in post-processing / enhancements over the past few issues. This is great news we are always interested all the processes and activities surrounding the goal of making great photos. Since there is a lot of reader interest we have started up a new section. As the name implies this section will be dedicated to tips on post-processing. This can range from various software techniques or tips (e.g. Photoshop, GIMP, Lightroom etc...) right down to ideas of how to efficient or effective ideas on post-processing. If you have any post-processing tips and feel like sharing them send them along and we will include them.
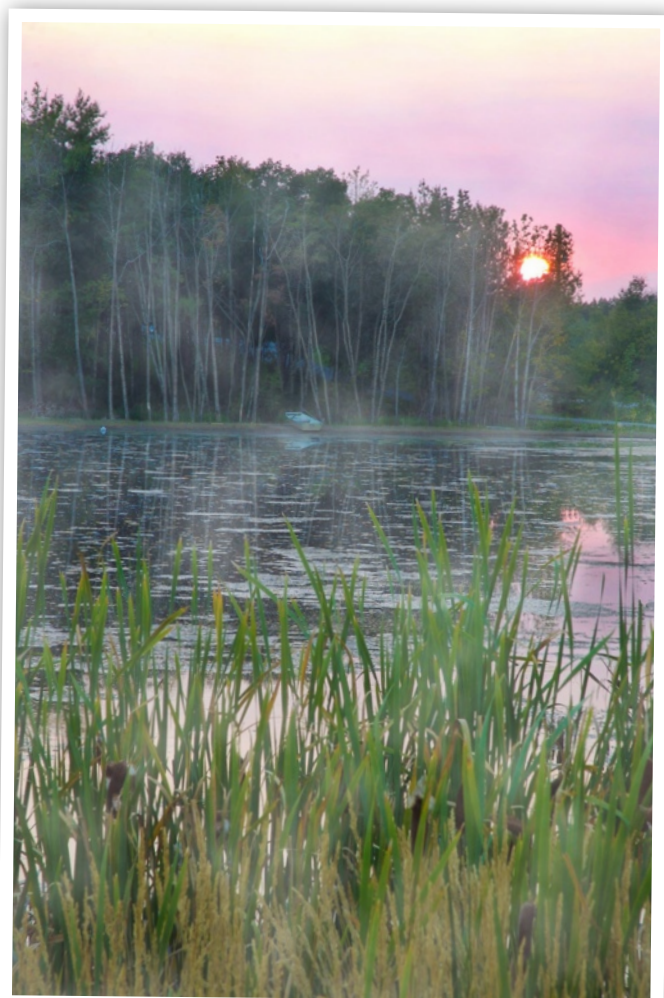
Step One: Open up your image in Photoshop.
Step Two: Duplicate the Layer using the keyboard shortcut Command+J (Apple), or Crtl+J (Windows).
Step Three: Goto the filter menu and render clouds
Step Four: Set the Layer Mode to Screen.
Step Five: Double Click on the clouds layer and set the opacity to a level you would like. You can also move the sliders around on the "This layer" and "Underlying Layer" portion of the blending options.