

Marin Photography Club - Presidents' Letter

To all Members

The first photos were black and white, and black and white remains a favorite of many photographers today. The lack of color to distract creates a focus on compositions and technique not seen in many color photographs. Many people like to shoot in black and white for this reason, or because it better conveys their emotions, or lends a timeless quality to their images.

For the Club, black and white is a popular category. It is good to see the number, artistry, and creativity of the images submitted. Not surprisingly some of the most creative images also push the boundaries of what is acceptable under our Competition Rules.

Our Competition Rules (sec 2(a)) provide that:

A monochrome image refers to an image in black and white (grayscale), but also includes images made of tones of a single color. Monochrome prints are defined as one color and the color of the paper; they may be toned, but not multiple toned.

This means a monochrome image consists of a single color of varying tones (intensity) against a neutral background. The definition of a neutral background depends upon the medium.

- For a print it is one color and the color of the paper ((usually white but not always (i.e. cyanotype images ("blueprints"))
- For projected the background color is black. Thus a red monochrome image will have black shadows and red highlights. There is not any requirement for white.

[read more...](#)

Editor's Note

This month's edition of Focal Plane has a great Travel piece by Keith Cockerham (page 6), and Merrill Mack has written a piece on the Club's successes at this year's Marin County Fair (page 7). Finally we have an excellent article and images on Landscape photography by Kevin Westerlund (page 9).

I shall be away on vacation from mid August through mid September, so there will not be a Focal Plane at the end of next month. I hope to cover two months of news when I publish the September edition.

Noel Isaac

August MPC Event Calendar

- **Monday, August 7th: Print Competition**
6:30pm @ Drakes Landing Community Room
- **Monday, August 14th: Education Night**
6:30pm @ Drakes Landing Community Room
Jeff Martz -History of Photography
- **Monday, August 21st: Projected Competition**
6:30pm @ Drakes Landing Community Room
- **Thursday, August 10th: MPC Board Meeting****
11:00am @ GGCS Meeting Room, First Presbyterian Church †
1505 Mission Ave. San Rafael.
- **Thursday, August 24th: Street Photography SIG**
6:30pm @ GGCS Meeting Room, First Presbyterian Church †
1505 Mission Ave. San Rafael.

Editor's Note:

**Any member of MPC can attend the monthly Board Meetings. If you have any questions or subjects that you would like it to discuss, please put them into writing

Images of the Month



Monolith

Dana Christensen

Print - Alternate - Basic

Judge: Mary Macy Butler (MPC Member)

Editor: Dana is to be congratulated on winning her second "Best In Show" in consecutive months.

Behind the Image:

"Monolith" is the north side of the Embarcadero Center, at around 11 in the morning. I was struck by the massive size of it, looking up from the street, and the narrow vertical strips of light. I've seen those buildings hundreds of times, but never quite from this angle. (Canon EOS 6D, 70mm, f8, 1/500sec at ISO 160)....[Dana Christensen](#)



All the Way Home, Gold Hill Lane, England

Gary Scales

Projected Images - Pictoral - Intermediate

Judge: Greg Edwards

Behind the Image:

I was taking a landscape workshop in Southern England, near Stonehenge. Gold Hill Lane is a popular visitor attraction in the little village along with several local pubs. I was staying not far from the site and returned a number of times to photograph it at different times of day and in the changing weather conditions. I saw a lady with a little girl coming up the hill. The apparent mother stayed at the bottom while the girl scampered up the steep grade. I knew she would eventually go back down so I waited. Sure enough, the mother called and the girl in the red dress started running down. (Nikon D4S, 70mm, f-5, 1/400 sec., ISO 250).....[Gary Scales](#)

MPC Member Websites

Want to see more photos of our members, please visit their websites, the list is [here](#).

If you want to add your website to the list, please send a request to focalplanenewsletter@gmail.com

New Members to the MPC

Please join us in welcoming the following new Competing Members to the Club:

Cindee Beechwood

Tom From

Erick Steinberg

Rick Strauss

Do introduce yourselves to new members at upcoming MPC events and competition nights.

The Outside Photography World

EXHIBITS in San Francisco:

- [The Grain of the Present](#)@ Pier 24
- [Mike Mandel "Good 70s"](#) @ SF MOMA (Through Aug 20th))
- ["Hair" Exhibit. Homage to the Summer of Love.](#) @ the Harvey Milk Photo Center. (June 21 - Sept8)
- [Current Exhibitions](#) @ Rayko Photo Center

CLASSES & WORKSHOPS:

- [Rayko Photo Center](#)
- [Harvey Milk Photo Center](#)
- [Point Reyes National Seashore Association](#)
- [The Image Flow](#)
- [Photo Arts Marin](#)

NOTE:

Do you know another location with great classes and/or workshops?

Please send the information to:focalplanenewsletter@gmail.com



WHAT I SAW!!!

The July/August Meetup Challenge

The weather is glorious – perfect for grabbing your camera and getting out for some candid shots.

In that spirit, our challenge for July/August is to capture something that caught our eye. It could be on the street, the beach, attending a concert, or taking a leisurely hike. Your artistic challenge is to make the viewer feel what you felt when you saw

the scene. Be creative, be realistic, be whatever you feel you need to – just so that your image gives the viewer the same feeling you had when you saw it.

So, grab your camera and get moving!

The Challenge ends August 31st at 10pm.....[More Info](#)

[Mary Weaver](#)

Lightroom Users

A number of Club members may be interested in the following:

Scott Kelby is doing a US tour giving one day seminars on **Lightroom**. He is scheduled to come to San Francisco on Wednesday August 16th at the South San Francisco Conference Center.

More information can be found at <http://kelbyonlive.com>

Noel Isaac

Traveling Italy by Keith Cockerham

Italy is one of my favorite destinations. It is both exotic and familiar as well as relaxing. The cities are full of excitement, crowds, sights, sounds, and food. The countryside is relaxing with vistas of land and some dramatic seashores – the excitement comes in the form of navigating the small and curvaceous roads; think



Hwy 1 to Stinson beach but with tour busses, trucks, cars, motorbikes – all being driven by a mixture of overconfident locals and over cautious tourists. For me, all of Italy is a delicious blend of chaos with just a suggestion of order.

Based on the above, there probably isn't much reason to convince someone to travel to Italy. If one enjoys western culture, churches, landscapes, great food, and wine, then what are you waiting for?

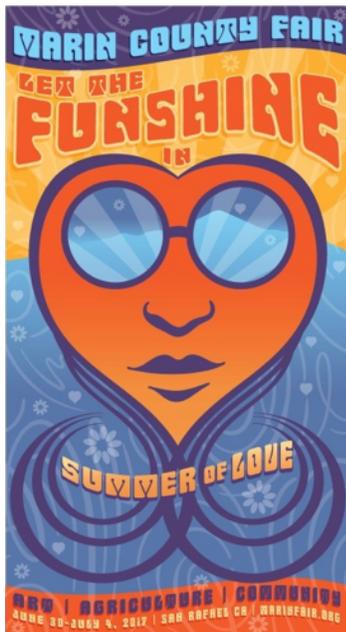
My photo travel philosophy is quite simple.

Luggage – there are 2 types of luggage, carry-on and lost. I believe in carry-on. I take a photography backpack and a roll aboard that meets the international size limits. Whether it's for 1 week or 3 weeks traveling light is more important than over packing and taking large pieces of luggage. I've had to walk considerable distance and get on buses and being able to fit into small spaces is important. Also, when everyone else is waiting for luggage we're on our way to passport control and clearing customs. One can always do laundry (they do have laundry and soap overseas) or in a pinch I use Woollite and a sink and wash and rinse clothes in the room. Rick Steves has wonderful tips <https://www.ricksteves.com>.

Photo equipment – Traveling for a "landscape" trip I travel relatively light with my camera equipment. I shoot Canon and for Italy would take a full frame body, up to 3 lenses. 24-105mm F4.0, 16-35mm F2.8, and either a 70-200mm 2.8, or a 100-400 F4.0. A travel tripod (I so love night photos) that can support the camera and heaviest lens.[Read more.](#)



MARIN PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB EXHIBITS AT THE MARIN COUNTY FAIR by Merrill Mack



As I worked my volunteer shift this year at Receiving for the Fair and spent time viewing the images, on more than one occasion I was reminded of the relationship that our Club has established with the County and it's Cultural Services Department.

The club's participation at this event grows every year. The number of member volunteers, the number of entries, acceptances, awards and sales increase yearly. Personally, I have been entering images in the Fair since I joined the club in 2007, but I know our Club had been participating in the Fair and other Cultural Services events for many years before I became a member.

At the Fair there are several areas where photography is entered and exhibited, such as Fine Arts hung on the wall, Digital, Mobilography, the Focus series, Capturing Fair Memories and the Special Category, which this year was Marvelous Marin.

Because my mind is always looking to make more work for myself, I thought I would try to put some stats together as to the Club participation in this year's Fair. Rather than take in all the aspects of Photography at the Fair I decided to get information on only the Prints that were entered and hung in the Fine Arts Division. I felt that the participation in this area would be representative of all the Photography Divisions. I am well aware there were many of our club members who entered, got awards and sold pieces in the various other Categories.

My numbers are not 100% accurate because I may not have heard from all those that entered. Thus the numbers would only be higher if everyone had given me their information.

With all that said; for the Print Division, from our club, there were 124 entries, 107 accepted, 27 awards given and 20 sold. I believe there were about 300 images hung this year, which means, that our club had one third of the images hung in the Fine Arts Division.

These are very impressive numbers. Being that the Fair retains 20% of the value of our sold images, I am very glad to see we are giving something significant back to our community.

Congratulations to all who entered, thank you to all who volunteered, and many thanks for promoting our relationship with the Cultural Services Department of Marin County. Special thanks to Charlie Barboni and his wonderful staff for again putting on such a great event.

I'm happy to announce that Charlie has asked us back for the third year in a row to exhibit our work during the months of November and December, so start getting your images ready.

Kevin Westerlund on Landscapes

My approach to landscape photography is 100% emotional. Research and experience have taught me where to go and when to go there, but once I'm at my location, I look for compositions that speak to me. I don't adhere to any of the traditional "rules" of photography because doing so would force me to view my subject on a technical, rather than artistic, level.

I always use a tripod. There are two reasons for this. First, since I'm often shooting in low-light situations, I don't want to be restricted to only shutter speeds that can be hand-held. Using a tripod gives me the latitude to use the shutter speed / aperture / ISO combination that I find most appropriate for my image. The second reason for using a tripod is that it gives me the opportunity to fully analyze my composition. I carefully scrutinize the scene in my viewfinder and I ask myself two questions: Is there anything missing that needs to be included? Is there anything included that doesn't belong? With a tripod, I'm composing a photograph; without one, I'm grabbing a snapshot.

My fascination with photographing the American landscape is largely governed by the fact that the area of history that I find most interesting is the exploration of the American West in the nineteenth century. With that in mind, I try to view any scene, even something as familiar and clichéd as Tunnel View in Yosemite, with fresh eyes. Even though I may be returning to a location for the tenth or twentieth time, I try to convince myself that I've never before seen it.

My goal is to take landscape photographs that have a "timeless" quality to them. I want my image to be something that could have been seen by John Muir 100 years ago, or by Lewis and Clark 200 years ago, or by a Native American 1000 years ago. For that reason (and to the strong disapproval of many photo club judges), I make every effort to exclude people, or any hand-of-man, in my landscapes. While I appreciate that a person can add interest to a landscape photograph, or that a winding road can add compositional strength, they also undermine the timeless quality that I'm striving to achieve..... [Read more + Images](#)