



New Westminster Photography Club

Shutter Release

February 2007

From the Editor

Shona seems to have been the ‘stand-in’ on a couple of occasions lately – as newsletter editor while I was away in balmy Toronto at New Year’s, and as temporary Pres., filling in for Dave, off on the Galapagos Islands and Peru. You’ve done a great job, Shona, whichever hat you were wearing. Thanks...

The Wicked Witch of Winter sneaked into BC and caught most of us by surprise (twice), which probably pleased our skiers and snowboarders, and gave the rest of us the chance to get snowscapes without leaving our own front yards.

The down side of that story is that the weather helped put the damper on Justin’s plans for his “Russian Soldiers” outing on the 20th. This event will almost certainly appear on the schedule for later in the season – watch for the date, and be sure to mark it on your calendar.

Until next issue – remember my usual plea. If you have a photographic hint or tip, a compliment or complaint to tell us about, write it up and pass it on to me. Pictures also accepted, of course.

Happy February – or is that an oxymoron..?
Peter



Photo:- “Fading Sun. Fading Beliefs” by Derek Carlin – one of our NSC entry images.

Upcoming Program

February 6

Selection of prints for the BC Print Challenge. For a reminder of the rules, see January’s Shutter Release. The presenter for the 5-minute talk, on basic digital slide-show preparation, will be Derek Carlin.

February 20

Archie Miller will give us the second phase of his presentation on the historical importance of old photos – showing more great examples from the New Westminster archives. His first talk was so well-received, this is sure to be a “don’t miss” event.
5-minute speaker? ...TBA

March 6

Selection of images (subject “Power”) for the Fraser Valley Invitational. Bring 2-3 slides/digital files.

Abstracts, with Jim Britton

Grace Darney

At our January 30th meeting, many of us discovered artistic talents buried since kindergarten. Jim Britton offered us an evening dabbling in abstract art for photographers.

We squeezed various colours of paint onto strips of paper, covered that with a strip of waxed paper, and then, just like the kindergartners we once were, smudged the whole lot together into fantastic swirls. Removing the waxed paper (a crucial step), we left the abstracts to dry while attending a second station in the room. At the second station, Jim had set up a piece of clear acrylic between two tables, dribbled syrup onto it, placed many pieces of coloured paper on the floor below, angled a light at just the right spot -- then challenged us to take the ultimate abstract.

After our colourful swirls dried, we photographed them at another station--set up with a powerful light, hoping our swirls were masterpieces of 19-century impressionism.

The results of both methods should be interesting to see.

Outings

Justin Ball, Outings Coordinator

Feb 10th – Saturday

"Almost Famous- Part 2"



Find your partners and props now to create a person, place, thing or event that has happened, or may have happened.

Meet at 10:00 am at the Café (with the yellow awning) on Blackie Street (under the Skytrain overpass).

More info at the February 6 meeting.

Photo, at left, (with Tasha and Dave) from “Almost Famous” Pt 1.

March 31st - Saturday

“Flowers”

A morning outing to try our skills and info gleaned from Leona Isaac’s programme of March 27th. Meet at the Burnaby Art Gallery parking lot at 10am, where we will continue to the Century Garden. Parking is free, the walk short, and there is also the lake and the gallery to visit. Bring snack, money, usual gear. There is nowhere nearby for coffee or snacks- there is coffee and such at the “On the Run” on Canada Way, and a Subway a few doors up.

Fraser Valley Invitational

We have now received our formal invitation to this inter-club competition hosted by the Langley Camera Club. This is for digital photos only and has a theme (Power). Our club may enter 10 images, only one per member. They must be .jpg images sized to a maximum of 1024 pixels wide and maximum height 768. Refer to the North Shore Challenge rules in the last issue if you need instructions for sizing.

We are selecting our entry on March 6 but you will be asked to send your images in beforehand. We will advise you at a later meeting which of our members will be handling that for us.

The actual judging will be May 12, 7:30 pm at the Fort Langley Community Hall. Advance tickets are \$7.50 and our club will likely obtain a block of tickets.

Unusual and imaginative entries are usually appreciated by the judges. There’s a wide range of interpretations for the theme, so we look forward to seeing some creative images on March 6.

To crop, or not to crop?

Peter Ellis

That is a question that often ‘crops up’, when images are being evaluated, in the club or at a competition-type judging. The answer may depend on the personal opinion of the viewer.

If he/she likes nice, tight compositions, with a very definite centre of interest, any extraneous ‘stuff’ hanging around the edges is frowned on. ‘Stuff’ may be a person or object appearing to move into or out of the frame, drawing the eye away from the main subject.

It may be a strong colour or bright area (again, usually towards an edge) that clashes with the mood of the picture. Perhaps, an uninteresting foreground that serves no visual purpose, and disturbs the balance of the composition.

These can be arguments in favour of tight cropping, either in the camera or in the resulting image. On the other side of the question, has the maker **chosen** to include a number of objects (trees, rocks, buildings) in the composition because they combine to suggest a mood or the surroundings of the theme-subject? If we are making the picture, have we done this intentionally, or did we just not notice what was there?

These are questions that have no definite ‘right or wrong’ answers. A lot may depend on the kind of subject being portrayed. Deciding whether usually-accepted photographic guidelines have been followed, is another consideration.

The whole matter is worth thinking about when you see any picture -- at the club, at the North Shore Challenge, or when looking at paintings in an art gallery. Do you believe “less is more”, or do you prefer a well-filled frame?

If you happen to disagree with a judge’s comments – remember, as I said earlier - this can be a question of personal taste.

Cold weather photography

Kelvin Leong

Prepare your equipment before going into the cold. Let your camera adjust to the cold temperature before using it. Tripods can freeze up in really cold weather, so give them a touch of a silicone spray before you go out to keep them working smoothly. Wear thin gloves and warm clothing; dress in layered clothing that will allow you to be comfortable for the duration of your shoot and the thin gloves allow you to access small buttons while adjusting your camera settings. Bring a sealable plastic bag large enough to contain your camera and lens and a drying cloth.

While working in the cold keep your equipment warm. Your camera and flash will go through batteries like they’re going out of style; what lasted you hours in normal temperatures, may only last you minutes. Keep cameras and flash units inside your coat when not in use; this will prolong the battery life. As well, keep your spare camera batteries in your pockets, not in the camera bag as they will stay warmer there. Are your batteries acting dead just after a short duration? Take them out of the camera, and put them in your pocket. They’ll ‘recharge’ themselves as they warm up, and you can re-use them.

Make adjustments for bright snow. Increase the exposure level or else your photos of the pristine glistening snow will all be grey. Need more shallow depth of field, but can’t drop the ISO enough? Use a ND filter. Glare? Use a polarizing filter. Even a pair of sunglasses can help.

Now that you’ve taken all these super photos, it’s time to come in from the cold. Did you remember to bring the plastic bag and drying cloth? Good. Dry the exterior of your camera and lens (not the glass though, and do not dismount the lens) as best as possible, insert your camera and lens combo into the bag, and seal it up while still outside in the cold. Once sealed, you can then return to the warmth and

comfort of the indoors. Now, condensation (if any) should form on the outside of the bag; wait a couple of hours for the camera and lens to acclimatize before opening the bag. Despite these precautions, it is still possible to have condensation inside the camera and lens, so it is important to allow your camera to sit and dry out for a few hours before using it again.

North Shore Challenge

Although the Challenge isn't held until March 3rd, it isn't too early to remind you that the order for tickets has now been sent in so, if you need to order more tickets, you should contact Cheryl Yates (by phone) at 604-986-2159, or (e-mail) cyates@paralynx.com. ASAP.

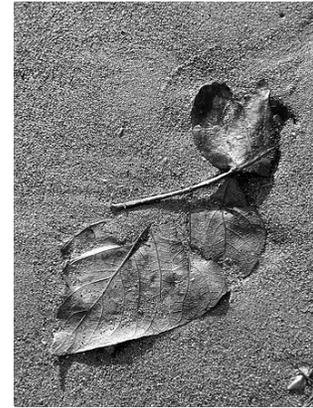
Our entry was selected by popular choice (shown here) at the January 16th meeting.



St. Patrick's – Dave Emery



Street Rainbow - Justin Ball



Riverside Cameo – Peter Ellis



Brownstone -
Tony Van Straubensee



Cathedral Reflections -
Kevin Leong



Spiders Handiwork -
Matti Lagerbom



Rebellion – Sherlyn Cordero



On Guard –Fred Greaves



Life and Death –
Shona LaFortune

Places to go - things to do and see

At the Vancouver Art Gallery (VAG):

FRED HERZOG

January 25 to May 13, 2007

Herzog took 80,000 photos of Vancouver over the last 50 years -- lots of neon, lots of smog and fog. 100 images have been digitized from his slides, printed large for the show. There are colour photos of downtown Granville Street in 1959, Robson Street in 1957, and many other colourful streetscapes that no longer exist.

ACTING THE PART: PHOTOGRAPHY AS THEATRE

February 3 to May 21, 2007

"This exhibition explores the transformation and wide variety of staged photographs from the 19th century to the present." Includes such famous photographers as: Hippolyte Bayard, Oscar Gustave Rejlander, Man Ray, Cindy Sherman, Yasumasa Morimura, and Yinka Shonibare.

Both these shows sound like must-see's -- perhaps a group outing would be in order. (The VAG has group bookings (10 or more people), but the website doesn't show a rate.)

VAG entrance fee is by donation on Tuesday nights (5pm to 9pm); otherwise it's \$15 for adults, \$11 for seniors 65+, and \$10 for students with valid ID. Backpacks, cameras, food, drinks, large bags and umbrellas are not permitted in the gallery -- can be checked at the door.



Just when you think you've bought **exactly** the right tripod for your new camera, someone comes along and shows you that it ain't necessarily so...

At the Equipment Night, in January, Kelvin tried some 'mixing and matching' at the Tripods and Supports table, for a little light relief. The Manfrotto combo is playing it safe (and then some) while the SLR on its teeny tripod would need all the image-stabilization it had to offer.

Thanks for the pics, Kelvin.

Attention, train buffs!

To commemorate White Rock's 50th Anniversary – a special rail excursion is arranged, for Sunday April 15th, traveling between Vancouver and White Rock. One way, or return.

Leaves Vancouver 10:00am, arrives White Rock 12:00 noon. Return trip leaves White Rock 3:00pm, arrives Vancouver 5:00 pm. **Fares:-** \$50 – one way : \$99 + GST – both ways.

For more information, contact West Coast Rail Tours @ (604) 524-1011, or www.wcra.org

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