



In Focus

Volume 64, Issue 3

March 2019

March Program- For The Love of Light by Henry Norton

Its duration can be incredibly short, sometimes about less than 1/30000th of a second. It can freeze some of the fastest events or animals leaving us with a sense of unexpected wonder and never has it been possible to afford more capabilities for less money.

This refers to electronic flashes; specifically speed lights, an indispensable part of what should be your photo kit. Most communicate with your camera leaving manual control aside. Radio or IR triggering mechanisms are either included or available for a moderate price. Lighting modifiers are available in a variety of sizes and capabilities.

This month we'll discuss the capabilities, accessories and more importantly how to use these incredible devices. Don Bennett and Nathan Robbins will assist with the presentation, explaining how they use flashes. Don will show his hummingbird set-up and capture; while Nathan will explain the use of flashes with models.

Come with your questions or issues and we'll try to assist you getting the most out of your gear.

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2019 Officers of HPS

President: Charles Gattis

Primary Competition Officer:
Steve Mitchell

Digital Competition Officer:
Jeanne McDowell

Competition Records Officer:
Eddie Sewall

Program Officer: Henry Norton

Outreach & Activities Officer:
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Treasurer: Sam Alexander

Communications Officer:
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Historian: Tom Bryant

Exhibition Officer: Bob Gower

PSA Representative: Lee Pratt

Webmaster: John Shriver

Non Board Positions

Membership Secretary:
Margaret Todd

Mentor Coordinator:
Jim Solomon

Meeting Information: HPS meets the second and fourth Mondays of the month, 7:00 p.m., at the Huntsville/Madison County Library - Main Branch, 915 Monroe St.



From The President

Photography As Art

Several years ago, when I joined the Huntsville Art League, I was astonished when they started calling me an “artist.” I thought of myself as a photographer. Perhaps, having written so much over the past 40 years as a pastor, I might think of myself as a writer, but adding artist to my understanding of self was a stretch for me. In the visual world, I thought of artists as painters or sculptors. Could photographers also be artists, and if so, what elevated their photographs from the level of mere snapshots to pieces of art?

Webster defines art as, “the expression or application of human creative skill and imagination, typically in a visual form such as painting or sculpture, producing works to be appreciated primarily for their beauty or emotional power.” How can a photo fit that definition? There is nothing innately creative about snapping a picture, particularly if the person just lifts the camera and shoots. The art comes in seeing the scene uniquely and then later artfully expressing what was seen to others.

Artistry is found in every part of the photographic endeavor. There is art in the way we line up the shot, perhaps searching through several different ways of viewing the scene and choosing out of an array of photographs the one that best expresses what we saw of interest in the beginning. Any art form tries to represent to another the character or essential nature either of the person or the scene in a way that is inspiring, beautiful or moving emotionally. The sculptor does that. The painter does that, and so does the photographer. The only difference is that in the initial phase, the photographer is limited to the static representation set before him or her, whereas the painter or sculptor has much more freedom to alter what he or she sees.

It is in post processing that the photographer has similar freedom of expression. Once the image is chosen either for its perspective, its lighting or its color, the photographer can then use certain techniques to direct the eye of the viewer not simply to see the original image,

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From The President

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but to see it as the photographer sees it with all its emotion and power. Colors can be changed, distracting artifacts removed, areas darkened or lightened, mood created and the image with all its depth of meaning as discovered originally by the photographer can be represented to another. The creativity or artistry comes forth in what the photographer sees both in the person or scene itself and beyond.

In a discussion over lunch with a few friends, Alan Forney shared this inciteful observation on the art of photography as he understands “conscious attention.”

What does it mean to see with conscious attention? It means looking, scanning, watching, with no preconceptions as to what you are seeing. It means being receptive to perhaps more than what the eye is viewing. The mind needs to be blank and open to an idea being written on it visually from your field of view.

That’s a powerful concept for me. It means, in essence, that I wait with anticipation and openness for something significant and life changing about me, my world, or someone else to be revealed to me. It comes through my vision, not just of what I see before me, but of what lies beyond it and has the potential to become iconic in the realm of human experience. The artistic skill I develop as a photographer begins in seeing it and then in my acquired ability to share what I have with another.

Charles Gattis

HPS 2019 Huntsville Museum of Art Exhibit

- 25 Mar - Open Website for Submissions
- 22 Apr - Close Website. HMA starts Judging Process
- 13 May - HMA Announces winners
- 27 May - Start handing out mats (Exhibitors have 7 weeks to pick up mats, get them cut and return them.)
- 24 Jun - Start collecting matted images.
- 22 Jul - Last day for winners to submit their matted images.
- 06 Aug - HPS frames Images at the Museum
- 25 Aug - Exhibition Opens

February 2019
Subject- Memorials
Judge – Monica Martin

	Color Digital (56)	Monochrome Digital (46)	Color Print (29)	Monochrome Print (20)
1st	Charles Gattis	Judy Kennamer	Earl Todd	Margaret Todd
2nd	Carol Boardman	John Kirwin	Henry Norton	Margaret Todd
3rd	Margaret Phillips	Bill Snoddy	Steve Mitchell	Emily Saile
HM	Rosemary Davidson	Judy Kennamer	Barbara Staggs	Earl Todd
HM	Thomas Johnson	Martha Teal	Eddie Sewall	Barbara Staggs
HM	Judy Kennamer	Peter Van Hoff		
HM	John Shriver	John Shriver		
HM	Christopher Baker	Tom Bryant		
HM	John Shriver			
HM				



Color Digital 1st place by Charles Gattis



Color Digital 2nd Place by Carol Boardman

Name	2019 points	2019 wins
Earl Todd	14	4
Judy Kennamer	10	4
Margaret Todd	10	3
Henry Norton	9	2
John Shriver	9	5
Tom Bryant	6	3
Barbara Staggs	6	4
Charles Gattis	5	1
Charles Leverett	5	1
Doris Leverett	5	3
Emily Saile	5	3
Larry Sanders	5	1
Carol Boardman	4	1
John Kirwin	4	1
Bill Snoddy	4	2
Susi Stroud	4	1
Christopher Baker	3	3
Steve Mitchell	3	1
Margaret Phillips	3	1
Bob Schmiedeskamp	3	1
Pete Van Hoff	2	2
Rosemary Davidson	1	1
Joy Henderson	1	1
Thomas Johnson	1	1
Jeanne McDowell	1	1
Barbara Montgomery	1	1
Eddie Sewall	1	1
Henry Smith	1	1
Martha Teal	1	1



Color Digital 3rd Place
by Margaret Phillips



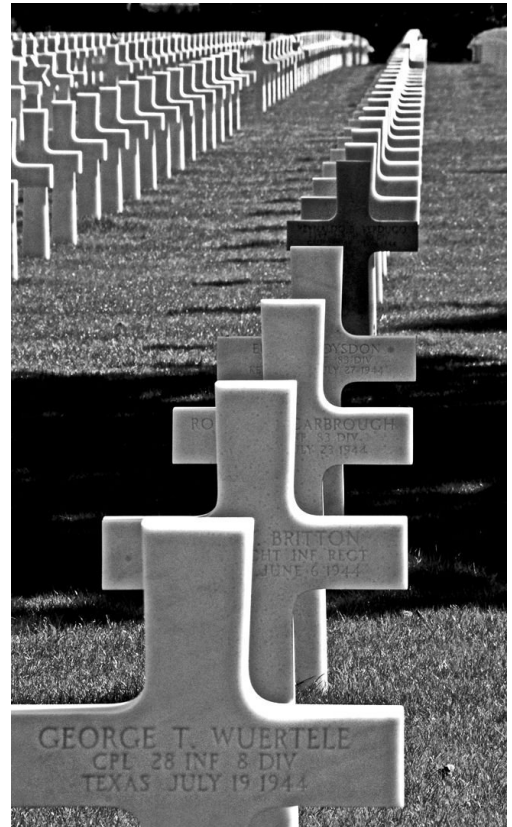
Monochrome Digital 1st by
Judy Kennamer

Reminder For Those Entering Prints:

For those that submit images to HPS Print Competition Categories, if you are repurposing mats, please remove stickers for previous competition wins. The stickers confuse the Competition Records Officer, and sometimes transfer to other images when prints are gathered/stacked during competition. Thanks!



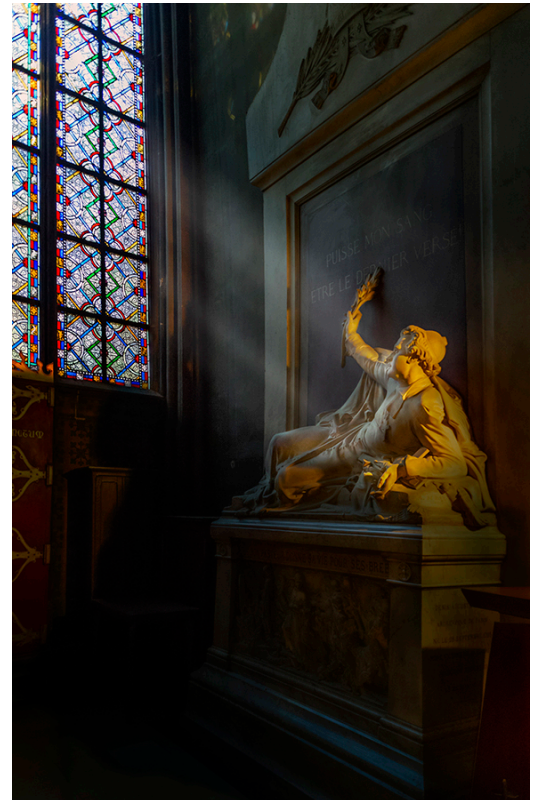
Monochrome Digital 2nd place by John Kirwin



Monochrome Digital 3rd place by Bill Snoddy



Color Print 1st place by Earl Todd



Color Print 2nd place by Henry Norton

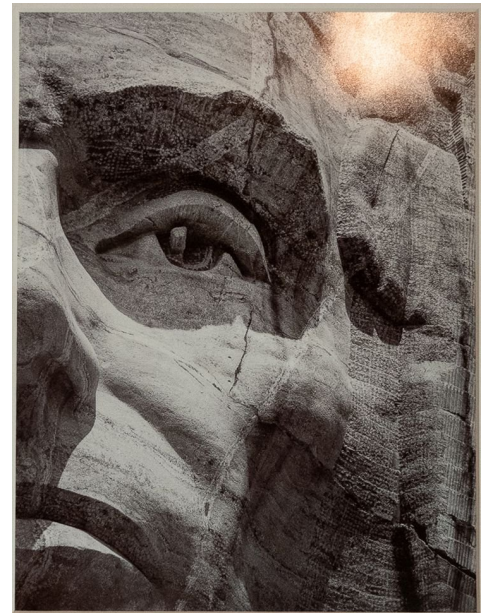


Color Print 3rd place by Steve Mitchell



Monochrome Print 1st place by Margaret Todd

Monochrome Print 2nd place by Margaret Todd



Monochrome Print 3rd place by Emily Saile

Member News

Lee Pratt won Best of Show and First Place in two categories of the exhibition for the 2019 Stereoscopic Society Convention in England. Best of Show was the 3D image, **Fishing in Colorado** (attached).



Photography 201: From Snapshots to

Great Shots. Program to be presented by Henry Smith, HPS member and Master Photographer, at the Huntsville Botanical Gardens. March 26, April 2, 9, 16, 23, & 30. 6-8 p.m. \$180 for Garden members, \$201 for Non-Members.

Six week series designed for those who are familiar with using their camera and desire to improve the quality of their photos. Participants should be comfortable adjusting shutter speed and aperture (no phone cameras). Students will complete and email weekly assignments to the instructor for in-class positive critiques.

Register at <http://hsvbg.org/adult-programs/>

Photo Opportunity

Chinese Lantern Festival, March 20-May 19. More than 1,000 illuminated displays provide a visual exhibition of Chinese art and culture. Enter "The Wild", a world of life-size illuminated panda bears, lions, flamingos and more from the world's seven continents. For pricing and daily hours go to: <http://hsvbg.org/faq-chinese-lantern-festival/>

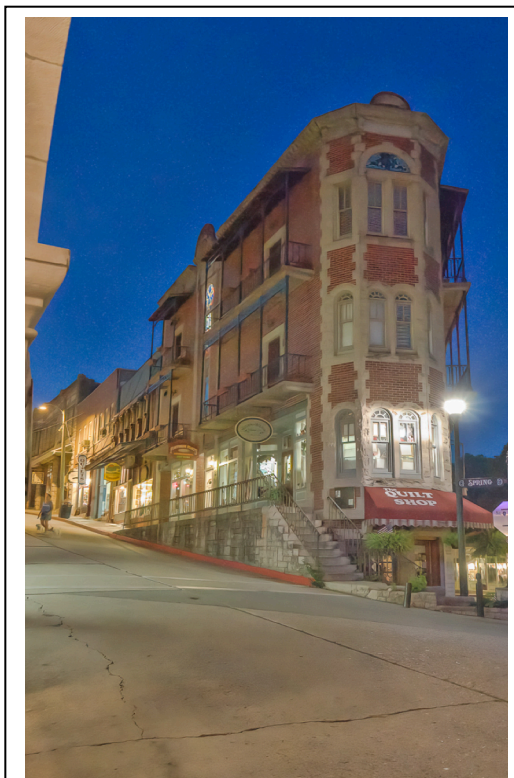
2019 Meeting Calendar

- Mar 11 – Flash/Strobe Photography Program
- Mar 25 - "Open" Competition
- April 8 - Program Meeting
- April 22 – "Abstract" Competition
- April 29- Fifth Monday Casual Meeting
- May 13 - Program Meeting
- May 27 – "Botanicals" Competition
- June 10- Program Meeting
- June 24 – "Doors/Windows" Competition
- July 8 - Program Meeting
- July 22- "Lakeshore" Competition
- July 29- Fifth Monday Casual Meeting
- August 12 – Program Meeting
- August 26 – "Patterns" Competition Meeting
- September 9 - Program Meeting
- September 23 – "Cityscapes" Competition Meeting
- September 30 - Fifth Monday Casual Meeting
- October 14 - Program Meeting
- October 28 – "Open" Competition Meeting
- November 11 - Program Meeting
- November 25 - "Shadows" Competition Meeting
- December - End of Year Dinner & Awards

Testing A.I. Clear (by Topaz Labs) *Article by HPS member Tom Bryant*

My Canon 70D fits my hands well and is light enough with some plastic in the body and kit lens. Bright optical viewfinder and a good Live View touch screen. It is fun to use! But it is about 5 years old and sensor technology has improved to where much higher ISO settings can be used without serious noise (or so the buzz says). So I've been looking at a new camera but may have found another way to shoot at high ISO. If you have read my article "What Single Thing Helped In Competition?" in the December issue you found that I like a Topaz Labs product called Topaz Adjust (highlights/shadows on steroids). It was their first popular Topaz product and I've had it since 2012. They have recently introduced a new product called A.I. Clear that makes a lot of promises of noise reduction without loss of detail. It has Artificial Intelligence in the name so you know that it is good. The capability sounds good and is very cheap compared to a new camera cost. I bought it and so far have found it works very well on some images.

I like sunset cityscape shots when the sky has gone cobalt blue and incandescent lights are on and glow orange. We had just arrived in Eureka Springs, Arkansas and it was past the golden light. Too late and no time to set up a tripod. So I cranked the ISO up to 8,000 and made a hand-held shot that I'll use here as a test.



Test image, ISO 8000

Here is the test image, ISO 8,000, 1/15 second, f/5.6. It is the flatiron building in Eureka Springs. I made a crop around the second story window to see the effect of different processing. For comparison I made a crop of the out-of-camera JPEG that only had the on-board noise reduction. The image shows noise and lack of detail that is expected from this vintage camera and on-board processing only. Next I looked at the image run through my typical work flow without A.I. Clear.



Crop of Camera JPEG

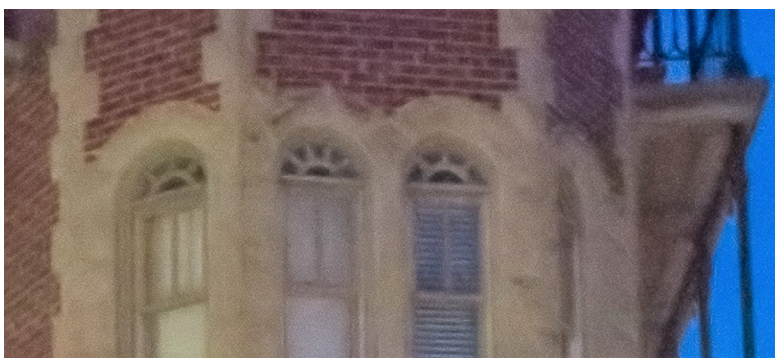
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Testing A.I. Clear

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Shoot in RAW, open in LR with preset of some sharpening, noise reduction, and lens correction. (All RAW images need some sharpening since it is not done in-camera). The next step was to export as a TIFF and open in Neat Image for removing noise. Then save and open in Topaz Adjust for highlight/shadows on steroids, then back to LR for final tough up. The crop of the image looks pretty good with some light noise. Much better than the JPEG. Some more work and it might be ready for prime time. But it took some steps to get here starting with Lightroom, export to Neat Image, and back to Lightroom with a sashay through Topaz Adjust.

For the A.I. Clear test I did RAW conversion with it as they suggest. So the steps were Open the RAW file in A.I. Clear, process and export as a TIFF, open in Topaz Adjust, then open in LR for final touch-up. The result is better than the above process and with fewer steps. In the test image I hope you can see that the noise level is similar but there is more detail in the window shade. This paper doesn't quite convey the image differences.



LR, Neat Image, Adjust, LR again

The A.I. Clear image looks better at this point in the processing than the old workflow and it was certainly quicker to get here and involved fewer steps.

I'm running on a 9-year old PC desktop with Windows 10, 16 Gb memory, and the speed for this software seemed just fine for me. No glitches or problems of any kind so far. It is not required for every image and it isn't a batch processor so I wouldn't run it on every image. I



have run cleaner images through it and saw no effect compared to a LR only workflow. But it does seem to easily clean very noisy images and maintain good image detail. And Topaz has a policy of free lifetime upgrades so as the A. I. technology matures we should be able to incorporate the rapid advances. I've tested AI Clear on a scanned slide

negative and got no improvement. Other products seem to be best suited for this type of image.

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Testing A.I. Clear

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Another new product of Topaz is A.I. Gigapixel, which is for upsizing files from small sensors to produce large prints. Just like A.I. Clear may allow the use of older cameras when pushing ISO, this product may mean very large prints can be produced from a small camera sensor. I've previously tried Genuine Fractals in OnOne 8 to Lightroom upsizing and found no difference. Who wants to try this new entry?

Topaz has also released anew product called AI JPEG to RAW that makes a lot of promises that may be too good to be true. Tim Grey is one of my favorite on-line photo personalities and here is what he says about it from Ask Tim Grey: <http://asktimgrey.com/>

Posted on February 8, 2019, JPEG to RAW:

"Today's Question: I got an email about software from Topaz Labs that claims to convert JPEG images to raw captures. Is that even possible, and if so will it provide all of the benefits of raw?"

Tim's Quick Answer: The "JPEG to RAW AI" software from Topaz Labs does not provide the same benefits as a raw capture, and frankly I feel that their marketing around this software is misleading."

More detail is available on his blog. If it sounds too good to be true, it might not be true.

March 2019 Judge: Patrick Oden

Patrick Oden will be our judge for the upcoming competition on March 25, 2019 for the subject, "Open."

In his 6th year as a judge for HPS, Patrick Oden is a seasoned and award winning photojournalist who currently lives in Guntersville, AL. As of this January 2018, Patrick has begun publishing his own local lifestyle magazine, Lake City Magazine, which allows him the opportunity to photograph just about anything and everything. A good example of this was recently Patrick conducted a food shoot for a restaurant in the morning, photographed boat racing in the afternoon, and an outdoor concert that evening. Street photography remains his favorite genera and he's always got an eye peeled for great light and a great moment.

We want to thank Patrick for returning, and once again serving as a competition judge for HPS.

You can find examples of his work at www.lakecityalabama.com

Website: www.huntsvillephotographicsociety.org
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/399566463394251/> (closed group)