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Think About It ...

We don't see things as they are,
we see them as we are.

—Anais Nin

Member Gallery

To be included, send your favorite image (in some digital format, please) to me at:

dasander@rockwellcollins.com

Entrance
by Dan Sandersfeld

capture date	3.20.05
image source	digital
camera	Canon 10D
lens	34mm (24-70)
aperture	f/22
shutter speed	1/45
shooting mode	manual
metering mode	evaluative
ISO	100
flash	off
image quality	RAW
RAW converter	Photoshop CS
cropped?	yes

From the President

At the March meeting, we decided to hold a photo shoot instead of our regular meeting on April 21st.

We'll meet at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 23 in Main Amana at the Amana HandiMart. Our newsletter editor Dan Sandersfeld—who lives in Amana—has volunteered to show us some of the locations he likes to photograph. With all the old buildings and barns to shoot it'll be a good chance to practice your black and white skills. Spring flowers should also be starting to bloom, so if you like to stick with color, there should be some opportunities for that as well. I'll send out an e-mail the week of the shoot with more information. I hope we have a good turnout, as we did for last month's meeting. I'll see you on the 23rd.

—Jim Zelle, CPC President

Our Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be Thurs., May 19 at 5:00 p.m. in the Main Plant cafeteria.

March Meeting Notes

Last month, club members shared and discussed their work.



Club Information

CPC Discounts

Please show your Collins Photo Club Membership Card to receive the following discounts.

Photo Pro
(319) 395-9121

153 Collins Road NE, Cedar Rapids

- 20% off film processing or second set free
- 20% off digital reprints and enlargements
- 15% off large format inkjet prints
- 20% off mats
- 10% off darkroom chemicals
- 10% off photographic paper
- Film at cost + 15%

Modern Gallery and Framing Company
(319) 366-7311

701 Third Ave SE, Cedar Rapids

- 25% off list price

Linn Photo
(319) 373-0658

1725 Blairsferry Road, Marion

(319) 396-3182

2405 Westdale Dr. SW, Cedar Rapids

- 15% off film processing
- 10% off chemicals
- 10% off paper
- 10% off film

Kyle's Framing and Gallery
(319) 377-5739

601 7th Ave, Suite A, Marion

(Between Sunbeam Outlet and Country Kitchen)

- 50% off matte board
- 30% - 50% off framing and glass

Perfect Edge - Custom Picture Framing
(319) 362-2119

1264 38th Street NE, Cedar Rapids

- 10% off any CR framing quote
- 25% off total order price

FY05 Club Officers

President	Jim Zelle	x 56798
Vice President	Dave Detwiler	x 59545
Secretary / Historian	Kris Hoeger	see roster
Treasurer / Membership	Pat Boland	x 54817
Equip. Checkout	Mark Bortz	x 54860
Exhibit Director	OPEN	
Newsletter	Dan Sandersfeld	x 52038
Webmaster	Cliffy Franzen	x 53725
Darkroom Coordinator	Kathy Rutherford	x 54113

To Become a Member

To become a member of the Collins Photo Club, complete the form at the end of the newsletter and send it to:

Pat Boland
m/s 124-213
Rockwell Collins
400 Collins Road, NE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52498
(319) 295-4817
pjboland@rockwellcollins.com

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Three Must-Have Photoshop Plug-ins

—Michael Reichmann

The following article has been reprinted from the Luminous Landscape website, © 1995-2005 Michael Reichmann.

<http://www.luminous-landscape.com/reviews/software/must-have.shtml>

One of the questions that I'm asked most often, both at my seminars, and by e-mail, is – what software tools do I use; particularly for noise reduction and sharpening. And, how do I do my B&W conversions.

Over the past several years I have tried many of the programs and plug-ins to come to market, on both Mac and PC platforms. Below are brief looks at the ones that are my current preferred choices. The ones that I use every day, and that I count on when producing my commercial images and fine-art display prints.

Are these the best programs available of their type? Possibly. Clearly I can't have tried everything, and even if I had, personal bias and needs play a role in making a statement like this. I should also note that I know personally most of the authors of these programs, though this played no role whatsoever in my selection or mention here. Please note that these are not reviews; simply descriptions of what I find to be the current best-of-breed in each category.

Also, in the case of two of the programs, new versions have just come out this week (early Feb, 2005). Each of these plug-ins are available for both Windows XP as well as Mac OSX.

Noise Ninja

Digital cameras keep getting better and better. In terms of high ISO noise performance, on many of the latest generation cameras ISO 400 is almost as good as ISO 100, and even then shows less noise than film ever did at those speeds. Many photographers now find themselves routinely shooting at ISO 800, 1600 and even 3200 on a regular basis. But, as good as contemporary cameras are at these speeds, they are relatively noisy, and you'll want to clean up these files.

Noise Ninja (<http://www.picturecode.com>) is one of the newer kids on the block, but in the couple of years that it's been available it has gone through constant upgrades. A new plug-in version has been in public beta for some months during late 2004, and in Feb 2005 has started shipping. As good as Noise Ninja was, I am always frustrated by image processing utilities that are stand alone programs. Having to switch back and forth between programs, loading and unloading files, can slow one down. Plug-ins simply make the workflow that much more straightforward.

In addition to now being available as a plug-in, (a stand-alone version is also still available), Noise Ninja has seen a number of strong improvements, both in functionality and in image quality. The new version appears to be faster, and also does a much better job of auto-profiling.

Noise Ninja can be downloaded for a free trial. A full Pro Bundle license is \$79.95, and includes both the stand-alone and the plug-in version. There are less expensive versions available, but at the price, why not get the best? Current owners can upgrade for just \$10.

Simply put, Noise Ninja is the current state-of-the-art in noise reduction software for digital cameras.

Convert To B&W Pro

For a long time it seemed that B&W photography was on the wane. But in recent years it's made a strong comeback, and many photographers are newly discovering the joys of printing monochrome images with their inkjet printers.

Of course very few people are still shooting B&W film, but instead are finding that by shooting digital they are able to use image processing tools to convert their colour images into stunning B&W, including all of the filter controls that B&W workers used to use in the field, but which now can be done better after the fact in Photoshop.

There are a great many free ways to convert your image to B&W. The simplest method is to use Image / Mode / Grayscale. But this is also the least satisfactory in terms of image quality and versatility of output. A much better technique is to use Channel Mixer (see the article at: http://www.luminous-landscape.com/tutorials/b-w_better.shtml). But Channel Mixer is slow and awkward to use, particularly when it comes to balancing the representation in monochrome of colour values.

Convert to B&W Pro (<http://www.theimagingfactory.com/>) (CTBWP from now on) is a Photoshop plug-in that actually makes the conversion process a joy. You are provided with a variable size preview window, (only on the new Mac version, regrettably), and a full set of tools for adjusting the image to just the way you want it to appear. And for those photographers coming from a background in black and white film processing and printing, the controls are even labeled with their analogue equivalents, right down to being able to choose multi-grade contrast.

Continued on the next page

For me one of the most useful capabilities is that of being able to adjust the colour channels to get just the tonal characteristics that best fit the image. This is equivalent to shooting B&W film, and standing in the field with a full set of colour filters, to provide just the tonality separation that you're looking for. But, of course, now you can do it at the comfort of your desk, change your mind as many times as you like, and do it all at a considered pace.

At \$99 CTBWP is not inexpensive, but you can download a full-featured version for a free 30 day trial, so what have you got to lose?

Photokit Sharpener

Sharpening is the single most misunderstood aspect of digital image processing. When I look at photographer's prints, especially those relatively new to Photoshop, the most common technical failing is that the prints are usually either seriously oversharpened or undersharpened.

Part of the problem may lie in the fact that digital sharpening has nothing to do with sharpness per se. The word sharpening is used, but it really has to do with edge contrast (acutance), not resolution.

The most common tool for doing so-called sharpening is the Unsharp Mask

tool in Photoshop. The problem with it is that it is difficult to use well, because the settings aren't intuitive, and they vary considerably depending on the image and its intended use.

There are also a great many variations on using the USM tool, including sharpening only the luminance channel, using High Pass sharpening, and the like. All of these work, and some work very well, but they each require skill and experience to use effectively.

There's a better way, and it's called Photokit Sharpener. Designed and written by six of the world's leading Photoshop educators, Photokit Sharpener is a powerful set of image sharpening tools designed to approach the task appropriately from both a workflow and an image quality perspective.

The program breaks sharpening down into three stages; Input Sharpening, Creative Sharpening, and Output Sharpening. Regard is given to the type of original image one is working with, and also the file's intended destination. All sharpening is done in Layers within Photoshop, and each adjustment done is user configurable, even after the fact.

In my opinion, the \$99 that Pixel Genius is asking for Photokit Sharpener is the best hundred bucks that you'll ever spend when it comes to improving the quality of your prints. Nothing else that I've yet seen even comes close.

Photo resource for selling your images online

PhotoGateway (<http://www.photogateway.com>) bills itself as a virtual gateway for photographers to make their images directly available to art directors, designers and marketing managers. Over 50,000 royalty-free images are now available from more than 450 independent artists and photographers. Each image is priced individually by the owner. Visitors to the site can browse photographers' portfolios, use the search engine and order images for immediate delivery via secure checkout.

Read the Sellers' FAQ (<http://www.photogateway.com/sellerfaq.asp>) to find out how to sell your images through PhotoGateway.

Club Membership Roster - FY05

[updated 3/15/05]

C = Contractor
E = Employee
R = Retiree
S = Spouse

Change of Address

Please notify the newsletter editor and membership coordinator of address changes.

Last Name	First Name	Mail Stop	Phone	E-mail Address	
Bjorseth	Bruce		393 6820	bpbjorseth@aol.com	R
Boland	Pat	124-314	295-4817	pjboland@rockwellcollins.com	E
Bortz	Mark	108-206	295-4860	mabortz@rockwellcollins.com	E
Bortz	Mary		294-1144	mary@planetbortz.com	S
Buelow	Barry	105-151	295-5805	bjbuelow@rockwellcollins.com	E
Dams	Doug	153-250	295-1929	dedams@rockwellcollins.com	E
Davidson	John	137-137	295-0215	jhdavids@rockwellcollins.com	E
Detwiler	Dave	137-101	295-9545	djdetwil@rockwellcollins.com	E
Gorelkin	Maxim	192-124	295-7773	mgorelki@rockwellcollins.com	E
Franzen	Clair (Cliffy)	105-152	295-3725	crfranze@rockwellcollins.com	E
Hamer	Gary	166-102	295-2498	ghamer@fmtcs.com	E
Hindman	Evan	105-191	295-5239	enhindma@rockwellcollins.com	E
Hoeger	Doug	166-109	295-5781	dahoeger@rockwellcollins.com	E
Hoeger	Kris		377-8263	Kris.Hoeger@vectorcorporation.com	S
Hofstetter	Scott	138-259	295-5699	sar-lab@msn.com	E
Johnson	Tony	192-	295-8639	tjohns2@rockwellcollins.com	E
Lang	Christy	108-176	295-7254	cmlang1@rockwellcollins.com	E
Meyer	Ron	108-205	295-0069	rrmeyer@rockwellcollins.com	E
Mussell	Daniel	166-106	295-0700	dan4pack@inav.net	E
Paeth	Bill		396-6470	billpaeth@hotmail.com	R
Rand	Jennifer		366-6659		S
Rand	Tim	108-207	295-0059	twrand@rockwellcollins.com	E
Rutherford	Kathy	108-177	295-4113	eilers-sacora@att.net	E
Sandersfeld	Dan	124-302	295-2038	dasander@rockwellcollins.com	E
Schott	Deb	124-213	295-3867	daschott@rockwellcollins.com	E
Beckley-Sliney	Sharon L.			sunbird@fmtcs.com	S
Sliney	James G.	106-181	295-4229	mrwhiskers@fmtcs.com	E
Ster	David	106-132	295-2213	daster@rockwellcollins.com	E
Tichy	SuAnn	109-206	295-2421	smtichy@rockwellcollins.com	E
Troumbly	Chad M.	105-152	295-0438	cmtroumb@rockwellcollins.com	E
Trbojevich	Jessica	137-108	295-1852	jatrboye@rockwellcollins.com	E
Xiong	Madie A.	192-104	295-0781	maxiong@mtu.edu	E
Zelle	Jim	124-313	295-6798	jazelle@rockwellcollins.com	E

Membership fee: \$16

For membership October 1, 2004 - September 30, 2005

Make checks payable to:
Rockwell Collins

Supplemental Activity Registration Form - please fill out completely

Return form and payment to:

Pat Boland
M/S 124-213
x. 5-4817

Name _____ Ext. _____ Mail Stop _____
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Membership Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal	<input type="checkbox"/> New		
Payment Method	<input type="checkbox"/> Cash	<input type="checkbox"/> Check # _____		
Status (required)	<input type="checkbox"/> Employee	<input type="checkbox"/> Spouse	<input type="checkbox"/> Retiree	<input type="checkbox"/> Contract
Camera Equipment	<input type="checkbox"/> point & shoot	<input type="checkbox"/> 35mm	<input type="checkbox"/> digital	
	<input type="checkbox"/> medium format	<input type="checkbox"/> large format	<input type="checkbox"/> other	
Experience Level	_____ (rank 1-10)			
examples:	beginner = 1 -2	amateur = 3-5		
	adv. amateur = 6 - 8	professional = 9-10		

I would be interested in giving a presentation at a CPC meeting

I would like to suggest the following ideas for meeting topics, programs or outings:

I would like to join the Collins Photo Club because:

RELEASE

I understand that the above named activity is sponsored for recreational purposes only. I also understand the nature of the activity including its possible risks and voluntarily register for participation.

I hereby release Rockwell Collins, Inc. from any claims, demands or damages because of injury or death, other than customary and reasonable medical expenses under the existing company medical plan, resulting in any way from participation in this activity.

Signature _____ Date _____

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Office Signature _____ Date _____

Invoice # _____