

Cayuga Nature Photographers *Newsletter*

May 2019 - Volume XXVII, No. 5



Backlighting & Silhouettes

Note our theme for the May meeting. It takes us into an artistic form not used by many nature photo artists. (I admit I had to search widely to find an image relevant to the theme. Editor) So, this should stretch our creative muscles at a time when so many of us are excitedly thinking of wildflowers, itty bitty birds and hillsides of spring green.

On the topic of spring, there are some excellent events at the Cornell Botanic Garden. They include a Mundy Wildflower walk at 6 pm on May 14, a wildflower hike at Edwards Lake Cliffs at 1:30 pm on May 1, and an explosion of spring bulbs at the Nevin Welcome Center, plus the arboretum. (They planted 30,000 bulbs last fall!) These events by expert arboretum staff are good ways to identify subjects for future photo investigation. See the website at: <https://cornellbotanicgardens.org/>

While our first thoughts when thinking of the arboretum are spring flowers, don't forget to think about birds and landscapes in the Cornell Arboretum. It is prime habitat for a great number of spring migrants.

Finally, **Pixel Genius** is a company offering some excellent plug-ins for sharpening and color enhancement. They are closing. You can get their plug-ins free. See: <http://www.pixelgenius.com/>

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Thursday, May 2 at 7:30 PM
Cornell Plant Science Building,
Whetzel Seminar Room (Rm.404)

Highlights: Black and White

Eugene Kolomatsky came upon this sad scene near the Philadelphia Art Museum. With ample time to explore the composition, he developed a high art message which is ideally rendered in black and white. So often, a shadow from the photographer is considered a detriment. But, not so for this case where Eugene's shadow is directly connected to the bird's beak.



Excellent.

Devan Acardo was in Kruger National Park in South Africa when she captured in high key this interaction between Zebras and a Red-billed Ox Pecker. It's perfect for black and white. Plus, the illustration of behavior creates a significant story of greater interest to the viewer. Notable.



Note: The edge boundary was added for the newsletter.

Muhammad Arif offered an image that was by his description simply boring. There was not much color because he was looking towards the sun. Therefore, it is ideal for a silhouette in black and white, and a month ahead of our sharing theme! Note that the heron's legs are well-positioned to confirm that the bird is in motion. Little details do count.



This transforms a disappointing setting into something presentable with a message. Well done.

Mark Malkin continues us along the path to improve the result by removing the color. Sometimes color detracts from the message and confuses the composition. For illustrative purposes, Mark supplied the image in color and in monochrome.



Isn't the image at right more memorable? The composition is stronger, especially with the bright area behind head reduced to colorless values.

These four examples present a case for examining monochromatic renditions for reasons of stronger composition, distracting colors, and poor overall light.

Thanks for sharing.

When the Light is Wrong by Paul Schmitt

There are times when the light is poor, and colors are not interesting. There are also times, I have discovered when the light just does not match the human reaction. There were several such moments on my recent trip to both the Argentine and Chilean sides of Cerro Torre / Torres del Paine massif. It is a harsh environment with abrupt mountains, high winds, and sparse vegetation. Beautiful too.

Speeding to Chalten on the Argentine side of the Cerro Torre massif, the light was hard, and my view was into the sun. I shot a few phone images into the backlit mountains and clouds. This one was at least level and free of scrubby bushes in the foreground.



I did not like it. The blue did not match the harsh moment. I took it into my phone apps and found one that yielded a black and white that fit my feelings.

A short while later, we made a stop at a picturesque view point.



It was too windy to use a tripod, even with added weight. We took shelter behind a stone wall to photograph. Let's say it was in the 30s, with 35 to 40 mph wind. The lighting was mixed between sun and shadow.

Here is the initial image.



It's warm and cool. Did not appeal to me, but when I went into black and white it seemed better balanced. This is what we were offered that afternoon. I was satisfied more with this .



The next morning we had the sun on our side, but no clouds. Oh well.

Please Note

Membership is \$20 for new and existing members. For existing members, it is due in September. You may pay at our next meeting, or, if preferred, you can mail it to Nancy Ridenour at 346 Warren Road, Ithaca, NY 14850. Thank you.

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