

The Art of Photography

Richard White

PHOTOGRAPHIC WORKSHOPS
CALENDAR

ON LINE GALLERY

PHOTOGRAPHY ARTICLES

HIGH COUNTRY

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Issue 6 August 2003



Dancing Mountain Ash, Mt Buffalo 2003

Sorry to land this newsletter on you again so soon, I'll be brief, but something happened recently that got me thinking about the next photograph we might take.

At the end of last month I entered the AIPP Victorian Professional photography awards in the landscape section. Surprisingly (to me) I won the section. You could enter 4 prints into any one section (there were 5 different sections) and the highest aggregate score was deemed the winner in that section.

The photograph I have shown you here was one of the four prints entered. Taken when I was at Mt Buffalo earlier this year teaching a workshop. Now winning this section started me thinking about our worth as photographers. Are we as good as our last picture or are we as good as our next picture? I tend to think the latter, because we have to keep on producing. It could be so easy to start strutting around with our chest popped out shining our finger nails on our lapels. I am sure some do, but for me I always think when I have some kind of success will I be able to continue on producing images that I like and that might be appreciated by others.

I have an artist friend who paints, who has aired similar thoughts to me. You see how vulnerable we are? Never good enough to achieve. Well my friend is nursing a broken ankle at present. A good time to paint I would think.

The best thing with a good result like this is to put it behind you and get out there and make more pictures. The taste of success fades with the first four figure bill you receive in the post. Who said post brings good news?

I have just sent my photographs off to the printers for my 2004 calendar. The process takes time and the selection choice seems to take even longer. Over the course of a year I just keep printing images that I think will get a guernsey and then around this time pull them out to see what I have. Believe it or not I do forget a lot that I have printed so am quite surprised to discover them again. Usually the selection is made from about 20 to 25 prints.

I will try and think up an incentive by the next newsletter to encourage you to obtain one.

A few ideas came in from my last newsletter about topics you wanted covered.

Spotting (prints and negs) B & W

Slowly and carefully. The best brushes I have found are Windsor Newton Series 7 Size 0.

Can use for both negs and prints. They produce a very fine point which enables you to do pin dots if you need to.

When spotting prints the idea is to start lighter than what you need and keep building up on the same spot. The more times you touch it the darker it gets.

I have found that Spotone neutral is an excellent match for Kodak Polymax fine art paper. You can use it straight meaning diluted with water, but not having to add other dyes to get a colour match. Marshall's dyes require a bit of mixing with their other dyes for Polymax. Do tests for Ilford. In fact you should test all your papers. Start with a cast off print before hitting the final print.

For negs I use the same brush and Kodak Opaque. A thimble full will last a lifetime. If you ever end up at a workshop at my studio I'll give you some.

Cleaning Lenses

Depends where you are. I mean if you are out in the field and you notice grunge on your lens. A bit of hot breathe and a clean soft cloth (tee-shirt) will save the day. At home I have used for ages because I have it, Kodak Lens cleaner and Kodak Lens Tissues. I am sure you can still buy them. I hope you can still get the tissues as having tried most of the others I wouldn't want anything else.

Drying and matting fibre prints for us amateurs who lack a dry mount press.

Try a warm to hot iron, brown craft paper, barrier paper and a piece of craftwood or MDF board.

Board on bottom, barrier paper, print face down, brown paper on top and then iron gradually and carefully. Do a test first. This may work for you.

Recommended books for reading (technical and/or visionary)

A few good ones: The Making of 40 Photographs by Ansel Adams.

The Art of Photography, An Approach to Personal Expression by Bruce Barnbaum
(I named my workshops before the book was published)

Mountain Light by Galen Rowell

Stay This Moment by Sam Abell

Quiet Light by John Sexton

And of course numerous others. These are some of my favourites.

Thanks and cheers till next time,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line underneath it.