

The Art of Photography

Richard White

PHOTOGRAPHIC WORKSHOPS
CALENDAR

ON LINE GALLERY

PHOTOGRAPHY ARTICLES

HIGH COUNTRY

P. O. Box 425, Mansfield, Victoria 3724. Phone / fax 03 5776 9533 Email: ragwhite@mcmmedia.com.au
website: www.richardwhite.com.au

Issue 8 March 2004



Tree Fern, Yarra Ranges 1997

First let me say hi for 2004. There are a few things I'd like to tell you about, one in particular, that may help you and save you money. Some of you may have already done this, but in case you haven't I hope it helps you.

I remember reading some time ago about making your own loupe from an old lens, be it from a camera or an enlarger. I just stored the thought away in the back of my mind with all the other stuff that lingers there, but was reminded of it about a week ago when I saw something else about the same idea.

Basically you can make a loupe from an old lens you may have sitting around that you can't use. Back in 1990 or 1991, I think it was, I remember dropping my Canon T90 with my 35 – 105mm lens attached and the lens came off worse for wear. Off to the lens doctor it went only to be told it would cost more to repair it than to buy a new one. Although I had insurance it just wasn't worth the difference, what with the excess I had to pay etc etc.

I bought the sorry thing home and threw/ placed it in a drawer to forget about it or hope the lens fairy would come one night and put it all back together. No such luck. She doesn't even leave money for teeth anymore.

So about a week ago with my memory stirred I released the lens from its dungeon and pulled it apart piece by piece. It was quite tricky in places, but I took care and soldiered on. I could be as careless as I wanted with springs and screws as I knew that I wasn't going to put it back together again.

I ended up with one large piece of glass about 58mm in diameter and several small pieces measuring around 20 to 25mm. For this exercise the only useful piece was the large piece of glass. I am sure with a fixed lens that more than one piece of glass would be usable.

Then I set about finding out how much distance I would need for the large piece of glass to work. My rough measurement was about 100mm. I started playing with the casing that came off the lens and found that with a bit of modification I could use it as my base to hold the glass. The bonus for me came by using the zoom piece as well, I could alter the height of the unit. Handy if you wear glasses or don't want to wear them.

The down side of the unit I made is that the middle 2/3 to 3/4 is sharp, but the outside falls off a bit. I think this would be part of the problem with glass from a zoom lens. Fixed lenses should be a little better and flat field lenses better still.

Because you use the modified loupe/lens with the glass facing up the lens cap came in very handy when it sits there and does nothing. The cap keeps the dust off the glass.

If you attempt this just be careful of getting grease on the glass that will come from inside the body. Even with all the appropriate cleaners and tissues it's a bummer to get off. If they're multi coated lenses methylated spirits is a good grease remover.

Just remember a cheap loupe is not worth what you paid for it and a GOOD loupe will last forever and cost you around \$150 to \$200 I bought one in the States when I was there recently. It cost me US\$95 and the exchange rate wasn't as good as it is now. If you can get hold of a "dead" lens for \$10-\$15, it could be worth the experiment of making one yourself. Of course you can just upend a 50mm lens and use it that way, however you don't get the field of view and all the bits that join to the camera need to be removed if you want to rest it on the neg or whatever it is you are looking at.

Visit to the USA

In the December 2003 newsletter I told you a little bit about my trip to the USA to attend two master photography classes thanks to receiving a Victorian Arts Council Grant. Part of the criteria for attending the classes was to take along a body of work to show (similar to what I do on my own workshops) and have assessed.

At the workshop in the Sierra Nevada region with Bruce Barnbaum, I presented my work on the third night. Bruce was quite impressed with what I showed and later asked if I would be interested in running a workshop with him some time. Needless to say I was flattered. Coming from someone whose work I have loved and admired for years. We spoke a little more over the next few days and again since being home and at present we are proposing a weeklong workshop in either Victoria or more likely Tasmania probably in April of 2005 or 2006.

For those of you who don't know Bruce allow me to give you a little bit of background. He has taught workshops since 1972 and is considered to be one of the finest photographers and printers in the world. He is the author of several books on the medium of photography and a well respected educator. A past student of Ansel Adams and co founder of the Owens Valley Workshops with John Sexton and Ray McSavaney. Bruce is also a regular contributor to several US photography magazines. See his website www.barnbaum.com

Web Site

And speaking of websites, finally after a couple of years of threatening to do so I have launched www.richardwhite.com.au Without the help of someone near and dear to me, it would never have happened. Although I expect it to be added to and changed over the next little while, the basis is there.

View Camera Magazine

Another good thing to come out of my trip to the USA is that the American publication View Camera is doing a profile on me in their March / April edition. This is a well distributed magazine in the US, but one seldom seen in Australia or as some Americans like to call it "The Land of the Long Weekend". How I stack up to the Americans will be, for me, interesting.

EMAIL DARKROOM EDITIONS **100% guaranteed**

Another thing I would like to introduce to you in this issue is something I have been thinking about for awhile which I am going to call the Email Darkroom Editions. I would like to give you the opportunity of purchasing one of my photographs at a highly reduced rate. This will apply only to receivers of this electronic mail and will last from one newsletter to the next.

The idea is that I will offer the photograph that accompanies the newsletter in sizes that I feel is appropriate for the image. This will differ from image to image as some shots, in my opinion, only deserve, or work better in a particular size.

The photograph offered this time is one of my favourites and one of my most popular. It will be offered in two image sizes: 11" x 14" and 16" x 20". The image will be printed on Polymax Fine Art Fibre Base double weight paper, selenium toned and processed to archival standards. The prints will be mounted and over matted on conservation board reading for framing. Details relating to the image and print number will appear on the back of the print.

That's it for this time. I'll leave you with a quote sent to me by a friend.

Everyone has a photographic memory. Some just don't have film.

Thanks and cheers till next time,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard". Below the signature is a single horizontal line that starts under the first letter and extends to the right, ending with a small arrowhead.