

# HORIZON NEWS #40

IMAGES, THOUGHTS AND NEWS FROM HORIZON PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS

*"Wherever you go keep your eyes fresh, your heart open, and your mind on making images that resonate with how you see and want to express the world around you."*

George Schaub, Editor, *Shutterbug*

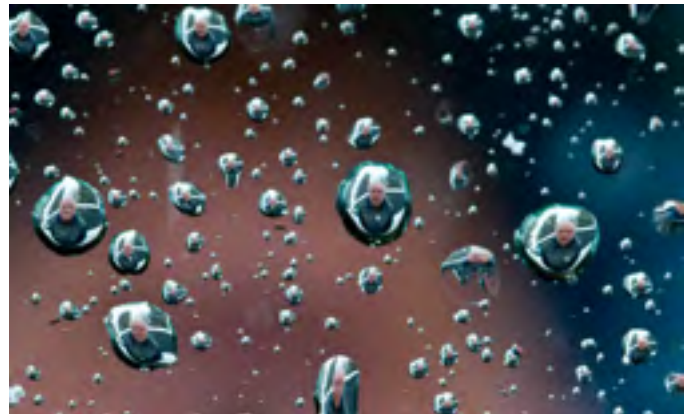
## STUDENT PHOTOS: CLOSE-UP

When Horizon Director Steve Gottlieb takes a photographic road trip, he establishes a basic itinerary, then explores anything interesting that crosses his path. Those attending his recent "Western Adventure" — held in New Mexico this year — got a five-day taste of his travel style. Interesting items not on the itinerary that crossed their path:

- A gorgeously restored Old West hotel in Cimarron; many ceiling holes were evidence of stray .45 Caliber bullets.
- A horse trainer who lived in the saddle morning 'til night. The females in our group seemed especially partial to this buff cowboy.
- An 80-year-old Korean American with two careers: wooden drum craftsman and proprietor of a coffee shop in an unlikely setting: the semi-ghost town of Tierra Amarilla. He also designed a modern outhouse; Steve took his portrait inside for the upcoming book about bathrooms, and will discuss same shortly on the Horizon blog.
- A Spanish/Indian philosopher/author with the French name "Napoleon."

Three other serendipitous stops led to these fine photos:

During an unexpected May snowstorm in Carson National Forest, we followed a sign to a lake. It had no apparent photographic potential; we would have left immediately except Steve's car got stuck in a snow bank. While Steve and a few others were digging out, some students made photographic hay. **Karen Messick** turned the common subject of snow bank and woods into an exquisite image that transcends cliché. Wouldn't this make a great mood-setter for a CD cover? Meanwhile, **Marty Becker** took this "WOW" portrait of fellow-student **Larry Hartman** through snowmelt water drops on his windshield. (Marty turned the picture 180 degrees to make Larry right side up.) This image should sensitize your eyes to looking closely at water drops.



### Announcements

- July's Upcoming Classes: Nudes: The Female Form July 16th; Glamour & Beauty July 17th; Weddings July 23-25; Canon July 23-25 (wait list only); Flash Magic July 30-31.
- All are invited to the Horizon Alumni Exhibition at GALLERY 919 MARKET – WILMINGTON. The show runs July 1-31. Reception is on Friday, July 8th from 4:30 – 8:00. Great photography...and some wonderful door prizes.
- If you have enjoyed hearing Steve Gottlieb's stories, he now offers an entire presentation called 25 Pictures/25 Stories. Check out: [www.25stories.com](http://www.25stories.com)
- Horizon's John Lauritsen offers individual PhotoShop instruction. Contact us for details.



In the town of Madrid, while waiting for lunch to be prepared, all 15 of us went out on the town. **Cathy Miller** captured a perfect pose of this mime. We'd give this shot an oxymoronic title: "Frozen Animation." (How many mimes, do you think, reside in New Mexico?) **Ed Ford** captured just the right expression of a man who clearly had one foot buried deep in the past. Nice lighting and composition added to the shot.

Of all our unexpected finds, surely the most strikingly unique was a home still under construction that used recycled objects, soda cans, tires, etc., as basic building material. **Yair Egozy** took two shots which, taken together, capture the playful, imaginative essence of the structure. There were many more such striking homes dotted throughout the valley, all of which look like great photographic subject matter. But sometimes the itinerary requires that you pass up some opportunities.



For Steve and (perhaps) for some of his students, these unexpected people, places and situations are often what generate the most vibrant memories, not to mention some of the most memorable photos. It's just a matter of keeping the schedule loose and the mind and eyes wide open.



# Anatomy of a Portrait

by Steve Gottlieb



A portrait starts with a person...but not necessarily. It might start with a background. Some backgrounds are so exquisite that they seem to call to you: “Please find a person — or more than one — to put in front of me.”

Such was the case in the bunker/fortress interior at Fort Dupont, in Delaware City, DE. Untouched for six decades, the walls and ceiling are a glorious canvas of decomposition. As if that weren’t enough, this background offered three added features: a small recess in the wall that could frame the subject’s head; a mysterious hallway on the right to provide visual balance to a person placed left-of-center; and soft directional light coming from two open doorways.

Choosing my subject was easy. Marvyn Morrison, a student in the Creative Vision class that was photographing the fort, has the wise, worldly face of a Biblical prophet. Moreover, I had a special reason to highlight Marvyn: I wanted to feature him in our newsletter. Horizon has drawn students to its Chesapeake City, MD weekend workshops from most of our 50 states and a handful of foreign countries. Marvyn undoubtedly came to Horizon from the most remote place of any student – northern Ontario – and I wanted to celebrate that.

I positioned Marvyn in front of the recess. He struck a pose with his hands behind his back; though natural looking, that didn’t feel quite right so I asked him to change; he put his hands in his pockets, which I liked. I didn’t like it when he looked directly at the camera. That made the dark side of his face too dominant. (Flash fill would be difficult here, so I followed my first rule of flash photography: “Don’t use flash if you don’t need it.”) Moreover, I wanted a contemplative look. By having him turn his head toward the light source and away from the camera, both problems were solved.

For this relatively dark interior, I pushed the ISO to 1600, which gave me 1/20th @ f. 5.6 (with my zoom VR lens at 65 mm). My first two shots didn’t seem perfectly sharp in the LCD. (Mea culpa: my tripod was missing in action). Solution: I steadied my head on the wall behind me, then pushed the camera firmly against my face. That made the picture sharp. Zooming my LCD on Marvyn’s face enabled me to see if his pupils were visible, notwithstanding the large reflections in his glasses. (The eyes, as they say, are the window to the soul.) They were.

I was happy. I think Marvyn was, too.