

# HORIZON NEWS #50

IMAGES, THOUGHTS AND NEWS FROM HORIZON PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS

*Who sees the human face correctly: the photographer, the mirror, or the painter?*

Pablo Picasso

## Student Photos Up Close

Reflective surfaces are everywhere, frequently hidden in plain sight. You should discipline your eye to find them; they can be a source for strong and distinctive images. Here are some tips for finding reflective surfaces...and taking the best advantage of them. Three interesting workshop images [**Allison Bethea** (horse), **Kelly Woods** (reflective glasses), **Joe Radcliffe** (man looking into plexi display case)], will help illustrate.

> To find reflections, look beyond the obvious—mirrors and water—for any glassy or highly polished surface. These may be quite small...but by moving in very close (with feet and/or telephoto lens), the reflection can become the picture's dominant element. >>>



> Notice how bright and clear the reflection is in the glasses but how dull and murky it is in the horse's eye? The reason: in the glasses shot, the reflected object (people) is in the sun, and the reflecting object is in the shade. In the horse's eye shot, that's reversed.

> As you may recall from high school physics, the reflecting object is *not* the same focusing distance as the reflected object. If the eye is, say, 5 feet from the camera and the people in the eye are 5 feet behind the camera then, for focusing purposes, the reflected people are actually 15 feet from the camera (5 feet to the eye plus 10 feet from the eye to the people). Therefore, if you want *both* eye and people in rela-



tively sharp focus, a very small aperture is required to maximize depth of field. (Using a small f.stop can result in a slow shutter speed...in that case, if anything moves, it may cause a blur.) Alternatively, you can use a large aperture and focus on one thing or the other. Make sure that *something* is sharp; if not, the eye will strain to find sharpness where none exists.

> Tiny position shifts of either the subject or the camera can dramatically change the composition. The reflected people in Kelly's glasses shot disappeared when the camera or head moved a fraction; in Joe's shot, a small movement caused the total loss of the reflection. So move your eye slowly—left and right, up and down—to find the strongest composition.



## Water = Visual Magic!



Photographers love water, except perhaps when caught in the rain. Water glistens. It reflects. It can be still...or splash...or swirl. Its beauty is evident in miniscule quantities—just a single drop—and immense ones—an ocean expanse. Water can help define a shape or distort it...or sometimes hide it. Wherever water is present, there is potential for great photographs.

To put you in a watery frame of mind and stimulate some photographic ideas, here are three varied images.

During a Coastal Camera Club workshop in Lewes, DE, **Ken Arni** used a glass of water placed on a second story balcony railing as a kind of lens with which to view the colorful and shapely town harbor. Other students tried similar shots but with less success. The likely reason was that there was virtually *no latitude* to get this shot; the glass, camera and harbor needed to be lined up perfectly. Easier said than done. As with reflections (discussed on the prior page), it's essential to move your eye around and look carefully.



During last year's Ireland workshop, **Peggy D'Iorio** used a long tele to get in tight on a full-body sculpture located in one of Ireland's award-winning "Tidy Towns." Most Horizon students consider rain to be "bad weather." Well, just imagine this shot on a sunny day. (Enlarge this image to get the full impact of the drops.)

Both bust and background are shades of green. To differentiate similar tones, use a wide open f.stop to limit depth of field. This blurs the background, drawing the eye to the sculpture. An added benefit are the soft white circles—small areas of overcast sky—that liven up the image.



Horizon Director **Steve Gottlieb** photographed the shadow of a tree after a rain-storm left a few inches of muddy, opaque water covering the dusty, irregular ground. The water's flat surface gave the shadow crisp definition. (The shot was taken during one of our annual Western Adventures; this year's Adventure will be California in May.)

For more watery inspiration, get our friend Tony Sweet's book on the beautiful, protean subject of water. And remember: when it rains, it's not time to put your camera away, it's time to create distinctive images.

# ***The Summit is Coming...In Just Four Weeks!***

## **Highlights of the Horizon Photography Summit, Feb 23-24 in Wilmington**

- > **Lou Jones:** This Nikon Legend Behind the Lens has been *Everywhere* and shot *Everything*.
- > **Max MacKensie:** As good as it gets for architecture...plus Max takes you aboard his ultralight for oo-ah aerials.
- > **Jon Naar:** Here's your chance to get up-close to photographic living history.
- > **Skip Brown:** He sky dives, surfboards and kayaks over waterfalls...with his camera. Yikes!
- > **Joe Edelman:** Grand Master of Glamour. Hear how he does it...and shoot a model while he coaches you.
- > Lots more classes on photo techniques, photo history, etc....plus portfolio reviews.
- > Hang out with instructors and fellow photo enthusiasts in a friendly, casual setting.

***www.horizonworkshops.com/summit***

\* \* \* \*

## **Upcoming Workshops**

In Chesapeake City Unless Otherwise Indicated

**Feb. 23—24: Horizon Summit (Wilmington, DE)**

**Mar. 16: Adobe Lightroom**

**Mar. 23—24: Flash Magic**

**Apr. 20—21: Washington DC: Icons with a Creative Eye (DC)**

**Apr. 27: The Creative i: Shooting with the iPhone**

**Apr. 29 — May 5: 2013 California Dreaming (So. CA & NV)**

**May 3—5: Chesapeake City thru National Geographic Eyes**

**May 4: Central Park in Season (NYC)**

**May 11: The Spirit of Manhattan (NYC)**

**May 25—27: Creative Vision (3 Day)**

**June 22—23: Canon Experience**

## **END FRAME**

To crop or not to crop? And where? These are key questions raised by many images. Here are several potential benefits of cropping:

1. Eliminate extraneous picture information.
2. Improve compositional structure.
3. Direct the eye to key point(s) of interest.
4. Avoid the monotony of consistent formatting (especially the common 2x3 ratio).

Shown here are just three possible crops. Others include vertical, panoramic and oval. To us, cropping is a creative act in itself; we see nothing sacred about original, in-camera composition. We always retain



the original file...cropping preferences frequently change over time.

Photo: **Bob Spross, Coastal Camera Club.**