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# SHUTTER

MAGAZINE

[ industry insiders share their best-kept secrets ]

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## NEWBORN INSPIRATIONS

*Portraits From Our Readers*

## MOVING MOUNTAINS

FEATURE INTERVIEW WITH

**JONATHAN MCINNIS**

BY SAL CINCOTTA

image © Salvatore Cincotta Photography



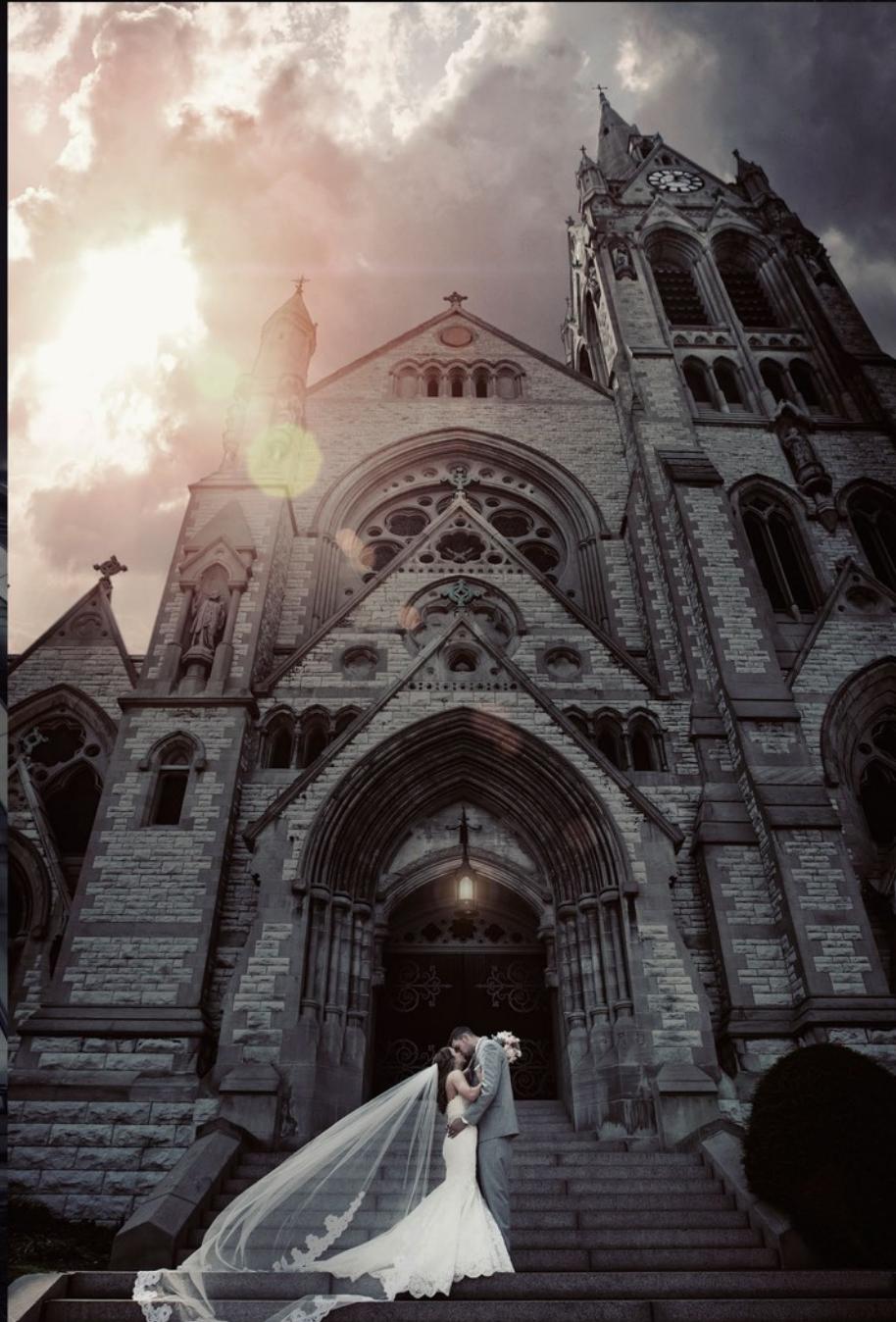
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# MOVING MOUNTAINS

FEATURED ARTIST

JONATHAN McINNIS

WITH SAL CINCOTTA

## FEATURE ARTICLES

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#### INSPIRATIONS | PORTRAITS

From Readers



— LIMITED —  
EDITION  
SESSIONS

WITH BLAIR PHILLIPS





BY BLAIR PHILLIPS

Here at our studio, we offer a series of four to six Limited Edition Series to our current and potential clients each year. These are mini sessions held on Saturdays (when we're normally closed) and last 15 minutes each. They are themed sessions with matching themed sets, and some have outfits to match. These sets are totally one-of-a-kind, giving them an exclusive allure.

When my wife approached me about this idea a few years ago, I wasn't sold. I didn't want to be the "volume," "in and out," "quick" photographer. I was afraid that by offering mini sessions, it would cheapen our brand and my current clients would get offended that we would offer a cheaper product for one day in the studio when they paid up to 50 percent more just a few months ago for a full session. After careful consideration and planning, we came up with Limited Edition Series. Suzanne, my wife, got the idea of the term *limited edition* from a certain brand of candles she loves. She was always purchasing these candles because they were one-of-a-kind. They were a must-have, impulsive buy. (We often watch other powerful national brands' marketing, and use the same concepts in our studio.) We added the word *series* because there would be a series of sessions in one year.



## LIMITED EDITION SESSIONS



So we had the idea for Limited Edition Series . . . what next? Throughout the year, we keep a note going in our iPhone of ideas and themes that hit us wherever we are. Whether it be in a mall window display, a billboard, a TV commercial, a dream, a magazine, something pinned on Pinterest or somewhere else online—literally, ideas are everywhere for themes and inspiration. Within several months, we have lists of ideas for new Limited Edition Series. In the fall, usually October, we plan for the following year and hold a meeting to determine the four to six set ideas that we would like to pursue. Even though we may have 15 ideas, we can't use them all. Our theory is that if we use more than six, it would reflect our brand and our current client base. Why would our current clients continue to come to the studio for a full studio session when they could come each month for a mini session and get reduced pricing if we offered one per month?

At this fall meeting, we Google the ideas we have for each theme. For instance, Suzanne had an idea for a candy shop with lots of color. So we Googled “candy,” “candy shop,” etc. We saved all of the images that we liked, and soon came up with our next Limited Edition Series: “Sugar and Spice.” I had a seamstress make a pink Austrian shade curtain as my backdrop, and bought large glass jars from a big-box store and filled them up with candy, cookies, marshmallows—anything that was fluffy and colorful.

After the meeting, we have our four to six themed series, which always include an Easter and Christmas series (two of our biggest sellers). Even these two holiday-themed series change each year to give clients who came the year before a different look. There are logos to go with each Limited Edition Series that match the feel of the theme for advertising and brand recognition.

In the beginning stages of Limited Edition Series, I photographed a sample of each themed set. Yes, I would build the exact same set that I was going to set up months later for advertising purposes. Potential Limited Edition Series clients have no concept of Sugar and Spice. They could envision something completely different from what you have planned. In the early stages, my suggestion is to photograph the themed set and a subject. Your target clients for these types of sessions are children and families. I have tossed around the idea of offering senior Limited Edition Series or even pet-themed series. This concept can work with each individual business. We have found that after several of these Limited Edition Series, people love what we are offering, and I no longer photograph sample sets. They are addicted and want more! The specific logos and theme names now carry a concept in their head, and they trust me.

In November we start to build the hype around the next year's Limited Edition Series. We set a release date for when the new themes will be announced, which is typically mid-December (in the hype of the holiday season). On that certain day, all of the themed logos and names for the next year are released online through Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest.

Many of these Limited Edition Series sell out quickly. Press card (5x7) inserts are printed with the themed logos and dates of each Limited Edition Series to go in each package that leaves the studio for further advertisement. These same 5x7 inserts go anywhere we have advertisements: pediatrician and dental offices, festivals, anywhere for further advertisement.

There are many calls and inquiries to our studio on pricing and how much we charge weekly. Often, we are too expensive for some potential clients, leaving them to settle for photography that was second best. They called me. They wanted me. They wanted my photography in their home. Pricing kept them away. Now, I will be the first to say I value my work and you should price your work for what it's worth. I am an advocate of keeping the photography market where it should be and not charging pennies for your work just to get the business in the door. These clients wanted me and my work—that's why they called. Limited Edition Series give them a taste of what we do (one set for 15 minutes), and the prices are reduced to reflect the time spent with that client.

Now, when a potential client calls or emails to inquire about pricing, if we are out of their budget for a full studio session, we offer them our lineup of that current year's Limited Edition Series. Eight times out of 10, we book that client on a Limited Edition Series. They were going to hang up and settle for someone else when they wanted my photography. You know those clients, right? You know right away on the initial phone call whether their budget will allow them to come to your studio or not. Why not capitalize on their inquiry?

In the beginning, most of our Limited Edition Series were new clients. Now, there is a mix of my studio clients, previous Limited Edition Series clients and new clients. I've found that my studio clients who have just spent a lot of money with me still want to come to one of these sessions just to get the set. It's that Limited Edition mentality—it gets my wife every time in a retail store!

Set building is right up my alley. I love building sets and props, so being able to build new sets four to six times per year is very exciting. My biggest suggestion for someone interested in Limited Edition Series is to be very consistent with your brand. My Limited Edition Series sets are much like any of my other permanent studio sets: very brand reflective. My brand isn't to photograph on a white backdrop with a white wicker chair (there's nothing wrong with that, it's just not my style). So, I wouldn't offer a themed set on a white background with a white wicker chair. Keep your same style and flare for these sets, as that is why clients call you.

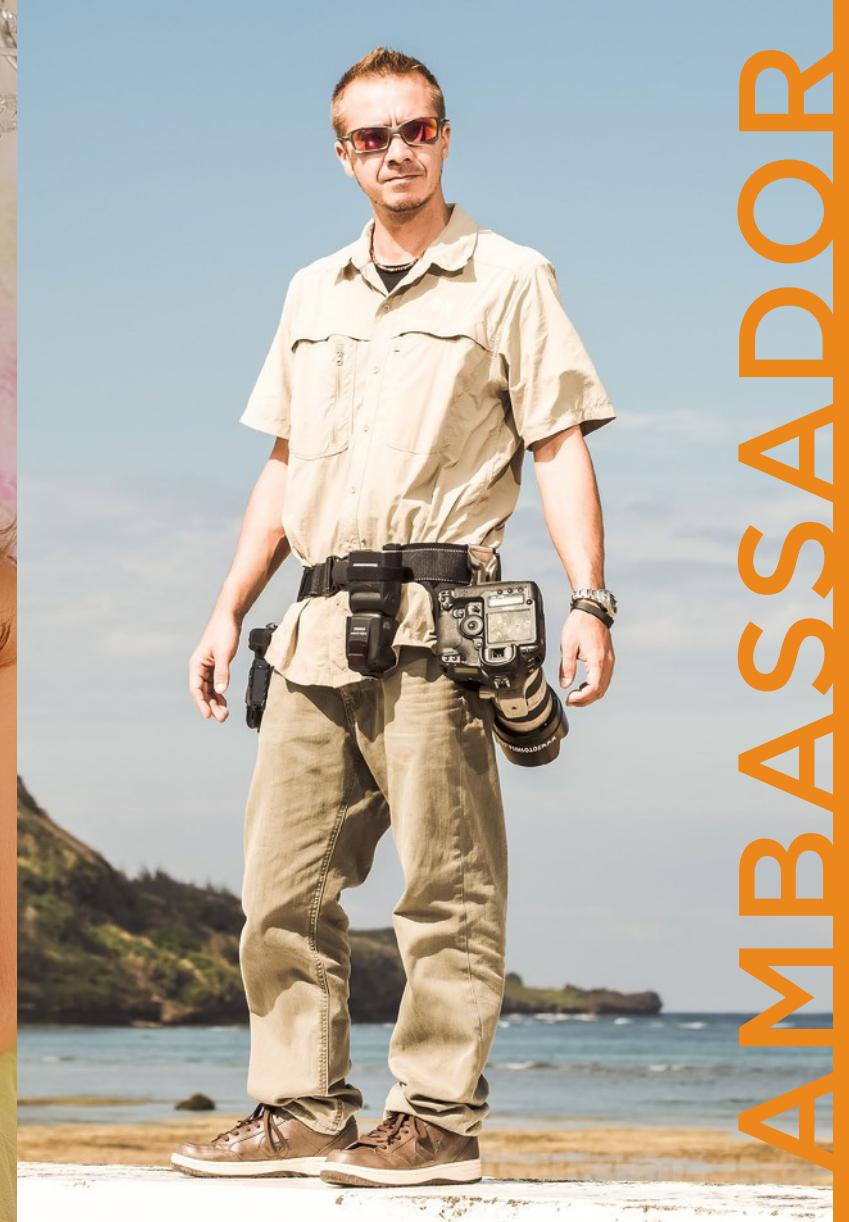


## LIMITED EDITION SESSIONS

Some Limited Edition Series sets are much more simplistic than others. For instance, “Mommy and Me” on Mother’s Day weekend this year will be very simple: just a light and a dark background focusing on the relationship between mother and child, whereas our “Cabin Christmas” set was intense. I built a cabin complete with a front door and porch, windows and a live Christmas tree—it was anything but simplistic. After Cabin Christmas was over, I was able to use the doors and windows from the cabin for another set, and the actual cabin wall is now being used as a backdrop for my general store. We never are wasteful—just consider it slowly building your own prop shop!

Many times I use food for set decoration. It is inexpensive and easy to get. For our Easter set, the grocery store loves me. I spend about \$75 on produce, from cabbage heads to beautiful carrots and radishes—anything that is full of color. For Sugar and Spice, we bought marshmallows, cookies, strawberry cereal, Little Debbie cakes, powdered donuts. For “Tutus and Ties,” we purchased lemons and limes and candy on a string. Food is an inexpensive way to add color and cuteness!

Limited Edition Series are not only financially rewarding, but have been a huge marketing tactic for our studio to build our client database. ☺



# AMBASSADOR

# PETE LEONG

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Enter Spider Holster.

*“The freedom from straps is something that once you get used to there's just no looking back.”*

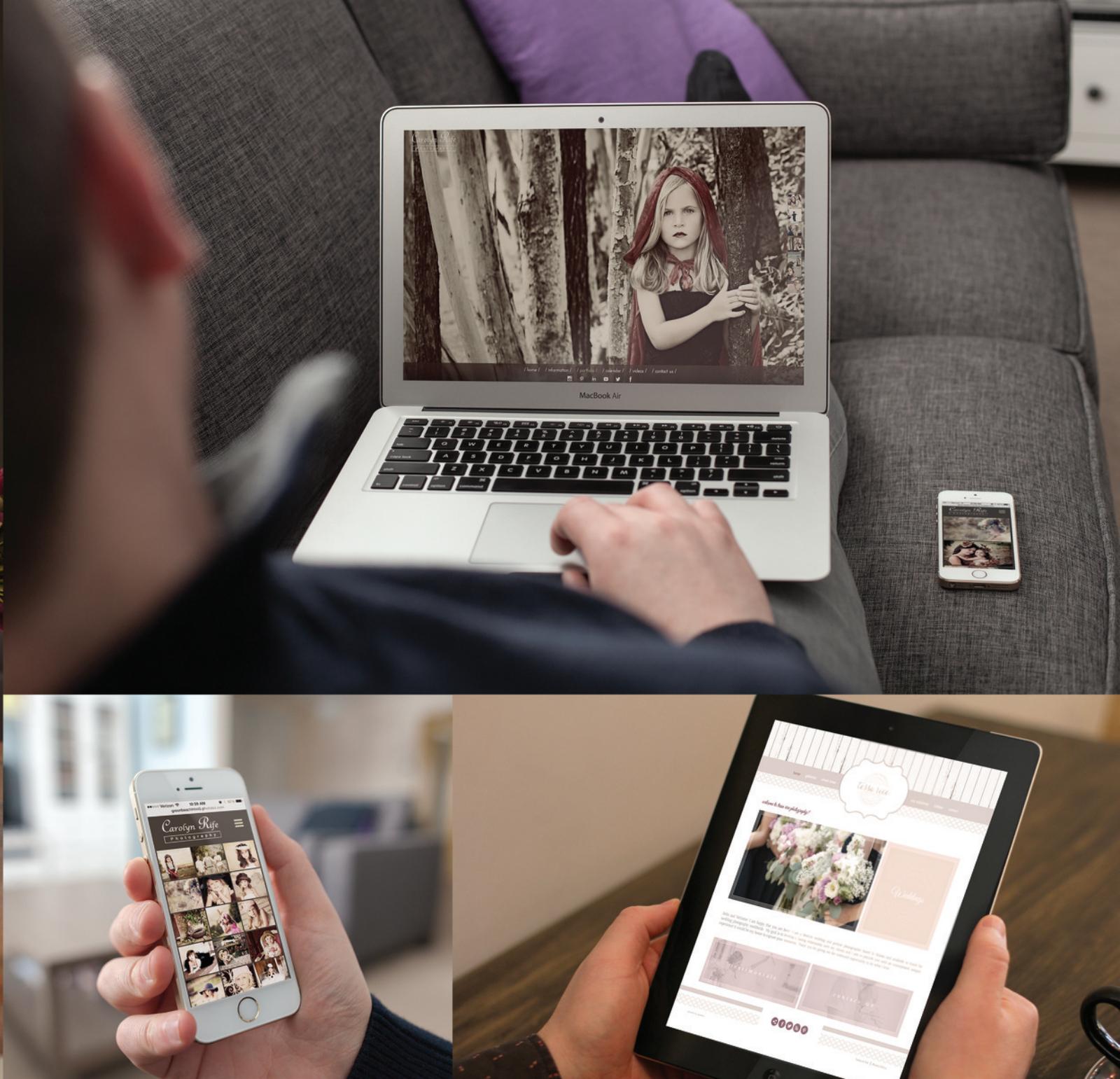
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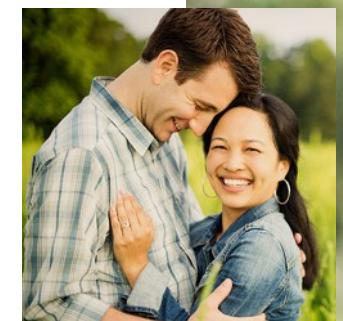


# THE POWER OF COMMUNITY

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WITH PHILLIP BLUME

BY PHILLIP BLUME



You (and everyone else in North America) probably scoffed when you saw us in the news recently. Together with thousands of our neighbors, we were imprisoned for days within our homes and in cars along the Georgia interstate. Snowmageddon had come! And the wintry mix accumulated to a height of . . . two whole inches! With weather like that, you'll understand why we didn't shoot many outdoor portraits this winter.

So how does "slow season" always become the most hectic time of year? Am I the only one who completely stresses over it? Fewer paying clients walked through our door. The previous year's savings dwindled just when we were hoping to make strides in our adoption process. Marketing took over my life, with very little to show for it in the short-term. (And did I mention Sal Cincotta wouldn't stop harassing me about getting these articles in on time?) I lost sleep. And sitting here now, I confess my wallet and I are both a lot lighter.

Yet somehow, through it all, I've been completely refreshed.

In large part, our busy-ness was due to travel (often with two young daughters in tow) between industry events. Therein lies the secret to my unexpected refreshing: community.

The camaraderie, encouragement and sense that "we're not in this alone" never felt stronger than it did this year among friends at industry conferences. I believe there's a groundswell of positivity in our industry—a reaction against the trend of photographer pessimism that increased with the digital revolution and subsequent saturation of photography markets. It's human nature to become despondent in adversity. It takes character and creativity to innovate and thrive together as one.

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*I believe there's a groundswell of positivity*

*in our industry.*





## SO WHAT DOES HEALTHY COMMUNITY LOOK LIKE?

*Many of us have gone so long without it, we've forgotten.*



Unfortunately, we've all seen how negativity feeds on itself. Just so we're clear, a pity party is not community, no matter how many people join in. Neither is posting, "liking" or commenting on some online forum. Sorry. Those places are cesspools of negativity. They reaffirm our fears and self-doubt, and drive us into isolation. We've all seen the diatribes. A photographer spouts off about his ungrateful and ugly bridezillas and the bad economy and his saturated market and how he needs to move where the clientele is prettier and richer and "omg, look how awful this boudoir photo is," and "does this photog really call herself a pro?" Am I right?

There's no use trying to improve the tone by lending your optimistic voice to the mix. At the risk of sounding negative myself, let me make one last comment on this: A couple of the larger educational forums (which helped me and my wife, Eileen, tremendously during our early years) have sadly degenerated into this kind of muckraking. They began filling our inbox with three nasty tabloid stories a week. We've left them, and I strongly suggest you do the same. We can send a message by standing up for healthier community.

More and more, the nature of our work drives us into isolation as well. We work for ourselves from the privacy of our homes, for goodness sake! Eileen and I suffered from that isolation for three years and didn't realize it. We weren't attending conferences; we were overly protective of our fledgling business, and felt competitive toward local photographers; we disappeared from our small group Bible study and church events while "growing the business" became top priority. Those choices were bricks that amassed into walls around my heart and mind. I shudder to think what I forfeited.

So what does healthy community look like? Many of us have gone so long without it, we've forgotten. For me, it was an early-morning "fun run" at WPPI, when a photographer I never met slowed down to run beside me in the last mile. It's the women Eileen occasionally shares lunch with, discussing the realities of balancing work and motherhood—sharing business concepts, parenting lessons, recipes and laughter. It was impromptu conversations in the lobby at this year's debut ShutterFest in St. Louis. I love the fact that this new conference was developed around the idea of community and instructor-student interaction, more so than any other event I know of in the industry.

Community is the young photographer couple whose thank-you note we received today. We met them briefly at a bridal show and invited them to dinner. We had no clue what an inspirational pair they were. The wisdom and perspective they gained through their child's terminal illness and death gave us new perspective on our own miscarriage and our ongoing adoption. Our shared passion for humanitarian work gave us fresh ideas and new partners going forward. It's good on such a deep level to grieve with someone, then to stand up enthusiastically and determine to love and help others who are grieving.

Community is getting outside your own head. It's hearing others. That's why I reached out to a few of our fellow artists who've made an impact on me in the past year. You may know them. Their success is due largely to the fact they rise above the fray. They understand the value of community, and they foster it.

Mike Allebach and I met while sharing a stage at WPPI last year. I admire his passion for justice and his talent for organizing peers around a cause. Of the importance of community for business, he told me, “I think community is no longer [just] an option. For a while it appeared social media replaced the need for face-to-face networking and community. But now more than ever it’s the face-to-face community that cuts through the noise.”

Like all successful businesspeople I know, Mike hires only people he’s previously met and connected with personally. He also explained to me how his so-called “competitors” send him referrals because of the community they inhabit together: “I think we grow as photographers when we grow together.” He answered humbly when I asked him about two recent community-building activities he’d been involved in. One was assisting our friend Jaleel King, a talented photographer and speaker in his own right, who needed a costly wheelchair upgrade. Mike helped make it happen. In the other, a young photographer in Mike’s community died suddenly, leaving behind a wife and sons. Mike used his media talents for fundraising, and the community answered his call to bless the family.

“People ultimately want to feel like they’re part of something bigger than themselves,” he told me. “Crowd-sourcing and getting people all in takes a lot of work. The relationships have to be there first. You can only call in favors if first you have a few friends who really believe in what you’re doing.”

Two of our own “competitors” in the Atlanta market are Graham and Ashley Scobey. In reality, they are colleagues and wonderful friends. Their value of community led them to organize Trigger Happy, a monthly photographer meet-up that’s benefited us with more good vibes than any group we visited before. It educates and inspires all of us for free. And it improves the entire industry.

“Our best ideas, our moments of inspiration, our big ‘ahas’ happen in the context of community,” Graham told me. And he’s definitely had some big “aha” moments. One of those is Art to Aid, which he founded to connect artists with charitable causes, allowing them to sell their wares to benefit the greater good. “As people, we’re far better together than we are as individuals. Trigger Happy and Art to Aid stem from these core beliefs we have. We truly believe we are better when we work together, and that individual successes and triumphs raise the collective bar for our industry and the world. Community is beautiful because it has the power to help and inspire.”



“**PEOPLE ULTIMATELY WANT TO FEEL LIKE THEY’RE PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER THAN THEMSELVES**



The community that has most enriched Eileen's and my life over the past couple of years has been our CONNECT family, a photographer community built around biblical teaching that comes together annually for a marriage retreat in the beautiful foothills of Georgia. (We're admittedly spoiled to have this event in our own backyard, as most attendees travel here from other states and countries.) Designed by Zach and Jody Gray, CONNECT provided Eileen and me a much-needed environment of understanding and accountability where we finally identified areas of conflict in our business and marriage that needed resolution. We've raced to implement the wisdom we've gained from this community of peers and more-experienced elders. It's been a boon for our marriage and business. It comes down to the fact that we—all of us, whether extroverts or introverts—are social creatures. We're designed to live in communities, and we'll never arrive at emotional or spiritual health, or achieve our full creative potential, until we go there deeply.

I love how Zach puts it: "To us, community is not 'friendships' that take place while sitting at your computer screen. There is something so powerful about being face-to-face with others and joining together and building relationships that way. That is community. People weren't created to be alone, and it's been amazing to see couples get together and develop real community and support based on common struggles, challenges and triumphs we all share."

While Snowmageddon had me trapped inside this winter, I listened to a lot of NPR. Two programs especially struck me. In one series of interviews, influential businesspeople from all walks of life were asked what they attributed their great success to. Education? Determination? Hard work? No. Some of those may have played a small role, they said. But they all agreed: Their people skills and the community of people they surrounded themselves with was the No. 1 reason for their success.

## COMMUNITY

I could write a book on the value of networking for business. (Many have already been written!) But you could also make a career out of networking without any impact if you superficially pursue relationships for gain. Build true community! The genuine relationships that strengthen your soul and your material success take place “on a human level, not on a transactional level.” Ashley Scobey told me that.

That's where the second NPR story comes in. As the snow came down, I listened with fascination to the broadcast about “Dunbar’s number.” The number (which is about 150) represents the number of people with which a human being is capable of forming deep, meaningful relationships. It's limited. That's easy for the average third-world villager. But I have to build my audience, right? I have to increase my Facebook friends and attract new Twitterers (or is it “twits?”).

I'm thinking maybe it's time to cut back on people and invest in community. I clicked off the radio and spent the next two days frozen inside my house with family who were visiting. Face-to-face. It was a warmer and more meaningful weekend. ☺



**“CANON PROFESSIONAL SERVICES SAVED MY SHOOT AND THE RELATIONSHIP WITH MY CLIENT.”**

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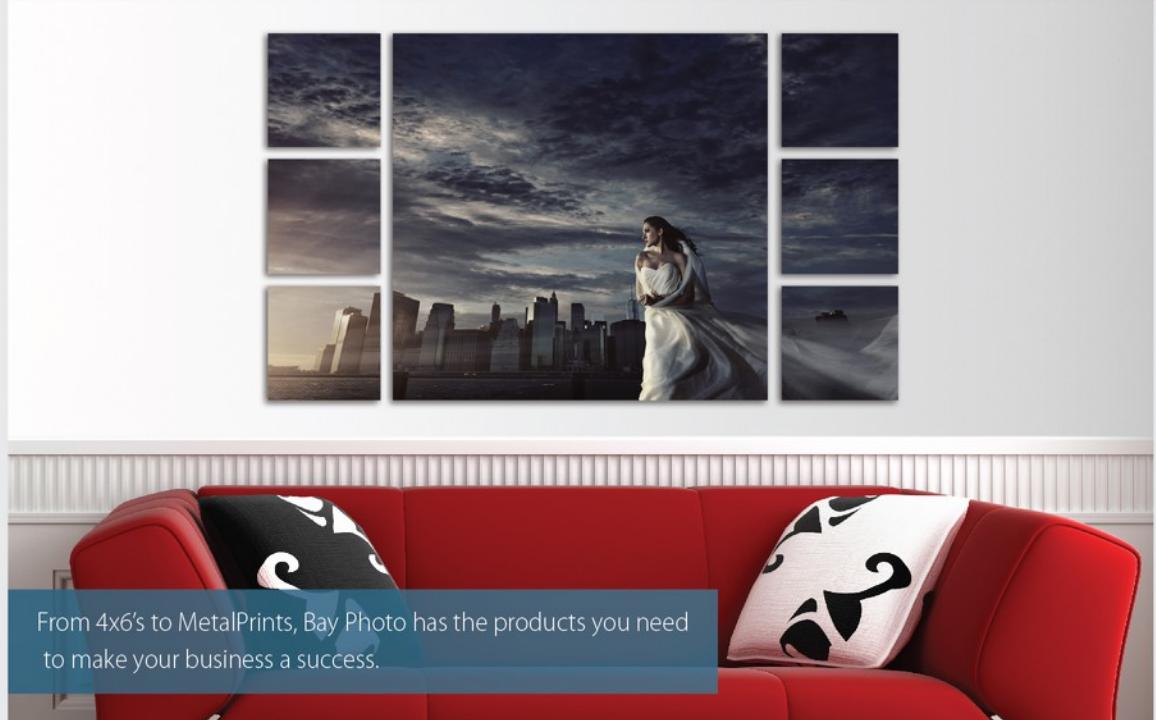
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# >>5 APPS<<

THAT WILL SAVE YOU TIME

A N D

ORGANIZE YOUR LIFE

— WITH VANESSA JOY —





BY VANESSA JOY

Running a business has so much to do with work-life balance and managing your time. You have to be able to balance so that you can do more of what you became a photographer to do: shoot. With life constantly throwing new tasks at us, new social media sites to keep up with and, hopefully, more clients to respond to, it can be overwhelming. Finding shortcuts is crucial to managing it all. Below are five apps I use to help me achieve that often elusive balance.



## EVERYPOST

Every time I see a new social media site, I simply want to jump off a bridge (but don't have the time to drive to the nearest one). There's another social media venue for me to keep up on? As if Pinterest, Google+, Google Pages, Facebook, Facebook Pages, Twitter and LinkedIn weren't enough. How can you possibly keep up with all of them and still run a business? (Now you can.)

EveryPost allows you to simultaneously post to all of the social media sites that I mentioned above, plus some. Not only will you be able to post content everywhere with just a few clicks, but you can customize each post, keeping Twitter to 140 characters, tagging people on Facebook, adding hashtags on Google+ and setting different privacy settings for each. (#ThankYouSweetBabyJesus.)

The only down side to EveryPost is that it has yet to incorporate scheduling posts, like similar app HootSuite does. Hootsuite, for the record, doesn't post to nearly as many sites, which is why I don't use it. EveryPost likes to hear from users, so I suggest we all download the free app and write to them asking for the scheduling feature—power en masse!

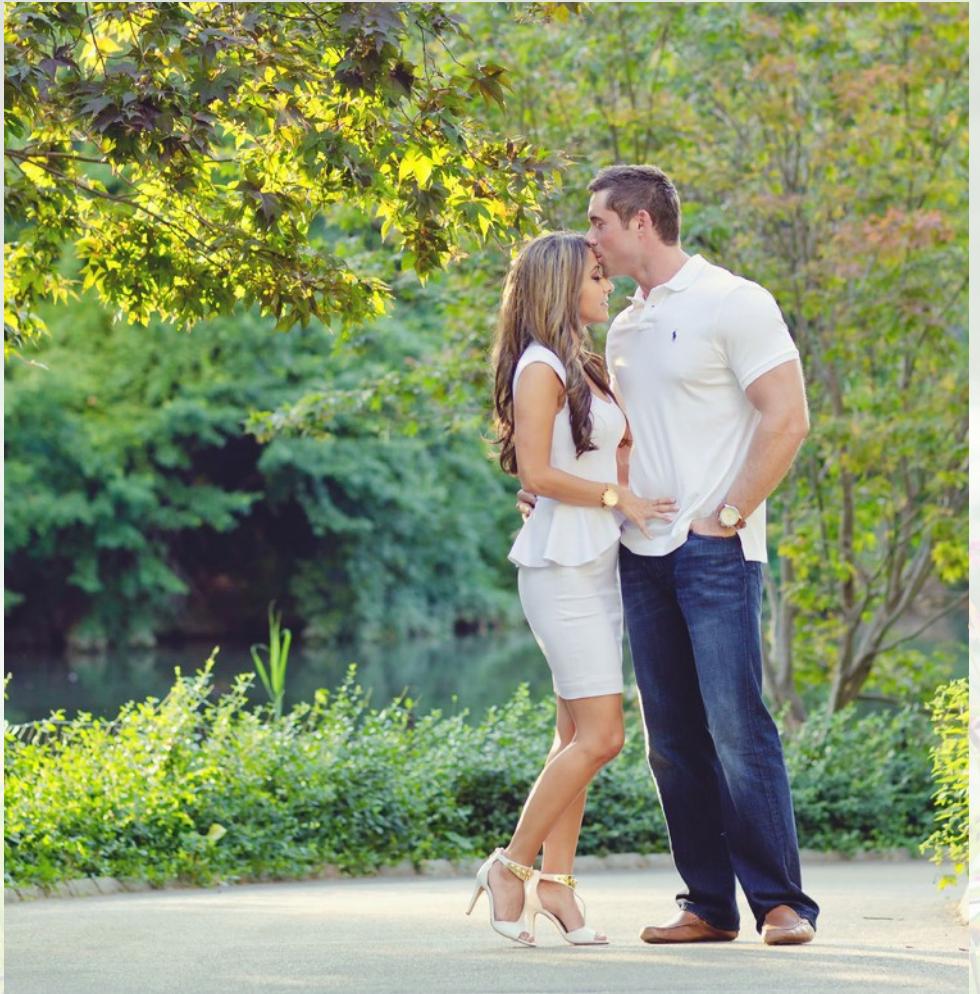


## MILEBUG

This one should hit close to home for many, since we've all just finished our taxes for the year (quite painfully for some, I'm sure). It's not a receipt tracking app (I could do a whole article comparing all of those), but it tracks a very important tax deduction: mileage.

As a business owner, you can deduct the mileage driven for work-related trips like going to weddings/shoots, meeting clients and attending networking events. It's not easy to keep track of—in fact, it's annoying—but MileBug makes it easier.

This app lets you track your mileage in multiple ways, including saving favorite trips (like the drive to your studio or airport), GPS tracking and manually inputting values. It generates reports for you to hand right over to your accountant at the end of the year. Best part is, you can try out this app for free before committing to it. Your wallet will thank you during tax season.





## TEXT EXPANDER

If you've ever heard me speak, you've most likely heard me rave about this app for both desktop and mobile. It's hands-down the No. 1 time saver in my studio for the mundane task of writing emails. It makes responding to inquiries, booking brides and handling new employees superfast and simple.

Text Expander allows you to save email templates (called snippets) within its interface and assign abbreviations to them. The program runs in the background of your desktop so that when you want to use one of the snippets, all you have to do is type in the abbreviation you made for it and, presto!—the whole email pastes right in. For example, when I receive an inquiry that I'm available for, I type in "IA" for "Inquiry Available," and my typical inquiry response email shows up. If I receive an inquiry that I'm not available for, I type in "TOOBAD," and in goes my "I'm sorry, I'm not available" response. If I don't hear back from an inquiring bride, I type in "FU" (to "follow up").

You can add other features like prompts for filling in blanks in your templates or going with the newly updated mobile version (and syncing your templates). Text Expander is free to demo. Then when you buy it after your demo expires, it summarizes how many hours you've saved by using the product, which add up quickly.



## THINGS

I confess, I use my inbox and Google calendar like task lists. To an extent, I think Google actually designed them to be easily used that way, but opening your inbox and having to sift through unread messages to find your client's email is not only overwhelming, but an unproductive waste of time.

Things is (optionally) a cloud-based app that operates and syncs via mobile and desktop to help you organize your never-ending to-do list. You can organize your tasks into groups (such as "Today," "Next" and "Someday"), and schedule them for dates in advance, long-term project tracking and a simple inbox for tasks that you quickly entered without categorizing. You can attribute tags, check off completed items and even send the task to your email if you still feel more comfortable tracking your to-dos that way.

Things is free to try for 30 days. After that, it's a few dollars for the mobile app and about \$40 for the desktop version. A little pricey as far as apps go, but peace of mind is priceless.

## 5 APPS YOU NEED



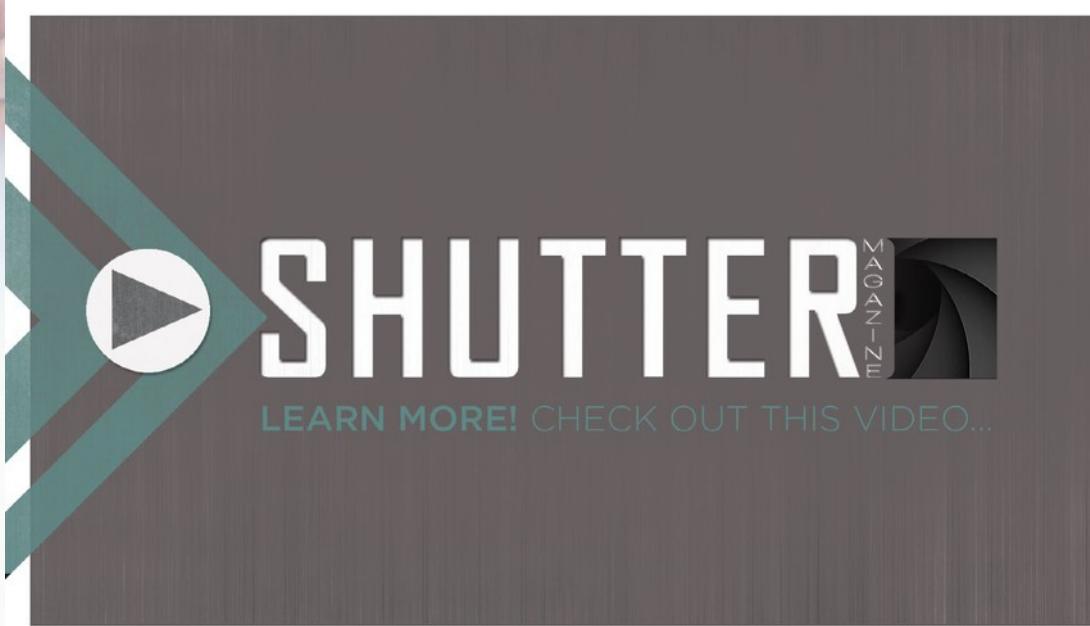
### CARD STAR

There's nothing that'll set your day in an upheaval like trying to find something in a pile of similarly shaped things—especially in your purse. It's so easy to get frustrated over the little things like lost club cards. Tearing apart your house to find what you need just leaves you with another mess to deal with later.

I'm a huge saver-type person, so I belong to every free-coupon, card-carrying club known to man. I can save 10 percent at Staples? Sign me up. You'll give me coupons for buying my dog, Tico, treats? I'm there. Before I knew it, my keychain and wallet once had more plastic in it than a recycling factory, and anytime I wanted to use one of my discount or club cards, I had to dump out a handbag to find it.

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*I had a hard time narrowing down my favorite apps to just five, so take a look at this video for three more that I use on a regular basis to better my business.*



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Q/A  
WITH  
Salvatore Cincotta



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# MOVING MOUNTAINS



FEATURED ARTIST

**JONATHAN MCINNIS**

WITH SAL CINCOTTA

## FEATURED ARTIST

BY SAL CINCOTTA



This month, rather than talking about business concepts or showcasing my imagery, I decided to feature one of my students. About two years ago I ran into Jonathan when he reached out to me to tell me about how he was putting my principles into practice and was having success. Now, this might not be overly exciting to you until you realize that Jonathan was about 16 at the time. I was blown away by his age, his maturity, and his hunger to be better and grow as an artist. I thought to myself, what would have happened if I had someone coach and guide me when I was that age? Where would I be now? I wanted to help Jonathan. I wanted to be part of helping him on his journey in photography and in life.

Jonathan is a sponge. Jonathan is hungry. Jonathan loves photography. And Jonathan has a bright future ahead of him.

As you will see from his imagery, he is no kid. He has a clear vision and passion for our craft. Get to know Jonathan and keep an eye on him. Great things are in his future.

*Sal*



## FEATURED ARTIST



### TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT YOURSELF AND YOUR STUDIO.

I'm Jonathan McInnis. I am a portrait photographer specializing in high school senior photography and headshot photography. I'm currently making an entrance into the wedding photography industry as well.

I am based in Plano, Texas [a suburb of Dallas]. Because I run my photography business out of my home, 95 percent of what I do is on location. We're shooting just up the street for headshots, a little farther down the road for local senior shoots or all the way to downtown Dallas for our popular destination senior session. I am mainly known for my work with high school seniors. This is mostly because I myself am a high school senior.

I will be graduating in May in a class of around 300. In school, I am the assistant photo editor of our yearbook. I'm responsible for photographing many of the events on campus, and I am the teacher's assistant for our AP-2D Studio Art-Photography program, where I help put together lesson plans and sometimes take over and teach.

In my personal work, I get much of my inspiration from fashion and movies. I use magazines and movie posters to inspire my work and push it to the next level for my high school seniors. Every now and then, I'll throw in some of my AP-2D Art skills and do some fine art work with seniors, but mostly cinematic and vogue.

### HOW DID YOU GET INTO PHOTOGRAPHY?

I got into photography by accident. I dropped a required class my freshman year in high school so I could participate in our theater program's one-act competition, as I was incredibly into acting at the time. The next year came, and I had to make up the required semester course and find a class to fill the other semester spot. Well, photography was a blow-off class, right? Anyway, I took it, and it ended up being first semester, and it wasn't that bad—or great—until the very end of the semester. We were to make a photo book with pictures from a certain area of photography. My area ended up being portraits using ambient light. That's when my passion started. I started researching and learning about portrait photography. I even thought that one day I may even work for a chain photography studio! (Please don't do that.) After developing a passion, I dropped the required next semester's class and took Photo 2. My passion grew from there. I ended up taking the class my junior year with all freshmen, but was it worth it? Oh yeah.

## TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT YOUR WORK AND STYLE.

What inspired me to make my work unique was seeing Lindsay Alder's work. I was absolutely amazed by her work, and I decided I wanted to go into fashion photography. Later, I realized how hard it is to make it anywhere in the fashion world, mainly because of how many fashion photographers there are out there wanting a spread in a magazine. That's when I decided to do high school seniors with a "fashion flair." On shoots, we'll toss dresses in the air, we'll create wind blowing the hair back and forth, and we'll even shoot in the middle of traffic if we want to.

Through the journey of fashion, I became way more interested in cinematic-type processing. Now, I'm not talking about using the action in Photoshop that calls itself cinematic, I'm talking about dramatic skies, altering where light looks like it's coming from, and in some cases, making it look like it's the end of the world. That, to me, was taking it up another level. It's a style that is rarely available to high school seniors, so we use that to stand out in our market.

Along with fashion and dramatic/cinematic styles, I also like to throw in some fine-art work. Fine art, when done right, is what usually scores high at competitions. This is less for the client and more for me personally, so I don't market it that much, but clients still like it when they get it.

## HOW DO YOU APPROACH SALES ?

From the session, I'll create at least one dramatic/cinematic image and sometimes, depending on the image, a fine-art image. I will take my favorite image from the session, print it in house on fine-art paper, and matte it as an 8x12 on a 16x20 matte. If it's a normal or cinematic image, it will get a normal matte. If it's the fine-art image, we like to take it all the way. We'll hand deckle edge the print and float mount it onto the same 16x20 matte. When the client comes in for their sales session, they see a physical piece with their picture on it, and we tell them that if they select our top package, they can take the print home with them that night.



## FEATURED ARTIST

### GIVE US A LITTLE BACKGROUND ON ONE OF YOUR FAVORITE IMAGES.

Recently, I entered a few images into the WPPI 16x20 Print Competition in Las Vegas. Of course I didn't expect to win anything big because the work entered into the competition is just incredible, but three of my images received awards, and one even placed third in the Premiere category this year. This has definitely been one of the achievements I am most proud of because not only can I say I'm an internationally award-winning photographer before I've even graduated high school, but I am one of the youngest entrants into this competition to win an award let alone place an image.

The image that took 3rd at WPPI is a very different style from my usual style. I was on a headshot session in the studio when I was testing my gear with the lighting to make sure all of the lights were working properly. I look over at my subject and notice that from where I was standing, about a 45-degree angle from the backdrop, he was positioned at the edge of the white backdrop. The contrast of the scene inspired me to do something a little different. Instead of using a main light, fill light and a background/backdrop light, like a normal three-light setup, I decided to turn the other two lights off and use one light only. To introduce as much contrast in lighting as possible to the image, I placed the main light off to the opposite side of the backdrop so that the part of his face away from the backdrop would be lit, and then the other side of his face would be unlit next to the white backdrop. In short, the bright part of his face is on black, and the dark side of his face is on white. Because of him being on the edge of the backdrop, there was a big white line above him, so I had to crop the frame right at the edge of his hair. After that, all that had to be done was basic color correction and retouching.

The other two images that won awards at WPPI have one big thing in common: planning. Both were created during actual senior sessions, but they were drawn out beforehand with the posing, wardrobe and location. First, we scouted out locations in advance and grew a concept from that point on. In fact, we have a binder of locations in the Dallas area that we have discovered set aside for future shoots. Afterward, we'll assign a concept or wardrobe. We will ask seniors if they are interested in being a part of the concept when we meet before their session. If it's a concept that requires special clothing, like a Red Riding Hood image, we will either rent or make it. If it's an idea that requires more of a common clothing selection, like a big flowing dress, we'll ask our subject if they have anything that matches the description (like a prom dress) and we'll have them bring it to their session. In the session itself, we take extra care on their posing and position in the scene. Since we are shooting this at the end of their session, if they have time, we will almost run over the time to make sure that we have the exact shot that we want.



## FEATURED ARTIST

### WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS WHO ARE NEW TO THE INDUSTRY OR WHO WANT TO TAKE THEIR WORK TO THE NEXT LEVEL?

First, get your basics down. Get off of auto. Shoot on manual for a solid month or two, understanding ISO, shutter speed and aperture. Once you get that down, you can go into whichever mode helps you work the best (I use aperture priority), but now you have an understanding of how your camera works. If you know portrait photography is for you, lighting should be the next thing you learn. If you understand lighting (yes, I mean flashes and strobes), you will have such an easier time dealing with not only studio lighting, but natural lighting as well. Basic posing should be next, along with basic processing in Lightroom. Last but not least, check out CreativeLive and watch live workshops. They're free, and given by some of the best photographers in the world. You would be crazy not to check them out. What happens after that is more customized for each area of portrait photography, but if there is one thing I believe everyone needs to do, it's learning how your camera works and learning how lighting works. I would recommend checking out Zack Arias for learning lighting. He covers absolutely everything you need for lighting.

Second off, learn how to manage your time. Running a business while still in high school is, well . . . different. First off, you have seven hours cut out of your day every weekday for school. Want to participate in extracurricular activities? There goes another hour and a half out of your day. Want good grades? At least another hour. AP classes? Two hours. OK, now I can start being a businessman. Because of all this, I have had to learn to be an expert in time management. Finishing images late or forgetting an appointment is super-unprofessional, so avoid those types of situations at all costs.

Last but not least, I would like to give a very special thank you to Sal. As a project for my senior year in high school, I traveled to St. Louis to shadow and train under him. What I have learned from him is absolutely incredible. Not only do I have a business plan, but I have a life plan. He has helped me grow to where I am now, and hopefully to where I can inspire others in the future who are currently in my position. ■

LEARN MORE ABOUT JONATHAN  
& SEE MORE OF HIS WORK:

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/JonathanMcInnisPhotography>

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# TOPLIGHT

WITH MICHAEL CORSENTINO





edgy one-light rock portraits

# TOP LIGHT

Capture One Pro 7's "Styles" allowed me to quickly save my color-grading changes as a preset and apply them to other selects.

BY Michael Corsentino



This portrait session of Orlando-based rock band Blaine the Mono is part of an ongoing series exploring different looks for its upcoming album and promotional efforts. It also represents a number of firsts for me: first time shooting with the incredible Phase One IQ250, first time using top lighting, first time experimenting with color grading in Capture One Pro 7 (covered in this month's video) and my first time creating a custom background. Each turned out great, and the files from the IQ250 were mind-blowing. If you're noticing a difference in the quality of the images and you can't quite put your finger on it, that's what it is! The detail and tonal range from medium format, and the RAW conversions from Capture One, created results unlike anything I've ever captured with a DSLR. I owe a big debt of gratitude to Dave Gallagher and his team at Capture Integration for their unparalleled tech support during my maiden voyage with the Phase One IQ250.

Don't be afraid to deviate from your initial plan. If what you had planned for your lighting isn't yielding the desired result, change it up! This shoot started off as a two-light shoot, with the key light placed directly overhead and a fill light to the left of my subjects. Initially I thought I'd need a little fill due to the deep shadows cast from the overhead key light. But after a few test captures, it quickly became evident that the fill light I thought I needed was in fact ruining the look I was ultimately after. In this case, the fill light was creating a quality of light that was too flat, not what I had in mind. This was because it was opening up the shadows more than I wanted, even at extremely low power settings. Consequently, it was killing the dramatic effect I wanted for these rock-and-roll portraits. I tried a few different positions and settings for the fill light just to do my due diligence. In the end, the portraits looked 100 percent better without this fill light, so I removed it. I opted instead for what turned out to be a much more successful one-light solution with an alternate fill source.

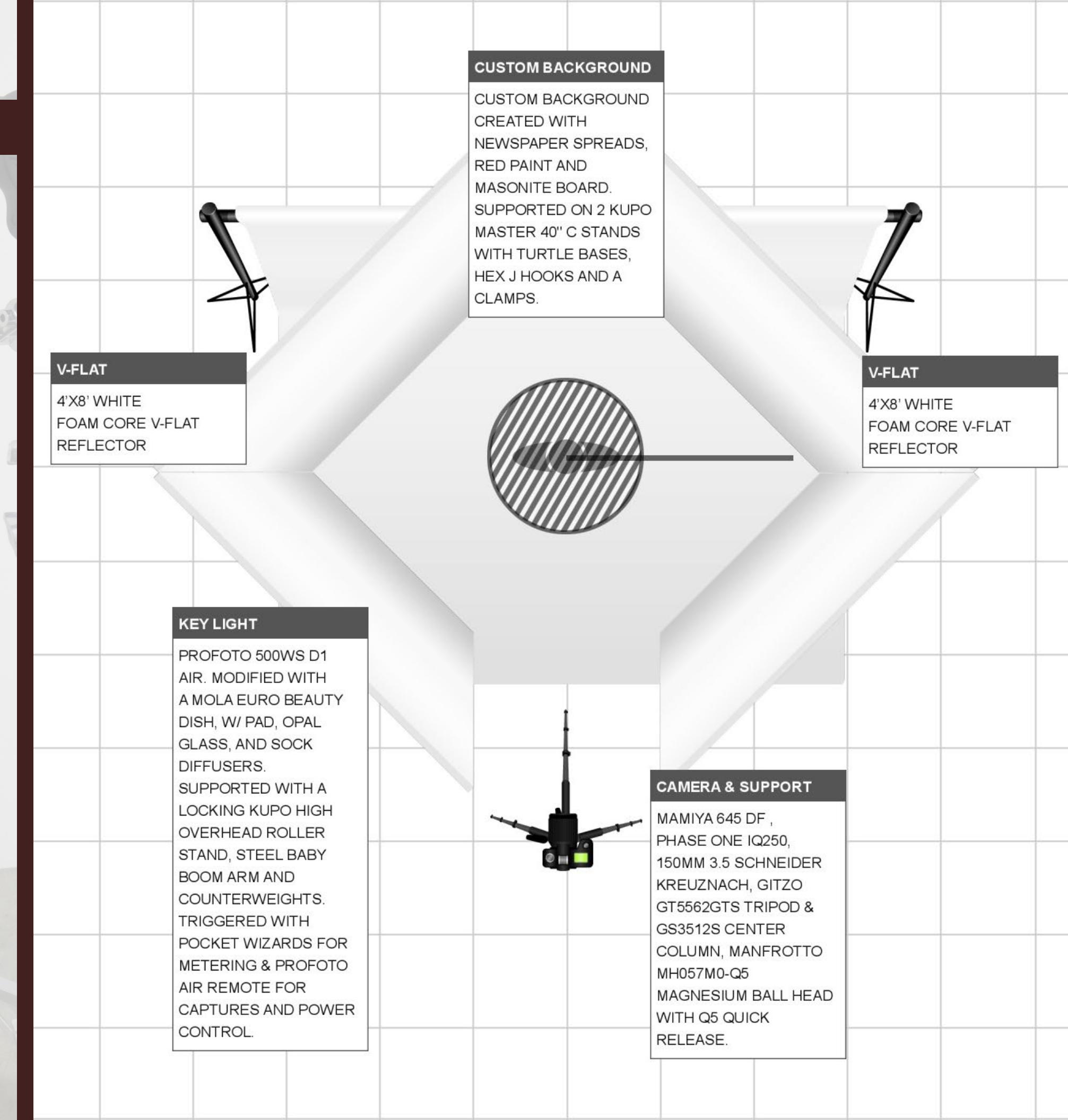
## TOP LIGHT

### THE SETUP

While I scuttled the fill light because it wasn't creating the light I wanted, the shadows caused by my overhead key light were still too deep and harsh to be left alone. My key light was a Profoto 500WS D1 Air modified with a 33-inch Mola Euro beauty dish—a modifier with an amazing quality of light. I started tweaking things by modifying the Mola using its Pad and Opal diffusors, and then added its diffusion sock. This helped soften the key, but I still needed to open the shadows that were being created below. After my tests using a second Profoto 500WS D1 air for fill failed, I knew the fill source needed to be indirect and do its job without overwhelming the drama created by the overhead key light. I accomplished this by positioning two V-flats, one left and one right, on either side of the subject. The white interior and chevron shape of each of the V-flats helped reflect just enough light from the key light back toward my subjects. Due to their size, white color and indirect reflected nature, the fill from the V-flats was broad and therefore soft enough to do the job of opening up the shadows without overpowering the drama from the key light. V-flats can be created using a number of solutions, from DIY to Sunbounce Pro panels. Here I used two double-sided white/black 4x8-foot sheets of foamcore taped together in the center to form folding panels arranged in a V shape.

I fine-tuned my lighting and dialed in what was close to the final look prior to the band arriving using a stand-in subject. This was easy to do because I'd recently picked up a vintage mannequin on eBay for just this purpose. Having a mannequin makes it easy to experiment and play without any pressure, time constraints or salary to pay. Naturally I had to name my new muse—so everyone, meet Roxanne! She's so agreeable.

Top lighting—not your usual-suspect solution—does present a particular set of qualities as well as challenges. First of all, owing to its top-down direction, the quality of light has very distinctive shadows that move quickly from highlight to shadow. This adds contrast, and contrast equals drama. This lighting pattern and position is certainly not a one-size-fits-all solution that's applicable to a broad spectrum of uses, such as beauty, classical portraiture, etc. But in the case of dramatic rock-and-roll portraits I was after, it was spot on. The interesting thing is that while this lighting pattern is far from the norm in studio, we're a lot more familiar with this type of lighting than you might think. In fact, most lighting does come from above, especially in the case of interior lights (ceiling mounted) and stage lights (overhead). These factors played a roll in my decision-making as I previsualized the look for these portraits. This is the light we're used to seeing musicians in, so why not use it to create more unique and relevant portraits? While this lighting does a good job of creating drama, it's not the easiest to use. It's what I like to call persnickety lighting! Because of its overhead position, the slightest move of your subject's head away or down from the light's path ends up dark and flat. So pay attention to this if you find yourself trying this type of lighting. Slight changes in position make a huge difference.



## TOP LIGHT



## SETTING THE MOOD

Safety first! Booming lighting instruments directly over your subjects requires rock-solid support, a light stand, grip head, baby pin, etc. The weakest link in that chain could end up causing disastrous results. The last thing anyone wants are accidents or unneeded worries. Put safety first and work with the appropriate equipment for the job. Here I was using a heavy-duty locking Kupo High Overhead Roller, Baby Steel Boom Arm and counterweights to balance the load.

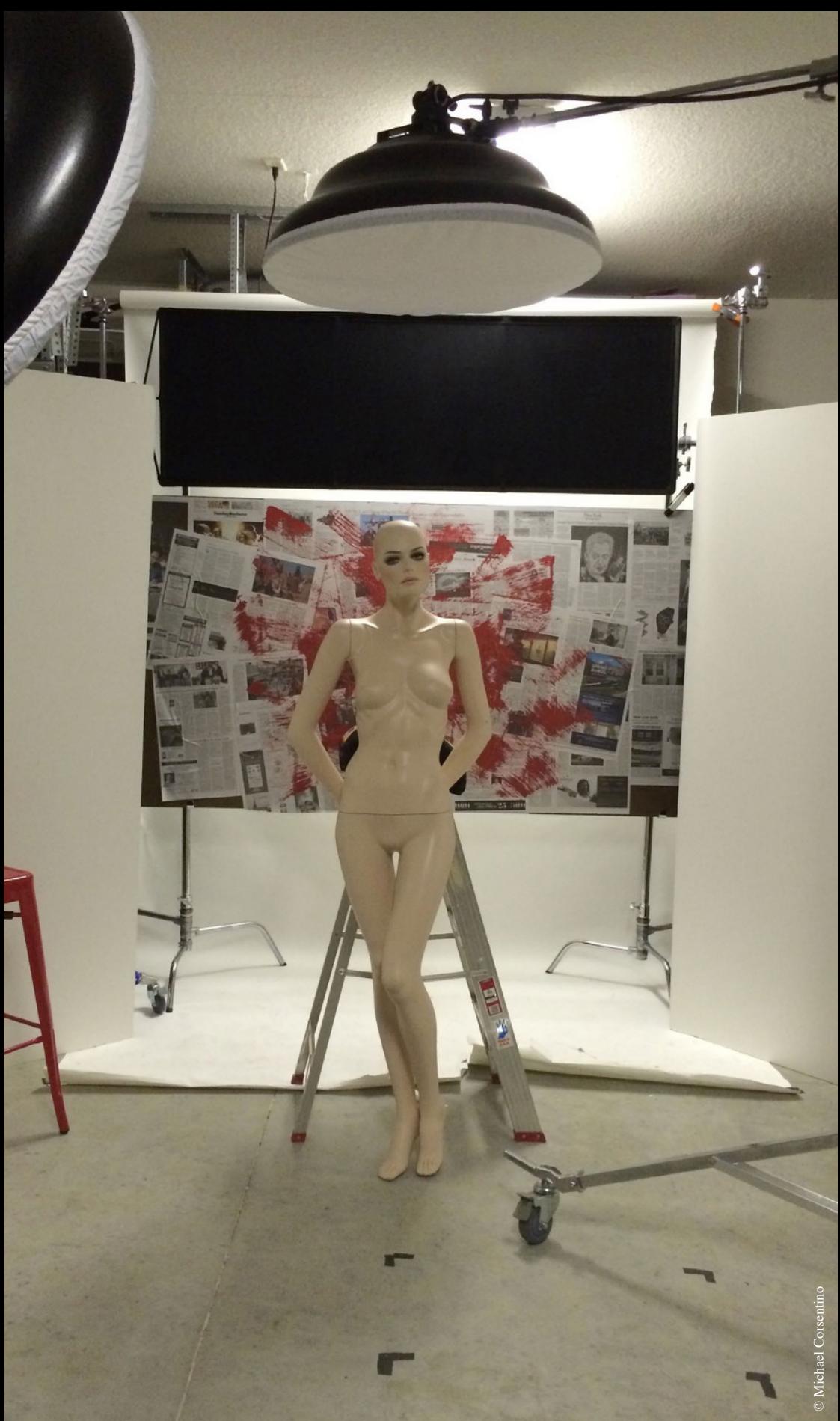
After listening to Blaine the Mono's music, I decided to create a custom backdrop for the band members' portraits. I wanted a background that would literally and figuratively reflect the social and political context behind their rock and roll, and rock and roll in general. What better way to do this than with newspaper and red paint? I grabbed two Sunday editions of the *New York Times* to represent the social and political context, sprayed adhesive to glue the newspaper spreads onto a 4x8-foot Masonite board, and used red paint to represent the anarchy of rock and roll. I used a shop push broom to paint in broad, coarse strokes. I also placed a large black rectangular Matthews cutter behind the key light to flag its light from the top of the backdrop.



Setting up the Mola Euro beauty dish on a Kupo High Overhead Roller Stand.



Making adjustments during the shoot.  
Note the camera position. Phase One IQ250, 150mm lens.



Testing lighting with my studio mannequin Roxanne.  
Note the height of the light and position of the V-flats.

## TOP LIGHT



© Michael Corsentino

The final lighting pattern resulted in the absence of catch lights in my subjects' eyes in many of the portraits. Typically this would be an issue and a definite departure from the accepted norm. But for these portraits, it didn't bother me in the least. Quite the contrary. In this case, I saw it as a plus because it added to the dark and moody quality I wanted.

At its best, your lighting should tell a story and convey the emotion that's right for the subject at hand. I bring this up because if I'm able to share anything, it's that I want you to be thinking photographers and creative artists, not blind rule followers and button pushers. I want you to know the rules (aka guidelines!) but not be constrained by them. Don't be controlled by so-called "rules" you hear all to often. Learn them, but don't be afraid to deviate from them and make educated decisions based on the story you want to tell. It's all right to break the rules as long as you know you're doing it and why you're doing it.

Again, think through what you're doing and where you want to end up with your quality of light. Learn the foundation lighting patterns, paramount light, loop light, split light, Rembrandt light, etc. And then experiment, venture out, try different things, think outside the box!

I'll cover foundation lighting patterns and lots of other cool stuff in the coming months. See you then! 



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12 - The Cake Shot



13 - The First Dance



14 - The Flower Girl



15 - Capturing Emotional Moments



16 - The Cake Cutting



17 - The Hora



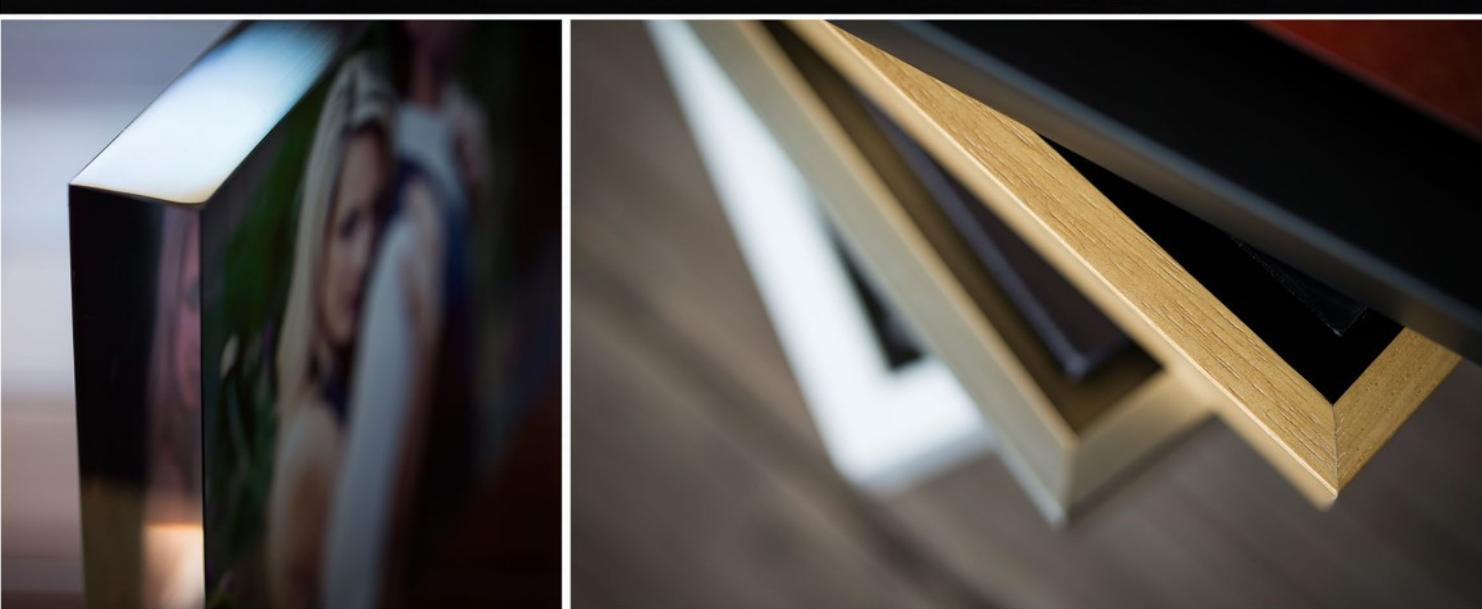
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# G O D S O N

WITH  
**FLOW**

with Doug Gordon



BY Doug Gordon  
**NIKON AMBASSADOR**  
 UNITED STATES

I want to begin by saying how excited I am to have the opportunity to write for *Shutter* magazine. I look forward to sharing my thoughts on a wide variety of topics with all of you.

I am commonly asked by photographers, "What can I do that will make me different?" My answer is always the same. If you want to be unique, if you want to tell a story, if you want to make a guarantee, you must learn to pose. It's that simple! I have been fortunate enough to photograph weddings for almost 25 years now. Technology has changed, and the number of people who believe they are photographers has grown along with it. One thing has not changed: Our subjects always want to look the best they can. It seems today that most new photographers lack a basic understanding of creating a story and, more importantly, the knowledge of how to flatter subjects of different heights, weight and body shapes. These are just a few of the things I plan to cover in my upcoming articles.



## POSING WITH FLOW

I thought I would start with a topic that not only helped me become well known as an educator in the photography community, but really has made my studio a leader in the Long Island/New York wedding and portrait market. I call it “flow posing.”

Flow posing, quite simply, is the art of making bodies flow together quickly, efficiently and, most importantly, naturally. My staff and past students have often told me that when doing flow posing, they almost feel like they are in a nirvana state. It requires little thought and is very fluid. It is a combination of many subtle movements, angles of the face and camera tilt. I have long believed in tilting the camera to achieve many unique results. Some of these results are:

- Reduced body size
- Change in eye level and direction
- Cropping of unwanted background distractions

One of the things I leaned very early on is that it's not that subjects don't want to pose, it's that they believe it will take too long and that it looks unnatural. I have always felt it is not the pose, but what happens inside the pose, that really makes it come to life. I always tell my clients that my poses will feel uncomfortable and very unnatural, but I promise they will look better than they ever have before. I begin this process during the engagement session, which I view as an introduction to posing for my clients.



## POSING WITH FLOW

Let me explain some basic rules to really make flow posing come to life. It starts with creating a strong foundation in the initial pose.

First and foremost, I try to make sure the female subject is never higher than the male. If she is, this tends to make her look larger and more dominant to the camera. My rule for subject height is that I generally want the higher-subject male's lips at the level of the lower-subject female's eyes. If he is much taller, they are the same height or she is taller, this is easily corrected by lowering one of the subjects. If the groom is taller, I try to create a wide base with his legs, which reduces his height. If she is taller, I ask her to do the same, or have her remove her back heel, which is farthest from the camera.

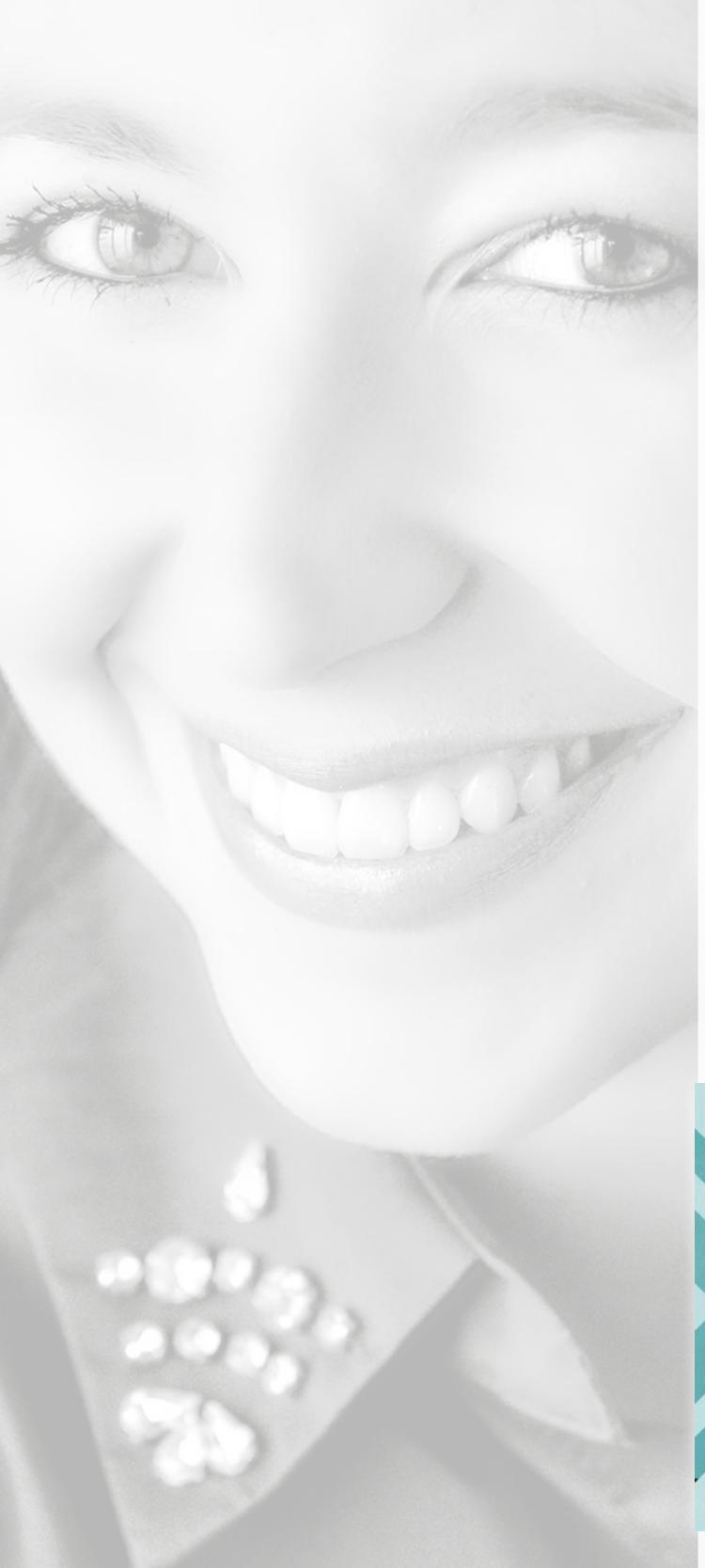
Secondly, I place the couple in what I call a posing V. This sets both bodies at a 45-degree angle to the camera, which helps reduce body size. In the V, the female's back shoulder is generally tucked into the male's armpit.

After the shoulders are in place and the V is created, I make sure that both subjects' front shoulders are rolled out. This is very important for reducing body size. A bride with a front shoulder closed in a sleeveless, strapless gown is not usually flattering. In this sequence setup, the bride's face should be turned to her higher front shoulder with a slight tilt. This is referred to as a feminine 2/3 view of the face. The groom's face should be turned slightly toward her, also in 2/3 view, with a slight tilt to her. This is called a basic masculine pose. It is very important to make sure both subjects' faces are in the same direction and view. If they are not, it will be very difficult to create proper lighting.

Now the key to all of this is to lean both subjects forward at the waist. This lean helps to tighten the skin and stretch out the face and chin. I bring the face slightly up as the forehead comes forward.



## POSING WITH FLOW



One last important thing to make note of is what I call the cover. I believe in making sure that the female subject's front arm, in this case her right, is covered by either his hand or the veil if it's a wedding. When the arm comes up to hug her man, it naturally appears larger. Covering it can mean the difference of whether or not a shot is sellable.

Now let's speed up the process. It starts with understanding that most of this sequence will be close-up imagery. This requires a camera height that is slightly above eye level. This helps force the chin up, and reduces most excess weight that causes double chins. The second part of this equation is understanding that the camera will be tilted at a 45-degree angle to the male subject. This helps raise him up in the image, while reducing her body size.

The last part of this sequence involves a basic understanding of facial angles. This set of images consists of two angles—either 2/3 view of the face or a profile of the face. The accompanying video shows these facial angles.

*For more information on Doug and his upcoming workshops, visit him at his Doug Gordon Workshops page on Facebook, and check out his free video tutorials on his Doug Gordon Workshops YouTube channel. Doug kicks off the Eastern leg of his Nikon/Bay Photo \$20 workshop tour on May 5 in Boston. Seats are limited. For more info, go to [www.douggordonworkshops.com](http://www.douggordonworkshops.com).*



8

1/80 sec at 2.8 ISO 800  
Camera height: above eye level  
Camera tilt: none  
5x10 crop  
Action: Kubota Mocha & Power Soft

9

1/80 sec at 2.8 ISO 800  
Camera height: above eye level  
Camera tilt: 45 degrees right



\$149

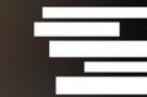
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11



# PROMOTIONAL I D E A S

THAT WORK

WITH SKIP COHEN

## PROMOTIONAL IDEAS

BY SKIP COHEN



While professional photography has a little seasonality, especially around holiday time, overall you have the most power to create excitement in your own market all year long. There are so many things you can start doing right now to impact your brand awareness and create some buzz.

Here are 10 promotional ideas that tie to both building a stronger network and reaching more consumers.

### START A NETWORKING LUNCHEON

Every one of you has the ability to do this, and it all starts with everybody associated with your specialty. Start by finding an inexpensive little restaurant in town, ideally one that has a private room for 10 to 15 people. Next, identify who should be there.

Wedding photographers: Florists, limo companies, caterers, venue managers, wedding planners, travel agents, bridal salons, spas, hair salons, tux shops, makeup artists, bakeries and music promoters.

Pet photographers: Vets, shelters, pet supply stores, pet food manufacturers (find out who the local reps are) and animal trainers.

Children's and family photographers: Toy stores, children's clothing stores, kids' restaurants, children's museums, day camps and overnight camps.

Don't forget to invite a few other photographers you respect. You won't always be available for every assignment that comes along.

The concept is simple: Everyone pays \$10 for lunch, and you're the host. Now, think about the power your network gains, sitting in between a florist and a venue manager. This is about building a marketing network for your community, but somebody has to take the first step—and that's you.



### LAB PROMO

I'm always amazed how many photographers, when trying to think of ideas for great promotions, never pick up the phone and call their lab. There are two key reasons to get your lab involved. First, your lab talks to hundreds of photographers every day. It knows, simply by osmosis, what's hot and what's not. Second, it's constantly coming out with new products of its own.

This isn't about changing your pricing. In fact, I hate discounting. It gets you into a rut that turns your work into a commodity item. So, look for products with high perceived value. Remember too that you're in the business, and, just because a metal print or canvas wrap is something you've known about for a long time, it doesn't mean your clients do.



### CROSS-PROMOTE WITH OTHER VENDORS

The best example is a photographer, florist and venue getting together and designing a postcard and sharing the expense, but also cross-promoting each other's products. Each of you becomes an ambassador for the other two companies. As a photographer, your images become critical for all three of you.

Working together, you can design a postcard and share the expense, a counter card that's on display at each of your businesses and a web page that highlights and links to each business.

All three of you share the same demographics as well, making it easy to develop better reach and a stronger push toward your target audience.

### DATE NIGHT

This is one of my favorites. Right off the bat, statistics show that women make 98 percent of the purchase decisions to hire a professional photographer in the portrait/social categories. That means that Mom is your primary target audience.

Build a portrait sitting into a relationship with a local restaurant, tickets to the movies, anything that represents a break from the kids and the challenges of being home. It's a complete package playing off of the idea "When was the last time you went out to dinner with your husband?"

Do the portrait sitting on the evening they're headed out to dinner. Work with a restaurant and include a gift certificate for dinner in the package. Spend some time with the couple just before dinner, and then they're on their own and you're the one getting credit not just for some great images, but helping Mom and Dad readjust their priorities.

### CAREER DAY

The best way to get to Mom and Dad is through the kids. There's an added benefit here: This is a project that starts to get you involved in the community too.

There isn't a school system in the world that isn't constantly looking for new activities to help inspire kids. As a photographer, you've got a chance to not only talk about your work, but share some tips to help kids take better pictures.

And before you start shaking your head and thinking I've gone off the deep end, here's a great example. Years ago my good buddy Terry Deglau (who was then at Kodak) and I spoke to kids in a middle school outside Pittsburgh. He talked about technique, and I did a program on marketing and getting your work seen.

The audience of kids 12 to 15 years old couldn't have been more enthusiastic. That night the six o'clock news ran a story about the event and included some interview time with me and Terry.

Now, think about your own community. Talking to kids about a career in photography is like the old *Saturday Night Live* "Mr. Subliminal" sketch. Here's your chance to raise awareness for your business and your skill set. You've even got a chance to do some basic demonstrations and give the kids images they can take home.



### PET PROMOTIONS

The hierarchy of why people hire a professional photographer goes brides-babies-pets, in that order. There are 160 million households in the United States with a dog or cat, and it's a growing market.

Vicki Taufer is credited with being one of the first to establish an annual pet photography event. For her Dog Days of Summer program, she offers a free portrait sitting to those who bring a food donation for the Peoria Animal Shelter.

Here's what's so perfect about this. First, the target audience, since she's a children's photographer, is the same target she's trying to reach for her core business. Second, the program is perfect for other partnerships. She's got a couple of pet product companies along with the shelter itself as partners. Everyone promotes one another. Third, she's hitting one of the big three: pets!

### CLIENT MAILINGS

Everyone spends so much time chasing new clients, but what about taking care of your existing client base? When was the last time you sent a personal letter to all of your past satisfied clients?

Let's assume you just started working with a new photographer who specializes in something you don't. Here's an easy example. You're a wedding photographer and you just started working with a photographer who does stunning maternity and baby photography.

It's the perfect scenario for a letter to all your past clients talking about how you're branching out and excited to share some new information about your business. Remember, brides have babies, couples start families, families get pets . . . got the picture?



### PULL YOUR COMMUNITY INTO YOUR BLOG

No matter where you live, you've been there long enough to have a few favorite vendors in the community. Get your camera out and start a series of community profiles. Each week you're going to do a blog post about another business owner in the community. You don't have to write a lot, just a paragraph or two about who they are and why you enjoy them, their business or the products/services they provide.

Let them know the day their profile runs, and you should also get them a hard copy of the page from your blog, with a title at the top, such as "As seen on \_\_\_\_\_'s Blog." Do enough of these over a couple of months, and you'll have everybody in the community talking about you and reading your blog.

Plus, there's an added benefit: Their portrait on your blog is an opportunity for you to show your skills.

### FREQUENT-BUYER PROGRAMS

OK, so it sounds crass, but we've all become points whores. We buy products with our credit cards and then track the points. The airlines started it all 25 years ago, but today every credit card we have is pushing consumer loyalty programs.

This doesn't work for every specialty, but it's perfect for children's and family portraiture. As the kids are growing up, you want to make sure there's never a missed birthday, first day of school or special holiday experience.

Personally, this is where I love image-box presentations. With the images in the box, you can also include a bounce-back certificate for something later on. Plus, you don't always have to include discounting, but added-value products like framing and additional albums.



## INTERIOR DISPLAYS AND YOUR IMAGES

From coffee shops to doctor's offices, the rest of the world needs all the help it can get in raising the bar on their walls. So let's get out and redecorate America!

The queen of professional photography, Helen Yancy, has talked about how she first got her images out there: She hung portraits in a diner. Bambi Cantrell decorated the Starbucks in Walnut Creek. Here in Sarasota, Mary Lou Johnson has her images all over the walls of the Coconut Mango restaurant.

Doctor's offices offer a specialized benefit. Think about a pediatrician. Who takes the kids to the doctor's 90 percent of the time? Mom. Who's your target audience? Mom. Who's got absolutely nothing to do while sitting in the waiting room at a doctor's office? Mom.

Here's the approach. You're going to suggest you decorate your doctor's office with framed images, and all you're asking for is to be allowed to leave some of your business cards or brochures on the coffee table.

Restaurants, coffee shops, doctors, dentists, lawyers—they're all prime targets, but you have to make the effort to get out in your community and get to know them.

Success with all of these promotional ideas is all about networking, but that's another article altogether. ■



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WITH JOE SWITZER

BY JOE SWITZER



GoPro is on fire! The company started in 2004, and has seen its sales double every year since. On February 7, the company announced it's going public, which means it's going to get a ton of cash and will obviously be planning more innovation and growth. It's set to raise \$400 million.

Founder and CEO Nick Woodman's net worth is over \$1.3 billion. The guy is still in his 30s! He got the idea for GoPro on a surfing trip in Southeast Asia. All Nick wanted to do was get high-quality action surfing shots. No camera could do what he wanted, so he created it. "To make videos worth watching, the camera has to get where the action is," he has said.

The GoPro is a disrupter in our photo/video industry. Time will tell, but the GoPro might be bigger than the DSLR revolution for filmmakers. Take a look around, and you will see the GoPro everywhere. Kids are out and about skateboarding with the camera on their head. In cities, you see them attached to cars. At beaches, they're on every surfboard. Our job is to constantly find ways to tell stories in a unique way. The GoPro allows you to get perspectives and angles that are flat-out mind-blowing. Did I mention it's the funnest video gadget I've had since I bought my iPhone?

## [1] MOTION WITH GOPRO

Film motion shots started with a 20-plus-pound camera with a full-body-suit Steadicam. When the DSLR cameras came out, filmmakers started using handheld motion stabilizers. This got rid of the body suit but took a ton of strength that many of us lacked. Who has the time to go to the gym every day and do 100 curls just so they can get motion shots at weekend weddings? Now is your chance. Anyone can hold up the 1.4-pound GoPro on a 2-pound handheld Steadicam SMOOTHIE-GPROHRO. Are you kidding me? Now, my three-year-old niece can get motion shots.

## [2] INTO THE CLOUDS

By now, everyone has heard the rumors that Amazon is going to be delivering orders by drone someday. Drones/octocopters are here to stay, and that industry is "taking off"—right? Drone pricing continues to become more affordable, and they are easier to fly and more mainstream than ever. GoPro is the perfect camera for them. It's lightweight and built for motion. Can you imagine pyrotechnic displays with your GoPro just above the fireworks? How about establishing shots hundreds of feet in the air, over cities, lakes, nature and events?

Are you too scared or don't have the money or time for a remote drone? Fear not. I've read stories about people using balloons and letting their GoPro fly away for amazing shots of the Earth. My advice is to attach some fishing line to your balloons and camera, then let it go into the clouds. Get your shot. Then reel it back in.



## [3] ATTACHING GOPRO TO OBJECTS

Last year I was on a shoot for a company that I can't mention, but to give you a hint, it's where dreams come true and it may or may not have magical wedding fairytales. When I arrived at the shoot, I saw a carriage with six ponies. In my bag I happened to have a GoPro Hero 2, but no experience using it. So I just stuck it to the carriage, attached it to a pony's head, and then put it on the road as the carriage and ponies walked and rolled right over it. What did I have to lose? A few hundred bucks. Who cares? The shots actually worked, and I got angles I couldn't get with my DSLR. Always have a GoPro ready.

## [4] ATTACHING GOPRO TO YOUR SUBJECT

The GoPro can attach to helmets, vehicles, wrists or around your chest. The tremendous advantage the GoPro has is that it was designed to give you the first-person perspective. Most of us have never had a tool that gives the perspective from the actual subject, talent or client. You have plenty of options. Use your imagination and have fun.

## [5] INTERESTING ENVIRONMENTS

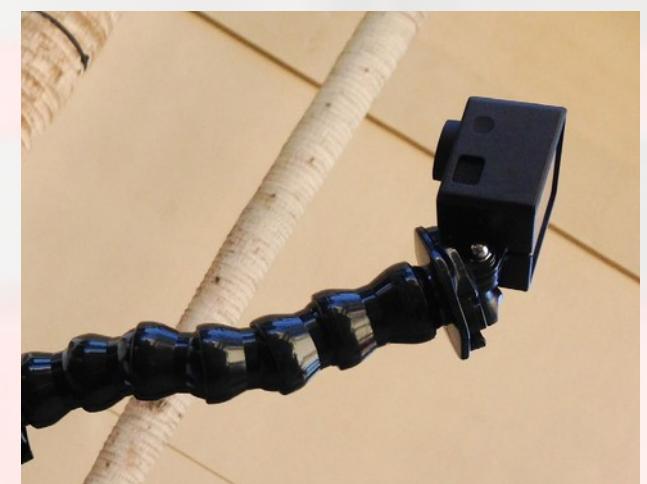
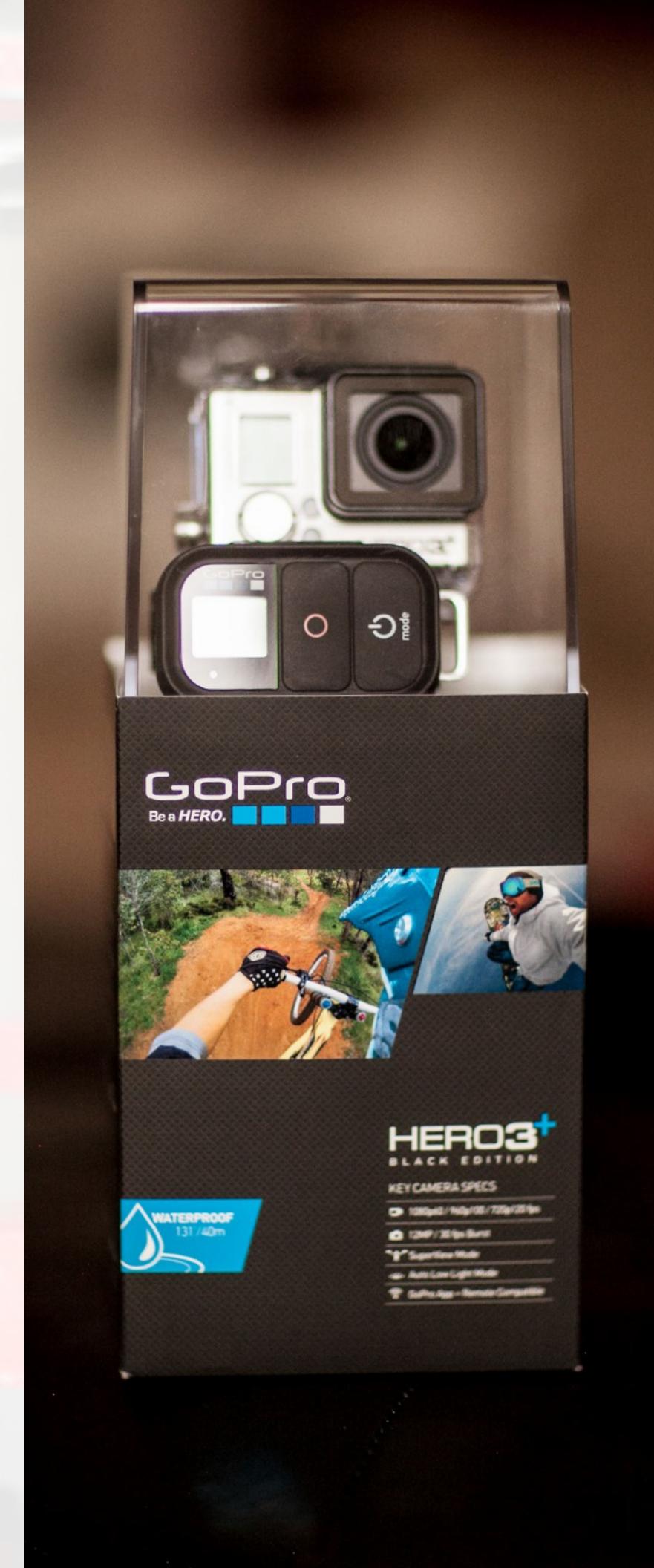
Maybe you're on a beach in Hawaii and want to get underwater shots of swimmers, whales or water sports. Or you're in a blizzard at 10,000 feet in the middle of winter, skiing or snowboarding. Or biking downhill at 60 miles per hour. This camera is ready to go anywhere. Someday I want to attach a piece of meat to it and throw it near a lion. Out of the box, this camera is ready to handle all environments.

## [6] SLOW MOTION BOOTH

Remember the photo-booth craze just a few years ago? Welcome to the next big trend for the wedding industry in 2014. My friend and former intern Deven Walker brought this up in our conversation about how he intends to use the GoPro. When he told me he was planning on using the slow-motion feature of the GoPro to start a "slow-motion" booth, I was stunned. Why didn't I think of this? How easy and nonintrusive! Deven is part of a big company called Walker Studio that does photography and video in Indiana. Part of Deven's business strategy in 2014 is to start a new revenue stream with the slow-motion booth. I think he is onto something bigger than ever.

## [7] TIME-LAPSE

Deven Walker of Walker Studio also turned me on to this feature. Why use it for time-lapses? He likes it because you don't need a secondary tool to plug in your camera. It's ready to record the time-lapse without any connections. He keeps it in his pocket, and can attach it to a tripod or object and get numerous time-lapses throughout the day. Some turn out great. Some don't. For him, it's all about finding the easiest way to get footage. I couldn't agree with him more, and will be using the GoPro for time-lapses all year long. Thanks for the tip, D!



**GOPRO**

## GOPRO "MUST-HAVES"

### Second battery.

Get one. The battery it comes with lasts only an hour or so.

### LCD Screen.

It helps when you can actually see the shot you're getting. I don't know about you, but trying to take photos or film blindfolded is quite a challenge, and the GoPro doesn't come with a screen.

### Flotation device.

If you're out in the ocean or on a lake and you lose your grip on your camera, bye-bye \$400. The \$15 investment for a flotation device is a good insurance policy.

### Suction cup.

Put them on cars, golf carts, carriages and windows. The great thing about this tool is you buy it once, and you're done. No more expensive stick pads.

### Tripod mount.

You'll need this so you can get time-lapses and stable footage. A good stable shot goes a long way. It gives you the ability to get a high-quality, conservative shot.

### Bottom Line

The age of wearable tech is upon us. Google glasses, maybe the iWatch later this year. Big tech companies are going to invest billions & all are fighting for a piece of the action. My prediction is that GoPro will be acquired by a company like Samsung, Apple, Cisco, or even Google. Maybe instead of going out and buying the camera we should be grabbing all the GoPro shares we can get when it goes public this spring. ■



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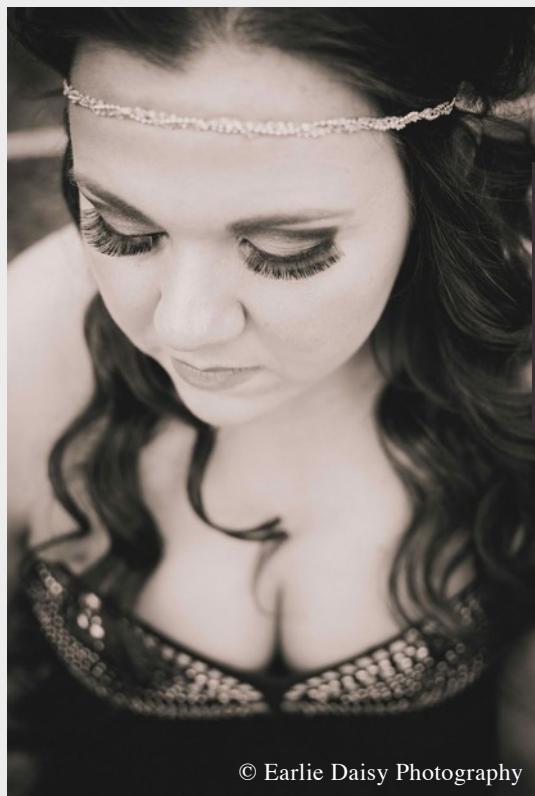
Better Music = Better Videos  
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# PICTURE PERFECT

CRITIQUE

WITH ROBERTO VALENZUELA





© Earlie Daisy Photography



© Rachel Edgington Photo



© Niche Photography



© Stephanie Ann Overstreet Photography



BY ROBERTO VALENZUELA

I have always been an advocate for the invaluable educational opportunity that image critique can bring. **I think it's one of the very best ways to understand your work.** Having your photos critiqued can bring to the surface both weaknesses and strengths you might not even know are there. Equipped with this knowledge, you can work on those aspects that need fine-tuning. Most of the issues with images fall into four main categories: technical, location, background and pose/expression.

**Every month, I will critique five images chosen by Shutter from reader entries.**

The best part is that I will critique them on video, and use PhotoShop to draw callouts to show you where the issues lie. It'll be as if we were sitting in the same room going over your images together. I love this industry, and I have dedicated many years to pushing my fellow photographer friends to invest in their education and prioritize their skills and mastery of the art. 

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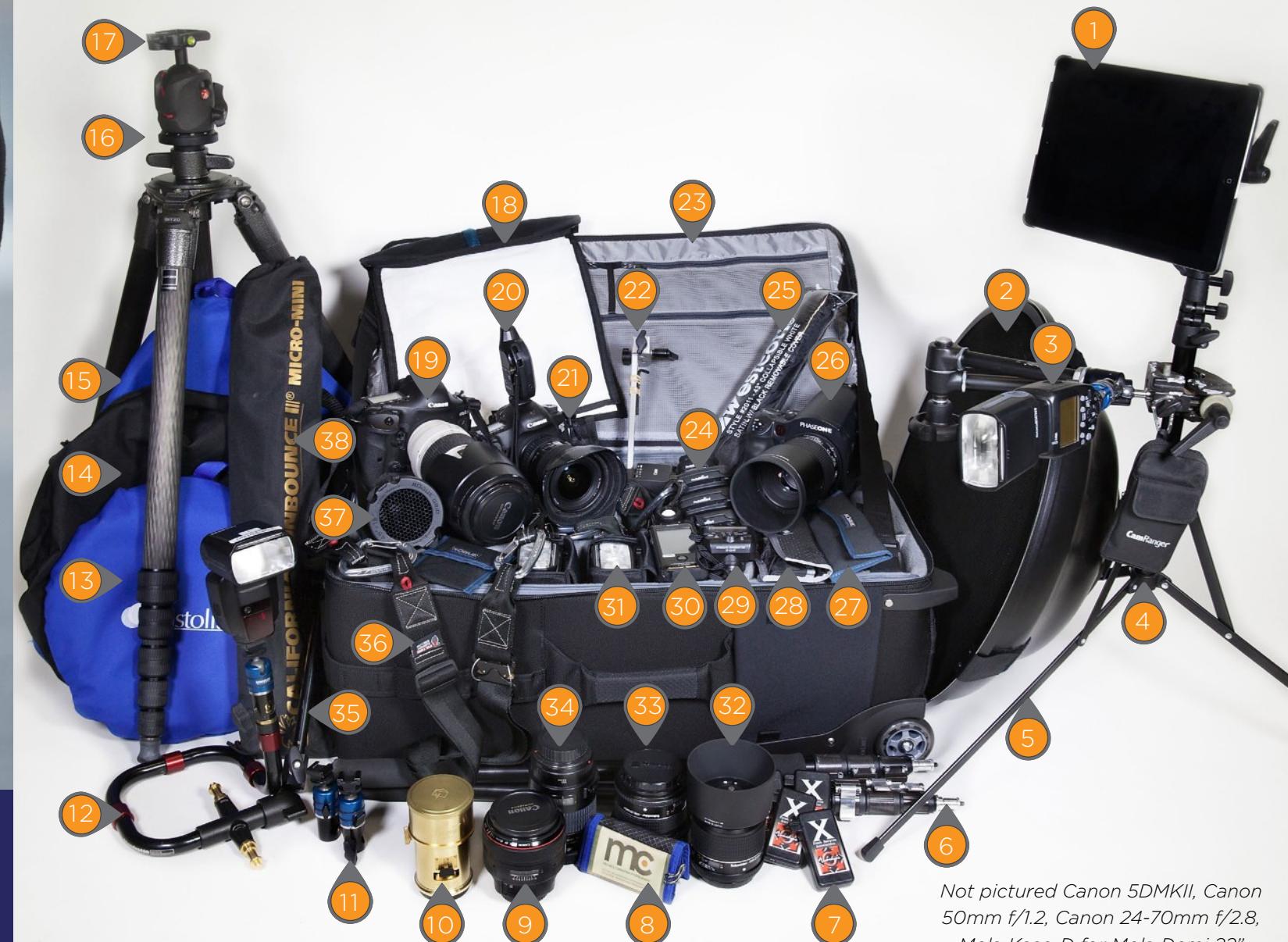
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# WHAT'S IN YOUR BAG?

WITH MICHAEL CORSENTINO

- 1 | iPad Mount w/ TetherTools Wallee Connect Mount   2 | Mola Demi Beauty Dish & Lumi Bracket   3 | Manfrotto Magic Arm  
4 | CamRanger   5 | Kupo Handy Stand   6 | Lastolite Non-Rotating Extending Handle (29 to 91")  
7 | Lymedyne "X" Flash Recycle Accelerator   8 | Think Tank Photo Pixel Rocket Memory Card Carrier  
9 | Canon 85mm f/1.2   10 | Lomography Petzval (D)SLR Art Lens   11 | Lovegrove Flash Bracket MkVII   12 | Manfrotto Snake Arm  
13 | Lastolite TriFlip 8 in 1 Grip Reflector Kit - 30"   14 | Lastolite Joe McNally TriGrip Kit   15 | Lastolite Ezybox  
16 | Gitzo GT5562GTS Tripod & Center Column   17 | Manfrotto MH057MO-Q5 Magnesium Ballhead   18 | Rogue Flash Bender XL  
19 | Canon 1DX w/70-200 f/2.8   20 | Pocket Wizard Plus III   21 | Canon 5DMKIII w/16-35mm f/2.8  
22 | Lovegrove Gemini twin speedlight bracket   23 | Think Tank Photo Logistics Manager Bag  
24 | Pocket Wizard Flex TT5, Mini & AC3 Controller   25 | Westcott Collapsible Convertible Umbrella  
26 | Phase One IQ250 Schneider Kreuznach w/150mm LS f/3.5 AF   27 | Rogue Flash Gels  
28 | Think Tank Photo DSLR Battery Holder 4   29 | Canon STE3-RT Speedlite Transmitter   30 | Sekonic L-478DR Flash Meter  
31 | Canon 600EX-RT Speedlite   32 | Schneider Kreuznach 110mm LS f/2.8 AF   33 | Schneider Kreuznach 80mm LS f/2.8 AF  
34 | Canon 100mm f/2.8   35 | Sunbounce Speedlight Bracket   36 | Vulture Equipment Works A4 & A2 Camera Straps  
37 | Rogue Grid & Grid Gels   38 | Sunbounce Micro Mini Reflector



Not pictured: Canon 5DMKII, Canon 50mm f/1.2, Canon 24-70mm f/2.8,  
Mola Kase-D for Mola Demi 22"

# INSPIRATION





# Inspiration comes to us in many shapes & sizes

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Put 10 photographers in a room and ask them to shoot a paperclip, and there's no telling what will happen. And that, ladies and gentlemen, is why I love being a photographer. We all see the world in our own special way. Ultimately, though, nothing is truly new or unique. Everything is inspired by something that came before. In that spirit, this month we asked you, our readers, to submit some work you thought would inspire your peers. What you gave us blew away the staff here. *Enjoy!*



© Nicole Mathison Photography



## INSPIRATIONS



© Mamarazzi Photography



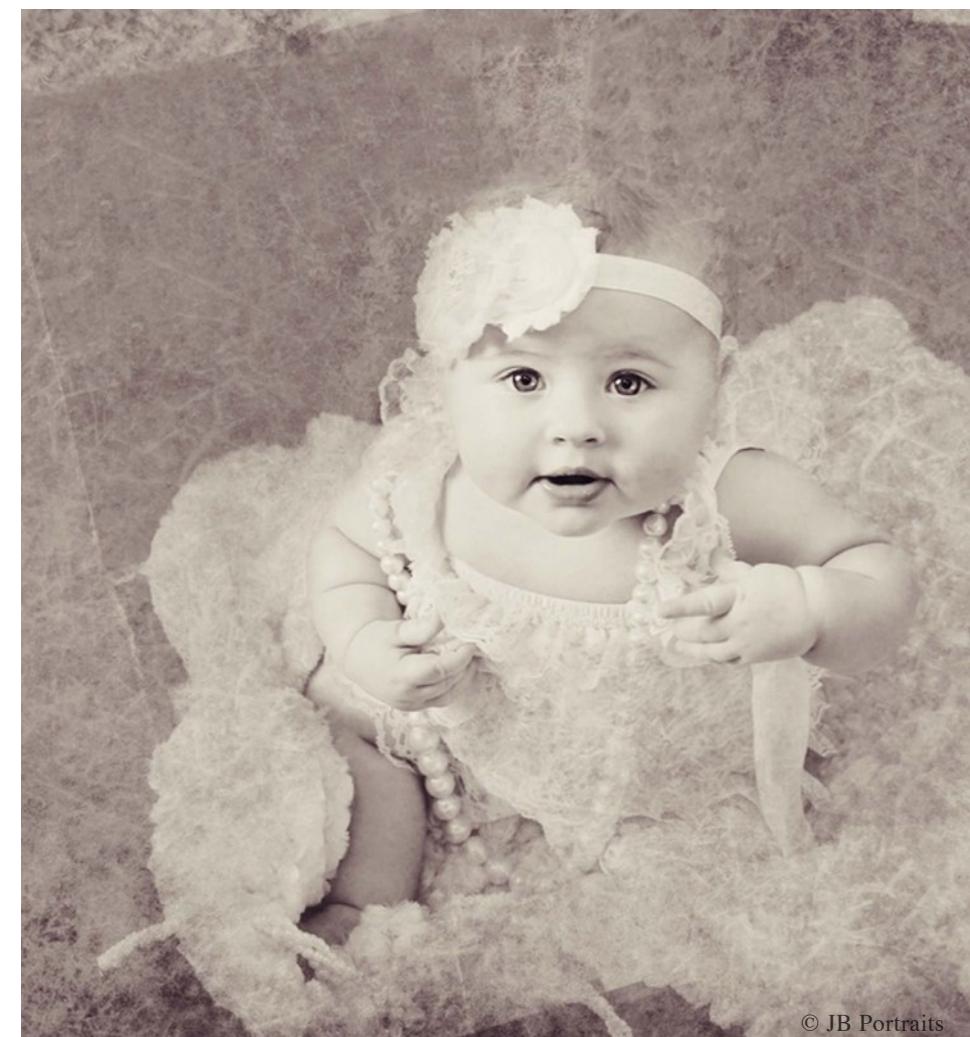
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© Shanna Simpson



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© Memories By Jen Bailey



Thank you to everyone who submitted images this month

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# WHAT IS SUCCESS?

with Kristy Dickerson

by Kristy Dickerson



**Success.** This is a big word that we sometimes allow to define so much of who we are and what we do. In our industry, we look to who is speaking at WPPI, who is shooting whose wedding, who is doing this or that. We look to those people to define success in our own minds. We want to be like them because they are successful—right? The same goes for society at large. What neighborhood do you live in, what kind of home or car do you have, do you get to travel, where do you work, etc.? Social media has made the magnitude of this phenomenon so much bigger. On our news feeds in the morning, we catch up with what everyone else is doing and what everyone else is being successful at. The idea of success glares at us daily on our phones, tablets and computers, and it is harder than ever to disconnect and be content with where we're at in life.

Our society and our industry have notions of success that can drive us to move forward and that can also break us down. Or, worse, it can drive us to really lose track of what is important in the first place. It is so hard not to compare work, scour blogs, walk the trade-show floors, and want everything, or go hear people speak and compare everything everyone else does to what you do. It's toxic not only to our industry, but also to you and your loved ones.

Don't try to be like anyone else. Just be you, because no one else can duplicate that. In photography, I feel like the only competitive advantage photographers have is themselves. Everything else can be duplicated. An image can be copied, the same gear can be bought, but no one can be you and have your vision, style and personality.





Where would we all be if we could **take fear out of the equation?**  
Where would we be if we could  
**take comparison out of the equation?**



I am just as guilty as anyone else in comparing myself to others. There are moments when I don't feel worthy or successful, or wonder who am I to share with you or to teach. I don't know everything, and I am constantly learning and absorbing, but what I do know is I can share and choose to share what has worked for me, and a lot of it I learned the hard way. Let me ask you this question: Where would we all be if we could take fear out of the equation? Where would we be if we could take comparison out of the equation?

I hope this article gives you a better understanding of what success truly is. To understand that, you have to start at the beginning and define success for yourself. It looks different to everyone. I look at so many people who are projecting success not only in our industry, but in society, and yes, it looks glamorous, but I don't want that life. A lot of them don't have kids, work countless hours, and their work is their life. For them, that brings happiness—or at least appears too.

For me, success on a daily basis is waking up early and excited about what I am doing that day, both with work and life. Now to further define it, success for me from a business standpoint is running a profitable business while still being present to my family, friends and community. A typical successful day for me would be waking up at 5 a.m. and knocking out the core of my work. Spending my mornings getting my six-year-old off to school, going to the gym and then hanging with my two-year-old until lunchtime. After lunch, work again until about 3:00 or 3:30, then call it a day. If I need to wrap anything up at the end of the night I will, but typically I don't work into the night. Most nights I spend with my husband, a couple nights a month I have girls' night and some nights I shoot. For me, happiness is balance. I also really think if you find happiness, success will follow.

In order to define success for yourself, you have to answer this very question. Why are you starting or why did you start your business? Are you following a passion? Is it to be at home with your kids more? Is it to supplement income? You have to answer all these "whys" for yourself. What is your end goal with photography? To make it a career, or just a hobby? Do you want it to be a full-time or a part-time job? I hear from so many people thinking they are not successful because of what society/our industry has defined success as. If you are a mom, and you love photography and your end goal is to be able to stay at home and be Mom while doing photography and making part-time income, is that not enough? I see that as success.

## WHAT IS SUCCESS?

Write down your answers to these questions so you can be reminded every day of your definition of success. The feeling of not being successful, getting burnt out or churning can be toxic enough to erode your dreams of being a photographer or, worse, your spirit. Once you define what success means to you, you can then devise a plan and actionable steps to get there. And remember, success doesn't happen overnight.

If your only goal is to understand photography more as a hobby, you can create actionable steps to get there. If your goal is to be a profitable and have supplemental income, when is the right time to take the leap to photographer? So many factors go into answering this question. I have sat in front of photographers/teachers saying things like "If you have a dream, just go for it" and "You can do it." And I feel like this can be disastrous. Why? If your family depends on your income, if you have kids, if running a small business really isn't even for you, all of it can lead you down a path of heartache and disappointment. When you run a photography business, it is probably 70 percent running a business and 30 percent or less actually taking pictures. So all these questions you need to take into consideration. I am not by any means saying you shouldn't go for your dreams. If anything, I am saying to go for your dreams but have the knowledge and understanding of your opportunity costs. All of these are big questions that you should evaluate, especially if your income or family is dependent on this business.



*Once you define **what success means to you**,  
you can then devise a plan and actionable steps to get there.*

WHAT IS SUCCESS?

You have the opportunity to be successful,  
and if you have the determination, it can happen.

I have spoken to so many people who have taken that leap of faith. They quit their day jobs, canceled the babysitter, they're staying home with the kids and they bought the gear they need for their business—and they have racked up debt. Starting a photography business is not easy or cheap. The debt has become a burden not only on themselves, but on the family and the marriage. This is just one example. I am not trying to scare you, but as a mother, wife and business owner, I'm telling you the realities of this undertaking.

So when do you take the leap of faith? It is this simple: If your family needs \$1,000 a month in disposable income for you to do photography full time, you need to calculate it out. On an Excel spreadsheet, write out your monthly business expenses. Factor 30 percent of your income as an expense for taxes. Write down the number of sessions/weddings that you need to do in order to cover your costs of doing business (expenses), and remember to factor in peak seasons. Cash flow always varies, so take into account that some months will be higher earners than others. When you have done this successfully for six months, take the leap. Will success just continue from there? No. But that's the challenge that drives entrepreneurs like me. We love the drive, the push, the getting-busy mode that determines the outcome of our business dealings.

You have the opportunity to be successful, and if you have the determination, it can happen. But define success for yourself. And as you go through life's stages, your definition of success will change. At the end of the day, happiness equals success. Life is too short to get lost in comparison. Just get busy doing what you love and knocking your action steps down. ■



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# HIGH-END SALES

PART TWO

with Lori Nordstrom





BY Lori Nordstrom

Last month I wrote about beginning the sales process with your client right from the very beginning. Planting seeds right from the first phone call is the best way to get your clients into an investment mindset. My process is to communicate the value of wall portraits and storytelling groupings as we talk, and then ask for snapshots of their walls so that I can begin planning for their session. I explain to my clients that after I get their snapshots, I'll be putting together some wall concepts for them, and we'll be making selections of which groupings they would like in their home. That's how I will start planning their session. I love this system because all of the hard work in the decision-making is done long before my clients will see their images.

The No. 1 complaint I hear from photographers during sales is that their clients won't make a final decision. They want to leave the sales appointment and have the images put online to look over. This problem goes away when the client makes those tough decisions in the beginning. We all know exactly what they are going to buy because we've planned for it already! I have had photographer after photographer who has tried this approach and then has told me, "It works! And my sales have doubled!" (Or tripled, or quadrupled!)

When you do the sales and ordering appointment makes a difference as well. I used to believe that a week was a magic time frame. If it got to two weeks after the session, some of the excitement has worn off, but waiting about a week builds anticipation. I still suggest this time frame—if you're not willing to do sales immediately following your session. Immediate sales has become a magical winning formula for me. I photograph my session, then let Mom and Dad get the kids settled with a snack and a movie while I load my images onto my laptop. I open the images into PreeVu Software, where I have already built their wall concepts (be sure to watch the video of this process included in the April edition of *Shutter*). Here we go through their images together and start narrowing them down to favorites. The beauty of this process is that my clients know that nothing has been done to the images; they are straight out of my camera, and of course that's obvious. It takes away even the temptation to spend too much time on the images before the client sees them. What a time suck this is—and we all do it! Because I have already presold my clients on the wall concepts they love, we now only have to choose which images we are going to use for each grouping. The process is quick and simple and, best of all, enjoyable. My clients love that they don't have to make a separate appointment, and it also gets the portraits to them much more quickly. I love that I don't have to spend time on images that haven't been ordered. (I mean I *really* love this.) I use this system as often as possible, and my goal by the end of this year is for 100 percent of my clients to be viewing their images this way.



To keep our sales and ordering time short and sweet, I make a lot of decisions for my clients. I point out the positives of the images that I love (never, ever point out a negative for one you don't like) and try to tie an emotion to my favorites. I want my clients to "feel" their images when they look at them; I know that they will love them even more when this happens, and it builds value for my product. I let them know when we sit down together that every image they order will be fully retouched, but I love that they get to see them "as is" because it allows them to tell me how far to go with the retouching, and they love it. I then tell them that we will flip through all of the images quickly the first time so they can get a feel for everything I shot, and then we will go back through more slowly and do some comparisons and start narrowing things down. PreeVu has a star rating system—one star for the least favorites and three stars for the favorites—so I start clicking one-stars as we go through the first time so that I'm narrowing down anything that is a definite "no." We then go back through the images more slowly, and I begin by saying, "As we go through the images a second time, I want you to tell me with each image if it is a yes, a no or a maybe. We're going to throw the no's out of the mix—we won't go back to those. The maybes are going to be your biggest category; these are images that you really like, and we can pull from them for an album or image box. And then let's try to get down to the very favorites for your yeses. The images in the yes category will be the images that we'll be choosing a product for." I want them to have only images they are going to buy in the yeses—or three stars. I've also, up until now, only presold the wall groupings. I've mentioned albums and image boxes,

but I talk about them again here because I want them to be thinking about that as we put images into the maybe category. I want them to love those maybes enough that they have to have an album or image box.

When I don't do immediate sales, the only difference is that we start with an Animoto slide show with Song Freedom music, and it's all projected onto a large screen. Everything else about the process is the same. If you are doing sales at your own studio, as I did for almost 15 years, you'll also want to be sure to take into account all of the senses. A lot of research has been done to show how valuable tapping into each of the senses is to the end sales decisions, both in making those decisions and in being happy with them. Make sure your ordering room is comfortable and decorated nicely. Start with a slide show to appeal to sight and sound. You don't have to show off everything you can do; your product menu should do that for you. (I have my product menu loaded on an iPad that I hand to them when needed.) Decorate with your portraits just how you would want your client to decorate with them at home. Show what you want to sell. Have drinks and snacks available. I've found that chocolate is always great to have on the coffee table, and studies show that people spend more when eating chocolate. Light a candle and make sure your room smells great. Some people bake cookies for that fresh-baked smell. Play soft music in the background. Instrumentals are best for sales appointments so that your client won't be distracted by familiar words.

HIGH-END SALES



If you are new to in-person sales, start a sales log and keep track of your progress, successes and goals met. Write down any objections that come up so that you can prepare a positive answer for the next time it's brought up, or incorporate it into your phone script so that it gets discussed before it even comes up. After each sale, evaluate the things that went well and the things that could go better next time, and then make a plan to make it happen. In each success, and even in the failures, there are lessons to be learned and tweaks that can be made in your system until it becomes second nature. Become an expert on your own products and services. Become a "consultant" for your clients, and watch as your profit goes up.

Lastly, don't forget to follow up with your clients. Follow-up creates loyalty that leads to future sales and referrals, so always take care of your clients beyond the sale. They will love you for it.

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## CONTRIBUTORS

## EDITOR



**SAL CINCOTTA**  
[www.SalCincotta.com](http://www.SalCincotta.com)

LOCATION: O'Fallon, IL

PASSION: Weddings & Seniors

Sal was exposed to photography at a very early age and has been in love with our craft ever since. He can still recall the smell of the chemicals in his aunt's makeshift dark room in the basement. However, a career in photography would elude him for over 20 years.

Graduating from one of the top 25 business schools in the country, Sal pursued a corporate career with his photography becoming more of a hobby. In 2007, he left corporate to pursue his dream of a career in photography and has never looked back.

Today, Sal Cincotta and his wife Taylor own and operate a very successful studio in the St. Louis metro area. Salvatore Cincotta Photography, Salvatore Cincotta Films, and BehindtheShutter.com.

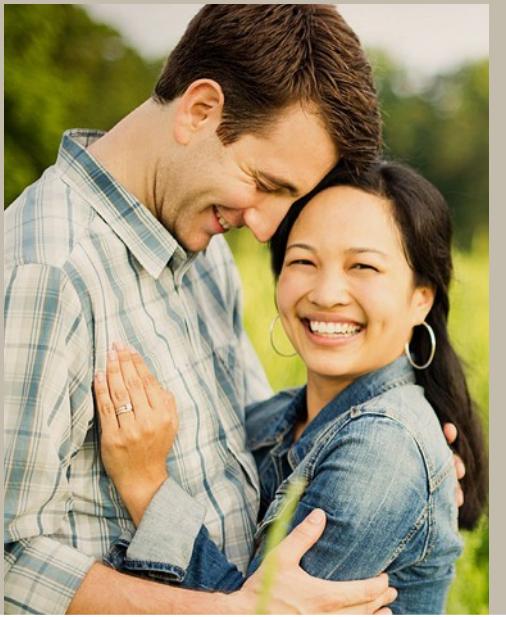
Focused on wedding and senior portraiture, Sal has had the opportunity to shoot for corporate clients like Nordstrom's and the St. Louis Cardinals to elite sports celebrities and the White House, photographing President Obama.

### FEATURED ARTICLES

Moving Mountains: Featured Artist Jonathan McInnis  
Q&A with Sal Cincotta



© Salvatore Cincotta Photography



## PHILLIP BLUME

[www.BlumePhotography.com](http://www.BlumePhotography.com)

LOCATION : Athens, GA

PASSION : Weddings

Phillip and Eileen Blume are international award-winning photographers who exemplify a new generation of socially conscious creatives. They not only push boundaries to create unforgettable imagery around the globe, but also innovate to address poverty and impact the world for real change. As owners of a high-demand boutique studio, they've worked with clients in New York, London, Manila, Antigua and beyond. In 2011, they released their first feature documentary film, *Lost Boys of Paradise*, which screened across the United States to raise awareness about children fighting to survive in Guatemala's post-civil war slums. By implementing sound business principles and catering to a select number of wedding clients, Phillip and Eileen strike a balance that affords them time and resources to invest in what they value most – parenting their two young daughters, adoption, involvement in their community, and personal projects. As educators, the duo accepts invitations to speak to students and photographers about the art and business of photography. They have appeared at WPPI in Las Vegas and on CreativeLIVE for Photographers Ignite. In 2014 they will premiere their new studio space in Athens, GA, as well as workshops for photographers.

### FEATURED ARTICLES

The Power of Community



© Phillip Blume



## S K I P C O H E N

[www.SkipsPhotoNetwork.com](http://www.SkipsPhotoNetwork.com)

LOCATION : Sarasota, Florida

Skip Cohen is President/Founder of Marketing Essentials International, a marketing consulting firm specializing in projects dedicated to photography, primarily photographic education. ([www.mei500.com](http://www.mei500.com))

He is also the founder of Skip's Summer School ([www.mei500.com](http://www.mei500.com)), the founder of the Akron Photo Series ([www.AkronPhotoSeries.com](http://www.AkronPhotoSeries.com) ), and the co-founder of GhostRighters ([www.GhostRighters.com](http://www.GhostRighters.com)), a content resource for professional photographers needing help with editorial content, web re-design and marketing. His blogs, [SkipsPhotoNetwork.com](http://SkipsPhotoNetwork.com) and [PhotoResourceHub.com](http://PhotoResourceHub.com), is read by thousands of professional and aspiring photographers. On May 21, MEI launched [PhotoResourceHub.com](http://PhotoResourceHub.com) a new content site for professional photographers with video, podcasts, blog posts and an ongoing calendar of industry events.

He has been a recipient of ADL's Torch of Liberty Award and Foto Imagen Magazine's Man of the Year Award and in 2001 he received PPA's Legacy Award for his work in support of PPA Charities. His images have been published in a long list of photographic trade magazines, including: Rangefinder, Shutterbug, Foto Imagen, Studio Photography and Design, Petersen's Photographic and The Hasselblad Forum. He's also competed in print completion in both WPPI and PPA's national conventions.

In addition, he has written six books on photography: *The Art of Wedding Photography*, *The Art of the Digital Wedding* and *The Art of People Photography with Bambi Cantrell: Don Blair's Guide to Posing and Lighting Body Parts*; and *Wedding Photography from the Heart*, co-authored with celebrity wedding photographer Joe Buissink. Book number six, *GoingPro*, co-authored with Scott Bourne, was released by Random House in October 2011 and remains on the photography book best seller list at Amazon..

### FEATURED ARTICLES

10 Promotional Ideas That Work



**MICHAEL CORSENTINO**  
www.CorsentinoPhotography.com

**LOCATION:** Petaluma, California

**PASSION:** Lifestyle Photography

Michael Corsentino is an award-winning, contemporary wedding and portrait photographer. He is an American Photo 2013 Top 10 Wedding Photographers nominee, Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Lightroom expert, Capture One Pro Certified Professional, author, contributing writer for Photoshop User Magazine, Shutter Magazine and Resource Magazine, speaker and international workshop leader.

Based in Northern California, Michael has been shooting digitally since 1999. His love affair with the magic and science of photography is more passionate today than ever. Stylish, dramatic, edgy and modern images set Michael's photography apart. His award-winning photojournalism, fashion and editorial styles have made him an in-demand portrait and destination-wedding photographer. Passionate about education, Michael loves to share his lighting and posing secrets, post-processing techniques, time-saving workflow strategies and shooting philosophy at workshops and speaking engagements.

#### FEATURED ARTICLES

Top Lights Are Tops





## KRISTY DICKERSON

[www.KristyDickerson.com](http://www.KristyDickerson.com)

LOCATION: Atlanta, Georgia

PASSION: Weddings & Engagements

Kristy Dickerson is the founder and CEO of Fisheye Connect ([www.fisheyeconnect.com](http://www.fisheyeconnect.com)), professional laundry sorter, CFO of multitasking, wedding photographer, mom of two, and a wife who is never wrong... never. Upon earning her degree in finance and business management, she started her photography business after the birth her first son. As if she didn't already have enough on her plate, in June 2010, Kristy launched Fisheye Connect for other photographers, like herself, looking for quality education. Fisheye Connect allows aspiring photographers to connect with photography industry experts by location, instructor or interest. It is a searchable database for photography workshops/events, along with services that help instructors manage the marketing and financial aspects of their businesses. Merging Kristy's business sense with her passion, Fisheye Connect has become a thriving community of photographers learning and growing together.

## FEATURED ARTICLES

What Is Success





## DOUG GORDON

[www.douggordonworkshops.com](http://www.douggordonworkshops.com)

LOCATION: Plattsburgh, NY

PASSION: Portraits

Doug Gordon is an award-winning photographer/visual storyteller, teacher, mentor to many and internationally acclaimed author of instructional materials for professional photographers. Doug Gordon's vision has helped to shape the memories of thousands of brides and grooms.

Currently, Doug's very busy studio photographs an average of 1,000 weddings per year as well as another 5,000 portraits ranging from schools, to sports, newborns, boudoir, etc. To ensure consistency, Doug produces the necessary training materials and he trains and manages a team of twenty-nine talented photographers, cinematographers and professional staff.

Doug remains a strong believer in paying it forward so he continues to actively share the lessons he's learned as a photographer, as a businessman and as a caring human being with thousands of professional and aspiring photographers around the world. He also makes time to speak at National and International conferences. And, he regularly offers Professional Workshops (<http://www.douggordonworkshops.com/>) for interested professional photographers.

## FEATURED ARTICLES

Posing With Flow



## CONTRIBUTORS



VANESSA JOY

[www.VanessaJoy.com](http://www.VanessaJoy.com)

LOCATION: Freehold, New Jersey

PASSION: Weddings

14 Years of photography, eight years of shooting weddings, three years of business ownership (not to mention five college degrees)

Vanessa is a trilingual (English, Spanish and a bit of French), award-winning photographer, living with her husband, Rob Adams, in the great state of New Jersey. She has studied photography since 1998 and has spent most of her life running a successful wedding photography studio that shoots 35 weddings a year (at a premium price). In her first three years of business, Vanessa achieved honors such as: 20+ publications in print magazines (including three cover photos and interviews in *PDN* and *Rangefinder*), a Grand Imaging Award from PPA and a second-place wedding Image Award from WPPI.

Vanessa enjoys speaking across the country at venues such as CreativeLIVE, Clickin Moms, WPPI, Imaging USA, PPA-related conventions and personal workshops. She is recognized for her talent and even more for her business sense. Vanessa's clients love working with her, and industry peers enjoy learning from her generous, informative and open-book style of teaching.

### FEATURED ARTICLES

5 Apps You Need

## CONTRIBUTORS



**LORINORDSTROM**  
[www.NordstromPhoto.com](http://www.NordstromPhoto.com)

**LOCATION:** Winterset, Iowa

**PASSION:**  
Babies, Families, Weddings & Seniors

Lori Nordstrom {M.Photog.Cr., CPP, ABI} owns a boutique studio specializing in children and family portraits located in the picturesque town of Winterset, Iowa. Lori is a PPA approved business instructor and marketing consultant for Studio Management Services. Sharing with other photographers and small business owners is one of the things she most enjoys. In 2009 Lori started Photo Talk Forum, an online community of photographers working together to grow their businesses.

Lori has always had a heart for children and believes in giving back. She has run a successful fundraising campaign for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society (LLS) for 10 years. In 2011 Lori began her own non-profit organization, Dando Amor which focuses on helping orphaned children in Ecuador. Lori and Travis Gugleman hit their goal of raising \$100,000 the first year of Dando Amor existence. You can find out more about going to Ecuador or making a donation at [www.dandoamor.org](http://www.dandoamor.org)

### FEATURED ARTICLE

High-End Sales Part 2



**BLAIR PHILLIPS**  
www.BlairPhillipsPhotography.com

LOCATION: Landis, North Carolina

PASSION:  
Seniors, Babies, Families & Weddings

Blair's team includes four employees plus Blair, who photographs 20 to 30 weddings and 500 studio sessions per year. Blair has a passion to teach photographers how to express themselves in ways they can't find with traditional training. He speaks to and teaches thousands of photographers and digital artists each year at national conventions and expos including WPPI, Imaging USA, SYNC Seniors, and various PPA conventions.

Blair and Suzanne's "eclectic elegance" style and positive energy educate and inspire photographers, while allowing them to stay true to themselves. This young team pushes the envelope daily with creativity and positive inspiration. As a side note, after 10 years of marriage, Blair and Suzanne welcomed Ava Blair Phillips into the world on August 3, 2011.

FEATURED ARTICLE  
Limited Edition Sessions



## CONTRIBUTORS



**JOE SWITZER**  
[www.switzerworld.com](http://www.switzerworld.com)

LOCATION: St. Louis, MO

Joe says "I got lucky and fell into the film/photo world. I'm probably known for my enthusiasm and randomness. I totally enjoy capturing real moments creatively...even if that's with my iPhone. I prefer Cold Stone ice cream once a week with Snickers, cookie dough, carmel, fudge, and a splash of Robitussin to take the stomachache away. My favorite color is the number 9. I'm writing this without any help from Google so I hope you feel like you know me better now. I hope they aren't mad at me for not writing something more professional."

FEATURED ARTICLES  
Let's Go With GoPro

## CONTRIBUTORS



**ROBERTO VALENZUELA**

[www.robertovalenzuelaphotography.com](http://www.robertovalenzuelaphotography.com)

**LOCATION:** Beverly Hills, CA

Roberto Valenzuela is a wedding and fine art photographer based in Beverly Hills, CA. Roberto Valenzuela is a 70-time International award winning photographer and three-time International first place winner. He serves as a photography judge for the 16x20 WPPI (Wedding and Portrait Photographers International), PPA (Professional Photographers of America), and various European photography competitions. Roberto's private photography workshops and speaking engagements are held worldwide. His goal is to encourage and inspire professional photographers to practice their craft when not on the job, as any other artist must do so in order to perform. He is an active teacher and platform speaker at WPPI and has served as the keynote speaker at other International photography conventions.

**FEATURED ARTICLES**

Picture Perfect Critique

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