

December 2021
Newsletter

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November PhotoShow Winners

"Time Lapse"



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Pics
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1st Place – George Bohannon

APC ACTIVITIES

Next Meeting

Dec. 20, 2021 6:00pm (Party)
Burlington Library

Board Meeting

Dec. 6, 2021 6:30pm
Burlington Library

Field Trips

Oct.-Dec. 2021 Country Roads

Programs

Dec. 20, 2021 Christmas Party

PhotoShows

Jan. 17, 2022 Member's Choice

March 21, 2022 Bridges

May 16, 2022 Churches

July 18, 2022 Fences

Sept. 19, 2022 H₂O Reflections

Nov. 21, 2022 Abandoned Places

Exhibits

TBD

President's Comments—December 2021

By Scott Duvall

I have enjoyed being your President during 2021. I will be succeeded by Keith O'Leary who I predict will be an outstanding President. He has great ideas, leadership skills, and lots of energy. You will enjoy Keith.

During 2021 we had wonderful programs, Photo Shows and field trips despite the inconveniences from the COVID pandemic. Thanks to the many members who made these happen.

Our last big event of the year is our Christmas Party on December 20th. All of our members are requested to bring appetizers of their choice. I'm looking forward to lots of good things to eat that evening. Thank you in advance to the members who are coordinating the Party.

Scott Duvall

APC President

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APC BOARD

President	Scott Duvall	Publicity Chair	Carole Barnard
Vice President	Sam Lynch	Exhibit Chair	Sandra Whitesell
Secretary	George Siple	Co-Chair	Angela Bostek
Treasurer	Nancy Jacobus	Membership Committee	
PhotoShow Committee		Chair	Len Barnard
Chair	Keith O'Leary	Co-Chair	Carole Barnard
Members	Herbert House	Twin Lakes Rep.	Len Barnard
	Gene Lentz	Web Master	Christie O'Leary
Outings/Field Trips	Hugh Comfort	Past President	Mike King
		Editor	Ray Munns

November 15th PhotoShow



2nd Place – Hugh Comfort



3rd Place – Steve Dingeldein



HM 1 – George Bohannon



HM 2 – Ray Munns



HM 3 – George Siple

Chris Whitted, thank you for your time and effort in judging our November PhotoShow! A tough job. Your valued comments and suggestions were very helpful in developing our photography skills. Also, thanks to Keith O'Leary and his team for assembling the photo entries and making the PhotoShow possible.



Christmas Party

December 20, 2021

6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

FOOD FUN FELLOWSHIP

It's Party time in our new venue, May Memorial Library, in downtown Burlington. We will have Meeting Rooms A and B. Since we have time constraints in this venue, please note the following:

Arrive at 5:45-6:00 and do not go in the front entrance, follow the Photo Club sign pointing to the right and enter in the lower entrance with your food item. All paper products, Holiday punch and water will be provided. If you desire an alternate beverage, please bring your own. No alcoholic beverages allowed. There is an electrical outlet if food needs to be kept warm.

Proceed to the front of the room for your name tag and select a seat at a table. While you are eating and socializing, there will be rotating videos on two screens for your enjoyment.

Around 7:20 there will be closing remarks. Following will be cleanup and teardown in order that we exit the building at 8:00. We hope that all will enjoy the evening. Soooooo, we heard that Santa Claus is coming to town with positive news for 2022. Good things are coming!

PS: *Remember your spouse or significant other is always welcomed!*



WEBMASTER NOTES

Visit www.alamancephoto.com for the latest happenings in the club. By the way, if you are in the process of recruiting someone to the club, why not point them to our website for more information?

All Facebook Members:

We welcome you to post your photographs on the Alamance Photography Club Facebook page. Thanks, **Christie O'Leary—Webmaster**

Alamance Photography Club

2022 Dues

With the New Year of 2022 arriving, it also brings forth Dues renewal time. Effective January 1st your 2022 APC dues are due! The good news is that they have not increased. They are still \$40.00 for an individual and \$60.00 for a family.

We also have a special rate for students—\$15.00.

For 2022, we have a new Treasurer, Dianne Sellers. If you wish, I am very sure she will accept your payment at our Christmas Social on December 20th or at our January and February meetings.

For dues unpaid by March 1st, members names will be removed from our Membership Roster.

If you desire to mail your dues in, please email to:
Dianne Sellers, 3853 Wesley Ct., Burlington, NC 27215

Membership Corner

Len Barnard 336-270-3194

As we celebrate the completion of our 10th year and look forward to our 11th year, I hope everyone will join me in saying **THANKS** to our elected officers and Chairs for all their efforts over the past 18 months during the Pandemic. Due to their efforts we are still an active club and growing! I know that our new 2022 APC BOARD has great plans for our APC Club but they will need your support and involvement.

[Take it from me—the more you get involved, the more you will enjoy it!](#)

Ray Munns — Club Member BIO

My background in photography (other than point and shoot) began in a manufacturing setting as training manager. In the mid 70's I used a borrowed 35mm Pentax that was all manual but had a viewfinder needle for aiding with exposure. Also, I used slides (for slide-sound training presentations) which are picky when it comes to proper exposure. It was trial and error for me when figuring out how to use the manual Pentax camera. Fortunately the company was paying for my self-education. Shutter speed and f-stop were fairly easy for me to understand but it took me a long time to figure out what changing the ASA (now ISO) did in the camera. It was sort of like driving a straight stick vehicle – difficult to learn but simple to use thereafter.

When we started having children, I realized I needed something other than the Kodak point and shoot we had, so I got a Canon AE-1 for my own personal use. We have a bunch of photo albums of our three girls.



Working in a manufacturing setting gave me access to people who needed a photographer. I was able to shoot weddings and outdoor portraits for them which helped pay for my photography habit. People had old photos they wanted copied and restored so I learned how to do that. I had my own “dark bathroom”. My church had a need for photos and I was able to help them. My experience and equipment grew and I was having fun.

In the early 2000's I traded in most of my film equipment for a Nikon D-70 DSLR which has since been upgraded several times. It has been so much fun learning digital cameras and processing photos. With most of my photography now I shoot RAW originals and use back button focusing. I enjoy landscape, wildlife, and macro photography the most. Using long shutter speeds for water and night photography is fun and challenging. I am blessed with my wife Ann who encourages me in my photographic endeavors (more pics of grandkids). My good friend Bob Finley and I have gone many places for great photographic opportunities including sleeping on Mt. Mitchell in the snow, a night on the sandy beach at Cape Lookout, camping in Cades Cove, Blue Ridge Parkway, etc. We have traveled with the Finleys and visited a number of places including Alaska, Canada, our west coast, Grand Canyon, Yosemite, Yellowstone, New England, Colorado, and Nova Scotia. Ann and I have also been to Hawaii, Israel, and Egypt. I have been blessed with many photo ops.

I have enjoyed being your APC Newsletter editor since 2016. The research I've done has exposed me to a lot of photography information – some of which I have actually learned. – Ray



TREES ON DISPLAY NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER

YOU ARE INVITED

RECEPTION DECEMBER 4, 2021, 2 - 4 pm



**Craft Workshop
with
Carolyn Teague**



Thursday, Dec. 2, 9:00-4:00

Learn a lot of techniques. Create ornaments and gifts to give for Christmas.

\$35.00 includes everything!

— More information on our website.

**Handcrafted
Unique**

- Gifts
- Ornaments
- Trees
- Pottery
- Woodturning
- Jewelry
- Stained Glass
- Fine Art
- Much More





FINE ART

FINE GIFTS

CRAFTS



2021-Q4 Personal Field Trip: **Country Roads**

Hugh Comfort, Outings/Field Trips Coordinator

Keith O'Leary, PhotoShow Chairman

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, field trips will still be conducted on a personal level vs as a group event. Please practice social distancing and do not trespass in the effort to get that perfect shot. Be well and be safe.

For the fourth quarter of 2021 (October 1 - December 31), our locations will be **Country Roads**. These may be local or where ever you happen to be (as long as out of cities and towns). While the locations are fairly general, the time frame is not: all photos must be taken during the fourth quarter of 2021. A link to all submitted photos will be shared with the club on the first day of the month following quarter-end. Up to 5 field trip pictures may be submitted per member to share with the club. Based on participation, we may only share your top 3 or 4, so please number them in the order of your preference. See below for details. Enjoy fall in the country and good shooting!

Field Trip Photo Submission Details

Number of Entries:

One (1) to five (5) entries per member. Please indicate your preferred photo with the number 01, etc.

Size:

Due to the number of photos for this event, we ask, if you are able, to resize your photos to 1-2 MB if possible, but nevertheless not to exceed 20 MB.

Format:

.jpg

File Naming:

Please rename your photo submissions using the following format:

FirstName.LastName_nn, where nn is the number (01-05) indicating preference where lower numbers are more preferred than higher numbers.

Example: john.doe_01.jpg john.doe_02.jpg

Email:

Email Address: Send all images to apcphotoshow@gmail.com

Email Subject Line: Include the Field Trip "topic" and your name.

Example: Photos for Country Roads Field Trip – John Doe

Entry Deadline:

Friday, December 31, 2021.

A link to view all submissions will be emailed to members by Saturday evening, January 1, 2022.

Please Note:

Pictures submitted before December are more likely to be featured in our annual highlights video. Pictures not taken in field trip time period (Oct-Dec) are subject to rejection as these should be recent photos taken specifically during these personal field trips timelines.

How to Take Better Photos of Christmas Lights

By Danny Eitreim

Here is an article describing how you can get better photos of Christmas lights. I've focused on the tree, but these concepts will work for most any lighting display.



"Wrapping Up the Season" captured by Andy Castro

This time of year, everywhere you turn there are pretty lighting displays — ones worth capturing with our cameras.

But how?

While pretty, most of the Christmas lights we see are not very bright and come with a lot of photo problems if we hope to capture them accurately.

Christmas lights can be fairly tricky to capture since they are so dim. If we use a flash (on camera or off), we get a nice image of the base subject — the tree, decorations, presents, et cetera. But the flash will totally overwhelm the Christmas lights, and we either can't see them at all, or they are nothing but a dim glow that adds nothing to the photo.

If we don't use a flash and opt for a long shutter speed (to capture the tree's lights), we get a nice festive image of the lights, but the tree and other decorations aren't properly exposed and don't look as good as they should.

A middle-of-the-road approach will give you results that are unsatisfactory at both extremes.

How to Take Better Photos of Christmas Lights . . . Continued

Here are three options you can try:

1. If you have a camera that is capable of doing a double exposure, you have it made. Do one exposure with the flash turned on, then another with the necessary settings to maximize the lights.
2. If you don't have a camera capable of double exposures, you can still take the two images described above and combine them in Photoshop or some other editing program that allows you to do such a thing.
3. The third method requires a little bit of camera mastery, and I highly recommend that you take advantage of the season to learn how to do this.

You will have to take the camera off automatic and actually employ a few advanced techniques.

Keep in mind that every setting you use in every photo has both advantages and drawbacks. It is the various choices you make that will define your creativity and photographic style.

Here we go...

To begin with, you must have a tripod. Don't even try to shoot Christmas lights without one.



"Live View" captured by Lee Morley

Turn off all the other lights in the room so that the tree's lights are all that are lit. We don't want extraneous lights throwing off our exposure settings.

How to Take Better Photos of Christmas Lights . . . Continued

Next, you need to determine the settings necessary to best record the lights. Our exposure will be concerned with three settings: ISO, aperture, and shutter speed.

ISO

Start with your ISO setting. I recommend 100 or so. The lower the ISO setting, the less “noise” will be introduced into the photo. Every individual pine needle will be sharp.

Aperture

Next, the aperture. Here is where we start making the creative (as well as the technical) decisions.

If you have a high-quality lens, you can open up your aperture to the maximum size. (This will be the smallest F-stop number, i.e., f/2.8, not f/16.) On the positive side, this will allow in the most light. On the negative side, a wide-open aperture will give you a very shallow depth of field, and some lower quality lenses tend to have aberrations at the extremes.

To avoid the aberrations and/or if you want more depth of field, most lenses have a sweet spot in the middle range — around f/8. Begin there, and adjust later if necessary.

Shutter Speed

Once you’ve decided on the aperture you want, the last way we can control the amount of light getting to our film or digital sensor is with the shutter. If we have used a low ISO and a middle-of-the-road aperture, our shutter will have to be open for a very long time.

Generally, when we consider shutter speed, it is in relation to some sort of motion or movement in our photos. In this case, there is no movement, and it is strictly a mechanical decision. (It has to be open long enough to get enough light into the camera.)



“Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to you and yours!” long exposure (30 sec.) captured by Scott Schiller

How to Take Better Photos of Christmas Lights . . . Continued

This will be a very long shutter speed. That's why you must have a tripod to get better photos of Christmas lights.

If your camera isn't able to give you a long enough shutter speed, if you MUST, you can make adjustments to the ISO and the aperture.

Going from 100 ISO to 200 ISO will cut the needed shutter speed in half. Going from 200 to 400 will cut it in half again, and so on. Opening up the aperture one or two F-stops does the same. Try one of each until you get the right exposure.

Be careful. Underexposure will eliminate the beauty of the lights, and you won't be able to see background objects. Overexposure will blow them out.

Flash

Once you have decided on the combination of ISO, aperture, and shutter speed, you need to capture the lights, then we need to turn our attention to the tree and other items in the photo.

While we now have a proper setting to record the lights, due to their strength and placement, they are not going to be bright enough to show the tree, pine needles, presents, and so on.

Like any other low-light situation, we need to add a flash. Here is where it really gets fun!

Our shutter speed may be a long time, but our flash isn't! That is OK. Our flash will give us the burst of light that will properly expose the tree, while the shutter remains open long enough to capture the lights!



"The Night before Christmas" captured by Robert S. Donovan

Ta-da! It's almost like a double exposure!

How to Take Better Photos of Christmas Lights . . . Continued

When shooting with a long shutter speed, most of your better quality flashes will allow you to set them so that they will fire either at the beginning of the exposure or at the end of the exposure. In this case, since there is no motion, it doesn't matter which one you choose.

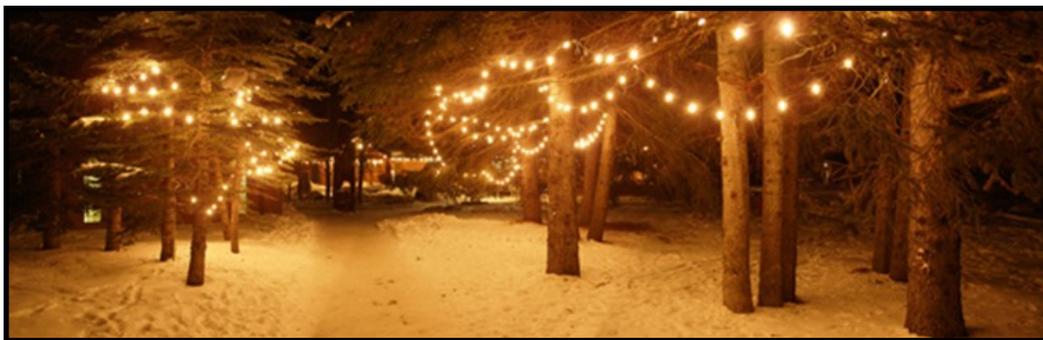
If you aren't aware of these settings or don't know how they work, it's time to pull out your flash's manual and read it. It's worth the effort. You'll learn a pretty cool option that can give you some interesting and creative photos all year long, not just get better photos of Christmas lights.

Then you're all set!

Decide what area you want a photo of, set up your tripod, and fire away! The flash will fire and show you the tree, then the long exposure will allow the beauty of the lights to show.

White Balance

By the way, be sure your white balance is set to record the white lights as white and not the orange/yellow produced by low-temperature lights. Unless that is what you want.



"Christmas Lights at Night" captured by Thomas Quine

I hope this article helps. These settings really aren't as difficult to do as they may sound, and to get better photos of Christmas lights and decorations, they are essential. Plus, the techniques you learn will translate to other types of photos, too.

5 Compelling Reasons to use your Camera's Live View Mode

By Peter Coskun

One evening while I was out photographing, I had set up an awkward, uncomfortable photography composition that kept me looking through my viewfinder. I had to almost shoot blind, twist in ways only a gymnast should, and hope I got the shot. This was before I realized that I could be using the camera's live view mode to better see what was set up in my shot. For a while, I was told that live view mode on your camera drains your battery and has no place in landscape photography. While it does indeed drain your battery, I've learned that I simply cannot live without it.



Landscape photography using live view mode from Zion Narrows

There are many reasons why nature photographers may want to use their camera's live view mode over the viewfinder. Here are some of the reasons why I find live view mode indispensable on my camera.

#1: Assisting with Landscape Photography Composition

For one, you can see your landscape photography composition right before your eyes (with no guessing) and you can adjust accordingly. Most camera's live view mode also shows 100% of the scene while many optical viewfinders, especially on consumer cameras, show a slightly cropped scene. Some cameras will display photography composition assist grid lines during live view so you can really see if your landscape photography composition is balanced or follows the rule of thirds.

In addition to this photography composition assist grid, some cameras also offer a leveling feature within live view so you don't have to use additional bubble levels on the hot shoe mount of your camera to get your horizon perfectly leveled.

5 Compelling Reasons to use your Camera's Live View Mode . . . Continued

#2: Getting Tack Sharp Focus Every time

My primary use of live view is for getting sharp focus. For nature photographers whose eyesight is less than ideal like mine, the viewfinder can often be difficult to use. When using your camera's viewfinder, you may think your subject is sharp. It may end up being soft and out-of-focus.

Focus assist technology such as focus peaking and focus magnification will help get precise focus. This can be great for macro photography. Live view mode on your camera allows you to zoom into your scene and set your focus exactly where you want it. This is invaluable for macro photography subjects where shallow depth of field and selective focus setting is required. Some cameras will allow you to get a depth of field preview with focus magnification that is invaluable for macro photography.

#3: Setting Focus for Night Photography

Believe it or not, I even use live view mode for night photography. However, I only do it to set the focus on my subject by light painting the scene with a flashlight. Once my focus is set, I revert back to my normal night photography workflow. When doing this, I'm always mindful of other landscape photographers in the area. The last thing I want to do is ruin someone else's night photo with my flashlight.



Night Photography using Live Mode for Focus Assist

5 Compelling Reasons to use your Camera's Live View Mode . . . Continued

#4: Setting your Camera's Exposure

One of the most important benefits of using live view mode on your DSLR camera is that it allows you to really see your exposure settings clearly. While you can see your shutter speed and ISO speed through the optical viewfinder, you can access all of your settings in your camera's live view. Most DSLR cameras have a quick menu button to access these settings without going through pages and pages of menu options.

One of the most helpful live mode settings on your camera is to preview your histogram. You can watch your histogram alongside the landscape photography composition that you are shooting to ensure you are getting the proper exposure every time.

#5: Explore Creativity Photography Compositions

Camera's live view mode can allow you to be more creative with your photography compositions. There may be times where a landscape photographer may have to flip your camera upside down on your tripod over raging water to get that extremely low perspective. Camera live mode can assist in composing your photos when you have to squeeze your camera between sharp cactus needles... and none of us want to put our faces near our cameras when there are sharp needles an inch or less away. Trust me... I speak from experience.

Newer DSLR and mirrorless cameras now offer tilting and rotating LCD screens which make landscape photography composition for super low or super high perspectives much easier and convenient in the field. No more gymnastics to get that perfect landscape photography composition that you are after....unless of course you enjoy that.

Drawbacks of Live View Mode

Not every camera will support the live view mode features that are listed above. As always it is best to check your camera's user manual. Be sure that the DSLR or mirrorless camera you will be using or thinking about purchasing has the live view features that are most important for your nature photography needs. During bright sunny days, it may be hard to really see live view mode on your LCD screen without the use of a hood or loupe. These items can be cumbersome to use in the field and are added weights if you are backpacking or prefer to hike with very limited gear.

5 Compelling Reasons to use your Camera's Live View Mode . . . Continued

As mentioned at the beginning of this post, the battery life will diminish faster with the use of live view mode on your camera. However, battery technology always seems to be improving, and you can usually get more out of your batteries now than in years past. Still, it is always wise to carry multiple extra batteries that are fully charged before heading out the door. Using a live view mode at night can be troublesome as well. Most times it is too dark to really see your composition without using artificial lighting like a flashlight or head-lamp. There are some DSLR and mirrorless cameras that now offer exposure brightening features in live view mode to assist with your low light or night photography needs.

Camera Live View Mode in Action

While in the Narrows at Zion National Park, I primarily used my camera's live view mode to frame up scenes and the rapids within the canyon. This allowed me to get the exact compositions I wanted while incorporating the rushing water. It also allowed me to be more mindful of my surroundings. Having to look through the viewfinder, I may not have enjoyed the scene behind the camera.



Live view mode used to set the photography composition and camera exposure for this Landscape Photo – Chamber of Light, Zion National Park, Utah.

In the photo above from Zion Narrows, my camera's live view was essential for this scene as the camera was just inches above the rushing water. I kept careful note of the camera histogram to not overexpose the highlights on the water and background wall. By the end of the day of shooting, I had just over 50% battery life remaining on my first battery.

5 Compelling Reasons to use your Camera's Live View Mode . . . Continued

The following image, while shooting twilight in the Superstition Mountains, I used live view to get as close as possible to the cactus. This was actually an eight-image focus blend due to the close proximity of the needles to the lens.



*Live view mode used for Focus Stacking and Focus Assist
Twilight at Superstitious Mountains Arizona*

Here I used live view in conjunction with light painting to illuminate the cacti. I then used the digital zoom feature on the camera (using manual focus as it likely will not work when your lens is set to AF), to focus on various focal points throughout the frame to have the entire scene in focus.

If you haven't tried using your camera live view mode, make a few compromises and give it a shot. It's been a huge help for me and my own landscape photography and I am confident that once you try it, you will be hooked.



10 Tips for Taking Great Cityscape Photos

By Rueben Hird

Cities are not only home to many people's residences, businesses and offices – they are also full of energy, power and vitality. There are many things that make a city great and capturing the true essence of a city in one single photograph is a very hard thing to do.



Photo by Vinh Pham

The main thing that encapsulates and defines a city can actually differ depending on the time of the day and even the season. During the morning cities can look peaceful and calm, whilst during the evening or nighttime they can come alive with activity and purpose.

Most of the people that call a particular city home don't take the time to stop and marvel at the magnificent landmarks and sights that make their own home city such a wonderful place to be a part of. A really good city photograph not only shows off the majestic buildings in the heart of the city center, but should also showcase some of the more enthralling aspects and delights that day to day city life has to offer.

1. Choose an Interesting Subject – Make sure you have an interesting subject for the photo, either in the middle section of the photo or in the foreground.

10 Tips for Taking Great Cityscape Photos . . . Continued

2. Have a Mix of Foreground & Background – Ensure that you have a good mix of interesting foreground and background areas in the entire photo.

Photo by Luc Mercelis; ISO 100, f/4.5, 1/1500-second exposure



3. Leave Room to Crop – When you are framing up the photo in the viewfinder make sure that there is some room around the edge of the photo to crop the final image.

4. Use a Level Tripod – Before taking the photo make sure that you use a level tripod so that the horizon is straight. Even though you can fix this later in Photoshop it is easier to do it right in the first place to save yourself the hassle.

5. Keep the Sun behind You – Try and keep the sun behind you so that you get the most amount of light on your city and the sky has a brilliant blue look to it.

6. Choose the Right Time of Day – Try to take photos as early or as late as possible in the day, as these times generally give the best light and produce more shadows and detail on your photos.

7. Use the Correct Exposure – When setting the exposure for a photo, make sure your reading is taken on the brightest part of the photo so that there is no overexposure.



Photo by Kat Northern Lights Man; ISO 1000, f/3.2

10 Tips for Taking Great Cityscape Photos . . . Continued

8. Use a Timer or Remote – Always use a timer or remote control to take the photo so that there is not any camera shake caused by you when you depress the shutter button.

9. Use a Polarizing Filter – On your SLR camera use a polarizing filter to remove the light reflections that bounce off of windows and metal objects.

10. Use a High Quality Wide-Angle Lens – In order to get crisp results from your SLR camera, invest in or rent a good quality lens. They may be expensive but will be well worth the money in the cityscape arena.

By using all of the above tips you are sure to see a noticeable improvement in any photo you take of city buildings or skylines. Not only will your cityscapes be clearer and well defined, but they will also have a wide spectrum of color and light, which is the sign of a great photo.



Photo by Alexey Kljatov; ISO 93, f/2.8, 1-second exposure