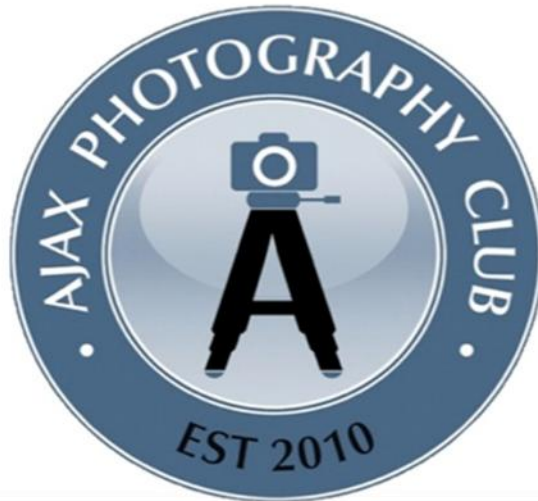


# APC Newsletter

Photo • Friendly • Fun • Focus • Feedback



## Board Members 2025/26

**President**

Richard MacEacheron

**Vice President/Meetings Director:**

John MacAlister

**Public Relations**

*Now Vacant*

**Treasurer** Don Turnbull

**Secretary** Eileen Nixon

**Director: Education**

*Now Vacant*

**Director: Contests and Clinics**

Vacant

**Director: Membership**

Alan Dryden

**Director: On-Line/Newsletter**

Karim Ahmed

**Board Member at Large**

Vacant

**Volume 2**

**Of the 2025 – 2026**

**APC Year**

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# THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Welcome to 2026!*

I hope everyone had a good relaxing Christmas and you were able to enjoy time with your loved ones and families. This time of the year provides great opportunities to capture memories that last a lifetime, whether it be of family members or of the beauty of the Christmas season.

On behalf of your club board members, we wish everyone a Happy New Year and all the best for 2026. Speaking of 2026, our season is half over and now we look forward to the second half when we have scheduled on-line (via Zoom) guest speakers for January to April that we think you will enjoy.

- January 20<sup>th</sup>: **Trina Koster**, Portraiture
- February 17<sup>th</sup>: **Peter Baumgarten**, Landscape Photography
- March 17<sup>th</sup>: **Kas Stone**, Landscapes and finding Inspiration
- April 21<sup>st</sup>: **Eva Polak**, Impressionist Photography (Rescheduled from November due to internet problems in New Zealand).

We are still looking for a quest speaker for our May meeting - any suggestions are welcome. We end our season in the traditional manner with our Annual General Meeting in June when we shall have our member slides shows and the Annual Ron Pereux Print Competition.

Other club activities are continuing:

- **Study the Masters** resumes in February or March. John has the lead.
- **Book Study**, The Photographer's Eye, led by Catherine is continuing each Monday through January and February. Thank you, Catherine!
- **Photo Discussions** will be held in February. Thank you, Roy and Michael!
- **The Weekly Photo Challenge** continues. Thank you, Rodney.
- **Photo Clinics**: The January clinic has been cancelled; however, we still plan to have a clinic in March and of course we will have our Annual Ron Pereux print competition in May.
- Opportunities to be a **photographer at upcoming community events** will be scheduled. Thank you, Eileen!
- And finally, there will be two more **APC Newsletters** for this 2025/2026 season Thank you, Nancy!

Please let us know if you have any suggestions or if you would like to help this great club.

*Richard*

## FROM THE SOCIETY PAGES...

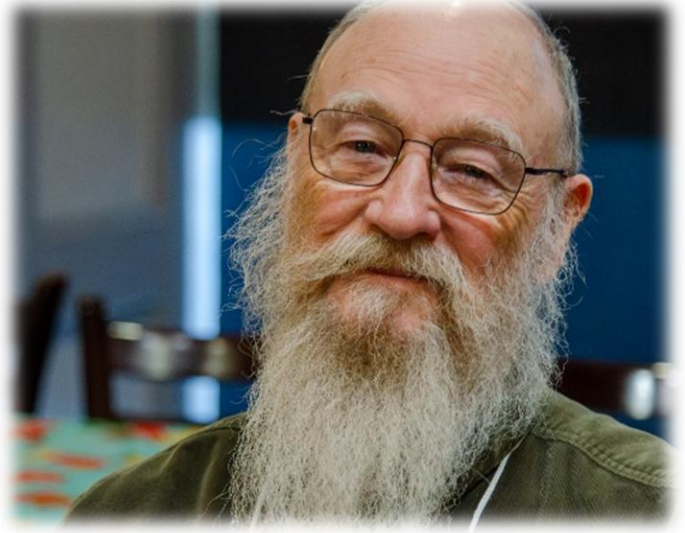
### THE ANNUAL APC CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

The annual APC Christmas Celebration was held at Sabine's in Pickering on 13 December. It was a time to socialize with our fellow photographers, get better acquainted with each other, and share our knowledge. Richard had arranged the food and served as informal Master of Ceremonies. He had prepared a quiz to test the photographic expertise of the enthusiastic party goers and managed to maintain control of those making merry in the back of the room. No names!

The Annual Christmas Fun Competition was held during the event. Richard had prepared a slideshow of the entries and voting forms for all to choose first, second, and third place as well as honourable mention. You will find all entries and the winners in this newsletter. As an interesting challenge after winners were determined, we went through all entries and gave our best guesses to identify the photographer of each photo. This activity showed that we photographers do indeed have our own styles that are recognized by others.

The event culminated in a draw for a copy of the book, The Photographer's Eye by Michael Freeman, which is currently being featured in our Book Study.





## 2025 CHRISTMAS FUN COMPETITION

On December 13<sup>th</sup> your club held its annual Christmas Fun Competition that showcased the talents of our members. Our club's focus is on learning with social interactions in a non-competitive environment. Although we selected a first, second, third place and honourable mention, we are all winners. Thanks to all who participated!

*From Richard MacEacheron*



1<sup>st</sup> Place  
Rainy Afternoon  
Catherine Holden



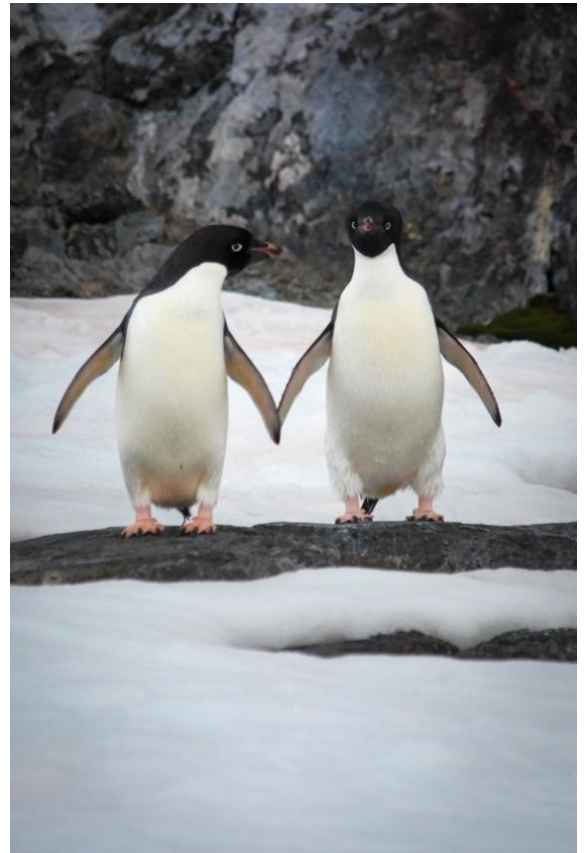
2<sup>nd</sup> Place  
Last Paddler on Emerald Lake  
Jenny Meloche



3<sup>rd</sup> Place  
Bee on Flower  
Mark Lewis



Honourable Mention  
Ghost Town  
Terri Sullivan



Antarctic Affection  
Kim Gervais



Indian Pipe  
Frans Grootveld



Left Behind  
Richard MacEacheron



Manhattan Bridge View  
From a Local Alley  
Richard Cousineau

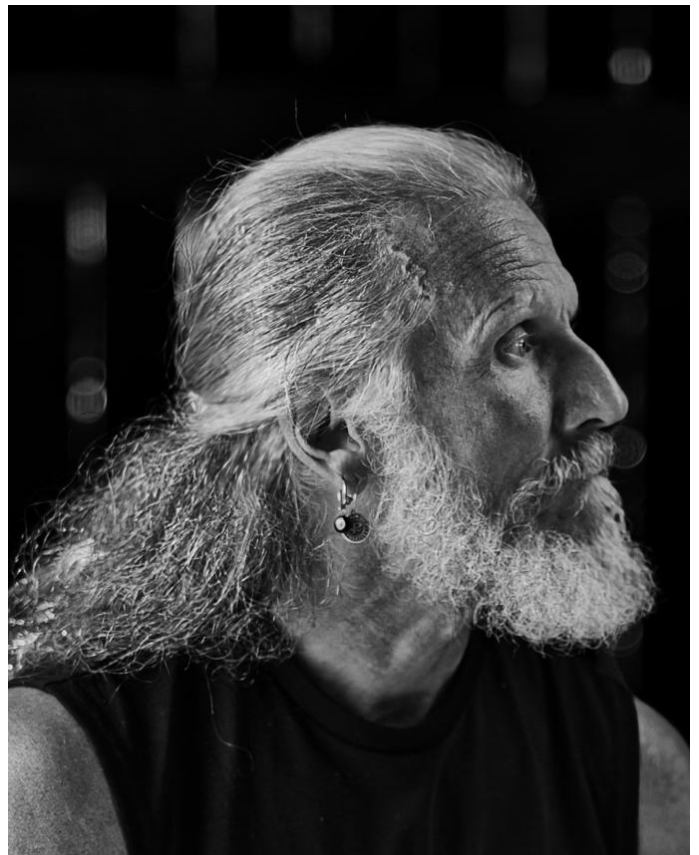


Yellow Warbler eating Boxelder Seeds  
Bonnie Cutten

Pride  
Michael Nelson



Dean in Profile  
Don Turnbull





*Built on a Rock  
St John's Newfoundland  
Elizabeth Ellis*



*Downtown Moves  
Nancy Leask*



*Self Reflection  
Alan Dryden*



*We May Get There  
Eileen Nixon*

## **ANNOUNCEMENT**

Due to an unforeseen internet blackout in New Zealand, our guest presenter of November 21, 2025 has been rescheduled.

**April 21, 2026**

***On-Line (Zoom)***

***Eva Polak Impressionist Photography***

Based in New Zealand, Eva will discuss what it takes to be an artist with the camera as well as techniques and the visual language of impressionist photography

To get Eva's newsletter go to <https://www.evapolak.com/> and choose Sign up for my Free Newsletter.



## A FEW THOUGHTS FOR THE YEAR 2026

*from John MacAlister*

*Winter at Cranberry Marsh- a new year begins for exploring the wonders and continuing changes in our corner of the world. The Marsh affords many opportunities for photography and contemplation and is very close to home.*

### **What do members want for Member Meetings?**

In the year 2024-2025 we have had presentations on the following topics, among others:

Stormchaser, Breaking the Rules, Winter Photography, Landscapes, Night Sky, Fine Art, Altered Reality, Creative Bird Photography, Street Photography, Macro Photography, Black and White Photography, Portraits, Architectural Photography, etc.

- What topics would you like to see explored in 2025-2026 and beyond?
- Are there any presenters you would like to see returning?
- Have you recently seen any photographer's work and thought "I wish I knew how that was done"?
- Do you know of any presenters you could recommend? Let us know and we will attempt to engage them.

Let us also know of any photographic topics you want to explore- astro photography, smart phone photography, travel photography, infrared photography, etc.

### **Different Skills for me (and maybe for you) in 2026**

#### [Making videos](#)

About 20 years ago, I started making some very primitive videos with my cheap point and shoot camera. Over the years I have occasionally dabbled in making videos none of which could be considered to be even semi-professional. A couple of days ago waiting for my wife to rejoin me as I sat in the car, I pulled out my phone and started videoing people walking to and from a local supermarket in BC.

I will explore this topic in 2026: it may not be relevant for the Ajax Photography Club, but it interests me.

#### [Exploring the limits of smartphone photography](#)

My phone now serves as my principal camera because of its portability and always being close at hand. For the last four years I used an iPhone 13 Pro Max and changed recently to a Samsung Galaxy S25 Ultra. With its four cameras at 12,24,50 and 200 megapixel sensitivity and the ability to adjust aperture, shutter speed, ISO, and colour temperature, it is a 'DSLR in my pocket'. I will see where this takes me in 2026. I have used it extensively for grandchildren photography over the last month.

**Don't forget to attend the Next Member Meeting on 20 January – Meetup posting will follow shortly.**

Happy New Year and keep those shutters working.

John C MacAlister  
Meeting Director

# CAPTURING THE ESSENCE OF WINTER: FINDING MOTIVATION FOR PHOTOGRAPHY

*From Rod Harvey*

Taking photos in winter can feel challenging, especially when temperatures drop and days are shorter, but it's also a unique opportunity to capture a season full of contrasts, textures, and quiet beauty. Winter brings its own dramatic lighting, pristine landscapes, and a sense of calm that's perfect for photography, with scenes you can only capture at this time of year.

- 1. Find the Beauty in Subtlety** Winter's muted tones—soft grays, frosty whites, and earthy browns—are ideal for minimalist compositions. Snow-covered trees, icy lakes, or even frost patterns on a windowpane can create beautiful images that feel serene and timeless. The lack of colour can sharpen your focus on form, shadow, and light. Try playing with negative space in snow scenes to add an elegant simplicity to your shots.
- 2. Take Advantage of Winter Light** Winter's low-angle sunlight provides a natural, flattering light throughout the day. Sunrise and sunset are extended in the winter months, creating soft, golden hues that you'd only get briefly in other seasons. Look for long shadows on the snow or ice that add depth and drama. Overcast days can also offer a beautiful diffused light that reduces harsh shadows—perfect for portraits and detailed shots of nature.
- 3. Embrace the Elements** Snowflakes, frost, and mist are winter's natural filters, creating magical, atmospheric effects. Embrace these elements by experimenting with macro shots of frost or capturing snowfall with a fast shutter speed to freeze each flake. Gear up with warm layers and weatherproof your camera to make venturing into cold conditions easier. The reward is unique, striking images that tell the story of winter.
- 4. Capture the Mood** Winter offers scenes with an emotional depth that can be nostalgic, peaceful, or even eerie. Look for subjects that convey this mood—deserted parks, quiet streets after a snowfall, or a single tree standing in an open field. Add warmth and life to the cold by photographing people in cozy winter wear, or capture the contrast of bright lights against the dark season.

Even if winter doesn't always seem inviting, a fresh perspective and a little planning can make it one of the most rewarding seasons to photograph. So, grab your camera, embrace the cold, and enjoy the beauty winter has to offer

## Photos:

Centre – Eileen Nixon Top and bottom – Rod Harvey



## BOOK STUDY UPDATE

*From Jane Nishikawa*

We have been meeting since early October to read and learn from Michael Freeman's book: **The Photographer's Eye Composition and Design for Better Digital Photos**. The book study has always been one of my favourite APC activities. It persuades me to get out of my routine and attempt different modes of photography, causing me to reflect on ways to improve. Some topics are simply a review of previously learned (but recently neglected) concepts. Other topics and terminology are new to me.

Every Monday, at the end of our meeting, we decide on our "homework" for the following week. I attempt to read the assigned pages on Tuesday and then seek opportunities to make photographs that demonstrate the concepts of the week from Wednesday to Sunday. This step often causes me to visit locations that are not on my regular route and to see things differently. One of the most important steps for me takes place on Sunday. This is when I review photos made during the week and select 3 to 5 photos to share with the group. By curating my selections, I am often forced to reread relevant sections of the chapter and take a critical look at my work. Sometimes I discover that I have wandered off-track, and sometimes I feel that I have succeeded.

The culminating event of the week is our discussion on Monday evening, guided by Catherine. First, we examine each others' photos discussing how they illustrate a point from the book. This may sound intimidating, but the conversations are positive and helpful. Next, we review the reading to clarify any misunderstandings that may have occurred. Catherine often provides additional material to support our learning. When I see the other group members' photos, and listen to their interpretation of the readings, I strengthen my understanding of the text. Finally, we collaboratively select the homework for the following week.

**If you think that you might enjoy taking part in a book study, please join us for a Monday discussion. You don't have to stay for the whole meeting, just pop in to get a feel for what we do. We have discussed the possibility of doing another book study this year, so stay posted.**

I asked some participants to contribute photos that they made for the book study to include in this article.

**Richard:**

*I chose this photo. The book describes a **low horizon**, one that isn't in the middle of the image.*



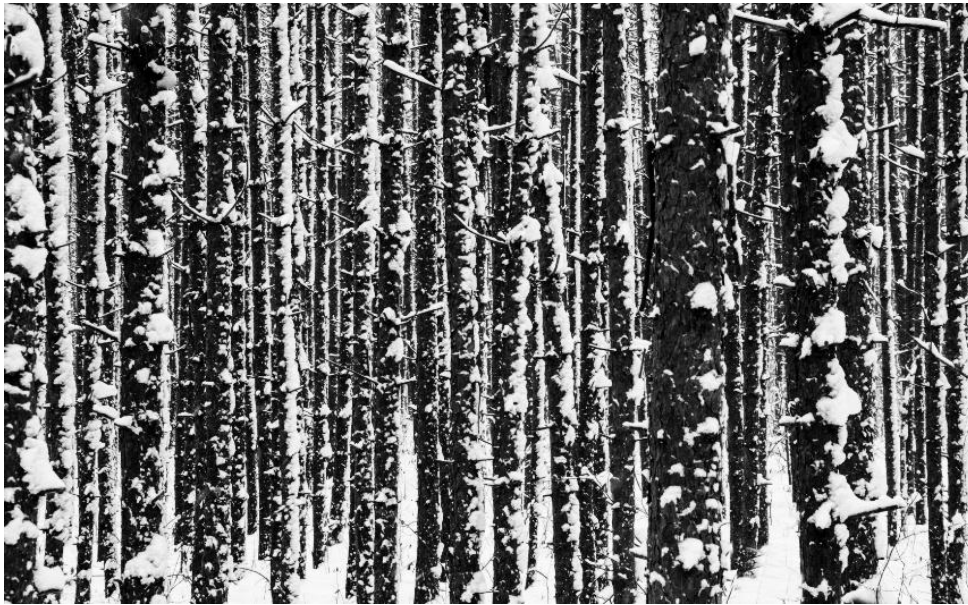
**Catherine:**

The Photographers Eye has a section about **multiple subjects** in an image. "As the number of subjects in the frame increases, the dynamics of composing them change. They have to be smaller in order to fit in the frame, and the connections are potentially more complex."

Freeman goes on to say "Our vision system trying to find simplicity and connections in whatever we look at." In addition, he said "beyond three, the number of meaningful subjects start to lose their identity, or rather viewers stop counting."

My photo to illustrate this was taken after a snowstorm, when the snow adhered to the trees and provided a great contrast between dark and light while becoming a countless mass. In addition, I felt that the conversion to black and white helped with the contrast in the picture.

This is a picture I have tried to take a number of times, but I felt it was more successful this time because I was looking at the mass of trees rather than one tree. I moved around until the viewfinder was filled with trees.



**Roy:**

I am having a great time with the member group in the book study.

We are somewhere near the halfway point. In Chapter two, a phrase caught my attention, and I wrote it down to use and reuse as a mantra. "The point of importance here is not how to make illusory photographs, but how to use or remove ambiguity in the relationship between subject and background."

**Either Use or Remove Ambiguity.**

This outdoor scene is an attempt.



**Nancy:**

**VISUAL WEIGHT:** Freeman states that, “we look most at what interests us.” We can keep this fact in mind when we compose our photographs by considering what will be looked at. Nervous system research shows that “there are specific brain modules for recognizing faces and others for recognizing hands.”

In essence, although the hands or a face, particularly the eyes and mouth, might only take up a small percentage of the entire photograph, these elements will immediately draw the viewer’s attention, and the viewer will spend time on this element of the photograph. The element is therefore said to carry a high amount of visual weight.



**Jane:**

I was inspired to try vertical panorama photos again. This was my most successful photo. I wanted to show a strong sense of height and the power and beauty of nature. The appearance of the woman in the red dress was a great surprise element!

**John:**

*LEFT: I made this image to illustrate subjects separate but connected by an activity. I had been using the technique but had never given it a name.*

*RIGHT: I made this image to show positioning of a subject in the frame. Following the book, I re-learned the importance of positioning and made a number of images to illustrate the exercise.*



**Frans:**

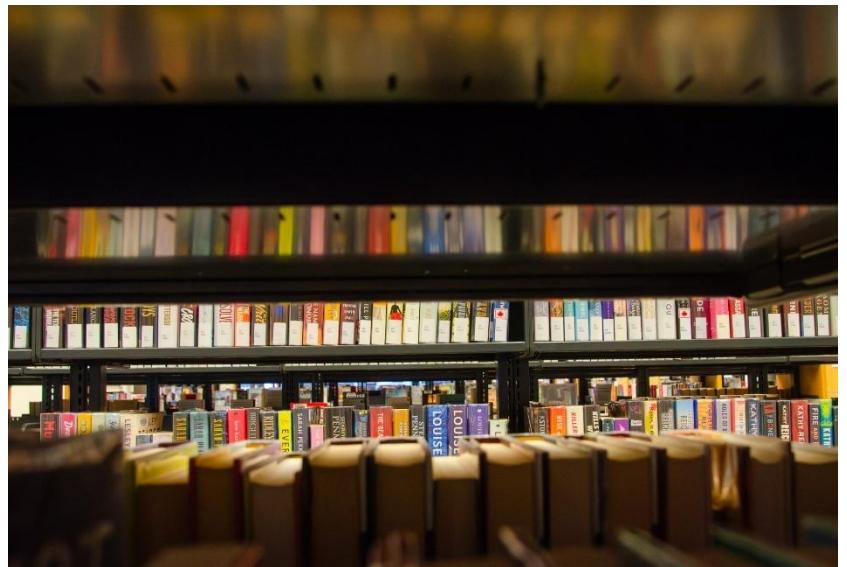
*In one section of the book, we read about "**Semantics**" or the meaning/subject of the image and the "**Graphics**" which determine how the subject appears. There are many ways to photograph this trestle, but what made it interesting to me in telling its story is the "graphics" of the water and sky supporting the whole image.*



**Richard** proposed these two photographs made by **Nancy** as examples of using circles and rectangles in composition.

A **CIRCLE** formation in composition draws the eye in and can be so strong that it can reduce the importance of the surrounding area of the photograph.

**RECTANGLES**, or subjects that can be enclosed by a rectangle, can serve to subdivide the composition. The rectangle projects a feeling of "gravity, solidity, and precision. A composition using a rectangle is a formal one and true rectangular shapes must be shot straight on in order not to become trapezoidal.



#### **Eileen**

*I find the Michael Freeman book study with fellow APC members to be excellent.*

*At times, the book itself leaves some questions on what the author means, even with his examples.*

*The weekly meetings and assignments are so helpful because we see different points of view and the discussion helps to interpret some of the author's examples.*

*Well worth the time and investment in this class and book study.*

**Michael**

*Many of us settle into a particular way or genre of photography, and sometimes moving beyond what we are used to can be an inspiring way to invigorate our practice.*

*There are numerous ways to accomplish this - like shooting with a lens or camera you haven't used for a while or otherwise imposing some self restrictions. Many people travel and shoot what they find or travel to shoot what they have planned.*

*APC offers several ways to step outside your comfort zone or push yourself to make images that you don't usually consider. One of those is book study and this time out we are exploring a book by Michael Freeman.*

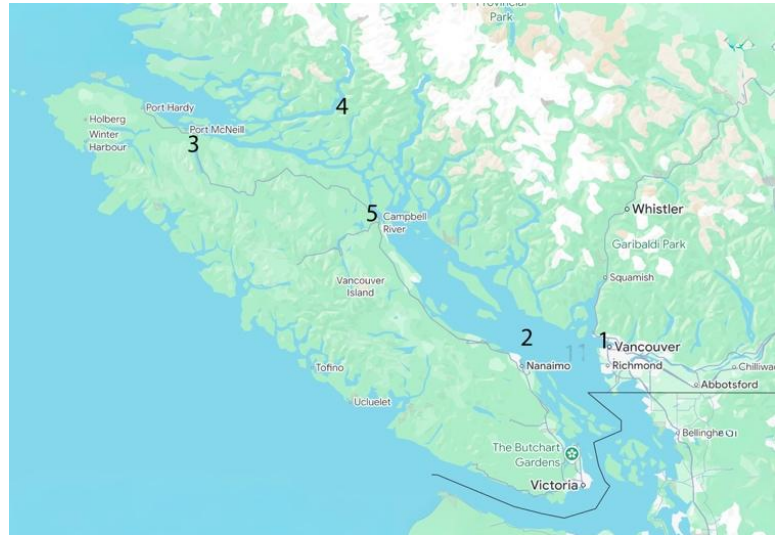
*These two images are from the homework I did for the first sections of the book and meant to illustrate selective focus from a shallow depth of field.*



# MY PHOTOGRAPHY TRIP TO VANCOUVER ISLAND

*From Richard MacEacheron*

I have often heard people describe British Columbia as “*God’s Country*”, a must-see part of our beautiful country. In September, I toured the east coast of Vancouver Island with the goal of capturing bald eagles, whales (ideally orcas), bears (ideally grizzlies) and, of course, beautiful landscapes. This trip certainly didn’t disappoint me.



## My itinerary was...

- 1 Vancouver:** After arriving in Vancouver, I took the Hulu ferry, a fast-sailing catamaran, from Vancouver to Nanaimo. The crossing took just over an hour. There wasn’t anything to see during the ride as the windows were completely covered in spray and there was no observation deck.
- 2 Nanaimo:** After spending a day in Nanaimo, I rented a car and drove 5 hours up the coast to Port McNeill making several stops along the way to capture the beauty of the mountains and water.
- 3 Port McNeill and Telegraph Cove:** About 10 Km south of Port McNeill is Telegraph Cove, a very small coastal village where I took a grizzly bear/whale watching boat tour. The tour group was *Tide Rip Grizzly Adventures*.
- 4 Knight Inlet:** From Telegraph Cove, the boat sailed across and up Knight Inlet on the mainland. During the journey, Bald Eagles, Sea-Lions, Orcas, Humpback Whales as well as multiple bears on the shorelines could be seen each time the boat slowed and approached the shoreline for a closer look. We then transferred to a smaller observation boat that allowed us to sail the shallow waters of Glendale Cove. There we saw two families of grizzlies, a mother and two cubs each, feeding on grass roots. The grizzlies were far away, so I needed my 600 mm lens to capture them. For some reason, the boat operator wouldn’t let me off the boat to get a lot closer.
- 5 Campbell River:** Before heading back to Nanaimo, I stayed at Painter’s Lodge in Campbell River, where I took another whale watching tour and saw more orcas and humpbacks. I was told that the best chance of seeing a bear was at the local fish hatchery. I just had to check it out. Sure enough, at the hatchery, as I walked along a creek, a large (massive) Black Bear emerged from the forest. I hoped it would catch a fish or do something interesting, but that was not to be, the bear just walked in the water for a bit then disappeared back into the forest.

Overall, this was a great trip, that I certainly recommend. A key photography “take-away” is “*shutter speed is king*”, use of a telephoto lens for a faraway moving subject on a rocking boat is a recipe for blurry images unless your shutter speed is at least 2,000/sec.



Telegraph Cove with tour boat



Small boat with observation platform at  
Glendale Cove



Above: Mother Grizzly with her two cubs



Above: She finally looked up

Below: Coastal mountains of mainland B. C.

Below: Breathtaking landscapes were  
everywhere





Above: Humpback Whale

Below: Black Bear at Campbell River Hatchery



Above: Orcas with little ones trailing behind

Below: Bald Eagles are as plentiful as seagulls at Telegraph Cove



## MY PHOTOGRAPHY TECHNIQUE HAS CHANGED

*From Richard MacEacheron*

*I* love taking pictures of my grandchildren, here is one that I took the other day of my grandson. In the past, for this scene, I probably would have used a flash, maybe bounced the light off the ceiling to light up the entire room with auto-ISO. Instead, I put the flash away, opened the aperture (F5), used a slow shutter speed (125/sec) and manually adjusted the ISO (25,600) to obtain the correct exposure on the Santa Claus box. This made the face underexposed which I recovered in Lightroom. Had I exposed for the face, the Santa box would likely have been an unrecoverable overexposed blob. With the high ISO, I had to denoise in Lightroom.



## THE STANDING STONES AT CARNAC

*From Catherine Holden*

We drove to the edge of town and the start of the alignments. There was an information centre, the Maison des Megaliths Centre. The man explained we could walk around the fields (which are fenced) for free or we could pay for a tour which gets us inside the fence. There was an English tour at 1 o'clock so we devised a plan to walk around some of the fields of stones using the car to access the car parks, walk around the stones in the area, and then move the car to the next lot. There were literally thousands of stones to see.

The Standing Stones at Carnac are a very dense collection of megalithic sites. They consist of stone dolmens (tombs), alignments (rows), tumuli (burial mounds) and single menhirs. More than 3,000 prehistoric standing stones were hewn from local granite and erected to form the largest such collection in the world. The stones were erected at some stage during the Neolithic period, probably around 3300 BC, but some stones may date to as early as 4500 BC. This predates Stonehenge and the Pyramids by about 1000 years.

There are three major groups of stone rows here; Ménez, Kermario and Kerlescan. They may have once formed a single group but have been split up as stones were removed for other purposes.

We explored the Ménez and Kermario alignments before our tour and we went back to the main parking lot for 12:15 and had lunch in the car as it was a bit miserable outside. For lunch we had the most exquisite cheese that we had bought at the market. It had two layers of a brie type cheese with a layer of creamy herb cheese in the centre. It was the best cheese we have had so far. A couple more Paris Breast pastries and then off to find our tour group.

There were about 35 people in the group. Dad said to me that he was super excited for the tour to find out why the stones were actually there. The first thing the archeologist said to the group was if you were hoping to find out why the rocks were there, you would be sadly disappointed!! That was quite funny.

Basically, it is not known why the stones were put there, but they do know that people settled in the area and there were lots of people to be able to bring that many stones to the area, given there were thousands of them and each stone weighs several tonnes. About 10% of the rock was buried in the ground and the balance was above the ground.

Some of the stone purposes, they understand. There were two stones that line up perfectly on the equinox and the people at the time would have been able to line them up to know when the longest and shortest days of the year were. This would have helped with planting for example. People were more stationary by the time the stones were erected. He showed us the large unusual shaped rock and another rock that was in the middle of another row (and no other rocks in-between rows) that line up on the equinox. The reason and purpose for other alignments of rocks is not yet understood.







The archeologist talked about the equinox and history – the equinox has always been an important day in history and so “tales” were told to explain the phenomena, as well as assigning historical events to the equinox.

He also explained that the history of the conqueror becomes the popular history and the rise of one civilization is to the loss and detriment of another. The standing stones would have been extremely important to the Neolithic people; however, the next civilization of people used the stones (that were easy to pull from the field) as the building blocks of their empire.

When the Alignments were constructed, the landscape would have been open, without the trees that now divide and flank the sections, and the sea would have been further away. Humans have altered the site in other ways. Cuts have been made with modern tools, and stones have been used as local building materials. While the Alignments were reasonably well preserved, both nature and humans have altered the appearance of the site over time.

It was really fascinating – more human history than the history of the stones. We talked to the guide a bit about research and he said that there has been very little research done in recent years. The alignments were examined in 1875, when the museum was established, but in recent years, there has been very little funding for archeology and so very little is known about what lies below. There has for example, not been any ground penetrating radar use. Historically some of the menhirs were removed so see if there were items below, but this had not been done in quite some time. The sites in the area have now been declared UNESCO world heritage sites and now there may be more money for research, but he did not sound overly optimistic. Reminded me of Delos in Greece where only a small fraction of the island had been excavated and no one is allowed on the rest of the island because they have no idea what is there!

The photography challenge was how to make rocks look interesting. The site was impressive – just the sheer number of rocks alone makes it interesting but that was a bit difficult to translate into photographs. By trying to be aware of backgrounds, textures, and the sky, I have tried to make an interesting collection that speaks to the uniqueness of the place.

# NEW YORK, NEW YORK

*Through the Lens of  
Richard Cousineau*



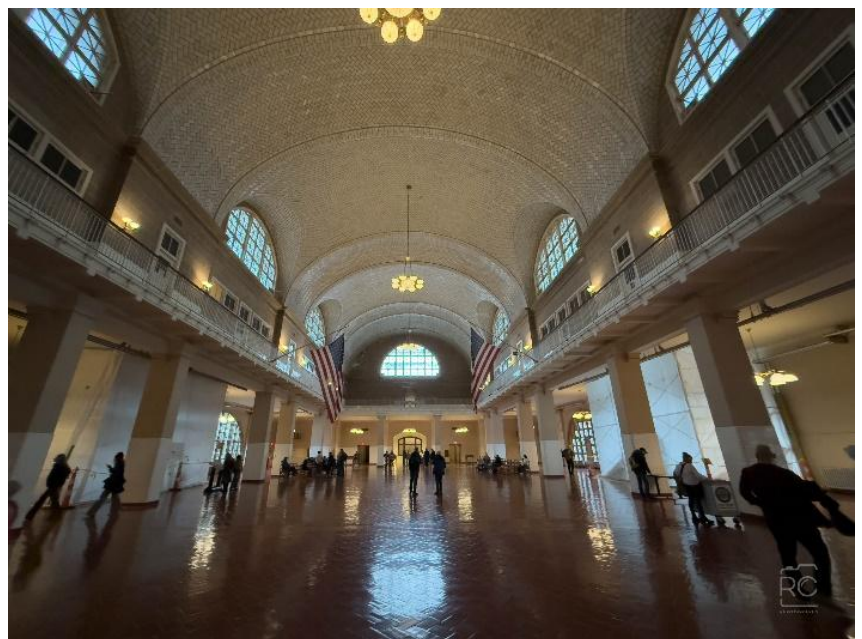
We recently took a trip to Manhattan to spend time with our new granddaughter for the USA Thanksgiving (or, as our son calls it, "Fakesgiving", since he has moved to the USA).

NYC is very congested, especially during the holiday season, so we flew to Lagaardia and chose to use the public transportation system to get to Central Park area where our son lives. NYC metropolitan area has a population of just over 19 million people and I enjoyed our time there.

We found our way to the lower corner of Central Park near Columbus Circle in Manhattan by subway train, and walked with our carry-on gear to their apartment. I found the subways much cleaner than I remember they were when we last visited NYC ten years ago when we ran the marathon.

Our family resides between Central Park and the Hudson River, providing lots of green space to explore. We found a custom *Welcome* sign on the window sill when we arrived.

On day 1 we booked a guided tour of Ellis Island's National Museum of Immigration and the Statue of Liberty Island. Our tour guide was so enthusiastic and such a loud speaker. What else would you expect from an Italian raised in the Bronx! He added his own spin on historical facts and even gave a tribute to his grandfather who experienced the immigration hardship that people endured at Ellis Island. What a fascinating story but I'm sure it was to boost his tip at the end of our journey with him. Once that tour was over, we walked towards the 9/11 Memorial Museum and also walked across the Brooklyn Bridge.







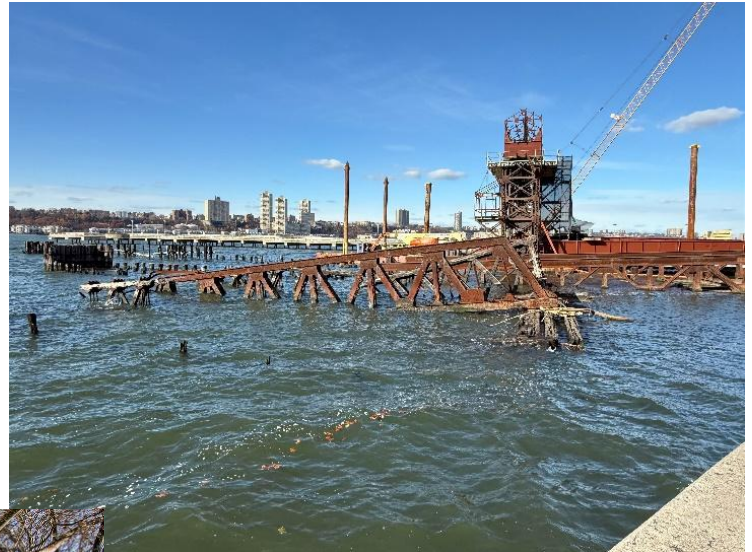
On day 2 we had an early start to experience the (99<sup>th</sup>) annual Macy's Thanksgiving Parade. I understand some ventured out three or four hours prior to the 8:30 AM start to get front row views. We went one and a half hours beforehand and we ended up ten to fifteen rows back from the fences that closed up Central Park streets the night before. It's quite the job to prepare for this parade the night prior. They use garbage trucks to close roads for car traffic and remove many traffic street lights to allow head room for the humongous floating balloons to travel the route and replace the infrastructure back again.



Turkey hats seemed to be a popular street vendor purchase. If you are lucky and have a window view from your apartment you get to relax and get unobstructed views. I had to take most of my photos with the tilt screen and my arms extended upwards hoping to not get blocked by someone else. Our granddaughter was so excited to see so many balloon floats and the vibe of the millions on people in the crowd was something else.



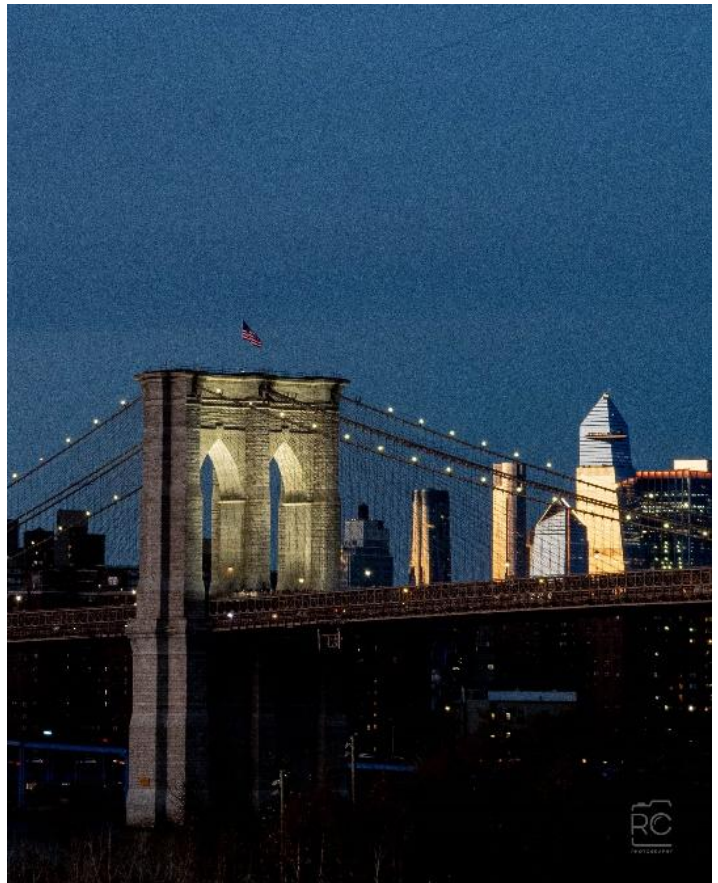
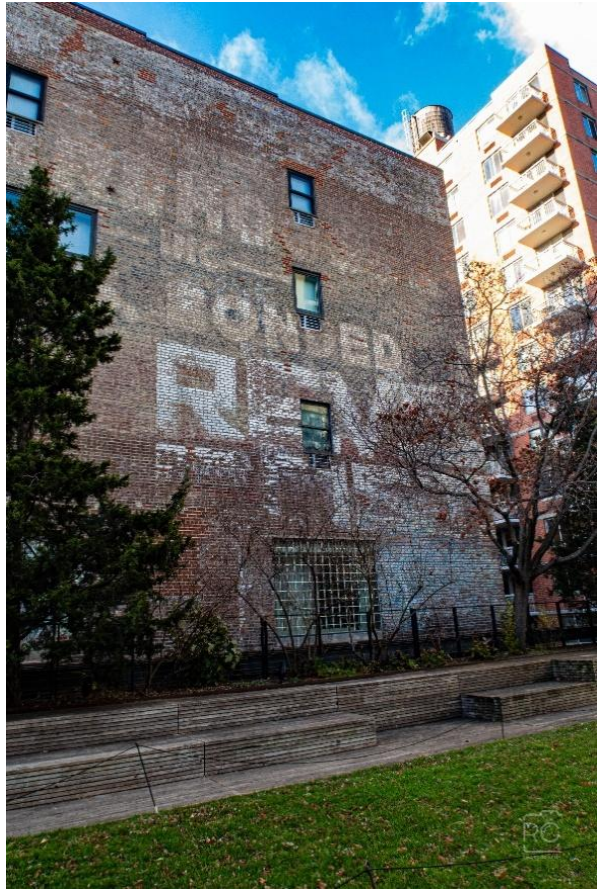
On day 3, we explored Riverside Park northwards at the edge of the Hudson River from 64<sup>th</sup> St to the top left corner of Central Park and walked down its central trails back south towards home. That took 3.5 hrs. stopping for many photos and great views along the way enjoying the sunny skies. This is a very popular area for joggers and biking and walking the paths along the river's edge.



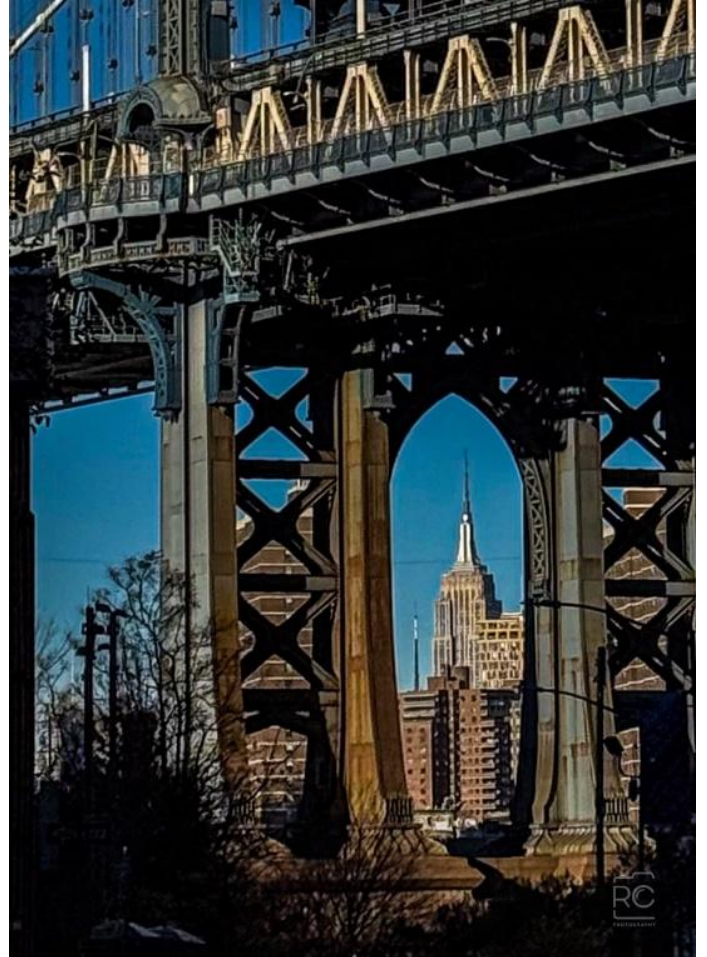
On day 4 we explored more of the midtown area like the High Line and the Christmas Market at Bryant Park.

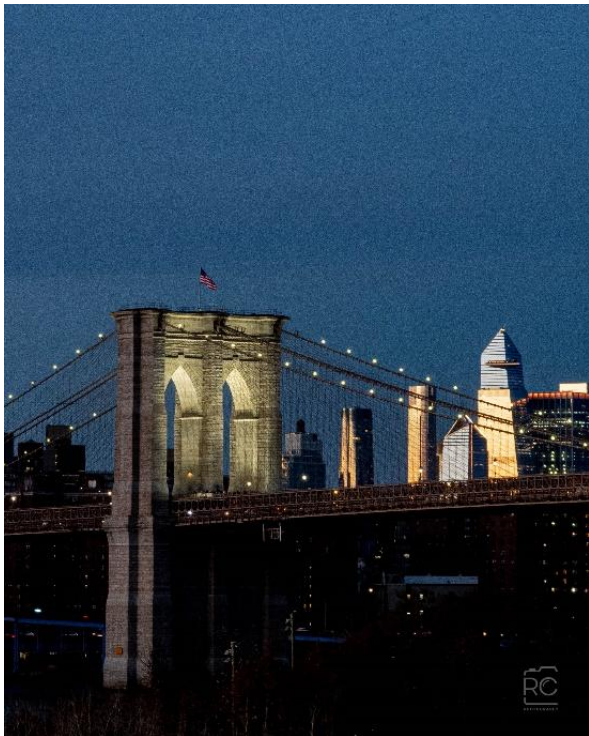
I took this opportunity for more photos of old shadow signs on brick buildings. I also had to stop at B & H but never opened my wallet.





On day 5 we explored the Brooklyn Heights area including the path under the bridge and the East River, Jane's carousel, and a great local pizza joint before a subway ride later that evening back to Manhattan





I hope to go back in the near future but there are many other places to visit that are more RV friendly.

Regards,  
Richard Cousineau

## NOTA BENE

Member Slideshows  
will be celebrated in June.

Have you started to work on yours yet?

# CHRISTMAS MARKETS ALONG THE RHINE RIVER

*From Eileen Nixon*



This trip was provided by Photo Tour Trekkers <https://phototourtrekkers.com/> and Ama Waterways for a very scenic river cruise on the Rhine.

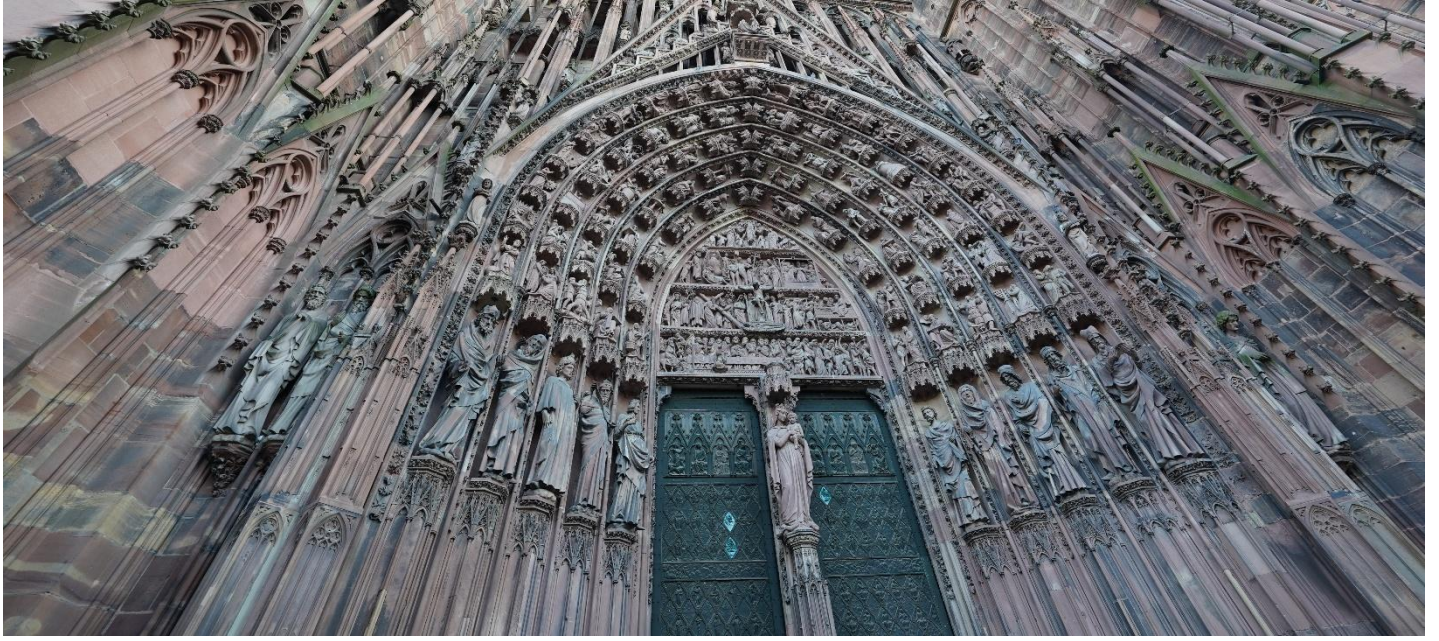
The tour started in the Netherlands and allowed us time to visit Amsterdam prior to boarding the river cruise ship. The Netherlands is beautiful. The land, the architecture of the houses in the old town, and the castles are beautiful. The number of bikes that the locals use results in much cleaner air. They have special parking lots, roads, and escalators for bikes. The people are so positive about their lifestyles and enjoy so much outdoor living.

Once we boarded our River Cruise ship in Amsterdam, we travelled to Dusseldorf, Mannheim, Rudesheim, Ludwigshafen, Strasbourg, Breisach and on to Basel.

At each stop along the Rhine, fully guided walking tours to all the Christmas markets, museums, and churches were provided. There was no snow and we had great walking weather. When we reached Basel, we disembarked and flew back to Toronto.







# THE CREATIVITY OF FOCUS

*From Nancy Leask*

Several years ago, I enrolled in a photography course and had the importance of focus impressed upon me. The instructor would zoom in to 100% to check that our photos were “tack sharp”. To this day I zoom in on my RAW files and check for this quality. While I agree with the importance of correct focus, I now also embrace purposeful out of focus photography. Shooting out of focus releases your creativity when making photos and can offer a feeling or mood to the viewer that total focus does not.

Photos utilizing out of focus elements are not as easy as just making a mistake in focusing. They require learning how to achieve the desired results, experimentation, and practice. Techniques might involve aperture, shutter speed, focal length, your focus ring, a tripod, timing and movement.

**Bokeh**, a Japanese word meaning blur, is used in photography to refer to the background of a photograph being set out of focus to create a dreamy quality and to set out the main subject from the background. The degree of blur will be determined by aperture to a great extent but distance from the lens to the subject, the subject from the background, and the focal length also influence the resultant bokeh. The same technique may also be applied to having the foreground sharp while leaving the subject blurred behind it. Beautiful orbs of light from artificial lights in the composition are also achieved in this way.

**Motion blur** is determined by setting a shutter speed so that either the entire subject is blurred or just a part of it. A frequent example is shooting traffic at night so that entire vehicles are blurred and attractive light trails result. Shooting a running dog could be done by choosing a shutter speed that puts the body in focus but allows for some blur in the feet/legs to suggest the movement to the viewer. Moving water provides a great opportunity for practice with various shutter speeds. For some motion blur shots, a tripod could be useful.

**Panning** is a technique that results in blurring the background of a moving subject in order to intensify the speed of the subject. This involves getting an appropriate shutter speed and being able to move your camera in a way that matches the position and speed of the moving subject. The amount of sharpness in the subject can vary but some amount of it should be in focus.

As a result of our club’s Study the Masters series, I have become very interested in trying the techniques used by Alexei Titarento and Olga Karlovac, both of whom became renowned for using **slow shutter speeds**. Their work is meaningful, atmospheric and, I think, fascinating. Despite their out of focus styles, the viewer can “see” what is in the photo, in a literal sense, as well as feel the meaning the photographer wishes to convey. Just as we look at famous paintings on a simple level but we also study them to understand the meaning within the art. Using a tripod or not will produce different results.

**Intentional camera movement (I.C.M.)** is done handheld. It can produce beautiful results akin to an impressionist painting. There is a lot of variety in the movement of the camera: up, down, sideways, diagonally, in a circular motion, and even through changing focal lengths. Shutter speed also plays a part since you need sufficient time for the physical movement of the camera. Consider starting with a shutter speed of ½ second and experiment with this technique to find what appeals to you. Be prepared to be surprised and, hopefully, pleased by the photos you make. Something I have not tried myself is to take photos while walking so that remains to be seen and learned.

**Purposeful dialing out of focus** is a matter of setting your camera to manual focus mode so that you may choose the degree of blur in the entire composition. Take care to include distinctive shapes in the composition and not to clutter the image with indistinct shapes. You still want the scene to be recognizable. Such photos are often made even more emotional when converted to black and white. I am new to this but plan to practise it now that I have seen examples.

**Environmental blur** and **artificial blur** may be achieved by precipitation in a scene or by adding objects that cover the lens. Consider shooting through a clear umbrella, a translucent disk, a plastic bag, a prism. Your own creativity should guide you.

Out of focus photography is not a licence to make mistakes in photography. Nor is it easily done to be done effectively. Rather, it puts the power of creativity, uniqueness, and emotional response into the mind and hands of the photographer. It is moving far from snapshot and into the realm of art.





# THE END



Please consider contributing to your APC Newsletter. Two more issues are planned for this club year and your submissions are integral to the document.

The APC runs on the generosity of volunteers and a term of three years applies to each leadership position. Know that the term of Newsletter Editor ended in June 2025 and your club is in need of a member to step up and take a turn in this role.

*The Editor*