



In this unit we look at sites that have competitions and Audio Visuals.

What next?

<http://www.viewbug.com> <http://www.australianphotography.com/competitions>
<http://www.photocompetitions.com.au/> <http://shutterbug.net.au/> <http://www.my-photoschool.com/competition/>

The above list of websites are online photo competitions, I suggest you visit them and look at the entries, then look at the winning entries and following my guidelines in a previous lesson evaluate the entries. One word of caution however, is that some of these competitions are voted on by the general public, hence some people with no knowledge of compositional rules are going to vote for an image where it does not warrant it. E.g. you will probably see a competition that is a set-subject, we'll say farms is the set-subject title and you might see a close up portrait of a cats head. The author could have put it in the wrong category by mistake, or he might have thought that as the cat lives on a farm, then it should be OK, unfortunately no, but I have seen something like that get well voted on. If you find a competition that is judged by a competent photographer you will find the winners are more deserving.

So look at other peoples images and evaluate them yourself. Look for how they have used the rules, like leading lines, DOF, rule of thirds etc. and try and figure out what the photographer was trying to achieve, and do you think he achieved it. Look for his faults, like tilting horizon in landscapes, disturbing items in the image that do not need to be there, also check for bad photo editing etc.

You can also find some websites on the net that have tutorials, <http://www.blacktowncityphotoclub.org> has quite a few tutorials on it, another site that is particularly good is <http://www.cambridgeincolour.com/tutorials.htm> it also has quite a lot of tutorials as well as some forums you can join and discuss photographic topics.

These are just another couple of sites with tutorials.

<http://tinyurl.com/go548mm> is a site with 100 helpful photography tutorials for beginners and professionals.

<http://www.digitalcameraworld.com/> or Lynda.com

Another outlet for your photography is to get involved with a camera club. I am a member of Blacktown City Photographic Club in Sydney. I have been associated with camera clubs over many years and find they are a very good place for on-going learning, once joined, you will have a group of like-minded people around you and you

only have to ask any of them 'how to.....' or 'how does.....' etc. They have lectures, workshops, field trips and competitions.

With the competitions you as a member are allowed to enter a number of entries, the club then has a qualified judge from another club come and evaluate each image, he will award merits, credits or a point score to each image, depending what system the club uses. He will also give constructive critique on images making suggestions on how they can be improved or pointing out some bad points. With your images, when he evaluates them, sometimes you might not agree with him, but you can always ask him later for further explanation.

You could also search the web for camera clubs and check out their sites or The Federation of Camera Clubs website has a club finder for NSW Australia, the address is <http://www.photographynewsw.org.au/> and if you are not from NSW email me, and I will do what I can to find a camera club in your area. My camera club website address is <http://www.blacktowncityphotoclub.org/> feel free to browse the site, there is a large number of tutorials to view, also the clubs address, membership fees and also the current program to find out what is on.

Other ways of learning is to purchase magazines on photography. Any newsagency will have a lot to pick from, including some dedicated to Photoshop. Some of these magazines also have attached a DVD which includes tutorials, and step by step instructions on how to do things. Magazines, however, tend to be expensive if you get into the habit of buying them, for the price of about two good magazines you would be able to get a one year membership to a camera club.

Photography is a unique hobby, what I get out of photography from my 53 years involvement, is not so much the taking of the image, or fiddling with the camera controls, or playing around with the images in Photoshop, but it is walking around with that rectangular frame in front of my face 24/7 looking for that next great shot, it makes me notice so much around me that I notice so many small things that I know many people would look over and not notice. Where possible I always carry a camera with me ready to capture that great shot before it is lost to me. Yes, it is not always my big DSLR I have, my phone camera does a pretty good job these days, they are improving with each new model that is released. But do not forget, I think I have mentioned it before, TAKE MANY PHOTOS, once you have your camera it does not cost you any more money. As technology advances and the sensors get both bigger and better. A note book and pencil is handy to keep with you to record any scenes or shots you see but want to return to either when lighting is better, or with a different camera or equipment. I know a guy that bookmarks locations on his GPS tracker so he can quickly find his way back to a particular site. Also not what you would need or the time of day you thing would be better. Take an image with your secondary P&S camera so you can then evaluate what gear you will need.

You can also search the web for sites that will possibly sell your images. This site <http://tinyurl.com/opj3o64> compares 15 photo agencies.

Next thing we can do is to create our own website and put our images on it. This can be a good storage medium where you can give family or friends the address so they can browse your images, I am not a great fan of social websites like Flickr, Facebook, YouTube etc. etc., mainly because any one in the world can see them and you will also get a lot of rubbish on these sites. Also with sites like these you have no control over who sees, uses or does what they like with your images. A friend of mine just recently had photos on Facebook of a sport she followed, she used Facebook so her friends could view and purchase her shots. Each image was watermarked, but that did not stop a monthly magazine downloading her images, removing the watermark and publishing them without her knowledge, permission or even giving her credit in their magazine. No image or file is safe on the internet, but you can get a bit of security by creating your own website.

To create your own website now days is quite easy, there are a number of sites to help you do this where you can use their free templates, or pay them hosting fees etc. to give you more features. The site I use is <http://www.webs.com> and you can check out my website at <http://ronatkinsonphotos.webs.com/> and as you can see it produces a good site. While the free sites are limited with how much they hold, you can create an unlimited number of websites. If you look at my site, at the bottom of the page is a series of links to my other sites, all created with Webs.

Another similar site is <http://www.wix.com/> they also have free sites as well as paid sites. There is probably a lot more sites on the web that offer these services but these are just two that I am familiar with. They are easy to learn, with a lot of drag and dropping. There are probably many more but these few I have used and found good and user friendly.

Another thing I like to do with my images is to build them up into an audio visual using sound and voice overs etc. Windows Live Movie Maker and ProShow Gold or Proshow Producer are just three programs that allow you to create slide shows. There may be more similar programs available on the net.

Windows Live Movie Maker is free and comes with Windows, so you probably have that on your computer already. It is a basic program that allows you to select your images, sort the order you want them in, then allows you to put a music background to them, you can select the time the images appear on the screen and you have different transitions from image to image as well as different effects with the images.

The program I use is ProShow Gold, and is available online from <http://photodex.com> and is priced at US\$69.95 and it gives you much more flexibility including voice over the background music, a lot of styles and templates as well as a lot of transitions.

Proshow Producer model will cost you US\$249.95 and is much the same as the Gold edition but has many more transitions and themes. You can download a fully working trial version of both these and I suggest you give them a try, their only problem is with them after you have created a show and publish it will have a big banner across it stating that it was created with ProShow, once you purchase the program and enter the registration number that banner will no longer appear.

You could check on the net as there may be other programs either cheaper or free that I do not know about, I love ProShow Gold.

If you are interested to give A/V a try, I would suggest you start up a collection of instrumental music to use, a site I found that has just about any music you would want (I use it a lot) is at <http://www.mp3va.com/> where you can purchase your albums or tracks for about AU\$0.15 each, yes, that is only 15 cents per track. Also save up a collection of sound effects to use, making you're A/V come to life.

I have not touched on printing your images, as that is a personal issue as to what you want to print, and with so many photo printing places around I could not try to compare them as to the quality they produce. Most of your images you could print at home on an inkjet printer and some photo quality paper.

Next

Next week we will have a revision on all that we have learnt.