

JPG

YOUR WORLD IN PICTURES

ISSUE

15

SNEAK

PEEK

Surroundings, Noir, Split-Second

Dial N for Noir

The era after the Great Depression was a time of immense optimism. Good had triumphed over evil in the war, there was a clear sense of right and wrong, and folks had a desire to just settle into a happy, productive life after such a turbulent time. But this optimism also masked the underlying problems of a rapidly growing society, and for everything that was shiny, bright, and hopeful, there was a contradictory feeling of darkness and desperation just beneath the surface. Film noir emerged in this period with its ultra-stylish presentation of a world where right and wrong were just different shades of gray. This was a world where nothing was simple anymore: a hopeless world with moral ambiguity, seductive murderers, bad guys you could understand, and a culture beginning to eat itself from the inside out.

So it's into this incredibly rich but dark territory that we all jumped with this issue, and the results are fantastic. Noir has always been a kind of code word for a photographic style evolved from the cinematography. The noir film's dramatic angles create a sense of disorientation, and the low-key chiaroscuro-style lighting adds to the

sense of depth in the images, like there's more to the scene than meets the eye. In this theme we see images that are technically masterful as well as stylish and cinematic. We go behind the scenes of a Gregory Crewdson shoot and see what goes into his lavish photographic productions, and Ryan Schude blows us away with his photo essay Tableau, in which each photo feels like an entire movie crammed into a single frame of film.

This issue also features Split-Second, which we have half-jokingly described around the office as feeling like an afternoon on Spike TV, with its explosions, gunshots, sonic booms, punch-outs, and tornados. This theme has some incredible captures, from the stuff that comes from being in exactly the right place at the right time (Breaking the Sound Barrier, p. 86), to images that leave no clue about how they were shot (Galaxy, p. 100).

We also delved into the theme Surroundings, which shows us your happy place. It is a warm cross-section of your homes, your childhood environs, and the places you go to feel most comfortable. Five JPG members show us their neighborhoods in Mexico,

India, the Czech Republic, Iceland, and England in the feature "Where I'm At," and Lori Andrews demonstrates her considerable talents as an architectural photographer with her article "Green with Home Envy."

With this issue we present the second of our new photo challenges, Spell It Out, and we can't believe how clever and creative you all were! We're really excited by the results of these challenges and we'll be looking for more ways to weave this kind of feature into the magazine.

As always, JPG is what you make it, and this issue is—as they might say in a noir film—"a real swell rag." So thanks again for another stunning issue. We hope it inspires you as much as it does us.

—Paul Cloutier, Publisher

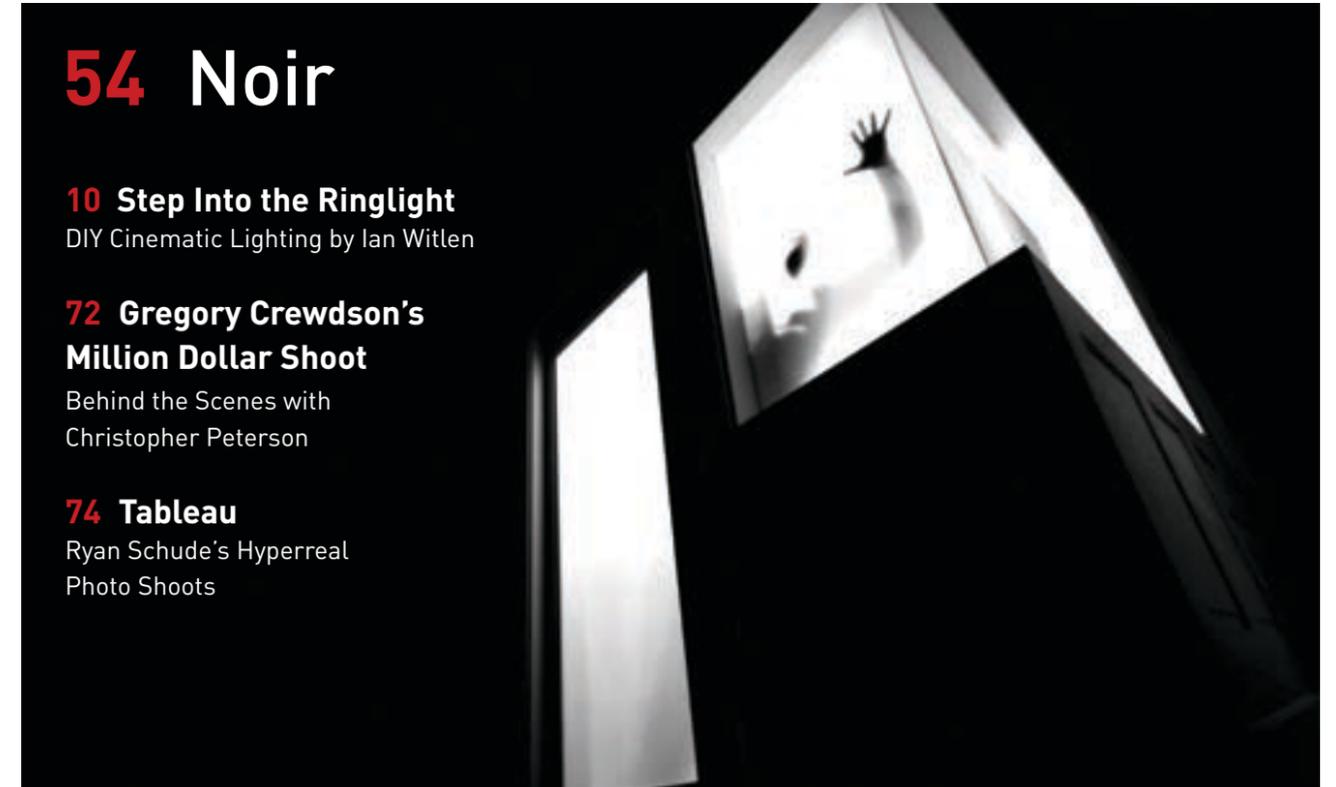
Note: On page 80 of JPG issue 14, Alyse Liebovich's photo's URL should have been listed as jpgmag.com/photos/294713. Also, Keith Clarke's name on page 110 was misspelled, and Micah Gilmore would like to add that her photo on page 20 was taken in conjunction with Sarah K Chen Photography.

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HOW JPG WORKS



1. Shoot, Upload, Submit
JPG members upload photos and stories to themes.



2. Peer Review
The community votes on each photo and story.



3. Final Selection
Editors create the issue with the best of the best.



4. Publication
Contributors get \$100 and a free subscription.

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Color Shift

Reviving Expired Film

By Paul Lavallee

Let me start off by saying that I am not a film snob. Digital certainly has its place in photography today. I can't imagine photographing a family event, let alone a wedding, using film. I would be lost in these situations without my DSLR. But when I use a digital camera, I am an entirely different photographer. Snap! Snap! Snap! Check the LCD, make adjustments. Snap! Snap! Snap! I feel more like a machine than an artist.

When I am photographing for fun or art, there is nothing better than shooting with expired film. Like Forrest Gump's box of chocolates, you never quite know what you're going to get. Sometimes the colors are off, sometimes the contrast is very high or almost non-existent, and sometimes nothing develops. It really all depends on how the film's prior owner handled it. Sure, I sorta know what to



expect based on the type of film I am using, but I am constantly being surprised by the results of each individual roll.

How do I get my hands on all this expired film? Four sources. Primarily eBay. Since the shift to digital photography, many professional photographers are selling off whatever leftover film they have lying around. Usually you can tell on eBay if it is a professional photographer selling. These films are well cared for and I have never had a roll of film produce nothing when I have bought from a professional photographer on eBay. Also on eBay are rolls being sold by the "new marketers" as I like to call them. These brave souls use eBay as their own big yard sale. They go to garage sales, store closings, clearance racks, etc. and buy expired film in bulk. If I only had the time to scour the earth for

expired film, I would join them and save a few bucks. Film bought from these folks tends to be less dependable. It will usually still work, but there is much more experimentation going on.

Second, there are other websites that sell expired film. Lomography.com immediately springs to mind because it caters to the plastic camera crowd. Even the big names like bhphotovideo.com and adorama.com often sell off their expired film. My third source is actually going to film shops and checking if they have any cheap, expired film. These film rolls are usually recently expired and will not look very different from normal film. This is an opportunity to try different processing methods, like cross processing, without paying full price for a roll of film. The last way I get my hands on this old film is by word of mouth. Everyone knows my girlfriend and I love old film rolls. Often we will get handed old cameras and film that our friends found while cleaning their attics. These are the most fun to experiment with!

My creative process is about experimentation in displaying everyday scenes in an imaginative light. It is of utmost importance for an artist to have his or her own style. My style was born out of my love of the look of expired film and cross-processing. Buy a Holga if you don't already have a medium format camera. Pick up some expired 120 film. Have fun with photography again! Who knows, you may even create your own style. ■

Paul Lavallee has a high-tech job, but enjoys low-fi photography. He loves his two dogs and his wife. paul@lavallee.com/people/mylavallee



Step Into the Ringlight

DIY Cinematic Lighting

By Ian Witlen

I was researching the cost of purchasing a ringflash a few years back when I came across a basic website that discussed the idea of building a ringlight, but did not include instructions on how to make the unit. Trying to find a light source that is uniform and shadowless can be difficult and quite expensive. There are two ways to achieve this lighting: one is to purchase a professional ringflash for between \$1,000 and \$3,000, the other is to build your own ringlight for less than \$100. The website only included a rough sketch of what the constructed ringlight should look like once completed. I decided to use its basic idea and modify it for my own uses. Currently, there are many websites with instructions on how to build a variety of do-it-yourself ringlights.

Other than price, there are a couple of key differences between a ringflash and a ringlight. The main difference between the two is that a ringlight is a form of continuous light, other than that, they are very similar. Another significant difference is the size of each lighting unit. A ringflash is typically 1 foot in diameter, whereas a ringlight usually runs between 1 and 2 feet in diameter attributable to the

size of the camera and total wattage of the bulbs being used. Because of the size and weight of the ringlight unit, portability may become an issue for some users.

Being that I shoot mostly film, I used 10 evenly spaced 100 watt floodlights to simultaneously light both the subject and the background. In order to have complete control over lighting output, each 100 watt floodlight has been placed on one of two alternating circuits. Each circuit has a total of five bulbs that are controlled by a dimmer switch. I also made the diameter of the ringlight 2 1/2 feet in order to create a large, lit area. In addition to attaching handles to the light for ease of transportation, mounting brackets were fastened underneath each handle so that the ringlight could be securely set up on two light stands.

The spectral highlights created by the ringlight are very unusual. As the light is emitted from the bulbs it creates a white ring around each pupil. This produces a rather hypnotizing effect at the final photograph. Since most are unsure of what they are looking at in the subject's pupil, it draws the viewer into the photograph for further inspection.

When shooting with the ringlight, you want to be sure to



+2 more My Precious product reviews and +1 How To story on creating in-camera panoramas

WHERE I'M AT

BIENVENIDOS

Villahermosa, Mexico

by Anahita Avalos



We arrived in Villahermosa, Mexico, some three years ago. We didn't find a school for my son who, having a rare genetic disorder (Costello syndrome), was very behind kids his age. So I just stayed home with him all day and never really went out. I had good excuses: very hot weather, no car, my son couldn't walk, I didn't speak Spanish...

Six months later we found a school for my son but I had a two-hour walk to take him from school to home—that's how and when my everyday travels around my Mexican neighborhood began. I then started to take pictures while pushing the stroller on a regular basis.

Downtown Villahermosa is a very vibrant area, and to me, what makes it even more alive is the large variety of little shops where you can buy meat, chicken, vegetables, clothes, or tools and where you can get anything fixed: your shoes, your car, your television, your watch, or your microwave. Most of the time these shops don't have a door to push; they're directly open to the street, which makes taking pictures easier. I especially love the hairdressers' shops with their vivid colors, homemade decoration, and '70s furniture. I am also extremely fascinated by the religious images and objects you can see in all the shops—especially by the omnipresence of "la virgen de Guadalupe" (the Mexican Virgin Mary).

Colors—all colors and any combination of color—are featured here just next to an orange one or ladies who are not afraid to wear colorful clothes. I even discovered



+4 more photographers showing us the pulse of their neighborhoods in Where I'm At



Centre Place, Melbourne, Australia.

Centre Place
By Roberts Birze
jpgmag.com/photos/403959

Surroundings

Places can be more than just locations. The images of meaningful places can evoke emotion, mood, and memory. JPG photographers share the shots of the surroundings that mean the most to them.

Sponsored by:

+18 more Surroundings photos that evoke emotion, mood, and memory of the places that mean the most

SAMSUNG

NOIR

First coined to describe the black-and-white crime films of the '40s and '50s, noir is about capturing the gritty imperfection of the world. Dramatic shadows, high contrast, greed, betrayal, jealousy, double-crossing, hard-boiled heroes, and femme fatales: noir always packs a punch, filling the frame with mood and moral ambiguity.

+15 more Noir photos that channel the grainy imperfection of the films from the '40s and '50s

For whatever is kept in, wanting to get out
(a secret, truth, love, or talent).

In Sane
By Faisal Almaliki
jpgmag.com/photos/392537



Gregory Crewdson's Million Dollar Shoot

Photographer Gregory Crewdson shoots his still images like Edward Hopper posing as Michelangelo Antonioni on a movie set.

By Christopher Peterson

In essence, the scale of his compositions matches the possibilities inherent in the 8x10 camera format, which has a large field of composition that includes people, sky, cars, streets, and buildings.

Gregory has a mini lighting crew that sets up before each shoot. Richard "Rico" Sands, whose background includes being a gaffer, crane operator, and director of photography, collaborates on the lighting setup of his shots; Rico controls the lighting on the set right down to calling out which circuit breaker to kill when shooting individual shots.

I watched the shoot unfold from beginning to end (6 p.m. to 9:15 p.m.) and decided to capture key moments of the process. This image will end up selling for \$80,000 to \$100,000 per print, in editions of 10, so essentially it's a million dollar shoot every time he

decides to shoot an image.

Gregory was quoted in an article, "Aesthetics of Alienation" for the Tate Modern Museum, as saying "There are these very ordinary situations, and the light is being used as a narrative code to reveal the story. It also provides some possibility of transformation of the ordinary, which gives the images a certain theatricality." This is the key insight to understand how Gregory creates images that resonate beyond the mere representation of a bar on the corner with a woman sitting outside smoking a cigarette while a car disappears down the street.

It was fascinating to watch the pieces of the image fall into place. Everything is choreographed from lighting to placement to the position of Colleen sitting on the curb. It's the scale of how Gregory composes the image for the

8x10 large format camera that really makes an impression. Instead of just pointing and clicking the camera at your subject, you suddenly realize the possibilities of composing an image with artificial lighting to achieve a powerful iconic image that resonates long after the set is shut down and the negatives are developed. These images are printed on oversize paper to match the scale of the composition.

I look forward to seeing the final image hanging in a gallery for sale! ■

Christopher Peterson studied film under the aesthetic eye of Harvard film professor Vlada Petric before venturing out to Hollywood where he worked for the Walt Disney Company. He is a frequent contributor to jggmag.com/people/sacredhands



1

1. Firemen Hose Down the Street

Before shooting his image at the corner of Madison Avenue and Seymour Street in Pittsfield, Mass., Gregory Crewdson hired the Pittsfield Fire Department to come out and hose down the street and buildings. They hosed down this street for a good hour, as the water would evaporate and they would have to hose it down again, to give it that glistening sheen look that made the scene pop under proper lighting.



2

2. Complex Lighting Adds to the Magic

Part of the mystery of Gregory Crewdson's photographs is the way he lights them. On this shoot he had two condors with lights parked north of the bar. The light on the right was focused on Colleen, the woman sitting outside the bar smoking a cigarette. The light on the left shot a pool of glow into the intersection. The windows of these buildings are lit from inside and out as well. The lighting really sells this image by emphasizing objects within the composition and creating a mood.

3. The Final Scene Is Set

This is the final setup of the shoot. Colleen is posed, the fogging truck has made a pass down the street, the lights on the condor are focused on Colleen and the intersection, and the 8x10 image is snapped. The magic hour has arrived.



3

+ 1 Ten Tips article on shooting home interiors professionally and flawlessly

Tableau

Ryan Schude Shoots Big

The lamp photo started it all four years ago when a small house party presented itself as an opportunity to make a portrait of my friend Colin. He had told us the story of a night when he was jealously attempting to own a corner of the couch but couldn't shake the attention of an overeager table lamp which repeatedly chose to remind Colin of its presence. The struggle sounded too delightful not to re-enact and so while the remainder of the party people played poker and imbibed, I set to scrounging around the garage, building the set with whatever rubble I could find. Three hours of ghetto digital Polaroiding ensued, which entailed fooling the long exposure setting on a point-and-shoot Elph in order to hit the strobe while the shutter was open. We built cardboard snoots around duct-taped flashes, and finally we were ready to shoot. Problem was I had a house full of drunks with little patience for my repeated focus checks on a beat-up Hasselblad from the '70s. As you can see from their expressions, none of them are actors. Looking back I realize how many ways this photo missed the mark; what stands is the birth of a whole new way for me to create that I never knew existed.

Surely people have been making photos like this forever. Perhaps it's like discovering a band on the radio you've never heard before; you're all excited to play it for your friends only for them to say, "Duh, I've been listening to that for decades." As the ideas began to elaborate so did the excitement during each actual session a picture was made. Next came the eggnog photo. This time the event was thrown around the single focus of making the photo as opposed to the other way around. We didn't tell



+5 more cinematic photographs from Ryan Schude's Photo Essay, Tableau



Split-Second

Split-second is about photography that catches the action at just the right moment: photos that couldn't have happened a second before or a second later. Here is evidence of that decisive moment right before the scene changes completely. In photography, sometimes timing is everything.

+21 Split-Second images that capture the action at just the right moment

Project Double Ex

Double Exposure Pen Pals Gigi Tindle and Suzette Lucas

Most photographers would agree that a picture is the end result of the ideas and emotions of the person taking the photograph, the final image being their truest vision of how they see the world. After all, as a photographer you make the decision which camera to use, what accoutrements to attach, what subject matter is appealing, what type of lighting to use, etc. Well, we're writing this to share an interesting method of taking photographs that meshes the personalities of two photographers on the same film frame, on same film roll.

Impossible, you say? Well, it's been done, and I urge you to try it right away because it is just so unusual and fun that you will absolutely love the results. We guarantee it.

Some time ago, before the days of messaging on jpgmag.com, we (Suzette and Gigi) began noticing and favoriting each other's photographs. We kept up with what the other was posting, and when messaging feature was added, we became fast and earnest friends. We found that we were around the same age, we each have a wacky family we adore, we share similar viewpoints, and we love to have fun.

One day while brainstorming various creative collaborations, we came up with the idea to shoot a roll of 35mm film and mail it to the other to shoot over a second time. The plan was to see happens when two people meld their lives and spirits together atop a roll of film.

Which brings us to our Project Double Ex (for Project Double Exposure). Technically, a double exposure can be made by Photoshopping two digital files together, but we can testify that it is just not the same. The thrill of waiting for the film to be developed and seeing the pretzeled layers of each photographer's scene cannot be topped via Photoshop.

Although we have hectic lives and our homes are on opposite sides of the country, we managed to double expose several rolls of film over the course of a few months. From October through mid-January we shot our various scenarios, on our various cameras—whether aiming at buildings or old trucks, or simply haggling and harassing family members to pose—all the while keeping the USPS good and busy with our precious cargo. Some of our photos are obvious doubles while others are more subtle, appearing only through the simple, yet exotic,

vignetting of the Diana or through the grand light leaks of the Holga.

We invite you guys to try this yourselves. And hey, if you're stationed in Antarctica or are in a circumstance that doesn't allow you to share a roll of film with another photographer, don't fret. Shoot a couple of rolls of film. Mix them up and put them in a drawer for a few weeks until what you've shot becomes rather hazy. After time has elapsed, reload the film and shoot something totally different and you will really dig the results.

This project is quite similar to making your best friend a music mix tape. Whatever the final concoction, it always ends up a surprise and a delight. So pick a shooting partner, load those cameras, and shake your creative groove thangs, babies! ■

Gigi Tindle is an explorer, and loves taking long walks in her bare feet, with a flagon of tequila tucked in her pocket in case of snake bite.

Suzette Lucas is a photographer who takes her work very seriously... NOT...lol...
jpgmag.com/people/gizette

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EXPIRES 1 JUNE 2008

+ 1 Post Processing article on transferring inkjet prints

Sneak Peek PDF cover art uses parts of photo "Norman, the Ringmaster" by James Ellerker, featured in its entirety on page 70 of Issue 15.