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ISSUE
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Beauty Redefined, Entropy, and Breakthrough

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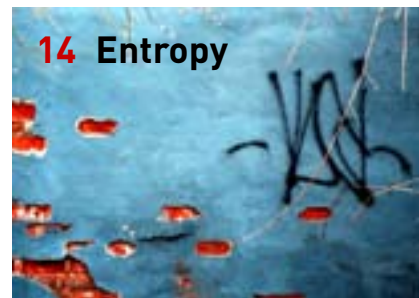
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MY PRECIOUS

Go Wide

The Sigma 10-20mm

By Dave Markowski



I admit it. When I got my first digital SLR, I didn't have a clue what I was doing. So I started asking the question that gives seasoned shooters facial tics: "What lens should I get?"

The advice I got was simple: "Figure out what you shoot most, and get the lens that will help you capture it best." So I used my kit lens for a few months, and found myself shooting landscapes using the 18mm side of the zoom. I decided to upgrade to the Sigma 10 20.

The 102.4 degree field of view is just what I was looking for in a lens

without going all the way to fisheye , and I almost never find myself cursing because something isn't fitting in the frame quite right.

I do quite a bit of nighttime long exposure photography, so the lack of a set aperture isn't really an issue. The Sigma is great for the nontraditional candid portrait photographer as well. You can really get some neat effects at the 10mm end, and, if you like to dork it up a bit, there's nothing like an ultra wide to give you that extra distorted edge or make your kids look like aliens.

Architectural exterior and interior

shots can also benefit and yield some excellent results. I've done quite a few shots of the college campus where I currently work, and clients have been very pleased with the dramatic angles that an ultra wide gives.

Since I got the Sigma 10 20mm, it rarely leaves my camera. So if you've got a hankerin' for some ultra wide action, give the Sigma a try. You won't be disappointed! 📷

Dave Markowski is a 30-something dad, designer, and photography addict.
jpgmag.com/people/doofusdave

+4 more **My Precious** product reviews in this issue

Poor Man's Macro

Photographing Really Small Things on the Cheap by Andrew Magill

In your house, in your backyard, everywhere around you are countless things that, ordinary as they may seem, suddenly become very strange and beautiful when looked at close up. The trouble is, the proper SLR lenses for the job are expensive and very special purpose. Close up filters are relatively cheap, but all they do is push the focal plane even closer to the lens, and that only gets you so far. And compact cameras are excluded from this facet of photography almost entirely. All that “macro” button on your camera does is tell the camera to try and focus as close up as it can.

The Poor Man's Macro technique is very simple. All you need is your favorite camera and a spare SLR lens. Turn the spare lens around so that its front side faces your camera's lens, and hold the two close together. Congratulations, you're ready to start shooting!

Your results will depend on what kind of lens you have on your camera let's call it the “primary”, what kind of spare lens you have call that one the “secondary”, and on how you have them adjusted. But now that you have the principle a second lens backward in front of your camera the rest is just a matter of experimentation.

No frills 50mm prime lenses make great secondaries. They're cheap, often easier to find than the cameras they go with, and usually have nice, big apertures. You'll want a big aperture on the secondary and a somewhat long focal length on the primary, so the primary can look through the secondary with less vignetting and more useful area in your frame.

Lenses with manual aperture settings are a just twist the ring on the back of the lens. If you have lenses that don't have an internal

aperture motor usually have a little metal arm on the back that you can gently slide to one side to open the aperture. Newer lenses with an internal aperture motor can be trickier, but if you have a camera that matches that lens, you can usually just put it on the camera, set the aperture, and take it off again without the aperture changing.

After setting the aperture, you have to worry about how you're going to hold your secondary lens. Handheld is almost never a good option. What's ideal is a thing called a “macro coupling ring”, just a metal ring that's threaded on both ends to screw onto a lens like a filter. They're about 8 online. You can also make your own by gluing together a couple of filters, or gluing together two lens caps and drilling out the center. Unfortunately, all of the really good solutions only work on SLR lenses. If you have a compact camera, chances are it can't take standard size filters or lens caps, and it's usually not a good idea to attempt to hang the weight of a secondary lens on the little pop out zoom lens on your camera. So get crafty! I've taped a couple inches of cardboard tube to my Canon PowerShot S70 as a spacer, and then taped the secondary lens on top of that. You'll have to figure out what works best for your camera.

Now, down to the actual photography. It's best to switch your camera to manual focus and simply move it forward and back from your subject to get the focus you want. Your depth of field is going to be tiny, sometimes as little as one millimeter. Stepping down your camera's aperture will improve the situation, but make a habit of taking lots of pictures while you move the camera forward and back in the scene. You'll find the aperture that get one that's just right. Finally, you're



either going to need a flash or two right up close, or you're going to have to do long exposures.

All that's left is experimentation. One experiment you might eventually want to try is to figure out if your pictures are technically macro or not. Purists don't like it when you throw the word around willy nilly, because “macro” doesn't just mean “small,” it means “1:1 magnification or greater.” That is, the size of the frame must be no bigger than the size of the sensor or film in your camera. Don't let the purists get you down, though. The 1:1 magnification threshold doesn't mean a lot when you're just trying to take great pictures.

In no time you'll be looking at everything around you a little differently, wondering what everything would look like just a little closer up. ■

added to Magill's original student working on the article. jpgmag.com/people/davebias

Forgotten Places

Some places get more interesting the older they get. Some are memorials to tragedy. Others are meant to be destroyed. JPG asked our contributors for photos of their favorite forgotten places, and they responded with scenes from every corner of the globe. The following 10 locations show that there's lots of inspiration to be found in entropy.



Whitby Psychiatric Hospital
Ontario, Canada
By Sam Javanrouh

Whitby Psychiatric Hospital was a mental health facility in Ontario, Canada. It was considered a model of mental health care when it was completed in 1916. Patients were housed in a cottage setting, in an attempt to provide a homelike atmosphere. The new Whitby Mental Health Centre was completed on the same site in 1996; the old hospital buildings were abandoned for more than nine years before most of them were torn down.

I have been to the old hospital a number of times, but was only able to get inside a few buildings. Most of the interiors were completely dark, and I couldn't see the room as a whole until the lights came on. The room was lit up by the camera's LCD screen.

+1 Ten Tips for shooting models article from a Suicide Girls Photographer

+9 more pages of Forgotten Places, including Chernobyl

Entropy

If you could see far enough into the future, everything around you would start to look like it's just on its way to breaking down, falling apart, and becoming trash. It's not sad, it's just the way nature works.

+17 more **Entropy** images submitted and voted on by you

Breakthrough



Discovery, invention, progress, and revolution.

+15 more **Breakthrough** images submitted and voted on by you

Beauty Redefined

Every generation redefines what is beautiful, but ours has taken it to a whole new level. This theme invites you to throw out traditional notions and start over from scratch, redefining beauty for yourself.

This theme is sponsored by SuicideGirls, which mixes smarts, enthusiasm and a DIY attitude with an unapologetic, grassroots approach to sexuality.



+15 more **Beauty Redefined** images submitted and voted on by you


Diversity Decontextualized

Mexico City Gay Pride Portraits by Rogelio Pereda

To me, diversity is all about individualism – having unique characteristics, values, and beliefs.

These photographs are a selection of fortunate encounters with individuals during the Mexico City Gay Pride Parade. All these portraits were taken in informal circumstances and with natural light. There was no quest for the unusual. Yet these instants enrich my personal concept of image.

In this underworld, as in the world at large, the definition of gender has expanded, as has the number of the people who make up this expansion, although they often remain as blind spots in the visual fields of others. Isolated from the parade’s visual noise with a white backdrop, the subjects in these shots allegorize the identifying traits of the world to which they aspire – a world that can be conquered only by trespassing on the norms of others. Here, the yearning to raise oneself up is as sublime as the impossibility of doing so. I sought to capture, as an exercise in image decontextualization, this annual parade of thousands of people who celebrate their differences by exalting them.

To be above or below aesthetic standards is almost the same as being above or below social norms. To accept that the passage of time will create an imposter in our own face, or disguise what one is inside, means that the deepest identity of each person is to be found only on an illusory plane. What the observer of the social aspects gets in the bargain is the bitter aftertaste that deepens the sweetness of being different when being the same has become alienating. Each person is unique, but each can come to represent a group that is vulnerable to a society that does not recognize its pride. 

Rogelio Pereda is a compulsive amateur photographer trying to find the meaning of life through the lens.
jpgmag.com/people/pereda



+6 more Diversity Decontextualized images AND

2 more Photo Essays on Pretty is Boring and Australia’s Superpit

Turn Prints into Journals

How to make a journal with your photos on the cover by Judy Lee

With a couple of prints and a bunch of paper, you can make your very own photo journal. Here's how.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Two photographs
- Sheets of paper they can be blank or try a mixed stack of recycled papers
- One thin strip of paper choose a color to match your photos
- Two wooden pegs or big binder clips
- Two wooden boards or old books
- Sheet of wax paper
- Brush
- White glue craft glue or PVA bookbinding glue

STEP 1 Trim your photographs and the sheets of paper so they are all the same size.

STEP 2 Stack together the sheets of paper, put one photograph on top and one on the bottom of the stack with the pictures facing outwards. Try to line

up the papers and covers along the left edge as neatly as possible this is the spine . Hold everything in place with the wooden pegs.

STEP 3 Prop the pegged sheets and covers between two wooden blocks or two books, hold the entire stack together firmly.


STEP 4 Apply a thin layer of glue to the spine left edge of the stack . Use the brush to spread glue on evenly. Wait a few minutes for the glue to dry, then apply another layer of glue.

STEP 5 When the second layer of glue has dried, remove the wooden pegs and wrap the stack in a sheet of wax paper. Place the bundle on a flat surface and put some heavy books, wooden boards, a brick (or any other flat, heavy thing) on top. Wait for half an hour get up and stretch, have a snack, stick your head out the window for some fresh air.

STEP 6 Take your almost-finished journal out from under the brick. Trim the thin strip of paper so it's the same height as your journal and then trim the width to about 1.25 to 1.5 inches depending on how thick your journal is .

STEP 7 Hold the thin strip of paper up to the journal spine – use your fingers to fold creases so that the paper will wrap around the spine.

STEP 8 Apply a thin layer of glue to the strip of paper, glue it firmly so it attaches to the front cover photo, spine, and back cover photo.

STEP 9 Sit back and revel in what you've made. Take a photograph of your completed photo journal to share with all your friends! 

Judy Lee is the lady behind the Five and a Half line of handmade journals. jpgmag.com/people/fiveandahalf



+1 interview with Chicago's anonymous **You Are Beautiful** collective


8.5x11 Voices

By Andy Mitchell

What would happen if you gave high school students one minute to say what's on their minds? I found out when I asked my class to write something, anything, on a piece of paper and then pose with it. At first they just rolled their eyes. I think they thought I was losing it.

No one was forced to participate only those who wanted to participate did. They were asked to write down whatever they wanted, without discussing it with anyone. I did not limit them on content or language. They could even tell me to piss off if they wanted.

After the initial sounds of paper being passed out, there was an intense silence. The first student finished, and I rushed them up to the chair. After the first kid went, almost everyone followed.

Some were silly, others were serious. Afterwards, one student told me it was almost like therapy to go up there. 

Andy Mitchell is a high school teacher in California. jpgmag.com/people/photoguy2001



+1 more **The Project** article

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