

The Nikonian eZine

NOW MORE THAN 30,000 NIKONIANS!

*News • Comments • Members • Gallery
Products • Events • Equipment • Reviews*

28

Nikonian

The Official Publication of Your Nikonians.Org

D2X Photo © Allan Schroeder

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**Cover D2X photo by Canadian team member Allan Schroeder
shows a waterfall in Strathcona Provincial Park, B.C.**

Cover Specs: Nikon D2X, Nikkor AF-S DX
17-55mm f/22, 6 seconds, ISO 100



Over 30,000 members and growing

Welcome to the 28th edition of The Nikonian - the 4th edition of the eZine in pdf file format. The Nikonian has become a popular resource about the latest developments at Nikon and Nikonians. From contests and their winners to specials in the Nikonians Photo Pro Shop and hands-on reports and reviews of the latest gear.

So far it has been a great year for the Nikonians' community. We just passed the 30,000 member mark and are in the beta phase of a new [Nikonians News](#) channel. And finally, the highly anticipated D2X started shipping. The new Nikon dream machine is getting [rave reviews](#) and appears to fulfill or exceed everybody's expectations. Take a look at the related forums for some great pictures and technical insight.

But Nikon didn't leave other users stranded on the beach, whether of film or digital. With the introduction of [the F6](#) and D2Hs and the announcement of the D70s Nikon showed dedication to improve already great products even further. The new D50 is going to be an affordable entry level DSLR. Personally, I can't wait to load the upcoming D70 firmware update to find out how the auto focus is going to improve.

In this issue we continue to introduce Team Members and Nikonians to the community. Do you like contests? Take part in the monthly photo contest and submit your best shot. Or be a winner in the new "[Tip of the Month](#)" contest.

The highlight of the current issue features an extensive behind the scenes look of a film shoot for National Geographic and production photography. Follow Nikonian Pro David Haynes around the world in 4 weeks. From Costa Rica to Sweden. Learn tips and tricks on how to protect your gear from the environment or how to handle the local wildlife. But beware, bugs and spiders might start crawling out of your monitor ...

Are you ready to gear up and have an intensive sharing, learning and inspiring experience adventure of your own? Check out the [Nikonians Workshops](#). There should be something for everybody. Discover wildlife and great landscapes, and improve your skills at the [Bavarian Forest National Park in Germany and the 5th Annual Photo Adventure Trip](#). Bring your gear to the [Patagonia Nature Photography Safari](#) to capture the breathtaking scenery of the far South. Take advantage of the [Mayan Adventure Tour & Workshop](#) to gain exclusive access to Mayan sites at the premier shooting times of the day.

Or extend your knowledge of D70 at the [D70 workshops](#).

The next issue should feature a report from the workshop at Helgoland Island, Germany, which wrapped up at the end of April, and announce new offerings in Europe.

Andreas Voigt, Editor

My personal thanks to Paul Fisher , Allan Schroeder and David Haynes for their generous editorial contributions to this issue.

Ron Green, Editorial Director

Are you a Member?
Choose Free, Silver,
Gold, or Platinum



Nikonian Membership Levels

Nikonians offers several levels of membership. Of course there is the free trial membership, but we invite you to enjoy the fun and benefits of Silver (Gold, and Platinum) membership. Not only do you contribute to support the cost of keeping Nikonians operational, but you also receive your own space in the Member Galleries to share your pictures. That is in addition to posting your pictures in the forums for helpful critique or for sharing. Depending on the membership level you may also benefit from discounted access to Nikonians Events and Workshops.

Please, refer to the following list for a detailed summary of membership benefits:

Free Trial Membership

Free of charge. You can access the forums, ask questions and help others by providing information.

Silver Membership

We thank you at this level of membership with:

- + Image Gallery. The members galleries are located on the high performance Nikonians gallery server, where you can upload and manage your own images. 15Mbyte of space is enough to hold e.g. 200 x 75Kbyte images or 100 x 150Kbyte images.
- + Access to Nikonians Events and Conventions
- + Access to Nikonians Photo Tours and Workshops
- + Image upload in forums
- + Access to "classifieds section."

Silver Membership is 25 US Dollars per year, less than seven cents a day.

Gold Membership

This membership level comes among others with more gallery space and the new Nikonians ID card.

- + Image Gallery like in Silver Membership, but with 50Mbyte space, equivalent to 660 x 75Kbyte images or 330 x 150 Kbyte images.
- + Access to Nikonians Events and Conventions and 50% off on the fee
- + Access to Nikonians Photo Tours and Workshops and up to 10% off on the price
- + The exclusive Nikonian Photographer ID
- + Access to "classifieds section."

The Gold Membership is 75 US Dollars per year.

Platinum Membership

The most exclusive membership level comes with a very large gallery, free access to Events and Conventions and other benefits:

- + Image Gallery like in Gold Membership, but with 200Mbyte space, equivalent to 2500 x 75Kbyte images or 1250 x 150 Kbyte images.
- + Free Access to Nikonians Events and Conventions
- + Access to Nikonians Photo Tours and Workshops and up to 10% off on the price
- + The exclusive Nikonian Photographer ID
- + Nikonians ANPAT CD-ROM Collection (currently 2 CD's)
- + Access to "classifieds section."

The Platinum Membership is 200 US Dollars per year.

To get your Silver, Gold or Platinum Nikonians membership, or to upgrade your current Silver membership, please visit this link: [Membership](#) ●



New Markins Ball Heads for 2005

It took us a long time to make them available in North America, Europe and Africa but finally the 2005 Markins ball heads are now in stock. The new M10 and M20 are lighter than ever and the M10 weighs in at a mere 498g (1.1 lbs) breaking the half-kilogram barrier. The M10 is easily capable of handling a 40kg (90 lbs) load, translating into a load-to-weight ratio of 80. No other ball head is close to this performance.

The main tension control mechanism has been improved further, now using a patent pending new "fluid style" with very smooth operation coming at a lower weight.

The 2004 red control label has been replaced with a 18% gray label, which can also be conveniently used as a gray card. Keep in mind that Nikon body-meters are calibrated at 12% gray (1/2 an f-stop difference).

Additional, minor improvements are: Center bolt is now made of Titanium and the quick release clamp knob is now in a "captive style", that is, it can no longer be screwed-off completely (so it can't be lost).



We carry all combinations of Markins ball heads, both the Regular (Right) and Special (Left) versions.

For more info about Markins Ball Heads click [HERE](#)

No VAT for European Pro's

If you are a pro (with a VAT ID), you don't need to pay the 16% VAT in the Pro Shop. Just include your complete VAT ID in the comment field when ordering. Orders outside the European Union are automatically VAT exempt.

NIKONIANS HYPERFOCAL TABLE T-SHIRTS

The Latest "Photo Tool" for the Nikonian who has everything.

Our 5.6 oz., 100% heavy pre-shrunk cotton, white T-shirt comes printed with an accurate hyperfocal table on the front and oriented upside-down so the wearer can easily refer to it.

Made with authentic Hanes® T-shirts ensures you'll be shooting in comfort. Makes a great conversation piece and sure to get a few laughs. Choose from digital or 35mm film tables and either feet or meters. Yours for \$19.99.

Add \$3.00 for 2X, 3X, or 4X.



Men's sizes: Small to 4X-Large

Ladies sizes: Small to 2X-Large

Kids sizes: Small to Large

For more information and to order please click here:

<http://www.cafepress.com/nikonians/383701>

Your purchase helps support our community.



Nikonian Workshops, Camaraderie & Learning

The Nikonians team has expanded its photo workshops! The tour and workshops at Cancun, Mexico and Helgoland Island, Germany are now over but there are still many opportunities coming in the months ahead. Visit some of the world's most fascinating locations, with ancient ruins and beautiful scenery. In addition, learn proven photography techniques from experienced members and share in the inspiration, in the company of Nikonians. To keep track of our plans visit www.greaterphoto.com frequently. ●

October 13 to 17, 2005: Bavarian Forest National Park

Bisons, Bears, Wolves, Lynx, Deer and Wild Boars

The Bavarian Forest NP offers great photo opportunities for the ambitious Nikon user, whether a beginner, intermediate or advanced amateur, with a strong interest in nature photography.

The bear enclosure offers shots with bears on trees, rocks or in water. The enclosures of wolves, wildcats and owls are also very suitable as no fences disturb the view. Despite these advantages, you have to be patient to achieve outstanding results - patience applies to all kinds of nature photography, though!

This workshop intends to give you a complete idea of what wildlife photography is all about. It is aimed at the amateur photographer who wants to learn all about wildlife equipment, exposure and composition. We will be on location in the best light and spend the mid-day with intense image critique sessions.

You will have the opportunity to show a small number of your photos in a digitally projected slide show. This benefits all of us by seeing how other people photograph and allows us to learn, change and expand our skills and ways of seeing throughout the workshop.

We have limited the number of participants to 8 to ensure each photographer receives as much individual instruction as is necessary. You will come away with a great set of images, an increased ability to take, and use your photos, and a memorable experience.

Visit www.greaterphoto.com for more information. ●

November 27 to December 3, 2005 Patagonia, Chile

Patagonia Nature Photography Safari

We will meet in Punta Arenas, Chile to begin an unforgettable safari into deepest South America. Amid the legendary Andes range we will traverse the pampas and large Chilean ranches to see the wonders of the Americas of the southern hemisphere. This is your chance to photograph the unique landscapes and wildlife of this area. The Straits of Magellan, Tierra del Fuego, penguin rookeries, pristine glacier lakes, the elusive South American Puma, and the colorful Gauchos tending their herds on the vast plains.

Group size is limited to 7 participants. You better hurry if you don't want to miss this rare opportunity.

Visit www.greaterphoto.com for more information. ●



April 2006: Cancun, Mexico Mayan Adventure

Sun, Pyramids, Wildlife, and Lovely Models

Fly into Cancun, Mexico where we will meet and tour the ancient lands of the Maya. We will be mobile and be traveling from site to site to take best advantage of exclusive access to the many Mayan sites during the best shooting times. You will get special access to these incredible and world class archeological structures that is rarely granted to even the most influential professional photographers. We have also arranged a fashion shoot with professional models on the pristine beaches of Cancun. This exciting tour is limited to 8 participants so reserve your spot early.

Visit www.greaterphoto.com for more information. ●

NIKON D70 USA Workshops

Nikonians is proud to introduce its first on-going series of workshops dedicated to the digital photographer and the Nikon D70 DSLR. We have strategically selected a number of cities in the U.S. to conduct a series of sessions through August, 2005. Take the time to learn how to access the power of your D70. Expert workshop presenters will teach you all there is to know about:

- exposure modes
- digital workflow
- auto focus settings
- using flash
- white balance settings
- exposure theory and metering systems
- and much, much more.

The general workshop topics are divided into: "The D70 In-depth",

"Advanced D70", and "i-TTL Workshop". The i-TTL workshop is suitable for those with SB-800 and/or SB-600 speedlights, regardless of which camera they may own. Cities on our list include: Seattle, Washington - Portland, Oregon - Reno, Nevada - Las Vegas, Nevada - Phoenix, Arizona - Los Angeles, San Diego, and San Francisco, California. And we have added more cities in the East and in Canada too.

You have the Nikon D70 and the passion to learn digital photography - let us help you master both! Each individual workshop is priced at \$95 USD. All three, when booked together at one location are \$260 USD.

Visit www.greaterphoto.com for more information. ●

NIKON D70 Europe Workshops

Similar workshops to those in the USA are being offered in France, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, and the UK from July through November of 2005.

Visit www.greaterphoto.com for detailed information. ●

Are you a card-carrying member of Nikonians?

Click [HERE](#) to find our more >



Bob Johnson

Nikonian of the Year - The Americas

In recognition of his outstanding commitment to the Nikonians community, his outstanding skills as a photographer, and his prolific contributions to the Nikonians forums. For his devotion to teaching and sharing his knowledge and skills with all members of the Nikonians community.

Introduced to photography early in life, after starting out with other brands, he has been exclusively using Nikon cameras for many years now. Early on, a pair of N8008s (F-801s) SLRs comprised the heart of his gear. He then moved to a pair of F100s, using Provia F and Velvia 50, as well as Kodak Ektachrome E100VS. During 2003 he made the leap jump into digital and now shoots with Nikon digital SLR's.

Bob is a pro who lives in Seattle Washington and is founding member of the Nikonians Workshops Team and the Nikonians Writers Guild. ●

Claus Brand

Nikonian Team Member of the Year

In recognition of his outstanding commitment to the Nikonians community as a moderator, and especially for his role in organizing, managing and leading the inaugural Nikonians Workshop with the photo expedition to Helgoland, Germany.

Claus is a freelance nature photographer living in Bonn, Germany. Having photographic experience since the age of 8, he soon focused on nature and wildlife photography, which are still his passion. For him, photography is an ART that he pursues in order to create an awareness of the great beauty and diversity of the worlds ecological treasures.

Being a Nikonian by heart, he shows his pride to support our community as a moderator of the Landscape and Wildlife forums and founding member of the Workshops Team. ●

Paul Fisher

Nikonian of the Year - Asia Pacific

In recognition of his outstanding commitment to the Nikonians community, sharing his experience as photographer, continuously helping to maintain civility and providing members with encouragement, sound critique and technical advice in the Picture Forums, with unchallenged dedication, patience, good humor and uncommon humbleness, setting an example of what the Nikonians spirit is all about.

Paul started photography in the mid 1970s with a Rolleiflex SL35. An obsessive photographer for some years, he got back to this passion when he bought his first Nikon (a F60), joined Nikonians and has never looked back. Paul lives in Perth, Western Australia, where he works as a civil engineer.

Paul is our Director of Community Relations and Moderator of A Picture I Took; Galleries Picture of the Week; Positive Critique & Constructive Technical Advice; 3rd Party Lenses; and Other Camera Systems & Formats. ●

Mark Eagles

Most Improved Photographer

In recognition of his excellent and fast acquired skills as a photographer, for the beauty of his images, and for the unselfish sharing of them and his knowledge path with members of the Nikonians community.

Mark has been a member of this community since 2002, but has shown giant steps in his advancement as a photographer most notably during 2004, becoming now a source of inspiration for fellow Nikonians.

Mark lives in Sydney, Australia. He began shooting with an F2, then a F75 and soon upgraded to a F100; currently he shoots with a D70. ●

Leonard Shepherd **Nikonian of the Year - Europe**

In recognition of his outstanding commitment to the Nikonians community, his in-depth knowledge and understanding of the theory and science of photography, his abundant contributions to the Nikonians forums, and his undeterred willingness to share his knowledge among all members of the Nikonians community.

A consummated semi-pro, Len lives in North Yorkshire, in the United Kingdom and shoots no less than 200 rolls of film per year with his F100, now recently upgraded to the F6. His main subjects are wildlife and landscape and is a fervent fan of Fuji slide films, namely Velvia 50, Velvia 100F, Astia; and as for negative film, NPS & NPH. ●

Lela Bouse-McCracken **Lady Nikonian of the Year**

In recognition of her outstanding commitment to the Nikonians community, as a moderator, contributor in the forums, and especially behind the scenes. For demonstrating exemplary administrative and people skills in fulfilling her role as Moderators Team Director.

A graduate of Oklahoma State University and currently residing in Oklahoma, US, Lela is photographer/photo editor for a daily newspaper. Prior to that she taught art for 14 years and continues to be a working artist (presently acrylics.) She always enjoyed shooting anything macro and all things nature. A Nikonian member since early 2002, while seeking information on the D100. She loves her Mac and her Nikons and promotes Nikonians every chance she gets. She currently is moderator of the Shooting Panoramas forum. Her signature line: "If you drop your camera into a river of molten lava, let it go, because, man, it's gone!" ●

Dr. James Robert Tomerlin **Nikonian Moderator of the Year**

In recognition of his outstanding commitment to the Nikonians community as a moderator, most prolific contributor to the forums, and a keen-eyed and constructive photo critic. For maintaining a high level of conviviality at all times, and for extending all new members a warm and cordial welcome, making their first impression of the community a most pleasant experience.

Bob started in photography in the early '70's after the birth of his first son. After virtually ignoring the camera for over 20 years, he started in again and rediscovered his love for the craft. He has been shooting Nikon for more than 5 years and now owns and proudly uses a F100 and a Fuji S2. Every now and then he sells prints at arts fairs, in the hope that his photography will someday be self-supporting. He and his wife, also as a hobby, train puppies for service as guide dogs for the blind. ●

Dr. Dinil Abeygunawardane **Meritorious Achievement Award**

In recognition of his outstanding personal strength of character, fortitude and relentless commitment to the welfare of his people following the Asian tsunami disaster.

Dinil has been a Nikonians member since 2002 and has shown himself to be a true Nikonian. Always amicable, courteous, generous in sharing and helping. Most appreciative of what the community is and offers. One can only imagine to what lengths he went in helping the victims of the tsunami, encountering and facing danger, and bearing pain and adversity with courage.

A self proclaimed intermediate photographer, Dinil lives in Colombo, Sri Lanka, and shoots with a FM10 and a F80. Last time we heard of an upgrade it was going to be a F100 in a trip to Singapore. ●



© MARSEL VAN OOSTEN

1st place Colour, "Quiver Tree Forest" **Marsel Van Oosten (marsel), The Netherlands**

© Nikonian: Marsel

It is with great pleasure that we celebrate the achievements of the Nikonians who chose to participate in the 2004 Nikonians Photo contest.

Nikonians was founded to share, learn and inspire amongst Nikon users, in a friendly and creative environment. We were delighted to find corporations sponsoring our contest with exciting prizes. To them, our high appreciation.

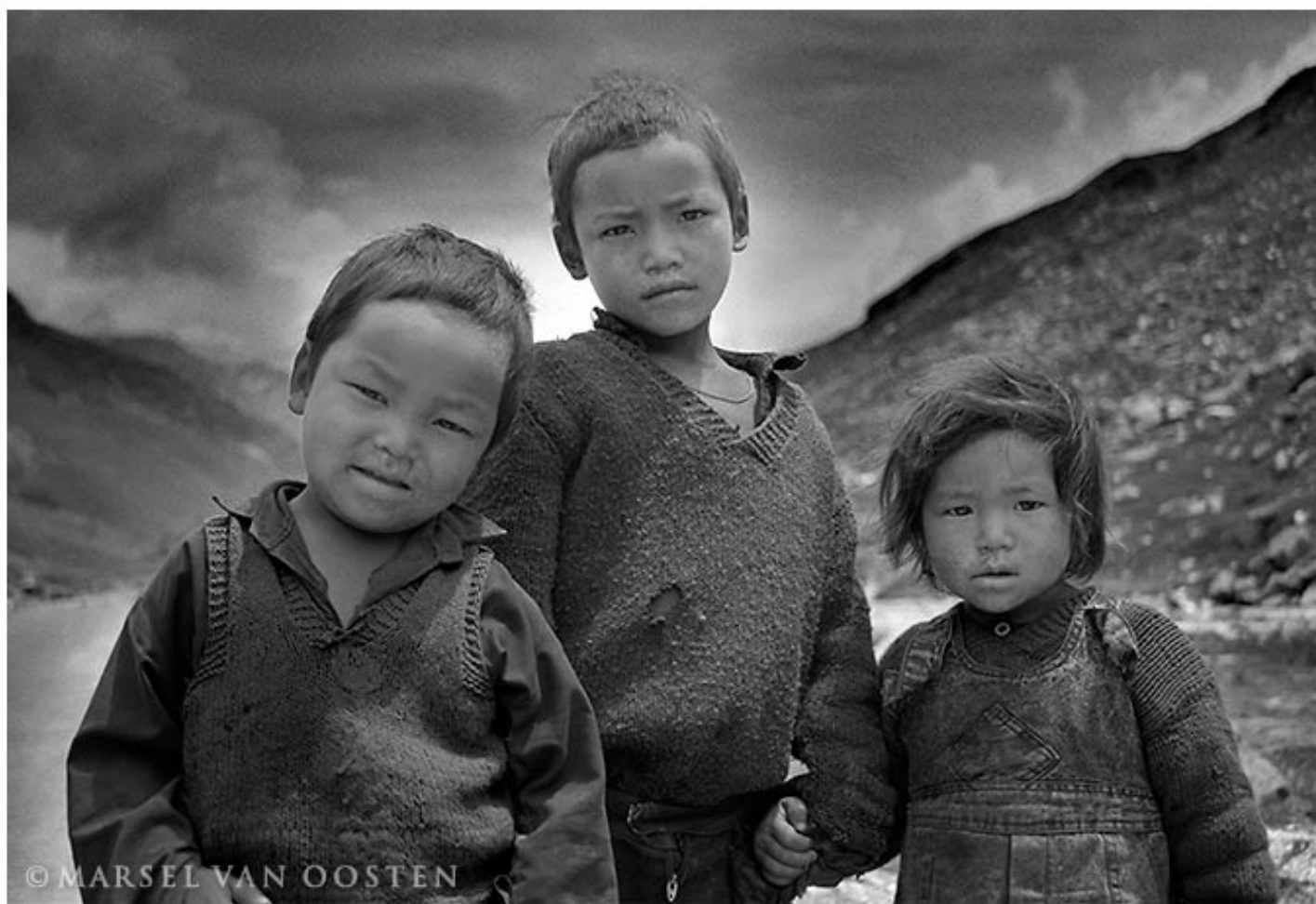
With over 600 entries to the contest, each of the single monthly winners in both the Color and Black & White categories was invited to enter the finals, either re-submitting the winning photograph or submitting a new one.

Nikonians decided to grant 1st, 2nd and 3rd place awards for 2004.

The panel of judges from the Nikonians Masters Society, composed of outstanding professionals and highly advanced amateurs around the globe, casted their votes. We are very happy to announce the winners of the Nikonians Photo Contest 2004, and to present you their outstanding images.

Our congratulations to all participants and to the winners.

The six winners of the 2004 Nikonians Photo Contest.



1st place Black & white, "A Girl with two Brothers"
Marsel Van Oosten (marsel), The Netherlands

© Nikonian: Marsel

Prizes were supplied by these generous sponsors:

- From [GretagMacBeth](#), an "Eye-One Photo" color management tool;
- Courtesy of [Adobe](#), a fully licensed copy of Photoshop CS (in the winners language and operating system);
- From [Nik Multimedia](#), two copies of Color Efex Pro 2.0 Professional Photoshop Plug-In-Filters;
- And from [Wacom](#), two Intuos3 A5 tablets.

See page 14 for interviews with the five winners by fellow Nikonian Paul Fisher

Prize Winners of the 2004 Nikonians Annual Photo Contest.

2nd place Colour, "*Busy as a Bee*"

Dan LaRusso (dclarhorn), United States



© Nikonian: dclarhorn

3rd place Colour, "*Bridges*"

Miquel Teixeira (migpower), Portugal



© Nikonian: migpower

Prize Winners of the 2004 Nikonians Annual Photo Contest.

2nd place Black & white, "Legs"
Rob Cruse (anitasm), Australia



© Nikonian: anitasm

3rd place Black & white, "Anna's Eyes"
Jeroen Krol (J_Krol), The Netherlands



© Nikonian: J Krol

“When I took the shot I knew it was going to be a special one. A great subject in great light - all the ingredients were there.” **Marsel Van Oosten**



First place, colour and black & white

Marsel Van Oosten
(marsel)

QUIVERTREE FOREST

Q: The most striking thing about this picture is the great quality of the light. Your comment on the picture says that no colour balance change was applied, so was the light really like this? Did you have to wait for the conditions to be just right, or were you lucky?

A: The light really was like this, only slightly less warm. I always shoot NEF + jpeg basic. For the NEFs it doesn't matter what white balance setting you use as you can change it afterwards, but for the jpegs it does. I like the jpegs to look nice because I use them later when I get home to make the selection. So even though I shoot NEF I always try to set an appropriate white balance setting. In this case I set the white balance to Shade, which works as if you are shooting with an 81B warm up filter.

I spent two days at this location, which is located in the south of Namibia. Before I left for the trip I already knew this would be a very photogenic location, but it wasn't until I arrived that I saw how beautiful it really was. So after a gorgeous sunset and a stunning sunrise I decided to stay another day.

I always carefully plan my trips as they are often once in a lifetime events in far away countries and I don't want to waste a single opportunity. That means doing a lot of research on when to go, where to go and why to go. My wife and I made a list of places we wanted to visit and for me to photograph. With landscape photography most of the time you only use the first two and the last two hours of light, so I planned everything around that. I tried to have at least one sunset and one sunrise at each of the most important locations. All driving was done during the day, when the sun was too high and the light too harsh to do any serious shooting.

Was I lucky? You never know what the light is going to do, so there always is some luck involved. Other than that, it's all in your hands. Being at the right place at the right time is essential for this kind of photography and you have full control over that. By choosing to visit Namibia during the rainy season

for instance, I was certain to get a decent amount of clouds in the sky from time to time. Would I have gone during peak season, I would have gotten nicer temperatures (less hot) but boring blue skies in every shot.

Q: What can you tell us about quivertrees?

A: The Quivertree (*Aloe Dichotoma*) appears over a large area of southern Namibia and the northern Cape, usually on steep rocky slopes. Its name refers to its supposed use by the Bushmen for making the quivers for their arrows - the inside of a dead branch consists of only a light, fibrous heart which is easily gouged out to leave a hollow tube.

Q: You used an ultra-wide zoom for this picture. What is your advice for people starting out with such a wide lens?

A: Whereas a telelens pulls the background towards the camera and compresses perspective, a wide angle pushes everything backwards. With an ultra wide zoom such as the 12-24 DX I used for this shot, this is even more so. Most important thing with this kind of lens is to make sure you have some foreground interest in your shot to lead your eye into the shot and make it feel three-dimensional. Without foreground interest you often end up with a distant scene where everything is equally small in the frame and there is nothing to pull you into the image. You can use either a large rock, a flower, a fence, anything goes.

Also with wide angles the perspective changes dramatically once you tilt the camera. If straight lines are what you are after, then you should try to keep the camera completely level.

Due to the wide angle of view wide angle lenses are prone to flare, so keep your lens hood on whenever possible.

Q: You must have been happy with the picture to submit it. But did you realise it was a winner?

A: When I took the shot I knew it was going to be a special one. A great subject in great light - all the ingredients were there. I didn't realise it was a potential winner until I got back from the trip and for the first time saw the NEF. Whereas most of the time raw files straight from a digital camera look dull and soft, this one already jumped at me.

Continued next page

“It was a very special moment being so far away from civilization, two extremely different cultures at the roof of the world.” **Marsel Van Oosten**



GIRL WITH TWO BROTHERS

Q: Can you tell us the story of how this picture came to be?

A: A couple of years ago I went on a mountainbike trip in the Himalayas of northern India. The main goal of this trip was to ride on the highest motorable road in the world at 18,380ft/5600m. At high altitudes the lack of oxygen is a problem - even talking becomes tiring, let alone cycling. To keep the weight as low as possible I only took an F50 with a standard Nikkor 35-80 kit lens in a waist bag when cycling. There were days that I was only going up, but on this particular day I had a really long descend of over 36 miles. Half way down there was some sort of valley where I saw these three children. I was both exhausted and surprised to see people at this altitude, but I'm sure they were much more surprised seeing me. A skinny tall white guy with tight shorts, a helmet and mirror sunglasses, I must have looked like a creature from outer space. I immediately saw the beauty of the scene, of the intense look on their faces, the worn clothes, the scenery. So I grabbed my camera and got down to their eye level and took a few shots. They followed every move I made. It was a very special moment being so far away from civilization, two extremely different cultures at the roof of the world. Apart from being a pretty image, this shot will always be a special one for me.

Q: I see that it was taken with the most basic of equipment. can you tell us how much Nikon technology influences your photography, and how much is it influenced by an inner light?

A: My first SLR was a Nikon, and that's the main reason why I still choose Nikon now. Photography is about seeing, the camera is just a tool. You can take great pictures with an amateur camera and you can take lousy shots with pro equipment. New technology offers new possibilities and therefore influences my photography, but the very essence of my photography is how I see things. The biggest influence on my photography is me. Nikon nor Canon nor any other brand can change that.

Q: The sky and clouds and the quality of light are all important aspects of this picture. Can you describe

the technical process you used to achieve this amazing result?

A: The original image was shot on colour film, but I didn't like the colours very much and found them distracting. That's why I then made a desaturated version which much better suited the scene. Each time I looked at the shot again, I ended up taking more colour out, until I eventually decided to turn it into a bw.

The original sky wasn't quite as dramatic as it is now. I isolated it from the rest of the shot by masking it and increased the contrast a good bit. And after that I dodged and burned the clouds locally.

About the Photographer

Q: How did you come into photography, and how did you find Nikonians?

A: I bought my first SLR, a Nikon F401, some 15 years ago to take with me on a vacation. I was a lousy photographer at the time - shot only auto everything and didn't have a clue what I was doing. Five years later my photographs were much better, but I still didn't know anything about the technique behind it. I realized that in order to improve I should learn to use apertures and shutter speeds, so I bought a copy of Practical Photography, a UK magazine. That turned out to be the accelerator for my photography. Suddenly everything started making sense and I started experimenting with all my new knowledge. As a result my images got a lot better, which made me even more enthusiastic. When I was planning for our honeymoon to Tanzania a couple of years ago, I realized I had to buy a long lens in order to be able to shoot animals from a great distance. Long lenses are expensive, so I did a lot of research on the internet. And that's when I found out about Nikonians. I became a member and posted the long lens question. A few days later I decided to buy the 80-400VR and it has been a good choice thanks to the tips and advice I got at Nikonians. When I returned from my honeymoon I started posting pictures and I immediately loved the honest critique and feedback I got on them. I have been a faithful member ever since and enjoy every moment of it.

Continued next page

“ I try to anticipate where they'll be, pick a spot and patiently wait for my subject to come to me. ” Dan LaRusso

Q: Quivertree Forest was taken in Namibia, and your other winner was taken in the Himalaya - how much time do you spend travelling? When travelling, how do you prepare and equip yourself?

A: I don't spend half as much time travelling as I would like to. It is a very big hobby and the great thing is that it combines so well with photography. Officially I have 24 vacation days in a year, so that is about the amount of time I spend travelling.

Like I said earlier, I spend a great deal of time planning my trips. Fortunately, I have a lovely wife that likes playing travel agent and she does all the initial research, the planning, the reservations, everything. We discuss together what we want to do and see, and she just makes it happen. We tend to travel to far away places, places that you don't just simply return to if you didn't get the shots you wanted. Planning is everything.

As for the equipment; I don't have tons of gear, so I usually just take it all with me. I always clean everything before I leave and make sure that I have enough batteries with me to last the whole trip.

Q: What best describes your photographic style: Do you deliberately previsualise and seek out images, or do you capture them when they present themselves?

A: I hardly ever previsualise images, but I do spend a lot of time determining where I want to go and what there is to photograph. I usually decide at the location what I will do and how I will do it.

Q: What are your personal and photographic ambitions?

A: My personal ambition is to become financially independent before my 40th birthday and then travel the world with my wife. My photographic ambition is to become a world famous nature photographer. Now why are you laughing?

Q: Anything else you'd like to add?

Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication.



Second place, colour
Dan LaRusso (dclarhorn),
Unites States

BUSY AS A BEE

Q: I see this was shot at the Kennilworth aquatic gardens in Washington. Can you tell us about this place, and what it's like shooting there?

A: Kennilworth Aquatic Gardens is a 700 acre natural oasis amid the congested urban landscape of Washington, D.C. Consisting of gardens, ponds and marsh areas. It's relatively little-known in comparison with D.C.'s famous monuments and museums, and even it's natural cousins, the National Botanical Gardens and the National Arboretum.

The main attraction of the gardens is its several acres of ponds that come alive in spring with water lilies and lily pads. Later in spring and throughout a good part of the summer, the large lotus plant blooms, drawing its biggest crowds of nature lovers and photographers.

The time to get there is early in the morning. Aside from the good light the early hours provide, it's very quiet and the only other people you run into are a handful of fellow photo enthusiasts.

Q: Can you talk about the equipment you used for the shot?

A: I shot this with my Nikon N90s camera, just two months before converting to digital. The camera was loaded with Provia 400F slide film. The lens was the Tamron 75-300mm f4-5.6 lens. I don't use it for its telephoto range (preferring the older Nikkor 70-210mm f4), but for its excellent macro feature. For this shot, I added the Nikon 5T close-up lens. Aside from the surprisingly good results this combination is capable of delivering, using macro at 300mm gives me a large working distance, which comes in handy when shooting subjects like bees!

I use a tripod for all my macro work.

Q: Can you describe your technique - what did you do that was special to capture the excellent light and the incredible sharpness of the bee?

A: Most importantly, I shot this around 7:30 am. The quality of the light then is most beneficial for nature subjects. Also, capturing subjects like bees or butterflies on film can be quite frustrating if you try to follow them.

“ I shot it at an aperture of 5.6, so the bee had to be in the perfect plane to be in focus. I got off around 8 shots and this one was the best one. So timing and luck did play its part. ” Dan LaRusso

In this case, I pre-selected my framing, shutter speed, aperture, metering, exposure and focus so I was ready to fire away when I saw the bee in my viewfinder.

Q: Did you previsualise this shot, or was it fortuitous?

A: I absolutely pre-visualized this shot. I wanted to take the viewer into the private world of the bee but also show its surroundings, which is why I shot through a gap leaving the petals prominent in the shot. I had watched how the bees hovered inside the large blooms and thought that was indeed the shot to be had that day. Luckily, there were a lot of bees about, so I figured correctly that I wouldn't have to wait too long using the technique described above. I was at this bloom for maybe 5 minutes before the bee came by.

The tricky part was that I purposely wanted a shallow DOF so the focus would be on the bee. I shot it at an aperture of 5.6, so the bee had to be in the perfect plane to be in focus. I got off around 8 shots and this one was the best one. So timing and luck did play its part.

Q: Is it true that you cloned out the thread?

A: Ha! I'll never tell! Actually, as well-documented at Nikonians, Bob Tomerlin, Jerome Julius and I have an intense training program for our bees. Hovering over this spot for my picture was a cinch for this bee.

About the Photographer

Q: How did you come into photography, and how did you find Nikonians?

A: Growing up, I always liked to draw and paint and I loved my art classes in school. But it wasn't until my parents gave me a Konica TC SLR camera for my birthday while I was in college, that I got into photography. Once I discovered all the things you could manipulate to get different exposures and effects, I was hooked on it.

I remained a part-time enthusiast for 20 years, but being diagnosed with cancer in December of 2000 changed everything. While going through some tough times during 6 months of chemotherapy, I decided that I would spend whatever time I had left pursuing some of the things I was most passionate about. At the forefront was photography.

I started doing more research and learning than ever before. After all, I had a lot of time being home and dealing with the effects of my treatments. While

searching the internet one day for a particular topic, I came across Nikonians. I quickly realized that this was the most informative and friendliest place on the web.

I have to thank Bo, JRP and the Nikonians community for getting me through some dark days back then. The result was that in January, 2004, I set up my fine art photography side business, which I am currently and continually trying to grow.

Q: What best describes your photographic style: Do you deliberately previsualise and seek out images, or do you capture them when they present themselves?

A: I have wrestled with this question for a long time. I am interested in a lot of styles and subjects and I consider myself an artist. In that regard, I don't want to create any limits to my vision and style. I do like to create art, so I guess I'm trying to do that with my photography, no matter what I'm shooting. I'm not a photojournalist.

I love the outdoors, so I do tend to spend a lot of time photographing nature. I find myself experimenting more and more with alternative views and abstractions.

I pre-visualize when I can, especially on how I want to handle the light in a given scene. But, I have to be spontaneous too, especially with unpredictable subjects in nature.

Q: What are your personal and photographic ambitions?

A: I would like to grow both technically and emotionally as an artist to the point where I can adequately express my feelings through my work.

I would like to leave a mark in the artistic community as someone who contributed to the photographic field by way of the quality of my work and my efforts to help others.

As part of this, I would like to reach to the point where I can devote all my time to my fine art print photography business, and photography in general. Yep, that means quitting my day job some day!

Q: Anything else you'd like to add?

Thanks once again to Bo and JRP for this great resource called Nikonians and for the honour of being selected in this contest .

Continued next page

“I’d like to think of my personal ‘style’ as casual images in black and white with a 50 or 35mm lens, with the subject somebody or something everyday or familiar.” Rob Cruse



2nd place – black & white
Rob Cruse (anitasm)
Australia

LEGS

Q: You are well known for your pictures of children, but this shot is very different from most of your work. Tell us how it came to be.

A: The inspiration for this image came from many images by a photographer called Andrea Francolini, a contemporary Australian based photographer who has a great talent for taking images that emphasise shadow and form, often taken in the street and concentrating on the legs and shadows of passers-by. This inspiration had stuck with me for some time, and I had been looking out for an opportunity to try something along this line for myself. Although this image is indeed of a child (my oldest son), I regard it more as an image that is a play of light, shadow and movement rather than as an image of a child.

Q: Did you pre-visualise this shot, or did it present itself to you?

A: I had pre-visualised this shot for some time, although the sense of movement was more than I had perhaps imagined. When the opportunity did present itself one afternoon at a friends house - I had the camera and black and white film (couldn't image using anything else for an image like this), it was the right time of day and the balcony was facing the setting sun (West Seattle on a summer afternoon facing the Olympic peninsula). It was just a matter of coaxing Ben to run past me at about the right distance away, pre-focus and shoot. He passed by about 5 times before he had had enough. I had no idea what image I had captured, or if any would be any good. My friends thought I was mad; wasting film with my camera pointed to the ground right into the glare of the sun as it reflected off the balcony!

Q: Can you talk about the equipment you used for

the shot?

A: The camera was a Nikon N70/F70 with Kodak T400CN (C-41) black and white film using a Nikkor 35-70/2.8 zoom lense. The camera was set to program mode; I knew the film had tremendous latitude and I didn't want to second guess the camera with the exposure.

Q: Can you describe your technique - what did you do that was special to capture this shot?

A: Keeping the idea of the image in my mind after being inspired by Andrea Francolini, then taking advantage of the opportunity to create the image is probably what stands out for me. In terms of technique, I used the film that was available, but given a choice would always have picked black and white. Pre-focussing then coaxing Ben to do what I had in mind was really the only technique that I used. Having said that, convincing a 3 year old to do ANYTHING at 4pm in the afternoon requires a pretty special technique :-)

About the Photographer

Q: How did you come into photography, and how did you find Nikonians?

A: I have become progressively more interested in photography over about the past 6 years, with a couple of events that really solidified photography as part of my life. The first event was the arrival of our first child about 4 years ago. I now had something to take pictures of other than landscapes, the dog and my long-suffering wife. The second event was making contact with some publishers last year that has resulted in a steady stream of editorial photography. Being able to take photographs as part of earning a living has provided another reason to pick up a camera or open Photoshop on the laptop pretty much every day; definitely exciting. I discovered Nikonians about 4 years ago, although it seems like yesterday. Like many people, I stumbled on Nikonians while researching something Nikon related on the net. There has been no looking back since.

Q: What best describes your photographic style: Do you deliberately pre-visualise and seek out images, or do you capture them when they present themselves?

A: I'd like to think of my personal 'style' as casual

Continued next page

“ Well, at the time, (10 AM) it had a lot of fog/mist due the river and the light was kind of hard to setup because there was a strong sun. ” Miguel Teixeira

images in black and white with a 50 or 35mm lens, with the subject somebody or something everyday or familiar. Shadows and contrast tend to be my focus of my personal images, and if a candid person can be in the image all the better. Basically street photography I guess but not of the 'in-your-face' variety, perhaps verging sometimes on documentary. My Nikon of choice is an F100 with the vertical grip; I have big hands and take about 75% of my images in portrait, so the grip is something I can't live without. I have a D70 that is basically used for editorial pics in a studio setting and illustrations for work/business purposes.

As regard to visualising images, I tend to take the camera along when I am going somewhere where I know I will find what I like to photograph; bold forms, contrasts and shadows. Then it is matter of working with what is around me.

Q: What are your personal and photographic ambitions?

A: In terms of photography, Weddings are definitely something of interest for the future. I enjoy taking photographs of people and (hope) I have developed some sort of 'style' that other people might find interesting and agreeable. There is no urgent timeframe on this one, but I think in the next 10 years it will definitely be something I try my hand at. The catch as far as I can see would be to continue to develop a style, then stick to it - don't be swayed by what you think a 'wedding photo' should look like. Personal ambitions are to continue building a management consulting business my wife and I started with some friends late last year, and to keep having fun with our little family of 3 boys (4 years, 2 years and 2 months).



3rd place – colour
Miguel Teixeira (migpower)
Portugal

BRIDGES

Q: I see this was shot at the Expo park in Lisbon. Can you tell us about this place, and what it's like shooting there?

A: Expo Park was build for the 1998 ExpoWorld Fair, after the Fair it remains one of the best places

in Lisbon to walk around. Since it is on the right shore of the Tagus River and close to one of the biggest bridges in Europe (almost 10 miles and you can see it all the way), it has different types of light that any photographer can use. Plus due the architecture of the buildings the Park offers other remarkable options as well. Look for it in here <http://www.parquedasnacoes.pt> and get a visit to the Oceanarium

Q: Can you talk about the equipment you used for the shot?

A: A Nikon D70 with a Nikkor AF-S 24-120 VR was used. It's my base setup since I always carry the camera with me and the AF-S 24-120 VR give plenty of options. No filters were used (besides the eternal UV). No Tripod or monopod was used. Compact Flash Sandisk Extreme II 512 MB

Q: Can you describe your technique - what did you do that was special to capture shot?

A: Well, at the time, (10 AM) it had a lot of fog/mist due the river and the light was kind of hard to setup because there was a strong sun. Nevertheless, I took different shots until I got more or less comfortable with it – After setting up the light I was concentrating more on the plasticity of the photo then on the tech. side. I remember that was hard to check on the monitor.

Q: Did you pre-visualise this shot, or did it present itself to you?

A: I had taken some shoots minutes earlier, same environment but with different people, different views. When I saw the Bike coming I just went for the best. I followed it with the camera and shot.

I was lucky!

Q: Although it was entered in the colour category, this picture is almost monochrome. Can you tell us about the colours that were really there, and how you achieved the final effect?

Continued next page

“ Make people feel something (good or bad) when they look to a picture. But make them feel! ” Miguel Teixeira

A: Hmmm... These are the real colours. The only action was the adjustment the levels a bit. I really like to work with this type of light, the mist and fog just give it an unreal feel. Of course you can not correct it very much since it's already on the limit, if you do, you end up with a bad picture. In fact you have to underexpose it by 1 stop factor to be workable and the D70 does it by "default".

The major differences are the time of the day you take the picture; it's more cold colour in the morning and warm in the afternoon.

About the Photographer

Q: How did you come into photography, and how did you find Nikonians?

A: The first time I looked through a camera I was aged four (a Nikon F from my old man), and I still remember the image of the road on the viewfinder and the spanking he give to me because I picked it up.

Both parents are photographers so, on my sixth birthday I got my first camera, an Agfamatic 50 – type 126 film. From that point on, photography was on my life, even my first job out of the family business was on the darkroom of a Pro Lab as a Durst Man.

Life went a different road many many years ago since photography does not provide enough support to make a living, at least in Portugal. I'm fortunate enough to make a living as a Network Engineer and pay for the hobby, within the limits that my lovely wife allowed of course ;-) – and she supports me!

My first Digital camera was a Sony Mavica FD-73 with 1.3 MP in 1998 (that cost as much as the D70 today!!) and had diskettes!

In 2001 jumped to the Cool side of Life with the Coolpix 990 that still rocks as the backup and sneaky camera. Last year went for the D70 and just days ago I bought a second hand D2H from a fellow Nikonian so I could reduce the NAS to a manageable level.

The Nikonians addiction shows up with the D70 purchase and a Google search for info and it just gets worse and worse. It's my default page on the browsers....

Q: What best describes your photographic style: Do you deliberately pre-visualise and seek out images, or do you capture them when they present themselves?

A: Nope, I do capture when I see it (if I can, most of the time I don't). I'm not fortunate to be blessed with the capacity of the "see it" before it really shows up. It's more on the side of "sense it" may be one second before it vanishes....

Q: What are your personal and photographic ambitions?

A: Photography has a paramount to myself and that is; "Make people feel something (good or bad) when they look to a picture. But make them feel!"

Now in personal terms, due to my work I travel quite a bit and that has allowed me to be in touch with people and make them interact through photography. In photographic terms, I must try to arrange some time to learn how to work with the Paintshop or Photoshop, while improving on what I learn with my fellows Nikonians.

I'm more a street man with some nature photography. I wish I could do nude photography some day.... The Woman is so beautiful.

Q: Anything else you'd like to add?

A: It's a strange time, my parents just closed their 40 year old photo and studio shop business last week. Digital has changed everything - as a Techie person I know inside that it does happen sooner or later, but when it bangs on your door.... Yeap it does hurt.

My old man has his fingers burned with the chemicals (oh yes I still have the books with the chemical formulas), Mom burned her eyes with the millions of negatives retouched. All that life so I was fortunate enough to find good people that for some unknown reason appreciate one of my photos and make me talk about it.

Sincerely, thank you Nikonians.
Mig

“At night I dream of becoming a travel photographer. Then, when I wake up, reality hits me and I know that making a living from photography isn't easy.”

Jeroen Krol



3rd place – black & white
Jeroen Krol (J_Krol)
The Netherlands

ANNA'S EYES

Q: This shot is very different from most pictures of children that we see. Tell us how it came to be.

A: My girlfriend was holding our little, 5 month old niece Anna, while she was standing in front of a window. This afternoon, I had been taking photos of both Anna and my girlfriend. I saw the reflection in Anna's eyes, got my Close Up lens and took two shots.

You could see little Anna looking outside. I think it lasted for a minute or so and I was glad I captured it in a different way. I knew that, if it her eyes were in focus, these were the good ones on the roll of 36. What makes the image, I think, is the simplicity and the fact that one can see what Anna was seeing, through the reflection.

Q: Did you pre-visualise this shot, or did it present itself to you?

A: I wish I had pre-visualised it in B&W at that moment, but I didn't. After I got the slide film back, I started scanning. Only as soon as I saw the result on my PC, I saw the opportunity of an extreme B&W image. It's really extreme B&W, there's almost no shade of grey to be found. After opening it on PS, I was ready within 10 minutes, as I had to leave. On the coloured version of the photo, the iris is more visible. I haven't been able to retain that detail in the B&W version.

Q: Can you talk about the equipment you used for the shot?

A: I used my F80 with a Tamron 28-200 XR coupled with a B+W Close Up lens. I used Fuji Sensia 400, which I scanned on the Nikon Coolscan V. I handheld my camera, no time for fancy tripods! On the PC, I used Levels, Curves and USM, after picking the right channel to work on (I think it was the green channel).

Q: Can you describe your technique - what did you do that was special to capture shot? In particular, how did you achieve the extreme sharpness in the picture?

A: As I said, I handheld my camera, holding my breath to get it sharp. The depth of field was extremely shallow, about 1 cm. Pure concentration

and some luck made both exposure sharp at the exact right spot. In PS I sharpened only the area that needed to be sharp. I didn't want the grain of the un-sharp area to be effected by the unsharp mask.

About the Photographer

Q: How did you come into photography, and how did you find Nikonians?

A: For some time I just made pictures without being interested enough to really learn about photography. When in '99 I went to Vietnam for a 3 week bicycle holiday, I bought an Nikon F301 (2020) from a friend. From that moment on, I started travelling and feeling the joy of photography. Some years later, I think in '02, I bought an F70, again second hand, again from the same friend. He pointed me towards Nikonians. I found the site to be very useful, as I was preparing for a trip around the world for 9 months. It helped me to pick the right camera (F80), lenses, film and other small paraphernalia. I really was prepared when I left for our journey. I had read a lot of magazines and books and had been practicing. The world trip brought me 4500 photo's and from then on, I was an addict.

BTW, I regularly visited Nikonians while being abroad and I got my silver membership from out of an Brazilian internet café!

Q: What best describes your photographic style: Do you deliberately pre-visualise and seek out images, or do you capture them when they present themselves?

A: I love simplicity, bold colours (I think because I'm a bit colour blind) and B&W. I still find it hard to pre-visualise, but I am improving on that part. I think I'm better at recognizing images in the world around me and then make the best of it. This is one aspect where I really want to improve. Lately, I tend to prepare shooting on a location and it helps. On the other hand, especially on my travels, I love to capture my feeling of seeing something for the very first time.

I know that Nikonians in the first place is about (photographic) equipment and technique, but I am sure that anybody can improve his photos more by concentrating on technique and creativity, than by

Continued next page



Photo Exhibits, etc.

concentrating on his (new?) equipment. Now, if only this d*#m NAS wouldn't be killing us!

Q: What are your personal and photographic ambitions?

A: I aim to keep getting better. I want a better 'hit ratio', i.e. a more decent percentage of (really) good photo's. I've noticed that since I've gone digital, I've become a bit lazy, thinking that I can always re-shoot to get the photo I'm after. I noticed that the 'hit ratio' has gotten worse and I'm working to bend the curve in the right direction. I'm thinking about following a course to become more creative, but I also have a wish list containing a wide-angle and a decent telephoto zoom...

Of course, like most of us, at night I dream of becoming a (travel) photographer. Then, when I wake up, reality hits me and I know that making a living from photography isn't easy.

Q: Anything else you'd like to add?

A: Not to drive people away from Nikonians, but to learn about your own photography and receive comments, visit places like Usefilm.com and Naturephotographers.net for almost the same positive attitude you find on Nikonians.

And: Learn, play and enjoy! ●

Be sure and check out the latest Nikonians & Nikon news with frequent updates from the imaging and photo industry with a Nikonian touch. With over 40,000 visitors per day and a team of over 40 photographer/news gatherers you're sure to be kept well informed. <http://blog.nikonians.org/>

USA

Mac Design Conference & Digital Photography Expo

The Southeast's premier digital educational event developed especially for design and imaging professionals, with more digital photography training than ever before.

Sponsored by Adobe Systems Incorporated.

21 Jun 05 to 23 Jun 05

Tampa Convention Center

Tampa, Florida

Info at www.macdesignconference.com

"The Eyes of History 2005"

An Exhibition of Award-Winning

Photographs by White House

Photojournalists.

Showcasing the work of the nation's most distinguished group of photojournalists

– the White House News Photographers' Association.

21 May 05 to 20 Jun 05

Corcoran Gallery of Art

Washington, DC

Info at www.corcoran.org

Images viewable at www.whnpsa.org

"Diversity"

The Institute of Photographic Technology

Exhibit showcasing the aesthetic beauty of

the scientific image. Running in conjunction

with the conference: Celebrating the

Diversity of Photographic Imaging at RMIT

University Melbourne.

25 May 05 to 19 Jun 05

80 Gold Street Studios

Collingwood VIC 3066

Info at www.goldstreetstudios.com.au

JAPAN

"Yukio Tabuchi"

Exhibit of works by famed Japanese nature and landscape photographer Hotaka Tabuchi.

23 Apr 05 to 12 Jun 05

Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography

1-13-3 Mita Meguro-ku

Tokyo, Japan

Info at www.syabi.com

NETHERLANDS

World Press Photo 2005

Launch of the traveling exhibit of the winning photographs for the 2005 World Press Photo Contest.

25 Apr 05 to 19 Jun 05

Oude Kerk

Oudekerksplein 23

Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Info at www.worldpressphoto.nl/index.php?option=com_calendar&task=view&catid=95&Itemid=83

FRANCE

"The Walls of No Man's Land: Palestine"

Exhibition of the Henri Cartier-Bresson Award 2003 winner, Magnum photojournalist Larry Towell.

15 Apr 05 to 6 Aug 05

Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson

2, impasse Lebourg

75014 Paris

Info at www.henricartierbresson.org/index.en.htm

GERMANY

"Martin Munkacsi: Think While You Shoot!"

First retrospective of one of the most important photographers of the 20th century - who shaped the beginnings of modern photojournalism, and inspired the likes of Henri Cartier Bresson.

15 Apr 05 to 24 Jul 05

Internationales Haus der Photographie, Deichtorhallen

Hamburg, Germany

Info at www.deichtorhallen.de

Check out the latest exhibits in the Calendar by clicking [here](#)

Nikonian Webring

The Official Nikonians Webring

We have set up a Nikonians Webring for all of you with your own photo website. Increase your traffic and get reviewed by the Nikonians Team. Soon, the Nikonians Webring Website of the Month will be featured on our homepage.

<http://www.nikonians.org/ringlink/index.html>

We only accept personal websites owned by *Nikonians*, that is, you must be a member of the Nikonians community prior to registering your site in the webring and we do not accept commercial listings. ●



Real world D2X usage in the hands of a professional.

By Allan Schroeder (*rutherfordphoto*)

I first got my hands on a D2X in October 2004. A quick session with the camera revealed Nikon had managed to improve on an already perfect D2H body. Early in January I had a chance to shoot with a production model, and all indications were that this was going to be an awesome camera. Noise was no longer an issue, and the image quality was second to none. For anyone currently using a D2H, the transition was going to be very easy.

Camera controls are identical, and the menu layout is almost identical. A nice improvement to the menu is an easier to read text, and an additional recent settings menu, that keeps track of the last 10 items you have changed, making common changes easier, and faster. The CF door modification is an improvement over the D2H. The door now pops open when depressing the button, a true one fingered (or thumb) operation. The door opens a few degrees further, allowing easier access when inserting or removing a card. The modification to the vertical AF-ON button will be a welcome improvement to photographers who are wearing gloves.

The D2X has already changed my shooting habits in less than two months. Due to the quality and size of file that can be delivered, every effort is made to attain an excellent image.

This review will not cover the technical details about the camera. They are available at Nikon's various corporate websites. Instead, this review will concentrate on the areas that have been improved the most, and a users opinion on some new features.

1 Image Quality

After having compared 35mm Velvia 100F Slides, and NEF files from the camera, to include making 11x14 prints, the images from the D2X are cleaner, AND sharper! I also compared the D2X image files to scans from 6 x 4.5, and they are very comparable. This is the camera that has finally come closest to convincing me I can drop my need to shoot 35mm film. I will soon be listing my Medium Format equipment in the classifieds.



Specs: Nikon D2X
Nikon AF-S VR 70-200mm
Aperture f/11
Shutter 1/13
ISO 100

“ The D2X has already changed my shooting habits in less than two months. ”

Image Quality, *Continued*



Specs: Nikon D2X
Nikon AF 85mm f/1.4
Aperture f/5.6
Shutter 1/100
ISO 100

2 Noise

As a firm believer in pre-setting white balance and nailing exposures in-camera, noise has rarely been as big a problem for me with any of my D2H's. My preferred method is my Sekonic L-358 light meter, and the camera's histogram. Given the accuracy of the new Colour Matrix II Meter, I find myself using the



Specs: Nikon D2X
Nikon AF 85mm f/1.4
Aperture (800) f/1.4, (HI-1) f/2, (HI-2) f/2.8
Shutter 1/400
ISO 800, HI-1 and HI-2

Continued next page

“ I The Auto White Balance is extremely accurate. Nikon has a winner here, and this camera should keep the Nikon camp happy for years. ”

hand-held meter less often. These are three samples, with NR at normal, ISO 800, HI-1, and HI-2. I was very impressed with HI-2, as they can easily be sent to an editor without requiring further reduction.

3 High Speed Crop

What at first struck me as a gimmick turned out to be a useful feature with only one drawback. The ease of turning on/off combined with the high frame rate makes it an easy choice, especially when shooting sports or wildlife. My only dislike about the HSC mode is it renders my ultra-wide DX lenses useless.



Specs: Nikon D2X with High Speed Crop
Nikon AF-S VR 200-400mm
Aperture f/4
Shutter 1/1000
ISO 200

About the Author:

Allan Schroeder is an award-winning British Columbia freelance photographer specializing in editorial, commercial, and sports photography. He is a Nikonian Team Member and moderates several forums.

4 Auto White Balance

The Auto White Balance is extremely accurate. When shooting landscape, the usual method has been to set the White Balance to Cloudy-3. The challenges faced in setting up to shoot high speed action indoors under the complex lighting conditions presented by a hockey arena are now much easier to handle. My previous approach at the hockey arena was pre-set the white balance. In either of these situations, the D2X Auto White Balance has proved to be consistently reliable. With other images, it has become one less thing to process in Nikon Capture.



Specs: Nikon D2X
Nikon AF 85mm f/1.4
Aperture f/1.4
Shutter 1/400
ISO 800,

5 Conclusion

This is a camera that will streamline my photography. I have one body that will accomplish all my goals, whether shooting commercially, or sporting events. Nikon has a winner here, and this camera should keep the Nikon camp happy for many years. ●

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<http://blog.nikonians.org/>



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On Location with Nikonian David Haynes

A behind the scenes look at the making of "Insects From Hell" for National Geographic. It has been broadcast in over 140 countries around the world since its release in February 2005.



Above: Film crew on location; production assistant with script, presenter, soundman, cameraman.

"When I was young, someone told me: 'Life should be an adventure - not necessarily a good one - but always an adventure...' It's a principle I try to live by." David Haynes

"It was to be one of the most grueling film shoots I've ever run. From the rainforests of Costa Rica, to Indiana, Florida and Missouri in the USA, then Sweden, UK and Mexico City. All in four weeks.

Along the way we would film army ants on the march, emerging Brood X cicadas, collect forensic evidence from human bodies, handle deadly spiders and scorpions, explore vehicle collision-avoidance systems based on locust vision and sample an array of tasty meals...made from insects.

Welcome to the world of TV production - at times interesting, fun and exciting, but also hard work, frustrating and occasionally dangerous."

INTRODUCTION...

Making a TV show is a complicated business, from the international logistical aspects and scientific research to the 'art' side of style and presentation, music and compelling storyline. And make no mistake, it is a business. That means budgets - which are very tight - and that means innovative compromises. One of those is to maximize crew skillsets, working across disciplines and breaking out of the traditional 'that's not my job' attitude. For this shoot as Director, my role also included at times: specialist camera operator, main cameraman and production photography. And production photography is what this article is about...

So just what is production photography?

Well in the world of 'factual entertainment' it covers many evils...

Primarily it is the taking of publicity shots for each episode/location. If it is a presenter-driven show then you need to feature the presenter in various states of peril. We call these the 'Hi I'm a Presenter and these are my teeth' shots - the ones you'll find in the listings magazines, advertising flyers and on the web.

Then there are the subject shots - locations and animals/situations covered - depending on what is included in the show. Also, there are the 'Behind the Scenes' shots that we use for our own publicity and for reference purposes.

Finally, as a full-time staff member, I also handle promotional shots for new concepts and proposals. TV is a visual medium and being able to illustrate a proposal with an attention-grabbing shot can make a huge difference.

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Left: Promotional picture for a concept that was to become the major BBC and National Geographic documentary - 'Top Cat'. These Caracal Lynx were relocated from a UK sanctuary to a wildlife reserve in South Africa - to act as bird control on a military airfield in the heart of the reserve. Caracal are notoriously elusive - researchers during 2 scientific studies in Africa only saw Caracal twice - in 22 years.

Below: Bloke with spider on his head. Never fails.

The Nuts & Bolts...

As part of the overall contract for producing a programme there will be a contractual obligation to provide a number of stills. For a series, there will be a number of shots per episode with a staggered delivery schedule linked direct to payments.

Know your audience. The main publicity shots have to match the style and content of the programme or series. So an action-orientated show may not benefit from artistic landscapes and a serious science show won't be sold with shots of a presenter mugging to camera.

In the furious battle for ratings, your image **WILL** make a difference if it grabs the attention of the people you need. Creating an image of Arthurian tragedy, evoking a human struggle against overwhelming odds, may suit your artistic sensibilities... but sometimes your audience just want to see a bloke with a spider on his head.

Additionally, the pictures submitted with the show will be used in a variety of formats - from tiny thumbnail sized shots in a listings magazine to large publicity pieces in magazines and newspapers... to giant posters used in talks and trade shows. Complex and detailed shots won't translate well to small inserts - or may not be attention-grabbing enough for news or trade show stands. Not forgetting the websites of broadcasters and listings companies - and interactive TV - where images tend to be small and heavily compressed JPEG's.

Vary your shots. The shoot ratio (what you film to what makes it into the final show) can vary from about 2:1 to over 30:1 depending on circumstances. Some of the best scenes can end on the 'cutting room floor', so rendering useless all their associated stills. Make sure you're covered.



The trick is to take a series of shots that represent the style, mood and content of the show and be suitable for all formats and be pitched at the target audience of the show.

As with many walks of life, everything in TV production is relative: in this case,

to budget, storyline, subject and intended audience. So what I tell you now is the way that we did things - this time. Different productions with different subjects, locations, budgets and staffing will work... differently.

COSTA RICA...

It has been suggested that Costa Rica plays host to some 5% of all global species. The rainforest here is home to thousands of species of plants and animals, many of them unique and with almost every science expedition discovering previously unknown species.

We were at the La Selva Biological Research Station - our base for a few days of prospecting for arthropods (insects, spiders and scorpions) in the forest. Not that you had to go into the forest to find them, quite a lot of the local wildlife seemed to be sharing my room - it's not a place for the arachnophobic.

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Left: Poison arrow frog – one droplet of its poison will kill a man...

The research station was an excellent location for our visit - comfortable accommodation, a mess hall and a network of useful concrete paths through the forest in the immediate vicinity.

It is all perfectly safe - enough so that my 5-year-old daughter joined me on this leg of the trip and had a fantastic time - her fascination with snakes and spiders not dampened by horrified relatives at home.

Conditions...

Shooting in the rainforest poses a number of challenges - high humidity, heavy rain, mud, high contrast natural light and difficult logistics - physically moving your gear around.

But these are really just extreme versions of what you'd face anywhere so being prepared for these conditions is a useful default and will cover you in most other locations. Except extreme cold - that's a different story.

When the rain hits, the temperature drops rapidly and all camera gear mists up - both the front of the lens and the rear as well as the body...well just everything. Then, when it stops, the whole region becomes a sauna.

However, the real problem is not that your gear may get wet - but that it never dries. In fact it's so humid that nothing was dry while we were there - clothes, gear, bedding etc.

The solution is to keep your cameras in their bag until needed and then put them straight back when done. The Lowepro Orion AW kept my cameras protected from rain and at a more constant temperature than the world outside - I didn't have any problems with them at all.

The forest canopy really is dense. The only light gaps we found were where a tree had fallen - usually by virtue of rot and insect action - or around rivers. Ground cover isn't



Above: Water continues to pour down from the canopy even after the rain has stopped. Shooting up into the trees like this will inevitably result in a wet camera.

Below: The video version of fill flash – the Sungun. Unlike



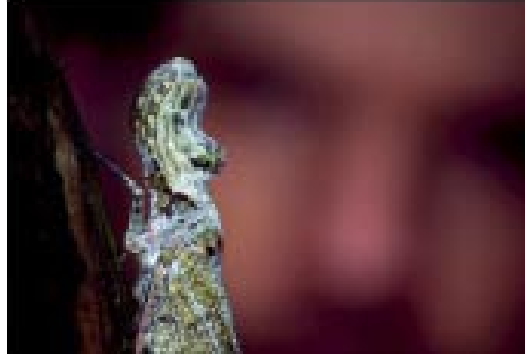
an SB28 however, it only lasts about 1 hour on its 6Kg bandolier battery pack. Also used to shed additional light when trying to find accurate focus for macro shots - both video and stills.

too bad however and it was relatively easy to move around. But gear had to be carried sealed in bags all the time because pushing through the scrub means everything gets wet.

Contrast is a constant problem for both filming and photography - very dark shadows beneath the trees with bright sunlight filtering through in places. For wide shots there's not much you can do about it, fill flash was essential for presenter shots on slide film but the latitude of black and white film just about coped.

Although they look fearsome, tarantulas tend to be pretty placid - with the odd exception. But great care needs to be exercised when working with them - obviously to avoid stressing them but especially because their large size means if they fall they can be fatally injured.

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Above: Stick Insects belong to a group known as Phasmids, originating from the Greek 'Phasma', meaning Phantom or Ghost. Like some production assistants, they spend up to 95% of their time inactive.

Their fangs can be up to an inch long but their venom is usually no more of a problem than a bee sting. However, some species have an extra defence - urticating hairs - barbed hairs that can be flicked off the abdomen into your face and eyes. Get these hairs into your eyes and you may need surgery to remove them.

Tarantula is a generic name given to all the New World large mygalomorph spiders. In Africa they tend to be known as Baboon spiders. But actually the true tarantula lives in southern Europe and is a type of wolf spider (*Lycosa tarentula*). It was once believed that the bite of this wolf spider could cause a disease known as tarantism. It was also believed that if the victim performed a frenzied dance then they would be cured - and this is the origin of the tarantella folk dance of Italy.

This strange looking creature is a peanut-headed lantern fly - a relative of the cicada.

According to local legend, if a girl is stung by this animal she must go to bed with her boyfriend within twenty-four hours or she'll die. Of course, the peanut-headed lantern fly doesn't bite or sting...so we're not sure of the origin of that story.

When we asked our tree-climbing guide, Jose, he just grinned.

Because of time and equipment constraints, we save some of the specialist photography for more controlled conditions. Tarantulas, stick insects and others are easily sourced in the UK and elsewhere. But the peanuthead had to be photographed on the spot.

Above right: Even shots that are far from perfect should be kept on file. Three years after taking this, it was composited into a publicity piece for a new series. Simple head shots are easy to retake if necessary but a shot with a unique subject - like this Goliath Bird-Eating spider - can be much harder to come by...

USA...

After a fun week in the forest it was time to move on. One of the great drawbacks to travelling...is the travelling. It's great to be places but air travel, airports and customs controls can be hard work. With a crew who are all over 6ft tall, no one really gets any sleep on a night flight and several days of travel can lead to more exhaustion than working flat out.

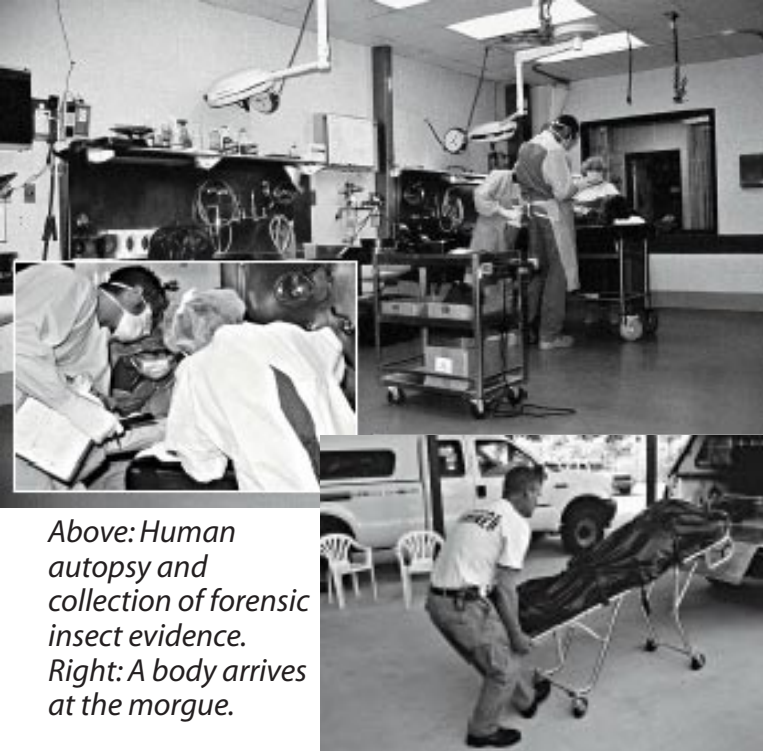
Delays at Newark meant we arrived in London with just 30 minutes to grab our bags off the carousel and walk around the corner to check-in for the flight back to the USA. It's usually at this point that new crew members realise we weren't lying when we said: "TV is not a glamorous business"

So it was nice to finally cruise into Bloomington, Indiana and hear the 80dB welcome song of the cicada.

We were here to film the emergence of Brood X - the cicada with the 17-year lifecycle. No need to hunt for the subject here - stand still long enough and several of them will happily use you as a temporary tree.

All over the Eastern USA, the cicadas emerge. So many in fact, that together they weigh almost twice the human population of the United States. Over the next few weeks they'd lay over 500 Trillion eggs and then promptly die.

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Above: Human autopsy and collection of forensic insect evidence. Right: A body arrives at the morgue.



Right: Crime Scene Unit collecting fly larvae (maggots) and other insects. The primary role of forensic entomology is to establish time of death. But concentrations of maggots also indicates locations of injuries - such as bullet wounds - that may not be obvious on a badly decomposed body.

Three days later we were in Florida. Florida was hot - about 90 degrees hot. But as long as gear is kept out of the sun then there's really no issue. The Lowepro ORION AW managed to maintain a fairly constant temperature even when moving from sunshine to air conditioned offices and none of the cameras suffered.

The real challenge here was filming the work of the Crime Scene Investigators and Forensic scientists in such a way that it could be explained easily in a short programme segment.

Sensitivity was also required here - we were filming insect collection from human bodies and were aware that these were once loved

and loving members of a family. The science is not only fascinating but also essential - cases have been solved on the basis of the lifecycle of a fly, false alibis of the guilty uncovered and the innocent acquitted from life sentences... thanks to an insect. Official photographs are taken of the crime scene and many more of the body once it reaches the autopsy room. And Nikon was the name of the game - the CSI boys and girls had an enviable collection of Nikon cameras and lenses.

Perhaps the best part of this job is meeting people and learning about their work.

All over the world, we get to work behind the scenes and see a part of life not usually available to business travellers and tourists.

I continue to be fascinated by the work and impressed by the dedication of so many contributors to our shows.

The Police Department, CSI and Forensics teams that we worked with in Florida were perfect examples of this.

Why anyone is more impressed with the world of TV (production and presenting) than that of the professional services is completely beyond me.

Science is taking a close look at the insect world - from micro air vehicles based on the principles of insect flight to military armour based on insect exoskeletons. One of the more fascinating stories - and with a practical life saving aim - is inspired by the eyes of a locust. So it was off to Sweden...

SWEDEN...

The Desert Locust - pest extraordinaire - has a tendency to swarm under certain conditions. These 'plagues' of locusts are both awesome and truly destructive.

But concentrating on the detail, rather than the overall spectacle, some scientists realised that no matter how dense the swarm, the locusts didn't crash into each other.

It turns out that locusts have a built-in collision avoidance system.



This Volvo concept car was designed exclusively by women. Among the superb design features are: reflective paint that picks up tone from the incident lighting, drop door sills to allow ladies to get in and out with modesty while wearing short skirts and an electrical petrol filler cap - activated by touching a sensor, it rotates to open...so no dirty hands or broken nails...



Trying to get locusts to sit still for filming is an exercise in frustration. But a photographic image - even from the

relatively small sensor of the D70 - provides a perfect solution. A 4:3 TV picture is just 720x576 pixels (PAL format, NTSC is even smaller). So an image taken at 3000x2000 pixels allows for panning and scanning - sliding the image around and zooming, allowing fine detail to be shown with motion to maintain interest. I'd had my D70 just 2 days when it was used for this purpose.

Part of their visual system takes a feed from the eyes and filters out all information except for that on a direct collision path. In other words, this part of their system only sees what's about to crash into them. And because it's hardwired, they can respond very quickly - no need to think and analyse the information.

Initial curiosity has turned to true application. Volvo is using the results of the science to create a collision avoidance system for their cars.

1.2 million people are killed on the world's roads every year - that's the equivalent of more than 3,000 airplanes (747's) crashing every year - with no survivors. This research is just one of many projects underway to improve safety.

VENOM...



Some animals are just plain dangerous. Specialist macro filming requires you to be within a few inches of the subject. An interesting combination...

Of the 40,000 known species of spider, only about 20 or 30 can inject harmful venom into a human. One of them is shown above - the Brazilian Wandering Spider - the most venomous spider in the New World. With the largest venom glands of any spider, thousands of people have been hospitalised after being bitten by these spiders. Unlike most spiders, they bite repeatedly - injecting more venom each time.

This one was found in a bunch of bananas at a market in the UK.

Any specialist macro filming not performed in the field, is usually handled in a large 3-sided wooden arena that we call 'Bug Theatre'. The video cameras use optical probes for lenses and the whole array is mounted on sliding glass plates for low friction with a combination of mini clamps and beanbags for elevation.

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Legal caveat: Death Stalkers and Brazilian Wandering spiders are highly dangerous and should only ever be dealt with by experts.

But an open fronted box is no place for these characters - and we can't remove them to our 'studio'. So we transfer them to a large aquarium tank for a closer look. Shooting through the glass is not an option for photographs - the tank is too big to get the camera close to the subject. So the only way is to half climb into the tank, watching the spider (and later, the scorpion) to ensure it isn't getting stressed.

Although most animals - including arthropods - are not actively aggressive, filming can be an invasive process. Most members of the crew are experienced animal handlers in some field - from big cats to crocodiles. We use experts on location in the field as consultants and have learned a lot about arthropods over the years. Our presenter - Jake - is an expert in insects and spiders and takes care of most of the animal handling. We pride ourselves on the fact that every animal we film remains unharmed.

In the event, the spider and then the scorpion were both very well behaved - as expected.

The D70 and Tamron 90mm macro lens did a fine job - the primary advantage being that I could leave the location knowing that I had the shots I needed. For macro shots at higher reproduction ratios (magnification) the D70 becomes more problematic. Its viewfinder is just too dark - swapping in an F3 body on the same setup is like switching on the lights, there simply is no comparison.

The Death Stalker scorpion has a well earned reputation as well - it carries one of the most potent venoms known. The Death Stalker lives in the deserts of North Africa and the Middle East. Sometimes referred to as the Yellow Scorpion, it hides away under stones or in burrows. This one was a stowaway - picked up when a traveller returned to the UK.

MEXICO...



Above: A field of maize in the hills around Mexico City.

Welcome to Mexico City.

With a reduced crew we settled into our long haul flight to Mexico City - the last location of the shoot.

Life has a certain irony at times. The in-flight movie being 'Man On Fire', it was a rather nervous crew that disembarked several hours later.

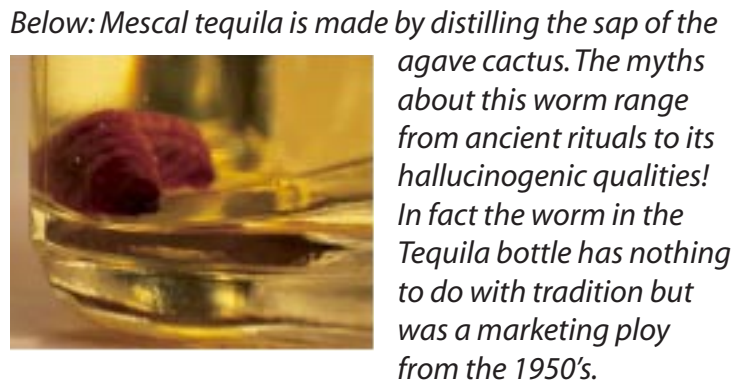
We were here to film insects as food - Thailand is the usual venue for this subject but we wanted to go somewhere different and learning about the traditional diet of Mexico was fascinating.

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So we spent a couple of days at the market and various restaurants. And drank Mescal, which we liked at the time but regretted in the morning.



Above: Dried grasshoppers sold at a market in Mexico City - ready to eat as a snack. Here in Mexico they eat 71 different species of insect. It's quite an impressive list, they eat beetles, bugs, aphids, flies, moths butterflies, bees, wasps, hornets, cicadas and even cockroaches, amongst others.



MY NIKONS

My trusty Nikon F3 and F90X (N90S) have traveled with me in Bolivia, USA, Africa, Philippines, India, Scandinavia and Europe amongst other locations and have proven more reliable than ANY other piece of kit on a shoot.



The F3 is my favourite camera of all time; there is just an intangible 'something' about it. I

think it's the purity of shooting that makes the difference - you can concentrate just on the visuals - not endless settings, menus and battery drain.

The D70 and F90X are fine cameras and each has their strengths as a usable tool. But...well, those of you with F3's will know what I mean.

The D70 was the new addition on this tour and has handled itself well. Since this production I have also dragged it around the jungles of the Philippines - a tough test for any camera and one it handled without problems.

For macro work I believe there are only 2 real choices (though Canon users may disagree) - Nikon and Olympus. The Nikon system has, I believe, the edge through the larger array of accessories that make life so much easier. Though the Olympus system has the Zuiko 20mm and 38mm specialist macro lenses - the one reason why I have also invested in an Olympus system for some circumstances...

JOB DONE...

Back in the UK, gear was mustered, cleaned and checked, batteries replaced and charged, film developed and digital files processed. The Nikon gear had survived a hectic few weeks in some difficult conditions with its usual panache.

Then the laborious four-month process of editing began.

Not for me though. Two weeks later I was in the Philippines, the first person to film a certain tree-living lizard, believed extinct until recently. But that, as they say, is another story... ●

About David Haynes...

David worked for the British Government for 14 years before leaving to seek new challenges in a less restrictive atmosphere. Since then he have worked in various fields such as project management, professional scuba diving, wildlife relocation and conservation and most recently as a cameraman and director of wildlife and science television programs. He notes that he has been privileged to travel the world, meet and explore different cultures and countries and work with many dedicated and inspiring people.

David Haynes offers a few tips and recommendations for the traveling outdoor photographer.

GEAR AND TRAVELLING

Travelling these days is much more of a security focused job than it used to be - for obvious reasons. Film crews take a lot of expensive equipment around the world - much of it electrical - and it looks fascinating under an X-ray scan at airports. And the same applies to photographers with loads of equipment in transit.

So bags WILL be opened and inspected. It is only sensible then to make the work of the security services easier by 'packing for inspection'. Don't cram too much into a case - security staff don't have time to shoe-horn everything carefully back into a case after checking and so gear may be damaged in a long trip. Keep items separated, easy to identify and easy to repack.

Don't pack too many heavy items into a single case. If it's difficult to lift then it will be dropped at some point. It's tempting to squeeze the last few odd-shaped bits and pieces - like battery chargers - into bags of clothes etc for extra padding. But when searched and repacked, your fragile equipment may no longer be protected by those several layers of clothing and so get damaged in transit.

Don't lock your cases. Many security services will simply break open the lock to investigate the case - and if the case is damaged in the process, so be it. They have thousands more to work through and don't have time to try and contact the owner. Anything that goes into the aircraft hold will be treated roughly. Depend on it. Many of our bags are marked 'FRAGILE' and may even go a separate route to the aircraft but different airports in different countries have different processes. For several

productions, I've filmed on the tarmac (on the standing alongside the aircraft), in cargo handling and in the actual hold itself during loading. Bags are dropped, thrown and can fall off a trailer on its way out to loading. I've even watched one of our 'fragile' cases roll off the top of a pile of bags in a trailer and bounce along the tarmac at speed, as a tractor rushes out to load a waiting aircraft. And it's just as likely to happen in a major European or US city as somewhere in the developing world.

PROTECTION IN THE FIELD

Tropical rainforests are the earth's oldest living eco-systems. And it's called rainforest for a reason - the average annual rainfall here is about four metres (157 inches)!

Several times we were caught in the forest in torrential rain with all our gear. It stops filming dead but isn't that hard to deal with as long as you're prepared.

The basic principle is: get the gear in bags, keep the bags off the ground, keep the rain off the bags. Then keep the rain off yourself.

The main video camera - \$130,000 of Sony wizardry - has its own rainjacket and day bag (softbag used to carry the camera when it's not in use).

Many of our smaller accessories were carried in Pelicases which are waterproof - so no problems there. In fact, if you manage your packing carefully, a fully loaded and sealed Peli will float.

I had the stills gear - both Nikon bodies, lenses and accessories - in a Lowepro ORION AW bag. It was bought for this trip and I'm still not sure if I like it or not. It has a pullover rainguard which helped though wasn't big enough for serious protection. But from experience in the Amazon I had a waterproof stuffsack ready to hand. The stuffsack rolls up small and fits in the tripod loops of the Lowepro. When the rain hits, the Lowepro fits into the stuffsack - totally waterproof.

Then there were the two large golf umbrellas that always travel with us in the tripod case. Umbrellas are a shoot-saver, strange then that people will spend a fortune on custom rain covers but forget that 'old-tech' solutions can be invaluable.

We also carry a roll of plastic bin liners as part of the standard kit.

Keep the rain off yourself. Even here in the sweltering heat of the rainforest it only took about 10 minutes to become uncomfortably cold from soaking rain. And because we were walking everywhere and carrying gear, chafing of wet skin is a constant threat. Lightweight rain ponchos are best - easy to slip on and they can cover any gear you have around your neck as well. Though you won't win any fashion parades.

The leaf litter of the forest floor is permanently wet - making it difficult to place gear and slippery when moving the heavy camera equipment. We usually carry a ground sheet to put gear bags on in the outdoors - damp will quickly soak up into backpacks and gear bags otherwise.

'Wellington' boots were the order of the day - and seem pretty uniform in all such locations including the jungles of the Far East. Get a pair that fit perfectly or you'll soon regret it.

Keep your gear zipped up. There are insects everywhere and a line of leafcutter ants will march straight through your kit, Nikon or not - and happily bite you when you try to remove them.

Same goes for nighttime and for personal baggage as well as cameras. The one night I forgot to clear up my wash things, the local cockroaches had an all-night feast on the toothpaste. Stuff a pair of socks into the opening of your boots or shoes to prevent scorpions etc crawling in when you're asleep and make a habit of always shaking your boots before putting them on. Lucky for us we found a scorpion in one of the bedrooms - it made a nice sequence in the show.

When you repack gear and personal belongings for the trip home, always double check you have no stowaways. Cockroaches are a favourite, but spiders and scorpions are also common. Best bet is to keep bags zipped closed at all times while you're there.

APPROPRIATE CONDUCT

This should be common sense but in the heat of the moment sometimes we can all be tempted to take a short cut...

Know your subject. If you're making a wildlife show - even with the opportunity to get pickup shots in captive situations - you need to understand the animal. A few years ago when filming in Africa, the production photographer effectively trapped his subject in the open, stressed and frightened. He got his shot and it looked impressive - but scaring an animal half to death in the process is simply not right. A photographer who doesn't understand wildlife puts at risk the filming and possibly the lives of himself and others.

It pains me to say it but men seem to be the worst offenders here. I've seen a guy get too close to an elephant in a reserve - putting it under stress - and then being injured when the elephant reacted. Despite our protests, the elephant was subsequently shot dead.

Be responsible. In areas stricken with poverty, people are often desperate for a chance to earn money - and they will volunteer to do almost anything - whether they are able to or not. Working overseas recently, I heard of a young lad who volunteered to string a climbing harness in a high tree for a research team. He fell and broke his spine. An accident, yes, but be aware of your responsibility to ensure that anyone who works with you is capable of doing the job.

Read the rules and listen to your local guides!





Rick Del Prince (RickD)



Hello everyone, I would like to introduce myself., They call me RickD at Nikonians.org. I guess I'm one of the old hats here, I can remember when there were only a couple of thousand of us. I have

been the moderator of the pictures forums since 2002; I also look after the Nikonians Webring and recently, I took on the duties of Chief Moderator, Director of the Moderators Team.

I'll soon be 58 years old and I make my home in Lancaster, New York. I have lived in the Western New York area all of my life. My marriage of 36 years has given me three children and five wonderful grandchildren. I've made a career out of the railroad and have been employed by CSXT (Conrail for 23 years) and its predecessors for almost 33 years.

My interest in photography started about 12 years ago when I received a Nikon point and shoot as a gift. I shot hundreds of pictures with that camera and thought it was the cats meow. (It really did take some nice pictures) I found that I loved taking pictures of my family and friends. My equipment has come a long way since those days. I discovered what an SLR was when I purchased a Nikon N90s and a Tamron 28-200 zoom - the salesman told me that was the only lens I would ever need. Now, I was set for life and would never have to spend another dime on equipment. I enjoyed using that camera, it taught me what it was like to shoot in manual mode. (Tons of wasted film) My first digital was a Nikon Coolpix 950, which I bought just before I discovered the Nikonians Website. That camera served me well with more than 10,000 actuations of the



shutter. I now own a Nikon F5, and a D100. That Tamron lens which was supposed to be the only lens I would ever need just sits on a shelf now: it's has been replaced by three AFS lenses and a variety of prime lenses, along with two Nikon speedlights. (Where is that salesman?) Yes, like many other Nikonians NAS (Nikon Acquisition Syndrome) has struck with a vengeance.

I've never had any formal training in photography, although I have thought of taking some classes at one of the local institutions. Most of what I have learned is through the trial and error method. Digital is also an excellent way to help you learn photography, you don't have to wait for the lab to process your film to see the mistakes you've made. I can't say enough for "Instant Feedback." Nikonians has also been a lot of help to me. It has influenced the way I shoot and the way I think about photography. Nikonians was a godsend when I purchased my F5 and my D100 - it gave me good practical information about the cameras and influenced my lens purchases.

I'm known as the guy who always has a camera with him. (Like many of us) I wouldn't be a happy camper if I had to say "I wish I had my camera with me." You never know, you might miss that once in a lifetime shot. My D100 and 28-70 AF-S lens is always close by.

I would have to say that it's my favorite lens. I enjoy shooting landscapes, (when I have the time) and railroad scenes. I must admit that my biggest interest in photography now is preserving my family in print, sort of like a photographic diary of family and friends. I print all of my own images, (digital). The last time I used a lab to process film was almost two years ago, when I shot candids with my F5 for my niece's wedding. My F5 sees little use now and sits on the shelf right next to my Tamron lens.

Nikonians has become a part of my everyday life. I have always felt that it was the best site on the web for my photographic needs and it's a great place to learn about anything Nikon. The members are always helpful and most are willing to go the extra step to help someone out. As you know, we always do things the polite way, and we try very hard to make everyone feel comfortable in our forums. Where else can you find that on the World Wide Web? The moderators are a great group of people as are the founders and the people that work in the background. They do much of what isn't noticed by most of us and get little recognition for their efforts.

I have attached an image that will show you what I like to photograph in my spare time. I would like to show off my grand childrens' pictures, but space is limited and I wouldn't want to hurt any of their feelings by leaving one or more of them out. ●

Rick is the Director of the Moderators Team, Nikonians Ring Master and Moderator of these discussions:

[Pictures / A Picture I Took](#)

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[Glamour, Portrait, Studio & Lighting](#)

Anthony Manansala (avm247)



I was pleasantly surprised and deeply honored when I was informed that I was to be a featured member in our Nikonian eZine. Then they asked me to write about myself – not one of the easiest things to do. What can I tell you about “ME”?

Originally a native of Los Angeles, California, I now call Sacramento my home. I share life with April, the most understanding woman in the world, to whom I've been married to for 13 years and our 5 year old son Joshua. My livelihood is as a designer for the State and I am a candidate for licensure as an architect.

Photography started out as a means to explore architecture and has turned into an important part of my life. I became serious about photography during my third year at Woodbury University in Burbank, CA where I graduated Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Architecture degree. In one design studio, our weekly assignment was to photograph a building, print an 11x14 image and present it along with a drawing based on a particular theme. Looking at great architecture through the lens, being influenced by the monographs at school and the monthly publications, I learned to “see” architecture in a whole new light. This is where I started to develop my photographic eye for framing, composition and perspective. The attached image taken of the Disney Concert Hall in downtown Los Angeles is representative of my architectural photography and my “eye.”

Continued next page



Along with architecture, I have begun to enjoy macro photography, shooting mostly flowers at this time. Family photos also fall under my attention. My collection of equipment includes three cameras: my first Nikon, the N70; an N80, the most recent addition and for my digital work a Coolpix 4500 for which I have most of the accessories. For my SLRs, I have a mixture of AF Nikkor primes and zooms: 24mm f/2.8D IF, 50mm f/1.8 and a 105mm f/2.8 D Micro. Zooms cover the range from my AF Nikkor 20-35mm f/2.8D, to the 28-105mm f3.5-4.5D IF to the 70-300mm f/4.5-5.6D ED. I have an array of Speedlights, filters and other accessories for my 35mm equipment.



I shoot film primarily with Kodak Ultra Color 100 and 400 being my choice for color films. Recently, I rediscovered black & white photography and am having a blast using Agfapan APX 100 and Ilford Delta 100.

Being a member of Nikonians has expanded my photography knowledge and skills greatly. I have been here nearly since its inception and I love volunteering my time to the community, helping those who are in the same boat I was not that long ago. The friendships made and the sense of family throughout the community are irreplaceable.

The most recent development (pardon the pun) regarding my photography is that I will be having my first gallery showing of my black & white images along with fellow Nikonian, David Good (DWGimages) in September 2005. Without his and the Nikonians community's support and feedback, I doubt I'd be where I am today with my photography.

I'm proud to be here and to call myself a Nikonian ~ Thank you all. ●

Anthony is a most dedicated Moderator or co-moderator of these forums:

[*Shooting issues / Architectural Photography*](#)

[*General / Repair Shops*](#)

[*General / Shops*](#)

[*General / Camera Security & Insurance*](#)

[*Nikon Products / Nikon Autofocus Film Bodies*](#)

[*Amongst Nikonians / The Nikonians Café*](#)



Conrad Obregon (Obregon)

I first became seriously interested in photography in 1951 and bought my first Nikon Camera, an F, in 1961. Although I processed my photographs in a chemical darkroom in my younger years, because of the pressures of time, I switched to commercial processing in the 70's. Today I'm back in the digital darkroom.



The pace of my photography has varied over the years. As a young man I took pictures all the time. Then the pressures of raising a family and building a career put a brake on my activity. As my children grew up I started taking pictures again, specializing in black and white model and prototype railroad photography. I could sell any picture I wanted to a trade or modeling hobby magazine. I usually won the first prize in any contest I entered. Then I found that, even though others didn't know it, I was taking the same picture over and over again. I put aside my cameras except for family events and vacations. And then about five years ago, I discovered that while I'd been away from serious photography, major changes had occurred in camera capabilities. I purchased one of the first N80's and have been back photographing with a vengeance ever since. I've specialized in wildlife and landscape photography in recent years.

Although I don't consider myself an equipment guy, I've always been quick to adopt new equipment that would help me make better pictures. This morning I was out with my D2x and 200-400 VR lens. But my main goal has always been to improve my vision, not my gear. That's why you can often find me reading a photography book to see if there is some bit of knowledge I can glean to improve the quality of my pictures. I review those books, both for Nikonians and Amazon.com. Of course, I begin my day, after I return from photographing, with Nikonians.



After careers in the military, law and finance, I've retired and so I get to spend a lot of my time with a camera. I look to photography to help me to grow and understand the world more, and to try to convey that understanding to others. Nikonians is a major tool in that process. ●

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Be sure and check out the latest Nikonians & Nikon news with frequent updates from the imaging and photo industry with a Nikonian touch. With over 40,000 visitors per day and a team of over 40 photographer/news gatherers you're sure to be kept well informed. <http://blog.nikonians.org/>



Chad Ward (**chad ward**)



I am a freelance writer based in Wichita, Kansas. If anyone is curious about my work, one of my essays – about my passion for custom-made chef's knives – can be found in "Best Food Writing 2004," an annual paperback compilation of the

best food articles of the past year.

I was always interested in photography, but was mainly a point-'n-shooter until a couple of years ago. That's when I decided to get serious and really learn photography. I started with a battered Nikon FE and a 105mm f/2.5 portrait lens and read every book I could get my hands on. My pictures were still pretty bad, but at least I was learning *why* they were bad. Discovering Nikonians was a huge help.

I've since graduated to a Nikon F3 and an N90s. With a lot of practice and, most especially, the advice and assistance I've received on Nikonians, I'm finally making pictures that I'm proud of. Last year I took the plunge and went semi-pro.

I write about a wide variety of subjects – including aviation, manufacturing, and food and wine – for various magazines. Many of the trade and industry magazines I work for are not willing to spend the money to send a professional photographer to illustrate my articles. So I decided to do it myself. Due in part to the thoughtful advice in the Critique forum, professional guidance in the Photojournalism forum and lighting

tips from the Speedlights forum, I can now provide suitable photography to accompany my writing. Lately I've been working on stock photography, and one of my shots was recently selected for a large insurance company's annual report.

I hope I can be as helpful to future Nikonians as the current ones have been to me. ●

Stephen Burnie (**F80**)



I'm fortunate my father, grandfather and uncle were all interested in photography. I remember from an early age seeing their slide shows and wanting to take my own pictures. At eight years old I was snapping with a Brownie. When I was a teen, my family traveled to the

east coast of Canada in the summers and I shot seascapes, beach details, flora and fauna. But I soon found that I preferred an abstract approach to photography. I loved to create my own world in images by using selective framing and focus to remove the extraneous and ordinary. My aim in photography is to present the familiar world in an unfamiliar way, whether my subject is architecture, nature or urban detail.

I haven't had traditional training in photography, but I do owe a lot to the influence of abstract expressionist painters. In the last few years, I have worked in a discipline known as Miksang contemplative photography (miksang.org) – training for the eye that brings together traditional Buddhist dharma art teachings and modern photographic techniques. Another big boost to my shooting has been my participation at Nikonians. The thoughtful, knowledgeable and positive critique on my photos has been

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an education and inspiration. I don't know of any other place I can access the range technical know-how and enjoy the work of so many talented photographers. There is also a thriving group of Nikonians in the greater Toronto area who regularly get out to shoot together. Nikonians is a living community, not just another online bulletin board!

Nikon gear has been my choice for over twenty years. A beloved F2AS is still working hard for my brother who specializes in astrophotography. For film, I'm using F100 and F80 bodies and a mix of prime and zoom lenses. It's hard to pick a favourite, but it might be my AF180mm f/2.8D IF-ED for sheer image quality. I find that film is a beautiful and rich artistic medium and hope that it remains available for many years to come.

A couple of years ago, I bought a Nikon Coolpix 5400 and entered the digital world. I take this fabulous camera with me whenever and wherever. It's great for experimentation both in composition and in the digital darkroom, which I really enjoy. Shooting in raw mode and processing carefully, I have made, and shown publicly, large high quality prints that most people can't tell are originally digital, much less from a "point and shoot".

I work with a photographers' collective known as Windrush Photographic (www.win-drushphotographic.com). I've had a couple of "coffee house" shows of my work and am now aiming for gallery exhibitions. Cheers! ●

The Nikonian Bookshelves

Here you will find over 325 recommended photography related titles, most at 30% discount; books dealing with Nikon products as well as books on the categorized photography issues below. We review and expand the bookshelves on a regular and frequent basis. Also, we have now added photo magazines.

If you would like to see a certain book being included in our bookshelves, please send us a note [right here](#). If you have the complete Amazon URL link available for the book, it would be appreciated. You may also want to [tell a friend](#) about our bookshelves.

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Books are great gifts that are long remembered and welcome for any occasion.

<http://www.nikonians.org/html/resources/bookshelves/index.html>



New from Nikon

D50 Digital SLR Camera

The Nikon D50 is the smallest, lightest and (Nikon says) easiest-to-use Nikon digital SLR camera yet. It should hit the shelves in June and is attractively (street) priced at under (US)\$900 including a DX 18-55 lens. Body only will be about (US)\$750.



Specifications

-- New 6.1 effective megapixel Nikon DX Format CCD imaging sensor that produces 3,008 x 2,000-pixel images with accurate color, high resolution and sharp details for great pictures capable of significant enlargement, or cropping for creative effect.

-- Advanced digital image processor that marks a further evolution of analog and digital processing and pre-conditioning technologies, producing images that require no preparation in a computer and are ready to print straight from the camera. Image quality is optimized, including auto white balance, auto tone and color control, and real-time processes diminish digital noise to produce beautiful long exposure shots.

-- 3D Color Matrix Metering II ensures accurate exposure control and white balance.

Dimensions (W x H x D): 133 x 102 x 76mm (5.3 x 4.1 x 3.0 in.) Weight: Approx. 540g (1 lb. 3 oz.) without battery. ●

D70s Digital SLR Camera



Just when Nikonians were getting the hang of their D70's Nikon introduces the new/improved D70s. The updated model incorporates several enhancements and refinements internally and externally including:

* A refined 5-area autofocus system now has an all-area search priority to go along with the camera's single area, dynamic area, and close subject priorities, improving the camera's ability to acquire focus on fast moving subjects within the frame.

* The camera now boasts a larger 2.0" LCD monitor, making it easier for users to review images and access menus.

* A new remote port for the MC-DC1 electronic cable release (optional) allows users to trigger the camera and hold the shutter open via an electronic cable release.

* A built-in Speedlight with a wider angle of coverage, supports 18mm lenses.

* A new easier-to-read menu design in the D70s uses color-coded menus, and a larger type-face.

* A higher capacity EN-EL3a battery offers users more pictures per charge. The EN-EL3a battery comes with a new, smaller MH-18a battery charger. Both the new battery and charger are included with the D70s.

Street price for the body only is (US) \$900. ●

Nikon Introduces Two New DX Lenses Created to Compliment the D50 & D70s



AF-S DX Zoom-Nikkor 55-200mm f/4-5.6G ED Specifications

Expected street price: (US)\$275

The AF-S DX Zoom-Nikkor 55-200mm f/4-5.6G ED lens provides telephoto capabilities in very compact design

Focal length 55-200mm (equivalent to an 82.5-300mm lens in 35mm format)

Maximum aperture f/4-5.6 Minimum aperture f/22-32

Lens construction 13 elements in 9 groups (two ED glass elements)

DX Picture angle 28°50' - 8°

Minimum focus range 0.95m (3.1 ft.)

Max. reproduction ratio 1:3.5

Attachment size 52mm

Dimensions (approx.) 68 x 79mm (2.7 x 3.1 in.)

Weight (approx.) 255g (9 oz.)

Included accessories: 52mm Snap-on front lens cap (LC-52), Rear Cap (LF-1), Hood (HB-34), Semi soft case (CL-0815) ●



AF-S DX Zoom-Nikkor 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G ED Specifications

Expected street price: (US)\$175

The AF-S DX Zoom-Nikkor 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G ED lens offers versatile zoom range in a lightweight, ultra-compact size.

Focal length 18-55mm (equivalent to an 27-82.5mm lens in 35mm format)

Maximum aperture f/3.5-5.6 Minimum aperture f/22-32

Lens construction 7 elements in 5 groups (one ED glass element and one hybrid aspherical element)

DX Picture angle 76° - 28°50'

Minimum focus range 0.28m (11.4 in.)

Max. reproduction ratio 1:3.2

Attachment size 52mm

Dimensions (approx.) 69 x 75mm (2.7 x 2.9 in.)

Weight (approx.) 210g (6.8oz.)

Included accessories: 52mm Snap-on front lens cap (LC-52), Rear Cap (LF-1) ●

Nikon DK-17M Magnifying Eyepiece



Enlarges the viewfinder image 1.5 times, while allowing the full frame to be viewed. Designed to fit the film F6 and the D2H, & D2X digital SLR

cameras. Price is about (US)\$45 and availability was scarce at press time.

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In the 22nd annual **Camera Grand Prix** awards this year, 192 cameras - all released between April 2004 and March 2005 - were nominated. The

Special Prize by the Camera Press Club (Japan) is given to the one camera among the nominees that has been recognized as superior in both popularity and technological advancement.

The F6 Film SLR Camera was selected to receive the Camera Grand Prix 2005 Special Prize. The prize was established in 1984, and has been awarded to Nikon five times.

The Camera Grand Prix is the most prestigious award that can be presented to a camera in the Japanese photo industry. It is chosen by members of the Camera Press Club, which is comprised of respected photographers, scholars and writers for photography and camera publications, as well as chief editors and magazine representatives.

According to the judges the F6 was given the honor this year because of the perfection of its basic features such as viewfinder, AE, AF and film advance. Its compact, rugged, lightweight metal body increases mobility while the highly refined design, subdued operational sounds and minimized vibrations provide an enhanced enjoyment of photography. Other cutting-edge features that attracted the judges attention were the Creative Lighting System for flash photography, a high-precision, durable shutter unit with built-in Shutter Monitor and a rear LCD panel that shows each shot's camera settings and information.



SLR Camera in Europe 2005, and the Nikon AF-S VR Nikkor 200mm f/2.8 IF-ED "Best Professional Lens in Europe 2005."

TIPA is a non-profit, independent professional organization open to all magazines within the European photo and imaging publishing industry. Each year a group of editor members representing leading photo and imaging magazines from across Europe choose the TIPA "European Photo & Imaging Award" winners by vote.

TIPA's official announcement included the following comments:



About the Nikon F6:

It seemed unlikely that the world would see true innovation in a new analog SLR camera, but Nikon have managed to prove everyone wrong and pull it off! With its robust build quality, its exceptional viewfinder, its incredibly accurate exposure system, and its fast and responsive autofocus, the Nikon F6 gives the dedicated film user all the benefits of the very latest developments in technology and ergonomics. It is without doubt the best analog SLR that has ever been produced, and will provide its owners with a tool that will never go out of fashion. Its rugged construction will last for many years-at least as long as film is available!

About the AF-S VR Nikkor 200mm f/2:

This new ultra-sensitive long-focal length lens represents the new standard of today's optical technology. The 13 lens elements are stacked in 9 groups and produce a remarkable sharpness at the widest aperture of f/2, while at f/5.6 the results are exceptional. The AF-S system's internal motor provides fast, accurate and silent focusing, and the Vibration Reduction (VR) technology offers an optical stabilizer which allows slower shutter speeds when hand-holding. With a Nikon digital SLR, the lens gives the equivalent of a 300mm f/2, which is perfect for sport and wildlife shooting in low-light conditions.

The official award ceremony will take place in Cologne, Germany on June 16, 2005. ●

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http://www.nikonians.org/html/resources/writers_wanted.html ●

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the premier photo community with over
30,000 members from 116 nations*

