

the Photographers' Formulary and Fine Art Photo Supply

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David Schaffer: With a Fine Eye for Detail



Abstract - White Paper Madonna
©David Schaffer

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Editor's Note:

The thumbnail images in this interactive newsletter are only the tip of the iceberg. They are NOT meant for the final viewing.

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DAVID SCHAFFER: WITH A FINE EYE FOR DETAIL

Film, aka analog, aka traditional photography requires a curious blend of technological knowledge and artistic ability. As more than one instructor of photography has cautioned students, *"Learn the technical stuff well, so you can forget it and concentrate on the beauty and wonder of the image."*

David Schaffer, research assistant and technical writer for the US Gov't, exemplifies by example. He's a voracious reader, as he must be to write technical articles and manuals, and he's a careful observer of his surroundings as potential subjects for his black and white photographs.

Like many of us, his first exposure to photography was the family Brownie box camera with its ten exposure roll of 120 film. Used to document family

gatherings, the Brownie intrigued David with its lens perfectly centered on the face of the camera, and its large roll of film with its ability to record as many as ten images.

An eyeopener for David was his encounter with his friend's 35 mm camera of unknown name or brand. It looked nothing like the Brownie, with its lens off center, and it held what at the time seemed an almost unlimited capacity of

exposures on its little metal canister of film.

His discovery of the 35 mm camera opened David's eyes to photography. Not unlike many young people of today and their

lust for the latest smart-phone or gadget, David had to have his own camera, and he had to learn how to use it.

He began by buying tools for film development: the familiar stainless steel reels and metal can with a snap-on plastic lid, and a thermometer. The salesperson at the



Alto Sax - Left Hand Keys
©David Schaffer



Door Knocker - Federal Hill,
Baltimore, Md
©David Schaffer



Railway Trestle Bridge
©David Schaffer

local camera store told David, "If you can read you can learn how to develop your own film." So David did just that. Covering the bathroom windows with blankets, Schaffer converted the family bathtub into a temporary darkroom and soon taught himself to develop Kodak Ektachrome slides.

When he reached college he found his way to a course in black and white photography and discovered the pain and the pleasure of printing. Printing proved to be the catalyst for Schaffer's lifelong



Infrared - Brookside Gardens, MD
©David Schaffer

interest in black and white film-based photography. He says the feeling of accomplishment is strong when he's finished a fine print and can proudly say he has done the whole process, from taking the photograph to developing the film then making the final print.

With a keen eye for detail Schaffer looks closely at his surroundings,

and takes particular pleasure in photographing architectural detail in buildings and structures. He once found himself in Old Quebec, Canada. Rich with buildings from a century past, the French Quarter beckoned to him, prompting him to leave the well-traveled tourist's path to explore the back streets beyond.

Pre-WWI homes are often rich in detail far beyond the homogenized, assembly line appearance of homes today. Using one of his favorite cameras, a Leica M6, David took delight in photographing doorways and doorknobs as he made his way down that back street, gathering latent images on his favorite film, Kodak's dependable Tri-X.

Using skills gathered over many years and a strong grasp of the Zone System, Schaffer took his rolls of film home and developed them to "N," "N+1" or "N-1" and so forth. Then, using skills learned on weekends and evenings during classes at a local community college, he printed up his best shots.

Before Digital Imaging became the *de facto* standard for capturing images, and before Hewlett-Packard began its Anschluss of the inkjet printing market, Schaffer learned about "circles of confusion," and the "softness" and feel of a well printed black and white film based image. Schaffer observes there are few examples in nature of the almost crystalline perfection and repetition of the square pixels in a digital print. Those square pixels, no matter how finely printed, tend to become "jaggies" when the image is enlarged.

Contrast this, he says, with prints from film. The random sizes of particles of silver making up the image, and the inherent imperfection

of the finest of enlarger lenses result in a print with what Schaffer describes as a softness, roundness or wholeness which is pleasing to the eye.

No stranger to photographic exhibitions, Schaffer can spot a "real" print from twenty paces. Walking through exhibits he likes to view



Japanese Garden, Zig-zag Walkway
©David Schaffer

the prints on display from a distance, and says he can pick out the analog from the digital at a glance.

He's visited exhibits of works of Ansel Adams, Brett Weston, Henri Cartier-Bresson, and examined their techniques and prints closely. Once, at an exhibition including Adams' "*Moon and Half Dome*", a museum guard allowed Schaffer to use his own loupe take a close look at Adams' work. Schaffer says he was able to see Adams' use of Spotone to cover imperfections in the print from either the negative



Buffalo Bridge, Washington., D.C.
©David Schaffer

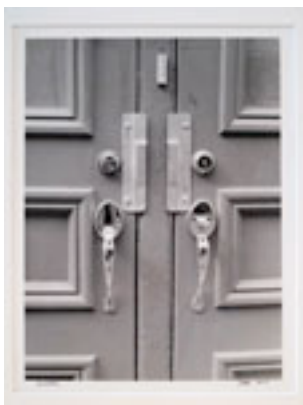


Child - Prague
©David Schaffer

or the paper, imperfections that uncorrected would have appeared as ugly white spots on an otherwise beautiful image.

Brett Weston, Schaffer feels, was a meticulous craftsman and printer, perhaps more so than Ansel Adams. Weston's "*Truck Window*" he sees an example of a print of exquisite quality, perhaps even better than Adams' work.

Schaffer's knowledge of photographers and their works results from his voracious reading of books on photography and his frequent visits to galleries to view works in person. His interests range from works of Adams, Weston and Cartier-Bresson to Ralph Morse's "*Guadacanal*," illustrating the horrors of war, Edward Clark's "*Mourning F.D.R., Warms Springs, Georgia*," showing the Navy Chief Petty Officer playing the accordion, with tears



Old Quebec 8th of 8
©David Schaffer

streaming down his face, and the meticulous craftsmanship of Irving Penn's platinum prints of [Lisa Fonssagrives](#).

In another vein entirely, Schaffer admires the flight of fancy and surrealism of [Jerry Uelsmann's](#) photomontages, remarking, "*He did those 'the old fashioned way,' using several enlargers in his dark-room, each precisely calibrated to ensure the same image register, and transferring the printing paper from enlarger to enlarger to make his final composite image.*" Now, of course, it's possible to create similar images on a computer, to which we may owe a debt to Uelsmann who reportedly was a



Clock face, crackle, sepia toning
©David Schaffer

consultant to the computer engineers who designed the software.

Of his own works Schaffer points to two images as his favorites. Both are "happy accidents," the result of accidentally overdoing sepia toning for so long the prints took on a purple hue. When Schaffer took the prints of an aged actress and the face of a grandfather clock out of the toner he decided to keep them long enough to see what they looked like after they had thoroughly dried.

To his surprise they both had an effect he found pleasing. Though he has tried, he hasn't been able to duplicate the effect. As the years



Colette, crackle, sepia toning
©David Schaffer

have passed the purple hue has mellowed, but because Schaffer doesn't know precisely what went wrong, at what stage or why, he is reluctant to give either print another bath in the fix. Better to enjoy the unusual results of his missteps than to take the chance on unwittingly ruining the prints.

Schaffer has dabbled with some of the alternative processes, but says he'd like to learn more about platinum/palladium printing, albumen, and perhaps bromoil. With Schaffer's impressive research skills and his affinity for books on the technical as well as artistic aspects of photography, all things are possible. For the moment, Schaffer will keep his day job to pay for photographic supplies, and perhaps a class in the use and operation of his newest toy, a Zone VI 4x5 view camera. He's looking forward to learning how to use the



Wrought Iron Grill - Prague
©David Schaffer



Old Quebec 4th of 8
©David Schaffer

various movements of “rise and fall,” the shifts of “left and right,” and the vagaries of correction for bellows extension.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR RETURNS FROM BSA NATIONAL JAMBOREE



Aerial of BSA National Jamboree 2013
©Todd Punch

Last month’s Formulary newsletter was abbreviated because editor, Anthony Mournian, played hooky and traveled to the new Boy Scouts of America Summit Bechtel Reserve in the mountains of West Virginia as part of the national videography team documenting the first-ever BSA National Jamboree at the site.

Part of a fifty person team of videographers and photographers, Mournian roamed the 10,000 acre Jamboree site in search of stories for the online publication, *Jamboree Today*. The team was responsible for recording and editing their video streams and still photographs which published daily accounts of Jamboree events.

During the first of several live shows in the new AT&T Stadium, videographer Todd Punch of Newton, North Carolina used a GoPro camera mounted on a radio controlled drone to capture *this bird’s eye view* of the AT&T Stadium crowd and a small portion of some 15,000 tents used to house more than 30,000 Scouts during the ten day event.

West Virginia weather during mid-July can be intense. Though years had passed without significant summer weather, Mother Nature decided to throw in a change-up for the duration of the Jamboree. With powerful bolts of lighting and bone rattling thunder accompanying pouring rains, getting around the Jamboree proved a challenge at times, and always exciting.

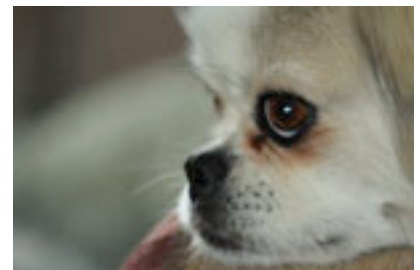
Scouts and volunteers alike had a wonderful time. With a full moon rising out of the eastern sky, videographer Bruce McKee of Mason City, Iowa found a prime



Moonlight over Base Camp D
©Bruce McKee

spot to capture “*Moonlight over Base Camp ‘D’*” before night, and more rain, fell. One viewer of Bruce’s photograph likened it to a colony on the moon with earthlight!

It’s all over now. When the Jamboree began it took only hours to create the instant city of tents and Scouts, temporarily third largest in all of West Virginia. Ten days later in a pouring rain it took even less time to tear it down, fold it up and put it away at the end of the Jamboree.



Sherry Maloughney, office manager of the Photographers’ Formulary learned she was awarded a Blue Ribbon at the Northwest Montana Fair in Kallispell. Sherry took the photograph of her dog, Walker, using her newly purchased Canon T3I.

the Photographers' Formulary

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NEWSLETTER SPECIALS

Specials for the darkroom. All items *limited to stock on hand*

PHOTOGRAPHERSFORMULARY GRADE 2 EMULSION



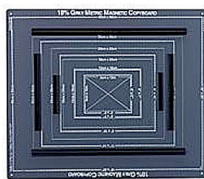
Cat. No.:07-0186
250ml size
Regular \$50.00
30% off: \$35.00!
Promo Code: A0186



Cat. No.:07-0187
1000 ml size
Regular \$165.00
30% off: \$107.25!
Promo Code: A0187

This fixed grade black & white emulsion is a light sensitive, silver chlorobromide emulsion which can be applied to various supports such as glass, ceramics, art paper, fabrics and plastics. It must not be coated directly on to metal, because this would adversely affect the photo-chemical properties of the emulsion. The emulsion corresponds in sensitivity and contrast to Kentmere Kenthene grade 2 paper.
<http://stores.photoformulary.com/-strse-994/PHOTOGRAPHERS-FORMULARY--GRADE/Detail.bok>

MAGNETIC EASELS



Cat. #.: 14-0241
Regular \$24.95
35% off: \$16.22!
Promo Code: A0241

This convenient Delta copy board holds copy perfectly flat with its supplied magnetic strips. Features two 8" and two 10" magnetic strips that are fully adjustable. Prevents hot spots, eliminates the need for tape or tacks, and will not damage original copy. Grid helps position copy for repeatable work. Made of 20-gauge steel with epoxy finish. Can be mounted on a wall or placed flat on a copy stand or enlarger. Can also be used as an enlarging easel. Limited to stock on hand.

<http://stores.photoformulary.com/-strse-824/Magnetic-Copy-Board/Detail.bok>

Cat. No.:14-0237



4-in-1 8x10 Magnetic Easel
Regular \$39.95
35% off: \$25.97!
Promo Code: A0237

Cat. No.:14-0239



16x20 Magnetic Easel
Regular \$44.95
35% off: \$29.22!
Promo Code: A0239

The easel has perfectly aligned masks positioned for 1/4" margins. No adjustments needed. Magnetic latching locks instantly, keeping paper secure. Special focusing base. All steel construction. Rubber feet prevent slipping. Accommodates four most used paper sizes: 8x10", 5x7", 3.5x5" and 2.5x3.25".

The larger easel 11x14, is made from steel and powder-coated in matte black paint. It's the perfect beginner easel: simple in design, construction, use and it's durable. With this easel, and a bit of practice, you can achieve perfect, borderless prints. Or you can center the exposure on the paper, resulting in a bordered print. The patented angles of the Delta retainer bars assure precision registration of each sheet of paper. The top easel bar is gently sloped and the left edge is flat to allow sliding of the paper in and out with ease. The non-skid bottom prevents the easel from slipping out of position. Each easel comes with three magnets: a 4, 8 and 10. Use one, two or three magnets to hold your paper in place.

<http://stores.photoformulary.com/-strse-820/Premier-4-dsh-1-Magnetic-Easel/Detail.bok>

STORAGE TANK



Cat. No.: 14-0507
Regular \$28.95
35% off: \$18.82!
Promo Code: A0507

Storage of larger volume chemicals is made easy with this extra heavy-duty translucent polyethylene containers. Rigid with easy viewing of liquid levels. All containers come with a fast flow faucet.

<http://stores.photoformulary.com/-strse-900/Storage-Tanks/Detail.bok>

SPOTTING BRUSHES



Cat. No.: 09-0400 Sable
1000ml size
Regular \$5.50
30% off: \$3.58!
Promo Code: A0400



Cat. No.: 09-0402 Sable
Regular \$5.50
30% off: \$3.58!
Promo Code: A0402



Cat. No.: 09-0403 Sable
Regular \$5.50
30% off: \$3.58!
Promo Code: A0403

The Delta 1 Kolinsky Sable Retouch/Spotting Brush has 100% pure red sable hair for retouching and spotting. The fibers are mounted in seamless aluminum ferrules.

<http://stores.photoformulary.com/-strse-938/Delta-0-Sable-Brush/Detail.bok>

FLAT BRUSHES



Cat. No.: 09-0404
Creative Mark 1 Flat Brush
Regular \$5.50
30% off: \$3.58!
Promo Code: A0404

The Creative Mark #1 Flat Brush features Pro Stroke Premium White Bristles and are superbly hand crafted out of the finest quality pure white Chungking bristle hair. The inward natural curve of bristle hair provides a springy response, making painting a pleasure. Natural flagged tips hold color extremely well for long and full paint strokes. The hair is hand-tied, placed in seamless nickel plated brass ferrules and glued and crimped onto balanced matte black long wood handles with distinctive silver dipped ends.

<http://stores.photoformulary.com/-strse-938/Delta-0-Sable-Brush/Detail.bok>

Formulary Substitute for Kodak D-19 Now Available in Larger Volume Kit Form



Need a larger volume kit substitute for Kodak's D-19 high contrast developer? The Formulary has one ready for you.

Kodak recently announced it will no longer manufacture its famous and highly useful Tech Pan film. D-19 Developer was used to process Tech Pan, and as supplies of Tech Pan begin to run out there's some question of D-19's future availability.

Years ago Kodak published the formula for D-19 as a convenience for customers who might want to modify its standard developer. The Photographers' Formulary has since made one liter kits using a similar formula.

Now you can buy four-liter kits of the Formulary's substitute for D-19. This will enable you to mix up four liters of the Formulary's D-19 substitute in a single operation. No more having to go back to the well, one liter at a time.

So if you need a developer with higher than normal contrast and speed, higher than average graininess, but with high capacity while being clean and fast acting, then the Formulary's substitute may be just what you have been searching for.

[Download the Formulary's D-19 substitute PDF information sheet here. . . .](#)