Beckham Digital

Feb 2018

Backing up Original Raw Images

For many years I and I guess many of you have stored original images in two separate places. I think most people appreciate the reasons for this. Internal/external drives can fail and CD's and DVD disks have been known not to read. So, keeping valuable images in two separate places has always been the prudent thing to do.

However, time moves on and I am thinking of changing this, just a little. I have run out of external drive space to store Raw images, so I am in the position where I need to consider buying two more external drives to continue to store original images in two places.

I have quite a bit of experience of using on-line storage with MediaFire. My confidence of their ability to store my images securely is generally high and upload speeds are now good enough for me to consider this. Remember it's a little and often upload as I shoot the images.

I store Raw images on a secondary drive in my PC installed just for this purpose, it is big enough for me to store raw images back to 2004. This is my main PC, loaded with Photoshop so all I need is in one place.

I have reached a point where I am considering storing original raw images on this secondary hard within my PC for convenience and a second copy in the clouds using my mediafire account. I can purchase 1 Terabyte of storage for $90 a year, just $7.50 a month.

Based on the amount of images I have shot in past years, that 1T storage will last 4-5 years.

The Drones are Here

Last month I mentioned that I have had the opportunity to experience drone photography with the Mavic Pro Drone and that experience has now stretched to almost 3 months. I have continued the subject this month as I have found it extremely interesting and I hope you do too.

Photography is all about viewpoint. Moving a few feet up, down, left or right can often make a massive difference to the image you are able to compose. It follows that if you can get up to 400 feet high, your vista is vastly different.

However, the principles of photography do not change just because you may have purchased a drone. We can purchase all sorts of gadgets for our photography, but unless they are partnered to good photographic techniques, they can be reduced to an expensive plaything.

The cameras on a drone are just as prone to the problems of high contrast as any other camera on the planet. There are times when photographing in high overhead bright sun may be right, but very often the best images are shot.....wait for it.....in the golden hour. In the case of the image

below, we also headed out when a storm was forecast.

Image 150th @ f2.2 with 160 iso

The Glass House Mountains were about to be deluged by water. We were on the edge of the storm, but standing beside the car, so it would easy to retreat if and when we needed to, which in fact we did need to. By the way, The Glass House Mountains were named by Captain Cook in 1770 who felt that from the sea they looked like glass kilns from England. They are in fact the hard cores of long extinct volcanoes, the rest of which has long since eroded away

Image 120th @ f2.2 with 160 iso

Photographers, who like landscape photography, are used to looking for good vantage points for their images. What I have had to get used to in the past few weeks travelling around with my Son is that, you often don't need to do that. All you need is a clearing in an area that doesn't have any no

fly restrictions. Once your drone climbs up over the tree line a completely different vista appears. In some cases you just need to go straight up, that's all. Take the image above. There is no way you can get a shot of the Three Sisters with the horizon too. All vantage points are too low.

Below is another image where you find yourself close to a storm, but can't find a good viewpoint for ground based photography. Just put up the drone and there we have it.

Image 320th @ f2.2 with 100 iso

Some personal thoughts.

Working through the Raw shot images from the Mavic Pro's 12 Medapixel camera, I do notice the quality difference between the raw images from the Mavic and those I am used to from my 20MP Canon. That is not a surprise of course, but when manipulating the images, I find I have to treat the raw sliders with a little more respect than i would with a 20MP camera. If you're not careful you can introduce more problems than you are fixing. Having said that, this is true most of the time with image editing.

Flight time seems to be a big issue with some drone users, but I have not found that at all. If you cannot grab some good shots in 15 minutes, then you're probably in the wrong place or at the wrong time. The Mavic comes with up to three batteries, depending on the package you buy and we have had to use all three batteries only a couple of times and that was when we flew in many different locations through the day.

The Phantom 4 Pro Drone does offer a 20MP 1" CMOS sensor with a 24mm lens and an aperture range of f2.8 to f11. However, it's a much larger drone than the Mavic Pro and the Mavic Air that was released in the past few weeks. All these drones are made by the same company DJI.

Remember we are shooting with just 12MP, but then we have the the ability to create a panoramic image. Here we used 5 images to create an image that would print 6ft wide. I know that because I saw one only the other day printed from a Mavic image the same size as this one above.

Image f2.2 with 100 iso

Image 1250th @ f2.2 with 100 iso

Above we are high up over Noosa North Shore looking down on the sand bars and the lagoons of Noosa. Impossible unless you can get 250 feet in the air. You may notice that the aperture quoted for all these image is f2.2. Shutter speeds and iso can be changed, but not the aperture. For most still photography that does not seem to be an issue, but for video you may need a neutral density filter to slow the shutter in bright conditions.

For most photographers, the question appears to be finding a balance between portability and quality. The Phantom 4 will capture 20MP, but you will need a backpack just for the drone, although it ain't heavy. For those wanting to carry their photo gear and a drone, then the Mavic Pro (below) or the Mavic Air (bottom right) seem to be the choice.

The Drones are Coming Audio Visual Presentation

Download the Mp4 from HERE

View on YouTube in HD HERE

A Sparkling Infra-Red Mono – Photoshop and Camera Raw -Video

This month we are getting creative with a Raw image from an Infra-Red Camera. Remember, Photoshop is the Rolls Royce of image editors and it underpins our creativity. It gives us the scope to develop a creative approach to our photography.

Although we use an Infra Red image here, the manipulation techniques are much the same for all our editing work flows. Photoshop is not as hard to get into as many people think. It just takes a structured and methodical approach. After watching this video and if you think we have that approach, try our set of videos with the title of Photoshop for Photographers below

View **Sparkling Infra-Red Mono** on YouTube HERE

Download **Sparkling Infra-Red Mono** for PC and Mac via an Mp4 video HERE

Download Part 1 of our **Photoshop for Photographers** training program here

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