

Landscapes

In this edition of the newsletter, with the help of Paul, Gareth and Mike, a feature on Landscapes has been put together.

The aim is bring the knowledge within KPC to a wider audience. You may not agree with their principles but it is not meant as a definitive document but to add a little more to our photography.

A key strategy in landscape photography is to take your time. To help achieve this using a tripod is a great aid. It provides a stable foundation and enables you to compose your shot from one position, and indeed to recompose as many times as you want to get your image right in camera.

There is a mantra that comes from all our excellent landscape photographers.

- There are three issues to consider when taking a landscape, context, structure and texture (all books cover the same but often in a different manner sometimes with different names) - however beautiful the view to the eye, without consideration of these three the photograph stands a reasonable chance of being just a record shot
- Context is "what the photograph is about" - why has it been taken; at one limit it might be to show the impressive structure of some mountains, and at the other man's destruction of an environment, but whatever, if it's just because "it's beautiful" then you need to take care with the other two below
- Structure is the layout of the photograph, the composition, which can follow the rules, but once you know these the strongest pictures are often created by breaking the rules - the structure should be appropriate to the subject and, if possible, emphasise the context
- Texture is often the strongest aspect of the photograph, but it can take many forms (lighting, geometrical form, contrast, colour, etc.) - if it's not just "beautiful" then it's often texture that provides the emphasis to a landscape
- Colour in a landscape should be appropriate and contribute to the texture; colour often distracts from other key textures in a landscape, in which case conversion to b/w may help
- For those working digitally, one of your best friends is the levels control, or anything equivalent, to ensure a full dynamic range across the landscape, not least for b/w

Lighting is a key element to the success of any image. If the light is dull and flat, this generally means dull pictures. Although if you are patient you may well be lucky and get that break in the cloud and light streams through.

On the other hand too much light can result in harsh reflection and another mantra landscape photographers chant across the country is "not after 10.00am and not before 4.00pm".

There is another saying that is regularly heard – rules are made to be broken!

Above all you never stop learning and every now and then you come across little gems that stick in your head. One such appears in the latest edition of “Which?” magazine.

To snap the best landscape photo, divide the shot into three horizontal thirds. The top two should be filled with sky, the bottom third by the land and horizon.

If anyone is interested there is a specialist on line magazine called GB Landscapes. The link is <http://www.landscapegb.com/issues/lgb-0015/>