

Image: Reflection
Photographer: Sue Sun
This image is the first place winner from August Landscape Photography competition
Camera setting:
Canon 5D Mark III
Aperture: F/18,
Shutter Speed: 1/200 seconds
ISO 640.



Editors

Ken Fong
Wen-Wen Li
news@101photoclub.com

Planning Committee

President: Serena Hartoog
Vice President: Tatung Chow
Membership: Vivian Yeh
Competition: Dennis Lo

101 Photo Club

101 Photo Club is sponsored by River of Life Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

Regular Meeting : 1st Tuesday of each month 7:00-9:30pm
River of Life Christian Church,
1177 Laurelwood Road,
Santa Clara, CA 95054

For details, please visit:
101photoclub.com

Events

Scout Robert Lim 9/30 & 10/1,
(page 3)

Resources

Scouting Report: Northern Santa Cruz by Ken Fong (page 7)
Tripod Purchasing Guide by Ken Fong (page 12)
Sept 6 Meeting Recap (page 15)

President's message

Summer is over, we will go back to our normal life instead of taking kids to vacation. School has started this month. Some of your children will go back to college. Now you all have your own private time to do some favorite activities such as photography.

Following last month's landscape event with Ken Fong, we will have a very different talk on portrait photography.

We invited Scott Robert Lim, an international award winning master photographer from Los Angeles, to come for a one-day workshop as well as the event program.

Please note that we have rescheduled the regular meeting from Tuesday Oct. 4th to Friday September 30th in the same meeting room, the Fellowship Hall. The speaker is flying from Los Angeles and will host a one-day workshop on Saturday.

Please reserve the day for the free event from 7pm to 10pm. This event is free for members. Our social starts at 6:30pm instead of 7pm. We will also end of at 10pm instead of 9:30pm.

The Saturday workshop has a registration fee.

For more details, please see <http://101photoclub.com>, our website home page: Sep 30 and Oct 1st with Scott Robert Lim: Big Boy Lighting on a Dime, Two days workshop.

Serena Hartoog

Your Hard Work Will Be Rewarded – Barbara Cage

Big Boy Lighting on a Dime: 2-Day Workshop by Scott Robert Lim

Professional lighting techniques on a budget



Sept 30 and
Oct 1, 2016

BIG BOY LIGHTING ON A DIME

Scott Robert Lim Two Day Workshop in Santa Clara, CA
River of Life Christian Church

About the speaker



Internationally acclaimed, master photographer, **Scott Robert Lim** (Photog Cr, AOPA) was awarded the prestigious 2009 Kodak Award and was inducted into WPPI's Society of Excellence and has earned an Accolade of Outstanding Photographic Achievement. He also has earned his Photographic Craftsman degree from PPA, the world's largest professional photography organization and is considered a leader in education. To his credit he has more than 50 international awards of excellence. His work has been published in books and magazines distributed internationally and has taught and mentored many professional photographers around the world. Scott is a popular international speaker with an exciting and inspirational style.

Links:

See Scott's Imagery <https://scottrobert.smugmug.com/>

FREE mobile app, video tutorials, workshops, gear, blog, etc. www.SRLapp.info (paste link into MOBILE browser and save to homepage)

Facebook: facebook.com/scottrobertlim

Instagram: @scottrobertlim

Big Boy Lighting on a Dime

Professional lighting techniques on a budget

Bigger is usually better, especially when it comes to lighting, but is it really necessary to spend thousands of dollars on a lighting system? Big expensive lighting is currently all the rage and used by many popular photographers but great lighting techniques do not need a lot of expensive equipment. The most lighting situations of an on location portrait and wedding photographer can be effectively managed with some very basic equipment, don't be fooled into thinking you need to spend thousands of dollars to be a world class professional.

Master photographer and Sony Artisan, Scott Robert Lim talks about how he shoots around the world with some very basic equipment and yet his portrait images are published and viewed by thousands around the world. Learn how Scott uses inexpensive, easy to use, lightweight and portable gear and how he can save the photographer thousands of dollars. He will reveal his lighting secrets that has turned him into an international superstar. Despite using some very minimal equipment, his portrait images are published and viewed by thousands around the world. Learn how Scott uses inexpensive, easy to use, lightweight and portable gear and how you can save thousands of dollars.

Topics:

- Why using a manual flash is important
- How to create big beautiful light for under \$20
- Managing bright light situations
- Best low light solutions
- Why every gear bag should include a video light
- Must have multi-function accessories

Itinerary

Sept 30 Friday

7-10pm Lighting Fundamentals

- Great exposure vs. Great Photo
- Hard light vs. Soft Light
- Creating sunsets anytime, anywhere
- Why shadows are necessary
- Flash Basics
 - Inverse Square Law
 - Flash sync
 - Dragging shutter
 - Stopping Action
- Controlling Flash Exposure
- How to use an umbrella
- When and why use video light

Oct 1 Saturday

9:30am - 12:30 Advanced Lighting

- Determining the best light for the right situation
 - Overcast
 - Bright Light
 - Night or No or Low Light
- Sunny 16 Rule- determining exposure w/out a light meter
- Importance of grouping multiple flashes
- Sandwich lighting for professional results
- How to use colored lighting
- Black box techniques
 - Underexposing for drama
 - Creative Silhouette images
 - Stopping action at slow shutter speeds
 - Dragging shutter speed
- Variable ND filters

12:30-1:30pm Lunch

1:30-3pm Practice Session

4pm-7pm Live Session on Location TBA

Scouting Report: Northern Santa Cruz Part 1 by Ken Fong

This is (hopefully) the first in a series of scouting reports for Northern Santa Cruz. To myself, I consider this area of California “undiscovered” with many hidden jewels that are not as popular (nor as crowded) as the nearby Monterey or Natural Bridges area. This area spans multiple coastal targets such as Panther Beach, Shark Fin Cove, Davenport Beach, and others. For this installment, the focus will be on Davenport Beach and the nearby Shark Fin Cove.

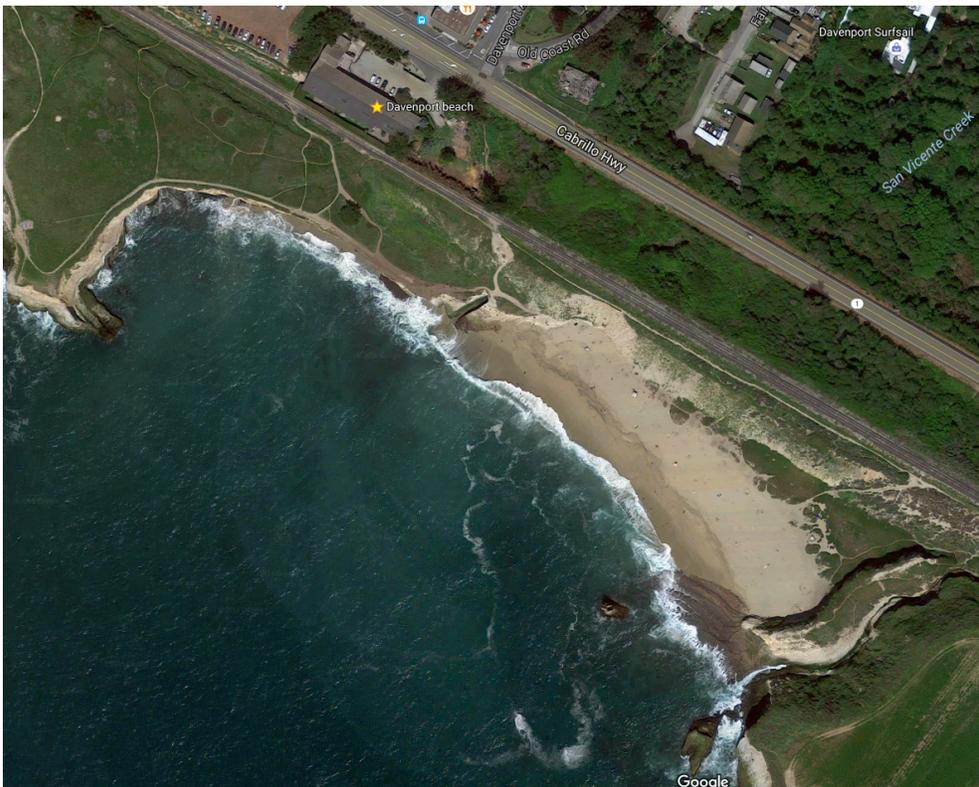
GETTING THERE

The beaches of Northern Santa Cruz are accessible from Highway 1. If you are visiting the Pigeon Point Lighthouse, it is just another 20-minute drive south. However, if you are just visiting the beaches from the South Bay, the most direct route is to drive through Hwy 17 to Santa Cruz, then head back north on Hwy 1. Allow about 1 hour if there is no significant traffic. I would plan to get to your target 1 hour prior to magic light to ensure adequate scouting of foreground material. Don't try to capture more than one target area per magic light session...you won't make it in time and you will end up rushing your composition.

TARGET AREAS

Davenport Beach

Davenport Beach is located right across the highway from the main part of town. There will be plenty of parking with access to the beach on the southern side of the lot. Be careful climbing down some stair-like rocks to get down to the railroad tracks, but once you make it past that, the path to the beach is easy. The beach features a seacave/cove as you walk in, but the beach's most notable landmark is the “monolith” sea stack on the southern portion of the beach. There are plenty of rocks and moss that can be used as foreground subjects.



Davenport Pier

Davenport Pier is a large abandoned pier that can be seen easily from Google Earth or Google Maps. Parking is in a roadside triangular lot just south of a cement plant. If coming from the south, the parking lot is about a quarter mile north of the main part of town, where the Hwy 1 just starts to bend slightly right. As with most of these targets, you will need to cross some railroad tracks to get to the trailheads. The access down to the Davenport Pier is a steep climb that should be done by confident hikers only; however, there are some good compositions that can be captured from the highway level that doesn't require any climbing. Plan for a good sunset shot using a reverse grad filter, and for plenty of magic light (post-sunset) compositions with a solid ND for long exposure times.



Shark Fin Cove

Shark Fin Cove is a delightful little place located just over a half mile south of the main section of Davenport. There are two parking lots off Highway 1 that lead to the cove's trailhead. The climb down to the beach level is short and moderate and can be done by beginning hikers if done slowly. If you can make it past the stinky runoff from the mainland, the beach area itself is quite pristine because the area does not seem to get a lot of visitors.



There are several suggested compositions at this cove:

A) Shark Fin at beach level...the point indicated as "A" seems to be the only spot where you can photograph the main rock at beach level with complete isolation...all other spots at beach level will have the rock overlap with something else. At this level, it might be difficult to align a sunset depending on time of year, so please check tools such as The Photographer's Ephemeris to plan accordingly.



B) Southward facing Shark Fin Rock from a higher vantage point. This is a classic viewpoint where you can get good subject isolation and sunset or post-sunset light on the horizon during winter months. During the summer (and if the sky is clear), this is a good spot for Milky Way compositions.



C) Cave view. You can use the cave to frame a shot of the cove. You probably won't get a clear view of the Shark Fin Rock through the cave. Using a fisheye and getting your feet wet may improve your chances, but be mindful of surf.



Photo by Bruce Nguyen

D) Tidal pool view. Tidal pools as foreground offer great potential to reflect colors in the sky, with the Shark Fin Rock as the background subject. Shark Fin Rock is not as nicely isolated as in "A", but there are still plenty of composition potential in this spot.



Photo by Hao Jiang

E) Northwest facing high vantage view. This is a high view of the Shark Fin Rock with good potential for sunset in the summer months. The added bonus of this site is the iceplant, seaside daisies, or yarrow foreground that can frame your rock nicely.



Tripod Purchasing Guide by Ken Fong

If you are a landscape photographer, choosing a tripod should not just be an afterthought after purchasing the camera. Many will often see what was on sale at Costco only to regret their purchase later. I'm not knocking tripods sold at Costco or such, but I want to emphasize that the demands of landscape photography require a thoughtful purchasing decision. I consider the tripod to be the main foundation for great landscape photography. The wrong tripod can cancel out the benefits of the most advanced and expensive camera.

There is no one "right" tripod as it will really depend on your intended application for landscape photography. A lot of folks will usually start by buying what appears to be a solid tripod at a local store, only to discover that it falls short in one area or another, so they end up stepping up to a more solid model, only to discover another weakness further down the line. This cycle of re-purchasing can be quite expensive and is something I have experienced myself. My hope is that my experience can save you money by buying the right tripod upfront, even if it does seem like a significant investment. Below are my guidelines and recommendations on selecting a tripod.

DON'T BE TOP-HEAVY

Ideally, 2/3 of the weight should be on the tripod legs, with 1/3 of the weight being the head/camera/lens. If you are using aluminum legs, you are likely on par with this ratio; however, if you have chosen carbon fiber, be especially mindful of top-heaviness. Most camera tipping accidents are the result of top-heavy rigs.

LOAD RATING

I've read that the conservative way to calculate if your prospective tripod has enough load capacity is as follows: add the weight of your camera and heaviest lens intended to be used...multiply it by 3...if the result is less than the tripod's load rating, you should be fine.

CARBON FIBER OR ALUMINUM

Carbon fiber can almost be as sturdy as aluminum, but is usually more expensive. Carbon fiber is usually a consideration for those that want a sturdy tripod, but also want to travel light or hike/backpack. Aluminum tripods offer a step up in sturdiness and definitely should be considered if you shoot "out the back of your car", meaning, you don't need to lug the rig around great distances on your own back. Never use plastic tripods. Interestingly, wooden tripods are great for ocean photography because the vibration from surf at the bottom of the leg dissipates by the time it reaches the head...but they are super heavy.

3 or 4-SECTION LEGS?

A 3-section tripod will usually be lighter and extend taller than its 4-section version. The 3-section will be slightly sturdier than the 4-section, but most people opt for the 4-section because it is more portable (can fit in a suitcase, etc.)

AVOID TRIPODS WITH CENTER COLUMNS

Center columns introduce instability...it is one item that we often forget to tighten, causing soft focus. And even when tightened, there is still a lot of extra vibration that amplifies through this extra appendage. When a center column is being used, it's usually in desperation. When considering your tripod's maximum height, do not use the height of the tripod with the center column extended. If you never use the center column, it represents unnecessary weight on your overall kit...better to invest the weight into the 3 main legs. Unfortunately, most tripods come with center columns.

TWIST OR FLIP-LEVER

When extending the legs, you will need to decide how you would want to lock the legs in place. The two most common methods are the twist rings and the flip levers. The flip levers are probably faster to operate; however, I prefer the twist rings for various reasons. Firstly, I tend to get pinched by the flip levers. Secondly, the twist rings allow me to disassemble a tripod more easily for on-field servicing or cleaning.

ON-FIELD SERVICEABILITY

As alluded to in the previous paragraph, a tripod should be user-serviceable on the field. The most common problem that can make photography miserable is sand inside the legs...this still happens even if your tripod claims to be weather-sealed. We all need to be able to clean out the legs on location or in the hotel without special tools or instructions.

COMPATIBILITY

The main thing is to make sure the tripod's head base is a good match for the ballhead. Do the ballhead levers clear or run into the base? Does the ballhead base overlap the tripod's head base? The choice of ballhead deserves its own article, but I will make a few recommendations later in this article.

MY RECOMMENDATIONS

The most stable combination that I recommend is the Feisol CT3471 paired with a Really Right Stuff BH55 ballhead. Even though the legs are carbon fiber, the overall rig will not be a top-heavy rig. This is the rig I would take if I were driving a vehicle (not hiking) and doing surf compositions...it handles ocean waves nicely. This tripod & head combination will top 7 lbs.

When travelling or hiking (which composes 70% of my photography these days), the combination I recommend is the Feisol 3401 paired with a Really Right Stuff BH40. This tripod and head combination will be around 4 lbs and starts to get a little top-heavy.

If you are willing to pay a little more for even more stability, less top-heaviness, and ultimate portability, consider the Feisol 3442 paired with the Arca Swiss P0 ballhead with quickset fliplock. The Arca P0 ballhead is one of the few solutions that will fit the Feisol 3442 in its inverted (stowed) state. This tripod and head combination will be under 3.5 lbs. The nice bonus about the P0 design is that you will not need to consider purchasing a separate panoramic head...its inverted design serves this function already. A panoramic head should not be confused with a panning head.

As for other tripod brands, here are my impressions...

Benro: good value for carbon fiber tripods; however, I have seen these things wear down after a few years of use.

Induro: incredibly durable, seemingly more expensive than its Feisol counterparts. One downside for me is that they all have center columns.

Gitzo: the supposed king of carbon fiber with great performance, but a bit overpriced in my opinion.

Manfrotto: Aluminum or Carbon Fiber, the tripod weight to load performance seems below par from I have experienced...for the amount of weight these things have, I would expect better load performance. But overall, not a bad value and they are available most everywhere including Costco.

Really Right Stuff: These are supposedly the best, but I have never afforded one to try it out.

Recap of Sept 6 Meeting: Cracking the Code of Landscape Photography

On September 6, club member and landscape photography instructor Ken Fong gave a 2-hour excerpt from his series on landscape photography fundamentals, "Cracking the Code of Landscape Photography." The seminar concentrated on how to create strong compositions, especially for those without an artistic background, or those who feel they do not have an "eye for photography". Ken shared his journey of being a shutterbug, of one who used to think that getting the next best camera would make for better photography, to one who now practices a "less is more" approach so that a photographer can be freed up to create and not fuss.

Ken discussed that the journey of improving one's compositional ability begins with some basics, but also by observing "code" that seems to exist in fine art photographs as well as art in general. Ken demonstrated some of the code by exhibiting some examples and explanations of how the code is achieved in-camera and by post-processing. The code is nothing complicated or difficult to master...it is just a common pattern that seems to exist in strong compositions.