

Byron Braton Photography – April 30, 2020 - IF YOU CAN THINK IT, YOU CAN CAPTURE IT!

Thank you Scott Swanson for recording, preparing and uploading the session to YouTube. Here is the link from this session. <https://youtu.be/xCMrNLsX8qI>

Also – here are responses from Byron to questions from the April 23 session of **IF YOU CAN THINK IT, YOU CAN CAPTURE IT!**

Q: Where do you get your inspiration to take photos?

A: I formed a group of 7 friends. Some have been photographers, some worked in camera sales and some are newcomers to photography and its just a hobby. We have a theme each week. I look for inspiration every week to take a picture that illustrates the theme. Often what I will do is Google the theme. I then look at the Images section. I will often see a photo there that will inspire me to take my own, similar picture. Here are 2 more examples. When I first saw the metal sculpture of the serpent in the desert near Anza Borego I thought it would look much more interesting at night with the Milky Way over it's head. That was inspiration. When I took the picture, I really liked it. That led to me wanting to make a series of 12 of the sculptures. That was more inspiration. I spend the winter in Palm Springs, CA. Architecture is very important to that area. I really enjoy seeing the buildings at night. Earlier this year I was leaving a movie theater just after sunset. I walked past an ornate building that was lit but the sky was still blue. I took a picture of it with my phone. I liked it so much it inspired me to take a series of photos of other buildings in Palm Springs at that time of day.

Q: I don't own a camera. Can we get similar pictures with a cell phone camera? Or what kinds of cool pictures can we get with a cell phone camera? Or an iPad?

A: You can get very cool pictures with a cell phone or iPad. Even though there are no physical dials or knobs to turn on a cell phone you can still do things like adjust exposure. I'm only familiar with the iPhone. With that I compose the picture and hold my finger on the screen. That brings up the exposure compensation scale, slide the finger up and the picture will get lighter. Slide the finger down and the picture will get darker. That goes a long ways to making a photo interesting. Remember, the 2 most important factors in making an interesting photo are composition and lighting. If you have those things taken care of, you can use any camera.

Q: How do you know the exposure of the moon though, to fine what exposure you should set it to? How do you know how to set it?

A: To get the proper exposure of the Moon, remember, it is just as bright on the Moon as it is on the Earth in the daytime. You could do an experiment- Walk outside in the middle of the day. Take a picture of the scenery. Your camera will display the exposure information. That is the same exposure you should use for the Moon. If you have your camera set to an auto exposure mode it will make the Moon look like a white disk. That's because the camera is being tricked by the black sky. Set your camera to a manual mode and adjust it to the same settings you had when you shot the landscape picture. I will guess the shutter speed will be 1/250 sec. When the Moon is near the horizon either at moonrise or moonset it will be a few stops darker. You should use a slower speed maybe 1/60 sec.

Q: How do you know what to set your shutter speed for certain pictures. Blurry or still? How do I know what to set it to?

A: That is a hard question to answer because there are so many variables. If you have a zoom lens and you are shooting pictures at the wide angle setting you can shoot as slow as 1/30 sec and not get much camera shake. If you zoom in on something you will have to increase your shutter speed to about 1/250 sec or faster. If your camera is on a tripod you don't have to worry about camera shake. Now you are only concerned about the subject. If it's someone running in front of the camera 1/1000 sec will freeze all motion. Every shutter speed slower 1/500, 1/250, 1/125 will show more and more blur. You'll have to take many pictures at various speeds to see how much blur you want in the picture.

Q: Do you have recommendation for new photographers about how to organize photos? Does instructor have recommendation for where to store photos?

A: If you don't use Adobe Lightroom or similar software both Mac and Windows computers have built in places to store photos. I like to download photos from a camera and store them there. I then put the card back into the camera and erase all photos. As far as how to organize, the camera puts a date stamp on all photos. I use that as my main organization and then the next step is to attach a name to the picture. That way you can use the search tool and easily find the photo. You can also create a folder to hold groups within the program. If you are working on a project, store all the photos relating to that project in the appropriate folder.

Q: Do you pay for Lightroom? Does Lightroom change or degrade the quality of the photos stored there?

A: Adobe makes Lightroom and Photoshop. They no longer sell them as individual programs. To get them you subscribe to Adobe and you get Lightroom and Photoshop for \$10 per month. The images are not degraded in Lightroom. Since the images are digital, they are made up of 1 and 0's. The images and copies of the images are kept exactly as they came from the camera.

Q: What program do you use to photoshop? Is it free? Also aren't there websites that you can photoshop?

A: I did a quick check. In the Windows world the top 5 free photo manipulation programs are GIMP, paint.net, Pixlr, PhotoScape and Fotor. Have fun exploring those programs. But be really careful. Free programs can often come with viruses and other malware that sneaks in with the software. It depends on what site you use to download the software and what "accept" buttons you push. Read carefully before accepting anything.

Q: I like to take pics of my friends, how do I use the shadows to my advantage?

A: Shadows are just as important as the lit area! If you are taking a close up picture of a friends face and the light is coming from the side, the shadow can make the face look very dramatic. I made a mistake in my first session, I gave the wrong definition of the French word Noir. It means black. Look up Film Noir, click the images tab and see how important shadows are.

Q: Can you take a picture while you are in the car and driving by in the same way?

A: You can take a picture from one car to another car going in the same direction. That could be an interesting picture. Taking a picture of something outside the car that isn't moving while your car is moving is usually very disappointing. If you took a picture of a building while driving by, the closer the ground the more blur. The building might look ok but the foreground won't. You would have to experiment with that.

Q: How do you take a picture of the sun without it glaring?

A: If you want to take a picture of the Sun you will need to put a Solar filter in front of the lens. A Solar filter is a super dark filter that makes the bright Sun darker and easier to photograph. When you put the filter on the lens you might have trouble finding the Sun! Normally the Sun has sunspots. For the last few years it has had few or no sunspots. That means a picture of the Sun will look like a round disk