

VIEWFINDER



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Photo credit: John Fraser

*“Whether he is an artist or not,
the photographer is a
joyous sensualist, for the
simple reason that the eye
traffics in feelings, not in
thoughts”*

Walker Evans

Photographer

Meet the Editor – John Fraser

Viewfinder is the Etobicoke Camera Club newsletter. Its goal is to share our members' success's and the events at the club that help us on that journey. If you have anything you would like to contribute, please consider submitting it. Our members will appreciate it.



The Etobicoke Camera Club introduced me to the Art in photography. No longer satisfied with just memory photographs, the club helps me strive for photographs that others will also enjoy.

Contact: info@etobicokecameraclub.org

Feature Article

Exploring AI in Photoshop

(A collaboration between Sam Elogio and Christine Kobielski)

What is real and what is fake? It becomes harder and harder to differentiate with so many AI apps available today. Writers, actors, artists fear for their jobs, and teachers wonder how they will keep tabs on all the plagiarism. Our club too has also voiced its concerns and is working on finding solutions to this ongoing dilemma. Rather than worry about all the negative press about AI, Sam and I have decided to just to explore it. We both have a passion for Photoshop and we both love to create. It is our hope that at the end of this article, you too will feel the urge to explore.

For me, **Generative Fill** is a great tool for the imagination! It allows you to try wild and crazy ideas before they escape, saving you hours of work. You can add and remove objects and the program adjusts the lighting and colour and shadows. You make a selection and type in a prompt. It gives you three variations and if you don't like them, just tweak your prompt until you find one you like.



For my first exploration, I chose an image of Mila. Mila loves chocolate, and I thought of her hands and mouth covered in chocolate. I wanted to try the new crop tool to expand the left side and bottom of the image.



The **Crop Expand** worked perfectly as you can see in the elbow on the left. I used various prompts in **Generative Fill** for the wall, the hands, the shirt, and the mouth. Most of the prompts worked except for the mouth; but I left it like that because I thought Mila might find it funny.

Using **Generative Fill** for some of my boring images will add some interest to my family albums. It doesn't take a lot of work and it's fun.

Mila Loves Chocolate

Feature Article

Sam also liked that it could be quickly used as a prototype for creative ideas. It could be used to add elements to a composition or remove distractions with good depth of field in most cases. He noted that when **Generative Fill** did work, it was great and quick.

Everly and Friends (without the use of Generative Fill)



This image was created by Sam using his own image of Everly, stock images of background and animals, and Photoshop tools. Although it is a beautiful image there are several distracting elements including the unappealing path, a giraffe, a water buffalo that stops the eye from going further into the distance, and a zebra that seems to be running into Everly.

Everly and Friends (Created with the addition of Generative Fill)

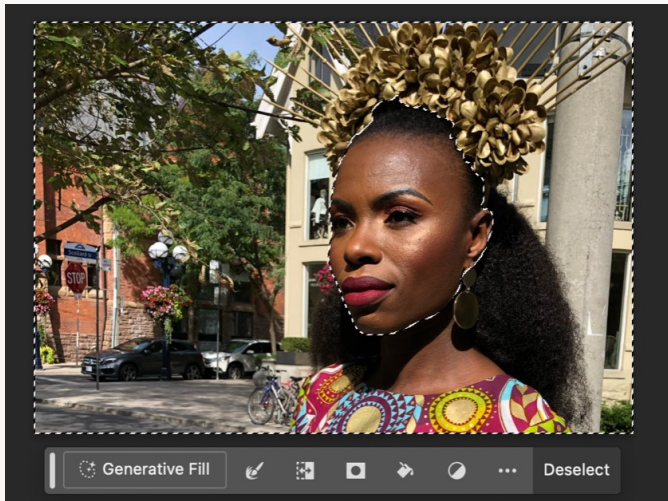


Sam has created a better image using **Generative Fill**. He removed the distracting elements, added a beautiful grass path and wild flowers and created a background of rolling hills moving way into the background. Note how the depth of field and perspective was maintained with the animals in the background. Here Everly is running with the zebra which makes the image more dynamic and adds to the magic of a story of a little girl being one with her wild animal friends. This example shows **Generative Fill** at its best.

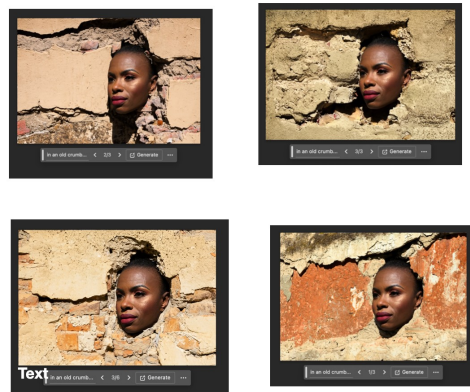
Feature Article

Next we each tried to **beat one of our best images using Generative Fill**. I chose my **In the Wall** image. Instead of starting from scratch, I selected my original face image and inverted the selection. I show just four results because no matter how many images I generated, they all looked similar.

Selection Inverted



AI generated images



Prompt: "In the old crumbling wall"

In The Wall—GOM



My final image is better as the woman is one with the wall as opposed to being separate from the wall. Being one with the wall gives one the feeling that she has been embedded in it since the beginning. My wall symbolized a movement through slavery into the pride and dignity of being a black American. In the AI images on the top right, the sense of pride and dignity is lost. There may be a story, but it's not the story that I wanted to tell.

Feature Article

Sam chose **Portal**, his **Image of the Year**. Could he make it better using Generative Fill? This time he wanted to work totally from scratch.

Portal—Image of the Year



It is easy to see why this was **The Image of the Year**. The selections, and blending are well handled. You can feel the energy of this dynamic pose which is made of at least three triangles, contrasted against the circles of the port. The surfer is strategically placed. Is he moving into the portal or moving out, or perhaps in between deciding? The title leads the story to any of these three scenarios. It becomes a metaphor for these moments in life we can all identify with. The elements of air, water, and earth help to create a story that transcends time and place.

Portal—Created totally using Generative Fill



Sam decided to try to beat his **Portal** image using **Generative Fill** totally rather than use his own photo like I did in my **In the Wall** image. The angle of the swimmer and the blending of the water coming out of the portal is well handled, but the image is far too small to have any impact. Here, clearly, the swimmer is moving out into the sky, limiting the story.

Feature Article

Sam was far more successful with his attempt at something **surreal** when he did it on his own without the help of **Generative Fill**.

Shattered—using Photoshop tools

Sam used a stock image for the man and his own image for the shattered glass. This was done totally using photoshop tools without the benefit of **Generative Fill**. The shattered glass texture layer adds to the story with the centre of the cracks in line with the gut of the man. The glass texture becomes one with the man rather than taking over. This is an image that lingers in our hearts. We feel the anguish. The man is turned to the left perhaps into the past. He has more room on the right (the future). This is a time when breaking the rules totally works. Sam can't put this image in competition as it is not totally his own. However he can experiment with his shattered glass



image on his own photos now that he sees how effective it can be.

Shattered—using Generative Fill



Sam used the same stock image of the man and **Generative Fill** to create the shattered glass. The whole effect has been lost. The shattered glass takes over. It is harsh and the man beneath almost disappears, There is no connection between the two images.

In this case, **Generative Fill** is a total failure.

Feature Article

Alien Landing—created totally using Generative Fill



Christine

This was my dismal, frustrating attempt at creating something **surreal** using **Generative Fill** exclusively. I tried many prompts: a tiger with wings flying through the sky, a two headed camel, an elephant riding a bicycle, etc. with no success. Anything irrational or bizarre was not recognized by the program. I finally settled on this composite. Look how cartoonish it is! I'm not even sure there are photographic elements in this image. Sam pointed out that his results would often generate cartoonish figures as well.

My final words

I would not use this program to create my surreal compositions. My own photos are like windows into my inner world, the seat of my creativity. I love to create and I love to tell stories that live within me. My stories are an unfolding that starts with my images. I need to interact with the real world and feel it in order to create something that has feeling and meaning for me.

Does AI have feelings? We know it doesn't. But can it convey feelings? Not yet as far as I can tell.

Sam's Final Words

"I like what Photoshop's **Generative Fill** offers, but it is limited in what it is able to generate as compared to applications such as **Firefly** and **Midjourney**. These two applications are able to generate very creative and professional looking images. Having said that, I can see how Photoshop's **Generative Fill** could be helpful when working on a Photoshop composite. I do not foresee myself using it all that much. I prefer to create the image myself. Of course, this requires much more effort on my part. I have to plan the composite, photograph all of the required elements, and then put it all together. This approach does not leave anything to chance. I get to meticulously plan and build the composite exactly how I want it to look. Plus, I have the added satisfaction of knowing that it is 100% my creation."

Feature Article

Resources (courtesy of Sam)

There is a free plugin which helps with the whole Gen Fill process. You can access it from this link: <https://goodlight.us/writing/genfill/gen-fill.html>

There is also a great series of videos which teaches you how to use the tool: You can access the lessons from this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yDdcGhxJd6I&list=PLRE7yCl-SQfRq9HdMM_pH84z7vB4noenl

AI is available using **Generative Fill in Photoshop Beta 2024** for anyone with a basic subscription to Photoshop. Sam tells me that on **January 1, 2024** the number of generations allowed will be limited; and will work on a monthly credit system depending on your plan. For now, you can explore with unlimited generations. Of course, you can't use in Photoshop competitions, and you wouldn't want to. Sam pointed out that the images generated are 1024 X 1024. Most of us work on much larger files and frankly our images are of a much higher quality. Also, for those interested in printing, the results would be dismal.

Here is a challenge for our club members. Sam and I each showed you a number of explorations. You may wish to try one or more of ours or make up your own exploration and send it to me. If I get a few submissions I will publish these in the next Viewfinder. Just work with the program whichever way you want and tell me what you did. My e-mail is kobielskichristine@hotmail.com. Please send your submission or submissions in before the new year. You have until then to do as much experimenting with the program that you wish without any cost to you as long as you have a basic subscription. Good Luck and Happy Exploring. I hope to here from you.

Theme - Nature

Competition Results and Highlights

All competition images may be viewed on our [Website Photo Gallery](#) or www.etobicokecameraclub.smugmug.com



GOLD & GOM
Superset
Barb Marszalek
Lion Cubs on Tree Branch

Theme - Nature

All competition images may be viewed on our [Website Photo Gallery](http://www.etobicokecameraclub.smugmug.com) or www.etobicokecameraclub.smugmug.com



GOLD
Advanced
Stephen Dunn
Nesting Red Squirrel



GOLD
Intermediate
Carmina Maruska
Warthogs - Family Feeding

Results of NATURE Competition held November 2023

Level	Full Name	Title	Score	Ribbon
INTERMEDIATE				
I	CARMINA MARUSKA	Warthogs - Family Feeding	24.5	GOLD
I	CARMINA MARUSKA	Mountain Goat - Practicing to be Adults	23.5	SILVER
I	ALAN MORROW	Common Bumblebee on Yellow Coneflower	23.5	SILVER
I	ANGIE BELLANZA	Rose	23	HM
I	LUCY SU	Mute Swan Meditation	22.5	HM
I	TAMMY COUTURE	Green Monkey	22.5	HM
I	KATHRYN RIDDELL	Gastropoda - White Lipped Snail	22.5	HM
I	MARY CHAMBERLAIN	Granite #1	22.5	HM
I	SYLVIA DAVIDSON	Loon Guarding Eggs in Nest	22.5	HM
ADVANCED				
A	STEPHEN DUNN	Nesting Red Squirrel	24.5	GOLD
A	PENNY RINTOUL	Highland Cow	24	SILVER
A	KAREN YOUNG	Cabbage White Butterflies Mating	24	SILVER
A	KAREN YOUNG	Great Blue Heron with Crayfish	24	SILVER
A	MARC EYME	Red Tailed Hawk & Its Prey	24	SILVER
A	RALPH KROMAN	Gull Flies With A Fish	23.5	HM
A	STEPHEN DUNN	Beaver Swimming at Dusk	23	HM
A	LINDA SMITH	Pink Water Lily	23	HM
A	STEPHEN DUNN	Red Fox & Prey	23	HM
SUPERSET				
S	BARB MARSZALEK	Lion Cubs on Tree Branch	27	GOLD & GOM
S	MANDY SAMARZIJA	King of the Sky, Bald Eagle	26.5	SILVER
S	BARB MARSZALEK	Cheetah Siblings Grooming	25.5	HM
S	JUNE WEST	Tree Swallow Defending Nest Box	25.5	HM
S	DON POULTON	Bull Elk Bugling	25	HM
S	LEANNE HAY	Northern Gannet in Flight	24.5	HM
S	GINA JIANG	Coyote's Family	24.5	HM
S	GINA JIANG	Horned Grebe with His Catch	24.5	HM
S	MICHEL GAGNON	Barn Swallow	24.5	HM
S	SAM ELOGIO	Eastern Bluebird	24.5	HM

Level	Submitted	Accepted
Intermediate	28	27
Advanced	24	23
Superset	63	63
Total	115	113

Judges	Affiliation
Parvez Khatib	No Club Affiliation
Cymthia Smith	Don Mills Camera Club
Tony Florio	Barrie Photography Club

Speakers

B. Dass Presented

“Break the Rules”

on Monday, November 13, 2023



In this thought-provoking session, Dass examined several “rules” of photography, looking at their benefits and their drawbacks. Are the rules mandatory or merely suggestions? If you break them will the design police come and break down your door? We looked at many photographs by acknowledged masters of photography past and present that challenge, bend, break and/or ignore the rules we’ve come to believe are sacred. Break the rules and free your creativity.

Dass has been photographing since he was a child. In his early 20’s he worked for a portrait studio in Toronto and later for a commercial photographer. In 2008 he joined two different camera clubs and became very active in the local photography scene. He is also the immediate past president the Toronto Focal Forum. In 2019 Dass co-hosted a photography tour of northern India, exploring the mystical land he knows so well.

How To

- Turn off the internal dialogue that’s telling you what you’re supposed to do
 - Experiment with alternate compositions
 - Google International Competition Winners
 - Google ‘Photographers You Should Know’
 - Search the internet for break the rules articles
 - Shoot wide and crop



Why Break the Rules?

What's in it for me?

- Rule of thirds**
- No one walking out of the frame**
- Not too much negative space**
- No mergers**
- Horizon not in the middle**
- No black holes**
- Something must be sharp**
- A strong center of interest**
- Rule of odds**
- Horizon must be straight**
- No 'bull's eye'**
- Blurry is bad**
- Don't cut off limbs**
- Watch the background**
- Fill the frame**
- Simplicity and minimalism**
- Left to right rule**

- You start thinking for yourself. Rather than following a formula, you start making photographs that appeal to you. Your art is about who you are and how you see the world.
- You will create unexpected visual interest that captivates and compels the viewer
- You make interesting, exciting and unique photographs
- You begin to develop your own voice or vision
- You have more fun

Speakers

THE
RULE of THIRDS
Divide the picture space into 3 equal parts both vertically and horizontally... placing your subject on one of the lines



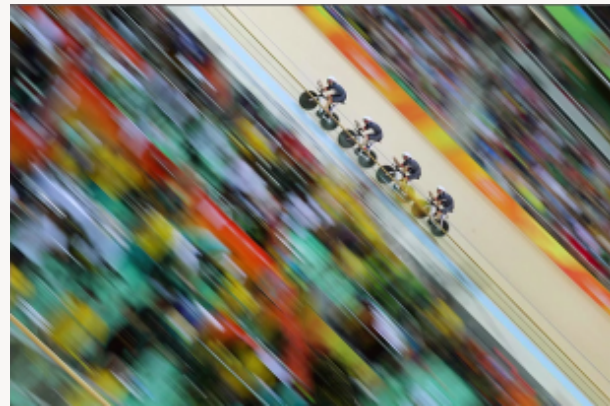
Do not put the horizon in the middle of the frame
A horizon in the middle divides the image into two equal parts which provokes indifference



Speakers

The Horizon must be
Straight

We humans like to see the
world level and plumb



Do not have anyone
walking out of the
frame

Leave space in front of your subject
for them to walk into



Speakers

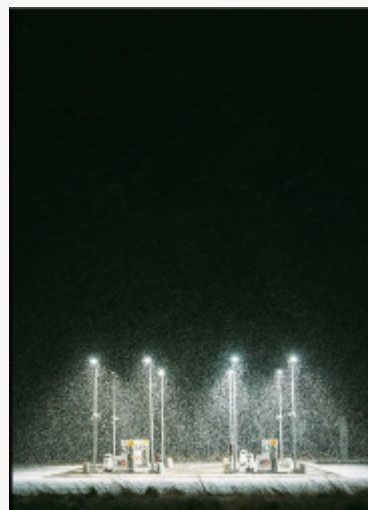
Do Not Put Your Subject Right In The Middle Of The Frame

A subject placed in the middle of the frame makes the photograph appear static and provokes indifference



Do Not Have To Much Negative Space

Too much negative space will make your photograph appear unbalanced



You Must Have a
Strong Center of
Interest

Without a strong center of interest
your shot will become confusing and
the viewer won't know what to look at



Speakers

Mike Grandmaison Presented

“Ontario Landscapes in Photography”

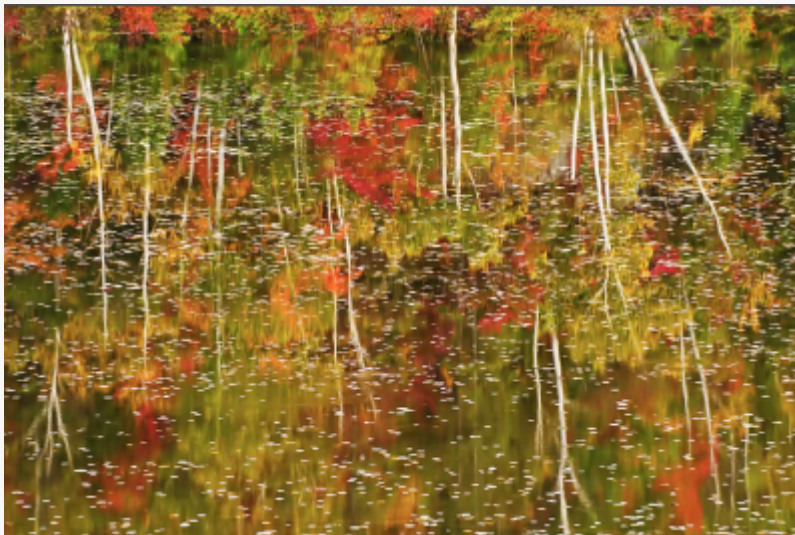
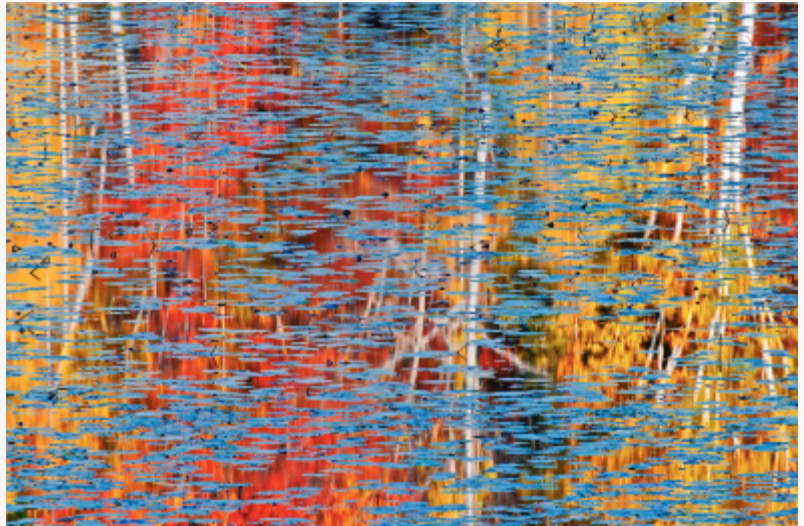
on Monday, November 27, 2023



Mike Grandmaison is an acclaimed Canadian photographer and widely recognized as one of Canada’s fine nature photographers. Passionate about photography and the natural world, Mike is known for creating unique images that reflect the natural beauty and diversity of his beloved country Canada. His award-winning images have been featured in some of the world’s finest publications, as well as in a wide array of books, calendars, cards and Canadian postage stamps. Growing up on the vast Canadian Shield, a professional background in biology, a decades-long career in the biological sciences, and a lifelong curiosity in physical geography have all contributed to the impressive, evocative body of work Mike has become known for. With camera in hand, he has explored literally the breadth of his beloved country Canada for 47 years. An uncompromising quality of craftsmanship, together with a signature style, distinguish Mike in this highly competitive field. Mike's on-location assignment photography spans Canada's geography. His academic knowledge and working experience in the natural sciences, coupled with his passion for photography, technical skills and an artist's eye, made him a sought after photographer for outdoor work.



Speakers



Speakers



Speakers



Outings

Tuesday November 7, 2023

We had 12 members join us for this unique opportunity to photograph the junkyard. It was a good time for all who came.





Past Issues of the Viewfinder can be found at

<https://www.etobicokecameraclub.org/viewfinder/>

Next Issue at the End of January!