

FAQs - Creating Fine Art Magic

Fine Art Magic is like Eye Candy - It Catches Your Eye to Fire Up Your Brain!



What are Adventure Tour sites like?

We tour in ancient Anasazi regions, 4 Corners, sw United States.

1. **Vermilion Cliffs**, Arizona Strip - *Page, Az*
 - a. Coyote Buttes North - The Wave
 - i. BLM permits - 6 mile hike on slick rock
 - ii. Difficult dawn or dusk access
 - iii. No water, Some climbing
 - b. White Pocket
 - i. 4 wheel drive - deep sand
 - ii. Camping required
 - iii. No water or lodging
2. **Anasazi Ruins** on *Cedar Mesa, UT*
 - a. Pristine ruin photography
 - b. Hiking and climbing required
 - c. No water or lodging
3. **Bisti Badlands** near *Farmington, NM*
 - a. Surreal hoodoos
 - b. No climbing, no water, no trees, no trails



What's a typical field day?

Our workshops unique dedication is to get participants to phenomenal locations at times when light is optimal for great fine art images.

1. We're often up early to capture sunrise and wonderful early-morning light that follows. Breakfast timing will depend on distance to our location - we may have breakfast before or after the morning shoot, or breakfast snacks en-route.
2. At mid-day we may have a classroom session, a field session, a critique, or a siesta, depending on workshop particulars.
3. Evening shoots typically take advantage of "Magic Hour" light,
4. We often have dinner in the field or go out when we return.
5. Please refer to our itineraries for more specific details.



What is Creating Fine Art Magic?

CFAM is a coordinated process of seeking the best nature sites, shooting when the light is right, processing for natural color and light, selecting dramatically memorable images, and preparing them for competition, print, and sale.

"One of the most beautiful pictures of Ship Rock I've ever seen! It's a different view with such strong light and color contrasts. I like the circular arc of the dike framing and leading one's eye to Ship Rock..." Fabian West, Art Director, New Mexico Magazine, Dec., 2009.



Magic Hour

"Light, not objects, is the source of all color!"

Isaac Newton, 1704

That hour surrounding dawn and dusk when the sun shines through long distances of atmosphere, creating dramatic, yet fleeting colors.

How much "hands-on" help will I get in the field?

This sometimes depends on you. Our faculty is highly qualified but they haven't mastered mind-reading. So, if you need or want help, just ask. As our faculty make their rounds, you may be asked "How are things going?" If you say "okay", they'll move along. If you say "What do you think of this composition?" they'll fall all over themselves to help. Sometimes, they might ask to take a peek through your viewfinder as in "Let's see what you've got there". Our faculty takes their responsibility as teachers very seriously and they'll give you as much - or as little - attention as you feel you need.

What is our shooting technique?

We use a high ISO DSLR, shoot raw files on manual settings, capture Full Range HDR, and process results in Lightroom and Photoshop.

Critiques

A process of discussing strengths and weaknesses of participant's images - thoughtfully extolling lines and shapes (composition) as well as contrast (tone).

What experience do I need for a photo workshop?

Most of our workshops are suitable for all photographic skill levels. However, a thorough understanding of camera operation is required. Your instructors will demonstrate field techniques on site. Field notes will also be available on our topics.



What kinds of equipment do participants use?

Digital SLR cameras are common. We send a detailed equipment list to all registered participants, but a good rule of thumb is to bring a sturdy tripod, cable release, extra batteries, extra film or storage cards, a downloading device for digital, and a means of cleaning your camera lens.



You can see a large version of this image at:

<http://www.geocompa.com/AdventureDigitalToursGear2010.jpg>



What trekking skills are required?

Familiarity with constructing GPS routes for day or night back country photography. Use Mapsource and Google Earth. Carrying gear, energy, and water in suitable backpacks.

What workflow is best for digital practice?

Digital images must be processed each day. We use Lightroom 3 to provide backup, prepare and maintain image collections, find keepers, and perform some global normalization and tone mapping of raw files.

Why use Full Range HDR?

Full Range HDR is capture and processing of multiple images to collect the complete color and contrast range of Magic Hour light. It is supported by processing using multiple pieces of software in the studio.

What workflow is best for HDR processing?

We use Photomatix Pro, Lightroom 3, and Adobe Photoshop CS4 to create fine art images of Magic Hour shots ala Ben Wilmore. In the field, PP and LR3 do preliminary evaluations of those images which become keepers for competition and publication.

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What else should I bring?

As a group we will be exploring a variety of interesting locations. Be prepared for moderate exercise and for working outside. Good practical and comfortable hiking boots are required. Loose pants, shorts and layered clothing for highly variable weather ranging in temperatures from low 40's to high 90's during spring, summer, and fall months. Evenings can be cool, so bring a light jacket or sweater. You will need a practical hat for sun protection and a windbreaker for early morning or late afternoon temperatures. Afternoon showers are possible, so a rain jacket is handy. Also, sunglasses, sunscreen, antiperspirant, skin lotion, a wrist watch, flashlight, water bottle, alarm clock, insect repellent and personal essentials will round out what you need to bring. A notebook /

voice recorder can be handy.

What are 4 Corners field locations like?

You will benefit from our extensive experience and planning for field sites. Planning enables us to take you to superb locations at the right time of day, letting you shoot as long as enchanting light creates breathtaking beauty.

Policy and Guidelines...

Registration, schedules, health concerns, liability, cancellation, etc - Please visit our Policies and Guidelines page for detailed cancellation policy. Download 2010 P&G at <http://www.geocompa.com/040600AdventureDigitalToursPolicy2010.pdf>

Tour Faculty

Your Leader, Joe Bridwell, is an award-winning photographer, blogger, educator, geologist, ancient Anasazi and natural history buff, and StoryTeller.



He has led groups into the Bisti since 2005; including Back Country Horsemen of New Mexico, Albuquerque's Enchanted Lens Camera Club, and clients. He has photographed the 4 Corners many times, so knows it well.

Joe also teaches Magic Hour fine art workflow using Lightroom 3 and Photoshop CS4. At day's end, he has processed all photos, digitally enhanced keepers, and prepared those images he feels suitable for competition.

Contact

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