



Delicate Arch, with moon, Moab (October 2019)

Items of Photographic Interest: January 2020

Greetings, friends.

Welcome to 2020, and our first newsletter of the year (and the first one that has also been released as a PDF). We have a few photography-related items to share with you, including a strategy to help [manage your growing photo library](#), an [update on the ebook version](#) of *Complete Digital Photography*, comments on [documentaries, photo books and other items](#) of note, [upcoming workshops](#), and more.

Any text colored in [blue](#) is a hyperlink; clicking on it should open the associated web page or item in this newsletter. Many of the photos presented here are also linked. And, if you're reading this on a printed page, a list of all the links in this edition are posted at the end of the January 2020 newsletter blog post at completedigitalphotography.com.

Enjoy, and thanks for reading.

Rick LePage (send me an [email](#))

CDP Press

Pruning old-growth photos

Photo organization is a common topic in our workshops; photographers of every level regularly ask for advice on the best ways to manage a large photo library. We always say that there's no singular, magical way to keep track of your photos: you have to find the solution that works for you and the way you shoot. And know that your method may change over time, as your library grows.

Image management goes well beyond the decision of where your photos will go (although that is the place to start). It involves ongoing maintenance, adjustments to keywords and ratings and file names, and much more. Sure, with careful thought, you can easily keep track of your portfolio-worthy photos, but what about the rest of your photos? Can you find them quickly? Are they organized effectively? Should you keep them all?

I was recently working through one of my annual library-management tasks — pruning a year's worth of my back catalog — and I thought it was worth sharing. It's one of the best tools I have for keeping my library clean, and it's one that has held up over time.

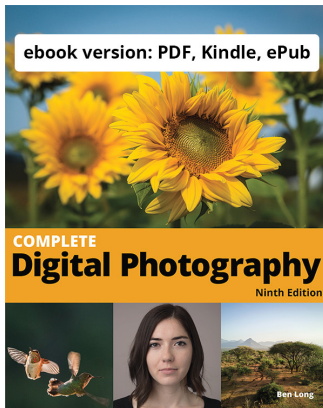
The basics are this: I pick a year from the past and walk through all of the photos from that year. Any photos that are poorly focused or composed, irrelevant, or just plain bad get tagged with a reject flag. Then, after scanning through the group of rejects one last time, I delete them. Not only do I get some storage back, but I also find old gems (like the one on the right), and have a better knowledge of what's in my back catalog.

You can read the complete details, along with some of the little things I do to ease the process in [Managing Your Photo Library: Pruning Old Growth](#) on the CDP website. I hope you find it helpful.



As part of my pruning process, I also flag 'lost' photos, ones that were either missed during the initial culling process, or ones that could benefit from the more recent advances in raw processing. This one, from 2007, is an example of the latter; I can extract better detail in the shadows with today's Lightroom than I did back then.

CDP ebook (and PDF) update



We recently expanded the ebook offerings on our website, adding a printable PDF of *Complete Digital Photography*, among other options. Now, when you buy the electronic book, it includes four DRM-free formats: PDF, ePub, mobipocket, and AZW3. You don't even have to sort through multiple offerings in our store: buy the ebook and get all four versions, ready to download.

The ebooks are viewable on all the major platforms, iOS, Mac, Windows, Android, and Kindle.

We put a lot of effort into making the electronic versions of *Complete Digital Photography* as readable as the print book, and we're proud of them. All we ask is that you keep your copies to yourself.

The ebook is currently **on sale for \$25** (\$10 off) in our store. And, if you purchased the ebook previously, we'll get in touch with you so you can get the updated versions.

Documentaries about photographers

One of the books we're working on this year is about inspiration and how we can channel that to become the photographers we want to be. As part of that work, I've been searching out documentaries on photographers and their craft. Here are three I've watched recently that I felt are worth noting:

Jay Myself (78 min., 2019)

New York's Jay Maisel is one of the most important photographers of the past 50 years, and his work is brilliant and deep, centered on the interaction of light and color. He's also known for purchasing an old bank in the Bowery in the 1960s, and turning it into his studio, warehouse and home. *Jay Myself* is ostensibly about the sale of the bank, and the resultant (and somewhat madcap) packing up of the six stories of Jay's life he deals with a **looming deadline to leave**. Really, though, the movie is a beautiful meditation/discussion about Jay's process, his vision, and throwing down roots. It's fascinating.

There were many interesting comments woven into the film; this one resonated with me:



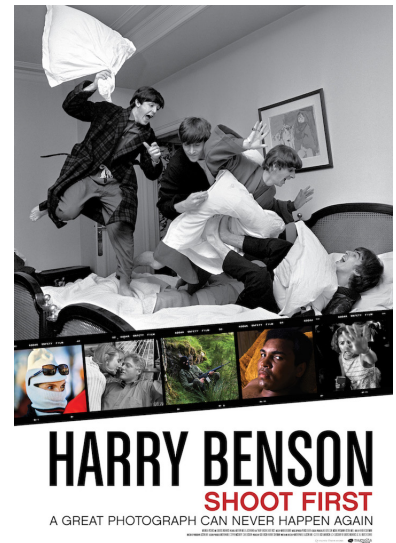
*“That’s why I say that the photographing, the seeing is more important than anything else. There’s a quiz I give people. Do you like photographing or do you like photographs? Choose one. And you learn a lot about yourself by choosing one or the other. Some people like photographs. I like photographing. The photographs are a byproduct. One way or another, they’re gonna be great, or they’re going to be sh***y, but the act of photographing is what it’s all about.”*

The movie is currently available for sale or rent on [iTunes](#) and [Amazon Prime Video](#). I’m not sure when or if it will hit Netflix, but it’s definitely worth searching out.

Harry Benson: Shoot First (89 min., 2016)

Working as a news photographer, the Scottish-born Benson shone by capturing ’60s and ’70s America, in both its glory and pain. Some of his most famous shots include photos of Beatles at play, marches with Martin Luther King, [Robert Kennedy’s assassination](#) and Richard Nixon’s resignation.

Benson was one of the original, scrappy Fleet Street photographers, and throughout his career, he often tread the line between accommodation and invasion. There isn’t a lot of discussion about the latter; in fact, he comes across more at times as one of the original paparazzi than as a straight-ahead news photographer. Overall, though, the impact and scope of his work is impossible to dismiss: there is a reason his photos are iconic.



The documentary is available on [Netflix](#), [iTunes](#), [Amazon Prime](#).

The B-Side: Elsa Dorfman’s Portrait Photography (76 min., 2016)

Living in Cambridge, Mass. (the hometown of Polaroid), Dorfman was a master of the Polaroid 20x24 large-format camera, a behemoth of which only a handful were made. Over the course of 30+ years, Dorfman photographed family members and celebrities in her studio with the large camera, usually preparing two photographs on the instant-film format: one for her and the other for her subject. Now, as supplies of the film are drying up, and with her own advancing age, Dorfman is [winding her studio down](#). (If you’d like a deeper dive into Dorfman and her work, *Harvard Magazine* did an extensive feature on her, “[The Portraitist](#),” a few years ago.)

Noted documentarian Errol Morris does a lovely job of showcasing a photographer who understands her craft and the technology that drives it. And, if you live in New England, check out the [upcoming show of Dorfman’s work](#) at the Museum of Fine Arts, on display from Feb. 28 to June 21, 2020.

Available on [Netflix](#), [iTunes](#), [Amazon Prime](#).

Other things of photographic note on the web

- It was hard to miss the endless parade of ‘best photos of the year’ lists that circled the web at the end of 2019. I scanned through a lot of them, but only a few resonated with me, mostly the *New York Times* [Year in Pictures](#) and the *Guardian*’s [Best Photographs of 2019](#), both of which include some powerful and poignant photographs. I also thought that Flickr’s selection of their top [25 photos of 2019](#) was good, although a few of the photos are a bit overprocessed for my tastes.
- A book that I picked up recently on the remainder pile has turned out to be a great one: [Paris Metro Photo](#), a themed collection of photos that have the Paris subway system as their anchor. It starts with a series of photos from the initial creation of the system in 1900, then branches off into photojournalism, fashion photography, architectural photography, snapshots and more, from the early 20th century through to today. Buried in the 350 pages are stellar shots from photographers like Robert Doisneau, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Brassai, Elliott Erwitt, Joel Meyerowitz and plenty of unknowns (and just plain folks). I got it for half of its original \$55 price at Powell’s Books in Portland, but it’s available on Amazon for \$30 or so (and less, from other sellers).
- Some of you know that I absolutely adore night shots in a city or town, and Robert Götzfried clearly does too. I found his work through the website Creative Boom, who showcased Götzfried’s recent work [on the streets of Tokyo](#). The Tokyo series photographs radiate with calm, eerie silence and gorgeous color. Take a trek over to [Götzfried’s website](#) and walk through his galleries. There is some wonderful work there.
- I love discovering the work of an unknown (to me) photographer. My most recent fave is [Mary Baker](#), an Englishwoman who shot on the streets of Manchester and other cities from the ’60s on. Her work is powerful, stunning and beautiful.



2020 workshop schedule



Cuba, 2019. ©Hudson Henry Photography

I'll be helping [Hudson Henry](#) on a number of workshops in 2020, including:

- [Cuba](#), April 4-9. This workshop promises to be an unbelievable cultural and photographic experience. We only have a few spots left open, so act quickly if you're interested.
- [Newport](#), on the Oregon Coast, May (dates are being finalized now).
- [Portland](#), July 31-August 3.
- [Yellowstone National Park](#), October 2-6.
- [Grand Teton National Park](#), October 9-13.
- [Moab](#), October 16-21.

The October workshops are not currently accepting reservations, but you can sign up on those pages to be notified when they do open up. We're also looking at adding two other workshops in Portland this year, one on printing, the other covering ON1 Photo RAW. If you're interested in either topic, send me [an email](#), noting your preferences, and I'll let you know before they open to the general public.

Coda

This newsletter is intended to be informational and is not meant to be a sales tool. That said, we do get a small kickback any time a reader uses our Amazon affiliate links to purchase something mentioned in the newsletter.

As always, thanks for reading and being a subscriber. If you have comments or thoughts on the items above, want to report typos, or just want to say hi, [drop us an email](#). We would love to hear from you — especially to let us know the types of stuff you do or don't like in these newsletters.

Items of Photographic Interest, Vol. 1, No. 1 (January 2020)

Written and edited by Rick LePage

Published by CDP Press

PO Box 849 • La Grande, OR 97850

completedigitalphotography.com

971-266-7805

©Copyright 2020 CDP Press