



ROCKHOUND RAMBLINGS

FEBRUARY 2019 • PASADENA LAPIDARY SOCIETY™ • PASADENA, CA



Three Editing Tips for Better Rockhounding Photos

by Karl Stull

Let's dispense with suspense and go straight to the tips:

1. Crop to a subject.
2. Increase *Exposure*, usually about 25%.
3. Increase *Contrast*, usually about 15%.

Exposure and *Contrast* are adjustments you can make in the photo software that came with your smartphone (iPhone users will recognize the rainbow-petals icon; everyone else, Google's quartet of crystalloids). In either system, you move a slider back and forth to adjust *Exposure* and *Contrast*. See the links beside the logos for help in finding the sliders and other editing tools on your phone.



Apple: www.lifewire.com/edit-photos-iphone-app-2000115



Google: www.androidcentral.com/how-edit-photos-google-photos

Bigger, Brighter, More Dramatic

The three tips will improve most photos, even those that look pretty good already. When you crop to the subject – moving the “frame” of the picture inward to a center of interest – a startling thing happens. The cropped image suddenly enlarges to fill the screen. That's an illusion, of course, because the cropped image is actually smaller, containing less data. But the seeming enlargement demonstrates how the picture gains impact when empty or irrelevant areas are trimmed out. Large areas of sky or foreground, for example, make your subject look smaller and should generally be cropped.

Adjusting *Exposure* upward intensifies visual impact in another way: by adding light throughout the image. All colors become brighter. This includes black, which fades to lighter and lighter gray as you push the slider farther. Areas of the photo that were

Before-and-after versions show the difference between a good photo and one that fills the eye and mind. The three basic tips for photo editing made it happen, with a few further tweaks from Shadows, Highlights, and Brilliance. The landscape (shown below in the original photo before cropping) is near a pastelite site in northern Imperial County, a few miles from Glamis.

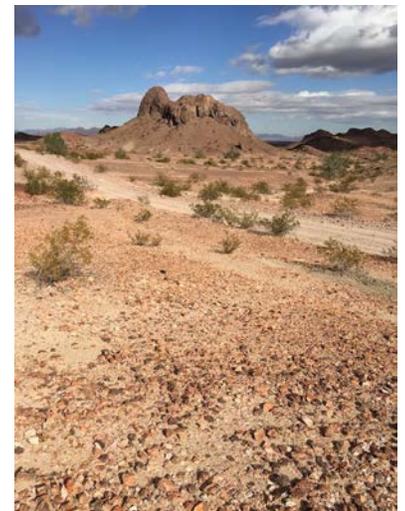
already bright stay at maximum brightness, so there is no harm there, but watch for details that “wash out.”

Enhanced colors from increased *Exposure* give a potent boost to photos of rocks, which are at times chromatically demure. The jasper you were so excited to find at Lavic Siding – under the cold eye of the camera – may come across as a study in reddish brown to darker reddish brown. A dose of extra light across the spectrum reveals brecciated hues from cinnamon to saffron... as well as reddish brown. Correct for the loss of black with tip 3, increased *Contrast*.

The *Contrast* slider lets you stretch or squeeze the range of dark to light tones in a photo. Decreasing the *Contrast* results in a picture that is mostly mid-tones, with less difference between the lightest and darkest areas. When you push the slider in the other direction, increasing the *Contrast*, black and white tones go toward their extremes and you see a dramatic difference between light and dark areas.

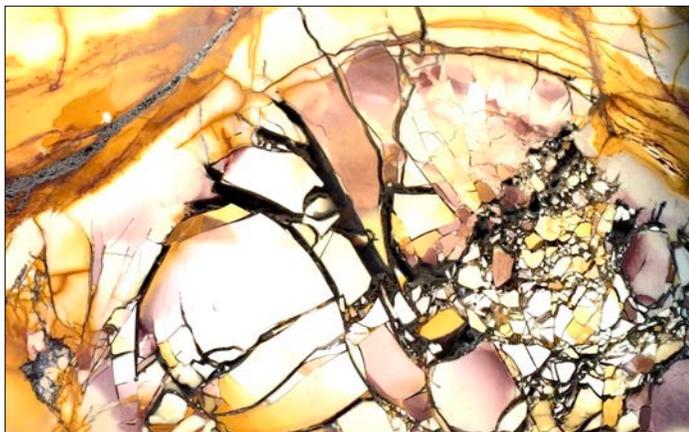
In art history, the use of high contrast is known as *chiaroscuro* (kee YAR oh SKOOR oh). It was a favorite technique of Da Vinci, Rembrandt, Hopper, and other painters known for realistic and hyper-realistic styles. The pearl in *Girl with a Pearl Earring* is a classic example: the gem shines like a beacon in the surrounding darkness. If you pushed the slider

down on Vermeer's painting, the pearl would lose a whole lot of drama. *Continued on page 5*



President's Message

At the Editor's request, our President Ellen Ferrell donated the President's Message space for additional photographs from Quartzsite. Thanks, Ellen! – Karl Stull



Pasadena Lapidary Society™

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Membership

Membership per calendar year is \$25; for a second adult at the same address, \$15; further adults, \$10. Junior members are \$10. Initiation fee is \$10 per person (nonrefundable).

Renewals are due in October and delinquent after December 31. Mail checks to PO Box 5025, Pasadena, CA 91117-0025.

Meetings

Board Meetings – 1st Thursday of the month

7 p.m. at Matt Denny's Ale House
 145 E Huntington Dr, Arcadia
 PLS members are welcome.

Workshop – 2nd Sunday of the month

Fees are \$3 for half-day, \$5 for a full day. Equipment instruction is required; also liability waivers, eye protection, and closed-toe shoes. For directions, please call (909) 455-4360 (cell) or (909) 593-2781, or email gem.quest@verizon.net. Bring lunch!

Junior members 9 and older are welcome with adult supervision.

Program Meetings – 3rd Tuesday of the month

Doors open at 6 p.m. Meeting is 6:30–8:45 p.m.
 Pasadena Central Library, 285 E Walnut St.

Contact Us

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Send articles by the 15th for publication in next month's issue. Very short items can get in as late as the 22nd but are not guaranteed to make the next issue.

A Quiet, Good Time at Quartzsite

by Rex Nishimura

This was an unusual year at the Quartzsite POWWOW. Very quiet. Rains left the desert very wet.

There were puddles all around our campsite. Fortunately, the storm had passed before we arrived and didn't really affect our stay. The plants loved it and took advantage of moist conditions as they began to carpet the ground in a luxurious green layer. Of course, the outdoor dealers didn't like the rain, and the storms seemed to have discouraged tourists from coming.

The most unusual thing was that I didn't run into any rockhound friends at the shows this year. We shopped all day Friday (Jan. 18) but saw no one we knew. We spent money at Tyson Wells but saw no one. Desert Gardens, the POWWOW. More money spent, no one seen.

Well, spending money and walking is tiring, so we quit shopping around 4 p.m. and headed back to camp. We hadn't eaten much that day and looked forward to a hot camp dinner. Our old wood-burning stove did its best to churn out a sumptuous meal of hamburgers without condiments (which I forgot to bring), corn chips, and sweet Thai tea. Junk wood scavenged from a rotten backyard fence provided the fuel to make it happen. It was delicious.

As we cleaned up, Phil Lahr texted me and said he would love to visit our camp for supper. Great news. Better yet, he had ketchup. He said he was tied up with an auction at Desert Gardens and would arrive later that night.

At 7 p.m., while Alyson was practicing her guitar, we heard a knock on our camper door. It was Phil, Michelle Vandebroek, and her cousin Diane. We fired up the stove and cooked another round of hamburgers. They say everything goes with ketchup, and I certainly must agree with that. Everything also goes well with good company, and Phil, Michelle, and Diane were lots of fun. The conversation centered on the events of the day, with the most important topic being where to find the best deals. I've determined that the auction might be something I should check out next year.

By 10 p.m., everyone was getting tired, so we bade each other goodnight, and Phil and company drove back to their campsite north of town. Once again, all was quiet. All quiet, except for the hum of the freeway – which, like the rain, is the lifeblood of the town of Quartzsite, AZ. It had been another great day.



Note from Fossil Falls

by Eugene Kim

About 50 miles south of Lone Pine on Highway 395 is an often overlooked wonder called Fossil Falls. It's dry now, but thousands of years ago it was fed by the melting glaciers of the Sierra Nevada. There look to be upper, middle, and lower sections, of which the middle really showcases its uniqueness by the smooth walls and deep holes that were cut into the basaltic rock. The lower section opens up into a wide mouth where you can imagine the water rushing down.

I'm guesstimating it's a couple of hundred feet from top to bottom. You'll make out figures in the rock formations, including a Rottweiler guarding the ancient waterfall.

The grounds above are littered with sharp obsidian slices. I'm curious to know how they got there (perhaps an eruption much later on) and why they're all broken up like that. The last photo in this set shows a peculiar piece of ice that's curved like an eel.

From a post on Eugene's Instagram page, [socalminerals](#).



Startling Arithmetic

It costs \$1.50 to print and mail your PLS newsletter. For 12 months, the cost is \$18. Which leaves only \$7 out of your PLS annual dues (\$25) for club insurance, speakers at meetings, hot dogs at the annual picnic, etc. Please, come to the meetings and buy a lot of raffle tickets!

Three Editing Tips *Continued from page 1*

With practice using the *Exposure* and *Contrast* tools, you'll have opportunities to experiment with other sliders, such as *Shadows* and *Highlights*, and learn how they can improve and sometimes rescue photos that did not turn out as planned.

Desert Photos: Do the Opposite

Photos from desert field trips are often disappointing, because lighting conditions out there are so extreme: sunlight is harsh, shadows are cavernous, and the mid-tones are thin as gruel in a gulag. Editing overlighted photos may require that you do the opposite of what you learned in the first half of this article. You may need to decrease *Exposure* to compensate for excessive brightness and reduce *Contrast* to preserve details that would otherwise be blotted out by shadows.

But first try these steps:

- Crop to a subject. This will reduce the predominance of overlit areas, making details in mid-tone areas easier to see.
- Move the *Shadows* slider to lighten – to 100% if necessary. You want to be able to see faces under hat brims.
- Move the *Highlights* slider to reduce intensity in brightest areas. Sometimes the beauty that inspired you to shoot the photo will emerge from the glare.

The *Shadows* and *Highlights* tools affect only the darkest and lightest areas, so changes made with these tools have targeted effects. On the other hand, the *Exposure* and *Contrast* tools affect all areas of the photo. Reducing *Exposure* to deal with overbright areas will at the same time also darken shadows.

There are other sliders to play with in both Apple and Google software, and you'll figure out which ones are useful to you. For iPhone users, the *Brilliance* tool deserves particular attention, because it can produce Merlin-like effects – restoring shades in too-bright areas and lightening shadows in one direction, but cranking up the light and intensifying shadows in the other (for instant chiaroscuro). Your PLS newsletter editor gives every photo a wig-wag in *Brilliance* just to see what will happen.

Send your brilliant rockhounding photos for publication in the PLS newsletter: newsletter@pasadenalapidary.org. ❖

Before You Shoot

7 Tips for Composing Better Photos

- Spray rocks with water.
- Spray humans with unexpected instructions, such as “Turn away first and then turn quickly back toward the camera.” This can help with awkwardly frozen photo face.
- Move in close to your subject.
- Include a shrub or mountain in the frame for scale.
- Take one step to the left after a photo and shoot again.
- Occasionally, raise your camera high and take a second shot at a downward angle.
- Take pictures when the sun is low in the sky (tones are rich in the low-angle light of spring and fall, dawn and sunset).



I'm looking forward to my first field trip with PLS, but I'm also a little worried. Where do lapidary ladies go in the desert?
– HOLDING IT IN HESPERIA

Dear Holding,

It's a fact there's not much foliage between here and the horizon in the Mojave, and none of it offers what a decent woman would call privacy. However, there are gullies, and with a strategic eye and a friend to stand guard it is possible to slip discreetly out of sight for a minute or two.

A hikers' product called a GoGirl – a soft plastic funnel with a disposable bag – helps get the job done quickly from a standing position, with minimal exposure if clothes are loose-fitting.

If the gully is not an option, a car and a cup might be the next best alternative. Improvise a curtain if needed. A family I know brings a big blue tarp on field trips, which a parent holds up when a youngster has to go. Everyone looks away when the tarp is up, and the lesson there may be that your fellow rockhounds will oblige if they know you want a moment alone.

I learned from television coverage this past New Year's that people who get to the parade route early and hold their place for many long hours are not necessarily holding their water. Like astronauts, some are “diapered up.”

Thank you, Holding, for asking this question. There's no telling how many tippy-toed hours of discomfort women have endured for lack of plain answers. What a relief! – Cabby

Maintenance Reminder

A Genie needs lubrication of the air pump every six months. The pump is a rectangular box under the left cover. Remove both of the red screws and put a couple of drops of 30-weight motor oil in each hole. This maintenance will keep the geysers spritzing water to cool the grinding and polishing wheels.



Field Trips



February and March

Due to the much needed preparations for the CFMS Show and Convention, I've decided to cancel February – well, not the whole month, just the field trip for this month – and due to some other obligation in March, I won't be able to lead the trip to the Lavic jasper areas.

So, some of you who have been on some of the trips I've led, I'm hoping one or more are willing to step up and lead your fellow rockhounds out to collect the much prized material that both these locations offer.

I'll think of a place to take you to in April. When I know, I'll let you know.

Lost somewhere. – *Joe Goetz*

Education Outreach



Share Your Inspiration – Be a CFMS Show Demonstrator

Thank you to everyone who has signed up to work at the Demonstration tables during our upcoming CFMS Show in March.

There are still 2 hour shifts available, especially for Friday, March 8th. Please contact me if you'd like to share your lapidary, beading, or silver-working skills!

(323) 640-4394 or liveoak180@yahoo.com. – *Joan Harrison*

Your Donations Matter

Funds generated from our show's silent auction are a major contribution to the operation of our club. It all begins with the generosity of our club members and the donations from friends. The silent auction committee is ready to hear from you. We are ready to accept and pick up your donations before February 28th.

Here is a list of what the committee is looking for: rough rock (agates and saspers, etc.), polished stones, geodes, slabs, lapidary materials, and lapidary and gem books or magazines. Please feel free to contact us. Thank you. – *Armando Pedroza (909) 455-6800 and Ben Shutman (626) 423-3233*



Elizabeth Weston, David Lacy, Joe Goetz, Marcia Goetz, and Ellen Ferrell at the CFMS Show Committee meeting in January.

2019 CFMS Annual Show & Convention

Hosted by The Pasadena Lapidary Society
Fairplex, Pomona March 8–10, 2019



Deadlines – Who Needs Them?

I certainly don't want any, but the world doesn't seem to function without deadlines. Why else would there be clocks and those darn cute calendars? Anyway, I feel like I should share some deadlines with you.

Deadline for Competitive Display Case forms: February 6. I hope we have several members getting ready for competition. It is our show after all, and we can show what we know. If you have questions about competition, there are a few veterans in the club you can talk to: Joe or Marcia Goetz, Tony or Sandie Fender, Sylvia Cliffe, and Ferdie Sanchez. For a sign-up form, go to PasadenaLapidary.org and select Display Cases from the list under 2019 CFMS Show.

Deadline for Non-competitive Display Cases: February 25. The form goes to Jennifer Jang. The link for her is on the Display Cases page mentioned above.

Deadline for reserving a room at the DoubleTree in Claremont: February 6. We have reserved a block of 50 rooms for members and directors of other societies for Thursday (10), Friday (20), and Saturday (20). Click Lodging on the drop-down menu under 2019 CFMS Show at PasadenaLapidary.org, or call **800-222-TREE** or **909-626-2411** (Ext. 1). Mention code CFM. Cost per night is \$159, plus tax.

Deadline for Awards Banquet tickets: February 25. The banquet will be at the DoubleTree, Saturday, March 9. Happy hour is at 6, dinner at 7. Tickets are \$52.50 each; choose beef, chicken, or vegetarian. The order form is at Registration/Tickets under 2019 CFMS Show at PasadenaLapidary.org.

Deadline for Editors Lunch tickets: February 25. The lunch will be at the DoubleTree, Saturday, March 9, at 1 p.m. For tickets, use the Registration/Tickets form described above.

You can get tickets to the Show in advance even if you are not attending one of the banquets. Click Registration/Tickets under 2019 CFMS Show at PasadenaLapidary.org.

– *Marcia Goetz, Show Co-Chairman*

Pop Quiz

Question: How hard can it be to repair a Kodak Ektagraphic Model E-2 slide projector?

Answer: If you said, "I could do it and might enjoy it," then you have won two free slide projectors from the overstocked shelves of PLS storage. Both units have trouble advancing slides, and one needs a new bulb.

Act now to collect this prize. If unclaimed by Feb. 19, they go to e-recycling. Contact: newsletter@pasadenalapidary.org.

More from Quartzsite...



Rock and Gem Shows

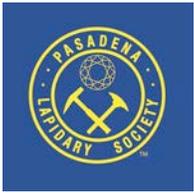
February 15–24 INDIO: San Geronio Mineral & Gem Society, Riverside County Fair & National Date Festival, 82-503 Highway 111. Hours: 10–10 daily.

February 16–17 ANTIOCH: Antioch Lapidary Club, Contra Costa County Fairgrounds, 1201 West 10th St. Hours: 10–5 daily. www.antiochlapidaryclub.com

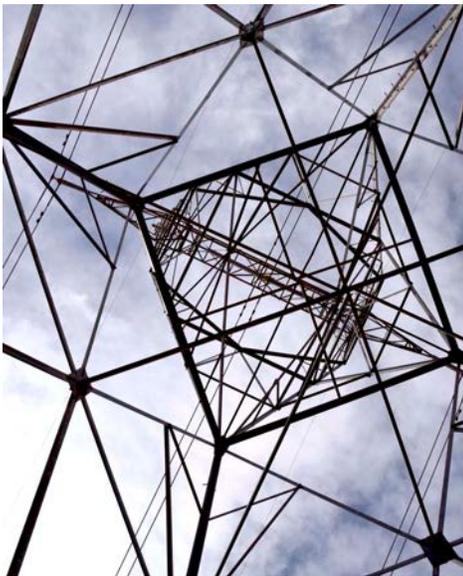
February 23–24: VALLEJO: Vallejo Gem & Mineral Society, McCormack Hall, Solano County Fairgrounds, 900 Fairgrounds Dr. Hours: 10–5 daily. www.vjgems.org



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
February 2019				Benitoite (California state mineral) discovered by J. M. Couch on February 7, 1907	1	2
3	4	5	6	7 Board mtg PLS members always welcome	8	9
10 Workshop	11	12 James D. Dana birthday (1813)	13	14	15  Gem show	16  Gem shows
17  Gem shows	18	19 Program mtg	20	21	22	23  Gem shows
24  Gem shows	25	26	27	28		



Pasadena Lapidary Society, Inc.
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On a dusty desert road



Above the fold: *Crystal-like structures seen from under a power tower – arrows, lines, netting, geometric solids... This way madness lies.*

Left: *The two barely discernible figures on a long road that keeps the power lines company are Christine and Joel Tureaud. Seated in an agate- and jasper-strewn field south of the Calico Mountains, Sue Pang weighs alternatives.*

Photos: *Sue Pang and Steve Cady, from a PLS field trip last November.*