

NEWSLETTER

# MICHAEL CLARK

PHOTOGRAPHY



SUMMER 2009



**SUMMER 2009 NEWSLETTER**

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Cover: Mike Tittel taking a breather on the Wasatch Crest Trail near Salt Lake City, Utah.

Above: Colin Shadill freeriding the ridges at a secret area near Nambe, New Mexico.

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# 5,000 Subscribers and Counting...

## UPDATES ON THE NEWSLETTER, WORKSHOPS, ASSIGNMENTS & EXPEDITIONS



As you might have surmised by the new cover on this issue of the newsletter I am starting to revamp the look of the newsletter. And since it would take more time than I currently have to reshuffle the entire newsletter all at once I will be upgrading the look and feel of the newsletter over course of the next few issues. I am aiming at making the newsletter easier to read, giving it a clean, understated look and basically dialing it in a bit more so it looks like an actual magazine.

Over the last few years there have been an incredible number of people signing up for the newsletter every day. At this moment, the newsletter goes out to nearly 5,000 people. And because it is so portable I am not sure how many more people beyond that get it from friends or download it from my website but are not on the official mailing list. On average I get between three and ten people signing up for the newsletter every day. Considering that I started out sending it to just art buyers and photo editors, the newsletter has come a long, long way indeed. That is the power of the Adobe PDF format and the World Wide Web for you. This newsletter has been at the core of my marketing for over five years now and will remain so for many more to come. It is my own “social marketing” effort, connecting me with thousands of photo editors and photographers around the globe.

This summer I have been shooting lots of stock images as well as a few assignments and finalizing the book *Digital Masters: Adventure Photography*. The book, I can happily say, is finished. Having seen the final color proofs and layout I am very excited about the book and can't wait for it to hit the market. The book is at the printers right now and it won't be too long before I have an advanced copy in my hands. If you just can't wait, the book is already available for pre-order on [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) and you'll be

among the first to get it if you put your order in now.

This fall is already pretty packed with expeditions, photography workshops and assignments. You can read about my upcoming photography workshops in Santa Fe and Philadelphia on pages 6 and 7. They are already filling up so if you want to join us for one of those don't delay in registering. I will also be teaching an adventure sports photography workshop next summer at the Santa Fe Workshops. Look for more information on that in future newsletters and on the blog.

This fall I will also be headed back to Patagonia to traverse a region south of Tierra del Fuego that has never been explored. As many of my readers know, the last few years I have been covering an adventure race in Patagonia each February and have explored some extremely remote regions while shooting those assignments. This adventure will be a great opportunity to actually explore the wild mountains and glaciers of that region while not being on the run at full-tilt to keep up with racers. Patagonia has become one of my favorite places on this planet and it has also become a personal project of mine to document these wet and wild, lonely, wind-swept mountains and plains where few dare to tread. Hence, there will be more images from Patagonia to come this winter...

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# Digital Photo Pro and Nikon feature Michael's Work Online

SPECIAL SECTION FEATURING INSIDE THE PHOTOGRAPHER'S STUDIO SHOOTERS

**inside** the photographer's studio

digitalphotopro.com | nikonusa.com

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**Michael Clark**  
On Photography

**What turns you on creatively?**  
An adventurous spirit. Wild angles. Creating an image that has never been shot before.

**What turns you off creatively?**  
Sitting in front of my computer!

**What's your dream photo assignment?**  
Photographing cheetahs running at full speed in the Serengeti. I'm not a wildlife photographer, but I've always dreamed about going to the Serengeti to photograph the animals and the landscapes there. It would be sweet to spend a few months living with the animals, getting to know them and create some stunning images.

**If you could have dinner with an artist from any era, who would it be?**  
Salvador Dali. He was out there and always created visually stunning art. He created art that you couldn't turn away from—it was completely new and original and done with incredible technical skill.

**What's your favorite photograph not taken by you?**  
Steve McCurry's photograph of the Afghan girl that was on the cover of National Geographic years ago. Her green eyes are captivating and tell a story that goes well beyond a normal portrait. It's one of those few photographs where every time I see it, I'm mesmerized by her face, what she has been through and what she must have been thinking at that moment.

**What profession other than photographer would you like to attempt?**  
Professional tennis player. I was never good enough to make it, but I still play as often as I can.

**What's your favorite camera feature?**  
The D2xs has many incredible features, but the white balance eye (Nikon calls it the white balance bracket) is my favorite.

Digital Photo Pro and Nikon have put together an extended advertorial featuring photographers that shoot with Nikon gear. My advertorial originally ran in the [November/December 2006 Issue](#) of Digital Photo Pro and was featured on my blog. For this most recent on-line revamp of the advertorial, Nikon and Digital Photo Pro have built a web gallery including a dozen of my best images. You can check out the "Inside the Photographer's Studio" web gallery on the [DPP website](#).

A few of the other photographers included in this web gallery are Dave Black, Joe McNally, Robert Beck, Doug Meunez, Joel Sartore, and Rob Van Petten. It is an honor to be included in a group of such well known and incredible photographers. Here are a few of the questions I was asked for the original interview:

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**What turns you off creatively?** Sitting in front of my computer!

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**RECENT CLIENTS:** Microsoft, Nikon, Red Bull, Black Diamond, Mont-Bell, Backpacker, Outdoor Photographer, Climbing Magazine and Sterling Publishing Co., Inc.

## Bogen and Cameradojo.com ONLINE INTERVIEWS AND WEBINARS

In July, I was asked to do interviews for the Bogen Cafe and CameraDojo.com. The Bogen Cafe interview, with Bogen Product manager David Fisher, was an interactive Webinar where participants were able to listen in on the interview, ask questions and



get answers as well as see my images on-line. We talked about my experiences as an adventure sports photographer and dissected some of my images. The interview lasted an hour and we

covered a lot of topics in an informal conversation. Of course as you might have already surmised, I have close relations with several photography related gear manufacturers including Bogen (specifically Gitzo and Elinchrom), Nikon and Adobe. And even though I was asked to do this interview because of my relationship with Bogen we were not actively advertising Bogen products during the interview - it was much more about creating images. Watch the [Bogen Cafe website](#) where a Quicktime movie of the Webinar will be available shortly.



Also in July, I was interviewed by [Cameradojo.com](#) about my adventure sports photography and what it takes to photograph adventure sports in general. As usual I delved into the nitty-gritty details of my profession in this hour long conversation with Kerry Garrison and David Esquire. Check it out on their website, it is [Podcast #59 - A Conversation with Michael Clark](#).

My sincere thanks to both Bogen Cafe and Cameradojo.com for taking the time to interview me. As always, it is great to have recognition for my work and it's even more fun to talk about the ins and outs of my profession with fellow professionals.

## ADOBE LIGHTROOM WORKFLOW A COMPLETE WORKFLOW FROM CAPTURE TO OUTPUT BY MICHAEL CLARK



**NEED A CUTTING EDGE DIGITAL WORKFLOW? CURIOUS ABOUT ADOBE PHOTOSHOP LIGHTROOM AND HOW IT CAN SPEED UP YOUR DIGITAL WORKFLOW?**

The Adobe Photoshop Lightroom Workflow, a 124 page PDF e-book, is a workshop in book form. This workflow, while not exhaustive, will cover the main topics of a shooting workflow then move into a RAW processing workflow with Adobe Lightroom 2.4 and Photoshop CS3/CS4.

To purchase *Adobe Photoshop Lightroom: A Professional Photographer's Workflow* click on the website link below. Payments can be made with any major credit card or via your PayPal account. For more information on the workflow and exactly what is covered go to Michael's website.

**[WWW.MICHAELCLARKPHOTO.COM](http://WWW.MICHAELCLARKPHOTO.COM)**



# Adobe Photoshop Lightroom & the Fine Art Digital Print

A WORKSHOP WITH INSTRUCTORS ANDY BIGGS AND MICHAEL CLARK - OCTOBER 8-11, 2009



This fall, [Andy Biggs](#) and myself are teaming up to produce an exciting workshop here in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Andy is an incredible photographer and a master printer, hence the topic of our workshop. He specializes in wildlife and landscape photography and leads several exotic African Safari Photo Workshops each year. For this workshop we chose the dates (October 8-11, 2009) to coincide with the Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta and at least two shooting days of the workshop will be devoted to covering this fantastic and colorful event. Having taught workshops where we covered the Balloon Fiesta, I can assure you it is a visual feast for any photographer.

This 4-day workshop will be a combined classroom workshop with outdoor photographic shoots. All classroom instruction will be centered around Adobe Photoshop Lightroom V2.4, as well as the craft of creating a fine art digital print. The workshop is sponsored by

Moab Paper and we will have industry leading printers on site courtesy of the Santa Fe Camera Center.

The cost of this workshop is \$995 per person (inclusive of breakfasts either in our teaching space or in the field). The same rate applies for each participant regardless of whether they are doing photography and participating in the workshop, or not. A nonrefundable deposit of \$300 is required to secure your spot on the workshop. The final balance will be due no later than September 1, 2009.

You can get all the [nitty-gritty details](#) about the workshop including a detailed schedule, information on accommodations and transportation, as well as what we cover and what you'll need to bring on my blog. [To register follow this link to Andy Biggs website where you can register and pay via PayPal.](#) If you have any questions before registering, send us an e-mail with any inquiries to [info@andybiggs.com](mailto:info@andybiggs.com).

# Mentor Series Master Class Workshop on Lighting

**INSTRUCTORS: DAVID TEJADA AND MICHAEL CLARK JOIN FORCES IN PHILADELPHIA, PA**

## Mentor Series Master Class: Lighting

**Date:** October 30 -  
November 1, 2009

**Location:** Philadelphia, PA

**Cost:** \$999.00

Pack your camera gear and join the Mentor Series as we trek to the birthplace of “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” this coming fall! Philadelphia will provide the perfect backdrop to learn the rewards of using light to create an intentional effect in your photos, as well as explore the history and culture this city has to offer. Follow Nikon professional photographers and illumination gurus David Tejada and Michael Clark as they simplify various techniques and help you address lighting scenarios that will convey a desired atmosphere, while capturing unique images in both controlled and spontaneous shooting situations.

This trek includes a Master Class on Lighting, providing an exclusive opportunity to determine how luminosity can shape the mood and color of the photographs you create. Allow our mentors to assist you in finding the best angles, interpreting natural light sources, utilizing reflectors, and understanding how to control light. By learning how to properly use light modifiers such as umbrellas, soft boxes, snoots, grids, silks and even bounce techniques, you will walk away with a solid comprehension of how easily an image can be enhanced.

Everywhere you go in Philadelphia, you’ll find a piece of America’s past, and continually discover the




## philadelphia

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Visit the stunning Longwood Gardens, one of the world’s premiere horticultural display gardens, as you gain experience directing hired models and practice using off-camera flash. Or reveal the beauty of the yellow, orange and purple trees, and the golden honey locusts, scarlet sweet gums, and ruby northern red oaks in the sunlight. Inside the Conservatory, have your camera handy as you discover a lush world of exotic flowers, with more than 20,000 blooming chrysanthemums, making for spectacular macro images.

Travel on to the infamous Eastern State Penitentiary, and explore what lighting is best suited to subject and scene, as we use America’s most historic prison (open from 1829 to 1971) to shoot models and further practice learned techniques “on location”. Take advantage of the penitentiary’s vaulted, sky-lit cells to capture a particular mood in the jail that held some of America’s most notorious criminals, including Al Capone. Later, photograph along a tour of Philadelphia’s remarkable landmarks from the top of our own double-decker bus. Try your hand at making long exposure night images while you capture the Betsy Ross Bridge, the dramatic city skyline from Camden and visit the waterfront area of Penn’s Landing, and Boathouse Row.

Spend some time in Center City, exceptionally conveying Logan Square, or the famous Love sculpture by Robert Indiana. You will capture history with your camera at Independence Hall as you take in the birthplace of the Declaration of Independence, stop in Washington Square, and pay a visit to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Everywhere you go in Philadelphia, you’ll find a piece of America’s past, and continually discover the chance to utilize the lighting techniques you’ve learned to capture these historic landmarks. Explore “the city of brotherly love” with expert photographers by your side!



**DAVID TEJADA**  
NikonNet  
Photo District News



**MICHAEL CLARK**  
National Geographic  
Sports Illustrated

**SCHEDULED TO APPEAR**  
Limited to 20 Students per Instructor

**Workshop cost**  
**\$999\***

\*includes in-the-field instruction, entrance fees, presentations, digital reviews, an Mpix photo book and transportation to each shooting location.

**Register Online:**  
[www.mentorseries.com](http://www.mentorseries.com)  
For more info call Toll Free 1.888.676.6468









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Sponsors for this workshop include: Nikon, Bogen Imaging, Microsoft, SanDisk, Photoshelter, and Mpix To learn more about David Tejada check out his web-site at [www.tejadaphoto.com](http://www.tejadaphoto.com).

This promises to be a great workshop. For more information on the workshop and [to register click here](#). If you want more details on what we cover in the workshop you can also download the [workshop itinerary](#) and the [workshop announcement ad](#).



# A few of my Favorite Things

## THAT IS, THINGS RELATED TO ADVENTURE PHOTOGRAPHY IN PARTICULAR

In just about every issue of the newsletter, I usually choose some major piece of gear to review in this section. For this issue, I thought I'd mention a few of the gadgets and gear that I use all the time that might otherwise go unnoticed. Above and beyond the camera gear, these items help me cart all this gear out to the location, organize it, shoot and speed up my workflow.

**LOWEPRO VERTEX 300 AW:** The [LowePro Vertex 300 All-Weather \(AW\)](#) has become my main photo backpack when I travel on assignments. It can hold an incredible amount of photography equipment (maybe too much!) and it fits my back quite well. One of the



biggest beefs I have with photo backpacks is that they are not made to fit humans necessarily - they are made to hold a certain amount of gear. Sometimes a certain design fits your back well, most of the time it doesn't. Sooner or later the manufacturers will figure out that they need to build a photo backpack the same way a backpack manufacturer builds a pack for climbing or trekking - i.e. so they fit a variety of backs well. Because of its long narrow profile, the Vertex 300 AW fits me better than any other photo backpack I have used. And if you aren't 6'3" with a back length of 22 inches, not to worry, LowePro makes two other sizes in this series with shorter torso lengths, the Vertex 100 AW and 200 AW. Of course these smaller sizes don't hold as much gear as the 300 AW but that might be a blessing in disguise since the 300 AW is quite large.

Fully loaded the 300 AW can weight anywhere from 40 to 60 pounds depending on what I have packed into it. As you might imagine, I don't take that fully loaded pack everywhere I go. It usually just gets the bulk of my gear to the location where I then split up what I really need for that day of shooting into smaller and more accessible camera bags like the LowePro Specialist 85 AW or the LowePro Toploader Pro 75 AW. The Vertex 300 AW has a plethora of pockets and storage and the main compartment can handle cameras with a 400mm lens attached or a 500mm lens without the camera attached. Suffice it to say, if you have more camera gear than this pack can handle you might want to consider leaving some of it at home.



**THINK TANK PIXEL POCKET ROCKET:** The [Pixel Pocket Rocket](#) isn't some perverted digital accessory, it's a killer little CompactFlash memory card wallet that can carry 10 CompactFlash cards in a very compact wallet that fits into your pocket. The name aside, it is the most useful and compact memory card wallet I have seen anywhere. I normally carry 60+ GB of memory cards with me on a shoot and this baby has served me for years as my memory card case. For those times when I am worried about sand or water getting into the wallet I simply drop it into a small ziploc bag. In fact, earlier this year, while covering the Wenger Patagonian Expedition race I fell into the ocean with a fully loaded wallet and I had forgotten to put it into a ziploc bag. I was worried that the cards would be destroyed but because the case closes so tightly, very little water had even gotten into the case. In fact, only the top two cards were even wet at all. I dried the cards off and rinsed the wallet - then downloaded all of my images without any hiccups. And I still use all of those cards. They seem just fine and I have never had a problem with them in



the last six months since the accident. Next time, I'll be sure to use the ziploc just so I don't have to worry.

**SANDISK FW 800/400 CF CARD READER:** One of the slowest parts of any digital workflow is transferring images from the memory card to a hard drive. For many years now I have used the [Sandisk Firewire 800 CompactFlash memory card reader](#) and it is wicked fast. As far as I know, for my Sandisk Extreme IV CF cards there is nothing faster available. An 8 GB card takes less than two minutes to download with this puppy. They aren't cheap at \$59 (at least when I bought it years ago) but it is nice to be able to download images so fast. If I am taking my laptop on an assignment, which is the norm these days, I won't leave the office without the Sandisk FW card reader.



**NIKON SB900 SPEEDLIGHT:** The Nikon SB800 was a phenomenal speedlight that really set Nikon apart in terms technology. I still have one of those units and use it often when I am going light and fast. When Nikon announced the [SB900](#) with all of the interface changes most of us I'd gather were pretty excited. After all, the SB900 is pretty much a more user friendly and more technically advanced version of the older (and now discontinued) SB800 speedlight. The only downside to the SB900 is that it costs quite a bit more than the SB800 did (it is currently \$469 on B&H) and it is also quite a bit larger than its predecessor. Aside from these points, it is the most advanced flash Nikon has ever built. The best thing about this flash is that it

has a very simple on/off switch that also allows you to put the flash into Master and Commander mode with the flick of a switch for wireless off-camera flash. The flash also has built in control for shaping the light as it comes out of the flash head. You can choose between three options for flash output that allow you to create a uniform or spotlight type light pattern and you can also zoom the flash head to match lenses from 14mm all the way up to 200mm which is a pretty phenomenal. Even if you are using a 24-70mm lens you can manually zoom the flash out to 200mm for a certain effects.



The flash also comes with a new filter holder and gels that have codes built into them telling the camera which filter you are using so the camera can account for that filter and use it to calculate the correct white balance automatically. I have no doubt this involves some very complex calculations on the part of the camera and flash, but for the user it simplifies some complex lighting setups. Overall, I don't know of any other speedlight on the market that can compare with the SB900. It might not be the most powerful flash out there, but the integration Nikon has built into their camera system with these flashes is nothing if not impressive - even the Cannonites will give us that. The SB900 is so good that I am always wanting one more than I have.

[PORTFOLIO]





[PORTFOLIO]



# The Future Magazine

by Michael Clark

With the publishing world in turmoil, it seems apropos to think about what magazines and newspapers will look like in the not too distant future. Over the last few years more and more magazines are offering a digital version of their print magazine which normally uses software like [Zinio](#) or something similar. In fact, you can already subscribe to hundreds of magazines digitally via Zinio.com. Getting back on track here, and more to the point, most of these new digital magazines have interactive content including revolving photos, video clips and pop-up details that give the reader an entirely new and exciting experience not available in a print magazine. If you haven't had the chance to experience a digital magazine I highly recommend checking one out. Granted, it isn't the same as hold-

**“FOR MANY MAGAZINES, GOING TO A PREDOMINANTLY DIGITAL DISTRIBUTION WILL BECOME THE NORM AT SOME POINT IN THE NOT TOO DISTANT FUTURE.”**

ing a magazine in your hands and there is something tactile about a physical (and highly portable) printed magazine. I don't foresee them disappearing anytime soon, but the writing is on the wall. For many magazines, going to a smaller print run and a predominantly digital distribution will become the norm at some point in the future, not just because of printing costs but also because of the expanded content options as laid out above.

As a photographer, this has become obvious to me in the last few months especially as video will now be an option on pretty much every D-SLR made from now on. The technology is moving towards mixed media and as a result magazines will have to adapt and absorb this new content if they want to be around ten years from now. Writing, photography, video and motion pictures are all methods of telling a story. After all, magazines (and newspapers) are made to tell stories - and get you to buy advertiser's products. What better way to help tell the story than have incredible writing, photography and video clips as well as interactive content all in one place. All of this will be possible via the World Wide Web. Perhaps the technology isn't there just yet for mass distribution and the highest quality images but you can be guaranteed that it's on the way. Faster computers, faster internet download speeds and higher quality video aren't that far off. If you are a still photographer and you aren't thinking about where technology will take us, then this is your wake up call.

While this newsletter isn't interactive (yet!), it has been around for five years now and has gained wide recognition because it is so portable - and of course because it is free and filled with (hopefully) lots of good information. As the technology improves I hope to include video and more interactive content into the newsletter to give a richer and fuller experience. Stay tuned.





The shadow of a cross on the ornate landscaping in a cemetery in Punta Arenas, Chile.  
Nikon D700, ISO 200, Nikkor AF-S 17-35mm f/2.8, Sandisk Extreme IV 8 GB CF Card