

NEWSLETTER

# MICHAEL CLARK

PHOTOGRAPHY



WINTER 2011





## WINTER 2011 NEWSLETTER

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Cover: Dane Reynolds launching a huge air in the quarterfinals of the 2010 Pipeline Masters competition.

Above: Michel Bourez doing a back flip on the north shore of Oahu, Hawaii.

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# Leaping into Motion

## OUR VERY FIRST MOTION PROJECT: THE ART OF MOTION



2010 proved to be one of the busiest years ever for us here at Michael Clark Photography. My book [\*Adventure Photography: Capturing the World of Outdoor Sports\*](#) was published in early January 2010 and has sold very well and it continues to sell well. I spent another year down in Patagonia covering the 2010 Wenger Patagonia Expedition Race last February, which was covered in the Spring 2010 Newsletter. After that began a series of assignments, workshops and photo shoots that seems now like a non-stop blur. Last fall I was on the road almost every weekend from September through late November and after that we shot my first motion project, [\*The Art of Motion\*](#) with the Red One Digital Cinema Camera in December. Shortly thereafter I set out to shoot on assignment for Nikon with their COOLPIX P500 point and shoot camera. Needless to say it was quite a year. I am exhausted just thinking about it and 2011 has followed suit without skipping a beat.

This year I opted not to go back to Patagonia for the Wenger Patagonia Expedition Race because I already had other assignments set up during the race. Part of me is really feeling like I am missing out because I am not down there in the sideways rain, snow and sleet knee deep in the action, but I do have some exciting assignments this month and I get to go ice climbing a bit more than normal this winter as well.

This newsletter has a very detailed feature article on how we made *The Art of Motion* and another editorial in the Perspective column on the transition from stills to motion work. Hence, I won't get into it here but I will say that the jump into motion wasn't as difficult as it could have been because I have such a talented team around me. For my motion work I have created a new division of my company named Michael Clark Productions. The team we have formed for

this new motion division spans the range of expert post-production, sound engineers, grips and cinematographers. We are looking forward to shooting several motion projects this year and we will certainly be sharing the details of those productions here in the newsletter and also on the blog.

Of course, I am still shooting a lot of stills. In December I spent another two weeks in Hawaii shooting surfing for Nikon (with the COOLPIX P500) and for myself. As you can see from the images in this newsletter Hawaii never seems to disappoint when it comes to surfing. My first day in Hawaii ended up being the best day of the 2010 Billabong Pipeline Masters Competition and there were lots of folks getting huge air as you can see by the cover image of Dane Reynolds and the table of contents image of Michel Bourez. After the contest, and five days of solid rain, I did get into the water and swam a bit to see how it would be shooting from the water. I was quickly schooled in small waves and found that shooting from the water is very tricky. Shooting from the beach is obviously easy. Shooting from the water is like trying to shoot photos while free soloing a rock climb next to the climber. It is going to take some time for me to get the skills needed but I am pretty excited to try again. Here's hoping you enjoy this issue of the Newsletter.

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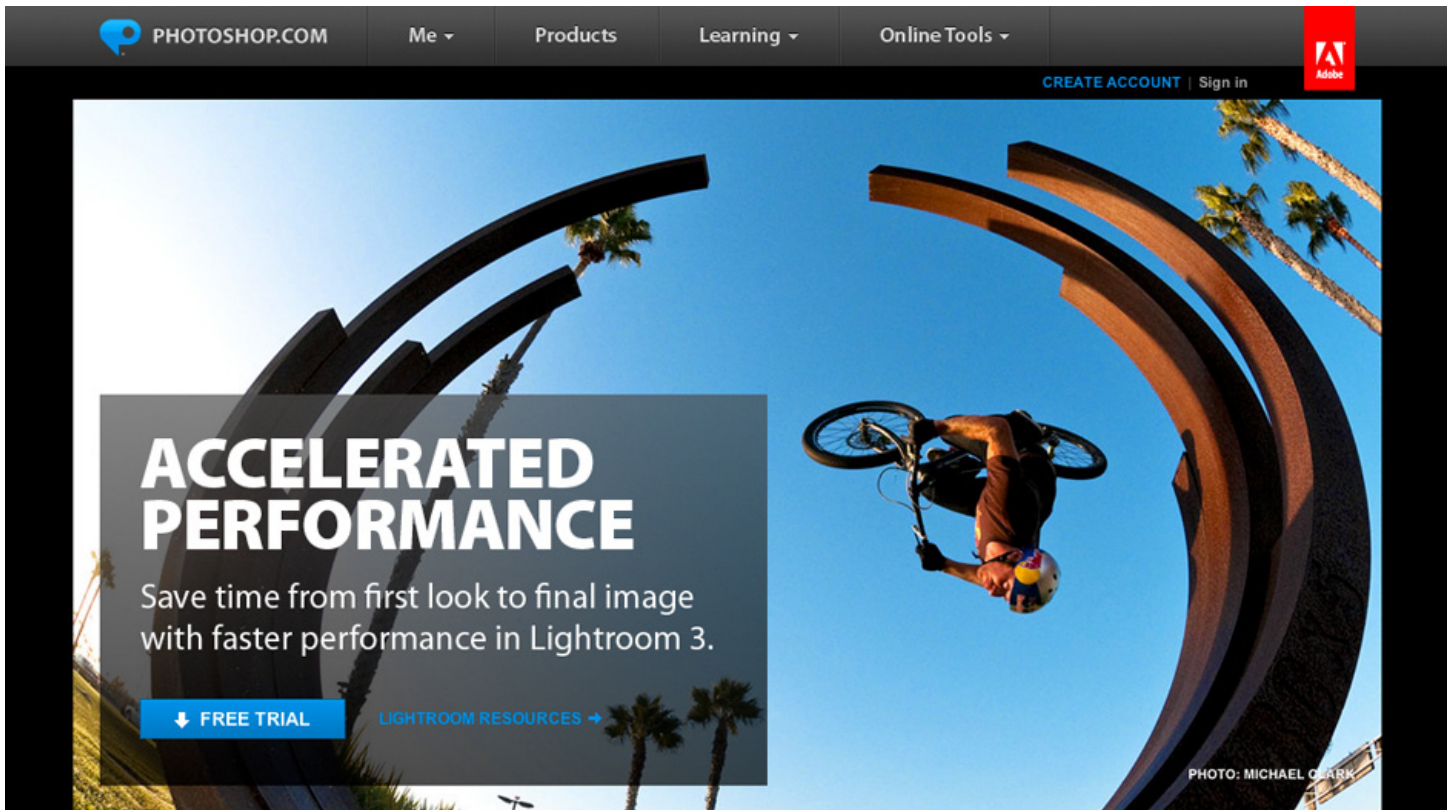
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# Adobe uses Michael's images on Photoshop.com

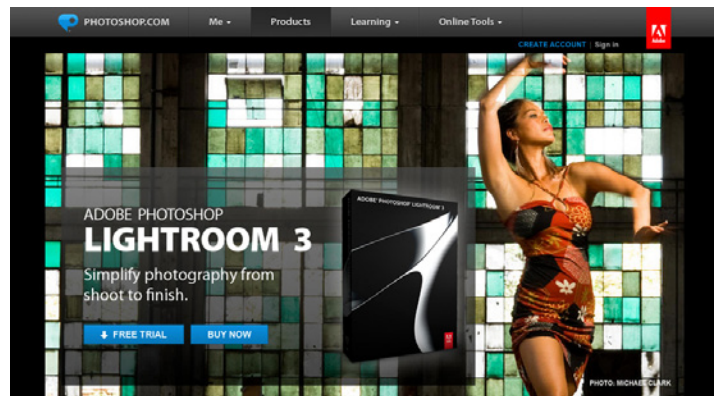
LATEST USE OF IMAGES IS A CONTINUATION OF A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH ADOBE



Ever since I shot images for the original Adobe Photoshop Lightroom software back in 2006 I have had a close working relationship with Adobe and it's products. I have been a beta tester for Lightroom and Photoshop for the last five years and continue to work with them to improve their products. A few months ago Adobe contacted me to use some of my images on the [Photoshop.com website](#). Those images are now live.

The Photoshop.com website has a treasure trove of tips, tutorials and interviews that can help make life easier for the Photoshop and Lightroom user. I highly recommend checking it out. The image above appears on the [home page](#) and the image at right appears on the [Lightroom 3 page](#). My thanks to Adobe for using my work yet again. They are one of the most responsive companies I have ever worked with in terms of taking in feedback and tweaking their products to make our lives easier and the end product the best it can be.

And of course many of you know that I have written an e-book that covers my entire digital workflow, which centers around using Adobe Lightroom and Photoshop. If you want to check that out [click here](#).



**Lightroom 3**  
Adobe® Photoshop® Lightroom® 3 software helps you bring out the best in your photography, whether you're perfecting one image, searching for ten, processing hundreds, or organizing thousands. Create incredible images that move your audience. Experiment fearlessly with state-of-the-art nondestructive editing tools. Easily manage all your images. And showcase your work in elegant print layouts, slide shows, web galleries, and on popular photo-sharing sites.

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**Watch a Lightroom 3 Overview**  
Edit, manage, and showcase all your photos with one intuitive solution.

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**RECENT CLIENTS:** Nikon, Adobe Systems, Inc., Red Bull, Smartwool, Pixiq.com, Lark Photography Books, Outdoor Photographer and Nikon World Magazine.



## On Assignment with the Nikon COOLPIX P500

SHOOTING ON ASSIGNMENT FOR NIKON WITH A SUPER-ZOOM POINT AND SHOOT



In early December I got an email from the folks at Nikon asking me if I was available to shoot with one of their new cameras (which was just announced today), the Nikon COOLPIX P500 as seen above. They had seen my surfing images from Hawaii and wanted me to shoot several adventure sports with this new point and shoot that has some very formidable features. It has a 36x zoom lens which zooms from 22.5mm up to an astounding 810mm! But that is just the tip of the iceberg as they say, it also shoots 12.1 MP images at up to 5 fps and it will even shoot up to 120 fps at a much reduced resolution. If that isn't enough it has a pretty amazing

macro mode, panorama mode (as seen in the panorama image I shot above) and it also shoots full HD (1080) video in a 16x9 format. All in all the camera is an amazingly lightweight and powerful unit. And working with Nikon is as always an enormous pleasure. They basically turned me loose and told me to shoot "those subjects that get me excited and that I normally shoot" and to be sure to use as many camera features as possible in the process. My thanks to Nikon and marketing crew there for this assignment. I had a lot of fun shooting with the Nikon COOLPIX P500. If you'd like to learn more about the mighty P500 visit the [Nikon USA website](http://www.nikonusa.com).

# Adventure Photography Workshop

**ADVENTURE PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP IN SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO - JUNE 19-25, 2011**



Adventure sports photography can be an adventure in itself, involving breathtaking locations, extreme conditions, and working with elite athletes in risky situations. It requires a host of skills, including technical excellence with the camera, familiarity with the sport, and the ability to keep your goals and safety in mind throughout.

Designed for intermediate to professional working photographers, this workshop concentrates on creating unique adventure sports and lifestyle images. We focus on four outdoor sports: rock climbing, white water kayaking, mountain biking, and trail running. Using elite athletes as our models and northern New Mexico's incredible landscape as our backdrop, we explore innovative ways to capture the essence of each sport. Topics covered during the week include research

**SANTA FE**  
photographic workshops

and preparation, composition and camera angles, equipment selection and use, using natural light, fill flash, and battery-powered strobes, and autofocus techniques. We also learn how

to work with athletes who are putting themselves at risk and how to capture the intensity of the action. Each day finds us in a new location working with expert athletes.

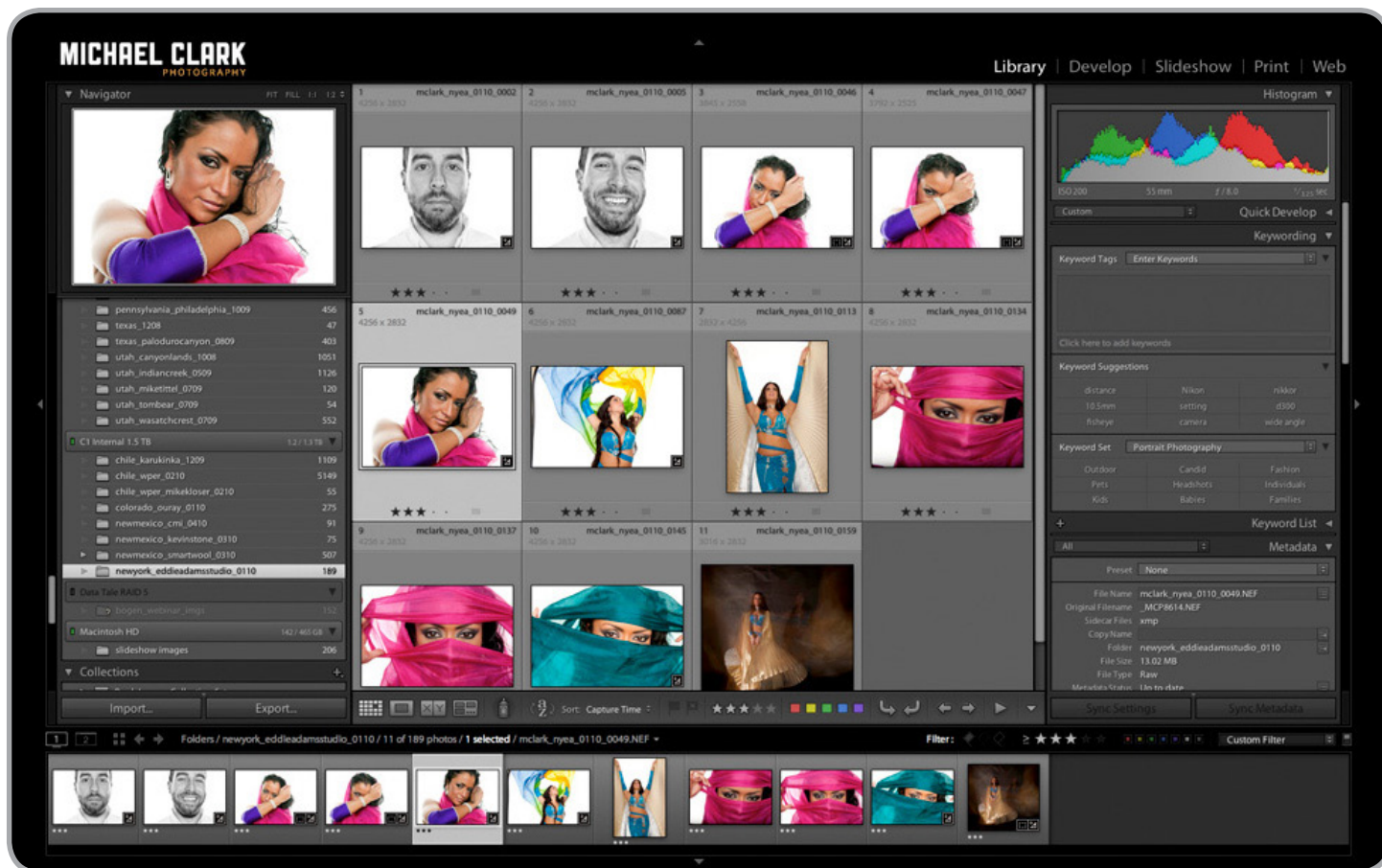
Classroom time includes editing and critiquing images and one-on-one meetings with Michael. In addition, Michael shares his insights and experiences in the adventure marketplace, including career development, portfolios, and how to shoot for stock, editorial, and commercial clients.

This workshop is slated for June 19-25, 2011 and is hosted by the [Santa Fe Workshops](#). Call them at (505) 983-1400 for more information or to register.



# Adobe Photoshop Lightroom 2-day Workshops

## START TO FINISH WORKFLOW FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS



Lightroom is the essential software of choice for digital photographers. This unique hands-on application experience is an intensive two-day workshop focused on Adobe Photoshop Lightroom 3.3, in which participants learn to download, organize, manage, develop, and present digital photography using their own laptops.

We begin with an introductory overview of Lightroom, which starts with covering the database components, catalog files, previews, the metadata structure, and the steps for setting up application preferences specific to your personal workflow requirements. Topics include digital camera setup, choosing appropriate file formats for image capture, efficiently downloading images from the camera or a hard drive, sorting, rating, editing, global tone and color corrections, critical local corrections, input and output sharpening, presenting slideshows, and printing photographic images using Lightroom from start to finish. Under Michael's expert guidance, participants come to see why Lightroom puts

deliberate focus on the word "speed". This program allows photographers to spend less time in front of their computers and more time behind their cameras.

**Sponsors:** Adobe, X-rite, Blurb, Data Robotics, Nik Software, onOne Software

**Cost:** \$295.00 with early registration.

[Register online at Lightroom workshops.com](http://Lightroomworkshops.com). In 2011 I'll be teaching this workshop in Seattle, WA on March 5-6, 2011 and in Salt Lake City, UT on March 26-27, 2011. Please check my website for more information about the workshop and other dates in late 2011, which will be forthcoming.

The Adobe Photoshop Lightroom workshops are taught as part of a larger series of workshops on Adobe Lightroom via [Lightroomworkshops.com](http://Lightroomworkshops.com). Other instructors, including Nevada Wier, George Jardine and photoshop guru Jerry Courvoisier, will be teaching the same workshop at other locations. For a complete overview of locations and instructors visit the [Lightroomworkshops.com](http://Lightroomworkshops.com) website.

# Adventure Sports Photography Workshop

ADVENTURE PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP IN ROCKPORT, ME - AUGUST 21-27, 2011



Adventure sports photography can be an adventure in itself, involving breathtaking locations, extreme conditions and working with elite athletes in risky situations. It requires a host of skills, including technical excellence with the camera, familiarity with the sport and the ability to keep your goals and safety in mind throughout.

Designed for intermediate to experienced photographers, this workshop concentrates on creating unique adventure sports and lifestyle images. We focus on outdoor sports like sea kayaking, mountain biking and trail running. Using athletes as our models and Maine's coastal landscape as our backdrop, we explore innovative ways to capture the essence of each sport. Topics covered during the week include research and preparation, composition and camera angles, equipment selec-

## MAINE MEDIA WORKSHOPS

tion and use, using natural light, fill-flash and battery-powered strobes, and autofocus techniques.

We also learn how to work with athletes who are putting themselves at risk and how to capture the intensity of the action. Each day finds us out in new locations and in the classroom editing and critiquing images, and meeting one-on-one with Michael. In addition, Michael shares his insights and experiences in the adventure marketplace, including career development, portfolios and how to shoot for stock, editorial, and commercial clients.

This workshop is slated for the week of August 21-27, 2011 and is hosted by the [Maine Media Workshops](#). Check their website for registration info or contact them via phone at (877) 577-7700.



## Mentor Series Photo Trek - Santa Fe

A PHOTO TREK IN SANTA FE WITH INSTRUCTORS DAVE BLACK AND MICHAEL CLARK



# MENTOR SERIES™

## Worldwide Photo Treks

For stunning sun-drenched vistas and glimpses into a rich cultural past, look no farther than the photo ops offered by Santa Fe, New Mexico. This vibrant Southwestern city blazes with dramatic landscapes, unique architecture and lively citizens. With Nikon professional photographers Michael Clark and Dave Black at your side, it won't take long for this desert locale to heat up your portfolio.

We'll begin by turning our lenses on Bandelier National Monument, a historical gem that showcases the ancestral cliff dwellings of the Pueblos. As we make our way around the Main Loop Trail, experiment with unusual perspectives after climbing one of the many small ladders, or zoom in for detailed shots of the intricate rock paintings and petroglyphs. Arriving in Los Alamos later that day, we'll stop to fill our frame with Black Mesa, followed by White Rock Overlook at sunset — both viewpoints showcasing the mighty Rio Grande snaking elegantly through the landscape.

At Tent Rocks National Monument, you'll want to take advantage of an unusual and otherworldly scene—massive cone-shaped rock formations soaring high amid a mountainous backdrop.

Nestled in the foothills of the majestic Sangre de Cristo Mountains, Nambé Pueblo is a destination renowned for both its natural and cultural beauty. Here we'll stop to capture a remarkable double-drop waterfall, as well as a traditional troupe of performers known as Young Buffalo Dancers. Heading back into Santa Fe, we'll make it to the Cross of the Martyrs just in time for sunset. Constructed to commemorate 21 Franciscan friars slain by the Spanish during a 1680 Pueblo revolt, this place has a solemn ambience that will translate into truly breathtaking photographs.

Possibly the best way for your camera to get closely acquainted with Santa Fe is by taking a stroll through the streets—just what we'll do on our guided walking tour. With a focus on 16th-century Pueblo and Spanish Colonial blended architecture, we won't miss any of the city's must-see spots—among them the Mission of San Miguel, the Palace of the Governors, St. Francis Cathedral and the state capitol, to name a few.

If you would like to register for the Santa Fe Photo Trek you can do so on their [website](#), where you can also download a complete itinerary and get more information. The cost for this workshop is \$1,100.

# The Canon iPF5100 Large Format Printer

**A LARGE FORMAT PRINTER THAT PUMPS OUT PHENOMENAL COLOR ACCURATE PRINTS**

In this digital age a large format printer might seem a bit esoteric but professional photographers do still print their images. Over the years I have owned high-end photo printers from Epson, Hewlett-Packard and most recently Canon. My old HP and Epson printers still get some use. The HP has been a die-hard workhorse and is used for day to day business printing. The old Epson R1800 still gets used for some printing duties, especially when I need full-bleed prints on odd paper sizes. A few years ago, while teaching a workshop with my good friend Andy Biggs, he suggested I buy the Canon imagePROGRAF iPF5100 printer we had borrowed for the workshop. I had some hesitations since I didn't do that much printing, but I got such a good deal on it I would have been a fool to pass it up. And now that I have used it for a number of years I am very glad that I bought it. It has proven to be a phenomenal printer and it produces stunning, highly accurate color and black and white prints up to 17 inches wide.

Living in the dry high alpine environment of Santa Fe, New Mexico I have always had problems with Epson inks getting blocked up in the ink cartridges. And since I don't print that often, maybe five to ten times a year, I spent a considerable amount of time and money cleaning the printer head on the Epson before I could even make one decent print. Add to that the fact that the Epson printers (of that era) were not calibrated at the factory and after a few years they tended to drift off into space when it comes to printer profiles and it took a lot to get a decent color accurate print out of my old Epson. When I first printed my portfolio three years ago on the Epson, I had to make on average three to five prints just to get a decent print. In between each print I would have to tweak the image slightly in Photoshop to get a new improved version of the image. Let's just say it was a pain to use. [Side note: Since getting the Colormunki in late 2009 and using it to make custom printer profiles the Epson is quite a bit better in this respect but it still takes some tweaking on each image to get stellar output and color accuracy.]

Hence when I got the Canon iPF5100, I was blown



The Canon imagePROGRAF iPF5100 (don't ask me about the name - pretty wild naming conventions Canon has) is a beast of a printer. At 80-plus pounds it requires a strong back to move it but the results are stunning color accurate prints. I highly recommend that folks buying this printer also get the printer stand. It will make life a lot easier when you need to move the printer around and it also has a fabric cradle to catch those big prints.

away when my first print out of it had dead on accurate color! The Canon printers are calibrated at the factory to all be within +/- .03% of each other in terms of color accuracy and this allows folks, like Andy Biggs (who makes the printer profiles for Moab Paper) to make incredibly accurate printer profiles for Canon printers, which work on any other Canon printer with great precision as I found out with that first print. After years of struggling with the Epson I had found a printer that could spit out perfect prints on the first go without any fuss. Of course, to get these perfect colors I had already done a fair bit of color management work by calibrating and profiling my monitor. If you are having trouble getting color accurate prints I highly recommend getting my digital workflow e-book ([available on my website](#)), which has an in-depth chapter on color management with a lot of information that I have never seen in any other book.

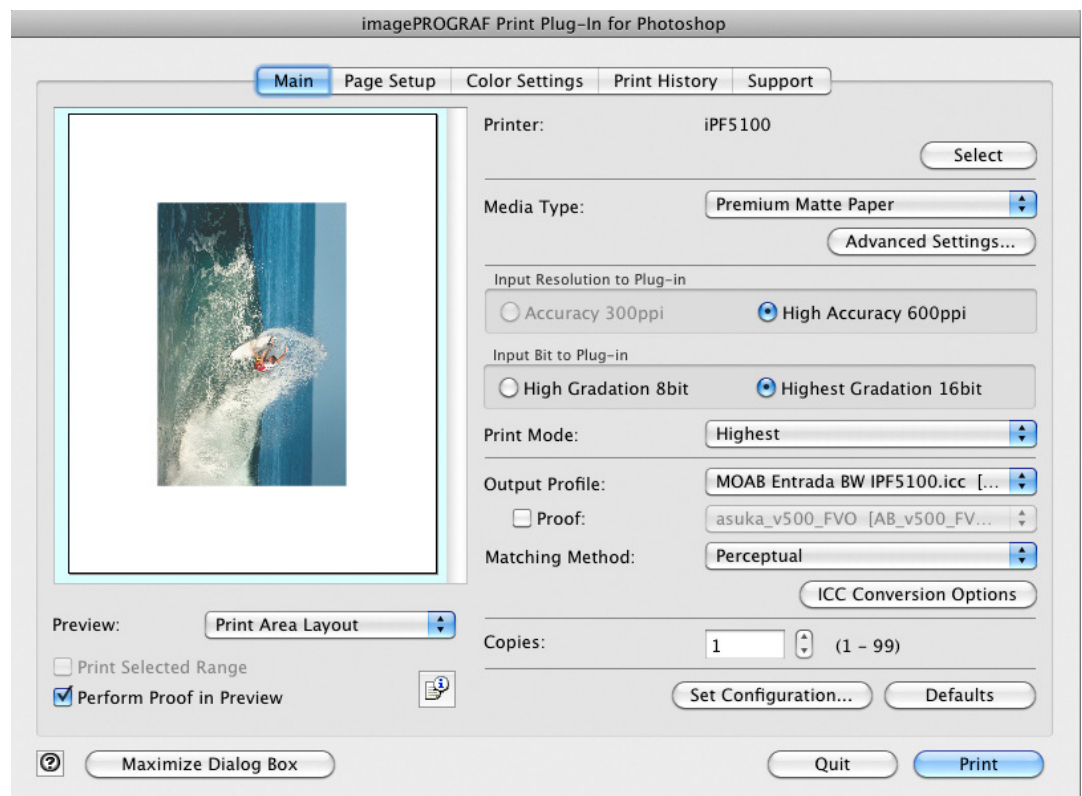


While the color accuracy of the prints is astounding, I can't say the printer itself is easy to use. The Canon printers in general have some serious quirks, as does just about every large format printer on the market these days. The iPF5100's on-board printer menu, which is displayed on an LCD panel, is a nightmare. You basically have to be an engineer to understand it (and I am an ex-physicist saying this) and Canon only gives you a PDF copy of the User manual, which is over 700 pages long! Epson and HP printers by comparison are much easier to use, understand and operate. But in Canon's defense they do have the best printer driver I have ever seen for a printer, and they even offer a printer plug-in for Photoshop CS4/CS5 that is a breeze to use.

Before I get too far off track here let me just lay out the pros and cons of this printer. On the pro side there is the incredible color accuracy that this printer affords (when used with good printer profiles like those made by Moab Paper) as I've already mentioned, it is also a very fast printer, it can print on just about any media type you would want to print on, it has a roll paper and cut sheet option, it has a paper feed mechanism that creates a vacuum holding the paper perfectly flat during printing, it produces incredibly accurate monotone black and white prints and it

has a very wide gamut ink set consisting of 12 inks total. Another nice feature is that you don't have to switch any inks out when switching from matte to glossy papers – the inks are ready to go for any type of paper and the printer switches between them instantly. And lastly, because it uses a thermal process to lay down the ink droplets instead of a piezo driven (i.e. electronic) system there are no clogged heads to worry about, and hence no long cleaning ordeals to go through.

Now, on the flip side let's talk about the cons. Right off the bat I'll just say this up front: Canon printers, and all printers using the thermal process to deposit ink on paper (which includes all HP printers) are not capable of creating prints as detailed as the Epson printers, which use the piezo technology. That might be a bit alarming so let me explain what I mean. The thermal print heads use droplets that are a bit larger than the piezo heads are capable of creating. The end result is that in images where there is superfine detail, like a kite flying with strings attached to it or a rope in an image shot from far away, will show up in the print from an Epson printer and it may or may not appear on the print from the Can-



The Canon imagePROGRAF Print Plug-In for Photoshop CS4/CS5 works extremely well and is a joy to use. This plug in can control every aspect of the printing and it can even upres the image with excellent results if you are printing on large paper. To access the Print Plug-In in Photoshop you go to File > Export > iPF5100 Print Plug-In.

on printer. In my experience this difference of print resolution seems to appear most often when I am printing an image that has super thin lines in it. Aside from this I cannot tell the difference in a Canon or Epson print. And if you print an image larger then this is not a factor. Is this a big deal? For most prints as I have said you would need a pretty high power magnifying glass to see any difference at all between an Epson, HP and Canon print. Just to be fair I wanted to point this out. For those

times when I need the extra resolution of the Epson I use my older Epson R1800, which is admittedly not their best printer, but it can still create some pretty stellar results with a bit of work. Epson states that their printers can obtain a print resolution of 1440 dpi whereas Canon states in it's literature that their printers get only to 1200 dpi, which explains the difference in superfine details. All in all though it rarely matters and I much prefer the color accuracy of the Canon printers.

A few other limitations of the iPF5100 (and all of the other larger version of this printer) is that it is a behemoth. It weighs at least 80 pounds or more and it takes a minimum of two people to move it. I recommend that you buy the stand Canon makes for the printer as that makes it easier to roll it around and move it. Aside from that, as I have said the menu system on the printer could use some serious improvements, the paper feeding system for the cassette and manual loading could also use some upgrading as they can be very finicky and last but certainly not least the inks cost a fortune at around \$90/cartridge. I can't really fault Canon for the ink costing a fortune though as it costs a lot with all of the high end ink jet printers on the market. That is just the way it is.

One of the upsides to the Canon printers is that they are workhorses for large print houses. Because they print faster than just about any other printer out there and use less ink than the Epsoms, these are economical printers for folks who print a lot. At around \$1,500 it is also a fairly good deal. I would opt for the basic model since printer profiles for this machine tend to be very good, hence the need for a RIP is debatable.

What else can be said about this printer? I cannot overstate how amazing it is to get perfect color from an ink jet printer. The latest Epsoms are capable of printing excellent color but I have not seen output from any other printer that matches the color accuracy of this Canon. That makes updating my portfolio or making prints for the models and athletes that I shoot a lot less agonizing. All I have to do is turn the thing on and hit print once I have the image sized up and sharpened. Try that with an Epson. I am a convert if you haven't noticed. I'd love to have a bit finer print resolution when it comes



The Canon imagePROGRAF iPF 6300 is the new 24" version of the older iPF6100. So far there isn't a new 17-inch version of the iPF5100. The newer model boasts better print quality and a slightly wider color gamut thanks to the new improved set of Lucia EX inks. From the Canon marketing materials it states: "Canon has updated its drivers for this printer to include two high-precision printing modes, one for photos and one for text and fine lines. Together they deliver unsurpassed quality that could not be achieved with previously available models. The drivers also allow borderless printing on roll media." Maybe this new version has the ability to print super fine lines that the iPF5100 did not as discussed on the previous page.

to those super fine lines but I can live with this puppy the way it is. Canon has released a newer version of this printers big brother, which prints up to 24 inches, named the iPF6300 and interestingly enough in it's promotional literature there is a note about the print resolution: "Canon has updated its drivers for this printer to include two high-precision printing modes, one for photos and one for text and fine lines. Together they deliver unsurpassed quality that could not be achieved with previously available models." Hence if you are looking for finer print resolution but still want the color accuracy of the Canon printers, and want the ability to print up to 24-inches wide then the iPF6300 might be a good choice.

If you are looking to buy a large format printer like this one or a larger one then I would highly recommend buying from a high end deal near you. These printers are temperamental and having a dealer who can come out to your studio or office and help you get it set up



## equipment review

or fix certain issues you are having is a huge bonus and worth the extra money you might spend. The key word in that last sentence is “might.” The shipping cost on these beasts is enormous so saving a few hundred bucks on the printer itself may not equate to much of a savings once you figure in the shipping costs from B&H in New York.



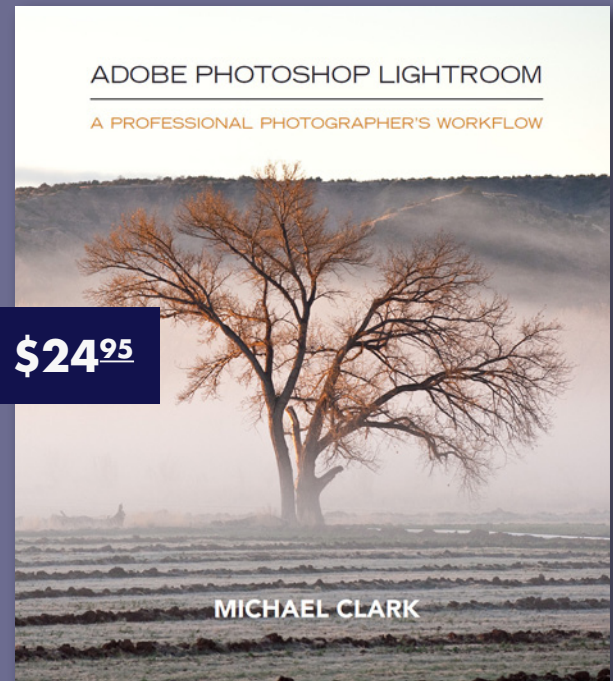
The new Canon iPF6300 also has a new and improved menu setup and LCD display layout which makes it a bit easier to use, though having seen the new menu I still think it has a long ways to go to make it user friendly.

This review of the Canon iPF5100 is probably more information than you ever wanted to know about a printer of this type and the differences between Canon, HP and Epson printers. Printing is an art in and of itself, which is why there are still “master” digital printers out there willing to print for you. My own experience printing my work is that it is painstaking and the best results still take a fair amount of work and color management knowledge no matter what printer you are working with. As a side note this printer is also very good at making accurate guide prints. I make these prints on Canon’s proofing paper and send them along with the digital images on larger ad jobs.

If you want more information on the intricacies of the Canon iPF5100 you can read a review from Andy Biggs on his blog [here](#) and you can also find the Canon iPF Wiki [here](#), which has a ton of great info for folks struggling with this printer and it’s quirks. And of course last but not least you can find more information on Canon’s [website](#).

## ADOBE LIGHTROOM WORKFLOW

A COMPLETE WORKFLOW FROM CAPTURE  
TO OUTPUT BY MICHAEL CLARK



## UPDATED FOR LIGHTROOM 3.3 AND PHOTOSHOP CS5

The Adobe Photoshop Lightroom Workflow, a 353 page e-book, is a workshop in book form. Updated for Adobe Lightroom 3 and Photoshop CS5, this e-book was completely re-written and presents a workflow that can be adapted by any photographer, professional or amateur. I can honestly say that I have not seen any other book on the market today that includes as much detailed and comprehensive information as this e-book does on digital workflow.

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)



THE **ART** BEHIND THE SCENES:  
OF **MOTION**





After months of hard work I have finally loaded a brand new motion reel onto my website. If you haven't seen it yet please be sure to check it out on my website by [clicking here](#). Since the entire reel was shot on the Red One Digital Cinema Camera I have uploaded it in a larger than normal size so that the quality and sharpness is apparent. If it takes a little longer than normal to load please be patient. It is worth the wait!

it off at the level I was aiming at and I knew I needed to build a team of people who could help me execute my ideas in a way that fit with my brand. And while the DSLRs can create some stunning video, I was looking for something to set my brand and myself apart from the rest of the pack. I have never been all that excited about HD video. It never looked that sharp to me and I was always underwhelmed with the quality. After all, 1080p



This scene of CJ Maestas putting on his “grips” and chalking up before getting on the rings kicks off his section in the reel. We used a black background and two Kino Flo lights to light him along with a 650 watt continuous light to highlight him from the back. [Note: “Shot on Red” logo does not appear in the motion reel.]

In many ways I feel like I am late to the game in terms of doing video. Everybody and their dog seems to be doing video these days in addition to still photography because it is now built into most digital SLR cameras. The technology has made it more accessible for the average still photographer to jump in and get their feet wet in the video world, whereas before most folks just didn't have the expertise, knowledge or equipment to do video or full 35mm motion film productions at all, and even fewer had the abilities to do it well. That was why I waited. I knew I didn't have all the skills to pull

full HD is only the equivalent to a 2 MP image in still photography language. I realize the correlation is not exact but that is the gist of it. HD may have been a step up for TV but in relation to the rest of the photographic world and where technology is today it wasn't that big of a step and I predict it will be only short while longer before we start seeing 4K TVs with much better resolution. I have always wanted to shoot moving images with the same amazing resolution that my still cameras have and that is where the Red One Digital Cinema Camera and it's amazing ability to capture 12 MP frames at up to

60 fps comes in. This was and is the camera I have been wanting to shoot motion work with.

Last fall, while traveling I found the perfect team to work with and we set out to make a demo reel to show clients our abilities. The team consisted of a good friend of mine, Chuck Fryberger, whom I have known and worked

and a pro-caliber BMX rider. We shot everything here in New Mexico. The most scenic segment we shot was with yoga instructor, Gretel Follingstad, in White Sands National Monument where the landscape really dovetails nicely with her movement. We chose to shoot in an anamorphic widescreen aspect ratio (2.35:1) for this segment and for the entire reel precisely because we

wanted to show the landscape like this (see the shot on the next page) and also because it helps to set the reel apart from those shot on HD video in the 16:9 format. We have nothing against that format – we just went super wide for this reel. Gretel's amazing ability and limber body really shows through in a few shots here. The crew was audibly exhaling when she did a few advanced maneuvers. And



Nelson very carefully testing the 19-foot crane mounted and lashed down in the back of a pick up truck with the Red One hanging off the front of it.

with for over ten years. He has honed his abilities as filmmaker to the point that we (and the rest of his team) can work together to create my vision. The whole point of this reel was to show that our “production value” is quite high and that we have a mastery of the many different aspects of shooting a motion piece including camera movement, lighting, sound, interviews and story telling. I think we pulled it off quite well. And judging from the responses that clients have shown they seem to think so as well.

The reel focuses on four athletes: a yoga instructor, a professional cyclist, a world-class gymnast on the rings

of course White Sands National Monument is a classic location that really helped accentuate the movement. For Gretel's segment, we decided not to do any extreme camera moves save for the opening shot of her walking out onto the dunes. This was intentional. We wanted to use faster and bigger camera moves for those segments where the athlete is moving fast. The locked off shots and slider moves help relate the stillness of her movement – and since the reel is named *The Art of Motion* we wanted to show that artistic movement not just with the athletes we were shooting but also in how we moved the camera. This philosophy also allowed us to move a bit more quickly from shot to shot and allowed



us to hike in with only a few hundred pounds of gear instead of five hundred pounds of gear. Having to cart less gear out to the location saved us a lot of time because we had to hike about a mile out into the dunes to get away from all of the footprints and hikers. Needless to say this was a tough day on the crew.

his deep dish carbon fiber wheels from a half-mile away and the sound of them slicing through the air as they come by the camera was like a gunshot – if you crank the volume on the reel you'll hear it. At first when we set up this shot we stopped the camera early because we thought a car was coming up the road behind him but



Gretel Follingstad, a yoga instructor in Santa Fe, is seen here warming up in White Sands National Monument near Alamogordo, New Mexico. We shot this on a crystal clear blue day in semi-cold temperatures. Between takes Gretel was wearing a large down jacket to stay warm but she did manage to still pull off some very advanced yoga poses.

Next up was Michael McCalla, a pro cyclist on the Scott USA team. He lives and trains in Santa Fe and we chose a few of the roads he uses on his normal training rides to shoot with him. Highway 45 just south of Santa Fe has sweeping vistas of the Sangre de Cristo, Jemez and Sandia mountains that makes for a very nice setting. As a cyclist myself, it is also one of my favorite rides because of the scenery and the challenging steep hills. The day we shot with Michael was very cold but since Mike is used to pain he went without leg warmers or a jacket. By the end of our shoot he was so cold that he was visibly shaking. One of my favorite shots in the entire reel is of him blasting by the camera at over 50 mph. You could hear

when he got to us we realized it was just the sound of his wheels slicing through the air. That gives you a sense of the noise made by his aero wheels at that speed. For the scenes where we are in front of Mike as he is riding we had the Red One on a 19-foot crane mounted in the back of a truck (see image on the previous page). It allowed us to have full range of motion and really get creative shots of Michael cranking along. As a cyclist myself, it was great to see Michael in action.

During pre-production for the reel, Chuck suggested an indoor option because we were shooting in December and if the weather crapped out on us this would give

us some options. It would also allow us to show that we can light subjects for motion to get a similar look to my still photography. Hence, we opted to shoot gymnastics and since I have shot athletes on the rings before we tracked down CJ Maestas. CJ is the current national champion gymnast on the rings – and he just happens to

CJ do his routine and to see him hold these poses again and again. It isn't often that you get to see this kind of strength on display and that was a huge reason we wanted to include CJ in the reel.

Yet another of my favorite shots in the reel is the one



Michael McCalla, a pro cyclist for Scott USA (pictured above), is seen here cranking past the camera at over 50 mph. For this shot, one of my favorites in the reel, we used a slider to move the camera ever so slowly as Michael flew past us. The sound of his bike slicing through the air was like a gunshot when he went past us.

live and train in Albuquerque, New Mexico at the Gold Cup Gym. In fact Gold Cup Gymnastics has produced a dozen Olympians in the last decade. For this segment I wanted to light him on the rings in front of a white background and then turn that into a high contrast black and white segment similar to the high-contrast black and white portraits that I am known for. We had about 20,000 Watts of lighting and a huge white background hung behind CJ. Because of the set up at the gym we had the camera on a 19-foot crane pretty much the entire time so we could get it up level with CJ (see image on page 20). Of all the segments for this reel, this was by far the most amazing to shoot. It was incredible to see

of CJ falling out of the iron cross and then bouncing up and down at the bottom of the frame as the rings clink together above him. That was his last go at the end of the shoot and he was so exhausted he just fell out of the iron cross. Watch closely on the shots of him doing the iron cross and the maltese (where his body is parallel to the ground) and you'll see just how hard these moves are and how much will power it takes to keep himself in those strenuous positions. Just a few weeks ago I found out that CJ has moved up to the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado. If all goes well and he stays at his current level he will be headed to the 2012 Olympic games in London.



For the last segment of the reel we tapped local hot-shot BMX rider Matthew Gannon and filmed him doing his normal routine at the Santa Fe dirt jumps. We hauled over 500-pounds of gear out to the location, which was back breaking labor but it worked out well. Matthew had some very funny quotes as well during his

each athlete and interlaced those with the action sequences. The first shoot we actually did was with CJ Maestas and for that we set up a black background and liked the look so we kept that style for all of the interviews, asking the same series of questions with each athlete. Their insight and seeing them perform while they



Above, Matthew Gannon in full flight doing a 360 at the dirt jumps just north of Santa Fe, New Mexico. Because it was a bit windy the day we shot with Matthew and the dirt jumps themselves weren't in quite good enough shape Matthew wasn't able to do any back flips but he did crank out an impressive number of other tricks that made it into the reel.

interview about lost girlfriends and broken teeth. While the windy conditions and the dirt jumps themselves that day weren't conducive to back-flips, Matt got after it and rode pretty much non-stop for about four hours. He was able to hit the same spots and perform the exact same maneuvers time after time which really helped us out with focus pulls and continuity. It was impressive to see him so easily perform these tricks. I have since shot with him again on another assignment for Nikon at a skate park in Albuquerque where he was throwing back-flips on command dozens and dozens of times.

Aside from the action we also filmed interviews with

talk gives the viewer a quick snippet of what their lives are like and how they integrate their respective sports into their lifestyles.

Along with the motion reel I have also posted an article on my website about "Our Philosophy on Video" productions. I must say that it is hard for me to call the footage that the Red One produces "video". The camera shoots at 4K resolution, which is 5 times more resolution than HD video and that equates to a 12 MP image for every frame at anywhere from 24 fps to 60 fps. It produces higher resolution footage than a full 35mm motion picture camera. And the new Red Epic, which we'll

have soon, is even higher quality. Here's hoping that with the launch of our new motion reel that we'll be working in that realm a fair bit in 2011. Without further ado, here is our philosophy on motion and video productions:



Nelson changing the settings on the camera while Chuck holds it steady during the shoot with CJ Maestas, who is a world-class gymnast and the national champion on the rings.

### Our Philosophy on Video and Motion productions:

At Michael Clark Photography we pride ourselves on top-notch quality in everything we do, whether shooting stills or motion. With the recent jump to producing high-end motion footage we have kept that principal in mind and we have put together a team of expert cinematographers, sound engineers, lighting techs, grips and production staff for our motion projects. We have the ability to pull off complex camera movements, professional grade lighting and sound, expert editing and post-production. In addition to the technical aspects of your project, we are dedicated to the story and telling that story in a manner consistent with your branding.

We use the best digital capture cameras on the market

to fulfill your needs and we match the right tool to the job. Currently we are using the Red One and the Red Epic cameras made by Red Digital Cinema to shoot the bulk of our motion projects. There are very few pro-

duction companies in the outdoor adventure market using such high-resolution digital cameras to capture adventure and the stories that go along with it. The result is that the final output at any size, even for the web, looks sharper and has better color than normal HD cameras. These cameras also allow us to be more creative and do things no other cameras can do. That means your brand will look

better than the competition.

The Red One is a 4K camera, which has five times the resolution of normal Full HD cameras. It is currently used to shoot motion pictures and advertisements worldwide. The Red Epic is a 5K camera with eight times more resolution than normal Full HD cameras. Beyond the resolution these cameras also have a dynamic range that puts them in a whole other category well beyond any normal or even pro-caliber HD video camera. This allows us to capture the entire set of tones in a scene, even in challenging high-contrast situations. The Red Epic is the standard for the digital cinema movement. These cameras are heavy duty, workhorse cameras and have been used to film a significant percentage of the feature films now being produced for Hollywood.



Of course, all of this tech-speak doesn't mean squat if the end product isn't well put together, visually stunning and entertaining. To that end we carefully plan out our shoots, making sure the entire team can execute what they need to do at the right moment so the end result fits the production and so we can come in on budget. In

post-production to your needs. If you are looking for the best quality currently available anywhere then look no further. We look forward to speaking with you about your next project.

Of course I have to give a lot of credit for this produc-



One of the last shots in the reel, this shot of Matthew Gannon looking off into the sunset while adjusting his headphones winds down his segment. Matthew wears headphones to help him concentrate and to keep any distractions that might happen while he is airborne to a minimum. From what I could tell, it seems to work quite well for him.

the planning stages of any production we create a detailed layout of every shot we'll be going after if possible, and then once on set we can use our time efficiently and wisely to get the best possible footage. What this means in the end is that you have a well-constructed piece that you can be proud of and with which you can elevate your brand.

All of this isn't to say that we don't use other cameras including HD video cameras and Digital SLR video cameras when the project and budget would be better served with those tools. Depending on your budget and needs we can scale our pre-production, camera, crew and

tion to the team that worked incredibly hard on this project with me including Charles (aka Chuck), Nelson Joey and Steph. Without their help this would not exist. It takes a whole team to create something like this. It is a collaboration and I cannot take full credit for the end result. I understand now why Hollywood movies have 60 people running around on set dealing with all of the odds and ends that have to be dealt with. Shooting something like this alone just doesn't happen. And as a still photographer moving into motion productions it was a huge learning experience for me. If you would like to read more about that experience check out the *Perspective* editorial on Page 26 in this newsletter.



[PORTFOLIO]









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## From Stills to Motion *by Michael Clark*

Making the transition from still photography to cinematography, aka video or motion, is much harder than just pushing a button on a DSLR. As many of you know by now, I have added motion work to my still photography so that I can offer a much more rounded and complete product to clients. [If you haven't seen my new reel check it out on my website.](#) I feel like I am late to the game in many ways. Everybody and their dog seems to be doing video these days in addition to still photography because it is now built into most digital SLR cameras. The tech-

**“AS THE OLD ADAGE GOES, THERE IS THE MOVIE YOU SET OUT TO CREATE AND THEN THERE IS THE ONE YOU END UP WITH.”**

nology has made it more accessible for the average still photographer to jump in and get their feet wet in the video world, whereas before most folks just didn't have the expertise, knowledge or equipment to do video at all or to do it well. And that was why I waited. I knew I didn't have all the skills to pull it off at the level I was aiming at and I knew I needed to build a team of people who could help me execute my ideas in a way that fit with my brand. And while the DSLRs can create some stunning video, I was also looking for something to set myself and my brand apart from the rest of the pack.

With moving images, there is a lot more than just how it looks that has to come together to tell a story and make it compelling. High quality sound, editing, music, excellent composition and camera movement all have to work together to help tell the story, which is why I built a team of experts in each of their fields to work with on motion projects. That is also why I have chosen the Red Digital Cinema cameras to work with since they can create a quality end product that has five to eight times more resolution than even the best high-end HD video cameras.

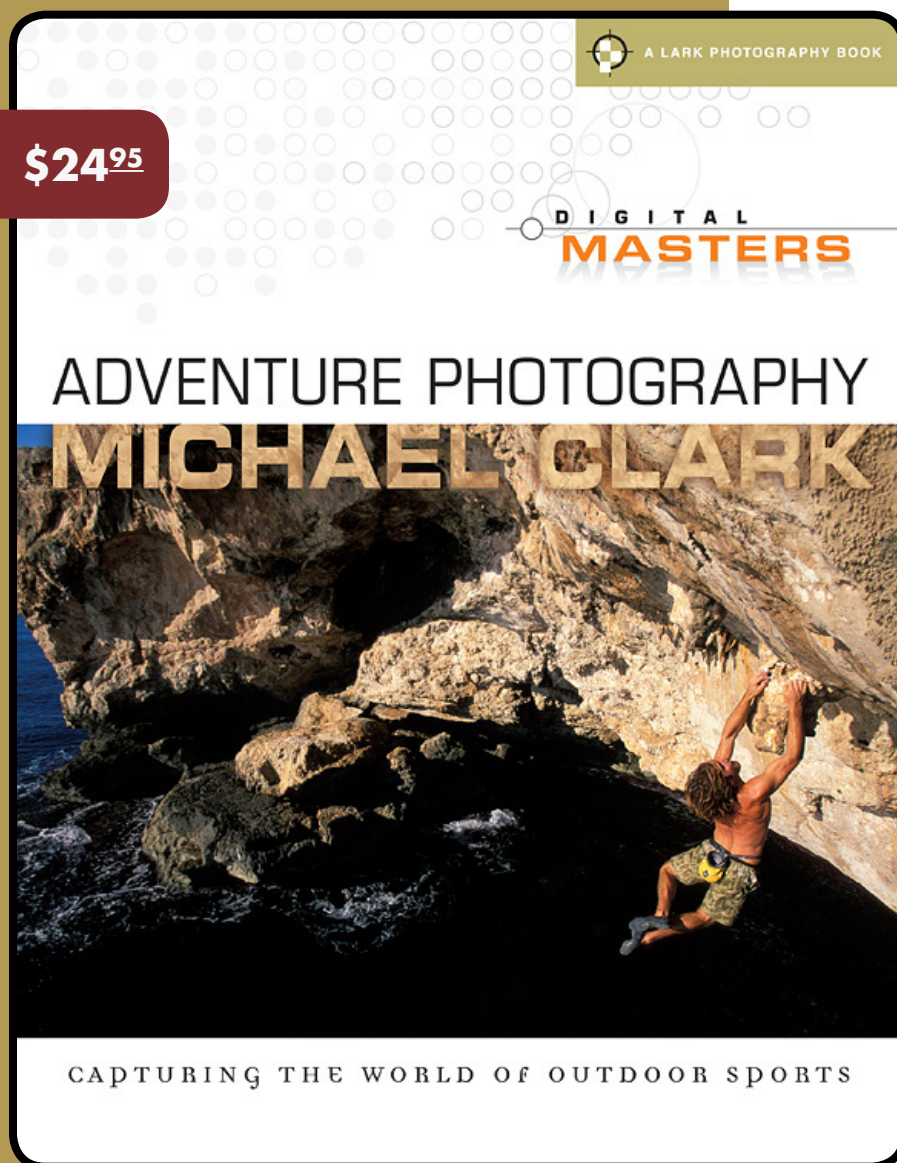
One of the biggest struggles for me as a still photographer when I shoot motion is that I am not fully in control of every aspect of the shoot or the final product. I simply do not have time to do everything and wouldn't want to even if I could. On the actual shoot it takes a team of people to deal with all of the logistics. One person to handle sound, another to operate the camera, another to pull focus, another to act as a grip and set up for the next shot and another to act as the director making sure everything is happening as it should – and that is the minimal crew for a decent sized production. It takes a group effort to make it all happen. Shooting motion is about collaboration and finding those people that can help execute your ideas and execute them well, not only while shooting the project but also in postproduction.

As the old adage goes, there is the movie you set out to create and the one you end up with. The closer those two align the better, and just like still photography it isn't always easy to create what you hold in your mind's eye, but at least as a still photographer I have years of experience with many of the key aspects of telling a visual story.



**DIGITAL MASTERS:**  
**ADVENTURE PHOTOGRAPHY**  
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This book details the ins and outs of creating top-notch adventure sports images. As far as I can tell there are no other books out there that even come close to covering as much ground as this book does. In fact there are few if any books

that specifically talk about photographing adventure sports at all. I have basically downloaded everything I have learned about shooting adventure sports over the last 14 years as a full-time pro into this book. Some of the topics covered in the book include: equipment, outdoor gear, adventure photography fundamentals, artificial lighting, how I approach and shoot each of the main adventure sports, portraiture and lifestyle photography as well as what it takes to be a pro. The book also includes in-depth interviews with photographer Corey Rich and *National Geographic Adventure* photo editor Sabine Meyer - and a whole lot more.

**DESCRIPTION FROM LARK BOOKS:**

As one of the world's most respected adventure photographers, Clark offers sage advice—gained from years of hard-earned experience—on equipment, techniques, and the specific skills required to get in on the action. Learn to capture fast-moving subjects and deal with harsh conditions and horrible weather—even when you're hanging from ropes and riggings in a squall. Of special interest is the Portraiture and Lifestyle chapter, which covers increasingly in-demand techniques.

*Digital Masters: Adventure Photography* is part of a series of photography books written by highly acclaimed photographers who are leaders in their diverse specialties, the Digital Masters series provides the expertise necessary for creating successful, well-executed images. These unique books take you on the road, in the studio, and on the job with some of today's most talented image-makers who provide insight into how they think, work, and shoot. Novice and seasoned photographers alike will find inspiration for cultivating creativity and essential information.

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A jet ski driver along with part of the TV crew have an exciting moment punching through the top of a big wave while shooting the 2010 Billabong Pipeline Masters surfing competition on the north shore of Oahu, Hawaii.  
Nikon D300s, ISO 400, Nikkor AF-S 200-400mm f/4D VR II, Sandisk Extreme IV 8 GB CF Card