



SELLING FINE ART PHOTOGRAPHY

an educational guide from:



PHOTOSHELTER



WHITE WALL




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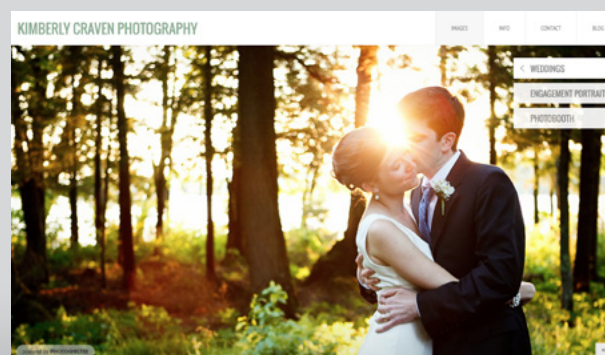
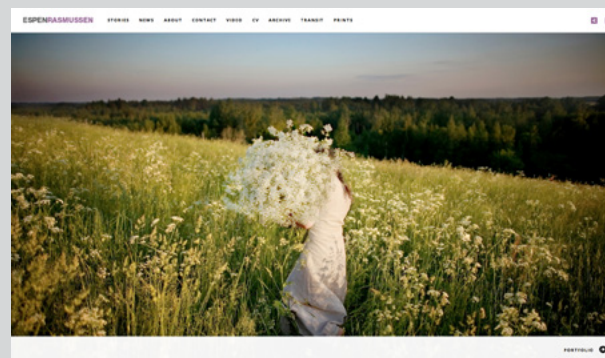
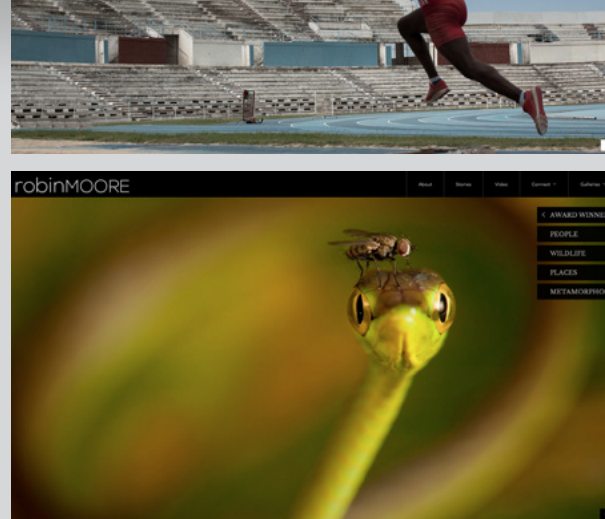
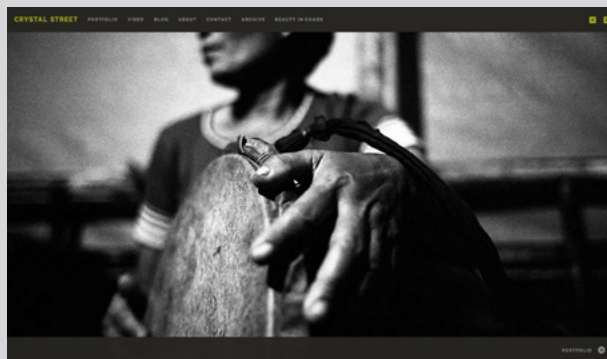
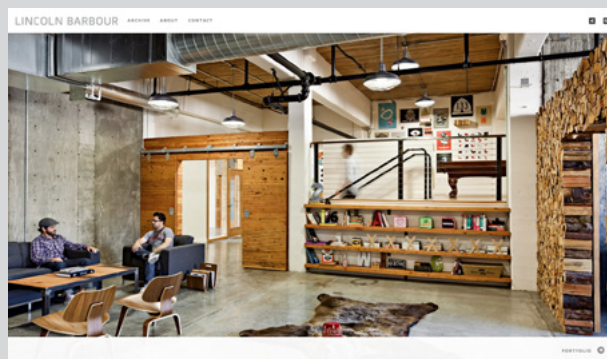
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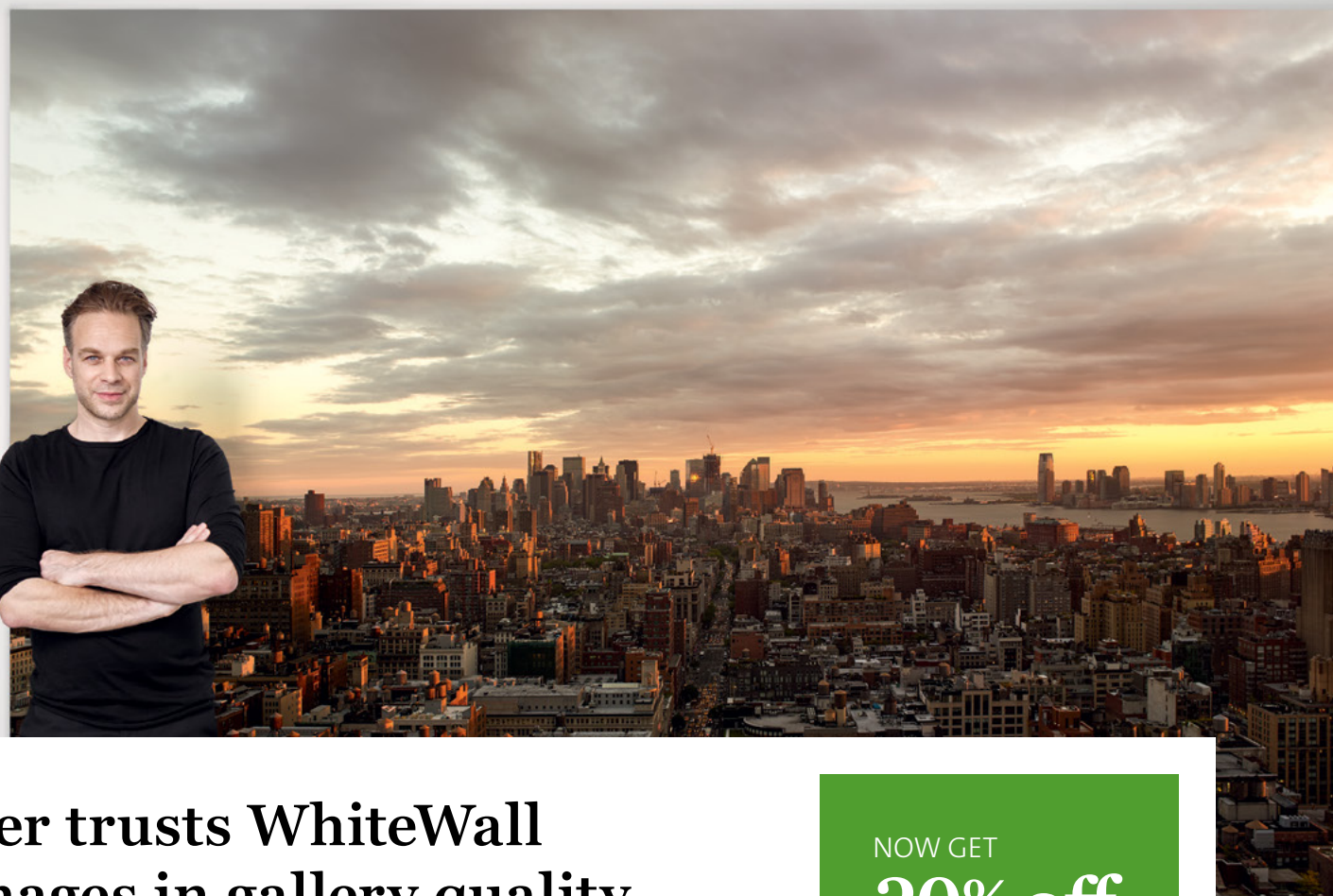


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Original Photo on Fuji Crystal DP II under 1/16" Acrylic Glass. From the series New York Love Story, an exhibition by photographer & WhiteWall ambassador Karsten Staiger.
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PART I

What's Inside

So you've got a wonderful collection of art photography. (You know this because your friends and family tell you so.) "You should really sell your work," they say. Generally, the people who say this don't have the faintest idea what goes into selling fine art photography.

When we initially set out to research and compile this guide, we thought it would be another trusty "how to" companion by PhotoShelter to add to our library, perhaps the most comprehensive guide to selling photography as fine art. Yet we soon found that unlike many other photography businesses, finding the "recipe" to selling fine art proved elusive. There is no recipe, but there are common threads. For example, in every instance of success, we find photographers who have made smart decisions about the ways to build an audience and market their work.

This guide, in partnership with online photo lab [WhiteWall](#), is nonetheless very educational reading for photographers looking to get started or tune-up their fine art sales. On the following pages you'll find inspiring profiles that are filled with unique approaches to displaying your photography for museum and gallery viewing, and building and sustaining a fine art photography business. We explore how photographers found their way into the fine art world and determined their work could sell, how they honed their marketing methods, their pricing and printing considerations, and more. We also spoke to a number of experts in selling fine art online and offline, who shared their tips for breaking through. The takeaways may inspire you to try out new methods for selling your own work.

PART I

6 Tips to Get Non-Profit Galleries to Feature Your Work

By Hamidah Glasgow
Executive Director,
The Center for Fine Art Photography



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In the world of fine art photography, one of the most powerful resources for getting your work seen is a nonprofit organization like the [Center for Fine Art Photography](http://c4fap.org). As with most non-profits, we provide exhibition opportunities for beginning, emerging and established artists. These opportunities provide avenues for making vital industry connections.

As we all know, this industry is based on networks and connections. Working with others to support and promote fine art photographers is fundamental to creating success for the artists whose work we have the honor to exhibit. While commercial galleries have to take into consideration the saleability of your work, the non-profit has a different business model and therefore, can show work that is not commercially successful, is controversial, or is exploratory in nature.

The Center has been noted by many as a launch pad for artists. In my tenure at the Center, I have seen many artists juried into an exhibition and shortly after, their career takes off from the exposure and connections that were made during the exhibition. It has also been my experience that some artists continue to submit to our juried exhibitions, and through that, their trajectory as artists is evident. Many artists have been invited for solo exhibitions at the Center for Fine Art Photography based on the relationships that are formed.

With that in mind, here are 6 tips for developing a successful relationship with non-profit galleries and organizations:

1. MAKE GREAT WORK. There are so many people out there working and creating work, but none of them have your experience, vision, and/or voice.

Make work that matters to you, that pushes you and the viewer to see the world in a new way. Make work that is in conversation with history, society, or with yourself. The Art in fine art Photography is the most important piece of it all. Be bold and true to yourself.

2. SUBMIT TO CALLS FOR ENTRY. People enter juried exhibitions and competitions for many reasons. Some enter to try out a new body of work or to begin the process of getting their work “out there.” Entering a juried exhibition can also be a great way to get your work in front of a specific industry influencer. May that be a curator, publisher, gallerist, or famous artist. Most importantly however, you should be strategic in your approach. Make sure that the organization is well vetted and that you retain the rights to your images (always read the Terms and Conditions) and that the exposure and opportunities associated with the exhibition are significant. Opportunities can include things like gallery and online exhibitions, promotion through social media, and receptions or other networking events.

3. ATTEND NETWORKING EVENTS. As mentioned before, creating connections with artists and “influencers” is one of the most important pieces of getting the work seen. Receptions, talks, workshops, gallery openings, and other events like these allow artists to professionals in the field and other creatives to make connections, form friendships and learn about the industry. But remember, when attending these events, don’t try to push your own agenda and be a salesperson—

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folks often do not appreciate this approach. Instead, be genuine, interested, and ask good questions that can help you learn more about the person or organization he or she is affiliated with.

4. **INVESTIGATE SOLO EXHIBITION OPPORTUNITIES.** Solo exhibitions are offered to artists whose body of work is substantial and compelling. Usually this comes through a relationship with the artist or the artists work. Most non-profit galleries provide the opportunity to submit exhibition proposals. Before submitting, it's best to consult the website for each organization's particular requests, rules, and timelines. If there is no information regarding proposal submissions, contact the gallery and ask what their policy is regarding submissions. Another effective way to garner opportunities for solo exhibitions is through portfolio reviews.
5. **PARTICIPATE IN PORTFOLIO REVIEWS.** Portfolio reviews come in all sizes shapes and price ranges. If you're looking to participate in one, a great place to start is by contacting your local organization or finding out if there are reviews in your area. Attending portfolio reviews is a skill set of its own, so start slow, pace yourself, and hone your skills so you can effectively and comfortably talk about your work and your strengths as a photographer. Once you are ready for the larger reviews (for example, at [Photolucida](#), [PhotoNola](#), or [FotoFest](#)), you will thank yourself for the practice and procedural knowledge. You want people to see you at your best and to make the most of the time that you are investing in yourself and your career at the larger reviews.
6. **NETWORK, NETWORK, NETWORK.** This part speaks for itself. The key is to be yourself. Treat people like you want to be treated. Remember, it is all about relationships. Give more than you take. Be real, helpful, make great work, and know how to speak about it.

PROFILE

Tips for Printing Museum Quality Pieces

Interview with Jan-Ole Schmidt,
Product Manager, WhiteWall



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We interviewed Jan-Ole Schmidt, the product manager at [WhiteWall](https://www.WhiteWall.com) to get his do's and don'ts for printing museum quality pieces.

What should a fine art photographer keep in mind when it comes to printing his/her work for a gallery show?

The first thing photographers should consider is what they would like to convey with their pictures, and what kind of printing, mounting and framing will underscore that message. At WhiteWall, there are over 1,000 product variations to choose from. Acrylic glass really makes colors pop and provides amazing depth. That means a [Photo Print Under Acrylic Glass](#) is really great for colorful underwater shots, nighttime photography, or even landscapes. The metallic gleam of the [Direct Print on Brushed Aluminum](#), on the other hand, is particularly powerful for mechanical or industrial images.

Before photographers decide on what kind of print they want, they have to have a vague idea of how big they want it to be. As far as size and format go, they need to consider how pieces will be distributed throughout the exhibition space and also how close their work will be to other pictures. Often, a frame is a great idea, because it directs viewers' attention to the image itself. An opulent frame that emphasizes the mood of the photograph can do wonders for larger works, giving them a fascinating presence. Smaller pictures [framed and mounted with mat board](#) appear very sophisticated.

Additionally, before placing an order, it is definitely important to view the pictures on a calibrated monitor so that there are no surprises with the end results. We

offer [ICC profiles](#) for the file previews. These can be downloaded for free on [WhiteWall.com](https://www.WhiteWall.com). The goal is to produce a color accurate print of the digital files. This is something fine art photographers can really appreciate!

What is the most popular photo finishing used by your fine art clients and why?

Our bestseller is our premium product: the [Photo Print Under Acrylic](#). It makes all kinds of photographs look particularly sophisticated. This mounting option enhances the luminosity of the colors, even with black and white photographs. The image itself is the decisive factor in selecting the printing options. For black & white photographs, the [LightJet Print on Ilford B/W](#) is a popular choice, because it produces enormous contrasts. [The Hahnemühle Fine Art Prints](#) are a great tip for portraits, because the paper's texture really brings out the artistic nature of the photographs.

You recently printed, mounted, and framed some amazing lunar images taken by NASA—how did you help them decide which finishing to use to print the images taken by LROC (lunar reconnaissance orbiter camera)? What were some of the big challenges?

NASA's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter Camera takes impressively high-resolution pictures of the moon that

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are fascinating to scientists and photographers alike. Since the [photos are incredibly detailed](#), the first order of business was to make the moon's textures all visible and also to bring out the various gray values of the black & white images. To determine which photo paper was best for the job, various proofs were created. It quickly became clear that the [LighJet Print on Ilford B/W Paper](#) was perfect for these moon photos. By mounting them under acrylic glass, the depths and details are also emphasized. Our team helped with the final fine-tuning of the image files and offered tips for the production, in order to get the most out of these works.

What does conservation grade mean? Why does it matter?

When it comes to art, conservation grade means that the photographs are protected from external influences so that they last as long as possible. Nobody wants a picture that fades after a short time or blisters or breaks with temperature changes. We place a lot of value on making sure our customers can enjoy their photos for a long time. We've adapted our production processes for this. For example, we use silicone that never completely hardens to mount our [Photo Print Under Acrylic Glass](#). This means it can contract or expand according to changes in the temperature, making it a lot more stable than mounting photos using conventional adhesives. The acrylic glass also provides additional natural UV protection.

What are the latest frame trends for gallery shows in the U.S and in Europe?

Currently, the trend is classic mounting under acrylic glass combined with a modern frame. [Wood Floater Frames](#) and the [aluminum ArtBox](#) are very popular. For Documentary Photography and Street Photography, the [Direct Print on Aluminum](#) is a popular choice. The matte surface gives the images real immediacy. This kind of mounting is also suitable for exhibitions with prominent spotlights, because it cuts glare.



What sets WhiteWall apart?

[WhiteWall](#) is an international, online photo lab from Germany trusted by photo pros and hobbyists. We became known as the exclusive producer of works for the LUMAS photo art galleries. Our customers get the same gallery-quality results for their own homes and can order their pictures in exact custom sizes. Every product is finished by hand, quality controlled, packaged, and shipped worldwide within 10 business days.

PROFILE

Images from the Moon

An Interview with Mark Robinson
by Benjamin Arntz



ASU professor Mark Robinson Photo by Charlie Leight/ASU Now

While millions dream of traveling to the Moon, very few have had an opportunity to do it. For now, the next best thing is NASA's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter Camera and the incredibly high-resolution images it transmits back to Earth. The images are fascinating for fans of exploration and photography enthusiasts alike. Select images from the LROC produced by online photo lab [WhiteWall](#) are featured in an exhibition at the [National Air & Space Museum](#).

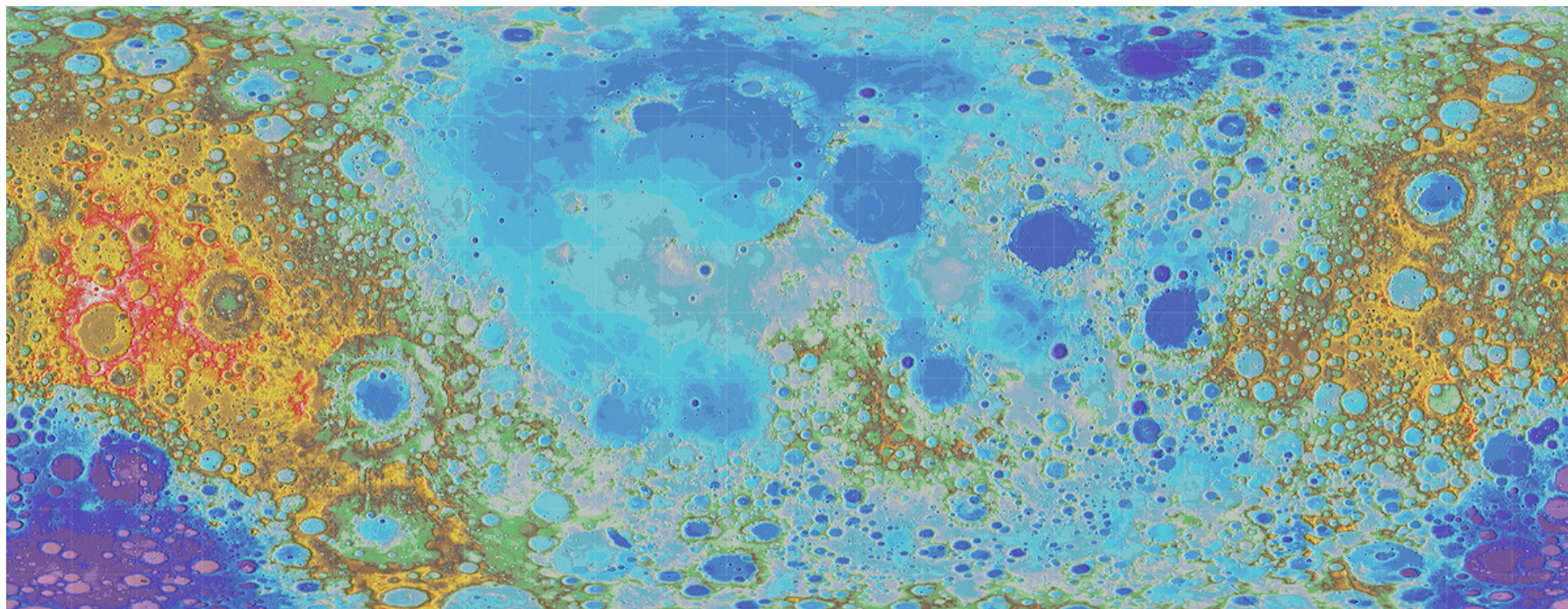
One of the organizers of the exhibition, Mark Robinson is a professor at Arizona State University's School of Earth and Space Exploration as well as the Principal Investigator for the imaging system on the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter. We had a chance to ask him a few questions about the project, how the images were created, and the upcoming exhibition. It's fascinating!

How did you first get into studying the geology of the Moon and other planets?

Following the Apollo program in newspapers and magazines and watching astronauts walk on the Moon were a great influence on me, even though I was just elementary school age. I am still in awe that humans actually walked on the Moon, not once but six times. Later, after college I worked for mining companies as an exploration geologist searching for precious metals. By a series of fortunate coincidences, I ended up working with space images of the Earth, and then made it full circle back to the Moon!

Do you find there are a lot of extra challenges in studying places you can't go visit?

Exploring the Earth is challenging in its own right. For example, as a field geologist you may spend a whole month in a field area collecting samples and mapping the geology. The next step is usually heading back to the lab for detailed analyses and correlating mapped geology with the sample results. Hypotheses are formed, then you go back to same field area and see what ideas stand up to probing and those that fall by the wayside. Most of the time in planetary geology, we cannot take the extra step of collecting samples or even simply turning over rocks or digging holes to see what lies beneath. From remote sensing alone, usually you can never have the satisfaction of knowing for sure that you solved a problem. But what you can do is determine the next steps: what questions to ask, where to go, and what measurements to make. We are doing just that with LROC—we now know the best places to go on the Moon to test many key science questions and locate resources.



© NASA/GSFC/Arizona State University

You are now the Principal Investigator for the imaging system on NASA's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter. What does that entail?

My main responsibility is making certain we collect the best dataset that enables future exploration and allows new exciting science results. Much of my time is spent working with the talented LROC crew at ASU that undertakes all the day-to-day activities required to collect 450 Gbits of image data every day! These LROC tasks include target selection, monitoring engineering data from the spacecraft, unpacking instrument telemetry and creating the image files from which we put together mosaics and topographic maps, and getting the word out—the Moon is a fantastic destination for exploration!

How does the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter Camera record and produce the incredible images we see? What kind of camera is it? Is it operated remotely or automated?

LROC is actually three cameras: a single Wide Angle Camera (WAC) and two Narrow Angle Cameras (NAC). The WAC was designed to image the whole Moon at moderate resolution in seven colors (ultraviolet and visible wavelengths) and provide stereo overlap for making a global topographic map. The Narrow Angle Cameras were designed to give human scale detail to the surface for planning scientifically engaging and safe landing areas. All three cameras rely on the spacecraft motion to build up images line-by-line. The NACs each only have 5064 pixels, all in a single row. This row of pixels is read out repeatedly as the spacecraft flies above the surface. Since the spacecraft motion is more than 1600 meters per second, it was a real engineering challenge to design the system to read out a row in 0.37 milliseconds more than 52,000 times per image!



Daily command loads are built by the ASU LROC team and sent to the spacecraft by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC) in Greenbelt, Maryland. The spacecraft sends back the images through a dedicated Ka-band antenna in White Sands, New Mexico, which are then routed to ASU through GSFC.

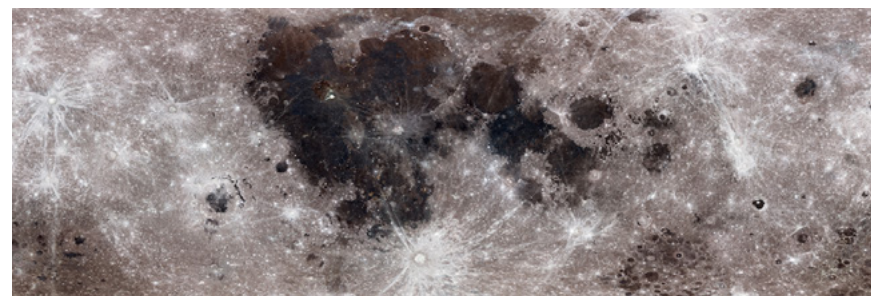
The Air and Space Museum exhibition includes a flight spare NAC and WAC (real operating backup copies of those cameras now in orbit about the Moon) so visitors can see what the cameras look like. These amazing cameras were designed and built by a small team at Malin Space Science Systems in San Diego, California.

Since the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter Camera has been taking pictures for years, how did you narrow down the selection when you were getting ready to have some printed?

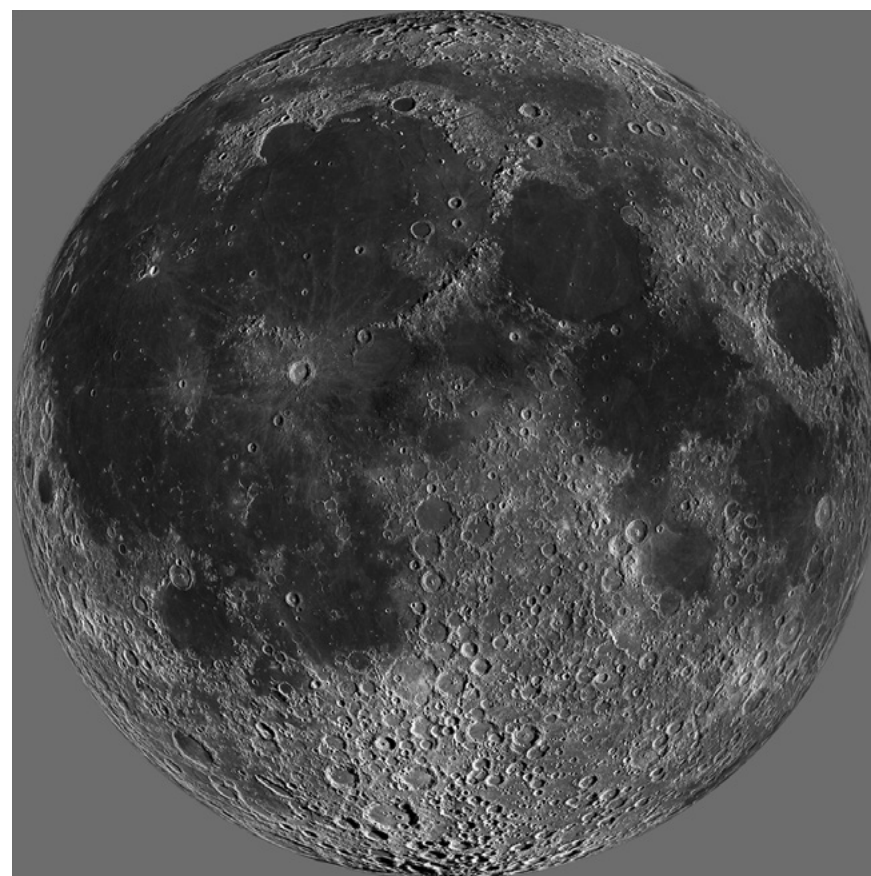
Three of us worked on the selection: myself, Emerson Speyerer, and Tom Watters. Emerson is a LROC researcher who has a keen interest in conventional photography, and Tom is a research scientist who works at the National Air and Space Museum. Both Emerson and Tom have spent a lot of time over the past six years working with the LROC image collection in terms of both science and engineering efforts. We picked a collection of images that conveys the beauty and grandeur of the lunar landscape, highlights ongoing science discoveries and gives a sense of the history of lunar exploration.

The complete collection of images taken by the LROC is available online. Why go through all the trouble of organizing an exhibition? Had you done something like that in the past?

We put LROC images and science out in many venues ranging from professional science meetings, elementary schools, public libraries, to art galleries. The idea is to reach as diverse an audience as possible. To many people the Moon is simply a beautiful silvery disc visible in the night sky, but they have no idea what the lunar landscape is really like. The Air and Space Museum receives nearly ten million visitors a year from all over the world, it is my hope this small set of LROC images will make the Moon a real place for many. A place of complex geology, a place that is still changing, a place of opportunity—a whole world that is awaiting our return. The full image collection including hundreds of captioned images is available on the [LROC webpage](#); a sampling is available on an interactive kiosk in the gallery.



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© Mark Robinson /@ National Air & Space Museum

How did you decide what kind of prints to have made?

The LROC images are quite large and contain incredible detail—a single NAC image contains over 256 megapixels with 12-bit grayscale resolution (0 – 4095 DN). To convey all the information contained within a NAC image (or mosaic) requires not only a sharp printing process with a large dynamic range, but one that can also make large prints. There are not many processes that meet all three criteria, so the decision was relatively easy.

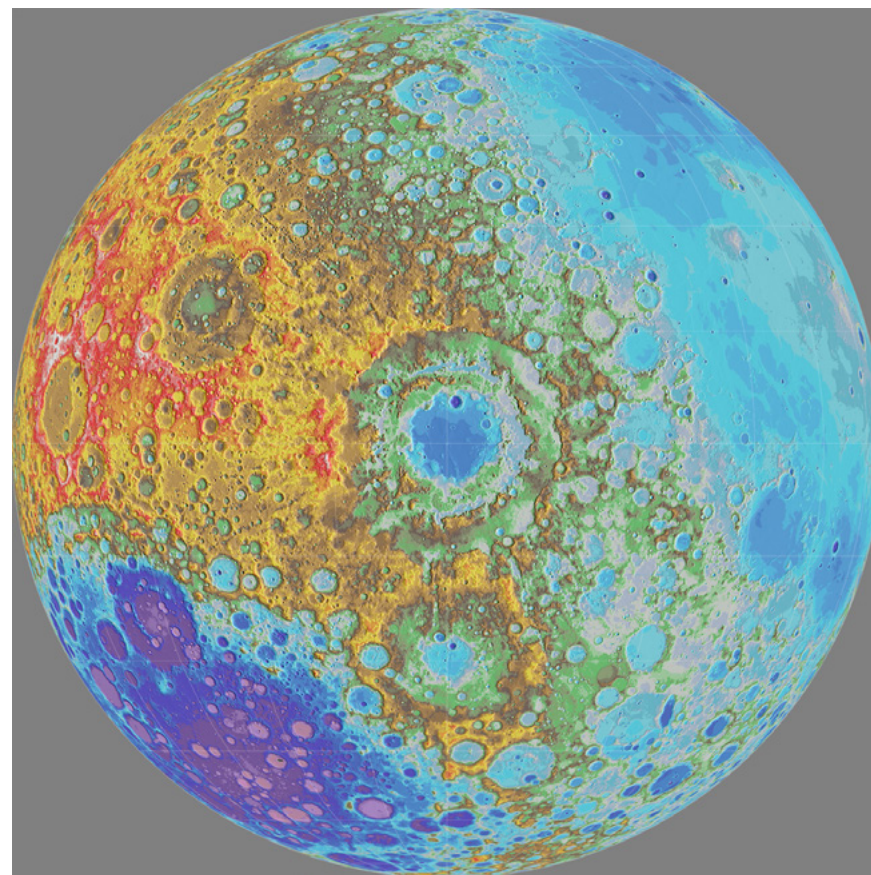
The prints are all original photo prints under acrylic glass, which offers incredible sharpness, brilliant color and can be produced in formats of up to 106.3 inch.

What would you like the people at home to glean from these images?

It is my hope that many visitors will walk away feeling that the Moon is a place of beauty and grandeur as well as scientific wonder. That the Moon is a whole world in its own right, waiting for our return, and it is only three days away! Let's go!

Last question: Why did you choose WhiteWall to produce the photographs?

Outstanding sharpness and color accuracy!



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PROFILE

Jimmy Williams: Building a Reputation by Starting Local



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North Carolina-based Jimmy Williams is a photographer of over 35 years and owner of JW Productions. Jimmy works closely with commercial clients in the hospitality, healthcare and travel industries, but in the past decade has expanded his collections to include fine art photography. Among a long list of accolades, Jimmy has been honored by the International Photography Awards and the International Spider Awards for his fine art work.

Looking back, Jimmy recalls rediscovering his love for fine art photography. “For almost 30 years, my finest photographs were hidden in the studio, buried in folders, forgotten by a busy schedule,” Jimmy said. “But about 10 years ago, I opened the file cabinet and dusted off the film. I liked what I saw and I decided it was time to invest some time in me and my personal fine art photography explorations.”

Jimmy’s exploration into fine art photography began slowly, as he reached out to expand his network. Partnering with a gallery in his hometown, Jimmy continued to strengthen his relationships within the local art community. Building a reputation and producing well-received fine art pieces, today Jimmy’s work is featured and available to buy in online and offline through galleries in Texas and New Mexico, as well as through his own fine art website: www.JimmyWilliamsFineArt.com.

Jimmy’s acclaimed fine art photographs include his “Music Makers” series, an ongoing collection which pays tribute to Southern musical traditions, as well as “Tuscany,” a series which showcases the region’s breath-

taking landscapes. Stylistically, Jimmy strives to capture a timeless quality in each of his fine art photographs. And when done right, “this timelessness often manifests itself through the subject matter and the overall emotional story that unfolds in the photograph.”

When showcasing his work in galleries and exhibitions, Jimmy’s personal preference is to print his photographs on archival museum-quality watercolor paper. “For the majority of our fine art prints we use Hahnemuhle Museum Etching paper. The paper has a good weight and substantial feel to it.” And although his team used to outsource all mounting and framing, they now do everything in-house because it became more cost effective and efficient. Jimmy’s limited edition prints are also produced in-house in his studio so he can oversee every step.

Welcoming sales, Jimmy said that determining the quantity and price of these limited collection prints took a great deal of time and research on his end because there is no clear standard to mirror. Ultimately his decision was based on the combination of three factors: his art, its worth in today’s marketplace, and its perceived future value.

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Through his personal online gallery, Jimmy's fine art collections are released in a series of 25 limited edition prints ranging in price from \$600 - \$1500 and in size from 16"x20" to 30"x40", with framing options available.

Jimmy's fine art work is primarily sold through gallery representatives, traveling exhibits, and as a result of interest generated by the press and the larger art community. For online sales alone, Jimmy says sales are often low. "Right now, online selling is not our strongest channel for sales but it is invaluable as a research tool for our customers. Our buyers will often peruse our online gallery and then contact us to talk about the work and complete sales."

Jimmy often promotes his work through gallery mailers, show exhibit mailers, and general art interest mailers. And with JW Production's own growing list of contacts, Jimmy and his team also send emails to a very targeted list of potential buyers. "But hands down, the best marketing tool has proven to be third party – the press," Jimmy says. "I've been very fortunate to have been featured in a number of articles and cover stories that have by far generated the most interest."

Represented by two galleries in addition to his own, Jimmy enjoys these partnerships because just like photography, running a gallery is a labor of love. "My advice for photographers is that when looking for a gallery to work with, make sure that the owner and curator is invested in your work for the long run, and they have a genuine interest in what you're doing. They should also demonstrate a financial investment in marketing and advertising your work."

Today, Jimmy believes that the challenges of selling and showcasing fine art photography is due to the country's economic downturn and has shaken the fine art market as a whole. "But you overcome these challenges by standing firm by the worth of your limited edition prints and try to find creative ways to bring in supplemental income via alternative channels like publishing or creative image licensing," Jimmy said.

When asked to define fine art photography—a definition often left up to personal interpretation—Jimmy believes that a piece of fine art photography must have a synergy composed of unique artistic vision, technical skill and subject matter. "When these three criteria come together, an emotional connection and message is clearly conveyed to an audience and that audience responds in kind. Fine art is a two-way conversation, and I believe my photos do just that."

TAKEAWAYS:

- › To get your work noticed, start local. Connect with galleries and curators in your own community.
- › Do your research before you price your pieces and compare your work to artists of a similar caliber.
- › Don't be discouraged if your online sales are down. Your website is a key marketing tool that when done right, can attract attention from offline galleries.
- › When looking for a gallery to work with, make sure the owner is invested in your work and will provide financial backing for marketing and advertising.
- › Diligently collect contacts and send thoughtful emails to potential buyers in your own network. Word of a mouth will always be your most powerful marketing tool.



credit: Jimmy Williams

PROFILE

Greg Marinovich: Sharing the Stories Behind Your Images



GregMarinovich.PhotoShelter.com

twitter.com/GregMarinovich

storytaxi.com

For over 25 years, Greg Marinovich has traveled the world as both a photojournalist on assignment and freelance photographer capturing events that, when brought to life in print, shock us in their reality. Some of his most famous photographs are those shot during South Africa's transition to democracy in the early '90s. Greg later co-authored a book with Joao Silva, *The Bang Bang Club*, detailing his experiences photographing and living in the terror of that time. He recently published *Murder at Small Koppie* about the 2012 massacre of striking mineworkers by South African police.

Greg has received the kind of recognition that many photographers work for their whole lives. Greg is very familiar with doing photo assignments for the world's top publications, but learned early in life that what's most important, in his words, is to simply "shoot what you care about."

But when talking about his photography crossing into fine art, he always returns to the same notion: passion. "If you can continue to shoot the work that is close to your heart, and if you can dovetail that to a paying client, then that's brilliant," he says.

The question is, what does Greg Marinovich like? Being a former conflict photographer, he would appear to be drawn to a certain type of shot. None of his work was, or is, shot as fine art photography—he is a documentarian who interprets and captures moments in life through a camera. Some of the work has value as news, some

record history being made, while other work is more idiosyncratic—see his *White Chairs* set.

Greg's understanding of fine art photography goes deeper than what subject or setting is actually caught on film. First, it's whether "the value of the work stands out over time" and second, "knowing what it's like to get the print just right. Seeking, visualizing and seeing it through until you print it."

Regardless, he remains committed to the notion of fine art photography as "something developed in the darkroom." Then it comes as no surprise that Greg continues to make prints from his negatives taken in the time before digitization, and still shoots film for his much personal work. It's his black and white prints from across Africa and the Middle East that he sells to national museums and private collectors.

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Given the historic nature of his images, Greg often works with galleries that specialize in vintage prints, and museums that want visuals of some of the world's most memorable and important events. He finds that desirable fine art has a "collectability" element, which explains why he's asked again and again to reprint old negatives. He'll still take the occasional editorial assignment, but editors almost always want color photos and he needs to continue taking black and white for his "own personal well-being."

Recently, he produced a limited edition of a beautifully boxed set of color images from the 1990s. The edition is limited to just five, containing 41 images, many of them previously unseen, with narrative texts accompanying each photograph. This was glimpse into his massive archive was done in collaboration with Strauss & Co, an esteemed fine art auctioneering company. This fits right in with his belief that what is most important are the stories and lives his images convey. Carefully working with scanned color images is as exacting - if not more so - than printing in a traditional darkroom, and is very much part of the same ethos of being an immaculate craftsman.

To support fine art sales, Greg says that's it's all about having a presence in the right environment. While he believes that generally the "right environment" is galleries, the fine art auctioneers have proved even better, with the benefit having someone else present you and your work to clients who trust them. He also finds that it's "easier to speak well of someone else's work rather than speaking about your own. You need to convince—it's a selling job." Thus Greg's best piece of advice is to find someone who has great contacts, because that's what will help get you connected with the right people. The hardest part about working with galleries, in Greg's opinion, is finding gallerists who are "totally on it," and committed to you and the task at hand.

At the end of the day, he advises photographers to find gallerists that you really like, because when times get tough or there's a disagreement, it's important that you actually like and respect that person in order to work well together. And while Greg recognizes that there are many other marketing techniques out there besides working with galleries, he reckons a good gallerist is the best way to go.

Since moving to Boston in 2013 on the back of a Nieman fellowship, he has slowly begun to concentrate on American work. One such body of work is his black and white essay of Donald Trump supporters in New England are shot on a dizzying array of film cameras (to keep it fresh). Greg also runs workshops to spread his passion for photographic storytelling and film.

Despite being an award-winning photographer, Greg still pays attention to marketing his work. He writes a powerful [blog](#) that's all at once opinionated, shocking and inspirational. When you post a photo series of sickly, malnourished children in Somalia, people want to know the story—not the circulated story that they've seen on the news, but your story on what happened—something that Greg has been able to accomplish. By relating your experiences, people feel drawn to your work. And that in itself is enough to draw visitors.

TAKEAWAYS:

- » A blog with good content attracts an audience—it helps drive traffic to your website where you can promote your work.
- » Use your blog as a chance to tell the background story of your photographs.
- » If you have a hard time speaking about and selling your own work, then try working with a gallerist.
- » Be sure to form a good personal relationship with your gallerist so you're able to get through the good times and the bad.



credit: Greg Marinovich

PROFILE

Brooke Shaden: Why Passion is the Secret to 850K Facebook Followers



🏠 brookeshaden.com/gallery
🐦 twitter.com/brookeshaden
📌 facebook.com/brookeshadenphotography

At only 28 years old, Brooke Shaden is a fine art photographer with a distinct approach to her self-portrait photography. When asked about her unique style, which is heavy with symbolism, Brooke says, “My style explores the beauty found in all darkness. It is whimsical and surreal and often centers around fairy tales. I work in nature and use feminine forms in my work. Most of all, I create stories and aim to create a world in my images that is unique and makes us think.”

Brooke began her career in fine art photography back in December 2008 after graduating from Temple University in Pennsylvania. “At that time, I found myself disenchanted with the filmmaking process,” Brooke said. “It took so long to create a single film that I already had 100 more ideas. So I picked up my still camera when I graduated college and haven't looked back!”

Brooke began selling photography a few years later in February 2010. She found success starting locally where she lived in Los Angeles. “Sales really began to pick up after I did my due diligence to contact all types of galleries in my area at the time,” she says. “I built up my CV that first year and tried to get as many shows as I could, which finally lead to a few different galleries taking a chance on representing me.”

When asked what her biggest challenge was when starting out as a fine art photographer, she said it was her lack of knowledge. “I would go into meetings and not understand the questions being asked—basic things like how my prints are created or editioned or sized. It's important to have a good hold on this part of the busi-

ness before diving in because the knowledge can work to your advantage.”

Today, Brooke has a number of reputable sponsors who help spread awareness about her work including Adobe, White House Custom Colour and Think Tank Photo. To establish these relationships, Brooke said that many of the connections formed through her involvement speaking at smaller events where they had a presence. “I spoke from the heart about my work and these companies liked what I had to say,” she says.

With regards to getting sponsors on board, Brooke adds, “Sometimes I pitch companies cold asking if they would like to be one of my sponsors. I always keep in mind that the worst thing anyone can say is no.” She believes any sponsor she works with reflects directly on her business, so she makes sure not to take on a relationship unless she feels strongly about the people behind the product.

To increase awareness about her fine art photography today, Brooke takes to social media—specifically Facebook—to connect with fans and share her work

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and upcoming events. To date, she has almost 850,000 followers on her Facebook page, [Brooke Shaden Photography](#).

When asked how she built such a large Facebook following, Brooke says it all comes down to passion. “I have a philosophy that if I put what I do out there with passion, someone else will feel that passion, too,” she says. “Even on Facebook, you need to be sincere and put your best foot forward. Understand your unique voice, because everyone has one, and present it. Whether you have one follower or one million, the best thing to do is to train yourself to be grateful for each individual supporter and never let your ego interfere.”

So what’s next for Brooke? For one, she’s hoping to start a photography school in Kolkata, India for survivors of human trafficking, and is using the crowdfunding platform Indiegogo to fundraise money and support. Check out her campaign [here](#). She’s also working more with her new blog, [Promoting Passion](#) to create weekly videos.

What’s Brooke’s biggest advice to fine art photographers hoping to reach more potential clients and increase their sales? “Understand what makes you unique, what story you have to tell, and then refine your skills to try and communicate that message in the clearest way possible. The moment you understand who you are, others will start to follow and support you. Find your confidence and present it to others humbly. Everyone wants to work with good people.”



credit: Brooke Shaden

PROFILE

James Bourret: Marketing Tactics To Get Noticed



🏠 JamesBourret.PhotoShelter.com
📘 facebook.com/Mountain.Image.Gallery

To many, [James Bourret](#) is the go-to photographer for shots of Sun Valley, Idaho's exquisite landscape. James developed a passion for photography early on in life: he became deeply involved in photography in high school, and stayed with it throughout college, but later found it difficult to continue working without access to a darkroom. Flash forward to the digital era, and James was able to pick up his passion once again with computers. In December 2010, James opened his own gallery in Sun Valley's neighboring town of Ketchum, Idaho.

"I didn't have professional training, but I had the creative drive," he says. "As an architect, I had been involved in the visual arts throughout my career and I began exhibiting photography at local venues, with moderate success. My confidence was boosted further after a portfolio was published in [LENSWORK Magazine](#). Eventually I decided that I needed a venue to display my own work."

For those not familiar with Sun Valley, this popular ski and outdoor resort has been called home by many famous celebrities such as Tom Hanks and Arnold Schwarzenegger. Ketchum is the adjacent town and sees many of the tourists and second home owners who come to visit Sun Valley year round, making it great location for the gallery that showcases a wide array of James's Idaho and mountain landscape photos, as well as fine art portfolios.

Along with his well-received landscape work, James dedicates time to fine art photography. For James, fine art photography constitutes "work purely driven by my own desire to create something expressive."

One look at his Motion or Edge Condition series, and the creative element is undeniable. Due to market demand, James has sold more landscape photos than his personal fine art photos—though that hasn't stopped him from displaying personal projects such as 'Motion' in his gallery. "When someone steps into the gallery, it's usually pretty clear what they're interested in," he says of his gallery's visitors. "Only a few people pay any attention to the fine art photography. A small landscape print might sell for \$175 to a tourist, but the sale of a \$1000 or \$2000 print from the limited edition 'Motion' series is far less frequent." One recent development is the growing interest in James' series of large scale, immersive prints on canvas, printed at sizes up to 60 x 120", which have been placed in large homes locally and on the west coast. These have, in turn, led to private commissioned work, also at very large scale.

So being the boss of your own gallery is all fun and games, right? Not always. James will be the first to tell you that it takes a lot of energy and resilience to run a



gallery: “In addition to having to wear all the hats, it’s difficult psychologically. I don’t know if I’m going to have two weeks of no sales, or a huge day. A big day sets high expectations for the days to follow, and expectations are your constant enemy”. He adds that being responsible for the gallery has also tied him to one physical location, making it difficult to pursue other projects and go out and shoot as he would like to, especially during prime tourist seasons.

But there are some clear advantages: since opening his gallery, James has watched his sales increase from roughly \$300 in the first month to well over \$7,000 per month. And while about half his sales used to come from online purchases, almost all of today’s sales are from the gallery. Sales to hotels and resort developers has given a strong boost to sales, and increases visibility.

James’s initial marketing efforts had focused largely on the local market. He posts information about his gallery in local blogs and other online venues, and swaps photos for full color advertising in local design and lifestyle magazines. James also has photography displayed in several of the town’s restaurants and the visitor center, and most recently in the guest rooms of the famous Sun Valley Resort lodge, which he says has brought a good amount of people to the gallery. The recent upturn in the real estate market has brought in many new second-home owners to the area, who are often looking for several pieces at one time, and have made it possible to exhibit and sell much larger pieces.

Of course, getting people to the gallery is only half the battle. Often times, it’s obvious that they’re there just to look, not to buy. It is also true, especially for larger purchases, that people need to return several times before making a purchase. Potential buyers often need to measure a wall or consider color schemes before making the purchase of a print, so patience and helpfulness are key.

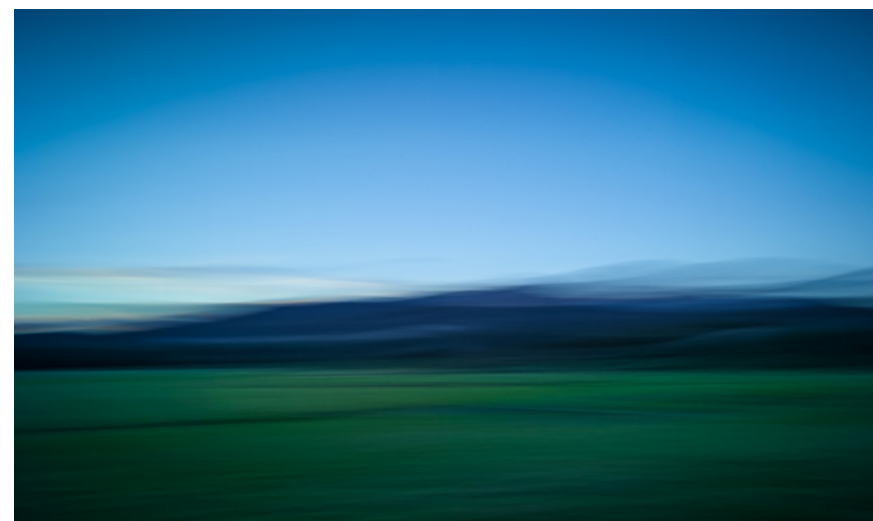
James also understands the importance of online marketing, and so he is constantly evolving his to-do list of tactics that could help bring his website more exposure. Interestingly, one of the places he’s seen the most web traffic from is StumbleUpon.com. Design and art bloggers have also generated significant web traffic for the site.

Another item on James’s marketing list is to stay active on Facebook and more recently, Instagram, posting images and links to his website’s most recent images. He almost always includes some comment about the shot or a question for his readers, so he often gets comments and “likes” on his posts. Following up on the comments is important, so readers feel they are in touch.

In his efforts to exhibit and sell his fine art work, James also works with art consultants, whose job it is to find work for private and corporate collectors, and for public spaces, high profile restaurants, office lobbies, etc. Another rewarding method James has found is to work with interior designers who act as art consultants to their clients.

TAKEAWAYS:

- › Tourist guidebooks and magazines, local news and even local restaurants and hotels can be very strong promotional platforms for your photos especially when starting out.
- › You can post links to your photos on StumbleUpon, which can help drive traffic to your website. Also stay active on your Facebook business page to keep people up-to-date with your work.
- › Keep a guest book at your gallery and ask people to include their email addresses. Then you have the option of sending them newsletters with information about new work and other gallery events.



credit: James Bourret

PROFILE

Peter Carroll: Striving for the Best Quality Print



🏠 PeterCarrollPhoto.com
🐦 twitter.com/pcarrollphoto
📘 facebook.com/PeterCarrollPhoto

In October 2010, Peter Carroll witnessed a unique event at one of Australia's most prized natural wonders: Uluru, a sacred rock formation in central Desert Country. It was one of those rare times of torrential rainfall, causing short-lived streams to run down the red rock and create dramatic color changes—all of which were captured on film by Peter. He sent one of the images to an Australian newspaper, and soon after the image was being showcased by major magazines and radio stations in both Australia and overseas.

Before the Uluru photo, Peter was introduced to photography in the late 1980s by the owner of International Park Tours, where he worked as an eco-adventure tour guide. It was a natural progression to want to capture the landscapes he spent so much time exploring. A camera was everpresent, but never seen as a way to earn a living. On returning to Australia in 2005, he felt his photography was at a level to take it on seriously, and began to sell prints and cards at local art outlets and markets. Then, there was Uluru: "It began my career at least a year earlier than I would have looked [to start it] otherwise. I'm not complaining—it was the biggest kick in the pants and necessary in some ways."

Everything since then has been a massive learning curve for Peter. He talks about not really knowing how to sell his work, and after the Uluru images were taken on by several major publications, he got what he calls a "hard message" from a photographer friend: "He told me what I was doing wrong—that I was basically giving [the images] away, and I wasn't doing photography any favors."

Since then, Peter has been on a journey to learn more about the business side of photography. "I never wanted to be in business—it never interested me. But this journey has blossomed into learning about business and I've found out that it's fascinating," he says. "I'm not kidding that PhotoShelter has probably been the most important factor in learning about what can be done for your photography. It's a lot easier to learn when there's an active crew behind the product and feeding you information." One of Peter's takeaways has been to utilize [Google Analytics](https://www.google.com/analytics/) to monitor his website's traffic and see where his visitors come from. When Uluru first came out, he saw massive spikes in his traffic, but as Peter says, "when the hoopla finishes, it drops right back down. I've really learned that it's important just to get traffic to the site, because as the traffic numbers drop, so do the requests for your images."

With that in mind, Peter has been looking at other sales avenues to sell not only more editions of the Uluru images, but his other landscape photography as well. He



sees a market for his work in hotels and resorts, which would want to exhibit the surrounding landscape as art in their guests' rooms. With the increased exposure, he hopes to drive more traffic to his site where potential customers could buy prints.

But before anything sells, Peter must be totally satisfied with the quality of the print. "It's important to produce the best quality work that you possibly can, so that you can stand 100% behind that work and people can know how much you've gone through to get the print to that point," he says. In fact, Peter came to realize that quality printing can make or break your fine art photography. "Beautiful paper," he says, "changed my whole idea of presentation. Part of fine art is making the best quality print from the file, and there is a lot of work that takes place."

"For me, the physical print is everything. It must be museum grade archival quality, and you must find a quality printer to print your vision without compromise." Peter often prints his work on Canson rag Photographique 310gms, but he also looks to experiment with other high end art papers, depending on the image or series.

For Peter, fine art is also about the time that he spends in the environment and what he goes through to get the shot. "It's all about waiting for the right time and light, traveling to the right destination and learning about the subtleties of how the weather affects the scape and how you want to capture it." His method is not to take hundreds of shots, but a handful that really capture the feelings that he had while viewing the landscape. "With fine art landscapes," he says, "I've realized that you really have to have the 'hero photo' and then have a series of 10 or 12 images that capture and sum up the experience."

Another piece of advice that Peter has for photographers in general is to refrain from posting your images to Facebook and Twitter right away. "You want to show them off and you've got so much emotion flying through you, but it's important not to give away too much. Sit on them until they're ready." Another piece of advice from Peter, specifically when reaching out to galleries, is to find out how each gallerist wants to be approached by photographers, since everyone has different preferences. Peter has found success in bringing physical books of high-quality prints to the gallery so that people can look through his work, which he says has gone over well with the gallerists that he's visited.

Peter knows the value of self-promotion, but he'll be the first to tell you that he still considers himself a family man and father first, and a professional photographer second.

Most recently, Peter has moved to Vanuatu for 12 months, which is opening up new opportunities with underwater photography. In 2015, 100% of Peter's print sales also went to various humanitarian projects he's involved with in Uganda. "I'm proud that my photography helps make a difference," says Peter. "I will continue to sell prints with this goal in mind."

TAKEAWAYS:

- » Maintain and build your website traffic. When traffic drops, so do requests for your images.
- » Research galleries before you contact them. Each one has different preferences for how they want you to submit your work.
- » If you're selling your work as fine art, then treat it like fine art; work with the best printer and highest quality printing materials possible.
- » Refrain from posting your work to Facebook and Twitter right after a shoot. Sit on the images and wait until they're ready for an audience.

PROFILE

Matt Suess: Connecting With Potential Buyers



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“I want to share with the viewer the way I see the world, inspired by Mother Nature, and I try to portray that in my photographs,” says Matt Suess, a fine art photographer & educator who travels around the American Southwest in his RV. While he’s always been a full-time professional photographer, Matt made the big move in 2006 from photojournalism to fine art photography and never looked back. He sells his work at a number of juried art shows each year in addition to online sales via his website and email marketing and also teaches photo workshops.

First and foremost, Matt emphasizes a deep connection to the people who buy his work. “Fine art photography is something that goes beyond just what the camera captures. I’d like to think that when people look through my photos, they can really tell who I am because I put a lot of me into them.” Though traditionally known for his landscape photography, Matt also specializes in Vintage Americana photography and Route 66 themed images. He uses various techniques in the field including natural light, multiple exposures for HDR photography, and is now experimenting with color LED light painting at night. He spends a lot of time in his digital darkroom enhancing colors and even blending composites. Says Matt: “The camera is really just the beginning point of me getting to a fine art print.”

Matt finds that connecting with the buyer has become the most important point in making a sale. “My customers are those that respond to my work and respond to me as an individual,” he says. “You [as an artist] are really connecting on a completely

different level, where if they don’t like you, they’re not going to buy.”

Once potential buyers make that initial connection with Matt, he invites them visit his website and view more of his work, especially if they’re not ready to buy right then and there. Matt has a very comprehensive site that plays a key role in his marketing efforts; plus, he’s an avid blogger who’s been online since 1999. He constantly adds fresh content, which has been integral in increasing visitors to his site, and getting search engines to read and rank it on a consistent basis. He adds that he also pays close attention to his site’s reports from Google Analytics to see where traffic is coming from and where he can improve.

Still, at the end of the day, it’s all about the personal connection for Matt. “People who don’t buy from me [at festivals] will go to my website and learn more about who I am before they’re ready to spend money on my work.” Given that Matt’s prices are in the mid-to-upper range, he finds that he doesn’t make many online sales

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with people who haven't seen his work in person. "They can see pretty pictures online, but there's no guarantee about how it will look in print. I've always preferred doing it in person because I'm going to be the best seller of my work—I'm going to be able to explain it the best."

To keep potential buyers in the loop, Matt keeps a growing list of email addresses, and sends monthly e-newsletters with updates on his work and information about the workshops that he has been offering to amateur & advanced photographers. He also maintains a presence on Twitter and Facebook, posting links to his e-newsletters and a place to subscribe to them by email. Lately he has begun using Snapchat for showing behind-the-scenes videos, providing another way for potential customers to connect with him.

Asked what challenges he's faced as a fine art photographer, Matt brings up the uncertainty that many photographers face when deciding how to price their work. "When I started selling my work, I had no idea how to price them," he remembers. His advice? "I recommend really evaluating your own work and seeing where it is in with similar photographers. It's better to start low and then raise your price."

Matt also reminds photographers to think about the volume that they're selling their work in: high volume with a low price or low volume with a high price? Matt prefers quality over quantity which gives him the opportunity to charge more for his work. "When you focus on quantity, quality always seems to suffer," he says. "I would rather sell less quantity at a higher price with the best possible quality than selling high quantity at a lower price and quality."

Matt has also found that in today's economy, many photographers who used to rely on high quantity with lower prices are having a much more difficult time with sales. "At a lot of the shows I have exhibited at lately, photographers who have been competing in the lower price range and relying on high volume are not selling like they used to. The higher income brackets are still buying high priced art, but the middle and lower classes are stretched too thin these days and that certainly affects those trying to do high volume with low prices."

And lastly, selling less quantity at higher prices gives Matt more time to enhance his relationships with his collectors - many of whom become friends and repeat customers. Some have even become workshop students, increasing Matt's bottom line. "When you can afford to spend more time on your clients, it becomes a win-win situation for both parties," Matt says. "In today's economy it is the personal touch and extra mile that goes a long way towards your success."

TAKEAWAYS:

- › If you want your fine art photography to appeal to people's emotions, then they often need to see it in a physical space before they're ready to buy it.
- › Consistently add fresh content to your website, whether in the form of blog posts or new images, so that search engines realize that it's not a static website. This can help it rank high in search engine results.
- › Give out flyers at gallery shows and art festivals with a link to your website so that people can revisit your work and see additional images online.



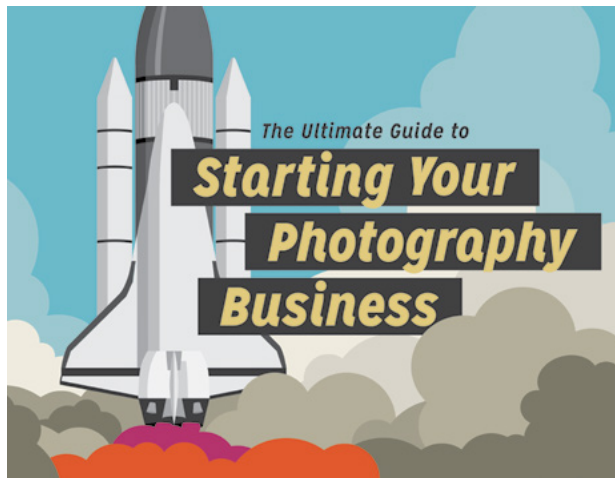
credit: James Bourret

PART III

Conclusion

There may not be one straight formula for displaying and selling fine art photography, but as we've learned from the photographers and industry pros in this guide, there are certainly common threads to help you increase awareness about your work and make more sales. Consider, for example, building your reputation as a fine art photographer in your local community first, using your blog as a platform to tell the stories behind your images to help grow your readership, and using high quality printers and the most cutting edge photo substrates used by museum and galleries such as acrylic photo prints. Also consider investing time to maintain and build your web traffic, and use a tool like [Google Analytics](#) to track your site's performance. After all, when visits to your site drops, so do requests for your images. The list of ideas goes on.

Now that you've got some inspiration, it's time to get to work!



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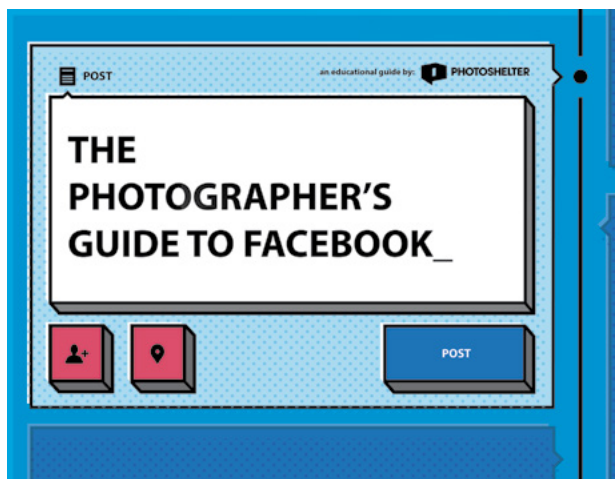
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