

STPC

Submissions Outline

July 15, 2010 TexNEP Program

The following workflow suggestions are aimed at those photographers using Photoshop 7 through CS4 along with the Adobe Camera RAW (ACR) converter used in Bridge and/or Lightroom 2.0.

NOTE: Make sure that you have the preferences set in your software to the parameters used for your submissions. Most important are settings for color space, resolution, file types, and image size. If you do not see any of these terms in your software it may not do the job. It is best to do your adjustments on a calibrated monitor. The standard settings for digital photography are a gamma of 2.2 and a white point of 6500K. Use of a calibration device such as the Spyder is highly recommended.

Check the official STPC publications for more detailed information. Make sure that you understand what the requirements are for adjusting images, re-naming files, and what types of files need to be turned in for your entries.

BRIDGE/PHOTOSHOP

1. Select your RAW entries and organize them in a way that works best for you. You may also use the rating, collections and/or keywording feature in your software to further organize your entries. Remember, entries from the Pro Classic (PC) and Open Division (OD) will need to be entered on separate disk. You will need separate folders for each division on your computer.
2. Using your photographer code, re-name your RAW files according to contest guidelines. You may use the Batch Rename feature in Bridge to set up a template for re-naming your entries. Move your renamed file to the appropriate division folder.

Using the above steps the way I have suggested, your TIFF and JPEG files will be renamed as you convert and will sort out by categories in your division folders. Your division folders will be ready to burn to your DVD when you are done.

3. Using ACR in Bridge, make cropping and global enhancements to your image then send the image to Photoshop for further global adjustments.
4. In Photoshop clone out any remaining dust spots and make your contrast and saturation adjustments.
5. Save as a TIFF file in the same folder, flattened, 8-bit, Adobe RGB, at 400 ppi.
6. Using the same TIFF master in Photoshop, re-size and save as a JPEG file in the same folder as the corresponding TIFF and RAW files. Settings for your JPEGs are 1200 ppi on the long axis at 400 ppi, sRGB. Sharpen your JPEG for screen use as the final step before you save the file at the highest quality setting (no compression).

Make sure your computer (Mac and PC) is set to save your files with the extension (.cr2, .tif, .jpg).

7. Check your entries to make sure they are named correctly, they are in the right division folder, and you have the the correct number of entries in each class as well as the total number entries allowed. Also check that you have a TIFF and JPEG for each corresponding RAW file, and that your JPEGs look the way you want the judges to see them. Be sure to have release forms for images that contain people and any explanation on the correct form, if needed.
8. Burn the folder with your entries to your disc. Make sure that the disk will open on a PC.

LIGHTROOM 2:

1. Make sure that you have all of your RAW files imported into the Lightroom catalog. Use “synchronize folder” to bring in any images that you do not see in Lightroom.
2. Organize your entries using Lightroom’s rating, collections, and/or keywording features.
3. Move your RAW selections that you want to enter to your division folders (PC or OD) for processing.
4. Using your photographer code, re-name the RAW files according to contest guidelines. Use the Batch Rename feature in Lightroom to set up a template for re-naming your entries.
5. Use the develop module to crop, remove dust spots, and make any global enhancements needed to your RAW image.
6. Using your developed RAW image, export your image as a TIFF file into the same folder. Export as an uncompressed TIFF file at 400 ppi in Adobe RGB. DO NOT resize or sharpen your TIFF file. Make sure you have the “add to Lightroom catalog” checkbox checked when you export. Save these export settings as a template to use on all the rest of your RAW entries.
7. Again, going back to your developed RAW image, export your image as a JPEG using the following settings: JPEG, 400 ppi, 1200 pixels on the long side, sRGB, sharpened for screen use standard setting, no compression highest quality. Save these export settings as a template for the rest of your JPEG exports. Make sure that you have the “add to Lightroom catalog” checkbox checked and that you are exporting into the same folder as the RAW file.
8. Check your entries to make sure they are named correctly, they are in the right division folder, and you have the the correct number of entries in each class as well as the total number entries allowed. Also check that you have a TIFF and JPEG for each corresponding RAW file, and that your JPEGs look the way you want the judges to see them. Be sure to have release forms for images that contain people and any explanation on the correct form, if needed.
9. Burn your entries to your disc. Make sure that the disk will open on a PC.

Common Optimization Problems:

1. **Saturation** - Many entries are turned in with little or no saturation adjustment or are over saturated. All digital images will need some saturation adjustment. *SOLUTION:* Careful use of the vibrance and saturation adjustments in ACR and Photoshop done on a calibrated monitor.
2. **Contrast** - This is tied in with the saturation problem. Many images entered look flat with no contrast or color. *SOLUTION:* Careful use of the levels, curves and saturation adjustments in ACR and Photoshop on a calibrated monitor.
3. **White Balance** - With most cameras set to auto white balance, it is very easy to overlook this adjustment. If your image does not look like it did when you took the shot, you may need to tweak the white balance sliders in ACR. *SOLUTION:* Make sure that you are using the correct camera profile. Carefully adjust the temperature slider in ACR. I very rarely adjust the hue slider.
4. **Sharpening** - Some very fine images have been entered in previous contest that were either over sharpened or were soft looking because no sharpening was applied to the image used for judging. Sharpening should be done after your image has been resized and before saving as a JPEG for judging. *SOLUTION:* Practice using unsharp mask or smart sharpen in Photoshop until you have the correct settings for the size of image you will be converting. Once you have your images looking good, you can use the same settings as a starting point for all of your JPEG entries. Have other photographers look at your images.
5. **Cropping** - A 10% crop is allowed. Crop artistically placing your subject matter in the area of the image where it will make the best impact.