

What's Good?



THE BREAK OF DAWN
ERICK LIRIOS

Photoworld Asia is coming up. It's the closest thing Filipinos have to a full-blown photography-related event and there are some good bargains to be had sometimes. It really just takes a little effort and patience to make sure that your hard-earned bucks go into something worthwhile. Heck, if you have half a million or more to throw at any one time, you may be tempted to just buy and buy. Even if you are capable of doing that, it is still a good idea to keep your feet on the ground. Think about this: Every deal you grab for yourself with stuff that you may not really end up using takes the opportunity away from someone else who may need it more.

What? A cheap lens, you say? Yes, even a cheap lens. There may be someone just next to you who may need that cheap lens more.

Does this mean keep off the bargains? Of course, not. Hunt for the bargains but remember that a true bargain is not something that's just cheaper than what it usually is. A true bargain is something that is not only cheap but useful to you. Buying something that you don't need is an unnecessary expense and not really a bargain at all. Guys who

Gear List

Cameras:

Lenses:

Flash Units:

Memory cards:

Batteries: For Cameras: For Flash units: Others:

Tripods:

Tripod heads:

Cleaning stuff:

Studio Lights:

Light Stands:

Reflectors:

Light meters:

Bags:

Lens Cases:

List: Do consider taking stock of your stuff. Here's a good way to start.

criticize their mothers, sisters, wives, girlfriends, and female friends for just shopping and shopping should

apply their own so-called standards to themselves. They may buy shoes, bags, and other stuff but guys normally have their own things that they normally can't say "No" to. It takes one to know one; besides, been there, done that.

If you really have a hoard of cash you can throw around, invest it in something else. If you really have so much money you don't know what to do with it (sigh, when do we get to that?), why not donate to Gawad Kalinga or something? Help people like Iliac Diaz or Bambam Aquino with their social entrepreneurial programs. Not that much money? Drop it in the church collection box. Little things do go a long way. Remember, the favorite Filipino Christmas song does say, "Kahit hindi Pasko ay magbigayan." Really? Really.

The Battle Plan

Okay, so you're determined to upgrade your stuff and/or add to your "arsenal of lenses" (as one photographer puts it) or some such. Best to plan things right and do proper surveillance work.

First, do list down what you have: cameras, lenses, flash units, cleaning cloth, blowers, silica gel, bags, caps/hats, utility belts, lens cases, studio lights, studio light accessories, light meters, tripods, tripod heads, reflectors, computers, backgrounds, etc.

Try also to determine what kind of photographer you are. If you've been shooting for some years, you can more easily say, "I shoot this stuff rather than this stuff more so I would really just need these types of things rather than that. I don't really

need that other stuff." Then again, you may want to try to shoot other things now and that may require different equipment or doodads. Putting this reality of what kind of shooter you are and what type you may want to evolve to beside what you have as your gear (Take note: It's "gear" and not "gears." The latter word refers more to toothed wheels that work together inside some mechanism) is a good starting point.

After that, take stock of which of your gear is really useful to you and which are just expensive paperweights. If you have too many of those, do consider selling them. You may just be the source of the bargain some other photographer is looking for.

Next, plan out your walking strategy for the event. Remember, unlike some other photography-related events, Photoworld has been relatively the same in terms of where it's held and how it's laid out for the past several years. There's this big central area in the Glorietta Activity Center (that's where smaller kids and bigger kids have their special events) where the big companies are - Canon, Fuji, Kodak, Nikon (Columbia), and others always are. Then there are two or three aisles (think of them as spiders' legs) branching out from that central area. There's the one heading towards SM Makati next door (Ynzal is usually there with good deals on Mac, Dell, and Neo computers), the one right next to Goodwill Bookstore and heading for Rustan's (that's where the Hidalgo dealers will be along with Island Photo and Aperture Photo), and

maybe one more heading for Landmark (where Fans, the photo printer, album-maker, and frame maker have been). These are the usual suspects but it's always best to walk around a bit more to make sure you didn't miss anything.

Is it a good idea to always be there at least once every day of the event? Yes, it is because some dealers will not have everything they will be selling all in one go. Don't go too early. Things really just start around 11:30 in the morning or so anyway.

Do take note of things which normally go fast. If you don't have enough funds at least on the first day but expect more in the coming days, feel free to ask if a dealer can hold something for you. They're usually quite accommodating with these things especially on Photoworld. Prime example of something to look out for: The Manfrotto 190XProB. It's always high on demand and there's usually a line of people who want to grab it. There are at least two dealers - Aperture Photo and Island Photo - who will most likely have it.

Remember that with secondhand stuff, there is seldom such a thing more than one item in stock. If something goes, it's gone. That, probably, is one of the better reasons to be there at least once a day. If you're into film stuff especially out of production, manual focus cameras like the Nikon F, F2, and F3 or the Canon A1, F1 or T90 or the Yashicamat 124G or something like that, you'd better be sure you have the cash on hand. These may just fly off the shelves before you can even grab your wallet.

More on this next week!

Metal...

(Continued from page E-3)



8 Proper focus

In macro photography, the focusing plane is very important. Your tripod will play a very important role here. The surface parallel to the front plate of the camera body will be the sharp area. Swinging the camera left or right may be all it takes to throw one side out of focus. Take care with how you align the camera in order to get the photograph you want.



9 Carry on

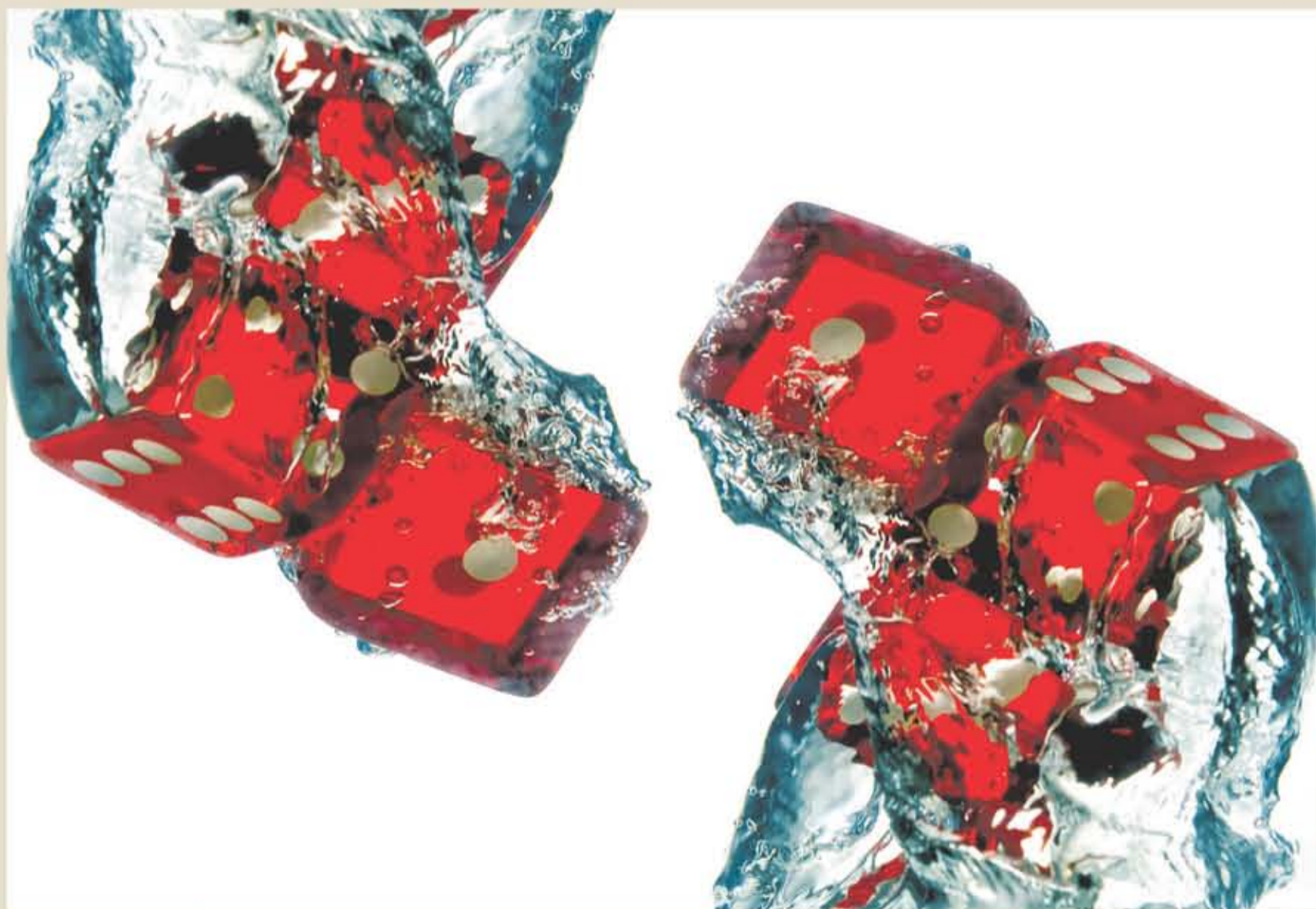
Throughout the years that I have been a photographer, I have realized that a backpack is more versatile than a camera bag hanging from one shoulder. It gives you better freedom of movement. One hand can support the camera while the other hand can carry the tripod. Your attention should be focused on creating a lasting memory and great impact rather than on struggling with your gear.

Let me close with a quote from Georgia O'Keeffe. Famous for her large close-ups of flowers, O'Keeffe was explaining this element of impact in a photograph in a 1946 interview by the New York Post. "When you take a flower in your hand and really look at it," she said, cupping her hand and holding it close to her face, "it's your world for the moment. I want to give the world to someone else. Most people in the city rush around so, they have no time to look at a flower. I want them to see it whether they want to or not."

[Georgia O'Keeffe was the wife of photographer Alfred Stieglitz.]

Tilak Hettige is starting a new class at PCCI in February, "A Closer Look at Nature: An Introduction to Close-up Photography." Students will be working with wild and arranged flowers in the studio and on location, and gain understanding of macro and closeup photography. Visit pcci.com.ph or call +632 759 3087 or 892 5281. He is also a contributing editor of I-Mag Photography magazine.

PHOTO OF THE WEEK



Calling all photography enthusiasts!

If you have a good photograph that you would like to share and you think is good enough to be published, send it to us (including some technical information about the image). We are looking for images of any subject that will catch the readers' attention and paint a thousand words. After choosing from among those photos submitted, we will publish one as our "Photo of the Week." For details, please call us at 5278121 local 384, or email your photos to: pictureperfect.mb@gmail.com / picture05perfect@yahoo.com.

Camera: Nikon D70;
lens: 50mm f/1.8; shutter speed: 1/400; aperture: f/1.8
Flash: Nikon SB28, SB800
 (Flash fired into illustration board and behind the subject for background while another flash fired from above; triggered with RF trigger; post-processed in Photoshop CS3)

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