

## Using Adobe Bridge as a Light Table

Before digital cameras and dark room software processing, you stood at a light table - moving slides around to winnow out the chaff and decide which few were your best competitors.

Now, with prosumer cameras, you capture 15-20mb of data per raw image. A Magic Hour session, that hour around dawn and dusk, can garner 10 gb of data. Yet you may only average 1 or 2 images per hundred which you feel are competitive.

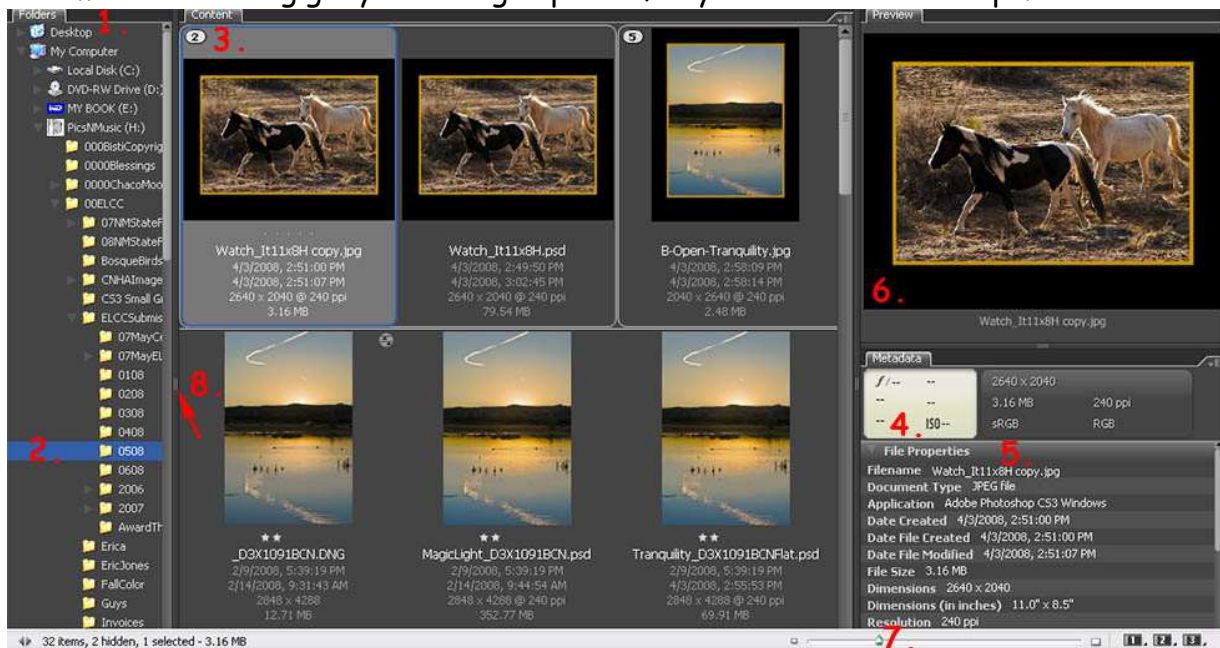
So, you need a stable workflow which minimizes your computer usage and maximizes your available shooting time!

With advent of Adobe Photoshop CS3, we can approach such a nirvana. Between Bridge and Adobe Camera Raw, we have advanced tools which let us quickly get the workflow job done!

Let's take a fast tour of how to do just that...

### Today's Digital Light Table

Let's assume you have a fast, multiple CPU computer, large calibrated screen, and multi-hundred gigabyte storage spaces for your work and backups.



Yesterday's Light Table is today's big computer screen and Bridge configured as a fast action light table. You can work with folders, images, metadata, rating systems, stacks, and particular capture data such as aperture and shutter speed while you cajole raw images into award-winning competitors.

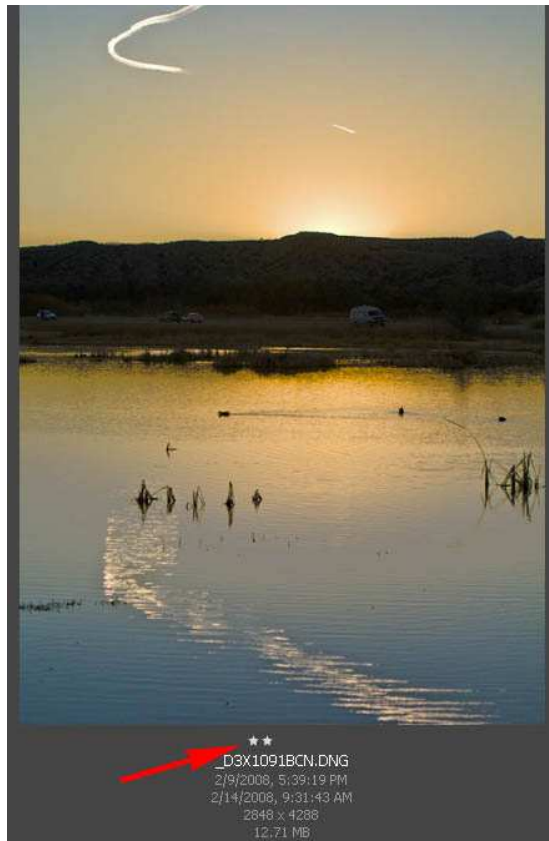
The image above gives you all these light table objects in one handy format.

### **Light Table Features**

In general, Bridge does an excellent job of letting you visually manage imagery. However, Windows Explorer, on which it's partly built, may come in handy at times. So I've also included this feature.

I've chosen to put numbers on the lead image to call your attention to the key areas I use to speed workflow. Let me draw a word diagram to show you why I choose this form of Bridge as my workspace.

#	Title	Remarks
1	Folder Display	Allows me to look at folders and display all files on my Light Table.
2	Working Folder	Shows hard drives and subfolders for my working folder.
3	Stack Identifier	You can Stack images together; the first two images are part of a future submission.
4	Capture Stats	Shutter Speed, Aperture, ISO, etc.; since these are processed images that type information does not appear.
5	Metadata	EXIF data - often needed to verify you fit within a competition date.
6	View	Depending upon your scaling, a larger view of the image.
7	Zoom Scale	Hot Goodie; you can zoom to any scale you want. A large-scale at 1:1 (extreme right) will often help culling workflow. Particularly helpful when looking at raw images to rate the first time on a full screen.
8	Folder Put Away	Handle to extend vertical column. Leaves Folders Display under Light Table to access when required.



You may choose to organize your Light Table in another way. Bridge has a number of preset options but it also lets you easily adapt to your own work style.

### **Image Rating System**

When you come back from a typical day's shoot with between 10 and 20 GB of raw files, there's a lot of work ahead to cull winners. Bridge allies you to either write or label individual images as you work through this calling process.

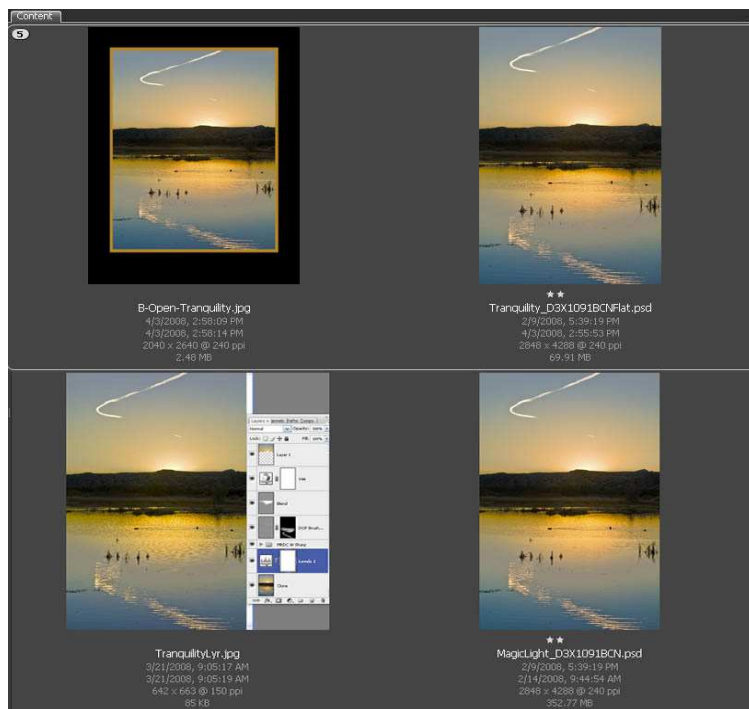
I prefer to use a keystroke Rating system. I will arrange it so my Light Table shows the image at full scale for my first culling step. When I find an image with potential, I use keystrokes to give it a 1 star Rating. This system allows me to

quickly move through several hundred images.

When I'm done, images I deem worthy of further processing appear at the top of the folder with their menu thumbnails displayed in order by Bridge.

If I've culled the list to 34 images, I can rank them using up to five rating stars on a second pass. Usually, when I'm done, I know where sweet spot images are from results of my digital capture that day.

### **Stacking for Final Competition**



This stack (4 of 5 images in our workflow process for this shot) shows a CS3 PSD file after processing, layer organization from processing, a flattened version of the image, and the final entry for a judge competition.

As you note, I worked on the image over a period of some 45 days. Stacking certainly helps me see the change sequence is for the exact process image from raw image to final competition format.

### **Workflow Teaser**

I know; this is just *barely* enough to titillate an avid digital photographer. But, it's a good start...

Looking forward, we present some 25-30 tips and tricks using this amazing software suite - Bridge, Adobe Camera Raw, and CS3. As a fillip, we even provide a detailed Study Guide of ~ 130 pages, images for your learning curve, all on a CD.

You receive the full CD when you attend either

1. **Anasazi Adventures** - our digital tour into ancient Anasazi heritage and culture
2. **PS Workflow Workshops** - our hands-on Photoshop workshops

Or, you can purchase the CD separately.

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