

## Tone Mapping Tree and Triangle

On the bench above Willow Gulch, a green tree stood boldly in front of a massive cliff. I set up for a portrait HDR capture; 6 shots at f/16 whose shutter speed ranged from 1/8-1/100 sec.

Photomatix Pro compiled the 32 bit HDR image. Tone Compressor was choice with all sliders set default. That image was returned thru the Lightroom plugin as a 16 bit tif file.

Here's the initial tif file,



saved as a screen shot. Because it was shot about 10:15 AM, basic shapes and elements are there. Direct and reflected light simply overwhelms the image.

### Lightroom 3

We proceed to color balance and tone map.

We use Histogram to insure no shadows or highlights are blown. Here, we reduce exposure 0.33 EV then increase Recovery 14. Highlights no longer clip. A little Fill Light (8) works shadows; we set Black Point at 2.

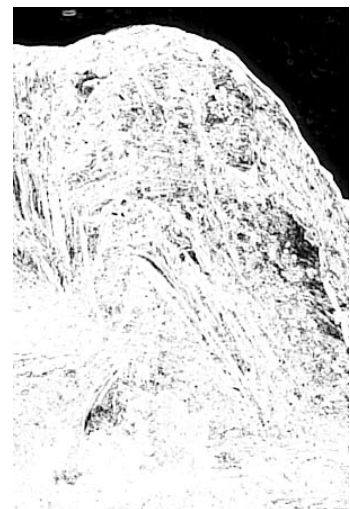
Clarity sets midtone contrast. Vibrance enhances dull colors. Here, we used

Clarity 68 and Vibrance 24.

Our last step was to use Landscape sharpening preset to create global sharpening. Initial values were Amount = 40, Radius = 0.8, Detail = 50, and Maskin = 0.

But wait, Masking contains its own illusive sharpening power. Simply hold down Alt key (PC) and move Masking slider. *Black areas do not get sharpened; white do!*

With Masking we asked Lightroom to sharpen most of image - ignoring sky and some areas back on the cliff.



Our final image is bold, if not much too bright. We used Local Adjustment



Brush to tone down creek bottom and that portion of ledge above trees and below the small bush covered bench.

Yet... it's still a blah daylight shot where the sun creates harsh, rather blatant patterns of direct and reflected light.

### Image Mapping

Albuquerque's Enchanted Lens Camera Club is a vibrant group of excited shooters.

Nearly a year later, I watched Sandy Corless present a seminar at ELCC. Her topic: *Image Mapping: Developing a Strategy for Post-Processing an Image.*

Sandy showed her strategy for taking raw images and making fine art. Her theme: *What Do You Ask of Your Image To Make It More Effective?*

Solution: Present post processing on some of her award winning images!

- Color and Tone
- Composition
- Balance
- Content
- Does the image tell a story or show emotion?

Create Image Map

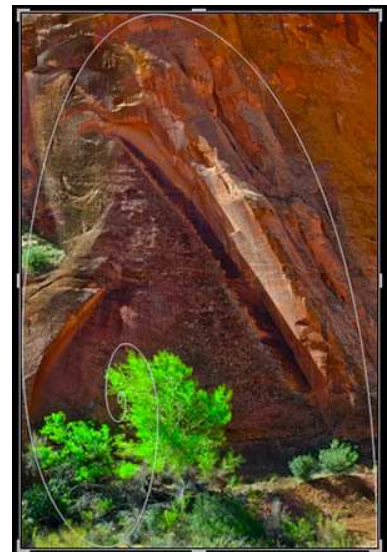
- Show path your eye should travel
- Identify areas to lighten and darken
- Indicate areas to sharpen or blur
- Special needs for specific elements in the image
- How do you want to keep the viewer's eye in the image?

## Sun Dance Revisited

Lightroom 3 has a really neat tool - a Golden Spiral overlay when you have an image in Crop Mode (Develop Module). We show a Golden Spiral superimposed on the most interesting part of Sun Dance Cliff after we have adjusted crop tool to show just that area.

The Golden Spiral (white line) sweeps from lower right corner to top of the image, then sweeps back down the left side.

Near the bottom, it begins a second sweep, finally ending near our focal point - a marvelous green tree at the base of the cliff's dark triangle accentuated by the reflected slash of light.



We did not like our 1<sup>st</sup> product above.

But, with a new eye, we certainly like this rejuvenated image much more!

## Final Lightroom Processing

After deciding our final view, we used Local Adjustment Brush to paint our image areas which require change.



In Lightroom, Local Adjustment Brush (LAB) creates a pin when we start to modify an area. Here we have penciled in outlines LAB made for each anticipated darkening, sharpening, or clarity change.

We use notation -0.33EV to mean we moved Lightroom's Exposure slider left until it reads -0.33. An EV is shorthand for Exposure Value (analogous to 1 full stop change in shutter speed).

The Local Adjustment Brush lets me draw a mask, confines mask edges to changes in tone, and feathers the mask.

I usually draw a rough mask, then visually modify sliders until I get appropriate tone mapping this image demands. For this image, its mostly darkening. I added texture to the triangle with Clarity and Sharpening to

strengthen its contrast with the startling green tree...

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### Creative Vision

Taken by themselves, landscape images can begin as massive views.

Yet, the perceptive eye, applying your own vision through extension of Creative Image Map, can add significant value to each capture.

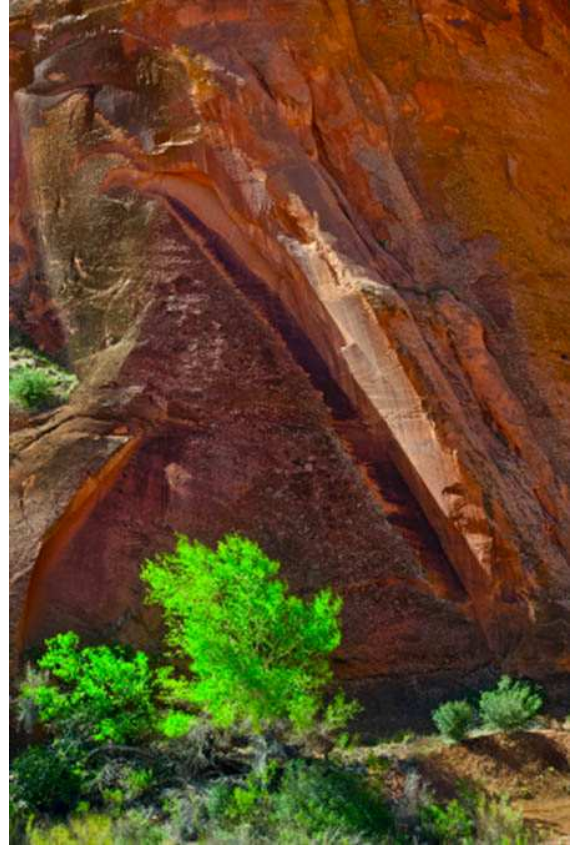
Here, we decided what was superfluous!

Then, we choose steps which would emphasize those attributes which first caught our eye - tree and triangle.

We captured the image as HDR so we could get full color contrast, even in harsh lighting conditions. We post processed HDR image until we had correct exposure, color balance, and tone mapping.

We then took a careful look at lines and shapes - major elements of the cliff. Once we decided what we really wanted to show, we cropped the image to emphasize just those fundamental elements.

Then, we went into extended tone mapping - delicately adjusting light and shadow until we had a revitalized *Tree and Triangle ~ Intimate Landscape... !*



### Fine Art Vision

This process is one of getting the initial capture, then refining until color balance and tone mapping provide fundamental elements. Finally, we picked primary elements and thought how we might have painted them. Then, using delicate brush strokes, actually used Lightroom to 'paint' *Tree and Triangle ~ Intimate Landscape!*

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