



A Remarkable Camera

Since the last Newsletter, I had the opportunity to test a new Fujifilm X-T1 mirrorless camera with Fujinon 18-55 zoom lens. This is Fujifilm's first digital camera (albeit mirrorless) in a traditional SLR designed body. The following is my experience with this product.

When I first opened the box, everything that should have been included was. There was a partial charge in the battery, indicating it had been tested. The camera was set to autofocus, program exposure, auto ISO, auto white balance, patterned metering and single shot advance. The lens slid onto the metal lens mount very smoothly.

Switching the camera on engaged the large LCD panel on the camera's back with information as to how the camera was currently set. It did not ask for language, date or time. Raising the camera to eye level turned the viewfinder on and the rear LCD panel off. At this point I realized the X-T1 was unlike almost any other digital camera I'd ever seen...

The electronic viewfinder (EVF) was the brightest, fastest, clearest - comparable if not better than an optical SLR viewfinder. Horizontally bisecting the view was a solid green line - a virtual level. Information in the EVF was crisp and clear and not bright enough to overshadow the subject.

The dials, rings and buttons were comfortably far enough away from each other to avoid confusion. The weatherproof, water resistant body's leatherette was very comfortable and was non-slip coated.

Pushing the Menu button revealed more unanticipated differences: The camera was set to highest resolution, least compression and .JPG + RAW! This is the only digital camera I have ever seen set up this way.

I took several photos that day without flash (which is included in the box) using automatic functions only. The camera was very fluid in my hands. A series of pictures taken in an apartment's living room on that cloudy day showed the qualities of the camera.

The pictures were unusually sharp and had extremely smooth tonal transitions. One sequence of photos was of some cut flowers, one of which was selected and an 8x12 print made. It looks like it was taken with a medium format film camera with ISO 100 film. (The X-T1 uses an APS-C sensor.) Reading the image's EXIF data, however, proves it was set to ISO 1600!

Another sequence of photos was of a bookshelf lit by dusky daylight and fluorescent lighting. The series was of the same books using ISOs of 6400, 12,800 and 25,600. When enlarged to 8x12, the 6400 ISO photo was incredibly smooth and detailed with amazingly little noise. The ISO 12,800 image exhibited insignificantly more noise at 8x12. The ISO 25,600 image displayed considerably more noise and a noticeable color shift in blank, dark areas. The sharpness was still first rate.

At \$1699.99 for body and lens, this camera is surely not for everyone. For those who want a superior tool for making superior photographs, this mirrorless camera is to be compared with both high end and professional SLR design cameras.

To summarize the main points, here are some highlights ...

- This is first camera I have ever found that is set to take its best quality photos by factory default.
- The EVF will satisfy even the pickiest professional user.
- The exceptionally low noise produced by this Fujifilm sensor blows other cameras away.
- The 18-55 zoom is the best "kit lens" on the market today. Period.
- The weather sealed metal body is well balanced and comfortably finished.

(This review is by Jerry)

Holidays are Coming

Spring holidays are special times for family and friends to come together for spiritual celebration, community connection and the much beloved Easter egg and Afikoman hunts! This season let the experiences take center stage with a few techniques sure to highlight the most memorable moments of the season:

Who can expect kids to sit still when there's so much candy up for grabs? In this situation, it may be best to photograph younger kids from a candid perspective, whether it's while they're sitting on the steps with their Easter basket or trying to spot which eggs they intend to nab when the race starts. Posed photographs are wonderful, but if the kids are less than cooperative, it's better to capture them in their state of excitement rather than requiring a forced smile and pose. After all, authenticity in your photos will shine through so adapt to your surroundings for success.



If you have portraits planned and all is going well, remember to have just a prop or two on hand. It's easy to go overboard but resist the urge. Too many props scattered in the shot can create a cluttered final result. A basket, a decorative egg or two or a Haggadah, even a live bunny can all add to the festive mood but take a few moments to determine the proper mix. After all, the props are there to support the subject, not overshadow it.

Photographing children often means trying to capture their experiences as they see them, so make sure not to tower over them (unless you're creating a specific overhead shot). Try shooting at their level and even get down low to photograph the Easter egg hunt and other festivities. The result can create a more authentic and expressive image of your subject.

If possible, position yourself opposite the impending run of the Easter Egg hunt so you're in the best shooting spot to capture the excitement as the kids dart from the starting line. Many people stand behind the crowds, but relocating to the opposite side to capture enthusiastic expressions will place you in prime position for top photos.

Don't Forget the Prints: Uploads and emails are great methods of sharing photographs but when it comes to holidays and special events, make sure to order a set of prints to send to loved ones. While all of today's digital technology is fun and easy, getting gorgeous printed photographs in the mail is more special than ever. You can order prints from just about anywhere at www.madisonphoto.com or www.photosummit.com.

A Facebook Note

As Facebook celebrates its 10th anniversary and continues its dominance as the most influential social media site, a recent Pew study shows that most parents have pretty specific opinions about photos of their children being shared without their permission.

In short, they don't like it.

"Parents are especially protective of images of their children, as 57% of Facebook users with children under the age of 18 say that people posting pictures of their children without asking permission first is something they strongly dislike about using Facebook," according to the Pew study.

Parents of younger-aged children are especially attuned to this issue, so when in doubt, make sure to ask the parents' permission before posting a photo that includes their child. Some may want you to tag the photos so they know they are online and being shared; however, others may share but not tag. There will always be situations where this courtesy will be difficult to extend, such as at a concert or school event, but you will create goodwill by asking before uploading.

And an Instagram Tip

If you're addicted to Instagram, you may be hitting the filters a bit heavy these days. Try a no-filter month of shooting to really see how your images stand out and speak to your followers. Filters have become so popular that many are now searching for images that haven't been enhanced. To help other shutterbugs find your photos, use the #nofilter hashtag along with one other hashtag that speaks to your subject, such as #Austin, #architecture or #travelgram. Not using a filter also helps you to more carefully consider the image, lighting and composition because you won't be fixing the image in post-production. Try this trick and see what kind of feedback it encourages from your followers. You may find yourself forgoing filters more often!

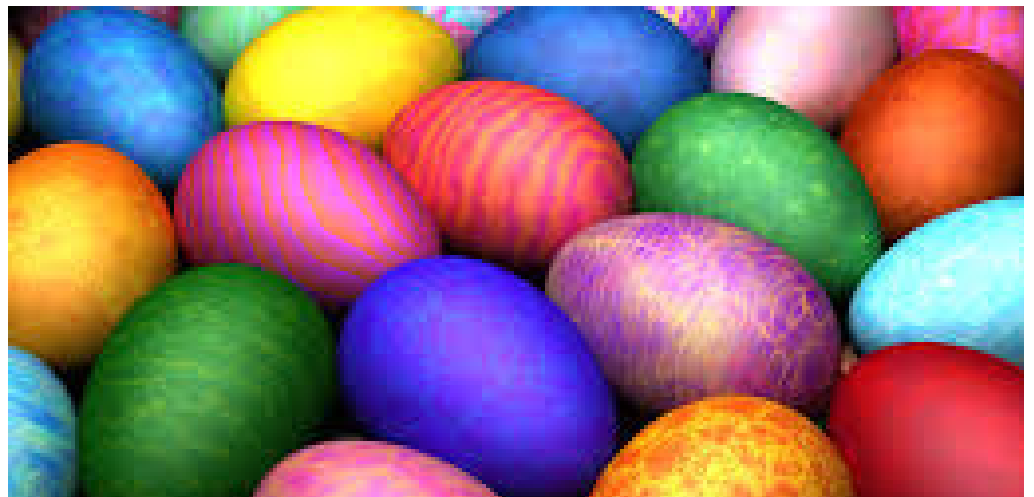




Photo Field Trip

This Spring's Photo Field Trip will be to Frelinghuysen Arboretum on Sunday, June 8. We will meet there late morning and take photos through mid afternoon. Olympus and Tamron have generously offered cameras and lenses for you to use at no charge. Olympus will loan OM-D series cameras and lenses and Tamron will supply some 10-24mm and 18-270mm zooms, as well as vibration controlled macro lenses.

Our group will be a maximum of 20 photographers plus members of our staff. Instruction will be available throughout the day. The cost to participate is \$20.00, payable no later than June 1 and is non-refundable.

New Products

Our stores have been named authorized dealers for GoPro products. These exciting video cameras can be used anytime and almost anywhere. During the recent winter Olympics they were responsible for all the on athlete videos.

There are accessories to mount a GoPro to just about anything - vehicles, scuba tanks, helicopter blades, dogs, fishing rods - you name it. They are very small, very lightweight and very easy to use. Video was never like this before!



Reminder

Each Saturday morning this spring we offer free group classes at 9:30 in Madison PhotoPlus. If you plan to attend, we would appreciate a head's up so we can arrange seating and print enough hand-outs.

- April 12 How to Photograph Indoor Performances
- April 19 Why Shoot RAW Format?
- April 26 Using Wi-Fi with Cameras
- May 3 Displaying Your Photographs
- May 10 My Outdoor Photos Come Out Fine, but Indoors ...
- May 17 Own an SLR with 1 Lens? Play Golf with only 1 Club?
- May 23 I'm Having Problems Using My ...
- June 7 Shoot Now - Crop Later
- June 8 **Photo Field Trip** (Location to be announced)
- June 14 Review/Critique of Field Trip Pictures
- June 21 Giclee Printing
- June 28 Photographing Fireworks

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