

INTRO TO LIGHTROOM

Seabrook Island Photography Club

May 2, 2022

AGENDA

Then vs Now

So What IS Lightroom?

LR Pros / Cons

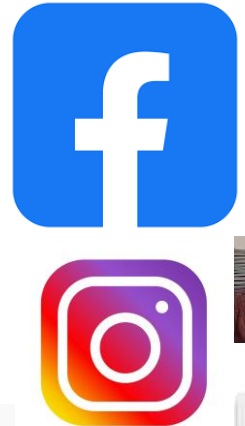
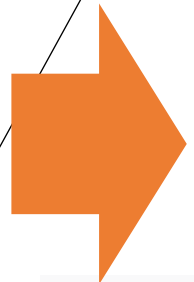
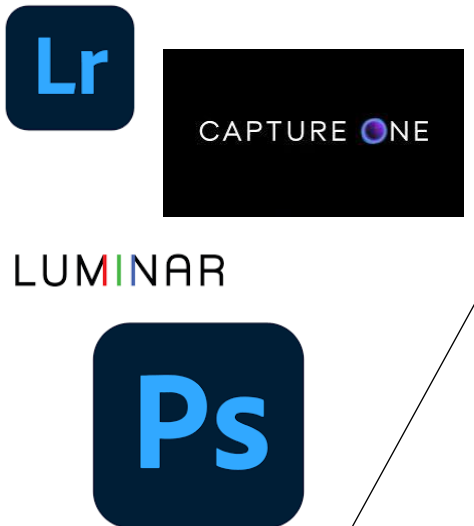
Is LR Right for ME?

Very Quick Overview of LR

Working in the Develop Module

My Workflow

THEN VS NOW





SO WHAT IS LIGHTROOM?

Main functionalities

- Culling (Wheat From the Chaff)
- Importing
- Organizing
- Developing
- Publishing / Exporting
- Overall Workflow Management

PROS AND CONS OF LIGHTROOM

PROs

Industry Standard

- huge user base
- tons of support online

SaaS Subscription Model

- Continuously updated
- Usually 2X major updates / year
- Can use across multiple devices

Good integration with Mobile / Cloud

Fully Non-destructive editing

- Library of RAW Files (Negatives)
- Series of develop steps
 - can go forward and backward
 - can revert all the way back to the original negative
- Virtual Copies to make multiple edits of the same shot

Fully customizable to fit YOUR workflow, via presets , defaults etc.

Very powerful relational database style organization

Most Efficient solution out there

- Presets
- Syncing Settings
- AI Masking settings etc

CONs

Somewhat overwhelming interface

With great power, comes complexity

There's not really a built in EASY MODE

Some might feel the subscription is expensive

In a way, the updates means you have to keep learning

IS LIGHTROOM RIGHT FOR ME?

As with many things, it **DEPENDS**

- If your primary goal is transforming your RAW "negatives" into impressive images, and doing it as efficiently as possible, yes
- If you are concerned about creating a consistent "look" across certain sets of photos, yes
- If you somehow think of your photos as a portfolio and want to push all of them to "completion" , yes
- If you take a lot of photos and having a quick way to organize / find them is important , yes
- If being able to semi automatically publish them to certain on-line platforms is important, yes
- If you want to make fantasy pictures with huge oversized full moons and unicorns, no
- If you are happy with the quality of SOOC jpgs and would rather have a lot more of your life back, NO
- There ARE a number of great alternatives

QUICK OVERVIEW OF LIGHTROOM

- Panel Based Layout
 - Library Mode / Grid Mode (G)
 - Import / Export
 - Organize
 - Setup Collections / Smart Collections
 - Pick / Unpick
 - Color Flags
 - Keywords
 - Copyright / Titles / Metadata etc
 - Ratings
 - Develop Mode (D)
 - All adjustments to photos
 - Exposure
 - White Balance
 - Color / Color Grading
 - Composition / Crop
 - Map Mode (M)
 - just for getting GPS info into your images
- Things to Know About Lightroom
 - There's Usually Several Ways to Skin a Cat
 - Keyboard shortcuts are your friend
 - You'll probably only use 25% of the functions on a regular basis but that's ok
 - It's easiest to just learn "one technique" at a time

DEVELOP MODULE

No right or wrong approach

My editing philosophy

- Edit as few photos as possible
- Light touch
- Make it pop but keep it real
- Fix composition to focus viewers eye on subject
- In and out as quickly as possible

A few general rules

- almost never use global saturation or vibrance
- almost never use contrast
- make sure your highlights and shadows aren't blown out
- **LEVEL THE DAMN HORIZON!!**

walkthrough example

The image features a series of thin, black, overlapping lines that form a complex, abstract geometric shape. The lines intersect to create various polygons and irregular forms, primarily concentrated in the upper-left and central areas of the page. The overall effect is that of a hand-drawn or algorithmically generated pattern.

MY WORKFLOW

“It’s Probably Not Right For You, But It Works For ME!!”

GOALS OF MY WORKFLOW

- Narrow down a large batch of imported photos (1000 - 2000) down to 50 - 200 good finished photos
- Only do the time consuming steps on the best of the best
- Realize that I won't get all the way through it at once, so a built in clear status of where I am so that I can stop and resume
- Ultimately get to separate collections of finished photos (jpgs) for separate audiences
 - Friends and family
 - Social Media
 - Display on my Meural Frames in my home and office
 - My photography sales website www.jeffreyjdavis.com

KEY FILE NAMING / ORGANIZATION PRINCIPLES

4 main file folder trees

Lightroom Import Backups (RAWS)

- Just a backup of the raws of every import, for emergency purposes only
- one directory for each time I import, named by date (20220417)

Post Processed (RAWS)

- 2020
- 2021
- 2022
 - 202201.Niagara

Not Post Processed (RAWS)

- 2021
 - 202112.Destin
- 2022
 - 202202.Breckenridge
 - 202203.Hungary

Lightroom Exports (JPGS)

- YYYY
 - YYYYMM.Place1
 - YYYYMM.Place2

IT DOESN'T MATTER WHERE YOU STORE THE RAW FILES, BUT AVOID MOVING OTHER THAN THROUGH LR

WORKFLOW (PT 1)

- **CULL** Relentlessly using an external program
 - FastRAW Viewer
 - FASTONE
 - Photo Mechanic
 - Only import the keepers, trash the rest
- **IMPORT** into LR
 - Set the Pick Flag to Picked for All
 - Set the Color Flag to Picked (yellow for me)
- Make new **Smart Collection Set** and import Smart Collection Settings
 - Triggers off of the folder names
- **DOWNSELECT**
 - Go through the groups of similar photos
 - Use Survey Mode (N) to go through and un-Pick the silver medalists
 - Once you have gone through the entire batch, Set the Color Flag to Picked and Downselected (Green for me)

WORKFLOW (PT 2)

- **EDIT**

- Do them in sub batches of similar subject / exposure
- Develop one to your liking
- Sync those settings across the rest of the batch
- Fine tune and adjust
- Once you have edited, Set color flag to Edited (Blue for me)

- **KEYWORD AND RATE** all the edited keepers

- Use the Spray Can for keywording, keyword set presets etc

- **EXPORT AND PUBLISH**

- Export JPG's to your HD
- Publish to your SM directly or indirectly
- Publish to your website

- once 100% complete, move the folder of raws under the POST-PROCESSED tree

- Depending on how important your collection is to you, strongly consider a good backup plan

- If you have Amazon Prime at least make sure you utilize their free unlimited photo backup

QUESTIONS?

- What is your workflow process is from capturing the image on your camera, backing up to storage/cloud, importing to Lightroom and saving “final” image...
- Also is there a significant difference between DNG file vs a RAW file vs JPEG?
- I have never used Lightroom. So I need to understand what it does and how it’s better than the Nikon Photo Editor I’m currently using.
- How best to organize, enhance and edit my photos. I've never used it and want to know if it's a program I should invest in.
- Everything possible and recent new features. Best steps to use when doing a photo for stunning results
- I'm interested in the basics of Lightroom and your tips to make it easier to use.
- How to use new spot removal tool smoothly
- When merging 3 prints for HDR, explain the ghosting feature and how to know which one to use and what it means
- Explain exporting an image to print or email that that has restrictions in size like for a contest ie. so many pixels, no larger than X (file setting, image size)