Workshop review and update

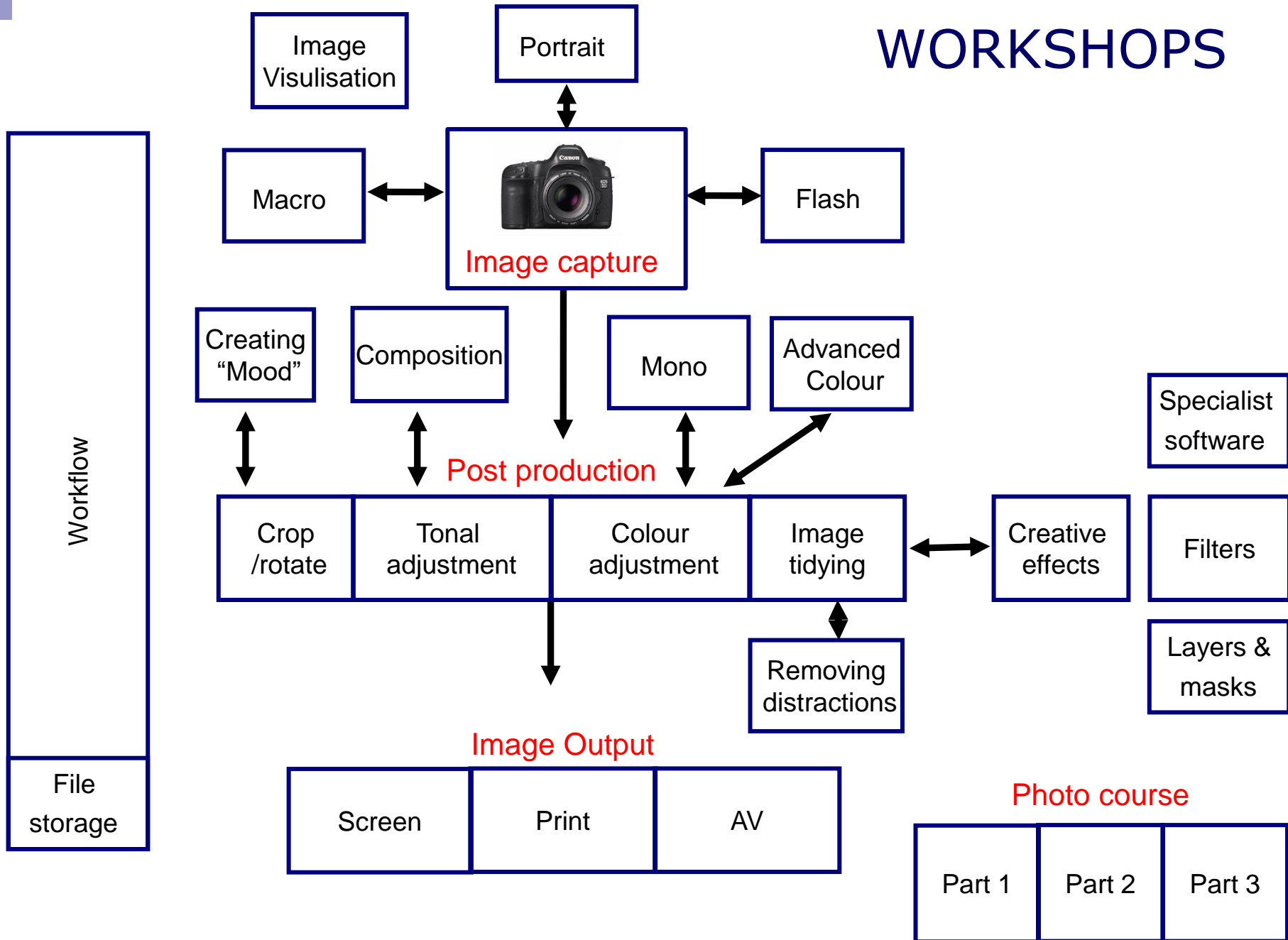# And a few tips

Bob Breach

WORKSHOP FORMAT

- Have been running for many years
- Mainly aimed at less experienced photographers and newer members but most people gain something
- Format
  - Very informal so easier to chat and ask questions
  - Usually some introductory slides which act as notes
  - Followed by practice/experimenting with your own images on laptop
  - Opportunity to share expertise among attendees and after
- Notes of last few years workshops are available on Member's area of the website for browsing (but some old and need tidying)
- Topics covered inevitably tend to overlap and link with each other
- Also include a "back to basics" three part photography course

WORKSHOP CHALLENGES

- Widely varying technical experience of attendees (but everyone helps each other)
- Great variation in the post processing software that members now use
    - Tools are often the same but the name and way they work varies
    - We are compiling a database of members kit and software to enable easier sharing of tips and problem solving
- Finding topics which appeal to enough members to make the sessions viable and useful

WORKSHOPS

Image Visulisation

Portrait

Macro

Flash

Image capture

Workflow

Creating "Mood"

Composition

Mono

Advanced Colour

Specialist software

Post production

Crop /rotate

Tonal adjustment

Colour adjustment

Image tidying

Creative effects

Filters

Removing distractions

Layers & masks

Image Output

File storage

Screen

Print

AV

Photo course

Part 1

Part 2

Part 3

Software options

WHICH SOFTWARE ?

- Depends on your personal preference and type of photography
- Ask around colleagues and learn from workshops to find best for you - before you buy consider free trial versions
- Wide range of software available- most now work with raw and jpeg/TIFF files but in different ways.
  - e.g. Lightroom, Adobe Elements/CS, On One, Affinity, DXO, Capture One, Nikon NX, Canon Raw
  - Some are annual subscription only, others offer one off payment, some both
- Specialist software for certain applications e.g. focus stacking, portraits, noise removal
- Whichever you use make sure they work together seamlessly with no wasted effort

In your software see if you can personalise all your favourite tools so that they are logically arranged on your post processing desktop screen

Most post production software has similar tools but the names and the way they work vary. Not possible to demonstrate all tonight so check what you have and how they work

File type

ALL DIGITAL PICTURES START LIFE AS RAW

- A raw file contains
  - The basic information about the image captured by each pixel
  - EXIF data- camera settings
- Raw files need to be converted to other formats (jpeg, TIFF, PSD, DNG) for most subsequent output and image manipulation
- In most compact cameras (and smartphones?)there is no option to output raw files
  - conversion to jpeg takes place within the camera
  - depending on type there is some ability to adjust raw image conversion
- In higher quality cameras the image can be output as raw files allowing much more control over conversion in separate software

WHY RAW- A DIGITAL NEGATIVE

- Benefits
  - ☐ Better quality with no image degradation
  - ☐ Greater flexibility to adjust image settings post capture
  - ☐ Better control over image e.g. shadow and highlight detail
  - ☐ Some changes e.g. colour temp, can only be done effectively on raw files

- Disbenefits
  - ☐ File size
  - ☐ Extra processing step before use

Most professional photographers use raw unless fast processing and transmission needed for press or similar

RAW FILE FLEXIBILITY

One Raw Image Can Be Processed in an Infinite Number of Ways:

Think of your raw capture as your digital negative. It never changes, but it can be processed any number of different ways.

Tuned for Web

Tuned for Print

Converted to B&W

© George Jardine

WHAT CAN RAW CONVERSION DO?

- Can change virtually any aspect related to the pixels and related histogram
- Includes
  - Colour temperature/tint/colour balance
  - Saturation
  - Contrast/Clarity
  - Brightness, levels, exposure, curves
  - Cropping and rotation
  - Sharpness and noise reduction
  - Format and size of converted image
- Importantly any adjustment does not impact the original pixels
- Many also now offer layer masks, cloning, filters etc.

But may still need PS for special effects and complex layers

High dynamic range
(HDR)
and exposure bracketing

HDR AND EXPOSURE BRACKETING

Dark ← EV range of scene → Light

← EV range of camera →
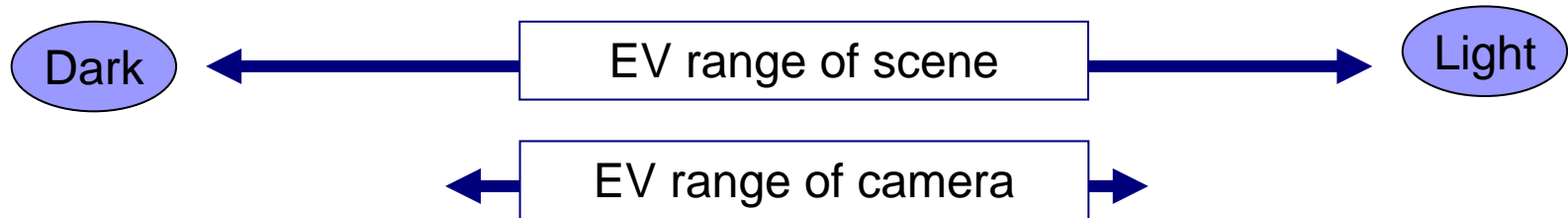
- All cameras including digital have finite exposure range between dark and light areas of the picture
- Measured as exposure value (EV) or "stops"
- If the scene you are trying to photograph is outside this range the camera cannot cope
- Commonly occurs e.g. with bright skies or inside buildings
- The result: The meter tries to work out an "average" exposure but can either blow highlights (pure white- no ink) or lose shadow detail (pure black)

High Exposure Range - Histogram

UNDEREXPOSED

No midtones, light greys or whites present

Note that sometimes you may wish to have pure blacks e.g. silhouette

AVERAGE HISTOGRAM

Shadows

Highlights

Midtones

The "ideal" exposure

Note that sometimes you may wish to have pure white e.g. high key

OVEREXPOSED

Pixels too bright for camera's sensor to record

High Exposure Range - Options

- Use graduated filters to balance exposure between dark and light areas- ideally needs tripod
- Recompose
  - Check histogram (many cameras have highlight warning) and recompose picture to minimise EV range (e.g. avoid bright sky)
- Take in RAW and hope to recover detail later
- Fill in flash- weddings/portraits in bright daylight
- Bracket exposure and merge later
  - Many cameras now include auto exposure bracketing
  - Can either process in camera or in post processing

HDR - Exposure Range

"Normal" photo

Blocked out

Burnt out

HDR – Exposure Range

3 Bracketed photos

2 stops under exposed   "Normal" photo   2 stops over exposed

Detail in burnt out area

Detail in blocked out area

HDR – Exposure Range

Final HDR photo

Image visualisation

VISUALISING YOUR IMAGE

- Do you have an image in mind when you look at a scene?
- Have you developed your "photographer's eye" to see images that others might walk past
- What did your eye "see" when you took the image
- Will the viewer see what you saw (or thought you saw)
- How can post processing better meet what you want the image to convey
- Or can you "create" an image in post processing?
- Whether preplanned, well spotted or created, how can you improve the composition and impact of the image in post processing

Using your camera creatively

What is your subject

Compose the shot
- Use thirds?
- Lead in lines?
- Subject separation?

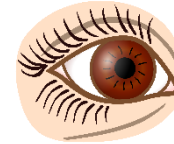Think differently

Which settings to use

Right speed Right DOF

Think background
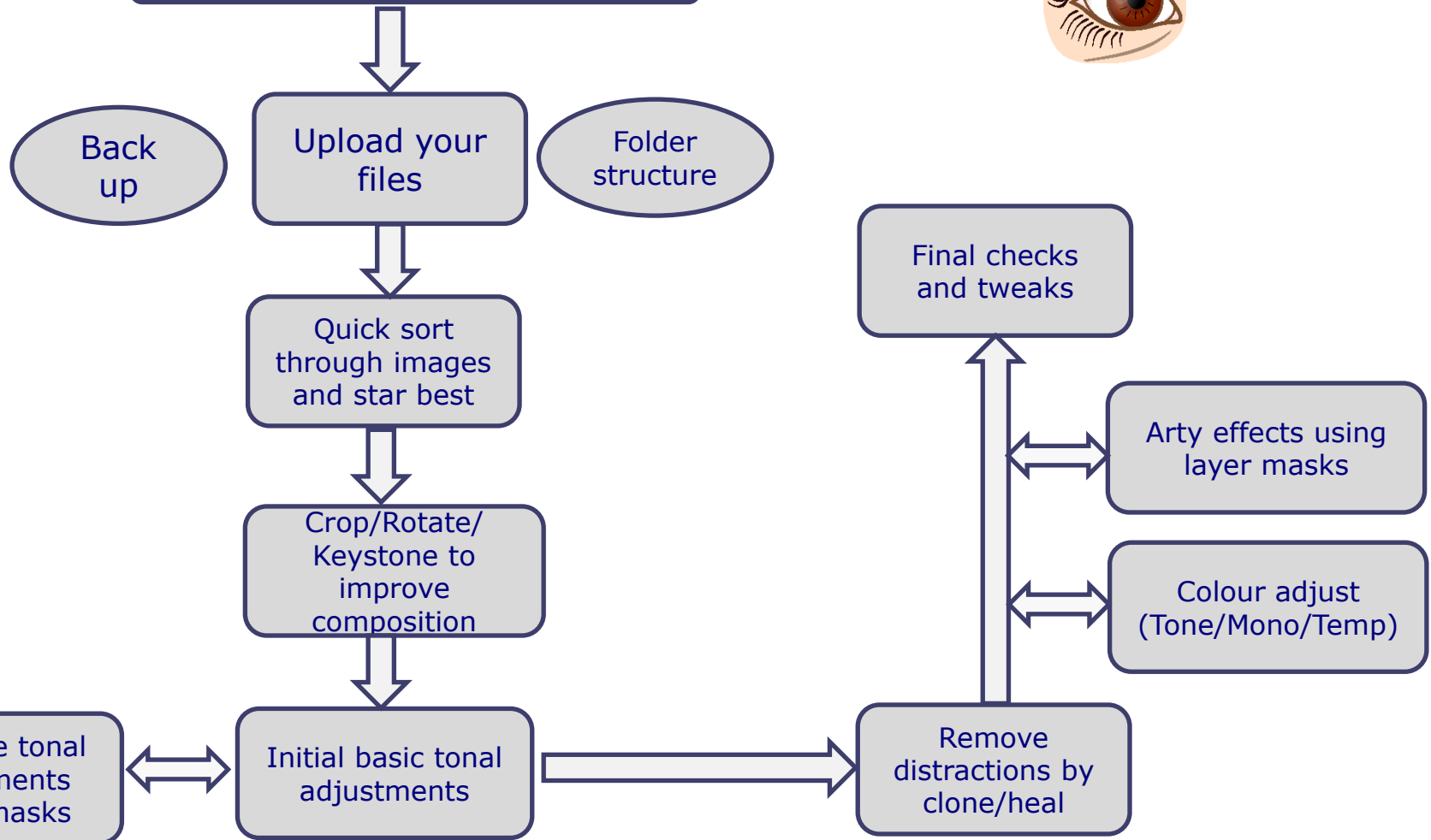
Check for distractions

- Take plenty of shots. Remember the "decisive moment"
- Be ready to react and change settings quickly if necessary

IMAGE VISUALISATION

Right Lens/F stop/speed/no of shots ?

Back up

Upload your files

Folder structure

Quick sort through images and star best

Crop/Rotate/Keystone to improve composition

Selective tonal adjustments using masks

Initial basic tonal adjustments

Remove distractions by clone/heal

Colour adjust (Tone/Mono/Temp)

Arty effects using layer masks

Final checks and tweaks

Original

- Crop even tighter
- Highlights/shadows
- Reduce saturation
- Reduce clarity/contrast to soften

Original

- Crop, perspective, flip
- Global and local tonal adjustments
- Clone background to extend area of screen and remove marks
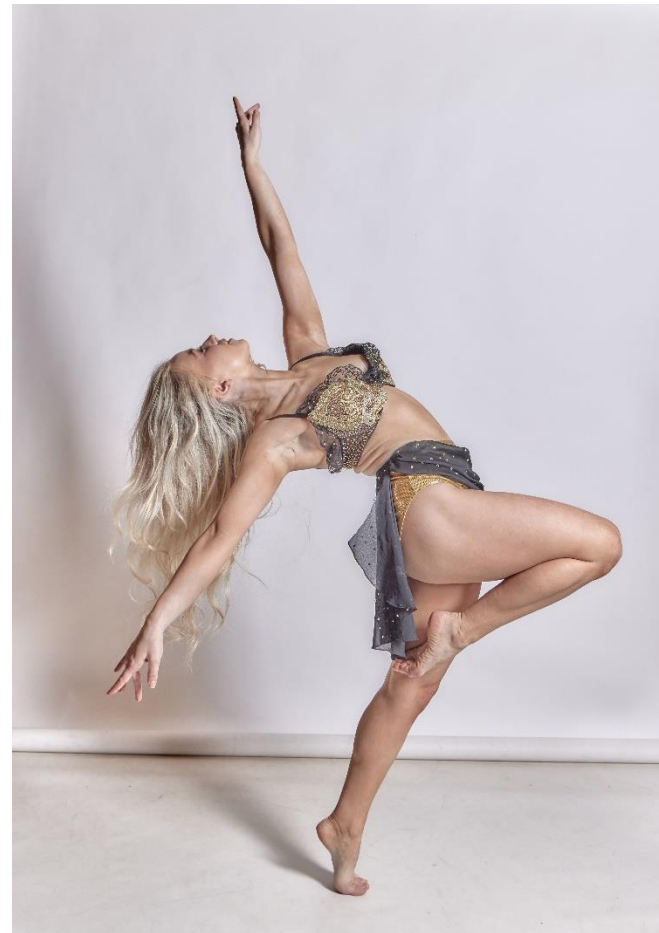
Original

- Crop
- Global and local tonal adjustments
- Mono conversion

Original

- Crop, straighten
- Minor tidying by cloning out distractions
- Global and local tonal adjustments
- Reduce saturation and clarity

Questions/discussion

and/or your turn to have
a go