



IMAGES OF *MOVING* SUBJECTS

Capturing images of a scene where one or more subjects are in *motion*

Charles Ginsburgh - Fotoclave 2017 (November 4th, 2017)



As you view these Images, think about ...

- What *the Story* is ...
- What grabs you when you first see the image ...
- What makes the images work ...
- What more you might want to see in the image ...







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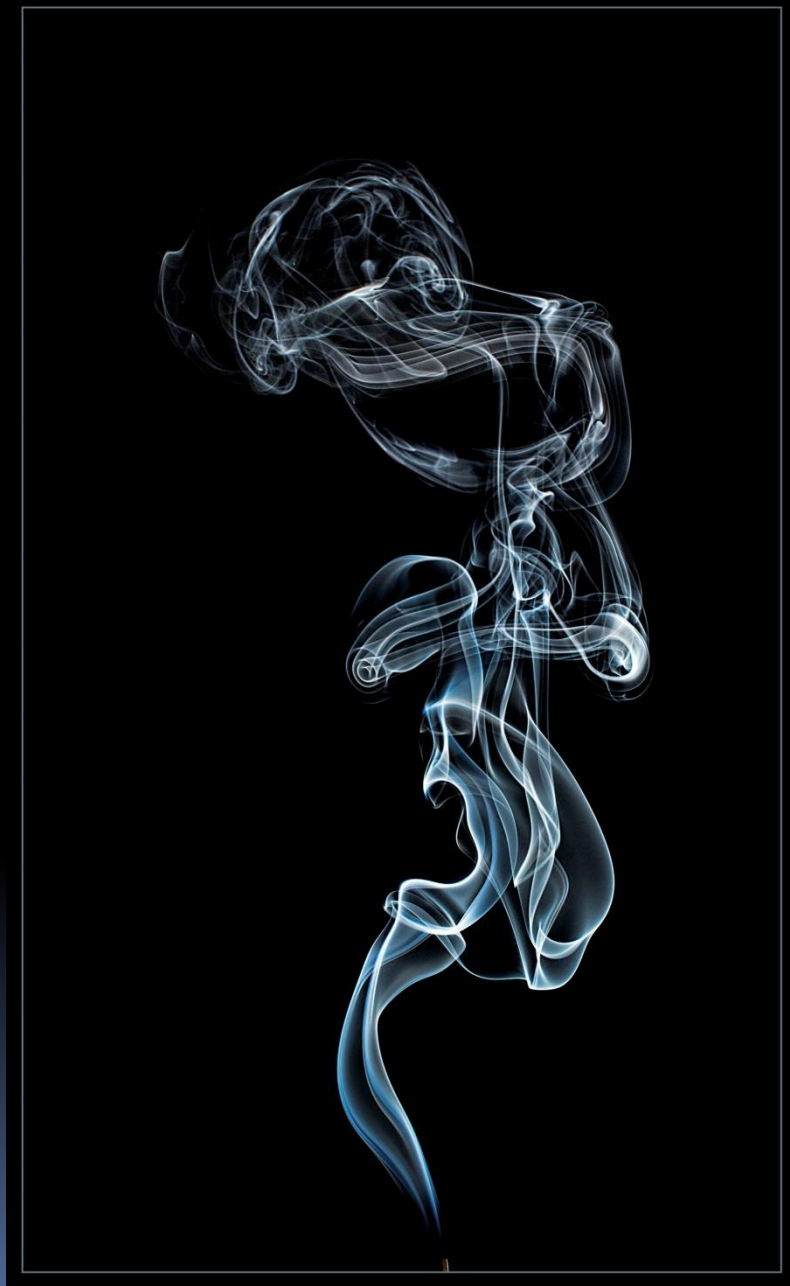
















Points to consider

- Visualize “The Story” you wish to capture
- Select the appropriate equipment and camera settings
- Anticipate the action
- Apply the principles of composition
- The final image

Every Picture Tells a Story (heard that before, heh?)

- Understand what the story is that you are trying to tell
- Put yourself in the best position to tell the story
 - Clearly
 - With the most impact
 - Without distractions
- Understand how the story will unfold

Anticipate the Action

When people are involved, their faces, gestures and expressions are critical to a compelling image

Equipment

- Any camera capable of
 - Fast (enough) shutter speeds
 - Zooming into the action (in-of-itself or with a zoom lens)
- A zoom lens, getting you close (enough) to the action

How close depends upon ...

 - What the story is
 - How close you are to the action
 - How big or the location of, the subjects
- A flash when the flash is needed to “freeze” the action
 - With the water drops, the flash froze the action
 - With the smoke, the flash captured the smoke wisps “mid-drift”

Camera Settings

- When you want the action to be clear and sharp, use a fast Shutter Speed
 - 1/500 to 1/2,000 of a second (often depends upon lens or magnification)
 - Slower shutter speeds if some blur is desired
- An open Aperture (i.e. f/5.6 or so)
 - Allows the subject to be sharp without making the background too sharp
 - Strike a balance between getting the subject and background sharp
 - Lets in more light which aids in achieving fast shutter speeds
- As high an ISO setting as reasonable, balancing
 - Noise (know your camera to know how much at a given ISO setting)
 - Increased sensor sensitivity (and therefore faster shutter speeds)
- An auto focus mode which adjusts to a moving subject may be best
- Continuous shooting or “burst” mode
(press the shutter button once and multiple shots are taken)

File type (RAW vs JPEG)

RAW Files

- contain more information
- are larger than JPEG (fill up memory storage card faster)
- provide more freedom in post processing editing
- take longer to load on to card (can be an issue when using “burst mode”)

JPEG files

- contain less information, some of which reflects edits made in-camera
- are smaller (more files per GB on memory storage card)
- less freedom in post processing editing
- take less time to load on to card (less of an issue in “burst mode”)

Many Sports Photographers Use JPEG Files

- Are smaller and load faster (filling buffer is less of an issue)
- Set up edits to JPEG files made in camera
 - White Balance
 - Picture styles (sharpening, clarity, contrast, brightness, hue / saturation)
- May be faster to review thousand(s) of images
- Photographers need to really know what they are doing
 - Images need to be “right” , right out of the camera
 - Less information in file to work with
 - Less opportunity to edit images (images may be sent right out of the camera)
- May be essential in time-pressure situations



Goal: Capture the Story

- Clean subjects: clear, sharp and in focus
- Impact
 - Capture the “Peak of Action” (bodies in motion)
 - Show the ball if possible (giving context to the action)
 - Capture the human element (faces, gestures and expressions)
 - Separate key elements and / or subjects from background
- To eliminate distractions
 - Clean backgrounds
 - Minimize individuals not related to the action
 - Less can be more ...

Examples – Lacrosse Images

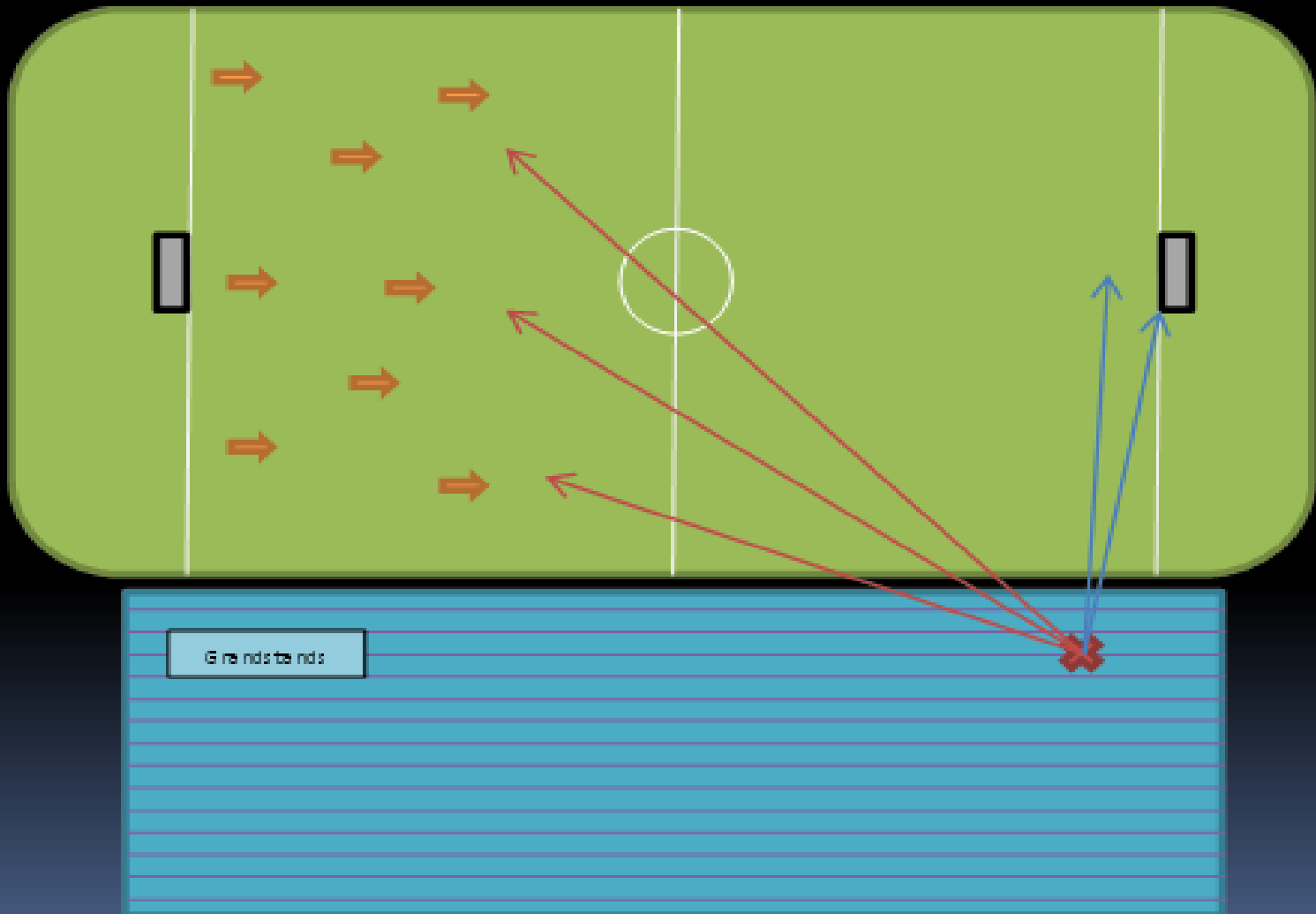
- The story was the individual battles between the players
I wanted to capture their faces so I confined most of my shots to periods during the exchange of possession when the players were somewhat spread out and running toward me (*why were the later points considered here ?*)
- I also tried to capture the post goal celebrations (*at least at my end of the field*) since I expected to see lots of player emotion at those times

Did this mean that I missed much of the action –
YES, but this was a conscious choice

Lacrosse Images

- I was located eight rows up from the playing surface, in the stands closer to one of the goals, so I used a ...
 - Canon 7d Mark II dSLR camera (hand held)
 - A 70 - 200 mm lens with a 1.5X extender (so autofocus was working)
 - Circular polarizer (for richer colors and glare reduction in the afternoon match)
 - Settings
 - Aperture priority with a set f/5.6 Aperture
 - ISO 1000
 - 1/500 or greater shutter speed (often 1/1,000 sec)
 - Continuous "Burst" shooting mode (10 fps)
 - AI Servo auto focus mode
 - Could also have used a ..
 - Manual mode
 - f/5.6 Aperture set manually
 - 1/500 or greater shutter speed (often 1/1,000 sec) set manually
 - Auto ISO (setting a max ISO of 1,600 which is OK for my camera)

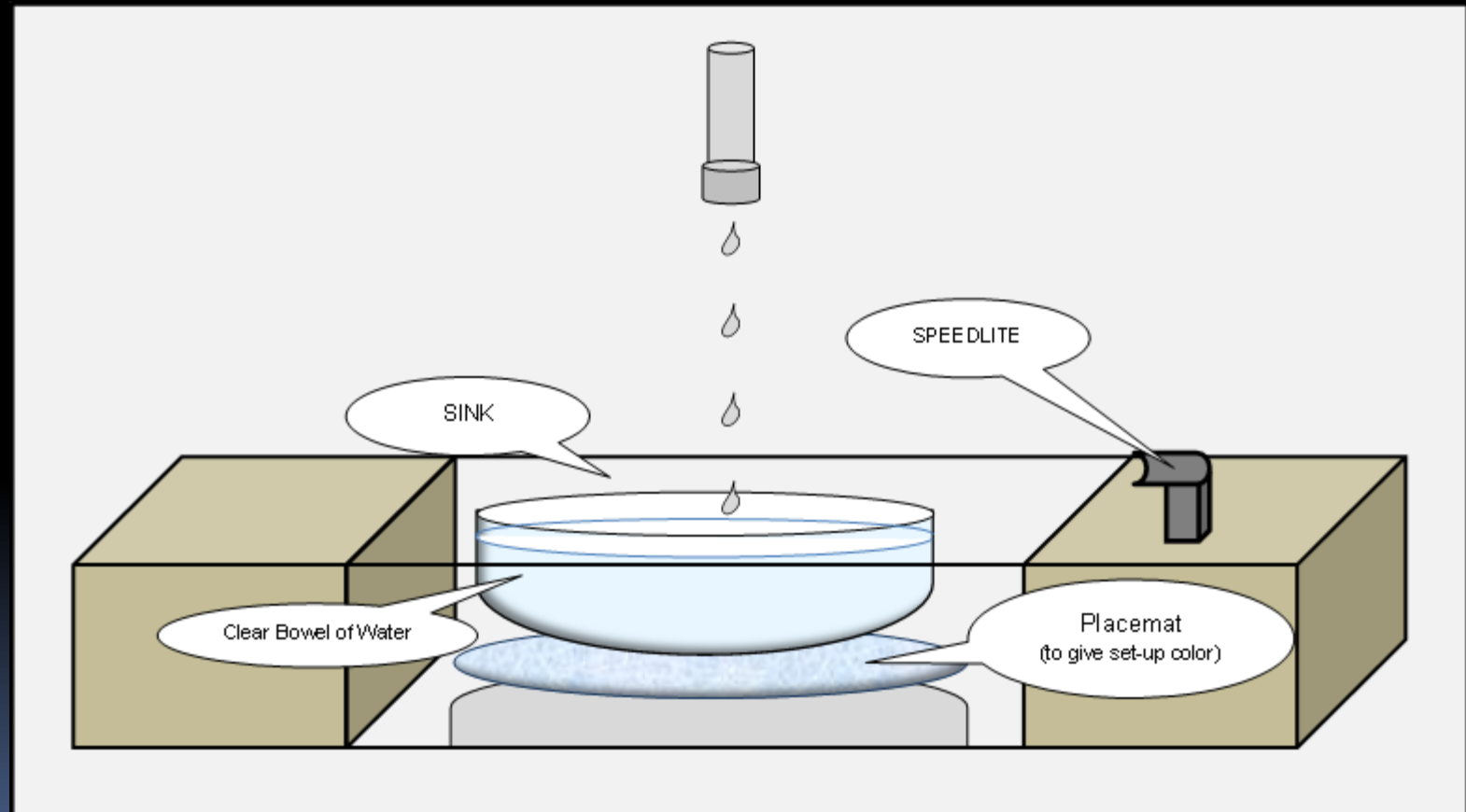
Positioning To Capture the Lacrosse Story I Wanted



Examples - Water Droplets

- I was located in my studio (kitchen) ...
 - Canon 7d Mark II dSLR camera (on a tripod)
 - A 100 mm macro lens
 - Shutter release cable
 - Off-camera Speedlite flash (90° from lens) set as optical slave
 - The camera's pop-up flash emits a low-power flash which triggers the Speedlite
 - Settings
 - Manual setting
 - f/9 Aperture
 - ISO 200
 - 1/200 or greater shutter speed
 - fast enough that flash was the sole light source reaching the camera sensor
 - Manual focus (pre-focused to a spot)
 - Notes
 - The end of a pipe-cleaner was placed where I thought the drop splash would occur, and I pre-focused upon that spot
 - I set the faucet to a slow constant drip-drip-drip rate and tried to time the shots
 - I took many, many, shots, and most did not work, but some did !!!
 - I did not use autofocus or burst mode (why ?)

To Capture the Water Droplet Story I Wanted



To Capture the Water Droplet Story I Wanted





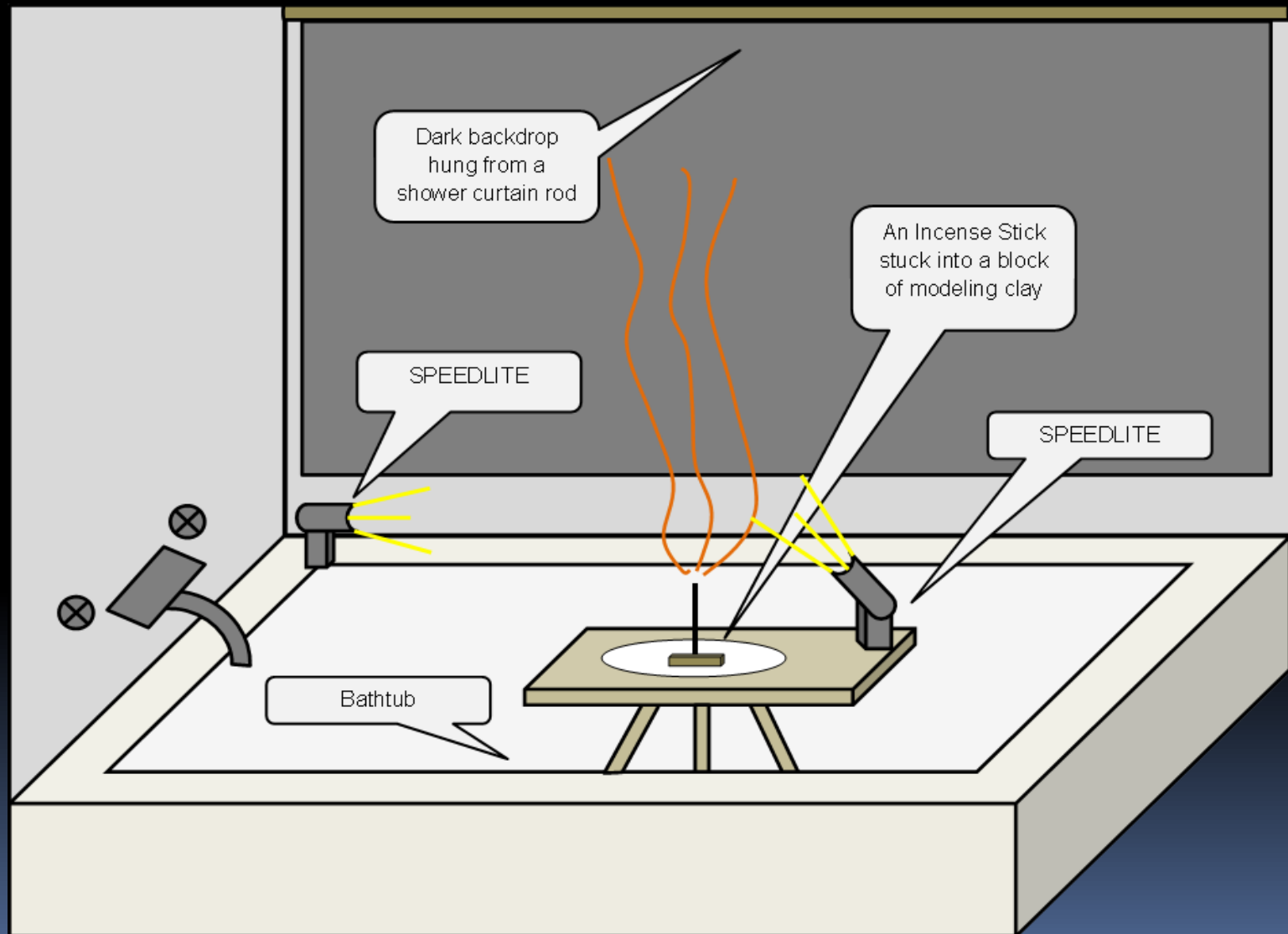


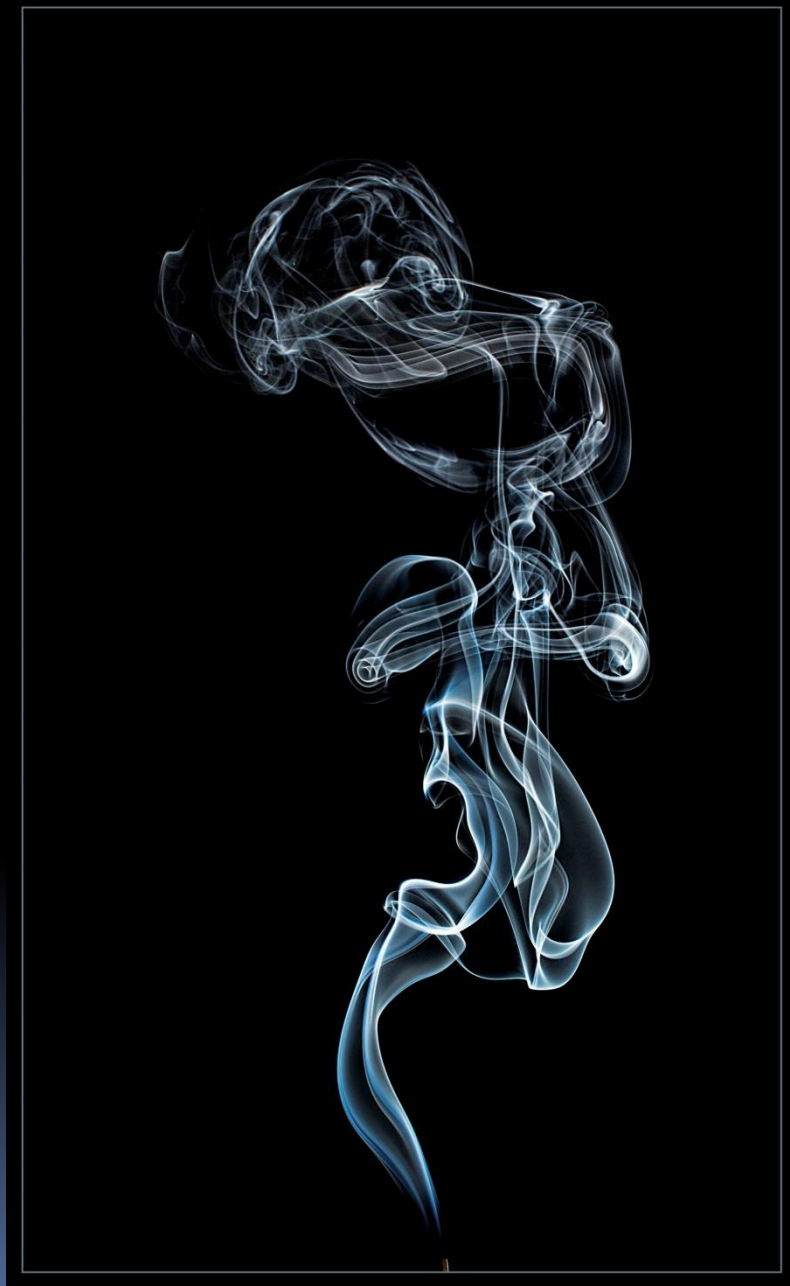


Examples - Smoke Wisps

- I was located in my other studio (bathroom) ...
 - Canon 7d Mark II dSLR camera (on a tripod)
 - A 50 mm prime lens
 - Shutter release cable
 - Two off-camera Speedlite flash (90° and 135° from lens) set as optical slaves.
 - One flash might have done as well
 - The camera's pop-up flash emits a low-power flash which triggers the Speedlite
 - Settings
 - Manual setting
 - f/13 Aperture
 - 1/250 or greater shutter speed (at this speed the flash is the only light source)
 - ISO 125
 - Notes
 - The end of a pipe-cleaner was placed where I thought the smoke trail would occur, and I pre-focused upon that spot
 - I did not need to shoot in the dark with the fast shutter speed

To Capture the Smoke Story I Wanted







Not everything needs to be in focus....

At times allowing a part of the image to blur adds to the image as a whole

Here the moving background adds a sense of poignancy to the stationary figure



Not everything needs to be in focus....

Movement within a stationary frame becomes a topic of its own



<https://digital-photography-school.com/13-places-to-practice-taking-beautiful-motion-blur-images>

Not everything needs to be in focus....

Another use
of a blurred subject
to obtain a
special effect




Panning

Following the motion of your subject with your camera
as you take the image

This renders motion blur to the background while
the captured subject remains sharp





Returning back to images
where the moving subjects are the story



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What's right and
what's wrong ?

- Clear subjects
- Peak of action
- Clean background
- Backs are to camera so there are no faces and therefore less connection to the viewer
- Action is moving out of the frame

General "rule of thumb"

- If you see the numbers on the players back, don't take the shot
- When might you break that rule ?

What's right and
what's wrong ?



- Clear subjects
- Peak of action
- Faces and facial expressions
- Central subject blends into the background so the focus of the action is not as clear

What's right and what's wrong ?



- Clear subjects
- Peak of action
- Faces and facial expressions
- Central subject's face is not clear and blends into the background so the focus of the action is not clear
- Background is busy
- Ball is not visible



What's right and what's wrong ?

- Clear subjects, Peak of action, Ball is visible
- Clean background
- Some faces and facial expressions
- Backs are turned and action is going away from viewer and out of the frame
- Large gap or segment of empty space



What's right and what's wrong ?

- Clear subjects, Peak of action, Ball is visible, Clear Story
- Lots of faces and facial expressions
- So many players that focus of action is lost
- Ball is a long way from player
- This is a somewhat cluttered shot (*to my eye*)



What's right and what's wrong ?

- Clear subjects, Peak of action, Clear Story
- Clear faces and facial expressions
- Too busy / cluttered in both the foreground and background



What's right and what's wrong ?

- Clear subject, Peak of action, Clear Story
- Relativity Clean Background
- Athlete is facing away, no facial expression



Now lets go back to the first set of sport images

Given what we have discussed ...

- Look at the original examples
- Look for the factors that give the images impact
- Look for distractions (or the lack of them)







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Many things must be just right to get that “good shot”

Getting Good Images which tell a Story **with Impact** is **NOT EASY** and takes thought, planning and some luck

It would not be uncommon to only get 10-20 good shots
after a full day's shooting of 1,000 shots



The better you are, the higher this percentage will be
(but expect to take and discard many, many shots)



Questions ?