

# Autumn Brilliance Photography Workshop

October 30 – November 2, 2020

## ***Tentative Workshop Schedule***

(actual schedule depends upon weather & light conditions)

### **Friday, October 30**

- 4:00-5:00 Arrival, check-in, temperature check & move into the dorm (***note one-hour window***)  
4:00-5:30 Gift Shop open  
5:45 Welcome & CovidSAFE Announcements – Jeremy (Pavilion)  
6:00 Dinner  
7:00 Orientation – Jeremy  
7:30-8:30 Class Introductions & Field Techniques Presentation – Tom (Pavilion, weather permitting)

### **Saturday, October 31**     *Sunrise: 7:57 am     Sunset: 6:40 pm*

- 6:00-6:30 Assemble, temperature checks & pack picnic breakfast  
6:30-11:15 Field Session – Foothills Parkway  
11:15-12:15 Return to Tremont for break & to download images  
12:30 Lunch at Tremont  
2:00 Pick up your bag supper  
2:00-dark Field Session (dinner in field) – Tremont Road  
7:00-until? Post processing with instructors (Cove Room)

\*\*\*\***Note: Daylight Saving Time ends October 31, 2020**\*\*\*\*

### **Sunday, November 1**     *Sunrise: 6:58 am     Sunset: 5:39 pm*

- 6:00-6:30 Assemble, temperature checks & pack picnic breakfast  
7:00-11:00 Field Session – Elkmont  
11:00-12:30 Break and prepare images for Group Review (Cove Room)  
12:30 Lunch at Tremont  
1:30-4:00 Group Review of participant's work (Cove Room)  
4:00 Pick up your bag supper  
4:15-dark Field Session (dinner in field) – location TBD by weather & colors

### **Monday, November 2**     *Sunrise: 6:59 am*

- 5:15-5:30 Assemble, temperature checks, pack bag breakfast (optional)  
5:30-11:30 Field Session – Cades Cove (we'll have the key to enter early!!)  
11:30-12:00 Return to Tremont to retrieve personal items

**\*\*Please remove all personal items from the lodge BEFORE** leaving for the Cades Cove field session Monday morning. The dorm will be cleaned and locked before your return.

## About This Workshop

***Things to Anticipate:*** It being 2020, it's hard to anticipate anything accurately. But we will be doing all we can to make this workshop a safe, fun, educational, and rewarding experience for everyone. We'll all have to be continually conscious of physical distancing and protecting ourselves and those around us during the workshop, including wearing masks and washing our hands. ***It is especially important to wear masks when activities require close proximity (e.g., while in vehicles, while processing images together, while reviewing camera settings).*** Being out photographing in the Smokies is exactly what we'll all need for our well-being.

We expect good fall color at this time of year, but Mother Nature follows her own schedule! Be prepared to shoot sunrise, scenic views, colorful leaves, close-ups, wildlife, moving water, reflections, and old buildings.

We will spend time at several different areas in the park. This is typically a busy time of year for park visitation, so we have planned not to compete with traffic, and will not go long distances. We will have a van available for our travels to our field destinations. For 2020 only, the van will take only a minimum number of participants. Others may travel no more than two per vehicle unless previously arranged.

With the smaller group, our student-to-instructor ratio will be better than five-to-one. This will allow the instructors to work one-on-one with each participant, both in the field and the classroom, throughout the workshop.

To minimize group time indoors, the only talk will be the opening discussion and demonstration of field techniques—hopefully in the Pavilion located outside between the dining hall and the dorms. We are suspending all other presentations in the classroom; instead, we will extend the field sessions for more one-on-one time. Our goal is to be out in the field during the best light of the day. Expect to get up early in the mornings! (But it's just three mornings; you can do it!) *You'll need a flashlight every morning and evening to get around the campus.*

Our field trips do not require long hikes; most are very short walks from the cars. The more adventurous are free to explore the longer trails at Elkmont and Tremont. Just remember that if you wander off *too* far, you'll find yourself out of range of the instructors.

On Sunday afternoon, we will review images made by everyone during the workshop. We discuss what worked great and what might be improved next time. It's a fun, educational highlight of the workshop!

***Weather:*** To help you better anticipate the temperatures we might expect, the average daily high over the last four years for October was 66°F and the average daily low was 43°F here in Walker Valley. Of course, average means it's been a bit warmer and a bit colder, so be prepared by dressing in layers. In fact, during this same weekend in 2019, the highs were upper 40's and the lows were

lower 30's. It can always feel cold in those pre-dawn hours, and even a little breeze can make it feel even colder. Rain gear is always advisable, as are gloves, a hat, and ear coverings. Again, dress in layers.

Remember: *You'll need a flashlight every morning and evening to get around the campus.*

**In addition to the list of suggested items to bring in Your Visit to Tremont, please bring:**

## COMPUTER GEAR CHECKLIST

\_\_\_\_\_ **Laptop** – With software to post-process, or at least view, your images. We recommend you calibrate your laptop if you can. *NOTE: If you don't own a laptop or don't want to travel with one, one can be rented for \$50 for the weekend. Requests must be made to the GSMIT office no later than two weeks prior to the workshop.*

\_\_\_\_\_ **Laptop Charger** – There are no computer stores in the Smokies!

\_\_\_\_\_ **Card Reader** – Best choice. 2<sup>nd</sup> choice is a cable to directly download from your camera.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Thumb or Flash USB Drive** – For transferring images for critique. We'll have some in case you don't.

## CAMERA GEAR CHECKLIST

Here are some things you should bring. (*Important:* there are no camera stores in the Smokies!) Fortunately, you probably won't need to buy anything special for this workshop. Remember, you can always rent what you don't own. Tom has rented many times from [LensRentals.com - Rent Lenses and Cameras from Canon, Nikon, Olympus, Sony, Leica, and more](http://LensRentals.com). Contact Tom at [tom@tomvadnais.com](mailto:tom@tomvadnais.com) with any questions.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Camera** – DSLR, mirrorless, or point-and-shoot.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Camera Manual** – Each camera is different and this will help instructors help you.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Memory Card(s)** – One or more clean memory cards. (No camera stores nearby!)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Lenses** – Consider normal, wide, telephoto, and macro options.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Lens Hoods** – Or some way to block light from your lens. A hat works well, too.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Batteries** – Bring spare(s) if you have one (them). (Remember—no camera stores there.) Using Live View can drain batteries quickly, as can cold mornings.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Battery Charger** – To recharge your camera batteries at night or during breaks.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Tripod** – ***This is the most important item on the list, after your camera.*** Best tripods are versatile, easy to use, & tall enough. Trust us; you'll learn to love using your tripod if it's good! A good tripod is not cheap, but it can last a lifetime. It will also be a

pleasure to use. When you think about it, unlike any individual lens, the only two things you'll use on every shot are your camera body and your tripod. Really Right Stuff and Gitzo are excellent pro brands. For significantly less money, MeFoto, Sirui, and Induro tripods fold down small for carrying, yet are remarkably stable when extended. Best of all, they also come with a ball head with an Arca-Swiss quick release.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Tripod Head** – A ball head or geared head is most useful. It's best if it can be used for both vertical & horizontal compositions. (L-brackets really help, see below.) An Arca-Swiss style quick release system is a big help.

\_\_\_\_\_ **L-Plate or L-Bracket** – Available for your specific camera body from Really Right Stuff or Kirk Photo. These have Arca-Swiss quick release plates on the bottom and on the left side, which allows you to quickly flip the camera between horizontal (landscape) and vertical (portrait) orientations without having to flop over the ball head. Extremely valuable and highly recommended. Once you use one, you won't want to be without it.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Remote Shutter Release** – With cord or wireless. Some wireless can be fussy.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Polarizing Filter** – If you don't own a circular polarizer, it's worth buying one for your lens with the largest filter thread size. Step down rings can be used for smaller diameter lenses.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Neutral Density (ND) Filters** – For slowing shutter speeds, especially for water. Variable ND filters allow you to dial in the shutter speed you want.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Graduated ND Filters** – For selective darkening—usually skies. No longer essential.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Flashlight or Headlamp** – For pre-dawn field sessions, & for getting around Tremont before sunrise and after sunset. (It's really dark there.)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Backpack, Roller Bag, or Belt System** – To carry your gear with you into the field. Roller bags are great when traveling or working near the car. A belt system is ideal for hiking: all the weight is on your hips, plus nothing gets set down in the mud. Think Tank is excellent for all three categories.

## FIELD GEAR CHECKLIST

Remember, you're in the mountains, so temperature and weather conditions can change quickly and often. Better to be prepared. Always dress in layers, and always be prepared for rain or mist.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Rain Gear** – Umbrella, rain suit, rain hat, boots, and a cover for your camera.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Gloves** – Preferably ones you that can still operate your camera while wearing.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Hat** – For sun shield, for warmth, for rain, or to block sun from your lens.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Ear Warmers** – Earmuffs or headband will keep you warm, especially mornings.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Ground Cloth & Knee Pads** – For lying or kneeling on the ground for macro work.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Flashlight or Headlamp** – For pre-dawn field sessions & for getting around Tremont in the dark. (Remember, it's really dark!)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Water Bottle** – Can be refilled at Tremont. No bottled water or soft drinks available at Tremont. Needed for water with meals in the field.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Thermos or Thermal Mug** – Coffee and hot water & tea bags available at Tremont, and first morning in the field.

## SUGGESTED READINGS

***Your camera manual.*** The better you know how your camera works, the more creative you can be. But this workshop will also be a great time to learn more about how and when to use some of the features on your camera. Just be sure to *bring* your manual so we can help you with your specific camera model.

**IMPORTANT UPDATE:** *John Shaw's Guide to Digital Nature Photography* by John Shaw. This is the long-awaited follow-up to John's classic *Nature Photographer's Complete Guide to Professional Field Techniques*. It is available in paperback and as an e-book. Even if you never read another photography book, please read this one. Invaluable.

***Digital Landscape Photography*** by John and Barbara Gerlach. While "landscape" is in the title, this highly readable book is a great guide to any outdoor digital photography. It has the benefit of being written to specifically take advantage of all digital has to offer the nature photographer. Available in paperback or as an e-book.

***The Ultimate Guide to Digital Nature Photography*** by The Mountain Trail Photo Team (including Bill Lea). The gorgeous photographs and clear text both explain and demonstrate the digital photographic techniques that will allow you to capture what you visualize. Paperback only.

***The Art, Science, and Craft of Great Landscape Photography, Second Edition (2020)*** by Glenn Randall. A great book for more advanced photographers, Glenn describes how weather, geography, and optics work, and how to incorporate them into your photography. He also describes his system for composing a photograph. Available as an e-book or paperback.

***Understanding Photography, Volume 1*** by Sean McHugh (Cambridge in Colour). Clear, thorough descriptions and illustrations of the fundamentals of photography. Covers cameras, lenses, filters, exposure, light, composition, lighting, and camera handling skills. Available as an e-book or paperback.

***The Landscape Photographer's Guide to Photoshop: A Visualization-Driven Workflow*** by Guy Tal. This book provides a solid foundation for digital landscape photography as an expressive visual art and for understanding how art and technology come together to serve a creative purpose. This thorough guide covers all things digital from pixels to processing with the goal of personal expression in photography. Available as paperback and e-book.

## Instructors

**Lead Instructor: Tom Vadnais** has been shooting strictly digital since November 2001. Although he takes many pictures in his day job as a consulting automotive engineer, his personal work consists primarily of landscape, nature, and travel images. Tom has studied

with such luminaries as John Paul Caponigro, Charlie Cramer, Bruce Dale, Jack Dykinga, Thom Hogan, Moose Peterson, the late Galen Rowell, Michael Reichmann, John Sexton, John Shaw, Charlie Waite, and Vincent Versace. Since 2004, Tom has been teaching photography, Photoshop, and printing workshops and classes, and has been giving talks and judging for numerous camera clubs throughout GA and TN. He has been president of two camera clubs—most recently, Georgia Nature Photographers Association. He enjoys the entire process from chasing the light in the field, through image preparation and printing once back home. His work can be seen on his blog and website at [www.tomvadnais.com](http://www.tomvadnais.com).

**Steve Zigler**, a native of the Midwest, has lived in Knoxville for more than 25 years. Steve's journey with photography began at the age of 11 when his uncle gave him a Pentax Spotmatic SLR. He still has that camera. Steve's experience evolved significantly in 2002 with the purchase of his first digital camera. Since then, he has extensively studied photography, including color, B&W, infrared, astrophotography, and time lapse. Like Tom, Steve believes in the power of learning from other photographers. Steve has studied with Marc Adamus, Guy Tal, Marsel Van Oosten, Alister Benn, Daniel Kordan, and others. As a Ph.D. chemist, Steve is fascinated by the combination of art and science that creates a photographic image. He travels extensively, focusing on amazing landscapes wherever he can find them in east Tennessee, the US, and across the globe. His simple mission is to touch the hearts and minds of people around the world through photography to help them connect with themselves, the planet, and the universe. Steve shares his infectious enthusiasm for photography through educational programs at the University of Tennessee, the Tremont Institute, and as a workshop assistant. Keep up with Steve and see some of his work on his website at [www.stevezigler.com](http://www.stevezigler.com) or on Facebook and Instagram.

**Todd Moore's** interest in photography started when his father gave him an Argus C31 Rangefinder when he was ten years old. After college he borrowed his father's Nikon and truly began his photographic journey. Many of his photographs have been taken within Great Smoky Mountain National Park. During his numerous trips to the Smokies, he has developed a deep fondness for the park, especially Cades Cove and the Middle Prong. Other interests include photographing birds of prey, especially the bald eagle. Whenever he can find the time you will find him in the field photographing wildlife and anything else that catches his interest. His images have been used by the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Gardens and other publications. During the day Todd owns and runs a computer service company and has more than 20 years of experience in Information Systems. Todd is also part owner of MK Controls Inc., a new company that produces camera control systems. Their first product, the Lightning Bug™, is used to safely photograph lightning. For more information on the Lightning Bug™ visit [www.mkcontrols.com](http://www.mkcontrols.com). Todd's photography site is [www.naturephotog.com](http://www.naturephotog.com).

**Sue Milinkovich** began photographing with her father when she got her first Brownie camera in elementary school. Her dad gave her the gift of "seeing" a photograph and both parents gave her a love of nature and an appreciation for the beauty to be found in our everyday world. Sue attended her first Tremont Photography Workshop in the fall of 2003 and hasn't missed one since, learning many skills from Will Clay, Bill Lea, Lori Kincaid, and Tom Vadnais. She has also attended workshops with John Shaw and Charlie Waite. Sue's favorite subjects in the Smokies are the buildings of Elkmont, Cades Cove, and the Middle Prong. While Sue enjoys capturing the larger landscapes, it is the intimate details of a landscape, structure, or flower that draws her attention. Sue also enjoys photographing children and frequently volunteers at events for children and families to photograph and

print pictures for families who cannot afford to have formal pictures taken. Sue's photographs have been used in a residential facility for children and adults with disabilities to create a more pleasant and relaxing environment. Sue belongs to three camera clubs in the Cincinnati area and has been giving presentations on composition and the use of light. Check out more of Sue's work at [www.susanmilinkovich.com](http://www.susanmilinkovich.com).

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