*Book Review*

**"the Adobe Photoshop Lightroom CC book for Digital Photographers"**

by **Colin Everingham**

The book is written by Scott Kelby, a photographer and well known writer of photography books. He has produced a book that explains the great features of Lightroom and unravels the mysteries of how to get the most from it. Step-by-step instructions are given, with illustrations. You can download many of his images so you can work along with him.

First up you learn that instead of opening a file you 'import' the file; instead of saving a file you 'export' the file. Guidance is given on creating presets to suit your own method of working. An example is how to open RAW images so they have the 'JPEG look' immediately. Then there are suggestions on how to organise your library of photos for quick access in the Library module. Throughout the book many more presets are suggested that speed up your work. Then there are suggestions for quick selection of images you wish to keep and those you want to discard.

The main reason for processing images in Photoshop and Lightroom is to adjust the exposure and to enhance the colour, contrast and sharpness. Sliders are used for these and are the same as in Photoshop ACR, but the layout is different. In Lightroom you open the Develop module and the Basic tab to do a lot of the work. The function of every slider is explained and illustrated. You are shown how to set White Balance, Exposure, Contrast, Highlights, Shadows, Whites, Blacks, Clarity, Vibrance and Saturation. Additionally illustrated are ways of making local adjustments to part of the image using the Adjustment Brush, Radial Filter, Graduated Filter, Red Eye Correction and Spot Removal brushes.

Also within the Develop module there are tabs for Tone Curve, Color, Split Toning, Detail, Lens Corrections, Effects and Camera Calibration. Each of these have their use for specific corrections. The Color tab allows adjustments to Hue, Saturation and Luminance for colours Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Aqua, Blue, Purple and Magenta. Sufficient for most corrections. The Detail tab accesses sharpening and noise reduction. The Lens Correction tab allows adjustments for lens distortion - vertical and horizontal to correct for converging verticals and horizontals - also rotation, scale and aspect ratio. Amazing what can be done with these. The Effects tab allows adjustments for Post-Crop Vignetting, Grain and Dehaze. The last of these is a recent addition and is surprisingly effective. The author explains and illustrates the uses for each of these tabs and the sliders within them. He even gives his opinion on the usefulness of them. Some he states are not very useful and then describes how to do the task better in another way.

As well as the Library and Develop modules, there are modules for Map, Book, Slideshow, Print and Web. Quite descriptive titles. The Print module allows you to print directly from Lightroom. This is not without a degree of difficulty, but the author leads the reader through the various steps. He describes how to create your own custom layouts and even offers links to some of his own layouts.

In Lightroom there are many shortcuts. Typically they take some finding but they are well explained in the book. Useful shortcuts include jumping to some of the modules, cropping, lights out and comparing before and after images. At the end of many of the chapters the author includes his Lightroom Killer Tips. These are based on his considerable experience as a professional photographer and are quite useful in speeding up your work.

One aspect of photography today is taking videos, often with modern still cameras. At present Lightroom can enhance these in a fairly basic way, only in the Library module. The Develop module allows more detailed adjustments but only for single images. A method is detailed where a single image can be extracted from the video, enhanced in Develop and then synchronised with the whole video clip to apply those enhancements to the full video. Clever.

In the last chapter of the book titled My Portrait Workflow, the author leads you through the steps he takes to enhance a portrait image. It crystallises many of the techniques he has explained earlier in the book and puts them into perspective.

What becomes evident are the advantages of using Lightroom. It combines many of the features of Bridge, ACR and Photoshop in one package. You do not have to keep switching backward and forward to start processing the next image. All the images in the folder or collection you are working on are in a filmstrip at the bottom of the Library and Develop modules. Easy to click on the next image or a selection of several if you want. In addition Lightroom is non-destructive. The original image file remains unaffected in the original folder on your computer. By default Lightroom saves all the adjustments you make to each image. To use the processed image you can print direct from Lightroom or export to a folder on your computer. You can then use this saved image as you want, sharing or emailing in the usual way.

That is not to say Lightroom can do everything. When the powers of Photoshop are needed, like processing with layers, blending layers and combining different images, that is the only way to go. It is easy to open an image from Lightroom in Photoshop, process it there, save it and return to Lightroom for further work on that processed image. The author states he now does 85% of his work in Lightroom itself. Enough said.

The book proves easy to read and understand, mainly because the author has an easy style, mixed with a little humour. The fact that each procedure is explained step by step and is illustrated with images makes it quite easy to follow and learn the technique.

A very useful book for anyone wanting to learn Lightroom. Many of the methods will work in earlier versions of Lightroom.