

At the September 14, 2017 meeting, we were treated to guest speaker Akemi Matsubuchi. As a professional photographer for over 25 years and an instructor at NAIT, she is more than qualified to speak about "Critiquing Images."

Akemi stressed that the vocabulary and tone of a critique are important. Feedback makes us vulnerable, and a critique should be a learning process. She shared a couple of catch phrases that could be used to lead into comments that may be interpreted as being critical: 'room for opportunity,' and 'moving forward.'

Akemi also described the four parts of a critique that are noteworthy:

- impact
- composition
- technical quality
- presentation.

The goal of a critique is to help a photographer learn and grow. It points out what the photographer is doing well, and what he/she could try differently.

Akemi packed a lot of information into a short presentation. I know we all look forward to learning more from her in the future.

Further Details about Four Parts of a Critique

Impact

Carefully interpret topics within a shared culture

- does the image grab or hold attention?

- is the image telling us something beyond the obvious; e.g., a story/visual information/uniqueness
- can the viewer understand the image and the message without the use of words?
- is the image inspiring/creative?
- did the image maker think outside the box?
- does it address the theme?

Composition

- is there a centre of interest/emphasis?
- is there a flow to the composition?
- does it include elements/principles of design?

Technical Quality

Consider form/shape/depth/texture/direction/mood & emotion

- lighting - is there dimension using light?
- does the chosen lighting style 'fit' the image?
- is there an accurate or artistic use of colour?
- if using selective depth of field, is the chosen focus point ideal?
- did the camera angle and lens selection make it an interesting image?

Presentation

"Says" something about your value of the image

- does the mat style and colour fit the image?
- are the cuts clean and is the matting straight?
- does it add value to the image?
- did the image maker show a high level of skill in post-processing?

Last year, Akemi Matsubuchi was one of our featured speakers at the club, giving a presentation on the intricacies of critiquing photographs. She then hosted a Critiquing Workshop where she applied her critiquing style to images from several of our members.

This fall Akemi was asked if she would repeat her workshop as last year's was very popular. She graciously accepted. So, on Monday, September 17 twenty one IACC members made the trek to a NAIT classroom each with an image to be evaluated.

Akemi is both an experienced commercial photographer and an instructor within the NAIT Photography Program where she critiques her students images weekly. We are fortunate that someone with her qualifications is willing to share her time and knowledge with our club.

It takes courage to have one's image critiqued by a professional in front of other club members. Akemi likes to establish a dialogue with the photographer which helps put them at ease. She asked the photographer about their thoughts and goals before addressing the image. Then she provided thoughtful insights using vocabulary and tone in her critique that were never negative.

Akemi commented on strengths in our images and places where we might have done things differently to improve or change the image to make it more appealing. Listening to critiques of both our own work and others is an excellent way to learn and grow as photographers.

Thank you Akemi.