Guest Speaker: Kelly Mellings, Artistic Director, Pulp Studios

By Heather Kuchma, IACC Program Chair

November 2014's guest speaker was Kelly Mellings, Artistic Director of Pulp Studios, based here in Edmonton, and the main focus of his presentation was the branding and marketing of yourself as a photographer. In Kelly's words "How you present yourself to the world is almost as important as the work that you create."

One of several topics Kelly discussed was around creating a website to showcase your work. He suggested that a portfolio/commercial website should always be separate from a personal website (one used to share images with friends and family). When trying to decide how you want to present yourself and your work consider trying some reverse engineering first; look to those who you aspire to be like or whose work inspires you, and consider how they present themselves and their work. A few things to keep in mind when creating your own website is the need to focus on where and how you want your work to be used and/or seen.

What makes you and your work different from anyone else's work? Sort your portfolio into galleries that will direct the user to the images he or she is looking for; e.g., portrait, editorial, event, still life, architectural, fine art. Keep the number of images in each category to a maximum of 10 to 20. When creating a web presence for your work, Squarespace, Wix, and WordPress were mentioned as a few services that offer ready-made website templates.

Kelly also reminded us about the importance of using appropriate file names and descriptions for better search engine optimization, in addition to the inclusion of meta data, copyright information, and creator information with each image file posted. And most importantly, the need to keep your online presence active and up-to-date.

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"Branding and Marketing Yourself as a Photographer"

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