



Public Presentation 2024 “A Photo Journey”

Iceland Through My Lens – Gareth Leung

Bhutan – Where Happiness Reigns – Mary Ann and Ray Anderson

Ethiopia – Journey to the Roof of Africa – Scott Bennett

Vietnam Trilogy – Andrzej Wodzinski

Egypt – Land of Wonders – Scott Bennett

Japan – Finding Our Ikigai – Susan Lemieux

On behalf of the members of the Toronto Camera Club, we would like to welcome you to the 2024 Public Presentation – 'A Photo Journey'.

This is an annual fundraising event for the club, so your interest and participation are greatly appreciated. The funds raised from this event will go toward the maintenance and repair costs associated with the ownership of our club building in mid-town Toronto.

In this photo journey, we present six audio-visual presentations, showcasing world travel photography from extraordinary locations, including the otherworldly landscapes of Iceland, the cultural and natural riches of Ethiopia, and the ancient wonders of Egypt. This photo journey continues to Asia, where we experience the traditional charms of Vietnam, the harmonious allure of Japan, and the Himalayan mysteries of Bhutan, the world's last remaining Buddhist Kingdom.

If you enjoy this presentation, please view the video on our website's main page to learn more about the history of the club and the benefits of a Toronto Camera Club membership.

Thank you and enjoy the show!

Kathryn Moore, President

Mary Ann Anderson, Public Presentation Chair

SCOTT BENNETT - A member of the Toronto Camera Club since 1997, Scott Bennett is a widely published photographer and writer. Born and raised in Southern Ontario, the arts have always played a vital role throughout his life. After completing a 3-year course in Classical Animation at Oakville's Sheridan College in 1983, he worked extensively in the animation industry throughout the ensuing two decades. During this time, the purchase of a 35mm camera piqued an interest in photography, which soon became an obsession.



After 25 years in the animation business, he decided to pursue photography full-time and now contributes photographs and articles to publications around the world. His passion for photography, both above and underwater, taken him to some of the most exotic places on the planet, from the heights of the Himalayas to the depths of Indonesia's coral reefs and the African savannah.

Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/scottbennett362>

Egypt – Land of Wonders - No other country on earth exudes the mystery and antiquity of early civilization quite like Egypt. Featuring a who's who of historic wonders, it has lured travellers the world over for millennia. I visited in August of 2021, with my 8-day trip encompassing Luxor, Aswan and Cairo. It quickly proved to be an exceptional and unique experience. Due to Covid and the scorching summer heat, sites usually jam-packed with tourists were virtually empty. As a result, I was able to experience and photograph Egypt's attractions without crowds or queues, an opportunity that will likely never come again. From the pyramids and the Valley of the Kings to the Temple of Karnak and Abu Simbel, it felt as if I had been transported the past before the days of mass tourism.

Ethiopia – Journey to the Roof of Africa - Despite its East African location, Ethiopia remains off the radar of mainstream tourism. The 10th largest country in Africa, its diverse landscapes are a far cry from the famine-ravaged image people maintain, encompassing everything from towering peaks and windswept highlands to tropical forests and scorching deserts. I visited on a 12-day photo tour, focusing on its unique wildlife and scenery. It was a journey of extremes, from the 4100m Sanetti Plateau in the Bale Mountains National Park to the surreal Danakil Depression, 125m below sea level. While not a traditional safari destination, Ethiopia is home to abundant wildlife. Rift Valley lakes brimmed with birdlife, and we were fortunate to encounter rare endemic species including gelada monkeys, mountain nyala and Ethiopian wolf. Along the way, local cultures proved equally captivating from mountain villages to the Afar people of the Danakil Depression. With low tourist numbers and its captivating blend of landscapes, nature and culture, Ethiopia provides a travel experience unlike anything in Africa.

SUSAN LEMIEUX - I have enjoyed taking family photos on my cell phone for many years, but my interest in photography really got started in 2019 after taking an online I-phone photography course. My hope was to improve my cell phone photography skills ahead of a planned move to Thailand. That move unfortunately was cut short due to Covid, but while it lasted, I discovered a love of writing about, photographing, and creating short videos of our adventures to share with family & friends.



In 2021, I dusted off my husband's Canon EOS60D DSLR that had not been used for over 10 years. Completely intimidated by the technology, I joined the Toronto Camera Club in 2022, and was able to take an introductory DSLR workshop put on by the club. This was followed by introductory and intermediate photography courses at Seneca College in 2022 and 2023, and an intrepid wade into Lightroom and Photoshop in early 2024.

My 30+ year career in marketing gave me lots of opportunities to develop creative strategies and to evaluate other people's creative efforts. However, it is a totally new and wonderful experience for me to be able to create actual images myself. Still developing my skills and trying to find my style, I attempt just about every photography genre in the form of competitions and workshops that the Toronto Camera Club offers.

Japan 2023, Finding Our Ikigai – While travelling around Japan in the Fall 2023, we discovered a beautiful Japanese concept called *IKIGAI* (*ee-kee-guy*). It refers to something that gives you a deep sense of purpose, satisfaction, and joy. The Japanese believe everyone has an Ikigai - a passion inside you, a unique talent that gives meaning to your day.

In writing about this concept, authors Hector Garcia and Francesc Miralles, determined that there were "*SIMPLE RULES THAT THE JAPANESE LIVE BY.*" They believed that if you follow these rules, you can improve your health and well-being - so you can discover and live your own Ikigai.

This essay is about how we interpreted some of these "rules" while travelling around Japan for 8 weeks on the main island, Honshu, and two of the smaller islands, Kyushu and Shikoku – experiencing Buddhist temples, traditional tea ceremonies, red Torri gates, art islands, pilgrimage trails, mountain sunrises, historic castles, volcanic walks, suspension bridges, war memorials, onsen hot springs, beautiful gardens, incredible markets, sake tours, and the oh so amazing food.

Did we discover our life's purpose while following these simple rules in this beautiful country? ... Still a work in progress. Did we find satisfaction and joy in the journey? ... Absolutely!

GARETH LEUNG - Gareth

is a passionate photographer with a deep love for nature. His work is distinguished by a unique perspective, meticulous attention to detail, and skillful use of natural light, imbuing his photographs with a sense of serenity.



Constantly seeking fresh locations and perspectives, Gareth's commitment to his craft is evident in his pursuit of new inspiration. Moreover, he is dedicated to conservation, using his photography to raise awareness about the importance of protecting the environment.

In addition to landscapes, Gareth is proficient in wildlife and nature photography, showcasing his technical expertise and creative vision to transport viewers to captivating realms.

Iceland Through My Lens invites you to embark on a captivating journey through the spectacular landscapes, majestic waterfalls, dynamic glaciers, primeval geothermal areas and undulating lava fields of southern Iceland. Immerse yourself in the raw beauty and unique natural wonders of this breathtaking land as you venture through Gareth's lens. Experience the inspiring sights and enchanting moments captured in vivid detail, transporting you to the heart of Iceland's mesmerizing beauty. Let each image ignite your imagination and evoke a sense of wonder as you explore the diverse and captivating landscapes of this Icelandic paradise.

ANDRZEJ WODZINSKI – Andrew is a Polish born, Toronto based, self-taught photographer exploring his creativity and artistic side through painting with light. He is drawn to various genres of photography. Black and white, high contrast photography and street photography appeal to him in particular, but he is also open to many other genres: travel photography, nature photography, macro and abstract photography, among others.

Andrew finds the process of making images meditative and relaxing.

Andrew is a member of Royal Photographic Society, Canadian Association for Photographic Art and Photographic Society of America. He holds the LRPS distinction (Licentiate of the Royal Photographic Society) and he is working towards the next level of distinctions: ARPS (Associate Distinction of the Royal Photographic Society).



Vietnam Trilogy - Vietnam, a country in Southeast Asia, with a turbulent history and a rich cultural heritage, was my great travel and photographic discovery of 2024. On my two trips to that country I spent over a month visiting its various regions. **Vietnam Trilogy** consists of three audio visual presentations, each focusing on a different aspect or region of Vietnam. From the immersion in the lives of indigenous Hmong people of Northern Vietnam, to the bustling streets of the capital city of Hanoi, to a more tranquil experience of the ancient cities of Hoi An and Hue, Vietnam captivated me. For a street photographer it offers many photographic opportunities - documenting the lives of the people in rural areas of Northern Vietnam, photographing people in the streets of its cities, whether candid or posed portraits, or capturing the colors and beauty of its old palaces and monuments. My hope is that this trilogy is but a start to a bigger project, and an inducement to make you consider visiting it on your next travel adventure.

MARY ANN & RAY

ANDERSON – Traveling for 40 years together, photography has always been part of this couple’s itinerary. The pair has visited over 45 countries. They are particularly attracted to independent travel and exploring less traveled parts of the world. Their curiosity is about the landscape and the culture of each country they visit. They extend their interest in people to learning about their religious practices and participating in their festivals and celebrations.



Ray and Mary Ann have been members of the Toronto Camera Club since 1992. For over 25 years, Ray and Mary Ann have been producing multimedia presentations of their journeys. Their previous Public Presentation shows included India, Nepal, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Tibet, Indonesia, Turkey, Guatemala, Peru, Namibia, Iceland, and Mongolia.

Bhutan – Where Happiness Reigns – Bhutan is the last remaining Buddhist Kingdom on earth. Nestled in the eastern Himalayas, and landlocked between India and China, Bhutan offers a pristine landscape, lush valleys, sacred mountains, fortress monasteries, and vibrant festivals, all seemingly untouched by the passing of time.

A deep-rooted belief in Mahayana Buddhism, and adherence to a traditional way of life, lie at the very heart of Bhutanese society. The country’s development is measured not in economic terms, but by Gross National Happiness.

Bhutan is the only place on earth to be officially carbon negative, meaning that the country removes more greenhouse gases from the environment than it produces.

2024 marks 50 years since Bhutan first opened its borders to foreign travelers. Mary Ann and Ray first visited Bhutan for 10 days in 2010, and they loved this country so much they returned for 20 days in 2022.

Mary Ann and Ray want to thank Heavenly Bhutan Travels, and especially their guide, Sajan, and driver, Namgay, for the amazing adventure!

**The Toronto Camera Club wishes to give special thanks to
our Club Members who donated prints, books, frames, and gift cards for this
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Max Skwarna, Ralph Grose, Victor Peters, William Reith

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and to the audience for their support of this Toronto Camera Club fundraiser!