

Focus On: David Smith

[It's been several years since we have featured any member interviews, but we have many new and interesting members that we would like to know more about. Our first article is on our most recent winner of the Billy Turner "Best Premiere" Award, David Smith.]



David, how did you get started in stereo photography?

I became really interested in photography when I got my first digital camera 10 years ago. About 5 years ago I was looking around on the internet and found a site that explained 3D photography. I did a few photos and built a stereoscope kit. It wasn't until I joined the DSS that my interest really increased. It was at the club that I learned about the wonderful Stereo Photo Maker software that has made side by side or anaglyph images so much easier. I enjoy the club, learning a lot, seeing what others have done, and the competitions are exciting and fun and give me renewed interest in taking more 3D photos.

How do you create stereo images (camera, film, software, etc.)?

I either use a single digital camera and cha-cha or 2 digital cameras that I have mounted on a sliding board. The 2 cameras aren't synced, I need to press both shutters buttons at the same time. I use Stereo Photo Maker software exclusively. At the club I learned how use the Multi Conversion functions, which is a real time saver. I either print side by side images and view on my stereoscope, load the prints into my homemade cabinet viewer or print anaglyphs and view with red cyan glasses. I also preview the images on the computer using a mirrored side by side viewer that is capable of viewing large images.

Does your job add to your photographic hobby (like being a graphic artist or mechanical technician)?

I recently retired from the Instructional Technology Department at Henry Ford Community College as a media technician. At the college I became familiar with many types of digital cameras.

What kinds of photos do you like the most (subjects or styles)?

Since I take photos using cha-cha or by using 2 side by side unsynced cameras, my subjects need to have little movement. I enjoy landscapes of the countryside the best.

What photographic tip could you pass on to other photographers – is there something you have learned that improved your own photos remarkably?

The artistic composition of 2D or 3D photos is similar, but I feel that the best 3D photos have separate and distinct subjects in the foreground, midground and background. So now when I am looking to shoot a 3D photo, I am always searching for scenes with visual depth.

What would you most like to learn about stereo photography?

I like the use of 2 digital cameras mounted on a sliding board but would like to learn how to sync the cameras to a single shutter button. I am also in the process of learning how much separation to use between the 2 camera lenses, depending on the distance to the subject. I do tend to like a little bit of hyperstereo, but I don't like it so much if it is overdone.

Of the photos you have taken, what is your personal favorite?

My favorite photo also won a 1st place at the DSS. At Greenfield Village, near the farm area I captured a shot of a receding fence line in the foreground, a large tree in the middle of the field and the farm house in the background. The 3 distinct objects make for a good 3D depth and the shadow of the fence as it recedes in the distance adds a visually dramatic air to the overall photo.

[Note: This image is part of the most recent ISU-CODE program, which will be shown later this season.]

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