



*The Newsletter of E.J. Peiker - Nature Photographer*

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Welcome to the quarterly newsletter from E.J. Peiker, Nature Photographer and [www.EJPhoto.com](http://www.EJPhoto.com). In this quarterly publication, I share with fellow photographers my photographic experiences, photo equipment reviews, photo and processing tips, and industry news. I also inform subscribers about upcoming workshops and products that I offer. Please feel free to forward this to other photographers and interested parties but please do so only by forwarding this newsletter in its entirety. All content is copyrighted by E.J. Peiker and may not be reproduced. If you would like to be added to the mailing list, unsubscribe, or access back issues, please visit: [www.ejphoto.com/newsletter.htm](http://www.ejphoto.com/newsletter.htm)



Hale Ma'uma'u Crater - Kilauea Volcano, Island of Hawaii (Sony a7R II, 70-200mm)

## Summer Travels

Since the last newsletter I've been on a number of photo specific travel shoots. I started the summer travel season in Iceland leading the Northern and Western Iceland Workshop for NatureScapes. You can read all about it in the last newsletter (<http://www.ejphoto.com/Quack%20PDF/Quack%20Summer%202015.pdf>) and see my updated Iceland page for all of the photos at [http://www.ejphoto.com/iceland\\_page.htm](http://www.ejphoto.com/iceland_page.htm).



Dynjandi, Iceland (D810, 15mm)

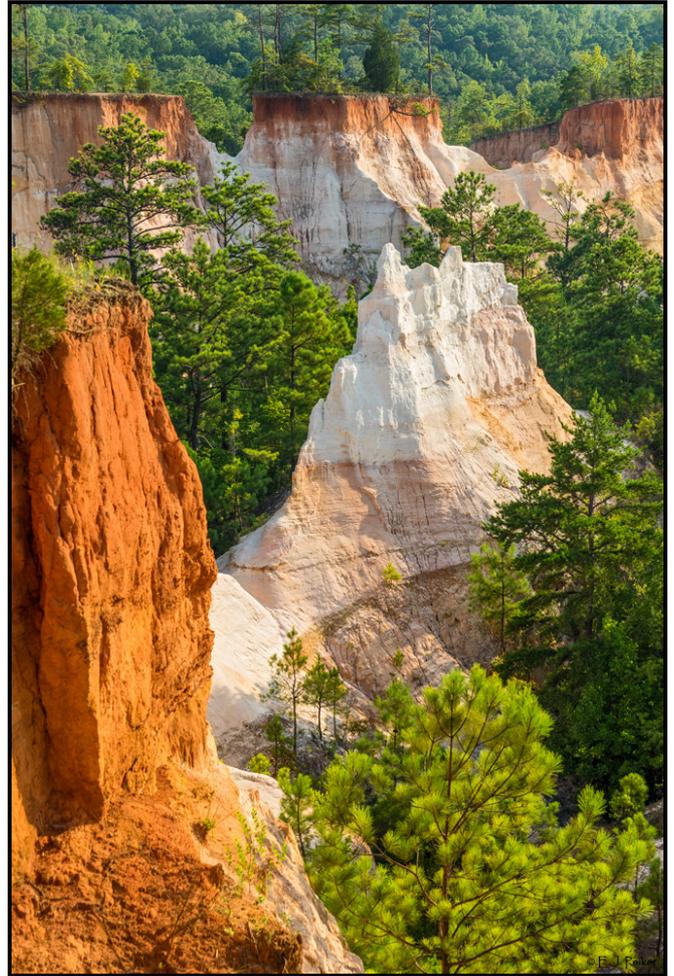
In late June I went to St Lucia in the southeastern Caribbean on a vacation. While this was not a photography trip, I did take my Sony a6000 and two lenses. I chose this island over the many others in the Caribbean due specifically to its volcanic origins giving it much more terrain than most islands in the Caribbean. The UNESCO site, The Pitons, did not disappoint and I took many photos from a catamaran of this beautiful site. All of the photos are viewable at [http://www.ejphoto.com/saint\\_lucia\\_page.htm](http://www.ejphoto.com/saint_lucia_page.htm).



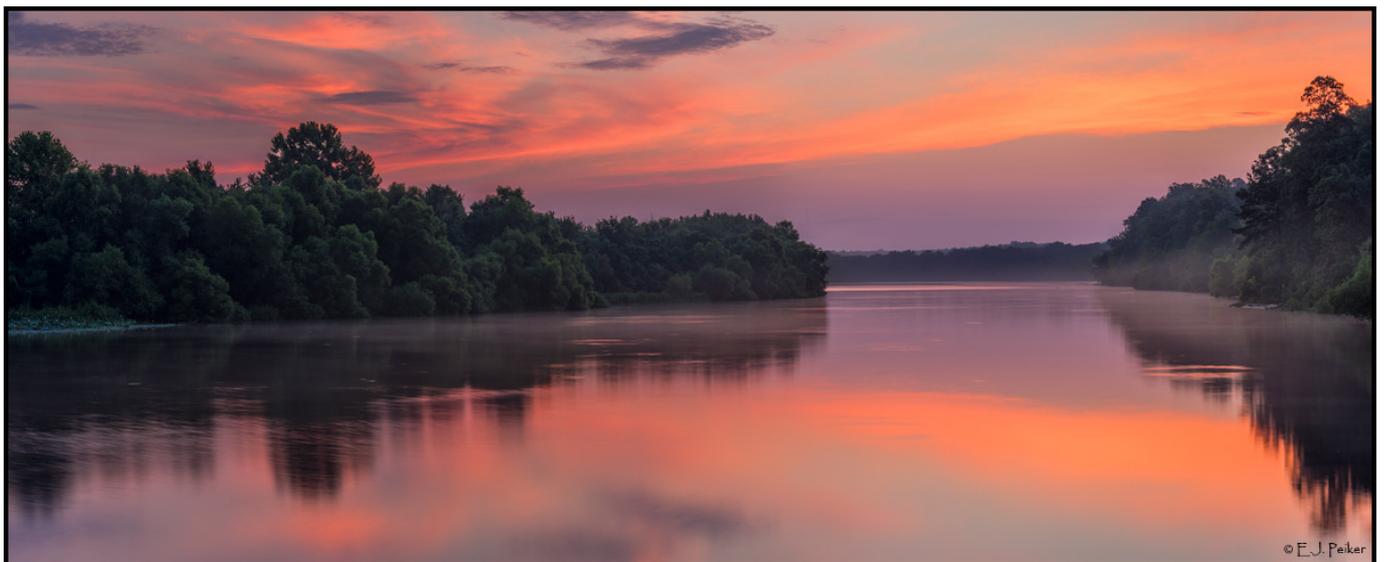
The Pitons UNESCO Site (a6000, 16-70mm)

After a month at home, which is unusually long for me in the 115 degree summer heat of Phoenix, I was going a bit stir crazy and decided to take a last minute, highly discounted, Delta flight to Atlanta to visit southwestern Georgia's Providence Canyon and the beautiful Chattahoochee River on the Georgia/Alabama border. This was to be the maiden voyage for the Sony a7R II camera but I did not receive the camera in time so I photographed it with the original a7R but it was the first extensive use of the KPS Research & Design T5 ballhead (see review of both the a7R II and KPS T5 later in this newsletter). While Georgia's claim that Providence Canyon is Georgia's own Grand Canyon is vastly overstated, it is a very attractive small canyon, by western USA standards, with lots of photographic potential. There are some very nice hiking trails and a few good overlooks that could use a little maintenance to provide fewer obstructions to actually seeing the canyon in its full glory. I found morning to give better light angles into the canyons from the overlooks and afternoons to be better for photography down inside the canyon. The Chattahoochee River separates Georgia from Alabama and is very picturesque. The views from the somewhat remotely located River Bend Park on the Georgia side south of Columbus, GA are fantastic, especially before dawn and the first hour or so after sunrise. Photos from both areas can be viewed here:

[http://www.ejphoto.com/georgia\\_page.htm](http://www.ejphoto.com/georgia_page.htm).



Providence Canyon, Georgia (a7R, 24-70mm)



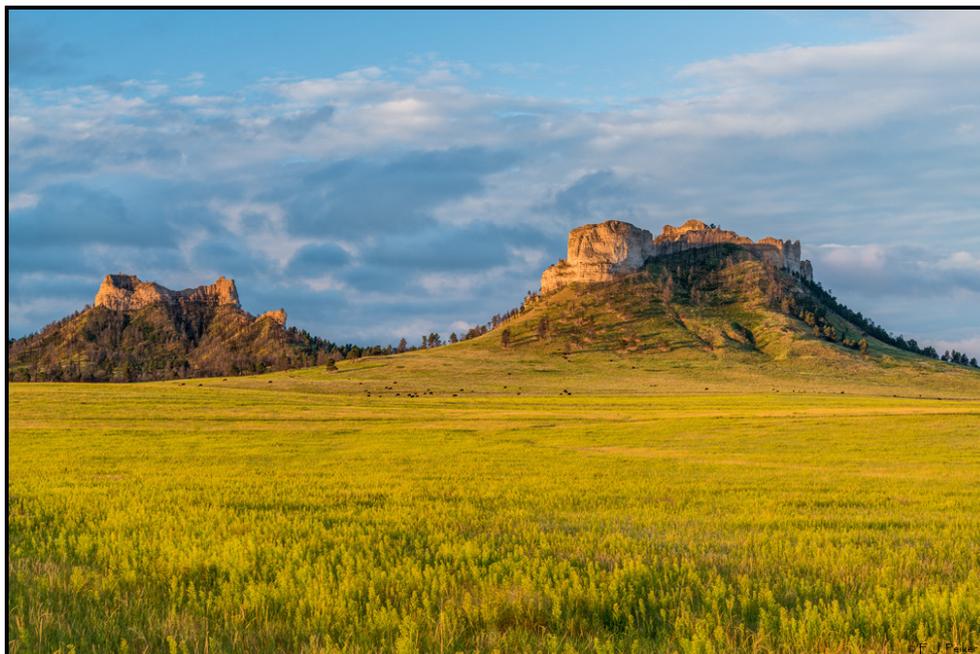
Chattahoochee River, Alabama/Georgia (a7R, 24-70mm)

One of the highlights of my summer was the completion of visiting all 50 states in the United States of America. All the way back in 5th grade in elementary school, all of the states were put into a hat and each student drew a state and then had to write and present a report on that state - I pulled Iowa out of the hat. Over a period of a few weeks we then listened to the reports from my classmates on most of the states. It was then when I made a goal for myself to one day visit all 50 states - that was in 1971. It took until August of 2015, 44 years later to complete the task by visiting the last

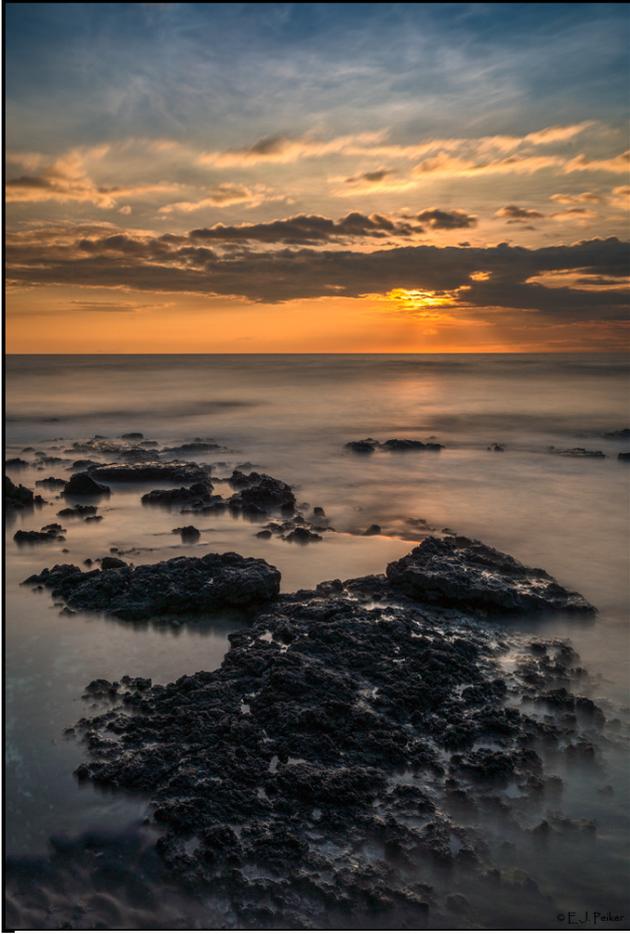


Theodore Roosevelt National Park, North Dakota (a7R II, 70-200mm)

two states on my list - North Dakota and Nebraska. In North Dakota, I thoroughly photographed the south unit of Theodore Roosevelt National Park as well as the beautiful Sunflower fields that cover big sections of the southwestern part of the state with the new Sony a7R II. I then drove to Nebraska to visit the grasslands and buttes of the Nebraska panhandle. North Dakota photos can be found here: [http://www.ejphoto.com/north\\_dakota\\_page.htm](http://www.ejphoto.com/north_dakota_page.htm) and Nebraska photos here: [http://www.ejphoto.com/nebraska\\_page.htm](http://www.ejphoto.com/nebraska_page.htm). I also spent some time in South Dakota but it was largely a rainout.



Nebraska National Forest, NE (a7R II, 24-70mm)



Anaehoomalu Bay, HI (a7R II, 1635mm)

Finally, in early September I paid a return visit to the Big Island of Hawaii after 13 years. This was my third visit to the biggest island in the Hawaiian Islands and my 11th overall visit to this chain of volcanic islands spanning 30 years and 4 decades. The trip was right in the middle of the Pacific Hurricane season and two Category 4 hurricanes were in the vicinity the whole time which made for very interesting and dramatic sunsets and lighting in general. Fortunately none of the storms made landfall and there was the added benefit of many cancellations which reduced the number of people on the island to a more manageable level than usual. I thoroughly explored much of the island and am very pleased with the photographic opportunities I had while there. Sunsets on the west coast of The Big Island are simply unmatched by any place on Earth that I have ever been. While I saw areas of slow flowing lava in previous trips, this was the first time I have ever seen the spewing fire of an erupting crater. The Big Island has it all from volcanoes to lush tropical rainforests to majestic waterfalls to historic areas to alpine areas on the world's largest mountain from base to top - Mauna Kea, to desert areas and much more. The photographic possibilities are endless. There are also many birds from spectacular endemics to fairly tame introduced species. The entire trip was photographed with the a7R II and various lenses. A completely new and revamped Big Island page can be found here:

[http://www.ejphoto.com/big\\_island\\_page.htm](http://www.ejphoto.com/big_island_page.htm)



Pu'uhonua o' Honaunau (a7R II, 16-35mm)

## Sony a7R II Field Report

Last quarter I previewed and described the main features of the new Sony a7R II 42.2 megapixel full frame (135 format) mirrorless camera. I have now had extensive use of the camera and file the following field report. Here is a quick rehash of some of the new features of the camera:

- A new back-side illuminated (BSI) 42.2 megapixel sensor that allows nearly 100% of the surface of the sensor to be used for light collection thereby not increasing noise due to the higher pixel count.
- In-body image stabilization allowing any lens, regardless of manufacturer to be stabilized
- 399 on sensor phase-detection autofocus points covering the vast majority of the full frame
- Largest image size viewfinder in a 35mm format camera ever made
- Fully electronic shutter capability and Electronic First Curtain shutter capability enabling no movement inside the camera at the time of exposure. The fully electronic shutter is totally silent for noise sensitive shooting situations.
- 5 frames per second in all AF modes
- Internally recorded 4K video (full frame and Super 35)
- Improved ergonomics including repositioning of the shutter button to a more natural position and a deeper hand grip
- Redesigned all-metal and totally rigid lens mount



Many of the original a7R usability issues have been addressed including the following:

- The camera now comes with a standalone battery charger and it even includes a second battery
- The very long power-on time after changing a battery has been slightly improved and the normal power-on time is now a total non-issue
- AF performance is now very quick and responsive and dramatically more accurate shot to shot than off-sensor phase detection systems used in DSLR's and there is never a need to AF Fine Tune or AF Microadjust the autofocus since focusing is achieved on the sensor plane.
- Auto ISO now gives you the option to select minimum shutter speeds that are appropriate for the focal length in use and also allows you to have the camera automatically change the longest shutter speed allowed based on one over double or triple the focal length to insure sharp shots with any lens.
- Auto bracketing was so ridiculously handicapped on the original a7R that it was almost useless. These restrictions have been eliminated allowing multiple stop brackets across multiple frames.

After extensive use of the new a7R II, including several trips where it was the only camera I used, it has become my only landscape photography body completely replacing my D810. I can simply see no reason to use a camera that weighs nearly twice as much, has less resolution and less accurate autofocus. Additionally, to complement the three native full frame E mount lenses that I own (16-35 f/4, 24-70 f/4, and 70-200 f/4), I can use any of my Nikon mount lenses including my world class Zeiss primes or any other manufacturer's lenses for that matter with the use of an adapter. Canon lenses can even be auto focused with the right adapter and have fully electronic aperture control (this capability is under development for Nikon lenses). In most shooting situations, you give up very little in AF performance with Canon lenses and since focus is done on the sensor plane, it is inherently more accurate than using those same lenses on a Canon DSLR.

The electronic shutter is a boon for sharpness. Similar to when when Nikon introduced an Electronic front-curtain with the D810, the a7R II ups the ante in image quality at the pixel level since there is absolutely no movement of the camera internally at the moment of shutter release as long as a delayed shutter is used or a cable release is used. Resolution, when using these shutter options and when the camera is coupled with first class optics such as the Zeiss prime lenses or Sigma Art prime lenses is the closest thing to a Phase One, Hasselblad, or Pentax medium format camera that I have seen or used but technique is absolutely paramount. One must be mounted on a very sturdy tripod, with a first rate tripod head fully tightened down and use the 2 second shutter delay with the electronic first curtain shutter. This is no different than the D810 or Canon 5Ds R for maximum image quality. Even the sometimes maligned Sony-Zeiss 24-70mm f/4 lens shines when shooting it like this but for really amazing results, use the Sigma 35mm f/1.4 Art, Sigma 50mm f/1.4 Art, and Zeiss 25mm f/2 for mind boggling results in this focal length range.

Adding a fourth user customizable button is also a welcome change. I have had a number of people plead for me to reveal how I have customized the camera. While this is a very individual thing, I have found the following to work well. You might notice a slight bias to a Nikonesque button layout with my customization:

#### Function Menu:

Upper 1 - Steady Shot Focal Length selection for non-Sony lenses

Upper 2 - Smile Face Detect

Upper 3 - Flash Mode

Upper 4 - Flash Exposure Compensation

Upper 5 - DRO/Auto HDR selection (I use this when doing JPEG Real Estate shoots)

Upper 6 - Steady Shot On/Off (make sure you turn it off when on a tripod)

Lower 1 - Zebra

Lower 2 - Grid Line

Lower 3 - Metering Mode

Lower 4 - Quality

Lower 5 - Focus Mode

Lower 6 - Creative Style

By far my most used functions are Steady Shot Focal Length selection when not using Sony lenses and Steady Shot On/Off

#### Now for the Custom Buttons (Keys):

Control Wheel - Not set (way too easy to accidentally roll it to allow anything to be assigned to it)

Custom Button 1 - ISO

Custom Button 2 - White Balance

Custom Button 3 - Focus Magnifier

Custom Button 4 - Peaking Level

Center Button - Focus Settings

Left Button - Drive Mode

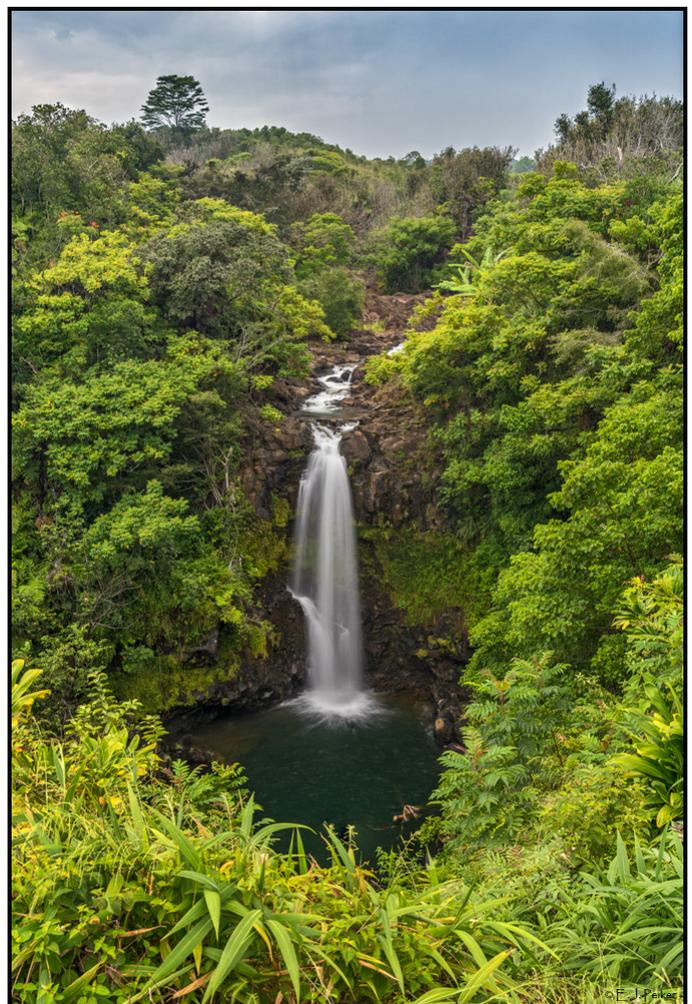
Right Button - Focus Area

Down Button - AF/MF Control Toggle

AEL Button - AEL Hold

AF/MF Button - AF On

Focus Hold Button - Focus Hold



Kamae'e Falls, HI (a7R II, 24-70mm)



Pu'uhoonua o' Honaunau (a7R II, 16-35mm)

Additionally I have turned off the AF function on the shutter button by Setting AF w/ shutter to OFF. This allows the camera to operate just like a DSLR with back button focus using the button in the AF/MF control, right under your thumb to perform autofocus functions independent of the shutter button - my preferred way of shooting landscapes.

Unfortunately, like the original a7R, the a7R II allows only shooting functions to be assigned to the function menu or custom buttons so it is still necessary to go menu diving for things like formatting a memory card, changing the time zone, or any other set-up type function. I would much prefer being able to assign anything I want, to the function menu. Alternately, Sony could allow a My Menu page like other manufacturers have done to place some of these often used, non-shooting type functions in one place. In general, the whole menu system is still a mess and, if anything, due to the addition of new menu options, is an even bigger mess than before. Even if you have memorized which menu all of the different things are located on the a7R, be prepared to relearn them on the a7R II since the addition of various items has moved others. Sony defenders will say that all camera manufacturers menus have to be learned and it just takes time. While true, this does not excuse incoherent menu layout methodology. Only Olympus is worse than Sony in this regard. Let's just take a

look at Autofocus related items - they should all be together on one or two pages of the menu tree but on the a7R II they are spread across 9 different menu pages across 4 major menu groups, in many cases non-contiguous pages. It's almost as if the firmware designers took all of the menu functions, wrote them on little pieces of paper, put them in a hat, and then mixed them up and pulled out one at a time and then constructed the menus in that order. Any experienced photographer, sitting down with the firmware designer could come up with a logical redesign of the menus in about an hour. It should not be necessary to memorize different places in the menu tree on different Sony cameras just to format a memory card...

While we are on the shortcomings of the a7R II, lets cover the other significant ones and please remember that one can construct lists of problems or poor design choices that are just as long for any camera on the market:

- Battery Life is absolutely abysmal. It is significantly worse than the a7R and I am getting from a low of 190 shots to a high of 260 shots per battery with WiFi turned off, about a 50/50 use of the EVF and the Rear LCD to frame shots, a 1 minute camera off delay and a 2 second image review. I usually have the in-body stabilization off since I am usually on a tripod. This is about 100 shots per battery worse than the a7R. Furthermore, the camera drains about 5% per day with the camera turned off where the a7R drains less than 2% per day. Fortunately, Sony included 2 batteries and a small external charger and the camera can now be used while charging so in a pinch you can use an external battery such as the ones made to recharge your phone on the road while shooting. Just put the battery in your pocket and run a USB cable to the camera.

- Sony continues to prioritize file size and card writing speed over image quality by forcing a lossy compression scheme on its users to make the files smaller and write to cards faster. There is no lossless compression or uncompressed file option. In most cases this isn't a problem but at ultra-high contrast edges and with some forms of night photography, it can be visible. It also results in a streaky shadow area when doing some more extreme shadow recovery and compromises the ultimate dynamic range of the camera by about 1 stop. Compared to the D810, a7R II files are nowhere near as malleable in RAW. While Sony has acknowledged this as a problem for some photographers, many of us are anxiously awaiting a firmware fix for this - but then again we have been waiting for this for a couple of years on the a7R too. It is simply mind boggling for a camera manufacturer that makes what are easily the world's best digital photography sensors to then degrade the image quality coming off of those sensors with a lossy software compression scheme. To further degrade ultimate image quality in extreme situations, Sony also knocks it's readout (before compression) down from 14 bits to 12 bits in just about any mode other than single frame modes using AF-S. In bracket, continuous focus, continuous frame rate and virtually any other mode, the camera is dropped to 12 bits. Again, it seems Sony is prioritizing frame rate and card write speed over ultimate quality on what is the best 35mm full frame sensor in the world - simply incomprehensible. (Late news: Sony has just announced a firmware upgrade in the future that will provide uncompressed RAW. While this eliminates the artificially degraded image quality, it does so with huge file sizes. The, translated from Japanese, news release is unclear on whether the 14bit compressed RAW option will be lossy or lossless. What is needed is lossless compression)

- While on card write speed, the card write speed is very slow compared to other cameras I have used. If you do a multishot bracket, you have to wait several seconds before you can do anything with those files on the rear LCD while the writing process completes.

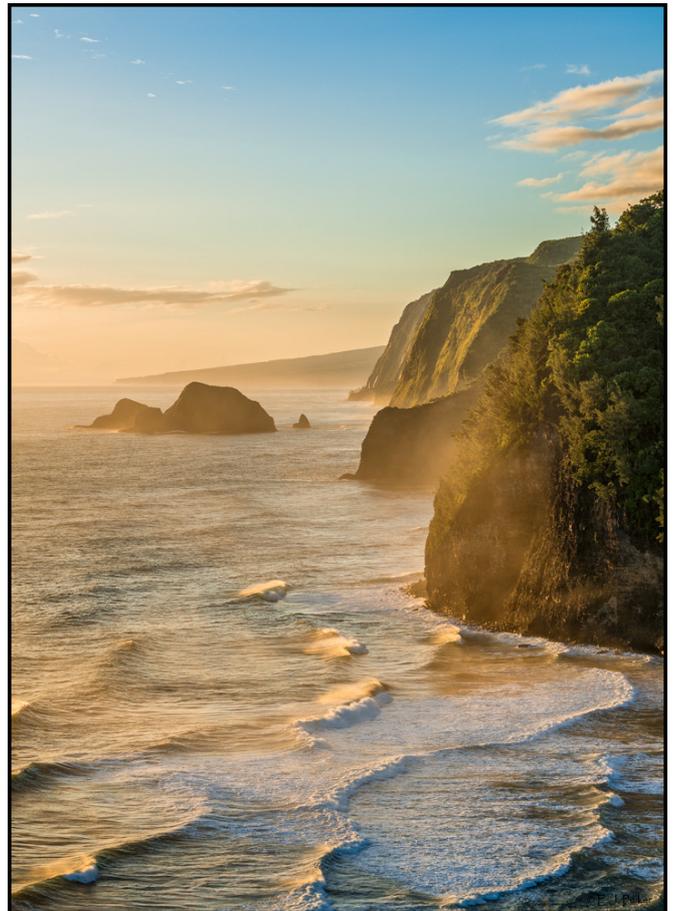
- The a7R II has gained weight. While there is still a major advantage in both size and weight to professional DSLRs, the difference isn't quite as big as it was from the weight perspective.

- Sony has replaced the hinged metal door access to the connector compartments with new rubber plugs in an effort to make the camera more moisture and dust resistant. Personally I prefer the much more elegant hinged metal doors to the rubber plugs which will likely come off and get lost at some point.

- As stated above, the viewfinder image size is now the largest of any 135 format camera on the market. This is fantastic for those that do not wear eye-glasses. But for those of us that do, the eye-relief isn't long enough to be able to see the entire viewfinder without having to significantly move one's head and eye around to see everything.

- The internal level in my camera is off by 0.8 degrees. Of all of the cameras I have had with internal levels, this is the first one that is not accurate and there is no documented way of calibrating it.

- As is the case with all Sony cameras, the exposure system is biased towards underexposure to protect



Pololu Valley (a7R II, 70-200mm)

JPEG file highlights. Even with Zebras set to 100% +, you still have nearly 2/3 of a stop of headroom above the initial appearance of zebras in the viewfinder available to you if you are shooting RAW. My technique is to adjust the exposure until I see the first signs of zebras and then add another 1/3 of a stop. I have never overexposed a RAW file doing this.

- The documentation that ships with the camera is still a joke and barely worth the paper it's printed on. there is a much better and more comprehensive online manual available on the Sony website.

- Some cameras have added a shutter option that allows one click to open the shutter and another to close it. This is preferable to the traditional Bulb mode where the shutter stays open as long as the button is held down. The a7R II has the traditional type bulb shutter capability but not the on/off toggle capability.

- The rear control dial on my camera sometimes does nothing, it seems if I have even the slightest downward pressure on the dial, it does not function - my thumb has to be squarely centered on the dial for it to function properly - not a problem now that I am used to it but it was initially disconcerting. I much prefer the more prominent and responsive rear dial of the a7R.

As I stated in my preview last quarter, the Sony a7r II ups the ante in mirrorless cameras with its 42 megapixel BSI sensor which retains the same excellent dynamic range and noise levels as its predecessor even though it could even be better if the camera stayed in 14 bit mode all the time and did not use lossy RAW compression. The new camera also addresses some of the biggest issues the original camera had - shutter shock is eliminated with a newly designed shutter and a full electronic shutter option and the poor autofocus system is replaced with one that performs dramatically better and is more accurate than any AF system on any DSLR without the need to calibrate focus with each individual lens. The relatively wobbly lens mount has been redesigned and made rigid. It also comes in an all metal weather-sealed body. As is usually the case, not every complaint of the original a7R has been addressed, most notably the poor battery life and the inexplicable lossy compression of RAW files. But it is an excellent upgrade that really propels this camera to the next level and brings it closer to medium format territory than any other camera on the market in a smaller form factor than full frame DSLRs. My D810 has not been touched since I received this camera!

### **KPS Research & Design T5 Ballhead**

Over twelve years ago, in this newsletter, I wrote that I felt that I had found the perfect ballhead - the Really Right Stuff BH-55. The BH-55 has been my primary full-sized ballhead for all of those years and it remains one of the very best heads ever made. In the intervening years, many new tripod heads with new features have been introduced. I have tested many of them and wrote about some of them including some highly touted ones but none of them provided me a superior experience to the BH-55... until now! About a year ago I got the opportunity to use both an Arca Swiss C1 Cube geared head and an Arca Swiss



D4. I loved the absolute precision of the geared nature of the C1 Cube but I did not like it's mass nor it's very slow approach to photography since all adjustments had to be made using the gears - there was no quick way to reposition the camera on the head. The D4 tried to solve this problem by providing both a geared function and a quick action function using a dual pivot design but the gearing in this head was somewhat difficult to use and despite trying several D4 heads, most had very inconsistent tension in the gearing between the pitch and roll axis. The cost of nearly \$1200 before putting a panorama clamp on top was also a turn-off for a product that still had some significant flaws. A few months ago I was introduced to the KPS Research & Design T5 geared ballhead. This head is a traditional ballhead that incorporates a geared system that allows you to fine tune pitch and roll similar to the Arca Swiss D4 but without the inconsistent tension between the axis. Unfortunately the first units only came with its own clamping system and I wanted to be able to use a panorama clamp on top. It seems that I was not the only photographer that requested this and KPS made available a model without a clamp that accepts different camera mounting platforms including those made by RRS. I did not hesitate to order the base head and then put a Really Right Stuff Panorama clamp on top.



The KPS head is manufactured and designed in Korea. This is not a cheap knock-off product. It is an innovative and uniquely designed extremely high end, precision manufactured tripod head and it is definitely not cheap in price or in quality. The head works just like any normal high end ballhead with a panning base for controlling the yaw axis and a universal ballhead positioning control for controlling pitch and roll (the two black knobs). Similar to some of the Arca Swiss models, a tension knob is integrated into the main control knob but unlike the Arca Swiss, it does not have the tendency to bind. In addition to these basic controls, it has a geared pitch and roll fine tuning control (the two red knobs) that can be used even when the head is fully locked to allow up to 15 degrees of left/right tilt (roll) and forward/backward tilt (pitch)



KPS T5 compared to RRS BH-55

allowing one to very precisely frame a subject as one would with a fully geared head like the Arca Swiss C1 Cube. You do not have to use these additional controls and ignore them completely when speed is of the essence making it function exactly the same as a traditional high end ballhead. But when a fraction of a degree can make or break a photo, one can first position the camera with the main controls and then with great precision, fine tune the framing. It is a fairly large head using a 44mm ball. The head is quite tall at 6 inches with the panorama clamp attached and it has a load capacity of 88lb. The T5 comes in an attractive box but the documentation must be downloaded. The non-clamp version costs \$730 with various different clamped versions available for more. When one

adds an RRS panorama clamp as I have done, the whole bullhead ensemble ends up at nearly \$1000. As stated, this is a premium proposition for the discerning photographer. The KPS T5 is available exclusively from Legio Aerium in the USA (<http://www.legioaerium.com/store/c2/KPS.html>).

In order for the gearing to work well and in a highly intuitive manner, it is important to properly position the head relative to your subject. I have found it to work best if the KPS logo is positioned toward the photographer (similar to the first picture of the T5 in its box). This puts the main ball control in perfect position for your left hand, the geared left/right tilt control in your right hand and the geared forward/backward tilt control in the front.

I have now used this head exclusively for my landscape photography for a few months including several longer trips where the head received very high utilization. I can honestly say that I would not want to go back to the BH-55 even though it is still one of the world's finest heads. I have actually sold my BH-55. The only minor shortcoming is that there is no way to know when the two geared tilt controls are centered other than counting turns of the knob from either stop. Since my a7R II's level is off by 0.8 degrees, I am constantly turning the left/right tilt or roll control in the same direction so I eventually end up at the stops and know that 15 half turns returns the control to center. In fact each half turn represents one degree of tilt in the controls. I can't immediately see a way for KPS to incorporate a centering indicator or mechanism though. This is a very minor thing though. Having the flexibility of quickly being able to frame a subject as a normal ballhead provides or being able to work slowly, deliberately and with extreme precision all in the same head is fantastic.

### **Sigma 150-600 f/5-6.3 DG OS Sport Lens**

For the last quarter I have been using the Sigma 150-600 f/5-6.3 OS Sport lens as my long zoom lens. I have written a very detailed full review accessible here:

<http://www.ejphoto.com/Quack%20PDF/Sigma%20150-600.pdf>

To summarize my findings, the new Sigma 150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS Sport lens is quite impressive, especially given the price point of \$2000. Image quality surpasses the quality level of other zooms that venture out into the 400-600mm range while maintaining very good autofocus capability despite the relatively small maximum aperture of f/6.3 at the longer focal lengths. It is especially well suited for crop-factor cameras such as the Nikon D7200 or the EOS 7D Mark II which avoid the lens' biggest weakness - the corners. But even with a full frame camera capable of cropping the image circle slightly like the Nikon D810 (1.2x crop) or the Canon EOS 5DS/5DSR (1.3x crop), the worst part of the lens can be avoided while maintaining a very high megapixel image. Adobe's latest RAW converters, Camera Raw 9.x and Lightroom 6.x, have excellent profiles built in to largely eliminate the corner issues that the Sigma 150-600 Sport has even on full frame cameras when using the entire frame. Excellent image quality in a super tele zoom like this does come with the penalty of weight though. The lens, with the integrated



enhanced foot is approximately the same weight as the Canon 500mm f4L II or the newly introduced Nikon 500mm f/4E VR even though they give you 1 1/3 stops more light gathering capability at 500mm. Physically, the Sigma lens is substantially smaller though (and dramatically less expensive) making it easier to pack while reaching all the way out to 600mm without the large drop in image quality at the longest focal lengths that is so common with super-tele zooms. In a world of increasing airline regulations on what can be brought on-board as carry-on luggage, the smaller size in a lens capable of reaching 600mm is important. Comparing it to something at least in the same general price range, the 80/100-400mm class lenses, it outperforms them for image quality while having significantly more reach but at a 1/3 stop penalty in light gathering and a substantial weight penalty. In the end, Sigma has a real winner on its hands and at a very aggressive price for what the lens delivers. I will most definitely be keeping mine and it is likely that my Nikon 500mm f/4G and 80-400 f/4.5-5.6G lenses will see a lot less use, especially when I travel.

### **2015 Annual Gear Blow Out - Two Great Items Left!**

Over the years I accumulate quite a bit of photo gear, some simply for review purposes, others have been superseded by different gear, or some, I just don't use enough to keep. Whatever the reason, I typically build up gear that I need to let go allowing others to get really good gear at a significant discount. Annually I offer some of this gear for sale. All gear is USA gear and no grey market gear is offered for sale. All items are for sale in the USA only (all 50 states but not US territories). All prices include UPS or USPS ground shipping within the 48 contiguous United States. Alaska and Hawaii are a bit more. PayPal is accepted with no surcharge! For comparison, new prices cited are based on current selling price for the item at B&H Photo Video. If you are interested in purchasing, please contact me at [ejpeiker@cox.net](mailto:ejpeiker@cox.net)

#### Nikon AF-S Nikkor 14-24mm f/2.8G ED

Lens Condition - lens like new, plastic lens cap, minor dings in plastic

Asking Price: \$1375

New Price: \$1997

Accompanying items: All original items shipped in original Nikon box

Reason for selling: Since I own the Zeiss 15mm f/2.8, 21mm f/2.8, and 25mm f/2, this lens is almost never used.



#### Nikon AF-S Nikkor 28mm f/1.8G

Lens Condition - lens like new

Asking Price: \$480

New Price: \$697

Accompanying items: All original items shipped in original Nikon box

Reason for selling: Since I own the Zeiss 25mm f/2 and Sigma 35mm f/1.4, this lens is almost never used

## The Best Lenses For Your Nikon and Canon Cameras

A few additions and changes were made this quarter. The Sony 28mm f/2 was added as a high quality moderately priced basic wide angle lens. The Sigma 150-600 Sport lens replaced Nikon's 200-400 f/4 VR II as it is sharper at longer focus distances, has a larger zoom range and is significantly less expensive. In the case of Sony, where equivalent focal length range lenses do not yet exist, most of the lenses that are in either the Canon or Nikon columns will perform very well with the appropriate adapter. Canon lenses will even autofocus, especially on the a7R Mk II with it's 399 phase detect autofocus points. Since there is no Sony long Macro for E-mount, I have added the 90mm Macro in the Long Macro category even though it is a medium Macro. Note that this is one of the very finest lenses ever tested by third part testing labs. Finally, I anticipate some of the best lenses to be replaced by the new Zeiss Milvus lenses in the future.

Lens Category	Canon EF Mount	Nikon F Mount	Sony (F)E Mount
Ultra Wide Prime	Zeiss 15mm f/2.8 ZE Canon TS-E 17mm f/4	Zeiss 15mm f/2.8 ZF.2	N/A
Extra Wide Prime	Zeiss 21mm f/2.8 ZE Canon 20mm f/2.8*	Zeiss 21mm f/2.8 ZF.2 Nikon 20mm f/1.8*	N/A
Standard Wide Prime	Zeiss 25mm f/2 ZE Canon TS-E 24mm f/3.5L II	Zeiss 25mm f/2 ZF.2 Nikon 24mm f/1.4G*	Zeiss Batis 2/25 Sony 28mm f/2
Moderate Wide Prime	Sigma 35mm f/1.4 Zeiss 35mm f/1.4 Distagon	Sigma 35mm f/1.4 Zeiss 35mm f/1.4 Distagon	Zeiss Loxia 2/35 Sony-Zeiss 35mm F2.8
Standard Prime	Zeiss 55mm f/1.4 Otus Sigma 50mm f/1.4 DG Art	Zeiss 55mm f/1.4 Otus Sigma 50mm f/1.4 DG Art	Sony-Zeiss 55mm f/1.8 Zeiss Loxia 2/50
Portrait Prime (short telephoto)	Zeiss 85mm f/1.4 Otus Canon 85mm f/1.2L II	Zeiss 85mm f/1.4 Otus Nikon 85mm f/1.8G	Zeiss Batis 1.8/85 Sony FE 90mm f/2.8 Macro
Medium Telephoto	Zeiss 135mm f/2 Apo Sonnar ZE Canon 135mm f/2L	Zeiss 135mm f/2 Apo Sonnar ZF.2 Sigma 150mm f/2.8 Macro OS	N/A
200mm Prime	Canon 200mm f/2L Canon 200mm f/2.8L II	Nikon 200mm f/2G Nikon Micro Nikkor 200mm f/4ED	N/A
300mm Prime	Canon 300mm f/2.8L IS II	Nikon 300mm f/2.8G VR Nikon 300mm f/4 PF	N/A
400mm Prime	Canon 400mm f/2.8L IS II Canon 400mm f/4 DO II	Nikon 400mm f/2.8E VR	N/A
500mm Prime	Canon 500mm f/4L IS II	Nikon 500mm f/4E VR	N/A
600mm Prime	Canon 600mm f/4L IS II	Nikon 600mm f/4E VR	N/A
800mm Prime	Canon 800mm f/5.6L IS Sigma 800mm f/5.6APO DG	Nikon 800mm f/5.6E VR Sigma 800mm f/5.6APO DG	N/A
Wide Angle Zoom	Canon 11-24mm f/4L Canon 16-35mm f/4L IS	Nikon 14-24mm f/2.8G Tamron 15-30mm f/2.8 Di VC	Sony-Zeiss 16-35 f/4
Standard Zoom	Canon 24-70mm f/2.8L II Tamron 24-70mm f/2.8 Di VC	Tamron 24-70mm f/2.8 Di VC Nikon 24-70mm f/2.8G	Sony-Zeiss 24-70 f/4
Telephoto Zoom	Canon 70-200mm f/2.8L IS II Canon 70-200mm f/4L IS	Nikon 70-200mm f/4G VR Nikon 70-200mm f/2.8L VR II	Sony 70-200 f/4 G
Super Telephoto Zoom	Canon 200-400mm f/4L 1.4x Ext Canon 100-400 f/4.5-5.6 II	Sigma 150-600 f/4.5-6.3 Sport Nikon 80-400 f/4.5-5.6G VR	
Long Macro	Sigma 150mm f/2.8 Macro OS	Nikon Micro Nikkor 200mm f/4ED	Sony 90mm f/2.8 Macro

## Upcoming Workshops

I will again be offering my Phoenix Area Winter Duck Photography Workshop in January. This 3-day DuckShop™ will put you right where you need to be to walk away with breathtaking images of an array of ducks, waders and other species at some of the best winter hot spots in the U.S.!

The Phoenix, Arizona area is a very popular winter home for many species of waterfowl and they'll be all decked out in full breeding plumage! Possible species include Northern Pintail, American Wigeon, Ring-necked, Gadwall, Northern Shoveler, Canvasback, Lesser Scaup, Mallard, Green-winged Teal, Redhead Ducks and many other bird species. Find out more and/or sign up here:

[http://www.naturescapes.net/workshops/arizona\\_duckshop\\_2016](http://www.naturescapes.net/workshops/arizona_duckshop_2016)



As promised, the Northern Iceland Expedition is back for 2016. Join NatureScapes.net founder and Technical Editor E.J. Peiker and Iceland's world renowned Ornithologist and photographer Jóhann Óli Hilmarsson on a very unique and diverse Northern Iceland Workshop. This workshop has it all, from the most spectacular and powerful waterfalls in all of Europe, to one of the richest waterfowl breeding lakes in the world, to cliff dwelling birds such as the colorful and comedic Atlantic Puffins, Razorbills, Murres and many other sea birds and Arctic species, it is also one of the most spectacular landscape spectacles on the planet... For all of the details, see the following link:

[http://www.naturescapes.net/workshops/iceland\\_adventure\\_arctic\\_2016](http://www.naturescapes.net/workshops/iceland_adventure_arctic_2016)

[ic\\_2016](http://www.naturescapes.net/workshops/iceland_adventure_arctic_2016)

Also as promised, Greg Basco and I will be holding a Costa Rica Tropical Landscapes workshop in 2016. Tropical areas have stunning landscapes but capturing them can be difficult. In addition to the standard challenges of depth of field, exposure, and processing that face the landscape photographer anywhere in the world, the tropical landscape photographer must learn to see compositions in the lush but chaotic environments of tropical rain forests and cloud forests. World-renowned professional nature photographers Greg Basco and EJ Peiker will be with you every step of the way in this specially designed tour to help you improve your landscape photography and capture fantastic images of

some of the most magical places in the amazing country of Costa Rica... All of the details can be found here: [http://www.naturescapes.net/workshops/tropical\\_landscapes\\_2016](http://www.naturescapes.net/workshops/tropical_landscapes_2016)



### **Private Photography Instruction and Consulting Services**

In addition to the duck photo workshops that I launched over 10 years, I also offer private instruction in Wildlife and Landscape photography at the place of your choosing. These private workshops are of the one on one variety (or two on one). Clients may schedule time in 4-hour time blocks for either classroom or field sessions. With just two people, a number of shooting locations become possible that aren't possible for larger groups and thereby making it possible to photograph some species or locations that are not attainable with larger groups. More specific instruction, based on the client's specific needs, can be given

using this delivery method in either the classroom or in the field. For more information please see the following link: [http://www.ejphoto.com/duckshop\\_private.htm](http://www.ejphoto.com/duckshop_private.htm)

I also offer both photo equipment and computer workstation/digital darkroom consulting services. This allows me to combine my 27 years of work in the computer industry with my lifetime of photographic experience and provide services at a technical level that are hard to find elsewhere. Contact me for rates and specifics or visit my rate sheet:

<http://www.ejphoto.com/Quack%20PDF/Rate%20Schedule%202014.pdf>

## **Photographic Services**

My list and rate table of photographic services can be found here:

<http://www.ejphoto.com/Quack%20PDF/Rate%20Schedule%202014.pdf>

## **Facebook Page**

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/EJ-Peiker-Nature-Photographer/150804446733>

## **Newsletter Info**

This is the 13th year of my quarterly Newsletter. I try to cover the wide array of digital imaging and products from mirrorless to medium format and everything in between. Throughout the years, the information contained herein has always been free and will continue to be free despite the many hours and significant equipment and travel expense it takes to put this together. Most of the products I have tested and reviewed, I have purchased myself; some have been made available to me for review and evaluation by loyal readers and a few have also been made available to me by the manufacturers themselves. While the newsletter is free either via eMail subscription or via accessing it on my website at

<http://www.ejphoto.com/newsletter.htm>, if you find the information useful to you and you do wish to donate for my continuing efforts, you may do so via PayPal and sending the funds to [ejpeiker@cox.net](mailto:ejpeiker@cox.net).

## **Disclaimers**

E.J. Peiker conducts consulting services and product design services for a number of photographic product companies. Those that know me know I would not endorse a product even for compensation if I did not feel it were a superior product.

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E.J. Peiker is a co-founder of [www.Naturescapes.net](http://www.Naturescapes.net) and leads photographic workshops under the NatureScapes Certified Workshops banner

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