



International Association of  
**PANORAMIC PHOTOGRAPHERS**  
e-Monitor

August 2013 Volume 3, Issue 12



## Yosemite's Gates of the Valley

In this, the final issue of the e-Monitor, we examine the panoramic photography of San Francisco and Yosemite National Park.

### Editorial Staff:

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Dawn Snow, Creative Director, design and production.

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### IAPP e-Monitor

The IAPP e-Monitor was designed to give our membership a quick look at what is going on with the IAPP and with panoramic photography in general. It was originated to give our membership quicker information while they await the release of the PANORAMA.

We welcome any and all articles and photos from IAPP members for inclusion into the IAPP e-Monitor. This is a publication for the IAPP, by the IAPP, and about the IAPP.

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In last month's installment we had visited the Hoh rainforest, several Pacific beaches, Multnomah Falls and the Avenue of the Giants.

After leaving Washington and Oregon we dropped south into California and visited San Francisco. One of the main attractions for panoramic photography was, of course, the Golden Gate Bridge. We arrived late at night and got up early to visit the bridge near first light in the hopes of catching some fog around the base of the bridge. No luck on the fog and, from the area we were photographing, the ironwork was quite prominent and, since there was little color, I decided to simulate the view of the bridge from decades ago by adding a sepia filter for the "old school" look. Returning to the bridge that evening I found a different location and concentrated on the evening

lighting and came up with the image on bottom of this page.

Another location we photographed was the Conservatory of Flowers. I have a passion for orchids and they had quite a wide variety of them. We could not take tripods into the Conservatory but there was no limit to the number of photos that could be taken with a smartphone. The orchid photos were taken handheld with an iPhone 5. While in San Francisco enjoy the food, it is worth the trip just for the dining.





Conservatory of Flowers



# Yosemite National Park

From San Francisco we headed east towards, what I consider, one of the best, if not the best of the national parks - Yosemite. According to John Muir, "It is by far the grandest of all the special temples of Nature I was ever permitted to enter". Yosemite is visited by 3.5 million people each year and summer is the most popular time for a visit. In the spring the waterfalls are at their best following the melting of the winter snow, and so is its main river, the Merced.

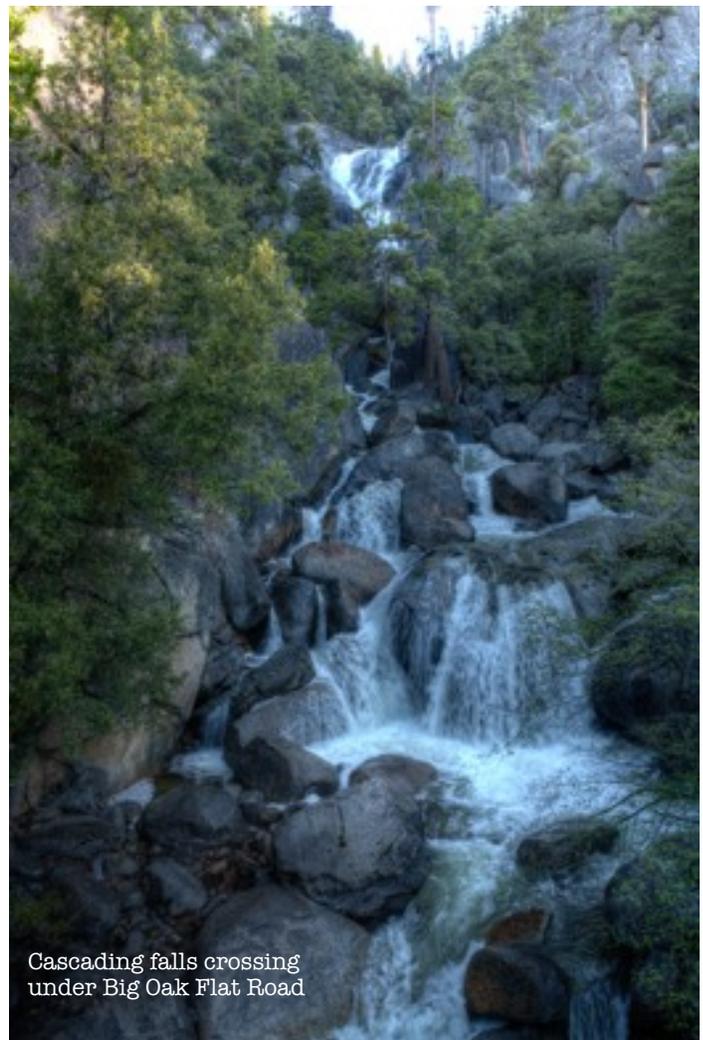
The grandeur of the giant granite monoliths of El Capitan and Half Dome define Yosemite in a visual sense and dominate the valley as nothing else can. Half Dome, cut by glaciers long ago, is among the most recognized features of Yosemite and, indeed, of all the national parks. It is visible throughout the valley and from high above, along the rim of valley itself.

As impressive as the walls of the valley are, it is the waterfalls that cascade from them that draw so many to Yosemite. These impressive flows of water are easily visible from your car as you drive slowly along the valley but are easily photographed from the various pull off areas on the side of the road. In fact, every time we pulled off to set up for a photograph, several cars would stop and wait to see where we were going to shoot, and then they would quickly grab their smartphones and take the exact shot. Of course, the difference between their's and mine was that I was shooting with a 300mm lens on my camera and both were set up on the GigaPan Epic Pro. As with the photograph of Multnomah Falls, when the GigaPan and big lens came out, so did the questioning tourists. We had a number of panoramic photos that we had taken to Everett for the Photo Contest and, as David Orbock always does on his trips to Europe, we handed a panorama that we had shot elsewhere to people who were curious about these long and wide photographs we were taking.

The first waterfall we came upon was one that was just outside of the valley that crossed under Big Oak Flat Road. While not high, it was a cascading flow and the sound of the first waterfall was invigorating and a good prelude for what was to come.



Half Dome target for the GigaPan and 300mm lens



Cascading falls crossing under Big Oak Flat Road

Once into the valley, the first falls you come to is Bridal Veil Falls. It is a beautiful vertical flow of 620 feet (188 meters) and is a picture-perfect waterfall. If you enter the park in the early morning, Bridal Veil Falls is shadowed by the surrounding peaks and is



Bridal Veil Falls

not as picturesque as it will be later in the day when the sun illuminates the flowing water.

As you continue along the Southside Drive the Upper Yosemite Falls comes into view across the valley floor. It is, perhaps, the most

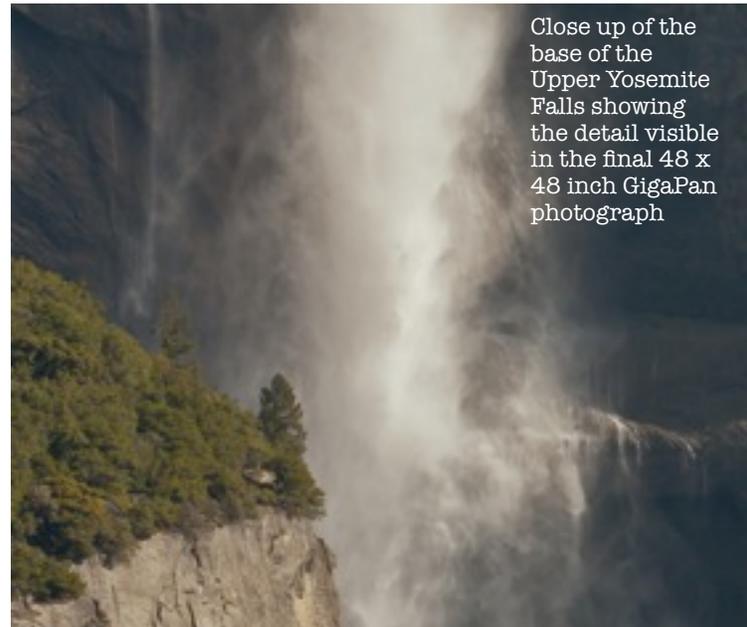


Upper Yosemite Falls being set up for a GigaPan shot

impressive of the falls but from this location you cannot see the lower section so you must wait until the return trip when you take the northern road in order to see it at its best. This view of the Upper Falls was inspirational enough to make me get out the GigaPan Epic

Pro and put the 300mm lens on the camera and get the images needed for an exceptionally large photograph. At 300 dpi the entire photo is about 48 x 48 inches. Included here is a close up view of the base of the Upper Falls that is part of that giant image.

Continuing eastward along Southside Drive the next sight you come upon is the massive granite face of El Capitan with the Merced River in the foreground. The morning light catches the rock



Close up of the base of the Upper Yosemite Falls showing the detail visible in the final 48 x 48 inch GigaPan photograph

wall and provides a nice contrast to the shaded rapids of the river. It really would take at least a week to visit all the important vistas that can easily be found in Yosemite. And to locate all the hidden wonders that could be found can easily take a number of seasons to capture a near complete collection of photographs. But, to take



El Capitan and the Merced River

in as many wonders as you can in one day you must stick to the valley drives that make a continuous route from the entrance of the park, to the Visitor's Center near the eastern end of the loop. From there you can head back west along the valley floor, nearly paralleling the Southside Drive but this time on the north side of the Merced River. It is on this drive that you find the full view of the Upper and Lower Yosemite Falls.

As mentioned earlier, the Upper Falls can be seen throughout the drive through the valley and each location presents this waterfall in a slightly different perspective. In some areas the meadows are the main focus with the waterfall hugging the cliffs in the distance. In others, the rock face is dominant with the falls cascading down them as icing on the cake. But, about one third of the way on the Northside Drive back from the Visitor's Center you will find the definitive positioning of the falls so that both the Upper and the Lower Falls are captured in one shot. And it is here where a number of compositions can be

The drive through Yosemite Valley is almost choreographed for impressing visitors. It starts with smaller falls that peak the wonderment. Then Bridal Veil Falls catches you up in its excitement. The granite facades of El Capitan



found and images taken. It is also here where you can feel the power of Yosemite near the base of the Lower Falls as it thunders and vibrates the ground beneath your feet and tripod, and the spray from a football-field distance still soaks you and causes you to cover your equipment.



Three rock climbers and their gear on El Capitan

suddenly come up close to the base of the 3,600 foot facade of El Capitan. It's just there! So large and imposing that it cannot be taken in from your vehicle. Dozens of cars are stopped and people are standing across the road from this vertical mass that shoots straight up in front of them, to a height of two thirds of a mile. Your eyes strain to see what others around you have already located - tiny specks against the jagged folds of granite. They are rock climbers, dwarfed by the wall of El Capitan. People who, in perspective, are smaller than an ant at your feet. Here, at last, is how we measure up to Yosemite's majesty. You feel happy to be in this park - on the ground. As you near the end of your round trip through the valley of Yosemite you look back in appreciation of the wonders you have witnessed, and the

and Half Dome solidifies the massive presence of this natural cathedral and, as your journey nears its end, the majesty of Yosemite Falls crashes against your senses like the finale of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. What more could possibly be left to the eye after all this? As you drive westward along Northside Drive and are winding down from Yosemite Falls you

valley gives you a parting gift, something to remember it by. It is the single image that sums up the valley in all its splendor - a scene epitomizing Yosemite National Park - The Gate of the Valley, as seen on page one of this, the last, issue of the e-Monitor.

Bryan A. Snow



Base of the Upper Yosemite Falls

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# Thoughts on the past, present and future status of the International Association of Panoramic Photographers.

An Editorial by Bryan Snow

As the production of the e-Monitor monthly electronic newsletter comes to a close, I reflect on my association with the IAPP and the successes and lack of success that I have been a part of for several years. There is a great deal of good surrounding this organization but, as with many groups today, times are a-changing, and, to stay viable, this organization must change in order to survive. The old days of panoramas being strictly a printed piece that is able to take in the grandeur of a landscape much more capably than the normal 8 x 10, 11 x 14, or 16 x 20 prints, are behind us and different mediums have been added to the old to make up a much different realm that can be denoted as “panoramic photography”.

When Dawn and I attended our first IAPP conference in Austin back in 2007 we were surrounded by people who had been specializing in photographing panoramas for decades. Large printed

panoramas lined the walls and were unrolled on the floor for people to marvel at the amount of detail that was available from this medium. This group seemed to be universally dedicated to their craft and to strengthening the bond between like-minded panoramic artists throughout the world.

Panoramic photographers have always been a niche group, a small band of artists who, for whatever reasons, saw the world as longer or wider, or higher than the normal photographer. The world just looked different to them and their images were fascinating to the rest of the world, who just saw that world as being made up of 8 x 10s. And, for several decades, the panoramic photographer spent a great deal of time and effort searching for other like-minded individuals with whom they might learn from, teach to, or just bask in the knowledge that their vision was shared by a select few who came together under the banner of the IAPP. Those who found refuge in this organization became the “experts” in this craft, the “holders of the knowledge” from whom the new visionaries could, if they were worthy, glean the secrets from the few. The experts freely imparted their knowledge to any and all who asked for it, and the images that were published in the PANORAMA, The Journal of the International Association of Panoramic Photographers, were spectacular and prized by the membership above all else. At the peak of the IAPPs popularity the membership had reached over 600 paid members and the PANORAMA Journal was being

produced quarterly. There were conferences where 60 to 100 members would attend.

Sadly, when we joined the IAPP it was in decline. We had no idea because we lacked the knowledge of its history, which we obtained from the experts just as we obtained the knowledge from them of how to successfully take panoramic images. The membership had dwindled to around 125 paid members and the PANORAMA Journal had fallen to a once-a-year publication, and, for some years, not even printed at all. How could this happen?

Panoramic images were still as popular as ever, people still marveled at the detail that these photo could show. Why the decline in membership; why was the IAPP dying?

The answer seemed to be two-fold. The first answer was “Technology”. And this answer was further broken down into two different but similar aspects: 1) Photographic technology advancement, and 2) Informational technology advancement.

Panoramic photography had, up to this time, only been possible by using Large Format film cameras or speciality Medium Format film cameras. While the rest of the photographic world had been leaving the Large and Medium Format film world and moving to the more convenient world of 35mm, the panoramic photographers had specialized in utilizing these specialty cameras to create the panoramic images that they so desired. Likewise, many had turned to the speciality Medium Format cameras such as the Fuji 617 and the Widelux-type

cameras that were more convenient than having to load individual film holders as the Large Format panoramic photographers had to do. Now, however, technology had begun in earnest to replace film with electronic sensors in the form of digital photography and with this advancement, a single 35mm sized camera could generate several images that could be electronically "stitched" together and form a panoramic image without the need for speciality cameras, and, as a bonus, you could shoot regular photographic images just as easily with the same photographic gear. Now everyone with a digital camera was free to create panoramic images.

The other aspect, informational technology, has changed the composition of organizations such as the IAPP. With the internet, everyone now has access to instant information about any subject. Whereas, 10 or 20 years ago information on panoramic photography was limited to a few books that were written about it and the information you could glean by talking to people who specialized in the topic. Many of these specialists were to be found in organizations such as the IAPP. This forced people with similar interests to collect together to learn, share, and compare panoramic photographic knowledge and styles. With this collection of knowledge concentrated in singular locations it was necessary to band together into a group, and the IAPP then saw its numbers grow to the apex of its membership. With the growth of the internet this panoramic knowledge is no longer concentrated in isolated locations but easily attainable with a few keystrokes on any computer, tablet, or smartphone, and with this proliferation of "instant access" the need of speciality organizations such as the IAPP, is no longer as relevant as it once was. This is true of many organizations and we see the decline over a large swath of groups, not just the IAPP.

While the answer to the first question concerning the decline of

the IAPP was "technology", the second answer was a human failing that occurs in most organizations - a passive rather than an active participation in the group. In most group dynamics you find that the active core of the membership is around 25% of the total. We pretty much see this when we examine the number of attendees of the IAPP Conferences. With a paid membership of around 125 we normally see about 30 members attending. Within that active core we usually see about 25% of those individuals who are willing to volunteer to help run the organization. This would be the 8 people who would make up the officers and Board of Directors that make the decisions that affect the group as a whole. It has gotten more and more difficult to get members to volunteer for these positions and many give the typical reasons of "I have too much work to do at my job", or "I am volunteering at another organization I belong to and can't take on more work". These may be justifiable reasons but, unfortunately when used, they deny a continuation of leadership for the entire organization. When the membership declines to the 100 member level there will not be enough volunteers to make up the leadership rolls and the organization will cease to be able to function according to its By-Laws. This is the true nature of the problem the IAPP faces. To be fair, this same problem is faced by many other groups as well and it is the reason why the future must take organizations, including the IAPP, in a much different direction than where they have been in the past.

The installation of the e-Monitor three years ago was an attempt to move in a direction that would deal with the "problem" of technology. The quarterly printed publication of the PANORAMA Journal cost entirely too much money for the organization to afford with the declining membership roll. Switching to a once-per-term publication was more affordable. The member's desire of still wanting a publication that could keep panoramic photography in

the forefront was solved by turning to a monthly electronic newsletter, the e-Monitor. It was here that the second problem arose, the dominant passivity of the membership. It was hoped that we could have at least 12 members per year contribute feature articles in order to keep interest going in this publication. I had asked this of the members at the April IAPP Conference but, sadly, there were not enough members willing to commit to helping. Not having any other contributors I could count on, it would have to be up to me to continue writing the vast majority of articles and that is too much to ask of one volunteer. Not only that, but, to keep the e-Monitor fresh, we need more than just one person writing the majority of the articles. The e-Monitor had turned into the "Bryan A. Snow Publication", consisting of Articles by Bryan A. Snow; Photographs by Bryan A. Snow; Edited by Bryan A. Snow. In short - it was the World according to Bryan A. Snow. This was something that no one wanted to see, least of all, me.

So, where does that leave the IAPP? I really don't know. If answers are to be found they will have to come from the Officers and Board of the IAPP, they are the leaders. Will they have the answers? They could have them if the members of the IAPP are willing to help find them. It is very easy to sit back and complain about not getting anything of worth for your membership dollars. It is very easy to find fault with an organization, but much harder to volunteer to help make that organization better. It basically comes down to whether or not you think the IAPP is worth having. I hope that answer is a positive one. I can, at least, accept a negative one. What is most frustrating is the lack of any answer at all and the passivity of a member drifting away because he or she didn't find what they were looking for in the IAPP.

*Peace, long life, and may your panoramic photography constantly surpass your expectations.*

Bryan A. Snow

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## T minus 0 Issue

With the completion of the August issue of the e-Monitor, we have completed our third year of publication. I have asked the membership to be cognizant of what was on the initial issue and the purpose of this monthly publication. From Issue 1, Number 1: *“We welcome any and all articles and photos from IAPP members for inclusion into the IAPP e-Monitor. This is a publication for the IAPP, by the IAPP, and about the IAPP. There are many talented members that have images and information to share and we desperately need it.”*

It had a good run, but I no longer have the time to devote to writing and editing this monthly publication. Thanks to all who contributed to its 3 year success. Any articles and photographs sent to me in the future will find their way into the IAPP web pages instead.

Bryan A. Snow - Ed.

# Fotoman has announced a summer promotion featuring it's popular 45SPS with film or scanning back and 617 panoramic camera.

The offer, which runs from now up until 31st August, concerns the two cameras below as a complete kits while those purchasing the camera with lenses can claim \$200.00US.

For more information on the offer please don't hesitate to contact us at [sales@fotoman.cc](mailto:sales@fotoman.cc) .

*Fotoman*  
PROFESSIONAL

Summer Promo



*Fotoman 45SPS*  
4x5 Handheld Camera  
Shift Movement: Vertical 40mm (±20mm)



*Fotoman 617*  
The Camera produces a large 16.8 x 5.6 cm image  
allowing for 4 shots on a 120 roll



**Fotoman**  
PROFESSIONAL

PANORAMIC CAMERAS



*Fotoman 617*



*Fotoman 624*





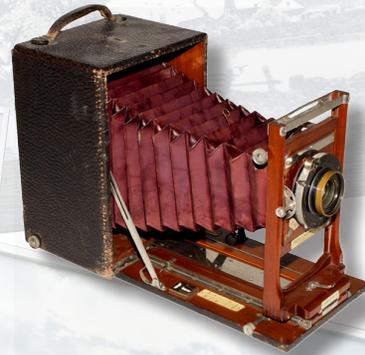
## A Piece of Panoramic Camera History!

Holabird-Kagin Americana is proud to present a unique large collection of antique panoramic cameras during the upcoming 2013 summer auction. This fabulous collection includes a wide variety of Cirkut models, Al-Vista models, Century Grand cameras, Korona Banquet Views, Universal Movie Cameras, and many more! This collection represents a rare opportunity to complete your historic camera collections with complete cases, cameras, tripods, kits, and even lots of parts to aid in the repair of your current collections.



A near-perfect Super D Graflex (1948-1958) model camera, with perfect lenses, shutters, and viewfinder. A rare, high-condition piece!

A gorgeous Cirkut #10 (1904-1905) by Rochester Panoramic Co. in excellent condition, featuring intact red bellows.



For the collector eager for a preservation piece, a Century Grand Senior with Cirkut camera back by Century and Bausch & Lomb Volute lens. Extra-fine to perfect condition, and sure to please!



A complete kit #6 Cirkut by Folmer-Graflex of Rochester, NY. (1932-1949) featuring a complete tripod, excellent lens, bellows, and interior condition. A fine kit to round off a serious collection.



An exceptional and hard-to-find #3A Panorama Kodak (1926-28) in superb overall condition—the last in the series of Panorama Kodak cameras.

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