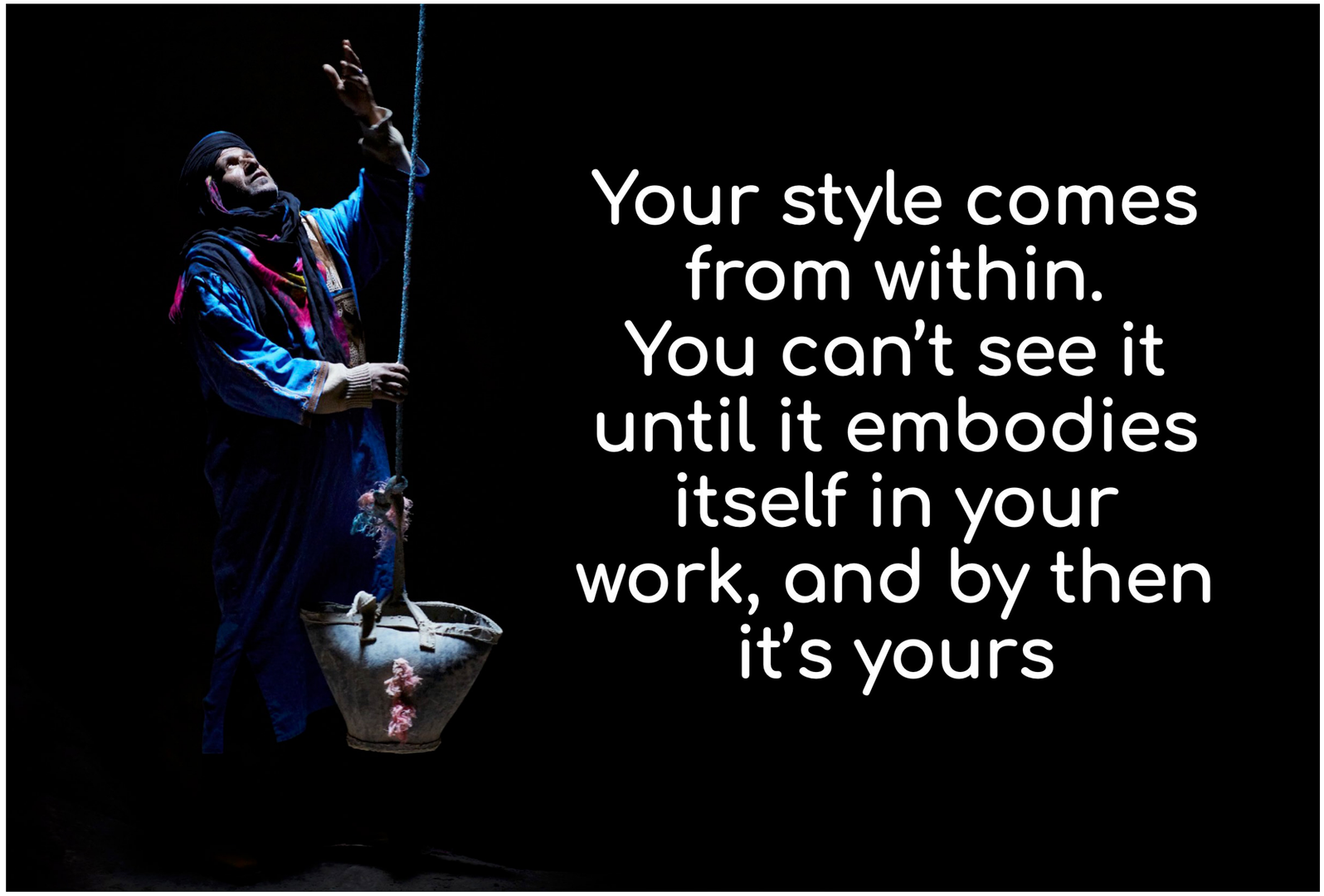
For advice on the best viewing settings visit https://mbp.ac/pdf

A Tribute to the EF 100-400mm Mark II Lens

Sept 24, 2020

Copyright © 2020 - All Rights Reserved

Long time listeners will know that I like to do a tribute to lenses that I've let go in the process of upgrading my kit, and today, we're going to continue that tradition with a tribute to my 100-400mm Mark II lens that I part-exchanged for the RF 100-500mm lens recently. Call me sentimental, or soft, but although I don't necessarily mollycoddle my gear, I do become attached to it and feel that I need to give them a bit of a send-off.



The process always starts with me selecting all images in my Finals collection in Capture One Pro and then filtering out images created with the lens in question. With telephoto lenses that support the use of Extenders, I include the Extenders in my filter as well, to ensure that I get everything. My Finals folder, which is where I keep all images that I have ever shot that I feel are worth a hoot, currently contains 10,776 images, including a few duplicates from before 2016 when I started using Capture One Pro, as I used to save a PSD or TIFF file for some images that I had to edit outside of Lightroom.

Of that 10,776 images, I found that 3,320 of them were shot with my EF 100-400mm Mark II lens. That's a massive 31% of my best work shot with one lens in just five years, and that's just one-quarter of the time I've been dropping images into this Finals folder. That really goes to show not only how often I used this lens, but how much it has contributed to creating some of my best work, making it an even more worthy subject for a seeing-off tribute.

I'm writing this as I work, and my next task is to drop all of the images that I really want to share into a collection, and that I'm going to be careful to try to only include images that I think will make the cut. My ultimate goal is to share just 10 images, hopefully no more. Let's see how that goes.

Well, a day later, and I'm sitting here with my first selection of images, which totals 162, which is 20% of all the shots I've got in my Finals folder from the 100-400mm lens. I honestly thought I'd be able to work to a smaller initial selection, but again, this just proves how well matched the 100-400mm lens was to my needs and the sort of photography that I love doing. On the following double page spread you find a screenshot of the results of the first pass, just so that you can see, albeit in tiny thumbnails, the sort of images that I chose.

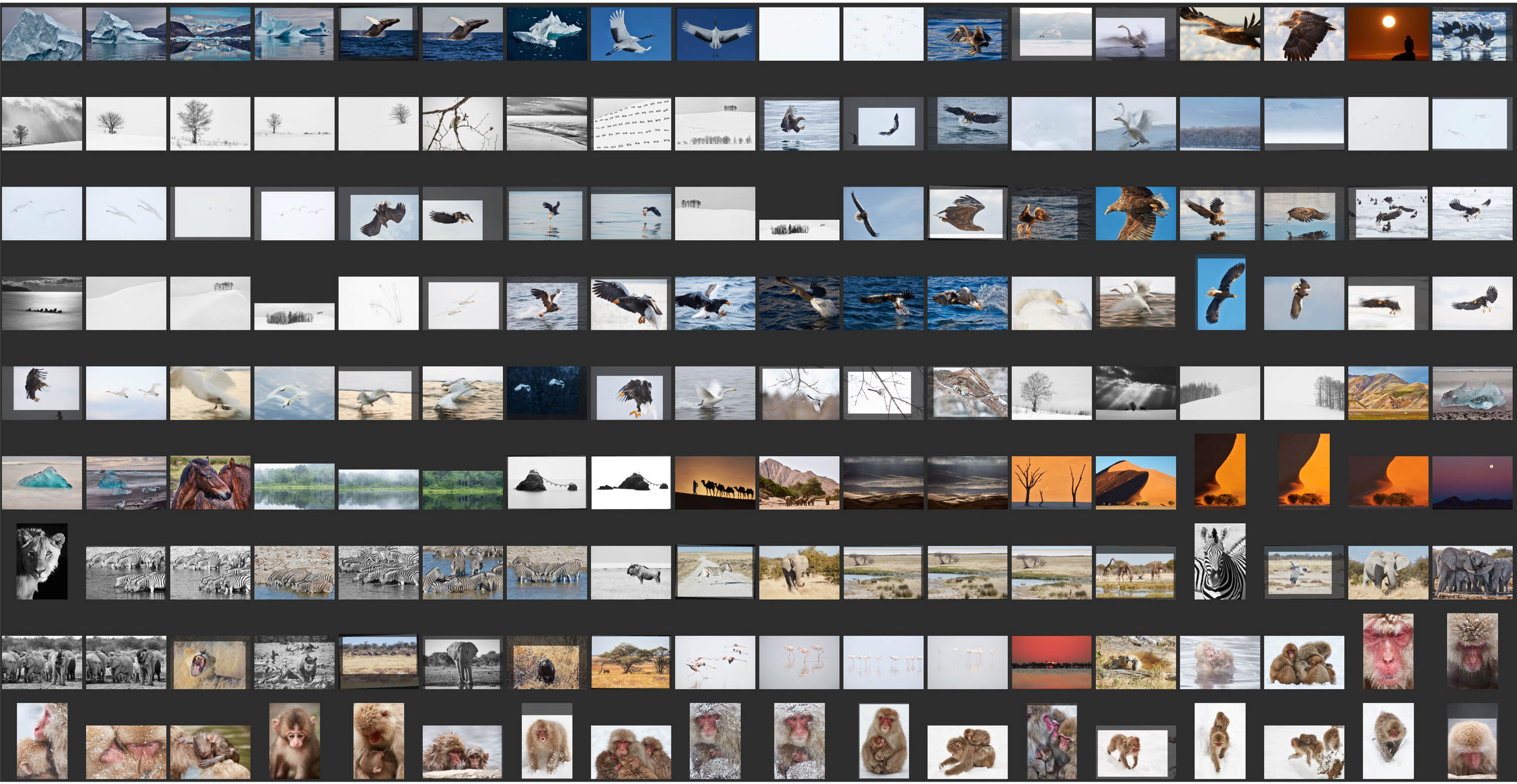
Oakville Camera Club Talk

Speaking of shooting what you love, I gave a talk for the Oakville Camera Club in Ontario, Canada on September 14, and got into the Canon R System and the EOS R5 for the first 45 minutes, then talked about Field Techniques and creativity in the second 45 minutes. This turned out to be a benefit of the current situation with the pandemic, as they usually try to get guest speakers to come to their club, but as they are now meeting remotely anyway, it opened up the door for their guest to be much further away too, so I kicked off their 2020 / 2021 season for them, and it seemed to go down very well. You'll need some budget, but if you'd like me to talk for your camera club as well, please drop me a line and we can hopefully set something up.

Back to my selection process though, I noticed a couple of duplicates, because for some reason there were various copies of the lens in Capture One Pro, so I had to do a couple of runs to catch them all. I also have a better idea of what I have now, so two more quick passes left me with 56 images, almost a third of what I just had, but then it starts to get difficult. These are my favorite favorites from a selection of favorites.

I started to use my primal response to the images as I went through a few more passes, literally just trying to sense the slightest increase or decrease in my response to an image as I flicked back and forth. This is a surprisingly effective way to cull images when you are up against a tight deadline or a small final number to work to. We want to leave images in for various reasons, but the heart doesn't lie. Overthinking the reasons for wanting to leave an image in the selection doesn't lead to a good final decision. At the end of the day, the selection has to come from the heart to be truly ours, so I let my heart decide for a number of passes, and now I'm down to the 18 images you see at the top of page six.

Copyright © 2020 - All Rights Reserved



Copyright © 2020 - All Rights Reserved

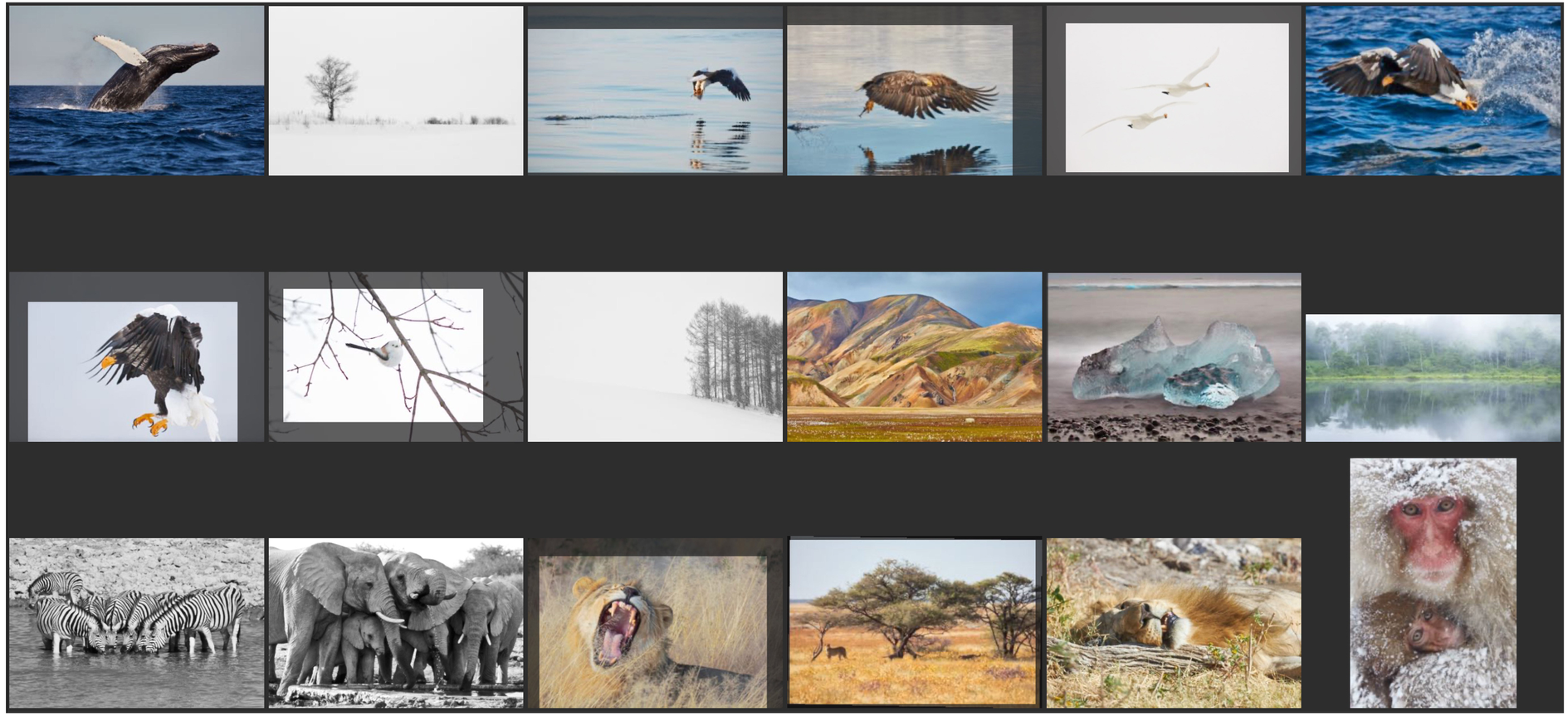
Down to Eighteen

As you can see, it's a healthy mix of landscape and wildlife work, as I used my 100-400mm pretty much like I used to use the 70-200mm lens before that. I also had the original pump-action 100-400mm but I did not include that in this selection. I have always found the 100-400mm range incredibly versatile though, and that just got even more versatile with the release of the 100-500mm in roughly the same size and weight, so I'm really enjoying using it. As I write it is the day after I started this exercise, and I've still not got my final selection, so it's time to really get ruthless. I should note though, that this is my way of kind of mourning the lens I've let go. It lives on in the hands of a new user, but to me, I have to pay my respects, and this is how I do it.

Letting Go of the Breaching Whale!

OK, so this breaks my heart, but I have to let go of the breaching whale shot. I want to keep it in because it's one of my best whale shots, but artistically it doesn't hold its own against the other images. The cute fluffy long-tailed tit shot can go too. It's cute, but sacrifices have to be made. I still have three Steller's Sea Eagle shots in the pack, so the two over water can go, as much as I like them. I am really happy with the one from this last season shot from the side.

The stitched pano of the summer trees in the mist from the Shiga Highlands can go too. I just felt a slight dip as it came onto the screen. Same for the ice on the beach shot from Iceland. See ya! And it's goodbye for now to the Cheetah family under the tree. A definite favorite but something has to go. I'm now left with eleven images. Which is the last one of my lined up children to shoot!? OK, it's the yawning lion that goes. There! We have our ten!! (For the eBook I've added the image in high resolution on the following pages.)



And, another week has passed since I wrote the previous paragraph, as I decided to quickly create and release last week's post before this one, and I have been working really hard to get the final touches into our Photographer's Friend update which is now almost done, but it meant putting this post on the back burner for a week. Here though is a gallery with my final ten images selected from the 3,320 images that were in my Finals folder, shot with the 100-400mm Mark II lens. As excited as I am to welcome in the era of the RF lenses, it kind of saddens me to see most of my EF lenses go recently. The EF mount has spanned more than thirty years and was already being used by Canon when I bought my first Canon camera in 1991, and it definitely was a big part in bringing me to this point as a photographer.

I'm looking forward too, to seeing what the cameras and lenses using the RF mount will bring, and wonder if this mount will be around in another 30 years, or if the pace of change has sped up to the point where the cycles will get a little shorter. I hope not, as I really do think that the RF mount is an incredible piece of engineering, and I'd like to see it stick around for a good while to come.

Anyway, here is a gallery with my final ten images. I'm not going to talk in detail about each image, but I encourage you to click on the first image to open up the Lightbox and take a quick skim through them. The image quality, from both my EOS 5Ds R and the EOS R with which most of these were shot is beautiful, and, of course, the light travelled through the elements of the 100-400mm lens to get to my sensor.

I love how this lens is equally at home with landscape work as it is with wildlife, and being able to hand-hold it at long focal lengths opens up a whole new world of opportunities. As I look through these images the smell of the cold air in Hokkaido, or the brisk air of Iceland and the dusty dry air of Namibia all come flooding back to me. The world is a different place now compared to just eight months ago when I photographed the Steller's Sea Eagle that you'll see in this gallery.

I long to get back out in the field, and I hope that it won't be much longer before borders start to open up again. Japan is just now opening up for long term travelers, but we still don't know if next year's winter tours are going to be possible or not. I'm keeping a very close eye on the situation, as you can imagine. For now, I'm going to push this out, and get back to my development work. I've gone ahead and created a Depth of Field Calculator that works independently on the Apple Watch, that will be a part of the Pro Upgrade that I'm adding as an In-App Purchase, and it's working great! There are now just a few things to finalize and I am hoping to get it all done within the next week or so.

Down Periscope!

Copyright © 2020 - All Rights Reserved

Copyright © 2020 - All Rights Reserved

Copyright © 2020 - All Rights Reserved

Copyright © 2020 - All Rights Reserved

Copyright © 2020 - All Rights Reserved

Copyright © 2020 - All Rights Reserved

Copyright © 2020 - All Rights Reserved

Copyright © 2020 - All Rights Reserved

Copyright © 2020 - All Rights Reserved

Copyright © 2020 - All Rights Reserved

A Tribute to the Canon EF 100–400mm Mark II Lens

Copyright © 2020 - All Rights Reserved

MARTIN BAILEY PHOTOGRAPHY K.K.

This article was first published on Sept 24, 2020

See You Online!

Check out our Tours & Workshops, eBooks and fine art prints and other products and services, or listen to the audio of our articles on our website!

https://martinbaileyphotography.com

Notice of Rights

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Copyright © 2020 - All Rights Reserved