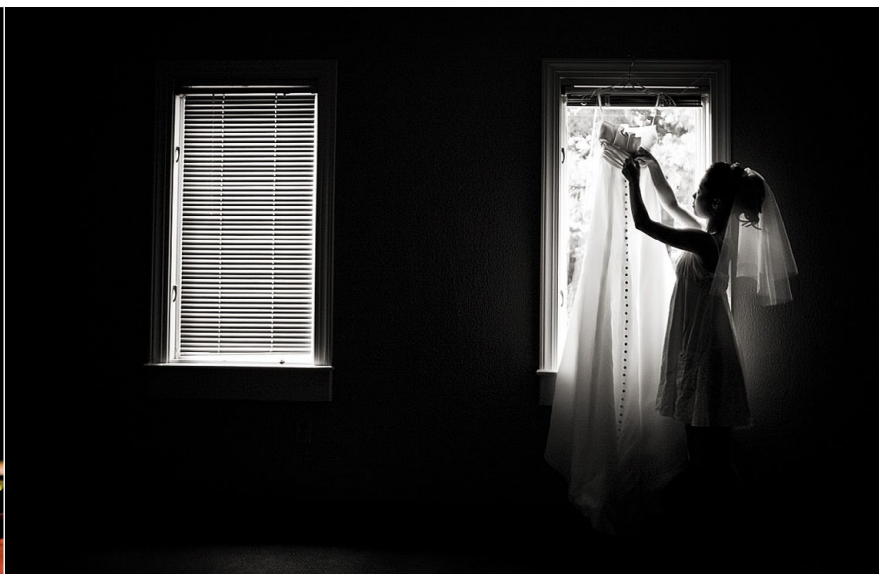




Greg Gibson
Recreating reality



Greg Gibson Photography
Washington, D.C.
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Adobe® Photoshop® and Adobe Photoshop Lightroom® help Greg Gibson recreate reality as seen through the naked eye in his photos—and it's the stuff of wedding magic

When it comes to photojournalism, Greg Gibson's versatility and talent shines. He landed the cover of *Newsweek* for his shot of the opening handshake at the first Clinton-Bush-Perot presidential debate. The photo was submitted 40 minutes ahead of the competition—and was the first-ever magazine cover shot with a digital camera. He has covered events like the first Gulf War and won two Pulitzer Prizes for photojournalism, placing him in the ranks of the world's most notable photographers.

Since 2003, Gibson has turned his cameras toward documenting special days and events in the lives of families throughout the Washington, D.C. area. A pioneer in digital photography, Gibson's tools of choice for importing, enhancing, managing, and showcasing his images are Adobe Photoshop Lightroom 3 and Adobe Photoshop CS5 software.

"Being a photographer is a never-ending quest to tell the stories in front of you with the tools you have," says Gibson. "That used to mean relying on film and lugging around a full darkroom with an enlarger and trays, but today my workflow centers around Adobe Photoshop Lightroom 3 and Photoshop."

With the new performance architecture in Lightroom 3 Gibson can create one catalog for all wedding images on an annual basis, complete with metadata and keywording so he can quickly and easily locate images.



Challenge

- Manage and organize photos with ease and efficiency
- Make photos look as if the eye saw them
- Custom process photos for every client

Solution

- Tap into new ways to import, catalog, enhance, and share photos in Adobe Photoshop Lightroom 3
- Finetune images using Adobe Photoshop CSS for final presentation

Benefits

- Streamline importing, cataloging, and searching of hundreds of thousands of images each year
- Use digital tools to guide the viewer's eye to certain areas of an image
- Share the highest-quality images online and in print
- Shape images to reflect the way they were envisioned at capture

Toolkit

Adobe Photoshop Lightroom 3
Adobe Photoshop CSS

The move to digital

As a photojournalist for Associated Press (AP), Gibson keenly felt the limitations of film. He shot rolls of film and transmitted them back to the AP bureau, but ultimately had no input into which photos were selected. His images were edited in digital darkrooms at the bureau and he had no influence on how the images were fine-tuned.

Gibson's switch to an all-digital workflow came in 1996 when he began using a laptop running Adobe Photoshop to process images on the spot. According to Gibson, it was one of the first times Photoshop was used in the field—and for him it was a breakthrough.

"I suddenly could sort through and select images, and had more granular control to finesse images than what I had previously with negative scanners," says Gibson. "Better yet, I had my toolset right there with me, so I could select and adjust images before I ever sent them in to the bureau."

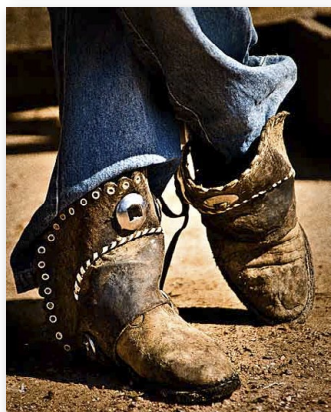
Another change came when he added Adobe Photoshop Lightroom to his photography workflow. He finds that Lightroom is fantastic for performing initial image enhancements and Photoshop is superb for more detailed image editing and retouching.

An elegant, efficient way to manage images

In 2003, Gibson moved into documentary wedding and corporate photography, and his narrative and photojournalistic approach has made him one of America's most sought-after wedding photographers. Among other kudos, *Washingtonian Bride & Groom* magazine named him Washington D.C.'s Top Rated Wedding Photojournalist in 2009. He now shoots 40 weddings per year and his studio generates 6,000 to 20,000 images per week.

After a wedding shoot, Lightroom 3 is Gibson's first stop for organizing and processing images. Using Lightroom, he can quickly import large volumes of photos and automatically rename files, organize them into folders and nested folders, and make non-destructive adjustments such as bumping the contrast or pulling the sky down.

Gibson uses the local adjustment brush and selective contrast in Adobe Photoshop Lightroom 3 to add highlights within images where he wants to draw someone's eye.



"I've taken an in-depth look at Adobe Photoshop Lightroom 3, and photographers are going to love the improvements."

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In 2010, Gibson participated in the Lightroom 3 public beta program and came away impressed. The new import handling enables him to quickly review his images before importing and de-select the ones he doesn't want to include. This feature is especially useful when he's working on a project for a corporate client that requires a fast turn-around.

"For photo management and organization, nothing beats Adobe Photoshop Lightroom 3," says Gibson. "I can scan images quickly and decide which ones I want to import. It helps me hone in on the best 1,000 or so images in no time and saves space."

Maximizing the potential of images

After initial selection, he begins bringing out the best in his images using Lightroom tools such as the local adjustment brush and selective contrast to add highlights within images where he wants to draw someone's eye. He also adjusts sharpness and clarity, and applies a slight vignette to darken the edges of the photo. According to Gibson, the local adjustment tool, luminance adjustment, vignettes, and saturation let him complete initial image adjustments faster and more efficiently.

"For me, photography is about capturing reality," says Gibson. "Your eye sees far more dynamic range than your camera is capable of recording. You're doing a disservice to your art if you don't adjust your images to display the contrast and color that was present at capture. Adobe Photoshop Lightroom 3 lets me adjust and refine the details in an image to accurately reflect the way I envisioned it at capture. I would never provide a client images straight out of the camera."

Creating a searchable digital image collection

To make it easier to organize and store photos after processing, Gibson creates catalogs of images. Prior to Lightroom 3 he would create one catalog per event. With the new performance architecture in Lightroom 3, he can now create one catalog on an annual basis that includes all metadata and keywording to support fast, comprehensive searching.

"With Adobe Photoshop Lightroom 3, I can take all the weddings I've shot in a calendar year and keep one large catalog of hundreds of thousands of images," says Gibson. "Then, it is easy for me to recall any image when I need to across a whole year's worth of work."

The Publish Services panel in Lightroom 3 lets Gibson specify settings and publish images in different sizes and resolution for sharing on his blog and website.



"Adobe understands the needs of photographers and provides an empowering toolset that enables me to produce a signature photojournalistic style better than ever."

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For more information
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Other features, such as the enhanced vignette tool, also have Gibson excited about Lightroom 3. "I've taken an in-depth look at Adobe Photoshop Lightroom 3, and photographers are going to love the improvements," he says. "Adobe understands the needs of photographers and provides an empowering toolset that enables me to produce a signature photojournalistic style better than ever."

The final finesse

After processing images in Lightroom 3, Gibson shows 700 to 1,000 images to his clients. The Publish Services panel in Lightroom 3 enables him to specify settings and publish images in different sizes and resolution for sharing on his blog and website.

Gibson selects 60 to 150 images that will ultimately make their way into a wedding couple's album and brings them into Photoshop CS5 to add final contrast and "snap and punch." Every image in a couple's album is delivered as a unique master print; complete with all the visual nuances the way Gibson envisioned them.

He uses tools like localized contrast and selective softening or sharpening on different layers, and new features in Photoshop CS5, such as Content-Aware Fill, for more advanced photo editing such as removing a wedding videographer who inadvertently appeared within a shot. Once the images are refined, Gibson uses Content-Aware Scaling in Photoshop to adjust the photos for albums.

"I custom edit all the finished prints for a wedding album. I don't think that could be accomplished realistically without a streamlined, fast workflow that begins in Adobe Photoshop Lightroom 3 and ends in Adobe Photoshop CS5," he says.

Photojournalism roots

Gibson likes to revisit his photojournalism roots and recently led a Photo Expedition in the Pantanal region of Brazil with *National Geographic Brasil* photographer Izan Petterle. His *Cowboys & Crocodiles* project highlights the varied wildlife of the region, as well as the Brazilian cowboys who make their livings on the backs of horses.

"This kind of documentary storytelling is the reason I became a photographer and is the part of photojournalism that I loved the most," says Gibson. "I returned home to the U.S. with a renewed sense of purpose in my work. I see this newfound sense of excitement in the wedding images I have made each weekend since I left Brazil and I can't wait for another opportunity to stretch my creative legs."

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