

## One Saturday Morning: Kelly C. Suchan



The alarm clock sounds with its familiar chime. Its 5 AM but it does not matter as I've been staring at it for about 10 minutes now. The first thing I always do is check Heart Mountain from my bedroom window. A heavy fog has masked the beauty that usually greets me from this vantage point. It looks like some photo opportunities await.

Coffee on, lenses cleaned, battery charged and bag packed. I'm ready. The old truck growls as I turn her over. Must be too early for her tired and worn engine. The fog is thick as I head down the street and out of town. What images will be captured this morning with all this fog? Is this a waste of time? I think to myself. I'm out now so I forge on. I'll check out Gap Lake on the way to one of my favorite spots.

With the sunrise still over an hour away I have lots of time to set up at my destination. Fog is lifting as I round the bend to Gap Lake. I'm stunned. Gap Lake is a mirror reflecting Wind Tower perfectly. The blue hour color amazes me. I stop, set up and shoot. Only enough time to fire off 3 sets of 13 image HDR brackets. Wind has picked up and the mirror is gone. Time to pack up and move on.

Truck seems happier as I fire her up and head to my next spot. I guess she was just cold. After a short drive I'm parked, packed and ready for the hike. With coffee in hand I begin to notice the fog is lifting nicely revealing some beautiful cloud formations. I guess it goes to show that you never know till you get out there.

After a short hike I arrive at the location I had in mind as I was staring at the alarm clock. Tripod up and camera mounted I review my settings. F-11? Check. A.V. mode? Check. ISO 100? Check. Focus set? Check. Now I'm ready to frame my shot. As I look through the viewfinder I notice the fog has moved back in and is masking Wind Tower. So I wait and I wait. It's not looking good so I walk around to see if anything interesting pops out. I notice the fishing path. Wow! With the low lying fog and McGillivray in the background this looks promising.

Racing back I grab my tripod and re-frame to capture the image I'm witnessing unfold in front of me. After double checking my settings I study the framing of the image. Remember the



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rules, I think to myself. Ok path on the right third. Mountain to the left, looks good. I fire off 4 sets of 13 image HDR brackets. Should be good. Clouds are fantastic I sure hope I captured them I think to myself as I walk around looking for something else that strikes me. Ah ha railroad tracks bending around the hill with the sunrise. Looks promising. I re-position and re-shoot. Sure hope these turn out! Ok what next?

As I scan my surroundings I see Wind Tower starting to peek through the fog. Perfect! Time to re-set at my original location. While framing my shot I notice how still the Bow River has become. What a beautiful mirror. After firing off several HDR brackets I move, re-frame and fire several more. What a sunrise! What a morning! As

I head home I can't help but think I almost missed this great opportunity. If I turned around because of the fog I would have never been able to witness and capture this incredible sunrise. Excitement builds as I head home. Can't wait to get these images down loaded and start working on them.

Photography has interested me all my life and have only started getting serious about it in the last year and a half or so. I am currently the treasurer and an active member of the Canmore Camera Club. Landscapes and macro are currently my main interests. As my skills develop hopefully so will my subject matter. A lot of people ask me why 13 image HDR and I ask why not?

I live in Exshaw, Alberta, which is the gateway to the Rocky Mountains.

This area provides spectacular vistas and vantage points for photography but so does every other place in the world. It's funny I live here but can't wait to get on the flat prairies and shoot. That next great image is out there just waiting to be captured so grab your gear and get out there. You never know what you will find!

(All images were shot on March 21-15 in the span of about 2 hours. They are 13 bracket HDR using Photomatrix to merge, Lightroom 5 and various Topaz plug-ins. Shot with a Canon 450D(xsi) using EF-16-35mm F4L lens. My camera is only capable of shooting 3 bracket HDR so I manually change the E.V. for each shot. (A steady hand is a must!) For HDR I always shoot at F-11 with ISO at 100.) \*