

Sharpening

Kelso Camera Club 2016

Sharpening

- Revisiting our standard work flow
- Focussing on sharpening techniques
 - Capture sharpening
 - Selective sharpening
 - Output sharpening

Work Flow

- Capture
- Global adjustments
- Selective adjustments
- Sharpening
- Noise reduction
- Output

What is sharpening?

- Traditionally, the last thing before printing
- Nowadays (assuming raw capture) more options
 - Raw conversion
 - Selective sharpening
 - Output sharpening

Why sharpen?

- To counter the softening effects of in-camera filters
- To draw attention to aspects of the photo
- To counteract the softening effects of the display media (paper, screen)
- Why?
- Because for many types of photography, sharper images have more impact

Unsharpened image



Sharpened image



Before and after



What does sharpening do?

- Most digital cameras soften images on purpose
- Anti-alias filter (removing 'shimmer' from material)
- Sharpening simply enhances contrast along edges

What makes up sharpening?

- Amount: how much contrast to be created either side of the line
- Radius: how many pixels either side of the line to be enhanced – resolution dependent
- Detail (LR): how much of the small details to be enhanced
- Mask (LR) or Threshold (PS): suppress sharpening in plain areas like the sky

Raw Conversion

- Raw files nearly always a little too soft
- Sharpen during the conversion process
 - In Camera Raw before editing in Elements
 - In Lightroom as part of the image development
- Sharpen 'just enough' at this point
 - Eg Amount = 50
 - Radius = 1.0
 - Detail = 50
 - Mask = 30

Selective sharpening

- Apply sharpening to important areas of image
- Probably best done towards the end of the development process
- In Lightroom you can 'brush on' sharpening, or use the radial filter, or gradient tool

Output sharpening

- Sharpen the image as appropriate for medium
- Sharpen for output only if changing size of image at output
- Lightroom
 - If you're exporting at full size then don't add any further Output Sharpening.
- Photoshop
 - If you already added Radius = 2, probably don't add more sharpening

Output Sharpening

- In Elements use Unsharp Mask
- View at 100%
- Amount: 50-70
- Radius: 1
- Threshold: 30

Out of Focus?



Tough!



No miracle cure



Noise

- Mind the noise!
- Manage noise before sharpening
- Be aware that over sharpening can bring noise back again.
- Session coming on Noise Management shortly.

Obvious edges

- Reduce Detail or Amount slider
- Or
- Increase Mask
- Or
- Possibly reduce Clarity

Settings to start with

- Lightroom or Camera Raw
 - Amount: 50-70
 - Radius: 0.8 – 1.2
 - Detail: 50
 - Masking:30

Sharpening demonstration