It's Bad, It's Bad, It's really really bad....

Bad Photo Workshop

So bad, it's bad

This month, we have a collection of 'bad' photos submitted by members, and we discussed ways that pictures can be improved, either through composition, camera adjustment, or software tweaks.

No Names have been assigned to protect the identity of the guilty!

Akwantu Global Images
2023-12-13

Some adjustment can be made in Photoshop CC:
- Levelling using the 'Move' tool
- use of the 'Distort' tool to "undistort" wide angle distortion.
- Use Photoshop 'Camera Raw' filter:
    - Overall brightening using the exposure sliders
    - knockout of the highlights using the highlights sliders
    - selective boosting of shadows to bring out the woman's face.
- Other suggestions were to crop severely to a vertical format retaining only the tower and the woman

- Result is by no means perfect, but a much more presentable image

The problems: Not level, underexposed, badly focussed, wide angle distortion, intrusive edge of window, reflections in window, car cut off on right edge.

Accra Lighthouse

The Proble:
Intrusive shadows, uneven exposure acriss the whole picture, distracting background. Generally how to control the light

Charm Bracelet
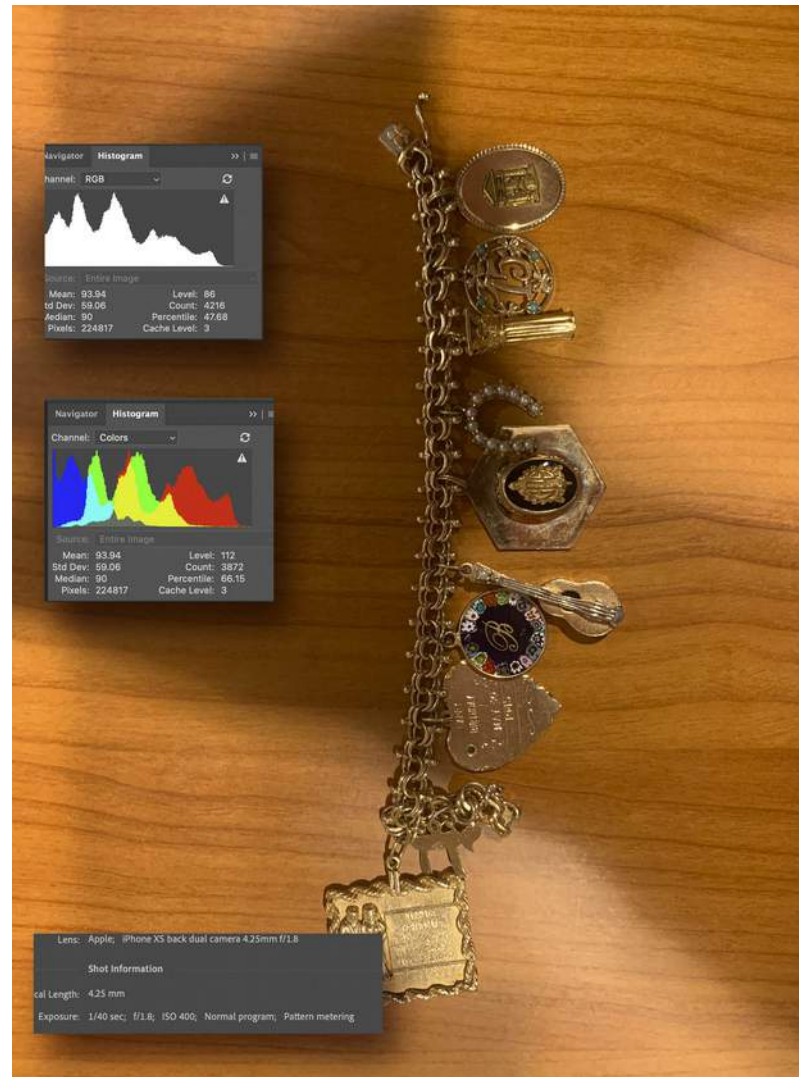
Histogram shows overall underexposure - histogram biased tonthe left, in general, expose to have the histogram centred, or biased to the right.

Photo info shows camera struggling to find a working balance between Shutter Speed, Aperture and ISO, with the result that overall, none of them are ideal.
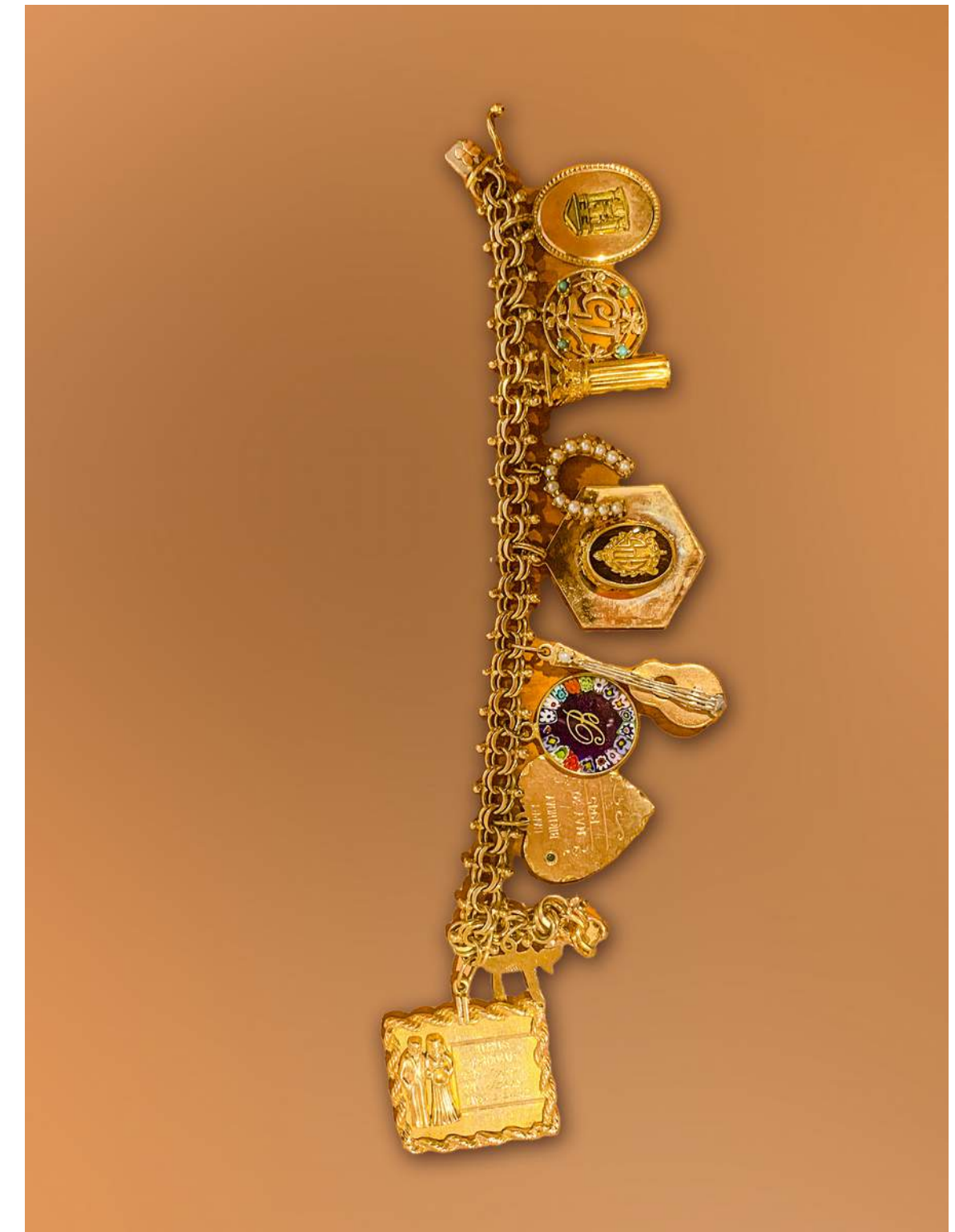
Suggestions for improvement:
- Physically move the bracelet to be entirely within the diagonal shadow -use the 'framing' effect of the different light levels to isolate the bracelet.

-Use in-fill flash. Even though the scene is overall bright, using the flash will highlight the bracelet, and go some way to eliminate the shadow.

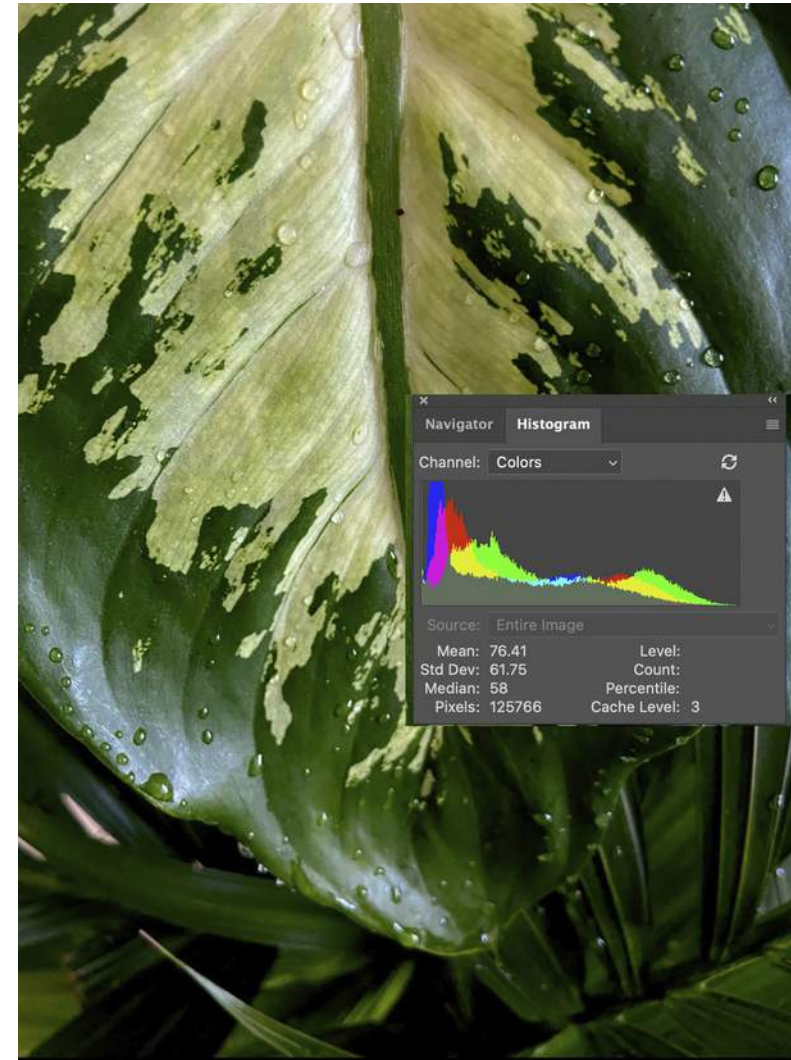- Use of "reflectors" (white umbrellas, mirrors, white card) to direct the light more evenly

- Use Software filters to boost the bracelet exposure, while blurring the background to isolate the subject.

Leaf Droplets

The Problem:
Intrusive shadows, uneven focus across the whole picture
Extremely narrow depth of field

Histogram shows overall
underexposure , but good contrast
(the color peaks are well separated)

Suggestions for improvement:
- Use a Telephoto or zoom, and move away from the subject- this will allow more light to be directed at the subject, and will make it easier to control depth of field.

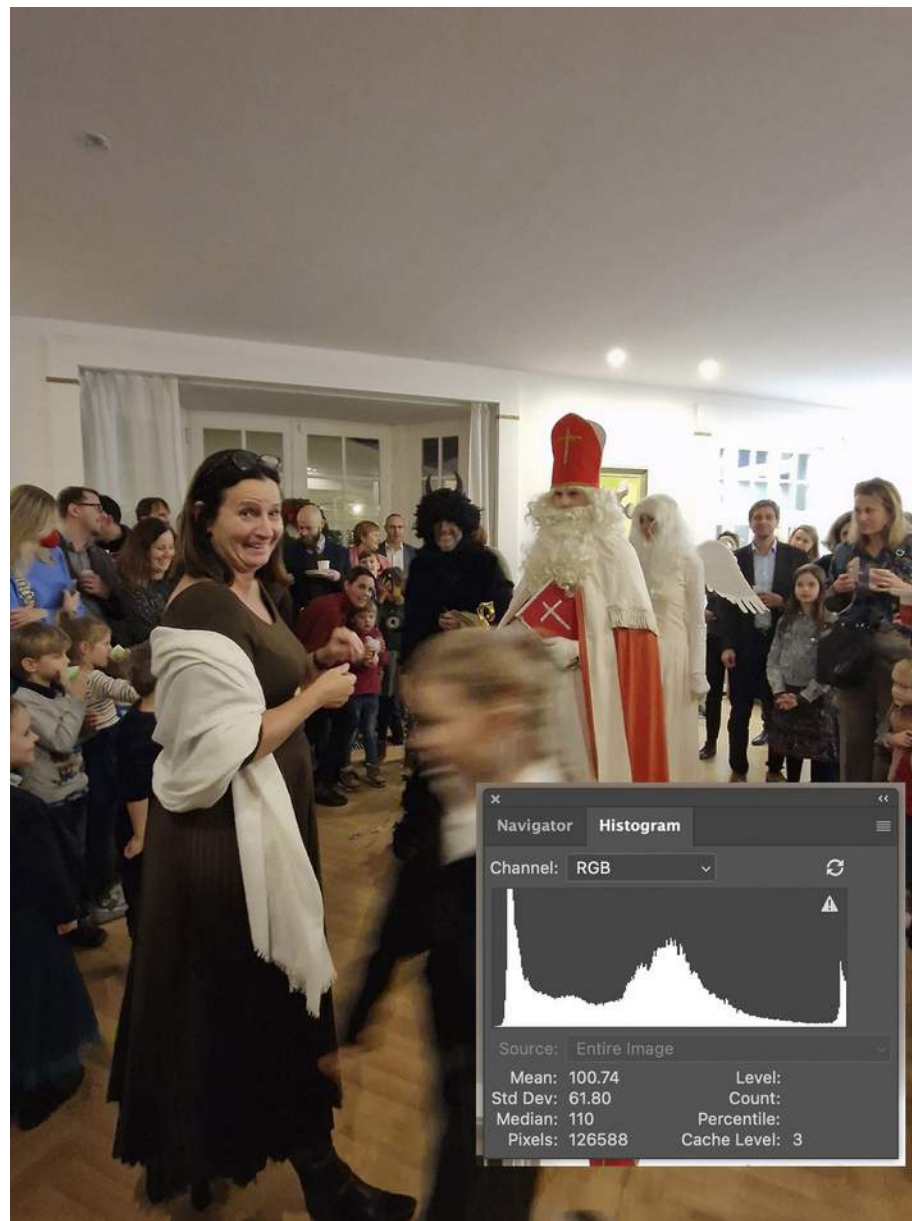- Use of 'Portrait'mode on i-phone was discussed, which gives the prompt 'Move Back'

Use of software to gently defocus the whole leaf, while keeping the water drops in focus.

Suggestions for improvement:
- Decide on subject: move around to better concentrate on subject

If child , use high shutter speed to freeze motion(but be aware this will require a bigger aperture, thus exacerbating the highlight overexposure)

Crop picture right down to isolate smiling woman

- Position faces in upper third of picture, to avoid cutting off the bottom.

Histogram shows overall good exposure , but upper highlights completely washed out (right edge of histogram cut off abruptly)

The Problem:
Unclear exactly what the subject is: Santa? The Smiling woman, the child?
Intrusive Highlights
Bottom of picture cut off because of instinctive placement of heds in centre of frame
Empty space in entire upper third of picture

Santa Nicklaus

Suggestions for improvement:
Overall the compositon and execution is good,
Need to decide on whether it is the moon or clouds that is being pictured. If moon, need to use a fast shutter speed, and much smaller aperture (f16) to cut down amount of light.
Recommend using a tripod when shooting the moon.

Chromatic aberration is exagerrated when using a zoom lens at the limits of its zoom, due to misalignment of the lens components.
Recommend using Zoom telephoto in its midrange, i.e if it's a 50-300 zoom, use the 150-200 range.
Use a fixed 'prime' Telephoto, (but obvious cost considerations)

The Problem:
Over-exposure of the moon
Chromatic Aberration (color ring on lower moon edge)

Histogram shows expected dark region, and clipped overexposure at the right edge. Color peaks show the chromatic aberration in the highlights.

Moon and Clouds

Suggestions for improvement:
Compose with your feet! Move around to left or right to remove distraction of boats.
Lower viewpoint to put more of the background in the bottom third, and cut down the sky (2/3rds rule)

A quite subtly 'bad' picture. Not obviously bad at first sight.

The Problem:
Compositon: sky is taking up too much of the picture.
Foreground boats are distracting from the actual subject (the fountain)
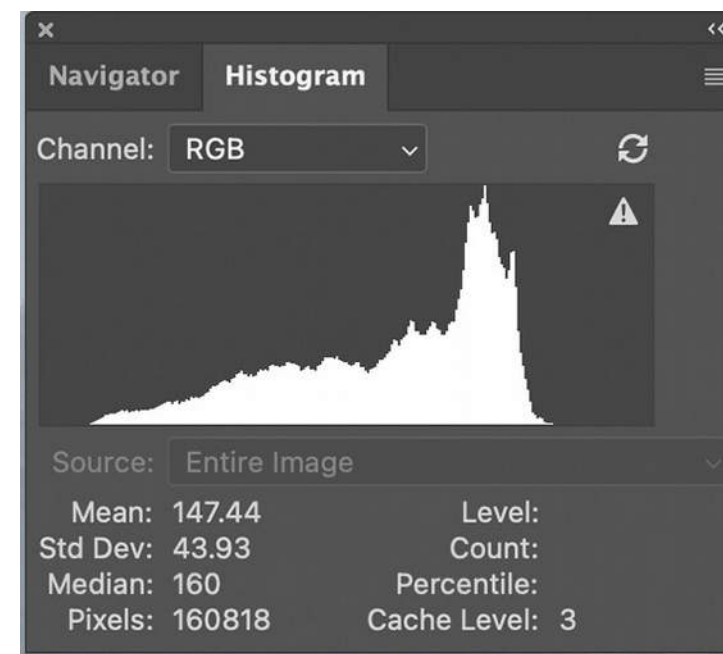Cut off at the bottom of the people.
Leading line of jetty good idea, but leads to the boat masts, not the subject.

Navigator	Histogram	
Channel:	RGB	

Source:	Entire Image			
Mean:	147.44		Level:	
Std Dev:	43.93		Count:	
Median:	160		Percentile:	
Pixels:	160818		Cache Level:	3

Histogram shows that, technically, this is a perfect exposure! Centred, no clipping, biased to right.

Jet d'Eau

The white balance of this picture is completely off, it is too blue. A discussion was had about white balance, and techniques for setting white balance. White balance can usually be set in camera. Use of a white paper to establish the color -take a photo of the white paper then check the color of the result, adjust camera color balance accordingly. Remember white balance levels: 2200 is blue, 7000+ is red! If white sheet pic is too blue, move white balance to a 'warmer" color (higher number)
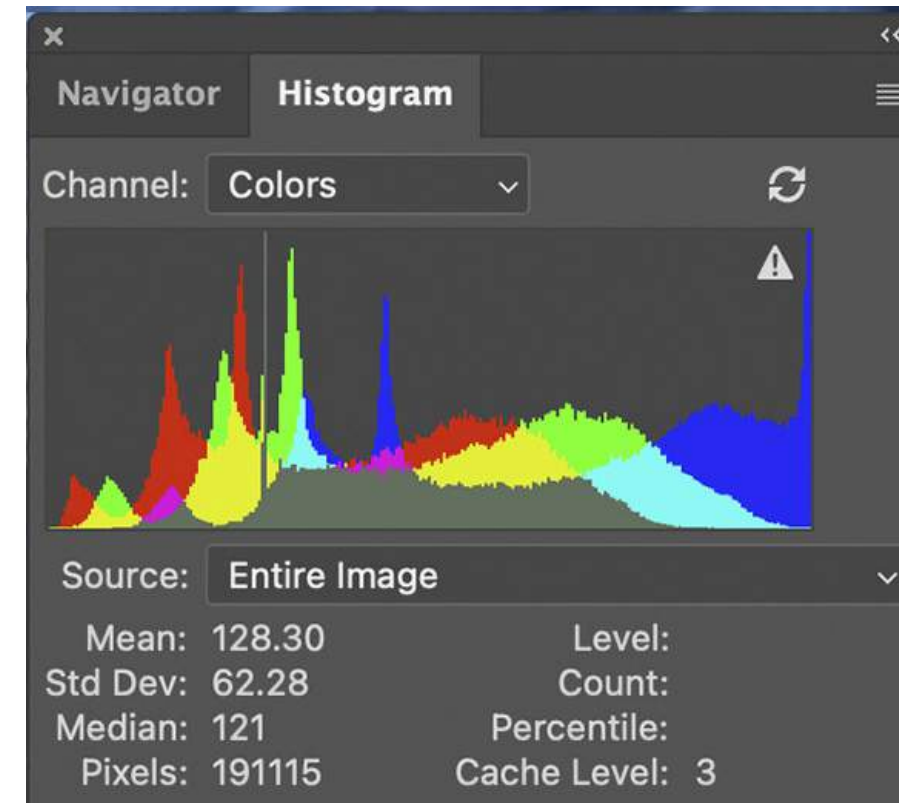
Conversely to the Jet d'eau this picture is technically, well, *less than perfect*, but compositonally it is spot on! Using rule of 2/3rds, bird is flying into the empty space giving direction and movement, and waves are dramatic without overwhelming.

Color corrected.

.The Problem:
Blue cast -white balance off
General overexposure of the sea
Lack of focus
Silhouetting of the bird – effectively this is a picture of the shadow of the bird due to the huge amount of light reflected off the sea- the intent was picture of the bird not, the sea.

The photographer was totally aware of the defects of this picture, the question was more about types of camera, and best thing specifically for bird shots

Jet d'Eau

Suggestions for improvement:

Move either left or right to close gap between subjects, and more likelihood of eliminating the white patch.

Select just one person as main subject (consensus was right side person is more interesting for color and pose)

Focus on the eyes of the subject – as a rule when taking portraits, the eyes should be the main focus point.

Take shot either above or below your own eye level.

The Problem:
- Composition: distracting white poster in middle, draws attention away from subjects.

- Subjects too widely separated, no centre of interest.

- Focus.

Histogram shows overall exposure satisfactory, but white poster is causing overexposure at the right end.

Jet d'Eau
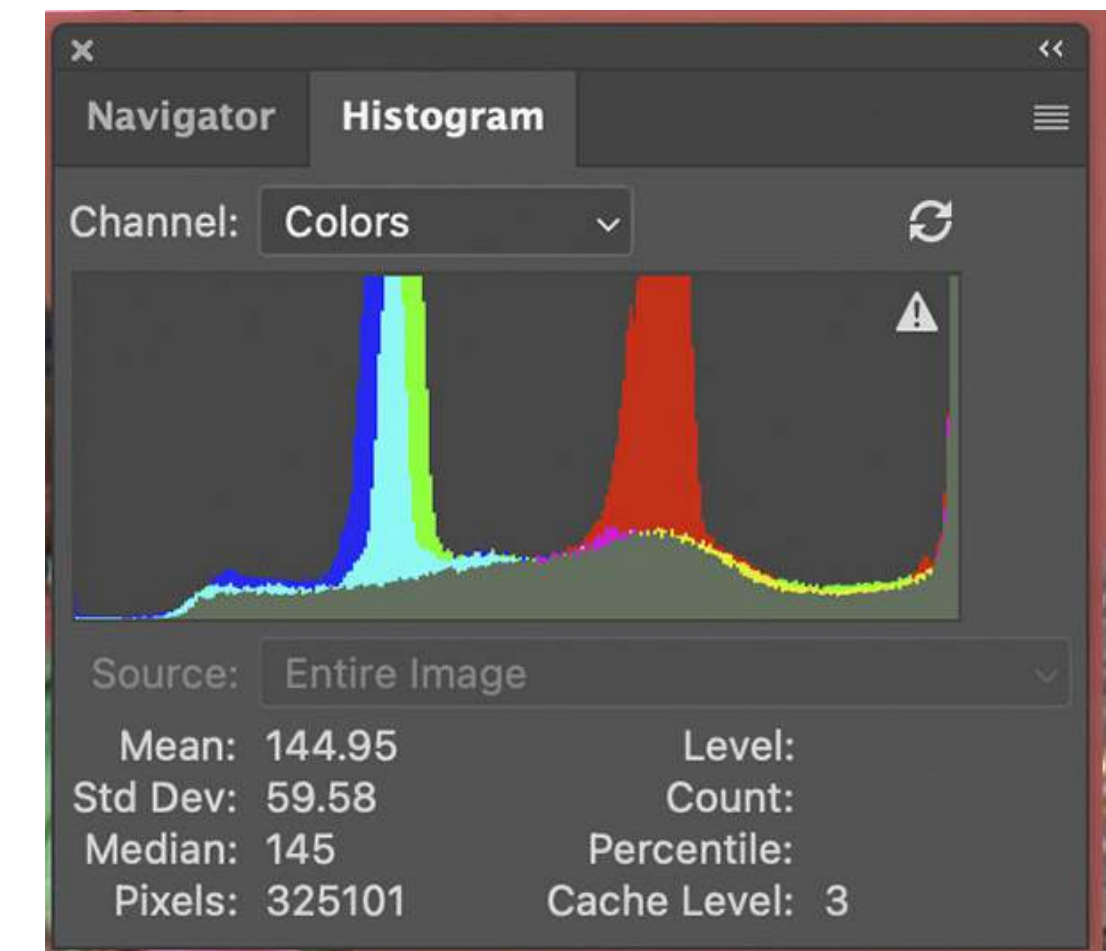
Vote! Vote! Vote!

Send your single choice of worst picture to: billos@pm.me
(in this case you can include your own!)

Next Month's Meeting:

Wednesday January 17th, 14:00 GMT

Theme: A Room with a view

Either three pics of the same room, or Three different rooms

Picture submission Sunday January 14th.