

FirstLight Workshops

At first light

Unique destination workshops for serious amateur photographers feature award-winning instructors and a workflow based on Adobe® digital imaging software and HP printers



Many photographers dream of shooting on assignment and seeing their work published in a magazine or displayed in a gallery. For attendees of FirstLight Workshops that dream has become a reality. Jay Dickman, a Pulitzer Prize winner and a contributing photographer for *National Geographic*, *Condé Nast Traveler*, and the Day in the Life books, is the founder of FirstLight Workshops. These workshops offer attendees the opportunity to enhance their shooting and editing skills, work with powerful Adobe photography solutions—including Adobe Photoshop® Lightroom™ and Photoshop CS3 software—and HP Designjet Z3100 Photo printing equipment, and leave behind a historical record of the time, place, and experience.

Participants try to capture their subjects in the first light of the day or in the golden hour as sunset approaches. Working with a photo editor, Ray Johnson used Adobe Photoshop Lightroom for non-destructive tone and color correction.



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Jay Kinghorn, Adobe Photoshop certified expert, FirstLight Workshops

A different kind of workshop

Hosted in stunning communities in transition around the world, FirstLight Workshops help attendees improve both their digital photography and their people skills. The workshops have taken place in Auvillar, France, the western Highlands of Scotland, Chesapeake Bay on the eastern shore of Maryland, and Dubois, Wyoming outside Jackson Hole. At the end of each workshop, Dickman and his team host a gallery show for the community, where the students’ work is displayed in rich, vibrant color. “It is really thrilling to have someone walk through the gallery and pause at your photos,” says Ray Johnson, an amateur photographer who has attended three FirstLight Workshops.

Real-world equipment

Dickman believes in demonstrating real-world solutions to workshop attendees. “I’m a photographer first, so the tools I work with and teach with—including Olympus digital cameras, Adobe Photoshop CS3 and Photoshop Lightroom software, and HP Designjet Z3100 Photo wide-format printers—have to be applicable to what I do and translatable to students,” says Dickman.

Many attendees have some experience with photo editing programs, earlier versions of Photoshop, or Adobe Photoshop Elements. At FirstLight Workshops they learn the power and simplicity of working with advanced Adobe photography solutions and benefit from seeing their work printed on HP Designjet Z3100 Photo wide-format printers.

Park Terrell, a former Adobe Photoshop Elements user who has attended four FirstLight Workshops, now exclusively uses Photoshop Lightroom to process his images because of the program’s speed and non-destructive editing capabilities. “Adobe Photoshop Lightroom enables me to do the things I used to do in a darkroom, such as cropping, adjusting exposure, lightening shadows, and darkening highlights without destroying the master image,” says Terrell.

Jay Kinghorn, an Adobe Photoshop certified expert and FirstLight Workshops instructor, sees these tools as fostering a renaissance in photography. “By setting up a whole system with tools like Adobe Photoshop CS3, Photoshop Lightroom, and HP Z3100 wide-format printers, photographers can once again have complete control of the photography process.”

Creating a visual narrative

FirstLight Workshop participants receive photo assignments and often try to capture their subjects in the first light of the day, or in the golden hour as sunset approaches. “I find assignments for students that I would want to shoot and encourage them to tell a story with their photographs,” explains Dickman.

After editing photos in Adobe Photoshop Lightroom, pictures are printed using an HP Designjet Z3100 Photo wide-format printer for display at the workshop's one-of-a-kind gallery show.



After each morning shoot, the photographers import their images into the Photoshop Lightroom library on their computers and backup photos to an external hard drive or DVD. Since incorporating Lightroom into the workshops, participants can now download and organize their own images. "Adobe Photoshop Lightroom is powerful and sophisticated, yet easy enough that I quickly learned how to manage my own files," says Johnson.

Photoshop Lightroom speeds the photography workflow by helping students breeze through once tedious tasks, such as batch editing, color correction, and cropping, and makes long-term archiving and storage painless. Photo editing experts at the workshop teach participants how to create Metadata Presets that include their name, contact information, and copyright and also insert the photographer's name as a keyword. "Using the Metadata Presets in Adobe Photoshop Lightroom to rename, copyright, and apply keywords to photographs is the first step toward teaching workshop attendees the importance of establishing good digital asset management practices," says Kinghorn.

Adobe photography solutions

Students review their photographs, add additional keywords, and use the star system in Photoshop Lightroom to narrow a shoot down to the best 50 to 100 images. Participants then sit down with a photo editor to review their photographs, identify patterns, and learn how they can improve their work. "We use Adobe Photoshop Lightroom to help students understand their habits and enable them to

immediately go out and apply what they've learned to their next shoot," says Dickman.

Photoshop Lightroom enables instructors and students to edit photography more easily than ever before. Instructors and students use Photoshop Lightroom for non-destructive tone and color correction. Attendees can also easily make adjustments to a series of photographs by editing one image and then synchronizing the adjustments to other photos they select.

After correcting white balance and exposure, they can use the tone curve editor to tease out highlight detail, such as a cloud or white piece of clothing. The Fill Light feature helps lighten shadows while the advanced hue, saturation, and luminance controls give students precise control over specific areas of an image.

When more detailed image editing is required, instructors export images from Photoshop Lightroom into Photoshop CS3. Changes made to an image in Photoshop Lightroom automatically appear in Photoshop CS3. Powerful cloning and healing tools in Photoshop CS3 enable advanced image retouching and improved printing controls make printing more intuitive and streamlined.

The resolving power of prints

At the end of each workshop, FirstLight displays the best four to five images from each student in a local gallery for the community to enjoy. Kinghorn prints 18 x 24 and 13 x 19 inch photographs using HP Designjet Z3100 Photo wide-format printers. The Photoshop Lightroom

Company

FirstLight Workshops

Littleton, Colorado

www.firstlightworkshop.com

Challenge

- Create a real-life photojournalism experience for attendees
- Provide instruction that improves student work over a short period of time
- Represent the spirit of a community through color photography prints
- Use the art of photography to impact transitional communities

Solution

- Importing, viewing, and editing photographs using Adobe Photoshop Lightroom
- Auto-calibration of HP Designjet Z3100 Photo printers using Photoshop Lightroom print menu
- Producing vivid, high-quality prints using HP Designjet Z3100 Photo wide-format printers

Benefits

- Create a seamless shooting, editing, and printing experience for attendees
- Enable serious amateur photographers to work with advanced Adobe photography solutions
- Show attendees the output they can achieve with HP printing solutions
- Present each workshop community with an historical record of the time spent

Toolkit

- Adobe Photoshop CS3
- Adobe Photoshop Lightroom
- HP Designjet Z3100 Photo wide-format printers

Participants use Adobe Photoshop Lightroom to create Metadata Presets that include their name, contact information, and copyright. Park Terrell enjoys how Photoshop Lightroom enables him to do traditional darkroom tasks without destroying his original image.



"We use Adobe Photoshop Lightroom to help students understand their habits and enable them to immediately go out and apply what they've learned to their next shoot."

Jay Dickman, photographer and founder, FirstLight Workshops

print feature enables him to specify the size of the paper and set three 13 x 19 inch frames to print at once. "Using Adobe Photoshop Lightroom to set printing specifications on the HP Z3100 is a big time saver," says Kinghorn.

Kinghorn found the HP Z3100 easy to set up, maintain, and administer. "At FirstLight Workshops, we typically print more than a hundred large prints," explains Kinghorn. "Auto-calibration features in Adobe Photoshop Lightroom easily synchronize the software with the HP Z3100 printers, eliminating the need for complex color profiles."

The superior print quality, efficient ink usage, and favorable cost-per-print numbers of the HP Designjet Z3100 Photo enable FirstLight Workshops to produce stunning gallery shows that benefit attendees and the community. The twelve inks of the HP Vivera pigment inkset provide a large color gamut while the Gloss

Optimizer significantly reduces bronzing and gloss differential found where highlights transition to paper white.

Kinghorn believes in the resolving power of printed photographs. "Using multimedia to combine audio with photos and videos gives people new ways to display and share images, but nothing surpasses the look, feel, and quality of a good print," says Kinghorn.

The success of FirstLight Workshops is apparent on many levels. For attendees, the workshops give them confidence to take their photography to a new level. "I've always been interested in photography, but after attending FirstLight Workshops I now have bigger dreams of seeing my work published and selling more of my images," says Terrell.

Instructors enjoy facilitating this type of transformation and seeing a marked improvement in student work over a short period of time. And for the communities, the workshops enable them to see the unique beauty of their home and their lives through a photographer's lens.



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