Adobe Lightroom Workflow for the Lab

Prep Your Drives

We will use the lab's Lightroom software, but place all data (pictures, catalogs, etc.) onto your portable drive.

1. On the lab Mac, create an *incoming* folder on the desktop. (Press Command-Shift-N)
2. Connect your external drive to the Mac. Be sure that it is readable by your Mac. Problems here are usually format issues.

Create a New Lighroom Catalog (One time per year)

1. Start Lighroom
2. File > New Catalog
3. Navigate to the removable drive in the Where field to create it.
4. Give it a useful name like 2016_lastname_photos
5. Click *Create*
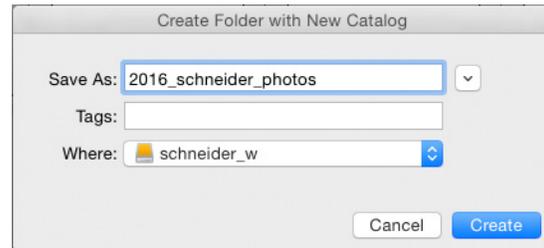
**MAKE A METADATA TEMPLATE (One-time on each machine you use)**

1. Launch Lightroom
2. Press Import, in the right column for *Metadata* in *Apply During Import,* choose *New...*
3. Name your template (i.e. 2016_schneider_template)
4. Enter information that will be embedded in each file imported with this template. Your name must be included.
5. Under Copyright Notice, enter: © 2016 Firstname Lastname - All Rights Reserved
6. In the Copyright Status field, choose "Copyrighted" from the pull-down menu.
7. In Rights Usage Terms, enter "Not usable for publication without explicit permission of the photographer."
8. Enter other info if desired, then hit *Create*.
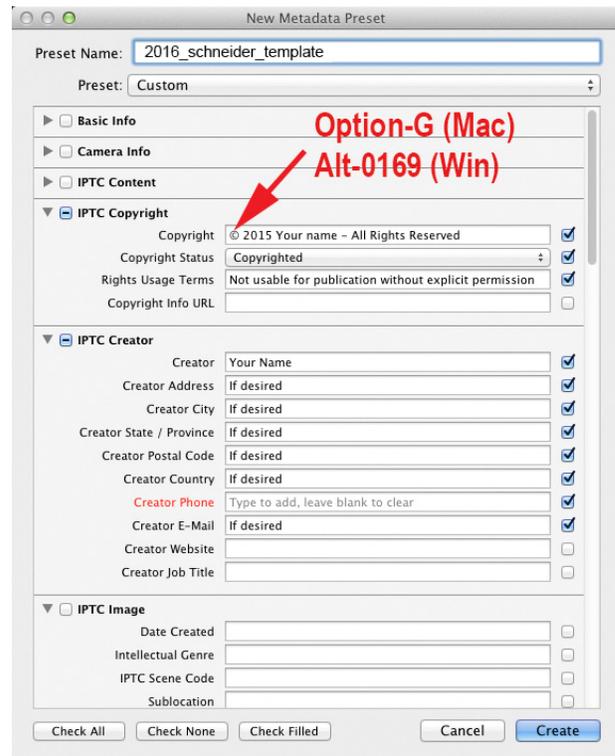
Note: This template is saved only on the computer on which you are working, so you will need to save it and load it on your personal computer (or just redo it).

IMPORTING IMAGES

1. In Lightroom, click the *Import* button (lower left).
2. In the left pane, choose the Incoming folder as the source.
3. Look through your pictures and select the frames you want to import by checking the box under the picture. Un-check ones that you don't want to include.
4. At the top of the screen, click *Copy as DNG*.
5. In the right pane, click the round arrow at the top left, choose Other Destination, and navigate to your external drive.
6. Check *Don't Import Suspected Duplicates* (default)
7. Under *Rename Files* (box must be checked), select *Custom Name* and type something descriptive in the *Custom Text* field. See the individual assigment handouts for the naming files for our class.
8. In the *Apply During Import*, choose the metadata template you made earlier in previous section above.
9. Add keywords to aid sorting and searching for files later. *This is important because all files you shoot this term will be in the same folder, and you need a way to quickly find the ones you need.*
10. In *Destination* near the bottom, choose the *2016_last-name_photos* folder on your external hard drive. Under *Organize*, choose *Into one folder*.
11. Double check your settings, and click the Import button on the bottom right.
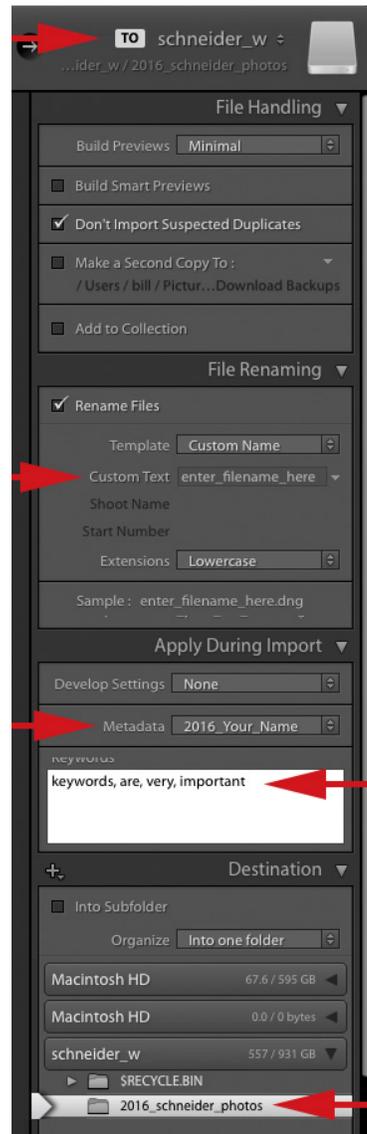
WORKING WITH IMPORTED IMAGES
If a naming or metadata step has been omitted when importing, not all is lost. There are ways to fix mistakes.

Rename - If you want to change the name of one or more your files, use the Library>Rename Photos feature.
1. Select all the files you wish to rename by holding the Command key down while selecting more than one, or choose all of them with Command-A.
2. Choose Library>Rename Photos (F2). That should produce a dialog box like the one shown to the right.
3. In the File Naming field, click to display options. Sequence numbers are useful when combined with custom text. An example filename will be shown at the bottom if the dialog using your current choices.
4. Press OK.

Adding Metadata - If you didn't use the metadata template you made earlier, and want to add that information to all of your files:
1. Choose the file(s) you wish to add the metadata too (Command-A for selecting all files in an import).
2. If you desire to apply the metadata from a template, just select it in the drop down box. You will get a dialog like the one show to the right.
3. If you want to key in new information, scroll to find the editable fields and type.

Keywording individual files - A way to add additional or missing keywords to individual files or to multiple files is done by directly editing in Lightroom's Metadata pane (shown to the right).

TIPS:

Keyboard shortcuts for Lightroom can be found several places online. One site is http://www.lightroomqueen.com/keyboard-shortcuts. There are shortcuts listed there in PDF form for both Mac and for Windows, and for different versions of Lightroom.

Problems reading RAW files? If Lightroom (or Bridge, if you use that) can't read the RAW file from your newest camera, search for Adobe's DNG Converter software. This utility is a free download and is updated regularly to include the newest cameras. Run it on a folder of your camera's RAW files to convert them to readable Adobe DNG files. It's also a way to continue using older software packages and still use the latest cameras.
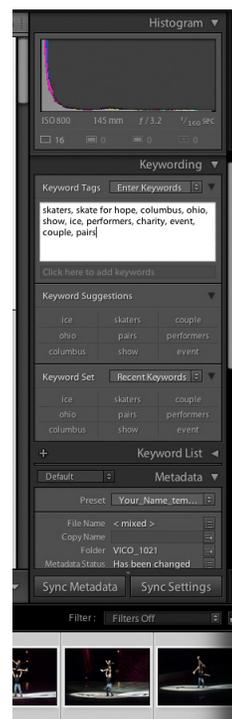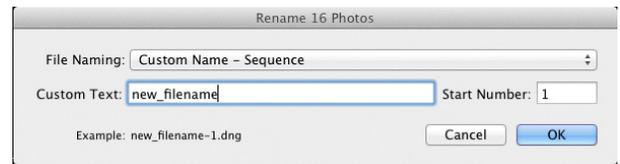
Imaging Editing Workflow

After all files are imported, it's time to sort the good ones from the others. Lightroom offers a rating system using stars (which we will use) and another by color.

Select Your Favorites - Most photographers use Loupe view to make their selections because it offers both thumbnail views at the bottom, and a much larger preview of the currently selected file.

1. Choose *Loupe* (E) view.
2. View each file, and when a good one is found, give it a 1-star rating. Type the number 1 or click the first star located just under the picture.
3. To compare two files next to each other in Loupe view, select the first thumbnail, then Command-click on the second thumbnail. Then click the *Compare XY* icon (C).
4. To compare more than just two files, choose *Survey* view (N) under the preview window after you Command click to add more files. When in this view, you can click the X in the lower right to dismiss a picture from the group.
5. If you desire to re-order files, there are some conditions required. If you are showing files in the *Previous Import* source, you cannot reorder. You may create a *Collection* (not a *Smart Collection*) of your freshly imported files, then reorder them. If your source is the destination folder (which will show all files unless filtered), you may also sort.

Hide the Others - Once you have tagged all promising photos with one star, now it's time to edit further. You can select just the tagged files quickly using a filter.

1. Enter *Grid* view (G).
2. Filter choices are found at the top of the thumbnail screen in *Library Filter*. Here you can choose to show/hide items based on text (keywords, file names, etc.), attribute (flags, ratings, color), and metadata (camera, lens, etc.)
3. Under *Attributes*, click the left star button to find files tagged with 1 star. The others are hidden temporarily as you refine your edit.

Refine Your Edit - At this point, you may have several similar photos that need further editing. Repeat the processes above using two stars. Don't neglect the usefulness of the *Compare* (C) and the *Survey* (N) views to help.

Toning the Pictures - Correcting the color and tone of the photos can happen anytime, but many photographers tone only the selects after editing to save time. Because you have found your top picks, it's now time to improve their appearance.

1. At the top right of the Lightroom window, click *Develop*. Any currently seleted file will display large in the preview. You can click other files in the filmstrip at the bottom to choose them for toning.
2. Your choice of where to start depends upon the file. For example, a dark photo may need lightened using *Exposure* or *Shadows* before color can be critically assesed. You may want to crop first, then tone.
3. Almost all files require tweaking. Never assume that an out-of-camera picture is optimum.
4. You can use *Clarity* gently to aid sharpness.

5. For gentle dodging and burning, use the *Graduated Filter* to make a "selection", then adjust the tones.
6. Use the *Spot Removal* tool to remove dust and spots.
5. Additional options including sharpening, noise reduction, lens corrections, and more are located under the basic functions. Scroll to see them.
6. When done, return to the *Library* mode by clicking it at the top.

It's wise to do as much toning in Camera RAW as possible before opening files in Photoshop, if you use it. In Lightroom, each change is reversible and does not change the original file. Once a file is in Photoshop, many changes do indeed directly alter the pixels in the file, for better or for worse. For most pictures, you should be able to do the majority of toning, cropping, and spotting entirely in Lightroom, then export them for other purposes (web, print).
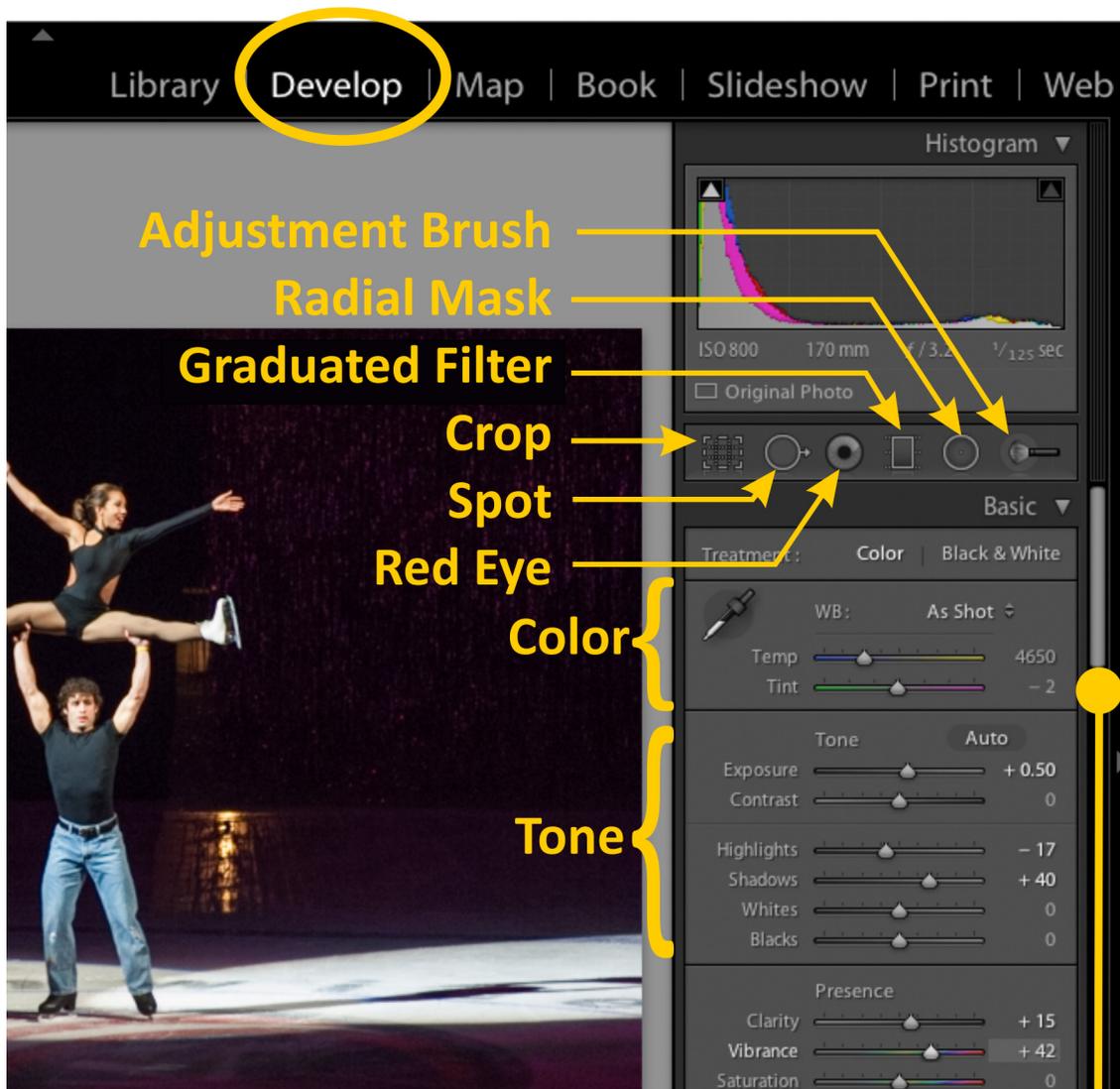

If you tone Camera RAW in Bridge, there are descriptions of the Camera RAW functions at:
http://www.ohio.edu/people/schneidw/2400/dig_meet09.html

Making a JPG Contact Sheet

Every assignment has a requirement to submit more than just your selects in the form of a JPG "contact sheet". A contact sheet contains thumbnails of a number of files, and has its roots in the darkroom to aid selection of the best pictures. This class requires electronic contact sheets of 35 to 70 different frames for each assignment. Fortunately, it's easy to make one.

1. Be sure that you are in *Library* mode (at the top). Also view your files in Loupe view (E) to have access to rating icons if you are not using shortcuts.
2. Tag 35-70 of the better pictures with a numerical rating (stars), or even a color. (If you re-tag using numerical ratings, you may override your original choices if you've already started them.)
3. After you have selected the number you want, enter *Grid* view (G), filter for the files by clicking the star icon above the thumbnail previews.
4. Select all the filtered files that show (Command-A)

5. Click the *Print* mode upper right in Bridge. After a few seconds, there should be a pane like that shown below.
6. Choose *Single Image/Contact Sheet*.
7. Check *Rotate to Fit*.
8. Make 7 rows, 5 columns.
9. In the Page section (scroll down), check *Photo Info*, and show *Filename*.
10. In the *Print Job* section, change *Print To:* to *JPEG File*
11. *File Resolution* - 300 , *Print Sharpening* - Low, *Media Type* - Glossy, *JPEG Quality* - 100.
12. The Color Management profile of sRGB is OK for the intended use of this file. Other lesser variables (margins, are shown in the screen capture below.
13. When you are done with the above, click Print to File at the bottom. Give your contact sheet(s) the name specified in the assignment. Watch to see what folder it goes into so that you can find your file(s) later.
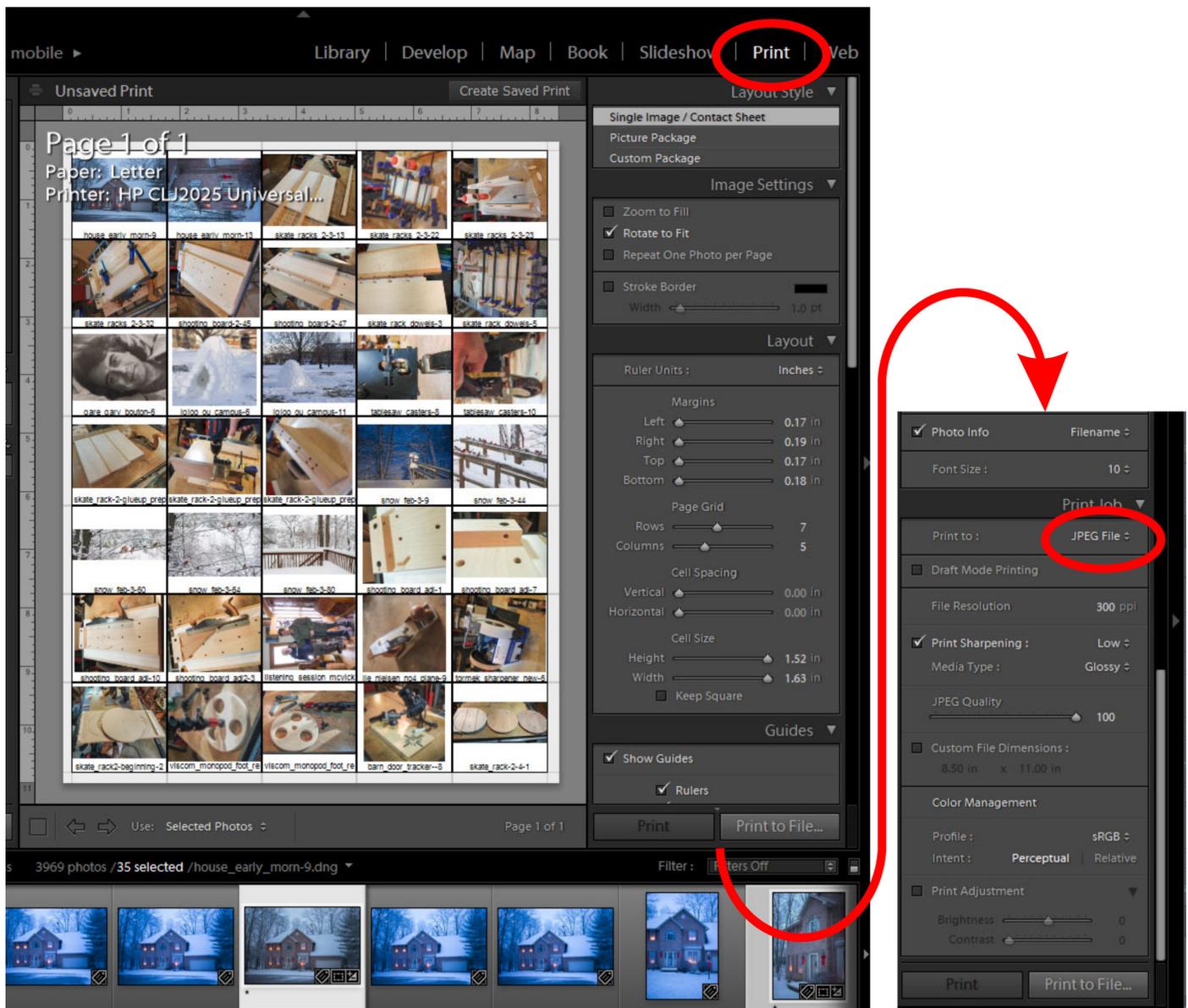
Exporting your Selected Files
Lightroom has a powerful Export function to allow quick exporting of just one file or a folder full of files with a few keystrokes. You can export in a handful of common file formats including JPG, TIF, DNG, and PSD.

Class assignment picture specifications are always for a JPG file, 2000 pixels on the long edge. The files should have names that agree with the individual assignment specifications.

1. If you are not already there, enter *Library* mode (button at top of window).
2. Either manually select your desired picture(s) or use a filter to find only the items you wish to export.
3. Click the *Export* button (bottom left part of screen).
4. Identify which folder you want to receive the exported files, and you may create a subfolder here if you wish.
5. Check *Rename To:* and then choose Custom Name - Sequence.

6. Type your lastname_firstinitial_whatever assignment in the *Custom Text* field. The hyphen and a sequence number will be added automatically upon export.
7. In *File Settings*, choose JPEG as the image format, *Quality* of 70 or higher, and AdobeRGB for the color space.
8. *Resize to Fit* - Type 2000 in the fields for W and H. Make sure the units are pixels, not inches!
9. *Resolution* - Use 300 pixels per inch.

You can now click the *Export* button to finish.

If you re-enter the same export configuration over and over, say for a web site that hosts hundreds of thumbnails plus larger pictures, you can save it as a *Preset*. Simply set up the export as you wish, then click the *Add* button on the bottom left to include this as a user preset. The next time, simply click your preset in *User Presets*, and the rest will be automatically done for you.