



Photo by Meg McKinney

Sloss Furnaces Workshop

March 19-23, 2024

How would you like to have the run of a massive old industrial facility dating back to the 1880s that's now a National Historic Landmark? And not just during the day, but at night? That's what we've put together for this exciting new workshop at the historic Sloss Furnaces

(<https://www.slossfurnaces.com/>) site in Birmingham, AL. For over 90 years iron was produced here, using blast furnaces, blowers, boilers, generators, miles of pipes and much, much more.

Working with the staff at Sloss Furnaces, we've reserved a large conference room to work out of, have access at times they're not open to the public, and split the time there between day shoots, night shoots (and light painting classes) and classroom instruction.

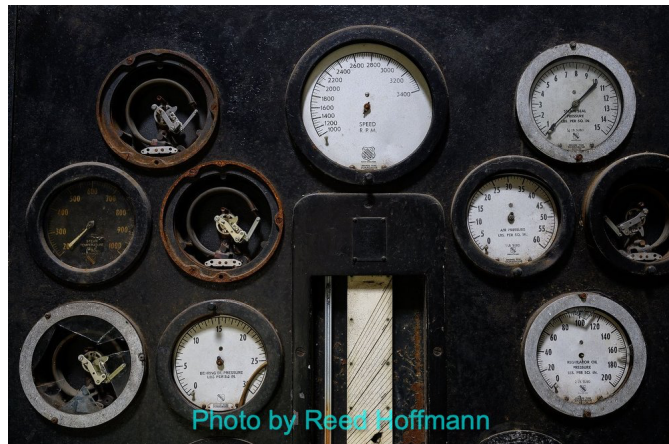


Photo by Reed Hoffmann

I'll be joined by local photographer and teacher Meg McKinney (<https://megmckinneyphotos.com/>), who's spent many hours at this unique location. While most of our days will be spent at the Furnaces, we'll also do side trips to a few other area locations, including Oak Mountain State Park and Spectre Island (site of the fictional town in the movie, "Big Fish").

This will be different from most photo trips I lead, in several ways. First, the price will be less, at \$1500/person. Second, during the four full days of the workshop, we'll have a heavy focus on night photography. Three evenings will be devoted to doing that, where we'll also teach light painting and low-level lighting. Third, because we have a conference space to work out of, there will be classroom time devoted to both instruction and processing of images. Finally, because we'll have two instructors plus that classroom time, we'll allow up to 15 people to take part. What the fee doesn't include is lodging, food or transportation. You'll make your own hotel reservations and need a car to get around (we'll connect those who are interested in sharing transportation). Payment details are at the bottom of this note.



Here's the itinerary (dates are fixed, but what we do at what exact times may change based on weather or other unexpected conditions):

Tuesday, March 19, 2024

The workshop will start at 2pm in our conference room at the Sloss Furnaces Visitor Center. We'll begin with introductions, then make a "get acquainted" tour of the grounds to begin our photography. After a break for dinner (there will be a list of suggested places nearby), we'll return and continue, working through dusk and into the night. Meg and I will both lead light painting sessions, and we'll be there until 11pm.

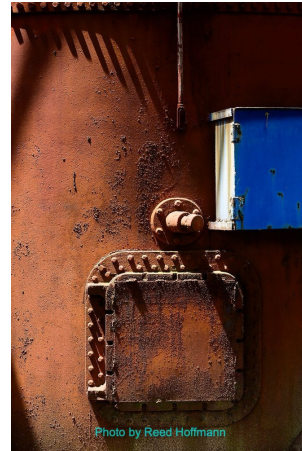


Photo by Reed Hoffmann



Photo by Meg McKinney

Wednesday, March 20

Wednesday morning we'll return to explore the site in early light, then after a break for lunch, meet in the conference room for the first teaching session. Since you'll have had some hands-on with light painting the night before, I'll now give a presentation that goes into more detail on the different ways to go about doing that. Afterwards I'll offer a lesson on common editing tips when working with night photos.

Later that day we'll head back out onto the grounds and start planning our shoots for the evening, then take a dinner break. We've arranged with the staff at Sloss Furnaces to have the structures lit until 9pm, then from that time until 11pm the floodlights will be off. This way we'll be able to work with both their lighting and just our own, for two completely different looks. End at 11pm again.



Photo by Meg McKinney

Thursday, March 21

Today we'll leave Birmingham behind for the day, with our first stop at Oak Mountain State Park. At this time of year, spring flowers should be abundant. We'll then spend the afternoon near Montgomery, first at Fort Toulouse – Fort Jackson State Park (<https://fttoulousejackson.org/>). After that we'll go to Jackson Lake Island and the fictional town of Spectre (<https://alabamanewscenter.com/2023/03/17/alabama-small-town-wonders-the-town-of-spectre/>). Built for the filming of "Big Fish," it's now open to visitors.

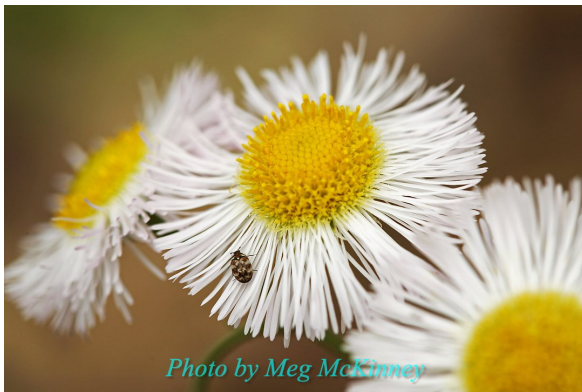


Photo by Meg McKinney



Photo by Meg McKinney

Friday, March 22

After the busy first three days, you'll now have an opportunity to sleep in! We may work in a local shoot in Birmingham Friday before returning to Sloss Furnaces for the rest of the day, ending our workshop there, once again going until 11pm.



Saturday, March 23

With the workshop over, you're free to head home or do more exploration of the Birmingham area. One suggestion would be to visit the U.S. Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville. NASA's presence in Huntsville has turned it into Alabama's largest city.

Level of difficulty: Easy. The Sloss Furnaces site is well-maintained, with paved or brick paths giving easy access to most of it. If you choose, you can also climb stairs up or down to get to other parts of the facility. We have a large conference room reserved in the modern visitor's center where we can meet and safely leave equipment. The locations away from Sloss don't require a lot of walking, although how much you do will be up to you. In those places, you'll sometimes be on trails, so good walking shoes are recommended.

Weather: Expect upper 60s in the daytime and down to the mid-40s overnight. Rainfall total the month of March averages a bit over 5-inches, so we may see some precipitation. If anything that, could add a nice look to our night shoots.

All clients must sign and return an assumption of risk form:
(https://reedhoffmann.com/PARTICIPANT_AGREEMENT.pdf)

Here's how to register and pay:

To register, simply call or email me to confirm that there's still a spot available for you. After that, I'll let you know when it's time to send me your deposit (\$600) and book travel. The deposit is fully refundable until December 1 in case you have to cancel. After that, it's refundable if you or I can find someone to take your spot.

The balance, \$900, is due January 15, 2024. After that, if you have to cancel, I can refund all your money if either you or I can find someone to take your spot. If you're worried that you might have to cancel, I'd suggest looking into trip insurance.

You can pay via PayPal or Venmo (as a "friend," or I need to add the 3% processing charge to your fee), or send a check to me at:

My address is: Reed Hoffmann
 13169 Carter Street
 Overland Park, KS 66213

Questions? Let me know - Reed