

## A Summary of the 2005 Digital Photographers Summit



**by  
Alain Briot**

*Photography is best described as a two step process.*

*Step one is the creation of new images in the field.  
Step two is the process of crafting a print that expresses what we saw and felt.*

*The Photographers Digital Summit, now in its third year,  
is a unique event in that it address both aspects of this two-part process.*

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Antelope Canyon

### **The Locations**

The 2005 Digital Summit took place in Page, Arizona this November.

The creation of images in the field took place at several locations near Page including Horseshoe Bend, Lake Powell and Antelope Canyon. Antelope was our main location, given its significant photographic potential.

The process of crafting a print that expresses what we saw and felt in the field took place at the Page Marriott, a beautiful adobe-style hotel with a great view of the surrounding landscape.

**The Summit**

The Summit is organized by Uwe Steinmueller and Alain Briot. The great thing about having both of us work together is that our photographic styles are so different. This demonstrates how two photographers can photograph the same subject at the same time and yet get totally different images.

Why is that? For two reasons, reasons that are directly related to the fact that photography is a two part process.

First, in the field we focus on different subjects. For example, while I frequently use wide angles and relatively rarely telephotos, Uwe hardly ever uses wide angles but uses telephotos a lot. Also, Uwe likes to focus on details in the landscape, often cropping out the sky, while I enjoy showing a lot more of the landscape in my images and rarely crop out the sky, except when I shoot down into a canyon or focus on small details.



From Within the Darkest Recess

Second, in the digital darkroom we have different goals. For example, I love color and like to create saturated images. Often, for me, the success of a photograph hinges on being able to create saturated colors while maintaining the believability of the image.

Uwe, on the other hand, prefers to use more subdued colors, often creating images that are nearly monochromatic and yet are not black and white. He also does not always set a

true black point in his images, explaining that what matters is whether he likes the image or not, and not whether there is a true black or not.

Finally, the southwest and the Page area are my home. I am intimately familiar with this landscape and have worked with it for years. For Uwe, this year's Summit was very much the opportunity to discover this landscape, with the surprises that comes with it. For example, Uwe said during the Summit that he did not have a palette for reds because in California one does not see a lot of reds in the landscape, unlike in the Southwest where red is found in nearly every cliff, canyon and sandstone outcrop.

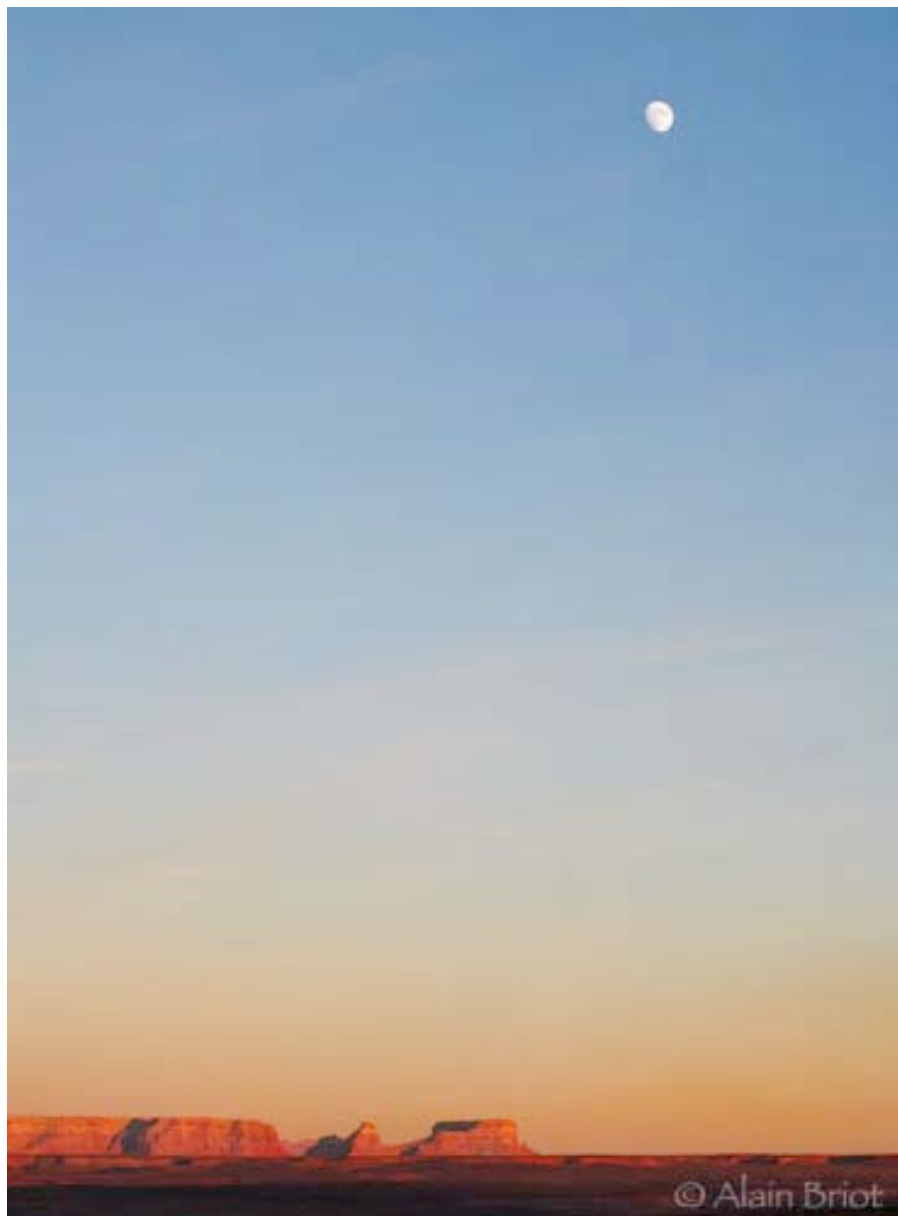
Again, the concept that one needs a personal palette to render a color to his liking demonstrates why the work of two photographers working with the same subject is bound to be different. Clearly, my palette for reds, and for other colors, is different from Uwe's palette for the same colors.



Photographing along Lake Powell at Sunset

And of course this brings up the question “do photographs represent reality?” If one needs to find the proper palette to express how he feels about the landscape, the answer is most likely “no”. In my view, photographs represents not *reality* as a whole, but rather our personal perception of reality, a reality that will change according to our choice of palette, as well as our choice of subject, composition and the many other options that are available to us while optimizing an image and working towards a fine print. It is this approach which leads to developing a personal style.

In a sense this is what the Summit is all about: not only taking good photographs and learning how to best optimize them in Photoshop and other software, but also finding out how you see the world around you and how you want to represent this world. It is about finding out what is your reality, what is your personal style.



Moonrise at Sunset along Lake Powell

### **The Vision Field Workshops**

The Vision Field Workshops were offered by Natalie and I over two days after the Summit. During the Field Workshops we photographed Monument Valley and Canyon de Chelly.

The Field workshops were designed to focus on personal style and give each participant the chance to reflect on what characterizes their personal style. In this sense they were a perfect continuation to the Summit and nearly every Summit participant joined the field workshops afterwards.

During the field workshop we focused upon personal style. I was very impressed with how successful this process was. I had not taught personal style in a short, two-day workshop before and I thought that the results were fantastic. Natalie and I were very impressed with the work of each participant and with how seriously they completed the assignments we had prepared for them. Again, my congratulations to all the talented photographers who participated in this event.



Monument Valley

If you like what we do during the Summit and if you want to join us next year sent us an email at [alain@beautiful-landscape.com](mailto:alain@beautiful-landscape.com) We started preparing next year's Summit, and even if it will be a few months before it is announced, you can be among the very first to know about it. The Summit will be in a new location next year, and we are already talking about introducing several exciting new features. Just like this year, it is bound to become an event you will want to be part of.

You can see a collection of photographs created by Uwe during the Summit in his Summit 2005 Diary: [http://www.outbackphoto.com/portfoliowork/pw\\_42/essay.html](http://www.outbackphoto.com/portfoliowork/pw_42/essay.html)

For those of you who cannot wait Natalie and I are offering a workshop to Antelope Canyon in April 2006:

<http://www.beautiful-landscape.com/Workshop-Antelope-WEW2.html>

Alain