

2009-02-27 cccc fourth tues bridge

Bridge (CS3)

Bridge is a program that comes 'free' with Photoshop and, according to Tim Grey, has "some great features for downloading, sorting and organizing your images".

That said, many folks have survived quite well without even opening Bridge (on purpose anyway) and if open, may not even recognize that they are in Bridge!

Let's start with the Preferences:

On a PC, Edit > Preferences

On a Mac, click on Bridge CS3 > Preferences

The Dialog box comes up with areas on the left and options on the right.

General:

Appearance... I prefer 18% gray so it doesn't affect the images.

Behavior... I don't connect my camera so don't use 'camera connected' option but, I do suggest you use the double click to open RAW files option if you do a lot of RAW editing where you aren't going to continue in Photoshop as without this option, when you do double click a RAW file, Photoshop is started automatically whether you plan to use it or not...

Reset... resets all those annoying WARNING boxes you clicked to "don't show this warning again!"

Thumbnails:

>Performance and File Handling...

>Turn Prefer Adobe Camera Raw for jpeg and tiff ON if you'd like Camera RAW to process your jpeg and tiff images like it does your RAW images.

>How long do you want to wait for thumbnails to be created and what quality do you desire? Quick is quick but low quality, High quality takes time but looks better.... Is it enough better? You decide!

>Do not process files larger than... bigger = slower and most folks don't have images this big... if you do, you decide the slow vs. no image tradeoff...

>Details: How much and what info do you want under each thumbnail? I kind of like to add 'size' and sometimes 'exposure' to the file name. The only

problem with this is in Light table view, the data area may reduce the number of images on the screen.

>Show Tooltips... check the box and every time the cursor goes over a thumbnail a box pops up with all kinds of image (Metadata) info... May be good for a while, but can get annoying... This is where you turn it on/off...

Playback:

>Sets how audio and video are played back. Tim likes the defaults, I have NO clue!

Metadata:

>Sets the data displayed in Bridge for each of the different sections... Default works well in most cases, I did add ISO to the Camera data. Just go thru the check boxes and see what you want or don't want and check the boxes accordingly, you can always go back and check/uncheck as your tastes change...

Keyword:

Labels:

>Change the Names on the Labels to better suit your way of working.

>Require a second key, Command or Control in addition with the number key to set labels, some feel it is safer if you have to hit two keys to get what you want...

File Type Associations:

>Allows you to select which application opens which types of files. If you don't know what you are doing, you might want to leave these ALONE!

Cache:

>This is where you control where and how your thumbnails are stored. Leave the location alone unless you really NEED to change it! Cache size determines how many thumbnails are stored before they are dumped out the other end...

>Compacting the cache may reduce disk storage space.

>Purge the Cache... good to know if something goes wrong or thumbnails do not load correctly, this is where you come to "start over"...

Inspector: Leave this alone unless you are controlling images in Workgroups (more than one computer/person working on the same image)...

Startup Scripts:

>I have only Adobe Bridge and Adobe CS3 selected as I don't use the others and it only slows things down to have the others start up when I never use them.

Advanced:

>Leave Software rendering off as Hardware rendering is faster.

> Previews... No information here, seems to be in two places and Bridge Help has NO help/info on this setting...

Setting up your Metadata:

>To preset your Metadata, go to Tools > Create Metadata Template, give the Template a name 'shawn' (in my case, may not work for you) and fill in the blanks!

>To apply your template, select all the images you'd like to 'tag' and hit the Metadata Tab and just to the far right, click the tiny icon and Apply Metadata 'shawn'. You can also add Metadata like Keywords to individual images or selected/multiple images.

Downloading your Images using Bridge:

Connect your card reader or your camera (not recommended, battery and cable/connector ware and usually not as fast as a good card reader) to your computer.

>In Bridge, select File > Get Photos from Camera

>Verify that the correct source showed up and watch the image thumbnails load. If you'd like all of them, do nothing, if you need to be selective, uncheck or select uncheck all and select only those you'd like to download.

>Go thru the Save options selecting folder and file names using the options provided or use Custom to get your own way! If you are going to change the file names, you might consider preserving the file name in the XMP just in case!

>Check Open Adobe Bridge so that when the image download is complete, Bridge opens to the newly created folder.

>Select your pre-done Metadata template.

>"Get Photos"

Setting up your Workspace:

>To see what's available, go to Window > Workspace and select each of the options in turn... # Note, if you already have a 'custom' Workspace setup, save it with Window > Workspace > Save and give

it a name so you can get it back if you change to a stock Workspace. You may find two or three Workspaces you like and/or ones that you can customize to your liking. Once you have selected your 'top three' you can click on the lower right 1 2 and 3 Icons. If you click and hold on '1' the menu comes up and you can select which Workspace you want when you hit that button. This allows you to rapidly switch between three Workspaces.

>If you'd like to add/subtract any of the info tabs, go to Window > and check/uncheck the ones you'd like to add/remove from the Workspace.

Working with images:

You can use the slider in the lower right corner to enlarge/reduce image size. In horizontal or vertical filmstrip mode you can select one image and then ctrl/command click another and have both images enlarged on screen at the same time. If you put your cursor over an image (in the Preview pane), you see a + and if you click, you will get a loupe to magnify that part of the image that the loupe points to (upper left corner of the loupe). You can have a loupe for each of the images and click and drag each to compare areas of each image. Click on the loupe to remove it.

You can use colored Labels to Label your selected images Ctrl/Command 6, 7, 8 or 9 will give you the labels you set up in Preferences...

You can Stack a selected Group, Open the Stack, Close the Stack and UnStack a Group in the Stack Menu at the top of the screen. Handy if you have 20 Duck pix and 20 Pelican pix and another 20 Sand pix, make three Stacks to get more room and open only those you want to work with.

You can Rate your images with 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 Stars by selecting the image(s) and ctrl/command 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5. Once Rated, you can Sort by Star Rating to get the images organized by Rating.... Click on Filter and below and to right, click on Sort By and a drop down menu gives all the choices you could want... To the right of that is an arrow. Click it to change from Ascending sort order to Descending and vice versa.

Purge the Cache:

There are times when things don't go quite right... and you need to Purge the Cache for a particular folder. This could happen if you can't see your RAW images and have to update the Camera Raw converter. Once done, to see the new Thumbnails, you need to Purge the Cache for that folder, to do so, go to that folder and Tools > Cache > Purge Cache for Folder "whatever the name is" ... Sometimes you just gotta do it and that's how.