

Digital Panoramic Photography course in Guatemala



Organized and delivered by **Nicholas Hellmuth, PhD, Director, Digital Imaging Resource Center, FLAAR-Latin America at UFM.**

e-mail info@flaar.org

The course will be given in English; most of the lectures are available in written Spanish as well.

Several courses on digital photography are now available from FLAAR:

- [introductory digital photography \(follow this link to introduction\)](#)
- [digital photography as input for wide format printing \(follow link to advanced\)](#)
- digital photography for architects, art historians, museum curators, and archaeologist (as well as any scientist, biologist, botanist, etc)
- **digital panorama photography (see below)**

This page describes the course on digital panoramic photography.

Professor Nicholas Hellmuth will now be offering courses and training on fundamentals of panorama photography including large format digital panorama photography. The panorama photography course will be available during November into December 2003 in Guatemala through Francisco Marroquin University + FLAAR.

This course is unique in that it's an actual professional expedition to do large format digital panoramic photography. Once we photograph this specific area of Guatemala, the course will not likely be repeated.



Popol Vuh Museum

This is a hands-on courses with limited participation size. We have the top of the line digital panorama camera from BetterLight. If enough people sign up we may add the original Dicomed FieldPro BetterLight Pano system (same system as used by Stephen Johnson to photograph the National Parks) and the Seitz Super RoundShot 70mm – 220 rollfilm panoramic camera.

Students will work in small groups for maximum practice together with an instructor. This course will have no minimum group size. Cutoff group size is 8.

Although it helps to have a knowledge of Photoshop beforehand, under some circumstances we can provide Photoshop training as an additional course concurrent with the panorama course. Training in Photoshop is available separately for introductory into intermediate level or for brush up intermediate course if you already have a bit of knowledge.



Tikal panorama

This course in panoramic photography is suitable for any individual, of any age or background, who wishes to learn about digital imaging and panoramic photography.

Naturally this course is especially appropriate for architects, photographers, graphic designers, artists, architectural historians, art historians, archaeologists or students of these disciplines.

Dr Nicholas Hellmuth is an architectural historian who specializes in large format photography of ancient Mayan pyramids and buildings throughout Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras. This program is sponsored by FLAAR Digital Imaging Resource Center at the Francisco Marroquin University.

The course will take advantage of the natural scenery of Guatemala, especially the tropical beauty of the highland mountains and the volcanic cones which dramatize the skylines in panorama photography.

Although we obviously won't do pano photography from an airplane, to see what the landscape looks like, see the area a few miles from the university.

We may also do urban landscapes in the nicest portions of Zone 10, Vista Hermosa, and the airport area to show off the striking modern architecture of this expanding city. Field trips will include excursions to Antigua, the Spanish colonial ruins about one hour from the city. We will also photograph Lake Atitlan, whose volcano-rimmed shores make it often considered the most beautiful lake in Latin America.

The designations "introduction" and "advanced" explain the nature of this course. Introduction implies that common sense and a good photographic eye are the most useful prerequisites.

"Advanced" means the students will learn the absolute latest technological advances in panorama photography, namely seamless digital photography. A large format digital scan back rotates on a computer-controlled panorama head. One complete vertical pixel column is taken with each "shot." Up to 29,999 pixel columns can be taken in automatic sequence (Adobe Photoshop can't open a digital image larger than 30,000 pixels). The average file is about 280 MB to 600 MB of true optical data (no interpolation).

This course will involve large format inkjet digital printing since the panoramas lend themselves to giant mural-sized enlargements. Indeed the best student and faculty photographs will be offered to large format printer manufacturers for them to consider using these images to showcase the quality of the large format printers at trade shows.

This course is especially suitable for architectural students, architectural historians as well as for anyone wishing to learn digital photography. This course is also suitable for individuals who are already professional photographers as well as hobby photographers who wish to have some experience using professional equipment.

Individuals with considerable interest but less experience are also welcome, indeed they will be offered private instruction in Adobe Photoshop to bring them up to speed.

Dr Hellmuth will give the initial lectures on the overall system and will supervise the training by other instructors including Marlon Castillo. The actual practice sessions will be led by instructors at Francisco Marroquin University who have been using this panoramic camera for two years.



Santa Clara's fountain, Antigua Guatemala



Installing panoramic equipment

Focus will be on visual communications of natural and urban landscapes.

The following syllabus is tentative and will be altered to suit the developing circumstances.

Session 1: Welcome and introduction to wide angle and panorama photography in the first century of photography.

Session 2: review of the traditional panorama cameras of the 1950's into the 1980's.

Practice: Session 3: Perspective control and movements, the downside of small format cameras which lack these movements: Traditional wide angle photography with conventional cameras: Nikon 15mm, Hasselblad SuperWide, and other cameras. The need for QTVR when you don't have seamless system.

Practice: Session 4: Perspective control and movements with 4x5 cameras with wide angle lenses, etc.

Practice: Session 5: Introduction to computerized panorama cameras: the newest BetterLight digital pano system. Photography on location: panoramas of the UFM campus



Museums Ixchel and Popol Vuh at UFM campus

Practice: Session 6: Photography on location: wide angle panoramas of the UFM campus

Practice: Session 7: Photography on location: panoramas of a courtyard aspect of the UFM campus

Practice Session 8: Photography on location: panoramas of an interior scene on the UFM campus

Session 9: Critique of student photography work done to date

Practice: Session 10: Photography on location: panoramas of an interior situation in the Museo Ixchel.

Practice Session 11: Photography on location: panoramic close-up inside the Museo Popol Vuh

Practice Session 12: Photography on location: panoramas within an urban courtyard in Zona 10 or Vista Hermosa



Urban panoramic of zona 10

Practice Session 13: Photography on location: panoramas of an urban landscape of skyscrapers in Zona 10 or VistaHermosa, especially from the hills looking down on VistaHermosa office buildings and tall apartments.

Practice Session 14: Photography on location: panoramas of an colonial situation in Antigua or nearby. We may add additional sessions for Antigua if weather and conditions permit.

Practice Session 15: Photography on location: panoramas of a landscape such as Lake Atitlan. We may add additional sessions for Antigua if weather and conditions permit.

Practice Session 16: Critique of student photography work

The above list will be adapted to the weather. The idea is that several students will work in the morning sunlight; other students in the afternoon. It is not possible to photograph with digital system at night.

The assignments will vary depending on the situation of the moment. For example, we have been invited to do photography from the Pacific Ocean coast of the chain of volcanic peaks that run through Guatemala. Presently this is not in the schedule, since we will wait until November to see when the weather and situation is propitious.



Textbook: two on digital photography, one on large format camera movements. No textbook that we know of exists of panorama photography, so we will prepare our own. If you need help on Adobe Photoshop we know of excellent textbooks on Photoshop.

We would recommend a few pertinent books on panorama photographs such as by Will Landon and Stephen Johnson.



Tutoring in Adobe Photoshop: if your skills in Photoshop are minimal, or if this is your first time, we will need to provide remedial and/or basic Photoshop training to you. Usually such a course costs up to \$900 in the USA. Cost via UFM should be roughly \$300 for intermediate to \$500 for beginner, depending on the level you wish to achieve and depending on how much personal attention our staff needs to dedicate you to teach you Photoshop quickly and thoroughly. If you need tutoring in Photoshop you will also need to bring with you the pertinent books which we will recommend.



Tutoring in Wide Format Inkjet Printing: we have a 42" wide Hewlett-Packard DesignJet 5000ps and a 24" Epson 7500 printers in our facilities (we have several others but these are the two with pigmented inks). If you wish to learn how to do your own printing, including a bit on RIP software, we can provide a personalized course on the spot for \$300; if you wish to have and take home the over 40 FLAAR Reports, cost is \$200 for PDF downloads. Realize that the normal wide format printing course itself costs just under \$1,000, so you are getting the basic material for half price.

Course fee for digital panoramic photography (not including Adobe Photoshop) is \$2,000 for professional photographers, \$1,500 for non-students, pro-sumers, full time museum, college, or university faculty or staff, or hobby photographers. For students under 28 years of age, \$500 if space allows.

You will be provided jpeg copies of your files to reproduce at page size. If you wish the original copies at high resolution there is a flat fee of \$1,000 camera rental fee for Lake Atitlan views and \$1,000 for comparable unique views elsewhere per individual image. There is no cost for generic views in Guatemala City outside the university campus. However there is no camera rental fee if you wish to return home with mural size print-outs; we have all the necessary wide-format inkjet printers here in Guatemala. You merely cover the cost of the print-out.

There is no camera rental fee if you merely want to learn how to do digital panoramic photography and you do not need commercially viable results to take home with you.

A corporation may make the payment in the name of any person for any level of attendance.

Scholarships will potentially be available for a limited number of personnel of the IDAEH.

Lab costs: any printing of results would result in student covering the basic cost of ink and media. Insurance, transportation, hotel, and meal costs are not included.

All photographs which result from use of FLAAR equipment are automatically copyright by FLAAR but with credit given to the student(s). If any photographs result from this course that can be commercialized, 25% commission goes to student, 25% to UFM, 25% to the Centro Digital, and 25% to FLAAR.

If you commercialize any photo of yours which results from this course, if you made a \$1,000 camera rental fee that covers the first \$1,000 of your income from selling a photo. Any income you or your company receive over this sum, a 25% commission is due to FLAAR as fee. This is because if you were to rent this camera system from a commercial location, rental fee would probably be about \$2,000 per day plus surcharges if they knew you were using it in a foreign country.

If due to weather, political, or other conditions this course can not take place, we will notify you as soon as possible. You receive back 100% of your payments. Be sure your airplane tickets are refundable. If due to equipment malfunction, breakage, the sessions are cut short, you will be refunded pro-rated amount factoring in how much you have learned and amount of experience gained up to the point of break-off. If the program itself continues, and you are unable to continue, as with any comparable program, no refund is possible.

You must show evidence of medical insurance and airplane medical evacuation insurance (available for about \$100 from a variety of companies). You must have read the US State Dept travel advisory on Guatemala.

Any student that breaks a camera due to accident, even if not negligent, will be responsible for repair costs. Damage, as opposed to thievery is not necessarily covered by our regular insurance.

To sign up, send an e-mail to info@FLAAR.org.

Examples of images taken in Guatemala and adjacent countries.

- * [Complete digital panorama system](#), Andrea in Copan ballcourt, Honduras
- * list of various professional level [panorama camera](#) equipment such as Linhof, Noblex
- * Linhof [Technorama 617S](#) panorama camera
- * Schneider [47mm lens](#) for ultra wide format photography (large format)
- * 160 degree [panorama](#) of volcanoes ringing Guatemala City, Central America



Different snapshots of the teaching lab for the courses of FLAAR at Universidad Francisco Marroquin.



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www.FLAAR.org

www.ctpid.ufm.edu.gt

www.wide-format-printers.net

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

You will receive every one of these course units.

This abundant material (not available elsewhere) will provide you with all the experience of Nicholas Hellmuth to assist you in learning how to accomplish digital photography for your own needs and applications, at your own level, whether beginning, intermediate, or advanced

