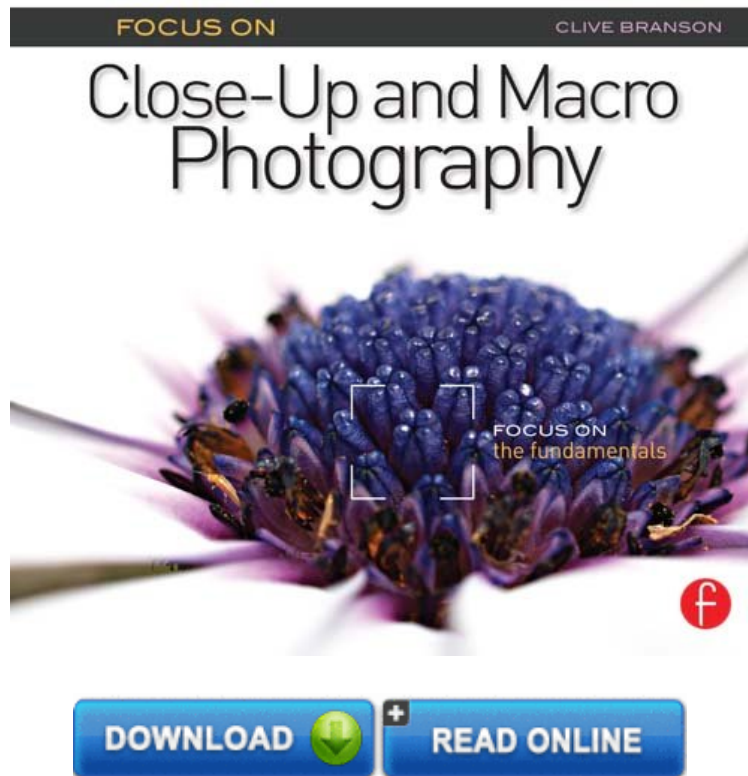


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## Focus On Close-Up and Macro Photography (Focus On series): Focus on the Fundamentals (The Focus On Series)

Clive Branson

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**Clive Branson : Focus On Close-Up and Macro Photography (Focus On series): Focus on the Fundamentals (The Focus On Series)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Focus On Close-Up and Macro Photography (Focus On series): Focus on the Fundamentals (The Focus On Series):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Focus on Close-up and Macro Photography By Marshal Shlafer I couldn't agree more with Paul Cassel's 2-star review ("Misses the Mark") of this book, and I urge potential purchasers to read it. Virtually every point he makes, starting with a comment that the book is awkwardly written and oddly disorganized, and on through the end, is spot on. I have been shooting macros using both film and digital SLRs for decades, including underwater using Nikonos cameras and strobes, so I was looking for something a bit "inspirational." Something, perhaps some new idea or technique or subject that I had overlooked during all those years. I found nothing along those lines here. (I do agree with Mr. Cassel that some of the "special subject" parts of this book, such as photographing fabrics, smoke trails, and so on, probably haven't been addressed specifically in other books. Nonetheless, regardless of which of those "special subjects" one considers, I found nothing that was more than merely interesting. Nothing that truly excited or inspired me.) The book is sort of a conundrum to me in ways that I don't think Mr. Cassel addressed. For example, for whom is the book intended? Newcomers to macro? If that's the case, I can understand the small section on macro with point-and-shoot and other simple digital cameras ("use the flower icon on the settings dial"). But then, there's also the discussion of reverse lens mounting and bellows... both

techniques not at all going to be used by newbies, or even many photographers with years of experience. So why even a page or two about the PS cameras? The section on, essentially, "where to market your photos" is also putting the proverbial cart way in front of the horse for novice readers of the subject. The book is also, as noted by Mr. Cassel, replete with errors or, at the very least, information that will either confuse or blow over the heads of relative newcomers. There are discussions of focus modes described with terms that I'm sure are intended for exposure modes (ie, shutter priority and aperture priority are exposure, not focus, modes). The author talks about compensating exposure by adjusting "EV," when I think he means adjusting the ISO sensitivity of the sensor. This will almost certainly confuse the novice, and perhaps even readers with more experience will start second-guessing their knowledge because the "expert author" uses a different or misleading or inaccurate term. Finally, the Kindle version I bought does funky things with some content (not at all unique to this book). For example, data in (I recall) the one table in the book gets moved around such that rows and columns of data don't get lined up properly, and you have to stop and think about what was meant to be where. The book isn't expensive, which lessens the pain of the purchase and reading a bit, but that doesn't mitigate what I perceive to be major negatives. My recommendation? Unless you really want to spend a few dollars to get one or two ideas, and you go in understanding this book tries to address a large reader skill level (from newbie to more advanced) and misses the mark on all levels, don't buy it. 12 of 13 people found the following review helpful. Misses the Mark By Paul Most of this book is awkwardly written and oddly disorganized, but the real issue I have is that it does not do what it purports to do which is to provide a newcomer to close up or macro photography a lucid explanation of the basics. Instead it's one muddled section after another culminating in an amazing gloss over one of the most pursued areas of macro photography. First the pros: this book has, at its end, sections devoted to specific macro photography tasks and how to accomplish them. This isn't basic material but still welcome. For example, one section goes into details about how to do good close up photographs of textiles. I've never seen a discussion of this topic anywhere so seeing this, as well as other similar if somewhat obscure subjects dealt with was interesting - to say the least. Additionally, the close up photos included are generally of reasonably high quality showing that the author can make the snaps that a novice close up photographer would like to be able to make. The cons are numerous. The author tends to never explain the basics or even get them wrong. Right on the first few pages he refers to the depth of field in macro photography as being 'marginal'. It's not. It's shallow. Shallow is not a synonym for marginal. Nearby he states the difference between macro photography and using a telephoto lens is that macro forces you to 'acquaint yourself with focusing techniques'. If there is any area of photography where you can blow off focusing or focusing techniques, I've ever run into them. The example photographs cheat. Many are complex studio setups but the author never shows or explains the setups needed to get the results shown. This would imply that the novice snapper can doodle himself out to some locale to take a few images and get similar results. Perish the thought. One major and rarely violated of photography is one shows how one's images have been acquired. You go to any photography board or consult any well done photography text and you see clear explanations of how this or that snap was done. This author violates this basic principle or ethic present in photography since the start of the technology over 150 years ago. I can go on and on for 10,000 words (easily) on the outrageous or just plain incorrect elements of this book, but wishes me to keep these reviews to much shorter. Suffice it to say that if you wish an introduction to macro photography, seek another source. This book will not teach you elements of technique, equipment or setup. It has incorrect information such as reducing noise in your photographs by 'exposing to the right' to 'compensate for noise'. Exposing to the right (skewing a histogram to the right or over exposure side) in no way 'compensates' for noise. It's a good idea but not for the reason stated. If you learn the information in this book, you will have to spend a lifetime unlearning it. Before I leave, let me take one more whack at this book and its author. One widespread area of macro photography is snapping invertebrates - usually insects. Again back to ethics here. A common and welcome ethic is that doing such photography should never harm or even disrupt the life of your subjects. The author here doesn't just suggest, but offers ideas on capturing these insects, stuffing them in the refrigerator to slow them down and then, while they're stunned with cold, take their image indoors. In a following sentence he gives this up and says to just kill them. The only good of this section is that it's very short. If you wish to learn to snap insects, move on, pilgrim. I can go on and on, but I've either made my point or not. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Mixed By Darren Ingram\_dot\_com You cannot fail to have been amazed by macro photography, even if you don't know it, and yet it need not be as complex as you possibly fear it to be nor does it necessarily need a ton of expensive equipment. Of course, you can spend a small fortune on a good macro photography setup, yet an eye for a great photograph, some good subject material and a bit of knowledge is key. This book can help with the latter and guide you as you possibly develop a bit of a taste for the subject and eventually expand your camera arsenal. Your bank manager might not like you though... The book is written for the relative newbie but many old hands might still find some nuggets of information (or possibly can correct any misunderstandings and assumptions learned over time) - if nothing else there's a LOT of great, inspiring photographs to look at. Starting with looking at the differences between close-up and macro photography the reader is patiently taken through what can be a complex, confusing subject with the patient ease of a grandfather teaching a grandchild to ride a bicycle. One nice thing about this book is that the average reader is considered. The pros can afford macro lenses and fancy flash units that can easily run into the

hundreds if not thousands of pounds. Relatively inexpensive "starter options" are considered and their benefits compared to the more expensive offerings, allowing you to perhaps dip a toe into an interesting photography area and see if it really going to be something you want to invest in. Photography can be an expensive hobby, even in the digital age when there are no processing costs! Every possible little saving can help. As you would expect, the quality of example photographs is excellent. It is a big niggle that there is no "how this picture was taken" info box by each of them as that would have been a great help and possibly even a greater reinforcement that the average photographer can, with the right knowledge, possibly do the same. Or perhaps the author doesn't want to admit that things are so easy as many macro photographers can spend hours or longer on getting one picture just right... with a TON of expensive equipment at their side. Building up unreasonable expectations has no place in a book of this type. After a very good introduction and overview it is time for a lengthy look at composition matters, making you think about what you take and how it will be used. Much of this practical knowledge is then put to the test in a dedicated chapter about flower photography. Even if this is something you don't think you'd want to do yourself, you should read through it carefully and maybe even try it and polish your performance as many of the skills learned can be applied to other macro subjects. It would have been nice to have had even more "dedicated subject"-chapters but maybe one is just being greedy. Lighting is an important, if not critical, part of macro photography and here you will not be left wanting. Obviously brevity is an unfortunate necessity but the author has managed to provide a sufficient level of introductory information for a beginner. If and when you get the macro photography bug there is a plethora of other books all looking at specific elements, whether it be flash lighting, photographing insects or esoteric matters such as focus stacking. As it is this is a voluminous, detailed, workable general introduction resource. A good index at the end lets you dig back into the book when you are suddenly trying to refresh your knowledge about a thing. There's not a lot more to say. This book is by no means unique and nor does it pretend to be. Books of this kind can be highly personal items that the reader either gels with or will hate forever. This feels a great book for the beginner as well as the self-taught-with-many-bad-habits-and-poor-background "pro" alike. The downside? You might suddenly feel that all of your attempts-to-date are rather inferior when you see what can be done...The book can and does feel disjointed, as if it needs a bit of polish. It is not a walk-through book where you just follow each stage and press the shutter button. It is not a universal guide and it tends to focus on studio matters rather than being in the field - possibly a deliberate decision where you have the opportunity to control things. It could have been better but equally it could have been a lot worse.

Want to get the best out of your digital camera? Not quite sure how to capture up-close shots? Want easy to follow, expert advice on the best ways to creatively capture macro shots you can be proud of? This is your ticket to go beyond a snapshot to create a fine art print that you'll be so proud of. Macro and close-up photography involves a unique skill set in terms of exposure, lighting, and of course, composition in particular. You can take a quick photo of a sunflower in your back yard that will look mundane and typical OR you could learn how to take a picture of just a part of it-up close-and create a work of art. Let this book be your guide!

About the Author Clive Branson is a photographer living in Canada.