The Light in Lightroom

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Lightroom Classic

Lightroom CC

Lightroom Classic [the old one] and Lightroom CC [the new one] - Two of a Kind

The current version of Lightroom (the folder version) is now called Lightroom Classic. The new version of Lightroom (the web-cloud version) is called Lightroom CC.

The difference is exactly that; the Classic version is folder-based, so all your image files are stored on your desktop or laptop computer and it's nearly impossible, or very difficult, to work on the same files on different computers via Lightroom.
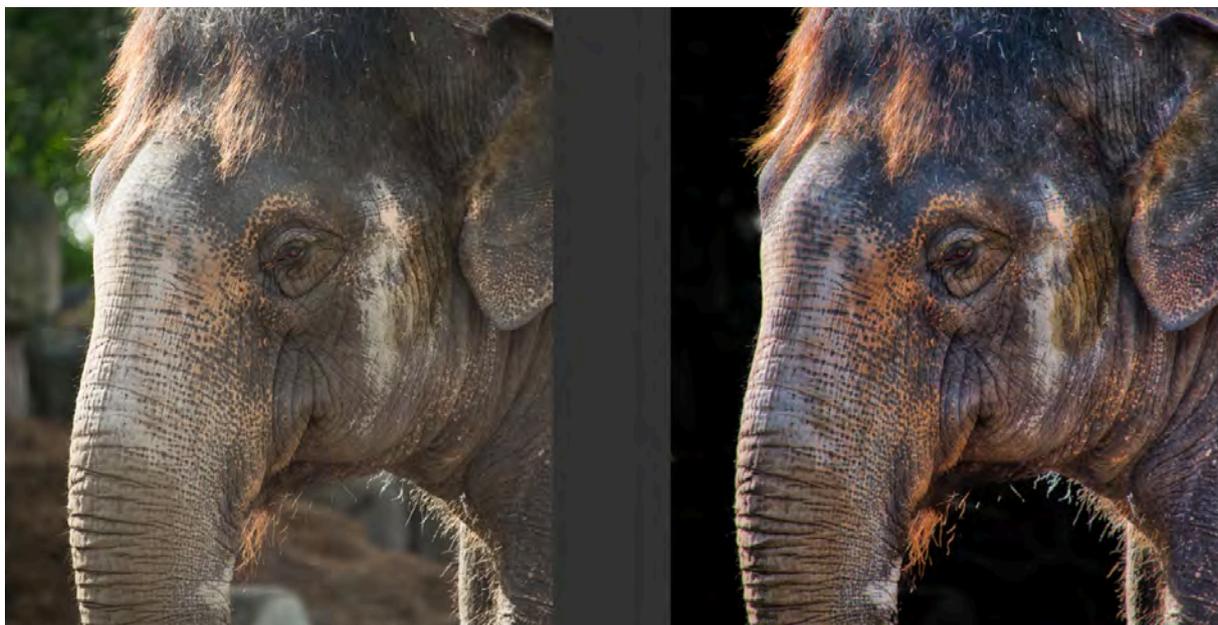
You could share the Catalog files via "The Cloud" using DropBox or similar. But then, where are the image files located? You could sync them via cloud services as well, but the upload/download times are impractically long. Even with fiber broadband running super fast, it's still a lengthy mission. For professional photographers like us, it is normal to come home from a shoot with a few thousand images, and I'd say impossible to upload all of these to a cloud server.

Another issue is the giant amounts of drive space this would take. You end up paying for the extra storage space required, unless you only keep the "current" files in the cloud and archive the older files on desktop drives. But this makes for a hugely complex workflow: it's not quick and efficient, and it is error-prone.
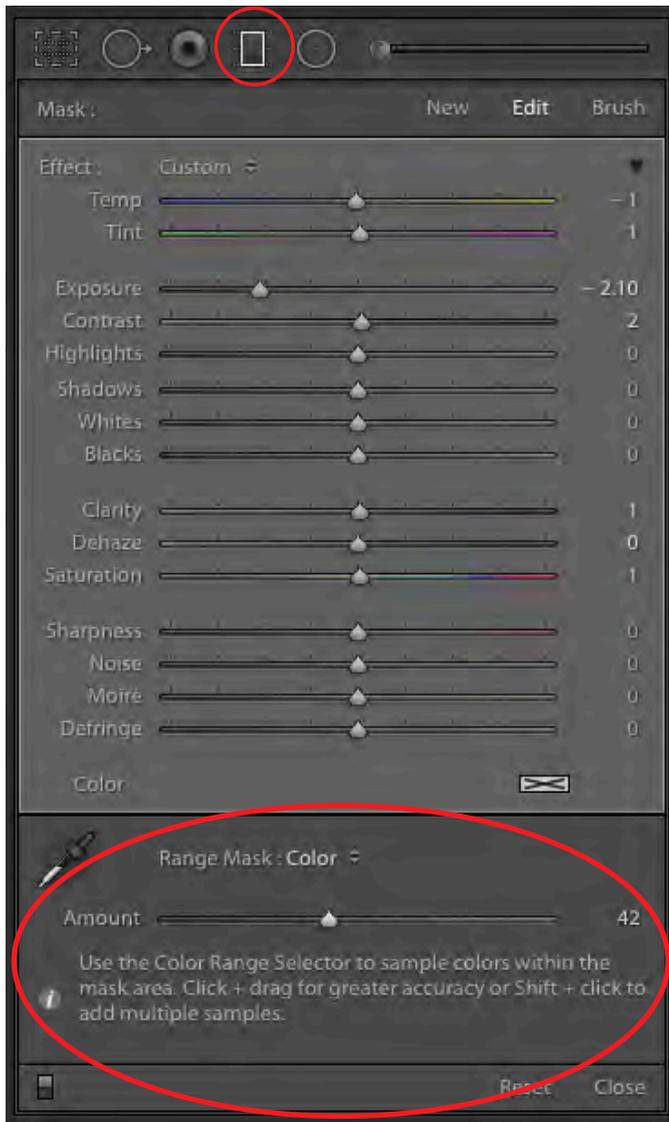
I have always maintained that it is impractical for photographers to work via a cloud-based system. My thoughts on this haven't changed with the introduction of Lightroom CC (the web-cloud version). You can create whatever super-smart software you like, but the weak link will always be "bandwidth". It simply takes a lot of time to upload and download; not very practical! But some creative thinkers have developed their own ways of working with this dilemma. If working on more than one machine is important, workarounds do exist. But I won't go into the details of that.

In the meantime, many users have been asking for a cloud-based workflow for Lightroom. Not so much professionals, but people who shoot with mobile devices. Please do not underestimate the mobile phone photographers. More pictures are taken every day on a mobile device than all other cameras combined! Workflow for those users on Lightroom Classic is cumbersome. Adobe did introduce a synchronise function between Lightroom and mobile devices a few years ago, but it seemed to be a bit remedial. So...
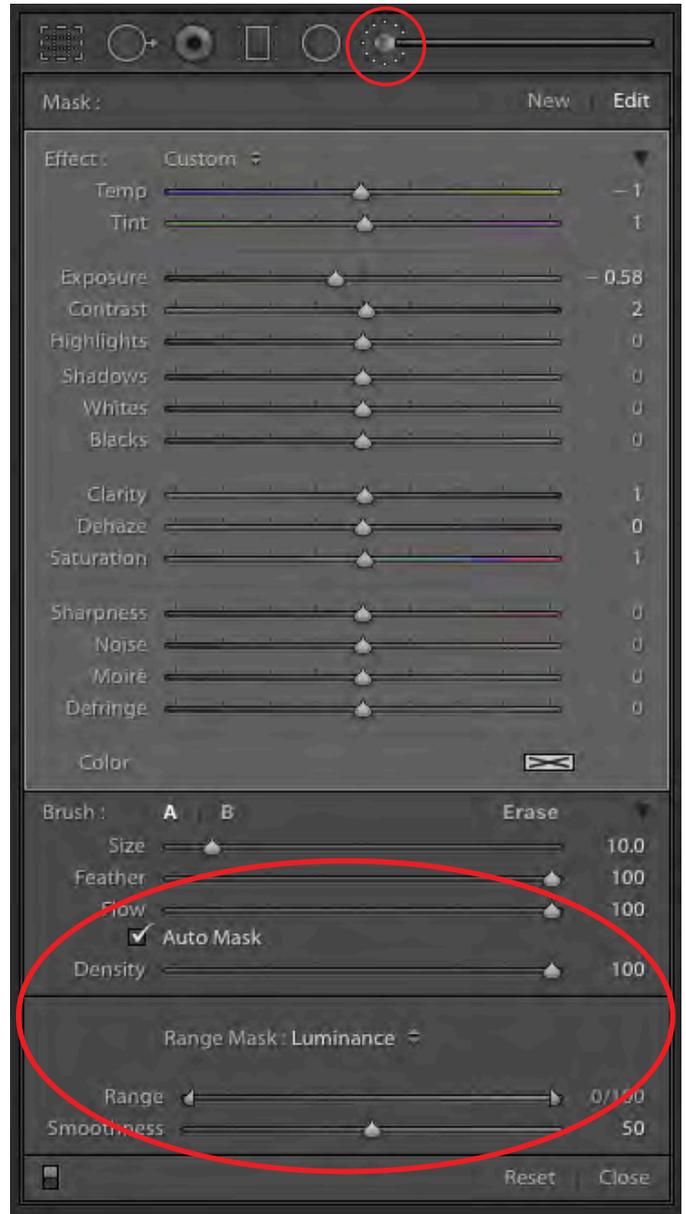
Welcome to the birth of little Lightroom CC. Keep in mind this is totally separate from the Classic version, and you can install both versions if you want. A consideration: this is only version 1.0, so a bunch of features are not yet available, though more will be added in future versions.

Elephant at the Auckland Zoo, entirely edited in Lightroom Classic using the adjustment brush only. © Harry Janssen

New features in Adobe Lightroom Classic include: new colour and luminosity masking, performance improvements and a new embedded preview workflow for faster culling of images.

Develop Local Adjustment Masking (Range Mask)

The new Color Range Masking and Luminance Masking tools allow you to build complex masks for local adjustments. This means you can now mask detailed areas, such as trees, and make localised adjustments, which was previously impossible without moving into Photoshop.

The Color Range Mask selects an area based on sampled colours, and the Luminance Range Mask selects pixels based on their brightness.

Color Range Mask:

First add a gradient or brush mask, then select Color from the Range Mask pop-up. Select the Color Range Selector (eyedropper) and click on your chosen colour in the photo. You can add up to five samples.

For greater accuracy, click and drag rectangles around the colours you want to adjust. Adjust the Amount slider

to narrow or broaden the range of selected colours. Hold down the Alt key (Windows) / Opt key (Mac) to display the mask as grayscale while moving the slider, so you can easily see the selected area.

Luminance Range Mask:

First add a gradient or brush mask, then select Luminance from the Range Mask pop-up. Adjust the Luminance Range slider to set the endpoints of the selected luminance range, then use the Feather slider to adjust how smooth the falloff is at either end of the selected luminance range. Hold down the Alt key (Windows) / Opt key (Mac) to display the mask as grayscale while moving the sliders, so you can easily see the selection.

Adobe Lightroom CC - The New One!

You can install Lightroom CC from your Creative Cloud control panel. There is a slight difference in the icons to tell them apart. The LR CC version has rounded corners. When you run it for the first time, check your settings in the preferences panes.

Panel 1: Enter your Adobe Creative Cloud user name and password.

Panel 2: Local Storage, you can check the box to keep a copy of your images on your local drive, or, click on Change Location to select where you want the images to be stored on your computer.

Panel 3: Should be all OK, but do select Automatic in the Panel Tracks option. This is similar to Solo Mode in Lightroom Classic. It automatically closes a panel when you open another to keep vertical scrolling to a minimum.

Note: If you made changes in any of the panels, make sure to restart Lightroom CC by clicking on the restart button on the bottom left to enable those changes. Now you're all set to go!

Adobe Lightroom CC - Download the iPhone, iPad or Android Apps

Next thing to do is to download the Lightroom apps for your device(s). And again, during the first run, make sure that you are logged on with your account details.

Select the Lightroom CC camera module and take a picture. It should now appear in the desktop version. So, next time you go for a walk, when you come home, the images will be waiting for you in Lightroom CC.
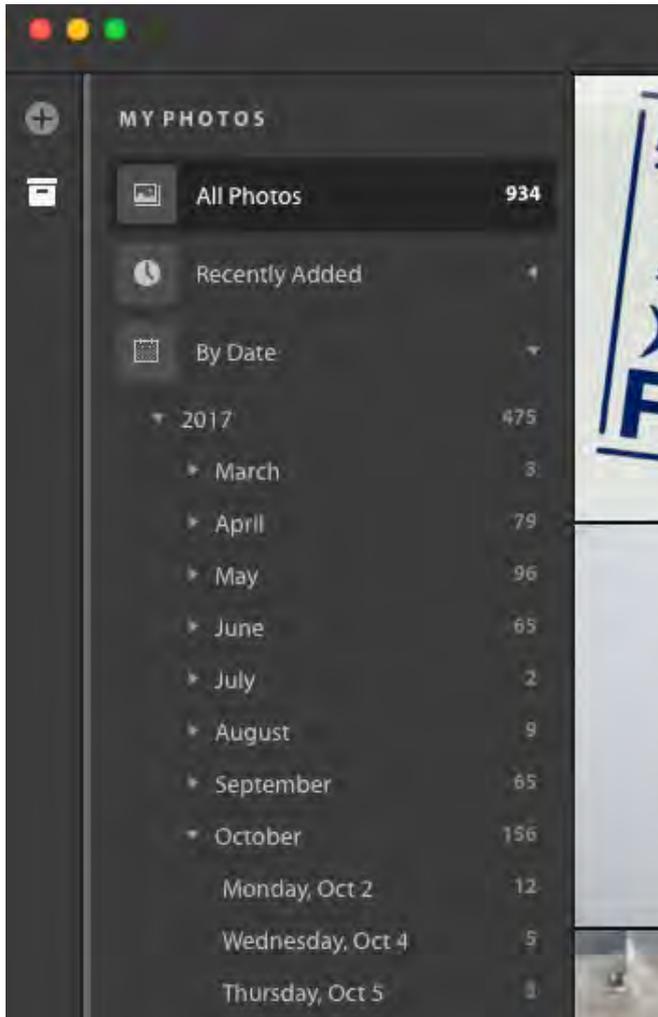

"This is not a user manual - if you are keen to try out the new Lightroom CC web-cloud version, think about how you are going to use it. I recommend you keep files from both Lightroom versions separated".

Adobe Lightroom CC - Albums and Filters

Click the + symbol to add images from computers or drives. To organise your work, create Albums (similar to Collections).

Select images and drag into the create album. You can filter images by date (Year, Month, Day).

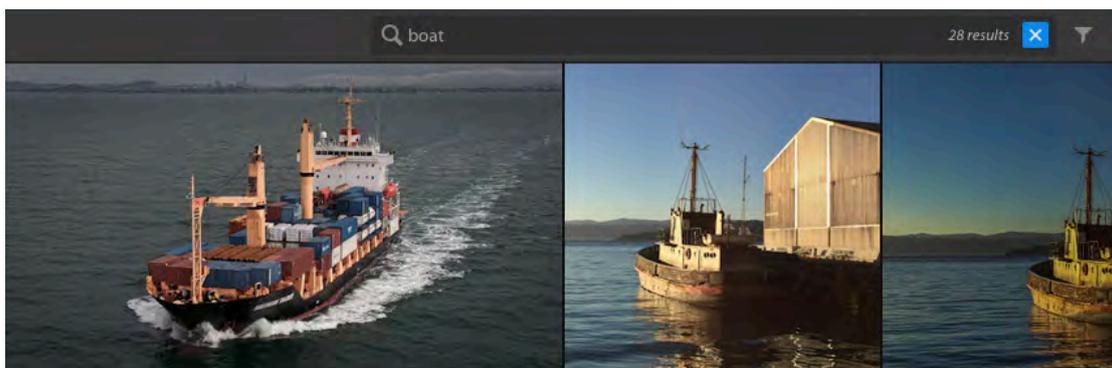

iPhone, processed in Lightroom CC
© Harry Janssen

Lightroom CC - Using the amazing Adobe Sensei to find an image

Lightroom CC on desktop is a completely new app for Mac and Windows. Lightroom CC is designed from the ground up to focus on photographers' needs as they move between their devices, and to tap into the power of cloud-based photo editing and management of collections and albums.

Lightroom CC features a new interface that makes it easy to organise AND edit from the same streamlined experience. Your original images, edits, and metadata are synced and stored in the Creative Cloud. Once they're in the cloud, Lightroom CC taps into Adobe Sensei to automatically tag your images for search.

Using the Sensei technology; in the example below, I searched for "boat" and without having to add any keywords, all my images with boats magically appear.
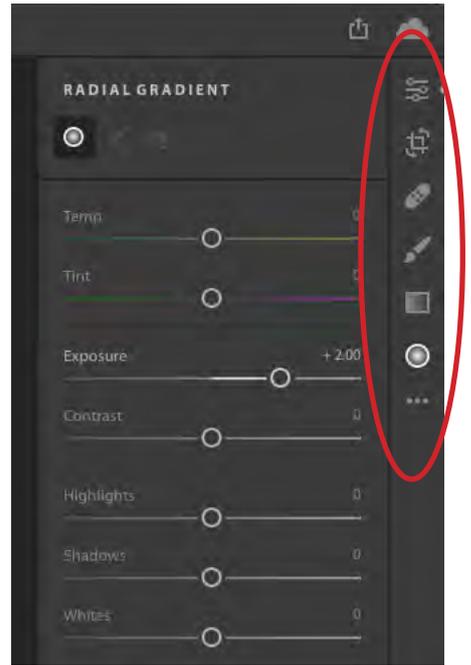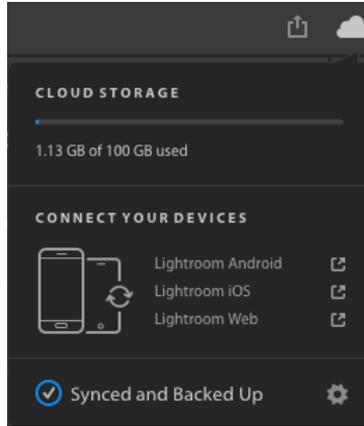
Adobe Lightroom CC - Correcting an Image

Lightroom CC uses the same terminology as Lightroom Classic, so it is very easy to use. Buttons for Light, Crop, Healing Brush, Adjustment Brush, Linear Gradient, Radial Gradient and a "More" option (3 dots).

The "More" option lets you edit in Photoshop for example. All other tools work and behave pretty much the same as the Lightroom version you are used to.
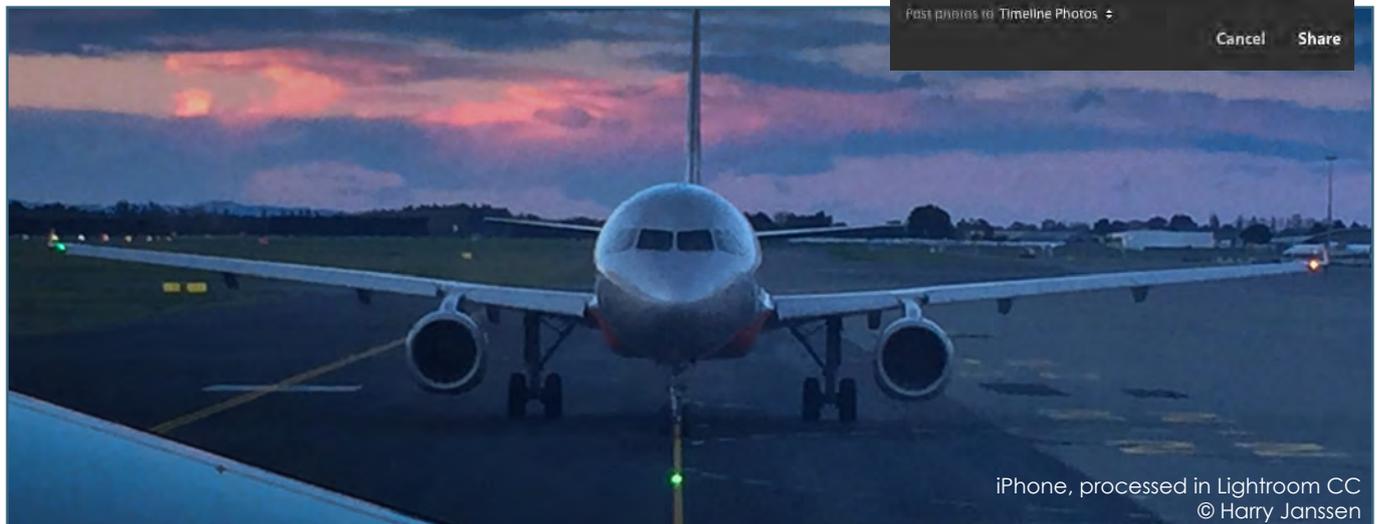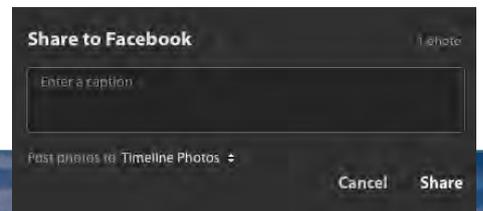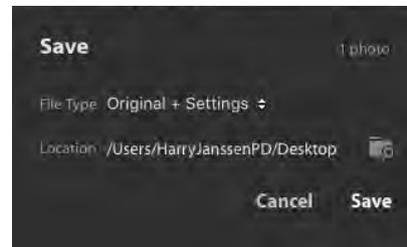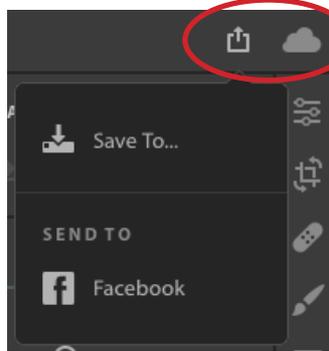

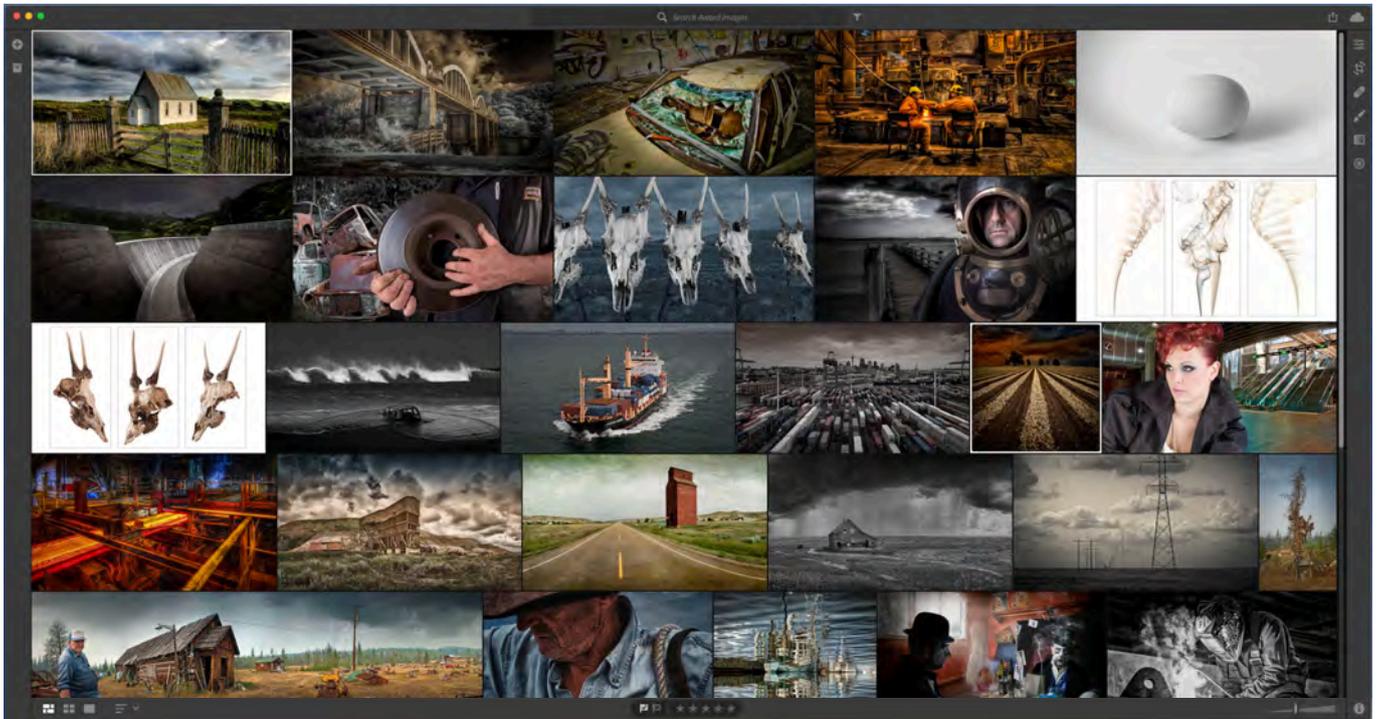

iPhone, processed in Lightroom CC
© Harry Janssen

Lightroom CC - Save and Share

The Cloud Button in the top right hand corner brings up a display which shows space used, devices connected and a sync status check. The Share / Save button lets you do exactly that, save image(s) to your hard drive, and you can post images to Facebook too. As I mentioned before, this is version 1.0 of Lightroom CC. A lot of things aren't there yet. But because it is so lean and simple, it is a nice way to get started.

iPhone, processed in Lightroom CC
© Harry Janssen

The Lightroom CC interface
All images © Harry Janssen

Adobe Lightroom CC - A Summary

Lightroom CC - The web-cloud version with apps for iOS, Android, tvOS, web browsers, PC's and Macs. It uploads everything to the cloud so you can access all of your photos everywhere. It's only the first release, so features are still a little bit limited, new features will be introduced with each update.
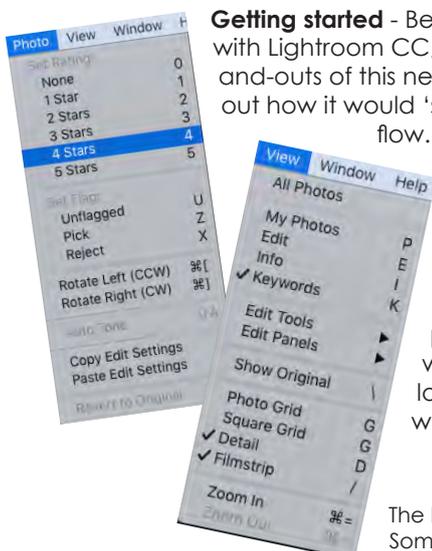
Lightroom Classic - The latest version of the Lightroom we are used to, with performance enhancements and other improvements. This version stores all of your photos on your computer, as it always has done.

A take-over bid - Is Lightroom CC going to take over from Lightroom Classic? Personally I can't see it, but you never know what the future holds. My reasoning is, imagine the wedding shooter coming home with hundreds if not more images from large file cameras like the new Nikon D850. It is just impractical to upload all of these images to a cloud service. Lightroom Classic is ours and it's here to stay.

This is version 1.0 - This is a total new program, not an add-on or upgrade. The features are very limited at this point, more functions will be introduced with every new release.

Keep work-flows separate - Use Lightroom Classic and Lightroom CC for separate work-flows. DO NOT use both for the same job(s). For example, I use Lightroom Classic for all my client and personal professional work-flows. I use Lightroom CC for iPhone and compact camera photography.

Installation of Lightroom CC - You are limited to two active installations on computers but any number of mobile devices. All computers and devices have to be signed on to your single user Creative Cloud account. Your images are also accessible via the browser version of Lightroom CC. Go to: https://lightroom.adobe.com and log-into your Adobe account.

Getting started - Before you get started with Lightroom CC, explore all the in-and-outs of this new software to find out how it would 'sit' in your work-flow. Figure out how you will used it first before installing it. Lightroom CC is not for everyone. It is at this point not a complex programme, so it won't take you very long to determine if it would work for you.

The Lightroom CC interface
Some keyboard shortcuts

iPhone, processed in Lightroom CC
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