

# CONTENTS

PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHER | MAY 2012 | WWW.PPMAG.COM

©Marianne Drenthe



# 98

Marianne Drenthe of Marmalade Photography in Chicago wanted to encourage repeat business from her many clients who travel with their kids from far away for her services. She made the ordering process much more convenient by switching from in-person sales to a limited online viewing window of the images and an ordering session on the phone.

- 14 FOLIO
- 121 PPA TODAY
- 136 SCHOOL CALENDAR
- 138 GOOD WORKS

## Departments

### CONTACT SHEET

- 22 Tim Mantoani:  
Portraits behind photographs
- 26 Case study: Delicious marketing
- 28 Giveaway of the month
- 28 PP asks: Spring images
- 30 Look back: Julia Margaret Cameron
- 30 E-mail scam warning signs and remedies

### PROFIT CENTER

- 33 What I think: Heather Lickliter
- 36 Ask the experts
- 38 Starting over: Playing fair  
*by Kalen Henderson*
- 40 Disability: Necessary protection  
*by Elizabeth Esser*
- 42 Up-selling  
*by Kalen Henderson*
- 46 SEO: Passive link building  
*by Tj McDowell*

### THE GOODS

- 49 What I like: Marianne Drenthe
- 50 Roundup: Summer-themed products  
*by Robyn L. Pollman*
- 56 Pro review: Leica S2  
*by Stan Sholik*
- 62 Pro review: Shoot Baby! Ottoman and Backdrop Stand  
*by Betsy Finn*
- 66 Pro review: NewerTech Guardian MAXimus Mini  
*by Stan Sholik*
- 70 Roundup: Metal print products  
*by Mark Levesque*
- 74 Lighting: Photo breakdown  
*by Ellis Vener*
- 76 Web design: What you should know

**ON THE COVER:** Kimberly Wylie captured this image outdoors in natural light. She shot with a Canon EOS 5D Mark II camera with an EF 70-200mm f/4L IS USM lens at f/4.5 for 1/200 second. Wylie applied the hand-painted texture in Design Aglow.

# THE GOODS

## What I like

*Marianne Drenthe says  
hands off my L series lenses*

**What makes your workflow flow?** Microsoft Expression Media 2. It catalogs images like a card catalog, referencing the images with thumbnails rather than creating additional copies on my hard drive. It doesn't use up a lot of space and it's fast.

**What's the best equipment investment you've ever made?** My Canon EOS-1Ds Mark II camera. I love the dynamic range on this camera.

**Little thing, big difference ...** For a standard family session, I take along only a 4GB CompactFlash card and I shoot raw format. This forces me to shoot intentionally, not machine-gun it. Then I have a smaller number of images to cull during post processing.

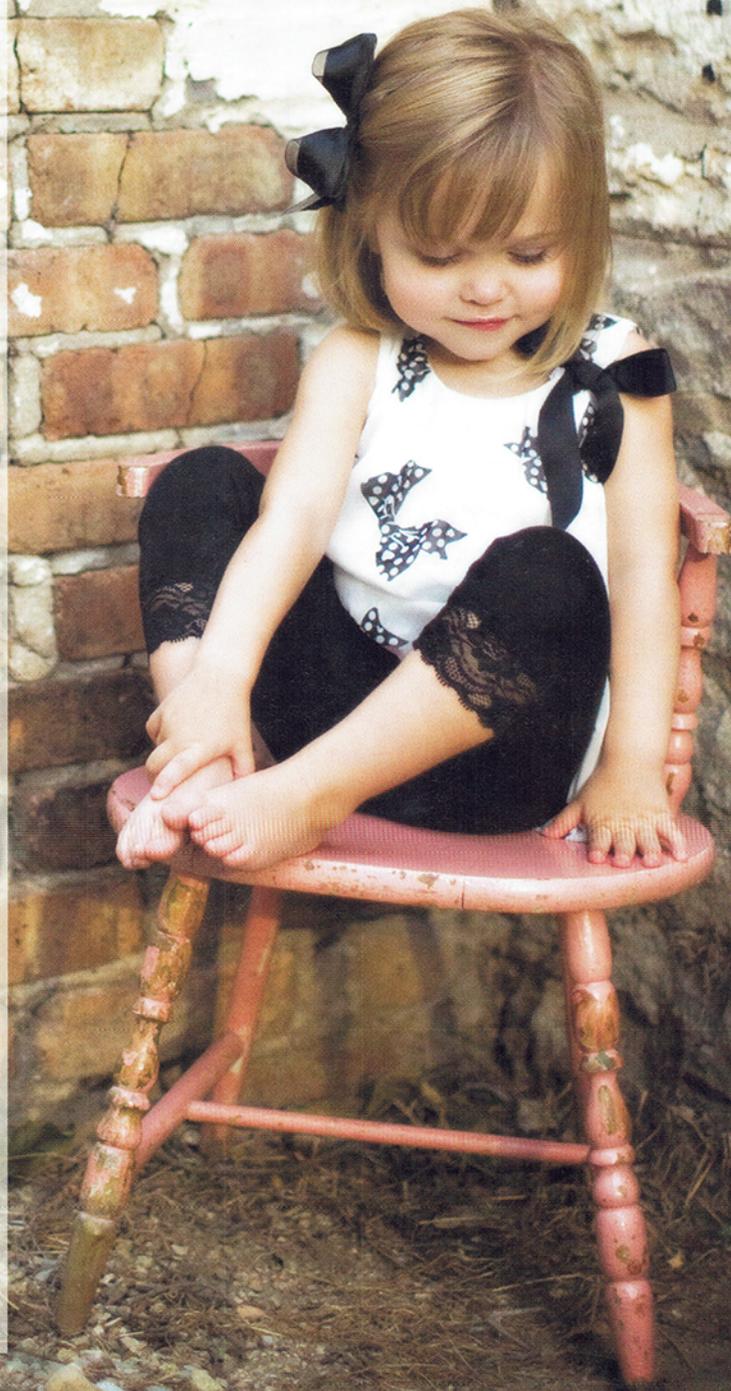
**What hot new product are you going out of your way to use?** I'm all about my new Lensbaby Edge 80.

**Has a piece of equipment ever changed the way you approach photography?** Going full frame with the original Canon EOS 5D allowed me to use the L series lenses the way they were intended.

**What gear would they have to pry from your cold, dead fingers?** My 85mm f/1.2L and 50mm f/1.2L lenses. I can't give up those beautiful skin tones and that amazing L quality in my images.

**IMAGE BY MARIANNE DRENTHE**

MARMALADEPHOTOGRAPHY.COM



Marianne Drenthe of Marmalade Photography seeks to uncover and capture all elements of a child, from the bursts of laughter and creative, playful romping to the quiet, introspective and curious pauses.

CHILDREN

By Jeff Kent



All images ©Marianne Drenthe

**M**arianne Drenthe always focuses on the positive. From the beginnings of her suburban Chicago studio, Marmalade Photography, she aspired to provide a joyous experience for her clientele. The trick was in developing her business in a way that benefits her clients, yet remains true to her vision.

Inspired by contemporary wedding photography and progressive location senior portraiture, Drenthe works in a style both moody and endearing. She pulls in elements from her childhood—forests, fairytales and juvenile curiosities—and creates storylines for each portrait session, then engages the subject in creative play to bring out elements of the child's personality. "I love all the aspects of children, not just the laughing and smiling aspects," says Drenthe. "So, in addition to those images, I capture the quiet side, the introspective, curious aspects of the child. I approach my photography holistically to capture everything about my subjects."

That philosophy struck a chord in the Chicago market, and Drenthe gained a fast following. Clients would travel 45 minutes or more each way to have her photograph their children. Within a year of her business launch, she was ready to take the next step.

Like many new pros, Drenthe thought she needed a storefront for her studio, and she leased a large retail space, which came with more amenities than she could use. As she began to refine her focus on her core market, she carefully considered her business identity. Her initial thoughts of being a big, high-volume studio with 15 employees dissolved as she realized how much she cherished her personal connection with her clients. Many

## Holistic view

A positive influence guides Marianne Drenthe

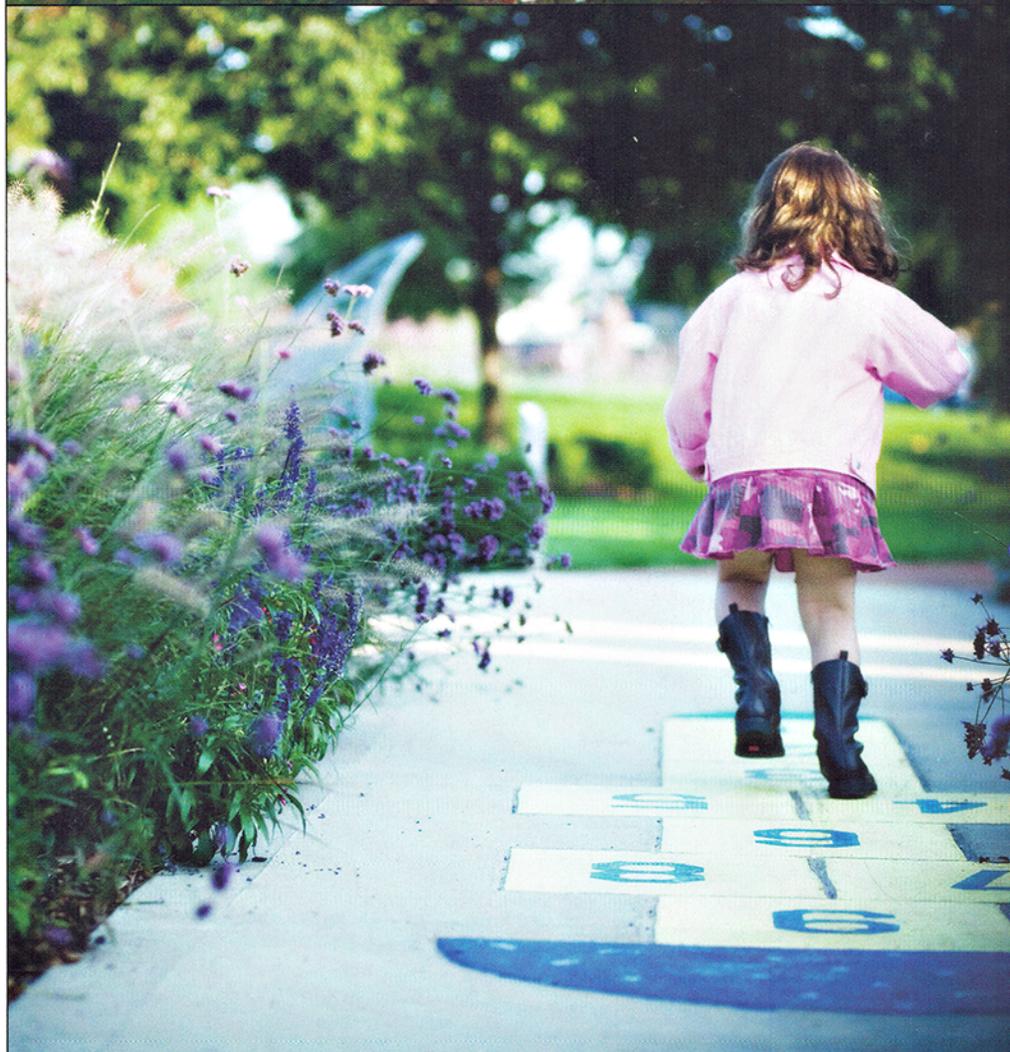
of her sessions were conducted on location. At the studio, where she had displays of her work, she met clients and photographed subjects at various outdoor locations. She did packaging at the studio, but she took care of day-to-day business tasks and post-processing at her home. She found she was paying rent on a space she wasn't fully using.

"Repeat customers are a critical part of my business model," says Drenthe. "Most of my clients travel from far away, so I felt like it was too much to ask them to keep coming back for meetings, ordering sessions and to pick up products. That's why I came up with my online ordering system." Her system is an innovative combination of online viewing and simultaneous over-the-phone ordering.

After a session, Drenthe creates an online gallery of enhanced images. When the gallery is almost ready, usually within a couple of weeks, she e-mails the clients a slideshow of products for display possibilities that includes various sizes of portraits hanging on a wall in a family room setting. She also sends a form that triggers them to set up a phone ordering session, and several times she's available for the session—*her* times. Once the client schedules the ordering session, she opens the image gallery to the client for a four-day period. Over the phone, Drenthe reviews and discusses the images with the client, answers any questions, and guides the finished product decisions.

"The key is to offer a finite viewing period and schedule an ordering session," says Drenthe. "You can't leave it open-ended and hope the orders will flow in. People are procrastinators by nature. With that four-day window, I get them while they're excited by the images, and it's still an emotional decision."

Drenthe's sales averages did not dip after switching from in-person sales sessions to an online-phone system, and the convenience factor for her clients (and her) rose



## CHILDREN

dramatically. Spurred by these results, she shuttered her storefront studio in 2011 and relocated the business to a smaller, less expensive space. The move has given her peace of mind, and made a positive impact on her busy, distant clientele.

That's important to Drenthe. "One of my inspirations to become a photographer came one night when I was a nurse, sitting in a patient's room during the midnight shift," she recalls. "He was surrounded by all these

beautiful pictures of his family. Seeing all that joy surrounding him, I decided right then I wanted to be part of the happiest moments in people's lives. So when I created the business, my goal was to be part of something positive for people, and that goal has guided every decision I've made. It's helped me focus my business on something that is truly inspiring to *me*." ■

*To see more from Marianne Drenthe, visit [marmaladephotography.com](http://marmaladephotography.com).*

