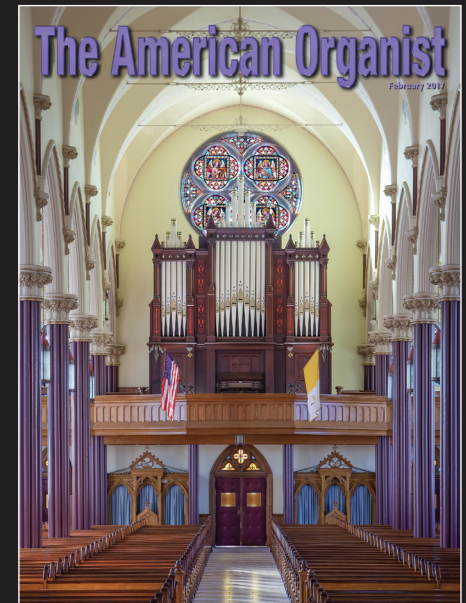
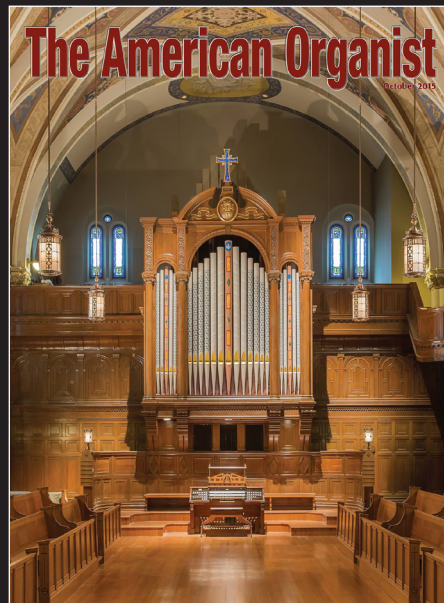
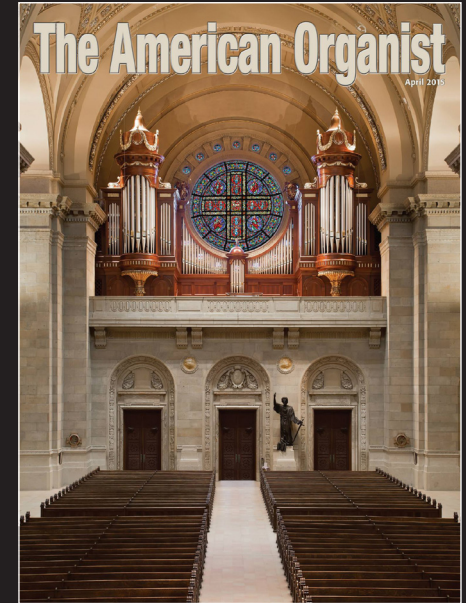
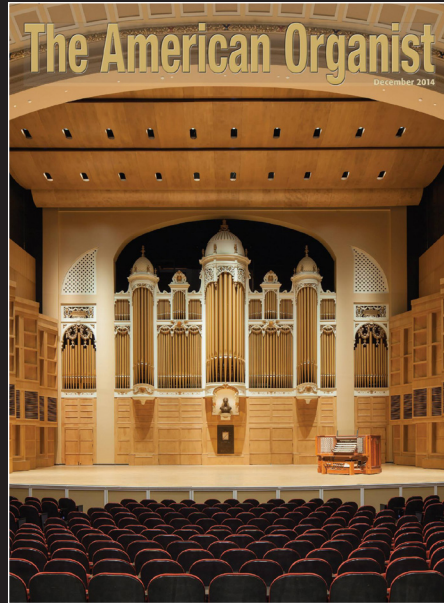




# TAO PHOTOGRAPHER'S GUIDE FRONT COVER SUBMISSIONS



PAGE 1





# TAO PHOTOGRAPHER'S GUIDE FRONT COVER SUBMISSIONS



## PREPARING THE COVER PHOTO

The front cover photo is taken very seriously by the editorial staff, and it is their goal to provide a high-quality presentation every month. This is best achieved when the photos are taken by a professional photographer. A Camera Raw and a TIFF file are preferred for the front cover image. TIFFs or JPEGs are acceptable for ancillary photos that will accompany the feature article. Photos should be submitted as high-resolution RGB or CMYK files with a minimum of 300 DPI at original size.

TAO reserves the right to consult with the advertiser concerning the final image reproduced on the cover. The editor reserves the right to request the following:

- *To have the photo retaken for reasons such as blown-out windows, blown-out lighting, insufficient sharpness or resolution, or any distracting or unattractive components that will detract from or diminish the photo.*
- *If the photo is usable, but needs extensive editing for print purposes, to charge an extra fee on an hourly basis to have our graphics department prepare the photo for print.*

TAO has professional photographers that are available for a fee. They will travel to your location and prepare the photographs specifically for print production for you. Please reserve this service well in advance of your cover deadline.

Please contact Len Levasseur at [tneorg@aol.com](mailto:tneorg@aol.com) if you have further questions.



We prefer Dropbox for file transfers.  
[www.agohq.org/taocoveradvertising](http://www.agohq.org/taocoveradvertising)

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## PARALLAX DISTORTION

Parallax distortion, lens distortion, or keystoning is a potential problem for any photographer without access to a tilt-shift lens. Since many pipe organ facade shots are architectural in nature, it is most important to be sure that there is not an undue amount of distortion in your image.

The top image appears to be bending inward with the columns leaning. This occurs because the camera is not shooting straight on, but tilted upward. The bottom image shows a properly straightened image. This can be accomplished with a tilt-shift lens, shooting straight on, or by using the lens correction filter in Photoshop.

When using software correction, a reduction in the amount of crop room in the image occurs, so always be sure to leave plenty of space around the image when composing your shot.



## ADVANTAGES OF USING A TILT-SHIFT LENS

Parallax distortion, lens distortion, or keystoning occur whenever you point your camera up or down, or when you move to a zoom lens's extreme focal lengths. This condition is unacceptable in architectural photography.

Software like Photoshop can be used to address this in digital post-production, but not without losing some portion of your composition. In addition, the moving and adjusting of pixels negatively impacts image quality.

Tilt-shift lenses enable the photographer to fix perspective issues in-camera. Adjusting the camera so that its back is parallel to the photograph's subject fixes the keystone effect, but may also negatively affect your composition. No problem—simply recompose by shifting the lens either up or down or side to side, depending on the composition. Voila—straight lines.



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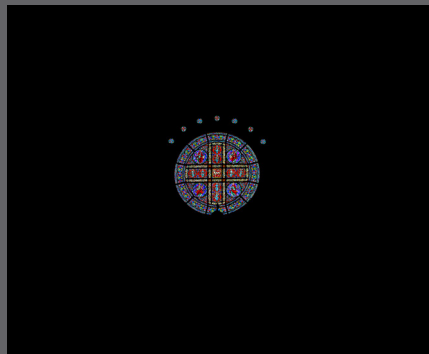
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## FIXING BLOWN-OUT WINDOWS

We cannot feature a front cover photo with blown-out windows. It can be very difficult to take one exposure that will balance a window and the instrument itself. All photos should be taken using a tripod, to ensure that the images align precisely.

In the example to the right, two exposures were taken. The first image is exposed to feature the organ. The second image was taken to properly expose the window. The third image is a composite—using an editing program such as Photoshop, the window can be isolated and then placed on a layer above the organ—a complete image is then ready for publication.

If you prefer, please send both exposures to our editor, who can professionally combine both images in-house.



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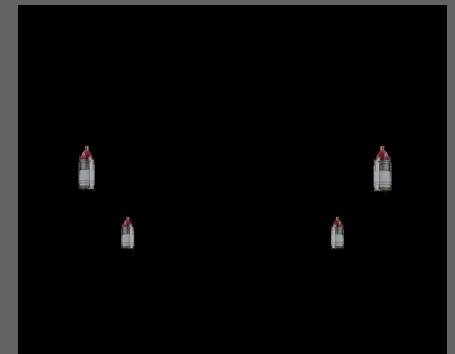
## FIXING BLOWN-OUT LIGHTS

We also cannot feature a front cover photo with blown-out lights. It can be very difficult to take one exposure that will balance the lights and the instrument itself. All photos should be taken using a tripod, to ensure that the images align precisely.

The preferred method is the same as fixing blown-out windows, opposite.

If you prefer, please send both exposures to our editor, who can professionally combine both images in-house.

*The above method is often only necessary if the interior lighting is only "on" or "off" with no ability to adjust levels. If there is a way to dim the lights, bring them down to half, and take a longer exposure. Experimenting with lighting levels often yields better results.*





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## ADJUSTING THE WHITE BALANCE

Tungsten and fluorescent lighting can cause a yellow or orange hue to saturate the photo (top image). Effort should be made to provide us a photo that is representative of the actual color in the room.

If you prefer, please send the image to our editor, who can professionally adjust the white balance in-house. It is helpful if you are able to supply the Camera Raw file.



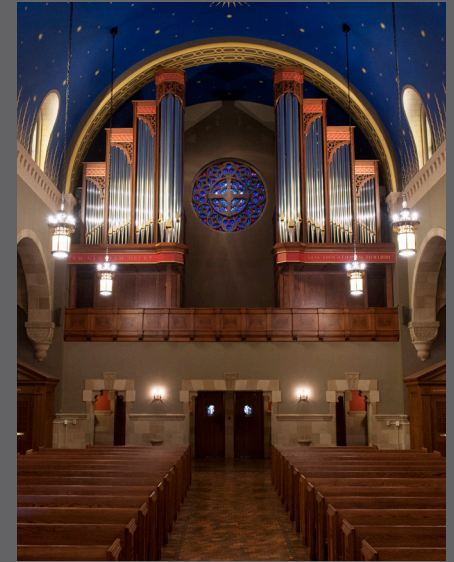
*Most cameras either have a "live view" or a preview after shooting to evaluate the shot. Auto White Balance (AWB) will often be the correct setting for the environment. If you find there are still problems with the color, you may want to try one of the other White Balance settings for better results.*

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## NOISE AND GRAIN

A very low ISO is extremely important to ensure that no noise appears in the image. This can often result in graininess in the photo, and while some of this can be corrected in post-production, it is best not to introduce it in the first place.

The top image has a few issues that need correcting—parallax, white balance, and noise. The bottom image is a detail of some of the wood panels that highlight the noise. This image was taken at ISO 1600, which in most cases is much too high for a full-page magazine cover.



This can be avoided by using a tripod, setting the aperture to 8 or 11, and setting the ISO to 100. When the speed is finally adjusted for a good exposure, you will obviously have a longer exposure, sometimes up to 20 or 30 seconds, but the results will yield a sharper and cleaner image.



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## USING HDR PROGRAMS

HDR is short for HIGH DYNAMIC RANGE. It is a post-processing task of taking either one image or a series of images, combining them, and adjusting the contrast ratios to do things that are virtually impossible with a single aperture and shutter speed.

An HDR image is commonly made by taking three photos of the same scene, each at different shutter speeds. The result is a bright, medium, and dark photo, based on the amount of light that got through the lens. A software process then combines all the photos to bring details to the shadows and highlights both. This helps to achieve the same task in the final photograph that the human eye can accomplish on the scene.



*Three photos of different exposure values used to produce the examples on the right.*



UNACCEPTABLE USE OF HDR



REALISTIC USE OF HDR

The above two photos are examples of HDR processing. The photo on the left is a common example of HDR that is noticeable, and almost "cartoonish." The one on the right is a more realistic final photograph. Many HDR programs accentuate details and colors to give the photograph a surreal and unnatural look. If the use of HDR in your submitted photograph is not acceptable, we ask that you provide us with the raw files used to create the final images so that we can produce a more realistic-looking image.



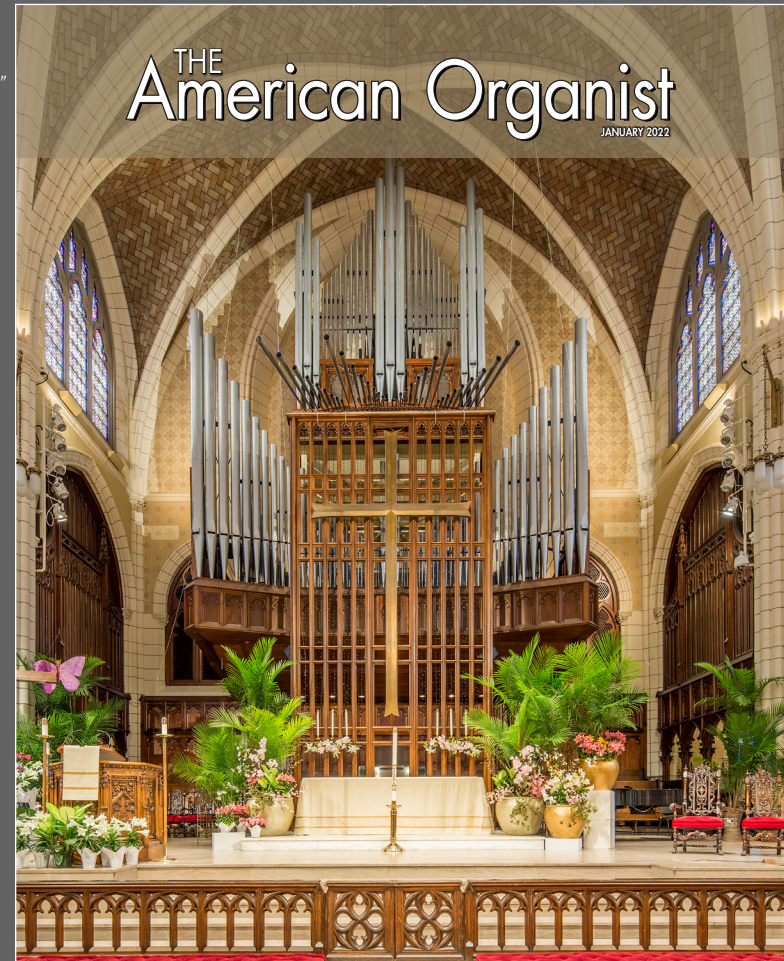
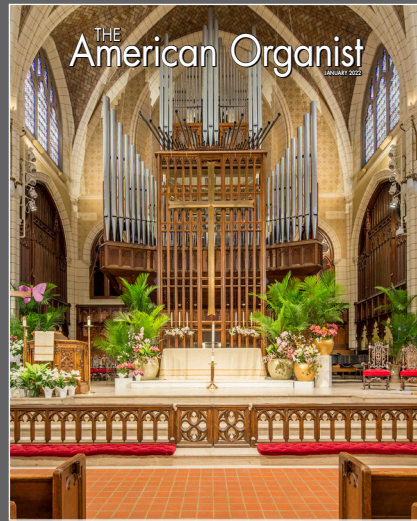
# TAO PHOTOGRAPHER'S GUIDE FRONT COVER SUBMISSIONS



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## LEAVE ENOUGH ROOM FOR OUR MASTHEAD

THE AMERICAN ORGANIST traditionally publishes the front cover photo of our magazine as a full-bleed photograph. It is important not to crop the photo too closely to the organ, but LEAVE SOME ROOM above the facade for our masthead, unless it is decided that the masthead is to intentionally obscure part of the instrument. Today's cameras have a high-enough resolution that zooming out to leave crop room should not affect the integrity of the photo.



TAO AND MASTHEAD DIMENSIONS