

THE BEST OF 2012



BY ADAM SHERWIN

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GREG NEUMAIER



NEC P232W 23" WIDESCREEEN DISPLAY

NEC continues its tradition of excellence with the P232W. The 23" 1920x1080 LED backlit display offers multiple connection options, USB hub, 4-way adjustment, as well as picture-in-picture and picture-by-picture modes. Host to awesome NEC features like Display Sync Pro (control 2 computers with one mouse and keyboard), AmbiBright (display adjusts automatically to lighting conditions), and MultiProfiler (control 5 picture modes and load ICC profiles), the affordability of the P232W makes it a great choice to meet the photo and video needs of emerging image-makers and pros alike.

\$569

Optional MultiSync Soundbar Pro +\$65

Optional SpectraView II Color Calibration Package +\$250

www.necdisplay.com

Greg Neumaier: www.gregneumaier.com

BEST
COMPACTS
OF 2012

CANON POWERSHOT S110

The competition in this weight class is getting fierce, but with a solid focus on aesthetic and just the right amount of innovation, the 12MP S110 is a mighty compact with the heart of a lion. The addition of a 3" touchscreen and Wi-Fi sharing match nicely with Canon's proven high-sensitivity CMOS sensor and DIGIC 5 processor. Throw in a sweet 24mm F2.0 5x zoom and ISO up to 12,800 and, whether you're shooting video or stills, you've got a camera that truly fits in your pocket while meeting the creative needs of pros and enthusiasts—all that for a magnificent price.

\$449.99
www.usa.canon.com



NIKON COOLPIX S800C

The 16MP 800C offers all the fun of smartphone shooting without the phone. It has a 10x zoom, Wi-Fi, GPS, Bluetooth and, with almost a third of its 2GB internal memory dedicated to storing and using Android OS apps, the 800C means users can shoot, edit and share stills and HD video right from their camera.

\$346.95 www.imaging.nikon.com 



OLYMPUS TOUGH TG-1 IHS

The TG-1 is waterproof, shockproof, crushproof and freezeproof. Whether you're shooting stills or video, this 12MP compact has a fast F2.0 lens for awesome results under the harshest conditions.

\$399.99 www.getolympus.com  DURABILITY



SONY CYBER-SHOT DSC-RX100

The RX100 ushers in a new era in compact cameras by offering a 1/2.3" 20MP Exmor CMOS sensor powered by Sony's BIONZ processor, and a super sharp F1.8 3.6x Carl Zeiss zoom lens that delivers awesome low-light performance.

\$648 www.store.sony.com 



PANASONIC LUMIX DMC-SZ5

Slim, compact and full of features, the SZ5 has a 14MP CCD, 10x Leica 25-250mm stabilized zoom, and Wi-Fi capabilities so you can share directly to your social networks, a smartphone or your computer via an internal router that can create its very own hotspot.

\$159.95 www.panasonic.net/avc/lumix 

PANASONIC LUMIX DMC-GH3

Aimed at serious enthusiasts looking for "DSLR-like" features and quality in a smaller size, the GH3 actually ended up being one of the big surprises this year for video professionals. At 16MP, the same resolution as the previous GH2 model, the GH3 introduces a stunning OLED monitor and live viewfinder, a new Live MOS sensor powered by a 3-core Venus 7 processor and Wi-Fi sharing—all great features to keep the interest of stills shooters. Video pros are enthralled by features like time-code support, external mic and headphone jacks, auto slow motion features, HDMI output for external recording and monitoring, as well as lightning fast bit-rates that are topped only by much more expensive HD/SLR models.

Body Only - \$1,298
www.panasonic.com/LUMIX



BEST LARGE SENSOR OF 2012



SONY CYBER-SHOT DSC-RX1

2012 could very well become known as the year of Sony. The RX-1 turned many heads in 2012 with its full-frame 24MP CMOS sensor powered by Sony's BIONZ processor and fixed F2.0 35mm Zeiss lens. The RX1 captures JPEG and RAW, as well as full HD 1080p video at 24 and 60fps.

\$2,798 www.store.sony.com



LEICA-S

Built on the foundation of Leica's quest for excellence, the 37.5MP Leica-S is a professional medium format digital camera offering some of the most advanced features of any camera in its class, while maintaining the simple yet classic and design Leica is recognized for worldwide. Enough said.

\$21,950 www.s.leica-camera.com



SONY ALPHA SLT-A99V

The A99 is Sony's new flagship, full-frame 35mm 24MP DSLR. The translucent mirror technology and dual AF system mean lightning-fast capture speeds and real-time focus adjustments since the subject is constantly being monitored. High ISO and built-in SteadyShot deliver amazing low-light performance for capturing incredible stills and full HD 1920x1080 60p video with audio input and headphone monitoring.

Body only - \$2,798 www.store.sony.com



CANON EOS-1D

Designed for Pro shooters, Canon's new 1Dx is everything you've come to expect and more. The 18MP full-frame CMOS sensor is powered by dual DIGIC 5+ processors for a blazing fast 12fps. Not to mention 61-point AF with dedicated DIGIC 4 processor and 14-bit processing, ensuring great results with low noise at high ISO settings. Whether you're shooting stills or capturing HD video, the 1Dx ensures professional results at every turn.

\$6,799.00 (Body Only) www.usa.canon.com





PENTAX Q10

The Q10 may not be much larger than a deck of cards but it offers the control of a DSLR with traditional program shooting modes and a broad range of Pentax's Q-mount lenses. Upgrades to the 1/2.3" 12.4MP backlit CMOS sensor and AF functions mean better overall performance and quality. Throw in 1080p HD video at 30fps, a multitude of in-camera effects and filters, shake reduction and a pop-up flash and you've got a tiny camera that is fun and effective for capturing great images.

Q10 w/ 5-15mm lens - \$599.95
www.pentaximaging.com

PENTAX K5 II

Pentax continues to build its arsenal of quality digital cameras with several top-notch releases in 2012. Pentax's new flagship K5 II and K5 IIs (no anti-aliasing filter) offer a weather sealed magnesium alloy body with a 16MP APS-C CMOS sensor powered by Pentax's second generation Real Image Engine. Paired with a new 11-point SAFOX X AF sensor, body-based shake reduction and an ISO range of 100-12,800 (expandable to 51,200) the K5 II is an awesome low-light performer with some decent video options including 1080p HD, an external mic jack and HDMI output.

K5 II Body Only -
\$1,199.95 (+\$100 for S-body)

K5 II w/ 18-55mm lens -
\$1,349.95

www.pentaximaging.com



SIGMA DP1/DP2 MERRILL

Sigma has created something truly beautiful with their DP1/2 Merrill compacts. Boasting the mind-blowing 48MP Foveon X3 Direct Image Sensor, these cameras feature high-end fixed F2.8 19mm (28mm equivalent) and F2.8 30mm (45mm equivalent) lenses respectively. Powered by dual TRUE II processors, the 3-layer RGB Foveon X3 sensor produces vibrant, almost 3D-like results with super-rich color. A redesign of the DP body and a simplified layout of the controls create a beautiful low-profile aesthetic that is matched only by the quality of the images it produces.

DP 1 Merrill with fixed F2.8 19mm - \$999.99 (left)
DP 2 Merrill with fixed F2.8 30mm - \$999.99 (right)

www.sigmaphoto.com



BEST
MIRRORLESS
OF 2012

FUJIFILM X-E1 AND XF1

Crafted with painstaking attention to detail, these two new additions to Fuji's X-series are nothing short of spectacular. The X-E1, a scaled down version of Fuji's X-Pro1, houses the same 16MP X-Trans CMOS sensor and carries the same Fujinon XF lens mount. It lacks the X-Pro's advanced viewfinder but trumps its big brother with a smaller frame, a superior 2.36M OLED EVF, built-in pop-up flash, and a 2.5mm input for an external mic for pro grade audio when shooting your full 1080p HD video.

The smaller XF1 is an elegant compact with a 12MP EXR CMOS sensor, a retractable Fujinon f/1.8 4x 24-105mm equivalent zoom lens with AF and manual focus options, aluminum body, and 3.0" Premium Clear LCD. The XF1 comes in 3 different faux leather finishes and a customizable E-Fn button for access to its many creative functions, making it the perfect accessory for any photographer.

X-E1 Body Only - \$995.99 (below)
X-E1 with 18-55mm lens - \$1,399.99
X-F1 - \$499.99 (right)

www.fujifilm.com



EDITOR'S PICK
2012 WINNER



SONY ALPHA NEX-5R

Another awesome release from Sony, the NEX-5R has a 16MP APS-C HD sensor, 3" tilt-able touchscreen control, offers 1080 HD 60i, 60p and 24p video, Wi-Fi sharing, mobile apps, and low-light performance up to ISO 25,6000. Sold as a kit with 18-55 E-mount lens.

\$748 www.store.sony.com



OLYMPUS OM-D E-M5

It may look old school, but this classically designed Olympus 4/3's camera is a far cry from the camera it is modeled after. The OM-D has a 16MP Live MOS sensor, 3" tilting OLED monitor, eye-level EVF and one of the fastest AF systems available.

\$999.99 www.getolympus.com



SAMSUNG NX1000

The NX1000 expands Samsung's line of Wi-Fi cameras while offering users a brand-new pro-grade 20MP APS-C CMOS sensor that matches the quality of more expensive DSLR's. It has a top shutter speed of 1/4000s and super fast AF, giving users an incredibly affordable option for a large sensor compact with tons of features.

\$499.99 www.samsung.com/us **FUNCTIONALITY**



NIKON 1 V2

Nikon continues to improve their 1-series camera with a redesigned grip, lighting-fast Hybrid AF, a built-in pop-up flash, and an enhanced motion snapshot feature—all built around a new 14MP CX super high-speed CMOS sensor and EXPEED 3A processing engine.

\$896.95 with 10-30mm F3.5-4.6 Nikkor VR Lens www.imaging.nikon.com

BRONCOLOR MOVE 1200L POWER PACK

Beautifully designed and built for photographers on the go, the MOVE 1200L weighs in at just under 14lbs, offers full asymmetry and a control range of 9 stops across its two head inputs. broncolor's patented ECTC technology means consistent and stable color, while the lithium battery promises 4,000 recharging cycles with flash times as low as 1/20,000s. Standard are a trolley backpack, weatherproof soft case, and the 8 durable bumpers to guard against everyday wear. The clincher? The MOVE 1200L can double as a power source for continuous lighting with MobilLED heads (sold separately).

\$4,995 (available 2nd quarter 2013)
www.bronimaging.com



2012 WINNER
ONION AWARD
FOR PERFECTION

BEST LIGHTING GEAR OF 2012



PROFOTO B4 PRO 1000 AIR

An incredible top flash duration of 1/25,000 means up to 30 flashes per second. Includes fast recycle, Profoto's dependability, and an unprecedented selection of light shaping tools at your disposal and integrated Air Remote and sync.

\$7,899
www.profoto.com/us



EXPOIMAGING ROGUE MASTER LIGHTING KIT

If you shoot with speed lights, you need this kit. On or off camera, the Rogue offers a complete collection of light modifiers for multiple speed lights, giving you incredible creative options and control.

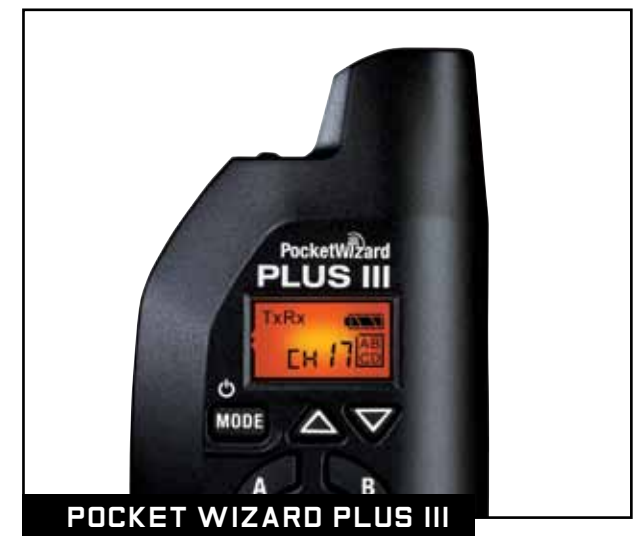
\$199.95
www.expoimaging.com



SEKONIC L4780/DR LITEMASTER PRO

The first light meter of its kind, the L478 offers touchscreen capabilities in addition to measurements for flash, incident and reflected readings for still, HD video and cinematic applications. The DR model also offers integrated use with wireless technology found in Pocket Wizards ControlTL technology.

L478DR - \$469
L478D - \$389
www.sekonic.com



POCKET WIZARD PLUS III

The best just got better—not to mention cheaper. The PW Plus III covers more distance with long range and repeater modes, goes from 4 to 32 channels, and triggers up to 4 separate flashes or bodies in 4 different zones. Making sure you control your flash, and not the flash from the photographer in the next studio (or the same stadium).

\$149
www.plusiii.pocketwizard.com



GURA GEAR BATAFLAE 26L

Like Gura Gear's previous backpack, the Kiboko, it's tough as nails and light as a feather but they still found a way to improve it. The innovative butterfly opening also fully opens now for easy loading and unloading.

18L - \$349.00
26L - \$399.99 / 32L
\$449.00
www.guragear.com



DOMKE NEXT GENERATION

DOMKE introduces 4 new collections and updated classics featuring GearProtex dividers and PocketFlex pockets, pouches and accessories for total customization. Shown is the new Ledger bag from the Journalist Series of DOMKE's Next Generation.

Available late Q1
Price: TBD
www.domkephoto.com



BEST BAGS OF 2012

LOWEPRO ROVER PRO 45L AW

The Rover Pro 45L is large, lightweight backpack with an incredible trampoline-style suspension system for awesome support and lots of room to carry gear and personal items.

\$329.99

www.lovapro.com



ACME MADE MONTGOMERY ST. COLLECTION

A great line of bags designed for the urban photographer or traveler. Montgomery St. offers 4 styles including backpack, courier street kit and street case bags to carry smaller DSLR, compact systems and personal items.

Backpack - \$99.99

Courier - \$79.99

Street Kit - \$59.99

Street Case - \$29.99

www.acmemade.com



KATA PRO-LIGHT REVOLVER 8

Aptly named the Revolver, the innovative design of the interior spinning pocket gives photographers quick access to 4 additional lenses through the side of the bag without taking it off.

\$249.99

www.kata-bags.us



LOWEL BLENDER 3 LIGHT KIT

The Lowel Blender, originally released in 2009, offered a cost effective and lightweight solution for video shooters caught in tough lighting conditions when shooting with mixed sources. The 2012 release of the 3-light kit means you can easily shift each of the 3 lights individually between 3,000K and 5,000K. With the twist of a knob, you can now create balanced light in almost any shooting situation. This super portable 17lb kit comes in a slim bag with stands included, making it one of the most portable, yet effective, travel light kits available.

\$1,466.50
www.lowel.com



EDITOR'S
PICK
2012 WINNER

BEST VIDEO GEAR OF 2012



INDURO HI-HAT

A staple in the video and cine industries, Hi-Hats had remained relatively unchanged until recently. Induro's design is only 4.6lbs but can hold up to 220lbs; with its expandable legs it goes from just under 4ft. to over 11ft. It also has pivoting feet and lots of mounting options.

\$279 www.indurogear.com



TENBA ROADIE II HD/SLR/VIDEO BACKPACK

Developed by Tenba with help from video and film pros, the Roadie II has lots of room for HD/SLR to medium sized video cameras. It has a ton of gear-specific storage for quick access to mics, headphones, monopod and up to a 17" laptop.

\$299.95 www.tenba.com



EDELKRONE SLIDER PLUS

Adding production value to our video is key, but the extra gear can weigh you down. Enter SliderPlus+, an innovative patent-pending design that is only 2ft. long, can fit in your backpack and gives you 1.7ft of travel distance for your camera.

\$499.99 www.edelkrone.com



BOWENS LIMELITE MOSAIC LED PANEL

At roughly 12"x12" the MOSAIC panel is daylight balanced, puts out 4200Lux at 1m and is dimmable from 100-0%. Anton Bauer battery mount and RJ45 DMX in/out come standard, and the output display can be viewed in f-stops. 2-4 panel-mounting kits are available for creating larger sources.

\$959.95 www.limelite.uk.com





MANFROTTO KLYP

Another incredibly well thought-out gadget to improve your smartphone photo/video experience, the KLYP is an iPhone 4/4s case specially designed to stay on at all times for protection and help steady your iPhone while shooting. The KLYP shown includes a clip-on pocket tripod; but even without it, the KLYP can mount to a tripod or other support via a standard 1/4" thread. The clip-on hot shoe allows for the addition of one of Manfrotto's two pocket-sized LED lights, which can be mounted to face forward or backward. [Available soon for the iPhone 5]

\$129.99 - As shown, other kits available
www.manfrotto.us/klyp



JOBY GRIP-TIGHT MOUNT AND GORILLA POD STAND

The best products are sometimes the most simple. Enter the Grip-Tight mount from JOBY. Simply put, there are few smartphone mounts that offer the diverse creative opportunities and stability of the Grip-Tight—especially when you pair it with the Gorilla Pod stand (shown) or the Micro Stand (not shown). The Grip-Tight adjusts to fit most popular smartphones as well as almost any tripod. When you're done, just fold it up and put it in your pocket!

Grip-Tight Mount Only - \$19.95
 With Gorilla Pod or Micro Stand - \$29.95
www.joby.com



BEST TRIPODS, GRIP & STRAPS OF 2012



JOBY ULTRAFIT SLING STRAP

The strap has an innovative and ergonomic design, which makes it extremely comfortable. Lock the camera close to your body in the cinched position for extra protection. Unlock the strap and bring the camera up quickly with a simple fluid movement. A women's version is available with special tailoring for the female form.

\$49.99 www.joby.com



MEFOTO TRANSFUNCTIONAL TRAVEL TRIPOD

Who doesn't like an awesome 2-for-1 deal? This MEFOTO tripod features a quick release Q-series ball-head and folds up to a mere 15.4" (but still opens up to 61.6"). Remove the center column and one of the legs, and you have a 64" monopod, making it the perfect travel companion for compact and smaller DSLR cameras.

\$229 www.benrousa.com



KUPO HANDY STAND

If keeping your travel kit light and compact is a must, the Kupo Handy Stand is a clear choice. At just 2.4lbs, it closes to a mere 20" which means it can fit in larger backpacks and suitcases. The 7'3" max heights makes it an effective tool for any photographer using speed-lights or mono-lights for location studio-style work.

\$50
www.kupogrip.com



TETHER-TOOLS LOOK LOCK SYSTEM

The Look Lock System allows you to mount your smartphone, up to 3" wide, above your lens, or on your camera's hot-shoe, via an articulating arm. It can help keep kids and pets entertained during shoots, take awesome POV videos or be used as a small teleprompter when shooting video.

7" - \$74.95
 11" - \$79.95
www.tethertools.com



MANFROTTO VIRTUAL REALITY AND PAN HEAD

While it may not seem like much to some and much too complicated for others, this VR Pan Head is a true feat of industrial design. Used specifically for shooting sequential, constant-angle shots around a single axis in both portrait and landscape positions. Smooth, accurate and guided by a system of horizontal and vertical plates, each movement is perfectly measured by the engraved index rules on each plate.

\$578
www.manfrotto.us



BEST GADGETS OF 2012



GITZO SERIES 5 CARBON 6X GIANT TRIPOD

Like every Gitzo tripod before it, the new Series 5 is beautiful and lightweight. At around 7.5lbs, it strikes the perfect balance between support and comfortable travel weight. The tripod has a 55lb load capacity, so you can bring your large DSLR with up to a 800mm lens. While it has no center column, the Series 5 Giant has a maximum height of 8.5ft, but, when closed, is just 2ft in length. It also features a third ultra-low leg spread for getting closer to the ground than ever before with a minimum height of about 6.5". The Series 5 carbon is available in 3 different sizes.

Giant 6-section - \$1,499.89
Long 4-section - \$1,199.90
Standard 3-section - \$811.13
www.gitzo.us

BEST COMPUTER GOODIES

OF 2012



TOUGHTTECH DUO 3SR

CRU-Dataport's 3SR offers fast USB 3.0 secure RAID storage with mirrored dual notebook drives up to 750GB. FW800 BUS powered model available.

750GB USB3.0 - \$539.00 / FW800 - \$559.00
www.wiebetech.com



X-RITE COLOR MUNKI SMILE

Aimed at photo enthusiasts, the Color Munki Smile makes color managing easy by taking care of everything with the simple click of a button.

\$89 www.xritephoto.com



EYE-FI PRO X2 16GB SD

With embedded WIFI, the Pro X2 Eye-Fi cards offer a ton of options for fast social network sharing and uploading of your photos and videos to smart devices and computers.

\$99.99 www.eyefi.com



EPSON R3000 IJ PRINTER

Offers wireless printing of beautiful color and B&W prints up to 13" wide. It uses 9 K3 inks and includes a dedicated CD/DVD printing tray and updated control panel.

\$599.99 www.epson.com



CINTIQ 24HD TOUCH DISPLAY

Wacom's multi-touch interactive pen display has amazing color accuracy, a ton of customization options and some of the most advanced tools available on the market.

\$2,499 www.wacom.com



PHASE ONE C1 PRO V7.0

Our favorite RAW conversion software just got better with new cataloging features and overall improvements to already outstanding file adjustment tools.

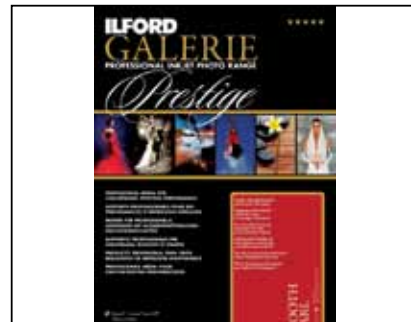
\$299 www.phaseone.com



ONONE PPS 7 PREMIUM

A suite of useful PS plug-ins or standalone software for masking, adjustments, resizing images and more!

\$299.95 www.ononesoftware.com



ILFORD PRESTIGE PAPERS

Our inkjet paper of choice when it comes to reproducing the look and feel traditional photographic prints.

Various Sizing and Pricing Available
www.futurenow.ilford.com/



APPLE 21.5" AND 27" IMAC

The updated iMac features a new super thin design with available memory and storage upgrades to help photo and video pros keep up with ever-increasing workflow demands.

Starting at \$1,299 www.apple.com

EDUCATIONAL WEBSITES



PHOTORESOURCEHUB.COM

Industry icon, Skip Cohen, helps you stay in touch with top photographers and leading manufacturers and keeps a constant flow of information and education coming your way.



THEPHOBLOGRAPHER.COM

The crew at Phoblographer brings you daily tech reviews, technical how to, and info on where to find the best photo stuff on the Internet.



CREATIVELIVE.COM

creativeLIVE provides free streaming video classes ranging from business management to lighting techniques, with HD downloads available for viewing later.



PHOTOFOCUS.COM

Run by photo legend Scott Bourne, Photo Focus provides daily contests, tips, tricks and general information about the photo industry from an insider's perspective.

INSPIRATIONAL WEBSITES



FSTOPPERS.COM

The team at Fstoppers never fails to impress with their daily selection of news, reviews, and industry-related videos.



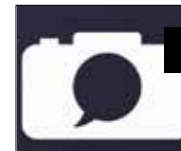
FEATURESHOOT.COM

Curated by Alison Zavos, Featureshoot highlights outstanding work from emerging talent and pros alike. Started in 2008, the site now archives works from over 2000 photographers.



FLAKPHOTO.COM

Wisconsin-based Andy Adams is recognized as one of the leading voices in contemporary photography in America. His site features the work of some of the best photographers and photography projects in the world.



PHLEARN.COM

Phlearn provides inspiring how-to videos on some of today's most advanced techniques to help you improve your photography.

BEST WEBSITES/ APPS

OF 2012

PHONE PHOTOGRAPHY APPS



CAMERA AWESOME

Compose, shoot, edit and share. Camera Awesome has great options for all of these features. **FREE**



CAMERA +

Advanced options for all your iPhone photography needs. Camera + also offers sync between all your iCloud enabled devices. **\$0.99**



HIPSTAMATIC

Consistently one of our faves, this app makes everything just a little bit more hip! Shooting, sharing and now lots of cool products like Hipstaprints! **\$0.99**



KITCAM

Full-featured camera app for adding awesome effects to your iPhone photos and videos. **\$1.99**

IPAD PHOTOGRAPHY APPS



MORPHOLIO

A portfolio app for any type image based content, Morpholio allows users to create and manage collections while getting valuable feedback from community members. **FREE**



TIFFEN PHOTO ULTRA DFX

By far one of the most beautiful and feature rich apps with 934 presets for manipulating and editing images from your iPad photo library. **\$4.99**



PHOTOSHOP EXPRESS

This is an easy choice from the industry leader in photo manipulation. PS Express offers a beautiful interface and a ton of options and in-app add-ons. **FREE**



500X

A community based sharing app for professional and emerging photographers in an easy to view timeline. **FREE**