

SCENIC FIREWORK PHOTOGRAPHY

DARYL  LYNCH
P H O T O G R A P H Y

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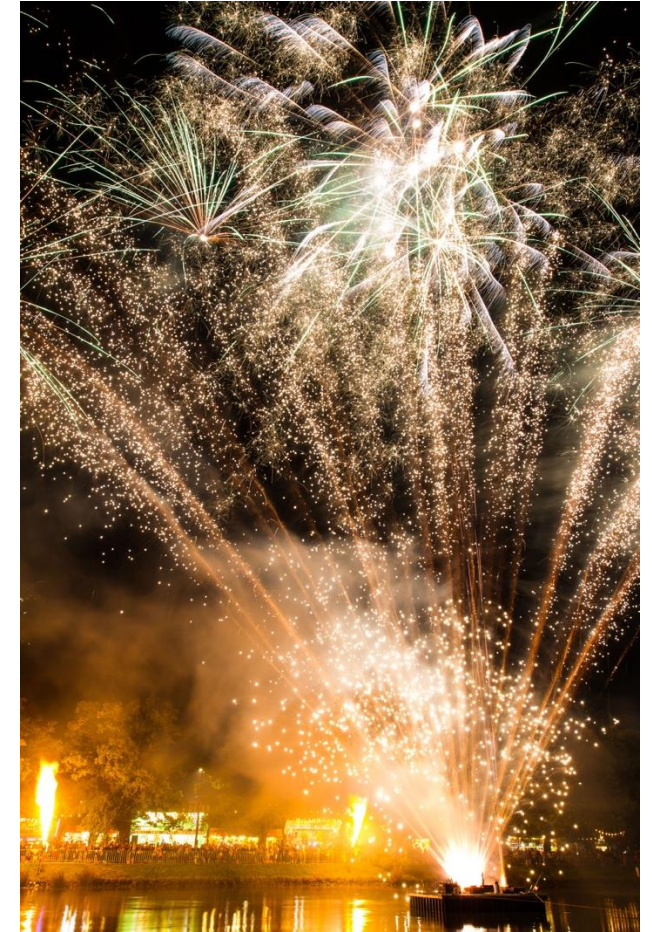
Facebook: [DarylLynchPhotography](https://www.facebook.com/DarylLynchPhotography)

Instagram: [@DarylLynchPhotography](https://www.instagram.com/DarylLynchPhotography)

3 Basic Styles

- Traditional
- Creative
- Scenic

TRADITIONAL



CREATIVE



DARYL LYNCH
PHOTOGRAPHY

Scenic Firework Photography

CREATIVE



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CREATIVE – DAVID GILLIVER PHOTOGRAPHY

Website <http://photos.gilliver.net> Mob 0402-323-739



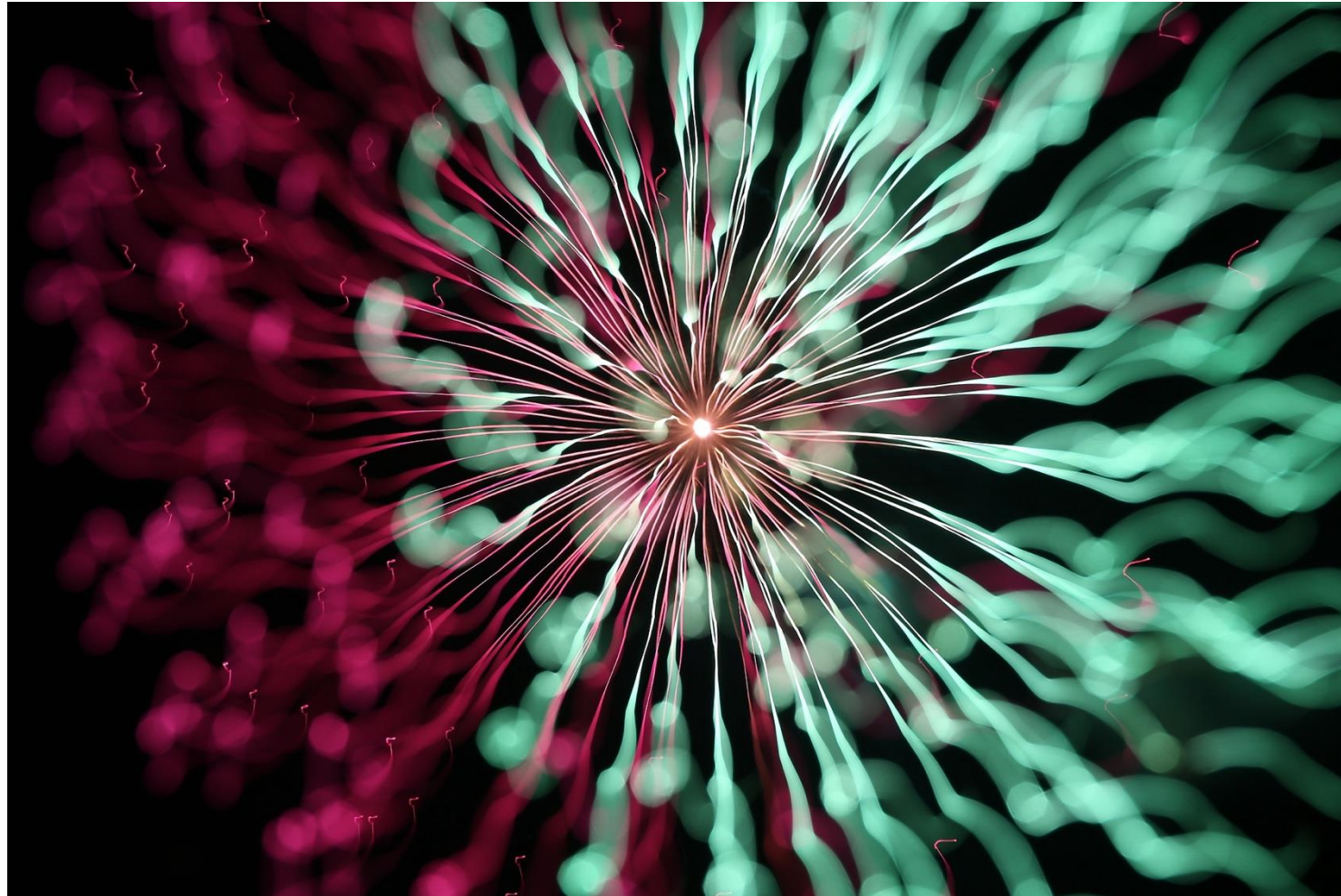
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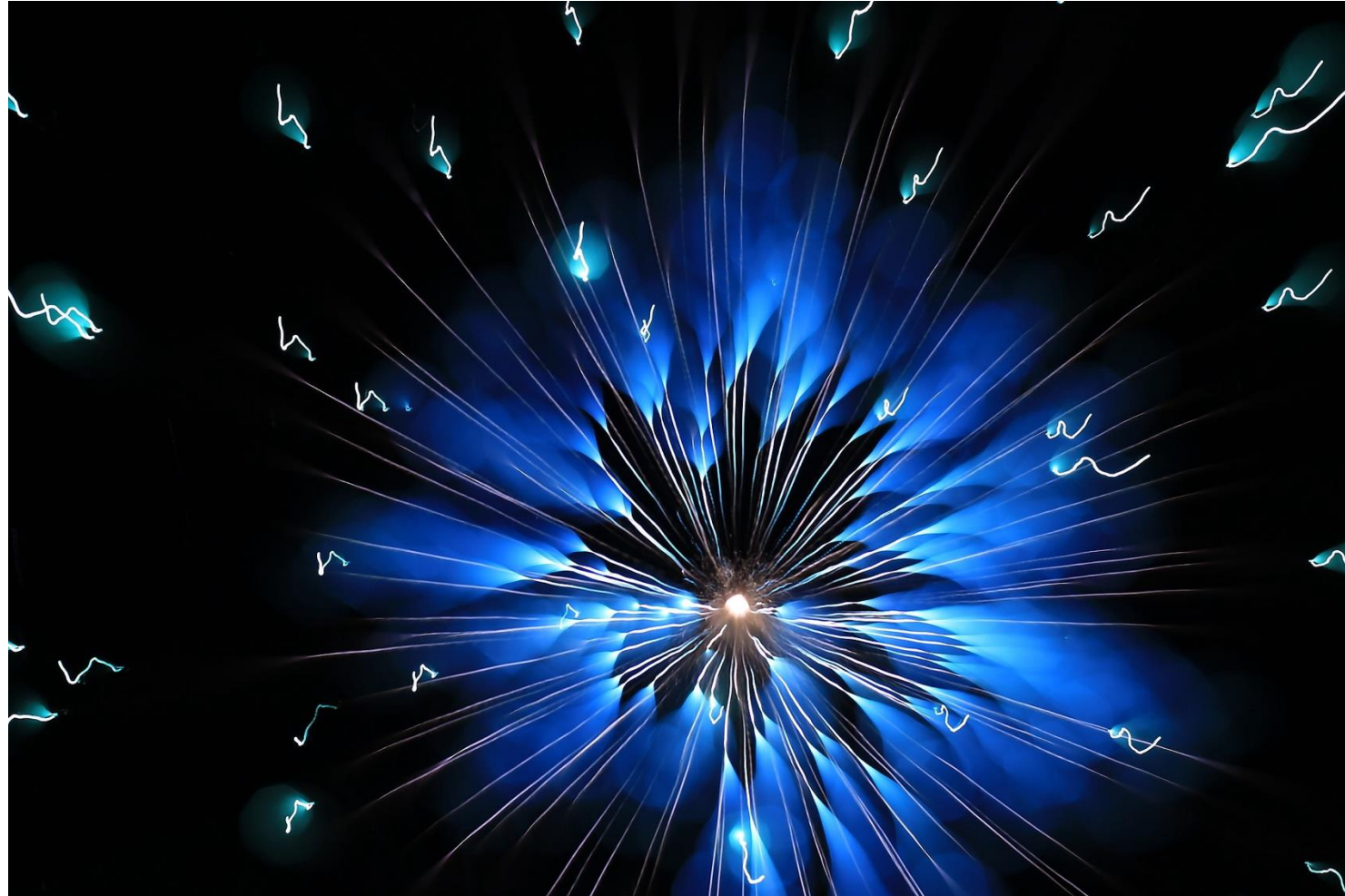
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SCENIC



Scenic Firework Photography

THE COMMON ASPECTS

RESEARCH

- Date & Time
- Location
- Launch Site
- Wind Direction
- Camera Equipment & Settings
- Processing

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 - NYE – 9pm and 12am

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 - NYE – 9pm and 12am
 - Weather forecasts may cause start time to be brought forward or delayed (which may work for you)

TIME ADJUSTED BECAUSE OF STORMS



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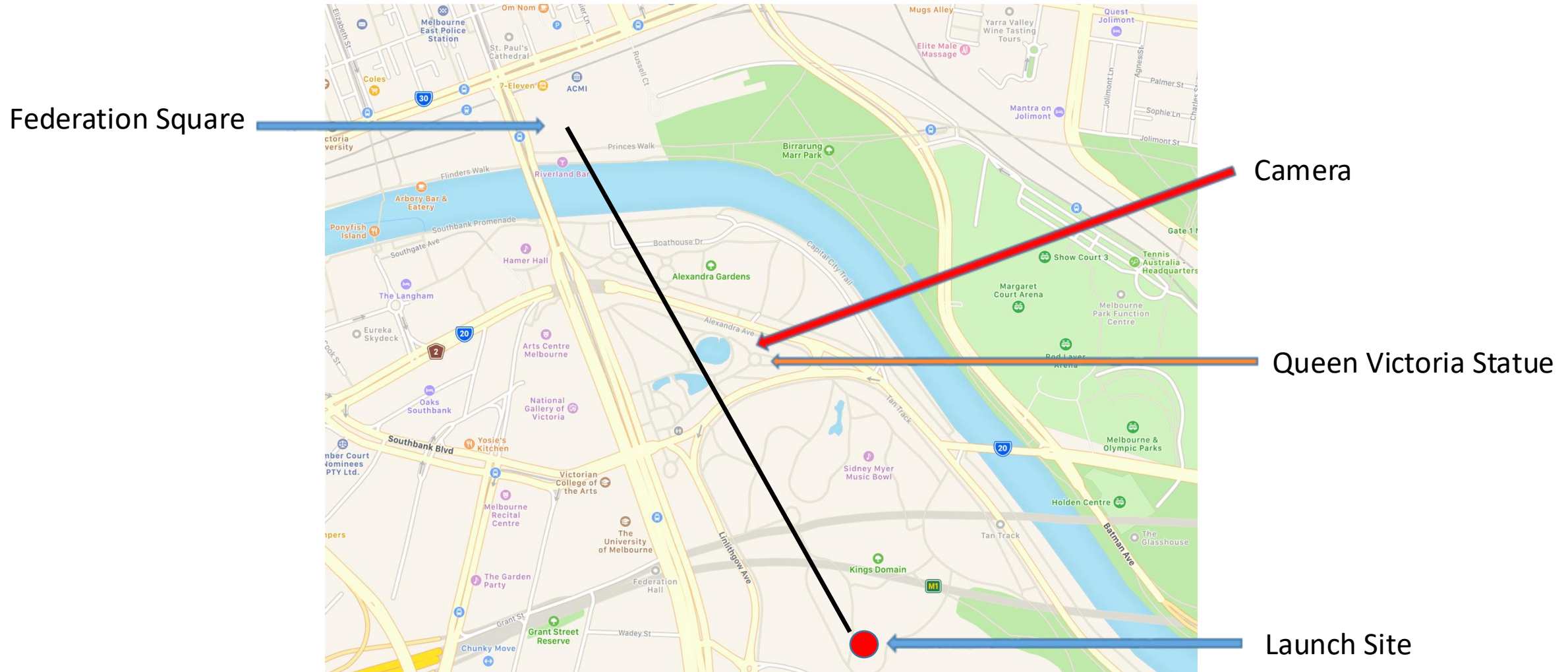
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Queen Victoria Gardens, St Kilda Road, Melbourne



Queen Victoria Gardens, St Kilda Road, Melbourne



Fireworks NYE 2025



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 - In Melbourne, Federation Square is commonly used
 - Docklands, Esplanade is recommended viewing position

Melbourne's Docklands Esplanade



Old Wharf next to Bolte Bridge



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 - In Sydney, on NYE, Mrs Macquaries Chair is a recommended viewing position

Sydney NYE at Mrs Macquaries Chair

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Sydney NYE at Mrs Macquaries Chair

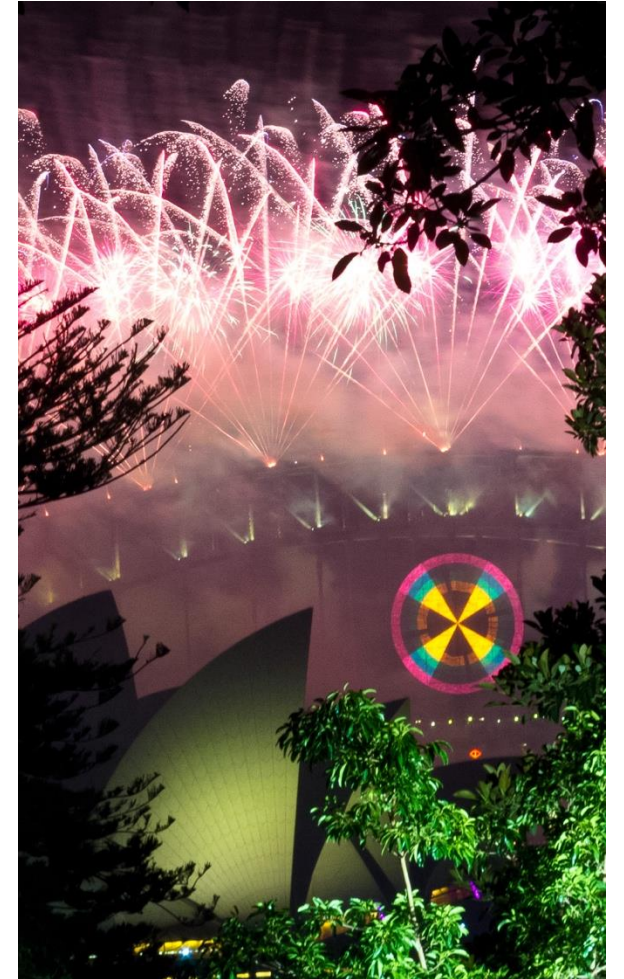
- Arrive early to get a good viewing position
- We arrived at 7am on Dec 31st to queue for the gate opening at 10am
- 14,000 people arrived at the entrance after us but
- 6,000 arrived before us, the earliest about 6pm on 29th

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 - In Brisbane, for Riverfire, Southbank is recommended viewing position

Brisbane's Riverfire from Southbank



Riverfire from Storey Bridge Brisbane



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 - In Sydney, on NYE, Mrs Macquaries Chair is a recommended viewing position
 - In Brisbane, for Riverfire, Southbank is recommended viewing position
 - In Canberra, for Skyfire, Rond Terrace on Lake Burley Griffin is recommended viewing position

Canberra's Skyfire from Rond Terrace



Canberra's Skyfire from Mount Ainslie



LOCATION

- Look for alternative locations to recommended viewing locations
 - Allow for distance
 - Find a higher viewpoint
 - Find a lower viewpoint
 - Find an uninterrupted viewpoint

Distance – Australia Day fireworks Federation Square



Higher perspective – Ethiad Stadium for Docklands



Lower perspective – Frankston Festival



Uninterrupted Viewpoint – Sydney NYE



Scenic Firework Photography

RESEARCH

- Date & Time
- Location
- ***Launch Site***
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LAUNCH SITE

- Locate the Launch Site
- Fireworks are launched vertically with a slight spread
- Creative fireworks – shoot from right next to launch site perimeter
- Scenic fireworks – need to position camera position so launch site is in direct line from camera to scene

LAUNCH SITE

- Consider Canberra's Skyfire launched from barges on Lake Burley Griffin and viewed from Rond Terrace

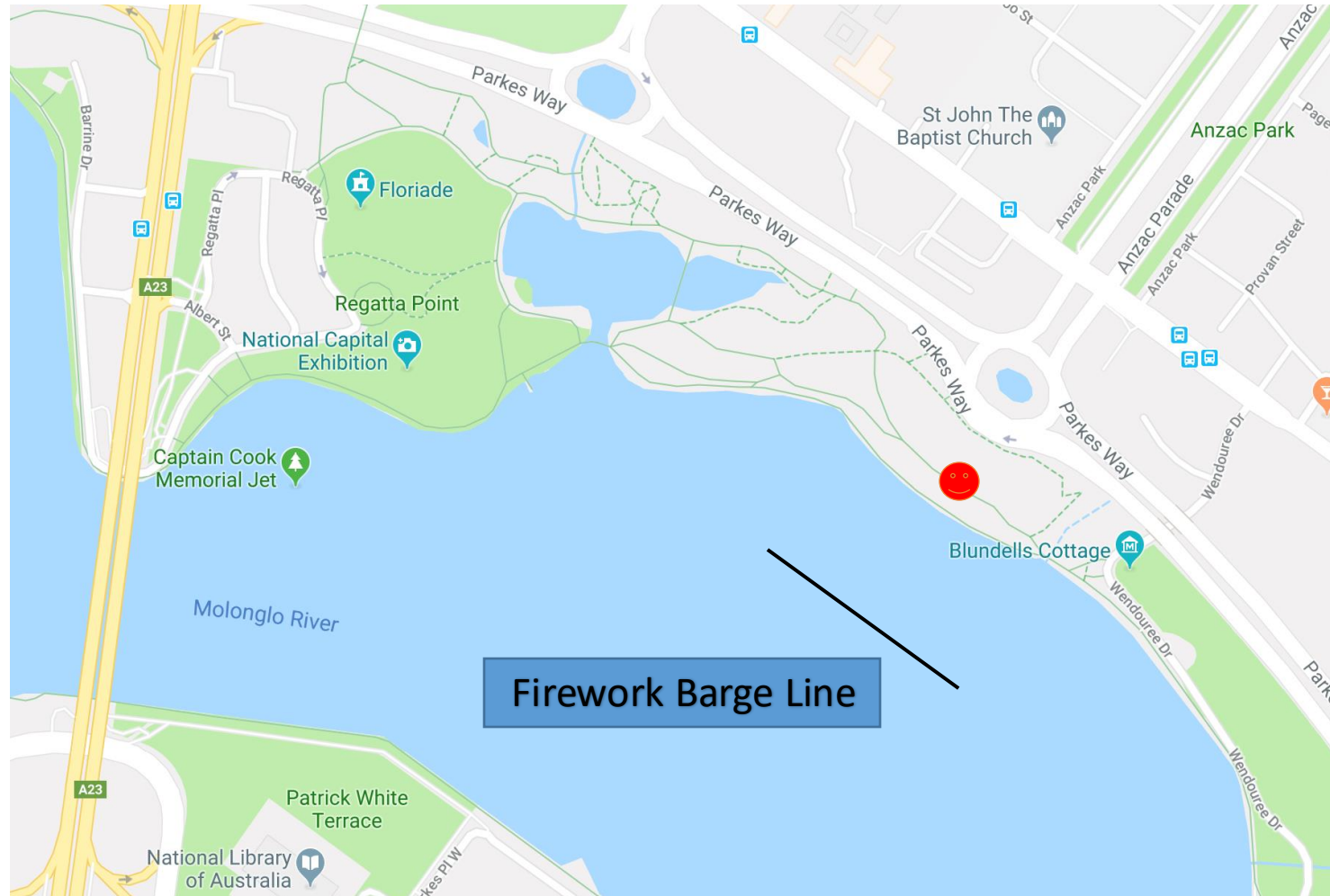
Canberra's Skyfire from Rond Terrace



LAUNCH SITE

- Consider Canberra's Skyfire launched from barges on Lake Burley Griffin and viewed from Rond Terrace
- Check out Google Maps to see where this is

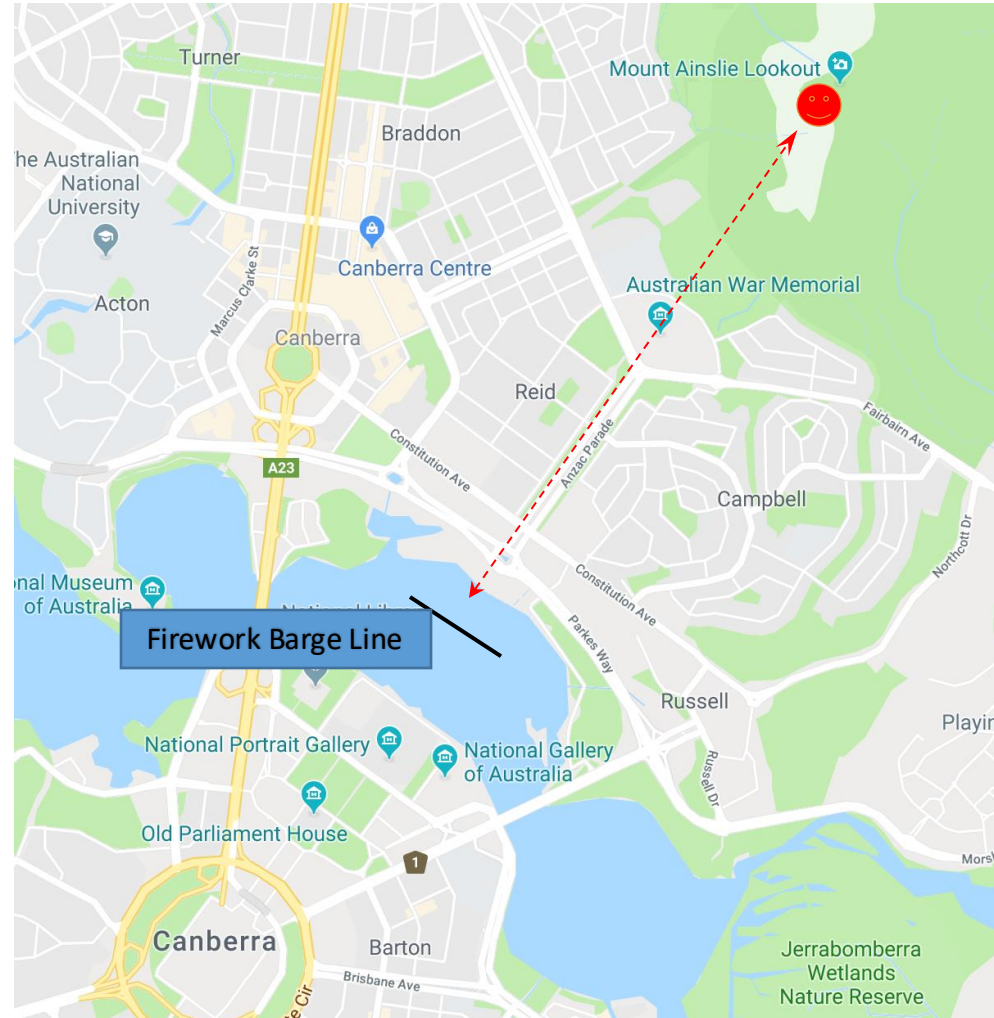
Rond Terrace



LAUNCH SITE

- Consider Canberra's Skyfire launched from barges on Lake Burley Griffin and viewed from Rond Terrace
- Check out Google Maps to see where this is
- A larger map of the area proves useful

Mount Ainslie Lookout



LAUNCH SITE

- Consider Canberra's Skyfire launched from barges on Lake Burley Griffin and viewed from Rond Terrace
- Check out Google Maps to see where this is
- A larger map of the area proves useful
- From Mount Ainslie Lookout, looking over the Australian War Memorial, along Anzac Parade, across the launch zone to Parliament House

Canberra's Skyfire from Mount Ainslie



RESEARCH

- Date & Time
- Location
- Launch Site
- ***Wind Direction***
- Camera Equipment & Settings
- Processing

WIND DIRECTION

- Fireworks are explosions, with chemical compounds added to provide colour
- Explosions have smoke
- Wind disperses the smoke
- Wind is preferred, but just a little, not too much
- Be upwind of the launch site if possible
- As a minimum, be side on to launch site
- Do not be directly downwind of the launch site

Downwind at Moomba



Downwind at Moomba



Scenic Firework Photography

Side on to wind at Docklands



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CAMERA EQUIPMENT - ESSENTIAL

- Camera – capable of manual control
- Wide angle lens (or for creative, telephoto zoom)
- Tripod - solid
- Remote shutter release, cabled or wi-fi

Good Lens Selection is important



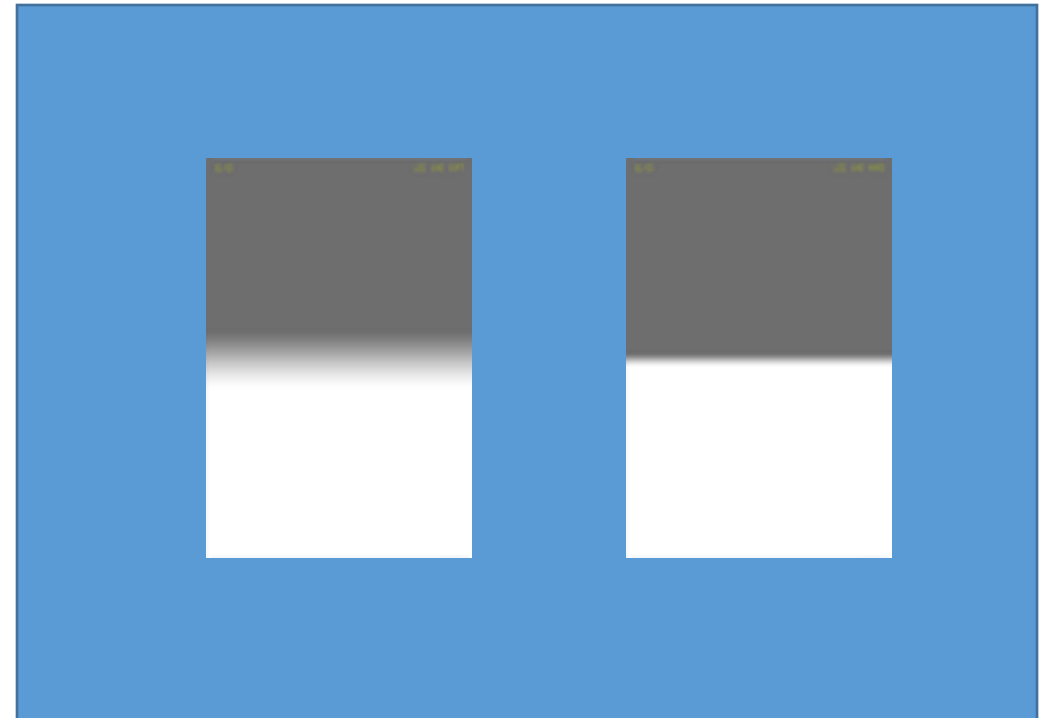
Scenic Firework Photography

CAMERA EQUIPMENT - ESSENTIAL

- 28mm Lens at 29mm
- Should have used a 16-35mm lens
- Moved too close to pier
- All photos have to be cropped carefully to disguise the error, but I missed some of the highlights
- And this was Frankston Festival on 8 February 2025

CAMERA EQUIPMENT - OPTIONAL

- Black cardboard – cover the lens
- Neutral Density (ND) filter
- Graduated ND filter – soft and hard (I use Lee Filters)



CAMERA EQUIPMENT - OPTIONAL

- NISI Natural Night filter – recommended to me during NYE preparation
- Designed to block the most common wavelengths of light pollution
- Use daylight white balance
- <https://nisifilters.com.au/natural-night/>

Nisi Natural Night Filter

OFF



ON

Nisi Natural Night Filter

OFF



ON



Nisi Natural Night Filter



CAMERA SETTINGS

- White balance – daylight
- ISO 100
- f8 – f11
- Shutter speed can vary from 2 seconds to 10-15 seconds
- Usually 2-6 seconds on manual
- Extend up to 10-15 seconds if long distance, using graduated filters, or black cardboard

CAMERA SETTINGS

- Manual vs Bulb
 - Manual – set shutter duration, change manually
 - Bulb – guess duration each time and hold or shut depending upon colour / brightness bursts
 - On bulb mode, my exposures can range from 21 seconds to more usually, 10, 11, 12 or 13 seconds and as short as 2,3, or 4 seconds for the grand finale which is usually a lot of bright white.

CAMERA SETTINGS

- Focus
 - Manual – turn off auto focus on lens after setting focus for scenic images
 - Back button focus
 - Turn OFF image stabilisation on lens while on tripod
 - NOTE - At the end of the fireworks, turn on auto focus on lens and image stabilisation

Tripod Mounted Image Stabilisation

OFF

ON

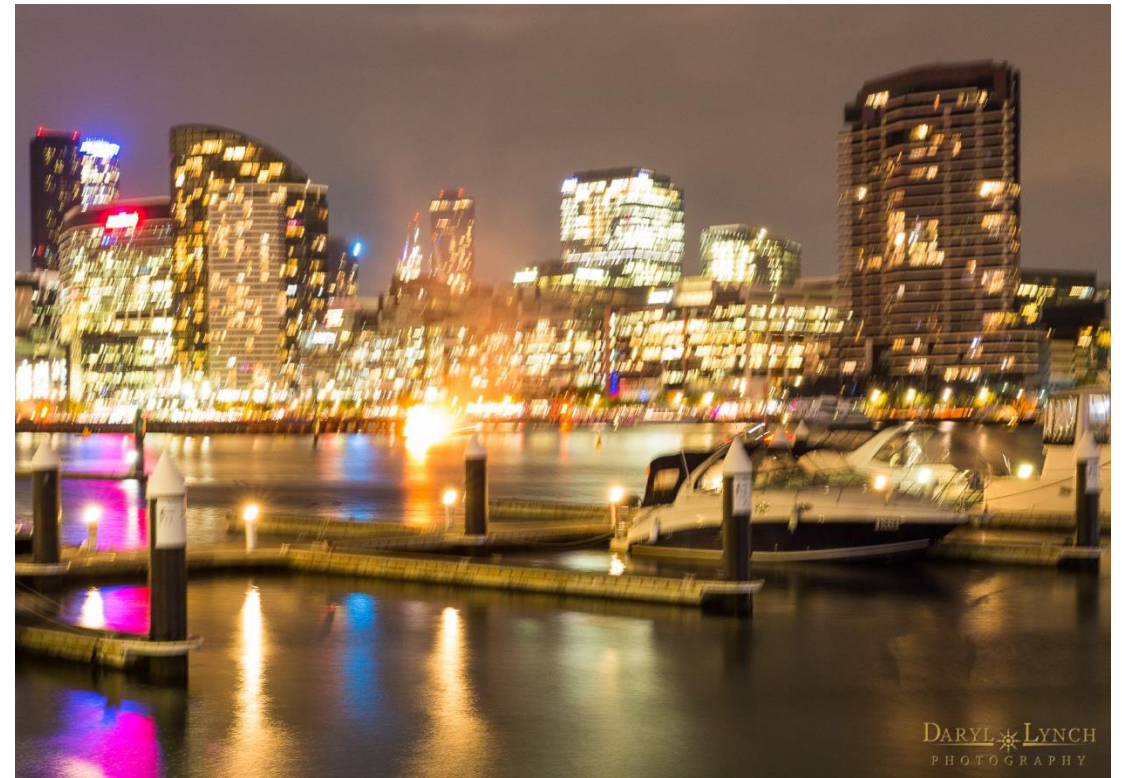


Tripod Mounted Image Stabilisation

OFF



ON



CAMERA SETTINGS

- When to commence Exposure
 - Watch for shell trails in sky
 - Start as it nears usual burst height
 - Use 2-3 second (or longer) shutter speed
- Listen to music and feel the rhythm to gauge type of firework burst
 - Often not near sound system
 - Radio broadcast
- Fireworks Finale
 - Often biggest mass of explosions
 - Almost white
 - Need shorter duration – even 1 second

RESEARCH

- Date & Time
- Location
- Launch Site
- Wind Direction
- Camera Settings
- ***Processing***

PROCESSING

- Auto Tone – start
- Adjust exposure
- Adjust contrast
- Apply graduated filter
- Reduce white clipping
- Reduce highlights
- Adjust vibrance
- Adjust clarity
- Adjust dehaze to reduce smoke haze
- Noise reduction

BEFORE & AFTER IMAGES – LIGHTROOM STEPS



Original Image & Settings

ISO – 100

Aperture – f10

Duration – 30 seconds

Focal length – 23 mm

Lee ND Grad Filter(s)



Edited Image & Lightroom Processing

ISO – 100

Aperture – f10

Duration – 30 seconds

Focal length – 23 mm

Lee ND Grad Filter(s)

WB – Auto

Auto Tone

Contrast +23 to +11

Highlights -73 to -86

White Clipping -77 to -69

Vibrance +37 to 62



Original & Edited Image



Original Image & Settings

ISO – 100

Aperture – f10

Duration – 45 seconds

Focal length – 23 mm

Lee ND Grad Filter(s)



Edited Image & Lightroom Processing

ISO – 100

Aperture – f10

Duration – 45 seconds

Focal length – 23 mm

Lee ND Grad Filter(s)

Auto Tone

Contrast +19 to +18

Highlights -73 to -78

Shadows -36 to -31

White Clipping -45 to -42

Black Clipping -28 to -37

Vibrance +14 to 39



Original & Edited Image



Original Image & Settings

ISO – 200

Aperture – f11

Duration – 10 seconds

Focal length – 35 mm



Edited Image & Lightroom Processing

ISO – 200

Aperture – f11

Duration – 10 seconds

Focal length – 35 mm

Auto Tone

Highlights -70 to -95

Clarity +21 to 21

Saturation +16 to 16

Graduated Filter

Exposure Adjustment

Vignette - subtle



Original & Edited Image



Original Image & Settings

ISO – 200

Aperture – f11

Duration – 24 seconds

Focal length – 29 mm



Edited Image & Lightroom Processing

ISO – 200

Aperture – f11

Duration – 24 seconds

Focal length – 29 mm

Auto Tone

Exposure +0.47 to +1.25

Contrast +6 to +14

Highlights -65 to -71

Shadows +70 to +91

White Clipping -24 to -21

Black Clipping -11 to +4

Clarity +18 ; Dehaze +19



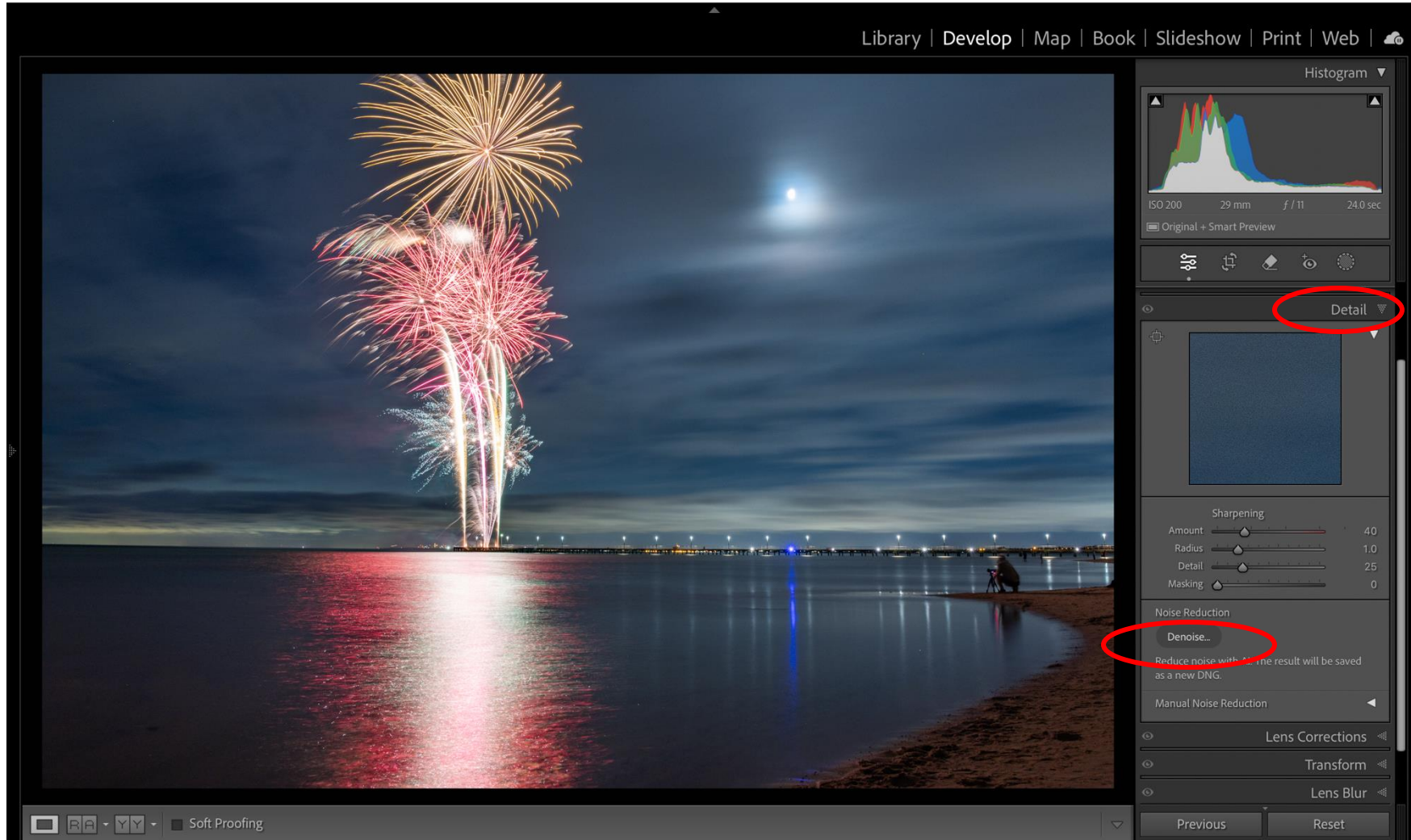
Original & Edited Image



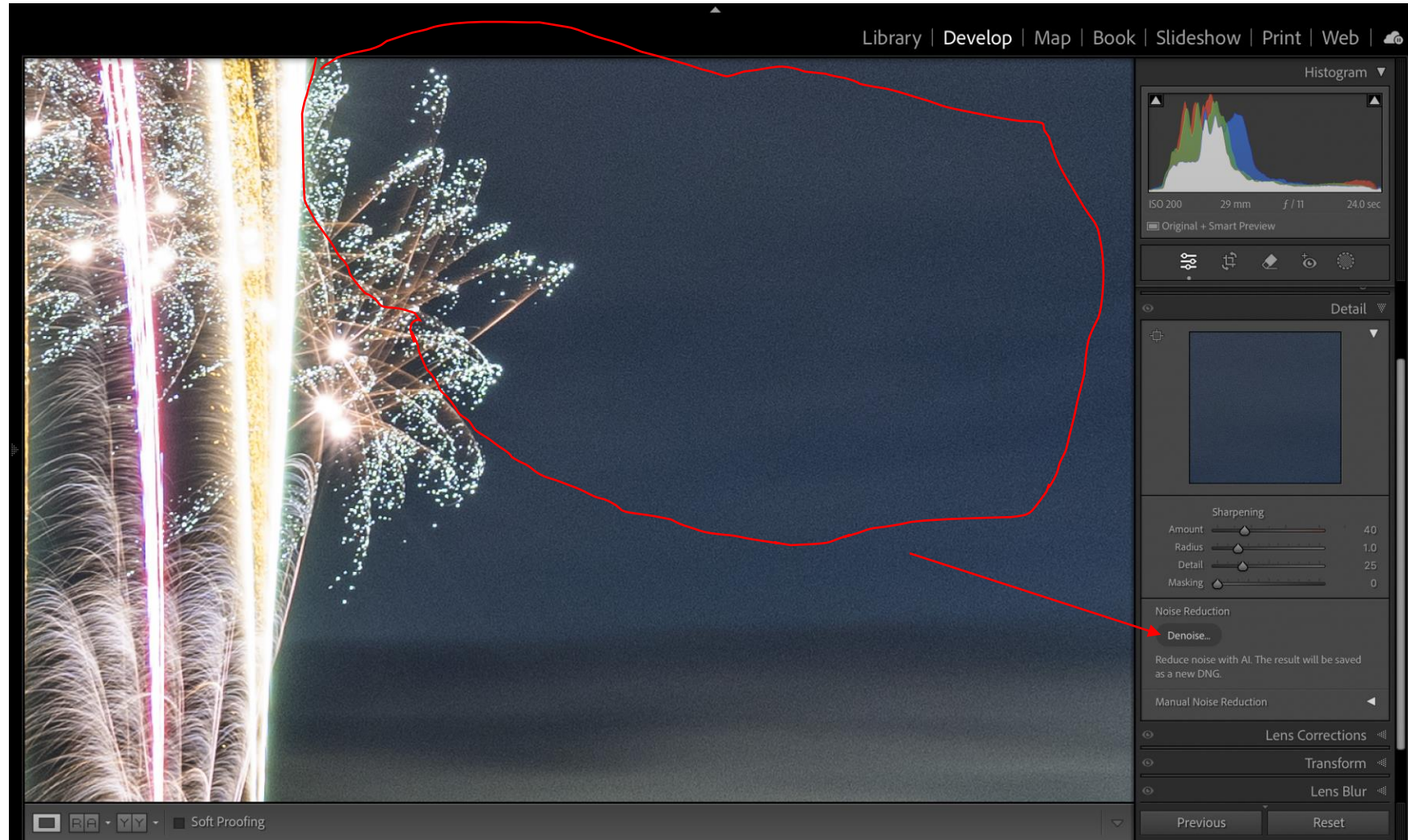
NOISE

- Lightroom Classic Noise Reduction
- In Lightroom Classic Develop module use the Details Panel, and select Denoise

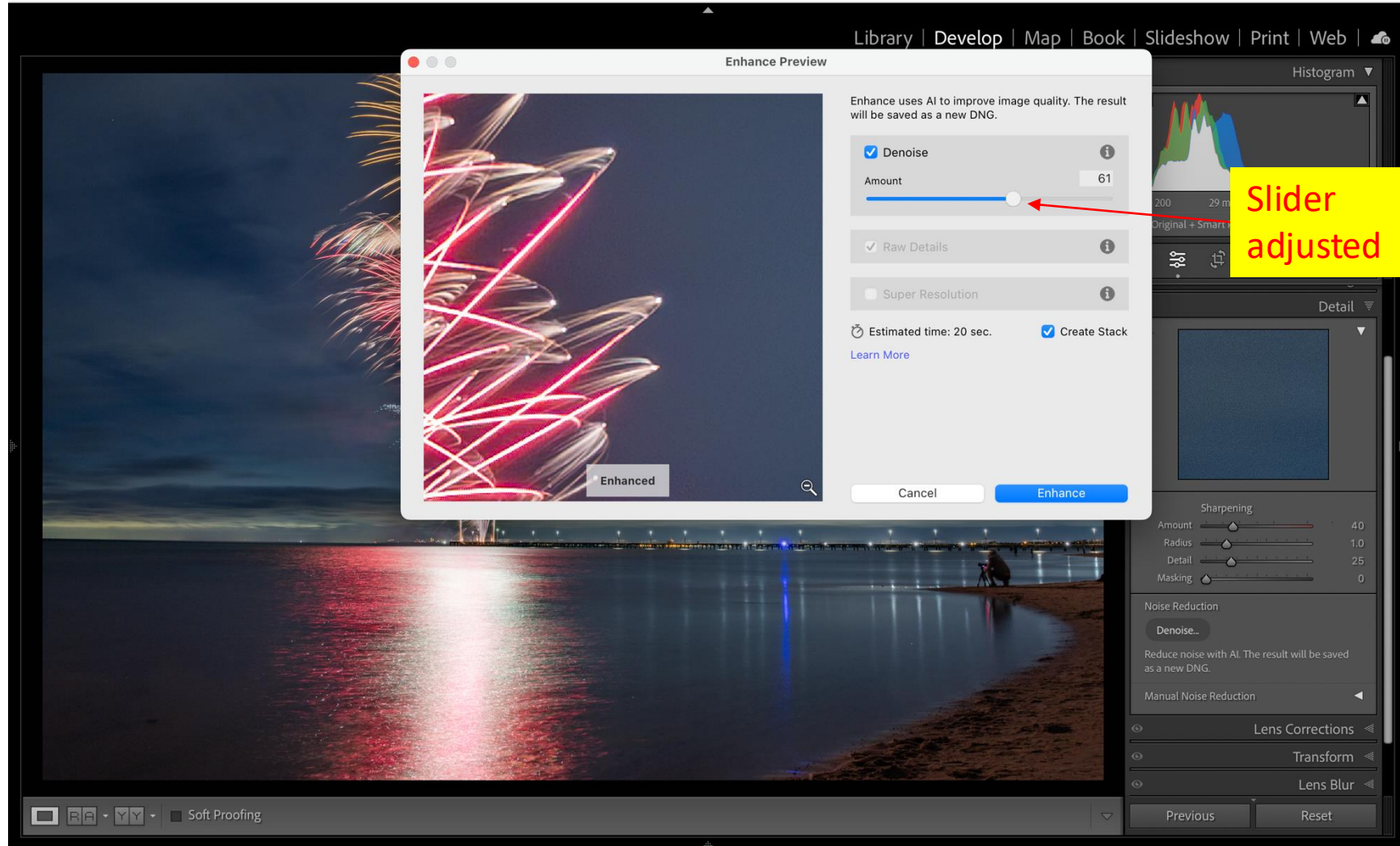
NOISE



NOISE




NOISE



Scenic Firework Photography

NOISE

Library | Develop | Map | Book | Slideshow | Print | Web |



ISO 200 29 mm f/11 24.0 sec

Original Photo

Detail

Sharpening

Amount		40
Radius		1.0
Detail		25
Masking		0

Noise Reduction

[Denoise...](#) [Learn More](#)

Denoise has been applied to this photo.

Manual Noise Reduction

Lens Corrections

Transform

Lens Blur

Previous Reset

Soft Proofing

Scenic Firework Photography

Edited Image before and after LR Denoise



PRESENTATION OF PHOTOS

PRESENTATION

- Fireworks are colourful and bright, with high contrast
- Gloss Photographic Paper, not matt papers
- Metallic Photographic Papers
- Metal or Aluminium Photo Print

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITIONS

Australia Day Fireworks 2015-2



Buoy Line Lighting



Sydney NYE Fireworks 2015



Sydney NYE 2015 Fireworks Finale (Award)



PRACTICE OPPORTUNITIES

Fireworks

- Moomba
- Dewali Festivals
- Suburban Christmas Carols
- NYE – city or suburban
- BEST - Gunning Fireworks Festival – a trade show for a fireworks company
 - Gunning is in NSW just past Yass on Hume Highway
 - Trade show recommenced in 2024 after Covid hiatus
 - 2 hours of fireworks, including a music themed 15 minute finale

Fireworks in Melbourne

Facebook – Fireworks in Melbourne

<https://www.facebook.com/fireworksinmelbourne/>

Find out where and when fireworks shows are held

