



Michael Warwick

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**W**hen I was judging the inaugural American Landscape Contest that we ran over the summer, I noticed a trend among the photographs. A lot of them were shot with full-frame DSLRs and wide-angle zooms. In fact, a pair of combinations I saw a lot of were the Canon EOS 5D Mark II and the Canon EF 17-40mm f/4L lens, as well as the Nikon D700 and the AF-S Nikkor 16-35mm f/4G ED VR. I've come to refer to them as the *OP* landscape kits.

Thinking about these *OP* landscape kits motivated me to plan the article on the full-frame DSLRs in this issue of the magazine. To me, the three cameras in the article—the Canon EOS 5D Mark III, the Nikon D800 and the Sony A99—are the pro-level full-frame cameras of the year for *OP*, at least as of press time. I'm not ignoring the EOS-1D X and the D4, but these two cameras, while being marvels of technology, are also priced in the rarified air well above \$5,000 (body only). For some photographers, these special pro models are the tools they need to get the job done. For many *OP* landscape shooters, the considerably

the D800 (about \$2,900) and the A99 (about \$2,800) are the models to aspire to.

Full-frame still rules the roost for many landscape shooters for a couple of reasons. Resolution, image quality and high-ISO capability all play a role, and while many sports and wildlife shooters may want the magnification or crop factor of an APS-C DSLR, landscape photographers tend to crave options at the wide end of the spectrum, which makes full-frame DSLRs more appealing. Full-frame DSLRs are the new medium-format while digital medium-format is the new large-format.

As this issue goes to press, there are a lot of rumors swirling about new full-frame models on the horizon at the high end, as well as at the entry level.

Even as we spotlight the three full-frame DSLRs in this issue, I'm looking forward to seeing more options from more manufacturers in the not-too-distant future. It's interesting to see that when it comes to camera sensors, enthusiasts aspire to larger sensors while at the same time advancing technology generally makes things smaller.

On the *OP* website, outdoorphotographer.com, we've been making a lot of changes in the galleries, and more are on the way. This is the first chance I've had to properly welcome George Lepp to the *OP* Blog. I'm excited to have his voice and his commentary as part of the rich collection of bloggers. Also on the blog, you'll notice that I've been selecting a Photo Of The Day, which I choose from the various *OP* galleries. A number of readers have written to me asking how their photos can be considered for Photo Of The Day. It's simple: Submit to any of our contests, Your Favorite Places or Assignments, and you're automatically in the running. I check in with these galleries every day to make my selection.

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