

# ACADEMY

THE BIG PHOTO E-ZINE

ISSUE 50 MAY



TRAFER  
*Scott*



# The fastest, smoothest, most precise photo editor for macOS, Windows and iPad



Available without subscription at  
[affinity.serif.com/photo](https://affinity.serif.com/photo)



## EDITOR'S LETTER

Life begins at 50!

I feel that this 50th edition of The Big Photo is not only a milestone for the magazine itself, but it also gets out there as the world is beginning to see a new normal. In business, it is great to see pro photographers of all kinds now shooting and selling their images again, especially in the social sectors like portrait and wedding.

This is a time to pick ourselves up and strive forward creatively to help us to readjust to the new world. I know it's frustrating and plays on your mind for many reasons but try and take the problem and spin it into a positive, setting new goals and tasks.

My milestone 50 was a long time ago, but every day I am thankful for getting to my age. I learnt a long time ago never to take things and people for granted. The magazine was always a dream for me, but in fact I have almost nothing to do with its production and content, some say that is why it's so good.

So, with that in mind I must thank all those who work so hard creating it as well as those who helped create it in the early days.

So, thank you, Honour who is the graphic designed behind almost all the issues. To Sam who put the first magazine together in content as well as all those along the way who worked here in finding and approaching all those featured in its pages including right up to date Laura who has her mission every month. We must not forget the tech team like Jay, Matt and Lawrence who make sure it gets delivered plus of course our trade partners who we could not survive without.

And you the readers, thanks for reading and telling us how much you love it.

**- Mark Cleghorn**

I'm Honour over the past five years designing The Big Photo e-zine I've learn an incredible amount about photography and about myself as designer. I love the feeling of seeing the amazing images and reading each article for the first then picture the design I can create for them. Being able to create a layout that will suit and frame the images in the best way possible. Over these years I've been given the chance to work with taken images all over the world by some of the industry's biggest photographers, and I've loved every minute! So, here's to 50 issues, and I can't wait for the next 50!

**- Honour Carrick-Donovan**

Hello, my name is Laura. I am the person who researches and approaches the photographers that we feature within The Big Photo. It was never intended for the E-Zine to be part of my job but I happily inherited it at the start of the first UK lockdown. I must admit, it was a bit nerve racking but I have worked within the industry for a long time and have always loved imagery so I soon found inspiration! I am very proud to play my part in The Big Photo and having read it for years, I still have to pinch myself that this is actually my job! Thank you to all of the featured photographers – you are so talented and it has been such a pleasure getting to know more about you and your work.

**- Laura Edmond**



# CONTENTS

EXPLORING IDENTITY & COMMUNITY

ORLANDO GILI

GEOMETRY, QUIRKINESS AND A PACKET OF JELLY BABIES!

TOM KNOWLES

ARTISANS IN INDUSTRY

STEVE RISKIND

THE STORYTELLER IT'S ALL IN THE MOOD

RACHEL TAN

INDUSTRIAL DECAY

ILAN BENATTAR

ANIMALS MAKE ME HUMAN

TRAER SCOTT

THE DRIVE TO DIVERSIFY

RICHARD BRADBURY

FIFE FISHERMEN

CAROLINE TROTTER

THE BRIDAL TIDE

MICHAEL SEWELL

THROUGH THE EYES OF A LOVED ONE.

SANJAY JOGIA

THE TOP 10

THE PHOTOGRAPHER ACADEMY

THE INSTAGRAM GALLERY

THE PHOTOGRAPHER ACADEMY

WHAT'S COMING UP

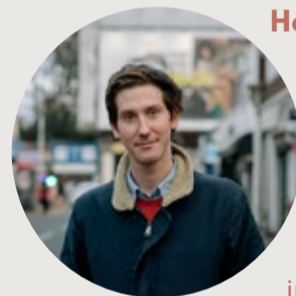
THE PHOTOGRAPHER ACADEMY





# Orlando Gili

EXPLORING IDENTITY & COMMUNITY



**How did you get started in photography?**

I assisted photographer Alex Schneideman who runs fine art photographic printing studio **Flow Photographic** in London. I had no formal education in photography previously, so it was a valuable experience to be involved throughout the photographic process from beginning to end - pre-production, the shoot itself, image selection, and finally processing and printing the images on a large giclee printer. It was an insight into how to operate a photography business.





**Can you tell us about your photography business today?**

I combine personal work, whether short or long term projects, with editorial and commercial commissions. I also pitch work to magazines and newspapers, and aim to shoot ideas regardless of whether a photo editor chooses to run the images.

**What inspired you to focus on portrait photography specifically?**

I'm curious about what makes people tick, and making a portrait puts you in the privileged and intimate position of getting to know a person you might not otherwise have met. They could be famous, or they could be a stranger on the street. It gives you the chance to learn about other people, and hear their stories face-to-face, in the process learning more about yourself too. I also enjoy the unpredictability, you are working with another person to make an image, so it really depends on the mood of two people on a given day. I like to see it as a collaboration between photographer and subject.

**You are also known for your documentary photography. Are there any common themes that you are drawn to focussing in on?**

I think there is a natural overlap between portrait and documentary photography. I'm drawn to exploring themes of identity and community. What draws people together, and how people express their individuality.

**“You are working with another person to make an image, so it really depends on the mood of two people on a given day”**







TRIVIAL PURSUITS



TRIVIAL PURSUITS



**As this edition is exploring Industry, we have to ask you about your latest book 'An Opinionated Guide to London Pubs'. How did this come about?**

In June 2020 Hoxton Mini Press published my series **'Trivial Pursuits - The English at Play'**. The photo book is a portrait of a nation in pursuit of happiness, recorded in the years preceding the pandemic. A few months later in between the first and second UK lockdowns, Hoxton Mini Press commissioned me to work on **'An Opinionated Guide to London Pubs'**, part of their series of London guide books.

**You have perfectly captured the personality of each pub within your images. How well did you get to know the pubs before the shoots took place!!**

Having spent most of my life in London it was strangely nostalgic to shoot this book, I had rich memories of a worryingly large proportion of pubs included in the guide. Photographing during the pandemic, with London eerily quiet, perhaps heightened these recollections. I once worked at the French House in Soho, this is the pub in the book which I am most fond and acquainted with, in fact I could go down to the cellar and change a barrel of beer.

**Was it important to watch how people interacted with the spaces before the shoot?**

Before shooting I would walk around the pub to get a feel of the place, looking for the areas that had the best light and most interesting corners.

**“Having spent most of my life in London it was strangely nostalgic to shoot this book”**







BOBBY DAVIS 2020



SOHO WAITER'S RACE 2017



**Were there any common issues that you faced during this project and how did you overcome them?**

The main issue was working around the pandemic. When London wasn't in lockdown pubs were open and could be photographed, but they often needed adjustments before taking any pictures. Most establishments required work to make them look like they would under normal circumstances. Tables would need to be rearranged, and covid signs temporarily removed. In addition, it was harder to capture atmospheric people shoots, the hustle and bustle that you would typically find a London pub.

**The pandemic has catastrophically effected the photographic industry. How has it effected your work?**

It has been a tricky year. The coronavirus has meant it has been hard to plan future projects, meet potential new clients, and there has of course been less commissioned work out there.

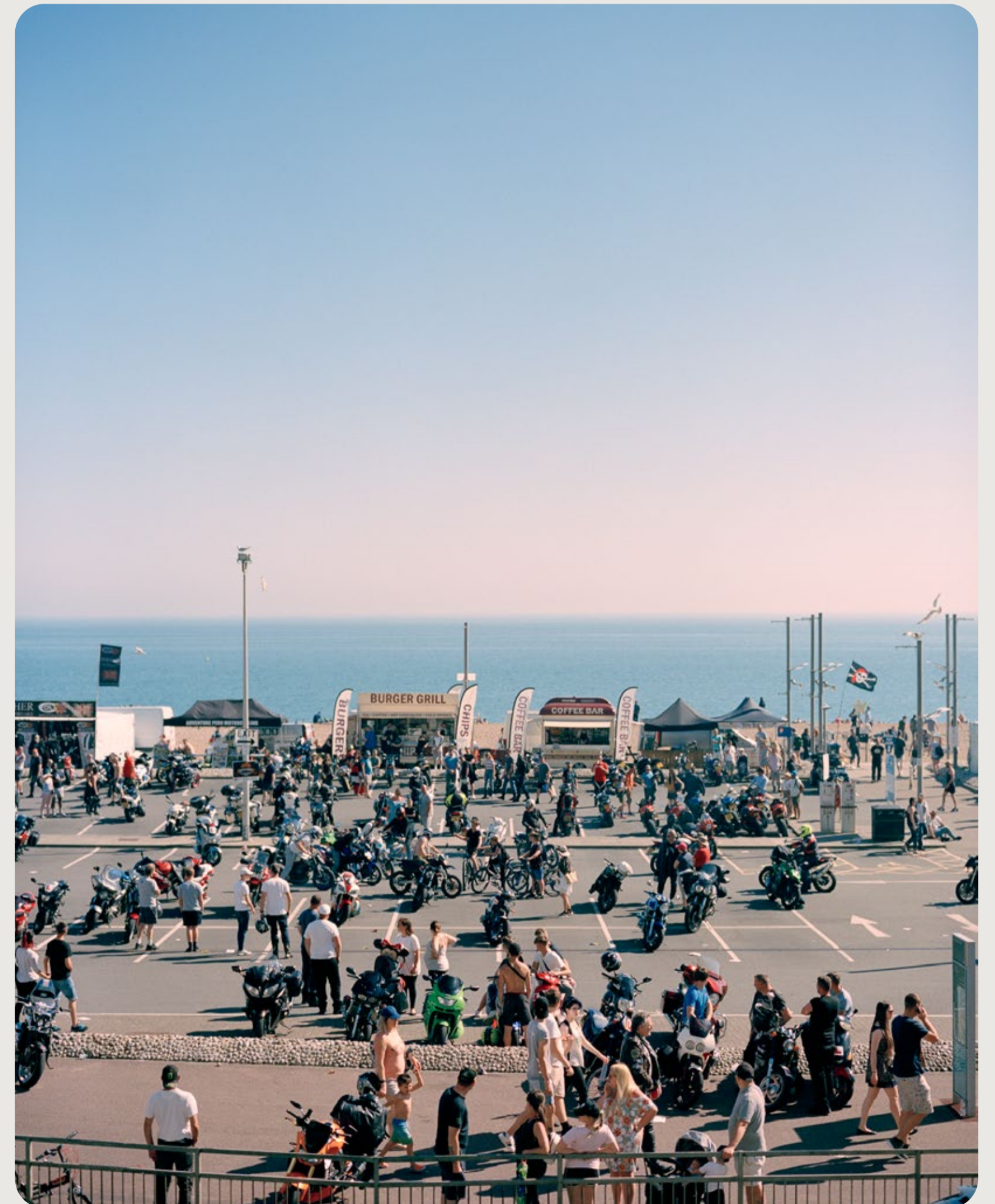
**Do you have any advice for photographers that would like to get their work published?**

Shoot what you are interested in, not what you think people will like. Pitch ideas to photo editors, and if you have no luck go out and shoot them anyway, you can always go back and present the completed project. The more you shoot the better you will get, so don't wait around twiddling your fingers waiting for the dream commission.



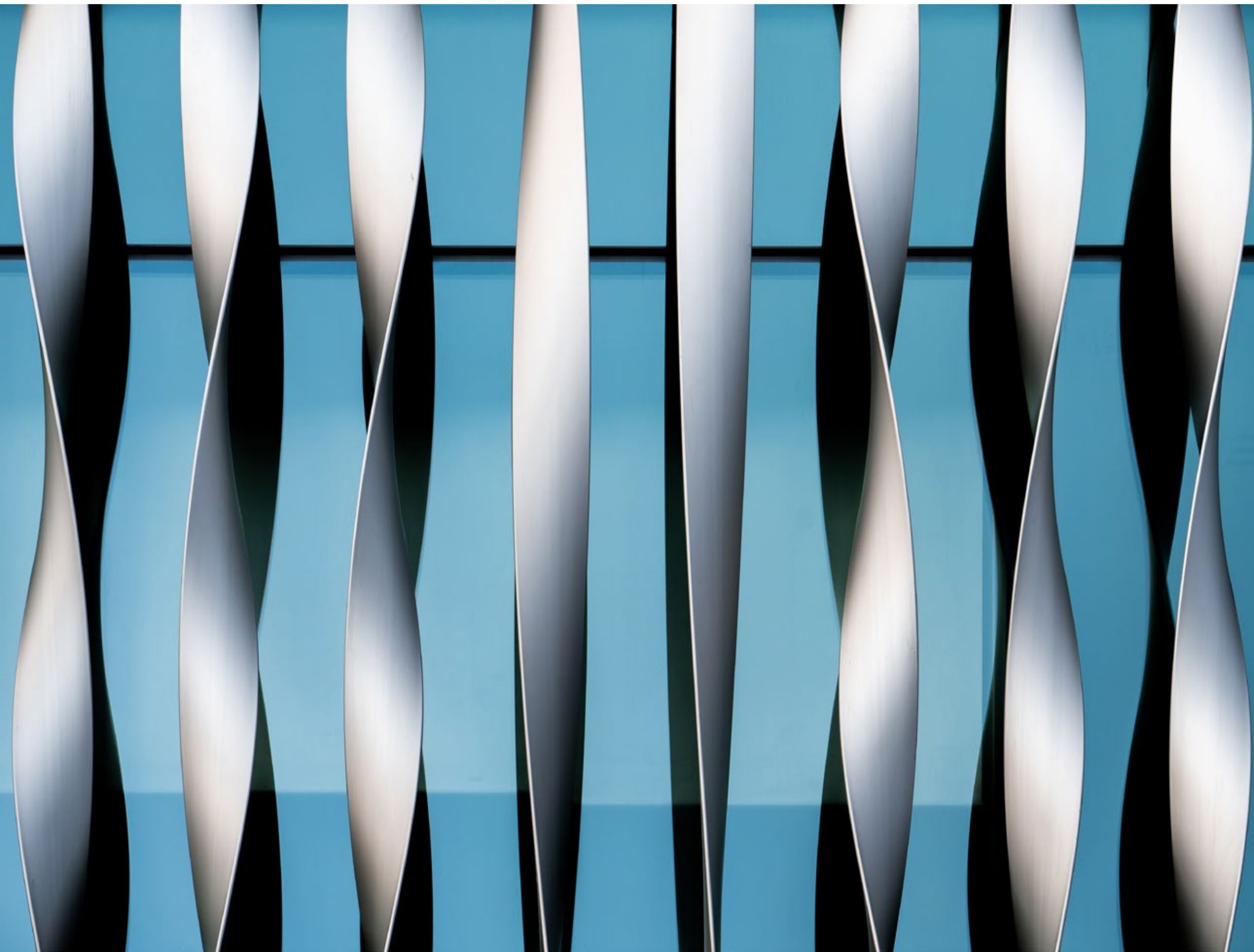
BOOKS

**“Pitch ideas to photo editors, and if you have no luck go out and shoot them anyway, you can always go back and present the completed project ”**



TRIVIAL PURSUITS





TOM KNOWLES

## GEOMETRY, QUIRKINESS

& A PACKET OF JELLY BABIES!



**What came first for you - the love of architecture or the love of photography?**

Without a doubt it was a love for architecture. I was privileged enough as a young child to be taken on a variety of foreign holidays. Whether it was a Bulgarian market place, ancient ruins in Carthage or the old harbour of La Rochelle, any new experiences of buildings always sparked my interest. Likewise, childhood day trips into central London were mesmerising for me, particularly the bright lights of the financial district and Greenwich.

**Can you tell us a little but about how you got started within photography?**

I think my first formal exposure was in school when I was a teenager. The art department had a dark room that we were able to use, but this was really only a fleeting experience that intrigued me more than anything else. Upon reflection, my real inspiration was some years later living in Bogota, the capital of Colombia. My flatmate was a photographer for a national broadsheet, and he took me to some incredible places while he was working. Unfortunately I didn't have a camera at the time, but I fell in love with the cultural experiences and was envious of the photographic memories that he produced. As soon as I returned to the UK, the very first thing I did was to buy my own DSLR.





“USE INSTINCT TO CAPTURE FLEETING HUMAN INTERACTION WITH THE BUILDING AS THIS CAN ALSO MAKE A TRULY MEMORABLE IMAGE.”

**Was it an organic decision to focus on architecture in particular or was there a defining opportunity for you which influenced your decision?**

I think I naturally gravitated towards photographing structures, geometry and strong lines from the outset. It's just a prevailing bias I have and something that both delights and excites me. Sometimes the concrete vertices of an art gallery inspire me more than the art itself! I've chuckled a few times overhearing people in galleries make amusing comments about the way I point my camera towards a railing or crack in the floor rather than the exhibits! They probably think I'm totally loopy! If I had to pick a defining moment though, it would have to be my first visit to Valencia's City of Arts and Sciences. Calatrava is a pure genius.

**Do you like to 'get to know' the buildings by exploring the spaces before you pick up your camera or is it more based on instinct?**

I tend to be pretty meticulous researching a building I want to photograph. Normally I build up an idea board and also mind map current photos of interest. I always research the access around a building, if there are any works prohibiting the shots I am looking for, as well as up to date opening and closing restrictions. There's nothing worse than organising a shoot, only to find it's closed on the day you are there, or the reflection friendly lake in front of the building is being dredged! Ironically that's what happened to me outside Calatrava's Agora in Valencia! Thankfully I was lucky with an unusual capture that made the trip worthwhile. I also try to factor in opportunities for unique weather whilst I'm there, but also use instinct to capture fleeting human interaction with the building as this can also make a truly memorable image.





RENZO PIANO RE-ANIMATOR



A PRIVATE INTERLUDE





SYNTHETIC MITOSIS





## “SOME SHOTS JUST SCREAM COLOUR WHEN YOU ARE BEHIND THE LENS”

**As a viewer of your images, you can't help but feel that you have taken a walk around or through the building with you. Is this your intention?**

This is music to my ears and the kind of comment that every photographer would love to hear. Sometimes I wonder if people find some of my more abstract work difficult to connect with, so it's rewarding that the personality of my photos has made you feel this way. You have definitely filled my backpack with rainbows today!

**Your projects include colour and monochrome. Is this a decision that you make whilst shooting the building or in post-production?**

It's a bit of both really. Some shots just scream colour when you are behind the lens, particularly blue or golden hour compositions. I find that bold pictorial images can work well with colour too, but often need playing with in post for best results. I have to admit though, that I'm a self-confessed monochrome fan. But however vogue it may be, I don't consciously convert photos into greyscale for the sake of doing so. The galleries I have in b&w are a deliberate stylistic choice, and have been carefully conceived with a visual aim in mind. So I guess my decision is made, more often than not, well before I even pick up a camera!

**Can you tell us a little bit about your Heterogeneous project?**

This is purely a default project for individual photos that have won competition awards and don't seem to fit neatly into any of my other galleries or albums. There's a few quirky photos there and one of a rather leftfield experience inside a cathedral!





SKY FITS HEAVEN





HEYDAR ALIYEV'S GROOVE





“ I ALWAYS CARRY A FAST 85MM PRIME LENS. THIS IS GREAT FOR INTERIORS THAT ARE NOT SO WELL LIT ”

**What challenges do you regularly face within your work and how do you overcome them?**

The main challenge at the moment seems to be avoiding over-zealous security! Unfortunately a large proportion of modern city architecture is built on or around pseudo-public land. As a general rule of thumb, these places have zero tolerance to anyone taking photos with 'professional looking' cameras. Even taking photos from public land can prove tricky at times. This is a bit of a concern but has helped encourage me to spread my wings and look towards architecture projects orientated outside the built environment. I can relax much more this way and enjoy my shoot without the fear of a potentially disappointing trip.

**What essentials do you have in your camera bag at all times?**

I always carry a fast 85mm prime lens. This is great for interiors that are not so well lit or alternatively for tighter geometric configurations that you wouldn't necessarily notice with a wider angle. It shouldn't be seen just as a portrait lens and can often give an interesting look for more abstract and detailed shots. I also tend to have a stash of jelly babies to keep me going as well!

**What's the best photography advice you could give?**

Stay healthy, enjoy life and keep reminding yourself that no one wants to know absurd technical facts about the camera you own, even if they are as passionate about photography as you are! Tell them an amusing joke instead.





**SWITCH THE LITE ON NOW!**

# XPERIENCE *LITE*

Whether you are a Pro photographer having to take your business in a new direction to generate more profit, or you are just starting out in the business, The Xperience is guaranteed to make the difference to you and your business!



**FROM ONLY  
£75 A MONTH**



**20 BUSINESS TRAINING  
SESSIONS (BIWEEKLY)**



**THE XPERIENCE  
AWARDS**



**20 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING  
SESSIONS (BIWEEKLY)**



**MARKETING  
PACK**



**QUARTERLY  
SALES SESSIONS**



**DISCOUNTS WITH  
PARTNERS**



**A CHOICE OF ONE OF 7  
XPERIENCE LEGACY CAMPAIGNS**



**ONLINE XPERIENCE LITE  
FACEBOOK COMMUNITY**



**XPERIENCE  
QUALIFICATIONS**



**0%  
INTEREST FREE CREDIT  
FACILITY**



**LITERATURE DESIGN  
TEMPLATES PACK**

**CLICK HERE**

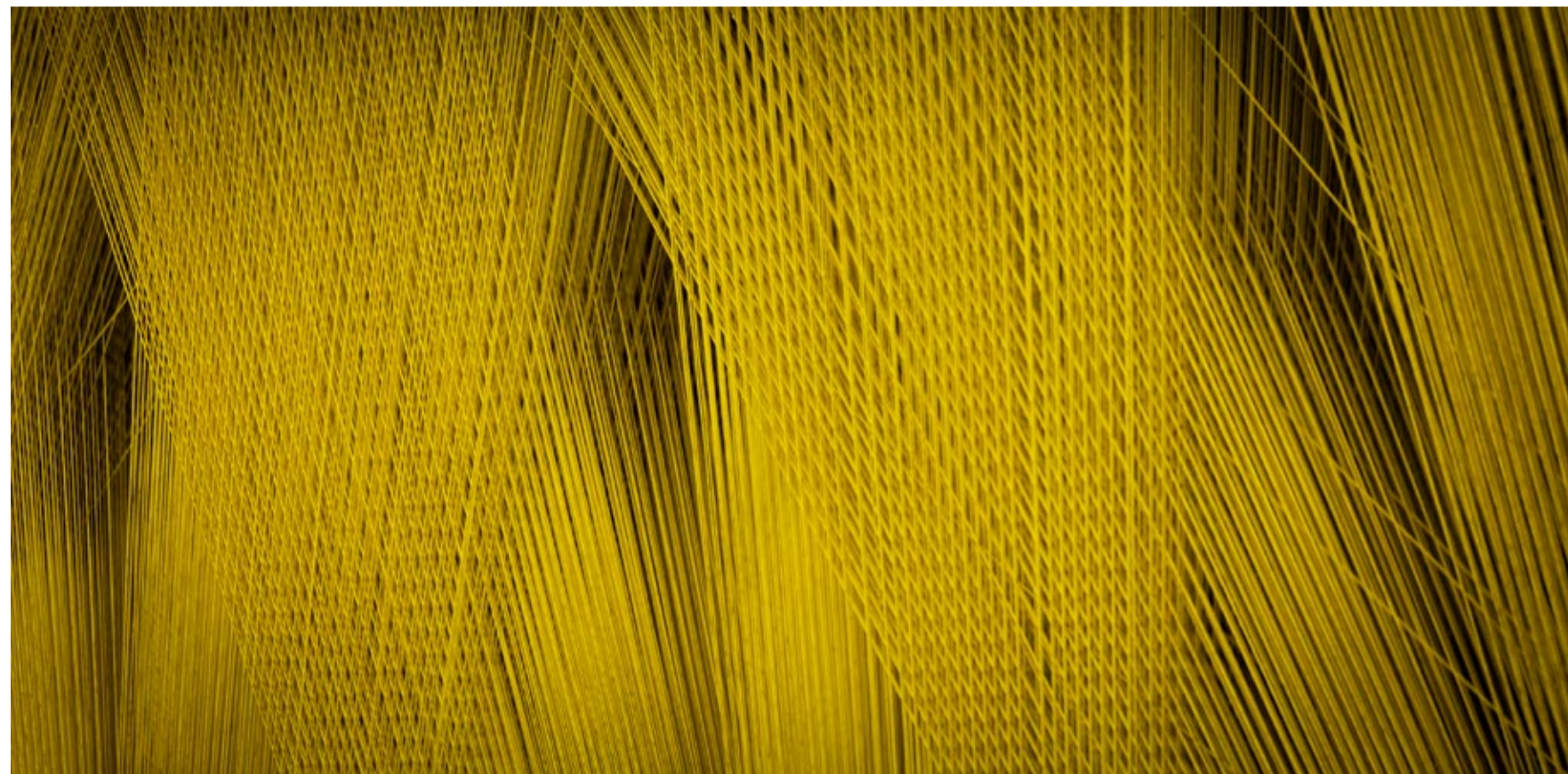
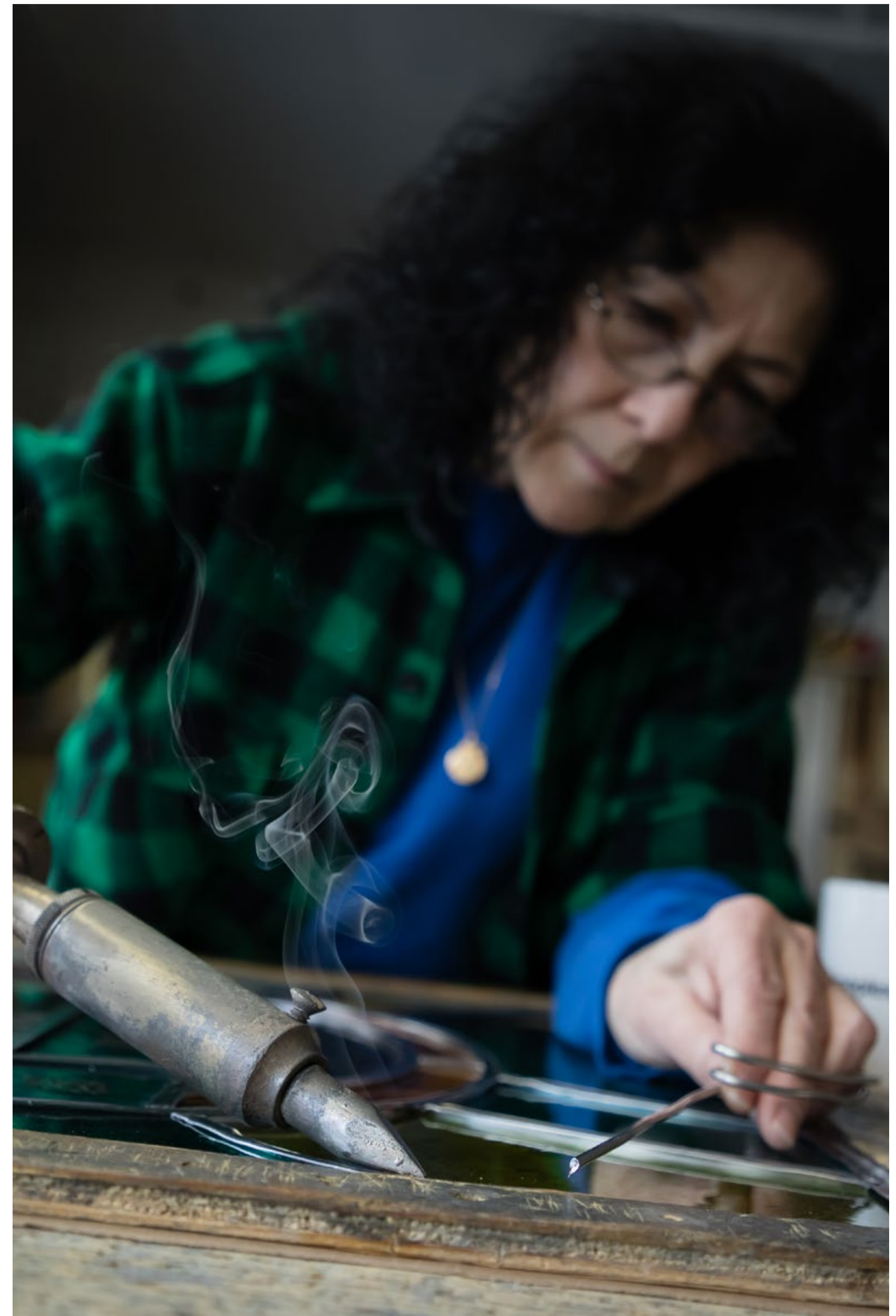
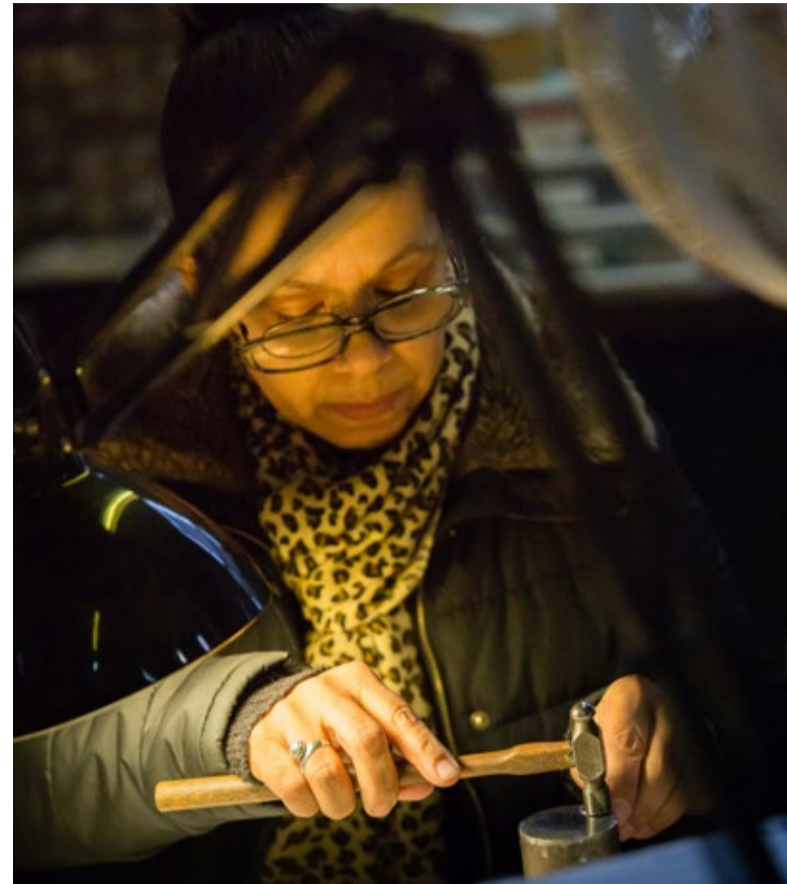
To join or to discuss The Xperience please call the office on **07716 640501** or email us **Laura@TheXperience.co.uk** and we will be able to answer any questions you have.

[www.TheXperienceGroup.co.uk](http://www.TheXperienceGroup.co.uk)



# Artisans *in* Industry

Steve Riskind



Small artisan businesses are an underappreciated piece of industry in the United States. I am delighted that The Big Photo E-zine has given me an opportunity share my photographs of artisan business in this issue about industry.

The photographs in my book "art | commerce: four artisan businesses grow in an old New Jersey industrial city" are a fusion of two passions in my life as a photographer: the industrial landscape and portraiture. It has taken me many years to get here.



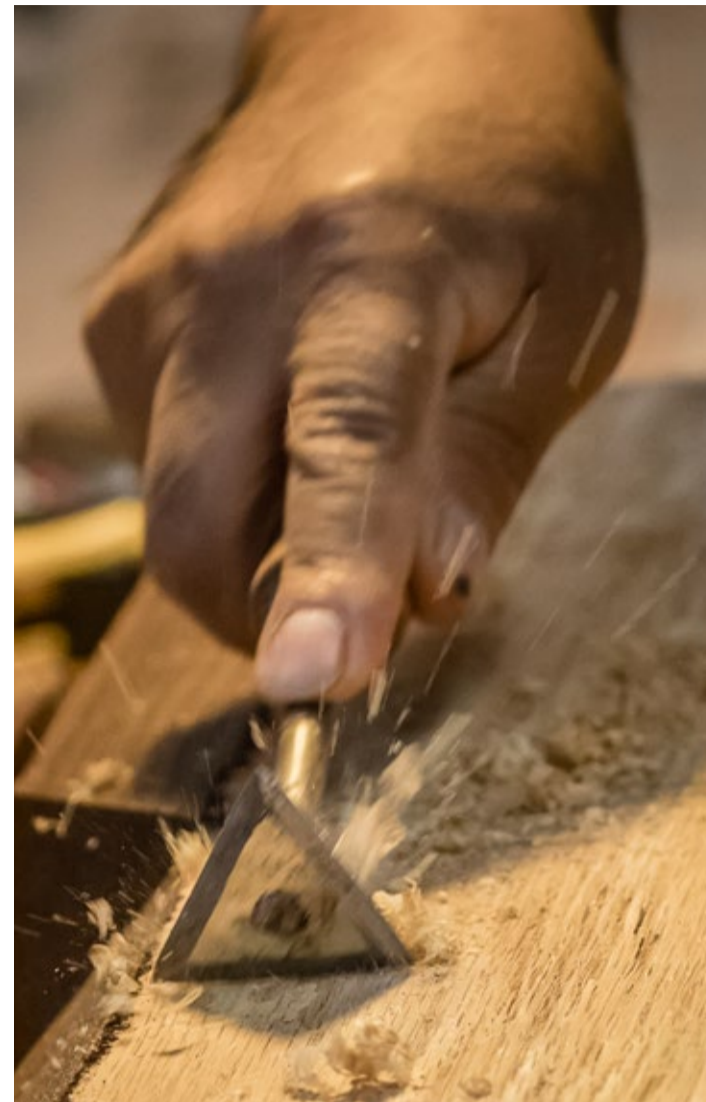
# Converging Passions

In 2012, when I began this project, my photographic work was in two distinct areas. First, I was taking photographs, usually outdoors, of the industrial landscape.

I learned photography from Robert Donald Erickson, my high school art teacher at the University of Chicago's Lab School. Bob Erickson was a Renaissance man: a visual artist, a toy design consultant, a trained musician, and a photographer. At the end of four years, besides breathing lots of Dektol fumes in the darkroom, I had a

strong knowledge of the foundations of photography. And I'd had a great deal of fun.

Erickson's own photography documented landscape and people in a gritty industrial city. Some years ago I was given a catalog of Erickson's photographs by the Stephen Dater Gallery in Chicago, which had presented an exhibition of Erickson's work. Bob Erickson did not usually show us his own work in class, but in looking through this catalog, I was struck by how similar my own style was to his.



I have been asked why I find so much appeal in photographing old and often crumbling urban landscapes. Undoubtedly, some of the appeal came from growing up in Chicago. Early in the morning you could hear the far-away roar of the mills along the lakefront in South Chicago and Gary, Indiana. Chicago was filled with bridges and other steel structures. My eyes were drawn to these as were Bob Erickson's before me.

My second love was portraiture. While I had taken portraits in high school using a beautiful 8" x 10"

view camera Bob Erickson had built, I really did not get seriously into portraiture until about 15 years ago. Again, my motivation was a wonderful teacher. At the International Center of Photography in New York City, Billy (Liam) Cunningham taught a class on taking portraits that looked at the relationship between the photographer and his or her subject. I am a technical person by nature, but this was the least technical class I had ever taken – never a mention of shutter speeds or *f*-stops. While a very different approach to photography than Bob Erickson's, Billy

Cunningham's approach also encouraged experimentation and emotional honesty.

Billy Cunningham's class led me back to portraiture. I continued to study portraiture at ICP, and I have had the honor of studying with several people who worked with Richard Avedon. The result of these courses was a love for photographing people, and it led to a portraiture practice. Many of my subjects have been classical musicians who participate in the Marlboro Music Festival in Southern Vermont.

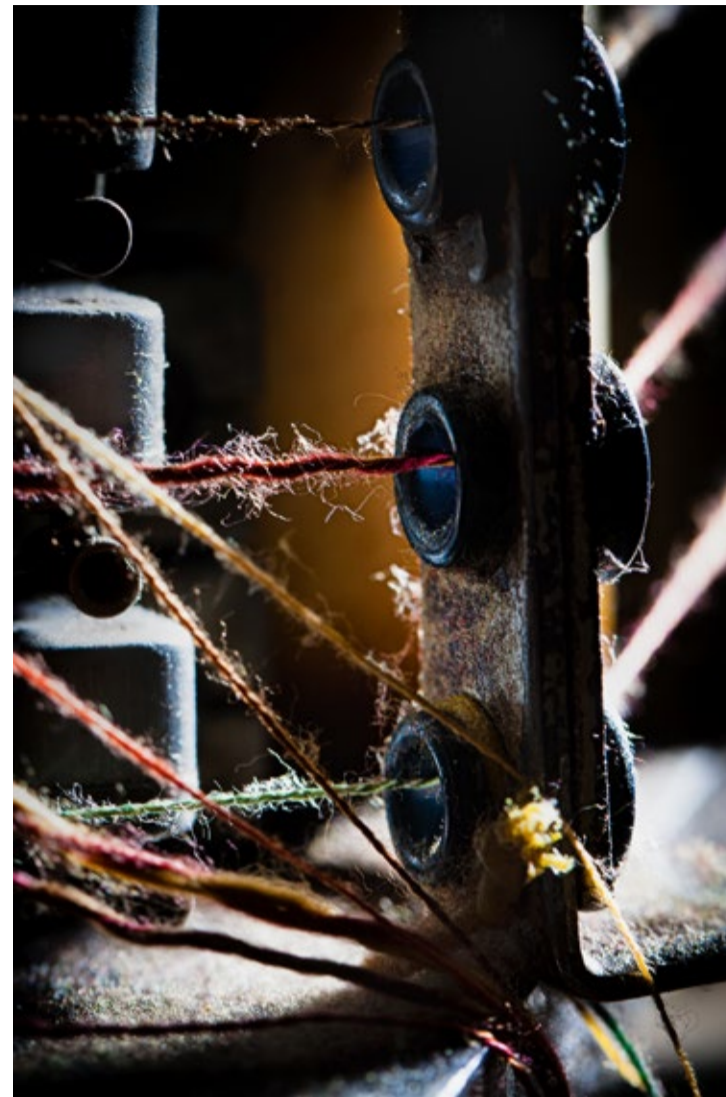


# The Artisans *Business* Project

Around 2012, I was working on a personal project in the old industrial city, Paterson, New Jersey. I was creating stitched, high-resolution images of abandoned, burned brick buildings.

This work is time-consuming. It required me to slip through the fence, set up my tripod on

a pile of rubble, and carefully reposition the camera after each shot. I photographed the buildings from a number of angles, and the slow, careful nature of the work left me feeling vulnerable. Paterson, once a thriving industrial center, has long since fallen on hard times.



I was working in an area frequented by drug users. Learning, shortly after completing the series of pictures, that someone had recently been murdered in the area, convinced me that I did not want to continue this kind of work. I began thinking about other ways I might take photographs of the industrial landscape. I wondered if I might be able to photograph some of the small manufacturing businesses that still existed in Paterson – but working on the inside. After some searching, I was

introduced to Jerry Valenta who owns a small, specialty textile mill that his father had founded in Paterson after the Second World War. Jerry Valenta and Sons was, to me, an unusual business. There were no employees. With very few exceptions, the only people on site were Jerry and his son Rich.

They have ten Jacquard looms in a cinderblock building located in a town just north of Paterson. Jerry was very welcoming, and for a year I made frequent visits to

photograph the industrial landscape inside of his mill. My initial impression was of machinery that ran with infrequent human intervention. Jerry Valenta gave me free run of his mill, and I became intrigued with the machinery. The result was a series of abstract photographs of the looms and ancillary equipment in a small textile mill. These photographs make up the bulk of the first chapter of “art | commerce”.

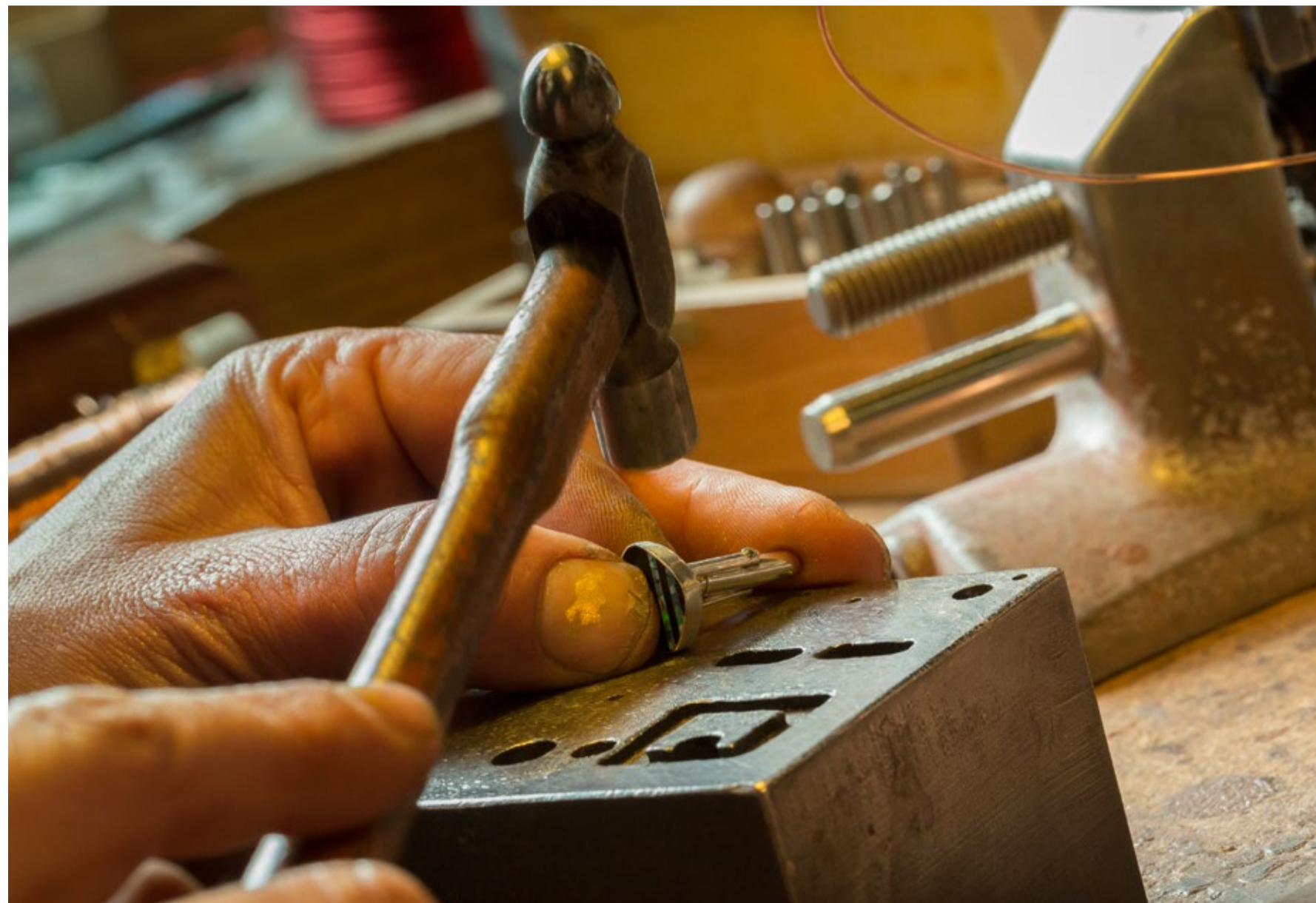


The second small business I found was Great Falls Metalworks, a manufacturer of jewellery located in a converted silk mill on the east side of Paterson. Unlike Valenta and Sons, Great Falls Metalworks did have employees. The work at Great Falls was done by Jan Palombo, who founded the business with her late

husband, Jan's daughter, and a small group of skilled employees.

For me, successfully photographing Jan and her employees meant photographing both the people and the industrial environment they worked in. How did they transform their materials, pieces of metal

and stones, into jewellery? How could I capture their skill and their intensity as they performed the act of transformation? As I reviewed the pictures from the previous photo shoot and thought about what I would do differently the next time I went to Great Falls, I came back to these questions again and again.





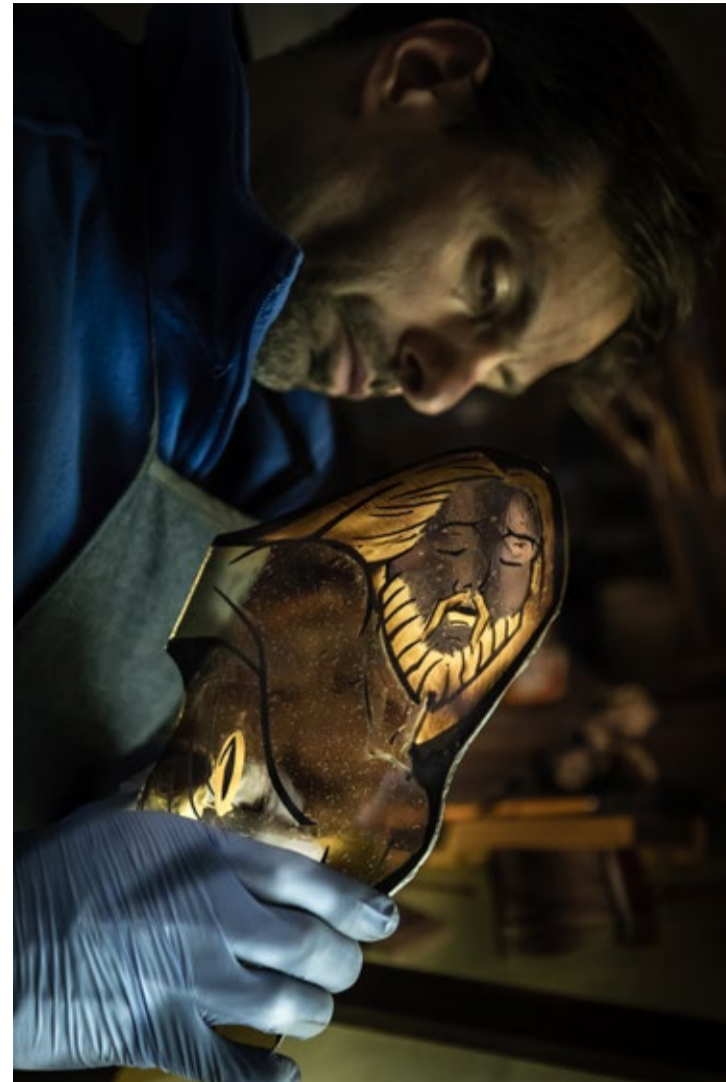
In time, I began to realize that this was both urban landscape and portrait photography. In this one project, my two passions were converging.

At the end of the Great Falls Metalworking project, I began to search for a third firm to photograph. I made contact with the Peragallo Pipe Organ Company, a fourth generation family-owned business also located in Paterson. A very active business, this was the largest firm I photographed.

Finding the final firm to photograph in the project was easy. John Peragallo, III suggested I contact the Hiemer Stained Glass Studio. Hiemer Stained Glass is located only a few blocks

from the Peragallo shop, and John III knew of them because both firms do the vast majority of their work in churches.

Like Peragallo Pipe Organ Company, Hiemer Stained Glass is a family-owned firm in its fourth generation. Judith Hiemer Van Wie, who owns the firm with her husband, proudly told me that stained glass windows are made today in almost the exact manner as they were in the great cathedrals of Europe. I spent over a year working at Peragallo and a similar length of time at Hiemer Stained Glass. I was welcomed by the owners of both of these businesses, and photographing their highly-skilled craftspeople was a joy.



# My Approach

My approach to photographing artisans at work is hand-held, available-light. By contrast, for outdoor landscape photography, I frequently use a tripod. When I take portraits of musicians and other clients, I prefer to use studio lighting. I have a set of three Elinchrom studio strobes, soft boxes, and other light shaping tools. I

believe that these help to create professional, well-lit images.

But photographing artisans in a shop or studio is different. Here, I do not want to disturb the worker's concentration with flash. I want to be able to move around and to take photographs from many different angles. Having the

camera at eye-height for every shot does not work.

The act of transforming materials IS the story of artisans and visual artists. I want to show this interaction of person and materials. And I need to make effective use of existing lighting to create strong images.



To me, hand-held, available-light is the right approach. For years, using DSLRs, I felt that shooting with an optical viewfinder was the best way to work. In the last few years, however, I have switched to composing the shots using the screen on the back of the camera. When you are working up-close, trying to take photographs from many

different angles, and trying to highlight the interaction of person and materials, there is great flexibility in not having to look directly through the viewfinder at all times. I am enjoying the fact that I now work in a way I would never have considered a few years ago.

Working hand-held, available-

light requires a camera that can take high quality images in low light. For me, the problem is exacerbated because, as I have aged, I cannot hand hold longer exposures. I realized some years ago that what I thought were autofocus failures were, in fact, often motion blur. Oh, to be able to take rock-solid hand held exposures at 1/20th of a second!





Fortunately, technology has helped. The newest generation of mirrorless cameras with in-body image stabilization that works in conjunction with IS lenses allows me to work at slower shutter speeds.

For the kind of work I do, the relationship with my subjects and with the owners of the small businesses is critical. My process is iterative: I visit and take photographs, come back and look at them on the monitor, think about what I am trying to

accomplish, and return to take more photos. I am working close to my subjects and I need them to be comfortable with me around. In the case of small businesses, this also means developing a personal relationship with the owners. I offer to share photographs that they can use for publicity or marketing. I bring in prints and look at them with the owners and with the artisans. We talk extensively about the work, and I encourage the artisans to suggest tasks or jobs that they

think are of particular interest. As with portraiture, the work I do is based on relationships with my subjects.

Before I began photographing artisan businesses, I saw myself as a fine art photographer, and my goal was to exhibit and to sell prints. I still see myself as a fine art photographer, but I am coming to feel that my recent projects are better served by photo books.



I am telling a story, and I would like the reader to have access to the entire story. The book format is so well suited to this kind of project. I like the fact that for a reasonable price, the reader can take home a whole series of photographs. And having a book to give to prospective subjects can help to open the door.



While I am telling a story and introducing my readers to a segment of industry with which they may be unfamiliar, I do not see my work as journalism. I fully understand why newspapers like the New York Times insist that there be no “photoshopping” on any photos that appear in the

paper. I have used Lightroom and Photoshop since I moved into digital photography, and I see them as essential tools. I am comfortable removing distractions, adjusting the lighting, and trying to make each image as clear and as beautiful as possible. As someone who works

“hand held, available light,” postproduction is critical. I hope you have enjoyed the chance to see these artisan businesses that grew and prospered in the ashes of an old industrial city. For me, this project has been a joy and a turning point in my work as a photographer.



Amazon  
UK



Website



Barnes & Noble  
US





R A C H E L T A N

# THE STORYTELLER

I T ' S A L L I N T H E M O O D

Known for her unique and brilliantly distinct style, Singapore-based lifestyle photographer, Rachel Tan, has a way of captivating audiences' hearts through her use of light, space, shapes and color in her images. Her emotion-evoking photography is a combination of talent and technique, as well as her skills in post-processing to fully realize the frame she envisioned in her mind.

Rachel has a diverse portfolio that spans architecture, nature and portraiture, but she is most recognised for her works within the food and beverage industry; an industry she is highly passionate about and one that is close to her

heart. She currently works with a variety of brands like Cloudstreet (#31 on Asia's 50 Best Restaurants 2021), Cheek Bistro (1 Michelin Star), Kotuwa and more. Her works have also been used in newspapers and prominent publications like The Business Times, Singapore Tatler, The PEAK, Men's Folio, TimeOut, and Yahoo among others.

A storyteller at heart, Rachel is passionate about creating unique perspectives and telling stories through her lens as she continues to seek the extraordinary in the ordinary. To find out more about her life and work, we asked her a few questions.





# T H E I N D U S T R Y

*Hi Rachel, how did you get started within photography? Your repertoire is wide-ranging, but you are best known for your commercial work within the food & beverage industry. Was it a decision to focus on this genre or was it more of an organic process?*

I've always had the passion to tell a story. My journey into photography might not be conventional (as with many others), but I enjoyed every minute of it. As a kid, I used to run around with a camcorder. I could visualise frames and scenes from a story and would try to recreate those scenes and record them. When mobile phones with cameras emerged, I used it primarily to capture life's random moments. Looking back, it seems like photography was something I naturally inclined toward. But at that time, I lacked the knowledge and skills to make that scene/image fully come to life, so it wasn't something I actively pursued.

After graduating with a Psychology degree, I turned to the one industry that I have loved for the longest time - food and beverage (F&B). I don't know what it was, but there was something about food, wine and cocktails that intrigued me. It was not only art on a plate, but I was drawn to the 'science' behind it, along with the techniques and balance of flavour; the hospitality, and immense knowledge that revolves around ingredients and the history of food. It is an industry that brings people together. Food is a big part of any culture and it is so

interesting to learn more about the foods from different societies - their uniqueness, similarities, how differently they use and pair certain ingredients, etc. It is a huge community, an ecosystem - from farmers and producers, to suppliers, restaurants and consumers. (Sorry for the nerd rant!)

And it was this love for the food and beverage industry that set me on a course that brought me to where I am today. I always found myself working part time jobs at F&B establishments during my university days.

After I graduated, I started out as a marketing and guest relations manager for a restaurant, then moved into public relations and branding at a consulting agency specialising in F&B. From there, a job opportunity to work

for a restaurant group presented itself that allowed me to not only put my public relations and marketing experience to good use, but also allowed me to pursue my love for photography. It was there where I was given the freedom to explore, learn, express my perspectives and hone my skill.

Though given the freedom, I was on my own and it was completely self-taught - from watching YouTube tutorials, attending workshops, to constantly being on the lookout for creatives and photographers whose images and videos spoke to me. It was a process, a process of trial and error, constant learning and experimentation.

So, that's how it started, and it just evolved from there.

"IT WAS A PROCESS  
OF TRIAL AND  
ERROR, CONSTANT  
LEARNING AND  
EXPERIMENTATION"





T H E

# CREATIVE PROCESS

*You have a brilliantly distinctive style. How would you describe it and how long did it take you to develop that style?*

People would describe my work as dramatic, moody, or sometimes abstract. I would say my work leans toward the cinematic side, with my own preferences toward certain compositions, elements, colors and tones. I wouldn't label my style per se, but I think ultimately, it's about expressing my perspective. Everyone sees and composes a scene differently, and post-processes differently – and that's the beauty about photography.

It took a while to find my style, probably a little over a year and a half, but it has definitely emerged from the collective body of my work. With everything self-taught, it was almost like having a crash course into photography. My journey was inspiring, enlightening, satisfying, and despite the hours I was putting in, I felt happy. It was like I could finally express myself how I wanted to, as I developed the skills to make frames that I envision, come to life.

*What's your process when you photograph food? What tips do you have for those that are pursuing food photography or those looking to create their own style?*

Sometimes I like it simple and a little abstract, with plenty of negative space - showcasing the dish in all its glory and setting a mood. Other times it's fun to get a little messy and bring in ingredients from the dish to give more insight and context to the image.

From a macro point of view, it's all in the details. Many small decisions must be made during the shoot and post-processing that result in a collective effect of subtle differences. These differences may seem minute individually, but when put together in the right amounts, make the image even more powerful. For example, from the calibration of light and shadow to the choice of textures and shapes. You also need the patience to lay out and set up the scene - from deciding on the surface, background and props, to determining the right amount and angle of icing sugar sprinkling down on a

cake, the fold of a napkin, the placement and angles of cutlery, ingredients, etc. The trick is to make it look natural, albeit intentionally placed, like it was a natural process in the scene. It needs to make sense. From my experience, less is more.

Here are a few tips when shooting on location:

1. It's crucial for me to understand the scene, what is available (from textures, props, plate ware and ingredients) and my light source. From there, I weigh my options and plan before I begin to compose.

2. Shoot with a purpose. Have an idea and intent on what you aim to achieve. Have a chat with the chef, learn how the dish was made, what inspired it – it gives you a narrative you can use. With food photography, it's great to experiment and play around with positioning and ingredients along the way, but it's also vital that you have some sort of concept and direction to execute. It will give you guidance and a framework that provides structure to your shoot. That is key.

“... MY WORK LEANS TOWARD THE CINEMATIC SIDE, WITH MY OWN PREFERENCES TOWARD CERTAIN COMPOSITIONS, ELEMENTS, COLORS AND TONES ... ULTIMATELY, IT'S ABOUT EXPRESSING MY PERSPECTIVE.”



3. After having a feel for the scene, I dial in my settings. Everyone has their own preferences, but for my style, I tend to shoot underexposed more often to not only preserve my highlights but based on how I envision the edit will look and how it aids in my post-processing flow.

I try to do all the work in camera as much as possible as I found that it helps in the efficiency of post processing. With that in mind, I want to capture the scene in the best way from the get-go, so I provide myself the leeway in editing. I think the preparation and planning is just as important (or sometimes even more important) than the post work. One of the things I strongly believe in: work smarter, not harder.



4. Once you have everything set, it's all about getting in the groove and working efficiently. Have fun, switch things up, move things around, etc. But keep in mind that being efficient is a valuable trait. It saves everyone time and keeps the spirits high – and clients love that.





"I BELIEVE THAT THIS VERSATILITY AND ABILITY TO REALLY UNDERSTAND THE BRAND, TO NOT ONLY PRODUCE WORK THAT IS ON BRAND, BUT TO FULFIL OR ENHANCE A BRAND'S STORY ... SETS YOU APART FROM OTHER PHOTOGRAPHERS."

All in all, trust in the process. Enjoy the journey. Have fun. Put in the work and find your own unique way to express your creative perspective. Through time, you learn to trust your eye and respect your craft. It is as much of the nitty gritty of photography's "rules and regulations" like composition, rule of thirds, leading lines, etc., as much as it is the big picture, the frame as a whole - like a scene in a movie or a mood that invokes an emotional connection and reaction.

Oh, and for the record, yes, I'm lucky to be able to eat most of what I shoot. Perks of the job I guess!

*How important is your marketing background when planning promotional shots for businesses?*

Understanding marketing and branding is extremely helpful when discussing and planning shoots. It gives you an edge when the client knows you really understand and can encapsulate their brand and take it to another level.

As a photographer and a branding specialist working with different food clients, I usually try to understand and conceptualise images based on each brand and their requirements, which is different for every client. I think the versatility is important, while still portraying your point of view, creative vision and style. I believe that this versatility and ability to really

understand the brand, to not only produce work that is on brand, but to fulfil or enhance a brand's story through the thought and care you put into your work - the details, creativity and vision; that sets you apart from other photographers.

*Your headshots show the personalities of the people and businesses so brilliantly. Is it important for you to get to know them first?*

It definitely helps to get to know them beforehand. It gives you a better idea of how they are on the job, what they do and how they interact with customers. These are things I can bring into the shoot - to showcase their personality, the business, and what people can expect with this person at the establishment. Also, through this initial conversation/interaction, they get to know me a little better too, and it helps them to feel more comfortable during the shoot.

However, you don't get the luxury of getting to know the subject in advance all the time. Portrait shots of chefs and service staff usually take place on location and it can be tricky to encapsulate the personality of people in portraits especially when they are not used to posing for the camera and when you're in a time crunch. Sometimes I do get more expressive people than others, but through my short interactions with them, I try to get them to feel comfortable enough to let as much of their personality to shine through as possible.









# T H E W O R K

*Do you tend to follow a brief or do people come to you because of your particular style?*

There is a good mix of both. I personally feel that having a brief is great, so I have a clear guideline and understand what the client wants. From there, I plan how I can work my creative perspective into the picture.

Some people do come to me because of my particular style, and they give me free reign to interpret and run the shoot as I like it. It's great to be able to have the freedom to express my vision, but I work better when I have some sort of structure. So, in these cases, I usually use the brand's guidelines or owner's preferences to give me some framework.

*What issues do you regularly face and how do you overcome them?*

Being primarily a natural light photographer, every shoot is different. Depending on location and the light (or absence of it), I need to adapt accordingly. Settings need to change quickly just because a cloud decides to pop by or go away. Certain set ups need to be moved a certain way depending on where the sun is at that time of day and in which direction I want light coming into my image or where I want my shadow to fall (and how harsh). Adaptability is key. And I guess it has become part of the job.

With food photography, you need to work quickly with items that melt or quickly lose shape – like ice cream, chocolate, ice cubes, foams, soufflés, etc. It is the same with action shots, especially in the kitchen or at the bar – cooking, pouring, shaking, smoke, plating, etc. – sometimes you only have one shot, and you need to make it count.

Don't get me wrong, I like shoots with artificial light too. But there is just something about natural light that I love - how it hits the subject, and with the right angle, amount, time of day, the result can be magical.

*Do you have any advice for people looking to create a commercial photography business?*

There are many aspects of a business and you need to take on multiple roles. You need to take into consideration things like legal, finances, business development, marketing, branding, public relations, website, social media, etc., on top of photography.

Pointers:

1. I'd say take it one step at a time. Take your time to understand each role and learn to play them well.
2. Determine your brand and the direction you want to take. Find what makes you stand out from the crowd in a saturated market. It is an important step in moving your business forward.
3. Set up a user-friendly website and be active on your social media channels – have your work prominently displayed and easily available for potential clients' viewing.
4. Have a list of brands you would like to work with and don't be afraid to reach out to them.
5. Establish good rapport with clients – it pays off. Repeat business and first-hand recommendations spark from clients having a good experience with you.
6. And when your business grows, consider hiring a team and scaling.





ILAN BENATTAR

# INDUSTRIAL DECAY

MOTHER NATURE'S ORDER



Ilan Benattar is a gallery owner and Toulouse photographer mostly known for his photographs of industrial buildings reclaimed by nature but where did his photograph journey begin and what led him to this genre? Ilan was initiated into photography from a young age within the age of film and with many thanks to his grandfather. His photography journey began in the same way as many other photographers- on his many travels! From The United States to Canada, Israel, Greece and Italy to name just a few. At the start it was all about portraits and street photography for him but his direction soon changed to abandoned places thanks to the street art approach.

What inspires Ilan today to do what he does? Well, the forgotten architectures, nature taking over, unusual discoveries, the beauty of the desolate constructions, the contrast between the buildings and the vegetation. Ilan sees an almost brutal contrast between the past and the present in these buildings where nature envelops history. He is capturing the passing of time and his work constantly explores and questions the relationship between nature and architecture alongside vegetation and human materials. The stark contrast of the shapes, colours and materials give his work the feeling of the passing of time and the overwhelming silence of nature's will.



— "IT IS A WAY OF INDIRECT AWARENESS  
OF THE SADNESS OF SUCH PRESTIGIOUS  
PLACES, WHICH HAVE IRREPARABLY FALL  
INTO OBLIVION" —











What Ilan sees in run-down buildings is simply beauty. Their glorious histories and of course the humanity that once filled them. A sublime original that is removed sooner or later to the vestige of nature forming a reminder to the viewer of order. In the end, nature wins – remain and you will become to it. Ilan believes whole heartedly that for him, photography and urban exploration takes on a role within essential society: “It is a way of indirect awareness of the sadness of such prestigious places, which have irreparably fall into oblivion”. Ilan responds to his theory with his photographic work which is both a testament to heritage and also a lesson to the viewer - a hard lesson in life that nothing is unchanging.

This willingness of the once great buildings to reward the person who takes the time to find it and capture its beauty is something that Ilan wants to carry forward within his images. Ilan enjoys the symmetrical and luminous views and using only natural light to ensure that his photographs are in fact a true testimony of what he actually experienced. “I’m trying to represent in photos what I actually see”. An ethos that sometimes makes his photograph testimonials crude and unvarnished, exposing the reality of the materials to their true environmental context. For all these reasons, Ilan’s post-production work is minimal. Its ambition being to show “the natural and concrete state of the place”



“I’M TRYING TO REPRESENT  
IN PHOTOS WHAT I ACTUALLY  
SEE”









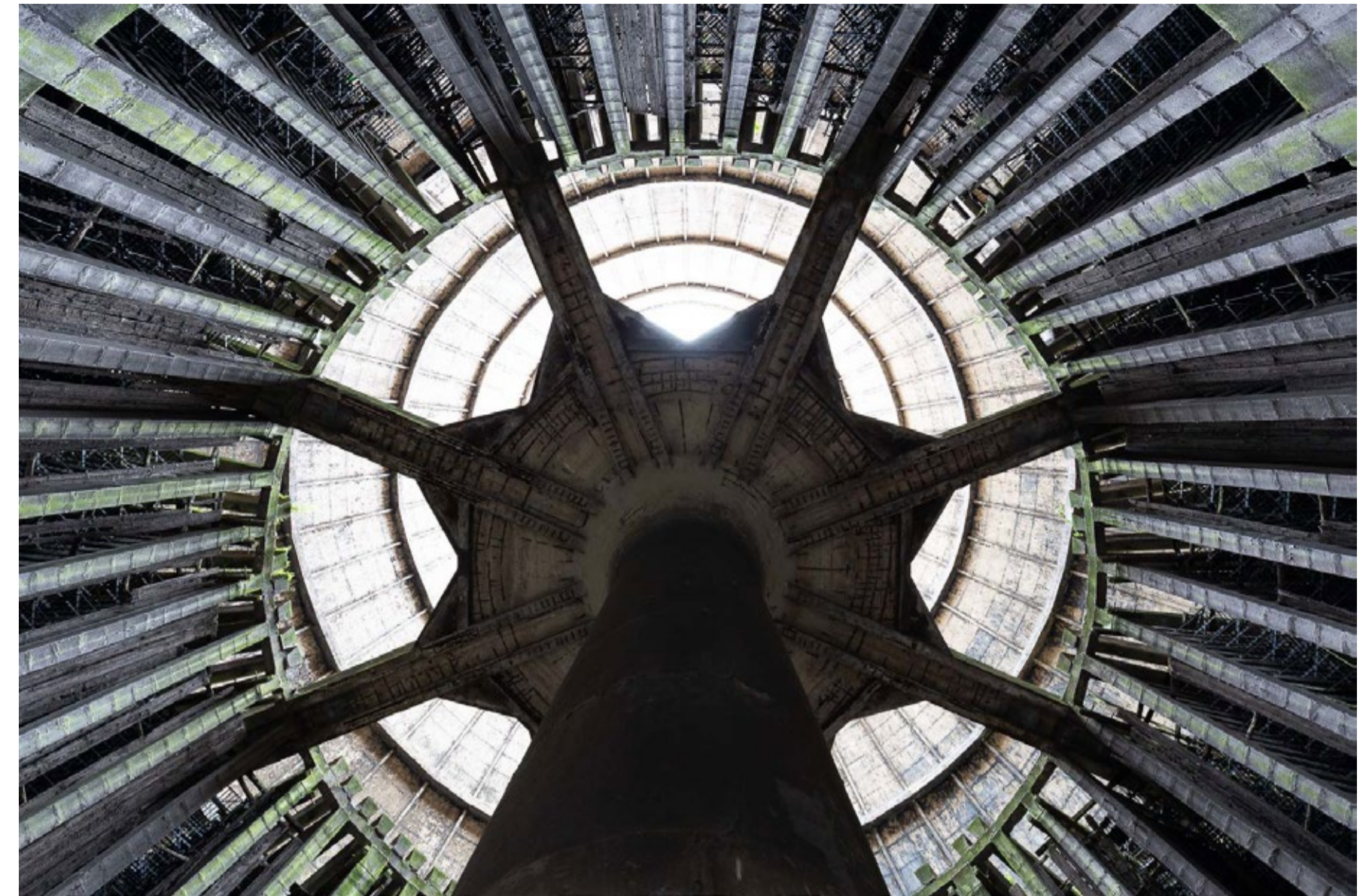




But like any good urbexer (urban explorer), visiting the building is not always the most important aspect. Ilan also enjoys the research, the investigation and the time required to discover a new building. One essential step that takes him a lot of time. "The more time passes, the more I realize that there are so many things to discover. The pleasure of exploring is always a new adventure".

Ilan wants his exploration images to raise questions. Questions that push the viewer to the same point that this talented photographer experiences during his explorations. What is our relationship to buildings, to industry, to nature? How far do our responsibilities go? Humility in the face of time and fate - a kind of reminder to Mother Nature's order.

— "THE MORE TIME  
PASSES, THE MORE  
I REALIZE THAT  
THERE ARE SO MANY  
THINGS TO DISCOVER.  
THE PLEASURE OF  
EXPLORING IS ALWAYS  
A NEW ADVENTURE" —





# elinchrom

ELC 125 TTL / ELC 500 TTL

Built For Your Daily Adventure.



ELC 500 TTL at min power: 7Ws  
Flash duration: 1/9433s  
1/125th F/8.0 ISO 400

©Emily Teague

## Ready. Play. Create.

The NEW ELC 125 / 500's are modern compacts built to handle your next adventure reliably & consistently. Featuring TTL with Manual Lock, HSS, Smart Pro-Active Cooling, Auto-On, dimmable daylight LED modelling lamp, colour coded grouping & direct compatibility with Elinchrom's world-renowned light modifiers.

Prices from £479 with 3 Year Warranty.



www.theflashcentre.com

# SIMIMAGING



## PERSONALISED PRINT & USB BOXES

### FIND YOUR PERFECT PRINT & DIGITAL COMBINATION

Our latest range of Print & USB Boxes offer a solution for your business with three key styles to choose from.

Whether you shoot natural weddings, family sessions or edgy urban portraits, you can find the best option to suit you and your photography business.



ORDER ONLINE AT [SIMIMAGING.CO.UK](https://simimaging.co.uk)

[simimaging.co.uk](https://simimaging.co.uk) / [info@simimaging.co.uk](mailto:info@simimaging.co.uk) / +44 (0) 1707 27 37 47

★ Trustpilot







T R A E R S C O T T

ANIMALS MAKE ME  
*human*







Since the day I got my first camera at age 6, I have been utterly fixated with fighting impermanence. A photo is where time and sound stop, when light and shadow and movement and subject all align to create something otherworldly and permanent. That is why photography bewitched me, but it is also one of many reasons that I love photographing animals. Their time on this planet is generally much shorter than ours.

I am fond of saying that ‘animals make me human’ because it’s the simplest, most compact way of describing a lifelong love and reverence that defies words. Sometimes I explain that I have always viewed animals as being much more dependable and appealing company than people, or that I first saw the shabby, sad cages of a notoriously horrific dog pound at age 8, or that I turned vegetarian at 13 in a southern town where everyone worshipped the almighty barbeque - but often that is too much information.

I actually didn’t start out photographing animals. In fact, it never really occurred to me in the beginning. Pursuing art photography in 1995 already put me on the fringe of the fine art world. Were photographs even art? That was the question on every gallerist’s lips. I wanted to be a serious artist, and I knew that serious artists focused on serious, unsentimental things. Animals were not viewed as suitable, serious artistic subjects. Oh, it was fine to have them as a prop or a secondary character but not as your main subject.

After several years of making moody, grainy black and white narrative portraits, I found myself desperately unsatisfied with my work. Follow your passion, that’s what we are always told. I started making portraits of people with animals and attended my first major portfolio review with a series of 16x20 silver gelatin prints featuring elaborately styled subjects, mostly women with their cats, rats, dogs. One reviewer, a cocky Manhattan gallery owner took one look at my work and told me that I should “give up”. When I look back on the portraits now, I cringe a bit. They are staged, verging more on fashion shoots than insightful portraiture; they communicated absolutely nothing genuine about the human or the animal, only a glossy aesthetic, but that series led me to what would eventually come next.

“ANIMALS WERE  
NOT VIEWED  
AS SUITABLE,  
SERIOUS  
ARTISTIC  
*subjects*”



In 2005 I began volunteering at an animal shelter and one aspect of my job was to photograph every dog that came in. Film was too expensive for this type of work, so I used the only digital camera I had at the time, a 5MP Olympus point and shoot that I had bought from a friend for fifty bucks. I soon amassed huge numbers of images. So many dogs. One night, I realized how many of those dogs never made it out alive. What followed was a profound sadness, the kind that swallows you whole and will only be assuaged by action. I needed to memorialize those faces, those lives. I realized that in many cases my photo was the only record of their short existence.

I started photographing with intention, making portraits against a black backdrop, focusing only on the dog, only on the face, letting the light of each animal shine, letting them tell their story through my photos. Those portraits became my first book, Shelter Dogs.

When the book came out in 2006, nothing like it had ever been published. Here were 50 simple black and white portraits of dogs taken while they were living in an animal shelter, a pretty straightforward concept, but what made it different was the text or lack of it- or both. There was almost no text until you turned to the back where brief bios of each dog were listed.

This was where the gut punch of the book was. Not in the introduction where I pleaded for people to choose adoption or explained how shelters were full of pit bulls that were dying by the thousands every day, or how hard it was to watch good dogs die because there wasn't enough space for them. The photographs coupled with the simple lines at the end that explained whether the dog lived or died did people in. Such is the power of images and words when they are thoughtfully combined. The book became a national bestseller.

I was lucky that a VP and editor of a publishing house, who would eventually become my agent, had taken a chance on "my dogs". It changed my life forever. With my foot now firmly planted in the publishing world, I went on to make five more books about dogs as well 4 about other animals: wild horses, nocturnal animals, wild baby animals, raptors. I learned that above all, to make a great photo of an animal, you have to first understand it's needs and fears. Dogs needs are usually blissfully simple: love and/or food, comfort. Their fears can be much more complex but are often overruled by the love/food combo. But what motivates a vulture or an orphaned kangaroo or a mustang? I found out that cows are equally terrified and fascinated by sheets that ripple in the wind, who knew? These were all things I had to learn as I went along and many times I stumbled.

"SUCH IS THE POWER  
OF IMAGES AND  
WORDS WHEN THEY  
ARE THOUGHTFULLY  
*combined*"







In 2015, 10 years after Shelter Dogs, I made Finding Home; Shelter Dogs and Their Stories which was a companion book, a sequel of sorts, to the now out of print Shelter Dogs. Making Finding Home was such a different experience than making Shelter Dogs. To start with, I was a different person, a mother, photographer who had now made 8 books, had traveled the world, had seen a lot of beauty and a lot of suffering. I was no longer a powerless volunteer in a municipal shelter overrun with unwanted animals.

Not only had I changed but the animal welfare landscape had too. Adoption had gone up exponentially, euthanasia was down by almost half, in short, things were getting better. When I made Finding Home, I went in as a photographer, not a wounded warrior in the trenches. The emotional distance allowed me to make better pictures, be more objective, take a step back, and see the forest not just the trees.

In following industry trends, it became clear that people wanted stories and that the stark, simple approach I had taken for Shelter Dogs wouldn't really work again without adding a little something. My publisher and I came up with the concept of adding 'feature stories' which followed dogs from when they landed in a shelter until after they were placed into their new homes. The bios were longer, more complex, because I had more information about these dogs.

Now I am working on the third and probably final book in the series, Forever Home which takes the concept a bit further and focuses much more space on stories, really spectacular ones that together, form a portrait of the biggest hot button issues in animal welfare right now.

I have been fortunate to find a global audience who buy my books, who share my love of dogs and other animals. But there was one topic that kept lurking in the back of my mind. My entire adult life I had wanted to do a book about farm animals. Or I should say, farmed animals: livestock, not the happy little cartoon versions you see in children's books, but commodities. Approximately 70 billion, (that's billion with a B) animals are raised for food every year around the world. Of these, 2 out of 3 are in factory farms. In the US, 99% of all meat comes from animals in factory farms.

" THE EMOTIONAL  
DISTANCE ALLOWED  
ME TO MAKE BETTER  
PICTURES, BE MORE  
OBJECTIVE, TAKE  
*a step back* "



It never felt like the right time to make this book- until one night in 2016, scrolling through Instagram, it suddenly did and Radiant; Farm Animals Up Close and Personal was born. It was originally titled "You Had Me at Moo" because I wanted to approach this with buoyancy. I did not want to make a preachy book, a book that berated the reader for eating meat or consuming animal products. When you tell people what to think, they get angry, and even if what you're saying makes sense, they will deliberately rebel and do the opposite. But when you let them discover a truth on their own, that's when the magic happens. That's why Shelter Dogs worked. I didn't show pictures of sad, skinny dogs shivering in cages, because no one would have bought that book and my message would have sat dusty and forgotten on a bookstore shelf. Instead, I made honest portraits of dogs that had miles of stories in their eyes. I let the reader go on their own journey simply by turning the pages.

That philosophy guided my approach to Radiant, but this time it was a much finer line to walk. Ironically eating (certain) animals is a much more polarizing issue than whether dogs should be saved. I settled on the approach of simply showing a beautiful farm animal up close. I wanted Radiant to speak to all people, all animal lovers at least. I can't tell you how many times someone has gushed to me about how much they love animals and then 10 minutes later I see them eating a hamburger. That hamburger had a face, a body, a personality I think to myself. It was the face and the personality that I decided to focus on.

I wanted to make a book that showcased these animals, our food animals, up close and personal and talked not about their past trauma or how many of their kind is slaughtered in the time it takes you to read this article, but about their personality. But who were my subjects? I didn't want to make yet another sanctuary story book, but my publisher said that if I used actual farm animals, meaning ones that would actually end up on someone's plate, my readers would be heartbroken and feel betrayed.

"**BUT WHEN YOU LET  
THEM DISCOVER A  
TRUTH ON THEIR  
OWN, THAT'S WHEN  
THE MAGIC  
happens**"







In the end, I decided to use animals that would have ended up on someone's plate if it wasn't for the intervention of a kind-hearted person, an organization or a sanctuary. These were the lucky few, the ones that got to live their lives out in peace being loved and cared for. I am neither the first nor the last photographer to make a series about farm animals, but hopefully mine did more than preach to the choir.

Like many things in life, being a successful photographer/author/artist is all about timing. It often comes down to who had the idea first but sometimes many people have the same idea and so it comes down to who executed it better or who had the biggest platform to get it seen first. The photo community has this amazing collective subconscious that I have marvelled at for decades now. There are trends, ebbs and flows of style of course, but also an annual clot of strikingly similar subject matter amongst completely unconnected people with seemingly unique, isolated influences; a synthesis of thought.

Throughout my career I have been fortunate to have most of the ideas first or maybe sometimes to have the biggest platform. On occasion, I can claim to have been the one to do it best not just first. I always fear that each book will be my last; that the inspiration will be as fleeting as the light we chase. Most days I get to spend a lot of time with animals who trust me enough to let me capture their image. Almost every shoot I make mistakes. The same mistakes over and over again. Ones that I shake my head at, and later scold myself over, but that's how it goes when you work without an assistant and have to think about lighting and f stops and ISOs and posing and focusing and not falling over- all at the same time. It's messy and beautiful, and those transcendent moments that I capture still manage to surprise me.

**Traer Scott is a photographer and bestselling author of 11 books. She lives in Providence, Rhode Island with her husband, daughter, dogs and a very amiable hamster. Her latest book is Goodbye Salad Days; Kevin Faces Adulthood from Chronicle Books. Available April 27, 2021.**

"  
MOST DAYS I GET TO  
SPEND A LOT OF TIME  
WITH ANIMALS WHO  
TRUST ME ENOUGH TO  
LET ME CAPTURE  
*their image*"



Radiant

Buy Goodbye  
Salad Days





# THE *DRIVE* TO DIVERSIFY

R I C H A R D B R A D B U R Y





When I began my career around 35 years ago the world of photography was a very different place. I was lucky enough to be taken on as a teenager by an amazing photographer called David Kilpatrick who is still to this day my most respected mentor. David literally taught me everything from loading film into a camera back to the fine art of lighting both still life, people and even large room-sets for a varied selection of commercial clients. David was extremely patient with me as I had no university or college background and knew very little of what really made the photographic world go around. In my first week of working at

his Nottinghamshire studio he gave me a book and said "Read this from cover to cover, it will explain everything you need to know."

The book was called 'Shoot Your Way To A Million Dollars' by Richard Sharabura. Despite its brash, American title and a very 'eighties' styled fashion head-shot cover, it proved to be a pivotal read in my career. This hardback book led the aspiring image maker through every stage he or she needed to become a busy working commercial photographer. How to take great pictures and make money doing it. Basically it covered Food, People, Cars, Roomsets, Location,

Fashion, Drinks, Industrial site photography and just about every other genre of commercial photography you can think of.

**THE PREMISE WAS THAT YOU NEEDED TO LEARN ALL OF THESE SKILLS TO BE VERSATILE ENOUGH TO BUILD A WORKING STUDIO AND HAVE A VIABLE BUSINESS.**

The book became my 'go to' reference for the next few years as I eventually opened a second studio for David in Nottingham before later travelled to London to work for a large catalogue studio.

As I progressed up the ranks of photography, something very odd happened. I realised that my mantra of 'train yourself in every field to become the best photographer possible' was less and less relevant. By the mid nineties I had my own central London studio and went out to visit the major advertising agencies with my extremely varied portfolio. I had built up an enviable selection of fashion, food, room-sets, still life and travel shots and everywhere I went I received high praise for my images. But I got little or no work from the agencies I visited. This became extremely frustrating and eventually I decided to take one of the art directors that I had visited out for lunch to confront him with my dilemma. I had worked for Peter shooting ads for British Gas and my original contact had come through a friend's recommendation. He had invited me into the agency to meet other creative teams and all of them had seemed impressed when I showed my work but no one had booked me.

Peter was very frank and explained to me something that would set me up for the next 20 years of shooting successful advertising campaigns. "Richard" he said "your work is great, the food, the cars, the fashion, all great but let me ask you this: If a new food client come to the agency and asks us to design a campaign and select a photographer, do you think we can recommend the photographer with two food shots in his portfolio or the guy who has 30 shots, nothing but food in his book? The food specialist will win every time. When the fashion client comes along, the same is true. You have a bit of everything and yes,

**IT'S ALL GOOD BUT IT'S NEVER GOING TO BE BETTER THAN THE SPECIALIST THAT ONLY COVERS THAT ONE SINGLE GENRE. YOU CAN'T BE ALL THINGS TO ALL MEN AT THIS LEVEL.**

After that lunch I changed my folio to be focussed on my strongest work, just still life. The work flooded in. I later developed my work more and moved slowly into becoming a people photographer using the still life lighting techniques to give my work an original edge. I also developed a style of my own, shooting in a bright, rich, colour palette with highly dramatic lighting to give my images a powerful self branded look.

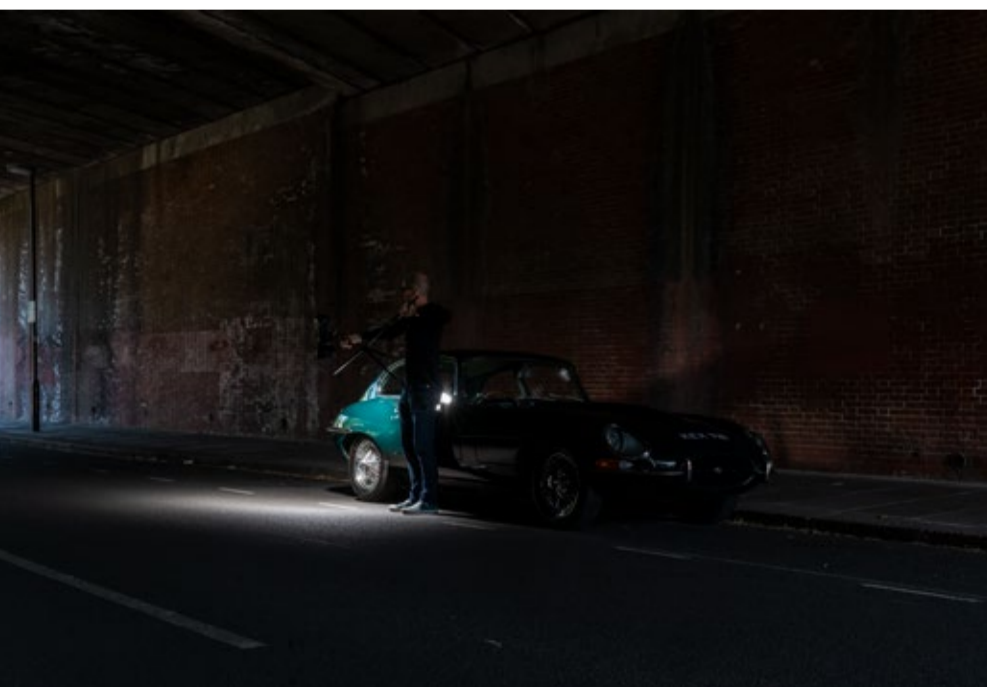
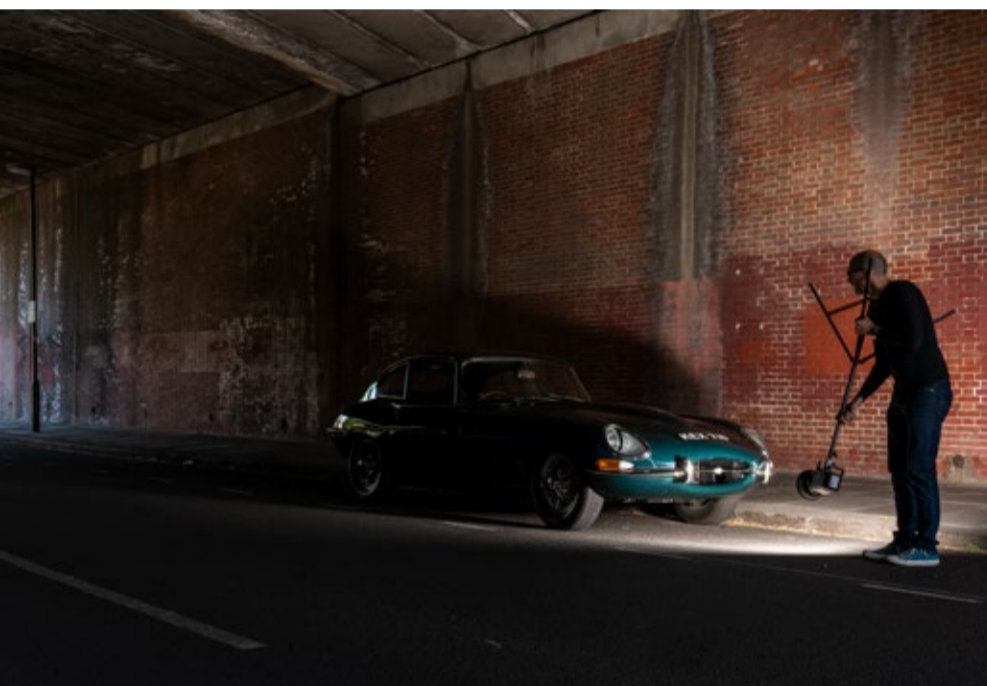
Bringing the story right up to date, the last decade and a half has been a very interesting period of change and transition for all of us. Digital cameras, the power of social media and the internet means that we have all had to change what we do and work in new and exciting ways. Personally, I have loved the transition to digital but the world is a very different place today in more ways than one. Shooting solely advertising has become increasingly difficult from a commercial perspective with faster and cheaper options becoming available to many clients so ten years ago I moved more of my business into the field of personal portraiture, dealing directly with the public as well as magazines and agencies.

I love the challenge of meeting new people every day and getting the very best from them all regardless of who they are and how they feel on that particular day. Getting to know different people and sharing their lives has always been the biggest driving force for me. I've been lucky enough to have a level of success in my business so a couple of years ago I decided it was time to get a bit more self-indulgent. It was time to diversify.

You see, I am a petrol head. I love cars and bikes. In fact I love pretty much anything with an engine, I always have. I've been obsessing over performance cars and bikes all my life even before I bought my first car a red Triumph Spitfire back in the eighties. I've also had the chance to shoot quite a few vehicles in various advertising and editorial projects. I own several performance bikes including a customised Triumph Bonneville and a 1000cc Aprilia Track bike and I'm currently the very proud owner of a Porsche 911.

In 2018 I decided to look into creating a new portfolio of cars and bikes. Its partly commercial and partly for the sheer love of anything automotive so there's a lot less pressure on the business side. That can sometimes be a very good thing. I'd been shooting people for a long time so it was time to add a new 'specialisation' to my stable.





I decided to make it a 'thing' to ask anyone I meet with a cool car if I can photograph their pride and joy. So that's exactly what I did and this was the beginning of my automotive portfolio. Pretty much every owner I ask says "Yes" but I've noticed they are a little surprised when I turn up with a full crew of assistants and a lighting rig. It pays to explain what your intentions are before the big day as the average person really has no idea what it takes to get a great shot.

I was waiting with my car one day at the back of our local supermarket for my wife to pop out carrying the weeks shopping when I noticed a man in a stunning British Racing Green E-Type Jaguar.

I walked up and said how beautiful the car was and spent the next 15 minutes just talking cars. Ron, the owner, has become a good friend and of course I just had to photograph the E-Type. I found a location just around the corner from my studio and I lit it with multiple flashes. I designed the final image to be constructed in Photoshop and the results, I think, were pretty cool.

You can see here how I shot different parts of the car with different flashes to get the very best from every surface. The final image has 29 layers. The union flag graffiti adds the finishing touch.

I have always believed that the only way to get good results

every time is to make every shoot the best you've ever worked on. It's a simple rule but it really does take some effort. We all have days when we are not at our best but I find it helps to remember this especially when you or the situation you find yourself in are not as you would like them to be.

---

**I PUT AS MUCH EFFORT INTO THESE TEST SHOTS AS I DO INTO EVERY FULL BLOWN ADVERTISING SHOOT AND I THINK IT PAYS OFF.**

---





Before the Covid crisis set in I managed to get several assignments from manufacturers and magazines shooting for Triumph in Germany and Aston Martin in UK. I was also asked by Harley Davidson to ride a special edition, \$40,000.00 Harley Davidson Road Glide across the USA from LA to Pheonix to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the launch of the iconic movie Easy Rider. Travelling across the states with a motor journalist on two Harleys was an amazing experience as well as a motorcycle photographer's dream.

I also discovered that shooting self portraits whilst riding a motorcycle has its own challenges. I perfected the art of setting up the camera on a stable tripod and carrying a small remote control in my hand. In this way you can be both artist

and model – this concept works particularly well for me when I'm at a distance and wearing a crash helmet, my modelling career is far from guaranteed

**I WAS FORCED TO TAKE ONLY A BASIC KIT AS WE CARRIED EVERYTHING ON THE BIKES FOR THE WEEK LONG JOURNEY. IT'S A TRIP I WILL NEVER FORGET.**



I was shooting portraits of an amazing brother and sister for my Children Of London book project on the roof of an office building in East London. I got chatting to their dad in between shots. It turns out that he is also a petrol head and to my astonishment is the owner of a 1971 Ferrari Dino. This iconic car is becoming rarer and good examples are rocketing in price so its increasingly difficult to locate one. Obviously I asked if I could photograph the car and at first he was a little reluctant. I had to convince him that I could produce something very special and I was determined not to let this opportunity slip away. He was finally convinced when I described what would be a very ambitious shoot photographing the Dino like the semi religious

icon that it is to motoring fanatics throughout the world. I had no clue where I would find the interior that I needed.

The following week I was riding my bike back from a location shoot and passed a large Victorian pump house being renovated for a new apartment complex. I stopped and located the foreman who showed me the empty pump house building. It had huge cathedral like windows and I knew immediately that I had found my location. The only problem was that the doors to the pumphouse were blocked with an on going drainage pit outside the building. It took three weeks to convince the owner of the building to let me shoot at the sight. Eventually

I got a date in the diary and spent a morning at the location shooting several interiors, carefully measuring the camera height of each shot so that I could match them later on with the car.

I photographed the Dino in the owner's garage, much to his delight, as it didn't require any travel to or from the location. I matched the camera height and mimicked the lighting I had found on location and I then pulled up some file shots of doves that I had shot for a campaign many years before. A good few hours of Photoshop did the rest. The final image is a little OTT but hey, it's a Ferrari Dino!







If you have the right vehicle in the right location you can do a lot with just one large reflector. This Aston Martin is the one used in the forthcoming Bond Movie and the stately home were loving the free publicity gained from the shoot.

---

I HAD PLENTY OF **LIGHTING OPTIONS** AVAILABLE BUT A SIMPLE LARGE BOUNCE **REFLECTOR** WAS ALL I NEEDED TO GET **THE SHOT**.

---





You have the right  
the right location you  
get with just one large  
This scene was  
the publicity gained from  
shoot.







I used the same technique here shooting for Triumph in Germany only this time I reflected the back light of the sun into the full front of the bike. It's a good idea to have a strong assistant to help out. We had sunshine in Germany but the wind was relentless.

Moto magazine editors love movement shots and frankly so do I. There are several techniques that work well and I have recently designed and built a shooting rig to use for slow moving set ups. I can fix it to the front of a slowly moving vehicle for precise clean movement shots. This shot is the real deal though and I ended up hanging out of the side of our transit van with

the sliding doors wide open. Shooting at a slow shutter speed of normally around 1/30th second can be challenging when the vehicle is bumping up and down so be prepared to scrap most of your frames. Safety is an essential factor too so make sure you have a good harness and a place to clip on to. Blood on the road surface is so difficult to remove.

Sometimes I can't resist shooting a simply beautiful still life. A stunning machine in the right location with great lighting is always a winner. This is a vintage Triumph lent to us from the Triumph museum in Hinkley and delivered all the way to Germany. Using the natural beauty of the town of

Fussen as a backdrop. A single light is all you need.

It's true to say that without the people that love cars and motorbikes there would be no beauty. Just boring, functional machines. There is an obsessive devotion to the creation of and praise for the machines that we love and it would be wrong for me to ignore this source of imagery.

**COMBINING MY LOVE FOR MOTOR VEHICLES AND THE PEOPLE THAT SURROUND AND RESPOND TO THEM IS, IN MANY WAYS, THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS FOR ME SO I ALWAYS TRY TO TELL THEIR STORIES IN THE BEST WAY I CAN.**



DOWN & OUT - YORKSHIRE UK



AMERICAN MONSTER TRUCK - MISSOURI USA



WORLD'S LARGEST MOTORCYCLE - MODENA ITALY



JET PROPELLED GO-KART - YORKSHIRE UK







When I first set up in business my accountant asked me a question. "What is the most expensive thing that most average people will purchase during their life time?" Naturally I said "Well obviously its their house!". "No" he said "A house will almost always make money for you. It's a financial investment. A car on the other hand will lose money the day you leave the show room, cost you more money to run and for the most part continue to lose money for the rest of its life."

If cars are the most expensive thing we are ever likely to buy then there will always be a market for capturing them in pictures and ultimately selling

them with quality photography. Our love for motor vehicles is more than a practicality, it's a metal, rubber, carbon fibre love affair.

Not everyone is obsessed by cars. Everyone has their own drug of choice and it's for you to decide what yours is. The job we do as photographers should be fun and diversity is at the heart of that. Its more than a job, it's a vocation. If you can combine your love of photography with whatever your other interests are you have truly hit the jack pot. I believe its important to pay your bills first so always make sure your core business is in order. Then you should be free to follow you dreams

in whatever form they come. Photographing people will always be my bread and butter. But now I can afford to create a new genre in cars and bikes. For you it might be dance, sailing, nature and wildlife, architecture.

---

**MAKE TIME IN YOUR LIFE TO FOLLOW YOUR ULTIMATE PHOTOGRAPHIC DREAMS AND THE QUALITY OF YOUR WORK AS WELL AS YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE WILL ALWAYS SHINE.**

---

Richard Bradbury is a photographer, writer and business mentor with over 30 years of experience in the business. His latest books are available in the link below



Image courtesy of Shutter & Co Photography



# Kaleidoscope

## FRAMING LIMITED

- Fully Bespoke wall art
- Design & visualise online
- Personalise products
- 40% display discount

[www.kaleidoscope-framing.co.uk](http://www.kaleidoscope-framing.co.uk)





# CAROLINE

# TROTTER

FIFE FISHERMEN



#### How did you get started in photography?

I have been interested all my life. First, I was in catering and then a children's clothing business for 19 years until I sold it in 2006. I had been taking the photographs for the mail order catalogue which is I suppose is where my experience came from initially. I took some time out to decide what to do next until my niece, who worked at the Balmoral Hotel, asked me to photograph their afternoon teas. I turned up with just a compact digital camera. I got the job done sufficiently well enough that they asked me back to do more!! Size isn't everything! That made me think that I would like to go in the direction of photography.

Helped by winning my first competition, "A day in the life of Scotland" on my old manual-not-all-singing-and-dancing-film camera. The prize was 5 nights in Toronto!

#### Can you tell us a little bit about your photography business today?

Today my main business is environmental family portraits, pet portraits and commercial - especially food photography. I am moving away from weddings. Next year will be my last year. It was actually meant to have been last year but booked weddings have been postponed to either this year or next year. I also do beginners camera classes from my studio at home.











# I LOVE THE TIME- LESSNESS OF BLACK & WHITE

images. Some really embraced it and got it. The front cover was of Wullie Wood who thought he had become famous and loved it!

**Like many photographers, you have embarked upon some amazing personal projects. Can you tell us about your 'Fife Fishermen' project?**

I was driving past the fish sheds at St Andrews harbour after a family shoot, when I saw this fisherman sitting there and thought 'wow what a face'. I jumped out of the car and asked to take his photo. That got me thinking and two years later, I embarked on my personal project on "Fife Fishermen"

It then grew arms and legs a bit and Christopher [chef and food writing husband] came with me to interview each fisherman and get a recipe idea from them which we later made into a book.

**Did you find that the fishermen were receptive to being photographed?**

We would just pitch up at a local harbour and accost whoever was there and explain what we were doing. Some were rather bemused – as you can see from some of the

**Did you encounter any issues during the project and if so, how did you overcome them?**

Christopher was asking them for recipe ideas - some said "I don't eat fish!" (!! ) and a few said just fish and chips. So, a bit of artistic license was required!

**Was there a particular reason that you chose black & white for the portraits?**

I love the timelessness of black and white and some of the fishermen have such amazing faces that really suited it. Also, one of them in particular had a really garish shirt on which needed toning down!







# PUSHES YOUR CREATIVITY, GIVES YOU A FOCUS AND ABOVE ALL IT'S GREAT PUBLICITY.

## How did the project culminate for you?

We printed up 20 of the images and Kaleidoscope Framing did an amazing job on the presentation. Very simple black frames. The exhibition opened in the Fisheries Museum in Anstruther with a dinner on the preview evening, cooked by Christopher using recipes from the book. It then moved to Valvona & Carolla in Edinburgh and then ended up in its permanent home at The East Pier Smokehouse in St Monans. Where it sits very nicely – and is great advertising for me! The book was re-printed last year.

I also used a couple of the images and entered them into The Pink Lady Food Photography awards under 'The Politics of Food' which went through to the finals.

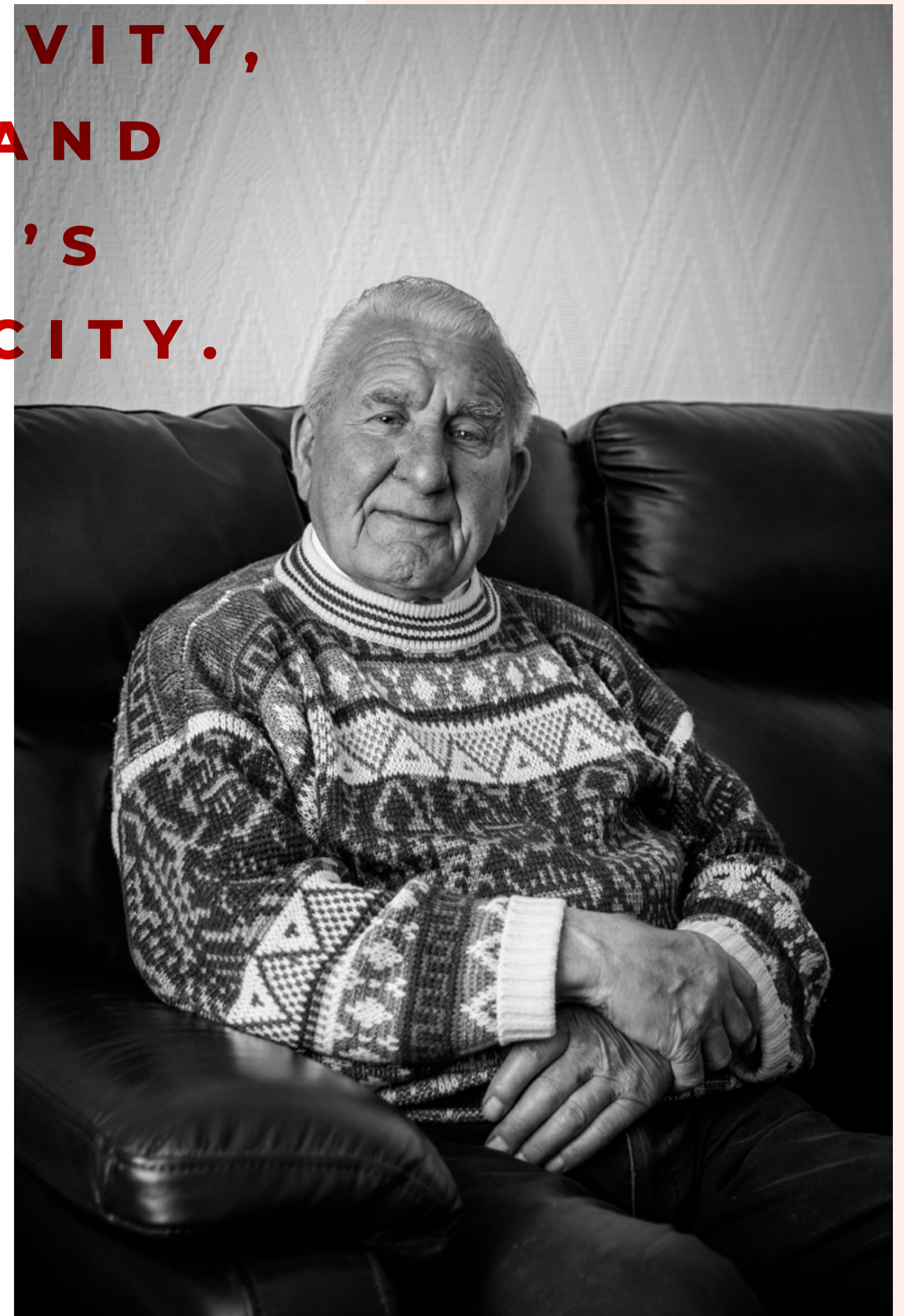
## Have you any plans for future projects?

At the moment, I am busy promoting our food photography business. We can offer a complete package with recipe development, cooking, styling and of course photography.

## Do you have any advice for somebody that would like to shoot a personal project?

Just do it!! It ticks all sorts of boxes - pushes your creativity, gives you a focus and above all it's great publicity.

We are currently putting together a recipe book for Fish taken from British waters. Christopher believes strongly that we in Britain need to eat more fish from our own waters and both Brexit and the Covid crises has enhanced people's awareness of the need to make better use of "locally" sourced fish. The book has his recipes and my photographs and will be published in June.



SEE NEXT PAGE FOR RECIPE



# ASPARAGUS & MUSSELS

COOKED WITH TURMERIC  
AND COCONUT CREAM



## INGREDIENTS

- 1 kg mussels, washed and de bearded
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- stick celery, finely chopped
- 2 tsp vegetable oil
- 1/2 tsp turmeric
- 150 mls dry white wine
- 4 tblsp double cream
- 30 g grated creamed coconut
- 1 tsp chopped chervil
- 20 spears of British asparagus, trimmed

## METHOD

1. Heat half the oil in a saucepan and sweat the onion and celery in it.
2. When soft add the turmeric, and stir for a few minutes.
3. Add the mussels and stir in to get the vegetables mixed through.
4. Pour on the wine, cover and steam over a low heat until the mussels all open - a few minutes.
5. Strain off the liquid through a sieve and set the mussels aside, return the liquid to the pan and put back onto the hob.
6. Reduce by about a third, then add the cream and coconut cream and simmer to combine, set aside.
7. Remove the mussels from the shells.
8. Brush a griddle pan with the remaining oil, and put over a high heat. When hot place the asparagus spears onto it and cook turning occasionally, for four or five minutes.
9. Take 4 hot bowls and strew the mussels over the bottom, and place the asparagus over them, pour over the hot sauce and sprinkle over chervil.



THE PHOTOGRAPHER  
ACADEMY



SAVE  
**£40**

SPECIAL OFFER

**£259**

FOR ACADEMY PRO

**THE CLOCK & COMPASS**  
I DEvised THE CLOCK & COMPASS TECHNIQUE FOR MY ASSISTANTS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS. A SIMPLE METHOD OF LIGHTING THAT SAVED ME TONS OF TIME WITHOUT HAVING TO WASTE TIME PRODUCING PROOFS TO CHECK THE WAY THE LIGHT WAS BEING ABLE TO MIMIC SIMPLE LIGHTING DURING THE SHOOT.

THE BASIC  
2 ZONES

FLAT ZONE

WHEN THE FLASH IS POSITIONED IN THIS AREA THE SUBJECT WILL BE LIT FLATTER AND HENCE FASTER SUBJECTS BUT WILL PRODUCE MORE CLASSIC AND SELLABLE IMAGES.



1 O'CLOCK  
IMPACT ZONE

USED FOR  
• HAIR LIGHT  
• SEPARATION  
• ACCENT LIGHT  
• KEY LIGHT



3 O'CLOCK  
IMPACT ZONE

USED FOR

©The Photographer Academy.com



# THE BRIDAL TIDE

MICHAEL SEWELL

First of all, this is a personal observation, and as such, I'm basically asking the question : "Does anyone else relate to this?"

What, you might ask, is "this"?

I have found over the years, my enquiries for wedding photography has brought with it specific tastes with regard to style. The brides particularly want something "different". I'm talking about stormy skies, rain, snow etc. etc. This is further compounded during the initial meeting, where we will discuss their expectations, and the word "different" tends to be used repeatedly. When I've asked is there anything they don't particularly want, the stock answer tends to be "I don't want it like my friend's album."

Now, I sometimes know who shot their friends album, and occasionally I've seen the images on their own social media timeline, and to be perfectly honest, they're good images. But it's not the standard of photography they actually mean, it's the style. They often refer to

"standard smiling bride and groom in the sun" as being the very epitome of everything they want to avoid. What they are after seems to be something unique to them and their venue.

Occasionally, they build a pinterest board with beautiful images of brides and grooms lit dramatically in unusual surroundings. Some of my images tend to be present, but sometimes they have very specific ideas of their own and have images on their board that reflect this.

I had a bride two years ago getting married on the last weekend of March, and almost every email conversation would include a reference to the fact she wanted a bridal portrait in the snow. You can imagine how she felt when we didn't have so much as a cloud in the sky on the day of her wedding, but she was upbeat and mentioned a good few times how she hoped it would snow before we left.

Would you believe it did snow as the evening guests arrived, and she got her wish.













This shift in bridal photographic tastes seems to have been insidious, gathering pace over time. Now it seems every single enquiry includes questions as to whether we can recreate a particular image seen on the blog, or can we photograph something like “this”.

I realise this may come about due to the power of social media, and the fact photographers publish images to quite a wide audience, but is the publishing of images on social media now defining the type of client we are hearing from?

Do other photographers get asked for images that are relevant to their style, or are you being asked for imagery in a style that’s doesn’t come naturally to you. Are brides and grooms becoming more savvy as to what we are capable of, or are they simply choosing a style because they like it?

In the commercial sector, we still get enquiries across the board. From “I want it on a white background”, right through to complex lighting situations out on location because the client wants something that will grab the

attention of the casual web surfer and searcher. But that seems to have stayed fairly consistent. Even back in the film days, there were clients who wanted the basics, and those who would quite happily invest in eye catching imagery that would take time to craft.

Bridal portraiture on the other hand, has definitely shifted. At least in my personal experience. The lit images during the bridal portrait session part of the wedding day tends to be the first topic talked about. How many images, how long does it take, can we put forward ideas etc etc. After that it’s the usual thing such as price, how many photographers, what time do you arrive and when do you leave. I’ve not had anyone yet who hasn’t wanted the bridal portrait session, and because of the images on my website, I have always assumed I’m attracting brides and grooms with particular tastes. Recently, I had a bride referred to me by another photographer, because he couldn’t cater for her requests regarding lit portraits, and this is what prompted me to ask the question, are bridal tastes in photography changing?

I can be found at [www.FocalPointPro.co.uk](http://www.FocalPointPro.co.uk)





# SWITCH THE *LITE ON*

WITH THE CUSTOMER XPERIENCE

LEARN THE 10 ESSENTIALS TO ADD MORE PROFIT  
TO YOUR BUSINESS

Join us at one of the UK's first events for photographers following the lockdowns.

Getting personal and face to face is something we have all longed for since 2020, and this is a perfect opportunity to talk photography and business with like minded people.

The Xperience Group and Mark Cleghorn are proud to put on these very personal events during the day as well as create a safe environment for photographers to mix and get back to business.

3 SESSIONS ACROSS THE 29TH & 30TH JUNE  
WESTON HALL HOTEL, BULKINGTON,  
COVENTRY, CV12 9RU

[CLICK HERE TO CHOOSE YOUR  
PREFERRED SESSION](#)





---

T H R O U G H

T H E E Y E S O F

A L O V E D O N E

---

S A N J A Y J O G I A

How did you get started within the photography industry?

My father worked for Kodak for 35 years so photography was a huge part of my childhood. They were great employers, frequently holding events for the families of their employees so naturally, later in life, I went on to work for them whilst studying architecture at The University of Bath. I practiced as a professional Architect for nearly 10 years, and had spent the last 6 years working in the same practice in the city. It was here that I started to realise that as much as I loved architecture, I was not in love with the building industry. What I did know however was that I loved photography, and that itself was a huge realisation which ultimately initiated the start of my photographic journey.

A friend of a friend was getting married, and we were put in touch to see if we could help. I was not photographing people professionally at this point so I scrambled an eclectic mix of images together so the bride could gauge my style. She loved it and asked me to shoot

her wedding which I thought could be interesting and the fee enabled me to invest in extra lighting and lenses. Looking back, I definitely over equipped myself! It was a Greek Orthodox wedding which was held in a beautiful venue and although it seemed scary and chaotic, by the end of the day we wanted to do it again! The bride kindly recommended us to her friends, and from this point we quickly realised that we needed to build a website and start marketing for ourselves. Social media was in its infancy back then but we decided to reach out via Facebook which grew and grew in popularity and as it did, the momentum spiralled until we had a viable business.

Our initial plan was to continue working full time for the first year and we somehow found the time to fulfil the events and the post-production work for seven weddings that year. We put the business infrastructure into place and thoroughly enjoyed this process of building something for ourselves. We took the step to reduce our employment to four days a week; so with more time



invested into the business the more demand it generated. Soon we reduced our employment to just three days a week to enable us to find the time to build a new and better website and at this point, magazines started to feature us too which generated even more demand. Resigning was a scary prospect and we wondered if it was the right thing to do especially having entered a recession at this point but we can honestly say that we have never looked back.





Whether it is a gifted camera from a grandparent or in your instance, your father's employment with Kodak, the love of photography seems to stem from childhood for many. Can you comment on that?

When I was 8, my older brother looked after me and my sister on a Saturday whilst my parents went grocery shopping. He liked watching football on TV which I hated so I would kick about the house finding things to do. My Dad had a cupboard which we were not allowed to go into, but this is where I found his Canon A1 camera! It was on the top shelf along with the instruction manual which I read from

cover to cover. It was a simple manual which included visual representations of what would happen if you changed certain camera settings which captivated my imagination. I followed it taking the lens off and opening up the back, changing the shutter speed to see what would happen with the shutter curtain and it all made sense. Dad's camera was no longer a mystical object that sat on the top shelf - I knew that I could do something cool with it and having a Dad that brought home film by the bucket load certainly helped, so from that day I was hooked!









---

E A C H I M A G E R E Q U I R E S  
A N D D E S E R V E S T H E  
S A M E L E V E L O F  
A T T E N T I O N

---

At 12 we attended my uncles wedding in Sydney, and I took Dad's camera with me. Indian weddings are long and although today they are very engaging, the old style traditional style is no less than boring for kids! It was more like a social gathering where everybody would meet and chat and nobody watched the 3-hour wedding ceremony... nobody really understood what was going on! My parents were occupied and I was bored so I started to take pictures of the people and things around me. I was a very shy child which is where my photojournalistic style stemmed from. I carried the camera at chin level, so people didn't know what I was photographing and if they saw me, they would pose which I hated. In which case, I simply looked elsewhere until they forgot I was there and then I could get the shot I wanted. The official wedding photographer certainly left his mark with me as he was embarrassingly traditional and bossed everybody around, sometimes even grabbing the microphone. I can remember thinking if I ever became a photographer, I was not going to be like him and to this day I still make a point not to be that guy.

My childhood experiences of photography have even shaped my equipment choices today. I believe that

you trust brands that you are exposed to as a child more within adulthood. I therefore only ever use Canon cameras and I am proud to say that I am a Canon ambassador which I never would have dreamt of as a child. A lot of what we do as adults is to satisfy the curiosities that we had as children, so these experiences certainly leave their mark.

As you have mentioned, your style is photojournalistic in approach but how much direction will you give during the day?

For us, the event consists of two photographic styles which we call "The Reality & The Fantasy". The Reality tells the story of the day and allows me to work in a photojournalistic style, capturing those unscripted moments which make up 95% of the narrative. The Fantasy is the portraits which take up just 5% of the day, and this time allows me to direct fully which is crucial as I know how important these images will be for the couple later. Some photographers take the attitude that group shots are a part of the day that they just need to get through and that is such a shame because these are the shots that family and friends want to see first. There is potential for this time

to be enveloped by the schedule or by guests that have travelled from other countries who require a little more attention from the couple, so dedicating time to portraits means that there can be no interruptions. We make it clear to the couple just how important it is to not let that time get taken away from them – they will never get it back.

Portraits are the only time of the day where I get 100% control which also adds pressure as I know I MUST deliver. The rest of the day is given to me which is also scary, but in a very different way as I must be 100% emotionally and visually engaged. Shooting a wedding is physically, mentally and emotionally draining because of the effort that we put into what is often a 12 to 14 hour day. My experiences of the photographer at my Uncle's wedding are always at the forefront of my mind as I do not want to spoil the moment, whatever that may be. We are also very conscious of the importance of consistency. The couple portraits need to fit within the rest of the images from the day stylistically, in composition and lighting. The end game is the album where all of these images will sit next to each other, therefore each image requires and deserves the same level of attention.





Do you get to know the couples before the wedding?

We do a pre-wedding shoot with our couples so we can teach them how to pose for professional photography and more importantly what will flatter them as individuals. When we get to the time pressured wedding day, they know exactly what to do which not only builds their confidence in being photographed, but it also builds their confidence in me. They trust that I am professional, and I will do my best for them. Pre-events also help us build a rapport with their relatives and close friends so that at the wedding, we are already familiar faces which helps their comfort level and therefore are less conscious of the camera. Being accepted like this allows me to be invisible which for me is important. Getting to know the bride,

groom, family and friends beforehand ultimately means that I am able to document the day through the eyes of a loved one.

The relationship with the couple evolves throughout the process so by the time we get to the wedding, we are not just their photographers, but we are their friends. Photographers work harder than any other wedding supplier, not just because we are on our feet all day but that relationship starts long before the event with the first consultations and pre-events, and will finish months after whilst we create their album. This results in a different level of trust and respect which is wonderful in relation to recommendations but more importantly, we do build genuine friendships with our couples so the process is very personal to all of us.









---

A C O N C E P T I S  
S O M E T H I N G T H A T H A S T O  
R E M A I N I N F O R M A T I V E  
A N D F L U I D R A T H E R T H A N  
D E F I N I T I V E

---

You capture fleeting moments so perfectly - for example a beautiful image of a bride re-applying her lipstick in a wingmirror. How important are these fleeting moments in telling the story of the day?

Fleeting moments make up 95% of the day. Lots of photographers close one eye when taking a photo - and although it may look weird, I choose to keep both eyes open so I have a better chance of remaining aware of what is happening around me. I hear many photographers say that they shoot what they see but I do not think this is enough... especially for weddings which are all about emotion. What you see in a wedding album is a finite set of images showing you the Reality and the Fantasy combining genuine emotion of the day so I must be aware in order to tell that story.

The image that you mention is actually posed, but the concept was inspired by a fleeting moment. In this case, we were doing the couple portraits which was set in a car park on the top of a hill and the sky was perfectly dramatic. I was pulling the equipment out of the boot of my car and took a moment to look around to gauge what I might need when I caught the bride checking her reflection in the car window. As I had taken the time

to get to know the bride, I knew that she was incredibly energetic, bubbly and quite vein, which is just a part of her character! I chuckled to myself thinking 'that is so you' and realised then that this was the shot. Everybody who knows this bride would react in the same way as I did. It is so representative of her personality that it is the perfect definition of a portrait.

The groom had asked me to get a shot of the car while they had it, so I lit the car and then the bride. She had to look into the wing mirror as the window reflection would not have made the best portrait, so I stylised the scene. We used bulldog clips to pin her dress around her knees and bust to define her shape. She wasn't actually looking into the mirror because that would have been a rather awkward pose, so I had her looking straight past it. Lighting her face was a challenge due to the shadows cast by the wing mirror on her face so, offsetting her slightly helped with that too. Although it was a posed shot, the inspiration derived from that fleeting moment which highlights beautifully my point that you must constantly be aware and evolve ideas because there really is inspiration all around us. Grab the opportunity and make it your own.

Your imagery perfectly uses the scenery

of the locations to highlight the couple. Do you visit the locations before the wedding?

For destination weddings, we will arrive a day or two ahead of the event(s) to help with the logistics and of course give us a buffer for any unplanned hiccups. We'll visit the venue to help us plan lighting, spot portrait opportunities and introduce ourselves to the other suppliers. The lead up to the flight will undoubtedly consist of long working days so we also allow ourselves time to recover and clear our heads. If we haven't visited the location before, we'll hit the tourist hotspots which does help generate image concepts. To me however, a concept is something that has to remain informative and fluid rather than definitive, as although we all build ideas based on our own expectations and preconceptions, you also must consider the unknown. Pre-wedding shoots are a great way to establish expectations to ensure that the couple know what they can expect from me but what can I expect from the couple on the day. I really enjoy the organic creative element of the unknown and the slightly chaotic to avoid frustration of concepts not coming to fruition from the forces that are simply beyond my control.





Your work includes beautiful panoramic shots, so I have to ask the question about equipment! How much do you take with you and are destination weddings different?

If I did not have a piece of equipment with me for a concept on the day, I would kick myself so I try to take everything that I can, however for a destination shoot this is generally impractical. In terms of image impact, expectations are higher of a destination wedding, so they can be more stressful for us both logistically and creatively. As well as the equipment, we are aware that we must be 100% emotionally engaged, always staying two steps ahead without that becoming paralysing; so the more equipment I have to hand, the freer I feel.

I will hire equipment locally too so long as it is equipment that I'm familiar with. We also like to hire a local photographer where possible because they will know

the locations, understand the language and will usually have a car which makes logistics much easier. The couple can travel with them while we follow in a hired vehicle with all the equipment. Roshni, an assistant and I will travel from the UK but having local support not only makes our lives easier, it also makes the experience for the couple much richer.

Roshni is my anchor, and she will do all of the hard work in the background. She not only runs the business side of things as well as being my second shooter, but she also takes great care of the couple on the day which in turn allows me to free my mind and focus on the creative process in front of me. We keep the couple calm and entertained as a team which allows them to have the best experience which is integral to our ethos. We are drained by the end of the day because we put all of our energy both professionally and emotionally into every second.





---

I T W A S I M P O R T A N T F O R U S T O  
M A I N T A I N T H I S H I G H - Q U A L I T Y  
E X P E R I E N C E S O W E H A D T O  
T H I N K H A R D A B O U T H O W W E  
C O U L D A C H I E V E T H A T

---

How has the pandemic effected your work? Have you been busy with projects or had to diversify in anyway?

At the start of the pandemic, it was scary for the entire industry. We all thought that within a few months it would be over but it wasn't, so we prioritised taking care of our couples and also used the time to tackle our 'To Do List' which as it turns out is never ending. We're updating everything from our website and infrastructure to the businesses processes and have also implemented a new studio management software. Initially, we were fully aware that our income could dry up so we decided to look after our couples on the premise that they in turn would look after us. We spent a lot of time talking to our clients and deferred dates and I must say, they were amazing and completely understood that we had to survive as a business, but they also still wanted to get married. We made it known that we are there for them and when the world opens up again we will fulfil our promise to with them with a new date. We couldn't shoot the wedding as originally planned, but we asked each couple to carry on paying their fees as if the wedding was happening now to help

see us through the void.

Once we got through that initial stage, our attention turned to the following year as we still needed to generate new business. Oddly enough, the enquiries were still coming in during the first lockdown, but people were not committing because of the uncertainty. I was certain however that we would experience a huge surge of interest when things could progress because as the dates were being pushed back and becoming limited so the demand was also pent up. Ultimately I was not overly worried about the business' future.

Pre Covid, Roshni would receive an enquiry from a couple, have a chat with them on the phone and then invite them into the studio for a consultation. Our studio has three rooms, an editing suite and two consultation rooms, one of which is set up as a lounge and this is where we will give the couple some bubbly and truffles and get to know them. We then retreat to the other showroom which houses our display albums so the couple could see the final products for themselves. In times of lockdown, it was still important for us to maintain this high-quality experience

so we had to think hard about how we could achieve that. This led to us investing in steaming equipment which also provided us with another opportunity to broaden our horizons.

Our lockdown presentations started in the editing suite with Roshni then moving into the album showroom which is ultimately set up like a TV studio! One camera is above the albums whilst the other focusses on Roshni so the couple still have that personal touch. I remain in the editing suite at the mixing desk so I can control the client experience, ensuring both a high-quality picture and sound. It is not the same as the tangible experience of being there in person, but we have made sure that it's the best experience that it can be. My confidence has grown so much with streaming that we now offer it as a service to our couples. When we were allowed to shoot micro weddings last year, we offered to stream the day to the guests that could not be there in person. This allowed me to test the technicalities, possibilities and of course the demand for such a service in a changed event environment; which was such a success, that we have now set up a new streaming business.









---

M Y K E Y M E S S A G E I S T O  
M A I N T A I N Y O U R S T A N D A R D S  
W H A T E V E R I S G O I N G O N  
A R O U N D Y O U , P E R S O N A L L Y A N D  
P R O F E S S I O N A L L Y

---

Having found time to pick album images, clients have also kept us busy with a tidal wave of album orders! This is a longer process for us than most because of the extra TLC and finesse that we give to each image and spread.

As I previously mentioned, I am an ambassador for various brands who also approached me during Lockdown to provide them with various online content. What that gave me was a great variety of projects to focus on which allowed me to in turn to expand my abilities. For example, during the first lockdown Canon reached out to their ambassadors and asked us to create educational videos aimed not just at professional photographers but anybody with a camera. The brief stated that the content must have simplistic language, be easy to follow and not exceed 20 minutes. Roshni took on the role of my model whilst the entire production was down to me. I had to learn the roles of producer, lighting assistant, sound

engineer, editor which were all new to me. I was pushed to explore my own capabilities within a difficult situation and that process was fascinating and very revealing.

Do you have any advice for wedding photographers post pandemic?

My key message is to maintain your standards whatever is going on around you, personally and professionally. You must look after yourself by staying healthy, strong and presentable whilst also staying professional for your business. It is a difficult time as we all need cashflow but do not let panic set in and devalue yourself or your expertise. If clients hear that you are using the pandemic as an excuse to lower your pricing, it will irreparably affect client expectations going forward and in turn affect the rest of the industry. As a business, you should be factoring some feasible margin in your pricing strategy, but do not double that margin else you

will be compared to people that are much cheaper than you even though your work is of a much higher standard and that is hard to re-build.

If you are accessible to everybody, you are no longer exclusive and you must remember that what we do is not a commodity or mass produced, it is completely bespoke. It is our job as professionals to educate each client on the distinction between price and value as they can never replicate those precious moments again. I fully understand that things are tough now, but we are going to be busier than ever when we can emerge from the pandemic so whatever you do, don't shoot yourself in both feet now. Enquiry levels for us are back up to normal levels and although there is still some non-commitment from some, people now just want to get this done and we will certainly be there for them.



## CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY EXPERIENCE

### Inspiring Outdoor Photography Courses and Workshops with Nigel Forster

**On-Line Tuition**  
From Webinars from £20 to Individual Tuition from £60 an hour

**Individual Tuition**  
from £295 or £545 for 2 in the Brecon Beacons or a location of our choice

**Group Workshops**  
Throughout the UK for groups of up to 6 from day workshops to 4-5 day breaks

**Coming up.....Abruzzo, Italy**  
Sat 9th - Sat 16th October 2021  
£1095 or £1,995 for 2

**My photography courses are continuing during the Covid-19 pandemic with my programme of On-Line Outdoor Photography Training.**  
*See the On-Line Tuition section of the website*

There's also a comprehensive programme of great workshops on location which will continue when Covid-19 restrictions allow but please feel free to book spaces in any case!

**Your choice:** On-Line Tuition, One to One Courses and Group Workshops for up to 6 clients

**Where we go:** Great locations from the Brecon Beacons, Snowdonia, Isle of Skye, Dorset, Northern Ireland, Northumberland Coasts to the urban environment in London & a week in Italy.

**Whatever course or workshop you choose:**  
You're guaranteed a great experience and an unbeatable way to develop your photography!

**CONTACT: NIGEL FORSTER:**  
Tel: Office: 01874 676402 Mobile: 07815 089835  
Email: [info@creativephotographytraining.co.uk](mailto:info@creativephotographytraining.co.uk)

**See our full workshop list: [www.creativephotographytraining.co.uk](http://www.creativephotographytraining.co.uk)**



# ACADEMY **LIVE**

EVERY WEDNESDAY AT 5PM



WITH THE PHOTOGRAPHER  
ACADEMY



FREE  
LIVE SHOOT

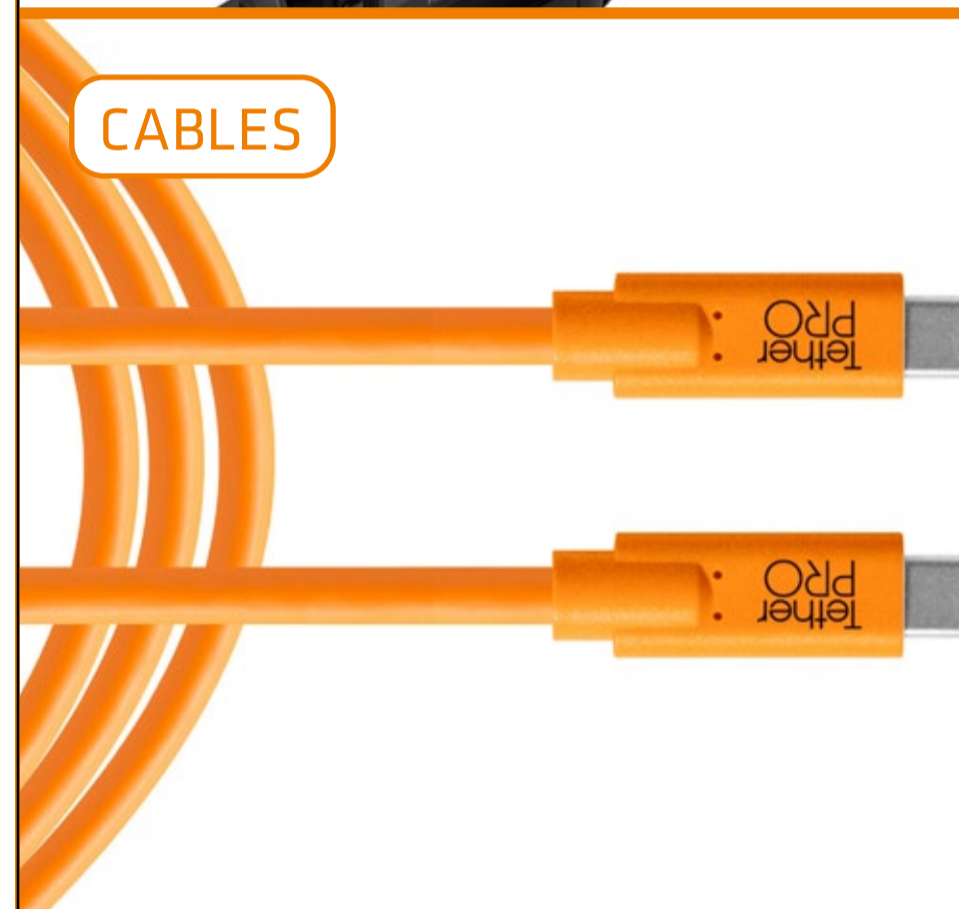
WIRELESS TETHERING



POWER MANAGEMENT



CABLES



**TETHER  
TOOLS**

Tethering, power and workstation  
solutions for creatives across the globe.

**Connect. Collaborate. Create.**

**SHOP NOW**  
on [colorconfidence.com](https://colorconfidence.com)

CABLE MANAGEMENT



TETHER TABLES







**THE  
PHOTOGRAPHER  
ACADEMY**



# TOP 10

Live Critique Comments  
20th April



Brian  
Hennessy





Julian  
Fulton





Graham Panton



Susan Lang



Andrey  
Zhukov







Dominic Byrne







Philip  
Lord







Philip Chipman



John Askey





 Alan  
Bousfield



Why not submit your own image for critique today!  
[www.thephotographeracademy.com/photo-critique](http://www.thephotographeracademy.com/photo-critique)  
Watch the full critique on The Photographer Academy.





@federicamorgan



@jnorthoverphotography



@photographedbyralph



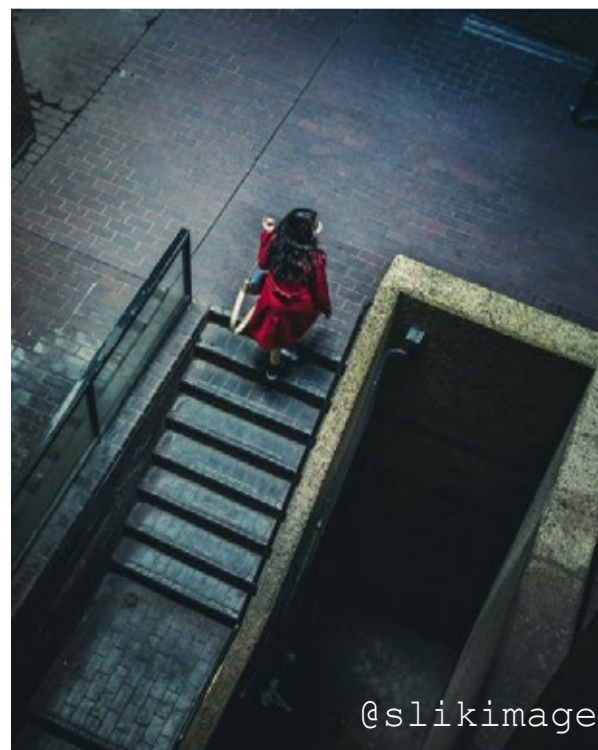
@timpindarphotography

# The Instagram Gallery

**WANT TO SEE YOUR PHOTO  
HERE?**

Tag us **@TPAPHOTO** or use the  
**#TPAPHOTO** & follow us for your chance to  
see your image featured here!

@joyce.simpson.1610



@slikimage

@thelifenarrator

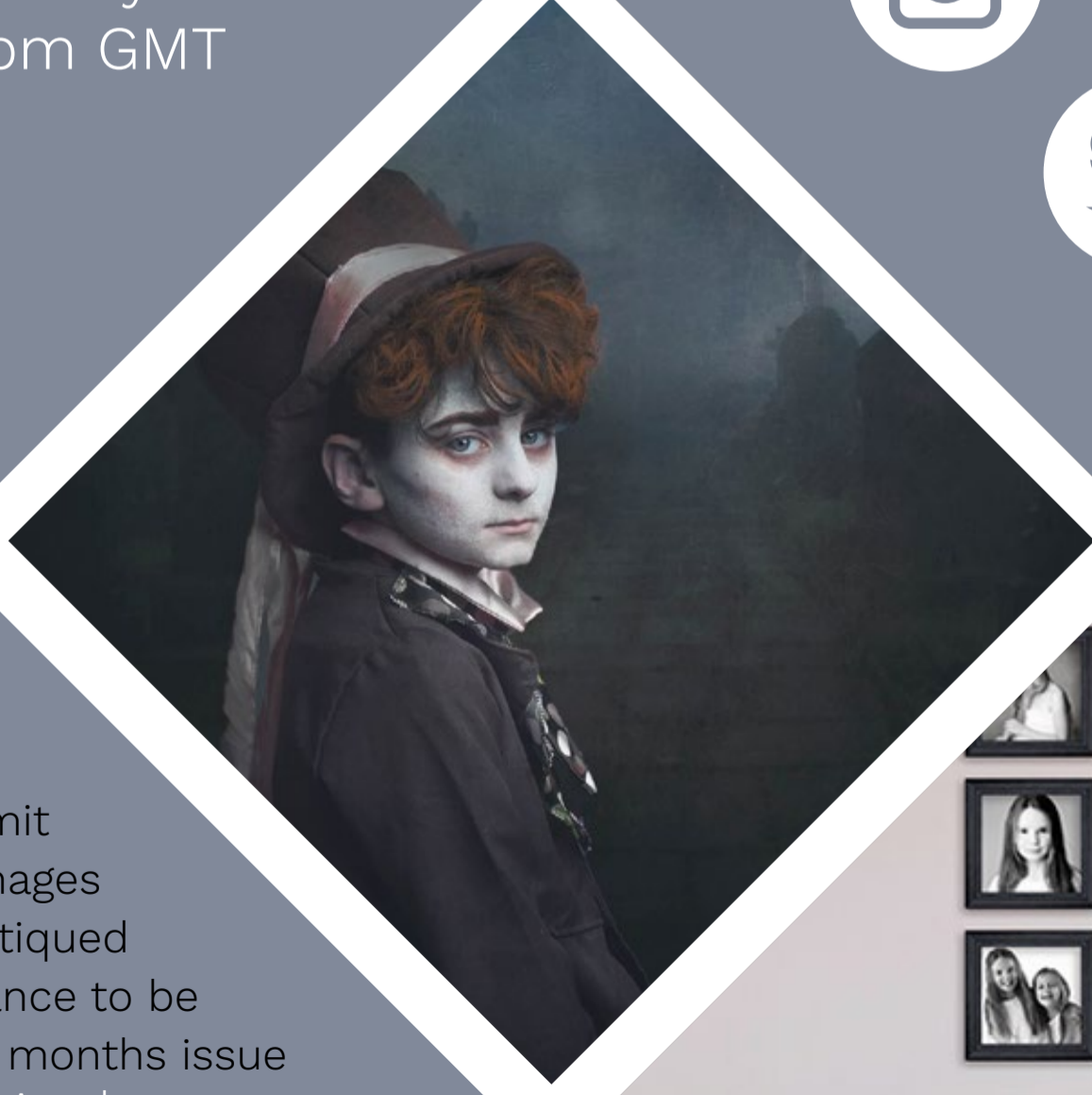




Go Get  
**LIVE**  
& Interactive



Webinar - Academy Photo  
Critique 5pm GMT



Business Live  
1pm GMT  
7th June

Submit  
your images  
to be critiqued  
for your chance to be  
featured in next months issue  
[ThePhotographerAcademy.com  
/photo-critique](http://ThePhotographerAcademy.com/photo-critique)

