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# Smart Photography

Interview

**Mattias Klum**

Photo Feature

**Postcards from Greenland**

Special

**Winged Beauties of Vietnam**

**My hidden gems Part 1- Tom Svensson**

Tutorial

**Lens Blur Tool**

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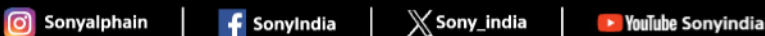
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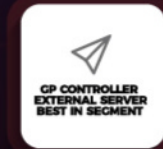
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**N**ews of camera sales in 2023 indicate that the camera market has definitely plateaued. From this point, it can only expand.

Video is driving the market and it is likely that future launches will put more emphasis on video rather than stills.

Camera and lens manufacturers are increasingly developing revolutionary lens designs and at the same time, are introducing high quality affordable lenses.

The inroads made by smartphones into the camera market are also likely to plateau. This may change if smartphones with Micro Four Thirds sensors enter the market.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) will play a larger role both in the design and manufacture of cameras. We have already seen the effects of AI in areas like subject recognition and tracking.

Camera manufacturers have increasingly looked at 'paid' influencers and celebrities to aid growth in sales. However, as the buying public gets more aware, their credibility will rapidly plummet.

Finally, the internet is gradually becoming very different from what we understood it to be. Several sites like Google and Flickr have started deleting user photos as well as videos. Where do we go from here?

**H. S. Billimoria**

## HERE'S WHAT MAKES US

# #1

### WE ARE GLUED TO THE GLOBAL IMAGING INDUSTRY

Our team is updated with all the benchmarks and road blocks that the field of photography and imaging across the globe experiences. This helps us record the changes in the global perspective, thus making us the first to predict which products will be a rage in the Indian markets.

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### OUR TESTS ARE CONDUCTED BY EXPERTS

All equipment go through a series of tests at the hands of our experts. Our reviewers are experts in the field of photography across the country and have many years of experience. That gives us the foresight to distinguish between a passing trend and a big change in the field of photography and imaging. And finally, our reviews are not extended to just fill up the pages!

### WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU

There is no debate on why we are here. Our sole goal is to provide you options and better your judgement in product purchase while, sharing tips and tricks to improve your images. Our biggest joy is in building a bridge between you and your perfect picture!

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Life unadulterated





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Photographer: Mattias Klum



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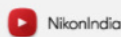
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## Nikon wins again!

Map Camera, a leading camera retailer in Japan has published a breakdown of the TEN MOST POPULAR cameras and lenses in 2023.

### Most popular cameras

- Nikon Z 8
- Canon R 6 Mk II
- Nikon Zf
- Sony A7R
- Sony A7 IV
- Sony A7 CII
- Ricoh GR IIIx
- Fujifilm XS – 10
- Panasonic Lumix S 5 II
- Fujifilm X-T 5

### Most popular lenses

- Nikkor Z 24 – 120 mm f 4 S
- Tamron 28 – 75 mm f 2.8 Di III
- Nikkor Z 180 – 600 mm f 5.6 – 6.3 VR
- Sony FE 20 – 70 mm F 4 SEL
- Tamron 28- 200 mm f 2.8- 5.6 Di III RXD
- Canon RF 50 mm f 1.8 STM
- Sigma 18- 50 mm f 2.8 DC DN
- Nikkor Z 26 mm f 2.8
- Sony FE 24 – 70 mm f 2.8 GM II
- Sony FE 50 mm f 1.4 GM SEL

# OnePlus launches 12R

In an era where technological innovation is the cornerstone of progress, OnePlus, a leading technology brand, is set to take the smartphone market by storm with its upcoming flagship, the OnePlus 12R. As part of the highly anticipated OnePlus 12 Series, this device promises cutting-edge advancements in both screen and battery technology, offering users an unparalleled mobile experience.



Scheduled for a global launch in the first quarter of 2024, the OnePlus 12R has generated significant buzz ahead of the Smooth Beyond Belief launch event on January 23. This flagship is the second member of the OnePlus 12 Series and marks the debut of the OnePlus R Series in global markets.

### Revolutionary Screen Technology:

One of the standout features of the OnePlus 12R is its groundbreaking screen technology. OnePlus has disclosed that the device will feature a fourth-generation LTPO 120Hz ProXDR display. Building on the LTPO 3.0 technology seen in its predecessor, the OnePlus 11, LTPO allows the phone to automatically adjust its refresh rate, optimizing battery life. What sets the OnePlus 12R apart is the introduction of LTPO 4.0, enabling the screen to change its refresh rate even faster, more intelligently, and more smoothly than ever before.

**Largest-Ever Battery:** Complementing its revolutionary screen technology, the

OnePlus 12R boasts the largest battery ever fitted into a OnePlus phone, with a substantial 5,500mAh capacity. This impressive power reserve translates to extended gaming sessions, prolonged usage, and an overall enhanced mobile experience for users who demand more from their smartphones.

The battery inside the OnePlus 12R will be powered by SUPERVOOC fast charging, ensuring quick and efficient charging capabilities. Additionally, the device features Battery Health Engine technology, a proprietary innovation designed by OnePlus. This technology is poised to keep the battery in peak health for an extended period, surpassing competing smartphones in longevity.

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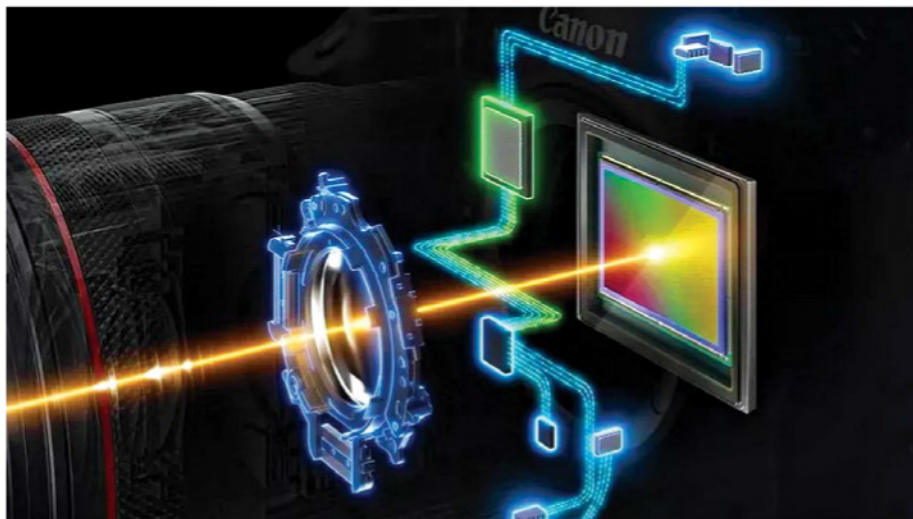


# Canon achieves 38-year streak in Top 5 US Patents Ranking

Canon, renowned for its unwavering commitment to technological innovation, has set a remarkable record by securing a position in the top five of the official US patent rankings for 38 consecutive years. In the 2023 rankings released by IFI Claims Patent Services, Canon claimed the fifth spot, reaffirming its consistent drive for inventive solutions. With an impressive 2,890 patents across its business sectors—printing, imaging, medical, and industrial—Canon showcased not only its prolific submission of patents but also its success in securing approval, highlighting unique innovations and strategic acquisitions.

Canon's dominance extends beyond the global stage, as it maintained its 19-year streak as the top-ranking Japanese business in the same patent rankings.

"Canon actively promotes the globalization of its business and places great value on obtaining patents overseas, carefully adhering to a patent-filing strategy that pursues patents in essential countries and regions while taking into consideration the business strategies and technology and product trends unique to each location," stated the manufacturer.



Recent patent submissions further underscore Canon's dedication to innovation, especially in imaging systems. Designs for a tilting viewfinder, camera body haptic feedback, and camera phone technology have been submitted, hinting at potential implementations in upcoming camera technologies.

The anticipation among Canon enthusiasts is palpable as they await news about the new Canon EOS R1, expected to push the boundaries of mirrorless cameras with

cutting-edge technologies, including a rumored shooting rate of 240fps. It is essential to note that while Canon's patent success reflects its commitment to innovation, the mere submission or approval of patents does not guarantee market availability. Patents are often granted for testing and research and development purposes, with many innovations never making it to market. Nevertheless, Canon's consistent presence among top innovators bodes well for the future of photography and technological advancements.

## Samsung to surpass Sony in sensors

In the dynamic realm of smartphone camera sensors, Samsung, currently the second-largest brand globally, has set its sights on outpacing its Japanese competitor, Sony, with a strategic incorporation of on-sensor Artificial Intelligence (AI).

While Sony leads the market, Samsung aims to leverage AI technology to revolutionize its camera image sensors. Recent reports from Business Korea suggest that the South Korean tech giant is actively working on integrating AI into its camera sensor

business. Following the introduction of its third 200MP camera sensor earlier this year, Samsung unveiled the Zoom Anyplace technology, a groundbreaking feature powered by AI. This innovation facilitates simultaneous 4K video recording of the entire frame alongside a zoomed-in section, showcasing Samsung's commitment to pushing the boundaries of imaging capabilities. Looking ahead, Samsung's vision extends beyond incremental improvements. The company plans to infuse its future camera sensors with even more advanced AI features,

aspiring to create sensors that emulate human senses. Their ambitious roadmap outlines the development of camera sensors capable of capturing invisible elements by 2027.

Both Samsung and SK Hynix are vying to narrow the gap with Sony in the camera image sensor market. According to a Counterpoint Research report, Sony currently dominates the market with a commanding 54% share. Samsung holds a 29% share, while SK Hynix has recently entered the top-five rankings, securing a 5% market share.

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## Camera Giants unite against deepfakes

Canon, Nikon, and Sony, industry titans in the camera sector, are joining forces to combat the rise of fake images. In response to the surge in manipulated photographs circulating in 2023, the trio is gearing up to introduce cutting-edge technology that simplifies the authentication of a photo's origins.

In the ongoing battle against deepfakes, the Japanese camera manufacturers are set to enable photographers to embed digital signatures directly within the camera. These signatures, featuring details such as the photographer's name, date, time, and location of the image, can be verified using a new web-based application called Verify. Launched by a global alliance comprising media outlets, camera makers, and tech companies, Verify aims to weed out AI-generated or altered images, flagging them as having "no content credentials."

Anticipated to be available this year, Sony leads the charge by committing to roll out firmware updates for three of its professional-level mirrorless cameras by the spring of 2024.

Canon follows suit, planning to incorporate this technology into some of its pro-level bodies later in the year, possibly in a new 2024 model. Canon is also developing its application capable of distinguishing between human-taken and AI-generated images.

As tech giants like Google and Intel explore ways to combat fake photos, the collaborative effort of Canon, Nikon, and Sony signifies a positive stride by incorporating in-camera technology to combat the proliferation of manipulated imagery.



## OPPO Find X7 Ultra

OPPO, the world's premier smart device brand, has unveiled the OPPO Find X7 Ultra, heralding a new era in smartphone photography. Boasting a groundbreaking Quad Main Camera, powered by the innovative HyperTone Image Engine, this flagship device combines top-tier hardware, computational photography, and a strategic partnership with Hasselblad to redefine the boundaries of mobile photography. Pete Lau, OPPO's Senior Vice-President, and Chief Product Officer, expressed the transformative impact of the Find X7 Ultra, stating, "Its world-first Quad Main Camera will change the way people take photos forever. It removes limitations, unleashes creativity, and introduces a respect for photography as an art form like never before."

The Quad Main Camera system of the Find X7 Ultra introduces the HyperTone Camera System, featuring four 50MP cameras, including two periscope zoom cameras, to bridge the gap between optical focal lengths. The wide camera incorporates the cutting-edge Sony LYT-900 1-inch sensor, providing exceptional power efficiency for computational photography, capturing nuanced stills with an  $f/1.8$  aperture and OIS.

For expansive shots, the ultra-wide camera boasts a 50MP Sony LYT-600 sensor, perfect for dynamic macro photography or capturing vast scenery. The device stands out as the first smartphone to feature two periscope cameras, with the 3x periscope camera

featuring a class-leading  $1/1.56''$  Sony IMX890 sensor, and the 6x periscope telephoto camera offering a large 50MP Sony IMX858 sensor.

Built on this Quad Main Camera system, the Find X7 Ultra achieves four major breakthroughs in the realm of smartphone photography:

**HyperTone Image Engine:** Addressing downsides of computational photography, OPPO's HyperTone Image Engine ensures a natural look, preserving highlights, shadows, and mid-tones.

**Uninterrupted Zoom:** Covering the full range from 14mm to 270mm equivalent focal lengths, Find X7 Ultra captures quality stills across the entire zoom spectrum.

**Hasselblad Portrait Mode:** Collaborating with Hasselblad, the device introduces a Portrait Mode calibrated to different Hasselblad lenses, producing cinematic bokeh with precision.

**Hasselblad Master Mode:** Unlocking advanced controls and calibration to match the characteristics of the Hasselblad X2D 100C, Master Mode offers pro-grade features for smartphone photography enthusiasts.

The OPPO Find X7 Ultra marks a new pinnacle in smartphone photography, combining innovation, style, and performance to redefine the possibilities of a flagship device.



# Smallest full-frame macro lens

Panasonic has unveiled the Lumix S 100mm f/2.8 Macro, claiming the title of the world's smallest and lightest full-frame macro lens with a focal length above 90mm. Boasting a 1:1 macro capability, the lens shares a consistent design with Panasonic's f/1.8 L-Mount prime lenses for efficient integration into user workflows with gimbals and cinema rigs.

At just 73.6mm in diameter, 82mm in length, and weighing a mere 298 grams, the Lumix S 100mm f/2.8 Macro outshines competitors like the Nikon Nikkor Z MC 105mm and Sigma 105mm f/2.8 DG DN Macro Art in terms of compactness and weight.

Panasonic's engineering innovations, including a double focus system, three aspherical lenses, and a new Dual Phase Linear Motor Actuator, contribute



to the lens's remarkable compactness without compromising performance. The optical design features 13 elements, including two UED elements and a single ED optic, ensuring edge-to-edge sharpness.

The lens promises responsive and noise-free autofocus performance, addressing common issues associated with macro lenses. Panasonic's commitment to a consistent "look" across its lens lineup ensures uniform colour rendition, contrast, flare handling, and aberration correction.

Priced at \$1000 (Rs.83,000), the Lumix S 100mm f/2.8 Macro is set to be available later this month or early next month, marking another milestone in Panasonic's dedication to delivering compact, high-performance lenses to photographers.

## C Contemporary 10-18mm F2.8 DC DN

Designed exclusively for APS-C mirrorless cameras

Supplied accessories: Push-on petal type hood LH706-02, FRONT CAP LCF-67mm III, REAR CAP LCR II

Available mount: L-Mount, Sony E-mount, FUJIFILM X Mount

\*The appearance and specifications of the product are subject to change.

\* This product is developed, manufactured and sold based on the specifications of E-mount which was disclosed by Sony Corporation under the license agreement with Sony Corporation.

\* L-Mount is a registered trademark of Leica Camera AG.



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# OnePlus debuts OnePlus 12

Global tech giant OnePlus introduced its latest flagship, the OnePlus 12, at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi, marking a decade of relentless innovation. Boasting the Snapdragon® 8 Gen 3 Mobile Platform, proprietary Trinity Engine, 4th Gen Hasselblad Camera for Mobile, and a 2K 120Hz ProXDR display, the OnePlus 12 promises an unrivaled flagship experience.

**Unmatched Performance and Endurance** The OnePlus 12 features Qualcomm’s Snapdragon® 8 Gen 3, delivering a 30% boost in CPU performance and 25% GPU improvement. Equipped with up to 16GB LPDDR5X RAM and 512GB UFS 4.0 ROM, it ensures applications remain readily available for 72 hours. The device, approved as Snapdragon Spaces™ Ready, opens new possibilities for XR development.

**Hasselblad-Backed Photography** The OnePlus 12’s camera system, developed with Hasselblad, includes a 50MP wide-angle, 3x periscope telephoto, and a 48MP ultra-wide camera. Enhanced by RAW HDR algorithms and upgraded Portrait Mode, it captures DSLR-like images with precision.



The phone’s modern elegant design, available in Flowy Emerald and Silky Black, pays homage to a decade of daring innovation.

**Pricing and Availability** The OnePlus 12, in 12/256GB at INR 64,999 and 16/512GB at INR 69,999 variants, will be available from January 30th, offering an exclusive pre-booking offer, instant bank discounts, exchange bonuses, and OnePlus Easy Upgrades.



## Nikon updates Nikkor Z DX 18-140mm lens firmware

Nikon has released firmware update version 1.01 for the Nikkor Z DX 18-140mm f/3.5-6.3 VR lens. The update addresses a specific issue: “Fixed an occasional video recording interruption with a ‘Recording interrupted’ message displayed when operating the lens zoom ring during recording.”

Users of Z-series cameras can conveniently update their Nikkor Z DX 18-140mm lenses using Nikon’s Download Center on the official website. For further details, visit Nikon’s website.

# Dr Batra: The Kashmir landscapes

Padmashri Dr Mukesh Batra, the renowned homoeopathy doctor, inaugurated his 53rd photographic exhibition, ‘Whispers in the Valley,’ at the Free Press Journal (FPJ) Art Gallery in Nariman Point.

The exhibition opened on 23rd January and features breathtaking landscapes of the Kashmir Valley across four seasons.



Notable personalities, including Türkiye Consul General Cuneyt Yavuzcan, FPJ’s Ashok Karnani and

Abhay Karnani, former MP Pritesh Nandy, and ace photographer Atul Kasbekar, graced the inauguration. Dr Batra, emphasizing the philanthropic aspect, stated, “My photography is for a cause, and all proceeds go to help the visually challenged.”

The exhibition, a visual treat for art enthusiasts, is open to the public till 12th February 2024.

### EXHIBITION DETAILS

**Title**  
Whispers in the Valley

**Venue**  
Free Press Journal Art Gallery, Nariman Point, Mumbai - 400001

**Dates**  
Open till 12th February 2024

**Admission** : Free

# Smartphones embrace Micro Four Thirds sensors

Prepare for a paradigm shift in the world of smartphones as the next image revolution looms, with credible reports suggesting the integration of large Micro Four Thirds sensors. This marks a potential revolution not only in the smartphone sector but across the entire camera market.

Multiple sources now indicate the imminent arrival of a new generation of Micro Four Thirds sensors, ranging from 44 to 100 megapixels, set to be implemented in smartphones. Weibo, among the sources, details the sensors per smartphone as follows:

- 4/3-inch 108Mp 1.4µm Nonacell Full-pixel DPAF (new ISOCELL, optimized quantum efficiency)
- 4/3-inch 80Mp 1.65µm QuadBayer Full-pixel 2x2 OCL AF (IMX472 changes Mipi interface to reduce digital layer power consumption)
- 4/3 inch 50Mp 2.1µm 4-Cell Full-pixel 2x2 OCL AF WDR (LOFIC TheiaCel)

- 4/3-inch 44Mp 2.25µm Mask-PD AF VDGS (Pregius S II)

The challenges are apparent, with the need to implement such a 'giant' sensor in a smartphone body being the primary obstacle. Additionally, managing the heat generated by the extensive processor presents another hurdle. However, overcoming these challenges is a matter of time and technological advancement. The term 'Four-Thirds' originates from the size and format of the image sensor developed by Olympus in collaboration with Panasonic. In contrast to the 35-millimeter film and APS-C-sized sensors used by other major camera brands, the Four-Thirds system employs a 4:3 ratio for its image sensor. The Micro Four Thirds sensor's diagonal length is approximately half that of a 35-millimeter film negative, resulting in a crop factor of exactly 2. While the Micro Four Thirds format has seen reduced use due to a preference for shooting large

formats, its potential to revolutionize videography in mobile phones is significant.

The journey towards larger sensors commenced in 2021 when Sharp introduced the AQUOS R6, equipped with a 1-inch sensor. Subsequent developments from various manufacturers, including Canon and Nikon, showcased powerful smartphones with 1-inch image sensors. However, Apple seems focused on refining image technology rather than adopting larger sensors, leaving the door open for future innovations.

Anticipating the first Micro Four Thirds smartphone to emerge from China, possibly by 2024-2025, sets the stage for a potential revolution in videography. The prospect of an iPhone 18 equipped with a Micro Four Thirds image sensor could reshape the landscape of smartphone imaging in the coming years.

## Unveiling Excellence: The Hasselblad 907X 100C

Hasselblad continues its legacy of excellence with the introduction of the 907X 100C, a remarkable addition to their lineup of medium format cameras. This fusion of iconic design and meticulous craftsmanship empowers photographers to capture 100-megapixel images with authentic, natural colors, coupled with the convenience of a built-in 1TB SSD.

The modular architecture and cutting-edge technologies of the 907X 100C unlock three distinct photographic applications, making it the most versatile Hasselblad 100-megapixel medium format camera to date.

Powered by a 100-megapixel medium format back-side illuminated CMOS sensor, the CFV 100C ensures

unparalleled image quality. With 15 stops of dynamic range and a native ISO as low as 64, it preserves highlight and shadow details while capturing intricate nuances. Introducing the Hasselblad Natural Colour Solution (HNCS), this camera optimizes colors for an authentic and natural appearance, rendering smoother and more delicate transitions – a faithful representation of the world as perceived by the human eye.

The 907X & CFV 100C Phase Detection Autofocus (PDAF) crisply defines the scene, providing an agile focusing experience. The new face detection function further enhances efficiency, facilitating seamless and convenient portrait shooting. Step into a new era of photographic precision with the Hasselblad 907X 100C.

## Canon loses 7% market share in camera rental market



According to a recent report by 'Lens Rental', Canon experienced a notable decline in camera rental share ceding ground to Sony and Nikon in 2023. Canon faced a 7.08% decline over 2022 whilst Sony garnered an additional 4.81% and Nikon 4.09%. Canon, however, still continues to be the market leader.

# CES 2024 Innovation Awards

In its annual showcase of groundbreaking technological advancements, the CES 2024 Innovation Awards Program unveiled a host of exceptional consumer technology products, setting the stage for the future of innovation. The prestigious awards, held in the heart of the tech world, acknowledge outstanding achievements in design and engineering across various product categories. Here's a look at the Digital Imaging & Photography category:

## OTHER HONOREES

### **Galaxy Z Fold5 by Samsung Electronics America: A Foldable Marvel for Photography Enthusiasts**

Samsung's Galaxy Z Fold5 emerged as a standout in the Digital Imaging & Photography category. This foldable device seamlessly combines flagship camera

features with a unique foldable form factor, offering unparalleled opportunities for eye-catching photos. With innovative features like FlexCam, Nightography, and Flex Mode, the Galaxy Z Fold5 is a versatile tool designed to elevate photography experiences.



### **VAONIS Triumphs with Hestia - Best of Innovation**

Leading the pack, VAONIS secured the coveted "Best of Innovation" award for Hestia, a revolutionary portable telescope. Hestia leverages the power of smartphone sensors to capture stunning images of the Sun, Moon, and the cosmos. The device boasts a telephoto lens, augmenting smartphone zoom capabilities by up to 25 times, coupled with intelligent software optimizing astronomical photography on smartphones.



### **PIXELL by 4BY4 INC.: Elevating Video Quality with AI Precision**

4BY4 INC.'s PIXELL clinched recognition for its deep learning-based video quality enhancer. The proprietary AI solution optimizes noise patterns, colour, sharpness, and resolution, achieving lifelike quality and reduced bitrates. Seamlessly integrated into various workflows, PIXELL marks a significant leap towards efficient, cost-effective, and immersive content creation.

### **Canon MS-500 ILC: A Breakthrough in Ultra-High-Sensitivity Imaging**

Canon's MS-500 stands as the world's first ultra-high-sensitivity interchangeable-lens camera. Equipped with a 1.0-inch Single Photon Avalanche Diode (SPAD) sensor, it excels in low-light performance. Paired with high-performance broadcast lenses, the MS-500 ensures clear full-color HD imaging, making it ideal for applications like seaport security and infrastructure monitoring.





**Skin Screen by L'Oréal: A Breakthrough in Skin Analysis**

L'Oréal's Skin Screen introduces a groundbreaking skin analysis service. Utilising tri-polar light technology and advanced algorithms, it assesses key skin parameters and recommends tailored skincare routines. In just minutes, Skin Screen provides a comprehensive analysis of sun damage, redness, pores, hydration, and more, revolutionising personal skincare.

**Leica BLK2GO Pulse by Hexagon:**

Revolutionizing Reality Capture Hexagon's Leica BLK2GO PULSE takes reality capture to new heights with a handheld first-person laser scanner. Delivering real-time data streams to a smartphone, this scanner captures indoor environments instantly, combining GrandSLAM technology and dual Time-of-Flight LiDAR sensors for colourized point clouds in the field.



**LG's Spectacular OLED Displays: 8K and Transparent Innovations**

LG 88-inch OLED 8K TV (Model OLED88Z3): A pinnacle of visual excellence, this ultra-premium TV offers advanced 8K resolution, razor-sharp images, and unparalleled details. Featuring LG's Next Gen OLED 8K AI Processor and webOS24, it stands as the most advanced 8K TV on the market in 2024.

**LG 4K Transparent OLED T:**

Breaking barriers with a 77-inch UHD transparent OLED TV, LG combines

aesthetics with technology. The customisable design and motorised contrast enhancement technology provide a unique viewing experience, blending seamlessly into various interiors.

**LG 118-inch Micro-LED 4K TV:**

Redefining visual technology, LG's Micro LED display offers breathtaking detail and vivid colours. With a super tight pixel pitch, this 118-inch display creates a canvas for photographers and digital artists, delivering unparalleled clarity and colour accuracy.



# Enhancing User Experience with True-to-Life Colours

By *Mr. Rajeev Singh, Managing Director, BenQ India & South Asia*



In the dynamic world of photography & videography, the marriage of vivid colours and state-of-the-art display technology serves as the canvas for visual storytelling. The intricate dance between the creators' lens and the hues on display is more than a technical necessity. As the pursuit of immersive imagery intensifies, the intersection of photography, colour accuracy, and display advancements take centre stage.

Accurate colour reproduction is absolutely vital for photographers & videographers to have immersive and efficient workflows. When the colour reproduction of their work monitor is sub-par, there is a possibility that they won't be able to obtain the colours they want when post-producing their work afterwards.

This has a great impact on people who rely on photography as their primary source of income. When the colours displayed on their monitors match real life, images and videos appear more realistic, allowing shutterbugs to vividly relive the moment the shot was taken. This results in higher engagement with each shot and facilitates more impactful and accurate editing.

Reproductions of landscapes that transport the viewer to the location and human skin tones that appear natural

as they did in the real world are two key elements that effortlessly hold a viewer's attention longer. For professionals to truly evoke emotions and transport viewers to a different time and place, the colours seen on display must precisely match real-world colours.

As a global leader in display technology, BenQ has always strived to come up with innovations that aid professionals to bring the best out of their craft. The SW PhotoVue monitors enable the accurate depiction of vividly colourful pictures in their truest form, aiding photographers to realise the full potential of their work.

A photographer's requirement from their equipment also changes according to the kind of work they do. A fashion and portrait photographer places much more emphasis on faithfully reproducing skin tones in their studio work. On the other hand, an architectural or product photographer will look for crisp, vivid colours and contrast to truly get the best out of their images.

With increasing expectations around colour precision, factors like wider colour gamuts providing fuller spectrum reproduction and display calibration delivering colour accuracy are top

priorities for photographers looking to buy monitors. True-to-life colour reproduction enables photographers to edit images & videos with their desired visual impact. Continual research into colour accuracy metrics like Delta E values and factory calibrations is also helping BenQ raise the bar in enabling stellar colour reproduction for photography workflows.

BenQ recognises how customers prioritise colour accuracy while choosing a monitor. The BenQ Professional monitors provide incredible coverage of the visible colour spectrum, considered essential for colour-critical editing in photography & videography. This exceptionally wide colour coverage combined with proprietary calibration technology ensures on-screen colours closely match real life.

Photographers are always on the lookout for the latest offerings in the world of display tech. The need for colour accuracy will always be ever-present. As research and development progresses and markets get more competitive, accurate and reliable colour reproduction will always be more important than most aspects of a monitor. **ISP**



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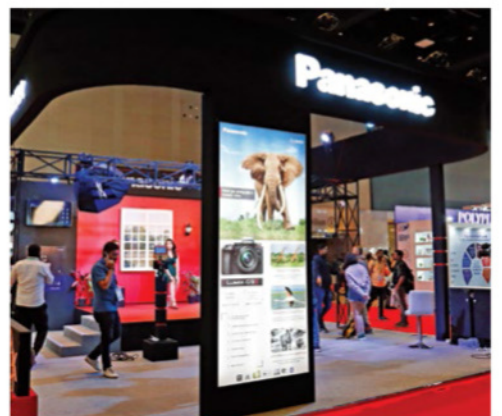
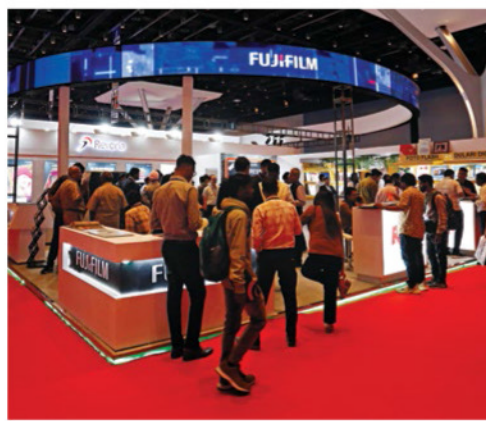


# SNAPSHOTS

# CEIF 2024







# POSTCARDS FROM GREENLAND



**Sridhar Swaminathan** calls himself a curious explorer. Having started his career in the oilfield rigs and platforms, Sridhar has traveled to 44 countries – some for work, some to run marathons and some for satiating his curiosity. Sridhar has also cycled from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and from Bhuj to Assam. He lives in Chennai and wishes to take his street Indie dog Oreo in a backpack around the world. He is @sridhar091 in Instagram and X (formerly Twitter)



Skeletons and bones of hunted animals are stacked atop the roof of a storage room in Sisimiut, Greenland

Row houses built atop rock outcrops in Sisimiut, Greenland



Impression of snow boots seen on the tracks of a snow mobile vehicle



The hide of a polar bear that was shot dead by the Municipal authorities because it repeatedly strayed into Sisimiut city in Greenland



A student cycles to school in front of a parked boat that was buried in snow.



One can ride a snow mobile for many kms on frozen lakes in Greenland.



The Sisimiut airport is a vital link to Greenland. Though it started as a heliport, it handles other planes now.



Many small towns in Greenland are accessed only via boats and GPS devices such as this one are vital to navigate the waters full of ice bergs

A traditional Inuit / Greenlandic shoe known as Kamik are made of sealskin and reindeer hide. With the soft fur being inside, it provides the much needed warmth during harsh Arctic winters.





Since large parts of Greenland experience permafrost, houses are built on top of rocks to provide a stable foundation and also for better insulation and protection.





Huskies occupy an important role in Inuit culture. They are used for pulling sleds and also for hunting and fishing expeditions. The life of Greenlandic people wouldn't be complete without huskies.

# DIVERSITY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE



Mattias Klum inches away from a banded water cobra in the Congo delta. Shot on assignment for National Geographic in Republic of the Congo.

**Mattias Klum** was born in Uppsala, Sweden in 1968. He has worked fulltime as a photographer since 1986, and as a cinematographer and director on numerous film and television projects since 1994. Mattias Klum is internationally recognized for describing and portraying animals, plants, and natural and cultural settings in the form of articles, books, films, lectures and exhibitions.


Mattias Klum's work has been featured in many international publications, such as National Geographic, Wildlife Conservation, Audubon, Geo, BBC Wildlife, Terre Sauvage, Stern, Der



**Mattias Klum**

Spiegel and The New York Times. Klum's photographs have been shown in one-man exhibitions at renowned museums and art galleries in the United States, Norway, Singapore, Malaysia, India, Japan, Botswana, China, Italy and Great Britain.

Over the years, he has received numerous awards and grants for his work. His Majesty the King of Sweden has granted Klum with his medal of the 8th grade with blue ribbon for his important contributions as a nature photographer.

[www.mattiasklum.com](http://www.mattiasklum.com)  
 [mattiasklumofficial](https://www.instagram.com/mattiasklumofficial)

## As Told to Girish Mallya

- **Tell us a little bit about your photography journey. Given multiple interests, did you start off as a photographer first or did it happen much later?**

My photography journey started at the age of 12-13 years, using my father's analogue camera. I became super passionate about photography already as a teenager. I started off as full time photographer when I was 17 years old, worked really hard and I got my first contract with National Geographic at age 23.

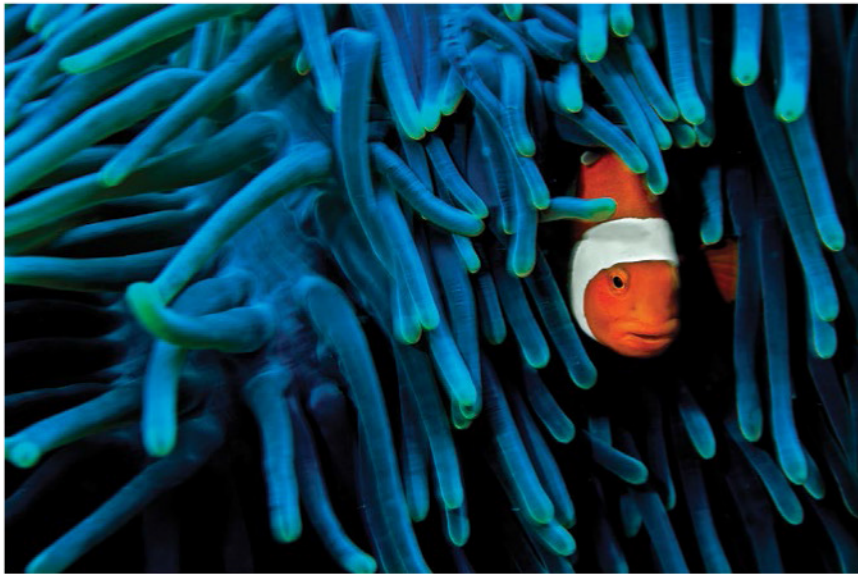


A female polar bear and her cubs take a well deserved snooze after devouring a bearded seal. Polar bears nap almost anywhere and any time, especially after feeding on a seal. Summertime sun never really sets in Svalbard. However light is softer and even more gorgeous at night. I usually choose to work "night shift" also since the polar bears (and other species) tend to be more active during night hours.

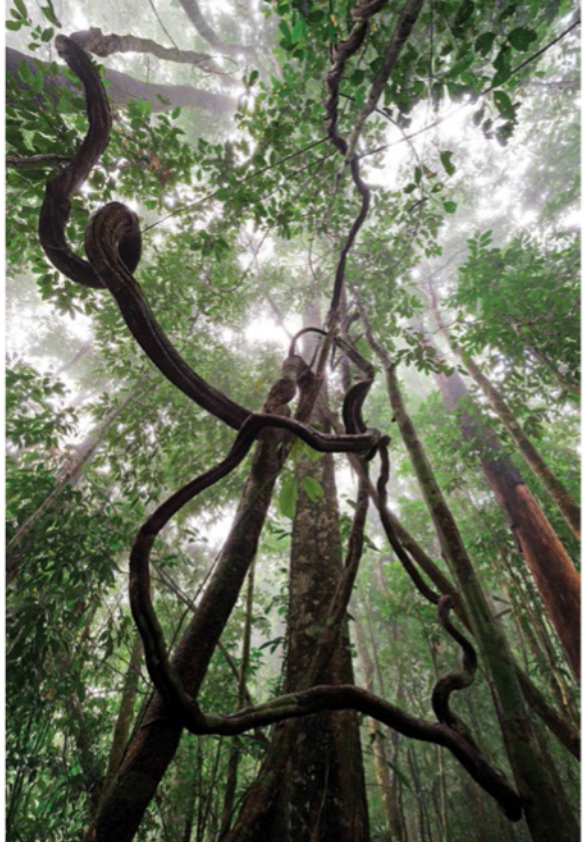
"This female cheetah and her playful cub gave me some unforgettable experiences". The latest cheetah census unfortunately suggests that these formidable cats, which are already few in number, may decline by an additional 53 percent over the next 15 years. Photographed in Phinda, South Africa.



The Congolese Water Cobra is very hard to find and has rarely been photographed. Shot on assignment for National Geographic in Republic of the Congo.



Cnidocytes (stinging cells) of the anemones are explosive defense cells, which send out toxin-filled harpoons when triggered by touch of an intruder. The clown fish however is a rare exception. These stinging cells of the anemone do not harm the clownfish, but instead gives it shelter. In return the clownfish defends the anemone from predators and keeps it clean from small harmful parasites. This clownfish was photographed in the beautiful coral reefs of Raja Ampat.



Early morning in Sarawak. Borneo's rainforest is considered to be at least 130 million years old and is the world's oldest. The Dipterocarp trees are the skyscrapers of the rain forest and can rise 70 meters from the ground. A bit further down is a wider, almost complete canopy at 30-40 meters that emit very little light down to the ground. Shot on assignment for National Geographic in Borneo.



A Jameson's mamba. Like other elapid snakes, the venom of the Jameson's mamba is extremely lethal. Unlike many other venomous snakes that have specialized in just one kind of venom, this mamba uses a cocktail of nasty surprises. Shot on assignment for National Geographic in Cameroon.



Tebaran a blowpipe hunter in Sarawak, predicted a difficult path ahead for indigenous people in Borneo, as logging operations and palm oil plantations rapidly engulf the land of his ancestors, rainforests that were abundant in plants and animals. Shot on assignment for National Geographic in Boreo.

So I feel blessed having been able to work for organisations like National Geographic and others for nearly four decades now. So this passion that hooked me already as a young boy has enabled me to travel the world and with my images, books, films, lectures, workshops and exhibitions inspire change.

But nothing, or very little, comes for free. Lot's of really hard work, determination, successful collaborations and very few days off is one recipe... It's a life choice and, like many artists would agree, as much as lifestyle as a job.

I love to do a lot of research for my projects, and I have frequently worked with scientists to try to add

dimensions to my work and to get a deeper understanding for endangered species, ethnic minorities in peril and ecosystems that are on the brink.

Over time I have developed different photographic languages depending on projects and how I choose to handle it. From artistic fine art installation projects to Natgeo-style documentarian assignment work...and I love the diversity.

■ **How do you see photography and imaging evolving in the social media and Ai age? What are the challenges you foresee in the near future?**

I think even more now than ever before its about trustworthiness and authenticity. You as the reader,

audience will ask yourself who is the conveyor or storyteller, can I trust this person, is he or she is trustworthy? Its a bit like in food, if you go to a Michelin restaurant or to a chef you know, there is a level of transparency, to actually know what you are eating and that chef will be celebrated for the quality of their work. Same thing with music, is this singer out of tune or their pitch incorrect or is this a person who can actually sing unaltered. It's all about this honesty or legacy, especially

when it comes to documentary work, as well as in photography, storytelling and filmmaking. It's not good or bad, but and as the storyteller or shooter the choice is yours. Where you want to belong?



Orangutan walking with attendant at the Nyaru Menteng Rehabilitation Center. This orangutan is one of the lucky ones. Although many female orangutans are killed when confronted in oil palm estates, their babies are often kept as illegal pets. Many of these babies die of starvation. But if rescued by NGO's specializing in trying to rehabilitate orangutans and return them to the wild, an increasing number survive. Shot on assignment for National Geographic in Indonesian Borneo.

■ **Which is your favorite photography destination and why does it continue to be a favorite?**

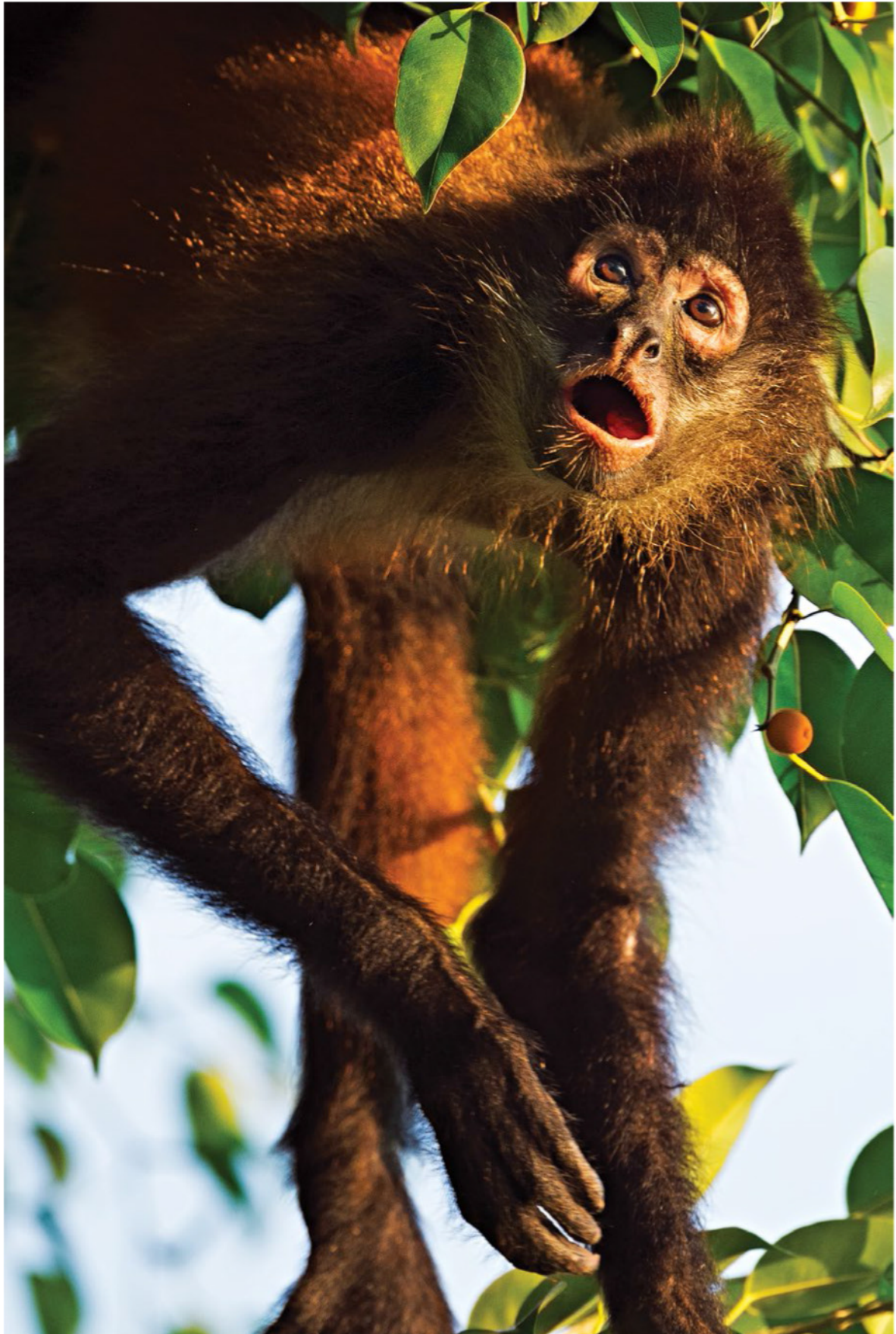
My favourite destination, now that is a very difficult question, because I love diversity, I cherish working with people, and I cherish working in the midst of of really remote natural realms far, far away from people. Harder and harder to find these days...but I have been to some of the remotest parts of the world and I have been sent there by National Geographic, New York Times or others or for my film projects. While I am grateful for that I also know we can find miracles, art and experiences really almost everywhere. You can find a great story or remarkable images anywhere and anytime, all the time. Its all about opening your mind and heart, and again, a lot of hard work. Research and love for the topic is required, but I also think practice is important and to find your own style. Its not good enough to just be a copycat, but you need to initially copy as it teaches you a wide range of techniques, but eventually you need find our own language that is recognizable and that can do justice to you and what's in front of your camera.

■ **Tell us a little about your photography gear, when you travel for a shoot.**

In terms of photography gear, I am shooting with Nikon, primarily using Z8 and Z9 and wide range of lenses and accessories. They are fast, reliable, advanced a literally unstoppable, and they perform the way I want. I am not someone who is obsessed about tech specs, but I know what I need to know. To me it's really about timing, texture and lighting, it's about being able



Male orangutan, Danum Valley, Malaysian Borneo Shot on assignment for National Geographic in Danum Valley, Borneo.



A Geoffroy's spider monkey performing an awe-inspiring jump in the rainforest of Osa Peninsula, Costa Rica. This species is listed as endangered even though it still occurs in some large areas of suitable habitat, logging operations across its range has been so severe that it is estimated that the species has declined by as much as 50% over the course of the past 45 years (three generations).



Stars and Aurora borealis, Svalbard



South American gray fox, in Torres del Paine National Park. This particular individual turned out to be a good model; beautiful, quite easily habituated and curious. That can not be said about all animals I have worked with over the years.





Jameson's mamba. Shot on assignment for National Geographic in Cameroon.



A female Asiatic lion photographed in Gir Forest National Park, India. It took me a year and a half to get a special permit to explore the entire Gir Forest for National Geographic—and really no time at all to see why these lions became symbols of royalty and greatness.



Sunrise in the Sal Forest of Kanha National Park, Madhya Pradesh, India.



Merino sheep Australia

to handle the light, obviously that takes knowledge and that the gear performs the way you expect. Sometimes it seems the general discussion is more about the camera and its features than the art of photography. To me the camera is just a tool, I am still a very manual shooter, maybe because I have done this for a while and my first years were completely analogue. I love to know exactly what happens, to be in full control and leaving the camera is in charge.

■ **Our readers would like to more about Mattias and his interests, beyond the photographer they see on Instagram and magazines.**

I am a 55 yr old photographer from

Sweden, right now living in London. I travel quite extensively for work. I have two grown up children. I guess I'm a passionate individual and I charge myself with energy through lots of music of all kinds and through people, animals and places I meet. I believe that by bridging the gap between the clever human mind and the emotional human heart, through sincere storytelling, through honest narratives, we are better equipped to meet the challenges we are facing globally with respect to climate change and the loss of biodiversity. To me that is the reason for me to continue doing what I am doing. I feel privileged that I get to work with something that fills me with purpose. This keeps me energized. |SP

**JOIN MATTIAS ON A PHOTO TOUR**

Don't miss the opportunity to join Mattias on one of his photo trips.

Right now, the following trips are available:

1. The best of Iceland  
<https://zoomphototours.com/best-of-iceland/>
2. Costa Rica tropical rainforests  
<https://zoomphototours.com/costa-rica-2025/>
3. Galapagos - The garden of Eden  
<https://zoomphototours.com/galapagos-2025/>



# WINGED BEAUTIES OF VIETNAM

The Jehangir Terrace Art Gallery in Mumbai showcased an exhibition of 56 bird photographs (13-17 December 2023) from 14 bird-lovers taken during a photo tour organised by Dr. Sudhir Gaikwad Inamdar under the banner of Wildwood Tours of India. All the photographs were shot in South Vietnam.

Says Dr. Chetan Ponshe, one of the tour members "Vietnam is extremely rich in its biodiversity with its splendid forests, wetlands and a long coastline. 270 species of mammals, 180 species of reptiles, 80 species of amphibians and almost 800 avian species abound the tropical forests of Vietnam.

We had spaced our seven days stay at Tan Phu Forest (2 days) which is about 40 km from Cat Tien National Park, Da Lat (3 days) and Deo Nui San/ Di Linh (2days). The forests are dense, and infested with leeches in some particular areas. The forest department from our safety point of view had only permitted us to use their hides for the purpose of photography. So in a sense we were restricted, but still the number of birds we saw and photographed were more than enough to keep our spirits soaring".

Below, we present 14 bird images, one each from the 14 tour participants for you to enjoy. |SP

Silver Breasted Broadbill



DURGAPRASAD MYLAWARAM: Works as an Under Secretary to the Government of Maharashtra. Mainly focusses on bird photography.



DR. DEVIPRASAD RAO: Practices Ayurvedic medicine in Mumbai. Likes experimenting and trying out various wildlife photography techniques.



SHIVAJI DESAI: A civil engineer by profession and an extremely dedicated wildlife photographer.



SWATI KALEKAR: Has a Master's degree in fine arts. Specially interested in monumental landscapes along with wildlife photography.

Black Collared Starling



DR.CHETAN PONKSHE: Holds a PhD degree in Zoology. Worked as an associate professor in a Mumbai suburban college.

Blue Rumped Pitta



**PRASHANT WAGH** : Works as an Under Secretary for the social justice department of Maharashtra Govt. Finds time from his busy schedule to follow his passion of wildlife photography.

Bar bellied Pitta



DR. ISMAIL SAMIWALA: A passionate wildlife photographer who works in the pharmaceutical industry.

Ochraceous Bulbul



**DR ATUL DESHPANDE:** Practises medicine and is an avid wildlife photographer with keen interest in bird photography

Rusty Naped Pitta



**DR . SANTHOSH KUMAR:** A doctor by profession. Loves travelling to capture wildlife through his camera lens.





Orange Necked Partridge

**DR MANGESH PRABHULKAR:** A practising dermatologist by profession, active trekker, naturalist and a wildlife photographer.



Vietnamese Greenfinch

**DEEPA SAPNE:** An entrepreneur and a wildlife photographer.

Germain's Peacock Pheasant



**DR SUDHIR GAIKWAD:** Practices medicine in Thane. Proprietor of Wildwoods Tours of India, columnist, highly decorated wildlife photographer with many national and international awards.

White Tailed Robin Male



**ANAND CHAVAN:** Worked with BPCL on a managerial post before retirement. Has cultivated a deep interest in wildlife photography.

White Throated Rock Thrush



**NEELANGI MORE:** An alumni of JJ School of Arts. Worked for advertising agencies and has a passion for wildlife photography.

## Mirrorless/DSLR Camera Gimbal

# SCORP-C

Versatile Filming, Capture Everything

## FEATURES

- Super weapon for single shooting, compatible with wide range of mirrorless & DSLR cameras
- Get complete control of the lens weather shooting upright or underslung while filming
- Gimbal is complete within internal holding telron bracket
- 5-way center of gravity adjustment with 3-axis motor lock & center of gravity memory slider
- New professional control panel with multiple buttons and joystick
- Create more possibilities with versatile magic wheel and follow focus
- 18w fast charging 2500 mAh efficient battery for 10-13 hours maximum run time
- Memorize AB trajectory, vision with one key to achieve the set movement



## Mirrorless/DSLR Camera Gimbal

# SCORP 2

Integrated Underslung Handle,  
Super Weapon For Solo Filmmaking

## FEATURES

- Super weapon for solo film making, With a load capacity of up to 2500g it can easily accommodate wide range of mirrorless and DSLR camera models
- New generation L shape mounting plate for instant vertical filming set-up
- Integrated smart AI tracking module for intelligent tracking and gesture control
- Integrated foldable telron bracket to set up gimbal without need of tripod
- Upgraded joystick and button for more delicate and smooth control
- Connect to camera wirelessly or through control cable
- 1.3" touchscreen to control gimbal functions
- Electric magic knob to control gimbal and zoom function
- 18w fast charging 2500 mAh efficient battery for 10-13 hours maximum run time
- Connect with feiyu scorp app to unlock more Professional settings.



# MY HIDDEN GEMS

## Part 1

**Tom Svensson**, lives in Sweden on the west coast in a small fishing village called Fjällbacka, not far from the Norwegian border. He is a conservationist who picked up the camera to make a difference. Tom is a person who puts a lot of feeling into his photos, and that is why big brands within the photography world want to be associated with him.



Photo by L. Brundin

**Tom Svensson**

[@tomsvensson1](#)  
[tomsvensson.conserva](#)  
 tionphotographer

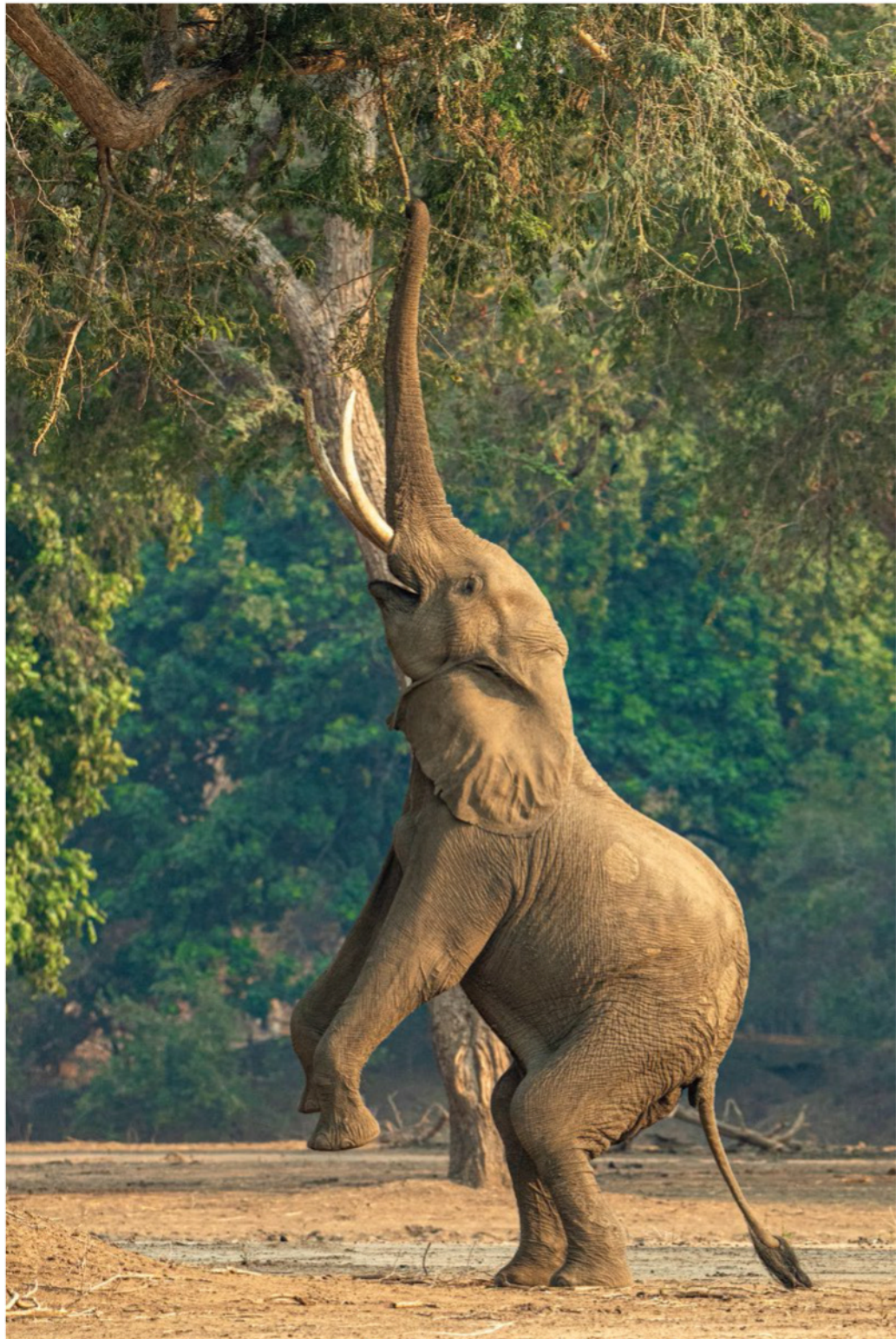
### As Told to **Girish Mallya**

In this series of articles, I will be sharing my favorite places from all over the world to get great photographs.

In my view, this is as close as one can get in this world of destroyed habitats when it comes to the Garden of Eden. I also understand why it is a UNESCO World Heritage site. A breathtaking place of pure wilderness, one that many people often long to come back to.

This amazing place is called Mana Pools in northern Zimbabwe.

My first trip there was many years ago. I still remember the first time we had set up our tent and sat outside, looking into our bush TV (fireplace), and the sun was going down. An elephant walked just in front of where we sat, and that feeling was amazing. It was in that moment that I fell in love with Mana Pools and the pure wilderness. Every day, we had elephants outside the tent, and very often at night, I could hear lions or hyenas walking around—an absolutely amazing feeling. There isn't much in the world that compares to that.





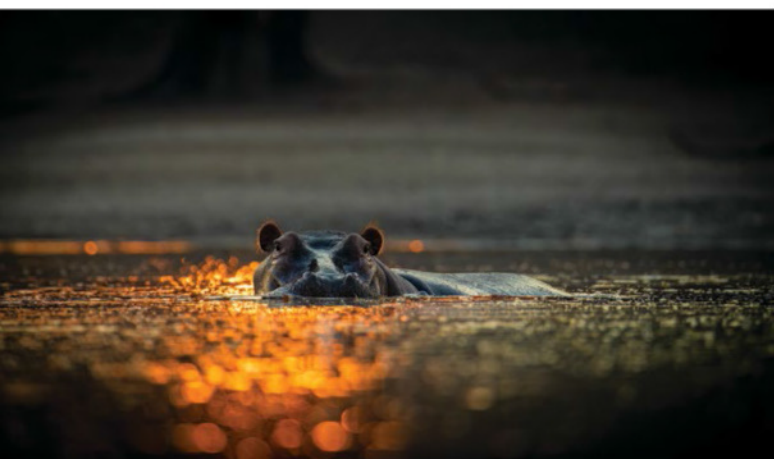
And then, the first time we drove to the blue forest and woke up early in the morning, elephants came walking, and the color in the photos was so blue. I thought that the blue in the few photos I had seen at that time from there was fake. Still, being there and seeing it, and also seeing in the photos how blue it really was, made me love the place even more.

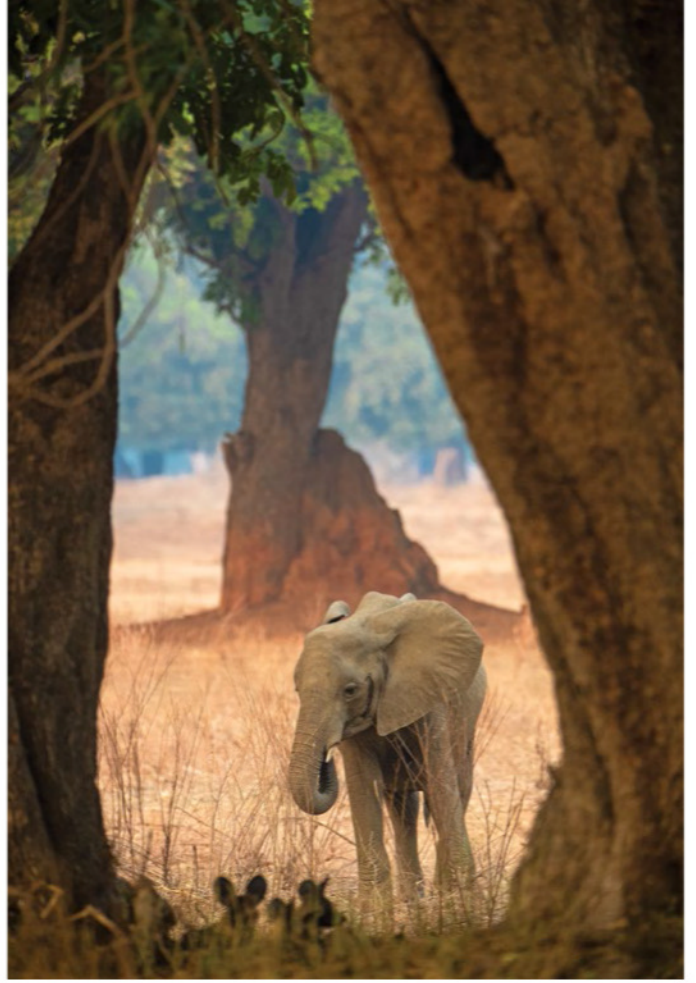
The light also comes through the tree crowns, so you get these amazing lights and so many possibilities to get great photos there. If you use that and underexpose, you will get some nice and different photos.

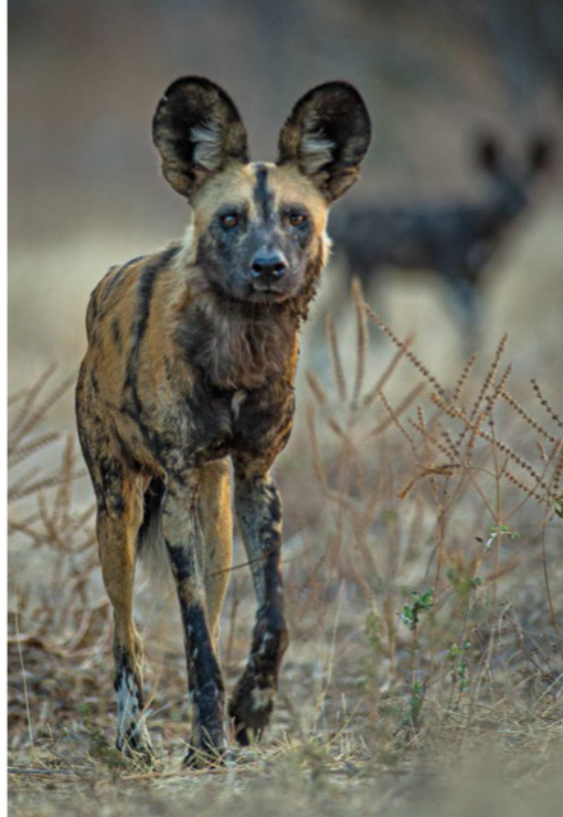
One can spend every morning and night there and get all different photos; composing there is just pure fun. One of the significant things in Mana is the elephants, and during the dry period, there are very many elephants around. If you sit down in the forest and just wait, they will walk very close, and that feeling is also amazing. Then you really understand how big they really are. But I must emphasize that it is always about showing respect towards animals, and they won't bother you as long as you don't disturb them or try to get too close. If you do, you will get a natural reaction, and then it is solely your own fault. So show them respect and stay calm, and you will get an amazing experience.

The same goes for lions; you can get by foot rather close to lions, but they will show you if you get too close. Just back off and sit down, and they will ignore you, and you can get really nice photos with their natural behavior in your photos. There is a nice population of lions in Mana Pools but also with leopards, showing that there is a balance between the carnivores.

And bird life is also great there, so if you like birds, you will see many different species. One of my favorites is ground hornbills with their amazing sound and interesting hunting technique. They use their wingtip, which is white, to distract snakes and bite them. When













they do, they just bite across their head, and dinner is ready—very smart and a good way to make sure you don't get any snakebite.

### Where to Stay

There aren't any hotels in Mana Pools, but quite a few lodges. They aren't open all year round. During the wet season, they all pack down, and the campsite is left back to animals again. I can recommend you find a lodge close to the river since that is where most animals will go to drink water. You can also bring your tent, and there are special camps you can put up on your own if you drive yourself in. But be careful and never walk outside after sundown since you are living among the animals, and you won't see them, but they see you. You are also allowed to walk inside Mana Pools, but for the first few times, make sure you have a ranger or guide with you.

### Photo Equipment

Since one is using jeeps mostly, I would

recommend you bring long lenses and a tripod. When you stand and wait for, say, an elephant to stand up on its back legs, it will be very heavy to stand with a long lens up and wait. You could also use a monopod with a gimbal on it, something I use a lot when out in the field.

I use my new Canon 200-800mm since I love to compose my photos when taking them and not after on a computer. But also bring a wide-angle if you want to take night shots. Since there is very little air pollution in this area, the Milky Way is really nice to take photographs of at night. It's important to bring a good tripod with a good ball head. Also, bring a remote trigger so you could put out the camera around camp when you see elephants walking, and you could get some nice photos then. I also always bring one extra camera if something happens to your main setup; you have a second option to use. I have never had that problem, but I bet you if I didn't bring that extra, it would have happened.

So better be safe than sorry.

### When to Go

I would also recommend you not to go during the really hot period, starting in October and November, since water dries out, and everything gets very brown with rather boring backgrounds. It will be too hot not only for you but also for animals.

### Other Equipment

Other things to bring are mosquito repellent since when we eat at night, many mosquitoes tend to come after us. Also, bring a long shirt and long-leg trousers; that will also help during the night to not get bitten. I also bring a towel when driving to cover my camera and lens when driving since it is very dusty during that period of the year, and your gear will be very dusty. Do make sure to clean it every night, especially the lens, so you don't get loads of small dots on the photos. If you do night shots, you must make sure your lens is clean. |SP



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# PRINTING AND BEYOND



**VIMAL PARMAR**, Digital Print Evangelist



**DHEER SANJAY SHAH**



**Vimal Parmar**

An independent marketing consultant and digital print evangelist with over 40 years of experience in the imaging industry.

[@vimalparmar](#)

# Exploring the Art of Personal Photobooks and the Vibrancy of CEIF 2024

**Dear Readers,**

Since the inception of our exploration into the world of photobooks, your feedback has been invaluable. Many of you have shared stories about creating photobooks—whether as a personal treasure, a thoughtful gift, or as part of a larger endeavour to share your visual narratives. The resonance of these tales has been inspiring, and we are eager to delve deeper into the experiences of photographers who have embarked on this creative journey.

In our quest for such narratives, I am reaching out to my network, both close and extended, to seek out photographers who have crafted photobooks for personal satisfaction. This search extends beyond professional photographers catering to clients with wedding albums, where the artistry is elevated to grand proportions. Wedding albums, with their larger-than-life

dimensions, ornate packaging, unique page designs, and post-print treatments, represent an intriguing facet of the photobook world. Stay tuned, as we plan to explore this fascinating topic in a future edition. But for now, we will stick to non-wedding albums.

If you have ever ventured into the creation of a photobook for your personal collection, I invite you to connect with me on my Instagram handle [@vimalparmar](#). Share your work, and let me dive into the story behind your creation.

On a broader note, January 2024 marked an exciting period for the photography community in India with the Consumer Electronic Imaging Fair (CEIF) 2024 held in Mumbai. Organized by the All-India Photographic Trade and Industry Association, this fair showcased the latest innovations from top brands in the industry. From January 11th to January 13th at the Jio World Convention Centre, Mumbai,

enthusiasts immersed themselves in the finest products of the photo imaging industry. The emphasis on print was evident, with brands spotlighting printers, digital presses, print substrates, and various finishing options, including the artistry of crafting photobooks and fine art framing. Attendees, deeply engaged in understanding the print ecosystem, demonstrated a genuine interest in both personal and client-focused printing.

In this issue, we shine a spotlight on Dheer Sanjay Shah, a Senior Business Analyst for IT projects. His black & white photobook, along with a calendar and a postcard, all centered around the same theme, creates a visual delight. I trust you will relish both the narrative and the accompanying visuals as we delve into his passion for photography and print.

**Warm Regards,  
Vimal Parmar**

# The Delightful Sensory Experience of Printed Visual Stories

## DHEER SANJAY SHAH

Mumbai

 @dheeeerr

**A**s a Senior Business Analyst for IT projects in a Paris-based company, my professional life revolves around designing and building applications. However, my passion lies in freezing moments in time through the lens of my camera. Photography, for me, is not just a hobby; it is a gateway to memories and connections.

### Unveiling the Roots

My photography journey has familial origins, stemming from my father's experiences in a photography club during the 80s. The tales of developing pictures in a dark room fascinated me, igniting my curiosity. My initial foray into visual storytelling began in college, where I created short films and secured first place in competitions. This marked the turning point that led me to intertwine my passion for photography with my professional life.

### The Photowalk Chronicles

Since acquiring my first camera in 2014, I have been an active participant in numerous photo walks, particularly with the Mumbai Instagrammers (@mumbai\_igers) community. From the iconic Worli Sea Face to the hidden gems of Reay Road ruins, each location offers a unique canvas for storytelling.

Photo walks, for me, transcend beyond photography tutorials. They are a journey into life, teaching valuable lessons about interaction, receiving advice, and gaining new perspectives on framing a shot.

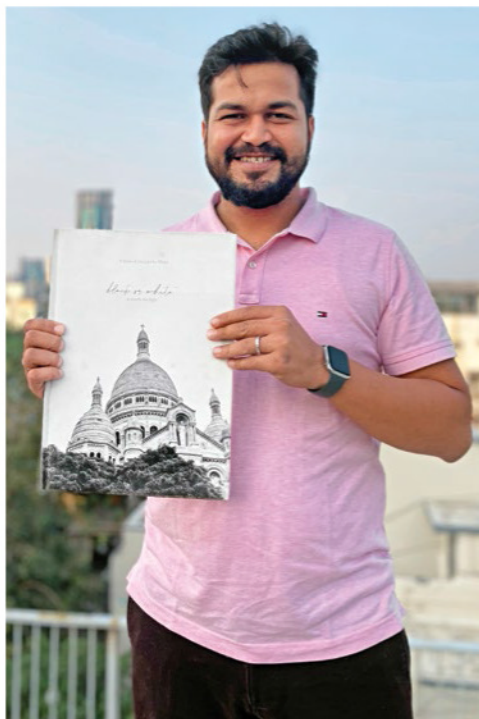
### "Black or White is Worth the Fight"

My photobook, titled "Black or White is Worth the Fight," encapsulates the memories forged during these walks and my travels to Paris. The black and white theme, inspired by photographers Raghu Rai and Alan Schaller, emphasizes simplicity, and evokes a timeless quality.

Designed initially on my smartphone, the book's final version was brought to life by my sister who is a graphic designer. With 32 pages, including the cover, and 21 carefully selected black and white images, the book aims to unlock and reminisce memories stored away in the recesses of my mind.

### The Power of Print

In a digital age where endless scrolling prevails, the tangible



nature of printed photographs brings a unique sensory experience. Print not only engages the sense of vision but also activates the sense of touch, creating a more immersive connection with the content.

The positive feedback I received about the layout, format, and paper quality affirmed my belief in the power of print. Some expressed interest in purchasing a copy, underlining the allure of a physical book in a world saturated with digital content.

### The Joy of Completion

Holding the first printed copy of my book was a surreal experience, a sense of achievement that filled a void I did not know existed. The journey from conceptualisation to delivery is indescribable, and one must experience it to truly understand the joy of completing a tangible project.

Despite initial challenges in choosing images, determining the sequence, and selecting paper quality, clarity emerged through meticulous planning. Convincing sceptics to print their photographs can be daunting, but the sensory pleasure of smelling freshly printed pages is a compelling argument.

### Beyond the Book

The journey did not end with the book. I extended these images into desk calendars and postcards, sharing pieces of my visual narrative with family and friends. The positive reception reaffirmed the significance of tangible photographs in a digital world.

### Looking Forward

As I continue to explore the space of photography, my next project involves compiling a book featuring the journey of my newborn child. In the words of Henri Cartier-Bresson, "Your first 10,000 photographs are the worst." This mantra propels me forward, encouraging perpetual learning and experimentation.

In conclusion, for aspiring photography enthusiasts, the journey of printing your book is an essential experience. It goes beyond visuals, immersing you in the sensory pleasure of holding your story in your hands—a journey every photographer should embark upon at least once in their lifetime. **ISP**

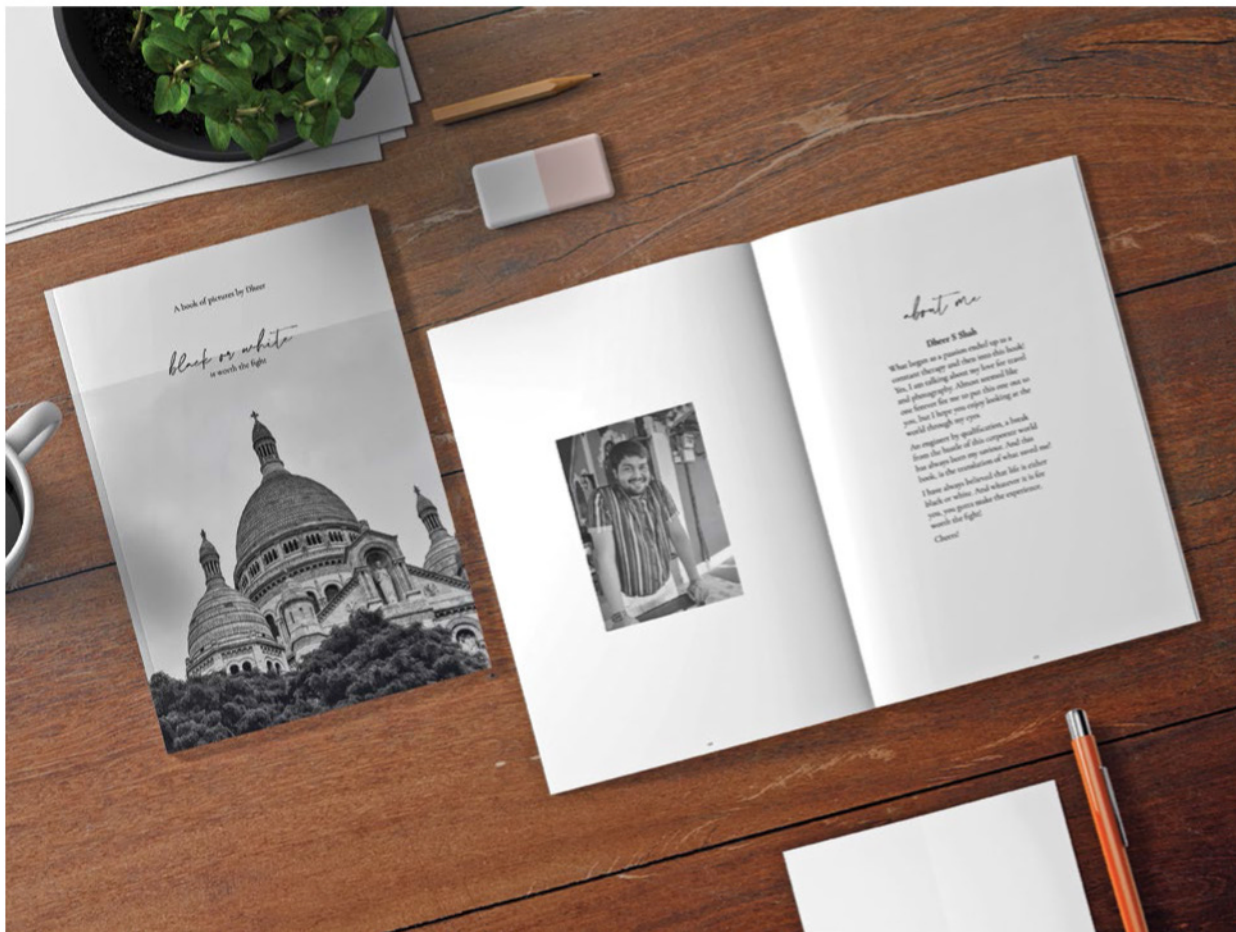


Cover page of the desk calendar

Cover and back cover of the photo book









Front side of the post card



Reverse side of the hand-written postcard that was sent through India Post



# LEARNINGS

## LEARNING

### The Lens Blur Tool



**Ashok Kandimala** has been in the photographic field for over three decades and has extensive experience in both film and digital photography being an electronic engineer by profession and a photographer by passion. He has published more than 100 articles on photography and equipment. He has also written several books on photography and more articles on photography have been published in various national and international magazines. Popular Photography, An aerial collector of photographic books and vintage cameras. Ashok has a keen interest in the history of photography and a passion for creating his own images as a photographer through his work and writing. He is the only Indian photographer to be featured on the Guinness Book of World Records. He is currently working as a Management and Engineering consultant. He can be reached at [kandimala@gmail.com](mailto:kandimala@gmail.com).



Picture 1

Which is your dream lens? For numerous photographers, it is the one capable of creating a seamlessly blurred background, allowing the main subject to stand out and imparting a three-dimensional appearance to the image. This outcome is influenced by various factors, including the lens's speed, design, subject-to-background distance, and more. Among these, the speed of the lens is arguably the most crucial, leading photographers to desire high-speed lenses with large apertures, resulting in a shallow depth of field.

The speed of a lens, denoted by its f/ number in relation to the focal length, determines its high-speed capability. For example, a 50 mm f/1.8 lens is considered

slow, while a 600 mm f/4 lens is deemed fast. Focusing on common focal lengths, such as 28 mm to 105 mm, apertures like f/1.8 are seen as moderately fast, and those of f/1.4 are considered fast. Advancements in technology have enabled the production of lenses ranging from 25 mm to 85 mm with even faster

apertures, such as f/1.2, and in extreme cases, even below the remarkable f/1.0 mark. Unfortunately, these rapid lenses, which yield appealing backgrounds, tend to be sizable, expensive, and challenging to use due to the need for precise focusing caused by the shallow depth of field at wide apertures.



Picture 2  
The screen of the Lens Blur Tool

Previously, Adobe had given photographers tools to correct aberrations in lenses. Now, it has advanced technically further and introduced a new feature called the **Lens Blur Tool** that can simulate the 'bokeh' of a fast lens by creating a blurred background. This is an AI-based tool (what else can it be?) While this is not a magic bullet and needs certain conditions to work well, its performance is nothing short of amazing. It is available in both Lightroom Version 13.1.1 and Photoshop ACR Version 16. It is also simple to use and being a post-processing tool, gives you a sort of flexibility that is impossible to get at the time when you are taking a photograph. Also, note that the Lens Blur tool is still under development and hence you will see a warning 'Early Access' and there is a button that you can use in case you want to share any feedback.

I have chosen a photograph (Picture 1) to demonstrate the tool. For reference, the EXIF data for this photograph is a Nikon Z6 full-frame camera, a lens of focal length 105 mm, and an aperture of f/6.3. As you would expect, the background at this aperture is not blurred as much as you would like it to be. We are now ready to start.

Locate the Lens Blur tool on the right panel in the Develop module of Lightroom or in the ACR. Let us look at the screen of the Lens Blur Tool (Picture 2). This has several options but the first and the most important one is the **Apply** check box (Picture 2A). You need to initiate the tool by clicking on the box. The software will use AI and create the very important 'depth map' based on the 'estimated' distances of the foreground, subject, and background. A depth map can be considered a mask like the one you create in Lightroom/ACR for adjustments but has a different purpose as it has depth (that is, distance) information. Based on the depth map the

amount of blur applied will be varied, thus attempting to replicate as closely as possible how it would have been when you took the photograph. We will see later how we can visualize (see) and edit the depth map.

Once you click on the Apply tick box, a depth map will be created using the default parameters. The created (using AI) depth map may not be perfect and the amount and type of blur applied may not be to your liking. That is, what should be sharp may be blurred or vice versa. However, there are features built into the tool to tweak these parameters.

The first slider you use is the **Blur Amount** (Picture 2B) and as the name indicates it controls the amount of blurring. The default is mid-way and you can move it left or right to decrease or increase blurring. Move it to suit your taste, but as always overdoing will not lead to pleasing results.

You must have heard of **bokeh**, a Japanese term that deals with the aesthetic quality of the out of focus areas (blurred areas). It is not just being out of focus but the beauty of it, however, subjective that may be. The Lens Blur Tool can create different types of bokeh. These are represented by 5 icons (Picture 2F) and are called **Bokeh Effect** options. The effect of these is very subtle and difficult to see unless you have some light sources in the background. Here is a brief description of the bokeh options given.

**Circle:** Modern lenses try to present a neat round bokeh and this setting tries to replicate that effect.

**Bubble:** Also called the soap bubble this type of bokeh has a thin bright edge to the bokeh circle. This is a characteristic of over-corrected spherical aberration. One of the well-known lenses that inhibits this bokeh is the Pentax 50 mm f/1.4 Super-Takumar lens from the early 1970s.

**5-Bladed:** Not very popular, this simulates the result of 5-bladed diaphragms of very old lenses.

**Ring:** This is another type of bokeh generally not preferred by many. It is

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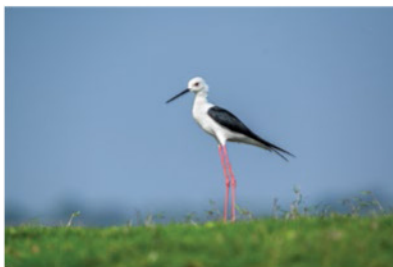
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## LEARNING

### Drop Shadow in Photoshop

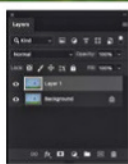


Starting image

**Q. So what exactly is a Drop Shadow? How does it help us?**

A. A Drop Shadow, as the name suggests, places a shadow under the photo, thereby giving us a visual impression of having a top-light shining down on the image. It also helps to separate the photo from the background thus giving a little bit of a 3D effect.

1. Open the photo in Photoshop.
2. Create a copy of the Background Layer (Control + J for Windows users) / Command + J for Mac) (Screenshot 1)



Screenshot 1

3. We will now extend the canvas. Go to **Image > Canvas Size**. In the dialog box that opens, click in the **Relative** check box and change the **Width** and **Height** from 0 to 5 (inches) as seen in Screenshot 2. How much extension



Screenshot 2

you provide is your choice and hence the figures for Width and Height will change accordingly. Ensure that White is selected as the canvas extension colour. Click **OK**. Screenshot 3 shows the photo with the white extension.



Screenshot 3

4. Double click on the icon on Layer 1 (the top Layer that you see in Screenshot 1 on the preceding page) and a **Layer Style** dialog box will open as seen in Screenshot 4.



Screenshot 4

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# The Lens Blur Tool



**Ashok  
Kandimalla**

**Ashok Kandimalla** has been in the photographic field for over three decades and has extensive experience in both film and digital photography. Being an electronics engineer by profession and a photographer, he possesses a unique and deep insight into the technical aspects of digital photography and equipment. He has published more than a 100 articles on photography and some of his writings have also been published in the well-known international magazine *Popular Photography*. An avid collector of photographic books and vintage cameras, Ashok has a keen interest in the history of photography and a passion for sharing his knowledge on photography through teaching and writing. He is the only Indian photographer to be featured on the Nikon Centenary website. He is presently working as a Management and Engineering consultant. He can be reached at [kashokk@gmail.com](mailto:kashokk@gmail.com).

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Picture 1

slow, while a 600 mm f/4 lens is deemed fast. Focusing on common focal lengths, such as 28 mm to 105 mm, apertures like f/1.8 are seen as moderately fast, and those at f/1.4 are considered fast. Advancements in technology have enabled the production of lenses ranging from 35 mm to 85 mm with even faster

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**Picture 2 :**  
The screen of the Blur Tool in ACR.

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**Ring:** This is another type of bokeh generally not preferred by many. It is

Previously, Adobe had given photographers tools to correct aberrations in lenses. Now, it has advanced technically further and introduced a new feature called the **Lens Blur Tool** that can simulate the 'looks' of a fast lens by creating a blurred background. This is an AI based tool (what else can it be?). While this is not a magic bullet and needs certain conditions to work well, its performance is nothing short of amazing. It is available in both Lightroom Version 13.0.1 and Photoshop ACR Version 16. It is also simple to use and being a post-processing tool, gives you a sort of flexibility that is impossible to get at the time when you are taking a photograph. Also, note that the Lens Blur tool is still under development and hence you will see a warning 'Early Access' and there is a button that you can use in case you want to share any feedback.

I have chosen a photograph (Picture 1) to demonstrate the tool. For reference,

the EXIF data for this photograph is a Nikon Z6 full-frame camera, a lens of focal length 105 mm, and an aperture of f/6.3. As you would expect, the background at this aperture is not blurred as much as you would like it to be. We are now ready to start.

Locate the Lens Blur tool on the right panel in the Develop module of Lightroom or in the ACR. Let us look at the screen of the Blur Tool (Picture 2).

This has several options but the first and the most important one is the **Apply** check box (Picture 2#1). You need to initiate the tool by clicking on the box. The software will use AI and create the very important '**depth map**' based on the 'estimated' distances of the foreground, subject, and background. A depth map can be considered a mask like the one you create in Lightroom/ACR for adjustments but has a different purpose as it has depth (that is, distance) information. Based on the depth map the

characterized by a thick bright ring (doughnut shaped). It is found when using mirror lenses. These lenses are very rare these days and no major manufacturer is producing them now.

**Cat Eye:** These look more like ellipses but with pointing (rather than curved) ends thus giving an appearance of a cat eye. Adobe says it is caused by optical vignetting in lenses. Certain very high speed lenses currently being made, exhibit this bokeh, especially toward the edges.

There is a slider called **Boost** (Picture 2#4), and this controls the quantum of the effect of the bokeh type chosen.

We are next getting into an area that is more dependent on our skills than AI. AI cannot be perfect always and sometimes needs our touch (and thank God for that). Just like the way you can fine tune any adjustment mask or a selection, you can do the same to a depth map.

Now, we come to the most important part and it is called the **Focal Range** (Picture 2#5). This is the color coded subject distance bar and is a sort of graphical representation of the depth that is, the distance from the camera up to the subject (foreground), the subject and beyond the subject (background) right up to infinity, left being nearer and the right farther.

In the Focal Range bar, you can see a white slider box (Picture 2#6). This is the focal range indicator and dragging it to the left or right will move the focal point closer and away from the camera. You can consider it to be the equivalent of rotating the focus ring on your lens, manually. There is one more trick. The width of the box represents the depth of field – and you can decrease or increase DOF by changing the width (narrower or wider) of the box! Click just outside the box and drag.

If you are not happy with the depth map, look for two icons on the right (Picture 2#7). These two represent **Subject** and **Target**. The former is the default, and the subject will be detected automatically by the tool using AI. If you choose Target, then you can click on a



Picture 3: The depth map.

point on the image and that point will become the point of focus!

Either way, the software decides what is near, intermediate, or far. If you want to see what has been done, click on the **Visualize Depth** box (Picture 2# 8) and your picture will be overlaid with a mask that shows the depth map. This is a special mask where light colors starting from white indicate the nearest distance, becoming yellow as the distance gets farther, and then taking on darker colors like purple for greater distances and ultimately black for infinity (Picture 3)!

Now, are you happy with this mask? Has the tool created a depth map accurately, as shown by the color code? If you are satisfied with the mapping done by the tool then you are fine. Just click on the Apply checkbox and you are done.

However, what if it is not? No worries. You can use a procedure you are

already familiar with. This is like the modifications that you do to the adjustment masks created by the masking tools (e.g., linear gradient, select sky, etc.) in Lightroom and ACR, using the brush tool (Picture 2#11). Select the Size, Feather, and Flow of the brush. Also, tick **Auto Mask** (Picture 2#12) as this will help to detect the edges, making selection/erasing easy when using the brush.

Let us take a specific case. You have observed that some areas that you wished to be blurred are in focus. So, click on the **Blur** button (picture 3#9) and paint the area that you want to blur. Then using the **Amount** slider (Picture 2#10), make sure that the newly blurred area blends with the surroundings. Follow the same process if you want the blurred areas to be in focus. However, instead of Blur, click on the **Focus** button (Picture 2#9). The rest is the same.

**Picture 4:**  
The final result  
after applying  
the Blur Tool.



I suggest that you choose a raw image of a portrait that has good background separation, make a copy, and start experimenting. Both Lightroom and ACR are non-destructive and you can freely try out all the options available.

One doubt that you might get is - why not use select subject, invert, and then use negative values of Texture, Clarity, and Sharpen sliders to blur? Well, the blur produced by a fast lens is notoriously difficult to replicate and is

very different from what you would get by using the aforementioned sliders. Considerable computation power is also required not just to create a realistic blur but also to detect the subject and create a depth map.

Picture 4 shows the result with the image processed with the default settings of the Lens Blur too. |SP

All text, diagrams, and images © Ashok Kandimalla

## CONCLUSION

As with all tools, there are limitations. However, as software gets smarter, we will be able to see more capability being achieved. Some Internet sites have claimed, that with the Blur Tool, the days of the fast lenses are over and you can get the same result with a low cost lens that is much lighter and smaller. The author is not prepared to go that far but who knows what will happen in the future.

# Drop Shadow

## in Photoshop

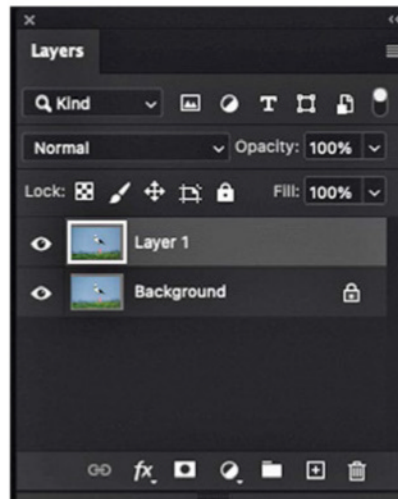


Starting image

**Q. So what exactly is a Drop Shadow?  
How does it help us?**

A. A Drop Shadow, as the name suggests, places a shadow under the photo, thereby giving us a visual impression of having a top-light shining down on the image. It also helps to separate the photo from the background thus giving a little bit of a 3D effect.

1. Open the photo in Photoshop.
2. Create a copy of the Background layer (**Control + J for Windows users**) / **Command + J for Mac**). ([Screenshot 1](#))

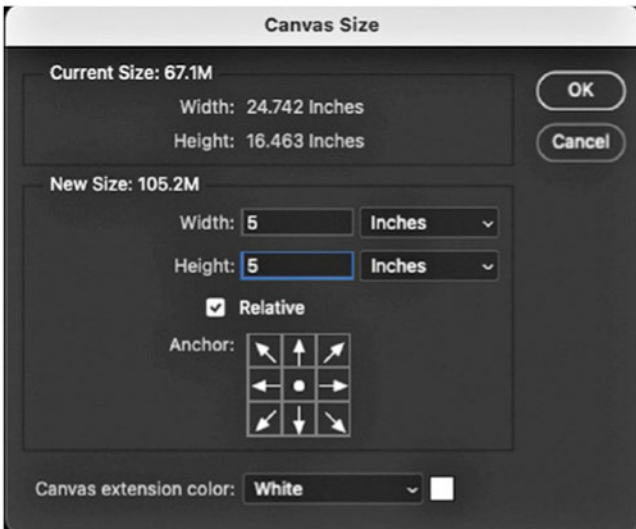


Screenshot 1

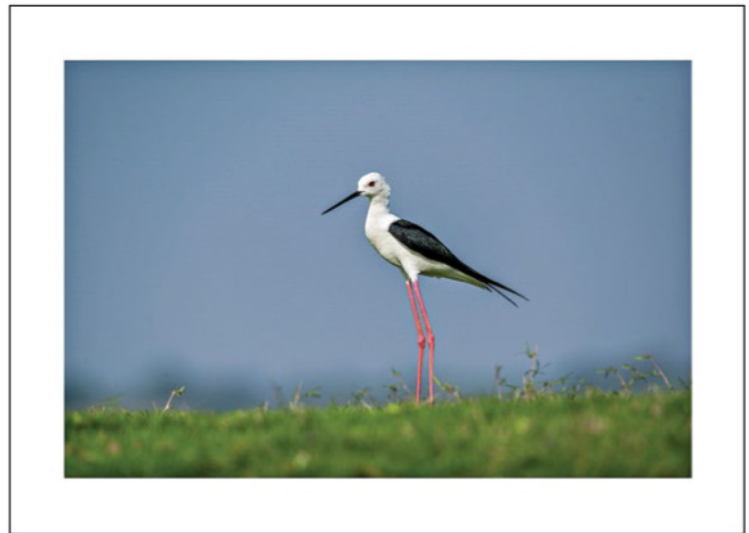


3. We will now extend the canvas. Go to **Image > Canvas Size**. In the dialog box that opens, click in the **Relative** check box and change the **Width and the Height** from 0 to 5 (inches) as seen in [Screenshot 2](#). How much extension

you provide is your choice and hence the figures for Width and Height will change accordingly. Ensure that White is selected as the canvas extension colour. Click **OK**. [Screenshot 3](#) shows the photo with the white extension.

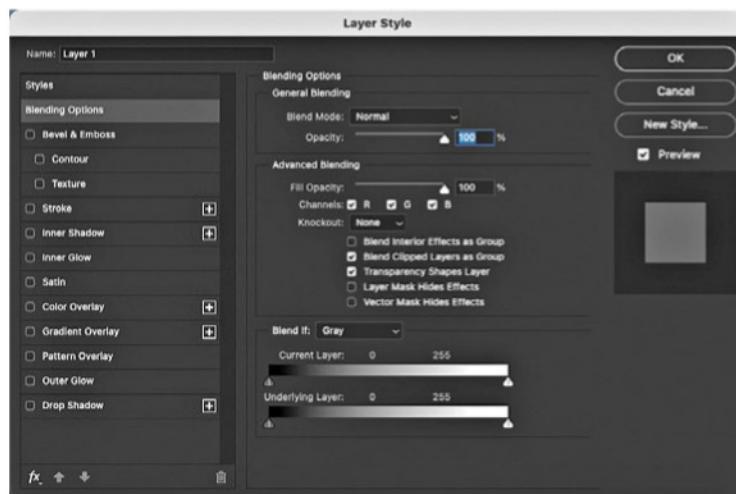


Screenshot 2



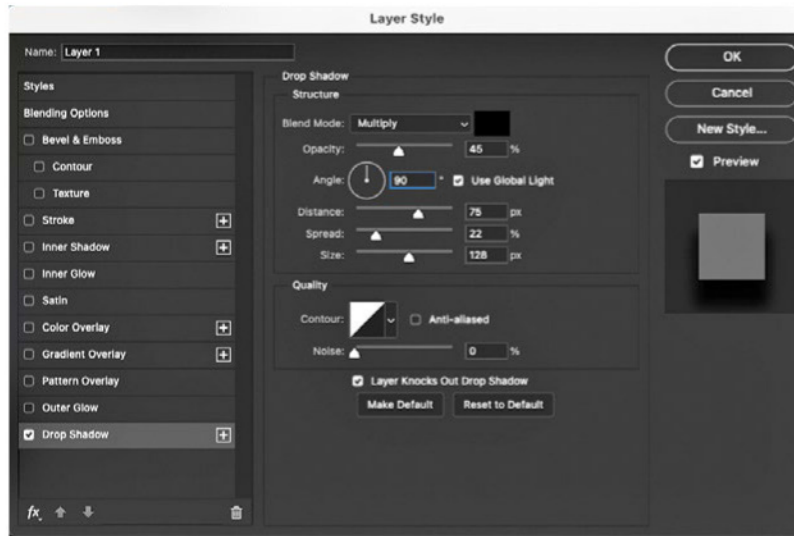
Screenshot 3

4. Double click on the icon on Layer 1 (the top Layer that you see in [Screenshot 1](#) on the preceding page) and a **Layer Style** dialog box will open as seen in [Screenshot 4](#).



Screenshot 4

5. Tick the checkbox for **Drop Shadow**. Set the **Angle** to 90 degrees and set the **Distance, Spread and Size** as per your taste (or simply follow my settings). See [Screenshot 5](#).



Screenshot 5

6. This step is optional. Select the **Text Tool** (shortcut T) from the Tool Box but make sure that at the lower end of the Tool Box, black is set as the foreground colour (if white is selected as the foreground colour... well, you cannot write with white on a white paper!) ([Screenshot 6](#)).
7. From the top left, select the **Font and Font size** of your choice. I have selected Myriad Pro as the Font and 60 Point as the size.
8. With the Text Tool selected, click on the lower white border of the photo and provide a title to the photo. You may also type the copyright sign with your name (**Alt + 0169 for Windows / Shift + Command G for Mac**). You can also select the text and change the font/size. The Move Tool (shortcut V) can be used to move the text to the desired position. Click the Enter button on the keyboard to accept the text.
9. Flatten the Layers and Save the image. |SP



Final

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# LIFE

## UNADULTERATED



**Tanvi Joshi**

I am a contemporary and fine art photographer based in Mumbai, India. My experience spans over 10 years where in I have worked as a photographer with multiple brands like Pizza Express, India Bulls, etc while working as a in house photographer and visual expert with Perfect Relations Pvt Ltd. After that I completed my professional degree in photography from Shari Academy in 2016, where I broke the Academy's 25-year record of being the only student to win nine awards at the passing out exhibition.

I now for the past 7 years have been working as an independent photographer available on contract basis with corporates and stand alone brands, like National Geographic Traveller India, Happionaire, Coach Saloni Suri, Zeiss India, Kedar Camp Resorts Guptkashi, HSBC INDIA, CONNECT Festival etc

**Tanvi Joshi** Contemporary and FineArt Photographer Projects Website - <https://tanvijoshiphotography.myportfolio.com>

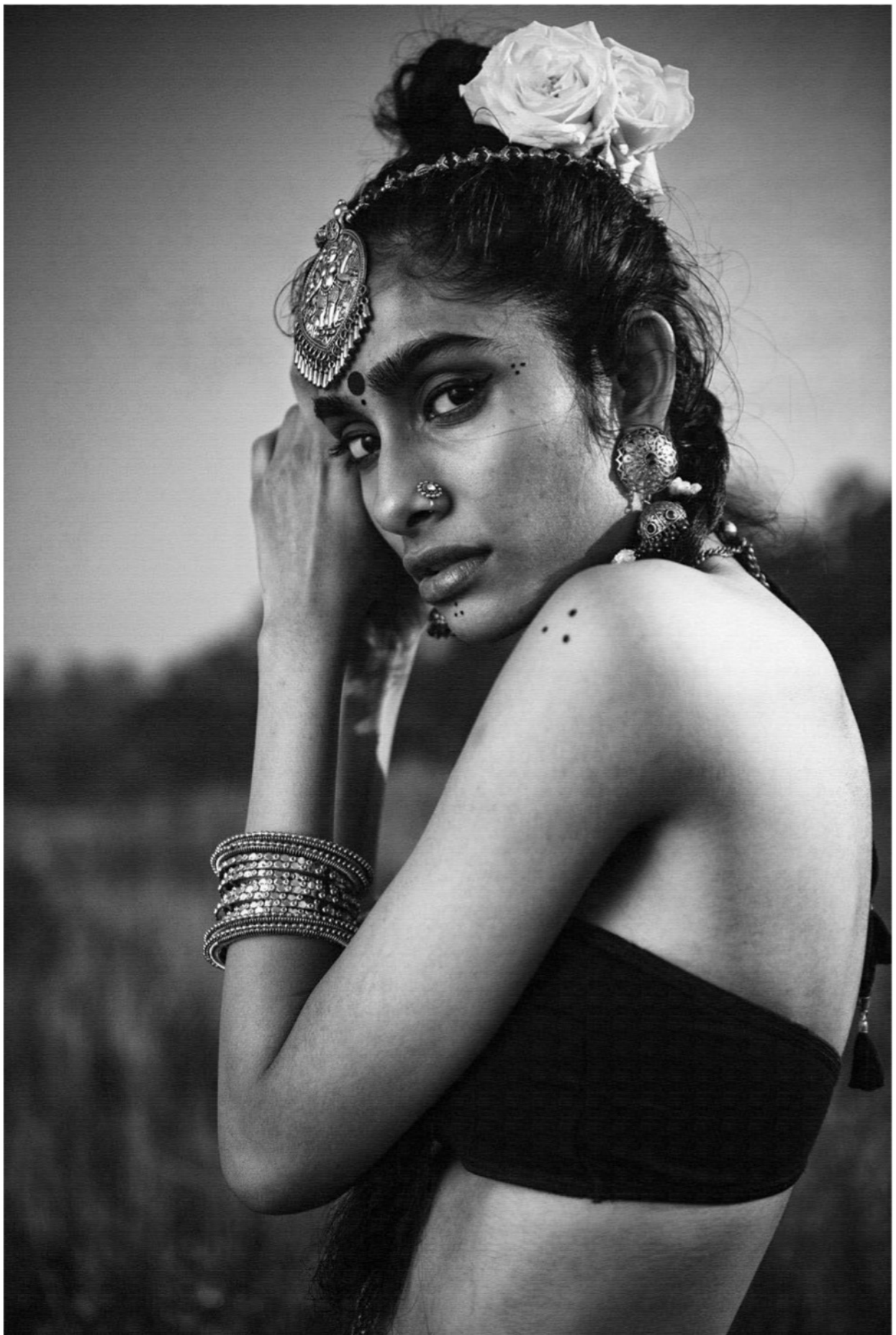
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**Linkedin** - <https://www.linkedin.com/in/tanvi-joshi-55550615/>

 [tanvijoshiphotographywork/?hl=en](https://www.instagram.com/tanvijoshiphotographywork/?hl=en)

Photographed at around 3 - 3.30 pm in natural light, in the month of September.





Photographed at around 9 - 9.30 am in natural harsh light. It was bright and sunny that day. Main light is falling on her back, a reflector has been used as a fill on her face and hands.



Photographed outside Bandra Railway Station, Mumbai, at around 11 – 11.30 am in natural diffused light. It was raining heavily that day.

Old Lady at Kutch, Gujarat. Photographed at around 9 - 9.30 am in natural light. It was sunny that day.



©TANVI JOSHI  
ZEISS MILVUS 1.4/85 ZF.2



Tso Moriri: Photo taken in the morning at around 9 – 9.30 in natural light. In the month of July.



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# REVIEWS

## FINAL RATING

The final ratings given in the reviews are not an indication of the performance or features of the reviewed device in isolation. It is a combination of all parameters including the price of the product.



82

### Lens Review

Nikkor Z 135 mm f/1.8  
S Plena

86

### Mirrorless Review

Sony A7CR



88

### Monitor Review

ViewSonic VP16-OLED

Nikkor Z 135 mm f/1.8 S Plena Lens ₹2,42,995

# A superlative telephoto lens with performance next to none!

by Ashok Kandimalla

The “Plena” belongs to the premium quality ‘S’ line family of lenses from Nikon. Unlike the German companies, which often give names to their lenses (such as Sonnar, Summicron, Xenon, etc.), Japanese companies typically do not do so. However, Nikon departs from this tradition by naming lenses that possess exceptional qualities, as seen with the “Noct” f/0.95 lens. The designation of ‘Plena’ as their second named lens underscores its exceptional nature and distinctiveness within the lineup. The name itself was derived from ‘plenum’ a Latin word that denotes the state of a space being completely full.

## Design & Build Quality

This is a very large and heavy lens as the specs suggest. The general appearance is very similar to the already reviewed Nikkor 85 mm f/1.2 lens. The body is fully metal. There are two rings – the first for focussing and the second is customisable. At the top, there is a ‘faux ring’ that the user manual refers to as a ‘rubber grip’ and is useful for mounting and unmounting this massive lens. The usual switch for AF/MF selection is also present. There are seals all over to make the lens dust and moisture-proof. On the barrel, you can see the word ‘Plena’ beautifully engraved and filled with yellow paint.

## Key Features

This is a complex lens with 16 elements in 14 groups (including 4 ED elements, one aspherical element, and one SR element). The coatings employed are Arneo and advanced Meso Amorphous that help in backlight situations improving contrast. Plus, there is the usual Nano Crystal Coating to reduce flare and ghosting.



## Inside the Box

- ✓ Lens
- ✓ Snap-on front lens cap
- ✓ Rear lens cap
- ✓ Bayonet lens hood
- ✓ User manual
- ✓ Soft pouch
- ✓ Warranty card

The focussing is internal. The control ring can be customised to set either aperture, ISO, or exposure compensation. The ‘L-Fn’ button (which is also duplicated) can be programmed to perform any one of the 21 different functions. The lens does not have any image stabilisation as that function is expected to be fulfilled by the camera through its internal VR (IBIS).

## Ergonomics

On the smaller Z full-frame bodies (e.g., Z6/7), the entire weight of the lens must be borne by the left hand and the right hand is to merely aim and shoot. However, the combo is surely usable. On a Z9 (or Z8), the balance is better. Both the rings have distinctive ribbing to distinguish them and are very smooth

Camera: Nikon Z9  
 Lens: Nikkor Z 135 mm f/1.8 S Plena Lens  
 Aperture: f/1.8  
 Shutter Speed: 1/800 sec  
 Focal Length: 135.0 mm  
 ISO: 1600



with perfect damping. The L-Fn buttons can be operated easily but it will help if you keep your left hand a little to the back for better reach.

## Performance

Sharpness these days is a given with most modern lenses and for a flagship lens like this, it is more so. The open aperture performance was superlative at the center as well as the edges, and we could see only a very minute improvement when the aperture was reduced by a stop. Truly an outstanding performance!

The overall contrast was excellent and the lens exhibited extremely low distortion. The aberrations were well corrected and the colours were vibrant. The flare control was very good and never showed up even when used with bright light sources in the frame. The usual caveat. Please remember that what we have written here is after the automatic corrections are done by the raw converter using the lens supplied profiles and in practice, this is what you will also see.

## FINAL SCORE



### Design and Build Quality



### Key Features



### Ergonomics



### Performance



### Value for Money



### Overall



## PLUS

- Extremely delightful bokeh
- Superb overall performance, even wide open
- Solid build quality and finish
- Perfectly damped rings

## MINUS

- Expensive
- Very large and heavy

## KEY SPECIFICATIONS

**Focal length & coverage:** 135 mm, Full frame (24 x 36 mm)

**Aperture range:** f/1.8 to f/16, diaphragm with 11 rounded blades

**Lens construction:** 16 elements in 14 groups

**Picture angle (diagonal):** FX Format 18° 10' or DX format 12°

**Highest magnification:** 0.2 X

**Focusing Range:** 82 cm to ∞

**Filter/attachment size:** 82 mm

**Lens Hood:** Supplied

**Dimensions (diameter x length):**

98 mm x 139.5 mm

**Weight:** 995 g

Camera: Nikon Z9

Lens: Nikkor Z 135 mm f/1.8 S Plena Lens

Aperture: f/1.8

Shutter Speed: 1/160 sec

Focal Length: 135.0 mm

ISO: 4500



Nikon in its sales promotion of this lens, emphasises the aspect of 'bokeh' (the quality of out of the focus rendering). From our tests and observations, we must agree that Nikon nailed it! The shape of the out of focus highlights is perfectly round at the center and only goes slightly out of shape towards the edges. Once again, this is quite remarkable for a lens of this focal length and speed.

The fall-off from sharp to out-of-focus areas is buttery smooth making the main subject to 'pop' out of the background.

When paired with the flagship Z9 body, the AF was very fast (though not as fast as the new Z super telephoto lenses). When the eye-detect feature was

enabled, the camera found the eyeball or pupil and focussed on it almost instantly.

### Value for Money

This lens is priced at Rs. 2,42,995/- (MRP). No doubt, an eye watering

number! Yet, upon examining the performance, one will observe that lenses possessing similar capabilities and specs come with a hefty price tag. We can say that the price is in the same ballpark for comparable lenses. |SP

### VERDICT

This lens not only boasts premium quality in all aspects but arguably stands out as the best 135 mm lens available in the market today. It excels in every aspect, from its construction to optical performance, achieving top-tier status with very few or no exceptions. Nikon emphasises the exceptional quality of bokeh, and rightfully so, as the rendering of out-of-focus elements is incredibly smooth. The transition from sharply rendered portions to the out-of-focus areas is gradual, allowing the in-focus areas to stand out without appearing harsh.

However, using this lens requires precise technique, as it can be unforgiving, especially when employed at the widest aperture. Even the slightest focussing error can lead to subpar image quality. Its primary competitor is Nikon's own 85 mm f/1.2 lens, priced similarly but offering even higher speed at a shorter focal length. Now, photographers face a choice between two exceptionally high-performance short telephoto lenses – a desirable situation, provided one has the financial means!



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### 2<sup>ND</sup> PRIZE

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### 3<sup>RD</sup> PRIZE

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All entries must be received by this date. The 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> prizes will be chosen by the editorial staff of Smart Photography and the National results will be published in the June issue.

### INTERNATIONAL JUDGING: JUNE 2024

National Maestro winners will also be published on Facebook at the end of June for the EISA Public's Choice competition. Prize for the winner: €1000.



The winning entries from each of the 16 participating EISA countries will then be judged together at the Association's General Meeting in June 2024. The final results of the International Maestro contest will be celebrated at the EISA Awards Gala in Sept 2024 and revealed, online, alongside the EISA product Awards on Aug 15<sup>th</sup> 2024

The winning photographs will be published in the Sept/Oct issues of all 16 EISA photo magazines/websites. Circumstances permitting, winners will be invited to the EISA Awards ceremony in Sept 2024



For further details, terms and conditions visit [www.eisa.eu/maestro](http://www.eisa.eu/maestro) and [www.smartphotography.in/maestro2024](http://www.smartphotography.in/maestro2024)



### Inside the Box

- ✓ Camera body
- ✓ Battery (NP-Z100)
- ✓ Shoulder strap
- ✓ Body cap
- ✓ Accessory shoe cap
- ✓ Grip extension

Sony A7CR ₹2,93,990

# A Compact Performer

▣ Hoshang Billimoria

Sony's supremacy in the full frame mirrorless market is attributable to both an early entry and to the wide range of models that are offered at various price points. Accordingly, there are SLR style offerings like the A7R V and the A7 IV and compact type options like the A7C. Being reviewed is the Sony A7CR, which looking at its specs, is a compact version of the A7R V. The A7CR came with a 28-60 mm f/4-5.6 retractable lens.

## Design & Build Quality

The A7CR has a design similar to the A7C and is remarkably compact at 124 x 71.1 x 63.4 mm. The body is made from magnesium alloy and is claimed to be dust and moisture resistant. Body weight is 515 g with card and battery.

## Key Features

The A7CR comes with a 61.0 MP back illuminated Exmor R CMOS sensor. An advanced Bionz XR engine boosts processing speed 8 times.

A next gen autofocussing system has been provided with advanced subject recognition abilities. Humans, animals, birds, insects, cars, trains and planes can be detected by the autofocus system.

The autofocus system is a fast, hybrid type using both phase detection and contrast detection and 693 AF points are available to autofocus. Continuous shooting at up to 8 fps with AF/AE tracking is possible with the mechanical shutter. Sony's excellent 1200-zone evaluative metering is also available. So is spot metering.

Shutter speeds range from 1/4000 to 30 sec plus Bulb in still mode with the mechanical shutter. With the electronic shutter, shutter speeds can range from 1/8000 to 30 seconds. In movie mode, shutter speeds range from 1/8000 to 1 second.

ISO speeds range from 100 – 32000 in still mode and 50 – 102,400 in movie mode. Dynamic range at lower sensitivities is claimed to be an impressive 15 stops.

5 axis image stabilisation has been provided which can provide up to 7 stops stabilisation.

The A7CR comes with a 3 inch TFT (thin film transistor) monitor that has 1.04 million dots and is variable. The 1 cm electronic viewfinder features 2.3 million dots and 0.70x magnification.

Images can be recorded on recording formats RAW, JPEG and HEIF (High Efficiency Image File).

On the video front, the camera can record 4K resolution at 60 fps. 4K 60 fps footage however comes with a 1.24x crop. For video, the Sony uses 10-bit 4:2:2 colour sampling. 4 channel audio recording is also possible. Slow motion and quick motion shooting is also enabled.

Stereo headphone sockets and microphone sockets are provided. So are USB-C and Micro HDMI ports.

Wi-fi and Bluetooth connections can be enabled. Sony's Creator's App allows remote control of the camera from your phone.

Strangely, a charger cable is not provided with the camera.

## Ergonomics

The compact camera type design of the A7CR is an alternative to the SLR style. Being small and lightweight, the A7CR definitely needs a grip and Sony has thoughtfully provided one. The handgrip is also nicely shaped. Together with the grip, the A7CR handles well. However, the A7CR is best

Camera: Sony A7CR  
 Aperture: f/5.6  
 Shutter Speed: 1/30 sec  
 Focal Length: 60.0 mm  
 ISO: 800



coupled with prime lenses or non-professional zooms in order to avoid camera-lens balancing issues.

The addition of a front control dial is a plus and helps handling considerably. In the absence of a joystick, autofocus point control is cumbersome.

Having only one slot for an SD card may be a restricting factor for some. The longish battery life of 490 – 530 shots with the NP – FZ 100 battery is a plus point.

### Performance

With a 60 MP sensor, the A7CR has to deliver and deliver it does. Images produced by the camera are biting sharp with phenomenal detailing and super dynamic range. This makes the A7CR an outstanding choice for landscape and nature photography. No noise was observed up to ISO 1600.

Like other Canon cameras, autofocus works extremely well and so does image stabilisation.

In video mode, the camera was competent. Lack of time did not allow us to test its ultimate video potential. Overall, an outstanding performance in stills and a competent one in video.

### Value for Money

The A7CR carries a body only price of Rs 293,990 ( Source: Sony.co.in). At this price, the camera is a tad expensive. Discounts should be available. Sony also provides a 3 year warranty. |**SP**

### VERDICT

If you are a fan of compact camera design and yet want a high performance camera, the Sony A 7 CR is for you. Otherwise, look at Sony's excellent A7R V.

FINAL SCORE



**Design and Build Quality**  
★★★★☆

**Key Features**  
★★★★☆

**Ergonomics**  
★★★★☆

**Performance**  
★★★★☆

**Value for Money**  
★★★★☆

**Overall**  
★★★★☆

KEY SPECIFICATIONS

**No. of pixels:** Approx. 61 megapixel (Effective)  
**Sensor type:** 35 mm full frame (35.7 x 23.8 mm), Exmor R CMOS sensor  
**Recording format:** Stills: JPEG, HEIF, Raw, Movies: XAVC S: MPEG-4 AVC/H.264, XAVC HS: MPEG-H HEVC/H.265  
**Focus type:** Fast Hybrid AF (Phase-detection/Contrast detection)  
**Focus points:** Stills & Movies: Max. 693 (Phase-detection AF)  
**Recognition target:** Stills: Human, Animal, Bird, Insect, Car, train, Aeroplane  
**Metering type:** 1200-zone evaluative

PLUS

MINUS

- Super detail and dynamic range
- Outstanding AF and IS
- Ideal for landscape photography
- Decent battery life

- Price
- No joystick to control AF points
- Only 1 SD card slot
- Handling not great with heavy professional zooms

*(Sony has also launched the A 7 C II which succeeds the A 7 C. The A 7 C II has a 33 MP sensor and improved video facilities over its predecessor. The A 7 C II carries an MRP of Rs 214,990 for the body).*

ViewSonic VP16-OLED ₹45,999 (viewsonic.com/in)

# Unrivalled Portability Meets Precision in Colour

## Inside the Box

- ✓ Monitor
- ✓ 1.1 Meter USB Type-C Cable
- ✓ 1.1 Meter micro HDMI Cable
- ✓ 1.5 Meter USB Type-C to Type-A 3.2 Gen1 Cable
- ✓ Hood, Quick Start Guide

by Girish Mallya

ViewSonic's VP16-OLED stands out as a pinnacle in portable monitors, harmonizing advanced technology with a dedication to color accuracy. Crafted for content creators, photographers, and professionals on the move, this 16-inch Full HD Color Pro Tech OLED Portable Monitor showcases a remarkable 1.07 billion colors at 10-bit depth and a striking 100,000:1 high-contrast ratio. The self-light emitting pixel perfection of OLED technology ensures rich blacks and unparalleled color accuracy, meeting the precise vision of creators.

Designed with user convenience in mind, it includes an integrated hood, screen cover, and an ergonomic height-adjustable stand for optimal viewing conditions. With 100% DCI-P3 Pantone Validated color and Delta E < 2, it sets a new standard for color quality guarantees. The VP16-OLED supports various devices through Micro HDMI and USB-C inputs, making it an essential companion for on-the-go professionals with its portable design measuring less than 1 inch thick and weighing around 1kg.



The on-the-go charging capability, powered by USB-C 40W two-way power, not only ensures a hassle-free power source but also acts as a power hub for laptops or mobile devices. The robust warranty package, including a 2-year on-site manufacturer warranty and an additional 1-year extended warranty upon registration, adds to its appeal.

In conclusion, the ViewSonic VP16-OLED surpasses traditional portable monitors, delivering an immersive, colour-accurate experience with unmatched versatility and portability. **SP**

## VERDICT

A superb portable calibrated monitor for photographers, especially for outdoor use.

### PLUS

- Ultra-portable, full-featured top-end monitor

### MINUS

- Lower price point

## KEY SPECIFICATIONS

**Screen Size:** 16 Inches

**Display Resolution Maximum:** 1920 x 1080 Pixels, True Black with 1.07 Billion colors (10Bit), OLED TECH, Integrated hood, 100 % DCI-P3 Pantone Validated color, USB-C charging, Portable with Delta E < 2 as color quality guarantee

**Refresh Rate:** 60 Hz

**Connectivity:** USB Type C, for fast data, audio and video transfer, and 40W charging over one cable

**Adjustability:** Comes with ergonomic height-adjustable stand

**Support:** The VP16-OLED supports laptops, PCs, and Apple/Mac operating systems



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# Photo

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**1** Sony stunned the photographic world with the A 9 III. Apart from the new global shutter, the Sony boasted a top shutter speed. What was that speed?

- a) 1/20000
- b) 1/30000
- c) 1/40000
- d) 1/80000

**2** In 2023, Canon hit a new production milestone in terms of EOS camera bodies manufactured. How many?

- a) 100 million
- b) 102 million
- c) 110 million
- d) 120 million

**3** In 2023, Canon hit a new milestone in the production of EF/ RF lenses. How many?

- a) 150 million
- b) 160 million
- c) 170 million
- d) 200 million

**4** Sigma makes lenses for which camera mounts?

- a) Nikon Z
- b) Panasonic L mount
- c) Sony FE mount
- d) Canon R mount

**5** Tamron does not make lenses for which camera mount?

- a) Canon
- b) Sony
- c) Nikon
- d) Fujifilm

**6** Which company introduced a DSLR that shoots only in black and white?

- a) Leica
- b) Laowa
- c) Pentax
- d) Fujifilm

**7** Which leading camera company recently introduces the world's first 24-105 mm f2.8 lens?

- a) Canon
- b) Nikon
- c) Sony
- d) OM Digital

**8** Which was the first SLR to offer three metering choices?

- a) Minolta Maxxum 9000
- b) Nikon F 90
- c) Canon F 1
- d) Olympus OM 4

**9** One of the brands mentioned below is not Japanese. Which one?

- a) Kowa
- b) Petri
- c) Metz
- d) Cima

**10** Name four Japanese lens manufacturers that do not exist today.

ANSWERS: 1 (a), 2 (c), 3 (b), 4 (a), 5 (c), 6 (c), 7 (a), 8 (c), 9 (c), 10 (Kiron, Panagor, Sun and Elitar)

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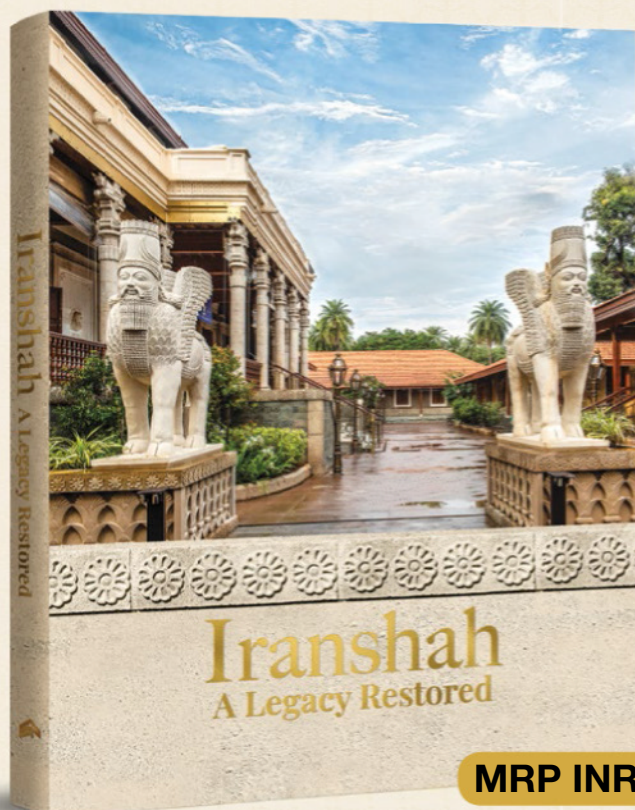
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