

PHOTOGRAPHY

MASTERCLASS

BUYERS GUIDE

THE LOWDOWN ON THE
LUMIX 100-500MM
WILDLIFE LENS

Featured

JOHN LUND &
STEPHANIE
ROESER
INTERVIEW

MIND-BENDING,
PHOTOREALISTIC
ANIMAL IMAGERY

MASTERCLASS

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EXPERT GUIDE

USE FLASH
LIKE A PRO

EDITING

THE SECRET
TO COLOR IN
LIGHTROOM
THAT MOST
PHOTOGRAPHERS
MISS



PHOTOGRAPHY MASTERCLASS MAGAZINE



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55 FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHER

We interview John Lund & Stephanie Roeser who are known for their mind-bending, photorealistic animal imagery that blends digital wizardry with a sharp sense of humor.



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EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome to this edition
of Photography
Masterclass Magazine

There's a unique power in a well-executed wide-angle photograph. It doesn't just show you a scene; it pulls you into it. Too often, however, photographers reach for a wide-angle lens simply to "fit more in.". In this issue of Photography Masterclass Magazine, discover how to move beyond simply "fitting more in" and start creating images that captivate and immerse. Learn to harness the drama, exaggeration, and unique perspective of wide-angle photography to transform your shots into powerful visual stories.

Also in this issue, we interview John Lund & Stephanie Roeser who

are known for their mind-bending, photorealistic animal imagery that blends digital wizardry with a sharp sense of humor.

We also explore the power of reflection, by reviewing both your best and your worst shots from the past year. Gain insight into your creative journey, celebrate your progress, and uncover lessons that can shape your work in the months to come.

We hope you enjoy this issue. If you try out any of the techniques mentioned, we'd love you to see your results, so please do share them with us in our [readers' Facebook Group](#), or on Instagram using hashtag #PhotographyMasterclassMagazine

Happy Shooting!



Gill



MESSAGE FROM GILL ROBERTS
THE EDITOR

EDITOR'S CHOICE

A Hand-Picked Selection of
our Favorite Photos

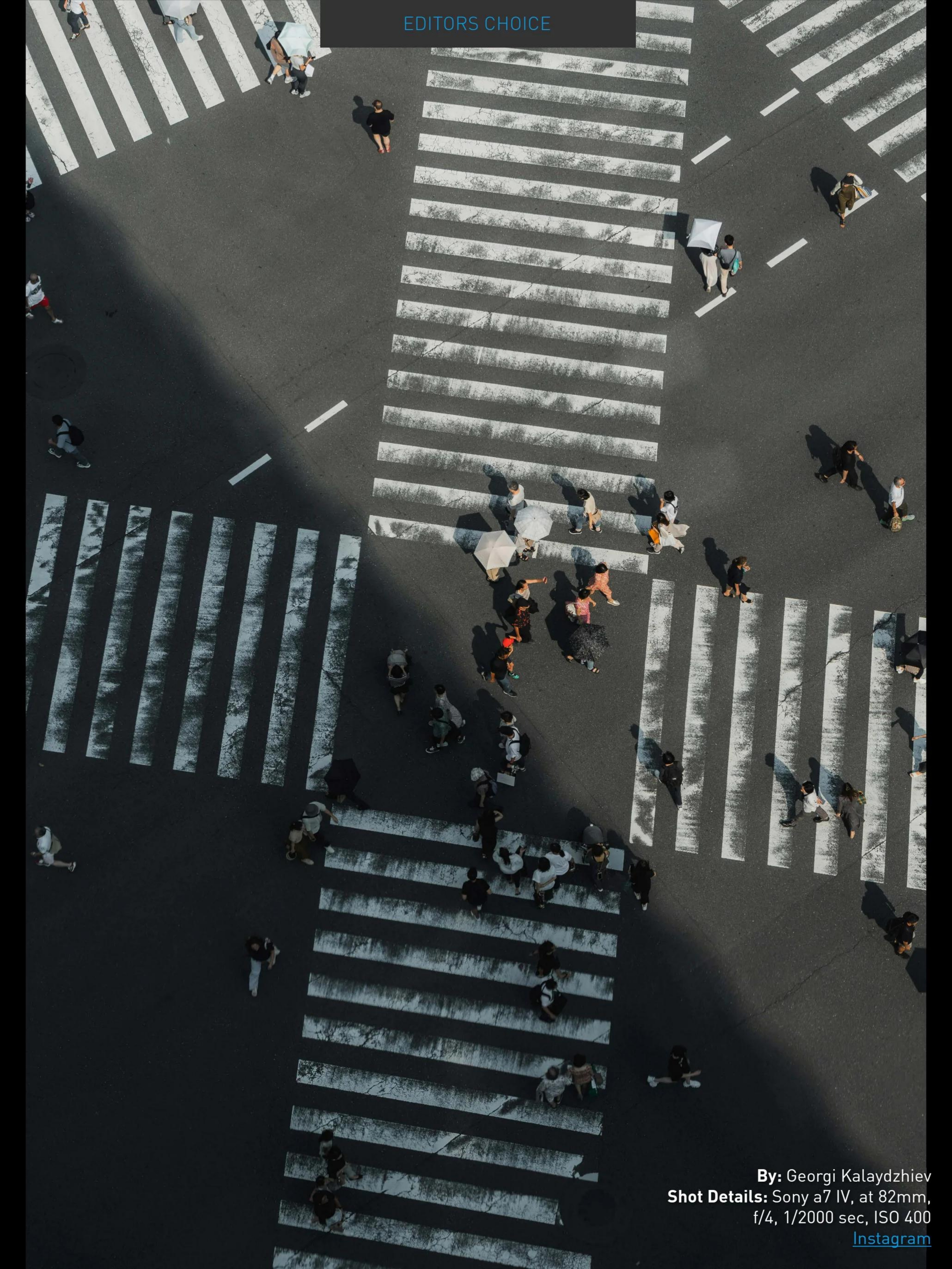


By: Ramsés Cervantes
[Instagram](#)

EDITORS CHOICE



By: Joshua Earle
Shot Details: Canon EOS R5, at 30mm,
f/13, 1/30 sec, ISO 320
[Website](#)

An aerial, high-angle photograph of a busy city intersection. The image shows several crosswalks with white stripes on a dark asphalt surface. Numerous pedestrians are walking across the intersection, some carrying umbrellas. The scene is captured from a high vantage point, looking down on the street. The lighting suggests it's daytime, with shadows cast by the people. The overall composition is a top-down view of urban life.

EDITORS CHOICE

By: Georgi Kalaydzhiev
Shot Details: Sony a7 IV, at 82mm,
f/4, 1/2000 sec, ISO 400
[Instagram](#)





By: Arturo Esparza
Shot Details: Sony a7C, at 50mm,
f/5, 1/800 sec, ISO 125
[Website](#)





EDITORS CHOICE



By: Evelyn Verdín
Shot Details: Canon EOS M50, at 24mm,
f/2.8, 1/200 sec, ISO 400
[Instagram](#)

EDITORS CHOICE

By: Juan Castro
[Instagram](#)

EDITORS CHOICE



By: Joshua Earle

Shot Details: Hasselblad L2D-20c,
at 12.3mm, f/2.8, 1/240 sec, ISO 100

[Website](#)

THE POWER OF REFLECTION

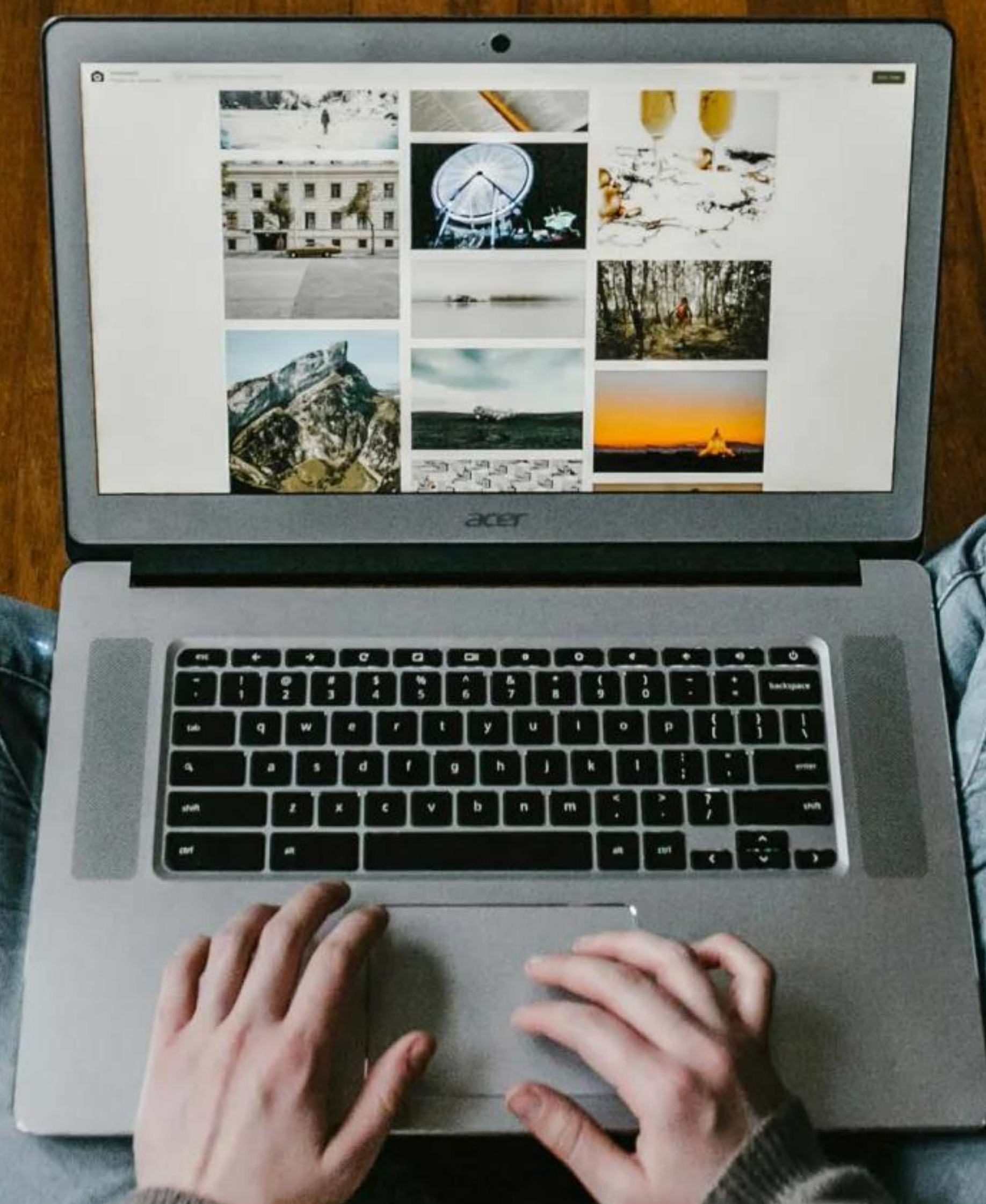


Photo by: [Andrew Neel](#)

REVIEWING YOUR BEST (AND WORST) SHOTS OF THE PAST YEAR

By Gill Roberts

At the start of a new year, many of us feel the urge to look forward, by setting goals, making resolutions, and dreaming of the images we hope to create. But before we rush ahead, there's immense value in pausing to look back.

Reflection is a powerful tool for any photographer, whether you're a seasoned

professional or just starting out. By reviewing both your best and your worst shots from the past year, you gain insight into your creative journey, celebrate your progress, and uncover lessons that can shape your work in the months to come. This process isn't about self-criticism or perfectionism; it's about honest self-assessment, growth, and rediscovering the joy that drew you to photography in the first place.

GATHERING YOUR YEAR BY CREATING A PHOTO REVIEW RITUAL

Before you can reflect, you need to gather the story of your year. Set aside some quiet time and create a comfortable space - perhaps with your favorite music or a cup of tea. Open your photo archives, whether they're on your computer, in the cloud, or tucked away on memory cards.

Start by scrolling through every shoot, event, or spontaneous moment you captured over the past twelve months. Don't rush this process; let yourself revisit the memories and emotions behind each image.

As you go, create two folders: one for your favorite shots and another for those that didn't quite work out. This simple act of sorting is the first step in understand-

ing your creative evolution, and it lays the groundwork for deeper reflection and growth.

THE HIGHLIGHTS REEL - CELEBRATING YOUR BEST WORK

Once you've gathered your images, it's time to focus on the photographs that made you proud. These are the shots that stood out - whether because of technical excellence, emotional resonance, or simply the story they tell. Take your time with each image.

Ask yourself: What makes this photo special to me? Was it a moment of perfect light, a breakthrough in technique, or a subject that challenged you? Sometimes, your best work isn't the most polished, but the most meaningful.

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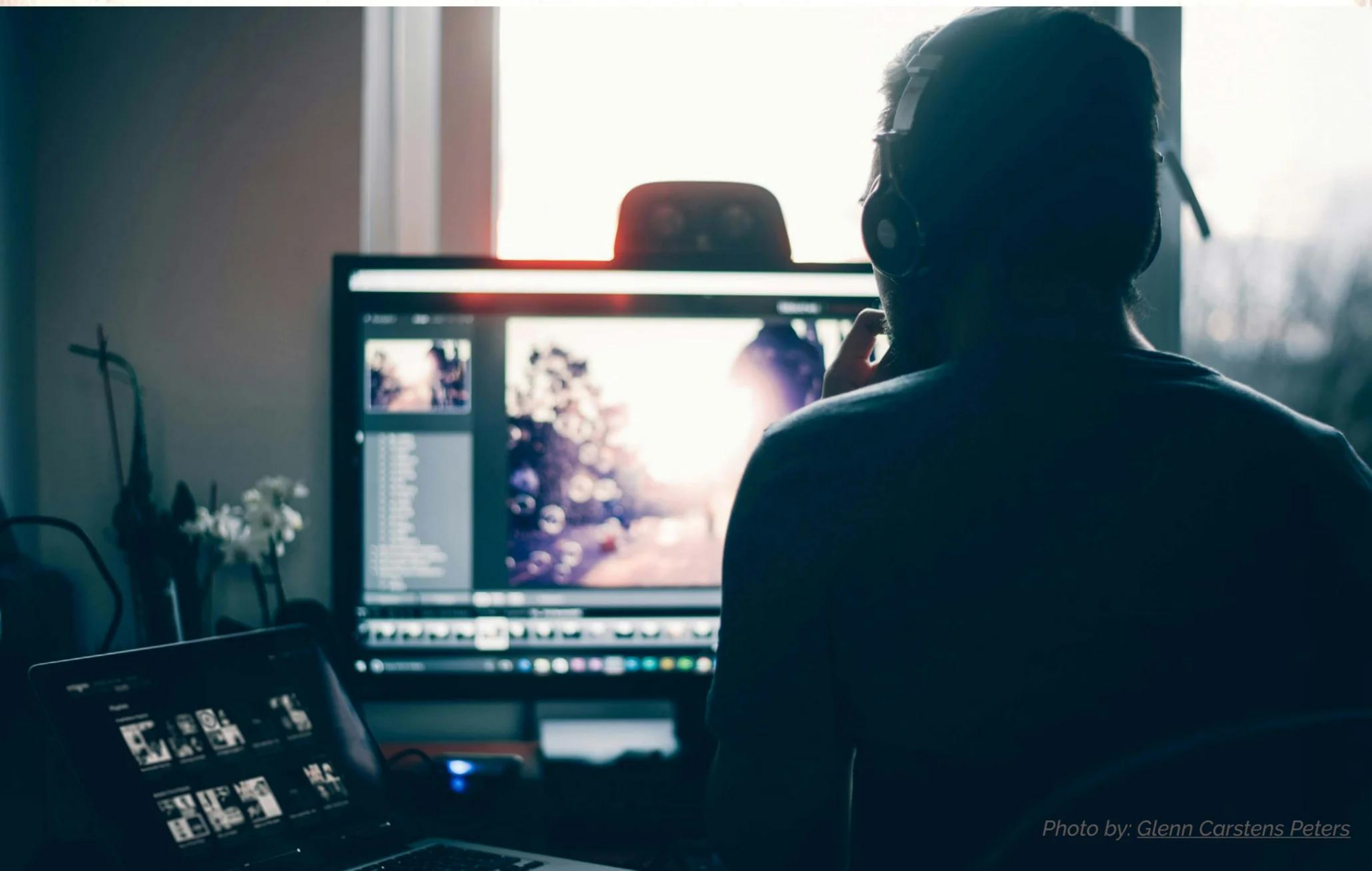


Photo by: [Glenn Carstens Peters](#)

Consider printing your favorites or creating a digital slideshow. Seeing your images outside the editing software can give you a fresh perspective and a sense of accomplishment. Share your highlights with friends, family and your photography community - not for validation, but to celebrate your journey and inspire others. We'd love for you to share your highlights reel on [our Readers Facebook Group](#).

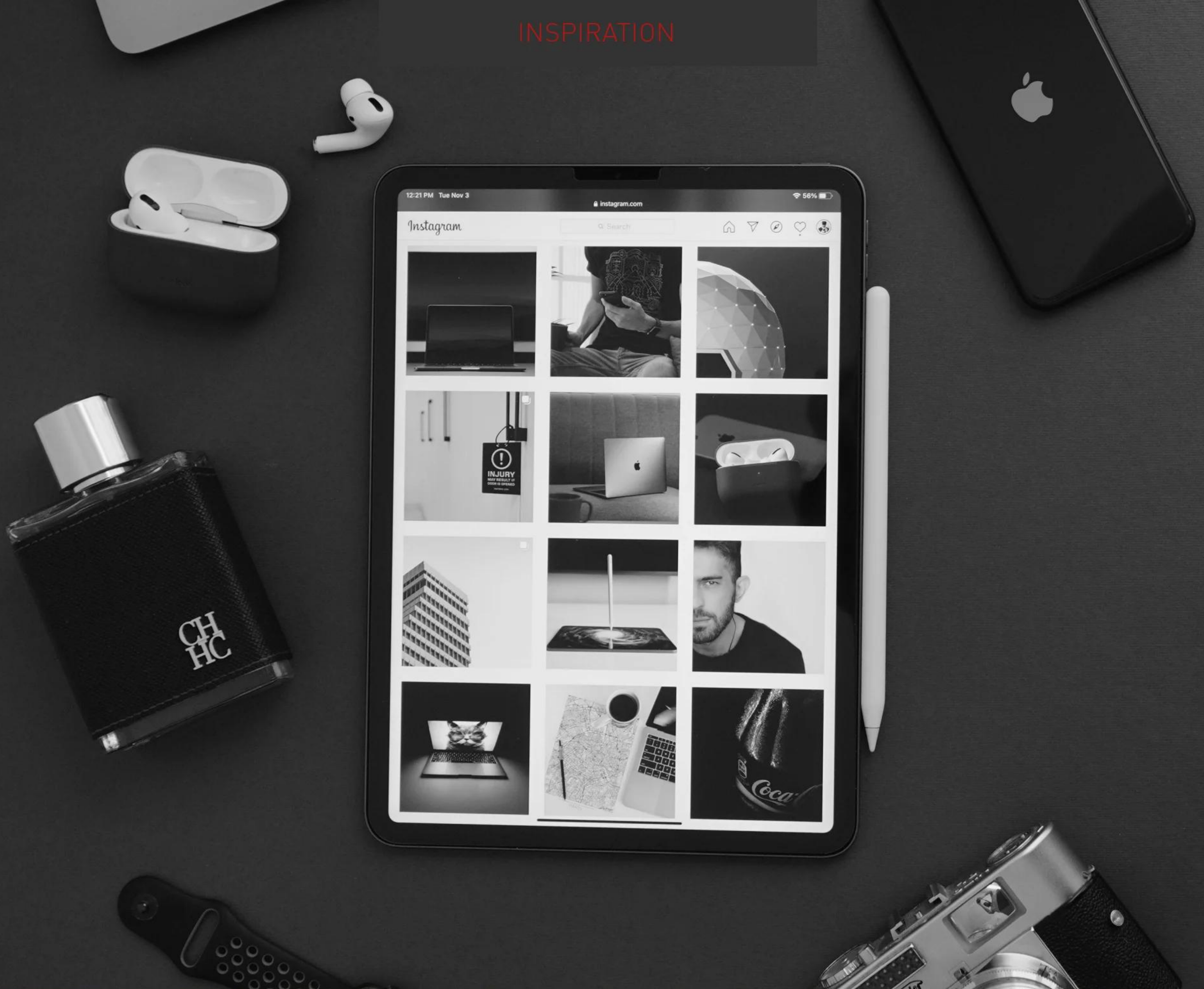
Reflect on the circumstances that led to these successes. Did you plan meticulously, or did you stumble upon a magical moment by chance? Did you push yourself out of your comfort zone, or did you finally master a skill you'd been practicing for months?

Celebrating your best work isn't about ego; it's about acknowledging growth and fueling your passion for the year ahead. Let these images remind you of what you're capable of, and use them as a foundation for new creative goals.

EMBRACING YOUR WORST SHOTS

While it's natural to focus on your best work, there's just as much, if not more, to be learned from the images that didn't turn out as planned. Revisiting your "worst" shots can be uncomfortable, but it's a crucial part of the reflection process. These photos are not failures; they are stepping stones on your creative path.





Start by looking at each image without judgment. Ask yourself what went wrong, but also what you were trying to achieve. Was it a technical issue, like exposure, focus, or composition? Or was it something less tangible, like a missed emotional connection or a lack of clarity in your vision? Sometimes, the gap between what you imagined and what you captured is where the most valuable lessons hide.

Don't be afraid to dig deeper. Did you rush the shot? Were you distracted or unprepared? Did you try something new that didn't quite work out? Each "miss" is an opportunity to identify patterns in your process and habits that might be holding

you back. Perhaps you'll notice that your least successful images happened when you ignored your instincts, or when you played it too safe.

Embracing your worst shots with curiosity rather than criticism transforms them into powerful teachers. Make notes about what you'd do differently next time, and consider keeping a "learning log" alongside your portfolio. Over time, you'll see that every misstep is a sign of growth and a necessary part of evolving as a photographer. By facing your misses head-on, you build resilience, humility, and a deeper understanding of your craft.

SPOTTING PATTERNS

With your best and worst shots side by side, you have a unique opportunity to step back and look for patterns that might otherwise go unnoticed. This is where the true power of reflection comes into play. As you review your curated folders, ask yourself: What themes, subjects, or styles keep reappearing in my work? Are there certain colors, moods, or compositions that you're naturally drawn to? Do your strongest images share a common thread, such as candid moments, dramatic lighting, or a particular genre like street, landscape, or portraiture?

Equally important, notice the patterns in your misses. Are there recurring technical challenges, like exposure or focus is-

sues, that crop up in similar situations? Do you find yourself struggling with creativity at certain times of year, or losing motivation after a particular type of shoot? Sometimes, the images you avoid taking (or the ones you never share) can reveal as much about your creative journey as your proudest work.

This process isn't about pigeonholing yourself or forcing a style, but about gaining self-awareness. You might discover that you're most inspired when working with natural light, or that your best images come from spontaneous, unplanned moments. Perhaps you'll realize you've been neglecting a subject or technique that once brought you joy. By identifying these patterns, you can make more intentional choices in the year ahead,



doubling down on what excites you, and setting goals to address areas where you want to grow.

Ultimately, your portfolio is more than a collection of images; it's a visual diary of your evolving perspective. By reflecting on the patterns within it, you gain clarity about who you are as a photographer and where you want your journey to lead next.

SETTING INTENTIONS BY TURNING REFLECTION INTO GROWTH

Reflection is most powerful when it leads to purposeful action. After reviewing your best and worst shots and identifying patterns in your work, take time to set clear intentions for the year ahead. These intentions don't have to be rigid resolutions or lofty goals. Instead, think of them as guiding principles that will shape your creative journey.

Start by asking yourself what you want more of in your photography. Do you crave deeper emotional connections in your portraits? Are you eager to master a new technique, like long exposures or off-camera flash? Maybe you want to dedicate more time to personal projects, or simply shoot more for the joy of it.

Write down a few intentions that feel both inspiring and achievable and these will serve as your compass when motivation wanes or self-doubt creeps in.

Consider also setting intentions around your creative process, not just your results. For example, you might resolve to spend more time editing thoughtfully,

to print your favorite images, or to share your work more openly with others. Perhaps you'll commit to regular reflection and reviewing your portfolio every few months to track your progress and recalibrate your goals.

Remember, growth in photography is rarely linear. There will be setbacks and surprises, but by setting intentions rooted in honest self-reflection, you give yourself permission to evolve at your own pace. Let your insights from the past year inform your next steps, and approach the new year with curiosity, openness, and a renewed sense of creative purpose.

IN CONCLUSION

As the calendar turns and a new year begins, the power of reflection offers every photographer a chance to pause, appreciate, and realign. By thoughtfully reviewing both your triumphs and your missteps, you gain more than just technical insight and you rediscover your passion, clarify your creative voice, and set a course for meaningful growth.

Remember, your portfolio is not just a showcase of your best images, but a living record of your journey: the risks you took, the lessons you learned, and the moments that moved you.

Embrace this annual ritual not as a critique, but as a celebration of progress and possibility.

With each new year, you have the opportunity to create with greater intention, to pursue what excites you, and to find joy in every step of your photographic path.

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USE FLASH LIKE A PRO

Move beyond the pop-up by mastering off-camera lighting, modification, and blending for natural results

by Gill Roberts

Move beyond the pop-up by mastering off-camera lighting, modification, and blending for natural results.

For many photographers, the speedlight is the scariest piece of gear in the bag.

Photographers often cling to the "natural light photographer" label not because we prefer the sun, but because we fear the strobe. We've all seen, or taken, those photos where the subject looks like a deer caught in headlights: skin blasted white, greasy highlights, and a pitch-black background that screams "snapshot."

But the secret is that flash isn't meant to destroy the atmosphere; it is meant to create it.

Using flash like a pro requires a mental shift. You have to stop thinking about flash as a tool for illumination (simply making a dark scene bright enough to capture) and start viewing it as a tool for creation. When you rely solely on natural light, you are a hunter, waiting for the right conditions. When you master flash, you become a farmer; you grow the light exactly where and how you need it.

We aren't talking about hauling five massive studio strobes to a location. The techniques in this article rely on a simple, agile kit: one speedlight and a wireless trigger. That is all you need to transform flat, boring images into dynamic, professional portraits.

STEP 1: GET IT OFF THE CAMERA

The single fastest way to improve your flash photography is to never, ever put the flash on your camera's hot shoe.

The physical position of the light is the root cause of that amateur "flash look." When the light source comes from the exact same angle as the lens (on-axis lighting), it fills in every shadow on the subject's face. Shadows define form; without them, a face looks like a flat pancake. Likewise, on-axis light casts a harsh, distracting shadow directly onto the wall or background behind the subject.

To fix this, you need to separate the lens from the light. By moving your speedlight 45 degrees to the left or right and raising it slightly above the subject's eye level, you mimic the most natural light source we know: the sun.

Photo by: Florian Cordier





This creates "Rembrandt" or "Loop" lighting patterns where shadows fall gently across the cheekbones and nose, instantly adding three-dimensional depth to the face. To achieve this, you need a wireless trigger and receiver system. Most modern speedlights have these built-in, but inexpensive radio triggers are widely available. Once your light is off-camera, you are no longer taking a snapshot; you are sculpting a portrait.

STEP 2: MODIFIERS ARE MANDATORY

A bare speedlight is a small, hard light source. In physics, the smaller the light source relative to the subject, the harder

the shadows. A bare bulb creates distinct, sharp transitions between light and dark, which is rarely flattering for human skin. It highlights pores, wrinkles, and blemishes.

To get professional soft light, you must make the light source larger. This is where modifiers come in.

THE SOFTBOX OR OCTABOX

This is the gold standard. By firing the flash through a layer of diffusion fabric, the light spreads out and wraps around the subject's features. The transition from highlight to shadow becomes a smooth gradient rather than a jagged line. A 24-inch portable softbox is an essential tool for on-location work.

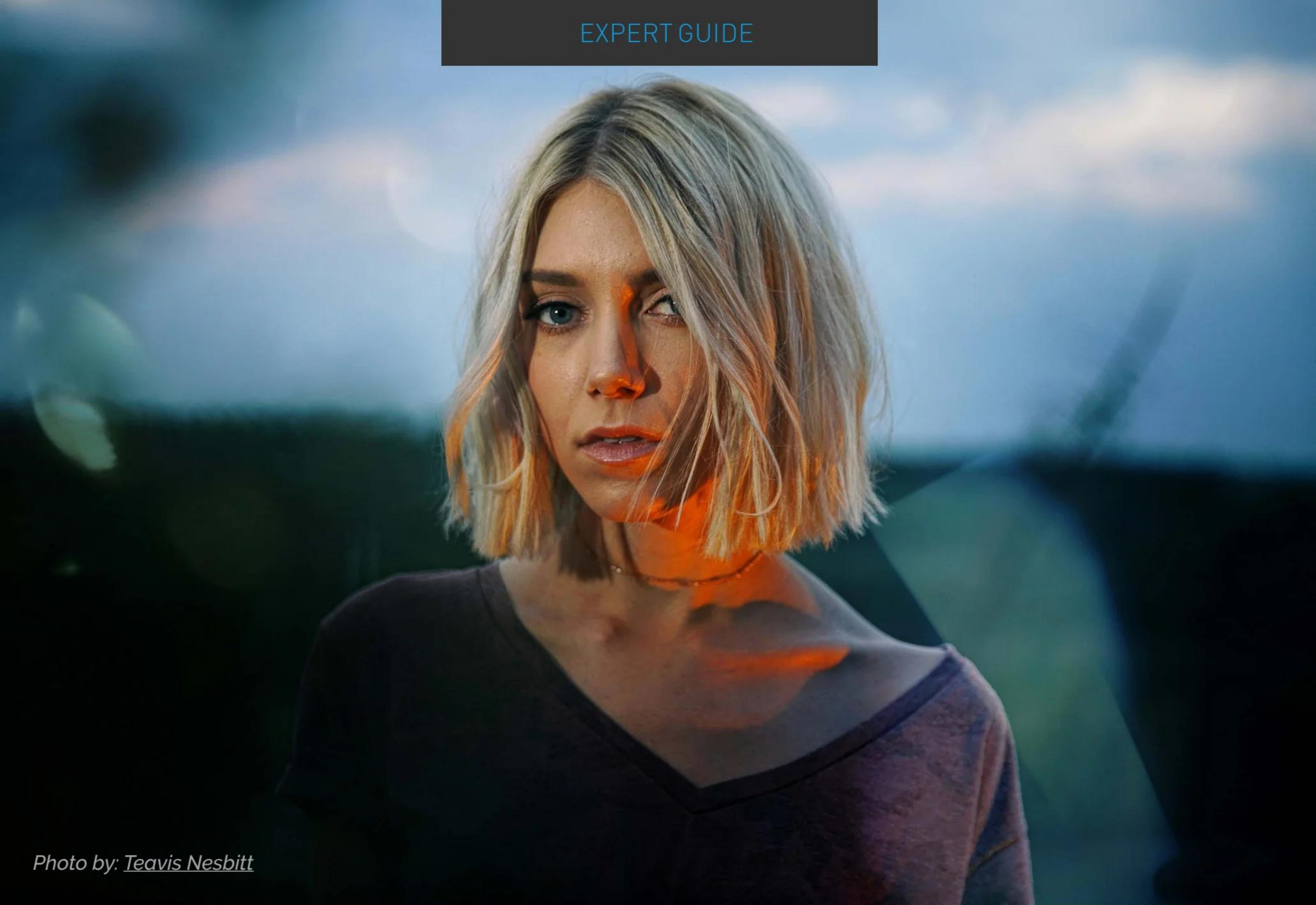


Photo by: [Teavis Nesbitt](#)

THE UMBRELLA

A shoot-through umbrella is the cheapest, easiest way to soften light. It spills light everywhere (making it harder to control spill), but it creates a beautiful, broad wash of illumination that is very forgiving for beginners.

THE BOUNCE

If you have no modifiers and are forced to keep the flash on-camera, aim the head backward or upward at a white wall or ceiling. The wall becomes your light source. Since the wall is huge, the light bouncing off it returns to your subject as a massive, soft wash of light. Just beware of colored walls, as bouncing flash off a red wall will turn your subject's skin alien red, for example.

STEP 3: THE BALANCING ACT (EXPOSURE BLENDING)

This is the technical hurdle that separates the masters from the students. When you use flash outdoors or in a venue, you are actually taking two photos at the same time: an exposure for the ambient light (the background) and an exposure for the flash (the subject).

If you shoot in Auto or TTL (Through The Lens) mode without thinking, the camera will often try to turn night into day, or the flash will fire so hard the background disappears entirely.

*Photo by: Timur Khan*

THE PROFESSIONAL WORKFLOW:

1. TURN THE FLASH OFF

First, dial in your camera settings (ISO, Aperture, Shutter Speed) to expose for the background only. Do you want a moody, dramatic sunset? Underexpose the sky by one stop. Do you want a bright, airy room? Expose for the windows. Your subject will likely be a silhouette at this point—that is fine.

2. LOCK YOUR SHUTTER SPEED

Ensure you are at or below your camera's "Sync Speed" (usually 1/200th or 1/250th of a second). If you go faster, you'll get a black bar across your image (unless you use High-Speed Sync - a topic for another day. We have a full article on using high-speed sync in Issue 38 of the magazine).

3. TURN THE FLASH ON

Now, add the light back in to illuminate only the subject. Adjust the flash power manually. Start at 1/16th power. Too dark? Go to 1/8th. Too bright? Drop to 1/32nd.

By controlling the background with your shutter speed/ISO and controlling the subject brightness with your flash power/aperture, you achieve a perfect balance where the subject pops, but the environment remains atmospheric.

STEP 4: MASTERING LIGHT COLOR (GELS)

Nothing screams "fake lighting" louder than mismatched color temperatures. Imagine shooting a portrait in a cozy, candlelit pub. The ambient light is warm orange (tungsten, around 3200K). Your flash, however, is daylight balanced (around 5600K), which is bright white-

blue. If you blast your subject with blue flash while the background is orange, the image looks disjointed and artificial.

To fix this, professionals use CTO (Color Temperature Orange) gels. These are small sheets of colored plastic that sit over the flash head.

- **Indoors (Tungsten)**

Place a full or 1/2 CTO gel on your flash. This warms the flash output to match the light bulbs in the room. Now, set your camera's White Balance to "Tungsten" or "Incandescent." Result: The flash looks creamy and white, the background looks normal, and the whole image feels cohesive.

- **Sunset (Golden Hour)**

Sunlight gets very warm at sunset. A naked flash will look unnaturally blue against a golden sky. Pop a 1/4 CTO gel on the flash to subtly warm up your subject, blending them seamlessly into the golden hour glow.

- **Creative Color**

Once you understand correction, you can use color for effect. Use a teal gel on a backlight (rim light) to contrast with a warm skin tone for that cinematic "blockbuster movie" look.

STEP 5: SHAPING WITH FEATHERS AND GRIDS

Once you have soft, balanced, and color-correct light, the final step is precision control. Sometimes, you don't want light spilling everywhere.

FEATHERING

Instead of pointing the softbox directly at the subject's nose, point it slightly in front of them (so the light skims past their face). The edges of a light source often have a softer, more pleasing quality than the "hot spot" in the center. Feathering allows you to wrap light around the short side of the face while keeping stray light off the background.

GRIDS

A grid is a fabric honeycomb that attaches to the front of your softbox. It restricts the beam of light, focusing it only forward and preventing it from spilling out the sides. If you want to light a subject's face but keep the wall behind them perfectly dark for drama, snap a grid on your modifier. It adds instant mood and prevents that "flat," light-washed look.

IN CONCLUSION

Flash photography is not about buying more expensive gear; it is about understanding the physics of light. It is about realizing that shadows are just as important as highlights.

Start simply. Take your speedlight off the camera this weekend. Hold it in your left hand and your camera in your right. Bounce it off a wall. Put a gel on it. Experiment with balancing the background exposure. Once you stop fearing the flash and start treating it as a brush to paint light into your scene, your photography will improve faster than any lens upgrade could ever achieve.

VIDEO TUTORIAL: HOW TO PHOTOGRAPH MOTION AT NIGHT

by ADORAMA



Single flash portraits are a great way to master the basics of studio lighting. Limiting yourself to just one flash can make getting the exact lighting style you want harder. With one flash you have to compromise on the look but along the way, you'll learn a lot about how to light portraits in different ways.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Shop [Adorama](#) for a powerhouse lineup of cameras, lenses, cinematography gear, studio lighting, tripods, pro audio, computers, printers, and every cutting-edge accessory you need to manifest your creative vision.

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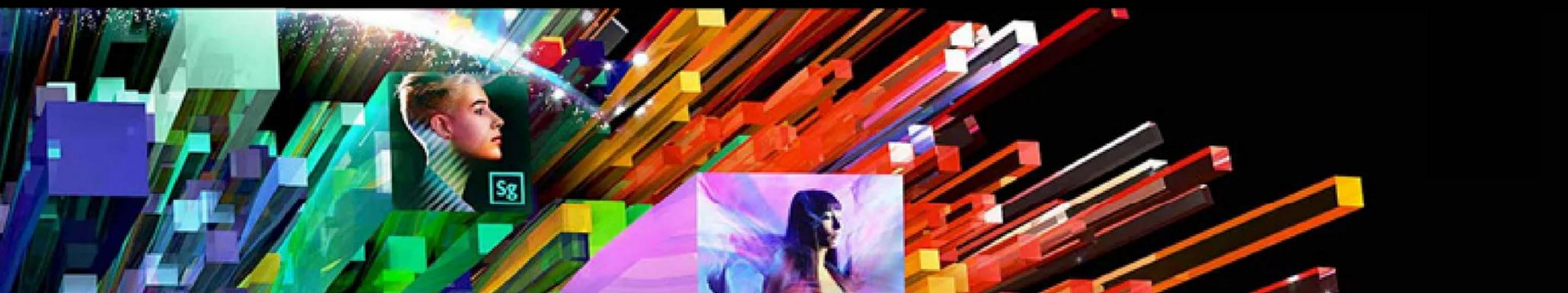
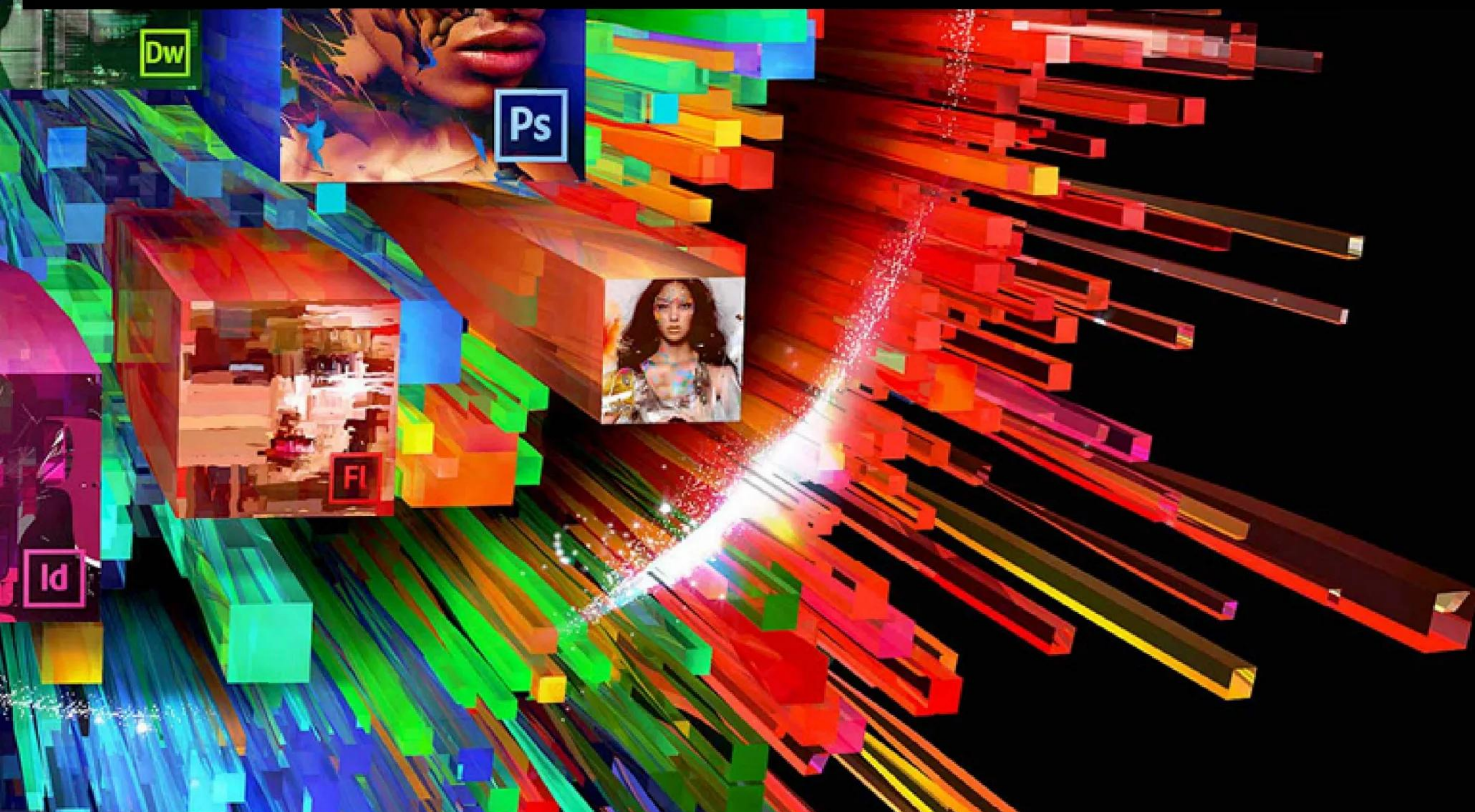


PHOTO EDITING:

The Secret to Color in Lightroom
(That Most Photographers Miss)



VIDEO TUTORIAL: **THE SECRET TO COLOR IN LIGHTROOM** THAT MOST PHOTOGRAPHERS MISS

by NIGEL DANSON



In this video, I'm going to talk all about color in Lightroom and how to create your own style.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

I am passionate about landscape photography and the great outdoors. Follow my adventures taking beautiful landscapes in the UK and US on my [website](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) & [Facebook](#). My aim is to inspire with Landscape photography tips and techniques.

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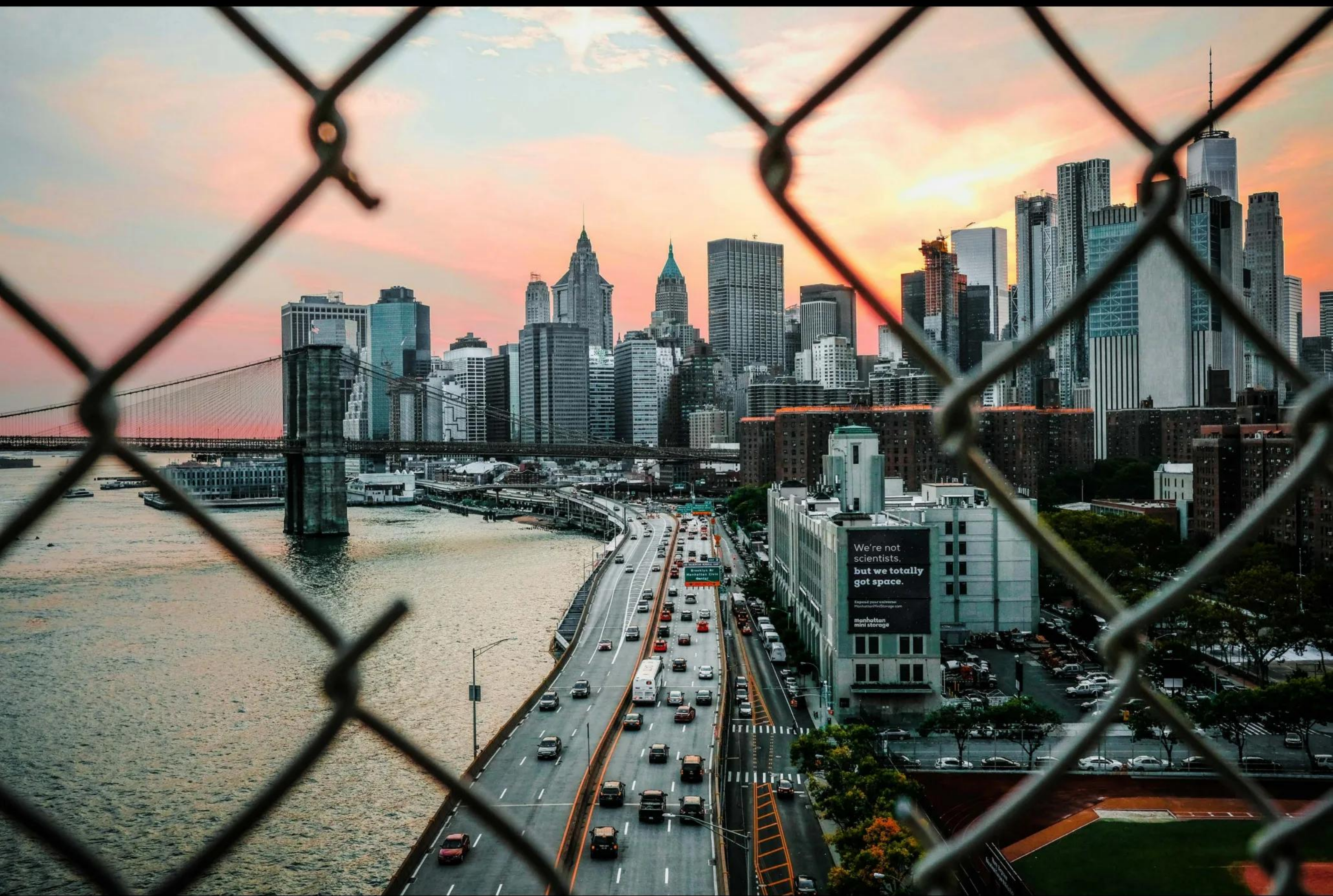


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THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO WIDE-ANGLE PHOTOGRAPHY



By: Matteo Catanese
Shot Details: Fujifilm X-T2, at 23mm,
f/8, 1/320 sec, ISO 800
[Website](#)



By: Yeshe Kangrang
Shot Details: Nikon D3200, at 12mm,
f/4, 1/1600 sec, ISO 100

[Instagram](#)



By: Luca Micheli
Shot Details: Canon EOS 5D Mark IV,
at 12mm, f/8, 1/25 sec, ISO 100
[Website](#)



By: Sean Pierce
Shot Details: Canon EOS 5D Mark IV,
at 24mm, f/11, 1/5 sec, ISO 50
[Instagram](#)















THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO WIDE-ANGLE PHOTOGRAPHY

FROM EPIC LANDSCAPES TO IMMERSIVE SCENES

by Gill Roberts



Photo By: Petr Vyšohlíd
Shot Details: Canon EOS 7D,
at 21mm, f/9, 1/20 sec, ISO 100

There's a unique power in a well-executed wide-angle photograph. It doesn't just show you a scene; it pulls you into it. You can almost feel the wind on the vast plain or the towering presence of the skyscraper above.

Too often, however, photographers reach for a wide-angle lens simply to "fit more in." This masterclass is about moving beyond that utility. We will explore how to harness the distinct characteristics of this perspective—its exaggeration, its drama, and its immersive quality—to transform your images from simple records into powerful, intentional statements.

UNDERSTANDING THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE WIDE-ANGLE WORLDVIEW

The first and most crucial step in mastering wide-angle photography is to stop fighting its fundamental nature and start using it. The secret lies in understanding one concept: perspective distortion. This isn't a flaw; it's your most powerful creative tool.

This distortion manifests in two key ways. First, it exaggerates the relative size of objects. Anything close to your lens will appear significantly larger and more prominent than elements in the distance. A humble wildflower in the foreground can suddenly possess as much visual weight as the mountain peak behind it. This stretching of space creates a profound

sense of depth and scale that is simply impossible to achieve with a standard or telephoto lens.

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Second, the expansive field of view creates a feeling of immersion. Instead of looking at a scene through a window, the viewer feels like they are standing right there with you. This is because the lens captures more of our peripheral vision, mimicking the way we experience a location in person. When combined with strong leading lines, like a winding path, a converging road, the sweep of a coastline, then the effect is magnetic. The lens exaggerates these lines, creating dynamic pathways that pull the viewer's eye from the very edge of the frame deep into the heart of your image. Your job isn't to correct this "distortion," but to compose your shot to exploit it.



Photo By: Filipe Dos Santos Mendes
Shot Details: Panasonic DMC-GX80,
at 7mm, f/4, 1/50 sec, ISO 800



Photo By: Spenser Sembrat

CHOOSING YOUR WIDE-ANGLE LENS

The term "wide-angle" generally applies to any lens on a full-frame camera with a focal length of 35mm or less. The shorter the focal length is, the more you'll notice the effects of a wide-angle lens.

So, what makes a wide-angle lens different?

There are two key characteristics – the image will encompass a wider angle of view and the lens will generally have a closer minimum focusing distance.

On a full-frame camera, wide-angle lenses are typically categorized into two groups:

- **Ultra-Wide (14-24mm):** This is the realm of the epic. These lenses produce the most dramatic perspective exaggeration, ideal for sweeping landscapes, dramatic architectural interiors, and capturing the sheer scale of the Milky Way. Be warned: their effects are extreme and require a careful composition.
- **Standard Wide (24-35mm):** This range is incredibly versatile and a perfect starting point. The perspective is distinctly wide but

less extreme, making it a favorite for street photography, environmental portraits, and documentary work. A 35mm lens, in particular, is cherished by many for its ability to capture a scene with context and intimacy.

Whether to choose a prime or zooms lens is an eternal debate and has practical consequences.

- **Zooms (e.g. 16-35mm):** A wide-angle zoom offers incredible flexibility. The ability to reframe your shot with a simple twist of the lens is invaluable when you're hiking a trail or working in a fast-paced environment.
- **Primes (e.g. 24mm f/1.4):** A prime lens has a fixed focal length. This limitation forces you to "zoom with your feet," encouraging more deliberate composition. The trade-off for this inconvenience is often superior image sharpness and a wider maximum aperture, which is a huge advantage in low-light situations.

If you're using a camera with a crop sensor, remember the crop factor (typically 1.5x or 1.6x). A 16mm lens on an APS-C body will give you a field of view similar to a 24mm lens on a full-frame. To get a true ultra-wide perspective, you'll need to look at lenses designed for crop sensors in the 10-20mm range.

THE ART OF COMPOSITION

A wide-angle lens can see everything, which means the biggest challenge is creating order out of chaos. A successful wide-angle composition is never passive; it is deliberately and carefully constructed.

A wide-angle scene without compelling foreground sometimes feels distant and empty. To create depth and impact, try finding foreground elements that can anchor your entire image. For example, look for interesting textures, shapely rocks, patterns in the sand, twisted roots, cluster of flowers, or reflective pools of water.

By getting low and close—often just inches away—you use the lens's power to make this element dominant and engaging. It becomes the viewer's entry point, inviting them into the rest of the frame.

You can also use leading lines to connect to your background. Wide-angle lenses are masters at this. Look for roads, fences, rivers, shadows, patterns, a curving shoreline, a winding path, a pattern of waves on the sand, or even the lines in a rock formation. Position yourself so these lines sweep dramatically from a corner or the bottom of the frame, pulling the eye on a journey through the foreground/mid-ground and towards your main subject in the distance (such as a mountain, sunset or cityscape).



Photo By: Bohdan Stoczek
Shot Details: Sony camera, at 14mm,
f/16, 1/500 sec, ISO 100

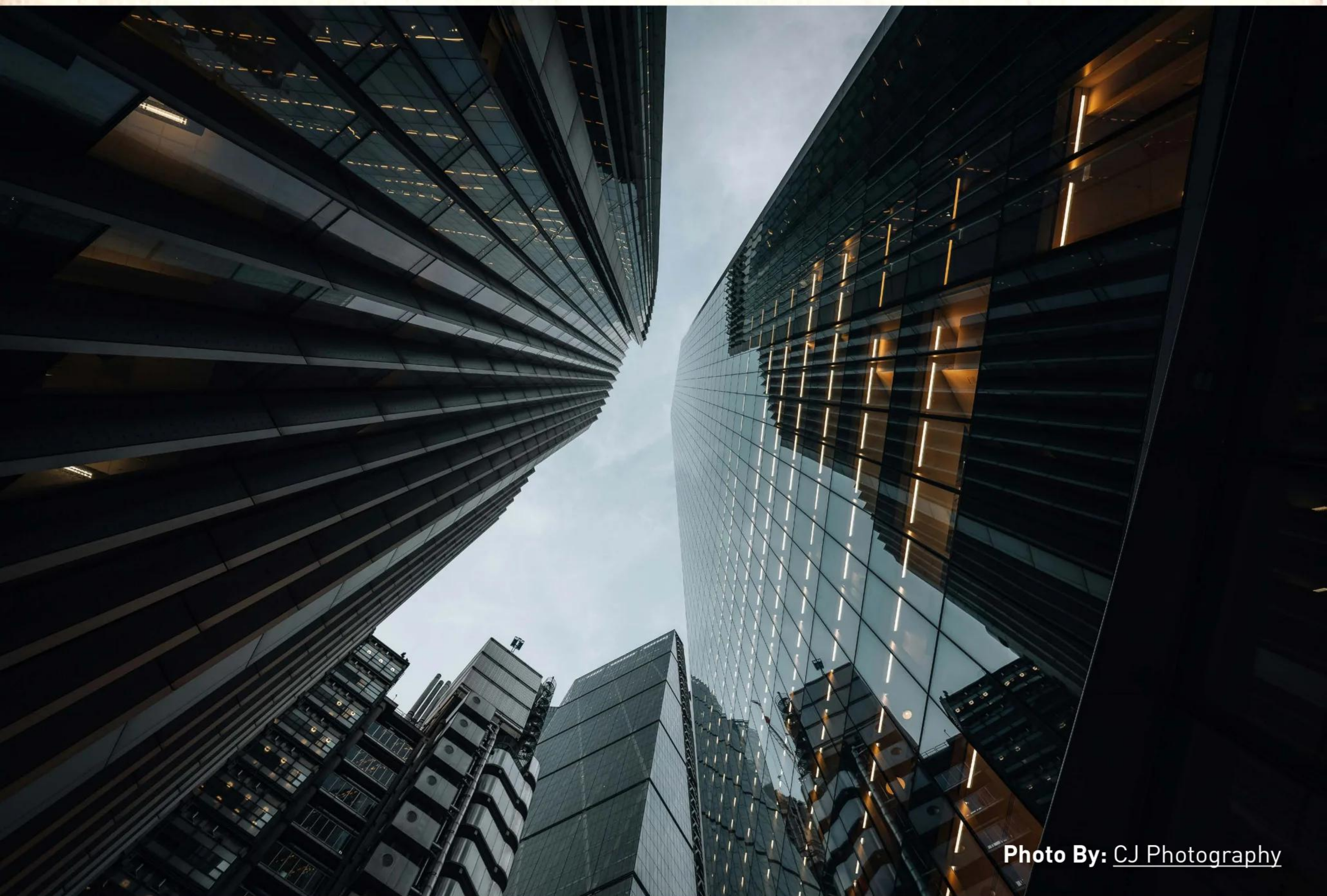


Photo By: [CJ Photography](#)

This creates a journey through the image, adding depth and a dynamic sense of flow that is uniquely suited to the wide-angle perspective. By consciously composing with layers, you create a rich, three-dimensional world within a two-dimensional frame.

Sometimes all you need in the foreground is just some intentional minimal negative space at the front of your image which can create a beautiful frame which draws your viewers eye to the background (think reflections, wide expanses of sand or simple patterns).

Looking down from high up can also create some dramatic images which don't necessarily need foreground elements to be impressive. For example, a high up vantage point looking down on the city below.

Also look up! Some of the best wide-angle photos are taken with your camera pointed to the sky. Think of tall high-rise buildings that converge at the top to create a dramatic image. Images like these do not have distinct foreground and background but are still incredible images.

Wide-angle lenses create something called converging verticals. Point it upwards at a building, and the parallel lines rush towards a vanishing point, giving the structure a sense of dizzying, dramatic power. In portrait (vertical) images, converging verticals can give buildings the appearance of falling over, but this perspective can easily be corrected in Lightroom or Photoshop.

While converging verticals can look awkward in some architectural shots (giving the impression of "falling" buildings), it can be a potent tool in landscapes, making trees or canyons feel even more immense. The key is to be intentional with your camera's

tilt, knowing that every degree you point away from the horizon will warp and stretch the world in a predictable, controllable way.

Remember in wide-angle photography to pay attention to the edges of your frame. Because your frame is so wide, it's easy to accidentally include distracting elements. Before you press the shutter, scan the entire perimeter of your viewfinder. Is there a stray tree branch, a bright piece of litter, or half a car creeping in from the side? Take a moment to reposition, tilt, or adjust your composition to ensure everything in the frame serves a purpose.

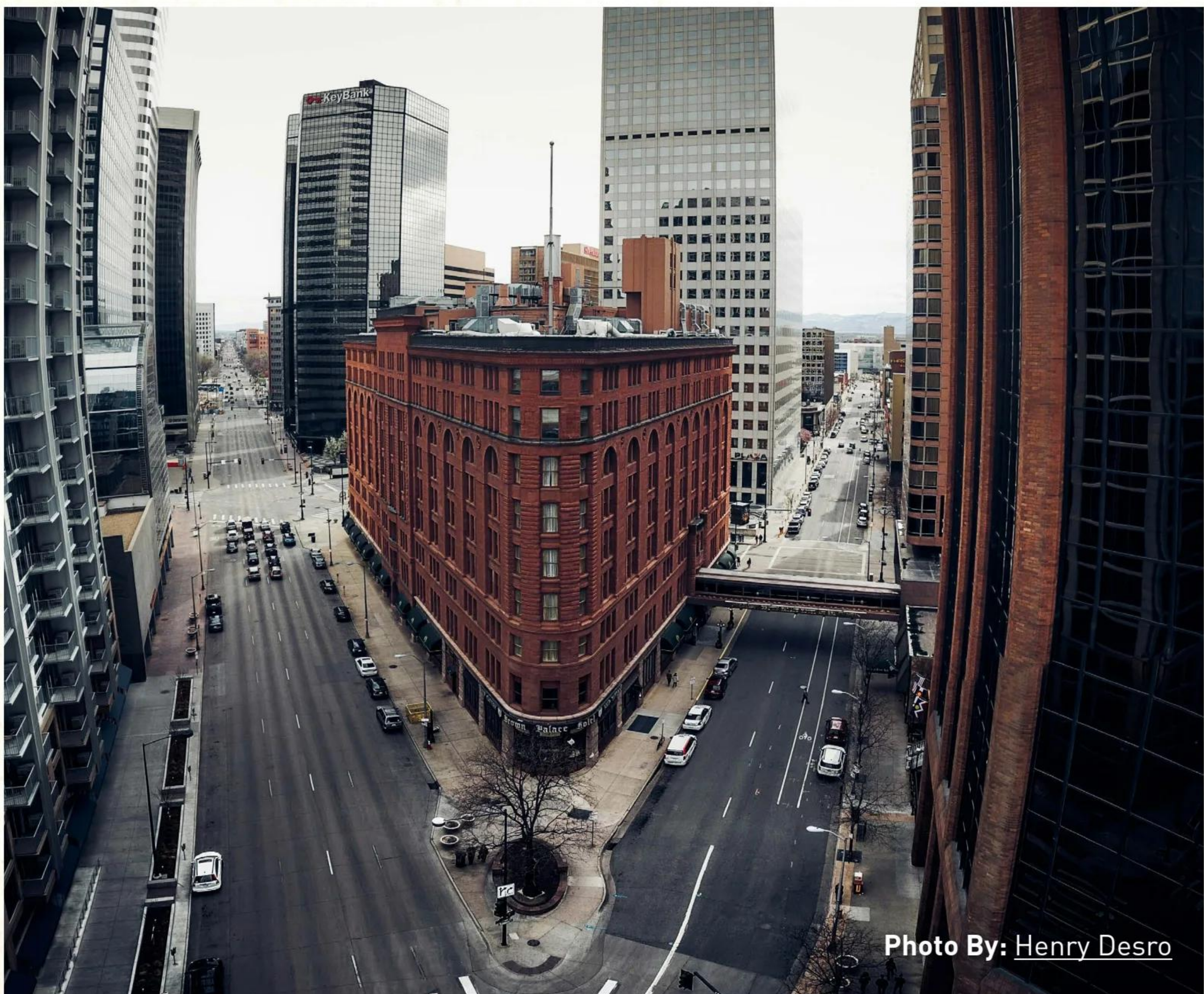


Photo By: Henry Desro



Photo By: Anders Jildén

OVERCOMING WIDE-ANGLE CHALLENGES

The creative side is only half the battle. Wide lenses present unique technical hurdles, but they are all easily overcome with the right techniques.

ACHIEVING FRONT-TO-BACK SHARPNESS

To get the best out of these sorts of shots, you'll need to use a tripod that's capable of low-level work. This is because you will want to use a low angle to get your foreground objects sharp.

Set your ISO to its base value (typically 100 or 200) to maximize image quality and detail.

With prominent foregrounds and distant backgrounds, getting everything in focus is critical. The key is to maximize your depth of field. Unless you're shooting in manual, use your camera's Aperture Priority mode and select a small aperture, typically between $f/8$ and $f/16$ (or even $f/22$).

Instead of focusing on your foreground elements or the distant background, manually focus about one-third of the way into the scene. This technique, a simplified application of hyperfocal distance, places the sharpest plane of focus strategically to cover the entire scene.

FOCUS STACKING FOR ULTIMATE SHARPNESS

For ultimate sharpness, an advanced technique is to use "focus stacking"—taking multiple shots focused at different points and merging them later.

Sometimes, even at $f/22$, it's impossible to get everything perfectly sharp, especially when your foreground element is extremely close to the lens. To get everything sharp, an advanced technique is to use "focus stacking"—taking multiple shots focused at different points and merging them later.

With your camera locked down on the tripod, take a series of identical shots, changing only the focus point for each one. A typical sequence is one shot focused on the immediate foreground, a second focused on the mid-ground, and a third focused on the distant background. In post-production software like Adobe Photoshop, these images can be blended automatically into a single, flawlessly sharp composite image.

CONTROLLING THE ARTIFACTS

Wide lenses have distinct optical traits you must manage. Vignetting, a darkening in the corners of the frame, is common but easily corrected in software (or used for creative effect).

TAMING DISTORTION

While perspective distortion is a creative tool, other types can be problematic. People placed near the left or right edges of the frame can become unflatteringly stretched; a simple fix is to keep your main subjects closer to the center. You may also notice barrel distortion, where straight lines appear to bow outwards. Don't worry about fixing this in-camera. It is an optical artifact that is easily and perfectly corrected with a single click using the "Lens Profile Corrections" feature in software like Adobe Lightroom and Capture One.



Photo By: [Luca Bravo](#)



Photo By: Ales Krivec

THE CHALLENGE OF DYNAMIC RANGE

Because your frame captures so much, it will often contain extreme variations in light—a bright sky and a dark foreground, for example. Your camera's sensor will struggle to capture detail in both the highlights and shadows. This is where the Graduated Neutral Density (ND) filter can be an essential tool. This filter is dark on top and clear on the bottom, allowing you to darken the sky and bring its brightness into balance with the land, capturing a perfectly exposed scene in a single shot.

If you don't have a graduated neutral density filter, you can use exposure bracketing (taking one shot exposed for the land and another for the sky) and blending them in post-production.

Finally, always use your lens hood. It's your best defense against lens flare when the sun is in or near your frame.

IN CONCLUSION

Stepping into wide-angle photography is like learning a new visual language. It's a language of drama, scale, and immersion.

Forget the idea of just fitting more in; your lens is a tool of exaggeration. The journey to mastering it begins when you embrace its unique perspective. It's about changing your physical relationship with the landscape—getting lower, getting closer, and thinking in layers. It forces you to look for the beauty at your feet as much as the grandeur on the horizon and guide the viewer's eye on a deliberate journey through the frame.

Now, pick up your camera, attach your widest lens, and go find a scene. Challenge yourself to get lower and closer than ever before, and start transforming the world before you into an epic photo.

VIDEO TUTORIAL: MASTER YOUR WIDE ANGLE LENS PHOTOGRAPHY

by Nigel Danson



Today we are talking wide angle photography. Simple tips and techniques to improve your landscape photos with a wide angle lens.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

I am passionate about landscape photography and the great outdoors. Follow my adventures taking beautiful landscapes in the UK and US on my [website](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) & [Facebook](#). My aim is to inspire with Landscape photography tips and techniques.

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#PhotographyMasterclassMagazine



FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHERS: JOHN LUND & STEPHANIE ROESER



Known for their mind-bending, photorealistic animal imagery that blends digital wizardry with a sharp sense of humor, John and Stephanie have carved out a joyful niche in the world of conceptual photography. John, an early Photoshop pioneer and educator, and Stephanie, a fearless creative who delights in turning the impossible into art, have together crafted the world's largest collection of anthropomorphic animal scenes, with each image crafted with painstaking detail and designed to bring a smile. From art fair beginnings and magazine assignments to digital compositing trailblazers, their playful photographs prove that, with the right teamwork and imagination, even elephants can strike a thinker pose.





Photographic Speciality/Style:

Photorealistic digitally composited
conceptual and humorous
anthropomorphic animal imagery.

Short Bio:

John's photography career began in 1975 selling prints in an art fair, then progressed to illustrating magazine articles, and then to advertising and corporate assignments. In 1990 he began using Photoshop (1.0) and never looked back. "Photoshop", he is fond of saying, "eliminated the boundaries between my imagination and photographic realities".

Over the decade John has served as an editor with Digital Imaging Magazine and Picture Magazine. He has taught workshops (Santa Fe Workshops, Palm Beach Workshops), has lectured extensively at Photo Plus in New York, and had a book on Photoshop (Master Class: Digital Compositing With John

Lund) published by Peach Pit Press. In addition, John has served on the board of directors of APA San Francisco and was a founding member of the stock agency Blend Images.

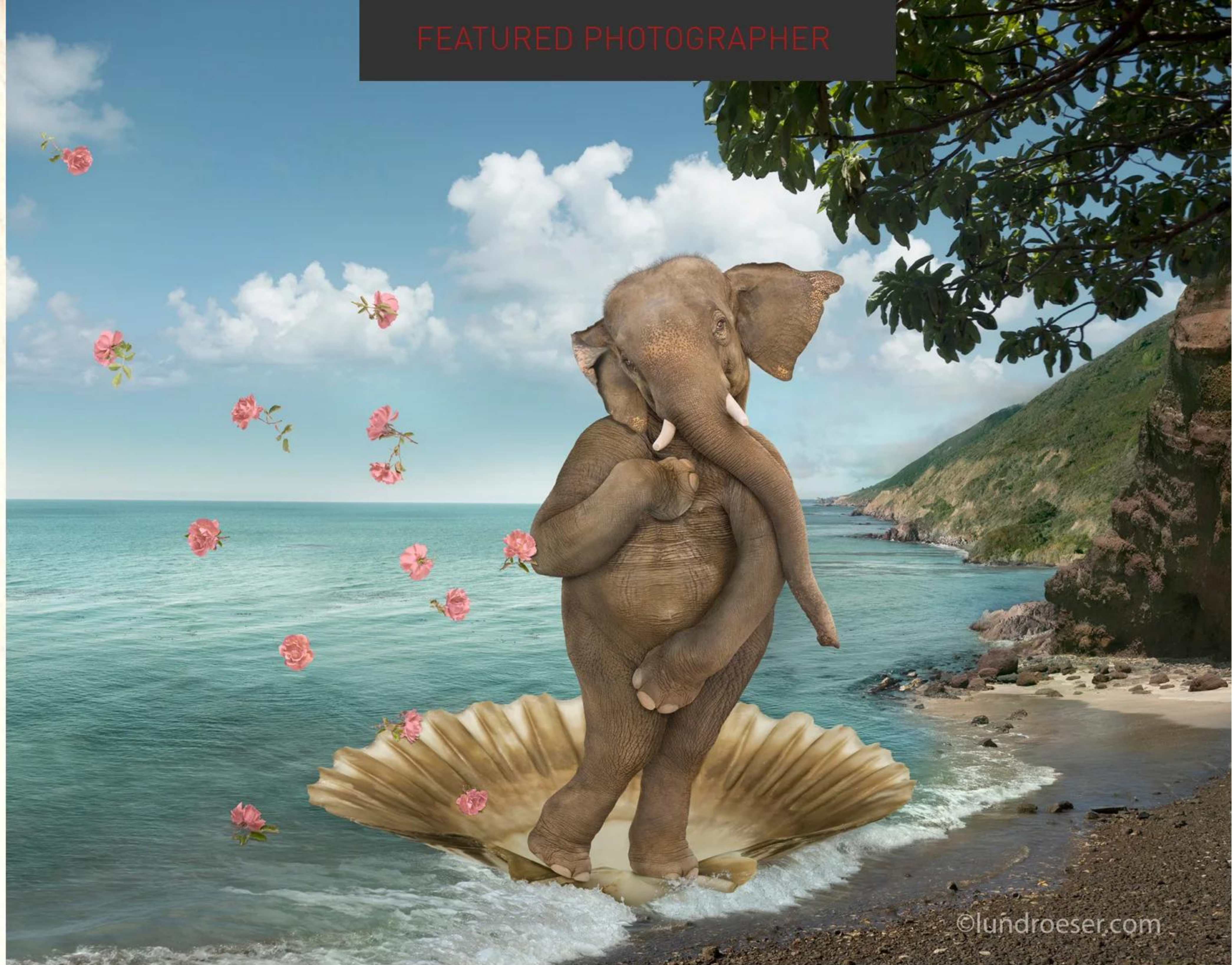
John was an early pioneer of Photoshop beginning in 1990 and using digital capture in 1994. It was in the early 1990's John first started creating his "Animal Antics" imagery. Together with his partner Stephanie Roeser they now have the largest collection of photorealistic anthropomorphic animal images in existence and continue to add more images designed to bring a smile to anyone's face.

Stephanie has always wanted to make things but never thought that her artistic and creative tendencies could realistically be her profession. In 2008 she met John and found out that it was possible to make a living taking pictures and more interestingly to her, you could take those pictures and change them into almost anything you wanted.









Stephanie had never used Photoshop and was not particularly computer savvy and so when John tried to describe how Photoshop worked and what a layer was and how you could create a mask and that white made things show and black made them disappear...it was as though he were speaking a different language but with persistence, it started to make sense. John gave her access to the program and to his library of animal photos and with some patient guidance, she was off and running, making an elephant floating by a balloon. Now she was hooked but she craved a challenge.

John had an extensive library of elephant photos from a trip to Thailand so Stephanie decided to focus on trying to figure out what weird things she could have an elephant doing. The goal was to come up with an idea that had some sort of possible advertising uses and that made sense relating to an elephant and ideally, was something that seemed impossible.

For her third image, Stephanie proposed that she would create an elephant in a thinker pose. John told her that it was impossible, which only served to motivate her more. She spent six months (part-time) creating her elephant in thinker pose...sorting through all the elephant source photos to find just the right hand or elbow or ankle to make her elephant look as realistic as she could make it but in an unrealistic situation. The final image was made up of over 100 separate elephant parts taken from different photos. Sometimes she would just take a wrinkle and add it to the image to make the bend of the arm more convincing.

The challenge of taking a task that seems impossible and making it work is what motivates Stephanie. It's one of the things she liked best about her favorite sport, rock climbing, as well. "Easy is boring...I want it to be difficult".

John, you began your photography career in 1975 selling prints at art fairs. Can you share what those early years were like and how they shaped your creative voice?

Originally, I wanted to be a writer and began taking photos to help get magazine articles published. I was working odd jobs and trying to keep afloat. It was then that I tried putting some prints on wood and selling them in an art fair up in Tacoma, Washington. While that was my first taste of actually earning money from photography, it was later that I had a career epiphany.

In 1976 that year, I wrote an article for Yachting Magazine. It took a week to write the article and a day to do the photography. They paid me \$200.00 for the article and \$2,000 for the photography (which included the cover image). I decided that photography would be a better career for me than writing...and it worked out pretty well.

But over the next few years, while I grew my client list, I also earned money by substitute teaching, delivering event tickets, doing janitorial work and so forth. The last job I ever had outside of photography, was as a landscape laborer carrying rocks and bags of cement for a rock wall.









John, you were an early adopter of Photoshop, starting with version 1.0 in 1990. What was that first experience like, and what possibilities immediately opened up for you?

Those early years in Photoshop were hard! I couldn't find any Photoshop classes, but Adobe agreed to give me some training. I actually traded stock photography for my first copy of Photoshop with Adobe and I would drive down to their headquarters once a week for training from one of their in-house art directors.

But man, everything was so slow! I was doing a job for Schwab and had an art director on each side of me. They had me rotate a file and it took forty minutes to finish the rotation...and it was a bit too far. The art directors told me to go

ahead and call them when I finished the job and they left.

In one case I had an art director give me a compositing type job. He told me not to use Photoshop because it was too slow. I did it in Photoshop anyway and had a 4x5 transparency output which I delivered to the art director. When I told him I actually did it in Photoshop he told me "For God sake, don't tell anyone!"

But for all the challenges, Photoshop opened up a ton of opportunities. I could do the impossible! One of the premier labs in San Francisco (where I based at that time) would farm out all their retouching jobs to me. The biggest benefit for me was to open up the doors for conceptual stock photography. Eventually I was doing so well with stock that I phased out my assignment work.



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Your "Animal Antics" has become a massive body of work, with over 700 images on your joint website alone. Where do your ideas for these whimsical scenes usually come from?

At one point I created an image of a smiling cat with a canary feather in its mouth. I took that image, and a few others, to a Greeting Card Publisher, Portal Publications, and suggested we create a line of greeting cards using anthropomorphic animal images. To my everlasting amazement they agreed!

In those early days most of the ideas came from Portal. But eventually Portal was destroyed by a venture capital fund, and I found new publishers for the cards. At that point I was also working with my partner (in work and life) Stephanie Roeser. We would brainstorm ideas. I have found over the years that, for me, creating the intention to come up with an idea, and then with that in mind looking at images, both mine and others, searching the net for cliché's and such has worked well. Nowadays I also use Chat GPT to help generate ideas.







Stephanie, you once spent six months building a single elephant image from over 100 parts. What kept you going through that challenge?

John had told me it was impossible to make an elephant convincingly into Rodin's "Thinker" pose. Being a bit of a perfectionist...and rather competitive, I was intent on creating the best possible "Elephant Thinker" image. As this was only the third image I had ever created in Photoshop, there was still a lot of learning going on. Back in 2008, when I was working on this image, Photoshop was a lot more limited in its tools and capabilities, so I had to search our archive

of hundreds of elephant source images to find, for example, exactly the right "wrinkle" for the elbow and then make sure that the texture matched...it required a lot of trial and error!

Do you both typically work on ideas together from the start, or do you each develop your own concepts separately and then compare notes?

We really work both ways. Sometimes we collaborate and sometimes just work on our own projects from the start. Almost inevitably though, Stephanie contributes her artistic sense and attention to detail to elevate my images.



Many of your animal scenes are both humorous and oddly believable. What's your secret to making the absurd feel real?

One of the most challenging parts of creating our Animal Antic's images is making them believable. Animal's limbs don't naturally articulate the way ours do so it can take a lot of effort to make human like poses look natural with an animal.

It is really important to have raw materials that facilitate that effort. When photographing an animal for a given idea it can be a painstaking task to photograph each part of the animal in a way that matches the lighting, angle and such to create a human like end result.

What's the single funniest moment you've had while creating an image?

I was attempting to create an image of a stampede of longhorn cattle. I hired a

woman who had a herd of about 30 head of longhorns. We were out in the field discussing our approach. I suggested that I could put a remote controlled camera at the base of a gate post and we could drive the cattle through the gate. The owner said it wouldn't work but I could try it I wanted.

I put the camera (a Nikon F2) at the base of the post and camouflaged it with some weeds. Our crew started driving the cattle towards the gate. The herd was about 20 feet away when they skidded to a halt. I fired the camera...and the cattle turned tail and ran. Oh well. We got the shots we needed by shooting the longhorns individually. The owner of the cattle put a bucket of grain in front of a steer, then I would crouch down in front of the animal with a wide angle lens. The owner would then slap the steer on the rump with an empty grain sack. As the startled longhorn would leap forward I would grab the shot. It was kind of stressful...but we got the raw images we needed.







What's the most "impossible" idea you thought wouldn't work... but did?

That would have to be Stephanie's thinker elephant. After that I knew we could pretty much create anything we could dream up.

What's your favorite photo that you've created & why?

That is a tough question...I have so many favorites! I think my favorite

shoot was having a lion in my studio. But my current favorite image is of an angry mob in front of the Capitol building. For a couple of years every time I photographed a model, I would also shoot the model in an angry mob pose. Eventually I put all the images together to create the angry mob. From my archives I found the Capitol building and created a mob version with that. I think it is both a fun image and very appropriate for the times.



Your images are widely licensed for advertising and commercial uses. Do you create with a specific audience in mind, or do you simply follow your own creative instincts?

Sometimes we will create images for a specific audience, and occasionally for a client, but for the most part we just follow our creative instincts. With the commodification of stock photos, and now the advent of AI generative images, there is little financial incentive to keep creating images. At least that is my experience.

If you could give one piece of advice to photographers who want to blend humor, realism, and storytelling, what would it be?

I would say make sure you get all the raw material (images) that you need and that the images share common qualities of light. With the right raw materials, you can create anything!





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TIMELAPSE

COPENHAGEN TIMELAPSE

by JONAS HØHOLT



Experience Copenhagen like never before in this breathtaking timelapse film, capturing the city's vibrant spirit and hidden beauty through months of dedicated filming.

BEHIND THE SCENES: JONAS HØHOLT'S “COPENHAGEN TIMELAPSE”

Jonas gives us a behind the scenes look
on how he put it all together



Discovering an unknown city through timelapse photography is completely unique and very challenging. However, this is how I got to know the Danish capital of Copenhagen during nearly 6 months of work. In-

depth research and location scouting prior to shooting along with difficult rooftop access and demanding creative post processing has tested the great perseverance and patience that I as a person is very known and recognized for.



Looking back at the hundreds of hours I spent creating this film, I can confidently say that I'm pleased with the result and especially the way I've evolved as an artist.

A huge thank you to the supporters of this project:

My supportive family!, Timelapse colleague [Henrik Matzen](#), Radisson Blu Royal Hotel Copenhagen, Danhostel Copenhagen City

The Round Tower (Copenhagen), Illum Rooftop (Amagertorv)

READERS GALLERY

Your Very Best Shots Showcased

OSLO SUBWAY

By: Kjell Værøy Ljøstad

Shot Details: Ricoh GR IV, at 18mm,
f/2.8, 1/500 sec, ISO 250

[Website](#) | [Instagram](#)



OSLO SUBWAY

By: Kjell Værøy Ljøstad

Shot Details: Ricoh GR IV, at 18mm,
f/8, 1/250 sec, ISO 400

[Website](#) | [Instagram](#)



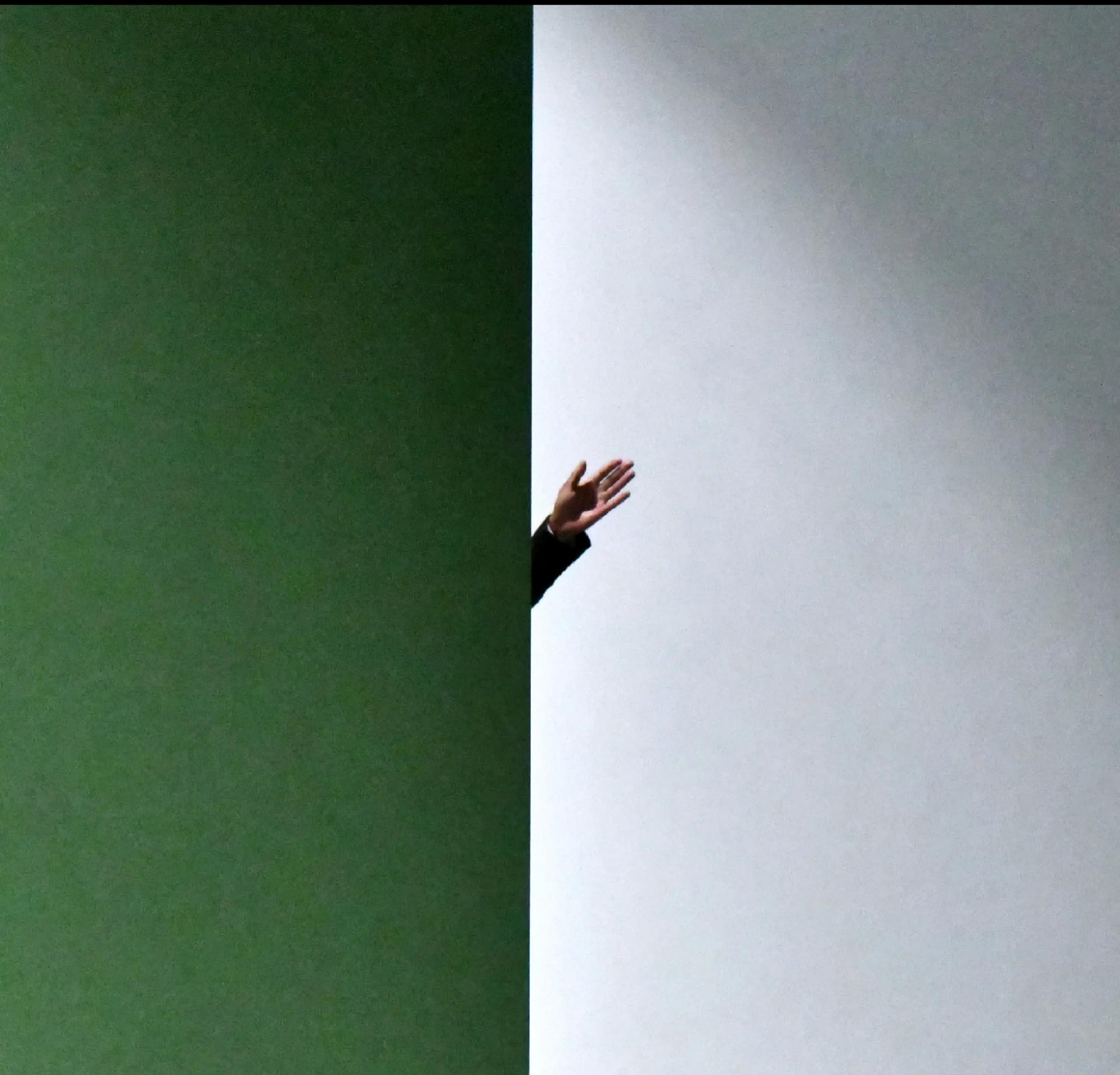




**MISTY MORN ON THE DEBEN
AT MELTON SUFFOLK**

By: Joan Moore

Shot Details: Nikon B700





MARINE SALVAGE YARD IN SHELBURNE, NOVA SCOTIA

By: Ken Renton

Shot Details: Sony a7 II, at 78mm, f/8, 1/80 sec, ISO 1250.

The mussel shells were attached to an abandoned mussel farm barge and the temperature that day was a freezing -7C



FROM UNDER

By: Geri Lynn Smith

Shot Details: Canon 6D Mark II, at 100mm,
f/10, 1/50 sec, ISO 200

[Website](#) | [Portfolio](#)



A PLACE WHERE TIME STOPPED

By: Brian Ford

Shot Details: Canon EOS 6D Mark II,
at 36mm, f/11, 1/40 sec, ISO 320



SURVIVOR

By: Brian Ford

Shot Details: Canon EOS 80D, at 29mm,
f/2.8, 1/200 sec, ISO 100

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FIND OUT MORE

THE LOWDOWN ON THE PANASONIC LUMIX 100-500MM F/ 5.0-7.1 LENS

By Ryan Sitzman



A powerful telephoto lens without the weight, making it an ideal and versatile choice for sports and wildlife photographers.

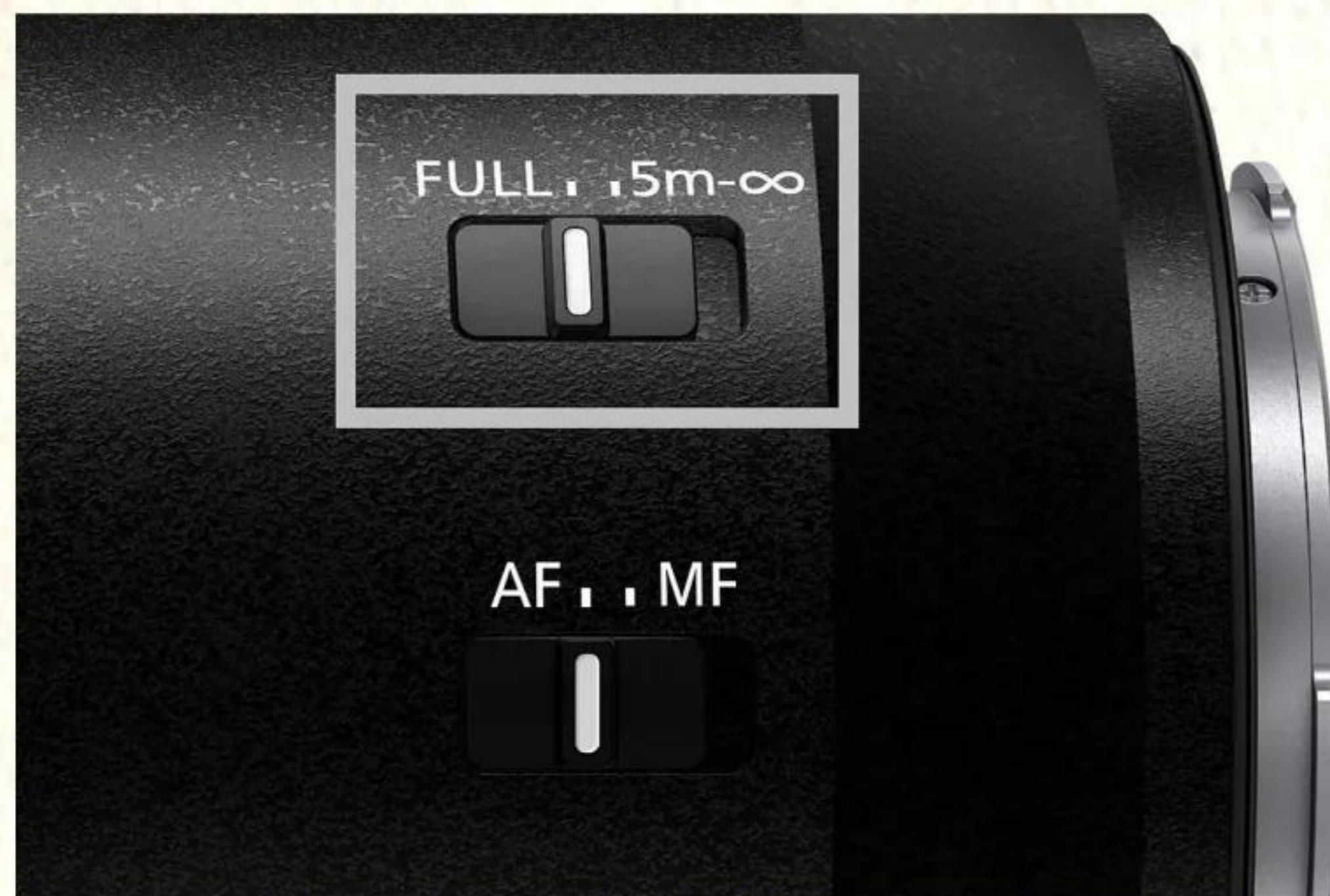
There's an exciting new ultra-telephoto lens for all you L-mount fans out there: the Lumix 100-500mm f/ 5.0-7.1. This lens is comparatively compact and light, and it gives its competitors a run for the money. If

you shoot with a mirrorless Panasonic camera, and you have more than a passing interest in sports and wildlife photography, then this Lumix lens should definitely be on your radar. Let's take a closer look.



It's always a bit difficult to write about lenses because it's hard for a lens to stand out from the crowd. It's not like camera manufacturers are constantly adding new, revolutionary features to their lenses. We may not see lenses with built-in heaters, white noise machines, or cupholders any time

soon - though I do like the idea of a heated lens for shooting on cold days! - so most discussions about lenses tend to revolve around their technical specs. However, even if they're not unique to the Lumix 100-500, this lens does have a few notable features and characteristics.



The first time you look at this Lumix lens, you'll likely notice that it has more switches than some other lenses. As you'd expect, there's a switch to choose between autofocus and manual focus, and there's another one to choose between optical image stabilization (OIS) modes. The two OIS modes are for stationary stabilization, when you're not moving, and a panning mode, which

stabilizes the lens while you track an object moving from side to side. The manufacturer claims up to 7 stops' worth of image stabilization, which makes the lens particularly adept for handheld shooting.

Another one of the switches is an on/off switch for the zoom limiter, which stops you from zooming lower than 150mm. To be completely honest, I'm still not quite sure why that is a desirable feature, or, if you really wanted to limit yourself, why you couldn't just stop zooming when you get to 150mm. I researched it until I realized that it has to do with apertures and math, so I just decided to assume that the good folks at Lumix know more than I do about zoom lenses and the photographers that use them, and there's surely a good reason to offer this feature.





S1II
 S 100-500 F5-7.1
 500mm
 1/200sec
 F7.1
 ISO5000
 ©Cozy Ogawa

This lens also has a focus limiter switch, and I actually understand this one a bit better than the zoom limiter. If you have a large field of vision in your camera's viewfinder, the autofocus can have trouble determining which objects it should focus on. If you limit the range, though, then the autofocus can concentrate on locking focus on objects within that range, instead of hunting and missing objects that are closer or farther than the set range.

The last switch is integrated into one of the rings of the lens, and it lets you choose between "smooth" and "tight" - in other words, you can decide how much tension you want to feel when

you're turning the zoom ring. I've definitely noticed that different zoom lenses have a different "feel" to them, so it's cool that you can customize this to make it feel just how you want it.

Speaking of rings, the tripod mount is integrated into a removable ring that clips around the center of the lens. The tripod ring also turns, allowing users to quickly and easily switch between landscape and portrait modes. The tripod ring is easy to remove, which is great because this lens is relatively lightweight, and a lot of users will probably choose to ditch their tripods and do handheld shooting, at least during the day.

Although I said that this lens is compact, it should be noted that it's just light and compact when compared to some other super zoom lenses. It's sturdily built, and also is resistant to dust and splashes, though of course it's not fully waterproof. With the tripod mount, the Lumix 100-500 weighs around 3.2 pounds. It won't float away if you attach a helium balloon to it, but it's still lighter than its competitors. When you're walking all day and schlepping around your camera and your big ol' zoom lens, then every ounce counts.

Finally, the lens also has a programmable button. Frankly, I can think of some pretty helpful ways to use a programmable button on a camera body, but I personally wouldn't have

much use for such a button on a lens. But I know that there are photographers out there who would appreciate it, and it's always better to have more options instead of fewer options, so I'm glad that the button is there.

This Lumix 100-500mm super telephoto lens performs well compared to other similar lenses on the market. It doesn't reinvent the modern mirrorless camera lens, but it is a very high-quality piece of gear. It boasts quick, silent autofocus, and it's especially suited for handheld wildlife and sports photography. With a surprisingly close minimal focus distance of only a few feet, it can even be used for some portrait work, even if it's not meant to be a dedicated portrait lens.





At \$2,100, it's also priced competitively - though just like I wouldn't say this lens is featherlight, I also wouldn't say it's cheap. But those categories are very relative.

After initially claiming that it was hard to talk about the features of a lens, I just wrote several hundred words talking about the features of the Lumix 100-

500mm lens. In the end, you can read about specs and quirks all day, but you really just need to try it out to see if it works for your needs. If you're a wildlife or sports photographer looking to give your camera gear a boost, then you should certainly give the Lumix 100-500mm f/5.0-7.1 a closer look. On the whole, it represents a great balance between size, weight, and versatility.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Ryan Sitzman splits his time between the coffee fields of Costa Rica and the mountains of Colorado. You can find him on one of his [several websites](#).

VIDEO THE BEST WILDLIFE LENS OF 2025?

by TONY & CHELSEA NORTHRUP



The new LUMIX 100-500mm f/5-7.1 is here, it's \$2,100, but is it fast and sharp enough for wildlife and sports? Chelsea tests the speed, sharpness, image stabilization, and more, to see if this is the right lens for you!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Chelsea and Tony Northrup are photographers based in Connecticut. They are the creators of the top-rated photography book, "[Tony Northrup's DSLR Book: How to Create Stunning Digital Photography](#)" which features over nine hours of video training and free lifetime updates. To see more of their tutorials and photos you can follow them on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)

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