

PHOTOGRAPHY MASTERCLASS

BUYERS GUIDE

**INSTA360 LUNA
ULTRA**

A FLAGSHIP DUAL-LENS
GIMBAL CAMERA

INSPIRATION

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DEVELOPING
YOUR OWN
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MY PHOTOS
BLURRY?

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**MIKE TESSELAAR
INTERVIEW**

PHOTOGRAPHY,
VIDEOGRAPHY
& DRONES

LIGHTROOM

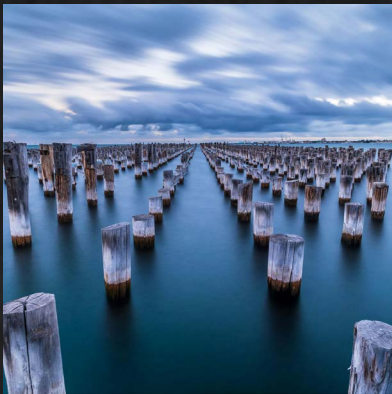
COMPLETE
LIGHTROOM EDIT
FROM RAW TO PRINT

MASTERCLASS

**BENDING TIME WITH
NEUTRAL DENSITY FILTERS**



PHOTOGRAPHY MASTERCLASS MAGAZINE



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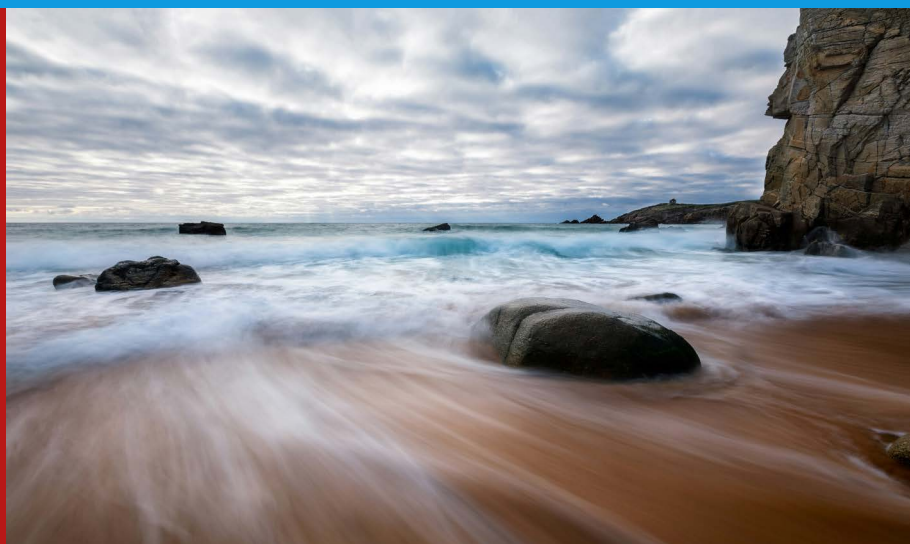
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EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome to this edition
of Photography
Masterclass Magazine

Want to capture those silky smooth waterfalls and streaking clouds that make professional landscapes pop? In this issue, we demystify Neutral Density filters and show you how to bend time in-camera. From decoding the confusing numbers to mastering long exposures and shallow depth of field in bright sunlight, we break down exactly how to use these essential tools to unlock entirely new creative possibilities.

A highlight for us in this issue is our interview with Mike Tesselaar. From building FPV drones above the flat Dutch landscape to quitting his engineering career for a life behind the lens, Mike's journey into photography is anything

but conventional. In this interview, Mike shares how a simple desire to capture hidden gems from above evolved into a full-time passion for "changing perspectives," whether he's shooting from a stabilized drone or his full-frame camera on the ground. Discover how this Netherlands-based creative blends photography, videography, and aerial storytelling to offer a truly unique view of the world.

We got loads more articles, videos and incredible pictures in this issue so we hope you enjoy it. 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: Benjamin Chambon
Shot Details: Sony a7 III, at 180mm,
f/2.8, 1/1000 sec, ISO 200
[Instagram](#)





EDITORS CHOICE



By: Brooke Valentine
Shot Details: Canon EOS R5 Mark II,
at 50mm, f/1.8, 1/320 sec, ISO 400
[Instagram](#)

EDITORS CHOICE



By: Casey Horner
Shot Details: DJI FC3411, at 8.4mm,
f/2.8, 1/1000 sec, ISO 100
[Instagram](#)

EDITORS CHOICE



By: Celine Sayuri Tagami
[Instagram](#)





By: Denys Nevozhai
Shot Details: Canon EOS 6D, at 16mm,
f/4, 1/40 sec, ISO 1250
[Instagram](#)

EDITORS CHOICE



By: Fatma Sarigül
[Instagram](#)



THE LOWDOWN ON INSTA360 LUNA ULTRA

By Ryan Sitzman



A flagship dual-lens gimbal camera

You've probably heard the 1979 song "Video Killed the Radio Star" by The Buggles. It's semi-famous for being the first song that was played on MTV when that network started broadcasting in 1981. One of the lines from

the song is: Video killed the radio star / Pictures came and broke your heart. The general vibe of that verse—and the song as a whole—is nostalgia for older times, since nobody will want to simply sit and listen to the radio anymore now that there are music videos.



A similar variation on that thought has been looming in the back of my head over the past few years, and it's this: video also killed the photography star. Granted, photographers aren't really stars on quite the same level that musicians are. In fact, if I had to name seriously famous photographers, I would probably run out of names shortly after Ansel Adams and Annie Liebovitz, and Adams died back in 1984 (though as far as I can tell, history hasn't recorded whether he heard the Buggles song, or whether he agreed with its premise).

All of that is to say that since I started writing these photography-related articles around 12 years ago, I've noticed an overall cultural shift from still photography to videography. Even sites like Instagram or Flickr, which at

one point didn't even have the ability for users to upload or view videos, gradually moved to accepting and then emphasizing video content over photos.

To be clear, that's not necessarily a bad thing, and I'm not against it. But as a person who has used my various cameras and cellphones to take photos, as opposed to videos, I'm perhaps not the most impartial judge of whether a new video camera is worth getting excited about.

However, I can absolutely recognize that the Insta360 Luna Ultra is a cool video camera, and Luna Ultra, along with similar cameras made by other brands, may even subtly revolutionize how modern people create videos.

I say that even though I would probably never buy the Insta360 Luna Ultra for myself, and even though I would just as soon jump off a mountain instead of recording a selfie video of me talking on that mountain. In other words, I am decidedly not part of the target market for this camera, yet I find myself intrigued by it, wondering, "What if..." Let's take a closer look at this beguiling camera.

The Luna Ultra is essentially a professional video camera, a monitor, and a microphone, in a single packet that can literally fit into your pocket. It's basically a compact video camera on a stick. If you're the type of person who enjoys holding a corndog or a turkey leg while walking around a festival, then you'll be right at home using the Luna. You turn on the camera by either tapping on a button or rotating the screen, and that causes the head of the

camera to spring to life and rotate into position. It's startlingly cool. I also have to admit that I'm impressed that when you rotate the 2-inch touchscreen on the handle, it also rotates the orientation of the head's dual cameras between landscape and portrait mode. It looks like the kind of technology that you'd find in sci-fi movies, but which would have been dismissed as outlandish even 15 or 20 years ago.

Because the Luna Ultra is attached to a 3-axis gimbal, it has built-in stabilization that allows it to remain steady while the videographer and/or the subject is moving. It also has automatic subject tracking, automatic focus adjustment, and automatic leveling, so you can record dynamic videos without having to continually futz around with controls or adjust the focus of a moving subject.





The part that's even cooler is that the touchscreen plate on the handle is detachable and wireless. That means that a user can set up the camera to record a video of oneself, and then detach and take the screen to monitor or adjust recording settings while recording. The screen plate also contains a microphone, which makes it super convenient for those who don't have extra wireless microphones.

All of those bells and baubles would be pretty pointless if the camera itself weren't up to snuff, and I'm happy to say that the Luna Ultra doesn't have to worry about that. It actually has two camera lenses; one is a more standard, 20-mm f/1.8 equivalent, while the second is a telephoto, 60-mm f/2 equivalent. Both lenses can shoot up to 8K video at up to 120 frames per second, although those specs are probably overengineered for most users. I would guess that the

average user would be much more likely to shoot at 4K and with fewer frames per second, in order to have a more manageable video that's easier to view and edit. Insta360 also offers quick-attachable lens filters, as well as a 16mm-equivalent wide-angle lens adapter, so there are quite a few ways to tweak and personalize the look of your videos.

Although I would guess that 99% of Luna Ultra users will use it for videos, it can also shoot still photos. Indeed, it can take 37MB "UltraPhotos," as well as what Insta360 calls a 200MP Scenic Panorama. I'm not sure if those are supposed to be just single frames that are isolated from a video, or if a user can activate a shutter for a single exposure, but the vagueness on the part of Insta360 just serves to underscore that this is first and foremost a video camera.

The Luna Ultra comes with 47GB of built-in memory, which is a number that would have broken our collective brains just a decade ago. Of course, it won't take too terribly long to fill that up if you're shooting in 8K, so the camera also has a micro-SD card slot if you need additional storage space.

Speaking of built-in things that can be supplemented, this camera has a built-in microphone on the handle/base, as well as on the detachable touchscreen control. But if you need more, Insta360 offers both its "Mic Air" and its "Mic Pro." The Mic Pro even has a cute little e-ink display that you can customize.

In terms of power, the Luna Ultra has an internal battery that can last up to 4 hours under ideal conditions. Additionally, there's a USB-C port that allows you to connect to a power bank, or you can clip on Insta360's own tripod battery adaptor.

As I briefly alluded to earlier, the Insta360 isn't quite unique, as it shares many features that you can find on cameras from other brands. In fact, its overall design is remarkably similar to the DJI Pocket series of cameras, although I don't know which company introduced each feature or design cue first.

Insta360 Luna Ultra

CO-ENGINEERED WITH



luna
M O M E N T

F2.0 1/125s ISO400

2026-04-25 21:16

I'm not going to wade into that issue. But it does make me think that every time either of these companies release a new camera, red lights start flashing in a patent lawyer's office somewhere. The bottom line is that if you're in the market for one of these cameras, it would make sense to shop around and try out the other brand as well.

In terms of comparison shopping, you can buy the Insta360 with its Standard Bundle for approximately \$770 at several stores, including Insta360's own online store. That bundle includes the camera, the handle, a cover, a wind guard, and a wrist strap. There are a number of other bundles, accessories, and configurations, but even at the pricier end of things, you can probably walk away with an amazing and highly portable video camera, as well as several add-ons, for under \$1,000.

At this point, I could make like the Buggles and bemoan the changes that technological development is causing to our society, our culture, and our art. Or, I suppose I could make like another late-70s pop rock song, and I could roll with the changes. Sure, videos are becoming more and more popular, but I think that the heart of photography will keep beating for as long as people are around and making visual art.

Even though I'm personally likely to stick mostly to still photography in the coming years, I could actually envision myself using a camera like the Luna Ultra for shooting some videos—as long as I didn't have to appear in them. And if I do decide to try my hand at videography, I think that the Insta360 Luna Ultra would be an excellent camera to start with.



Protective Cover



Insta360 Luna Ultra (with Wind Guard)



1/4" Thread Handle



Wrist Strap

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 INSTA360 LUNA ULTRA | CREATORS ARE DITCHING SONY FOR THIS?!

by TONY NORTHRUP



This Insta 360 Lunar Ultra has completely changed how I shoot. It has a built-in gimbal, a little built-in screen, and it's so small and lightweight. This is not a gimmick, this is so useful. In this video, I tell you all about it.

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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7 TIPS FOR DEVELOPING YOUR OWN EDITING STYLE



Photo by: *Mylene T Photography*

STOP RELYING ON SOMEONE ELSE'S PRESETS AND LEARN HOW TO BUILD A SIGNATURE EDITING STYLE THAT IS UNMISTAKABLY YOURS

As photographers, we spend hours obsessing over glass, sensors, and finding the perfect golden hour light. But clicking the shutter is only half the battle. In the digital age, the darkroom has been replaced by software such as Lightroom, Capture One, and Luminar and Photoshop. We live in a world awash with purchased preset packs and fleeting social media trends, making it incredibly challenging to cultivate a personal editing style.

Your editing choices are your visual signature. They set your work apart from the millions of images uploaded daily, making your photographs instantly recognizable as yours. Whether you are shooting with a high-megapixel mirrorless beast or a trusty DSLR, the RAW file is merely a starting point. Here are some practical tips to help you develop and refine your own unique approach to your desktop editing workflow.

1. START WITH INTENTION

Before you even import your RAW files into your catalog, ask yourself what you want your photograph to convey. Before you touch a single slider, take a moment to look at the unedited image. Are you aiming for a moody, cinematic effect with deep shadows, or a bright, airy feel that highlights delicate textures?

Let your intention guide your editing decisions, rather than blindly applying the latest popular preset to see what sticks. As a photographer, your goal is to evoke emotion. If the scene was cold and desolate, your white balance and color grading should reflect that. If it was a warm, intimate portrait, your skin tones and con-

trast curves need to support that narrative.

Editing with intention means knowing exactly why you are adjusting the exposure, pushing the shadows, or pulling the highlights before your mouse even moves.

2. EXPERIMENT BEYOND PRESETS

Presets are a fantastic learning tool and a great foundation, but they should never be your final destination. When you buy a preset pack, you are essentially buying someone else's vision, calibrated for their specific camera sensor and lighting conditions. Apply them, but don't stop there.

Photo by: [Curated Lifestyle Photography](#)



Photo by: [DLX Media](#)

Dive into the underlying settings to see exactly what that preset is doing. Look at the Tone Curve: is it an S-curve? Are the blacks crushed or faded? Head down to the HSL (Hue, Saturation, Luminance) panel and see how the greens and blues are being manipulated. Adjust the exposure, contrast, color balance, and masking to suit your specific raw file. Once you understand the mechanics of the software, you'll discover which granular adjustments resonate most with your personal style.

3. STUDY THE WORK OF OTHERS, BUT DON'T IMITATE BLINDLY

We all have photographic heroes. Follow photographers whose work you deeply admire and spend time analyzing their editing choices. What makes their images stand out? Is it the way they handle dynamic range? The specific color palette they lean towards? The way they use radial gradients to draw the eye?

Try to reverse-engineer their process in your own editing software. However, the goal here is to adapt techniques, not to copy looks. Ripping off someone else's style will only make you a second-rate version of them. Inspiration should fuel originality, not imitation. Take the way one photographer manages contrast, combine it with the way another handles split toning, and filter it all through your own perspective.

4. CREATE AND SAVE YOUR OWN PRESETS

Once you move past relying on others' presets, you should start building your own library. Most desktop editing suites like Lightroom Classic and Capture One allow you to save custom develop settings. As you experiment and find specific combinations of tone curves, color grading, and sharpening that you love, save them as your own base presets.

Building your own presets does two things. First, it drastically speeds up your workflow when batch-editing a massive wedding or editorial shoot. Second, it helps maintain absolute consistency across your portfolio. Your grid or website will start to look cohesive because the underlying color science and tonal values are unified by your custom baseline settings.

5. EMBRACE IMPERFECTION

With modern DSLR and mirrorless sensors, we have access to clinical digital perfection. Images are razor-sharp, noiseless, and technically flawless out of the camera. But perfection is often boring. Sometimes, the quirks and mistakes in an edit can become the hallmarks of your style.

Don't be afraid to add heavy film grain to a digital file to give it texture and a tactile feel. Leave in a bit of color fringing or a light leak if it adds atmosphere. Push the white balance slightly too warm if it enhances the mood. Don't be afraid to break the technical rules or leave in elements

that add character to the frame. The goal of an edit isn't to create a sterile, perfect representation of reality. It is to create art.

6. REVISIT AND RE-EDIT YOUR WORK

Your editing style is not a static thing. It will evolve over time as your tastes change and your skills improve. One of the best exercises you can do is to go back into your archives. Pull up a RAW file from two or three years ago, one you thought you edited perfectly at the time.

Create a virtual copy and re-edit it with fresh eyes and your current skill set. This practice will clearly reveal how your tastes have shifted. Maybe you used to love heavy HDR looks, and now you prefer muted, filmic tones. Re-editing old work is a masterclass in self-reflection and an excellent way to consciously refine your current approach.

7. STAY TRUE TO YOUR VISION

The photography industry is incredibly trend-driven. A few years ago, it was crushed blacks and faded vintage tones. Then it was the teal and orange cinematic look. Trends come and go, but your perspective is uniquely yours.

Trust your instincts and edit in a way that feels authentic to you, even if it completely contradicts what is currently popular on social media. The most memorable photographers, the ones who leave a lasting legacy, are those who dare to be different. They dictate the trends rather than follow them. Build a style that serves your subjects and your artistic soul.

IN CONCLUSION

By approaching your editing workflow as an ongoing creative journey, you will gradually develop a style that is entirely your own. It takes time, patience, and thousands of hours staring at a calibrated monitor. But eventually, you will craft a visual signature that reflects not just how your camera captured the world, but how you uniquely want others to see it.



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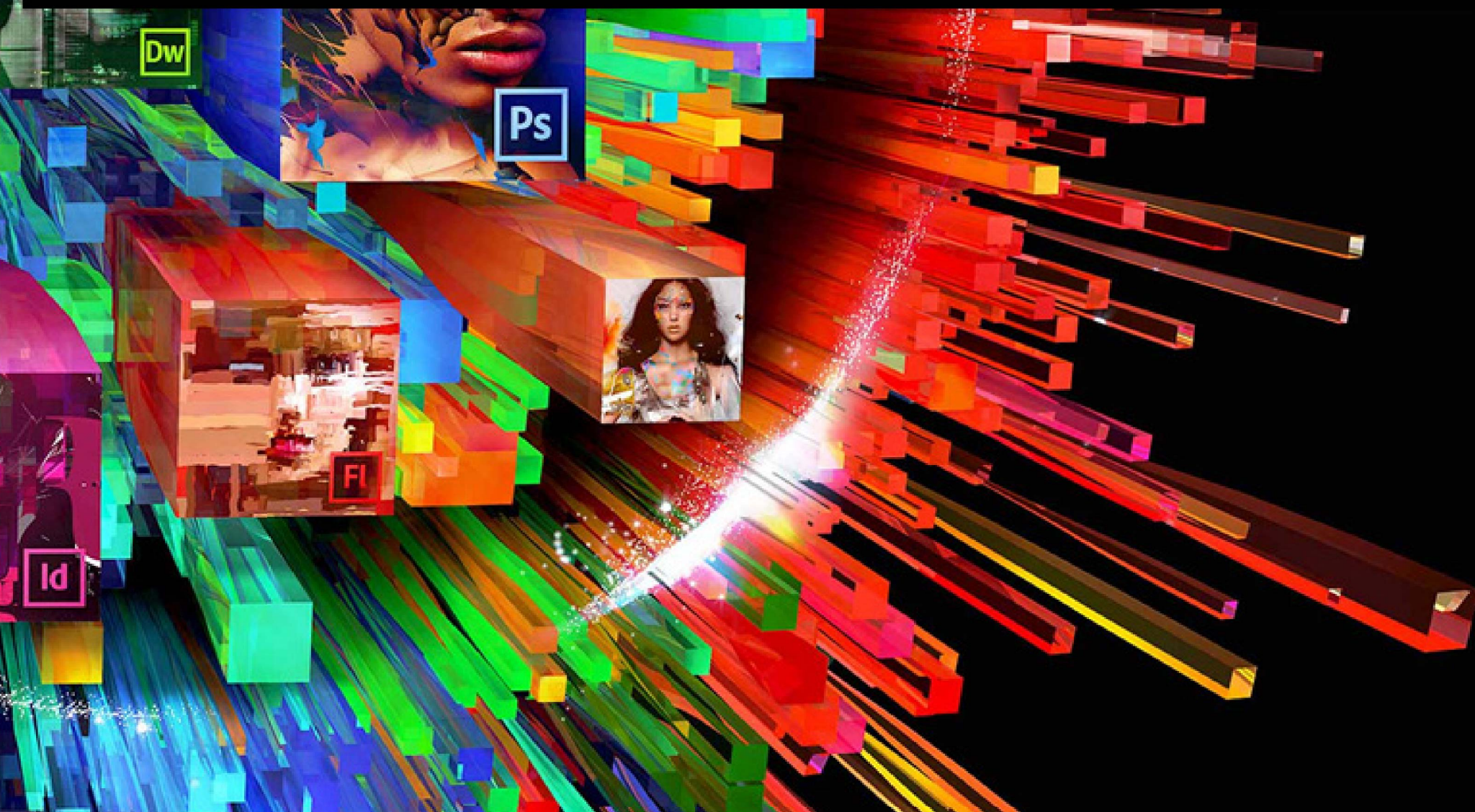


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PHOTO EDITING:

Complete Lightroom Edit From Raw to Print



VIDEO TUTORIAL: COMPLETE LIGHTROOM EDIT FROM RAW TO PRINT

by NIGEL DANSON

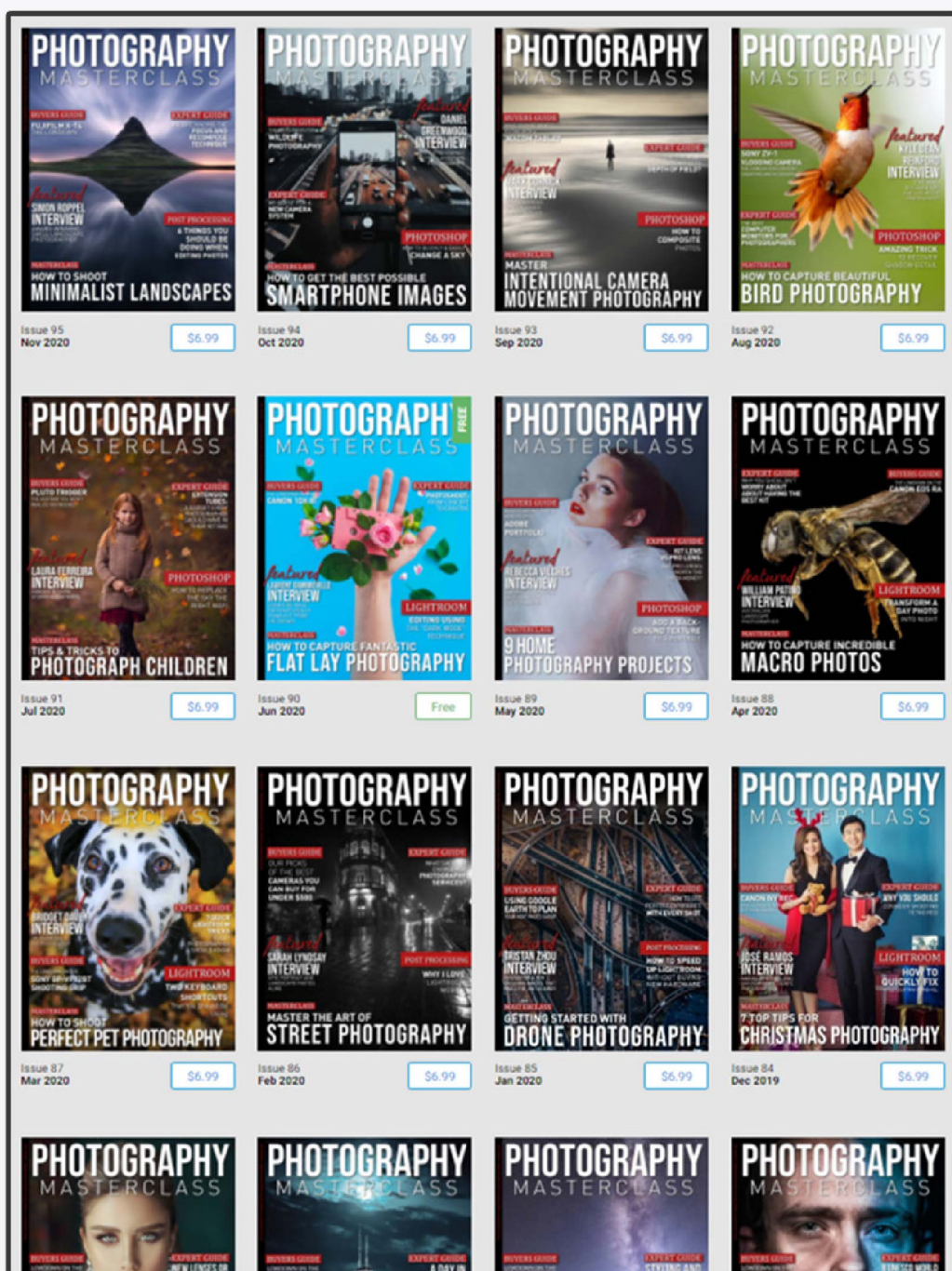


In this video I go right from the beginning of editing a HDR photo (where I've taken 3 exposure brackets) and I'm going to edit it (It's quite a complex edit with lots of different techniques) and then I'm going to print it.

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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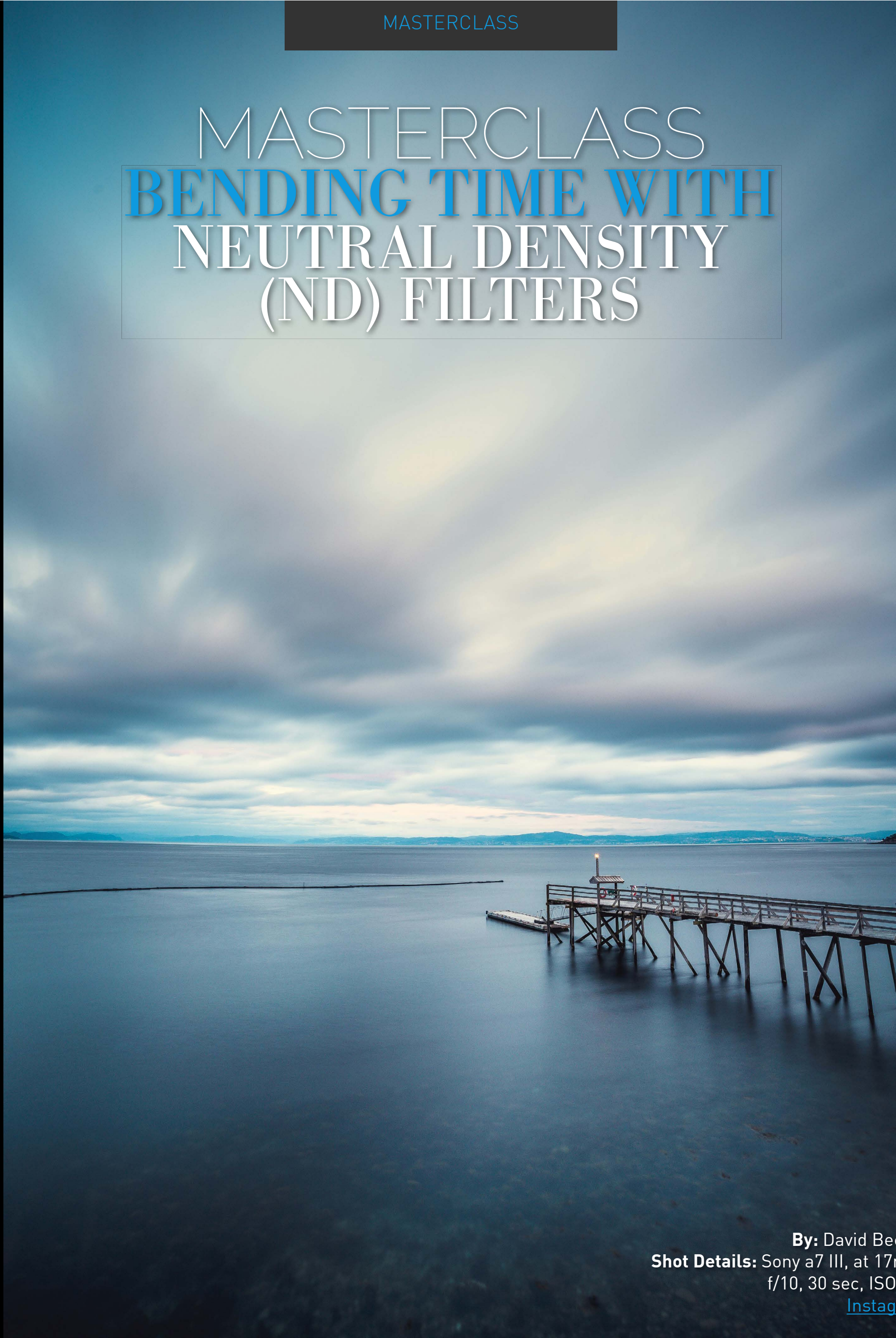
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Your submission can be based on any topic relating to digital photography, including post production. We also accept reviews of cameras, lenses and equipment.

Submit your articles or videos at Photographymc.com and your content could appear in an upcoming issue!

FIND OUT MORE

MASTERCLASS BENDING TIME WITH NEUTRAL DENSITY (ND) FILTERS



By: David Becker
Shot Details: Sony a7 III, at 17mm,
f/10, 30 sec, ISO 100
[Instagram](#)





By: Brice Cooper
Shot Details: Canon EOS Rebel SL3, at 21mm,
f/8, 3.2 sec, ISO 100
[Instagram](#)















By: Ache Dipro
Shot Details: Nikon D7000, at 11mm,
f/8, 1/4 sec, ISO 100
[Instagram](#)

BENDING TIME WITH NEUTRAL DENSITY (ND) FILTERS



Photo by: Fabien Bellanger

If you've ever scrolled through your feed and paused on a landscape photo featuring buttery-smooth water or streaking clouds, you've seen a Neutral Density (ND) filter in action. While editing software can simulate a lot of things these days, true long-exposure motion blur

and daylight depth-of-field control are still best captured in-camera.

Today, we're going to dive deep into ND filters so you can unlock new creative possibilities and refine your technique, no matter where you are in your photographic journey.

WHAT EXACTLY IS AN ND FILTER?

Think of an ND filter as a pair of high-quality sunglasses for your camera lens. Its sole purpose is to reduce the amount of light entering the lens and hitting your sensor. The "Neutral" part is crucial: a high-quality ND filter reduces light without affecting the color or contrast of your scene.

By deliberately restricting the light, you force the camera to compensate in one of two ways: leaving the shutter open longer (which creates motion blur) or opening the aperture wider (which creates a shallow depth of field).

THE THREE MAIN TYPES OF ND FILTERS

SOLID ND FILTERS:

These have a uniform darkness across the entire piece of glass. They come in specific, fixed strengths and are the standard go-to for long-exposure photography.

VARIABLE ND FILTERS (VND):

These consist of two polarizing layers. By rotating the front element, you can dial in the exact amount of light reduction you want. They are incredibly popular for videography and fast-paced portrait sessions, though cheaper ones can introduce a dreaded "X-pattern" cross-polarization effect at extreme angles.

GRADUATED ND FILTERS (GND):

These are dark at the top and clear at the bottom. We use them for high-contrast scenes, like a bright sunset sky over a dark foreground. You line up the transition line with the horizon to balance the exposure perfectly in a single frame.

CIRCULAR VS. SQUARE FILTER SYSTEMS

When you start shopping, you'll quickly realize you have to choose between circular screw-on filters and square drop-in systems.

CIRCULAR FILTERS:

These screw directly into the filter threads on the front of your lens. They are compact, relatively affordable, and great for run-and-gun shooting. The downside? You either have to buy a different size for every lens you own (e.g., 77mm, 82mm) or buy the largest size you need and use cheap metal "step-up rings" to adapt them to smaller lenses.

SQUARE FILTER SYSTEMS:

These use a metal bracket that attaches to the front of your lens, and you slide rectangular glass filters into the slots. The massive advantage here is that you can easily stack multiple filters (like a solid ND and a graduated ND) without worrying about physical vignetting on wide-angle lenses. If you plan to shoot landscapes 90% of the time, the square system is usually the preferred choice.



DECODING THE NUMBERS

Filter manufacturers love to confuse us with different naming conventions. Depending on the brand, you'll see numbers like ND8, 0.9, or "3-stop." Here is the cheat sheet you need to memorize:

1-Stop (0.3 / ND2): Cuts light in half. Barely used in modern digital photography.

3-Stop (0.9 / ND8): Great for slowing down water just enough to show movement while retaining texture, like a rushing river or a crashing wave.

6-Stop (1.8 / ND64): The workhorse for landscape photographers. It allows for multi-second exposures during golden hour or overcast days.

10-Stop (3.0 / ND1000): The heavy artillery. This turns a 1/60th of a second exposure into a 15-second exposure. It's what you use to completely flatten the ocean or streak clouds across the sky in broad daylight.



MASTERING THE TWO PRIMARY USE CASES

It's a common assumption that ND filters are only for waterfalls or blurring water, but there are two entirely distinct reasons to have them in your kit bag.

USE CASE 1: MOTION BLUR (THE LANDSCAPE APPROACH)

When you are shooting a landscape and want to blur moving elements, you need a slow shutter speed, often several seconds long. In broad daylight, even at ISO 100 and f/22, your camera will likely max out at 1/15th of a second before the image overexposes.

By placing a 6-stop or 10-stop ND filter on the front of your lens, you choke the light. Suddenly, that 1/15th of a second

becomes a 4-second exposure. The water turns to mist, the clouds drag across the sky, and moving tourists completely vanish from the frame.

USE CASE 2: SHALLOW DEPTH OF FIELD (THE PORTRAIT APPROACH)

Let's say you are shooting a portrait at noon on a sunny day. You're using an 85mm f/1.4 lens, and you want to shoot wide open to beautifully separate your subject from the background. But in bright sunlight, shooting at f/1.4 will let in so much light that even at your maximum shutter speed (say, 1/4000s or 1/8000s), the image is completely blown out.

Enter a 3-stop ND filter. It cuts the light just enough that you can keep your aperture at f/1.4, get that beautiful bokeh, and achieve a perfectly exposed shot without overworking your sensor.

STEP-BY-STEP: CAPTURING THE CLASSIC "SILKY WATER"

Let's put this into practice. Here is a reliable workflow to use when shooting moving water in the field.

SET UP THE COMPOSITION:

Mount your camera on a sturdy tripod. This is non-negotiable. Any camera shake during a multi-second exposure ruins the shot.

COMPOSE AND FOCUS BEFORE ADDING THE FILTER:

If you put a 10-stop filter on first, your viewfinder or live-view screen will be pitch black. Your camera's autofocus will struggle or fail. Compose your shot, lock your focus (switch the lens to manual focus so it doesn't hunt later), and then carefully thread or drop the ND filter onto the lens.

DETERMINE YOUR BASE EXPOSURE:

Before adding the filter, take a test shot in Aperture Priority or Manual mode to get a proper exposure. Let's say it's ISO 100, f/8, at 1/30th of a second.

DO THE MATH (OR USE OUR CHEAT SHEET):

If you add a 6-stop filter, you need to double your shutter speed six times. 1/30 -> 1/15 -> 1/8 -> 1/4 -> 1/2 -> 1 second -> 2 seconds.

(Pro tip: Just [download our free ND Filter cheat sheet](#) to do this instantly without the mental gymnastics).

COVER THE VIEWFINDER:

If you are using a DSLR, light can leak in through the optical viewfinder during a long exposure, ruining the contrast of your image. Use the built-in blind or just throw a dark cloth over the camera body. (Mirrorless users can skip this step).

FIRE WITH A REMOTE:

Use a cable release or a 2-second self-timer so you aren't physically touching the camera when the shutter opens.



PRO TIPS AND PITFALLS TO AVOID

Here are a few lessons I've learned in the field that will save you time and frustration.

WATCH OUT FOR COLOR CASTS:

Cheaper ND filters are rarely truly "neutral." They often have a magenta or heavy blue tint, especially the darker 10-stop varieties. Always shoot in RAW so you can easily correct the white balance in post-production later. If you're shooting frequently, investing in high-quality glass from a reputable brand makes a massive difference.

VIGNETTING ON WIDE ANGLES:

If you shoot with an ultra-wide lens (like a 16-35mm), screwing on a thick, circular ND filter might cause physical vignetting—dark corners where the lens is actually seeing the edges of the filter ring. Look for "slim" or "nano" filter profiles to prevent this, or switch to a square filter system.

DON'T OVERDO THE BLUR:

It's incredibly tempting to throw a 10-stop filter on everything. But

sometimes, completely flattening water removes all texture and makes the image look sterile. A 3-stop or 6-stop filter that retains some dynamic, violent movement in a crashing wave often results in a much more powerful image. Try to match the shutter speed to the velocity of the water.

KEEP THEM CLEAN:

ND filters are magnets for dust and smudges. Because you are often shooting at smaller apertures like f/8 or f/11 for landscapes, every single speck of dust will show up clearly in your final image. Keep a microfiber cloth handy and check your glass before every shot.

IN CONCLUSION

ND filters force you to slow down. You can't just run and gun when you're calculating stops, mounting tripods, and waiting 30 seconds for an exposure to finish. They demand intentionality. As you experiment with ND filters, you'll find that this slower, more deliberate process doesn't just give you better files, it makes you a much more thoughtful photographer.

Grab a 6-stop filter, find some moving water or drifting clouds, and start bending time.

VIDEO TUTORIAL: ND FILTERS EXPLAINED IN DEPTH GUIDE FOR BEGINNERS

by The School of Photography



In this tutorial, I'm going to explain all about ND filters in photography; what ND filters do, what ND filters to buy, what effects they create and so on. I've also created an ND filters guide that you can download and keep. This will help you work out shutter speed times using our exposure calculator and advise on what ones to buy. If you're thinking of buying or using ND filters to create long exposure photography, then this tutorial is for you.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

The School of Photography deliver high-quality photography courses online, in person and in books, and are a leading provider of photography education to schools and colleges in the UK. You can follow more from The School of Photography on their [website](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).

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FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHER: MIKE TESSELAAR



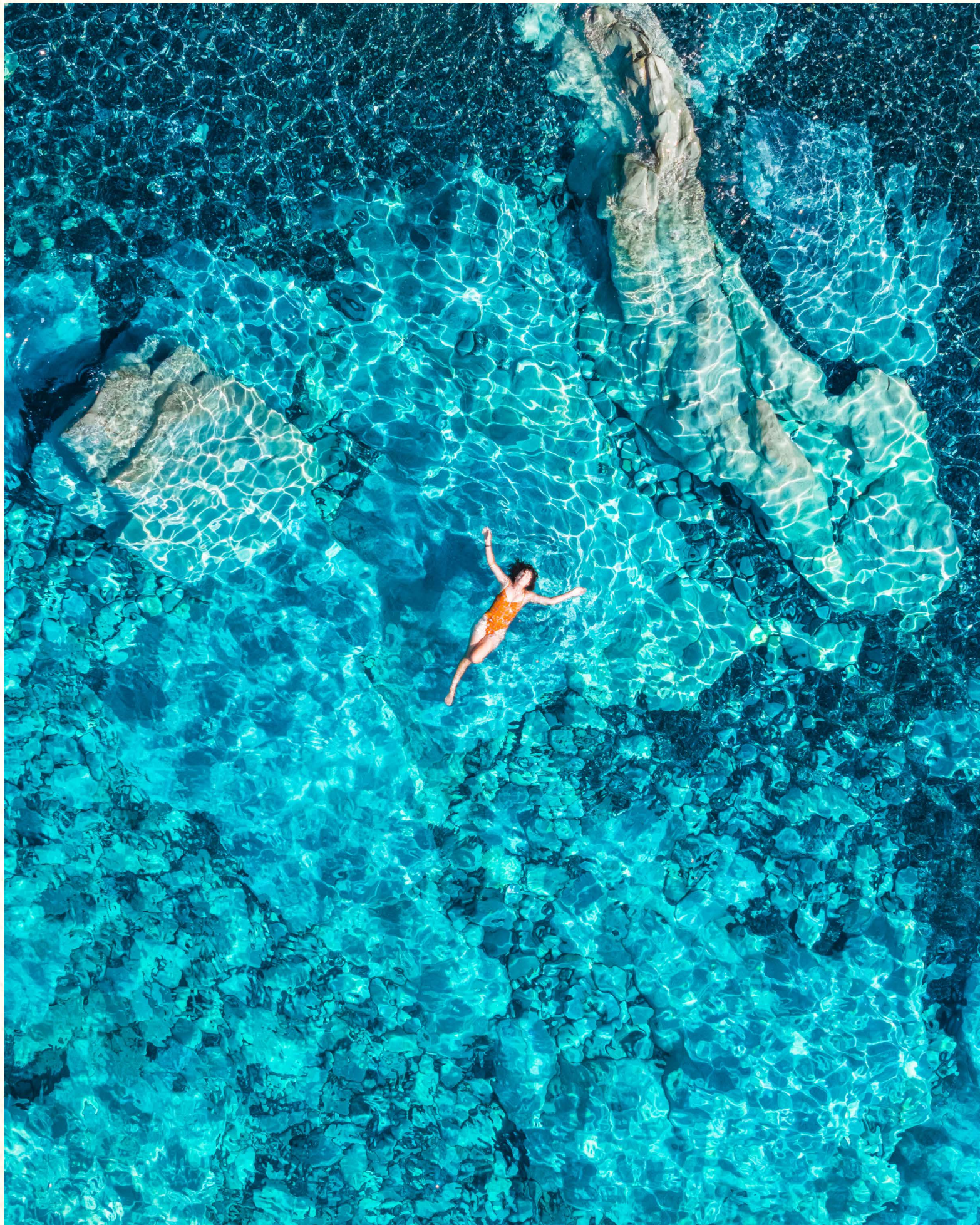
From building FPV drones above the flat Dutch landscape to quitting his engineering career for a life behind the lens, Mike Tesselaar's journey into photography is anything but conventional. In this interview, Mike shares how a simple desire to capture hidden gems from above evolved into a full-time passion for "changing perspectives," whether he's shooting from a stabilized drone or his full-frame camera on the ground. Discover how this Netherlands-based creative blends photography, videography, and aerial storytelling to offer a truly unique view of the world.



Photographic Speciality/Style:

I specialize in high-quality photography, videography and drone content, in- and outside of The Netherlands.

My slogan is "changing perspectives", something I used to describe myself in the early stages of my career. I still think it fits really well, as I like to mix things up and find the best angles and storytelling-ish ways to capture the world around me.



**Short Bio:**

Although I messed around with self-built FPV drones back in the day, my story really started during a trip to New Zealand in 2020 when I came in touch with a professional camera. With this camera, I could suddenly capture the images I had in mind. "Crazy," I thought, "Was it the camera after all?" It turned out I'd always had an eye for composition, but lacked the right tools to capture it.

Upon returning to the Netherlands, I decided to test this theory. I bought my first professional camera and started

photographing part time alongside my job as a Sales Engineer. I soon discovered videography, and less than a year later, I decided to take my chance and fully embark on this journey, combining the best of photography, videography and drone in any project I come across.

I've always liked to create something out of nothing, and to offer a unique perspective along with it, whatever the challenge, device or location. Nowadays, I spend around a quarter of the year traveling the world for various projects. Always with a camera, drone and other devices, so I can capture any moment that catches my eye.

You shoot both travel and drone photography. What is it about those genres that keeps you creatively excited?

Travel photography, combined with drone wherever I can, allows me to discover the world and capture the most beautiful places. And doing it as a profession makes it even more special. Personally, I love the "photo view" of the world, making me look at things from a different perspective and in more detail than I would without a camera. Nowadays, I notice I even look at things with a photographic eye without my camera with me, and I think that's beautiful; I pay more attention to my surroundings, cultures, landscapes, cities and its small details than I ever did before.

Travel photography is all about timing. Someone can arrive one hour before or after you and experience a place entirely different. What you see and experience is entirely up to the person who's traveling. I love to dive in without too much preparation and just experience the place, capture whatever I notice and present my unique perspective to the world. It

doesn't need to be perfect, it just needs to be real. I think that's very important, and also what keeps traveling refreshing and exciting for me as a photographer and traveler alike.

Drone photography adds an entire new dimension to (travel) photography. Drones allow me to find more creative angles and perspectives that are refreshing and still relatively new to the human eye. Even though drone photos look impressive pretty fast, it still is an art to capture stills/moments that make people stop and wonder. Especially "birds-eye-view" photography with the drone gets me really excited, this is where you point the camera straight down and remove the horizon on the photo. This often leaves you with an abstract kind of photo, sometimes even painting-worthy.

Combining travel photography and drone photography allow me to capture a scene from all angles and tell a story. A real story. The freedom a drone gives you, and the possibilities cameras and lenses give you, make for endless creative photos.







Your work often offers a fresh perspective on a place. What do you look for when deciding whether a scene will work best from the ground or from the air?

Before I visit a place, I do a little research. Not much about what has/hasn't been photographed already, just if I find a place worth visiting and what that weather will look like (even though the weather doesn't scare me much). I often plan my trips with Google Maps and scan the area for cool places. Sometimes, you can already see patterns or "hidden gems" from the satellite view, which will be great to capture by drone. But most places I just visit more or less blindfolded. I assess the location on the spot and try to capture the scene with both camera and drone. If the area doesn't allow drones (like certain

national parks etc.), I sometimes try to find an elevated spot to photograph from.

Drone photography often allows you to capture more of the surroundings. It's giving context to your story. Where a camera offers you the "human perspective", a drone offers you a flying self-timer, where you can add yourself into a scene from a perspective unknown to the human eye. So yeah, if context is needed, flying a drone is a no-brainer for me.

The beauty of doing both camera and drone photography on one location, is the possibility of "zooming in" and "zooming out". You can use the camera for details, close and medium shots. The drone for wide shots and interesting angles. I try to find new perspectives in both practices to make the most of it in every place.

Can you talk us through your creative process, from first arriving at a location to capturing and refining the final image or video?

Little bit like described above.

I normally have a little list in my head of things I'd like to capture. Not requirements, but guidelines for myself. Moreover, I'm quite an on-the-fly kind of photographer. If I like the place, I'll start looking around and find spots to photograph. If I don't feel it, and if it's likely I won't edit the photo afterwards, I just don't take the photo, leaving me more time to enjoy the place for myself.

At the end, I quickly check if I have all the angles I wanted and if the photoset tells

a story. If no, I only shoot the photos I still need to finish the serie. If yes, I stow my camera away to prevent me from overshooting. This also helps me in the editing process by limiting my options and only shooting things that are worth it (to me).

When editing, I make a rough selection (generally 1/10 or 2/10 photos) after which I edit those. From these edited images, I select the ones for social media, clients, website, prints etc.

Most of the times I come home with more than I expected. I believe this comes from my lack of research before, and therefore lack of expectations. But that is what works for me: less expectations makes for a better traveling experience. You can't miss what you don't know.





Travel photography can involve unpredictable light, weather and access. How do you adapt when conditions are very different from what you hoped for?

When I first started, I felt inspired by big photographers with the best weather conditions in every single location, but soon realised that chasing the best image was not for me. Don't get me wrong, I love to shoot with ideal conditions and beautiful locations, I just don't mind if the weather turns out a little different anymore. I want to capture it as it is. Sometimes a place is only beautiful with the best conditions and sometimes a place is even better when the weather turns out worse than expected. I think it's all about your mindset as a photographer and

making the best out of every situation. Especially for travel photography, where you have limited time and resources per location.

I adapt to whatever comes my way. If a location is closed, I see if I can find a replacement. If the weather is bad, I wait or make the best of it. If the light is hard, it's time to explore inside or just go for a coffee. Travel photography is amazing but you need to allow yourself to enjoy the place. And sometimes you find an even better story to tell when deviating from your original plan anyway ;)

And last but not least: patience. If you really want a specific photo with good conditions, make sure you book enough time (minutes, hours, days) around the location.



Since leaving your previous career to focus on photography and videography full-time, what has been the biggest lesson you've learned about building a creative life?

I never imagined having my own company/going freelance, but everything clicked the moment I started with photography. Dictating my own work/life balance, working in a creative job and, of course, traveling. It's been amazing over the years.

I think my biggest lesson would be to focus on your network. Delivering great work is amazing, but having the right people find it is so much more important. Most photographers would love to jump

on the opportunity to photograph for a travel agency, but how would they find you out of all the available people? You need to put yourself out there, promote your work, write up possible candidates and expand your network. Of course, alongside delivering the best work you possibly can, but your network is what will drive your career in the long-run.

I noticed a snowball-effect after about two years of working in the creative industry. People will start to notice your work, your name starts to go around, people start to refer to you and clients come back for more. Success doesn't happen overnight, but it can definitely happen when you power through and don't give up too easily.





What would you consider to be your greatest achievement in photography so far?

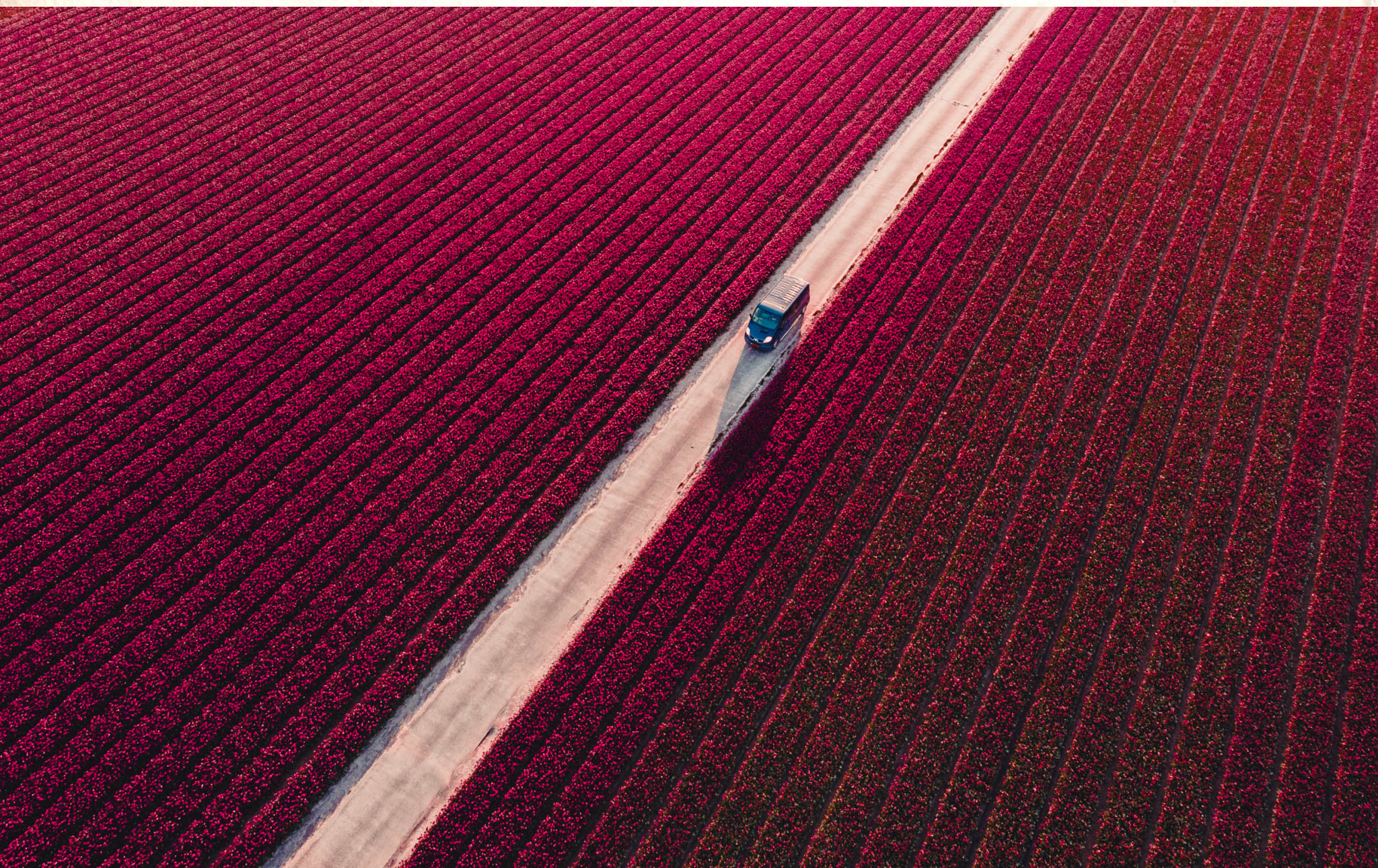
Talking about actual achievements, I received 3 commended awards in the Siena Drone Awards over the years, as well as Gold and Platinum awards in the Muse Photography Awards, among other competitions and publishings. I also became an ambassador for photography platform 500px and I'm active as DJI creator (Skypixel).

Something I'm rather proud of, even more so than the achievements, is that I've traveled to 30+ countries in 4 years just by doing photography. I loved traveling before I became a photographer, and I'm glad my career allows me to explore the world and share it with others. It's a dream come true, honestly. I think it's my greatest achievement personally.

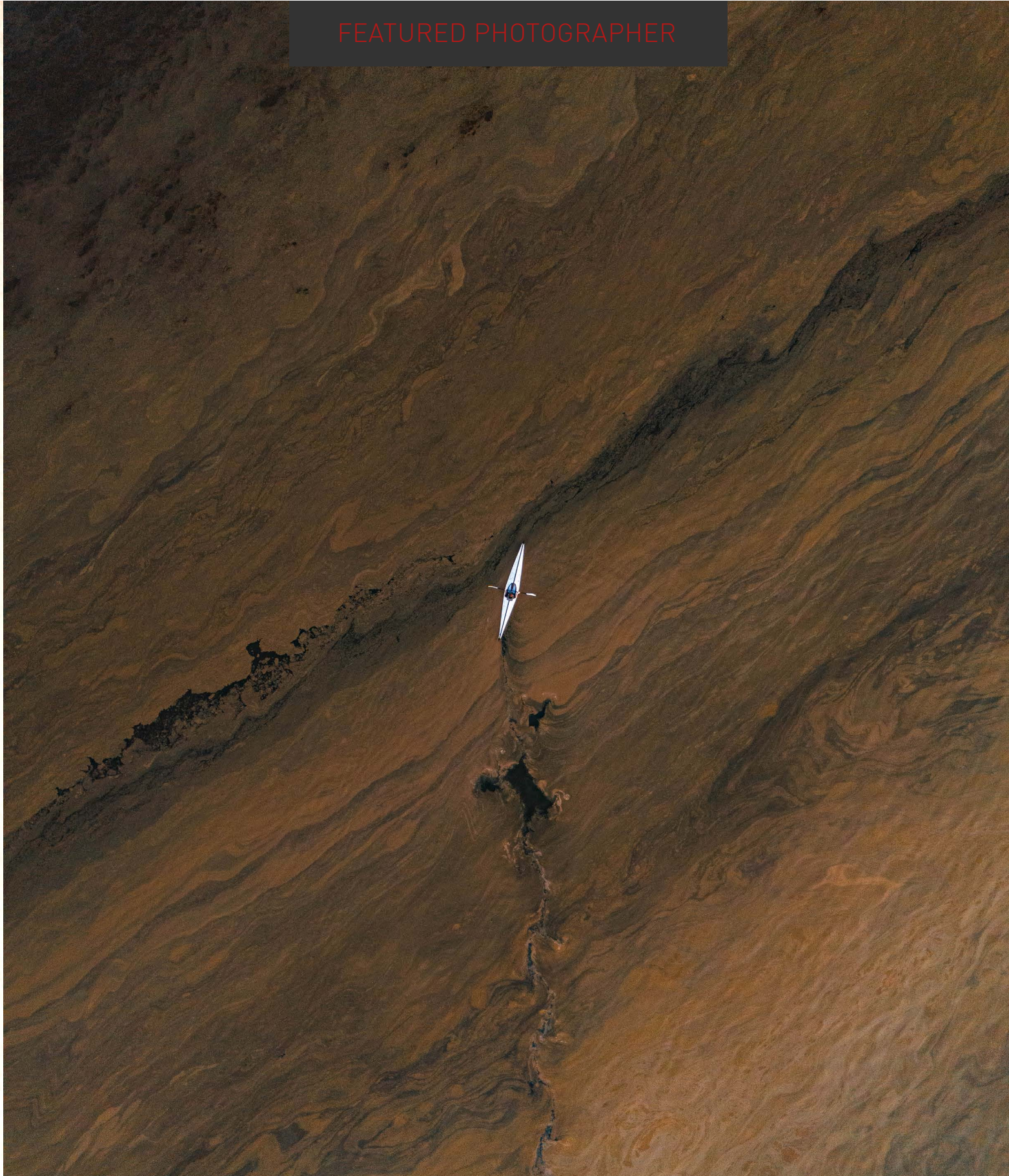
What's your favourite image you've ever taken?

Years ago, I think it was 2020, during tulips season in The Netherlands, I shot a drone photo of a van driving through a tulip field. I was on my last battery and spotted the composition I wanted. The problem was, it was a road to a singular house in the middle of nowhere, so the

chances of a car driving past was slim. I had about 15% left on the battery and was about to fly back when this van pulled up and drove past. I got a one shot and one shot only, but that shot ended up getting multiple awards and worldwide recognition. It is always a photo I think of when someone asks when I started to feel like a photographer. I love this photo still.







Looking ahead, what are your long-term photographic ambitions?

So much! First of all, I look forward to travel to Japan, Patagonia and Antarctica next year. When I started traveling when I was 18, I set out a goal to reach 100 countries one day. This year I'll reach halfway already. Maybe, just maybe, I'd like to launch a coffee table book with the best of 50 or even 100 countries when it comes to that.

In terms of photography, I want to continue down the path I'm currently on. I get to travel, meet amazing people, see crazy places and work with interesting companies. Every year, my work has been improving and I'm looking forward to seeing what I'll be doing in a few years! The ambition is to enjoy it and keep improving.

What's currently inside your kit bag, and what's the one piece of gear you couldn't do without?

Travel photography is constant process of considerations of what to pack. You want the right gear to capture your location, but also keep your backpack reasonably in weight. I always pack a 24-70mm f/2.8 lens. It's one of the greatest do-it-all lenses to travel. And, if it's allowed to fly, I always carry a drone, no matter the weight. Oh, and for the harsh light during the day, a CPL filter is a must!

My kit for most travels:

- Canon R5 Mark II + Canon R5C
- 24-70mm f/2.8
- 70-200mm f2.8
- 35 / 50 f/1.8 prime
- Drone
- CPL filter
- Optional: action cam, 3D cam





If you could build your dream kit bag with no limitations, what would be in it?

If only it could prevent me from back pain haha! If it could, I would also bring

a 100-500mm with 2x teleconverter, a 10-20mm, a huge powerbank to charge all my stuff, a boatload of snacks and something that magically transfers all my photos to a hard disk in two locations.

What advice would you give to beginner photographers?

Just start. Don't overthink it, just start. You'll find out after a while if you like it as a hobby, a profession or just something you like to do sometimes. And use social media for inspiration but don't use it to

compare yourself to others. Try to explore and experiment, go outside with your friends for a random shoot, and find out what you like most. Everyone has their own way of finding their path in photography. I'm wondering what it'll be for you! :)

Have fun!







Follow more of Mike Tesselaar's work on his [website](#), [500px](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)

TIMELAPSE

CAPTIVATING AERIAL ADVENTURE: EXPLORING THE BREATHTAKING AUSTRIAN ALPS BY DRONE

by CHRISTIAN MÖHRLE



Experience the awe-inspiring beauty of the Austrian Alps like never before with this breathtaking timelapse drone video

BEHIND THE SCENES:
CHRISTIAN MÖHRLE'S
“CAPTIVATING AERIAL ADVENTURE: EXPLORING THE
BREATHTAKING AUSTRIAN ALPS BY DRONE”



Immerse yourself in the serene beauty of the Austrian Alps and the Hohe Tauern Nationalpark with our mesmerizing drone footage.

In this captivating video, we take you on a relaxing journey through the majestic Großglockner area, the awe-inspiring Krimmler waterfalls, and a myriad of picturesque mountain lakes and ranges. From the towering peaks to the tranquil valleys, experience the

tranquility and grandeur of this stunning alpine landscape. Let the soothing visuals transport you to a place of serenity and wonder. Whether you're an outdoor enthusiast, a nature lover, or simply seeking a moment of tranquility, this drone video is sure to captivate your senses. Join us as we uncover the hidden gems of the Austrian Alps from a unique perspective. Sit back, relax, and let the beauty of the alpine paradise unfold before your eyes.



The footage of this drone video was recorded on the @DJI Air 2s. Flying in the Hohe Tauern National Park is

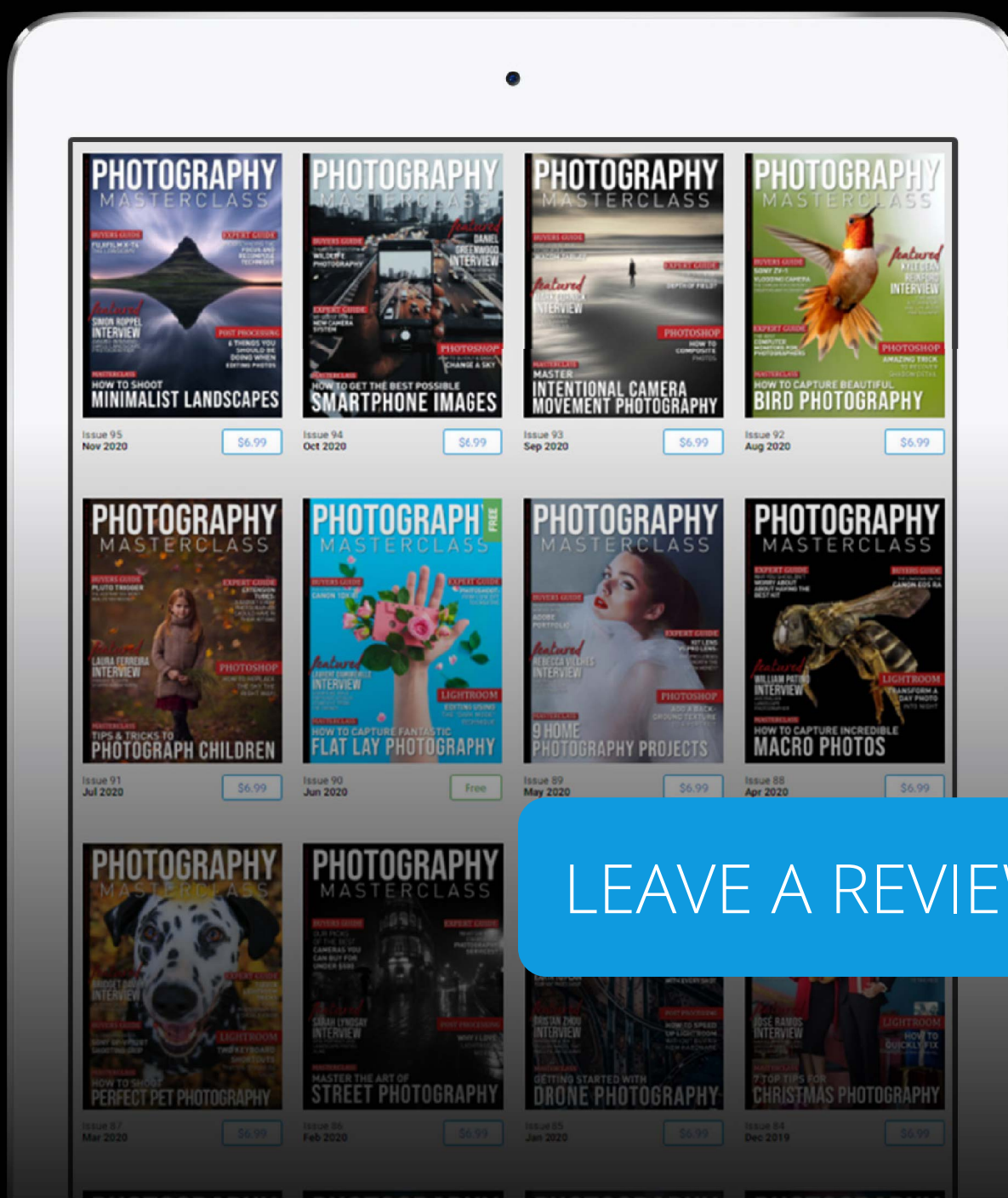
possible, but there are restricted areas which of course we have avoided!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Christian Möhrle is a landscape photographer based in southern Germany & has been shooting landscapes since 2009. His goal to become one of the best landscape photographers in Germany while still doing it just as a hobby. On his way to achieve this, he publishes post processing videos using Lightroom, Photoshop and other helpful tools, as well as doing timelapse videos. Follow more of his work on [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#)

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READERS GALLERY

Your Very Best Shots Showcased

IVORY GRACE ON FIRE

By: Brian Ford

Shot Details: Canon 6D Mark II, at 66mm,
f/5.6, 1/160 sec, ISO 800



SELECTIVE COLOR SUNFLOWER

By: Geri Lynn Smith

Shot Details: Canon EOS 6D Mark II,
with EF17-40mm f/4L USM lens, at 40mm,
f/10, 1/80 sec, ISO 200, -2/3 EV

[Website](#)







URBAN RED FOX KIT

By: Keith Dsylvia

Shot Details: Nikon Z8, at 390mm, f/6,
1/640 sec, ISO 400



SUNSET AT THE LAKE

By: Steve Cohen

Shot Details: DJI FC3170 with 24.0 mm f/2.8 lens,
at 24mm, f/2.8, 1/8 sec, ISO 740, -0.7 EV

[Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#)



FINISHED FOR THE DAY

By: Henry Cooper

Shot Details: Panasonic DMC-FZ330,
at 92mm, f/5.6, 1/125 sec, ISO 400

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



BURROWING OWL

By: Russell Wynter

Shot Details: Canon R5 with EF 300mm f/2.8L IS II
USM + 1.4X III lens, f/4, 1/2000 sec, ISO 320

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FIND OUT MORE

WHY ARE MY PHOTOS BLURRY? 5 REASONS YOUR PHOTOS AREN'T SHARP



Photo by: [Raphael Nicolas](#)

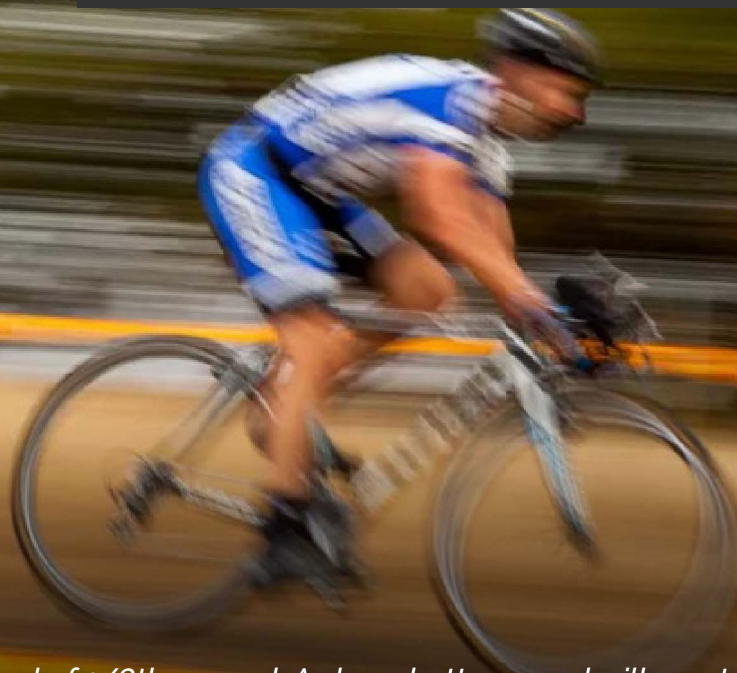
by The School of Photography

You've set your exposure correctly. As far as you're concerned, the focus is absolutely fine. Then you get home, open the image on your computer and zoom in. It's soft.

So, why are your photos blurry or not as sharp as you expected?

The frustrating thing is that there isn't one single answer. Sharp photography relies on several different things working together, and getting just one of them wrong can leave you with a soft image.

Here are five of the most common reasons your photos aren't sharp — and what you can do about them.



Taken with a shutter speed of 1/8th second. A slow shutter speed will create what is called camera shake.

1. YOUR SHUTTER SPEED IS TOO SLOW

One of the first things to check when your photos aren't sharp is your shutter speed.

You may have heard the old rule that you should be able to handhold a camera at 1/60 sec or faster and still get a sharp photograph. It's a useful starting point, but there are plenty of variables.

One of the biggest is your focal length.

If you're shooting with a wide-angle lens, it's much easier to handhold the camera without your movement becoming obvious in the photograph. Zoom in with a telephoto lens, though, and every tiny movement is magnified.

At 18mm, for example, a small amount of camera movement might not cause a problem. At 200mm, that same movement becomes much more noticeable.

And focal length isn't the only consideration.

Think about photographing a portrait. You're talking to your model, directing them and moving the camera around. Or perhaps you're doing street photography: you spot something, quickly raise the camera and take the shot.

Your hands and camera are moving, and if they move during the exposure, you get **camera shake**.

That camera shake can make an otherwise correctly focused photograph appear soft.

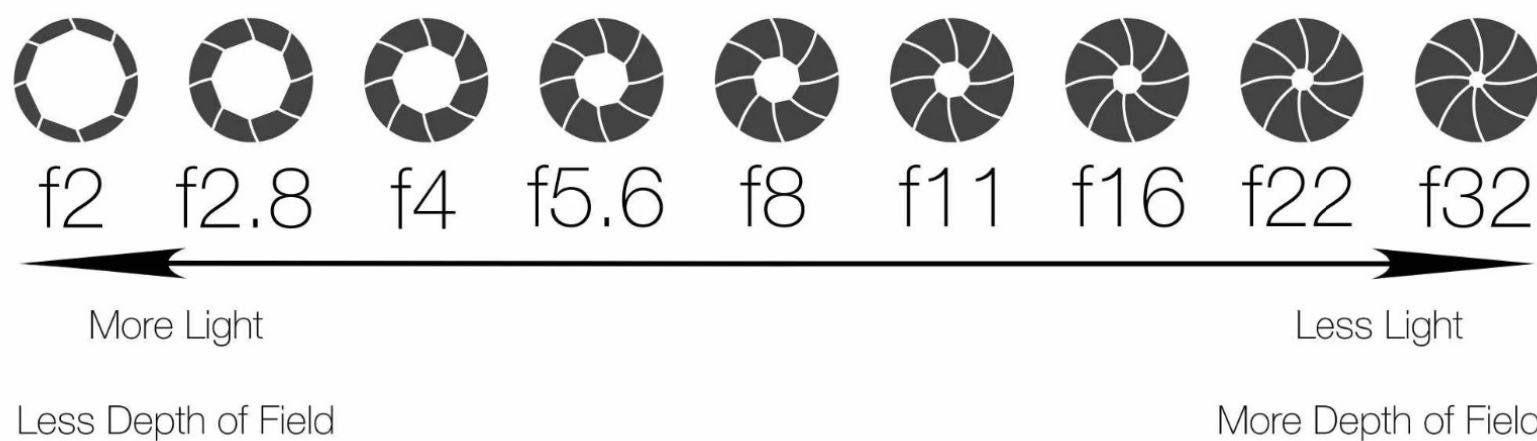
WHAT SHUTTER SPEED SHOULD YOU USE FOR SHARP PHOTOS?

Generally, when shooting handheld:

- At wider focal lengths, try to stay at **1/125 sec or faster**.
- When zoomed in, aim for at least **1/250 sec**.
- In many situations, **1/500 sec or faster** will give you a much better chance of consistently sharp results.

Modern cameras and lenses often include image stabilisation, including IBIS (in-body image stabilisation). It's brilliant technology, but don't make the mistake of relying on it completely.

Yes, stabilisation can allow you to use surprisingly slow shutter speeds when both you and your subject are completely still. In real-world photography, however, things move.



How aperture affects light and depth of field, from $f/2$ to $f/32$.

2. YOUR APERTURE IS TOO WIDE

Aperture can also have a huge effect on how sharp your photograph appears.

Wide aperture, such as f/1.2, f/1.8 or f/2.8, creates a **shallow depth of field**.

Only a relatively small area around your focus point will appear sharp, while areas in front of and behind it become increasingly blurred.

That can look fantastic. It's how photographers create those beautiful portraits with a sharp subject and soft, creamy background.



f/4, narrow depth of field

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f/22, long depth of field

But it also makes accurate focusing much less forgiving.

Imagine photographing something at $f/1.2$. You get your focus point exactly where you want it, but then either you or the subject moves slightly. Your intended point of focus can quickly move outside that very narrow zone of sharpness.

Close the aperture to something like $f/8$ or $f/11$ and your depth of field becomes much greater, making it easier to keep more of the photograph sharp.

WHAT IS THE BEST APERTURE FOR SHARP PHOTOS?

There isn't one aperture that's correct for every photograph.

However, if you're photographing a scene where you want plenty of detail to appear sharp (a landscape, for example) **$f/8$ or $f/11$ can be a very useful starting point.**

If you deliberately want a shallow depth of field and blurry background, you can absolutely use a wider aperture. You just need to be much more precise with your focus.

The important thing is to understand the trade-off rather than simply setting the widest aperture your lens offers every time.



A photo example of high ISO, showing lots of grain.

3. YOUR ISO IS TOO HIGH

Your shutter speed can be fast enough, and your aperture can give you plenty of depth of field, yet your image may still appear soft.

The problem could be your ISO.

As you increase ISO, you also increase the amount of visible noise in your

photographs. That noise can reduce fine detail and make an image appear less clean and sharp.

In the video, we demonstrate this by photographing the same scene at **ISO 160** and then at **ISO 6400**, while keeping the aperture at f/11. The resulting images show the difference that high ISO can make to apparent image quality.

That doesn't mean you should be frightened of increasing your ISO.

If you're photographing in low light and need a faster shutter speed to prevent camera shake or freeze your subject, increasing the ISO might be the right decision. A noisy photograph is often preferable to a completely blurred one.

The principle is simply this:

Keep your ISO as low as you reasonably can while still getting the shutter speed and aperture you need.

Modern denoise software can certainly help with high-ISO images, but it's always better to start with the best-quality image you can create in camera.



A photo example of lower ISO, which is producing a clearer image.



REASON #4: USING THE WRONG FOCUS SETTINGS

Using the wrong focus settings can be a major cause of blurry or missed shots.

4. YOU'RE USING THE WRONG AUTOFOCUS SETTINGS

Modern cameras have incredibly sophisticated autofocus systems.

They can detect faces, track eyes and even recognise and follow animals. That's fantastic when you understand how and when to use those features.

However, sophisticated autofocus doesn't automatically mean sharp photographs.

One of the problems beginners encounter is giving the camera too much control over **what** it focuses on.

For example, a wide or whole-area autofocus mode allows the camera to search across a large portion of the frame for something to focus on.

But what if you want the object in the foreground to be sharp and your camera decides to focus on something in the background?

The camera doesn't know what your photograph is supposed to be about.

You do.

That's why, while you're learning photography, using a single or spot autofocus point can be a great way to take control.

Position that autofocus point over the part of the scene you want sharp, focus, and you know exactly what you've asked your camera to focus on.

Once you've mastered focusing alongside aperture, shutter speed, ISO and exposure, you can start experimenting with more sophisticated tracking modes. They can make photography faster and easier, particularly with moving subjects, but you should understand the fundamentals first.



REASON #4: USING THE WRONG FOCUS SETTINGS

Choosing the right focus settings is essential for capturing sharp images in challenging conditions.



The diopter adjustment helps ensure the viewfinder display appears sharp to your eyesight.

5. CHECK YOUR CAMERA'S DIOPTER THIS FINAL ONE IS EASILY OVERLOOKED.

If your photographs **look blurry through the viewfinder**, the problem might not actually be your focus at all.

It could be your camera's **diopter**.

On most cameras you'll find a small adjustment dial beside the viewfinder. Its purpose is to adjust the viewfinder to suit your eyesight.

This is particularly useful if you wear glasses because you can adjust the viewfinder so that the information and image inside it appear sharp to your eye.

To set it, look through the viewfinder and turn the diopter adjustment until the display appears sharp.

It's a tiny control, but if it's accidentally knocked out of position, it can leave you wondering why everything through your viewfinder suddenly looks blurry.

SO, WHY AREN'T YOUR PHOTOS SHARP?

The main lesson here is that there isn't one magic camera setting that guarantees sharp photographs.

If your photos keep coming out blurry or soft, work through these five things:

1. **Shutter speed** — is it fast enough to prevent camera shake?
2. **Aperture** — do you have enough depth of field?
3. **ISO** — is excessive noise reducing image quality?

4. **Autofocus settings** — is the camera focusing where you want it to?
5. **Diopter** — is your viewfinder adjusted correctly?

Photography is about controlling all of these things together.

Learning how shutter speed, aperture, ISO and focusing interact takes time, but once you understand them, you'll stop relying on the camera to make all the decisions and start taking control of your photographs yourself.

And that is ultimately how you get consistently sharper images.



In this portrait, the subject's face and eyes are crisp and sharply focused, while the surrounding trees and background are softly blurred, demonstrating how a sharp subject can stand out against a shallow depth of field.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT GETTING SHARP PHOTOS

WHY ARE MY PHOTOS BLURRY EVEN WHEN THEY LOOK IN FOCUS ON MY CAMERA?

A photo can look sharp on your camera's small screen but appear soft when you view it at full size on a computer. Common causes include a shutter speed that's too slow, camera shake, a very shallow depth of field, high ISO or the camera focusing on the wrong part of the scene. Checking your images at a larger size will give you a much better idea of whether they're genuinely sharp.

WHAT SHUTTER SPEED SHOULD I USE TO GET SHARP PHOTOS?

When shooting handheld at wider focal lengths, 1/125 sec or faster is a good starting point. When using a longer focal length or zoom lens, try 1/250 sec or faster. In situations where either you or your subject is moving, 1/500 sec or faster can give you a better chance of getting a sharp image. The correct shutter speed will always depend on your focal length, subject movement and how steadily you can hold the camera.

WHAT IS THE BEST APERTURE FOR SHARP PHOTOS?

There isn't one aperture that will be best for every photograph. If you want a larger area of the image to appear sharp, apertures around f/8 or f/11 are useful starting points. Wider apertures such as f/1.8 or f/2.8 create a shallower depth of field, which means accurate focusing becomes much more important.

WHY ARE MY PHOTOS BLURRY AT LOW SHUTTER SPEEDS?

A slow shutter speed gives the camera more time to record movement during the exposure. If your hands or camera move while the photograph is being taken, that movement can be recorded as camera shake and make the image look blurry. Your subject can also move during the exposure, causing motion blur.

DOES A HIGH ISO MAKE PHOTOS LESS SHARP?

A high ISO doesn't necessarily mean your focus is wrong, but it can introduce more visible noise and reduce fine detail, which can make a photograph appear softer. Where possible, keep your ISO as low as you reasonably can while still using the shutter speed and aperture you need.

WHY ARE MY PHOTOS BLURRY AT F/1.8 OR F/2.8?

Wide apertures such as f/1.8 and f/2.8 produce a shallow depth of field. This means only a relatively small area of the photograph may be in sharp focus. If either you or your subject moves slightly after focusing, the part you wanted sharp can fall outside that area.

WHICH AUTOFOCUS SETTING SHOULD A BEGINNER USE?

A single or spot autofocus point is a good way to learn because it gives you direct control over where the camera focuses. Instead of allowing the camera to choose a subject from across the frame, you position the autofocus point over the area you want to be sharp. Once you're comfortable controlling focus, you can start experimenting with your camera's more advanced tracking modes.



DOES IMAGE STABILISATION GUARANTEE SHARP PHOTOS?

No. Image stabilisation and in-body image stabilisation (IBIS) can help compensate for movement of the camera, but they don't guarantee a sharp photograph. They also can't stop a moving subject from becoming blurred. Understanding shutter speed is still essential if you want consistently sharp images.

WHY DOES EVERYTHING LOOK BLURRY THROUGH MY CAMERA VIEWFINDER?

If everything looks blurry through your viewfinder even when the camera has focused correctly, check the diopter

adjustment beside the viewfinder. The diopter allows you to adjust the viewfinder to suit your eyesight. If it has been moved accidentally, the viewfinder can appear blurry even though the photographs themselves are correctly focused.

HOW CAN I TAKE SHARPER PHOTOS?

Start by making sure your shutter speed is fast enough to avoid camera shake, choose an aperture that gives you enough depth of field, keep ISO as low as reasonably possible and take control of where your camera focuses. Sharp photography isn't controlled by one setting — it's the result of understanding how all of these settings work together.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

The School of Photography deliver high-quality photography courses online, in person and in books, and are a leading provider of photography education to schools and colleges in the UK. You can follow more from The School of Photography on their [website](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).

VIDEO TUTORIAL: **WHY ARE YOUR PHOTOS BLURRY?** **5 MISTAKES YOU NEED TO FIX**

by THE SCHOOL OF PHOTOGRAPHY

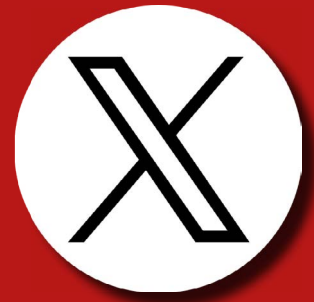


You set the exposure, nail the focus, and the shot looks sharp — until you get home and zoom in. It's soft. So what went wrong? There's no single cause. Sharp photos depend on several things working together, and one small mistake can ruin the result. Here are five common reasons your photos aren't sharp, and how to fix them.

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