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Interviews:

Cat Brown
Nina Papiorek

Featured Artists

Ali Zolghadri
Sarah Wouters

Travel

ICELAND
SERBIA

Art

TANBELIA
SAMIDHA
ISHRATH

Books

LINES BY REMON DIAZ
FORMS OF JAPAN

COVER PHOTO: VIVEK VERMA | PAHALGAM, INDIA



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From the Editor

For as long as I can remember, I've searched for a magazine that speaks to the photographer, the traveler, and the artist in equal measure — and found none. So, naturally, we made one.

In this debut issue, you'll meet extraordinary photographers from across the globe, explore art that demands your attention, and gather insights that go well beyond shutter speeds — from nurturing mental wellness to navigating the legalities of our craft, from unraveling the beauty of complex processes to learning from legendary masters. We've included honest gear reviews, thoughtful learning resources, and curated gems in books, films, and courses. You'll journey through Iceland's ethereal landscapes, wander Serbia's hidden corners, and relish travel-inspired artwork from India to Germany.

Entirely self-funded and non-profit, this biannual labor of love was born from the belief that creativity blooms at the confluence of photography, art, and travel. It exists to inspire, challenge, and spark ideas you didn't know you were missing. My hope is that you'll turn every page not out of obligation, but because each one whispers an invitation — to see more, feel more, and create more.

Vivek Verma

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CONTRIBUTOR SPEAK WHAT IS PHOTOGRAPHY FOR YOU?



ASHISH KAMBLE

Photography to me, is a form of self-expression where I express my thoughts and perspective into images. It also serves as a way to preserve moments in time for the future generation.



ALI ZOLGHADRI

Photography is the universal language of light and time. It preserves fleeting moments, reveals hidden details, and transforms the ordinary into the extraordinary. Beyond documenting reality, it tells stories, evokes emotions, and connects people across cultures. In its purest form, photography is both truth and interpretation—a timeless bridge between the eye and the soul.



REMON DIAZ

Photography, and in that I categorize, has several sections. For me, the only possible way is that of a form of artistic expression, where there are no intermediaries or third parties. It is the art of knowing how to observe and reinvent what we see with the sole purpose of finding our voice. Everything that is linked to the market, causing it to be approached as a trade, is a utility that I do not contemplate in my definition. Photography for me is always a Decisive Metaphor and the lack of utility turning it into mere artistic expression is essential. Everything else is business.

BY **VIVEK VERMA**
PHOTOGRAPHS **CAT BROWN**



INTERVIEW

Cat Brown

Cat stepped into the fashion world as a model over 20 years ago where she gained a deep understanding of the fashion world before transitioning into photography. Working with fashion brands, Cat is driven by passion for imagery which pushes boundaries and empowers clients. Working in studios across London and Kent, she crafts dynamic images that evoke emotion and powerful storytelling which has led to international awards, editorial features and art gallery exhibits.

jellymediapix





I. Your journey from being a fashion model to becoming an award-winning fashion photographer is so inspiring. What was the turning point that made you realize your true passion was behind the camera?

I enjoyed modelling immensely but even from the very beginning of my modelling career, I always found myself more fascinated by how the final imagery looked than actually modelling myself. How photographers were capturing the mood, framing the shot, and bringing the vision to life just fascinated me.

I started to realize I had this overwhelming passionate urge to tell visual stories from my own perspective. Creating art behind the camera is where my heart truly belongs.

II. With a background in editing images for fashion agencies, how did that experience influence your transition into photography? Did it help shape your unique style?

My background in editing images for fashion agencies played a huge role in shaping my transition into photography. Editing taught me to really see an image, not just in terms of lighting, composition, and colours, but also in how subtle details can evoke emotion and tell a story. I spent countless hours fine-tuning skin textures, adjusting tones, and enhancing fabrics — all of which gave me an intuitive understanding of what makes an image captivating.

When I picked up the camera myself, I carried that same attention to detail. I started composing shots with post-production in mind, imagining how lighting and shadows would evolve in editing. That experience pushed me toward a clean yet artistic style — polished but not overworked, always with a touch of raw authenticity.

III. You've worked with so many prestigious magazines like Moevir Paris, Vanity VIP, and Hunter, as well as popular brands. How do you approach creating impactful imagery that resonates with such diverse clients?

Working with magazines and brands has taught me that impactful imagery always starts with understanding the client's story and audience. Every brand or publication has a unique voice, and I see my job as translating that into visual language. My approach begins with a deep dive into the brand's identity — their history, values, and current creative direction.

For magazines, it's about understanding their editorial tone and the story they want to tell through a specific feature. From there, I collaborate closely with creative directors and stylists to conceptualise a visual narrative that aligns with their goals while staying authentic to my style.

Whether it's a sleek campaign for a fashion brand or an edgy editorial for a contemporary magazine, I focus on crafting images that evoke emotion, command attention, and leave a lasting impression. Lighting, composition, and mood are my key tools, but I always prioritize authenticity — people connect with what feels real, even in highly polished work. Flexibility and intuition are also crucial. Staying adaptable allows me to respond to the creative energy on set, often leading to the most impactful, unexpected moments.

IV. Your images are breathtaking and instantly captivating. What's your creative process like, from conceptualizing a shoot to executing it?

It all starts with storytelling. Whether it's a campaign or editorial, I ask myself: What emotion do I want to evoke? What story should the visuals tell? I gather inspiration from art, music, films, and even everyday moments. Creating detailed mood boards helps me visualize themes, colour palettes, and the overall aesthetic. I work closely with stylists, makeup artists, and set designers to refine the vision. We discuss wardrobe, set design, and how to align every detail with the narrative we're building.

I create detailed notes on lighting setups, and planned shot sequences. On set, I create an energetic but comfortable atmosphere to keep creativity flowing.

I give clear guidance but encourage subjects to explore movement and emotions. I love staying adaptable — sometimes the best shots are unplanned magic.

V. As someone who's both modeled and photographed, how do you use your experience in front of the camera to guide and connect with your subjects during shoots?

My experience in front of the camera definitely shapes the way I connect with my subjects. Having been a model myself, I know how vulnerable it can feel to be in front of the lens, and that understanding allows me to create a safe, comfortable environment for my subjects. I guide them not just with technical directions but through conversation and energy. I encourage movement, natural gestures, and expressions, rather than stiff poses. Because I know what it's like to be unsure of "looking right," I offer constant reassurance and clear guidance — whether it's subtle adjustments to posture or simply reminding them that they're doing great. Sometimes, I physically demonstrate poses or share relatable anecdotes to break the ice and ease nerves. This creates a sense of trust and collaboration, which always translates into more authentic, captivating images. Ultimately, I want my subjects to feel empowered and seen, just as I learned to feel as a model. It's a full-circle connection that brings a unique dynamic to my shoots.





VI. Fashion photography is all about storytelling through visuals. How do you balance the client's vision with your own creative flair while working on campaigns or magazine covers?

The first step is always communication. I spend time understanding the client's goals, brand identity, and target audience. From there, I look for the creative freedom within that framework, finding ways to elevate the concept without straying from their vision.

The first step is always communication. I spend time understanding the client's goals, brand identity, and target audience.

I often present mood boards that showcase my interpretation of the brief, incorporating elements like colour palettes, lighting, and composition ideas. This helps align expectations while giving me space to propose fresh, unexpected ideas.

On set, I remain adaptable. Sometimes the client loves my original creative direction; other times, tweaks are necessary to better match their brand narrative. I thrive in that push and pull because it leads to innovation. The best projects are those where the client's vision and my creative instinct merge to tell a story that feels bold, authentic, and visually unforgettable.











VII. Your studio, Jelly Media Studio, is already well-known. Where do you envision taking it in the next few years? Are there any new projects or ventures we should look forward to?

I have a new project coming out very soon showcasing some striking visuals titled “From Ruins to Renewal: A Photographic Story of Transformation”.

This editorial shoot captures the profound journey of transformation through four distinct photographic looks: Broken, Unveiling, Rebirth, and Time.

Each phase tells a unique and evocative story, using powerful imagery, styling, and artistic direction to symbolize the cycles of destruction, self-discovery, renewal, and the passage of time. There are 4 main looks:

Broken – A raw and emotional portrayal of fragility, loss, and the beauty in imperfection.

Unveiling – The moment of revelation, shedding layers to expose truth, vulnerability, and strength.

Rebirth – A powerful resurgence, embracing renewal, resilience, and newfound identity.

Time – A reflection on the journey, capturing the essence of growth, change, and the marks left by experience.

With a compelling visual aesthetic and a deeply resonant theme, this feature showcases some impactful storytelling through photography. I believe this piece will captivate the audience, sparking conversation about personal evolution and the artistry of transformation.

VIII. Having worked with iconic brands like Aftershock London and Wolf & Badger, what's your dream brand or publication to collaborate with next?

I would absolutely love to work for a high-fashion house like Gucci or Chanel, or a major publication such as Vogue, Harper's Bazaar, or Dazed!



5 tips for aspiring fashion photographers



1

Lighting Techniques

Lighting is everything in fashion photography. Whether using natural light or studio setups, experiment with different lighting styles (soft, harsh, dramatic) to create depth and mood.

2

Storytelling & Concepts

Focus on Storytelling & Concepts, the best fashion images tell a story. Develop strong concepts before the shoot, considering wardrobe, location, and posing to create a cohesive visual narrative.

3

Talented Team

Work with a talented team. Fashion photography is a team effort. Collaborate with skilled stylists, makeup artists, models, and set designers to elevate your shoot.

4

Composition & Posing

Perfect your composition & posing. Study fashion editorials to understand angles, framing, and dynamic posing. Guide your model to create movement and emotion in every shot.

5

Signature Style

Try to develop a signature style, and try to stand out by refining your editing style and aesthetic.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
ALI ZOLGHADRI

In the world of photography, few artists blend emotion, concept, and form as masterfully as Ali Zolghadri. Based in Dubai, he's a celebrated name in black-and-white minimalism and fine art, with over 80 international awards recognizing his powerful, pared-down visual storytelling. His frames are meditative spaces —where silence, simplicity, and meaning converge.

INSPIRATION

Street Photography Meets Fine Art!



A figure leaps into the setting sun—caught in a perfectly timed moment of surreal energy. It's a visual meditation on ambition, movement, and the human desire to reach the unreachable. The horizon line is minimal, giving space for the viewer to breathe, while the mirrored reflection below adds a sense of balance and illusion. The symbolism of running toward the sun, or seemingly into it, can be read as a metaphor for chasing meaning, hope, or simply pushing beyond one's limits.



ABOVE ▲

Two small figures appear to be playing with a ball, yet the stripped-down landscape transforms it into something more existential. They are suspended between sky and reflection, seemingly alone in an infinite space. The ball becomes a symbol of connection—fragile, shared, yet unpredictable. This is not just a game, but a delicate dance of distance and presence. The minimalist setting emphasizes the emotional weight of human interaction when stripped of distractions. It's a quiet story of tension, longing, and rhythm

RIGHT ➤

This image explores the emotional intersection between architecture and solitude. A lone human figure stands at the edge of light, half-swallowed by darkness, evoking feelings of isolation and contemplation. The narrow passage of brightness feels like a metaphor for hope, memory, or perhaps escape—yet remains distant and unreachable. The harsh verticals contrast the vulnerability of the body, inviting viewers to reflect on presence, disappearance, and the silences we inhabit. The absence of visual noise amplifies the psychological weight of the scene.



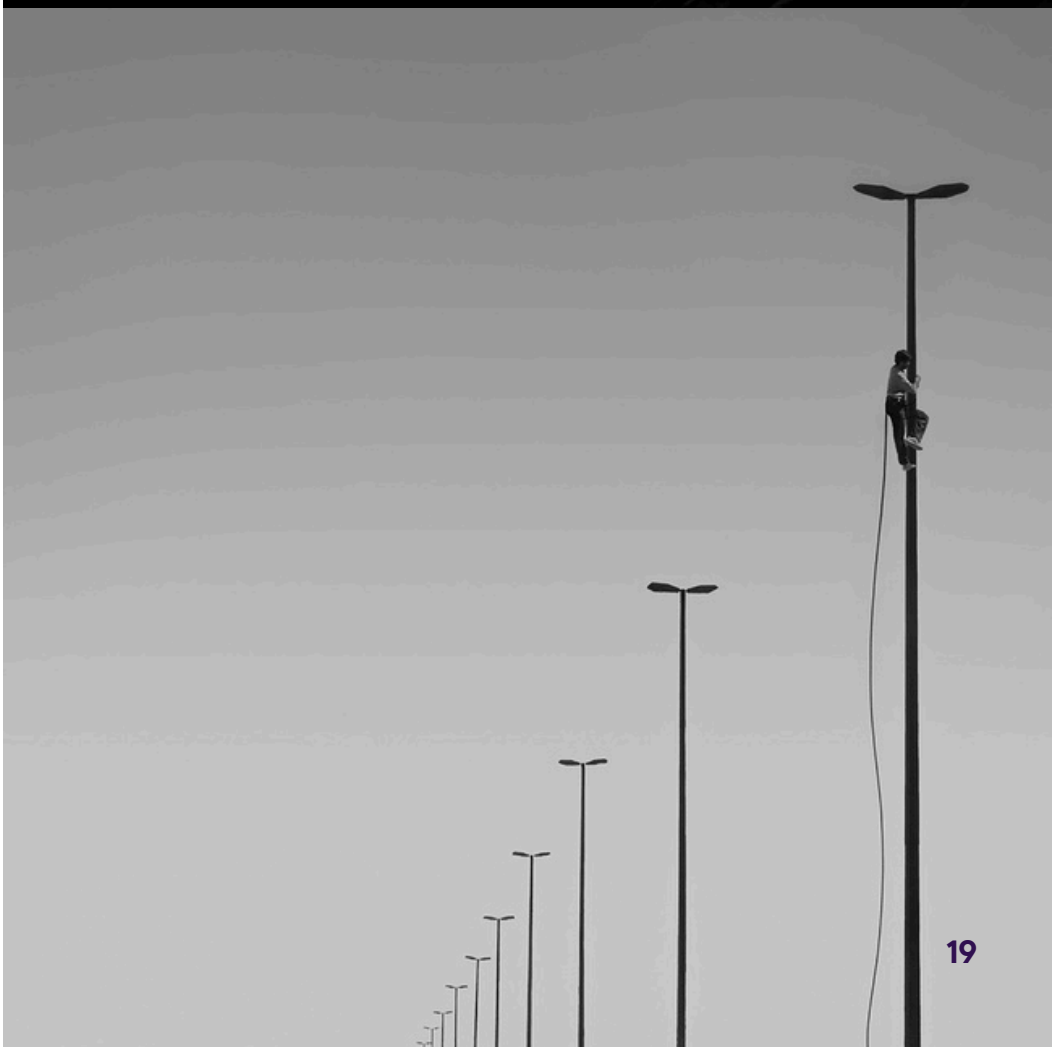
RIGHT ➤

The lone cyclist rides across a dark mountain ridge, framed by distant, misty peaks that fade into abstraction. This image captures the essence of human fragility in the face of nature's grandeur. The monochrome layers of landscape evoke a sense of timelessness and spiritual stillness. The cyclist, almost lost in the scale of the setting, becomes a silent witness—both part of the landscape and apart from it. It's a tribute to solitude, journey, and the quiet resilience of the soul.



RIGHT ➤

At first glance, the subject climbing a lamppost feels surreal—almost absurd. Yet within the repetition of vertical poles and the emptiness of the sky, this act becomes a symbol of rebellion. It suggests rising above uniformity, challenging systems, and seeking perspective in a flat, controlled environment. The composition uses space, scale, and isolation to create a sense of elevation—not just physical, but philosophical. It asks: in a world of repetition, who dares to rise?



ALI ZOLGHADRI

Ali Zolghadri is an internationally acclaimed fine art and conceptual photographer known for his minimalist, surreal, and emotionally resonant black-and-white work.

With over 120 international photography awards from more than 20 countries, his images have been exhibited globally and featured in leading photography publications. His artistic essays and photo series have appeared in several renowned magazines.

Ali has served as a judge for multiple international photography competitions and is a recipient of the prestigious UAE Golden Visa for artistic excellence. His distinctive visual language continues to inspire emerging artists to explore the boundaries of fine art photography.



alizolghadrii



▲ ABOVE

Through a clever alignment of shadow and geometry, this street photograph transforms a mundane moment into an abstract visual poem. The crosswalk becomes a metaphorical path, while the shadow—elongated and detached—acts as a second identity, or even a ghost of the self. The hat, the sunlight, the distorted proportions all contribute to a sense of mystery and narrative ambiguity. It's about perception, anonymity, and how we walk through spaces without fully being seen. Reality is deconstructed into shapes and illusions.

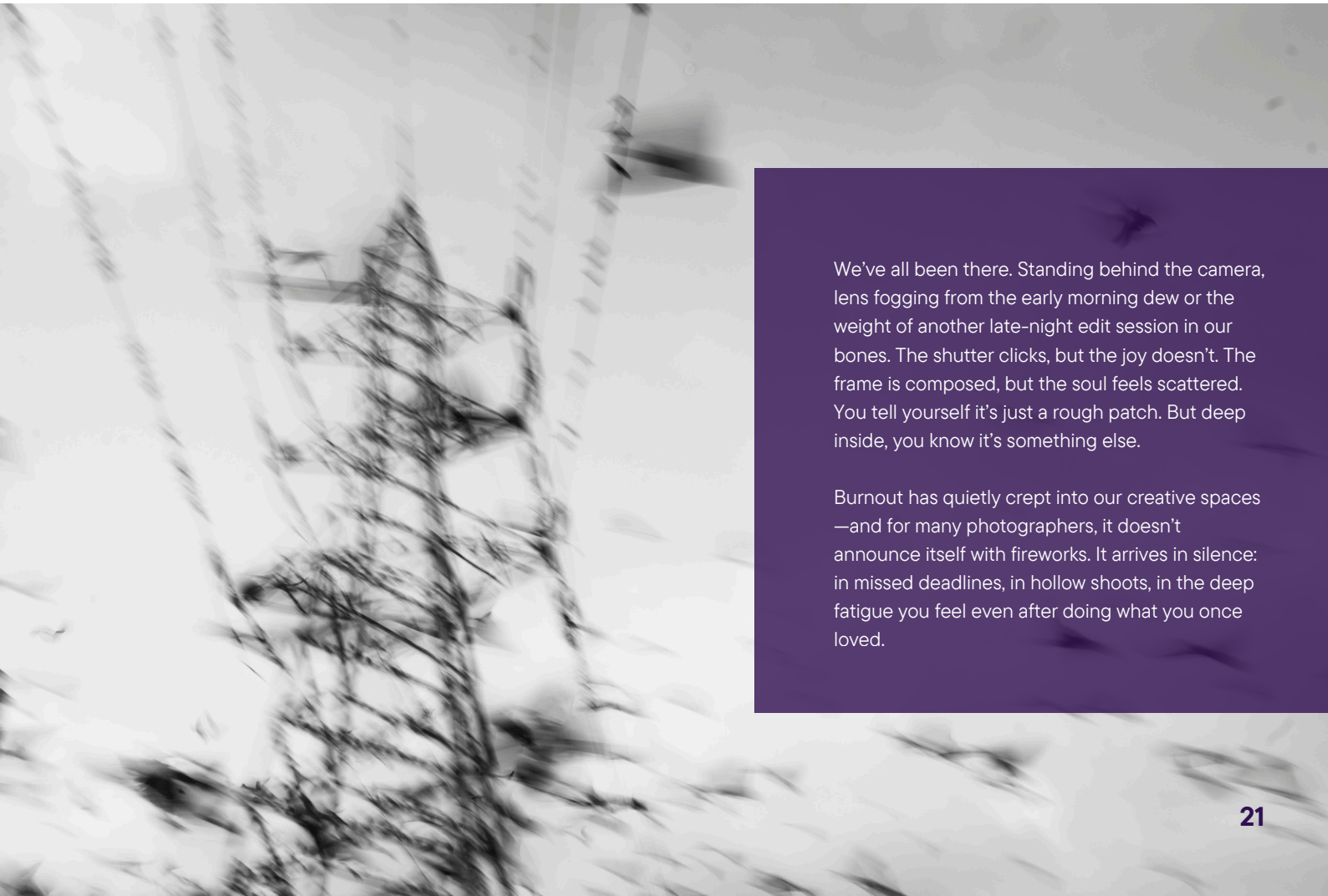
MENTAL HEALTH CHECK-IN

When the Lens Grows Heavy

UNDERSTANDING AND HEALING **CREATIVE BURNOUT**

Burnout isn't always loud. For photographers, it often creeps in quietly—through joyless shoots, creative blocks, or a camera that suddenly feels heavier than it should. This article explores the hidden emotional weight many photographers carry, the three forms of burnout they face, and how to gently find your way back to the work you once loved.

PHOTOGRAPHS: VIVEK VERMA



We've all been there. Standing behind the camera, lens fogging from the early morning dew or the weight of another late-night edit session in our bones. The shutter clicks, but the joy doesn't. The frame is composed, but the soul feels scattered. You tell yourself it's just a rough patch. But deep inside, you know it's something else.

Burnout has quietly crept into our creative spaces —and for many photographers, it doesn't announce itself with fireworks. It arrives in silence: in missed deadlines, in hollow shoots, in the deep fatigue you feel even after doing what you once loved.



THE BURNOUT OF OVEREXERTION

You're juggling three weddings this week, prepping for a product shoot, and somewhere in between, someone wants a "quick" portrait session. You keep saying yes. You want the gigs, the exposure, the income. But somewhere along the line, your art became admin. Your creativity—compressed into colour correction checklists. This is **overexertion burnout.**

It doesn't always start with stress; sometimes it starts with ambition. But when the workload is relentless, your mind stops being a creative wellspring and turns into a tired machine, churning images without meaning.

THE BURNOUT OF DEPLETION

This one sneaks up on you. You think you're managing. You keep showing up. But it's been months—or years—since you took a proper break. Not a weekend away with your laptop and Lightroom, but a real, soul-replenishing pause. Time away from algorithms and deadlines. Time to just be. That's **depletion burnout.**

You're not tired from work alone, but because you haven't had silence, you haven't let your creativity breathe. We are often told to "keep creating"—even during burnout. But sometimes the bravest thing you can do is to stop. Completely. To not photograph, not post, not produce.

THE BURNOUT OF MISALIGNMENT

You're getting paid. Your calendar is booked. But every time you pack your gear, it feels heavier. That corporate event? It doesn't light you up. That studio session? It feels like a repeat of last year's set. The work is fine—but it isn't you. That's **misalignment burnout.**

When what you do no longer reflects why you started. We often chase external markers of success—brand collabs, Instagram growth, clients. But deep down, if your creative compass isn't aligned with what brings you purpose or curiosity, no amount of "likes" can fix that fatigue.

WHAT HELPS

Start saying "no" to protect your best "yes." Define clear work hours. Set boundaries with clients—no edits at midnight, no reshoots on Sundays. And outsource when you can: editing, invoicing, even emails. You're not just the photographer; you're the artist. Protect that space.

WHAT HELPS

Plan sabbaticals—no matter how small. Two weeks. One month. Build them into your calendar like you would a shoot. Explore something new—pottery, long walks, film photography for fun. Give your senses something they're not used to. Recharge not just your hands, but your heart.

WHAT HELPS

Reconnect with your "why." Remember the first photo you ever took that made your heart race. Seek projects that speak to you—personal photo essays, stories in your own locality, portraits of people that matter. Maybe even go analogue again. Strip it down to the basics. Rebuild from there.

WHY IT FEELS SO INVISIBLE

The World Health Organization once defined burnout strictly as an “occupational phenomenon”—tied only to workplace stress. But for us photographers, burnout bleeds into identity. It’s not just work. It’s who we are. When our camera doesn’t excite us, it feels like we’ve gone silent.

And yet, there’s little space to admit this in our community. We fear losing momentum, relevance, income. But silence only deepens the burnout.

YOU’RE NOT ALONE

I’ve watched brilliant photographers lose their light—not from lack of talent, but from a creative exhaustion they didn’t know how to name. I’ve seen their social media go quiet, their editing queues pile up, their joy turn to routine.

This article isn’t a warning—it’s a hug in the form of words. A call to every photographer out there: your burnout is real. And it deserves your care.

WHAT YOU CAN DO RIGHT NOW

- Pause and reflect. What kind of burnout are you facing? Overwork? Emotional emptiness? Misalignment?
- Set boundaries. Not just with clients, but with yourself. You can’t pour from an empty lens.
- Take a creative detour. Shoot for yourself. Explore without intent. Get messy again.
- Talk about it. Share with your photography community. Let vulnerability be the new strength.
- Reclaim joy. Because photography isn’t just work. It’s how you see the world. Don’t let burnout steal your vision.

You’re not a machine with a shutter. You’re a human with a story. Your camera is an extension of your soul—and like you, it deserves rest, meaning, and magic.

YOUR CREATIVE FIRE ISN’T GONE — IT’S JUST RESTING, WAITING FOR YOU TO BREATHE LIFE INTO IT AGAIN.

LET THIS BE YOUR REMINDER: IT’S OKAY TO STOP. IT’S OKAY TO FEEL. AND IT’S OKAY TO BEGIN AGAIN.

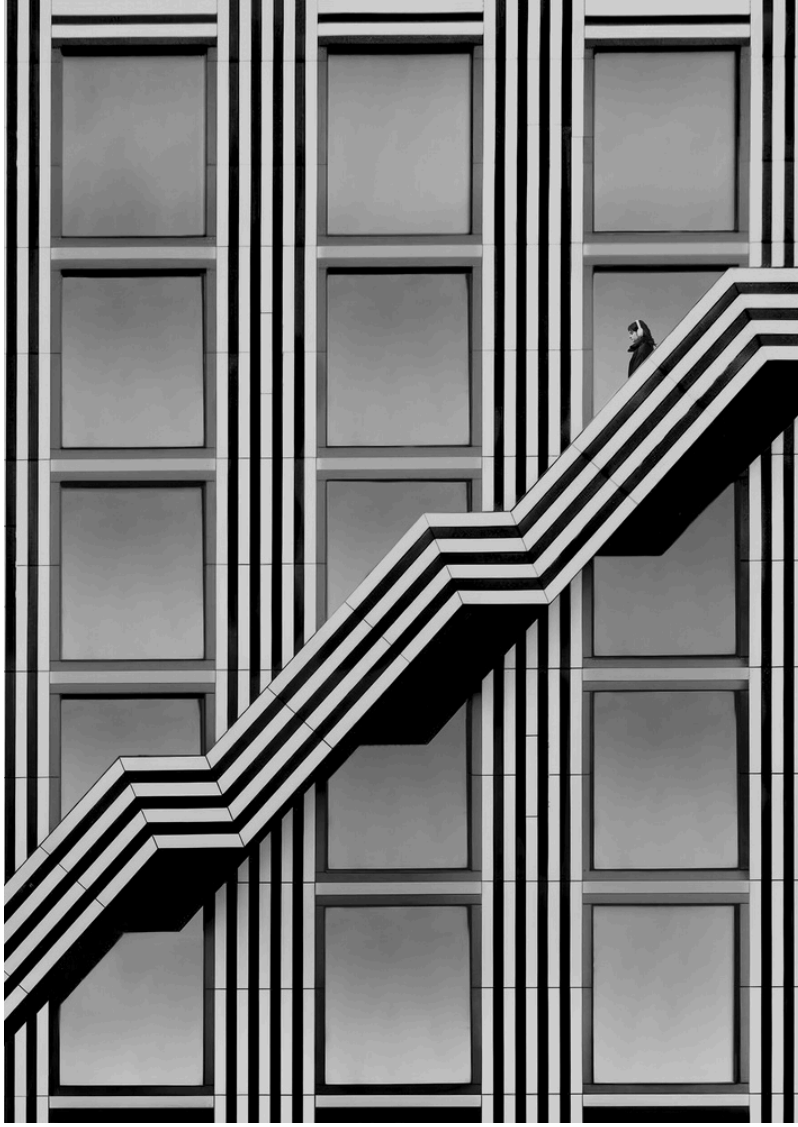


INTERVIEW

Nina Papiorek

BY VIVEK VERMA
PHOTOGRAPHS NINA PAPIOREK

For years, I've been captivated by Nina's black-and-white imagery — photographs that transform streets and urban landscapes into something almost lyrical, rich with new meaning and quiet power. It's taken us a while to align our paths, but at last, the interview I've been itching to share is here.



I. What made you fall in love with photography, and when did you realize it is an inseparable part of your life?

There really wasn't a single, pivotal moment in my life as a photographer. I've always been interested in photography since early childhood and thought photographers were "cool." But there was no one around me who was equally interested, so I put it off during my teenage years. I actually started relatively late, at around 24, when I bought myself my first camera for my college graduation to take with me on a trip. So, unfortunately, I can't tell the famous story of my grandfather, who introduced me to photography at a very early age and whose cameras I inherited. Rather, it was a gradual and steadily growing process; one day I simply went to the store and bought my first camera. The good thing about this boring story is that I take photographs out of absolute personal conviction, and I still fall in love with photography every day.



II. Was there a particular photo or moment that made you realize black and white photography defines your visual language?

From the beginning, black and white photography has been my preferred medium. I love its simplicity and straightforwardness. There's nothing distracting; the focus is entirely on the essentials, the narrative elements of the image. Since I pursue a very minimalist approach to photography, the black and white approach supports this as well. Additionally, shooting in B&W is a wonderful way to add some surrealism to a scene.

III. People and their surroundings play a big role in your images. What interests you most about this connection?

For me, my photographic focus is often on capturing people in their surroundings. It's always candid street photography, I don't like posed photos, because in my opinion you can always see that in a picture. It's much more about capturing genuine scenes and the right moment, which is precisely the art of fine art street photography. The loneliness of the person is a stylistic device that gives the viewer plenty of scope for their own interpretation and appeals to their emotions.

Unlike street photography in general, however, it is not important to me to capture a scene for posterity in as documentary a way as possible; the artistic aspect is more important to me and I want my pictures on the wall. This is an aspect that applies less to street photography in general. People often don't like to hang recognizable strangers on their walls.

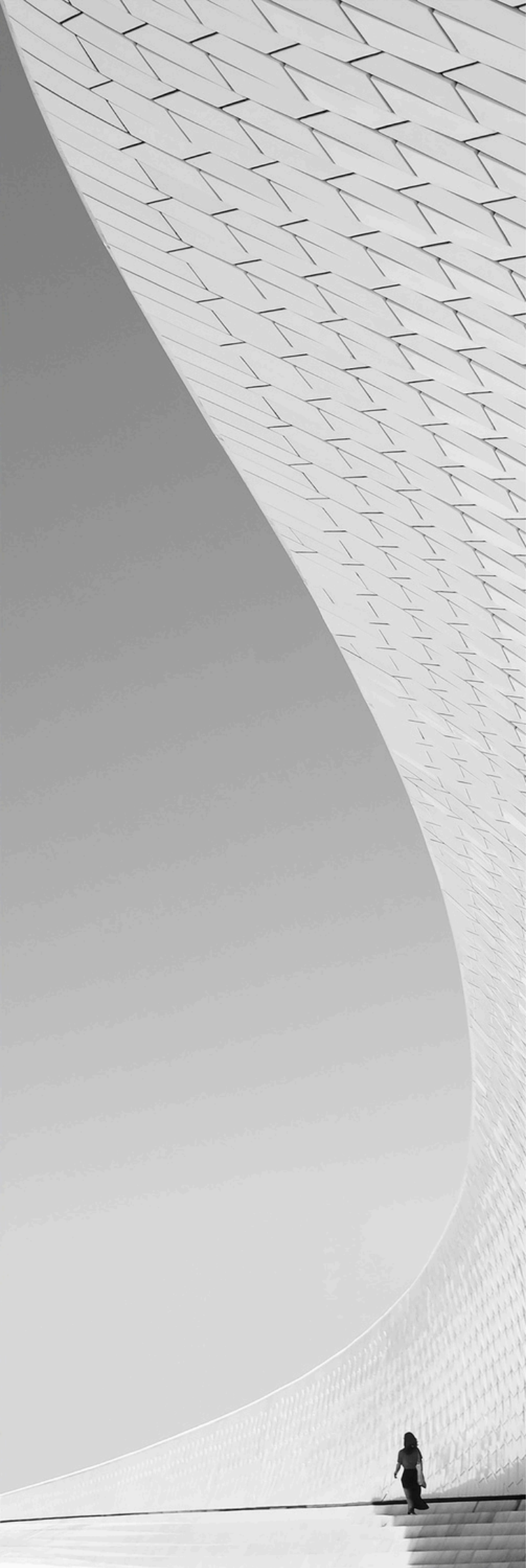
I try to eliminate distracting picture elements during the shoot, often a simple step to the side to hide a rubbish bin standing in the way or simple tricks such as a change of perspective to get a scene that is as clean and tidy as possible. As I often integrate architecture into my photos, especially as a background, this is exactly the kind of clean look that I want to achieve and that fascinates me. It often makes the world or the surroundings seem a little surreal and captivates the eye (at least for a short time).

IV. Your work blends street photography, urban landscapes, and fine art. How do you know when a scene is worth capturing?

There are few scenes on this planet that are not worth triggering the camera for. You should take a lot more pictures, because if you don't, you've already lost. In digital photography, it is easy to quickly delete photos that have gone wrong, but a picture that has not been taken is lost forever.

For me, photography always has a lot to do with TRY & FAIL, often you think you've discovered an exciting scene, but it just doesn't work as a photo. On the other hand, banal scenes can sometimes work amazingly well as photographs. The key is to be selective when choosing images in order to create a meaningful portfolio. When taking the pictures themselves, however, you should proceed rather non-selectively and with a great urge to capture things. That way, you can sometimes have a lucky shot.





V. Having contributed to multiple book projects, how do you approach storytelling through a series rather than a single image?

It is much easier to tell a story in the form of a small series, because with each additional image the viewer receives more and more information about the scene. Not all the images in a short series have to be outstandingly strong, but it is important to have a particularly strong starting image, while the other images might not have been considered for publication on their own. A good example here is the attached “NY Subway” series. The starting image, the lady smoking a cigarette on the deserted platform, forbidden and alone in the dead of night, conveys for me the typical NY vibe of a night of drinking. Meanwhile, photo 3 shows only the lettering on a poster, but it makes it very clear where we are: in New York.

The story is filled out and enriched more and more with each additional picture. In my opinion, a single bid can also have a similar narrative function, but these are usually the best of the best pictures..

VI. What is your thought process when framing and composing a shot in a dynamic urban setting?

The composition of the image is indeed a decisive factor in how your picture affects. Therefore, I always try to build my framing as minimally as possible. I always look through the viewfinder when I try to compose my image, because that often allows me to see other details or sections. Often, one passes by a scene without noticing it; looking through the camera sharpens my 'seeing' immensely.

VII. You also work on commissioned projects for international clients. How do you balance commercial work with personal projects?

You often have to work on things for clients that are not close to your own heart. I often receive commissions in the field of architectural photography, which I generally like very much, but I personally often miss the human factor. In my personal view, people give these photographs life, a world of emotion. It also helps to show the proportions, especially of architectural features, more clearly. As a photographer for commissioned work, however, you have to accept this and put your own wishes to one side.

This year I have an absolute dream job: I'm photographing the island of Rügen in Germany for a hotel chain. The local hotels want to use my photos to decorate their rooms and restaurants, and I have absolutely no brief other than to photograph the island “from my eyes”. An absolute dream project. Unfortunately, this rarely happens – but I cannot complain.



VIII. With your experience, what do you think are the biggest challenges photographers face today, especially in fine art and street photography?

I actually believe that too many budding photographers, who have not yet finally found and positioned themselves, allow themselves to be influenced far too much. Unfortunately, social media play a major role in this, as they allow worldwide access to vast amounts of photographic work. Once you've seen them, you often don't forget them and they influence your own work, even if unintentionally. Unfortunately, many photographers also tend to copy them if they particularly like an image.

But photography is an expression of creativity! It can't be the purpose of photography to copy someone else's photo and want to win accolades for it... this is where I think photography is completely misunderstood. Even if you photograph well-known places, everyone should be able to develop a different position or their own perspective on things. Of course, everything has been done before, but for me there is a great danger in copying.

IX. You've won some of the most prestigious international photography awards and had your work exhibited in prestigious galleries. Is there one that felt particularly special to you?

The whole "game" with the photography awards is an ambivalent one. There are often no large organizations behind them, so you have to take a close look at the selection process. It helps to take a look at the jury, the prizes or even the winners from previous years. That's why I've almost stopped entering contests recently.

But of course there are prestigious ones that you are very proud of. I've been a finalist in the Hasselblad Masters several times, a title I've never won, but I'm not giving up ;)

I see things differently when it comes to exhibitions. Every small exhibition is great. There's nothing like a printed picture, I love to go to every exhibition that comes my way. Of course, I also love visiting exhibitions.



X. Your book “akʁibɪ:” brings together your Fine Art Street Photography and Architecture work from 2009 to 2023. The title means meticulousness and precision—how does this reflect your approach to photography, and what do you hope people feel when they go through it?

I chose the title “meticulousness” of course for the exact reason that it perfectly describes my way of working. When I arrive at a location, it doesn't take me long to create the image I want in my head. There is usually a location with a suitable focal length. Then there's the all-important moment that rounds off the photo. So sometimes I have to wait a long time and observe things until I have the situation in the box as I had hoped.

Over time, you also learn to deal with disappointment, because you can't go home with the ultimate photo every time. It's quite simply part of the job to leave a spot without success and have to come back later - it's just unposed street photography over which nobody has any influence. But it's all the better when the photo is finally successful.

The famous MAAT Museum in Lisbon is packed with people during the day. I had to spend a total of three mornings taking the following photo. In the end, you are proud of the result and the waiting times are quickly forgotten.

XI. What advice would you give to photographers trying to develop their own unique style?

As mentioned above, you shouldn't fixate too much on the work and styles of other photographers. Of course, it is not easy to develop your own style and you will always be influenced. However, there should be something in your own photography that has never existed before. The road to this is very long and rocky, and as a rule you don't find your own style but it works the other way round: the style finds you. So the best tip is to always remain patient.



XII. You’ve been following your love for photography for over 20 years. How do you keep evolving as an artist?

That's actually something I've never really thought about. In the past 20 years, I've never had the feeling of losing interest in photography or even having to persuade myself to do anything. I really always want to take photos, I can't imagine anything better and it's an integral part of my life. That's why I don't have these well-known motivation problems. Maybe that's because I mainly take photos when I'm traveling, which is of course the best time of my life.

Nothing is as educational as a journey and if you can combine that with photography, then I think your happiness is perfect. When traveling, you always experience new things, discover small and big cultural differences and even the difference from the familiar motivates me immensely to reach for my camera.

XIII. What’s next for you? Are there any upcoming projects, exhibitions, or creative directions you’re exploring?

Thank God, there are a few things coming up before the end of the year. I will be exhibiting with Mark Fearnley as the main artist at the Venice Photo Lab in Italy in October, which I am really looking forward to. I will also have a solo exhibition at the Fujifilm Store in Nuremberg, Germany this fall.

A big project I'm currently working on the final stages of is my second book. It will be a follow-up to “Akribie” with the title ‘ikigai’, a Japanese term that translates as “that which is worth living for”. For me, this is obviously photography, which is why I chose this title after a trip to Japan. My two books will differ from each other in their external appearance like negatives, black and white of course.

A dream that I still want to fulfill is a photography trip through Mongolia. However, since I have a family with small children, it is currently failing to be realized. But dreams are there to be believed in. Thank you for allowing me to be a guest in your magazine. I wish you much success for the future!





NINA PAPIOREK

Nina Papiorek is a professional street photographer from Germany, pursuing her passion for over 20 years. She has earned some of the most prestigious international photography awards, with her work showcased in exhibitions and publications worldwide.

In addition to contributing to several photography books, she is the author of online courses and undertakes commissioned projects for international clients. Her signature black-and-white imagery blends street, urban landscape, and fine art photography, often exploring the interplay of lines, architectural forms, and human presence. Guided by a minimalist approach that runs through all her work, Nina’s photographs capture the poetic connection between people and their urban surroundings.

ninapapiorek

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
SARAH WOUTERS

INSPIRATION

Archiving World's Ethnic Beauty!

We feature Sarah Wouters for her masterful portraits of tribal and native communities — from Ethiopia and Laos to Mongolia and Sudan. With rare sensitivity, her lens rescues these cultures from obscurity, illuminating their traditions, customs, and ways of life in images as compelling as they are enduring.



Thai-born and Dutch educated, Sarah Wouters has traversed over 70 countries, chasing not just destinations but the stories within them. Each journey is a dialogue with place and people, distilled into photographs that breathe with memory and emotion. Inspired by masters like Steve McCurry, Martin Parr, Sebastião Salgado, and Jimmy Nelson, her lens captures fleeting moments with timeless resonance. Sarah's travel photography is more than documentation—it is an intimate archive of the world's beauty, cultures, and shared humanity, seen through the eyes of a true wanderer and storyteller.

sarahwouters_ph



THE EAGLE HUNTERS OF MONGOLIA

The Golden eagle (Aquila chrysaetos) is central to Mongolia's eagle-hunting tradition. Revered for its strength, keen eyesight, and majestic appearance, the Golden eagle is the largest bird of prey found in the region. Eagle Hunters meticulously train their eagles from a young age, forging a unique partnership built on trust and mutual respect. The bond between hunter and eagle is foundational to the success of eagle hunting expeditions.

The selection and training of a Golden eagle are intricate processes that require patience and skill. Typically, Eagle Hunters capture young female eagles from nests high in the mountains, carefully selecting individuals with the right temperament and physical attributes. The training process involves acclimating the eagle to human presence, teaching it to perch on the hunter's arm, and gradually introducing it to hunting techniques. This mutual training period strengthens the bond between hunter and eagle, establishing a practical and meaningful partnership that lasts years.

Females are taken from their nests before they fledge. They will remain with the Eagle Hunter for anywhere from 9-12 years. At which time, the Eagle is released back into the wild to live out the rest of its life. The hunters use eagles to hunt foxes and wolves for their skins.





KARO TRIBE OF ETHIOPIA

The Karo (or Kara) tribe is a small ethnic group residing in the Omo Valley of southwestern Ethiopia, known for their unique body and face painting practices. With a population of only around 1,000-3,000, they are one of the smallest tribes in the region. The Karo people rely on the Omo River for agriculture, particularly flood retreat cultivation, and also engage in fishing, goat and cattle keeping. The Karo practice agriculture on the banks of the Omo River, relying on the annual floods for irrigation. The Karo are renowned for their elaborate body and face painting, using natural pigments like white chalk, red ochre, and charcoal. They decorate their bodies to represent identity, social status, and beliefs, often imitating patterns found in nature, like bird plumage. Karo women practice scarification on their chests, creating raised welts by cutting the skin and rubbing ash into the wound. Karo women also create elaborate clay hair buns, sometimes adorned with feather plumes.





The Suri tribe have lived in the border of Ethiopia and South Sudan for many generations, successfully surviving through a combination of livetsock herding (cattle, goats and sheep), some hunting and gathering, rain-fed cultivation of a variety of field crops like millet, corn, and sorghum, and the garden cultivation of vegetables, spice plants, peas and beans. During special occasions, Suri people wear brightly coloured flowers on their heads and paint their faces and bodies. Due to the absence of mirrors, people paint each other. The paint is created by mixing leaves and owers from various plants, crushed rock (white or red) and water. The Suri pride themselves on their scars and how many they carry. Women perform decorative scarification by lifting the skin with a hook or edged thorn with the skin being then sliced or removed with a razor blade.



The Katu people are an ethnic minority group residing in the Annamite Mountains, which encompass the Bolaven Plateau, a region known for its coffee plantations and waterfalls in southern Laos. They are one of several Mon-Khmer groups in the region, known for their animist beliefs and unique cultural practices. The Katu are part of the Lao Theung ethnic subgroup, which is one of the three main ethnic classifications in Laos.

LESSONS FROM LEGEND

Minor White

AMERICAN | 1908–1976



Minor White (1908–1976) was one of the most influential American photographers of the 20th century, known for elevating photography into a vehicle for spiritual exploration and inner transformation. His work ranged from expressive landscapes and stark architectural details to abstract forms and symbolic compositions, all crafted with exquisite tonal control.

Deeply influenced by mysticism, Zen Buddhism, and the teachings of G.I. Gurdjieff, White believed that a photograph should not just be seen but experienced as a mirror of the viewer's inner state. He sought to communicate states of consciousness through images, often encouraging viewers to look "through" the photograph rather than "at" it.

He was also a powerful teacher and mentor, inspiring generations of photographers through his deeply philosophical approach. As a founding editor of Aperture magazine and curator at institutions like the George Eastman House, he played a crucial role in shaping the discourse around photography as an art form.

Studying Minor White is essential to understanding how photography can transcend documentation and become a profound tool for self-awareness, emotional depth, and inner awakening.



ALL PHOTOGRAPHS © MINOR WHITE

5 Lessons from Minor White

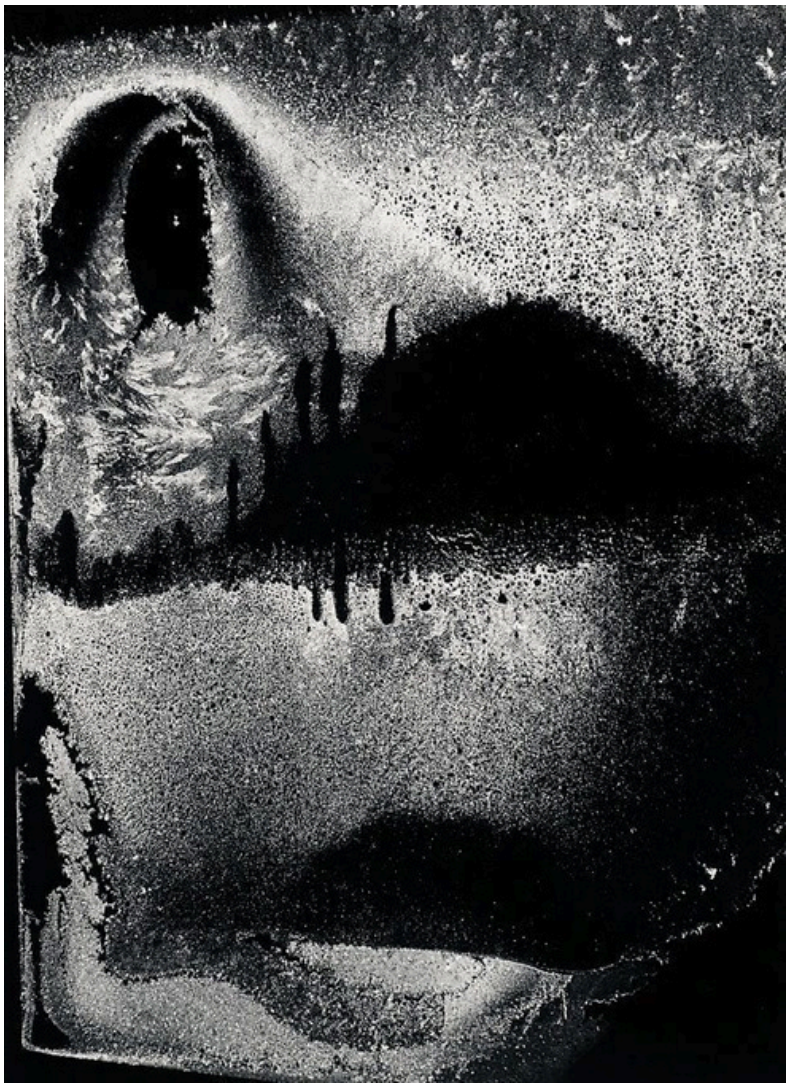
1. SEE BEYOND THE SURFACE

Minor White urged photographers to look past literal appearances and capture the essence or emotional resonance of a subject. In abstract photography, this means finding forms, textures, and patterns that evoke feeling or suggest metaphor, not just visual appeal. A rock becomes a symbol. A shadow becomes a silence. White believed that the best photographs reveal something invisible—something felt rather than seen.



2. LET THE IMAGE REFLECT INNER STATES

White developed the concept of "equivalence," where the photograph stands as a visual metaphor for the photographer's emotional or spiritual state. In abstract work, this is especially powerful—shapes, tones, and compositions become vessels for personal meaning. The image doesn't explain—it resonates. Practice aligning your inner mood with your subject to produce images that are not only visually striking but emotionally authentic.



3. LET LIGHT AND SHADOW SPEAK

White was a master of the Zone System, using it not merely for technical precision but to express subtle emotional and psychological nuances. In abstract photography, where literal reference is minimal, tonal variation becomes a language. Learn to control contrast, texture, and gradation to evoke depth, mood, and atmosphere—making your image less about what it shows, and more about how it feels.

4. PRACTICE ACTIVE STILLNESS

For White, photography was a meditative act. He taught that images are not to be hunted, but discovered—often in silence, stillness, or moments of inward pause. Abstract photography thrives on this mindset. It requires slowing down, looking deeply, and allowing patterns and compositions to appear rather than be forced. Patience, presence, and receptivity become part of the creative process.





5. MAKE ART THAT TRANSFORMS YOU

White saw photography as a spiritual practice—a means of self-growth, not just self-expression. This philosophy is especially transformative for abstract photographers. Instead of chasing perfect form or popular trends, use the camera as a tool for introspection and personal evolution. Your most powerful images will emerge not when you seek to impress, but when you seek to understand something deeper—within yourself and the world around you.





BY **VIVEK VERMA**
PHOTOGRAPHS **ABHISHEK ANUPAM**

INTERVIEW

Abhishek Anupam

Raised in Eastern India during the liberalised 90s, Abhishek grew up on comics, cricket, and classic rock. He discovered photography during engineering, thanks to his brother's camera, sparking a lifelong passion that later extended to documentary filmmaking. Trained at the University for the Creative Arts, UK, his work now explores themes of power, representation, and identity.

I. Your early work focused on questioning the medium of photography, while recent work explores themes like power, representation, and identity. How did this shift occur, and what inspired it?

I think my training as an engineer shaped me to approach things analytically. So when I moved into the arts—and photography in particular—I was trying to understand the medium itself, almost as a way to develop a personal philosophy. One that could guide how I think about the act of seeing and making images. My early projects, Banality and Banal Reflections, were part of that inquiry. They were essentially asking: *What is an image?*

Around 2019, there was a radical shift in my personal politics. Engaging deeply with the work of thinkers like Noam Chomsky, Arundhati Roy, and Ramachandra Guha helped shape a clearer understanding of how society functions—who holds power, who gets to represent whom, and where each of us stands within those structures. That shift naturally began to reflect in my work, moving from medium-specific questions to more thematic explorations of power, representation, and identity.

II. You pursued an MA in Photography at the University for the Creative Arts, UK, which must have significantly shaped your artistic journey. In an era of abundant online learning resources, how does a traditional photography education remain relevant?

While online resources today offer incredible access and speed, the real challenge isn't access—it's curation. There's an overwhelming volume of content, but developing a discerning eye, a sense of taste, takes time and structured guidance. That's where traditional education still holds relevance.

III. How did this experience in the UK enhance your growth as an artist and enrich your creative perspective?

The course structure at UCA gave me the freedom to choose my direction, to form opinions, and—importantly—to question them. It encouraged a culture of self-reflection and critical thinking, which was new to me at the time. I wasn't just learning how to make images—I was being asked why I wanted to make them, for







whom, and to what end. That kind of intellectual rigor, paired with the support of some phenomenal mentors, expanded my understanding of what photography could be—not just as a medium, but as a tool to engage with the world.

IV. Can you tell us about the "Re-imagining the Family Portrait Residency"? What was it about, and how has it shaped your creative process or added new dimensions to your work?

It was a month well spent in Chennai. The residency brought together artists from across the Indian subcontinent, and we were collectively reimagining what a modern family portrait could look like. Through this, we explored questions of identity, belonging, and the evolving idea of 'family' in contemporary contexts.

For me, the most valuable part was learning from my peers. Being part of a space where people genuinely want to engage with your ideas—and offer theirs in return—is rare and incredibly enriching. That kind of exchange sharpens your thinking and deepens your own perspective. It reaffirmed how collaborative processes can be as creatively nourishing as the outcomes themselves.

V. How do you approach building connections or securing projects with renowned brands and companies like Google, BBC, and Decathlon?

A: For me, it's always started with reaching out. The tools keep evolving—when I began, cold emails still led to meetings if the message carried genuine character. Today, social media often plays that role. What remains consistent is the need to consider the recipient—what they might appreciate, what would resonate with them.



One connection often leads to another—a reference, a recommendation. Persistence plays a huge part. Knowing people helps, of course, but for the rest of us, it comes down to consistently showing up with your work. That's how I got my foot in the door. Beyond that, it's about client servicing and relationship building—making sure you continue to deliver your best, not just once, but over time.

VI: What role does storytelling play in your lifestyle photography, and how do you ensure authenticity in your images?

A: Lifestyle photography is perhaps the most enjoyable kind of commercial assignment I've worked on. It gives you the opportunity to create images from the ground up—there's a brand context, of course, and specific business objectives to fulfil, but within that, the creative challenge is to find moments that evoke a feeling—aspirational or functional, depending on the brief.



Authenticity, for me, is a by-product of an honest approach. It comes through when the composition, lighting, model positioning, and expressions are all thoughtfully considered—but also when the intent behind them is grounded. A lot depends on the worldview the photographer brings to the work. Contextual research plays a huge role. For example, shooting for IndiaFirst Life Insurance made perfect sense to me—I could imagine myself or people I know in those situations. But I couldn't quite imagine myself as Shobhaa De at the Taj Colaba. So, for me, authenticity lies in recognising where your perspective aligns with the narrative, and making creative decisions that reflect that alignment.

AUTHENTICITY IS A BY-PRODUCT OF AN HONEST APPROACH. IT COMES THROUGH WHEN THE COMPOSITION, LIGHTING, MODEL POSITIONING, AND EXPRESSIONS ARE ALL THOUGHTFULLY CONSIDERED—BUT ALSO WHEN THE INTENT BEHIND THEM IS GROUNDED.

VII. Running a media and branding communication agency in Mumbai while pursuing independent photography is no small feat. How do you manage these dual roles effectively?

Honestly, it's a necessity. I do feel that the number of commercial photography jobs in the market is shrinking, and making a reasonable living in an expensive city like Mumbai requires multiple income streams.

Fortunately, neither of my commitments is full-time in a conventional sense, which gives me the flexibility to take three or four days off for shoots and manage post-production when assignments come in. It's a bit of a juggle, but I've found a rhythm that works, where both practices feed into each other in unexpected ways.

VIII. Are there any new societal themes or visual narratives you're particularly excited to explore in the coming years?

I hope to create more work that helps me understand how systems function—while also critiquing their design. No system is perfect, and while refinement takes time, it's essential that we keep asking questions. That's how we build more resilient structures.

In that sense, I often look back at photography's history as a political tool. I'd like to continue that legacy—exploring the nature of the society we live in: its hierarchies, its victories and failures. Hopefully, future projects will reflect deeper inquiries into these questions.

IX. What advice would you give to aspiring photographers trying to navigate the balance between artistic growth and commercial success?

There's no sugar-coating it—it's hard. And it's become increasingly harder since the time I first made my way into this space. While the ideal scenario is to have commercial success grow out of artistic development, in the early stages of one's career, the two can feel mutually exclusive.

It's crucial to ensure you have a stable source of income. And that doesn't necessarily have to come from within the photography industry. What's important is to continue creating work and gradually finding your voice. In my case, as my professional practice evolved, I began getting hired for the kind of work I had already done. That's a double-edged sword—it helps to be known for something, but it also risks you being boxed in. That's why making personal work, free from a client's brief or expectations, is essential. It's the clearest route to both artistic growth and, eventually, the kind of commercial success that feels aligned with your vision.

abhishek.anupam

X. Reflecting on your journey, is there a particular project, client, or recognition that stands out as a defining moment in your career?

Working with Mirchi Komachi was probably the most fun I've had on a project. Yoshiko, who runs the brand, creates funky Indian streetwear with a distinct personality, and our creative wavelengths matched from the start. It felt like we were just running around the streets of Versova in Mumbai, chasing ideas inspired by Kiki's Delivery Service, the Studio Ghibli film.
There was a sense of freedom in that shoot—playful, instinctive, and full of energy. It reminded me how powerful a project can be when both client and creator are equally invested in the imagination behind it. That spirit has stayed with me.





INSPIRATION

The Night Explorer

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
ASHISH KAMBLE

In this feature, Ashish takes us on a breathtaking journey across the stars —revealing the art and precision behind his Milky Way panorama photography. What may seem like a dreamy night shot is, in reality, a complex dance of planning, patience, and technical mastery. Shooting under pitch-dark skies with specialized gear, Ashish shows us what it truly takes to capture the galaxy in motion. Dive in to explore his process, camera settings, and the behind-the-scenes magic that brings these celestial images to life.

EXPLORER II

Thar Desert, Rajasthan
2 April, 2025

(STACKED | PANORAMA)

Sony A7iiia + Viltrox 16mm f/1.8

SKY: f/2.2 | 15 seconds x 6 | ISO: 6400 (9 Panels)

FG: 16mm | 30secs | f/2.8 | ISO 6400 (9 Panels)

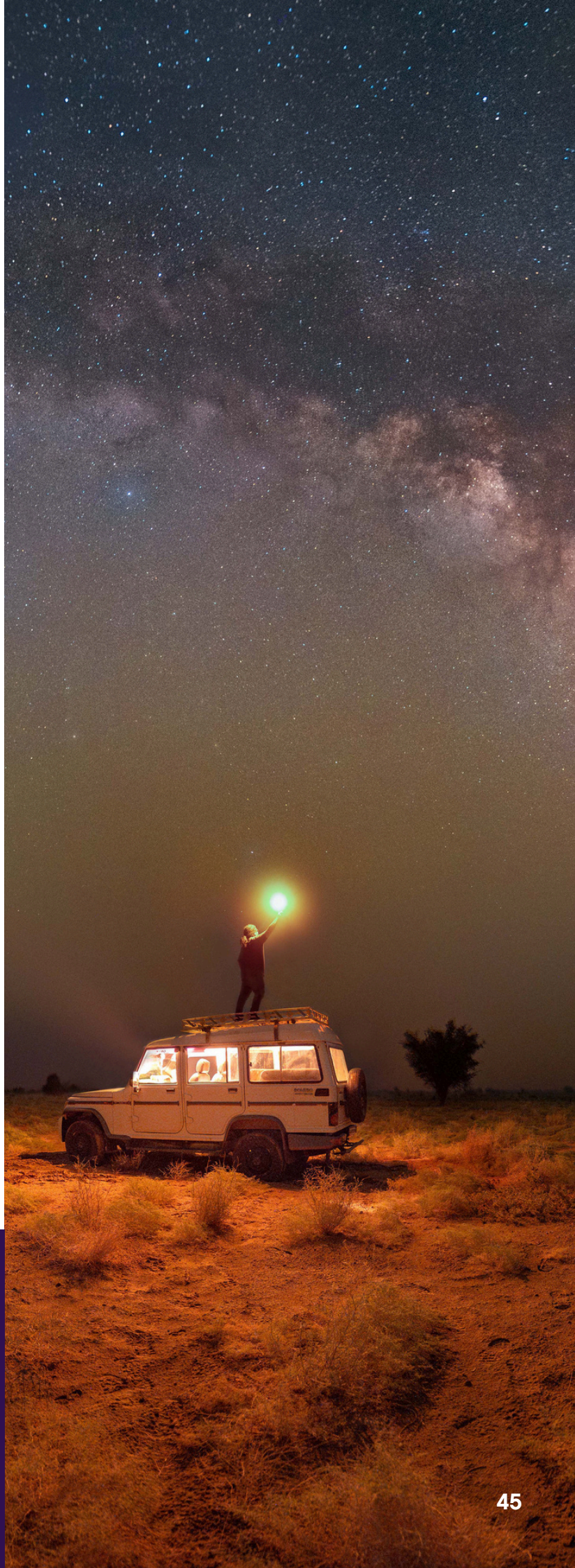
Flash: Godox TT 350 + Ulanzi LED inside car

Tripod system: Leofoto LS 365c + LB 75 + DH 60 + VH 10

By 1:00 PM, the red line on the thermometer had soared to 46°. Right after lunch, we rushed back to the comfort of our air-conditioned stone den. We finalized the gear setup, I managed to get some rest around 4 PM and woke up two hours later. When I looked at the window, the usual golden glow was missing, it was replaced by a diffused light. Curious, I stepped outside to check the weather. It was windy and overcast and soon heavy rain poured down, followed by a loud thunderstorm. We ended up staying inside all night, waiting and hoping for the rain to stop.

The forecast for the next day also showed thunderstorms, dejected me - I packed my bags, left the homestay and headed to Jaisalmer to relax, as shooting wasn't an option again. I spent the entire day catching up on sleep and resetting my sleep-cycle. Around 5:30 PM, I got a call from my friend suggesting I return to Thar Desert as the weather was clearing up. I went up to the terrace to see for myself and the weather looked promising. Even though the weather app showed hailstorm, I started packing my camera bag. When I arrived back in the Thar Desert, I was welcomed by clear skies. As I turned on my headlamp, its beam cut through the thick dust hanging in the air. Although I was aware that the dust accumulation on the lens would significantly reduce the detail in the Milkyway, I still wanted to give it a shot.

ONE THING I LEARNED FROM THIS EXPEDITION, NEVER LOSE HOPE. THIS IMAGE WAS POSSIBLE BECAUSE I RETURNED INSTEAD OF GIVING UP ON HOPE.





DUNES

Thar Desert, Jaisalmer, Rajasthan
30 April, 2025

(PANORAMA + STACKED)

Sony A7iiia + Viltrox 16mm f/1.8

SKY: f/2.2 | 15 seconds x 10 | ISO: 6400 (7 Panels)

FG: 16mm | 119secs | f/2.8 | ISO 1250 (7 Panels)

Flash: Godox TT 350

Tripod system: Leofoto LS 365c + LB 75 + DH 60 + VH 10

Located in the northwestern region of Rajasthan, the Thar Desert is a sea of shifting sands, where dunes rise and fall like waves which are beautifully sculpted by the desert winds. I never imagined such massive sand dunes existed in India. To truly portray their scale and vastness, I decided to capture a panoramic shot with myself in the frame.



While scouting for a location to capture the panorama, we came across this farmland. The owner mentioned that we could shoot there during the summer, as nothing typically grows in the Thar Desert region. The land was scattered with uprooted, thorny shrubs, leaving only one tree standing. When I asked why that tree was spared, he explained that it's the only fruit-bearing tree in the entire desert region. Traveling to such isolated places really makes you appreciate the delicate balance of nature.

That night, the green airglow was so vivid that despite my attempts to tone it down in post-processing, the intensity of the green hue still dominates.

THE BER TREE

Thar Desert, Jaisalmer, Rajasthan
30th April 2025

Sony A7iiia + Viltrox 16mm f/1.8

SKY: f/2.2 | 15 seconds x 10 | ISO: 6400 (6 Panels)

FG: 16mm | 119secs | f/2.8 | ISO 2000 (6 Panels)

Flash: Godox TT 350 + Yellow Gel

Tripod system: Leofoto LS 365c + LB 75 + DH 60 + VH 10



Ashish Kamble is more than a photographer—he's a visual storyteller who fuses culture, consciousness, and the cosmos into striking imagery. With over a decade of experience, he is inspired 900+ budding photographers through his teaching at Mumbai University colleges and his own LotusBeam School of Photography.

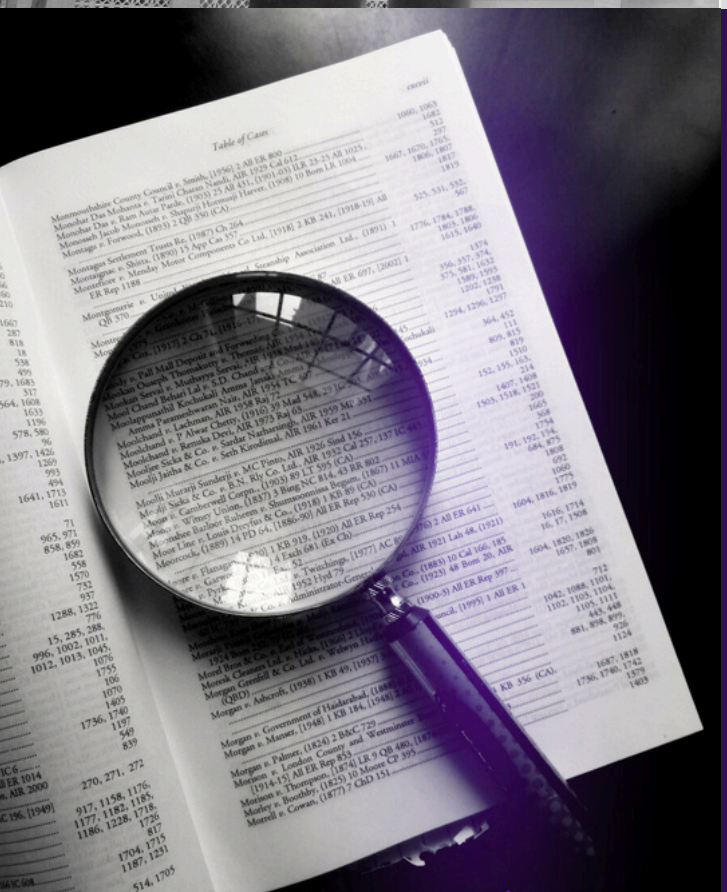
Now a mentor at Indian Photo Expeditions, Ashish brings his love for sharing knowledge to the field. His unique perspective—rooted in India's vibrant traditions and a deep fascination with sci-fi and human consciousness—shines through in every frame, whether it's a soulful tribal portrait, a dramatic landscape, or the awe-inspiring beauty of the night sky.

indianphotoexpeditions

LEGAL EDGE

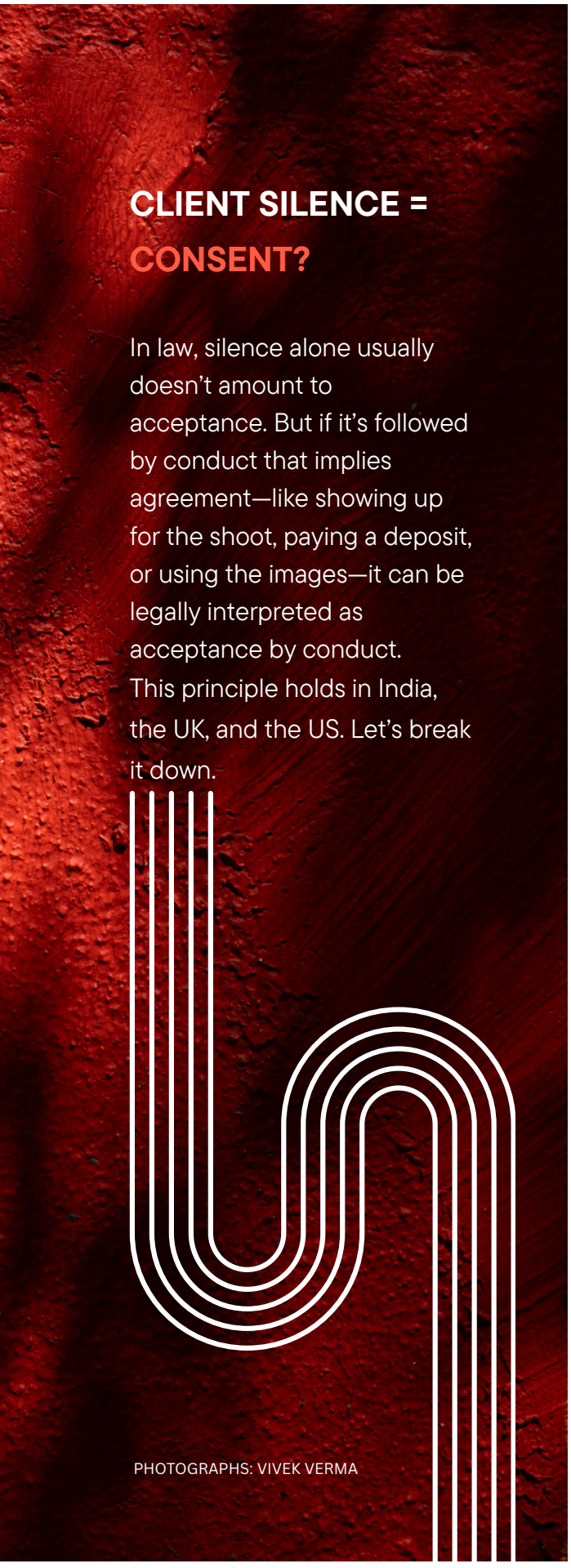
SIGNED BY SILENCE?

ENFORCEABILITY OF EMAIL CONTRACTS & **DEEMED CONSENT**



In an age where bookings are made over emails and confirmations are sometimes just... silence, photographers often find themselves navigating uncharted legal terrain. You send your terms—rates, usage rights, cancellations, copyright policies—via email and ask the client to reply in agreement. They don't. But they go ahead with the shoot. Is that a binding contract?

The answer, across India, the UK, and the US, lies in the concept of acceptance by conduct and the legal status of electronic contracts.



CLIENT SILENCE = CONSENT?

In law, silence alone usually doesn't amount to acceptance. But if it's followed by conduct that implies agreement—like showing up for the shoot, paying a deposit, or using the images—it can be legally interpreted as acceptance by conduct. This principle holds in India, the UK, and the US. Let's break it down.

PHOTOGRAPHS: VIVEK VERMA

WHAT MAKES AN EMAIL LEGALLY BINDING?

A valid contract requires three basic elements in all jurisdictions:

- An offer (your email outlining terms);
- Acceptance (ideally, the client replies with a "yes"), and
- Consideration (payment or something of value).

If all three are met—even digitally—you have a legally binding contract. But what if acceptance is not explicit?

INDIA: ACCEPTANCE BY CONDUCT & ELECTRONIC EVIDENCE

Under the Indian Contract Act, 1872, Section 8 states: "*Performance of the conditions of a proposal… is an acceptance of the proposal.*"

So, if a client receives your terms and proceeds with the photoshoot or payment, that action may amount to acceptance—even without a written reply.

India's Information Technology Act, 2000 and Evidence Act, 1872 make digital contracts and emails admissible, provided a digital evidence certificate is produced.

UK: EMAILS & IMPLIED ACCEPTANCE

UK contract law recognises contracts formed by email and accepted through conduct. The Electronic Communications Act 2000 affirms that electronic communications can create binding obligations.

So, if your client acts on your terms—books, pays, or participates—it's likely enforceable, even without an explicit "yes."

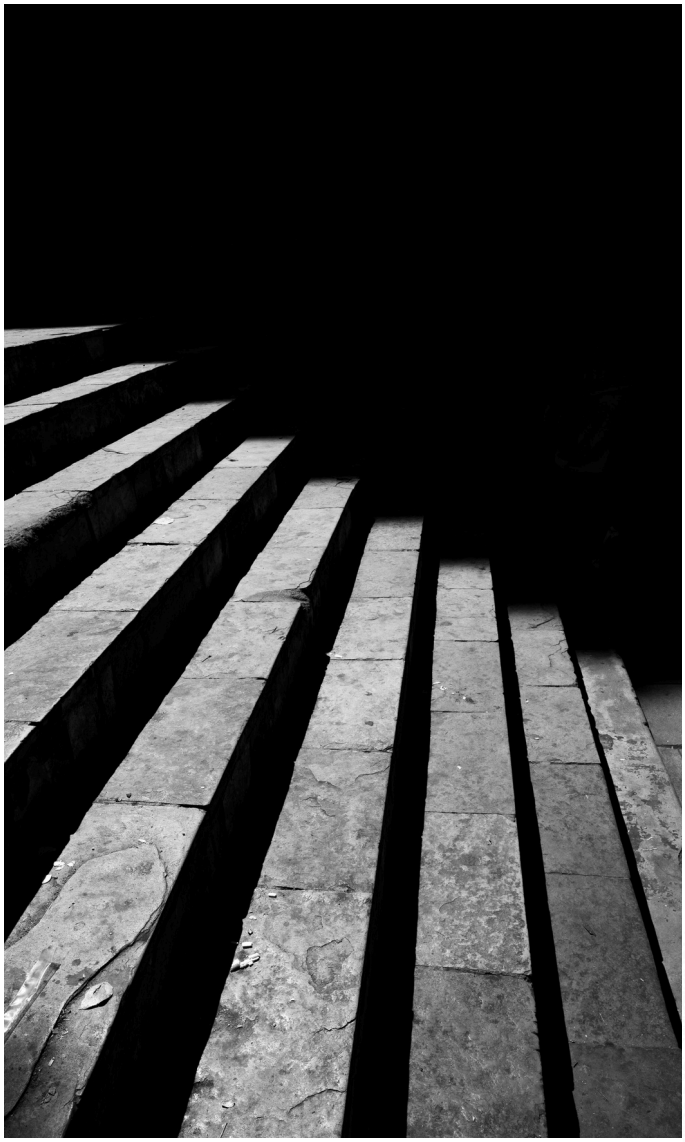
USA: ELECTRONIC AGREEMENTS

In the US, contracts made electronically are valid under the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act (UETA) and E-SIGN Act.

These laws state:

- A contract cannot be denied legal effect just because it is digital.
- Email can serve as valid acceptance, especially if followed by performance.

In the US, the objective theory of contracts applies—courts assess what a reasonable person would interpret from the actions, not just the words.



WHAT PHOTOGRAPHERS SHOULD PRACTICALLY DO

Even with strong legal backing, best practices make your case bulletproof:

BE EXPLICIT

Mention that proceeding with your services implies agreement. E.g., “By going ahead with the shoot as scheduled, you agree to the terms outlined here.”

USE PROFESSIONAL EMAIL TRAILS

Keep all discussions in one thread. Avoid WhatsApp for official terms.

GET A READ RECEIPT OR FOLLOW UP

Even if the client doesn’t reply, your reminder adds weight to your case.

PRESERVE EVIDENCE

Backup your sent email with timestamps. In India, be ready with a Section 65B certificate for court admissibility.

COMMON SCENARIOS WHERE TERMS ARE DEEMED ACCEPTED

- Client attends the photoshoot after receiving your terms.
- Partial or full payment is made without contesting your conditions.
- Delivered images are used without any dispute raised.
- The client sends someone else on their behalf after receiving your email.

These scenarios strongly support the notion of implied consent.





PHOTO: VIVEK VERMA | MUMBAI, INDIA

A FINAL WORD OF CAUTION

While deemed acceptance by conduct is recognized, don't rely on it as your primary method of securing agreement. Silence is safer when paired with performance—but clarity is still essential.

TURN EMAILS INTO CONTRACTS

As a photographer, your art deserves protection. So does your time and effort. In the legal world, emails are not just casual conversations—they're potential contracts. When structured correctly and backed by client action, even an unanswered email can carry legal force.

The key? Make your terms clear, document the interaction, and understand that conduct—sometimes louder than words—can seal the deal.

LEGAL CHECKLIST FOR EMAIL CONTRACTS – PHOTOGRAPHY SERVICES

DISCLAIMER

THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IS FOR GENERAL INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY AND DOES NOT CONSTITUTE LEGAL ADVICE. NO ATTORNEY–CLIENT RELATIONSHIP IS CREATED BY THIS COMMUNICATION. FOR ADVICE REGARDING YOUR SPECIFIC SITUATION, PLEASE CONSULT A QUALIFIED LEGAL PROFESSIONAL.

01

SUBJECT LINE

Use something clear like: "Photography Services: Terms & Confirmation"

02

LIST THESE TERMS CLEARLY

Fees & payment schedule; Cancellation & rescheduling policy; Deliverables & timelines; Copyright and usage rights, and Late payment or breach consequences.

03

USE THE CONSENT CLAUSE

Insert the clause at the end to make it clear that proceeding implies agreement.

04

REQUEST CONFIRMATION

Ask for a written reply ("Please confirm by replying to this email").

LEGAL CHECKLIST FOR EMAIL CONTRACTS – PHOTOGRAPHY SERVICES



We have prepared a short clause that you can copy-paste into your emails:

"By proceeding with the scheduled photography session, making any payment, or otherwise engaging my services after receiving this email, you confirm your acceptance of the terms and conditions outlined herein. If you have any questions or require modifications, please reply before the session date."

05

FOLLOW UP IF NO REPLY

Send a polite reminder to nudge them into confirming or at least noting that the session is proceeding.

06

RETAIN ALL COMMUNICATION

Keep the email thread intact—don't delete or break it into separate conversations.

07

USE PROFESSIONAL EMAIL

Always send contractual terms via email for admissibility and documentation.

08

DOCUMENT CLIENT'S CONDUCT

Retain proof of payments, attendance at shoot, use of images, etc., as evidence of acceptance by conduct.



Tradition Meets Timeless Glamour

BY ASHISH SAWANT



Ft. Helly Shah

Drenched in golden brocade and heritage elegance, she becomes a living canvas — capturing the soul of Indian tradition through the lens of modern artistry.

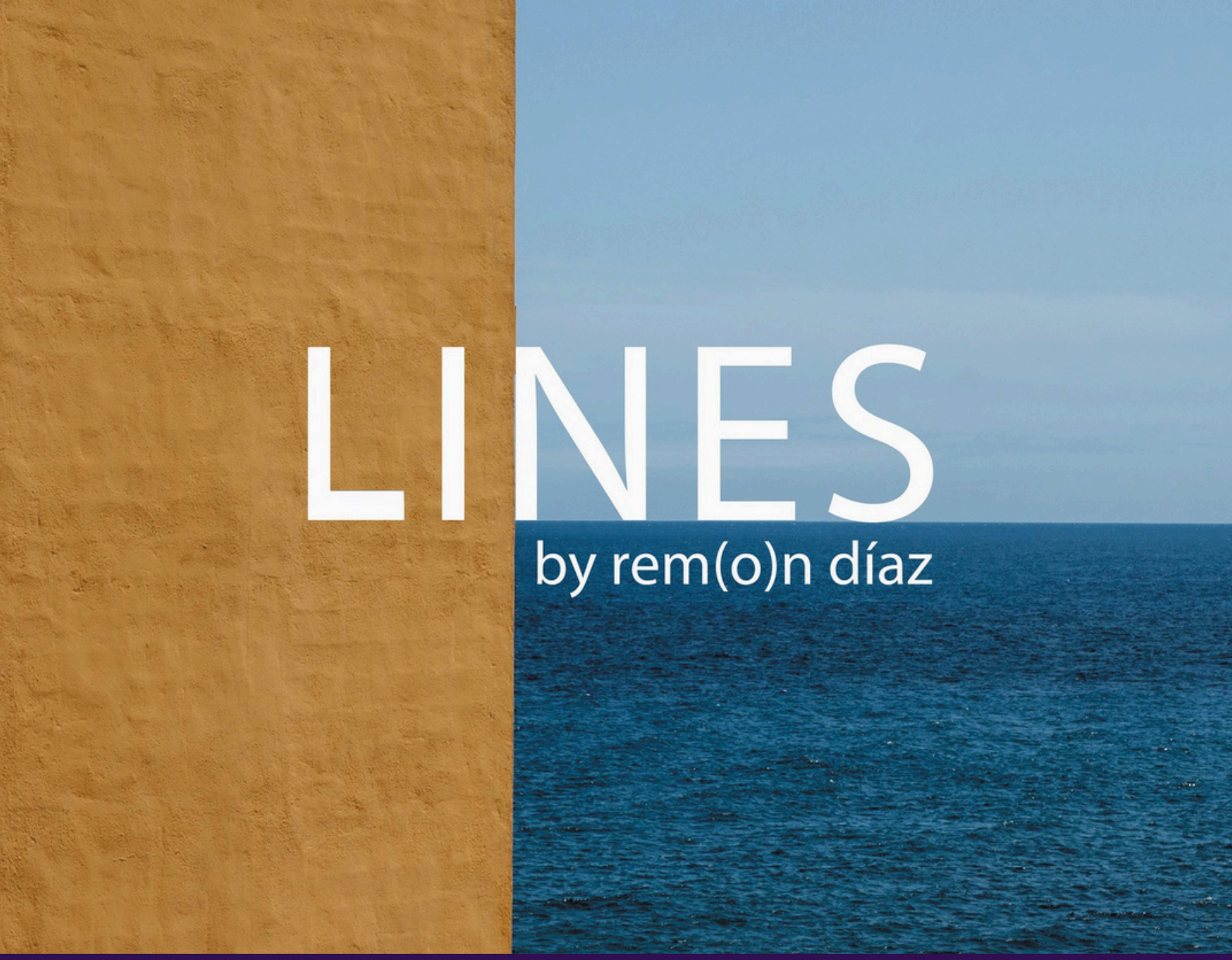


PHOTOGRAPHY: ASHISH SAWANT



Ashish Sawant is a celebrated fashion photographer and cinematographer whose work has graced magazine covers, luxury brand campaigns, soulful music videos, and acclaimed documentaries. With over a decade of experience, he blends artistry and technical mastery to shape light, mood, and narrative. As a Director of Photography, Ashish captures fashion's grandeur, cinema's emotion, and brand storytelling's power—delivering visuals that don't just impress but inspire, whether with iconic celebrities or raw, authentic moments.

ashish_sawant__



Author Speaks

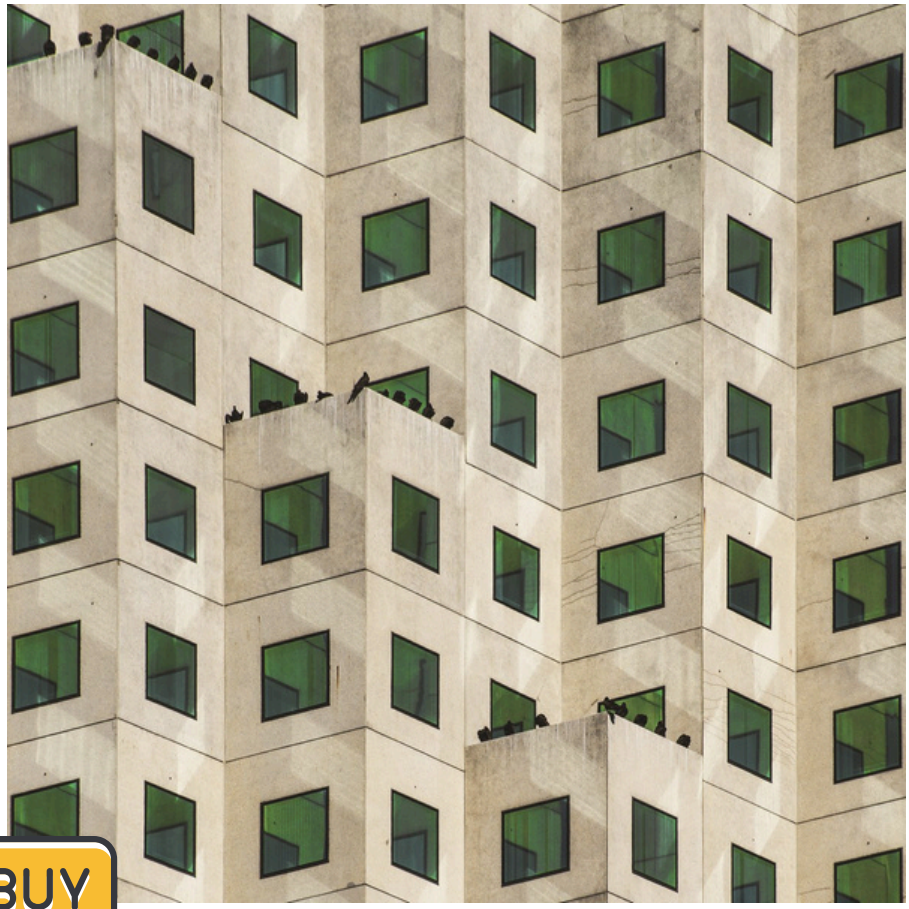
REMON DIAZ

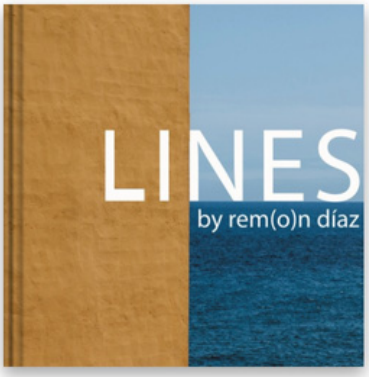
Rem(o)n Díaz (Havana, 1972) is a Hispanic-Cuban photographer based in Miami. Internationally recognized for his conceptual and poetic approach, his practice spans photography, art installations, and mixed media, creating distinct yet interconnected artistic universes. LINES was recently selected for the International Photography Awards (IPA), with results to be announced in the coming weeks.

remondiazart









LINES is, in essence, a distillation of my earliest steps in photography—moments of discovery that continue to shape my aesthetic vision today. Created between 2010 and 2018 across various cities, each photograph emerges from my fascination with uncovering conceptual secrets hidden in the everyday fabric of urban life.

My training in mathematics, my experience of deafness, and my deep affinity for abstract and surrealist painting have profoundly influenced the way I observe and interpret the world. LINES stands as a testament to this vision. For this selection, I chose images from Seville, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, San Cristóbal de La Laguna, and Miami—fragments of a much larger and more varied body of work. The decision to limit the number of photographs was intentional: to create a book that remains accessible to the public while maintaining the highest print quality.

The work is, above all, a journey—an exploration of my visual and conceptual universe. In my ongoing pursuit of a photography anchored in poetic vision, I have developed multiple ways of approaching reality. LINES may be the first chapter, but it is only one fragment of an unfolding whole. The journey does not conclude; it transforms.



AVAILABLE ON **BLURB** AT
www.blurb.com/b/12370061



Read Remon's insightful interview on Creative Genes at **www.creativegenes.in**

SHAPE OF MY TEARS

PHOTOGRAPHY SERIES BY **VIVEK VERMA**



SHAPE OF MY TEARS: WHAT REMAINS UNSPOKEN

Under the gaze of the full moon, emotions rise like tides—unspoken, unseen. Each drop here, shaped by its weight, tells of a different kind of ache: the sharp sting of anger, the quiet swell of grief, the soft ache of longing. Some fall heavy, some barely form. Like the moon's pull on the sea, our feelings shape our tears—each one a silent imprint of what the heart dared to feel but could not speak.

SHAPE OF MY TEARS: WHAT THE EYES COULDN'T HOLD

Her face appears not in flesh, but in shadows and water—etched on cold glass by emotions too heavy to hold. Each tear, a silent story, trails down in different rhythms—some sudden, some slow—shaped by the depth of what was once buried inside. She does not cry loudly, yet this frame hears everything. In the blurred outline of a woman and the thousands of droplets, you see the anatomy of sorrow—grief without words, but never without shape.





SHAPE OF MY TEARS: THE CHILD INSIDE.

Captured through the mist of rain-speckled glass, this image holds a quiet mourning. The raindrops are not just water—they are metaphors for forgotten tears, each one shaped by a sorrow we never fully outgrew. On the other side stands my 22-month-old son, a silhouette of innocence walking toward me, toward the lens, toward a world that may one day forget to hear his silent cries. My reflection—crouched, unseen—is the grown man who once was him. This is not just a photograph. It's a conversation between my present and my lost childhood.



SHAPE OF MY TEARS: THE TRAPPED CHILD

A toddler girl stands behind a rain-soaked glass, her palms pressed flat as if reaching for a world just out of reach. The droplets mirror unspoken tears—symbols of silent expectations, restrictions, and roles imposed on her since birth. Trapped not by walls, but by inherited norms, she longs to step beyond the beliefs that bind her. This image is a quiet rebellion, a visual metaphor for every girl who's ever dreamed of a life unshaped by others, free to choose her own becoming.



VIVEK VERMA

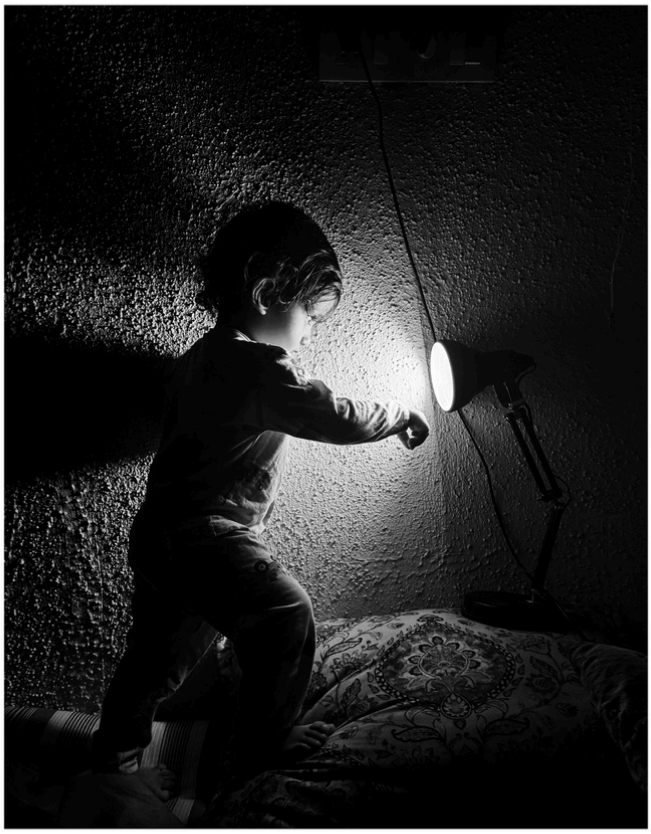
Vivek is an award-winning photographer whose training includes an Integrated Photography course from Michigan State University, Seeing Through Photographs by MoMA New York, and Fashion Photography from BHAOF.

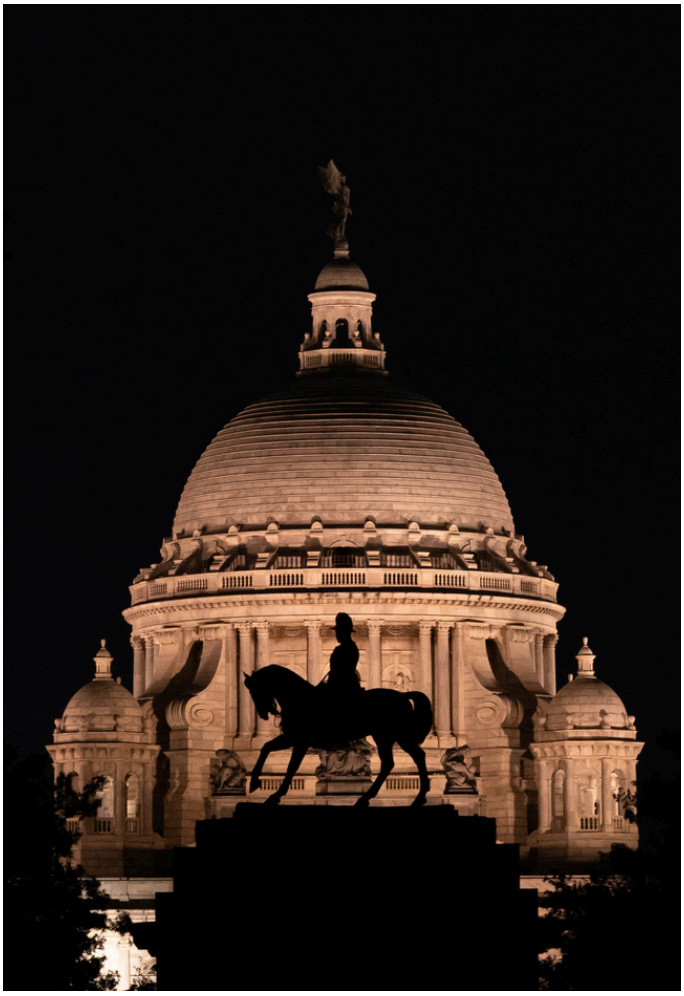
His work has been exhibited in renowned galleries in Mumbai, New Delhi, and Pune. A Bangiya Kala ARYA Award recipient (2025), he has also served as a jury member for Bar & Bench's photography competition. Through his blog Creative Genes, he writes on photography, law, and mental health, with features in Vistara Airlines magazine.

You can read more about him and his work on his blog Creative Genes at:

www.creativegenes.in

vivekverma0909





A writer must understand what nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and other word forms are, before putting them together in sentences that make sense to a reader. Similarly, an artist must understand the essential elements of design that must be put together to create a composition that will “make sense” to a viewer of their artwork.

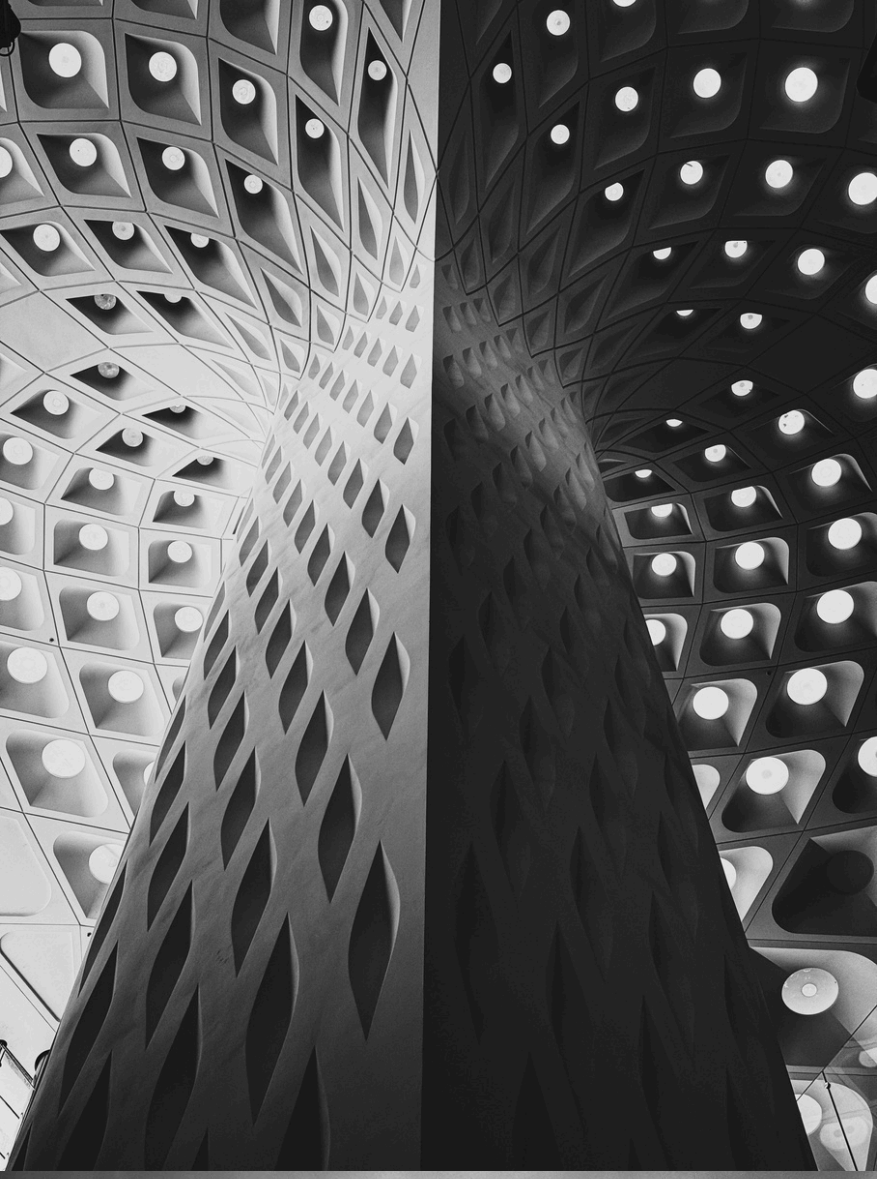
— PETER GLENDINNING

PHOTOGRAPHS: VIVEK VERMA

ELEMENTS OF VISUAL ART

Shapes & Forms

In photography, shapes and forms aren’t mere elements—they are the very architecture of visual storytelling. They anchor compositions, sculpt depth, and stir emotion, turning fleeting moments into powerful narratives that linger in the viewer’s imagination long after. Let’s explore how you can use shapes and forms creatively to make strong compositions.





Shapes

Shape is represented as flat two-dimensional (length and width) enclosed area of space with definite outline. It doesn't have any appearance of depth. It is often defined by a change in value (darkness and lightness) or some other form of contrast.

Irregular or flowy shapes (like curves) are considered organic, while angular shapes (like rectangles and triangles) are considered geometric. Shapes can be observed as single object and also as a collection of objects.

- Silhouette is a good example of creative use of shape;
- Front or back lighting can be used to emphasize the shape;
- Colours help you pronounce the 'flatness' of shape better;
- As the details of the subject are hidden, shape creates mystery element around the main subject;
- Negative shapes (having no tangible form of their own but are made with objects around them) can also be used creatively to create great composition;
- Circles introduce energy and movement in a photograph as the eyes are constantly directed around the image;
- Squares and rectangles give a feeling of stability and solidity, particularly, when large;
- Regular shapes (circles, squares and equilateral triangles) convey a sense of order and stability;
- Organic or curved shapes suggest relaxation and calmness.





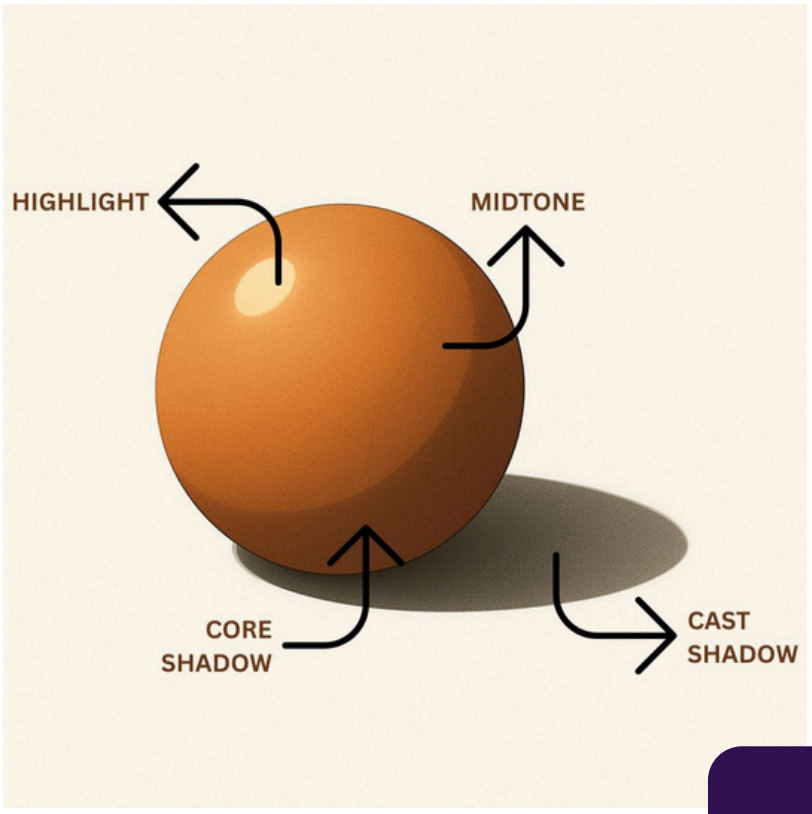
ARTISTS

PIET MONDRIAN

PICASSO

WASSILY KANDINSKY

AGNES MARTIN



Forms

Form is always three-dimensional and encloses volume, having length, width, and height. It creates a sense of depth either through lighting or perspective. Form is often visualized with indistinct borders or edges.

A cube seen from an angular position highlights the form while the same cube seen straight onto only reveals the shape (i.e., square). Geometric forms can be mathematical and precise, e.g., sphere, cube, pyramid, cone, and cylinder. Organic forms can be free-flowing, curvy, asymmetrical and thus cannot be easily measured.

- Shadows help in emphasizing the depth;
- Seeing the subject from an angle (not straight) also creates depth;
- Prefer sidelight over direct straight light;
- Black-and-white is often preferred over colour to emphasize depth (due to tonal range);
- Use soft light to create tonal gradations that can give your subject depth;
- Be mindful of layers (foreground, midground and background) in your composition to give a sense of depth;
- Reflections can also add form;
- Consider setting your EVF (electronic viewfinder) to display in black and white to see and identify forms more easily;
- Create the illusion of form by understanding how light reacts on the object;
- Telephoto lenses reduce the depth (hence form) by compressing the scene, while wide-angle lenses increase depth by exaggerating the perspective;
- Use dodge and burn tools during post-processing to emphasize the depth.

Highlight shows the area where light hits the subject directly.

Mid-tone shows a middle value of the colour of an object, which is neither directly hit by light nor opposite to the direction of light.

Core Shadow shows the area that is directly opposite to the direction of light and hence shaded on the object.

Cast Shadow shows the area that is shaded on surrounding objects and surfaces because of blocked light.



ARTISTS

LEONARDO DA VINCI

MICHELANGELO

RAMBRANDT

MARK ROTHKO

GEORGIA O’KEEFFE



BOOK RECOMMENDATION

Forms of Japan

BY **MICHAEL KENNA**





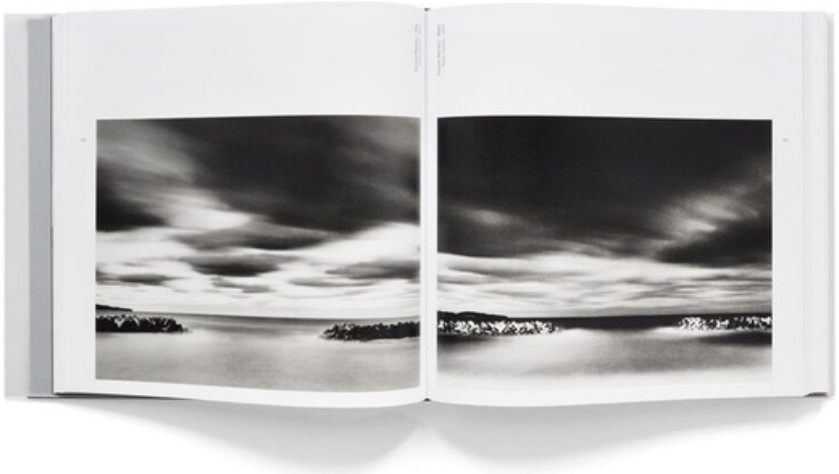
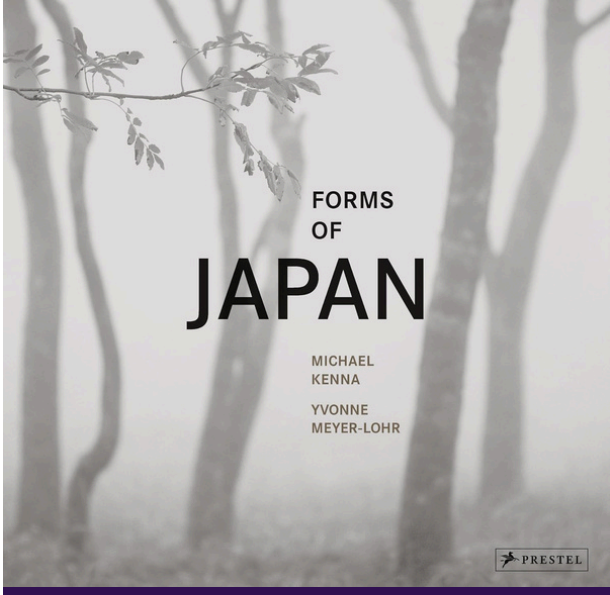


IMAGE COURTESY: MOOM BOOK SHOP

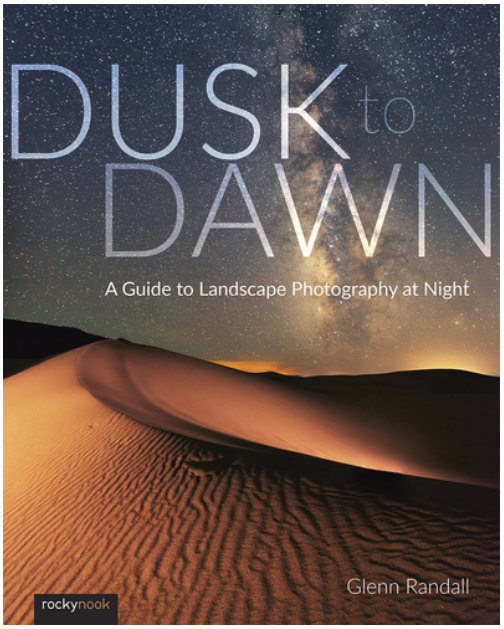
EDITOR'S PICK



Forms of Japan by Michael Kenna is a masterwork that distills decades of the photographer's deep emotional and artistic connection with Japan into a singular, meditative volume. For over thirty years, Kenna has returned to Japan repeatedly, drawn to its serene landscapes, spiritual architecture, and the quiet poetry of its everyday forms. This book is perhaps his most personal and distilled expression of that enduring relationship.

What makes Forms of Japan one of Kenna's finest books is its profound minimalism. The photographs, all in black and white, speak in whispers rather than shouts. Trees, shrines, rivers, and snow-covered fields are transformed into abstract forms through careful composition and long exposures. Every image evokes stillness and contemplation, a signature of Kenna's style, but here taken to its most refined and essential expression.

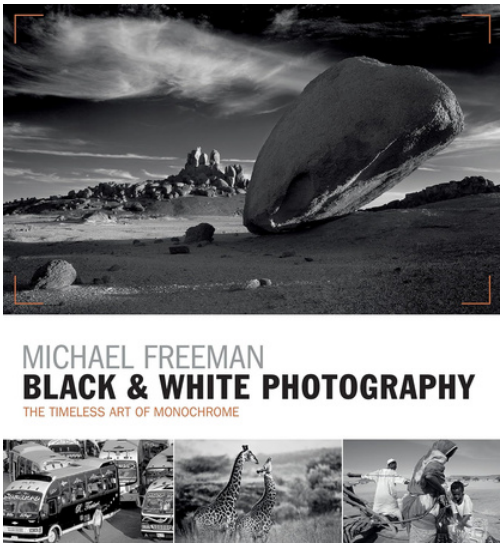
The book is not just a collection of beautiful landscapes—it is a visual meditation. It teaches you to see the essence of a scene, the soul beneath the surface. If you love photography that is more than documentation—something deeply poetic, intentional, and emotionally resonant—Forms of Japan is essential reading. It's a quiet journey into the heart of a country and a master photographer's devotion to its spirit.



02 DUSK TO DAWN

A GUIDE TO LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY AT NIGHT BY **GLENN RANDALL**

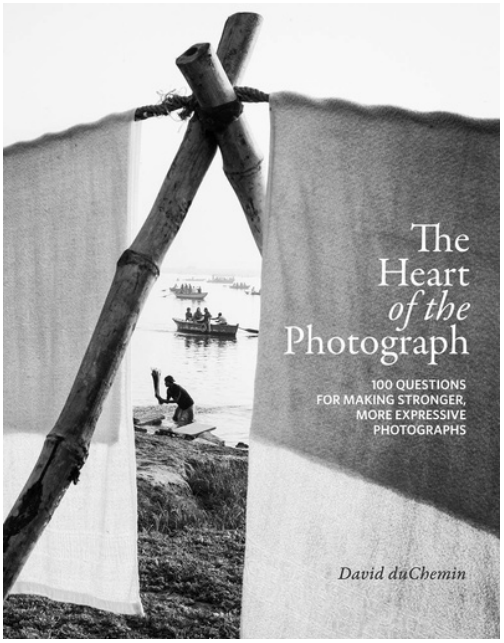
Among the many books on astrophotography, Dusk to Dawn by Glenn Randall—a veteran landscape photographer, writer, and instructor with over four decades of experience—stands out as a meticulously crafted guide I hand-picked for its textbook-level clarity and depth. Randall unpacks every step—from technical shooting to post-processing—while his stunning images invite you to experiment yourself. More than a guide, it's an invitation to venture into the silent beauty of the night and create extraordinary photographs while the world sleeps.



03 BLACK & WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY

THE TIMELESS ART OF MONOCHROME BY **MICHAEL FREEMAN**

Of all the books I've read, Michael Freeman's Black & White Photography is the one I hand-picked that truly transformed my work. For years, my monochrome images fell flat compared to professional standards—until this book revealed why. Freeman unpacks the artistry and complexity of black-and-white post-processing, far beyond a simple greyscale conversion. A renowned photographer, writer, and educator with over 140 published books, Freeman equips you to elevate your craft and create black-and-white images with real depth and impact.



04 THE HEART OF THE PHOTOGRAPH

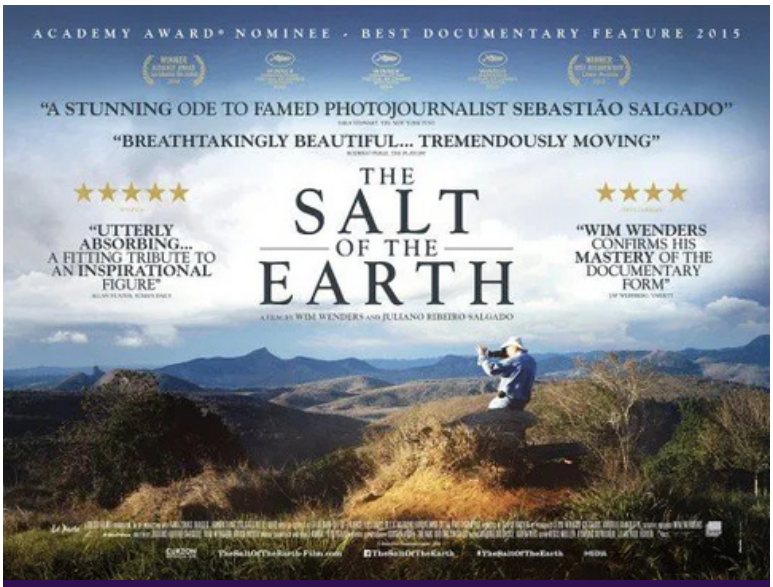
100 QUESTIONS FOR MAKING STRONGER, MORE EXPRESSIVE PHOTOGRAPHS BY **DAVID DUCHEMIN**

Few books have touched me like David duChemin's The Heart of the Photograph, which speaks with rare honesty and empathy, as if a trusted mentor is guiding you one-on-one. It goes beyond techniques, addressing the deeper, often unspoken questions of photography, mindfulness, and artistic purpose. A world-renowned humanitarian photographer and bestselling author of over a dozen books, duChemin compels you to see photography as both visual art and self-expression. This is a hand-picked, must-read for anyone who truly cares about their craft.

DOCUMENTARY TO WATCH

The Salt of the Earth (2014)

IMDb 8.4/10



This documentary is essential viewing for anyone who values the power of photography to bear witness. Salgado's images are not just pictures—they are moral documents, demanding empathy and reflection. The Salt of the Earth is a rare chance to experience his monumental vision in motion, on a cinematic scale.

The Salt of the Earth documents the extraordinary career of Sebastião Salgado, whose photography confronts war, famine, genocide, and exploitation with both unflinching honesty and breathtaking artistry.

Co-directed by Wim Wenders and Salgado's son, Juliano Ribeiro Salgado, the film traces his journey from an economics student to a world-renowned photographer drawn to remote corners of the globe. Iconic series include the haunting Brazilian gold mine photographs and devastating depictions of Rwandan and Bosnian atrocities, as well as African famine.

The accumulation of such images builds a profound sense of sorrow and outrage, ultimately leading Salgado to shift focus toward nature's beauty and environmental restoration in Brazil.

While the film is visually stunning, it offers limited insight into Salgado's technical process or personal interactions with subjects. Despite some stylistic distractions, it stands as a testament to his unmatched ability to capture both human suffering and resilience.

1 HOUR 50 MINUTES

DIRECTORS:
JULIANO RIBEIRO SALGADO
WIM WENDERS

WRITERS:
WIM WENDERS
JULIANO RIBEIRO SALGADO
DAVID ROSIER

STARS:
SEBASTIÃO SALGADO
WIM WENDERS
LÉLIA WANICK SALGADO

PHOTOGRAPHY COURSE

Seeing through Photographs

BY
MOMA, NEW YORK

2

INSTRUCTORS

7

MODULES

100

PHOTOGRAPHS

411,394

ALREADY ENROLLED

If you are a sincere photographer—someone who seeks more than just capturing a moment—this MoMA course is a rare opportunity to deepen your vision.

In today's fast-paced, image-saturated world, photography is often reduced to snapping, filtering, and sharing. But to truly excel, a photographer must go beyond seeing to understanding. This course bridges that gap, offering fresh perspectives on how photographs acquire meaning and influence the way we perceive the world.

You'll study 100 remarkable works from MoMA's renowned collection, going behind the scenes at the Museum and into artists' studios through videos and interviews. These encounters reveal not only the creative process but also the cultural, historical, and personal contexts that shape each image.

The program expands photography beyond art—it examines its role in science, exploration, documentation, storytelling, and social critique. This breadth ensures you develop not just technical skill, but also a richer, more versatile visual vocabulary.

For a photographer committed to growth, understanding the why behind an image is as important as mastering the how. MoMA's course equips you with the knowledge to create work that resonates deeply, stands apart, and endures. It's more than education—it's a transformation in how you see and make photographs.

coursera

MoMA

Photographers tend not to photograph what they can't see, which is the very reason one should try to attempt it.

Otherwise we're going to go on forever just photographing more faces and more rooms and more places.

Photography has to transcend description.

It has to go beyond description to bring insight into the subject, or reveal the subject, not as it looks, but how does it feel?

— DUANE MICHALS

We always photograph what we see. Have you ever challenged yourself to photograph something you do not see? Something that is unobvious yet present, small yet beautiful, unsaid yet pronounced, which often skips our attention. Photography has to indeed transcend description and capture the soul of the moment, evoking feelings and creating vibes. Every time I read this, I get an overwhelming feeling of how much I need to work hard and grow as a photographer to actually call myself a visual artist in the true sense. It reminds me every time that I am not here to simply document, replicate and present a glorified version of what we see, but what we feel inside and let that feeling transcend visual narrative. If a photograph can stir feelings that one cannot possibly frame in words, it does mean a true work of art.

B&W Feature

More than colours, we love black and white. From pitch dark to paper white, we love everything in between. This space features black and white photography from our readers and followers.





JAN SCHOOF
UK BASED INTERNATIONAL
PHOTOGRAPHER, ARTIST & CREATOR

PREVIOUS: FENRIR: UTAH SUPERCELL
LEFT: BAD DAY AT SHIPROCK

janderfull

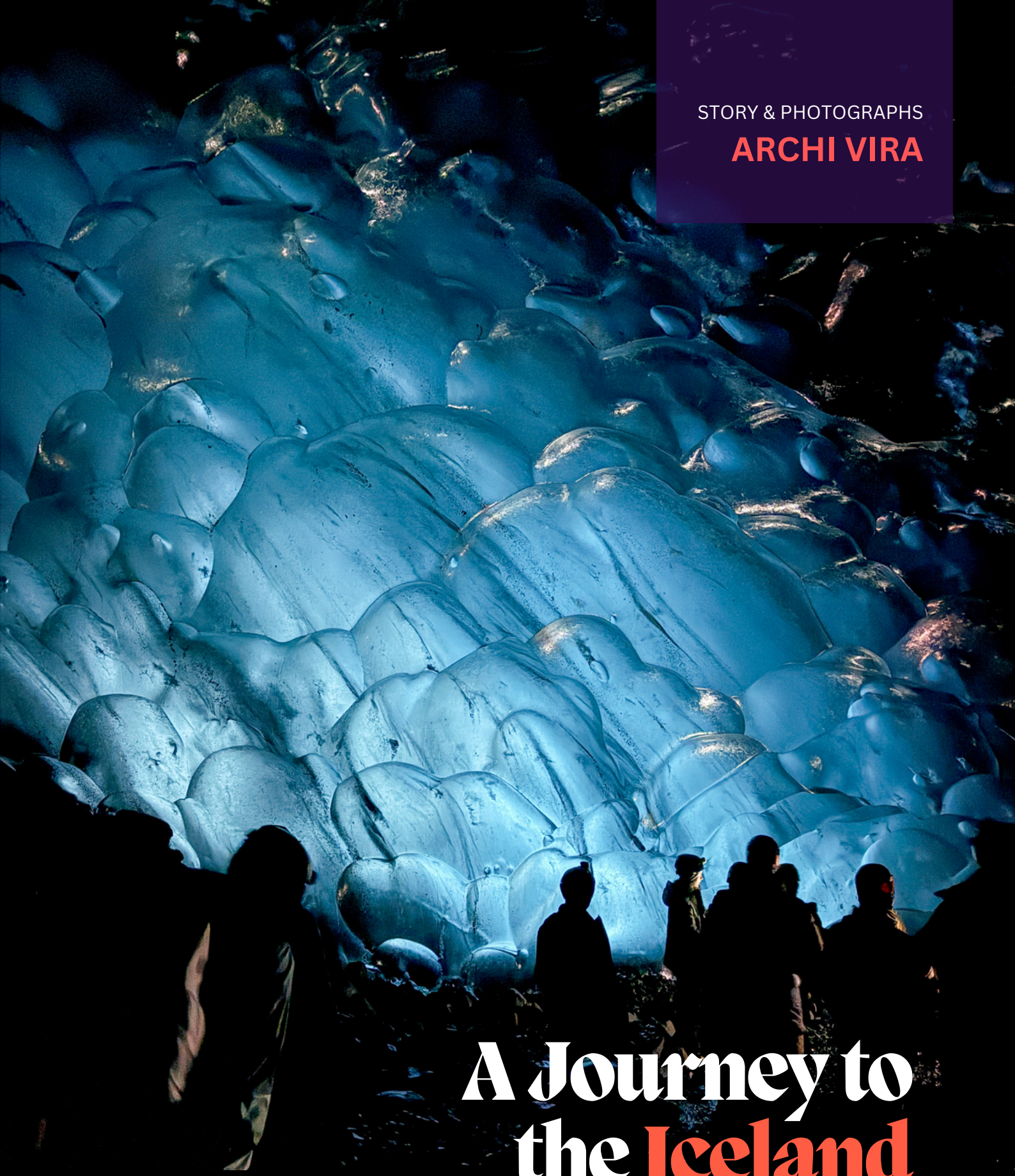
JAY SANKLECHA
MUMBAI BASED LAWYER & PHOTOGRAPHER

jaysanklechaphotography



TRAVEL TALE

74



STORY & PHOTOGRAPHS
ARCHI VIRA

A Journey to the Iceland

Some dreams take months, others take years. For me, Iceland was a two-year plan, meticulously researched and eagerly awaited. Finally, in March 2025, I boarded the flight with my heart racing and expectations soaring. This was my dream destination – a land of fire, ice, and magic. And yet, no matter how much you read online, Iceland has its own way of surprising you.

HITTING THE ROAD – THE ONLY WAY TO SEE ICELAND

There's no better way to explore Iceland than on the road – and that means self-drive. But as an Indian driver, switching to the opposite side of the road was the first challenge. Add in unpredictable weather, slippery roads, and strong winds, and you've got yourself an adventure before you even reach the first waterfall.

A FEW HARD-EARNED LESSONS:

BUDGET FOR PARKING

Almost every tourist spot has paid parking. Factor this into your costs.

INSURANCE MATTERS

Skip buying it online. Locals will still insist you take Icelandic insurance, and trust me, it's worth getting complete coverage.

GET A 4X4

Weather can turn in minutes, and those extra wheels are worth every penny.

OBEY THE RULES

Fines are steep. We learnt the hard way – ₹10,000 for unknowingly parking in the wrong zone for two hours. And yes, locals will report lane-cutting or speeding. We were lucky enough to get away with a warning once.

Despite the strict rules, the Icelandic people are some of the kindest you'll meet. If you're lost, just ask – they'll help with a smile.

THE HIDDEN COSTS – PETROL PITFALLS

Filling fuel in Iceland is a self-service, card-only affair. What we didn't know was that each transaction comes with a hefty security hold – for us, around ₹18,000 – which should release in 24 hours but took 15 days with our Niyo debit card. Imagine that being deducted every time you fill up. Definitely something to factor into your budget.



STAYS – AIRBNB OVER HOTELS

My advice? Choose Airbnbs. They give you space, kitchen facilities, and the warmth of a local host. Hotels, while comfortable, often lack room service, cutlery, or even a microwave, which means no flexibility if you want to cook. Plus, they cost more.

One last-minute hotel stay drove this point home – the location was great, but the lack of amenities meant we were out searching for meals in freezing weather.

FOOD – VEGETARIAN STRUGGLES

Vegetarian food is expensive in Iceland, and options are limited. Carry ready-to-eat packets – they'll save your budget and your appetite.



WHEN TO GO – PICK YOUR ICELAND

We chose March for the Northern Lights, but that meant battling snow and shorter days. If your heart is set on lush green landscapes, long daylight hours, and more wildlife, visit in spring or summer – though you'll trade the aurora for endless golden sunsets..





ADVENTURES WORTH FREEZING FOR

Iceland is a playground for thrill-seekers. We braved the icy waters of Silfra, snorkelling between two continents in 2°C water – an otherworldly sight where the tectonic plates create shimmering blue depths. Fingers numb, heart full.

We explored Langjökull's ice caves – nature's own glass sculptures, glowing in shades of blue as sunlight filtered in. Sadly, weather cancelled our glacier hikes, snowmobiling, and whale watching. But there was one adventure left.

THE NIGHT THE SKY DANCED

For nine nights, the Northern Lights eluded us – snow, rain, and clouds hid them away. On our second-last night, we booked a guided tour, our final hope.

In the middle of nowhere, under a blanket of stars, the sky began to shimmer. Green and purple lights swayed above us – a moment beyond words. And then, as if the night wasn't magical enough, my husband proposed. Iceland gave me not just my dream sight, but a memory for life.

NATURE'S WONDERS – AND WILDLIFE CAMEOS

From countless waterfalls to black-sand beaches (thanks to volcanic lava), Iceland feels like another planet. Diamond Beach sparkled with chunks of ice scattered on its shore. Along the way, we saw Icelandic horses trotting freely, puffins dotting the cliffs, and even a few reindeer.





ICELAND



DON'T LEAVE WITHOUT

End your trip in one of Iceland's many hot springs. We tried the famous Blue Lagoon and Sky Lagoon with their seven-step spas and mineral-rich mud masks. For a quieter, cheaper option, ask locals for hidden geothermal pools.

We also stayed in a so-called "glass igloo" in Ölvisholt – more of a plastic bubble, with shared toilets and no kitchen, for a staggering ₹36,000 a night. Romantic in theory, overpriced in reality.





FINAL THOUGHTS

Iceland is breathtaking, challenging, and humbling all at once. It taught me that no amount of research prepares you for its wild beauty or unpredictable moods. It's a country I want to return to – next time, in summer – to see its other face.

Because Iceland is not just a destination. It's an experience, one that changes with the seasons, but leaves the same mark on your soul.







A short intro or kicker of the article will go here. This part acts as a bridge between the headline and the article itself.



A GEM HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT — BELGRADE, SERBIA

STORY & PHOTOGRAPHS
ROOPALI ADLAKHA

As someone who cannot have enough of Europe, I am always on the lookout for beautiful cities and towns which can satisfy my craving for the European charm but is also easy to get to for a quick holiday. In one such quest, I stumbled upon Belgrade, Serbia. A stone throw's away from Budapest and Vienna, you can easily add Serbia to any East European holiday itinerary. But I am here to argue that it deserves a trip of its own. Having spent numerous vacations exploring different part of this continent, I was truly amazed by this city which blended the quintessential European streets and architecture with the most easygoing vibe of any capital city I have been to. With numerous flight options from all major cities in India, you need not go through the hassle of getting a Schengen visa for this trip. You can enter Serbia visa-free using a valid USA or UK visa.

To soak in the history and geography of the city to help contextualize your entire trip, start with a walking tour around the Republic Square and its neighbouring area. Located slightly off the city centre, the Republic Square is a smaller version of a typical European city square, only less crowded, more relatable and a lot less pretentious. Having said that, don't mistake it for being any less impressive. The square is surrounded by beautiful historic buildings and monuments - like National Museum of Serbia, being the oldest and largest museum in Serbia and National Theatre inspired by the renowned La Scala in Milan, with the monument of Prince Mihailo Obrenović built in the nineteenth century at its centre. I would highly recommend checking the schedule of shows at the National Theatre in advance and possibly catch a play, opera or a ballet while you are visiting. This area is also a cultural and shopping hub brimming with hotels, bars and restaurants with both local and world cuisines in the bylanes near the square.





The National Museum is currently hosting an inspiring exhibit called 'World Unseen' which is making photography accessible for the visually impaired. It is an incredible initiative and the photography exhibit is organised by Canon with Association of the Blind of Serbia and the National Museum of Serbia as partners. The exhibit has also been hosted in renowned locations in the United Kingdom, Kazakhastan, the Czech Republic, Kenya, the United Arab Emirates, Croatia and Slovenia.

You can also experience the art and history of numerous Serbian artists at the National Museum followed by further exploring the art scene in Savamala, the design district of Belgrade. Given the diverse options available, it is recommended you take an art tour to get a better perspective and direction in your exploration as one can spend days soaking in the Serbian art and its evolution.You can also experience the art and history of numerous Serbian artists at the National Museum followed by further exploring the art scene in Savamala, the design district of Belgrade. Given the diverse options available, it is recommended you take an art tour to get a better perspective and direction in your exploration as one can spend days soaking in the Serbian art and its evolution.





Belgarde Fortress is another imposing piece of architecture which is sure to take you back in time. Located at the confluence of Sava and Danube rivers, this fortress complex comprises of parks, stunning views, a museum and numerous statues and monuments which will give you a glimpse into the history of the region.

Since Belgrade has two major rivers, Sava and Danube, a walk by the promenade followed by a river cruise is a must. Various river cruises are available on Airbnb, viator and getyourguide and each tends to include unlimited drinks – I would recommend you pick a small cruise for a more personalised experience. Depending on your guide, you would get to immerse in not just the history of the region but also some interesting stories of recent Arab investments and hilarious urban anecdotes.

Another unmissable experience in Belgrade is to explore the orthodox churches in the city especially the Church of Saint Sava. It is one of the largest orthodox churches in the world. Despite beingrecently opened, the church has a rather intriguing past – during the occupation of Yugoslavia, its construction was halted in 1941 and it also came to be used by the German troops during the World War II. As serene as the white façade of this church is, the interiors are opulent with stunning use of gold mosaics. Modeled on the renowned Constantinople's Hagia Sophia in Istanbul which has recently been reconverted into a mosque, this church is often referred to as the New Hagia Sophia.

Apart from its remarkable architecture, rich history and more chequered recent past of being bombed and occupied in the 1900s, Belgrade has a vibrant and rich cuisine. To experience it, you can head to the cobbled-stone street of Skadarlija where traditional and modern local restaurants and bars await to welcome you and take you on a culinary journey with an unforgettable background score of live music. The Serbian cuisine is a beautiful culmination of Balkan, middle eastern and Austro-Hungarian influences. Be sure to try cevapi (local grilled sausages), sarma (flavourful minced meat wrapped in steamed cabbage or grape leaves), ajvar (red pepper paste), pljeskavica (a Serbian burger), burek (pastry or pie baked with traditional fillings) and rakia (a traditional fruit brandy).

Despite its endless offerings for a traveler, Belgrade is often overlooked in recent times due to misconceptions of unrest in the country. The ongoing civilian protests against the government are well organised and peaceful. So one can easily enjoy this stunning city which has more character than most other European capital cities. Explore the kind beating heart of Balkan in the city of Belgrade for a truly unique European experience.

ART

Travel Paintings

TANBELIA
UKRAINE



Tanbelia is an artist and sculptor, born and based in Ukraine in the Rivne region. Her art is about nature in a wavy line. She raises issues of ecology and nature. The goal is to encourage people to protect nature. The idea is to immerse the observer in the world of nature through the prism of water. The goal is to encourage people to protect and cherish nature.

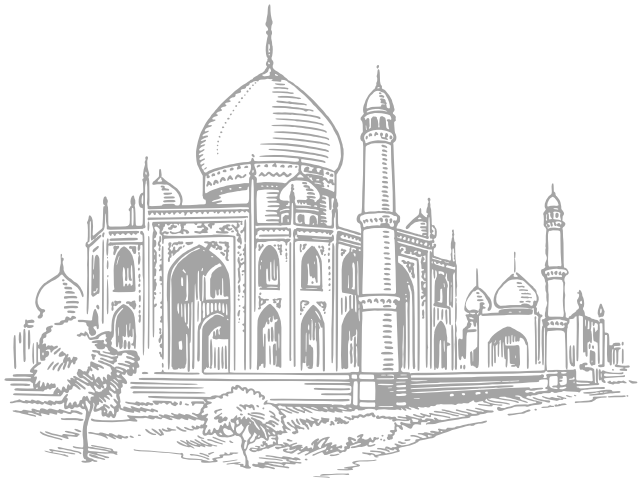
With her artworks, she tries to show people's deep connection with the environment and meaningfully reminds contemporaries of the need to cherish and preserve nature. Using watercolour and acrylic paints, she brings to life ethereal landscapes from her native Ukraine and world travels, putting a spin on things with her unique brush technique that gives objects a rippled appearance.

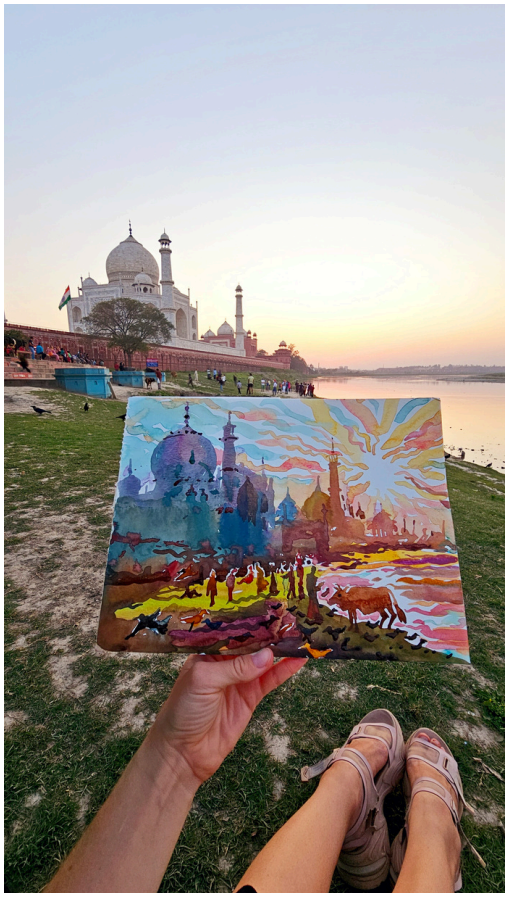


TAJ MAHAL ON THE SUNSET

WATERCOLOR ON PAPER, 23 X 31 CM | 2025

The Wonder of the World near the Yamuna River.
People, cows, and crows are meeting a sunset.







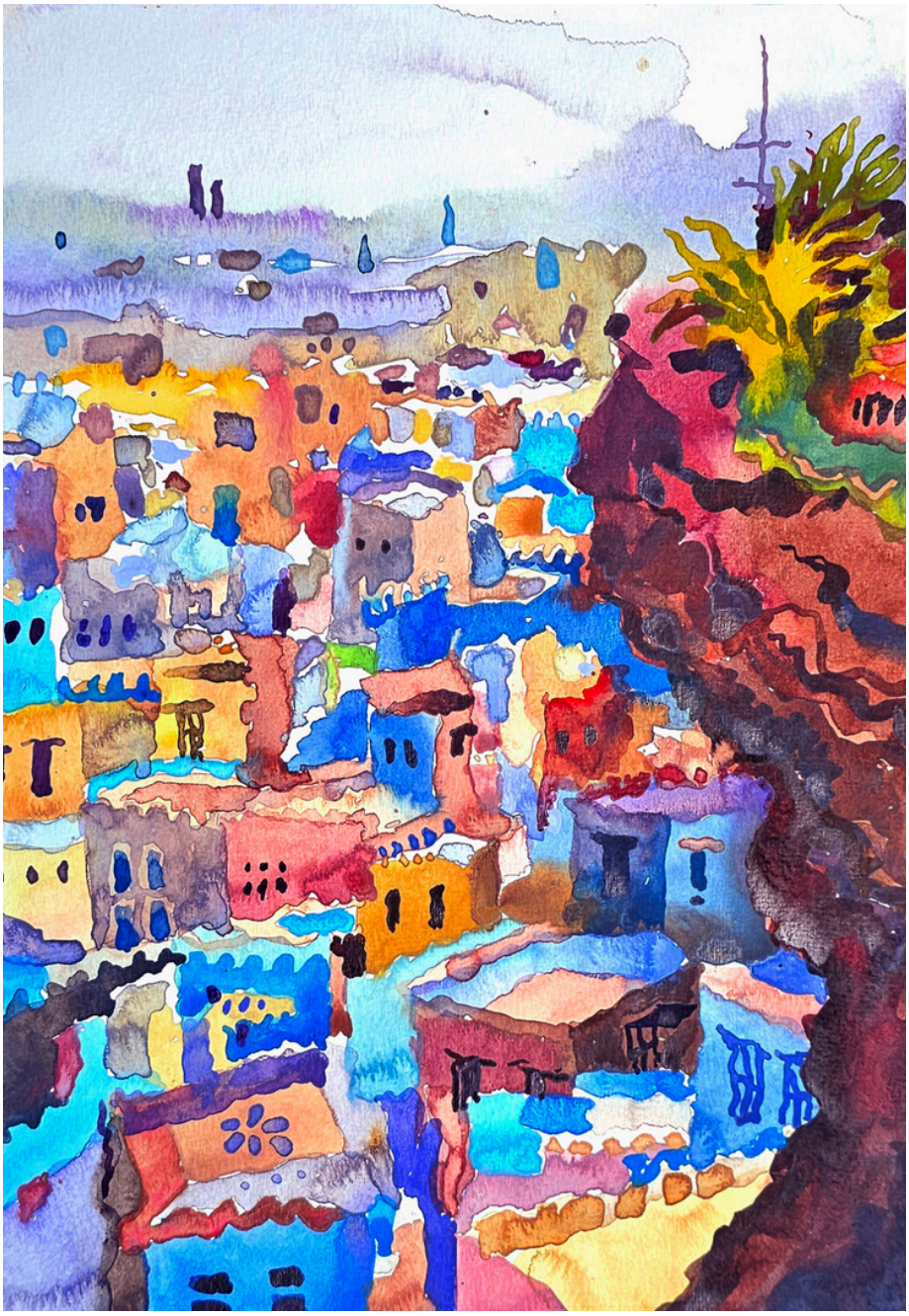
JODHPUR, THE BLUE CITY

WATERCOLOR ON PAPER, 23 X 31 CM | 2025

Famous view from the sunset point near Maa Jwalamukhi Devi Temple. It is must have to see while you are in Jodhpur, the blue colours from this side are the most saturated.



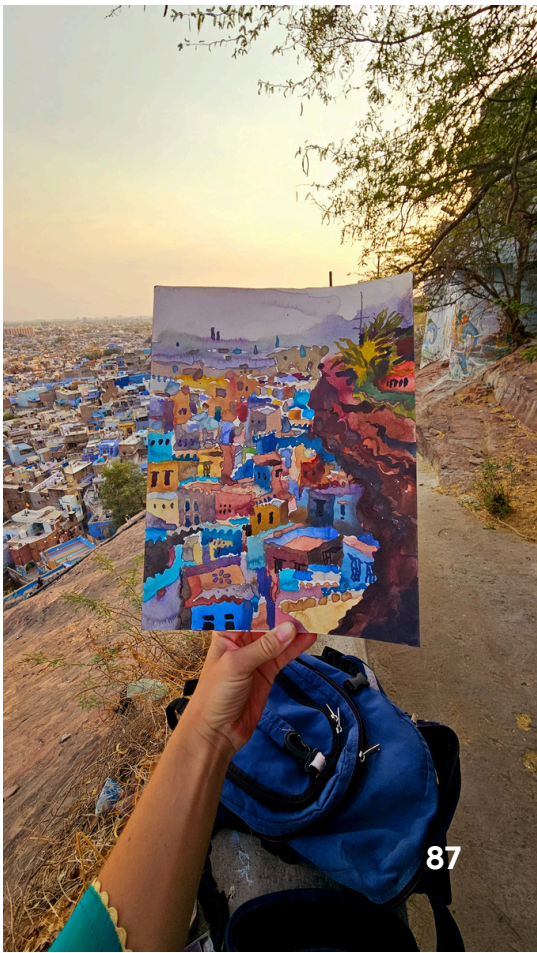
जोधपुर

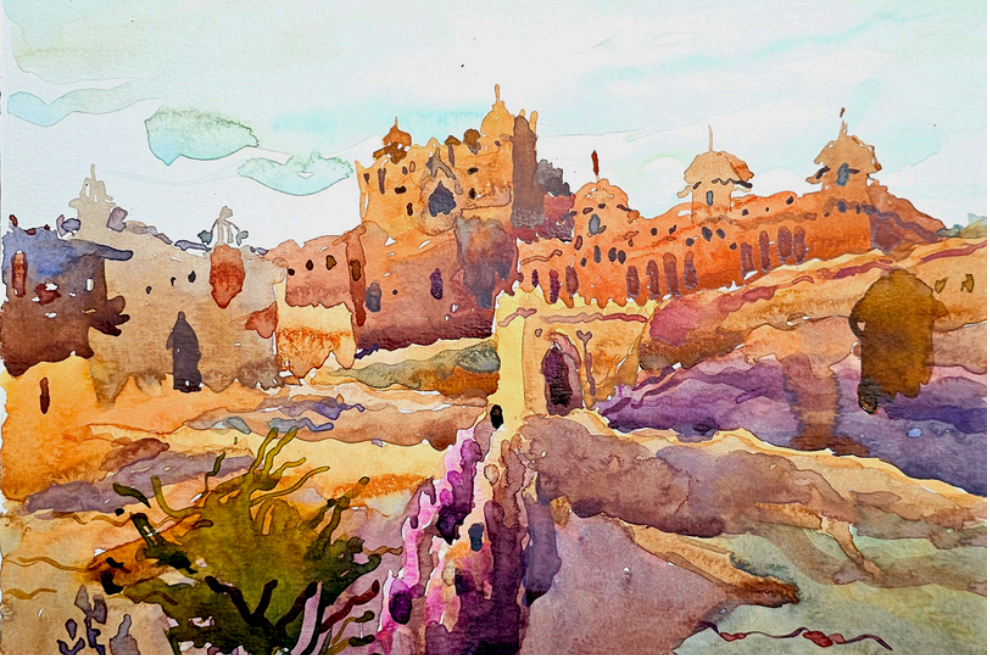


BLUE CITY ON THE SUNSET

WATERCOLOR ON PAPER, 23 X 31 CM | 2025

The blue city in India stands out against the desert landscape.
It attracts attention and inspires with plenty of blue hues.



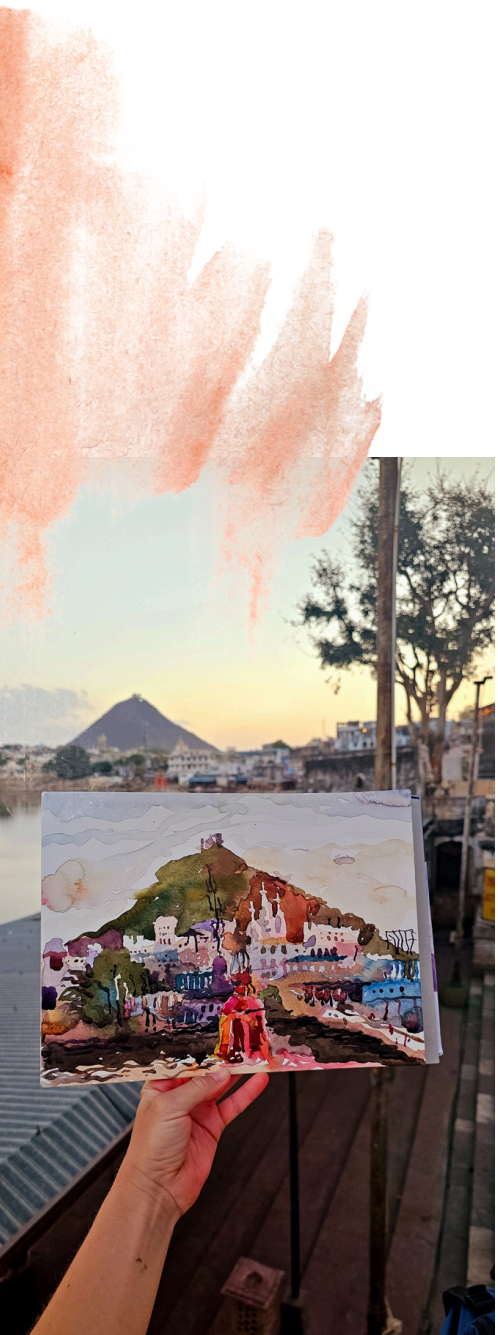




AJMER FORT

WATERCOLOR ON PAPER, 23 X 31 CM | 2025

The fort of the 8th century is a symbol of Rajasthan’s rich cultural heritage.





PUSHAR LAKE

WATERCOLOR ON PAPER, 23 X 31 CM | 2025

The view of the Pushkar Lake, Pushkar Krishna Ghat, and Shree Savitri Mata Mandir Temple on the Hill.

Ganga Aarti

SUSHIL KUMAR

INDIA

Sushil is an artist from Jammu without the confines of a particular genre, painting whatever inspiration or mood dictates. Primarily working with brushes, he has also explored finger painting and palette knife techniques.

A passionate traveler, Sushil has driven across India, with these journeys often influencing his art.

Beyond creativity, Sushil dreams of developing a permaculture-based food forest—an experiential sanctuary for like-minded people.

Formerly a legal professional in a large MNC bank, Sushil is currently on a break to pursue farming interests.





It was only apt that I wanted to create a painting inspired from the memories of this trip. Haridwar was the first place that we visited on that trip with Rishikesh, Badrinath and Kedarnath to follow. It was a long standing wish of my parents to visit these places and till that time, we never thought of undertaking this journey, primarily because of the poor health of my mom. So it was really a big leap of faith that we decided to go on a road trip of this magnitude.

I love to travel and I love to paint. Over the years, I have tried to create paintings that have helped me to Immortalize the memories from my trips. My travels have taken me to many beautiful places across this country and all those memories have a special place in my heart, but some trips turn out to be more memorable than others simply because of the people accompanying you.

A JOURNEY LIKE NO OTHER

Back in 2018, we undertook a road trip to Haridwar, Rishikesh, Badrinath and Kedarnath in Uttarakhand where my parents also joined me for the very first time. It was a trip that was not easy to plan and execute. My mom's fragile health was a major consideration and some of the religious places that we were planning to visit were difficult to reach. It was simply a case of God's grace and my parents absolute devotion that we managed to complete this road trip and create memories that we so fondly talk about till date.

HARIDWAR: THE FIRST STOP OF AN UNFORGETTABLE TRIP

It was only apt that I wanted to create a painting inspired from the memories of this trip. Haridwar was the first place that we visited on that trip with Rishikesh, Badrinath and Kedarnath to follow. It was a long standing wish of my parents to visit these places and till that time, we never thought of undertaking this journey, primarily because of the poor health of my mom. So it was really a big leap of faith that we decided to go on a road trip of this magnitude.

EXPERIENCING THE MAGIC OF GANGA AARTI

Ganga snan and Ganga aarti were the two rituals that were very high on the agenda of my parents. On the first evening of the trip, after bathing in icy cold waters of Ganga, we occupied a spot on the banks of Ganga and started waiting for the Aarti ritual to start. We were soon joined by a sea of devotees who occupied every available space on that ghat. As the sun was about to go down, the priests started singing the prayers with big lamps swaying in their hands and soon the entire atmosphere turned completely magical. It was indeed a blessing to see my parents joining the crowd singing the prayers and participate in that specatcle.

I wanted to paint that scene to etch in my memory the magic of that blissful evening. This painting is therefore rightly titled as 'Ganga Aarti'.

My approach for this one was simple. Just wanted to create a scene that immediately takes me to that evening, a sort of anchor to that memory. Two things that took the most time on this one are (I) getting the proportions of the priests relative to each other right and (ii) the lamp fire. Overall, it took a week to finish.





PRAVEEN BHATIA

INDIA

From an early fascination with paintings—nurtured by the works of Vincent van Gogh—Praveen Bhatia has pursued art with unwavering passion. While at the Bank of India, he explored oil painting and frequented art galleries. Retirement in 2016 drew him to the intricate world of watercolour, studied at the Delhi Collage of Arts. His works have earned recognition in Japan (2021), the IWM World Contest (2022), and Olympiart (2024). Inspired by masters like Joseph Zbukvic, he now ventures into acrylics and mixed media.

WINTER IN GERMANY

WATERCOLOR ON PAPER, 42 X 30 CM | 2022

Neuschwanstein Castle situated in Bavaria, Germany, on the foot hills of Alps, built by King Ludwig II, in 1800s.

Despite the main residence of the Bavarian monarchs at the time—the Munich Residenz—being one of the most extensive palace complexes in the world, King Ludwig II of Bavaria felt the need to escape from the constraints he saw himself exposed to in Munich, and commissioned Neuschwanstein Castle on the remote northern edges of the Alps as a retreat but also in honour of composer Richard Wagner, whom he greatly admired. The construction started in 1869 and was not completed till King Ludwig died in 1886. It was then opened to public.

It is said to be inspiration for Disney's Cindrella Castle. It has appeared prominently in many movies including musical Chitty Chitty Bang Bang (1968), Cameran Palace in the animated Pokémon film Lucario and the Mystery of Mew (2005), etc.

More than 1 million tourists visit this Castle in a year. It has been declared UNESCO World Heritage site in July 2025.

ART CURATION
VIVEK VERMA

ARTWORK
ISHRATH HUMAIRAH
SAMIDHA LAD

As a photographer, abstraction has long been the language closest to my heart. From the moment I first held a camera, I was drawn to its ability to suggest rather than define, to invite interpretation rather than impose certainty. Today, that enduring fascination finds expression in my curatorial aspirations, where I make honest attempt to bring together abstract works that create a space where the viewer can experience both mediums not as separate disciplines, but as intertwined forms of visual poetry.

The Art of Abstraction



ARTIST: ISHRATH HUMAIRAH



UNTITLED
OIL ON CANVAS | 24" X 24" INCH



REQUIEM FOR A DREAM
OIL ON CANVAS | 36" X 36" INCH



ISHRATH HUMAIRAH

HYDERABAD | INDIA

Ishrath Humairah is a self-taught artist from India whose work is deeply rooted in nature-inspired abstraction. Her signature style features textured landscapes, rocks, and trees, painted primarily in oils with a traditional, layered technique that creates rich depth and mystery. Rather than rigid planning, she allows her compositions to flow intuitively, resulting in abstract works that feel organic and alive. Continually experimenting with colours, textures, and mediums, Ishrath shares her journey through workshops and art events. Her paintings have found homes with collectors worldwide, while her creative pursuits also extend to photography, poetry, and advocacy for eco-causes.



THE RISING
OIL ON CANVAS | 48" X 22" INCH



HOW MUCH MORE SHOULD WE BLEED
OIL ACRYLIC CANVAS
24" X 24" INCH

UNTITLED
OIL ACRYLIC CANVAS
24" X 24" INCH





the automatism of being , the power of light and darkness, hugging shadows, holding on to light. to me the painting represents injuries' in a big city chaos. the complexity of the city, of order of society , seeing and experiencing contradictions is my greatest wound. yet the orange tint seem to scratch this chaos the silhouettes of cityscape at dusk. so its like giving a colour to the dark chaos of the city with orange. yes there is order within chaos.

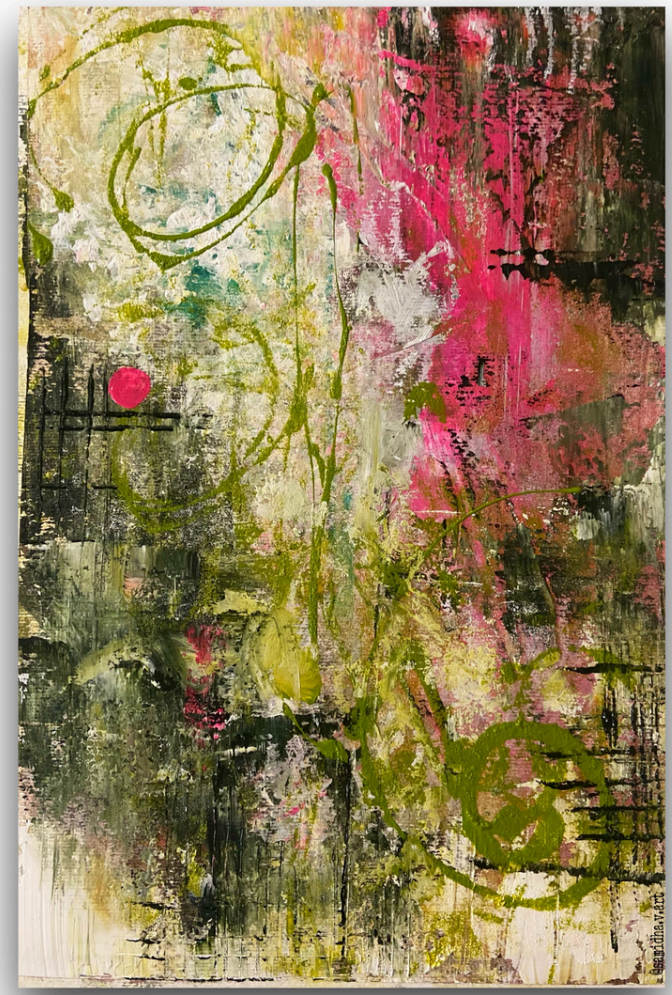
the painting offers a powerful insight into the human experience, highlighting the struggles and contradictions that we face in our daily lives. The painting becomes a mirror, reflecting our own emotions and experiences, and inviting us to explore the complexities of our own existence.



SAMIDHA LAD

MUMBAI | INDIA

For Samidha, art transcends mere expression—it is meditation and a sacred pause. With a background in architecture, she constructs emotional terrains rather than structures, evoking depth through abstract expressionism. Her layered compositions embody rhythm, spontaneity, and structure, translating solitude into creative energy. Each canvas becomes an intuitive dialogue between silence and revelation, chaos and light. Deeply personal yet universal, her works invite viewers to reflect, heal, and discover their own emotional landscapes within her artistic language.



The image of mosses and pinks blooming on weathered walls speaks to the passage of time and the cyclical nature of life. As structures crumble, they provide a canvas for nature to paint its masterpiece. The vibrant colours of the flowers contrast with the worn, muted tones of the stone, creating a striking visual representation of life's persistence.

The idea that old architectural walls "put down their guards" suggests a surrender to the forces of nature. As the walls weaken, they allow nature to seep in, and the flowers bloom with abandon. It's as if the walls, once proud and strong, have finally relaxed, allowing the beauty of nature to shine through.

This theme resonates with the concept of impermanence and the transience of human creations. Even the sturdiest structures will eventually yield to the elements and the passage of time. Yet, in their decay, they provide a foundation for new life to emerge.

Whirl wind in the sky explores the concept of spirituality and its connection to nature. a whirlwind in the sky as a demonstration of vortex, highlighting the force of nature and its ability to give one a path of liberation from the things that stand between man and the entire nature.

It encourages the viewer to look beyond the physical world, transcend their own experiences, and embrace the essence of spirituality and Oneness with nature. By doing so, one can gain a deeper understanding of the world and their place within it, and ultimately achieve liberation from the things that stand between man and the entire nature.





Unsung Heroes

PHOTO & STORY
VIVEK VERMA

In today's rapidly digitizing world, countless old and rare books face grim ends—dumped as garbage, forgotten in dusty corners, or even burnt on cold winter nights for a fleeting moment of warmth. Those who rescue such books and place them in the right hands perform a deeply noble act. They are guardians of culture, ensuring that stories, knowledge, and history survive beyond a single lifetime.

These rescuers are far more than resellers; they are matchmakers between books and readers, giving each rescued volume a second life. In doing so, they preserve the irreplaceable charm of physical books—the scent of paper, the texture of pages, and the quiet intimacy of reading by touch. Each saved book becomes a fragment of history, spared from silence.

One such guardian is **Nishant Soni**, who has been reselling old books in Versova, Mumbai, for nearly a decade. His efforts have helped countless readers and collectors build cherished libraries. Personally, he has been instrumental in helping me assemble a private library of 100+ books dedicated to photography , sourcing rare titles I now consider treasures. Many others share similar stories.

In a world quick to discard the old, Nishant's work keeps the heartbeat of print alive—one rescued book at a time.

72, Popco Colony Rd, opp. DCB BANK, Aram Nagar Part 2, Machlimar, Versova, Andheri West, Mumbai, Maharashtra 400061

9820790388 nishant.soni.booksellers

PHOTOGRAPH: VIVEK VERMA

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PHOTOGRAPH: VIVEK VERMA

Call for Submission

WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR

For our January 2026 issue, we welcome photo essays and series, personal essays and reflective writings on art and creativity, mental health and photography as a form of visual art. This isn't about polished perfection. It's about raw insight, emotional honesty, and the courage to be real.

HOW TO SUBMIT

Send your submission to zynemagindia@gmail.com with the subject line: "Submission – Issue 01 – [Your Name]"

Include a short bio (50-80) words and a brief statement about your work.

Please attach files (or link to a private gallery/Google Drive folder) with proper titles and captions.

DEADLINE
30 NOVEMBER 2025

PHOTOGRAPH: VIVEK VERMA

Zyne International Photography Awards 2025

Zyne announces its International Photography Competition—global talent, top judges, and winning works showcased in the February 2026 issue.

JURY MEMBERS

ALI ZOLGHADRI
Fine Art Photographer, Iran

PAVEL ZIEGLER
Photographer, Prague

JOZEF DANYI
Photographer, Bruntál

ZUZANA FAJMONOVÁ
Photographer, Czech Republic

REMON DIAZ
Photographer, Miami

CATEGORIES

ABSTRACT PHOTOGRAPHY

STREET PHOTOGRAPHY

BLACK & WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY

LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY

MINIMALISM PHOTOGRAPHY

CONTEST OPENS
19 AUGUST 2025

DEADLINE
19 OCTOBER 2025

WINNERS ANNOUNCEMENT
19 NOVEMBER 2025

PUBLICATION
ZYNE FEBRUARY 2026 ISSUE

Awards & Recognition

- **Publication** : The top 10 entries, including the award winners (top three) under each submission category, will be published in the February 2026 issue of Zyne.
- **Exhibition**: The winner under each category (top five) will be exhibited in a major city in India (Mumbai/Delhi).
- **Global Exposure**: 50 shortlisted work will be featured across our website, blog and social media channels for promotional purposes.

KNOW MORE ABOUT THE CONTEST AT
ZYNEMAG.COM

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PHOTOGRAPH: VIVEK VERMA

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