



By Alfonso Calero

Travel Photographer's Essential Guide Book

INTRODUCTION

Thanks for downloading my e-book to help you master travel photography. The book will be your perfect guide when exploring the many genres of travel photography.

Learn how to tackle each genre of travel photography differently. Each one requiring a different set of skills and gear. The focus will be on **People & Places**

From **Landscapes** in rural escapes to **Cityscapes** in urban jungles, the book promises to inspire and educate.

Discover the many sub genres of how to photograph astrophotography, night photography in cities, seascapes, waterfalls, mountains and more.....

With people or portrait photography you will see the value of interacting with locals on a positive level. **Street Portraits** with permission or unobtrusive street scenes to capture an ambiance of a place in time, the experience will help you grow as an empathetic shooter.

Of course for all you geek freaks out there, I will show how it's done **technically** and what **gear** was used to achieve style and simplicity.

Unleash Your Creativity with me on this learning adventure of self discovery & visual expression. Finally the book ends with **editing** tips in Adobe Lightroom, Photoshop and other useful plug ins.



Chapter 1

Technical & Creative

Manual Modes & Mastering Composition



How To Shoot in Manual Modes



How To Master Composition



Chapter 2

Places

Urban Jungles & Rural Escapes



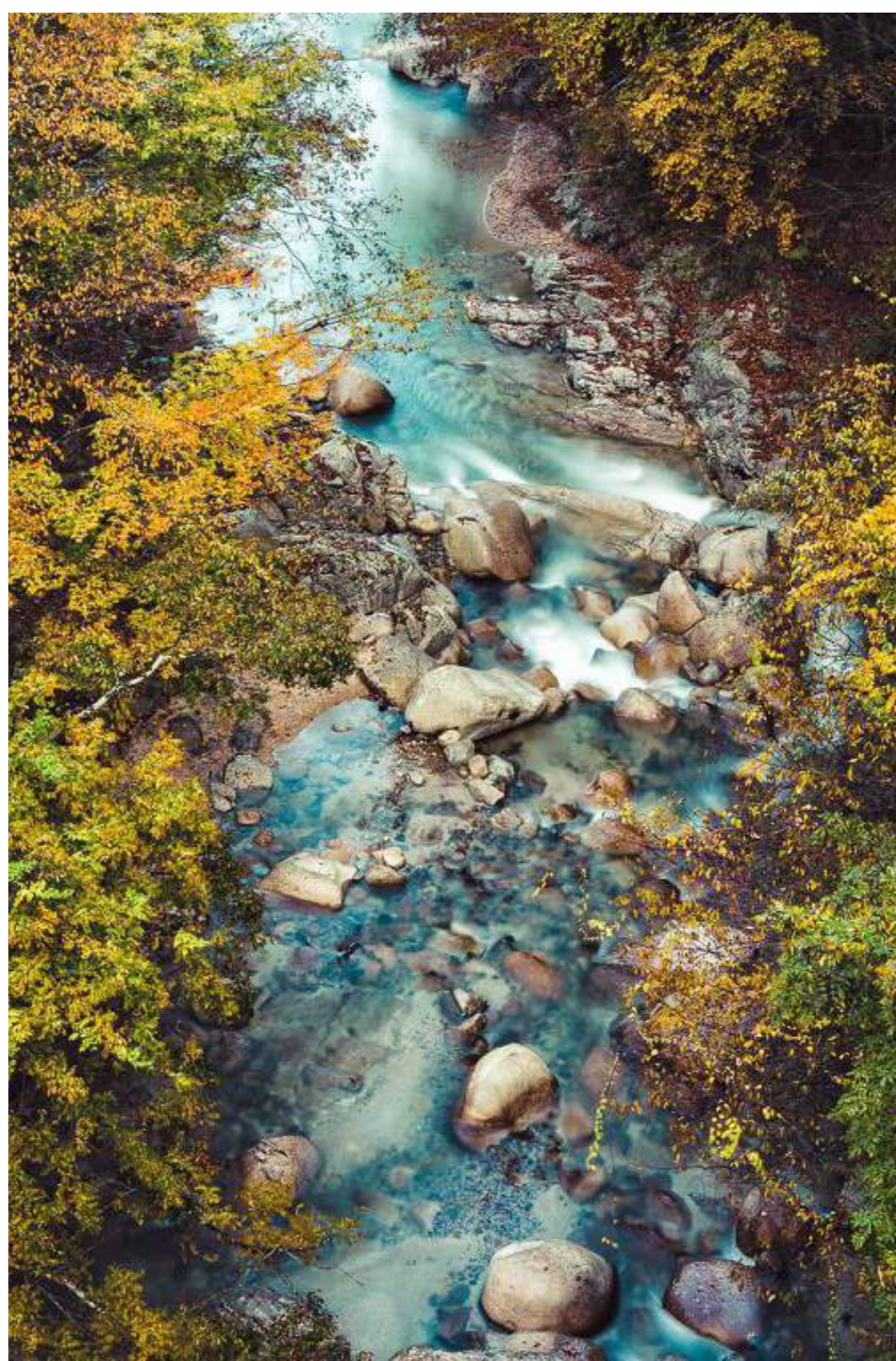
How to Shoot Cities at Night



How To Shoot Seascapes



How to Shoot Astrophotography



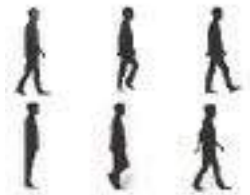
Chapter 3

People

Streets Portraits



How To Shoot Street Portraits



How To Shoot Streetscapes



Chapter 4

Editing

Adobe Lightroom & Photoshop



How To Use The Lightroom Classic
Basics Introduction



How To Use Photoshop

Mid Level Experience Users





Chapter 1

Manual Modes & Mastering Composition

Technical & Creative



ISO100 | F11 | 120 Seconds | 10 Stop Filter | Liffey Abandoned Woolshed

BASIC MANUAL SETTINGS CHEAT SHEET

ISO "P" CONTROL THE LIGHT SENSITIVITY

MORE CRISP PHOTOS

NIGHT/DARK

50 - 100 - 200 - 400 - 800 - 1600 - 3200 - 6400

DAYLIGHT (WELL LIT)

MORE NOISE/GRAIN

ISO & APERTURE "A/AV" CONTROL THE FOCUS



50 - 100MM LENS (I.E. PEOPLE)



14 - 24MM LENS (I.E. LANDSCAPE)



BRIGHTER (BIGGER HOLE)

SHALLOW DEPTH OF FIELD (LESS IN FOCUS)

DARKER (SMALLER HOLE)

GREATER DEPTH OF FIELD (MORE IN FOCUS)

ISO & SHUTTER SPEED "S/TV" CONTROL THE MOVEMENT

"B" BULB MODE (CABLE RELEASE/REMOTE) + 30 SECONDS

BRIGHTER/SLOWER

1 - 30 SECONDS (USE TRIPOD & SELF-TIMER/CABLE RELEASE/REMOTE)

BRIGHTER/SLOWER

1/2 - 1/8TH SECOND (USE MONOPOD OR TRIPOD)

BRIGHTER/SLOWER

1/15 - 1/60TH (USE 14 - 50 MM LENS RANGE)

BRIGHTER/SLOWER

1/60TH - 1/200TH (USE 70 - 200 MM LENS RANGE)

DARKER/FASTER

1/250 - 1/1000 (FREEZE FAST MOVING SUBJECTS)

DARKER/FASTER

1/1000 - 1/10,000 (FREEZE FAST MOVING SUBJECTS)

DARKER/FASTER

ISO, APERTURE & SHUTTER SPEED "M" CONTROL EVERYTHING MODE

-4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4



DARKER / UNDEREXPOSED

BRIGHTER / OVEREXPOSED

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MASTER COMPOSITION



BALANCE

Balance is an equilibrium that usually comes in two forms - symmetrical and asymmetrical.



LINE

Lines lead our eye to look for dominance. Lines can be straight, curvy, bumpy, jagged, or wavy.



DOMINANCE

Dominance is the bullseye point or area with the most emphasis or significant message.



CONTRAST

It is like the Yin & Yang of an image. The balance of the opposites. Long and short, black and white, light & dark, big & small.



TONE

Every Colour has a range (H.D.R.) of tones. To achieve a larger gamut of choice, shoot in RAW and edit accordingly. Also shoot a range (Bracket) of +/- exposures to produce a higher quality images with more detail.



SPACE

Space refers to the area within, around, above or below an object or objects. Negative space is the area of the layout which is left empty.



FORM

(3-D) always has bulk or mass. Some basic forms are the sphere, cube, cone, cylinder, and pyramid.



REPETITION

Repetition and rhythm are the repeating of parts within a photo, such as shapes, colors, patterns, or lines.



TEXTURE

Texture refers to how the surface of something looks and feels. For example, hard and soft, rough or smooth, wet or dry. Texture is simply the tactile quality of an object.



SHAPE

When both ends of a line meet to surround space, the line forms a shape. Shape in images refers to elements that appear two-dimensional, such as squares, triangles, or circles.



ANAGRAM = B.A.L.D. C.A.T.S. F.A.R.T.S.



PHOTO COURSES & TOURS

WWW/ALFONSO.COM.AU

SMARTPHONE PHOTOGRAPHY CHEAT SHEET

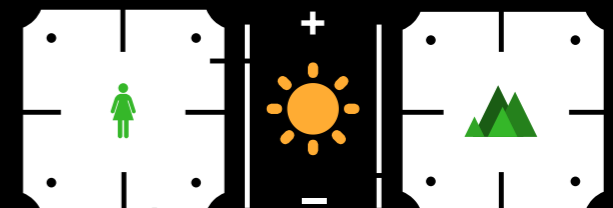
CONTROL THE CAMERA SETTINGS

TURN ON 3 X 3 GRID TO COMPOSE

SET HIGHEST RESOLUTION

SHOOT HDR ON

CONTROL THE FOCUS & EXPOSURE



TAP TO FOCUS

SLIDE UP & DOWN TO
BRIGHTEN OR DARKEN

HOLD TO LOCK FOCUS

CONTROL THE NOISE & MOVEMENT



BURST MODE / HOLD DOWN SHUTTER & CHOOSE BEST IMAGES (Live)



USE THE SHUTTER FROM VOLUME CONTROL ON PHONE OR EARPHONES



USE THE SHUTTER FROM VOLUME CONTROL ON PHONE OR EARPHONES



USE A TRIPOD AT NIGHT OR WHEN SHOOTING CLOSE UP OR MACRO



AT NIGHT OR EXTREME LOW LIGHT, EXPOSE FOR THE HIGHLIGHTS.

Download Snapseed to edit Photos and You Cut to edit Video

SNAPSEED



You Cut Video Editor



0417 482 473

alfonso@alfonso.com.au

www.alfonso.com.au



ISO 100 | F11 | 1/2 S/S | Freycinet Lodge, Tasmania



How To Shoot In Manual Modes

Often referred to as the exposure triangle. If you wish to manually control your images to create exactly how you wish to communicate, then this is the only way.

ISO - Is the sensitivity of the light. Two reasons to control it are for daytime or night time & fast or slow movement. ISO works in unison with Shutter Speed.

Daylight: The brighter (100-400) the situation the lower the ISO number.

Nightlight & Indoor: The darker (800 - 6400) the situation the higher the ISO Number..

Slow Movement: If you are looking to have creative blur in movement usable from around 1/15th - 30 seconds, then a tripod is essential. Low ISO's of around 100-200 ISO are needed to avoid noise and slow movement.

Fast Movement: If you are looking to freeze movement usable from around 1/30th - 1/4000th shutter speed, then a continuous shutter would be helpful.

Aperture: Is to control the amount of focus in an image to have more or less clarity.

Shallow Depth of Field: Refers to having less in focus from your subject to the background. Best used around **F2.8** with longer lenses from 50mm - 100mm.

Great Depth of Field: Usually means that subject matter focused from about a 1/3rd into the frame allows for the rest of the image to all be in focus. Best apertures are about **F11** but would also depend on focal length. Most wide angle lenses from 14-24mm allow for easier great depth of field focus.

How to Master Composition

These are the basic concepts that are easy to learn and will allow you to create great photos in an eye-pleasing way and even capture that rare beast we call art.

There are many basic concepts that underlie the field of image design that are often categorised differently depending on philosophy or teaching methodology.

A useful way to apply the design elements + principles is to treat photographic composition like a language, where the elements act as the vocabulary and the principles, the grammar & structure.

ISO 80 | F11 | 30 Secs | 21mm Lens | Zaragoza, Spain



“Crop in your head not in your edit”



ISO 80 | F11 | 0.5 Secs | 50mm Lens | Port Willunga Beach, South Australia



Line

Lines can be used to show motion by guiding and moving our eyes around an image.

Horizontal lines guide our eyes across the photo. They create a calm and restful mood in a design. Vertical lines move our eyes up and down the photo.

Diagonal lines move our eyes from one corner of an object or design to the opposite corner. They are exciting lines and show strong feelings. Even shadows create lines.

Kinds of Lines & Feelings

Vertical - dignity, power, resistance to change, strength.

Horizontal - quietness, calm, earth, sea, sky, death.

Diagonal - dynamic, aggressive, danger, movement.

Jagged - spasmodic & staccato rhythm.

Circular - fluidness, grace, growth, peace, erotic.

Spiral - dizzy, hypnotic, flowing.

Texture

Texture refers to how the surface of something looks and feels. Texture is simply the tactile quality of an object. Close up abstract style of photography often shows texture.

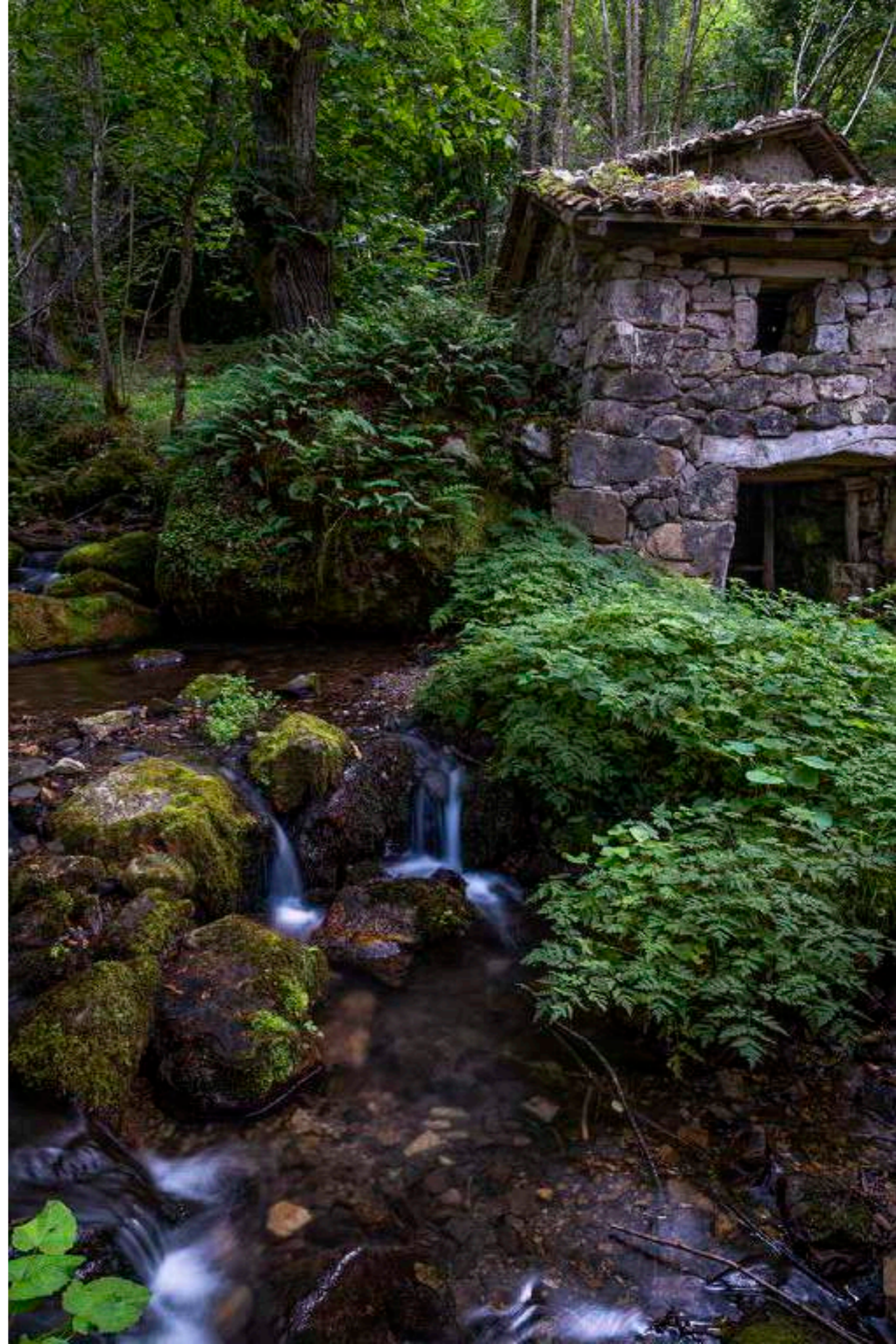
Texture is an extremely good way to capture a viewer's interest, as it invokes more than simply their sense of sight but also their sense of touch.

When taking photos where texture is the main element, it is best to light it from the side or from the back as this will bring out more texture. It is best to avoid harsh and direct light.

Common Types of Texture

Rough or Smooth
Wet Or Dry
Hard Or Soft
Silky or Prickly
Misty or Foggy
Sticky or Slippery
Bumpy or Fluffy

ISO 80 | F11 | 0.5 Secs | 50mm Lens | Covadonga, Spain



" Photography is the art of subtraction. Subtracting any elements you don't want, less is more."



ISO 100 | F11 | 10 Secs | 18mm | Siquijor, Philippines



Shape

Shape refers to elements that appear two-dimensional, such as squares, triangles, or circles.

Shapes can also have bumpy or pointed edges as well. It is easier to define shapes in man-made objects.

Unconventional or undefinable shapes can also be found in nature.

Form

A form always has bulk or mass. Some basic forms are the sphere, cube, cone, cylinder, FORM and pyramid.

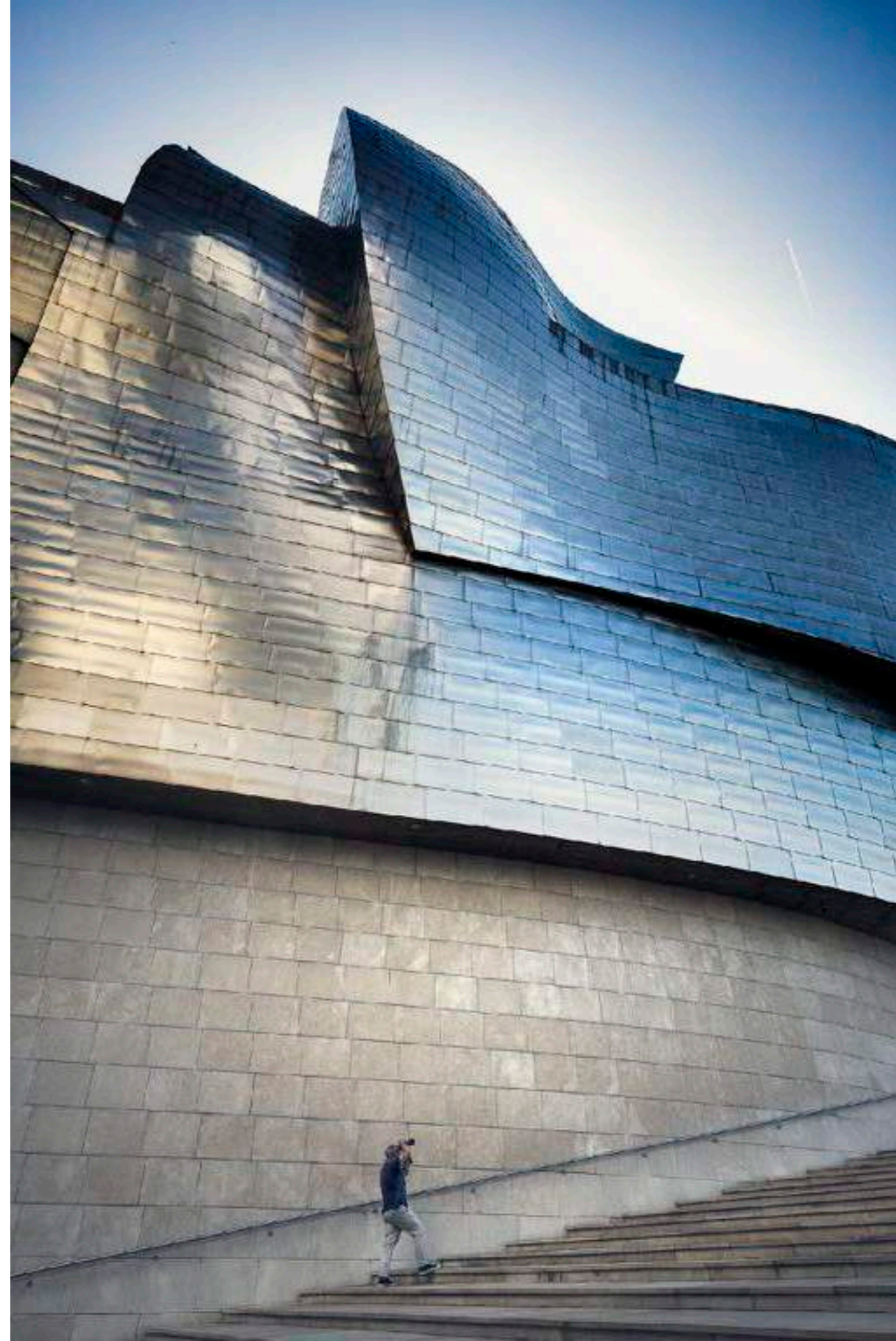
Shapes from nature or man-made objects are variations of these forms. For instance, a pine tree is a cone, and a building is a cube.

More complex subjects are combinations of these basic forms, such as the human body. It is made of various cylinders and a sphere.

Form is very similar to shape, but can create depth and interest in photographs. While shape is 2-dimensional, form is generally a 3-dimensional object.

This is also the least used of the elements as it's difficult to portray a 3-dimensional object with a photo. The idea behind form is to reveal gaps, curves, bulges and edges that depict the object's form.

ISO 400 | F8.0 | 1/640 | 21mm Lens | Guggenheim, Spain



“Zoom with your feet not with your lens”



ISO 100 | F11 | 2 secs | 50mm Lens | Bohol, The Philippines



Space

Space refers to the area of unused or unoccupied area in a photo. Basically, the space between objects. In general, space helps lend a sense of 3-dimensionality to a photo. Also referred to as negative space.

By itself, Space can create beautiful photos, such as a photo of clouds, but its real strength lies with using it in combination with Line, Form, or Tone.

ISO 400 | F9.0 | 1/250th | 50mm Lens | Zaragoza, Spain

Tone

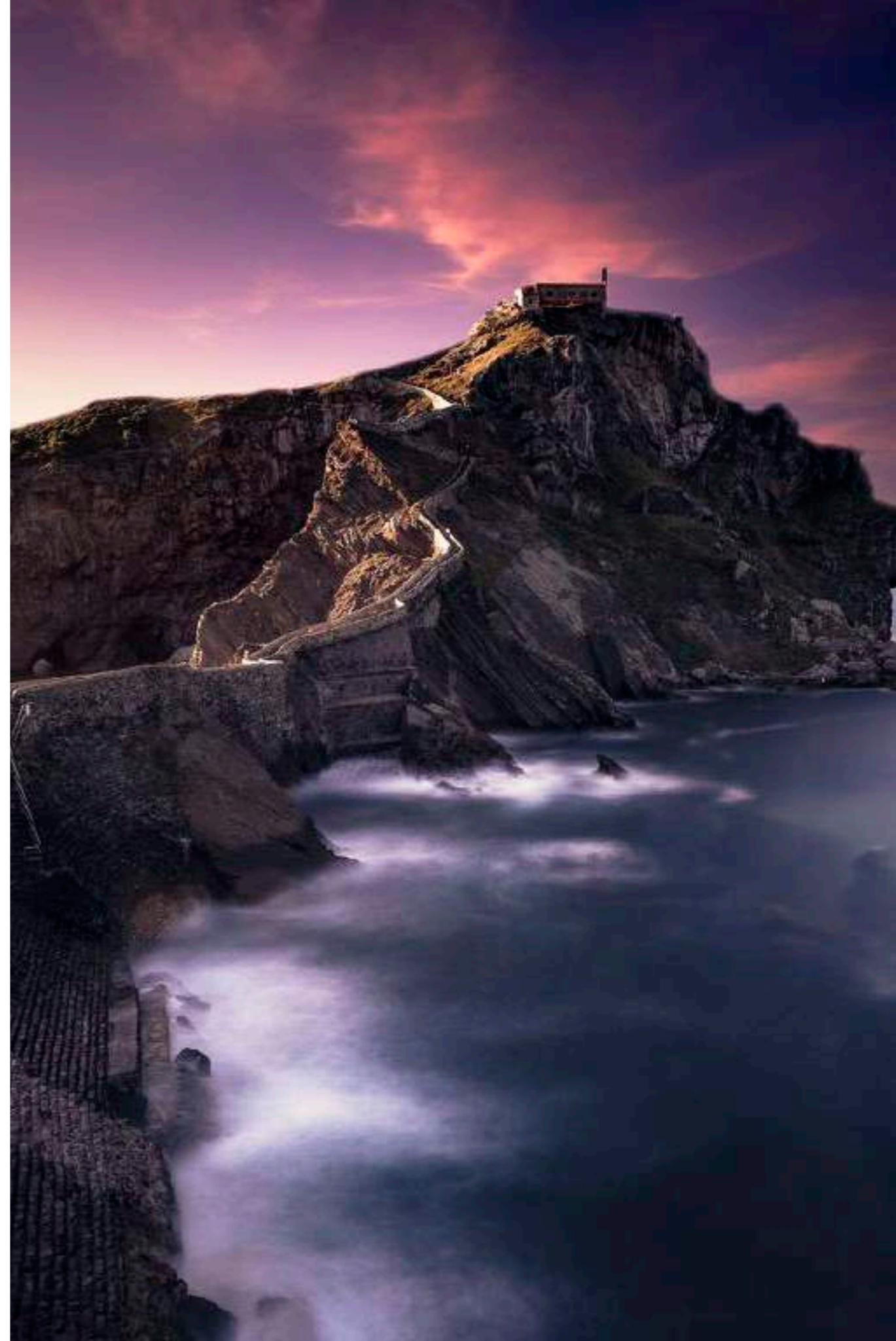
We use the term "tone" to refer to how much light and dark is in a design. Tone is very important because it makes some parts of a composition more dominant than others.

Pure white is the lightest tone, and black is the darkest tone. All tones in between are grays. Texture and shading are ways of making shapes have tone.

The more texture or shading a shape has, the darker in tone it becomes. For instance, imagine words as texture on a piece of white paper. If the paper has one sentence typed on it, it has a very light tone. But the same paper with many sentences typed on it has a much darker tone. Color also has tone.

Tone requires a somewhat practiced eye to understand and implement successfully. Tone is the organisation and magnitude of light and dark in a photo. Tone can be used to highlight certain aspects, such as a bright subject against a dark background, or to obscure unpleasant features in dark shadows.

2 Shot Composite | ISO 80 | F11 | 30 Secs | 10 Stop Filter
21mm Lens | Basque Country, Spain



" Photography is an illusion of reality with which we create our private world"



ISO 80 | F11 | 30 Secs | 50mm Lens | Negros Island, The Philippines



Balance

Everything in a picture has weight, visual weight, even the empty space. A line weighs less than a shape. A shape that is filled in with a colour or texture weighs more than a shape outline.

A form that is three - dimensional weighs more than all of these. Balance in a photograph can be achieved from side to side or from top to bottom. If a design or picture is unbalanced, you as the viewer will feel that something is wrong.

Balance is an equilibrium that results from looking at images and judging them against our ideas of physical structure (such as mass, gravity or the sides of a page.) Balance usually comes in two forms - symmetrical and asymmetrical.

Symmetrical balance occurs when the weights of a composition is evenly distributed around a central vertical or horizontal axis. Under normal circumstances it assumes identical forms on both sides.

Asymmetrical balance occurs when the weight of a composition is not evenly distributed around a central axis. It involves the arranging of objects of differing size in a composition such that they balance one another with their respective visual weights.

Repetition

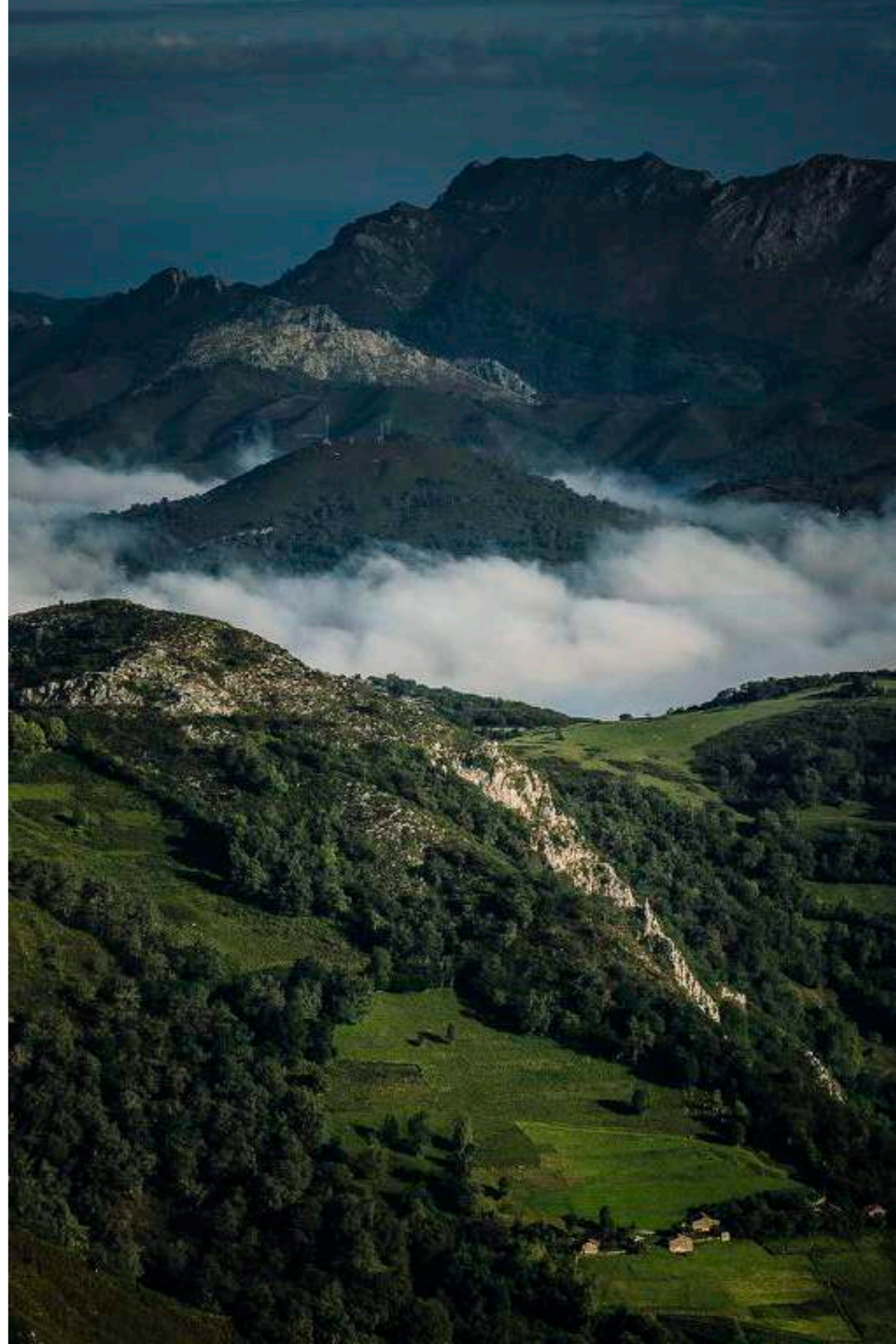
Repetition and rhythm are the repeating of parts within a design, such as shapes, colors, or lines.

Repetition involves using similar things over and over again, while rhythm refers to using them in an order or pattern.

Repetition and rhythm are just as important to art as they are to music. The rhythm is the beat, and the repetition is the chorus sung again and again.

In music, our ears pick out the rhythm. In art, our eyes pick out the pattern in a drawing and follow it.

ISO 200 | F10 | 1/250th | 90mm Lens | Covadonga, Spain



"It's weird that photographers spend years or even a whole lifetime trying to capture moments that added together don't even amount to a couple of hours"



ISO 400 | F8.0 | 1/200th | 50mm Lens | Panglao Island, The Philippines



Dominance

Refers to making one part of a design or picture more important than the rest. All other details are less important than the dominant part, but they also add to the composition.

A designer can make something stand out by its size, color, texture, shape, position, or any combination of these. For instance, in a drawing of black shapes that are the same size, a smaller red shape would be dominant.

Or a single triangle can be dominant over a group of triangles if it is away from the group. Designers often, but not always, make the center of a picture the dominant area. The focal point, the place where the eye keeps returning, usually is in the dominant area.

All design should have some kind of center of interest. One suggestion is to limit the number of areas to three when viewing an image. Less is more. If our eyes go to more than three dominant points then it becomes confusing.

Differing proportions within a composition can relate to different kinds of balance or symmetry, and can help establish visual weight and depth

Contrast

In order for a design to be interesting, it must have contrast and variety. Contrast refers to having different things in the same design.

It is like the Yin & Yang of an image. The balance of the opposites. Long and short, black and white, light & dark, big & small - opposites are everywhere.

Proportion is closely associated to contrast. It is the relationship in scale between one element and the other, or between a whole object and one of its parts.

Type to enter text



Chureito Pagoda



ISO 100 | F11 | 5 Secs | 21mm Lens | Mt. Fuji, Japan



Chapter 2

Urban Jungles & Rural Escapes

Places

Places

Urban Jungles (Cities at Night) also known as cityscapes are best tackled at night with a tripod. The city comes alive with neon lights and colourful movement. The stark contrast between dark and light really show the ambience of a city that never sleeps. Architecture is the focus in a built structure.

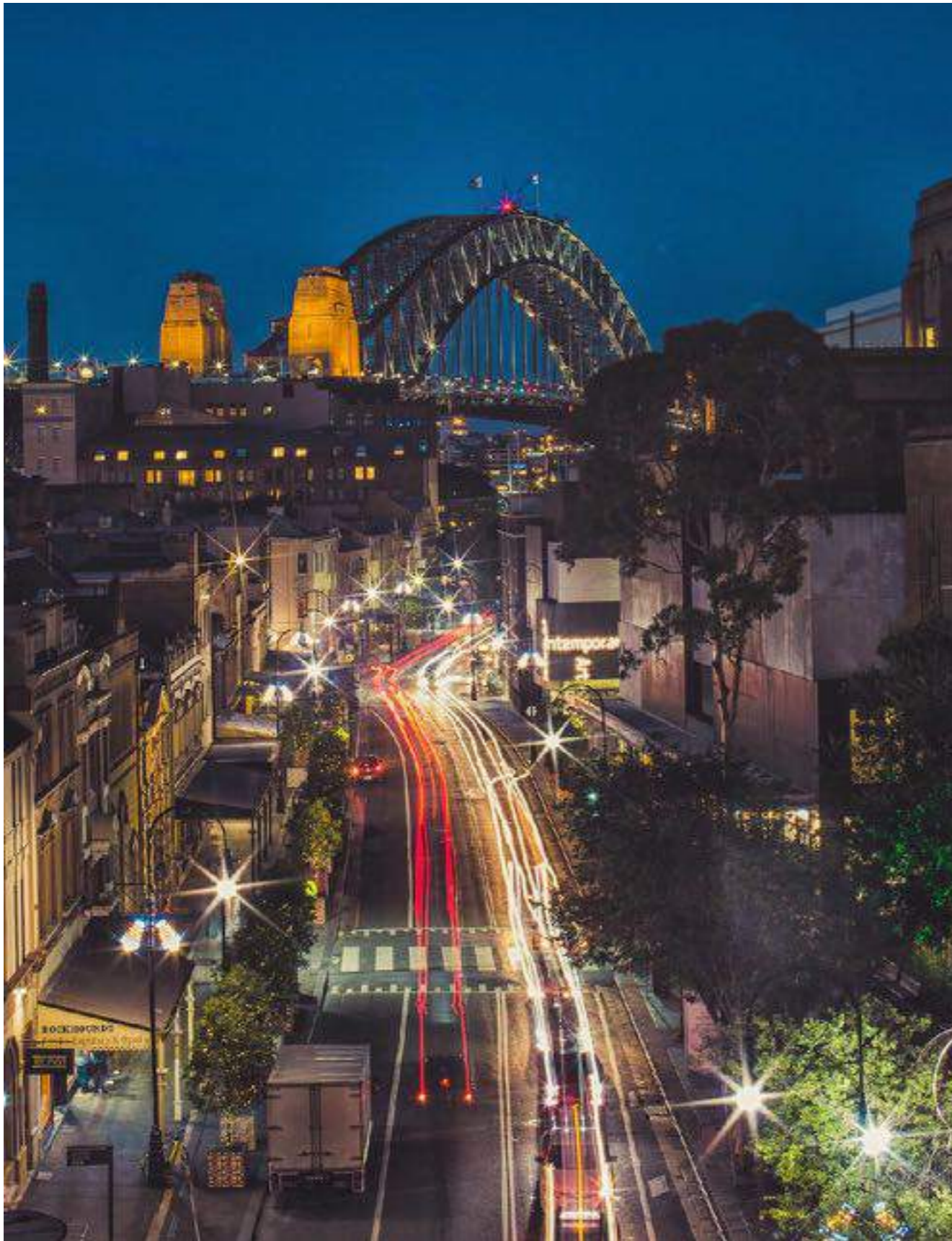
Rural Escapes (Landscapes) are simply landscapes in natural environments. Mountains, seascapes, rivers, forests, waterfalls, lakes and even astrophotography can all help depict the beauty of a pristine experience.





Urban Jungles

How To Shoot Cities at Night



Location

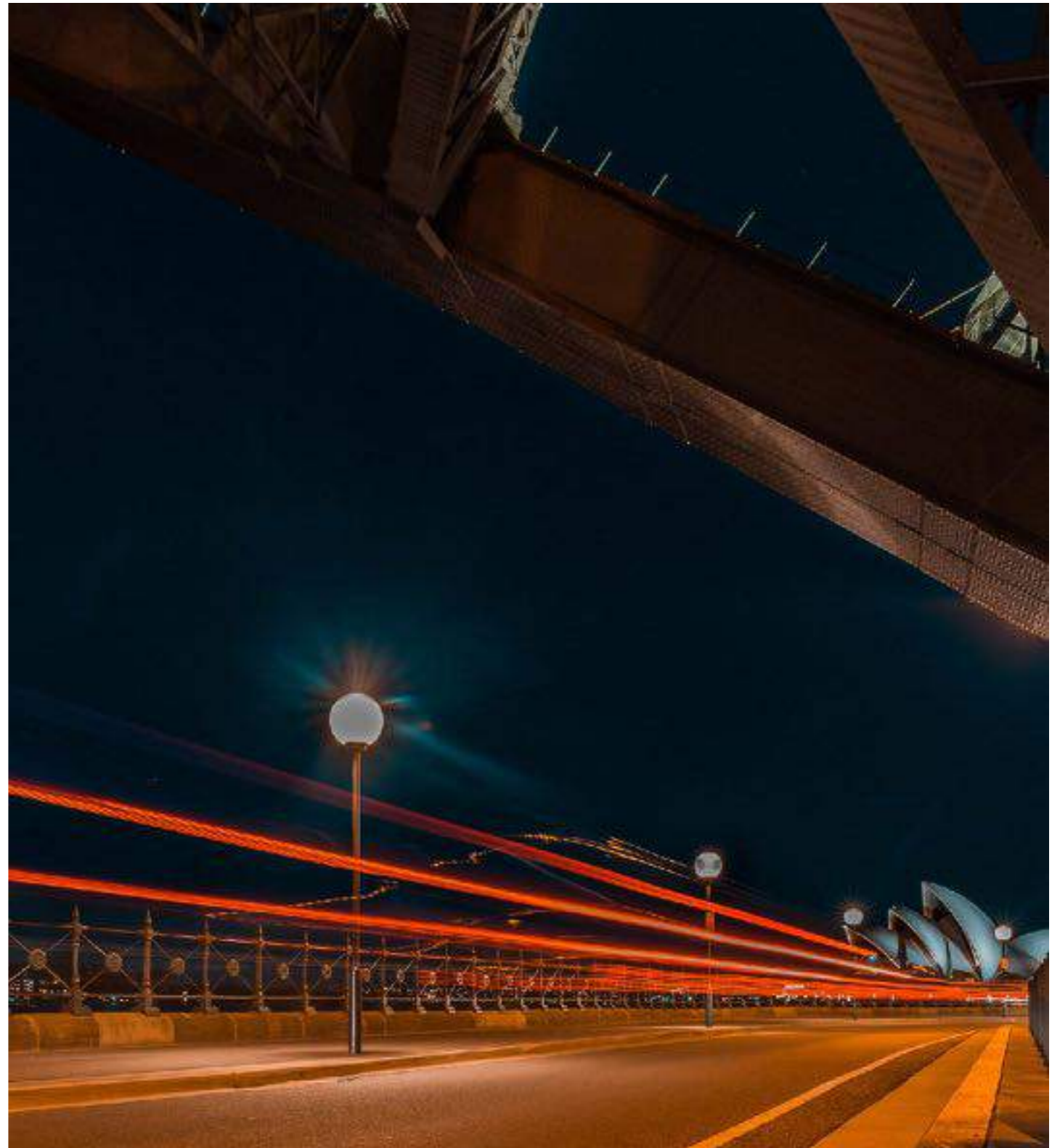
Being in the best place at the best time is paramount when looking for the prime compositions in a city. Weather can play a big part in deciding which spots to choose as well.

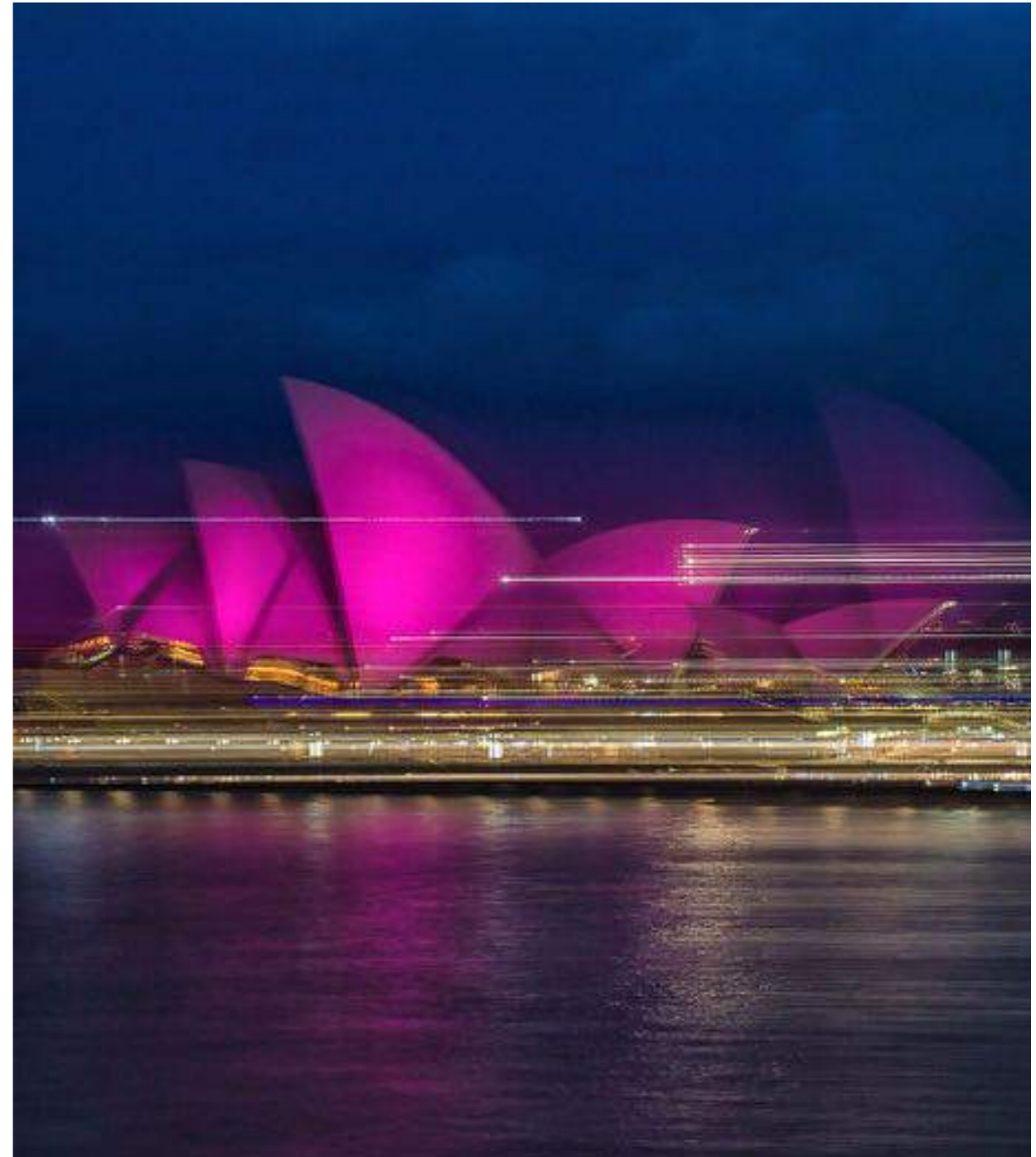
Gear

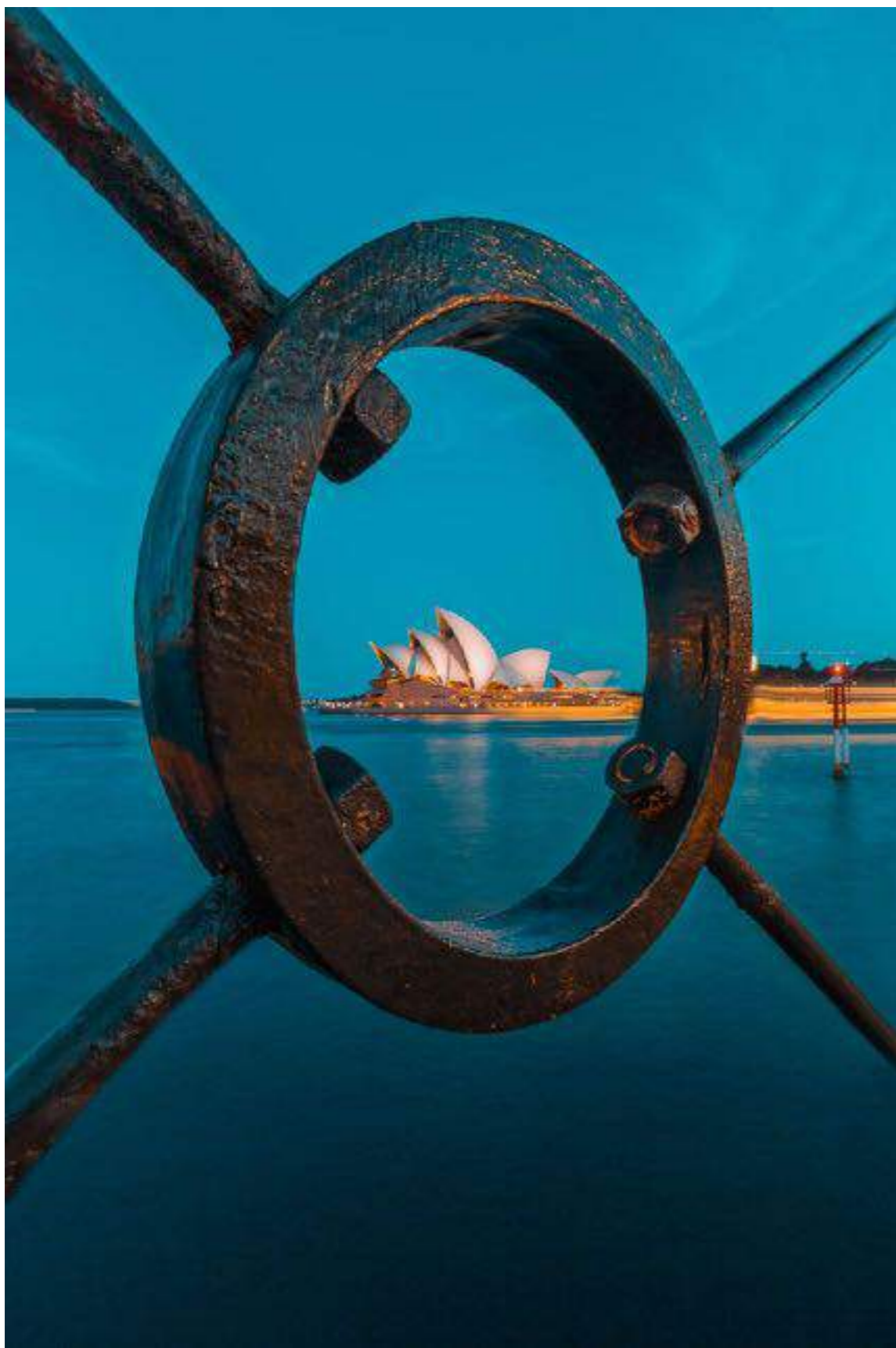
A tripod and camera are two essential tools when shooting the city streets at night. Spare batteries can also come in handy.

Make sure your tripod won't move in strong winds or weigh too much when doing long walks.

In wet weather, an umbrella, non slip shoes and small towels will keep you and your camera dry.







Settings

ISO 100 (less noise), F11 (Sharper images) and around 10-30 seconds (long exposures) are common settings used at night. Capturing colour, movement and texture are common themes at night.



Rural Escapes

How To Shoot Seascapes



How To Shoot Seascapes

I am not an early bird but living in Sydney, Australia on the east coast leaves me no choice but to get up early once in a while for a dawn to sunrise shoot.

The coffee and breakfast at a beach cafe make it worth getting up at crazy early times especially in summer.

I've been shooting seascapes for over 10 years and I have always found it to be one of the most rewarding and challenging of photographic subjects.

No two seascapes are the same and once you add variable weather and sea conditions to the mix there are endless opportunities for photographers willing to get their feet wet, so to speak! I am still learning everyday how to stay dry and not get washed away.

Use A Tripod

It sounds obvious, but most beginners don't bother with tripods; they should. Apart from giving you the freedom to choose a slower shutter speed, a tripod forces you to slow down and think about the image-making process.

Where should you position the horizon? Should that rock be in the frame or would it be better left out? Should you use a slow shutter speed to blur the water, or would it look better sharp? Look for a sturdy tripod that can collapse down to provide a low shooting angle.

Shooting low can create great drama in your images. I like to use [Sirui](#) Carbon Fibre tripods. Make sure to check your load capacity as it is worth spending the extra dollars to have a great tripod that will last for years. Always make sure to wash down your tripod after each shoot with fresh water.

I have a friend who likes to shower with his tripod fully expanded. It sounds kinky but it's practical when water shortages are happening in some drought stricken areas of Australia. Even without droughts we still are careful with water usage.







Low ISO & Slow Shutter Speed

Choose your camera's lowest ISO setting (normally 50, 100 or 200 ISO). This will not only minimize the appearance of noise in your image, but also allow you to use a slower shutter speed, which can be useful if you are trying to achieve the 'blurry water' effect you see in many seascapes.

If you want to create the 'milky water' effect you'll need to use a slow shutter speed – slower than half a second. With your camera on a tripod, switch your camera to Shutter Priority (S or TV) and choose a shutter speed between 1/2 and 10 seconds.

If it is too bright you will get a warning message indicating that the image will be over-exposed at this shutter speed. At this point you have two options. First, wait until it gets darker. Second, and this is my preferred option, place a Neutral Density filter, which looks like a grey piece of glass, in front of the lens to artificially darken the scene. You can buy ND filters of varying densities, from light to dark grey.

I use a **+10 stop ND NISI filter** for most of my seascapes and find it works very well. If there is abundant water movement then you might also be able to get some nice effects at 1/8th or 1/15th of second without the ten stop filter.

Aperture & Remote

Even though you're shooting in Shutter Priority you still need to be conscious of the camera's aperture setting. Look for an aperture somewhere around f/11.

While you'll get more depth of field as the aperture gets smaller (higher f-numbers) keep in mind that most lenses are sharpest at a setting of around f/11.

Best to do some research in regard to the sweet spot of your lens as every lens has the perfect f-stop to produce optimally sharp images.

I prefer to shoot in full manual mode and control ISO 50, F11 for aperture and then change my shutter speed accordingly depending on the effects I am trying to get. If needed, then I will add on my filter.

If you're using long exposures a remote shutter release will help you keep camera shake to a minimum.

Failing that, you can use your camera's self timer to fire the shutter 'hands free'. The best and cheapest option is to download an app for your smartphone to control from as a remote, but for that your camera will need Bluetooth capabilities.







Filters

To add drama to your skies try using a graduated filter which are dark at the top and clear at the bottom.

A graduated filter can be really useful for shooting high contrast landscape scenes where the sky is considerably brighter than the foreground. I use a **3 stop soft grad Nisi filter** for sunrises.

Safety

I have been soaked with waves and sudden swells many times. I have even fallen a few times on slippery moss covered sandstone rocks.

Be careful when photographing near the coast. Conditions can change quickly and it's easy to get caught out if you're not careful.

Don't become so preoccupied with taking photos that you forget what's happening around you. Err on the side of safety – there are worse things in life than missing the shot!

I often check my location's low tide the day before. It's best to decide where and how you will be shooting as it may still be dark when you arrive.

It is best to stand back for a few minutes and observe the tides. The Great Australian surf has taken many rock fishermen by surprise.

I use rock fishing boots with spikes now to give me ultimate grip on these slippery surfaces. A head lamp in the darkness also allows me to be hands free with my backpack.







Pre Shoot

Apps Used:

Clear Outside (Cloud Checker) allows you to see how much cloud cover you will have at sunrise or sunset. It shows you the percentage of cloud cover in low, mid and high range hourly.

Willy Weather (Tide & Swell Check)

Like most surfers, they like to see how much swell and wave height there might be at a particular time and place. Knowing when the tides are low or high can greatly affect the safety of your morning shoot. Choose the best location to suit your level of security. Many rock fishermen and seascape photographers often take high risks of being swept away.

Photo Pills (Angle of Sun)

Knowing the angle of the sun and the exact time we have blue and golden hours will help you set up in the perfect spot. It's always a good idea to scout the area the day before if you have not been to a seascape location.

Gear

Aside from my camera gear which is listed below, here is a list of other essential extras needed to keep you and your camera dry.

Spiked Boots - Some rock surfaces can be very slippery with clear moss. It's hard to notice in the dark of dawn where it is safe to step.

Small Towels - I always have a towel to dry off my camera and myself especially after the occasional unexpected splash.

Spiked Tripod - Some tripod feet can be replaced with a spike peg to lock yourself into the sand a bit firmer.

Wipes & lens cleaner - Before, after and during my shoot I often check my lens to make sure there are no drops.

Always a good idea to also wipe down your lens, body and tripod after each seascape shoot. Salt condensation can build up over time and eventually damage your gear.







Execution

Hopefully you have done a little scouting the day before to have some idea on where you would like to do some nice compositions.

Bare in mind the tide will be different the next day which will greatly affect the mood of the shots. If you can arrive at least 45 minutes before sunrise this will give you time to settle and relax on your first set of shots.

Look For 3 Spots - I usually move every ten minutes to try and get at least 3 different perspectives. Don't be afraid to move around and challenge yourself to have a different interpretation of your environment.

Look For 3 Angles - Vary your tripod height, shoot in portrait or landscape format and lastly, choose a different focal length.

Look for 3 Methods - Every photographer has a different method of shooting a landscape. Below are 3 methods with and without filters.

Filters & Exposure

3 Types of Filters - In my camera bag I usually carry a soft reverse grad 3 stop, CPL, and a 10 stop filter. All used for different situations.

Generally speaking the soft grad 3 stop for a sunrise or sunset to separate the dark foreground from light horizon areas. The **CPL** is usually used in combination with the soft grad 3 stopper. This helps me to increase my shutter speed time and add more contrast to the shot.

The **10 stopper** is almost always used during the day with harsh light. This allows me to put sunglasses on my lens to get longer exposures for those silky smooth water shots.

Shooting without Filters - If you are an advanced user of photoshop or lightroom, then you should already know how to salvage and bring out details in dark shadows. More importantly always expose for the highlights. You can usually get away with one exposure.

Bracketing H.D.R. - A.K.A. High dynamic range is when you blend 3 different exposure values (i.e. +/- 3 stops) to have a composite of one shot when editing. Make sure not to move your camera between shots. It may be a little tricky to use this method as you will also need to know how to use photoshop for some advanced masking techniques.



Gear

You'll need a camera that allows you to shoot at slow shutter speeds – at least 30 seconds and preferably longer. Most DSLRs and high-end compact cameras offer good shutter-speed control with a 'Bulb' (B) mode that basically keeps the shutter open for as long as the shutter button is pressed.

To keep your shots steady, you'll need a sturdy tripod and a remote release. Better than a simple cable or remote release, a programmable intervalometer allows you to shoot time-lapse sequences and program exposures longer than 30 seconds in Bulb (B) mode.

If you're using a DSLR, check to see if your camera has a mirror lock-up option. This prevents the small vibrations that reverberate through the camera when the mirror slaps up and down.

You can use any lens for night photography but fast, wide angle lenses (16-24mm, 35mm equivalent) are the most popular.

A good headlamp will keep you from tripping over in the dark and help you see what you're doing while keeping both your hands free to operate the camera. I also recommend a strong LED torch to 'paint in' foreground details like trees and rocks.



Editing



If your images are well exposed and focused, you shouldn't have to do too much in post production.

If you are using a program like Lightroom, you'll find that small changes to contrast and white balance can make a big difference to the overall impact of the photo.

Noise is an issue with night photography as most shots are taken at high ISOs. Zoom in on the image and use the Noise Reduction sliders to clean up the image.

One of the challenges with night photography is creating images where both the sky and foreground are well exposed. One option that can be useful is to shoot two images; one exposed for the sky the other for the foreground.

As long as the camera doesn't move between shots, it is a relatively easy task to merge the images together in a program like Photoshop.



How To Shoot Astrophotography



When To Shoot

While you may be tempted to start shooting as soon as the sun goes down it's best to wait until the warm glow of twilight has completely faded. Generally speaking, you'll get the best clarity and contrast if you wait at least two hours after sunset and stop shooting two hours before dawn.

Winter is the best time to shoot the night sky in the Southern Hemisphere, as the air is cleaner and clearer and the stars appear brighter. Shooting while there is a quarter, half or full moon will introduce unwanted light to your images and make the stars appear fainter. Aim for a clear moonless night.

Where To Shoot

Light pollution is the number one enemy of star gazing, so seek out a location well away from cities and towns.

There are a number of tools you can use to work out where the stars will be at a certain location and time.

Stellarium (available for iOS and Android devices) shows an accurate 3D map of the night sky, based on the time you set, your GPS location and the orientation of the phone.

To find a specific star or constellation it's simply a matter of setting the date and time and panning the camera around until you see the stars you want to shoot.





Composition

You'll find it helps to plan your composition before the sun goes down so you can see what's happening around you.

Try to include a foreground element in the shot such as a tree, mountain, historic home or bush track.

Shots of stars by themselves can be interesting but if you can include other elements it's likely you will add more depth into the photo.

To add a dynamic feel to your photos, it's generally a good idea to avoid putting the horizon in the middle of the frame. Most images work better with the horizon placed on a third or quarter line.



Chapter 3

Street Portraits

People

People

People on the streets are obviously much easier to photograph in more populated areas like cities or large towns.

Within the genre of street portraits falls many other sub-genres such as environmental portraits, street portraits with and without permission and photo journalism to tell a story with a series of photos.

Social documentaries can help piece a narrative together. Some projects may take months or years and some may just be a day in the life of a person story.



5 Steps to Street Portraits

Most people shy away from the idea of even trying a street portrait. Fear is the biggest reason to avoid confrontation and rejection. It took me at least 100 times before I got comfortable with asking strangers or shooting without permission.

Here are some tips to get you started and push you out of your comfort zone. Legally speaking most democratic societies allow photos in public but ethically speaking it's your choice to make a decision if you would like to shoot without permission.

Always check the laws in each country. Always avoid confrontation and never argue with anyone you don't know or wishes to have their photo deleted. It's not worth the hassle and stress.



STREET PORTRAITS W/O PERMISSION

1. LENS CHOICE

Don't use a long zoom lens as you will be noticed and will appear to be a paparazzi. For your own safety best to appear as if you are not focusing on an individual but more of a group of people simply to capture the ambience of the place.

If people start to notice you too much then it will be difficult to capture something spontaneous. My favourite lens range is a 28-50mm lens. 28-35mm for a **photo journalistic** look and **50mm** for a classic **portrait** look.



2. BACKGROUND

Having a neutral background that draws the eye to your portraits main focus is important to add contrast and interest.

Busy backgrounds simply add and distract instead of minus and attract. Photography is the art of subtraction. Less is more.

Don't crop your photos when editing. Look at the edge of your frames for any unwanted elements. Crop the image tightly in your head and have clear intent with pressing the shutter. Bullseye!



3. LIGHTING

Lighting is paramount in this situation so look for nice soft light and a background that has contrast. Shooting with a shallow depth of field and having darker backgrounds always helps.

Look at what colour clothing they have and see how that adds to the contrast of the background. Nothing worse than seeing dark shadows under the eyes of your subject.

If they are squinting, then the light may be too strong. Even the subtle movement of a head one way or the other can change the direction of light. Watch closely.

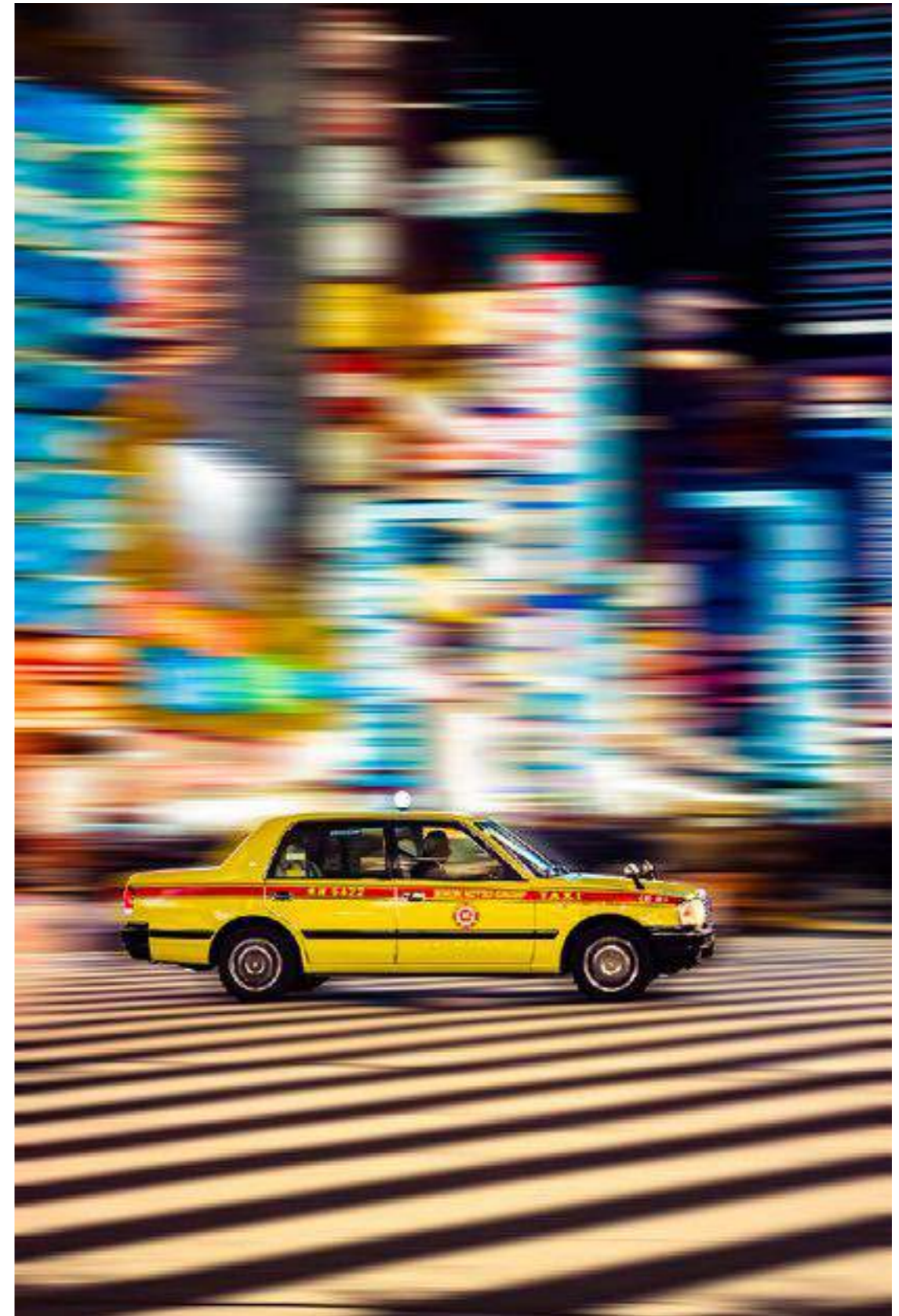


4. MOVEMENT

In most cases people will be moving in a busy place so best to manually control your shutter speed and set to a speed suitable to the effect you are after. You might consider panning with a slow shutter speed equivalent to the speed they are moving.

For example $1/30\text{th}$ - $1/60\text{th}$ for a fast paced walk to create a blurry background and a person moving in focus.

Alternatively, if you would prefer to keep your background and movement in focus then best to speed up your shutter accordingly to match the pace.



5. EDITING

When editing consider which two images may flow well together and whether or not to convert to B&W or leave in colour.

The colour grading you add on can also add a mood to the series. I often use Lightroom, Photoshop and Nik software in this order.

Shooting vertically and horizontally also gives me some choices when editing. If the eyes are not sharp I tend not to use them as a final cut. Emotion is the strongest driving force when choosing the best of the best.



STREET PORTRAITS W/ PERMISSION

1. SET UP

Before you approach a stranger to ask their permission it would be best to set up your shot both technically and creatively. You need to have a clear vision on your outcomes.

Depending on your lighting conditions at the time of shooting you may prefer to keep your subjects away from direct harsh light. Best to do a test shot with a friend or of the background without the subject in front.

Take accurate light readings and anticipate the subject will not have any blown out highlights on their face or the rest of their body. A location with the same magnitude of light evenly and softly spread is ideal for a portrait.



2. STYLE OR SERIES

Continuity or consistency in the lighting, message and concept can help thread or link together a series of photos to tell a story about a demographic such as the ones shown here.

A few words to accompany each series also adds more interest to explore a sub-culture, profession or type of person or style of fashion.

Sometime what they are wearing or how they act can teach us something about the people in their environment. Also known as an environmental portrait.



3. APPROACH

Pick your subjects properly and make sure your approach is polite, friendly and communicate clearly your intentions to avoid any rejection.

If someone is walking very quickly then it is obvious they are in a hurry and will probably be difficult to approach or get permission. Someone waiting for a friend or walking slowly might be more open to a quick portrait.



4. BODY LANGUAGE

Watch the body language and be quick to snap away on continuous shutter while you are asking questions.

Watch how they stand and how much or little you need to move in to shoot a head shot, waist up or full body shot.

Sometimes you might want to direct them to standing a certain way if the lighting is not quite right.

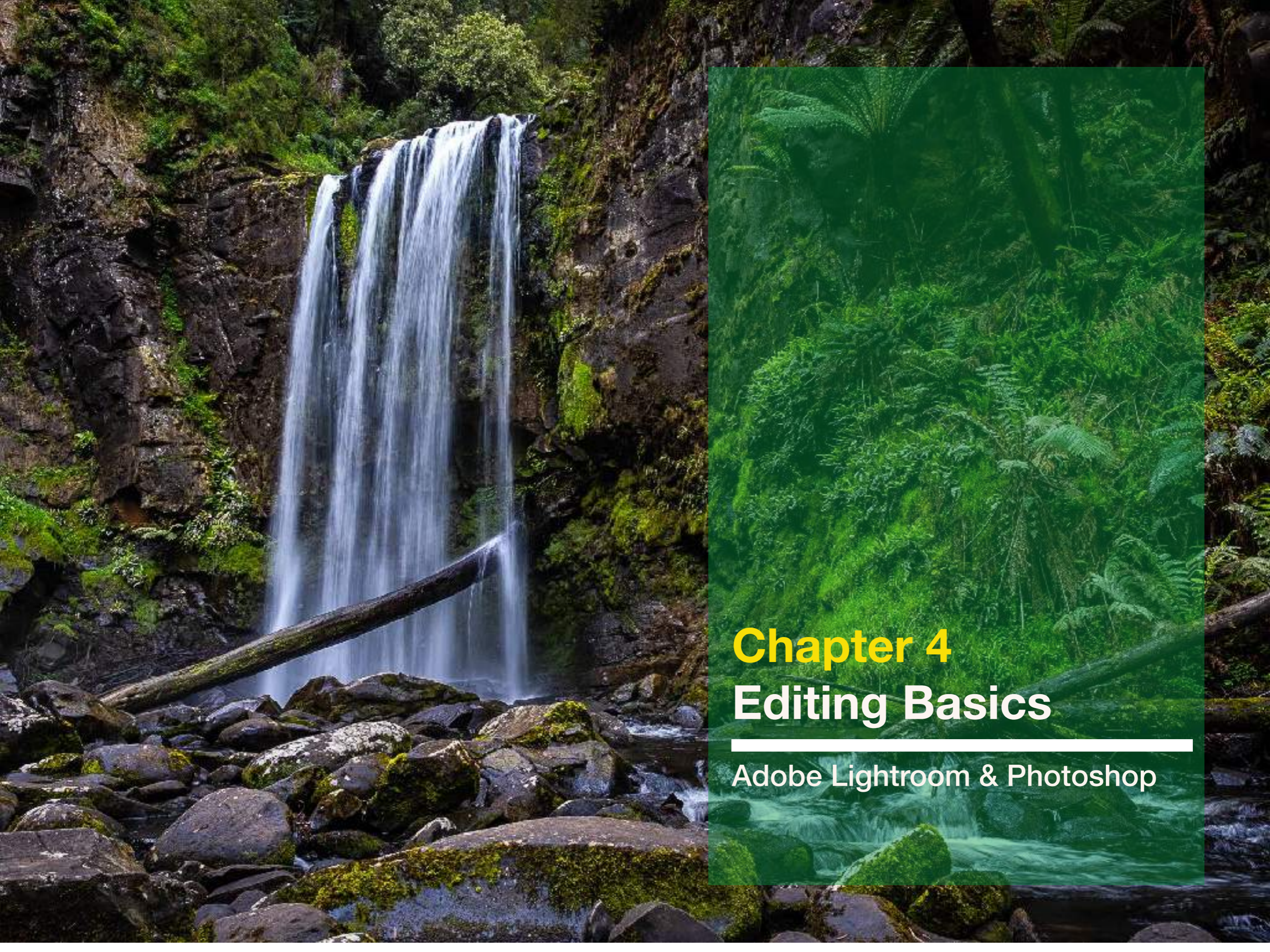


5. COMMUNICATION

Knowing the local lingo or having a translator on call is a definite plus. I never touch my subjects or direct them too much. I prefer to act out how I would prefer them to move their posture.

Sometimes by moving myself a certain direction they move with me. Best to keep things flowing spontaneously and most importantly the quicker you can get them to trust you and work with you, the easier and more natural their movements will appear.





Chapter 4

Editing Basics

Adobe Lightroom & Photoshop



2019 Vivid Light Festival - Image by Isaac Vorrieter

Adobe Lightroom Classic

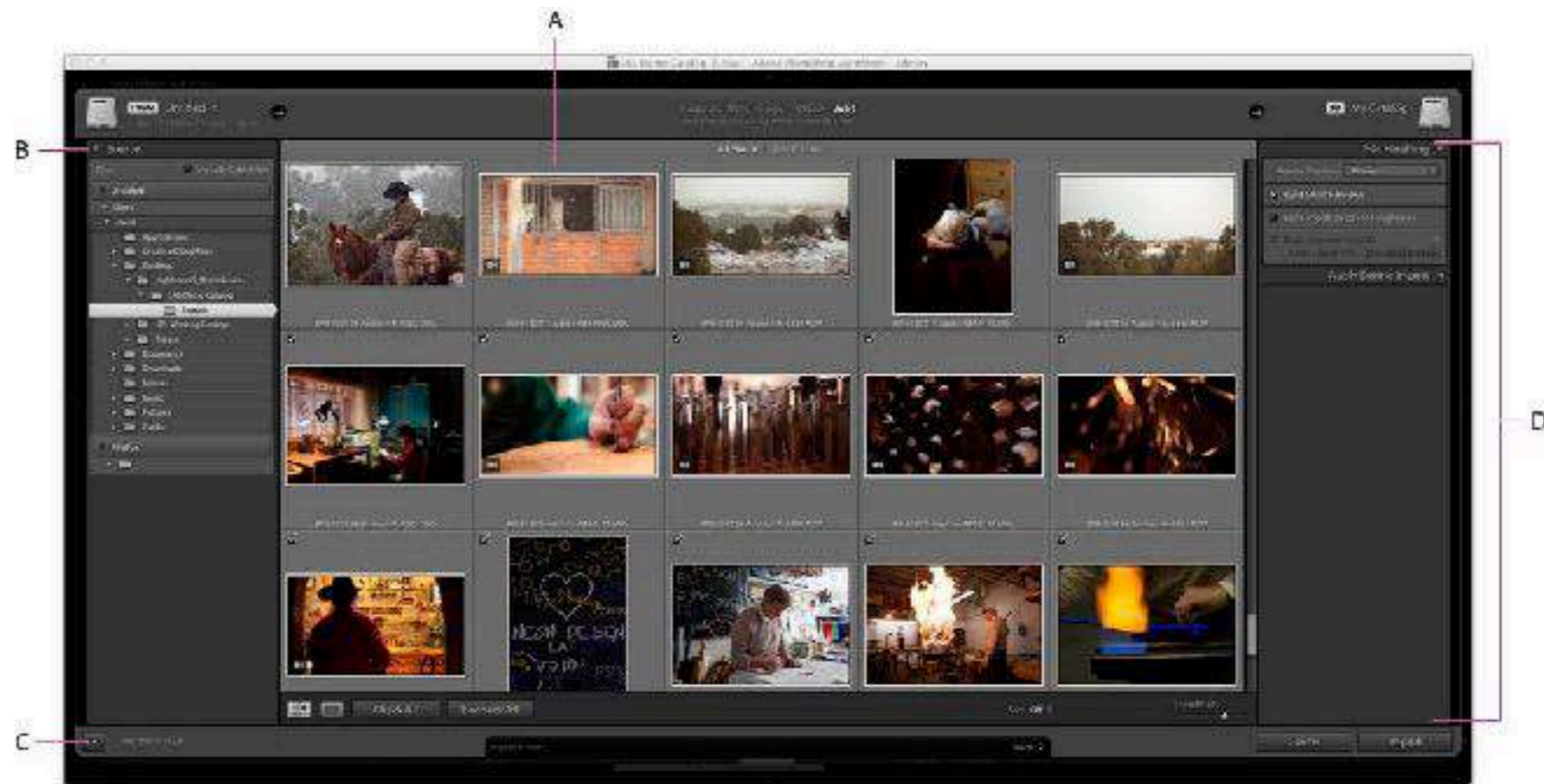
Basics

Import photos from a camera or card reader

Note: You're viewing help for Photoshop Lightroom Classic CC (formerly Lightroom CC). Not your version? View help for the all-new [Photoshop Lightroom CC](#).

When you import photos into Lightroom Classic CC, you create a link between the photo itself and the record of the photo in the catalog. In the case of importing from a camera or card reader, Lightroom Classic CC copies the photos to your hard drive and adds the links to the photos in the catalog.

When importing, you work from left to right in the import window. First, on the left, identify what files you want to import (the source files). Then, in the middle of the window, choose how you want to import them into the catalog (when importing from a camera or card, you copy them). Finally, on the right, specify where you want to store the files (the destination folder) and other options for the imported files.



The Lightroom Classic CC import window

A Preview area B Source panel C Toggle Minimal import D Options and Destination panels

Important: When importing for the first time, think through how you want to organize your photos and where you plan to store them before you start. Planning ahead can help minimize the need to move photos later and possibly lose track of them in your catalog.

Video tutorial: [Transfer photos to your computer](#)

[Video tutorial: Transfer photos to your computer](#)

Workspace basics

Note: You're viewing help for Photoshop Lightroom Classic CC (formerly Lightroom CC). Not your version? View help for the all-new [Photoshop Lightroom CC](#).

Lightroom Classic CC application workspace

Lightroom Classic CC is a complete toolbox for professional photographers, organized into modules.

Each module focuses on a specific portion of the photographic workflow: the Library module is for importing, organizing, comparing, and selecting photos; the Develop module is for adjusting color and tone, or creatively processing photos; and the Slideshow, Print, and Web modules are for presenting your photos.

Each of the modules in the Lightroom Classic CC workspace includes panels that contain options and controls for working on your photos.



The Lightroom Classic CC workspace in the Grid view

A Library Filter bar **B** Image display area **C** Identity plate **D** Panels for working with source photos **E** Filmstrip **F** Module Picker **G** Panels for working with metadata, keywords, and adjusting images **H** Toolbar

Develop module basics

Note: You're viewing help for Photoshop Lightroom Classic CC (formerly Lightroom CC). Not your version? View help for the all-new [Photoshop Lightroom CC](#).

The Develop module contains two sets of panels and a toolbar for viewing and editing a photo.

On the left are the Navigator, Presets, Snapshots, History, and Collections panels for previewing, saving, and selecting changes you've made to a photo.

On the right are the tools and panels for making global and local adjustments to a photo.

The toolbar contains controls for tasks such as changing between Before and After views, playing an impromptu slideshow, and zooming.

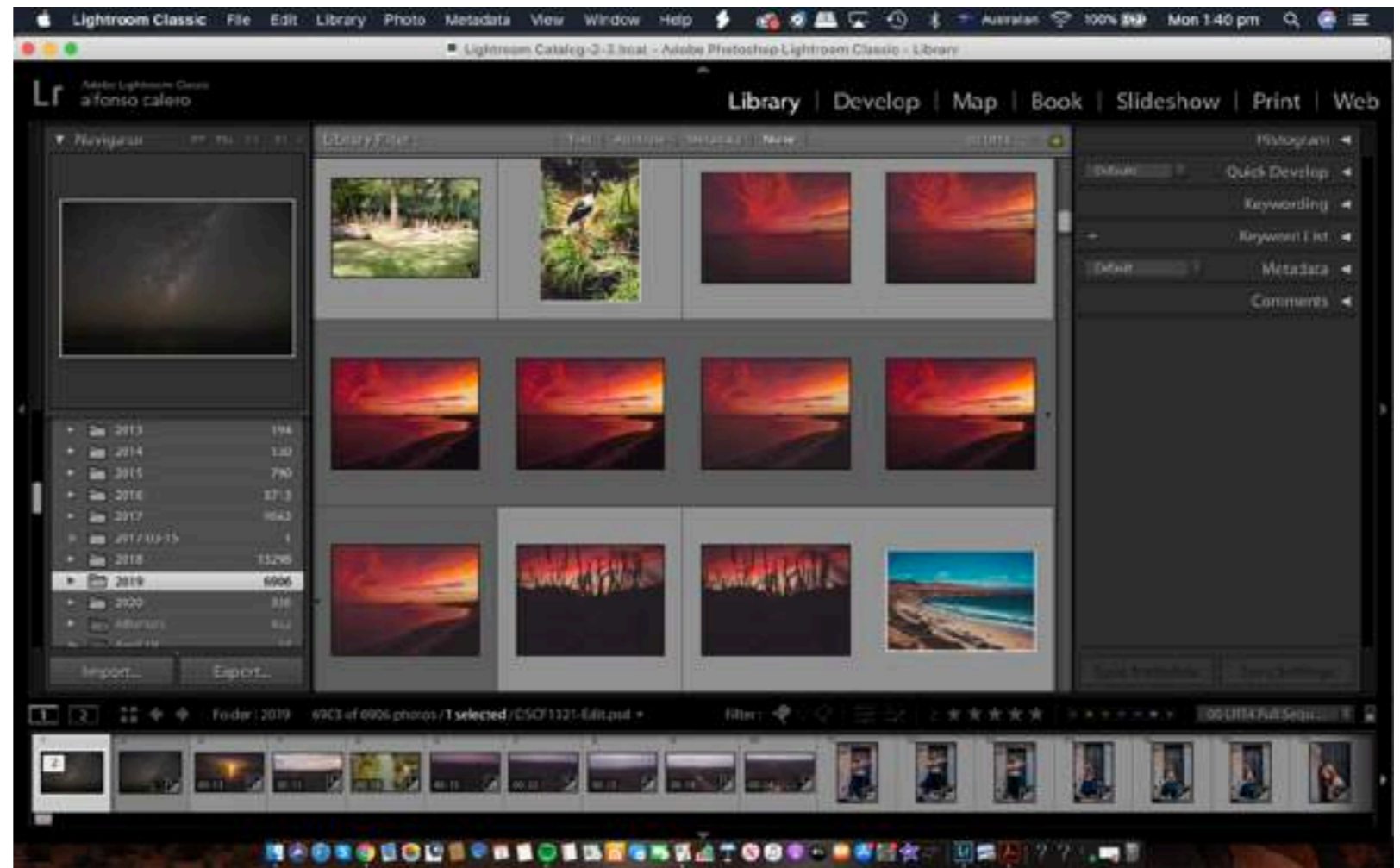


The Develop module

A Presets, Snapshots, History, and Collections panels **B** Toolbar **C** Histogram
D Photo information **E** Smart Preview Status **F** Tool strip **G** Adjustment panels

Module overview

- The Histogram panel in the Develop module allows you to measure color tones as well as make tonal adjustments to the photo.
- Additional information about the Smart Preview status of the photograph is displayed below the histogram/EXIF information/RGB values.
- The tools in the tool strip let you fix red eye, remove dust and spots, crop and straighten photos, and apply adjustments to specific areas of a photo.
- The Basic panel contains the main tools for adjusting the photo's white balance, color saturation, and tonal scale.
- The Tone Curve and HSL/Color/B&W panels contain tools for fine-tuning your color and tonal adjustments.
- The Split Toning panel colors monochrome images or creates special effects with color images.
- The Detail panel lets you adjust sharpness and reduce noise.



- The Lens Corrections panel lets you correct chromatic aberration and lens vignetting caused by the camera lens.
- The Effects panel lets you apply a vignette to a cropped photo, add a film-grain effect, or adjust the amount of haze or fog in a photograph.

- The Camera Calibration panel makes adjustments to the default calibration settings for your camera.



Editing

Software used: Depending on your skills in editing, 1 or 2 of these will be needed to get the most out of your shots. Most of my editing is done in lightroom and for more advanced tools, photoshop.

Always shoot in RAW not JPEG format to suck out the best tonal range available in your shots.

Lightroom - For basic editing of your images a slider is available to bring out the best detail in your highlights or shadows panel.

Blacks and whites can also be controlled to avoid blown out areas or areas that are too dark.

Photoshop /Luminosity Masking - If you have photoshop then a downloadable panel such as **TK** are worth having if you wish to seperate and have more tonal control of your images.

You will also need some knowledge of how to use photoshop and blend composite layers to achieve the best results.

Important: The following pages are for moderate level photoshop users.



2019 Vivid Light Festival - Image by Isaac Vorrieter

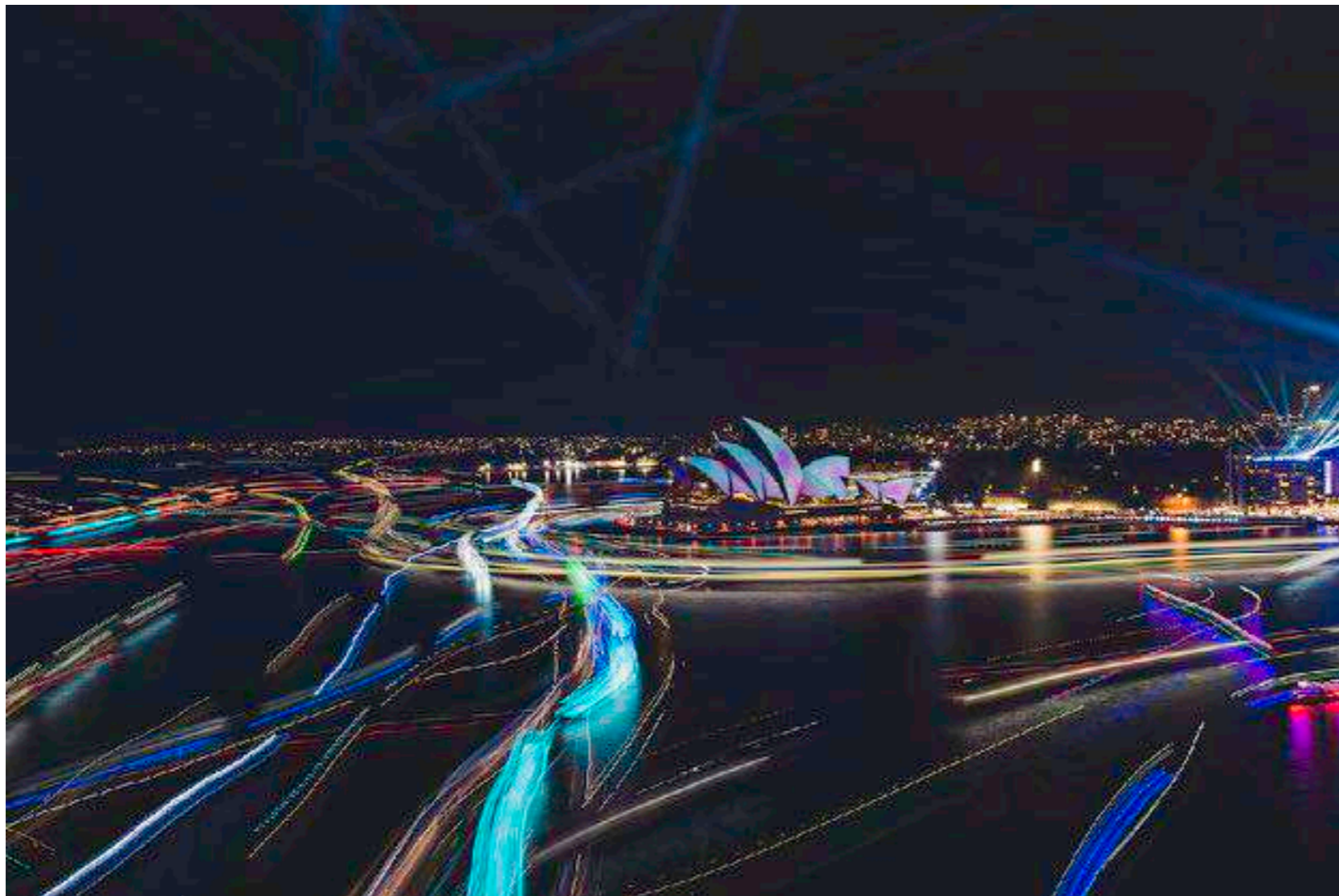
Adobe Photoshop

How To Do A Composite

Night Photography - 5 Best Tips

Ever wanted to blend a series of your best night shots but was not sure of the process. It actually is much more simple than you think. It's all about location, planning and great composition. Vivid light festival was the perfect venue to practice this effect.

Below are 5 easy steps to get your creative juices excited about night photography. The ideas are endless and the ambience at night is other worldly. As seen in the images above and below, I assisted my customers in editing these shots with the same 5 step process. 5



2019 Vivid Festival - Image by Maggie Hong

1. Make a Series

Goes without saying a tripod will be an essential tool. All your images need to stay in one position. Choose a tripod that is sturdy and has at least eye level height. There might be some locations that need to be higher than chest height because of railings, walls or fences.

Tripods that don't move too much with wind or ground movement will be advantageous as well. Once you have locked down on your ideal composition make sure there is a lot of movement in the scene.



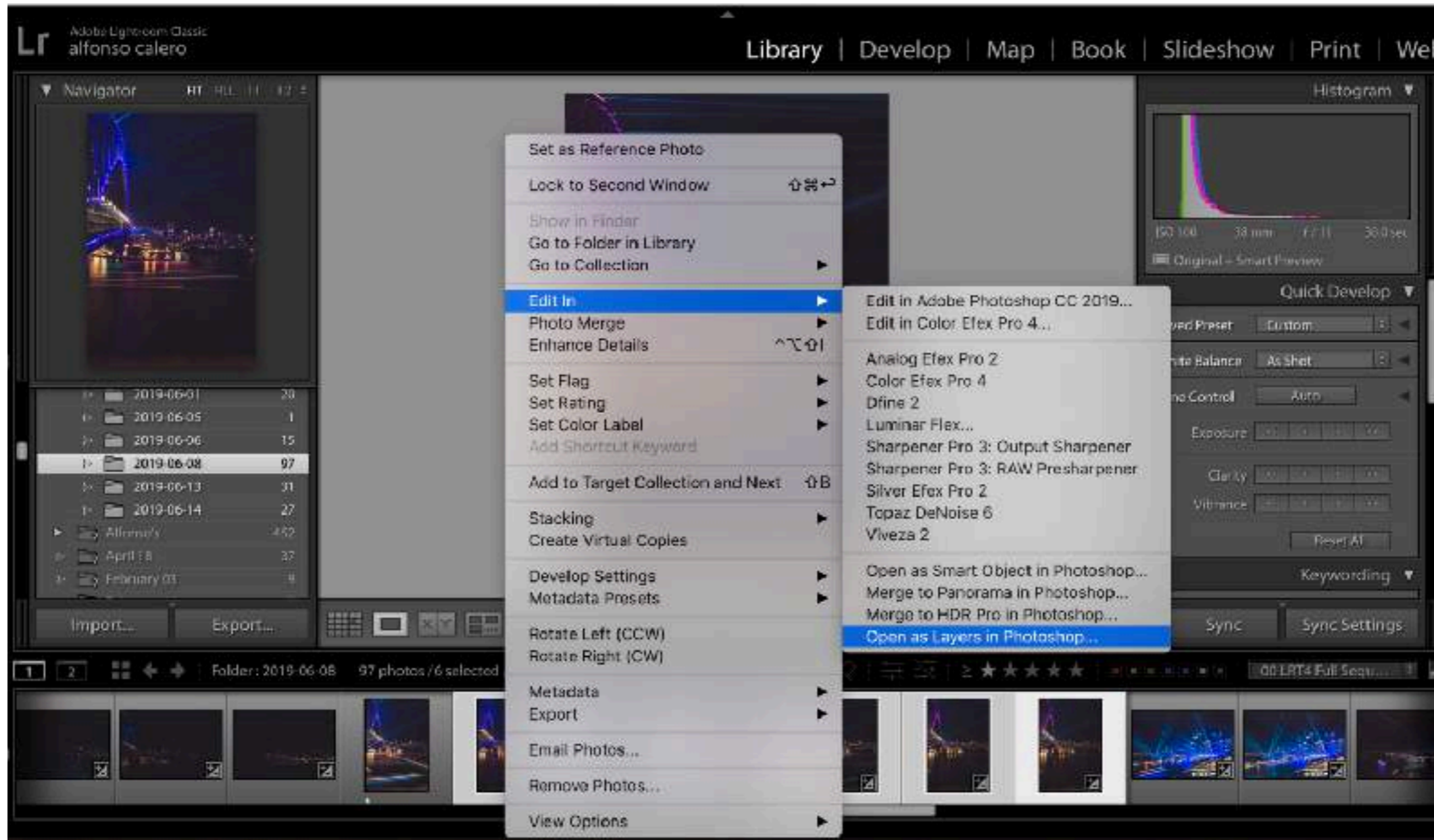
The image above was done with 10 photos. Each photo at 30 seconds, F11 on ISO 100. Every location will require some minor tweaking with one or more of the three base settings. When you scroll through your images to check the review make sure you have not moved your camera even a millimetre.

You can try different types of movement such as car trail lights in a busy location. Back red lights are always easier to work with than front white lights which appear blown out. If you wish to darken the road then a simple ramp up of F16-22 will work well.

If you have a 3 - 6 stop filter and cable release you can also increase your exposure time in bulb mode. Bulb mode allows you to shoot longer than 30 seconds. try up to 1 minute with a series of 5 - 10 shots. My favourite angle if accessible is from up high looking down on traffic.

2. Open As Layers

Once you have edited and chosen your best series of photos from the exact location, simply open them up as layers. I tend to use Adobe Lightroom first for all my editing and then I simply right click to open as layers in photoshop. It is important that whatever edits you do for your series that cropping is uniform for all of them.



Adobe Lightroom - Open As Layers



Tulip Farm (Wynyard, Tasmania)

Adobe Photoshop

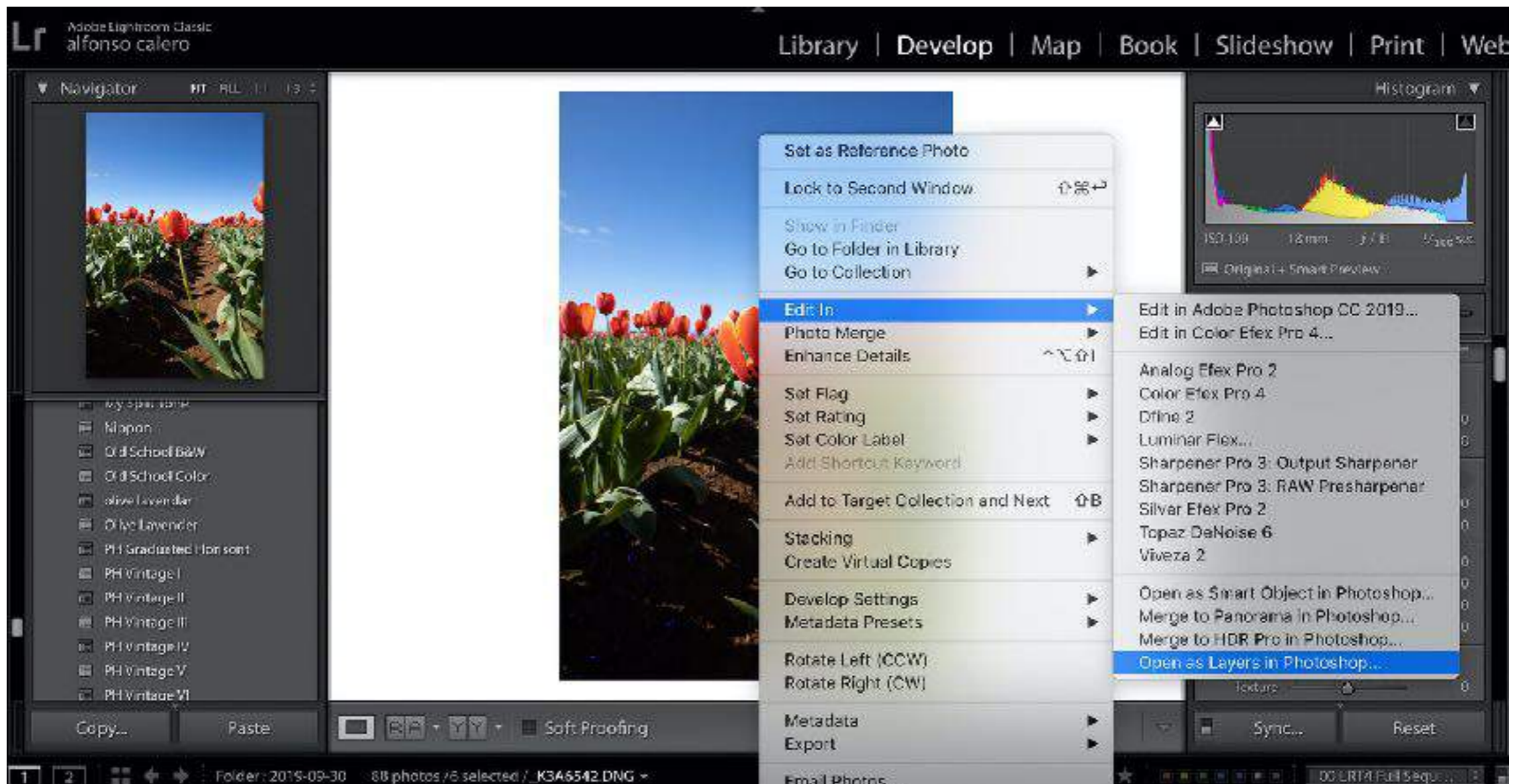
How to Focus Stack

What is Focus Stacking?

When you layer photos in **Photoshop** together at different focus planes to produce one image that is all in focus from the nearest subject to infinity.

Edited in Lightroom & Focus Stacked in Photoshop

Auto Align Layers



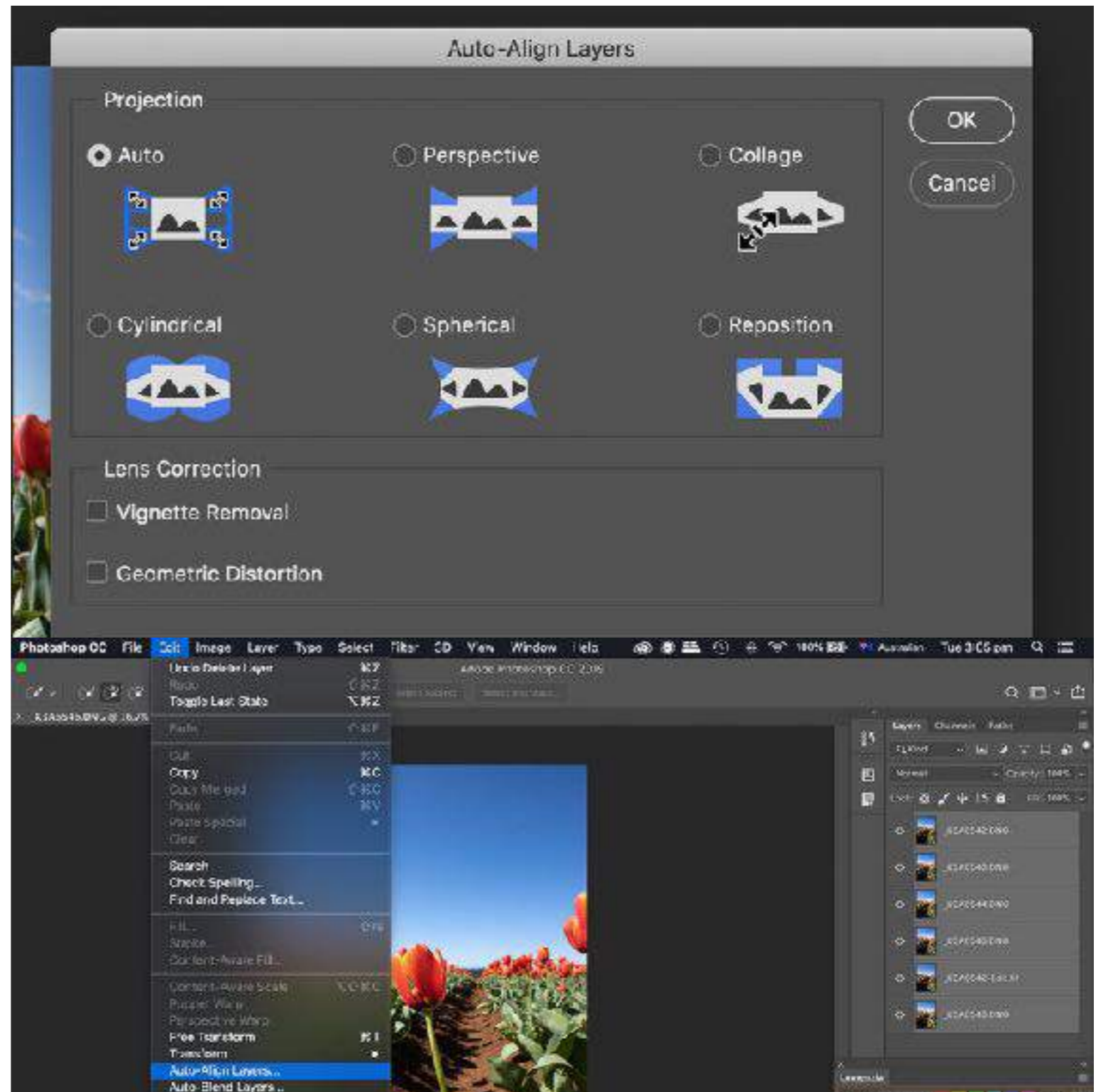
When Should I Focus Stack?

You only need to focus stack your images when you are too close to a subject and the mid & background is not in focus.

A perfect scenario is when shooting a flower close up in a landscape as seen the sample of a tulip field in Wynyard, Tasmania.

Edit > Auto Align Layers in Photoshop

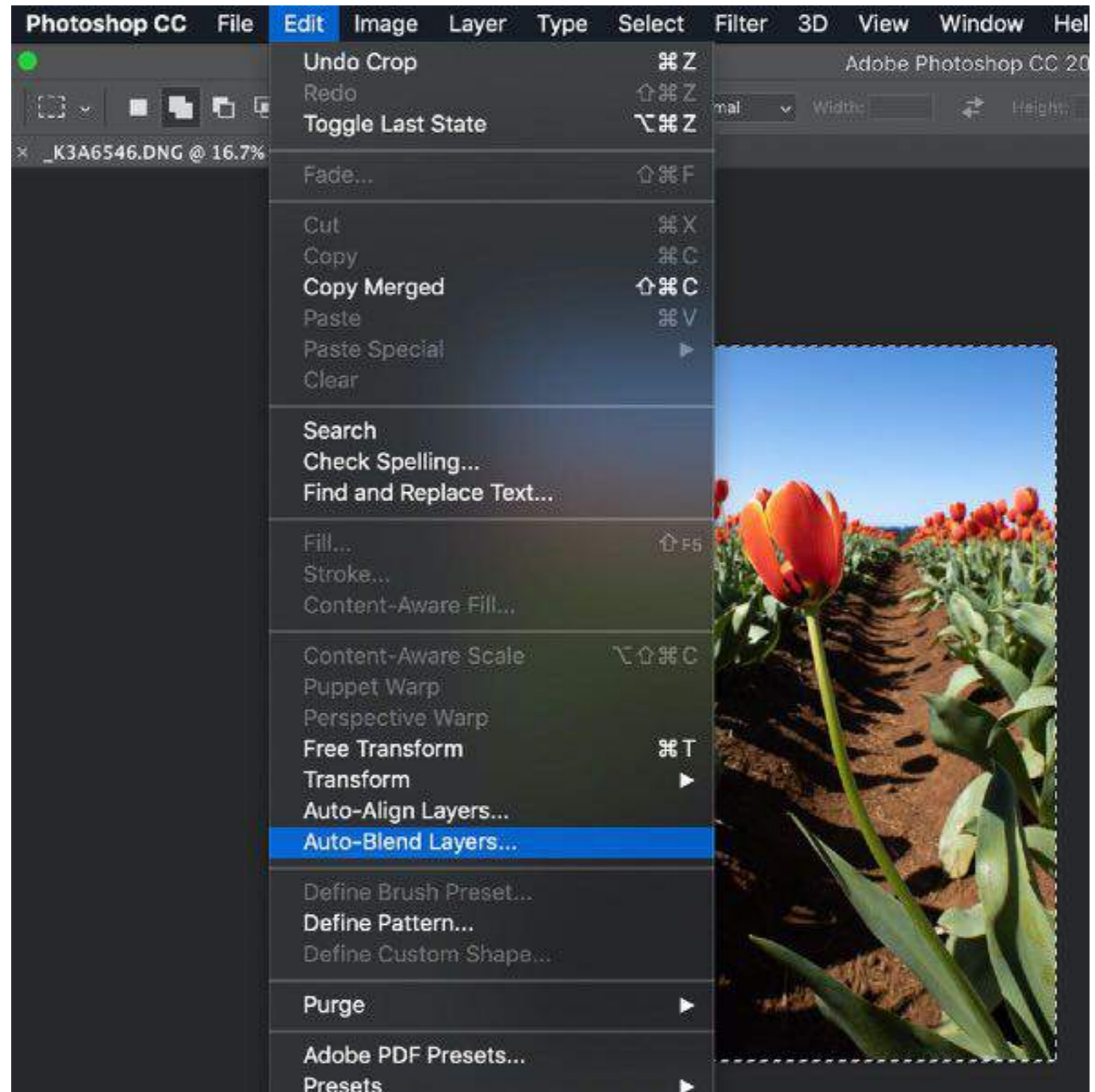
Auto Align Layers



How Do I Focus Stack?

Use a tripod and a wide angle lens (14 - 24mm lens range) Turn on your live view and focus on the nearest point by magnifying x 10.

Repeat the process at different planes of focus. Make sure you are also adjusting for any movement (flower in the wind) with a faster shutter speed.



How Do I Edit For Focus Stacking?

In Photoshop open up all the images as layers in Photoshop. Highlight all the layers and choose **edit > align layers**. Crop accordingly and choose **edit > auto blend layers (tick seamless tones & colours)** Flatten all your layers and WALA you have your focus stacked image.



Travel Kit

Fujifilm XT3 (Overseas Kit)

Lenses: 14mm (F2.8), 35mm (F1.4) Lenses

Canon EOS R (Australian Kit)

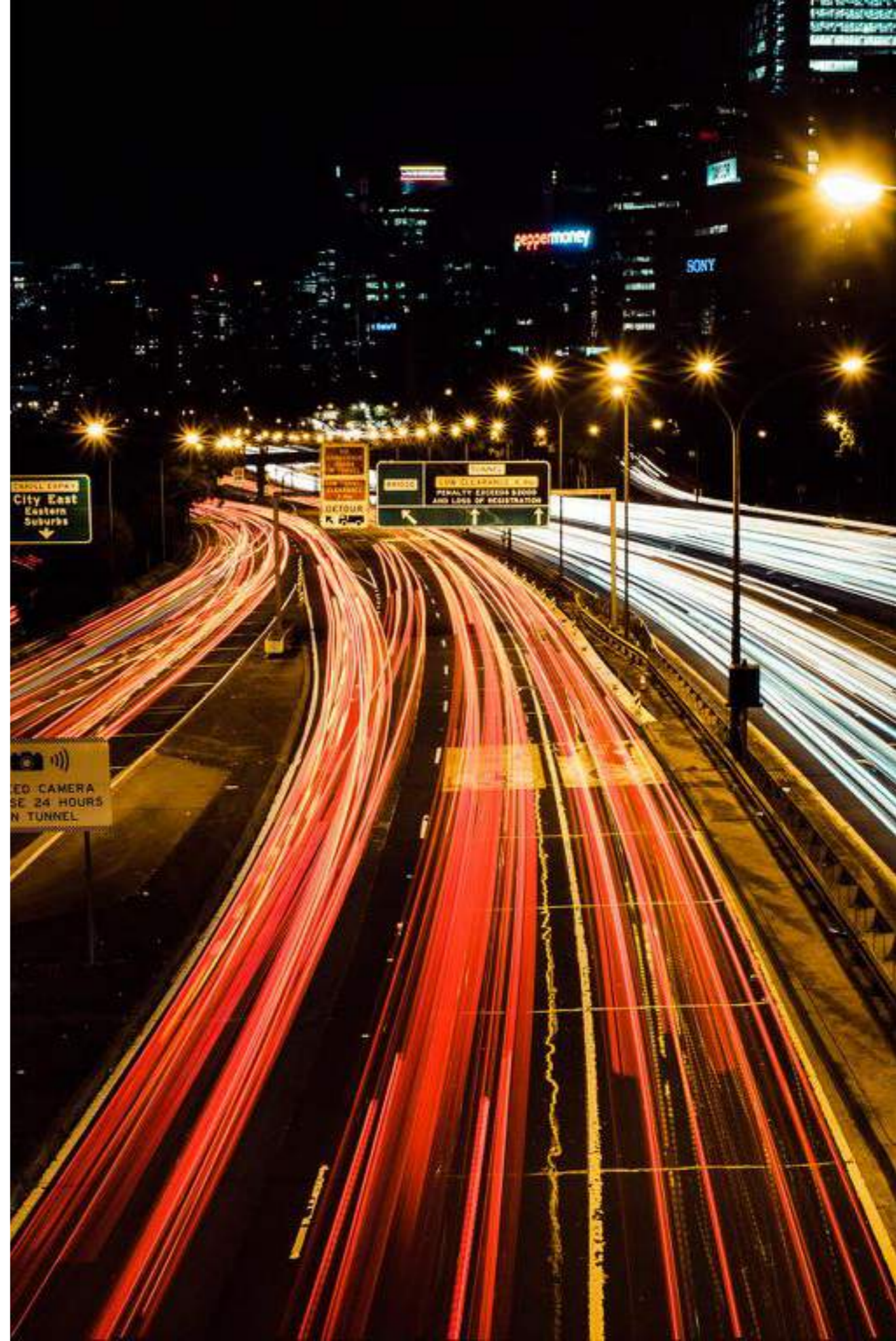
Lenses: 18mm Carl Zeiss Distagon (F3.5), 50mm (F1.2), 85mm (F1.2) 70-200mm (F2.8)

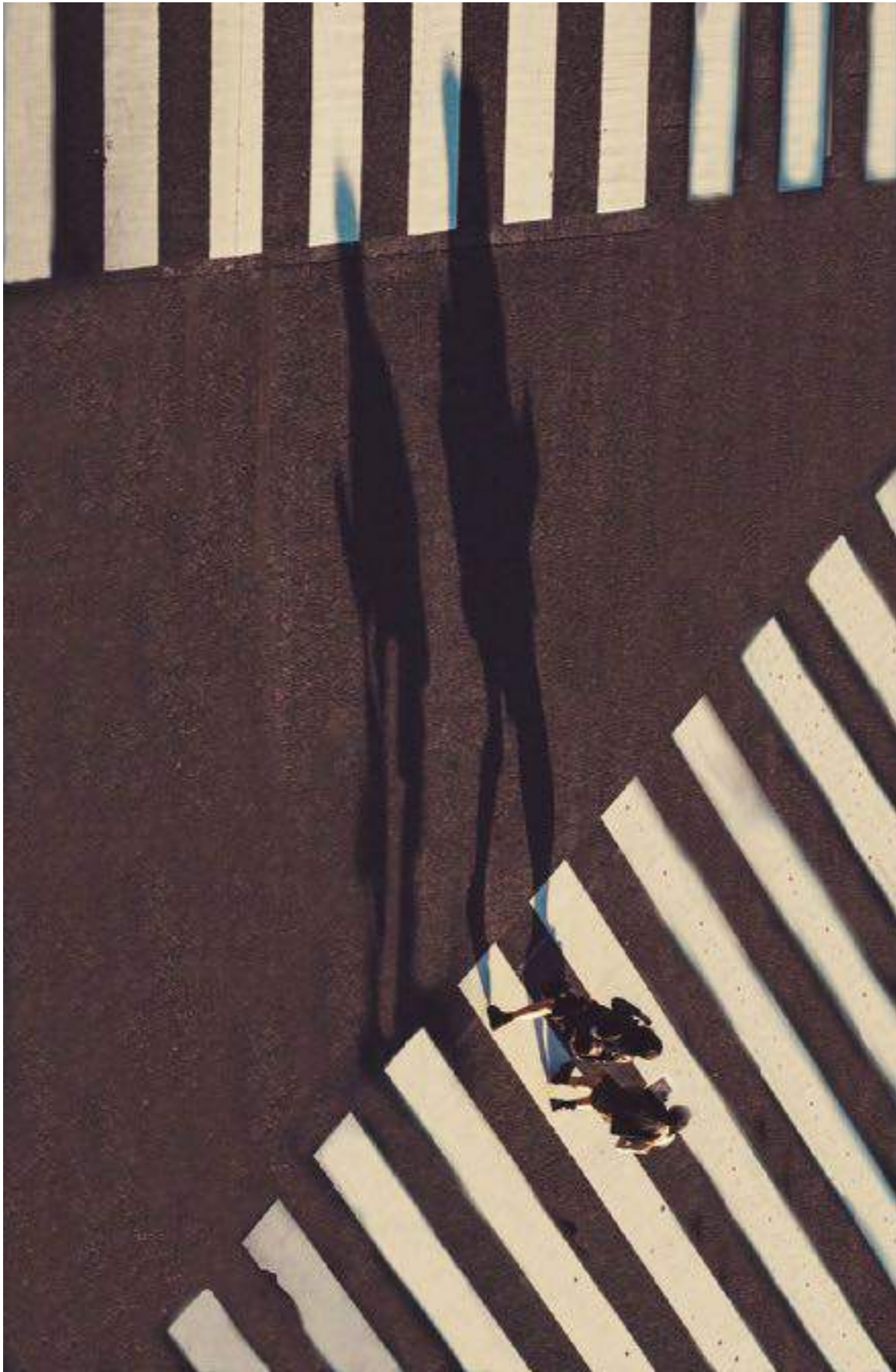
Filters: Breakthrough 6 stop filter, NISI Filters CPL, SOFT GRAD 4 Stop, 10 Stop,

Tripod: Sirui Carbon Fibre Tripod 024X

Software: Edited in Adobe Lightroom and Photoshop on 13 Inch Mac Book Pro with two external 2tb Seagate Passport sized drives.

Spare Body: Fuji XPRO1 or Canon 5D Mark III





7 Ways to Unlock Your Creativity

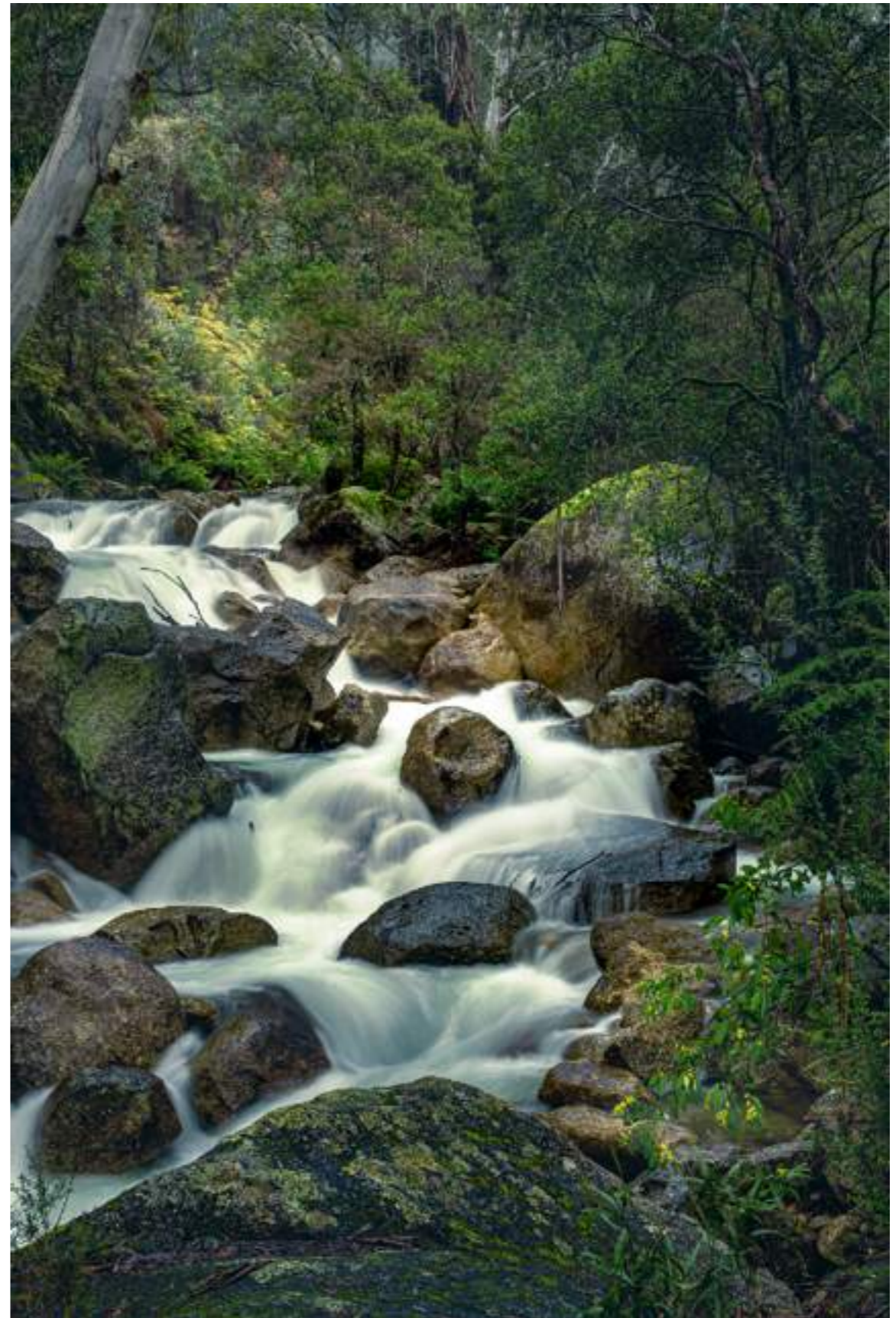
Let's be honest, regardless how creative you may be we all have our highs and lows. In the field of photography, creativity should be an essential part of why we started. Our passion needs to be unleashed. Here are some ways to help you unlock your creativity.

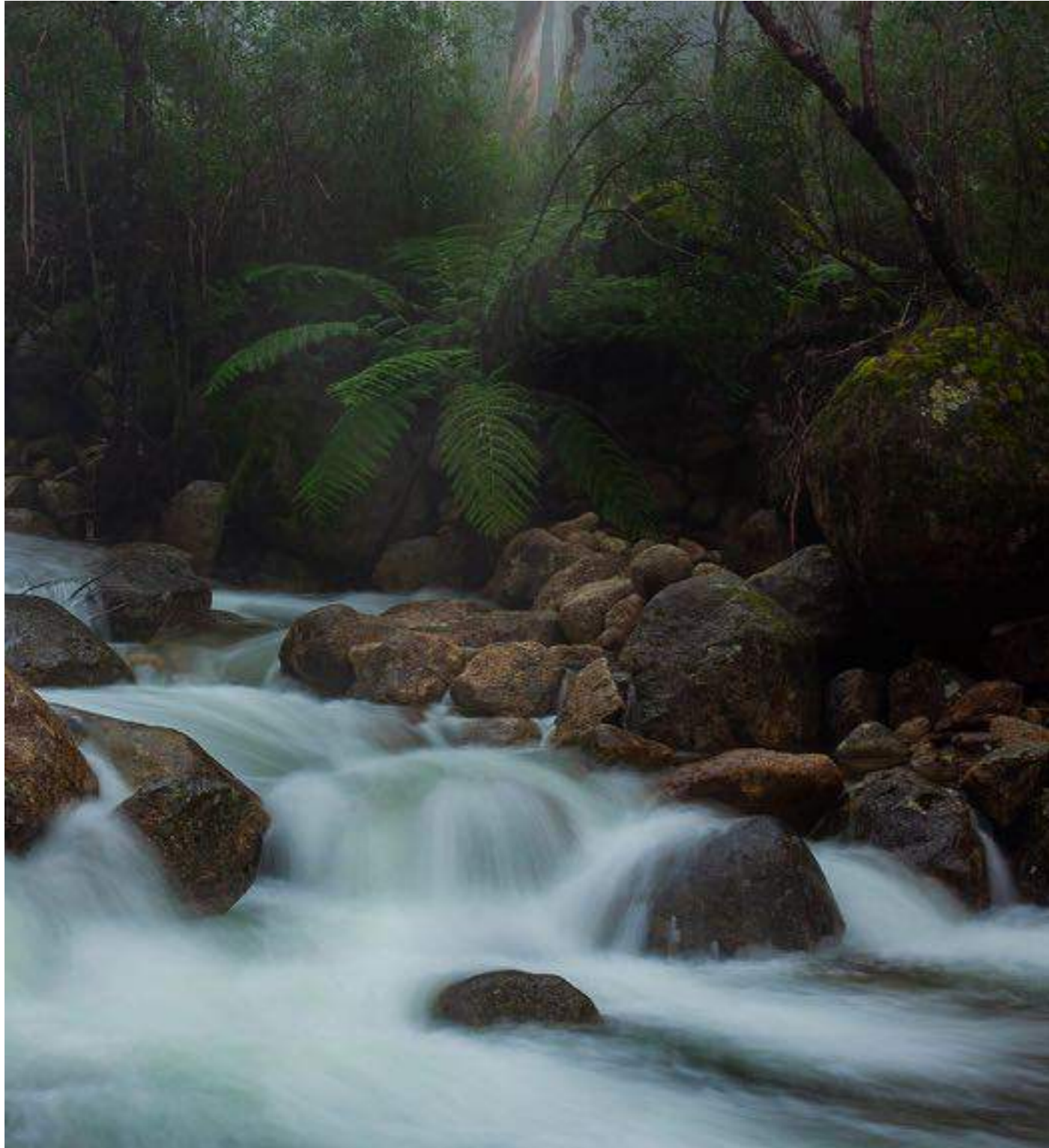
START A PROJECT

Create regular projects for yourself until a series or cohesive body of work emerges. If you had to put together six to ten of your best images, what would they be about? Is there a narrative that you wish to express? What genre of photography are you looking to utilize? Keep a journal of your drawings or written ideas.

I still have journals from years ago that I reference. The concept needs to be thought about properly. Merge your hobbies with your project. For example, I have combined my love of art, history, and culture. Why not try some new equipment or techniques for your project.

You will choose between found pictures (e.g., photojournalism) and created pictures (e.g., conceptual). If you are lucky you might even be able to combine found with created pictures. Adding a composite of images in editing might lead to a series. A large part of the process is the wandering mind and experimenting.





BE READY

Sometimes the best images are completely spontaneous. Half the skill is recognizing the special moments when they arise. Even if you don't see anything that particularly inspires you, try to get in the habit of shooting every day to improve your creative and technical skills. It takes hard work and discipline to get in the mood.

Find out if you are more creative early in the morning or late at night. Set yourself some creative challenges to explore for certain elements and principles in composition (i.e., look for texture and repetition of shapes).

Dreams, if you can remember them, are also a source of ideas. Salvador Dali, the surrealist painter, used to have an afternoon siesta with a paintbrush in his hand ready to paint.

PRE-VISUALIZE

What do you have to do to turn your idea into reality? What are the challenges and how can you solve them? Collect reference material. I enjoy using [Pinterest](#) to create my own mood boards for possible projects.

I love to explore different styles of painting and periods of art. For example, I enjoy dark and moody landscapes that have a melancholic feel. English Painter [Sidney Richard Percy](#) depicts what I am drawn to. Also,

I often use three books to check on photography and art: "[The Art Book](#)" by Phaidon Press, "[The 20th Century Art Book](#)," and "[The Photography Book](#)." Even though some of you may not have an interest in art, you have to admire a painter's ability to capture light and master composition.





CHANGE YOUR PERSPECTIVE

I am glad I have not deleted some old photos to edit them again differently. Travel is a great way to stimulate your creativity. Visiting a new country, eating something bizarre, or learning a new language are all simple steps to re-wire new pathways.

Experiencing a new culture and interacting with locals will surely give you a fresh perspective on life. In Claire Rosen's book "[Imaginarium](#)" she talks about [divergent thinking](#) and concepts that can come from a place, a person, an object, or an event to name a few.

Be playful with your ideas and try not to think too literal. Comedian Robin Williams [showed how this works best at 3:10 in this video](#).

SHOOT LESS, SHOOT BETTER

Shoot without looking at the preview, this will force you to be in the moment. This will also force you to concentrate more on your idea and not on technical data. Also, try to imagine that each shot is precious.

If you slow down and think about what you're doing, the number of images you shoot might go down, but the quality of your images will almost certainly go up. Turn off your preview mode while you are shooting a short 10-20 minute challenge.

If you still have a film camera why not shoot a roll or two. Set yourself a timeline to work through this exercise to brainstorm ideas. When editing your best shots look at them once to avoid being indecisive and being too self-critical. Go with your gut feeling and intuition to make quick choice.





TRUST

The only person you need to please is yourself. Don't let anyone tell you how or what to shoot.

Once you have an idea, follow it though to its conclusion. If there is someone else you trust and value their opinion, why not bounce your ideas off them? Collaborate with other artists who understand what you are trying to visually communicate.

De-construct your ideas for time and budget. Sometimes I feel a need to gain more skills in Photoshop as a digital artist. Other times, I may need more experience lighting subjects to convey an emotion I am not achieving. The whole journey of discovery takes time, patience, and perseverance.

UNDERSTAND YOURSELF

This seems like a logical step but it is one that is often overlooked. To get a basic understanding of psychology

I often read from experts like **Jeremy Dean** who focuses many of his articles on creativity. Over the last 20 years of using photography as a medium of my self-expression, it has been very gratifying to tap into my past as a source of inspiration.

I think of photography like a window to my subconscious memories. The end goal is to grow as a photographer and develop your skills and style to express yourself.

Regardless of the outcomes, I always find it a very healthy experience. Have you got other ways to get you ready for creativity?



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