

# PHOTOGRAPHY

## MASTERCLASS

### BUYERS GUIDE

THE LOWDOWN ON  
**THE TOURBOX**  
CREATIVE  
CONSOLES

### INSPIRATION

**AI WILL NOT KILL  
PHOTOGRAPHY**  
HERE'S WHY

### EXPERT GUIDE

**BEST HYBRID  
CAMERA**

*featured*

### **THOMAS DE FRANZONI INTERVIEW**

ITALIAN FINE-ART  
LANDSCAPE  
PHOTOGRAPHER

### EDITING

**EDITING A PHOTO IN  
LIGHTROOM + PHOTOSHOP ...  
ON AN IPAD**

### MASTERCLASS

**THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO  
OUTDOOR PORTRAITS**



# PHOTOGRAPHY

## MASTERCLASS

### MAGAZINE

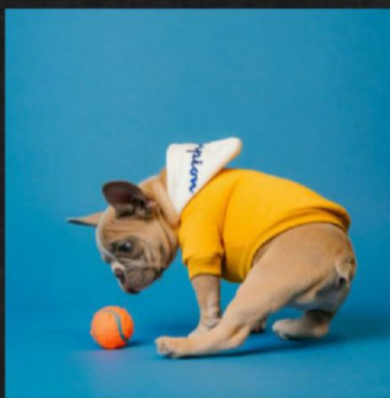


#### EDITORS:

Gill Roberts  
Kevin Roberts

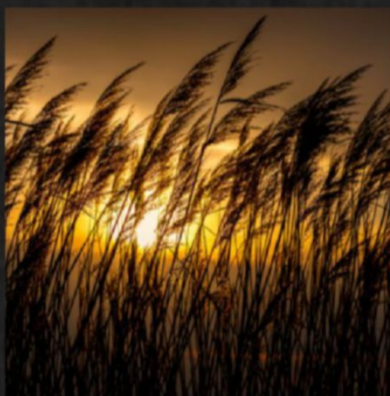
#### CONTRIBUTORS:

Jo Plumridge  
Ryan Sitzman  
Thomas de Franzoni  
School of Photography  
Glyn Dewis  
Tony Northrup  
Chelsea Northrup  
Jonas Høholt  
Mark McGee



#### COVER PHOTO BY:

Kateryna Hliznitsova



#### PHOTOGRAPHERS:

Joao Abm Yordanov  
Serralheiro  
Brian Ford  
Per Birkhaug  
Mj Oliver  
Allen Carroll  
Tom Arnhold  
Getty Images  
Semenay Erdoğan  
Kateryna Hliznitsova  
Frank Flores  
Jayson Hinrichsen  
Fellipe Ditadi  
Natalia Blauth  
Fatma Sarigül  
Ahmed Photography  
Diego Hernandez

Benjamin Chambon  
Carrie Borden  
Andre Benz  
Hasse Lossius  
Jared Rice  
Jay Soundo  
Karsten Winegeart  
Matsvei Liatkouski  
Michał Bińkiewicz  
Ramses Cervantes

Contact Details:

Email: [mail@photographymc.com](mailto:mail@photographymc.com)

Web: [Photographymc.com](http://Photographymc.com)

Facebook Page: [Facebook.com/PhotographyMasterclassMagazine](https://Facebook.com/PhotographyMasterclassMagazine)

Facebook Group: [Facebook.com/groups/PhotographyMasterclassMagazine](https://Facebook.com/groups/PhotographyMasterclassMagazine)

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# EDITOR'S NOTE

**W**elcome to this edition  
of Photography  
Masterclass Magazine

There's an undeniable magic to a well-executed outdoor portrait.

While the controlled environment of a studio offers precision, the great outdoors provides a dynamic, ever-changing canvas that can infuse your images with life, context, and a profound sense of authenticity.

Stepping outside means trading predictable strobes for the golden glow of sunset, plain backdrops for textured city walls, and static poses for genuine interactions with the world.

In this issue of Photography Masterclass Magazine we walk you through the

essential elements of planning, lighting, and directing, empowering you to embrace the elements and elevate your outdoor portrait photography.

Also in this issue, we have the pleasure of interviewing Italian fine-art landscape photographer Thomas de Franzoni, who creates quiet, atmospheric landscapes where silence and solitude take centre stage. Working with just a few carefully chosen elements, he turns familiar places into contemplative spaces that feel both fragile and immense.

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

Happy Shooting!



*Gill*



MESSAGE FROM GILL ROBERTS  
**THE EDITOR**

# EDITOR'S CHOICE

A Hand-Picked Selection of  
our Favorite Photos



**By:** Benjamin Chambon  
**Shot Details:** Sony a7 III, at 180mm,  
f/2.8, 1/800 sec, ISO 100  
[Instagram](#)





**By:** Andre Benz  
**Shot Details:** Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, at 50mm,  
f/1.2, 1/200 sec, ISO 1600  
[Instagram](#)



**By:** Hasse Lossius  
**Shot Details:** Fujifilm X100V, at 23mm,  
f/2.8, 1/1250 sec, ISO 160  
[Portfolio](#)



EDITORS CHOICE



**By:** Jay Soundo  
**Shot Details:** Sony a7R Mark IV, at 16mm,  
f/3.5, 1/320 sec, ISO 100  
[Instagram](#)





By: Matsvei Liatkouski  
Shot Details: Canon EOS R10, at 100mm,  
f/6.3, 1/500 sec, ISO 1600  
[Portfolio](#)







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# AI WILL NOT KILL PHOTOGRAPHY HERE'S WHY

THERE'S A GROWING FEAR, WITH CREATIVE CIRCLES ASKING, "WILL AI KILL PHOTOGRAPHY?" AFTER ALL, IF AI CAN CREATE A PERFECT FOREST SCENE, WITH AUTUMN LEAVES, LIGHT BEAMS, AND MISTY SUNLIGHT, WHY BOTHER GOING OUT TO CAPTURE IT YOURSELF?

## By School of Photography

**T**he truth is, AI won't kill photography. It might change it, challenge it, and even redefine how we work, but it will never replace the experience, passion, or creativity that drives photographers to pick up a camera.

In this article, we'll explore how AI is reshaping photography without replacing photographers, and why the art form remains as alive and human as ever.

## WILL AI KILL PHOTOGRAPHY? NOT WHEN PHOTOGRAPHY IS ABOUT EXPERIENCE

A rainy weekend in the New Forest offers a useful way to answer the question: will AI kill photography? The conditions are the kind photographers often dread, flat grey light, heavy cloud, and persistent rain, with none of the golden autumn glow so many people hope for. And yet, that's exactly why the point becomes clear.

AI can generate flawless, picture-perfect forest scenes in seconds. But it can't

recreate the experience of being there: the early start, the commitment to shoot regardless of the weather, the problem-solving around composition and light, and the satisfaction of making something work when conditions aren't cooperating.

In difficult light, the creative process becomes the reward. Limitations force photographers to draw on their knowledge and make deliberate choices. Even if only a small number of images from the weekend truly feel successful, the value is in the craft — and in the enjoyment that comes from earning the photograph rather than generating it.



*AI Generated Image*



*AI Generated Image*

## HOW AI IS CHANGING PHOTOGRAPHY — WITHOUT REPLACING IT

When people ask will AI kill photography, they're often really asking whether photographers will still be needed. The truth is that AI is changing the industry, but mostly by automating repetitive tasks and making certain types of generic imagery cheaper and faster to produce.

AI is influencing nearly every part of the photography world, from editing software to camera technology, but it's doing so in a way that enhances the craft, not replaces it.

### 1. AI-POWERED EDITING TOOLS THAT WORK WITH YOU, NOT INSTEAD OF YOU

AI editing software is getting smarter every month. Tools like Adobe Lightroom's AI Masking, Luminar Neo, and Topaz Photo AI use machine learning to select subjects, remove noise, and even enhance details automatically.

But these tools don't make creative decisions for you — you decide how far to push them. They free up time for photographers to focus on storytelling, color, and mood rather than tedious retouching.

**TSOP Tip:** AI should handle repetition, not imagination. Use it to save time, not to skip the creative process.

## 2. AI FEATURES IN CAMERAS ARE QUIETLY MAKING PHOTOS BETTER

Modern cameras — from smartphones to mirrorless systems — are already powered by AI. Features like subject detection, intelligent autofocus, and real-time scene recognition improve sharpness and exposure automatically.

But crucially, they don't remove the photographer's touch. Instead, they act like an assistant — refining the technical side so you can focus on the creative side.

Example: Sony's Real-time Eye AF, Canon's Deep Learning autofocus, and Apple's computational photography all use AI to help you capture the shot you envisioned — not a shot the computer chose for you.



### 3. AI ENHANCING PHOTOS FROM TRADITIONAL CAMERAS

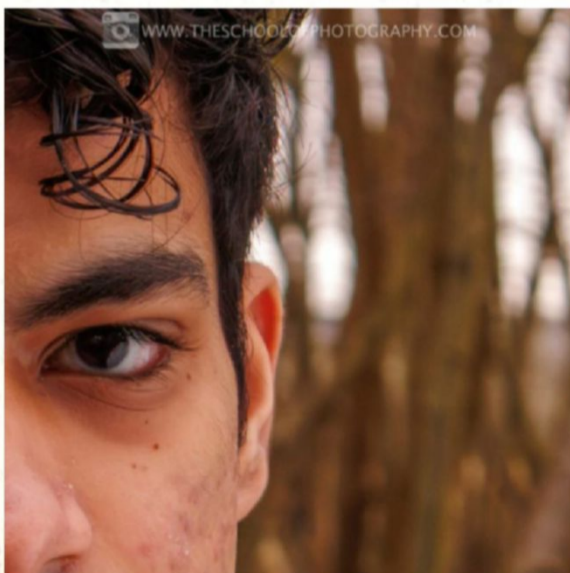
AI post-processing tools can breathe new life into images captured on DSLRs or mirrorless cameras. Whether it's denoising, sharpening, or color balancing, AI can enhance traditional images without stripping them of their authenticity.

A good example is Topaz Gigapixel AI, which upscales images while maintaining realistic texture — perfect for large prints or exhibitions.

The key is subtlety. The goal isn't to make the image look AI-generated, but to use AI to reveal details that were already there.



*Image with noise*



*Image with Denoise added in Lightroom*

### THE REAL RISK: STOCK PHOTOGRAPHY AND GENERIC IMAGES

There's one corner of photography where AI is disrupting fast, stock photography. If a company wants a generic forest scene or a product mock-up, they can now generate it with prompts in DALL·E, Gemini, or Midjourney in seconds.

That means photographers who rely solely on stock sales will find competition tougher than ever. But this decline didn't start with AI, it began years ago, when digital platforms and oversupply drove down prices.

Photography that relies on uniqueness, experience, and human connection, such as weddings, portraits, documentary, or fine art will remain irreplaceable.

### CREATIVITY CAN'T BE AUTOMATED

Photography is 50% technical and 50% emotional. AI might be able to mimic the first half — exposure, sharpness, color, but it will never replicate the second.

When you're out in bad weather, composing a scene, or waiting for the light to shift, you're part of a process that no algorithm can feel. It's this emotional connection that gives photographs their soul.

The same goes for teaching. Learning photography, experimenting, and improving through trial and error are all deeply human experiences. AI can offer suggestions, but it can't replace the mentorship and feedback that help photographers grow.

## AI IN PHOTOGRAPHY EDUCATION: LEARNING HOW TO USE AI WITHOUT LOSING YOUR STYLE

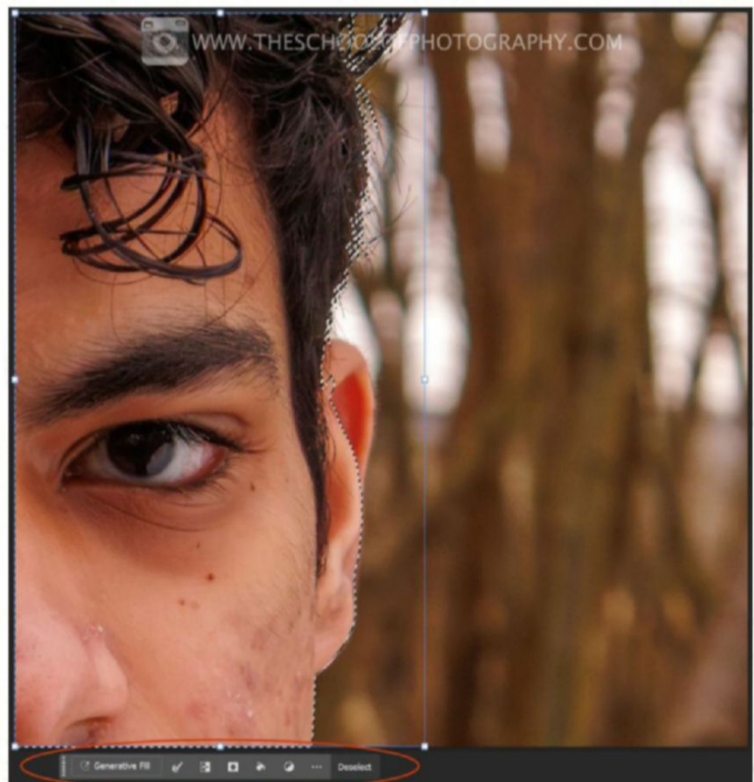
The question “will AI kill photography” also shows up in education — especially from beginners wondering whether it’s still worth learning camera skills. It’s arguably more important than ever to learn the fundamentals, because AI tools work best when guided by someone who understands light, composition, and visual intention.

Rather than being a threat, AI is increasingly becoming a practical learning tool for photographers. Used well, it can speed up repetitive tasks, simplify complex edits, and help photographers understand what’s possible in post-production — without removing the need for creative decision-making.

**TSOP Insight:** The future belongs to photographers who combine technical skill with creative thinking — and AI is just another tool in that journey.



*Using Object Masking to remove sections in Lightroom*



*Photoshop Generative Fill Panel*

## THE COMPANIES POWERING AI PHOTOGRAPHY

Several companies are leading the charge in creating AI software that complements professional photography rather than replacing it:

- **Adobe** – AI masking, Denoise, and Generative Fill features in Lightroom and Photoshop.
- **Skylum (Luminar Neo)** – Automated sky replacement, portrait retouching, and lighting enhancement.
- **Topaz Labs** – Industry-leading noise reduction and upscaling powered by AI.
- **ON1 Photo RAW** – Smart masking and adaptive AI adjustments.
- **NVIDIA Studio** – GPU-powered AI features for advanced rendering and editing.

These tools are designed to support photographers – not sideline them.

## THE PART AI CAN'T REPLACE

AI can speed up editing, generate ideas, and even produce convincing images on demand. But photography isn't only the finished picture, it's the decisions, the timing, and the interpretation behind it. Waiting for the right light, adapting to difficult conditions, choosing what to include (and what to leave out), and responding emotionally to a scene are all human inputs that shape the final photograph.

That's why photography will evolve alongside AI rather than disappear. The tools change, but the heart of the craft – the creative intent, personal vision, and storytelling – will stay human.



## CONCLUSION

So, will AI kill photography? No, but it will continue to change parts of the industry, particularly where imagery is generic, repeatable, and purely functional.

AI has changed photography forever, but not by killing it. It's a collaborator, not a competitor. When used wisely, AI tools help photographers work faster, push creative boundaries, and focus on what really matters: seeing the world through their own eyes.

So, the next time you hear someone say, "AI will replace photographers," remember this:

AI can create the picture, but it can't create the passion.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

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

# VIDEO: **AI WILL NOT KILL PHOTOGRAPHY!**

by THE SCHOOL OF PHOTOGRAPHY



There's a growing fear in creative circles that, "will AI kill photography?" is no longer a hypothetical question. After all, if AI can create a perfect forest scene, with autumn leaves, light beams, and misty sunlight, why bother going out to capture it yourself? The truth is, AI won't kill photography. It might change it, challenge it, and even redefine how we work, but it will never replace the experience, passion, or creativity that drives photographers to pick up a camera. In this video, we'll explore how AI is reshaping photography without replacing photographers, and why the art form remains as alive and human as ever.

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# BEST HYBRID CAMERA 6 CAMERAS FOR CREATORS, BEGINNERS & PROFESSIONALS IN 2026



## by School of Photography

**I**f you want to create great videos and great photographs without carrying multiple camera bodies and a suitcase full of lenses, you're looking for one thing: the best hybrid camera.

But choosing the right hybrid camera isn't easy. There are countless brands, endless specifications, and price tags that make you nervous about getting it wrong.

This guide simplifies the process. We'll break down six of the best hybrid cameras for professional and enthusiast use, explain what actually matters for video and photography, and help you decide which one offers the best balance of performance and value.

## WHAT IS A HYBRID CAMERA?

A hybrid camera is a camera designed to perform at a high level in both photography and videography. Unlike traditional cameras that prioritise still images, hybrid models are engineered to deliver professional-quality video alongside strong photographic performance.

While most modern mirrorless cameras can capture excellent photos, video places far greater demands on processing power, heat management, storage speed, and stabilisation systems.

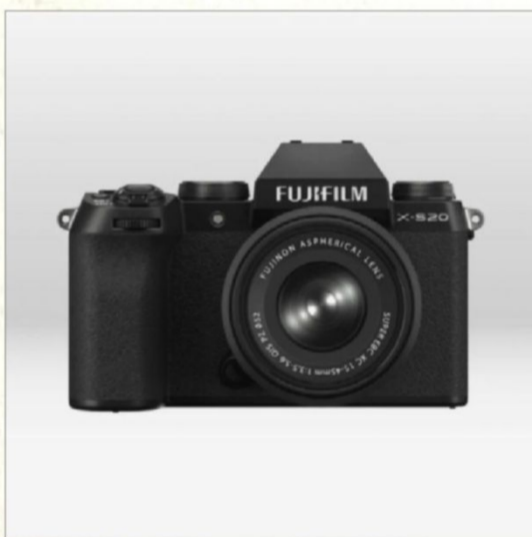
To be considered a true hybrid camera, it should offer:

- 4K resolution or higher (many now offer 6K).

- Frame rates such as 50 or 60fps for half speed motion.
- Frame rates that allow for ultra slow motion (100fps+).
- In-body image stabilisation (IBIS).
- Advanced autofocus tracking for moving subjects.
- Log recording and 10-bit color for flexible editing.

In short, a hybrid camera is built for creators who need one camera to handle both professional photography and serious video production without compromise.

If video matters to you just as much as photography, a purpose-built hybrid camera is essential.



*Fujifilm X-S20*



*Panasonic Lumix S5 II*



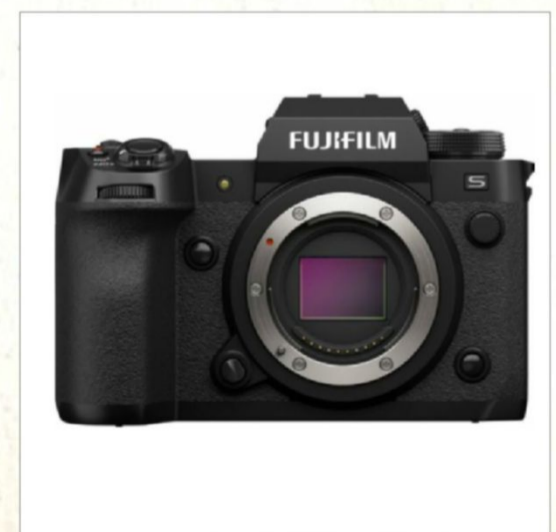
*Sony a6700*



*Nikon Z6 III*



*Canon EOS R8*



*Fujifilm X-H2S*

## THE 6 BEST HYBRID CAMERAS IN 2026

(All prices include a lens and are approximate prices at time of writing.)

### FUJIFILM X-S20 – BEST HYBRID CAMERA FOR CONTENT CREATORS

Approx. \$2,600 / £1,200 (with 15–45mm kit lens)

The Fujifilm X-S20 is one of the strongest entry-to-mid-level hybrid cameras currently available, particularly for creators who need strong video features without jumping into professional cinema budgets.

#### KEY SPECS

- 26MP APS-C sensor
- 6.2K open gate recording
- 4K 60fps
- 240fps slow motion (HD)
- 10-bit internal recording
- IBIS (in-body image stabilisation)
- SD card compatible

#### WHY IT'S STRONG

This is a camera designed with content creators in mind. The 6.2K open gate recording allows flexible cropping for YouTube (16:9), Instagram (4:5), and TikTok/Reels (9:16) without losing resolution.



*Fujifilm X-S20*

Fuji's film simulation modes are a major bonus. For creators who don't want to spend hours color grading, these profiles deliver cinematic color straight out of camera.

**It's also compact and lightweight, making it ideal for:**

- Travel creators
- Solo shooters
- YouTubers
- Hybrid photographers who film occasionally

### TRADE-OFFS

- The 15-45mm kit lens is basic
- No internal ProRes
- Slight crop at higher frame rates

### WHO IT'S BEST FOR

- Content creators
- Travel videographers
- Beginner-to-intermediate hybrid shooters
- Anyone wanting strong video specs at a reasonable price

### VERDICT:

One of the best value hybrid cameras right now.



*Fujifilm X-S20*



*Sony A6700 mirrorless hybrid camera with 18-135mm lens front view*

## SONY A6700 - BEST HYBRID CAMERA FOR AUTOFOCUS AND RUN-AND-GUN VIDEOGRAPHY

Approx. \$2,000 / £1,500–£1,600 (with 18–135mm kit)

Sony has built its reputation on autofocus — and the A6700 continues that legacy.

### KEY SPECS

- 26MP APS-C sensor
- 4K 60fps (no crop)
- 4K 120fps (1.58x crop)
- 240fps HD
- Real-time subject tracking
- IBIS
- Compact body

### WHY IT'S STRONG

Sony's real-time autofocus tracking is arguably the most reliable in this class. It excels in:

- Run-and-gun filming
- Weddings
- Events
- Sports
- Documentary shooting

The 18–135mm lens provides an incredibly versatile range, meaning you can often leave the house with just one lens.

## TRADE-OFFS

- Complex menu system
- Single card slot
- Smaller ergonomics may not suit everyone

## WHO IT'S BEST FOR

- Event shooters
- Wedding videographers
- Documentary filmmakers
- Hybrid creators who prioritise autofocus reliability

## VERDICT

If autofocus is your top priority, this is one of the best hybrid cameras available.



*Sony A6700 mirrorless hybrid camera with 18-135mm lens rear view showing flip-out screen*

## CANON EOS R8 – BEST BUDGET FULL FRAME HYBRID CAMERA

Approx. \$1,650 / £1,050 (with 24–50mm kit)

The Canon EOS R8 is one of the cheapest modern full-frame hybrid cameras on the market — and that makes it extremely appealing.

### KEY SPECS

- 24MP full-frame sensor
- 4K 60fps (no crop)
- 180fps HD
- 10-bit color
- Canon color science
- Excellent subject detection AF





## WHY FULL FRAME MATTERS

Full frame provides:

- Improved low-light performance
- Shallower depth of field
- More cinematic background separation
- For photography, this is particularly noticeable in portrait work.

## MAJOR DRAWBACK

No IBIS

If you shoot handheld video frequently, this is a serious consideration.

## WHO IT'S BEST FOR

- Hybrid shooters on a budget
- Portrait photographers who film occasionally
- Beginners wanting full frame
- Low-light shooters

## VERDICT

Arguably the best value full-frame hybrid camera currently available.

## PANASONIC LUMIX S5 II

### – BEST HYBRID CAMERA FOR VIDEO-FIRST CREATORS

Approx. \$2,600 / £1,500–£1,600 (with 20–60mm kit)

Panasonic has always leaned heavily toward video performance — and the S5 II reflects that.

### KEY SPECS

- 24MP full frame
- 6K open gate
- 4K 60fps (1.5x crop)
- 120fps HD
- Excellent IBIS
- Dual SD card slots
- Real-time LUT preview





## WHY IT STANDS OUT

- This camera is designed for serious videography workflows
- Log shooting
- LUT previews in-camera
- Strong stabilisation
- Backup card slots
- It's particularly appealing for creators working solo without a rig.

## TRADE-OFFS

- Autofocus not as strong as Sony/Canon

- L-mount lenses can be expensive
- Some pro features require paid unlock

## WHO IT'S BEST FOR

- Video-first creators
- Indie filmmakers
- YouTubers shooting log
- Hybrid shooters prioritising video flexibility

## VERDICT

One of the strongest hybrid cameras for video under \$3000 / £2,000.

## NIKON Z6 III – BEST PROFESSIONAL FULL FRAME HYBRID CAMERA

Approx. \$2,700 - \$2,800 / £2,000–£2,100  
(with 24–70mm kit lens)

The Nikon Z6 III is a serious tool for professionals needing balance between photography and advanced video.

### KEY SPECS

- 24MP full frame
- 6K recording
- 5.4K 60fps
- 4K 120fps
- Internal ProRes
- Dual slots (CFexpress + SD)





## WHY IT'S STRONG

This is a true hybrid — not photo-first, not video-first — genuinely balanced.

ProRes internal recording makes it suitable for:

- Commercial production
- Professional documentary
- Corporate filming

The dual card slot setup is also ideal for paid client work.

## TRADE-OFFS

- Expensive
- CFexpress cards increase cost

## WHO IT'S BEST FOR

- Professional wedding shooters
- Commercial videographers
- Hybrid freelancers
- Those needing redundancy and pro codecs

## VERDICT

One of the most complete professional hybrid cameras available.

## FUJIFILM X-H2S – BEST HYBRID CAMERA OVER- ALL FOR PROFESSIONAL VIDEO AND PHOTOGRAPHY (OUR TOP PICK)

Approx. \$3,700 / £2,600 (body + 18–55mm f/2.8 lens)

This is the most expensive APS-C camera in this list — but it delivers professional-level performance in a compact system.

### KEY SPECS

- 26MP stacked APS-C sensor
- 6.2K open gate
- 4K 120fps
- 240fps HD
- Internal ProRes
- Dual CFexpress Type B
- Excellent IBIS





## WHY IT STANDS OUT

The stacked sensor enables faster read-out speeds, reducing rolling shutter — crucial for video.

It combines:

- Professional codecs
- Compact size
- High frame rates
- Strong stabilisation
- It's used heavily in professional production environments.

## TRADE-OFFS

- Expensive
- Autofocus not as strong as Sony/Canon
- APS-C (not full frame look)

## WHO IT'S BEST FOR

- Professional hybrid shooters
- Production teams
- Serious content studios
- Creators wanting pro specs in a smaller body

## VERDICT

The best hybrid camera overall if budget allows.

## FAQS ABOUT THE BEST HYBRID CAMERA

### WHAT ARE THE TOP-RATED HYBRID CAMERAS FOR PROFESSIONAL USE?

For professionals needing both high-end video and strong stills performance, the top-rated hybrid cameras include:

- Fujifilm X-H2S
- Nikon Z6 III
- Panasonic Lumix S5 II
- Sony A6700 (for compact setups)

These offer 4K+ video, high frame rates, log profiles, and strong autofocus systems.

### WHICH HYBRID CAMERA BRANDS OFFER THE BEST VALUE FOR MONEY?

For value, the strongest contenders are:

- Fujifilm (X-S20) – strong video specs at a competitive price
- Canon (R8) – cheapest modern full-frame hybrid
- Sony (A6700) – strong autofocus and lens ecosystem

Value depends on whether you prioritise full-frame depth of field or compact portability.

### WHERE CAN I BUY RELIABLE HYBRID CAMERAS IN THE UK?

Reliable UK retailers include:

- [Wex Photo Video](#)
- Direct from brand websites

Always check warranty coverage and return policies before purchasing.

### WHERE CAN I BUY RELIABLE HYBRID CAMERAS IN THE USA?

Reliable US retailers include:

- [Adorama](#)
- Direct from brand websites

Always check warranty coverage and return policies before purchasing.

### WHAT ARE THE TOP HYBRID CAMERAS AVAILABLE FOR PHOTOGRAPHY BEGINNERS?

For beginners entering hybrid shooting:

- Fujifilm X-S20
- Canon EOS R8
- Sony A6700

These models offer strong automatic features, excellent autofocus, and room to grow without overwhelming complexity.

## HOW TO CHOOSE THE BEST HYBRID CAMERA FOR YOU

Instead of chasing specs, ask:

- Do you need full frame for shallow depth of field?
- Will you shoot handheld video (IBIS important)?
- Do you need dual card slots?
- 
- Do you want professional codecs like ProRes?
- How important is lens size and portability?

The best hybrid camera is the one that matches your shooting style — not just the highest spec sheet.

## CONCLUSION

Choosing the best hybrid camera doesn't have to mean spending the most money. It means finding the right balance between photography performance, video capability, portability, and budget.

Whether you're a content creator, wedding shooter, or professional filmmaker, there are excellent hybrid options available.

And once you've chosen your camera, the real journey begins — learning how to use it properly.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

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

# VIDEO TUTORIAL: 6 BEST HYBRID CAMERAS IN 2026

by SCHOOL OF PHOTOGRAPHY



Looking for the best hybrid camera for videography and photography? Here we compare top-rated models, features, value for money, and beginner-friendly options in this complete guide.

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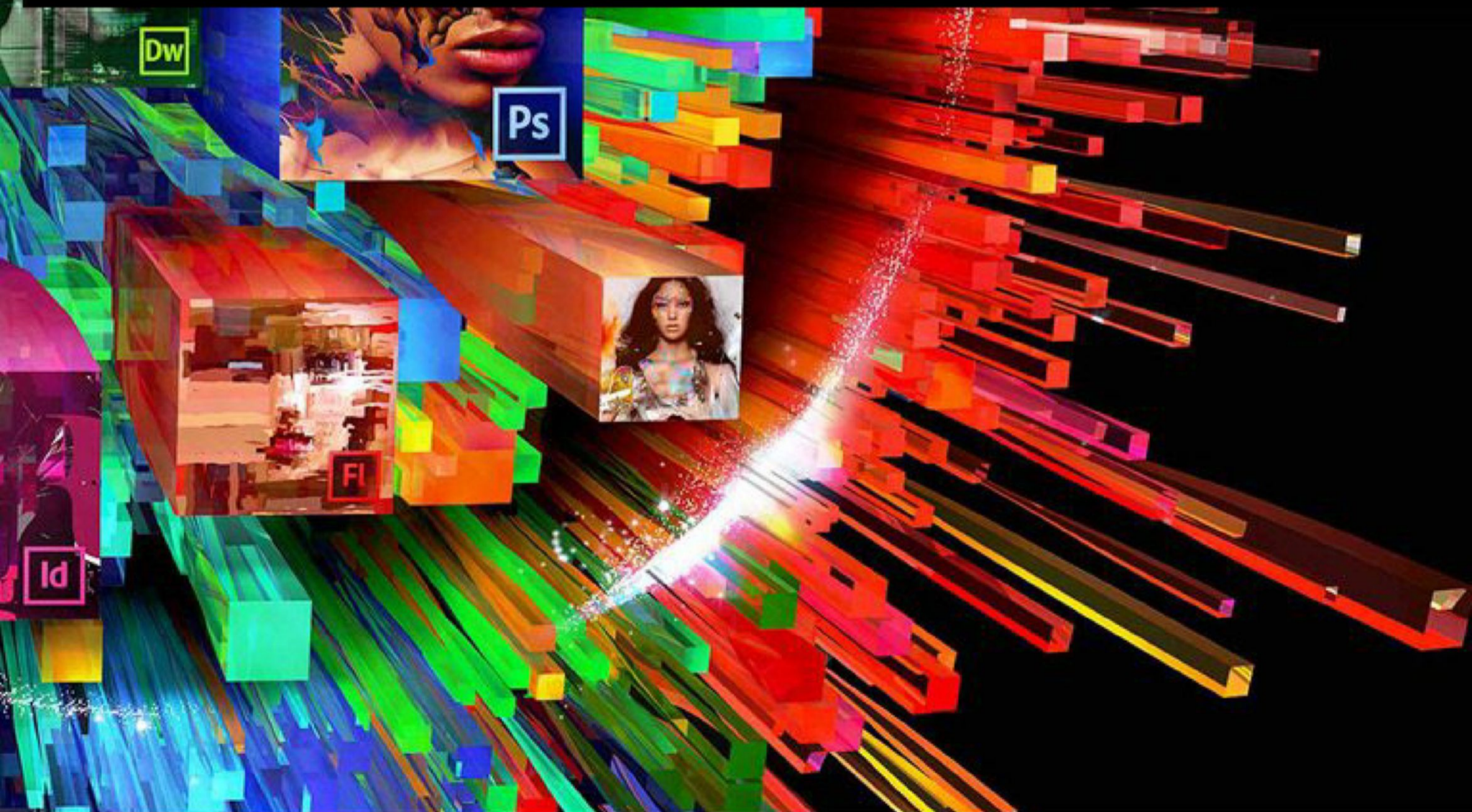


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# PHOTO EDITING:

Editing a Photo in Lightroom  
+ Photoshop ... On an Ipad



# VIDEO TUTORIAL: **EDITING A PHOTO** IN LIGHTROOM + PHOTOSHOP ... ON AN IPAD

by GLYN DEWIS

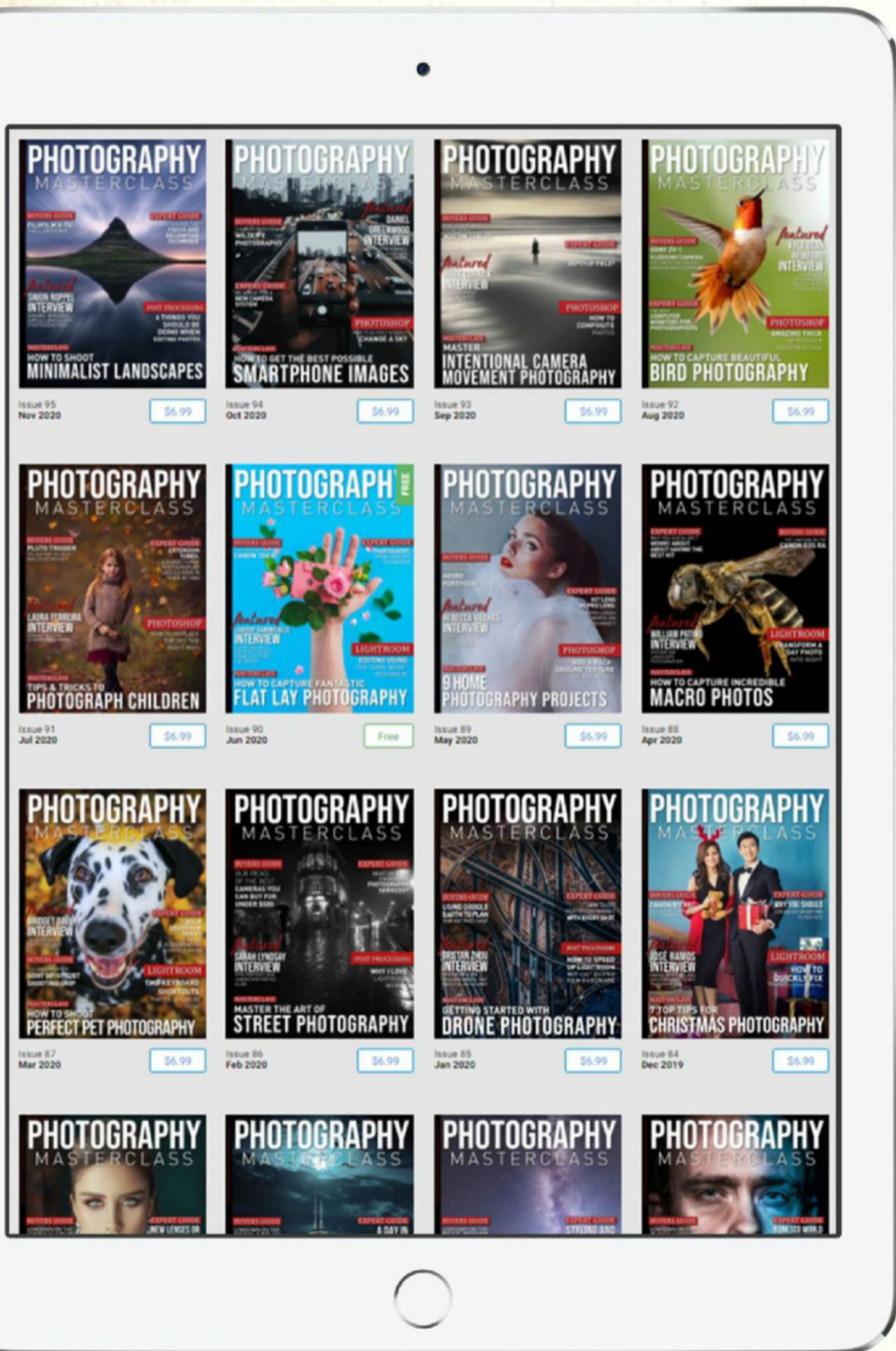


In this video I show how to edit a photograph in Lightroom and Photoshop on the iPad.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Glyn Dewis is a Photographer, Retoucher, Trainer and Photoshop World Instructor based in the UK. Working in both Studio and 'On Location' his main area of work sees him shooting Promotional and Commercial material for Musicians, Bands, Physique Athletes, Up and Coming Actors and other Industry Professionals. He also runs a series of workshops specifically concentrating on both Photography & Photoshop Compositing/Retouching Techniques. You can follow more of his work on his [website](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).

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MASTERCLASS

# MASTERCLASS **THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO** OUTDOOR PORTRAITS



By: Getty Images  
[Website](#)







**By:** Fellipe Ditadi  
**Shot Details:** Fujifilm X-T50, at 23mm,  
f/2.8, 1/320 sec, ISO 250  
[Instagram](#)



**By:** Kateryna Hliznitsova  
**Shot Details:** Nikon Z 7 II, at 69mm,  
f/2.8, 1/320 sec, ISO 320  
[Instagram](#)





By: Ahmed Photography  
Shot Details: Sony a7 IV, at 70mm,  
f/2.8, 1/100 sec, ISO 200  
[Instagram](#)







By: Frank Flores  
Shot Details: Nikon D750, at 32mm,  
f/4, 1/640 sec, ISO 100  
[Instagram](#)



# THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO MASTERING OUTDOOR PORTRAITS



*Photo By: Getty Images*

**T**here's an undeniable magic to a well-executed outdoor portrait.

While the controlled environment of a studio offers precision, the great outdoors provides a dynamic, ever-changing canvas that can infuse your images with life, context, and a profound sense of authenticity.

Stepping outside means trading predictable strobes for the golden glow of sunset, plain backdrops for textured city walls, and static poses for genuine interactions with the world.

This guide will walk you through the essential elements of planning, lighting, and directing, empowering you to embrace the elements and elevate your outdoor portrait photography.

## PLANNING YOUR SHOOT

The best outdoor portraits rarely happen by chance. They are born from thoughtful preparation. A successful shoot begins long before you press the shutter button.

### LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

Your chosen environment is more than just a background, it's a character in the story. When scouting locations, think about the mood you want to create.

Do you want the gritty, architectural lines of an urban landscape, the soft, organic feel of a wildflower field, or the calm expanse of a beach at dawn?

Consider how the textures, colors, and lines of the location will complement your subject's style and personality. Visit

potential spots at the time of day you plan to shoot to understand the light and identify the best angles.

### COLLABORATING WITH YOUR SUBJECT

The collaborative process is key. A pre-shoot consultation is invaluable for aligning your vision with your subject's expectations. Discuss the concept, share mood boards, and provide guidance on wardrobe.

Clothing choices should harmonise with the location - earthy tones in a forest, for example, or a bold color to pop against a neutral urban backdrop.

This conversation also builds rapport, helping your subject feel more comfortable and invested in the process.





Photo By: Getty Images

## TIMING IS EVERYTHING

Light is the backbone of photography, and its quality is dictated by the time of day. The most coveted light occurs during the "golden hours" - the first hour after sunrise and the last hour before sunset.

The low-angled sun provides a warm, soft, and flattering light that wraps beautifully around your subject. Conversely, midday presents the harshest challenge, with a high, direct sun creating strong, unflattering shadows under the eyes and nose.

If you must shoot midday, seek open shade. Don't discount overcast days as the sky can become a giant, diffused softbox, providing beautifully even and soft light that is perfect for portraits.

## ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT FOR OUTDOOR PORTRAITS

While your vision is important, the right tools will help you execute it effectively. You don't need to carry an entire studio on your back, but a few key pieces of gear are essential.

### THE CAMERA AND LENS TRINITY

Whether you use a DSLR or a mirrorless system, full-frame cameras generally offer the best performance in varied lighting conditions.

Your lens choice, however, has the most significant impact on the final look. A classic 85mm or 50mm prime lens, with a wide aperture like f/1.8 or f/1.4, is perfect for creating a shallow depth of field, beautifully blurring the background and making your subject stand out.

For more versatility and compression, a 70-200mm zoom lens allows you to work from a distance, which can help a shy subject feel more at ease.

## HARNESSING AND SHAPING LIGHT

Natural light is your primary tool, but modifiers are your secret weapon for perfecting it. A simple 5-in-1 reflector is the most valuable accessory for an outdoor photographer.

The silver side adds a bright, specular fill light; the gold side adds warmth; the white side provides a soft, neutral bounce; the black side can be used to add shadows (negative fill); and the translucent diffuser can be placed between the sun and your subject to soften harsh light.

For more power, a portable off-camera flash or strobe can be used to overpower the sun or add a dramatic pop of light.

## THE LITTLE THINGS THAT COUNT

Outdoor shoots can be unpredictable. Always pack extra fully charged batteries and empty memory cards. A lens hood is crucial for reducing flare when shooting towards the sun. A sturdy camera bag will protect your equipment from the elements, and bringing along a bottle of water and snacks for both you and your subject is a thoughtful touch that can keep energy levels high.

## MASTERING NATURAL LIGHT

Understanding how to see and shape natural light is the single most important skill in outdoor portraiture. It's a skill that blends technical knowledge with artistic side of photography.



## GOLDEN HOUR

During this magical time, you have several creative options. Position your subject with the sun behind them (backlighting) to create a beautiful rim light or halo effect around their hair and shoulders.

This separates them from the background and adds a touch of magic. You may need to use a reflector or a gentle touch of flash to bounce light back into their face. Allow some sun to spill directly into your lens to create artistic, hazy lens flare.

## TAMING THE MIDDAY SUN

When faced with the harsh, direct sun of midday, your first instinct should be to find "open shade." This is the area at the edge of a shadow cast by a building, a large tree, or an overhang. Here, your subject is out of the direct sun but is still illuminated by the soft, indirect light from the open sky. If shade isn't available, use a large diffuser held over the subject to create your own softbox, turning harsh light into a soft, flattering source.

## THE OVERCAST ADVANTAGE

A cloudy day is a gift. The clouds diffuse the sun, eliminating harsh shadows and providing a soft, wraparound light that is incredibly flattering for skin tones.

This even lighting allows you to focus purely on composition and expression without worrying about controlling highlights and shadows. The colors can be slightly cooler, but this is easily adjusted in post-processing or by using the gold side of your reflector for warmth.





## POSING AND CONNECTION

A technically perfect portrait can fall flat without a genuine human element. Your role is not just to take a picture, but to direct a performance and capture an authentic moment.

### BEYOND "SAY CHEESE"

Static, rigid poses often feel unnatural. Instead, give your subject actions and prompts. Ask them to walk towards you, fix their hair, laugh at a silly joke, or think about someone they love.

These small activities break the tension and lead to more authentic expressions and body language. The goal is to capture the moments in between the poses.

## INTERACTING WITH THE ENVIRONMENT

Use the location to your advantage. Have your subject lean against a textured wall, sit on a park bench, look out over a railing, or brush their hand through tall grass.

This interaction makes the pose feel more natural and grounded within the scene, enhancing the storytelling aspect of the image.

### BUILDING RAPPORT

Your camera can be intimidating. Put it down occasionally and just talk. Ask questions, listen to their stories, and make them feel seen and valued as a person, not just a subject.

A relaxed, comfortable subject will give you access to their true personality, which is the heart of any great portrait.

## COMPOSITION AND STORYTELLING

Composition is how you arrange the elements within your frame to guide the viewer's eye and tell a story.

### FRAMING YOUR SHOT

Look for natural frames within your location. Shooting through an archway, a cluster of tree branches, or a doorway can add depth and focus attention directly on your subject. This technique creates a sense of place and intimacy.

### LEADING LINES AND DEPTH

Use elements like paths, fences, staircases, or the edge of a river to create leading lines that draw the viewer's eye from the edge of the frame directly to your subject. This is a powerful tool for creating a dynamic composition and a three-dimensional feel in a two-dimensional image.

### THE POWER OF PERSPECTIVE

Don't be afraid to move. Get low to the ground and shoot upwards to make your subject appear powerful against the sky. Find a high vantage point and shoot down to create a more intimate or whimsical feel, showcasing the environment around them. Experimenting with your angle can completely transform the mood of the portrait.





## ESSENTIAL CAMERA SETTINGS AND FOCUS

The settings you use are going to be largely determined by the amount of available light and whether you have decided to add in any artificial light as well.

That being said, there are some core settings you should aim to use.

### APERTURE PRIORITY AND BOKEH

For portrait work, Aperture Priority (Av or A on your camera's dial) is your best friend. This mode lets you set the aperture while the camera automatically calculates a corresponding shutter speed for a correct exposure.

The main reason for controlling the aperture is to manage your depth of field, which is how much of your image is in focus. A wide aperture (a low f-number like f/1.8, f/2.8, or f/4) creates a shallow depth of field, resulting in a beautifully blurred background known as 'bokeh'. This effect is essential for making your subject pop from their surroundings, which is especially useful in busy outdoor locations.

### SHUTTER SPEED AND ISO

Even in Aperture Priority, you must keep an eye on your shutter speed. If it drops too low, you risk motion blur from either your own movement (camera shake) or your subject's.

A good rule of thumb is to keep your shutter speed at least 1/250s or faster for a stationary subject to ensure a crisp shot. If your subject is moving, you'll need to go even higher. This is where ISO comes in. ISO controls your camera sensor's sensitivity to light.

Start at your camera's base ISO (usually 100 or 200) for the cleanest image quality. If the light is low and you cannot achieve a fast enough shutter speed with your desired aperture, begin to increase the ISO.

Just keep in mind that higher ISO settings will introduce digital noise or grain into your image. The goal is to find the perfect balance, which is an aperture that gives you the desired bokeh, a shutter speed that freezes motion, and an ISO that keeps the image clean.

## THE EYES HAVE IT

Regardless of your lighting, location, or composition, there is one rule in portraiture that is probably the most important, and that is having the eyes as the focal point. They are the "windows to the soul," the anchor that draws the viewer in and creates a powerful connection.

If the eyes are out of focus, the entire portrait loses its impact. To ensure tack-sharp eyes, switch your camera to a single-point autofocus mode. Place this point directly over the subject's eye that is closest to the camera and lock focus before recomposing your shot, if needed. In good light, you will also notice "catchlights", which is the reflection of the light source in the subject's eyes. These small specks of light add a crucial sense of life and dimension, so pay attention to how your subject is angled toward the light to capture them.



## POST-PROCESSING FOR THE FINAL TOUCH

Your work isn't done when you press the shutter button. Post-processing is the final step where you refine the image and enhance the mood you set out to capture. The goal with outdoor portraits is not to create an artificial look but to polish the natural beauty of the light and the moment.

Using software (such as Adobe Lightroom, Capture One, Luminar Neo, Affinity or something similar) your initial focus should be on global adjustments. Start by correcting the white balance to ensure skin tones look natural and accurate.

From there, adjust the overall exposure and contrast to add punch and dimension. Use the highlights and shadows sliders to recover details that may have been lost in bright skies or dark areas of the frame.

Finally, consider color grading. This doesn't have to be extreme. A subtle

shift toward warmer tones can amplify the feeling of a golden hour shoot, while cooling the image can enhance the mood of an overcast day. The key is to be deliberate and tasteful, ensuring your edits support the story of the portrait without overpowering it.

## IN CONCLUSION

Mastering outdoor portraiture is a continuous journey of learning and discovery. It's about more than just settings and gear - it's about seeing light, connecting with people, and telling stories.

By planning thoughtfully, understanding the nuances of natural light, and building a genuine connection with your subjects, you can move beyond simple snapshots. So, step outside the studio. Embrace the beautiful unpredictability of the natural world and watch as your portraits come alive.



# VIDEO TUTORIAL: THE PHOTOGRAPHER'S GUIDE TO MASTERING OUTDOOR PORTRAITS

by Tony & Chelsea Northrup



Tony & Chelsea Northrup provide guidance on taking outdoor portraits using both smartphones and traditional cameras. It emphasizes that technique is more important than gear.

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

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

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# FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHER: THOMAS DE FRANZONI



Italian fine-art landscape photographer Thomas de Franzoni creates quiet, atmospheric landscapes where silence and solitude take centre stage. Working with just a few carefully chosen elements, such as a lone tree in fog, a narrow ridge beneath towering peaks, or a distant human figure, he turns familiar places into contemplative spaces that feel both fragile and immense. Favouring soft light and subtle post-processing, his restrained, minimal style has earned him significant international recognition, gallery exhibitions and a strong presence in the fine-art photography community.



***Photographic Speciality/Style:***

Fine-Art Landscape Photography

***How did your love of photography begin, and what eventually drew you toward fine-art landscape work in particular?***

My interest in photography began in 2018, initially as a way to explore and document the landscapes around me. I was immediately fascinated by the ability of a photograph to transform an ordinary scene into something emotional and contemplative. Over

time, this curiosity gradually evolved into a deeper artistic pursuit.

I found myself increasingly drawn to fine-art landscape photography because it allows me to go beyond simple representation. Rather than just showing a place, I try to interpret it - seeking silence, atmosphere, and a sense of introspection within the landscape. Minimal elements such as solitary trees, fog, and empty spaces became central to my work, helping me express mood, scale, and the quiet dialogue between nature and the human presence.



FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHER



WHERE LIGHT SLEEPS

**EMPIRE OF LONELINESS**

***Your landscapes feel quiet, minimal and very atmospheric. Where does your inspiration for these calm, contemplative scenes usually come from?***

My inspiration comes mainly from the landscapes that surround me and from the quiet moments I experience while observing them. Early mornings, foggy conditions, and empty spaces naturally create an atmosphere that invites contemplation. In those moments,

the landscape becomes almost silent, allowing emotions and subtle details to emerge.

I am particularly drawn to simplicity. By reducing the scene to a few essential elements, such as a solitary tree, a path, or a distant human figure, I try to create images that leave space for interpretation. My goal is not only to show a place, but to evoke a feeling of calm, solitude, and introspection within the viewer.



***Can you walk us through your typical creative process for your images – from the first idea or location, through shooting on location, to the finished photograph?***

My process usually begins with the choice of a location, often places I already know or landscapes I have observed many times. I like to return to the same areas repeatedly, waiting for the right atmospheric conditions (fog, soft light, or a particular season) that can transform the scene into something more evocative.

When I am on location, I work patiently and observe how the elements interact within the frame. Composition is essential, and I often wait for the right moment, sometimes including a small human presence to add scale and emotion to the scene.

The final stage happens during post-processing, where I refine the image while maintaining a natural and minimal aesthetic. I work carefully on tones and contrast, especially in black and white, to emphasize mood and atmosphere while keeping the image clean and essential.





**IT ALL STARTS WITH A LULLABY**

***You've received a huge number of international awards in recent years. Which achievement (or achievements) have meant the most to you personally, and why?***

Receiving international recognition has been a great honor, but what means the most to me is seeing my work appreciated within the fine-art photography community. Being selected and awarded in international competitions confirmed

that the quiet, minimal language I try to express through my images is able to resonate with people from different cultures and backgrounds.

Equally important have been the opportunities to exhibit my work in galleries and be featured in magazines. These moments allow the photographs to move beyond the screen and become part of a real dialogue with viewers, which for me is one of the most meaningful aspects of being a photographer.



***What's your favorite photograph you've ever taken, and what is the story behind it?***

***Untouchable*** (which you can see below) represents a decisive moment in my exploration of scale, solitude, and the relationship between human presence and overwhelming natural forces.

The image portrays a lone figure standing on a narrow ridge, dwarfed by

monumental mountain formations rising dramatically in the background. The human element is intentionally small, almost fragile, yet central. I waited for the precise position where the figure could balance the composition while emphasizing the immensity of the surrounding landscape. The gesture, with arms slightly open, suggests both surrender and confrontation, reinforcing the emotional tension of the scene.



FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHER



GEOMETRY OF SOLITUDE

**BREATH OF THE INVISIBLE**

***Many of your images transform simple natural elements into something very elegant and emotional. How do you approach composition, light and timing to create that mood in your landscapes?***

When I compose an image, I try to simplify the scene as much as possible, focusing only on the elements that are essential to the visual balance. Minimalism plays an important role in my work, so I carefully arrange shapes, lines, and empty space to create harmony within the frame.

Light and atmosphere are equally important. I often work in soft or diffused light, especially during foggy mornings, because it helps remove distractions and allows the main subject to emerge more clearly. Timing is also crucial; sometimes I wait patiently for the right moment when the atmosphere, the composition, and occasionally a human presence come together to create a more emotional and evocative image.

***How much of your signature look is created in camera versus in post-production, and what does your editing workflow typically involve for a landscape piece?***

Most of the visual language in my photographs is created directly in camera. I spend a lot of time observing the scene and carefully composing the image so that the balance, atmosphere, and minimal elements are already present at the moment of capture. Waiting for the right light and conditions is an essential part of this process.

Post-production is mainly used to refine the image rather than transform it. My workflow usually focuses on adjusting tones, contrast, and balance, especially in black and white, to enhance the mood and emphasize the essential elements of the composition. The goal is to maintain a clean and natural look while reinforcing the quiet and contemplative atmosphere of the landscape.

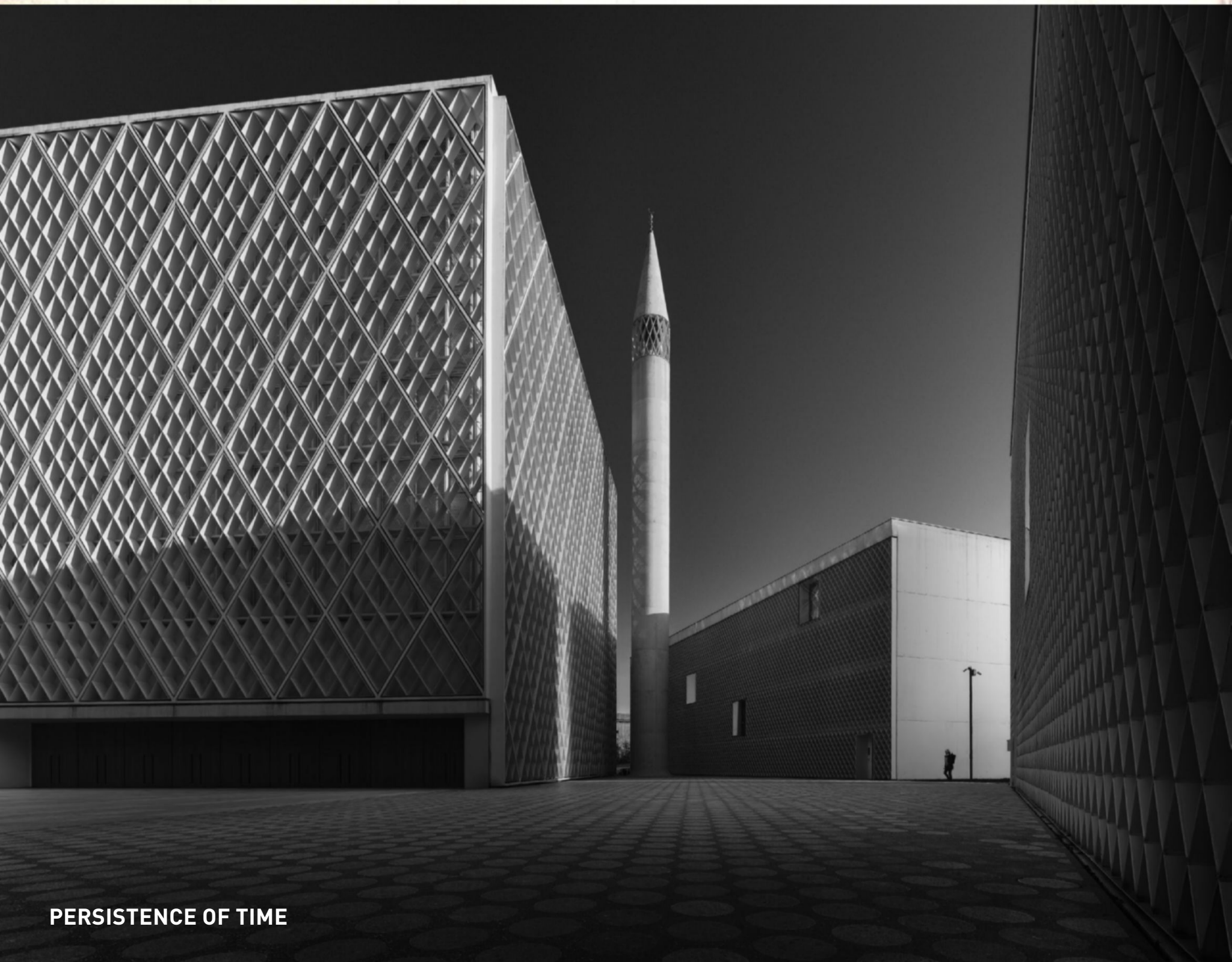


***What does a typical day in the field look like when you're working on a landscape project – from planning locations and weather to the way you move and work on site?***

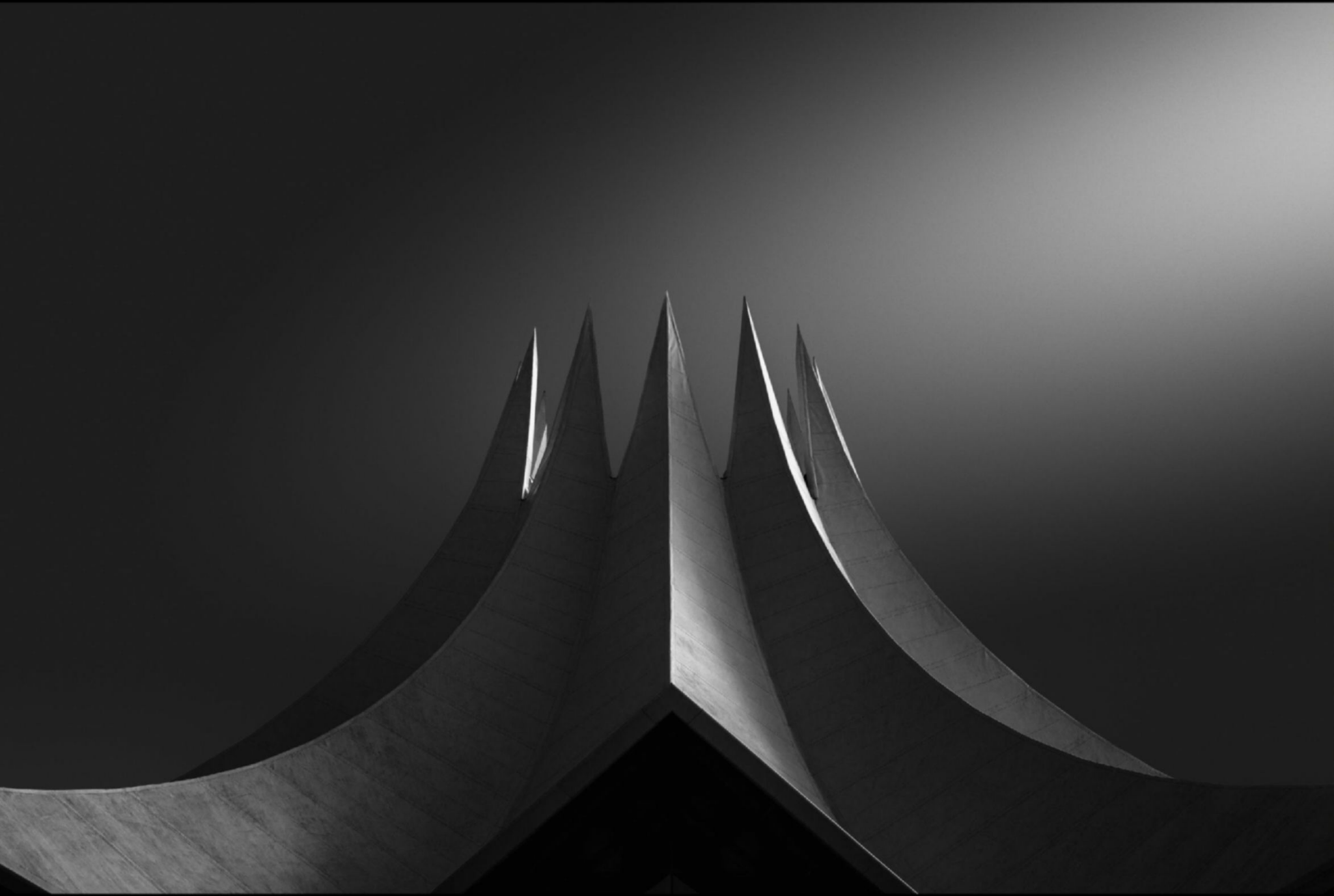
A typical day in the field often begins very early, sometimes before sunrise. I usually check the weather conditions carefully, especially looking for fog, soft light, or atmospheric situations that can simplify the landscape and create a more evocative mood. Many of the locations I visit are places I already know well, which allows me to anticipate how the scene might change under different conditions.

Once on location, I prefer to move slowly and observe the environment before setting up the shot. I spend time studying the composition, the balance of elements, and how the light interacts with the landscape. Patience is an important part of my process. Sometimes I wait for the right moment, or for a person to enter the frame to add scale and emotion.

Working in this way allows me to remain connected to the atmosphere of the place. Rather than taking many photographs, I focus on a few carefully considered images, trying to capture the quiet and contemplative feeling that first drew me to the scene.



FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHER



CROWN OF SILENCE



## THE GATHERING

***What's inside your kit bag for this kind of work, and what is the one piece of equipment you absolutely couldn't do without?***

My kit is simple and focused, usually including a camera body, a couple of versatile lenses, and a sturdy tripod, which is essential for precise framing and stability, especially in low-light conditions.

I also rely heavily on filters: a polarizing filter to enhance contrast in woodland scenes or water surfaces, and a 10-stop ND filter for long exposures that capture movement in waterfalls, seascapes, or clouds. Beyond these essentials, I carry spare batteries and memory cards, keeping the setup minimal so I can focus fully on observing and composing the landscape.

If I had to choose one piece of equipment I couldn't do without, it would still be the tripod, as it allows me to work deliberately and maintain the calm, measured approach that defines my photography.

***If you could build your dream kit bag specifically for your fine-art landscape photography, what would be in it?***

Over the years I have tried many cameras and lenses, but now I've found the right balance between versatility, quality, and weight, and I'm very satisfied with the kit I currently use for my fine-art work.

Filters are also essential for me. Magnetic filters, in particular, can be very useful in difficult weather conditions or when I need to work quickly, and I'm considering expanding my collection with a new magnetic filter kit.



***What words of advice would you give to photographers who want to create more minimal, emotionally-driven landscape images of their own?***

My main advice would be to slow down and learn to observe the landscape with patience. Minimal photography is often about removing rather than adding, so it is important to look for simple scenes where a few elements can communicate a strong feeling or atmosphere.

It is also helpful to pay close attention to light and weather conditions. Fog, soft light, or quiet early mornings can naturally simplify the landscape and help create a more contemplative mood.

Finally, I would encourage photographers to focus less on taking many images and more on creating meaningful ones. Sometimes waiting for the right moment, the right composition, or even a small human presence can transform a simple scene into a photograph that carries emotion and depth.



FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHER



Follow more of Thomas de Franzoni work on his [website](#),  
[Instagram](#) and [500px](#).

TIMELAPSE

# JUTLAND

## DENMARK TIMELAPSE 4K

by JONAS HØHOLT



Experience the breathtaking beauty of Denmark's Jutland peninsula in stunning 4K, as Jonas Høholt's timelapse film captures its diverse landscapes, dramatic skies, and hidden gems shaped by the last ice age.

BEHIND THE SCENES:  
**JONAS HØHOLT'S**  
JUTLAND - DENMARK TIMELAPSE 4K



**S**haped during the previous ice age, the Danish peninsula Jutland offers very diverse landscapes - smoothed by the ice in the west and very

hilly in the east. This video takes you on a timelapse journey across the peninsula, which forms the western part of Denmark.



Jutland 4K has been my personal project, and I have spent a little more than one and a half year in the field chasing the best light, the best views and the clearest night skies. And I am proud beyond belief!

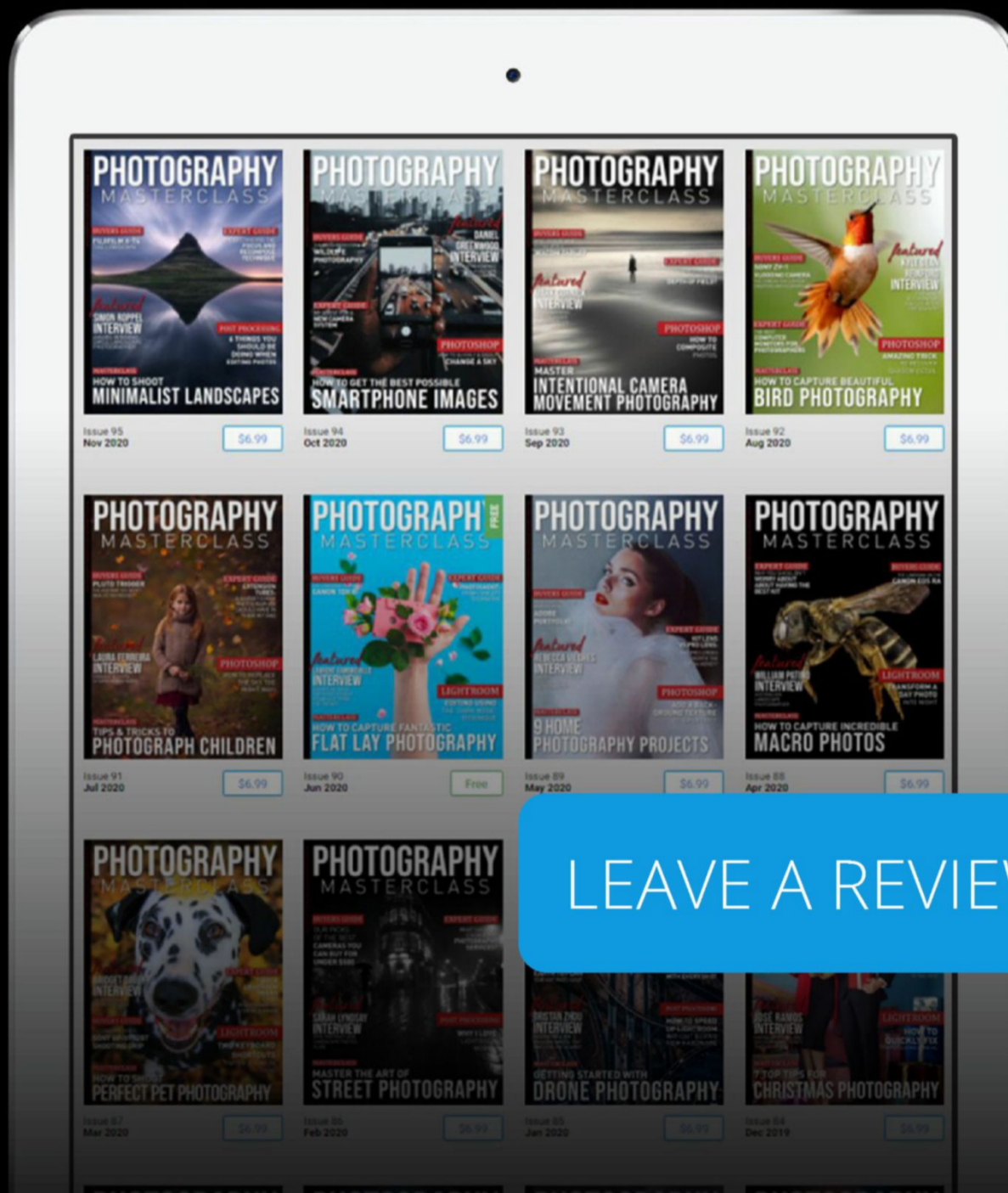
This film shows some of my favorite remote places and also several known locations visited by thousands of tourists each year.

**SOUNDTRACK:**

[Stephen J. Anderson](#) - [A Lamp In A Windless Place](#)

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Your Very Best Shots Showcased



**INTERSTELLAR RADIANT, ONE-MILE RADIO TELESCOPE, MRAO - MULLARD  
RADIO ASTRONOMY OBSERVATORY, CAMBRIDGE UK**

**By:** Joao Abm Yordanov Serralheiro

**Shot Details:** Sony a7 III, with Sony FE 20mm F1.8 G lens, f/1.8, 20mm, ISO 640.  
Total time of exposures is 90 mins. Benro Mach3 TMA28C/GD3WH tripod.

[Facebook](#)



**TIMELESS CLAUSTRO**

**By:** Brian Ford

**Shot Details:** Canon 6D Mark II, at 45mm, f/4,  
1/125 sec, ISO 400



**SEASONS CHANGE, WINTER SOON,  
MOUNTAINS BECKONING**

**By:** Per Birkhaug

**Shot Details:** Canon R6 Mark II, at 39mm, f/8,  
1/400 sec, ISO 100, +1 EV

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**BROKEN HILL SCULPTURE GARDEN IN INFRARED**

**By:** MJ Oliver

**Shot Details:** Infrared 720nm conversion





**METHODIST CHURCH AT CHEWTON**

**By:** MJ Oliver

**Shot Details:** Infrared 720nm conversion



**SEA OATS AND TALL DUNE GRASSES**

**By:** Allen Carroll

**Shot Details:** Nikon D850, at 70mm, f/9, 1/500  
sec, ISO 64

[Website](#)



**RARE VISIT**

**By:** Allen Carroll

**Shot Details:** Nikon D500, at 400mm, f/5.6, 1/2100  
sec, ISO 2200

[Website](#)



**LONG-JAWED ORBWEAVER**

**By:** Tom Arnhold

**Shot Details:** Canon R7, with 100-500mm Canon lens, at 600mm, f/11, 1/2500 sec, ISO 12800

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**ROBBER FLY**

**By:** Tom Arnholde

**Shot Details:** Canon R7, with 100-500mm Canon lens, at 343mm, f/9, 1/1640 sec, ISO 3200

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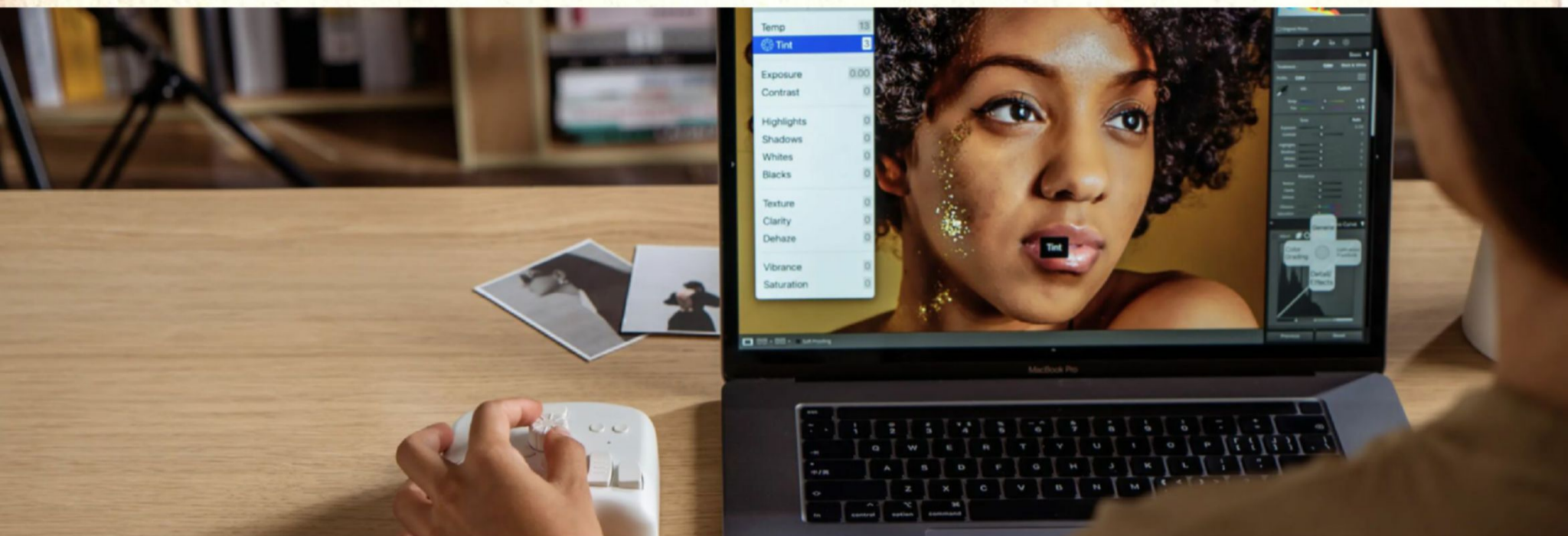
# THE LOWDOWN ON THE TOURBOX CREATIVE CONSOLES

By Ryan Sitzman



A customizable, hand-held controller designed to accelerate workflows for creative professionals using software like Photoshop, Lightroom, Premiere Pro, and Final Cut Pro

**D**o you have any habits that seem completely normal and logical to you, but which might appear strange to onlookers? Most of us have at least a few quirks and idiosyncrasies, although we might not actually realize that we're doing something strange or different until someone else points it out to us.



For example, I'd consider myself a pretty normal, boring guy, but I do harbor one strange, dark secret: I use two mice for my computer. Mouses? Mice? Who knows. Either way, you heard me—I use one mouse for each hand. If one hand gets tired, or if I just want to spice things up, I start using the other mouse. It makes complete sense to me, and I've also avoided carpal-tunnel syndrome thus far, so I must be doing something right. But any time someone else sees my two-mouse setup, they invariably comment that it's weird, and then they start to back slowly away from my desk, lest they fall victim to an attack by the Crazy Double Mouse Guy.

What does all this have to do with photography? Well, as I was researching the TourBox series of programmable consoles, it reminded me of how I use my second mouse with my left hand. It's marketed as "The Ultimate Creative Console," and most people use it with their left hand, while their right hand controls a mouse or a drawing tablet.

At the same time, the TourBox also combines some aspects of keyboard shortcuts, thereby offering an efficient

and compelling way for photographers and other creative types to improve their workflow and streamline countless tasks in several different programs.



The TourBox isn't the first editing console, of course, but it does have some cool features that make it stand apart from others on the market. Today I'll mainly talk about how photographers can improve their photo processing workflow with TourBox, but it can be just as useful for video editors and even digital artists.

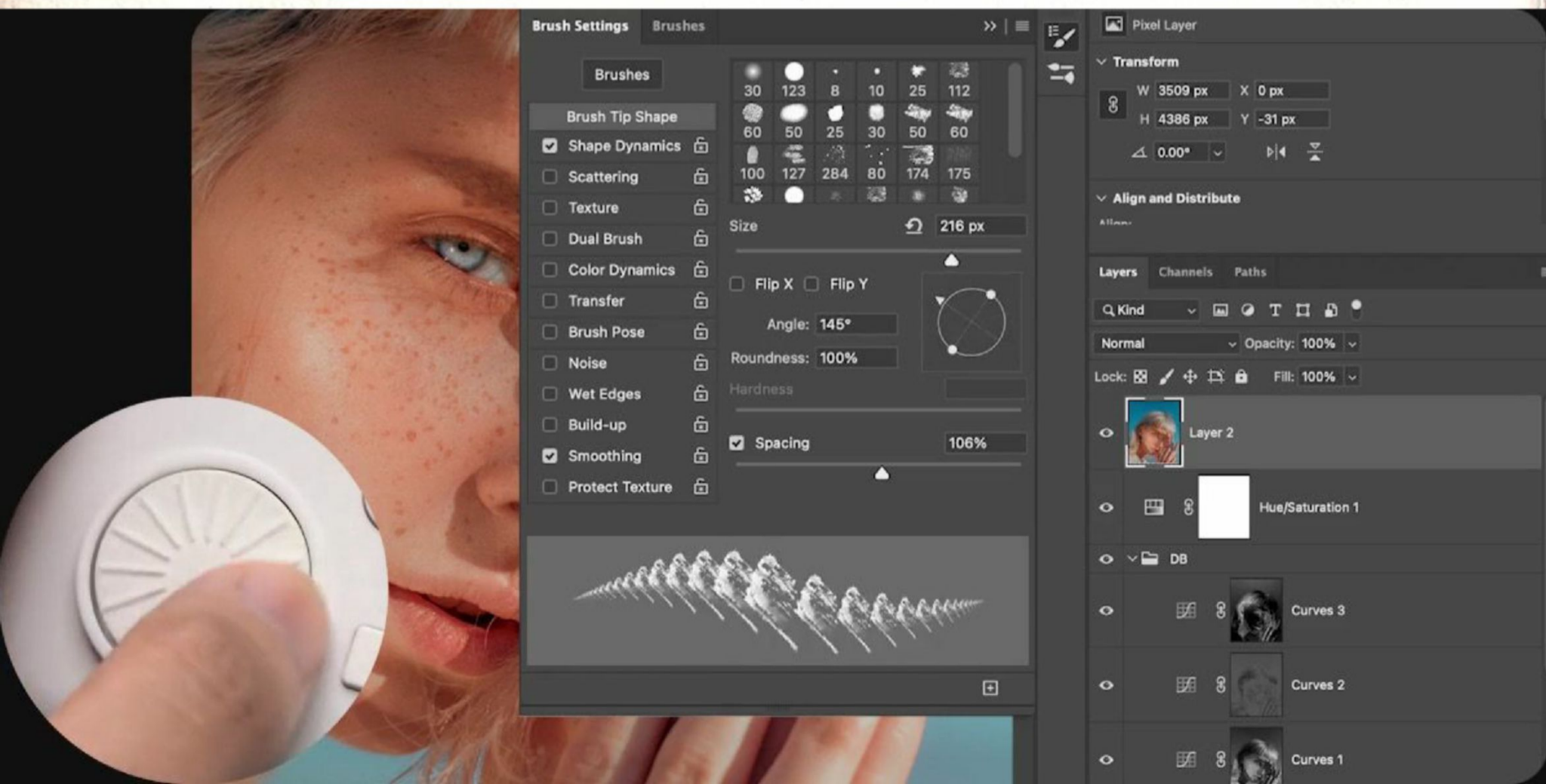
It's important to understand that TourBox comes in a range of several different models. The flagship model, the TourBox Elite Plus, obviously boasts the most features and compatibility, but even the most modest model, the TourBox Light, isn't lacking in dials and buttons.

Regardless of the model, each TourBox is ergonomically designed and well thought out. It's larger than a mouse, but it still can fit comfortably on either side of a keyboard (or a tablet or iPad, as the case may be).

If you choose the Elite Plus, you'll have 11 buttons and keys, as well as three "spinnny guys" (specifically, a knob, a dial, and a scroll wheel). With the exception of two circular buttons on the top right, every other button has its own unique shape and texture. That makes it super easy to work just by touch and feel, so you can keep your eyes where they belong: on your photos.

And the best part is that all of the buttons and knobs are fully programmable—you can even adjust the speed of the dials, and you can choose between three different levels of haptic feedback for each button. A person who's better at math than I am could probably calculate the precise number of customization options, but for our purposes, let's just say that you can customize them in approximately a bajillion ways.

Even if you're extremely adept at using keyboard shortcuts to help speed up your workflow, you'll have noticed that there are some editing tools and actions that simply don't have a corresponding keyboard shortcut. But they do now if you use the TourBox. If you use the console with Lightroom or Photoshop, for example, you can customize the buttons to execute common commands or shortcuts as you move through your photos. Or, you can use your mouse to hover over your adjustable sliders, and then use a programmed dial on the TourBox to quickly adjust each slider, without having to click and hold a mouse button or touch a keyboard.





You can also program the TourBox so that a specific combination of buttons executes an action, or you can set a single button to perform a "Macro," which executes multiple actions with a single click.

I was particularly impressed with the floating, dynamic menu (which you can also adjust or turn off) that appears on your screen when using TourBox. The menu shows a map of each button's function, which also helps you focus on the work you're doing, without needing to look down and poke around at different buttons until you find what you're looking for.

The customization possibilities really are almost limitless, especially if you're a power user. I rarely make major edits to my photos, but even I could easily justify working with at least a basic

TourBox. A lot of my post processing workflow involves basic actions, such as cropping or rotating images, adjusting the exposure, or zooming in on my photos to check for sharpness. All of those actions could be done with a click of a button or a turn of a dial, and TourBox could greatly cut down on mouse and keyboard clicks, while helping me review, edit, and organize my photos much more efficiently.

As mentioned earlier, the TourBox can be a powerful tool for photographers, but it's also great for working with video and other digital art forms. Whether you use Photoshop, Davinci Resolve, Final Cut, Capture One, or any of another 20 or so programs (including Excel and Word!), there's good chance that you can use a TourBox to streamline your creative work.

The TourBox Elite Plus is the fanciest model, and it costs just under \$300. It also stands out from the other models by offering compatibility with more operating systems. Whereas the other models work with Windows and MacOS, the Elite Plus also works with iPadOS. I know that a lot of people prefer to edit with some kind of desktop computer setup, and presumably part of the reason they do that is because working with a computer generally involves a keyboard and some kind of mouse or other trackpad. It can be tedious to use a touchscreen to edit images or video, so it's really cool that TourBox can give you a tactile experience with physical buttons, thereby changing photo editing on an iPad from a nuisance into a power player move. What's more, the Elite Plus lets you quickly and easily switch between your devices with a switch on the unit.

The next model is the TourBox Elite, which starts at about \$268. It's almost identical to the Elite Plus, except it can't connect to an iPad, and it comes in slightly different, more muted colors. Both the Elite and Elite Plus models offer wired and Bluetooth wireless connections. The mid-range model, the TourBox NEO, costs around \$169, but

it has much of the same functionality as the pricier models. However, it only comes wired, and the buttons don't offer any options for haptic feedback.

I believe that the entry-level model, the \$95 TourBox Lite, is arguably the best option for many potential users, especially if you don't need to connect to an iPad. It does have some tradeoffs, as it is slightly smaller, and it has fewer buttons—the four cross buttons in the middle are gone, as is the side button, and the left dial has been replaced with a button. Still, the eight buttons that it does have are all still fully programmable, so it should be able to handle most users' needs.

Interestingly, the Lite also is available as a wireless model for five dollars more (\$100).

At the risk of seeming unserious, I also have to say that I really like the unique color options for the Lite models. Would I actually buy it in "Aqua Green," "Misty Pink," or "Sunny Yellow," instead of simple, trustworthy "Black"? Well, maybe not. But I absolutely think it's great that those other options are out there.



Speaking of colors, the TourBox Elite Plus is currently offered in black or a clear, transparent option. However, the site is currently taking preorders for the TourBox Elite Plus "Arctic Series," which include transparent cases in colors including "Frost White," "Glacier Blue," "Aurora Violet," and "Midnight Indigo." They look pretty sick, as my kids say (and that's a good thing here). Also, if you preorder one of the Arctic Series models, they come at a discount that brings their price down to \$252. In other words, it's even cheaper than the normal price for the lower-level TourBox Elite—though that controller is also on sale at the moment. Suffice it to say, if you're considering buying a TourBox,

you might want to keep an eye out for discounts and upcoming models.

You can probably tell that I'm enthusiastic about the TourBox. I think it has a lot of potential, even for non-professional photographers or videographers. I may even break down and pick up an Aqua Green TourBox Lite to aid in my photo organization and editing. While I'm sure I'd enjoy one of the fancier models, I think that the Lite model would be a good fit for me and my workflow. Of course, I'd probably need to move one of my mouses while I'm working on my pictures, but that's a reasonable tradeoff for efficiency and convenience.



#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

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

# VIDEO

## SMALL FAST EDITING CONTROLLER FOR PROS!

# TOURBOX ELITE

by MARK MCGEE PHOTOS



TourBox Elite is a bluetooth custom editing controller! This editing console is perfect for video editors, photography editing and audio production. With dual bluetooth 5.0 and haptic feedback plus over 150 actions per preset!

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

I'm a photography nut! Content creator, portrait photographer, pushing the boundaries of how to use a camera, light and photoshop! I love making images and producing videos about how I do it! Follow more of my work on my [website](#), [Instagram](#) & [YouTube](#).

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