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ENLAPS TIKEE MINI+

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EDITING

INSTANTLY FIX
"IMPOSSIBLE"
GLASSES REFLECTIONS
IN PHOTOSHOP



PHOTOGRAPHY

MASTERCLASS

MAGAZINE



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EDITOR'S NOTE

W elcome to this edition
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Masterclass Magazine

There are few environments on Earth as visually intoxicating, and technically demanding, as a deep, slot canyon. Places like Antelope Canyon or the narrows of Zion offer a surreal landscape where water and time have carved sandstone into beautiful flowing curves. When the sun is high, shafts of light pierce the gloom, bouncing off the red and orange walls to create an ethereal, glowing atmosphere that seems almost otherworldly.

Capturing that ethereal, glowing magic means battling intense dynamic range, low light, and swirling dust. In our latest masterclass, we break down the specific gear, settings, and techniques you need to conquer these challenges and bring home the raw

data for a spectacular final edit.

Also in this issue, we interview Simon Migaj, a London-based documentary photographer specializing in lifestyle and interior photography. With a background in architecture and a passion for creating images that feel honest and immersive, Simon's work captures the essence of a place — not just how it looks, but how it feels. In this interview, Simon shares his journey from architectural visualizations to photography, his creative process, and the inspiration behind his timeless images.

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: Vadim Sadovski
Shot Details: Sony a7C, at 200mm, f/5.6,
1/2500 sec, ISO 2000
[Instagram](#)







By: Simon Zhu
Shot Details: Sony a7 II, at 14mm, f/4,
1/15 sec, ISO 500
[Instagram](#)

EDITORS CHOICE



By: Elio Santos
Shot Details: Fujifilm X-S20, at 50mm,
f/2.8, 1/250 sec, ISO 1000
[Instagram](#)

EDITORS CHOICE



By: Benjamin Chambon
Shot Details: Sony a7 III, at 35mm, f/2.8,
1/2500 sec, ISO 100
[Instagram](#)







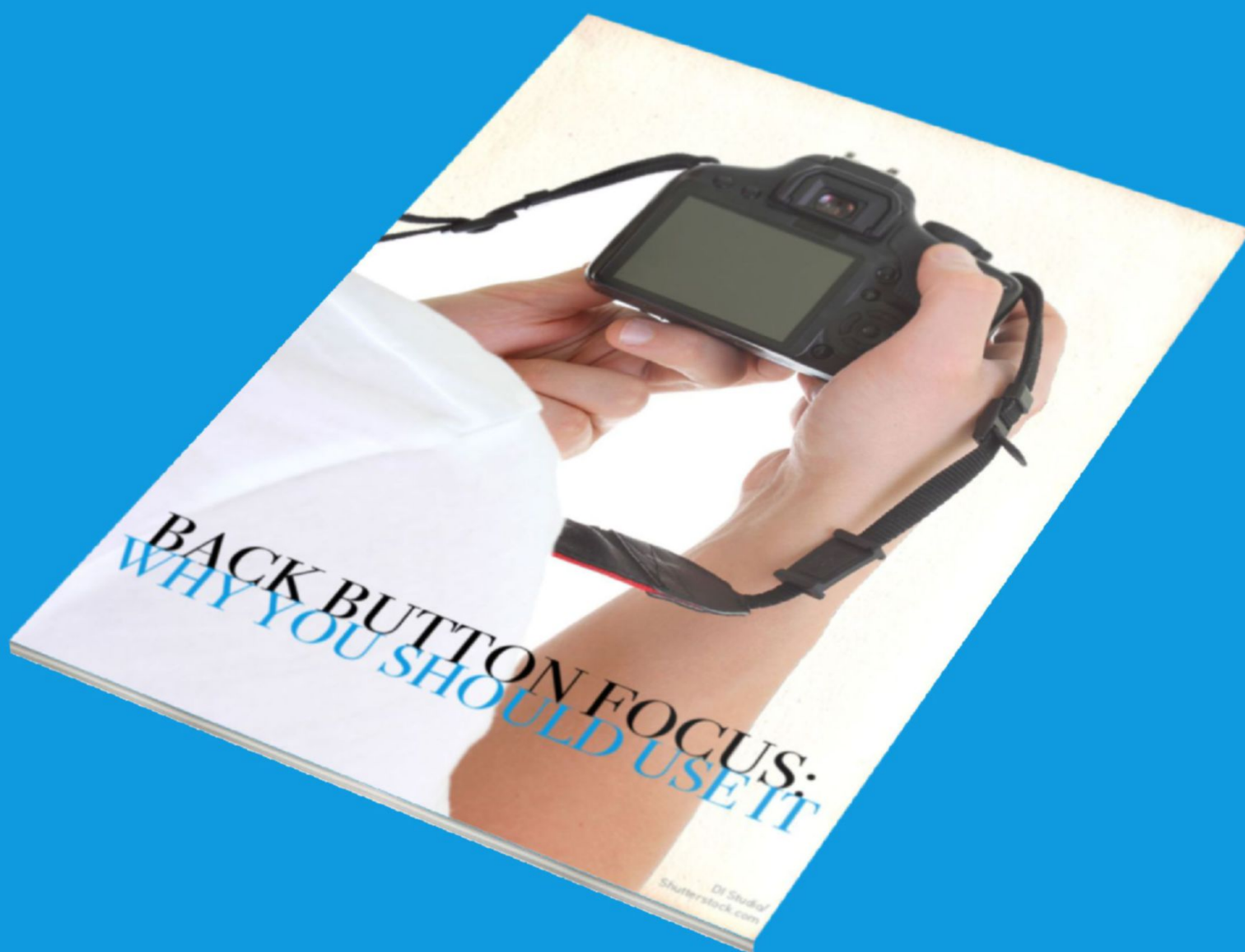
By: Tim Mossholder
Shot Details: Nikon D850, at 38mm, f/2.8,
1/160 sec, ISO 1000
[Instagram](#)



By: Spenser Sembrat
Shot Details: Sony a7 IV, at 85mm, f/1.4,
1/1000 sec, ISO 320
[Instagram](#)

PHOTOGRAPHY MASTERCLASS MAGAZINE

GRAB OUR BACK BUTTON FOCUS GUIDE



There is another way to focus, which many photographers swear by. It's called back button focusing! In this PDF guide, you'll learn exactly how it works and what it can do for your photography!

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HOW TO GET INSPIRATION FOR YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY



Photo by: [Zero Take](#)

(OR WHY YOU SHOULD GET OFF SOCIAL MEDIA AND JUST GET OUT AND SHOOT INSTEAD)

By Jo Plumridge

I think many people struggle to find inspiration for their photography, particularly if they're just starting out. We live in a world that's somewhat saturated with

imagery and it can be hard to know how to carve out your own style, or even where to start when just taking photos for your own personal projects.

One of the big mistakes people often make nowadays is looking at social media and comparing their images to what they see there. For starters, much of the stuff you see online has been manipulated to within an inch of its life. Filters, AI and endless tweaks mean that unfortunately anyone can take a pretty average photograph and turn it into something that doesn't even resemble what was originally shot. Plus, if you look more closely, a lot of social media snaps all look the same – same filters, same digitally blurred background, same colour grading. It's all a bit boring and identikit.

That's not to say that there aren't plenty of talented photographers using social media, but I want to step away from that world and tell you all about how I think you can find inspiration.

BE YOURSELF

If you spend all your time looking at images online and just blindly try to recreate them, you'll never find your own voice and style. There's absolutely nothing wrong with looking at an image online and thinking that you'd like your photography to look similar, but there's a fine line you don't want to cross.

Be influenced rather than trying to straight copy things. If you just go out with a fixed idea in your head, you could miss a whole host of other photographic opportunities as well, because you won't be engaged with what's going on around you.

It can be hard when you're starting out as you don't have the experience that you'll get over time, and it can seem like an easier path to learning to just emulate the work of others. But doing so doesn't allow you to think about what you're creating, it doesn't allow you to search for the shot you want and it certainly doesn't teach you any technical skills.



Photo by: Gabe Pierce

BUT DO STUDY THE MEDIUM

This might sound a little contradictory and even contrary, but I do recommend studying the history of photography and those masters of the past whose work you admire. Photography has gone through so many technological changes, but trust me when I say that by studying those who shot on film, you'll learn so much about how to work with light, exposure, composition and tones. So, pick the genre you're interested in and look at how the masters approached it.

I'd also recommend looking beyond photography to the Renaissance painters such as Rembrandt, Raphael and Jan van Eyck. These painters really knew how to best frame and light a painting and these examples can be applied to photography. There's even a popular studio lighting technique that we call the Rembrandt. You can learn a lot from the old Masters without directly copying their work but rather applying their techniques. Visit art galleries and museums. You'll learn a lot.



Photo by: *Erik A van Dijk*

LIGHTING

I bang on and on about the fact that without light there's no photograph but that's because it's true. Light makes or breaks an image and without it, you'll have nothing to capture. But it's not just a case of going outside and taking a photo – my inspiration comes from knowing how light works through the day, what tones and colours it's going to produce and how I can best work with it to achieve my aims. The right kind of light is worth waiting for and seeing it on your screen can really influence the shots you'll take at that given moment.

TRUST YOUR EYE AND YOUR IMAGINATION

An eye for a good photograph is something that's instinctual and hard to teach. Those with a creative bent

can look at a person or a scene and 'see' the best image. I've heard many beginners and even accomplished amateur photographers say that they don't think they have a creative eye, but I believe that if you're interested enough in photography to buy the kit and go out and start shooting, you've probably got more of a creative streak than you realise.

Again, much of this comes down to confidence and that's why imagination is so important. I've always been a portrait photographer primarily but when I'm shooting someone, I allow my imagination to take over and, by looking at my subject, I can envision lighting set ups and angles that will work for them and produce something a little bit different and unique.

A PHOTOGRAPH IS A STORY BE HAPPY WITH THE GEAR YOU'VE GOT

Think about high end fashion photography where by the photographer will usually shoot a series of images that tell a story – often revolving around an exotic location that the images are being shot in.

Sadly, most of us won't be shooting for Vogue on a daily basis but you should think of your photographs as telling a story, right down to each individual image. If I'm out shooting people on location or just shooting landscapes for my own personal projects, I can get a lot of inspiration by thinking about how I want my viewer to see the image and what story I want them to take away from it. This also leads into composition and using leading lines to draw a viewer in and direct them around a photograph in the way you want.

This is a slight segue away, but I do think some people worry that if they haven't got all the latest kit and caboodle, their images will suffer. And that can stifle creativity and inspiration. It's easy to blame things on having the 'wrong' kit but the truth is that you are perfectly able to get beautiful images from any camera and lens if you allow your creativity to flow.

New kit is lovely, of course, and there's no doubt that some lenses are better than others. But don't get fixated with new gear. That won't make you happy and, in this fast paced digital environment, it will be obsolete by next month anyway. Get to know the kit you do have and learn to use it so that it works for whatever you enjoy shooting.

Photo by: [Simon Hughes](#)





Photo by: [Elisa Pérez Rodríguez](#)

ENJOY YOURSELF

I think too many people put undue pressure on themselves when they go out, thinking they must take the perfect photo every time. But in truth, many of my best landscape shots (for example) have come about when I've just been mooching about and relaxing, before happening to spot a beautiful scene or particularly good lighting.

Do just go out and shoot for fun. Yes, you can think about the technical aspects and obviously make sure you've got your settings right but, at the end of the day, you'll get the best shots when your heart is engaged with what you're doing, you're having fun and your creativity is being allowed to flow. Relax and remember that you're not under any pressure.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Jo Plumridge is a UK based photographer, writer and lecturer. She specializes in portrait, corporate and travel photography, and writes photography, travel and comedy pieces for magazines, websites and books. You can see some of her work at her [website](#) or follow her on [Twitter](#).

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THE LOWDOWN ON **THE ENLAPS** TIKEE MINI+ TIMELAPASE CAMERA

By Ryan Sitzman



I've been writing about new cameras and photography gear for several years now, and I can honestly say that every item that I've written about has had at least one feature or element that caught my interest. A new camera might have an interesting quirk that I like, or perhaps I can imagine myself using a new lens on an upcoming trip.

However, even though I'm often quite interested in these products, I also frequently have to concede that many of the things I write about simply aren't for me. And that's OK. It's obviously not the Canon lens' fault that I don't have a Canon camera body, for example, and very often, a product may simply be (way) out of my budget, or it might have features that I'd have no realistic chance of using.



I mention this because for a few recent articles that I've written, I've "revisited" a model or a brand that I had previously written about. In each case, I thought that the earlier product was interesting and cool, but I ultimately dismissed it as something that wasn't for me. However, for these recent products, the new model made some changes or updates, or included new features, and it suddenly looks a lot more appealing to me.

Around a year ago, I wrote about the Tikee 4 timelapse camera from the company Enlaps. It honestly seems like an excellent product that is perfectly designed to take high-quality, long-term timelapses. The catch - at least for me - is that it costs over \$2,000, and I have absolutely no personal use for a long-term timelapse camera,

no matter how cool it looks with its fancy integrated solar panel and its anthropomorphized dual lenses that look like adorable robot eyes. No siree, no matter how cool and fun it looked, I couldn't justify getting the Tikee 4, so I had to chalk it up to the "Only If I Win The Lottery" column of my budget.

Enter now the Tikee Mini+, which is already making me start to wonder if I need to recalculate all my previous assumptions about Enlaps timelapse cameras. Whereas the Tikee 4 is clearly marketed for construction professionals and other niche-use cases, the Mini+ is geared towards more everyday use, including by hobbyist photographers. Let's take a closer look at what the Enlaps Tikee Mini+ 4K timelapse camera can do, and consider whether it might be useful for you.

For a camera that has “mini” in its name, the Mini+ might not look that tiny at first glance. At around 2.2 pounds, it's also not exactly “jumbo,” but it is substantial enough to take up some space, and it's not the kind of thing that you can just slip into your pocket. If you compare the Mini+ to the Tikee 4, though, you can see that the Mini+ is indeed noticeably smaller. I would also say that its clean design makes it look a lot more modern than the Tikee 4.



Physically speaking, the Mini+ is rather simple. The front and back are shaped like black, horizontal ovals, with a single lens in the front and a few ports in the back. Those ports include slots for a MicroSD memory card and a micro-SIM card, as well a USB-C input for charging, and a separate port for an external solar panel, which can be used as an alternate power source.

All of the ports on the back can also be covered with caps that are waterproof (or at least highly water-resistant, with an IP66 rating). The top and sides are bare, save for the Tikee Mini+ logo, and the bottom just has a few screws and a threaded hole so that allows it to be mounted on a tripod. There's also a small metal loop in the back, which can

be used to secure a lock - you wouldn't want someone walking off with your fancy new camera, after all.

Looks aren't everything, though, and fortunately, the Mini+ also has what it takes on the inside. This model comes with several new or updated features, with “True View” being one of the most notable. The camera can still shoot a wide-angle, fisheye view angle of approximately 120 degrees, but I (and many other photographers, apparently) think that the curved lines and the warped view from the fisheye lens can get old pretty quickly. Fortunately, you can also adjust the camera angle to 110 or 90 degrees. That straightens out the lines nicely, while giving a more lifelike view of the scene.

Some of the other new features seem less groundbreaking, but they're still worth mentioning. This includes the Low Light mode, which can automatically adjust the ISO and shutter speed to compensate for nighttime photos, thereby providing clearer, brighter images with much less noise.





Another cool setting is the Rotation selection, which allows users to rotate the image by 90 degrees when shooting for vertically oriented uses such as social media, or by 180 degrees, like if the Mini+ is mounted from a ceiling. Other features, such as an Adaptive Interval setting that adjusts the shooting interval when the battery level gets low, or the White Balance Lock, which locks a designated color temperature, are also pretty cool.

Another much-hyped feature is the "Live Preview" setting. Users of the Tikee 4 had to pay for a monthly subscription if they wanted to get a live view from that camera, but the Mini+ offers a live view right in the basic app. In fact, the app is where you need to set and program basically everything about the Mini+. That could be a good or neutral thing when everything works well, but if you have setup or connectivity issues, or if there are other kinds of glitches, I could see how it might quickly become a frustrating experience.

Sure, many cameras these days have different apps or connectivity options, but the Mini+ is completely dependent on the app for everyday functionality. Everything needs to be programmed and run through the app, whether you're programming the photo interval, setting the white balance, or just composing the scene. The camera itself does have a single button, which can be used to start a timelapse, but even that timelapse needs to have been previously programmed through the app and synced up with the camera.

Honestly, that's probably the biggest factor that would give me pause before buying this camera. If Enlaps goes out of business or is just no longer able to support the app, then what will happen with this camera? I already have enough doorstops and paperweights.

Although I like the clean design of this camera, I do sort of wish that there were more controls on the camera itself, to make it a more independent, standalone device. It would reassure me that I could keep using this camera well into the future, regardless of what happens with the app or Enlaps.

In terms of price, if you only want the basic Tikee Mini+ camera, it will cost you around \$1,115. That price includes a simple carrying case and not much else. I should also note that on Enlaps' online shop, it states that their price for customers in the U.S. doesn't include an additional cost of approximately 15% for import charges, seeing as the camera is manufactured in France. You can

possibly reduce that price uncertainty by shopping at a U.S.-based store, which might list a price that already includes tariffs and other import costs. And as always, you should shop around to be sure that you're getting a good deal.

Interestingly, you can even find the Mini+ at Walmart's online store. It does inexplicably cost much more at Walmart than at a camera store like B&H (\$1,780 versus \$1,115, respectively), but the fact that Walmart is carrying the Mini+ underscores this camera's more mainstream appeal to a wider group of consumers, and not just to professional photographers or construction engineers.



Various online retailers, including Enlaps itself, also offer different accessory packages, which may include add-ons such as a more robust hard case, different mounting accessories, or even an external solar panel. If you're planning on using the Mini+ outdoors, especially over longer periods of time, then the solar panel could be crucial. However, the panel costs around \$560, so if you only plan to use the camera indoors, or just for shorter shoots (such as a day or two), then you'll probably be OK relying on the camera's large internal battery.

All in all, the Tikee Mini+ is a big step forward for Enlaps, at least in terms of offering a product that should have broad appeal to a wider swath of photographers, including non-professionals. It's a great camera, and the high-quality timelapses speak for themselves.

My only hesitation about this camera - aside from not having an extra \$1,200 or a clearly defined reason to purchase it - is that the Mini+ is very reliant on using the app for its basic functionality. But if you can get past that fact, then the Tikee Mini+ could be a fun and formidable addition to your gear bag.

**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](#).

TIMELAPSE

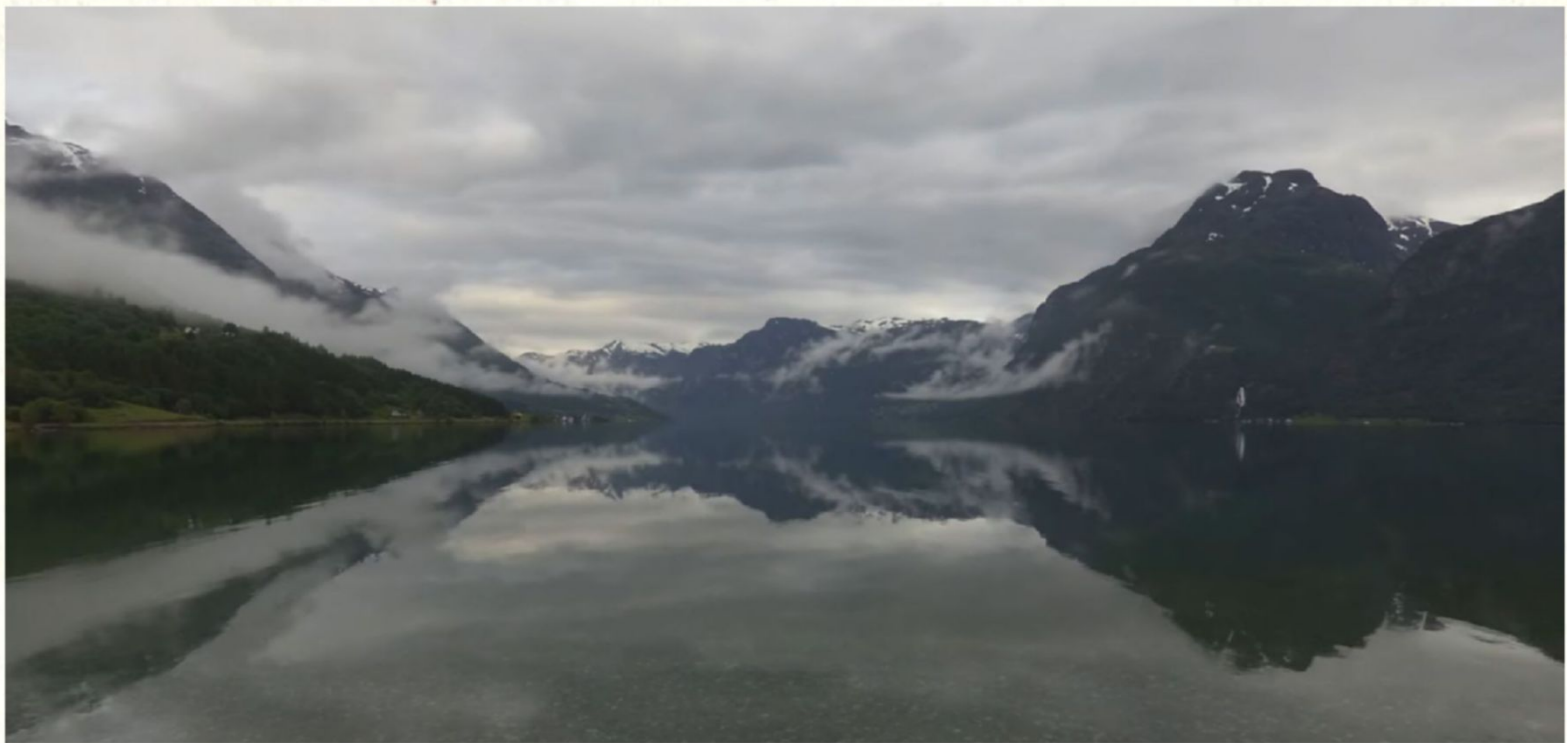
NORWAY TIMELAPSE ADVENTURE (TIKEE MINI+)

by CASPER ROLSTED



Experience Norway's breathtaking fjords and mountain landscapes through cinematic timelapse. Shot with the Tikee Mini+

BEHIND THE SCENES: CASPER ROLSTED'S NORWAY TIMELAPSE ADVENTURE WITH THE TIKEE MINI+



In my own work, I use the Tikee Mini+ in two main ways.

First, for nature and travel projects like this one in Norway, where the camera captures long sequences of changing light, weather, and landscapes over time.

Second, I use it for professional timelapse projects for clients, including construction sites and long-term developments that run over days, weeks, or even years. In these setups, the camera works autonomously in the field, documenting progress continuously without the need for constant supervision.

WHAT'S NEW IN THE TIKEE MINI+?

1. True View – Choose between fisheye, 110°, or 90° perspectives to get the perfect shot without distortion.
2. Rotation Settings – Position your camera in landscape or portrait mode for full creative control.
3. Low Light Mode – Improved performance in darker environments ensures clearer night shots.
4. White Balance Lock – Maintain consistent color throughout your timelapse sequence.

5. Live Preview – See exactly what you're capturing in real time and adjust framing on the spot.
6. New Adaptive Interval – Smarter time interval control that helps optimize battery life during long projects

LOCATIONS IN THIS FILM

SOHLBERGPLASSEN

A viewpoint offering a breathtaking panoramic view of Rondane, famously immortalized in Harald Sohlberg's iconic painting "Vinternatt i Rondane." It's a place where time seems to stand still, and the beauty of nature speaks volumes.

TROLLVEGGEN

Trollveggen (The Troll Wall) is Europe's tallest vertical rock face. Rising approximately 1,700 meters from the base to the summit, with about 1,000 meters of that being a sheer vertical drop, this colossal cliff is a magnet for climbers and base jumpers. Standing at its base truly puts the scale of nature into perspective.

OPPSTRYNSVATNET – A PLACE WHERE TIME STANDS STILL

Tucked between towering mountains and deep fjords lies Oppstrynsvatnet

– a lake so pure and clear, it's hard to believe until you're standing there... or swimming in it. From the view over the old cottages to the glass-like surface of the lake – here, you find a rare kind of silence.

HJELLEDALEN – WHERE NATURE UNFOLDS

Driving along Gamle Strynefjellsveg towards Stryn, you enter the breathtaking Hjelledalen, a valley embraced by towering mountains and rushing streams. Gamle Strynefjellsveg, one of Norway's oldest tourist roads, still features rugged stone paths, ice patches, and snowbanks even in summer. Then, suddenly, the landscape opens up into Hjelledalen—verdant, powerful, and full of life, both grand and intimate at once.

GEIRANGER

Geiranger, at the end of the stunning Geirangerfjord, a UNESCO World Heritage site with towering cliffs, waterfalls, and crystal-clear waters. A short drive up winding mountain roads brings you to Dalsnibba Viewpoint – one of Europe's highest fjord overlooks accessible by car, offering panoramic views of the fjord and surrounding peaks. Further inland, the landscape shifts to high mountain lakes, snow patches, and floating ice – wild, raw, and profoundly peaceful.

VIDEO

NORWAY TIMELAPSE ADVENTURE WITH THE TIKEE MINI+ TESTING 6 SURPRISING NEW FEATURES

by CASPER ROLSTED



In this video, you'll experience some of Norway's most breathtaking landscapes, all shot using the Tikee Mini+, while I explore its enhanced capabilities in real-world conditions.

Follow more of Casper Rolstad's work
on his [website](#), [Youtube](#) and [Instagram](#).

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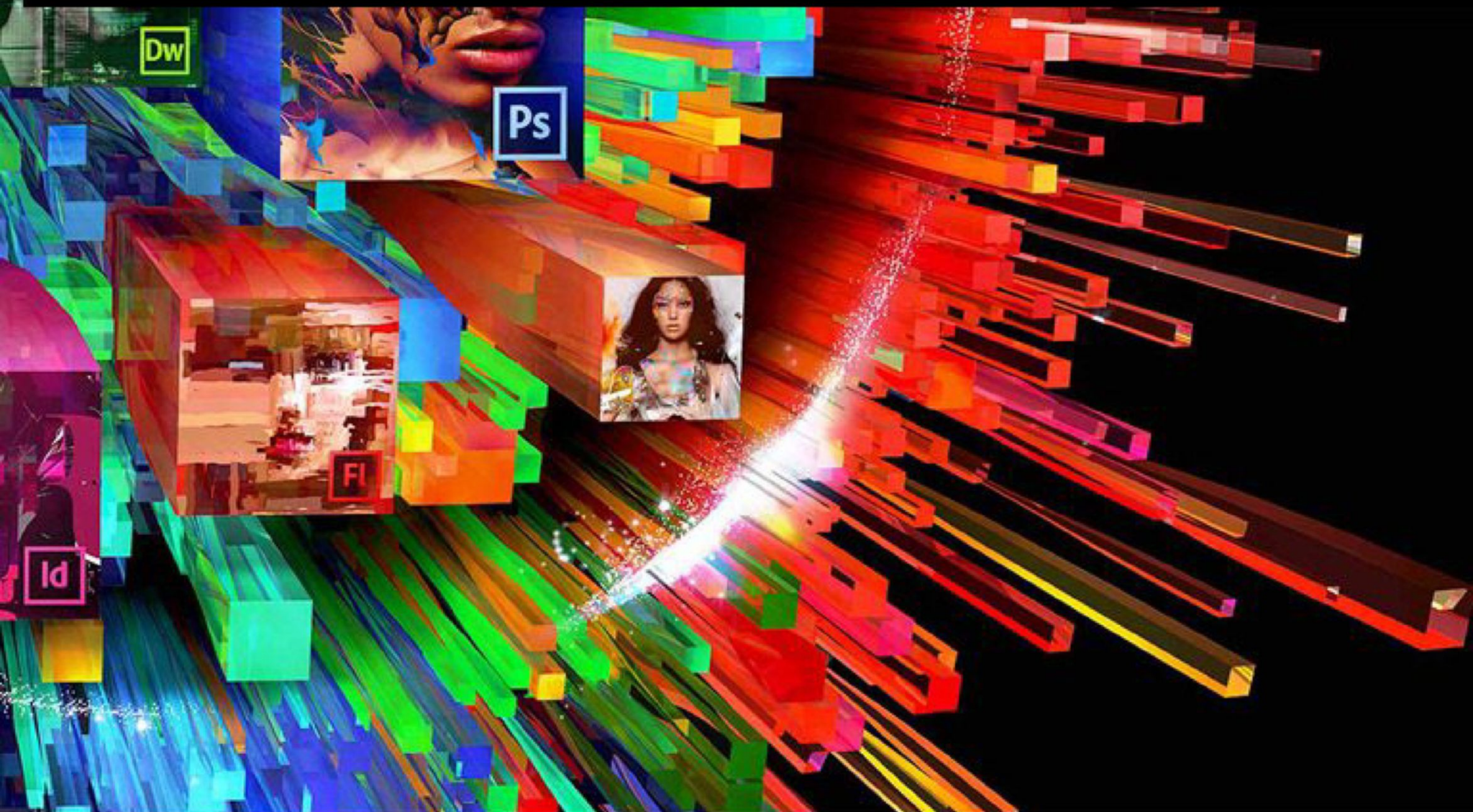


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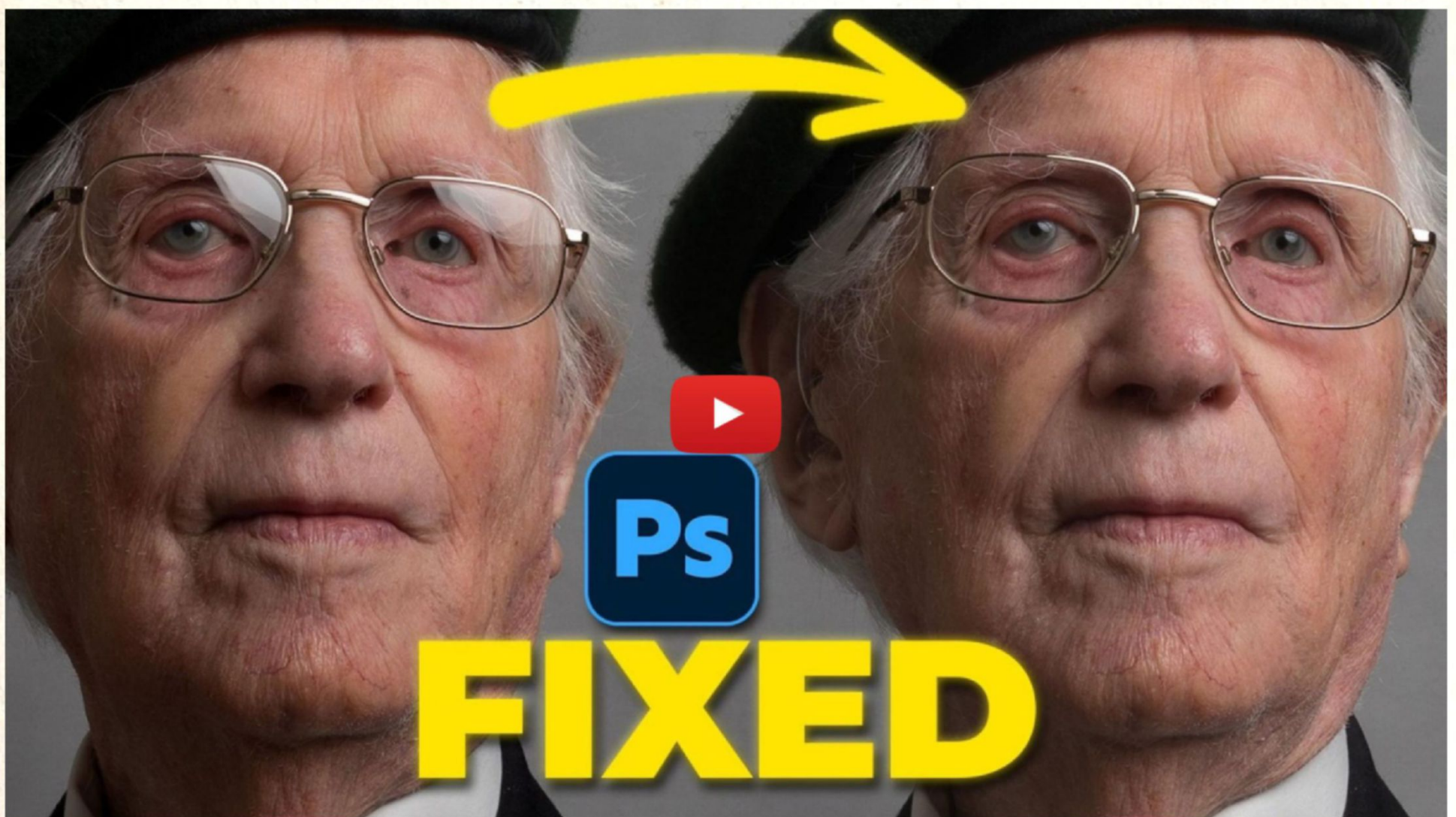
PHOTO EDITING:

Instantly Fix "Impossible"
Glasses Reflections in Photoshop



VIDEO TUTORIAL: **INSTANTLY FIX "IMPOSSIBLE"** **GLASSES REFLECTIONS** IN PHOTOSHOP

by GLYN DEWIS

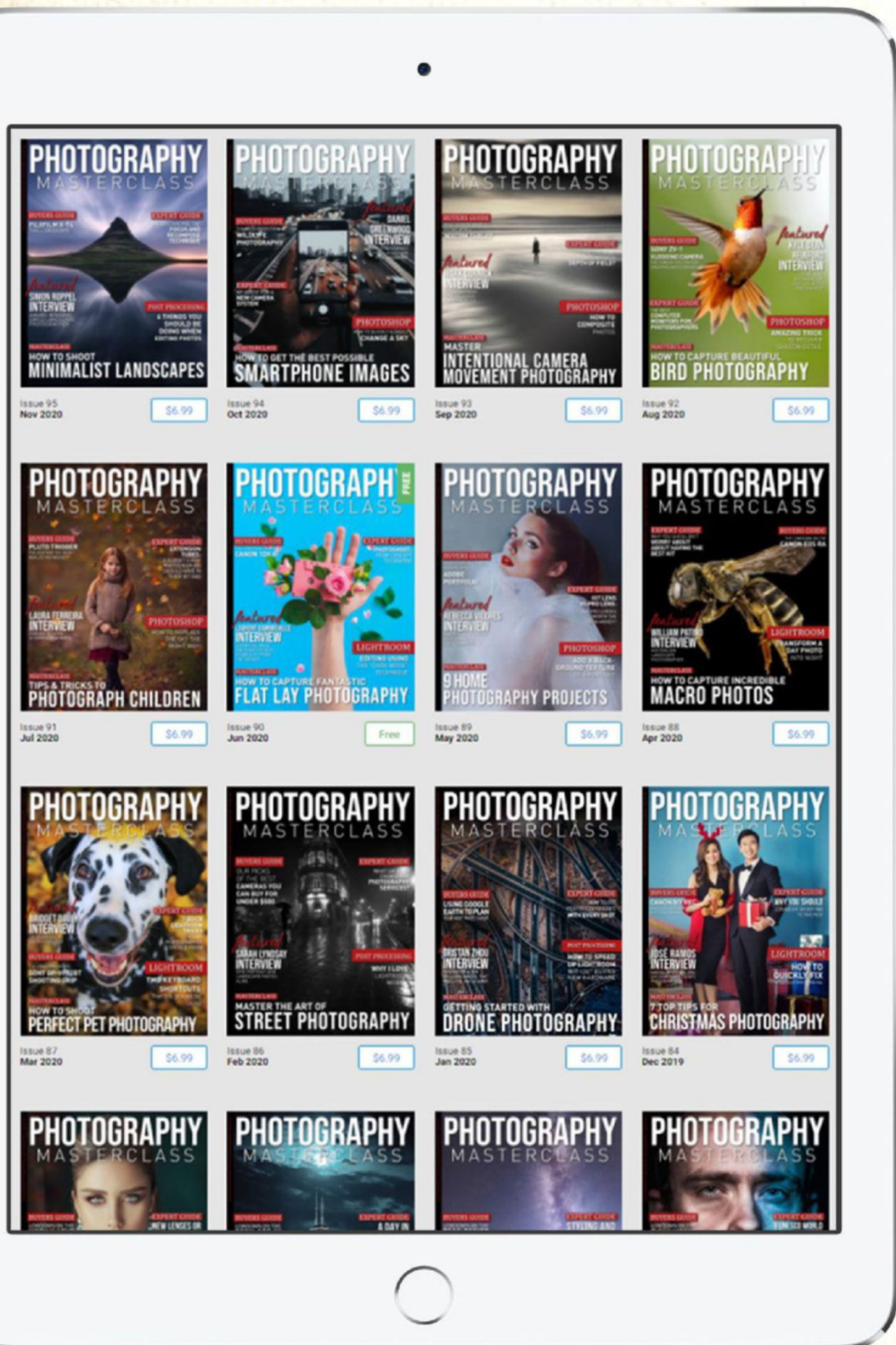


See how to instantly remove impossible reflections off glasses using the new Firefly Image 5 model in both the Photoshop Public Beta and maintain 100% integrity of your original image.

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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If you are a photographer with tips to share and are interested in helping others improve their photography, then we'd love to feature your content in Photography Masterclass Magazine.

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

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

FIND OUT MORE

MASTERCLASS

CARVING LIGHT A MASTERCLASS IN CANYON PHOTOGRAPHY



By: Ashim D'silva
Shot Details: Fujifilm X100T, at 23mm, f/2,
1/450 sec, ISO 400
[Instagram](#)









By: Jocelyn Hsu

Shot Details: Sony a6000, at 19mm, f/4,
1/60 sec, ISO 640

[Website](#)





By: Madhu Shesharam

Shot Details: Canon EOS 7D Mark II, at 11mm,
f/11, 5 sec, ISO 100

[Instagram](#)



By: Peter Olexa
Shot Details: Canon EOS 100D, at 300mm,
f/5.6, 1/2000 sec, ISO 6400
[Instagram](#)



By: Sebastien Gabriel
Shot Details: Canon EOS 6D, at 24mm,
f/4, 1/20 sec, ISO 500
[Instagram](#)



By: Zetong Li

Shot Details: Nikon D700, at 24mm,
f/2.8, 1/400 sec, ISO 1600

[Instagram](#)

CARVING LIGHT A MASTERCLASS IN CANYON PHOTOGRAPHY



Photo by: Jake Johnson

There are few environments on Earth as visually intoxicating, and technically demanding, as a deep, slot canyon. Places like Antelope Canyon or the narrows of Zion offer a surreal landscape where water and time have carved sandstone into beautiful flowing curves.

When the sun is high, shafts of light pierce the gloom, bouncing off the red and orange walls to create an ethereal, glowing atmosphere that seems almost otherworldly.

But as any photographer who has stepped into these canyons will tell you, capturing their true magic is full of challenges. You are battling intense dynamic range, swirling dust, crushing crowds, and the constant struggle to keep your camera steady in low light.

If you want to bring home images that evoke the true majesty of a canyon, you need to approach the shoot with a specific strategy.



Photo by: Sven King

In this masterclass, we will break down the gear, settings, and techniques required to master canyon photography,

ensuring you capture the raw data necessary for a spectacular final edit.

1. GEARING UP FOR THE DEPTHS

Canyon photography is not the time to be changing lenses. The air inside these natural wonders is often thick with fine, abrasive sandstone dust. The moment you expose your camera's sensor to that environment, you risk ruining your shoot with dust spots that will take hours to clone out later.

THE GO-TO LENS

Wide-angle is the name of the game. A lens in the 14-24mm or 16-35mm range is ideal. You want to be able to capture the sweeping curves of the canyon walls and the vastness of the chambers. While a fast aperture (like f/2.8) is helpful for handholding in low light, you will often find yourself stopping down for depth of field or relying on modern noise reduction software.

TO TRIPOD OR NOT TO TRIPOD

In the past, a sturdy tripod was the canyon photographer's best friend. Today, however, many popular slot canyons have strictly banned tripods on general tours to keep crowds moving. Check the regulations of your specific location beforehand.

If tripods are banned, your gear strategy must shift toward stabilization: lenses with built-in VR/IS, camera bodies with In-Body Image Stabilization (IBIS), and a willingness to push your ISO higher than you might prefer.

DUST PROTECTION

Bring a rocket blower, a microfiber cloth, and consider a protective filter for the front of your lens. Do not change lenses inside the canyon under any circumstances. Pick your focal length before you descend and commit to it.



Photo by: *Christopher Burns*



Photo by: David Lusvardi

2. MASTERING EXPOSURE AND DYNAMIC RANGE

The single biggest hurdle in canyon photography is the dynamic range. You are dealing with brilliant, blown-out skies at the canyon rim and deep, impenetrable shadows at the canyon floor. A single exposure simply cannot capture both ends of this spectrum.

THE POWER OF BRACKETING (HDR)

This is where Auto Exposure Bracketing (AEB) becomes mandatory. To capture

the full tonal range, you need to shoot multiple exposures of the exact same scene. A standard bracket of three shots is usually sufficient - one at neutral exposure (0 EV), one underexposed to save the sky highlights (-2 EV), and one overexposed to dig into the dark shadows (+2 EV).

By capturing these bracketed frames, you are gathering all the necessary data to blend them later in post-processing. This ensures you have rich, clean shadows and skies that retain their color and detail rather than blowing out to pure, unrecoverable white.

3. CAMERA SETTINGS

- Aperture: If you have a tripod, stop down to f/8 or f/11 for maximum depth of field. If you are handholding, you may need to open up to f/4 or even f/2.8 to let in enough light, focusing carefully on your primary subject.
- ISO: Keep it as close to your camera's base ISO (usually 100) as possible for maximum dynamic range and minimum noise. If handholding, do not be afraid to push this to ISO 800 or 1600. A sharp, noisy image can be fixed in post; a blurry image is bound for the trash bin.
- Shutter Speed: If handholding then to avoid camera shake, obey the reciprocal rule (shutter speed = $1/\text{focal length}$) as an absolute minimum, though doubling it is safer. If shooting at 14mm, try not to drop below 1/30th or 1/60th of a second without IBIS.



Photo by: Jake Johnson



Photo by: Jake Johnson

4. COMPOSITIONAL STRATEGIES FOR FLOWING ROCK AND LEADING LINES

A canyon can be overwhelming. Everywhere you look, there is a photograph. But without careful composition, those flowing lines can become a chaotic mess of orange rock.

LOOK UP

The most classic canyon shots are taken pointing the camera straight up toward the rim. This isolates the shapes of the walls against the sky (or the glowing rock near the surface) and eliminates the crowds of people inevitably standing in front of you.

FIND THE ABSTRACT

Canyons are a playground for abstract photography. Look for pareidolia - shapes in the rock that resemble familiar objects, faces, or figures. Zoom in on the interplay of light and shadow, focusing on the texture of the sandstone and the sweeping curves.

FOLLOW THE LIGHT

The color of the canyon walls changes dramatically depending on how the light hits them. Direct sunlight creates bright, washed-out yellows and harsh shadows. The real magic happens in the reflected light. When a sunbeam hits a wall out of frame, it bounces a warm, diffused, intensely saturated orange and red glow into the shadows. Expose for this glowing reflected light; it is the true soul of the canyon.

5. UNDERSTANDING WHITE BALANCE IN THE GLOW

One of the most confusing aspects of shooting slot canyons is dealing with color temperature. The light bouncing around the sandstone walls is so intensely red and orange that your camera's Auto White Balance (AWB) will often panic, resulting in flat, muddy, or excessively cool images as the processor tries to compensate for the overwhelming warmth.

Because you are shooting in RAW (which is absolutely necessary for canyon photography), your in-camera white balance setting is largely a placeholder. However, setting it to "Cloudy" or "Shade" while shooting can give you a much more accurate preview on your LCD screen, helping you visualize the final result.

In post-production, you will need to establish a consistent white balance across all your images to maintain the narrative of the location. The goal is to retain the fiery warmth of the rock without turning the shadows into an unnatural muddy brown, often requiring a delicate balance of warming up the highlights while injecting a touch of blue into the shadows to create striking color contrast.

6. CHASING THE LEGENDARY LIGHT BEAMS

If you are hoping to capture the iconic shafts of light that penetrate the canyon floor, timing is everything. These beams are not a constant feature as they only occur during specific times of the year and specific times of the day when the sun is directly overhead.

For most slot canyons in the American Southwest, the prime season for light beams is between late spring and early autumn (May to September). You generally need to be in the canyon between 11:00 AM and 1:30 PM.

Capturing the beams requires dust in the air to catch the light. On busy days, the shuffling feet of tour groups will naturally kick up enough dust to make the beams visible. When shooting a beam, expose for the beam itself, letting the surrounding canyon walls fall into deep, dramatic shadow. This is a scenario where bracketing is less effective, as the dust is rapidly moving; instead, rely on a single frame that protects the highlights of the light shaft.

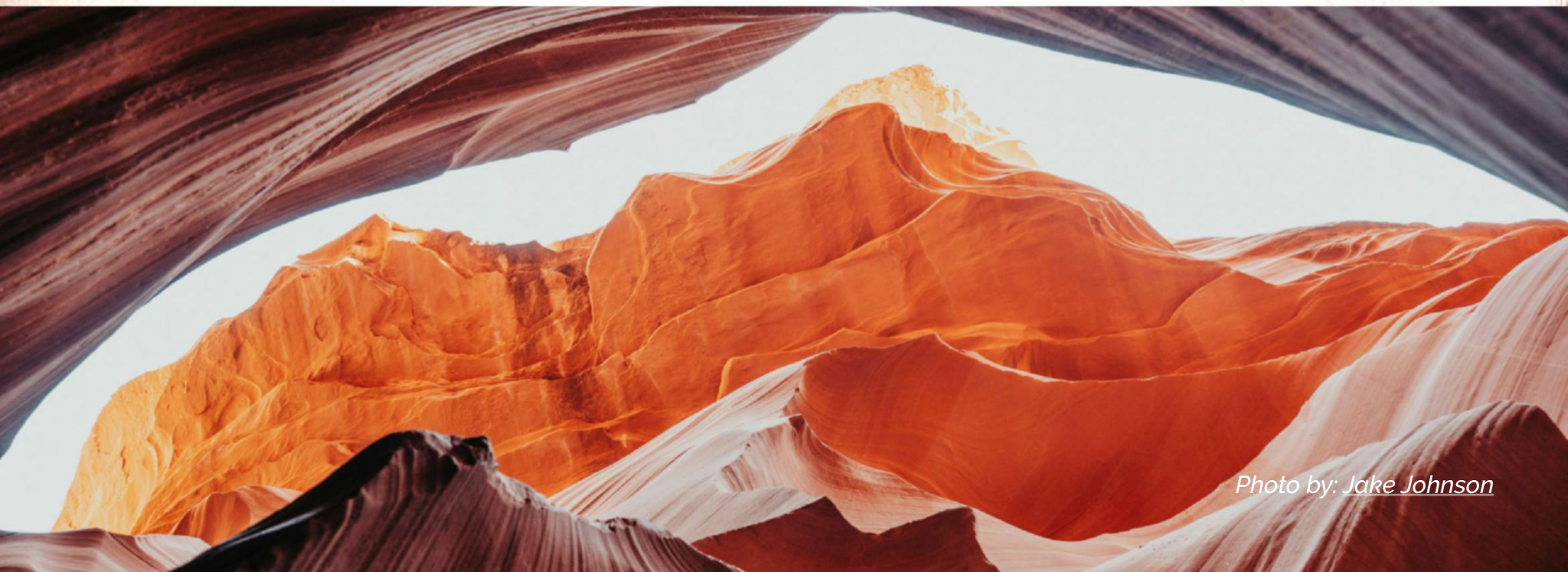


Photo by: Jake Johnson



Photo by: Justin Luebke

7. PRACTICAL TIPS AND ETIQUETTE

PATIENCE AND POLITENESS

Popular canyons are incredibly crowded. You will have people walking into your frame constantly. Breathe, be patient, and work with your guides. Sometimes, including a person in the frame can actually provide a much-needed sense of scale to the massive geological walls around them.

FOCUS PEAKING AND MANUAL FOCUS

In the dim, low-contrast depths of a canyon, your camera's autofocus might

hunt frantically. Switch to manual focus and use focus peaking if your camera supports it. This will save you precious seconds when the light is changing rapidly and people are moving behind you.

PROTECT YOUR HIGHLIGHTS

When reviewing your images on the back of the camera, turn on your highlight blinkies (zebra stripes). The canyon walls should be bright, but you never want the red channel to completely blow out. If your walls are blinking, dial in some negative exposure compensation.

8. SETTING THE STAGE FOR THE DIGITAL DARKROOM

Shooting in a canyon is only the first half of the creative process. The flat, unedited RAW files you pull off your memory card will likely look muddy and lack the vibrant, glowing contrast you saw with your own eyes. Do not be discouraged.

By shooting in RAW, nailing your focus, and utilizing exposure bracketing to tame the extreme dynamic range, you have successfully captured the digital negative. You have preserved

the brilliant blues of the sky peaking through the rim, the intense fiery oranges of the reflected light, and the deep, mysterious shadows of the canyon floor.

The true magic happens when you bring these files into your editing suite. In the post-processing phase, you will merge those bracketed exposures, balance your white balance to unify the scene, and use targeted dodging and burning to make the natural shapes of the rock leap off the screen. Your time in the canyon was spent collecting the clay; now, it is time to sculpt.



Photo by: Photoholic

HOW TO CREATE COLORFUL CANYON PHOTOS USING THIS TOOL IN LIGHTROOM

by Serge Ramelli



Learn how to create colorful and dramatic canyon photos in Lightroom using HDR, masking, white balance, and a powerful Lightroom preset workflow. In this tutorial, I show you how I retouch an Antelope Canyon photo from a flat RAW file into a vibrant, gallery-quality image with rich colors, glowing light, and beautiful detail. You'll learn how

to merge multiple exposures into an HDR photo, recover highlights, open shadows, fix difficult skies, use object masks, create a natural glow with radial gradients, and make canyon colors look more dynamic without overdoing the edit. Download my [free Lightroom presets](#) and try this edit on your own photos

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

I'm passionate about photography. I specialize in landscapes, cities and interior designs. I love to learn new photography or retouching techniques and share them. I like very dramatic type photos, inspired by world famous movies. I think that creating images for people to enjoy is the most amazing job in the world. For more tutorials visit my [website](#) or [YouTube channel](#), or view my [portfolio](#).

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We want to see your own masterclass shots! If you've put the techniques from this issue to the test, share your results with us. Use the hashtag #PhotographyMasterclassMagazine on Instagram for a chance to be featured. We can't wait to see your stunning shots!

#PhotographyMasterclassMagazine



FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHER: SIMON MIGAJ



We interviewed Simon Migaj, a London-based documentary photographer specializing in lifestyle and interior photography. With a background in architecture and a passion for creating images that feel honest and immersive, Simon's work captures the essence of a place — not just how it looks, but how it feels. From remote landscapes to thoughtfully designed interiors, his photography blends patience, natural light, and a deep sense of atmosphere. In this interview, Simon shares his journey from architectural visualizations to photography, his creative process, and the inspiration behind his timeless images.

FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHER







Photographic Speciality/Style:

Documentary photographer specialising in lifestyle and interior photography

Short Bio:

I'm a London-based photographer drawn to atmosphere, light and a strong sense of place.

My work sits somewhere between landscape, travel and architectural photography, but at the core of it all is the same thing: creating images that feel honest, immersive and emotionally grounded. I'm less interested in simply documenting locations and more interested in capturing how a place feels — the weather moving through a landscape, quiet moments in unfamiliar cities, or the way light transforms a space.

Over the years, photography has taken me from the Faroe Islands and Lofoten to Japan, Italy and beyond. Some of

these journeys were planned, others happened almost by accident, but many of the places I return to share the same qualities: solitude, changing conditions and a certain stillness that's difficult to describe but easy to recognise when you feel it.

Alongside personal projects and fine art prints, I also work with clients across travel, hospitality, architecture and design. Whether I'm photographing a remote landscape or a thoughtfully designed interior, my approach remains the same — patient observation, natural light and an attempt to create imagery that feels timeless rather than overly polished or artificial.

When I'm not working on commissions, I'm usually chasing weather forecasts, exploring somewhere unfamiliar, or trying to find quiet moments in places that normally feel crowded.







Your work sits at the intersection of architecture, photography, and visual storytelling — how did that journey begin, and what first pulled you towards image-making?

My path into photography wasn't especially direct.

I originally studied architecture and, after university, started an interior design business. Alongside the design work, I began creating architectural visualisations to present my projects — essentially creating realistic digital images of spaces before they were built, helping clients understand the atmosphere, materials and experience of a design. This was around 2007. Looking back, that period taught me a huge amount about composition, colour, light and how images can shape the way people experience a space.

When the recession hit, the interior design side of the business slowed down significantly, so I shifted my focus more towards architectural visualisation — something that remains a big part of my work today. That was probably the period where I really developed my

eye and became deeply interested in image-making, even though I wasn't yet photographing.

Around that time I moved to London and joined a visualisation studio. The owner happened to be a huge photography enthusiast and introduced me to cameras I'd never had access to before — Nikon D800s and digital Hasselblad systems. That was my first real exposure to photography as something more than documentation.

For better or worse, that was the moment I got hooked.

Since then — which would have been around 2013 — I've rarely gone anywhere without a camera. What started as curiosity gradually became something much bigger and eventually turned into a significant part of both my life and my work.

I think that's also why my photography still feels closely connected to architecture. I'm always thinking about atmosphere, structure, light and how an image makes someone feel inside a place, whether I'm photographing a landscape, a city or an interior.









Where does your inspiration come from, and what continues to excite you creatively about photographing architecture and lifestyle subjects?

I think most of my inspiration comes from places rather than from photography itself.

I've always been drawn to spaces and landscapes that have a strong atmosphere — places where the weather, the light, the materials or even the time of day completely change how they feel. That interest probably started with architecture, because architecture teaches you to think about how people experience a space rather than just how it looks.

Over time that naturally expanded into photography and travel. A lot of inspiration comes from being out in the world —

walking around unfamiliar cities early in the morning, noticing how light moves through a room, returning to places in different weather conditions, or simply paying attention to details that most people pass by.

What still excites me creatively about photographing architecture and lifestyle subjects is that they're really about the same thing: creating a sense of presence. Architecture photography becomes more interesting when it feels lived in, and lifestyle photography becomes stronger when it's connected to a space and atmosphere.

I'm less interested in perfect images and more interested in photographs that make someone feel like they were there — even if they can't immediately explain why.





You work across photography, videography, and 3D visualisation — how do those different disciplines influence one another in your work?

To me they've never felt like completely separate disciplines — they all feed into the same way of seeing.

Architecture taught me to think about space, proportion and how people move through environments. 3D visualisation taught me how to build an image intentionally — understanding light, colour, composition and how small details can influence the mood of an image. Photography introduced something different: unpredictability. Instead of creating conditions, you learn to observe and respond to them.

I think moving between those disciplines has shaped the way I work.

When I'm photographing, I still carry a lot of that visualisation mindset with me — thinking about layers, balance, how light defines a space, and how the viewer's eye moves through the frame. At the same time, photography has probably made my visualisation work better because it's taught me to embrace imperfections and create images that feel more natural and believable.

Video adds another dimension again — time, movement and rhythm. It makes me think less about a single frame and more about how moments connect and how an atmosphere builds over time.

At the end of the day, whether I'm photographing, filming or creating CGI, I think I'm always trying to do the same thing: create images that make people feel something and give them a sense of being there.









Can you describe your typical creative process, from the first brief or idea through to the finished image?

It usually starts with understanding what the image needs to do rather than what it should look like.

Whether it's photography, video or 3D visualisation, I spend time early on trying to understand the intention behind the project — who it's for, what feeling it should create, and what story needs to come across. I find that decisions about composition, light and style become much easier once that's clear and after so many years of creating images, the technical part is usually just second nature.

From there I start gathering references, but not necessarily in a traditional moodboard sense. I'm usually looking more for atmosphere than specific shots — light conditions, materials, colours, pacing, or the emotional tone of an image.

Then comes planning and making. Depending on the project that could mean scouting locations, thinking about time of day and weather, designing camera angles, or building and refining scenes digitally. But I try not to over-plan everything because some of my favourite images come from reacting to unexpected moments rather than forcing an idea.

Once the images are captured, editing becomes a continuation of the process rather than a separate stage. I'm not trying to dramatically transform images in post-production — more to refine what drew me to the scene in the first place and make sure the final image feels cohesive and intentional.

By the end, I usually ask myself a fairly simple question: does this image make me feel something, and does it communicate what we wanted it to? If the answer is yes, it's probably finished.





What is it about architecture and interior spaces that most interests you as a photographer, and what makes an image of a space feel successful to you?

What interests me most about architecture and interiors isn't really the object itself — it's the experience of being in a space.

I think that comes from studying architecture and later working in interior design and visualisation. From early on I was taught to think less about how a building looks in elevation and more about how people move through it, how light changes it throughout the day, and how materials, proportions and details influence the way a place feels.

That's probably still how I approach photography today.

When I photograph architecture or interiors, I'm usually trying to find the moments where a space feels most alive — when the light reveals texture, when a composition creates a sense of calm, or when there's enough context for someone to imagine themselves there.

I'm generally less interested in creating perfectly clean or overly idealised images. Of course, accuracy and clarity matter, especially in architectural work, but I think the strongest images do more than document — they communicate the atmosphere and help people understand something about the character of a space.

For me, a successful image is one that feels inviting and believable. Ideally, someone should be able to look at it and get a sense not just of what a place looks like, but what it might feel like to stand there.









Much of your work helps brands and businesses create content for campaigns, websites, and advertising — how do you balance the client's objectives with your own creative voice?

I've never really seen those two things as being in opposition.

Ultimately, my job is to help clients communicate something effectively, whether that's showcasing a space, telling a story, launching a product or building a brand. The client's objectives always come first because the work needs to serve a purpose.

At the same time, clients usually approach me because they connect with the way I see and interpret the world. They're not just hiring someone to operate a camera;

they're hiring a particular perspective and aesthetic.

For me, the balance comes from understanding the goals of a project as clearly as possible and then finding a way to achieve those goals through my own approach to light, composition and storytelling. I think the best collaborations happen when those two things reinforce one another rather than compete.

Over the years I've learned that creativity isn't about insisting on a particular idea. It's about solving problems in a way that feels authentic to both the client and the work itself.

If I've done my job well, the final images should feel true to the client's brand while still feeling recognisably mine.





Looking back over your career so far, what would you consider to be your greatest achievement, or achievements, in photography?

There have been a number of milestones that I'm grateful for over the years — seeing my work published, collaborating with clients I admire, travelling to places I might never otherwise have visited, and having people choose to hang my photographs in their homes.

But if I had to choose what I'm most proud of, it would probably be building a career around something that started simply as curiosity.

Photography began as a personal interest alongside my work in architecture and visualisation, and over time it grew into something much more significant. The fact that it has allowed me to travel, meet interesting people, work on projects I'm genuinely excited about, and create work that resonates with others is something I don't take for granted.

I'm also proud that I've managed to develop my own visual style over the years. In a world where we're constantly exposed to other people's work, finding your own voice takes time, and I think that's an ongoing process rather than a destination.

Perhaps the achievement that means the most, though, is when someone connects with an image on a personal level. Whether it's a client who feels we've captured the essence of a space, or someone who chooses to live with one of my prints, knowing that a photograph continues to mean something to somebody long after it was taken is incredibly rewarding.

All of that aside, my highlights would definitely be the work I did for General Tire in Scotland and House of Walpole interiors in London. The first one was my last travel assignment before the pandemic so I thought about it a lot over 2020 and 2021. And the second because how often do you get to shoot at 1 Palace Street, right next to Buckingham Palace?!







What's your favourite photograph you've ever taken, and what makes that image so special to you?

To be honest, it's a fairly simple landscape photograph.

The image shows layers of the Italian Alps emerging from the morning light. From a purely photographic perspective, I've probably taken more dramatic or technically challenging images, but this one has always stayed with me because of the experience behind it.

The day before, my friends and I had been hiking around Aiguille de Rochefort, a peak on the border between France and Italy. At the end of the day, we set up camp nearby and spent the night at around 3,700 metres above sea level.

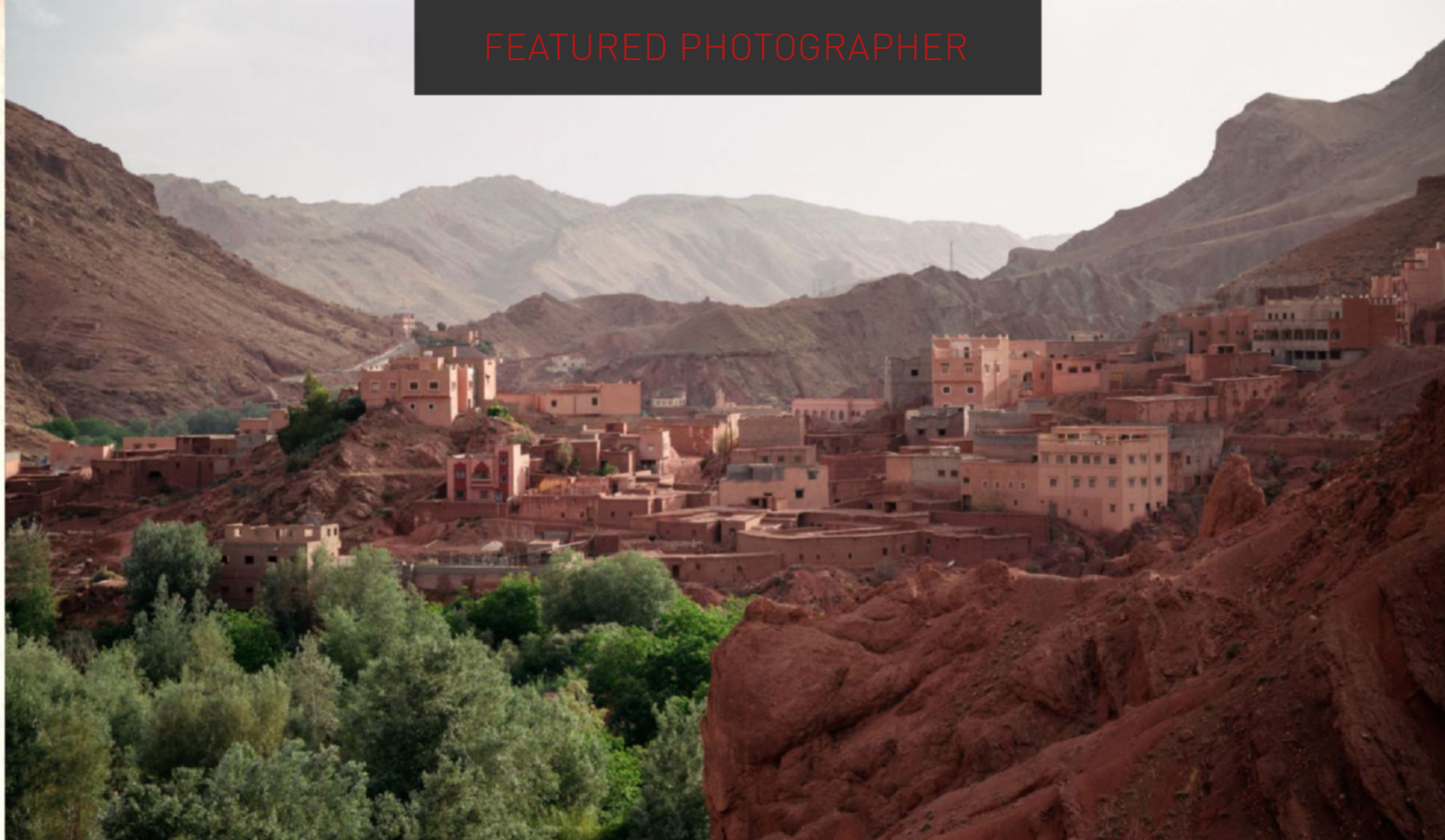
Waking up there the following morning and watching the first light slowly reveal the mountains was unforgettable. There's something special about experiencing a place like that after putting in the effort to reach it. I was technically standing in France, photographing Italy, with some of the highest peaks in the Alps stretching out in front of me.

Whenever I look at that photograph, it takes me straight back to that morning. I can remember the cold air, the silence, the excitement of being there and the feeling that, for a brief moment, everything had come together perfectly.

I think that's why it's my favourite photograph. It reminds me that some images become important not because of how they look, but because of the memories and experiences attached to them.







What is your long-term photographic ambition, and are there any projects or directions you're especially keen to explore next?

My long-term ambition is to continue building a creative career that combines photography, architectural visualisation and, increasingly, videography.

The last year has been a significant one for me personally. Becoming a father has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life, but it also meant putting some professional ambitions on hold for a while. Now that things are settling into a new rhythm, I'm excited to refocus my energy on growing the parts of my work that I'm most passionate about.

In the coming years, I'd like to further develop both my architectural photography and visualisation work, expand my client base, and bring more video into the mix. I'm particularly interested in working with clients internationally, not only because it opens up new creative opportunities, but also because it gives me a reason to explore new places, experience different cultures and continue learning through travel.

One of the projects I'm most excited about right now is a book that I'm hoping to complete by the end of the year. It will be a deeply personal project centred around my family, my upbringing and the places that shaped me. While photography will, of course, sit at the heart of it, I'm hoping it will become something more than a collection of images—a reflection on identity, memory and the connections between people and place.

I'd also like to continue growing the print side of my photography. There's something uniquely rewarding about creating work for yourself and then seeing it find a place in someone else's home. Knowing that an image continues to live with someone long after it was taken is a special feeling.

More than anything, I'd like to keep creating meaningful work, keep challenging myself creatively, and keep finding opportunities to tell stories through images. If I can do that while working with great clients, travelling occasionally, and still making time for personal projects, I'll consider myself very fortunate.





What's currently inside your kit bag, which one piece of kit could you not do without, and what would be in your dream kit bag if there were no limits?

To be honest, I think I'm already carrying my dream kit bag.

These days my personal cameras are a Leica M11 and a Leica M7, usually paired with a 35mm and 50mm Summilux. They're the cameras that go everywhere with me. Whether I'm travelling, walking around London or spending time with my family, there's almost always one within reach.

There's something about the Leica system that just encourages you to use it. The cameras feel great in the hand, they're beautifully simple, and they get out of the way in a way that lets you focus entirely on seeing rather than operating a camera. Over the years they've become a natural extension of how I like to photograph.

For professional work, my main camera is still a Sony A7R III. It's my workhorse and has been with me on countless architectural and interior photography projects. Most jobs will see me carrying a 16–35mm, a 50mm and a 70–200mm, which covers pretty much everything I need. It may not have the romance of the Leica, but it's an incredibly reliable tool and has never let me down when it matters.

If I had to choose one piece of kit I couldn't do without, it would probably be the Leica M11 paired with the 50mm Summilux. That's the combination that has travelled with me the most and the one that feels the most natural in my hands.

As for a dream kit bag with no limits, I honestly don't think I'd change very much. I've reached a point where I'm more interested in where a camera takes me than in the camera itself.

The only thing I'd really love is for my Leica to shoot video as well. Then I'd have the best of both worlds.









What advice would you give to photographers who are just starting out, especially those who'd love to move into architectural or commercial photography?

This is probably where I'm a bit less romantic than many photographers.

I love photography, but I've always tried to be realistic about it as a profession. The truth is that it's becoming increasingly difficult to make a comfortable living from photography alone. Competition is higher than ever, technology is changing quickly, and many clients expect more than just still images.

Because of that, my advice would be to diversify.

That doesn't mean losing focus or trying to do everything. It means building a broader creative skill set around photography. In my own career, architecture led to interior design, interior design led to architectural visualisation, and visualisation eventually led to photography. More recently, I'm adding videography to that mix as well.

The advantage of working across related disciplines is that they strengthen one another. The skills transfer, the clients often overlap, and you're not relying on a single source of income or a single type of project.

I'd also encourage photographers to think of themselves not just as photographers, but as creative problem-solvers. Clients rarely come to you because they need photographs. They come to you because they need help communicating something, whether that's a building, a product, a brand or a story. The more ways you can help them do that, the more valuable you become.

Most importantly, don't be discouraged if your career doesn't follow a straight line. Mine certainly didn't. Looking back, many of the opportunities that shaped my career came from being open to new skills, new industries and unexpected directions rather than following a carefully planned path.

Photography can absolutely be part of a successful creative career. Just don't be afraid to build that career around more than photography alone.





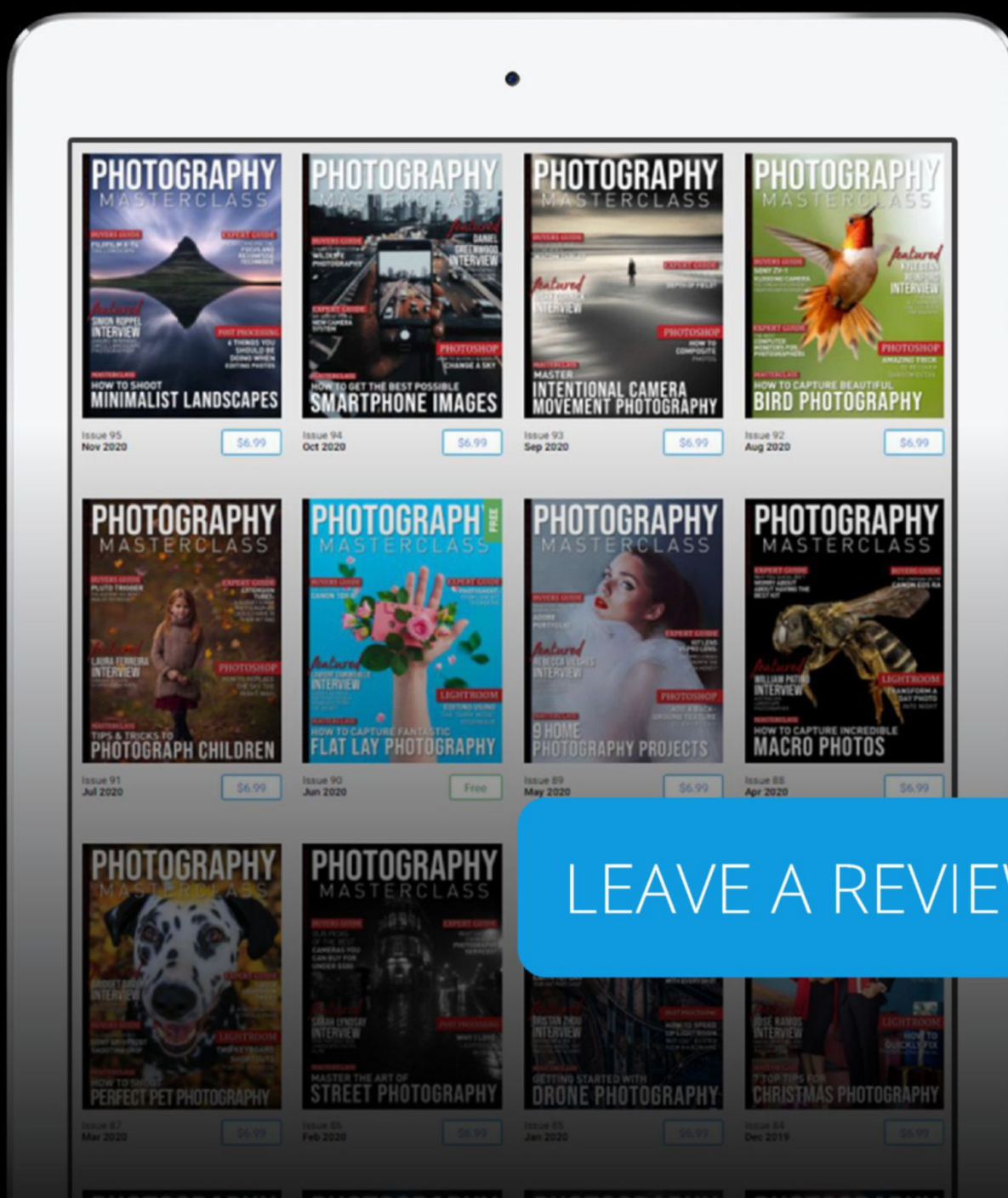
FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHER



Follow more of Simon Migaj's work on his [website](#) and [Instagram](#)

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STANDING TALL MILLBROOK

By: Shaun Jones

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STORMY WINTER BUSSELTON

By: Shaun Jones

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HILLSDALE LAKE

By: Tom Arnhold

Shot Details: Canon R6 II, at 10mm, f/9,
1/320 sec, ISO 125

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



THE SHY ONE

By: Brian Ford

Shot Details: Canon 6D Mark II, at 200mm, f/4.5,
1/2000 sec, ISO 800



By: Peter Thomas
Shot Details: Sony a7R V, at 24mm, f/2.8,
1/2500 sec, ISO 160
[Instagram](#)



By: Gantavya Bhatt
Shot Details: Fujifilm X-T2, at 81.9mm,
f/7.1, 1/100 sec, ISO 1600
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By: Gantavya Bhatt
Shot Details: Fujifilm X-T2, at 50mm,
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THE \$100 STUDIO

10 INDISPENSABLE PIECES OF PHOTOGRAPHY GEAR THAT WON'T BREAK THE BANK



Photo by: [Aditya Wardhana](#)

Photography is a notoriously expensive profession. Between upgrading camera bodies to chasing the latest tech, investing in flawless fast-aperture glass, and building out a comprehensive lighting kit, it is remarkably easy to empty a bank account.

We constantly obsess over the big-ticket items, like the \$2,000 lenses and the \$3,000 strobes. But if you spend enough time on professional sets, you quickly realize that the gear keeping a shoot running smoothly rarely costs four figures. Often, the most valuable items in a photographer's kit bag are the cheap, utilitarian accessories that solve immediate problems.

Recently, Adorama TV host Gary Hughes reached out to his email community with a simple prompt: What is your favorite piece of photography gear under \$100? The responses poured in, revealing a fascinating mix of lighting modifiers, workflow enhancements, and clever set hacks.

Based on his findings (and the accompanying video we've included after this article) here is a deep dive into 10 indispensable pieces of photography gear under \$100 that working professionals swear by.

1. KUPO BABY OFFSET ARM

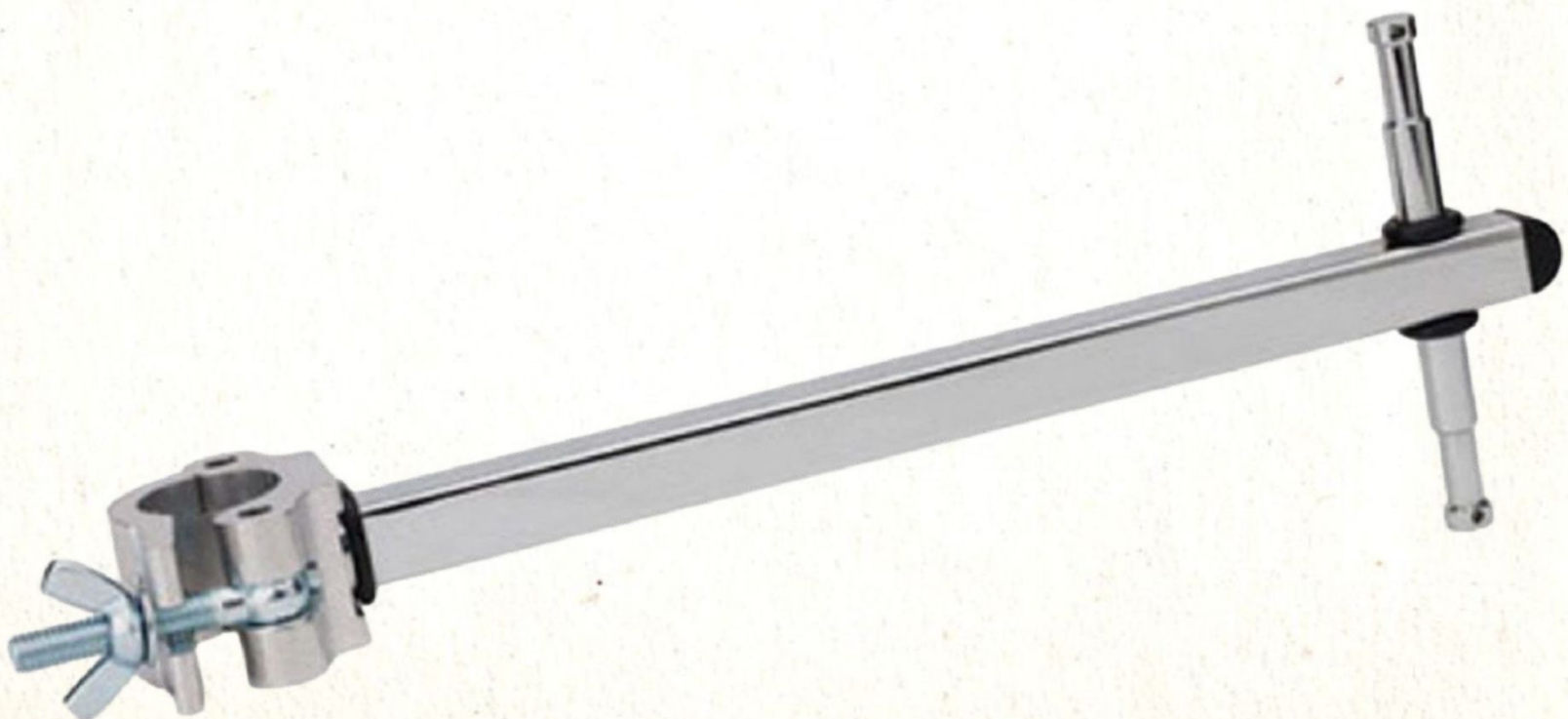
Recommended by Harrison Boyd

Lighting a portrait efficiently often requires finessing the exact position of your key light or hair light. While

a heavy-duty boom arm can put a light exactly where you need it, full booms are notoriously cumbersome, require heavy sandbagging, and eat up valuable floor space in tight home studios or small on-location rooms.

Enter the Kupo Baby Offset Arm. This simple, rugged piece of metal provides just enough horizontal extension to push a strobe over a subject's shoulder or extend it past the center column of your light stand.

It completely eliminates the need for a massive boom setup when you just need a few inches of clearance. For headshot and portrait photographers working in confined spaces, this elegant solution prevents light stands from creeping into the bottom of the frame while keeping the setup incredibly stable.



2. GODOX C30BI LITEMONS BI-COLOR LED PANEL

Recommended by Jimmy Ferrara

Sometimes dragging out a full strobe kit is massive overkill. Whether you are adding a quick hair light to a corporate headshot, illuminating a dark corner of a reception venue for a wedding detail shot, or shooting a quick behind-the-scenes video clip, small LED panels are lifesavers.

The Godox C30Bi Litemons is a pocket-sized powerhouse. What makes this specific light punch above its weight class is its bi-color functionality, allowing you to instantly match the color temperature of your ambient environment - whether that's cool daylight spilling through a window or warm tungsten bulbs in a moody hotel lobby.

It is exceptionally bright for its footprint, easy to mount anywhere, and takes up virtually zero space in a camera bag. (For those looking to get experimental, Godox also makes a full RGB version for creative color splashes).



3. GLOW 5-IN-1 COLLAPSIBLE REFLECTOR

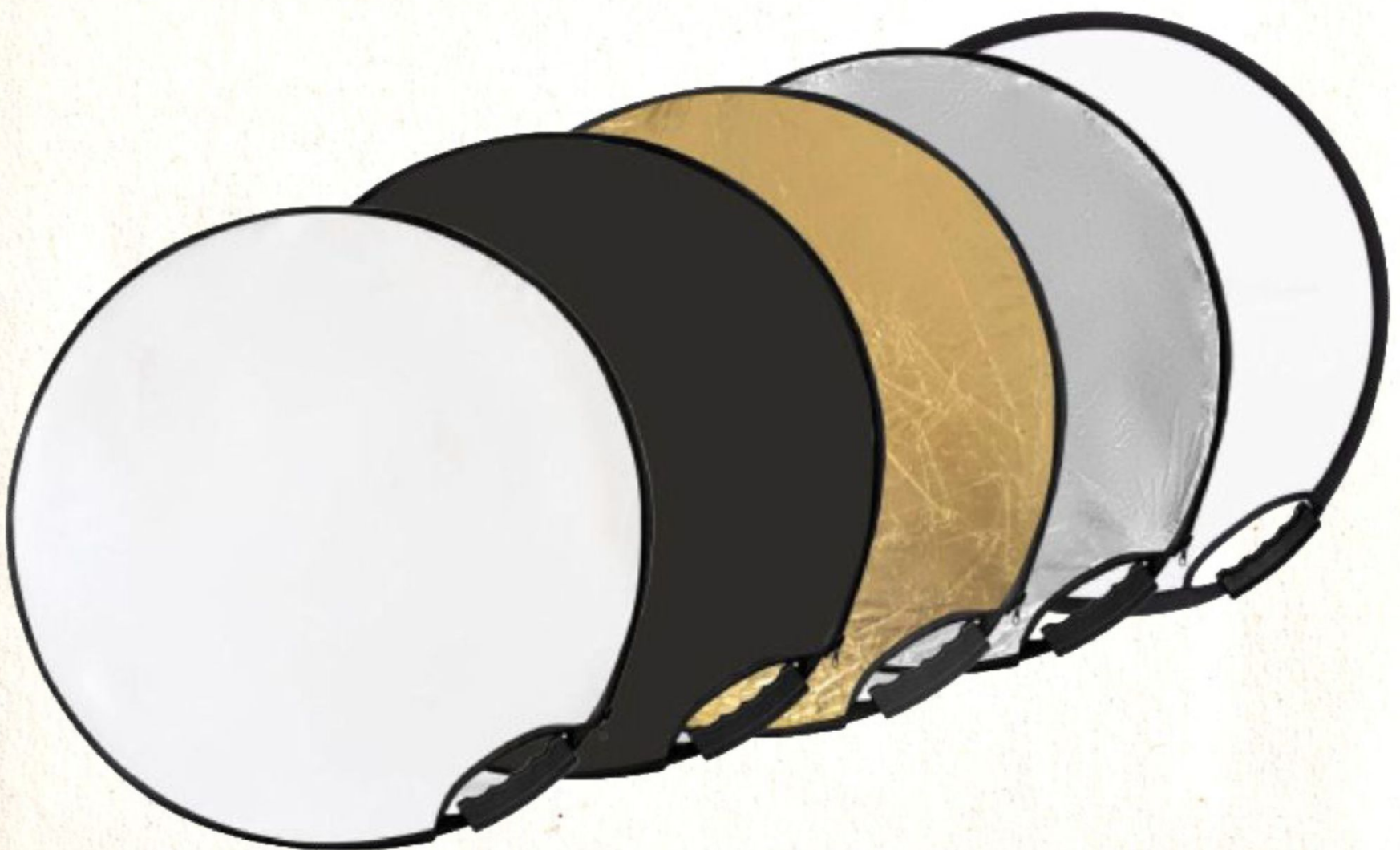
Recommended by Steven Easley

If you have less than \$50 to spend on lighting, you shouldn't buy a light at all. You should buy a 5-in-1 reflector. It remains the undisputed king of value-for-dollar photography gear.

A collapsible reflector allows you to harness the sun or bounce your existing strobes to fill in harsh shadows, add a catchlight to your subject's eyes, or flag

off unwanted light entirely. The Glow 5-in-1 model specifically improves on the classic design by incorporating built-in rigid handles.

Anyone who has ever tried to hold a cheap, floppy reflector steady on a windy beach knows exactly how frustrating it can be; those handles alone are worth the price of admission, giving you or your assistant a firm, comfortable grip to control the bounce.



4. DATACOLOR SPYDER CHECKR PHOTO COLOR CHART

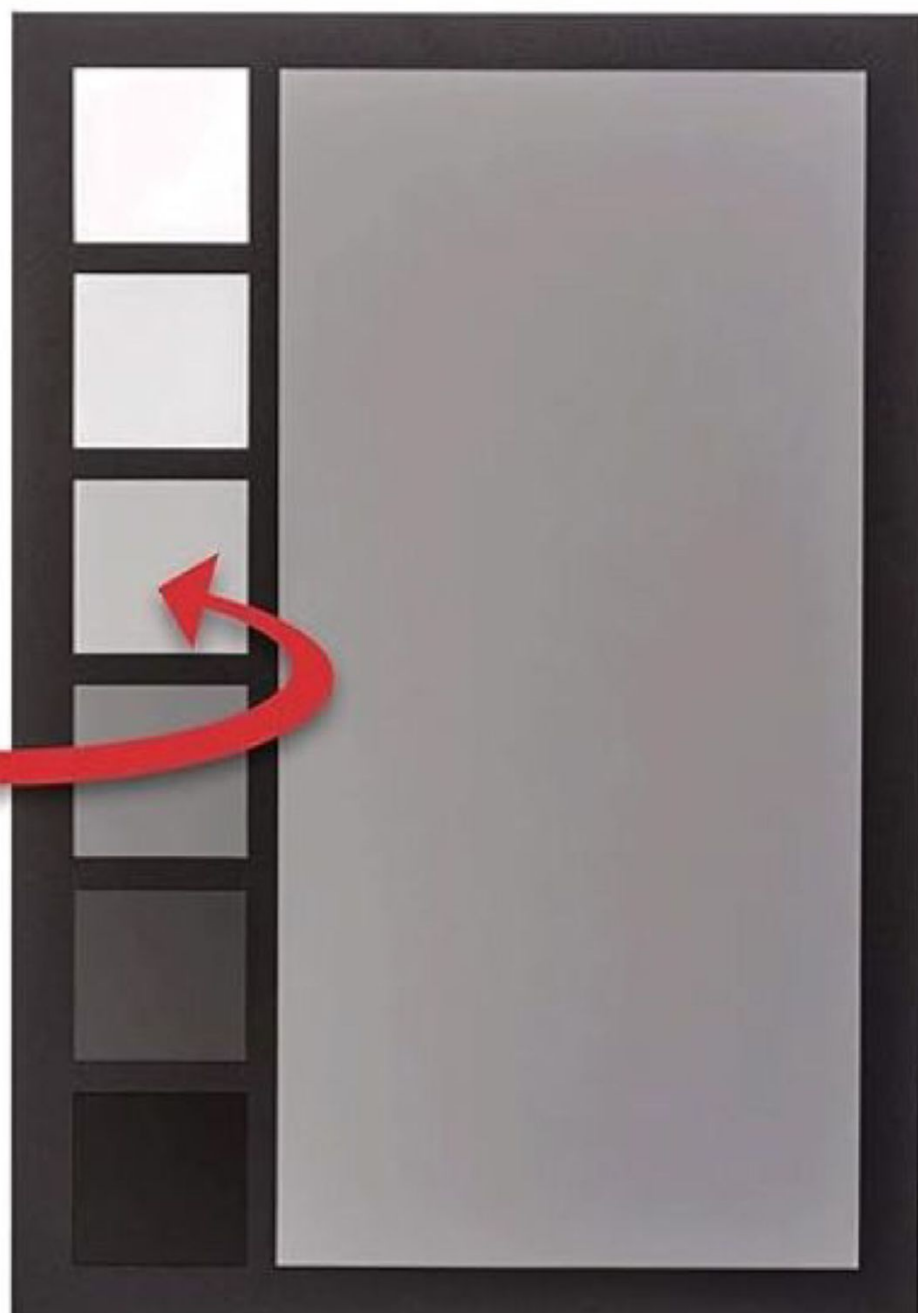
Recommended by Adriana Escalante

No one buys a color chart because it's exciting. They buy it because they are tired of spending hours endlessly tweaking tint and temperature sliders in Lightroom.

For product, fashion, and commercial photographers, accurate color isn't a

stylistic choice, it's a strict requirement. If a client sends you a dress or a product with a highly specific brand color, delivering photos with a magenta color cast is a fast track to losing a client.

The Datacolor Spyder Checkr allows you to take one reference photo at the beginning of a lighting setup. In post-production, your software can read that chart and automatically create a color profile that perfectly balances the scene. It turns an hour of frustrating color-matching into a one-click automated process.



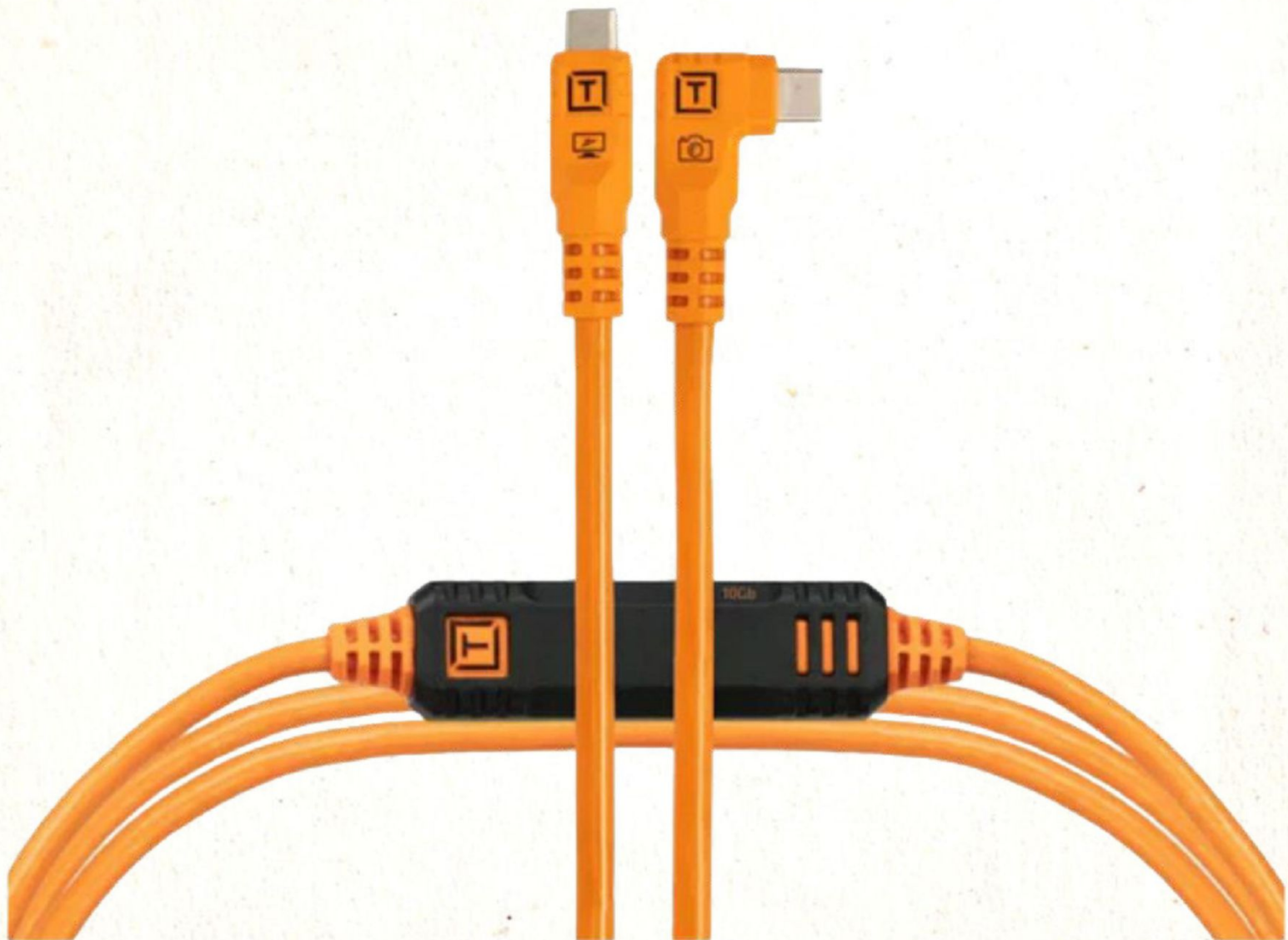
5. TETHER TOOLS

TETHERPRO OPTIMA 10G CABLE

Recommended by Barry Bronstein

Shooting tethered, which is connecting your camera directly to a computer so images appear on a large screen in real-time, is the industry standard for commercial work. It builds client confidence and allows you to check critical focus immediately. But a tethered workflow is only as strong as its weakest link, which is almost always the cable.

Standard USB cables are not designed to carry massive raw files quickly, nor are they built to survive being repeatedly stepped on by a frantic crew. The TetherPro Optima cables are engineered specifically for the physical abuse and data demands of professional photography sets. They are noticeably faster at transferring high-resolution files, preventing that dreaded lag between the shutter click and the image preview, and their rugged casing ensures they won't die on you in the middle of an advertising campaign.



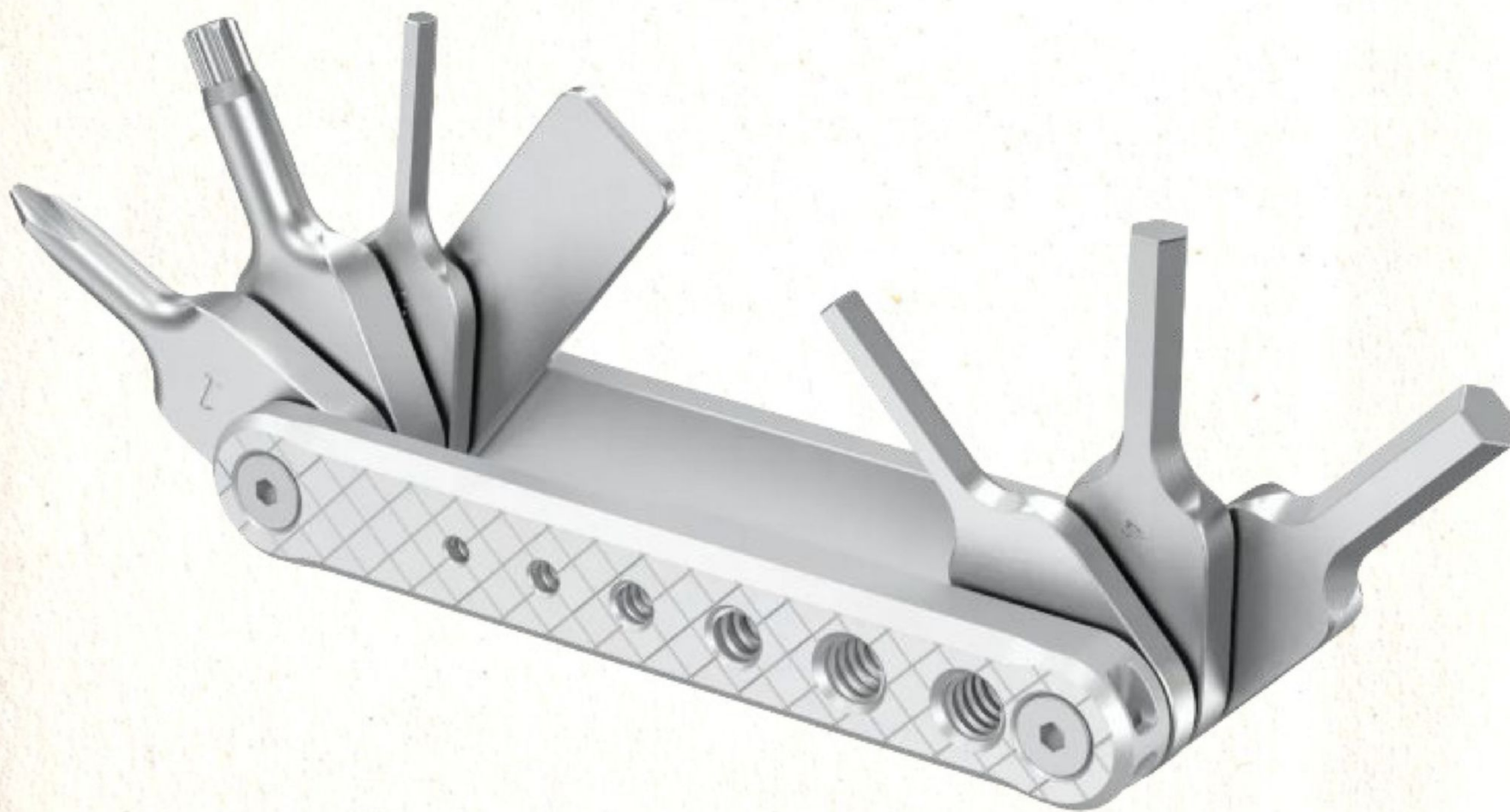
6. SMALLRIG 7-IN-1 FOLDABLE MULTITOOL

Recommended by Jim Felder

Murphy's Law dictates that the exact moment you have a stunning sunset and a willing model is the exact moment your tripod plate will come dangerously loose. Photographers are constantly battling loosening screws on camera cages, light stands, and baseplates.

Instead of scrambling for a quarter or destroying your fingernails, the SmallRig 7-in-1 foldable multitool provides all the specific Allen wrenches, flatheads, and screwdrivers you need, packaged in a sleek, pocketable form factor. It is the definition of a daily-carry item.

Once you attach one to your keychain or slip it into your side pocket, you will genuinely wonder how you ever functioned on set without it.



7. FLASHPOINT FLASH TUBE PROTECTOR

Recommended by Mike Price

The Flashpoint Evolve 200 (also known as the Godox AD200) revolutionized location lighting by putting the power of a studio strobe into a speedlight-sized body. However, utilizing its incredibly useful bare-bulb head comes with a massive risk: the delicate glass flash tube is completely exposed.

Throwing a bare-bulb flash into a heavy gear bag alongside metal light stands

and heavy lenses is a recipe for shattered glass and an expensive repair bill.

Mike Price's recommendation of the Flashpoint Flash Tube Protector is a no-brainer. For just a few dollars, this simple protective cap slides over the bare bulb during transport. It saves setup time by allowing you to leave the bulb attached to the flash body while completely neutralizing the risk of breakage. It is the cheapest insurance policy you will ever buy for your lighting kit.



8. PANASONIC ENELOOP RECHARGEABLE BATTERIES

Recommended by Michael Joseph

In the era of proprietary lithium-ion camera batteries, it's easy to forget how much gear still relies on standard AAs. Speedlights, wireless triggers, light meters, and continuous LED accents burn through alkaline batteries at an alarming (and expensive) rate.

Panasonic Eneloops have held legendary status among wedding and event photographers for over a

decade. Unlike cheaper rechargeable alternatives, Eneloops have an incredibly low self-discharge rate, meaning you can charge them in January, leave them in your bag, and confidently use them in June.

More importantly, they provide exceptionally fast recycle times for speedlights, ensuring your flash is ready to fire when the bride and groom go in for their first kiss. Switching to Eneloops not only saves hundreds of dollars over time, but it drastically cuts down on toxic environmental waste.



9. PROTAPES POCKET SPIKE TAPE STACK

Recommended by Robin Skimbody

Gaffer tape is the undisputed duct tape of the production world. It holds gels to strobes, secures loose cables to the floor to prevent tripping hazards, and fixes broken gear in a pinch, all without leaving a sticky residue. But lugging around a massive, heavy roll of standard gaffer tape is annoying.

The ProTapes Pocket Spike Tape Stack solves this brilliantly. These are small, travel-sized rolls of brightly colored gaffer tape that easily slide into the tiniest pockets of a camera bag. Beyond quick repairs, the bright colors make them phenomenal organizational tools.

Photographers use them to mark where a model should stand (spiking the mark), label memory cards, or color-code hard drives so you instantly know which SSD holds the primary files and which holds the backups.



10. ROSCO MATTE BLACK CINEFOIL

Recommended by Seth Miranda

Rounding out the list is a recommendation from fellow Adorama TV host Seth Miranda, and it is an unsung hero of dramatic lighting. Cinefoil (often referred to as Black Wrap) is essentially heavy-duty aluminum foil that has been anodized matte black.

Its ability to absorb light and withstand extreme heat makes it the ultimate

makeshift lighting modifier. If your strobe is spilling light onto a background you want to keep completely dark, you can rip off a piece of Cinefoil and mold it directly onto the flash head to flag the light perfectly. You can shape it into snoots to create a tiny spotlight effect, craft makeshift barn doors, or punch holes in it to project dynamic, cinematic shadow patterns on a wall. It is incredibly cheap, infinitely reusable, and gives you hyper-precise control over your lighting that traditional modifiers simply can't match.





Photo by: [Daniil Kondrashin](#)

IN CONCLUSION

It is remarkably easy to get paralyzed by "Gear Acquisition Syndrome," constantly believing that the next expensive camera body will magically improve your portfolio. But as this community-sourced list proves, the gear that actually changes your day-to-day workflow is often unglamorous, utilitarian, and highly affordable.

By investing a few dollars in the right cables, batteries, clamps, and tape, you remove the frustrating friction from your shoots. And when you aren't fighting your equipment, you are free to focus entirely on the only thing that actually matters, which is the image in front of your lens.

10 PIECES OF PHOTOGRAPHY GEAR **UNDER \$100** PHOTOGRAPHERS SWEAR BY

by ADORAMA



In this video, Gary Hughes shares 10 indispensable pieces of photography gear under \$100, all suggested by photographers from his email community. From lighting tools and tether cables to multitools, batteries, and clever accessories, these affordable tools can make a big difference in your photography workflow.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

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

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