

ALAMANCE PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB

2012–2024



August 2024 Newsletter

www.alamancephoto.com

www.facebook.com/alamancephotoclub



Photo by Jack Blomquist

APC ACTIVITIES

Our club will be taking a different approach in 2024. While our Programs, PhotoShows and Field Trips will continue, all will be geared towards an overall theme of learning and practicing basic photography.

We will also be adding some workshops to the mix. We feel our planned activities will appeal to both novice and advanced photographers alike and provide an opportunity for us to learn more from each other.

See more about what we have planned for 2024 on pages 3 & 4. We hope this will be a fun and educational experience for all. – Your editor

President's Comments—August 2024

By Keith O'Leary

Hi. Welcome to August. I always thought August was the hottest month of the year in NC but according to Google, July is the hottest and temps start to slowly decrease in August. Anyway, here are a few fun facts about August that may, or may not, interest you.

- August is the only month that is also one of the top 1,000 names for men.
- The Perseid meteor showers occur every year in August and can be one of the most spectacular shows in the sky. This year they will peak on the night of Aug 11th. Click [HERE](#) for more info.
- 08/02: National Ice Cream Sandwich Day
- 08/03: National Sunflower Day, Disc Golf Day (the first Sat in Aug) and Watermelon Day!
- 08/07: National Lighthouse Day
- 08/13: National Filet Mignon Day (Field trip to Texas Roadhouse anyone?)
- 08/19: National Soft Ice Cream Day (Another field trip?)
- 08/21: National Spumoni Day
- 08/24: National Peach Pie Day
- 08/25: National Banana Split Day

Whew! Too bad *National Exercise Day* isn't until next April! (18th)

In case you haven't heard, we are now taking orders for club T-shirts and Polos with our club name and logo. The T-shirts will be DTF printed and the Polos will be embroidered. Check your inbox for more info and a link for online ordering. Shirts may also be ordered at any club meeting. We need at least 12 of each to place our first order and currently we have orders for 6 polos and 4 Tees.

Are you good at taking notes and publishing meeting minutes? We are looking for someone to serve as our club secretary for our board meetings. If you would like to try this out or learn more, please reach out to me during any of our gatherings or simply email alamancephoto@gmail.com

Stay cool and happy shooting!

Keith O'Leary

APC BOARD

President	Keith O'Leary	Interim Exhibit Chair	Christie O'Leary
Vice President	John Reich	Outings/Field Trips	Hugh Comfort
Secretary	<i>open</i>	Membership	Ken Sellers
Treasurer	George Siple	Web Master	Christie O'Leary
PhotoShow Chair	David Hall	Editor	Ray Munns

2024 Alamance Photography Club Activities

- Jan. 15th** Program: Sean Leahy – Birds from Colombia
- Feb. 19th** PhotoShow: The Rule of Thirds (and ‘Back to Basics’ Ice Cream Social)
- Mar. 18th** PhotoShow: Photograph **three (3)** of the following:
Close-up of a person
2 to 3 people interacting
Action shot
Animal shot
Nature shot
- Apr. 15th** Program: George Bohannon – Camera Basics with a Twist of History
- May 4th** Field Trip/Workshop:
Place: Burlington Arboretum
Objective: Understanding Light & Exposure
Exercise: Experiment with different light sources and exposure settings.
- May 20th** PhotoShow: One subject using 2 different light sources
- June 1st** Field Trip/Workshop:
Place: Center for Creative Leadership, Greensboro
Objective: Understanding Depth of Field, Composition, Angle of View
Exercise: Experiment taking same compositions with shallow (wide aperture) and deep (narrow aperture) depths of field and from different angles.
- June 17th** PhotoShow: One Subject with 2 Different depths of field
- June 29th** Field Trip/Workshop:
Place: Burlington City Park
Objective: Understanding Stop Action vs Motion Blur
Exercise: Experiment taking stop action & capturing motion blur from same or similar subjects.
- July 15th** PhotoShow: Stop Action & Motion Blur of Same (or Similar) Subject
- Aug. 19th** PhotoShow: One subject from 2 different angles/perspectives
- Sep. 16th** Program: Photo Editing Demonstration/Workshop (Dan Walker)
- Oct. 21st** Program: Dr. Jim Herrington – Drone Photography
- Nov. 18th** PhotoShow: Photos from North Carolina
- Dec. 16th** Christmas Party, Slideshow, Buy/Sell/Swap

2024 Programs

JAN: Sean Leahy – Birds from Colombia

APR: George Bohannon – Camera Basics with a Twist of History

SEP: Photo Editing Workshop/Presentation (Dan Walker)

OCT: Jim Harrington – Drone Photography

2024 PhotoShows

FEB: The Rule of Thirds (and 'Back to Basics' Ice Cream Social!)

MAR: Photograph **three (3)** of the following:

Close-up of a person

2 to 3 people interacting

Action shot

Animal shot

Nature shot

MAY: One subject with 2 Different light sources

JUN: One Subject with 2 Different depths of field

JUL: Stop Action & Blur Motion of Same (or Similar) Subject

AUG: One subject from 2 different angles/perspectives

NOV: Photos from North Carolina

(Tentative) Field Trip/Work Shops

5/4: Place: Burlington Arboretum
Objective: Understanding Light & Exposure
Exercise: Experiment with different light sources and exposure settings.

6/1: Place: Center for Creative Leadership, Greensboro
Objective: Understanding Depth of Field, Composition, Angle of View
Exercise: Experiment taking same compositions with shallow (wide aperture) and deep (narrow aperture) depths of field and from different angles.

6/29: Place: Burlington City Park
Objective: Understanding Stop Action vs Blur Motion
Exercise: Experiment taking stop action and capturing blur motion from same or similar subjects.



WEBMASTER NOTES

At your fingertips, you have access to:

- The club's current month events + Calendar of all 2024 Events
- PhotoShow themes and several submissions from each month for 2024, as well as 2023 PhotoShow winners.
- Member Galleries
- Newsletters from 2023-2024

So check out our website at www.alamancephoto.com

Christie O'Leary—Webmaster

Fall Exhibit

The Beauty of Nature

Alamance Photography Club's Fall Exhibit at Alamance Arts

September 18, 2024 – October 18, 2024

Each photographer who has signed a contract may display up to 5 photographs.

Next Deadline August 21st: Inventory List and Brief Biography (4 to 5 sentences) and/or artist statement. Keep watch on your inbox for a blank inventory sheet!

***If you desire to participate and have not already signed a contract, please notify Christie.**

If you have any questions, contact Christie O'Leary at 336-693-8269 or at apcphotoexhibit@gmail.com.

Looking forward to our Fall exhibit,
Christie O'Leary (Interim Exhibit Chair)

APC Membership Corner

August 2024

Join me in welcoming our newest member, Spencer Wiersma, who lives in Burlington and joined by taking advantage of our special 50% off membership offer for the remainder of this year! Do you know anyone who is interested in photography? Now is a good time to ask them to join the APC! Beginning July 1, 2024, there is a cool way to become a member. Membership for the remainder of 2024 is 50% off the current yearly membership. For the last 6 months of membership in 2024, it is only \$21 for an individual membership and only \$31 for a family membership! Now is the time to jump in and cool off with this really cool special offer!

Ken Sellers

Membership Chair



Photo by Keith O'Leary

August 19th PhotoShow

“Two Different Angles or Perspectives of the Same Subject”

David Hall, PhotoShow Chair

Continuing with different themes for this month. Everyone can submit 2 photos. The 2 photos should be of the same subject but taken from different angles or perspectives.

Submission Guidelines:

Number of Entries: Two (2) entries per member.

Format: .jpg

File Naming: Please name your photos using the following format:

Firstname.lastname_01, _02

Examples: john.doe_01.jpg john.doe_02.jpg

Size: Between 1 and 25 MB

Email: Send all images to apcphotoshow@gmail.com

Email Subject Line: include the month of the PhotoShow and your name

Example: Photos for August PhotoShow – John Doe

Entry Deadline: Wednesday, August 14, 2024

Please Note:

Submissions that do not adhere to the guidelines above may be returned.

*If you have any issues with formatting or submitting, please let us know at apcphotoshow@gmail.com and we will be happy to assist. Also, **let us know if your submitted photo is not acknowledged within a few days and/or by the deadline.***

July 15th PhotoShow: "Stop Action & Motion Blur"



Photos by George Siple



Photos by Hugh Comfort



Photos by John Reich

July 15th PhotoShow Photos . . . Continued

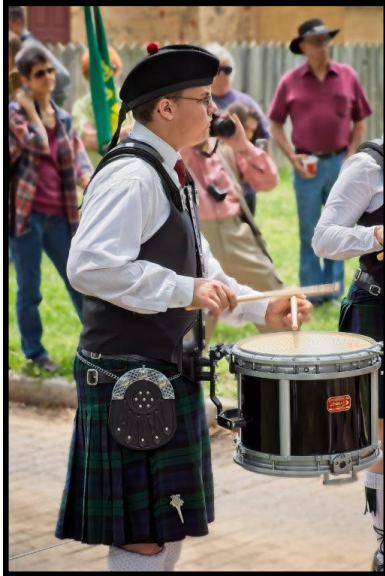
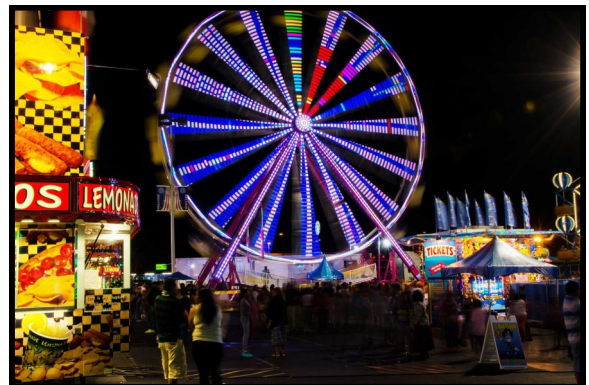


Photo by Tom Jamison

Photos by David Hall



Photos by Keith O'Leary



Photos by Ray Munns

APC Trading Post

Submit brief descriptions of photography items you would like to sell, swap or purchase to Ray Munns (raymunns@bellsouth.net) no later than the 20th of each month. Please include your name, contact info (phone and/or email) and if each item is for sale or something you are looking to purchase. Also notify Ray when items should be removed from the newsletter.

David Hall (dlhallofnc@gmail.com or 919-840-8198)

Cokin Filters – for “P” System

ND Grad Kit --- \$26 / OBO

- Filter Holder
- Filters – Graduated Neutral Density
- ND Grad Soft [3 f.stops]
- ND Grad Med [2 f.stops]
- ND Grad Light [1 f.stop]

Adapter Rings with Caps --- \$7.50 each / OBO

- 52mm [extension ring]
- 55mm
- 62mm
- 67mm

Domke Canvas Camera Bag

This bag can hold two cameras and 6 lenses plus accessories. The four-compartment padded center insert is removable or adjustable. There are six pockets – two on the side and two on the front. The largest pocket runs the length of the bag. With all the pockets and compartments you can carry a lot of equipment and accessories. There is a removable shoulder strap and hand strap. There are O rings on the back for attaching to a backpack. The canvas is thick and rugged offering a good deal of protection.

The bag is in very good condition.

This bag currently sells for \$162.00 (B&H Photo) asking \$75



APC Trading Post - cont.

For Sale:

Orion StarBlast 4.5 EQ Equatorial Newtonian Reflector Telescope, suitable for beginner astrophotography. Accessories include variable universal camera adapter kit, Orion AstroTrack DC Motor Drive, 6 mm and 15 mm eyepieces, and Celestron X-Cel LX 3x Barlow lens. \$150.

Contact George Siple @ 508-317-8454.



Table Talkers



On hold thru the rest of the summer.

Will resume in October.

Mio Winkle

Now taking orders for
Alamance Photography Club Shirts



Select from DTF Tees and/or Embroidered Polos

Several colors available.

**Orders may be placed at club meetings or online per link
provided in email.**

NOTE: First order will be placed once we receive at least 12 of each shirt type (Tee or Polo)



Photo by Bob Finley

BACK TO BASICS

Black and White Photography—Getting Started

By Andrew S. Gibson

If you've never tried black and white photography before, you may feel a bit intimidated. After all, how do you get started? Should you be shooting black and white on your camera, or should you be converting color images to black and white? And how can you create stunning black and white images, anyway?

In this article, I aim to answer all those questions. I'll explain the value of black and white, how to do it, plus I'll share some tips along the way!



Why is black and white photography important?

In the photographic world, black and white is an art form of its own. Some would even say the best photographers work in monochrome. It's a medium with a rich history; look at the work of Ansel Adams, Edward Weston, or Henri Cartier-Bresson for some truly stunning examples.

Just as importantly, working in black and white can help you become a better photographer.

How?

It's all about *seeing*.

Color is very powerful. It tends to dominate photos – to the point that beginners struggle to see other key elements like contrast, texture, shape, form, and quality of light.

Experienced photographers instinctively see these things, regardless of whether they work in color or black and white. But if you're just starting out, you may need some assistance. Black and white strips away color, allowing you to focus on the other elements that matter.

Black and White Photography—Getting Started . . . Continued

Black and white emphasizes the textures of the rocks and sea in this landscape photo.



Naturally, there are certain subjects that tend to work better than others in black and white. In particular, black and white lends itself to landscapes and portraits.

So if this is your first time shooting in black and white, then those are great starter subjects!

Black and white portraits emphasize expression and light.

How to shoot in black and white

Before digital photography, the only way to work in black and white was to use black and white film.

But these days, you have two options:

- 1) You can shoot in color and convert your photos to black and white in Lightroom, Photoshop, or some other post-processing program.
- 2) You can switch your camera to its Monochrome mode.

I highly recommend you choose the second option, and here's why:

By shooting in black and white from the beginning, you'll get black and white previews on your camera's LCD. You'll also be able to see in black and white via your camera's Live View mode. And if you use a mirrorless camera, you can look through a black and white viewfinder – so you know exactly how the different colors will convert before you press the shutter button.

(If you're not sure how to switch your camera to black and white, check your camera's manual. Don't worry; it's not difficult!)



Black and White Photography—Getting Started . . . Continued

One last piece of advice here:

Shoot in RAW, not JPEG (or shoot in RAW+JPEG, which will give you a file in each format every time you press the shutter button).

RAW essentially offers you insurance. If you decide you don't like your shot in black and white, your RAW files can be reverted back to color with the click of a mouse. And if you decide to extensively edit your photos in post-processing, RAW gives you a lot of flexibility.

However, if you're new to photography, I recognize that you may want to work exclusively in JPEG, and that's okay. Just know that you'll probably want to switch to RAW eventually (it'll deliver better image quality in the long run).

Working in Monochrome mode

As explained above, I highly recommend you set your camera to Monochrome mode. And to get basic black and white shots, that's all you need to do.

However, once you're in Monochrome mode, you may have color filter options. And through careful application of these filters, you can capture even better black and white shots.

Color filters

The color filter settings come from the days of film photography. Photographers would use color filters to alter the tones in black and white photos. These days, digital photographers rarely work with physical color filters – instead, they use camera software or post-processing to mimic filter effects.

Your camera likely includes a few color filter options. For instance, you might use a yellow or orange filter to darken a blue sky or a red filter to turn it nearly black.



The photo on the left is without a color filter; the right with a red color filter.

Black and White Photography—Getting Started . . . Continued

The left photo on the previous page works quite well in black and white, but it's not nearly as dramatic as it could be as shown on the right.

Applying the red filter setting makes the blue sky go much darker, creating a dramatic version of the same scene.

There is also a place for green filters, which can bring out more detail in green subjects like leafy forests.

Four colored filters (red, orange, yellow, and green) have made their way onto most digital cameras as black and white settings.

Quick tip: Don't forget about contrast!

If you take a photo in dull light – in shade, for instance, or under a cloudy sky – the photo may look flat (i.e., two-dimensional), especially in black and white.

So what do you do?

You compensate by increasing the contrast. A contrast boost will deepen the shadows, brighten the highlights, and make your main subject pop!

Here's a portrait without a contrast adjustment:

The model was standing in the shade when I took this photo. The light lacks contrast, and the black and white photo is flat.



And here's the same portrait, but with a contrast boost:

Increasing contrast creates a much stronger image.

To my eye, the final (adjusted) result is much more powerful.

You can increase the contrast after the photo has been taken (in Photoshop or Lightroom), or you can do it in-camera by adjusting the contrast setting (see your manual if you're not sure how to do this!).



Black and White Photography—Getting Started . . . Continued

Composing in black and white

Remember how I said black and white forces you to think about other key elements, such as shape and form?

It's true. And it's the reason why composition becomes so important when shooting in black and white.

Unfortunately, there's not really a quick solution to capturing good compositions; a lot of it just depends on your ability to see shapes, lines, and textures (which you can develop through practice or study or simply by looking at great photography).

However, there is one item that can improve your black and white compositions: the aspect ratio.

Certain aspect ratios (such as the 1:1, or square format) make composition easier. Whereas other aspect ratios (such as most cameras' native 3:2 ratio) make composition tricky.

So after you've set your camera to Monochrome mode, I recommend heading into the settings and changing the aspect ratio to Square. It'll improve the way you frame scenes (and if your camera has an electronic viewfinder, it'll let you see the new aspect ratio in real-time!).



Cropping to the square format emphasized the shapes of the three pots above.

Toning in black and white

Toning is the process of adding color to your images, but only after they've been converted to black and white.

This can give very cool effects – for instance, it can turn your shots yellow or purple or red.

Now, your camera may allow you to tone your photos when you take them. But the effect is usually very heavy-handed, which is why I recommend you avoid in-camera toning.

Instead, test out toning in post-processing. You can have lots of fun applying a single tone to your images (such as a nice sepia). And if you want to get really creative, you can add multiple tones, an effect called split toning.

Black and White Photography—Getting Started . . . Continued

Black and white photography: final words

Black and white is a beautiful medium to work in, one that you will appreciate even more as your skills grow.

In the meantime, have fun and enjoy yourself. You are following a path trodden by some of the most famous names in photography!



5 Quick photo Editing Tips

- 1. Straighten your horizons.**
- 2. Crop out distractions - but don't go too far.**
- 3. Recover detail, but leave some contrast.**
- 4. Make colors pop, but keep it natural.**
- 5. Subtle vignettes are often great.**



5 Secrets for Stunning Creative Bird Photography

By Jaymes Dempsey

Do you want to capture stunning bird photography...

...that goes beyond the usual, standard bird photos?

You can!

In this article, I'll give you 5 bird photography secrets that will ensure you consistently create incredible bird images.



Images that are creative, unique, and original.

Sound good?

Let's dive right in!

5 Secrets for Stunning Creative Bird Photography . . . Continued

1. Get Low for Gorgeous Bird Photography Backgrounds

Here's the bread-and-butter of creative bird photography:

Get down low.

Really low.

It may seem tough. You might prefer to stay up high, away from the dirt and water and mud.

But if you want incredible bird photos, you've got to get out of your comfort zone. You've got to get down low.



Specifically, you need to get on a level with the bird. Your lens should be about even with the bird's eye.

Why is this so important?

When you shoot from down low, the distance between the bird and the background is greatly increased. And that causes the background to be far more blurred.

Therefore, you'll capture some beautiful bokeh.



And beautiful bokeh?

Makes for a stunning bird photo.

This is how professionals capture such dreamy backdrops in their bird photography.

They get down as low as they can go.

It really does make a huge difference!

Try it. I can guarantee that you won't regret the resulting shots.

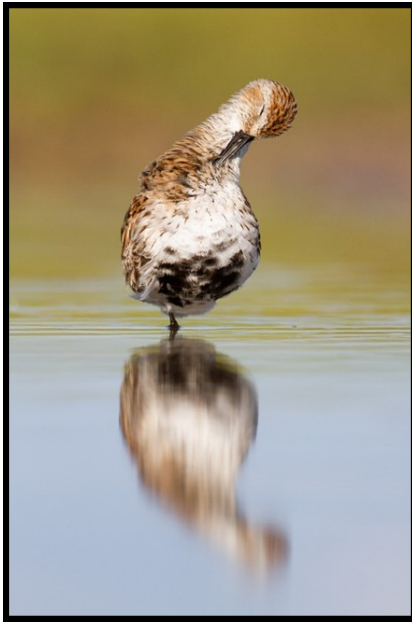
5 Secrets for Stunning Creative Bird Photography . . . Continued

2. Shoot in water for stunning reflections

Do you want to capture especially gorgeous bird photography?

One of my favorite ways to do this is to shoot reflections.

Let me explain:



A photo of a bird is nice. It's standard. It can be beautiful.

But if you add a reflection, the image immediately becomes far more captivating. Viewers are instantly sucked into the scene.

The reflection adds a sense of subtle beauty and delicateness – one that you can't get any other way.

Now, here's how you capture gorgeous bird reflections:

First, shoot by still water.

Mudflats (with puddles) work well. Same with sheltered lakes.

If you're struggling to find water still enough to generate full reflections, try shooting during the early morning. That's when the wind tends to be a lot less noticeable.

Second, make sure the sun is low in the sky. (The lower, the better.) This will ensure that the reflection includes some nice colors.

You also have to be careful not to get too low over the water.

Why? If you're too low, the full reflection won't come through. And a broken reflection has far less power than a full reflection.

Bottom line?

Find some birds near the water, and start taking photos!



5 Secrets for Stunning Creative Bird Photography . . . Continued

3. Capture action for compelling bird photos

One of the biggest problems with beginning bird photography...

...is that it's static.

The bird just stands in the frame.

And while there are methods of making this type of photo work, it's often just a boring photo.

That's why you should spice up your bird photos using action.

Once you've found a subject, watch it through your camera. Keep your finger on the shutter button.

Then, as soon as it starts to move, take a burst of photos. The more photos, the better!



Of course, you're going to have a lot of failed shots. But you'll also capture some keepers. And these will (with a little luck) blow you away!

Some of my favorite shots involve birds flapping their wings, preening, or feeding. If you wait for this behavior, you'll get some stellar action shots.



One thing I'd recommend:

When you're watching a bird through the camera viewfinder, keep some space between the bird and the edge of the frame.

Because birds can rapidly change their size – just by opening their wings. And clipped body parts are one of the easiest ways to ruin a bird photo.

Just remember these tips, and you'll be capturing some great action photos in no time!

5 Secrets for Stunning Creative Bird Photography . . . Continued

4. Shoot through vegetation for unique images

Another way to capture original images...

...is to find a subject.

Get down low.

And shoot through some vegetation.



This creates a gorgeous foreground wash – one that frames the subject without dominating the photo.

To pull this off, you generally have to lie flat on the ground. I advise experimenting with a few different angles – move around your subject, testing different possible foregrounds.

Note: It's important that the vegetation is very close to your lens (and very far from your subject). Because the farther the vegetation is from your lens, the more in focus (and distracting) it becomes.

It's also important to limit the amount of vegetation in the photo. You don't want to cover up the bird entirely. Instead, you want to frame the bird with the vegetation.

Make sense?

Then start taking some shots with a foreground wash. You'll love the shots you get.



5 Secrets for Stunning Creative Bird Photography . . . Continued

5. Capture silhouettes for dramatic bird shots

Here's one more way to capture creative bird photos:

Shoot silhouettes!

Silhouettes are really easy to pull off – and they look incredible.

Here's how you do it:



Go out as the sun is just about to set. Find a subject (birds with a clear outline are best).

Then change your position so that the bird is between you and the setting sun. Ideally, the bird blocks the sun from your camera. This will prevent the sky from being completely blown out.

Make sure that the bird is in front of as much of the sky as possible.

That is, you want to frame the bird with sky – and you don't want any dark patches behind the bird (from trees or other objects).

If you're struggling with this, try getting down as low as you can. Because the lower you get, the more sky you'll include in the frame.

Finally, ensure that you drastically underexpose your subject. One trick is to set the exposure based on the sky next to the bird.

That way, you'll get a beautiful sky – with a nicely silhouetted subject.



5 Secrets for Stunning Creative Bird Photography . . . Continued

Creative bird photography: next steps

Now you know how to capture stunning, original bird photos.

You know how to produce amazing backgrounds.

You know how to generate interest.

And you know how to capture incredible foregrounds.



The next step...

...is to get out and shoot!



How to Tell Stories with Architecture Photography

By Charlie Moss

At first glance, it might seem like architecture photography is all about prestige projects, glittering corporate headquarters, and well-paid specialist photography gigs. However, there can be much more to architectural photography if you look a little deeper.



The Radcliffe Science Library, Oxford © Charlie Moss

Architecture is a vast and diverse field. It basically means the design and construction of buildings or the style in which a building is built. Styles vastly differ from country to country, even from town to town. Very local architecture that is heavily inspired by the local conditions and traditions is known as “vernacular architecture” – and that is the kind of built environment that inspires me most in my architectural photography.

On weekends, it is quite common to find me out and about with a camera in The Cotswolds – the beautiful area of England that is on my doorstep. There I seek out beautiful examples of buildings crafted from Cotswold Stone – the local building material. The stone itself varies in color from beautiful honey to a rich golden hue, and it’s these variations that tell you where you are!

Head a little further south, and you’re in the city of Oxford, famous for its prestigious university. The story of the city and the university is told through its architecture and is a vernacular architectural photographer’s dream. It’s here in Oxford that I’ve based this article on architectural photography, but hopefully, you’ll find it full of tips and tricks for shooting any of your surroundings or those you visit on a trip.

How to Tell Stories with Architecture Photography . . . Continued

1. Do some research

Before you grab your camera bag and walk out of the door, the first thing you're going to want to do is a little research. See if you can read up on the most important buildings in the place you're heading out to. Then see if you can work out why they're considered the most important.



Schools Quadrangle, Oxford, and a door on Parks Road, Oxford. © Charlie Moss

Look at images of the place that other people have already taken and see if you can pick out any themes. Other photographers might have had some smart ideas for locations – no harm in making a note to check them out while you're there too. Is there a predominant style of architecture? A set of repeating motifs? Or perhaps a common building material? If there does seem to be patterns in the buildings, ask yourself why that might be and see if you can get to the bottom of what they could perhaps mean.

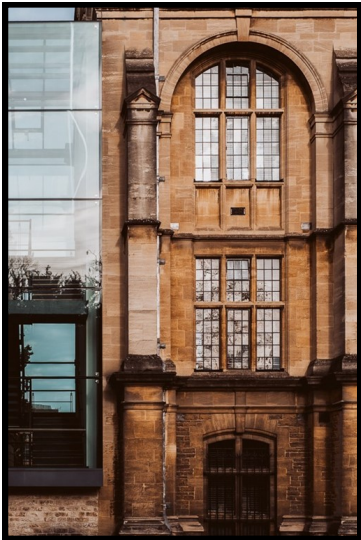
In Oxford, there is a long-running fight over which architecture styles best reflect buildings dedicated to learning and research. Are the Roman and Greek inspired Classical style buildings the most appropriate because of their obvious connection to ancient civilization? Alternatively, are the tall, soaring, pointed towers of Gothic architecture better for a university because it seems to be reaching ambitiously skywards towards God? The designers and patrons of the city have argued this backward and forwards for many centuries now, so it is the perfect place to tell stories about the architecture!

If nothing else, think of some themes that you might like to shoot while you're out with your camera. I can never seem to resist a good photograph of a door, and nor can many other people judging from the subject's popularity on Instagram.

How to Tell Stories with Architecture Photography . . . Continued

2. Look for contrast

Images that juxtapose different but related buildings or themes can be very powerful when you're photographing architecture. Well-considered juxtapositions of images can show both positives and negatives about architecture. In the image below of the Radcliffe Science Library, I've tried to capture the contrast between the ancient Headington Stone used in the original Victorian library building, and the modern glass extension.



The Radcliffe Science Library, Oxford © Charlie Moss

Both materials express different ideas about what it means to study science, and so together they tell the story of what science has become over the last two hundred years. The reflection of the tree brings the two together – reminding us that science is all around us and not just found in libraries and laboratories.

If you can capture scenes like this all in the same image then that is great, but do not be afraid to place two or more images next to each other as I did on the next page in the images of Keble College.

3. Plan to shoot a series

Creating diptychs and triptychs in photography is as old as the medium itself. Setting out to specifically capturing two or three images that work together (and could perhaps be mounted together as prints) is a fantastic way to tell a story.

It might be that you plan these images specifically to be a series while doing your research, but often you might make connections while you're out and about. The best tip I can give to you is to write down the connections that you've made while shooting in a notebook; otherwise, you're bound to forget them while editing!

How to Tell Stories with Architecture Photography . . . Continued



Keble College Chapel reflected in the Beecroft Building, Oxford, and Keble College, Oxford © Charlie Moss

The two images above were a happy accident. I didn't realize that there was a brand new physics building constructed in the last twelve months, and it perfectly reflects the chapel of the college across the road. This juxtaposition of science and religion is quite powerful, but also I enjoyed the way that the facade of the new building draws inspiration from the old. The tall rectangular windows of the new Beecroft building seem almost to be a modern version of the tall rectangular windows in Keble College built around a hundred and fifty years ago.

If you see an interesting image that wasn't on your original itinerary, then stop and take a few minutes to photograph it. Don't be so focused on your research that you miss unexpected gems – they might turn out to be some of the best photographs of your trip.

4. Bring the architecture to life

Regardless of how spectacular the buildings themselves might be, it is how the inhabitants of the city use the architecture that's important. In Oxford, the primary mode of transport is the bicycle. There simply isn't enough room in this medieval city for cars, and so pedal-power is far more efficient.

Bikes in Oxford. © Charlie Moss



How to Tell Stories with Architecture Photography . . . Continued

Every street and building has space for parking bikes – and if it doesn't – the cyclists soon find somewhere to put them! To photograph the city of Oxford without photographing the bikes would be to miss out on a large part of what makes the place come alive.

Think of how you can show the life that lives alongside the architecture in your images. It could be something as iconic as a bright yellow taxi in front of the iconic Flatiron building in New York. Alternatively, it might be as simple as a reflection of a busy city street in a brilliant local coffee shop.

Try to capture what makes the place you're photographing unique, both in the buildings and in what is happening around them.

5. Shoot the icons

While you're focusing on the details and the hidden stories, don't forget to tell the big stories too! Iconic architecture is iconic for a reason, so don't keep it off your itinerary. The important thing is, once again, to find the story that you want to tell and try to capture that.

The Radcliffe Camera, Oxford, with All Souls College, Oxford in the background. © Charlie Moss

This image shows the Classical versus Gothic war of architecture in Oxford in a single shot. The front building is the Radcliffe Camera, an historically significant library built in the English Palladian style inspired by the classical temples of the ancient Greeks. Behind its defensive wall is the soaring tower of All Souls College built in the Gothic style. You couldn't get two more contrasting buildings in the same shot if you tried.

These contrasts and histories are the keys in photographing architecture. If you can seek out the interesting stories to tell, you'll have no problem shooting great images.

