

Practical Camera Club Presentation

When is a photo a good photo or a snapshot?

First of all, a big part of liking a photo or not is personal. It's about taste and you cannot impose taste on others, so don't try to do that.

That being said, all good photos do have a fixed set of things right one way or another, so that's the place we'll start.

Any good photo attracts your attention and holds it. There are multiple ways to do that so what attracts and what keeps your attention can be different things, but they are present.

This can be 100% luck. That is why some snapshots are good photos. But a good photographer can manipulate the camera, subject or light in such a way that he or she gets a good photo in any situation.

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How do I make a good photo?

To learn making a good photo you start with a bad one, you look at the viewfinder and critique it... Each time improving on the last photo until you have no idea what to improve anymore. Those you show to others, and they will show you what could be improved beyond what you can see.

In the beginning it will be hard to find what is wrong, but you'll learn. Once you start doing this, you will start to do it without having to take the photo so your starting photo will become better and better right to the point when you know that you have got it right!

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Comment from 'Pieter Osaer' Professional Photographer.

"Besides your close relatives, no one wants to see those 420 photos you made during your 5 day trip, trust me. When I see a big album on Facebook, I look at the few first ones, and if they don't make me want to see a lot more, that's it. Selecting the photos you show is one of the most important things that could make you a better photographer.

During a portrait shoot, I generally make about 200 photos. Of those 200 I edit about 40, and my customer gets about 40. On Facebook, I show 1 - 5, on my website, I show 1, maybe, if it's worth deleting another photo.

When people see only my absolute best work, their perception of me as a photographer will be better than when I also show work that is less good than my absolute best, so why show it?"

The same applies with work you enter in the competitions.

Show the best you can do, the work you don't think you know how to improve, you think is perfect.

The improvements you get proposed on those will actually teach you something.

If you show work you know how to improve yourself, why show it?

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How to Critique:

Look at the photo and think about:

what could be improved to make the photo better.

what elements make you like the photo, add to the quality.

what elements make you dislike the photo or ruin it for you.

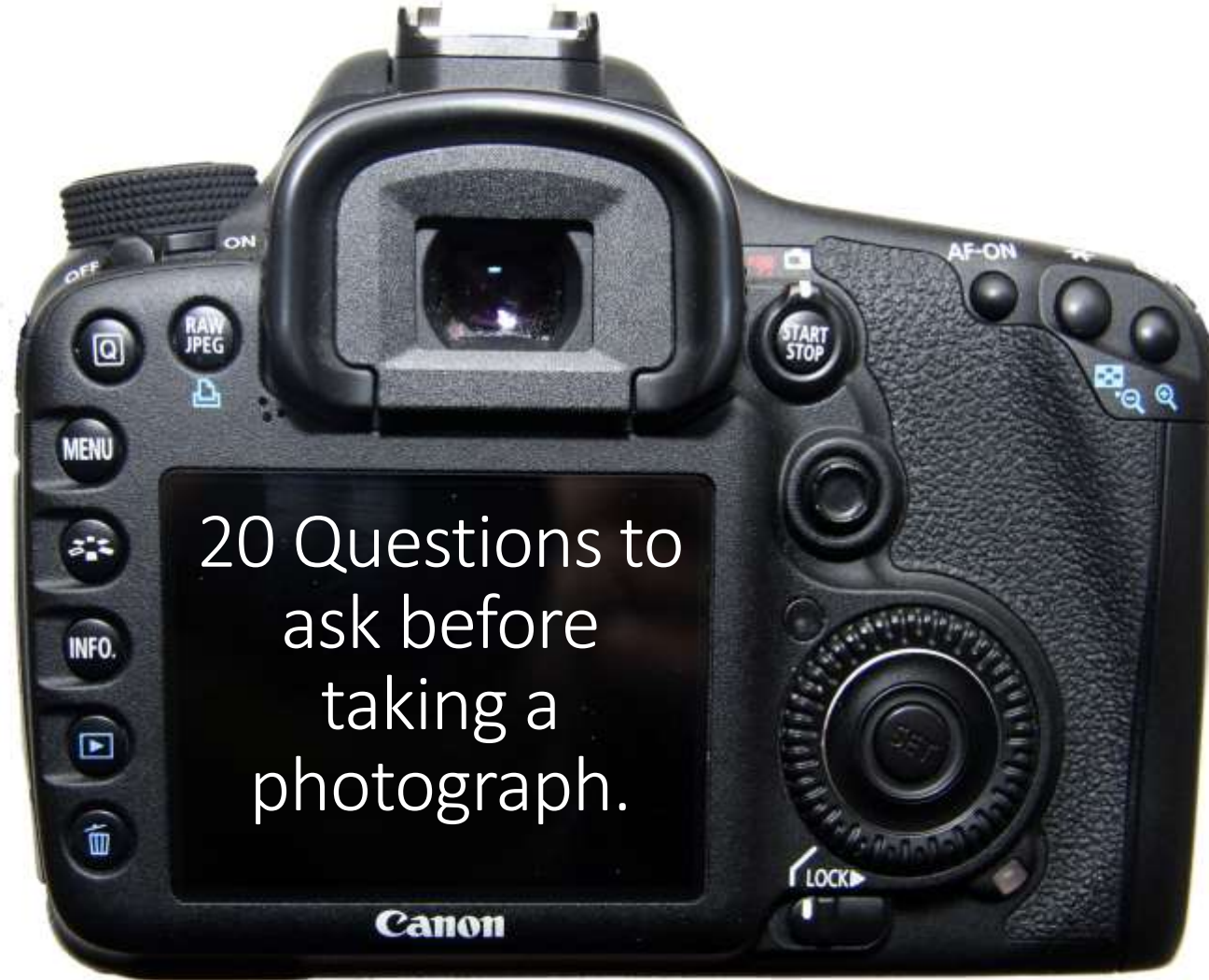
Critiquing photos (A bit more detail).

Looking at photos, your own or other photographers' work, will help you get better.

This is why entering the competitions and getting feedback from other members is so important to progress.

The long term reason is so you will eventually start critiquing the photos you have yet to take!

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1. What is my Subject?



2. How do I best highlight the Subject?



3. Where is the Subject in the frame?



3.Cont'd?



3.Cont'd?



4. Am I close enough to my subject to emphasize it ?



5. Am I far enough from my subject to allow the viewer to have a sense
Of time and place of the photograph ?



6. Is there something in front or behind that distracts me ?



7. Is there something in the frame taking my attention away from the subject. ?



7.Cont'd



Typical English Village

8. Is there something outside the frame that I could incorporate to enhance the image. ?



9. Where is the light coming from. ?



10. How does my eye move through the scene.?



10.Cont'd.?



11. Am I standing in the best place to make this photo.?



Last Hope, Malta.

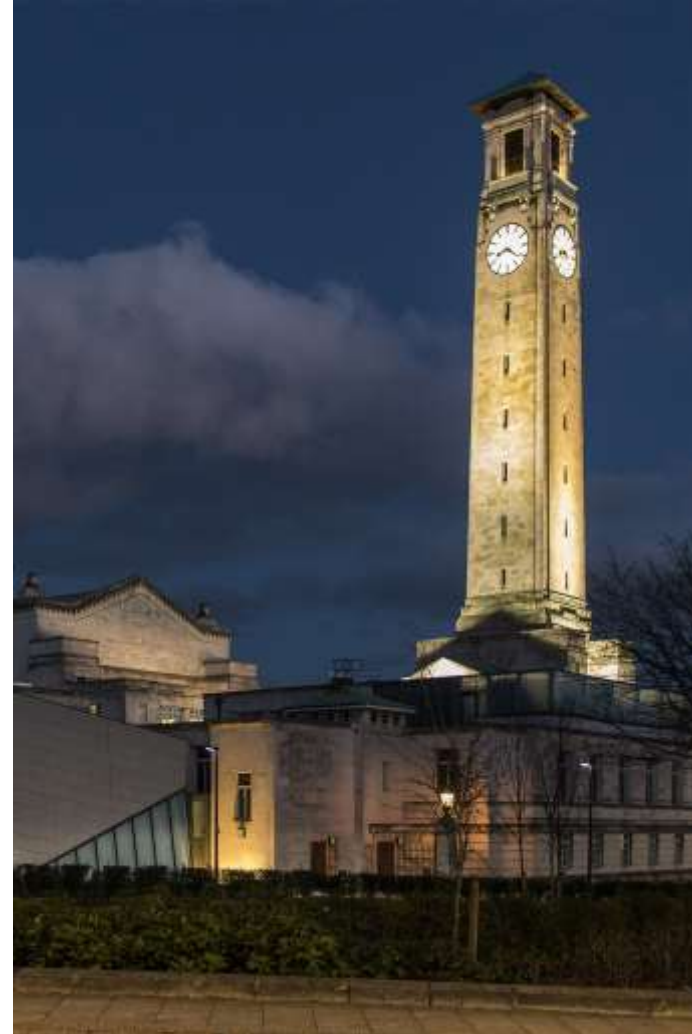
12. Should I be standing straight up and shooting from eye level
Or is there a better perspective.?



12. cont'd .?



13. Is this the best time of day to take this photo .?



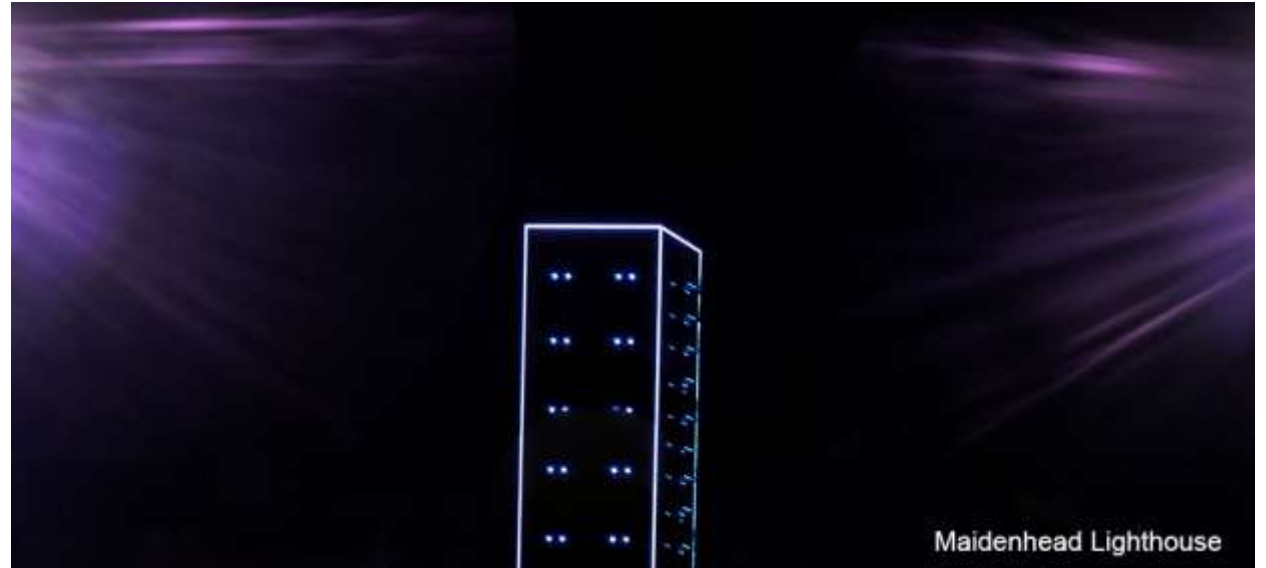
14. Is this the best moment to make this photo .?



15. Is this the best weather to make this photo at this Particular place.?



16. Are my lines straight or intentionally angled.?



17. Is the camera lens distorting lines or perspective in a way I don't want them to distort.?



UN-ATTRACTIVE
Wide angle lens
standing very close



MILDLY ATTRACTIVE
30mm lens standing
too close



DEVASTATINGLY ATTRACTIVE!!
50mm lens standing
further back

17.Cont'd.?



18. Are my camera settings correct for this image.?



19. Is the camera capable of capturing the dynamic Range of the scene.?



20. Should the camera be stabilised?



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To Summarise.

1. Subject: A photo must have a subject, a point of interest that makes you look at the photo for longer than a blink of the eye. When there are people, they become the subject by default unless they are really small, animals have the same effect when there are no people. The subject must be clear, in focus, lit clearly.

2.Composition: This is the way the photo is framed, how the elements in a photo are arranged, how colours are used and so on. We understand the effect of a lot of these elements and call them "the rules of composition". They must be used correctly, intentional or not

3.Exposure: The subject, and the important elements in the photo, must be illuminated to show it in a pleasing way

4.Focus: The subject (or important parts of that subject) must be in focus, meaning the maximum amount of detail must be visible. With people and animals, the eyes must be that point.

5.Background: The background can be part of the story, or must be made to not attract attention by making it one colour, dark, blurred out or otherwise pull attention to the subject

6.Story: When the scene or person on itself isn't really really beautiful, you'll want a story in your photo, and that story has to make sense. That's what makes a lot of photos bad, the stories don't match up, they make no sense, and the viewers notice that.

The End

Discussions or comments ?