

[See Inside The Times on Instagram](#)

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Body

[Times](#) Insider explains who we are and what we do, and delivers behind-the-scenes insights into how our journalism comes together.

To get into the minds and notebooks of [Times](#) journalists, look no further than Instagram.

The app allows many reporters, editors and photographers based in New York and around the world to show how their professional and personal lives intersect. Their feeds become a repository for unpublished details and visuals, and serve as a creative outlet for their journalism-related interests.

Here are 12 Instagram accounts from journalists who span The [Times](#)'s report and take readers behind the scenes.

Kathy Ryan, @kathyryan

Director of photography for The New York [Times](#) Magazine

Follow for: Artistic scenes from the New York [Times](#) headquarters, in black, white and red

In 2012, a shaft of light falling across some stairs in the [Times](#) Building caught Kathy Ryan's eye. She posted a photo of it on Instagram, and from there evolved a series she dubbed "Office Romance."

"It's overwhelmingly about the light for me," says Kathy, who captures The [Times](#) through the people and objects in its Renzo Piano-designed building -- "the greatest studio in the world."

Her subjects, often bathed in soft sunlight punctuated by stripes of shadow, appear ethereal in her posts -- a conscious contrast to the chaos of working at a news organization. She shoots them mainly in black and white, with the occasional pop of cherry red, in a style that evokes film noir.

Each post, she says, captioned with the [time](#) and date she took the photo, allows her followers "for a split second to be in this remarkable building in this remarkable city."

But if the [Times](#) Building looks like the Garden of Eden on Kathy's feed, its sins can be seen on @dont_tell_renzo, a humorous account she recommends.

Pete Wells, @pete_wells

Restaurant critic

Follow for: A slice (often literally) of New York's dining scene

See Inside The Times on Instagram

Pete Wells has a disclaimer in his Instagram bio: "sloppy with lighting; struggling with focus."

"I'm kind of picking the least bad photo from my three visits to a restaurant," Pete says of his approach to posting. "And sometimes it's still pretty bad."

While he makes no claims to high art, his feed brings followers to tables across New York City, from slice shops to high-end sushi counters. They can also see his review process, which often involves comparing meals at similar restaurants.

Pete credits Instagram for "one of the biggest subtle changes in restaurant design" in recent years: lighting fixtures that act as spotlights for your plate, chosen with amateur food photographers in mind. But when the lighting isn't ideal, he admits he uses his iPhone's flash, "even though it's the biggest no-no in food photography."

"If you do it right," he advises, "you can get really great high-contrast, shadow-filled dramatic pictures."

Sebastian Modak, @sebmodak

52 Places correspondent

Follow for: Armchair travels around the world at a breakneck pace

Unlike most ***Times*** journalists, Sebastian Modak actually has Instagram in his job description. As the 52 Places Traveler, he uses the platform daily to bring along his followers on his yearlong adventure.

Sebastian's feed brims with his best shots from each destination and gives a sneak peak of his weekly columns. But his Instagram Stories are, well, another story. The often humorous slide shows of photos, text and videos reveal the "not fun part of travel" -- flight cancellations, exhaustion, middle-of-the-night driving -- and everyday moments, like a haircut in Croatia, that don't make it into his articles.

Followers have sent Sebastian a plethora of recommendations, and he has taken them up on offers to be his tour guide. "It's a really nice way to meet people," he says, "and I never even thought of Instagram as a tool for that."

Pamela Paul, @pamelapaul2018

Editor of the Book Review

Follow for: Reflections on books and illustrators, occasionally interrupted by three beguiling cats

The focus of Pamela Paul's Instagram feed is, unsurprisingly, books -- "both in terms of my life here at The ***Times*** and, on a more personal level, my life as a reader and also an author."

But her "gold standard" for a post is when her family's cats -- Zoomer, Loki and Octavian -- intrude upon her more purely literary posts.

In a rather meta photo, she recently documented her progress on a forthcoming children's book -- about a cat that gets in the way of a boy's reading -- with Zoomer lounging on some early illustrations. "It is not purely fiction," says Pamela, who has two sons and a daughter.

Farther from home, Pamela likes to post photos of foreign-language books and bookshops she stumbles across: "It's a lot of what I'm doing when I'm abroad, and I think it's part of what people are looking to me for." Mindful of her own aversion to Instagram posts of idyllic vacations, she adds, "But it doesn't make anyone feel bad."

Eve Lyons, @lyonse

A Styles photo editor

Follow for: Photographers to have on your radar, with a dash of mustard yellow

See Inside The Times on Instagram

For Eve Lyons, what started as a practical concern last year -- finding meeting spaces after a recent renovation of The Times's newsroom -- turned into "a happy accident."

When photographers came in for portfolio reviews, she started using the diner-style yellow booths installed during the office makeover. As an experiment, she began doing short shoots at the end of each meeting to feature the artists on her Instagram.

"The yellow is such a good visual signifier," says Eve, who likes the playfulness that the colorful booths elicit.

As the series evolved, she added more photos to highlight not only the photographers, but also pieces from their portfolios. It has turned into "a destination for people to explore new work, new stories, new projects," not to mention her own visual Rolodex of freelancers.

On a temporary assignment, Eve has decamped to Los Angeles, where actual diner booths are serving as her stand-in.

Dionne Searcey, @dionnesearcey

Politics reporter

Follow for: Snapshots of life in West Africa, and election coverage from across the United States

Dionne Searcey joined Instagram four years ago, after becoming The Times's West Africa bureau chief. She saw the platform as a way to document everyday life in a part of the world that remains off the radar for many.

"I always tried to show things that were unexpected," she says, and "to bust stereotypes of the continent in general being a place that was full of bad things."

Her Instagram posts, often short vignettes drawn from the stories she writes, have featured cow herders in Nigeria, athletes in Senegal and her own life as a correspondent.

Dionne, who is from Nebraska and recently joined the Politics team to cover the 2020 election, has already started posting photos from her new beat.

"I'm hoping to travel to parts of rural America that people on the coasts call 'flyover country,'" she says, comparing her work in the United States to her work abroad. "I think that is a similar approach and a similar philosophy, of showing parts of America that a lot of people in big cities don't see."

Hannah Wise, @sewmanycomments

A social media editor

Follow for: Crafting #inspo and amusing news commentary

After covering a police shooting for The Dallas Morning News in 2016, Hannah Wise wanted a tactile, screen-free activity to do in her free time. The solution came when she saw a "really bizarre" comment on one of her reporting partner's stories and decided to embroider it.

With that, her new hobby and new Instagram account were born. Hannah, who has a background in graphic design, compares it to drawing in thread. She stitches quotes and comments that amuse her, or that touch a nerve in journalism.

Most of her hoops end up as gifts. A 12-inch one memorializing the journalists who were killed at the Capital Gazette last year was included in The Dallas Morning News's care package for the Maryland newspaper.

Fittingly, she used embroidery to announce her new job at The Times last month.

See Inside The Times on Instagram

Gia Kourlas, @giadk

Dance critic

Follow for: Mesmerizing short videos of dancers in the studio

For nearly three years, Gia Kourlas has written the weekly #SpeakingInDance column, which explores the world of dance through videos posted on Instagram.

The sessions are filmed by professional videographers and appear on The ***Times***'s main Instagram account, but Gia also takes her own videos and edits them for her personal feed. She hopes her followers feel "like you're in a room with me, seeing a different perspective."

Growing up in Ohio, Gia, who trained as a dancer, didn't get to see many performances. Now, with Instagram, she can bring dance to more people around the country, and the world.

"I just want to get more eyes on dance," she says, "in any way I can."

Mujib Mashal, @mujmash

Senior correspondent in Afghanistan

Follow for: Poignant scenes from a changing Afghanistan

Mujib Mashal's reporting has taken him across Afghanistan, where he was born and raised, and South Asia. He likes to take photos as part of his notes, documenting the remote, visually stunning areas where his work takes him.

"Those are places that sometimes I don't get back to," he explains, "so I want to make a record for my own memories and archives."

From that collection, he chooses photos for his Instagram feed to illustrate the news he covers, or simply to show life in Kabul, where he lives -- a stop at a park, a cafe, an ice cream shop.

Mujib uses Instagram Stories to present highlights from his bigger projects. He thinks of them as trailers to draw readers in through the videos, sounds, photos and quotes he gathers during his reporting.

Melissa Clark, @clarkbar

NYT Cooking reporter

Follow for: Cooking ideas and tutorials, and vicarious global eating

Melissa Clark wants her Instagram feed to feel inviting, and to inspire home cooks. That means mostly informal shots of the new dishes she tests in her Brooklyn kitchen -- no filters or food styling involved.

"I like to show people how I really do it," she says.

Melissa also sees the platform as an educational tool. She has created in-depth guides to techniques such as yogurt making with Instagram Stories. And when she travels, she uses her food photos to share what she learns, like how it's actually O.K. to eat oysters in the summer.

In addition to pictures of cooking and eating, you'll see Melissa's daughter, husband and friends. "Each post tells a story, but the whole entire group tells a story, too," she notes. And if you look closely, that story follows a pattern, which Melissa boils down to "cake, child, sardine or anchovy, cocktail."

Chang W. Lee, @nytchangster

Photographer

See Inside The Times on Instagram

Follow for: Visual stories told in up to 10 photos

Photojournalists may take hundreds, even thousands, of shots for a single story, but only a fraction will end up online -- and even fewer in print.

For Chang W. Lee, Instagram is a way not only to publish more work from his **Times** assignments, but also to express himself through the photo selection and edits. In his posts, he often arranges multiple images to tell a complete visual story.

"It's like my own publication," he says.

Chang, who has traveled around the world for The **Times**, favors human interest stories. He has shot young basketball players in the Philippines, impoverished families in the United States, and the aftermath of natural disasters. He also has an eye for capturing the artistry and physical feats of athletes in motion at major events like the Olympics and the United States Open.

Nick Casey, @caseysalbum

Andes bureau chief

Follow for: Reporting outtakes from Latin America

Nick Casey's Instagram -- a play on his Twitter account, @caseysjournal -- acts as an extension of his notebook. Details that don't make it into his stories, behind-the-scenes reporting shots and glimpses of daily life in Latin America fill his feed.

"If you look at my Instagram account and the reporting," Nick says, "they kind of put together one piece."

You can see photos from Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Easter Island and Colombia, where he lives. But perhaps his most photographed country is Venezuela, where he was based until 2016, when he was banned for his reporting on the country's economic collapse.

Now, whenever Nick returns to Venezuela, he posts as much as he can. He says his photos of trying to pay for things -- with stacks of bills and wire transactions, necessitated by the country's hyperinflation -- have particularly captured his followers' attention.

Follow the @ReaderCenter on Twitter for more coverage highlighting your perspectives and experiences and for insight into how we work.

This is a more complete version of the story than the one that appeared in print.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/23/reader-center/instagram-times-journalists.html>

Graphic

PHOTOS: Follow for: Reflections on books and illustrators, occasionally interrupted by cats. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PAMELA PAUL)

Follow for: Photographers to have on your radar, with a dash of mustard yellow. (PHOTOGRAPH BY EVE LYONS)

See Inside The Times on Instagram

Follow for: Election coverage from across the United States. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DIONNE SEARCEY)

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