

ISSUE 01

Best camera for Landscape Photography  
in 2020 | Fujifilm GFX 100



# Landscape Photography

Magazine

NATURE  
**THEME**

Another remarkable  
aurora photographed by  
Marc Adamus

The Ultimate Guide  
to Landscape  
Photography

• Camera & Lense  
Selection

• Mastering Light In  
The Landscape

• Interview with  
Charlie Waite



# Editors' Letter

The beginning of the calendar year is at its heart a fantasy of newness and clean slates—of the chance to do things differently and with more attention to purpose. In reality, it's also one of the most challenging times of year for many of us, as we return from holidays and fly straight into the plate-glass window of an overfull schedule. As I talk with friends and colleagues about plans, the word “hectic” keeps coming up, and I think we should find that a little worrisome. A hectic fever is what you get when you have consumption. It looks a lot like excitement, but ultimately, you're *consumed*.



## Star on Ice

A remarkable aurora photographed deep in the mountains of the Arctic Yukon which is reflected in clear ice surface near our nightly bivouac site.

This photo was captured by Marc Adamus, he is a landscape photographer based in Western North America. Marc's pursuit of landscape images have taken him around the world almost continuously for well over a decade now. The visual drama and artistry of his photographs are born of a keen eye for the many moods of Nature and a life-long passion for the wilderness. This passion shines throughout Marc's work and has attracted a wide audience around the world.



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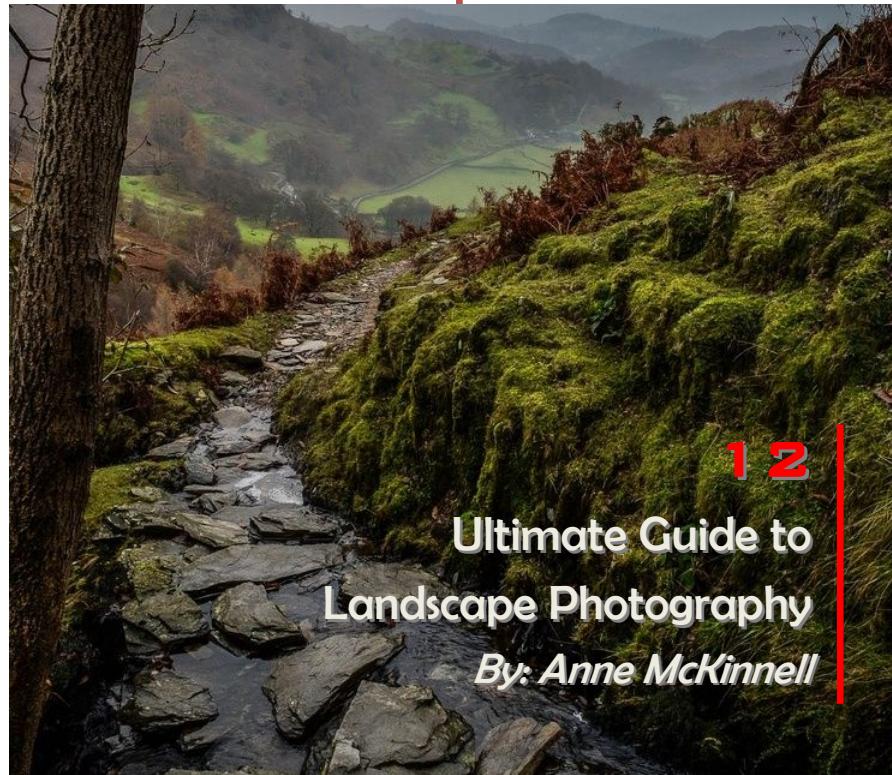
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# The **INSTRUCTION** of Landscape Photography

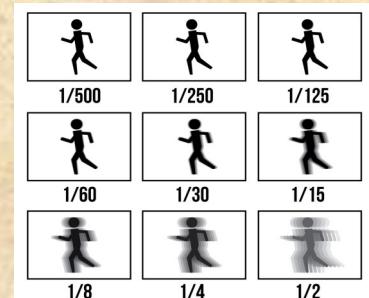
Landscape photography is one of the best ways to disconnect from the otherwise hectic day-to-day life and it's the perfect excuse to enjoy spending time in the great outdoors. For some, landscape photography involves hours or even days of traveling while others seek the beauty right outside their front door. Some dream of becoming a full-time professional, while others enjoy it as a hobby. Regardless of your ambitions, the steps involved in learning how to capture great images are the same and something we all need to go through.



## CAMERA EXPOSURE

### SHUTTER SPEED

A camera's shutter determines when the camera sensor will be open or closed to incoming light from the camera lens. The shutter speed specifically refers to how long this light is permitted to enter the camera. "Shutter speed" and "exposure time" refer to the same concept, where a faster shutter speed means a shorter exposure time.



### APERTURE SETTING

A camera's aperture setting controls the area over which light can pass through your camera lens. It is specified in terms of an f-stop value, which can at times be counterintuitive, because the area of the opening increases as the f-stop decreases. In photographer slang, when someone says they are "stopping down" or "opening up" their lens, they are referring to increasing and decreasing the f-stop value, respectively.



### ISO SPEED

The ISO speed determines how sensitive the camera is to incoming light. Similar to shutter speed, it also correlates 1:1 with how much the exposure increases or decreases. However, unlike aperture and shutter speed, a lower ISO speed is almost always desirable, since higher ISO speeds dramatically increase image noise.



## Start with the Fundamentals

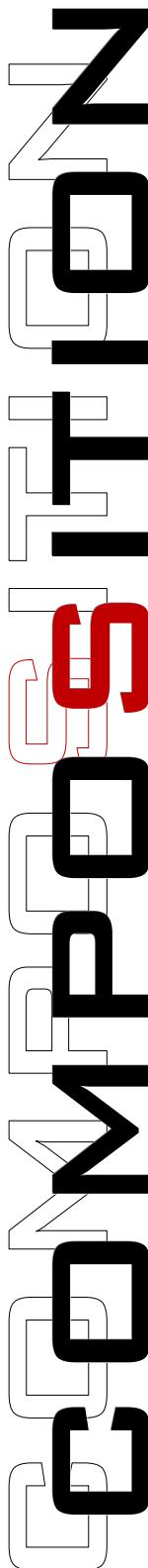
In this article, I'll introduce you to the things you need to know in order to master your camera and start capturing better images. We'll start with the fundamentals and how they work together, before we look at some simple tricks that can make your images instantly look better. At the end of the article, you'll hopefully be left with a better understanding of how the basics of landscape photography work and you'll have the tools needed in order to start capturing beautiful images. Even though I'll be focusing on landscape photography, the lessons taught through this article is also relevant for mostly any other genre of photography as well. Regardless of what style or genre you identify with, the fundamentals of photography remain the same; the shutter speed, ISO and aperture will always work the same and impact each other in the same manner.

In today's world it seems like anyone with a smartphone and a post-processing software can call themselves a photographer. Many tend to jump straight into advanced Photoshopping and image manipulation before they know how to use the camera. My friend and fellow photographer Gary Randall summarized this beautifully in a post he did a while ago:

*... new and beginning landscape photographers who hire me don't want to learn the mechanics and the operation of their cameras but want to instantly learn luminosity masks and blending, focus blending and perspective blending and other processing techniques.*

The biggest favor you can do yourself, regardless of your ambitions, is to start by learning the fundamentals of your camera. Without this basic knowledge, it's going to be much harder to capture both visually and technically good images and your progress will be much slower. Trust me; when you first learn the fundamental settings and how to use them, your progression will skyrocket.

In landscape photography (and photography in general), this means learning the basic camera settings and understanding how they impact each other. By understanding them, the quality of your images will show great improvement and you'll already be one step ahead.



A lot can be said about the rules of composition but I want to keep this brief and as easy to understand as possible. I generally dislike calling it rules and I choose rather to look at them as guidelines. There's a reason that the compositional guidelines we're going to look at exist and you will see a big difference in your photography once you become aware of them.

That being said, I do believe that you should only use these rules as guidelines and know when to break them. Seeing an image that obviously follows them can be just as displeasing as an image that breaks all rules without succeeding. Experimentation is the key and I strongly suggest that this is where you place your focus once you've mastered the fundamental settings.

The rule of thirds and the golden ratio are the two guidelines you should familiarize yourself with when beginning on work on your compositions. Both are rather simple guidelines that have the power to make your image more visually pleasing.



# THE LIGHT



**L**ight is an incredibly important factor in landscape photography; in fact, it's the most important. Without light, there's no image. 'Nice light' is a saying you'll often hear in the world of photography but what exactly does that mean? Is there good light and bad light?

Most landscape photographers prefer photographing during the golden hours; the hours around sunrise and sunset. During this time of the day, the sun is in a low position on the sky, creating a soft glow on the landscape – it's also during this hour you can be treated with some nice colors in the sky.

As the sun rises to a higher position on the sky, the light becomes harsher and it's not as ideal for photography. If you look at a handful of images from some of your favorite photographers there's a good chance that a large portion of those images are captured during the golden hour.

That being said, the hours around sunrise and sunset aren't the only time of the day you can capture beautiful images. Good light can be found everywhere and it's only a

matter of finding a subject that benefits from the current light. However, besides the golden hours there's a few other scenarios where you're likely to get some good results:

Foggy and gray days can be good for capturing moody images. There's not much I enjoy more than a hike in the woods when the fog is thick; there are images waiting to be captured around every corner. Cloudy days are perfect for both grand landscapes and waterfalls. As the clouds cover the sun, the light becomes slightly softer and it will remove a lot of the unwanted reflections and glares from a river/waterfall.

Valleys and gorges rarely get the morning light so if this is what you're photographing you're better off waiting until the sun is at a higher position in the sky. While being in the field during sunrise and sunset is one of the easiest steps you can take in order to capture great images I strongly recommend that you continue shooting in all kinds of conditions. Once you start learning how the light behaves, you'll get better at seeing how the light impacts different subjects in the scenery around you.

## ► Image Format

**Shoot in RAW file format.** A **RAW file is the complete picture, if you will.** RAW files contain all of the digital information from every pixel captured on your expensive camera sensor. Why compromise quality when you've invested in a great camera? When you shoot in JPEG, the camera takes the RAW image and performs its own post-processing and compression, which results in some of information in the pixels being lost. While JPEGs will always look better than your RAW images before any post-processing,

**JPEGs will limit the what you can do in post-processing** before introducing artifacts and noise. RAW files look terrible right out of camera because they lack any adjustments to contrast, sharpness, or color saturation, but they contain all of the information needed to make those adjustments yourself, whereas JPEGs are limited in that regard.



*Comparing an unprocessed (left) versus processed (right) RAW file.*

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# Ultimate Guide to Landscape Photography

By: Anne McKinnell

Landscape photography is one of the most challenging and most rewarding hobbies a person can have. One of the things I like most about it is that there is always more to learn. It keeps our brains active! Between learning about what type of gear you need, how to use it, understanding light and composition, and learning to process your photos, you will quickly come to the realization that making a striking landscape photograph involves a number of essential ingredients.

# Gear



## Your Camera

There are three basic categories of digital cameras: point-and-shoot; digital single lens reflex (DSLR); and mirror less.



**Point and shoot cameras** are the small digital cameras that most people start with. These cameras do not have interchangeable

lenses, and they have tiny sensors that have limited image quality. Point-and-shoots are used for making snapshots



**DSLRs** are the most popular type of camera for landscape photography for a number of reasons. They allow you to shoot in

RAW format for maximum data capture (more about that later). They have a variety of shooting modes including fully manual.



**Mirrorless cameras** are relatively new technology. They have all the same features as a DSLR, but they don't have the internal mechanism that includes the mirror, which is why the camera bodies are smaller and lighter.

internal mechanism that includes the mirror, which is why the camera bodies are smaller and lighter.

# Essentials



## Lenses

Once you have your camera picked out, you'll want to pick a few quality lenses that give you good focal range from wide-angle, which puts everything in your field of view into the frame, to telephoto, which will allow you to zoom in to something in the distance.

Lens choice is important because your photograph is influenced much more by your lens than by your camera. Sharpness, contrast, depth of focus, clarity, and detail are all determined almost exclusively by the glass (lens). It forms the image, while the camera simply captures it.

Lenses come in two forms; prime and zoom. A prime lens has one fixed focal length, such as 35mm. A zoom lens has a focal range, such as 18-55mm. Prime lenses are often slightly sharper than zoom lenses. However, zoom lenses are much more versatile and allow you to carry fewer lenses in your bag.



## Tripod



For landscape photography, a tripod is an essential piece of gear. When

you have lots of light, you might get away with hand holding your camera. But if you want to make images in low light situations such as sunrise or twilight, you'll need a tripod so that you can use longer shutter speeds.

## Sensor size

When it comes to image quality, the only thing you should concern yourself with is sensor size. Megapixels are not nearly as important as sensor size.

The largest sensor is known as a Full frame because it is the same size as a 35mm film negative. You'll pay the highest price for a system with a full frame sensor, whether it is a DSLR or mirrorless system.

	<b>APS-H (Canon)</b> 28.7 x 19 mm 548 mm <sup>2</sup>		<b>APS-C (Nikon DX, Pentax, Sony)</b> 23.6 x 15.7 mm 370 mm <sup>2</sup>		<b>APS-C (Canon)</b> 22.2 x 14.8 mm 329 mm <sup>2</sup>
	<b>Foveon (Sigma)</b> 20.7 x 13.8 mm 286 mm <sup>2</sup>		<b>Four Thirds System</b> 17.3 x 13 mm 225 mm <sup>2</sup>		<b>Nikon 1/CX</b> 13.2 x 8.8 mm 116 mm <sup>2</sup>
	<b>1/1.7"</b> 7.6 x 5.7 mm 43 mm <sup>2</sup>		<b>1/1.8"</b> 7.18 x 5.32 mm 38 mm <sup>2</sup>		<b>1/2.5"</b> 5.76 x 4.29 mm 25 mm <sup>2</sup>

# Recommended Camera Settings



**"Many beginner photographers often wonder what camera settings they should use to get the best possible results with their current camera gear. While there is no set rule for camera settings that work well in every shooting environment ."**

## Shooting in RAW

Most people are used to shooting pictures that come out as JPG (jay-peg) files since this is the default setting on most cameras. JPG is a compressed format meaning that some of the data the camera captures is discarded to make a smaller file size. Raw format, on the other hand, is completely uncompressed with no information thrown away.

What results from this is a digital negative – a large file that can only be accessed through Adobe Camera Raw, Lightroom, Photoshop and other compatible image editing software products. We'll talk more about processing your photos later, but start off by capturing a RAW file so you have more information to work with when you process your photos.

## Shooting Mode

Your camera will likely have a mode dial on the top where you can choose your shooting mode from one of the following; auto; aperture priority; shutter priority; program; or manual. For landscape photography, I highly recommend shooting in aperture priority mode, likely marked on your camera's mode dial as "A" or "Av".

The reason for using aperture priority is because aperture controls the depth of field in your image – the amount of the scene (in your image) that will be in focus. Generally, for grand landscapes, you will want everything from the foreground to the background sharp, so you'll pick an aperture like f/11 or f/18.

## Metering Mode

Evaluative or Average metering is the most common metering mode to use in landscape photography because the camera reads the light information from the entire frame. This is your best bet most of the time when the highlights and shadows are spread relatively evenly throughout the scene. However, if there are very dark blacks or very bright whites, this can throw your camera's meter off. In this case, you might want to switch to Spot Metering.

**Note:** Just a word of caution. Make sure you are familiar with how your camera meter works and how to do Spot Metering before you attempt this. Remember, your camera meter will always try to measure for medium or 18% gray. Therefore, if you meter off something that is black or really light in tone, your camera will compensate and try and make it gray .

# Tips for Taking Great

## Landscape PHOTOS

1. Location, location, location

2. Select a Mid-Range Aperture

3. Use a Tripod if You Need One

4. Shoot During the Golden Hour

5. Use a Polarizing Filter

6. Capture Movement

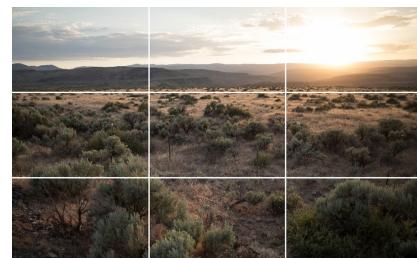
7. Experiment

8. Never settle for a good photo

### Compositions of Landscape Photography

#### Use the Rule of Thirds

Using the rule of thirds is an easy way to create a balanced and visually interesting picture. To do so, you simply break up your image into thirds vertically and horizontally with imaginary gridlines and position the subject(s) of your photo.



#### Make Use of Leading Lines

Using lines in your pictures is a powerful way to draw the viewer's attention to the main subject and create a sense of movement through the image.



#### Change Your Point of View

Shooting all your pictures from the same point of view can sometimes make your photos all start to feel the same.



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# B est Cameras for Landscape Photography in 2020



**The Fujifilm GFX 100** is a superb choice for landscape photography for many reasons. First, it has an ultra-high resolution 102 MP sensor that produces images with stunning detail and excellent dynamic range.

**Nikon D850** has a wide array of tilt/shift lenses available today and although they are quite expensive, they are among the many lenses available for the system, giving lots of different options for landscape photographers.



**Sony A7R IV** is our top pick among full-frame mirrorless cameras on the market today. Sony has also done an amazing job with its lens releases, giving plenty of options from ultra-wide-angle to super-telephotos for landscape photographers.

**Canon EOS R5** has a tough magnesium alloy construction, superb weather sealing, and dual memory card slots (1x CFexpress and 1x SD UHS-II). Despite its high-resolution sensor, the EOS R5 is able to shoot up to 12 FPS using its mechanical shutter and up to 20 FPS when using the electronic shutter.



**The Ni-  
kon Z7  
and Z7 II**  
are strong  
contenders  
in our list of



best cameras for landscape photography . Nikon was able to roll out its holy trinity in the form of the Nikon Z 14-24mm f/2.8 S, Z 24-70mm f/2.8 S, and Z 70-200mm f/2.8 S in a relatively short period of time.

**Pentax K-1**



comes with a great set of in-camera features for landscape photography, including built-in GPS and Compass which automatically get written into every captured image, which can be helpful for tracking the movement and position of the camera.

# Landscape Photography Lenses



Canon EF 16-35mm f/2.8L III USM (left) and Canon EF-24-105mm f/4 IS II USM (right).



**Canon EF 16-35mm f/2.8L III USM and Canon EF-24-105mm f/4 IS II USM** are great updates to classic Canon full-frame glass. The 16-35mm has 16 elements, including one aspherical lens, fluorine coating and a minimum focus distance of under a foot, with a fixed f/2.8 aperture and dust- and weather-resistant housing.



Fujifilm's XF 16mm F1.4R WR lens is a favorite for Fujifilm cameras, with a 24mm equivalent focal length.

The lens has two aspherical and two ED elements, and a nano coating to correct refraction and reduce flare and ghosting.



Leica Summaron-M 28mm f/5.6 (left) and Leica SL 24-90mm f/2.8-4 ASPH (right).



**Leica Summaron-M 28mm f/5.6**, for its M-series digital cameras. The lens came with the then-current screw mount; the new version has been updated with today's Leica M mount and can focus as close as 3 feet.

**Leica SL** shooters, the native **SL 24-90mm f/2.8-4 ASPH** is constructed with 18 elements in six individual moving groups, including four aspherical lens elements.



Nikon AF-P DX NIKKOR 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G VR offers a 27-

83mm equivalent range and has built-in image stabilization. A new stepping motor means smoother, quieter autofocus.



Nikon AF-S NIKKOR 24mm f/1.8G ED (left) and Nikon AF-S NIKKOR 24-70mm f/2.8E ED VR (right).



**Nikon's AF-S NIKKOR 24-70mm f/2.8E ED VR** lens is an update to the company's venerable zoom with its latest technologies, including four stops of image stabilization .

## AF-S NIKKOR 24mm f/1.8G ED

**ED** is another lens found often in landscape photographers' bags thanks to the wide-open f/1.8 aperture and the ED and aspherical elements.



**Olympus M.Zuiko Digital ED 12-100mm f/4.0 IS Pro** lens has a full-frame equivalent range of 24-200mm and a fixed aperture throughout. It is constructed of 17 elements in 11 groups, and features the company's Z Coating Nano optical coating and in-lens stabilization and it is weatherproof .

# MASTERING LIGHT In The Landscape



What makes one landscape image stand out from another? Is it location? We've all seen stale photographs from the most dramatic destinations, so location alone isn't enough. Is it composition? A well-composed image is essential, but it can look artificial if the scene isn't right.

**I**t's the light. One thing we see here at *Nature Photographer* is how the use of light consistently distinguishes landscape images. Light can transform a scene from boring to evocative, giving a location atmosphere and mood.

As photographers, we're dependent on the whims of weather for our light, yet we have many choices. We can look for light that dramatizes a scene and learn to recognize the direction, color and quality of the light that makes a landscape look its most photogenic. Sometimes, as the sun sinks low in the sky, the light changes on the scene rapidly, so you must keep shooting since a single photo likely won't capture the best light on the scene. At other times, getting the most effective.

light may mean simply waiting for a cloud to move so the shadow/highlight relationships change on the landscape.

## 1. Paint With Light

Night photography can be interesting without any tricks, but it's the sky that usually draws our attention, as so many details of the landscape are lost. One way to light up the landscape for night photography is to use a standard flash, but have you considered "painting" with light? Use a flashlight during a long exposure to selectively illuminate landscape elements, particularly in the foreground of your composition.

## 2. Backlight For Emphasis

Because of challenges with flare and exposure, many photographers often avoid using backlight. However, a sun shade, a graduated neutral-density (ND) filter and a digital camera can make a difference. Backlighting causes colors to glow and separates forms and textures. In this image of scrubland along the California coast near Los Osos, the clouds broke long enough to light up the bushes dramatically, allowing viewers to appreciate the texture, form and color. Backlight is always dramatic because of its contrast, which is why you see many pros use it, but that contrast can be difficult to manage.

### 3. Use “Bad” Weather

Inclement weather can create dramatic light on the landscape, especially at either end of a storm when direct sunlight breaks through. Heavy clouds and fog can add atmosphere to a scene that might otherwise have little of interest in it. Stormy skies also act as a natural diffuser, casting even light across the scene. In this image, dense clouds are a graphic contrast to the verdant landscape and break up what might otherwise be a monotonous view.

### Use Natural Shadows

### 4.

Create strong, contrast images by making compositions in which part of the scene is naturally shaded. Look for shadows caused by cliffs, boulders or a big bush. You'll most likely find these shadows in the early morning or late afternoon, when the sun is lower and the shadows are longer.

### 5. Backlight For Detail

Departing from ordinary frontal lighting can interject some originality into your photography. When you compose with the sun behind trees or other subjects that exhibit fine detail, backlighting will bring that out. In the case of trees, colored leaves will positively glow and every nuance will pop. While not every subject is right for the backlighting treatment, try some experimentation and you'll come up with situations where it generates outstanding results.

### Open Flash Techniques

### 6.

For unusual photos after dark, use multiple bursts of flash to light up a foreground or highlight parts of a background. Leave the shutter open for a time exposure and walk around inside the area you're shooting, popping your

flash as you go to light things up. Your camera will collect the light from each burst, giving a final image that appears to be lit by many flash units simultaneously. You can use the technique as a “main light” for areas that would otherwise be dark or just to add a little sparkle to areas already lit by ambient light during your long exposure.

### 7. Soft Light For Water

Water can be challenging to photograph in bright sun, particularly running water. The sun can make whitewater too bright, create glare on tops of rocks, reflect as uncontrollable highlights and keep shadows very dark. On the other hand, soft light from an open sky or bright clouds can be effective (heavy clouds tend to dull water). This creates a large area of light that makes gentle gradations for shadows and gives form to rocks and other objects, yet keeps the water with smooth tonal transitions.

### Layering Tones

### 8.

Although sunsets present vivid and saturated colors, there are other elements that can lead to a strong image. With the varying tones of the mountain ranges and morning atmosphere, this photograph evokes an interesting array of subtle, but dramatic contrasts. By becoming aware of such gradual changes in lighting and tone, you have the opportunity to create splendid images that reveal the less-pronounced beauties of nature.

### 9. Off-Camera Flash

The use of off-camera flash can enhance your sunset or sunrise images. By introducing flash on the foreground, you emphasize strong colors that complement the overall scene; by using the flash off-camera, you have greater control over the location of the flash rather than being limited to its

mounted position on top of the camera. In this photograph, the exposure was set manually for the early-morning sky; then the flash, tethered to the camera via a TTL-sync cord, illuminated the yellow-flowered Scotch broom shrubs in the

### Slow Sync For Vibrant Skies

### 10.

foreground.

Capturing a rich sky while maintaining good exposure on the foreground is a look that eludes many non-professional photographers. Just getting the sky to look right is the trickiest part of the shot. Once you can do that, the rest is easy.

Twilight is a tough time to shoot because of the high contrast between the ground and the sky. If you expose for the foreground, instead of a colorful, richly hued sky, you end up with a long exposure that blows out the sky and often leaves the foreground looking muddy. On the other hand, if you expose for the sky, the foreground is likely to end up as a featureless void. If you try to use your flash to expose for the foreground at normal flash settings, the sky tends to be completely black while the foreground is harshly lit. The solution is a compromise between these three techniques.



# Interview with CHARLIE WAITE

**Q1.**

You initially left school and began a career in theatre and acting.

What prompted you to change from this into photography and more specifically, landscape photography?

*I spent much time observing the stage lighting and found that it was so effective when done well in bringing a play to life.*

*I also enjoyed photographing my fellow actors. Then I met my wife Jessica Benton who was working on hugely popular series in the 70's and 80's called the Onedin Line for the BBC. I used to go and watch her filming in Exeter and Dartmouth and found it boring and would set off to explore the countryside and with my camera started responded to trees and valleys and rivers.*

**Q2.**

What inspires you?

*The natural world and the challenge to move people with a landscape photograph. The hope is that my photography will awaken something in the viewer and effect them. Landscape images cut across all political and national boundaries, they transcend the constraints of language and culture.*

**Q3.**

What was the strangest thing you have ever had to shoot? Why?

*When I thought that I would have to do photo journalism to make money, for my first job, I was asked to photograph a politician who might have been coming out of a building in central London. If I was able to get a picture of him, it would incriminate him. It was the most horrible thing I could imagine and from that moment on, I knew that I would never be a paparazzi.*



**Q4.**

Out of all the images that you have ever taken, is there one that you think of as your favorite?

*There was one made in Lake Titicaca where I was convinced there was some divine intervention at work.*

**Q5.**

You have shot stunning landscapes from so many parts of the world. Is there one place that you would love to visit and shoot images of?

*Yes, I would like to go back to France and just work in some of the most rural parts that many people never visit. I would love to be commissioned to do another book on 'Rural France'*

**Q6.**

For all our readers who would love to follow in your illustrious footsteps, what advice would you give them?



*To specialize and at the same time be realistic that you're your style of photography may not earn sufficient funds. Create an impressive portfolio of images and a simple yet stylish web site and understand lighting in all its different forms. Think carefully about composition and colour.*

**Q7.**

Throughout your extremely successful career you have remained incredibly loyal to landscapes. Have you ever been tempted to experiment with new genres?

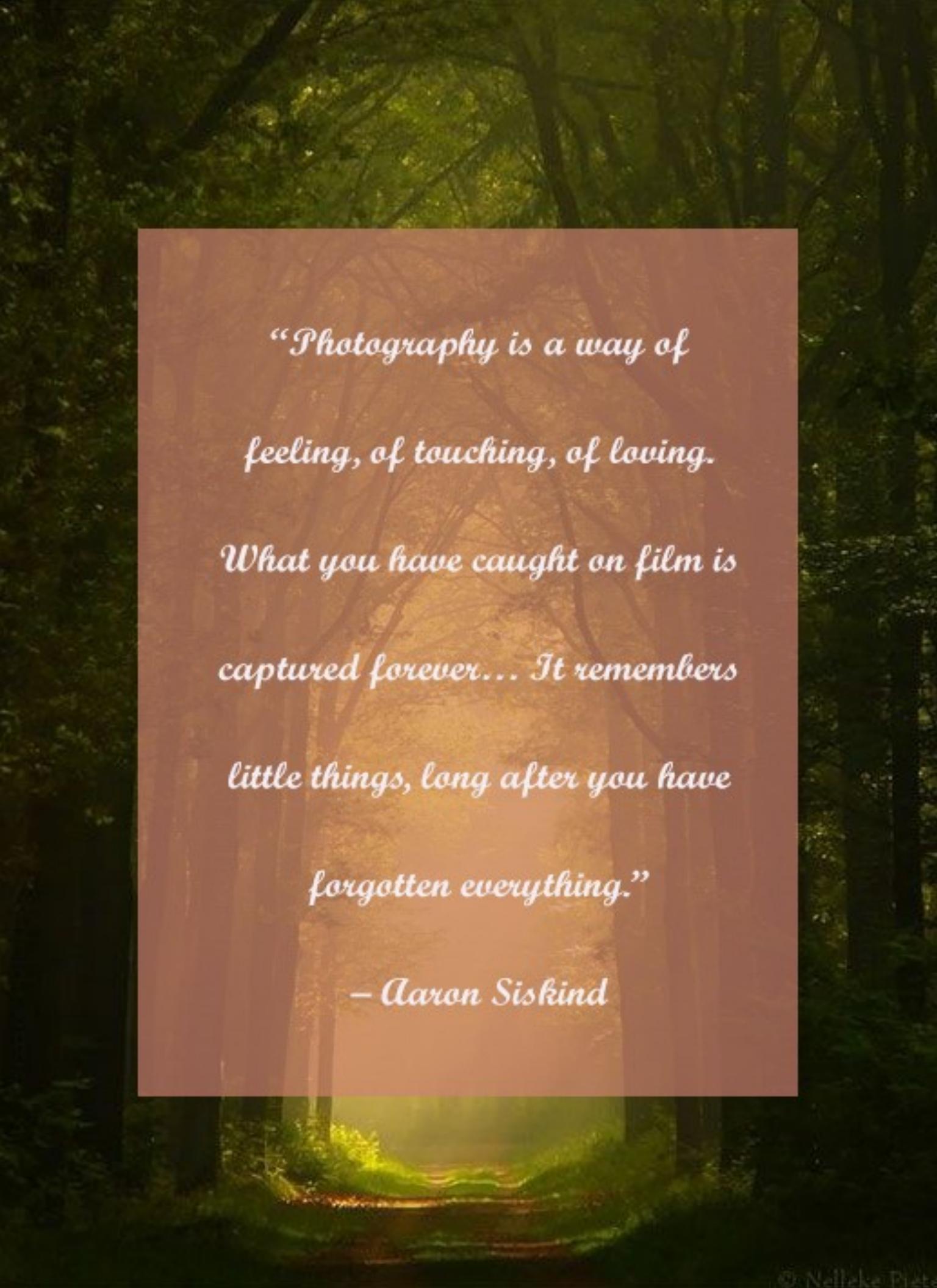
*Yes, I continue to photograph actors but I am always drawn back to the landscape. I have been working a great deal with the compact camera of late and enjoy the immediacy of it, but it is almost always the landscape that hauls me back.*

**Q8.**

The Landscape Photographer of the Year Awards is such an exciting event, for both amateur photographers and professionals and it is an incredible medium for emerging talent. What made you decide to launch such a competition?

*I have always been evangelical about landscape photography and am convinced that the camera acts both as a wonderfully creative tool and also a channel through which, the landscape photographer can fully engage with their surroundings.*





*"Photography is a way of  
feeling, of touching, of loving.*

*What you have caught on film is  
captured forever... It remembers  
little things, long after you have  
forgotten everything."*

*- Aaron Siskind*