

Light Leaks

Issue 7 Low Fidelity Photography

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In Conversation with the Koordinator of Krap

DIY: Shooting the Invisible

Showcase: Mattia Marchi and Kelsey Jarboe

Gallery: "Time"

Light Leaks Magazine Issue

Technique: Shooting Angles

COMPOSITION SIMPLICITY

BY TREAD

I know as a photographer you have been forced to ponder the notion: “Why are (insert fellow shooter’s name here) better than mine?” You, on occasion, have photographed the same subject matter as someone else only to find that your work lacks something. You’ve nailed the exposure, your subject was doing its thing, the planets were all aligned...and you screwed it up somehow. If I had to guess, I’d guess your composition was lousy, unimaginative, downright CLICHÉD! We cannot have that, so here are some simple ways to bust the cliché, to get you to think about the whole frame and hopefully improve your toy camera images, as well as your viewer’s patience.

Let’s get basic. No, wait. Let’s get simple. Simplicity is your best companion with a toy camera. Shy of a few filters or a homemade lens attachment or gadget, you have one lens, one focal length to work with so you have to use your own ingenuity to control where and what you are photographing. Simplicity. Think about that word. Got it? Alright, now ask yourself: “Visual simplicity; how can I inject that idea into my imagery?” You have to find a way to give “the most important thing” in your photos the most visual attention. That is the thought process you must entertain before clicking. Going down that path, you’ll find in many instances, it isn’t what is on the film, it is what you choose to leave out that makes the image work. You have to compose your photograph so that your reason for taking the picture is clearly seen. Arrange other parts of the picture area in such a way as to complement what you choose to be “the most important thing.” How you decide to do that ultimately will dictate your style as an image maker.

Golden mean, rule of thirds, visual design, et al. Google them and you’ll find the rules that have been around since cave drawings. Simply (there’s that word again) grab your camera,

look in the viewfinder and before you snap the picture, imagine your image area divided into thirds both horizontally and vertically. The intersections of these imaginary lines suggest four options for placing “the most important thing” for good composition. That area in the frame you select depends upon the subject and how you would like that subject to be presented. A flurry of choices is now upon you: background—is it busy and distracting? Point of view - are you above or below or boringly dead center? Distance—too far, too close, too left, too right? I know, I know choices, choices! Breath deep, simple, remember? Heck, following the old school rules will work for the most part and that can also become boring visually. Developing a good eye for composition requires you begin and end by removing what mucks up the frame. That being said, there are some basic design elements that can strengthen your image.

Lines—use them. Fence lines, crooked paths, the basic line a subject makes. Following a line with your point of view can instantly make a boring image a little more dramatic. Ignoring that line the right way might add some much needed tension. Lines require that you study where they lead you. Understanding lines and how your eye reacts to them will make you a stronger shooter... ponder the line, Grasshopper, ponder the line.

In Conversation

with the

Koordinator of Krapp

BY JAY HEUMAN



Cemetery Arches, Inkjet print, Woca (overlapping) (2007)

SANDRA CARRION IS PROUD OF HER DESIGNATION. SHE HAS EARNED IT BY COORDINATING THE NATIONAL KRAPPY KAMERA® COMPETITION FOR THE PAST 10 YEARS. THE COMPETITION IS OPEN TO ANY IMAGE TAKEN WITH TOY OR PLASTIC CAMERAS (DIANAS, HOLGAS, PINHOLES, ETC.), WHEREAS IMAGES TAKEN WITH MORE TECHNICALLY-ADVANCED CAMERAS, LIKE POINT-AND-SHOOT AND DISPOSABLES, ARE NOT ALLOWED.

INVOLVEMENT WITH THE COMPETITION SHOULD NOT, HOWEVER, OVERSHADOW HER WORK AS A PHOTOGRAPHER, WITH BOTH TECHNICALLY-ADVANCED AND LOW-FIDELITY PHOTOGRAPHIC MEANS AND METHODS. SHE SEES WORKING IN BOTH AS A COMPLEMENT AND CHALLENGE. HIGH-TECH CAMERAS CAN CAPTURE COLOR, CONTRAST, AND CONTOUR FLAWLESSLY; HOWEVER, THE RESULTS FROM LOW FIDELITY PHOTOGRAPHY EMBRACE CHANCE AND EXACT CONSIDERATION OF YOUR EQUIPMENT, AS THERE IS NO HIGH-TECH SAFETY NET.

HERE'S WHAT SHE HAD TO SAY, IN CONVERSATION WITH JAY HEUMAN.



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Holga 120S, 4sec exposure

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MATTIA MARCHI



Synagoge Man

Shoot the Invisible

USING INFRARED FILM IN A HOLGA CAMERA BY WALLACE BILLINGHAM



The main thing that attracted me to “lo-fi” photography many years ago was the way plastic cameras with cheap, single element lenses render the world. Gone are tack sharp images with perfect focus and exposure, in their place are soft dreamy images with dark and blurry corners. By using such tools, unique images are captured on film that can be created by no other means. The world illuminated by infrared light is also unique and dreamy. Since our eyes are unable to see the light above the red part of the spectrum, images captured using this infrared light allow us to see the invisible.

F-STOP

THE FIRST FOUR YEARS



Free Milk Press, Chicago, 2007. 103 pages, 169 color and black & white photographs, 8½ x11”.

Compiled by Christy Karpinski, Editor of F-Stop Magazine, F-Stop: the first four years is a testament to the originality and talent that has helped make F-Stop Magazine what it is today. Fifteen of the e-zine’s early contributors are showcased in this book of evocative, unsettling, humorous, sensual and mysterious photographs. Look inside and see Aline Smithson’s charming summertime toy camera images, self-portraits by Shots Magazine founder Russell Joslin, vividly surreal tableaus by Tom Chambers, and Jessica Bruah’s amusing blend of fiction and photography.

Pick up a copy of F-Stop: the first four years and delve deep into the narratives and personalities each photographer will-ingly shares and you’ll quickly find yourself lost in the imaginative visual stories inside.



Copies can be ordered directly from F-Stop at www.fstopmagazine.com for \$22.50 US + shipping. Print-on-demand copies also available from www.lulu.com for \$37.70 US + shipping.