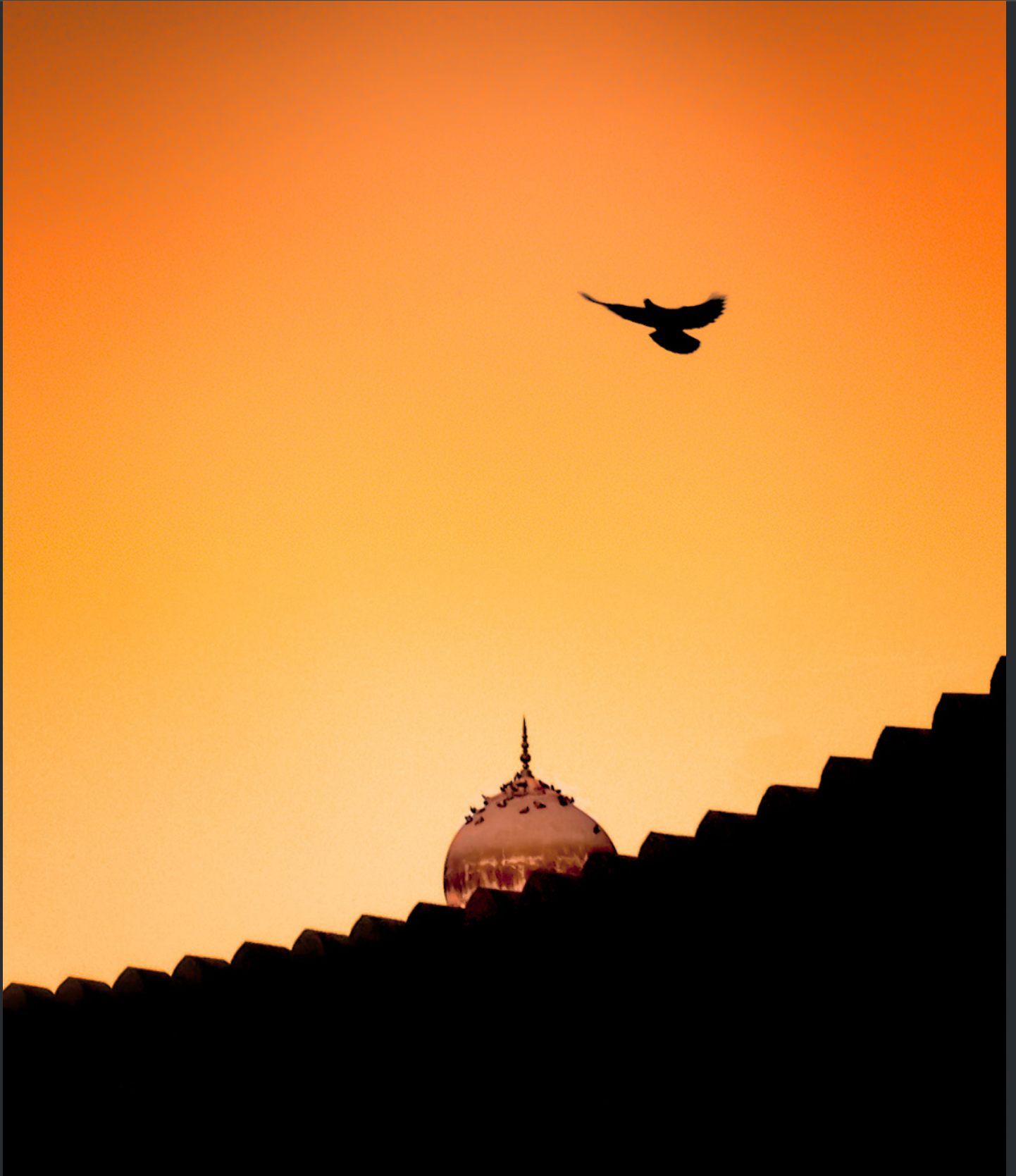




Drishti



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Inside: Featured Article: Pandharpur Wari – An experience beyond words | Just Grasp It: An introduction to the Zone System



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Dr̥ṣṭi (दृष्टि) in Sanskrit language means vision. The vision in the mind of a photographer, aligned in a creative manner with what one sees around, produces an artistic image. This resonates with the spirit of YPS, which strives to promote the photographic art.

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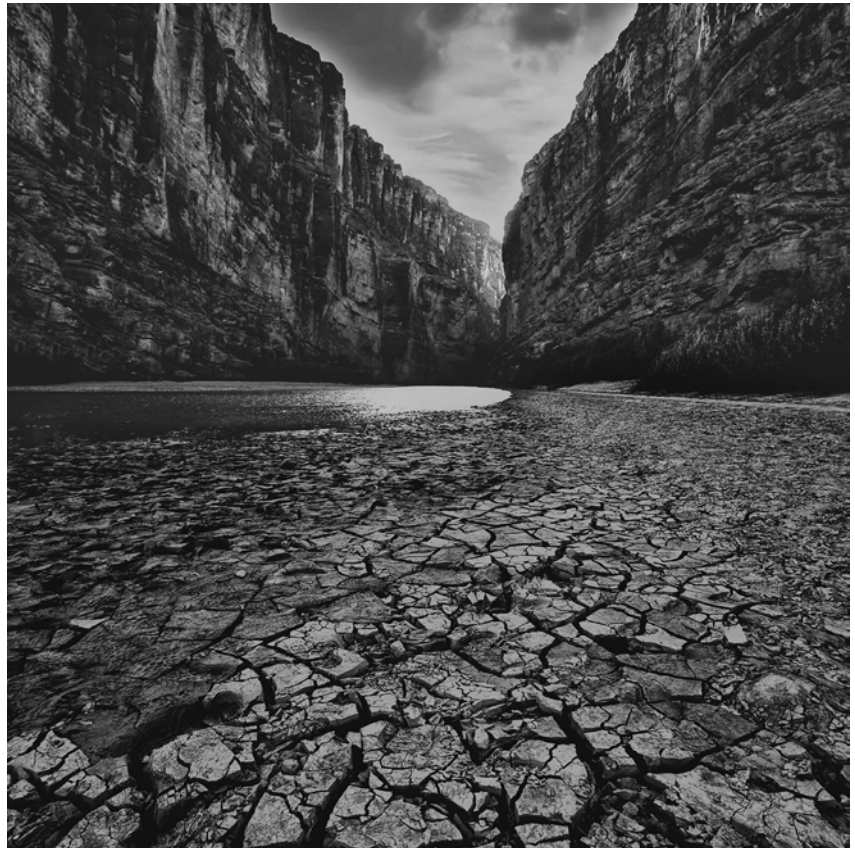


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An eventful two months

Dear YPS family,

Hope this finds you all in good health and spirit. Wishing all a Happy World Photography Day & Varamahalakshmi Festivities. Happy to say that there were umpteen number of activities which kept the spirit of all our YPS Members high in the last two months.

I am elated to share the resounding success of two notable Macro Workshops hosted at Hingara, during the last of July and the first week of August. These workshops, orchestrated under the expert guidance of Mr H Satish, garnered an overwhelmingly positive response. The guidance and mentorship of H Satish brought these workshops to life, with positive feedback from the attendees. Inquiries have already started coming in with requests for organizing yet another workshop.

The YPS National Salon 2023 culminated with a grand exhibition captivating the attention of numerous photo enthusiasts. The Chief Guest Dr. Shalini Rajneesh, Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Planning and Statistics and Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports was amazed by the quality of the pictures that were exhibited. A remarkable tribute in the form of an entire wall featuring photographs by Mr Murali Santhanam, served as an expression of profound gratitude for his enduring contributions to YPS.

The passionate Macro photography enthusiasts within YPS showcased their works from a recent macro walk at Lalbagh at the YPS Open House, resulting

in constructive feedback and dynamic exchange of creative ideas and insights.

On the occasion of the World Photography Day this year, we had yet another exhilarating event. This gala event saw an exhibition at Chitrakala Parishath, titled 'Frames 2023 - Visual Voyages', where 72 member images were showcased in grandeur on large-format prints of 20 x 30 inches. This magnificent exhibition was a testimony to the unwavering dedication of the Executive Committee and the YPS Exhibition Committee, who labored tirelessly to ensure its resounding success. A special thanks to H Satish for his instrumental role in securing sponsorship from HP Reddington for the prints, a contribution that was pivotal to the event's success. The event also offered a lineup of programs, including a presentation by Mr Ananthamurthy R on the avian and wildlife wonders of Ecuador, a captivating live demonstration on portrait lighting techniques by H Satish, and a practical session dedicated to capturing family portraits in natural light.

Amid all these activities, it gives me immense pleasure and happiness that we are less than a month away from our first international photo tour to Vietnam. With preparations in full swing, my best wishes are extended to all participants, and I eagerly anticipate seeing some captivating photographs from this enriching experience. I extend my gratitude to Mr Yogesh Mokashi for his dedicated coordination, which has been pivotal in the realization of this momentous endeavor. I also wish the upcoming Belvai Butterfly Photography Workshop, led by

Mr Chandrashekar S, a grand success and anticipate some wonderful clicks from all the participants.


I am delighted to announce that YPS has been selected to host the upcoming convention of the Federation of Indian Photography (FIP), a prestigious event planned in the first quarter of 2024 in the culturally rich city of Mysore. Preparations have started and in due course, I assure you that more details such as dates and registration information will be communicated through YPS communication channels. As we prepare for this landmark event, the Executive Committee looks forward to the collective engagement of all members in ensuring that this convention becomes an enduring memory for all attending delegates. In this endeavor, we extend an open invitation to any member interested in volunteering and participating in the organizational efforts to connect with us.

We are all set to announce the YPS International Salon soon and expect participation in large numbers and encourage you to spread the word amongst your fellow photographers. Looking forward to active participation of members in all upcoming activities.






Manju Vikas Sastry V
AFIP


President, Youth Photographic Society and Editor, Drṣṭi



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Pandharpur Wari – An Experience Beyond Words

Maharashtra has a legacy of saints who are renowned social reformers too. After reading the biographies of many of them, I realized that all of them were devotees of Lord Vitthal (also known as Vithoba) and were extremely subservient. This realization made me extremely interested in joining the Pandharpur Wari, the annual yatra that is taken out in honour of Vithoba. This year, I was finally able to fulfil this longstanding interest.

Wari is a centuries old annual pilgrimage procession. It is the ritualistic essence of the Warkari Panth (a sampradaya within the Bhakti tradition), dedicated to the worship of Lord Vitthal (an incarnation of Lord Vishnu) and his consort Rukmini. While we don't have concrete evidence on the exact beginnings of this practice, a reference of Wari is found in 13th century literature also. Wari involves carrying the holy Paduka (footprints) of the saints in a Palakhi (palanquin) from their native place to the temple of Vitthal in Pandharpur.

Sant Tukaram and Sant Dnyaneshwar are among the more prominent saints in Maharashtra, so a majority of people join the procession of their Palakhis. The Sant Tukaram Palakhi starts from Dehu whereas Dnyaneshwar Palakhi starts from Alandi, near Pune. Though the final destination of both the Palakhis is the same i.e., Pandharpur, the routes are different. Every year, the Wari begins on the 8th or 9th lunar day of the waning moon in the Hindu month of Jyeshtha and reaches Vitthal temple at Pandharpur a day before Ashadhi Ekadashi (the 11th day of the Hindu month Ashadh). The distance covered during the Wari is around 250 km and it is covered in 21 days. Wari attracts millions of devotees, making it one of the largest religious gatherings in the world. It has been classified by the World Book of Records as "one of the most visited places in a day".

The Wari schedule is published ahead of time. Minute details are made available, including the starting location and the location of breaks, including lunch, rest and night stays and those are strictly followed.



Vithoba and saints



Sant Dnyaneshwar Maharaj Palakhi



Warkaris keep walking to reach Phandharpur

Warkaris

Members of Wari are called Warkaris. People from various castes and socio-economic backgrounds participate in the Wari, with the common goal of reaching Pandharpur and worshipping the deity. In Wari, everybody is treated as Mauli, which is a pet name given to Vitthal by his devotee saints. There is no differentiation on the basis of religion, caste, age, sex or even financial position. All are equal. Most disciples are hardworking farmers. They are very simple by nature regardless of their socio-economic position. As Warkaris treat each other as Mauli, they are always ready to help each other. This is called Seva. So, the event has not just religious but also cultural and social importance, as it brings people from various backgrounds and communities together in harmony.

Dindi

The conglomeration of many Warkaris is conventionally called Dindi. All registered Dindis are numbered and assigned their place in the procession. Each Dindi strictly follows their assigned place throughout the Wari. 27 Dindis walk ahead of the Mauli Palakhi; the remaining Dindis (more than 250) follow. During their march, Patakadhari (saffron flag holders), a member carrying a banner of register number and women carrying Tulsi (Holy Basil) saplings on their head are at the front of the troupe, followed by the drummer and Veena player. Taalkaris (those who play Taal, another instrument) follow them and women bring up the rear.

Accommodation, meals, and other facilities are provided to Warkaris through their respective Dindis. Stay arrangements are usually in tents or in schools or colleges along the route. Those Warkaris who are not members of any Dindi, usually stay in open areas like farms or along river banks. Along the way, the Wari passes cities, towns and villages. Local residents along the route come out to greet, feed and house the Warkaris. They are the major support of Warkaris. After experiencing Wari, one realizes how few basic needs a human has and how simply life can be lived.

Arrangements By Government

The state government and local authorities make extensive arrangements for drinking water, toilets, medical



In Wari, all are equal



Warkaris treat each other as Mauli (Vitthal) and help each other



Dindi No. 30 behind Mauli Palkhi



Drying Clothes

assistance etc. Whether these arrangements are sufficient is an entirely different matter.

Drying Clothes

Warkaris leave their house simply to meet God Vitthal. Each Warkari carries 3-4 pairs of clothes, a plate, a glass, and a piece of plastic to sleep on. After taking a bath in the morning, they start walking, carrying their wet clothes with them and drying them where possible. People drying clothes is an interesting subject for street photographers.

Ringan

An important event that occurs during Wari is the Ringan (literally, circle). It is the biggest attraction in the Wari and a heaven for photographers. At different pre-announced locations of Ringans, the Mauli Palakhi stops and flag holders of all dindis take Pradakshina (a circular walk around the Palakhi). There is an inner Ringan and an outer Ringan; between them is a gap of almost 15-20 feet. Once all Warkaris set at their positions, the most important event happens. The Jaripatakadhari, a horse-rider wielding a golden flag, circumambulates thrice to the inner circle with two galloping



Warkari drying clothes is a unique subject of photography



Drinking water facility by Govt.



Warkaris who are not members of any Dindi stay in open areas



Sant Dnyaneshwar Palakhi



Pradakshina of Talkaris in inner circle of Ringan



The run behind Mauli Palakhi, called 'Dhava'

horses, one which he rides and another white horse which is not ridden. The belief is that the white horse is ridden by Sant Dnyaneshwar. The chants of 'Mauli Mauli' rise in excitement and happiness. Thousands of villagers gather for hours to see this event which lasts less than a minute. This is an absolutely fulfilling and surprising sight. Once this is over, the drumbeaters and Taalkaris (numbering thousands) go inside the inner circle. Women are not allowed inside the inner circle. One person, akin to the conductor in an orchestra, gives the instructions. All Taalkaris play taal in one rhythm. It's an experience to attend it. Everything goes on with extraordinary discipline - seeing is believing. Outside the Ringan, all other Warkaris play traditional games like Fugadi, Manora etc. Frankly speaking, Ringan is the perfect event for drone photography (taking prior permission from local authorities is a must).

There are 2 kinds of Ringans, - the Gol (circular) Ringan and the Ubhe (standing) Ringan. During the 21 days, there will be around 2-3 Ubhe Ringans and an equal number of Gol Ringans. The date, time and place of each Ringans is part of detailed Wari timetable. The Ringan at Wakhari, the last destination before entering Pandharpur, is the biggest one. This is where both the SantTukaram and SantDnyaneshwar Palakhis come together. One wonders how these Warkaris have the stamina and enthusiasm to play with so much vigour after walking 12-15 kilometres. Faith has the greatest strength, I believe.

Holy Bath

The ultimate destination of Wari is the temple of Vithoba at Pandharpur. The Wari reaches Pandharpur on the Dashami (10th day) of the Hindu month Ashadh. The next day, Ashadhi Ekadashi, is the biggest festival for Warkaris, (more significant than even Diwali and Ganesh Chaturthi). On that day, they fast and take a holy bath at the river Chandrabhaga. The river Bhima flows in the shape of a crescent at Pandharpur. So, it is called Chandrabhaga (Chandra means Moon). After the holy bath, they go to the darshan of Vitthal at his temple. If Darshan is not possible due to the very long queue, then they take a darshan of the temple, and take a Pradakshina around it. The next day, everyone starts their return journey home.



On Ashadhi Ekadashi, a holy bath at the river Chandrabhaga

The Challenges For Photographers

The Wari procession passes through small villages in Maharashtra. Although the Wari schedule is detailed and easy to read on paper, it can be quite confusing to follow while on the road. It is highly recommended to be accompanied by someone familiar with the area. Chances of finding reliable restaurants or hotels with western toilet facilities is almost nil. The Wari takes place during the rainy season. The crowds and the rain make it really tough to manage equipment. Ringan event is the highlight of the Wari but villagers occupy the Ringan ground well in advance. For Wakhari Ringan, which is the last and biggest of the Ringan events, the ground is fully occupied 7-8 hours before the event starts and photographers have to arrive much earlier to secure a good spot. Despite the multiple challenges, the Wari presents a unique and worthwhile photo opportunity.

Wari is a spiritually enriching experience for Warkaris who find solace and unity in their shared devotion to Lord Vitthal. For me, it was a very tough journey but truly a life changing experience.



Playing 'Fugadi', a traditional game



Vinaya Mathews

MFIP, MFIP-Nature, EFIAP, PPSA, GAPU

About the author: After working with State Bank of India, for 31 years, Vinaya Mathews quit her job to pursue her passions, working for the under-privileged and photography.

She has earned many national and international distinctions, wrote a series of columns for local newspapers on 'Basic photography' and articles in magazines like 'Viewfinder'.

Misty morning at Munnar

"There are two kinds of photographers—those who compose pictures and those who take them. The former work in studios, for the latter their studio is the world. For them, the ordinary doesn't exist; everything in life is a source of nourishment. There is only 'you and your camera.' The limitations in your photography are in yourself, for what we see is what we are." – Quote by: Ernst Haas, (1921 – 1986), a famous Austrian-American photojournalist and color photographer.



Presenting here is a captivating landscape titled 'Misty Morning at Munnar' by Mr G R Pandit who learnt camera basics from Mr R Sathish of Sagara

Photographic Society and attributes his aesthetic inspiration to the guidance of Mr A G Lakshminarayan, a figure of international acclaim in artistic photography.

In January, he joined Mr Goutham Ramesh for an expedition to Munnar. Their objective was to capture the ethereal beauty of mist-shrouded hills. They arrived at 'Top Station' an hour before dawn and selected the location with a desired perspective. The photograph was taken between 5:30 and 6:00 am using a Canon 750D camera, an 18 mm focal length lens, aperture f/5.6, an exposure time of 2 seconds, and ISO 100. For stability, a tripod was used.

Technical analysis of this picture reveals a harmonious combination of elements; the camera, wide-angle lens, ISO settings, extended exposure time, and the tripod setup. He masterfully captures the early morning interplay of light, shadows, colors, and textures. The 2-second exposure breathes life into the rising mist, adding a three-dimensional allure to the landscape.

On an aesthetic note, the photograph aligns with Ernst Haas's wisdom, quoted above: "Some photographers meticulously orchestrate their parameters before shooting, akin to a studio arrangement. In contrast, others perceive the world as their studio, capturing what they see". This approach resonates with planning and seizing the right moment - especially in the case of landscapes, where the photographer has limited control. Thus, we can reflect upon a few criteria for analyzing



© G R Pandit

this 'Misty Munnar' picture: In the realm of landscape photography, the keen eye of the photographer encompasses every element from the foreground to the background. To spotlight crucial components within the scene, two vital parameters come into play.

Firstly, drawing from the legacy of the renowned Ansel Adams in the film era, a deep understanding of the Zone system, which spans nine shades of grey alongside pure black and white tones, guides the photographer in selecting the right exposure. This principle seamlessly translates to the realm of color photography as well.

Secondly, while the human eye perceives the landscape in three dimensions as a natural phenomenon, the camera captures this scene in two dimensions, resulting in a 'flat' representation. Hence, the photographer's expertise lies in meticulously selecting the right time, such as the early morning instance in the context of Munnar, and the appropriate vantage point to imbue the image with a 3D allure.

The photographer must harness ideal natural lighting and shadows, ensuring that the focal point, positioned correctly as the entry point, draws the viewer's gaze instinctively with an impact. Complementary elements, serving as leading lines, guide the viewer's eye towards this entry point, while the rest of the elements are harmoniously integrated and brimming with informative allure and infinite appeal. The resultant picture becomes vibrant. It tells a captivating story

interesting with intrigue and full of vitality as well as life.

The ensemble of this landscape, a harmonious convergence of towering hills, mist that seemingly dances on the horizon, and neatly arranged tea plantations in the foreground, forms a visual symphony. These elements, characterized by intricate patterns, dynamic lighting and interplay of textures and shadows, evoke a spectrum of emotions in the viewer's mind.

In sum, these factors collectively weave the fabric of the image, deeply connecting with the viewer's sensations and perceptions, stirring their emotions.

Thus, it is my pleasure to commend Pandit, the creator of this extraordinary landscape, for his skillful artistry and exceptional ability to convey the essence of nature's beauty.



K S Rajaram
AFIAP, Hon YPS

Mr Rajaram is a life member of K S Rajaram AFIAP, Hon YPS YPS and has served in different capacities in its executive committees including that of president during 1989 - 92. He is an author, teacher, and mentor in the field of photography.

Stories from United States National Parks - Part 1

In the heart of the United States lies a collection of landscapes that could only be forged by the hands of time, nature's artistry, and the unyielding forces that shaped our planet. These are the USA National Parks – a testament to the country's dedication to preserving its most pristine and awe-inspiring natural treasures. As a photographer deeply drawn to the wonders of the wilderness, I find myself humbled and inspired by the sheer diversity and grandeur these parks offer.

From the towering granite spires of Rocky Mountains to the ethereal, mist-shrouded valleys of the Great Smoky Mountains, each park is a unique masterpiece, telling a story of geological forces, ecological harmony, and the passage of time. These places are sanctuaries for not just the flora and fauna that call them home, but also for the countless souls seeking solace, adventure, and a connection with something greater than themselves.

Through my lens, I endeavour to capture not just the physical beauty of these landscapes, but the emotions they evoke and the stories they tell. The delicate balance of delicate ecosystems, the serene solitude of untouched wilderness, and the harmony between human endeavour and the natural world are all narratives waiting to be shared.

As we journey together through the pages of this photographic exploration, let us immerse ourselves in the splendour of these parks. Let us remember that the preservation of these spaces is not just a gift to ourselves but a promise to future generations – a promise that the untouched wilderness, the roaring waterfalls, the ancient forests, and the star-studded night skies will remain as a source of inspiration, introspection, and profound reverence for the remarkable world we inhabit.

Welcome to a visual odyssey through the USA National Parks – a testament to the sublime beauty that unites us with the very essence of our planet.

Denali National Park, Alaska

Denali National Park and Preserve is a vast protected area located in the interior of Alaska, USA. It encompasses over 6 million acres of pristine wilderness,

including the towering Denali, also known as Mount McKinley, which is the highest peak in North America. The park is renowned for its stunning landscapes, diverse ecosystems, and rich cultural history.

Mount Denali



Mount Denali © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP

Mount Denali, also known as Mount McKinley, stands as the highest peak in North America, majestically dominating the Alaskan wilderness. Its story is one of discovery, exploration, and enduring beauty.

The Athabascan people, indigenous to the region, called the mountain "Denali," which means "the high one." This name perfectly captures the towering stature of the peak, which reaches an impressive elevation of 20,310 feet.

As I embarked on the journey to capture the essence of Mount Denali through my camera lens, I knew I was about to face a challenge unlike any other. The sheer scale and unpredictable weather of this Alaskan giant demanded careful planning and a deep connection to the landscape. The statistics say that the mountain is visible only on a third of the times you attempt to see it. True to form, in our three day stay in Denali National Park, the mountain was visible only on the first day.

Setting up my gear at various vantage points, I felt a mix of excitement and humility in the face of Denali's grandeur. The mountain seemed to change its mood with each passing moment – from being veiled in mist to standing proud against a clear blue sky.

During my time there, I encountered the

unpredictable Alaskan weather – sudden rain storms, dense fog, and even moments of clear brilliance. Each weather pattern added a unique dimension to my shots. The challenge was to adapt quickly and adjust my camera settings to capture the evolving scenes without compromising image quality.

Most of the following landscape pictures like the picture of Mount Denali were shot with Canon 6D with a Canon 17-40 lens, at F9, with shutter speed 1/125s. I generally use Adobe Lightroom for brightness and contrast control, with Adobe Photoshop for cropping and cleanup.

Mount Divide



Mount Divide © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP

I could see through the mud smeared glass window that the weather was worsening as we sat in the shuttle bus of the Denali National Park. But the weather was very unpredictable in the area.

As we got out of the shuttle bus at the Toklat river stop, a few people got out along with us but got back into the bus because of the weather. My wife and I may have been the only people who started to explore the area as we liked the complete lack of any sound related to human activity. We could only hear the sound of the Toklat river.

Due to the absence of trees, one can see into the distance which creates a false

impression of distance. We presumed the walk to Mount Divide to be about fifteen minutes but it took a close half hour hike to get there and we missed our next few shuttle buses. The hike to the river was deceptive too, as the moist ground around the river sometimes gave, sucking our legs down halfway to the knees.

On our hike back, we stood on the bridge across the river to take a good picture of the Toklat river along with Mount Divide. We found this to be a relatively safe place to stand for a long time, waiting for our next shuttle bus. This is when lightning started. We stood there for sometime hoping to catch the next shuttle bus before it started pouring.

We caught the next shuttle back to the park headquarters as the rain came down heavily.

For post processing of this image, I created two virtual copies of the original image with +1 and -1 exposures respectively. I exported all the three image files into Aurora HDR and created an HDR image that would pump up the textures of clouds in the skies.

Wild Blueberry Picking



Wild Blueberry Picking © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP

The forest rangers in Denali National Park took us on a small hike where we could see wild blueberries growing all over the ground. Blueberries are very tasty and nutritious. Also, they are very expensive. It was fascinating to see them just lying there on the forest floor.

Leaving Denali National Park behind was

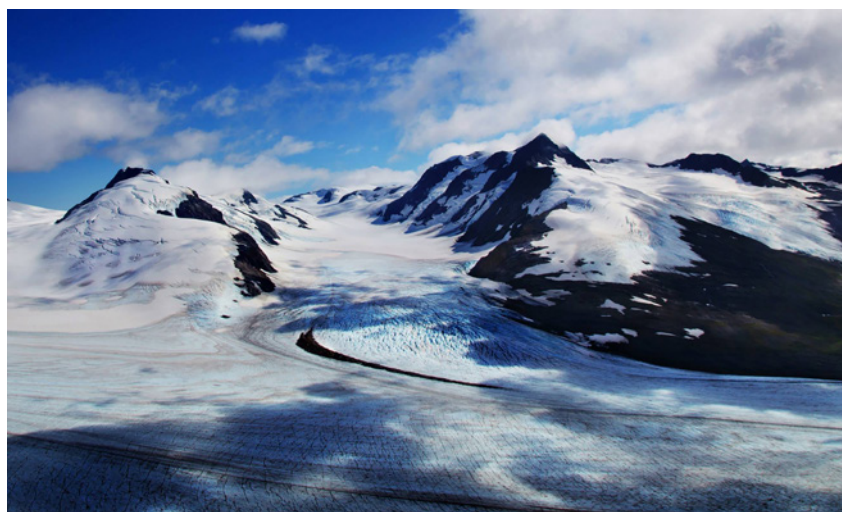
bittersweet. The memories of capturing its majestic presence on camera will forever stay with me. This experience taught me the importance of embracing the unexpected, being patient, and connecting deeply with the environment to truly capture the essence of such a monumental landscape.

For this image, I used a Tamron 24-70 lens at F2.8.

Kenai Fjords National Park, Alaska

Nestled along the rugged coastline of southern Alaska, Kenai Fjords National Park beckons with its awe-inspiring beauty and dynamic landscapes. Home to majestic glaciers, pristine fjords, and diverse marine and terrestrial ecosystems, the park offers a captivating blend of natural wonders. From the thunderous calving of glaciers to the serene beauty of icy blue waters, Kenai Fjords National Park stands as a testament to the powerful forces of nature and a sanctuary for those seeking to explore the untouched wilderness of Alaska's frontier.

Harding IceField



Harding IceField © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP

The Harding Icefield, a breathtaking expanse of ice and snow, crowns the dramatic landscape of Kenai Fjords National Park in Alaska. Covering over 700 square miles, this ancient icefield is a living testament to the ebb and flow of time, shaping the park's iconic features. Glacial meltwaters cascade down steep valleys, carving out majestic fjords and nourishing delicate ecosystems. As a cornerstone of the park's rugged beauty, the Harding Icefield invites adventurers and nature enthusiasts to witness the

awe-inspiring forces of nature in action and experience the profound serenity of a world shaped by ice over millennia.

We decided to take a helicopter ride over the Harding Icefield. We soared over rugged peaks, each one revealing a new facet of the icefield's grandeur. The glacial blue hues shimmered in the sunlight, creating a surreal and ethereal atmosphere. It was as if we were flying over a landscape that belonged to another world entirely.

The sheer scale of the icefield was humbling – a testament to the raw power of nature and the immense passage of time.

Fjords of Kenai Fjords National Park

We took a cruise ship through the awe-inspiring fjords of Kenai Fjords National Park. The cool breeze carried the faint scent of saltwater, while the sound of distant waterfalls added to the serene ambience.

The towering walls of rock seemed to rise impossibly high, and the deep blue of the water mirrored the ghostly Alaskan sky.

The glaciers stood like silent sentinels. The cruise took us past massive icebergs, which had broken off from the glaciers, creating a surreal scene that felt almost otherworldly.

The mist created strange patterns that created a surreal ambience that burned the images in my mind creating an experience of a lifetime.

I created two virtual copies of the original image in Adobe Lightroom and exported all of them into Aurora HDR to create this image.



Fjords of Kenai Fjords National Park © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP



Zion Narrows © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP

Zion National Park, Utah

Settled within the rugged terrain of southwestern Utah, Zion National Park enchants visitors with its striking red rock canyons, towering sandstone cliffs, and vibrant desert landscapes. A sanctuary of geological wonder, the park's iconic formations like the Zion Canyon and the Narrows draw hikers and adventurers to explore their intricate beauty. As

sunlight dances across the rocks and the Virgin River carves its path, Zion unveils a captivating tapestry of colours and textures, inviting all who enter to witness the harmonious marriage of nature's artistic prowess and the enduring spirit of the American Southwest.

Zion Narrows

The skies over Zion are usually clear, lacking any intriguing cloud patterns.

Fortunately, on the day we arrived at Zion, the sky was overcast with a constant threat of rain. As I positioned my camera to capture this image, the clouds had partially parted, revealing a glimpse of the sky. Additionally, there was a break in the clouds that allowed the setting sun's light to illuminate the taller peaks.

Hiking enthusiasts from all around the country visit Zion National Park

to experience the Narrows hike. This demanding hike, lasting 8-10 hours, begins along the riverbank (Virgin River), seen in the picture, involving intermittent river crossings and wading through chest-deep water amidst towering rocks. After watching a few HD-Pro videos created by hikers, I realised that it's quite risky to carry a dSLR camera on this hike. When we reached this spot, known as the mouth of the Zion Narrows, we witnessed three hikers emerging from between the rocks, completely soaked, even though the river was not in full flow.

Soon after, a light drizzle began, prompting us to rush back toward the park bus shelter.

Zion Vista

Standing atop an elevated vantage point overlooking the awe-inspiring beauty of Zion National Park, I felt a mixture of exhilaration and reverence. With my camera mounted on a sturdy tripod, I adjusted my settings to ensure the perfect exposure for the impending lightning strikes. The sky, once serene and calm, transformed into a canvas of darkness streaked with the occasional flash of lightning, illuminating the entire canyon. The challenge lay in timing my shots with a lightning trigger, waiting for the precise moment when the lightning would streak across the sky, revealing the park's magnificence in an electrifying instant.

As the storm drew closer, the lightning strikes intensified in frequency, casting a surreal illumination over the landscape. With each bolt that forked across the heavens, my lightning trigger clicked,

capturing nature's raw power as it danced above the iconic landmarks of Zion. The thunder that followed seemed to reverberate through the very rocks themselves, underscoring the scale of the spectacle before me.

Virgin River in Zion National Park



Virgin River in Zion National Park
© Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP

As I set up my camera along the banks of the Virgin River in Zion National Park, I was drawn to the idea of capturing the serene beauty of the flowing water. Slow shutter speed photography has become my chosen technique. By setting a slower shutter speed, usually a few seconds or more, I'll be able to convey the movement of the water in a dreamy and ethereal manner. The milky effect created by the long exposure transforms the rushing river into a graceful, smooth flow, while the surrounding rocks and

vegetation remain sharp and detailed. This technique allows me to express the tranquil atmosphere of the park and create a captivating visual story that transports viewers to this breathtaking scene.

I used an ND 10 filter to create a slow shutter speed (50 seconds) image to

create a misty effect from the flowing river.

Big Bend National Park, Texas

Situated along the meandering course of the Rio Grande in southwestern Texas, Big Bend National Park unveils an awe-inspiring realm of diverse landscapes and untamed wilderness. Spanning vast desert expanses, rugged canyons, and towering mountains, the park's name aptly describes the grand curvature of the river that shapes its contours. Here, the Chisos Mountains rise as a verdant oasis amid the arid surroundings, offering a striking contrast to the dramatic chasms of Santa Elena and Boquillas Canyons. As the sun paints the landscape with hues of gold and crimson, Big Bend beckons adventurers and nature enthusiasts to explore its untouched beauty, revealing a tapestry of nature's artistry woven into the fabric of the American Southwest.

Lost Mine Vista

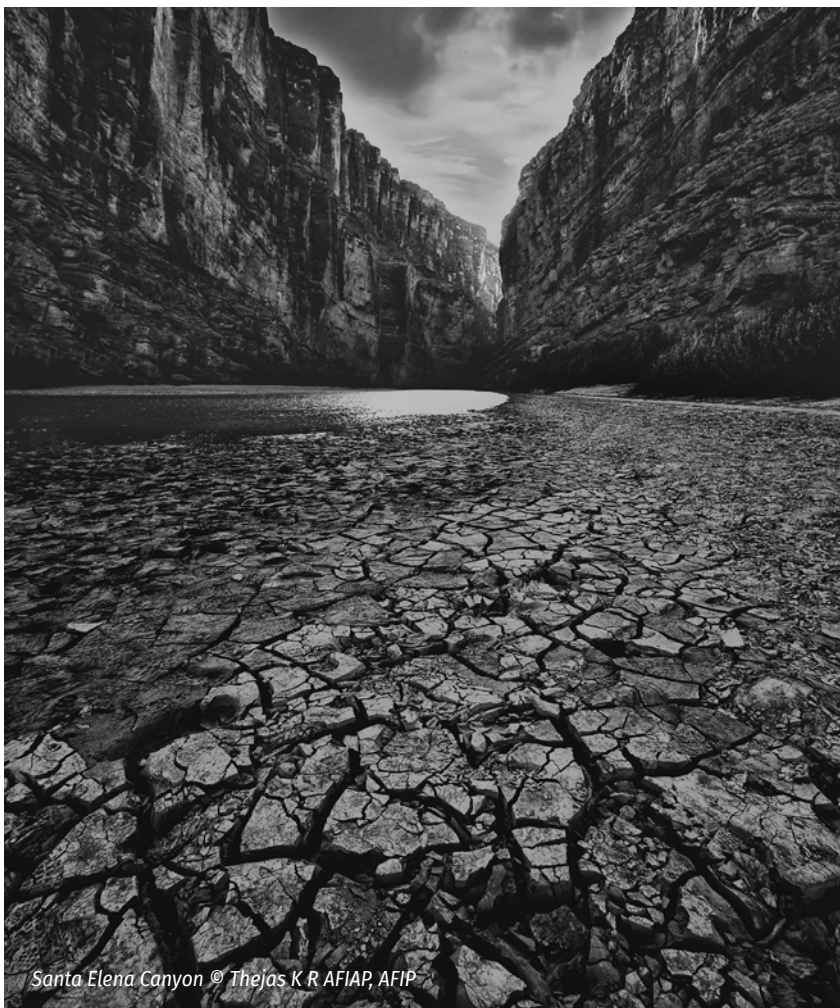
Anticipating the creation of history, our decision to embark on an early-morning drive to Big Bend National Park was fueled by the prospect of capturing the captivating moment when the sun triumphed over the darkness. Our searches on Google of the Lost Mine trail had revealed a void of such shots, igniting



Zion Vista © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP



Lost Mine Vista © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP



Santa Elena Canyon © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP

our excitement further. Yet, reality swiftly interjected our ambitions, reminding us that the sun's ascent would be veiled behind the hills, rendering our sunrise shots impossible. The dream of etching our mark in history was met with a good-natured chuckle – no groundbreaking sunrise photography awaited us.

Adaptation then became our ally as we sought elevation and embarked on the Lost Mine trail, a 3-hour round trip hike. Just twenty minutes into our journey, we stumbled upon a remarkable spot

that unfolded just as the sun gracefully emerged on the opposite horizon. The timing was impeccable, the sun's gentle ascent bathing the landscape in a soft, golden glow. In this fleeting moment, we discovered that sometimes, history isn't defined by groundbreaking firsts, but by the art of seizing an unexpected, beautifully illuminated instant, etching it into our memory as a timeless achievement.

For this shot, I combined 3 different exposures of the image to create an HDR image in Aurora HDR.

Santa Elena Canyon

Journeying through the Texan landscape, our path led us southward, beyond the arid stretches of desert and the looming contours of parched hills. Suddenly, an imposing sight unveiled itself – an immense, foreboding wall of ebony hues stretching alongside the southern boundary of Big Bend National Park in South Texas. The wall's sheer presence triggered a mental nod to 'The Wall' from Game of Thrones, though here, the snow was replaced by the raw, sombre textures of dark rock formations. Amidst this colossal barrier, the Rio Grande river breaches the continuity, giving birth to the majestic Santa Elena Canyon. On official records, the opposite bank of the river marks the territory of Mexico. Here, beyond the wall, reside the peaceful inhabitants of border towns, coexisting with the constant shadow of the drug cartels, wielding deadly armaments. This scene encapsulates the intricate tapestry of this border region, where dichotomies merge and stories of resilience and tension play out amidst the stark contrast of rock and river.

For this shot, I created an HDR image and then converted it to monochrome using Nik Silver Efex Pro.

Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Tennessee

The Great Smoky Mountains rise with an air of majestic mystery on the border of Tennessee and North Carolina. These ancient peaks, draped in mist like a shroud of secrecy, offer a breathtaking spectacle that's both humbling and enchanting. With dense forests that seem to harbour whispered tales and a rich biodiversity that rivals a bustling city, the Great Smoky Mountains stand as a testament to nature's boundless creativity. Whether you're captivated by the serene melodies of trickling streams or the vibrant dance of fireflies on a summer's eve, these mountains have a knack for making every visitor feel like a part of their timeless narrative.

Golden Embrace

Once we put our bags in the cabin, we drove towards the northern part of the Great Smoky Mountains where you can see tall trees with yellow leaves of autumn. The sun was beginning its descent, casting a warm glow on the horizon.

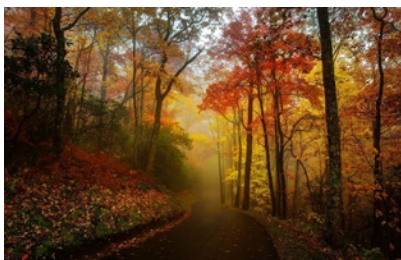


Golden Embrace: Sunlight Filtering Through Autumn's Canopy © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP

Setting up my camera, I attached a wide-angle lens and mounted it on a tripod. I adjusted the settings to achieve a narrow aperture, which would help create the starburst effect as the sun's rays filtered through the leaves. With my camera in live view mode, I framed the shot, ensuring that the sun was partially hidden behind the oak tree's trunk. The contrast between the brilliant leaves was mesmerising. There were many others taking selfie pictures but I found myself to be the only one who was shooting the sunburst.

The picture was shot at F16 to get the sunburst.

Drive Through Appalachians



Drive Through Appalachians © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP

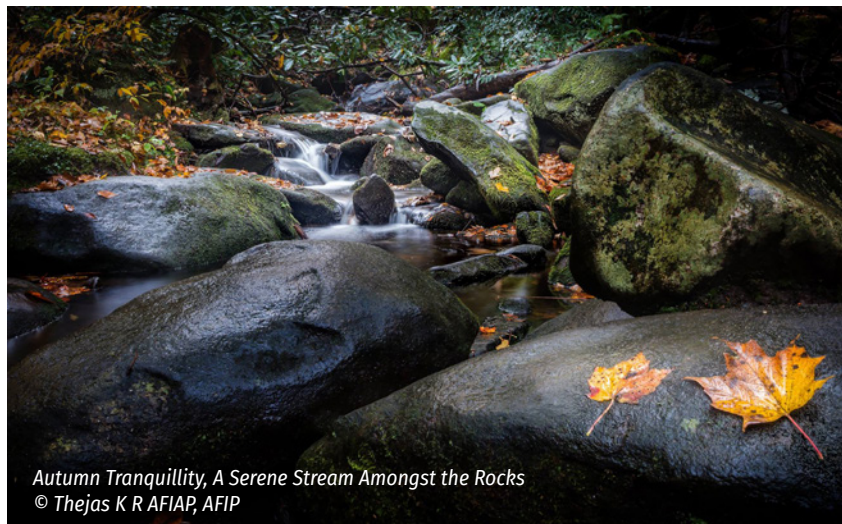
"You are going to the Smokies now?" one of my friends asked us, a couple of years back when we were planning on a trip to The Great Smoky Mountains.

"Yeah, why?" I asked.

"All the colours would have disappeared by now. You will only have barren trees," he said.

We debated if driving all the way from Houston to the Smokies was worth to look at barren trees. After careful consideration, we resolved to embark on the journey primarily to relish the pleasure of a long drive through the Appalachians that house the Great Smoky Mountain National Park. The prospect of residing in a mountain cabin also beckoned, regardless of whether the trees retained their leaves or not.

Mark Manson says in the best-selling



Autumn Tranquillity, A Serene Stream Amongst the Rocks © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP

book, *The Subtle Art of Not Giving A F**** that chasing positive experiences will leave you sad. Accepting negative experiences will leave you happy.

We were pleasantly surprised to catch the last few days of the colours. This was especially a better feel as we were not expecting it. The drives and treks through the colourful wet forests of the Appalachians were one of my best experiences.

In retrospect, it's a testament to the notion that sometimes, surrendering to uncertainty and being open to whatever comes your way can yield the most rewarding outcomes. The hues of the forest may have been on the cusp of vanishing, but their fleeting presence left an indelible mark on our journey—one that was infinitely better because it was unanticipated.

Autumn Tranquillity

In the heart of autumn's splendour, with raindrops delicately falling from the sky, I found myself facing a unique photographic opportunity. I stumbled upon a tranquil stream that wound its way through a tapestry of fallen leaves. The water flowed with a gentle murmur, a melody that seemed to harmonise with the rustling leaves above. The forest was alive with the rich hues of fall. I was determined to craft an image that would tell a story of nature's elegance in this tranquil moment.

Dressed in waterproof attire and with my camera securely protected under a rain cover, I ventured into the woods. The pitter-patter of rain on leaves was a soothing symphony that accompanied my every step. The stream, swollen

from the rain, flowed with a newfound energy, and the colours of the leaves seemed to intensify against the muted grey backdrop of the sky.

Setting up my tripod on the bank of the stream, I chose a wide-angle lens that would allow me to encompass the entire scene. The rain's soft touch lent an enchanting misty quality to the air, and I knew that using a longer exposure would accentuate this ethereal effect.

The picture was shot with an ND4 filter, with a time of 2 seconds.

As time passed, the rain continued its steady descent. My fingers were damp, and my clothes had absorbed the earthy fragrance of the forest. Yet, I was completely immersed in the experience, attuned to the dance of water and light. The rain had been both my challenge and my partner, and the resulting images held within them the story of a rainy autumn day, the stream's murmured secrets, and my quest to capture the essence of the moment.



Thejas K R
AFIAP, AFIP

Mr Thejas K R (LM-198) has been a passionate art photographer for over 2 decades. A computer science engineer with MBA degree, he works as an operational technology project manager in Air Liquide Co., and lives in Houston, USA with his wife and daughter. He has served as the president of Memorial City Toastmaster Club and was on the boards of Houston Photographic Society, and Houston Camera Club

An introduction to the Zone System

The famous Zone System was devised and developed by Ansel Adams who is arguably the greatest landscape photographer ever. In essence it is a well defined process to give photographers complete control of the process, end to end, right from capturing an image to the final print. It is regarded as one of the seminal developments in photography.

At the first look, it may sound complex and hence many photographers shy away from using it. Some are of the opinion that it is no longer relevant. This article cuts through the confusion, explains its usage in simple terms and discusses its relevance in the digital age. So, read on.

Relevance in the digital age: The Zone System was formulated during the film era to exercise ultimate control from the capture of images on film, its development and then printing. Since we are now in the digital age, is it still relevant? The answer is yes. While the development part is perhaps no longer applicable, the Zone System is still very pertinent to digital photography, since it will make you understand the whole process of setting

the exposure methodically and precisely. It will also give you an idea how your final print will appear whether it is produced in a lab or using an inkjet printer. Zone System can assist you to measure the brightness range (contrast) of the scene you are photographing accurately. This will help you to decide for example, the bracketing interval and the number of exposures you need to make, for creating a High Dynamic Range (HDR) image stack.

What do you need for using Zone System: For Zone System to be used effectively, your camera needs to have a few features which are quite common these days. The first of these is the spot meter and the second is the manual exposure mode. Next, the area over which the spot meter is active must be clearly demarcated (as a circle or a square) so that it is easy to use.

You can't use the usual evaluative (also called matrix) metering as this gives a 'sort' of average reading of the whole scene and hence will not give you the level of precision needed to use the Zone System.

Understanding the Zone System: As the name implies, we start by defining what a zone means. Every scene we photograph has areas that have different reflected brightness values (or tones). These are also called luminance values (or luminances for short). Zones are nothing but luminances and are arranged on a scale starting from zero and going up to 10. These are represented by Roman numerals 0 to X (Table 1). The value 0 represents purest black and XI purest white. For us in practical terms, Zones I to IX are important and the range between them was termed as 'Dynamic Range' by Adams. However, even this range is large and at the extreme ends, textures are not visible. So, Adams further called Zones II to VIII as the 'Textural Range'. This is where we photographers operate mostly. Each zone is one f/ stop apart. So, as an example, if Zone V has an exposure of 1/60 at f/8, then Zone VI would give you an exposure reading of f/11 and Zone IV would be f/5.6 at the same shutter speed and ISO. Picture 1 gives an idea of the tones of different zones and Picture 2 shows zones marked in a typical scene.

Table 1

| Value Range | Zone | Description of the Luminance |
|-------------|-----------|--|
| Low | Zone 0 | Pure black |
| | Zone I | Near black, with slight tonality but no texture |
| | Zone II | Textured black; the darkest part of the image in which slight detail is recorded |
| Middle | Zone III | Average dark materials and low values showing adequate texture |
| | Zone IV | Average dark foliage, dark stone, or landscape shadows |
| | Zone V | Middle gray/tone (18%): clear north sky; dark skin, average weathered wood, mud, Gray card |
| High | Zone VI | Average Caucasian skin; light stone; white beach sand |
| | Zone VII | Very light skin; white beach sand sun lit |
| | Zone VIII | Lightest tone with texture: textured snow |
| | Zone IX | Slight tone without texture; glaring snow |
| | Zone X | Pure white: light sources and specular reflections |



Picture 1: Approximate luminances of different zones.



Picture 2: Various zones marked on an image as per the luminances.

Meter scale and calibration: There are some important points that you need to keep in mind when you want to use the Zone System. Let us look at these in more detail starting with the analog scale (Picture 3) that shows up in the viewfinder of your camera when you switch on the manual exposure mode. There could be some differences between how the scale is implemented on your camera and what is described here but the principle is the same. Please check your camera manual for the exact details.

This scale is just like a ruler used by students. However, instead of being marked in centimeters or inches it is marked as exposure stops (long bars) with half stops (short bars) also shown. Please recall that a stop is also referred to as one EV. So, the (long) bars are 1 EV apart. The status of the metering is indicated by a pointer which is shown as a yellow triangle (Picture 4). When it is at the center (Picture 4), it means that the exposure set by you is as recommended by the camera meter. The meter pointer to the left of center indicates underexposure and if it is to the right, it shows overexposure. The image will be rendered correspondingly darker (Picture 5) or lighter (Picture 6) by an

amount indicated by the meter pointer's position with reference to the center. When the symbol > lights up it indicates that the overexposure is beyond 3 stops. Likewise, when < is lit, it means that underexposure is beyond 3 stops.



Picture 3: Exposure scale marked at 0.5 EV steps. Each long bar represents one Zone. The leftmost is Zone II and the rightmost Zone VIII. The longer bar at center indicates Zone V.



Picture 4: The meter pointer (yellow triangle) at center position. This means that the exposure is as per the meter's recommendation and hence the area you have measured will be recorded as medium tone, that is Zone V.



Picture 5: In this example, the exposure is 1 EV less (underexposed) than the meter recommendation. Consequently, the area you have measured will be recorded as Zone IV.



Picture 6: Here, the exposure is 2 EV more (overexposed) than the meter recommendation. In this case, the area you have measured will be recorded as Zone VII.

Of all zones, Zone V is the most important. This is the 'middle tone' which has 18% reflectance. Your standard gray card is at Zone V. All reflectance meters that measure reflected light, including your camera meter, are calibrated to this tone approximately, if not exactly. However, you can consider this to be close enough to the actual calibration standard, for the purpose of this article.

So, if you place the spot metering circle on an area and center the meter pointer on the scale (Picture 4), this means that you are setting exposure for that area as per what meter is recommending. As the meter is calibrated to medium tone (or Zone V), if you now take a picture, this will be the tone at which that area will be recorded. The interesting point is that this is so regardless of the actual tone of the area!

However, this is not the end of the story! It is not necessary you want the area to be recorded as medium tone. You can shift the shutter speed or aperture or ISO or

any combination of thereof, to keep the meter pointer at any position on the scale to record it either darker or lighter. For example, in Picture 5, the meter pointer has been kept at -1EV. So, the area being measured is being recorded as 1 stop darker than medium tone, regardless of its original tone! In other words, we have given here -1.0 stop exposure compensation and hence kept it at Zone IV. Another example is shown in Picture 6.

So, to conclude, the actual tone (luminance) of the subject does not matter! This leads to our all-important Metering Mantra, which is –

Metered area is always rendered as medium tone but I can place it at any tone I want by giving suitable compensation!

This is something that you should never forget!

Now, if you look at Pictures 1 and 3, you can see that the scale in your camera is a sort of symbolic representation of the Zone System with each bar corresponding to a zone. The center bar represents Zone V, the leftmost Zone II and the right most Zone VIII. The other zones are in between. Thus, the spread is across 6 zones and this can be considered as the dynamic (recordable) range of the camera.

Note that this range of 6 stops is valid for full frame digital cameras. Cropped sensor cameras may have less.

Using the Zone System: Once you understand the principle of zones, meter calibration and scale, using the Zone System is straightforward. The real key here is to understand and recognize the tones or luminances and place them where you want in the final image (or a print in case this is your final output). This is the reason why Adams was a strong proponent of a concept called pre-visualization. Here, you are really not concerned about the tone of a particular area in a scene but rather how you want to make it look in the final processed image. This is why the 'metering mantra' is very important and it is essential that photographers develop a detachment to what they see and acquire a skill to visualize what they want ultimately.

The Zone System really shines when the brightness range of the scene is very high, spanning more than 6 zones. Under these circumstances it is logical to start with a well-known luminance value which is of course the Zone V (medium tone).

Examples are, dried mud, green grass, northern blue sky, etc. In all these cases what is really important is not the colour but the tone. Start by placing the spot metering circle on an area at Zone V. If you now center the meter pointer on the scale, then this means that area will be rendered as Zone V. You can expose as it is, if that is what you want or give less or more exposure to move it to lower or higher valued zones. That is entirely up to you.

Here is an example when you want to record at a zone other than the actual one. Assume that you want to record textures in an area that is at Zone II. As per Table 1, textures are seen starting from Zone II but greater detail may be recorded many times by placing the area at Zone III. So, if you have some head room at the high value end, you may want to expose the area at Zone III (overexpose by a stop) though the actual tone may be at Zone II. Read on for more details on how to set exposure using the Zone System.

Place and Fall: This is an important point. Remember that the entire scene is recorded ultimately with a single exposure in the end, after all. In other words, as an example, if you spot meter a Zone V area and decide to record it at Zone V or even something else, that exposure is valid for the entire scene that you see in the viewfinder. Adams calls it "Placing" the exposure. Once that is done all the other zones will "Fall" with reference to that and different luminances will be recorded relatively.

Handling low contrast scenes using Zone System: One of the great uses of the Zone system is that it allows you to determine the contrast range with great accuracy. Let us start by considering a low contrast situation. Here, the brightness range of the scene falls within the dynamic range of the sensor. There are two cases that you should look at.

Case I: Spot meter a medium toned area (Zone V) and center the meter pointer. This will record the area in medium tone. Now move the spot meter circle to the darkest and brightest areas and see if the < or > symbols light up. If they do not, then it means that you are safe as your camera has enough dynamic range to handle the scene without any issues. Just press the shutter release and you are done.

Case II: In this case the contrast is higher than in Case I but still within the dynamic

range of the camera. As before, spot meter a medium toned area (Zone V) and center the meter pointer. This will record the area in medium tone. Now move the spot meter circle to the brightest area and see if > symbol lights up. If this happens, it means that highlights are getting clipped. You can handle this by giving some negative compensation, say -1 EV. With this step you are trying to move what is beyond Zone VIII to Zone VIII. If the > symbol still lights up, reduce exposure further (more negative compensation) till the brightest area is at Zone VIII or if you want to be more conservative between Zones VII and VIII. So, we have now placed the brightest area at a zone where this highlight will record with some texture. This setting of exposure corresponds to what many refer to as ETTR (Expose To The Right). It maximizes the dynamic range of the camera.

The negative compensation given will make all the other zones fall towards lower valued ones accordingly. So, at this stage make sure to check the darkest part of the scene with the spot meter. If the < symbol has not lit up then, you have the right exposure as all the zones in the scene will be recorded without any clipping.

Handling high contrast scenes using Zone System: If the scene has very high contrast that is, it has a brightness range greater than the dynamic range of your camera then the following problem will occur.

Proceed just as in Case II explained above. However, after you have given the needed negative compensation and spot meter the darkest area, you will see that the < symbol lights up. This means that it has fallen to Zone 0 or Zone I and some shadows are getting clipped. Now, you can't increase the exposure in this case as highlight clipping will occur. What this means is that the dynamic range of your camera is not in a position to handle the brightness range of the scene and you have to sacrifice either highlight or shadow detail. Or you need to resort to HDR image capture and processing.

Setting up the camera for an HDR sequence: HDR capture involves taking multiple images (called an HDR stack) with varying exposure (bracketing) so that they can be combined to get a dynamic range that is large enough to handle scenes with very high contrast. Zone system can help you to determine the number of frames that are needed to capture an HDR stack.

Before we go ahead, please note the following three points:

1. Digital sensors have a great amount of latitude (tolerance) for under exposure. That is, you can recover a lot of shadow details though you will have to pay a price in terms of noise in the shadows when you open them up in post-processing. However, once an overexposure happens it results in clipping of highlights (blown areas) and no recovery is ever possible. Hence, highlights must be preserved at all costs.
2. Second, the HDR stack has to be merged in post-processing. All the images must be similar (other than exposure) so that they can be blended properly. For this, you cannot change exposure by altering aperture as this will change the depth of field. Use only shutter speed (preferably) to change exposure. If this is not possible for whatever reason you can also alter ISO.
3. For best results exposure should be varied between frames by steps of 1 EV.

There are a few different ways of setting up a camera for HDR stack capture. We will look at one.

First locate the brightest area in the scene you are planning to photograph and place it at Zone VIII or between Zones VII and VIII as just explained. Let us call this meter setting as the 'base exposure'.

Next, place spot meter on the darkest part of the scene. Since we are dealing with a very high contrast scene, this will fall below Zone II and hence the < symbol will light up. Start increasing the exposure by making the shutter speed slower (and/or by increasing the ISO) till the meter pointer aligns with Zone II bar or if you want to be on the safe side keep it between Zone II and III. Let us assume that you needed 3 more stops of exposure compared to the base exposure to get here.

So, the bracketing sequence you need to perform is totally 4 exposures, viz.,

1. Base exposure
2. Base exposure + 1 EV
3. Base exposure + 2 EV
4. Base exposure + 3 EV

These 4 exposures will capture the entire brightness range and when merged in a

post-processing package like Lightroom or Photoshop will give you an HDR image with all the luminances of the scene recorded. You can now further process such an image by adjusting contrast, saturation, etc. to get the result that you had previsualized.

Conclusion: While many may think that the Zone System is archaic and is not relevant in the digital age, this is not true. There is really nothing as precise as the Zone System for determining the exposure. Plus, it is unparalleled for the flexibility and control it gives. This when coupled with pre-visualization can give you the best results. Also, precise determination of brightness range will help you to get a proper HDR stack. The only thing needed is that the photographer should have a good grip on identifying the zones and previsualize what he wants in the end. (14 Oct, 2023 - Google Meet by Mr Ashok Kandimalla on this topic)

All text, diagrams and images © Ashok Kandimalla.



Ashok Kandimalla

Mr Ashok Kandimalla has been authoring articles since 2009, titled 'Basics of Photography' in Smart Photography magazine. He has conducted more than 100 workshops and photography courses for Honeywell, Bank of America, Infosys, UNESCO and Mindscreen Film Institute Chennai. He has been a speaker at FIP convention at Rajahmundry and has been interviewed and featured on the Nikon Japan Centenary website for his contributions to photography.



YPS Saturday Meet Sessions

The Lalbagh Macro Open House Saturday Meet session was held at YPS hall on 5th August 2023 at 6.30pm. The meet was mainly to review the photographs of members. A moderate gathering of about 25 had assembled by evening.

At the outset, Mr Vikas Sastry, president of YPS welcomed the members and also made a few announcements about the ensuing programmes such as the World Photography Day, Askary awards competition, YPS workshops and photo tours and the YPS International Salon. He also informed about the tie-up with the Forest department in organizing an exciting photography contest for the members and a 10-day programme on the eve of the wildlife week. It was even heartening to hear from him about the possibility of hosting the next FIP convention by YPS.

Among members present only two had brought the pictures for review. The first set of pictures was shared by Mr Atri, who had recently taken part in the photography outing at Lalbagh. Most of the pictures were of macro subjects. The reviewing of the images were done by Mr Chandrashekhar, Ms Prema Kakade and Mr Hardik Shah. Some members also chipped in with their observations. The second set of pictures were presented by Mr Mikhil and the images were from his last trip to Kaziranga and Manas wildlife sanctuaries. The pictures which were mainly of mammals such as elephants, rhinoceros and leopards were reviewed and many suggestions regarding composition, adjusting brightness and contrast in post processing were given.

With that the session of image review concluded.



B V Prakash

Mr Prakash is an avid mountaineer, photographer and travel writer. He is a life member of YPS and member of Drṣṭi editorial team.

Macro Photography Workshop in Agumbe-2023



Mushrooms - H Satish



Kalidasa lantern - Achintya



Karadi Caterpillar - Dr. Phanibhushan



Yellow Pit Wiper - Rajasimha

For the first time, YPS organized a Macro Photography Workshop mentored by yours faithfully, H Satish. Due to the overwhelming response, two batches were organised. It was a first-time Hingara Macro workshop for all the enthusiastic participants.

Since the time of our wildlife workshops at Bharatpur and Kaziranga, interest among members has grown and now all our workshops are fully booked. It is notable that nowadays YPS is arranging many workshops for all genres of photography. The two batches for the long pending workshop for macro enthusiasts were from 21-23rd July and 4-6th August, in Agumbe forest. Our stay was in a beautiful homestay at Hingara.

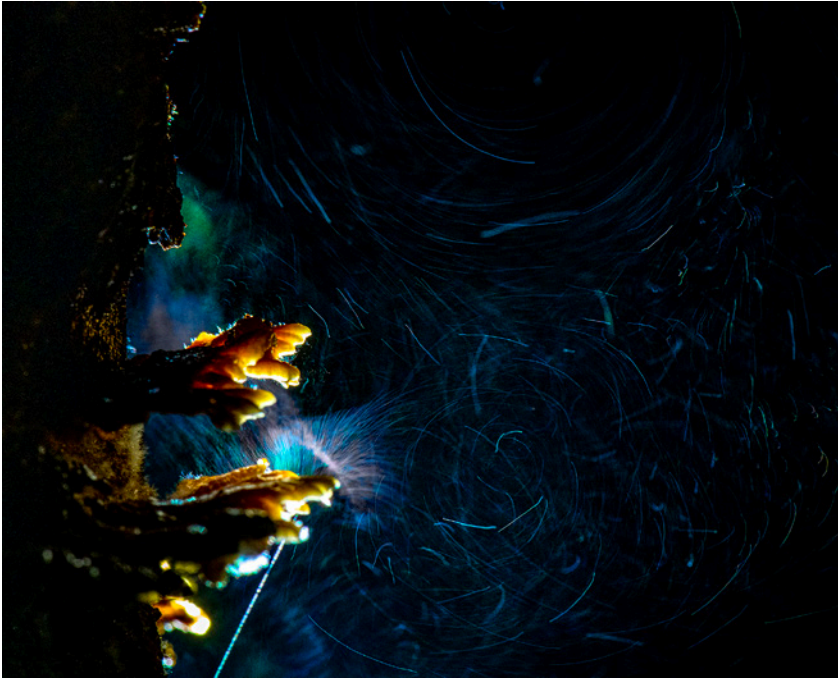
I started the workshop with an introduction to the biodiversity of the forest and the various techniques of macro photography, the correct way to approach a subject and the use of flash

in different ways. I also demonstrated when and how to use two flashes.

The day started with an outing to a nearby forest patch, where we got a variety of beautiful insects. During our 3-day stay, we visited different biodiversity for different subjects. The naturalist, Mr Afran, was highly knowledgeable and showed us many snakes and frogs to photograph. In fact, we were shooting through the day and the night without wasting any time. Every photographer was able to make lovely images with different kinds of lighting, which I taught them. Both batches got varied subjects, more than what they expected. The common subjects though were snakes and frogs. Everyone got excellent images of Malabar pit vipers in different morphs and different compositions. The first batch was lucky to see Jogi Gundi waterfalls whereas the second batch was lucky to get a Yellow morph pit viper.

The kind of insects and mushrooms we get in the rainforests of Agumbe is incomparable to the plains: the variety and species are entirely different. The adventurous part is trekking in the leech-infested rainforest amidst heavy rains. Everyone was thrilled by the walk in the thick forest, both during the day and night. They came to know the difficulties of doing macro in the rain and at night! I hope that this workshop gave an insight into future (advanced) workshops and hope macro enthusiasts will make use of them.

Hospitality at this homestay is at a different level: the staff are very friendly and the food is mouthwatering. Each day we had different dishes, from Malnad and South Canara region. Overall it was a great success from the point of positive feedback we got. This motivates us to do more such workshops for the benefit of members



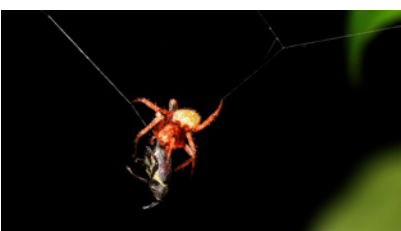
Mushroom Sporulation- H Satish



Cicada - Laxmi Prasanna P A



A Busy Doctors Prescription - Dr. Anand



Full Meal - Minaketan Sabar



Long Horned beetle - Dr. Shridhar



Cicada Moulting Vinod Kumar V K.



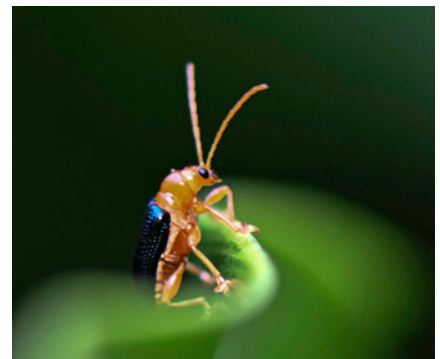
Slither - Dr. Anand



Aninda Mitra - Pomudi Bush frog



Blue eyed Bush frog - Vinay



Beetle-Narendra Kondajji



H Satish

Mr H Satish, the Ex-officio President of YPS, is the first Indian to be honoured with EFIAP and MFIAP in Nature colour prints and the youngest Indian to get MFIAP. He is also the first Indian to get two master's distinctions in the Nature section, from international photography bodies. His pictures have graced all the guidebooks published by 'Outlook Traveller' and 'Today- Travel Plus' magazines. For his achievements, he has been conferred with the title of Karnataka's State Artist – an award in the field of Art of Photography by Karnataka Lalit Kala Academy.

World Photography Day Celebrations

FRAMES 2023 - Visual Voyages



World Photography Day is celebrated all over the world on 19th August. At YPS too the day is well celebrated year after year with many programmes and events related to the art of photography. This year there was a host of exciting programmes over a period of three days from 18th to 20th August at Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath, Bengaluru. The highlight of the occasion was a unique exhibition of the best photographs of various genres from 72 YPS members. The well arranged display of large sized photographs aptly titled 'Frames - 2023 - Visual Voyages' was a big draw and saw an enormous number of visitors on all the days. It was a visual treat to the viewers. The members whose photographs were on display had a happy time getting photographed holding the photo booth along with their friends and family. The YPS memorabilia viz., YPS mug and cap were also picked up by a few. Even as the fervent celebrations continued there was a good coverage of the events by both the print and visual media, thanks to the efforts of Mr Girish Ananthamurthy, Mr KS Rajaram and other EC members. Chandana TV covered part of the programme and the exhibition quite well.

There were fascinating events too. While the first afternoon saw an exciting presentation of exotic species of birds of Ecuador and Peru by Mr R. Ananthamurthy, the second and third days delved on Lighting and Portrait



photography respectively with lecture and demonstration on both by Mr H Satish. The portrait session was particularly one of festive atmosphere with members and families involved in posing as well as photographing.

The last day had even more pleasantries. The members were given away goodies such as the YPS bag tags and badges. Vaishali Printers gave a pleasant surprise offering to give an instant print of the photographs of members posing with the photo booth. All in all, the three day celebration of World Photography Day at YPS was a wonderful and memorable one.

Enchanting Ecuador and Peru

On 18th afternoon, a presentation on the Enchanting Birds of Ecuador and Peru was made by our member, Mr R Ananthamurthy, a well known and accomplished photographer. As a keen birder he has photographed more than 1000 species of birds of the Indian subcontinent. At the outset he gave a brief account of his 55-day sojourn to Ecuador, Costa Rica and Peru with a map of the countries and areas visited as also about the distribution of bird species. The presentation started right away with a series of pictures of unique and rare birds such as Tanagers, Antpittas, Plovers and Motmots with a variety of sub species of each. The exotic birds with their attractive colours and artistic plumages made everyone glued to the display with rapt attention. He not only remembered the names of hundreds of birds but also shared interesting details. Like the Inca jay, the bird with a moustache like feathers and the Hoatzin, supposedly a prehistoric bird with claw-like formation on the wings. Many of the birds are endemic and some endangered too. The Oven bird is called so as it builds a nest of clay with compartments. Showcasing the wildlife of Peru, Ananthamurthy presented pictures of Green kingfisher, Penguins, Sea Lions and Howling monkeys. He enlightened that out of some 250 species of Hummingbirds in the world, nearly 150 are in these countries alone. Among them the Swordbill, which has a beak longer than its body, was prominent. Some of the images were from the island of Los Acantilados he visited, which is dubbed 'The poor man's Galapagos'.

Explaining the ordeals of bird photography in these places he said going out at odd



hours, cloudy weather, low light, and finding the bird itself were some of the challenges faced. Often the places are basic with bland food but birds in plenty.

As the presentation came to an end everyone was simply awestruck and spellbound by the beauty of the birds.

Demonstration on Lighting

On 19th afternoon an interesting programme on Lighting was presented by Mr H Satish, an ace photographer of YPS. Satish's photographic achievements include being the first Indian to be honoured with EFIAP and MFAIP in Nature photography and also the youngest Indian to get MFAIP.



Satish began the session giving a short account of the significance of WPD and its history. Before the presentation he was requested to give away the Askary award to the winners Ms Saanvi Vidyashankar and Ms Kshama G, both members of YPS.

Emphasizing that lighting is an essential part of photography Satish explained the two types of light: natural sunlight and the artificial lights. Often the sunlight provides good lighting for photography especially in morning and evening. The afternoon sunlight can be harsh and also casts shadows when shooting can be done in a shaded area or indoors with ambient light. But then the background has to be suitable. He then focused more on the artificial lighting indoors with various types of lighting and their effects. The common lighting indoors is the flash. But it can be a very powerful light source. One or more flashes can also be used depending on the need. One of the audience was requested to pose and lighting techniques were explained by Satish. He demonstrated how fill in light on the subject's face can be made by holding a thermocol or white cardboard which are called reflectors. Holding it properly ensuring where the light falls till the shooting is an art by itself he said. Umbrella lights as the name suggests involve umbrellas which can be reversed also with the white for diffusing harsh light and the black for reducing the light output. The background, preferably dark, has to be at a distance so as not to get shadows. The more sophisticated and more expensive version is the soft box which gives a smooth uniform lighting



and is suitable for fashion photography. The snoot is used to light hair or a portion of the face. However, rim lighting is not good for portraits. All or any of these techniques can be employed to get good lighting. Satish also informed about the Rembrandt lighting and Butterfly lighting before concluding the session.

Portrait photography

The last day of celebrations on the 20th which began in the morning itself was devoted to yet another session by Mr H Satish on portrait photography. The focus was on taking portrait pictures outdoors. Beginning with an introduction to the topic, Satish explained and demonstrated how a proper place for the photo shoot can be made. A small room-like place can be created by placing the frames and spreading thin white cloth over them. This helps in avoiding the harsh outdoor light and creates a smoother light.

Before the actual shooting Satish clarified on the settings and equipment required for the purpose. He said a DSLR body with a lens of about 85-135 would be good. Wider lenses like the 50mm prime may not be suitable as the facial parts would be distorted. Generally an aperture of f 5.6 is good but can be f8 also sometimes. As regards ISO one can



go anywhere between 200 and 800 and keep a shutter speed of 1/60th. Keeping a distance of about 6 feet from the subject and shooting at eye level is ideal and the photographer's stance should be erect. Stepping a little back can be better than leaning back from the same position. Also when using the kit lens extending it to the maximum focal length would be appropriate. Reflectors can also be used.

Apart from preparing the set up the photographer should also ensure a happy expression is given by the model and also take pictures in different postures, individuals, couples and families.

Once the demo was over the members were encouraged to pose with their friends and families and also click portraits of other members. It was a wonderful session of members learning the nuances of portrait photography and also getting their portraits shot.

The joyous session on portraits marked the concluding of the WPD celebrations.



B V Prakash

Mr Prakash is an avid mountaineer, photographer and travel writer. He is a life member of YPS and member of Drṣṭi editorial team.

Award Function and Salon Exhibition

Salon Exhibition

The Exhibition of YPS National Salon 2023, WAW – Women At Wheel, was held from Saturday, July 15 to Sunday, July 16, 2023 at Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath, Bengaluru. All Medal and Ribbon-winning images were printed using high-resolution images uploaded by the participants, framed, and displayed at the venue on both days.

A slideshow of all accepted images was also continuously running on a large TV at the venue.

This YPS National Salon 2023 was dedicated to Shri. Murali Santhanam for his invaluable service to YPS. A wall in

the exhibition hall was dedicated to Shri. Murali Santhanam.

Also displayed at the exhibition were end-of-the-year award-winning pictures of the PSA Interclub Competition 2022-2023, in which YPS came out at the top in Open Monochrome, Nature and Photo Travel division.

Footfall at the exhibition was very good on both days.

Award Function and Catalog Release

The Award Function to distribute medals and awards was held on July 16, 2023 at 11:00 AM. The Chief Guest at the award function was Dr. Shalini Rajneesh,

Additional Chief Secretary to Govt. Of Karnataka, Department of Planning and Statistics and Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports. The second Chief Guest, Ms. Deep J. Contractor, DCF & Director BRT Tiger Reserve, could not make it to the function due to unavoidable circumstances. Apart from handing out awards to the award-winners, the Chief Guest also released the Salon Catalog. The WAW – Women At Wheel Salon Committee was also lauded by the Chief Guest and received a small token of appreciation from YPS.

YPS thanks all the participants, Salon Committee Members, YPS Executive Committee Members and Volunteers!

- Salon Chairperson:

Prema Kakade

EFIAP, EFIP, GPA, PESGSPC, cMoL, A.CPE

- Salon Secretary:

Ms Anitha Mysore

MPSA, EFIAP/g, ARPS, GPUCR-4, EFIP/g, c***MoL



PSA Interclub Competition 2022-2023

YPS came out with flying colors in the End of Year awards of the PSA Interclub 2022-2023 season, ending with six medals and two HMs across the five divisions. YPS thanks its members for their whole-hearted participation in this competition.

You can also view all the awarded images and club standings at <https://psa-photo.org/page/competition-results>.



Anitha Mysore

MPSA, EFIAP/g, ARPS, GPU CR-4,
FAPS, EIUP, c***MoL
Director of YPS, YPS
Representative for PSA



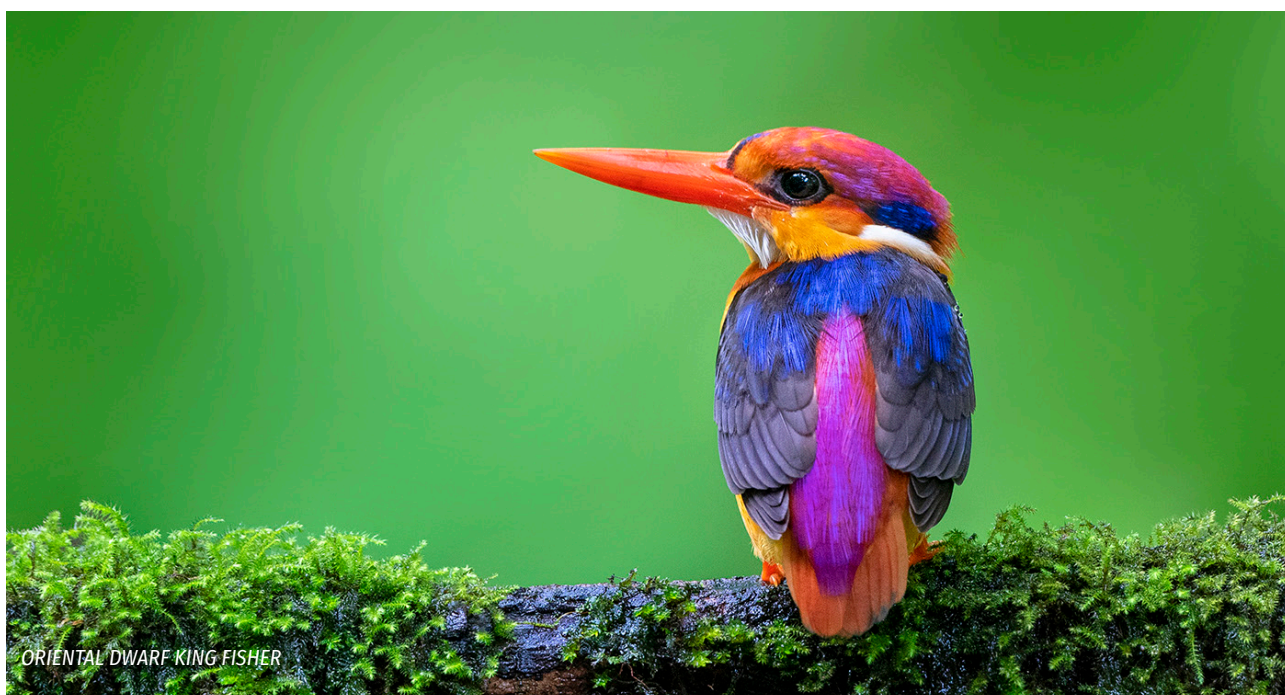
Youth Photographic Society is proud to be a member of Photographic Society of America. We encourage you to consider becoming an individual member of PSA.

Benefits of PSA Individual Membership include:

- Access to a full range of photography programs and services.
- A world-class, monthly PSA Journal publication.
- Members Only discounts on photography-related products, excursions and services.
- Customized photography education, mentoring and critiquing service.
- A worldwide community for like-minded individuals.

Log on to www.PSA-Photo.org to learn more or to become a member.

| Group | Div | Author | Title | Points | Award |
|-------|----------------|------------------------|----------------------------|--------|--------------|
| D | PID Color | Anitha Mysore | Kalari flight of fancy | 10 | |
| | | Krishna Bhat | Chali Belagu | 12 | |
| | | Surya Prakash K S | Oriental Dwarf King Fisher | 13 | Silver Medal |
| | | Varadanayaka T P | Never Ending | 12 | HM |
| B | Nature | Arjun Haarith | Weaver ant with prey | 6 | |
| | | Arjun Haarith | Flamingos everywhere | 9 | |
| | | Kartik Raman | Asiatic Lion with its kill | 13 | |
| | | Pramod Govind Shanbhag | T 120 and Krishna 7218 | 13 | |
| | | SATHYANARAYANA C R | CHEETAH CHOKING GAZELLE | 14 | |
| | | SATHYANARAYANA C R | DOUBLE ATTACK | 15 | Bronze Medal |
| A | PTD | Karthik S Kargallu | THEYYAM 02 | 7 | |
| | | Sharath Acharya B | Flower bless | 11 | |
| | | Varadanayaka T P | Attacked bull | 10 | |
| A | PID | Prakash Kandakoor | The Fear | 13 | Silver Medal |
| | | Udaya Thejaswi Urs | LIVE AND LET LIVE | 11 | Bronze Medal |
| | | Umashankar B N | Stop Dont Run | 10 | |
| D | PID Monochrome | Nagendra Muthmurdu | Mother-Twins-Affection | 13 | Bronze Medal |
| | | Prakash Kandakoor | Friendship | 14 | Silver Medal |
| | | Ramesh Hoskote | Ceremonial | 12 | |
| | | SATHYANARAYANA C R | RETURNING CATTLE HERD | 12 | |
| | | Varadanayaka T P | happy in safe | 12 | |
| | | Varadanayaka T P | Bicycle ride | 13 | HM |



ORIENTAL DWARF KING FISHER



DOUBLE ATTACK



Bicycle ride



Never Ending



Mother-Twins-Affection



The Fear



LIVE AND LET LIVE



Friendship

New Member Corner

| Mem No | Full Name |
|---------|--------------------------------|
| IM-0899 | Ms Renu Tapadiya |
| IM-0900 | Mr Aman Vora |
| IM-0901 | Mr Hanumant Bhoite |
| IM-0902 | Ms Payal Shah |
| IM-0903 | Mr Shreyas Patel |
| IM-0904 | Mr Avinash Koorgailu |
| IM-0905 | Mr Govindaraju Thimmarayappa |
| IM-0906 | Ms Manasi Gopinath |
| IM-0907 | COL Nair VK |
| IM-0908 | Mr Kashyap Naresh Raval |
| IM-0909 | Mr Sridhar Parthasarathy |
| IM-0910 | Mr Sreekumar Krishnan |
| IM-0911 | Mr Madan Chandrashekar |
| IM-0912 | Mr Adrian Silvester |
| IM-0913 | Mr Rajesh Hegde |
| IM-0914 | Mr Keerthi Krishna Annasagaram |
| IM-0915 | Mr Bipin Pawar |
| IM-0916 | Dr Rajakumar Deshpande |
| IM-0917 | Mr Avinash S |
| IM-0918 | Ms Deekshashree R |
| IM-0919 | Mr Akarshan M |
| IM-0920 | Mr Thayi Lokesh |
| IM-0921 | Mr Amar Prabhakar |
| IM-0922 | Mr Manu Gowda N M |
| IM-0923 | Ms Prajwalika K S |
| IM-0924 | Mr Lakshay Arora |
| IM-0925 | Mr Akhilesh Sati |
| IM-0926 | Mr Balaji B |
| IM-0927 | Mr Abi M Pulikeezh |
| JA-0047 | Mr Chirag Mayur |



IM-0899



IM-0900



IM-0901



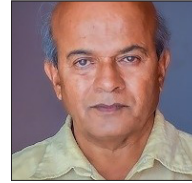
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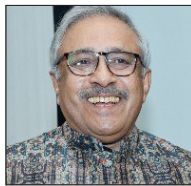
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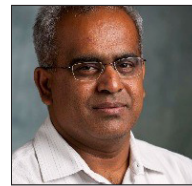
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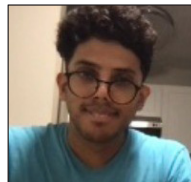
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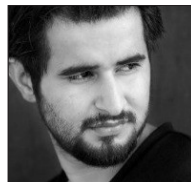
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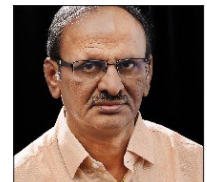
IM-0923



IM-0924



IM-0925



IM-0926



JA-0047

YPS Programme Calendar

September 2023

| Date | Venue | Topic | Title | Presenter |
|---------|-------------|--------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Sat, 02 | YPS Hall | Open House Picture Review | Macro Photography Workshop at Hingara - Batch 1&2 | H Satish |
| Sat, 09 | YPS Hall | Presentation and Demonstration | The Art of Focus Stacking | Raghuram Annadana |
| Sat, 16 | Google Meet | Open House Picture Review | Butterfly Photography at Belvai | S Chandrashekar |
| Sat 30 | Google Meet | Street Photography | Steve McCurry - A visual storyteller | Srikanth Nippatla |

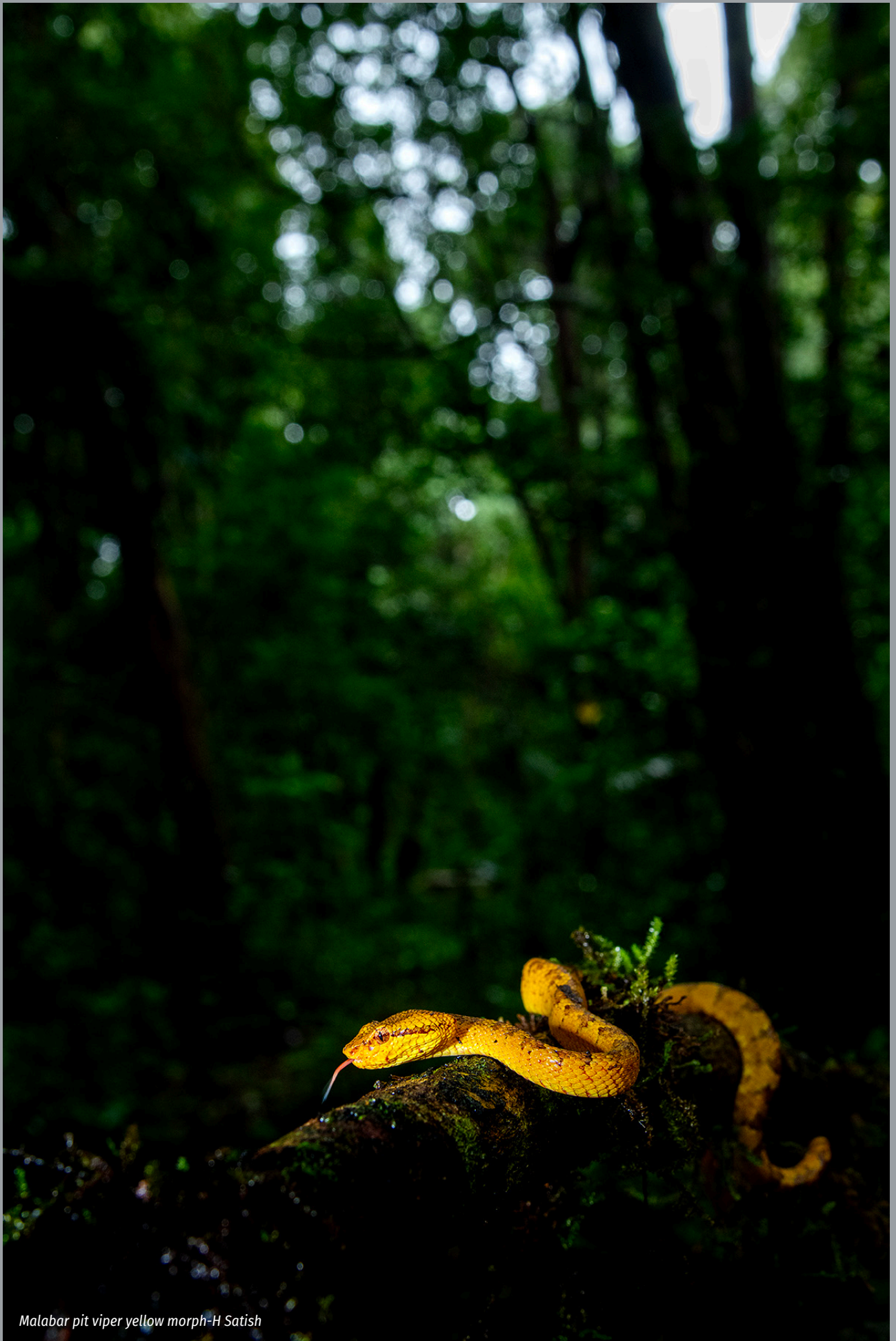
October 2023

| Date | Venue | Topic | Title | Presenter |
|---------|-------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| Sat, 07 | Google Meet | Metering and HDR Photography | An introduction to the Zone System | Ashok Kandimalla |
| Sat, 28 | On-line | Streaming of results | YPS International Salon 2023 | Chairperson: Vikas Sastry Secretary: Anitha Mysore |
| Sun, 29 | On-line | Streaming of results | YPS International Salon 2023 | Chairperson: Vikas Sastry Secretary: Anitha Mysore |

Note: The above programmes are provisional. Confirmation for each of the programmes will be announced on the website, by email and WhatsApp broadcast.



World Photography Day 2023



Malabar pit viper yellow morph-H Satish



Youth Photographic Society

www.ypsbengaluru.com

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