



Drishti



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(7 pm onwards)

**Convention venue and accommodation at a premium hotel,
Rio Meridian, Mysuru**

Convention - email-id:
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Youth Photographic Society®

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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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Front cover: *Loving Cub* © Suryaprakash K S EFIAP, ARPS

Rear cover: © Udit Jain

A Befitting Farewell 2023

My Dear YPS Family,

Hope this finds you all in good health and spirit. It was extremely exciting to celebrate this Kannada Rajyotsava uniquely by having a streetwalk to K R Market with a theme of photographing the Yellows and the Reds, which was followed by a quick contest for all the participants. I congratulate all the winners on behalf of the Executive Committee and all our members. Hope all of you celebrated this Deepavali under the glory of lights and made some stellar pictures of the fireworks. Christmas is a season of enjoying the simple things that make life beautiful. I wish you so much joy during this season and all through to the New Year. Wishing you all a Happy and prosperous New Year.

YPS Executive Committee, Salon Committee and the Subcommittees were all well occupied and engaged with YPS Activities such as Karnataka Rajyotsava Celebrations, led by Kishan Harwalkar and Prashant Kulkarni.

YPS International Salon Online Judging was conducted professionally by the Salon Web-Master and the Salon Secretary which unleashed the award winners and the scores of the participants through a webcast catering to a global audience

Macro Photowalk, led by H Satish, a one-of-a-kind educational program - a photo outing to Bannerghatta Butterfly Park was special because it went beyond photography. It included valuable lessons about the life cycle, habitat, behaviour, and conservation of butterflies. Gratitude

to the Butterfly Park team for their support and assistance during the event.

The Workshop Committee organized another YPS Open House to showcase pictures and share experiences from the recently held 1st International Photo Tour in Vietnam. Participants had the opportunity to share their photos, receive feedback, and get suggestions to improve their photography skills.

The YPS International Salon 2023 was a fantastic event that took place on the first weekend of December. The award ceremony was held at Chitrakala Parishath, and it was a great success with the esteemed presence of Ms. Barbara Schmidt. Having an international chief guest was a unique and first-time experience in the history of YPS Salons, and possibly even in the country.

A simple yet very informative demonstration of the use of light in portrait photography led by our senior member K S Rajaram was held at YPS Hall which had an extremely good response. A lot of new YPS members utilized this opportunity to learn the art of shooting portraits using very simple and inexpensive equipment.

The list doesn't end there.... We had another street walk to the famous Kadalekai Parishes which is customary to the streets of the Basavanagudi area. The Street Photography Group led by Yogesh and Kishan had good participation.

Collaborations keep organizations climbing the ladder and up the ante in any field. It was one such unique opportunity to collaborate with a world famous educational institution, Alva's, Mudbidire

and be a part of their annual festival Viraasat 2023. This gave YPS International Salon 2023 more glamour and extended a visual treat to the 4 Lakh+ visitors to the event where all the award-winning prints were exhibited. Thanks to Sri Mohan Alva of Alvas for such a wonderful gesture. I would fail in my responsibility if I did not thank our own member Jinesh Prasad without whose coordination this would not have been a reality.

Early bird registrations for the upcoming FIP Convention at Mysuru was in full swing and ended on November 30. If you have still not registered for the same.... Do register now and block your seat as it is filling fast. Avoid last-minute rush!

We would like to inform all our members that there is an opportunity to promote your businesses/ organizations during the Convention. Please contact us for sponsorship opportunities.

Overall the last 2 months were extremely eventful with a lot of participation from our members in various activities of the club. Keep up this spirit and motivate us to do much more for all of you.

I look forward to the active engagement of members in all upcoming YPS activities.

Embrace the magic of new beginnings as we bid farewell to another remarkable chapter. Here's to a year well lived and the promise of a bright and inspiring new year ahead!



Manju Vikas Sastry V AFIP
President, Youth Photographic
Society and Editor, Dr̥ṣṭi

YPS International Salon 2023 (Digital) Award Function and Print Exhibition

Salon Exhibition

The Salon Exhibition of the International Salon 2023 was held on Saturday, December 02, 2023, and Sunday, December 03, 2023, at the Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath, Bengaluru. All Medal and Ribbon-winning images were printed using the high-resolution images uploaded by the participants, framed and displayed at the venue on both days.

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

YPS also held a talk and slideshow on December 02, 2023, by Ms. Barbara Schmidt, the Chief Guest for the day. She presented awe-inspiring images from her architecture collection and this was a sight to behold.

The exhibition was attended by a large number of visitors.

Award Function & Catalog Release

The Award Function to distribute medals and awards was held on December 02, 2023, at 05:00 PM and was chaired by

Ms. Barbara Schmidt, a very well-known international photographer, who hails from Germany. The Guest of Honor was Shri. N Shashi Kumar (IPS), Commissioner, DYES who, unfortunately, could not attend the event. Apart from handing out awards for the participants from Bangalore, the Chief Guest also released the Salon Catalog.

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

Anitha Mysore
ARPS, MPSA, EFIAP/p, c***MoL, EIUP, GPU CR-4, FAPS, EFIP,
EFIP/g, Salon Secretary and Director, YPS

Thejas K R



Many of our readers would have read and loved the 'Camera Diaries' series in *Dr̥ṣṭi*. This series took us through the narrow lanes of the USA to the grasslands of Hawaii, the tranquil lakes of Alaska to skyscrapers of Dubai. The author of this series is Mr Thejas K R, a passionate art photographer and a life member of YPS. In this section of Spotlight, let us have a candid conversation with Thejas and find out more about his photography journey.

Dr̥ṣṭi (D): Can you tell me a little about your growing up years?

Thejas (T): I grew up in 1980s Bengaluru, immersed in its vibrant streets filled with the rhythmic clatter of Ambassador cars and the occasional hum of Bajaj scooters. The air was infused with the aromatic blend of filter coffee and blooming bougainvillea, creating a charming backdrop for outdoor activities. The city, with its iconic weather of pleasant temperatures and sudden drizzles, became a playground for games like



Spirit Of Freedom © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP

cricket on narrow lanes and kites flying against the backdrop of old bungalows with red-tiled roofs. Landmarks like Lalbagh Botanical Garden and Lalbagh Rock defined our growing-up years, offering green sanctuaries and panoramic views of the city.

D: Can you tell us a bit about your education and profession?

T: Inspired by the remarkable leadership of Dr. H Narasimhaiah, the esteemed President of the National Education Society, I found myself drawn to the prestigious National High School in Basavanagudi, Bengaluru. Fuelled by a passionate interest in Computer Science, I pursued my undergraduate studies in the field, obtaining a degree in Computer Science and Engineering from Dayananda Sagar College of Engineering.

The journey continued as I embarked on a new chapter, earning my MBA from Rice University in Houston. I currently serve as a Product Delivery Manager at Air Liquide, a global leader in Industrial and Medical Gases.

D: How did you develop an interest in photography?

T: I remember spending a lot of time as a light boy for the portraits my father Mr Rajaram K S (Life Member and former President of YPS) shot of different people: friends, family and also celebrities. Though I could not appreciate the art of photography at that point, I was fascinated by the responses of people who were photographed. They appeared to be impressed and thankful to my father for shooting such beautiful pictures of them.

Due to the high cost associated with film photography and the inability to preview results before printing, I did not acquire a camera until my early teens. During this period, my interest in capturing portraits blossomed, although I cannot recall producing any outstanding pictures due to a lack of artistic perspective. It wasn't until my early twenties that I began experimenting more seriously with photography. Despite persistent frustration from comparing my work to the impressive images featured in YPS Salons by talented photographers, a significant breakthrough occurred in



OldMan And The Sea © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP



OldCarIn Childress Texas © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP



In Flow Houston Texas © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP



Cannon Beach Sunset © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP

my mid-twenties with the purchase of a digital camera. This marked a pivotal moment, as digital technology not only made experimentation more affordable but also facilitated post-processing, allowing me to enhance the quality of my images.

D: Any mentor or photographer you look up to?

T: My primary mentor has always been my father, K S Rajaram. Throughout my journey, I have found inspiration in renowned photographers like Late Mr E Hanumantha Rao, Late Mr TNA Perumal and Late Dr G Thomas. Additionally, I draw influence from the timeless works of Ansel Adams and Henri Cartier-Bresson. Keeping pace with contemporary photography, I closely follow the creations of Thomas Leuthard, Serge Ramelli, Art Wolfe, and Peter Lik.

D: Can you tell our readers a bit more about your journey as a photographer?

T: The steady hum of the waterfall echoes in the air as I crouch down, knees pressing into damp earth, my SLR camera set on my tripod. The mist rises, swirling around me like a spectral dance. My clothes are soaked by a light drizzle. My umbrella, a makeshift shield against the unpredictable drizzle, strains against the breeze, offering intermittent refuge to the camera beneath. I am trying to shoot a long exposure photograph of a small waterfall in the Smoky Mountains National Park, USA.

The waterfall cascades before me, its ceaseless flow captured through the lens of my camera. Each long exposure is a meditation, a dance between the stillness of the lens and the relentless motion of the falling water.

As I watch the beautiful result of this long exposure shot of the waterfalls in the camera's LCD, I am not able to believe that this was my picture. I think back to the day, as a kid, when I looked at a similar picture in a photography magazine, wondering how this magnificent shot was taken.

Although I dabbled with a SLR in my teens, my true journey as a photographer commenced when I embraced the realm of digital cameras. Initially drawn to the serene art of landscape photography, I found it akin to meditation—a quiet preparation, being at the right place at the right time for that perfect light. The

tranquility of these landscapes became a canvas for spiritual dialogues with nature.

However, my interests expanded to the opposite end of the spectrum—the vibrant chaos of street portraits. Crafting compelling images amid disorder presented a unique challenge that resonated with me. Navigating focus in a tumultuous world not only strengthened my skills as a photographer but also shaped me as an individual. Discovering my affinity for connecting with people, I found joy in conversing with strangers on the street, delving into their stories, and capturing their portraits.

These contrasting experiences now converge in various facets of my photography, from travel to event photography, creating a diverse portfolio that reflects my multifaceted connection with the art and people around me.

D: Tell us about the accolades you have won and works published

T: I hold certifications as AFIAP and AFIP. My photography has earned recognition, featuring as a winner in Fort Bend Monthly magazine and Voice of Asia newspaper's public photo contest in Houston. In addition to numerous awards from local PSA-recognized organizations like the Houston Photographic Society, a landscape photograph of mine secured the PSA SILVER - Best B&W Landscape AWARD at the International Digital Photography Salon 2017 held at YPS Bengaluru.

D: How has been your association with YPS so far?

T: As a child, I had seen my father exhibit pictures in various salons in the YPS. It was



Bangalore Town Hall © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP

a great place to meet my father's friends who were fellow enthusiasts, so I always felt happy when I went to YPS events.

During my teens, I attended workshops by YPS as well as local photography trips around Bengaluru arranged by YPS. It was amazing to see different viewpoints of the same landscape or portraits by different photographers.

I became an official Life Member of YPS in 2006 and participated in various National and International Salons. Also, I presented talks on street, portrait and landscape photography with a focus on storytelling in YPS.

YPS Bengaluru holds a special place in my heart, serving as a nurturing ground for creativity and a haven for those passionate about the art of photography. This esteemed institution not only fosters technical skills but also cultivates a deep appreciation for the

aesthetics and storytelling aspects of photography.

The vibrant and inclusive atmosphere at YPS encourages photographers to push boundaries, experiment with various styles, and evolve in their craft. The organization's dedication to hosting events, exhibitions, and contests further adds to the dynamic and enriching experience it offers to both aspiring and seasoned photographers alike. YPS Bengaluru stands as a beacon for photographic excellence, a place where passion converges with skill, fostering a community that celebrates the diverse and ever evolving world of photography.

D: What is the power of Photography according to you?

T: Photography is an unparalleled storyteller, with its power to freeze moments and distill human experiences, leaving a lasting mark on our collective consciousness. From transformative photojournalism to artists' tales, photography mirrors our past and contemporary life. Its impact resonates through cultural, social, and technological realms, shaping our perception and understanding of the intricate stories that define our existence, transcending barriers.

An effective picture can make or break a person and a nation.



Life At Dusk Sugarland Texas © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP



Ananth Kamat EFIAP, EFIP, cMoL
Director of YPS, Member, Drṣṭi
Editorial Team

Shooting stunning photographs of your festive cakes

It is the season to be jolly - but most often for a baker, it is the busiest time of the year. Baking is fun, it is creative and it can be immensely therapeutic, but there's no doubt that it is plenty of hard work. After all the effort and toil that you put into your beautiful festive cakes, it is only natural to be torn between wanting to eat the cake and keep it too. Cakes are for celebrating, sharing and bringing people closer together. But let's be honest, you also need the admiration they bring to keep yourself going. There's only one way to do all this, and that is, plain and simple, to take a photograph. How important it then becomes that the photograph does justice to your talent and hard work. However, not to worry, there are a few simple ways to be able to consistently take superb pictures of your baking.

In this article, we are going to take you through a step-by-step process to help you take stunning photographs of your cakes. As a novice, you will be introduced to what goes into taking a good picture of your work. If you already photograph your own cakes, this article will help you take your skills to the next level. We will discuss and demonstrate the use of backdrops, props, lighting and camera settings needed for cake photography. Remember, photographing a cake is not just about creating a 'documentary evidence', it is an artistic process. You get to make others see it, the way you want to show it.

For this tutorial, we have selected two desserts as examples that reflect the season's festivities. As you will see, they are a rustic black forest cake and a gingerbread chocolate tart.

We will now discuss in brief the various aspects and elements of photography that you need to know about before starting. This also roughly corresponds to what you need to prepare in advance before you shoot a cake you made.

Backdrops

These can be almost anything - a nice tabletop or countertop to even a simple coloured chart paper. However, as your skill grows, it is worth investing in a few good-quality vinyl backdrops. Depending on the angle of your shot, you will



© Prashant Manchikanti

need at least one or two - a base (non-optional), and a background (optional in some angles like top-down shots). Firstly, make sure you choose two backdrops that complement each other as base and background. Secondly, choose backdrops that either complement or bring out the colours and textures used in the cake.

Choosing props

Choosing props to shoot a cake is somewhat different from choosing props for other dishes. The props will depend on the narrative you are trying to build in your photograph. As we are going to

focus on beauty shots in this article, your main prop will be a good-quality cake stand. If you don't have one, you can still be creative. Sometimes an upturned glass or bowl with a matching plate can do the trick. Styling will be kept to a minimum as the cake decoration needs to be in focus. Little things like ribbon, bits of tinsel, a napkin, a few flowers, some berries, and sprinkles can go a long way to add glamour to your shots.

Lighting

Before you shoot you need to plan your lighting. Lighting is one of the most

crucial aspects of any photography. The photographic process is essentially capturing and recording of light reflected off objects as well as the absence of light (shadows). Light is what will reveal texture and affect how colours appear. The intensity of shadows will define the mood of the picture. The two main sources of light are natural light and artificial light. By artificial light we refer to studio strobes and flashes. An explanation of the use of these lights would require much more space than we have here. However, we can summarise what they do in brief. The use of flashes and studio strobes is essentially to mimic sunlight. You might then rightly observe that one may just as well use sunlight. And you would be right. However, the amount of sunlight and its direction changes through the day. Moreover, there is none after sunset. Artificial light enables you to shoot with consistent light anywhere, and at any time.

We will now look closely at the kind of natural light that will be the most flattering for your photographs. You need to remember that there are three major aspects of available light - its quantity, its quality and its direction. For attractive food photographs with the maximum amount of sharpness in the desired area of focus as well as to avoid grainy pictures you need to have loads of light. Choose a time of day when there is ample sunlight. This tends to be from around mid-morning till about 4 o'clock. Choose a location next to a large window or a door through which plenty of light enters the room. However, midday light, though plentiful, can also be quite harsh. This is where you need to pay attention to the quality of light. The most flattering light is diffused soft light. This is the kind of light you might get on a cloudy day, or when the sun is at a low angle. On a very sunny day you may need to drape thin white cotton cloth over the window or door in order to diffuse it.

Capturing Shadows is as important as capturing light. Shadows are what will give the effect of depth in a picture. They will define the mood of the picture. It is important that you position your cake so that the light falling on the cake comes from the side (either on the left or the right). Avoid back light as your cake will be completely in the shadow. Avoid top light and full front light as they will make your cake look flat. This is the reason why on-camera flashes must be avoided.



35 degree shot of the chocolate tart © Prashant Manchikanti

Camera angles

The angle at which you shoot depends on several factors. We will explain a few basic angles here, and then further discuss the choice of camera angle in the examples below.

The 90° angle (where the camera is straight over the food) is a modern twist to create lifestyle food photography. It became extremely popular with the rise of mobile photography. It is not how we naturally view food, and creates a fresh perspective. It is great when most of the cake decoration is on the top. However, care is needed as this angle can cause optical illusions and loss of depth.

The 0° or head-on shot, is the other extreme. It gives the effect of looking at the dish being shot "eye to eye". It is also not an angle at which we naturally look at food, thus creating a startling effect for the viewer. It is a powerful angle that can draw the viewer in. Again, care is needed, as like the previous angle discussed, it also causes optical illusions and loss of depth.

The classic angle for shooting food is around 45°. It most closely approximates how we naturally see food and enables viewers to see the top as well as the side of the dish. For many cakes that have top as well as side decoration, this angle would be the most flattering.



30 degree shot of rustic black forest cake © Prashant Manchikanti

Camera settings

We will now look at the camera settings needed to shoot in natural light. One piece of advice I always give during my workshops is to spend as much time as possible familiarising yourself with your camera menu. Be fearless - click everything, try all the options, turn all the dials - you can't damage a camera that way!

If you own a DSLR, and are new to using manual settings, it is advisable to start by shooting in the Aperture priority mode. This mode essentially lets you change the aperture or depth of field, while the camera takes care of automatically setting the shutter speed. This ensures that you get well-exposed images.

If you are comfortable shooting in manual mode, ensure you set your aperture first and then the shutter speed, while keeping an eye on the meter. This is done to make sure you are not getting an underexposed image. I would strongly advise you to use a tripod while shooting. This will let you use slower shutter speeds and still get sharp images.

If you use a point-and-shoot camera or a mobile camera, simply set your camera to portrait mode. It chooses the best aperture based on the scene you are shooting and gives you beautiful out-of-focus backgrounds. With smartphone cameras, you now also have the option of shooting through an app such as Adobe Lightroom. This gives you more

options to set aperture and shutter speed, but not as much as with a DSLR.

A word on the automatic setting: it may be your safe zone, but like with all things, you will be so much the winner for venturing out of it. But I don't advise that you stop using it going cold turkey either. Especially during social occasions, even seasoned photographers use the auto mode as their safety net, to ensure that they capture their scene on the spur of the moment when they can't otherwise risk taking the time to work out the best settings. But when you do have the time, and there's no pressure - the exercise is absolutely worth it. One helpful exercise is to initially take a picture in auto mode and then to experiment a little with manual settings. You will be delighted when you eventually find yourself taking better pictures than your camera!

Shooting the rustic black forest cake:

For this cake, we have chosen a backdrop that contrasts with the colour of the cake. As the cake is predominantly the colour of dark chocolate, we have used a white background, and a light mottled base to shoot it. This has the advantage of helping make an otherwise dark cake look light and festive.

As both the top and the sides of the cake needed to be shown, the picture has been shot at a 45° angle. This helps to capture details both of the gorgeous floral and fruit topping as well as the creamy swirls and cherries in the icing between the layers of the cake.

The cake was left on a plate, rather than being placed on a cake stand. The rustic aspect was further brought out by the choice of props that depict the preparation process - kitchen tools, a cookbook, and a kitchen cloth. Furthermore, the props were carefully selected so that they all have similar colour tones ranging from white to pale natural wood. This ensures that the viewer's attention is kept on the main element - the cake.

Shooting the gingerbread chocolate tart:

This dessert was shot in three different styles, each one to bring out a different narrative. The choice of dark wood backdrop here was to complement rather than contrast with the tart. On the other



Flatlay of gingerbread chocolate tart © Prashant Manchikanti



Serving shot at 45 degrees of the chocolate tart © Prashant Manchikanti

hand, the props were chosen in order to bring in contrasting colours. In this case, red and green, in keeping with the Christmas theme.

The first photograph was shot at a 90° angle, and is also called a flat lay. For those of you shooting on mobile phones, this is the most flattering angle you can use for food photography, as mobile cameras usually have a very wide-angle lens. It is a pleasant modern style, and offers a lot of potential in the use and arrangement of props.

The second picture was shot at a 45° angle, the classic storytelling shot. The human element adds interest, and immediately attracts the viewer's eye. This can be achieved in many ways. Here,

the person holding the tart is visible, but even just showing hands in the shot can be enough to add interest to your pictures.

The third picture was kept for the last because it is a serving shot. For practical reasons, these are not always possible. But when you have the option to do so, it always adds depth to your depiction of a cake by quite literally showing it inside out. In the case of our tart, this was the only way of capturing the ombre effect in the chocolate filling. Make sure you angle the cut side of the slice towards the light to ensure that a good amount of detail is visible. In such shots it is customary to focus on the texture of the slice, letting the rest of the cake be a

little less sharp and in the background. These are usually the classic 'drool' shots, because the amount of detail and texture captured can evoke the taste of the cake for the viewer.

To conclude, here are a few pointers to keep in mind when you are shooting. Always plan your scenes and your shots in advance. If possible, you can even do rough sketches. It is helpful to cultivate the habit of looking at inspiring photographs to analyse what you like about the picture. Don't shoot under pressure. It is better to set aside time just for photographing your amazing cakes. And when possible, shoot with a friend. A friend can help you when you're stuck for inspiration, but most importantly can assist you when you need to have both hands on the camera. Finally, the most important factor to taking stunning photographs is having lots of light in your scene. Plan the time of day at which you shoot.

Photographing your own cakes can be very rewarding. You just need to follow a few guidelines in order to avoid the frustration of trial and error and succeed in making great pictures consistently.

About the author: Prashant Manchikanti is a commercial food photographer. He specializes in food realism, that captures the essence and the spirit of the cuisine.

He creates drool-worthy magical pictures through dark moody settings where the food gets all the attention it deserves. His simple to elaborate scenes for food create perfect contexts, connecting the viewer to the food.

• Prashant Manchikanti



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He creates drool-worthy magical pictures through dark moody settings where the food gets all the attention it deserves. His simple to elaborate scenes for food create perfect contexts, connecting the viewer to the food.

Dancing Elegance in Motion



Dancing Elegance in Motion © Gowreesh Kapani

This picture of Bharata Natya dance performance in action reminds me of a quote "It takes a lot of imagination to be a good photographer, but you need less imagination to be a painter because you can invent things. But in photography everything is so ordinary; it takes a lot of looking before you learn to see the extraordinary" by David Bailey. Born in 1938, he was an English fashion photographer, best known for his images of celebrities, models and musicians. His collections are exhibited in the National Portrait Gallery and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.



The multifaceted author of the picture, Mr Gowreesh Kapani, offers a compelling perspective on this shot, expressing, "The essence of the

image goes beyond merely capturing the dancers; it aims to immortalize the dancers through their dynamic movements. The true challenge lies in freezing these moments during live stage performances. The intentional blur introduces an artistic element, infusing the image with dramatic energy and intensity. Achieving this effect involves using a slow shutter speed and moving the camera horizontally while releasing the shutter- an art that demands both skillful practice and a steady grip on the camera."

Employing a Nikon D800E camera paired with a zoom lens set at a 105 mm focal length, the photographer fine-tuned the

settings for optimal capture: an aperture of f/29, a deliberate half-second slow shutter speed, and an ISO of 400. Operating with a handheld approach and utilizing center-weighted metering, this composition posed the ultimate test for the photographer, demanding precision and expertise to achieve the successful outcome seen in this picture.

With over 23 years of comprehensive experience in photography, Gowreesh Kapani, a Bengaluru-based artist, holds a degree in Visual Arts from Chitrakala Parishath. Noteworthy among his photographic endeavors is the series 'Banada Baduku', which has garnered acclaim through two notable displays at Chitrakala Parishath. Kapani's creative prowess extends to major journals and his captivating photographs have graced wildlife calendars. Currently residing in Mysuru, he conducted 'Neralu Belaku' Club House for 50 weeks, interviewing noted photographers on Tuesdays. He also has made Neralu Belaku Gallery to exhibit works of photographers and artists.

Upon a technical analysis of this image, I discern that all the camera settings have been meticulously calibrated to facilitate the realization of a previsualized final action picture, particularly with the deliberate half-second shutter opening.

Aesthetically this composition stands out as a well-crafted image, carefully attending to various compositional elements that contribute to its pictorial qualities such as:

- **Impact:** The dancers' dynamic poses, vibrant costume colors, and lively streaks of color drawn across one side of the frame instantly capture the viewer's attention.
- **Unity:** The fusion of beauty and emotion expressed by both the dancers works harmoniously to elevate the overall pictorial value of the scene.
- **Infinity:** The astute capture of the dancers' movement, transitioning from one side of the frame to a poised halt at the golden cross one-third point, conveys a sense of perpetual motion, resonating directly with the viewer.
- **Vitality:** The unique depiction of the dancers' movements, characterized by action-filled poses, infuses the picture with a vivid sense of liveliness.
- **Balance:** The thoughtful arrangement of costume colors on one side and the dynamic streaks of color on the other establishes a visual equilibrium within the frame, transforming it into a compelling pictorial presentation rather than a mere record shot.

Therefore, Gowreesh Kapani's action shot of dancers utilizing a slow shutter speed is not merely a fortuitous capture but a narrative-driven image meticulously previsualized to achieve the ultimate frame. This achievement speaks volumes about his elevated skills in both technical and aesthetic realms, offering sincere commendation for his exceptional work.

• K S Rajaram AFIAP, Hon YPS



Mr Rajaram is a life member of 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.

A Slice Of Alaska



Portage Lake © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP

While driving on a seemingly endless, straight highway in the expanse of North Dakota during a road trip to a national park, my gaze was captivated by a billboard that boldly proclaimed, 'Alaska Before You Die.' The display showcased breathtaking images of Alaskan landscapes. The audacious assertion by the Alaskan tourism department instantly intrigued me, prompting a conversation with my travel friend about visiting Alaska before we die.

As we continued our drive, my friend agreed with the billboard's message. Alaska, a land far removed from the contiguous United States, beckoned as a destination to visit before one died. The sheer remoteness of Alaska added to its allure. Also, it contributed to the considerable challenges in reaching this northernmost state. Flying to Alaska was not only a long journey but also an expensive one, further accentuating its exclusive and distant appeal.

Even though Alaska is part of the U.S., there's a funny thing – you can't just drive

there. You have to go through Canada. The alternative modes of transportation, such as cruise ships or flights, offered more convenient but still pricey methods to experience the wonders of Alaska.

Alaska isn't within the budget for many Americans. Even among those fortunate enough to visit, very few make the journey more than once in their lifetime. Therefore, I am sure that the 'Alaska Before You Die' billboard struck a chord with many readers as a profoundly true sentiment.

Portage Lake, Alaska

Experiencing the breathtaking beauty of a turquoise-blue lake is truly indescribable. Although I had seen pictures and heard about it, the moment of actually standing by Portage Lake, touching its water, left me pleasantly shocked.

Our journey began with a flight from Texas to Anchorage, Alaska's capital and its largest city. The eight-hour flight, covering a significant distance within the same country, highlighted the remoteness

of this northern state often referred to as the Last Frontier. Despite being roughly half the size of the U.S. mainland, Alaska boasts only a handful of cities and a limited highway network, emphasizing its sparsely populated nature.

Our destination was Seward, a coastal city known for fishing and cruises. The drive from Anchorage to Seward was a visual delight, offering countless opportunities to pull over and capture stunning landscape pictures along the highway.

About a half-hour before reaching Seward, we veered off towards Portage Glacier. En route, we made a stop at Portage Lake, the source of my earlier astonishment. The lake's captivating turquoise hue results from the high concentration of copper sulphate, deriving its water from the glaciers adorning the surrounding hills and mountains. The encounter with this natural wonder added a remarkable chapter to our Alaskan adventure.

A mere ten-minute drive from Portage Lake led us to the awe-inspiring sight of



Portage Glacier © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP

Portage Glacier. The enormity of the icy mass, its contours resembling a tortoise with its offspring, floating gracefully in the lake, left us captivated.

Exit Glacier, Alaska

A short drive from Seward city is the Exit Glacier. The Exit Glacier was likely known to Alaska Natives and early explorers, but it gained more attention during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The glacier was named "Exit Glacier" by members of the Harriman Alaska Expedition in 1899. The name reflects the exit of the first recorded crossing of Harding Icefield, from which the glacier flows.

Naturalist John Muir, who was part of the Harriman Expedition, explored the Kenai Fjords area extensively. His writings and advocacy for the preservation of natural landscapes, including glaciers, played a crucial role in raising awareness about the ecological significance of places like Exit Glacier.

Exit Glacier, like many glaciers worldwide, has experienced significant retreat in recent decades. This retreat is often attributed to a warming climate. As you stroll from the parking lot toward the glacier, you'll encounter distinct markers highlighting the glacier's historical

positions at various points in time. The glacier's changing size provides a visual representation of the effects of climate change and has become a focal point for discussions on environmental conservation.

The ground, once concealed by the glacier for possibly millions of years, has only recently emerged, explaining the limited vegetation in the glacier's immediate vicinity. Despite this, my attention was captivated by a small plant defiantly sprouting vibrant flowers. It serves as a poignant reminder that life, resilient and tenacious, finds a way to thrive even in the most challenging environments.

Cruising from Seward, Alaska

'This is the worst day for a cruise,' I thought as I surveyed the overcast skies.

The clouds hung heavy, and I doubted if the visibility would be favourable for glimpsing sea life and glaciers, especially with the sea shrouded in thick fog.

Interrupting my thoughts, the captain of the cruise offered a perspective that countered my concerns. "You may not like the weather," he remarked, "But a cold day with an overcast sky is the best weather for sea life sightings. Whales and dolphins, you see, have a thick layer of skin and tend to surface more when



Exit Glacier © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP



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

it's cold. On a sunny, hot day, they prefer to remain deep within the water."

A sense of relief washed over me. The captain's explanation, contrary to my initial apprehensions, made perfect sense.

There are several day cruises from Seward. These cruises take the tourists out to watch the huge and spectacular glaciers and wildlife in Kenai Fjords National Park.

As the boat sets sail, you find yourself surrounded by towering fjords and their rugged cliffs adorned with streaks of ancient ice. The crisp, salty breeze carries whispers of the sea, setting the stage for a mesmerizing adventure.

Shot details: Canon 6D, with exposure at F9, 1/100S, Canon 70 - 200 at 70mm. Adobe Lightroom was used for selective exposure control. Adobe Photoshop was used for cropping and cleanup.

The fjords, sculpted by the forces of nature over aeons, unfold in a grand spectacle. Massive glaciers cling to the mountainsides, their icy fingers reaching down toward the deep blue waters. The sight is both awe-inspiring and humbling as you witness the dynamic dance between ice and ocean.

As the cruise glides through the pristine waters, your eyes are drawn to the skies above. Various species of beautiful birds,

their wings gracefully navigating the air, add a vibrant dash of colour to the dramatic landscape. Seabirds wheel and cry, their presence a testament to the park's rich biodiversity.

The excitement builds as playful dolphins emerge from the depths, dancing alongside the boat in a joyful display of aquatic agility. Their sleek bodies cut through the water, leaving a trail of glistening droplets in their wake. The spectacle continues with occasional glimpses of jellyfish, their delicate forms pulsating in a ballet of translucence.

Then, a hushed awe descends upon the vessel as a magnificent blue whale breaches the surface. The sheer enormity of this majestic creature leaves everyone onboard in silent reverence. The sight of the world's largest mammal gracefully navigating its aquatic realm is a rare and unforgettable spectacle, a testament to the park's status as a haven for marine life.

Throughout the cruise, the knowledgeable guides provide insightful commentary, unravelling the ecological vibrance of Kenai Fjords National Park. The journey is not just a visual feast but an educational experience, deepening your appreciation for the delicate balance of this pristine wilderness.



Cruising in Kenai Fjords National Park © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP

Flying Over Glaciers, Alaska

"Can you guys arrange a flight over the glaciers?" I inquired at the counter. We had initially booked a flight over the Harding Icefield with the renowned Talkeetna Air Taxi. This expansive ice field, nestled in the Kenai Mountains, serves as the source for numerous glaciers cascading down from the peaks of southern Alaska. Talkeetna Air Taxi is based out of a very quaint little town called Talkeetna, which has some restaurants, clothing stores, and souvenir stores. Unfortunately, our plans had been thwarted the day before when Talkeetna Air Taxi had to cancel our flight due to unfavourable weather conditions.

Hoping for better conditions, I ventured out on this day, seemingly with improved weather. Spotting a different flight operator along the street, I approached their counter with a hopeful request for a journey to the Harding Icefield.

"The weather might clear up around 11 am," the attendant informed me. It was currently 9 am, and a light drizzle persisted. "Please return in two hours, but it looks promising for a flight today," he added.

Alaska's weather, as many locals jest, is notoriously unpredictable. There's a saying among Alaskan residents that they don't put much faith in weather predictions; instead, they observe the sky and prepare for whatever nature decides to throw their way.

We patiently waited, and true to the unpredictable Alaskan weather, the drizzle subsided, and by mid-morning, the clouds began to disperse. Returning to the flight operator, we were informed that conditions had improved sufficiently for a flight.

Later in the day, we were soaring above the majestic Harding Ice Field in a helicopter. It is not easy to shoot from a helicopter, and I had to rest the lens of my camera on a cloth over the ledge of the helicopter window to be able to get stable aerial shots of the Alaskan landscapes.

Denali National Park, Alaska

"Into The Wild" is a captivating film adaptation of the book by the same name, chronicling the journey of a disillusioned young American who hitchhikes to Denali National Park, seeking a life disconnected from the materialistic world. Tragically,



Aerial View of Harding Icefield Flowing Down As Glaciers © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP



Aerial View of a Turquoise Blue Lake © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP



Store In the cute Talkeetna town © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP

after a few months of living on his own terms in the wilderness, he succumbs to the consumption of poisonous plants. My fascination with Denali National Park was ignited when I first read this compelling story in 2006.

Upon a four-hour drive along a single highway from Anchorage, Alaska's capital, to Denali National Park, visitors are faced with the choice of camping within the park or opting for accommodations in one of the nearby hotels. Cars are not permitted within the park boundaries.



Toklat River © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP



Head of a Dead Moose © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP



Lightning In Denali National Park © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP

Instead, visitors can drive to a designated parking area and then access the park's interior using dedicated buses.

Denali National Park is vast and, depending on the selected route, the park buses take approximately 4-6 hours one way to reach their final destinations. Passengers have the flexibility to

disembark at any point along the route or signal for the bus to stop, with sheltered bus stops available in case of rain.

Our bus journey took around three hours to reach the Toklat River, a majestic river originating from the glaciers. Here, we discovered the skeletal remains of a moose, complete with its impressive

horns. A moose is a large animal belonging to the deer family. On the return hike, a distant lightning prompted us to seek refuge in the returning bus as we made our way back to the visitor center at the park's entrance.

Highway 1, Alaska

Alaska, the largest state in the USA, boasts only three main highways, and among them, the renowned Highway 1 stands out as the most popular, connecting the picturesque town of Seward to Anchorage. As mentioned earlier, the journey from Seward to Anchorage unfolds like a visual symphony, treating travellers to heart-stopping landscapes at every twist and turn along the highway.

Two distinct ways beckon those traversing this scenic route. The first offers a leisurely ride on a slow train equipped with glass tops and windows that afford passengers uninterrupted views of the captivating landscapes. The alternative is a road trip along highway 1, providing the freedom to pull over at will, capturing the beauty of the surroundings through the lens of a camera or simply soaking in the breathtaking scenes.

Opting for the latter, we embarked on our journey, making occasional stops to seize the moment with landscape photography. One such pause was at the Tern Lake Pullover, where nature presented an idyllic canvas for indulging in the art of long-exposure photography.

In the tranquil waters of Tern Lake, a small group of carefree ducks gracefully glided, presenting delightful opportunities to capture images that perfectly embodied the serene ambiance inherent to the landscapes of southern Alaska.

During another impromptu stop along the highway, we were greeted by the sight of train rails set against the backdrop of a serene lake and the ever-present majestic mountains that define the Alaskan landscape.

During another pause in our journey, we seized the chance to catch the serene essence of Alaska by quietly observing a beautiful yet unassuming boat gently resting on a still lake. Such moments, reflective of the tranquillity that defines the Alaskan ambiance, are abundant throughout this remarkable landscape, offering countless opportunities for quiet contemplation and connection with nature.



Tern Lake Pullover © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP



Quiet Lake near Seward Alaska © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP



Quiet Life At Tern Lake © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP



Rails Kiss The Sea © Thejas K R AFIAP, AFIP

As the journey through the untamed beauty of Alaska came to a close, the memories of soaring over ancient glaciers, navigating the crystalline waters of Kenai Fjords National Park, and embarking on exhilarating hikes to Exit Glacier and Portage Glacier lingered

like a vivid dream. Each adventure unveiled a different facet of Alaska's natural wonders, from the majestic ice fields to the vibrant marine life. As we drove back to Anchorage, the scenic landscapes bade us farewell, leaving an indelible mark on our hearts.

Boarding our flight back to the mainland USA, we carried with us the spirit of Alaska, a testament to the raw and breathtaking allure of America's last frontier.

• Thejas K R, AFIAP, AFIP



Mr Thejas K R, (LM-198) has been a passionate art photographer for over two 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.

The Lens Blur Tool

Which is your dream lens? For numerous photographers, it is the one capable of creating a seamlessly blurred background, allowing the main subject to stand out and imparting a three-dimensional appearance to the image. This outcome is influenced by various factors, including the lens's speed, design, subject-to-background distance, and more. Among these, the speed of the lens is arguably the most crucial, leading photographers to desire high-speed lenses with large apertures, resulting in a shallow depth of field.

The speed of a lens, denoted by its f/ number in relation to the focal length,

determines its high-speed capability. For instance, a 50 mm f/4 lens is considered slow, while a 600 mm f/4 lens is deemed fast. Focusing on common focal lengths, such as 28 mm to 105 mm, apertures like f/1.8 are seen as moderately fast, and those at f/1.4 are considered fast. Advancements in technology have enabled the production of lenses ranging from 35 mm to 85 mm with even faster apertures, such as f/1.2, and in extreme cases, even below the remarkable f/1.0 mark. Unfortunately, these rapid lenses, which yield appealing backgrounds, tend to be sizable, expensive, and challenging to use due to the need for precise

focusing caused by the shallow depth of field at wide apertures.

Previously, Adobe had given photographers tools to correct aberrations in lenses. Now, it has advanced technically further and introduced a new feature called the Lens Blur Tool that can simulate the 'looks' of a fast lens by creating a blurred background. This is an AI-based tool (what else can it be?). While this is not a magic bullet and needs certain conditions to work well, its performance is nothing short of amazing. It is available in both Lightroom Version 13.0.1 and Photoshop ACR Version 16. It is also simple to use and being a post-processing tool, gives you a sort of flexibility that is impossible to get at the time when you are taking a photograph. Also, note that the Lens Blur tool is still under development and hence you will see a warning 'Early Access' and there is a button that you can use in case you want to share any feedback.

I have chosen a photograph (Picture 1) to demonstrate the tool. For reference, the EXIF data for this photograph is a Nikon Z6 full-frame camera, a lens of focal length 105 mm, and an aperture of f/6.3. As you would expect, the background at this aperture is not blurred as much as you would like it to be. We are now ready to start.

Locate the Lens Blur tool on the right panel in the Develop module of Lightroom or in the ACR. Let us look at the screen of the Blur Tool (Picture 2).

This has several options but the first and the most important one is the Apply check box (Picture 2#1). You need to initiate the tool by clicking on the box. The software will use AI and create the very important 'depth map' based on the 'estimated' distances of the foreground, subject, and background. A depth map can be considered a mask like the one you create in Lightroom/ACR for adjustments but has a different purpose as it has depth (that is, distance) information. Based on the depth map the amount of blur applied will be varied, thus attempting to replicate as closely as possible how it would have been when you took the photograph. We will see later how we can visualize (see) and edit the depth map.



Picture 1



Picture 2: The screen of the Blur Tool in ACR.



Picture 3: The depth map.

Once you click on the 'Apply' tick box, a depth map will be created using the default parameters. The created (using AI) depth map may not be perfect and the amount and type of blur applied may not be to your liking. That is, what should be sharp may be blurred or vice versa. However, there are features built into the tool to tweak these parameters.

The first slider you see is the Blur Amount (Picture 2#2) and as the name indicates it controls the amount of blurring. The default is mid-way and you can move it left or right to decrease or increase blurring. Move it to suit your taste but as always overdoing will not lead to pleasing results.

You must have heard of bokeh, a Japanese term that deals with the aesthetic quality of the out of focus areas (blurred areas). It is not just being out of focus but the beauty of it, however, subjective that may be. The Blur Tool can create different types of bokeh. These are represented by 5 icons (Picture 2#3) and are called Bokeh Effect options. The effect of these is very subtle and difficult to see unless you have some light sources in the background. Here is a brief description of the bokeh options given.

Circle: Modern lenses try to present a neat round bokeh and this setting tries to replicate that effect.

Bubble: Also called the soap bubble this type of bokeh has a thin bright edge to the bokeh circle. This is a characteristic of overcorrected spherical aberration. One of the well-known lenses that exhibits this bokeh is the Pentax 50 mm f/1.4 Super-Takumar lens from the early 1970s.

5-blade: Not very popular, this simulates the result of 5-bladed diaphragms of very old lenses.

Ring: This is another type of bokeh generally not preferred by many. It is characterized by a thick bright ring (doughnut shaped). It is found when using mirror lenses. These lenses are very rare these days and no major manufacturer is producing them now.

Cat Eye: These look more like ellipses but with pointing (rather than curved) ends thus giving an appearance of a cat eye. Adobe says it is caused by optical vignetting in lenses. Certain very high speed lenses currently being made, exhibit this bokeh, especially toward the edges.

There is a slider called Boost (Picture 2#4), and this controls the quantum of the effect of the bokeh type chosen.

We are next getting into an area that is more dependent on our skills than AI. AI cannot always be perfect and sometimes needs our touch (and thank God for that). Just like the way you can fine tune any adjustment mask or a selection, you can do the same to a depth map.

Now, we come to the most important part and it is called the Focal Range (Picture 2#5). This is the color coded subject distance bar and is a sort of graphical representation of the depth that is, the distance from the camera up to the subject (foreground), the subject and beyond the subject (background) right up to infinity, left being nearer and the right farther.

In the Focal Range bar, you can see a white slider box (Picture 2#6). This is the focal range indicator and dragging it to the left or right will move the focal point closer and away from the camera. You can consider it to be the equivalent of rotating the focus ring on your lens, manually. There is one more trick. The width of the box represents the depth of field – and you can decrease or increase DOF by changing the width (narrower or wider) of the box! Click just outside the box and drag.

If you are not happy with the depth map, look for two icons on the right (Picture 2#7). These two represent Subject and Target. The former is the default, and the subject will be detected automatically by the tool using AI. If you choose Target,



Picture 4. The final result after applying the Blur Tool

then you can click on a point on the image and that point will become the point of focus!

Either way, the software decides what is near, intermediate, or far. If you want to see what has been done, click on the Visualize Depth box (Picture 2# 8) and your picture will be overlayed with a mask that shows the depth map. This is a special mask where light colors starting from white indicate the nearest distance, becoming yellow as the distance gets farther, and then taking on darker colors like purple for greater distances and ultimately black for infinity (Picture 3)!

Now, are you happy with this mask? Has the tool created a depth map accurately, as shown by the color code? If you are

satisfied with the mapping done by the tool then you are fine. Just click on the Apply checkbox and you are done.

However, what if it is not? No worries. You can use a procedure you are already familiar with. This is like the modifications that you do to the adjustment masks created by the masking tools (e.g., linear gradient, select sky, etc.) in Lightroom and ACR, using the brush tool (Picture 2#11). Select the Size, Feather, and Flow of the brush. Also, tick Auto Mask (Picture 2#12) as this will help to detect the edges, making selection/erasing easy when using the brush.

Let us take a specific case. You have observed that some areas that you wished to be blurred are in focus. So, click

on the Blur button (picture 3#9) and paint the area that you want to blur. Then using the Amount slider (Picture 2#10), make sure that the newly blurred area blends with the surroundings. Follow the same process if you want the blurred areas to be in focus. However, instead of Blur, click on the Focus button (Picture 3#9). The rest is the same.

I suggest that you choose a raw image of a portrait that has good background separation, make a copy, and start experimenting. Both Lightroom and ACR are non-destructive and you can freely try out all the options available.

One doubt that you might get is - why not use select subject, invert, and then use negative values of Texture, Clarity, and Sharpen sliders to blur? Well, the blur produced by a fast lens is notoriously difficult to replicate and is very different from what you would get by using the aforementioned sliders. Considerable computation power is also required not just to create a realistic blur but also to detect the subject and create a depth map.

Picture d shows the result with the image processed with the default settings of the Lens Blur too.

Conclusion: As with all tools, there are limitations. However, as software gets smarter, we will be able to see more capability being achieved. Some Internet sites have claimed that with the Blur Tool, the days of the fast lenses are over and you can get the same result with a low-cost lens that is much lighter and smaller. The author is not prepared to go that far but who knows what will happen in the future.

• 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.

A photography tour to CAMBODIA



YPSians at Angkor Wat

The second International photographic tour of YPS was to Cambodia, specifically the Siem Reap region of that country from Oct 30 to Nov 05, 2023. Situated in the Northwest of the country, Siem Reap is the gateway to the Angkor archaeological park that is spread over 400 sq Km.

The tour began with a bang when we were greeted by heavy showers on the evening of Day 1 and two of the most magnificent rainbows that I have seen. We were attempting to photograph life on the streets at Angkor Pyong Yo and later in the town area. The day ended with much merriment over a Khmer dinner.

Day 2 dawned bright, and everyone was up early to photograph the daily life of the Khmer people at the Phnom Krom Village and the market. Early morning light was our company that morning as we photographed blacksmiths, barbers, street vendors going on about their busy lives. After a break to cool off from the

heat and satisfy the hunger pangs we headed to the most spectacular of the monuments Angkor Wat, earlier known as Param Vishnu Loka indicating the Hindu influence on this region of the world.

We witnessed the epics we are so familiar with, Ramayana and the

Mahabharata, etched on walls of this magnificent monument, the largest Hindu temple complex in the world. The Samudra Manthan and the story of the Narasimha Avatar of Vishnu are immortalized here.



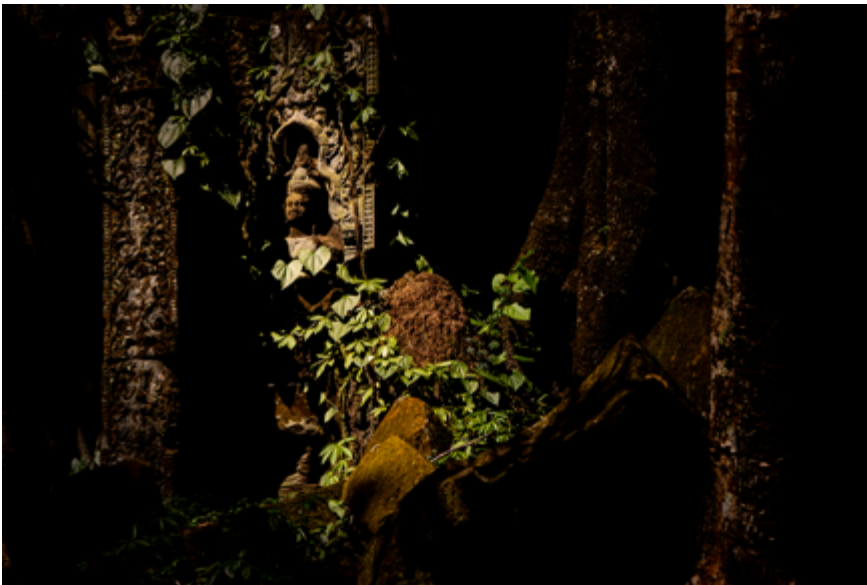
Bayon Sunsets-5082 © Yogesh Mokashi EFIP, EFIAP



Angkor Wat Long Exp Pano © Yogesh Mokashi EFIP, EFIAP



Roots of Ta Prohm-4975 © Yogesh Mokashi EFIP, EFIAP



Lit Corners-7442 © Yogesh Mokashi EFIP, EFIAP



Suryavarman II © Yogesh Mokashi EFIP, EFIAP



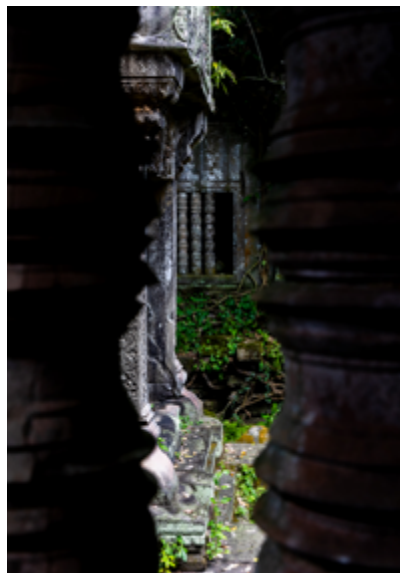
Fallen Angels-6873 © Yogesh Mokashi EFIP, EFIAP



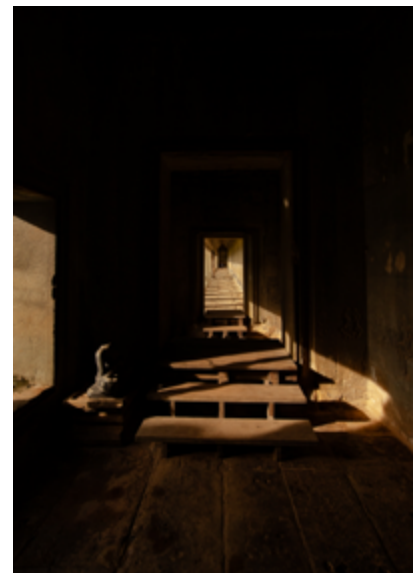
Sunrise at Angkor Wat-4866 © Yogesh Mokashi EFIP, EFIAP



Welcome to Angkor Thom-5047 © Yogesh Mokashi EFIP, EFIAP



Nooks of Beng Melea-7389 © Yogesh Mokashi EFIP, EFIAP



Corridors of Angkor-4439 © Yogesh Mokashi EFIP, EFIAP



Bow before the Buddha-7269 © Yogesh Mokashi EFIP, EFIAP

After a night's merriments and a short night's sleep we headed out to photograph the sunrise at Angkor Wat during sunrise. We joined the throng of people at 4.45 am in a dash to get the best spots for sunrise. After having

sweated our way through this early morning exercise, the packed breakfast provided nourishment to head out to Prasat Preah Khan. This temple was an important complex that served as a city, a temple, and a Buddhist University.

After cooling off the sweat and some nourishment we headed to Mechrey Floating village, a village built on the waters of the Tonle Sap Lake. After witnessing and photographing the ways of life of people who live on water and



Bayon Sunset reflection © Achuta Herur



Outer Walls © Achuta Herur



Cloud kissed divinity © Anitha Mysore MPSA, EFIAP/g, ARPS, GPUCR-4, FAPS, EIUP, c***MoL

getting soaked in a furious thunderstorm, we called it a day.

Banteay Srei was our temple for a brand-new Day 4. This temple was built in the 10th Century AD and is dedicated to Lord Shiva and Parvati. This beauty of a temple could probably be called the Pinnacle of Angkorian art. Carved from stone of a pinkish hue are some of the finest examples of stone carving in the entire world.

From the temple of Shiva, we went to a river that flows over 1000 Lingas

carved in the bed of the river. This holy river then falls over two levels to create a thunderous waterfall, the Kulen Waterfall that is so beautiful that time stopped for all of us.

The next morning had all of us excited to be going to the Tomb Raider temple Ta Prohm made famous by the eponymous movie starring Angelina Jolie. The beauty of the temple despite it not being in great shape was due to the huge roots that had taken over the complex after humans departed,

the intense green of the moss that covered the walls and the dappled light that created a perfect canvas for photographers.

From the mostly ruined to the ruined temple of Chau Say Vibol (Chue Srei vibol) was the afternoon highlight. Set amidst lush vegetation this temple was the site of our shoot with the monks. Two monks, a senior and a novice joined us, and we enjoyed their company as we took pictures of them in this temple.



Tangerine grace © Anitha Mysore MPSA, EFIAP/g, ARPS, GPU CR-4, FAPS, EIUP, c***MoL



Harvest © Shamala Muniswamy



Water People © Shamala Muniswamy



Playful Dash Through Angkor_s Majesty
© Srivatsa Sharma



Sacred Blessing © Srivatsa Sharma

And it was time for Angkor Thom (Great City), the last magnificent capital of the Khmer Empire. Bound by 5 gates, one for each cardinal direction and the fifth one also in the East, The Victory Gate. Each of the gates has a tower flanked by four huge faces. And as the sun raced towards the west we raced in time to get the Sun glinting off the towers of Bayon temple.

And in a blink of an eye, it was our last day in Cambodia and Beng Melea the jungle temple was our last port of call. It is an unrestored temple and was opened to tourists only in 2003 after being cleared of landmines. The beauty of the temple comes from its state of dilapidation and the feeling of being an

adventurer descended upon us as we explored the nooks and crannies of this magnificent ruin.

And it was time to leave the land of the gentle smiling people who had suffered terrible depredations for centuries still do not forget to smile.



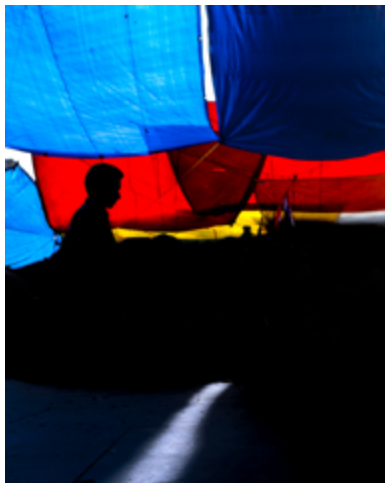
Yogesh Mokashi EFIP, EFIAP
Tour Lead

Karnataka Rajyotsava Celebration Street Walk

ART OF SEEING – in street photography



Winner - *Market melodies shadows of commerce dance under vibrant tarps*
© Subash Rao



1st Runner-Up - *Dealers Under The Sheets*
© Madan Chandrashekar



2nd Runner-Up - *Red And Yellow Garlands*
© Rajaram K S

When Kishan called to join on the street photography walk with YPS as a mentor, I was introspecting "What does street photography mean to me?" Following are a few thoughts that came to my mind...

Street photography is a captivating art form that captures the raw essence of everyday life. It thrives on the spontaneity



of the streets, where every frame tells a unique story and Street photography is about unveiling the unnoticed, turning ordinary moments into extraordinary visual narratives.

Elliot Erwitt, renowned for his humorous and poignant captures, expressed this sentiment beautifully: "To me, photography is an art of observation. It's about finding something interesting in an ordinary place..."

The streets serve as a canvas for photographers to paint with light and shadow. Alex Webb, known for his vibrant and complex compositions, emphasized the importance of light in this medium: "You're out there hunting for these moments, and often the light is a big part of it—how the light transforms a situation."

To celebrate Karnataka Rajyotsava, we gathered approximately 30 participants at KR Market, a bustling area in the early hours. Following a brief discussion and introduction, and instructing about the theme being Red and Yellow, the colors of Karnataka, the group was divided into two teams to capture candid moments within the market.

The vibrant market serves as an excellent canvas for a creative photographer to craft compelling images. We guided the participants on how to effectively follow the light and seize moments in the interactive spaces. Demonstrations were

provided for both the art of hunting for shots and the fishing techniques.

A specific group was instructed on working the scene, selecting a suitable background in front of which an auto stood. After finalizing the subject, various characters entered the scene, creating a candid moment with a well-balanced composition, designating one central element as the focal point.

Subsequently, we explored a lower-lying area adorned with colorful covers, emphasizing the significance of positioning for optimal image composition. Demonstrations showcased subjects entering the scene as silhouettes against vibrant highlights, adhering to the ground-to-figure principle to convey a compelling storytelling image

In conclusion, sharing some valuable time and exchanging a few ideas about street photography with eminent participants from YPS and outside, including my daughter, was an overwhelming experience for which I am ever grateful to YPS.

A contest was announced by the club and participants were to post their images on Social Media and tag YPS. Many beautiful and well-captured pictures were posted. The winner of the contest was Mr Subash Rao, First Runner-up Mr Madan Chandrashekar and Second Runner-up Mr Rajaram Kilar.

• Dr. Prashanth Kulkarni



YPS Saturday Meet Sessions

YPS Photo Outing: Bannerghatta Butterfly Park

The photo outing to Bannerghatta National Park on Nov 04, 2023, was all about Butterflies!

Even though the number of registrations was limited to 10, many more than that number turned up at the venue with a lot of expectations.

Butterflies have a special place in the insect world. The names such as “Flying Jewels” indicate that butterflies are considered as being beautiful, elusive and fascinating.

The park at Bannerghatta has the following major components:

- A butterfly garden to sustain the local butterfly population
- A butterfly conservatory enclosed under a polycarbonate roof
- Research and captive breeding laboratory
- A museum

Out of these, photography enthusiasts’ main interest was the butterfly conservatory. Thirty species of butterflies bred under captive conditions are released into the conservatory dome.

Mr H Satish, immediate Past President of YPS led the walk and took the team through an exclusive entry into the laboratory to learn about the beautiful butterflies followed by photographing them at the enclosure.

It was every photographer's delight to shoot the butterflies at such close proximity as they drowned themselves in the abundance of nectar. Sponge pads soaked with simulated nectar for the butterflies were strategically placed.

The participants returned with a plethora of butterfly pictures, much to their delight.



M S Kakade Director, YPS
Member, Dr̥ṣṭi Editorial Team



Vietnam Photo Tour Open House

After the euphoria of the Vietnam photo tour came the time to showcase the images made by the participants. A Google Meet to display the images and open them for critiquing was held on 18th November 2023. We had a well-attended meeting with several members and participants providing excellent input on the images.

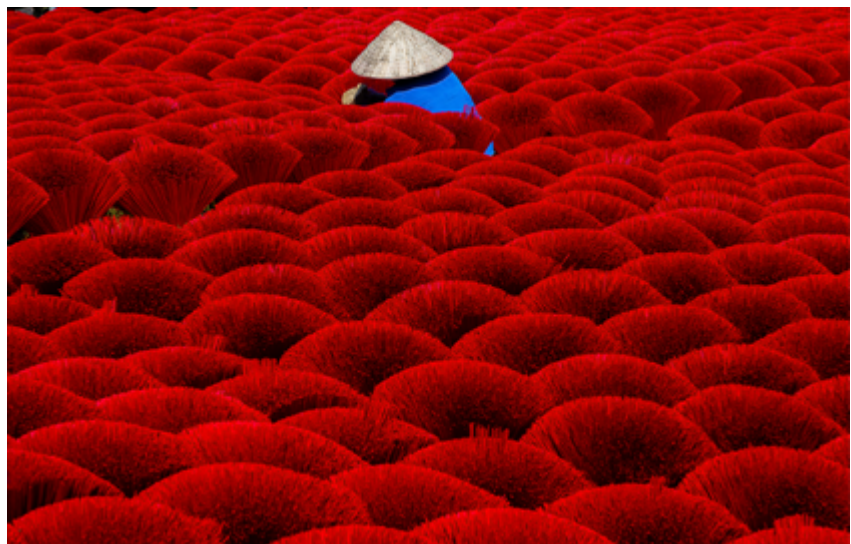
Images made by Anand Sharan, Avinash Koorgailu, Dheeraj Rajpal, Kishan Harwalkar, P.N. Arya, Punkaj Gupta and yours truly were displayed.

The participants are very appreciative of Satish H, Chandrashekar S, Girish Ananthamurthy and Hardik Shah among others who attended the Meet and provided their input/critique.

It was a delightful exchange of ideas that will improve the photography skills of all those who made the pictures and those who got an opportunity to see and learn.

Rare are those forums where serious feedback is provided instead of just the thumbs up and the heart emoji and YPS has consistently provided that for photographers.

• **Yogesh Mokashi** EFIP, EFIAP
Tour Lead



Blue in a red sea © Yogesh Mokashi

Basics of Lighting for Portraiture

9th December, 2023 was a day of learning at YPS Hall. A veteran in photography, Mr K S Rajaram unleashed some basic nuances of lighting in creating great portraits. He started by explaining that a good portrait shall depict one's personality and emotions and that lighting would play an important role in achieving this objective.

Over a dozen aspects of lighting were explained with practical demonstration. Some of these included, Role of Key / Prime light in Portraiture, Split Lighting, Broad Lighting, Short Lighting, Rembrandt Lighting, Loop Lighting, Butterfly Lighting, Under Lighting, Rim Lighting with ambient lighting, Back Lighting in ambient lighting, Top lighting in ambient lighting, Effective lighting, Roles of multiple Lights & Reflectors in final shooting keeping in view effects of each one of those Lights & Reflectors, Low Key and High Key shootings and Emotions / Moods attached to each one of such presentations.

The participants got to see and learn practically how one could use a single light



source to achieve the lighting conditions explained. His art of narration combined with a live demonstration using a simple set-up of backdrop, light source, and models made it very easy and effective to understand how one could create some beautiful portraits and showed that it does not require an elaborate set-up.

Members got to shoot pictures after the demonstration and received valuable tips as to how the images could be improved by effecting minor corrections. The session saw active participation by the members with a lot of takeaway points enriching their knowledge on lighting techniques to create some wonderful portraits. Rajaram answered all the questions raised by the

members on various aspects of lighting. Members voiced that the session was very interesting, useful and a learning experience. Sincere thanks to Rajaram for making this session happen and also thanks go to both models Ms Shivganga and Ms Roopa who posed for the demonstration/practical shooting, helping members understand the techniques easily. The presence of members in good numbers made the event successful, thanks to all those who attended and derived the benefit.

• **Girish Ananthamurthy** EFIAP, EFIP,
Hon. PESGSPC, GPA PESGSPC
Vice President, YPS

PSA - Who's Who in Photography for 2022

PSA has published its annual Who's Who world list for 2022. This list is composed by using PSA's algorithms, which are different for each section (OC, OM, PT etc).

For example, in Open Color (PIDC) section, the criteria is as follows: There were 610 recognized exhibitions and circuits consisting of 2308 judgments, resulting in a total of 9232 (2308 X 4) possible acceptances. This listing consists of exhibitors with 150 or more acceptances, which is 5% of the total possible.

Top Exhibitor from YPS in PID Color is Mr C R Satyanarayana, with 1737 Acceptances in 750 Judgments.

Other members in the list:

- Dr. Ajit Huilgol
- Ms Anita Mysore
- Dr. Pramod Govind Shanbhag
- Mr Ashok Viswanathan
- Mr Venkatesh B S

Top Exhibitors from YPS in PID Monochrome are Mr C R Satyanarayana,

with 1387 Acceptances in 616 Judgments and Dr Ajit Huilgol, with 1000 Acceptances in 451 Judgments.

Other member in the list:

Mr Venkatesh B S

Top Exhibitors from YPS in Nature are Mr C R Sathyanarayana, with 2342 Acceptances in 668 Judgments and Dr Ajit Huilgol, with 1455 Acceptances in 530 Judgments.

Other member in the list:

- Mr Venkatesh B S
- Mr Raghavendra Joshi
- Dr. Pramod Govind Shanbhag

Top Exhibitor from YPS in Photo Travel is Dr Ajit Huilgol, with 1069 Acceptances in 457 Judgments.

Other member in the list:

- Mr Venkatesh B S
- Dr. Pramod Govind Shanbhag

Top Exhibitor from YPS in Photo Journalism is Mr Venkatesh B S, with 169 Acceptances in 282 Judgments.

Other members in the list:

- Dr. Ajit Huilgol
- Dr. Pramod Govind Shanbhag

Drṣṭi Editorial team and YPS Executive Committee congratulate the top performers in the PSA 'Who's Who' list for 2022 and wish them many more accolades.



Prema Kakade, EFIAP, EFIP,
GPA.PESGSPC, cMoL, A.CPE
Secretary, Youth Photographic
Society, Member, Drṣṭi Editorial Team

PSA Interclub Competition 2023

Youth Photographic Society took part in the PSA Interclub Competition 2023, conducted in three rounds, Nov 2023, Feb 2024, and Apr 2024.

YPS participated in Open Color, Open Monochrome, Nature, Photo Travel, and Photo Journalism divisions. In every division, six images can be submitted per round, with a limit of one image per author. YPS's position at the end of Round 1 in all divisions is summarized here.



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.

Round 1						
Group	Division	Round	Author	Title	Points	Award
D	PID Color	1	Kishan Harwalkar	Pink Incense Passage	8	
			Nagendra Muthmurdu	Splashed Joy-3	9	
			Satish H	First light at Pangong	15	Merit
			Sathyanarayana C R	WINNOWING PAIR	12	HM
			Varadanayaka T P	GRANDMOTHER	12	HM
			Venkatesh B S	Playing holi with sieve 1782	9	
A	Nature	1	Achintya Murthy	Flowery Landing	9	
			Ananth Kamat	Wrinkled Frog with Eggs	9	
			Chethan Rao Mane	Jumbo Combat	9	
			Phani Bhushan Ramasastry	ODKF 11	13	HM
			Pramod Govind Shanbagh	Tawny Eagle with Fawns head 2 4795	12	
			Vinay B V	Hop skip and jump	10	
A	PTD	1	Ananth Kamat	Kodial Teru	10	
			Chethan Rao Mane	The Elephant Herd	11	
			Kishan Harwalkar	At The Library	7	
			Nagendra Muthmurdu	Serene Shelter	9	
			Sharath Acharya B	Anointment of the Bahubali	14	Merit
			Varadanayaka T P	Abhishekham	14	Merit
A	PID	1	Anitha Mysore	Fire jump	9	
			Satish H	Epitome of Sports	11	
			Udaya Thejaswi Urs	Agony	13	HM
			Umashankar B N	A fiery path to a lonely life	10	
			Varadanayaka T P	Please leave me	15	Merit
			Venkatesh B S	Morning jejuri crowd 4937	8	
B	PID Monochrome	1	Anitha Mysore	Tender ties	13	HM
			Kishan Harwalkar	The Library	13	Merit
			Nagendra Muthmurdu	Affection-B1	8	
			Prakash Kandakoor	Whats going on outside 2	8	
			Satish H	Vintage beauty	12	Merit
			Varadanayaka T P	HAPPY CHILDREN	10	



PSA Interclub Competition 2023 awarded images



Odkf 11 © Phani Bhushan Ramasastry



First Light At Pangong © Satish H



Tender Ties © Anitha Mysore



Anointment Of The Bahubali © Sharath Acharya B



Winnowing Pair © Sathyanarayana C R



Vintage Beauty © Satish H



The Library © Kishan Harwalkar



Please Leave Me © Varadanayaka T P



Agony © Udaya Thejaswi Urs



Abhishekham © Varadanayaka T P

New Member Corner

Mem No	Full Name
IM-0948	Mr Vysakh Karthikeyan
IM-0949	Mr Santosh Bade
IM-0950	Mr Shailesh R
IM-0951	Mr Hari Lakshmiratan
IM-0952	Mr Shovan Dhara
IM-0953	Mr Udit Jain
IM-0954	Mr Manoj Oak
IM-0955	Mr Ramesh Sa
IM-0956	Mr Gopala Krishna Baliga
IM-0957	Mr Ravi Murthy
IM-0958	Mr Subrahmanyam Busa
IM-0959	Mr Katukuri Surya Prakasa Rao
IM-0960	Mr Gunbir Singh
IM-0961	Mr Vikramjit Singh Wasu
IM-0962	Mr Naasiruddin Saiyed
IM-0963	Mr Gopinath C J
IM-0964	Mr Rohan Saraf
IM-0965	Mr Adarsh Dharmadevan
IM-0966	Mrs Selva Arasi Britto
IM-0967	Mrs Kavita Kavya
IM-0968	Mr Rakesh Jain
IM-0970	Mr Amith KN



IM-0948



IM-0949



IM-0950



IM-0951



IM-0952



IM-0953



IM-0954



IM-0955



IM-0956



IM-0957



IM-0958



IM-0959



IM-0960



IM-0961



IM-0962



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IM-0964



IM-0965



IM-0966



IM-0967



IM-0968



IM-0970



© Hari Lakshmiratan



© Hari Lakshmiratan



Kulasai Dasara © Shailesh R



Theyyam Kannur © Ravi Murthy



Taj Mahal © Sunitha Varadan



Reflection © Rakesh Jain

YPS Programme Calendar

January 2024

Date	Venue	Topic	Title	Presenter
Sunday, 07	Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath	Street Walk	Chitra Sante	Yogesh Mokashi, Kishan Halwalkar
Saturday, 13	Google Meet	FIP Convention Mascot Unveiling		
Saturday, 20	Google Meet	Open House	Cambodia Photo Tour	Yogesh Mokashi

February 2024

Date	Venue	Topic	Title	Presenter
Saturday, 03	Google Meet	Travel Photography Presentation	Colonial Williamsburg - A living history museum	Dr. Maddur Badarinath
Saturday, 10	YPS Hall	Product Photography	Subtle Elements	Mohan Krishnappa
Saturday, 17	Lepakshi	Out-door Pratical Photo Shoot	Architecture Photography	Goutham Ramesh

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



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Youth Photographic Society

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