



When photographing and posing people, there are three main variables that need to be taken into consideration: The light, the subject and the photographer.

To some photographers, this is not so obvious, particularly at the beginning. Have we perhaps stopped seeing with our eyes and seeing only what advertising and commercials subtly direct and wants us, to see?

I meet so many hopefuls wishing they have this or that camera and this or that lens, thinking that high-end equipment will make them great photographers. Alas it is not the case. Granted, top notch kit will make your life easier, and yes, for some genres of photography, such as macro, sports or underwater, one does need particular equipment. Yet, when one studies the history of photography, as well as great photographers, there is usually one thing which binds the majority of them – that is that they all based their photography not on their equipment, but on their mind and vision.

In this day and age, with everybody rushing around, not unlike headless chickens, trying to keep up with everything, some of us are missing the forest for the trees. Is it not time to take stock and try and organise ourselves? Is it not time to think of our priorities and work towards them? Is it not time to perhaps review our progress to date and try and analyse how to improve our work and lifestyle?

Coming back to photography, and the three main variables, it is time for those taking up photography seriously to try to grasp, and better understand, the effects of light. One thing we have to acknowledge is that light is actually invisible. What the photographer sees is the effect of light on his subject. What the photographer tries to do is capture that light in the most suitable way that fits the subject.

We must really look at the light on our subjects and then adjust maybe our subject or our own position, to fit and mold to the light we have. Many 'photographers' are not even looking at the way light is affecting their subject, at the transition between highlights and shadows. Look at your subjects and decide what is the main focus of your image and work towards lighting that part of the photograph and leaving the rest of the image in more subdued lighting (quite like a spot lit effect). A lot of images are today spoilt with over lighting, particularly people pictures.



Look at what the great masters did in painting and you will see the way they 'lit' up their subjects by knowing the direction and quality of light. Study the work of Rembrandt, Rubens, Caravaggio, Michelangelo. What better tutors could one wish for!!? The more we hear today that photographers are portraying themselves as 'artists', the more, alas, it seems they are not behaving like artists!

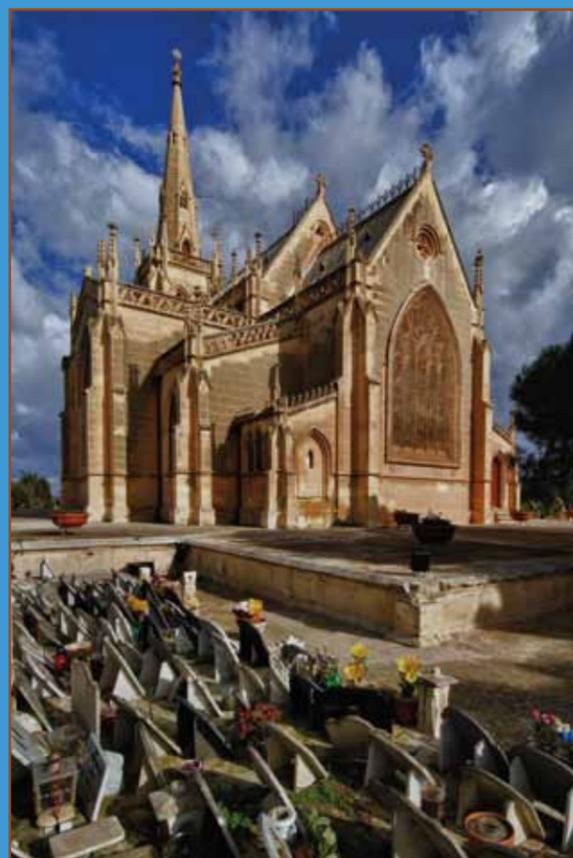
Technology has made it so easy to churn out an 'image' that most are just not thinking and our brains and eyes have become sluggish and untrained. We must study the history of art, we must be aware of the evolution of photography, we must keep in touch with the breakneck pace of photography's technology, we need to know the rules before we attempt to break them, we need to network and view other photographers' work, we need to introduce concepts and meaning in our imagery, we need to learn how to best direct and manage our subjects, we need to learn the classical before attempting the abstract, we need to keep our minds open and receptive to all forms of art. The list is endless. . .

Technology has given photography to the masses and the masses have taken it on in a huge manner. It is now up to the masses to use their new found creative tool to the best of its ability and not to abuse and reduce it to mere gimmickry.

Let us all strive to learn more and more on this wonderful art.

Increasing our passion for photography is bound to increase the level and purpose of our images. The way forward is to never think you have arrived but to keep learning and discovering.





THE EYE AND THE MIND

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ADVERT



Maltese photographer, Kevin Casha is due to speak to the 2013 Convention at the following times (see the programme for full details):

What Do Judges Look For? – Sunday 13th

The Maltese Way – Friday 11th

Simple Ways Stunning Results – Saturday 12th

