

FOCAL POINT



Photography by - BY JOSEPH FRANCALANZA

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www.mipp-malta.com



2020
SEPT | OCT



Photography by Y Kevin Casha

PRESIDENT'S VIEWPOINT

Revisiting an everlasting debate:

Dear Members,

Sometimes I try to spend time on reflection; I find it beneficial to go on pause and take stock of my position and revisiting topics that, with time, I might have changed my opinion or views. During this turbulent year, I seemed to find myself having more opportunity for thinking and my mind dwelled upon the timeless debate of whether Photography is an Art. I always said I am positive it is but what with the digital revolution and the mammoth changes it has brought to this medium? Am I still fully convinced about this or has photography mutated into something else? Can we still call it 'Photography' or is it a form of image making which has totally changed the perspective and cognition of photography as an art?

Difficult questions for sure. The worst and most tricky one is trying to define what is art. Perhaps if we ask 'What does art involve'? We might get nearer to the truth. In my opinion, the characteristics that



make an art work great (whatever its medium) are:

1. The value to the particular viewer or customer; naturally this is different to everyone.
2. The feelings and mood that an artwork has on the viewer or owner.
3. The technical quality and skill to produce it.
4. The ability to stand the test of time; does the owner get bored with the artwork? Or does it keep kindling emotions and reactions?
5. Does the subject, concept, rendition or message instigate debate?
6. Does the artwork have a lasting value as time goes by? This can be monetary, memorable or nostalgic.

I feel that in depth reflection on these few sentences can help us more towards understanding art and photography. Whenever valid art is created, there is usually an alchemy or magic that takes place involving the creator, the medium and the observer. Whatever the medium, style or technique, a truly gifted artist will speak to the viewer whilst a mediocre one will not. After mastering the techniques of photography and digital post-processing, which is integral to the success of photographic art today, an artist should try to roam free and explore different styles, experiment and provoke without taking too much notice of what the 'critics' are saying. Confidence and belief in an artist are vital in order to be free of the shackles that society binds us with. An artist should never rest on his quest for exploration and communicating with the audience.

Those who think one art form is better than another need to reflect further and learn more about how art is perceived by different persons and their conditioning. One of the greatest gifts that humans have is our ability to reason and make judgements based on our reasoning abilities. Unfortunately, this is not so widespread today; the apparent inability of engaging in research by most of today's students is killing free thinking and reasoning. The problem of fake news and manipulation by seemingly everyone does not help at all. The crux of the problem has always been education, or the lack of it. Good education is not learning enough to get a certificate but it should strive to make the student capable of valid reflection of what's going on around and then evaluate, weigh and come out with sane answers. It is imperative for a photographer to do this. Do not think that masses of expensive gear will make you a better photographer; as much as a chisel and a piece of stone will not make you a good sculptor.

Yes, let us try and use the creativity that modern digital technology has given us, but not at the expense of shutting down our brain cells. It is reasonable to speculate that all art and all life has value as long as we open our minds and our eyes.

Kevin Casha
President

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Kevin Casha

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If you want your photographs featured on the newsletter's front page just send the images to: courses@mipp-malta.com
Your contributions are always welcome



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LET'S TRY AND HELP OUR SPONSORS!





Dear Members and friends,

In these difficult times, our thoughts should go to those who are facing problems with their income due to the complete or partial closure of their businesses. We are all in some way or other effected, but some are feeling the brunt more than others and I feel we should all try and come together and help in whatever manner possible. As you well know, the MIPP is attempting to tide over the time in the best way possible, with our resources.





My second appeal and thought goes out to the MIPP's main sponsors, most of whom have employees and large bills to meet. In this dire time, why don't we all go through our images and work and try and print that travel album, that family picture etc? That way, in our own little way, we can try to help our sponsors by giving them some work, however small, in a period where they have none? This quiet period will also help us get over our backlog and things which we have been putting back. What better way than to look at our past memories and immortalise them in a photobook? Again, this appeal goes to those who can as for those who are hard up charity, naturally, begins at home.

Just to remind you of our main sponsors, (who can still be contacted online), they are the following:





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Images taken during the recent MIPP practical water polo workshop with Martin Agius.









Photography by y Edward Sant Fournier



Photography by Tom Lee, Iguazu Falls



Charles Calleja during a workshop on flash photography



The President with Stephen D'Alessandro during his recent inspirational talk



The SIA students at Mediterraneo Marine Park



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Photo by Daniel Bonello



One of the first sessions back at the MIPP premises delivered by Sam Scicluna, who covered his way of editing images.



MARTIN AGIUS



Martin is 54 years old originally from Gzira but moved to Bahrija in 2018. He is married to Therese. He left school at 16 years of age with the education one can gain at that age. At 18 years of age he joined the Armed Forces of Malta and there he learnt a lot being involved in the roles of a clerk, store man and infantry. In his spare time, he did a Computer Technician course at MCAST and worked in the trade for over 10 years.

HOW IT ALL STARTED

His life was not only work and as for hobbies apart from photography, Martin enjoys reading, trekking and travel. Martin always loved photography and always had a camera and snapped photos. In 2008

he decided to take a course in photography. He attended the Fast Track courses organized by Kevin Casha and it was there that he realized that the way he delivered his work during the FastTrack course that photography was a natural for him.

The reason for him going for a formal photography course was due to the fact that a year before, he bought a Canon SLR 400D with the Canon kit lens 18-55mm and realized that with such equipment, he needed a course besides shooting snapshots. Having said this, Martin considers himself coming from the era of the Film cameras as he owned several compact cameras. Before he bought the Canon 400D he had a Minolta DSLR with a zoom. Amongst others, apart from Kevin Casha's Fast Track 1 & 2 courses, Martin did the MIPP Photo Essentials, a Media course, a Photoshop Course with Ramon Sammut and the first Still Image Award course that the MIPP organized.



IMPORTANT LESSONS

He believes that all formal courses help one understand photography better and gives the attendee the opportunity to practice what he was taught. Martin went further by adding that besides practicing what he learnt, he attempted to master what he learnt and eventually develop his own style and apply his own philosophy in his work. Martin believes that the first thing one needs to do when starting in photography is firstly to invest a lot in oneself (such as by doing courses) and then in the equipment one buys as you do at one point need some form of equipment to start photography.

“Adding all this together”,

Martin adds,

“it helped me to become the Photographer that I am today and working fulltime as a Photo journalist”.

Martin also considers another important input in his career as a photographer which is not living photography in isolation. In fact, Martin joined the MIPP in 2008. The exposure to talks, events etc and input from other photographers helped him develop his photography further. Martin considers himself an all-rounder. Since he is a photojournalist by profession, Media, Sports and Documentary are his main genres. He qualified in the MIPP and the Societies UK Associateship in Fashion and Glamour. His preferred genre now are Street Photography, Landscape and Long Exposure.

Besides investing in oneself as discussed above, Martin believes that regarding equipment, one needs to buy what you really need and not what you like to have. Before going out to shoot one needs to do research, plan and when on the field keep everything in mind. The photographer must be very disciplined in the way he handles the elements all at the same time: what should have been planned, the environment, the camera amongst others.

“Without discipline”,

Martin emphasizes,

“you will struggle in anything not just photography”.

ROLE MODELS

Martin amongst others follows Mark Fearnley as a Street Photographers. In Landscape photography he follows Nigel Danson and Adam Gibbs. Martin also admires Gareth Danks who photographs Street Photography. There are other photographers Martin looks up to. At this point Martin mentions to me that he is available to share further about the photographers he admires to anyone who contacts him for further information. As for Image editing too, Martin has his role models these including but not limited to Julieanne Kost, Mark Denney and Anthony Morganti.

THE FUTURE, THREE MESSAGES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Martin looks to the future and will be prepared to pursue further courses in photography possibly of a higher level than he has attended so far. He is also working on his Fellowship Qualification which will be Street



Photography and who knows an exhibition to follow?

One thing that Martin wishes to leave those reading this interview with three statements: Never give up. He had failed his MIPP Licentiate which was his first qualification, but he didn't give up and the year after he went to do the MIPP and the Societies Associateship and he passed.

Perseverance and making the Time are key. Share with others and find opportunities to do so Martin is grateful to several people who have helped him along the way particularly Kevin Casha and Ramon Sammut for teaching, guiding and helping him and his wife Therese for all her support and patience.

FAVOURITE 3 PHOTOS

1: I have many favourite images but the first one will be the one that I won my first Gold in the Societies Monthly Competition. This image was taken during the Arab Uprising on 22nd February 2011 which happens to be my birthday.



1

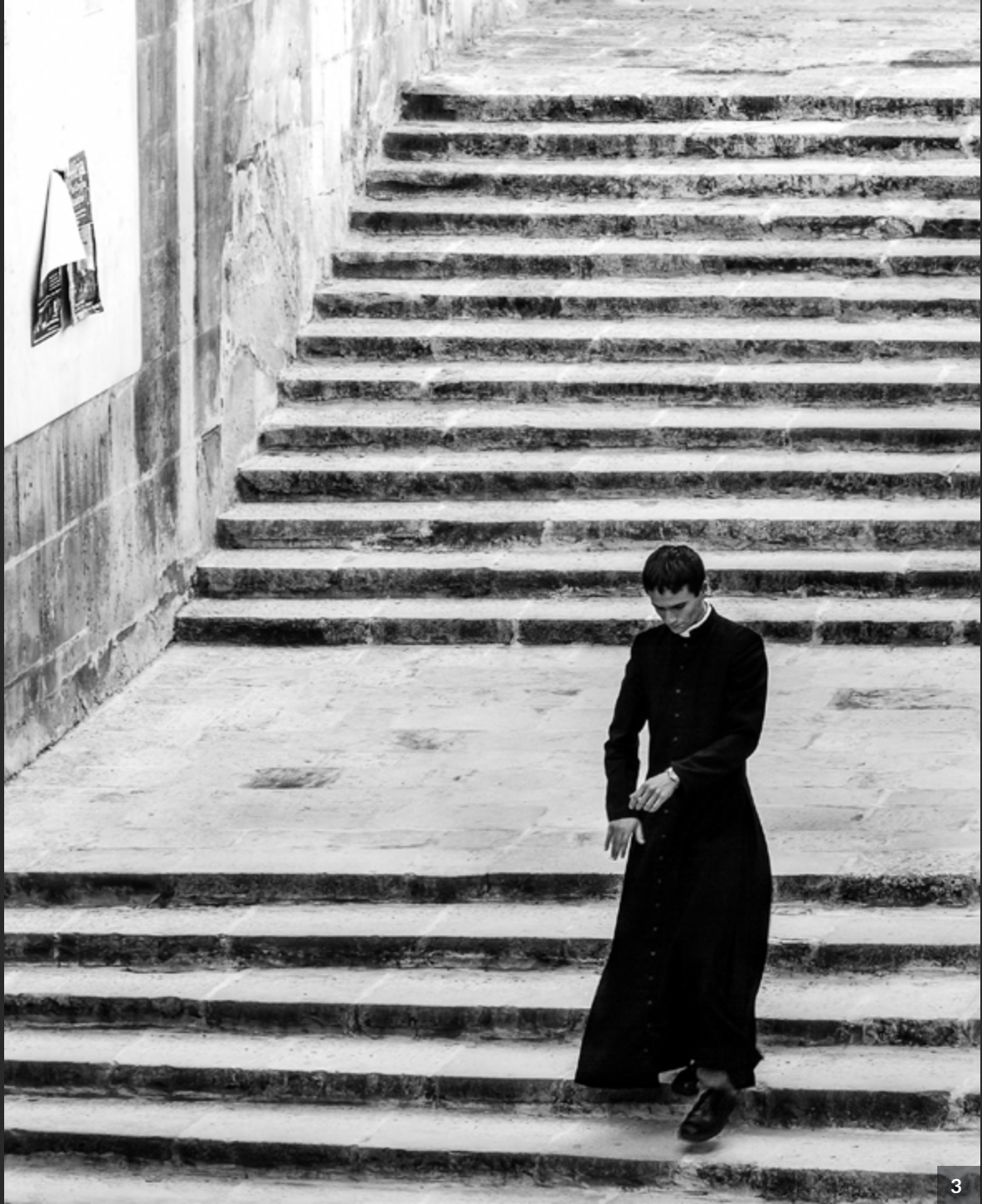
2: This image is of an Irregular Immigrant and her child when they arrived at Maritime Squadron. This image apart from winning me a Gold in the Societies Monthly Competition also won me the Press and News Photographer of the Year in 2011





3: The third image is one of my early Street Photography images I saw this priest hurrying down the steps and I went running up the steps from another side to capture him with my camera and this is the result. I also got Highly Commended Societies Monthly Competition.

by Edward Sant Fournier



3



Keith Ellul during one of the practical sessions with the MIPP Still Image Photography students at Ghar Lapsi.



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NB: DUE TO COVID PANDEMIC, ALL THOSE ATTENDING MEETINGS, WORKSHOPS ETC. ARE ADVISED TO WEAR A MASK & FOLLOW OUR RECOMMENDATIONS.



MIPP MEMBERS'

THE THREE E'S
IN MY PHOTOGRAPHY:
EXPRESSIONS, EMOTION, EXECUTION
BY STEPHEN BUHAGIAR

Tuesday 1st September | 19:00

SEPTEMBER /2020



MIPP MEMBERS'
BW PHOTOSHOP TUTORIAL
PART 2
BY TOM LEE

Tuesday 29th September | 19:00

SEPTEMBER /2020



MIPP MEMBERS'
APPLES & GLOBES
THE CHALLENGING JOURNEY OF
TWO STUDENTS IN
THE STILL IMAGE AWARD
DURING THE PANDEMIC
BY GAIL CIANTAR
& ROBERT CUSCHIERI

Tuesday 15th September | 19:00

SEPTEMBER /2020

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MIPP MEMBERS'
MEETING:
IMAGE REVIEW NIGHT –
MEMBERS TO SEND A MAXIMUM
OF 3 JPG IMAGES FOR REVIEW.

Tuesday 6th October | 19:00
76, MIPP, Britannia Street, Paola



MIPP MEMBERS'
MAXIMISING USE OF SELECTED
PHOTOSHOP FEATURES
BY STEFAN CACHIA

Tuesday 22nd September | 19:00

SEPTEMBER /2020

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MIPP MEMBERS'
MEETING:
PRACTICAL TIPS ON
USING DSLR VIDEO
BY JEAN PIERRE GATT

Tuesday 13th October | 19:00
76, MIPP, Britannia Street, Paola



CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER



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MIPP MEMBERS'

MEETING:

PUBLISHING YOUR FIRST
BOOK - FROM PLANNING TO
PUBLICATION
BY CHARLES PAUL AZZOPARDI

Tuesday 20th October | 19:00
76, MIPP, Britannia Street, Paola

OCTOBER /2020

MIPP MEMBERS'

MEETING:

WORKING AS A COUPLE IN
PHOTOGRAPHY
BY DANIEL BONELLO
& YASMIN DINGLII

Tuesday 27th October | 19:00
76, MIPP, Britannia Street, Paola

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Non-Profit organizations like the Malta Institute of Professional Photography are constantly in need of funds in order to be able to function in a modern and professional manner. That is why it is important to have various sponsors interested in networking with the MIPP and at the same time involving them in important issues concerning the photographic trade.

The MIPP feels it is vital to stimulate joint events and initiatives together with our sponsors. This policy helps our members to be constantly aware of products and services that our sponsors market thus not only encouraging an increase in business but also benefitting our members through special occasional offers and deals.

This co-operation and belief by our sponsors, most of who have been with us since the MIPP's inception, has helped in no small way in making the Institute what it is today. It is one of the MIPP's main objectives to help to keep this co-operation improving. We urge our members to truly support our sponsors by making use of their services and products whenever possible.


The main sponsors of MIPP are AVANTECH (CANON); ILAB Photo, PHOTOCIANCIO (FUJI) and PHOTOIMAGES.


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