



Photography Is Light, Only Light

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IMAGES: PATRICE DELMOTTE



Well-known local photographer Patrice Delmotte has been doing studio photography for over a decade in Taipei. He exhibits regularly both in Taiwan and abroad, and his most recent gallery showings were in May 2019 for the Taiwan Exchange Photo Club Our Island Exhibition, supporting Father Yves Moal's charitable work in Hualien.

In his youth, Patrice loved drawing and engraving, but unfortunately his professional work kept him too busy. On his birthday in 2005, the gift of his first digital camera, a small Coolpix, opened the door to the digital world. By 2007, he had started seriously to pursue photography as both the perfect retirement hobby and the ideal way to reactivate his appetite for graphic arts.

That year he took a crash course

with a professional photographer and a model. Its purpose was to recreate five photos, each with totally different lighting. Besides learning basic lighting principles, the most important lesson he received was from the model herself. She told him that a model couldn't see herself and needed to be directed. It was his first nude model, and he was really shy at the time.

Though Patrice is self-taught, he has been particularly touched by Brazilian photojournalist Sebastiao Salgado, whom he greatly admires for the precision, accuracy and poetry of his work, even in the most dramatic of scenes. His love for black and white was also influenced by Salgado. He likes particularly the use of *chiaroscuro*, so popular among Flemish painters. He feels that it reflects the light of house interiors in northern France, where he was born, and also the bright light of the tropics where he now lives.

Nowadays, Patrice likes to work with amateur models who are less rigid and more natural in their poses. In some ways, the relationship between the photographer and the model is a game of seduction. One is trying to appear the most beautiful, while the other is trying to create the most beautiful photo of her. The photographer's reward is to see the happy face of the model when she sees her picture.

For him, the body of the woman represents the most beautiful of landscapes. A simple, static drape covers nudity, while it also flows as in a dance movement, too. Patrice puts poetry into his photography to enhance his artistic nudes, since the line that demarcates nudity in fine art from pornography is very tenuous.

Patrice hopes that the emotion and atmospheres that appear in his work reflect and express his passion for Asia. He continues to hone his artistry and provides photographers with these recommendations from his experience.

PLEASURE ABOVE ALL ELSE

Patrice believes, "There is beauty in every being and everything, it is up to you to discover and exploit it. Use it, but always have as a priority your own pleasure, which is another key to your success." He realizes how fortunate he is to have no commercial purpose and therefore total freedom of expression.

STUDY THE MASTERS

"Often you won't have time to compose," he advises. "So it is important to cultivate your unconscious, your instincts, by carefully studying and analyzing the works of painters, sculptors, photographers, dancers and even musicians. Immerse yourself in their know-how and the harmony of their works. This is also one of the keys to creating your own style."

PLAY WITH THE SHADOWS

On the use of light and dark, Patrice advises photographers: "The shadow helps to hide or suggest. Shadows may even sculpt the subject. So you can also use a transparent veil. Do not neglect the power of suggestion, which is far more powerful than a full nude image."

SHOW YOUR WORK

After spending long hours in the studio, he reckons, "Photography is often a solitary exercise. It's important to share your work to get constructive criticism. This is one of the fastest ways

to progress. There's a photo club near you or on the Net that will allow you to do so. Do not hesitate to contact professional photographers; very few will refuse to help you."

NO MATTER THE CAMERA

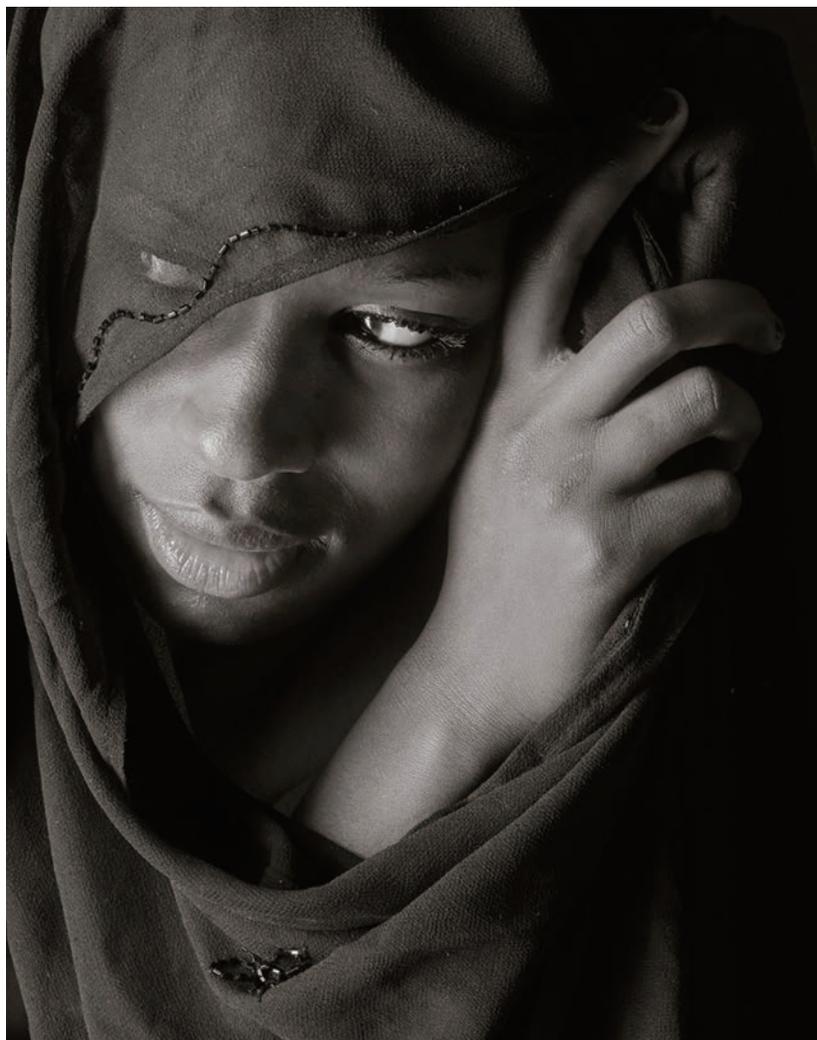
He also advises caution: "The race for equipment shouldn't be your priority. Outdoors, all devices are almost equal. The most expensive devices will only offer real benefits in extreme conditions. Never forget that it is your eye that will be responsible for 90% of the creation of the image. For the rest, you need to have a minimal technical knowledge of your camera and its possibilities. Moreover, know that nothing is better than experimenting over and over. If necessary, Photoshop will help you get where you want to go. But beware: a good Photoshop is a Photoshop that should not be visible!"

PRINT YOUR PHOTOS

Lastly, as Patrice firmly understands, "The great danger of the digital age is



to accumulate pictures without actually breathing life into them." He believes that photographs need to be printed to be fully expressed. To that end, he has published over thirty fine art photo books.



You can find Patrice Delmotte's portfolio and photography on his personal website: <http://www.delmotte-artphoto.com/> and you can follow his recent photography on YouPic: <https://youpic.com/photographer/patricedelmotte/>.

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Patrice Delmotte is a well-known local photographer and active member of TEPC.



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Kenneth Dickson has been an active member of TEPC for the past couple of years. He loves Tamsui for its cooler evenings, golden sunsets, and a gentler pace of life. It's a great place to discover Taiwan with your camera!

