

## Case Study #07

# PHOTOGRAPHING FABULOUS FLOWERS

The creative process is what takes you from a great idea percolating in your brain to the end product, which in photography would be your final image. It is the road from your vision to the photo you want to hang on your wall or share on your website.

The creative process is less like a paved four-lane highway and more like a bumpy gravel road with potholes and hills. It can be a great pleasure or quite painful at times. It is important to recognize that *it is a process* and it can take time to arrive at your final destination.



Photograph by Leanne Cleaveley

The image on page 1 started out as an idea for a semi-abstract shot, utilizing the colors and form of a daylily. Leading up to this photo, I had been photographing daylilies for quite some time and was looking for a new way to showcase their vibrant colors and unique shape.

I was excited by the idea of getting in very close to the flower with my macro lens, using a narrow DOF. I wanted the background to have a softness, showing how the colors blend together. I knew that I would need to decide on a focus point and that it would become my main subject.

The stamens were a natural choice for my focus, but with such a narrow DOF I would only be able to focus on one. If I chose to have all the stamens sharp, it would take away from the softly blended colors in the background that I was aiming for.

For me, this image was more about an idea and I didn't really see this photo as my final image. It was more like a test shot to see what was possible. I was happy with the shot even though it was lacking some elements of composition to make it really great.

At this point, I walked away from the flower and let the idea simmer for a bit. It didn't quite meet my original vision for what this shot should achieve. The stamens, all lined up in a row, made the image feel a bit static and didn't really do the daylily justice.

Almost two weeks after the image was taken, I returned to the daylilies and attempted the shot again. The flower I was shooting was a different one but from the same plant, so essentially the same flower in color and structure.

I did a couple of things differently in my second attempt. I moved in as close as I could with my macro lens and altered my angle so that the stamens weren't lined up. The result was a vertical image, with the focus point being on one of five stamens that were arranged in a more dynamic way than the original photo.

The stamen that is in focus lies on the intersecting lines following the RULE OF THIRDS. It is closest to my lens, allowing the rest of the flower to soften and blur. There was an interesting bokeh effect that I did not anticipate with the pieces of pollen on the remaining stamens.



Photograph by Leanne Cleaveley

The image above is the end result of the vision I first had for the daylily. Thankfully not all of my images take two weeks to come to fruition.

However, having the patience to wait out your creative process speaks to your commitment to the final vision that you have in your head.