

The tools of travel photography to make your travel photos work with David H. Wells

Making exceptional travel photographs requires skills in many different types of photography, from street photography to still-life work to portraits. In a typical day of travel, a photographer may shoot busy festivals, quiet buildings, open landscapes, or close-up nature. The best travel photographers are versatile in their skills and fluid in their process, using minimal gear to achieve a maximum of results.

This presentation explores the following topics:

- The traveling photographer's camera and bag
- Being in the right place at the right time
- Varying the time of day and understanding light
- Portraying people
- Composition
- Stopping action vs. showing motion
- Framing and scaling; tripods
- Using the appropriate lens

The best travel photos are symbolic images that convey the mood of a place as they “bring” the viewer to the place. The best ones are made not from the viewpoint of an observer but rather from the viewpoint of someone who is actively engaged in the event. Good travel photographs make seemingly boring things interesting, even unique and magical. You also need to be comfortable taking pictures in unusual places, which requires you to carry yourself confidence as well as to treat your subjects with respect. For many people, travel photography combines two of their favorite passions, travel and photography.

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Tools of Time Lapse Imaging with David H. Wells

Digital imaging has given today's photographer an expanded toolbox of creative options, including the ability to create dramatic time-lapse animations incredibly simply. Time-lapse animations are produced by taking a series of consecutive photographs of movement, which, when put together, create the illusion of motion. This is compared to conventional video, where real time is captured and then played back "normally" as events unfold. The best time-lapse pieces take us out of the "here and now" experience of video.

In this workshop David will explore the important skills needed for good time-lapse pieces including:

- Camera considerations
- Format issues
- Image altering issues
- Conceptual issues
- Strategies in terms of viewpoints
- Image organization after capture
- Software considerations

In this workshop, students learn the tools of time-lapse animations and how to expand the single frame of a photograph into a more complex and evocative moving-image project that distorts time, and alters the pace of daily tasks. With the migration of media to the web, which is an incredible venue for time-lapse media, the skills involved in making time-lapse projects serve virtually all photographers well.

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The personal project as the professional tool with David H. Wells

When anyone can claim to be a photographer, differentiating yourself as a professional is harder than ever. A social media presence and a web site (or two) are required just to keep up. The best way to separate from the crowd is to develop, promote and disseminate a personal project. Each project is unique to the individual, but successful projects that carry over from the personal to the professional realm showcase the photographer's skills and help end-users know the photographer's personality.

David is going to take you through the evolution of his project "Foreclosed Dreams." He started with a vague idea and ended up with a body of work that has been featured in numerous publications, exhibitions and web-site profiles including the N.Y. Times Lensblog and the ABC News website. He has also made money off the project while using it to get more paid work.

David worked to make sure his projects dovetailed with larger political and cultural themes, ensuring wide dissemination of the work. With e-mail, David has a complete record of each step, every milestone that he encountered as he developed the project. That information, dozens of compelling images (and a few videos) have been synthesized into this presentation. Though David will be talking specifically about his "Foreclosed Dreams" project, from the start to the present, he will draw on his decades of experience working as a self-employed photographer to share his larger strategies for developing and disseminating the all important personal project.

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The Humanistic Photo-Essay: Old and New with David H. Wells

If a single photograph has the power to tell a story, then imagine what a body of work can communicate. For many photographers, after their skill level reaches a certain point, making a singular photograph can become unsatisfying. The multiple-image project, whether a personal endeavor or a documentary photo-essay, is the next step for the serious photographer. Join a master of the photo-essay, David H. Wells, to explore the magic that transforms loosely defined ideas into a powerful collection of images based on a theme, and tell a story through conveying the author's point of view

David will begin the lecture by showing his work and highlighting the different kinds of essays he has produced for different uses. Exploring such topics as globalization in India, the devastating effects of pesticides, and a photo documentary on a homeless family living in a school bus, David's work spans across many genres. In the last year David has expanded into multi-media work and this presentation will include examples of that work. Following the presentation, he will briefly explore how to write a proposal for a photo-essay, which is the first step towards funding, exhibiting and publishing a project.

This is a unique opportunity to learn the basics of a photo essay from a widely published/exhibited photographer and a two time Fulbright fellowship recipient.

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Street Photography Tools: with David H. Wells

Street photography has a long and glorious tradition in the history of photography. The best street photographs give the viewer of feeling as if they are “amidst” the street scene in the photograph. Images that are misinterpreted as lucky photographs are often the result of an attentive eye and preparation. There are specific skills involved in doing great street photography. These include how to work rapidly and unobtrusively in busy environments with minimal equipment and maximum adaptability.

Lecture and demonstrations explore:

- What you need to be aware of when looking through the lens
- How to anticipate the action
- Seeing/metering the light
- Positioning your self
- Your choice of lens/focal length
- Situational awareness of all the elements as they come together

At the end of the workshop, students will be better at quickly analyzing the quality/direction of light, framing and composing the image as well as anticipating the unfolding activity that they are photographing.

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Stock photography workflow with David H. Wells

An overview of the business of stock photography as well as an outline of the digital workflow from capture to archiving to agency submission/dissemination.

The key to making a living as a stock photographer is running your stock photography business like a business, as efficiently as possible. Digital technology can be the key to this efficiency in creating, archiving and disseminating images. The class is an overview of the business of stock photography. It includes a detailed outline of the digital workflow from capture to archiving to agency submission through final dissemination.

David Wells is a completely digital stock photographer who has worked with almost every kind of stock agency from editorial to commercial, American to overseas. He currently works with seven different agencies, from very large to very small. Over his twenty years of working as a stock photographer he has learned from working with different agencies, some of which market to niches and others which are specific to certain geographic markets. Similarly, some of the agencies works with have been consolidated into other agencies, some have voluntarily withdrew from the market and some who were forced out of business.

Wells will start by showing his work and highlighting the various stock uses of images he has made throughout his career. Then he will detail his way of systematizing the steps to make, edit, caption, copyright register, disseminate and track your images. Wells will go through his entire workflow, from capture to licensing by end user. The class focuses on key mechanisms for generating a decent revenue stream from stock photography.

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One Pro's Digital Imaging Workflow with David H. Wells

Digital imaging has offered photographers a world of new possibilities in photography including immediate feedback, nearly infinite possibilities for image modification, etc. At the same time, today's photographers are flooded with an equally vast number of new images that need to be organized in some coherent way. In this workshop David Wells will teach you his workflow, explaining each step in his process from the point of view of this is what he does and why, for his business as a stock photographer.

Any photographer can learn an incredible amount about how to manage their own workflow by understanding why David does what he does and then asking themselves what they should do in their new workflow, based on their particular type of photography. The class is for all levels of photographers.

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Mastering found light: Light shadow night and twilight with David H. Wells

If photography is writing with light and everyone is a photographer these days, then the business should be overrun by masters of writing with light. Yet nothing could be further from the truth. Great photographers know that light is a tool just like a camera, lens or tripod and mastering that same light is a hard-earned skill. For studio photographers, the art is in controlling that light. Working in uncontrolled situations with found light is as much a challenge but is also rewarding when the light is used effectively. Differentiating yourself as a professional photographer is harder than ever these days with everyone claiming to be one. Learning how to master found light is one way to really do that.

David H. Wells will share his tools for mastering found light, experience that comes from decades of practice and decades of looking at light analytically. This seminar is more than a refresher in the basics, it offers a whole new way to look at and master found light.

Wells has repeatedly been called a master of light and shadow. His photo-essays on the light and atmosphere of different places have been published in general magazines as well as photography magazines. They have been exhibited in numerous exhibitions including one where a curator wrote of David's work saying "Wells uses light like a surgeon." His approach to light has been profiled on the web and in magazines such as Camera and Darkroom, Photographers International, Communication Arts Photography Annual, Photo Magazine and Phototechniques.

Wells likes to call himself a connoisseur of light (meaning a person who is an expert at something or has informed and discriminating taste.) Working in places like Israel, Guatemala, Bangladesh, India, Italy, etc., has given Wells the opportunity to critically analyze found light around the globe and to become a connoisseur of that light.

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Light Studies Exploring the Light Atmosphere of a Place with David H. Wells

Certain places call out to us to be contemplated and explored. Whether they are a big city or a small town, public or a private space. Bodies of work that explore the light and atmosphere of such places are often called Light Studies. Light, shadow, night and twilight are the tools that David H. Wells uses as he makes his award winning "Light Studies." Train stations, shrines, city centers, buildings and the like are just a few potential subjects for such "Light Studies."

David H. Wells is a freelance editorial photographer who specializes in producing "Light Studies" on location, across the globe. His finished "Light Studies" have been published in general interest magazines as well as photography magazines and have been exhibited in exhibitions around the world. Spend time with this master of light and shadow who will help you understand how to make your own "Light Studies." Wells will share specific techniques (and particular images that highlight those techniques) that he used to create his "Light Study" photo-essays.

Topics to be explored include:

- Specific issues of time of day / morning vs. evening light
- Quality and direction of light
- Scouting a location with a compass to plot the play of light
- The importance of the photographer's position
- The use of lines, light and dark
- Lens choice / composition
- Framing to create dramatic images when no dramatic light exists

Attendees will gain a better understanding of available light, how it is shaped by the time of day, seasons, the photographer's positioning, etc.

"Wells uses light and dark like a surgeon... His dynamic compositions have an almost surreal quality that reshapes our expectations of space. (He) uses light, carefully, to explore interior human complexities." Charles Biasiny-Rivera, a curator and critic

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Intro to Photo Editing: Selecting the Best Few Images from the Hundreds with David H. Wells

A piece of gear doesn't make one a better photographer. To become a better photographer, you need to take a lot of pictures and select the best few. The problem is that most photographers cannot edit their own work well. They are too caught up in the content of the image or in the emotional experience they had making the image. In this presentation we will explore how to edit your photographs effectively by stepping back and looking at the work more analytically and dispassionately.

We will consider: How do you "Critique" photographs? Saying "wow," "neat" or "cool" is not critiquing. We will explore the common language for critiquing photographs. We will discuss the photographic tools, elements and techniques the photographer used, successfully or unsuccessfully, to make the image that communicates their idea, regardless of photographic style, media, genre, format, etc.

I will walk you through my career path, show examples of the best edits of my work and teach the basics of selecting the best few images from a large set of work. The sets of work I will show are not all my own so the students feel more comfortable talking about the work. Students leave the class with an education in photo editing.

As an added option a FEW students can bring a stack of 50 to 100 photos (4 x 6 to 8 x 10 inch prints, again prints only, no digital files.) These could be work prints NOT necessarily final images. We will lay out the images from each student on a large table, one student at a time. I will then edit them with the entire group watching. I will start cutting the number down to get to a top 15 or 20, talking about my thinking as I go. Often time, I find 3 or 5 or 7 images that are similar in terms of composition, content, etc., and select the best one. Having prints to place side by side in this process makes this MUCH easier.

At the end of each edit, the students who submit work end up with a top 15-20 images (approximately) which reflects their artistic strengths, subject matter of interest, etc. Students also learn by watching me do the same edit with the photos of others. In some ways they learn more watching the same process as it plays out with their peer's work. They begin to "mentally" edit the other work and they learn about editing (whether or not they agree with my choices.)

Students leave the class with an education in photo editing (AND a professionally executed edit that will cut their large set of images down to a final, tightly edited and clearly defined top twenty images.

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A week in the life of a professional photographer with David H. Wells

This class is for those who are thinking of becoming a professional publication photographer, and want information about the business side. The fact is that talent as a photographer is only half of what you need to succeed. Skills as a negotiator, bookkeeper, researcher, record keeper, correspondent, writer, networker, etc. are as important as skills at making images.

Spend a time with David H. Wells, a veteran professional photographer, who makes his living solely through his photography. He walks you through a typical week in his life as a professional photographer. He covers estimating assignment fees, usage fees, resources for pricing, negotiating skills, and the various legalities and necessity of signed estimates, image usage licenses and contracts. David also covers self-promotion, marketing, and copyright law. He discusses when you need a model release and/or property release and what kind to use. He also covers the topic of taxes and what you need to know for sound financial practices.

Topics to be explored include but are not limited to:

- Business insurance, camera insurance, quarterly income taxes and sales tax issues.
- Researching, updating, purchasing and training for latest digital technology.
- Resources for keeping updated on pricing, evolving business practices, trends, etc.
- The various list serves to read each day to stay up to date on industry news, etc.
- Fine art galleries and corporate art dealers who sell photographs as art prints.
- Mentoring friends, students, etc. on business practices to keep the market viable.
- Research and attend exhibits as opportunities for creative and business stimulus.
- Garnering exhibitions for print sales, personal expression and career advancement.
- Understanding portfolio reviewing options, writing cover letters, artist's statements, etc.
- The basics of running a stock photography business.
- The importance of registering work with Library of Congress for copyright protection.
- The world of grants, from how to write a proposal to grant funded exhibitions/books.

This is a business class, which can be two or three hours long for intermediate, advanced/ aspiring professionals. Though Wells makes his living as an editorial and stock photographer, the skills he has developed apply to almost any kind of professional photography.

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The Career Path of a Photographer with David H. Wells

The best way to get better at almost any skill is to study how others before you have mastered that process. This is true whether flying a plane, cooking a meal or making a photograph. The lesson most photographers want to understand is "How did the pro I admire get from being an aspiring photographer, to being an established professional?"

Each successful photographer's career path is different, so studying the career paths of many photographers is the best way to understand what they did along the road from the start of their careers(s) to their success. You should note that these questions apply regardless of what style or type of photography you do, whether portraits, photo-journalism, landscapes or nudes.

In this presentation David H. Wells will take you through his career path, where his photos have been shown on everything from newsprint to an iPad. From an aspiring photographer in high school to an award-winning, world-traveling photographer, David took a series of steps, which he will trace in this presentation. As he takes you through his career path, he will show you work from different phases of his career including newspaper work, magazine work, stock photography and fine-art work. Since 1986 David has worked full-time as self-employed editorial photographer.

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David H. Wells is a photographer / photo educator in Providence, Rhode Island. He specializes in intercultural communications and the use of light and shadow to enhance visual narratives. He also focuses on photo-essays for publication and exhibition.

To produce his photo-essay on the pesticide poisoning of California farm-workers, Wells received the Nikon/National Press Photographers Association Documentary Sabbatical Grant in 1988 and a 1989 fellowship from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. His essay on the pesticide poisoning of farmworkers in California was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize

To produce his photo-essay on the complex relationship between Arabs and Israelis, Wells received a fellowship from the MacArthur Foundation's Program of Research and Writing on International Peace and Cooperation in 1991 and a fellowship from the New Jersey Council on the Arts in 1994. In 1999, he spent five months in India on a Fulbright Fellowship at the University of Mysore, where he started his project on globalization in South Asia. A fellowship from the Alicia Patterson Foundation in 2001 and a Fulbright Regional Studies Fellowship in 2005 enabled him to complete that project.

Past editorial assignments have been for Life Magazine, National Geographic Publications and the New York Times Magazine to name a few. He has produced 16 photo-essays for the award winning Philadelphia Inquirer Sunday Magazine. He is a member of the American Society of Media Photographers (ASMP) and the National Press Photographer's Association.

Portfolios of his work have appeared in American Photography Four, Camera and Darkroom, Communication Arts Photography Annual, Graphics: The Human Condition, Photo District News, Photo Magazine, Photographers International and Zoom.

Wells has taught semester length classes as well as shorter, intensive workshops at the University of Pennsylvania, Syracuse University, the University of the Arts, the International Center of Photography in New York City, the Maine Photographic Workshops, and the Rochester Institute of Technology.

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In 2011 he was featured in Photo District News as one of "The Best Workshop Instructors." As an Olympus Visionary, Wells has been contracted by the camera company to produce images and provide feedback on new product lines.

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Every picture tells a story: The Personal Project: Soup to Nuts with David H. Wells

While every picture tells a story and each one is worth a thousand words, certain photographs tell stories more directly, with more impact and emotion. David H. Wells has spent the last four decades telling stories with his photographs for publications, exhibition and organizations.

In this presentation David takes you through his career path, from aspiring photographer to internationally published master photographer. Then David will take you through his photo-essays, where he tells in depth stories through a series of images. David's photo-essays explore important political topics as well as places that David finds compelling.

Photo essays (also known as personal projects) can be compelling, dynamic, vivid mission statements of a photographer's work — every photographer should have a working knowledge of this art form. With that in mind, David will explore:

- Defining a personal project or photo essay, as in “to try out an idea from a personal point of view. “
- The best ones communicate an idea that others can understand without your presence or your explanation.
- Two kinds of photo-essays: Linear are unified by the evolution/character development of the people/group shown, or portfolio, which is unified by the commonality of location, topic, and/or stylistic approach to the photography.
- Narrowing a personal project to strengthen it.
- The importance of aligning your project with larger political and cultural themes to ensure wide dissemination of and interest in the work.
- How presentation format such as color vs black and white or pairings, panoramas, diptychs & triptychs, can strengthen the message.
- Mirrors and Windows: proposed by John Szarkowski, curator of photography at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1978 as an exhibit and book. Work that largely seeks to see the outside world is a “window” while work that largely reflects the subjectivity of the artist is a “mirror.”

- The importance of looking at projects that are similar to yours to see what others have done, to understand how did they define, execute, disseminate and position their project?
- Principles of proposal writing for photo-essays/personal projects.
- Keeping on track and motivated in doing your personal project by creating a calendar to set mile posts along the way to keep you motivated, moving forward and judge the success of the project.
- Importance of your network in executing personal projects.
- Summarizing a project via an elevator pitch, a short summary used to quickly define a person, product, service, and its value proposition which you should be able to deliver during an elevator ride of 30 seconds to 2 minutes.

David will end the presentation sharing resources for photographers interested in pursuing their own photo-essays.

David H. Wells is a free-lance photographer based in Providence, R.I. and affiliated with Aurora Photos. He is a specialist in intercultural communication and visual narratives that excel in their creative mastery of light, shadow and sound, stills and video. Wells' photo essays have been published in Life Magazine, National Geographic, the New York Times Magazine and the Philadelphia Inquirer Magazine, where his essay on the pesticide poisoning of farmworkers in California was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize. He is also a photo educator, with previous workshops at such institutions as the International Center for Photography in NYC and the Maine Media Workshop. David teaches workshops around the world, and he was featured in Photo District News as one of "The Best Workshop Instructors." He has launched an online educational tool with video podcasts and other useful information for photographers called "The Wells Point" at thewellspoint.com.

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