



Sidelight

May 2017

Sidelight

May 2017

Illumination placed at 90° to a camera that reveals shape and form

Hello and welcome to the first issue of Sidelight photography magazine. I'm David Taylor, a landscape and architecture photographer based in Northumberland, England. This issue of Sidelight features tips and tricks that will help you improve your photography skills, using my own photography as examples. Future issues will also include reviews of photography equipment and books, interviews with other photographers, and all you need to know about my favourite photography locations. In the meantime, enjoy the current issue!

sidelight@davidtaylorphotography.co.uk
www.davidtaylorphotography.co.uk

Thorny Doors

Hadrian's Wall is a photogenic subject all year round. One of my favourites stretches along the wall is Thorny Doors between Cawfields and Caw Gap. From here the view north appears to stretch on forever across farmland and moors. It gives a powerful impression of what it must have been like as a Roman soldier posted to the very edges of civilisation.

Camera Sony A7 II
Lens 24mm
Shutter speed 1/8 sec.
Aperture f/11
ISO 100
Filtration 2-stop ND grad + polariser



SHOOTING MACRO

Cuckoo flower

1 Depth of field

One of the challenges of macro photography is working with a narrow depth of field. Even when using the smallest aperture available it may not be possible to achieve front-to-back sharpness. However, this drawback can be used creatively to make softer, more impressionistic images, an approach that suits organic subjects such as flowers.

2 Focus

Because of the lack of depth of field it's important to focus accurately when shooting macro. I usually switch to manual focus and zoom into the Live View on the rear of my camera. I can then very carefully adjust focus until the most important part of the subject is perfectly sharp.

SHOOTING AT NIGHT

Newcastle/Gateshead and the River Tyne

1 Aperture *f/11*

A relatively small aperture was required to produce sufficient depth of field. This also had the happy accident of creating a star effect around the light of the various streetlamps in the scene.

2 ISO 100

You might think that you'd need a high ISO for a night scene like this. However, using a low ISO value will reduce the risk of image noise softening the fine details in the resulting photo. The one big drawback to using a low ISO for night scenes is that you invariably need to use a long shutter speed.

3 Shutter speed *15 sec.*

The combination of low light, small aperture and a low ISO figure required the use of a lengthy shutter speed of 15 seconds. This meant that the camera needed to be mounted on a tripod to avoid camera shake. The long exposure has blurred the water of the river flowing through the shot.

4 Night shooting

Oddly enough the best time to shoot night scenes isn't at night! Shooting at dusk - approximately twenty minutes after sunset - means that there is generally still colour and light in the sky. This helps to define the shapes of buildings on the skyline.

turning back THE CLOCK

In May 2007 I was on a photography workshop in Umbria with leading British travel photographer David Noton. Shot during the trip, this photo of Norcia's main square is incredibly poignant. In October 2016, an earthquake destroyed the San Benedetto basilica (right) as well as the town's cathedral. It has brought home to me how impermanent even the built environment can be and how a photo can become a record of something that no longer exists.



Macro workshop

Location: Dilston Physic Garden

Date: 21 May 2017

Cost: £70 per person

The grounds of Dilston Physic Garden near Hexham (www.dilstonphysicgarden.com) are perfect for tranquil thought, reflection and, of course, photography! This workshop is dedicated to the art of close-up and macro photography using the flora and fauna found at Dilston Physic Garden.

If you have a hankering to learn more about the subject of macro photography then this will be the workshop for you. You don't need any specialised equipment – cameras with close-up focusing facilities will be more than suitable. However, if you have a dedicated macro lens then bring that along. I'll be bringing equipment such as extension tubes and close-up attachment lenses for those who want to try a more D.I.Y. approach to their macro photography.

For more information send me an email to sidelight@dauidtaylorphotography.co.uk.

