

Photography Philosophy

Photography is an obvious passion of mine. For as far as I can think back, I was always “that guy” taking photos at any event I was involved with. The original purpose for my photography was to help remember events. That is an important part of photography for me. The photographer captures a moment in time and keeps it forever. Having that visual memory can then virtually take the subjects back in time at a later date. Who says time travel is not possible?

On a more recent note, photography has become more involved in my life. Upon becoming a VCT major at BGSU, I got more involved in the artistic view of photography. Depth-of-field, the rule of thirds, framing, contrast, and texture suddenly became things I looked for while shooting photos. The next thing I know, I am shooting photos for multiple bookstores, weddings, and I even just got hired by a company on campus as a photographer.

In order to get a true Chase-like photo, many different things go through my head while on a shoot. My typical aperture setting is very low. I like to shoot using a very shallow depth-of-field. That lets me truly bring the subject out of the background and have complete control over what my viewers see when while looking at a photo of mine. This also really simplifies my photos, whether the objects in my photo are simple or not.

The angle at which I shoot photos is almost always different from a normal person’s viewpoint. I want my viewers to look at my subject in a new way. Rather than doing the cheesy “tilt the camera” technique that many novice photographers do, I look at the composition of my photo and plan a layout that works for that photo. When planning

that layout, I use the rule of thirds almost religiously. I make sure that the background makes just as much sense as the foreground, as they are equally important.

Photography is fun and relaxing for me. Approximately 90% of the time I am shooting, I am shooting alone. It helps me concentrate and really lets me relax and get the shots/angles I truly want. I can almost say that photography is my method of meditation. It allows me to express myself artistically, take in the environment around me, and forget about whatever may be troubling my busy life. Since many of my photos involve nature in some way, being out in the middle of nowhere shooting is a relaxing element in itself.

I believe that photography takes a certain level of concentration that only some are truly able to perform. Many times after a shoot, I come home feeling rather exhausted. While it was a fun, relaxing experience for me, I was also at a constant level of concentration, looking around for the perfect angles/subjects/compositions. Not everyone can stay focused that long and that focus is necessary for a successful photo shoot.

It seems that another reason I enjoy photography so much is that it really gives me something to show for my work. If I am going to put forth a lot of effort into a project, I like to have something special in the end that I can show. Yes, you can spend hours on a paper and you will have that paper to show, or you may spend hours researching an idea and will come up with some sort of outcome, but I like to have something visually pleasing to show. I want it to be something that anyone can appreciate at some level.

Since I enjoy photography so much, I have learned that I enjoy teaching it as well. I believe that once someone has truly embraced their passion, they should try to spread

that joy to others. As a teaching assistant in the VCT program, I have been able to instruct students on the basics of everything that is VCT. While it includes much more than photography, I see that has a good thing. While a freshman, I was introduced to all of the various parts of VCT too. After taking the introductory courses, I could then choose what I wanted my focus to be. I like that the students have those options and opportunities. Teach them a little about a variety of things in their field, and then allow them to focus on one or two things. That will give them more opportunities and more of a vast knowledge of their field that they can one day take to their workplace.

In summary, as a photographer, I like capture moments in time so that they may be relived. Getting behind the camera turns me into a historian, an environmentalist, a news reporter, and an artist. It gives me something to show for my work that everyone can enjoy, and I truly enjoy myself while shooting. It takes me away from the everyday hassles of reality and makes me one with my subjects. Photography will always be an important art form, an important way to document history, and I will always be a part of that preservation of memories.