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Amateur in photography and amateur in life.

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The Art of the Photoblog

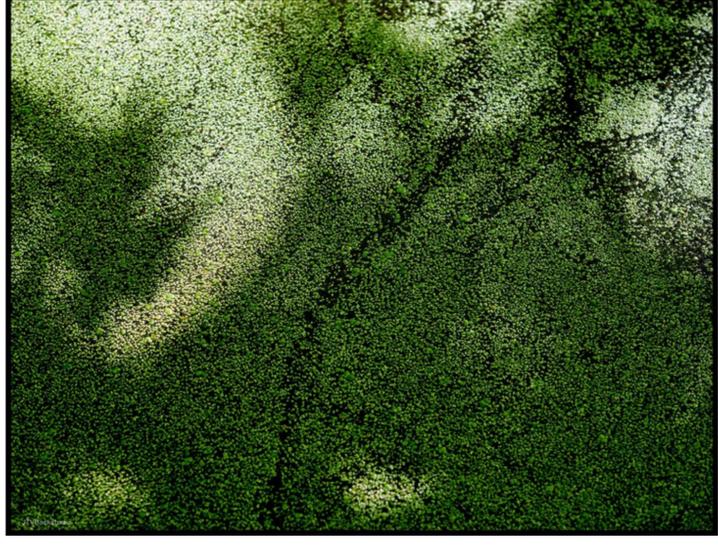
by James V OCTOBER 17, 2020 376 VIEWS



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Patio Table

I was a big fan of Ming Thein's photoblog. For those unfamiliar with his work, his photos are exemplary in their execution, refinement and sometimes, emotional content. If I can think of one or two words to describe his work, it is "skilled craft." Through his "skilled craft" of taking photos, Mr. Thein's work has become elevated to an art form; and while sometimes his work is defined as abstract and void of emotional content, it nevertheless is able to stir strong emotions, if not downright envy, from the observer.



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The Celery Farm Stream

I read Mr. Thein's thoughtful postings about photography regularly. His discussions touched upon his personal aesthetic philosophies which he weaved into his work. There was a consistency between Mr. Thein's philosophy of making photos and the end product. He constantly explored and pushed himself to do more, reviewed gear, was an ambassador for more than one camera brand including Hasselblad (even helping with some product development) and started designing award winning luxury watches (and photographing them, of course), which are available for sale in limited supply. I strongly urge readers to visit MingThein.com to explore the possibilities for a photoblog and expansion of one's exploration into the visual arts.

A shame that Mr. Thein ended his regular blog postings at the end of August of 2020. But to be fair, he was more than generous with his time and the sharing of his achievements. Over 2000 postings? Hundreds of hours of video content? Hundreds of gear reviews? And the photos....thousands of photos posted for the viewers' pleasure; this, from a professional paid photographer. It was a gift and for that every visitor to his site should be eternally grateful. It was because of this gift from Mr. Thein that I became much more serious about my photography and aspired to be a better photographer.



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City Island Marina

Mr. Thein always reiterated, during the several years he ran his blog, that the best lesson for anyone committed to photography, pro or amateur, is curation: the selection of one's images to be incorporated into a portfolio to be presented to others. By forcing oneself to be critical of his/her work, the photographer is able to improve their skill. While the complexity and meanings of a photograph are debated, the essence of an image is mostly determined by its clarity of concept and execution.



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Overpass Sandy Hook

I have neglected curation of my photos. For me, photography is a hobby. One in which I strive to improve both technically and aesthetically. Perhaps this is taking a hobby too seriously. But if we are to share aesthetically, then it becomes important to select our work for viewing by others...and this, I believe, is where some of the seriousness starts. I want my images to draw an emotion or reaction. My aesthetic is one of a slightly augmented reality without the photo appearing augmented by post processing. Yes, I post process. Yes sometimes it's finicky. No, my photos are not composites. In the processing I am not changing the nature of the photo, a certain quality of light or moment recognized at the time the shutter was pressed. My aim is to capture a moment, evoke a feeling or describe a place for the split instant that compelled me to press the shutter. Most of my photos are failures in this regard, but the fun is in trying. My photos are intended to make the viewer aware of the temporal nature of photography.

I believe it's time to put into practice some of the lessons I have learned from those photographers I admire. This blog is intended to act as a my curation process to share my photos. And perhaps, I'll learn something along the way.



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Contemplation at the Reservation