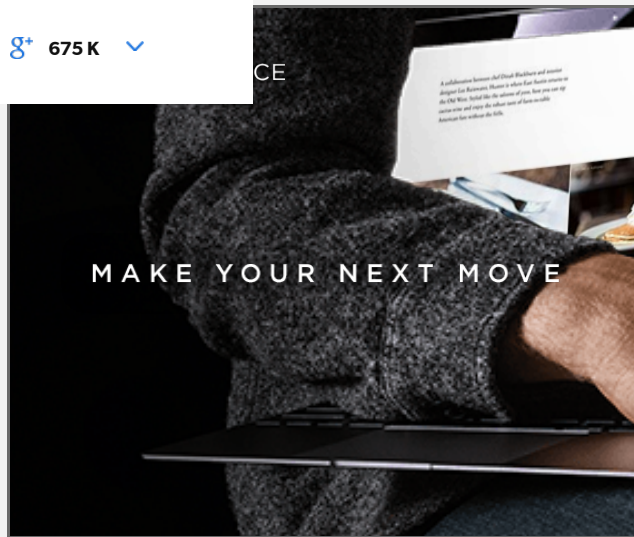


f 474 K t 858 K g+ 675 K v



MAKE YOUR NEXT MOVE

SQUARESPACE

Popular Photography is Dead After 80 Years as a Top Photo Magazine

MAR 07, 2017

PHIL MISTRY

9573
Shares

9.0K



SHARE

353



TWEET

241



SHARE

59 COMMENTS



POPULAR PHOTOGRAPHY

1937-2017

Popular Photography, the largest circulated imaging magazine that launched its first issue in May 1937 in New York City, has ceased publication after being continuously in production for 80 years. The March/April 2017 issue will be the last in print.

When print magazines close, their online counterparts often live on, but in the case of *Popular Photography*, PopPhoto.com will also simultaneously close (though it may stay online for a while).

In April 2015, *American Photo* — also owned by Bonnier Corporation — **stopped the print magazine** and moved to online only at AmericanPhotoMag.com, but that too has come to an end.

Last year, issues of *Popular Photography* began to be combined, and then it was announced that instead of a monthly magazine there would be only 6 issues a year, but even that move proved inadequate to save it from depleted ad revenues. Earlier issues were filled with retailer advertising at the back of the book but with online sales becoming dominant, those ads were sadly missing or severely reduced.

Here's the internal company-wide email sent out by Bonnier CEO Eric Zinczenko announcing the shuttering of the two magazines:



From: Eric Zinczenko

Date: Mon, Mar 6, 2017 at 2:25 PM

Subject: [notifycorporate] Popular Photography and American Photo

To: Notify Corporate

Dear colleagues,

This afternoon, Gregory Gatto, VP, Publishing Director of the Lifestyle Group, and Anthony Licata, Editorial Director of the Lifestyle Group, made the difficult announcement to our employees in New York that we have decided to cease all media operations for Popular Photography and American Photo, effective today.

I want to take this opportunity to share this news with the entire company and the reasons behind our decision. In our most recent Town Hall, I spoke of how the pace of disruption through digital and technological advancements is unprecedented. Unfortunately, the photo industry is an example of where this disruption has forever altered the market. The rise of smartphone-camera technology and its increasing ability to capture quality photos and video and instantly share them socially has dealt the photo industry formidable challenges. For our brands, these industry challenges have left us with insurmountable losses in advertising and audience support. Despite the extraordinary efforts of our committed colleagues at Popular Photography and American Photo, as well as our best attempts corporately to find a sustainable path forward, we are simply unable to overcome these market forces.

We would like to thank Miriam Leuchter and her team for their commitment not only to their industry, but to Bonnier as well. Since 2009, Miriam and team have consistently produced best-in-class content, giving their audience of photo enthusiasts industry-leading product reviews, smart service journalism and, of course, terrific photography. They have done everything possible to make these brands thrive; unfortunately, the challenges in the photography industry are just too great.

I also mentioned last time we were together that our executive group will

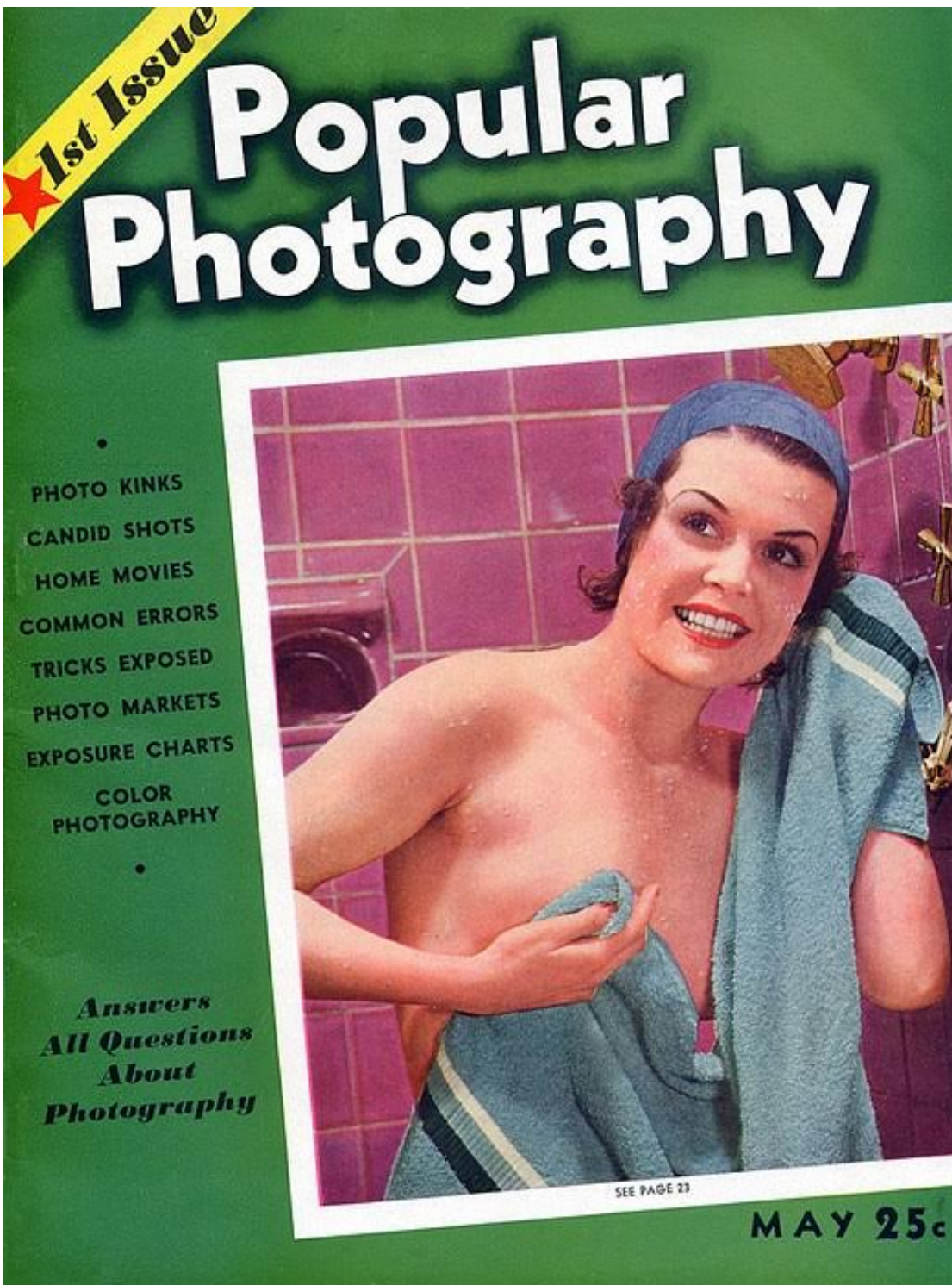
never waiver in making the difficult decisions that protect our company and our greater group here, and keep us on our path to long-term sustainability. While this decision is far from pleasant, it reinforces our commitment to channel Bonnier Corp.'s precious resources to healthy industry verticals and our category-leading brands to drive asset value of Bonnier's U.S. portfolio.



We have a fiduciary responsibility to constantly evaluate our portfolio of brands as part of our ongoing transformation, but I want everyone to know there are no plans on the horizon to cease operations of other brands; if there were, we would have announced those today as well.

Please join me in thanking our colleagues at Popular Photography and American Photo for their contributions and to wish them the very best. We are also grateful to all of you for your continued resilience, dedication and endurance as we continue on our strategic path forward.

*Best,
EZ*



The cover of the first Popular Photography issue, published in May 1937.

Here's the internal memo sent out by *Popular Photography* and *American Photo* editor-in-chief Miriam Leuchter to the magazines' contributors yesterday:

From: Miriam Leuchter



Subject: Fwd: [notifycorporate] Popular Photography and American Photo

Date: March 6, 2017 at 3:30:24 PM EST

Dear all,

I apologize for sending this to you in a group email, but I wanted to give all of our most valued, loyal, and beloved contributors this bad news as soon as possible—even though I haven't really figured out what to say.

I'll just say it bluntly and you can scroll down for more from Bonnier Corp's CEO. Our company has decided to shutter Popular Photography and American Photo. Our recent March/April 2017 issue will be our last in print, and while both of the websites may stay up for a while, as of Friday we will cease to post anything new.

Those of you who wrote or photographed for the May/June issue will be paid for your work, of course, and you are free to publish this work elsewhere.

It's been a pleasure and an honor to work with all of you over the past 15 and a half years, since I first arrived at Pop Photo. I'm very sad to see the end of two great publications, including the leading magazine in the photography industry, 80 years old this spring.

Yours,

Miriam



\$15 1-year CARP membership
& Zoomer subscription

\$50 5-year CARP membership
& Zoomer subscription

[Pop Photo's end] "is partly that the parent company just did not see the value of a photography magazine," says Jeff Wignall, Contributing Editor at Popular Photography since 2008 who has been writing for photo magazines for 40 years. "Cell phone cameras, you have to admit, played a big part in this, but if Bonnier wanted to save the photo magazine there were ways to do it."

"Their website was very lame, they started it up at one point, and seemed like they had a lot of energy flowing into it for a while but that was several years ago," he continues. "Then they seemed to have abandoned the website and the only way, ironically, for a print magazine to survive is if it has a good partnership with an online edition of the magazine. Without that there is a sort of breakdown in communication between the print reader and the online person."

"The PopPhoto.com website has always lagged behind other photo websites and it's just because the company was not committed to putting money into that," Wignall says. "You know, when I first started writing for POP they were paying me to contribute to PopPhoto.com and then after a while they just sent me an email saying they could no longer afford to pay for contributions. You can still contribute if you want but I write for a living and it's hard to do that."

"This had got nothing to do with the editorial staff of the magazine and it comes from high above. This comes from Bonnier's lack of belief, I think, that the photo community would support a big website, which is obviously not true. If you have a bunch of media properties and some that are thriving, you're naturally going to make

a business decision to support and grow those, rather than save a struggling cousin that's falling by the wayside. What's the point of putting all the energy into that?"

"Even though I was the contributing editor, they never gave me a complimentary subscription to the magazine. When my sources asked me for a copy I had to go out and buy copies and mail it to them."



A collection of Popular Photography covers.

Jason Schneider, who was the editor from 1987 to 2003 and earlier with *Modern Photography* from 1969 to 1987 says the digital revolution and camera manufactures also played a big role.

"Digital manufacturers did not adequately support the magazine and their revenues were compromised and this is something that affects all print publications operating in an era of social media and indirect electronic commerce," Schneider says. "The medium was the message and the message was good-bye."

"Ever since the digital revolution hit home shortly after the millennium and by 2002

blew analog photography into the weeds to become the dominant medium everyone was petrified and photography itself became a dirty word and it was decided to change the name to *Popular Photography & Imaging*,” Schneider continues. “People will see photography and think that this is an old-fashioned publication, we have to refresh it, and so they called it *Popular Photography & Imaging*. However, within five years it had become clear that photography had gone digital so overwhelmingly that the distinction was moot; thus *Popular Photography* alone returned as the title.”

During its run, *Popular Photography* developed a fine system of testing cameras. Former editor John Owens said more than 10 year ago that in excess of a million dollars was spent in setting up a state of the art testing lab. *Pop Photo* was one of the few places where you could read in-depth camera reviews, they have been doing bench tests for a long time, and produced pretty involved reviews and they were considered fairly authoritative.

At its peak, *Popular Photography* had a circulation of nearly to 1 million. Today, as per the 2017 Media Kit, that number stands at 320,000. The audience was always male dominated and stands at 60%. The median age is 49.9, so millennials are missing, and that could perhaps be one of the reasons for the demise.

Magazines have a finite run and when their era disappears, the magazine goes with it. It seems that younger photography enthusiasts who live on the phone and tablet are not attracted to print magazines anymore.



About the author: Phil Mistry is a photographer and teacher based in Atlanta, GA. He started one of the first digital camera classes in New York City at [International Center of Photography](#) in the 90s. You can reach him via email [here](#).



TAGS: AMERICANPHOTO, CLOSING, ENDED, MAGAZINE, OUTOFBUSINESS, POPPHOTO, POPULARPHOTOGRAPHY, RIP, SHUTTERED

9573
Shares

9.0K



SHARE

353



TWEET

241



SHARE

59 COMMENTS

YOU MIGHT ALSO ENJOY

Promoted Links by Taboola

How Cruise Ships Fill Their Unsold Cabins

Cruise Deals Ace

Hilarious Customer Reviews for the Sigma 200-500mm Lens on Amazon

28 Celebrity Plastic Surgery Nightmares

ViralScape

Why I'm Returning My Sigma 135mm f/1.8 Art Lens

The Superfight Of The Century Can't Get Any Messier

American Timless

National Geographic Lists Its Top 10 Compact Cameras for Travelers

59 Comments

PetaPixel

1 Login

Recommend 43

Share

Sort by Oldest

Join the discussion...

LOG IN WITH



OR SIGN UP WITH DISQUS ?

Name



AI Guderian
4 months ago

—



I was a big fan of Pop Photo and Modern Photo back in my early days of photography. Kinda sad to see it go, but I'm not terribly surprised, either.

12 ^ v Reply



Peter Crum → **AI Guderian**
2 months ago

—



I'm glad they kept Herbert Keppler "In Memorium to the bitter end.

1 ^ v Reply



Paddy
4 months ago

—



Not surprising, printing and mailing are expensive and advertisers are holding back. It was a good

run but even the online stuff was stagnant.

5 ^ v Reply



Travis Alex

4 months ago

I'll have to pick it up. Was never a big fan, but a piece of History never the less.

Joining the "Not Surprised" party. Most mediums are switching over to Online publications. Adapt or Die. That simple.

2 ^ v Reply



MickO → Travis Alex

4 months ago

I am not surprised either. "Worst party EVER!"

1 ^ v Reply



William Dyer

4 months ago

I've been a subscriber since the late 1970's. At one point I subscribed to Pop, Modern Photography, and Camera 35 which later became American Photographer. I deeply miss them all. From basic "how to" articles to in depth camera/lens reviews, they opened my eyes to not just the gear, but the Art of Photography and how it has an impact on how we view the world and the people in it. I could count on Popular Photography for the latest in gear info and on American Photography for creative and fine art perspectives. Times change, but I don't have to like it.

9 ^ v Reply



AI

4 months ago

Like many I "learned" photography through the pages of Popular Photography (and Modern Photography and Camera 35) in the late 1960s. Like many other relics of the film age, I'm not surprised it is gone but it is sad.

5 ^ v Reply



brian

4 months ago

Sad day. Enjoyed this magazine, especially when traveling abroad. You think the company could have converted 100% to an online digital edition to avoid this vs shutting it down- like 5 years ago. Merely dropping the print/mail order option would have saved a considerable amount of costs; however, perhaps contractual obligations made this hard to do?...guessing.

The name and reputation of this magazine still has value so I expect it to be re-born but 100% online only + more interactive to attract millennials. The other thing that bothers me about the announcements is blaming the smartphone revolution. To me mobile phones are like the modern

Kodak instamatics camera of past eras. Yes they are handy and produce good convenient photos but nothing like what you can do with a full frame sensor camera. Perhaps we're settling for mediocrity vs quality now. I wouldn't be surprised if at some future date these millennials convert back...just like we've seen with the resurgence of LP vinyl and film photography. Hope for the best Poppo. I've requested a refund on the remaining of my subscription.

4 ^ v Reply



Roger Vaughn → brian

4 months ago



The only way to revive this magazine would be to rename it "Popular dark iPhone Snapshots" cause that's what younger generations perception of artistic photography is. Most have never held a camera and will never understand the intricacies of composition, light, and exposure. They just point their smartphone camera and tap the screen. If they get a dark image they apply a filter to it and hope for the best, and when a filter doesn't make the snapshot look better they delete the image and say oh well. Smartphone users and younger one's in particular certainly have not helped tradition SLR photography. Talk to the Sports Illustrated photographers who were fired because Time, Inc decided it was more economical to pay pennies to smartphone toting sports enthusiast for their lucky captures rather than to the pro photographers. Talk to the wedding photographer trying to justify the costs for their time and talent when the bride to be says she's only willing to pay a couple hundred dollars for professional photography so will have Uncle Bob shoot pictures that will likely turn out dark and improperly exposed as well as spending many hundreds of dollars on alcohol that will be flushed down the toilet the next morning. Young people have no understanding of what value in good photography is..

4 ^ v Reply



brian → Roger Vaughn

4 months ago



I hear ya. I know several millennials who respect quality photography; however, they majority I talk to don't want to do all the work required to learn how to take proper photos (or what's involved with editing). Also the younger generation seems to be focused on immediate gratification. For example, I recently volunteered to take photos at all night high school Sr. Party event. I did my usual thing and ensured all shots were properly exposed, noise reduction, color adjusted, etc. expecting some might want prints. I was wrong. They all wanted their shots uploaded to Instagram quickly so they could "heart" shots- oh well changing times. Sure you can "right click save as" or do a screen shot to get your 79kb photo for future reference.

I do think there will be a need for professional wedding photographers but in some cases, you'll always have a couple which just cannot afford \$1-2K and therefore they opt for the person learning how to take wedding shots for \$200 who also will provide RAW files- it's a gamble for sure considering this is a once in a lifetime event (i.e. it should be a once in a lifetime event). I figure the general rule is, "you get what you pay for." The thing is with today's

technology most people can rattle off 8-12 FPS in AUTO mode and AUTO ISO and hopefully get one jpeg right :)

The deal with SI to me is all about outsourcing to reduce costs- full time employee vs using a contractor. It's sad this is happening but this outsourcing model appears to be a trend with most corporations. If SI doesn't produce the quality shots they are known for then I'm sure decisions will be reversed. I would have to believe they have re-hired some back but can't be certain. Perhaps the freelancers are fitting the bill. Photography is a hard business these days.

1 ^ v Reply



Lee Smith → Roger Vaughn

3 months ago



Sorry Roger but you are completely wrong. As an old fart myself, I get annoyed when I see old people comment about young people as if it's their fault. If you spent some time on Instagram or just talking to young people you would know that while they use their cel phones, of course, they also are buying used film cameras and shooting film! Lot's of it! My friend's lab has had a steady increase in business in the last three years from kids who want to take pictures with a real camera. Of course, if you relied on dinosaurs like Pop Photo for info, no wonder you have no clue....

^ v Reply



Edi Chen

4 months ago



This is the reason why their staff works so unprofessional?

^ v Reply



Lee Smith → Edi Chen

3 months ago



Because people who write about photography tend to not take good pictures...."Those who can't do, teach...." etc.

^ v Reply



Bruce

4 months ago



I found it a bit ironic that this article was peppered with advertising...

1 ^ v Reply



editorsteve

4 months ago



As a publishing consultant, magazine editor and semi-pro photographer myself, I certainly do not blame the editors or Bonnier. My wife and I have been subscribers for so long that we don't even remember when we started. I like the print edition. I like the website. But the number of camera retailers and new models continues to decline. The non-phone camera market has become ever

more concentrated. Nikon is now collapsing. Sony has other ways to promo its products. Fewer new lenses are being announced, and at higher prices with manufacturers tightly controlling sales prices. We're just seeing new films and artsy plate cameras, but that's not much of a market.

Every economic case is different, so general comments about digital or whatever are not all that valuable. My own magazine (a B2B "trade," not a "buff book" like Pop Photo) still publishes 7 issues a year in print -- advertisers pay a huge premium because the print issue hangs around on desks so long. But we make half our revenue from conferences, 20 percent by selling proprietary, detailed data and by consulting, and only 30% from direct advertising. Most of these revenue streams are not open to Pop Photo.

Going all digital is often silly -- we need the print advertising to help cover editorial overhead!

May the editors hold their heads up high. They have nothing to be ashamed about. Neither does Bonnier.

3 ^ v Reply



DHoffmann

4 months ago



Why did I hear about this from PetaPixal and not Popular Photography directly? And since my subscription is paid through June of 2020, do I get a refund?

3 ^ v Reply



editorsteve → DHoffmann

4 months ago



The norm is to offer a subscription for another publication, but cash if you insist.

1 ^ v Reply



brian → DHoffmann

4 months ago



They have a site where you can manage the subscription. Hopefully you still have the original email notifying you about the subscription. Once you get to the site you can see an option to cancel existing subscriptions. Once canceled you should be credited the amount left on the subscription. I'm getting \$8 back.

1 ^ v Reply



ML W → DHoffmann

a month ago



Yes, you can get a refund. I just called today and told them to keep their Popular Science magazine and send me a refund! I, too, was paid through next year. I will dearly miss this magazine with its beautiful imagery and educational articles.

^ v Reply



Cheeses Christ

4 months ago



I guess they just couldn't figure out a way to keep on recycling the same 12 articles over, and over, and over.

"WHAT LENS IS RIGHT FOR YOU? OUR EXPERTS PUT THEM TO THE TEST!"

4 ^ v Reply

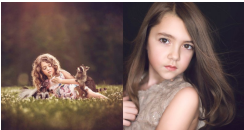
Load more comments

Subscribe Add Disqus to your siteAdd DisqusAdd Privacy

DISQUS

PREV

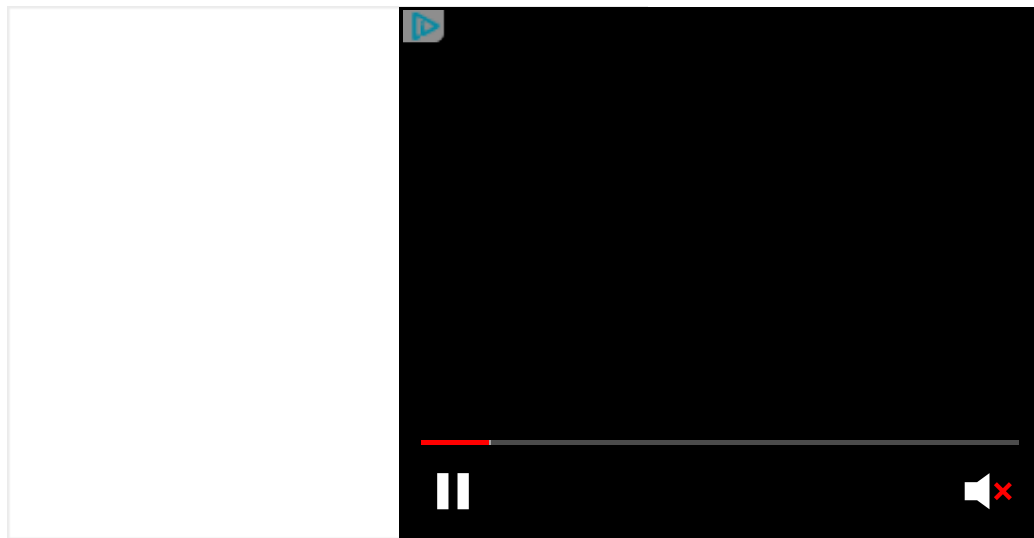
NEXT



**4 Lighting Principles
I Wish I'd Known
When I Started
Photography**

**What Lens Should I
Buy? This Video
Breaks Down All
Your Options**







MAVIC **PRO** – SHIPS IN 3 DAYS
ONLY FROM THE DJI ONLINE STORE



BUY NOW

TRENDING POSTS



Why I Swapped My 'Pro' DSLR for the Cheapest One Available

🔗 2856 SHARES

9 HOURS AGO



An iPhone Accident Made This 'End of the World' Photo

🔗 1669 SHARES

13 HOURS AGO



How Photographing an Abandoned Hotel Cost Me \$2,800

🔗 2815 SHARES

JUL 01, 2017



Photobucket Just Broke Billions of Photos Across the Web

🔗 1152 SHARES

JUL 01, 2017



The Truth About 'Shot on iPhone'-Style Ads

[6695 SHARES](#)

JUN 30, 2017



This is What One Photography Veteran Thinks Makes a Great Image

[1686 SHARES](#)

JUL 01, 2017



How to Photograph Glassware on a Pure White Background

[1876 SHARES](#)

JUL 01, 2017



Nikon D820 Less Than a Month Away, Report Says

[2703 SHARES](#)

JUN 30, 2017



Why I'll Never Use FedEx Again to Ship My Camera Gear

🔗 380 SHARES

10 HOURS AGO



DJI Drone Cameras Compared: Spark, Mavic, and Phantom

🔗 146 SHARES

14 HOURS AGO



How the Rolling Shutter Effect Works

🔗 1372 SHARES

JUN 30, 2017



Ep. 190: Nikon's D820, D850 or DWhatever – and more

🔗 158 SHARES

JUL 02, 2017



This is How Much Photo Editing Can Impact Portraits

[214 SHARES](#)

JUN 30, 2017



How to Stop Lens Creep for Free Using a Rubber Band

[327 SHARES](#)

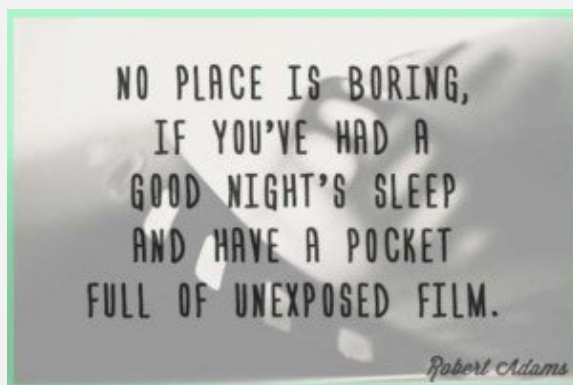
JUL 01, 2017



These DeLorean Photos Were Shot with a Toy Car, Fire, and Light Painting

[999 SHARES](#)

11 HOURS AGO



70 Inspirational Quotes for Photographers

[3833 SHARES](#)

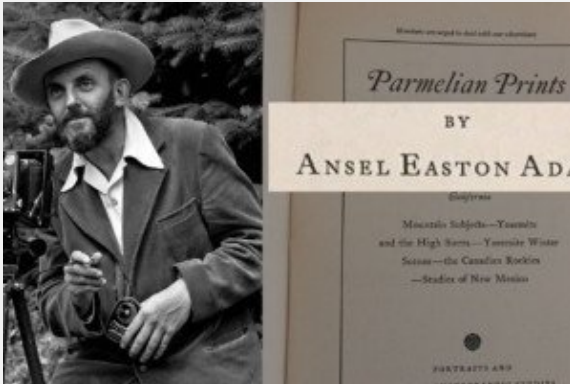
MAY 29, 2014



Canon 6D Mark II Unveiled: A Cheaper Full-Frame DSLR for Enthusiasts

 [4877 SHARES](#)

JUN 28, 2017



Even Ansel Adams Had to Advertise His Photo Business

 [705 SHARES](#)

JUL 01, 2017



This is What Wedding Photos Looked Like in the Late 1800s

 [127 SHARES](#)

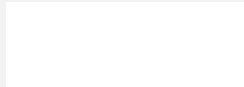
10 HOURS AGO



Big Dumb Button: Why My Hasselblad is Priceless to Me

 [2189 SHARES](#)

JUN 30, 2017



News

Gear

Inspiration

Tutorials

Reviews

Archives

Podcast

Copyright © 2017 PetaPixel

**SUBSCRIBE OUR NEWSLETTER
TO STAY UP TO DATE**

your email

SUBSCRIBE

 474 K  858 K  675 K