IF YOU TRAVEL THE WORLD
CAMERA IN HAND,
WELCOME HOME.

THIS IS YOUR SPACE FOR FUN AND THOUGHT-PROVOKING CONTENT
GUARANTEED TO INSPIRE YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY TO
SAVE UP TO 55% OFF THE NEWSSTAND PRICE
GET FREE ACCESS TO THE DIGITAL ARCHIVES
SUPPORT AN INDEPENDENT CANADIAN MAGAZINE

PHOTOLIFE.COM/SUBSCRIPTION
1 800 461-7468
CONTENTS

AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2018, V. 43, N. 5

ON THE COVER
18 FRIENDSHIPS, A CAMERA, & ROCK AND ROLL
VANESSA HEINS

EXPOSURE
04 CONTRIBUTORS
06 EDITORIAL
08 THIS AND THAT
18 THE COMMUNITY
  FRIENDSHIPS, A CAMERA, & ROCK AND ROLL
  DOCUMENTARY MUSIC PHOTOGRAPHER VANESSA HEINS
  SHOWS THE MANY FACETS OF THE INDUSTRY
26 MISADVENTURES IN PHOTOGRAPHY
  PAIN, YOU SAY, ON OUR BIG DAY?
66 THE LIVING ROOM

VISION
28 WISDOM, WIT AND OTHER TIDBITS
  EXCERPTS FROM OUR INTERVIEW WITH JO-ANNE MCARTHUR
  Toronto-based Jo-Anne McArthur has made it her mission to document humans' relationships with animals. For 20 years, the photographer, author and educator has travelled the world advocating for animal rights.

34 RESISTANCE DYNAMICS
  CHARLES-FRÉDÉRICK OUELLET AND A CHANGING WORLD
  Photographer Charles-Frédérick Ouellet is downright impressive: his work has been featured in numerous exhibitions, he has gallery representation, he has received grants for his projects, and he has already published three books. Yet he’s completely approachable and disarmingly relaxed.

44 SHOWTIME

46 UNIVERSAL OPPORTUNITIES
  ON E-BOOKS, REACH AND LEGACY.
  I have a fondness for the feeling, smell and heft of a real book, so I’ll never argue against printed output. But thanks to mobile and especially tablet computing, e-books have become an extremely interesting alternative for presenting our work.

ON THE COVER
18 FRIENDSHIPS, A CAMERA, & ROCK AND ROLL
VANESSA HEINS

CANON EOS 5D MARK III, 70 MM, F/2.8, 1/160 S, ISO 320. © VANESSA HEINS

TOOLBOX

52 EMBRACE THE GRAIN
USING NOISE TO ADD MOOD AND TEXTURE TO YOUR PHOTOGRAPHS
Technical quality is what we strive for. Once we’ve achieved that, what other creative paths can we take to continue to grow? A sharp, well-exposed and noise-free image is not all that makes a great photograph.

58 IN SEARCH OF A THOUGHTFUL APPROACH TO PHOTOGRAPHY EQUIPMENT
RECAPTURING PHOTOGRAPHY’S LOST TREASURE: PEACE OF MIND
Trying to introduce some patience and thoughtfulness into my relationship with gear has made a huge impact.

64 BECAUSE EVERY SECOND COUNTS...
MIDI CONTROLLERS TO THE RESCUE!
The mouse was an excellent invention, but I dream of the day when I will be able to control Lightroom like John Anderton (played by Tom Cruise) in Minority Report.

CONTRIBUTORS AND EDITORIAL STAFF
Curious about who put this together? Here’s this issue’s who’s who.

Holding a passion for the world and an eye for the beauty it contains, Prince Edward Island-based Dave Brosha is one of Canada’s most diverse photographic artists and educators. His work covers a wide spectrum including landscape, portraiture, commercial and adventure imagery. davebrosha.com

Laurence Butet-Roch fell in love with journalism through Scoop, a Quebec sitcom set inside a newsroom. Studying international relations at the University of British Columbia and photography at the School of the Photographic Arts: Ottawa led her to become a photographer with the Boreal Collective, a photo editor and a writer. lbphoto.ca

Emmanuelle Champagne completed her studies in creative writing and later decided to pursue accounting and administration. She enjoys literature and all forms of art.

Patrick La Roque is a speaker, writer and professional photographer from Montreal. He is an official Fujifilm X-Photographer and founder of the KAGE COLLECTIVE, an international group specializing in visual storytelling and documentary work. larouquephoto.com, kagescollective.com

Jean-François Landry has been providing advice to photographic equipment buyers in Quebec City since 1989. He also shares his passion with amateur photographers through courses and magazine articles. cylidd.com

Guy Langevin has worked in the magazine and photo industry for many years. He has had the chance to collaborate with and befriend some of the best photographers in the country, and you’ll rarely see him without either his running shoes or camera. guylangevin.net

Marius Masalar is a photographer, tech journalist, and founding partner at a digital marketing firm in Toronto. He co-hosts a photography podcast called Candid, travels frequently, and writes about technology and productivity on his blog mariusmasalar.me

Jenny Montgomery is a theatre director and writer who first learned her way around a darkroom in 1998. Photography runs in her family, so it was probably inevitable that it would be a part of her life.

Valérie Racine has been part of the Photo Life team since 2001. She currently serves as publisher and marketing director. Her background includes studies in art, art history and communications, and she is passionate about photography.

Jon Reaves is a travel and nature photographer based in Alberta. Formerly a freelance photojournalist, Jon now focuses on Canada’s wild places and a bit of international travel. His photography and travel writing can be found at jonreaves.com and mapsandcameras.com.
PHOTOGRAPHY: FIRST WORLD WAR

Through October 28, the Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto is presenting Photography: First World War, 1914–1918, the first of a two-part series. The AGO has almost 500 albums from this era, which were donated by a private collector in 2004. The relationship between war and photography is emphasized through this diverse collection of albums from Canada, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Austria, the United States, Australia, Italy, Czech Republic and Russia. The gallery will also present photographs by Australian war photographer James Francis ‘Frank’ Hurley (1885–1962). His album Australian Units on the Western Front (1916–1918) chronicles life on the front. The second part of this series will be presented from November 10 through April 14.
ago.ca
Vanessa Heins' working family is comprised of some of the biggest names in the Canadian entertainment industry. Her job? To translate sound into visuals and document behind-the-scenes moments that most of us don't get to see.

“It's not uncommon for the general public to watch performers and believe that they have big personalities; that they crave the spotlight and the attention; or that they don't have the same fears, reservations and anxieties as the rest of us. Those impressions couldn't be further from the truth. Often, they’ll have onstage and offstage versions of themselves. I've watched some of the most outgoing people, who you think of as fearless, crumble,” explains Vanessa Heins, who's been photographing renowned entertainers from Canada and beyond for well over a decade. A quick gander through her Instagram feed (@vanessaheins) reveals sessions with Sloan, Alessia Cara, Carly Rae Jepsen, Arcade Fire, Metric, Kaytranada, Mac DeMarco and countless others. Such encounters would leave most of us star-struck, but talking to Heins, it becomes clear that she approaches her work among these stars with humility, confidence and down-to-earthness.

Heins got her start early. She didn't even wait to begin classes at the School of Image Arts at Ryerson University to develop her portfolio. In high school, she became enamoured with photography after taking it as an elective. “It seemed like the lesser evil of all the classes that were offered such as home economics and woodworking,” she jokes. Once she had a camera in hand, she found that it could be her way into the music world, which she was obsessed with and in which so many of her friends were involved. At the time, two of her best friends were experimenting with what would become the Juno award-winning band Said the Whale. “Working in tandem was great for us because we were learning our respective crafts simultaneously and needed one another. I would take portraits and band photos, shoot all their shows, and capture behind-the-scenes moments when they were rehearsing or recording. I essentially followed them everywhere they went,” she recalls.

The approach she developed then—a careful balance between professional collaboration and friendship—carries through to today. “A lot of the people whom I work with now have been in my life for quite some time. Over the years, we've cultivated strong bonds that help us understand one another. The process of making music can be tedious and frustrating. The artists are in a vulnerable space as they try to figure out how to express themselves through sound. Hence their need to surround themselves with people they trust, who get what they're doing and trying to communicate,” she reflects. The emotional toll performing takes was never more evident than when she collaborated with Hawksley Workman who co-created and performs a solo cabaret titled The God That Comes. “He wanted me to wait for him in his dressing room to photograph him coming back to reality as he's stripping away the different personalities he has to embody during the show to become himself again. He went through so many emotions in a short span of time. It was very intense,” she recalls. What made this moment even more special was that she hadn't personally known Workman prior. She realized that if artists whom she was not acquainted with invited her into their space, it must be because the trust her usual collaborators felt must be showing through the images she was producing.

However unobtrusive she may be, Heins has never shied away from reaching out to the artists she admires. Case in point: in 2004 the Toronto-based photographer emailed the five-piece punk band Alexisonfire. Though they didn't know her, they agreed to let her photograph them before their set in St. Catharines, Ontario. Since then, she has not only captured them on the job but also during some of life's most important moments, including “a couple of weddings, a kiddo, and various side projects.” Similarly, after seeing one of Carly Rae Jepsen's music videos in 2010, she contacted her thinking that she'd make for a fun shoot if she were ever in Toronto. The pop singer-songwriter replied enthusiastically and set up a casual session where the two West Coast natives used the clothes that she brought with her on tour.

Continued on page 25
EXCERPTS FROM OUR INTERVIEW WITH

JO-ANNE McARTHUR

Toronto-based Jo-Anne McArthur has made it her mission to document humans’ relationships with animals. For 20 years, the photographer, author and educator has travelled the world advocating for animal rights. Her work has been published in National Geographic, National Geographic Traveller, The Washington Post, Elle Canada, The Globe and Mail, and many more publications. In addition, she has published two books, We Animals and Captive, and her photojournalistic work was the subject of Liz Marshall’s 2013 documentary film The Ghosts in Our Machine.

FIRST CAMERA?
My Dad’s Minolta SLR with a fixed 50 mm. Ah, the good old days.

WHAT DID YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GREW UP?
I have notes on that in various journals from the very early years. A cowgirl, an astronomer, a marine biologist, a journalist, Jane Goodall. My passions varied widely! However, there was a recurring theme: adventure, exploring, and, later, I turned my sights to work that would include a lot of freedom. It made sense that I became a photojournalist.

WHY PHOTOGRAPHY AS A CAREER?
Freedom. Creativity. Entrepreneurship. My own schedule. Seeing one’s own personal hard work met with success. Mostly, though, I could continue to satisfy my curiosity about the world through photography. Best career ever!

MOST PIVOTAL CAREER EXPERIENCE?
Well, in my very early career, I did a printing internship with Canadian Magnum photographer Larry Towell at his home in rural Ontario. He became a mentor and friend. He gives really good advice.

MOST ADMIRED PHOTOGRAPHER?
Hands down: the multidimensional work of Larry Towell. It’s his dedication to ideas and projects and the way he sees them through with artistic integrity and attention to detail. His photo books are among the most beautifully produced in the world of art and photojournalism.

THE “PHOTO THAT GOT AWAY”?
Actually, it was five rolls of black-and-white film. It was August 1998, and I had just got home from three months of travel in South America. I was so excited to process my film that I must have put the fixer in before the developer. Imagine finally opening the processing canister with glee, only to find 36 blank frames…on five rolls. Luckily I had shot probably a hundred rolls of film during those three months, but, yeah, that stung. I didn’t make that mistake twice.

FAVOURITE CAMERA-AND-LENS COMBINATION?
My D4S with a 17-35 mm f/2.8 is a hand-breaker, but it’s my favourite combo for stills.

BEST ADVICE?

MOST UNEXPECTED THING IN YOUR PHOTO BAG?
It’s not so much that it’s in my photo bag, but on my person. A lawyer’s phone number penned on my forearm when I’m doing investigative work.

WHAT’S YOUR SISYPHEAN STRUGGLE?
Reaching enough people with the important stories that need to be seen, so that the suffering of billions of animals every day can be diminished.

FAVOURITE PLACE TO PHOTOGRAPH?
Animal sanctuaries.

EARLY RISER OR NIGHT OWL?
Ouch, touchy subject. Welcome to my daily struggle. The night owl usually wins.

WEIRDEST PHOTO EXPERIENCE?
Don’t even ask how much pig and mink shit I have crawled through in order to gain access to the stories I need to document.

WHAT SUPERPOWER WOULD YOU CHOOSE?
With one look, I’d be able to fill someone’s heart with care, compassion and benevolence for all living beings. Is there a name for that superpower?

WHAT’S A NORMAL DAY FOR YOU?
Normal for me is the busyness of a life lived eight months a year on the road. Speaking engagements; shoots; planes, trains and automobiles; working on many projects with our amazing We Animals team; hopefully a bit of exercise; and always some nose-in-book time (hence the night-owl situation).
Photographer Charles-Frédérick Ouellet is downright impressive: his work has been featured in numerous exhibitions, he has gallery representation, he has received grants for his projects, and he has already published three books. Yet he's completely approachable and disarmingly relaxed. We asked him to talk with us about his approach to photography, storytelling and point of view.

PUSHING OFF
The photographer learned the technical side of his craft in school in the early 2000s, but he had mixed feelings about academia and felt limited by its walls. The Chicoutimi-born artist explains, "I worked on my own to develop my point of view and skills by studying and questioning a variety of diverse artistic practices."

He says that the most pivotal moment in his career was when he got a grant in 2009 to do a six-month internship in France at Magnum Photo and Signatures: Maison de photographes. "That's where I started to understand the mechanics of creating and disseminating work," he explains. During this developmental opportunity, he was also able to work alongside several photographers and have "really enriching experiences at a time when a lot was happening in the world of photo collectives."

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS
This experience inspired him to start his own collective with friends and colleagues. "I should explain that when we started it, we all lived in different places. There wasn't necessarily a photographic community like you'd find in big cities like Montreal or Toronto. Coming together as a group gave us a way to offer and receive feedback on our different photographic practices. In the beginning, this alliance made it easier to have group exhibitions and be able to approach festivals and artist centres. Now that we are all busy with our own projects, Kahem is a group of photographers and artists who share the same values when it comes to documentary photography and related issues."

Though he didn't really have any mentors, over the years he's had help from many photographers he deeply respects. Ouellet says, "I admit that my process is rather solitary, and I don't like to show a project that's in process." Even so, he's aware of the importance of having feedback on his work. "When you are working on a project, there comes a point where you can't really go any further. You're just turning the work around in every direction without really changing anything. That's when it's good to talk with your peers. Otherwise, I find that the most enriching comments come from people who don't really have any knowledge of photography; they interpret freely," he adds.

He mentions that he particularly admires the work of Lee Friedlander: "First because he reinvented himself incessantly. Then for the subtlety of his observations and the complexity of his images, which are both vernacular and conceptual at once. He never takes a subject for granted, and his work is most meaningful in its published form."

His admiration for Friedlander makes sense because photo books are a central aspect of Ouellet's artistic practice too. "Books and photography have been closely linked since the invention of photography. Papers, magazines and advertising have served as the main platforms for photography from the beginning. Today the image is dematerialized, and that's maybe what has pushed me to make physical objects that give people access to the complete work. An exhibition is usually dependent on programming, and the work is presented for two months. It's temporary and then you have to get it to circulate," he explains. He encourages others to consider publishing a photo book: "Don't wait for someone to ask you to do a book! If you have an idea in mind, go ahead and self-publish! Make physical mock-ups because you need to get those images out of the computer. You have to manipulate them to make a book. If you work only on-screen, you'll miss some things. A mock-up doesn't have to be fancy; it can be done with whatever you have on hand. In doing so, you'll be forced to deal with several big aesthetic and conceptual aspects." The expert storyteller reveals, "I often consider a book the end point of my projects. This forces me to draft a sequence of chapters, which helps me order the images. However, to be completely honest, I have to find the right music. With time, the sounds and silences help me find the right order for my images."

Continued on page 38
Imagine for a second that it’s 1972. We could’ve picked 1957, or even 1982 for that matter. But let’s go with the seventies: the decade, after all, has a certain aura about it—bell bottoms, polyester suits, a slight bluish haze hanging in the air...

So it’s 1972, and you’re a passionate photographer toiling away in the makeshift darkroom you’ve set up in the basement of a bungalow. You eat, drink and breathe photography, and the chemical whiff surrounding you is proof of your dedication to the craft.

Over the years you took a few chances with local photo contests, but it never amounted to much. Your neighbours destroy the competition every single time with those golden sunsets, the flowers, the birds. The judges eat it up. The truth is, when you look at your work, you don’t see anything pretty. Not in any conventional sense. Photography just speaks to you in ways nothing else does, so you keep at it. You go on. Hidden, quiet and anonymous.

When Vivian Maier’s work was discovered in 2007, it quickly became a sensation. The pictures themselves certainly deserved attention, but it’s the story, I believe, that resonated with so many of us: the archetype of the unsung hero, of a life dedicated to art in the depths of obscurity. Despite the surrounding controversies, in the end, this was a tale of redemption and ultimate rebirth. But how many other photographers have simply faded from existence? How many shoeboxes are buried in trash heaps and forever lost to the world? Okay, sorry for these depressing thoughts. Let’s switch gears and get to the heart of the matter: we live in an era of unprecedented opportunities.

MEET THE AUDIENCE

In Life magazine’s heyday, fifty percent of the entire U.S. population would purchase each weekly issue. For a photographer, purely in terms of reach and audience, this was nothing short of a consecration. But the chances of moving from obscurity into those famed pages were minuscule: the seats were limited, accessible only to a select few. And it’s not due to some elitist plot or conspiracy to keep anyone at bay—this was just the reality of the times. Exposure and discovery were rare occurrences.

Those three years I listed in the opening paragraph all have one thing in common: they’re all pre-Internet, pre-computer (for the average Joe and Jane), pre-mobile and pre-social media. What Gutenberg’s printing press enabled in terms of the distribution and curation of knowledge, we’ve now witnessed being multiplied tenfold in less than a generation. We have never, historically, been so connected—in real time—to everyone else on the planet. We have never had such easy access to so many tools, creative or otherwise. We’ve never held this much power, individually, to invent ourselves and—potentially—touch the lives of others in the process. And that’s the essence of all these monumental changes: the very real possibility of seeing our work matter to others. From one to many.

So forget the basement, the hidden pursuits and anonymity. Forget the trash heaps. Each and every one of us now has an audience waiting in the wings, as well as the resources to create anything our minds can dream up. Now what?

BOOK = VISION

Yes, Instagram. Sure, Facebook and Twitter—or Flickr, or 500px. But let’s talk for a moment about moving beyond instant gratification, beyond that one-off image meant to elicit likes and loves and thumbs-ups. Let’s talk about sitting down and reflecting on a larger body of work instead, something that may define who we are and provide a broader narrative. Because we’ll glance at someone’s Instagram feed, but we won’t necessarily lose ourselves in it, will we? We won’t curl up on the couch and spend a few hours with a timeline. While social media is a great way of telling the world we exist, it’s still just a quick wave—the illusion of a conversation. Necessary? Absolutely. But it also forces a kind of perpetual motion, this need to constantly feed a beast that never seems to be satisfied. Every creative pursuit requires taking a breath and hitting pause at some point, to examine results and reflect on the work.

For me, a book remains the ultimate vehicle to communicate a clear, concise vision. As an “object,” it’s self-contained and finite; it immediately sets a frame of reference. It forces curation, which, in turn, involves a thought process—what to include, what to dismiss. It also allows us to take a step back and provides a necessary overview. Continued on page 51
You’ve paid the big bucks for big sensors and gone into debt for the latest high-res camera bodies that produce the cleanest files. You’ve spent hours with an aching back, hunched over your computer watching tutorials on how to further reduce noise in post-processing. You’ve obsessed about it, drooled over the clean files of flagship cameras, and insisted on shooting at ISO 100 always. Admit it; it’s driven you slightly nuts. (Photographers are a bit nuts, though, aren’t we?) I’ve been there. I’m guilty too. The sharpest, cleanest files possible are what we lust for. Quality, quality, and more quality.

Reaching for the highest quality images definitely has its benefits, but quality can be defined in all sorts of ways. Technical quality is what we strive for. Once we’ve achieved that, what other creative paths can we take to continue to grow? A sharp, well-exposed and noise-free image is not all that makes a great photograph. Those characteristics may not necessarily even count for much depending on the subject matter, the mood you’re trying to create, or the story you’re trying to tell. A great photograph, in my opinion, is where all those factors—both the technical and artistic choices—come together. Though it may be necessary for you to strive for the highest technical quality in your images for practical and professional reasons, it may also be necessary to pursue a slightly less tangible artistic quality.

**THE NITTY GRITTY**

I’ve gone through some phases where I shot a lot of gritty black-and-white film (for example, Ilford HP5 Plus or Kodak Tri-X), but most of my work is produced with digital cameras in Raw format. This gives me the ability to have multiple edits of a single image. The vast majority of my clients and photo buyers want colour photographs. It’s rare that my black and whites are licensed for editorial or commercial use. My personal preference has always been grainy, gritty, and contrasty black and white. The photos I like most always end up having a colour version and a black-and-white version. To me, colour can be distracting if it’s not part of the story or doesn’t play an integral role in identifying (or drawing the eye to) the subject.

Since relocating to Alberta from North Carolina, I’ve been shooting a lot more wildlife. Most of the time, there isn’t much colour going on in the image. Brown fur on a green or brown background doesn’t do it for me. That’s when I employ black-and-white techniques, and my preference is moderate to high grain (noise) for texture and a good amount of contrast to make the subject pop.

I started my photography career as a freelance photojournalist. Though my clients wanted lightly edited colour photographs, I always made gritty and grainy monochrome versions that were a little more exciting to look at for my portfolio. Ten years later, I still strive for the documentary or “street photography” style even in my nature images.

**REDEFINE QUALITY**

Since quality can refer to technical perfection (low noise, sharp focus and balanced exposure) or artistic choices, it’s really up to the viewer to decide how to define it. After all, art should spark a reaction. I find the look of old, grainy black-and-white documentary film pleasing. I love how the simple process of stripping away colour and adding a bit of grain heightens the texture, mood and drama of the two-dimensional image. I also enjoy how I can take an image made using a high ISO and convert that annoying noise to grain to make something beautiful.

When I was in college, I travelled around Europe for a while. That’s where my interest in photography began. I had my first DSLR and knew little about the technical aspects of creating a photograph. I went to galleries in Paris and spent hours looking at (and studying) the photographs of greats like Henri Cartier-Bresson and Elliott Erwitt. For them, grain wasn’t necessarily an aesthetic choice but a byproduct of the technology of the time. Grain was produced automatically. Continued on page 56
IN SEARCH OF A THOUGHTFUL APPROACH TO PHOTOGRAPHY EQUIPMENT

RECAPTURING PHOTOGRAPHY'S LOST TREASURE: PEACE OF MIND

BY MARIUS MASALAR

I recently set aside a couple of days to tidy up the oldest corners of my photo library. It brought me back to my early days of photography, when I was learning the craft with an entry-level DSLR and a kit lens.

Before smartphones gave everyone a camera and before mirrorless vs. DSLR emerged as a discussion, simply owning a camera meant something. And I was thrilled to be a part of that community. I remember the freedom of not worrying about my equipment. There was no debate over which lenses to bring (I only had the one!), no concern about other cameras on the market (I didn’t know about them!), and no pressure to upgrade or switch systems.

As my photography needs advanced, my equipment list grew and I missed the calm of a simple set-up. With choice comes uncertainty. Tidying those old photos was the last step in a bigger organizational effort I’ve been undertaking to recapture that peace of mind. Over time, I’ve come to understand that the feeling I was after emerged not from having very little stuff, but from having only the stuff I need and understanding the role of each piece in my set-up.

THE BASICS

I shoot a single system—Micro Four Thirds—and have done my best to whittle down my lenses to optimize for the things I actually shoot and the situations I work in. I tend to photograph in two kinds of scenarios: casual, day-to-day shooting and professional work. Recognizing this, I’ve organized everything into two distinct bags, each ideal for one of those contexts.

My small bag is my daily carry, and it tends to contain the following photography equipment.

- Olympus PEN-F w/ M. Zuiko 17 mm f/1.8 lens
- Mitakon 25 mm f/0.95, a manual-focus delight
- M. Zuiko 45 mm f/1.8, the tiny portrait gem
- Mini flash

For normal shooting, that’s all I need. It’s an extremely compact set-up that’s easy to grab and go without worrying about weight. And the PEN-F is marvellous to shoot with.

My professional bag contains the gear I tend to use for more demanding shoots.

- Olympus E-M1 Mark II + Grip
- M. Zuiko 25 mm f/1.2 Pro
- M. Zuiko 12-40 mm f/2.8 Pro
- M. Zuiko 40-150 mm f/2.8 Pro + 1.4x teleconverter
- M. Zuiko 60 mm f/2.8 Macro
- M. Zuiko 75 mm f/1.8
- ColorChecker Passport
- Godox V860IIO flash

Depending on the assignment (portraits, product work, landscape, etc.), I may not take all of that, and I often slip the PEN-F in too so I have a backup body handy. I know that when I grab that bag, I have everything I could possibly need to cover the kinds of work I do.

The bags also have a dedicated spot in my studio, and any of the overflow items that don’t come with me on a shoot (extra microfibre cloths, lens caps, filters, etc.) live in a Tenba insert. If something is not out with me, it’s in the Tenba, so it’s impossible to lose track of anything.

ORGANIZING GEAR

Establishing those two bags and determining where everything should go in them was a time-consuming process. My goal was to be able to retrieve any part of my kit without even thinking about it—no hesitation, as though each piece were an extension of my body.

I would go out on shoots and remain attentive to what I was reaching for. I’d try to notice which things I tended to need urgently and which I didn’t, as well as details like where I expected to find things. It’s not