

LENSCAPE

ARCHITECTURAL PHOTOGRAPHY

The act of making architecture involves many people doing many things, but it is usually considered complete at the moment of occupation. The client moves in, the architect moves on, the contractor breathes a sigh of relief, and the media (in some cases) focusses its searing gaze on what's been made. Just around this time, a stealth visitor shows up, carrying some equipment, generally slipping onsite quietly, watchfully, sizing up the brand new building or space, then spends a few hours or days making a visual record of what he/she sees. The architectural photographer is a lonely hunter, seeking out certain 'truths' about buildings that perhaps differ from their architects' or owners'. The images produced from the lenses of great photographers can make a building look more beautiful than it is, or less; they can alter our appreciation of them, or help us understand them better. These photographs are factual records, true, but also artistic interpretations, and as such, have the ability as much to distort as to uncover, to enhance as well as to explain.

What's so difficult about shooting buildings? It seems fairly straightforward, the biggest challenges perhaps being the effort to avoid automobiles on the street in front, or gaining access to the rooftop opposite. The subjects don't move or sneeze, or have moods. There's all the time in the world as far as the walls are concerned; if the weather doesn't cooperate, just come back tomorrow. You get the daylight view, and the night view, with all the lights on. There's lots of space to move around or through most buildings, and clients and architects usually do all they can to accommodate the photographer. What's the fuss? What makes a great photograph rather than a mediocre one? Imagination? The 'weird' angle no one looked from before? A fortuitous glance of dusk light onto stone or steel surfaces? A passing jetliner reflected in glazed curtain walls? Clichés we've all seen before.

Certainly a command of light and tone is essential to the successful photographer of design. He (and for whatever reason, they are mostly men) must know his equipment. The tone of a photograph can express the 'soul' of a building, its deep character. Yet it must be admitted that most architects look at photographs of architecture to understand what has actually been made, not what feelings the building means to inspire. We want to know how our colleagues or ancestors matched two pieces of stone, or adhered glass to steel, or proportioned openings, or patterned a wall. We want to see the effects of shadow on relative surfaces and how it deepens or flattens them; we want to study textures and hues. We look for something to trigger our next idea, to strike that narrow wire of creativity resting with annoying obscurity somewhere within ourselves. And when we hire a photographer to shoot our own work? Ah, then we want a bit more. Documentation, yes, but also art. We want them to exhibit to the world – in two dimensions – what is so obvious to us: the original brilliance of our achievement. Very few architects take very good pictures of their own buildings. Clearly, objectivity is missing. It's easier to photograph your own child than your own building. It's highly recommended indeed to hire someone who specialises in this difficult activity.

Before the advent – and then ubiquity – of photographic images, people who wanted to see what buildings looked like packed a suitcase and took trains and boats to do it. The 'Grand Tour' became, for students of the Beaux Arts tradition, a critical introduction to the successes and failures of architecture. They packed a sketchbook and pencil, then sat and looked, training their eyes and hands, in front of the real thing. Today, a grand tour can happen with less trouble: a bit of Google and a memory stick. There are billions of pictures of places, spaces and buildings, but how many tell the tale? The architectural photographer is more important to contemporary architecture than he probably realises. His is literally the medium, the conduit, of knowledge.

Internationally, a few names have risen to the very top of this special field, photographers that offices and clients seek at almost any cost and wait for months or years to book: Christian Richters, Roland Halbe, Paul Warchol, Timothy Hursley... These individuals promise to capture architecture as few can, and memorialise

permanently the buildings or rooms that have taken so many others such effort to create. They fly all over the world on assignment, not unlike rock stars. One presumes they command fees set in the stratosphere.

One pictures them lounging for days in five-star accommodations, waiting for the perfect climatic conditions, or merely artistic inspiration. Clients (architects, owners, magazines) queue up to secure their services, and provide access and accessories as desired. In return, they expect art. The truth may be a little less romantic, but there is no doubt a few individuals have earned pretty high bragging rights. Smart design offices cultivate close ongoing relationships with one or two photographers, who come to understand their work and know how to shoot it. This becomes something like a marriage, different talents appreciating the other, contributing to something in common.

Every month at *hinge*, we see hundreds of photographs of buildings and rooms, shot by people all over the world. When we select images to accompany a story, we look for different things: documentation certainly, a spirited viewpoint, drama. Perhaps too much on the drama. The media loves the loud, the colourful, the memorable; it thrives on standing out. Architecture is a bit more complex (although some architecture also thrives on standing out). Often, the most revealing and telling pictures are the quietest. Amid a lot of noise, sobriety or undertone becomes extraordinary. There is unquestionably a 'look-at-me' atmosphere to architectural practice today; too many want immediate attention, and see press pages as confirmation. Gone is some of the slow appreciation that characterised the relationship of architecture and society in centuries past (though we suspect that Wren, Bernini or Wright liked a bit of attention, too). But in today's world of instant, constant media 'information', the camera is never off, the imagery is continuous, and our eyes are saturated. How rare, then, is the photograph of a building that slows everything down, that makes us stop and notice, that connects us – for more than just seconds – to something inanimate but thrilling, or teaching, or beautiful.



Trump Tower in fog, Chicago, Illinois



Tribune Tower in fog, Chicago, Illinois



Originally having studied and practised architecture, Fradkin left the confines of corporate design practice in 1998 for the precarious lifestyle of freelance photography, and has never looked back. His photographs have been exhibited and published internationally and collected by several prominent museums and many private collections. Alex taught photography at Columbia College Chicago and was a staff photographer for CITY 2000, an archival

project that documented Chicago and its inhabitants in the year 2000. He graduated with an MFA in photography from Columbia and has since divided his time between fine art and editorial photography. He is currently working on two anthologies of his work; the first, titled Bunkers: Ruins of War in a New American Landscape (publisher pending), is scheduled for completion in 2010. In the fall of 2006, Fradkin embarked with his large-format camera and VW camper on a four-year project to

photograph the changing California coastline and its inhabitants – a document which will be published by the University of California Press. In 2009, he lived for part of the year in Cuba, during the 50th anniversary of the Revolution, photographing and experiencing an extraordinary island and its amazing people. A native of California, Fradkin lives in San Francisco and works around the world.



Ann Hamilton Tower, Geyserville, California



Living Room of Artists Guest House, Oliver Ranch, Geyserville, California – Jim Jennings Architect



Courtyard of Artists Guest House, Oliver Ranch, Geyserville, California – Jim Jennings Architect



Chicago Watertower and Park Hyatt, Chicago Illinois

How do you find a successful photo?

Finding a compelling image can happen both by accident and by design. I always stay open to both. Mostly I see a subject and try and imagine how it will look in a different lighting situation or season. Often I will sketch something out on a pad of paper, make notes and plan to come back when the light and circumstances are perfect. In many cases this process can take a year or more before I make the return visit. Passion, patience and obsession are my key ingredients.

What's the most difficult shot you have taken?

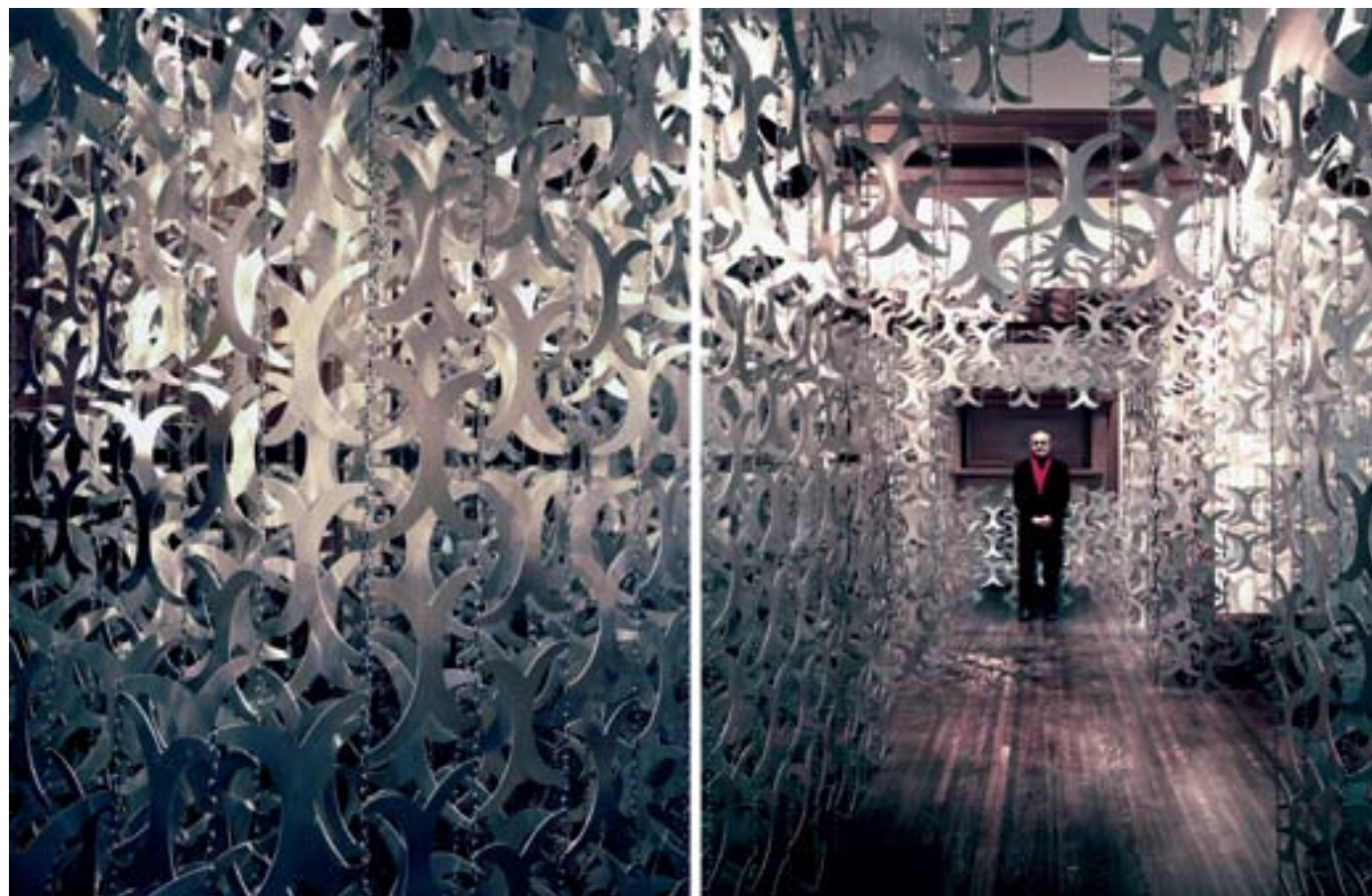
Often my favourite time to shoot is in the winter due to the particular light. In Chicago, this would often mean photographing with a view camera in temperatures well below freezing. For this one shoot, I had to walk out onto the frozen ice, thinly covering Lake Michigan near the shoreline, in order to get a good shot of the Chicago architectural skyline, trying to alternately concentrate on my equipment, my cold numb fingers and not falling through the ice. Each step resulted in disturbing cracking sounds under my feet and each second, less feeling in my fingers. Trying to be creative under such circumstances was a nerve-racking challenge.

What's the most enjoyable photo shoot you have had?

The most fun shot I have ever taken was when I was suspended in a crane deep inside a blast zone, right in front of a building that was going to be imploded. I was attached only by a safety harness and operating two cameras, set to capture the collapsing building. When the blasts went off, the 21-storey structure took only six seconds to come down. Feeling both an adrenaline rush and success that I had captured the demolition, I turned around to see a tidal wave of dust and debris coming at me and my exposed position in the air. Barely with enough time to cover the cameras, it was too late to cover myself, so I just hung on, riding out the turbulence caused by the cloud, feeling the wild swinging of the crane basket being buffeted by the winds and dust. When it had cleared, I was completely buried in dust. What a rush!

What advice do you have for young architectural photographers?

If you have passion, patience and obsession, mixed with talent, you have the core components of what it takes to be a successful photographer. Do what you love foremost!



Cecil Balmond and his installation "H_edge", Chicago, Illinois



05 72 96 7



Born in Cesena, Italy, in 1941, Guido Guidi began his photography career in the late 1960s. After studies at the Venice University Institute of Architecture (Istituto Universitario di Architettura di Venezia; now Università IUAV di Venezia), he returned to IUAV in 1970 as a photographer. He has taught and given workshops on photography at various Italian universities and institutes since 1986. Over the course of his practice, Guidi has developed a cohesive body of work in which he examines the contemporary landscape and its transformations. His investigations into marginal places break with the tradition of depicting classical Italy and its monuments. He has worked on several photographic commissions focussed on landscape and his work has been shown in many

solo and group exhibitions, including *Viaggio in Italia* (1984); *L'Insistenza dello sguardo, l'Invention d'un art* (Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, 1989); *Muri di Carta* (1993); *The Italian Metamorphosis, 1943–1968* (Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1994); *L'io e il suo doppio* (Venice Biennale, 1995); *In Between Cities* (2003); *Metamorph Trajectories* (Venice Biennale, 2004); *Trans Emilia* (Fotomuseum Winterthur, 2005); and, most recently, *Dieci* (Fotografi d'oro (2009)). His photographs have also been the subject of numerous publications and articles. In 1995, he was awarded the Italian Photographic Book of the Year Prize for *Variante* (Udine: Arti Grafiche Friulane), a monograph on his mid-career work that garnered critical praise for the excellence of its text and images.



Comment:

“ When some of my photographs of Carlo Scarpa’s work were published in Carlo Scarpa, Architect: Intervening with History some Italian architects accused me of treating Scarpa’s works as if they were bunkers (above). Later on, when I’d had the opportunity to carry out research on the Atlantic Wall – bunkers built by Nazis from Norway to France – one of the things I discovered was that it influenced a lot of the modern architecture, from Le Corbusier to Scarpa (I first image). A fundamental aspect of architecture from XX century, from Wright to Le Corbusier, is the relationship with the ‘outside’: a building before being an artefact is a privileged point of view. And if this is true, bunkers completely perform this function. They metaphorically refer back to photography, and as Walker Evans said: It’s akin to hunting too – photography is; and in that same way you’re using the machine and you’re actually shooting something, and shooting to kill actually. To get the picture you want – that’s a kill, that’s a bull’s eye. Enormous satisfaction.

How do you find a successful photo?

I agree with [late American photographer] Paul Strand: It’s the subject that chooses me and asks me to photograph it.

What’s the most difficult shot you have taken?

The photographs I took in 1999 on Mies van der Rohe in Chicago for the exhibition Mies in America, promoted by the Canadian Centre for Architecture.

What’s the most enjoyable photo shoot you have had?

When I wander through the countryside and the villages near home photographing without any photography commission.

What advice do you have for young architectural photographers?

My advice is to take photographs that aren’t accommodating and flattering, but to look for the true face of things.



Jensen Architects, San Francisco



Kuth Ranieri Architects, 17th Street, San Francisco



San Francisco-based photographer César Rubio has been documenting the work of architects and designers for 14 years, using an approach informed by his early studio work and a life-long love of motion pictures. His photos have appeared in Architectural Record, Interior Design, Metropolis, Contract, New York Times, and the San Francisco Chronicle Magazine, among other publications. His work has also been featured in two San Francisco Museum of Modern Art exhibitions – Icons: Magnets of Meaning and Railway Spine – as well as at the AIA San Francisco Gallery.

Philosophy:

“ I try to fuse together my abilities in the studio and those I have gathered as an architectural photographer. Although the two subjects are quite different, they can be treated in the same manner. I consider my style to be influenced by the cinema and have a special appreciation for Film Noir and post-World War II Japanese films. When I was a kid, my family and I lived in Central America, where my weekends were spent at the local theatre watching old films from the United States and Europe. Those flickering images are still with me today.



Natoma Architects – Yerba Buena Lofts



TMDA, Founders Fund, San Francisco



SOM, Cathedral of Christ the Light, Oakland



Leddy, Maytum, Stacy, San Francisco



Sunshine 100, Beijing



Blain Crellin has been creating memorable images of man-made structures for over 15 years, capturing and recording their beauty and purpose for architects, interior designers, hotels and developers across Asia. Crellin strives to represent the form, space, light and shade of a building as both an iconic structure and an inhabited space. Growing up in Melbourne, Australia, with an artist mother and structural engineer father

is why Crellin is able to tune into the essence of a large man-made structure and record it on film. He is constantly honing his ability to capture both the aesthetic and functional qualities of a building. After many years flying between Australia and Northern Asia, Crellin settled in Shanghai in 2005, putting him within easy reach of some of the most exciting new developments anywhere in the world.

When he's not shooting steel and concrete, Blain softens his style to create memorable portraits and still-life pieces. His highly acclaimed Icon Series Exhibition, produced for the Salvation Army in Australia and also to commemorate 100 years of Federation, can be found at www.iconseries.com



Teda Stadium, Tianjin

How do you find a successful photo?

One in which both my client and I feel as if we have found a new way of looking at the project.

What's the most difficult shot you have taken?

I had a chance to photograph the Space Shuttle at the Kennedy Space Centre, risked my life on a catwalk, one wrong move...

What's the most enjoyable photo shoot you have had?

Fun? Enjoyable?

What advice do you have for young architectural photographers?

Don't do it.



Curved Facade, Shanghai

Poem:

An Urbane Society

Within a world of clarity in a
jungle of personal obscurity,
The designer and the client are
those people who ultimately
make it happen.

The urban landscape.
You and me – as we walk through
this land,
We are only concerned about
how it looks – as we rush to our
next meeting.

Reflections of steel, images of
blurred glass in a park at dusk,
As daytime changes – the visible
– shadows to luminescence.
And now the architect has
become the fabric and the
design,
Where creativity meets the
commercially viable.

Up it goes, down it comes,
across the fence and through the
gardens,
Buildings grow, sprouting wings
and towering into the heavens.
Beautiful and elegant, practical
and required – in a world of
design and space,
They are built, they are pieced
together, they are drawn – from
within the mind.

Blain Crellin, 2009



"The Golden Door" Health Retreat, Hunter Valley New South Wales



Teda Stadium, Tianjin

How do you find a successful photo?

Commercial architectural photography is about creating an image that is creative and defines the subject. It must be shot from the right location at the right angle with the right balance of light/shade/colour/shape. These are the basic requirements to obtain a successful shoot. The client will be happy with this.

What's the most difficult shot you have taken?

Difficult shots happen frequently. Getting the right shape is always a challenge. Standing on top of a skyscraper, outside, on the edge of the building with a large format camera at dusk, the wind generally slows that feeling. I use a harness.

What's the most enjoyable photo shoot you have had?

The most enjoyable shoots are when everything falls into place in beautiful locations. I have shot in New Guinea a few times. Bougainville Island hanging outside of a chopper... Exhilarating, beautiful light and great fun in a helicopter flown by a creative pilot.

What advice do you have for young architectural photographers?

Always take the time to smell the roses. Think about what you are shooting for a while before you push the button. The right location at the right angle with the right balance of light/shade/colour/shape.



Clubhouse Stair, Lanson Place, Hong Kong



Medina Serviced Apartments, Melbourne



Dragon Road, Shanghai



Melbourne Theatre Company/Melbourne Recital Centre, Melbourne
 Architect: Ashton Raggatt McDougall



Walt Disney Concert Hall, Los Angeles
 Architect: Frank Gehry



Melbourne Theatre Company/Melbourne Recital Centre, Melbourne
 Architect: Ashton Raggatt McDougall



Born 1944, in Melbourne, Australia, John Gollings made his first photographs and received darkroom tuition at age nine. He studied Architecture at Melbourne University, and later completed his Masters of Architecture at RMIT, investigating the photography of architecture in the virtual environment. Gollings Studio in St Kilda is a collaborative environment with architects, graphic designers, 3D animators, filmmakers, photographers, digital retouching and fine art printers. Gollings has received numerous industry awards and has twice won the Institute of Architects President's Award and been made a fellow of the AIA. By 1967, John began working as a freelance advertising photographer specialising in fashion, which gradually broadened into large-scale location

work and travel accounts. As his contemporaries in architecture developed their practices, so the amount of architectural photography increased. While still shooting for leading graphic designers and advertising agencies, his principal work involved documenting buildings, both old and new, and working especially in Asia. His oeuvre is characterised by strong formal composition and a wider, contextual viewpoint. John brings the technical resources and craft skills of a very experienced photographer to a discipline which often lacks either a point of view or the ability to express it. Recently, he has spent more time on longer-term projects with academic or cultural significance for books, exhibitions and fine prints. His documentation of ancient cities includes Hampi in India, Angkor Wat in Cambodia, Kashgar and Turfan on the Silk Road in far western China and the Greco-Roman cities of Libya. He recently finished a guidebook to every Khmer temple in Laos, Thailand and Cambodia.

Qizhong Stadium, Shanghai
 Architect: Mitsuru Senda of Environment Design Institute





Beijing Olympic Tennis Stadium, Beijing
Architect: BVN Architecture

How do you find a successful photo?

Wait for the right light (generally backlit), then walk around the subject working out the composition and perspective which leads to choosing the right lens, and afterwards work out the exposure to give the effect I want and do a lot of post-production.

What's the most difficult shot you have taken?

Every picture that an art director has torn from a magazine and wants copied. It's never appropriate and an insult to my own creativity and the impossibility of recreating something done under different circumstances.

What's the most enjoyable photo shoot you have had?

Flying to an exotic island location with a great team of models and designers to photograph a resort specifically for young people to go wild in. We had to live the part in order to photograph it.

What advice do you have for young architectural photographers?

I think you need to assist where possible and then start your own business. There is virtually no employment, everyone is self-employed, but these days it would be difficult to start a business without assisting, mainly to teach you professional practice and get access to clients. With the impact of digital, I found that I didn't need an assistant on all the jobs, as I was just carrying around a 35mm camera basically, and the post-production is so large that the last assistant I had ended up full-time in the studio doing production and post-production, which was a curious twist. When it was on 4x5, they were like a nurse to a surgeon; it was full-time – they were loading film, pulling polaroids, setting exposures, setting up the camera, basically running the whole technical side of it, and that's all gone. You are a bag carrier now, which is disappointing in many ways, and the gear has got a lot heavier.

Jean-Marie Tjibaou Cultural Centre, Noumea
Architect: Renzo Piano



Richard Cox studied at Fine Art in Newport, Birmingham, and London, and moved to Wales in 1975. He has supported his work as an artist by teaching at various colleges, including the RCA and Pennsylvania Academy of Arts, and working as a visual arts organiser. From 1983 to 1998 he was a Visual Arts Officer at SEWAA and the Arts Council of Wales, running the Artists in Residence Programme and organising international visual artists exchanges. He has undertaken residencies himself at Kunstakademeit i Trondheim, UWIC; Bemis Centre for Contemporary Arts, Omaha; University of Hijiya, Hiroshima;

and the Delhi College of Art and Rajasthan School of Art. Since 1993 Cox has been working in collaboration with artists in India, touring an exhibition of photographs, drawings and prints, Subterranean Architecture. Stepwells in Western India, to nine venues across India and the UK. His work is held in 26 public collections in the UK and internationally, including the National Museum and Galleries of Wales, The State Museum at Majdanek, Jawahar Kala Kendra, State of Rajasthan and British Council New Delhi. He lives in Cardiff and is gallery director at the Cardiff School of Art and Design.





How do you find a successful photo?

A successful architectural shot has to have a strong specific identity that marks it out. However, I work to no particular formula. It is the power of the image I look for and I tend to be very straightforward in the way I frame my images.

What's the most difficult shot you have taken?

When photographing Chor Stepwell in Todarasigh in 2008, my intention was to shoot directly down the well from 80ft above. A bush growing out of the wall obstructed my view, so I broke the branch for a clear shot. I had not seen or realised the branch supported a hornets' nest and it took about 15 seconds for the insects to identify their "attacker". Once a hornet has delivered a sting, a pheromone is released, providing guidance for the rest of the colony to attack. I was very lucky to escape with only 10 stings to my head and arms. It was the swift action of my local Indian guide who threw a blanket over me and we ran to our car and left the place at speed. I could have been seriously injured, and now always treat all such nests with extreme caution.

What's the most enjoyable photo shoot you have had?

In this current series of work I have derived a great deal of pleasure working in the Thar Desert, Rajasthan, despite the hostile nature of the physical environment. Travelling over weeks with just a driver in a recently manufactured 1958 style Ambassador, is a wonderful way to explore this huge region. When visiting and meeting those who live in these often-remote communities, I am always greeted with courtesy, curiosity and generosity, even though I am an uninvited foreign visitor to their territory. I seem always to be made welcome. This is one of the many reasons I have worked in India for so long.

What advice do you have for young architectural photographers?

Any advice I might offer has to be associated with working in locations that can be dangerous. It is practical rather than technical. It's not just the presence of hornets, but the nature of crumbling stonework, deep drops in remote places where there may be no help available. These conditions must engender common sense and care wherever you choose to work and, of course, courtesy to those you meet there.

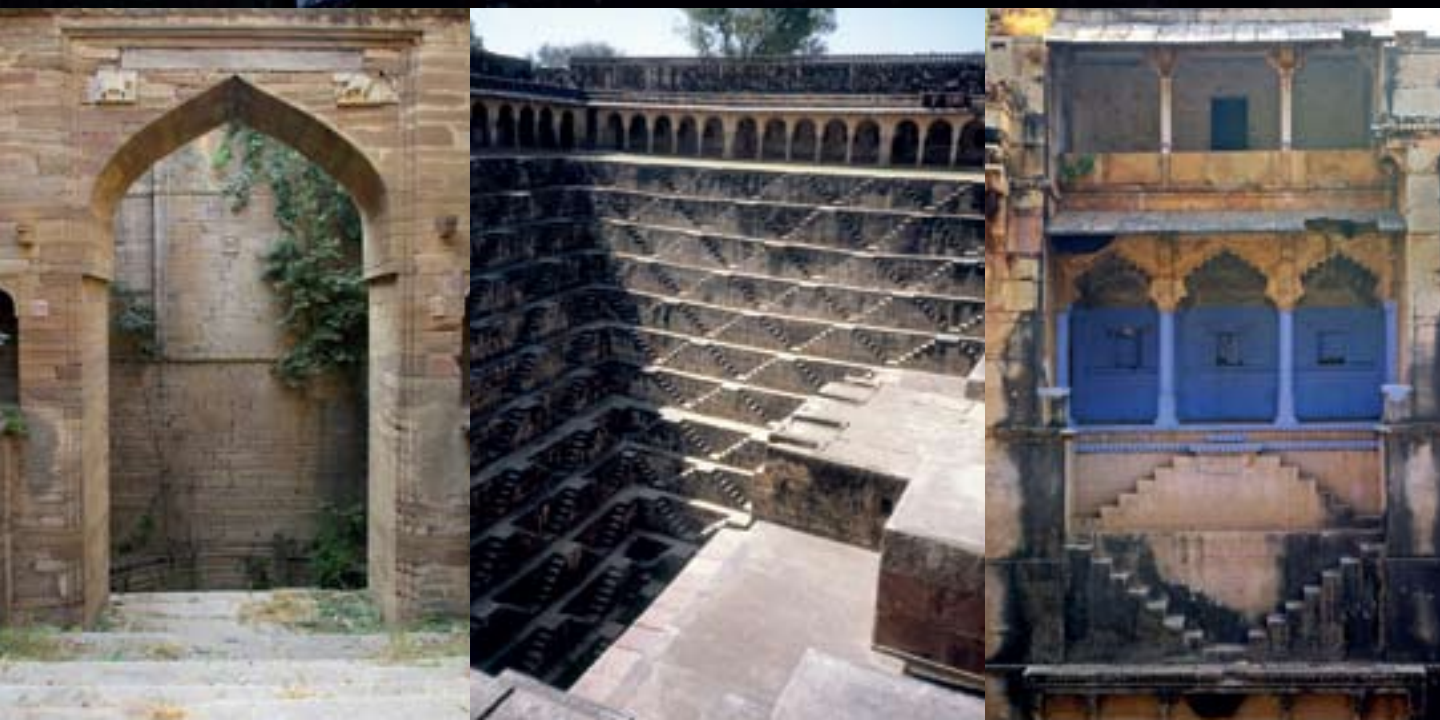
Subterranean Architecture, Stepwells in Western India:

"Although I have been visiting India since 1993, it was not until 1999 that I became more aware of these highly unusual examples of traditional Indian architecture, which are not well-known outside the Indian subcontinent. Stepwells have been built in India for over a thousand years and were constructed to provide access to groundwater and as wells to retain water from the annual monsoon in desert regions. As their name suggests, the means of this access was by way of a series of steps descending from ground level, as the water recedes through the season following the monsoon. The nature of these steps can be simple or complex and their size varies and designs are unusual. The wells had many additional functions and were an important focus for community social interaction, religious worship, ceremonies and rituals, cool resting places in the fierce desert summer and places for recreation. This specific type of architecture can be found only in this area of India, although wells of similar functions are present all over the world.

Abhaneri Chand Baori is a very large 9th-century stepwell located a two-hour drive from Jaipur, off the main road to Agra. It is exceptionally well-preserved and one of the largest and most impressive examples in existence. The immense inverted stepped pyramid structure descends on three sides down 18 levels to nearly 200ft, the last few levels being underwater. Built initially in 825 AD it was a Hindu well, but later was partially rebuilt by the Moghuls, making it an unusual hybrid structure.

Neemrana Ki Baori is an immense 17th-century stepwell of the late Moghul period, nearly 200ft deep, reaching down nine levels, and is located 100km south of Delhi off the Jaipur road. On the ground level there are a series of 86 colonnaded arches, each two metres high, overlooking a sheer dropdown to the seventh underground level, the last two levels being submerged in water. This well is still in use and evidence of recent restoration can be seen.

Panna Meena Ka Kund in Ajmer, Rajasthan, is an early 17th-century royal stepped 'kund', a well without covered landings, different from Neemrana but similar and smaller than Abhaneri. This well has recently undergone extensive and expensive restoration by the government of the state, and is now a very beautiful soft yellow with white edging to the geometric 8 x 8 steps which descend to the water tank."

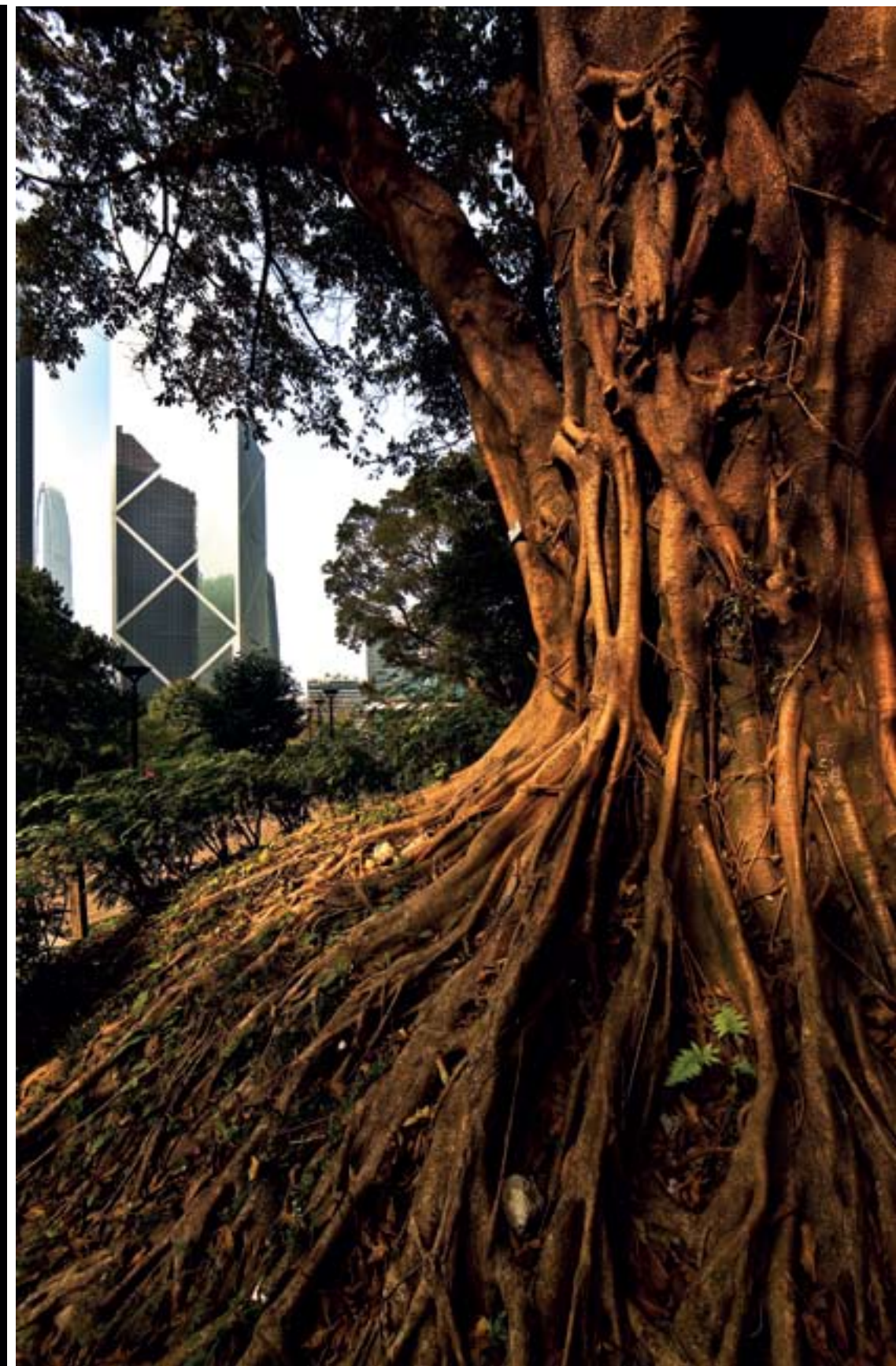




Palace, Shenyang, China



IFC II, Hong Kong



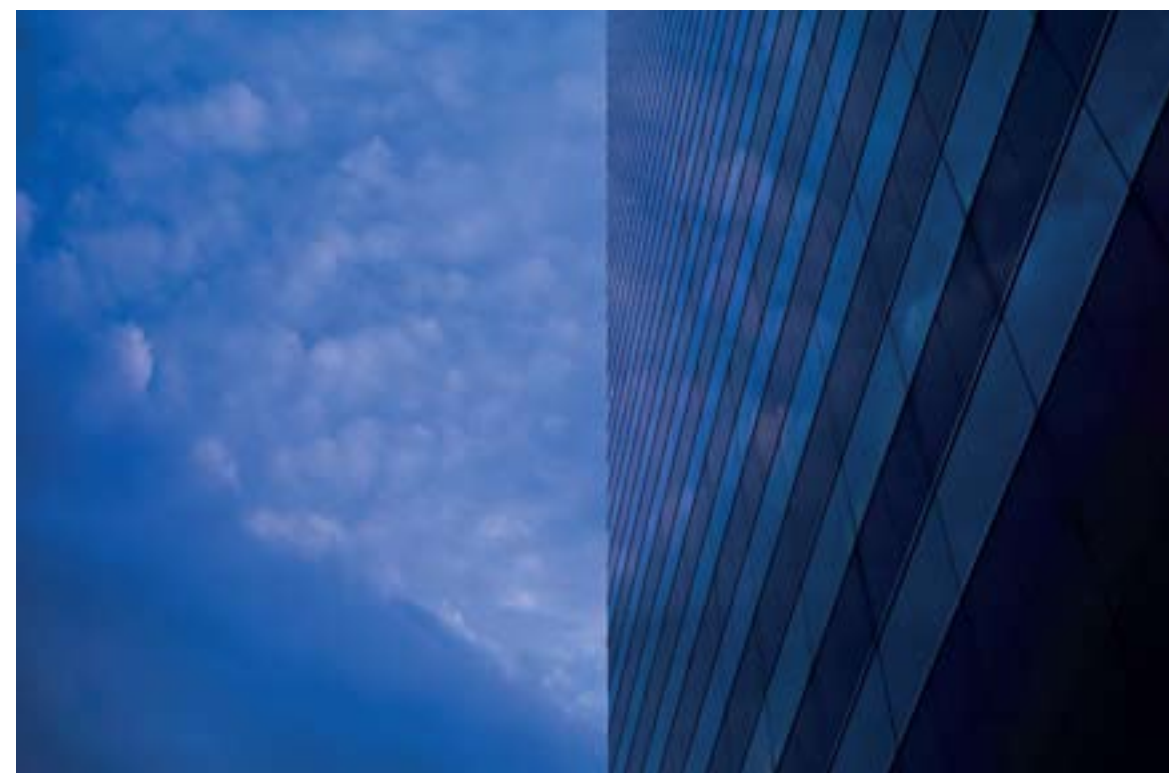
Bank of China, Hong Kong



Shanghai, China

Ulsø Tsang has been a professional photographer since 1990. His love for photography began while he was studying in secondary school. Tsang studied Graphic Design and graduated in 1982 from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU), where he went on to study photography over the next few years. He worked as a graphic designer for nearly 10 years before deciding to be a photographer. A chance meeting with an architect and interior designer in 1997 led to his new occupation of interior and architectural photography. Tsang's professional expertise has been recognised by many universities and arts institutes. He was a part-time lecturer and course leader for various university photography courses from 1978 to 2000.

Exchange Square, Hong Kong



Shot for Association of Protecting Victoria Harbour



Abu Dhabi, UAE



Convention Centre, Hong Kong



Shenyang, China

How do you find a successful photo?

Good translation of composition of geometry and good light. A tremendous "feel of sharpness" (I do not mean the focus) in the photos related to the architecture, that attracts our hearts.

What's the most difficult shot you have taken?

Shooting two particular photos for the Hong Kong Tourism Board: I was shooting a "traditional boat" on the Victoria Harbour with the Central Plaza and Bank of China Tower in the background, with a beautiful angle of the boat and excellent sunlight. I went to take shots when the boat sailed every Wednesday and Saturday, but the boat only sailed for two hours before sunset. It took me six months to capture those two photos!

What's the most enjoyable photo shoot you have had?

Photographing my wife, any time, any place.

What advice do you have for young architectural photographers?

Be attentive and patient, observe with your heart and sharpen your own eyes for a good sense of things, compose the shot carefully and "crop" out the "disturbing elements" inside the frame.



Born in Picton, Ontario, 1957, Robert Burley has been a passionate observer of the built environment for the past three decades. His works explore the relationships between nature, architecture, and the urban landscape. In his earliest projects, Don Valley, Ontario and O'Hare, Chicago (both from the 1980s), he set out to capture the continuity between landscapes both natural and artificial. Burley works with a 4 x 5 camera. The clarity and precision of his unique vision, matched by his exceptional technical ability, result in works of great sensitivity. Burley's photographs reveal his continuing fascination with the subtle interplay of natural landscapes and the built environment. Burley currently teaches at Ryerson University's School of Image Arts in Toronto, Canada. He is represented by the Stephen Bulger Gallery.



Darkroom #2, Building Three, Kodak Canada (2005)



Darkroom #16, Building Three, Kodak Canada (2006)



AGFA-Geveart Film Plant, Antwerp (2007)



Demolition of Buildings #65 & #69, Kodak Park, Rochester (2007)



Kodak Pathé Plant Demolition, Chalons-sur-Saône (2007)



The Coating Facility, Building Thirteen, Kodak Canada (2006)

Define a successful architectural shot.

What photography and architecture share is a love of detail. The best architectural photography succeeds through a detailed description of place that allows the viewer to feel as though the camera's view is their own.

What is the most difficult shot you've ever taken?

The Frank Lloyd Wright Home & Studio in Oak Park – like many masterpieces of architecture, it's very difficult to photograph.

What was the most enjoyable photoshoot you have had?

Santiago Calatrava's Galleria at BCE Place in Toronto – it is a playground for light.

What advice do you have for young architectural photographers?

Digital media is redefining photography and already having an enormous impact on how we experience the world around us. I am starting to see many images that are a cross between an architectural photograph and a rendering. Try to keep it honest.



Robert Burley : Photographic Proof. Installation view on the north façade of the OCA © Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal



Robert Burley : Photographic Proof. Installation view on the north façade of the OCA © Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal



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Bubble Theatre (2009)



Jeb Plus shoot (2009)



Graham Uden is a British-born Hong Kong based photographer. He graduated from Ravensbourne College of Art & Design, London, in 1985 with a Degree in Graphic Design / Visual Communications. For the next 7 years he lived and worked in London, New York, Sydney and Singapore, combining photography with design.

On arrival in Hong Kong from New York in 1992, he set to work photographing the faces and scenes of Asia. This has involved being roughed up by ex-President Clinton's bodyguards in HK, being held up by AK-47 totting ex-Khmer Rouge soldiers in Cambodia, crawling across minefields in Laos, squatting 300 metres

from Taleban frontline trenches in the Afghanistan War and narrowly missing suicide bombs in Baghdad.

He currently specialises in editorial features, reportage, travel, corporate, commercial and architectural photography in the Asia region.

Define a successful architectural shot.

A shot that shows how the architectural space works, not simply nice corners or interesting viewpoints on their own, whilst keeping the ambience as the architect intended

What is the most difficult shot you've ever taken?

Shooting on the outside of the top of the Macau Tower before construction was completed....without a safety rope!

What was the most enjoyable photoshoot you have had?

Most enjoyable was probably shooting the Peninsula Hotels worldwide for their annual reports. 5 star living, great interiors, great foodall round a great product

Any words of advice for budding / amateur architectural photographers?

Train your eye for anal detail and get a good shift lens



Phoenix TV (2009)



Jeb Plus shoot (2009)



Manchester United Experience (2009)

HSBC Executive floor, Regional HQ (2009)

The best architectural photography happens when the architect and photographer work in tandem. Architect Greg Pearce of One Space was with me the entire 12 hours it took to shoot this technology integrated interior. This strikingly modern re-design is a transformational departure from its predecessor. After 11 hours of continuous shooting I felt we had barely scratched the surface of the pure white composite stone floors.

The executive's own offices are largely transparent. An enigmatic 'veil' embedded into the continuous floor-to-ceiling glass office fronts comprises two layers of crisply scored glass illuminated by concealed LED lighting, providing semi-obscurity and a luminous internal façade that self-adjusts with the changing daylight. This detail that offers the highest degree of acoustic privacy also provided the biggest challenge to photograph. Interesting.

Jeb Plus shoot (2009)

Myself and graphic designers Yellow Creative were brought on board to shoot and create marketing material to promote the group's 'best partition system in the world'. On spending an entire afternoon immersed in the KplusK-designed space it became clear to us it had to be shot and presented in a way different to most other sterile and ultra clean styles of its competitors.

The system and space came over as esoteric yet warm and sensual by the use of its treatment of glass, materials, reflections and lighting. Its simplicity in form and operation combined with a visual slenderness and innate strength gave the partitions and space an almost stealth-like quality, hence the flush facades made it challenging to shoot. The aluminium structure melted away behind glass that appears to float in space prompting an initial straight 14 hour shoot to get the desired effect - with subsequent full day shoots to follow

To emphasise the engaging movement of the partitions we employed a model and shot her dancing within the space. Glass partition systems are some of the most difficult spaces to shoot in architectural photography, and this one proved to be the most difficult yet rewarding one I've shot.

Phoenix TV (2009)

Located in Tai Po, an existing factory building shell was transformed into this hi-tech 24-hour satellite TV studio complex. The design was interesting and relatively easy to shoot as the architects had designed everything around circles, which meant the studios could be shot at virtually any angle due to no 'back-end ugly parts' in full view of the camera. This was a necessity as the studios incorporate a fully automated TV camera track system - hence, wherever the cameras shoot from there had to be aesthetically pleasing views

The challenging part came in that it all had to be shot with very long exposures in low light during live on air time. So nothing could be moved and we weren't allowed to interact with the staff. Luckily the staff were frozen in front of their computer screens most of the time following news stories so not too many 'ghosts' appeared in the shots.

Manchester United Experience (2009)

My only brief on this project was that I was not allowed to shoot any interactive displays whilst actual football matches were being shown due to the strict copyright laws governing the professional soccer leagues - difficult considering most displays were showing round the clock looped soccer action, but I successfully avoided being given a red card by waiting and watching each video loop to avoid copyright violating footage.

Sky photo (2009)

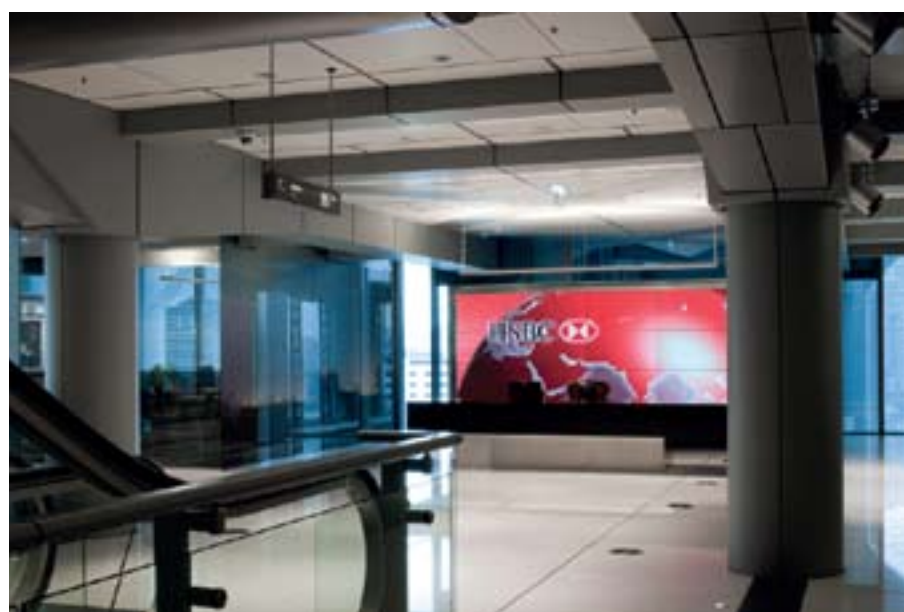
Workers were putting up the glass façade at Lohas Park. The sky had momentarily been reflected in the glass panel and it looked like it could have been from the set of the movie 'The Truman Show'

Bubble Theatre (2009)

City of dreams Bubble theatre



Sky photo (2009)



HSBC Executive floor, Regional HQ (2009)