

“Doors”

by Malcolm McElvaney

Imagine a room with doors concealing so many worlds at the finger tips of the photographer all around them, from the center of the room we stand and look around but does that photographer really see all those worlds or explore each door fully. Even in the best of times it isn't possible and I know I preferred the wide expanse of nature photographer as it was likely the path of least resistance, that was an obvious door for me. The time and ability to travel made it possible to seek out the pockets of nature via state parks, in doing so perhaps I placed a limit on my progress into photography at the cost of the ideal I preferred. Life happens and real limits close doors easily opened before but the same drive and energy for the art form and pursuit of it still exist. I discovered home town photography and through that door discovered everything can be of interest and learned to deal with light conditions any time of day. Proximity to where I photographed seemed to increase my need to take pictures but also allowed fewer images captured to be just as satisfying. Each door explored will offer a different experience and lessons to be learned. Life closes in again and what seems like more limits is not actually a negative but the doors opened this time are more introspective and closer to home. It is from here that I am barely beginning the journey forward again into photography as I write this. The energy will go into planning, dreaming, and the occasional photograph actually produced as time allows; however, a slowing down also allows for old ideas to be revisited and explored further. The center of the room is the point we return too after each trip out and process what we have learned. Skill sets get collect here regardless of where the next trip out takes us. Photography is greater than the sums of it parts explored.

The pursuit of photography is in essence the act of collecting photographs to be admired for a time and most likely lost in time eventually; however, there is also the very act of practicing within the limits we found ourselves in at the moment for each photograph that got added to the collection. Expanding beyond those limits and growing in the art form is the challenge I see set before me now, it was true of past endeavors as well. The avenue of an easy already made scene to capture, most days, is traded up for an image that as a photographer I plan and dream up with far more artistic effect and see the time to do it in a more positive way. Paths traveled change not the end goal. Appreciate the time put into those photographs taken before as they may be an unique record of what once could be done; however, our abilities in the present is just as valuable. A shift in perspective and how we see the world with a fresh outlook opening up new aspects once ignored.

I can only write from my experience of “photography” but in truth it is just the art form that chose me so perhaps the time is finally here to mix in other art forms and learn new

skill sets. Life is unpredictable and perhaps a change can seem like a negative but it is maybe better seen as that chance to reflect and adapt. Enjoy your pursuits and dreams and never give up, just try to emerge and keep that same passion and energy level.