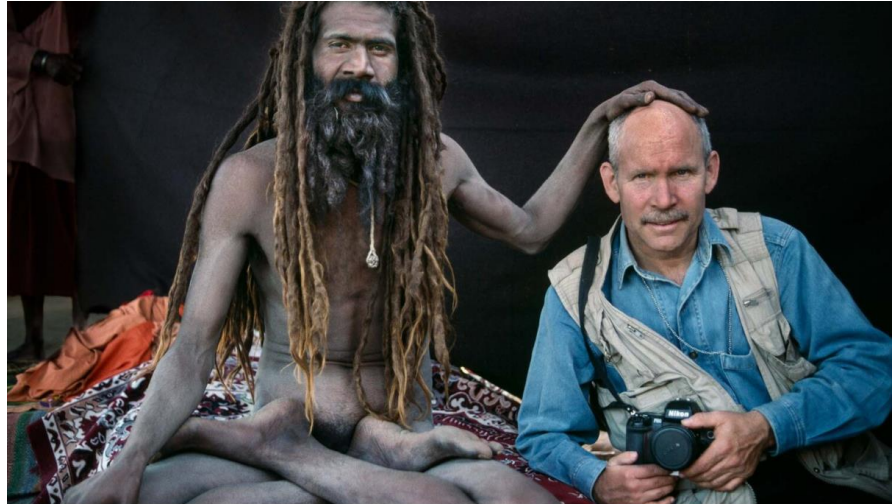


#61 May 2021
Cameraderie
Steve McCurry (1950-)



Steve McCurry is alive and current in photography, having worked extensively for National Geographic, among many. He shoots in color, and his images have intense appeal for intimate views of people and places.

McCurry's Wikipedia entry is here:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steve_McCurry

Here is his extensive personal website. It has a great number of images.

<https://www.stevemccurry.com/>

McCurry has photographed in India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, war sites around the world, the 9-11 attack. He seems to have gone wherever there has been conflict and tragedy; and recorded its effects on humanity everywhere. Please read the Wikipedia article for an excellent summary of his travels and work.

McCurry has been criticized for altering his images in PS without comment. He has defended this practice with vague statements about his staff and others transmitting his images. He has also said he is creating stories, not strict photojournalist reporting. His alterations have included removing figures from scenes. See the Wikipedia article, subtopic Photo manipulation, for more details. This certainly has an impact for each of us in competitions, as we must adhere to the definition of photojournalism when competing in that category.

McCurry's most famous image is probably his "Afghan Girl." It appeared on the June 1985 cover of National Geographic. It is among the McCurry images criticized for editing, although its impact remains. It is said to be the most famous image ever appearing in National Geographic.



Everything about this image is right there to see: the green eyes (against green fabric slits and a green background), good lighting, a direct look at the camera, the stained face, and the mix of emotions and experiences in the face.

A young monk runs along the wall over his peers at the Shaolin Monastery in Henan Province, China, 2004.



McCurry caught a “decisive moment” of an athletic young monk performing a “horizontal wall run” over his peers’ heads. This same stunt may be seen in western parkour. Here is a link to one of many YouTube videos showing the parkour stunt:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bgyrrjmavy4> The stunt is enabled by staying in the horizontal wall run for only a brief time.

Tailor carrying his sewing machine, Porbandar, India, 1983.



Taken, of course, during monsoon flooding, as the poor man must relocate with his equipment. The machine looks like a hand-cranked flywheel sewing machine. I have seen one in use by my wife’s dressmaker making a house-call in Turkey. They are quite portable.

Four monks at Angkor Wat.



So why is this a good image? The monks' faces are indistinct; the sky is featureless; the view is boringly centered.

My answer. McCurry has used an extremely wide-angle lens for this shot to contrast the four nearly silhouetted monks with the apparently remote main temple. He successfully conveys the rainy-day mood.