

Michael Perenich Interview – Historic Kenwood Artist Enclave

By Brian Lynch

This is another in a series of interviews with Historic Kenwood artists as part of highlighting our “Neighborhood of the Arts” and our soon to be Artist Enclave.

Did you receive any formal training in photography? How has that helped or hurt your work?

--No I did not receive any formal training. Some of my friends shoot for fun and professionally, so I have learned a lot through them. I have also used resources online to improve my skills. If one does some searching around in forums, blogs, videos, etc. they will find a plethora of tips and tutorials on photography. The upside to learning like this is that my work isn't confined to the things that I've learned, and I'm much more willing to experiment. The downside is that I make a lot of mistakes that I have to learn from (which isn't all that bad)



What are the essential steps for an up-coming photographer to make a successful living as a fine art photographer?

1) Get an intro camera, don't go all out on your first camera. A nice lens is more important 2) Learn everything about the camera and all the settings. Shoot in manual mode until the settings are second nature 3) Use RAW format. 5) Get a fast memory card (more important for video). 4) Learn Photoshop, or at least Lightroom. 5) Bring your camera with you if there is any possibility of seeing something worth capturing.

Do You Have A Favorite Walk Around Lens...If So What Is It?

- EF-S 18-200mm f/3.5-5.6 IS lens

Which one item of equipment would you say is the most important to you?

-The lens

Would you give a brief walk through your work flow?

-Sure 1) (I like numbering) I decide RAW or JPEG, flash, external flash, other lighting, tripod, monopod, remote for time lapse? 2) Shooting for what I want to capture, what I want others to see in my work 3) Briefly reviewing the shots after I take them, adjust, retake if possible. 4) Export to computer, weed out all the good and bad. 5) Edit the goods with Lightroom, edit the really good ones with Photoshop. (ask my wife which ones she really likes, then Photoshop those too). 6) Distribute.



In general, during a session, how many photos would you say you take to find "the right one?"

-That really depends, as I get better I find my first shot is often really good, mostly because I think it's authentic. If I have the time, I'd say anywhere from 2-20 shots to get what I want.

How do you decide on locations & subjects?

-Obviously if someone hires me, but other than that I'll scope a spot out for a while, or I'll have an idea of what I'm looking to accomplish and I'll will it to happen.



Do you rely on lighting (natural, or artificial), or do you rely on computer manipulation?

- Indoors, lighting is key, I'd say 80% of time you'd want to supply extra lighting. I wouldn't rely on Photoshop compensate for bad lighting as it will erode the quality of your photos.

Do you prefer making color or black and white photos?

-I reserve black and white for select photos. Something dramatic, or rustic; I shoot mostly in color



What has been inspiring/influencing your work lately?

-Honestly, a lot of what I see online, I have a friend that shoot Tampa and St. Pete quite often and his shots are often inspiring. My other buddy is an cinematographer out in LA, so I'm always motivated when he posts something on his blog. I have professional friends on Instagram that share great shots.

Who are your favorite artists in your field?

- I really don't have a clue, I probably would change my mind every day if I ever made it up. I could look National Geographic any month and find a photographer that I think is amazing.

What else would you like to say?

I'm an attorney by profession, but I became passionate about photography because I wanted to capture not only the special moments, but also all the moments in between. Whenever I take a trip I find it necessary to capture something that is about where I am going and what I am doing. The benefit of doing this is that I get to relive the whole experience by looking at these shots. I've put them all together in a video with music, it's not very fun to watch for other people, but for those on the trip they really appreciate it.