

TEN AWESOME PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECTS

To inspire and boost your creativity



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Creativity by Lucrecer Braxton

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IS YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY IN A RUT?

Have you been looking for something new to shoot but not sure where to start? Well, I have created this book to help you do just that. In the following pages, you will find ten photography projects to give you new ideas and help stretch your creative muscle.

The following projects will be fun challenges you can do in a day or over the course of a month or a year. Choose what fits your skill level or try something that pushes you to take your photography to the next level.

Photography gives you an opportunity to expand the way of think, see and interact with the world around you. I know you are going to have a lot of fun. So, pick a project and get started!



WINDOWS & DOORS

Windows and doors are a great beginning photography project. For one, doors and windows are everywhere. Secondly, you will develop an eye for the unusual as you start looking for interesting doors to photograph.

Count yourself lucky if you find peeling painted doors, fancy door knockers and beautiful windows boxes. Doorways are a nice backdrop for portraits. They ground the subject and offer an instant frame for your image.

Schedule a photo walk with a friend in a neighborhood that has a lot of character. Search for doors and windows that tell a story and capture it. Look for bright colors, unusual details and make sure you take a full shot of the door and a few of the details. You will be glad you did.



Series projects:

Shoes

Flowers

Wall Art

Sunsets

SHOOTING FROM THE HIP

Shooting from the hip is one of my favorite photography project. It is pure candid photography. Shooting from the hip is exactly like it sounds. Place your camera at your hip and take a picture. Do not look through the viewfinder at all and do not review your images until you are done shooting.

The cool thing about shooting like this is you never know what you are going to get. With a bit of practice and patience you will learn how to shoot images that are interesting.

Shoot with a wide angle. It will give you a wider point of view, which replicates our field of view. You will also want to use a faster shutter speed to control motion blur and freeze the action in the image. One more thing for a great "hip shot", use a narrow aperture for a deeper depth of field.



PROJECT 50

If you shoot with a DSLR, you most likely have a 50mm lens or some other prime lens in your camera bag. Challenge yourself to shoot with the 50mm, for fifty days and use none of your other lenses. This is a great exercise in seeing the world differently and learning how to not rely on zoom lenses.

You can also do this challenge with a point and shoot camera or your smartphone. Try this: frame your image, then take two steps forward, now shoot your image. The idea here is create a tighter frame for your image. Do this one thing will instantly improve your photography because you are removing unnecessary distractions from the background.



DOCUMENT A SERIES

Find an event going on locally in your town and document it on a regular basis. Each Summer, we have Salsa on the Square in downtown Cincinnati. If I did not love dancing salsa so much, I would spend those days photographing the people. The mix of dancers and bands changes each night and offers a great opportunity for creating a series of images.

Another idea is to photograph the same park bench on different days. While certain aspects of the environment, like the placement of the bench, will not change, what will change is what happens on or to that bench daily. Capture it with snow on it, couples, a person sleeping, birds or nothing at all. Just shoot a series of images.

If you decide to document a series, pick a theme or subject that will keep your interest for a while.



PORTRAITS WITHOUT FACES

If you think about your favorite portraits, what usually makes them special is the eyes and how engaged the subject is with the photographer. But, not all engaging portraits involve photographing the face.

If you have worked on a 365 Day self-portrait challenge, you know that it can get boring real quick when you are always shooting your face. Instead, consider photographing other parts of yourself that give a glimpse of what makes you distinctly you.

Do you have a mole or freckles on your arms? Do the scars on your hands or knees tell a story that needs to be told? Tell the story with a portrait and have fun. Seeing yourself differently will elevate your 365 Day project to a new level of awesome.



SEXY BLUR - BOKEH

Bokeh (pronounced Bo-Kay) is the aesthetic quality of the blur, in the out-of-focus areas of an image. Bokeh is appealing to us because it forces us to focus on a particular part of an image. Bokeh is rendered by lens, not the camera. In general, telephoto and portrait lenses offer the best bokeh. Two lenses I like using for great bokeh are the 50mm and the 85mm lens.

Try your hand at creating a photograph with nice, buttery bokeh. The subject should be in focus and the background blurred. Also, set your camera to Aperture Priority mode and set the aperture to the lowest setting. Experiment. Bokeh is one of those techniques where beauty is in the eye of the beholder. What looks great to you someone else may not like. Use your own judgement and keep shooting.



A DAY IN THE LIFE

If you have a free day you can devote to a photography project, consider doing a day in the life of yourself or someone close to you. The possibilities for this type of project are endless. In the images below, I documented a day at the zoo with my children. Even though these images are three years old, we love to relive the day and how I would not go into the Reptile House.

Day in the life photography shows us where and how people live. Good documentary photography evokes emotion and shows us that our lives are not that much different from others.

Day in the life photography is also called Slice of life photography and Time capsule photography.



BLACK & WHITE

If you tend to shoot in color all the time, try your hand at monochromatic photography for about a month. I did this a few years ago because I wanted to know how I convert photos to black and white. This is a great exercise in seeing which of your images look good in black and white and which do not.

Shooting with the purpose of turning your images black and white will often surprise you. You may find that images you would normally leave in color look so much better in black and white. You will also develop a better eye for composition since removing the color from your pictures forces you to shoot stronger images.

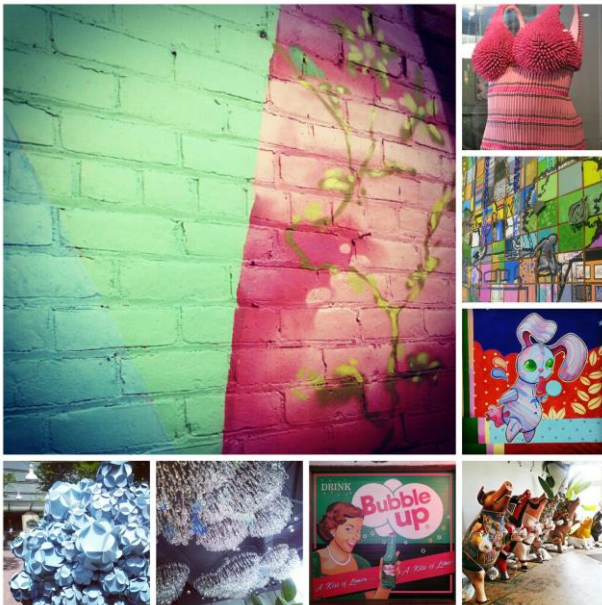


ENVIRONMENTAL ART

Photo walks are a great way to explore the local art in your city. Pick an area you have not been to before and get a few friends together for an afternoon of shooting and exploring.

You may decide to select a theme for the walk and look for art that fits, such as murals or contemporary art. We have a large variety of murals all over my region and I love going around capturing different parts of them.

Another idea you can try for your photo walk is capturing people in an artistic environment. Coffee shops attract an interesting mix of people you can capture in candid shots. Or, if you are bold enough, ask if you can photograph them. Photographing strangers makes for another great project.



FOOD PHOTOGRAPHY

Food shots some of my favorite photographs to capture. I always learn something about lighting and how quickly food changes the longer it sits. If you are interested in learning to take better food shots, try to light your food by placing it next to a well lit area. Windows work perfect for this, as food looks so much better with natural light.

Another reason you may want to consider a food photography project is because food does not move. I have learned more about my camera from shooting still life images and food than I have from any other subject. The variety of items we can shoot is huge. If you like fruit, shoot that. If baked good are more your thing, get to baking or visit your local bakery for a few tasty treats.

Use a lens with a low aperture, such as a 50mm. If you are in a dark restaurant, take advantage of candle light to help improve your photograph. If you want more tips on shooting great food photography, visit [this post](#) where I share four of my favorite tips.



CONTACT LUCRECER

I love connecting with and meeting new people. If you have any questions about the projects I have included in this book, feel free to contact me at lucrecerbraxton@gmail.com.

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