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Light, Gesture, And Color (Voices That Matter)



Synopsis

Jay Maisel, hailed as one of the most brilliant, gifted photographers of all time, is much more than that. He is a mentor, teacher, and trailblazer to many photographers, and a hero to those who feel Jay's teaching has changed the way they see and create their own photography. He is a living legend whose work is studied around the world, and whose teaching style and presentation garner standing ovations and critical acclaim every time he takes the stage. Now, for the first time ever, Jay puts his amazing insights and learning moments from a lifetime behind the lens into a book that communicates the three most important aspects of street photography: light, gesture, and color. Each page unveils something new and challenges you to rethink everything you know about the bigger picture of photography. This isn't a book about f-stops or ISOs. It's about seeing. It's about being surrounded by the ordinary and learning how to find the extraordinary. It's about training your mind, and your eyes, to see and capture the world in a way that delights, engages, and captivates your viewers, and there is nobody that communicates this, visually or through the written word, like Jay Maisel. *Light, Gesture & Color* is the seminal work of one of the true photographic geniuses of our time, and it can be your key to opening another level of understanding, appreciation, wonder, and creativity as you learn to express yourself, and your view of the world, through your camera. If you're ready to break through the barriers that have held your photography back and that have kept you from making the types of images you've always dreamed of, and you're ready to learn what photography is really about, you're holding the key in your hands at this very moment.

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Customer Reviews

This isn't a book about photography, this is a book about seeing. I've done a couple of workshops with Jay, and this book reflects his teaching focus. I've never heard him talk about image noise, f-stops, shutter speed, or any of the technical things that most photography books focus on, other than dismissively. "If people are talking about the noise in a photograph, it's a crappy photograph." Yeah, that simple. Overall his message is that seeing is the most important part of creating great photographs, all the rest of the technical stuff isn't worth spending time talking about because it's pretty easy. Crazy? I don't think so - every professional photographer I've met who's taken a workshop or class with Jay identifies that workshop as the key turning point in their development as a photographer. In his workshops, he's always done a lecture called "Light, Gesture, Color". In the workshops I did, at the end of the hour when the lights were turned on, the room was still and silent for a very long time. The Brits have a great word for how we felt - "gobsmacked." He was just showing photos of his, and casually talking, as each image came up, he'd say some short phrase or sentence, in the imperative, before casually talking about the image. Seemed conversational, but it wasn't - it was a very carefully structured set of lessons in understanding how light, gesture, and color work, how they make great or ho-hum photos, and how to see and understand what's going on. The density of information is what caused the long silence at the end, and the same is true here. If you just casually flip through the pictures and read the few sentences with each, you'll think, "huh?"

It's important to be clear that this is fundamentally a book about Jay Maisel. Yes, it's ostensibly presented as a photographic self-help book of tips and guidance. It is. But its morsels of candy are each tightly wrapped within Jay's personal anecdotes. It's not enough for Jay to simply say, for example, "Be aware that colors shift as outdoor light shifts." No, he wraps such a message in a story about a time from the 1970's when he was on his way to photograph some commercial project

and discovered that" That is, this book is primarily about its author and secondarily about photography. Take it or leave it, but that's the way it is. I chose to take it. I've long stopped buying or reading photo self-help books. But books presented by someone like Jay Maisel whose work I admire and who was a professional photographer for so many years are hard for me to pass up. I glad I didn't. I have never personally met Jay Maisel (darn it) but my impression from his photos, his writings, and a few videos is that he is (a) quite a secure fellow, and (b) not shy. Nothing in "Light, Gesture & Color" shakes my impressions. Jay's photo work is distinctively straight-forward, not generally multi-layered and often boldly graphic with strong color fields bounded by sharp forms and lines. His is not nuanced conceptual work; it's in-your-face and what-you-see-is-what-it-is. He's a master of seeing such scenes in the everyday world around him. "Light, Gesture & Color" attempts to decompose the elements of Jay's image style into characteristics that can be redeployed to nearly any other type of imagery. Chapters are very short, often only a few short paragraphs accompanied by an example image. Sometimes the examples support the topic, sometimes not.

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