

INTERVIEW

# Shoot to thrill



Chairman and founder of the Malta Institute of Professional Photography **Kevin Casha** shares an album that spans more than three decades of professional photography.

**Do you remember the first photograph you shot?**

To be honest, I don't. And anyway, I'm sure it was rubbish.

**What made you pursue photography as a profession?**

I've always been artistically inclined. Being particularly drawn to images, I bought my first camera to improve on the shots I used to take with my dad's old compact camera. As soon as I started using my first SLR camera, I realised how little I knew about handling it properly and so I decided to do a basic photography course. I immediately got the bug and photography has been an integral part of my life since then.

At the time, I worked with the civil service but this didn't excite me at all. So I took the plunge, left my secure but boring job, and ventured into professional photography.

**In your more than 30 years' experience in photography, how has the medium changed?**

There have been tremendous changes, with the main one being



the arrival of the digital medium. This has brought photography to the masses and made it more creative and challenging. Nowadays, photographers are like painters – they have a blank canvas and their only obstacles are their own creativity and skills with technique and post-processing.

Digital photography has also made it difficult for someone to

make photography their main source of income. That said, progress cannot be stopped and professional photographers must accept the situation and adapt.

The golden days of the photographic profession are over – yet the artistic and exciting creative opportunities opened up by this new technology are fantastic.



**Nowadays cameras are cheaper and more accessible. But can anyone be a photographer?**

Anyone can take a picture but not anyone can be an artistic and successful photographer.

**Do you miss the process of actually developing photos?**

I only miss the instant when the print would start appearing in the developer. But to be honest, I used to spend too many dark and lonely days in my darkroom to miss it.

**What is, for you, the most important element in photography – composition, light or subject?**

For me, the two most important things in photography are the mind and the eye.

**What is the best photograph that you didn't manage to shoot?**

Once, on a very stormy day, I managed to arrive near Filfla in a small boat. The views were amazing, with seagulls flying around me, seeking shelter on the island. However, I couldn't take any photos as I was too seasick to hold the camera.

**If you had to choose a favourite genre, what would it be?**

I have always enjoyed working with people and portraiture. In fact, my main work is associated with

fashion and model portfolios – however, I've also started enjoying street photography due to its realistic and simple storytelling qualities.

**What is your role as Malta Institute of Professional Photography chairman and how does the institute help in the local development of photography?**

Mine is quite a demanding role yet I look back with a lot of satisfaction at everything that the institute has achieved.

The institute has managed to encourage many professional photographers to work and cooperate together. Through the institute we have also managed to establish high quality standards in the medium with structured qualifications and regular international seminars and workshops.

We also give invaluable instruction in matters that are somewhat ancillary to taking photographs, including issues such as ethics, copyright, data protection, pricing and customer relations.

We've also gained the respect of other European countries due to our high level of work. Maltese photographers are now regularly asked to sit on international judging panels as well as to lecture at important conventions and events abroad. We have also managed to get photography academically recognised with a Higher National Diploma course offered at the Mcast Art and Design School.

My wish for the future is that the local authorities recognise the honour and name we have been giving Malta for the past years by granting us a local centre for photography. It is something I've been personally lobbying for the past decade, to no avail yet.

**Photos by Andreas Gursky and Cindy Sherman fetch millions at auction. Can photography be considered as high art?**

I think there is no question that photography today can be considered as high art, particularly in places like the United States, France and Belgium. In Malta, it's still very difficult to convince people about the artistic aspect of photography, but we will get there.

For more of Kevin Casha's photos visit [www.kevincasha.com](http://www.kevincasha.com)



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