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ON THE COVER

"This is a promo image for author Payne Harrison's techno thriller, *Eurostorm*, which he is pitching to networks for a movie deal," Dixie Dixon says of our cover photo. For more about Dixie's adventures in commercial photography, turn to page sixteen.
D3X, AF-S NIKKOR 24-70mm f/2.8G ED



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+ EDITOR'SNOTE

The great Henri Cartier-Bresson, who is often called the father of modern photojournalism, gave us the concept of the decisive moment. He defined it as "the simultaneous recognition, in a fraction of a second, of the significance of an event as well as the precise organization of forms which gives that event its proper expression." Most of us are likely to consider it the instant the key elements—could be light, shadow, shape, gesture, color, you-name-it—come together in the frame, and we recognize that this is the story we want to tell and we trip the shutter.

Then again, we might agree with photographer Alan Zenreich, who maintained that the true decisive moment came when Cartier-Bresson pointed to a frame on his contact sheet and said, "Print that one."

In any case, decisive moments of one kind or another seem to come again and again to certain photographers, and not because of any single element and not because they're lucky. I'll give you that luck favors the prepared, and it may well be the residue of design, but its limit is maybe two great shots on the memory card. To consistently capture decisive moments is beyond luck, beyond even technology, technique, timing and persistence. It's all of those things.

In this issue our three featured photographers had something to say about the decisive moment, although none of them actually used the phrase.

Stewart Halperin referred to the making of one of his photographs as "watching compositions come and go" until he saw the one he was waiting for.

Dixie Dixon, a fashion photographer, gets to direct the decisive moment; literally and figuratively, she can call the shots. But she doesn't. "I never bark orders or tell a model that she's not doing it right and has to change the poses." Rather, she'll keep shooting, confident that she'll get to the moment she wants.

And for Mark Alberhasky, it's creative decisions that capture key moments. He knows what he wants to do and the kind of photograph he wants to get. "Great photographs are rarely serendipitous," he says.

And great moments? Your call on that one.

Bany T-1



"I shot these three photos at the Venice carnival. Masks are like flowers: you think you're an instant genius because of their inherent beauty, but there's also nuance—the eyes, the turn of a head, a face in the background. Don't let the beauty of something make you think you're doing more than you're doing."

D200, AF-5 DX VR Zoom-NIKKOR 18-200mm f/3.5-5.6G IF-ED





SUM

Stewart D. Halperin took our first question—it was something about his observation of color in a scene—and ran with it, free-associating as he went. We were smart enough not to get in the way.

"Color is the great palette of possibilities. I've spent my life searching out bold colors, and the search does not include the realm of Photoshop. I'll lighten, darken, maybe add a touch of contrast, but for the most part, my work is done when I push the shutter."



"Did you ever hear the psychological term, 'apperceptive mass'? It means that everything in your experience goes into the next moment of your behavior. I believe that when I push the shutter button, that decision is the sum total of all kinds of experiences."

"In workshops I'll often have the students cover the LCDs on the backs of their cameras. Why would you risk losing the next moment by looking down to see what you've got? Professionals do this as well as amateurs. Sure, review your pictures, but if you're looking at the results as you shoot, the world is passing you by in those moments...and the nuance of light is changing."



ABOVE LEFT "The old palaces on the other side of the Grand Canal in Venice make this more than just a lineup of blue-tarp covered gondolas on a day that was a little too cold, a little too rainy. Things had stopped in Venice."

D70, AF-S VR Zoom-NIKKOR 24-120mm f/3.5-5.6G IF-ED

ABOVE RIGHT "I took this at a club in Rio de Janeiro. As I started to shoot, a guide tapped me on the shoulder and said, 'No flash.' So I shot at 1/30 second and the blur of red motion resulted in a fine-art print that hangs in corporate offices and private collections and has been one of my best sellers. Nicest tap on the shoulder I ever got."

D100, AF-5 VR Zoom-NIKKOR 24-120mm f/3.5-5.6G IF-ED

OPPOSITE PAGE "The 'little' fishing boat is probably 30 or 40 feet long; the big one is a coal transport. I was on the boat to which the coal was being loaded. The plankton on the bottom of the coal boat attracts fish, so that's why the fishermen were there."

D100, AF-S DX VR Zoom-NIKKOR 18-200mm f/3.5-5.6G IF-ED



"I have to react quickly to what grabs my attention, the particular subject that pulls me in. Then I have to decide: is this the moment? I might see something, but it's flat, onedimensional, and I need to wait for the light to be right or for a person to enter the scene. Sometimes I have to come back at another time. Most of the time I take a lesson from sports photographers: they don't have the luxury of watching

what's going on, then raising the camera." "I did workshops with Ernst Haas years ago, and he would have a slide projector and we'd look at his pictures and the students' pictures. He would project a picture, then throw the projector's lens out of focus and he'd ask, 'Does the color hold together beyond the literal subject of the picture? Is it pleasing to your eye?' He was talking about the arrangement of color, about the tones, about the very construct of color."



"We need to look beyond the subject, to go beyond that original captivation, to be aware that every millimeter of the frame, that canvas, needs to be attended to."

"But realizing these things isn't enough. You have to work at them consciously and conscientiously until they become part of what you do. It's worth the effort because this awareness and learning become part of the apperceptive mass—the sum total of experience."

ABOVE "I was sitting on a bench, 20 feet onto the sand at Laguna Beach in California. I saw the possibility of a picture, and when the kid passed in front he cast his shadow on the umbrella. I still think of it as a fairly spontaneous moment, but you've got to be both prepared and quick." D100, AF-5 VR Zoom-NIKKOR 24-120mm f/3.5-5.6G IF-ED

OPPOSITE PAGE "I stood for an hour on a wall in the old city section of Dresden, Germany, with an umbrella over me, watching compositions come and go. I realized that if I shot at a certain cadence of the walking, everyone in the picture would have one leg. That means something only to me, but that's why I do these pictures: they capture my attention and tell a story."

D70, AF-S VR Zoom-NIKKOR 24-120mm f/3.5-5.6G IF-ED

You can view a selection of Stewart's images and find information about his workshops at www.halperinphotography.com.

