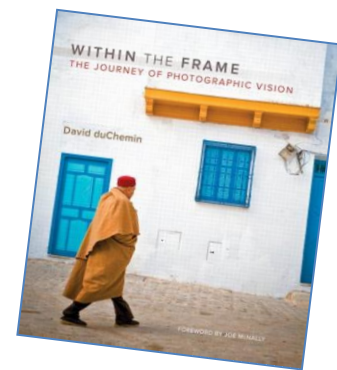


WITHIN THE FRAME

THE JOURNEY OF PHOTOGRAPIC VISION

By David duChemin



Many of the books on photography that I have read either concentrate on the technical issues of taking a good picture or they showcase the author's work. Don't get me wrong, those are good reasons to author a book; both can be interesting, educational and even inspirational. After all, learning the technical aspects of photography, and being inspired by the work and travels of successful photographers is a good thing, but truly understanding what it takes to create a photograph that tells a story or evokes an emotion is beyond the scope of many books.

While I was always impressed by the beautiful photographs and inspired by the stories of travel to exotic locations, I found it hard to understand how the photographers' 'vision' found its way into the photograph. I always suspected it was more a matter of taking lots of photos and choosing the best of the bunch, but I knew there had to be more to it than that.

David duChemin states clearly in the introduction that this "is a book about chasing your vision and telling your stories as clearly and passionately as possible with compelling photography" and much to my surprise, he took a large step toward accomplishing that goal. And he accomplished that goal not by *what* he said, but *how* he said it.

Let me provide just a few examples. On page 11, under a paragraph title **Shoot What Moves You** he encourages you to think of your pictures as "more than a record of 'I was here and saw this.' Instead, [let your pictures say] 'I feel this way about this. I was in this place and saw it like this.'" In other words, pictures are more than just a representation of the subject matter, they are an interpretation.

Technically, how we do that can be a bit tricky; our minds unconsciously make corrections for things we see in the viewfinder. Have you ever taken a picture of a tall building only to notice the distortion when you look at the printed picture? Why didn't you notice it when you took the picture? Because you have seen lots of buildings and you [and your mind] know what a building looks like. But the camera lens is not so forgiving. The wide angle lens is going to distort the image of the building. His suggestion is to tell himself that he is "looking at an image in a frame, not a scene through a lens."

Mentally we need to learn to "Stop looking and begin seeing." Starting on page 156, under the heading **Not-So-Great Expectations**, he discussed the mentality of learning how to see what we are looking at. To make his point, he differentiated between a *picture of a person* and *portrait*. "A portrait is an image about a person. And so it is with photographs of all people, places, or cultures."

This book is full of these thought provoking statements; statements that not only make a point or clarify an idea or concept, but help make it possible to transcend the mental thought into an action plan. After all, much of the magic of how many things work is in the 'how' something is done, not just 'what' was done. This book not only helps us learn 'what' we need to do, but shows us 'how' we need to get it done.