

*versione italiana*

I'm fascinated by the sense of urgency in "Don Vito" one of your images in *Dream of Venice in Black and White*. Can you tell us the circumstances around taking this photo?

Venice is always full of tourists, but like all cities, there are also local people working and living there. It was a wet Friday morning, pretty early, before the majority of the tourists were out. Venice was still busy with the hustle and bustle of the morning commute. The locals were rushing about the streets on their way to work. This is what I was trying to capture in this photo. I was very lucky that someone as interesting as the gentleman in the photo came along. I wanted to show the movement of the person to emphasise the urgency. You don't often see such urgency from the tourist crowds who have all day to get to where they need to be.



All of your photography is now black and white. Can you tell us how you came to this decision to only shoot in monochrome? Did you try colour first and reject it, or has black and white always been your preference?

I tried colour once, I didn't really like it. I will still now and again, but not very often, produce a

colour image but I much prefer to create black and white art. Monochrome, for me, is timeless and creates much stronger visual images. A good black and white photograph needs a strong composition to draw the viewer in; the artist hasn't any strong colours to rely on to grab people's attention. As an artist I often find colour distracting, taking your eye away from what you want the viewer to see and feel.



What was your expectation of Venice? Did you have a shot list before you arrived? You've mentioned that you'd like to go back. What would you be interested in photographing on your next trip?

I wasn't too sure what to expect of Venice, as a city or as a photography location. It's very different to any other city I've been to. I've always liked photographs of the moving gondolas, so really wanted to take my own photo of them. That was really the only shot I had in mind before going. I have since been back, this time I wanted to explore other parts on Venice and venture over to some of the other islands. There are some interesting fishing huts out in the lagoon that are wonderful subjects for long exposure photos.



Long exposures work particularly well when photographing the lagoon, with its expanse of water. However, in your work there is often a wonderful juxtaposition between void and geometric line. Do you seek out this contrast?

Photographs really are just shapes and tones; the art is putting them together to create something visually interesting. I always aim for a strong geometric composition in my photographs. My Urban Geometric Street photos show this along with my long exposure architectural work. It's always much easier to get a strong contrast in tones working with light and shadows, if you can also get a good contrast in shapes too, you're onto something that will work well.

You've travelled extensively and photographed in many countries. What are your criteria now for deciding where to go?

I've always wanted to travel different interesting places, whether that's with or without my camera. Seeing or photographing something that I don't normally see. Cities with interesting buildings or lots of architecture are always high on my list to visit. I'm always happy to revisit countries that I've been to before, as an artist I will always see something that I never saw the time before, even if it's the same scene in different light.

I already have plans to travel to Italy this year and it would be nice to also get back to Venice at some point too.





LINKS

[Tony Sellen](#)

[Dream of Venice in Black and White](#)

[JoAnn Locktov](#)

[Manuela Cattaneo della Volta](#) (*translation*)