

AUGUST 5, 2020

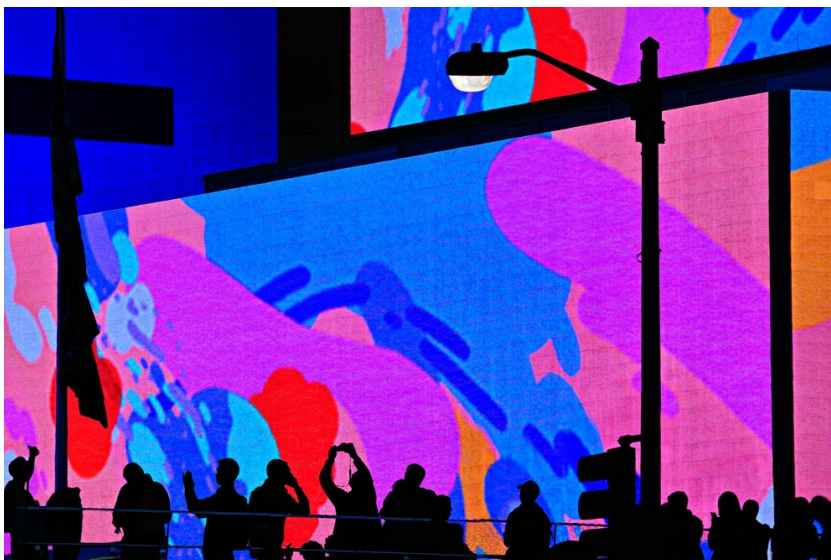
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BEGINNER

One Shot: City Lights

Shooting a silhouette against the lights of Times Square

Featuring **MARK ALBERHASKY**



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Nikon 1 V1, 1 NIKKOR VR 30-110mm f/3.8-5.6 lens, 1/400 second, f/6.3, ISO 400, manual exposure, Matrix metering.

Mark Alberhasky and his wife, Cindy, are returning to their hotel from the PhotoPlus Expo at the Javits Center on the west side of Manhattan when Mark's eye is caught by the splashes of bright color and the freeform design on electronic billboards in Times Square. With the folks at the top of the red steps above the TKTS booth nicely silhouetted by the dazzling light show, it's a picture asking to be taken.

Just one problem. "I wasn't following the Jay Maisel rule," Mark says, "so we rush into the hotel, go up to the room, I grab my camera and tell Cindy I'll be back in a few minutes to get ready for dinner. Then I head downstairs."

He gets into position and zooms the lens to fill the frame with color and design. "But I'm shooting from across the street," Mark says, "and you just don't stop to think about how many double-decker buses there are crossing Times Square."

The display keeps cycling through its changes, and every time the specific graphic Mark wants comes up, a double-decker rolls by to block the shot.

Time passes. Fifteen floors up in the hotel, Cindy comes to realize that in photographer speak, "I'll be back in a few minutes" means "I'll be gone for as long as it takes to get the picture."

On the street, Mark digs in. He's dealt with desert sandstorms, roving lions and once pretty much went nose to nose with a cheetah in the Masai Mara game reserve, and he's not about to be bested by the double-deckers of Times Square.

"As the graphic is changing I'm shooting test shots with the camera set for manual," Mark says. "An autoexposure mode will try to balance everything out, and that's not what I want. This photo is all about impact and stark contrast—the deep black silhouettes against the vibrancy of the billboard."

Twenty minutes later he gets the shot he wants. "It's about seven o'clock on an October evening," he says, "and the darkness makes all that brilliant light all the more brilliant and dramatic."

The specs: Nikon 1 V1, 1 NIKKOR VR 30-110mm f/3.8-5.6 lens, 1/400 second, f/6.3, ISO 400, manual exposure, Matrix metering.

The Jay Maisel rule: Always carry a camera. It's tough to shoot a picture without one.

To see more of Mark's photography, visit his website at www.imagama.com.



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