

PCQC Video Presentation

Fundamentals of Travel Photography by Bob Krist—National Geographic

Lesson 11: People in Performance

This lesson covers photographing people in performances and tipping subjects for photographs

• Technical Considerations

- Before taking any photographs of a performance make sure that photos are allowed. If unsure, ask.
- One common problem in photographing stage shows is overexposure. Many shows use dramatic lighting with high contrast. The light meter on your camera will try to compensate for the dark areas, blowing out the well-lit areas of the photo. There are a couple ways to deal with this problem which is demonstrated by the example photos from Preservation Hall in New Orleans
 - Dial down the exposure compensation by -1 to -2 stops or
 - Change your camera meter to spot meter and aim the spot on the lighted performers
 - A note of caution: Don't use the on-camera flash to shoot these shows. The flash will distract the performers and the audience will be annoyed. Also, the harsh frontal lighting will adversely affect the mood and atmosphere of the performance. Most likely your camera will allow you to change the ISO. Choose a higher ISO. This will make your camera sensor more sensitive to light and allow you to shoot in low light situations without a flash
- For dancers, experiment with your shutter speed. Slow it down enough to get the faces in focus while the rest of the body will be a slight blur. Get a "safety shot" first at a high shutter speed. An example is provided.

• Tipping for Photographs

- Be sensitive to the income gap between tourists or photographers and the local population. In some instances, tipping may be acceptable and expected; in other locales it may be an insult. Gauge what to do by taking the lead of others who may be taking photos and tipping. If unsure, check with a tour guide, hotel concierge or tourist board representative.

• Exercise

- Go to a local school production or a pub with a band. Ask permission to photograph; take your pictures without a flash. Experiment with metering, ISO, shutter speed, and aperture. Watch for special moments. Share shots with the performers.