



Are you creative or reactive? It's an internal discussion I've been known to have on occasion and in fact, a discussion I've had with several other photographers in the past. It seems the two are mutually exclusive. But are they really?

I'd firmly put myself in the reactive category. I photograph things that exist and that require little more from me than an ability to capture them as they are - landscapes, wildlife etc. It suits my mind set much more. I'm a technical person - I look at camera specs and they make sense. I can see the technology and how to apply it. The stumbling block for me is trying to make interesting pictures. Sure if the subject is good, then it's no problem. But how do you make something look good even after it's been done many times before? How do you come up with that 'different' shot.

Some people do this regularly. They are the creative types. Those that have ideas and put them into practice. You may think this is the best way to be, but from my experience, you usually find that the most creative photographers are the least technical. Sometimes they have a great idea, but they have no way of knowing how to achieve it. At the other end of the scale is the technical person. they have all this knowledge of how to do things, but they struggle for subjects and situations to apply them to. Of course, the very best photographers are those that sit in the middle. They have some creative and some technical expertise and they're able to put the two of them together.

From my point of view, I only get creative with a subject when I think of a technique to use on it. You see photography for me is about experimentation. Why take the same style of shot time and again when you could use 101 different techniques to get something different? I'd rather take fewer images but keep trying new techniques to push my self into new areas. Sure you need to build up a style, but you also need to break your style now and again. It's like my now well worn mantra that "photography has no rules - only guidelines to get you started".

So where do you fit? Where do your ideas come from? Do you look at the work of other photographers and try to emulate it? Do you deconstruct images and try to re-create them? Are your ideas innate like the creatives, or are you techy and generally need a subject to get you going?

Hit up the comments and let us know.