

Interview with Karthik Addagarla, an IIM grad turned Celebrity Landscape Photographer



Visakhapatnam, Aug 4, 2020 (Issuewire.com) - This young photographer and entrepreneur offer us an insight into his experiences and learnings during his travels.

Karthik Addagarla places the human encounter at the heart of his work. This young photographer lives it with an overflowing passion as evident by this interview carried out at his home in Visakhapatnam

Q: What inspired you to become a photographer after scoring a near 100 percentile in CAT?

Karthik Addagarla: Well, right after my graduation, my first job was in Chennai. I did not have many friends there and I wanted to do something productive and creative. I was also a classic case of someone blessed with mathematical and technical skills but someone who wanted to become an artist. Photography was the mid-way! It needed both technical and creative skills. I bought my first DSLR, a canon and I used to visit Adyar broken bridge every morning. It was a place where a bridge is half broken and extends into the flowing Adyar right at the point where it merges with the ocean. There were many migratory birds there. So to find my subjects, it was only a kilometer ride from my place. I was fortunate in a way to find inspiration and motivation in the initial days from Mother Nature herself. As time moved past, I was drawn more and more towards nature.

All the hard work and dedication paid off and today, I specialize in HDR photography of landscaping and monuments and my photographs have been well appreciated in India and abroad.

Q: How would you describe your learning experience as a photographer?

The journey to becoming a professional photographer is enriching and it needs dedication. There's lots of reading, whether it's books or websites, and then working and testing with the camera and photography equipment. It required lots of patience. The most effective way to learn photography is from other pictures. I used to browse through hundreds of pictures each day on Flickr. I also use my Instagram channel and social media to share my pictures. Social media is a great place to receive feedback for the photographs. Feedback sharpens the eye. I spend a lot of time perfecting a certain photographic culture, observing the work of other photographers, in bookstores or on the Internet.

Q: Regarding other photographers, which all photographers inspire you?

The photographer whom I was majorly influenced right from my early years was Ansel Adams. It won't be wrong to say that his work is a major reason why I got motivated to become a photographer. Maxrive is another landscape photographer, whose photographs of the magnificent Alps is mind-blowing. He has an incredible sense of composition and a unique way of capturing the scene through his lens.

Daniel Kordan is another photographer that I respect a lot. He can wait for days and weeks to capture the perfect shot that he is looking for. There is also Steve McCurry, the famous travel photographer. He has a philosophy that I particularly appreciate. I really like his way of photographing people, his approach to humans. Lots of emotions in his work and photos that make you dream of traveling. I observe the way other people work a lot. It is important to be interested in what is behind the photographs and the story behind them.

Q: Let's go back to your journey. Tell us more about your travel experience, any favorite trip?

I was on a bike trip exploring the mighty Himalayas with my younger brother. It was a trip of my lifetime.

We did not really prepare for the trip. All we had was a Royal Enfield and basic clothing. We set off from Srinagar and it was August. It's a sight to behold, Alpine forests green in color and not white against the brown imposing mountains! We rode at 16000 feet, through waterfalls and rivers, through potholes, through the rain at freezing temperatures. I remember riding up Chang La, the third highest motorable road in the entire world, and midway, we had thin ice on the road and it was a near-death experience. We cannot ride forward, nor can we go back. The bike just slips! But that's a memory and that what we live for isn't it. I captured the famous Pangong Tso Lake during that trip. That was one trip where I felt that I did not need any photography skills to get a good picture. Every frame was like nature's masterstroke.

Q: Gokartik, your Instagram handle has close to 100K followers. How does it feel with all the attention?

I am truly humbled. Acknowledgment and appreciation is all that an artist needs and I am blessed to have such a giving audience. It inspires me to go out there every day and explore the art in new ways. I hope that someday, I can give it back by making videos on easy to learn techniques about shooting HDR and landscapes.

Q: How do you go ensure you get good captures during your photoshoots during travel?

To get a good photograph, one needs to know about the place that he intends to visit. If someone asks a great photographer from Canada and a mediocre photographer from Visakhapatnam to shoot a landscape in Visakhapatnam, 9 out of 10 times, the photographer from Visakhapatnam will shoot better because he knows the place! He knows the vantage points

So, it is imperative that a photographer visits his shoot venue well in advance rather than just heading there just before sunset or sunrise. So that we can scout for our vantage points, have enough time to set up the settings, and wait for the perfect light. I read this from an article by Daniel Kordan and I follow this religiously. It is not the camera that makes those beautiful pictures but our dedication and hard work to be there before time.

Q: In which direction do you foresee your future work?

I started to explore the human element in landscape photography. You will see a lot of human elements in the forthcoming pictures. I also aspire to shoot wildlife with a wide-angle, thereby capturing life in a frame that's landscape. I am working towards that goal.

Q: Lastly, your photographs are always in very vibrant colours. Is it an expression?

I was always amazed by the changing colors of the sky during sunsets. I try to make the Sky as the subject in many frames and the colorful frames are just a result. It is indeed an expression. A quest for joy, my pursuit of happiness.



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