

WORLD PICTURES

When he's not writing about photography, **Lee Frost** likes to practise what he preaches by heading off to far-flung destinations with his camera. Dream job? You bet

All pictures © Lee Frost



Blame it on my mother. In 1972 she bought me *The Children's Picture Atlas in Colour* for my sixth birthday and without realising it, sealed my fate. In its pages, I discovered the world – Europe, Asia, Africa, the Americas, Oceania. Everywhere seemed so exotic and exciting compared to the Yorkshire pit village where I was growing up, and I daydreamed many an hour away paddling a dugout down the Amazon, scaling Himalayan peaks or rounding up cattle on the prairies. I still have that book. Terrible photographs!

Almost a decade later, I got my first camera and, inspired by stories in old copies of *National*

Geographic picked up from flea markets and jumble sales, the pieces of the jigsaw started to fall into place. At 18 I got my first proper taste of travel by Interailing around Europe for the summer with some friends, documenting the trip with an Olympus OM1. A year later I did it again, getting as far south as Istanbul. Not long after that I won a travel photography competition that kick-started my career as a writer and photographer and 25 years on I'm still managing to fool everyone into believing I'm any good!

Travel is still central to what I do, and the part of my job that inspires me more than anything else. I thrive on variety and the unexpected, and that's what travel photography is all about – one minute I can be shooting

AIT BENHADDOU, MOROCCO
This famous kasbah was once an important trading post on the route from Marrakech across the Sahara to Sudan. Today it's popular with tourists, having been used as a backdrop in many Hollywood epics. The guy was offering camel rides along the dry riverbed, but instead earned a few dirhams by posing for me

Canon EOS 1DS MKIII with 17-40mm zoom lens, ISO 200, 1/80sec at f/8

impromptu portraits, the next architecture, abstracts, action or landscape. I love the idea of waking up in the morning, hitting the streets and not really knowing what I'm going to end up with, even if I've walked down that street a dozen times already.

Chance favours the prepared mind, as the old saying goes.

Since 2001 I've organised and led more than 100 photography workshops and tours, taking groups of photography enthusiasts to Cuba, Morocco, Namibia, Iceland, Zanzibar, Turkey, Greece, Italy and, more recently, the Kingdom of Bhutan – perhaps the most fascinating country I've explored to date.

Later this year I'll be co-leading a trip to Burma with travel pro Pete Adams, as well as reccing India for future trips. But before that I've got plenty more photo adventures to look forward to – including a return trip to Namibia in the spring which includes a few days in the north of the country, visiting the fantastic Himba people.

It's a dirty job! >

LITTLE VENICE, MYKONOS
Often, the essence of a place can be found not in the grand view, but in the small details. Octopuses strung out on a line and drying in the sun remind me of that trip to Greece as much as the pretty churches and beautiful beaches
Nikon F90x with 28mm lens, 1/1250sec at f/8, Fuji Velvia



HAVANA, CUBA
The key to travel photography is to keep your eyes peeled for new or unusual angles, especially when you're in a familiar place. I spotted this family playing dominos while walking down a flight of stairs, so without a word I simply leant over and grabbed a few shots
Canon EOS 1DS MKIII with 50mm lens, ISO 1600, 1/100sec at f/3.5

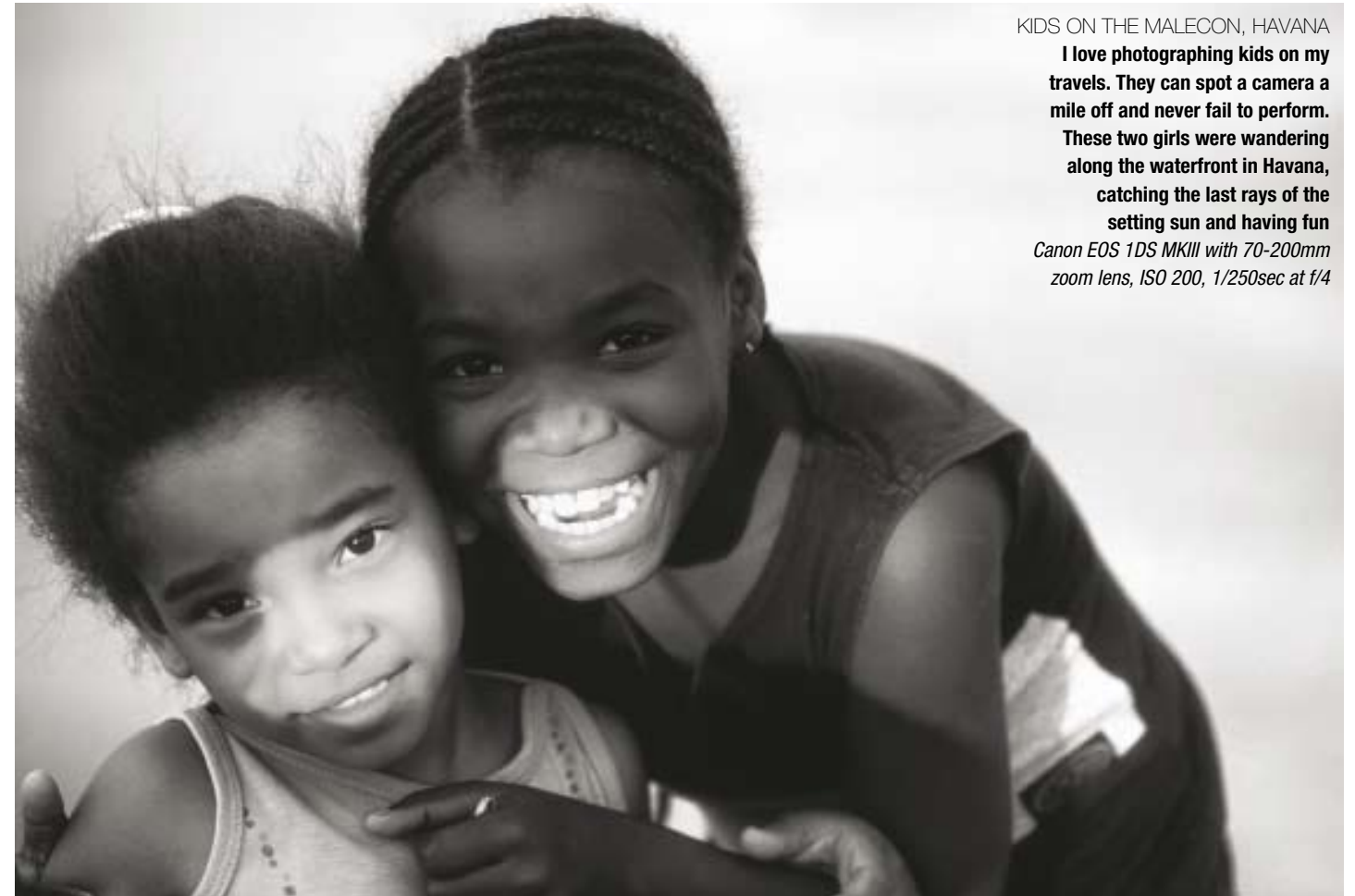




Left SHRINE, BHUTAN
 One of my favourite shots from a recent trip to Bhutan is this one, of a cat sleeping in a patch of sunlight in a small shrine. I could never have planned for such a photograph, but all the elements were there, as if waiting for me to find them. Expect the unexpected
Canon EOS 1DS MKIII with 17-40mm zoom lens, ISO 800, 1/160sec at f/4

Above MARRAKECH, MOROCCO
 I noticed a woman having a henna tattoo applied as I strolled through the Djemaa el Fna in Marrakech, so I stopped and asked if I could photograph. I was told 'OK' so long as I only photographed the hand, not the woman's face. I was fine with that – it was her hand I was interested in!
Nikon F5 with 50mm lens, 1/125sec at f/2.8, Fuji Provia 400

Below NUNGWI, ZANZIBAR
 One of the things that fascinates me about travel is the fact that so much has remained unchanged throughout the world. On the exotic island of Zanzibar, fishing in traditional outrigger canoes is as popular today as it was centuries ago
Nikon F5 with 28mm lens, Ilford HP5 Plus, 1/500sec at f/2.8



KIDS ON THE MALECON, HAVANA
 I love photographing kids on my travels. They can spot a camera a mile off and never fail to perform. These two girls were wandering along the waterfront in Havana, catching the last rays of the setting sun and having fun
Canon EOS 1DS MKIII with 70-200mm zoom lens, ISO 200, 1/250sec at f/4



Left GANGTEY, BHUTAN
 I photographed this old man at the Gangtey Tsechu, one of the many amazing festivals that take place in Bhutan every year. I wandered into a covered courtyard and spent several hours photographing people. No one minded – it was like I wasn't there – and the quality of light was amazing
Canon EO 5D MKII with 70-200mm zoom lens, ISO 800, 1/100sec at f/4.5

Above MESSARIA, SANTORINI
 You don't need 21Mp digital SLRs to produce successful travel images – I've used Holga and Diana 'toy' cameras on my travels too. This shot was taken in a derelict wine bottling plant that had been damaged in the 1956 earthquake and subsequently abandoned
Holga 120GN with fixed 60mm lens, Ilford XP2 Super, 1/100sec at f/11



Above
VENICE, ITALY
Venice is one of my favourite cities. The atmosphere is magical in autumn and winter and though all the classic views have been done to death, it's still a fantastic place for black & white photography. I'm hoping to return this year and put my 10-stop ND filter to work!
Holga 120GN with fixed 60mm lens, Bulb for 10 seconds at f/11, Ilford XP2 Super

Opposite top
GANGTEY, BHUTAN
While photographing performers at the Gangtey Tsechu, I put one of my cameras down on a bench. Seconds later I heard laughter and when I looked up, an old Buddhist monk had picked it up and was looking through the viewfinder. I couldn't resist taking a shot of him!
Canon EOS 5D MKII with 50mm lens, ISO 1000, 1/50sec at f/3.2

Opposite bottom
TSHANKHA VILLAGE, BHUTAN
Often the best shots are the least expected – which is what I find so enjoyable about travel. This amazing scene was encountered while driving between locations – the road climbed, the sun came out and suddenly we were above the clouds looking down on a remote village
Canon EOS 1DS MKIII with 70-200mm zoom lens, ISO 200, 1/320sec at f/6.3

