Fernando Santos on Monday Motivation

Hello, my name is Fernando Santos and this week’s Monday Motivation is brought to you from the sunny and warm city of Lisbon, in Portugal where I live. You may also know me by Chicky Nando, especially if you are a regular watcher of KelbyOne’s webcast called The Grid, or if you are a KelbyOne Community member, where I am Community Leader and Moderator.

Today I would like to talk to you about inspiration and how you may find it where you least expect (if you are ready for it).

Last year Portugal suffered too many wild fires, and even though that’s frequent every summer, in 2017 it was particularly bad because over one hundred people lost their life to the fires. A few months ago, I was participating in a photographic event that was planned to create pictures around firemen and forest fires, so that those pictures could be used as some sort of a tribute to honor their work.

We are always told to make pictures, not to take pictures. We are supposed to create the final image in advance, to plan for all the details, and finally to execute them and have the image we envisioned. But that’s not the only way to create. If you can start with good “raw materials” you will be able to find inspiration in different places.

Back to that event. While we were photographing, I noticed that we were using strong visuals and we could take those images into a completely different direction. Symbols that can be used metaphorically like for example a mask, a white dress, a black dress, a dark alley, wings, a rope, fire, a ladder, mist, and so on and so forth… When you add symbols like those to your image, suddenly you can give those images a whole new meaning, and it can have different meanings to different

people. That’s a good starting point to tell your own story, but more than that, you have a foundation for your audience, your viewers, your public, to create their own story on top of your foundation. And that’s what we all want to achieve, right? We want to create images that touch the viewers, that allow them to get intrigued, to get them involved into figuring out a story – and it doesn’t have to be the exact same story.

Back once again to the event. Here I am, capturing images that can be used in a totally different way. Now what? I can use them as just “single pretty pictures” or group them and sequence them to complete my goal: to tell a story.

I ended up creating a complete project out of nothing planned in advance. I had good “raw materials” and I was able to group and sequence what I had captured into something that would be meaningful. Out of that, I created Furnace, my tribute to the **#MeToo** movement and the victims of sexual abuse, a small 5-image story that you can see below or at **my website**, with some additional text.

Next time you’re shooting, consider adding symbols into your composition. Those symbols don’t have to be props. Color, shape, darkness, brightness, can also be used to transmit an idea, and can be used to help you tell your story. Be aware. Look around. Think how you can use something giving it a second purpose, a second meaning. You will be surprised with the things you will be able to achieve.

Where can you find more about me? You should be able to easily find me at the KelbyOne Community. Also, if you ever visit Lisbon, contact me in advance. Maybe we can go out and shoot together.

Many thanks to Fernando for that great piece of Monday Motivation! You can find out more about him at his website, or learn about his alter ego Chicky Nando! Find him on Instagram, too!

https://layersmagazine.com/fernando-santos-on-monday-motivation.html