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By David Accomazzo Mon., Oct. 20 2014 at 9:23 AM
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Slug, of Atmosphere

Ben Garcia

Earlier this year, we announced a [concert photography contest](#). We received more than 46 submissions, and a crack panel of judges winnowed down the submissions to [10 finalists](#). We are now introducing you to each photographer, presented in random order. First up is [Ben Garcia](#).

Phoenix New Times: What separates a good concert photo from a great concert photo?

Ben Garcia: For me, what makes a great concert photo isn't necessarily the editing technique used or the framing of the photo, but rather how it makes someone feel. I obviously love all of my edited pictures, but it's great when someone else feels the same way I do about my own work.

While I was the editor-in-chief of Mesa Community College's newspaper, one of my editors had an extra photo pass for the Flogging Molly St. Patrick's day concert at [Tempe Beach Park](#) and asked if I wanted to go. I was hooked after shooting that one show.

There is no way for me to count all the shows I've shot (maybe I should start counting), but I'd say I've shot at least 25 shows this year and upwards of 60-70 in the three years I've been doing this.



Ben Garcia

What challenges does concert photography present as opposed to other forms of photography?

I guess when I first started out shooting, lighting was the biggest challenge concert photography presented. Now that I've shot so many venues around town, I pretty much know what my manual camera settings will be before I even take my camera out to shoot.

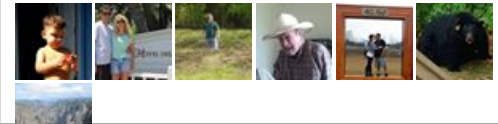
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Ben Garcia

What advice do you have for aspiring concert photographers?

The best advice I can give is to find a style that works for you and stick to it. You should never adapt your style to please others because some people are going to like your style and some people are going to hate it no matter what you do. I think I edit my stuff a little bit differently than most people, and I developed that style so my work would stand out. But more importantly, because it was the look and feel that I liked the most.



Ben Garcia

Choose one of the photos you submitted. Tell a story about it --where was it shot, who is featured, what makes it one of your favorites, and what circumstances lead to your capturing it. The more details, the better.

The Atmosphere shot at Mesa Amphitheatre where Slug is making eye contact with my camera is definitely one of my favorites. It's awesome anytime you can get a picture with an artist making direct eye contact with you. I think it has a different vibe, because making eye contact is one of those things that can trigger certain emotions, and I usually wear this bright colored jersey to shows in hopes that I stand out a little more in the photo pits so I can get those shots. I have an Atmosphere tattoo and had seen them a couple of times but that show was the first time I ever had the chance to shoot them.

No lie, I got that shot at the beginning of the second song and then proceeded to walk out of the photo pit way early leaving behind all of the other photographers shooting because I knew I had already gotten that "money shot." Since I do live uploads from shows, I found a place to sit and I whipped out my MBP and began editing right away, and when I saw that

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picture I instantly had a new favorite concert picture. Not only did I upload it right away to Instagram (before Atmosphere was even done playing their set) but I set it as my phone and laptop's background picture because I loved it that much.

See next page for more photos by Ben Garcia

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