

BURMA

BEHIND THE SCENES WITH
Steve McCurry



SPECIAL GIFT

**STEVE MCCURRY WILL
TAKE YOUR PORTRAIT**

better  moments



PHOTO BY STEVE MCCURRY



Exclusive portrait by Steve McCurry

For the first time ever, Better Moments and Steve McCurry are offering every guest of our 2021 workshop to have their portrait taken by Steve McCurry himself. The portraits will be signed by Steve McCurry and sent to you after the workshop.

Photography with passion



Photography may be my first passion, but traveling is a close second. I spent decades exploring the globe with my camera and out of this passion, Better Moments was born in 2011. Since then, I have worked with the world's most renowned photographers to offer high-end workshops and expeditions for photo enthusiasts worldwide.

On our workshops, everyone is welcome. No matter if you have recently discovered your passion for photography or if you are an emerging pro – our workshops cater to everyone's needs and our experts are all experienced teachers that will adapt to your personal skill level.

Our mission is to help you to take your photography to the next level, refine your own style and sharpen your technical skills. Additionally, we want to inspire each other, create lasting memories and enjoy the best moments in life.

Better Moment's exclusive workshops in landscape, travel and wildlife photography take place in unique locations around the world. From the Himalaya region to Africa's deserts, from Scandinavia's fjords to Australia's Outback – we like to travel off the beaten track and work with local agencies as we are always striving to leave only footprints behind.

I am looking forward to meeting you on one of our adventures,

Christian Nørgaard

better moments



Better Moments
CEO and founder:
Christian Nørgaard

Graphic design:
Håkan Andersson

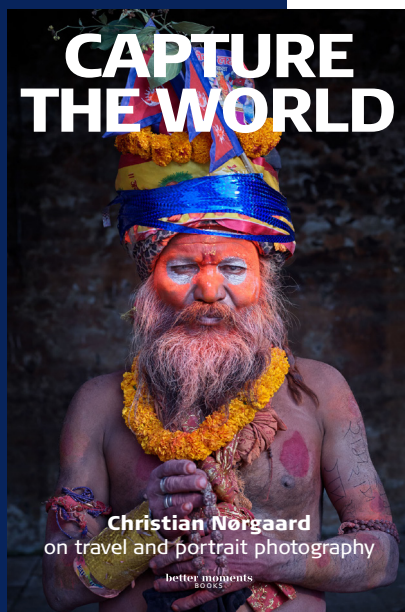
Text editor:
Laura Graf

Cover photo by
Lars van de Goor

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Our guests love to travel with us
– which is why we are lucky enough
to welcome them again and again.



LET'S GET SOCIAL

For inspiring experiences, real-time updates,
the latest trends or casual conversation, explore
our social networks for all things travel.



Linked in

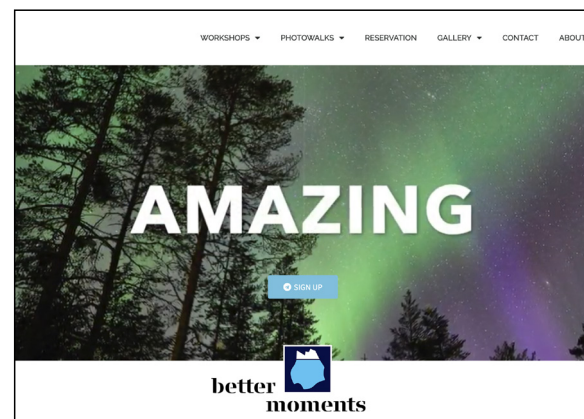


YouTube



BETTER-MOMENTS.COM

You can view our current
photography workshops
on the Better Moments
website, where you will
find all dates and details
– and can reserve a spot
for your dream trip.



NEWSLETTER

Stay up-to-date with our workshops, experts, and special offers:
sign up to our bi-monthly newsletter – and receive Christian
Nørgaard's guide to travel & portrait photography for free.

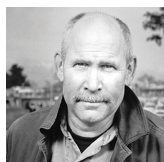
**SIGN UP AND RECEIVE A FREE
TRAVEL & PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY GUIDE.**

"I think that Better Moments' workshops are some of the best organized, most educational and most inspirational group workshops I have ever worked on. So I would encourage you to join us. Come along and have a great time, learn, be inspired and take great pictures."

Steve McCurry

Our passionate experts

We are proud to work with some of the best photographers in the industry who are experts in their field and have years of experience in guiding and teaching photography workshops.



Steve McCurry

National Geographic,
World Press Photo
first place



Michael Nichols

Wildlife journalist,
National Geographic
editor



Hamid Sardar-Afkhami

Writer, photographer,
award-winning
filmmaker



Sisse Brimberg

National Geographic
photographer



Orsolya Haarberg

Natural History Museum
Wildlife Photographer
Of The Year



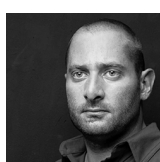
Peter Eastway

AIPP Grand Master of
Photography, Publisher Better
Photography Magazine



Lars van de Goor

Hasselblad Master
Landscape
photographer



Marco Di Lauro

World Press
Photo Award



Andreas H. Bitesnich

Award-winning fine art
photographer



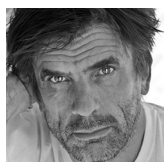
Steve Bloom

National Geographic
photographer



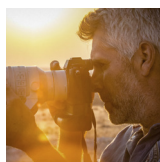
Tom D. Jones

Hasselblad Master
& European Fine Art
photographer



Arne Hodalič

National Geographic
photographer &
photo editor



Laurent Baheux

Award-winning
wildlife photographer



What our guests say about us

"It was a marvelous workshop with a lot of opportunities for great pictures. Obviously, the highlight was the night in Riisitunturi National Park watching the Northern Lights. It was the whole atmosphere having a rustic dinner in the hikers hut after shooting the sunset and waiting for the Northern Light which is staying in my memories."

Bernd Beykirch, Germany



"I found out that one of my favourite photographers, Lars van de Goor, was doing a workshop in the Netherlands so I signed up for the workshop and was introduced to Christian, the founder of the company, and I knew immediately that this would be a great workshop just by talking to him and seeing how incredibly well organized and precise everything was planned out. The hotels were first class, the food was phenomenal, which is important, and more importantly, each day was very well planned out and it has been a really great experience."

Aubra Franklin, USA

"Everybody has something to offer to the group, so we learn from each other, we share things, we have workshops in the evenings where we talk about what went well, what went wrong... and we see a lot of different styles, a lot of different techniques. And that is the good thing about this trip, it is really all about photography!"

Peter Dorr, The Netherlands.







PHOTO BY STEVE MCCURRY





PHOTO BY STEVE MCCURRY

Explore Burma

Burma is one of the few countries in Asia that has preserved its deep religious and historical roots. Today, the country has just started opening up for foreign visitors and we are pleased to offer a workshop to this alluring land led by award-winning photographer Steve McCurry.

Drift down the Irrawaddy to capture life along the river, admire the thousand-year-old temples and pagodas that dot this magnificent country. Dig into the myriad dishes of the local cuisine, from a hearty bowl of mohinga noodles for breakfast to the fermented tea-leaf mixture that's a popular finish to a Burmese meal. Swap cocktails and canapés for snacks and tea sweetened with condensed milk at tea houses where you can chat with locals.



Expand with passion

Better Moments' mission is to deliver exclusive workshops and we want you to explore your passion for photography and work with one of the best photographers, Steve McCurry, during your Burma workshop.

■ ON LOCATION

- Learning and training in small groups with a maximum of four people under the guidance of Steve to ensure individual support.
- Composition and focus on lines, golden section, perspective, foreground.
- Work in different lighting and with short/long exposure times and aperture.
- Private hands-on lessons that can help take your photography skills to the next level.
- How to approach locals in a natural way.
- The secrets behind travel and reportage photography.

■ IN CLASSROOM

- Expert review and constructive criticism of the images taken during the day by Steve McCurry.
- How to create portraits of daily life in villages we visit.
- Private 1-on-1 portfolio review by Steve McCurry
- Presentation of Steve McCurry's work
- A Better Moments Certified Photo Instructor is available during the entire workshop to offer assistance with camera settings, the basics of composition, and to generally guide and help.

PRICE & BOOKING



PHOTO BY STEVE MCCURRY













Explore Burma together with award winning photographer Steve McCurry

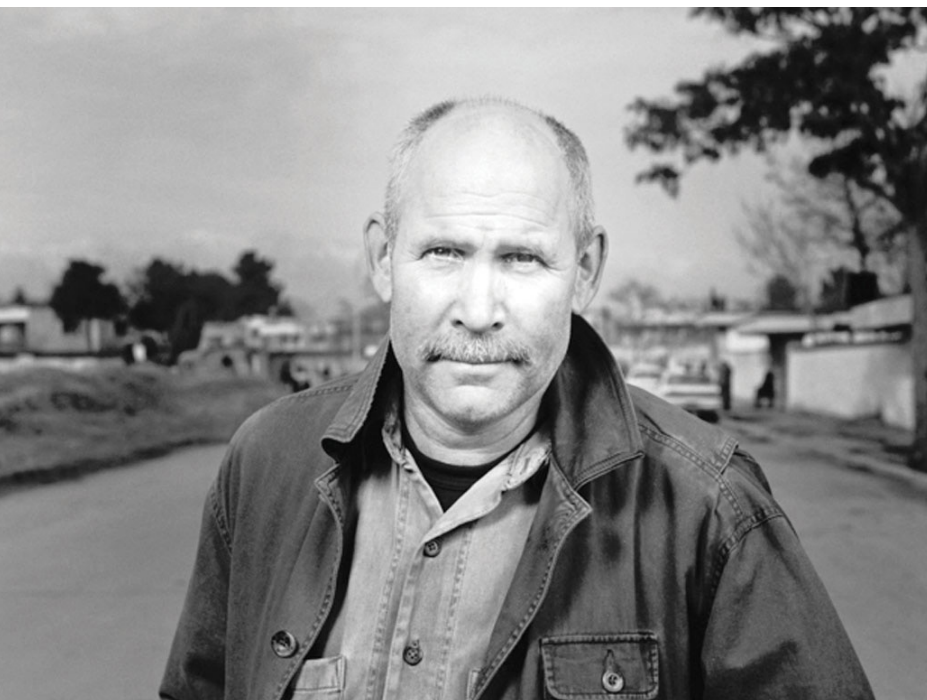


PHOTO BY CHRISTIAN NØRGAARD

"The photograph is an undeniably powerful medium. Free from the constraints of language, and harnessing the unique qualities of a single moment frozen in time."

Steve McCurry

Steve's work has been featured in every major magazine in the world and frequently appears in National Geographic magazine with recent articles on Tibet, Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, and the temples of Angkor Wat, Cambodia.

McCurry is driven by an innate curiosity and sense of wonder about the world and everyone in it.

Telling stories can have a heavy price. But Steve is always ready to take that chance and has experienced them close-up many times. He sneaked across the Pakistan border in 1979 to cover the conflict in rebel-controlled Afghanistan and has since then been shot at, robbed, mortared, beaten up, arrested, nearly drowned and had other close encounters during assignments around the world.

Steve, in the finest documentary tradition, captures the essence of human struggle and joy. Steve's work has been featured in every major magazine in the world and frequently appears in National Geographic Magazine with recent articles on Tibet, Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, and the temples of Angkor Wat, Cambodia. McCurry is driven by an innate curiosity and sense of wonder about the world and everyone in it. He has an uncanny ability to cross boundaries of language and culture to capture stories of human experience.

PHOTO BY STEVE MCCURRY

















PHOTO BY STEVE MCCURRY

Itinerary

DAY 1

■ MANDALAY, MYANMAR

Upon arrival you will be picked up at Mandalay airport by our Better Moments guide who will then take you to our hotel. During the day you can relax and get adjusted to the local time and climate.

For those who have arrived one or a few days earlier, we offer a city tour of Mandalay from 10am to 4pm. The city tour is a great way to explore Mandalay and get ready for the upcoming workshop with Steve McCurry.

In the evening, we will all meet in the hotel lobby for the official start of the workshop. After a traditional Burmese dinner, we would like to invite you to join us for an introduction to the workshop with Steve McCurry presenting his magnificent work from past travels to Burma. The lecture will also include an explanation on how to capture great portraits and how to approach people along the way.

DAY 2

■ MANDALAY – THE FAMOUS U BEIN BRIDGE

For sunrise, we will visit the iconic U Bein's Bridge, a 1.2 km long walkway across the Taungthaman Lake built in teak more than 150 years ago. The bridge is used daily by many monks and locals, and is one of the most photographed sights in Burma. You will have the possibility to take portraits of fisherman, workers, and locals living at the shores of the lake.

After breakfast at the hotel, we will explore the local fish market which is located on the river bank of the Irrawaddy. The fish market is a wonderful chaos of piles of fish, fishmongers kneeling on the floor, buyers inspecting the produce – all

in all, a fantastic place for portrait photography.

You will work in groups of a maximum of four people to give everyone the chance to be tutored by Steve.

Later that day, we will visit the day workers, who are living in humble houses at the river, to take their portraits and to photograph them during their work.

After dinner, we will work on our images and Steve will offer constructive feedback of your best shots. Moreover, Steve will present his most iconic and award-winning pictures.

DAY 3

■ MANDALAY – BUDDHIST CULTURE AND FILIGREE HAND-CRAFT

Rise early to witness the morning face-washing ceremony of the Mahamuni Buddha, the most revered Buddha image in Mandalay. Admire the carvings of the Shwenandaw Monastery and see the 729 chiseled marble slabs of Kuthodaw Pagoda.

The remainder of the day, we will visit several of the city's artisans and craftsmen, who are, for instance, carving Buddha statues out of solid blocks of white marble. In Burma, there is a healthy demand of Buddha statues – whether it is for public temples or private use – and the artisan craftsmen create the statues by hand, a truly dusty and physically exhausting work.

By working in small groups, Steve will be able to tutor everyone individually to help you hone your skills for travel and portrait photography.

Dinner at the hotel, followed by a review of your images taken so far.

DAY 4

■ MANDALAY – LIFE AT THE SHORES OF THE RIVER

Set off on an all-day cruise on the Irrawaddy River, stopping first in Sagaing, where myriad pagodas gleam white and gold on the hillside. Take in the view from the Soon U Ponya Shin Pagoda, and observe daily life at a convent and a community school. Continue up river to Inwa and hop onto horse carts to visit Nan Myint Tower, Menu Ok-kyaung Monastery and the teak Bagaya Monastery.

Enjoy lunch on board as we sail to Mingun, home to a massive, unfinished pagoda. Watch the sunset over the river on our return to Mandalay.

After dinner, Steve will hold a presentation about the photographers that influenced and inspired him and his work the most.

DAY 5

■ BAGAN – A UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE

We will catch the morning flight to Bagan/Nyaung U airport to visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Bagan. The former capital of the Pagan Kingdom is one of the world's greatest archeological sites. There are more than 2,000 temples to explore, their outer-worldly silhouettes rising up from the green plain against the clear sky, only limited by the horizon where one can vaguely discern some mountains. The Irrawaddy is flowing lazily, setting the overall tone for the city.

We will head out to explore the ancient city with its old ruins and huge temple area with our cameras. We will immerse ourselves in the hustle-bustle of the local Nyaung U daily market and its

vibrant sociocultural atmosphere. You will have ample time to take portraits of shoppers and stall owners and capture the street scenes unfolding.

For lunch, we will return to the hotel and you will have time to relax until the afternoon. In the late, soft evening light, we will then visit the ancient ruins of Bagan at the villages Minnanthu and Phwar-saw, just in time to witness the villagers returning home with their cows and goats to bring them in for the night.

After dinner, Steve will review the images taken during the day and provide feedback.

DAY 6

■ BAGAN – HOT AIR BALLOONS AND ANCIENT TEMPLES

Today you have the chance to go on a ride with a hot air balloon to see and photograph the magnificent landscape and ancient pagodas during sunrise (optional activity at extra cost). You will float peacefully over the centuries-old temples while the hazy morning light is creating a mystical mood. A truly memorable experience that provides for amazing photographs.

After breakfast, we will first drive to Shwezigon Pagoda to capture its impressive circular gold leaf-gilded stupa and surrounding smaller temples and shrines while the daily festivities take place. Our next stop will be Ananda Temple, a Buddhist temple built in 1105 AD, where the Ananda Pagoda Festival takes place earlier in the year. We will be able to photograph the remains of the events and meet some of the vendors.

We will also visit the Nat shrine (Nats are spirits worshipped in Burma and neighboring countries in conjunction with Buddhism) at the entrance of the ancient Tharaba Gate, the only surviving gate of Bagan, to capture its believers during their interesting worship rituals.

The afternoon will commence with indoor shooting at Sulamuni Temple, which is famous for its colorful wall mural paintings;



Phahto Tharmay Temple, which is known for magnificent natural lighting inside; and Taungphi monastery, famous for its teak wooden architecture.

We will conclude the day with a sunset shoot over the vast landscape of Bagan.

DAY 7

■ BAGAN – EXPLORING THE COUNTRYSIDE

After breakfast, we will leave Bagan and drive to the countryside. Our destination will be Setsatyo village, however, we will make plenty of stops on the way to observe the toddy palm tree climbers and peanut farmers while they go about their day. You will be able to document the process of peanut oil grinding first hand. Moreover, we will visit a local cottage industry of lacquerware production, a fascinating traditional handcraft. While working in your groups, Steve will assist you to achieve better results.

In the afternoon, we will stroll around the community of horse cart drivers and put our knowledge about how to approach strangers to the test by asking for portraits. Our last stop for the day will be a traditional riverside fishing village where you will again have the possibility to experience the life of the locals and to take unique portraits.

Dinner at the hotel and review of the photos taken during the day by Steve.

DAY 8

■ BAGAN – PROCESSION OF THE MONKS

If you are curious about Buddhist culture, rise up early and witness a Buddhist ritual – hundreds of monks at all ages walk around their community seeking alms (food) from the generous donors. Capture this morning tradition while the city around us slowly awakes. We will then follow the monks to a local Buddhist monastery where little young novices from different tribes receive their monastic learning.

During the afternoon, you will have the option of revisiting some of the previous shooting locations. If you are the adventurous type, go for a run with the cattle herds as they are brought back to their stables at dusk.

Tonight, we will have a farewell dinner at the hotel. Steve will thoroughly review and critic some of your best photos taken during the workshop.

DAY 9

■ DEPARTURE

Morning flight back to Mandalay International airport for your onward flight back home.

PRICE & BOOKING











Quick guide

We wish you to travel with the greatest possible comfort and to know that you have received as much information as possible.

■ GETTING THERE

All international flights arrive at Mandalay airport. The most common route to Mandalay airport is via Bangkok.

■ VISA

All visitors are required to have a passport valid for at least six months beyond the intended stay, and all visitors will need a visa. The visa application process is handled by the Embassy of the Union of Myanmar, and can be done in person, by representative, by post or online (<https://evisa.moip.gov.mm/>). It takes 5-10 working days to get the tourist visa application processed.

■ WEATHER

The southwest monsoon starts around the end of May, bringing frequent rain until October, peaking from July to September. March to May brings intense heat. At this time, the daily temperatures in Yangon often reach 40°C, while areas around Bagan and Mandalay go a few degrees higher.

■ LANGUAGE

Burmese is the official language of Burma, and the primary language of instruction. English is the secondary language taught.

■ CURRENCY

The Burmese monetary unit is the Kyat (K).

■ QUICK GUIDE

One of the most fascinating aspects of travel in Burma is the opportunity to experience a corner of Asia that, in many ways, has changed little since British colonial times. Being cut off from the rest of the world for so many decades, Myanmar has achieved a unique preservation of culture bounded by a rich, unspoiled landscape. Abundant in natural resources, the landscape of Myanmar ranks among the most breathtaking sights anywhere in the world.

It's also a country of many incredible and sometimes surreal sites. Contemplate the 4,000 sacred stupas scattered across the plains of Bagan. Stare in disbelief at the Golden Rock teetering impossibly on the edge of a chasm. Ride a horse cart past colonial-era mansions.

Meet multi-talented monks who have taught their cats to jump, or feisty elderly Chin women, their faces tattooed with intricate designs.

PRICE & BOOKING







Equipment

Whether this is your first trip or your "hundredth" workshop with us, it's always helpful to have a rundown of what items you may want to pack so you have a travel checklist. Bookmark this packing list, because you'll want to refer back to it to make sure you've thought of everything you might want to pack.

■ CAMERA

The camera list is for inspiration, since you know better than anyone what equipment you prefer.

- ☐ Bring your own laptop computer and storage medium
- ☐ Camera body(ies)
- ☐ Tripod
- ☐ Lenses, If you are working with a 24x36mm camera system, lenses from 12mm to approx. 55mm is obvious. And a "long lens" such as a 180mm. If you are working with a medium format camera, lenses from 28mm to approx. 80mm is obvious. And a "long lens" such as a 300 mm.
- ☐ Bag for all camera gear
- ☐ Light bag for easy hiking with camera bodies and accessories
- ☐ Cleaning kit for cameras and lenses
- ☐ Rain/dust covers for cameras and lenses
- ☐ Charger for batteries
- ☐ Spare batteries
- ☐ Standard power converter
- ☐ Raw processing software
- ☐ Memory cards and card wallets
- ☐ Memory card reader
- ☐ USB key to exchange images

■ NICE TO HAVE

- ☐ Lens extenders
- ☐ Camera straps for ease of changing from one camera to another
- ☐ Graduated filter set
- ☐ Filter holder
- ☐ High quality polarizing filter
- ☐ Lens belt















**better
moments**



PHOTOGRAPHY
WITH PASSION

BETTER MOMENTS APS

Allerød Stationsvej 4 | DK-3450 Allerød | Denmark

Tel.: +45 31578747

E-mail: info@better-moments.com

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