

50 Famous Photography Quotes

I have put together 50 of the most inspirational and famous photography quotes of all time. Being photographers, we're always looking for different methods to motivate ourselves when we're in hitting a creative block.

These 50 famous photography quotes spoken some of the world's greatest artists will show you how they see/saw the world and how they approached photography as an art form.

I've included quotes and sayings capturing raw human emotions that form the process of creating photographs which starts in your head and heart.

"We are making photographs to understand what our lives mean to us."

- Ralph Hattersley

"The context in which a photograph is seen affects the meaning the viewer draws from it."

- Stephen Shore

"Photographs are just light and time."

- Aza Holmes

"The way that light hits objects, I think, is one of the more important things that sculpture and photography share."

- Rashid Johnson

"Only photography has been able to divide human life into a series of moments, each of them has the value of a complete existence."

- Eadweard Muybridge

"What do we feel when we look at a good photograph? We just want to be there, right at the exact moment that photo taken!"

- Mehmet Murat Ildan

"The picture that you took with your camera is the imagination you want to create with reality."

- Scott Lorenzo

“Black and white are the colors of photography. To me, they symbolize the alternatives of hope and despair to which mankind is forever subjected.”

– Robert Frank

“I’ve been forty years discovering that the queen of all colors is black.”

– Henri Matisse

“If the photographer is interested in the people in front of his lens, and if he is compassionate, it’s already a lot. The instrument is not the camera but the photographer.”

- Eve Arnold

“A tear contains an ocean. A photographer is aware of the tiny moments in a persons life that reveal greater truths.”

- Anonymous

“The camera is an instrument that teaches people how to see without a camera.”

- Dorothea Lange

“Essentially what photography is is life lit up.”

- Sam Abell

“...we are there with our cameras to record reality. Once we start modifying that which exists, we are robbing photography of its most valuable attribute.”

- Philip Jones Griffiths

“I don’t trust words. I trust pictures.”

- Gilles Peress

“To some extent, the cult surrounding black-and-white photography is based on nostalgia.”

– René Burri

“A good photograph is one that communicates a fact, touches the heart and leaves the viewer a changed person for having seen it. It is, in a word, effective.”

– Irving Penn

“After following the crowd for a while, I’d then go 180 degrees in the exact opposite direction. It always worked for me.”

– Elliott Erwitt

“To me, photography must suggest, not insist or explain.”

– Brassai

“If you want to be a better photographer, stand in front of more interesting stuff.”

– Jim Richardson

“I see more in black and white – I like the abstraction of it.”

– Mary Ellen Mark

“Black and white is abstract; color is not. Looking at a black and white photograph, you are already looking at a strange world.”

– Joel Sternfeld

“Your first 10,000 photographs are your worst.”

- Henri Cartier-Bresson

“For me, the camera is a sketch book, an instrument of intuition and spontaneity.”

- Henri Cartier-Bresson

“When people look at my pictures I want them to feel the way they do when they want to read a line of a poem twice.”

- Robert Frank

“Without vision, the photographer perishes.”

- David duChemin

“A thing that you see in my pictures is that I was not afraid to fall in love with these people.”

- Annie Leibovitz

“Photography is all about secrets. The secrets we all have and will never tell.”

- Kim Edwards

“I wish that all of nature’s magnificence, the emotion of the land, the living energy of place could be photographed.”

– Annie Leibovitz

“The earth is art, the photographer is only a witness.”

– Yann Arthus-Bertrand

“Photograph: a picture painted by the sun without instruction in art.”

– Ambrose Bierce

“Wherever there is light, one can photograph.”

- Alfred Stieglitz

“When people look at my pictures I want them to feel the way they do when they want to read a line of a poem twice.”

- Robert Frank

“With photography, you zero in; you put a lot of energy into short moments, and then you go on to the next thing.”

- Robert Mapplethorpe

“A camera is a SAVE button for the mind’s eye.”

- Roger Kingston

“I lived and grew up in the black and white period of photojournalism.”

- René Burri

“One of these days, I’m going to publish a book of all the pictures I did not take. It is going to be a huge hit.”

- René Burri

“Everywhere is something which could be beautiful. You must only to see and to know what and how to take off, to crop from the infinity. Abstract, fine art, nature, landscape, and portrait photography.”

- Florin Constantinescu

“Media today is even more black and white, then early photography ever was.”

- Loesje

“Photography can never grow up if it imitates some other medium. It has to walk alone; it has to be itself.”

- Berenice Abbott

“Photography is a calling that requires vigilance and alertness for that moment in time that only occurs once.”

- Caroline Mueller

“The best view comes after the hardest climb.”

- Unknown

“Don’t pack up your camera until you’ve left the location.”

- Joe McNally

“I think landscape photography, in general, is somewhat undervalued.”

- Galen Rowell

“In photography, the smallest thing can be a great subject. The little, human detail can become a Leitmotiv.”

- Henri Cartier Bresson

“A photograph is a secret about a secret. The more it tells you the less you know.”

- Diane Arbus

“Photography is the art of frozen time... the ability to store emotion and feelings within a frame.”

- Unknown

48. “When a silhouette or shape is as beautiful as it is functional and relevant, that’s true luxury.”

- Reed Krakoff

49. “I know the world that I am painting is not a reality. It is a whim, an entertainment to provoke something in people, whether as escapism or relief. I think that is very valid.”

- Tim Walker

50. “A landscape image cuts across all political and national boundaries, it transcends the constraints of language and culture.”

- Charlie Waite

50 Famous Photography Quotes

These 50 famous photography quotes have built up over the decades to create an inspiring list of motivational words which hopefully have brightened your day.

These sayings are designed to inspire beginner photographers as well as professionals to see the art as a creation of stories from the world around us.

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