

Gunther Deichmann

Chronicles Of A Globe Trotter

German-born, Australian photographer Gunther Deichmann is a man of multiple facets. His travel images are not only theatrical in nature, but also contain a profound mix of local flavors and emotions. At the age of 21, he journeyed to Australia with just one suitcase in hand, and his quest to capture natural beauty led him to pursue photography. With some of the most prestigious awards under his belt, and scores of magazine covers and features across the globe, Deichmann remains as passionate about photography as ever. Here, we chose some of his finest images only to reiterate that it does not matter how many times a place is photographed; there is always another way of doing it!



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Is travel photography an all-encompassing term for landscape, people and architectural photography? Alternatively, is there an essence to travel that supersedes and distinguishes it from the others?

Yes, travel photography is different as you shoot landscapes when the place and light is right. However, what differentiates it from landscape photography is the fact that photographers specializing in this genre consciously choose to shoot only landscapes, as they may be uncomfortable photographing people. I somehow manage to mix both; it is something that has developed over the years. Besides, what keeps me going is the fact that I enjoy different cultures and look forward to meeting interesting people.



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The genre of travel photography is very attractive for most photographers; however, we see few of them exhibiting their work. Do you see this genre being shunted or do you believe that it will gather serious momentum?

I do not think it will gain momentum as there are so many people out there wanting to sell their images at a very

low price. Besides, good travel photos are still a specialty and rare to find.

How lucrative is this genre in comparison to advertising and other forms of photography?

Once upon a time, it used to be very lucrative, but the good old days are over. Today, unless you have established yourself in the industry, you need to work a lot harder. Thus,

it is only wise that most travel photographers combine travel with their commercial work. All said and done, advertising still remains the money maker.

Which is your favorite city or country in terms of photography?

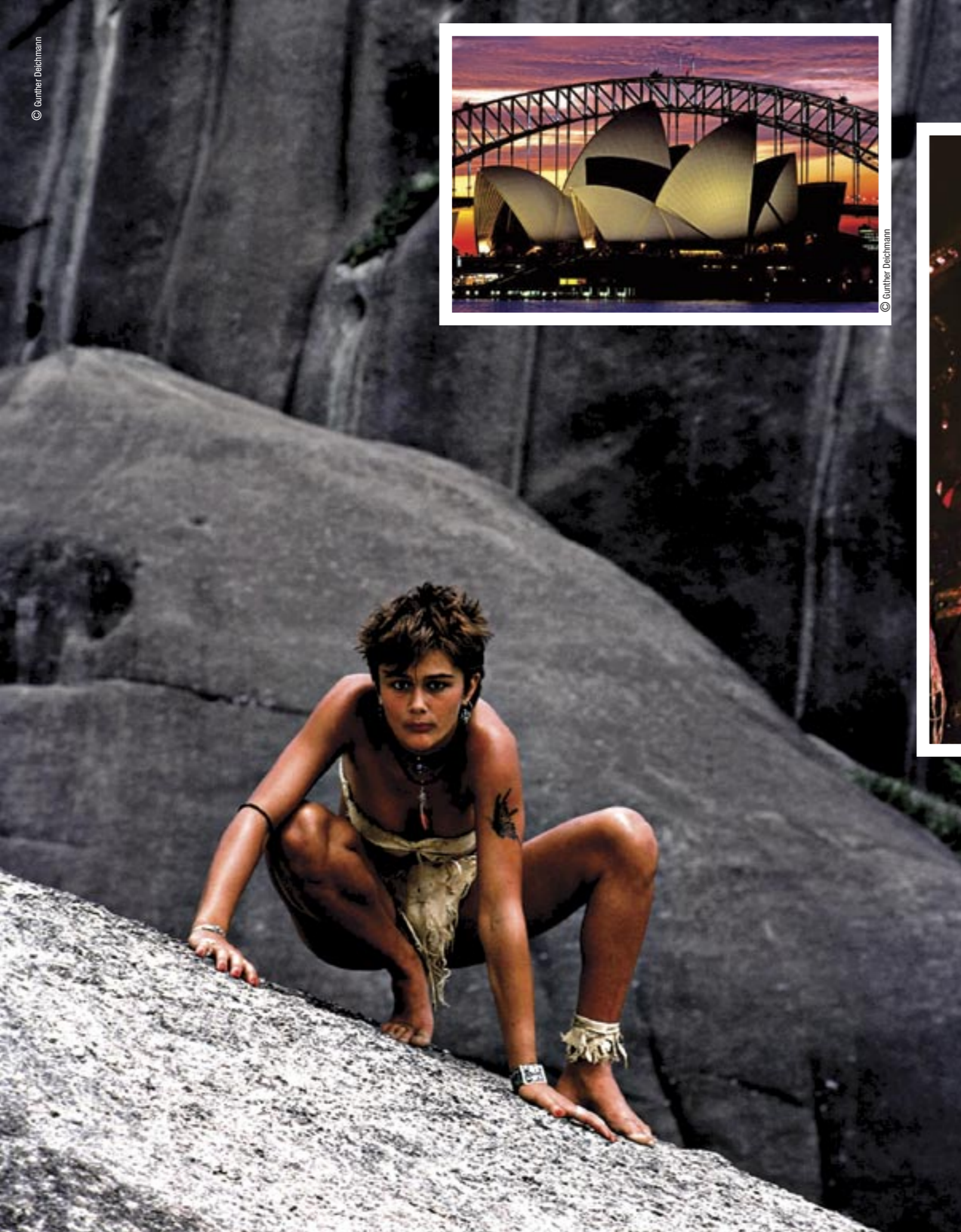
I don't have any favorites, but I'm quite excited about Australia,



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Myanmar, and now about India. However, my most loved and revered place is Tibet, I'm mesmerized by its spiritualism and culture.

Frankly, all cities are interesting as there is always something to shoot. For example, Mumbai fascinates me in spite of the fact that other people cannot stand the traffic or the crowd, but that's what's got me excited! I never worry about these things, as all big cities have their charm and disappointments, and I try to capture that tryst.

Narrate an experience during travel that changed your perspective towards life. I have always been involved with the protection and conservation of our environment, but in the past few

years, it has only grown stronger. In fact, my trip to Tibet in 2006, made me rethink. I love Buddhism because of its non-violent approach, and this has changed my perspective towards life.

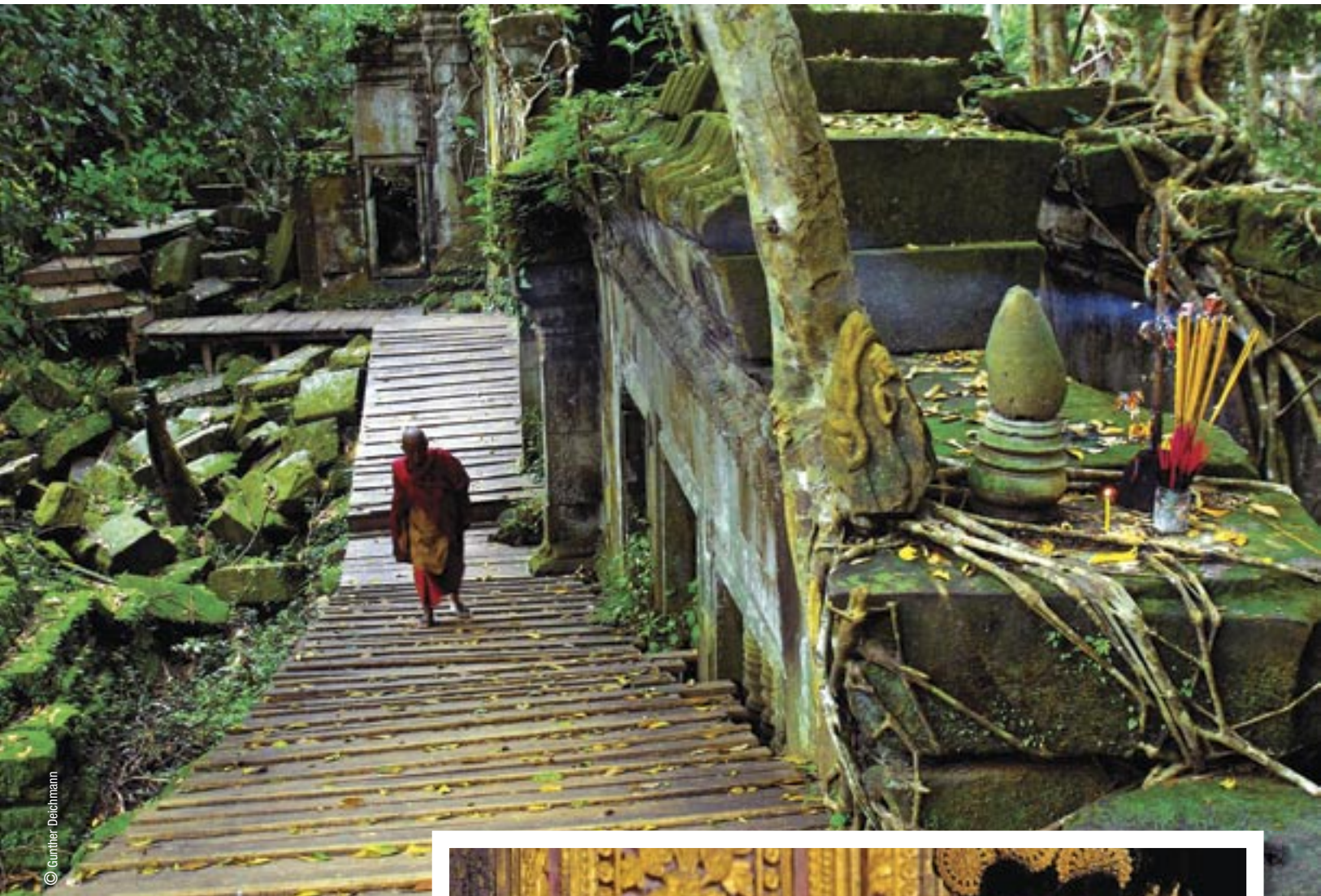
The one important lesson that I have learnt is that 'talk quietly, and you will find that people will come closer to you'.

Often travel photographers attempt to either tell a story or document the place. What do you seek to capture when you visit a new place?

I do a lot of research on culture, people, etc., before I travel anywhere. Upon arrival, I usually don't pick-up the camera on the first day, I hang around open café's and in the center

of town, watch life go by, take in the smells and observe people. I do so, because you need to get a good feel of any place first before you attempt to create your images. Besides, I also hire a local guide who helps me get around and also combats the language barrier. Then, I try to find the unusual and not-so-often photographed places and people, as that will make your images stand out. Venture into places tourist seldom go, but a word of caution, check with your guide or other locals first, remember your safety is of prime importance.

Having traveled extensively, what are the essential things to remember for photography enthusiasts who wish to pursue the same?



Firstly, research and then do some more of it! Third thing to remember is to travel only with the equipment you need (but two cameras), a small flashlight for the early morning shoot and if you shoot using digital, a good back-up of storage cards. Forth would be carrying a raincoat, in fact, I never leave without one and I actually carry two small ones! Also shooting in the rain can be very rewarding and different. Last of course is security. It is very important that you keep your equipment by your side at all times, even when you have to use the washroom. Make sure your hotel or guesthouse is safe, sometimes it is better to pay a little extra for your accommodation than get your equipment stolen, because then the whole trip will get wasted and will cost you a lot more in the end!

▣ As told to Kavita Dadhe