

The Instagram revolution

We take a look at some of the best Instagram photographers on the app

Gimmicky filter-fest or serious social-media app? Instagram has inspired the everyday photographer to upload images, but now the professionals are taking up the challenge of shooting with an iPhone. Despite the lack of an interchangeable lens and lacklustre low-light capabilities, the camera has proven it can capture stunning shots in spite of this. Recently, one image even made it to the front cover of *TIME* magazine after they recruited five pros to shoot the aftermath of superstorm Sandy in New York. Now with more than 50 million users signed up to the app, Instagram has revolutionised the photography industry and turned the smartphone camera into a respected digital shooter.

We talk to some of the best iPhoneographers that Instagram has to offer to discover the appeal of this new platform...



Jesse Burke
 “I shoot pictures on my phone in a quick and dirty sort of way, to document the immediate happenings of my life,” says ardent Instagram user and photographer Jesse

Burke (jesseburke.com). He’s one of the growing number of professional photographers who use the photo-based social-media platform alongside his personal website. “With my real camera I am much slower and [more] precise with what I am doing as far as subject, lighting, and composition,” he observes. “So to me, the phone acts as a sledgehammer rather than a scalpel.”

Jesse’s online gallery is a voyeuristic peek into his everyday life: fishing trips; family walks and seaside vacations. Familiar faces creep into his professional work too, but he was surprised to find that wasn’t the only similarity his phone work had in common with his DSLR images. “It’s so strange to me to see a very consistent flow and aesthetic in both groups of work,” he says. “If anything, by using my phone so much I have learned to relax and stop taking everything so seriously when I’m shooting. Some of my favourite images are from my phone. It’s tough to fight with the facts, so I have embraced it.”

He’s also discovered some other benefits from using the app, such as the ability to interact with other photographers all around the world. “Instagram has been really helpful in making the photo world an even smaller place, which is something I really like about it,” he continues. “I’ve gained a lot of new relationships that I may have never made in real life. I think the real beauty of Instagram is that you are able



to keep in touch and up to date with people at a really low level of contact.”

The immediacy of the app complements his unprocessed, direct style of shooting. Among the conventionally beautiful rural scenes of New England

USA, where he’s based, you’ll find images that will take you by surprise; a beached whale, a dead deer, a messy nose bleed. He describes his personal style as “bold and colourful with a raw edge,” adding, “I think that I have a very delicate approach to my subjects. I am very aware of the sensitivity and toughness that each image needs to create a balance. I tend to shoot outdoors a lot so there is a lot of nature that pops into my work. So I would categorise myself as a sensitive and raw, nature/portrait photographer, as funny as that may sound.”

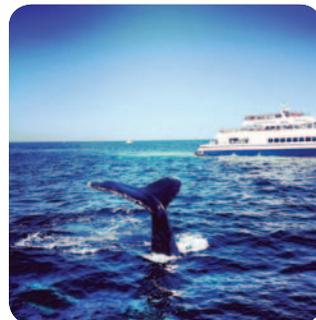
Follow Jesse Burke @[jesse_burke](https://www.instagram.com/jesse_burke).

“By using my phone I have learned to relax and stop taking everything so seriously when I’m shooting”



▲ “I love the idea that I create a living archive of my life with my family and our travels. It’s fun to go back and look at the old posts many months after”

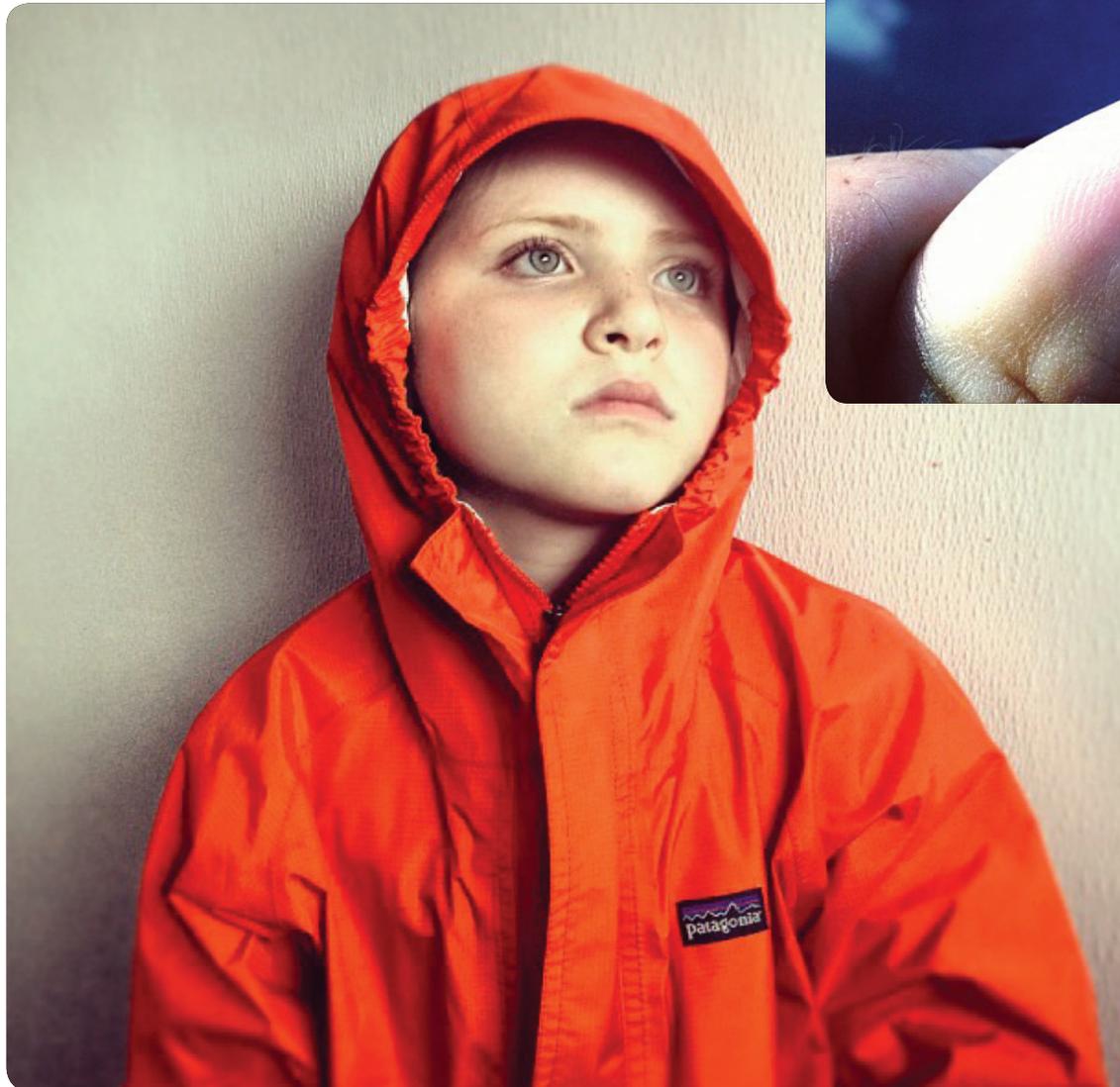
▼ “I tend to shoot outdoors a lot so there is a lot of nature that pops into my work, both in my artwork and phone images”



◀ “I am into so many different genres, from fashion and sports, to fine art photography of all kinds. The beauty of Instagram is it brings all these worlds together”



“Instagram has been really helpful in making the photo world an even smaller place”



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▲ “Instagram is set up to connect with people and share really easily. It's like photo Twitter, but better. For my money it's the simplest, easiest digital photo/social media platform out there”

5 reasons we love Instagram

Retro is cool

Vintage is in vogue at the moment and the classic analogue look that Instagram lends photos is amazingly trendy right now. It crops photos into squares, imitating the classic Polaroid prints that are just too expensive for most people to create authentically.

The effect is nostalgic

The filters give photos an instant aged effect, complementing the idea of capturing memories. Essentially, it's an extension of what people are already feeling when they flick through an old photo album.

It's inspirational

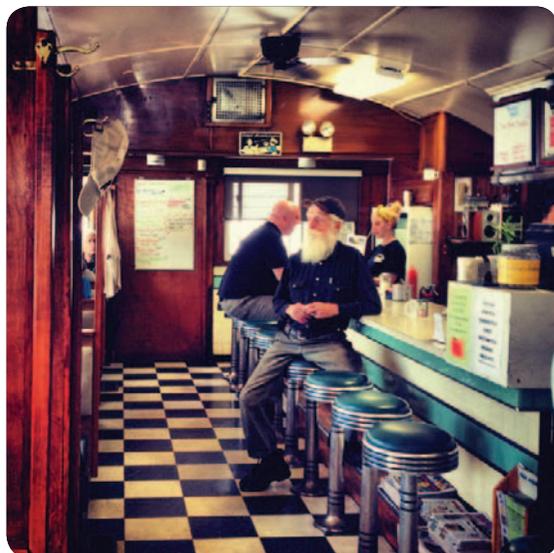
There are those who argue Instagram will be the death of professional photography, but if it inspires more people to give photography a go then how can it be a bad thing? It's another platform for expression and creativity.

It's democratic

Unlike most things in life, Instagram is completely free and therefore utterly accessible to anyone with an iOS device. You don't need to invest in expensive editing software, as the filters are readily available and instantly applicable.

Bad photos look better

Photos captured on the fly can sometimes miss the mark when it comes to colour balance and focus. It's useful then, that Instagram goes some way to masking any discrepancies to save your shots.



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