

Sam Abell

Quotes

Photography, Photographer, Thinking, People, Taken, Book, Years, Careers, Photograph, Would Be, Philosophy, Teacher, Believe, Home, Dad, Spiritual, Culture, Light, Teaching, Artist

My best work is often almost unconscious and occurs ahead of my ability to understand it.

~Sam Abell

It matters little how much equipment we use; it matters much that we be masters of all we do use.

~Sam Abell

Photography, alone of the arts, seems perfected to serve the desire humans have for a moment - this very moment - to stay.

~Sam Abell

Essentially what photography is is life lit up.

~Sam Abell

We know that photographs inform people. We also know that photographs move people. The photograph that does both is the one we want to see and make.

~Sam Abell

Life rarely presents fully finished photographs. An image evolves, often from a single strand of visual interest - a distant horizon, a moment of light, a held expression.

~Sam Abell

A mad, keen photographer needs to get out into the world and work and make mistakes.

~Sam Abell

For sheer majestic geography and sublime scale, nothing beats Alaska and the Yukon. For culture, Japan. And for all-around affection, Australia.

~Sam Abell

Photographs that transcend but do not deny their literal situation appeal to me.

~Sam Abell

Editorial photography has to be energetic and visually competitive.

~Sam Abell

I wanted life to be episodic. I wanted to be a magazine photographer and I was willing to do what it took to become that.

~Sam Abell

Actually, ambition won't get you that far. You'll shift gears. You'll see something that's shinier. But if you believe... then you're the long-distance runner.

~Sam Abell

My father taught me photography. It was his hobby, and we had a small darkroom in the fruit cellar of our basement. It was the kind of makeshift darkroom that was only dark at night.

~Sam Abell

There isn't an aspect of book creation I don't enjoy, and there has always been a book in my life to dream about or work on.

~Sam Abell

My connection to Santa Fe is very closely, and continuously a connection with Reid. I believe in him and his philosophy of photographic education.

~Sam Abell

People say to me, "Who's your favorite kind of photographer?" Or "Who would be your favorite photographer to have in a workshop?" And I always say, "My Dad."

~Sam Abell

For example, in my dorm, at the University of Kentucky, I had the only camera. I don't think anyone came to college with a camera, other than me.

~Sam Abell

It's more difficult now, to be a Geographic photographer, than it was when I came along. And it wasn't easy at that time.

~Sam Abell

Even though I teach with 35mm, my method takes people by surprise, because it isn't fast, and it isn't about hardware or software, or even great results. It's about great process.

~Sam Abell

Increasingly, it's people not interested in National Geographic.

~Sam Abell

I would like to go to Antarctica. That's about all.

~Sam Abell

I'm very involved in photographing America now, so I don't think of faraway places, as I did when I was young.

~Sam Abell

[My time and our common culture] it's what I'm photographing, and I'm very involved with that.

~Sam Abell

There's a great quote about Virginia Woolf, she had the same spiritual stake in her diaries as she had in her writing.

~Sam Abell

Aboriginal Australia is a tough place to work, rough and tough.

~Sam Abell

Teaching has never been far from my life. It's the most natural thing I do. Apparently, as I said, I cannot not do it.

~Sam Abell

The longer we lived with it the more we wanted something less about process and more about life.

~Sam Abell

I had a book come out several years ago, when there were no blogs. This is a mark to me about how the environment has changed.

~Sam Abell

Typically I see it with photographers who go to a place like India or Nepal, and everything's so colorful and exotic and they think, therefore, a picture's been taken.

~Sam Abell

It actually has transcended my career at the Geographic, so that when my career there ended, I had momentum as a teacher, and a belief in photographic education at the workshop level.

~Sam Abell

My least favorite photographer to have would be myself. Someone who wanted a career at National Geographic. Because it's almost mathematically impossible to achieve that.

~Sam Abell

[In the late 80's] that's the first time I heard about that astonishing idea [that most photographs would be taken on telephones]. And now I've been watching the tsunami of images.

~Sam Abell

I was known as a 35-mm photographer with a view-camera mentality.

~Sam Abell

My dad had been an ardent amateur photographer, and he taught me to compose a photograph from the back to the front, and then populate the picture.

~Sam Abell

I now want to be a photographer of my time, and our common culture.

~Sam Abell

I had luck, but I worked hard and I suffered. It's not just photography I'm talking about. It's about whatever dream you want it to be.

~Sam Abell

The best lesson I was given is that all of life teaches, especially if we have that expectation.

~Sam Abell

The unusual wins out over the usual.

~Sam Abell

Richard Prince's most famous photograph was made by me.

~Sam Abell

This might seem off the track, but an interesting thing to me that others could talk about better than I, but one of the growth areas in photographic education has been the so-called slow photography.

~Sam Abell

What I'm interested in is modern American history. I'm taken with the changes that have occurred in America in my lifetime.

~Sam Abell

That's who comes to my workshops. I jokingly tell my students that the class could be called "Your photographs: Better."

~Sam Abell

A very big part of the life of a photograph is the afterlife.

~Sam Abell

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