

The makings of good travel photos



THROUGH HIS LENS:

Passionate about photography, Teoh Peng Kee hopes to share some tips on the craft with his new coffee-table book 'Travel Photography: Capturing the Sense of Place', Suzanna Pillay writes

WHETHER its capturing the quiet calm and stillness of the sea during an early sunrise at Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam, or a frenetic bull race in Bali, Indonesia, Teoh Peng Kee's pictures speak volumes.

It is a rare breed of photographer indeed who can capture both extremes with sensitivity, but fortunately for Teoh Peng Kee it is a skill he has under his belt.

His new self-published book, *Travel Photography: Capturing the Sense of Place* contains several interesting photographs, not only of scenery and landscapes, but also street photography and portraits, people at work, festivals and events, low-light photography and candid moments he took while travelling in Southeast Asia, India, Sri Lanka and Nepal.

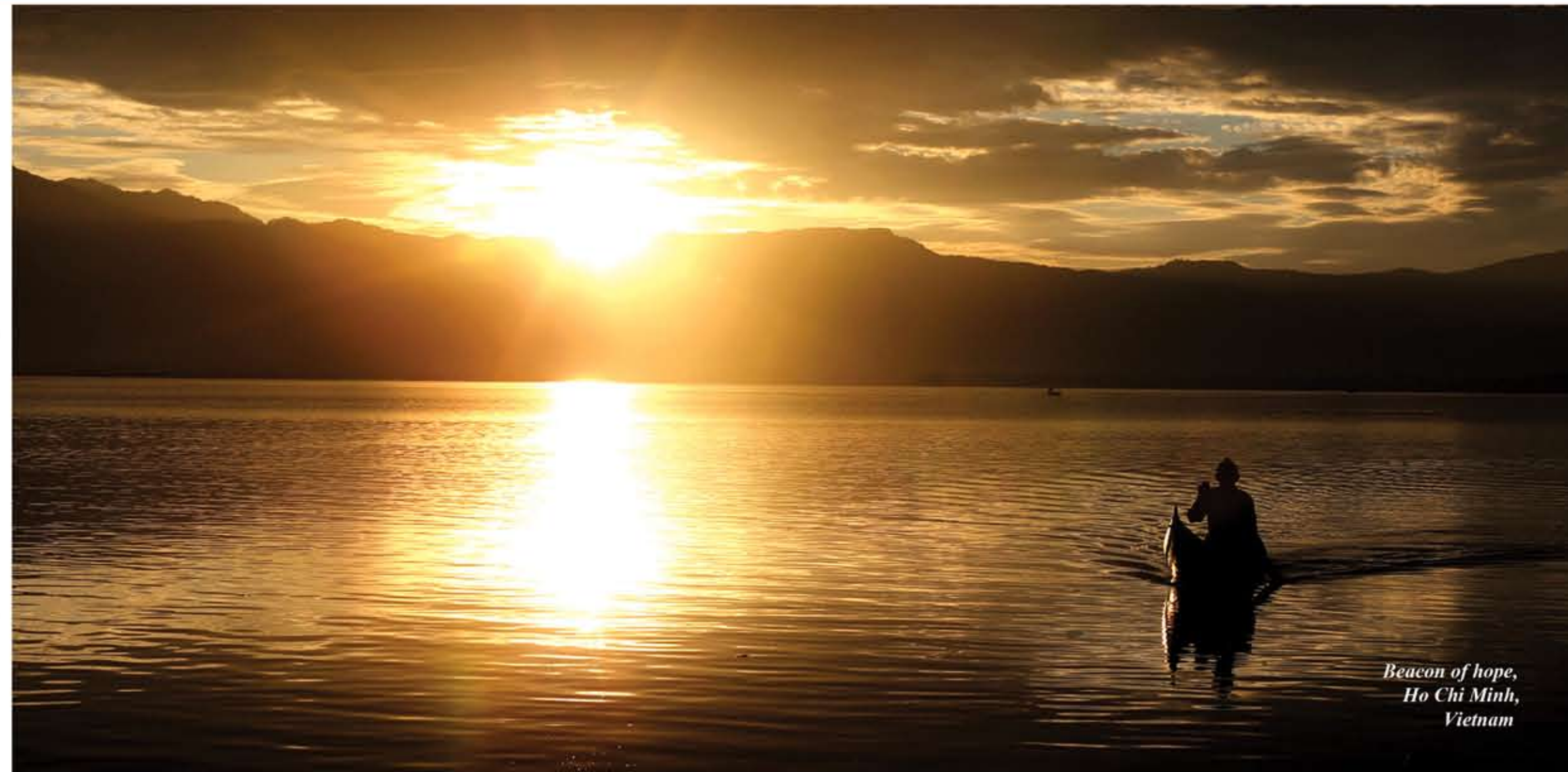
"In the last two years, I have been conducting photography seminars and workshops in these countries and the images in my new book are from some of these visits," Teoh said.

Shot inside a Buddhist temple in Bagan, Myanmar, "An eye on the novice" — featuring a novice lighting candles at the altar of a reclining Buddha statue — is one of these photos. This quirky composition is memorable because it appears as if the statue is keeping a watchful eye on the boy.

"It's OK" is another quirky composition from Teoh. Taken in Kathmandu, Nepal, it features a swami making a hand gesture that looks like an "OK" sign.

Teoh has more than 18 years of experience promoting the EOS system for Canon Malaysia and Canon SSEA regional office. He was also selected as the EOS master Canon Asia-Pacific and as a speaker for the National and Southeast Asia and India continent EOS pro seminar.

"Photography is an international language and I was encouraged by



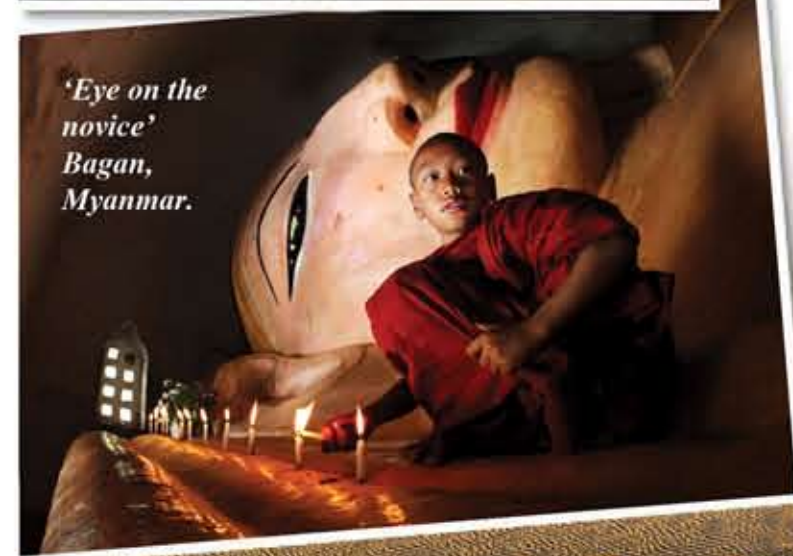
Beacon of hope, Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam



Unrelieved, Phan Rang, Vietnam.



'Fresh and live', Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.



'Eye on the novice' Bagan, Myanmar.



The glittering Shewadagon, Yangon, Myanmar.



'Ships of the Desert', Inner Mongolia, China.



Teoh Peng Kee loves to share his knowledge of photography with other enthusiasts

the positive experience I enjoyed in sharing my images and knowledge with photo enthusiasts from these different countries to produce a coffee-table book."

However, Teoh hopes his book will not be considered as just another "decorative" book of pictures and says what sets his book apart are simple shooting tips he has included to help enthusiasts improve their travel photography skills and picture composition. Every photo featured in the book also carries a detailed listing of the settings and equipment used to get the shot, should readers want to capture similar shots.

"I always believe sharing is important and I hope my book will not only inspire, but make others more passionate about photography. Photography is not just meant for

professionals but can also be an interesting hobby which a photo enthusiast can use as a means to record exceptional moments and memories in his or her lifetime."

"When it comes to photography, I cannot emphasise enough three elements which are important for any enthusiast to take good photos. The first is the know the fundamentals and basics of photography, second is to know you camera and tools well and last, is the art of seeing where the sources of light framing your subject is coming from."

Ultimately, he said the aim of a picture was to tell a story so photo enthusiasts, wearing the hat of storyteller, should have a clear idea what the objectives of the picture were and could convey the message clearly by focusing on the main subject of the story.



Bull run, Bali, Indonesia.

Taking good pictures with a handphone camera

- 1 Bear in mind the objectives of storytelling, focus on the main subject and do not make your picture too messy in composition. Think and plan before shooting. Sometimes when taking a spontaneous shot, this may not be possible.
- 2 If possible, add artistic value to your pictures by adding lighting.
- 3 Get the timing right and take the right equipment with you. Hold your handphone steady when taking a shot.
- 4 The preset of your camera handphone is important for continuous shots. Focusing is slower, so mark the main subject and set it to a reasonable ISO, apply basic photography principles and remember, the main purpose of a handphone is to be a phone and not a camera.



Teoh Peng Kee's coffee-table book.