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Seminar in English Entitled:

Photography...

A career or a hobby ???

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- Introduction :



All of us take photos to document our interesting moments with people we love such as friends and families . And when we miss people who are far from us ,we go back in time and watch photos to remember our lovely memories with those people . We use photos in teaching as a way for describing ideas . We enjoy looking at unique photos of beautiful places and animals . We use them in magazines and newspapers as a way to complete reports and see advertising photos everywhere .

In short , we use photographs in all domains in life .

But have we ever asked ourselves :

1)) Is the photography a career or a hobby ??

2)) What are the differences between amateur and professional photography ??

3)) Which categories of photography are for professionals and which are for amateurs??

4)) Can an amateur photographer turn into a professional one ?And how ??

1. What are the differences between an amateur and a professional photographer?

1.1 What does the dictionary say ??

An amateur is "**A person who does something as a hobby without receiving money for it**" While a professional is "**an adjective of profession which means doing something as a paid job rather than as a hobby**".¹

1.2 What does photography say ??²

Professional photographers are people who take photography as a career to earn their living from .While amateurs are those who take it as a hobby and practice it because they enjoy it without thinking of money or wide ranging prestige ,they do it in their leisure just to have fun ,whilst professionals may have to work for long hours to complete their assignments.

Professionals develop their skills through training programs .They may attend schools and colleges specialized at photography . Amateurs learn on their own or by participating clubs with other dilettantes who have the same interests and opinions .

Professionals make images for public usage and the subjects of their images are given to the photographer by the client. Whereas , amateurs have a kind of freedom ,they choose the subject of the image and make it for their personal use ,and because of that freedom, a lot of professionals envy them. Professional photographers have to be very conscientious and careful not to make any mistake and they always try to bring the best in their photos ,because the most important thing is not how much did they work but what did they achieve(the person who will pay looks only at the result) as well as their desire to reinforce their status as professionals .That doesn't mean that amateurs don't have to be careful , but making a mistake won't cause a big problem for them because that's their own work and that doesn't preclude their status as amateurs .

¹ Oxford LEARNER's POCKET Dictionary . p 12,342 respectively .

²<http://rhizome.org/editorial/2009/apr/29/after-the-amateur-notes>
Finley ,1944: 20.

Although many people use the word "**amateur**" as the meaning of "**inexperienced**", "**clumsy**", "**dull**" , there are many amateur photographers whose abilities precede lots of professional photographers' abilities and put them in the forefront .³

As Roland Barthes described them " **the amateur is not necessarily defined by a lesser knowledge ,an imperfect technique... but rather by this he is the one who does not exhibit, the one who does not make himself heard** "⁴.

³ Foldes , 1947:62.

⁴ Barthes , R, 1973.

2. Which categories of photography are for professionals ? and what are they used for??



There are four basic categories of photography: creative , retail, editorial and personal ,three of them are mostly popular by professionals while the other is common by amateurs.

Categories of professional photography :⁵

2.1 Creative photography :

Photographers working in this category tend to focus on creating a fictional reality which enables photographers to utilize lighting , poses , setting and retouching that add elements of fantasy to their pictures .And it includes :

1)_Fashion:

Photographs for a studio or catalogue .This brunch of photography is very profitable because, it is one of the most effective ways of communication in the world of fashion. They are used to bring attention to clothing, accessories and evolving trends.

2)_Celebrity and Band :

Specifically portraits of celebrities and bands for exposes or other articles .

Common in newspapers , magazines and journals .

⁵<http://www.brooks.edu/Student-Life/Brooks-Blog/June-2013/Unpacking-the-Four-Basic-Categories-of-Photography-Creative-Retail-Personal-Editorial>

http://www.shutha.org/photo-genres#personal_genres.



Picture(1) Creative photography-Celebrity and Band –

Lady Diana for Mario Testino



Picture (2) Creative photography-fashion

3)_*Commercial* :

Photographs of a product for advertising purposes in which the photographer should focus on creating the right environment to highlight the product .

4)_*Food and Décor* :

Similar to commercial photography , this subcategory advertises food for grocery stores , producers or restaurants and décor for stores ,merchants and other retailers.



Picture (3) creative photography –food and décor Picture



Picture(4) Creative photography-commercial

5)_Fine art :

Includes still life , nude photography and other works .The photographer's goal is to have their photograph resemble a work of art –as though they are practicing a more traditional art form , such as painting on a canvas .

6)-Erotic :

Photographers emphasize the human body, focusing on it as the primary subject.

7)_Propaganda :

These photographs have a political message.

Photographers may choose specific subjects,

unusual poses or utilize symbolism to convey a message .It has very aggressive purposes .



Picture (5)Creative photography –fine art

2.2 Retail photography :

Photographers in retail are often solicited by consumers and contracted to take photographs . This genre focuses on major events in life , typically graduations , weddings and other important milestones . Although this kind is considered more mundane than the other ones , it's almost used by everyone at some point in their life.

It includes:

1)_Portrait Studio:

It includes photographers working for directories and passport services .As well as photographers who own family portrait studios.

2)_Event :

Includes specific functions such as sporting events, team photos , weddings ,graduations , funerals



Picture (6) Retail photography-portrait studio

and other cultural ceremonies .In this genre , photographers may be required to know how to take a high-quality action or candid shots , depending on the nature of the event .

2.3 Editorial photography :

This genre aims to capture reality in an objective ,non-fiction manner .

It includes :

1)_Archival :

Photographs preserved cataloged for their historic value.

2)_Architectural :

Photographs of public or private property with the intention of making the structures look attractive so it's may be used for retail .

3)_Nature :

It includes aerial , cloudscape , landscape , wildlife, wildlife portraits , underwater , seascape and plant photography..It can be published in magazines such as National photographic.



Picture (7) Retail photography- wedding



Picture (8) Editorial photography-architectural



Picture (9) Editorial photography –nature-wildlife

4)_Sports

Includes action shots , sports portraits and adventure shots, and photographs are featured on sports pages or in magazines.



Picture (10) Editorial photography-sports

5)_Scientific :

Includes forensic , microscopic , telescopic , medical ,satellite ,aerial and astrophotography .
May also include macro and micro photography .
It's typically used for a scientific endeavor .



Picture (11) Editorial photography -scientific

6)_Military :

Photographs are taken by photographers working with the government to document events ,complete spy work or manage satellite photography.

7)_Corporate :

Includes industrial and corporate portraits .

8)_Celebrity :

Unlike creative photography , editorial celebrity shots are taken at red carpet events or by paparazzi . Photographers in this subcategory attempt to show the celebrities in real time , rather than posed in studios .



Picture (12) Editorial photography-celebrity

9)_Fashion :

this fashion category shows fashion as it is being presented –on the run way .

10)_Photojournalism :

Photojournalists attempt to tell a story about a particular event through a single photograph .

They often work alongside a reporter so that the photograph and the article complement other .A motif in Photojournalism is street photography .



Picture (13) Editorial photography –photojournalism

11)_Documentary photography :

The first difference between a photojournalism and a documentary photographer is that a documentary photographer takes a series of photographs in an attempt to tell a story often about contemporary political or social issue .

3. Which categories of photography do amateur photographers prefer ??

Categories of amateur photography :⁶

3.1 Personal photography :

This kind of photographs is usually taken to record personal memories with friends and families as well as beautiful places that the person visit , for private use. It's the most widely used and distinct from the other categories for its

impressive impact , and it includes :

1)_Vernacular :

Photographs from everyday life, often taken by family members on personal cameras.

2)_Found :

Old personal photographs discovered by collectors.

3)_Travel :

Photographs taken on trips or vacations of different landscapes inside the country or abroad They are often characterized by exotic historically significant or un usual landscapes ,and other places .

And nowadays ,with in the development of cameras and new technology ,new genres of amateur photography are spreading widely ,and selfie is one of them .



Picture (14) Personal photography-vernacular

⁶<http://www.brooks.edu/Student-Life/Brooks-Blog/June-2013/Unpacking-the-Four-Basic-Categories-of-Photography-Creative-Retail-Personal-Editorial>

Selfie :⁷

it's a kind of photographs that one has taken of oneself ,typically with a smart phone or a webcam .It's surprising for most of us to know that the first selfie was taken in 1839 by an amateur chemist and photography enthusiast called "Robert Calmelius" . Then , in 2005 ,it started to emerge and spread widely to be uploaded to social media websites like "MySpace pic" then "facebook" , "instagram "and others .What is good about selfie for some people is that it is instantaneous, available for most of people anytime and anywhere on their cell phones and it doesn't need any special skills .While others see that it promotes narcissism and self-obsession .And for me , it causes a kind of addiction for those who take lots of selfies.

What I said previously doesn't mean that these are the only domains for amateur photography , there are also some of amateur photographers who are interested in photographing nature, buildings or even their food but most of amateurs don't specialize in a certain genre of photography ,they just go and capture any unusual phenomenon that attracts them .



Picture (15) selfie



Picture (16) Personal photography -found

⁷<http://socialmediaweek.org/blog/2014/08/selfie-boom-good-bad-selfies-will-change-future/>

4.Can an amateur photographer turn his hobby into a career?? and how??

If you are an amateur photographer who owns a good sense of photography ,you have the strong will to turn this hobby into a source of income and you think that you're able to work hard to achieve your goal then the answer is" yes" ,but before here's some tips that may help you to become a professional photographer :

1)) Know thyself :

Before you start your professional photography business , you have to know that working as a professional photographer is more than taking photos. So, you have to ask yourself some questions: Are you the kind of person who can run a business ? work easily with clients ? live with unsteady income ? look for work every day ? and constantly market yourself ? If your answer is no , then you shouldn't continue with this job .

2)) Develop your photography skills :

You can attend a class , go to a photography college or learn from books and experimentation .It doesn't matter what to choose but to achieve your goal that is becoming a better photographer .

3)) Choose the area of photography that fits you :

You can try many genres of photography before settling on one of them as your favorite .You may choose portrait , wedding , sports , landscape , photojournalism or whatever you want . And then you should learn as much as you can about the genre that you have chosen and know how to bring the uniqueness to your images .

4)) Build a portfolio :

In order to show your clients your abilities and highlight your talent , you will need to have a portfolio. And to build one , you should take many unique photos with different subjects . People always want to see the great job that you've done .

5)) *Buy the appropriate , frugal equipment:*

Although having a good equipment is essential to take a high-quality photos , you shouldn't spend your money on buying the newest equipment .You can start with the camera that you own , buy a used one with good working conditions or even borrow one till your business becomes successful .But it must be convenient for the genre that you have chosen , as well as you must understand it with its buttons and the way to use it . You should also keep up with camera sittings , tips and tricks .

6))-*Intern with a professional photographer :*

If you are an amateur photographer , you should intern with a professional photographer to learn how business should be run .

7)) *Know how to deal with the client and give them what they wants :*

Avery important part of being a professional photographer is to know how to deal with your clients . You should be kind, talk to them about their goals and vision for a photography shoot and be able to calm down angry ones . Also , don't forget to give the client what he wants ,and try to say "yes" to new work opportunities.

8)) *Advertise your business:*

Create a nice website ,make business cards , network with locals and talk to everyone you meet about your photography business .Because being active on social media will help you to make a name and attract a lot of clients.

9))- *Get prepared to wait and set up goals :*

You will probably take a long time to transit from an amateur photographer to a professional one .Also , there may be long periods of time with no work at all . You have to be patient and try to develop your marketing methods .And remember always to set up goals , because they help you to endure most of the difficulties and work harder .

10))- *Organize your documents and files :*

Before you can work as a professional photographer , you should search your country

requirements for a business license and the documents you need to have in order to legally call yourself professional .

And about the prices ,you should put your prices depending on your professional status and your services compared with your competitors .

(((Conclusion)))

As we have seen ,we can't judge if the photography is a hoppy or a career ,because some people use it to enjoy themselves ,capture everything that admires them and record their memorable moments with their friends and families .While others use it as a resource of their living .And being an amateur doesn't mean that you're unskilled person because there are lots of amateurs who are very skillful and even better than professionals while others practice photography just to have fun ,it depends on how much do you love and practice it .

Moreover , there are many categories of professional photography and so for amateurs .But the difference is that professional photography has public uses whether it was in advertising ,trading ,capturing major events in life (wedding..) ,science ,military or storytelling .Whereas , most of amateur photographs have private uses. Also, most of professionals specialize in a certain genre of photography unlike most of amateurs who go and take images for every subject that attracts them .

And for amateurs who want to turn their hobby into a career , I think that they can but before they should make sure that they are able to take responsibilities and be patient because nothing is easy and especially at the beginning .

A final word , photography is a good career and an interesting hobby ,so I hope that's respected more in my country as a career as well as a hobby. I wish also that more photography schools and colleges to be built for people who want to work in this domain ,to get benefit from experts and their skills ,learn basic rules and techniques , know which area of photography fits them and advance their abilities in this area before starting their work. There also should be more clubs for both amateurs and professionals to gather photographers with the same interests and opinions to discuss and develop their skills . And as a kind of respect of photography , I think that government should put more laws that protect photographers' rights especially those who risk themselves to complete dangerous assignments .

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