



Valerie Braglia, Photographs

the scene Capture

Nightclub & Concert
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A nightclub and concert photography more or less provides the same challenges for the shooter, these tips will help out with each types. The points and techniques I will be mentioning apply to both areas, unless I state otherwise or logic suggests one area rather than the other. *So let's begin... shall we?*

Concert photography can be a lot of fun especially if you're a laid-back kind of person, but it sure imposes a lot of challenges on the photographer. Main reasons for that include the overall dimly lit atmosphere, lights constantly changing quality and quantity as well as direction and behavior, white balance changing accordingly, high-contrasting situations that require attention and skill in metering, and a lot of spontaneous motion and movement to name a few. So how to go about getting away with a few decent photos in spite of this whole mess? Here are a few tips to help you out...

Max Out Your Camera Settings

Since using flash might be prohibited during shows and concerts as they disturb both the performer and the audience, as well as making them uncomfortable and ruining their experience, and since you probably *like the Ivo* don't have an external flash, you will need to have your aperture open as much as possible and your ISO set to the highest possible value without introducing an unacceptable

level of noise to your photos. Also, in such environments it is mostly dark with lights flashing in high intensities and different colors, so shadow areas are very prone to noise.

Motion is mostly going to be quick, so try to use a fast enough shutter speed while not under-exposing your photos. Depending on your lens' focal length, you are bound by a minimum shutter speed setting which going any slower will start to cause camera shake.

Now that you know your ISO and shutter speed limits, to get in as much light as possible you need to play with your aperture opening. Usually the wider the opening, the better, unless you have too much light which would cause over-exposure and potentially highlight clipping. This also depends on your desired depth of field. If you're shooting just one person, you can get away with very shallow depth of field. If you're shooting multiple people, you need to make sure all of them remain within an acceptable range of focus, or maybe not... depending on the outcome you have in mind.

“Put **YOURSELF** out there. Get close to people, but *within* limits.”

Keep an Eye on Your Histogram

Every serious photographer, whether professional or hobbyist, needs to be able to read the histogram so be sure you're capable of reading yours. The histogram also enables you to tell if you're clipping the shadow details. Plus, the histogram is much easier and faster to assess, which would be perfect when you're shooting continuously.

Never Mind Your White Balance

As lights are going to be all over the place with different colors, I suggest you just leave your white balance set to auto mode. No matter how you custom-set your white balance, in a minute the lighting will change so you might as well leave it on auto and let the camera make the best guess for you, unless you're in a consistently lit environment, in which case you can set your white balance as you please.

Continuous Shooting Mode

It's a good thing to be shooting in continuous mode so as to be able to capture sequences of movement and possible reactions the artist or crowd might make. With continuous mode the camera will keep capturing photos as long as you have your finger on the shutter release button. True, you might end up with extra, unwanted photos but your odds at capturing the right shot are greater this way.

Also make sure to try and anticipate reactions of the person or persons you're shooting. Since music is rhythmic, you might be able to guess that a specific performer, singer, dancer or guest might act in a specific way during a specific verse or solo playing for example.

A cool thing to watch out for is interaction and engagement between the performers with one another as well as with the crowd attending the show or party. Such moments, attitudes and facial expressions can yield interesting intriguing shots.

Don't Be Shy But Be Considerate

Put yourself out there. Get close to people but within limits, without disrupting their peace or invading their space. Find a good angle to shoot from, just make sure you're not standing in someone else's way. Show respect, smile to people, don't impose. You know... the usual stuff. Just make sure everyone knows you're the photographer, and your going to be photographing the event.

Study the Work of Others

This is my last piece of advice. Study former concert, party, or similar event photos taken by other fellow photographers and try to figure out where they went wrong and where they did well. If you find an interesting effect, try to visualize how you can achieve that in your situation. Try to study the techniques, angles, and tricks used and how you would go about implementing them as well; if they yield good results of course! Do not go mimicking styles if they don't look good. And try your best to let your own touch and style dominate.

Play with the continuous action mode to capture action shots. Use the stage lights at different angles to enhance your shot.

