

# ales jungsmann

Born in Czechoslovakia in 1971, Ales studied photography at the Film and TV School of the Academy of Performing Arts, Prague. He is a member of the Association of Professional Photographers Czech Republic (AF). Ales specializes in clean, sharp shots of architecture and interiors.



**nationality**  
Czech

**main working location**  
Czech Republic

**website**  
[www.alesjungsmann.com](http://www.alesjungsmann.com)

## ◀ for this shot

**camera and lens**  
Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III and  
TS-E 24mm lens

**aperture and shutter setting**  
f/10 and 30 sec

**sensor/film speed**  
ISO 100

for the story behind this shot see over ...

## in conversation...

### What led you to specialize in architectural photography?

As a student I was given the task of photographing an outstanding building, Prague's Trade Fair Palace, built in 1928. I was overwhelmed by its architecture and realized that this type of photography might be a field I could explore for a long time and even make a living from.

### Please describe your relationship with your favourite subject. Are you an expert on it?

My photography is a service for architects, so I must portray responsibly and with humility a picture of the place for a person who may never visit it. But it is up to me to interpret the picture. I choose the visual means to do this – I always try to express the nature of the building, whether in an overall picture or an abstract detail.

### Do you feel you have succeeded in being innovative in your photography, or do you feel the shadows of past masters over you?

I don't know. I haven't thought of it this way. Of course, I have admired photographs made by other architectural photographers, such as Pavel Štecha and Ezra Stoller.

### How important do you feel it is to specialize in one area or genre of photography?

There's no real reason why a photographer shouldn't become outstanding in all genres – but I can't recall anyone who has done it.

### What distinguishes your work?

I feel this is up to others to decide. I just try to do my best.

### As you have developed, how have you changed?

I have become more self-confident in my work and clear in my mind about what I don't want to do.

### What has been the biggest influence on your development as a photographer?

My own mistakes and my tutors at college.

### What would you like to be remembered for?

I would be pleased if people looking at my photographs see that the architecture is good and then say, "That's a good photograph. Who took it?" And I would like my clients to regard me as a reliable professional.

**Did you attend a course of study in photography?**

I majored in photography at the Film and TV School of the Academy of Performing Arts, Prague. This education was essential for me. You can possibly become a successful commercial photographer even faster through self-study or working as an assistant. But thanks to this art school, I think I have developed a more complex personality than I would have done if I had started to work in the commercial field and specialized from the very beginning.

**How do you feel about the tremendous changes in photographic practice in the past 10 years? Have you benefited or suffered from the changes?**

The past 10 years have really been revolutionary. High-quality digital photography became available almost overnight, so everybody became a photographer, which must have been frustrating for the professionals. On the other hand, I am able to sell more photographs and I am better off. But I feel nostalgic about the old days when, working with a large format 4x5 camera and cloth over my head, I felt like a magician.

**Can photography make the world a better place? Is this something you personally work towards?**

Nowadays, when TV is so ubiquitous, perhaps not. Even the documentary photography after World War II did not bring about change, although photography as a medium had much more impact back then than it does now. However, a good photograph pleases people.

**Describe your relationship with digital post-production.**

I made friends with my first Mac in 1992. I can't imagine my work without it, though I try to do most of the work during the process of taking the picture.

**Could you work with any kind of camera?**

With architecture I need special equipment to correct converging parallels. I used the Sinar F 4x5 camera long after digital photography arrived. However, after I bought a new Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III and then Canon's new series of 24mm and 17mm tilt and shift lenses arrived I made the switch to digital.

**Finally, to end on a not too serious note, could you tell us what non-photographic item you find essential?**

I love driving, so I choose big playful cars with a large boot for my equipment. But equipment is getting smaller and smaller, so I am considering buying a Mini Cooper JCW!

# behind the scenes

The BMW plant in Leipzig, Germany, is an amazing building by Zaha Hadid. As the shoot was in December when daylight hours are short, I decided to start in the afternoon and do the main shots I wanted at dusk.



10:30



10:38

10:45

**10:30** I packed a basic set of equipment, though I did take along my Sinar F view camera as well as all the digital gear so that I could take one "old-fashioned" picture.

**10:38** Checking the weather in Leipzig, I saw that a sunny afternoon was still promised.

**10:45** I set off, allowing plenty of time to be sure of arriving while the sun was still up.

**15:20** When I arrived I found the weather overcast, so I didn't get the sunlight I wanted to show up the plasticity of the building.

**15:40** I set up my Canon 1Ds with the 24mm TS-E tilt and shift lens, set to maximum shift.



15:20



15:40



16:00



16:05

**16:00** The hard case for my Sinar camera stands in for a stepladder when I need one – I was able to use a height of about 2.1m (7ft) on my Manfrotto tripod.

**16:05** I concentrated on interior shots first as the light levels would fall more quickly inside than outside.

**< in camera**

16:15 I moved outside at the time I planned but, on checking a test shot (below right), I realized I needed the light levels to fall a little further for the intensity of the coloured light to strengthen.

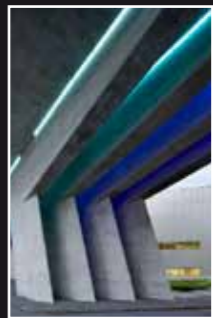
16:30 I took a shot with the Sinar view camera first as it takes a while to set up. I used a single 1200w lamp to show details in the shadows.

16:50 Changing back to the Canon, I took a digital photograph, again using the lamp and flashing about four times during the 25-second exposure.

▽ in camera



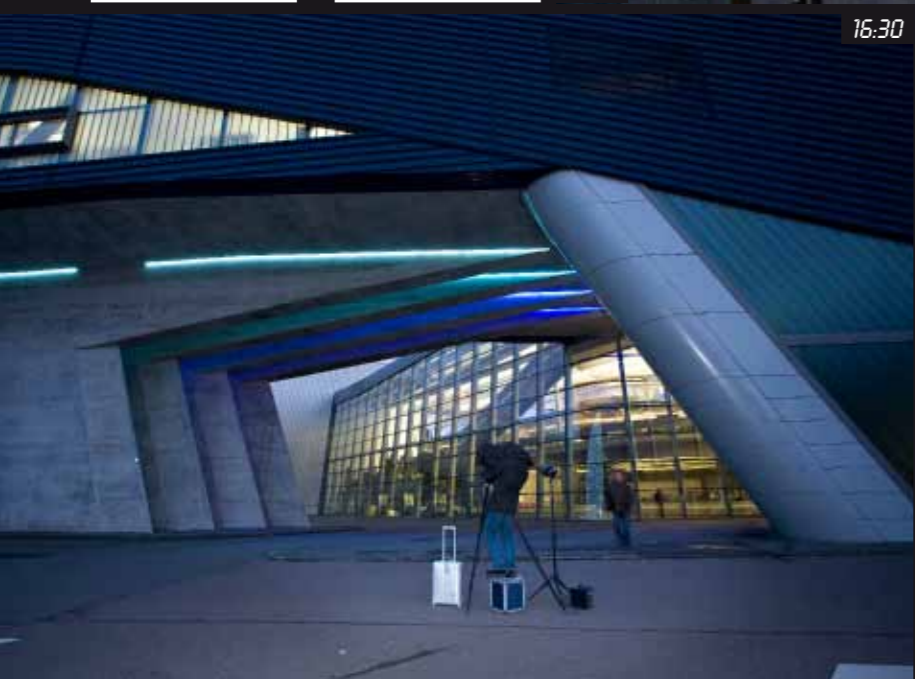
▷ in camera



16:15



17:05



16:30



16:50



17:10

◀ in camera



17:05 Perched on an uneven surface, I used a self-timer to reduce the vibrations.

17:10 The colours were now strong, but I had to be quick as the sky was getting dark.

17:45 I quickly reviewed the shots I had taken on the camera screen.

18:15 It was now too late to repeat anything, but I checked my shots carefully on the laptop to give me peace of mind on the way home.



17:45



18:15

# portfolio

▽ **detail of a ceiling at Village Cinemas, Prague, Czech Republic**

This was the very first picture I took of a cinema, but I have since photographed more than 20 new multiplexes. I used no additional lighting.



△ **interior of the PVR Cinema, Juhu Mumbai, India**

I have photographed cinemas in cities all over India, including Delhi, Indore, and Hyderabad. When I'm on a shoot, I like to catch a film at the cinema too, so when I was working in India I became a big fan of Indian films! I used a 2500w Hedler tungsten light with a softbox.



◁ **Andel's Hotel, Lodz, Poland**

When I was on this shoot I had bad luck with the light – it was either overcast or raining heavily. This picture was the last shot taken on the last day. Just as I was loading my equipment into the car, there was a moment of bright sunlight. I quickly grabbed the camera without the tripod and pressed the button.