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PHOTOS BY JASON NUTTLE

West Palm Beach As Seen Through an Artist's Lens:

*A Place of Style, Cool Art, and
Character of Many Voices*

Downtown West Palm Beach is at the beginning of a renaissance. It is full of life these days, says photographer Jason Nuttle. From his vantage point, he's had a wide angle for the past two decades from which to capture the narrative. What's it like to live and work in this area—a vibrant urban destination that is attracting New York City financial and private wealth management firms like Steven Ross and other developers to move their offices here?

"These types of firms are key to the growth of our local businesses and economy. With more financial, fintech, and tech companies here, I see downtown as having a solid support system for our local shops and businesses," adds Nuttle. He's not slow to point to the pandemic as another key factor in the growth of downtown over the past two years. "Florida remained open for business and had fewer COVID restrictions than the Northeast and West Coast, leading to more people who purchased homes and brought their businesses here."

Nuttle works and lives in West Palm Beach. His business is thriving these days. You can find his photos on the covers of Jupiter, Boca Raton, Delray Beach, and Venice magazines.

He sees the change that's happened since 2020, and the clear view from his spacious studio in West Palm Beach's Warehouse District inspires him every day. Devoted to his art, Nuttle hopes his studio will also inspire other photographers—from professionals

Jason Nuttle, a commercial and advertising photographer located in West Palm Beach, sits at the entrance to his studio. He has worked in both commercial and editorial photography for more than 20 years in South Florida.





Jason Nuttle has used the Canon camera system since the late 90's and owns a half dozen of L series lenses. He also works with a Hasselblad medium format system for portrait projects. When on location, Nuttle looks at what will make the most interesting background for the subject then chooses his lighting and modifiers, using strobes to light most of his subjects.

to amateurs, and everything in between. And as he observes, he could generate a long list, as he feels that there's so much amazing talent in this town.

Nuttle began his career as a photojournalist before turning to commercial photography in 2006. His projects are imbued with a lyrical and at times surreal point of view. His early days at the Palm Beach Post were spent documenting the city and its residents, and judging by his portfolio, that much hasn't changed.

When he talks about his experience in the news industry, there's a sense of nostalgia—a kind of sadness in his voice. "You could see the industry declining in the early 2000s and when a developer client of mine made me an offer to come and work for his firm, I said yes, even though it felt like a scary move."

That feeling didn't last for long. Though the times were tough in the news business, he always had a firm footing, carving out things on his own—figuring things out as he went along. At the Post, though there were manuals for everything, he was the guiding force behind switching from film to digital, a work that still draws him, one may observe, to the same subjects and themes—bringing a fresh approach to his work. He studied and learned the new form, which became his main practice after he mastered it. And though it probably took a lot of trial and error, seeing what worked and didn't work, Nuttle continued to explore new options and avenues.

"Working for the paper, you always had to be prepared for anything," he says. "You had backups for backups." And thanks to that type of training, he admits he's never had camera failures. "It just becomes second nature."

While commercial and advertising photography is a different beast altogether, they are by nature a collaboration—a collection of many voices. Something that he likes, as he seems to hold his photography more as a personal statement.

That said, commercial work influences his process. Like the desire to experiment with techniques and points of view. All of his favorite ads have a strong identity and stand apart from the work that others

are doing. And perhaps this comes from his newspaper days, and his ability to recreate real moments.

Whether it is with models, other hired talent, or even real people—he's learned to direct them, to create a scene, and then let them go. "You shoot, shoot, shoot—capturing all those moments," he says, and then he sits back and looks at his photographs and the way he's used to illustrating how a place felt to him at that moment.

Though the photojournalist still exists inside of him, you can tell that he's developed a style that's bold and expressive. This style is based on colors that allow him to share his unique perspective. The context of South Florida serves as a backdrop as he explores different visual techniques to show his vision of the region, the art displayed, and a character with many voices.

"If you look at my Lifestyle portfolio, there are a variety of projects there that I am super happy with. There were so many great photos to deliver. I even had a really hard time selecting a batch for this piece."

There are cool stories behind Nuttle's pictures. As with most accomplished photographers who are passionate about photographing people within their cultures, you wonder, "What comes from experimentation, either in the field or possibly in post-production? What happens during the creation process, as he conceptualizes a shot? Although a photographer can never predict how their day will turn out, his ability to get his shots to tell a story every time is impressive.

Like the photograph of a mother and her daughter in a candle store. The photo is simple. There's not a whole lot of information in the background. The focus is on the people. They, not the candle, are what transmit the warmth. "That was a real mother and daughter relationship," explains Nuttle. "The kids were excellent actors and great to work with—quite the characters! They were all smiles for the camera, and when I was done shooting, it's like they turned themselves off and just sat there with a blank stare!"

As a Florida photographer, Nuttle is capturing and preserving for posterity a unique and vibrant part of South Florida's rich cultural heritage. He likes the artwork displayed across town, so he uses it in his photographs. And as they are developed, what you see is an impressive rendition, indicative of the creative and innovative minds living in the area.

"South Florida's culture is rich," he says and his photos don't lie. It is curated by internationally renowned businesses, local pizzazz, and some of the most innovative and creative minds.

As the latest essential elegance arrives at The Square just in time for fall, Nuttle is there to capture it all. From upscale boutiques to unique small shops and restaurants, he rounds up the most exciting openings in the city to kick off the "season."

His collection of work shows the organic chemistry of West Palm Beach, how people gravitate to the downtown area, experiencing a vibe that's simple, smart, and undeniably stylish. Nuttle captures that simple but elegant life that West Palm Beach offers, with real foods, real people, and the real shopping experience—the in-person kind. His photographs of storefronts and other commercial locations, bright lights and dark spaces, models, and neighborhoods with historical and tropical trims are very simple, very well-designed, and very beautiful.

After more than a decade in the Harvey Building, Nuttle moved his business to The Studio 1016, located at 1016 Clare Avenue, Suite 5, in the city's trendy urban warehouse district. The Studio 1016 is an industrial-chic warehouse and shared workspace with a full photo studio and greenroom. It also offers private offices, open workspace, meeting rooms, and a podcast studio for creatives & small businesses. The move has given him the opportunity to collaborate with others and mentor up-and-coming photographers while elevating his business.

In the following pages, you will see a dynamic vision of West Palm Beach and of South Florida as a whole captured by Jason Nuttle.



"It feels like a time capsule!" - JN

Nuttle has photographed restaurants, shops, and the lifestyle of downtown for the Downtown Development Authority. He likes to capture the shifting and thriving energy of the downtown area, where so many people come to dine, shop, and socialize. This photo was taken at The Blind Monk, a swanky wine bar with small bites at 410 Evernia St, downtown West Palm Beach.



“I think downtown West Palm Beach is at the beginning of a renaissance.” - JN

Nuttle likes to tell a story through his photographs and showcase all the outdoor spaces along downtown and the waterfront. This photo captures people riding the free trolley that picks up passengers every 10 to 15 minutes at designated trolley stops located throughout the Downtown. For many, the trolleys are a convenient way to visit all Downtown shops, restaurants, and attractions.



Jason Nuttle has worked with dozens of businesses from Palm Beach to Miami. He has taken employee head shots, executive portraits, and in-office photography. In addition to studio work, he shoots environmental portraits and commercial sites. This photo was taken during his work for Loic Bakery Cafe Bar, a trendy spot downtown West Palm Beach where French elegance and excellence meets industrial chic.



This photo of Steve Hudson was taken at the Florida Everglades to illustrate his efforts on the commission to help remove invasive species from the protected area. Hudson is a developer, venture capitalist, and restaurateur, as well as an avid outdoorsman. He was appointed to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission two years ago. Mr. Hudson has learned a lot about imperiled birds, the bear population, and the plight of the Florida panther, among other issues.

Last year, while photographing for a story on Steve Hudson and his mission to try

and rid the Everglades of pythons, a storm rolled in from the west. While Nuttle and his assistant waited for the python to arrive, they talked about what equipment to use and how to light Mr. Hudson. The storm was full of heavy rain and lightning, so they took most of the lighting equipment down and put it in the car, keeping only one light. When the snake arrived, they shot Mr. Hudson holding the snake in three different locations from three different backgrounds. The photo was used as a two-page spread to open the story.



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