

Q&A: Mylo Fowler

PHOTO EDITOR JEFF KIDA

JK: I first saw this photo on your Instagram feed (@navajomylo). How did this shot come together?

MF: I was leading a workshop up in the Page area, where I'm from, and we were breaking down shutter speed and situations where using shutter priority mode with a digital camera would be very effective. This was a good example of a situation where a person could experiment. While using a tripod, I slowed down the shutter speed for some shots and had the dancer move around, creating a blur. I then used a higher shutter speed to get a really crisp, clean image, which is what you see here.

JK: Did you have this image in mind ahead of time?

MF: I did, especially because of the size of that alcove. If you don't include a subject to give an idea of the scale, the viewer doesn't know how big it might be. It's sort of the opposite of a photo I made of an "arch" that's about the size of your hand, but in photos, it looks huge. So I wanted a subject that would help the viewer understand the size of the landscape.

JK: As a Navajo photographer, what does this image mean to you?

MF: Most of my images are based around Navajo heritage and culture — the things I learned growing up. I was a dancer when I was a kid — I stopped grass dancing and hoop dancing around third grade — so I've always wanted to photograph a dancer. More than that, though, from the day we're born, we connect with the land and become one with the land. This image reminds me of a mother's womb, and I put this dancer there to reflect the

idea of being in nature and being nurtured by it.

JK: Having grown up on the Navajo Nation, what are some of your favorite places to shoot in Navajoland?

MF: People ask me that all the time, and it's hard to choose a favorite, but Monument Valley is definitely in the top three. It's nice to lead workshops there with people who sort of know what they're doing, so I can sit down in the dirt, play my flute and enjoy the quiet and how immense that place is. It's so different from having neighbors on the other side of the fence.

PHOTO WORKSHOP



Navajoland and People September 2-6, Navajo Nation

This workshop focuses on the beauty, culture, traditions and landscape of the Navajo Nation, with stops at Canyon de Chelly and the Navajo Nation Fair in Window Rock. It's led by acclaimed Navajo photographer LeRoy DeJolie.

Information: 888-790-7042 or ahps.org

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A Navajo dancer is dwarfed by a sandstone alcove near Page in Northern Arizona.