



Ice Diamonds

Aaron Burden

- He is a Youth Pastor at the Trinity Baptist Church in Michigan.
- Contrary to what he photographs, in reality, Aaron isn't too fond of winters.
- He enjoys drinking sweet tea.

Aaron Burden takes Conchita Fernandes through the intricate and delicate world of snow crystals, as he gushes about his immense love for nature.

More than a century ago, Wilson Bentley had spoken about the fascinating journey of the humble snowflake. “The snow crystals... come to us not only to reveal the wondrous beauty of nature, but to teach us that

all earthly beauty is transient and must soon fade away. But though the beauty of the snow is evanescent, like the beauties of the autumn, as of the evening sky, it fades but to come again.” Aaron Burden’s photographs evoke the same sense of awe and admiration of the little ice crystals.

The best time to photograph snowflakes is when the weather is bitterly cold. This prevents the corners and edges of the snow crystals from melting.

Photographing snow crystals at an angle will highlight surface reflections and prismatic colours, possible because of optical interference.

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- Instagram: @aaronburden

Upholding a Sense of Wonder

Aaron's affinity towards nature comes from a place of immense love for God and his creations. "Almost every day I set out early in the morning and spend at least two to three hours photographing whatever is around me... The trees, meadows, rivers, frozen bubbles and snowflakes. At times it is the same scene that I encounter day in and day out, but every day brings in a new appreciation for what nature has to offer."

Using the Best Camera at Hand

When Aaron is out photographing, it is not unusual to find him plugged into his earphones. He's either listening to music or his favourite audio book, which he claims helps him block out all the distractions.

A resident of Michigan, he has had several opportunities to photograph



the state's wintry landscapes and its various elements, one of which are snowflakes. Their transient nature, as eloquently described by Bentley, was what attracted Aaron to them. However, their impermanence meant that they can only be appreciated momentarily. While he

❗ Snow crystals are fragile and delicate, and melt easily. When you're photographing them, ensure that you never breathe in their direction.

📌 Get your camera as close to the snowflake as you possibly can. A distance of 1-3 cm between the lens and the snow crystal is ideal.





📍 Look for isolated snow crystals against a plain or dark background. The latter is usually preferable to highlight the intricate details of its structure.

initially used his DSLR to photograph the intricacy of the ice crystals, overtime, he graduated to the camera that was always with him, his iPhone. With the help of Olloclip's macro lens attachment, Aaron discovered a whole new world of possibilities that were now achievable with his phone. Unlike the DSLR, which

required to be setup and adjusted for its settings, Aaron found himself not fussing as much with the iPhone. It was instant and hassle-free.

For Aaron, nature brings within him a certain quietness and calm, and invokes inspiration and hope. He mentions it in the words of a hymn...

"This is my Father's world,
And to my listening ears
All nature sings, and round me rings
The music of the spheres.
This is my Father's world:
I rest me in the thought
Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas--
His hand the wonders wrought..." 📖

📍 Snowflakes usually fall in clumps. Don't worry, be patient and look for isolated crystals.