

# Meet Phil Bekker of Phil Bekker Photography in Sandy Springs – Voyage ATL

VoyageATL Staff



Today we'd like to introduce you to Phil Bekker.

Born and raised in the British colony of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Phil studied photography in both South Africa and England and moved to the United States in 1986, where he achieved his MFA. He has been involved in fine-art photography, having been represented by Fay Gold Gallery and Hagedorn Foundation Gallery in Atlanta as well as the Works Gallery in Costa Mesa, California. His work is currently on exhibition at The Lynda Matney Gallery in Virginia.

Phil Bekker's work is in private and corporate collections worldwide and has appeared in many awards publications. Collectors include Hyatt Group Paris, Ann Cox Chambers, UPS Consulting, Polaroid International Collection, Silvercreek Country Club CA, Saks Fifth Avenue, and Judith Ripka, to name a few.

Concurrently, Phil has operated his own commercial studio since 1986 and been involved in photographic education at the college level up until 2016. Commercial clients have included: Bell South, Buchtal Tiles, CDC, Cit Group, Coca Cola, Contel, Georgia Power, Honeywell,

Mercedes Benz Pierre Cardin, Ritz Carlton, San Destin Resorts, Siemens, Southern Bell and many more.

Phil is both a follower and collector of fine-art painting, sculpture and photography and lives amongst abundant wildlife on a lake off the Chattahoochee River, where he prefers the peace and tranquility of nature. His work may be seen at [www.bekker.com](http://www.bekker.com), on Instagram under PhilBekkerPhotography and on Facebook under Phil Bekker Photography.

**Overall, has it been relatively smooth? If not, what were some of the struggles along the way?**

Truthfully, it was a long and difficult road, from traveling from a small country in southern Africa to enormous London, to live and study and not being able to stay in the UK afterwards because of world sanctions against my country, was a bit tricky at the time but the best decision I ever made, in terms of the experience I gained.

Moving from South Africa to the US a number of years later, was also very difficult initially in all aspects, especially the steps and enormous costs in gaining citizenship – about \$20,000.00, but we persevered (sold valuable photographic equipment) and in the long term it has also turned out to be a very good move and we love it here and it is definitely home.

The joys of youth when everything seems possible and there is no fear.

**Phil Bekker Photography – what should we know? What do you guys do best? What sets you apart from the competition?**

In South Africa, photographers ‘generalized’ to ‘specialize’ in terms of what they were shooting commercially as the market was much smaller. In America when I first arrived in the late 80’s, one had to have a specialty and you marketed yourself in the huge sourcebooks as doing that specialization only. Generally, now, I think many photographers in the US (you can see in the big rep firms like StocklandMartel and BA-Reps) advertise themselves as being a master of many talents /field of expertise, which I would think is a result of the uncertain economy over the past decade or more. I arrived in the US with a general book and ended up specializing more in interior and exterior architecture, which I still pursue but I am always on the lookout for more challenging and innovative work, a looser brief from the client.

I was perhaps most proud of having being asked by Pierre Cardin to do an extensive brochure with the work being all of my own concepts. This did repeat itself later, when I was working with Polaroid Transfers and clients would give me a lot of free reign in interpreting their clients’ needs.

I think my very graphic and abstract style and bold use of color has set me apart and resulted in a lot of my work being featured in awards publications and advertising awards.

**What is “success” or “successful” for you?**

One has to have a personal style / signature that sets you apart from others and will position you successfully in the market place, which is ever evolving. Success is being as savvy with the business aspects as with the creative package that you can create to appeal to the potential

clients. Once you get those clients, success is repeat business and the generation of new business based on the success of what you're producing, how you relate to the clients and the confidence they have in you. It's really 95 percent marketing and 5 percent actually photographing.

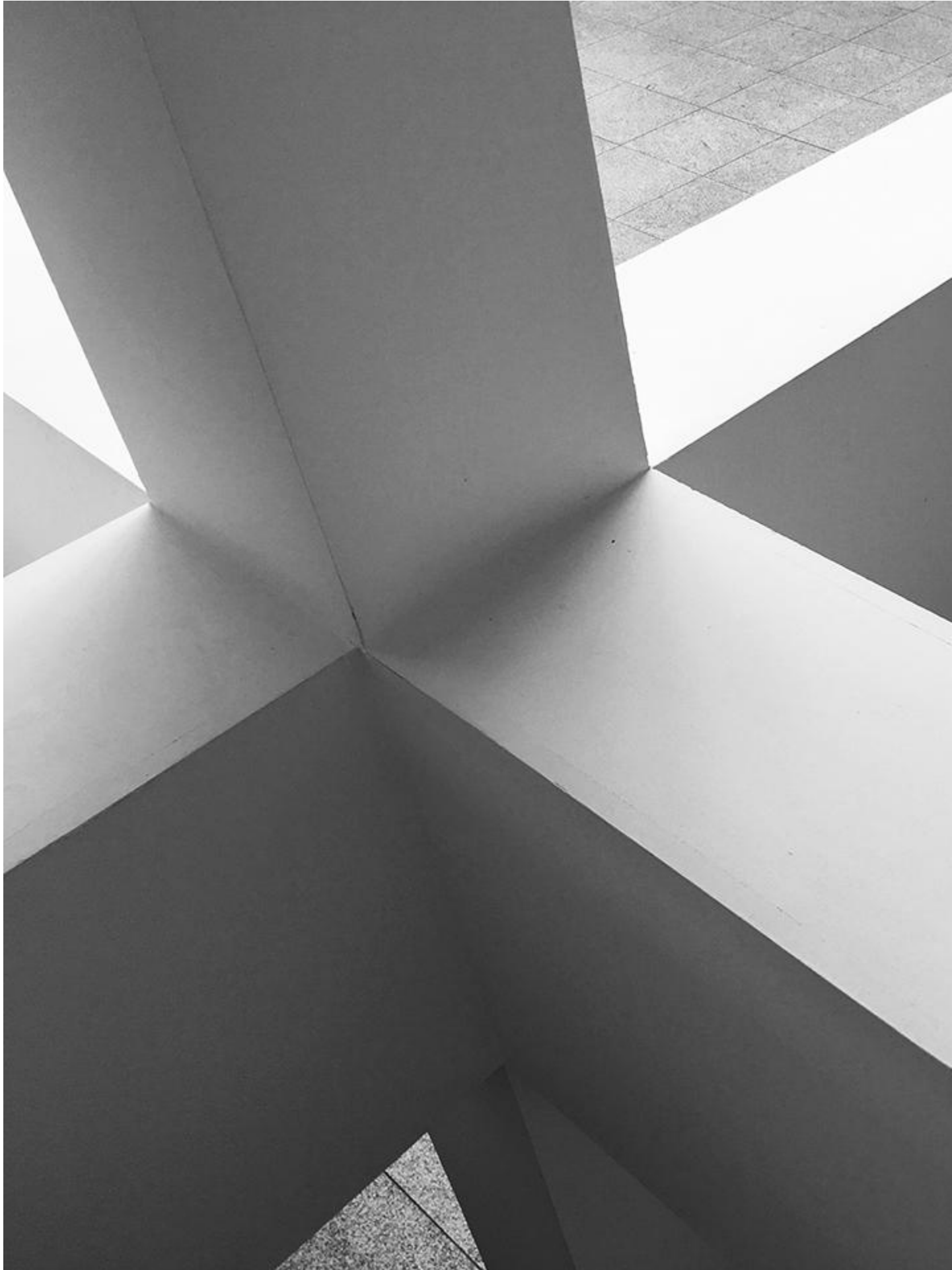
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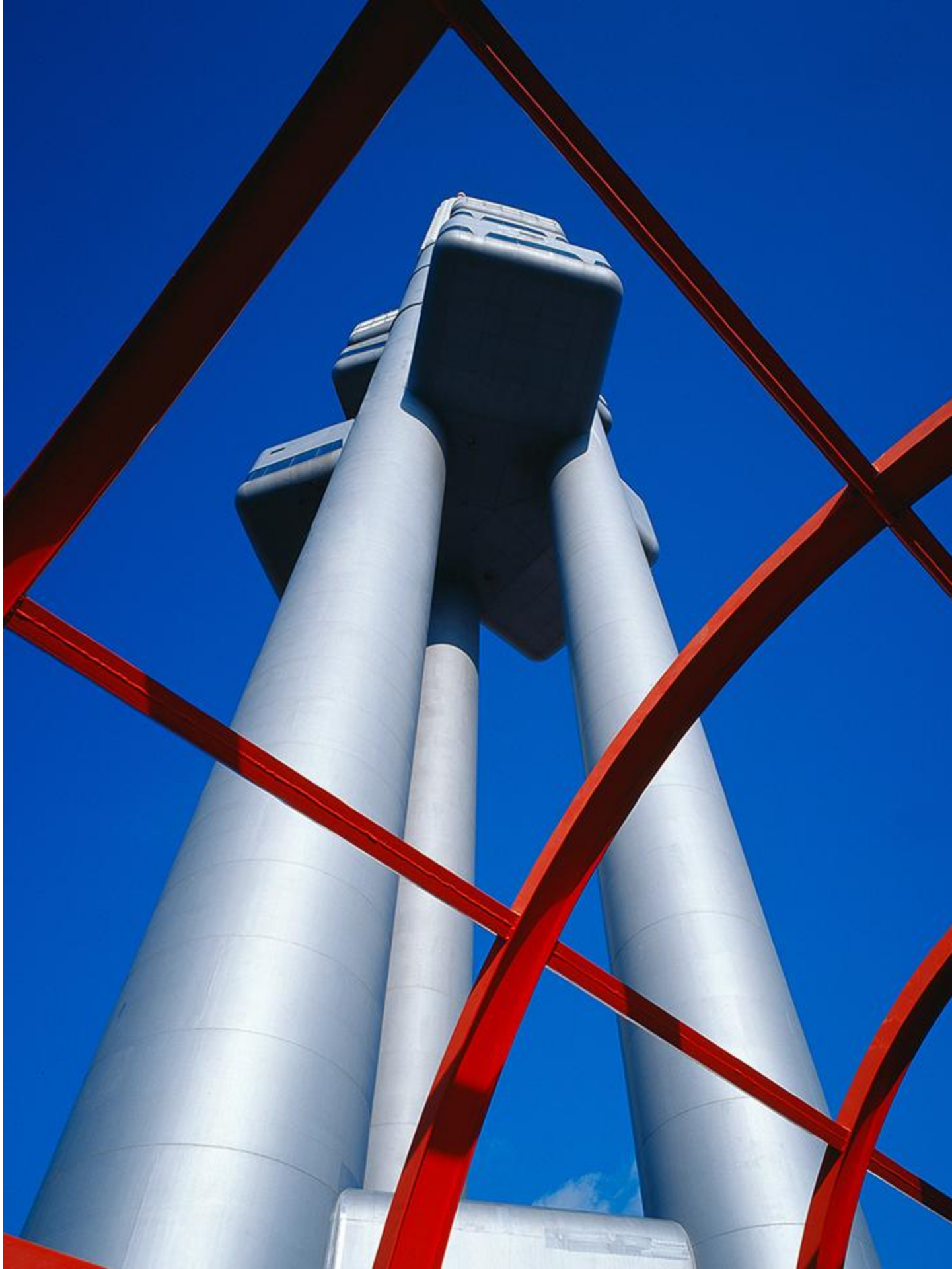


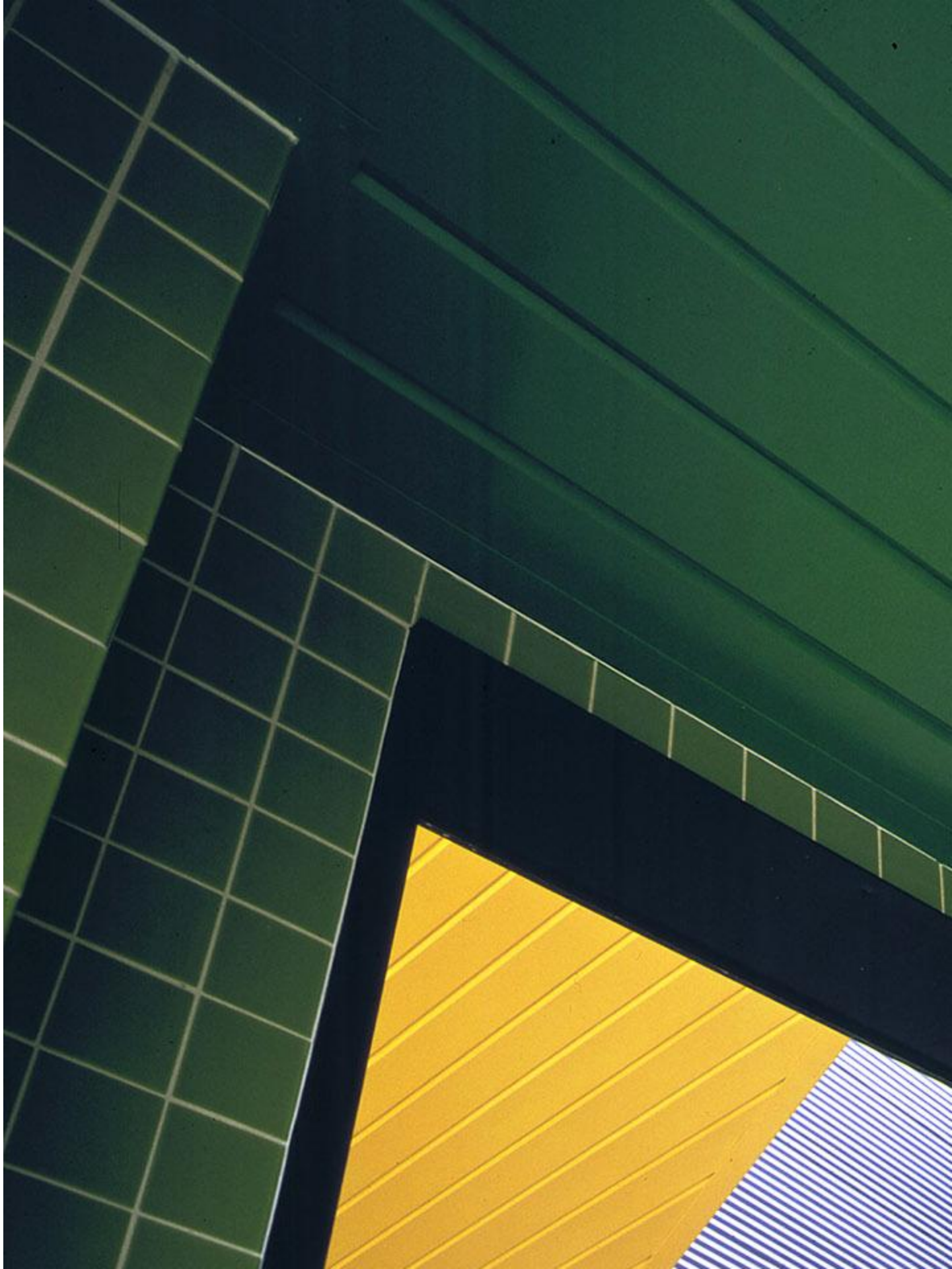


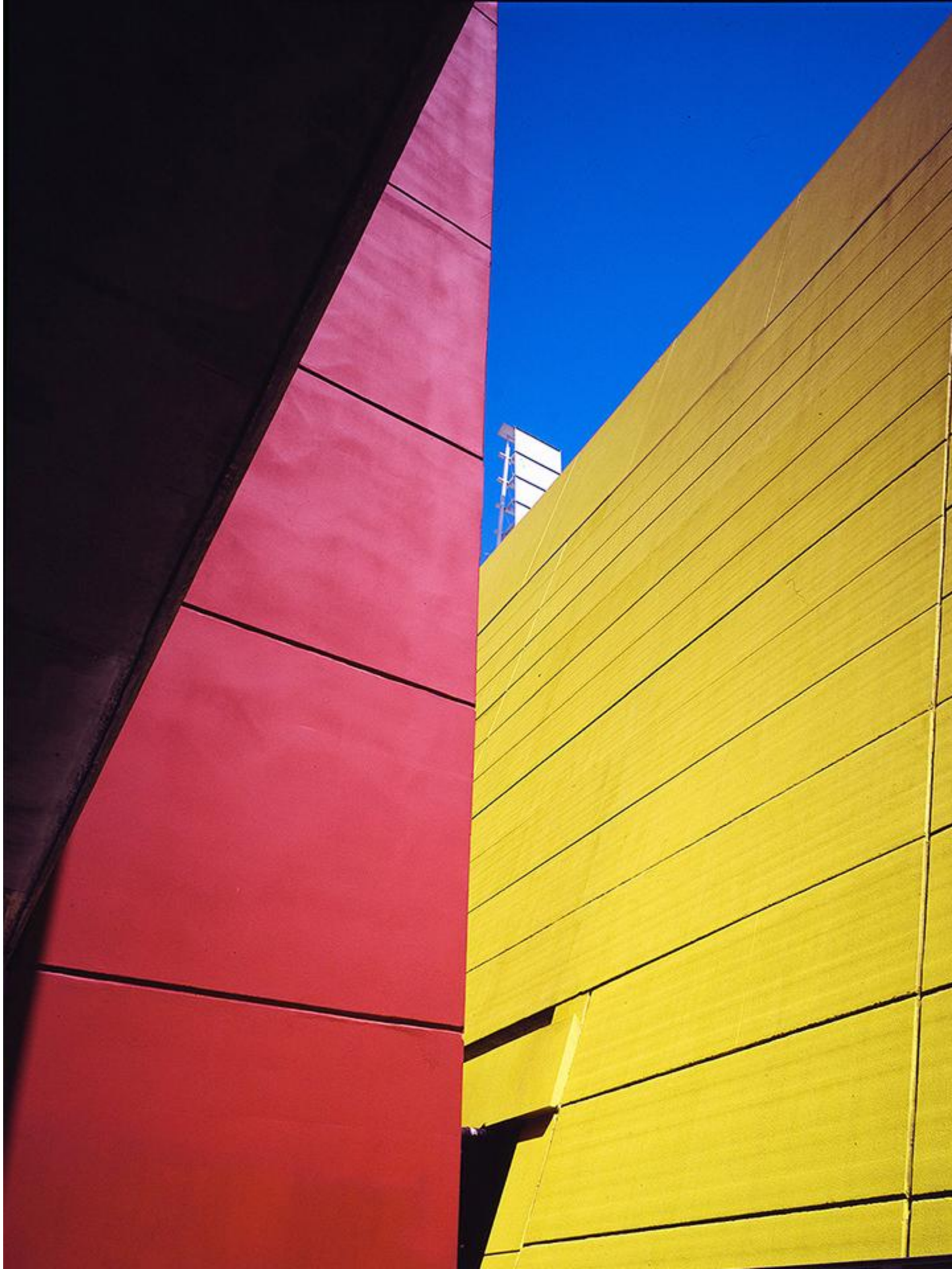












**Image Credit:**

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