

ISSUE 01 | JULY 2011



for PHOTOGRAPHERS
AND AFICIONADOS

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SIMON HARPER

Business as usual

CHRIS COAD

Personal panoramas

NICK SERVIAN

Dummies for Windows

A work of art



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Welcome to the first issue of *f11* and thanks for joining us! You're here because you're curious, but mainly because you love photography.

f11 is for professional and enthusiast photographers, designers and creative people working with images, and collectors of photography and ephemera. We want to see your work and hear your voice.

We're as hot for silver as we are for pixels so expect images from every origin – wet or dry, dark or light. And before you ask - yes, show us your Polaroids and your iPhone pictures!

Create your images on the computer rather than in the camera? Photoshop and CGI artists, retouchers, graphic designers and illustrators are all welcome here.

We share your passion as picture makers and we're also astute observers plugged into imaging industry brands and suppliers.

We're not here for newbies. You won't find articles on photographing the family cat or explaining depth of field. No inane photo competitions, no articles about how to win them either! We won't help you choose the best digital camera under a hundred bucks, or offer tips for capturing baby's first steps, or tell you why a tripod might be a good idea. We won't extoll the virtues of starburst filters either.

Instead we'll show you superb images, review products that will appeal to you, and we'll seek insight from leading exponents of the art. We'll also cover associated technology stuff as we suspect you're fond of gadgets and gizmos, large and small!

All you need to do is subscribe to join our community and enjoy the benefits not available to casual readers here on our website. Subscribers are automatically entered into all of our prize draws, and receive an email when each new issue is released. It's fast, easy and free to sign up and we'll never provide your details to anyone else.

Do it now! Be one of our first five thousand subscribers and you're instantly in the draw to win an Olympus XZ-1 camera!

Hope you enjoy issue one of *f11*.

Tim

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f11 Magazine
P O Box 37-233, Parnell
Auckland 1151, New Zealand
www.f11magazine.com

Editorial:
editor@f11magazine.com

Advertising Sales:
sales@f11magazine.com

Publisher/Creative Director:
Tim Steele

Design/Layout:
Donna Hoyle & Claire Robertson
of Donna Hoyle Design

Web Developer:
David MacLeod

Contributors:
Gary Baildon :: James Madelin
Karim Sahai :: Malcolm Somerville

Featured In This Issue:
Robert Catto :: Chris Coad
Simon Harper :: Nick Servian

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RETOUCHING www.super-nz.com

GARY BAILDON aka The Shooter was schooled in the dark arts of photolithography, before talking his way into a well-known Auckland studio in the heady 80's. Most of the 90's were spent in a plausibly deniable series of roles in the photo industry. After his disappointment at Y2K not signaling the end of the world, as we know it, he returned to shooting people, products and fast moving objects for filthy lucre. Helmeted and leathered, he's often sat astride a rather large and imposing British motorcycle, the latest in a succession of fast toys. For shits and giggles he plays both drums and bass in bands you've never heard of, in places you've never been to.



JAMES MADELIN is a former investment wanker, a reformed press photographer and a cunning linguist. He's better known for his role as CEO and chief mad scientist at his company Enlight Photo. James is the inventor of the now world famous Orbis ring flash device, the indispensable Frio and a host of future products that shall, for the moment, remain top secret. When not jet setting around the world's photo dealers promoting his latest indispensable photographic invention, James may be seen around town on two wheels in an effort to reduce his massive carbon footprint. He strenuously denies the use of bicycle clips and insists that his legs are unshaven.



KARIM SAHAI is an accomplished photographer, a deeply conceptual thinker and an all-round clever guy yet he still insists on holding down a day job. He is one of those mysterious unsung heroes toiling away on the back lots of Wellywood as a visual effects artist for feature films. As you read this, he is most likely putting the finishing touches on a future blockbuster while planning his next expedition as his alter ego, the globe-trotting travel photographer and adventurer. Although he failed to meet the selection criteria by being far too young and good-looking we decided to invite him to join the *f11* team anyway.



MALCOLM SOMERVILLE spent far too much of his working life within the evil empire that once was the largest multi-national manufacturer in the photo industry. His resulting knowledge of photographic and chemical processes is so deep that he is still deemed to be a security risk. A past president of the NZIPP, and an active member of their Honours Council, Malcolm is the ultimate fixer, a go to guy for anyone wanting to know anything about professional photography and photographers. Malcolm has been a writer and industry commentator for many years and has the innate ability to spot a crock of the proverbial at 500 paces.



TIM STEELE is the ringmaster of the new travelling circus that is *f11* Magazine. A former high wire artist for corporate masters in the photo industry, he still suffers nightmares about delivering the physically impossible, occasionally under the whip of the seemingly insane, and always on behalf of the terminally unappreciative. A brilliant escape from the last of these gulags led him to consultancy in publishing, advertising and marketing. Tim has always been, and remains, in awe of the many professional photographers who continue to allow him to hang around their studios in exchange for odd jobs, lunches, and his personal speciality, free advice. *f11* provides the ideal platform for him to do precisely this.



Featured in this issue



Nick Servian

Dummies for Windows
Fashion store mannequins
around the world.



Simon Harper

A retrospective portfolio of
his personal and commercial
photography.



Chris Coad

A collection of personal
panoramic photography,
all shot on colour film.

Contents

Welcome	1
Meet the team	2
Contents	3
In plain sight	4
Editorial	6
Real Life Review	8
Chop Chop	24
Malcolm Somerville	57
AIPA	60
Karim Sahai	62
James Madelin	64
NZIPP	68
Gary Baidon	70
The Slack Page	76

IN ADVERTISING – SONY 3D BROADCAST TVC

Sony has worked with London agency Crayon to create this TVC for their 3D broadcast from Wimbledon. The ad mimics Sony's original 2005 Bravia TVC set in San Francisco and featuring a cast of thousands, balls that is. Tennis balls on this occasion, naturally, and bouncing through the streets of suburban Wimbledon.

Click on the screen to view the new ad or here to see the 2005 original. <http://youtu.be/7DrFY3H-u8w>



29 WAYS TO STAY CREATIVE

If you're in need of a little inspiration, or just need help getting through a flat spot in your day, there's food for thought to be found here.

A light hearted interruption to whatever pressing matters currently prey on your grey matter.



SELF PROMOTION – JASMINE STAR

Sure, skeptics will say this is too 'schmaltzy', too 'American' and way too slick a piece of self promotion but we say boohoo to those nay sayers and fiddledeedee to her detractors! This is unquestionably THE best piece of self-promotion that we've seen from a people photographer – bar none. Admittedly it helps that Jasmine Star is charming, persuasive, effervescent, talented and attractive but this is great marketing machinery in action.



VINCENT LAFORET ON CUSTOM DSLR VIDEO RIGS

A series of short videos on configuring custom rigs for DSLR video. This is an intro to bolt ons for the DSLR film maker. Click on the screen to watch the intro, then below for the series.

Part 1: <http://vimeo.com/16983371>

Part 2: <http://vimeo.com/16984057>

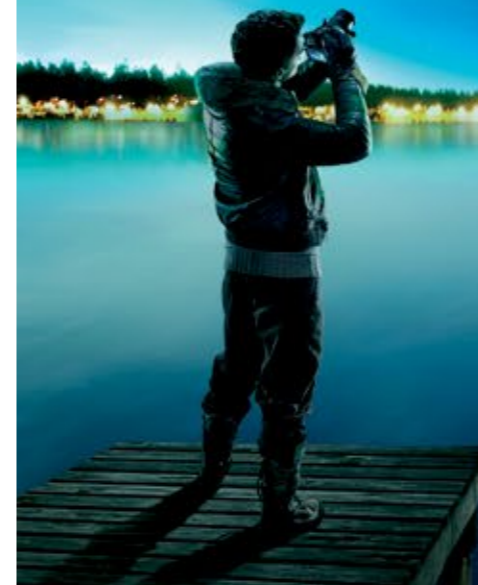
Part 3: <http://vimeo.com/17016951>

Part 4: <http://vimeo.com/17017681>

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How do you start an online magazine?

Well, it helps to know something about the selected subject, and the right people, so that's a good start, and that's followed by a year of solid research resulting in a business plan that looks a little like a road map and a lot like chicken scratchings.

It's been an experience not unlike a long car journey. Sometimes I'm driving, other times I'm being driven – trying to read the map. I've had my head down and now my stomach is lurching because I've been too long without seeing the horizon. Oh, and the jiggly bits of road are making me a tiny bit nauseous, so stop the car I want to throw up.

The best bits however, have been truly awesome. Like the faith demonstrated by my photographer friends, some very old, some very new, lots in between, who have rallied around the idea, embraced it and graciously thrown their work on to the bonfire of vanity that such a publication, even an on-screen one, represents. I thank you all sincerely for your encouragement, support and stunning work. Now, go tell all your equally clever friends!

Not one member of this rapidly growing, coffee-consuming, jive talking focus-group has called for a print version of *f11*. All agree that they want to read this on screen.

As a lover of printed matter myself, someone who can become aroused just tearing the shrink wrap off a good magazine and sniffing the ink, I do see the contradiction but we move with the times and the technology.

The fact is, we now live significant portions of our lives somewhat vicariously on a series of screens, large and small, in a connected but often anonymous virtual world. If we work hard and enjoy a modicum of success then maybe that reality is 1920 pixels wide and 1080 high.

Yet, in the midst of this pixelated curious mix of anonymity and notoriety the internet has taught us all the value and meaning of being part of a large community, made up of smaller communities, some as small as you, me and the other guy.

We're all in this pseudo religion that is the online world, and we variously frequent the great cathedrals, the churches, the shrines and the tiny chapels that represent holy places where priests and priestesses speak to our interests, great and small, deeply meaningful or deeply meaningless.

My hope for *f11* is that we can straddle two things, the sea that is the Tasman, geographically separating two incredibly similar nations, and that gulf between the deeply meaningful and the deeply meaningless. Expect both, but hopefully not in equal measure.

This is a place for pictures and ideas, a meeting place for people who share a love of something. We'll try to be deeply reverent of great images and even greater ideas, occasionally scalding by eliminating the poor ones, and always healthily skeptical of BS when we can see it for what it is.

Subscribe, communicate, contribute – be a part of this community.

TS
tim@f11magazine.com



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Fujifilm X100

Robert Catto

No camera launched in the last couple of years has generated as much interest, as many column centimetres, or garnered as much web real estate as Fujifilm's X100. This has been the most talked about launch for some time, the camera eagerly anticipated since being announced at the 2010 Photokina show.

This retro-styled but very modern day digital rangefinder has found a market recently tightly held almost exclusively by Leica. Importantly, it has done so with a thoughtfully conceived and strategically price pointed product. What may have appeared as a brave move into a low volume sector may well transform that sector's viability for other manufacturers by generating notable sales numbers.

Fujifilm is to be congratulated for the thought that has gone into re-entering the professional and enthusiast space after a long absence.

It has been a long time between drinks as the company withdrew from the DSLR space, producing nothing since the S5 in 2006. The X100 formula? Retro-look, a fast but fixed moderate wide angle lens, a large but still APS size sensor, a hybrid optical and electronic viewfinder and stylish accessories to match the period dress.



So how does it measure up? We set out to discover if it's bling for the bucks or bang for the bucks...

Here in the first of our "Real-Life Reviews" we asked Canadian photographer Robert Catto, now Wellington based, for his candid observations on his recent purchase.

Robert specialises in photographing the performing arts and live events and edits the GRINZ newsletter for photographers, www.grinz.co.nz



Self-portrait with the X100 on the day it arrived. Taken with the X100, 23mm lens, 1/125th at f/2 and 250ISO, in-camera .jpeg with processing in Adobe Photoshop CS5 and Alien Skin Exposure 3. © Robert Catto.

f11: Welcome to f11 Robert, good to have you here. Tell us about the X100 - what are your impressions?

RC: Hey Tim—thanks for inviting me! I'm enjoying my X100 a lot, personally. I've been using rangefinders for my personal work for a few years now, with a Voigtlander Bessa, Hasselblad X-Pan and most recently the Epson R-D1, which takes Leica M-Mount lenses on a 1.5x crop sensor; but that's gone completely untouched since I got my hands on the little Fuji.

I'd say the best way to sum it up is that there are a lot of really great things about it, alongside some relatively minor niggles, which naturally annoy some people more than others. I'm in the 'less annoyed' camp.

f11: What are your thoughts on image quality? How does it compare to your Canon cameras and the L series lenses you use every day?

RC: Well, obviously I'd been looking online at info about this camera for a while before getting my hands on it. I'd seen a lot of files floating around, and was trying not to get my hopes up – it's very hard to gauge things like that if you haven't seen the situation they're actually faced with, and shot a comparison with a camera you know well.

In my experience, it's been very, very good; in just about any situation, at least in terms of raw (or RAW) image quality, it's up there with some of the very best dSLRs available.

f11: How does the X100 fit within your range of equipment? Did you buy it as a plaything, for a specific application or perceived need?

RC: I wanted it for my carry-everywhere camera; funnily enough, I've wound up using my iPhone a lot of the time for personal work, too! So I find myself having to think about when the iPhone will be fine (or when I'm wanting to post something to Facebook immediately), and when I want to pull out the 'real' camera. But it's nice having one so small and light, that

still delivers the goods when real image quality is needed.

I very rarely carry an SLR if I'm not working, now. I'd rather travel light with this in my jacket pocket, whenever I can.

f11: Tell us about the low light performance. Given your style of photography, does it measure up to your DSLR's?

RC: When I first got mine, I took it into the kind of situation I'd normally shoot with an SLR – by which I mean to a dimly lit stage – and what I immediately thought in reviewing the images was that it lay somewhere between my 1D Mark III and the newer Mark IV; funnily enough, a few days later the DxOMark site put one through its paces, and their results were exactly the same!

So the image quality lies halfway between a 2007 pro camera and a 2010 pro camera, each costing about four times as much – without even including a lens! That's very, very good for a compact body, in any case.

f11: That electronic viewfinder, gimmick or great? How are you working with the focus and viewing tools available?

RC: I really like it! The overlaid info screen on the viewfinder window is great when you want to see the real world directly, and the LCD is there when you need it – for macro work, primarily.

I think the best thing about it though is the instant review – you can 'chimp' (review what you just shot) without even removing the camera from your eye. That's possibly the least-mentioned feature of the camera, but it's definitely one of my favourite things about it!

f11: Some reviewers have been critical of the autofocus speed. Your thoughts?

RC: Well, I think we've got to be a bit realistic here; coming from dSLRs alone, you might find it slightly slower; but coming from a manual-▶



Eli 'Paperboy' Reed plays live at Bodega in Wellington, 30 Apr '11. X100, 23mm lens, 1/125th at f/4, 1600 ISO. Adobe Camera Raw conversion, processed with Alien Skin Exposure 3. © Robert Catto.

focus rangefinder like the Epson, it's pretty snappy. Certainly faster and more accurate than my manual focus ever was!

Compared to most other cameras close to it in size, it's pretty darn good. I think possibly only the Panasonic GF1 series would beat it, but I haven't got that much experience with them; and unless you add the external viewfinder, you're holding those out at arm's length, which is just wrong!

f11: There has also been criticism of the controls, menu structure and firmware? How have you found these?

RC: Overall, it's a great camera – it's just that some functions that are relatively common are buried in menus, or split over two menus, where most photographers would rather have immediate access to them. I'm thinking mostly of ISO / Auto ISO here, which are in two different places; and yes, you can access the ISO setting from the Fn button on top of

the camera, but you have to choose ONE thing to access with that button and for me, it's the Neutral Density filter, which lets you shoot shallow depth of field on a bright day.

That said, there's been one major firmware update already that sped the camera up overall and fixed a number of things people had been criticizing, so it seems like Fuji are listening to comments on the camera and making improvements. I expect more improvements to the menu system will come with future updates as well.

f11: On balance, is the X100 an expensive compact, or value priced pro camera?

RC: Oh, completely a pro camera. Let's face it – what's the cheapest 35mm (equivalent) f/2 lens you can find? With the X100, they're practically throwing the body in with the lens! And there's a lot to like about the 'free' body, as well as the lens.



Andrew Savage & Dan Adams play with their band, The Dickens, at Happy in Wellington, 23 Mar '11. X100, 23mm lens, 1/125th at f/2 and 3200ISO. In-camera .jpeg, processed in Photoshop CS5 and Alien Skin Exposure. © Robert Catto.

Compared to other compacts I've had (Canon's G9, S90 and Leica's D-Lux 4 for example), it simply stomps all over them for usability, enjoyment and image quality. I'd probably still be happy with my R-D1, if the files from this weren't so much better!

f11: Best and worst points? What are your loves and hates?

RC: Love the size and weight, the look and feel of it; and I'd like a few changes to the menu system as we discussed, but I wouldn't go so far as to say I hate that about it.

Look, frankly, it's like any camera – the more time you spend with it, the more you understand how it functions, and the better your relationship with it gets. There are quirks to learn and work with (or around) on the X100, it's true; but that's the case with most cameras, really. You just want to get to the point where your attention is on your subject rather than the camera...

f11: Is it a keeper or this year's toy?

RC: I think it's a keeper, but I tend to say that about all my cameras...did I mention I've bought an average of one new camera every six months, since 2002? This is definitely one of the better ones I've chosen, though – or else I'm still in the honeymoon period!

Put it this way – I just spent three weeks travelling in Canada and the US, and it's the ONLY camera I took. That should tell you something about the image quality, usability, and my overall feeling for it. It might be love, but it's still pretty early in the relationship to use words like that...

f11: Thanks Robert, keep in touch!

See more of Robert's work at www.catto.co.nz, follow his blog at <http://catto.co.nz/blog>, join him on Twitter at @robertcatto, or visit <http://facebook.com/catto.co.nz> ■



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Buenos Aires 1994, Olympus OM4, Kodachrome 64. © Nick Servian.

Nick SERVIAN

Dummies for Windows
Fashion store mannequins
around the world

“The most fascinating thing about travelling is people-watching. To me, dummy-watching comes a close second. I’ll bet when you go to any town or city you spend time looking in fashion store windows. You may study the clothes but do you ever look at the mannequins wearing them? They can reflect the taste, wealth and fashion-consciousness of the country you’re in as much as the garments themselves.

They can be startlingly lifelike, or stylized to the point of being surreal. Some of them have been recycled many times and suggest an ideal of beauty of another age altogether, ▶

while others are as trendy as the clothes they wear. Will today's stylish mannequin look just as old fashioned in a few years?

After studying these pictures, I hope you will see these strange creations in a new light."

Wellington photographer Nick Servian wrote those words in 2006 about a personal project of enduring fascination that continues to this day and will no doubt be pursued until he can no longer hold a camera steady or see with at least one good eye.

As recently as a week ago, Nick was adding images to this collection by visiting a mannequin factory, the location of which must remain a closely guarded secret.

As a day job, Nick is a commercial photographer who has worked with hundreds of advertising agencies and design companies, producing photographs for countless annual reports and corporate profiles. He studied photography at the Polytechnic of Central London and has been awarded Fellowships by the British and New Zealand Institutes of Professional Photography. In 2006 he went to London to collect the First Prize in the Fine Art Awards of the British Institute of Professional Photography.

One day these images will reside in a book currently only dreamed of, but the work continues unabated here, and around the world on his travels. It's a personal creative essay of endless fascination, a collection that will never be complete. The pictures get better and better and, along with many of his friends and colleagues, I look forward to each new addition to his increasingly rather extended dummy family. ■

www.nickservian.com

TS



Nice 2008, Canon 5D. © Nick Servian.



London 1993, Olympus OM4, Kodachrome 64. © Nick Servian.



Cambridge, New Zealand 2003, Canon 1DS. © Nick Servian.



Budapest 1999. © Nick Servian.



Hong Kong 1995. © Nick Servian.



Cuba Street, Wellington, New Zealand 2005. Canon 1DS. © Nick Servian.



Dubai 2008, Canon G9. © Nick Servian.



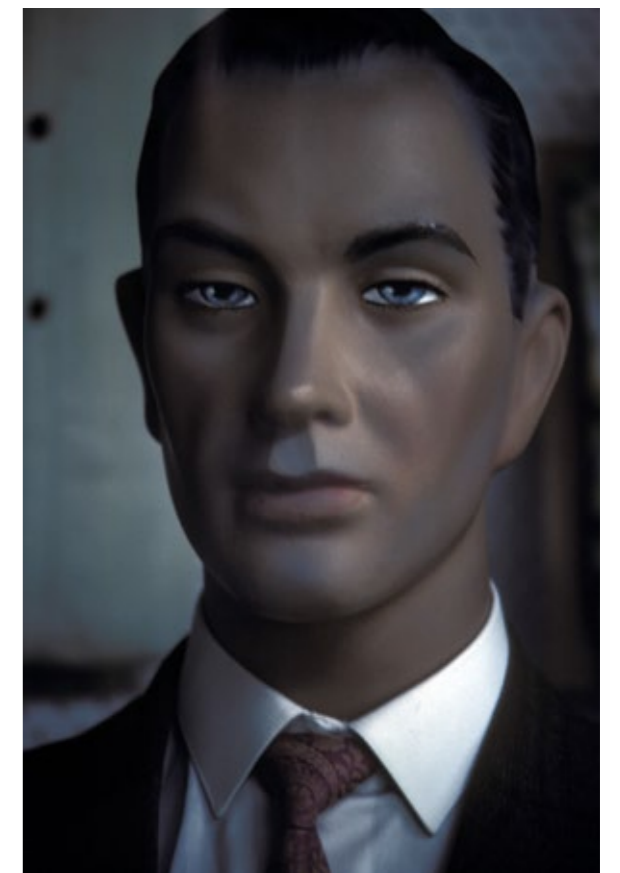
Prague 2009. © Nick Servian.



Brisbane, Australia 1994. © Nick Servian.



Galle, Sri Lanka 2005. Canon 20D. © Nick Servian.



Oamaru, New Zealand 1995. © Nick Servian.



Prague 2009. Canon G9. © Nick Servian.



Fifth Avenue, New York, USA 1995. © Nick Servian.

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Chop CHOP

Photography from 400 feet

Most days Matt Wilmot flies one of his helicopters. Before you ask, no he's not a millionaire industrialist who has somehow managed to fly under your social radar, he's an entrepreneurial young man who managed to combine his interests in order to do something he's passionate about every day.

Matt's company, Virtuoso Media, uses a small fleet of helicopters to capture still and high definition video imagery for clients from a wide range of sectors.

Even at this early point a correction is necessary, it would be more accurate to say that Virtuoso has a fleet of small helicopters.

While these small aircraft look like something that might have been born in a model and hobby shop looks are indeed deceiving. These are purpose built, industrial strength weightlifters on a diet of steroids and a fat reducing, muscle building exercise regime. They might be small but they are perfectly formed and painstakingly configured for their task as unmanned aerial vehicles carrying cameras.

The largest of these is Icarus, and it's impressive in a purposeful way though not exactly a thing of streamlined beauty as some flying machines

can be. It looks utilitarian, it looks like it can do the business.

At just under 1.5 meters long and with a rotor span of 1.6m, Icarus weighs in around 12 kg and can carry a 9kg payload, which easily covers any of the camera combinations Virtuoso has in day-to-day use. Icarus is GPS and autopilot equipped and can hover on station on command.

Restricted by NZ Civil Aviation restrictions to an altitude of 400 feet, and limited by battery power to a ten minute flight duration, meticulous planning goes into ensuring that each flight goes with military precision. A total of 6 very expensive lithium polymer batteries power the 50-volt engine and the electronic systems and sustaining time aloft is simply a matter of changing these between flights. Gas power was an option and would have provided greater endurance but was ruled out for excessive vibration and the inevitable exhaust fumes, which might have drifted across the camera lens in some conditions.

A portable generator is part of the travelling circus required as life support for Icarus and with multiple battery sets and fast chargers the aircraft can work all day on the big jobs. A large SUV transports the aerial circus to each destination and acts as control center, mobile workshop and storage facility. Icarus is airliner transportable and the team can operate anywhere in the world with only modest ground support requirements on location.

Virtuoso has experimented with a wide range of video and still cameras and lenses before employing units from Sony and Canon but continue to regularly test other offerings. Whatever camera is in use is mounted in a three axis gyro stabilised rig in the belly of the beast.

Capturing images requires a two-man crew, pilot and camera operator, each carrying out their own functions from Futaba 10 and 12

channel radio controllers. Watching the two go through their pre-flight checks is an eye opener as every nut and bolt is tensioned and all of the electronics, plus the functions on both radios, are tested before each flight. The camera receives similar attention to ensure that it is airworthy with all connections secured and the mount position zeroed.

As pilot, Matt trained for two years and endured all of the agonies and ignominies involved in that process, including writing off a number of airframes. Mastering the essentially unstable aerial creature that is any rotary wing flying machine does not come easy and necessitates a deftness of touch not found in every individual. Flying these aircraft requires the same control of cyclic, collective and tail rotor involved in a full-scale helicopter and absolute concentration is essential. The other thing it has in common with any type of helicopter is that even a small mistake is a potentially very expensive one.

The eminently well named Emerson Coolsville is Matt's camera operator. He controls the camera equipment with his own Futaba radio controller augmented by a live video feed to Fat Shark goggles permitting him the same bird's eye view from the camera position. This is invaluable for complex video sequences or precise camera placement for still photography. I asked Emerson about airsickness and he very politely reminded me that although his eyes were tracking with the motion of the aircraft and following the movement of the camera mount, his inner ear was unaffected and his

feet were still on terra firma so this was not an issue.

After the aerial action, its back to base where the team carries out the vital post-production work on the imagery captured. While Virtuoso's key services are based around heli-cam imagery, video production and virtual tour production they are often challenged to step outside of the square by clients quick to embrace the new perspective on offer. Virtuoso is a Mac operation and utilises Final Cut Pro and Avid Media Controller Pro to weave footage into compelling viewing.

If you're thinking that this looks like a cool way to earn a crust then think again. While the financial barriers to entry are relatively low, with a new fully equipped Icarus weighing in at around fifty thousand dollars fully accessorised – albeit minus the camera equipment and support vehicle, the skill barrier is the main issue, and it's a high jump. Few will have the motivation, time, concentration or just plain 'stickability' to master a beast such as this, and turning the raw footage into a finished product requires a different set of skills again. ▶

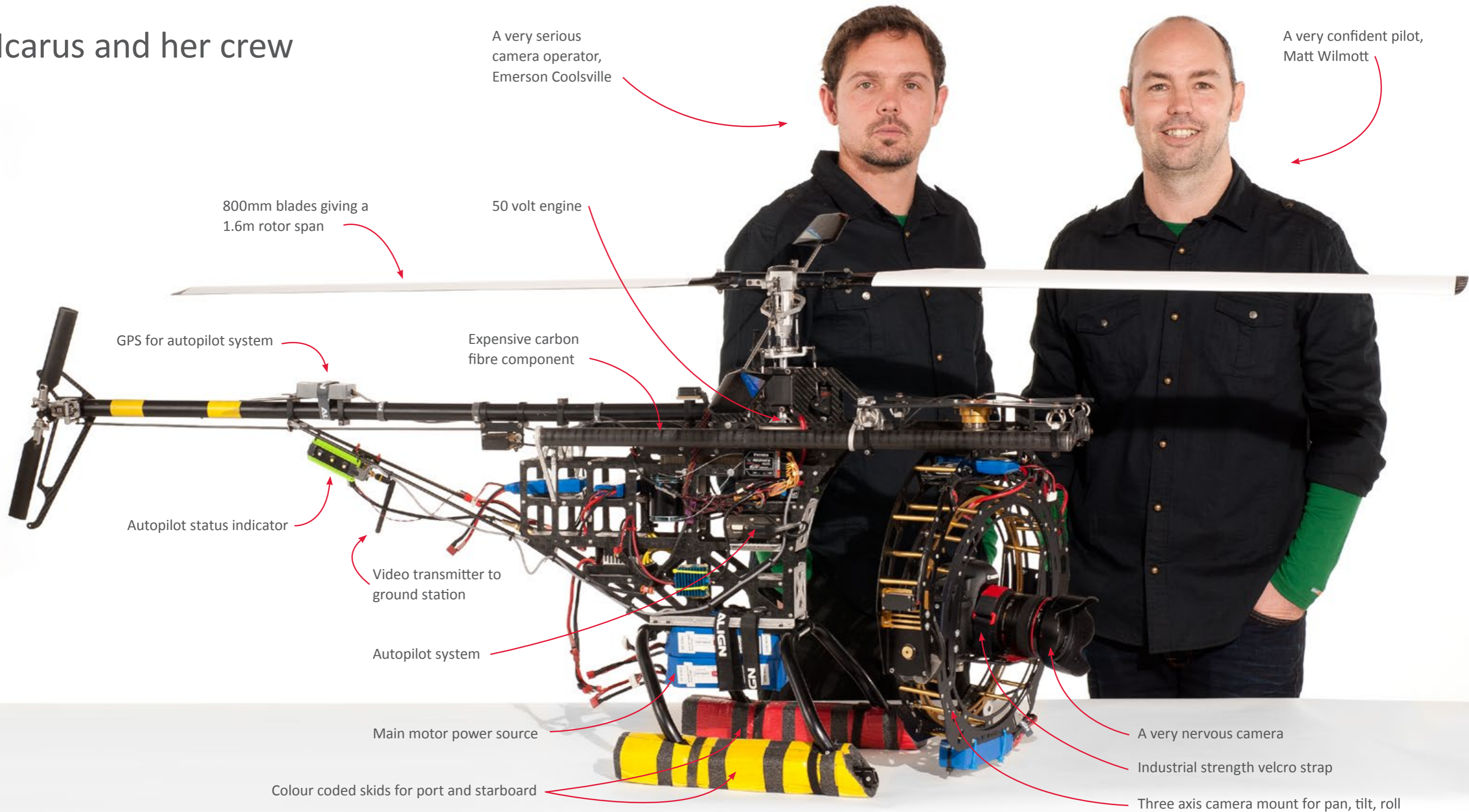


Image © Tim Steele

Icarus and her crew

A very serious camera operator, Emerson Coolsville

A very confident pilot, Matt Wilmott



800mm blades giving a 1.6m rotor span

50 volt engine

GPS for autopilot system

Expensive carbon fibre component

Autopilot status indicator

Video transmitter to ground station

Autopilot system

Main motor power source

Colour coded skids for port and starboard

A very nervous camera

Industrial strength velcro strap

Three axis camera mount for pan, tilt, roll



Image © Tim Steele

Matt is wary of unveiling his plans for the future and my questioning around a couple of issues took us into 'no comment' areas. Specifically I wondered aloud whether they had done any testing with the Red camera, or chatted to the nice man in Wellington who now has twenty of them. I also asked how they would feel about flying client's cameras as I could see a market for commercial photographers and TVC producers looking for a new angle. I chose to read in to Matt's enigmatic shrug that either he's way ahead of me or that the jury may still be out on both counts.

Watching Matt and Emerson operate as a team is impressive as their combined motor and rotor skills are complimented by the clear communication needed to have airframe and optics in the right place and at the right time within three dimensions. It's their money and their reputation hanging off that small helicopter as it buzzes off on today's mission and I have to say that it really does seem like a pretty interesting day job.

Providing of course that you can rub your tum and your head in opposing directions with any degree of control while trying to figure out if that wee blob is flying towards you or away from you...and what the hell is that flock of seagulls doing? ■

TS

Check out the Virtuoso showreel at:
<http://www.vimeo.com/18696879>

Or visit their website to learn more and view all the videos <http://virtuosomedia.co.nz/>



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After Bogey and Bacall. Still image for TVC. Kowa 66 with Ilford FP4 film. Location, lighting by film crew.
© Simon Harper

Simon HARPER

PORTFOLIO

In a former life, Simon Harper trained as a manufacturing jeweller. He made baubles and bangles and earrings and doubtless in that process made a lot of women very happy, but that is another story.

Today Simon is a commercial photographer in Auckland, New Zealand who works with a formidable list of advertising agencies and corporate clients from a purpose built studio tucked away in a suburb known more for retailing than the craft he now pursues. ▶

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Airbus cockpit. Noblex Pro 6/150VX Kodak E100VS. 2 shot composite, 60 second exposure. Client: Air New Zealand.
© Simon Harper

While Simon shoots a lot of cars, interiors, lifestyles and people he's hard to pigeonhole and a long exploratory journey through his hard drives reveals work from almost every genre. There is food here, and product, fashion, some amazing jewellery stuff and a mastery of macro with some specialised kit he developed to work alongside focus stepping techniques and software.

Unique to this studio is the full egg covered cyclorama that reaches into the ceiling and back around behind the camera position. I've

not seen another like it, and it is a bit like being in a life size walk in soft box. With either studio flash or hot lights the effect is incredible and very flattering for people and hard objects. Among other things, Simon is known for his car photography and the combination of this studio and his lighting skills are evident in his portfolio.

Simon works with the Leaf Aptus 75 33 megapixel back on Mamiya RZ and 645 AFD II cameras as well as a Sinar camera. A longstanding Nikon owner, he also employs

the D3x and a huge range of lenses, which he is rapidly replacing with the new G optics with their digital friendly N coating.

Unusually, Simon claims not to do any personal work but we found plenty of uncommissioned stuff in his studio and feature some of it here. So he does shoot when the meter isn't running, he can't help himself. I had to point this out to his strenuous denials!

Also unusual, is that he is quick to name and recognise the contribution of the many retouchers whose skill combines with his to

render complex scenarios which would have been logistically well nigh impossible to create in camera and at the location. We spoke to Simon on a cold winter's day in his studio, the gas heater cranking and his phones on divert...

f11: So after 6 years of training, you're finally a jeweller and then you quit to become a photographer?

SH: That's right, photography had been my hobby throughout that process with a succession of Olympus OM's and some Tokina ▶

lenses and I wanted to shoot for a living. So I printed some cards, put a portfolio together and worked on the Gold Coast in Australia. I shot tourism and real estate, called on agencies and started to get work.

Came back to New Zealand in 1986, converted my parents laundry into a darkroom and started meeting people in PR and advertising. Then in 1988 I found this studio and I've been here ever since, just signed another lease!

f11: So no formal training and no assisting along the way?

SH: No formal training, so largely self taught. Three months assisting but we won't go there! Very strange experience, won't say more!

f11: OK, that's intriguing but moving right along. How do you promote yourself?

SH: 90% of my work comes from ad agencies and graphic artists so of course I promote there. I advertise where they read, I cold call new prospects and leave a DVD portfolio with them. I also do mail shots and email drops to my existing client list. My website is my 'book' and I've just had a major redesign done, I got bored with the old one and the new one is so much faster, no waiting!

f11: Ever worked with a photographer's agency or a rep?

SH: No, although I've been approached I've always represented myself. There are positives and negatives to having a rep, but more negatives for me. Works for some, but it's not my way.

f11: Do you miss anything from the pre-digital days?

SH: Definitely not. Well, maybe the smell of the Polaroids? And the buzz of seeing an image develop in the tray? Actually, no, not really.

f11: How many megapixels is enough?

SH: We're there now, or almost there. I've shot billboards on my D3x and don't see the need to replace my Leaf anytime soon. I'd like a full frame 6x7 back for my RZ but even 40MP would fill that nicely. I can't understand people who are after 80 and 90MP sensors, why?

f11: Photographers are magpies, what shiny new stuff have you recently succumbed to?

SH: Three new G lenses for the Nikon, the 35mm f1.4, 50mm f1.4 and the 85mm f1.4 – love them! Also the new Nikon dedicated Pocket Wizards.

f11: Tell us about your workflow? Capture One, Lightroom or Aperture?

SH: None of them. I work with Adobe Bridge in CS5 and I'm happy. I've looked at all the options, and they all seemed like copies of Bridge so I'm not changing. No reason to change, Bridge is fast on my Mac Pro and I'm totally comfortable working in it.

f11: What have been the major influences on your photography?

SH: My clients, their art directors and their briefs. I deliver what they want so they are my influences. I add good lighting, hard lighting, and I keep everything clean and simple. I don't study other photographers either. I deliver against the client's vision, just adding and finessing with my own ideas and touches.

f11: Has CGI had an effect on the business of car photography?

SH: Undoubtedly yes, but my contacts in Detroit tell me that some of the manufacturers have tired of CGI and are returning to real photography. Good news for people like me!



Rural life. Mamiya 645 AFD II, Leaf Aptus 75 with 45mm lens. 3 shot composite. Client: ANCARE. © Simon Harper

f11: Do you print many of your images?

SH: Only for gifts, or perhaps for my wall in the studio. With my work, I consider that one day it's an advert, next day it's wrapping chips.

f11: Do you belong to any associations?

SH: No, I'm a one percenter, happy on my own.

f11: What would you do if you gave up shooting? Back to being a jeweller?

SH: Hell no! I think I'd become a retoucher. All those lucky buggers need is a beast of a Mac, a few hard drives and a Wacom tablet and they're in business. And they can work at home, huddle round the heater and drink coffee all day. Contrast that with all the

running around and all the bloody gear I have to buy and replace as a photographer. So yeah, a retoucher would be my guess, but still pretty unlikely I'd have to say.

f11: What's your perfect day off?

SH: Catching up with friends over a glass of wine in Takapuna, or relaxing up at Waipu Cove, never far away from a camera.

f11: Thanks Simon. ■

www.harperphoto.com

TS



Ford GT40. Composite with car shot in studio and background shot in Northern Gateway Tunnel. Car shot on Nikon D2X with 60mm 2.8D lens. Background shot on Nikon D3X with 35mm D lens. Personal work. Retoucher: Daniel Evans www.super-nz.com. © Simon Harper



*Audi R8. Composite with car shot in studio and background shot on Auckland motorway. Car and background shot on Nikon D3X – car with 50mm 1.4G lens. Personal work. Retoucher: Daniel Evans www.super-nz.com
© Simon Harper*



Casino. Four shot composite, background on site and talent shot in studio. Background shot 15 second exposure on Nikon D3X with 24mm shift lens. Talent: each couple shot with Mamiya RZ67 and Leaf back. Retoucher: Dan Coroian-Vlad, D² dsquared. www.retouching.co.nz. Client: Sky City. © Simon Harper



Manu, Bland Bay. Personal work. Nikon D3X with Tokina 28–80mm lens. Black and white conversion in Adobe Bridge. © Simon Harper



Landscape. Personal work. Mamiya 645 AFDII with 35mm lens and Leaf Aptus 75 back. © Simon Harper



Pool Hall New Zealand. Personal work. Nikon D3X with Tokina 28–80mm lens. Hand held exposure at 400ISO. Grain added in post production in Nik Colour Efex Pro software. © Simon Harper



Promotional team. Shot on location. Mamiya 645 AFDII with 80mm lens and Leaf Aptus 75 back. Client: Jim Beam. © Simon Harper



Sinar camera with 210mm Rodenstock lens. Hand painted background, lit with flash. Flower shot with soft focus filter and lit with light brushing during time exposure. © Simon Harper

Speed to Get the Shot



©Jemini Joseph

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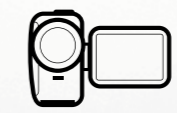
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*Aratere interisland ferry from a launch on Wellington Harbour, NZ while shooting a yacht race.
Hasselblad X-Pan with 90mm lens, Kodak portra 160nc. © Chris Coad.*

Chris COAD

Chris Coad is a commercial photographer based in Wellington. We've chosen to show you some of his personal work, which reflects his thoughtful approach and attentive eye, but from a position of total freedom to shoot where and when he chooses. Unlike his mainly digital commercial work, these pictures are shot on film in panoramic cameras, mainly the Hasselblad X-Pan.

Chris has this to say about the collection we assembled from his much larger submission to *f11*. "As a busy commercial photographer whose day to day photography usually involves photographing people, often for advertising,

editorial or design briefs I find it cathartic to go out and find these quiet unassuming scenes.

The series is an ongoing project that I will be publishing as a book in the fairly near future. I usually try to include a human element in most of my landscape imagery. I feel that the inclusion of something man made provides a link that viewers can identify with. I also consciously look for subjects that while they may have once represented something cutting edge or state of the art are now abandoned, derelict or discarded." ▶

www.chriscoad.co.nz

*Bus near Pahiatua landing strip, Pahiatua, Tararua District, NZ.
Hasselblad X-Pan with 45mm lens, Agfa APX100. © Chris Coad.*





*Desert Road Power Pylons, Rangipo Desert
Hasselblad X-Pan with 45mm lens, Agfa APX100.
© Chris Coad.*



*Derelict Panel Beaters, Shannon, Manawatu, NZ.
Hasselblad X-Pan with 45mm lens, Kodak Portra 160nc. © Chris Coad.*



*Pub, Shannon Manawatu NZ.
Hasselblad X-Pan with 45mm lens, Kodak Portra 160nc.
© Chris Coad.*



*Abandoned Dairy Factory, Tokomaru, Manawatu, NZ.
Hasselblad X-Pan with 45mm lens, Kodak Portra 160nc.
© Chris Coad.*



*Caravan, Queen Elizabeth Park, Paekakariki Kapiti Coast, NZ.
Hasselblad X-Pan with 45mm lens, Agfa APX 100. © Chris Coad.*



*Nis Bins Crayfish Caravan, Kaikoura Coast, NZ.
Hasselblad X-Pan with 45mm lens, Fuji Provia 100. © Chris Coad.*



Stirling Point Lighthouse at the Heads of Bluff Harbour, NZ. Gaoersi 6x17, 90mm lens, Agfa Portrait 160. © Chris Coad.

We asked Chris a few questions:

f11: Tell us about these road trips you seem to take? Are you in transit to somewhere else or literally wandering for the sake of finding images?

CC: Sometimes I'll take a couple of extra days if I am shooting out of town to shoot for myself but more often I will set time aside and go off and shoot specifically for the project. I like to plan these excursions fairly carefully. I find I can waste a lot of time and petrol by just driving around. I am also working on similar projects in other locations around the world and usually try to get away a couple of times a year to progress these as well.

f11: So you're on the road and see this great shot but what about the temptation not to stop, you've just overtaken three camper vans and nature is calling...

CC: Yes there can be a temptation not to stop. Especially if I'm on a deadline to be somewhere else at a certain time. And often I will see something that I would love to shoot but the light is not right at the time. I have a long list of places that I want to return to. The photo of the Kaikoura crayfish caravan took several years before I found it in a light I wanted to shoot it in.

f11: Do you travel with other photographers on shooting trips, or prefer to go alone?

CC: I always travel alone. Even traveling with family is difficult enough if I want to stop and wait for the clouds to clear, or for an hour or so until the evening light comes right. I would think traveling with another photographer would be worse as they would invariably want to be shooting something else, somewhere else at the same time.

f11: You're also quite a printmaker and sell some of your work to collectors. Tell us about that process?

CC: I print very little in house and usually opt for lab prints off a Lambda or Epson machine.

f11: Any thoughts about shooting this work on digital and simply carving the panoramas out of the frame? Might be easier or would that be cheating?

CC: I have traditionally shot panos so the digital option generally means stitching and I don't like doing that. It's not so bad if the subject is still but I shoot a lot of water scenes where there is movement and because of that I prefer to shoot the whole scene in one frame. There will no doubt come a time when I move to a digital platform for this type of work but I have no plans to switch immediately. ■

TS



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Convergence 1.0

I remember Convergence 1.0 or at least I am pretty sure I do. That was the drift from film to magnetic media and storage. It didn't happen in photography as we knew it but in that allied craft... filmmaking.

Funnily enough it is the current meld of filmmaking and photography which has become another eureka moment - defining another convergence altogether.

But back to Convergence 1.0, this was bubbling along in cine production - initially it was capture taking place with film ... 16 mm and 35 mm, mostly colour negative but broadcast news was shooting a positive.

In long form documentary, it was mostly edited and cut and matched and reprinted to another film.

From there, it went to broadcast or later to videotape, the first convergence was present in the form of 'tele-cine' transfers that captured from film and went to tape. Later it was the reverse of that which was to become a norm, the printing from tape (or digital storage), back to film.

Parallel to that convergence was one taking place in the graphics and pre-press industry. What was once a multi step colour separation task which created multi layers of film that in turn created (by contact mostly), multi layers of offset plates that attracted different colour dyes that eventually reached paper.

Convergence here was the introduction of colour scanners - initially in the form of drum scanners working in conjunction with

rudimentary computers that often filled rooms. These new convergences were to become industry altering, integrating new practices, creating new alignments, and making others obsolete. It gave new freedoms to design and drove down both costs and turnaround time without quality loss. The changes were to influence a very wide industry, not just pre-press where the revolution started.

The film to digital photography convergence was enabled mostly in the commercial sector... news gathering, military intelligence gathering, and later advertising. So rather than making this a lecture in the history of technological impacts I will quickly mention that often what we perceive is taking place is not in the sequence or for the reasons we might think at the time.

Suddenly we had a new convergence.... easily dated from August 2008, the day Canon announced the EOS 5D MkII and the possibilities simply exploded with the appearance of Vincent Laforet's "REVERIE" a month later. Here was a device that 'multi-tasked' to enable almost cinema quality filmmaking from a familiar mass market object, a digital SLR camera. ▶



Image courtesy of and © Karim Sahai.

The 5D phenomenon was made possible by the collision of massive computer capacity at lower prices, and the introduction of very clever software for editing. This previously complicated and expensive process was becoming universal and cheaper. And of course fast and wide data pathways talking with terabytes of storage at bargain prices. It also coincided with a new generation of users and adopters, far more media literate and confident to grasp these new tools in order to tell stories to a world wide audience. Or in some cases, merely to amuse themselves and others.

Photographers were hurriedly adding new skills to their bag of tricks, in love with the moving image, not sure how to create cash from it. Photographers know they have this powerful new convergence tool yet many are still stepping into it with some trepidation. They dreamed epics of Hollywood standards but underestimated the inherent complexities of linear storytelling and the importance of what should take place post-production.

Cinematographers and filmmakers were coming from a different direction. They knew what happened after capture, they knew the workflow and examined the signal specs. They saw narrow niche applications and embraced the DSLR for them. Old, new and emerging cinematographers and filmmakers have driven the accessory aftermarket to a point where your sub \$4K DSLR camera can quickly become a 12 -20 K rig!

So, convergence yes, but not the first, and certainly not the last. Technologies will continue to overlap, collide and race alongside each other and we will experience new ones for the rest of our lives., As photographers it may well be our equipment and our technology but this may well be grasped by others as they see opportunities we overlook. ■

MS

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See Vincent Laforet's camera test footage with the Red Epic M - includes time lapse sequences shot on the 5D Mk II:

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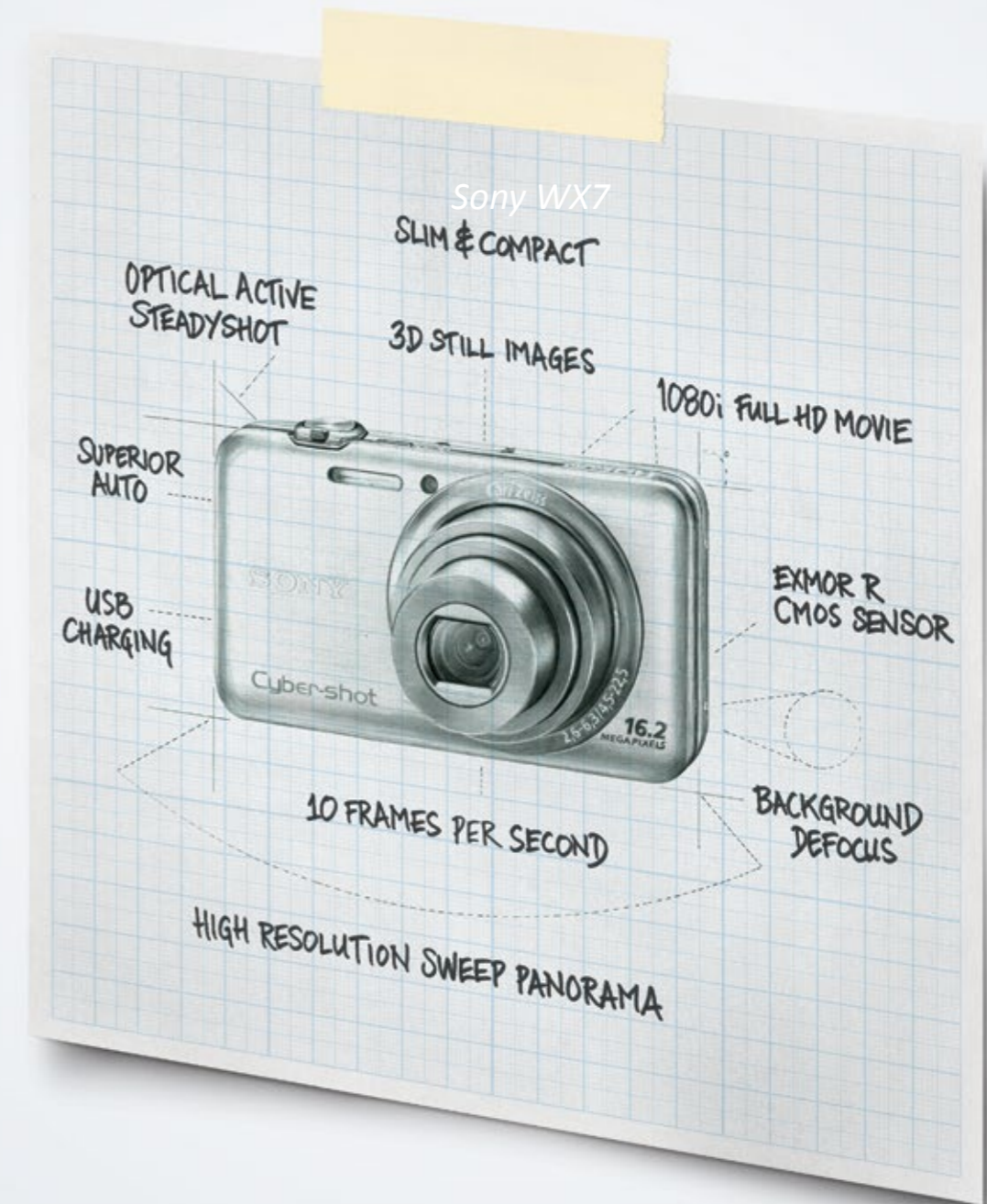


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Hello *f11* readers!

Given that this is the very first issue of *f11* Magazine it seems like an appropriate time to briefly explain what the Advertising & Illustrative Photographers Association (AIPA) is all about...

The AIPA was founded as a not-for-profit incorporate society in 1978 to represent the business interests of professional advertising and editorial photographers in New Zealand.

Run voluntarily by and for its members for over 30 years, the Association continues to support and nurture the photographic industry through education initiatives, conferences, seminars, workshops, exhibitions, information sharing, publications and networking among members. The AIPA is committed to protecting photographers' moral and intellectual property rights, while also cultivating public interest in photography both as an art form and a communication medium.

The Association currently has over 260 members nationwide, with the majority based in Auckland.

Over the past 5 to 10 years our profession has seen a massive influx of new entrants, and unfortunately many of these photographers have received woefully inadequate training and little if any 'real world' experience. Therefore the role of organisations like the AIPA (and NZIPP) has become more vital than ever. We aim to provide the information and resources that commercial photographers need in order to develop a rewarding, productive and profitable career in an incredibly competitive market.

In other words, the AIPA's primary objective is to help photographers. It's that simple.

Upcoming Events

Late July

AIPA Auckland General Meeting

Roughly every two months the AIPA holds a general meeting in Auckland featuring special guest presentations by top industry 'players'. These events tend to be quite social so they're great for networking with other photographers and assistants. Free entry for AIPA & NZIPP members, \$10 cover charge for non-members to help cover the cost of food and beverages.

Canon/AIPA Christchurch D-SLR

Video Workshop

Initially this workshop was scheduled to take place in March, but due to unforeseen circumstances (i.e. the February earthquake) it had to be postponed. Basically it's an introduction to shooting and editing HD video footage captured with digital SLR cameras like the Canon 5D Mark II. The Auckland and Wellington sessions we held earlier this year were both extremely popular.

August

AIPA Go-Kart Grand Prix (Members Only)

An elite group of AIPA speed freaks will head down to the race track and compete for the illustrious title of "AIPA 2011 Grand-Prix Champion". Not for the faint of heart.

For more information about these events (including dates and venues) please visit the AIPA website – www.aipa.org.nz – or alternatively 'like' our Facebook page – www.facebook.com/aipa.org.nz

Aaron K

AIPA Executive Director

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AIPA
for photographers

Storytelling, 2000 A.D.

Now is a time of revolution. Beyond that of the industrial age, the electronic period and the realm of instant information, now is the era of empowerment through a universal language of human storytelling.

Signs of this empowerment appear as an underlay in the battles opposing expression and oppression, propaganda and accountability. These revolutionary times also permeate all artistic expressions, be they visual or auditory. At the core of this fast-marching revolution is the irrepressible desire and human need to communicate about one's conditions; to share with all communities, societies and nations the dreams we aim to realise during our lifetime.

This exciting new magazine is a testament to the convergence of tools, techniques, currents, art forms and industries coalescing into a world of possibilities in which compelling stories are told visually and globally. Starting with this issue, I will aim to present technologies, filmmakers, artists and cases illustrating this storytelling revolution.



My (very) recent trip to PMA Australia 2011 Imaging & Entertainment Expo, brought back my child-like feelings of excitement at the sight of so much gear over such a large surface (Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre). It was a drool expo. A few of my pictures of the event, sit below this article. Although smaller in scale than European or American photography trade shows, PMA Australia 2011 was nonetheless strongly indicative of how the emphasis has somewhat shifted from displays of technological prowess to expressions of what this equipment can produce.

What struck me the most during this three-day affair was the intense interest paid by expo participants to the multiple gallery displays of large and beautiful prints; and the large attendance at talks given by photography professionals. In both cases, it seemed people were more interested in stories encapsulated by images than by technology itself. This interest seemed to dwarf in size that paid to the gazillion stands showcasing cameras



and other gadgetry. Some will say this is an indication of a global recession still breathing. And they may have a point.

The relatively recent eruption of video right in the middle of the world of digital photography is ongoing and shows no sign of abating. If the presence at PMA of many stands dedicated to camera controls, video lighting equipment, cinema lenses adapters, software and a myriad more digital cinematography accessories is anything to go by, it's easy to see how the touted convergence of still and moving imagery is not going to be without challenges.

Many of them will be technical, for the photography industry as a whole, but more so for the individual willing to embrace these enabling methodologies and technologies. The majority of challenges fall into one of the following categories: financial, collaborative, heuristic, artistic and evolutionary.

Financial because, many will succumb to the sirens of equipment-hoarding, while others will

invest heavily, riskily, into the tools allowing them to reach an enhanced (perceived?) power of creative expression; besides, Canon, Sony, Nikon and all the actors of this convergence need to remain in business.

Collaborative and heuristic, because crafting stories, which captivate and inspire relies on the perfect execution of a learned craft and are not the byproduct of simply owning the "right gear".

And, finally, artistic and evolutionary; the two facets of storytelling for which technology alone will never be a panacea.

Next month, we'll explore a fascinating aspect of the convergence of technologies at the service of storytelling.

Karim Sahai is a photographer and feature films computer visual effects artist based in Wellington. *Images below © Karim Sahai.*

karim@f11magazine.com
www.karimsahai.com



Lighting the easy way

Flash Basics Part 1

Using flash effectively and learning about lighting is often the “final frontier” in a photographer’s journey to mastering photography.

For many, the challenge is a step too far. The flash gun you bought lives in the bottom of your bag, or worse – in a cupboard, and to anyone who asks, you are a “natural” or “available light” photographer. If you’re anything like I used to be, you really mean that you’re a photographer who knows next to nothing about light! That was me a few years ago, so I’m talking from personal experience.

Until recently, learning about lighting was a hugely involving and time-consuming process. Now, thanks to the instant feedback you get on the back of your camera, it’s easy. It’s just a question of finding out where to go to learn.

I’m going to de-mystify this whole thing a little bit and set you on the way to having fun with light.

To paraphrase famous photographer Joe McNally, “I’m an available light photographer. I use any available light I can lay my hands on.”

So let’s put our flash onto our hotshoe. This is a great place to start. Yes, the flash is fixed in position relative to the lens and everyone’s always talking about off-camera flash these days, but let’s begin with the basics. Walk before we run. We’ll do some running later..

With the flash set on its TTL setting and your camera set to ISO200, put your camera on f5.6 on AV mode and let the camera decide the shutter speed. Take a photo of something. It’s always fun if you can find something (or someone) beautiful, but anything will do. Now set your camera mode to M for Manual and fix the same aperture and shutter speed into the camera that you had just now. Take another photo of the same subject with the same positioning as before. Your two photos should look identical.

Here’s where it gets interesting. We’re going to play around with the shutter speed and see what happens. It’s easy to forget the concept of “STOPS” of light thanks to our modern cameras that we can adjust in small increments, but to review, shutter speed ‘stops’ are:

... > 1/4 > 1/8 > 1/15 > 1/30 > 1/60 > 1/125 > 1/250 > 1/500 > 1/1000 > ...

You can change your aperture in stops too, hence the term f-stops, but we’ll come to that later.


So if you started on 1/160, drop your shutter speed to the nearest stop below that; 1/125 and take another photo (same subject, same position). Then a photo at 1/60, 1/30 and so on until your photo is blown out when reviewed in the back of your camera. Then go back to the shutter speed you started with and RAISE the shutter speed, for example to 1/200. You’ll

see the background get progressively darker while your subject remains well lit by the flash. Be careful not to exceed your maximum flash synch speed (see your manual for details)

What we’re doing here is changing the ratio in the photo of ambient light to flash exposure. Every time you use flash in a photo, the final image is composed of some ambient light (i.e. light from any constant source that you can see with your eyes) and flash light (i.e. light cast from the flash(es) you’ve introduced).

You control how much ambient light appears in the photo with the shutter speed. Take a look at the differences in the photos you took in the exercise above and we’ll go over what’s happening in the next installment.


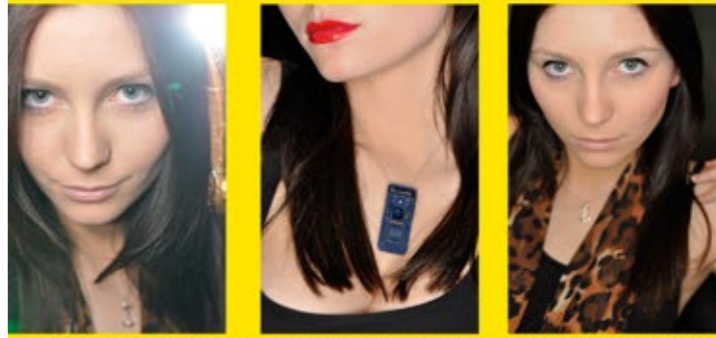
Here are some hasty examples. A very quickly thrown together set I shot of my tradeshow model on a balcony over the tradeshow floor in Sydney recently. All of these are at ISO200. My AV setting of f5.6 gave me a starting exposure of 1/60. You may find as soon as you turn your flash on and put it in the hotshoe, your system defaults to the flash synch speed. If this happens, simply remember the shutter speed that the AV setting chose before you put your flash on and set your camera to M and dial it in. ▶



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OK, so here is a photo taken with the flash on TTL, shutter speed 1/60 and f5.6. Note the model in the foreground is perfectly exposed with the flash (albeit with horrible hard shadows) and the background of the hall where the flash doesn't reach is exposed... kinda just about.



So now let's go the other way. Here the shutter speed is 1/125. So the background is consequently darker.



Next up I've left the flash on manual, but gone for 1/30. Note the flash foreground exposure is identical, but the background lit by the "ambient light" is brighter.



And so on! Here the shutter speed is 1/200, the fastest flash synch speed on my little Nikon D90. So the background is at its darkest.

Now your turn... imitate what I've done and think through what's happening. Using your shutter speed to control the ambient-flash balance, or ratio, is very useful. ■

JM



All I've changed is the shutter speed to 1/15. Again note how the foreground exposure is unchanged, but the background is even brighter again.



And finally, shutter speed to 1/5. Now the background is almost getting too bright. Yet the foreground is still lit perfectly with the flash. See how changing the shutter speed has altered the "ambient light"-lit parts of the image? Of course here you can also see that at 1/5 I couldn't prevent some camera shake (I blame Sinead for that), but we'll come back later in the series to use camera shake to our advantage.

Resources and cool lighting sites:

- www.orbisflash.com
(yep, that's my website)
- www.youtube.com/enlightphoto
- www.strobist.blogspot.com
(check out the excellent Lighting 101)
- www.lastolite.com
- www.chimeralighting.com

James is inventor of the orbis® ring flash and frio™ coldshoe, a pro photographer and lighting workshop teacher.

Watch out for the next part of this series soon, featuring shutter drag and second, or "back" curtain synch.

All text and images © James Madelin 2011

Firstly the New Zealand Institute of Professional Photography (NZIPP) would like to congratulate the *f11* team on their inaugural issue, we're really excited to see where this leads. Secondly we'd like to thank the *f11* team for the opportunity to contribute.

I guess we should start by introducing ourselves. Who, or what, is the NZIPP? The New Zealand Institute of Professional Photography (NZIPP) is the only qualifying body for professional photographers in New Zealand, and currently has over 360 members across NZ covering the disciplines of Wedding, Portrait and Commercial Photography. With a 73-year history of providing support and professional development to professional photographers in New Zealand we like to think NZIPP membership is a 'must have' in the gear bag of a professional photographer.

One of the major strengths of the NZIPP is the activities held in each region, usually on a monthly basis. And the real benefits of membership come from involvement at that level; attending meetings, workshops, seminars and social get-togethers. You can find contact details for your region on the NZIPP website www.nzipp.org.nz. If you're involved in the photography industry, or thinking of dipping your toe in the water I fully encourage you to make contact, attend a meeting (usually free of charge) and see what NZIPP can do for you.

Annually NZIPP holds the Infocus event, which comprises the Epson / Iris Professional Photography Awards judging, a two day conference, masterclasses and industry exhibition for professional photographers.

This year Infocus is happening in Rotorua from 04 – 09 August. You can find more information in our ad in this issue and also on the NZIPP website. Please accept this as your official invitation to attend some or all of the events!

Nicola Inglis

NZIPP Wedding Director

On behalf of the NZIPP Board.

INFOCUS 2011 ROTORUA



TOP LEFT Image by Kaye Davis © TOP RIGHT Image by Sue Bryce © LEFT, ABOVE, RIGHT Images by Todd McGaw ©



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The Essentials

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Apple iPad 2 - Tool or Toy? - Part One

The iPad 2 is a slick piece of kit that everybody on the planet wants so badly they're willing to wait for weeks to get hold of one. iPads come out of a factory in China but perhaps recent tragic events in Japan come into the equation to a degree. I'm picking that with or without natural disasters interfering with component production there'd still be a queue a mile long to join the iPad community.

The tens of thousands of apps that are already available are merely the tip of the iceberg. Developers are working around the clock to bring new usefulness to this remarkable device, and while frivolous apps like Angry Birds are shattering download records many of them are deadly serious business, artistic and technical apps that will boost productivity and provide solutions to problems we don't yet know we have.

So what does the iPad 2 hold for the world's photographers?

Of course, there were items on photographer wish lists that didn't make it to the 2nd generation device, but let's not dwell on that. The first thing you notice when faced with the iPad 2 is the quality of the display. The screen brightness and definition is nothing short of stunning. If you did nothing but use this as an almost-pocketable digital portfolio you've already justified the investment in the device.



© Gary Baildon

Any unexpected opportunity to show your work to a potential client can be handled with ease if you're packing an iPad. It's an incredibly attractive piece of kit and at the time of writing simply producing one usually ensures a high level of attention.

Booting almost instantly and flicking through a selection of your finest cannot fail to impress. Even a 16GB iPad can hold a monumental number of screen res images, so you can easily have numerous specialised "mini-portfolios" on hand that focus on specific areas of your expertise. So no need to flick through content that is irrelevant to your current prospect.

In short, it makes you and your work look good, and is so much more effective than handing over a business card directing your prospect to your website which they may or may not get around to once you're out of sight.

Oh, I almost forgot there used to be a thing called a physical portfolio which was usually leather bound, and cost as much as an iPad. Hold on, that's before you printed, at great expense, a selection of your finest images to populate it. Personally I've rarely been asked for this type of portfolio in the last few years. These days referrals, laptop slideshows and my website are doing most of the selling. Those, and my powers of persuasion – or should that read confusion?

Now that the iPad is here the MacBook will be getting some much-needed rest. The compact portability and phenomenal battery life of the iPad making it a much better proposition as a daily companion. Publisher Tim is charging his once a week, when it gets down to 60% battery, so mine may last for two weeks between charges as I won't get antsy until it gets down to 10%!

The iPad will do most of your mobile computing tasks just as well as your laptop, as long as you can go online wherever you are. The premium model with a SIM card slot is probably the tidiest way to keep connected and mobile data prices are slowly declining. However, if you already have an iPhone it is a very simple matter to use it as a modem via the "Personal Hotspot" feature that came with Apple's last I-OS software update. This allows you to connect your iPad or laptop utilizing the mobile data plan on your iPhone. Of course if you're in range of a friendly wireless network it will connect that way by default reducing mobile data costs greatly. This is the best way to update software, add apps or buy music. Why use pricy mobile data for that?

Obvious uses include email, web surfing (Flash issues aside), connection to VPN's and the like - but how about obtaining signatures on model releases digitally? The model signs on the screen and receives a copy of the contract digitally. Yes, it's a reality and a very slick way to deal with an irksome task.

Still not convinced? Hell, I've only just gotten started. Next issue we'll look at image transfer, editing, viewing images while shooting tethered and some tasty accessories.

If you're a pro photographer using an iPad in your workflow please feel free to send a quick email outlining how it's going. Any tricks, apps or traps you would like to share?

GB

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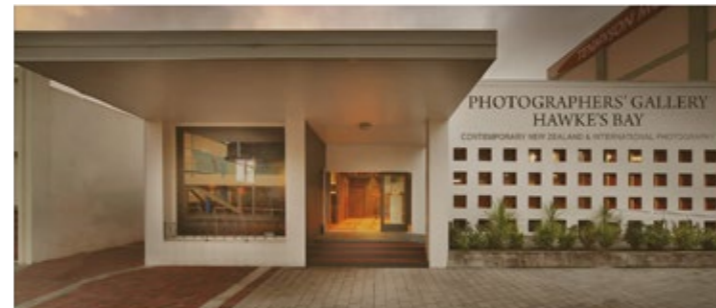
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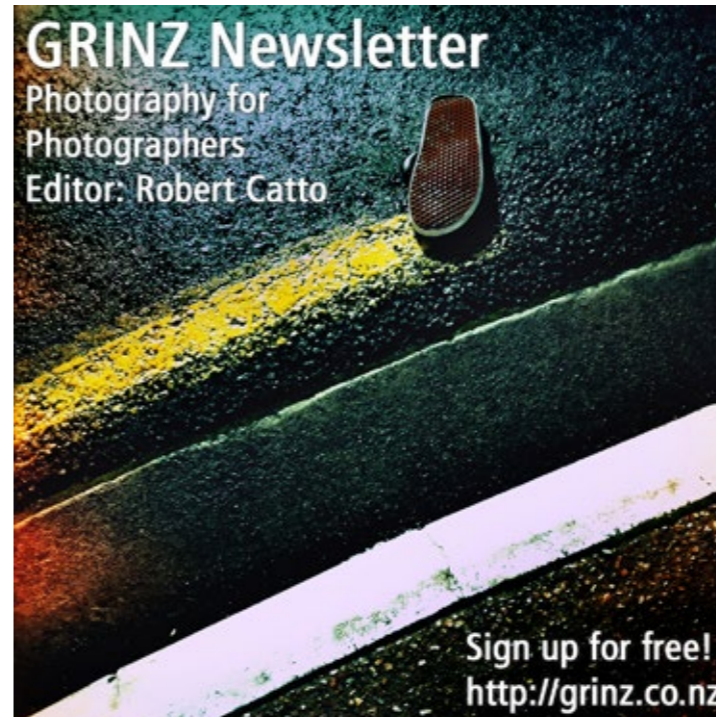


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3D or not 3D, that is the question

Maybe I'm the only one, or perhaps there are others lurking, unwilling to voice reservations about the elephant in the room. The pachyderm in question, first in theatres – now available in your lounge - is 3D, and I just don't get it.

I usually 'get' new technology, my usual purchase pattern sitting comfortably somewhere between the early adopter and the early majority.

I have tried, really I have. I sat dutifully through Avatar in the Joe 90 specs wishing that I'd opted for the regular version in the cinema next door. Toasty warm to the movie, frosty cool about the fact it was in 3D, and nothing since has changed my mind.

For me, 3D belongs firmly in the category of 'because we could' rather than 'because we should'. The whole term 'in 3D' reeks of comparative superlative, implying some advantage but ultimately for me anyway, failing to deliver any.

It's the classic solution in search of a problem.

I'm yet to see a single frame, much less 24 of them in hot pursuit of the next second's worth of motion, which offered a skerrick of evidence of any cinematographic superiority over anything produced in the previous hundred years of movie-making.

Perhaps it's my presbyopia, the inevitable affliction of middle age rendering my close

up vision compromised, and me phobic of eyewear. I'm in a cast of millions in this respect.

So when it comes to recreational viewing of anything, I have a strong preference to view my larger screens, at home or in the multiplex, with eyes wide open but nakedly unadorned.

The very sight of racks of those goofy glasses at the cinema chills me to the bone. Similarly, the proffered eye wear from the salesman keen to demonstrate 3D TV in my favourite consumer electronics retailer also sends a shiver up my spine.

The other mind-blowing gap in the whole 3D premise is the stunningly underwhelming choice of movie titles available.

I'm just hoping that by the time our delicious collection of plasma screens finally reach their use-by date, 3D will be a blast from the past – a technology moment on the pages of history.

I don't like my chances.

TS

In a similar vein:

Some movie directors rebel against 3D...

An article first run in The New York Times –
3 August 2010

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