

ISSUE 46 | AUGUST 2015



*for* PHOTOGRAPHERS  
AND AFICIONADOS

[www.f11magazine.com](http://www.f11magazine.com)

**STU ROBERTSON**  
Peace in 10,000 Hands

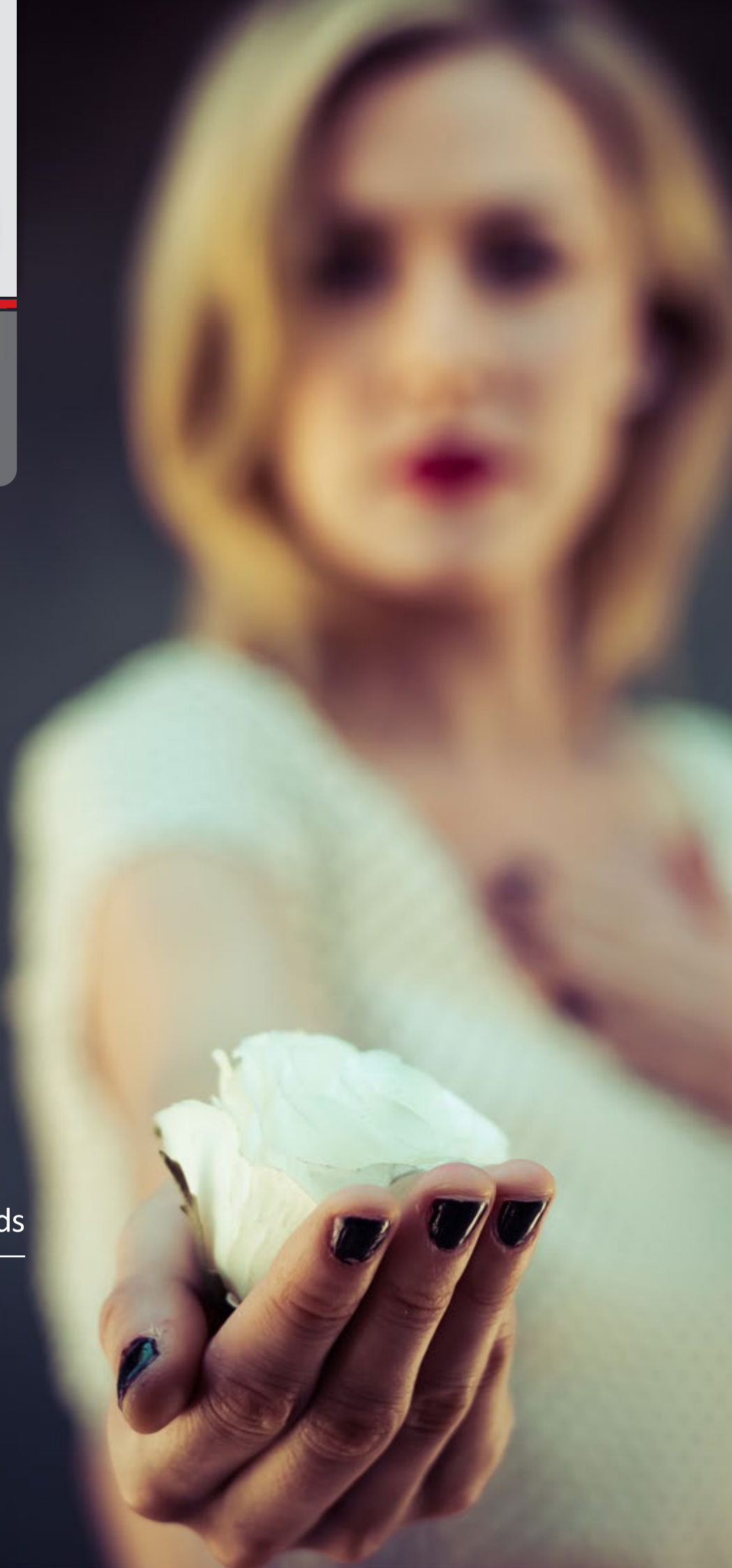
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**MARIS RUSIS**  
Forever silver

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**AMBER GRIFFIN**  
Pas de deux

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# NOTHING EXISTS UNTIL IT IS OBSERVED

Welcome to issue 46!

First up is New Zealand photographer, but citizen of the world, Stuart Robertson. Stu and his wife Semele, are on a mission to promote world peace. No, they're not contestants in a beauty pageant, they are absolutely, passionately serious in their intent. With 'Peace in 10,000 Hands' they set out to photograph a single white rose, itself a symbol for peace, in the hands of 10,000 people spread across every country of the world. It is the most ambitious of endeavors, they fund it themselves and the images are powerful metaphors, whether viewed singly or in a collection. With 2,000 people captured so far, we explore the why, what, when and how with our feature which begins on page 12.

Australian Maris Rusis makes his images with all of the craftsmanship associated with large format sheet film, hand development processes and well practised traditional darkroom skills. The finished print is his opus, and all of the philosophies and ideals he promotes are in support of the essential truthfulness of his chosen medium. Timing, planning, patience, skill and self-analysis combine with a clear vision and a rigorous justification of why he, quite simply, feels compelled to do what he does in the way he does it. It's delightfully anachronistic, and it's been a joy to bring you this feature – itself very much a collaboration between myself, my friend and colleague Ian Poole, and the artist himself, Maris. The apparent irony that we're delivering digital representations of hand made, incredibly tactile physical objects, each unique and with a life of their own, in an online magazine is not lost on us.

Finally, another New Zealander, Amber Griffin is our third feature photographer. Amber specialises in photographing dancers, classical and contemporary. It has all of the hallmarks of a real niche category, and a tough one to pioneer, yet Amber has clawed a vibrant business from this art and delivered a wonderful collection of images from which we curated her feature. Her own practical knowledge of dance combines with strong technical skills and superb timing to arrest her subjects in action, mid flight and at the peak of the moment.

Enjoy this issue of *f11*. ■

**Tim**

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**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 suited, he now spends weekends in his small German racecar, 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.



**TONY BRIDGE** is a fine artist, photographer, writer and photo educator – sometimes performing all of these minor miracles on the same day. When not hosting seminars or workshops or messing with someone's mind, this wandering nomad is usually to be found somewhere around New Zealand, four wheel driving up hill and down dale in search of new images and true meaning. Like any modern day guru, he thinks way too much, constantly reinvents himself and often pontificates on one of his blogs, enriching us all in the process. Rather than joining the rest of the team in the cult of Mac, he insists that he has now constructed the 'ultimate PC' – poor deluded man. As far as we can tell, this is his only flaw...



**DARRAN LEAL** is a photographer, adventurer and educator. An Australian by birth, he combines his twin loves of travel and outdoor photography by running tours, workshops and seminars and guiding photographers to stunning locations around the globe. Prior to inventing this great gig, he variously sold cameras, served food and wine, built gas pipelines, explored for diamonds and discovered that the life of a park ranger was not for him. When not up to his ass in crocodiles, cuddling gorillas or herding photographers, he fishes the world's oceans, rivers and streams. Only his fishing exploits suffer from exaggeration, believe it or not the rest of his adventurous life is, amazingly, true.



**IAN POOLE** has been a member of the AIPP since 1976, holding various positions within the Institute. Truly a trans-Tasman go between, Poole has been a long term judge of the APPA's and a guest judge in the NZIPP Awards for many years. Well known for his extensive work as an educator at both Queensland's Griffith University College of Art, and Queensland University of Technology, and with a background as an advertising/commercial photographer in Brisbane, Ian is now turning his hand to finely crafted black and white portraiture. He is a director of Foto Frenzy, which specialises in photographic education in Brisbane. Erudite, witty and urbane, or so he tells us, he's one of *f11* Magazine's ambassadors in Australia.



**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, 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 travelling circus that is *f11* Magazine. A former high wire artist for corporate masters in the photo industry, he still has nightmares about delivering the physically impossible, on occasion under the whip of the seemingly insane, and always for the terminally unappreciative. A brilliant escape from the last of these gulags left a tunnel for other prisoners and led him to consultancy in strategy, advertising and marketing. Always impressed by the Bohemian lifestyles, devil-may-care attitudes, cruel wit and sheer bravado of professional photographers, he now frequents their studios, shooting locations and watering holes in search of his personal holy grail, great images to share with *f11* readers.

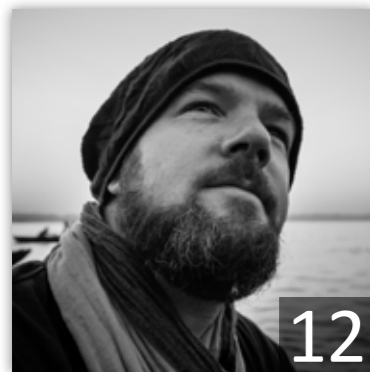


*'I don't pay attention to celebrities. I don't photograph them. They don't dress so...interestingly. They have stylists. I prefer real women who have their own tastes.'* – Bill Cunningham.

**WARNING – HOTLINKS ARE EVERYWHERE!**

Amazingly, some readers are still blissfully unaware that this magazine is a veritable hotbed of hotlinks, so this is a friendly reminder! There are links to online content such as videos, and to websites which expand on the ideas on offer here in the magazine. Anywhere you see an image of a computer screen contains a link, there are highlighted links within articles and all advertisements link to the advertisers websites so you can learn more about the products you're interested in. Simply click on the ad.

If this is still baffling, learn more in our expanded instructions on **page 149** of this issue.



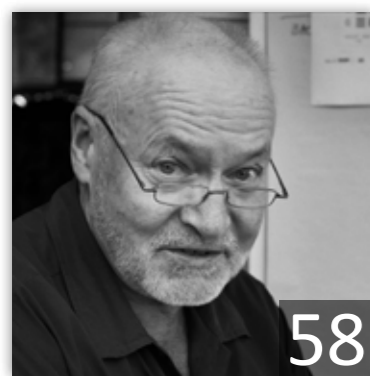
## Stu ROBERTSON

Peace in 10,000 Hands

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© Stuart Robertson,  
Peace in 10,000 Hands



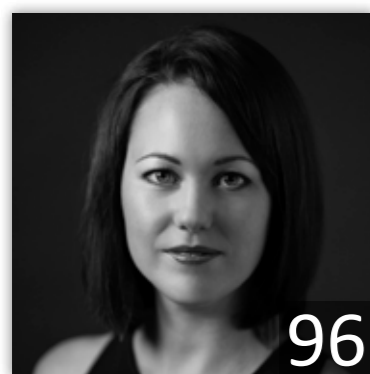
## Maris RUSIS

Forever silver

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© Maris RUSIS



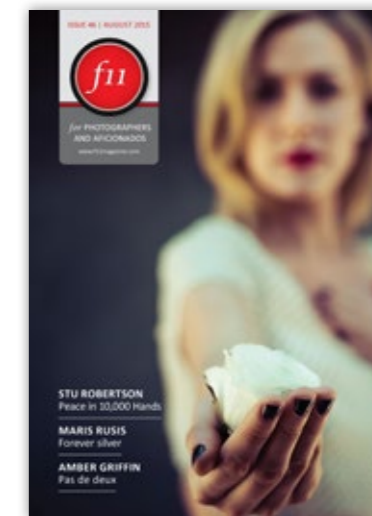
## Amber GRIFFIN

Pas de deux

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© Amber Griffin



COVER IMAGE Allison McAtee,  
Los Angeles, California, USA, 2014.  
Leica M240 with Summilux M 35mm  
f1.4 ASPH lens. © Stuart Robertson,  
Peace in 10,000 Hands

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*'Imagery can break down barriers, move effortlessly across borders, speak profoundly to the heart of mankind and spark emotion and inspiration in every one of us.'* – Stu Robertson.



### MAGNUM PHOTOS – THE CHANGING OF A MYTH

Magnum photographers talk about their work and personal connection with the famous photo agency in this 1999 documentary film directed by Rainer Holzemer.

It's a multi lingual history of the agency, and the influence it has had on photography.

Learn more here.

Blind Shutter via YouTube

**CLICK ON THE SCREEN IMAGE TO VIEW THIS VIDEO**



### JASON LANDRY – PHOTOGRAPHY COLLECTOR

An interview with Jason Landry - photography collector and owner of Panopticon Gallery in Boston, MA. Landry earned his B.F.A. in Photography from the Massachusetts College of Art & Design and an M.F.A. in Visual Arts from the Art Institute of Boston at Lesley University. In the interview he discusses how he began collecting photography.

Interview and videography by Gustav Hoiland  
via YouTube

**CLICK ON THE SCREEN IMAGE TO VIEW THIS VIDEO**



### STU ROBERTSON TALKS AT TED-X WELLINGTON WOMEN

One of our featured photographers in this issue, Stu Robertson, talks about his 'Peace in 10,000 Hands' project, the same one we're showcasing here on page 12. Watch now, or watch after you've read our feature. The two work well together, in any order. Less than 20 minutes to tell a very big story, quite a challenge!

via YouTube

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### Converts and natives

While Ian Poole and I worked together to create the story in this issue on Maris Ruis we were reminded of the sights, sounds and smells associated with a traditional darkroom, the drudgery of hand processing film, the thrill of watching a print coaxed gently into life in the developing tray. These experiences never grow old, the wondrous nature of such essentially simple processes never lose their ability to surprise, and even though neither of us have darkened the darkroom door for many moons, the memories tumble back into view, with great clarity.

If you identify with this, chances are you're like us – digital converts. We came here from a different world, one involving film, and although we've changed religions we still remember the hymns, responses and affirmations of our old faith. Many of you, a younger generation, are digital natives and you've had a different path. I'm well aware that some of you may have an excellent and highly informed understanding of what came before even though this has not been your road. You've grown up in a world without film and chemistry and wet darkrooms, and the essential divide between the light and the dark that traditional silver halide processes demanded.

Processing and manipulation, storage, display and output are all performed in daylight, all entirely portable, and none involve fumbling around without the use of one of your senses. That initial disorientation of working in the dark, learning where everything is located and being able to not only function, but create, in that foreign environment has not been a part of your adventure with the light.

You've only ever lived in a world where the democratisation of the very process of

photography is complete. Technology combined with ubiquity means there are no barriers to creating imagery every day, anytime or anywhere you like, but do more images mean better images? Our global connectedness means that sharing is also immediate. The tyranny of distance has been conquered. What you see, what you've created, can be shared with millions, wherever they happen to be as the brilliance of electronics magically places it on the devices they carry – as fast as the speed of light, radio waves or cellular networks – will allow. But is greater sharing delivering better outcomes?

Let's celebrate where we are today, let's marvel at the power and influence of our imaging capabilities, let's take every advantage of the way technology has shrunk the world, effectively creating one society, one world – one experience. Let's delight in watching the print, so painstakingly prepared, creep noisily out of the inkjet, in daylight – pixel perfect, immune from a spot of dust, albeit without the magical qualities of somehow being conjured out of the darkroom tray and into the light.

So digital natives, as converts we live in your world, but we came from another one. We came from a time when capturing and making any use of an image was a slower, more considered, more painstaking, excruciatingly more complex process than it is today. It also allowed more time for finessing.

It created some great intangibles – the anxiety of uncertainty, the sweetness of anticipation, the delay of gratification, the joy of arrival – but those are the nostalgic ramblings of an aging, but enthusiastic convert to the digital faith.

All the same, you might like to try it. ■

### TS

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## LEICA M-P

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## On Content and Process

What is it that sets photography as a medium apart from other art media?

It is a technology applied artistically. And there are two parts to it: content and process.

Content is the realm of the artistic, process is the vehicle to get the photographer there. Each needs the other. The relationship is symbiotic – a cynic might say it was parasitic.

For most of the medium's history, the developments have been technology-driven, as the response to a perceived need by the end-user to achieve certain ends. Film, as we knew it, came from a need to move beyond glass plates coated by the photographer just before shooting. What worked for Timothy O'Sullivan would no longer do. It was simply too inconvenient.

In other cases process was used to create a need, and make its developer a lot of money. George Eastman saw the opening in the wall and created the Box Brownie, a camera which made the medium accessible to Everyman, and in doing so, enabled a process that was aspirational. The Box Brownie of yesteryear became the smart phone of today. Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.

And, nearly 200 years later, nothing has changed. As photographers we are both defined and dictated to by the process, or processes, we use. We are defined by our process, and we are servants to it. The technology we use both constrains and liberates us. Our photographic process is the craft upon which we base our art and it is a craft we will always be refining, never mastering.

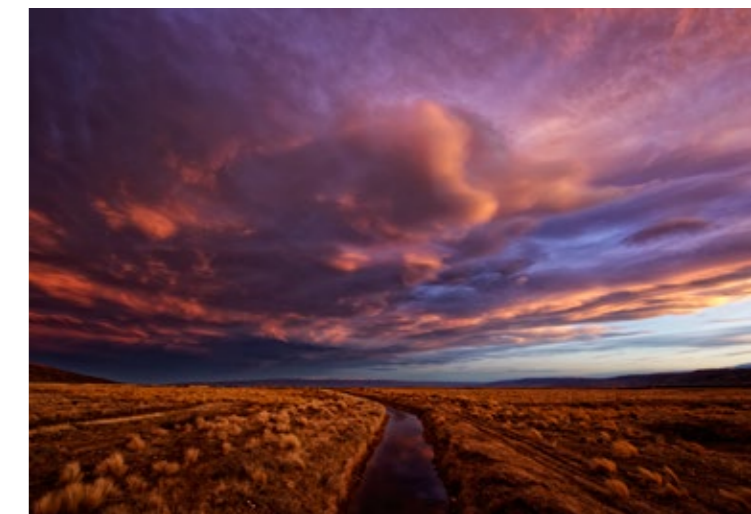
There are two parts to the digital photography process, capture and post-production, and each is part of a greater whole. Neither exists in isolation, because each affects the other. We need to be conversant with every part and to understand the effect it will have on the other parts, in our journey from visualisation to the final print.

Our choice of sensor (read: camera) will have a powerful effect on the finished result, as will the tripod we use, the exposure time selected, and the aperture we select. We must understand which raw converter to use, and its possibilities, along with having at least a working knowledge of suitable plugins. No one combination fits all. We have to define our own process. And this is as it should be, for in making friends with the tools which work for us and support our vision,

we are carving our own niche in the pantheon of photography.

I was reminded of this one evening when photographing a grand landscape in the Maniototo in Central Otago, New Zealand. Capturing the grandeur and at the same time the smallest nuances of detail has always been my core aesthetic for this type of work. A chilly wind was blowing, and the 36 megapixel sensor on my D810 is very sensitive to the slightest vibration. I moved my truck so I would be photographing in its lee. I further positioned myself between the camera and the wind to block any potential vibration. I used a heavy tripod, along with a remote release, mirror lockup, first curtain sync and a release delay of 3 seconds in an attempt to minimise and preferably eliminate any smudging of microdetail. In a real sense, I was utilising techniques that I might have brought to bear had I been exposing an 8x10 inch sheet of film in a large format camera dating back 50 years. The highest performing digital sensors of our age are demanding that many of the ways of an old craft be reincarnated in modern form.

The nature and quality of the light determined my choice of raw converter (DxO Optics Pro),



*Hawkdun Water Race at sunset © Tony Bridge*

since all raw converters put their own spin on the data. I could see the plugins I would use, and the Photoshop techniques I would need to use to set up a file which would print cleanly and with a full range of tones on the paper which would make the most of this image.

Then I began making exposures. A lot of them, as in spite of all this careful preparation, I have observed that sometimes you need to shoot a lot in these conditions to get one where all the craft ducks line up.

Process matters. Craft matters. As Ansel Adams, the Master of Craft put it, 'the way to art is through craft, not around it.' ■

**TB**

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# Stu ROBERTSON

## Peace in 10,000 Hands

New Zealander Stuart Robertson is inspired by the belief that art is intimately entwined with the human condition and that it has the power to challenge and create change.

‘Since the time of cave drawings, art has inspired and transcended the boundaries of language, culture, religion, time and space. Imagery can break down barriers, move effortlessly across borders, speak profoundly to the heart of mankind and spark emotion and inspiration in every one of us.’

His concept? Photographing a single white rose, an ancient symbol of peace, in the hands of 10,000 people from every country on the planet.

An evocative and unstoppable global art project creating a visual provocation to challenge and reinvigorate the conversation for peace.

An obsessive and prolific concept in which Robertson explores the idea of mankind’s global interconnectedness and probes into the emotional repositories of our individual belief systems about peace and quietly sets adrift a deep question about the human experience. ▶



*Bill Mitchell, 100 year old second world war veteran, Christchurch, New Zealand, 2013. Leica S2 camera with Summarit-S 70mm lens. © Stuart Robertson, Peace in 10,000 Hands*



Robertson hopes to have photographed all 10,000 subjects holding the white rose by the end of 2018. That may be a highly optimistic target date, as in the same interview he projects that 5-7 years of work might still be required.

It's a body of work, a journey. Along the way, it will manifest itself in the form of films, books and a final definitive exhibition – all provocative and insightful explorations of the very meaning of life.

Artworks are being sold to fund the project and also donated to various charities focused on furthering peace through childhood education, safety and wellbeing. Robertson says:

'Each of our actions and thoughts has a subtle, yet profound ripple effect. We are responsible for, and have the ability to choose, how we influence that ripple.'

The project is ambitious, the work of an optimist of the highest order and its sheer scale, duration, cost and complexity would have daunted almost everyone I know.

But Stuart Robertson, and his partner in life and in the project, his wife Semele, are extraordinary people prepared to commit and execute against the rigorous demands that 'Peace' imposes on their lives. By its completion, they will have quite a story to tell. If I were a movie producer, I'd buy that option right now, start shooting and spend the next few years preparing to release an epic tale of idealism, hope's triumph over inertia, and the power of art to provide thought leadership, influencing across cultures and geography.

Why the white rose? Stuart explains:

'I chose the white rose for its beauty and because I see it as an accessible, non-confrontational, universally accepted symbol that holds so much history, meaning and symbolism that is both humble in the simplicity of its purest form of everyday life and yet soaring in the ideals it represents. An ancient and timeless symbol of

peace and pure love recorded throughout mankind's history.

The hands represent our shared humanity and express our life story, our choices and individuality without judgment or prejudice.

The 10,000 hands represent a slice of humanity from every country, a big number to make a big impact and further the global conversation for peace.'

**f11: Hi Stu, thanks for the opportunity to learn about the 'Peace' project and to share your story with those who gather here, photographers from all around the world. You're passionate about photography, but more passionate about using it as a communication tool, is that a fair comment?**

SR: I love photography and I've always leant towards photography. It's ability to engender an emotional response is something that is both contemporary and timeless.

**f11: You had a couple of family influences in the earliest days of your photography, tells us about those?**

SR: My grandfather, Eric Paton, had a darkroom and photographed with Leica cameras. My other grandfather, John Robertson, worked for Eastman Kodak and loved photography too. Eric collected Leica cameras, lenses and accessories. Some of the first photographs of me were taken on a Leica, in black and white, a giveaway that I was born in the late sixties! ▶

*Shantel Van Santen, Los Angeles, California, USA, 2014. Sony ILCE-7R with Leica Summilux-M 35mm f1.4 ASPH lens. © Stuart Robertson, Peace in 10,000 Hands*





**f11: So the Leica bug bit you early?**

SR: People ask why I'm so fanatical about Leica. It is a feeling like writing a poem or falling love. You can't value it, but without it there is no feeling, no passion. For the first 25 years I used various brands, Pentax, Canon, Sony and Nikon. Leica was within me however. I am lucky enough to have my grandfather Eric Paton's M3 body, and a selection of lenses and accessories which I took to Antarctica. Also my uncle, Dr Neil Paton, discovered a Leica 2 (early 1930's) in the rubbish at MIT and gifted it to me recently. When I decided to commit to this project, I thought of my grandfather and there was one camera brand and lens maker I wanted to work with, and that was Leica. They bring the art out in me and I love their glass.

**f11: How do you find working with Leica equipment, is it somehow different from all of the other brands you've just mentioned?**

SR: I look at people differently through Leica glass – and it feels as if people look at me differently through Leica glass. When I capture that moment of 'unguarded humanity', the look that I'm always chasing, the camera becomes an extension of my mind and eye as I release the shutter. I've had wonderful support from the Leica team at Lacklands here in New Zealand, and from key Leica people in the US, Australia and Germany.

**f11: Your image captions will tell the full story, but what are the main pieces of equipment being used on this project, and what drives the decision on which camera you choose to use for each subject?**

SR: If I have the luxury of a base when travelling I use my medium format Leica S and take the 70mm and 35mm lenses. The image quality and glass are stunning. If I am travelling relentlessly, which is usually the case, I take a Leica M240 and Leica Monochrom with a 35mm 1.4 Summilux and 50mm 2 Apo. For filming, as in my time in Antarctica, I use a Nikon D800 and

Nikkor lenses, the 14–24mm, 24–70mm and 70–200mm with a Nikon extension ring x 2. In addition I always have a GoPro and an iPhone 6 Plus on me too. Finally there is a back-up body if everything else fails, a Sony A7r with Novoflex adapter for the Leica glass.

**f11: Have there been other influences, outside of family ones, on your photography?**

SR: I'm very influenced by modern design, popular culture, architecture, psychology and unguarded moments. I draw inspiration from the works of Henri Cartier-Bresson, Man Ray and Richard Avedon and the paintings of Mark Rothko and pop art legend, Jasper Johns. I incorporate symbolism and storytelling. I tend to view the world in black and white and geometric shapes.

**f11: What stage of completion have you achieved at the end of July 2015, and what's left to accomplish?**

SR: The project is just over 20% complete, I have taken portraits of about 2000 people holding the white rose with around 8000 still to go.

**f11: I know that you're aiming for 2018, but how long do you really think the project will take?**

SR: Currently I estimate completion to take another 5 – 7 years, this essentially depends on funds, the more we can gather the quicker we'll be able to plan and get around to completing the project. All the while planning the exhibitions, shows, books and more! 10,000 is the goal, but the process and journey is where the true meaning and value of this project is being created.

**f11: Do you have it all planned to the nth degree, in a series of bite sized chunks, or is it more opportunistic in terms of timing?**

SR: The project is planned as we go, so I would say more opportunistic. We know what steps are required and plan these as they approach, and as opportunities arise. In addition to travelling and photographing there are many other

elements we need to fold into the running of the project. The exhibitions, planning, administration, social media, accounts, communication, fundraising, editing and making the artworks all adds up to a tremendous workload.

**f11: Is there an element of 'the universe will provide' in terms of opportunities, contacts, potential subjects, cooperation, sponsors and so on?**

SR: Yes, I am a believer in flow, and the incredibly serendipitous nature of the universe. Things happen for better or worse and I just go with it. What you think you want, or need, changes as do relationships and people. Everyone once wanted a Walkman and a fax machine – now no one wants them. They are discarded, we move on. Needs, wants and desires change. The only constant is change and change is the number one thing we all have to deal with. Being 'in the moment' is essential as it is the only thing that's real. The past is a construct, and the future is imagined. Now is real. Right now!

**f11: How does an individual, or in your case a couple, bankroll a project so ambitious, wide ranging and of such a long duration?**

SR: There are various ways I guess, and for everyone it is different. For us, we live well within our means, and we budget. I travel as cheaply as possible and we sold our house in order to do this. When you have a single focus, and a plan, it brings clarity and everything you do is based on the outcome you desire.

**f11: Do you also have financial, in-kind or logistical sponsors such as camera companies, hotel chains, airlines and the like?**

SR: For the first two years of the project I have just had my head down, quietly working everyday on the building project by taking photographs. There hasn't been any flag waving or approaches to airlines or hotel chains yet, but there will be! Lacklands and Leica have been incredible. I can't speak highly enough of

Lacklands support. From day one of the project they believed in me when many doubted.

**f11: So at this point in the project you're funding all of this yourself?**

SR: Yes, we bankrolled the project to get it started, and to keep it going for the first two years. We haven't taken a dollar back out of the project. Now we have started to have exhibitions and selling artworks to fund the project. We had a crowd funding campaign on The Arts Foundation online platform 'Boosted' and set a record for funds raised. From that we travelled and produced our first book and we now sell these.

**f11: Are you in any danger of personal financial overexposure to the project?**

SR: There is always a danger when you commit and focus 100% on anything whether it be love, children, work or your passion. But the only way you achieve above and beyond is by committing everything you have and being singularly focused on the outcome you want. I know exactly why I am doing this and it gets me out of bed and into crazy situations constantly. For me knowing the 'what' is knowing the 'why'. I know exactly why I am doing this and it takes my complete focus on the vision to ensure I complete the project and create something that has the chance to make the world even a fraction of a better place.

**f11: Do you have 'fixers' in some countries, states or regions, as an advance guard to knock open doors, work the logistical end, arrange introductions and so forth?**

SR: When I went to the Syrian border and into Iraq this year I had a fixer, yes. The risks were calculated, we got in, out and the job done. With regard to other countries that are safer, I go it alone. If it is a country where English is not a first or second language then I have a guide, specially chosen and well briefed! I am not a tourist so I don't want city tours. I specifically ▶



need guides that are happy walking up to strangers, to anyone, and translating and explaining exactly what I need. That sort of work is not for everyone.

**f11: Most images appear to be shot in available light, is that deceptive and do you supplement the existing light with any flash equipment?**

SR: Yes, great spotting. I never carry a flash or a tripod with me. I like available light. I have nothing against flash, studios or tripod use at all, they each have their merits. It's just that, for me, going into a situation where you have one chance to get the picture and make the light work adds an edge both to the moment and the images. Working on that edge of light and time, brings a freshness, a genuineness and emotion in the eyes of those I photograph. I like the look of naturally lit portraits and the pressure of working with a person I have never met before, who probably hasn't had a portrait taken, and I have only the one chance to make it work.

**f11: How does all of the travel impact on your personal and professional life – in terms of the major time commitment required?**

SR: The travel is grueling, but great. In the past two years I have spent around 8 months of the year travelling outside of New Zealand. The trips get gritty, but it is this that pushes the boundaries and helps me be in the right headspace to get the images I want. I love being at home, I live in Queenstown and for me, just being there recharges me and fills my soul. My aim, moving forward, is to be at home for three months a year. It's also where my studio and gallery are, so while I'm at home I switch from taking photographs to creating artworks and preparing for exhibitions. ▶



*The Potter, Udaipur, India, 2013, Leica S2 camera with Summarit-S 70mm lens. © Stuart Robertson, Peace in 10,000 Hands*



**f11: In a project as ambitious as this, how do you define success?**

SR: I define success by how much better I can make other lives. I have just chosen photography to do it. I would not do a project without a cause. I would only work where a social and human element is injected into the fabric of a project, or a business, from day one.

**f11: What are your measures of this?**

SR: Right now, it is the artworks we donate to non-profits and charities to enable them to do what they are great at. Also feedback we get about the project, with the concept of peace becoming a more conscious thought, as people discuss and respond to the project and the artworks we create. Ultimately, success will be measured when we start building schools and hospitals and funding global charities that are focused on peace through the education of children.

**f11: Are you in any danger of personal 'burn-out' given the energy you're pouring into this every day?**

SR: I say to people, there is time for rest when you're dead. There is no time in my life for rest and I don't want any. I figure the chance of being here on earth is basically so infinitesimally small and incalculable that you need to behave as if you do only get one chance and make a difference while you're here. You find out one day, like a thump in your stomach, that a third of your life is spent unconscious lying flat in a bed. The first few years seem fun, but wasted, and god willing, your latter ones are fun but not wasted! ▶

*Jamie Lee Curtis, Los Angeles, California, USA, 2014.  
Leica S2 camera with Summarit-S 70mm lens.  
© Stuart Robertson, Peace in 10,000 Hands*





*Bound, Thar Desert, India, 2013. Leica S2 camera with Summarit-S 70mm lens.  
© Stuart Robertson, Peace in 10,000 Hands*

*'...success will be measured when we start building schools and hospitals...'*





**f11:** Looking out into the future, do you anticipate that the eventual completion of the project will bring feelings of relief, or be an anti-climax, or would you feel some regret when its finally done?

SR: This is an interesting question, and one I haven't been asked before. I get asked 'what will I do', not 'how will I feel'. Hmm... to be honest I will feel proud. My ultimate goal as an artist is to create a global conversation for peace and to raise 100 million dollars for children's charities. The process that goes into this is full on, and quite draining at times, but I don't imagine feeling an anticlimax or any regret.

**f11:** How many people support the project as the team around you?

SR: There are two of us working on the project, my wife, Semele, and I. We do everything. The goal, when funding allows, is to get a production manager to assist with functional destination planning, sponsorship, exhibition preparation and logistical management of the artwork created through the project. In addition we would like to be able to afford to take someone with me to film the journey. It is interesting, gritty and fascinating for many people who hear my stories from Iraq to Antarctica, to Red Square on May Day, and the deserts of Rajasthan. It would be great to be recording it as we go along on the journey.

**f11:** Can you take any time out for yourself or is it a full time commitment?

SR: This is my passion, and every day wherever I am in this world, I pinch myself. I live 'in the now' and remain as present as possible. I am doing exactly what I want to be doing and I feel a little guilty at times that I can let this art project be as all consuming as I do. ▶

*Two Down, Varanasi, India, 2013. Leica S2 camera with Summarit-S 70mm lens.  
© Stuart Robertson, Peace in 10,000 Hands*





**f11: What else are you balancing this with, other projects, businesses and so on?**

SR: I own some businesses which I started a long time ago, and I'm still a director on the board of those. I am incredibly lucky to have the best team imaginable running them. I am passionate about design, brand engagement, marketing, food, hospitality and events and those businesses are all in these fields.

**f11: Stu, it's been an absolute honour to showcase your project in the magazine. We'll be watching from the sidelines as you carry this through to final fruition. Be sure to keep us, and our readers, in touch with your progress.**

SR: Thank you, the honour is mine. I have read *f11* Magazine for a very long time and to make it on to the pages of this great publication, one that I respect, is very special. My grandfathers would be proud. Peace, Stu. ■

#### TS

[peacein10000hands.com](http://peacein10000hands.com)

Facebook

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Instagram

Plus you can watch:

Peace in 10,000 Hands lead story on '60 Minutes'

Peace in 10,000 Hands film Illuminate Peace Day produced for the Auckland Museum

Peace in 10,000 Hands book out now – The First Collection

*Another Life, Varanasi, India, 2013. Leica S2 camera with Summarit-S 70mm lens.*

© Stuart Robertson, *Peace in 10,000 Hands*









▶ *Stick Collector, Rajasthan, India, 2013. Leica S2 camera with Summarit-S 70mm lens.*  
© Stuart Robertson, *Peace in 10,000 Hands*



◀◀ *Previous double page spread: Grant Bowler, Los Angeles, California, USA 2013. Leica S2 camera with Summarit-S 70mm lens.*  
© Stuart Robertson, *Peace in 10,000 Hands*



*Ricky Gervais, Los Angeles, California, USA, 2014. Sony  
ILCE-7R with Leica Summilux-M 35mm f1.4 ASPH lens.  
© Stuart Robertson, Peace in 10,000 Hands*

*'Each of our actions and thoughts  
has a subtle, yet profound ripple  
effect. We are responsible for,  
and have the ability to choose,  
how we influence that ripple.'*





*Make Time, Queenstown, New Zealand, 2014.*  
*Leica S2 camera with Summarit-S 70mm lens.*  
© Stuart Robertson, *Peace in 10,000 Hands*





*The Pimp, Venice, 2013. Leica S2 camera  
with Summarit-S 70mm lens.  
© Stuart Robertson, Peace in 10,000 Hands*

*'The 10,000 hands represent a  
slice of humanity from every  
country, a big number to make a  
big impact and further the global  
conversation for peace.'*





*Tiesto Mako, Las Vegas, Nevada, USA 2013.  
Leica S2 camera with Summarit-S 70mm lens.  
© Stuart Robertson, Peace in 10,000 Hands*





► *Muscles on Venice, Venice Beach, Los Angeles, California, USA 2014. Sony ILCE-7R with Leica Summilux-M 35mm f1.4 ASPH lens.*  
© Stuart Robertson, *Peace in 10,000 Hands*

*'I look at people differently through Leica glass – and it feels like people look at me differently...'*

►► *Following double page spread: Patience, Udaipur, India, 2013. Leica S2 camera with Summarit-S 70mm lens.* © Stuart Robertson, *Peace in 10,000 Hands*









London Blue, London, England 2013. Leica S2 camera with Summarit-S 70mm lens.  
© Stuart Robertson, Peace in 10,000 Hands

*'I am a believer in flow, and the incredibly serendipitous nature of the universe. Things happen for better or worse and I just go with it.'*





*Awake and Dreaming, New York, USA, 2012.*  
*Leica S2 camera with Summarit-S 70mm lens.*  
*© Stuart Robertson, Peace in 10,000 Hands*





Seal, Los Angeles, California, USA, 2013, Leica  
S2 camera with Summarit-S 70mm lens.  
© Stuart Robertson, Peace in 10,000 Hands

*'I like the look of naturally lit  
portraits and the pressure of  
working with a person I have  
never met before...'*





▶ Lisa Kristine, San Francisco, California, USA, 2014.  
Sony ILCE-7R camera with Leica Summilux-M 35mm f1.4  
ASPH lens. © Stuart Robertson, Peace in 10,000 Hands

▶▶ Following double page spread: Peacock,  
Los Angeles, California, USA, 2014, Leica M240  
camera with Summilux-M 35mm f1.4 ASPH.  
© Stuart Robertson, Peace in 10,000 Hands









*Danny DeVito, Los Angeles, California, USA, 2013.  
Leica S2 camera with Summarit-S 70mm lens.  
© Stuart Robertson, Peace in 10,000 Hands*





Love Life, Los Angeles, California, USA, 2013.  
Leica S2 camera with Summarit-S 70mm lens.  
© Stuart Robertson, Peace in 10,000 Hands

*'I am doing exactly what I want to be doing and I feel a little guilty at times that I can let this art project be as all consuming as I do.'*





# Maris RUSIS

## Forever silver

I've never met Maris Rusis. Yet I know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that this is my loss. Although we're only a shade under 2300km apart there is the difficulty of an angry little sea separating us, albeit a laughable 3 and a bit hours by Boeing or Airbus.

A resident of Queensland, Australia, Maris makes pictures the old way, with wooden cameras, and sheets of film and the alchemy of heat, chemical potions and darkness. Not as a luddite, but as a traditionalist – in the finest interpretation of the word. We need people like this, people who keep an original craft alive and vital and still just within view of a world infatuated with the very latest answers to old questions.

He keeps a low profile, that's probably why until a year ago I'd not heard of him. A mutual friend, our Australian correspondent Ian Poole, introduced his name to a conversation, spun me a yarn so delicious and entertaining that it could only be told by an Australian, and by way

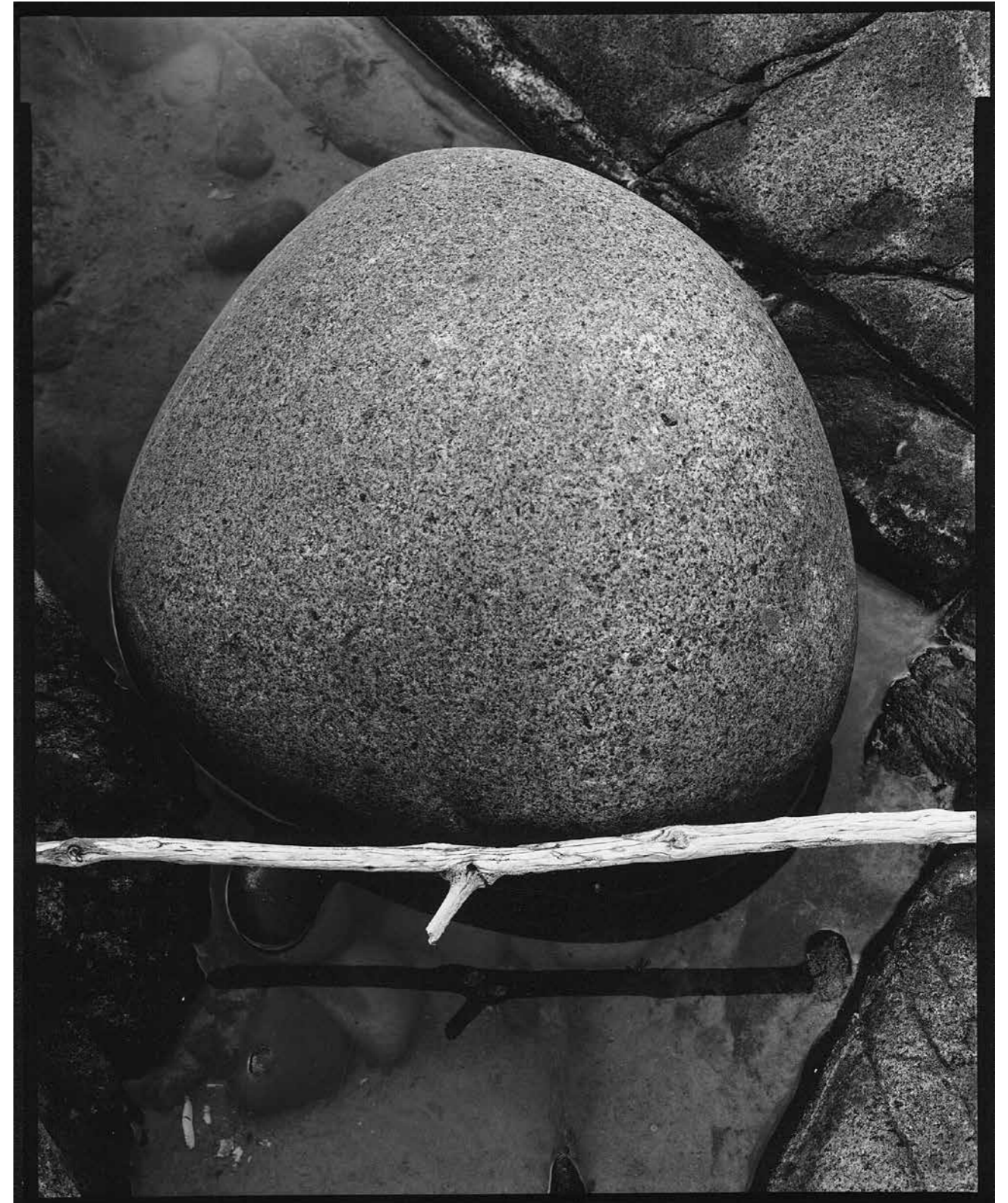
of an end to it, baited me with these words, 'of course, you may not be able to get him...'

I took the bait and swallowed hard – hook, line and sinker. Here was a mission...

Since then, I've spent time alone with his work, read his treatise '*In defence of light-sensitive materials*', researched and stalked him with the infinite patience of a man challenged by that teasing early suggestion that his prey may not come willingly.

My distant impression is of a man delightfully steeped in the ways and means of a kinder, gentler age. Somewhat akin to twin carburetors in a fuel injected world, plate sized vinyl records rather than compact disk, glowing valves over solid state, and the greatest of these, the abiding conviction that where photography is concerned, silver will beat digital every time.

Thankfully not only does Ian, my colleague and secret weapon, know Maris Rusis but he ▶



*Boulder and driftwood, Granite Bay. Gelatin-silver photograph on Ilford MG IV FB photographic paper, image size 24.5cm x 19.6cm, from an 8x10 inch sheet of Kodak T-Max 400 film. The negative was exposed in a Plaubel 8x10 monorail view camera fitted with a Fujinon W 300mm f5.6 lens. © Maris Rusis*



graciously accepted the challenge to broker an introduction, and to extend an invitation for him to be featured here in the magazine. I'm led to believe that this was no easy task, so to the victor the spoils, I invited Ian to collaborate on this feature with an introduction to the man. These are his words, his 'take' on Maris.

#### Poole on Ruis

From an initial relationship built on envy, (mine) my connection with Maris Ruis slowly developed to one of mutual respect between two photographic practitioners with different pathways to the same end goal – good and creative photography.

I was a sports car driving advertising photographer with a 200 square metre studio, staff, darkrooms, vast amounts of electronic lighting and 3 different camera systems with associated lenses. Ruis had, at that time, a 5x4" camera and a couple of lenses; but more importantly he was an amateur photographer. As a person who engages in a study, sport, or other activity for pleasure rather than for financial benefit or professional reasons, Ruis was, in my opinion, blessed with no constraints imposed by the commercial reality of clients. From his point of view I was wallowing in equipment and facility and probably not achieving enough in a creative sense.

We eventually came to understand that there was a place for each of us in the photographic firmament.

Our other point of difference was the traitorous manner in which I slowly embraced the photographic digital age. Ruis was, is and always will be an analogue man.

As is often the case with a person whose background is that of a migrant, Ruis came to Australia as a small child from the war torn ravages of Europe. English is not his first language, but his command of that language

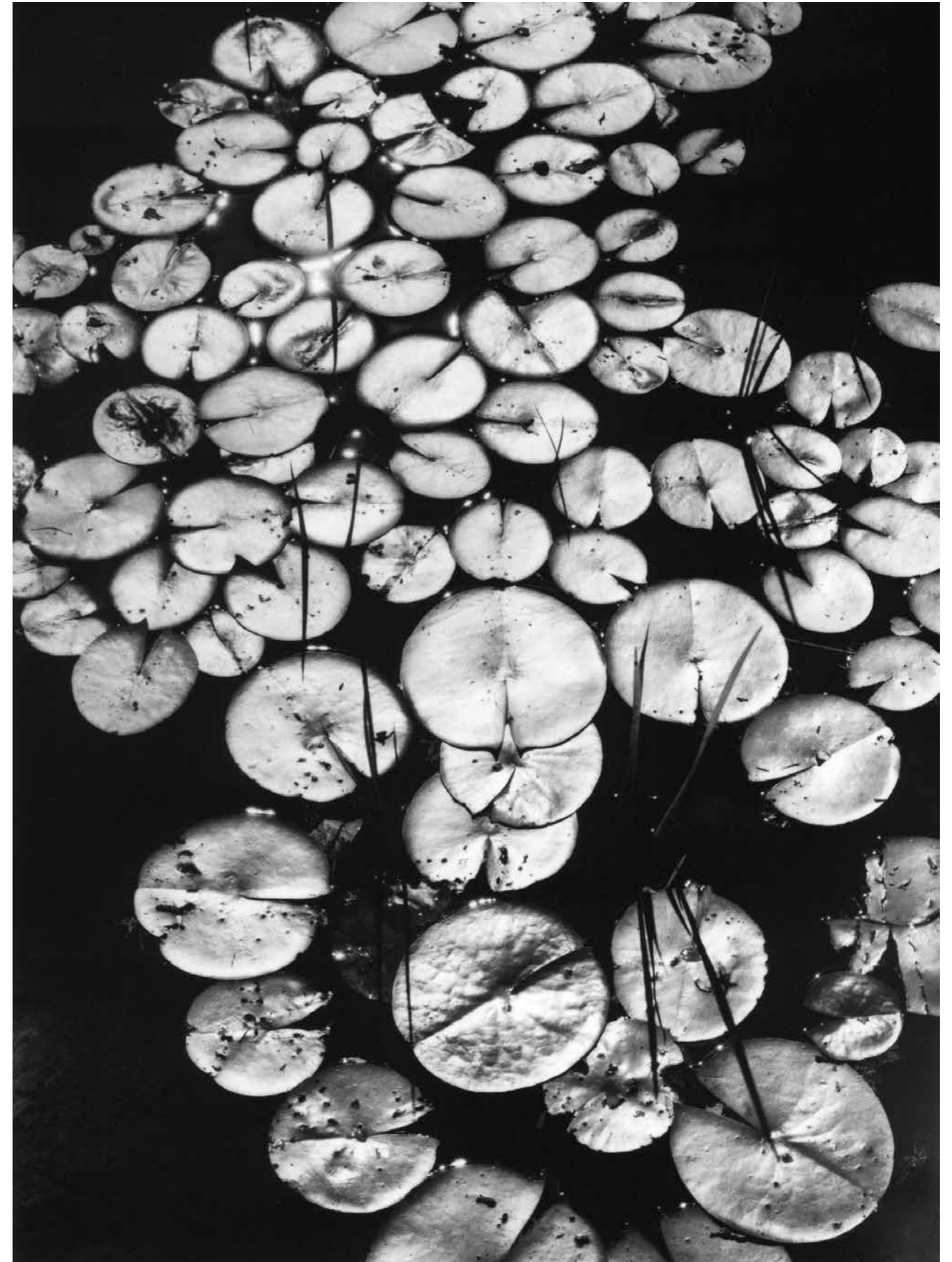
exceeds mine and many other single language speakers. He is a renaissance man with a formal education in science but a curious mind for minutiae across diverse and non-complementary topics. In other words a frustratingly interesting character to be around, but an easily roused person with whom to start a debate.

His respect for the photographic print is supreme. Particularly if it is a large format negative contacted onto paper. Removing the enlarger from the equation gives Ruis the ability to claim that what he saw in the field and subsequently reproduced as a contact photograph is a visual truth, without the artifice of cropping or enlargement. An argument that is so simplistic that I endorse it – but so flawed in a creative sense that I want to rail against this theory.

An example of his single mindedness is illustrated in a trip we undertook together to Central Queensland. I was commissioned to photograph an outback festival and chose to drive the 1500km each way thinking that some great landscapes could be had along the way. Ruis packed his beloved Tachihara Field 10x8" and 10 sheets of film. He arrived home with 9 exposed and 1 unexposed sheet of film, the ▶

*Water lilies, sunlight, Australia. Gelatin-silver photograph on Ultrafine Silver Eagle VC FB photographic paper, image size 21.3cm x 16.4cm, from a 4x5 inch sheet of Kodak Tri-X Pan Professional film. The negative was exposed in a Tachihara 45GF double extension field view camera fitted with a Nikkor 210mm f5.6 Nikkor W lens. Titled and signed recto, stamped verso. © Maris Ruis*

*Water lilies are enveloped in a brilliant waxy cuticle that sheds rain drops and gleams in an intense specular way when sunbeams strike at a favourable angle.*





camera had been unbundled 12 times, and on 3 occasions it was deemed that the location was unworthy. All 9 photographs taken were 'keepers' and exhibition worthy. Of course he did have his Seagull twin lens roll film camera and exposed a couple of rolls through that by way of documentation, but the 'real' photographs were all on the large format.

Whilst known within a tight circle of similarly minded enthusiasts, Ruis has a low profile in the wider photographic community – such is the case for amateur photographers with little desire to self-promote. His oeuvre is of the classic black and white landscape tradition. A carefully chosen field of vision, accurately exposed and taken at a time of day and day of the year to best illustrate the landscape, is his manner of working.

Whilst supported artistically by his partner Zigi Georges, who also works successfully in the large format photographic medium, Ruis essentially works alone, albeit in the confines of an indulgent workspace. Together they have created a small but very functional darkroom with enlarger capacity from 35mm to 5x7", and a spacious workroom allowing storage, matt cutting and dry mounting.

A large reference library is close to hand and the inevitable Ansel Adams photographs line the wall.

A delightful place, and a most engaging couple, to visit.

- Ian Poole.

While in preparation for this feature, we asked Maris for his thoughts, a manifesto, a look

behind the curtain at his work and philosophy. Naturally, he did not disappoint!

### Ruis on Ruis

'It all started in the late 1950s when I discovered the arts and the sciences at the Toowoomba municipal library. I read everything they had, hundreds of books, and I knew then that I was going to work as a scientist and, to fill in all the spare time, I was going to make art. The library was particularly well equipped with oversize books which featured the glories of Western painting and historically important photography. Luminous names like Edward Weston, Paul Strand, Wynn Bullock, Julia Cameron, and Ansel Adams come to mind. And then there were illustrated accounts of the dramatic discovery of photography in the 1830s followed by stories of Alfred Stieglitz's machinations in having photography accepted as a fine art among wealthy Americans.

In the 1960s I made sculptures in polystyrene, quick to work with and somewhat cheaper than marble, and painted in watercolour and acrylics but all of that dropped away when I encountered genuinely hard core science at the University of Queensland. Only photography with its direct access to 'the shock of the real' seemed compatible with the scientific mind-set.

Scientists tend to be well remunerated but I waited until my second professional pay packet before buying a camera, a 35mm Praktica. Determined to master camera-work I shot about ten thousand negatives in the first year, that's only a 36 exposure roll a day. Having mastered camera-work, or so I thought, it was time to go further. ▶



*Moonrise, Sunshine Beach, Noosa, Australia. Gelatin-silver photograph on Kodak Fine Art VC FB photographic paper, image size 24.5cm x 19.6cm, from an 8x10 inch sheet of Kodak T-Max 400 film. The negative was exposed in a Tachihara 810HD triple extension field view camera fitted with a Fujinon W 300mm f5.6 lens and a #25 red filter. Titled, signed and stamped verso. © Maris Ruis*



Jumping into the world of art was easy. Lots of parvenus and outright impostors do it every year and I could not be certain that I wasn't just another one. In the absence of external endorsement I fell back on the 'as if' principle. The photographs would be made as if they were art and I would conduct the process as if I was a real artist. To this end I adopted a set of guidelines to sustain effort through moments, maybe years, of doubt:

I would title, sign, and annotate each photograph so that it could be uniquely identified. People would know who the perpetrator was. And I couldn't excuse failure on the basis that I was just a dilettante or idle experimenter.

All the pictures were to be made out of light sensitive materials so that their constituent marks have physical links to the subject matter they represent.

The final gelatin-silver photograph would be a photograph of its subject matter: usually a film negative.

The film negative would be a photograph of its subject matter: the real optical image in the back of the camera.

And the real optical image would depend on its subject matter: the illuminated world on the other side of the lens.

The discipline of this approach insists that subject matter content cannot be deleted, stitched, or rearranged. The marks that form my photographs go where the subject matter says, not where I care to push them with an image manipulation programme.

Some powerful and appealing corollaries follow from this particular approach to photography:

Such photographs cannot depict subject matter that does not exist.

The photograph and the subject have to be in each other's presence at the moment of exposure.

Only the fleeting present can be captured. Things past, things to come cannot be depicted.

Dreams, imaginings, and hallucinations do not come out in photographs.

The sole energy input for the photographer comes from the subject. Remember, photography was invented in and perfected in a world without electricity.

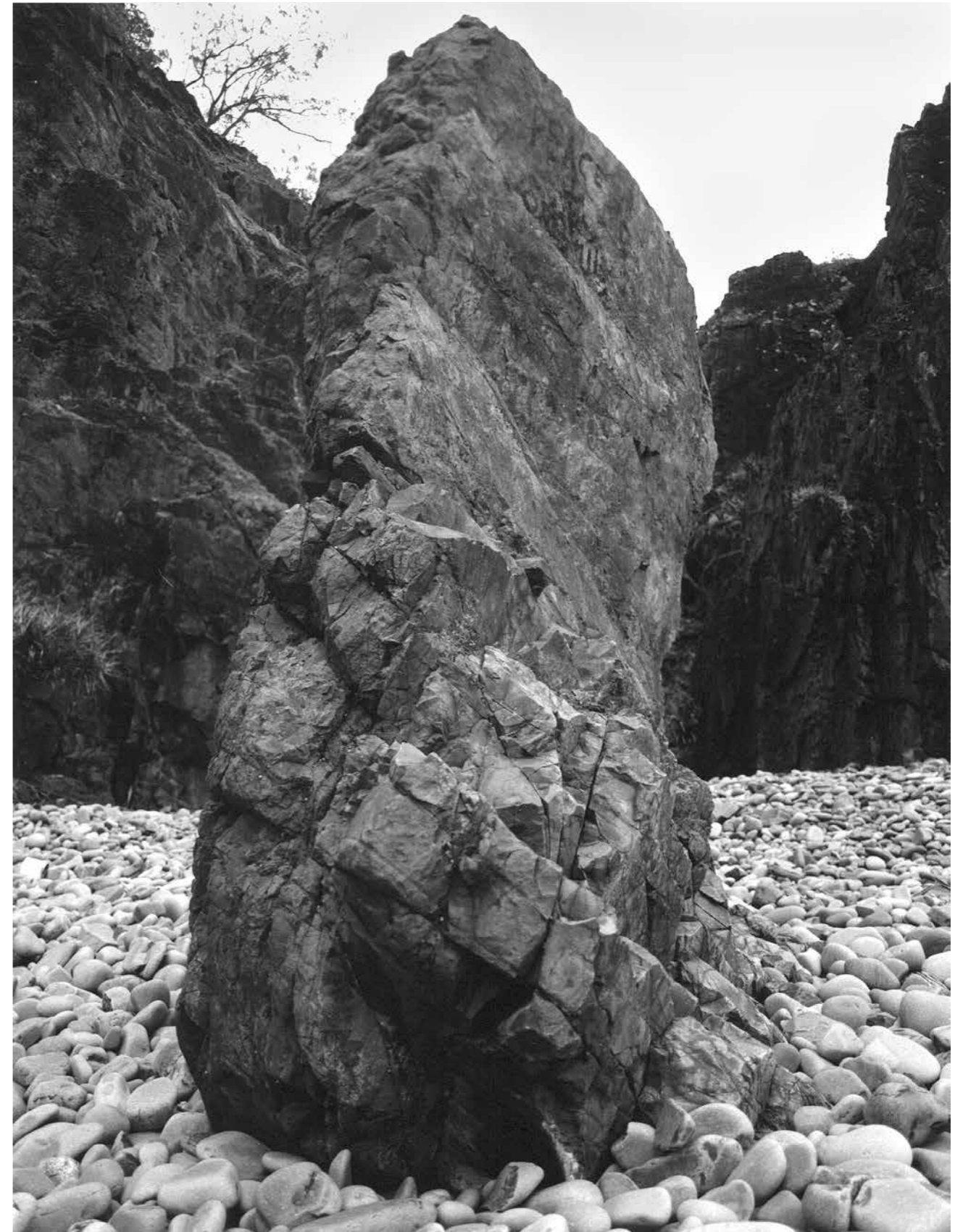
Pictures made from light sensitive materials, photographs indeed, are different to paintings, drawings, and digital images in that their authority to describe subject matter comes not from resemblance but from physical causation.

There are many ways a photograph-maker can work and I chose the black and white gelatin-silver photograph as my medium. Black and white is more abstract than illustrative and I hope it's good enough to evoke appreciation beyond the mere identification of subject matter.

From the beginning my photographs were small and they still are. I was inspired by the work of Edward Weston who had possibly the most ▶

*Cook's Monument, Noosa, Australia. Gelatin-silver photograph on Freestyle Private Reserve VC FB photographic paper, image size 21.5cm x 16.5cm, from a 6x7 format Kodak T-Max 100 film. The negative was exposed in a Mamiya RB67 single lens reflex medium format rollfilm camera fitted with a 50mm f4.5 wide angle lens. Titled and signed recto and stamped verso. © Maris Ruis*

*Cook's Monument is a natural sea stack of hard metamorphic stone that has resisted the elements while surrounding rocks have been ground down to rounded boulders.*





exemplary career in all photography and never made a picture bigger than 8x10 inches (20x25cm) in his life. Several decades on I'm glad I never made 16x20 inch pictures (40x50cm). The sheer accumulated bulk would be overwhelming.

I'll take acclaim if it's forthcoming but I wager no self-esteem on audience endorsement. Within the limits of talent, imagination, vision, and energy the photographs are as good as I can do and that, I suppose, validates them. As for me I'm happy if I try harder next time and cleave to the principle that persistence and discipline inevitably trump inspiration and luck.

There are much easier, quicker, cheaper ways of making pictures than by consuming valuable light sensitive materials. I make photographs one at a time, start to finish, and in full by my own hand. Nothing goes to assistants or back-room people. No matter; I feel uplifted by the work rather than being broken down by it.

Fainter hearts have worried about the continuing identity of photography in a world where pictures are no more than a set of instructions whereby a display monitor may paint an image on its screen. But throughout the history of art no medium has ever become defunct if it is valued. I make photographs out of light sensitive materials because of the unique properties they afford. I am part of a tradition that goes seamlessly back to the very invention of photography. And I'm sustained by that tradition, not as a latter day worshiper of ashes, but as a celebrant of a fire that still shines brightly.'

- *Maris Rusis*

In conclusion, we present a series of what Maris refers to as his 'rambling and digressive musings'.

They eventuated as part of our long distance dialogue by email.

On the initial proposal of a series of emails between us to gain insight into his work and the thought behind it:

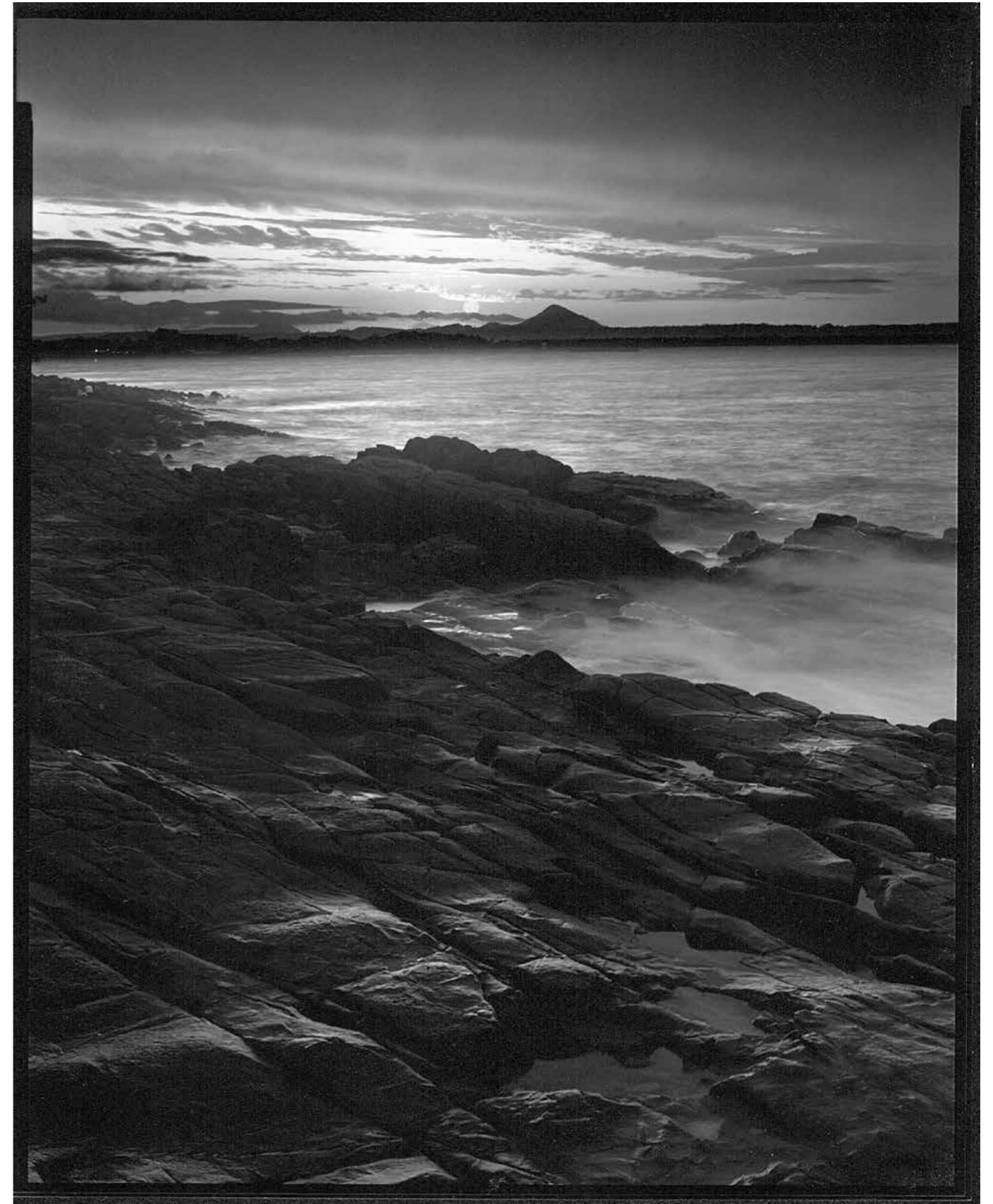
'Dialogue is most welcome. Thank goodness photography is not just camera work, darkroom work, framing, and exhibiting. Years ago I jokingly fixed a big label on a box of gelatin-silver paper: 'Warning – open only in darkroom. Photographic materials are sensitive to thought'. Maybe there's an ongoing lesson for me there.'

On my selection of his images for this feature:

'A selection is always an interesting thing not only through what is selected but as an insight into the selector. Perhaps photographs interrogate the viewer in much the same way as Rorschach ink blots are purported to unmask a state of mind in psychoanalysis. I don't see many selections from my photographs and I appreciate yours.'

On the importance of detailed captions to reveal more about the work we curated for this feature:

'The descriptions that accompany photographs are a shortened version of an international standard for objet d'art. People occasionally travel to see my photographs and I hesitate to derail their trust by posting monitor images or descriptions that aren't closely reminiscent of the originals. Not to go overboard, I leave out details like my photographs weigh between 15 and 16 grams and they are about 0.3 mm thick baryta paper. Only conservators care about that stuff. If the pictures were part of a catalogue raisonne I'd have to include where in the world they are and in whose holding they are kept. ▶



*Sunset, Laguna Bay, Noosa, Australia. Gelatin-silver photograph on Ilfobrom IB4 FB photographic paper, image size 24.6cm x 19.6cm, from an 8x10 inch sheet of Kodak T-Max 400 film. The negative was exposed in a Tachihara 810HD triple extension field view camera fitted with a Fujinon W 300mm f5.6 lens and a #25 red filter. Titled, signed and stamped verso. © Maris Rusis*



The photographs are signed, titled, and they bear my stamp and annotations on the back.'

On the essential nature of our presenting these images without cropping, or in any way removing visual clues such as edge detailing which he has included:

'It is very rare that an entire negative is used when it is accessed by projection from an enlarger. In most camera work composition is not the same thing as framing. Consequently a lens with a sufficiently wide-angle is used to include all of the desired composition and the final framing is completed by a masking easel in the darkroom. Changing the framing by moving the camera back and forth in front of the subject matter fails because it also changes the composition.

In the special case of photographs made by contact exposure with an unmasked negative the positive will reveal the rebate of the negative caused by the film holder or the film gate in the camera. The variety of shapes here, the broad 'T' of a double-dark film holder or the double notch of the Hasselblad film gate, may amuse or inform those motivated to look for them.

Aside from edges designated by a masking easel secondary photographs don't have their own rebates. Primary photographs in the form of camera-original material often have rebates but these (Polaroids, Fujiroids, Direct Positives, Tintypes, Ambrotypes, Daguerreotypes and Impossibles aside) are rare things indeed. And I've never seen an instance of negatives on show in years of gallery lurking.

A recurring fashion involves contriving a rebate on a secondary photograph by using a filed out negative carrier. The black edge, often rough,

is presented as a 'verification border' attesting to the uncropped integrity of the photograph. The perpetrators of this ploy seem unconscious of the irony involved in claiming artistic merit for picture edges they never saw, could not verify, in their camera viewfinders.

Historic attitudes to displaying negative rebates in secondary photographs vary. A while back I looked through a big collection of Edward Weston originals (no, not the posthumous ones made by Cole Weston) and in every case Edward had guillotined away the black border before dry-mounting on rather low grade card. I own several photographs off Ansel Adams' 8x10 negatives made in the Yosemite darkroom and again, in every case, the negative rebate is masked off at the enlarging stage. The gallery director at Point Light, Gordon Undy, who has represented me for years insists implacably on overmatting my 8x10 contacts to hide the black edge. He declares it's ugly.

Personally, I like the black edge on full frame contact photographs. The black edge is code for about half a dozen value signals if the viewer cares to think along those lines. And the black edge also announces that a full frame contact photograph is an example of the rare (and difficult to do) case where composition and framing are the same thing.'

**On the use of a very digital medium to share his very tangible art works:**

'The Flickr presence is just a way of getting pictures hosted so that they can be shared on line. Maybe there are better picture hosting sites but I'm too computer-naive to pursue them. In the good old days one would exchange packets of photographs through the post and endure the anxiety and expense involved. ▶



*Stranded Jellyfish, Granite Bay. Gelatin-silver photograph on Agfa Classic MCC 111 VC FB photographic paper, image size 24.5cm x 19.3cm, from a 4x5 inch sheet of Kodak Tri-X 400 film. The negative was exposed in a Tachihara 45GF double extension field view camera fitted with a Voigtlander Heliar 21cm f4.5 lens. © Maris Rusis*







At least then there was no ambiguity about the physical existence of the work. I suspect now there are people who innocently regard monitor displays of electronic files as the same thing photographs; most curious. The objects illustrated in the Flickr site aren't film, prints, or print-outs. They are actual photographs: objects bearing marks as a consequence of being struck by light. The identity clash between prints and photographs is more than a century old and it has done photography no favours. Nearly all my photographs illustrated in Flickr are secondary photographs. In other words they are photographs of photographs. The primary photograph, usually a camera-original negative, is merely the subject matter for the next exposure which is executed on paper-backed photographic emulsion. Other objects are usually included in this second exposure. These may include edges of moving cards, cards on wands, my hands and fingers, that enter and leave the exposing light beam.'

**On the process required to transition incredibly tactile hand made prints to digital display:**

'I simply put the photographs on a \$49 flat-bed scanner that sees finer than I can. I push some buttons and the scanner sends a signal to a version of Photoshop in my computer. I make some adjustments until the picture on my monitor looks like the actual photograph held up next to it at normal looking distance. Usually the picture on the monitor is not quite the same size as the photograph. Maybe different size monitors show different size pictures and size matching is a lost cause. That's why I nominate the actual picture size, cm high by cm wide, according to the international standard convention for art objects. Several of the photographs in the Flickr set are with owners overseas. Others are in Australia held in gallery

stock, by collectors in various locations, or remain with me.'

**On the challenges of working alone and the mental processes required:**

'It seems a regular fate of any art-worker that they'll find themselves striving in profound isolation most of the time. I've had part of six decades in the scholarship and practice of photography and during those years I've developed a few sustaining mantras that are out of kilter with current fashion. You may have noticed! I reckon too much self doubt doesn't get photographs made but too far the other way proves Euripides right: 'Those whom the gods wish to destroy they first make mad.'"

**On the challenge of writing about his own work, and the construct of an artist's statement:**

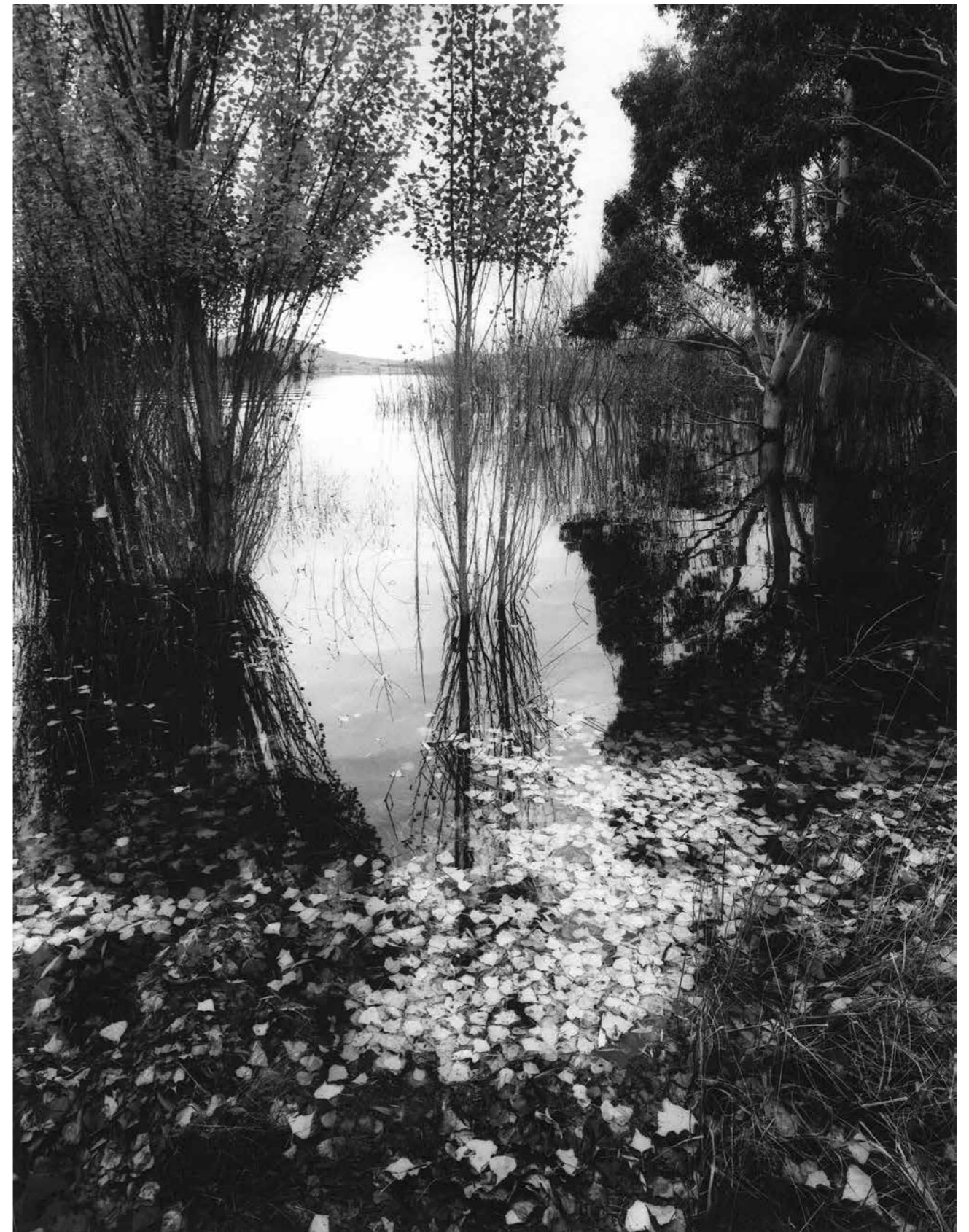
'Artist statements are notorious indulgences but I reckon it's possible to write a plain and honest one. As for raisons d'etre, disciplines, and aesthetics I'm up to about half a million words penned, published, or posted over years of distracted time; distracted, that is, instead of just making photographs.'

**On the sneaking suspicion that in the course of our dialogue he may have pulled the curtains back to reveal a little more than he intended:**

'I'll admit writing too much is as fraught as writing too little. I'm reminded of the famous quotation from Cardinal Richelieu:

'Qu'on me donne six lignes écrites de la main du plus honnête homme, j'y trouverai de quoi le faire pendre. – If you give me six lines written by the hand of the most honest of men, I will find something in them which will hang him.' '

Far from it, Maris Ruis is a delightful and reliable fixed point in a spinning world, a way point, ▶



*Late Fall, Lake Jindabyne, NSW, Australia. Gelatin-silver photograph on Ultrafine Silver Eagle VC FB photographic paper, image size 21.3cm x 16.4cm, from a 4x5 inch sheet of Fomapan 400 film. The negative was exposed in a Tachihara 45GF double extension field view camera fitted with a Schneider Super Angulon 75mm f5.6 lens and a #25 red filter. Titled and signed recto, stamped and annotated verso. © Maris Ruis*



a navigation beacon connecting the very essence of traditional photography and the values it exemplifies with the permanent state of transition which digital imaging seems to have brought along for the rollercoaster ride it has proven to be.

Two worlds certainly, not so much colliding but in orbit around the same light source, a common sun allowing life and creativity to exist and continue to evolve in both ecosystems.

Vive la difference! ■

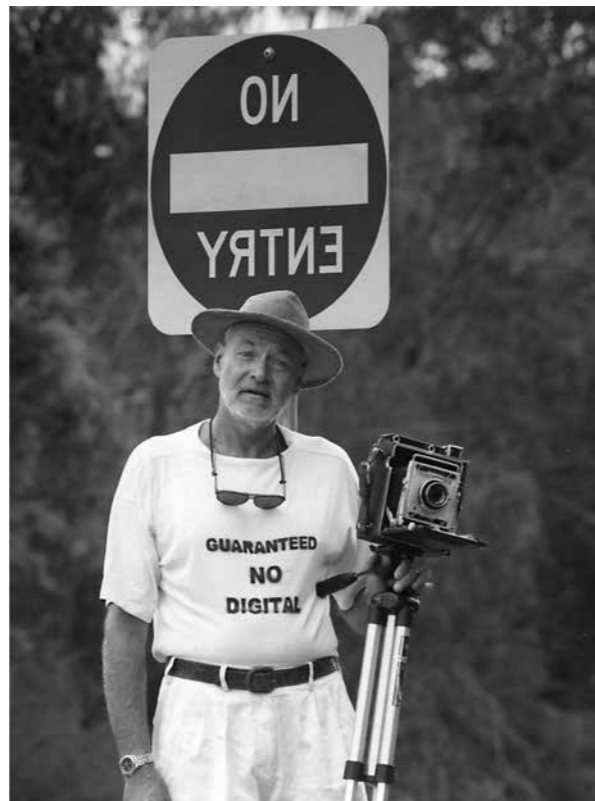
TS

Flickr

Doug Spowart on Maris Ruis



© Maris Ruis



© Maris Ruis



Rock Mills, Tea Tree Bay, Noosa, Queensland, Australia. Gelatin-silver photograph on Agfa Classic MCC 111 VC FB photographic paper, image size 24.7cm x 19.6cm, from an 8x10 inch sheet of Kodak Tri-X Pan Professional 400 film.

The negative was exposed in a Plaubel 8x10 monorail view camera fitted with a Schneider Symmar 300mm lens.

© Maris Ruis

These hard quartzlike rock mills are in the surf zone. The largest one is about a metre across and about 1.5 metres deep.





*Snow Gum, Mount Guthrie, NSW, Australia. Gelatin-silver photograph on Fomabrom Variant III VC FB photographic paper, image size 16.5cm x 21.3cm, from a 6x7 format Kodak T-Max 100 film. The negative was exposed in a Mamiya RB67 single lens reflex medium format rollfilm camera fitted with a 360mm f6.3 lens and a #25 red filter. Titled and signed recto and stamped verso. © Maris Ruis*



*Snow Gum skeleton. Gelatin-silver photograph on Arista Edu Ultra VC FB photographic paper, image size 20.3cm x 25.4cm, exposed in contact with the negative. The negative was originally exposed on an 8x10 inch sheet of Fomabrom 200 film. The negative was exposed in a Tachihara 8x10 triple extension field view camera fitted with a Schneider Super Angulon 121mm f8 lens. Titled, signed and stamped verso. © Maris Ruis  
The tree has been blasted by years of ice storms and the wood is polished smooth and white.*

***'Determined to master camera-work I shot about ten thousand negatives in the first year, that's only a 36 exposure roll a day.'***





*Whirlpool, Kondalilla Falls, Kondalilla National Park, Queensland, Australia. Gelatin-silver photograph on Agfa MCC 111 VC FB photographic paper, image size 24.5cm x 19.6cm, from an 8x10 inch sheet of Kodak Tri-X Pan Professional negative film. The negative was exposed in a Tachihara 810HD 8x10 triple extension field view camera fitted with a Fujinon W 300mm f5.6 lens and a #25 red filter. © Maris Ruis*

*The whirlpool at the base of the falls turns slowly but a 2 minute exposure was sufficient to record a dynamic swirl.*



*Tea Tree Bay, reflection. Gelatin-silver photograph on Agfa Classic 111 VC FB photographic paper, image size 19.1cm x 16.4cm, from a 6x7 format Kodak T-Max 100 film negative. The negative was exposed in a Mamiya RB67 single lens reflex medium format rollfilm camera fitted with a 127mm f3.8 lens. © Maris Ruis*



*'The sole energy input for the photograph comes from the subject. Remember, photography was invented in and perfected in a world without electricity.'*



*Blue Pool. Gelatin-silver photograph on Agfa Classic MCC 111 VC FB photographic paper, image size 24.7cm x 19.6cm, from an 8x10 inch sheet of Kodak Tri-X Pan Professional negative film. The negative was exposed in a Plaubel 8x10 monorail view camera fitted with a Symmar 300mm f5.6 lens. © Maris Ruis*





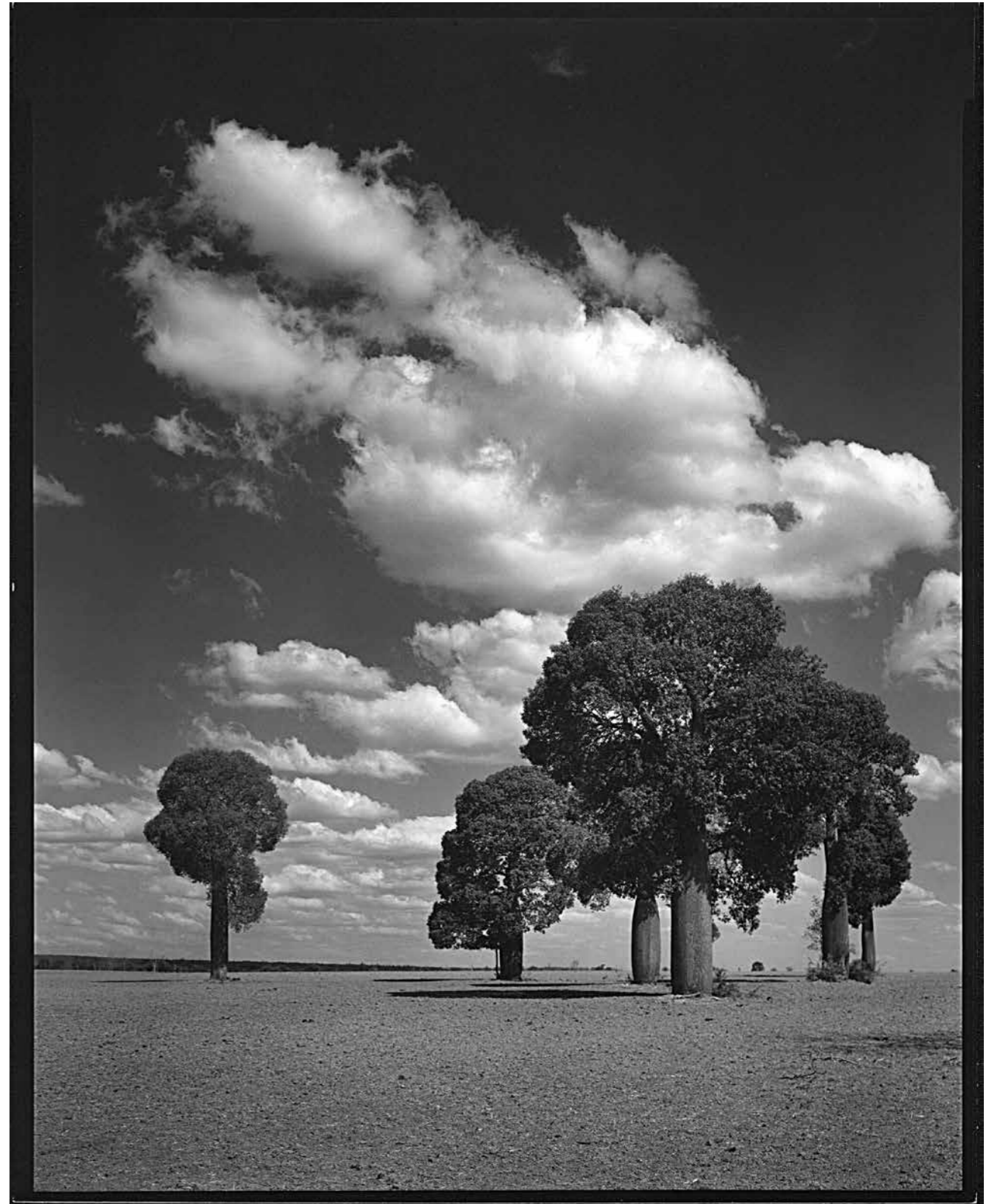
*Dove Lake, Pencil Pine Ghosts. Gelatin-silver photograph on Agfa Classic MCC 111 VC FB photographic paper, image area 21.2cm x 16.3cm, from a 6x7 format Kodak T-Max 100 film negative. The negative was exposed in a Mamiya RB67 single lens reflex medium format rollfilm camera fitted with a 360mm f6.3 lens. Titled and signed recto, stamped verso. © Maris Ruis*



*Storm Cleft Tree. Gelatin-silver photograph on Agfa Classic MCC 111 VC FB photographic paper, image size 24.6cm x 19.6cm, from an 8x10 inch sheet of Kodak Tri-X Pan Professional negative film. The negative was exposed in a Tachihara 810HD 8x10 triple extension field view camera fitted with a Fujinon W 300mm f5.6 lens. © Maris Ruis*



*'There are much easier, quicker, cheaper ways of making pictures than by consuming valuable light sensitive materials. I make photographs one at a time, start to finish, and in full by my own hand.'*



*Australian Icon: from the Biloela road, Queensland, Australia. Gelatin-silver photograph on Agfa Classic MCC 111 VC FB photographic paper, image size 24.7cm x 19.5cm, from an 8x10 inch sheet of Kodak Tri-X Pan Professional negative film. The negative was exposed in a home-made Bender 8x10 view camera fitted with a Schneider Symmar 300mm f5.6 lens and a #25 red filter. © Maris Ruis*





*Angular Pool, Monument Bay. Gelatin-silver photograph on Agfa Classic MCC 111 FB photographic paper, from a 4x5 inch sheet of Kodak Tri-X Pan Professional film. The negative was exposed in a Tachihara 45GF field view camera fitted with a Schneider Super Angulon 90mm f8 lens. © Maris Ruis*

*'Years ago I jokingly fixed a big label on a box of gelatin-silver paper:  
"Warning – open only in darkroom. Photographic materials are sensitive  
to thought". Maybe there's an ongoing lesson for me there.'*



*Girraween Creek, Slick Granite. Gelatin-silver photograph on Agfa Classic MCC 111 VC FB photographic paper image size 19.6cm x 24.6cm, from an 8x10 inch sheet of Kodak T-Max 400 negative film. The negative was exposed in a home-made Bender 8x10 view camera fitted with a Schneider Symmar 300mm f5.6 lens. © Maris Ruis*





*Worn Path, Sunshine Beach. Gelatin-silver photograph on Agfa Classic MCC 111 VC FB photographic paper, image area 16.5cm x 21.3cm, from a 6x7 format Kodak T-Max 100 film negative. The negative was exposed in a Mamiya RB67 single lens reflex medium format rollfilm camera fitted with a 50mm f4.5 lens. Titled and signed recto, stamped verso. © Maris Ruis*



*Leaf Fall. Gelatin-silver photograph on Fomabrom Variant 111 VC FB photographic paper, image area 16.2cm x 21.5cm, from a 6x7 format Kodak T-Max 100 film negative. The negative was exposed in a Mamiya RB67 single lens reflex medium format rollfilm camera fitted with a 50mm f4.5 lens. © Maris Ruis*

*Apart from an Antarctic relic in Tasmania, no Australian trees are deciduous. Were it not for imported trees it would be an unknown thing to see a leaf fall in winter.*

***'Only the fleeting present can be captured.  
Thing past, things to come cannot be depicted.'***





Maris Ruis in his workroom © Ian Poole



Rockpool and reflection, Granite Bay. Gelatin-silver photograph on Freestyle Private Reserve VC FB photographic paper, image area 16.5cm x 20.2cm, from a 6x7 format Kodak T-Max 100 film negative. The negative was exposed in a Mamiya RB67 single lens reflex medium format rollfilm camera fitted with a 50mm f4.5 lens. Titled and signed verso, stamped verso. © Maris Ruis



Maris Ruis in his darkroom © Ian Poole





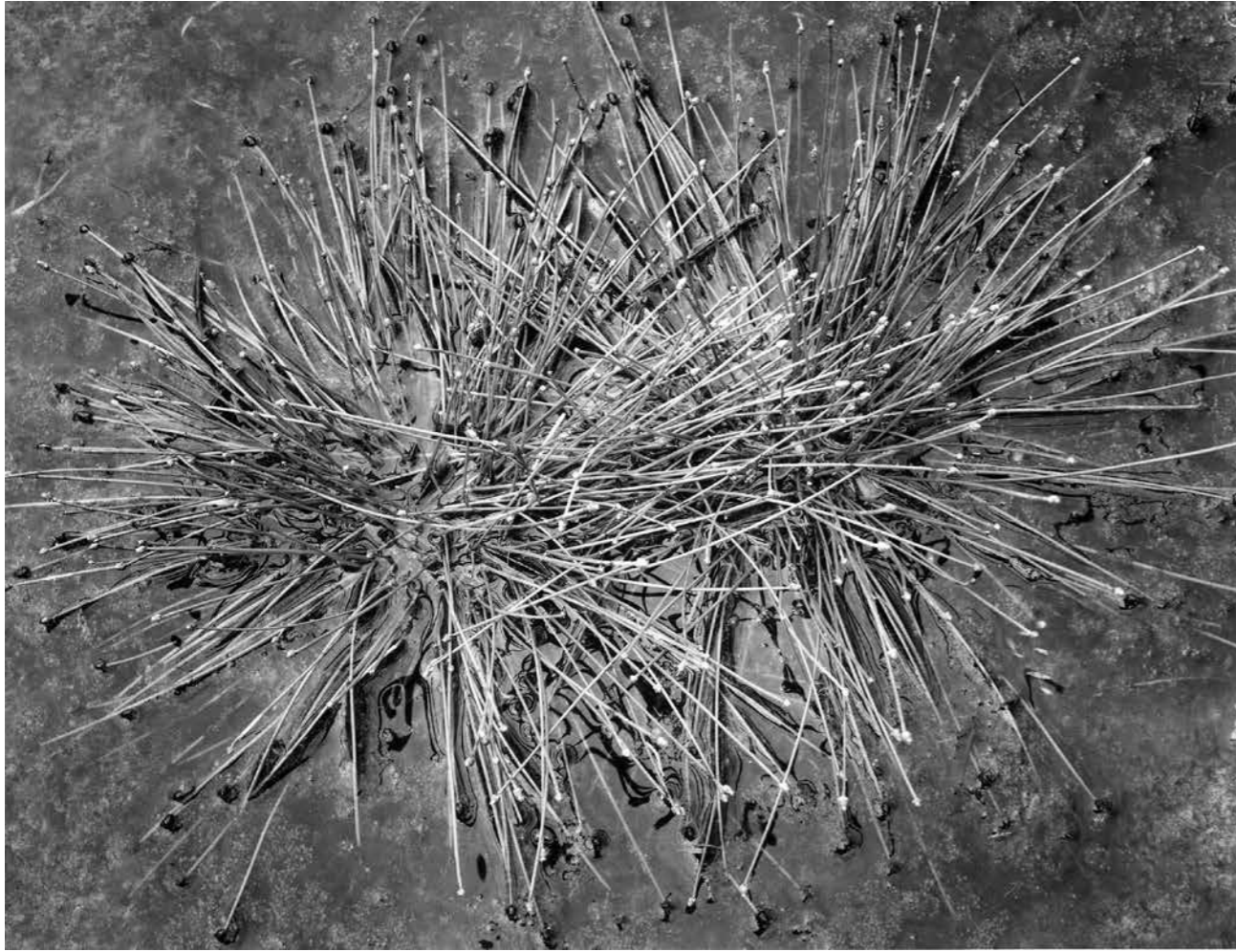
*Rock Pool, Tea Tree Bay, Afternoon. Gelatin-silver photograph on Agfa Classic MCC 111 VC FB photographic paper, image size 16.5cm x 21.3cm, from a 4x5 inch sheet of Kodak T-Max 100 film. The negative was exposed in a Tachihara 45GF double extension field view camera fitted with a Schneider Super Angulon 90mm f8 lens and a #25 red filter. Titled and signed recto, stamped verso. © Maris Ruis*

***'I make photographs out of light sensitive materials because of the unique properties they afford. I am part of a tradition that goes seamlessly back to the very invention of photography.'***



*Boulder and Shrubs, Porcupine Track, Infrared. Gelatin-silver photograph on Ultrafine Silver Eagle VC FB photographic paper, image size 19.6cm x 24.6cm, from an 8x10 inch sheet of Efke IR820 negative film. The negative was exposed in a Tachihara 810HD 8x10 triple extension field view camera fitted with a Wollensak 159mm f9.5 lens. Titled, signed and stamped verso. © Maris Ruis*





*Swamp Sedge, Alexandria Bay. Gelatin-silver photograph on Agfa Classic MCC 111 VC FB photographic paper, image size 16.3cm x 21.3cm, from a 4x5 inch sheet of Kodak T-Max 100 film. The negative was exposed in a Tachihara 45GF double extension field view camera fitted with a Voigtlander Heliar 21cm f4.5 lens. © Maris Ruis*



*Snow Gum Grove Infrared. Gelatin-silver photograph on Freestyle Private Reserve VC FB photographic paper, image size 16.3cm x 21.3cm, from a 4x5 inch sheet of Efke IR820 negative film. The negative was exposed in a Tachihara 45GF double extension field view camera fitted with a Nikkor W 210mm f5.6 lens. Titled and signed recto and stamped verso. © Maris Ruis*

*'It seems a regular fate of any art-worker that they'll find themselves striving in profound isolation most of the time. I've had part of six decades in the scholarship and practice of photography and during those years I've developed a few sustaining mantras that are out of kilter with current fashion.'*



# Amber GRIFFIN

## Pas de deux

Amber Griffin has forged a career photographing dancers, developing a tenuous foothold in the slenderest of niche markets where others might not have dared to tread. Her intimate understanding of the art, and her relationships with the people who tread these boards, makes for a powerful and collaborative pas de deux between the photographer and her subject.

Amber grew up in Wellington, the capital of New Zealand and home to many passionate artistic communities. With two sisters and supportive parents, Amber fondly recalls that art and dance were the two dominant themes of her childhood.

'I remember my first time on stage in a little blue tutu at four years old, my hair was too short to even make a bun and my mum had accidentally forgotten my ballet shoes, but I was determined to perform.

The determination still reigns strong within, the performing – not so much. I am the most introverted and least dramatic of the three 'Griffin girls' and I'm much more comfortable being behind the camera than in front of it.

I was always encouraged to be creative and painting was what got me through the teenage years. I only discovered photography at

university but learned about composition, colour and all things 'art' through painting and sculpture at school. I had one year of dark room experience at Massey University, but discovered that the chemicals in use were detrimental to my sensitive skin making this area taboo for me.

Instead, I quickly embraced the digital darkroom. The small photography department computer lab at Massey was the birthplace for my love affair with Photoshop.'

Amber graduated from university with a Bachelor of Design with honours in 2007. She immediately moved to Auckland and attempted, but struggled, to secure work as either a photographer or an assistant. So instead, she found employment as a Mac operator in an advertising agency, 'Mr Smith', where she worked for 3 years, undertaking graphic design and some photography while in the role.

Returning to a Wellington still in the depths of the recession, Amber took an in-house graphic design role with professional services firm, Deloitte. ▶

*Personal work, WPAC dancers Todd Williamson and Daniil Gorham, Nikon D800 with Nikon 24-70mm lens.  
© 2014 Amber Griffin*





'While I only worked there for around 9 months, my time with Deloitte proved to be one of my most beneficial career moves for my current commercial work, purely from a networking perspective.

I then moved back into advertising with a Wellington based agency, 'First Star Communications' (now 'Stun'). This was a far more creatively challenging role but after a few years I grew to despise sitting behind a desk all day, instead craving the freedom of self employment.'

So early in 2012, she took the bull firmly by the horns, quitting her day job in advertising to embark on the photography career calling her so urgently to action.

'As many do, I started out doing anything and everything and then a family friend suggested that I have a go at photographing some kids from a local dance school. She knew that I'd grown up with ballet, and dance has always been a passion of mine, so photographing dancers was a really natural fit for me. I speak their lingo and I find that they relate to me really easily. Dance photography is my passion and has now become my niche, in my first three years in business I did a huge number of 'Dance Portrait' shoots for local dancers – I have now photographed over 150 dancers, mainly from the Wellington region. Running a busy and multifaceted business I 'work' ridiculously long hours, usually seven days a week. However, I feel incredibly fortunate to be able to earn a living from my passion. I expect this is a rare privilege. I do also enjoy a busy commercial photography schedule with a few key commercial clients.'

With new found confidence, and a growing collection of images around dance, Amber decided to truly test her own mettle by placing some of this work before her peers in the testing and demanding environment of a professional awards program.

'Last year, I decided at the last hour to enter the NZIPP Iris Awards. I entered seven images and came away with seven awards, one of which was a gold for the Commercial category. This image was then chosen by the NZ photography honours council to represent New Zealand at the World Photographic Cup where it also won the gold medal for the Commercial category, as well as achieving the highest overall score in the global competition. In April I attended the WPC ceremony in Montpellier, France, which was a wonderful experience and I was fortunate to meet some very inspiring people.

I am currently working on new imagery for my first solo exhibition which opens at Exhibitions Gallery in Wellington on 26 August. The works are all focussed around dance photography and explore the beauty and majesty of movement through both contemporary and classical dance. A few of the images are still in development (...I work best under pressure!) and I am relishing this opportunity to whole-heartedly indulge my personal creativity through collaboration with some incredible local dancers. Creating work for this exhibition is the first time that I have worked with professional ballerinas and professional contemporary dancers. I feel so completely in my element in the studio with them and the collaborative processes that we go through have made for the most exhilarating shoots that I have been involved with.'

Amber talks about that process of preparing for an exhibition, and the changes this has brought to her perspective:

'Through creating work for my pending exhibition, I no longer feel like a photographer... I now finally feel like an artist, which is my ▶

*Personal work, WPAC dancers Todd Williamson and Dani Gorham, Nikon D800 with Nikon 24-70mm lens.  
© 2014 Amber Griffin*





ultimate goal. I think of these shoots as the time to gather and create the finest raw materials possible. Then the post production phase is the time for everything to be refined and where my real artistry kicks in.'

**Amber asserts that in the early days, her post production and graphic design abilities proved powerful tools to leverage her improving camera skills.**

'For a long time I felt as though I used my superior retouching abilities to 'save' my photography. I now feel that my photographic skills have reached a place where they are now informing and dictating my post production choices. Editing and post-production is completely integral to the success of my image-making and I put a large amount of time and energy into it. I am largely self-taught with Photoshop, I did learn its very basics while completing my degree but most of it, I've just figured out as I've gone along.

Another hugely important element to my work is the influence of my sister, Crystal. She is a very creative force in her own right however, through life's circumstances she didn't end up pursuing a creative occupation. Crystal has worked from my apartment for the last few years and has become my most trusted source of constructive and objective critique. As an artist, I often get far too close to my own work and develop subjective attachments to things that are not necessarily good or, occasionally, overlook things that are great. As Crystal has the ability to be utterly blunt and completely honest with me and, because she has the heart of an artist herself, I know that I can wholeheartedly trust her to give me an educated and thoughtful opinion.'

**When quizzed about the technicalities of her work, Amber is equally candid, unselfconsciously spilling the beans about her preferences.**

'I am a Nikon girl through and through, probably because my first digital camera was a Nikon

D200. I am currently using the D800 and I have a D7000 as back up although I can't even remember the last time I used that. I am not a gear geek in any way. I am attracted to the artistic and emotive side of photography – the technical side is just something I force myself to learn in order to best achieve the artistry. I don't own a plethora of lenses. I shoot almost all of my dance studio work on a Nikon 24-70mm zoom lens and I sometimes use my Nikon 70-200mm zoom when I'm out and about. I've tried using a variety of prime lenses in the studio but, because I shoot tethered, I find having a little zoom really useful and I wasn't able to detect any difference in the sharpness of the end result. If I need any other more specialised lenses for a particular job, I just hire them.

I predominantly use Bowens flash lighting with large strip soft boxes in the studio with my dancers. I really like the control that this style of lighting gives me for sculpting their bodies. I believe that enhancing, and sculpting the dancers musculature, is one of the most important aspects to successful dance photography. They work so hard to achieve this definition and I think their unique musculature is one of the main things that make professional dancers bodies so incredibly beautiful to photograph.

Until recently, I have often struggled with having blurry extremities (feet, hands, tips of long hair) on a lot of my RAW dance images, despite using only flash lighting. It's been a crazily sporadic and frustrating problem for me over the last few years and I know now that this relates to the duration speed of the flash units I was using. I am relieved to see affordable high speed flash units are now available to fix this issue.' ▶

*Dance portrait for Amelia Chandulal-Mackay, Nikon D7000 with Nikkor 18-200mm lens.  
© 2013 Amber Griffin*





One of Amber's images, awarded a silver Distinction, featured on the cover of our September 2014 issue as part of our coverage of that year's NZIPP Iris awards. So technically, this is the second time we've welcomed her work on our virtual pages, something we reminded her of when we chatted.

**f11: Welcome back Amber, thanks for finally agreeing to being featured. Looks like you're living your own dream, shooting something you're very passionate about and enjoying some critical acclaim on the resulting images?**

AG: Thank you so much for inviting me to share my work in your wonderful magazine! I'm not sure that I'm living the dream quite yet – I think I might still be working out what 'the dream' actually is. However, I certainly do love what I do and photography is a very dominant part of my life. This is currently my fourth year in business and I finally now feel established enough to imagine that this will be my long-term career.

**f11: As to the process of working with us, how did you find this and were there any revelations while preparing material for us?**

AG: Your organisation and guidance throughout this process has been so wonderful Tim, thank you. One thing I love about photography is that, at the end of the day, it really all just comes down to the work. Selecting work for this *f11* Magazine feature has been quite an eye opening experience for me to actually see the progression in my own work over these last few years. As a frantically busy sole trader it's rare for me to take a pause to reflect back on where I've come from. It's a real privilege to have my work featured in your magazine so thank you to the team at *f11* for creating this opportunity for me.

**f11: It's entirely our pleasure. Let's start with the spaces you're photographing in, are you shooting in the dance studio or on stage, taking your own lighting with you, or do the dancers come to your studio?**

AG: A mixture of all of the above actually. Initially, I started out with my own studio in Upper Hutt. It was a converted office space with a white cyclorama that my Dad built down one end. I had an incredibly generous and helpful landlord and it was such a wonderful place for me to experiment and develop my preferred lighting styles. Having this space was definitely the catalyst for the current direction of my business and I will always be extremely grateful to Rod and Jane Evans who made this possible for me. My style of dance photography requires a lot of width and height from a studio and I eventually realised that I just needed more room. I moved into a Wellington-based studio for a little while but as my business has grown over the last year, the nature of my work has changed and I've learned that renting a full-time studio is no longer a feasible option. I now hire professional photography studios or theatre spaces on a per-job basis. Obviously my event work is shot on stage, but all my commercial and dance portrait work is studio based. I have all my own lighting equipment which has now outgrown my poor little Toyota Corolla so, fortunately my partner Matt allows me to use his ute when I need to transport a lot of gear!

**f11: In order to capture the performers in flight, are you essentially creating a lighting trap in space and awaiting the single decisive moment when they enter that trap?**

AG: Yes, so a dance shoot with me is often quite a repetitive process. Either my dancer or I will suggest a movement and I will then ask them to perform the movement multiple times until we get it just right. Through experience, I think I have now developed a pretty good 'strike rate' of capturing the decisive moment within ▶

*Dance portrait for Danii Gorham, Nikon D7000 with Nikkor 18-200mm lens. © 2013 Amber Griffin*





each movement. My former dance training is enormously helpful with this whole process as I am usually on the same page as the dancer with what we are aspiring to achieve. I find that shooting tethered slows my dance shoots down but results in a much better overall success rate with the imagery. If something's not working we can see it straight away and bail, or if something has potential we can easily see where the issues are and fix them. Depending on the purpose of the shoot, it's often really important that the dancer themselves is completely satisfied with every part of their body within the image. I find that I learn a lot about the dancer and especially the technicalities of dance from these mid-shoot discussions.

**f11: Have you attempted any of this work with extreme high speed multiple repeating strobes, or is it always one movement, one image, and repeat until success is achieved?**

AG: I have experimented with multiple strobes within one image but I wasn't happy with the light quality so have parked that idea for now. When I'm shooting I try to get completely 'in sync' with my dancer and I would say that nine times out of ten, if they can do the movement, I will capture it at the right time. This is essential when working with younger and less experienced dancers, as they are not always able to achieve their ultimate form too many times in a row! My shoots can therefore be an exhausting few hours for a young dancer but I have a few tricks to help them get through unscathed.

**f11: The stop action technique is incredibly effective at capturing the dancers at the peak of the action, essentially freezing them in mid-flight. That must be quite hit and miss, and require repetition and lots of patience between you and the dancer?**

AG: Yes, I think this challenge is one of the things that attracts me most to dance photography. Finding that 'decisive moment' within the movement that best depicts that dancer within

a two dimensional image. I don't find patience to be much of an issue on either side. The wonderful thing about photographing dancers as a subject, is that they are innately extroverted and they want to be seen and photographed. I always find that my dancers are incredibly enthusiastic and positive about their shoots. They are full of ideas and energy and, if there ever is a problem, it is only that we run out of studio time for everything that we aspire to achieve together.

**f11: Two things occur to me, the first is, have you attempted any drag the shutter techniques to capture some of the motion, fluidity and movement of dance?**

AG: I first began experimenting with long exposure to capture the full breadth and fluidity of movement several years ago with an aerial yoga 'dancer'. The unpredictability of this style of shooting has fascinated me ever since and I have very recently been exploring it further, working with professional ballerinas. Mixing long exposure and flash-freezing stills within a single exposure is a complex and very multi-layered shooting process and I find that using professional dancers for this style of photography really helps me to eliminate a lot of the 'dancer incompetency' issues that tend to occur with less experienced dancers. There are so many things that have to work together to make this style of shooting a success. It can be frustrating but, if the dancer is up to it, then I find it to be an addictive and exhilarating image-making process. ▶

*Personal work for exhibition, dancer is Alayna Ng from RNZB, Nikon D800 with Nikon 24-70mm lens.  
© 2015 Amber Griffin*





**f11:** The second, and perhaps you're already doing this, do you take the opportunity to create a portrait of each dancer in the quiet moments before or after the action itself has been captured? It seems to me that you've already created the rapport, and having caught the action a simple quite confrontational portrait would create an entirely new series of work within the genre, thereby extending your reach into a new area?

AG: This is not something that I have explored yet Tim, but it's a great idea so watch this space! If requested, I do make head shots for my dancers before their physical shoots begin but, once the action has started, they usually get pretty hot and sweaty and the hair starts to unravel, so they're not really in their prime for portrait-making. Also, I set my lighting to sculpt my dancers bodies, not their faces. When we have a limited time-frame in the studio, my clients are usually only interested in achieving as many amazing action shots as possible.

**f11:** Is the commercial work that you also do becoming increasingly difficult to accommodate as the dance work grows, and do you imagine that at some point you won't be able to combine the two?

AG: This year is the first time that I have started to say no to some other commercial jobs. I have reached a point where I now can't fit everything in and it's quite nice to be able to start being selective about what work I now do. However, I do really enjoy some other types of commercial photography and it's good to mix it up and keep my other skills fresh. I really enjoy working with a wide variety of people so, even though I specialise in a particular niche, I think I will always try to make some room for an array of different types of commercial work.

**f11:** You said that you're not a gear head, or a geek, but is there a shiny and new piece of photographic equipment that you're secretly harbouring a desire to acquire?

AG: Why yes, there is. The boys at Wellington Photographic Supplies have been wonderful with allowing me to trial several different types of high-speed strobe units for some of my recent work. At this point I am still on deciding exactly which ones to invest in, but these will definitely be the next item on my purchase list.

**f11:** Have you ever considered photographing any of the other performing arts, and would this be a natural extension to what you're doing now?

AG: I do currently photograph a few other different types of performing arts, particularly at various events and competitions around the country. I've also done a lot of work for Wellington Musical Theatre and have made portraits for a several body builders. I have an appreciation for most types of performing arts but I just tend towards dance as I think that a large part of the success I've had with dance photography is owed to my former training and consequent understanding of dance as an art form.

**f11:** Have there been any strong influences on your work, people you've looked to for inspiration, advice or mentorship?

AG: I find the work of New York photographer Lois Greenfield particularly inspiring. I adore her innovative approach and I think she has produced some of the best dance photography I've seen to date. I also pay a lot of attention to the teachings of Sue Bryce. Although she specialises in a different genre, her vast ▶

*Dance Portrait for Chantal Pinguet, Nikon D800 with Nikon 24-70mm lens. © 2015 Amber Griffin*





experience and sage business advice is still very relevant to me and I deeply appreciate Sue's generosity and 'open book' policy. I just love her knowledge-sharing ethos because this helps to improve everybody's photographic standards. Educating as many people as possible to help understand what makes for 'good photography' benefits all good photographers. Wellington based wedding photographer Mel Waite recently said to me, 'a rising tide lifts all the boats'. I think this sums up Sue's ethos well.

**f11: Your partner Matt is a helicopter pilot but I hear that you've drummed him into service as an assistant on some of your shoots, do you ever use paid assistants when he's not in the country?**

AG: Matt is amazingly supportive of what I do. He's a very fast learner and seems to have an innate appreciation for photography so I love having him work alongside me when he's home. I have used paid assistants in the past, however I am so used to operating in a studio environment on my own that I don't usually feel that I need anyone else. Although it can be exhausting, I don't mind the physical benefits of lugging heavy equipment around! I also think that my dancers feel more comfortable with fewer people in the studio, particularly if they're doing a nude shoot. When appropriate, I try to book my dancers in pairs so that if we do need an extra pair of hands to pop a flash or lift a light then there is another dancer available. ▶

*Dance portrait for Sophie Arbuckle, Nikon D7000 with Nikkor 18-200mm lens. © 2013 Amber Griffin*





**f11:** Tell us about your capture technique, you mentioned that you're shooting tethered – can you talk us through this?

AG: I just shoot straight to Lightroom on my laptop and we rate the images as we go. I find this really helps to keep the shoot on track as well as saving initial editing and selecting time at the other end. I have developed a little star rating system so each of the five stars has a meaning, therefore if we discuss compositing throughout the shoot, I just rate the image mid-shoot and this dictates what I will do in post.

**f11:** And to your secret weapon, post production, care to share a few secrets with us about what your typical post process looks like after one of your shoots?

AG: I do all my selecting and colour balancing in Lightroom and all pixel manipulation work in Photoshop. If you see two or more dancers together in a final image it is likely that they have been shot separately and composited together in post. The open files for some of my recent works have been getting slightly out of control with some of them nearing 20GB in size. This is because I work in a very non-destructive way, with lots of groups of layers and I use a lot of blending modes. I love building up different layers of textures for backgrounds and colourising my final composites with subtle AlienSkin filters to finish. ▶

*Personal work for exhibition, dancer is Adriana Harper from RNZB, Nikon D800 with Nikon 24-70mm lens.  
© 2015 Amber Griffin*





**f11: Can you imagine a time when your enthusiasm for this genre might fade, and do you see other avenues you might like to explore as a photographer?**

AG: Over the last four years my enthusiasm for this genre has only grown. The more I learn the more I want to know, so no, right now I can't imagine not wanting to photograph dancers. I still feel as though I am right at the very beginning of my quest to master this genre. It's a big world out there and there is so very much more to explore.

**f11: I know you've entered the NZIPP Iris awards again this year, do you print your own work or have this done for you?**

AG: Printing is a skill I have yet to master so I choose to leave my printing to the professionals. I will have my Iris work printed through ImageLab in Wellington. Call me old school, but nearly everything I print is done through their Durst Lambda printer. There is often a lot of darkness and black in my work and no matter what else I test print on, I always come back to the Lambda because of the beautiful detail in the blacks.

**f11: How do you present your work in portfolio form, electronically or via a printed portfolio of book?**

AG: Currently my portfolio is only presented electronically. However, when over in Montpellier earlier in the year I was impressed with the very portable printed presentation that Finnish photographer Antti Karppinen showed me of his work. Now that I finally have a reasonable amount of work that I still like, I think I will make a small printed portfolio in this fashion.

**f11: Finally, if the cruel finger of fate ever robbed you of your photography career, what would you do instead? What would be your 'B' plan?**

AG: Gosh, that's a dismal prospect to ponder, Tim! I've always wanted to fly, so perhaps I

would get my pilot's license and join Matt in the air. Although, I've always thought that the only thing that could really prevent me from taking photos would be if I were to somehow lose my sight... not sure how employable a blind pilot would be!! Fingers crossed I never have to cross that bridge.

**f11: Thanks Amber, its been a real pleasure learning about you and your work.**

AG: Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to share my work and thoughts with your readers. ■

TS

[www.ambergriffin.co.nz](http://www.ambergriffin.co.nz)

Facebook

**NB.** Within the captions for this article:

1. RNZB refers to the Royal New Zealand Ballet
2. WPAC refers to the Whitireia Performing Arts Centre

*Dance portrait for Dania Gorham, Nikon D7000 with Nikkor 18-200mm lens. © 2013 Amber Griffin*





Personal work, WPAC dancers Todd  
Williamson and Danii Gorham, Nikon  
D800 with Nikon 24-70mm lens.  
© 2014 Amber Griffin

*'I remember my first time on stage in a little blue tutu at four years old, my hair was too short to even make a bun and my mum had accidentally forgotten my ballet shoes, but I was determined to perform.'*







*All 3 images on this double page spread: Personal work for exhibition, contemporary dancers are Jono Selvadurai and Alice Macaan, Nikon D800 with Nikon 24-70mm lens. © 2015 Amber Griffin*

*'I'm a Nikon girl through and through...'*



*Dance Portrait for Holly Cummings,  
Nikon D800 with Nikon 24-70mm lens.  
© 2014 Amber Griffin*

*'I've tried using a variety of prime lenses in the studio but, because I shoot tethered, I find having a little zoom really useful and I wasn't able to detect any difference in the sharpness of the end result.'*











*Personal work, dancer is Alayna Ng from RNZB, Nikon D800 with Nikon 24-70mm lens.  
© 2015 Amber Griffin*

*'...the post production phase is the time for everything  
to be refined and where my real artistry kicks in.'*



*Personal work, dancer is Alayna Ng from RNZB, Nikon D800 with Nikon 24-70mm lens.  
© 2015 Amber Griffin*



Dance portfolio imagery for Katie  
Lin-Musson, Nikon D800 with Nikon  
24-70mm lens. © 2014 Amber Griffin

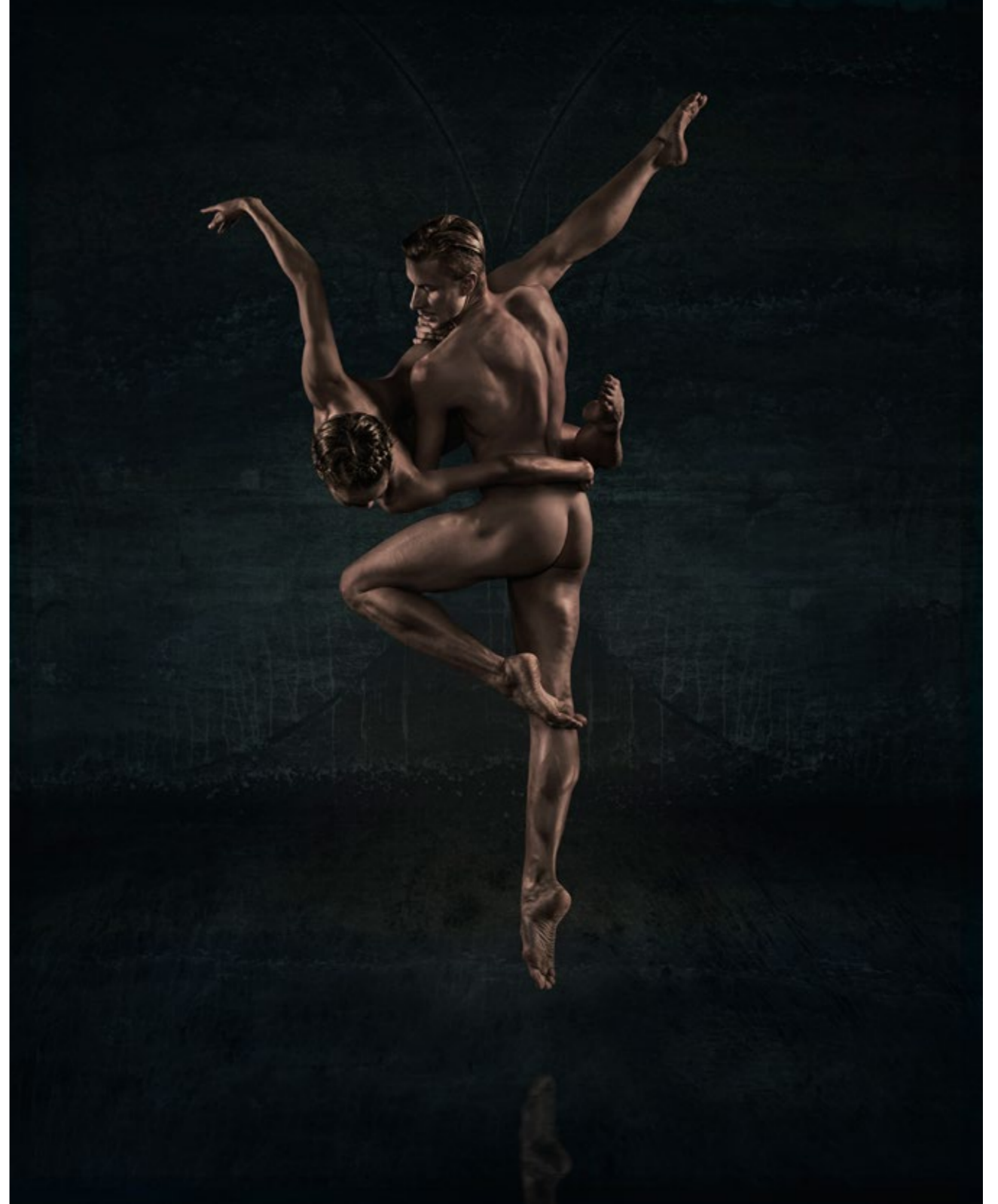
*'I believe that enhancing, and sculpting the dancers  
muscularity, is one of the most important aspects to  
successful dance photography. They work so hard to achieve  
this definition and I think their unique muscularity is one of  
the main things that make professional dancers bodies so  
incredibly beautiful to photograph.'*







*Personal work for exhibition, dancers are Loughlin Prior and Alayna Ng from RNZB, Nikon D800 with Nikon 24-70mm lens. © 2015 Amber Griffin*



*Personal work for exhibition, dancers are Loughlin Prior and Alayna Ng from RNZB, Nikon D800 with Nikon 24-70mm lens. © 2015 Amber Griffin*







Branding imagery for Chilton Dance Centre  
to show versatility and progression, Nikon  
D800 with Nikon 24-70mm lens.  
© 2015 Amber Griffin

*'The wonderful thing about photographing dancers as  
a subject, is that they are innately extroverted and  
they want to be seen and photographed.'*





*Remarkable Rocks offers endless creative options.  
Aperture Priority, 200 ISO, f11 at 1/180 sec.  
16-35mm lens, hand held. © Darran Leal*

## KANGAROO ISLAND, AUSTRALIA

Yes the island lives up to its name – you will see kangaroos. However, it will also offer you so much more in the way of seascapes, landscapes, creative shoots and other great nature images.

I first visited the island in 1982 and spent three months exploring the many unique hidden corners. The roads were rough, the access was tough, but I loved my time in the area and have many fond memories. I have since returned several times with photographers from all over the world and they all agree, it is a stunning part of Australia! The best feature is the diversity of opportunities to shoot amazing pictures.

Most visitors catch the ferry from the mainland, less than an hour's drive from Adelaide. The 45 minute ferry crossing lands you on a good road. There are many choices of accommodation, from camping to renting a house to lodges. Be warned, holiday periods are very busy on the island. We tend to base ourselves at two locations – Kingscote and the Flinders Chase National Park. At extreme ends of the island, you can target the many and varied shoot opportunities.

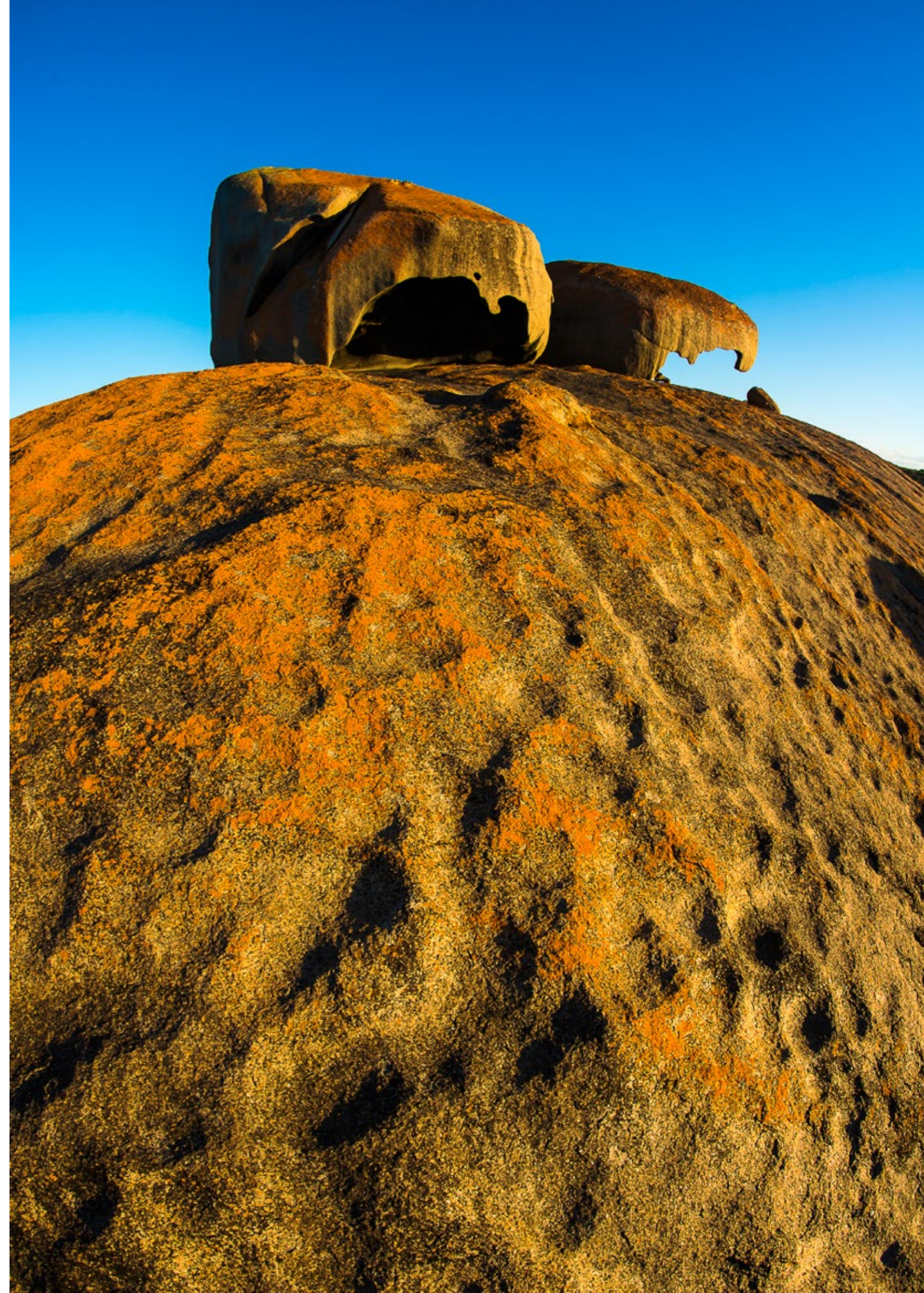
Flinders Chase offers lighthouses, the Remarkable Rocks, Admirals Arch and excellent nature subjects. I spend quality time at these locations and often return 3 to 4 times as every visit offers new light and weather. Because Antarctica is the last stop after the coast, weather can vary from

hot in summer, to subzero and gale-force winds in winter. The Remarkable Rocks is a location that you can shoot nearly any time. I love to use my super wide angle lens and on my last visit, included a fish-eye in the kit as well. Its granite domes suit such shapes and a slow walk around will offer endless angles and creative options. However, be careful as signage warns of the dangers of walking too far down the slope. You might not come back...

Admirals Arch is nearby and is a great late light shoot. If you time it right for large waves, you can shoot some great 'angry sea' images. Above Admirals Arch is a superb lighthouse. This can be shot at any time of the day. It works well for sunsets and with some work, you can isolate it for classic lighthouse images.

Flinders Chase offers more than just landscapes. The park headquarters, which you pass through on the way to the coast, is an essential location to check out information and to shoot nature images. From tiny colourful wrens to Cape Barron Geese, parrots and Kangaroo Island Kangaroos. They are a subspecies of the Western Grey Kangaroo. If you are lucky, you might spot a Koala in one of the trees in the car park or an Echidna on any of the roads.

Seal Bay Conservation Park is home to hundreds of large Australian Sea lions. Now I love this ▶





place, but I have to say that it is a little frustrating in modern times as they limit your time on the beach. As visitors, it seems that we are loving it to death...

The island offers a wide range of hidden small bays. These are great to explore, especially in summer. A few years ago, a wildlife park opened. You can get 'up close and personal' with unique animals and you help to save such creatures by visiting. The small entrance fee is worth every cent and if you ask before entering, you can organise a private shoot for a few more dollars. Up close portraits of eagles, owls and much more.

Kangaroo Island is one of those locations that you can return to many times. I have personally enjoyed living on the island. It is a great place to teach photography. The diversity of photo opportunities will test your technical skills and push you to work for your results. So don't turn up thinking the images are just waiting for you. Be prepared to get out, spend quality time and look for images less shot.

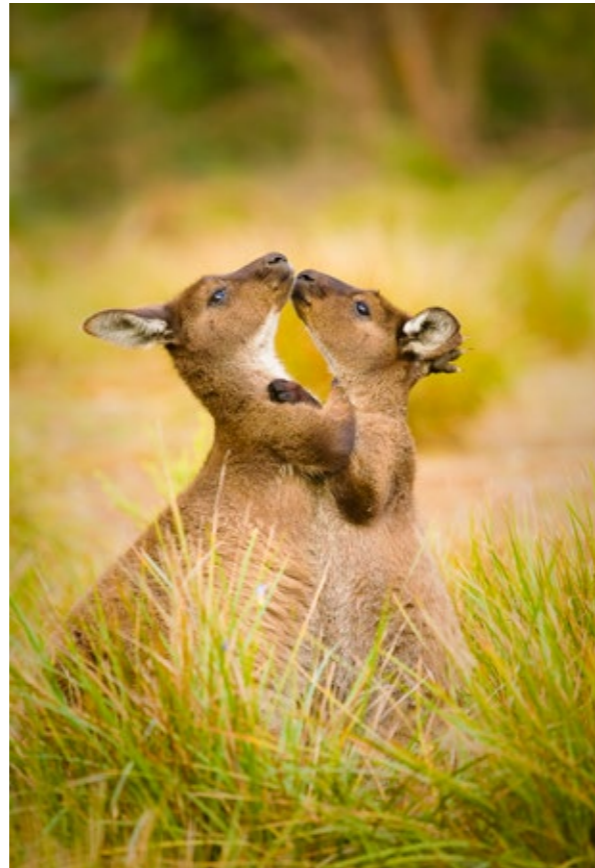
Enjoy your photography ... ■

#### Darran Leal

darran@f11magazine.com  
www.worldphotoadventures.com.au

Darran and Julia Leal are the owners of World Photo Adventures, Australasia's premier photo tour company. WPA is celebrating 26 years of amazing small group photo adventures. From local workshops and tours, to extended expeditions on every continent, they are famous for offering unique travel and photography experiences. For more information visit:  
www.worldphotoadventures.com.au

► I have shot several of my favourite koala images on Kangaroo Island. Aperture Priority, 200 ISO, f5.6 at 1/60 sec, 100-400mm lens, hand held with fill-flash. © Darran Leal



▲ Two male kangaroos, fighting over territory and the local females. Aperture Priority, 200 ISO, f5.6 at 1/60 sec, 100-400mm lens, hand held. © Darran Leal



# Queenstown Centre for Creative Photography



## New Zealand Photographic Workshop Specialists – 2015/2016

Jackie Ranken and Mike Langford, both internationally award winning photographers, judges and lecturers based in Queenstown, New Zealand.

**Mike Langford** Canon Master, Grand Master NZIPP, Australian Travel Photographer of the Year 2013, NZ Travel Photographer of the Year 2012.

**Jackie Ranken** Canon Master, Grand Master NZIPP, NZ Landscape Photographer of the Year 2013 & 2014, NZ Professional Photographer of the Year 2012, NZ Creative Portrait Photographer of the Year 2012, Australian Landscape Photographer of the Year 2012.



Join us for hands-on, practical workshops, where you can use our CANON EOS 700D cameras and/or trial our range of lenses and filters. All camera brands are welcome. Our aim is to teach and inspire. We will enhance your camera skills and develop your creative palette. We believe you will leave our workshops totally inspired and excited about your own photographic future. We always run small groups of eight students with two tutors.

#### Our 2015/2016 event schedule:

August 20-24	Mt Cook 'Winter Landscape 2', NZ
September 17 - 21	West Coast/Haast 'Seascapes', NZ
October 8-12	Fiordland 'World Heritage Landscape', NZ
October 30 – Nov 10	Japan 'Autumn Colours' <b>FULL</b>
Nov 12-24	Japan 'Autumn Colours' <b>FULL</b>
Dec 3-10	Queenstown 'Luminous Landscapes', NZ
Mar 17-21	Central Otago, NZ
April 15-18	Autumn Colours 1, NZ
April 25-28	Autumn Colours 2, NZ

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Creative Landscape Photography II Fieldguide



Fieldguides to Creative Photography. See our website or click here for more details.



#### Photo Safaris – run from Queenstown, NZ

One on one tuition: NZ\$260 for 2 hours  
One to two tuition: \$180 per hour.  
5 hour Photo Safari: NZ\$340 minimum two people.

See: [www.photosafari.co.nz](http://www.photosafari.co.nz)

Email: [info@qccp.co.nz](mailto:info@qccp.co.nz) | Ph + 64 3 4090272 | + 64 27 6722788

[www.photosafari.co.nz](http://www.photosafari.co.nz)

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### Prints Matter

Many photographers, including APS members, seem to have abandoned the practice of making prints from their images, considering it sufficient to have them in digital form on their camera memory cards, computers, backup drives, and web storage.

Others believe the print is the thing; without a print there is no photograph.

The leaders of the APS Print Division fall more into this category. They certainly believe prints are special. When he took up his position as Chairman of the Division, the Chair stated 'My vision for prints is that, after all, they are the only true 'PHOTOGRAPH' and remain the best medium for presentation. Our job is to convince others.' Bit provocative!

More recently, the Chairman has written 'Printing one's photos is, and always has been, an art. Today we start with the virtual image on the computer screen. The digital only photographer may feel that this is the end result, which is a pity as at this point the image has no real existence.' More provocative!

The member who co-ordinates the Print Division's portfolio service also has strong views, 'As far as I am concerned prints are the only tangible realisation of an idea. Until we actually print them, they are not a permanent part of our lives. Prints can be looked at, admired and

scrutinised at any time, even during power cuts. (Yet more provocation!) My most precious possession is a print. It depicts my family, myself, wife and three sons – a typically posed family portrait. The reason it is so precious? The youngest of those sons was killed a few months later and this is the only complete record of us all together as a family. It is on permanent display in our home. Prints are permanent. Prints are precious.' Can't argue with that!

In 2014, our Print Division embarked on a campaign of sorts to showcase more of its members' prints. It obtained sponsorship and had fifty large canvas prints made, then exhibited to the public at a regional library and, later, at the Society's annual convention. The total duration of those exhibitions was seven weeks. Each image was by a different member, meaning that fifty members had one print each in the exhibition and to take home afterwards. Mine remains displayed in my home and is often commented on by visitors who particularly enjoy the canvas print look.

In 2015, the Division is mounting another public print exhibition. Each exhibitor will display ten prints on their choice of theme, so will be showing a portfolio. I can't wait to view the prints and the book of them that is a by-product.

**Brian Rope OAM, AFIAP, FAPS, ESFIAP, HonFAPS Chair, Marketing & Sponsorship Sub-Committee**

### Colour, composition and conversation . . . under Southern Skies

All this and more is yours for the taking at the Photographic Society of New Zealand's (PSNZ) **Southern Regional Convention** coming up in one of New Zealand's most liveliest destinations – Gore – from **2 to 4 October 2015**.

Hosted by the Gore Camera Club the organisers have assembled a trio of outstanding photographers who will deliver a variety of presentations and workshops under the banner theme of 'Action is the Attraction!'

Originally from Scotland, Christchurch based **Scott Fowler, EFIAP, PPSA, APSNZ** has spent many years behind the camera, but in the past six years he has been addicted to the study of Black and White. Scott will share his techniques for capturing outstanding B & W images as well as some of his editing skills, especially using the Nik software.

Since 2009 Scott has competed on the International Salon circuit and holds the level of Excellence with FIAP (Federation International Artiste Photographique), and the level of Proficiency with the Photographic Society of America.

Scott's favourite quote is 'when you photograph someone in colour you photograph their clothes, when you photograph them in B & W you photograph their soul'.

Landscape photographer **Dr Roger Wandless APSNZ, FNZIPP** has been photographing for

over 20 years and has self published three landscape pictorial books, including his acclaimed 'Fiordland Landscape and Life'.

Roger says he is passionate about landscapes and photography as a form of artistic expression and the legacies it empowers us to leave.

Roger is a member of PSNZ, NZIPP and AIPP. An associate of PSNZ and a Fellow of NZIPP and his list of photographic awards are too many to list here!

**Kevin Tyree, APSNZ** hails from Southland and has been photographing the area and travelling the world for the past 10 years. He is best known for his love of wildlife photography, but enjoys most genres of the art.

He is a member of the Southland Photographic Society and PSNZ and he says he is looking forward to sharing his talents and knowledge with delegates.

Regional Conventions are a key component on the annual PSNZ calendar and are a time for photographers to come together with old and new friends to learn and expand their technical skills in a warm, fun and friendly environment.

Registration is open to all photographers – you don't have to be a PSNZ member – and is a very low \$195 for the full weekend. For more information and registration [click here](#).

**Moira Blincoe LPSNZ is the PSNZ Councillor for Publicity**



# Commodity

## An article of trade

In its simplest form, trade is all about supply and demand. It's about achieving a balance of either making a lot of the product (let's call it branded widgets) because lots of people want lots of widgets and are prepared to pay gazillions for them, or making just a few because even more frantic demand will make buyers pay gazillions – plus a healthy scarcity premium!

Sometimes that all collapses, as too many competitors start making generic widgets and once satisfied, demand drops a lot – followed by price.

Our world landscape has been littered with the debris of mismatched demand and supply.

Unfortunately the consequences in some cases, have been dire, as evidenced by scavenged and destroyed environments, starvation, war and massive disruption to economic and social order.

Mostly the disruption takes the form of crippling financial results, upheaval and sometimes a clear new resolve to do something entirely different instead. Or, sometimes unexplainable, pig-headed arrogance by repeating the previous action, the one that failed last time, and maybe the time before.

So what has this to do with photography other than documenting every aspect of it?

I'll get to that by reminding you about some of the commodities currently in the great tumble drier of trade. Oil, coal and iron ore have always been the 'biggies' of supply and demand with all of the complexities of geo-politics, corruption,

cartels, scandals and tax havens – and legendary tales emerging of this derring financial do.

Today the pressure on a commodity such as energy is often from oversupply meeting head-on with unexpectedly reduced demand. Sometimes this happens just as new territories open up, and new technologies make previously uneconomic recovery processes possible and viable. Renewables like solar and wind enable cleaner capture and combine with more economic storage and reduced usage to balance demand.

You can see the fear in the eyes of some oil states as Iran now potentially re-enters the supply chain released from their embargo – just as there was a decade ago with Iraq – whoops, same players, different teams, different allegiances?

As an aside, I noted recent commentary about men's barbers. It appears that with new expectations around grooming or fashion needs, more barbers are setting up to ply their trade. In Wellington, the city I frequent, the number of outlets has grown from 7 to 13 within a few city blocks. It appears that demand is increasing and as a consequence, so is supply, but what is happening in the middle where new operator meets old, is competition based on price – the \$15 haircut against the \$40 – \$50 haircut and beard trim. But for how long, who blinks first?

Behind it all is an environment with no barriers to entry other than a mirror, a chair and a bit of low price kit. Not a sign of a qualification or license requirement, an unregulated

environment it would seem. But even in the midst of this seeming chaos, there is a clear differentiation that earns loyalty and commands a price premium. A commodity service by description – the seemingly simple task of removing and re-shaping hair, but by adding skill, trained artistic flair and enhanced professional tools of trade and combining this with better presentation, somehow a much higher price is justified and achieved. My downtown barber even finishes with a hot steamed face towel!

As photographers, we face the same commodity pressure as anyone else, firstly as unintended collateral damage from the trickle down malaise of the general economy around us.

Secondly, because there continues to be very few real barriers to entry into the market, and as photo-schools continue to grow and graduate 'perfectly adequate' competitors, hungry for their first jobs it's clear that a steady flow of young new practitioners will arrive in all of our markets ready to challenge for turf and territory.

Note the term adequate, this in itself is open to a heated debate, but let's throw caution to the wind and agree that a few years of near starvation will smooth some of the rough edges, add some real world savvy, and hone some better developed skillsets among many of the new entrants.

That is, of course, unless they throw in the creative towel and head off in search of a day job...a clear and present possibility for a

significant percentage of graduates in many vocational fields such as our own.

Differentiation is the key, as it always has been and very likely always will be. Differentiation of performance, expertise, professional tools, systems, marketing and relationship management all contribute to making your offer to some degree unique and of tangible value. Or not.

But our buyers need to detect and understand the difference, and perceive greater value on that differentiation. Here's where the real generation gap, some would say vast divide, lies.

And what value positive and compelling differentiation when the market is essentially price driven and controlled by an emerging segment of buyers unable to themselves perceive any differentiation between Pablo Picasso and Crayola?

If you're planning that a big part of your unique differentiation this month will somehow be enhanced by showing up with 50 megapixels in hand, or holstered prominently, you're in for a rude reception.

Unfortunately, unlike a bad haircut, a hat and an extra week's growth doesn't make the problem disappear... ■

**MS**  
malcolm@f11magazine.com





# THE 2015 NIKON AIPP EVENT

perth



## THE 2015 AIPP NIKON EVENT RAISES \$58,000 FOR BEYONDBLUE

On Wednesday 10th June, the Australian Institute of Professional Photography (AIPP) through its annual charity print auction raised over \$58,000 for “beyondblue” taking the total raised in the last four years to over \$200,000, benefiting breast cancer research, prostate cancer foundation and Make-a-Wish Foundation as previous charity recipients.

This annual auction takes place at end of the AIPP national conference, The Nikon AIPP Event, and was the brainwave of a number of members who 4 years ago simply decided they could combine their image making talent with their generosity of spirit to raise money for worthy charities...

This year, the 2015 AIPP Nikon Event was held at the Crown in the Perth. This 3-day professional photography conference from the 29th June – 1st July included amongst its delegates, AIPP members, photography students, and members of the public interested in improving their photography knowledge.

Peter Myers, the AIPP Executive Officer said “This year, the theme of our conference was “Developing your own style”. Professional photographers love their work and they enjoy seeing the pleasure their work brings to their clients. But equally, they also understand,

even in difficult financial times, the need to give back and support the community at large. Each year we choose a charity to be the beneficiary of this fund raising effort, and each year we try to raise even more money”.

The prints for the auction were donated by the speakers and presenters at the event, including this year, Brooke Shaden, Tony Hewitt, Stef King, Joshua Holko, Steve Wise, and the current Australian Professional Photographer of the Year, James Simmons to name just a few.

The AIPP together with its major partner Nikon, are already planning and looking forward to The Nikon AIPP Event 2016, and raising even more money.

### FOR MORE INFO GO TO

[www.aipp.com.au](http://www.aipp.com.au) and <http://www.aipptheevent.com.au>

**Address:** G.03 171 Union Road, Surrey Hills, Melbourne, VIC 3127

**Contact person:** Kim Harding

**Phone:** (03) 9888 4111

**Email:** [events@aipp.com.au](mailto:events@aipp.com.au)

This AIPP page is sponsored by *f11* Magazine.



## AIPP Accredited Professional Video Producers

The AIPP has become the home for Image makers and part of the association growth has been to embrace the profession of video production.

Over the past few years, our industry group has been slowly brewing & fine tuning processes. With the Accreditation system in place, our strength in membership has been gathering momentum and reinforced by strong educational content.

This year the Accredited Professional Video Producers (APVP) of AIPP were proud to introduce our first international tour presenters. Stillmotion, an Emmy Award winning team came to our shores to present two exciting experiences. The tour spanned Perth, Melbourne, Sydney & Auckland and from all responses from attendees, this has been one of the best education events offered.

The Storytelling with Heart day seminar was presented to approximately 200 avid filmmakers, keen on developing & unearthing MUSE, their patent-pending 8-step process that unlocks the magic of story. It's the storytelling process they've developed over the years which they use with every story they tell.

**To read more about MUSE and what it involves check out the Stillmotion blog:**

<http://stillmotionblog.com/muselaunch/>

Further advancing from SWH, Stillmotion spent 3 dedicated days with 8 candidates in Melbourne and Sydney. Taking participants through the journey of EVO each group

worked with a local non-profit, to help tell the story. EVO is the ultimate way to dive in and learn from the inside out. Through workshops and tours like Stillmotion, the APVP offer experiences to develop skills, hone abilities and advance the profession of video production.

### Upcoming APVP events:

Brisbane – 9th September - APVP Critique Night at Foto Frenzy  
Melbourne – 27th October APVP Critique Night at Glow Studio

**To find out more or become a member of the APVP visit**

[www.aipp.com.au](http://www.aipp.com.au)

### AIPP Reflections Project

AIPP Photographers should check out this short video clip about the work being done and Get Involved!

<https://vimeo.com/134189634>

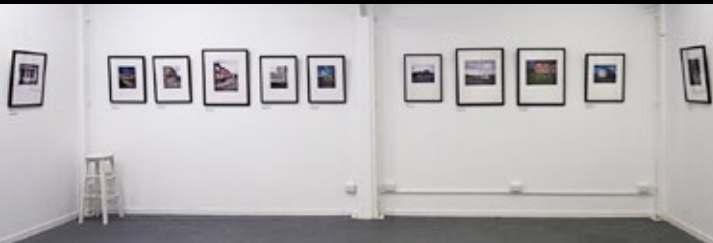
**More information on the AIPP Reflections Project**

[www.aippveterans.com](http://www.aippveterans.com) | <http://www.aipp.com.au/reflections/reflections>



This AIPP page is sponsored by *f11* Magazine.





Brisbane's **Gallery Frenzy** is hosted, managed and curated by photographers, for the benefit of photographers and collectors of photography.

We have had the pleasure of hanging first-time exhibitors as well as established names in the Industry.

### 18 One Man Shows



Members of *The Masters' Apprentices Camera Club* exhibiting in the Gallery context for the first time.

Opening Friday 3 July 2015 6:30pm

### series-ously



A cohort of six students from Griffith University share the Gallery.

Opening Friday 7 August 2015 6:30pm

Visit the Foto Frenzy website [www.fotofrenzy.com.au/spaces/exhibit-foto-frenzy](http://www.fotofrenzy.com.au/spaces/exhibit-foto-frenzy) or email [info@fotofrenzy.com.au](mailto:info@fotofrenzy.com.au) for more information, terms and conditions.

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FOTO FRENZY | BRISBANE | AUSTRALIA

## TONY BRIDGE

ARTIST, WRITER, PHOTOGRAPHER,  
TEACHER, MENTOR

Tony Bridge is one of New Zealand's leading photo educators with over 30 years experience as a photographer himself, and as a teacher of photography at all levels. He is an industry commentator, a blogger and a popular columnist for f11 Magazine.

### Bridge on teaching photography:

*'Nothing gives me more pleasure than to share my knowledge, much of it not available in books, with people seeking to grow themselves as photographers.'*

### Bridge on his Hurunui Experience tours:

*'Come, join me for a photo tour of up to 3 days, for only 3 people, and discover the astonishingly beautiful Hurunui District of the South Island.'*

### Bridge on his photography workshops:

*'Share with others in one of my unique workshops, designed to get you thinking in new ways about photography.'*

### Bridge on mentoring photographers:

*'Make a friend and become part of my strictly limited mentoring programme, a one-on-one journey, working towards your own goal and developing your own vision.'*

These programs are often bespoke, tailored responses to the carefully analysed needs, wants and aspirations of the photographer concerned. It all begins with a conversation, and that conversation will very likely be an enduring one.

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# IMAGENATION+

## PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY CONFERENCE

FEATURING LOCAL + INTERNATIONAL SPEAKERS | OCTOBER 19 + 20 | Q THEATRE, QUEEN ST, AUCKLAND  
[IMAGENATION.CO.NZ](http://IMAGENATION.CO.NZ)

This AIPA page is sponsored by f11 Magazine.



It's Saturday night, it's cold and the All Blacks are playing Australia. For most people this means a good night in front of the TV, or a night out with friends and family.

However when it comes to the life of an 'event photographer' things are a little different. Late nights and lost weekends are all part of the job. The genre of event photography covers a wide scope and isn't just photographing A-list parties. Assignments are varied, ranging from 21sts to school balls, black tie dinners to press conferences. And even though it may seem like a glamorous lifestyle most of the time it feels like it's far from it. Deadlines and challenging lighting conditions are part and parcel of an average day's work. The industry requires that you are available almost anytime, even at a moments notice.

So what does it take to be a successful event photographer?

As the industry has evolved over the years, and in this era businesses are desperate for visual content to keep their customers and shareholders informed and engaged. We have seen an increased requirement for relevant photography and with the emergence of social media, businesses, now more than ever, are seeking content to keep their social media streams current.

I've been an event photographer in Auckland for the past 12 years and in that time I've managed to build a strong portfolio of companies and organisations. Over the years I've learned some valuable lessons, first and foremost has been understanding the clients needs.

Being able to deliver a set of images that both meets and exceeds expectations is paramount.

To achieve this you need to get an understanding of the event your client wants you to shoot, you can draw parallels with wedding photographers, they are rarely given a brief however they ask the right questions in order to make the job work.

Also the little things can make all the difference. For example when I'm photographing a CEO delivering a keynote speech I'm looking at a range of different things that will make for a good photograph such as studying speech patterns, when are they likely to look up, where do they typically look, hand gestures, backgrounds, how can I incorporate logos branding and so forth.

Being professional is also an important piece of the puzzle, and by 'professional' I'm not just talking about wearing the right clothes or being polite in emails, I'm talking contracts, terms and conditions and copyright. These are everyday necessities when dealing with companies.

Over the years I have relied on the NZIPP and it's members as a resource to understanding copyright law and protecting both myself and the client from ambiguity. At the end of the day professionals want to deal with professionals.

The good news is there is no need to re-invent the wheel. Organisations like the NZIPP have a wealth of resources to guide professional photographers in the right direction.

So if you get through all that, you can go home, watch a replay of the rugby and do it all again tomorrow!

**Gino Demeer – NZIPP Auckland Chairperson**

**It's not too late to register!**



**INDUSTRY EXHIBITION**  
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# The freedom of the skies

But watch out for clouds...

I'm fairly new to aerial photography as performed by personal U.A.V. (unmanned aerial vehicle), Multi-Rotor, (often reserved for helicopters) or the modern day multi engine stabilised wonder, the Drone.

The mainstream press have popularised the 'drone' descriptor to the point where it's really become the go-to term for any flying machine capable of hand-thrown, or vertical take off.

In the past nine months or so I've scaled a considerable learning curve and have now reached the point where if a client requests aerial footage I can confidently say 'sure, how high?'

While the pace of change in professional digital cameras has slowed somewhat in recent years the same can't be said for the now near ubiquitous 'drone'. Regular readers may recall my review in issue 39 Dec/Jan 2015 where the publisher and I did a newbie hands on test of DJI's finest (at the time) consumer lever drone, the Phantom II Vision +. The little drone had some cutting edge features packed into it's compact frame including a near real time video downlink which used a smart phone for a monitor so you could see which way the capable little combination video/still camera (slung underneath on a stabilising gimbal) was pointing. Sufficiently impressed to see the potential, I very soon bought one.

The time spent with the Phantom II got me seriously interested in these pieces of kit, but to be fair there wasn't much of a push needed as I'd already been flying fixed wing remotely controlled (R/C) aircraft for a few years and the idea of a personal drone was simply irresistible.

Now, less than a year later, I'm running shakedown tests on it's significantly improved replacement the DJI Phantom 3 Professional. The 'professional' designation means that amongst a catalogue of improvements (the depth and breadth of which is too vast to go into detail on in this article) it is now packing a 4K capable camera which can also capture a 12MP still frame in RAW file format! Both video footage, and the still files are extremely good, especially for the price point and when properly processed have a wide range of output possibilities.

However just as I completed my initial test flights the New Zealand CAA (Civil Aviation Authority) released its first formal set of rules on the use of drones here in the land of the long white cloud. They previously published what I guess could best be described as 'guidelines' but the latest announcement is somewhat more serious and could have real repercussions for careless users out there. Frankly, not a moment too soon.

There's no getting around it, sales of these things are growing out of control globally and as well as ending up in the hands of responsible owners

like myself (good to hear you're responsible for something – Ed) they are also being consumed by what I'll lump together into a category of hapless flyers I like to collectively refer to as 'bad buggers'. Bad buggers, in my parlance, comprise the hooligans, idiots, thrill seekers and perverts who will use this exciting technology to frighten, recklessly endanger and even spy on law abiding members of our society as they go about their business.

There have been countless stories of people opening their blinds to a hovering drone, or seeing one float over their backyard. Then there are the more extreme cases like the small drone that got inside the boundaries of the White House, and the recent YouTube footage showing consumer drones firing real guns - at targets at this stage - but you can imagine the possibilities. Also, some of the often stunning footage I've seen online including flyovers of towns, cities, monuments and ruins also offer ample opportunity for harming innocent passers by and their property in the course of capturing the footage revealed.

These things can, and do, fall out of the sky (just Google 'drone crash' and clear your calendar for a couple of days) and when they do they only have one place to go - straight down. Weighing anywhere from 500g, to several kilograms, they don't land softly on cars, houses, or people.



© Gary Baidon

All is well while there is plenty of charge in the flight battery (or batteries) and the drone is locked on to several global positioning system satellites, but if power is lost, a prop flies off or nearby interference causes loss of contact with the satellites all hell can break loose - and quickly.

At this point the best thing it's operator can do is quickly change modes to manual control and try to actually fly the thing. Most of these scenarios are fully preventable, or salvageable by good planning, or actually learning to really fly without electronic aids, and dare I say a bit of common sense! The skills required take a lot of practice and patience but the confidence they inspire is more than worth the effort.

So if you already have a drone, or plan to get one, take a look at the [rules](#) and study these as if one of your loved ones might be harmed in the course of its operation.

Whatever you do, don't be the guy or gal who is responsible for the next viral 'drone crash' video on YouTube!

Then, rules understood, properly trained and prepared, go out there and have some fun, or even make some money. ■

**Buzz**  
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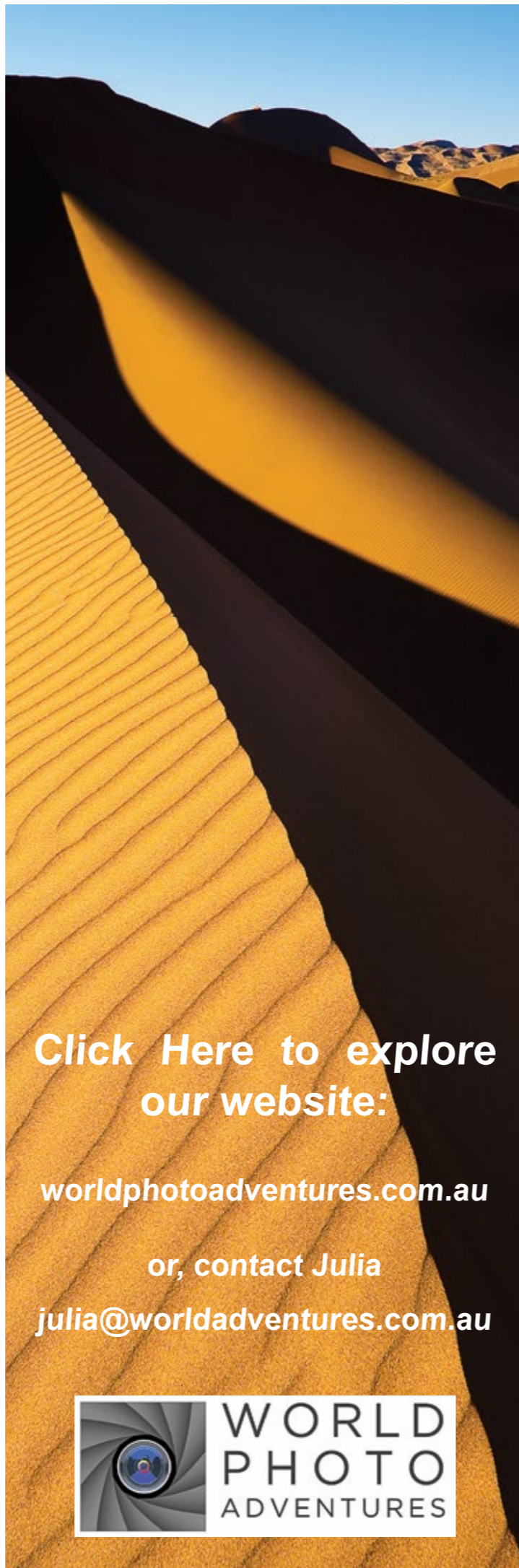


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Enjoy.

▶▶ Continued from page 150...

Christchurch (New Zealand) based Johannes van Kan has some firm views on what photographers should wear, although not necessarily totally in line with mine. It was instructive speaking to JvK as he immediately spoke of having polished shoes and a discussion point on his check list that spoke of what the bride wanted him to wear at her wedding. In other words his personal presentation was important to him but he wanted it to be in sync with the bride's wishes. All of which is decided weeks in advance of the event.

Brisbane (Australia) based and current Queensland Professional Photographer of the Year Richard Muldoon was equally clear in what he and his staff would wear to cover a wedding. Even in sub-tropical Brisbane, Richard was adamant that his tailored suit was part and parcel of his wedding package. He noted that client feedback spoke of the presentation by him and his staff as much as the creative quality of his work. This speaks volumes about a photographer whose business approach measures such seemingly unimportant details. It follows that Cath Muldoon, wife and business partner, similarly dresses in tailored suits whilst completing assignments.

Yervant Zanzanian needs little introduction. This extroverted, flamboyant, world travelled wedding photographer is not necessarily seen wearing a suit but his sharp and tailored clothes, black, always black, are sharp, stylish and at the cutting edge. It matches the manner in which he delivers his skill in covering an event.

It strikes me that dressing for success seems to bring its own rewards. Yes, it's a personal decision, but it's also a professional statement.

It's a truism that applies equally to many professions, as well as our own.

Your move... ■

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# Clothes maketh man

From the Latin, a translation of: *Vestis virum facit*

Whilst I don't necessarily think that Erasmus' original advice in 1400, or Shakespeare's revisit to it in 1600 in Hamlet, is totally relevant to today's photographer, it did spring to mind recently when I was a guest at a couple of weddings and noted, with some disquiet, the dress sense of some of the working photographers.

At a time when professional photographers are complaining that their livelihood is being threatened by large numbers of price cutting competitors I would have thought that an upmarket presentation would be as important as the quality of the work being provided.

I understand that jeans, black t-shirt and sneakers can be seen as hip and happening for an advertising photographer wanting to fit in with a similarly clad advertising agency art director, but it seems strange that a similar wardrobe would be seen as suitable wear in front of clients who have spent thousands of dollars on a once in a lifetime wedding dress and a tuxedo by Armani.

Indeed there are good sound reasons for a commercial or industrial photographer wanting to state his skill on a hard hat or a high visibility fluorescent jacket to slow down the work site questions that come with that territory. I even know a couple of photographers who have created very large impressive nametags that they wear for that very reason.

I am not personally a fan of embroidered and named clothing, but admit that many photographers find it reassuring for their clients,

▶ *Oar Boy, Varanasi, India, 2013.*  
Leica S2 camera with Summarit-S 70mm lens.  
© Stuart Robertson, *Peace in 10,000 Hands*

and if it is done within the bureaucratic guidelines, the tax office will allow a uniform clothing allowance. My personal problem with this tagged uniform is that I would feel that I was being portrayed as a tradesman rather than an artist. Fighting words I know, and I am not meaning any disrespect to qualified trades people everywhere. I would never stray away from a highly qualified and experienced practitioner when dealing with electricity, water, sewage, or gas connections, much less car engines or construction. But equally, I don't want to wear a hard hat cheerfully emblazoned 'Poolie', or worse, 'The Poolester'

The sad irony in taking this stance is that where I live, Australia, 100% of qualified trades practitioners have completed a 3-5 year formal training program and on current available figures well under 20% of contemporary photographers have similar (or any) training.

It is the wedding area of our industry that I am most concerned about as this is very much on public display. A Saturday afternoon drive can bring visions of casually jeans clad, sneaker wearing photographers working with a couple who could be wearing outfits costing in excess of \$20,000. The ironic contrast beggars belief. And it's not like the clients are asking these professionals to slide under their house, or shinny up their chimney...

Not wanting to allow my rant to lack substance, I approached a few photographers seeking a real world working perspective on suitable attire.

◀◀ **Continued on page 149...**





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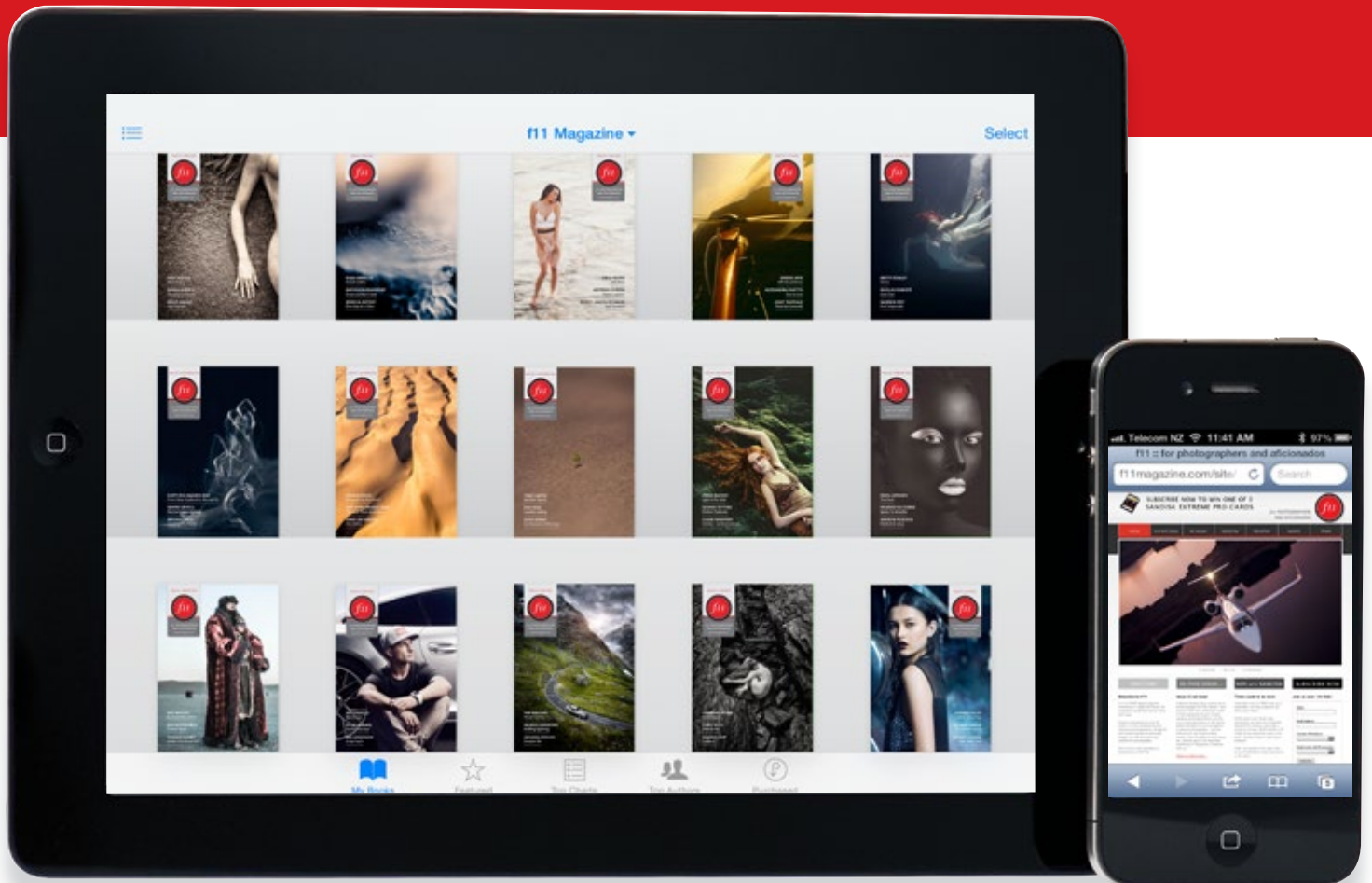
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