

ISSUE 05 | NOVEMBER 2011



*for* PHOTOGRAPHERS  
AND AFICIONADOS

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**JULI BALLA**

Grace under fire

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**TAMARA LACKEY**

Child friendly

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**MICHAEL GAKURAN**

Urban explorer

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At the heart of the image



Welcome to our fifth issue of *f11* Magazine, November 2011!

Thousands of readers from Australia, New Zealand and around the globe continue to discover the magazine and then joyfully tell their friends and colleagues all about us. All we can say is thank you all for reading, and thanks for sharing our story with others!

Most of you choose to read the magazine in page flip format on our website but our PDF download is also proving popular, with around 20% of readers taking this option. If you're about to succumb to the joys of iPad ownership, we have to warn you that *f11* Magazine looks gorgeous on that device, and on many other tablet style devices.

Remember that every advertisement in the magazine is a clickable link to the advertiser or manufacturer's website so more information is only a finger tap or mouse click away.

Also, check out the embedded links in many of the articles and in sections such as In Plain Sight on page 6 where a click on any of the screens links through to video content.

All of these links will open the website or content link in a new window or tab, with *f11* remaining open in the background for you to return to (without losing your page) after you've taken the link.

If you're a regular reader but have not yet become a subscriber – ask yourself, why not?

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

Plus for November only, every new and existing subscriber goes into a separate draw to win a Lowepro Flipside 400 AW Photo Backpack valued at NZ\$225.

Hope you enjoy this issue of *f11*.

Tim  
[tim@f11magazine.com](mailto:tim@f11magazine.com)

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# The *f11* team

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



**TONY BRIDGE** is a fine artist, photographer, writer and photo educator...depending on which day you catch him. Yoda like, he hides away in the hills in Hanmer Springs, where, like any good modern day guru, he thinks way too much, constantly reinvents himself and pontificates on one of his blogs. Rather than joining the rest of the team in the cult of Mac, he insists on trying to build the 'ultimate PC' – poor deluded man. Apart from that tiny lapse of judgement, as the good Yoda himself would put it, "Learn from him, you will".



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



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



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



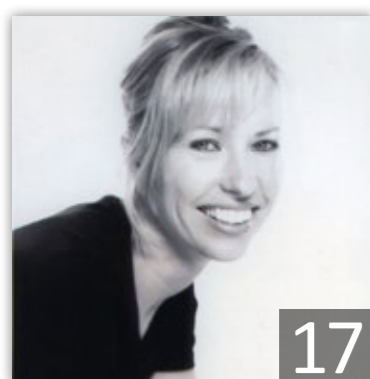
**TIM STEELE** is the ringmaster of the new travelling circus that is *f11* Magazine. A former high wire artist for corporate masters in the photo industry, he still suffers nightmares about delivering the physically impossible, occasionally under the whip of the seemingly insane, and always on behalf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





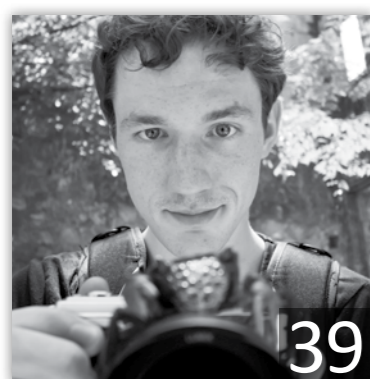
## Real Life REVIEW

Michael Ng on the Leaf  
Aptus II-12 80MP Back



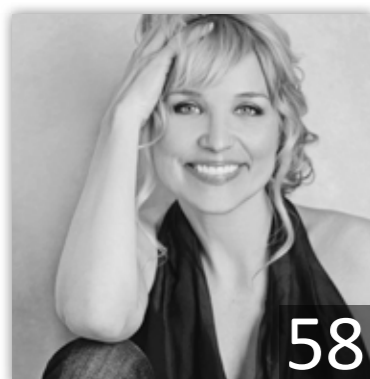
## Juli BALLA

Grace under fire



## Michael GAKURAN

Urban explorer



## Tamara LACKEY

Child friendly

© Sue Bryce



COVER IMAGE © Juli Balla.  
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LG IN BERLIN

Last year LG unveiled a giant 3D media façade in Kulturbaruerei, the cultural heart of Berlin, to the range of devices under the LG Optimus series label. The ever-changing 3D artwork on the nearly three-storey high screen (23 x 21m) captured the attention of many a passerby.

CLICK ON THE SCREEN IMAGE TO VIEW THIS VIDEO.



JAY MAISEL ON PRINTING WITH EPSON

In this video produced by Epson, legendary photographer Jay Maisel talks about discovering printing. Watch this, then discover a host of similar videos from Epson on famous photographers like Greg Gorman and John Paul Caponigro.

CLICK ON THE SCREEN IMAGE TO VIEW THIS VIDEO.



JULI BALLA, MASTERS OF PHOTOGRAPHY 2011 FASHION INDUSTRY BROADCAST

More work from photographer Juli Balla, featured on page 17 of this issue.

CLICK ON THE SCREEN IMAGE TO VIEW THIS VIDEO.



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For November only, all subscribers, new and existing go into the draw to win a Lowepro Flipside 400 AW – a high-performance camera backpack designed with a large capacity, premium security, all-day comfort, plus protection from the elements. The prize is valued at NZ\$225. Learn more here: <http://bit.ly/jMuNZj>

# Works of art



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It's no secret that most of the *f11* team are ardent card carrying members of the Apple community. Some of us came to the party later in life, others have been here for the duration, but a passion for the brand and its products is one of the many things we share.

In terms of our magazine production process, it's almost a 100% Apple affair. *f11* is written, planned, designed and produced on various Mac computers, of the desktop and portable varieties, and proudly demonstrated to contributors, readers and advertisers on our iPads.

Apple has long played a part in revolutionising many industry sectors, producing computers, and later other products, that dramatically changed the way things were done. In that respect, the company delivered, or contributed to, the platforms and graphical user interfaces for processes we absolutely take for granted today.

Graphic design, pre-press, CAD, photography, illustration, typography, presentation graphics, music production and distribution, video editing, motion picture production – all altered immeasurably by the platforms, the processes, and the industries that grew up around such widespread and fundamental change. Perhaps even more significant, in the long run, is the global community of users that has embraced the Apple brand, its products and its values – from across the spectrum.

Steve Jobs was an agent provocateur for technology, a force of nature, an advocate for change, a mercurial pied piper that the

creative world marched merrily behind – whether they knew, liked or disliked that fact – or the man himself. He was but one of many change agents, but his visibility made him the poster child for a technology revolution that still impacts us all.

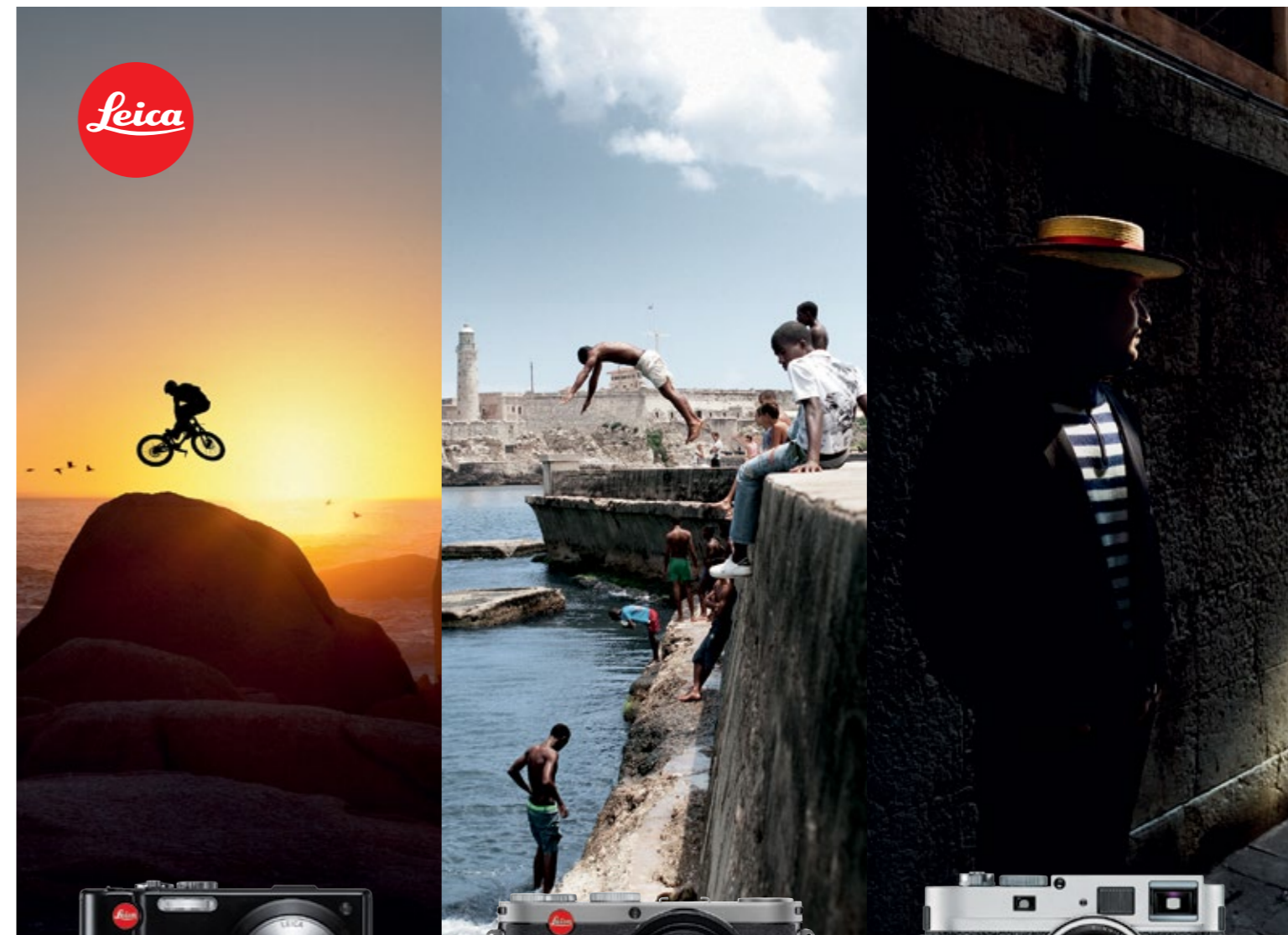
His legacy will be chronicled on the pages of history, it will doubtless endure commentary – cruel, kind and everything in between, variously withstanding a flood of mixed opinion from the sage, the misguided, the ignorant and the fawning. Historians will eventually be more even handed.

From a selfish perspective, new media such as *f11* would not exist without the fundamental changes in technology, the creative process and even the resulting business environment which Apple played a pivotal role in influencing and engineering over the last two decades – largely through innovation.

Others have taken up the challenge of leading Apple. Elsewhere perhaps waiting in the wings, are spiritual successors ready to ask “what would Steve do?”.

Vale Steve Jobs, too soon gone.

TS



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Michael Ng on his

# Leaf Aptus II-12 80MP Back



The medium format digital back is often considered to be the next step after a photographer has worked his or her way to the top offerings from Canon or Nikon. While many find contentment with well featured DSLR models from these manufacturers, others seeking the performance gains provided by larger sensors are willing to accept slightly reduced mobility and the intimidating cost of entry as the price of admission to this rather more exclusive club. Often that cost will include not just the back itself, but an entire life support system comprised of a new body, optics and accessories.

This is one such case. Here in our latest “Real Life Review” we asked Auckland based photographer Michael Ng for his considered perspective on his recent major purchase, and discovered that there were actually several purchases involved!

Michael recently invested in a Leaf Aptus II Medium Format Digital Back. It’s sensor arranges 80 megapixels across a 40x50mm area, an aspect ratio equivalent to that found on a 4x5 camera. This was sourced through New Zealand’s Leaf agent, H E Perry Ltd in Auckland.

Michael specialises in photographing fashion, here and in Australia, and is usually to be found poised over a catwalk with his Canon DSLR equipment.

**f11: Welcome to f11 Michael, we’re supposedly in the throes of a global financial crisis, what possessed you to invest at this level – at this time?**

MN: I had been looking into a high end digital back and camera system for a while and reached a point where I felt the technology had reached a level which is easy to use and the business is now able to support.

**f11: What applications drove the purchase? Where are you shooting with this rig and what benefits are you seeing from doing so?**

MN: As you have mentioned I’m better known as a catwalk fashion photographer but I have a background in design. I studied architecture at the University of Auckland so I have always been interested in the built environment. I mainly shoot architecture and interiors with this kit. The main reason why I bought the back was for the huge leap up in quality and the ability to use it with a technical camera with rise and fall. It is amazing the amount of detail



Auckland City Art Gallery Toi O Tamaki. Alpa Max camera with Leaf Aptus II-12 80MP back © Michael Ng

a 16-bit device can capture in the shadows and highlights.

**f11: So why the Leaf, and why this particular variant?**

MN: I looked at the other backs available at the time and like other photographers using Leaf backs I also felt the files had a ‘film’ look to them. The big touch screen is also very easy to use. I went for the Aptus II-12 because I wanted the biggest back to do single shot photographs rather than having to stitch photos together.

**f11: Did you have a suitable medium format body to bolt on?**

MN: When I decided to go with the Leaf I had decided on the Hasselblad H2 system as it is an open platform where the body accepts any digital back and most of the Hasselblad lenses. I also purchased the Alpa Max medium format

camera system from Switzerland. It’s very well made, allows me to shift the lenses like a 4x5 camera, and is precision machined to take a digital back like the Aptus.

**f11: How does it fit within your range of equipment? Presumably you’ll continue to shoot the fashion work with your Canon equipment?**

MN: Yes, as a photographer you select the right tools for each job. Next time I cover a fashion week I’ll bring the Leaf with me just to get something different.

**f11: Tell us about the sensor performance. Are you getting the sort of results you envisaged?**

MN: The sensor is an 80 megapixel CCD measuring 53.7mm x 40.3mm so each exposure produces a 240MB file. ▶



The physical size of the sensor is bigger than 2 full frame DSLR sensors combined. The Aptus II-12 shoots at 1.5 frames per second but I did not get it to shoot fashion shows. To get the best from this back you need lenses designed for digital capture, either the Rodenstock HR or Schneider APO digitars. These lenses are designed for use with the latest digital backs.

**f11: After the freedom and flexibility of your DSLRs, does this rig force you to think, shoot and post-process in different ways?**

MN: Shooting with the Leaf on a technical camera is similar to shooting with a 4x5 large format camera. Instead of composing on a grid screen under a dark cloth, I use a viewfinder as a framing guide and after working out the exposure I focus, set the aperture, cock the shutter and take a shot using a cable release. With a technical camera you also need to shoot LLC or Lens Cast Calibration files. This is due to the fact that the sensor is so close to the back element of the lens, and the light is bent at such an acute angle, that it results in colour casts. The LCC files compensate for this. The bigger back has made me consider my shots a lot more so I tend to shoot fewer images.

**f11: Best and worst points? What are your loves and hates about shooting medium format digital?**

MN: The best point is the ease of use in producing such a high quality file. The worst is that the learning curve is very steep so you need a good dealer able to provide technical support as you learn.

**f11: What's been the impact on your computer solution? Any changes necessitated by the larger files?**

MN: At present I'm using a Mac Book Pro with

8GB of RAM, but I may have to upgrade to a Mac Pro. The huge files slow the processing speed down and I'll have to get higher capacity drives.

**f11: In the harsh light of day, and after the honeymoon period, how do you feel about such a major investment, and what's the impact on your business?**

MN: It's just one of my cameras at the end of the day and I just have to be a bit more careful when using it. The current range of digital lenses can really take advantage of the resolving power in the latest sensors.

**f11: Major investment or major indulgence?**

MN: A business investment. When I was shooting film and Polaroid I was spending a lot of money each year on film and processing costs. I researched a high end digital system for a while, even going overseas to see dealers and check out equipment. The time was right to invest. I'm confident that the technology has reached a point where these backs now surpass the quality of 4x5 inch format film cameras.

**f11: Thanks Michael, now where's that fashion portfolio we talked about running? ■**

See more of Michael's work at [www.ngfoto.com](http://www.ngfoto.com)

*Orange Coronation Hall, Auckland.  
Alpa Max with Leaf Aptus II-12 80MP back  
© Michael Ng ▶*





## The panorama

### Part one: It is all about time.

Last month we talked about the picture space, how our cropping choices can have a powerful effect on how a viewer reads an image. The closer to square we go, the more formal an image becomes. Conversely as we approach the panoramic aspect ratio, our story becomes more informal and we are beginning to work with a larger and more complex narrative.

You are probably wondering what a piece of Roman antiquity has to do with making panorama photographs. Well, more than you might think.

The Roman frieze, seen on temples and in places like the Vatican Museum, is a series of carvings which flow continuously along walls and archways. The moment you look at one, you know you are reading a story carved in stone, rather like a paused video. There is a narrative here, and all narratives have a beginning, a middle and an end – usually. The ones in a frieze happen to be chronological, that is, they tell a story which unfolds along a linear time scale. Each event follows the one before. It is rather like watching a film. As the plot unfolds, as one event follows the next, time passes. We rely on memory to help hold the story together, to tie what we are watching to what has gone before.

I found the frieze pictured here in the Vatican



*Frieze, Vatican Museum, Vatican City. © Tony Bridge.*

Museum. It was a fragment, clearly part of something larger, but even this fragment contains a series of interlinked narratives. We are meant to study each one and see how it relates to the one before it, and use this to read the one following. From this we can read the whole story. Since Latin, the language of the Romans, was written left to right, so it follows that we are meant to approach it in the same way. The story unfolds chronologically from left to right. By the time we get to the end, it will be time to return to the beginning and start over. And while we were reading it, time has passed.

A panoramic photograph can be that, can tell a story which unravels over time. Instead of producing an image which is essentially a single moment, a photograph with the top and bottom cropped off, there is the potential for storytelling. The panorama offers the potential to create a narrative which engages a reader, or viewer, for a significant length of time and it is chronological.

To do that, however, we need to think of what

that story might be, then plan the image so that it reads as we intend it.

I have thought about the concept of the frieze for a number of years, thinking how it might work in photography, how I might be able to create a work which contained just such an extended narrative. I usually work with Autopano Pro to do my stitching, and because I plan my shooting to take advantage of its power, I need to think about the narrative before I begin. Often I will sit down, sketch the scene and make notes before I begin. The act of shooting takes time and I often wonder, when I have finished shooting, just what has changed back where I began.

The image here was made from 19 images of a lake edge, stitched together and then enhanced. I happened to turn my head to one side and then realised that what I was seeing was a series of chapters in a larger narrative.

The rest was straightforward. The work is entitled Pou, in finished form is 2.1m tall, and is a reference to the carved centre column in a wharenui, or Maori meeting house, which, on one level, represents the umbilical cord, joining heaven (Ranginui) and Earth (Papatuanuku) and on another, all the mythologies which make up the human narrative.

**TB**

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*Pou © Tony Bridge*





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© Juli Balla.

# Juli BALLA

Grace under fire

Originally an artist, Juli Balla began work as photographer in Australia in 1989. Today, based in Sydney, she is sought after for her work in advertising, beauty and portraiture by clients all over the world.

Her editorial clients include some of the best international magazines including Vogue, Vanity Fair and Marie Claire, and her advertising client list is an alphabetised 'who's who' of major airlines, cosmetic and hair care companies, technology, financial and luxury brands. It is far too lengthy to place here but let me just say that De Beers features, and yes, diamonds are still a girl's best friend. ▶



Juli is represented in London, Milan and Asia and her agent, Shannon Stoddart, from The Kitchen Creative Management in Sydney describes her thus:

“Juli’s unique style is confident, articulate, and defined by her interest in film, theatre, art and fashion. This style has been rewarded by her winning the Advertising Award twice in Australia, the Catalogue Award seven times here and in New York.”

In spite of a work schedule to make grown men weep, Juli nonetheless finds time to both produce and exhibit her personal work. She has had 7 solo shows in the last twenty years and her work is included in the collection of the Australian National Gallery.

Juli also undertakes portrait commissions of celebrity clients, including Portia de Rossi, Rachel Weiss, Tony Colette and Hugh Jackman.

In person, and as the preamble might suggest, Juli is charming, confident and articulate and I deduce that she is not a woman who would suffer fools easily. She’s tiny and engaging but there is an underlying strength that’s also a wee bit intimidating, and I mean that in a good way. Here is someone who has immense ability, combined with the personal presence to foot it in a powerful, unforgiving, rough and tough business. It’s also clear to see that the same clarity of her creative eye would be very much to the fore in any business negotiation.

Juli is funny, open and willing to share the secrets of her success. She describes her ten rules which she shares when speaking to other professional photographers and students.

They are:

1: Use the right team – get the best hair and makeup artists and stylists, and the best models available to you. “All these little things are like a mosaic and can affect your work in a good or a bad way.” She prefers to work ▶



© Juli Balla.

*“I can’t stand a vacant stare, I just can’t bear it.”*



with one team, some of whom travel with her whenever possible.

2: Direct the models – communicate with them constantly and give them positive feedback. Make sure they feel the emotion that you’re trying to convey. Models must project a knowing look regardless of their experience. “I can’t stand a vacant stare, it’s my pet hate.”

3 : Keep the concept simple and discuss it with the team. “I bring historical references, swatches and books so everyone understands my vision and they can add their own ideas. Collaboration is an important part of the process. Be very well prepared for the shoot; have preproduction meetings, I even storyboard my pictures sometimes. Remember that assumption is the Mother of all f...ups.”

4: Strive to take photographs in which the moment captured transcends what the model wears. “Try to create imagery that will stand the test of time. The mood and atmosphere you create is as important as showing the clothes.”

5: Be flexible. “Do all your homework, and then let go! Things will go wrong at times. Be prepared to adapt your ideas without stress and go with the flow. Think of it as “serendipity.”

6. Be a diplomat. “This is one of the most important lessons I have learnt in my 23 years in the business. I think I could definitely take a job on a hostage negotiating team.”

7: Don’t be “that photographer”, the mean one who strikes fear in the heart of assistants. It’s not worth it to get a bad reputation.

“It’s important to create a sense of family on set. At the end of the day, work should be fun and it’s the most successful way to get the best out of people.”

8: Keep testing and experiment with techniques and ideas. “Be true to your own style, don’t follow trends just for the sake of it.” ▶



© Juli Balla.

*“The moment captured transcends what the model wears”.*



9: The quality of each print and every book should be perfect.

“Spend time on your portfolio and keep it up to date. You should feel proud every time you show it. Follow the golden rule” if in doubt, keep it out.”

10: Be passionate. “Don’t take no for an answer but listen to criticism.”

**We had the opportunity to ask Juli a few questions.**

**f11: Your parents were both photographers, you were an artist, so what drew you so inexorably into photography as a profession?**

JB: Well primarily I am a fashion photographer. I think the love of fashion itself is part of the reason. Being introduced to the work of Penn and Avedon at a very early age was definitely an inspiration.

I was looking at the world through a camera lens as a young child – thanks to my Father, who took me on assignments from as early as I can remember.

**f11: Where do you find influence and inspiration for your work?**

JB: EVERYWHERE! Movies, art, popular culture, travel. I have a note book with me always to write down my ideas before I forget them.

**f11: What’s the dream assignment? Who, what and where in the world?**

JB: Somewhere beautiful and exotic, with a great model. The “must” is good weather!

**f11: What personal projects are you shooting at present?**

JB: I am preparing for two exhibitions, one is with BMF agency, 20 photographers are interpreting the dreams of 20 art directors. I am shooting mine bright and early tomorrow morning.

The other is a show called “This time it’s personal”. 15 photographers have been invited to show personal work. I have created characters without faces. See the show to find out more.

**f11: What were you doing two weeks ago and where will you be next week?**

JB: I have been working on a few very exciting assignments in Sydney and Melbourne, after having returned from France and Milan completing two fashion jobs there. In two weeks hopefully I will be in Singapore shooting for one of my regular clients, Unilever.

**f11: What’s the most exciting aspect of being a photographer right now?**

JB: I really enjoy the technical advancements and I take advantage of them in my practice. I love being able to see at any moment what I am doing exactly and this in turn helps me to be more precise and to perfect the end result. I am not a photographer who likes saying: “Oh we can fix that in post”

**f11: What’s the most frustrating thing about being a photographer right now?**

JB: Our industry has definitely been affected by the GFC – do I need to say more? I also find that digital technology has opened up the profession to a lot more competition and some shouldn’t call themselves photographers. They have a lot to answer for!

**f11: Complete this sentence, the best thing about being a photographer is...**

JB: “...having a million possibilities at our fingertips to be creative with.”

**f11: Thanks for allowing us to share your work with our readers. ■**

TS

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

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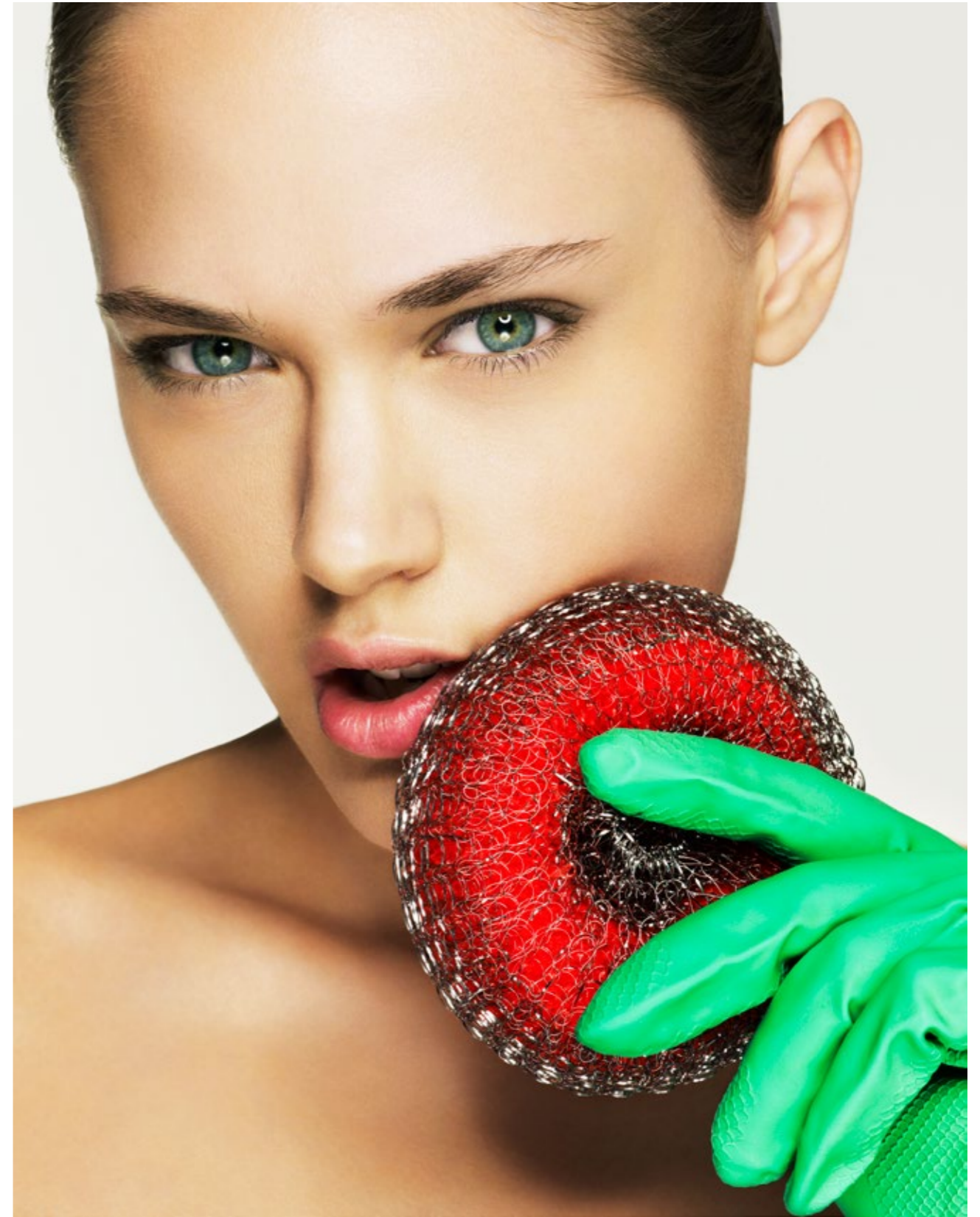






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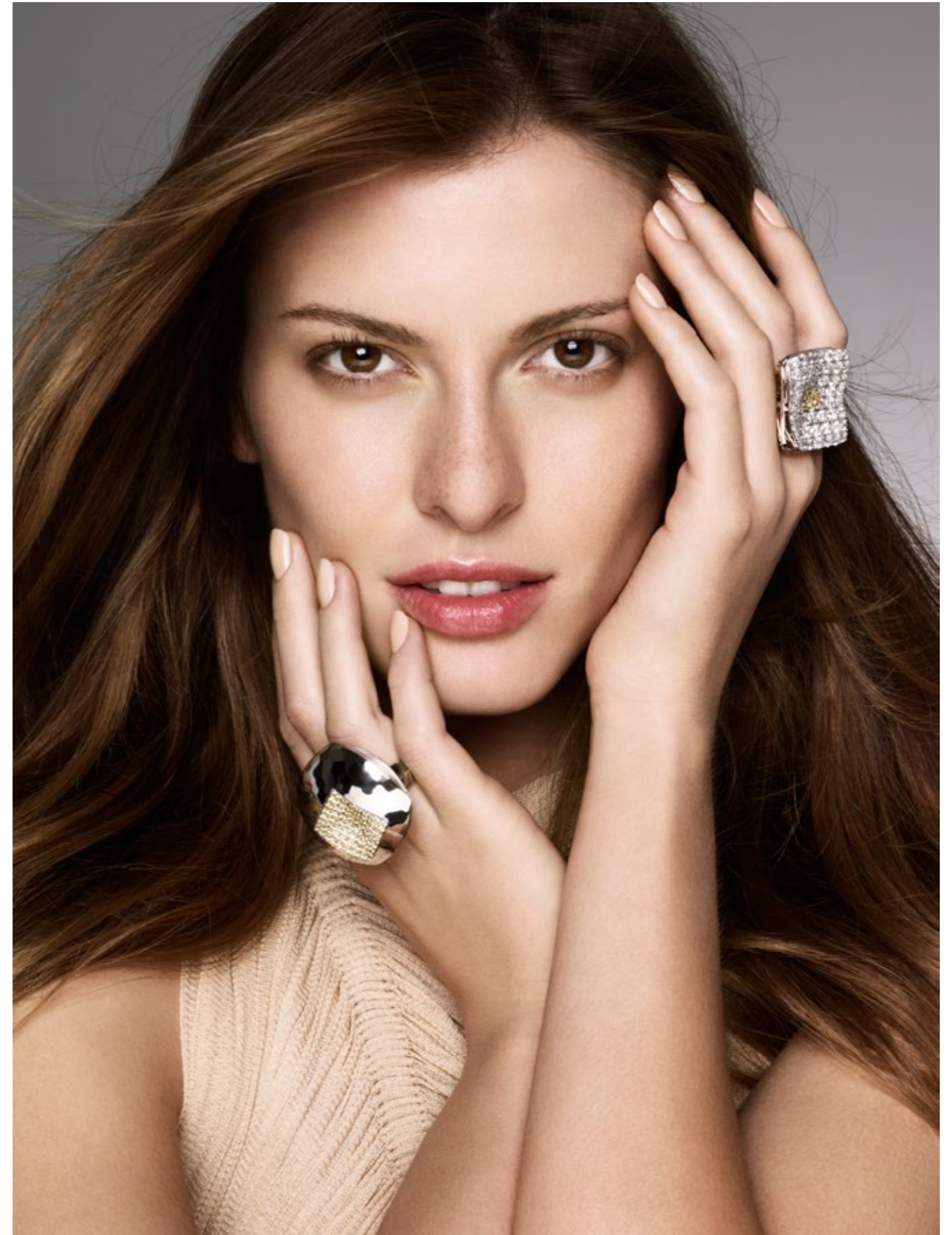


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*"...at the end of the day I'm selling frocks."*

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*Gunkanjima. Hashima Island.  
Olympus Pen E-P1 with Panasonic 7-14mm lens.  
© Michael Gakuran*

# Michael GAKURAN

Urban explorer

Michael hails from Kent in England but lives in central Japan where he works as a Coordinator of International Relations, doing translation and interpretation. He also teaches advanced Japanese as the founder of, and main writer for, Gakuu and Gakuranman.com, a cultural blog illuminating Japan.

Michael has lived in Japan for around 4 years but had visited the country many times prior to living there. He has studied Japanese for over 10 years, reading Philosophy and Japanese at university in the UK.

A passionate photographer in his spare time, Michael combines this with another of his interests, urban exploration – 'Urbex' or 'U.E.' as it is widely known. ▶



**f11:** Hi Michael, tell us about your fascination with urban exploration as a concept, and more about this in the specific Japanese context of 'Haikyo'.

MG: I got into urban exploration after seeing photos from other UE explorers online. The hobby is also practised in Japan, but usually referred to as 'haikyo' – which literally means 'abandoned place', but seems to also represent the practice of urban exploration over here.

**f11:** We Googled 'urbex' and got over two million results, it's a huge fascination for people all over the world, what drew you to this?

MG: Urbex fascinates me for several reasons. One big attraction for me is that I'm able to witness and photograph a part of life that few people ever get to see, and one that expresses the Japanese concept of wabi-sabi. I feel this dilapidation, of man-made structures being re-claimed by nature, is innately beautiful.

*"If an object or expression can bring about, within us, a sense of serene melancholy and a spiritual longing, then that object could be said to be wabi-sabi."*

Juniper, Andrew (2003). *Wabi Sabi: The Japanese Art of Impermanence*. Tuttle Publishing. ISBN 0-8048-3482-2.

*"[Wabi-sabi] nurtures all that is authentic by acknowledging three simple realities: nothing lasts, nothing is finished, and nothing is perfect."*

Powell, Richard R. (2004). *Wabi Sabi Simple*. Adams Media. ISBN 1-59337-178-0.

**f11:** What other reasons?

MG: Another is the thrill of the exploration itself and doing something not fully accepted by society. I suppose I never really lost the childlike wonder I felt growing up with the likes of Indiana Jones. Going places you probably shouldn't be going and sneaking around – all with good intentions to document the ruin, ▶



*Gunkanjima. Hashima Island.  
Olympus Pen E-P1 with Panasonic 7-14mm lens.  
© Michael Gakuran*



of course. The motto of urban explorers is to 'take only pictures and leave only footprints'.

**f11: Is this a solitary pursuit, or is there some safety in numbers?**

MG: As with most risky pursuits, it's usually better to explore with a friend. The ideal sized group is usually between 2 and 4 people. Solo trips are naturally more dangerous because there will likely not be anyone around should you become injured, and larger groups draw unwanted attention.

**f11: Speaking of safety, what sort of precautions do you take?**

MG: It ultimately depends on the location I'm visiting. I sometimes bring an asbestos grade mask when entering buildings without much airflow. I also wear a pair of sturdy hiking shoes as there is often a lot of broken glass. Of course, I always carry a torch, a phone, food, water and let somebody know where I've gone.

I will usually do background research before going to a location so that I have an idea of the layout and structural hazards other explorers have noted, but once there it is mostly a matter of common sense and knowing when to stop, especially when climbing staircases. Some explorers have died falling from great heights after the ground has given way due to degraded concrete or rusted metal. It's not always possible to tell just by looking at a structure whether or not it is safe. There are also other dangers like toxic substances found in old medical clinics, the dreaded giant hornet here in Japan (which has a deadly sting), and running into less than friendly people also at the location.

**f11: You've been using the Olympus Pen cameras, first an EP1 and now an EP3 – tell us about this decision to use this system?**

MG: I'd been waiting for this type of camera for quite some time. I snatched it up when ▶



*Gunkanjima. Hashima Island.  
Olympus Pen E-P1 with Panasonic 7-14mm lens.  
© Michael Gakuran*

*"Gunkanjima is the holy grail of haikyo in Japan"*



it was first released back in 2009 because I wanted a system that could provide high quality pictures from a camera body that was compact and lightweight. Ironically these days I have expanded my lens collection so much that I often take a lot of kit with me, but the size and weight savings help immensely with this type of hobby. I can take a full range of lenses from ultra-wide to macro, all in a small rucksack. The equivalent DSLR system would be much bigger and heavier.

**f11:** Do you do much in the way of post-processing of these images?

MG: At first I was just happy with the gorgeous colours of the Olympus cameras, but I've gradually been learning some of the secrets of photography as my passion for taking pictures has grown. I originally shot in jpeg, but changed to RAW after seeing the extra room I had when post-processing. I also found out that much of the sparkle that pro images seem to have is added later in software applications.

Simple things like adjusting the contrast and saturation can dramatically improve an image, and more advanced techniques using filters can really help to create an artistic vision. I now post-process almost all my images to really help them shine. Of course, good photographic technique is still the most important part of creating pleasing images!

**f11:** Do you document all of your adventures in the blog, or are there some too sensitive or off limits to feature?

MG: There are certain parts of my adventures and particular locations that I find myself reluctant to post. As the hobby is not seen favourably by all, I do consider the ramifications of documenting explorations and consider the amount of detail I give, especially when writing about locations. On many occasions I've seen sites become vandalised after the location was made public on the web, so I don't often share locations except between trusted friends. ▶



Gunkanjima: Hashima Island.  
Olympus Pen E-P1 with Panasonic 7-14mm lens.  
© Michael Gakuran



Imari Kawatana WWII Shipyard. Olympus Pen E-P1  
with Panasonic 7-14mm lens. © Michael Gakuran





**f11:** Have there been any ramifications from any of the exploration site owners once 'their site' has been featured in the blog?

MG: Personally I have not yet had this problem, although I do know someone who has been asked to remove photos they posted on request from the owner of a site. It seems to be quite a rare thing though.

**f11:** Your images of Japan are an ongoing work in progress, but the catacombs of Paris featured in your blog recently, any travel plans for urbex in other countries?

MG: Loads! If only I had the funds and freedom to go travelling to all those international locations! On my to-do list is Pripjat, naturally, as well as several other smaller European locations. There are just so many ruins though. Perhaps somebody would like to sponsor me to document them? (Laugh)

**f11:** What would be the holy grail urbex location for you to explore?

MG: Well, Gunkanjima is the holy grail of haikyo in Japan. That was my original dream, and it was fulfilled through making friends with another explorer who helped get me there. Next I hope to visit some lesser-known locations, including using my diver's licence to explore the underwater ruins of Yonaguni island in southernmost Japan. ■

**TS**

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

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

◀ Previous page: Kawatana Human Torpedo Training School. Olympus Pen E-P1 with Panasonic 7-14mm lens.  
© Michael Gakuran



Maya Hotel. Olympus Pen E-P1 with Panasonic 7-14mm lens.  
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Gunkanjima. Hashima Island.  
Olympus Pen E-P1 with Panasonic 7-14mm lens.  
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Kawatana Human Torpedo Training School.  
Olympus Pen E-P1 with Panasonic 7-14mm lens.  
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Royal House. Olympus Pen E-P1 with Panasonic 45mm Macro lens.  
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Maya Hotel. Olympus Pen E-P1 with Panasonic 20mm lens.  
© Michael Gakuran.

*The motto of urban explorers is to 'take only pictures  
and leave only footprints'.*

*"Haikyo literally means abandoned place"*





Doctor's Shack. Olympus Pen E-P1 with Panasonic 45mm Macro lens.  
© Michael Gakuran.

*"If an object or expression can bring about, within us, a sense of serene melancholy and a spiritual longing, then that object could be said to be wabi-sabi."*



Motor Lodge. Olympus Pen E-P1 with Panasonic 20mm lens.  
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*"As with most risky pursuits, it's usually better to explore with a friend"*





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Canon EOS-1D MkII with EF24mm - 70mm f/2.8.  
© Tamara Lackey.

# Tamara LACKEY

## Child friendly

Best known for her images of children and families, Tamara Lackey is a real go-getter, a woman constantly evolving, and now host of her new web-based interview series very aptly titled reDefine! Tamara and her team operate out of her studio in Durham, North Carolina. She's even listed in Wikipedia, but don't take my word for it, go look...

New Zealand photographer Sue Bryce speaks highly of her, in fact Sue introduced Tamara to *f11*, so here we are. That's Sue's portrait of Tamara on our contents page, and here's what Sue says about her...

"Tamara Lackey is arguably THE most dynamic woman you will meet in the photographic industry. I met her two years ago at WPPI, she walked up, put out her hand, introduced herself and we have been firm friends since." ▶

*"Yes, mistakes make you stronger, but go ahead and avoid these."*





“Very few people in our industry stop me in my tracks and make me go WOW. She’s smart and has a dynamic wit, her confidence is so empowering, her drive and self-belief are so incredible they challenge my very foundation to be better, to believe more and to achieve more. She has a successful business, is a beautiful portrait photographer, is an entrepreneur and a great speaker and she also juggles three of the most gorgeous children (and a gorgeous hubby too) with her career. I have been blown away by this woman from the moment I met her. Her confidence, resilience and presence.”

Not content with a huge career as a renowned professional photographer, Tamara is an innovative entrepreneur, author, and web show personality. Her authentic lifestyle photography, from children’s portraits to celebrity portraits, is praised by her peers and published internationally. Tamara’s work has been featured in dozens of media outlets including Vogue, O—The Oprah Magazine, Town & Country, Parenting Magazine, Food & Wine, Men’s Journal, Professional Photographer Magazine, Rangefinder Magazine, NBC’s The Martha Stewart Show, ABC’s Extreme Makeover: Home Edition, PBS’ Need to Know and NBC’s The Today Show.

Combining artistry with spontaneous authenticity, Tamara’s new web series, the reDefine Show, examines the inspiring stories of top-tier creative artists who make it work. Tamara’s interview style showcases her abiding interest in real conversations that share practical tips, innovative methods, and previews of the newest and most useful technologies on the market.

In reDefine she chats to creative artists like Jerry Ghionis, and even turns the tables on someone like Chase Jarvis, well used to interviewing people for his own similar web interview series. She also shows that she’s equally comfortable on both sides of the camera, something many photographers struggle with. ▶



Canon EOS 5D MkII with EF35mm f/1.4L. © Tamara Lackey.

*“By far our best marketing is simply word-of-mouth referrals.  
We are grateful for our clients’ enthusiasm.”*



Tamara is a sought-after professional speaker and educator. She has addressed thousands at conventions and conferences around the world, and has been simulcast to hundreds of thousands in live, worldwide-broadcast workshops.

Her first instructional book for professionals, *The Art of Children's Portrait Photography*, was released to high praise from reviewers, her peers, and aspiring photographers. She quickly followed that success with her top-selling professional video *Inside Contemporary Children's Photography* and then the *Tamara Lackey Style Book*, developed in collaboration with Kubota Image Tools. Translating her professional acumen and intuitive teaching skills to an amateur photographer audience, Tamara released a unique "edutainment" book, video and iPhone app set, *Tamara Lackey's Capturing Life Through (Better) Photography™*, which has already garnered acclaim in both the professional and consumer markets. Tamara's next book, *Envisioning Family*, releases in December, 2011 (New Riders Press: *Voices That Matter*).

This month, November, Tamara visits down under speaking across Australia. Check out her itinerary on her website, who knows, a few tickets may still be available?

If you're lucky enough to attend one of the seminars, prepare to be impressed. ■

**TS**

[www.tamaralackey.com](http://www.tamaralackey.com)  
[www.redefineshow.com](http://www.redefineshow.com)

*Canon EOS-1D MkII with EF24mm - 70mm f/2.8.*  
© Tamara Lackey.







*Canon EOS 5D MkII with EF85mm f/1.2L MkII.  
© Tamara Lackey.*

*Canon EOS 5D MkII with EF24mm - 70mm f/2.8.  
© Tamara Lackey.*





Canon EOS-1D MkII with EF70-200mm f/2.8 IS. © Tamara Lackey.

*“Keep doing and finding work that feels true to you. It sounds trite, but it’s so exceptionally true: don’t try to be anyone else.”*

Canon EOS-1D MkII with EF24mm - 70mm f/2.8.  
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Canon EOS 5D MkII with EF85mm f/1.2L MkII. © Tamara Lackey.

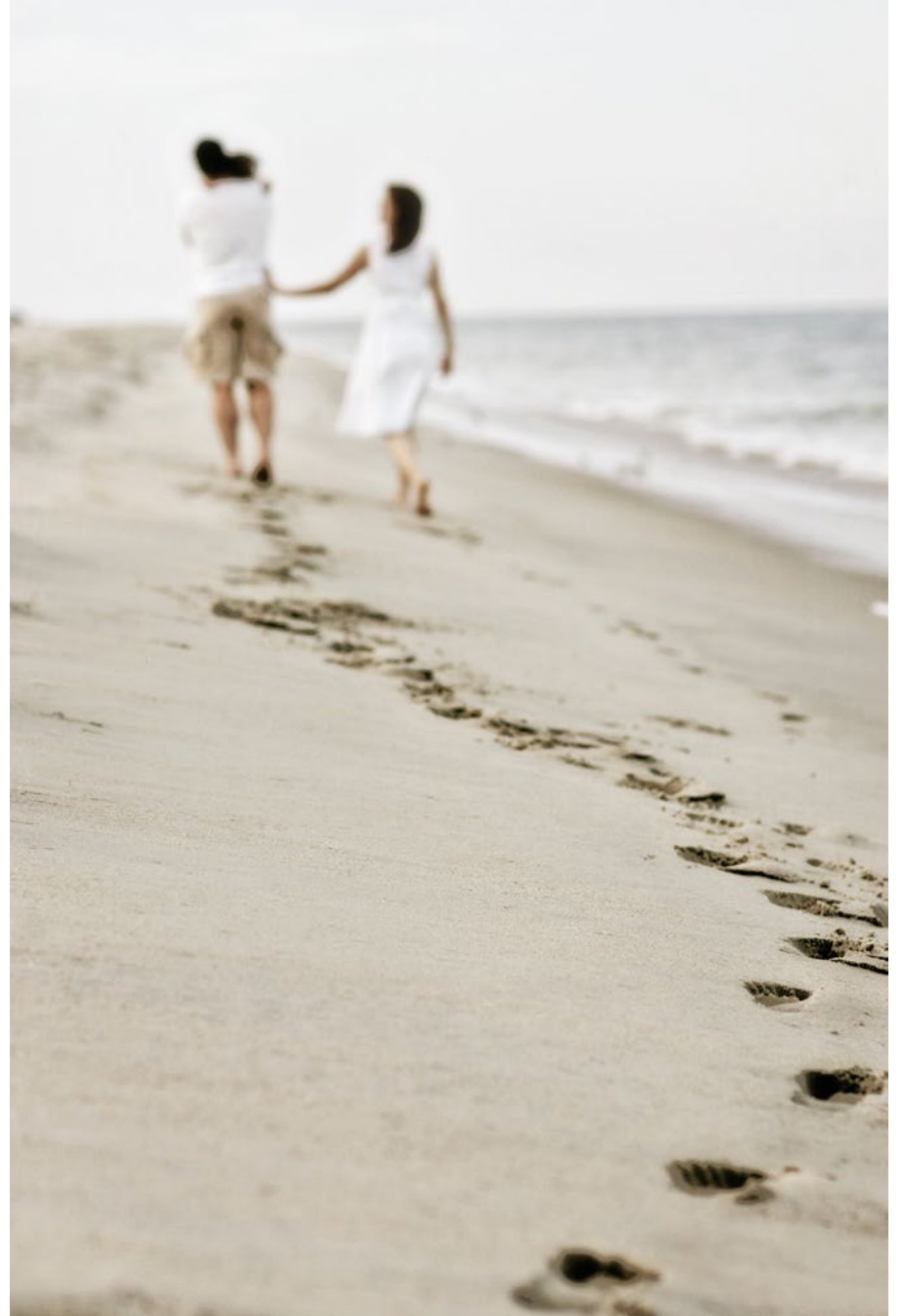


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Canon EOS-1D MkII with EF85mm f/1.2L MkII. © Tamara Lackey.





Canon EOS-1D Mark II with EF24mm - 70mm f/2.8 © Tamara Lackey





The Photographic Society of New Zealand (PSNZ) is the national governing body for over 60 camera clubs in New Zealand. What started from a small gathering of passionate photographers in Queenstown in 1952 has grown into a respected and professionally run organisation. A Council of 13 leads PSNZ with the sole purpose to 'promote the wider enjoyment of photography' as a craft and art form.

Over 1000 members with an interest in all aspects of photography – from film to digital, landscape to nature, point and shoot to SLR, and more enjoy the fellowship PSNZ extends to members. These photographers have a wide range of skills and knowledge – some are 'new entrants' to photography and keen to soak up and learn as much as possible, while others range from passionate amateurs to full time professionals.

There is a host of benefits awaiting PSNZ members, including the opportunity to present best work – for competitions, awards and exhibitions; the opportunity to train and qualify as a judge; and opportunities for publication – PSNZ annually produces a special photographic book showcasing almost 300 images selected from over thousands submitted.

Activities of special interest include instructional workshops, field trips, access to the PSNZ learning library, and without doubt one of the key benefits is the opportunity to network, learn and develop new skills by attending one of the four conventions held each year.

The National Convention is held in April or May

each year and is highly sought out by members. It attracts world class keynote speakers who, by presenting their own works and delivering quality presentations and workshops, manage to successfully inspire and motivate everyone else. National Convention is also a time for photographers to be publicly recognised with the presentation of the Honours Awards and trophies won.

PSNZ also offers members the opportunity to achieve higher recognition through the respected photographic distinction of PSNZ Honours, which recognises different levels of photographic proficiency and gives members a tangible goal to strive for.

The primary distinction award, a Licentiate (LPSNZ) recognizes 'proficiency of a high order in practical photography.' The degree of proficiency required to attain the next level of distinction naturally progresses in difficulty, and this is for the Associate and Fellowship levels. Achieving any one of these PSNZ Honours allows the photographer the privilege to carry the respective letters after their name, e.g. Jack Black, APSNZ.

Photography is an exciting hobby, interest and art form. One only need to pick up a magazine or scour the Internet to see the creativity and technical skills put into most images to understand just how far the craft has advanced in the past 10+ years.

For more information about PSNZ and what it can offer you visit our website at: [www.photography.org.nz](http://www.photography.org.nz)

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## Rumour mills

As October 18 loomed, the ‘chatterists’ – those with an ear out for the next new thing, seemed divided, some claiming imminent model releases, others saying no new EOS cameras until 2012.

Naturally, Canon would have been listening in amusement, but undoubtedly stuck to their own game plan, and the 1D X appeared.

Weeks ago it was the Apple iPhone 5 that filled the rumour pages with incredible detail. The actual iPhone 4S revealed was the anticlimax despite delivering much of what seemed to have been promised. We’re told that some manufacturers had already begun to manufacture – and ship – iPhone 5 cases, based on a rumoured specification and form factor. Perhaps these are even now on a return journey for their untimely date with the recycling plant?

So what drives these rumours?

Much of it is wishful thinking on the part of users, some of it is competitor driven, some of it is company driven, with some manufacturers ‘managing’ their own press.

The users and product loyalists begin by publishing wish lists, “if only they added this, made it do this”, then speculate on what version 3 (or 4 or 5) should have. The company addresses a few issues by adding a new free downloadable firmware upgrade. They are listening intently to what is needed. They are also watching their competitors intensely and speculating on where the market is trending.

At the same time they are trapped in a process that requires a financial yield on all the research, design, die making, package design, inventory and advertising and promotion that’s been invested.

They are also trapped by where a camera may fit within their own product range, the relative price position against competitive product, the timing of the announcement and broad assumptions as to whether or not the supply timetable can be met.

The company can be part of the speculation, for market feedback reasons, for competitor positioning, even to influence share market analysts. Note what happened to Apple share values after the expected iPhone 5 wasn’t announced, despite a well featured iPhone 4s being launched to a characteristically receptive market.

Another test taking place, is that of price sensitivity as the manufacturer decides where to load the best features within their own range. Look at the new Canon 1DX, probably delivering the best set of video features currently offered on a DSLR, albeit at a premium price over the 5D MkII. Speculation now centres on what will be delivered on the 5D MkIII – what will it, or won’t it, have? Perhaps the acid test is to see

how many 5D users elect to move up the food chain, climbing the price path – or wait for the direct replacement to their model. Some of this will depend on projected delivery dates.

As much as this is vital to Canon, it is equally vital to Nikon and Sony and Panasonic within their following.

As the feature options and price positions shift, often gaps appear in the range which create opportunities for new models... lighter, cheaper, fewer features.... lots of speculation there too.

Alongside all this are the lenses, the real cash cows. More full frame camera availability drives demand for more full coverage lenses, and a higher likelihood of ‘same brand’ purchase.

Current speculation features Canon 6D, 5D MkIII, Nikon D800, Nikon D4 and RED. The ‘expected’ announcements are predicted all over the place, next month, next year, Photokina.

In every rumour, every piece of speculation, every blog, tweet or conspiratorial conversation, there will be a vestige of truth. In general, there is a cold, calculating reason for what, where and when. We can be certain that almost all of the detail around any ‘next



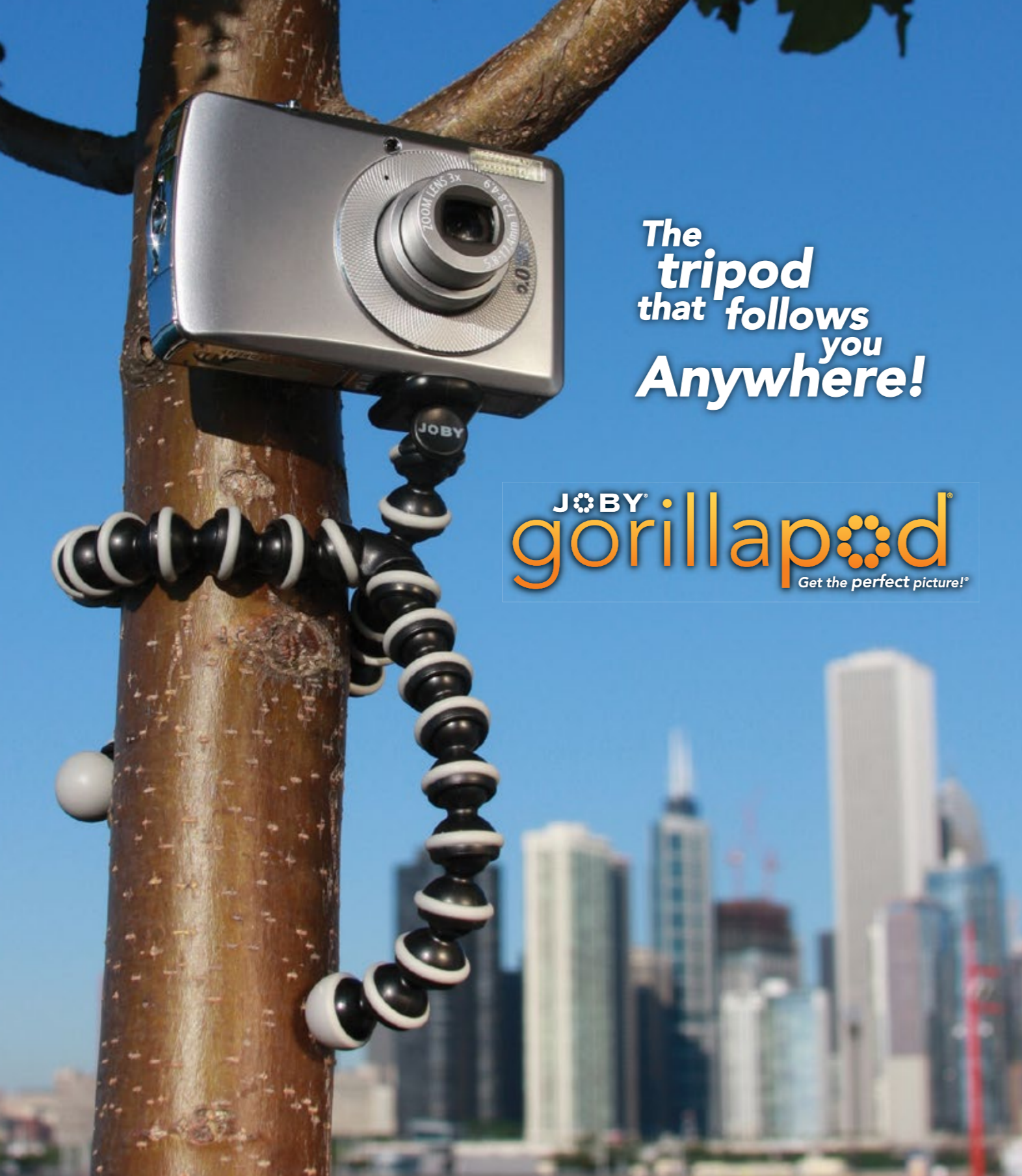
model’ release is already fixed, set in stone. They have to be, in order for the manufacturer to coordinate all of the component supplies, retool and reconfigure factory production lines, plan model run-outs and phase-ins. Be sure that the marketing plans are done, the collateral prepared, the website content ready to go live, the technicians trained, perhaps even the first shipments notionally allocated by country and by region.

Only the moment needs to be fixed, sometimes that’s the single most important variable.

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The observant ones amongst you will notice a significant drop in Nikon's pricing this month. The D7000 continues to be a store favourite, especially with the nice 18-200mm VR zoom.

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### Girls on Film

Saturday 12th of November in Melbourne at Sugar Studios – Level 1, 4 York Street Richmond VIC

Sunday the 13th of November in Sydney at Stables Studios – 7 Little Bourke Street Surry Hills NSW

A showcase of working women photographers, in particular a few who have been shooting in the industry for 20 years or more in the commercial, magazine and advertising sector.

### The Idea:

A large number of female commercial, magazine and advertising photographers are quietly working away and this showcase is to help encourage, bring together and inspire these women photographers to start a discussion amongst themselves and to let them know that they are not alone.

The speakers are Penelope Beveridge, Lisa Saad and Michelle Aboud all of whom have been shooting in the industry for more than 20 years each. Each of these female photographers have made their own individual way into the commercial world of photography and each have succeeded greatly despite the opinions that they would fail. It's a testament to their belief in themselves and also in their ability in being great image makers.

"Girls on Film" at Sugar Studios in Melbourne is just the first step with a second event scheduled in Sydney the following day at Stables Studio. Both will allow a true afternoon of connection filled with information, fun,

laughter, tears, networking and just a really good time.

All speakers will be on stage at the same time, with a dialogue between themselves and the audience, chatting about their careers, their struggles, their moments of triumph and their moments of complete resolve as they dedicated the majority of their youth and early adulthood building their photography business in a world that was heavily dominated by the idea that women photographers were only for the light and airy campaigns or jobs that did not require too much of an effort or technical skill.

Through this and the communication and discussions that will hopefully develop it will be a moment in time where women can connect and appreciate each other and the contribution that women are giving to the industry.

These women will show that their "can do" attitude demonstrates that anything is possible.

**For further information and tickets see**  
[www.acmp.com.au/events](http://www.acmp.com.au/events)

**Sacha Walters**  
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## Photographic Competitions – Caveat Emptor

I am William Long – I am the PhotoWatchDog.

I represent the AIPP, the ACMP and various other organisations, groups, and collectives on the issue of photographic competitions in Australia.

PhotoWatchDog provides the education to ensure fair Terms and Conditions for photographic competitions for both entrants and organisers.

I've been regularly reviewing photographic competition terms and conditions for the past 15 years; and what started as a trickle of competitions a decade or so ago, turned into a tsunami. On average I would review 400 competitions a year, and end up appealing the T&Cs of 50% of those.

When a new photographic competition contains unfair T&Cs, I attempt to contact the organisers of the competitions and question these T&Cs to highlight and illustrate where something is clearly unfair to the entrant, often suggesting a better approach to these details in the fine print.

Some organisers are happy to change, as they've unwittingly produced a set of unfair terms and conditions; and hadn't realised the impact that a set of unfair T&Cs can produce.

Unfortunately, a clear percentage has deliberately produced what I can only call Sham Competitions. In these, there is very little interest in producing a competition, but their intent is to acquire images for free. This is referred to as an Image Grab.

A new point of concern is that there is often little genuine interest in the images, but more importance is placed on the acquisition of personal information, an increasing valuable commodity. Not only do entrants agree to give the organiser their personal details, but the online "voting" also requires that voters agree to similar T&Cs, which allow the "competition" organisers to collect, use and trade their information.

Complex Terms and Conditions put people off reading them.

Typical points to look out for:

Do you lose your copyright ? That's not good – don't enter!

Do you agree to licensing the image to the organiser, and is the usage limited to use relating to promoting the competition ? That's OK.

Is any future usage noted outside of the competition, and how will that be handled?

As an example, let me highlight one current "competition". This is just one section – and there are 11 sections of a single term, with 54 terms in total :

That the organisers, "own the content of the Entry in any way for use in any media worldwide and have the right to assign such copyright ownership in perpetuity and other Intellectual Property Rights in the Entry to the Promoter"

In short – they want the copyright – and once

you've read the entire terms and relate each term to each other, in order for it to make sense; this particular competition contains these points of concern:

- You can't use the image for yourself in the future.
- You can't enter it into any other competition.
- You can't use it in your own portfolio.
- You can be held legally liable if the image gets used for any other purpose in perpetuity.
- Plus, you're agreeing to all of this just by entering – and this applies to both winners and losers.

The main problem is that the general public simply do not read the Terms and Conditions. Instead they tend to "trust" that the competition organiser is doing the "right thing".

That is where the problem starts. In most cases, a presumption is made by the entrant that the organiser wouldn't do anything that is so blatantly unfair.

On the positive side, I often accomplish significant changes in attitude and approach by discreet communication between competition organisers. And it's extremely heartening when major companies like Canon, Nikon, Fuji and many others, now contact me prior to agreeing on a set of T&C's for their competitions, as they are eager to produce something that is going to be an effective marketing tool, as opposed

to something that has a negative effect on their corporate image.

With the popularity of social media, and internet forums, adverse reactions to a new marketing campaign are very difficult to manage, and it's easy for what was considered a good idea to turn into a publicity nightmare for companies. Many of them are now eager to quickly alter T&C's that appear to be unfair in any way. And it's satisfying that companies have often changed their T&C's within days of my initial contact.

So to keep things reasonably brief;

- Before you enter a competition, READ the Terms and Conditions.
- Before you support by way of sponsoring, or providing prizes to, a competition, READ the Terms and Conditions.
- Before you support by way of judging a competition, READ the Terms and Conditions.

PhotoWatchDog – will have a new website soon – work is in progress.

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

### William Long

M.Photos III, MNZIPP, FBIPP, FRPS –  
PhotoWatchDog

(on behalf of AIPP)

Article © 2011 William Long



## What's next?

Fresh from my year and a half involvement with 'The Adventures of Tintin' Steven Spielberg's latest film, based on Hergé's work – the gap between a very large production with its ample means, eye-catching computer graphics, tight deadline and intense schedule, with the "normal world" seemed unusually wide. However, in the days it took me to fully emerge from my digital den and reacquaint myself with a more normal pace, the pervasive nature of tools like the iPhone, within the context of storytelling, was all the more palpable. <http://bit.ly/IOISK7>

A case in point are the 'Goldilocks' and 'Happy Slapping' films. 'Goldilocks' is the 'first mobile film series', by Michael Koerbel and Anna Elizabeth James. <http://bit.ly/w17LLY>

'Happy Slapping', a feature film entirely made on Apple's ubiquitous pocket slab and directed by Canadian Christos Sourligas. <http://bit.ly/rR0vRO>

In his interview with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the producer turned director shared his initial doubts regarding one of the technical limitations of lower tier cameras such as the one in the iPhone: the "rolling shutter effect" caused by a lag between the reading of data from one end of the image sensor to the other. This lag makes footage look like jello when the camera pans around rapidly. <http://bit.ly/rR0vRO>

To address the issue, The Foundry – a London based visual effects software company – came up with a clever solution

based on Motion Estimation; an algorithm with an unusually large number of applications in the world of video and film. <http://bit.ly/sCtHlg>

A second algorithm aims to improve footage shot with questionable methodology: Subspace Video Stabilization, an efficient high quality solution developed by researchers at Portland State University, University of Wisconsin-Madison and Adobe. I expect to see an implementation of the method in future off-the-shelf software. <http://bit.ly/tzWJg8>

These showcases of technology at the service of storytelling are only two in an infinity of others. Given the ephemerality and abundance of tools at the service of the modern storytellers, one can be forgiven for thinking: what next, are we there yet?

A number of technologies are worth keeping an eye on. One development in particular is set to increase the level of engagement between the viewer and the story: the Quantum Dot image sensor. According to InVisage Technologies, one of the companies pioneering this new sensor design, today's CMOS silicon-based sensors exhibit light-sensing efficiencies of only about 25 percent.

<http://bit.ly/u3iJTJ>

<http://bit.ly/uB8veG>

For every four photons reaching the sensor, only about one is converted into a photoelectron. Silicon is not only a weak absorber of light, but it is also buried beneath layers of metal interconnect wires which obscure half of the pixel area. Such losses are detrimental to image quality, especially in devices such as mobile phone cameras. To compensate for data loss, a large and costly piece of silicon would be required. Due to their unique design, the promise of Quantum Dot sensors lies in their ability to fully complete the conversion of photons to electrons, effectively increasing in sensitivity by a factor of four. This translates into cleaner (less noisy) images and the ability for filmmakers to produce images in low light, without artificial lighting.

Another technology may play an important role in enhancing the quality of interaction between story participants and content: touchable holograms. <http://bit.ly/uSgufX>

The technology consists of software that uses ultrasonic waves to create pressure on users' hands for haptic feedback. However, it has only been tested with simple holographic representations. Given the new presence of 3D displays and content, there is an equal mix of archaism and irony in having to wear special glasses to emulate what my brain "sees" and dispatches in the form of a fully stereo, full colour visual experience, otherwise known as Life.

One of the most visually striking experiments I've come across recently is one developed by Gordon Wetzstein & Wolfgang Heidrich of the University of British Columbia and Douglas Lanman & Ramesh Raskar of MIT Media Lab <http://bit.ly/vlgaKy>

Their Tomographic Image Synthesis is the best example of stereoscopic display I've seen. It's hard to describe in words, so I leave you with this short video clip explaining the process <http://bit.ly/vOqw9U>

So, what's next? My guess is that a flurry of gradually enhanced iterations of the same products will mix with truly revolutionary products and techniques. The difficulty for the modern storyteller is to keep track of what can help create compelling tales, but also to choose the tools wisely, as it's too easy to be swept away by the incessant flow of technology and to wonder too often about "what's next".

### Karim Sahai

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

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



# AIPA

Well it looks like November is upon us already. Time sure does fly when you're having fun!

It's at this time of the year that most of the University and Polytechnic photography courses finish and send their final year students out into the 'real world' where they will have to fend for themselves. One would hope that most of these young photographers are well prepared for the volatile and highly competitive market they're about to enter – but sadly, for many this is not the case.

I have lost count of the number of the times I've heard recent graduates ask the question "Now that I have my photography qualification what should I do?" You'd think that after years of studying photography at a tertiary level they would know what their next step will be. In fact, I would go so far as to say that if a graduate has to ask this question then the tertiary institute they attended has failed in its duty to properly prepare them for the industry.

Many are still under the misguided impression that, armed with their new degree or diploma, they will simply 'get a job' as a full-time professional photographer. Dreams are free! Full-time photography positions are as scarce as hen's teeth, while those that do still exist tend to be low paid and require little, if any, creativity from the photographer.

Others believe that they will just 'start a photography business' – which in this context means:

1. Set up a business page on Facebook
2. Shoot a bunch of freebie jobs for mates and 'cool' magazines

3. Upload the resulting photos to Facebook
4. Wait for the clients to start flooding in

Again, this kind of overly simplistic thinking is wildly delusional. Building any viable business is a difficult and highly complex endeavour. To be successful you need forethought, planning and investment. Trying to 'wing it' certainly isn't a wise idea. New entrants who follow this approach might struggle along for a year or two (if they're lucky), but the long term prospects for business survival are pretty grim.

So what should the next step be for recent photography graduates? And how does someone go about building a career as a professional photographer these days? There are no simple or easy answers to either of these questions, and the reality is that every individual entering the industry will have to navigate their own unique route. What's important is realising the learning process doesn't stop when the classes finish – in fact, it has only just begun. Therefore, in my opinion, the best course of action is to find other more experienced photographers who can act as mentors and guides. And that's where belonging to an organisation like the AIPA can really be a huge advantage – because we help bring photographers together.

## Aaron K

AIPA Executive Director

### Upcoming Events

#### November AIPA GearFest 2011

Saturday, November 26th – White Studios, Auckland. Discover all the latest photographic products and accessories from leading suppliers. Loads of demo equipment to try out, professional models to photograph, mini-seminars to attend. Entry to this event is free! All photographers are welcome.

## Lighting the easy way

### Flash Basics Part 5 advanced off-camera flash

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

This is the last in a five part series on using your detachable SLR flash creatively. You can read the first parts in previous issues of *f11* Magazine on the website.

This instalment covers advanced off-camera techniques and modifiers. You should have a good understanding of how your flash affects your exposure, how to balance it with the ambient light, how to bounce it off nearby walls or ceilings to make it look like a much larger light source and how to get your flash off camera. All of this becomes easy when you practise, even though at first glance it might look like a lot to learn.

It's worth beginning with some reasons you'd want to use a flash modifier. Why you want to change the size or the shape of your light.

It's all about the size of your light source. More accurately, the relative size. The sun is a massive light source, but it's so far away that it appears to us as a small light source. That's what I mean by the 'relative' bit. Your 580EXII or SB900 is a small light source, most of the time. But if you're using them up close to light, say, a flea, then it becomes from your subject's perspective a very large light source.

Large light source = soft light. Small light source = hard light.

Next time you're outdoors on a sunny day note how people look in the sunlight, lit by hard light with sharp shadows. Remember that and note how different they look on a cloudy day where the entire sky becomes an even, large, light source.

Hard light throws hard-edged distracting shadows that you have to manage. So hard light is bad, right? Not always! Sometimes you want that effect. It works particularly well with spectacularly attractive young models – girls, guys and kids – with awesome skin. Hard light highlights sharp cheekbones, for example, but magnifies imperfections.

Here's an example of where hard light worked really well for me; I needed a lot of power, the water's surface diffused the light a little and the model's great muscle tone was magnified by the hard light.



So how do you soften light from your flash gun? As we found in part 4, you can bounce if you happen to be in the right place. For all those times when you're not, the easiest way to do it is by using an umbrella or softbox. Umbrellas are quick to set up but spill a lot of the light out the sides. The flash fires into the umbrella, that's commonly white and semi- ▶



opaque or silver reflective. The white brolly is called a 'shoot-through'. You can also get different colours to affect the white balance. The shoot-through umbrella increases the size of the light source from your small flash to the size of the brolly. With a standard brolly your flash points away from your subject and the brolly acts a little like a radar dish for light, and the effect is similar. Relative size, remember, so don't put any of these modifiers a long way away from your subject and expect the same soft result.

Here's an example of a photo taken with a single 580EXII speedlight on a friso coldshoe attached to a brolly adapter on top of a lightstand.



Here's a setup shot:



*This is a shoot-through brolly so the model would step around the other side for the photo.*

I also own a small Chimera softbox for my flash (there are similar models from Lastolite and others, too) that I use when I want really fine control over the soft light. I often put a

grid on it, which projects a broad beam of light without any spill. Gridded softboxes offer some fun possibilities but are beyond the scope of this article... you get soft light but with a fairly sharp fall-off at the edges.

There are modifiers from Gary Fong and Stofen that spread the light from your flash without changing the size of the light source. These are often misconstrued as providing soft light but you'll now know why they don't, on their own. They come in particularly useful when you're able to combine them with bounce flash (explained in my earlier article) where the wider beam combined with bounce flash gives a double light-softening effect.

So that's hard light and soft light. Another advanced but extremely useful lighting trick to understand is called the Inverse Square Law. It's often explained with confusing math formulae and physics multi-dimensional mumbo-jumbo. But it's really not that complicated. All you need to remember is this: if you double the distance between your flash and your subject, you don't halve the amount of light, as you might expect. The amount of light falls by FOUR times! So if you move your light from 1m to 2m, you get 25% of the light. Move a light from 1m to 4m away, you're left with 6% of the light you had at 1m falling on your subject directly!

Try it. In a dark room shoot something like an apple on a table with your flash and camera on manual, and your flash set up 2 meters away from your apple. Set your aperture at f4. Move your light 4 meters away and set your aperture to f8, twice the size of f4, to compensate. You'll notice that your subject is under-exposed.

Why do you need to know this? A few reasons... first up, if your light source is near your subject, moving it only a little will have a large effect on the lighting. It's a great way to fine tune your lighting much more subtly than you might with a flash power adjustment.

Secondly, there may be instances where you

want to light something in the foreground but not in the background. Set your flash up to light your foreground and place your flash close to the foreground subject. Thanks to the light falling off by four times every time you double the distance, your background should, all being well, not be lit by the flash.

I use it all the time when shooting corporate presentations so that I can light presenters but leave the projection on the screen bright.



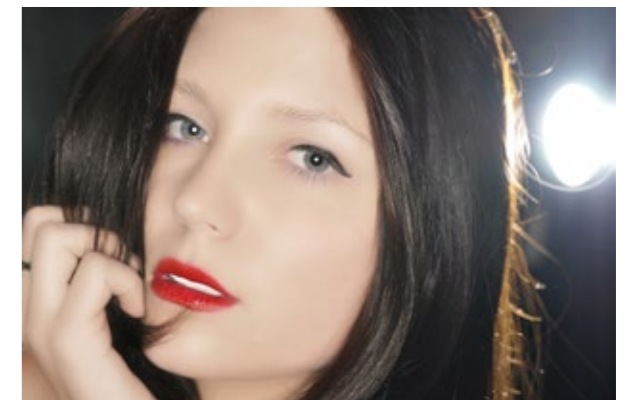
*I also "snooted" my flash to further limit any light spilling onto the projection screen. My pal David Honl makes great snoots.*

By putting the flash near my subject, they're well lit but the light isn't spilling onto the projector screen and blowing out the slide. It's one of the things I love about lighting with small flash; you can put a lightstand in front of an audience near a speaker's lectern and no one notices. Don't forget to mention to the speakers what you're going to do and if you're snooting your flash, ask them to stay near the lectern.

Hard light, soft light, snoots and grids. Anything else? Another great way to transform the light from your flash is to go one step further. Rather than just changing the size of the light source, you can actually re-shape it too, using something like an orbis ringflash (disclaimer: I invented it). Ring flash was invented in the 1950s for medical applications but caught on in the Swinging '60s when fashion photographers adopted it. They loved the characteristic

shadowless effect. The orbis, and the few other modular ring flashes out there, reshapes the light into a ring using your speedlight flash as the lightsource. When you push your camera lens through the hole in the middle of the ring and take a photo, from the camera's perspective there's light coming from every direction.

Here's what I mean:



*In this photo, I put an SB800 behind my model firing straight into the camera for some backlight and flare. But the light on her face is beautifully soft and even thanks to my orbis redistributing the light into a ring around the lens.*

So there you have it... you should have all the tips you need from this series to kick off your journey into light. This knowledge is of immense benefit whether you choose to use it or not. Photography is all about light and the more you understand it, the better you'll become.

**James Madelin**

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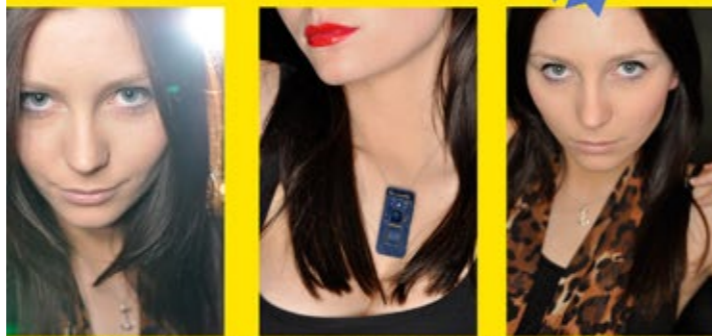
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### These days everyone's a photographer...

So you've got a fry pan, you must be a chef? Of course the possession of a fry pan does not make you a chef. But when it comes to photography, it seems that everyone with a camera is a photographer. The key missing word here is professional.

Having the latest camera model with the most megapixels and largest lens doesn't make you a professional. So what does professional mean? By definition professional can have numerous meanings:

#### Professional

#### Adjective

- 1a. Of, relating to, engaged in, or suitable for a profession: lawyers, doctors, and other professional people.
- 1b. Conforming to the standards of a profession: professional behaviour.
2. Engaging in a given activity as a source of livelihood or as a career: a professional writer.
3. Performed by persons receiving pay: professional football.
4. Having or showing great skill; expert: a professional repair job.

#### Noun

1. A person following a profession, especially a learned profession.
2. One who earns a living in a given or implied occupation: hired a professional to decorate the house.
3. A skilled practitioner; an expert.

The key words seem to be these words; skills, standards and source of income.

The New Zealand Institute of Professional Photography (NZIPP) puts the professional in photography. Members get the opportunity to meet and enjoy the company of like-minded business owners. They are provided with education opportunities, resources and the support from other photographers.

For many years members have been able to gain "Qualified" status by submitting a portfolio for peer review. In 2012 the NZIPP are moving to a new "Accredited Professional Photographer" system for members, known as Continuing Professional Development (CPD). This is aimed at those professional photographers who wish to differentiate themselves and show their clients they are on top of their game.

If you really want to be inspired, be successful and succeed as a professional you should belong to a professional organisation. The NZIPP has members in all corners of New Zealand and regular meetings and events. Visit <http://www.nzipp.org.nz> for further info.

#### Richard Linton

NZIPP Commercial Director

[www.nzipp.org.nz](http://www.nzipp.org.nz)



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One lucky *f11* subscriber will be making room on their coffee table this week for their very own copy of 'Trees of New Zealand'. That lucky person is Andrew Paterson of Auckland, New Zealand. We have notified the winner and his prize will be with him soon. Our thanks to Hodder Moa and Hachette NZ for generously providing this prize.

Well done Andrew!



### OUR OCTOBER SUBSCRIBER PRIZE DRAW WINNER!

The winner of the Phottix Atlas Wireless Flash Trigger kindly supplied courtesy of NZ Distributors Lacklands Limited was professional photographer and subscriber Natalie Bailey from Lithgow, NSW, Australia. We have notified Natalie and her trigger will be on the way soon!

Congratulations and well done!



## The Essentials

There is only one piece of equipment you really can't do without...

I'm a gear junkie, I admit it and I've learned to accept it. I'd like to be able to say after 25 years in this industry that I've outgrown it, but the truth is I haven't. I hang on rumour sites and eagerly await the release of the next camera, lens or widget that will make life easier or help me produce better results, or any other justification I can convince myself and my accountant of. To be fair, in this digital age there is a lot to look forward to. I don't remember film advancing with the leaps and bounds that have occurred in digital capture over the last decade.

The problem with the availability of all of this wondrous equipment is just that – availability. Professional level DSLR equipment, is readily available and it's relatively cheap. Very capable equipment has found its way into the hands of several of my corporate clients over the last few years who are now producing "adequate" images for their web sites, they're even doing headshots and simple product shots themselves.

It's not the end of the road though, as I still work for most of them. I get the call when they need something more than is possible with a halfway decent DSLR, a light tent and a beady eye on the budget. They call me when they need something to look "special" or "professional". Whether they realise it or not

they're not hiring me for my more expensive camera, or the lenses, lights and peripherals in my bags, they're hiring me for my eye, and the mind behind it.

Your eye. Something you take for granted day in, day out. However by itself it's no more powerful than a good camera in the hands of a visual illiterate. It's what your mind lets your eye see that enables you to create an image that stands out from the visual noise we are surrounded by these days.

That noise can be deafening. Never before have more cameras been in the hands of the masses. Phones are the most ubiquitous form, turning the average person into someone ready to capture whatever life throws at them at a moment's notice. Today, anyone and everyone can capture, share and otherwise distribute images around the world in seconds with a few clicks or button pushes.

Of course not all noise is good noise – anyone unfortunate enough to have experienced a Proclaimers live show would testify to that. However when you see clever, striking or otherwise visually compelling images among all that noise they really do stand out.

This is your opportunity to shine. Your opportunity to use your eye and the visual and technical knowledge you've developed over



© Gary Baidon

the years to create images that stand out from the crowd. Images that visually describe ideas and emotions, concepts and desires.

This may mean lifting your game. Every assignment these days requires you to go that extra mile creatively to ensure you deliver what your clients cannot, and ensure that you remain in demand and able to command a decent price for your work in a market that feels increasingly price conscious and displays little respect for the value of our craft.

With this shift of photography to a commodity perhaps you're not getting those "bread and butter" jobs so often these days and you may be finding landing assignments a bit more challenging. But hang in there because if you can get to a point where you are getting booked for your unique visual 'take' on things

your work will feel less like work and more like play. Hey, isn't that why we got into this crazy business in the first place?

**GB**

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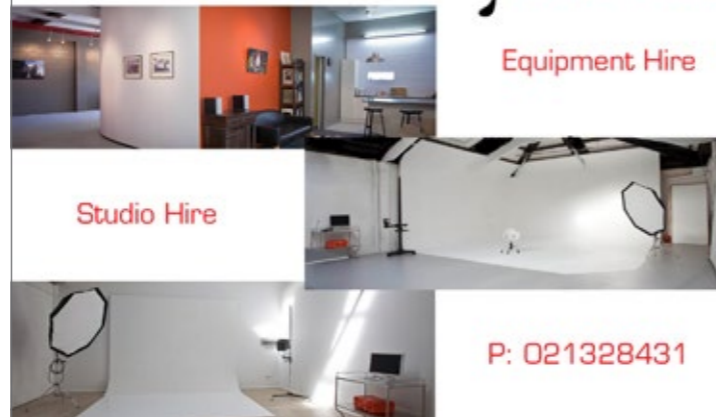
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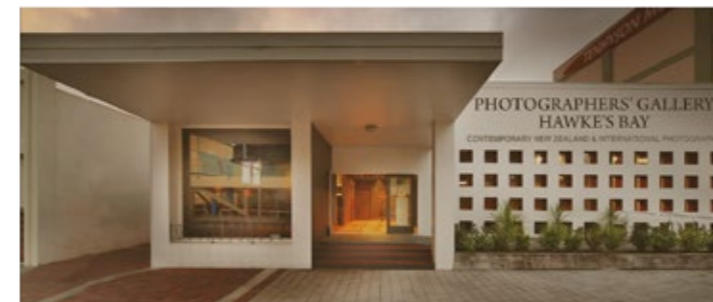
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## One bag to rule them all

It's either an affliction or an indulgence. It's certainly not unique, I share this condition with at least one other member of the *f11* team, and without doubt, one of our readers. James and Mike, you know who you are, oops.

I'm a man with a bit of a bag collection – people say it's a fetish but I feel that's harsh. To be fair, I do have more camera bags than cameras, more laptop bags than laptops...and padded pouches of every size and shape. Now how many blokes can say that?

I'm pretty loyal, almost everything has come from one big brand. I have their big rolling bag for equipment storage, two backpacks for travel, a variety of shoulder bags including a huge one that should have come with a Sherpa, bags that nest in other bags, bags for one wee camera, a bag for one camera and one lens...a bag for the whole shooting match. Everything matches – all black, same fabric, same detailing, same logo, a collection in itself – all is well in the bag world.

That's not the whole story, I have pouches, straps, hooks, slings and webbing so that I can attach things to the bags. I have card holders and name tags so I can label the bags. I have a bag for my monopod that attaches to the bigger bags. The collection of pouches serve to keep small and expensive things safe when they're in the bags.

On the plus side, when new camera gear or other technology devices enter my world I generally have suitable storage on hand waiting for them. When the iPad 2 arrived

to help me promote the magazine I had two suitable padded pouches ready and waiting to accommodate it, both purchased years before in my favourite Tokyo photo store – Yodobashi Camera in Shinjuku.

I'm nothing if not self-analytical, so I've sat myself down and explored what could possibly provide the motivation for the collection. That's how I know that two things drive this.

First, is a compulsion to keep all of my camera and computer equipment looking like the day it left the factory. Nothing less than pristine condition will suffice. Don't ask me why, but I find it impossible to cultivate the disdain for equipment that many so easily adopt. I can admire a press camera that looks like it was dragged behind a four wheel drive – yet still goes perfectly, but I don't want to own it.

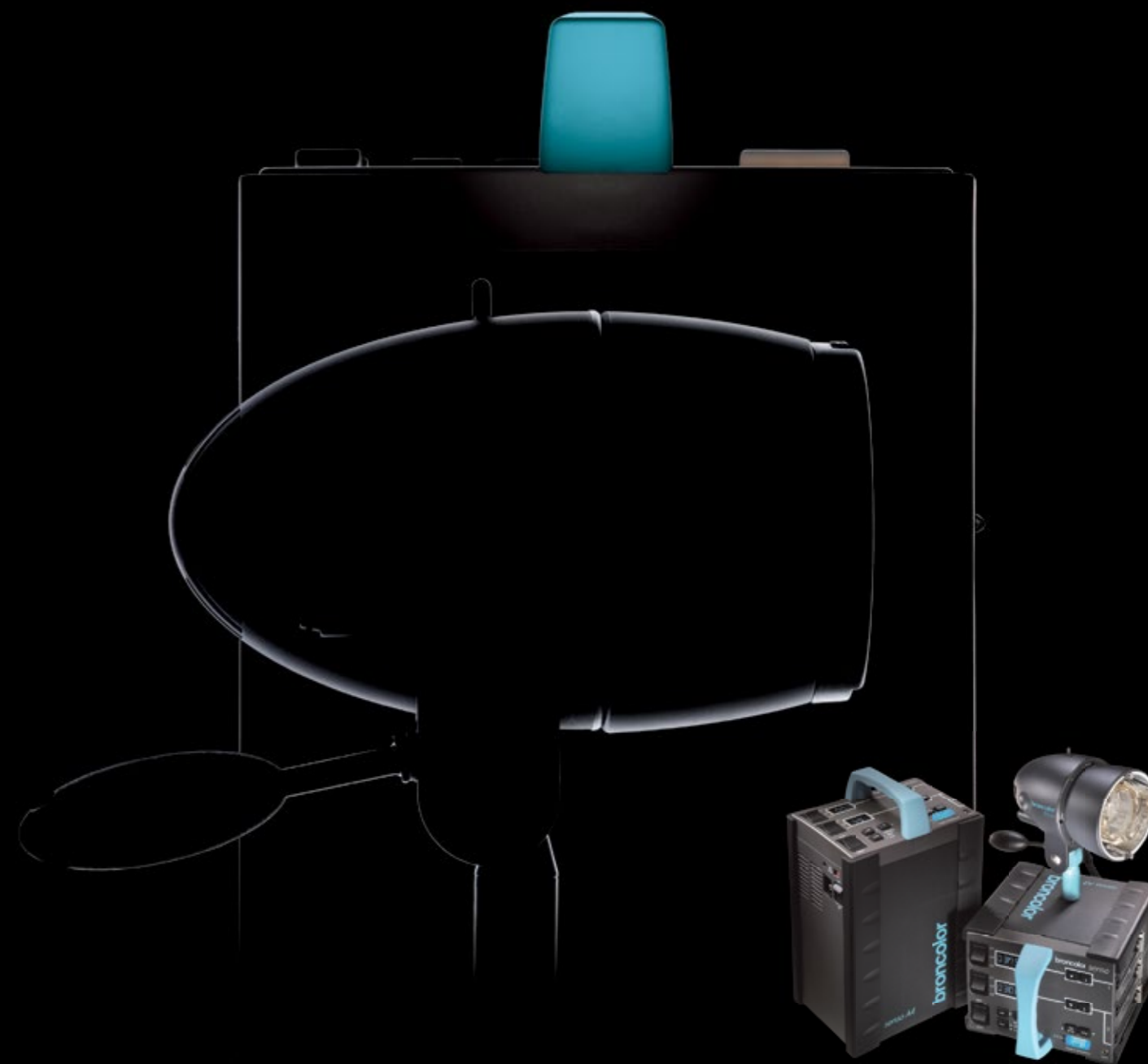
Second? A slightly manic need to be organised and to "have the right bag for the job" when I'm venturing out and about. Not too heavy, not too light, something perfect for just the kit I'm carrying that day, that weekend, that trip... Am I driving, am I flying, or do I need the rickshaw bag today because I'm in Singapore? Yes, almost as silly as that.

There are worse afflictions, come on, I know there must be. At least with mine nobody gets hurt and bag manufacturers prosper. Occasionally I wonder if I might ever find one bag to rule them all? I'm pretty sure I saw it on the internet last week...

TS

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