

ISSUE 52 | MARCH 2016



for PHOTOGRAPHERS
AND AFICIONADOS

www.f11magazine.com

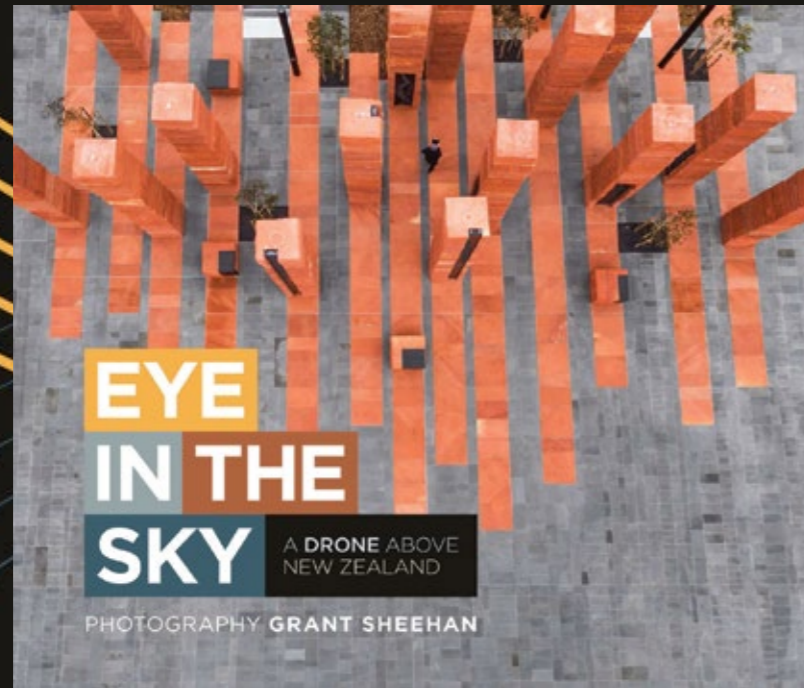
MIRNA PAVLOVIC
Restlessness

NIKI BOON
Wild and free

TOBY TRUEMAN
The Tides

Eye in the Sky: A Drone Above New Zealand

A new book from Grant Sheehan and Phantom House Books



Eye in the Sky: A Drone Above New Zealand, by Grant Sheehan, explores the country from the air, ranging from 10ft to 400ft, in a way that is both unique and compelling. From wide elevated vistas of landscapes and land forms, to close intimate portraits of buildings and textures that conventional aircraft would struggle to capture.

This book is the first of its kind in New Zealand, and adds an extra dimension to the idea of the classic New Zealand photo book and will appeal to wide range of tastes, from those interested in both aerial and drone photography, tourists, lovers of landscape and to those keen to see New Zealand in a new way.

Each photograph is accompanied by the height and GPS location.

Soft cover with flaps | Full colour photographs | \$45.00

Eye In The Sky: A drone above New Zealand is now available from good New Zealand bookshops, from www.eyinthesky.click and www.phantomhouse.com



Welcome to issue 52!

All three photographers featured in this issue have created their individual bodies of work almost entirely* with a one camera, one lens combination. Electing to simplify their equipment solution for a mix of artistic and logistical reasons, they have all placed their emphasis firmly on careful observation rather than the shackles of a camera bag bulging with optics offering alternate viewpoints.

Croatian photographer Mirna Pavlovic is also a writer and an urban explorer. Boldly going where few have gone before, she finds beauty, meaning and more than a little excitement in the desolate places man has deserted and left to decay gracefully. Her travels within her native country and across Europe to discover lost worlds have resulted in a body of work we can only begin to reveal here. Hers is a thoughtful and considered approach to documentary photography.

A trained physiotherapist, New Zealander Niki Boon homeschools her 4 children in Marlborough, at the very top of the South Island. Her long running project, presented in monochrome, documents the simple life that her children enjoy with all of the freedoms and benefits of a rural lifestyle in a beautiful location. Niki says her children are '...right where they belong, covered in mud, wild and free and earth connected in a world where the landscape begins and their little souls end'. (* Only two of Niki's images were taken on lenses other than her 35mm f1.4)

Finally, UK photographer Toby Trueman works by day as a creative director of a production company specialising in video, film and animation. His series, *The Tides*, is an homage to the Scottish coast near where he lives. Careful composition and long exposures have created a series of square format images which present a picture of the balance between sea and sky, at once fleeting and permanent, and the distant horizon which joins them.

Enjoy this issue of *f11*, and ponder the effects of three artists using simple solutions to create bodies of work which will, in all likelihood, stand the test of time. ■

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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.



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 almost 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, 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, outstanding images to share with *f11* readers.



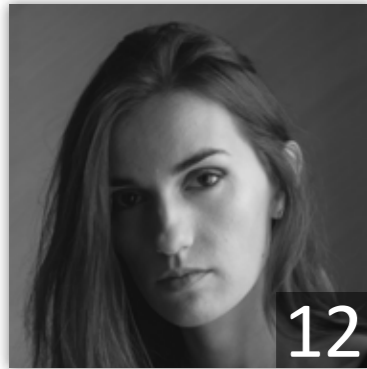
'It is a cruel, ironical art, photography. The dragging of captured moments into the future; moments that should have been allowed to evaporate into the past; should exist only in memories, glimpsed through the fog of events that came after. Photographs force us to see people before their future weighed them down...'

– Kate Morton, *The House at Riverton*

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 146** of this issue.



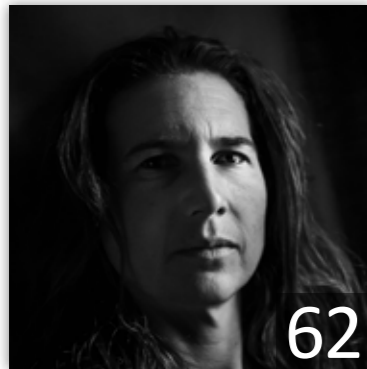
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Restlessness

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© Mirna Pavlovic



Niki BOON

Wild and free

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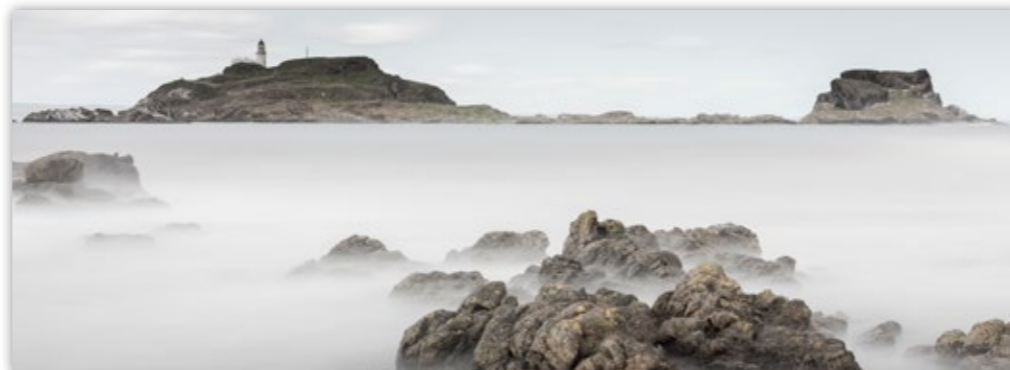
© Niki Boon



Toby TRUEEMAN

The Tides

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© Toby Trueman

'In the unfamiliarity of an abandoned location, the fight or flight instinct kicks in almost immediately. All of the sounds are much louder, the colours are more vivid, the muscles tense up, and the air becomes much harder to breathe. Basically, the atmosphere becomes thick with all of your innate fears, excitement and expectations.' – Mirna Pavlovic



COVER IMAGE
© Mirna Pavlovic
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LAFORET AIR OVER LONDON

Short behind the scenes video of photographer Vincent Laforet's two hour flight over London in 2015, creating a sequence of nighttime images of some of the city's most iconic sites. This new series of photos is part of an ongoing project and soon-to-be book called *Air*, featuring similar aerial photos of Las Vegas, Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco.

Aerial Tech – Mike Isler / Video + Edit – David Geffin / Music – Exist Strategy

Laforet Air via Vimeo

CLICK ON THE SCREEN IMAGE TO VIEW THIS VIDEO



TOYOTA KIKAI

Promo video for Toyota's Kikai concept car from the 2015 Tokyo Motor Show.

Futuristic, quirky and certainly not motoring as we know it, this slick video is fine work. Witness an automaker's effort to reconnect Japanese youth, increasingly disconnected with the car, an attempt to once again affirm the personal conveyance as a vital part of their lifestyle.

WOW Inc via Vimeo

CLICK ON THE SCREEN IMAGE TO VIEW THIS VIDEO



FAR CRY PRIMAL TVC – THE DIRECTORS CUT

Far Cry Primal is an action-adventure video game developed and published by Ubisoft. It was released for the PlayStation 4 and Xbox One on February 23, 2016.

This is director Patrick Clair's private cut of the TVC airing in some markets now.

10,000 BC captured by Phantom footage, A52's creature FX team and design by Elastic.

Patrick Clair via Vimeo

CLICK ON THE SCREEN IMAGE TO VIEW THIS VIDEO



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A reply from digital

Hey film, thanks for writing.

Straight off the bat, total respect and no issue with anything you had to say for yourself in the last issue. You are still the man. LOL.

As my erstwhile predecessor, you made my existence possible and I'm grateful for that. Thanks for not scoffing during my teething years, looking back I can't say I'd have been as tight-lipped! Your resolution blessed brothers Kodachrome and Velvia must have doubled over laughing hysterically at \$30,000 1.5 megapixel sensors in my first DSLRs. The least said about those the better, I wonder are they doorstops now?

I'm really on a roll (no pun intended), I'm getting better and more capable every day. I'm even growing into medium format with some kick ass new sensors, seen the 100 megapixel Phase? You'd need a sheet of 8x10 Velvia to rival that... sorry, can't help it, I'm highly competitive but I'm getting some help with that.

It's a struggle though, just quietly, these photographers are never satisfied with me, they always want more. There's a limit to what I can cram on a chip, but they just keep on pushing. More receptors, larger ones, smaller ones, more sensitive ones, whatever I come up with they want more, or different, or something else.

You never had that, did you? Did anyone bitch and whine about Ektar 25 or Panatomic X or K25? No, they were satisfied, delighted even,

those babies could out resolve most of their lenses by quite a margin. See? I've studied your history and I recognise the incongruities, after all I'm a sensitive new age medium...

Yet my siblings come and go, rise and fall. They have nothing like the enduring decades long shelf lives some of your contemporaries enjoyed. At the end of the day, as digital beings we are all fashion items, desirable triumphs of technology one day and deemed as extinct as dinosaurs the next.

Right now, there's nothing the least bit romantic about being an old digital camera. We're not revered and collected like an F2AS or an M3 or a vintage Rolleiflex. Basically, as soon as we've been bettered we're well on the way on our short journey to becoming e-waste, recycled as hazardous, electronic and plastic scrap. Who knows, I might come back as a rubbish bin? That's planned obsolescence baby!

I'm not being morose, it's just the way it is for me and my kind. We're predestined to go from hero to zero in no time flat, yesterday's plaything so quickly unloved and passed over in the short journey to becoming irrelevance.

Anyway, what I really wanted to say was, don't go away, as long as I'm here I'd like the company.

Tell me about the good old days... ■

TS

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NOTHING EXISTS UNTIL IT IS OBSERVED

Visit our website for
more details:

www.worldphotoadventures.com.au



On Discernment

Crafting your vision

A wise man once said: the trick is not knowing *when* to take the photograph.

The trick is knowing *when not* to take the photograph.

So often, when we are out there with our camera, we may feel that because we have made the effort to make time for our hobby/passion, to assemble our equipment and go somewhere, that we simply must come home with a masterwork.

It is rather like the old joke about the frustrated fisherman who stops at the fish shop and buys a fish on his way home to his family so he has something tangible to show for his Big Day Out. We feel that we must produce something to exhibit. To not do so is to be a failure, and not live up to our expectations of ourselves, and by extension, the expectations of others. I wonder how many of us have put ourselves under such unnecessary pressure. Most of us, I would venture.

As a result of this internal self-flagellation we may scurry here and there, making pictures of things we would not normally be interested in

and would probably pass by, because we can and because we must and because we will not feel fulfilled unless we return home with memory cards groaning under the weight of files which will almost certainly be deleted, consigned to the dustbins of our misery.

There is another way.

We can practise mindful discernment. We can opt to limit ourselves to a fixed number of images much as we did when we shot film.

Today (I will tell myself) I have 36 images/opportunities available to me – if you imagine yourself as a 35mm shooter, or perhaps 12 exposures if you see yourself as a medium format photographer. Or you can envisage yourself as a large format worker a la Ansel Adams and hold yourself to 6 frames.

In doing so we are learning to be discerning and in practising not making photographs, we will begin to actively and consciously refine our sense of what works for us, and by extension, consider how we actually see. The process of conscious rejection will better inform our



© Tony Bridge

understanding of what constitutes acceptance. We will begin to see more acutely.

Another way of developing photographic discernment is to pin ourselves to a place and work with what we have. In other words, you nominate a spot and stand there, perhaps using only one focal length and giving yourself a fixed time to make those exposures. The scene may at first appear to have nothing to offer but if we stay with it new perspectives and spatial relationships will come.

It may however have too many possibilities, and therefore the issue becomes one of discernment in relation to choice. We may even find new paths for ourselves through the photographic process and a new vocabulary to be explored and incorporated into our visual expression. This is a practice I undertake from time to time or when I am feeling visually clogged.

I had gone down to the harbour to visit a friend. I had just missed the ferry to the other side of the harbour, so I had an hour's wait until the next one. It was a perfect opportunity to consider my own seeing and to practise my photographic scales.

For a long time, a core picture making issue for me has been the nature of horizon and the significance of its placement. What does it signify and what is the effect of where I locate it relative to the frame?

An associated issue is the question of how I visually signify what constitutes the horizon. How far can I go before the term horizon has no meaning? Where I was standing, the island on the horizon was the only identifiable thing of consequence, a tonality barely discernible in a field of pure tonalities. Did the darker tonality of the island on the horizon constitute the horizon itself or did it serve to delineate the actual horizon?

There was only one way to find out.

I made a series of exposures. ■

TB

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Mirna PAVLOVIC

Restlessness

It's no secret that here at *f11* Magazine we are great aficionados of the photographic pursuit known as urban exploration, often shortened to *urbex*. The bold proponents of this form of adventure enter forbidden, forgotten or overlooked spaces and places with the desire to tread lightly, take nothing but photographs and leave only their footprints behind. The gentlest of trespassers, they show the greatest of respect for the secret places they explore and document for those of us less intrepid.

Croatian photographer and writer Mirna Pavlovic could be simply described as a storyteller with a severe case of restlessness. A lover of all things obscure, she is always in pursuit of new discoveries, in this instance abandoned places to discover and explore.

After a fateful, and very unusual, trip into ice-clad Bulgaria years ago, she caught the travel bug. Her quest for the abandoned, the forgotten and the derelict has led her all over Europe, these travels fuelled by the desire and a desperate yearning to break out of the ▶



One of the many derelict villas that dot the Italian landscape, countless in number and beautiful in decay. 2015. Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens. © Mirna Pavlovic

prescribed norms of moving through more regular urban environments. But most of all, that same quest is one of identity, tirelessly seeking to find her own reasons behind the urge to explore, in places where the past, the present and the future collide, merge and form a reality of their own.

Mirna collaborated as a writer on *Between Nowhere & Never – Photographs of Forgotten Places*, a book showcasing the photographs of a fellow explorer, Reginald Van de Velde, released worldwide. Regular readers may remember that we featured his work in issue 22 of this magazine, in June 2013. That feature is still available to read on line, visit the All Issues page of the *f11* Magazine website.

Rather than pursuing a career in academia, Mirna now combines her two Master's degrees, one in English Language and Literature and the other in Comparative Literature, with a new-found passion for photography. This allows her to incorporate her training in creative writing into projects that bring together her writing and her photographs – a way of imbuing these abandoned locations with new life. As Mirna says:

‘To me, a picture is worth a thousand words. Literally.’

In addition to writing, her photography has been shown as part of several group exhibitions, most notably in the PH21 Gallery in Budapest, at Zagreb Salon, an international photography competition, and the Artichoke festival in Zagreb. Last year she was invited to talk about her project on abandoned places at the Open Show, organised by Organ Vida, the Balkan's most prestigious photography festival, and on national television.

Mirna talks about her work in a concise artist's statement:

‘Abandoned places exist at the edge of known space, in a reality of their own. In a time of their own. A time that is difficult to comprehend, yet

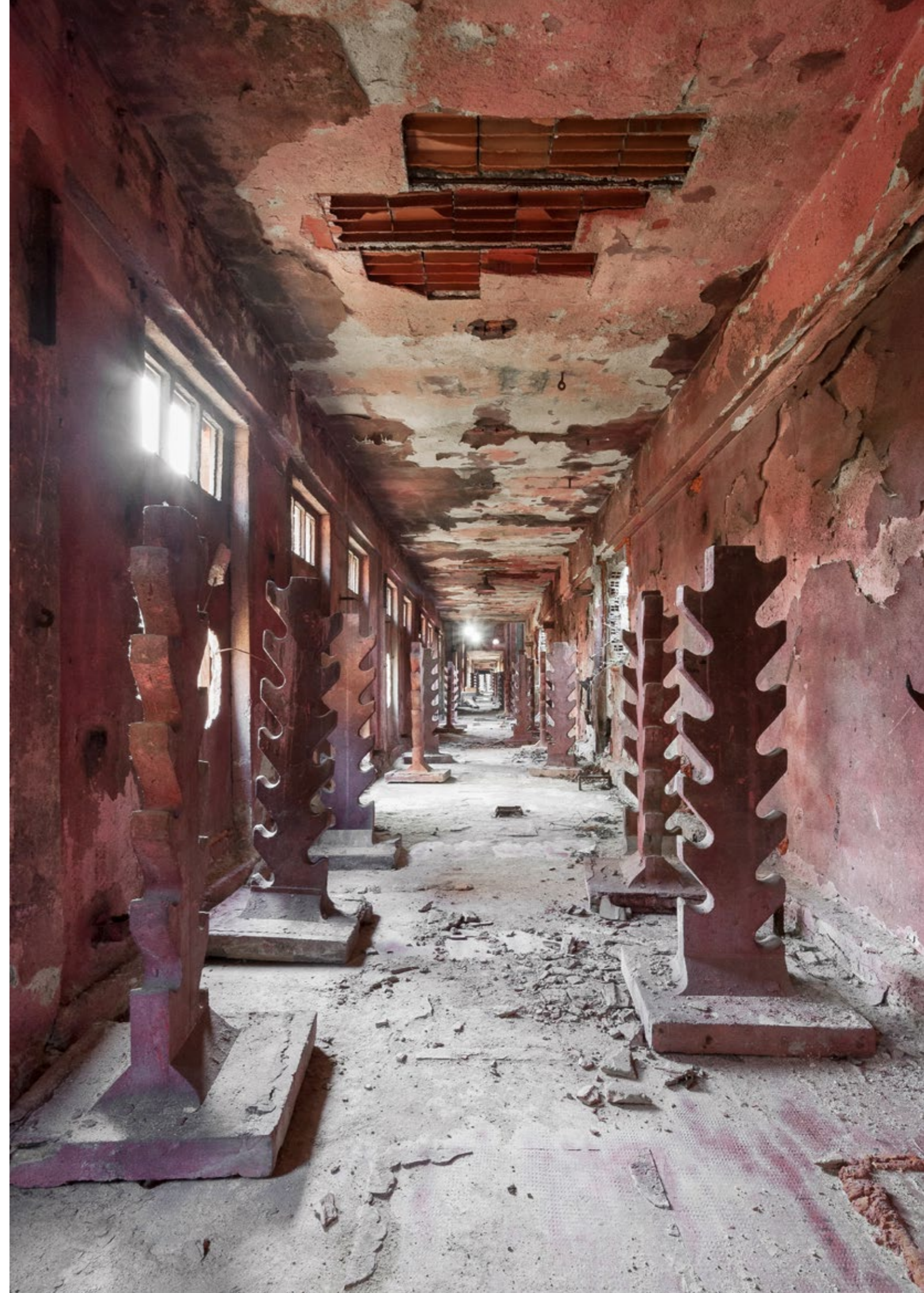
starts to exist when the past, the present and the future collide and merge to produce temporal incongruities that are scattered all over the urban and rural environment.

They are never truly dead, yet never really alive. Precariously treading along the border between life and death, decay and growth, the seen and the unseen, the past and the present, abandoned places confusingly encompass both at the same time, thus leaving the ordinary passerby overwhelmed with both attraction and revulsion. An uncertainty of what to do, a discrepancy between the wish to look away and the unconscious desire to step into them.

In a culture that increasingly restricts movement in urban environments, the acts of transgression and trespass into abandoned spaces becomes equally as incongruous in nature as the spaces being explored. The act of exploring, like the abandonments, becomes in itself an act that is both invisible and increasingly present. Both suppressed and flourishing. It becomes a desperate cry for freedom in a world where everything is prescribed, regulated and expected.

Explorers are drawn to places that merge these opposing unconscious forces with such a tangible brutality, and they themselves become vehicles of disparity, embodying and assimilating the otherness and the radical alterity offered by abandonments. This project strives to explore these questions of identity and how abandoned spaces not only flirt with, but rather merge polar opposites which, in turn, appeal to our own unconscious desires to walk on the edge of what should or shouldn't be done, in places that struggle to find their own definition. In places where time had stopped to offer us a tiny bit of escape from a world in which it is moving too fast. ▶

*A hallway inside a monstrous industrial complex, Italy
2015. Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens.
© Mirna Pavlovic*



Abandonments offer a plethora of stories. Not only stories about their own history, but stories about the society that left them and stories about individual journeys as we step into places that exist at the edge of known space. This is why I pour my heart and soul into this type of photography, because it is not simply documenting, it is storytelling.

My images rely on a sense of scale, introspection and imagery of the mind. Photographing abandoned places is not merely a quest to document a society slowly losing its grandeur and its will to prosper and preserve. Nor is it about seeking grandeur in a collapsing structure, although this aspect should not be completely overlooked. It is rather about provoking a certain get-up-and-go feeling. About reclaiming places deemed inaccessible and/or forbidden. It's about the deconstruction of everyday life.'

f11: Hi Mirna, welcome to f11, thanks for sharing your thoughts and images here.

MP: Thank you for inviting me to do so, it really is a pleasure.

f11: Tell us about some of your photographic or artistic influences, people who have knowingly or unknowingly helped to steer your vision?

MP: The photographers I absolutely look up to are Nadav Kander, Rob Hornstra, Evgenia Arbugaeva, Anna Filipova, Danila Tkachenko and Laurent Kronental.

f11: Given your passion for literature, are there writers who have also influenced your interest and approach towards documenting these abandoned places? Do any works spring to mind?

MP: Of course, I would say that, as my approach to documenting abandoned places is to create hybrid works that combine short stories and photography, the influence of literature is inevitable, especially considering my intensive academic background. In my interest and artistic

expression I was moulded and influenced by the great classical works that are inseparable with adventure and mystery, such as Beowulf, Le Morte d'Arthur, works of Shakespeare, Austen, Lewis and writers that came later and shaped the genre of fantasy, like Lord Dunsany, Tolkien, Le Guin... All of them also shaped my sense of adventure, and most of all, my yearning for adventure, which consequently translates to my photographs.

f11: Many of the places you choose to explore are quite inaccessible, do you sense that there are ever present and quite tangible elements of danger in these locations?

MP: Mostly the danger comes from the structure itself, and a lack of adequate preparation by the photographer. Many of these places are already quite far gone in terms of deterioration, so there is always quite an inherent risk of certain parts simply collapsing. Taking those risks for granted, not watching your step, not taking extra precaution – there lies the real danger.

f11: I guess it's safer to explore as part of a small group, rather than as an individual? Also, what sort of precautions do you take?

MP: Exploring as an individual has its own undeniable appeal. That is how I started out, and still sometimes do. There is something quintessentially adventurous in being inside an abandoned place on your own. You are acutely aware of anything and everything around you. In those instances I truly feel like an explorer rather than a photographer-explorer when I'm in a larger group. However, the first and greatest precaution one can take is simply to explore with an additional person. That way you don't jump at every sound and you feel more comfortable when taking shots. Other precautions are something I've picked up over the years: always have gloves at hand, walk up the stairs one by one to put less strain on potentially collapsible structures, remember the way you came in, first scout the place before you start taking photos...

f11: Does that slight hint of danger and the unknown add some frisson to the whole experience, does your heart beat faster when you're exploring or shooting in these spaces?

MP: Oh that's essentially why we do it. In that feeling of risk, adventure and the unknown we feel most alive. The perception of reality shifts and everything takes on a more immediate taste to it. In the unfamiliarity of an abandoned location, the fight or flight instinct kicks in almost immediately. All of the sounds are much louder, the colours are more vivid, the muscles tense up, and the air becomes much harder to breathe. Basically, the atmosphere becomes thick with all of your innate fears, excitement and expectations. Because abandoned places exist in such temporal and spatial incongruities, they offer a space that demands shedding constructed rules and identities, precisely because no rules apply to them. In this way abandoned places become blank canvases upon which we can then paint with our own personal brushes. They take on whichever context we decide to put them in. Of course, their special atmosphere majorly influences our experiences, but how we feel inside of them is mostly a reflection of us.

f11: I can see from your image captions that you've been very disciplined in your choice of equipment, one Nikon DSLR and one extreme wide angle zoom lens. Is this driven by artistic or logistical reasons?

MP: Mostly logistical. Over the years I've done a lot of shedding of unnecessary equipment. I used to carry around one extra camera, a film Praktica BX20, and two additional lenses, a Nikkor 50mm f1.8 and a Carl Zeiss Jena Flektogon 35mm f2.4. I would then divide my time between shooting digital with the D80 and the 10-24mm, and film with the Praktica and the 35mm. It proved too cumbersome at the end and divided my attention too much, so I decided to focus on one thing for the time being. That extra gear also added weight in places where it's extremely important to travel light.

f11: I guess a sturdy tripod is the missing element not mentioned in the captions? What's your preference and do you ever use a monopod instead?

MP: I have a love-hate relationship with my tripod. On the one hand, it's physically impossible to shoot without it and I would never go to a location equipped only with my camera. On the other hand, it's the same problem as mentioned above. It makes my movements much more restricted, and moving around slower and more complicated. I have never tried a monopod, but the tripod I use is a refurbished Cullmann 3150, an old thing not in production anymore, but as sturdy as they come. It can also go to unbelievable heights, more than anything I've seen on the market today, which is really important to me.

f11: Are you capturing your images in RAW, and what's your typical post production workflow? Are you only minimally invasive or do you do quite a bit of post on each image?

MP: Always and without exception yes, I shoot RAW. The first step of my process is to do lens correction and basic tonal changes in Camera Raw, like adjusting the white balance, bringing up the shadows or saving the highlights. Then I transfer to Photoshop where I mostly just do a couple of things: curves to make my images brighter, and hue/saturation layers to analyse which of the hues are predominant in the midtones, highlights and shadows, and then trying to make the overall feel of the image as neutral as possible. Nothing stresses me out as much as having blues in the highlights or greens in the midtones. So my main concern is to balance that out, brighten it up and bring out the details by putting in some contrast where I need it.

f11: What ISO do you prefer to shoot these interiors at, and what would your longest exposure typically be?

MP: I keep my ISO at 100 almost all of the time, to minimize the noise to which my camera is really prone. The only time you'll catch me ▶

at ISO 200 or more is when it's getting really dark and I forgot to bring my remote shutter release. The exposure depends on the light, but in ideal conditions the longest exposure doesn't go much beyond 5-6 seconds. In less than ideal situations, the longest exposure can be anything from 30 seconds to one minute.

f11: Are you using any ND or graduated filters to control the light?

MP: I haven't felt the need to use them so far, although after my last exploration, where the light was very tricky, I am now giving the idea much more thought.

f11: Does film work or video interest you? Many of the places you explore are extremely theatrical, lending themselves to the moving image as well as the still, have you ever had thoughts in this direction?

MP: I think this will be the first time I will actually shape these thoughts both on paper and in my mind as well. It's coincidental that you should ask, but I did just recently have similar thoughts, but more in the direction of *cinemagraphs*. I know it's a far cry from an actual video, in which I am not so interested, but I see it as falling somewhere on the spectrum between photography and video. Closer to photography, probably, but still. I've always thought how amazing it would be to have a moving photograph that still retains the physicality of a photograph, but with a mysterious and intriguing quality to it added by slight movement. Essentially it is exactly what I am trying to do by writing stories to accompany my photographs – make them more alive. A cinemagraph would add that dimension as well. ▶



A grand Portuguese palace built in the 1800s, used as a ministry at a later stage only to be completely abandoned in the late 20th century. It is a site of great dispute, as the citizens continuously clash with the government over its fate. A masterpiece of architecture and interior detail, proving that sometimes form triumphs over functionality. Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens. © Mirna Pavlovic

f11: Did your photography start with digital, or is there some use of traditional film in your background?

MP: My photography started with film, using that old Praktica BX20 I mentioned earlier. Looking back on it, it was a good, yet very difficult way to start. You have no immediacy, as you do with digital, which makes you think about the composition and the exposure more. It also adds quite a bit more stress, since you can't actually see what you're getting, and for a beginner, that can add unnecessary tension to an already tense situation, and there's a lot of frustration in the learning curve process. Although I've switched to digital, I am increasingly thinking about going back to film, and purchasing a medium format camera for that purpose. I think film has such a timeless aspect to it, and I'm personally instinctively always drawn more to photos made on film.

f11: Do you have links within a global community of urban explorers or are yours confined to your own region or country?

MP: I am greatly involved in the world exploring community, with a lot of friends, acquaintances and general contacts all over the world, including here at home. Explorers tend to add other explorers on social media so we inevitably get to know each other, even if we never meet in person. Within half a year, you get really intertwined with the community and people start to notice your work. As I travel a lot, there are also constant opportunities to meet other explorers. ▶



The main hall of an abandoned industrial site. Undisclosed location in Europe, 2014. Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens. © Mirna Pavlovic

f11: I see other European countries feature in your caption data, are there many destinations around you still to explore, or will you increasingly have to search further afield for suitable urbex locations?

MP: There are enough abandoned places for three lifetimes. I have been travelling for almost two years now, but I've barely begun to experience everything that I would like to. However, yes, there is always that impulse to search further and travel further than before, exploring the fringes and uncovering new abandoned sites.

f11: If you set out to show these images with the accompaniment of music, what sort of style or artist would you see as a suitable fit for the content?

MP: Ah, that's always a difficult thing to determine. On a couple of occasions I've been asked to provide music to accompany the slides of my work, and I've always struggled with that. I would have to go for something instrumental, strong yet not overpowering, almost like a musical score for a movie, with hints of mystery. The kind of music that makes you want to put on your boots, carve out a staff and search for the council of Elrond. (Obscure Tolkien reference –ED)

f11: Are there specific destinations that prove elusive, ones that you long to visit and explore?

MP: So many. There's Hashima Island and the exclusion zone in Japan, the snow-covered Siberia and the now quite touristy Chernobyl which I would still like to see one day. Quite a few others that I'll keep to myself for the time being, as preparations for new projects are always underway. ▶



*Only the bed springs remain from what was once a bed inside an Italian villa, 2015.
Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens. © Mirna Pavlovic*

f11: Is there a book planned in your future, and will you write the accompanying text to these collections of images?

MP: I definitely see a book in the future, in which all that I do now with the writing and photography would come together into a fluid narrative but on a much grander scale. That's precisely what my photography revolves around – writing stories to accompany the photos. I try to write at least something for every image I publish. Recently, though, I've been in a small hiatus. However, I have a new platform for writing now, which is the blog on my new site, and there I'll return to writing bigger stories as for social media I now tend to write shorter ones. My interests are also slowly shifting more to photojournalism, which provides much more fertile ground for chasing concrete, important stories and writing them down. So my gaze is slowly shifting towards figuring out how to mould the stories of abandoned places into producing a socially important narrative.

f11: Thanks again Mirna, it's been exciting to have you with us, and we love the work.

MP: It's been wonderful, thank you for this great opportunity! ■

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The place was ablaze with desolation. Reeking of decay, it offered a comforting solace. Sun found its way through the cracks in the concrete, speckling the rough ground in patches of skin-burning warmth. The walls were bare, riddled with holes through which rebar stuck out like bones from flesh. Abandoned cement factory, Italy 2014. Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens. © Mirna Pavlovic



The attic of an abandoned sugar factory. Croatia, 2014. Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens. © Mirna Pavlovic



A small private chapel, in no way revealing on the outside the amazing woodworking it hides on the inside. The subtle blue tones and the gentle craftsmanship produce an ethereal atmosphere. Rural Belgium, 2015. Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens. © Mirna Pavlovic



ANNOD:1010

◀◀ Previous double page spread: One of the inner chambers of an old monastery, deep amidst the rolling hills of Tuscany, Italy, 2015. Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens. © Mirna Pavlovic



Another perspective within the grand Portuguese palace built in the 1800s, used as a ministry at a later stage only to be completely abandoned in the late 20th century. Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens. © Mirna Pavlovic



◀◀ Previous double page spread: Yet another abandoned Italian villa, this one due to a fairly recent earthquake that left the entire building unstable and dangerous. Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens. © Mirna Pavlovic

‘Precariously treading along the border between life and death, decay and growth, the seen and the unseen, the past and the present, abandoned places confusingly encompass both at the same time, thus leaving the ordinary passer-by overwhelmed with both attraction and revulsion.’



The vast inner courtyard of an immense asylum, now completely overgrown. Italy, 2014. Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens. © Mirna Pavlovic



◀◀ Previous double page spread: The air strained under the weight of memories, the hallways of this ancient monastery-turned-castle were now empty and the courtyards overgrown. Just the church remained, glorious in its wooden and stone grandeur, now almost completely encased in scaffolding. Italy, 2015. Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens. © Mirna Pavlovic



The damask wallpapers slowly peel off, as the floor rapidly collapses in another room of this grand villa. Situated in the very centre of a bustling town, but well out of sight. Undisclosed location, Europe 2015. Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens. © Mirna Pavlovic



It was too easy to get lost among the many corridors of this ancient Italian monastery-turned-castle from the 14th century, and before I knew it, the place consumed me with its chambers, stone slides, bone-filled holes, rickety stairs, marble altars and chapels. Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens. © Mirna Pavlovic



◀◀ Previous double page spread: A decayed room inside an abandoned chateau in rural Belgium, 2015. Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens. © Mirna Pavlovic

'Abandonments offer a plethora of stories. Not only stories about their own history, but stories about the society that left them and stories about individual journeys as we step into places that exist at the edge of known space.'



View of the ceiling inside a castle in Italy, 2015. Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens. © Mirna Pavlovic



◀◀ Previous double page spread: Once bustling train construction and maintenance yard, built before the World Wars and abandoned in the 90s. Croatia, 2015. Italy, 2015. Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens. © Mirna Pavlovic



The decaying staircase of a small forgotten factory. Croatia 2015. Italy, Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens. © Mirna Pavlovic



◀◀ Previous double page spread: A cooling tower, part of one of the numerous plants in Belgium currently in the process of demolition. 2014. Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens. © Mirna Pavlovic



A vast masterpiece of socialist grandeur with an indisputable air of importance. It was built in the 70s to educate a new generation of political leaders, but now stands abandoned, overgrown and vandalised. Undisclosed location, Europe 2014. Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens. © Mirna Pavlovic



*An abandoned villa in the middle of the sun-parched countryside, Portugal 2015.
Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens. © Mirna Pavlovic*



BENECIA
491

◀◀ Previous double page spread: The crumbling innards of a former hospital, specialising in the treatment of tuberculosis, built in the 30s, Italy 2015. Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens. © Mirna Pavlovic

'Photographing abandoned places is not merely a quest to document a society slowly losing its grandeur and its will to prosper and preserve. Nor is it about seeking grandeur in a collapsing structure, although this aspect should not be completely overlooked. It is rather about provoking a certain get-up-and-go feeling. About reclaiming places deemed inaccessible and/or forbidden.'



The grand living room inside an abandoned chateau in rural Belgium, 2015. Nikon D80 with 10-24mm f3.5 Nikkor lens. © Mirna Pavlovic

Niki BOON

Wild and free

Niki Boon is a mother of four based in Marlborough, New Zealand. She originally trained as a physiotherapist and spent 6 years working here in New Zealand and in the UK.

Her passion for photography was rekindled when she stopped working after her second child was born.

Her current project, the one we're sharing here, was born from her desire to document her family's days as they pursue an alternative education and lifestyle within a rural environment.

Niki's artist statement :

'We live a simple life in rural New Zealand, my children are alternatively educated and live without a television or other modern electronic devices, a lifestyle that may seem unconventional to some, but I am here to celebrate the magical place I choose to live with my family.

It was with our decision to educate our children alternatively that documenting their lives ▶



*Brand new lamb love. Canon EOS 5D MkIII
with EF 35mm f1.4 L USM lens. © Niki Boon*

became so important for me. The way I document, and what I chose to document, changed at this point.

Documenting their days has helped me to reflect on our decision. We are often bombarded with questions, and criticisms, and my photos helped me to be OK with our days and to be contented that they were happy and experiencing the world around them and learning along the way.

I document their days together, in an environment full of nature and uninhibited play. I photograph as a physical record of their childhood, life as it is, the real, but also as a reflection of a childhood rooted deep in my own past, for me a most sincere place of freedom.

As well as the joy and freedoms of their childhood, I want to document the other aspects of what childhood is, and what it is to grow up, and for this reason I choose to show images which may depict the loneliness and solitude of childhood, the pain and hurt that is also experienced, the confusion and struggles of growing up, and striving to understand the mysteries of the land and society we had to grow into.

I believe my children are right where they belong covered in mud, wild and free and earth connected in a way where the landscape begins and their little souls end.

My initiation into photography started whilst working as a physiotherapist through a particularly dreary Scottish winter where I took a dark room course for something to do in the dark evenings and weekends. The appeal for me was instant, as I fell in love with the magic of both the art and the science of the picture ▶



Muddy river play. Canon EOS 5D MkIII with EF 35mm f1.4 L USM lens. © Niki Boon

making process from start to finish. My photography ceased completely on returning to New Zealand (no access to darkrooms) and only with the birth of my second and third child and then our path in lifestyle and education style did the same passion re-emerge.

I choose to use black and white processing to depict their story as I find that black and white enables me to focus more on the moment and also helps me to see light differently, rather than focusing on colours I find I focus more on the direction and quality of light.

My dream is for viewers to be moved by my images in some way, to feel something. I don't necessarily desire everyone to like my images, or even understand them, I just want them to feel a little. To see the honesty, the reality, the raw, the truth in those that I photograph. I want viewers to see the life they live and the wonder and depth in their everyday, the beauty in the ordinary.'

f11: Welcome Niki, thanks for being here and for sharing these wonderful images with us.

NB: Thank you so much for this opportunity to share my work. I have followed your magazine for some time now, so it is really exciting to think of my work being included amongst that of others you've so carefully selected.

f11: You came to photography via the darkroom, that's normally the second step rather than the first in the evolution of a photographer. What if any photography experience came before that course?

NB: Actually, it was a huge part of my evolution as a photographer, I was working in Scotland and in the middle of a very grey and cold winter, and I saw an advertisement for a darkroom course that ran over a couple of weekends, it appealed so I enrolled and spent the rest of the winter weekends learning and mastering darkroom skills which also led to discovering a passion for photographing people.

f11: Have you studied the work of other photographers, and where do your influences lie?

NB: I haven't formally studied other photographers, but informally there are many many photographers work that I love looking at...too many to list for sure, but recently I purchased Ernesto Bazan's *Cuba* which I love and have looked at almost daily since I got it. I also love Larry Towell's *The world from my back porch*. Sally Mann is another artist who's work moves me on a deep level. It is my hope that one day I will be able to create pictures that move people to feel something.

f11: Are you still using traditional film and darkroom techniques or have you migrated your monochrome photography to digital capture and output?

NB: Unfortunately, my life right now with four children at home 24 hours a day makes it challenging to pursue experimentation with darkroom techniques, so for now I continue to try to master my post processing digitally. It has been a long road for me learning this, and I still have a long way to go.

f11: Tell us about your equipment, processing and post processing workflow?

NB: Currently I use a Canon EOS 5D MkIII with a 35mm lens. All of my post processing is done in Lightroom. I often start with a preset from VSCO and then tweak it heavily in Lightroom.

f11: Which 35mm lens are you using?

NB: I have just recently bought the Canon 35mm f1.4 lens, which I love! Prior to that I was using the Canon f2.0 version, which I also loved, it is a lot lighter and smaller, but also noisier. Now I am enjoying the fast aperture of the new lens, it's fun to play with.

f11: The 35mm focal length has always been prized by photojournalists, but do you ever find yourself hankering after shorter or longer lenses when shooting?

NB: 35mm seems to work well with the way I like to compose my photos, it often works for me to be in closer to my children, I feel as though I am more in the moment that way, and my children are not bothered at all by my close presence, it doesn't impose on their play at all. So I don't aspire to own a longer lens, even when taking more portrait type images.

f11: You obviously love working in available light, but do you ever supplement this with flash or any other form of introduced light?

NB: With my personal work, no. I am more often than not capturing their world outside, and I haven't found a need for artificial light. Occasionally if taking some photos inside late at night there might be light from a household lamp, so in a sense that's available light as well.

f11: Are you capturing RAW files or jpegs? Also, are you capturing in colour and converting to black and white in your post processing, or capturing in monochrome to start with?

NB: I capture RAW files in colour and then convert to black and white in my post processing. It seems to work well for me. I can often visualise a scene in black and white when I see it in front of me, and I am trying to teach myself to better see light and shadow over the confusion of colour in a scene, it is a work in progress. I have read that some people shoot in monochrome to start with as it helps with this, and I have thought about maybe trying this too.

f11: So digital capture, a computer and the internet obviously play a big part in your image making. It sounds like these are major exceptions to a life you've made for yourself and your children which is relatively devoid of electronic playthings?

NB: Yes, for me the computer is vital for my photography, all my images are downloaded and processed on our computer. The internet too, has played a big part recently. 18 months ago I set up my Facebook page, and it has been a

wonderful resource for me to 'meet' other photographers, especially like-minded ones. I have learnt an enormous amount from being able to be involved in discussions with others around everything photography. I live rurally, and my nearest town is a small one, so the community of photographers around me is small. My children know that I use the computer for my 'work', but I limit my use of it as much as I can during the day. It is the only electronic device that we have in the house, and my children, to date, have yet to ask to use it, which is great.

f11: How do the children respond to the fact that you're constantly documenting their lives to such a degree? Are they entirely comfortable with the ever present camera, or do they occasionally rebel against this?

NB: I think they just accept it as part of their life, it doesn't bother them. I don't ask them to stop what they are doing or pose, apart from the occasional 'could you just do that again', so it very rarely stops their play, and they don't seem conscious of the camera being focused on them when they play at all, they just carry on as they always do.

f11: Does being behind the camera prevent you to some degree from being a part of the action, or somehow any less 'in the moment' than you might otherwise be?

NB: That is a very interesting question, I guess to a degree it does, but I always try to make sure that the camera doesn't predominate over my presence, and while it is often present it's not always up to my face. As I get to know my style and what I like to capture, I am getting better at seeing the scene and only taking a picture when it all comes together, so I can be in the moment as a mother as well as a photographer. ▶

f11: Do you ever look back on some of the images you've created and wish that you had been more of a participant and less of a spectator?

NB: Back when I was still very unsure of terminology and functions, or how I wanted to take the picture, I was possibly more intensely concentrating on developing a relationship with the camera, although I do believe that I was still very much present as a mother.

f11: Given the heavy demands of looking after and home schooling 4 children, when do you find time to edit and work on your images on the computer?

NB: It's not easy at all. Given the relaxed nature of my children's learning, occasionally there are opportunities to grab a few minutes at the computer during the day, but the demands of being a mother usually see me not feeling so great about too much of this, so it is mostly late nights, and early mornings. I am very much a morning person and this often works best for me, and I love to work in a silent house these days, as our everyday environment tends to be busy and loud.

f11: Do you print any of your images to display at home, or enjoy these purely on the small screen?

NB: Rather embarrassingly I have to admit to not having done much of this at all, with the exception of a few 6x4 inch prints. Although I have recently been making quite a few photo books for the children, as it is my preferred way for them to see their pictures, and that way they have access to them whenever they wish. It is my goal this year to print some of their ▶



Practicing a shooting scene for his made up play. Canon EOS 5D MkIII with EF 35mm f1.4 L USM lens. © Niki Boon

images larger. I have a passion for the printed image, and for this reason I love to save money for other photographers books, as I believe this is the ultimate result for any photographer, so I will work to back this up with my own work. I am in the process of working with someone here in Blenheim who might be able to help me with this.

f11: Are you backing up this important archive of images to another location, or on a cloud sharing system?

NB: Currently I use two external hard drives for this, but I am not as vigilant as I could be. Thank you for the reminder to look into extra and alternative archive systems for this vital function.

f11: Do you have other photographic projects on the go, or is this your life's work right now?

NB: I do photograph for other families on occasion, and I also have small side projects within my personal work, one of them being a small project with my eldest daughter who is at a very interesting stage in her childhood. At this point, I think my photography reflects my everyday life with my four children at home all day every day, living and learning together.

f11: Does colour photography have any appeal to you, if not for this work, then for future projects?

NB: I do have a few pictures that I take that speak to me very loudly in colour, and for me they will never be black and white. For now, I see our daily scenes in black and white, as for me there is magic in black and white, maybe this comes from my dark room days, I am not sure, but also I love to see the relationship ▶



Hide and seek. Canon EOS 5D MkIII with EF 35mm f1.4 L USM lens. © Niki Boon

between light and shadow in black and white, and right now I find this more interesting than the relationship between colours. It may change in time, I guess we will see.

f11: Do you feel like you are part of a photo community, with exposure to other photographers around you, or is this work largely a private passion developed in splendid isolation?

NB: For me the internet has been instrumental with this. Since I started my Facebook page 18 months ago I have been able to find some incredibly supportive, creative, and knowledgeable online photography communities that I have learnt so much from. That would never have been possible here where I live in rural New Zealand. I am so so grateful for this.

f11: Do you have any mentors now, people you can turn to for help, advice or critique?

NB: I am so lucky and very grateful to have met so many incredibly talented, generous and amazing artists through the internet, many of whom have helped me with a multitude of different aspects of my photography journey.

f11: Is this the first time you've shared this work with a large community of image makers and aficionados?

NB: To date, Facebook has been a great platform for me to share my work on, and I am lucky to have a group of people who follow me there.

f11: Have any of the children shown some level of interest in photography?

NB: Not yet, but maybe as they get older an interest may develop for some of them. Who knows? ▶



Hanging out at home. Canon EOS 5D MkIII with EF 35mm f1.4 L USM lens.. © Niki Boon

f11: Children grow up, they'll move on and find their own way in the world. What plans do you have for your photography at that point in your life?

NB: I was just thinking about this a few days ago, it is an interesting question. I guess there will be an end date, and I am picking it will come before I am ready for it. I think and hope that my pictures and photography will evolve with them, but I guess we will see. I have got an ongoing personal project with my eldest daughter 'On being 11', documenting just what it is like for her to be on the cusp of childhood and the next stage of her youth. For the future, I am not sure. I will work hard to stay curious and keep my eyes open to all around me and I'll just wait and see what the universe presents.

f11: Thanks Niki, and good luck with the ongoing work which will build into a really valuable collection.

NB: Thank you so much again for the opportunity to share my pictures in your fantastic magazine, I really feel very honoured to be here. ■

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www.nikiboonphotos.com

<https://www.facebook.com/niki.boon.35>



Untitled. Canon EOS 5D MkIII with EF 35mm f1.4 L USM lens. © Niki Boon



Stick guns. Canon EOS 5D MkIII with EF 35mm f1.4 L USM lens. © Niki Boon

'We live a simple life in rural New Zealand, my children are alternatively educated and live without a television or other modern electronic devices, a lifestyle that may seem unconventional to some, but I am here to celebrate the magical place I choose to live with my family.'



Early morning swim. Canon EOS 5D MkIII with EF 35mm f1.4 L USM lens. © Niki Boon



*Tree hut. Canon EOS 5D MkIII with EF
35mm f1.4 L USM lens. © Niki Boon*



*Mudslide. Canon EOS 5D MkIII with EF 35mm
f1.4 L USM lens. © Niki Boon*

'I believe my children are right where they belong covered in mud, wild and free and earth connected in a way where the landscape begins and their little souls end.'



Best friends, girl and her dog. Canon EOS 5D MkIII with EF 35mm f1.4 L USM lens. © Niki Boon



*Country road. Canon EOS 5D MkIII with
EF 35mm f1.4 L USM lens. © Niki Boon*



*Frame truck. Canon EOS 5D MkIII with
EF 35mm f1.4 L USM lens. © Niki Boon*



*Homemade plane. Canon EOS 5D MkIII with
EF 35mm f1.4 L USM lens. © Niki Boon*



*Tyre swing. Canon EOS 5D MkIII with
EF 35mm f1.4 L USM lens. © Niki Boon*



*Hanging out in the wheelbarrow. Canon EOS 5D MkIII
with EF 35mm f1.4 L USM lens. © Niki Boon*



Tree swings. Canon EOS 5D MkIII with EF 35mm f1.4 L USM lens. © Niki Boon

'I choose to use black and white processing to depict their story as I find that black and white enables me to focus more on the moment and also helps me to see light differently, rather than focusing on colours I find I focus more on the direction and quality of light.'



*Homemade raft in pond. Canon EOS 5D MkIII
with EF 35mm f1.4 L USM lens. Niki Boon*



Swing. Canon EOS 5D MkIII with EF 35mm f1.4 L USM lens. © Niki Boon



*Waiting for the mailman. Canon EOS 5D MkIII with
EF 35mm f1.4 L USM lens. © Niki Boon*



*Mosquito net. Canon EOS 5D MkIII with
EF 35mm f1.4 L USM lens. © Niki Boon*



*Playing with Papa's animal horns. Canon EOS 5D MkIII
with EF 35mm f1.4 L USM lens. © Niki Boon*

'As I get to know my style and what I like to capture, I am getting better at seeing the scene and only taking a picture when it all comes together, so I can be in the moment as a mother as well as a photographer.'



Smallest of chickens. Canon EOS 5D MkIII with EF 35mm f1.4 L USM lens. © Niki Boon



*New life wonder. Canon EOS 5D MkIII with
50mm f1.4 USM lens. © Niki Boon*



*Lazy summer days in the hammock. Canon EOS 5D MkIII
with EF 70-200mm f2.8 L IS USM lens. © Niki Boon*

Toby TRUEMAN

The Tides

Toby Trueman is the creative director and head of production at Heehaw, a production company working across the video, film and animation disciplines.

The company is based in Edinburgh, Scotland and their show reel demonstrates the type of work undertaken for a host of clients across a broad range of industries.

Toby's interest in photography stems from his childhood:

'I've always been interested in playing around with cameras. My father was really into his photography when I was growing up, and I have fond memories of walking the hills of the Lake District snapping pictures, me with some cheap auto and Dad with his 35mm Olympus OM10, which he later passed down to me.

My school built a darkroom in our art department when I was in the 6th form, and we spent a lot of time in there, mainly messing about, but occasionally playing with B&W wet film development. I followed my nose to University with the intention of studying photography, ▶

The Tides #1. Fujifilm X-T1 with XF 18-55mm f2.8-4 R LM OIS lens. © Toby Trueman



but I was introduced to film in my second year and followed that route instead. To be honest, I wasn't the most committed of students, and I only realised the time I had wasted once I'd left.'

That is an often told story, and hardly unique to Toby, but that realisation struck home with some force, spurring him on to catch up, make amends and work hard to realise his full potential.

'I started to teach myself everything I'd missed in an effort to make up lost time, gaining valuable experience editing short films and documentaries in my spare time, eventually landing a job with a production company called Heehaw where I quickly moved on to directing and producing. I now co-run the company with a friend, Mally Graveson. We make promos and brand films for clients, and are in the middle of developing a film slate of our own original content.

During this time I was focussing so much on film and building a career, I'd forgotten about photography. Then I lost my Dad to cancer in 2012, he was 62. This completely changed my outlook on a lot of things. I decided to undertake a charity Kilimanjaro hike in support of the hospice, and as part training, part escape, I began exploring the Scottish mountains, reliving my childhood memories from the Lakes, the experience of being in the hills somehow brought me closer to his memory. I began documenting the hikes, but something was missing from the images, I couldn't really capture what I was feeling; the fear and excitement that comes from wandering about on mountain ridges.'

The missing elements were environmental, Toby was working in isolation and lacking the beneficial effect of influences. This would soon change.

'I stumbled onto the Google+ photography scene, which was actually thriving at the time, despite its 'ghost town' status. I was introduced to a lot of artists who really inspired me to look differently at my work, folk like Hengki Koentjoro, Julia Anna Gospodarou (both of whom have

featured in this magazine), Nathan Wirth, Stephen Cairns, Andy Lee, and especially Joel Tjintelaar. His work was kind of an 'ah-ha' moment, and I went about digitally destroying the majority of the pictures I'd taken previously in an effort to gain some control over post-processing the image and get myself to the point where the picture demonstrated how I felt rather than just what I saw at the point of capture. After my Dad handing me his camera, I owe Joel everything actually, as adapting his techniques was instrumental in discovering my own visual style.

It was then that I realised that I might have found my voice. I had previously read interviews with artists who had stressed the importance of 'finding your voice' as an individual, of creating art from your personal perspective, of telling a story in a way only you can, but I'd never truly known what that meant. I just took photos of stuff. I started to focus on what I was trying to say with my photography; what I wanted them to look like, why I took the pictures, and what I was doing there in the first place. So I settled on the themes of wilderness, folklore and escape.

Wilderness is the place where I feel the most energy, emotionally charged. I love the coasts and highlands of Scotland, and I feel totally at home here. I live with my wife and daughter, Tori and Suzanna, in a little village a couple of miles from the sea. I work in Edinburgh but leaving the city at the end of the day is a joy. I'm unashamedly a country boy. The electronic, data filled, screen driven society we live in today is pushing us ever further from the natural world, and for me, taking on some mountains is a way to respect the world for what it is, underneath all the concrete and cables.' ▶

The setup, Fujifilm X-T1, lens, ND filter and tripod. Shot with Apple iPhone 6 Plus. © Toby Trueman



Spirituality is an element for Toby, an enabling element that he considers to be a part of the art form he has chosen.

'Folklore is a huge part of Scottish history and culture. Every peak and loch has some myth associated with it, and wandering the forests and ridges or staring out across the water with these stories in the back of your head elevates the experience. Folk tales also have a natural nostalgia associated with them. When I was a child my Irish grandfather, who sadly passed away recently, used to tell me wonderful tales of giants and adventurers, so keeping folklore alive is an important way of preserving not only my own memories, but those of a collective culture too.'

It's also a refreshing change from his daily work where he is essentially office bound and tied to computers and monitors of every shape and size, and the alluring recreational displays found at home.

'Modern life is focussed on screens. My professional work is focussed on creating content for screens. We spend 8 hours a day looking at screens, followed by a few more hours gazing at the screen on our mobile, TV, tablet and laptop. My photography is my escape; it forces me to disconnect and actually experience the world of rock and sand, to recharge. I try to capture the essence of this in my work. Of course, I work entirely in digital, so I use the screen to craft my own escape from it, and in doing so the process starts all over again.'

With no lack of enthusiasm, and a clear idea of what he would like to achieve creatively, the primary issue is how to make time for his photography. This is always a challenge.

'As most artists will know, the biggest revelation about finding your focus is that it allows for a clarity of vision that makes the creative process so much easier. The main problem for me is finding time to actually create all the work I have already finished in my head! My family and the business always come first, so it takes

me a long time to get photography projects done. That's a good thing though, as I'm constantly learning and trying to improve.'

Luckily, his hobby and his work co-exist harmoniously, as still and full motion photography have so much in common that the line blurs frequently.

'I study cinematography and visual language on my 2-hour commute, and of course this expands both my photographic work and my film work with Heehaw. In March we're off to Africa to shoot a documentary on witchcraft and mental illness, titled 'The African Witchfinder'. The themes link to my own artistic direction, and this will be the first film I've worked on as both director and cameraman, so I'm really looking forward to telling this story and seeing where it takes us.'

f11: Welcome Toby, tell us more about 'The Tides', the series of images we're featuring here?

TT: Trying to find out exactly what I wanted to say as an artist took about three years, and during that time I was purely focussed on mountains and black and white photography. After finishing my first series, 'Halls', I wanted to do something that was the exact opposite of what I'd been working on, so a minimal exploration of colour seemed right! The sea is at once both calming and terrifying, and has fascinated the minds of man since he first gazed out at the waves. The aesthetics of the coast have always interested me, I wanted to see if I could look at the notion of balance, between sea and sky, fleeting and permanent, the sea gradually eating away at the rock until all that's left is the horizon.

f11: What are your current equipment preferences?

TT: I shoot with the Fujifilm X-T1 with an XF 18-55mm f2.8-4 R LM OIS lens and I use Formatt-Hitech Firecrest filters for the long exposure stuff. The X-T1 is a perfect size for taking up hills, most

of the time it's strapped to my chest so anything bigger would be too heavy and just get in the way. All the exposure dials are on the top, which makes it easy for adjusting with gloves on without having to faff around with menus. And of course it's weatherproof, which is pretty essential in Scotland. Plus it has a nostalgic styling to it, which ties in with my line of thinking.

f11: Do you only have the one lens, or are there others in your camera bag?

TT: I have just the one at the moment. I try to keep my gear as light as possible, but also just for ease of use. For the projects I've been working on the Fuji kit lens has been perfect. That said, I'd like to swap it for the 16-55mm f2.8 WR lens, just for the speed and extra weather resistance. On a hike, I'd only want to take one lens.

f11: Apart from that, is there anything on the shopping list or are you happy with a pretty minimalist kit?

TT: There are two other lenses I've got my eye on, both project specific. One concept would really suit the look of the Helios 44-3 vintage Russian lens, and I'm keen to get a macro lens for a project focussed on looking at the finer details of objects found in sand. I definitely try to keep gear as minimal as possible, as that helps me to focus on the idea itself.

f11: Your captions show the use of a 16 stop ND filter, so what's a typical exposure time for you and what sort of tripod and head are you using?

TT: The exposure time varies a lot depending on the time of day and how much texture I want to keep in the final image. #2 for example (on page 119) had an exposure of 6 minutes due to the evening light and the fact I wanted to make the sea as flat as possible to complement the sky and highlight the boat. Most images range from two and a half to 4 minutes, trying to keep the f-stop in the middle numbers to make the best of the lens. The X-T1 is light, so I've found

I can use a small Giotto's carbon fibre tripod which is great for sticking in a pack. On windier days I have to be careful to avoid movement, but then I can always hang a bag of rocks or sand from the central column for stability.

f11: What gear preceded the X-T1? What prompted the change and was this system a replacement for something far heavier and more cumbersome?

TT: Not really, I've always gone for light cameras. After shooting on film for ages, I had a little Sony NEX interchangeable lens camera for a while, but the flaws in the image quality were evident and I wanted something more advanced which I could rely on, yet without getting into some of the more cumbersome DSLR cameras. The X-T1 is my ideal camera really.

f11: Tell us about your post processing practices, are you shooting RAW, if so how are you converting, and what is your typical post capture workflow?

TT: I always shoot RAW, then make three slightly different exposures of that file and blend them together in Photoshop. Having studied Joel's gradient masking techniques where he uses selections to add depth to his subjects, I realised I could use that to do the opposite and flatten the image, like each object in the composition exists in its own layer, like a collage. With Tides it was pretty straightforward as most of the time there are only two main areas of the composition for selections. Once I have my selections, making the masks to get the look I was after was simple enough. Then I'd flatten and add final tweaks. The main correction that needed to be made was straightening the horizon. The lens distorts the horizon line in the middle of the frame by three or four pixels, so I have to zoom in and paint it flat. ▶

f11: I'm guessing that you're a Mac guy, rather than a PC user, am I right?

TT: You are right. Hate the company, love the hardware.

f11: Are you a solitary shooter, or do you sometimes have others in tow when you're working on a series of images?

TT: A lot of the time I'm by myself, as the freedom that brings to the experience and therefore the end result is invaluable. I can go at my own pace, stop and shoot some frames, choose to take a different path, then go off at my own speed. But that said, a lot of the locations in Tides I found through being there with my family or friends, and I just make a mental note to come back with the camera when the time is right. Sometimes it's nice to come down to a location with the family, as the experience of being there with them while I take a few shots attaches fond memories to the imagery.

f11: Is there a holy grail destination for you, somewhere you've always wanted to photograph?

TT: I have always wanted to go to the Himalayas; I've this idea for a large format black and white project that would be thoroughly epic, huge 6ft prints, the lot! I'm hoping I'll get the chance to make it a reality at some point in my life, we'll just have to see. ▶

The Tides #2. Fujifilm X-T1 with XF 18-55mm f2.8-4 R LM OIS lens. © Toby Trueman



f11: What comes next, do you already have another work in progress?

TT: The final image here was the genesis for a new series I've begun working on, expanding on this last photo and exploring the notion of something that is everything; land, sea and sky, represented through minimalism. An abstract escape. One location, the camera in the same position every time; the same shot with an infinite amount of possibilities. It's going to take a year to put it together, but it should be worth it. In the meantime, keep an eye out for the film, we'll hopefully get it into the festival circuit later in the year. You can follow me on [Twitter](#) for updates.

f11: Good luck with that new project, and be sure to keep in touch.

TT: Thanks, it was a pleasure. ■

TS

www.tobytrueman.glass

www.heehaw.co.uk

The Tides #3. Fujifilm X-T1 with XF 18-55mm f2.8-4 R LM OIS lens. © Toby Trueman





The Tides #5. Fujifilm X-T1 with XF 18-55mm
f2.8-4 R LM OIS lens. © Toby Trueman

*'Wilderness is the place where I
feel the most energy, emotionally
charged. I love the coasts and
highlands of Scotland, and I feel
totally at home here.'*



*The Tides #6. Fujifilm X-T1 with XF 18-55mm
f2.8-4 R LM OIS lens. © Toby Trueman*



*The Tides #7. Fujifilm X-T1 with XF 18-55mm
f2.8-4 R LM OIS lens. © Toby Trueman*



*The Tides #8. Fujifilm X-T1 with XF 18-55mm
f2.8-4 R LM OIS lens. © Toby Trueman*



*The Tides #9. Fujifilm X-T1 with XF 18-55mm
f2.8-4 R LM OIS lens. © Toby Trueman*



The Tides #10. Fujifilm X-T1 with XF 18-55mm
f2.8-4 R LM OIS lens. © Toby Trueman

'The aesthetics of the coast have always interested me, I wanted to see if I could look at the notion of balance, between sea and sky, fleeting and permanent, the sea gradually eating away at the rock until all that's left is the horizon.'





*All That Is #1. My next series, a work in progress. Fujifilm X-T1
with XF 18-55mm f2.8-4 R LM OIS lens. © Toby Trueman*

*We had some fun with a crayfish on the beach.
Aperture Priority, 16-35mm lens, 100 ISO, f16 at
1/60 sec. © Darran Leal*

On location

King Island, Australia

Australia has 8,222 islands within its maritime borders. From tropical waters in the north, to the freezing waters of the sub-Antarctic, you can explore relatively small specks of land that offer much to photographers.

King Island is one such island, in the middle of Bass Strait – just 90 kilometres from Victoria and a similar distance from Tasmania.

My recent visit was intended to be for photography. However, one of my other loves, food, played a strong role as well. The delights of fresh crayfish, so many beautiful cheeses and great beef all added to the beautiful seascapes, nature and creative shoots I undertook.

King Island is about 60km long and 25km wide. It offers a good sealed road network and the same again as dirt roads and tracks. I think its strength lies in the wild beaches on offer. The island is encircled by beautiful white sandy beaches and rocky headlands. A perfect mix for creative photography.

GETTING THERE

By ship is possible, but the easiest way is to fly from Melbourne. Regular daily flights help you to come and go with ease. One point to be aware of is the luggage limit. 15kg for main bag and 7kg (in total) for carry on. Son Pearce travelled this week with his main bag weighing

5kg, so it is possible. Mine was 10kg (with projector), this leaving some space for cheese on the return home...

TIMING

This will depend on your interests, but most photographers would find the summer months offer more diversity and possibly more consistent weather. Having said that, my recent visit offered dramatic clouds that the group found very beneficial for adding more drama to the final look of their images. If one side of the island is windy and bleak, then the other side is just 30 minutes away and calmer. Of course, bleak can also be fantastic!

NATURE

King Island has an excellent diversity of creatures great and small. From wallabies and pademelons (small marsupials, they're everywhere) to echidnas (spiny anteaters), beautiful native flowers and a great range of birds. Every rock has a lichen pattern and the flotsam on the beaches can offer you an hour or more of shooting at each new beach. Low tide is a very cool time to explore any part of the coast. You are guaranteed to find something of interest. One beach and one group of rocks offered us a huge amount of starfish, yet another location right next to this had none. ▶



PLUS

The island offers two good lighthouses to explore. Angles are endless for different creative results. I enjoyed my super wide angle lens for these subjects. As you drive around the country regions with rolling hills and cattle, you can find some cool looking old houses, sheds and even a wild turkey or three...

WHERE TO STAY

For photographers, I would highly recommend that you stay with the team at King Island Holiday Village. Getting around can be via hire car or, you can choose to use the village owner as a guide (he's a mad keen photographer) and his monster 4WD to get you around. He knows all of the off track locations that a hire car will not reach! He also offers purpose built accommodation with over 50 of his own framed images to help you visualise what the island can offer. We go back again in 2018 – I can't wait to explore those beaches, rocky headlands and as for the food – I will start my diet now knowing what will happen to the scales after my next visit.

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



The island offers dozens of rocky headlands. Here I used a 25mm focal length up close on the flowers, with a limited depth of field to let the background drop out. Aperture Priority, 16-35mm lens, 400 ISO, f5.6 at 1/3000 sec. © Darran Leal



Fairy Wrens are prolific on the island. Most bird photographers dream of shooting these little guys. KI is a hot spot! Aperture Priority, 100-400mm lens, 800 ISO, f11 at 1/500 sec. © Darran Leal

► I enjoy looking at sunsets, but often shoot them 'half heartedly', but in this case, I got as excited as photographing my first. The tones, colour and mood were special. Aperture Priority, 16-35mm, 400 ISO, f11 at 1/180 sec. © Darran Leal



► The island offers a lot of isolated beaches. We only spotted these starfish at one location. So exploring, or local knowledge, helps. Aperture Priority, 16-35mm lens, 200 ISO, f8 at 1/750 sec. © Darran Leal





Where will it all end?

Cole Thompson is a self-described fine art black and white photographer whose work I enjoy. Somewhere in my reading I came across this quotation from Cole:

‘Rule of Thirds: ⅓ vision, ⅓ the shot, ⅓ processing.’

The quote seemed pertinent on a number of levels. First it gives a new slant on the over hyped conventional rule of thirds. Next it makes one aware that good photographs need care and attention to all three of Cole’s rules, particularly, in my view, the last.

As my photographic interest evolves I find that image processing becomes ever more interesting with all the possibilities as yet unplumbed. Rapid developments in sensor technology have given us a dynamic range approaching 15 stops, a level unimaginable not so many years ago. In parallel with the hardware improvements, new innovative software keeps appearing which give us ever more tools to take all the goodness in a RAW file and bend it to our liking without unsightly artefacts.

Photography has always been located at the intersection of craft, technology and art. Just what proportions of those appear in one’s work depends upon personal likes and abilities, but today, with the development of amazing sensors and software, the possibilities for the artistic interpretation of an image are greater and more easily achieved than ever before. What’s more, once an image is created, identical reproductions can be made at any time with a few clicks,

something the creative darkroom worker could never achieve.

If we want to think of photography as art, what does that mean? In 1853 one view was that photography was too literal to compete with works of art because it was unable to ‘elevate the imagination’. Today, with some photographs selling for millions and hanging in the most prestigious of art galleries that view has long passed.

Ever helpful Wikipedia says ‘Fine art photography stands in contrast to representational photography, such as photojournalism...’ which is not at all helpful, particularly when Alfred Stieglitz’s photograph ‘The Steerage’ is used as an illustration. Stieglitz’s photograph is representational and falls neatly into the category of photojournalism. Also interesting is Andreas Gursky’s £2.7 million photo of a grey Rhine River which appears to be a ‘straight’ un-manipulated photo. Just why it has that value is perhaps something that only an artist can explain but it surely indicates that the ground has shifted forever.

The reason for rambling on about developments in sensors and software is that I see these as key for the liberation of photography from representational imagery. In the art world there are no rules and human imagination is given free reign. So, where will it all end?

Robert Dettman AFIAP
APS Management Committee Councillor
Digital Division Chair

Changing times for photographic industry

Late last year the leaders of NZIPP, AIPA and The Photographic Society of New Zealand (PSNZ) met with industry leaders which was welcomed by all parties. The PSNZ is a large organisation compared with NZIPP and AIPA, boasting approximately 1260 members. But that does not mean that there is not common ground. New Zealand is too small a market place for everyone not to work together for common goals. We all face the same challenges – rapidly changing technology, squeezed margins in the industry, pressure on the photographic consumer's dollar. One meeting will not solve any of those problems but it is great to see the beginnings of a co-operative approach.

The Photographic Society of New Zealand has embarked on a transition which should in the longer term make the Society stronger, more flexible and more responsive to the needs of its membership. Some of these changes are in place already and some are nearing completion. Our bi-monthly newsletter – NZ Camera Talk – has been completely re-vamped giving a more modern and crisp look and very soon our new website will be unveiled. In line with the new look and feel of NZ Camera Talk, the website will be easy to navigate and have a modern, fresh brand as well as being more informative and visually appealing.

One of the over-arching problems facing any membership based organisation is in attracting new, and retaining existing, members. PSNZ is no different and we are constantly looking for

ways to incentivise our membership; improving and adding services for our members and addressing where possible the needs of the members of the 71 photographic clubs affiliated to PSNZ.

Therefore to be able to collaborate with NZIPP and AIPA on many activities, such as annual events, workshops and guest speakers, makes a great deal of sense. The one common goal for all three groups is to retain members, grow as individuals, develop our creativity, and enjoy the networking opportunities each organisation provides.

For more information about PSNZ visit:
www.photography.org.nz

Moir Blincoe LPSNZ is the PSNZ Councillor for Publicity

Save the date

27TH - 31ST AUGUST 2016

5 DAYS OF WORKSHOPS
4 NIGHTS OF PARTIES **3** DAYS OF JUDGING
2 DAYS OF CONFERENCING
1 AMAZING CAR GIVEAWAY!

THE BREAKDOWN

DAY 1 - SATURDAY 27TH AUGUST - Category Judging, Workshops

DAY 2 - SUNDAY 28TH AUGUST - Category Judging, Workshops and Video Awards Judging

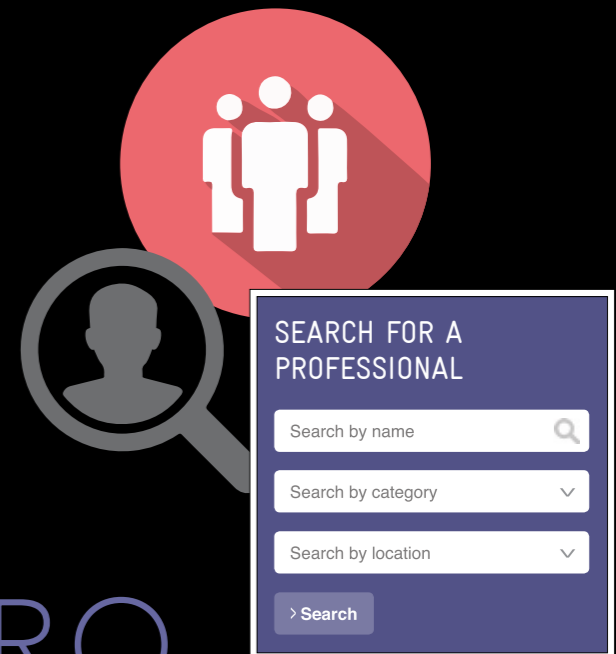
DAY 3 - MONDAY 29TH AUGUST - Category Judging, Workshops and Post Judging Wrap up Party

DAY 4 - TUESDAY 30TH AUGUST - Keynote, Seminars, Workshops and Trade Show

DAY 5 - WEDNESDAY 31ST AUGUST - Keynotes, Seminars, Workshops, Trade Show, Honours Cocktail Party and Gala Dinner, where category winners and the AIPP Australian Professional Photographer of the Year (PPY) will be announced.

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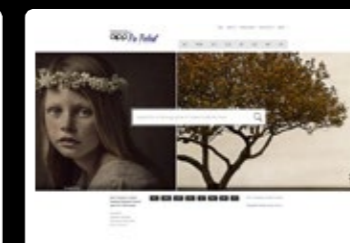
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WEDDERBURN: THE PAINTERLY LANDSCAPE WORKSHOPS WITH TONY BRIDGE

JUNE-JULY 2016

The Maniototo district in Central Otago, New Zealand, has to be one of the most beautiful parts of the country, and in winter it is an extraordinary landscape which begs to be photographed.

This is a workshop like no other. It aims to take photographers of all levels and get them to think in new ways, to step outside the conventional paradigm and begin to make truly individual work by exploring their own response to place and time. It begins with the principle that each of us is unique and therefore we should use ourselves as our own greatest resource.

Technically it moves along and explores the edge between painting and photography, exploring issues which face painters and offering ways of achieving this in Photoshop.

Some feedback received from previous participants:

'I have found Maniototo special to me. I have learned more about myself and my goal in photography after each of the three workshops I attended between 2011 and 2015. I have gained a lot technically, aesthetically, and personally through your teaching and evaluation of my work. These are the feelings from my heart.'

'The Painterly Landscape Workshop for me not only showed me a wonderful and varied land, but also let me see a pathway to my mind and soul from making images, through to creating in post production. A workshop not to be missed if you wish to enlighten your creative side.'

'I came away from the workshop with new ideas for future projects, new friendships and memories and the inspiration to develop my photography further.'

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PLACES ARE STRICTLY LIMITED ON
THESE SMALL GROUP WORKSHOPS**

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**BUT WAIT –
THERE'S MORE...**



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Each issue of *f11* Magazine contains dozens of hotlinks, all expanding on our content and offering an enhanced readership experience.

There are links to online content such as videos, and to websites expanding on the ideas on offer here. Passing your cursor over the link usually highlights it.

Anywhere you see an image of a computer screen contains a link, usually to video content.

There are links highlighted grey within articles which may provide further explanation or take you to a photographer's website.

All advertisements link to the appropriate website so you can learn more about the products you're interested in.

Finally, there are email links to many of our contributors so you can engage with us.

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A single click of the mouse will activate the link you're interested in. Here's how they behave depending on how you're reading the magazine:

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Enjoy.

"I've been a member of the AIPA since my early days as an assistant, and although I haven't always been an active participant, I knew that I belonged to an organisation of like-minded individuals that held the same passion for photography that I do."

Whether you're looking for a strong sense of community, exclusive business resources and promotional opportunities, or just the reassurance of knowing that you have the support of your peers if you're ever in a bind – joining the AIPA is a no-brainer if you want to make a living as a commercial photographer in New Zealand."

Tony Drayton
www.tonydrayton.com



AIPA
FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

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www.infocus.org.nz

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See: www.photosafari.co.nz

SAVE THE DATE

16-20 JUNE 2016

SHED 6 WELLINGTON

KEY DATES

JUNE 16-18 Iris Awards Print Judging - open to the public
Awards exhibition - open to the public

JUNE 18 Industry Exhibition - public open day
Public events and workshops
Post Print Judging Party

JUNE 19-20 Infocus Conference
Industry Exhibition
Gala Awards Dinner (20th)



THE 2016 VENUE:
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Wellington's newest waterfront venue and home to the 2016 Iris Awards and Infocus, has been transformed from an old Harbour Board shed and is within easy walking distance of Wellington's CBD and down town hotel district.

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Michael A. Smith & Paula Chamlee from the USA will be conducting photography workshops in New Zealand in March, 2016.

Vision and Technique

The Art of Seeing Photographically

After these workshops everyone will make better photographs, in their own terms.

Some unsolicited comments they have received:

“I have been a commercial photographer since I was 17. I went to college, assisted the top photographers in London, worked on global international advertising accounts for the last twenty-five years, and last year I went back to college to do my Masters. Not once in all that time have I ever had such an interesting and informative photographic experience.”

“Just a note of thanks to you both for having me at your wonderful workshop. There are events that occur in one’s life that you consider a milestone for growth for who you are or become. I can honestly say that your workshop is one of my milestone events. You have renewed my photographic vision. You have reaffirmed my love of photography.”

“The workshop expanded my perspective and I have not felt this level of excitement since I started in photography. The best workshop of the dozen that I have attended.”

For dates and details and to sign up:

www.michaelandpaula.com



Iceland, 2010

© Paula Chamlee

IAN POOLE does PHOTOGRAPHY



With an active and long-term membership of the Australian Institute of Professional Photography (AIPP); a lifetime of photographic experience; an extensive role in judging photographs in Australia and New Zealand; and a post-graduate degree in visual arts; Ian Poole is well placed to assist you with your photographic images. Ian’s previous teaching experience at university level, as well as strong industry activity, gives him powerful skills in passing on photographic knowledge.

Are you looking for assistance in any of the following?

- Portfolio construction and development
- Initial advice for a photographic exhibition
- Curatorial assistance with an exhibition (opening night details – even choice of wine)
- Re-assess your photographic output – weddings/portraits
- Writing a strong artist’s statement
- Choosing strong photographs for competition entry

Ian works from Teneriffe, an inner city Brisbane suburb, but there are many ways to contact and speak to him.

SKYPE | EMAIL | SNAIL MAIL | FACE-TO-FACE

+61 0424 727 452 ~ poolefoto@gmail.com

Blog poolefoto.wordpress.com

Skype [poolefoto](https://www.skype.com/en/contacts/voice/poolefoto)



▶▶ Continued from page 152...

More importantly I took a camera with me to the gallery. Now there is a radical thought. Well for me it was – I know I tell every one else to carry a camera, yet often I am not one to do so. To my absolute surprise a couple of shots jumped out in front of me. One or two are tolerable and may well end up residing in a presentation portfolio.

Several conclusions were reached in the past few weeks. Good photographic friends are valuable beyond words, even if their comments are sharp and cutting and a little too close to the bone; interesting photographs are sitting, waiting for all of us close to where we are at this very moment; and having a challenge and being challenged is the quickest way to lift the quality of one’s visual output.

I’m on to it now! Stay tuned... ■

Ian Poole

Poolefoto.wordpress.com
ian@f11magazine.com

No time like the present

As a well known and committed procrastinator, it was only a few weeks ago that I realised that a couple of 2016 projects and goals were going to need quite a number of new, exciting and creative photographs taken. Creativity is one of those skills that has never come easily to me – and probably never will. So delaying making plans to fulfil the requirements of my own needs was another stuttering step embedded in my procrastination.

I was brought back to reality when a week out from a long planned speaking engagement I realised that the details loosely floating around in my head needed to be set in audio visual concrete and speaking notes were required to keep me within the tight time constraints nominated by conference management. This flurry of activity then generated the realisation that other projects needed just as much urgent attention.

Coinciding with my small commitments to the photography convention was the visit of a couple of international friends who were key note speakers on the same bill. My hosting them during their Brisbane stay was one of those privileged benefits gained from having access to peer review from long time friends. I have banged on often enough in this column about the value of mentors, and peer review to enhance your understanding of your own work, and so here was my opportunity.

It soon became obvious that it wasn't the chilled Chardonnay being taken to ward off Brisbane's humid summer that was doing the talking – but

that I had some mental blocks that required re-adjustment. A lot of the current images that were being compiled to complete these projects were taken on overseas jaunts. Certainly an obvious way to seek out new visual interpretations, but not necessarily the only way of completing assignments.

NIMBY – not in my back yard – had become part of my *raison d'être*. I had become the very person I have spent most of my teaching and mentoring career warning students against.

With some firm and pointed observations my friends noted loudly that I wasn't spending much time documenting my beloved home town. 'Where are the photos of locals and familiar scenes?' they asked. Another good friend is working on a personal project titled *500 metres from my desk* and I have been giving him strong encouragement on seeing his powerful and creative images.

I was obviously having difficulty in seeing 5 metres from my desk, much less 500!

With these thoughts pulsing through my brain I attended the opening of an exhibition that had had its genesis during Australia's bi-centennial back in 1988. The re-hanging of this show would give me a chance to revisit the prints that I had processed for one of the six artists being shown. A chance to review my processing skills after almost 30 years. They were still in good condition! ▶

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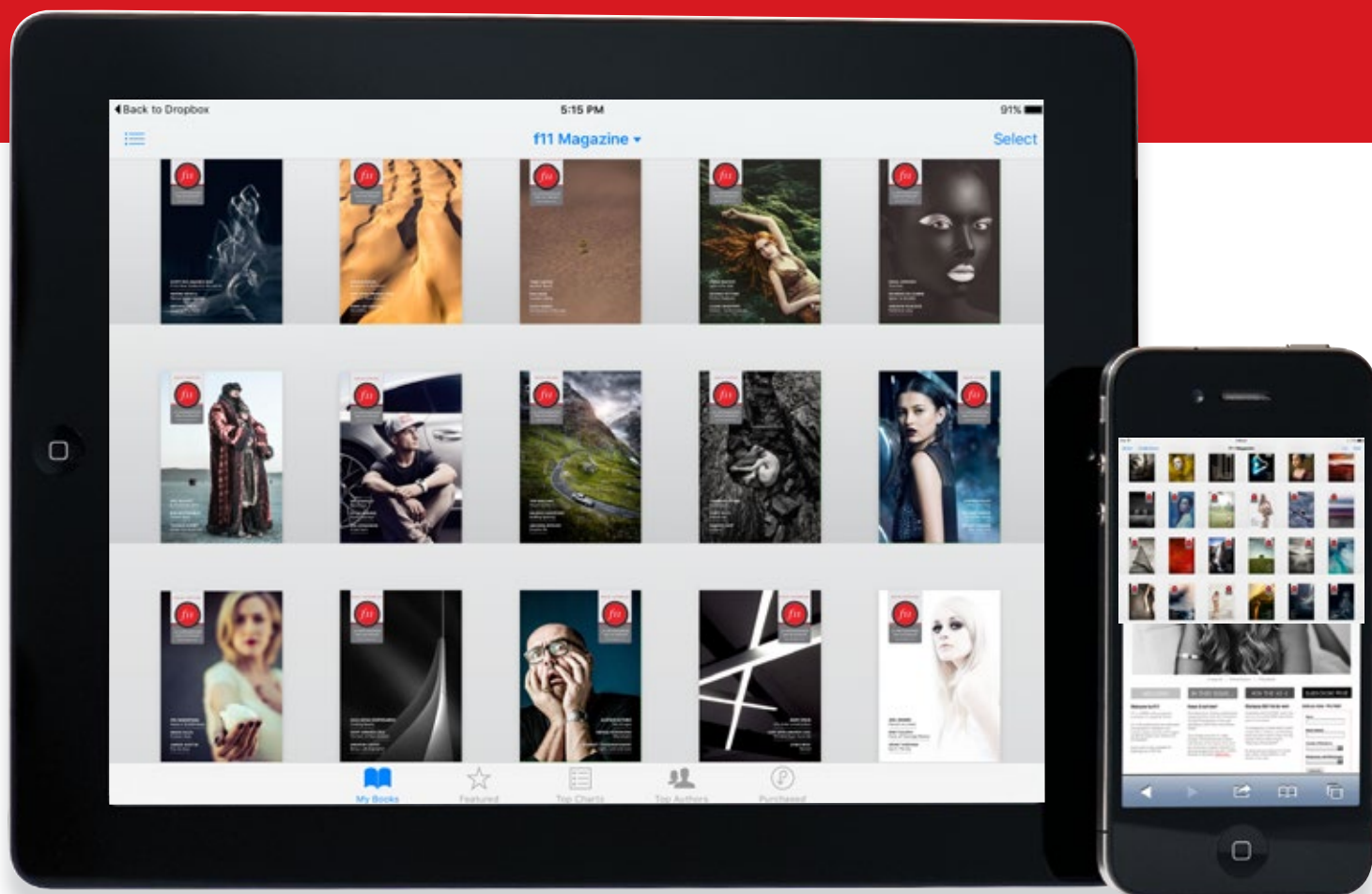
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