

ISSUE 53 | APRIL 2016



for PHOTOGRAPHERS
AND AFICIONADOS

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KAROLIS JANULIS
Drone inspired

STEVEN EDSON
Hitting the road

ILAN WITTENBERG
Faces of Jerusalem

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Welcome to issue 53!

All three photographers featured in this issue came through our submissions system, contacting the magazine to tell us about their work and asking if this would be of interest to our readers. All were difficult to refuse, offering interesting images and well developed perspectives, both visually and when expressed in writing.

American photographer Steven Edson pitched us a totally different series of images but we chose these ones instead! Our compilation combines work from his series on American cars, and another where Steven has focused on the road surfaces which are their natural environment. The resulting collection is a veritable feast of colour, texture and graphic design, well observed and cleverly captured.

Originally from Israel, New Zealander Ilan Wittenberg had the opportunity to pursue one of his true passions: documenting people, in the Old City of Jerusalem. His exciting journey in 2015 took him through twisted and narrow streets where merchants market their goods. Ilan's unique eye and his ability to create rapport with his subjects enabled him to produce a compelling portfolio of monochrome photographs using only ambient light.

Finally, Lithuanian photographer and skilled drone pilot Karolis Janulis prefers to see the world from a bird's perspective. All of his previous photography experience is now applied from a modest altitude, and within the perspectives available from his DJI drone, in the process capturing a series of images he collectively describes as 'drone inspired'. With a mix of vertical and oblique images, this collection is a peep into other worlds, all just out of sight right here on our own world.

Enjoy this issue of *f11*, showcasing three very different photographic artists, from three countries, all originating their own projects and developing these with vision, absolute dedication and considerable ability. ■

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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 doesn't matter if you use a box camera or a Leica, the important thing is what motivates you when you are photographing. What I have tried to do is involve the people I was photographing. To have them realise without saying so, that it was up to them to give me whatever they wanted to give me... if they were willing to give, I was willing to photograph.'
– Eve Arnold

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 148** of this issue.



Steven EDSON

Hitting the road

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© Steven Edson



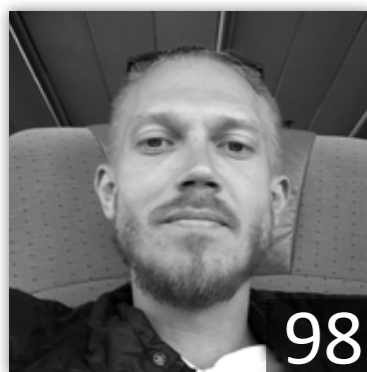
Ilan WITTENBERG

Faces of Jerusalem

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© Ilan Wittenberg



Karolis JANULIS

Drone inspired

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'Once you really commence to see things, then you really commence to feel things.' – Edward Steichen

THE NIGHT MANAGER – TITLE SEQUENCE

3 months in the making, these 48 seconds of slickness are the animated opening sequence for the British-American television drama 'The Night Manager' based on John Le Carre's novel of the same name.

Director : Patrick Clair, Production company: Elastic

Elastic via Vimeo

CLICK ON THE SCREEN IMAGE TO VIEW THIS VIDEO



THE USELESS SEA

The Salton Sea – California's largest body of water, and a tragic mistake. Tucked away deep in the Southern Californian desert, the Salton Sea is quite a peculiar place in desperate need of relief to assure the survival of its fragile ecosystem. 'The Useless Sea' takes viewers on a cinematic journey around the vast lake, proving that even in a place covered by traces of death and deterioration, there is plenty of beauty to be found everywhere. Shot on DJI Inspire 1, RED Scarlet Dragon and Canon 5D MkIII.

Open Valve Studios via Vimeo

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TIMEDRIFT – ALPINE 4K TIMELAPSE

This 4K timelapse from a collection of similar clips from Timestorm Films' online series shows the beautiful landscapes of the Italian and Swiss Alps.

All shots are available in 4096x2304 Cinema 4K here.
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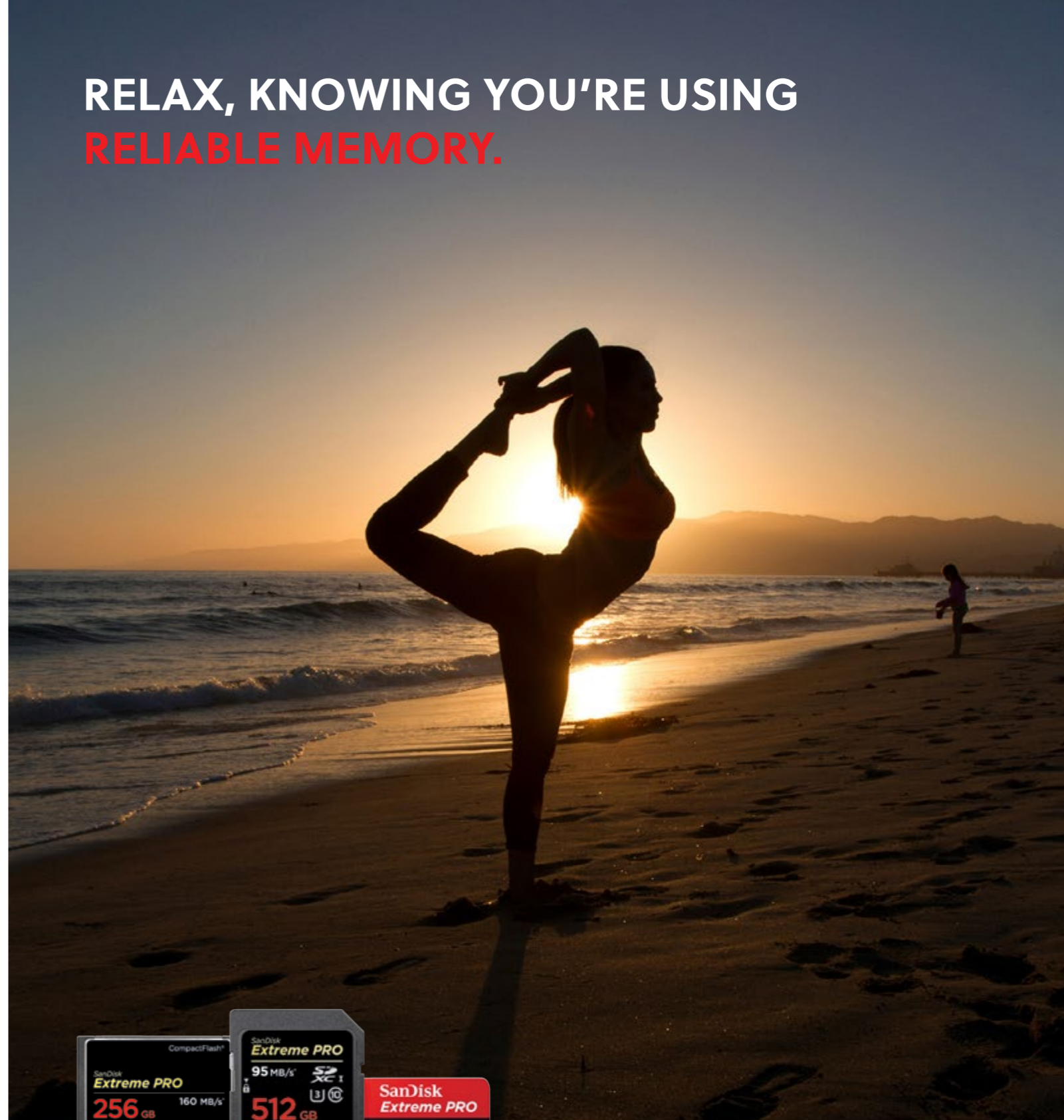
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*'I'm guided by a signal in the heavens
I'm guided by this birthmark on my skin
I'm guided by the beauty of our weapons
First we take Manhattan, then we
take Berlin.'*

– Leonard Cohen

Every time I hear that line, 'guided by the beauty of our weapons', I'm drawn to conclude that parallels exist for photographers in the relationships they have with their cameras. Like it or not, our devices guide us in myriad ways, some so subtle as to remain below our level of recognition.

Cameras have always been weapons of mass seduction, even in their earliest, occasionally bordering on ugly, iterations. Polished brass and glass, leather and fine wood, smooth gliding mechanisms and precisely folded bellows assemblies combined to create early objects of desire.

As photographers, or aspirants to become such, our attraction to these devices had a life of its own. Yes they were certainly tools for the creation of imagery, but they clearly conveyed an accompanying image, imbuing their owners with a degree of mystique, and many were drawn to the promise associated with ownership, rather than the reality of their possession.

Initially practical, often workmanlike, tools, cameras would eventually come under the influence of designers. An early example, in the 1950s Polaroid turned to US designer Walter Teague to design their Land camera, with designs now seen as delightfully retro yet still

capable of turning heads today. No doubt their engineers held such an idea (no doubt from the marketing department) with equal measures of contempt and skepticism.

In the last few decades of the last century, camera design reached what I consider to be the pinnacle of achievement. Recognising the bankable qualities of leading edge design, Nikon turned to noted industrial designer Giorgetto Giugiaro, Italy's most famous automobile designer, to enclose their electronic masterpieces in svelte, organic shapes and tactile claddings. Giugiaro penned the F3, F4, F5 and F6 and some of his design influences can still be seen today, woven into the DNA of this century's Nikons.

Other manufacturers soon followed, organic and ergonomic designs clothing the innards and bringing fashion influences to camera design. Even Porsche Design got into the act, collaborating with Fujifilm.

In this century almost all of our picture making tools are lovely to look at, lovely to hold, devastatingly effective instruments for the worthy purpose of creation.

Probably best that we spend more time looking *through* these wonders, and less time looking *at* them.

Perish the thought, but might we be occasionally *blinded* by the beauty of our weapons? ■

TS

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What makes us the
photographer we are?

Every 12 months or so I seem to have an inevitable conversation with yet another professional photographer on the subject of gaining clients.

They will ask me a question along the lines of ‘How do you get the clients you have?’ but what they really mean is, ‘How can I get clients like yours?’

Sometimes they mean: ‘How can I get your clients?’

I answer them as honestly as I can. My commercial clients are few in number, and yet they have very specific requirements. They have very specialised needs and they are willing to pay for results which reflect those needs – and no, of course I am not going to tell you who they are.

My reply is that it is all about relationships and trust. You need to be able to listen to your clients and to look for the subtext, to sit in their seat

and hear what they are really saying. You need to know their values and understand who they are. It helps if you resonate personally with those values. It helps to realise that the person with whom you are working is being looked down on from above and being judged by their superiors. It is important, then, to make them look good in the eyes of their organisation.

However, there is something you need to know first:

You need to know who you are.

Every photograph we make, have made, or will ever make, is a mirror we are holding up to ourselves. It is a self-portrait. When we make a photograph, we are putting ourselves out there, putting ourselves on show. A canny viewer will be able to read us from the images we make. They will be able to see where we are at, and, if they are a clever client, they will see if our

values mesh with theirs, whether we are on-board, or just showing them what we think they want to see.

The same thing happens every year with amateur club members when it comes time for them to go for their letters of association. Much of the discussion centres around trying to second-guess the judging panel, in a careful analysis of who they are and what they like, and then a process of presenting them with material which will gain approval, and hence recognition. The question is often, ‘Is my work good enough?’, when it should be, ‘Is this work a beautiful reflection of who I am?’.

You need to know who you are.

And, while this is a longer road, it is an infinitely more satisfying one.

One of the medium’s great gifts (some might say its greatest gift) is its ability to document:

the history of our society and civilisation; our culture and beliefs; the human condition and the world around us. It has been doing this for nearly 200 years. In the course of this a wonderful archive has been built up, a record to share for a long time to come.

Recently an aunt, my father’s half-sister, died. She was the last of that line on the family tree. When we assembled for the funeral, the executor presented us with a very large cardboard box full of photographs. Unbeknown to us, our maiden aunt had been patiently collecting photographs of our family as far back as she could, keeping tabs on all of us for many years. There were photographs of my great-great-grandmother in England, made in 1858 according to the elegant copperplate script on the back. There were ambrotypes and Kodachromes and Type C prints, Polaroids and quarter-plates. In a way it was like looking at a history of the medium itself. I learned things ▶



© Tony Bridge

about my father which he had never mentioned by reading the photographs and the stories on the back. And I learned about myself.

We are, in a sense, the pointed end of our own family history, the living sum of the hopes and dreams of all those who have come before us.

What then, will become of our output as photographers if we bring that knowledge into our work and allow it to influence and develop our own voice, visual and otherwise?

What indeed, a far better point to ponder.■

TB

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**BUT WAIT –
THERE'S MORE...**



HOW TO FIND THE LINKS TO EXTRA CONTENT IN *f11* MAGAZINE

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.

HOW TO USE THE LINKS

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:

ONLINE readers will note that these links open in a new tab, or window, in your web browser, so you won't lose your place in *f11*, as this stays open in it's own tab or window.

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D5



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At the heart of the image



Steven EDSON

Hitting the road

American photographer Steven Edson is a survivor of our submissions system, one of the many artists who brave our process to share their work in this forum. A worker in many genres, he actually pitched us another collection of his images and in that dialogue we found the collection we wanted to show and share with you. Actually, we've curated a selection of images from two of his series, discovering that their combination makes for a highly complementary collection.

Our compilation combines work from a series on American cars, and another where Steven has focused on the road surfaces which are their natural environment.

Steven describes both series, and the thinking behind them:

'The Car Details series reflects my love for industrial design as only American car manufactures were able to bend and shape metal and plastics to reflect people's hopes and dreams about space travel all the way through to the bad boy art form of hot rods. The Model A Ford, (1927-31) enabled ordinary and everyday ▶



Road Paint. Nikon D810 with Nikon 17-35mm f2.8D AF-S lens. © Steven Edson

people the freedom to explore and travel. Starting in the early 1920's, the US started to plan and create a national system of roads for national defense, industry and personal ground transportation. Car manufacturers needed to stimulate sales and offered the consumer notions of freedom and exploration, designing cars with comfort and aeronautical design influences. The use of space metaphors further served people's imagination and a desire to travel the galaxy or at least, discover the geographically and socially diverse USA. While British and Italian auto manufacturers were constantly updating designs and evolving demands for functionality, speed and comfort, American manufacturers began to embellish cars with beautiful lines and details and the beginning of 'planned obsolescence'. Sadly, those details are seldom found in modern vehicles. Fortunately all around the US, at the many car meets, vintage, classic cars, muscle cars and modified hot rods are accessible to the general public where people can get close up and enjoy looking at these beautiful machines.

The Road Paint series combines my fascination and interest in finding 'art' using colour, textures and abstract graphic fields. These symbols and messages, obscured by the commonplace, go practically unnoticed by most people as they travel by car, foot or bicycle from one street to another. These images are about the painted lines found on almost every modern road system within cities and towns and on the highways of the world. Road crews, public works departments, cable, telephone, gas companies and water departments all place their own hieroglyphic lines and symbols. For me, they create a beautiful, yet accidental configuration of abstract expressionism.' ▶



*Car Details. Abstract red automobile with chrome rocket design tail fin.
Nikon D810 with Nikon 17-35mm f2.8D AF-S lens © Steven Edson*

Expanding on the process itself, the search to add new images to these series, Steven talks about the way he goes about it:

'I feel I am never more alive than when I am on the hunt for new images. Trying to create an image that is successful and, most importantly, transcends my original intention is a very temporal and amazing process. I feel like an alchemist turning nothing into something of value. Photography is like trying to turn a gas into a solid or reading tea leaves for a hidden message. There is subtle but significant difference between moving a camera 3 inches to the left or right or between 1 frame and the next frame. Many times the photograph that I wanted, or was really interested in seeing, was somewhere between the 2 frames. As usual, lots of editing ends with many images ultimately placed into the digital garbage basket. The more we know and understand, the more discriminating we become, and the higher we raise the bar for the perfection of expression. The rare images that hit the target are so worth the effort. In retrospect, seldom do I think about the photographs that got away such as the blurred and out of focus, the under exposed, and the ones suffering from bad timing. Knowing how close I might be to another successful image certainly makes me work that much harder when I am out photographing.

I am happiest when I am engaged in the act of creating and looking for those magical moments. After working at this process for many decades, I am also aware that I might not even recognise the power of certain images I have made until months, or sometimes years, after I have made the image.

Art is so much about the fundamentals of form and design, negative space, movement and emotional resonance, colour or the simple and sophisticated use of black and white. Yes, in my book, black and white are colours too.

When I am reviewing recent work, one of the criteria I use as a reference point is, how does

that image fit into a series of other images or does this image push the boundary forward or simply become a repetition of another image that I have already made, or an image I have seen elsewhere?

I sometimes wish my art were more involved with political, social and environmental issues.

As people seem to have gotten more confrontational, I have moved my focus to the commonplace and the accessible. People walk, drive, bicycle everyday on the roads to school, work, stores but they barely take notice of the abstract expression of road lines as they have been applied by the various utility and road crews.'

Steven grew up in NYC and eventually moved to New Rochelle, a suburb just north of NYC. It's a bedroom commuter town where many parents travel daily into Manhattan for work. For a time, his father worked and had an office in the Empire State Building and later, in other buildings in Manhattan. Steven recalls that period fondly.

'NYC had it all going on, all the time and the activity never ceased. The city was vibrant and the streets never lacked for something unusual to watch. My family also spent a lot of time visiting, so my comfort level with being in a big city was never a problem. As a young street photographer in the 1970's, I never knew what I would come across. I would spend days walking around different areas of the city. As a street photographer, reading the street not only for potential photographs, but also watching my back and making sure I didn't find myself in a bad situation was a necessary and helpful skill that I acquired.

Growing up, my Dad would take out a camera and photograph family occasions. He would take the mandatory group shots and every now and then a portrait or 2 of the kids and my Mom, but he never wrestled with the ideas of serious and intentional image making. Seeing the

camera and knowing how portable it was, helped to make photography more tangible for me and inspired a desire to learn more about the process. I could never draw and as a teenager, I was desperate for some kind of outlet for self-expression. I found life to be pretty confusing, still do, but back then, it was a steep learning curve to understanding who I was and how I fit into the world. Having a camera helped me to look at the world differently, more closely, more abstractly. Life is chaotic, but I have gotten used to the rhythms and I have come to understand that it's not necessarily my chaos or confusion as much as it is life's tempo.'

There were other influences, indirectly and directly, and Steven began to study his chosen subject, formally and informally.

'While growing up, Life Magazine, a US national publication was a tremendous photographic influence. It was mainly a pictorial story telling publication and placed a lot of importance on the photographic image to illustrate a story.

In high school, I took an art class in black and white photography and was immediately taken by the process of photographing and documenting what was around me at the time. I enjoyed the concentrated time spent making images appear in the darkroom. In college, I studied photography with undergraduate classes at Goddard College in Vermont and eventually transferred and graduated with a BFA in photography as part of The Studio for Inter-related Media (SIM) from Massachusetts College of Art and Design in Boston, MA.

There are many styles of art and forms of expression, which have all served as reference points and influenced my work. I have enjoyed the narrative form of story telling which describes and relates to the human condition, from the everyday to the tragic to the sublime. Painting has influenced the way I have looked at the world, from the Surrealists to the Dutch Masters to the Modernists and contemporary

painters. Art from Asia, India, Africa and South America has all impacted on what I see. Music, in a range of styles from Jazz to Blues, Rock N' Roll to Americana has also added to my sense of self, by discovering how other artists create in different mediums. Theater and film, have also had a significant impact on my life, aiding and enhancing my ability to tell incredible stories. Literature, magazines and journalism have also added to my collective interest and greater understanding of the world around me, and have helped me to look with a different sense of what the possibilities are and how stories are being told.'

The hunt for images is a constant process, a major component in an already busy professional life:

'I am always looking for, and exploring, the visual richness which exists all around us. I have used the camera to try to make sense of the world around me. By using a frame in front of me, it allows me to study and see more clearly, the visual relationships between people and people, people and objects, people and landscapes, objects and objects. The camera allows me to photograph and then review and inspect what it is that I have seen and what the world was actually looking like in a precise moment, at a specific place, from an exact point of view. It's actually pretty fascinating as only one person ever has that exact perspective. This process is a complex interaction between many moving parts, all of which I have very little control over and I am just hoping and working to ensure that all the elements of the image, come together in that small fraction of a second.'

His advice for aspiring photographers?

'With the prevalence of cameras in phones, many people think that they are a photographer, and in fact, this is only partially true. To become a photographer, I believe it is important to have an intention to document and explore specific subjects. There is a rich history of image ▶

making that we all rely on when making photographs. The problem is that most people are not aware of this lineage and they make very pedestrian images and do not understand the difference as to what makes a very average one or what makes a great image. Look at art, visit galleries, look at art books, read blogs and print magazines. Visit museums and travel as broadly as possibly. To more fully understand ourselves and our shared vision, we need to understand what foundations of culture we stand on. Then, we can toss it all aside and make our art, our own.'

f11: Welcome Steven, thanks for submitting your work, hope you weren't too surprised when we went off on a tangent and suggested this collection instead of the one you offered?

SE: I am almost always open to serendipity. My images are very much like my two children, I love them dearly, for different reasons. So if you loved a different series of my work, I was definitely on-board with your input.

f11: I enjoy the colour and the graphic nature of these images, and creating the sequences we're showing was a really enjoyable process. Did you ever imagine that these collections might one day be presented together?

SE: I actually never thought of the 2 series as being seen together as I continue to work on them as separate projects. I can see how they are related and I am looking forward to seeing how they come together in this article. The pleasure and surprises that often come about when working in collaboration with talented designers and editors, adds another perspective to how an artist's work is seen. ▶



Road Paint. Nikon D810 with Nikon 17-35mm f2.8D AF-S lens. © Steven Edson

f11: The road images seem to have been created with pretty much the same equipment combination, the cars shot on a variety, but tell us about your equipment preferences, your usual working kit and any planned purchases on the horizon?

SE: I have always been a Nikon user. I am not sure if it's habit or a case of muscle memory in knowing where all the critical buttons are, and how the user interfaces work. My eye and fingers must work quickly and intuitively to capture images, so having a system which I can confidently use, is definitely required. That said, in the camera bag I always have plenty of memory cards and an extra battery. For my camera, I am currently using the Nikon D810 along with all Nikon lenses: 17-35mm f2.8, 70-200mm f2.8 and an 85mm f2.8 micro lens. I try to travel as light as possible and will remove the macro lens if the bag is beginning to get heavy. I also work without a tripod as often as possible. If I am walking a city for hours on end, too much weight really puts a strain on my back and eventually limits my mobility, so I try to find a compromise between weight and having the right equipment I need to work with. I never compromise on the quality of my lenses even if it adds additional weight. I know that sounds almost contradictory, but most of the time I have with me the right gear to get my images. If I don't, and that image I envisaged needed a 1000mm lens to make it right, I simply let it go as one of the many misses that I will experience in this life. ▶



Car Details. Abstract red 1937 Ford Coupe rear quarter panel with blue pinstripe. Nikon D810 with Nikon 35-70mm f2.8 lens. © Steven Edson

f11: Are series like these ever really complete? Or are you still passionate enough about the subjects to keep on capturing them, in an ongoing way?

SE: Once I get going in a series, I am always looking for the next images. Just yesterday, I was pulling up to a stop light at an intersection near my home and was carefully observing the lines in the intersection for potential new imagery. I just never know for sure where I will find my next 'best' new image and whether I can improve upon what I have already done, so I am always looking for new inspiration and possibilities to work on.

f11: Any thoughts about extending either series by shooting in other countries?

SE: I would love to travel soon and definitely to other countries to explore more of these images and some of the other series I am working on. The downside is that it's expensive to do so. The difficulty is to be able to sell enough images to pay for more time spent shooting. It's definitely in my plans, but the money hasn't shown up yet.

f11: Love what you do, the money will follow. At least that's what I've always been told! Tell us about your post-production process, and also how you store, safeguard, and protect your digital images for future retrieval?

SE: I work exclusively in Adobe Photoshop for post image processing. I work with a calibrated high-end EIZO monitor so I can create beautiful prints based on what I see on the monitor. I have 20 terabytes of storage drives in my studio which copy and mirror each of the drives, so the chance of losing work due to 1 drive crashing is pretty slim. I have lost drives and experienced corrupted or failed drives in the past, because apparently, they will fail, but the chance of 2 drives failing at the same time is very slim. I also like being able to access my work at any moment without the need for an internet connection to be able to retrieve it.

f11: We're featuring your personal images, created as art, but you're also a working photographer across a range of disciplines. Tell us about the sort of work you're typically doing day to day?

SE: I had a very successful photography business for many years shooting everything from annual reports and company brochures to advertising, fashion, architecture and landscapes. There was a great mix of work and projects that I worked on, but as a commercial photographer, I came to realise that photography was only one of the tools of the media spectrum. I became interested in telling different types of stories using not only photographs (which I still use and work with) but also video, sound, illustration, animation, voice overs, music, type and motion as methods to communicate with. So right now in my life, I am the president and creative director of an interactive media and marketing agency in the Boston area called Visual Stream Productions. We get to work on an assortment of projects for different clients, helping them to differentiate who they are while engaging their targeted audiences. Essentially, educating customers, employees, and investors while making the information fun and interesting to digest while using all the wonderful 'tools' of rich media, and traditional design applied to print, interactive and web.

f11: Are the best days of photography behind us, with us right now or ahead of us in the future?

SE: I have lectured at various colleges and universities about the future of photography. The appreciation for new image makers has never been more needed. Still photography is an amazing medium which is constantly being redefined and the old boundaries are being pushed to new visions. The web has enabled a vast audience to share in these visions. The difficulty and challenge as an artist is to be able to distribute images and be paid for them in some manner that enables us to continue to

make them. We also have an overload of mediocre images which clutter the visual landscape. Publications like *f11*, help to separate out the clutter and allow people to get a deeper understanding of an artist's intentions and vision.

f11: Kind of you to say so, we do try to do exactly that. Of all the current trends in photography, which do you find the most compelling – and conversely, what do you find most annoying?

SE: I am currently seeing that war, hate, poverty, devastation and news images seem to be the most proliferated and compelling imagery. I guess, who doesn't see disasters as newsworthy, but preferably, someone else's. I say that with the utmost compassion for the subjects in these photographs. There has been a long history of war and news photographers who share the brutality and grotesque treatment of humans by humans or simply images of massive natural disasters. I can't help but look at these images and the world is simultaneously a strange and wonderful place to live in. It always has been, but world and local news is almost instantaneous and the news media churns it out as consumption and international interest is huge. I am not saying it's all negative, as photographs help to educate and make people aware of what's going on somewhere else. At times, it has helped to mobilise people for real change or to help people recover from disasters or foster new ways of thinking about social change, which is all good.

On the 'most annoying' part of the question, probably 'selfies' annoy me most of all. So many people are self-absorbed and their posts of their recent meals and self portraits are just so mediocre. Most people don't attempt to do a thorough job of eloquently writing about food in a way to describe to the viewer what is inside a dish or how it was prepared – ultimately enhancing the experience of that photograph. This was lunch, and I just ate it. Selfies are annoying to me because so many people who shoot them don't take into context that it's a

portrait and there is a long history of portrait photography. So many selfies tend to be self centred and ego driven, they're all about how someone wants to be perceived and have little to do with who they really are as a person, so we end up with very boring images that aren't very interesting to look at. People who shoot selfies should look at the work of a photographer like Cindy Sherman, a master of the self-portrait.

f11: Thanks for joining us Steven, its been our privilege to show your work.

SE: Thanks for sharing my work with your audience. I am definitely looking forward to seeing the issue! ■

TS

www.stevedson.net
www.stevedson.com

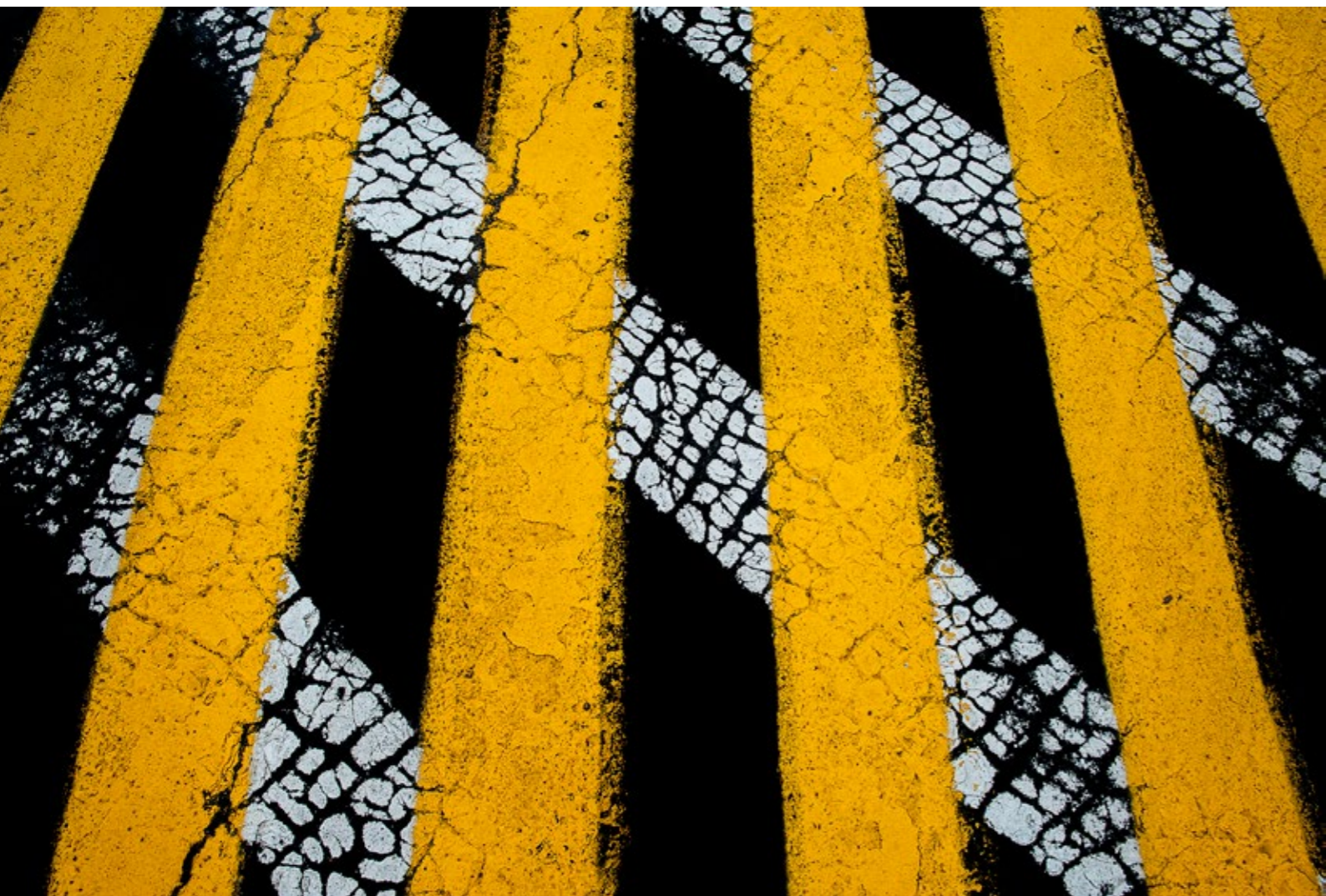


*Road Paint. Nikon D810 with Nikon 17-35mm f2.8D AF-S lens.
© Steven Edson*



Car Details. Abstract view of green 1950's Pontiac front fender with headlight and fender ornament. Nikon D810 with Nikon 70-200mm f2.8 lens. © Steven Edson

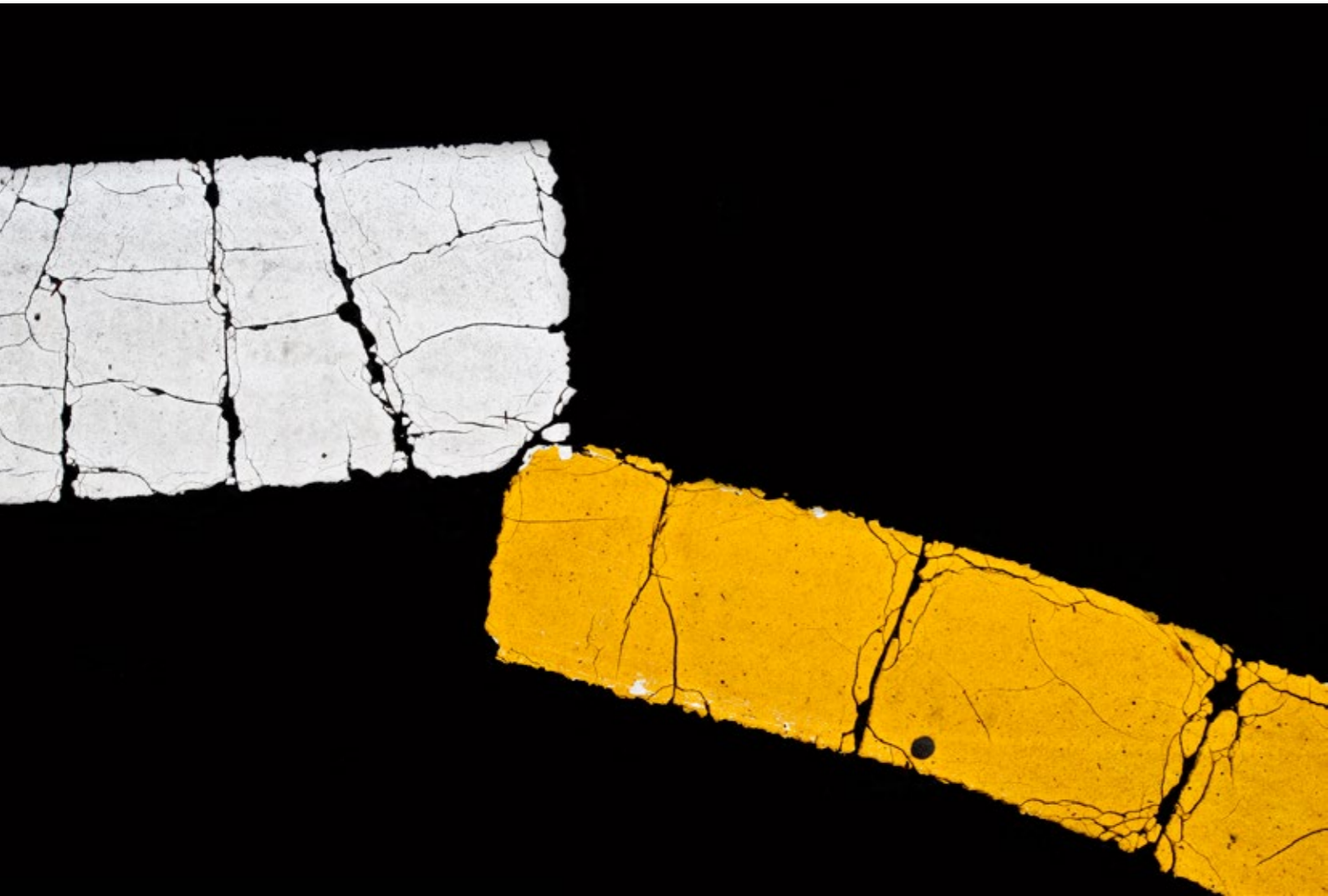
'I feel I am never more alive than when I am on the hunt for new images. Trying to create an image that is successful and, most importantly, transcends my original intention is a very temporal and amazing process. Photography is like trying to turn a gas into a solid.'



Road Paint. Nikon D810 with Nikon 17-35mm f2.8D AF-S lens.
© Steven Edson



Car Details. 1938 Packard Opera Coupe rear quarter panel including tire and wheel
and hub cap. Nikon D810 with Nikon 17-35mm f2.8D AF-S lens © Steven Edson



*Road Paint. Nikon D810 with Nikon 17-35mm f2.8D AF-S lens.
© Steven Edson*



*Car Details. Abstract detail of the rear driver quarter panel of a yellow 1930's
hot rod. Nikon D810 with Nikon 70-200mm f2.8 lens. © Steven Edson*



Road Paint. Nikon D810 with Nikon 17-35mm f2.8D AF-S lens.
© Steven Edson



Car Details. Indian head hood ornament of a Silver Chief, a 1950's Pontiac automobile. Nikon D810 with Nikon 70-200mm f2.8 lens. © Steven Edson



*Road Paint. Nikon D810 with Nikon 17-35mm f2.8D AF-S lens.
© Steven Edson*



*Car Details. 1959 Cadillac with rear bullet lights and large tail fin.
Nikon D810 with Nikon 70-200mm f2.8 lens. © Steven Edson*



Road Paint. Nikon D810 with Nikon 17-35mm f2.8D AF-S lens.
© Steven Edson

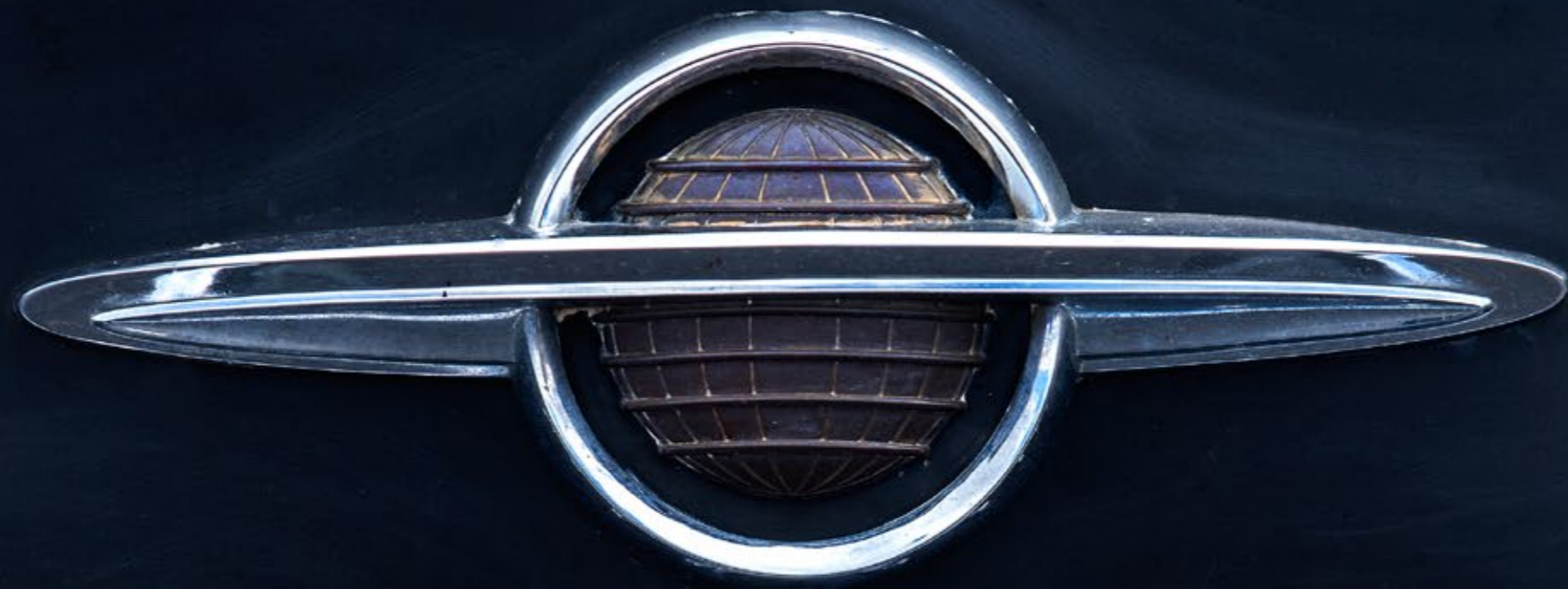
'Art is so much about form and design, movement and emotional resonance, color or the lack of color when reduced to the essential black and white. Yes, in my book, black and white are colors too.'



Car Details. 1957 Chevrolet Bel Air dashboard and odometer with red interior.
Nikon D810 with Nikon 70-200mm f2.8 lens. © Steven Edson

▶▶ Following double page spread: Road Paint. Nikon D810 with Nikon 17-35mm f2.8D AF-S lens. © Steven Edson





OLDSMOBILE

OLDSMOBILE



Road Paint. Nikon D810 with Nikon 17-35mm f2.8D AF-S lens.
© Steven Edson



Car Details. Rain drops sitting on the chrome gas cap of a 1960's MG automobile. Nikon D810 with Nikon 105mm f2.8 lens. © Steven Edson

◀◀ Previous double page spread: Car Details. 1954 Oldsmobile logo and typeface on the hood of a black car. Nikon D810 with Nikon 70-200mm f2.8 lens. © Steven Edson



Road Paint. Nikon D810 with Nikon 17-35mm f2.8D AF-S lens.
© Steven Edson



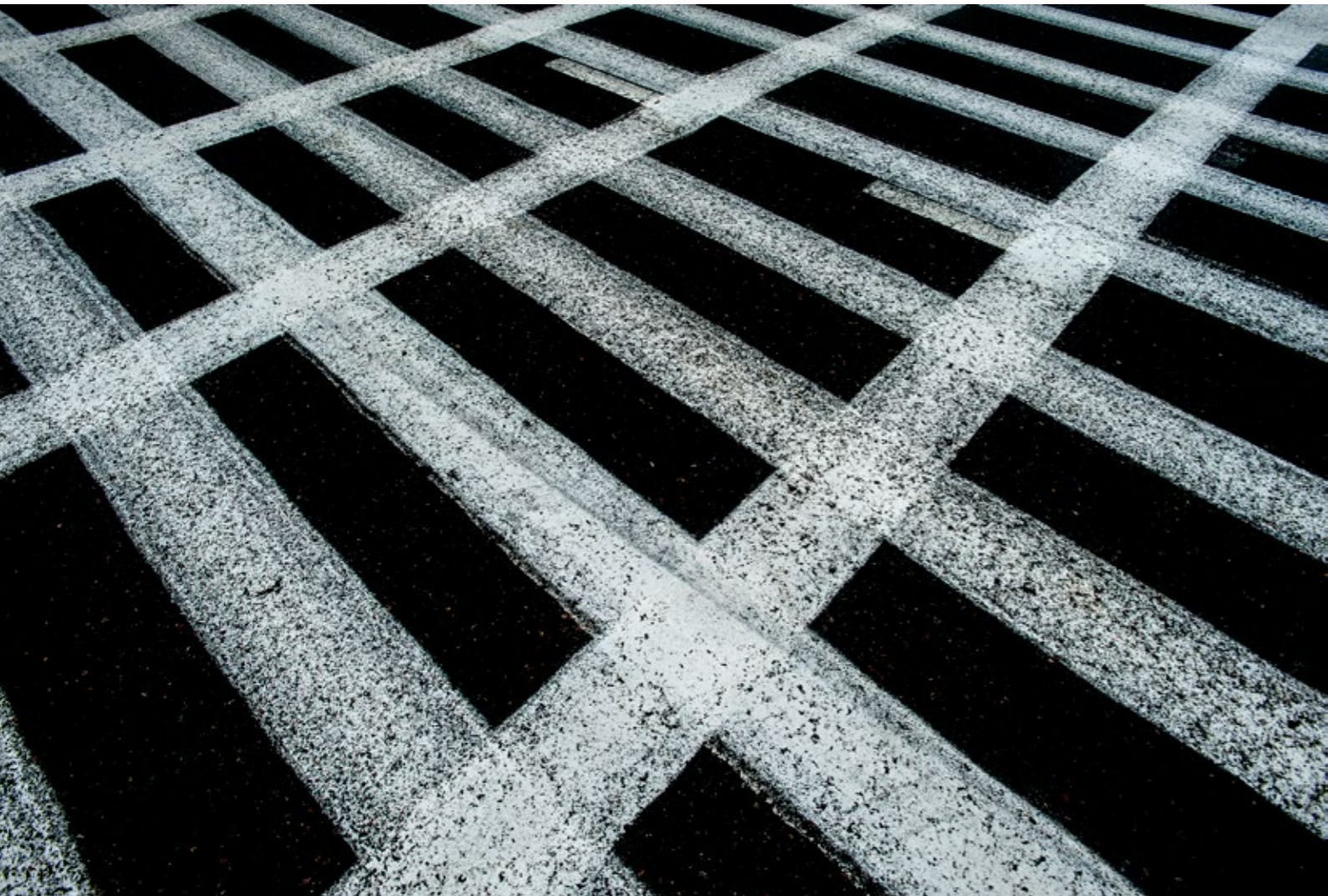
Car Details. 1954 GMC hood ornament in the shape of a jet airplane.
Nikon D810 with Nikon 70-200mm f2.8 lens. © Steven Edson

▶▶ Following double page spread: Road Paint. Nikon D810
with Nikon 17-35mm f2.8D AF-S lens. © Steven Edson



CROWN *Victoria*

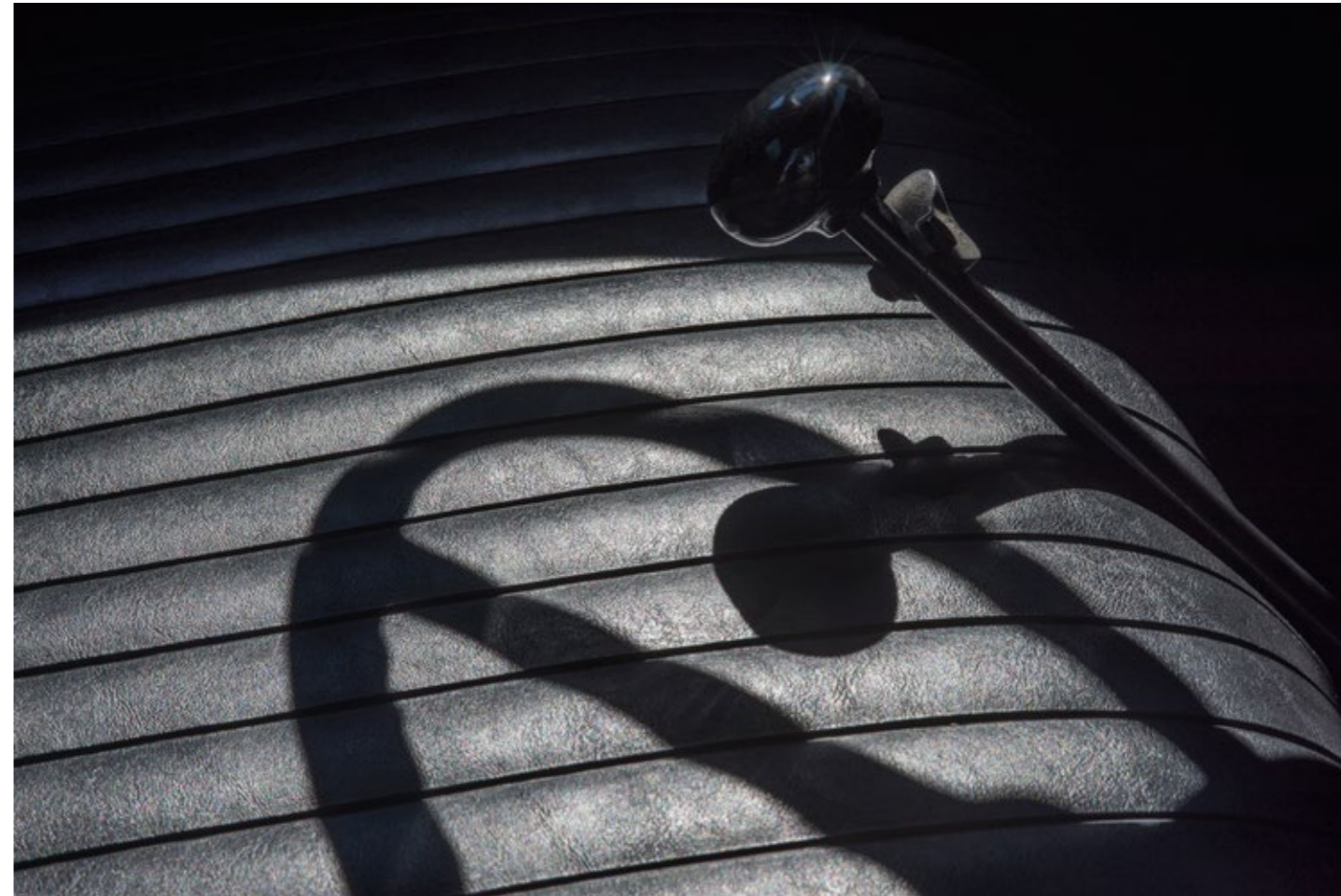




*Road Paint. Nikon D810 with Nikon 17-35mm f2.8D AF-S lens.
© Steven Edson*

‘People walk, drive, bicycle everyday on the roads to school, work, stores but they barely take notice of the abstract expression of road lines as they have been applied by the various utility and road crews.’

◀◀ *Previous double page spread: Car Details. Abstract detail of chrome and red paint on the side of a 1956 Ford Crown Victoria. Nikon D810 with Nikon 17-35mm f2.8D AF-S lens. © Steven Edson*



Car Details. Interior of cab of a 1920's truck with black leather seats and gear shifter. Nikon D810 with Nikon 105mm f2.8 lens. © Steven Edson

▶▶ *Following double page spread: Road Paint. Nikon D810 with Nikon 17-35mm f2.8D AF-S lens. © Steven Edson*



Car Details. 1970's Lincoln Continental rear light assembly. Nikon D810 with Nikon 70-200mm f2.8 lens.
© Steven Edson





◀◀ Previous double page spread: Car Details.1957
Chevrolet Bel Air hood ornament and detail. Nikon
D810 with Nikon 70-200mm f2.8 lens. © Steven Edson

*'I am always looking for, and
exploring, the visual richness
which exists all around us. I have
used the camera to try to make
sense of the world around me.'*



Road Paint. Nikon D810 with Nikon 17-35mm f2.8D AF-S lens.
© Steven Edson

Ilan WITTENBERG

Faces of Jerusalem

After gaining a Bachelor of Science in Industrial Engineering and an MBA in Information Technology, Ilan Wittenberg realised that his passion lay elsewhere and moved into the creative realm of photography. It sounds like a career fairy tale but for Ilan this is a reality. Now a successful portrait photographer whose enthusiasm stemmed from reading Time Life books and National Geographic magazines as a child, Wittenberg spends most of his time creating portraits and fine art. Arriving in New Zealand in 2001, Ilan's journey as a photographer only began relatively recently but he was quickly recognised as one to watch, winning a plethora of national and international awards. Working in such an eye-opening field enabled him to really get amongst New Zealand's culture. The people, the atmosphere and the landscape here have contributed to Wittenberg's shift into a full time photographic career, where he enjoys exercising his creative spirit. ▶



This proud garment merchant was very keen to have his portrait taken just outside the Cotton Merchant's Gate which leads to the Dome of the Rock. The Old City of Jerusalem, Israel 2015. Sony α7R with Canon EF 16-35mm f4L IS lens. © Ilan Wittenberg

During 2015, Wittenberg had the opportunity to pursue one of his true passions: documenting people in the Old City of Jerusalem. His exciting journey took him through twisted and narrow streets where merchants are proud to market their goods. Ilan's unique eye and his ability to create quick rapport with his subjects enabled him to produce a compelling portfolio of monochrome photographs, capturing their character and the special atmosphere using ambient light only. Faces of Jerusalem was chosen to be exhibited at Te Uru Waitakere Contemporary Gallery in early 2016.

Ilan describes the project in his artist statement:

'Faces of Jerusalem is a documentary portfolio offering the viewer a journey to the Old City through its people. Their proud portraits reflect the rich culture and turbulent history of Jerusalem. Created during January 2015, it presents a glimpse into their lives. The different merchants are surrounded by their products. The souvenirs are intended for tourists and pilgrims who walk the ancient, narrow streets while visiting some of the holiest and most sacred religious temples in the world.

In many cases I was able to talk to the merchants so they are looking straight at me with a natural expression. I find that this results in more engaging portraits than candid photography. All photos were taken in ambient light without flash or tripod in order to create a more authentic scene.

The images are presented in monochrome which emphasises shape and form. The sepia tone ▶



I waited a few minutes until the magazine shop became empty before creating this portrait of the shopkeeper with beautiful leading lines. The Old City of Jerusalem, Israel 2015. Sony α7R with Canon EF 16-35mm f4L IS lens. © Ilan Wittenberg

creates a timeless atmosphere while eliminating distracting colours. This makes the set more uniform regardless of the light source or the time of day. It helps focus viewers' attention on the people, their body language and their facial expressions. It also gives me the opportunity to create dramatic images using contrast and structure.

My goal in creating this portfolio is to show an authentic view of a foreign land. I aim to demonstrate a clear style, to tell a story while being imaginative and thought-provoking. I wish to inspire people with distinct images that are crisp and sharp, to be creative and artistic, to evoke emotions and to show a personal vision.'

Born in Israel, Ilan has visited the UNESCO World Heritage site on numerous occasions. However, it was during a recent family trip that the idea to produce this portfolio of portraits (for his fellowship application to the Photographic Society of New Zealand) first took form. Not wanting to hold up the family, Ilan returned by himself in January 2015 and spent days exploring the winding, cobbled streets and tiny, dimly lit shops of the Muslim, Jewish, Armenian and Christian quarters.

While his collection of striking monochrome images captures a range of people going about their daily lives, it was the city's merchants that Wittenberg was particularly drawn to. 'Many people are not happy, you can see that,' says Ilan, 'but that's for good reasons: the economy is down. There are very few customers and very little foot traffic because there is a lot of stress ▶



Father and son are standing behind the counter at the family shop. It is very likely that the son will take the place of his Dad as the shop had been passed down from previous generations. Notice the son clutching his fists. The Old City of Jerusalem, Israel 2015. Sony α7R with Canon EF 16-35mm f4L IS lens. © Ilan Wittenberg

in the streets. Wars, religious tension and the ongoing political conflict scare the tourists away.'

Wanting to create quick rapport and a relaxed environment, Ilan introduced himself as a New Zealander (which he has been since arriving in the country in 2001). 'Oh Kiwi, welcome...' would be the typical response, which cleared the opportunity to create a photograph. Where language permitted, he engaged his subjects in further conversation, to produce more captivating portraits than candid documentary photography usually does.

Ilan is a fellow of the Photographic Society of New Zealand as well as a Master of the New Zealand Institute of Professional Photography. Selected prints from his 'Faces of Jerusalem' portfolio contributed to the body of work that won Wittenberg the prestigious title of NZIPP 2015 Auckland Photographer of the Year. The collection also took first place in the Documentary Book section of the 2015 Moscow International Foto Awards, a competition that attracted entries from 84 countries.

f11: Welcome to f11 Ilan, seems like we've been talking together for a while now, so it's good to finally have you here.

IW: Thanks Tim. Being featured in *f11* is certainly an honour and a goal I set myself to achieve for the past few years. I am delighted to share this portfolio with your global audience and look forward to new and exciting opportunities that this exposure will bring.

f11: Given your close ties to Israel, a project such as this must have been personally significant on many levels. Did you feel both foreign and familiar as you engaged with your subjects?

IW: Knowing the language, the culture and the mentality of the people definitely offered a unique vantage point. This also gave me the confidence and the courage to approach strangers with a positive, can-do attitude which

contributed to the success of the work. The ability to be a foreigner offered the choice of engaging in a neutral way or pretending to be a tourist. Understanding history and politics also helped me to engage with people in an open conversation about the prospects of peace and a better future for their children.

f11: Did you feel relatively relaxed when approaching your subjects, or was there some anxiety in the process? Also were you generally well received and were there any exceptions as you went about the project?

IW: Setting up a project like this gives me purpose so I am on a mission. This positive attitude fills me with energy and enthusiasm which helps to overcome challenges and ignore obstacles. For example, non-Muslims are subject to strict security screening when visiting the Dome of the Rock, a shrine located on the Temple Mount. I was questioned on my first visit to verify my purpose as very few Israelis visit the site. On my second visit I was delayed about 30 minutes for further questioning, but on my third visit I was stopped. I explained that I wanted to create a photographic exhibition and needed more photos but the guard in charge did not care about my project. He could not understand why I would try to visit the site again and again and was concerned that this could cause trouble. My Israeli friends said to me later that I must be crazy to visit the site. They've been avoiding it for years due to security risks as riots often break out there. On another occasion, I started a conversation with a merchant who became very anxious about the political situation. It took me a few minutes to understand that this photo opportunity was gone despite all my efforts to calm the atmosphere and I had to leave quickly for my safety. On that same evening I met a man who urged me to follow him to the top floor of his hostel which was under renovation at the time. As I stepped up the stairs in the dark, I became concerned about where this was leading me.

'You are carrying an expensive camera' he noted, 'it is not safe for you to walk the streets at night'. I felt stressed and left the next morning. I heard later that on that same day an Orthodox Jewish man was stabbed in the back with a screwdriver right through his lungs. He survived the attack but it made me think again about the risks involved. Political tension became much worse in later months so I was lucky to create these photos at the time, as it would be virtually impossible to take them now.

f11: Did you have many flat refusals from potential subjects, and were you ever treated with a degree of suspicion?

IW: Very few people said no – and I respected that. Most assumed that I was a tourist when I just pointed at my camera with a question on my face. One merchant chased me down the alley after taking his photos. He didn't speak English so we went inside another shop to translate his question. He asked what was I going to do with the photos. I explained that I was creating a collection and he smiled. My business card was very helpful by proving that I was a photographer from New Zealand, but one person quickly went to check my Facebook page to discover my links to Israel, which changed the dynamics.

f11: While making our selection of images for this feature, I found one thing quite puzzling, why are there so few women in this collection of images?

IW: This is a question which I am frequently asked. It is simply a different culture, a male dominated one where the woman's role is to stay at home. Women are not supposed to interact with others in the street or to serve customers in shops so very few are seen around.

f11: Tell us about your equipment choices for the project, what were you carrying and shooting with?

IW: I was very fortunate to get a loan camera from Sony New Zealand. I invited Sony to the

opening of my previous exhibition 'Black, White & Colour' and mentioned that I would be travelling to Israel shortly after that. 'We must get you to use our new camera' they said. The $\alpha 7R$ produced beautiful images with great dynamic range. I used a Metabones adapter which worked almost perfectly with my Canon EF 16-35mm lens. The combination allowed me to capture a tremendous amount of detail surrounding my subjects, to show the merchandise and create the atmosphere. The images show little noise even at very high ISO (up to ISO 12,800 on some images) and converting them to monochrome in post also helped in hiding some of the noise. The shops in the Old City are dimly lit and the camera was hand-held so I set the shutter speed as slow as 1/30 of a second – which explains why you can see some movement in the subjects. The 42.3MB sensor contains large pixels which captured a lot of data in the Raw files even in very dark locations. Many times I set the camera on Manual mode with Auto ISO and a fully open aperture of f4 which still offered good depth of field. The small camera looks serious, but not professional, which helps in maintaining a natural atmosphere. Subjects are more relaxed when I just stop for a few minutes without too much setup and when I don't interrupt their trade.

f11: Is that reflective of the equipment you use professionally here at home, or more of a travel solution?

IW: Seeing the beautiful results from my journey to Israel, I had to own the $\alpha 7R$ for my business as well. I now use the Sony with a Zeiss 55mm f1.8 lens for most of my portrait photography work and enjoy the Zeiss 16-35mm f4 on my travels. The camera focuses very quickly and accurately which is a big plus for me. The built-in image stabilisation is also key when I am not using a tripod. Weight can become a real issue when walking the streets all day. The lightweight camera and lenses were much easier to carry which proved to be a winning combination. ▶

f11: Your artist statement suggests a ‘keep it simple’ approach, did that philosophy extend to the post production work you did on these images?

IW: In creating this portfolio I am trying to maintain the authenticity and the documentary qualities of the portraits. Converting to monochrome is key to eliminating distracting colours using the NIK Collection by Google. Other than correcting some distortions caused by the wide angle lens, most of the photos have had very few changes made to them. I use a little vignetting to bring attention to the subjects and carefully enhance the presence to bring out the details. My goal is to have my work readily identifiable and I am delighted that my signature style is now recognised by fellow photographers. It’s been said that photography is the easiest medium of art to be competent in but it’s the hardest medium in which to have a truly personal vision. It’s very much like talking: everyone can talk but very few have something to say.

f11: Do you feel that the project is fully complete, or is it one you’d like to continue to add images to?

IW: I feel that this is just the beginning, Volume One so to speak, just an important milestone. I intend to visit Israel again this year and hope to give prints to some of the people in the Old City. Hopefully, it will be safe enough to travel and more portrait opportunities will become available. ▶



Priest praying at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. This scene is lit only by the eleven candles on the altar beside him so taken at ISO 12,800. The Old City of Jerusalem, Israel 2015. Sony α7R with Canon EF 16-35mm f4L IS lens. © Ilan Wittenberg

▶▶ *Following double page spread: A hunched nun is walking briskly across the large platform in front of the Mosque. I predicted her path and waited for her to reach this point to take a few wide angle photos from my waist level. The Old City of Jerusalem, Israel 2015. Sony α7R with Canon EF 16-35mm f4L IS lens. © Ilan Wittenberg*



f11: Has the experience left you hankering after similar projects, perhaps in even more challenging environments?

IW: I am very keen to visit Morocco and Iran and really hope to photograph street markets in Turkey and India to name only a few. Cuba also fascinates me before it becomes a busy tourist destination. The world is changing rapidly and some of these old sites will be gone in a few years. I am actively looking for a sponsor to enable these projects.

f11: Is this the sort of project you might embark on here at home in New Zealand, or one that can only be shot outside of your usual environment, a total immersion sort of experience where you devote yourself to it knowing that time pressure is a major factor?

IW: Visiting a foreign location definitely creates a sense of urgency to document it. I may skip an interesting event in Auckland thinking that I am too busy or that I can see it next year. When I travel these distractions are gone and I focus on the destination and the rare opportunities on offer. Time pressure is also a challenge and a catalyst. I was lucky to extend my trip which gave me more opportunities to go back, study the Old City, focus on my project and expand it.

f11: What's the worst aspect of travel for a photographer in this century?

IW: I think that it becomes harder and harder to create documentary street photography in western society. With social media being so dominant, many people have become very concerned about privacy. Unfortunately, this creates all sorts of challenges as I'm being asked 'Why are you taking these photos?' or 'What are you going to do with them?' I now think twice before taking a photo in a public place. I respect people's desire to be private but think the pendulum has swung too far in that direction. As a society we may be losing some precious photographic opportunities that were once much more available.

I sometimes envy the photographers who documented the previous century.

f11: Is there one place in the world you'd like to visit and photograph, an absolute holy grail destination for you?

IW: I would love to visit Iran again. I spent two years there when I was six years old so have a few fading memories from my childhood. I am fascinated with the idea of capturing the story of the simple people on the street and all the hardship they have been going through in recent years. This would definitely be an amazing opportunity to document a society that hasn't changed much from the 20th century and where I believe most people would agree to have their portrait taken.

f11: Thanks Ilan, good having you here and we appreciate your sharing this work with our readers.

IW: Thanks Tim, it's great to be featured in your magazine! I am also grateful to my dear wife Hadas who supports me in so many ways along my journey to explore and develop my photography. ■

TS

<http://ilanwittenberg.com>

Israeli soldiers stand beside the Cotton Merchant's Gate just outside the wall surrounding The Dome on the Rock. The soldiers' role is to keep the peace and search for any weapons which might be carried by visitors to the Temple Mount. The Old City of Jerusalem, Israel 2015. Sony α7R with Canon EF 16-35mm f4L IS lens. © Ilan Wittenberg





This merchant was busy decorating his shop of essential oils and perfumes. Notice the small passport photos behind him. The Old City of Jerusalem, Israel 2015, Sony α7R with Canon EF 16-35mm f4L IS lens. © Ilan Wittenberg

▶▶ *Following double page spread: I had a long conversation with this jewellery merchant about world politics. His theory is that all wars are instigated by large corporates which make tons of money selling weapons. Old City of Jerusalem, Israel 2015. Sony α7R with Canon EF 16-35mm f4L IS lens. © Ilan Wittenberg*



'Knowing the language, the culture and the mentality of the people definitely offered a unique vantage point. This also gave me the confidence and the courage to approach strangers with a positive, can-do attitude which contributed to the success of the work.'



A merchant is smoking his Shisha while his apprentice is cleaning the fish. Acre street market, Israel 2015. Sony α7R with Canon EF 16-35mm f4L IS lens. © Ilan Wittenberg

'I met a man who urged me to follow him to the top floor of his hostel which was under renovation at the time. As I stepped up the stairs in the dark, I became concerned about where this will lead me. 'You are carrying an expensive camera' he noted, 'it is not safe for you to walk the streets at night.'



This Djellabah Arab merchant was reading his newspaper when I asked his son's permission to take his photo. I waited patiently for a few minutes until he lifted his eyes from the paper and seized the moment. The Old City of Jerusalem, Israel 2015. Sony α7R with Canon EF 16-35mm f4L IS lens. © Ilan Wittenberg

►► *Following double page spread: A merchant sitting in front of his bric-à-brac shop at Jaffa flea market, Israel 2015. Sony α7R with Canon EF 16-35mm f4L IS lens. © Ilan Wittenberg*





*Merchant stands outside his shop as evening descends.
The Old City of Jerusalem, Israel 2015. Sony α7R with
Canon EF 16-35mm f4L IS lens. © Ilan Wittenberg*

'It's been said that photography is the easiest medium of art to be competent in but it's the hardest medium in which to have a truly personal vision. It's very much like talking: everyone can talk but very few have something to say.'



This young boy was pushing a large cart when I saw him in one of the alleys. Notice the iron gates which are the best protection for houses and shops. The Old City of Jerusalem, Israel 2015. Sony α7R with Canon EF 16-35mm f4L IS lens. © Ilan Wittenberg

▶▶ *Following double page spread: The Dome of the Rock is one of the oldest works of Islamic architecture. According to the faith, the rock is the spot from which the Islamic prophet Muhammad ascended to Heaven accompanied by the angel Gabriel. This old man was sitting outside the mosque when I was instructed by the guards to leave the area together with all other tourists. The Old City of Jerusalem, Israel 2015. Sony α7R with Canon EF 16-35mm f4L IS lens. © Ilan Wittenberg*





This merchant proudly showed me a medal (hanging behind him) that his father was awarded by King George V for serving as a horse back guard armed with a sword. Acre, Israel 2015, Sony α7R with Canon EF 16-35mm f4L IS lens. © Ilan Wittenberg



A man preparing Turkish coffee for his friends at the back of this shop. He must have joked with them about being a model or a movie star while I was desperately trying to get the focus right at this dimly lit shop (1/30 sec, ISO 2,000). The Old City of Jerusalem, Israel 2015. Sony α7R with Canon EF 16-35mm f4L IS lens. © Ilan Wittenberg

'I think that it becomes harder and harder to create documentary street photography in western society. With social media being so dominant, many people have become very concerned about privacy.'



A merchant is surrounded with souvenirs and waiting for tourists to visit his shop. Notice that 'Palestine' is replacing 'Israel' in the map behind him. The Old City of Jerusalem, Israel 2015. Sony α7R with Canon EF 16-35mm f4L IS lens. © Ilan Wittenberg

▶▶ *Following double page spread: Teenager transporting gas bottles down the main alley. He steps on the tyre dragging on the ground in order to slow down the trolley when descending slopes. The Old City of Jerusalem, Israel 2015. Sony α7R with Canon EF 16-35mm f4L IS lens. © Ilan Wittenberg*



Karolis JANULIS

Drone inspired

Karolis Janulis calls himself a drone inspired aerial photographer and hails from Klaipėda, in Lithuania. He introduced himself and his work to us through our submissions process and we were keen to share his work with you.

Karolis finished his international business studies at Vilnius University in 2003 and has been working in the field of international trading since then. As a hobby, photography has always interested him, but this became more important when the first smartphones arrived and he started shooting daily life using these devices. In fact, he was so committed to that platform that he won the mobiliography category in the largest photography convention held in the Baltic countries, SNAP, for two years in a row (2013 and 2014).

As a keen photographer, Karolis has experimented with all sorts of gear and explored many types of photography but he has always been most in ▶



Winter in Lithuania. DJI Phantom 2 vision+.
© Karolis Janulis

love with the perspectives offered from above. For this passion he's used hot air balloons, planes, motor air gliders and various other means just to bring his ideas to life. The personal breakthrough happened in 2015 when he started implementing his photography visions from the sky with the help of a drone of his own. Since then, his photography has been featured by CNN, the BBC, The Daily Mail, American Photo magazine, ABD, Rotor Drone, The Telegraph, The Guardian and many other worldwide media outlets. This year, he has been shortlisted in the Sony World Photography Awards, within the people category, for one of his aerial images.

At present, he is working on his ongoing aerial photography project 'To be a bird', as well as preparing for his first personal exhibition, a photography book and other related projects.

Karolis talks about his passion for aerial photography:

'I have always been in love with the perspectives from above and the modern technologies of today give each of us more freedom than ever to capture these images. Humanity has always had a dream to fly and now we may experience the view from a bird's flight. The same old places become unseen and interesting again while the world reveals itself in new colours and shapes. Drone supported aerial photography is still quite complicated and requires skills, but I accept those challenges and keep on speaking my own language through it. The views are worth it and I am especially happy when I bring smiles to people's faces with my images. Aerial photography has taught me tolerance, respect for others privacy and an understanding of the responsibility which I now have. The whole process requires one to be strictly well organised and very attentive. There are no huge future plans, I just keep on travelling with the drone, sharing my visual experiences with the others on social networks and spontaneously accepting new and interesting projects.' ▶



Winter. Bridge over canal in Elektrenai, Lithuania. DJI Phantom 2 vision+.
© Karolis Janulis

This is his artist's statement, some thoughts on why he has such a strong affinity for the drone as a platform:

'When I started flying early in 2015, drones were becoming easily obtainable by everyone, but were still only accepted quite suspiciously. I imagined the possibilities this technology might bring and took a chance by getting one for myself. At that time I did some research but could not find many high quality drones which supported photography. So I decided to prove that I could produce results equal to those I created with ground-based photography and I dedicated all of my photography skills to this project.

During the process I have acknowledged much when seeing the world from a bird's perspective. I still enjoy capturing sky reflections in the water or on ice, finding interesting moments in the amazing shadow plays of people and objects. These views are still unknown to our imagination and seeing them for the first time is like a child recognising the world. Most of my pictures are taken without any setup or organisation, they're captured from natural life. In this way they come to life with honest feelings and tell a true story. Many of them feature my family, friends or people I met on the street. It is a little easier to persuade a person to feature in an aerial picture as their faces are not seen and the whole idea is still new and fresh.

This entire aerial project is an expression of me, I'm doing what I really love and it has become a way of life. The most amazing moments lie just on the edge, we simply need to notice them. I am especially happy that I can bring positive emotions to the people who share the results of my aerial photography.

I'm struck by the way that worldwide media now offers much more coverage of aerial photography in their content and there is a great increase of various groups, websites, contests – all related to drone photography and video. This proliferation is increasing in the same way that smartphone photography took off and sometimes it's difficult

to find truly high quality aerial pictures. But increasing numbers of drone users bring aerial photography to a new level and now it becomes part of photography as a whole.'

Karolis is happy to expand on the technical aspects of his drone photography, in an honest evaluation of what he uses, and where any frustrations he has with the process might lie.

'I started my aerial photography with the DJI Phantom 2 vision+ drone with its factory 14 megapixel camera and I am still flying it. I control it from a remote while standing on the ground and see the live image stream on the screen of my iPhone 5s, so I can look for the right scene and composition using this as a viewfinder. With one fully charged battery, this type of drone can stay in the air for about 10-12 minutes and the flying range is also quite limited.

The factory-supplied camera is a fish-eye and makes one shot every 3-4 seconds, and it is not good at all in low light. I know I could easily update to a later model and improve my gear to be more comfortable but I prefer the one I have as it gives me some of the feelings akin to shooting film. When taking a picture this way it is important from the very beginning to get the right composition as almost no cropping can be done, you do not get the full picture with all the details on a small screen, so there is an exciting waiting period until you see the final capture on a computer screen. Timing is also very important and requires good preparation for the shot in advance. I prefer to see the scene I am shooting both from the air and from the ground so I often walk there and have my drone within the range of sight.

For me, the drone is just a way to get the perspective I want, it does not shoot by itself, I make those decisions.'

With that quite comprehensive background information we took the opportunity to further interrogate Karolis on some of the finer detail associated with his love of drone photography.

f11: Welcome Karolis, thanks for submitting your work, it's been great to collaborate with you on this feature.

KJ: Thank you for inviting me to show my images in *f11*! This kind of article, and the questions you've asked, makes me search for the answers and reveal them, which is important to me for a better understanding of myself, and what I'm trying to do.

f11: Have you found it difficult learning to fly the drone, and were there any disasters or accidents during the early stages?

KJ: It is not so difficult to learn to fly the drone, especially if you have skills in video games using the controller! In the beginning there was some fear and anxiety that kept me away from flying but as I gained experience, flying became as natural as driving a car. In a whole year of flying with the same drone I had only one small accident, which did not do significant damage to the drone.

f11: How easy, or difficult, is it to fly the drone and take pictures at the same time?

KJ: It's like crossing a busy road on the yellow light and trying to take a nice picture while doing so. It's still very challenging.

f11: You seem to love the square format as the finished size for many of your pictures, tell us about this preference and why you do this rather than showing the rectangular image being captured?

KJ: For a short time I took pictures with a Holga, my medium format film camera, and these were in the square format. I also habitually cropped my smartphone pictures to a square for posting to social networks. Another important thing is that my drone camera shoots with fisheye effect and when straightened some of the details in the corners do not look nice, so the crop tidies this up. The combination of all these experiences made me love the square format and now I look for suitable compositions.

f11: Is the automatic exposure pretty reliable or do you have to do a lot of post production to get these images to the point where you're creatively satisfied with them?

KJ: The natural light, reflections and other elements in the air are quite different than they appear on the ground so the right exposure is very important in aerial photography. The initial quality of the pictures my drone delivers both RAW and jpeg is horrible and leads to post production as a necessity. I have to do what smart cameras already take care of when converting the RAW image to match my vision for its final form.

f11: What is your typical post production process for aerial images?

KJ: I have some presets prepared, but in most cases I have to check each picture's white balance, exposure, contrast, highlights, shadows, blacks, whites, and sharpness, and if required some tiny adjustments on other parameters. I just try to make it as natural as I have observed it. The whole process of post-production is quite a creative and interesting time for me. When I am taking an aerial picture the live view in my smartphone screen is only an approximation and not all of the details may be well seen. This always gives me that excited feeling of waiting to see the final picture, as if waiting for the development process of film based photography.

f11: You've talked about a few frustrations with your current drone, what's your next one going to be?

KJ: I'm still not sure, but I wish that a drone the size of mine could carry and control a small but high quality digital camera like a Sony rx100, which would be quite enough for professional quality results. ▶

f11: As a user, what are the two features or capabilities you would most like to see incorporated into future drones?

KJ: For me it is most important that small drones have high quality cameras. We see that the latest smartphones have amazing ones, and allow us to give up carrying heavy photography gear so I hope that the standard cameras fitted to drones will improve soon. Also the flying time duration is very important, as to my mind this is quite limited now.

f11: Our drone flying environment is now subject to new rules and guidelines, is this the case in Lithuania or is it still a pretty free flying environment, devoid of regulations?

KJ: Lithuania has regulations for drones which are more or less the same as in other European countries: a separation of at least 50 meters away from objects, no flying higher than 120 meters, and staying well away from airports and other hazards. But there are no penalties yet, only a warning and the community is quite tolerant. In any case, it is very important to understand the responsibility you carry when flying a drone and be extremely aware of the risk of hurting someone, damaging property or invading other peoples privacy. So if you respect others, take care of the gear and calculate risk well then flying and taking pictures is quite fun. I usually engage in a dialogue with people who come to see what I am doing, especially if asked to explain about the drone, its technical details, and so on. Drones are still new to many people and some are quite apprehensive until they learn more. ▶



*Path through the treetops in Anyksciai, Lithuania.
DJI Phantom 2 vision+. © Karolis Janulis*

f11: Have you experienced any issues with land owners, other land users or anyone who had a problem with you flying your drone above them?

KJ: I still have not run into any serious issues. If I see people worried I usually talk to them and answer any questions in a friendly and respectful way. Many of my pictures contain my family and friends, so there is no problem with them at all!

f11: Do you engage with many other photographers using drones, is there a network you can rely on for advice, hints or tips – or are you pioneering this sort of work in your country?

KJ: No, not really, I like finding and exploring new things by myself. When I started shooting there was not a lot of good drone photography on the web, so this gave freedom to my imagination and influenced my actions. I am not a pioneer in drone photography in Lithuania, but I have started shooting directly downwards and capturing shadow play. When we're standing on a bridge we are always curious about what is happening below, for me it is the same when viewing the world from the air. The world from this perspective is still unknown, and challenges our imagination.

f11: Thanks Karolis, it's been a pleasure.

KJ: Thank you! Drones for good! ■

TS

<https://www.instagram.com/karolis.jay/>



*Field of rape in Lithuania. DJI Phantom 2 vision+.
© Karolis Janulis*

The Eye. Pond with small island creates the impression of an eye, Lithuania. DJI Phantom 2 vision+.
© Karolis Janulis



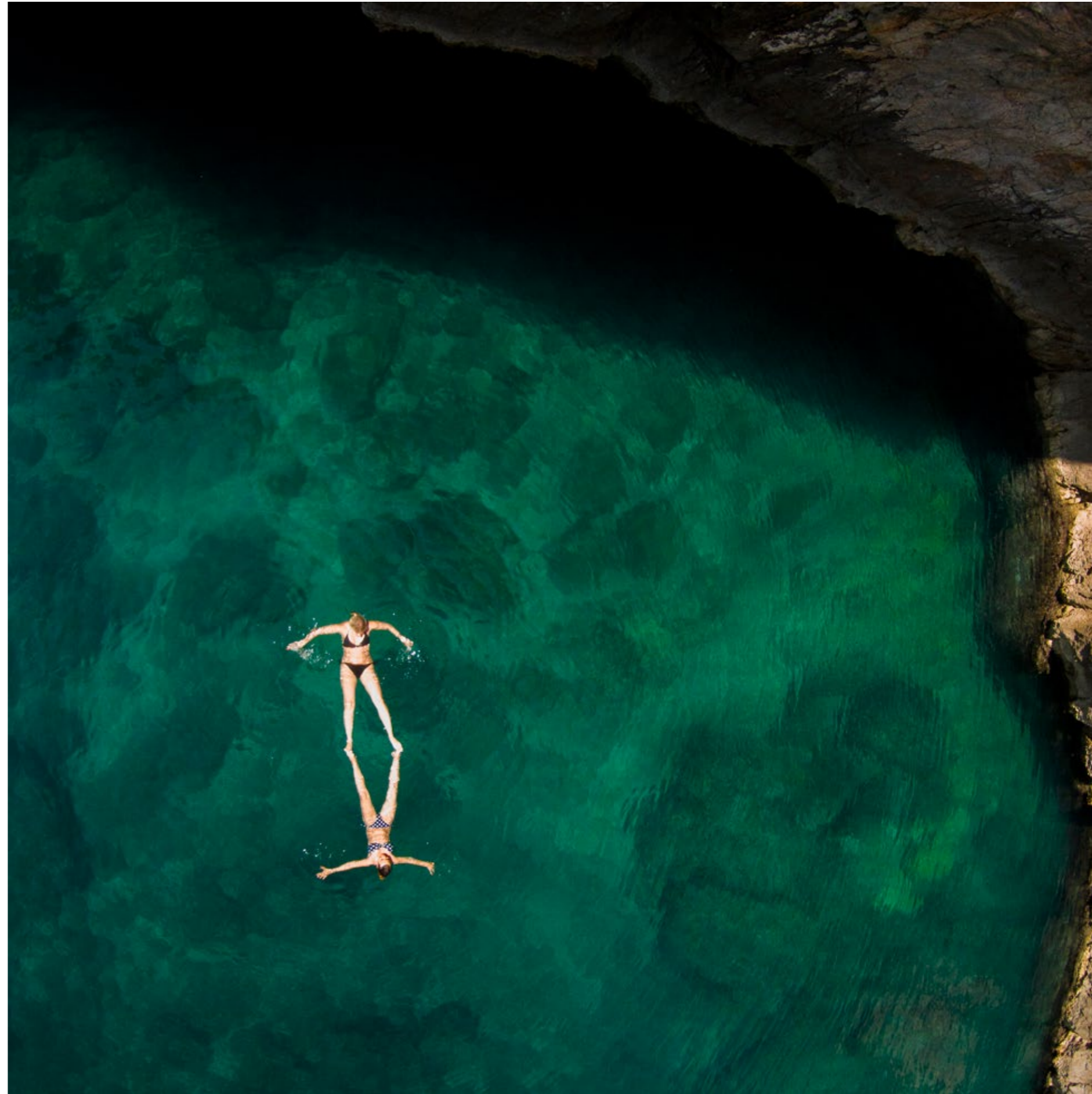
'I have always been in love with the perspectives from above and the modern technologies of today give each of us more freedom than ever to capture these images.'



Sculpture of Lenin in Gruto Parkas, Lithuania.
DJI Phantom 2 vision+. © Karolis Janulis



Adult Games. Ladies swimming in the Adriatic Sea near Krk Island, Croatia. DJI Phantom 2 vision+.
© Karolis Janulis



Tree of life. Mass yoga exercise in Vilnius, Lithuania.
DJI Phantom 2 vision+. © Karolis Janulis

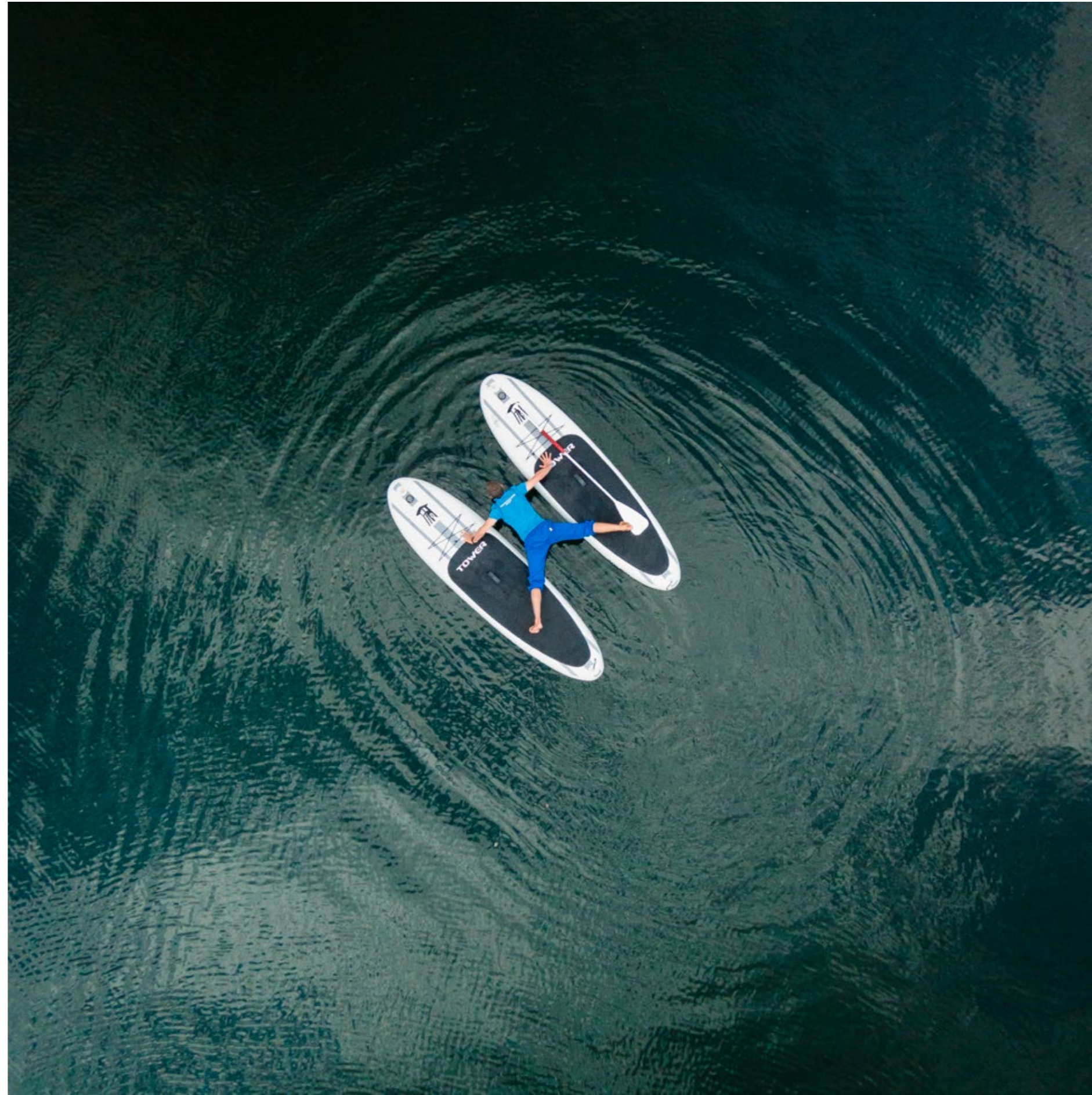


Newlyweds on the coast of the Baltic Sea, Lithuania.
DJI Phantom 2 vision+. © Karolis Janulis

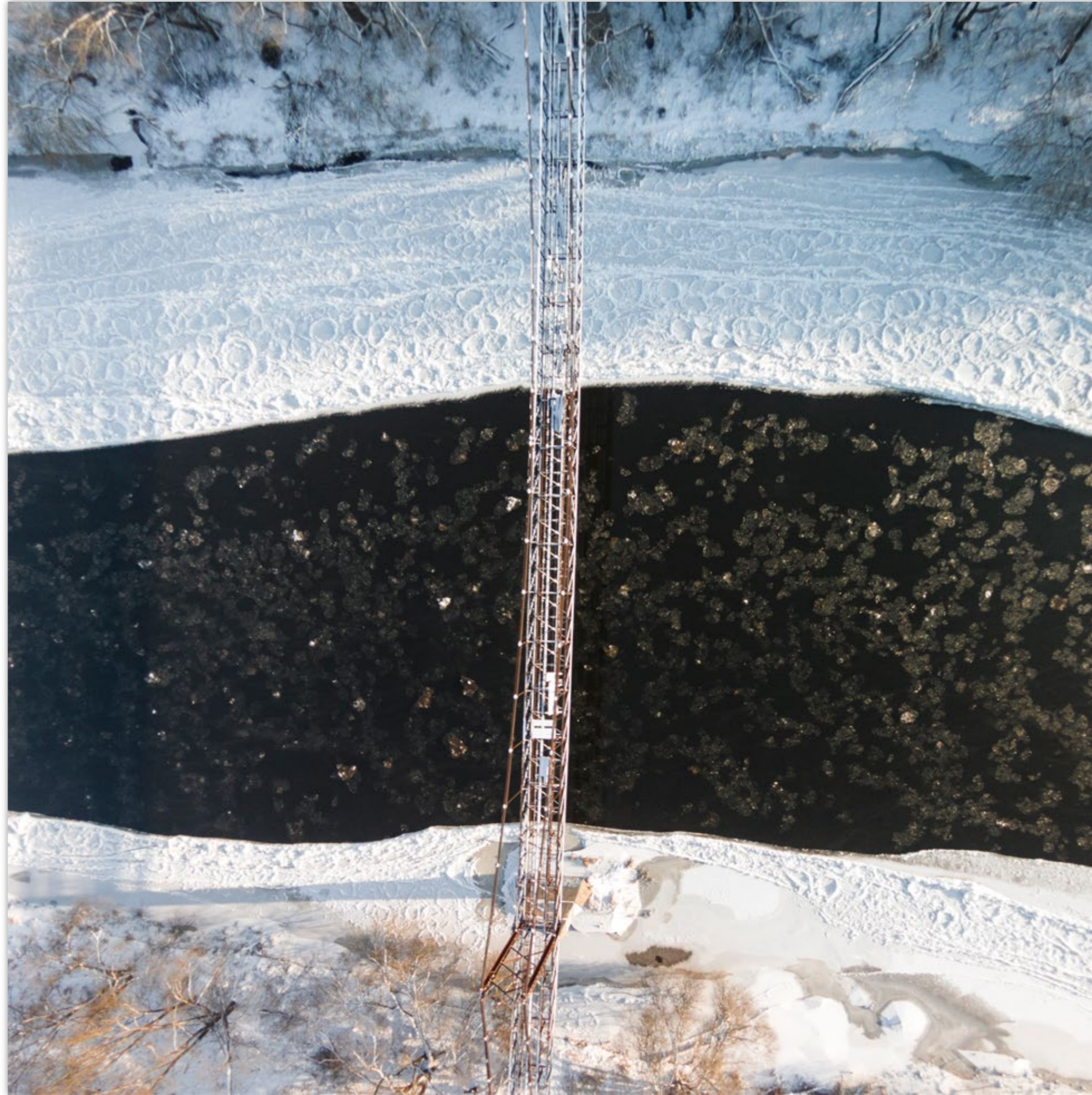


Helicopter in military show at Kaisiadoriai, Lithuania.
DJI Phantom 2 vision+. © Karolis Janulis





Bridge, winter, Lithuania. DJI Phantom 2 vision+.
© Karolis Janulis



*Man sitting on pier with his feet in the lake, Lithuania.
DJI Phantom 2 vision+. © Karolis Janulis*

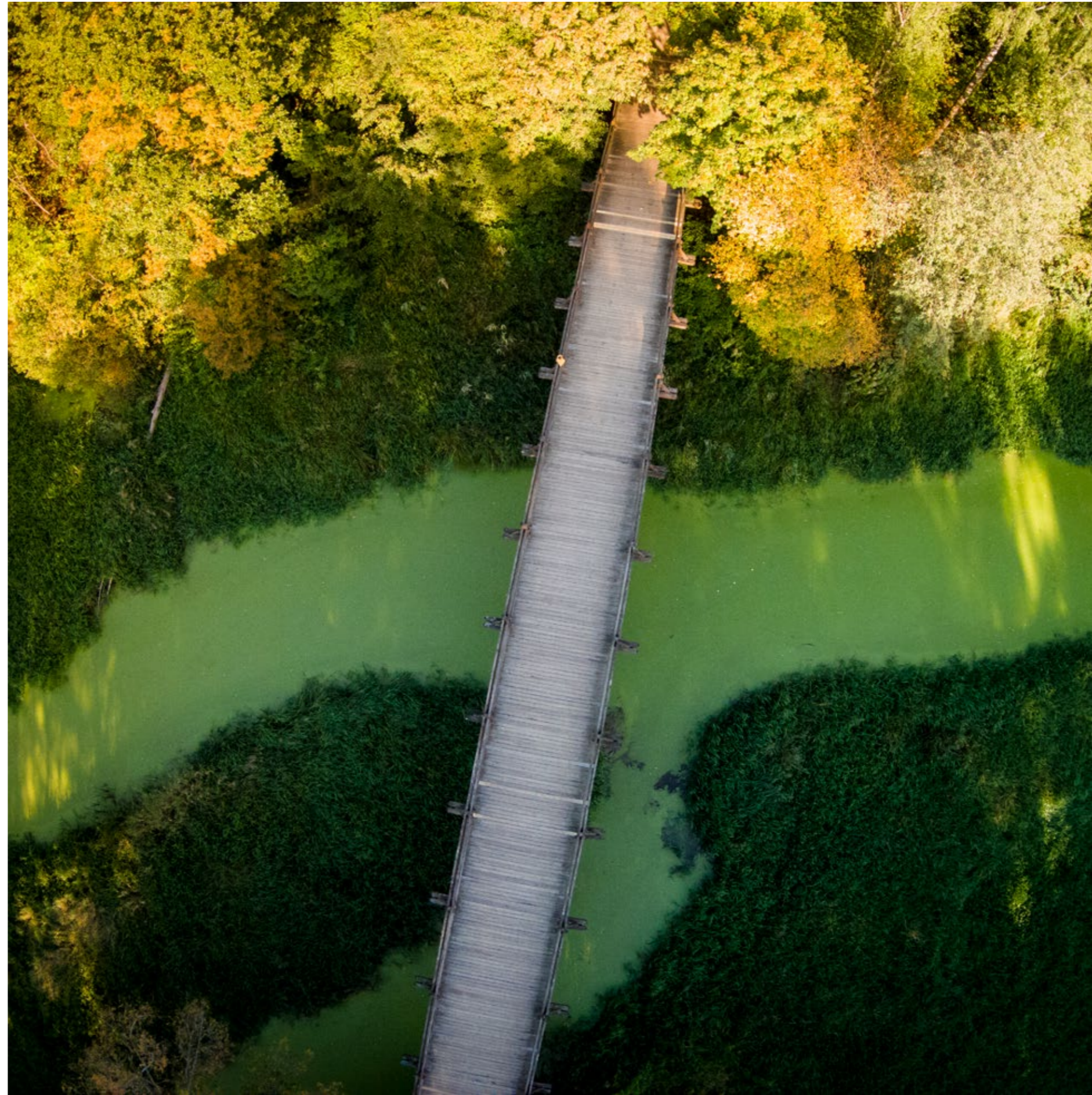
'Aerial photography has taught me tolerance, respect for others privacy and an understanding of the responsibility which I now have. The whole process requires one to be strictly well organised and very attentive.'





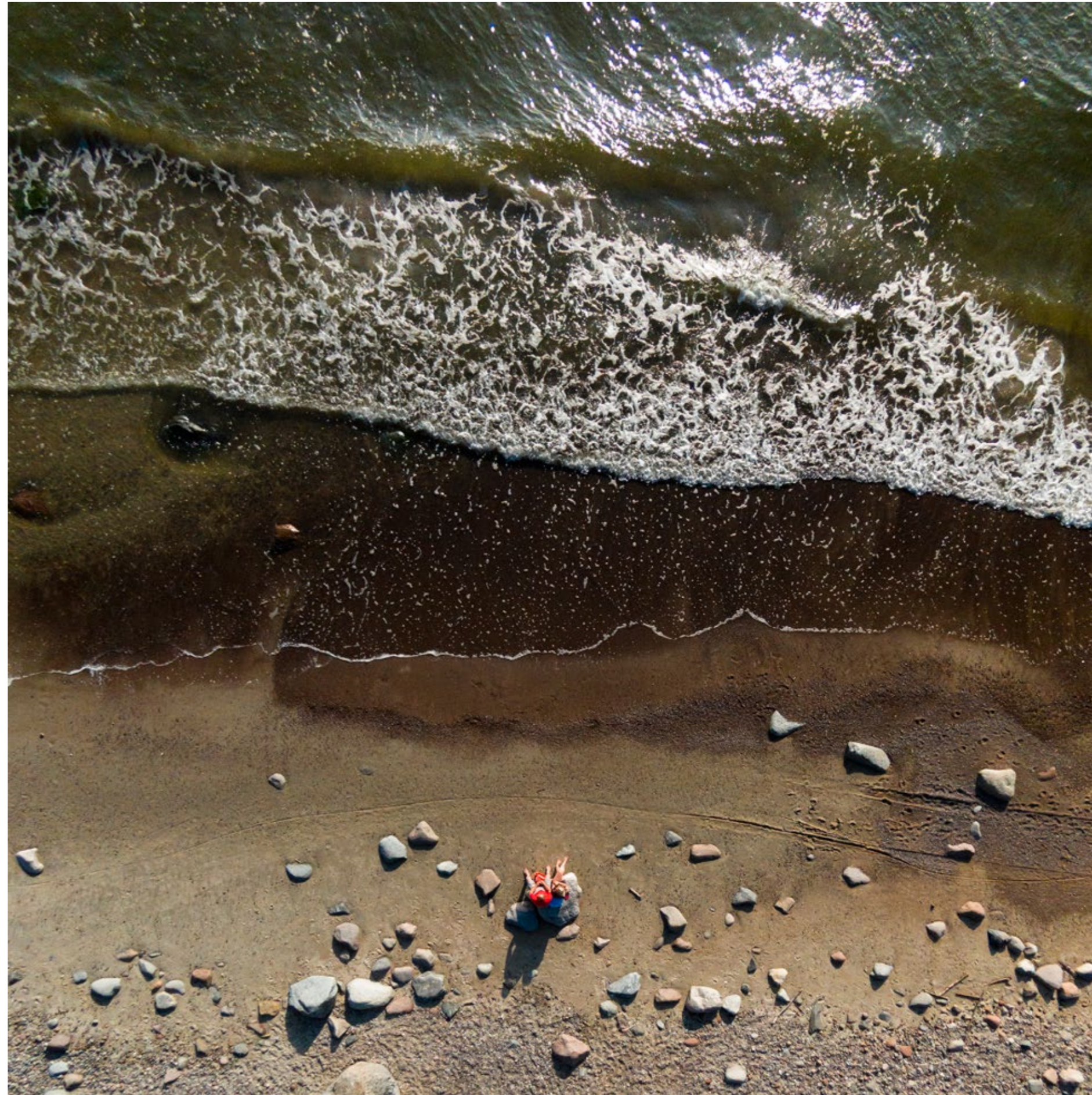
*Agricultural work, summer in Lithuania. DJI Phantom 2 vision+.
© Karolis Janulis*

Fall is coming. Autumn colours in Lithuania.
DJI Phantom 2 vision+. © Karolis Janulis



A couple enjoying the sea view on the Baltic Coast, Lithuania. DJI Phantom 2 vision+. © Karolis Janulis

'This entire aerial project is an expression of me, I'm doing what I really love and it has become a way of life. The most amazing moments lie just on the edge, we simply need to notice them.'



Puzzle. A maze in Anyksciai, Lithuania.
DJI Phantom 2 vision+. © Karolis Janulis



Witch. A bride on a broom, Lithuania.
DJI Phantom 2 vision+. © Karolis Janulis



*'When we're standing on a bridge we are always
curious about what is happening below, for me it is
the same when viewing the world from the air. The
world from this perspective is still unknown, and
challenges our imagination.'*



Chasms and waterfalls are a landscape photographers dream on the road between Banff and Jasper. Aperture Priority, 100 ISO, tripod, f16 for 25 seconds with ND filter, 17-40mm lens. © Darran Leal

On location

Canada – Banff to Jasper

When you think of Canada, you think of the Mountie, the moose, stampedes and maybe a bear. Canada offers this and so much more. Photographers can explore vast wilderness regions. Some are true wilderness, while others might be classed as ‘soft’ wilderness. Soft wilderness often offers easier access, better shooting locations and great accommodation options. The amazing drive between Banff and Jasper is in this latter category.

Easiest access is from either Vancouver or Calgary. On leaving both cities, you are quickly into conifer forests with towering peaks as a backdrop. It looks wild and for a photographer – especially one new to Canada, it’s very exciting!

This region has 4 clear seasons. This means you can pick the time of your visit to suit your interests. Winter offers lots of snow and it can get below -20 degrees celsius. This does limit access to some locations. Spring will offer flowers and a buzz of insects and creatures like bears. Summer has a lot of melt water for the waterfalls and good access to more locations, while autumn can offer fall colour. In other words, apart from unpredictable storms, nearly any time of the year will offer you unique imagery.

LANDSCAPES

As mentioned, the landscapes start immediately. It does, at times, feel like, ‘where do we stop?’ For this reason, I like to start and finish a tour of this region in the same place, this offering a return ‘backtrack’ over old ground and the chance to experience new light on a location or two that took your interest earlier.

Lake reflections such as those found at Lake Minnewanka and Lake Louise are truly iconic. The key is to get down to the waters edge. However, some slightly more elevated locations can offer great shoots on the right weather day. Weather plays a huge role. I remember one walk which started in drizzle, so we shot flowers and creative images. An hour later, the clouds parted for stunning reflections and landscape images.

I highly recommend that you take a guided walk on the Columbia ice fields. You can drive up in a giant truck with all the other tourists, but a guided walk will get you right up into the ice for better imagery. Like anywhere in the world, it is easy to go to lovely locations and shoot ‘nice images’. It is harder to do it the right way but the resulting images are in a different league. ▶



WATERFALLS

Over a dozen waterfalls are waiting for your artistic touch and other gorges and chasms might entice you to shoot as well. Athabasca Falls and Maligne Canyon, are well sign posted and worthy of spending quality time. One of my favourite waterfalls is a small fall right beside the main highway. A lot of traffic drives by slowly and looks at it from the car. Some stop for a few minutes. I spent over an hour and a half shooting a host of angles.

NATURE

Yes, you can see bears in this region. Most likely it will be a short reveal and not that photogenic, but you might be lucky. We even spotted some wolves but they were very shy. Moose and deer are about, and reasonably approachable, as are squirrels. Mountain goats are also to be seen. Often they are hard to shoot, but if you are lucky, there are a couple of locations offering easier access.

Canada offers a great diversity of subjects for a visiting photographer. I look forward to revisiting 'Banff to Jasper', but also to new Canadian destinations that all promise to be a 'photographers playground'...

Enjoy your photography ... ■

Darran Leal

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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:
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Squirrels and chipmunks are common. Program Mode, 100 ISO, f8 at 1/200 sec with fill-flash, 100-400mm lens, hand held. © Darran Leal

► Both images on right hand page:

The drive from Banff to Jasper can offer shooting opportunities at any time.

Top image: Aperture Priority, 100 ISO, f5.6 at 1/90 sec, 100-400mm lens, hand held.

© Darran Leal

Bottom image: Aperture Priority, 100 ISO, f8 at 1/500 sec, 100-400mm lens @ 330mm, hand held.

© Darran Leal





APSCON ADELAIDE 2016

The premier event for the Australian photographic Society (APS) is the annual convention, generally referred to as APSCON. Each year the convention is held in a different Australian state. APSCONs enable members to catch up with old friends and make new ones while enjoying motivating speakers, attending informative workshops, sharing tours planned to make the best of photographic opportunities and taking advantage of many occasions for social interaction.

Adelaide is the host city this year. From its sweeping white beaches to the cultural strip of North Terrace to the beautiful Adelaide hills with their boutique wineries and picturesque villages; diverse, arty, scenic and delicious, Adelaide has it all.

Keynote speaker Tony Bridge is one of New Zealand's leading landscape photographers. Tony is a digital artist, professional photographer, photo educator, published author, columnist and freelance journalist. He is a regular contributor to *f11* Magazine. A graduate of Canterbury University, he holds an Advanced Certificate with Distinction in professional photography and is a fellow of the Photographic Society of New Zealand. His work draws strongly upon his Māori and European heritage (Te Rarawa, Nga Pakeha) and ongoing studies into a broad range of spiritual and mystical traditions. It also draws heavily upon a university degree in foreign languages and literature.

Tony will deliver an address titled 'From the Heart, Honouring your own Journey' and will

run two workshops titled 'From Heart to Print' and 'A Matter of Quality'.

Tony says: 'It seems to me, that the digital process is limited only by our imagination, our knowledge of self, and our willingness to give it free rein. For me, capture is only the beginning. It is in post-production that I can truly recognise my vision in a form which I can share with others.'

The second keynote speaker is Mark Galer. Members heard him speak at Tweed Heads and asked for more. Mark is a seasoned professional photographer, educator, author, and contributing editor for Australian Photography and Digital magazine. He is also the Adobe Photoshop/Lightroom Ambassador for Australia. Mark has just finished his 30th book for Focal Press, has served as a Senior Lecturer and Program Director of the BA Photography course at RMIT University in Melbourne and is the Sony Alpha Ambassador for Australia.

Mark's address is titled, 'Adobe Creative Cloud for Photographers'. He will also run two workshops titled, 'On Lightroom' and 'Lightroom and Photoshop'. These presentations promise to provide a timely update on the Adobe programs most used by photographers.

In addition, Dylan Toh and Marianne Lim, Lou Marafioti, Phillipa Frederiksen, Paul Atkins, Denis Smith, David Evans, Paul MacDonald, Paul Robinson and Ron Speed will be presenting in a full and varied program. Don't miss out, register now on the APS website.

Peter Robertson LPSNZ

Changing of the Guard – PSNZ Welcomes New President

When members of the Photographic Society of New Zealand (PSNZ) meet in Queenstown for the 2016 National Convention from 22-26 April, President-elect Peter Robertson LPSNZ will be officially appointed as President of the Society.

Having served as Vice President for the past three years, supporting outgoing President Murry Cave FPSNZ FNPSNZ, Peter says he is looking forward to embracing the role of President of one of the country's most distinguished arts organisations.

A resident of Westport, Peter is a Past President of the Buller Camera Club and has contributed a broad range of skills and abilities since joining the PSNZ Council some four years ago.

He is a Justice of the Peace, Rotarian and a Trustee for several charitable trusts. He chairs the Denniston Heritage Trust and spent 18 years as a Secondary School Principal which collectively has given him expertise in governance and management in both charitable and business arenas.

A passionate photographer, Peter has produced award-winning images in a broad range of genres and styles, and has a particular interest in travel, nature and editorial photography. His photographs of Denniston and the development of the Denniston Experience – an underground heritage coal mine tourist attraction – have been widely exhibited and published.

Using his teaching skills, Peter taught photography courses at High School level in the 'film' days, and continues to tutor at club and community workshops throughout the country. He is currently training for judging accreditation under the PSNZ Judge Accreditation Programme.

With the pending new 'Incorporated Societies Act' (currently a bill before Parliament), PSNZ, along with all other incorporated societies will have to migrate its governance and management structures to comply with the Act.

Peter is a champion of the Photographic Society of New Zealand and its affiliated camera clubs and says managing the changes in governance will be one of his key goals as President while recognising it will be a lengthy process.

He also sees PSNZ as a framework of encouragement and support for students of photography, regardless of their level of competency. Embracing the digital era and iPhone photography, and promoting a membership drive are also high on his list of priorities.

'Photography is a never ending journey as there is always something new to embrace, learn and share. I'm looking forward to all the challenges that will be presented to me over the next two years,' says Peter.

For more information on PSNZ go to www.photography.org.nz

Moira Blincoe LPSNZ is the PSNZ Councillor for Publicity



LISA SAAD APP M.PHOTOG III

LISA SAAD APP M.PHOTOG III



LISA SAAD APP M.PHOTOG III

LISA SAAD APP M.PHOTOG III



KELLY TUNNEY APP M.PHOTOG I

KELLY TUNNEY APP M.PHOTOG I

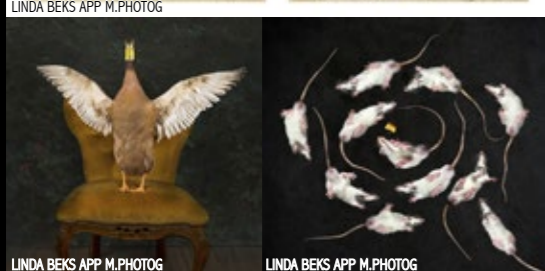


KELLY TUNNEY APP M.PHOTOG I



LINDA BEKS APP M.PHOTOG

LINDA BEKS APP M.PHOTOG



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LINDA BEKS APP M.PHOTOG

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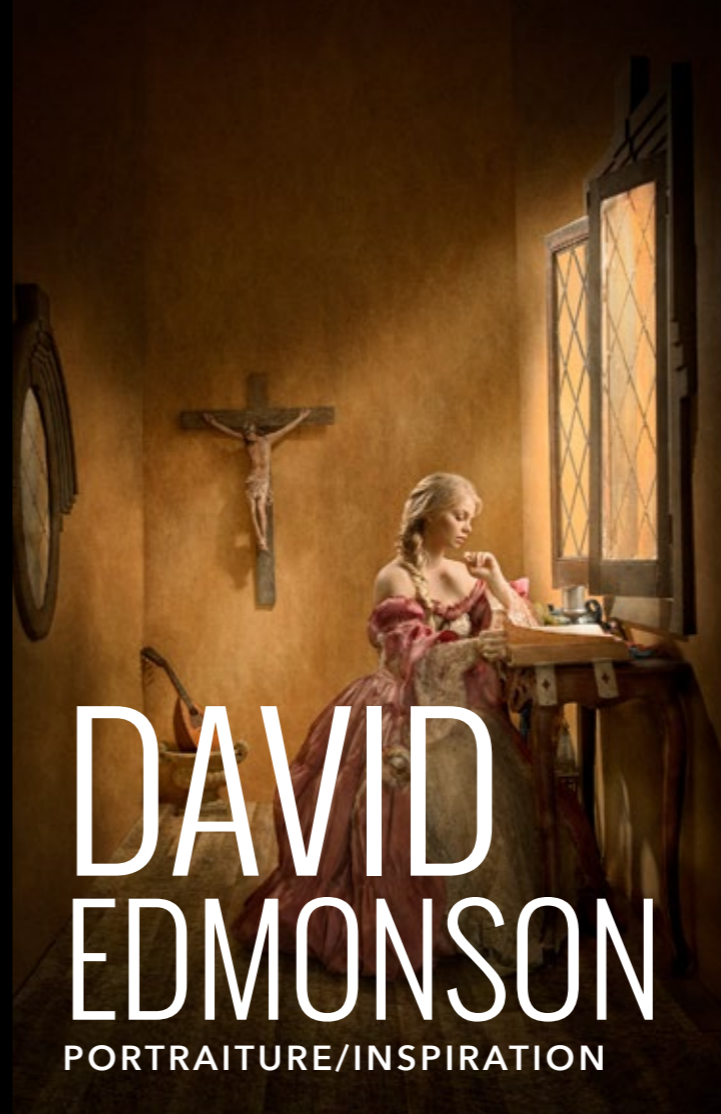
20th – 21st of June

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN

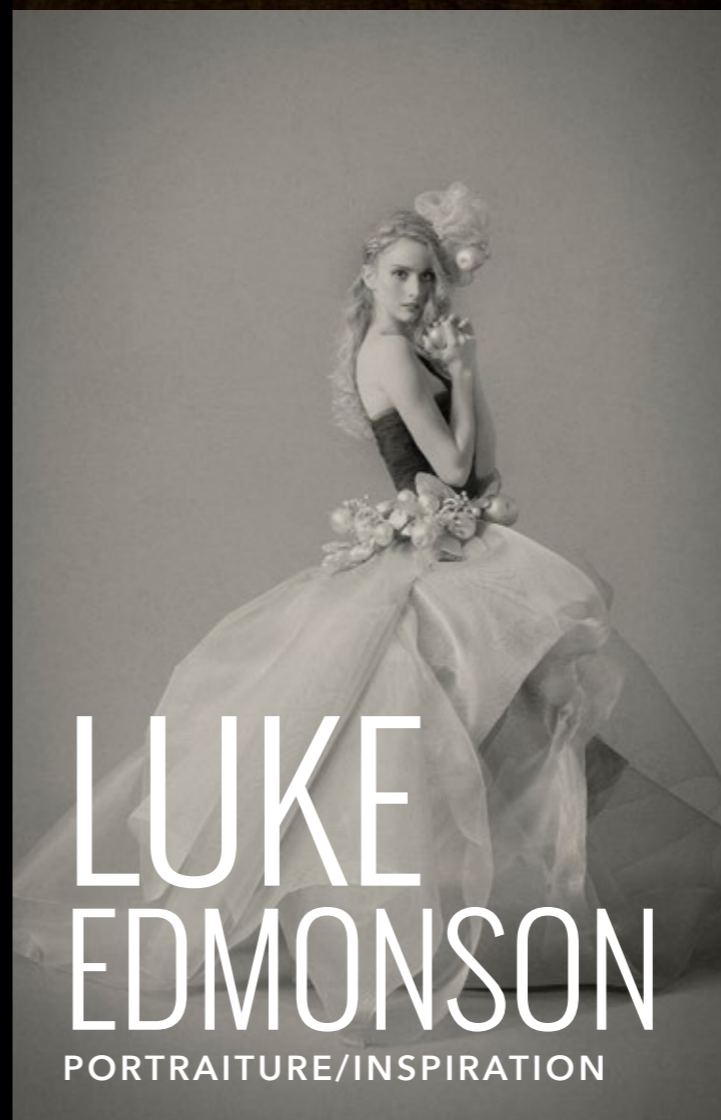
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NORTHERN TERRITORY

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MELBOURNE

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.

THE 2016 NIKON AIPP
EVENT



These AIPP pages are sponsored by f11 Magazine.



**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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BOOKINGS ARE ENCOURAGED AS
PLACES ARE STRICTLY LIMITED ON
THESE SMALL GROUP WORKSHOPS**

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CONTENT IN f11 MAGAZINE**

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.

HOW TO USE THE LINKS

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:

ONLINE readers will note that these links open in a new tab, or window, in your web browser, so you won't lose your place in f11, as this stays open in it's own tab or window.

If you're reading our PDF on your computer, Acrobat/Adobe Reader will open the link in your browser while holding the f11 page open for you to return to.

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Enjoy.

AIPA

FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

www.aipa.org.nz

"It's great to belong to an organisation that supports photographers and is actively involved in making the industry better for everyone."

Garth Badger
www.garthbadger.co.nz



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Newer is always better – right?

As I've admitted in the past, I'm a gear junkie and I've learned to accept it.

After years of hanging out on rumor sites and eagerly awaiting the release of the next tasty piece of kit (the one that will make life easier, produce better results, create demand from clients, or any other justification I can convince myself, and my accountant of) I am finally admitting to an addiction to the new.

Picture me at my first meeting standing up unsteadily and mumbling my name and my addiction, to a soft round of applause from my fellow sufferers.

After that repeat admission you'd be forgiven for thinking that the release of an updated version of the 'workhorse' optic of my DSLR kit, which happens to be a top-of-the-line brand-name mid-range zoom, should have me fizzing. To be fair, at first it did but then the details emerged and really took the shine off things. As the first tests and reviews emerged from the test labs I realised that we are now firmly in the age of compromise.

It's been years since we first realised that the shiny new washing machine wasn't going to last as long as the old one – but now a new lens has less central sharpness than its predecessor – WTH? Ok it's not all bad news, as apparently the overall IQ and edge to edge sharpness across the zoom range is so superior that hardly anyone will miss the central shortcomings! Oh, and it has VR. From memory, VR is for people who were never taught how to hold a camera properly (or how to use a tripod) as children...

So, now I'm torn between giving away some of the biting central acuity of my current (mint condition) optic but gaining all of the other benefits, or saving my hard earned to buy more hard drives, and living under the weight of knowing that some of my compatriots are packing better edge to edge sharpness and, wait for it, ...VR, in their camera cases.

So with some trepidation I head into the archives to take a look at some of the work I've done with the current lens in the five or so years I've



owned it. The lens has been used across a multitude of genres – portraiture, fashion, food, architecture, industrial and aerial assignments to name but a few. Now, try as I might, even looking hard at a full Christmas table setup shot from a mere metre and a half above the table, I couldn't fault the IQ or edge sharpness on any of the images. Clearly none of my clients could either, as I've never had any complaints.

So I do some more research, seeking out 'real world' and 'hands on' reviews where hair-splitting bench testing is eschewed in favour of tackling real world situations and guess what? The general consensus is, there is bugger all difference between the old and the new! It turns out that the better edge-to-edge sharpness is almost as hard to discern as the lack of central acuity. In short, a well processed file from the old lens is damn near indistinguishable from the new.

This makes my decision a whole lot easier now. The downsides of the extra weight and size of the new lens, coupled with a larger front element

that I would have to buy expensive filters for, do not appear to outweigh the much vaunted (perceived?) optical benefits. That said, and even though warm in the knowledge that my accountant will be happy, I still feel a bit deflated by the whole thought process involved in the decision...

Now before those of you who have figured out which lens I'm talking about all start writing in to disagree, I'll be hiring the new lens shortly and I'll put it through its paces alongside my current one – just in case the reviews I read were well wide of the mark. In the event I'm turned around after actually using it, I promise to frankly admit all in a future article. ■

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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.

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do not make face contact with the camera. Their eyes are unseen. The power of the back story to this photo is compelling but it is the photo that takes you to that place in an unwavering way.

Whilst I now own up to looking for more books about photographs than I do for books of photographs, it was through my early career period spent studying photographs that I started preparing my eyes for seeing without a camera. This was a difficult period, because I was hooked on the mechanical process of creating photographs.

A period of time we all must pass through in order to reach the other side, I hasten to add!

But it slowly dawned on me (cheerfully admitting to being one of the world's tardiest learners) that the content, the construction, and the creation of the photograph was more important than the delivery of the image.

This applies equally to the commercial image sold for money, and the fine art print created for aesthetic and stylish reasons.

The brain behind the eye behind the viewfinder is more powerful than any of the metrics we use to measure the calibre, quality or resolving power of the lens. ■

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'A camera is a tool for learning how to see without a camera...'

– Dorothea Lange

How could an early twentieth century photographer be so aware and conscious of the power of photography without possessing any of the knowledge we now have at our fingertips, in our case thanks largely to the information age of the internet?

Lange was from that famous school of American documentary photographers during the early twentieth century which included, amongst many others, Robert Frank, Garry Winogrand, James Nachtwey, W. Eugene Smith, Nan Goldin and Mary Ellen Mark.

Seeing without a camera is also described as pre-visualisation. Ansel Adams was a great proponent of getting the image clear in his head before exposing a sheet of film. There might have been monetary constraints behind such a process, but I like to think it was then, and still is now, all about searching and finding the photograph before letting the camera perform its very mechanical and technical thing, the job of making an exposure.

At this time of the year when the photography calendar has started with the WPPI convention in Las Vegas now completed, the various Australian state professional awards commenced, nominations for entries into the New Zealand professional awards having been called, and mumblings already starting about the Australian awards later in the year; discussion is rife about creativity, and the creation of great photographs.

Whilst some photographers maintain that a good photograph can be created via careful post-production of an image (either digitally or in the dark room) I am strongly of the opinion that great images have their genesis in a process involving careful thought. That superb reaction shot taken by a wedding or documentary photographer is more than just the tangible evidence of good reflexes, it is the sum total of years of experience, of getting into the right position, of thinking about new angles or approaches and having the presence of mind to be ready for the unexpected. Luck plays very little part in it.

The power of Lange's photographs is as strong and compelling today as they were when she worked for the US Farm Security Administration and created the iconic photograph, *Migrant Mother, Nipomo, California (1936)*. This image has little to do with technique and a lot to do with the gentle but determined desire of the photographer to observe and then capture a scene that she felt needed to be seen by a wider audience.

The focal length of her lens, her choice of film type, or the length of time it spent in the developer are rendered irrelevant by the choice of angle, the humanity contained in the eyes of the subject, a poverty stricken mother, and the fact that her children, huddled in their tent

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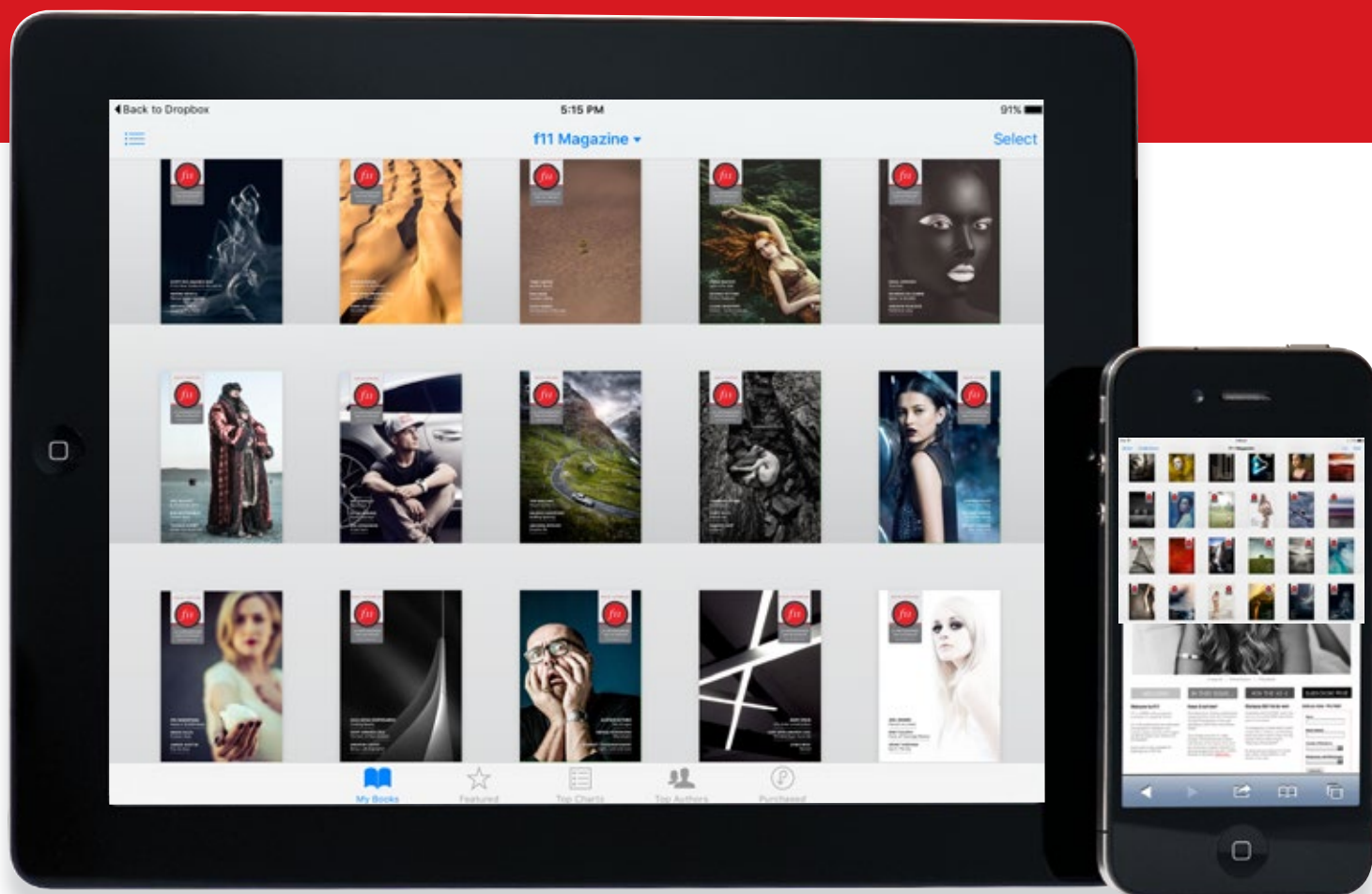
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