

ISSUE 08 | MARCH 2012



for PHOTOGRAPHERS
AND AFICIONADOS

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Travelling light

SCOTT LEGGO

Outdoorsman

MARK HARRIS

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At the heart of the image



Welcome to *f11* Magazine

Welcome to issue 8, our March 2012 edition. We're delighted to feature the work of another three photographers, work we hope you'll find as interesting as we do.

A warm welcome to Darran Leal as a new regular contributor to the magazine. Like all of the team, I can vouch for his credentials and suitability, learn more about Darran on page 2 - and read his first contribution, On Location, on page 72.

Growth is our mandate for 2012, we need new subscribers to sign up and we need your help. If you're enjoying *f11*, and want us to succeed, then please help us grow our readership numbers. So keep on spreading the word, we love you for it.

We're now on the home stretch to find subscriber number 5000 and once we've done that we'll draw the Olympus winner from our virtual hat. Yes, you're all in the draw, so good luck people.

f11 readers are a small but growing community, whether gathered by country or separated by geography, linked or divided by language, they are bound together by one common denominator, a passion for the power of the image. We are united by what we share, and what we share at least partly defines us.

You can choose to read the magazine in page flip format on our website or take advantage of our popular PDF download. The PDF is perfect for iPad, or other tablet style device, users and also allows you to archive your copy for future reading.

If you're a regular reader but have not yet subscribed – please do! Subscribers are automatically entered into all of our prize draws, and receive an email when each issue is released. It's fast, easy and free to sign up and we'll never provide your details to anyone else. Promise.

Plus, during the month of March only, every new and existing subscriber goes into a separate draw to win a Manfrotto 681B Monopod complete with a Manfrotto 234RC head, together valued at NZ\$219. This prize is kindly provided courtesy of our friends at the NZ Manfrotto agents, Macalister Ltd.

Hope you enjoy this issue of *f11*.

Tim

tim@f11magazine.com

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**Alex Wallace :: Scott Leggo ::
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The *f11* team

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



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



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.



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



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



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



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



This issue's guest editorialist is **IAN POOLE**, a member of the AIPP since 1976, holding various positions within the Institute. He has been Australian Vice-President and Queensland President and is well known for his extensive work as an educator at an academic level with Queensland College of Art and the Queensland University of Technology. Poole has been a long term judge of the APPA's and a guest judge in the NZIPP Awards for six years. With a background as an advertising/commercial photographer in Brisbane, Poole is now turning his hand at finely crafted black and white portraiture; and is a director of the newly formed Foto Frenzy company specialising in photographic education from a Brisbane base.





**Ian
POOLE**

Guest editorial

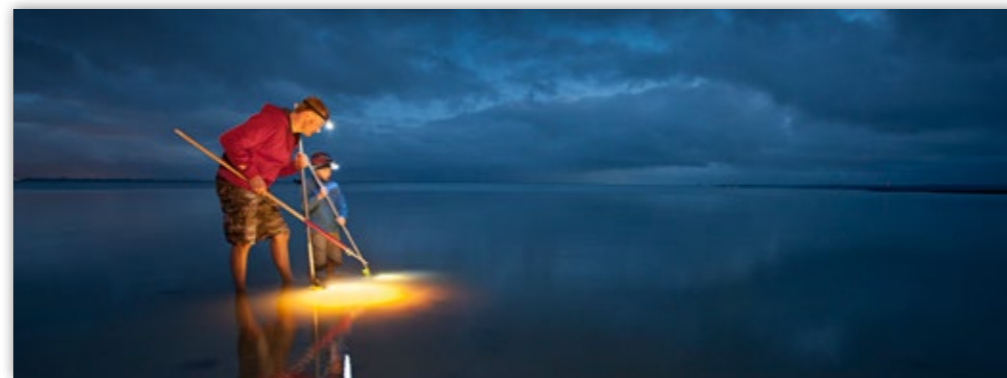
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COVER IMAGE © Alex Wallace
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JOY RIDE

Not to be confused with the 2001 film of the same name, or the 2009 song by Roxette, 'Joy Ride' is a short film shot by Sandro using the new Nikon D800 camera.

CLICK ON THE SCREEN IMAGE TO VIEW THIS VIDEO.



DON'T MISS THIS OPENING SEQUENCE...

David Fincher uses Blur Studio for the stunning opening sequence for 'The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo'.

CLICK ON THE SCREEN IMAGE TO VIEW THIS VIDEO.



ADOBE CS6 SNEAK PREVIEW

A sneak preview into Photoshop CS6 from Adobe's Senior Product Manager, Bryan O'Neil Hughes. Get an early look at some of the things the Photoshop team is working on for Camera Raw.

CLICK ON THE SCREEN IMAGE TO VIEW THIS VIDEO.



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Style is knowing who you are, saying what you want to say, and not giving a damn.
- Gore Vidal

In preparing each issue of this magazine, I'm often struck by the validity of this quotation from Gore Vidal, a man enormously capable of expressing complex propositions with very few highly effective words. Although I rather think he was addressing writers, it still speaks to me almost every time I sit down to edit, then select, images from our contributing photographers.

I'm not immune to the suggestion that this statement potentially reads two ways, speaking of emotional indifference almost as well as it speaks to singular clarity of vision. I simply choose the latter interpretation as it better suits my temperament and purpose.

As I work with their images, I can usually place photographers in one of two camps. Those who have a style carefully developed and deliberately constructed over many years and those whose style simply pours out of them every time they lift the camera, uncontrived but nonetheless unmistakable. It often takes a little time to work out which is which, and sometimes it's impossible to tell – and that conclusion is a source of endless fascination.

Of course the differentiation is a somewhat moot point, it matters little whether the resulting images are consciously or unself-consciously created. In the editing process, and the layout process that follows, the portfolios

we show simply hang together as bodies of work demonstrating a certain 'style' which we then attribute to that photographer.

What matters more, is that once style has been established a photographer is liberated to look beyond the superficial, think beyond the constraints of 'how will I represent this?' and interpret with newfound freedom more along the lines of 'why will I represent this?'.

How an image was planned, designed, executed and then post produced and presented will always be important. These are contributors towards the success or failure of that image, or series of images.

Why an image was created, it's intention and the message behind it is of equal importance in many cases, though not all. Some images simply move beyond the intent of their creator, finding multiple interpretations from multiple viewers, often surprisingly at odds with the creator's original intent.

Finding a personal style is liberating, becoming comfortable in that skin not always so, as photographers seek to first invent and then reinvent themselves over the longer term.

Sought, found or lost, deliberate or unconscious, known or unknown, style is unmistakable, powerful and compelling when we as impartial observers see it.

The trick for any photographer is to know where they are in that process, and if they've found their own style, to recognise, cherish, celebrate and feed the beast.

TS


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Smelling the visual roses

As a recent purchaser of a smart phone, an Apple iPhone 4S in November, I have had a love/hate relationship with the device.

For me a mobile telephone has been a “ring-ring – hello” type of a device; and it is only with a recent change of circumstances that I have found myself doing more travelling and working away from a regular office. The contemporary smartphone has suddenly delivered additional communication concepts into my hand – and a device capable of image creation! I still don’t regard it as a camera, but my views are slowly changing.

This is mainly due to the fact that I have found an unlikely, but very likeable, use for my iPhone.

Whilst travelling in Japan late last year, I found that in addition to my Nikon D700 and my greatly loved Panasonic Lumix GF1, I was using the iPhone more and more. Firstly it was to update friends in Australia on my journey, then to include new and old Japanese acquaintances in a visual diary of my activities using Facebook. Images don’t require any knowledge of a foreign language, particularly when you are communicating with visually literate friends.

Then it finally dawned on me what I was doing. I

was “playing the scales”. This is what musicians do almost every day of their life. In my case, it was playing the visual scales. I was pushing my eye to discover new patterns, new concepts or just to record ideas in an interesting way. If a “real” situation came along and I wanted to take a “real photograph”, the iPhone would be quickly thrust into my pocket. Slowly I discovered the joy of creating a photograph without using a camera. A little like the seductive somewhat perverse joy that can be had by using a toy camera, such as a Holga or building and using a pinhole camera.

Many serious professional photographers regard such devices as tools of the Devil and suggest that these have no part in “real” photography. I disagree – what I have recently discovered, and forgive me for being very slow on the uptake, is the freedom to create images quickly and easily with a device that enables me to share such images with my friends via various social media sites.

Of course I have been seduced by various applications that take some of the “darkroom” out of the process. At the moment I am using Instagram as a conduit to my friends; Snapseed as my processing tool; 6x6, set permanently on black and white and Photosynth to do believable, amazing, instant in-camera

panoramas! All of these apps are easily obtainable and mostly free.

Is my iPhone a camera? No, it is not, and it will not be replacing my “real” camera equipment. But it has a valuable role in my life and a permanent spot in my camera bag. I have become a better photographer through being waylaid by this new technology and by taking the time to stop and smell the visual roses.

Ian Poole



Queenstown, New Zealand. Apple iPhone 4S.
© Ian Poole



Whilst Stealing Bandwidth Outside the Ginza Apple Store. Tokyo, Japan. Apple iPhone 4S. © Ian Poole



Apple iPhone 4S. © Ian Poole

Breaking photographers block

Back to the basics.

There are many ways of looking at our own work, and sometimes running into a brick wall of our own imagination, or the lack of it, can be one of the best things that ever happened to us.

The great photographer, Sam Abell, in his book *Stay This Moment*, talks of reaching a point where he no longer wanted to photograph, since there were no further challenges for him. It took about a year of wandering in the photographic wilderness before he found a new way of looking at his own photography. As he describes it, he was looking at a book on Japanese gardens, when he realised that, just like the art of Japanese landscape design, photography for him was about the art of framing. When you think about it, there are two tyrannies in photography which we can never escape: Time, which can only ever be expressed in fractions or multiples of a second; and the image frame, or picture space, which confounds some of our best attempts to escape it. From that point on, his core artistic issue became one of exploring framing an image and his response to it.

Often we will be exploring our own picture-making issues without realising it. At the beginning of our career as a photographer, amateur or professional, without realising it, we will subconsciously be developing our own way of doing things, and our own way of exploring our subject matter. You only have to go on a fieldtrip with other photographers, where you all line up in a row and attempt to photograph the same scene, to realise what is happening. Everybody will produce a different response to the same scene, and it is wonderful to share those varied and different versions at a later time.

If you are wondering just what those issues are for you, then take the components of photography and explore them one by one. Most of the great photographers have all done this at some point or for an extended period of time. Simple things like depth of field (which isn't really!) or choice of format (landscape or portrait), or even simple design elements like line, shadow or negative space can be particularly informative. Look back across your work and see if you can find common motifs which occur again and again. The next time you are out in the field photographing, experiment with the placement of the horizon line, selecting either higher or lower placements of it. More importantly, don't attach to a particular way of doing things. Just allow yourself to explore and play.

When you get back to your workspace, using your virtual lightbox, sit with the images you have made and decide which ones work best. Ask yourself if you could have been even more radical in the placement of your horizon lines, and what effect that might have had.

Playing with the basic components of photography, either by exploration or reflection, can often give you new insights into your own photography. It can even break photographer's block.

For the last 5 or 6 years I have tended to photograph the landscape using landscape format. After all, we tend to look at the landscape from left to right, rather than up and down. For most of that time, I was more interested in spatial relationships which ran from left to right, and from front to back. It always seemed to me that the 3:2 ratio in portrait format yielded a particularly visually narrowing effect.

But that was then and this is now.

Cloudscapes have been a singular part of my subject material for most of that time and, generally speaking, I have been trying to fit them into the landscape format. Then, one day last year, high on the Hawkdun mountains in central Otago, I saw these clouds. They just didn't work in landscape, so I attempted them in portrait, and to my surprise, they just worked.

Since that time I found myself using portrait format for the landscape more and more.

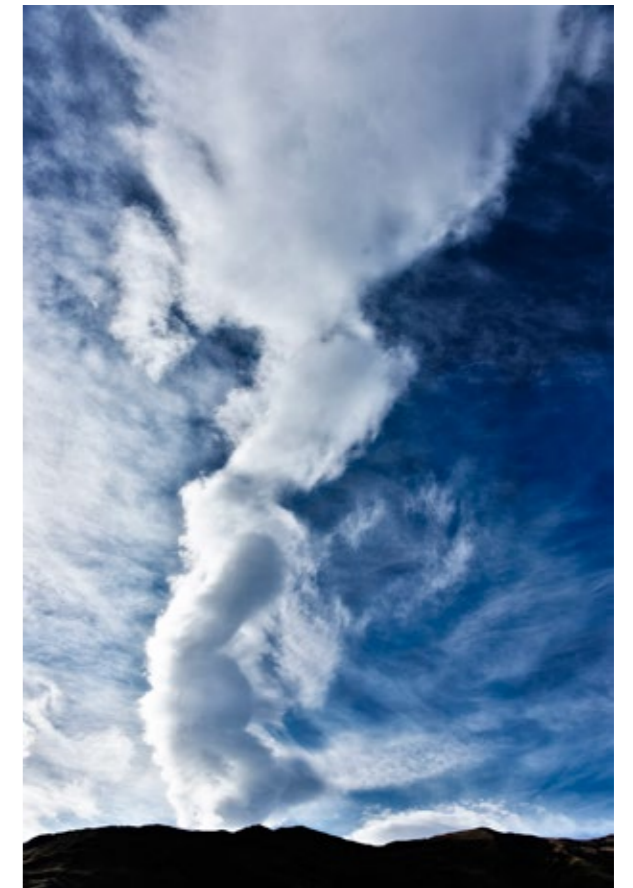
Actually, for all sorts of photography.

TB

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Alex WALLACE

Travelling light

Originally from the United Kingdom, Alex Wallace arrived in New Zealand ten years ago with the idea of finding work as a photographic assistant, and did precisely that. Those were buoyant times and he worked with as many professionals as possible, learning as he puts it, "...a hell of a lot from them, including how best to do things and how not to do things."

He met his future wife here, and they later moved back to the U.K. where Alex took a position in a commercial studio and put everything he'd learned into practice. Three years ago they returned to New Zealand and Alex set up his own business, in times now best described as less buoyant.

"It was probably the worst time to be setting up a business - the height of the recession, but being thrown in at the deep taught me a great deal about marketing: what's effective and what isn't." We talked to Alex about life, business and clients. ▶



*Water polo player shot in Auckland. New Zealand Water Polo. Canon EOS 1 DS MkIII. 16-35mm f2.8 II lens.
Lighting: broncolor. 3 heads. 2 honeycombed heads behind (right and left) with yellow gels.
1 beauty dish high to camera right. No gel. © Alex Wallace*

f11: Tell us a bit about the work you're doing?

AW: Much as I hate the negative connotations of the term, I guess I am a bit of a 'jack of all trades'. I shoot a wide array of subjects for a variety of clients - and I wouldn't have it any other way. I shoot products and people for advertising, buildings for architects, landscapes for stock. I shoot a bit of food, a bit of corporate portraiture and still try to keep up with some personal projects. Then of course I still make time for the important stuff: family and fishing.

f11: How's business at the moment, feast or famine?

AW: Business is now going pretty well. I've picked up some high profile clients and some loyalty from a few agencies, which is so important.

f11: What's your basic business approach to clients and agencies?

AW: You can't live on your past successes. You have to keep performing and getting the work in the door, to pay the bills and feed the family. So a client that keeps coming back to you is invaluable. I try my absolute best to look after them and keep them happy however I can. I'm always conscious of being the 'yes man'; trying to keep the whole relationship sweet and when they present me with a problem, offering them the solution they're after.

f11: Is there such a thing as a 'loyal' client?

AW: A client coming back with more work, is often the only way of knowing that they're happy with what you've done. You rarely get any thanks. Photos are temporary and expendable and while you may treasure a shot for the effort and love you put into it, you'll get little more than a cursory 'thank you', from the person who commissioned it - and I guess why should they - you're providing a service and once they pay for it, then the deal is done. ▶



▲ Billy Goat. Shot in Guernsey, for photographic book. Canon EOS 1DS MkIII. 16-35mm f2.8 II lens.
Lighting: Elinchrom. 2 heads. Soft-box high to rear right of subject. Softbox to left of camera. © Alex Wallace

▶ Image on page 19: Tim - Surfer. Shot at Piha Beach. Self promotion piece. Canon EOS 1DS MkIII. 24-105mm f4 IS lens.
Lighting: Broncolor. 1 head - high camera left. Large rectangular softbox minus diffusion. © Alex Wallace

f11: We've chosen to feature the 'people pictures' from your portfolio, so two questions in one - would you say that's your speciality, and who's doing the hiring?

AW: I shoot a lot of portraiture - mostly for advertising rather than editorial and clients are both agencies and the corporates.

f11: Let's talk about location lighting, looks like a lot of this is going on here.

AW: Yes, and 90% of this is on location and this usually means schlepping a full location lighting kit around. With the advent of digital and high ISO shooting, I find I can use speedlights and reflectors for quite a bit of work - especially for the bright light portraiture where the ambient light is key. Indeed my broncolor kit is often too powerful in these situations, you need just the tiniest pop of flash and their power can't be reduced enough. You find yourself dialing all the way down then layering the head with white diffuser to kill the light further. When the flash takes over and dominates the frame, that's where the broncolor gear comes into its own.

f11: You're obviously a real aficionado of flash, would you say it's become part of your style?

AW: I love shooting these heavily flash lit shots where the background is underexposed and the subject leaps from the frame. It offers a whole new look to what may otherwise be an uninspiring scene - and making people look twice and consider an image is surely the sign of a successful shot. It means they are paying attention to the ad - and that's what I'm paid for.

f11: Having worked in the UK and here in New Zealand, and apart from the issue of scale, how do the markets differ?

AW: Advertising agencies are a lot braver here than in the UK. I see ads running here that would never run over there. Anything that could possibly upset the PC brigade is

cut in the UK. Here it's quite the opposite; if an advertisement stirs up controversy and offends a minority, then it's ticking the right boxes.

f11: What's the next item of your photographic equipment which is up for replacement?

AW: The Canon 1DX looks pretty tempting but the one thing I would love to replace is my 16-35mm f2.8L USM II lens. The reason it needs replacing is that it's terribly soft at the wide aperture end. I've seen comparisons with the equivalent Nikon glass and the Nikon won hands down - sharp edge to edge at f2.8. Unfortunately Canon hasn't announced the successor yet, so I'm just going to have to wait.

f11: What's the best part of your work, the thing that keeps you coming back each day?

AW: The fact I'm getting paid to do something that many people enjoy only as a hobby

f11: Why is this a great time to be involved in imaging as a professional photographer?

AW: There are more images around us than ever before - we are bombarded by them at every turn in almost every media. While our industry often bemoans the fact that standards have slipped and everyone and anyone can call themselves a photographer and work for a pittance, I prefer to see this as a good thing. The more poor quality images there are out there, the better mine look. With the huge demand for fresh photos, there is inevitably a market for low quality inexpensive stuff, but so long as you're getting paid what you think you are worth, then I reckon you're doing pretty well.

f11: If circumstances were different, preventing you from doing what you do, what would you choose to do instead?

AW: I love diving and I looked at that as a career option for a while - becoming a ▶





▲ Taylor - skateboarder. Shot in Auckland. Metro Magazine. Canon EOS 1DS MkIII. 16-35mm f2.8 II lens.
Lighting: Broncolor. 1 head - camera left. Large softbox minus diffusion. 1 rim-light - the sun! © Alex Wallace

► Harlequin Great Danes, shot alongside commission for Audi. Canon EOS 1DS MkIII. 24-105mm f4 IS lens.
Lighting: Broncolor. 3 heads: 2 high snooted heads to rear of subject (either side) one softbox above camera left.
© Alex Wallace



dive instructor seemed a great idea. However, I found that diving as a profession took all the enjoyment out of it for me. Thankfully that has never been an issue with photography.

f11: Where do you turn to for inspiration, what gets the creative juices flowing?

AW: That's a big question! Sometimes it's Mother Nature, sometimes it's the built environment, often it's just observing people –those with an energy or a look about them, that you could imagine translating well into a photograph.

f11: Which photographers working now do you admire, and why?

AW: I often look to other photographers for inspiration. Damon Winter for example, he has a truly unique eye on the world. And on a local level here in NZ, I love the work of Jackie Ranken: an immensely adaptable and accomplished portrait and landscape shooter. I'm impressed by Tony Drayton. He lives in a world I don't inhabit; high end models, top stylists and make-up artists, big budgets and he's a very gifted photographer. It all combines to create these wonderful ethereal shots.

f11: You mentioned personal projects, what are you working on and why?

AW: I'm currently working on a documentary story at a local boxing club here in Auckland. It's a world away from my commercial work and with no control over lighting or posing, it's making me think sideways; I'm forced to shoot images without influencing the subject... something I'm not good at. There's an element of serendipity in every frame.

f11: Thanks Alex, look forward to seeing some of those images one day. ■

TS

www.alexwallace.co.nz



Ross and Lexi fishing for flounder. Manukau Harbour, Auckland for New Zealand Geographic Magazine. Canon EOS 1DS MkIII. 16-35mm f2.8 II lens. Lighting: Canon 580 EXII with yellow gel - camera right. plus glow from torchlight.
© Alex Wallace



▲ Tahlia. Shot near Pukekohe. Private Commission. Canon EOS 1DS MkIII. 24-105mm f4 IS lens.
Hazer to reveal sunrays and soft light through frame. White reflector to subtly fill subject. © Alex Wallace

▶ Quinn - Hairdresser. Shot in Auckland. Personal work. Canon EOS 1DS MkIII. 24-105mm f4 IS lens.
Lighting: Broncolor - arranged as seen in frame! © Alex Wallace





Maori Warrior in hot water waterfall, shot in Rotorua for Te Wero. Canon EOS 1DS MkIII. 24-105mm f4 IS lens. Lighting: sun through cloud and mist. © Alex Wallace



Woman with seaweed hair. Self promotion piece shot at Piha Beach, Auckland. Canon EOS 1DS MkIII. 24-105mm f4 IS lens. Lighting: sun bounced off white reflector. © Alex Wallace



▲ Leaping Maori Warrior shot in Ararimu for Te Wero. Canon EOS 1DS MkIII. 35mm f1.4 lens. Lighting: Broncolor. 1 head - large octagonal soft box to camera left. White reflector to camera right. © Alex Wallace

◀ Maori Warrior shot in Rotorua for Te Wero. Canon EOS 1DS MkIII. 35mm f1.4 lens. lighting: Mother Nature. Taken in the rain, under a tree fern whilst waiting for weather to improve. © Alex Wallace



Ronan - boxing coach. Shot in Auckland for Shamrock Boxing Club. Canon EOS 1DS MkIII. 24-105mm f4 IS lens.
Lighting: Broncolor. 2 heads. 1 high camera right with tall narrow softbox. 1 high in roof beams with wide dish reflector.
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Cross in snow, Alpine National Park, Victoria, Australia. Canon EOS 5D MkII, Canon 24mm f1.4L lens. © Scott Leggo

Scott LEGGO

Outdoorsman

Scott Leggo is a landscape and aviation photographer, based in Australia. He is driven by a passion for travel and the outdoor adventure of getting to great locations to photograph the stunning beauty of nature. Here at *f11* Magazine we were torn between the two bodies of work he made available to us, a collection of stunning landscapes, and an equally powerful selection of aviation images.

Could we showcase both adequately in one feature or did they deserve quiet spaces of their own? After much wailing and gnashing of teeth, we've elected to concentrate on the former, and revisit the latter – in a future ▶

“We need to preserve the few wild, untouched places remaining in the world and protect our precious wildlife and natural resources.”



Photographer Scott Leggo

issue, if he'll allow us. To tease you, take a look at the last page of this magazine as a taste of what may follow...

Formerly an Officer in the Royal Australian Air Force, Scott decided to pursue a career as a photographer, quickly becoming respected for his photographic talents, and winning many awards along the way.

Scott sells his best personal work, which is represented in his multi award winning limited edition print collection, to a growing international client base. His premium quality limited edition photographic prints grace the walls of homes and offices the world over, transforming the feeling of many a public and private space.

Scott was recently awarded the 2011 Epson ACT Professional Photographer of the Year, and was a finalist in the 2011 International Loupe Awards.

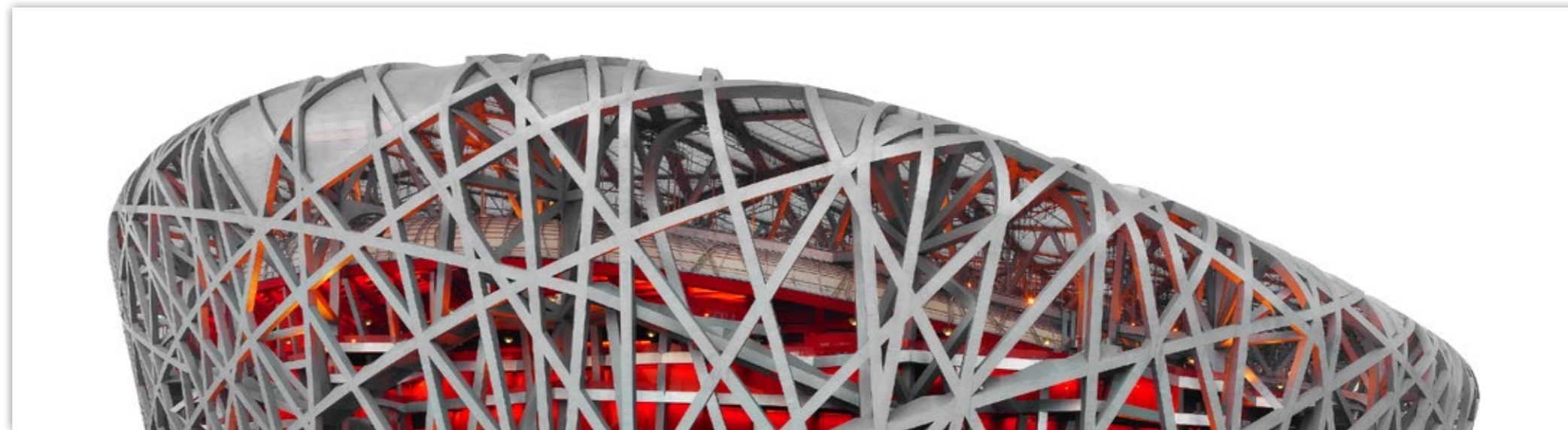
We chatted briefly with Scott about life, the universe and photography.

f11: From life in the RAAF to life as a photographer, tell us about the journey?

SL : I was in desperate need of a much better work-life balance and was looking for an 'excuse' to get out and about and get back to doing things I enjoyed rather than having my life dominated by work. Growing up I used to love the time I spent outdoors and over the years grew to love travel, but I had gotten to a point where much of what I enjoyed doing had disappeared from my life as I had been taken over by work. Essentially over a number years a lot had fallen out of my life in terms of what I actually enjoyed, replaced by work that increasingly offered little reward other than long hours and hectic travel. It all came to a head in 2006 and I decided that landscape photography would be a great 'excuse' for me to focus on reintroducing to my life the outdoor adventure activities I enjoyed as well



*Docklands moonrise. Webb Bridge, Docklands, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. Canon EOS 5D, Canon 24mm f1.4L lens.
© Scott Leggo*



*Birds nest, Beijing National Stadium. Beijing, People's Republic of China. Canon EOS 5D MkII, Canon 24mm 105 f4L IS lens.
© Scott Leggo*

as travel on my terms rather than those of my employer. Ultimately I thought, wouldn't it be awesome if I could travel around to these great locations and photograph them and come back with great images that would look great on people's walls? That was the genesis of the idea, and I guess why in many ways I'm not traditional in how I came to photography with no formal training or 'art' background - and why I've never been interested in shooting weddings or portraits!

f11: As someone now involved in the business of photography, how are you finding it?

SL : After working in Government and Defence, I now thoroughly enjoy the freedom and flexibility of effectively being my own boss and being unconstrained by frustrating processes and bureaucracy. I also get a lot of satisfaction from the challenges that are inherent in trying to grow a business along the path to achieving the vision I have set for myself. There were however, gasps of horror from many of my former colleagues over why I'd leave behind a successful career to chase a dream with no guarantees compared to the security I enjoyed. Undoubtedly I'm now much more relaxed, and happier, than I was when I set out on this photography journey, so in that regard I think I've definitely made the right decision.

f11: What's your approach to equipment?

SL : It's not about what camera or equipment you use. Yes equipment is important, but the best camera in the world is only as good as the person operating it. These days new versions and models of cameras, sensors and lenses are constantly being released. I think it's easy to fall victim to marketing hype and feel unhappy with the camera you have, as something better is always just around the corner. In my view, it doesn't matter. Use what you have. ▶



*Moonrise at the lighthouse. Cape Otway Lightstation, Cape Otway, Victoria, Australia.
Canon EOS 5D, Canon 24mm f1.4L lens. © Scott Leggo*



Lorne Pier. Pier, Lorne, Victoria, Australia. Canon EOS 5D, Canon 24mm f1.4L lens. © Scott Leggo

Cameras record what you choose to put in front of them. It's the getting out there in the first place and then your skills as the photographer in choosing composition, lighting and capturing an emotion that makes a good photograph. Get those things correct and it doesn't matter what camera you're using.

f11: Fair comments, so what equipment choices have you made?

SL : First and foremost, for much of what I do given the weather conditions I often find myself in, personal equipment and clothing is the priority. There's not much point having great camera equipment if you freeze to death. On the clothing front, I love everything from Icebreaker, and spend far too much money at all the top outdoor/adventure stores on clothing and other outdoor adventure essentials. Having been in the military you come to appreciate how important decent footwear is. My Raichle mountaineering boots, which I've had for a while now, are without doubt the best boots I've ever owned. They've taken me through all sorts of extremes globally and are still together and waterproof.

On the camera front, I currently shoot with Canon's EOS 5D MkII, with a good range of L series lenses. I predominantly use the wider angle lenses for my landscape work, while the longer focal lengths are great for much of my aviation work. Medium format is next for me, given what I want to be able to offer my clients going forward. I use a Gitzo GT2542L tripod and Gitzo GH2780QR ball head which is great for my back given the light weight and I love the flexibility that the extra length from the tripod gives me with no real compromise on rigidity. To carry my gear, I use Lowepro or Macpac backpacks for the longer overnight camping trips. I've used Sandisk Extreme Cards since I started and these cards have never failed me - and I've shot in temperatures

as low as minus 40 degrees Celsius. And last, but of course not least, I use Apple products for all my computing needs. On the processing front, I use Phase One's Capture One for my RAW processing and then Adobe Photoshop as required.

f11: Thanks Scott, we'll be back in touch a little later to talk aviation photography! ■

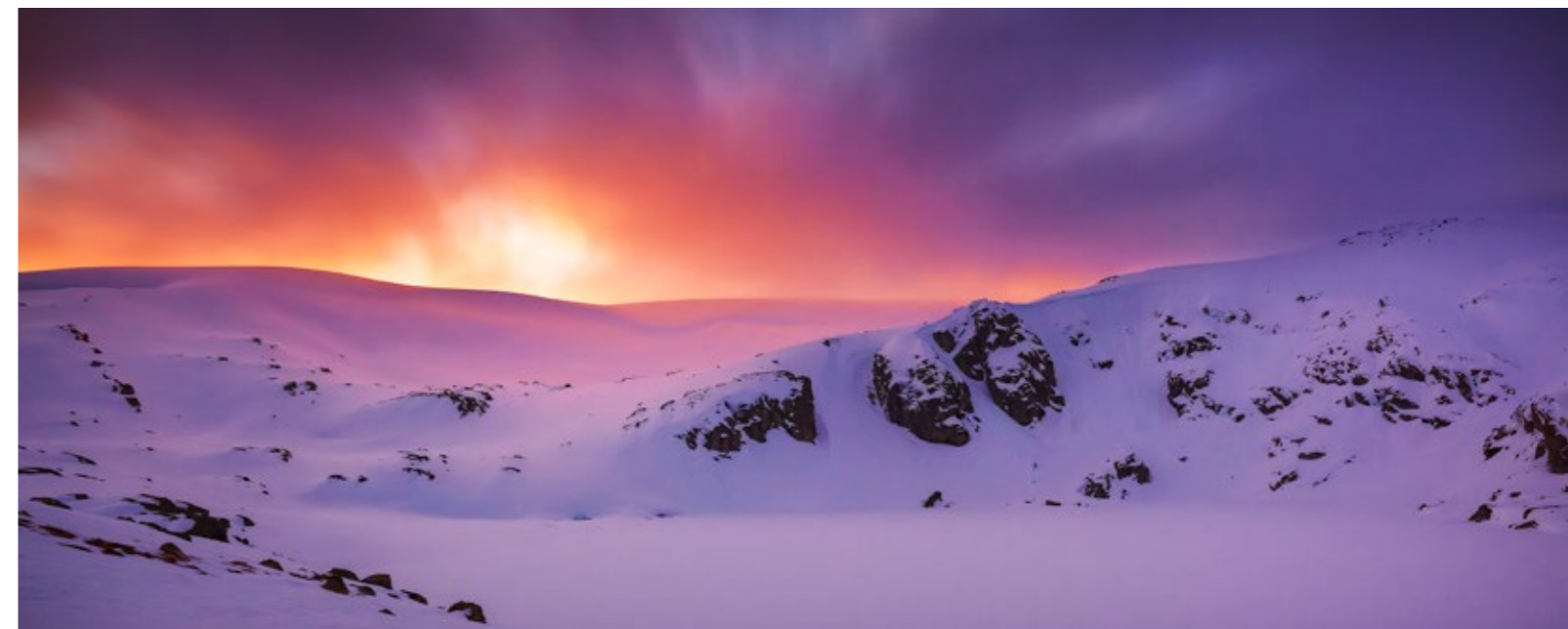
TS

www.scottleggoimages.com



Windmill. Rochester, Victoria, Australia. Canon EOS 5D, Canon 70-200mm f2.8L IS lens. © Scott Leggo

“I hope my images can help people recognise what we still have left and that it is worth protecting and preserving”



© Scott Leggo



© Scott Leggo

“Landscape photography for me combines a passion I have for the environment and my love of the outdoors”



Orange row of trees. Buck and Valley, Victoria, Australia. Canon EOS 5D MkII, Canon 24-105mm f4L IS lens. © Scott Leggo



*Red row of trees. Nightingales Alpine Apples Orchard, Wandiligong, Victoria, Australia.
Canon EOS 5D, Canon 70-200mm f2.8 L IS lens. © Scott Leggo*



*Braving the elements – Summer. Snow Gums, Mt Hotham. Alpine National Park, Victoria, Australia.
Canon EOS 5D, Canon 24mm f1.4L lens © Scott Leggo*



Braving the elements – Winter. Snow Gums, Mt Hotham. Alpine National Park, Victoria, Australia. Canon EOS 5D MkII, Canon 24mm f1.4L lens © Scott Leggo



*Braving the elements – Summer. Snow Gums, Mt Hotham. Alpine National Park, Victoria, Australia.
Canon EOS 5D, Canon 24mm f1.4L lens. © Scott Leggo*

***“I fully embrace the power
of technology and the digital
darkroom”***



*Ancient wall. Great Wall of China. Beijing, People's Republic of China. Canon EOS 5D MkII, Canon 24 -105mm f4L IS lens.
© Scott Leggo*



Watchtowers. Great Wall of China. Beijing, People's Republic of China. Canon EOS 5D MkII, Canon 24 -105mm f4L IS lens.
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Mark HARRIS

Home from the sea

In former lives, Mark Harris dug deep, and he often looked down on people – and no, he wasn't an undertaker or a snob. Rather, these were stints in landscape gardening and roofing that would not prevent him from ultimately pursuing his goal, life as a photographer.

Today, Mark lives and works in New Plymouth in the beautiful province of Taranaki, on the West Coast of New Zealand's North Island. Mark shoots commercial and advertising imagery - people, fashion and lifestyle - and we like his style, so we're on a mission to reveal some of what he's been shooting lately.

Yes, he's achieved his goal, but the voyage to this life first took him around the world. We talked to Mark about that long voyage, his ocean wanderings and the place this has led him back to.

f11: What was the turning point for you, when did you decide to become a career photographer?

MH : It was time to take control of my future, I went snowboarding for the winter in 1997. Looking out the window at the Remarkables Range one morning in Queenstown I made the decision to go professional with my photography, it was pretty much now or never.

I loved photography and thought it'd be pretty ace to do something I loved for the rest of my life, so I made a decision that it was going to be my only source of income from that point on, and if that meant sleeping on the streets then so be it.

f11: Gutsy move, were you well prepared for it?

MH : I really had no idea of the business side of it so threw myself into courses and working for camera shops, in studios, and by assisting other photographers. For 4-5 years I went back and forward between NZ and Australia as I kept learning and progressing.

f11: Where did all of this lead?

MH : By 2001 I was looking for a new photographic venture that included travel and over a period of a couple of months 3 or 4 people mentioned cruise ship photography to me. I'm a believer in the old saying 'things happen for a reason' so looked into it. In February 2002 I boarded my first ship in Honolulu, Hawaii for a 10-month stint as a photographer. I'll be honest, when I first walked on to that huge ship and was shown my cabin I got serious cabin fever! I dropped my bags and asked myself what I'd done, coming ▶



straight from 18 months in Raglan shooting schools, graduations and some commercial work, and surfing as much as I could, to a cabin that was under water level with no windows. Being an adapter I've pushed the limits with a lot of things over the years but this took the cake, I was as far outside my comfort zone as I could possibly get and had to take a two hour walk off the ship to talk myself into it. I decided to give it a month, if I couldn't handle it then I'd come home.

I was on the first ship as a photographer with 8 others, from there my now wife and I managed and ran photographic businesses on various ships until coming home in 2008. We gained so much photographic and life experience in this time that it would seriously take a novel, but basically we were shooting so much variety every day - environmental portraits and landscapes, events and studio set-ups. We shot advertising images for companies running businesses on the ship, and covered news events. I remember being on the bridge shooting huge waves crashing over the stern in a Hurricane off Florida; sitting in a meeting before shooting Prince Albert of Monaco, shooting 2 cruise liners pulling into port in Nice at sunrise; 7 mind-blowing weeks in Antarctica, villages and animals in Africa; Nordkapp, Norway in the midnight sun... the list goes on and on.

f11: And now you're back home in Taranaki, how's life?

MH : Now I'm on a different mission, it was time to come home and settle into a 'normal' life. I grew up in New Plymouth and always wanted bring my kids up here when the time came.

f11: How's the business of photography in a provincial location away from larger markets and clients?

MH : I think photography is like anything else, you've got to love it, you've got to ▶



Client work. Canon EOS 50D, EFS 17-55mm 2.8 IS. f3.5 1/250 sec. © Mark Harris

feel it, embrace it, push yourself, your gear, composition, light and colour further than you thought any of it could go, then take all of that information and dissect it, pull the reins in and hopefully find what works for you, find your style and also your niche. To do this you have to do it in your own time, not on your clients' time.

The life of a photographer can be a tough road at times, and let's be honest, it's only human to have the little guy sitting on your shoulder saying that you're not good enough, or not good enough 'yet', it's something we all need to continually battle, and definitely conquer. We all have different ways of doing this, mine is to flick him off with my index finger... Seriously though, embrace that little guy, because he's the one making you push yourself harder to make sure you put the ground work in to get the image you envisage either for yourself or your client.

f11: Thanks Mark, for sharing your images and your thoughts, it's been a pleasure. ■

TS

www.markharris.co.nz

“I feel like I'm only tapping on the edge of this huge iceberg of photography with a pick”



Portfolio. Canon EOS 5D MkII, 70-200mm f2.8 L. f3.5 1/200 sec. © Mark Harris



▲ Portfolio. Canon EOS 30D, 70-200mm 2.8 L lens. f9.0 1/30 sec. © Mark Harris

▶ Portfolio. Canon EOS 50D, 70-200mm 2.8 L lens. f11 1/250 sec. © Mark Harris





▲ Client work. Canon EOS 30D, EFS 10-22mm lens. f16 1/250 sec. © Mark Harris

► Portfolio. Canon EOS 50D, EFS 10-22mm lens. f4.5 1/250 sec © Mark Harris





Portfolio. Canon EOS 7D, 70-200mm 2.8 L lens. f2.8 1/250 sec. © Mark Harris

“Photography is a passion of so many things, it’s so vast yet can be so simple or so intricate, or be photographed so intricately to look so simple.”



Portfolio. Canon EOS 5D MkII, 50mm f1.4 lens. f2.2 1/640 sec. © Mark Harris

“Be inspired, aim to inspire, try new things, have no style yet have a style, shoot continuously, have a calm mind, have a chaotic mind.”



Client work. Canon EOS 5D MkII, 50mm f1.4 lens. f5.6 1/200 sec. © Mark Harris



Portfolio. Canon EOS 7D, still frame from video capture. © Mark Harris



Client work. Canon EOS 5D MkII, 50mm f1.4 lens. f2.5 1/200 sec. © Mark Harris



Client work. Canon EOS 5D MkII, 50mm 1.4 lens. f6.3 1/100 sec. © Mark Harris

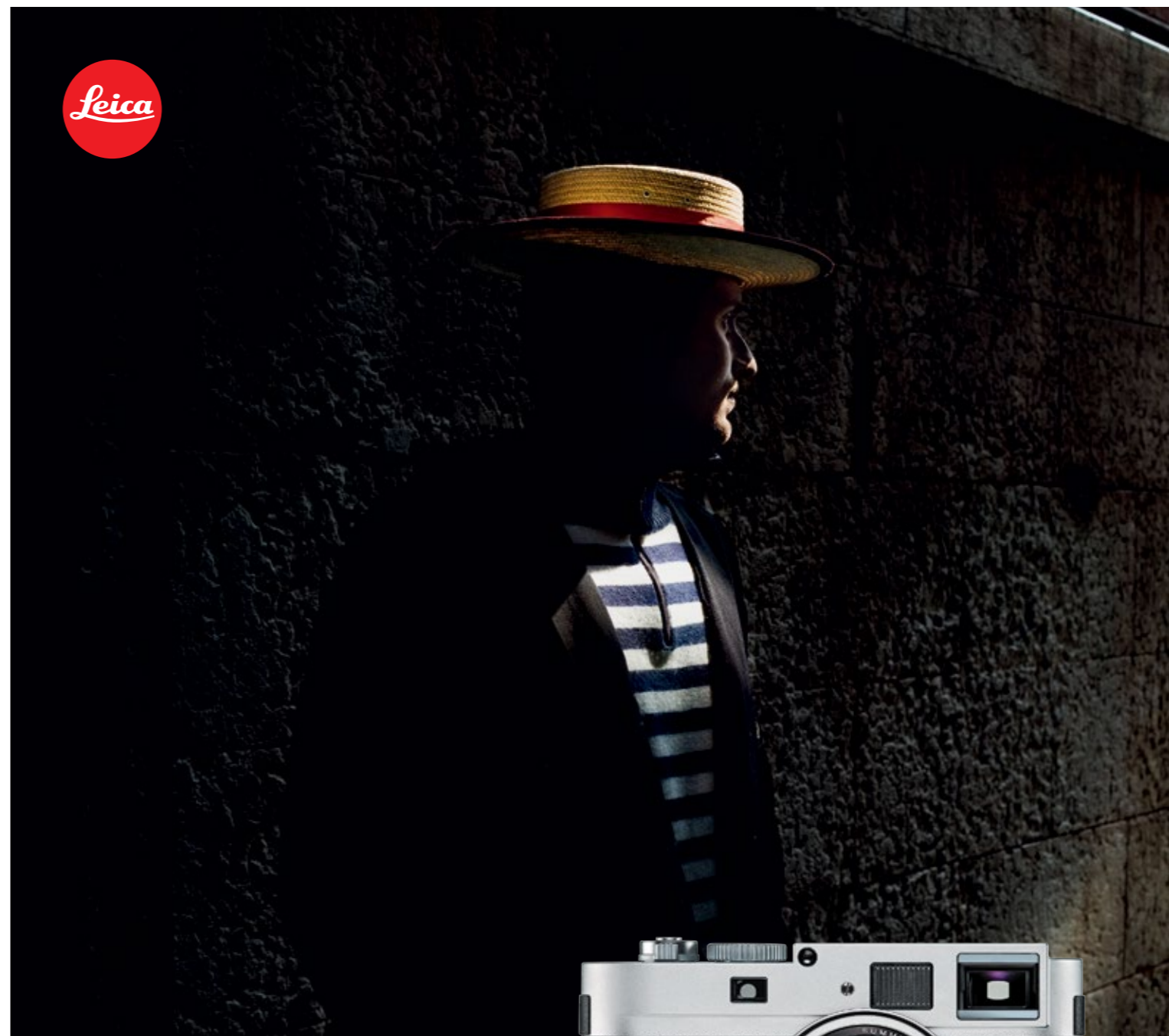


◀ Previous page: Portfolio, Canon EOS 7D,
70-200mm 2.8 L lens. f6.3 1/200 sec.
© Mark Harris



Client work. Canon EOS 5D MkII, 70-200mm 2.8 L lens. f4 1/250 sec. © Mark Harris

“let your weirdo out - but not in front of clients - keep learning...”



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On location

Australia's Kimberley wilderness

The world offers so many stunning wilderness locations to shoot. Many are found very close to your own back yard. However, one location in Australia that requires a bit more travelling and definitely more logistical considerations is the incredible Kimberley region, in the far north-west, of Western Australia. This is a world class shooting location!

This region is larger than many countries in Europe and has cattle properties over 1 million acres. It's a big land! Add to this a 'dry season' and a 'wet season', plus few roads, very few people and little infrastructure and you are looking at perhaps one of your greatest photographic challenges ever.

I first visited the Kimberley in 1984 and have since revisited over a dozen times. Why go back so many times? It is simply that good, with every visit offering new experiences and importantly, new images.

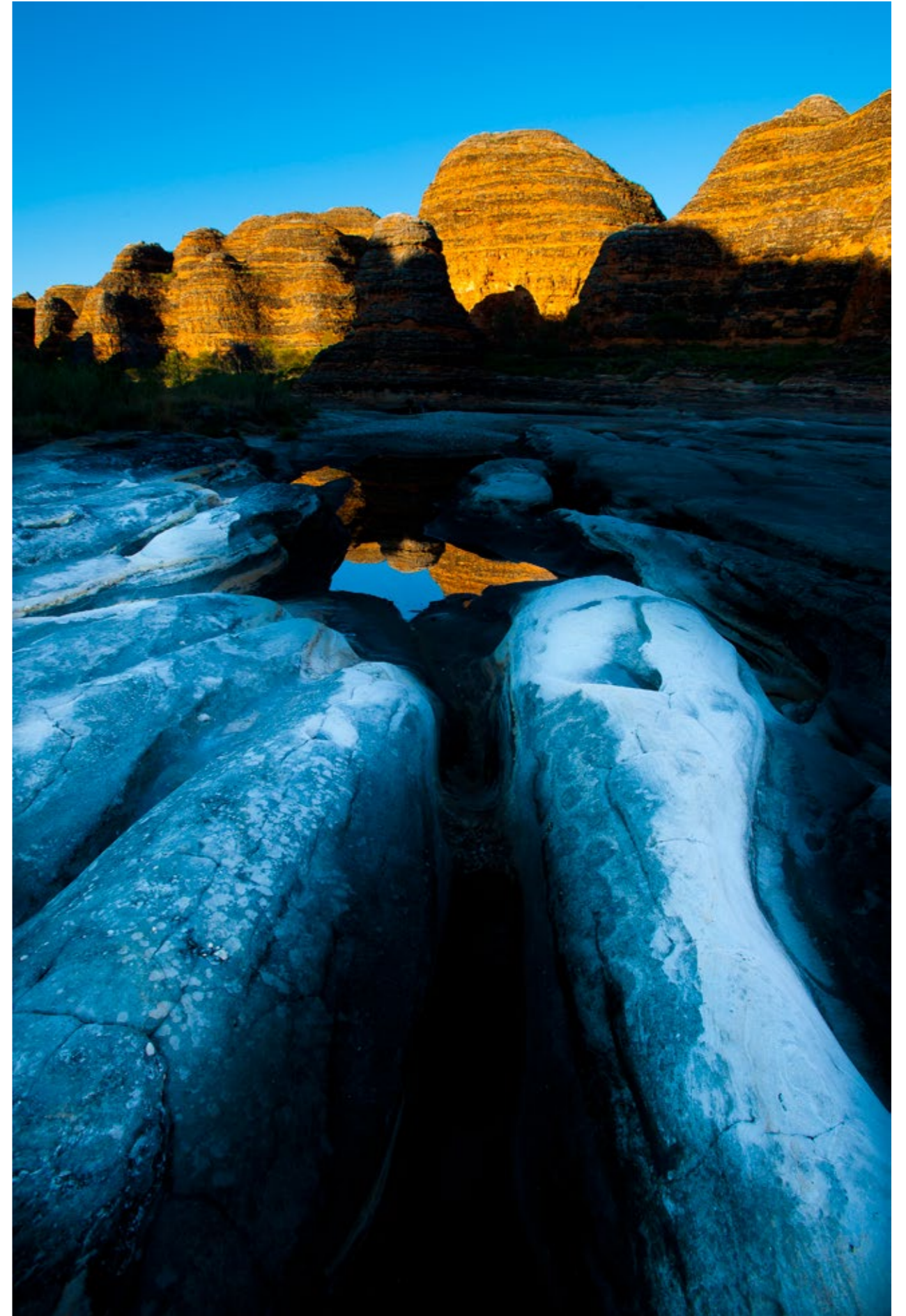
Landscape photography is one of the key draw cards, but if you are an adventurous shooter and like to mix it up, any discipline will succeed. From macro to culture, birds to flowers and top creative imagery.

The Kimberley draws me back for its unique timeless landscapes. Some of the rocks are in the billions of years – amazing! Iconic gorges

like Windjana, Bells, Gelvin, Emma - to name a few will offer you different results every visit. Hundreds of other gorges are to be discovered by a photographers lens, if you have the budget for chopper flights, or time to drive/walk. This is my dream, which I enjoyed in the 1980's and now, can not leave for too much longer as the countryside is so harsh and rugged that it requires the fittest body and best logistical plans to succeed.

One of my favourite visits was in 1987. See page 75. I picked up a couple backpacking around Australia and took them to the Bungle Bungles, now Purnululu National Park. We hiked two nights up (now famous) Picinnini Creek. I obtained special permission from the head ranger at the time, to go to a unique position to shoot 4/5 hour night time exposures.

► *I love to use super wide angle lenses, as they help tell a story. Combined with visualisation, Lightroom and a good RAW file, the result can be very expressive. I started with standard processing overall – Vibrance, a little Saturation, Contrast and sharpening. Using the Adjustment Brush, I targeted foreground rocks and added exposure to the target zone. A new Adjustment was to brighten the reflection pool. Nikon D3X, Nikkor 17-35mm lens @ 17mm at f11 60th of a second at 100ISO. © Darran Leal*



I set the camera up on 'B' and used an interval timer. The colours in the final Fujifilm results were beautiful. I have got to do that again one day! A more recent visit was to target the very end of the wet season. I arrived early April and in fact had to wait a couple of days due to a late cyclone. But it was well worth it. We were the first group into Purnululu and the first into Picinnini Creek. The extra water in the creek equated to stunning reflections and very unique photo opportunities. It was a hot 40 plus degrees centigrade, so not for the faint hearted.

Another top shoot, this time in 2005, was at Windjana Gorge. See facing page. Every time I visit this gorge, it is so different. The limestone range is around 360 million year old and was an ancient barrier reef, now fossils and all. It ruggedly juts out of the surrounding flood plains. A living fossil in the gorge water is the freshwater crocodile. This is not aggressive, but has been known to bite a dangling toe or two. I spotted several larger crocs sunning on this side of the bank, near the mouth of the gorge. Instead of using a tele lens, I put on my super wide angle. 'Lets see how close I can get', was the train of thought. As it turned out, I was just 1.5 metres away, to over 2 metre specimens - the perspective was fantastic. Up close crocs, with the rugged gorge as the backdrop - I call this type of imagery 'Naturescapes'. I got the shots, backed off the same way as I approached, slowly and then took a breath - what a magic experience.

Another feature the Kimberley is famous for is waterfalls. Several are very accessible, while others require ship or can only be access by long rugged walks, or from the air. Mitchell Falls is one of my favourites as it has some real 'Kimberley attitude'. Like all of these locations, you need to shoot either early or late, or from a unique perspective. I often target the unique perspective angle as few photographers are keen to scale the rough rocky terrain and the text books say, early or late ...

WHERE TO START

Broome offers the best logistical start location, followed by Kununnura. Either town has good supplies, rental 4WD's and allows for a complete loop of the Kimberley, via the infamous Gibb River Road. If you are lucky, you will time this road just after the graders have gone through. Makes life a lot easier!

WHEN TO GO

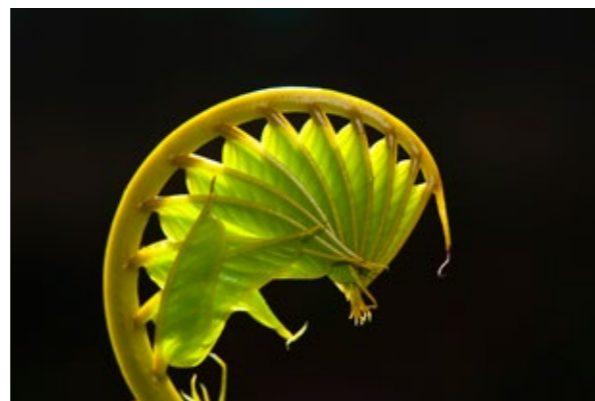
In theory, anytime of the year. However the wet season is just that - very wet! This includes many road closures and considerable heat and humidity. Consider a chopper as your transport. Your reward, stunning world class waterfalls that few have ever shot at this time.

The dry season is the best time to cover the greatest area. I like April/May as fewer travellers (grey nomads ...) and the waterfalls are still pumping. The wildlife is also fantastic. June to September works, but waterfalls progressively dry up and some locations become chocked with people.

Enjoy your photography ...

Darran Leal

darran@f11magazine.com
www.worldadventures.com.au



Shot in 1987 using a 4 hour exposure on Fuji slide film, this image brings back great memories of a unique technique. Who'd have imagined the colours with the first touch of a rising sun? Canon T90, 20mm lens at f11 4 hours at 100 ISO. © Darran Leal

While a crocodile is traditionally shot with a telephoto lens, I decided to use a super wide angle lens. My thought process was to get in tight on the croc, but tell the story of the animal's environment. Canon EOS 1DS MkII, 20mm lens at f8 1/45th of a second at 100 ISO. © Darran Leal



**Southern Focus –PSNZ National Convention
25-29 April, Ascot Park Hotel, Invercargill**

There is still time to register for the PSNZ national convention – Southern Focus – happening in Invercargill next month.

The earlier you register the more chance you will have to get into your preferred workshop or tutorial, and the organising committee says ‘places are filling fast.’

Hosted by the Southland Photographic Society, Southern Focus is being promoted as the ‘World’s Best Kept Secret’ and is the 60th PSNZ National Convention.

With seven amazing and talented guest photographers lined up to share their own unique photographic experiences through presentations, workshops, tutorials and field trips - there’s bound to be something for everyone. Keynote speakers are Tom Ang – well-known award winning travel and digital photographer. Derek Henderson, who is not only an outstanding photographer but also delves into the creative side of film and video productions.

Then there’s Julian Apse who specialises in all aspects of location photography and has worked in every corner of the globe. Stephen Voss has a strong interest in Astronomy and as a local resident he’s keen to share his images and techniques in shooting the big, open skies. One of the country’s most respected artists – Grahame Sydney – will share his thoughts on photographing Central Otago landscapes, which mostly make up his award winning signature works.

Kevin Tyree’s work is dominated by nature

and he has explored the Southern World from Southland to Antarctica.

Highly acclaimed Queenstown photographer Jackie Ranken has a lengthy list of Australasian photographic titles to her name and particularly likes to photograph landscapes. She says her personal challenge is to capture the essence of where ever she is on the planet.

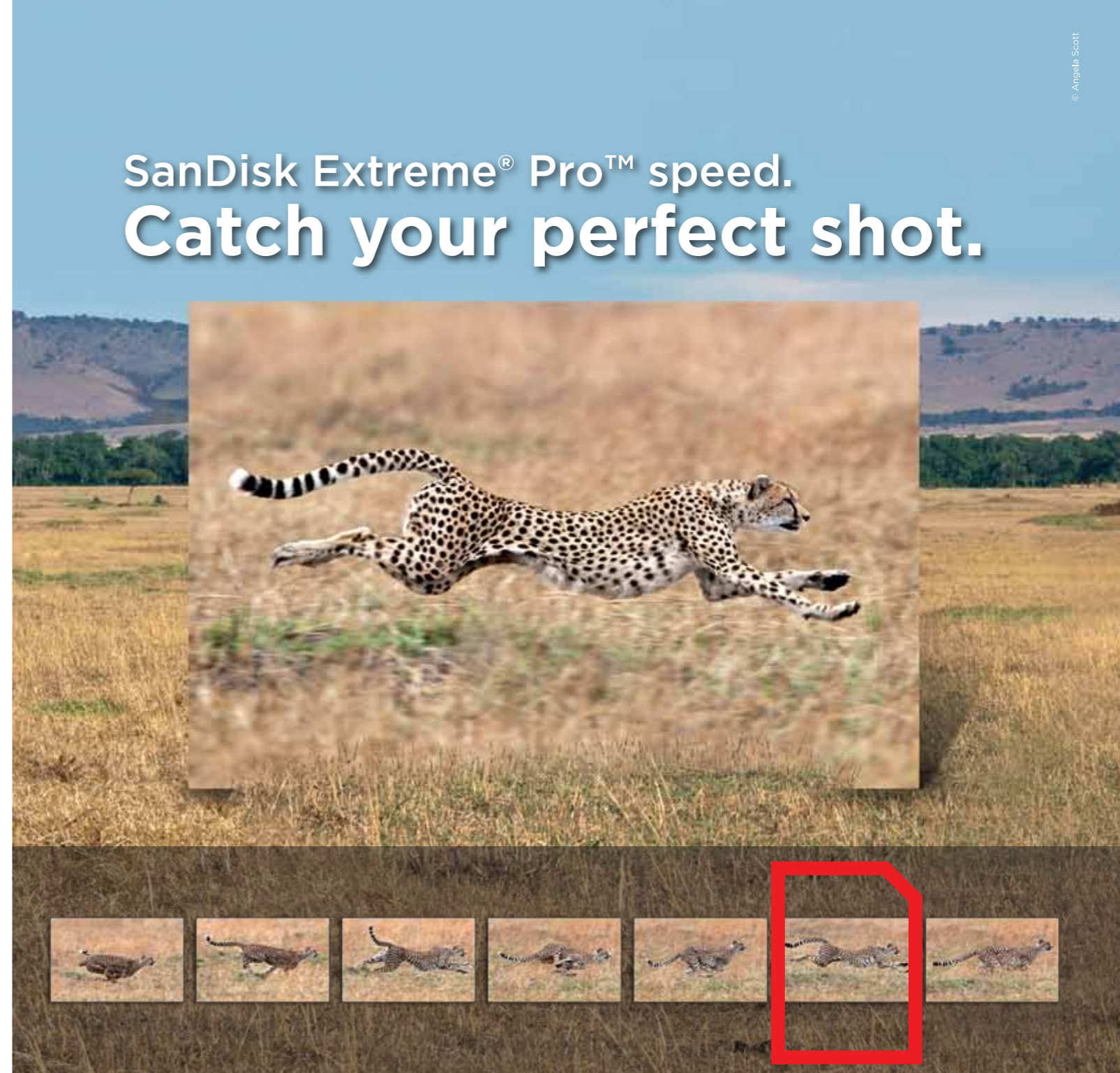
As well as presentations, workshops and tutorials there are three full day field trips on Friday 27 April, which include a visit to The Caitlins, a Southern Scenic Route, west to Riverton and following the wild Southern coastline, and a visit to Stewart and Ulva Islands.

Numbers will be limited on the field trips so it definitely pays to register early to avoid disappointment, especially for the Stewart Island excursion. The tutorials and workshops take place on Thursday and Saturday, and the Kodak Honours banquet will be held on Saturday night – a chance for guests to let their hair down!

If you register before 31 March 2012 you’ll qualify for the early bird fee. Single day registration or a weekend special fee is also available. The convention is open to any photographer with a passion to learn and grow their technique.

For full details about the convention, including registration form, go to: www.sps-southernfocus.co.nz or the PSNZ website at www.photography.org.nz/national_convention.html

Moira Blincoe
PSNZ Councillor for Communications



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Passing phase

Looking about we seem to be able to identify the landmarks, the visual triggers, the clues that set scenes and define eras.

Burger King, the home of nostalgia, with visual values of simpler times, when Chevrolet and DeSoto posters set the style, when Saturday Evening Post made lifestyle images memorable. An instant theme we quickly recognise and store away, even though most of us never experienced any of it! Will Burger King really be the 1950's diner? Will their burgers be as tasty as we thought they might have been in that era?

Such is, and will be, our photographic style as history stands back and tries to define 'our' period. The most obvious comment on this current period will be the post production of captured images that Photoshop has facilitated. We managed to move quickly through the corny 'tricks' period of Photoshop to the point where now magnificent productions are becoming a more 'symphonic' or 'heroic' treatment of sometimes simplistic and frankly daft ideas.

A lot of our current period is being defined for us by powerful media influences. Just look at the imagery that is conjured for us by movie makers. The movie poster over the decades has reflected and probably driven much of what we hook into as we try to define periods.

An interesting site to reflect on all of this is www.movieposter.com which has a massive collection of posters classified by director, decade, and rarity. It really does show what influences a lot of our colour, shape, and use of text. These posters became the references of what was hip and contemporary at any given time.

One startling revelation is the treatment of flesh. Skin colour is rarely the natural colour of skin. Obviously in earlier time black and white ruled, for many decades drawn and painted people were the vogue, now it's photography - but highly post produced.

Think too, on the golden age of the Hollywood star portrait. Produced in studios by studios as a 'celebrity' marketing tool. These were included in the press packs that went to reviewers, newspapers, magazines and by distribution to movie fan clubs. Another style icon defining a period.

A passing thought is how cruel the failure of the first decade of colour photographic printing has been. It is now defined for nostalgic purposes as bleached out, magenta/yellow... almost like badly exposed Polaroids. In many cases Photoshop action now emulate this effect. The reality of this bad product, combined with poor processing is that eventually much of the period will be lost.

No doubt as the fusion influence of photographic execution brings it all closer we will explore the other media influence... the cinema trailer which in under three minutes tells the story, sets the style, invites you in to the experience and convinces you to part with your money.

Then the opening credits grabbing you as they establish the heart and pace of the movie.

These will be memorable, quickly entering our reference library of a point in time as strong and as powerful as the opening sequence to 'A Clockwork Orange' was in the 1970's.

Our great landscapes are not only nature's natural beauty but with extensive post production these have become a rich and nostalgic place that exist largely in our dreams. The brooding power of the landscape in any 'Lord of the Rings' film sets a scene and defines a cinema decade we all know well.

Perhaps even these evocative images may one day be looked back on as simply another 'passing phase'?

MS

malcolm@f11magazine.com



CLICK ON THE SCREEN IMAGE TO VIEW THIS VIDEO.

'Stanley Kubrick - A Filmography'.
Design by Martin Woutiseth:
www.martinwoutiseth.com

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A Loupe Awards Fashion Photography Workshop in conjunction with ACMP

As part of the Medium Format Fine Art Prize and to coincide with the launch of the L'Oreal Fashion Festival in Melbourne, we will hold a fashion photography workshop on Friday the 9thth March 2012.

The Workshop will be held in the Latrobe Ballroom within the Sofitel on Collins. The workshop will be held as 3 concurrent sub workshops that all attendees will enjoy.

The 3 sub workshops will be:

- Shooting Fashion
- Shooting Beauty
- Shooting Fashion Accessories

The Ballroom will be divided into 3 areas where each of the sub workshops will occur. The entrants will be divided into 3 groups at the beginning of the day. These groups will each spend 1.5 hours learning at a sub workshop rotating off to the next over the course of the day.

At the end of the day after all groups have experienced all 3 sub workshops a question session and hands on guided shooting experience will occur. The cost of attending will be A\$295 per person. This will be a catered event with tea and coffee and a lunch service provided. Maximum attendance to the event will be 100 people who will be evenly broken down into 3 working groups.

The Australian Commercial and Media

Photographers (ACMP), established in 1991, acts as a united voice for Australian professional working photographers. The ACMP is committed to the development and promotion of professional photography. It provides members with an understanding of the more complex issues of professional photography such as copyright re-usage, contracts, sales tax, legal protection, digital imaging, insurance, and standard terms and conditions.

Every aspect of the event has been carefully considered to offer a quality experience from beginning to end. The choice of venue is all about quality. All of the equipment used in conducting the event will be high quality and high performance. The cameras used to shoot the workshops will be Hasselblad medium format cameras. The lighting equipment will be a selection from Elinchrom.

The Photographers conducting the workshops are top quality Australian commercial Fashion photographers.

The Fashion Sessions - Robert Earp
www.fusefoto.com.au

The Beauty Sessions - Peter Collie
www.petercollie.com

Fashion Accessories - Lisa Saad
www.lisasaadphotography.com.au


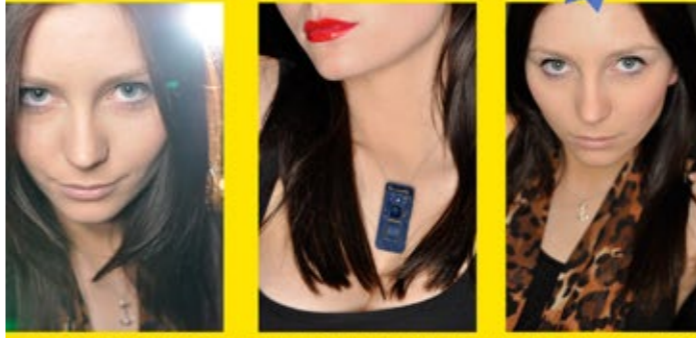
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The Kodak Instamatic 33

AIPP - Hair of the Dog 2012

AIPP Queensland's event, held at the Metropolitan South Institute of TAFE (MSIT), was abuzz with creativity and photographic inspiration during the annual Hair of the Dog international photography conference hosted at the Mt Gravatt campus' Creative Industries Precinct from 4 to 6 February.

Our international speaker Greg Gibson was recently recognised by American Photo Magazine as one of the world's top ten wedding photographers. The Two-time Pulitzer Prize winner and photojournalist shared his knowledge about wedding photography after a successful career documenting his hometown of Washington, USA. His hands-on workshops were full of high energy and had all the attendees buzzing.

Our local and national speakers Jonas Peterson, Yervant, Wayne Radford, Kristen Cook, Vicki Bell, Christine Pobke, Mark Galer, Murray Fredericks, Glen Krohn, William Long, Shane Monopoli and Matt Adams made this year's Hair of the Dog the best ever.

Don't forget these upcoming events:



In the 1970's Kodak Instamatics were an entry level favourite for millions utilising 126 format film in easy load drop-in cassette form. Film choices included Verichrome Pan, Kodacolor and even Kodachrome in 12 or 20 exposure variants and the resulting images were square format. Two exposure settings were possible – Cloudy and Bright – and a socket allowed the use of the Sylvania Flashcube for those moments where available light simply would not cut the mustard. The hot, slightly sulphurous smell which emanated from each 4 shot cube after use remains as a powerful memory of my early photography.

Mine was a present from my grandmother before a trip to London with my father in 1971. I photographed the pigeons in Trafalgar Square, tanks at the Imperial War Museum and London's monuments and discovered the joys of composition within the beautiful square format I still love today.

The 126 Instamatic would eventually be replaced by Kodak with smaller Pocket Instamatic cameras using narrower, and much inferior, 110 format film, but delivering more compact form factors and the rectangular image so familiar now.

The 4K route

Increased broadcasting and internet bandwidth, clever digital compression methods, lower manufacturing costs, the advent of social media and digital sharing tools have undeniably contributed to the adoption of moving images as a means to tell one's story or share inanities.

With this comes the relentless pursuit for visual clarity; we use technology so that when it reaches its aim, we will forget it's there. We want technology to re-create reality, so we can manipulate it and make it do whatever we want.

Well, we're not there yet and, for moving images, the route to getting there is littered with standards such as the ubiquitous HD formats. But even HD is a temporary step to something "better" and more demanding in terms of resources, time and money. The next steps towards the elusive moving image nirvana seem to be: 4K resolution, frame rates of 48fps or faster and, yes, even stereoscopic 3D - ugh!

With an effective horizontal resolution of about 4000 pixels, 4K is roughly four times the size of HD 1080.

To most photographers, and amateur film makers contemplating better technologies and methodologies to support their projects, the increase in resolution offered by 4K capture will automatically mean a better rendering of visual details.

However, one key advantage becomes more apparent at projection time, in a real cinema: acuity relative to viewing distance. Depending on a spectator's distance from the movie screen, HD and traditional variants of 2K formats will appear the same as 4K projections. Sit in the back row of a large cinema and all this high-resolution prowess will look pretty much the same as before.

At closer range 4K projection will appear to have shed the digital compression, pixellation and lack of detail that is often present in 2K/HD. But how much of a difference is there? The answer lies in the design of cinemas and the nature of human visual acuity. At a distance equivalent to 2.3 times the projected image's height 4K will present a real benefit. In an average size auditorium of 300 seats, it is safe to say that a little more than two thirds of a movie theatre audience will experience a marked improvement viewing 4K material.

With increasingly popular cameras such as the Red Epic or Canon's upcoming yet-to-be-named 4K camera everything which brings a technological improvement, the methodologies and resources needed to tackle 4K need to be revised. While the Red Epic achieves 4K, it makes sense to capture at its native resolution of 5K (5120x2560 pixels) as it includes an image padding of 20% more than 4K and opens up many re-framing possibilities in post-production. While the storage implications of capturing 4K (and 5K) are obvious, playing back the uncompressed captured images, in real time, requires quite a bit more than a beefy computer. Red Epic footage captured at 5K/24fps expands to roughly 1Gb per second once the raw files are converted to 10bit Cineon or DPX files.

Without a capable playback system working with 4K footage will always sound like a wonderful idea, but only at the start. To capture at 4K implies you will do so in Log and therefore you will be spending a fair amount of time color grading your film. If long processing times are not an issue, Apple Color will probably do the trick. An alternative fancier grading suite such as Mistika by Spanish company SGO may also be utilised.



CLICK ON THE SCREEN IMAGE TO VIEW THIS VIDEO.

If you are impressed and excited by the implicit possibilities offered by high resolution moving image capture, remember that, for now, there is a lot of baggage to carry on that route ahead. For the majority of independent film makers, 4K will feel like a financial bridge too far.

If you are a photographer - with a history - and want to venture deeper into moving pictures, think of 4K as the "wide format of film making". In all likelihood, the unforgiving 4K will probably make you a better film maker because, no longer will it be possible to hide imperfections in lighting, make up, costumes, and a host of other visual elements laid bare by the sheer revealing resolution of the format.

Karim Sahai

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

AIPA

AIPA News for March 2012

It gives me great pleasure to announce that on Saturday, March 24th the AIPA will be hosting a lecture in Auckland by world renowned celebrity and fashion photographer Robert Erdmann.

Robert studied History of Photography at Princeton University in New Jersey. He went on to assist Helmut Newton, among other photographers, before moving to Italy to work as a stylist. In 1984 Robert moved to London where he set about establishing himself as a photographer; shooting fashion, as well as musicians such as Iggy Pop, Kylie Minogue, Frankie Goes to Hollywood, Simply Red and Bananarama for magazines including i-D and The Face.

Over the past two and a half decades Robert has produced a truly exceptional body of work. Now based in Los Angeles, his portfolio reads like a who's who of the celebrity world and includes outstanding images of Heidi Klum, Ann Hathaway, Angelina Jolie, Beyonce, Cameron Diaz, and Catherine Zeta Jones. His photography has appeared in publications such as Vogue, W, Elle, Marie Claire, Glamour, Harper's Bazaar, GQ, Esquire, Details, Interview, and Vanity Fair. Robert's advertising clients include 20th Century Fox, Disney, Emporio Armani, DKNY, Hermes, Nokia, Cover Girl, L'Oreal, Pantene, Revlon, and Oil of Olay. (When I included the words "world renowned" at the top of the page I wasn't joking!)

Needless to say, if you're interested in discovering what it takes to reach the pinnacle of the commercial photography profession

then you need to attend this presentation. In fact, if you have any interest in photography at all I would highly recommend coming along to hear about Robert's incredible career. This is a very rare opportunity that is unlikely to be repeated for a long, long time (if ever) in New Zealand – so please, make the most of it!

As I write this column the venue for Robert's talk is still to be confirmed, but simply visit the AIPA website or AIPA Facebook page for up-to-date information and booking details.

In other AIPA news, last month we held the first ever AIPA meeting for photo assistants – the unsung heroes of the photographic industry. The primary purpose for this gathering was to discuss the creation of industry standard Photo Assistant Terms & Conditions. We hope that by making such a document available to freelance assistants it will better protect them from certain unscrupulous operators and raise the bar for professional behaviour industry wide. This project has been on the back burner for a few years now, so we're aiming to have the final "lawyer approved" contract ready for use before the end of 2012.

Aaron K
AIPA Executive Director

The business of photography



I'm going to take a pause in my lighting series this month. I'm on holiday so my mind has been meandering. I got to thinking about why we do what we do. Why do we want to take better photographs? Why do we seek to learn lighting or shutter speeds or apertures?

Commonly it's because you love photography as a hobby. It may be your living. For most of you, it's somewhere in between. It's a hobby but you'd love it to be your living. Or you're trying to make it your living but for some reason you never have any money.

If you're the latter, you're not alone. Samuel Aranda was telephoned last week to be told he'd just won one of the world's most prestigious awards, the 2012 World Press Photo Award. He was sitting at his computer

trying to work out how he was going to afford his month's rent.

There can be few other careers where you regularly work for the world's largest companies like the New York Times and Time Magazine, are at the pinnacle of your career yet don't earn enough to make a living.

So here are some tips, both if you would love to make photography your career and if you are trying, but struggling to.

I fell into the latter camp when I was a photographer for reasons that will become clear but am confident my wisdom is relevant, thanks to my current job as an inventor and marketer of photo accessories. That might sound odd, so read on.

Should you become a professional photographer? My usual answer to this is “No.” Not because it’s hard. Not because there are fewer full time pro photographers than ever before. Not because the average take-home earnings of a full time pro photographer is less than US\$30,000. It’s because the chances are you’ll soon find you don’t enjoy photography any more.

Ask a pro photographer what they enjoy doing on their time off and most of them won’t mention photography. I’m afraid to say it’s been proven that we enjoy things less when we earn money doing them (vis. Deci’s Theory, SDT and Lepper, Green and Nisbett et al on Extrinsic vs Intrinsic motivation). I never knew about this research when I was a photographer, but I did know that I have never enjoyed photography less than when I worked as a photographer. And most of my peers agree.

But I haven’t convinced you. You still want to make it as a pro. Then the most important thing to remember is that above all else, you will be running a business that, as is true with every business, your foremost concern will have to be making as much money from as little work as possible. In other words, to maximize your profit.

That sounds harsh. It sounds capitalist and horrible. But it’s really another way of saying that you’d like to be able to grow your business. Which will need profit. You’d like to be able to sustain your business, which will need profit. You’d like to provide for yourself and your family. That will need profit. You’d like (and will need) to be shooting with the latest gear. Which will need... you get the picture.

That is where almost every pro photographer fails. It’s what got me. I focused on my photography. I didn’t focus with anywhere nearly as much vigour on my business.

Of course you have to be an accomplished photographer. But almost anyone can become that with enough dedication and practise. You also need to be a sharp, dedicated business owner.

The art of business has little to do with the art of photography.

There’s the rub. If you don’t pursue the business of photography with as much dedication and practise as the photography, you’re unlikely to get far.

My friend Richard Linton, who is both an excellent photographer and an incredible businessman, preaches the rule of thirds. Not the one about framing photos. Linton’s rule of thirds is this; Successful photographers are one third photographers, one third businessmen or women and one third marketers and networkers.

Whenever I visit my friends who are successful wealthy pro photographers, I almost never find they’re shooting. Much more likely I find them reviewing their cash flow forecasts, tweaking their SEO, cold calling potential clients or working on their latest marketing campaign -the one for their business, not the one they might be shooting for someone else.

So my advice is to keep photography as your hobby. You’ll never dent the passion and love of a great image and never have to read another article about making it as a pro photographer.

I hope I’ve given you something to think about. If this has fallen on deaf ears, next month I’ll give you some essential tips on launching your successful photography business.

James Madelin

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NZIPP Report

It is our aim this year to return to the base level of the organisation and to reinvigorate the smaller regions as well as stimulate the larger ones. It is also our aim to nurture the family that we represent and give the community at large a brand that is truly respected and professional.

An increased membership is key to our future success. The growth of sub regions is one of the keys to this - especially in areas where distance is a factor for members to be able to regularly attend regional meetings. This is already being developed by Central Districts as well as in the Otago/Southland regions. A positive result is already evident by increased membership in both of these two regions. If you live in one of these regions and earn an income from photography then contact us and become actively involved.

Increased communication with Tertiary Photographic Educational providers is another initiative that I strongly believe in. Students are the future of our industry as well as our institute. I have already booked myself in to give presentations to students at Massey University in Wellington and UCOL in Palmerston North, as well as presentations to the industry in Wellington, Havelock North, Palmerston North and New Plymouth. I will continue with this membership drive throughout the year, so if you are interested in hosting one of these let me know and I will book something for you.

For the first time in many years we are already able to start advertising our conference program for this year's INFOCUS Conference in Christchurch, with all the speakers already signed and sealed. We have a fantastic line up which includes Marcus Bell (one of the greatest wedding photographers on the planet) and Peter Coulson (Australian Professional Photographer of the Year as well as Australian Advertising Photographer of the Year) plus many more. We have also lined up several other international speakers presenting outside of the conference period with Jerry Ghionis presenting during April in both Auckland and Christchurch. Followed by National Geographic great Joe McNally, who will be offering a one-day workshop, a four hour seminar and a key note speaker spot in Auckland in May. Special rates for all of these will be offered to our members and details for all of these events will be released shortly.

Watch this space!

Remember – look for the NZIPP logo and buy the quality our organisation offers.

Mike Langford

President New Zealand Institute of Professional Photography
Hon F, FNZIPP. Hon F, MAIPP.

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The Essentials

Stativ the nation -
rock solid or not at all!

stativ (noun) German
– English translation: tripod



© Gary Baidon

My oldest living tripod was bought new in 1985. It's a Manfrotto 055 with a pan/tilt head and it bears many scars of unprotected air travel and general abuse, in short it looks like it has been around the block more than once - which it has. It has been overhauled a couple of times and had levers and even a leg tube replaced. As ugly as it now is, it hasn't been thrown out or even mothballed for one reason and that is, it still works and is absolutely rock solid with the right rig on top of it.

It's not ideal for medium format and a D3/200mm combo is about the limit if you're being particular about rigidity. Used within its limits it has no equal. A couple of years ago my eye was caught by a beautiful new carbon fibre version of the same model (055), and since I use the 055 where portability is imperative I purchased the much lighter carbon unit intending to replace the old warhorse. In one of my worst ever cases of buyer's remorse, I soon discovered the new pod was not as good a support as old faithful. I'm not sure to this day why this was so but in side-by-side tests the steel unit came out on top by a fair margin. The new pod was promptly sold, and old faithful was back in the case. Never again would

I doubt him/her! (Which is it Buzzard, surely 27 years is long enough to have determined the sex of your tripod? – Ed.)

When shooting on a tripod - which is a lot of the time in my business - there are numerous factors that come into play such as - ease and speed of adjustment, precision of movements, and of course ultimate rigidity. Rigidity is a deal breaker for me. No matter how user friendly a tripod may be, if it allows any movement at all when the end of the lens is tapped it's of no use to me. There can be no compromise here, a monopod can be a valuable tool to steady a particular combination where mobility is paramount but if I make the decision to lock a camera down it must be 100% locked down. When I am on a client's time there are more important factors to consider, I won't list them here as you'll be familiar with them, I certainly do not want to be worrying about the tripod.

The tripod head is as important in terms of rigidity as the legs, in my opinion. Whether you're a ball head or a pan/tilt type of person the head is where the quality really comes into play and is not the place to skimp. Silky smooth movements make those micro adjustments to



© Gary Baidon

your viewpoint far more pleasant, and super sensitive tension and tightening functions that allow you to nip up without moving your viewpoint even a fraction complete the picture for me. After my cameras, my tripods are the second most used piece of kit, and the single most important in terms of making sure my images are pin sharp. Of course I'm assuming top of the line glass and focusing technique are both a given.

So go grab your tripod, put your most ungainly combination on top of it, give the lens a tap at the filter end and watch. If all is well you'll see nothing at all. If not, work remains to be done...

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New models

As yet another crop of high end picture taking machines is set to roll in upon us we're again consumed by questions around the need for speed, capability and resolution – specifically, more of all of these.

Many will be planning migrations, sales and purchases. Timing and affordability will enter into this, accompanied by a sneaky feeling that there is such a thing as a 'right time' to move from last year's model to next year's.

For some, this is an easy decision. Finances permit, the accountant approves and the adoption of the next big thing is justified logically by the supposed business benefits the new piece of kit will deliver.

For others, it's a torturous process of weighing cost against benefit, wondering if Canon or Nikon's latest model will deliver precisely the advantages needed in a technologically rough and tumble world. Will replacing perfectly functional equipment already carrying more processor power than NASA used to get to the Moon improve any part of the picture taking process?

For another group altogether, upgrades simply won't be on their horizon, or even on their long-range radar. These happy souls are in a wonderful place, and are to be envied, for they have reached nirvana. The equipment they own, meets and in all likelihood far exceeds, their requirements delivering everything their vision demands. These folk understand that any decent hammer is a hammer, and that one drives a nail equally well as another.

If you're in this camp, you are truly enlightened individuals, kudos to you.

From a purely creative standpoint, the argument for change becomes a little harder to substantiate. Will full HD, a few more megapixels and a host of new features deliver an edge, a new perspective or a host of compelling ideas?

Sometimes, yes. New capabilities often add fuel to our creative fires, intriguing us to go further, to experiment, and to push boundaries previously thought of as fixed. Increased speed or resolution can be a deal maker, an enabler, if it secures or cements in a client or a job.

Sometimes, no. New equipment is never the cure for a creative black hole, or even a palliative. This type of emergency is best addressed by rest, recreation and the repeated application of new sources of inspiration - from multiple sources. In this scenario, the missing element is a spark of activity in the cerebral cortex, a flash from the right side of the brain and the judicious application of time, resources and diligence to produce the envisaged result. Neither Canon nor Nikon yet list these as features in their new top models, or sadly, as optional accessories.

If an upgrade is imminent for you, my simple suggestion is this, understand your own motivation.

TS



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