

ISSUE 20 | APRIL 2013



for PHOTOGRAPHERS
AND AFICIONADOS

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ADAM CUSTINS
Instant gratification

A.D. WHEELER
Abandonscape

MARTIN HILL
Earth to earth



ALL YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY NEEDS



Welcome to *f11* Magazine

Welcome to issue 20, and what a month it's been in the interim between issues! We've enjoyed phenomenal growth, at times increasing subscribers by 200 people each day over several days. Some very favourable press in syndicated articles in major Australian newspapers doubtless provided real impetus, but ongoing promotion by evangelist readers around the world is a constant driver of our success, so thanks people!

Here's what this issue has to offer:

Long an aficionado of Fujifilm's X series cameras, Tony Bridge has spent time with the new Fujifilm X100s. Get his take on the new camera, in brutal honesty, and make up your own mind whether this is an essential upgrade for existing X users. I'm certainly keen to try one. See page 14.

New Zealand photographer Adam Custins shot our cover and his work on instant film is featured as our first portfolio. Based between Auckland – NZ and NYC – USA, Adam shoots beautiful people almost exclusively with instant picture film. Share his instant gratification as he explores a process being rediscovered by a new manufacturer breathing life back into what we once knew as Polaroid.

A.D. (Andrew) Wheeler is a native upstate New Yorker. He shoots abandoned urban landscapes, or as he calls them, 'Abandonedscapes'. Places which once teemed with people, at work or at play, now silent and lost to time, but representing fertile photographic locations for this explorer. Interestingly, he sees himself more as a conservationist than an explorer, and his efforts to preserve what he shoots are clear and unambiguous.

Martin Hill is an environmentalist and sculptor from New Zealand. Along with his partner, Philippa Jones, he creates sculptures within the landscape which are quickly reclaimed by time, temperature, wind, rain or season. Photography is an essential companion activity, serving to document these productions for posterity, and to extend the vital messages about sustainability and conservation which they carry. The resulting images are breathtakingly beautiful; not an end in themselves, rather the means to an end, but no less stunning for it.

Enjoy this issue of *f11*. ■

Tim

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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.



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



TIM STEELE is the ringmaster of the travelling circus that is *f11* Magazine. A former high wire artist for corporate masters in the photo industry, he still has nightmares about delivering the physically impossible, on occasion under the whip of the seemingly insane, and always for the terminally unappreciative. A brilliant escape from the last of these gulags left a tunnel for other prisoners and led him to consultancy in strategy, advertising and marketing. Always impressed by the Bohemian lifestyles, devil-may-care attitudes, cruel wit and 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.



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 107** of this issue.



Product REVIEW

Tony Bridge on the new Fujifilm X100s

14



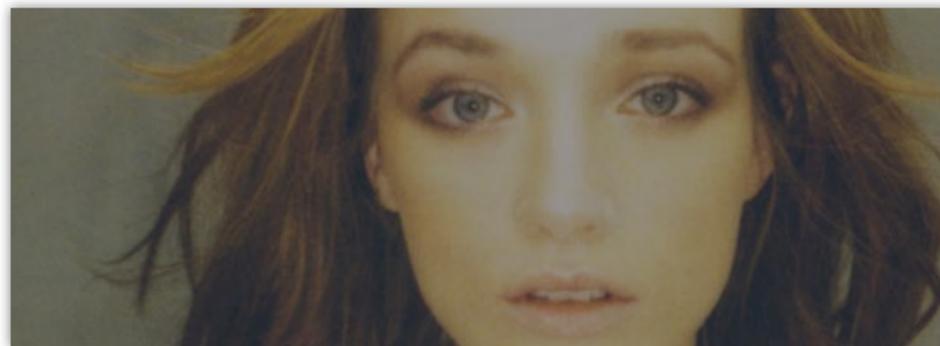
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Adam CUSTINS

Instant gratification

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A.D. WHEELER

Abandonscape

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© A.D. Wheeler



Martin HILL

Earth to earth

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In plain sight

SHOOTING AT 1,000,000,000,000 FPS

In this TED talk, MIT Media Lab Associate Professor Ramesh Raskar discusses a bleeding-edge camera that was developed for the express purpose of capturing slow-motion images of light itself traveling through space — and, eventually, shooting around corners. Yes, really.

Source: TED

CLICK ON THE SCREEN IMAGE TO VIEW THIS VIDEO



FINDING VIVIAN MAIER

This is the official trailer for the documentary film, Finding Vivian Maier, which unravels the secretive life of the now famous photographer Vivian Maier, and John Maloof's journey to piece together Maier's past.

Source: YouTube

More here:

www.findingvivianmaier.com (Film website)

www.vivianmaier.com (Maier's photographs)



SURVEILLANCE FROM 17,500 FEET – THE ARGUS-IS 1.8 GIGAPIXEL SUPERCAMERA

Big brother, in this case Uncle Sam, really is watching over you. See the surveillance technology found over warzones, perhaps coming soon to a city just like yours?

Source: Nova: Rise of the Drones documentary (PBS)

CLICK ON THE SCREEN IMAGE TO VIEW THIS VIDEO

SUBSCRIBE NOW FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN A FUJIFILM X-E1 CAMERA WITH ZOOM LENS

See full details on page 121 of this issue. Please note all existing subscribers also go in the draw, which takes place at the end of May 2013.

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So many magazines, so little time...

I try to keep an eye on a handful of what I consider to be the 'better' imaging magazines, probably some of the same ones you do. One or two are in print, but most of my personal favorites are online only these days.

As much as I'm looking at the pictures, I'm listening far more critically for voices, voices with opinions and perspectives which manage to punch a signal through the noise and clutter within the spectrum that is our chosen media, magazines, and our chosen field, imaging. My observation is that there is an awful lot of noise, loads of static, hardly any message and very few powerful signals to tune into.

Publishing is a capricious business, titles rise and fall, come and go. Certainly the prevailing economic conditions can influence success or failure, but unseen factors are equally influential drivers. Critical to this is the passion of your readership and audience, and their engagement both with the medium and the material presented within.

We're extraordinarily lucky to enjoy this level of connection with our readers, and the percentage of these who list themselves as professional photographers is now very significant – not only quantitatively but qualitatively, as it guides us.

Having a perspective, and being able, and willing, to voice it, is a factor often absent in the mainstream publishing media. Almost every-heavily-edited-word seeks to accommodate the needs of very-well-connected-people called 'stakeholders'. Sometimes these are owners, or

advertisers, or manufacturers, or popular opinion leaders – and often their vested interest is as completely transparent as the degree of their influence.

I've seen this in action, and we've worked hard to avoid the slippery and precipitous slopes leading to this. As an example, we will not under any circumstances, present you with 'advertorial' – material which purports to be editorial comment but is actually advertising in thin disguise. You'll often see these travesties described as an 'advertising feature' or a 'product portfolio'. This policy has cost us vital revenue, and we accept that, but our principles come before our profits. So, not here, not ever.

There's a 'fast food' mentality at the heart of many magazines. Loads of options, cheap ingredients, cooked quickly and served up cheerfully – with just enough sizzle, and almost zero nutritional value. The aim is to please a vast array of fairly unsophisticated diners. Instead, our mantra has always been based on a 'slow food' philosophy. We choose our ingredients with great care, try to include some intellectual fibre worthy of our more erudite audience, and if the recipe calls for thrice cooked soup... Well, you guessed it, we'll create the dish days before you arrive.

Yes, we're publishing a digital magazine, but that's just the electronic manifestation of something infinitely more valuable and worthwhile.

We're building a community, with shared values, shared understanding, a shared language, and an abiding common interest in something which is, come hell or high water, our enduring passion.

That's why our team is here, instead of anywhere else, and I'm pretty sure it's why you're here too. ■

TS

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Capturing each image beautifully,
the APS-C sensor size and OLPF-less X-Trans architecture
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X100S. Taking the essentials to new extremes.

Classic Evolution.

X100S

fujifilm-x.com/x100s/



Sensor : X-Trans CMOS II / Lens : Fujinon Single focal Length Lens [f=23mm/35mm(35mm format equivalent)/F2 Full-aperture] / Aperture : F2-F16 1/3 EV step / Sensitivity : ISO 100-25600 (AUTO:Control available up to ISO 6400) / Viewfinder : Hybrid viewfinder

Photography

It's all about the light

Photography is a journey for all of us, and at the beginning, when we are setting out, there is so much to learn; we have to master the arcane world of exposure, depth of field and focusing, not to mention coming to understand the implications and importance of the choice of focal lengths. All of this takes time and, as we progress, we may for a time believe we have our techniques sorted. However, if we stay on the road, we will realise that we are really ascending a spiral, and that we revisit the basics many times, each time gaining a new understanding we weren't aware of before.

Light is like that. In the beginning we may not even be aware of the importance of light, other than that certain circumstances and tricks of light can produce certain results. In the beginning it will be enough to understand direction and contrast and quality. We may feel from time to time that we have it sorted. Nothing could be further from the truth. For as long as we remain in photography, and, more importantly, are open to the idea that we do not have it all sorted, we will gain new understandings and learn that coming to understand light will be a lifetime's journey, a journey we will never complete.

There are techniques we can use to help us grow in our awareness and understanding. One of the best is to photograph without a camera. When you are in your car or on the bus going

to work, take the time to study the light. Imagine you are making a photograph, and study the way the light is affecting your 'take' on what is before you. Remember that everything you are looking at is revealed by light reflecting from it, thus what is reaching your eyeballs and mind is the sum of the nature of the light falling onto your subject and the characteristics of the subject onto which it is falling. A darker skin appears darker because it absorbs most of the light hitting it: an object is red because it absorbs all visible wavelengths/colours except red. Simple stuff apparently, but the nuances and understandings will engage you for your lifetime in photography and, while you can get the basics from a book, making it your own takes time. Perhaps that is why the masters appear to understand light in a way, and with an ease, that the rest of us do not.

With 50% of us living in cities or urban environments, there is no better place to start than here. Our streets and the buildings in them will play a merry game with the light. Remembering that light travels in straight lines, first of all identify where the light falling on your subject is coming from. Is it a large, soft source like an overcast sky or a point source like the sun shining along a street in the early morning? What happens when it bumps into buildings? How do paint or mirror glass windows change it? What happens to the shadows?



© Tony Bridge

I recently happened to be in Auckland, New Zealand, teaching a workshop. I arrived the day before and joined a couple of friends for a photo walk around the CBD. Because I do not live there, each visit is a refreshing of the vision and the opportunity to extend a narrative about surface and looking behind the façade and the obvious, one of the leitmotifs for my street and documentary work.

We eventually found ourselves on a balcony overlooking an interior thoroughfare. Because it was late afternoon and the sun was on its way down, the light skimmed in, sliding along the

pavement and bouncing off the shop windows. As people walked along below us, I was fascinated by the double shadows they cast and the interaction of subject and shadow. I made photographs of this phenomenon. Sometimes that is all photography has to be. ■

TB

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Fujifilm

X100s

Tony Bridge



© Tony Bridge

The duckling becomes a swan

About two years ago, being something of an early adopter, I was excited when I heard that Fujifilm were about to release the X100, so not long after it was released, I went into my favourite camera shop and purchased one. I kept it for about a month and then sold it. Quite frankly, it drove me demented. The autofocus was slow, the fly-by-wire manual focusing was about 300 turns lock-to-lock, the optical viewfinder inaccurate, and the menu system required a Ph.D in astrophysics to understand. The straw which broke the camel's back, however, was the file quality. The colour files were flat, lifeless and completely lacking in depth. I mentally chided myself, bit the bullet and got rid of it.

But that was then and this is now. Last year I decided to revisit the camera, and to my surprise, the duckling had shaken off a lot of its ugliness. There were still things in the operation of the menu which drove me mad, but the autofocus speed had improved markedly and the files had improved remarkably. There was now energy

and a sense of three-dimensionality in them, and the sharpness of the lens was clearly evident when I enlarged them. It was only when I saw a file enlarged to A0 that I realised just how good this camera was. Furthermore there was an analogue flavour to the black and white files, that indefinable relationship between the tones which suggests that the image has been made using film.

By the time I got my hands on the camera, there were already whispers coming down the wind of its replacement, and it did not take the intellect of a neurosurgeon to figure out that Fujifilm would be using the X-Trans sensor they had already introduced to the X-Pro 1 and the X-E1. Would the engineers, however, listen to all the gripes they had no doubt received from end users, and do something about them? Would they be willing to set their pride aside and make what was a good camera into a truly great one?

Well they did, and they have. The ugly duckling has become a swan called an X100s.

Design

From the front, and from the top, there seems to be little difference between the old X100 and the new X100s. There is the same wonderful 50s feel, the combination of chrome and black leather which so clearly evokes Leica's M-series cameras. By retaining the body design and form factor, Fujifilm has ensured that all previous X100 accessories, even many third party ones like the popular Gariz half cases, are still completely compatible.

Everything seems to be the same on the top deck, with the exception of the labelling on the left side. There is the same shutter speed dial with its knurled edges, and the very analogue and retro exposure compensation dial out on the far right, which just naturally falls under your thumb. Fujifilm's engineers have taken advice from users on both of these controls, increasing the angle of separation between A and 1/4000 on the shutter speed dial, and significantly increasing the torque on the exposure compensation dial, removing the

tendency for this to accidentally rub in one direction or the other in the previous model.

It is on the back of the camera that more becomes apparent. Gone is the RAW button, replaced by the Q (Quick Menu) button. This is the first sign that the engineers at Fujifilm are standardising their system. Tap it with a fingernail and it opens up the custom setting menu familiar to other X-users. Here you can quickly adjust settings such as ISO, dynamic range, image type and quality and others such as noise reduction, sharpness and contrast. If you have been used to working with one of this camera's other siblings, then adjusting your settings is simple and straightforward. So far, not bad.

The criticism about the annoying position of the autofocus adjustment button on all the X series cameras, that it is almost impossible to reach with the camera up to your eye has been heard, and adjusting the shooting position can now be done with the right thumb, since it has been moved to the top of the command dial. Importantly, the viewfinder has built-in dioptre adjustment. ▶

It is under the hood, and in the menu system, when you are setting up the camera, that you become aware a number of wonderful improvements have been made. I am a big fan of using Auto ISO, since the X-Trans sensor is so clean you can happily use it out to 3200 ISO. Setting up Auto ISO in the menu now offers you the ability to set the maximum ISO from 400 to 6400. There are options to shoot down as low as 100 ISO or as high as 12,800 ISO. What is more wonderful however, is the fact that you can specify a minimum shutter speed when you have the shutter speed dial set to auto. Because the camera is not stabilised, this is critical for maximum sharpness, especially when working in dark environments.

Further down the menu system is a function labelled MF Assist, and it is here that you become aware the engineers have really been at work. While it is possible to achieve critical focus in manual by pressing the command control button, and using magnification to achieve it, you now also have the option to choose peak focusing, where areas in the image which are sharp are highlighted. But wait, there is more. In what I suspect is a first, and entirely in keeping with the Fujifilm philosophy of achieving a seamless synergy between the best of modern digital and the best of old school rangefinder design, you can also select a digital split image function, where you use the manual focus ring to line up selected edges in your picture until they are sharp. If you have selected ON for the MF Focus Check in the setup menu, rotating the focus ring automatically magnifies the view and the electronic viewfinder or LCD monitor for precise focus. With so many options for precise focus, there are no excuses for mistakes.

In use

The first thing which struck me when I turned the camera on, was how quickly it came to life and was ready to shoot. Spot a scene, flick the on button as you bring it up to your eye and by

the time it gets there the camera will be ready for use. It is that fast.

Autofocus has improved out of all sight. This is currently, far and away the fastest focusing camera in the X stable. Focus is almost instantaneous and shutter lag is non-existent. With the option to turn off the shutter sound, stealth photography is assured. The only other camera I have ever used which was as silent in its operation was a Konica Hexar I owned some years ago. The X100s is significantly quieter than an M-series.

Gone is the fly-by-wire feel of the manual focusing ring. It is now quick, accurate and precise. Manual focusing is really now a viable option. Add the fact that depth of field is now visible in the viewfinder and it is possible to use hyperfocal distance techniques.

For those wanting to do so, it is possible, using the macro mode, to focus down to 10 cm/4 inches. Furthermore the frame lines and the optical viewfinder seemed to me to be more accurate than they were in the previous model.

I was reminded of the necessity for being precise with my capture technique and the rule of thumb of making sure that the minimum shutter speed is at least twice the focal length of the lens. Because the camera is so light, jabbing at the shutter button in my excitement at making what I hoped would be an iconic photograph generated a minute amount of camera shake, and that file, while suitable for the web, will never make a huge print. Looking at the file at 100% on my monitor I realised the importance of keeping the shutter speed up to avoid camera shake. Since I use Auto ISO most of the time, I would strongly recommend setting the minimum shutter speed to at least 1/125 of a second.

Post production – The proof of the pudding

The lens in the X100s remains unchanged, carrying over to the X100s, testimony to the fact that this optic was clearly able to out-resolve



© Tony Bridge

the previous 12MP sensor, and proving more than a match for the X-Trans 16MP unit.

Prints from the X-Trans sensor are so good that exhibition quality prints at A0 are a reality, and, at f8, they are sharp from edge to edge. They are so good in fact that they give lie to the idea that the APS-C sensor is a poor cousin to the full frame sensor. Because of the unique design of the sensor, very little noise is generated in the green channel, and there is no problem whatsoever at shooting up to 1600 ISO. 3200 ISO requires a little noise reduction, but only that.

Being such a new model there are, as you might expect, few options when it comes to processing RAW files, with the included Raw Converter EX (Silkypix) and Lightroom 4.4 RC the only ones I am aware of at the moment. I am sure people like Capture One are working on them even as

we speak. Fujifilm and Adobe have been working hard over the last few months to produce an updated RAW converter for the sensor, and the results show, but they are not yet perfect. Increasingly my 'go to' RAW converter for files from the X stable has been Capture One Pro 7, which seems to extract both detail and tonality. I am eagerly awaiting an update which will enable me to use it on files from the X100s. What I did notice when I processed the files was how black and white conversions had a beautifully smooth tonality and a wonderful analogue quality, very reminiscent of Fujifilm's magnificent Acros black and white film.

So who is it for? Anyone who wants a small camera which is a triumph of function and form, and who is anally retentive about file quality and the possibility for massive enlargement, is going to be well served. Street, documentary ▶

and editorial photographers will love this camera, for its unobtrusiveness and sheer talent. At the price it is going to be a 'must have' for wedding photographers, for those times when you want to shoot candid and quiet moments discreetly.

There is something about this camera. It just makes you want to pick it up, load a card and get out there into the world, to go out and make pictures. Whether you are passionate about photography for its own sake, or you are looking for another weapon in your armoury, you owe it to yourself to have one of these in your bag. The ugly duckling has evolved.

TB

Other X100s reviews online:

Zack Arias

David Hobby



The Fujifilm WCL-X100 Wide Conversion Lens

A little known but really useful and important accessory for the X100 and X100s has to be the Fujifilm WCL-X100 Wide Conversion Lens. Put simply, it is a screw-on lens, which changes the field-of view to give the equivalent of a 28mm effective wide-angle. For around NZD\$600 you can have two focal lengths for your X100s, and that extra focal length can make all the difference when out shooting. In his book *American Color*, Magnum photographer Constantine Manos, talks about how he does all his astonishing documentary photography by walking with his camera and two lenses, a 35mm and a 28mm.

I am told that the Wide Conversion Lens is the brainchild of one of the Fujifilm engineers, for whom it was a pet project he was carrying out on the side. When he showed it to his bosses, they were so impressed that they put it into production.

The lens comes in its own foam-lined cardboard box, complete with a magnetic clip to keep it shut. It also has a cloth storage bag for carrying around. It is a lovely, weighty, beautifully-finished thing which, when mounted, makes the camera look even more retro, rather like one of those rangefinders from the 1950's. You have the choice of silver or black to suit your camera body. To attach it, you unscrew the front ring from the lens, revealing the thread for the lens hood, then screw on the wide conversion lens. Job done. If you have the lens hood for the camera, this will fit on the front without producing any vignetting. It is important to remember to go into the shooting menu and switch the wide conversion lens setting to "on". The camera will now recognise the lens when it is on and adjust the frame lines and EVF accordingly. Interestingly, if you switch back to the 35mm equiv. focal length, it automatically readjusts the framing to suit. The extra weight somehow gives the camera more gravitas and better balance.

What is interesting is that the extra glass should reduce the exposure somewhat, but it does not and there is no loss of speed. I am led to believe that, the effective aperture of the 23mm lens on the camera may in fact be a somewhat faster f1.7 rather than the stated 2.0.

I have used screw-on wide-angle lenses in the past and the results were almost always terrible, causing vignetting, distortion and loss of resolution and clarity, so I approached this one with a certain unease and scepticism. I opted to use it in close, where its faults would be very apparent, and to include lots of fine detail to mess it up. I failed. The Wide Conversion Lens is to my eyes every bit as good as the 23/f2 which comes on the camera, any loss on the edges is entirely consistent with a lens of this focal length. You can view the MTF curves here.

If you are looking to extend the range of your X100 or X100s, this has to be a must-have accessory. ■



Focal length: 200mm. Exposure: F/10. 1/60 sec. ISO1000

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Model A009

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Compatible mounts: Canon, Nikon, Sony*

* The Sony mount does not include VC, as Sony digital SLR bodies include image stabilization functionality. The Sony lens is designated as "SP 70-200mm F/2.8 Di USD".



Adam CUSTINS

Instant gratification

Adam Custins is a New Zealand photographer currently based between New York and Auckland. I first met Adam when, as a young man, he was about to depart New Zealand to complete his education at The Brooks Institute in Santa Barbara, California. I was immediately impressed by his determination and enthusiasm to carve a career as a photographer, a path he has never wavered from.

Today, he is a walking, talking, shooting crusader for instant film, his medium of choice as he chases the moving target that is celebrity and fashion portraiture in the most competitive photography market in the world.

Adam takes up the story of his affection for instant capture:

‘During 2010, I received an email from the Editor of Black Magazine, Grant Fell. He asked if I’d be interested in trying out a pack of The Impossible Project instant film. This was from their final pre-release test batch, before launching their first retail line of new instant films.

The Impossible Project purchased the last functioning Polaroid factory in Europe, and set itself the challenge of manufacturing a stock to sell to the public within one year. Unable to buy

the Polaroid patents containing the chemical formulas, firstly because of the cost, and secondly due to some crucial ingredients being outlawed due to new environmental laws, TIP genuinely had to reinvent the process. The pack of film I was given was black and white, and incredibly sensitive to light when first ejected: it also shifted tones over time, almost fading away, but if scanned initially: the results were magical.

Shooting with The Impossible Project film, I felt like I was participating in a moment of photographic history: here was a company going out on a long limb, to not only reinvent the chemical process, but also market themselves in a digital age. At that moment, all I wanted to do was dedicate myself to this medium, the magic of photography had returned for me.

When I began shooting, there was no digital: it was all film, and Polaroid. But instant film was only used for proofing: rarely as the final piece. Photoshop did not exist either.

When the digital era dawned, I embraced it quickly, and loved the instantaneousness of the medium. But for years I was shooting 35mm, or maybe 645 digital: two basic cameras and formats. It hit me one day when I was shooting ▶



Portrait, Danielle Hayes. © Adam Custins

with one of my instant film cameras, an SX-70, that it was actually a 6x7 format camera... and then it clicked: I missed being able to shoot with all the old film cameras I'd grown up with and loved. As a commercial photographer in the film days, you needed 35mm, 120, and 4x5 simply to function. Just because of digital, all those cameras had been put aside, and nearly forgotten.

I realised that after all these years of searching for my own visual language, I had found it... the instant gratification of digital, with the surprise of analogue, using a range of cameras and formats... I felt free as an artist, rather than trapped by only using a Canon or the Hasselblad H range of cameras with digital backs.

Shooting instant film also mirrors my aesthetic and intellectual approach to picture making. I rarely use artificial lighting, so usually my shoots are just me and a camera. This simplicity has forced me to confront my own ability as a photographer: how effective can I be in telling a story, or conveying a feeling, with the least impediment between me and my subject?

These days, I shoot with all formats of instant film, and occasionally digital and traditional film. In the end, I hate being defined by the medium or camera I use, I am a photographer first – what I use to shoot is largely irrelevant.

In recent years, we have seen an analogue photography renaissance. It began with the Holga, and Lomo, then TIP, and now, all things film. This has only been made possible by affordable scanning technology and solutions becoming accessible to anyone. On a recent shopping trip to B&H, I asked which scanner I would need for copying my Polaroids, and their 'scanner-expert' sold me a \$79 flat bed scanner. 'You could make prints the size of a wall' he said, 'consumer technology has surpassed most quality requirements...'

Five or ten years ago, companies such as Lomo or TIP could never succeed. One drum scan years ago cost me \$50-100 at least.

Since my first shoot with TIP test film for Black Magazine, I have continued shooting their film through all its evolutions. I remember when I shot their very first color film which came about a year after the first B&W stock. The color tones were really only blue and green... but produced such exceptionally delicate tones. I felt like I was on the photographic frontier again.

Over the last two years, I have been commuting between NY and Auckland, shooting editorial for off-shore, non-US clients, and working a lot with TIP's New York office. Being literally down the road from TIP has meant that I've had first hand access to the world leaders in instant film technology, and art.

By attending monthly user group meetings, I have met instant film practitioners from around the world. People who live and breathe the medium. I remember one meeting where the then store manager Kisha Bari explained that even though a print might have visually developed, the chemicals trapped in the 'print-envelope' were still wet, and would take days or weeks to completely dry. She held up two Polaroids, and tapped one, and then the other... 'listen, you can hear this one is dry, by the sound it makes'. It was a beautiful moment, when have you ever 'listened' to your pictures?

During 2012, while in NY, I saw the release of their latest color stock, which was a revolution. It was exceptionally sharp, with vibrant colors, and crazily amazing dynamic range. Sure it took over twenty minutes to properly develop into a visible image, but the final results were incredible. Every 6 months TIP manage to bring out better and better film, step by step, bringing better chemistry to their products.

In the final months of the year, TIP announced the re-release of 8x10" film. Black and white first, with the promise of color to come. I attended an 8x10" training workshop, and shot the self portrait as seen here in my bio portrait. I only shot the one frame, but I was hooked. ▶



Portrait, Dana Taylor. © Adam Custins

This year, I have been offered a solo show at TIP Gallery, and I plan to shoot all 8x10". Opening in August, I will be shooting the material between now and then. I've only ever shot 8x10" film once before, and never forgotten the feeling of virtually looking into a window.

Since early 2010, I have essentially dedicated my life to instant film photography. Exploring as many films, formats, cameras, brands, and applications as possible, but to be honest, I still feel like I am scratching the surface. With TIP continuing to produce 2 major chemical formulas per year in both color and B&W, and in multiple formats, coupled with Fujifilm continuing their Instax and FP100c peel apart stock, there is a healthy, if slightly unknown future for the medium.

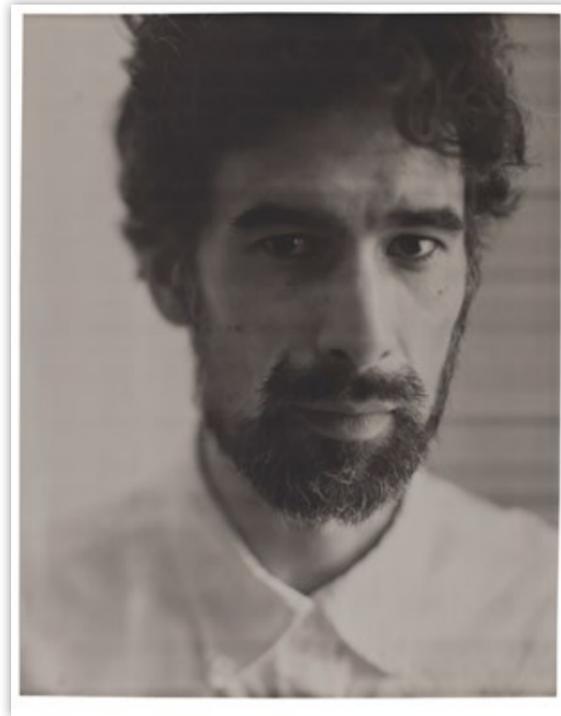
While the technology is fascinating, and the new film part of an historic period for photography, the most gratifying experience has been exploring as an artist this new language. Over the years, I have developed various motifs, stories, and characters that populate my own imaginary world, one dominated by natural, organic, and minimalist themes, WHILE opposed by religious, and darker THEMES. I have a fascination for opposites, and the struggle between 'good and bad' – 'purity and evil'.

Most recently, I have published my very first book: a collection of portraits shot over Spring and Summer 2012, in Brooklyn. This is available via blurb.com.

So sit back and enjoy Adam's instantly gratifying images, an ever-evolving story from an ever-relentless image maker. ■

TS

www.custins.com



Sef portrait © Adam Custins

'Since early 2010, I have essentially dedicated my life to instant film photography.'



Portrait, Alexia Bellini. © Adam Custins



Untitled. © Adam Custins



Portrait, Chloe Price. © Adam Custins



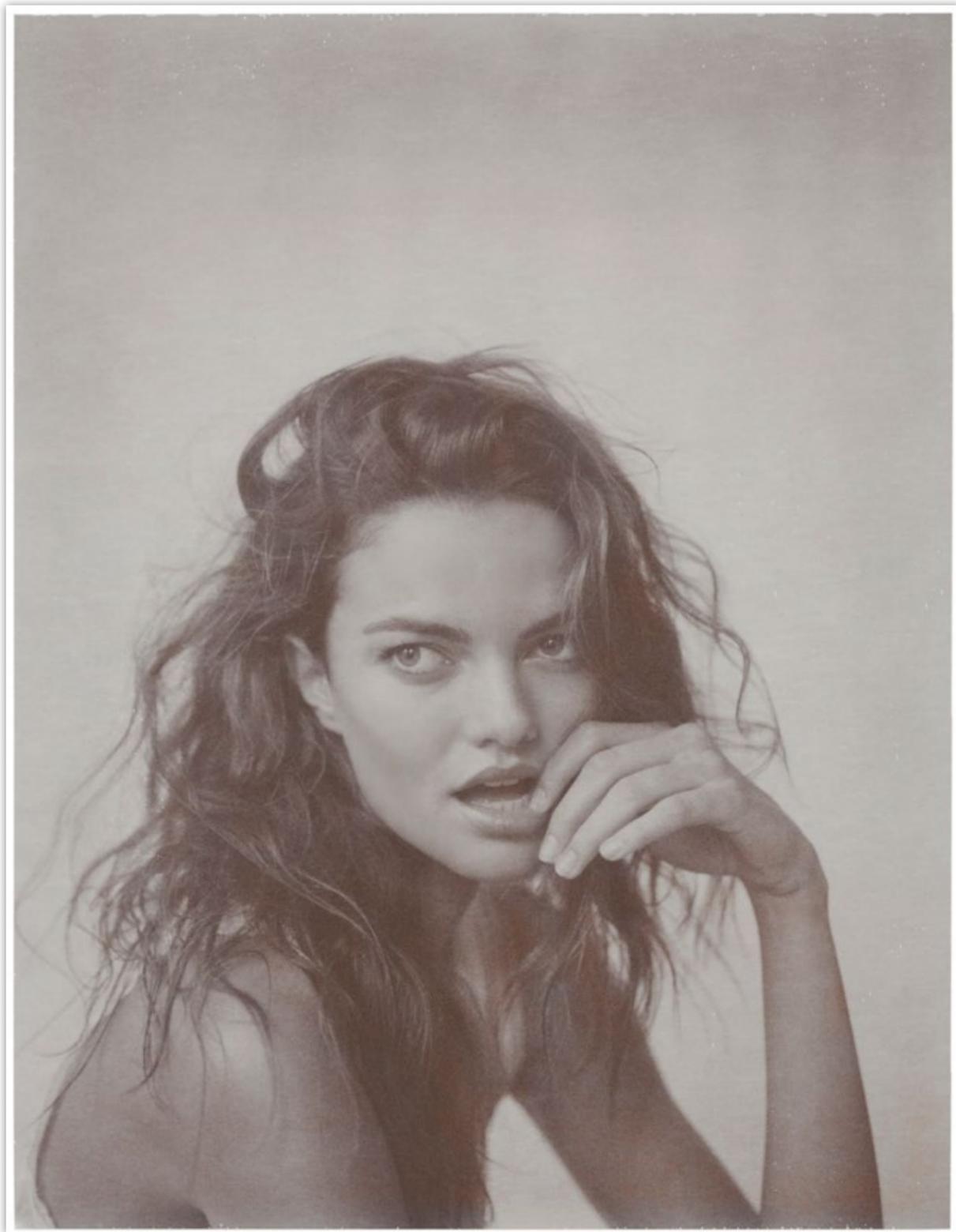
'When I began shooting, there was no digital: it was all film, and Polaroid'

Portrait, Danielle Hayes. © Adam Custins

'I have a fascination for opposites, and the struggle between 'good and bad' – 'purity and evil.'

Portrait, Liv O-Driscoll. © Adam Custins





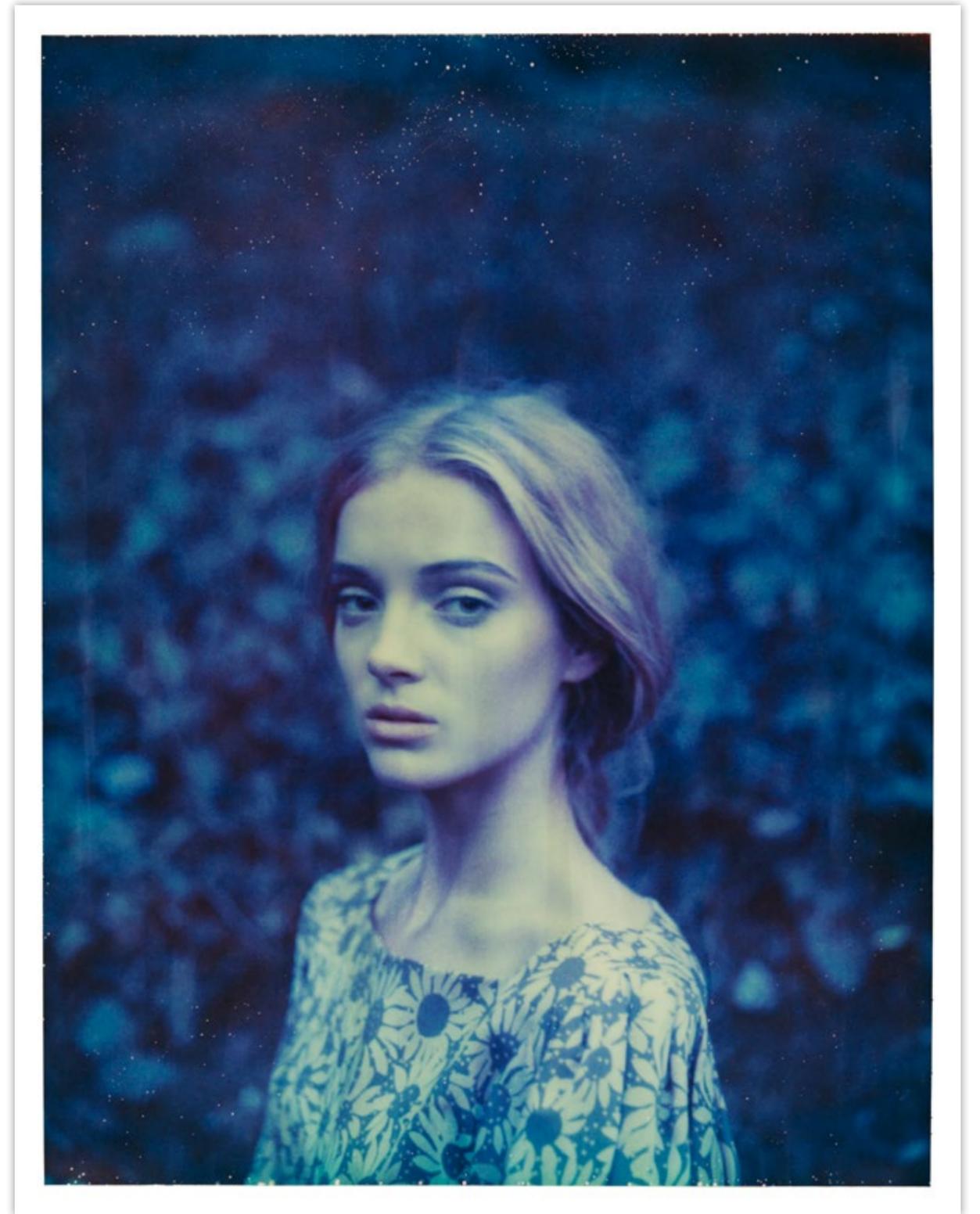
Portrait, Barbara Fialho, NY. 2012. Shot with extinct vintage Polaroid stock. © Adam Custins



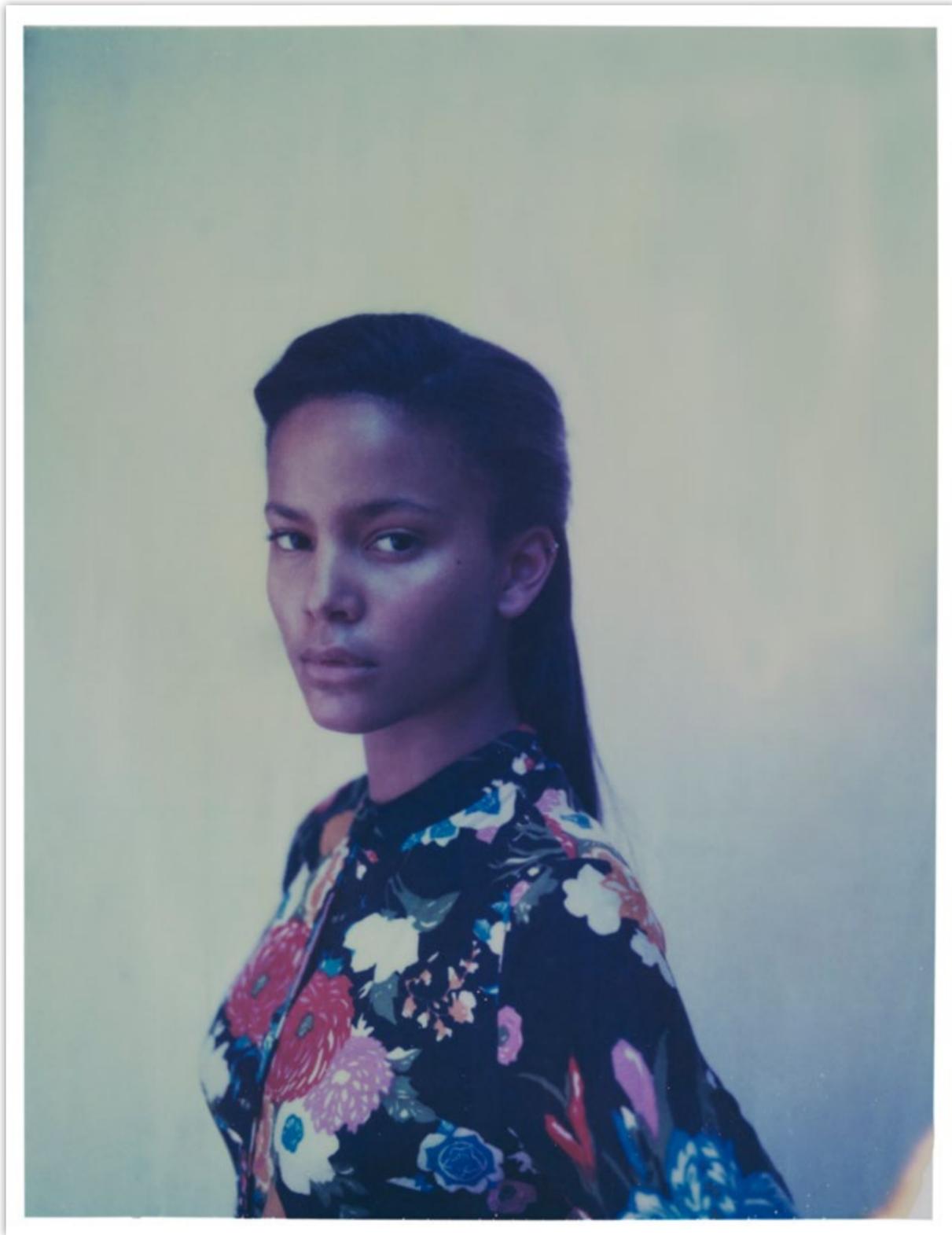
Editorial, Cake Magazine. © Adam Custins



Portrait, Weronika Dus. © Adam Custins



Editorial, Print Magazine. © Adam Custins

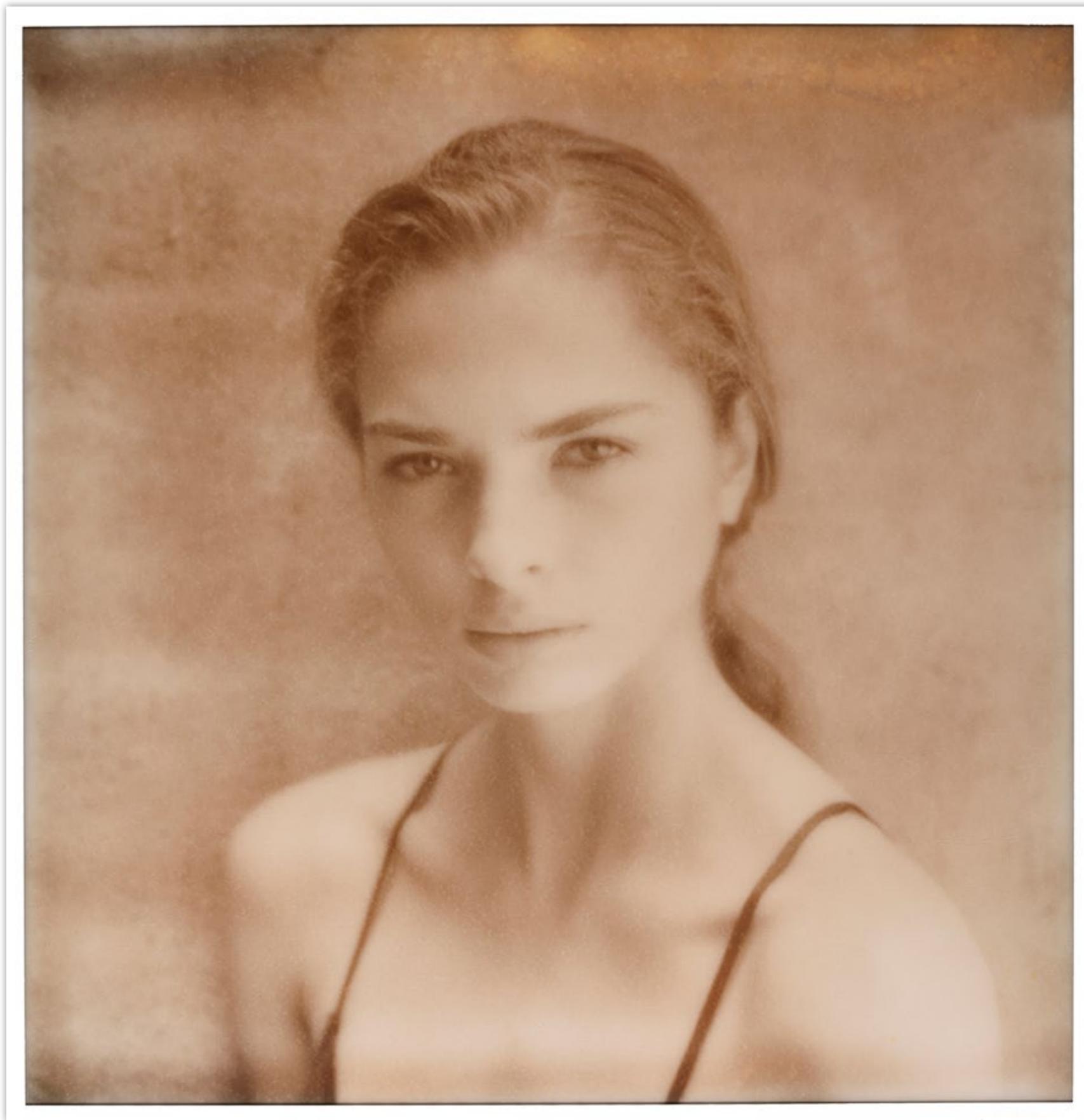


Portrait, Kyra Green. © Adam Custins



Portrait, Lauren Graves. © Adam Custins

'At that moment, all I wanted to do was dedicate myself to this medium, the magic of photography had returned for me.'



Portrait, Paige Rivas. © Adam Custins



Barbara Fialho: from the Black Magazine shoot. © Adam Custins



Stephen Madden

Shot with Big Stopper, 0.3 Soft Grad



the System



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A.D. WHEELER

Abandonscape

A. D. (Andrew) Wheeler is an urban explorer who uses the highly appropriate term 'abandonscape' to describe his work, focusing as it does on the vacated and forgotten places in his surroundings. Abandoned landscapes many of these certainly are, speaking of lives, locations and even industries, lost to time, circumstance and progress. Abandoned machinery also features, testament to the fact that today's high tech is tomorrow's scrap metal and clearly his fascination extends to these subjects as well.

Andy is a native of Elmira, a small town in upstate New York, USA. He refers to Elmira as the 'home base for my life'. Andrew's mother Evelyn, adopted him at just 2 days old. She was a very talented artist, and passed that talent on to Andrew who began his artistic life with sketching and drawing from an early age. In his teens during the computer revolution, his interests and devotions naturally turned to technology. An extremely quick learner, Andrew adapted to the computer world and explored 3D modeling, graphic design and video editing. ▶



*Horrible Vacation: Indoor pool, Grossingers Resort, Liberty New York USA.
Sony a55v with Sigma 10-20mm f/4-5.6 lens. © 2012 A.D. Wheeler*

Although Andrew had been taking photographs since he was old enough to hold a camera, it was his purchase of a camera in 2008 that really began his photographic journey and his love for High Dynamic Range (HDR) imaging.

A self-taught photographer, he loves pushing the boundaries of both his camera equipment and his post processing. Andrew focuses primarily on the landscape, photographing abandoned buildings and sites of ruin and decay.

Andrew has specialised in HDR photography as he feels it allows him better control over the often minimal available natural light in these locations and more accurately portrays what the human eye can see. His process is dedicated to replicating not only the scene as his vision saw it, but also conveying the sense of wonder that he felt while exploring the location.

Early in 2013, US network PBS described Andrew as a rising star in photography. Curiously, he does not consider himself an explorer, but he does love the adventure of finding beauty and art in generally unseen places.

Andrew's Artists Statement describes his work in this way:

'My goal is to photograph and create images that scream a story to the viewer. If I can create a visual that draws the individual in and makes them long to know what was going on in the location when I shot it, then I have achieved my overall goal. Every photo I take, to me, is a movie. It must live on its own, and push the viewer to want to see more of the same. For me, abandoned sites hold the ghosts of those who once brought these magnificent places to life. I strive to capture that history, and bring those memories back to the future. Every site brings its own unique set of challenges, whether it be lighting, mood, color, or whatever the case may be. Each new place pushes the boundaries of my craft and keeps me moving forward and fresh. There is never a dull moment when shooting modern ruins.' ▶



*Executive Meeting: The Jenny G hotel offices, Grossingers Resort, Liberty New York USA.
Sony a55v with Sigma 10-20mm f/4-5.6 lens. © 2012 A.D. Wheeler*

f11: Hi Andy, and welcome to *f11* Magazine.

ADW: Howdy *f11*, and let me just say that I am quite honored to be here.

f11: Have other artists or photographers been influences on your work?

ADW: Everything and everyone influences me in one way or another. My cues and learning really come from all over the place. I think if I had to nail down a few, my work ethic comes from guys like the incredible Colby Brown. My processing and style from the great Ansel Adams and my wanting to explore these ruins from the European UrbEx scene. Those guys do some incredible restorative work as well as amazing photography.

f11: What's your process for hunting down these locations, and how much advance planning is involved before visiting a site?

ADW: A lot more today than there used to be. Some of my early shoots were literally 'pull-overs' on the side of the road. I'd drive around until I found something interesting and go explore. These days myself and a few others here in the States are trying to put our art to good use in saving some of these historic locations.

f11: Tell us about a typical visit to one of these places, are you with a group or on your own, how long might you be there, what precautions do you take?

ADW: Generally it is myself and one other fellow photographer. We started doing this together and have since moved several states away from each other. Nowadays we get together a couple of times a year for a 7 day stretch and go to work. In the beginning it was truly a stealth-like mission. Get in, get the shots, get out. Maybe a couple of hours at most. Now I try to work with the owners of the property or building and that results in several day shoots along with meetings with local historical society members to try and nail down some history on the site.

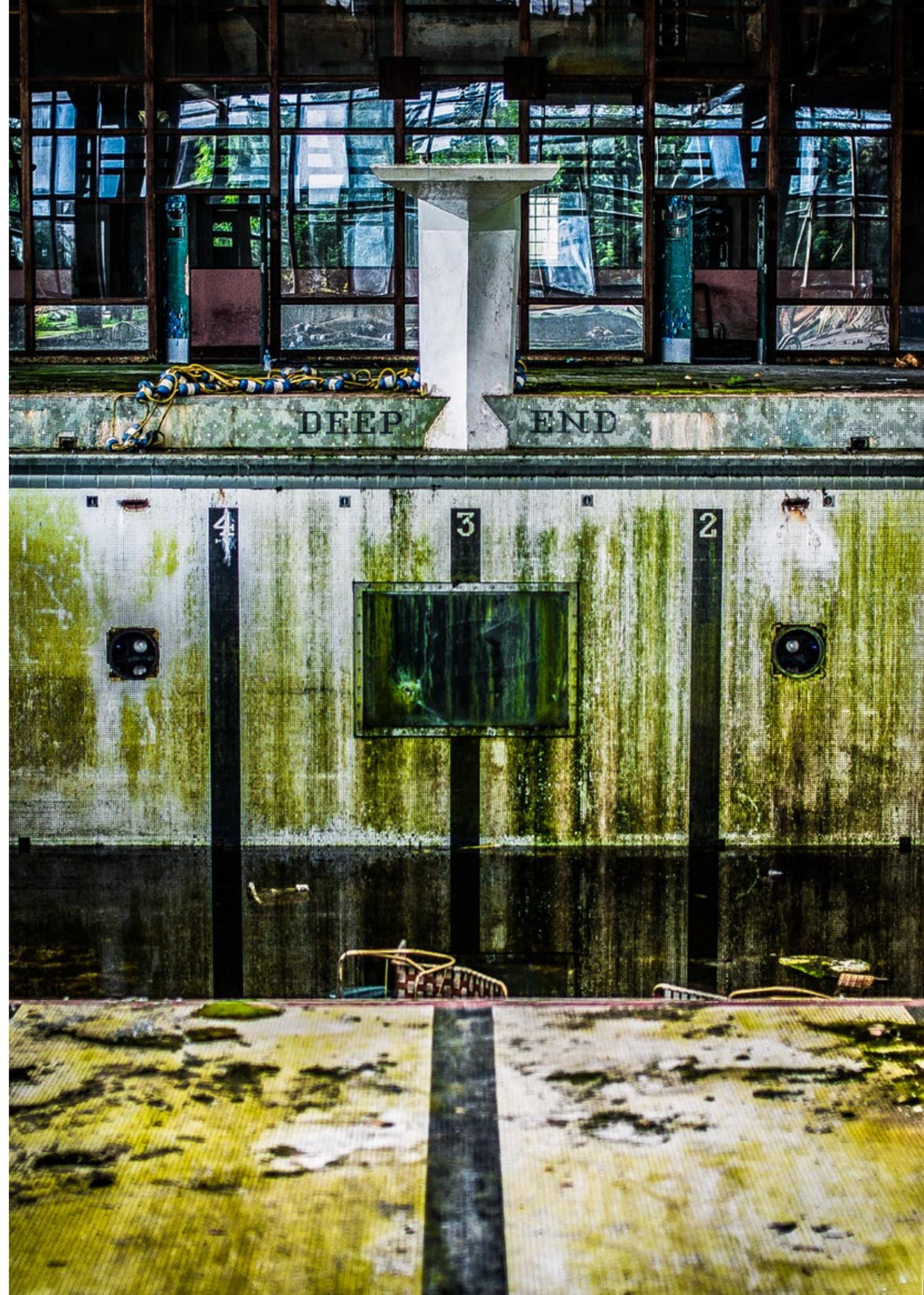
f11: This is a completely different America, certainly not what I imagine as an occasional visitor to your country. Tell us about this side of the American landscape.

ADW: When life gives you lemons, right? The lemons have been served and there are many that don't like it. Myself, and many artists really, are finding interesting textures, colors and subjects in the wake of factory closings, natural disasters, and financial failings.

f11: Is the global financial crisis and the downturn in the US economy contributing to the pool of abandoned locations for you to visit, or are newly abandoned places much harder to access?

ADW: That is a great question. Many properties are posted of course. I try to locate owners and find out what they are doing with the property. That answer, if I get one, is usually, 'nothing'. And with that, there is no legal access. In the last couple of years I will only shoot legal access, and I try to shoot with a goal in mind. To either help the owners raise funds for up-keep and security of the site and/or to preserve the last remains of history left. Getting owners to open up to this as a good thing but for them is always tough. More and more are getting sick of the illegal scrappers and vandals and want a change and seeing not only property security but some financial gain from it as well. One owner of a silk mill in Maryland is actually giving tours to photographers and groups for a fee. With this he pays the taxes, has camera security, and pays for general maintenance of the site. As a result he is preserving a 106 year old silk mill for generations to enjoy. ▶

▶ *No Diving: Indoor pool, Grossingers Resort, Liberty New York USA. Sony a55v with Sigma 10-20mm f/4-5.6 lens. © 2012 A.D. Wheeler*





The Good Life. Grossingers Resort, Liberty New York USA. Sony a55v with Sigma 10-20mm f/4-5.6 lens. © 2012 A.D. Wheeler

f11: I know there is quite an urbex community in the US, do you have much contact with fellow explorers or pursue this work in relative secrecy?

ADW: I do not. I do not consider myself an urban explorer. Those guys are incredible in what they do and I admire them for it. I am an artist first, photographer second and a bunch of other things. I love to explore, but with a family, business and all of the legalities involved I like to think of myself as a fledgling historical-site activist. If through my art and work I can help one site be recognised, saved, or just turned around, I have accomplished what I set out to.

f11: How much gear do you normally take along on a typical shoot?

ADW: Whether I am doing travel landscape work or climbing through an old dusty mill, I take it all. 3 camera bodies (2 DSLRs, 1 Full Spectrum IR) plus GoPro, iPad, 5 pieces of Sigma glass, assorted filters, tripod, etc. All of it squashed into a Tenba Medium shootout backpack that weighs in at about 65lbs. I was heading down a cliff in Acadia National Park and a guy stopped me at the trailhead and said, 'I don't know if you are a pro photographer or not, but I have to give you a ton of credit for going down there, with all that'. I never really think about it, it just all goes everywhere I go.

f11: And safety equipment?

ADW: Some high-power 3w LED lights, dust mask once in a while. No gas masks or breather masks. Most of these places are not that problematic unless you are kicking up a lot of dust with careless behavior.

f11: For the most part are these places truly empty or do you run into squatters, animals or security guards?

ADW: 90% of the time they are completely vacant. One time we ran into someone who recognised us from the internet. At the time we didn't think anything of it, they asked for safety

info on the site as we were leaving so we helped them out.

f11: What's been your worst urbex experience so far?

ADW: This kind of ties in with your last question. During an exploration of an old lace factory my partner and I were shot at by gang members. Apparently, they were using the site for some sort of illegal activity and weren't too happy about us being there. Note to all gang members; we are very friendly, please don't shoot. We can work something out!

f11: And your best?

ADW: In 2012 I drove from New York to a small town called Nelson in Nevada and a really cool place known as the Eldorado Gold Mine. They literally have everything imaginable there. There is an extensive 5 part story on my blog about the entire trip. Just a fantastic journey.

f11: Your HDR is a lot subtler than a lot of what I'm seeing, nowhere near as garish or unreal as so many of the HDR images being shown. How far is too far when post processing your HDR images and how much restraint do you apply?

ADW: My goal when I started photography was to use the camera and the available tools to create art. It wasn't too long after I started that I found HDR. I have no real opinion on what is good or what is bad. I process my shots first to be as close to reality as possible and then push it over the line slightly in the direction of the mood and experience I had while there. When I enter these sites you get a sense of the place while there. I try to bring this to my shots, and to bring that to the viewer. It is an ongoing study which I am enjoying thoroughly.

f11: Tell us briefly about your HDR capture and post production technique?

ADW: I am currently processing exclusively in 32bit HDR. With the dynamic range of the ▶



The End Of Days: Chaise lounge chairs at the indoor pool, Grossingers Resort, Liberty New York USA. Sony a500 with Sigma 18-250mm f/3.5-5.6 lens. © 2012 A.D. Wheeler

Grossingers: Birthplace of snow making, training camp of Rocky Marciano, hang-out of countless movie stars, this was one of the most famous resorts on the east coast of the United States. Now a playground for scrappers and vandals. This was one of my first locations and still one of my favorites. (Pages 43-55)



*Standing At The Edge Of Yesterday: Outdoor olympic pool panorama, Grossingers Resort, Liberty New York USA.
Sony a55v with Sigma 10-20mm f/4-5.6 lens. © 2012 A.D. Wheeler*

*'For me, abandoned sites hold the ghosts of those who
once brought these magnificent places to life.'*



*Lap Of Luxury : Tennis Clubhouse ruins, Grossingers Resort, Liberty New York USA.
Sony a55v with Sigma 10-20mm f/4-5.6 lens. © 2012 A.D. Wheeler*



*Sylvania 6-5000 : An old TV console at the Joy Cottage, Grossingers Resort, Liberty New York USA.
Sony a55v with Sigma 10-20mm f/4-5.6 lens. © 2012 A.D. Wheeler*

'I am an artist first, photographer second and a bunch of other things.'

current DSLR's on the market I am shooting fewer exposures than in the early days. Originally, if I was shooting an interior with bright sun shining through a window or doorway I would need to shoot upwards of 15 exposures to capture the entire range. I have had photographers question that, but I do not like the result achieved by letting the software 'figure it out'. I would rather get what I know I can use rather than getting back to the studio and finding that I don't have a useable bracket set. Currently with Adobe's new 2012 profile and the dynamic range it allows in my processing I am finding that 3 exposures at -2, 0, and +2 works well for most scenes. With 5 to 7 exposures for the really difficult shots.

f11: Do you think HDR is a fad, a technique of the moment, something you might tire of and eventually abandon?

ADW: I do not. Cameras, no matter how advanced with the current technology, cannot capture the dynamic range of the human eye. I have always, and will always, seek the most realistic shot I can deliver, of course with my own personal twist on it. I do not shoot strictly HDR though. I love infrared, and working with long exposure shots. I am also equally at home in the studio. Whatever it takes to keep me interested and challenged.

f11: You've likened your images to movies, with your background in video editing have you considered documenting these places in full motion video rather than still capture?

ADW: Well, no. I am not that good with video. Plus, I think that over the years I have realised that photos are like books. They spark your imagination. Movies these days have gotten away from that. Now you see everything, and nothing is left to your imagination. Old horror films were great at doing this. You saw the knife, you saw the victim, you heard the scream. The rest your mind could only imagine. I still hold on to that bit of antique thinking. ▶

Doll Valley: A mammoth safe discovered in a basement while combing a repurposed parachute factory for the owner of an artist's abandoned apartment featured in another story. The safe was loaded with old documents representing the famous WWII parachute manufacturer Blue Swan Mills, dating back to the 1930's.

▶ *Now That's A Safe: Abandoned records safe, Blue Swan Mills, Athens Pennsylvania USA. Sony a77v with Sigma 10-20mm f/4-5.6 lens. © 2012 A.D. Wheeler*



f11: I'm guessing that conservation exploration is not your day job, what's your main occupation and how do you fit photography in around this?

ADW: I am a regional touring musician. After 31 years this will end this April and it will be photography full bore.

f11: Complete this sentence: An urban explorer's best friend is...

ADW: ...common sense.

f11: If money was no object, and permission no problem, what location in the US would you most like to visit and document?

ADW: A Military missile site.

f11: How about anywhere in the rest of the world?

ADW: Oh my, I envy the explorers in Europe. So much beauty and history there. I am a huge fan of European UrbEx photography. I find the darker more surreal stuff particularly inspiring.

f11: Finally Andy, if you could have anything right now, what piece of photo equipment would make a critical difference to improving what you do?

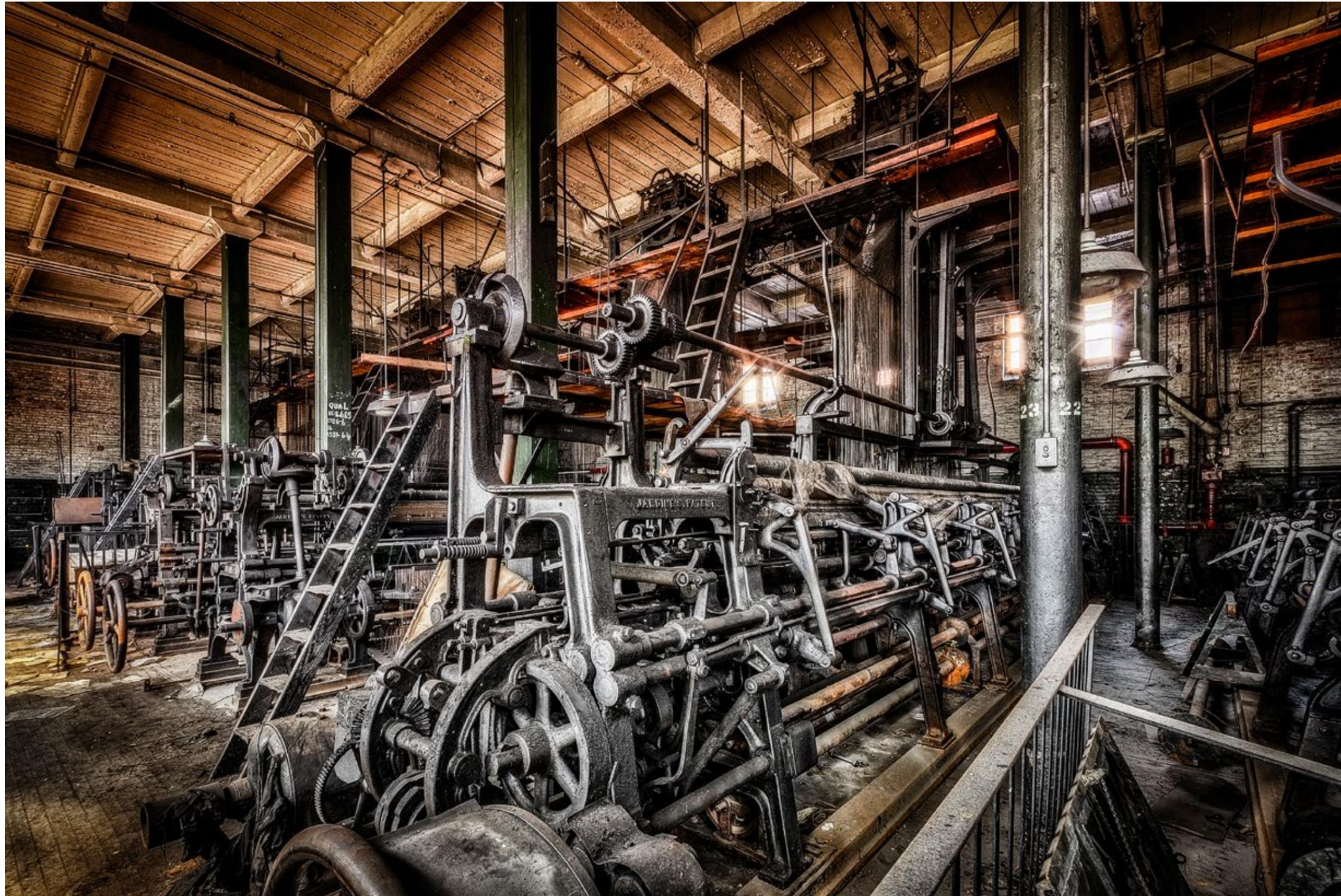
ADW: I am saving every penny I have for the new Sony a99 full frame camera. I am an odd duck and shoot Sony/Minolta.

f11: Thanks for being with us and we'll be reading your blog with great interest so keep on exploring, shooting and posting! ■

TS

<http://www.theartofdecay.com>

<http://www.adwheelerphotography.com>



Scranton Lace: Home to the famous Nottingham lace and imported Jardines looms now dismantled and sold off. Rumors of restoration have been thrown around for years yet still nothing has been done there, other than scrapping the history of this amazing landmark.

*The Loom Room: Giant Jardines looms, Scranton Lace Factory, Scranton Pennsylvania USA.
Sony a500 with Sigma 10-20mm f/4-5.6 lens. © 2012 A.D. Wheeler*



The Tragic Kingdom: Dundas Castle, Catskills New York USA. Sony a55v with Sigma 10-20mm f/4-5.6 lens. © 2012 A.D. Wheeler



Doors To Nowhere: Closet doors in Servants quarters, Dundas Castle, Catskills New York USA. Sony a77v with Sigma 10-20mm f/4-5.6 lens. © 2012 A.D. Wheeler

Dundas: Built as a refuge for the owner's mentally ill wife and daughter, Dundas castle in the Catskill mountains of NY was never lived in. Over 90 years old and currently owned by the African American Masons of New York, the owners have expressed no interest in up-keep or restoration. (Pages 60-63)



*Into The Depths: Turret staircase, Dundas Castle, Catskills New York USA.
Sony a500 with Sigma 10-20mm f/4-5.6 lens. © 2012 A.D. Wheeler*



*Cold: Servants quarters fireplace, Dundas Castle, Catskills New York USA.
Sony a55v with Sigma 10-20mm f/4-5.6 lens. © 2012 A.D. Wheeler*

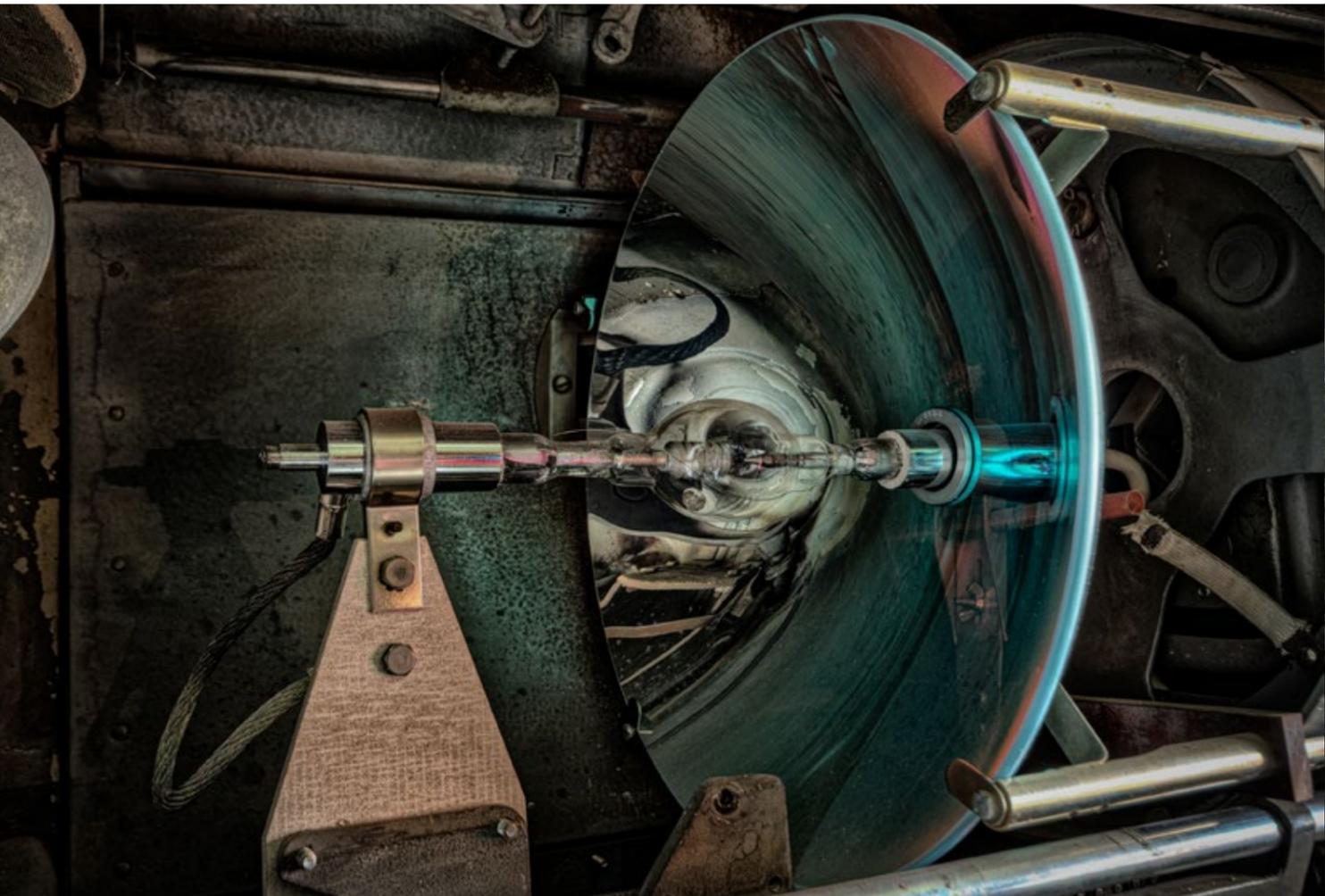


*Overlords Nest: Perimeter wall guard tower, Eastern State Penitentiary, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA.
Sony a77v with Sigma 10-20mm f/4-5.6 lens. © 2012 A.D. Wheeler*



*Higher: Cell block 7, 2nd floor, Eastern State Penitentiary, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA.
Sony a77v with Sigma 10-20mm f/4-5.6 lens. © 2012 A.D. Wheeler*

Eastern State Penitentiary: Famous for housing the world renowned criminal Al Capone. In fact, so well known that I didn't take even one photo of his famed cell while there. Contrary to general belief, Eastern State Penitentiary had no electric chair and never performed an execution.



*Xenon Ray: Arc projector converted to a high power xenon bulb, Hollywood Theatre, Gowanda, New York, USA.
Sony a77v with Sigma 10-20mm f/4-5.6 lens. © 2012 A.D. Wheeler*



*My Biggest Fan: Ornamental dome, Hollywood Theatre, Gowanda New York USA.
Sony a77v with Sigma 10-20mm f/4-5.6 lens. © 2012 A.D. Wheeler*

Hollywood Theatre: Located in Gowanda, NY, the Hollywood theatre is a fantastic restoration project. A prime example of what can happen when a community cares and comes together. Donations through purchases of my prints from this shoot on my website are going towards the full restoration of this once grand theatre.



International Service Truck: Abandoned International service truck interior, Eldorado Canyon Gold Mine, Nelson, Nevada, USA. Sony a77v with Sigma 10-20mm f/4-5.6 lens. © 2012 A.D. Wheeler

Eldorado: Shot during my great 2012 travels to the southwestern region of the United States. Featured as part of a 5 part blog feature on my website, the Eldorado Canyon Gold mine located deep in southern Nevada. One of it's claims-to-fame is that the movie '3000 Miles to Graceland' was shot there. In fact the airplane that was blown up in the movie is still there along with just about everything else in the world.



Cheese: 1948 Dodge Limo, abandoned property, Hector, New York, USA. Sony a77v with Sigma 10-20mm f/4-5.6 lens. © 2012 A.D. Wheeler

'During an exploration of an old lace factory my partner and I were shot at by gang members.'



*Driven To Death: 1934 Chrysler Imperial, abandoned property, Hector, New York, USA.
Sony a77v with Sigma 10-20mm f/4-5.6 lens. © 2012 A.D. Wheeler*



*The American Nightmare: 1948 Dodge truck, abandoned property, Hector, New York, USA.
Sony a77v with Sigma 10-20mm f/4-5.6 lens. © 2012 A.D. Wheeler*



*Powerless: Arc projector power meter, Hadley Hall, Willard Asylum, Willard, New York, USA.
Sony a77v with Sigma 10-20mm f/4-5.6 lens. © 2012 A.D. Wheeler*

Asylum by the lake: The asylum that changed the face of mental health care in the late 1800's. Willard State Hospital believed that chains and solitude were not the answer to mental health and chose to treat it's patients with respect and care giving them jobs and freedom with spectacular results. Ultimately the asylum would reduce the overall number of patients in asylums by dispelling many myths of mental illness at the time. Willard still operates successfully to this day as a Drug Treatment Shock Camp.

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Martin HILL

Earth to earth

Martin Hill is internationally acclaimed for his sculptures made in nature from found natural materials which he photographs before they disperse back into nature.

He was educated and trained in art and design in England during the 1960s where he was influenced by the great transformations in art, design and music in London while he was working there. Inspired by his love for natural wilderness, especially mountain environments, Martin relocated to New Zealand in 1975. He has been a rock climber and mountaineer for 50 years.

Winning many design awards led him to create his own design company in 1988.

His deepening interest in the environment, and his growing concern about the destruction of the natural world by global consumer culture, led him to study systems thinking and the emerging principles of sustainable design which he incorporated into his work.

He understood that the linear industrial model of taking from the earth and making things that shortly become poisonous waste destroys the earth's natural cyclical systems on which life ▶



Autumn Leaf Cycle. Lake Wanaka, New Zealand, 2008. Nikon D200 with 12-24mm DX lens and tripod © Martin Hill

relies. There is no waste in nature; everything becomes food or energy for something else. In order for the current linear industrial model of progress to become compatible with nature, fundamental redesign of the system is required.

He began by redesigning his own life and working practice by making ephemeral sculptures in nature, photographing and publishing them as cards carrying his 'sustainability by design' story to a large public audience.

Martin's recognisable, often circular works have been published, exhibited and collected widely. They have become synonymous with the principles of sustainable design around the world.

A book of his sculptures, which are often made in collaboration with his partner Philippa Jones, was published in 2007. 'Earth to Earth – sculpture inspired by nature's design' includes essays and quotes from some of the world's great thinkers and writers on ecological sustainability.

In 1995 Hill and Jones began the 'Fine Line' Project – 12 environmental sculptures made on high points connected by a line that encircles the earth. Nine are so far completed. When finished the project will be expressed in an exhibition, book and multi media vehicles for education.

Hill and Jones were awarded the Kenneth Myer Artists and Writers Alpine Retreat in 2012 from which a major body of work for exhibition entitled 'Watershed' is in progress.

We talked to Martin about his work, and the important role that photography plays in documenting sculpture which will rapidly return to the earth which gave life to the raw materials involved, ice being one excellent example of the highly temporary materials used within his sculpture.

f11: Welcome to f11 Martin, it's good to catch up with you again after a gap of so many years between conversations!

MH: Yes, Tim, it is very nice to catch up with you again. I remember you were quite supportive of the Fine Line Project back then in your time running Fujifilm Professional in NZ.

f11: I also note with interest that we both settled here in 1975, parallel migration paths in timing, though not direction, and a resulting shared love of our adopted homeland.

MH: I have lived more of my life in New Zealand than UK now, so Philippa says I qualify as a New Zealander.

f11: Photography is such a vital component of your work, it would be inconceivable for you to produce such beautiful – yet largely fragile – sculpture without documenting this for sharing with a wider audience. Unimaginable?

MH: I have never made a sculpture that I didn't photograph, even those that didn't work. I always learn from my mistakes.

f11: Creating often highly temporary sculpture as you do, sometimes within minutes or a few hours of its completion all of your carefully planned and painstakingly created work has disappeared. Without photography, where would you be as an artist with a message?

MH: That's right. The image is the story teller, so I am thinking of the image when I begin to make a work. ▶

*Martin Hill and Philippa Jones with the Fine Line Project Sculpture on the summit of Half Dome, Yosemite National Park, USA, 1995. Nikon F90x with Fujichrome Velvia film 35-70mm lens, tripod and timer.
© Martin Hill*



f11: Which artists have been influential on your work, and are there any photographers among them?

MH: I am influenced by many artists particularly those who took art making out of the studio and into nature. My approach is to try to do no harm in nature. Unlike for example Smithson who used bulldozers and disrupted the land. Those I admire include Richard Long, Andy Goldsworthy, Nils Udo, David Nash and Chris Drury. They all use photography as well as making gallery sculpture.

f11: Did you have an interest in photography prior to becoming a sculptor, or did this develop very much as a support activity?

MH: I have always loved photography. It was in the family, my father built his own enlarger when I was a child and he made black and white prints which were hung up to dry overnight in the living room. I followed the great landscape and reportage photographers as well as the modern masters. While I was an art director and designer I worked with some great photographers over the years.

I regarded my own photography back then as a hobby.

f11: Do you take many photographs outside of the work you do around documenting the sculpture or is your interest confined to this?

MH: I make photographs of things that interest me in the world. I have travelled a lot and been lucky to experience a great variety of cultures and ways of life as well as extreme landscapes and unique wildlife. I try to make original images that capture the spirit of a place.

f11: You have strong roots in traditional film based photography, tell us about that background. What cameras, and film types were involved in documenting your earlier work?

MH: I have used 35mm SLRs because they are all I can carry into the mountains and remote ▶



*Snow Circle. Mt Ruapahu, Tongariro National Park, New Zealand. 1994.
Nikon F90x with 28-70mm lens on Fujichrome Velvia film and tripod. © Martin Hill*

'I have never made a sculpture that I didn't photograph, even those that didn't work. I always learn from my mistakes.'

places along with climbing gear. I keep it simple and believe it is photographers that make great work whereas the camera is just the tool. I used Nikon cameras and Fujichrome Velvia film because it provided high saturation and fine grain for detail.

f11: You must have transitioned to digital by now, tell us about that path and your current process?

MH: I was not an early adopter of digital cameras, I held off until I was convinced that the images would enlarge well without loss of quality. I was given a D100 by Nikon Japan and used it as well as my film camera at first. Learning the whole digital workflow and management was a big change but also provided added creative control. The first digital camera I relied upon was the Nikon D300 and from then on it has been continual improvement. Now I use a Nikon D800 with its superb high resolution, versatility and image quality. Not to mention video which I also use.

f11: Did you experience any disasters in the film days where a record of important work was lost for any reason?

MH: In the extreme places we have worked there was a danger of damage, loss and failure. I always had a backup camera, looked after the film in dry bags, watched out for dust and moisture and kept cameras with me at all times.

Even so, sunrise shots of the sculpture we made for the Fine Line Project on a peak in Madagascar, when processed had parallel scratches through a whole roll. Luckily Photoshop was available by then to repair them.

f11: Are you one for much post production or is the record of the artwork completed solely in the camera itself?

MH: I have always aimed to capture the image I want in camera. Post production consists only of balancing colour. I want an authentic image because some of the sculptures do appear to

be physically hard to achieve. If they were manipulated in post production it would be pointless.

f11: Have you ever considered using time lapse photography, or even video, to document the ephemeral nature of your work as it deteriorates in the elements?

MH: Yes, I have used both. Last year a documentary was made of a whole year's work and the film makers used some of these techniques. Philippa and I also film ourselves making work although it is hard to get the best results when we are both in front of the camera working.

f11: You and Philippa are a wonderful team, tell us about the way you work together and the division of responsibilities, complimentary skills and so on.

MH: I had just begun making sculptures in the landscape when we met on a climbing trip to Whanganui Bay, Lake Taupo. Since we climbed together and began to travel together it was natural to work together on the sculptures. Philippa is very creative and practical, and we enjoy working together. I take responsibility for the sculpture and the philosophy, but often the work is repetitive and laborious, together we make it fun. Philippa's collaboration has been a major contribution to the body of work. Some sculptures could not have been made without her. Philippa is particularly skilled at weaving because she was a craft basket maker. I handle the photography, although Philippa has photographed me working and vice versa. ▶

Anawhata Sphere. Anawhata Beach, New Zealand, 2003. Nikon F100 with 17-35mm lens on Fujichrome Velvia film and tripod. © Martin Hill



f11: Your work has been highly accessible to a wide general audience in printed form through cards, posters, calendars and so on for a number of years. Is the environmental sustainability message getting through, and what's the most resounding feedback message you often receive?

MH: Hmmm!! People often respond to the problems I pose with 'But what can I do?' Communication of all kinds about ecological sustainability has increased exponentially since I began in 1992, but tragically, actual changes made to world systems through government policy and practice are slight. Carbon emissions have increased. We have stepped beyond the earth's planetary boundaries described by the Stockholm Resilience Centre research in three of the nine safe zones – biodiversity, nitrogen and climate change. And we are dangerously close to doing so in others.

At the same time people's awareness of the unsustainable nature of our current model of progress has risen greatly and there is a huge worldwide movement of people taking personal responsibility and desperately working locally to make a better world. The problem is that to effect large system changes requires us to use an holistic planetary kind of thinking not the fragmented thinking we have used to create the problems in the first place. For transformative change 200 countries have to move together in the same direction.

f11: In an overwhelmingly digital environment, how do you achieve even greater proliferation of the message and higher response to your 'call to arms'?

MH: The digital world now means everyone is a communicator therefore there is much more noise to get through. When I began publishing I used cards as a viral medium which spread from person to person. The Internet has taken over and its reach is immense and growing. It will be the way humans self organise to create ways to live sustainably, or not at all. ▶



Ice Leaf Circle. Rocky Hill, Wanaka, New Zealand, 2012. Nikon D7000 with 12-24mm lens. © Martin Hill

'I am influenced by many artists particularly those who took art making out of the studio and into nature. My approach is to try to do no harm in nature.'

f11: When do you anticipate that the Fine Line Project will finally be complete? It started in 1995, you must have incredible patience!

MH: Philippa and I have made nine of the twelve sculptures on the Fine Line around the world. Reaching the Ross Ice shelf in Antarctica has held us up because we had hoped to gain the support of Antarctica New Zealand. Without their support we need to self fund the sea passage to achieve this sculpture on the line encircling the earth. If we raise the funds we will go in a year or so and the last two works, one on a Pacific Island and the last on the summit of Mt Ngauruhoe to complete the circle should be achievable before my 70th birthday in 2016.

f11: And the new project you've recently embarked on, 'Watershed' – give us the briefest of teaser introductions to this?

MH: The project was initiated when we were awarded the inaugural Kenneth Myer Artist's and Writers Alpine Retreat – 20 days staying at Whare Kea Chalet at an altitude of 1800m on Albert Burn Saddle opposite Mt Aspiring. We spent 10 days there in extreme winter conditions in September last year and go back at Easter this year for 10 more days. We are creating a large body of work for exhibition that utilises the local mountain environment to make work that focuses on global issues, especially the relationship between human systems and the water cycle.

f11: We look forward to featuring that project after completion, thanks for sharing your work here in f11 Martin.

MH: Thank you for the opportunity to be part of your wonderful publication. ■

TS

Martin Hill Studio Wanaka New Zealand.
www.martin-hill.com



*Martin Hill and Philippa Jones in their Wanaka studio
© Martin Hill*

► *Red Berry Circle. Summit of Tomb Stone Rock, Wanaka, New Zealand. Nikon D7000 with 12-24mm DX lens and tripod. © Martin Hill*

►► *Following double page spread: Ice Circle. Lake Wanaka New Zealand, 2007. From 'One Life, One Place, One Year'. Commissioned by John May. Nikon D200 with 12-24mm DX lens tripod. © Martin Hill*







Gorge Circle. Motutapu Gorge, Wanaka, New Zealand, 2006. Nikon F100 with 17–35mm Lens, on Fujichrome Velvia film and tripod. © Martin Hill



▲ *Autumn Leaf Circle. Clutha River, Wanaka, New Zealand, 2006. Nikon F100 with 17-35mm lens, Fujichrome Velvia film, with tree as tripod. © Martin Hill*

‘Philippa’s collaboration has been a major contribution to the body of work. Some sculptures could not have been made without her.’

▼ *Philippa at work, this gives an indication of the scale of this artwork. © Martin Hill*







Tide Cycle. Anawhata Beach, New Zealand, 2001. Nikon F100, with 17-35mm lens on Fujichrome Velvia film and tripod. © Martin Hill



Rising Circle. Anawhata Beach, New Zealand, 2004. Nikon F100 with 17-35mm lens on Fujichrome Velvia film and tripod. © Martin Hill

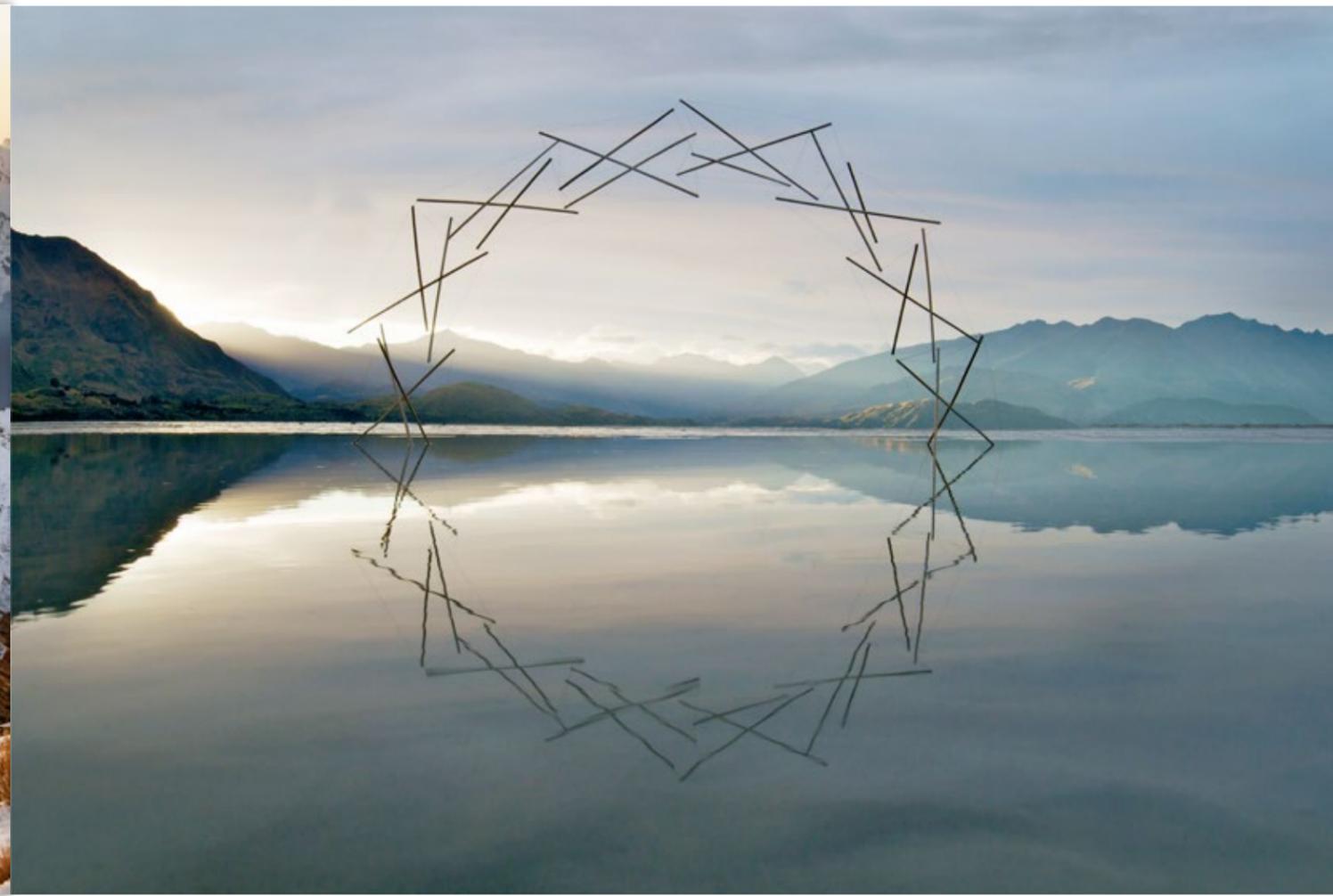
◀◀ *Previous double page spread: Circle of Circles. Lake Wanaka, New Zealand, 2006. Nikon D300 with 12-24mm DX lens and tripod. © Martin Hill*

▶▶ *Following double page spread: Stone Circle. Whanganui Bay, Lake Taupo, New Zealand, 1995. Nikon F90X with 28-70mm lens on Fujichrome Velvia film and tripod. © Martin Hill*





*Stacked Stone Sphere. Breast Hill, Wanaka, New Zealand, 2011.
Nikon D7000 with 18-200mm VR DX lens and tripod. © Martin Hill*



*Synergy. Lake Wanaka, New Zealand, 2009. Nikon D300 with
12-24mm DX lens and tripod. © Martin Hill*

***'I believe the ultimate value of the natural world
will not be its resources but its design – we just
need to follow the blueprint.' – Martin Hill***

▶▶ *Following double page spread: Cascade Saddle Ice Circle. Mt Aspiring National Park,
New Zealand 2012. Nikon D7000 with 18-200mm DX lens and tripod. © Martin Hill*





▲ *Silver Fern Circle. Whanganui stream, Lake Taupo, New Zealand, 2000. Nikon F100 with 28-70mm lens on Fujichrome Velvia film and tripod. © Martin Hill*

◀ *Maple Leaf Arch. Hanazona Valley, Ibaraki, Japan, 1998. Nikon F90x with 28-70mm lens on Fujichrome Velvia film and tripod. © Martin Hill*

► A walk in the rainforest, where no one has stood before, is a special experience. Our skipper has been cruising the Alaska waterways for over 30 years and knows the photo locations. Canon 5D with 17-40mm lens @ 17mm, f16 @ 6 seconds, 100 ISO, Aperture Priority. © Darran Leal

On location

North to Alaska

Alaska might not be the place you thought it was. Yes it offers bears, and salmon (in season) but did you know that it also offers stunning landscapes, unique local characters and one of the most surreal travel experiences on this planet?

I have been fortunate to travel through several regions of Alaska and have enjoyed many different environments, except the far north of Alaska. Perhaps next time.

There are three main forms of transport around Alaska:

Flying – Most visitors fly into Alaska with the capital Juneau and Anchorage as the key arrival ports. However, from here, you have a multitude of small plan options, or Air Alaska's Boeing 737s to pick from. Alaskan locals have one of the highest private pilot licence rates in the world. In fact, fly over any town in Alaska, as there are no true cities, and you can see anything from dozens to hundreds of float planes, parked like cars outside the houses. This gives you an idea of how much water lies around. Lots of lakes, creeks and rivers allow for water landing strips.

Road travel is feasible in some locations, but as an example, the capital of Alaska, Juneau, is land locked on an island. Alaska has few roads

and many that simply stop at a small village on a wild peninsula of land. Do your homework with regards to a hire vehicle, accommodation and time required to get from point A to point B, and expect driving conditions unlike most parts of the world.

Ships and boats are perhaps the main form of transport for adventure. As photographers, we do not want to get caught on the huge tourist ships that offer glitter and 'fast passing' wilderness. The only way to truly explore this wilderness is in a small ship of no more than around 30 berths. Smaller is better as you can access very private locations for a true wilderness experience. I think the true iconic 'Wild Alaska' experiences are by small ship – or by air with targeted landings.

Denali National Park comes to mind as one location that many of us will know. In the 'old days' this was a great place to explore as it was wild, untamed and beautiful. It is still all of these things – but with one major change – very limited access. The only way to truly visit here is to be dropped off and take day hikes. Alaska offers several locations that are so unique, that they are simply some of the hottest shoot locations on the planet! Bears so close that you shoot with a 70-200mm lens. Bald Eagles ►



eating fish. Blue ice from bergs to glaciers and stunning wilderness landscapes. I love to get up close and personal with all of these opportunities. It is safe, with the right local operator, including those bear experiences. We have 'walked' with bears many times.

Small ships allow you to explore and access these key photogenic locations. Of course, planes get you to a start and finish point. So a 'well studied' itinerary should offer you the best photo options. As to price, Alaska is not a cheap location to visit, this being due to a short summer travel season.

Timing is everything in Alaska. As an example, a visit in April will offer few bears. They will be just coming out of hibernation and as the salmon runs have not started, they will be spread over a wide area feeding on berries and plants. June changes this, as the salmon start to run, this attracts the bears to key locations. I have even seen bears in Juneau, just a couple of kilometers from the town centre.

As an alternative to a bear experience, in 2015 we are targeting Alaska for the Northern Lights. This is in late winter and could see some very cold temperatures. It will open up the unique chance to shoot the Aurora Borealis. (The 'Northern Lights' are very limited in the summer months.) The right week in winter also times festivals with ice sculpting and dog sledge racing.

Alaska favours very long and very wide lenses. It is also fantastic for macro work. I also use my 70-200mm f2.8 lens in Alaska. This is great for heavy cloud cover days and at some bear shoot locations, which are in deep gorges. So you can be shooting at 1600 ISO at f2.8 and just register a fast enough shutter speed to freeze their movement. The right location can offer close access to bears, from the safety of a hide.

Alaska lends itself to tripod use so I either take my Manfrotto 055 with 327 head, or if weight is an issue (small planes) a Gitzo GK1580TQR5 which weighs in at a tiny 1.16kg with head! Where

you have water and lots of rain, you will of course have water movement and waterfalls. Alaska offers a lot of creative diversity in this area.

A day in Alaska...

We often start from a small fishing village and motor out to explore. The start of our last visit was delayed in harbor, for a couple of hours. We could not get out of the harbor due to breaching whales, followed by bubble netting whales – simply amazing! We had shot a couple of hundred images each, and we were still in harbor!

Landing in 'the middle of nowhere', is a magical experience. From ship to shore, the zodiac motors through mirror reflections to a rocky bay. We get out and the local guide takes us into the forest. How far? Often less than 100m and you are in thick rainforest, with sponge like moss as a base. 'Wellies' are the order of the day and rain pants to keep dry. Apart from the tall trees and moss, you are most likely to notice mushrooms. Out with the macro lens ...

After lunch – a chance to warm up – we are in the zodiac again and this time, a more open field with a kaleidoscope of colours, provided by flowers, in the thousands. But before we land, a bear is spotted walking along the shore. We motor up slowly and shoot parallel as it walks, just 10m away. Soon it disappears over a rocky ridge and into the forest.

Back to our landing, we are greeted by oystercatchers. We shoot great images and discover they have a nest. We quickly move away a little so as not to disturb them further. Finally the flowers, macro lenses on, ISO up to 400 we shoot. All sorts of angle options are offered. This is truly a typical day, in the right location, in Alaska.

Enjoy shooting... ■

Darran Leal

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www.worldadventures.com.au



▲ We arrived in a small bay where few boats could go as it was shallow. We walked this field and shot for over two hours, eventually calling it quits as we had another hot spot to shoot. Nikon D800E with 16-35mm lens @ 16mm, f11 1/180 sec at 400 ISO, Aperture Priority. © Darran Leal

▼ We had been shooting for over an hour when we spotted a lady beetle. Nikon D800E with 105mm macro lens, f5.6 1/350 sec at 400 ISO, Aperture Priority. © Darran Leal





Witness travel photography at it's best at the PSNZ National Convention

Amos Chapple is a 'Kiwi' icon in the international world of photography. His name is first on everyone's lips when you talk 'travel photography'.

An award winning photographer, Amos is another one of the outstanding keynote presenters appearing on the programme at the Photographic Society of New Zealand's annual National Convention, 'Positively Photography Wellington', being held in Wellington from 1 – 5 May, 2013.

If you have a passion for travel photography you won't want to miss sitting in on one of his two presentations during the four-day programme. Not only will you be taken on a visual whirlwind journey around the world, it is by listening to high caliber photographers like Amos that we are able to extend and grow our own skills.

Despite his young years, Amos has worked in more than 50 countries and been commissioned by, or published in, some of the world's leading publications, including Italian Vanity Fair, Wall Street Journal, Guardian, Daily Mail, Telegraph, Conde Nast Traveller, Wanderlust Magazine, Red Bulletin, Panasonic, Europe by Satellite, and New Zealand Tourism, among many others.

He is currently a finalist in the 2013 International Travel Photographer of the Year competition. He won the prestigious Cathay Pacific Travel Photographer of the Year award in 2009 and was runner-up in 2012.

Today Amos works as a fully independent photographer and is available for commissions. As he says, 'if there are people involved and an opportunity for adventure, I'm keen to be involved.'

Amos began his career as a press photographer with the New Zealand Herald before joining the Our Place photographic project from 2006 to 2010 documenting all the world's UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

His appearance at Positively Photography Wellington is supported by C.R. Kennedy New Zealand.

To view award winning imagery by Amos go to www.amoschapple.com

There is still time to register your attendance at the convention and you can do this at: <http://positivelyphotography.org.nz/register>

To learn more and to keep up to date with convention news check out our Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/PositivelyPhotographyWellington>

**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

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Enjoy.

TONY BRIDGE

ARTIST, WRITER, PHOTOGRAPHER,
TEACHER, MENTOR

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

Bridge on teaching photography:

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

Bridge on his Hurunui Experience tours:

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

Bridge on his photography workshops:

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

Bridge on mentoring photographers:

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

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

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70 mm brings tears to the eyes

Sometime in 1993 I arranged to show a brand new 35 mm print of 'Baraka' to an audience of Auckland professional photographers. It was in a 30 seater, specialist preview cinema with fantastic sound and a floor to ceiling and wall to wall screen. It was like being there.

The impression this made on many viewers triggered an almost tearful response.

Director Ron Fricke, and producer Mark Magidson, have done it all again with 'Samsara', launched late last year and currently in cinemas.

The magic of images captured on 70 mm film negative, then digitally scanned frame by frame at 8K resolution and compressed to 4K for projection. The results are detailed, saturated, and stunning!

Take a background look, and view the trailer by clicking on the screen image alongside this article.

This isn't a film review though. It's an argument for better capture delivering better results. At the time Baraka first came out very few cinemas projected 70 mm and 35mm prints were the luck of the draw – some suffering handling scratches, dust, splices, frame to frame shifts and worse.

At first private copies were VHS tape, then later DVD. Not until the producers went back to scan

the original negative at 8K per frame in 2008 were they able to produce a Blu-ray disc which, for many, has become the 'reference standard' for Blu-ray.

Conceptually, that is where ultimate image capture is going, driven by how it will be viewed, now with the luxury of the best possible viewing options... be they plasma, LED, ink or silver halide.

The 'in between' part of storage, post and transfer at large file sizes is a given – faster, bigger, cheaper. Note the scanned Samsara file started at over 20 terabytes!

DSLR's are fantastic in what they manage to deliver from a 35 mm equivalent full frame and with pixel counts increasing all the time. But take a look at what Hasselblad and PhaseOne and Leaf and others are adding to their capture specifications. If you cast your thoughts back to the halcyon days of film – assuming you know film – you will remember that 35 mm frames were mostly shot to be printed with limited cropping, whereas medium format and sheet film enabled a more significant image 'wastage' by cropping. Medium format and sheet film, when printed full frame were unbeatable.

For a while I used Hasselblad 6X6 projectors in AV presentations and they beat hands down the then (early 1990's) digital projectors for

image sharpness, saturation, and colour accuracy. But, they were a very expensive production process and lacked repeatability and at the end of the day were limited by mechanical reliability and, of course, the limitation of only displaying still images.

As still and movie cameras have evolved, the magic number of 1080p motion capture was hit and 'democratised' in 2008 with it being unthinkable now to consider a lesser rate – even my iPhone does that!

Most serious video cameras are now at least 2K and heading to 4K capture. Even the GoPro Hero3 Black will do 4K at 15fps.

The Red Camera system is one that has pushed the boundaries – now up to 5K capture – and a number of films on release demonstrate it's ability to render very high resolution in 48fps mode almost clinical detail.

For further background look at an educational discussion see RED's 'Motion Capture at 4K and beyond'.

In a way we are almost full circle, back to the 70 mm capture of Baraka and Samsara which for post went to an 8K scan. The projection, screens and viewing environments are now there too, being so close to visual utopia that I



can't help but wonder how further fine tuning will impact on our industry?

Very likely, via price. The technology is a known, the ability to replicate and reduce and package is present, the demand for better and faster will always suck up new product.

The Blackmagic Cinema Camera is a classic example of a low priced but serious contender.

Our creative need to tell stories in a better, more powerful way drives everything. ■

MS

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This year the ACMP turned 21 and we have a jam packed event calendar to help members and supporters, current and past, to celebrate the industry we all work in and strive to better. The ACMP is celebrating 21 years in the professional photography industry with a call for entries for a competition based on 'What does the 21st Century mean to you?'. This exhibition will feature at the Vivid festival in Sydney. It's open to all ACMP members, and will be exhibited at The Overseas Passenger Terminal as part of Digital Playground, which will be the photographer's hot spot during the festival.

ACMP also has another event planned for Vivid. We plan to hold our black tie dinner for the ACMP Achievement Awards in Photography at Quay restaurant on Friday May the 31st, where we will celebrate those photographers who have recently achieved in our industry, and gather together with the lights on the sails of the Opera House above, and a mass of photographers who gather below to talk all things photographic celebrating the future of the industry. Be quick to book as we have limited seating and the food at Quay, the company and the delights of Vivid below will fuel your visual senses.

Tickets will be available on line early in April at: www.acmp.com.au/events

With the movement of time and technology, having the skill set to supply video for clients is fast becoming a required part of business for many creative professionals. This has led the ACMP to provide classes where photographers can up-skill and add value to

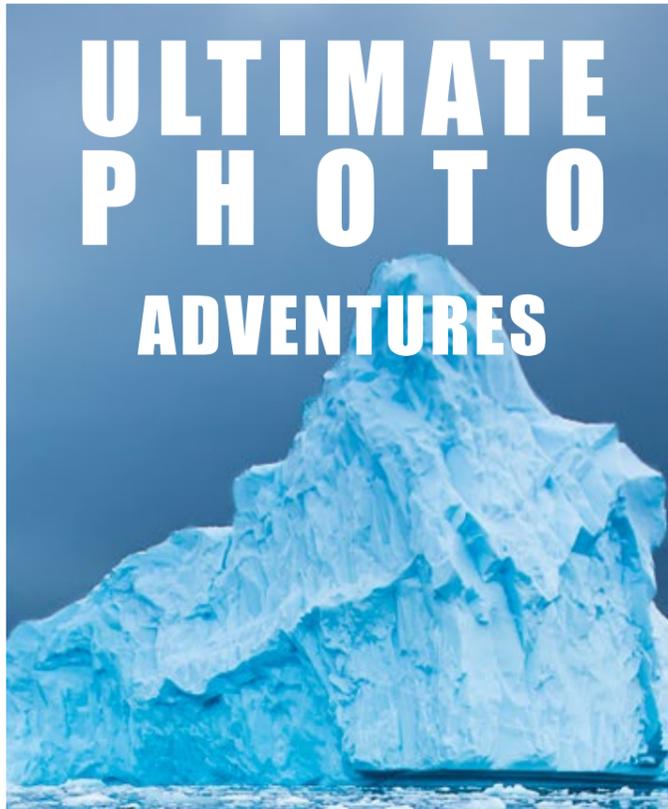
their existing trade with the incorporation of HD-SLR video skill courses. Our first weekend workshop ACMP 2 day HD-SLR 'Hands On' Write, Shoot and Edit video workshop is at Borges Imaging in Melbourne in association with Manfrotto on April the 20th and 21st. Photographers will write, shoot edit and produce a small concept piece by the close of the workshop. We have a great small class size, with instructors who are leaders in their fields. Including: Benjamin Doudney – How to shoot with your camera and what is HD-SLR?; Ben McEwing – Script writing, story boarding and editing; Simon Green – What is the producer for? Editing, sound recording and usage; Ross Calia – Practical sound usage and how to get the most out of your equipment; with Lisa Saad as the facilitator.

Further information and bookings details are at www.acmp.com.au/events

Sacha Walters



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The Leica S delivers perfect images, but that's not all – the data are immediately ready for processing in all professional imaging workflows. Reduced to the max – and plenty of good reasons why the extremely rugged and reliable Leica S can give you a truly decisive competitive edge. If everything it can do were visible, it would probably be twice the size.

Find out more about it here: www.s.leica-camera.com

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You can find out more here, at www.s.leica-camera.com

NZIPP Accreditation

Last month I talked about our Q process which sets a standard of acceptable quality and professionalism for our members and enables them to claim full membership and use the NZIPP accredited members logo.

First, let me explain why we have this process. It's all about setting a standard of

Professionalism in our industry. The institute's philosophy is that a member of the public can rely on a photographer we have given the 'big tick' to. A person who adheres to our code of conduct and delivers professional, quality work in a professional way.

There are two parts to gaining NZIPP accreditation: one shows your ability to meet the NZIPP photographic standards (through the Q process) and the other demonstrates continued professional development (CPD).

The accreditation is gained through a point system, and earned by a variety of 'further education' actions, such as attending photo lectures and seminars.

The need to move to accreditation has been driven by the necessity to keep our membership current in the market place and provide the general public with photographers who have proven that they can deliver at a professional standard.

The Photographic Standards component is based on the current Q model where a member gains a Q (qualification) in one of the three genre; Wedding, Portrait or Commercial. This Q is now

only valid for four years, but members can then maintain their Q status by doing one of two things.

1. Over the four years enter 10 (or more) prints into our Iris awards and gain 'professional standards for each'
2. Re-submit another Q

Remember membership of the NZIPP is available to anyone who is earning income from photography. It is by no means 'a closed shop'.

If you would like to join have a look at our website <http://www.nzipp.org.nz/> or email us info@nzipp.org.nz

TERRY WREFORD HANN

Commercial director New Zealand Institute of Professional Photography

INFOCUS 2013 AUCKLAND



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www.nzipp.org.nz

The things we must endure to get the job

Part 2 – the five questions you'd love to be asked in the commissioning process

It's vital to remain calm and not sell yourself short, or make a rod for your own back, when you answer these precious, valuable questions from truly enlightened clients!

So here we go...

How much time do you think you will need?

Resist the urge to punch the air and whoop when you hear this, and always remember your ABC's – Always Be Cool. Be cautious though, as this is a multi-faceted question. Your client may already have a quote or two in hand and may either be concerned over the previous estimates, or might be testing you to see if you fully understand the requirements of the job.

Before you answer take stock of the scope of the job and the time you realistically think you'll need and immediately follow up with your rationale to back up your answer and demonstrate that you fully understand the brief. The devil is always in the details, so be vigilant.

You'll need assistants, how many?

This shows you are dealing with a professional who has an understanding of the photographic process and is more interested in a quality end result for the client than trying to win favours

with his/her boss by screwing the bill for the shoot down as low as humanly possible. Whoops, did I sound bitter there for a minute? Nah, not me.

Although in my experience it's harder than ever to add even a single assistant to a lot of jobs, whenever possible they should be used. Another pair of hands (or two, or even three) enables you to do what you do best and conserves your energy for the job at hand – actually making photographs and being creative!

The talent is key to this and future campaigns, can you come up with an initial selection of models for me to review?

Again this demonstrates a good understanding of the big picture. We'll skip the obvious pre-requisites here such as professionalism, experience and so on, and get to the really important stuff – the right fit for the campaign. This also demonstrates a level of trust in your judgement, one that you can either enhance or endanger when you provide that list and those portfolio headshots.

The look and personality of the talent are arguably the most important element in visual communication. The right choice here will

engage your audience and endear them to the campaign, brand and product. Am I talking about TV commercials here? No, but these elements are just as important to a still campaign as to a commercial (or series thereof).

Take your time on this and think hard about what the art director and client are after in terms of look and personality, a careful selection here will establish your credibility and build client/agency confidence before shooting begins. At the very least, this will provide an opportunity, over discussion with the art director, to gain a deeper understanding of their needs and requirements.

Do you have a producer you'd recommend for this project?

Again this is an opportunity for you to surround yourself with 'your' people who you are confident in, and comfortable with, and this reduces your on the job stress levels – right?

Be careful here though, that the people you've worked with before are the right people for this particular job. Particularly if it's a scenario that is new to you, or that you're not 100% sure about. If anything goes wrong it's going to be 'on your head' so it may be better to defer to the agency

as they will probably have someone they've previously worked with to call on and this removes some of the responsibility from you.

Of course if you have the 'perfect' person waiting in the wings this will add to your credibility on successful completion of the job.

Licensing – can I send you a list of all the expected usage for you to incorporate these into your quote?

A knowledgeable client on the subject of licensing is a rare beast but one that does actually exist! This topic is far too big to go into here so to avoid accusations of 'dodging the bullet' here and now I'll promise to deal with this in detail in a following article.

In response to this question simply put your best licensing foot forward and give the client or art director everything he/she wants clearly spelt out in a detailed summary.

Of course have your explanations at the ready in the event of any questions, mild or vigorous interrogation.■

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Hidden treasure

If you're a productive, or perhaps even prolific, shooter you're likely sitting on an archive of images earmarked for future attention. These represent your good intentions, rainy day planning, future potential rather than present day billable value.

Most of us are shooting way more than we process. Digital did not start the ball rolling, it was already well in play, but it's sure kicked it over to the other side of the park. Chances are we're now overshooting and under processing by a massive factor.

What might have been a 10:1 ratio in silver halide days is now far more likely to be 50:1, maybe even higher.

We're picking the low hanging fruit when we edit our images, favouring immediacy and a 'result' to claim as a victory, commercially or artistically. We're all time poor, and the high fruit just looks a little too tricky given our many constraints.

I'm questioning that, and suggesting that a revisit to your hard drives, filing cabinets and glassine envelopes might be a worthy use of some of your discretionary time.

Weeks, months, perhaps even years later you'll be visiting those shoots, trips or events with more experienced and likely more sophisticated eyes – plus greater post processing skills – and there will be discoveries to make, I guarantee it.

Those images aren't getting any younger, and maybe they're becoming more significant as you dither about what to do with them. Or maybe not, perhaps you need to harvest and put these to good use right now. Spend some

quality time knee deep in those negatives, transparencies or digital captures lying dormant in your archive.

You're looking for realisable value, images you can market or enjoy years after the fact, images that might otherwise be lost.

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TS

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