

ISSUE 56 | JULY 2016



for PHOTOGRAPHERS
AND AFICIONADOS

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PAUL ALSOP
Wet plate wonders

R. IAN LLOYD
La dolce vita

MICHAEL HUDSON
Circumambulations



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WELCOME TO *f11* MAGAZINE

Welcome to issue 56!

With the publication of this, our July 2016 issue, we enter our sixth year of publishing this magazine.

Three photographers feature in this issue:

R. Ian Lloyd hails from Australia and is a professional travel photographer. Perhaps best known for his work around Asia, and with a vast collection of stock images held in his library, Ian has a work life many dream of. Currently travelling and working in Italy, our feature showcases some of the images he's shooting in that country, perhaps one of the most beautiful in Europe.

British doctor and enthusiast photographer Paul Alsop lives and works in New Zealand. He's chosen a hard road in photography, shooting portraits with large format cameras and using the wet plate collodion process – one we can only describe somewhat kindly as delightfully antiquated and very demanding technically. The results however, the portraits themselves, warrant the effort that has gone into their creation.

Finally, Australian born but now Chicago resident photographer Michael Hudson has been a professional since 1989 and has a fascination with trees. Michael presents a series called Circumambulations, layered multiple exposures of trees shot in medium format digital and then carefully blended and combined in post processing. Photography by walking around in careful circles, a practice well known to many but not quite the way Michael does it!

All three came to *f11* Magazine via our submissions process, so congratulations to all for electing to expose themselves and their work here on our virtual pages.

Plus, if you've ever considered adding a steady-cam to your equipment arsenal, Gary Baidon reviews the DJI Osmo in this issue. Learn more on page 136.

Enjoy this issue of *f11*, see you next month! ■

Tim

tim@f11magazine.com

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f11 Magazine
P O Box 37-233, Parnell
Auckland 1151, New Zealand
www.f11magazine.com

Publisher/Creative Director:

Tim Steele
tim@f11magazine.com

Editorial:

editor@f11magazine.com

Advertising Sales:

sales@f11magazine.com

Design/Layout:

Donna Hoyle and Adela Lee
of Donna Hoyle Design

Web Developer:

David MacLeod

Contributors:

Gary Baidon :: Tony Bridge ::
Darran Leal :: Ian Poole

Featured In This Issue:

R. Ian Lloyd :: Paul Alsop ::
Michael Hudson

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



TONY BRIDGE is a fine artist, photographer, writer and photo educator – sometimes performing all of these minor miracles on the same day. When not hosting seminars or workshops or messing with someone's mind, this wandering nomad is usually to be found somewhere around New Zealand, four wheel driving up hill and down dale in search of new images and true meaning. Like any modern day guru, he thinks way too much, constantly reinvents himself and often pontificates on one of his blogs, enriching us all in the process. Rather than joining the rest of the team in the cult of Mac, he insists that he has now constructed the 'ultimate PC' – poor deluded man. As far as we can tell, this is his only flaw...



DARRAN LEAL is a photographer, adventurer and educator. An Australian by birth, he combines his twin loves of travel and outdoor photography by running tours, workshops and seminars and guiding photographers to stunning locations around the globe. Prior to inventing this great gig, he variously sold cameras, served food and wine, built gas pipelines, explored for diamonds and discovered that the life of a park ranger was not for him. When not up to his ass in crocodiles, cuddling gorillas or herding photographers, he fishes the world's oceans, rivers and streams. Only his fishing exploits suffer from exaggeration, believe it or not the rest of his adventurous life is, amazingly, true.



IAN POOLE has been a member of the AIPP since 1976, holding various positions within the Institute. Truly a trans-Tasman go between, Poole has been a long term judge of the APPA's and a guest judge in the NZIPP Awards for many years. Well known for his extensive work as an educator at both Queensland's Griffith University College of Art, and Queensland University of Technology, and with a background as an advertising/commercial photographer in Brisbane, Ian is now turning his hand to finely crafted black and white portraiture. He is a director of Foto Frenzy, which specialises in photographic education in Brisbane. Erudite, witty and urbane, or so he tells us, he's one of *f11* Magazine's ambassadors in Australia.



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



'Design everything on the assumption that people are not heartless or stupid but marvelously capable, given the chance.'
– John Chris Jones

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 132** of this issue.



R. Ian
LLOYD

La dolce vita

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© R. Ian Lloyd



Paul
ALSOP

Wet plate wonders

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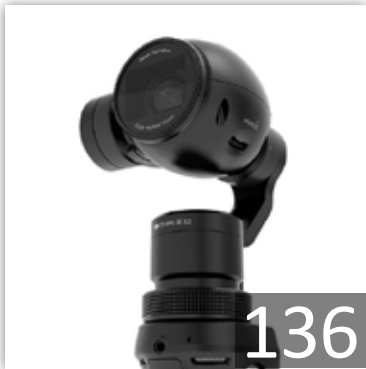
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© Michael Hudson



Product
REVIEW

DJI Osmo
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JO QUAIL – GOLD – BY MICHAEL FLETCHER

Composer and cellist Jo Quail lives in London and writes and performs instrumental music. In this video she teams up with Australian photographer Michael Fletcher who filmed and edited this clip for her piece 'Gold' using a Canon C300 and Sigma Art series lenses.

via Vimeo

CLICK ON THE SCREEN IMAGE TO VIEW THIS VIDEO



HELMUT BY JUNE (1995)

Written and directed by his wife of 56 years, Helmut by June takes a behind-the-scenes look at Helmut Newton's work process as a photographer. Having bought Newton a video camera for Christmas one year, June began using the camera herself, putting Newton in front of her lens. An intimate portrayal by the woman who knew him best, the 53-minute short also features Carla Bruni and Cindy Crawford, two of Newton's long-time muses.

via YouTube

CLICK ON THE SCREEN IMAGE TO VIEW THIS VIDEO



SUN PICTURES – HENRY FOX TALBOT AND THE FIRST PHOTOGRAPHS

Created for SFMoMA for their Photographic Interpretive Center. This animation tells the life story of the first photographs ever made and the forgotten innovations of William Henry Fox Talbot. Animated by Drew Christie and Dane Herforth.

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Changers and switchers...

From time to time we've acknowledged in this magazine that photographers often belong to a camp that they associate strongly with. That might be a format, a brand of camera or even an image production process that they feel inextricably wedded to. Medium format film capture might be yours, or the use of

Nikon cameras, or perhaps you're planning to be the last person standing peeling prints apart in the instant film camp.

However strongly held our links or convictions might be, there will be temptations along the way. I've seen dyed in the wool Nikon users convert to Canon, and others make the reverse switch, both convinced beyond all argument that they had somehow seen the light at the time. Sometimes these changes have been prompted by the peaks and troughs of technological superiority, as one brand gains dominance through new technology while another plays catch up. Eventually the world turns again, and sometimes switchers return to their previous loyalties, a tad sheepish and the butt of a few jokes and jibes from friends and colleagues.

Others change for promised performance improvements, such as the allure of medium format sensors, accepting the massive cost implications and logistical downside of larger and heavier camera systems. I've also seen some of these folk return to the traditional DSLR outfit, accepting that portability advantages might just,

after all, have made up for any slight quality gains left behind in the switch back.

But far and away the most significant group of switchers, by my own personal observation, over recent years has been those moving from traditional 35mm scale optical viewfinder DSLR camera systems to relatively diminutive format electronic viewfinder alternatives. Their physically smaller modern sensors now offer terrific price for performance levels which allow other whole system questions to be asked, such as those related to size, weight and portability. The advantages are obvious even for a one-camera one-lens comparison, but when extrapolated across a two camera, holy trinity three-lens outfit and compared weight for weight the edge can look extremely compelling. Retailers tell me that 'entire bag swap' trade-in deals are regular occurrences, and that yes, the bag itself is part of the change!

None of us are getting any younger, and the idea of carrying a smaller and lighter bag is appealing, particularly if no significant performance sacrifices have to be made in the selection of the equipment it contains. Chiropractors everywhere take note.

Is there a change on your horizon? ■

TS

Footnote: I'm also aware of some now switching from small EVF systems back to the traditional full scale OVF DSLR. Further proof that change is a constant, and the grass is always greener somewhere else...

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Dodging the technology juggernaut

(getting with the programme)

Sometimes the past, which we have carefully ignored, will rush up behind us and attempt to run us down. This is as true for photography as it is for anything.

How we handle that will determine our future direction. We can close our eyes and pretend that we are not a part of it, and risk dismemberment from the mainstream of the medium, or we can get with the programme and look for the opportunities.

Photography, our medium, is littered with the bones of those who blinked and were crushed by the juggernaut of advancing technologies that frankly didn't give a damn, and left the corpses of those who refused to move over scattered across the motorway. In the beginning of the medium, nearly 200 years ago, many ►



© Tony Bridge

portrait painters were overwhelmed and despatched to the abattoirs of history. Photography moved on, crushing all in its path, and portrait photographers (known then as camera operators) made a handsome living, all the while standing on the bones of painters who couldn't offer that something extra.

Then the box Brownie emerged in the late 1800s. 'You take the photos, we do the rest', George Eastman's tagline proclaimed. Suddenly the medium was for everybody, not just those who were closeted members of an arcane brethren. I imagine that many professionals, whose services were no longer required, went out of business. The behemoth rolled on.

The medium advanced, shape-shifting as it needed to meet the circumstances of the day. Film progressed and developed until its own use-by date came. Until the eventual day that the great God Kodak was caught in the headlights of its own hubris. It collapsed and disappeared quickly. The brash new technology, digital photography, took it from hero to zero in a few short years. The king was dead. Long live the new king.

Matters proceeded apace until the next juggernaut rumbled over and crushed the brash new child digital photography, a phoenix risen from and fashioned in the likeness of its film ancestors. The smart phone had arrived. Suddenly our phone was able to fully engage with our digital world. We could check our email, engage with Facebook, tweet and keep in touch with world events in real time. Oh yes, and we could make voice calls. What a novel idea.

However the best thing was that we could make photographs. Wherever and whenever we were we could document our world and share it immediately. Globally. From one end of the planet to the other.

And all the time the technology in my phone leapt forward in leaps and bounds. Suddenly I realised I was using a camera with a phone on

the side. I found that it had built-in stabilisation. It made beautiful 16 MP files. Hell it would even shoot RAW. And it never ever fluffed an exposure. In the background I noticed that the venerable digital point and shoot, the heir to the Brownie throne, had been quietly despatched in a palace coup and sent to a deep dark hole far, far away.

I began to use my phone more and more. I found myself, much to my disgust, preferring it over the hassle of getting out my DSLR and setting it up. The phone simply worked and it worked brilliantly.

Then one day I had the occasion to visit a heritage engineering works in a corner of New Zealand. In its day it had developed products which had been cutting-edge and ahead of their time. As I moved through the place I felt the dry bones of the past and the remnants of a technology lovingly preserved. There was an allegory here, a link between the old and the new, between the silent machinery and the small box in my hand.

I lifted my phone and began to make images in the likeness of the current king. I realised that I could document the fleeting transience of the past and the dusty breath of the past while driving the leviathan du jour. It seemed entirely appropriate to fashion the past in the likeness of the present. Just me, my phone and Snapseed.

The king is dead. Long live the king. ■

TB

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November 12 - 22 - 2016	Japan Autumn Colours (fully booked)
December 16 - 18 - 2016	Portrait
March 16 - 20 - 2017	Central Otago
April 14 - 17 & 21 - 24 - 2017	Autumn Colours
May 25 - 29 - 2017	Paradise
October 25 - Nov 8 - 2017	Myanmar
November 11 - 21 - 2017	Japan Autumn Colours



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R. Ian LLOYD

La dolce vita

Ian Lloyd is a travel photographer. That's his day job, and yes, really, no kidding. Many photographers travel occasionally, and always with a camera, but it's a long running jump and a hopeful optimistic leap into oblivion from there to where Ian Lloyd is today.

In my experience, two genres of photography are often professed as specialties but not always owned by the claimant. 'I am a fine art photographer...' is one; the other is, 'I am a travel photographer'. Both statements are often claims of dominions desperately aspired to, but not yet quite absolutely reached.

Lloyd is the genuine article, the real deal. The breadth and coverage of his image library is testament to a work ethic that would leave many younger shooters gasping in his trail. Right now he's immersed in la dolce vita, the sweet life, the Italian lifestyle. He's working his way through many of the provinces and regions of that beautiful country and documenting his travels with care, precision and the gathered insight that really only comes from living, instead of visiting, where you shoot.

So we've worked our way through his catalogue, curating our own 'take' on this recent work to share with you here. ►



San Quirico d'Orcia, Tuscany, Italy. © R. Ian Lloyd

Lloyd talks about his background, and the formal photographic education that made what he does today possible:

‘I was born and raised in Midland Canada just north of Toronto on the Great Lakes. My father died when I was 14 and he left me some darkroom equipment. Initially I wanted to be a journalist but I was given a book on developing photos and the magic of watching an image appear in a darkroom solution changed my career path to photography. I started by working in a local camera shop, taking portraits and weddings and selling cameras. Midland happened to be the only location outside of Wetzlar Germany that made Leica cameras so my first ‘real’ camera was a Leica M4 rangefinder traded in by an employee wanting a Japanese SLR.

I went on to study photography at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) in New York and later at Brooks Institute of Photography in Santa Barbara, California. My influences at the time were pioneers in colour such as Ernst Haas, Eliot Porter and Pete Turner as well as black and white landscape masters such as Ansel Adams and Edward Weston.

I worked for three summers as the resident photographer at two large Canadian Pacific Hotels in the Canadian Rockies, in Banff and Lake Louise. My boss at the time set up a photography business and lab in Vancouver that eventually failed and I was the one who had to explain to him why the operation would never be profitable. That early business failure was tough, but in retrospect it was probably one of the most valuable lessons I could ever have been given.

After that I decided to travel and see some of the world. While most of my contemporaries were going to Europe, I decided to be a contrarian and head the other way across the Pacific to New Zealand. Eventually I landed a job as a cameraman in what was then TV1 in Dunedin and worked for a year on TV shows all over the

country. Following that I travelled around Australia and worked for 3 years there as a media photographer and image producer at a college in Perth WA.

My original goal in starting to travel was to see Asia and eventually I packed up my cameras and as much film as I could afford and travelled through South East Asia for a year. I eventually settled in Singapore running a photo agency, photographing guidebooks and making multi-media presentations for a guidebook company. In 1983 I formed my own company - R. Ian Lloyd Productions - to do photography for clients overseas in New York, London and Tokyo.

I spent the next twenty years doing advertising and annual reports for the likes of Exxon, Intel and Singapore Airlines but my great love was shooting editorial assignments for magazines such as National Geographic, Time, Newsweek and Fortune. These assignments eventually led me to photographing 34 books on places like Bali, Nepal, India, Malaysia, Taiwan and Hong Kong. My involvement with stock photography grew also and I took on 12 staff and represented overseas agencies in Singapore. After a number of assignments in Australia for National Geographic Traveler I decided to do a series of four books on Australian Wine Regions and in so doing perhaps learn a little about Australian wine. Eventually my Australian wife Elizabeth and I decided to re-settle in Sydney while our son Christopher completed his university education there. This led to another project exploring the studios of 61 Australian painters that became a **book**, DVD and travelling exhibition in 2007. It toured for 7 years.’ ▶

Chianti, Tuscany, Italy. © R. Ian Lloyd



Lloyd's CV contains an enviable list of publications which have featured his work, with well over 30 books of his own, and contributions to numerous others. He has held six solo exhibitions, and participated in a number of group exhibitions. He is perhaps best known for building a significant catalogue of images in Asia and in some quarters came to be seen as a real specialist in that region. So it's hardly surprising that when we asked for his thoughts on working in Italy, he placed these very much in the context of his previous work:

'During my time in Asia the thing I loved the most was that people lived their life out in the streets, eating, playing and socialising. This offered great access for me as a photographer and I eventually became known as a 'people' photographer. Assignments eventually took me to most countries in Asia but typically I was limited to one or two weeks to engage with my subjects. When I moved to Australia I longed to visit all the countries that I had not been sent to on assignment, and spend more time in each.

First up was Italy and after 3 short trips there my wife and I decided to live for three months in Florence. We both love art and food so we rented an apartment and decided to live like locals. My wife, who is an artist, did a figure-drawing course while I explored the towns and countryside around Tuscany. My first impression was that Italy was in many ways similar to Asia in that life is lived out in the street, making people photography much more accessible.

The evening stroll or 'passeggiata' is a lovely tradition of strolling with friends and family, dressed in your most stylish clothes. Taking the time to acknowledge others and take an interest in their lives on a daily basis is something I think we have lost in other western countries in our rush to secure financial success. It's not that the Italians are less hard working it's that they love to put their hard earned money on their backs. Dressing well, showing off their family and socialising with friends is a high

priority. Having said that, I don't shoot a lot of people in Italy as fashions change so much these days and Italians wear international styles so it's often difficult to tell them apart from other Europeans. On top of this I'm much more aware these days that shooting for stock requires model releases so I tend to avoid people.

My Italian is rudimentary but the Italians are a lot more forgiving of mangled linguistic attempts than the French are. Before each trip I try to do as much reading and background research as I can so I can be familiar with the culture I will be dealing with. For example, on a recent trip to Sicily I read books on their fascinating 3000 plus years of conquest, their problems with the Mafia and I read translations of well known Sicilian fiction writers. For visuals I do the same research, looking at images in various stock libraries, on Google and on Pinterest. I want to know what has been done before so that in a short time I can make new photographs that go beyond the obvious and invoke a sense of place.

I'm very aware that first impressions can be very powerful and I try to photograph early on when I visit a new town to capture that sense of wonder that I think is at the heart of all truly good photography. One problem though that arises with travel photography is the visual fatigue that builds up quickly after visiting several spectacular sights. The brain can only absorb so many cathedrals or works of art before it all starts looking the same. My solution is to purposely build in one or two days a week while travelling that I do nothing but recharge my creative batteries. Driving, packing, even making decisions about where to eat can be surprisingly exhausting and without a break everything just starts looking the same and that sense of wonder is lost. ►

Perugia, Umbria, Italy. © R. Ian Lloyd



With viewing art, my solution is to buy a gallery membership and visit many times for 2-3 hours at the most each time to really take everything in. After joining as a Friend of the Uffizi Gallery in Florence I was able to jump the queue, see different galleries on different days and even spend time studying a great painting like Botticelli's 'Primavera'. In Paris I visited the Louvre 13 times over a two-month period before I had covered the entire collection.

I think Italy has many seasons for photographers. Winter can be bleak and cold although it is possibly the best time to visit Venice during Carnevale. Summer is often hot and crowded with European visitors and beaches are packed. Fall and spring I think are ideal with fewer visitors. April to June is my favourite time there as the countryside is verdant with crops and activity. On one week the fields can be golden with yellow rapeseed while the next week those same fields could be bustling with harvesting or other activity.

Italians are very forgiving of foreigners. I find them very tolerant and helpful even when I end up driving the wrong way down a crowded street, the Carabinieri are ever polite in pointing out my error. There is a relaxed attitude to life there and it is not surprising that the slow food movement was started in Piedmonte.'

On the subject of his chosen specialty, Lloyd expands on the combination of travel and photography:

'I think the nature of travel photography has changed a lot over the past few years. Destinations are accessible to most travellers, digital cameras and camera phones have eliminated technical barriers and once mighty magazine clients have slowly disappeared. Even after a lifetime of travel I am still excited about travel photography and as my friend Bob Krist recently told me, I always travel like I am on assignment. I still shoot assignments for the occasional magazine ('Islands' magazine in particular) but for me I self assign and I'm

pleased the work can be distributed through Masterfile as stock. After so many years doing this, I realise I am very good at quickly coming up with new iconic views of destinations. It's the ten thousand hours of practice principle, coupled with the joy of having new digital tools that push old film boundaries and open up a whole new world of possibilities.'

On the subject of new tools, we asked Lloyd to tell us about his current tools, techniques and work practice:

'Everything has changed considerably from the equipment laden days of film. I loved Fujichrome Velvia and often pushed it one stop but even that wasn't good enough for most low light location lighting. These days I travel with two Canon EOS 5D MkIII bodies and my standard working ISO is 800. I use 1600 and 3200 ISO in low light and have the confidence not to have noise issues even when using 6400 and 12,800 ISO processed through Lightroom.

Last night for example I expected Bari to be an uneventful stop on the way to the more popular cities further south. It has an old town built like a maze to confuse invading marauders and last night at twilight with my 5D and the new image stabilised 16-35mm f4 lens I was able to shoot all the street life, look into homes, engage with locals and get great images all at 1600 and 3200 ISO. The light was so low that it was fantastic! I could never have done that until recently and it's like a whole new world of possibilities has opened for me.

I travel with only three lenses, a 16-35mm, 24-105mm and a 70-200mm. All are compact, lightweight, high quality f4 lenses with built in image stabilisation. I've stopped carrying a tripod and rarely use a flash these days. Recently I sold some of my f2.8 lenses to save on weight, along with my super telephotos that I no longer want to carry. With a lens on each of my two bodies and my third lens in a backpack I can cover just about anything.

A two camera setup saves me from changing lenses often and introducing dust on the sensors but can look a bit serious at times. This could be seen as a target for thieves but throughout Italy I have felt safe. The only time I felt threatened in my travels was in Buenos Aires, Argentina where a collapsed economy had created a lot of economic desperation. With two cameras out on view I could feel 50 pairs of eyes zeroing in on what appeared to be my blatant opulence. So I put one camera away and shot with my all purpose 24-105mm lens. In St. Petersburg Russia, even with two hands on my two camera bodies, thieves approached and distracted me while cleverly removing a lens from one of my bodies. I was so sure nothing had been taken that I only discovered the fact that I was missing a lens several minutes later. I have to tip my hat to the thieves' professionalism for knowing the brand of camera I was carrying and how to disengage a lens swiftly and surreptitiously with my hand still on the camera body. The whole scam can be seen being performed on another hapless visitor to Russia on a YouTube video [here](#).

For me the right equipment is what works best at the time I need it. The final image is, of course, everything and like fishing and horsehoes, close just doesn't count. I try to be as invisible as possible by not wearing a photo vest or looking like an obvious tourist. I don't hesitate to shoot on automatic and only occasionally check my histogram to make sure my exposures are within range. I have custom functions set up for high speed predictive shooting and can quickly get a sharp series of photos of someone walking straight towards me if necessary. Above all, I am watching and observing what is going on around me and anticipating when all the elements will fall into place.

In the field, each night I caption the location of all my images I have taken that day and back them up to two external hard drives. I save all editing, key wording and Lightroom corrections

for when I return to Sydney as I can better judge the images on an iMac with a 5K Retina screen.'

In a 2007 interview with Photo Review Magazine, Lloyd talked about some of his philosophies:

'The joy is not just finding a new subject, it's easy finding a new subject. If someone says okay here's a place you haven't been to, you're always excited. But the real skill, craft and professionalism in being a photographer is going to a place you know only too well and coming up with a new view. I love doing that.

The more I practice, the luckier I get. You need to be prepared, and know what you want to say.

It's something that I really try to stress to young photographers, you're not going to pull a brilliant photograph out of the air without understanding what's going on.

I do a lot of research before I go. I look at a lot of photography; I look at what's been done before. There's no point reinventing the wheel. I don't believe in that. I want to say 'Oh yes, if somebody did that, that's great. Now I have to go beyond that.'

You have a duty as a photographer to take a picture that is so arresting, that says enough about what is going on in the subject matter, that (it) leads people into either reading more or giving you an idea of what's going on. I always say that the most important thing a photographer can do is read.'

A year earlier, in an interview with the South China Morning Post, he talked about the rhythm and pace of his work:

'In my life, there isn't a typical day. If I'm on a shoot, I'm probably up an hour before sunrise to make sure I'm out ready take a picture at dawn, which is a fabulous time to take pictures, because the light is great and there's a lot of activity with people going to work, families going to the market, and children going to school. ▶

When I'm on the road I'll probably have done almost a half day's work by 9:30 am. The first couple of hours of the day are intense but it's all about preparation, knowing where I need to be. By the time I go back to the hotel I'm quite exhausted. I have my breakfast and regroup. As a photographer, my day revolves around the sun. All the things I need to do that don't require fantastic light will be done during the middle of the day. It could be doing indoor shoots or aerial shoots, travelling from A to B or setting up photo shoots for the next day. A lot of what I do now is going beyond just wandering the streets. I would once have had a little compass in my pocket, now that's a smart phone version, so I know that something I saw earlier in the morning is going to have great late afternoon light.'

It sounds like hard work, but nice work if you can get it. R. Ian Lloyd has earned this, his sweet life, and we can't help but wonder where the road leads after he's conquered Italy.

Bravo! ■

TS

<http://rianlloyd.com/>

Masterfile



Ponte Pietra, Verona, Veneto, Italy. © R. Ian Lloyd

‘You have a duty as a photographer to take a picture that is so arresting, that says enough about what is going on in the subject matter, that (it) leads people into either reading more or giving you an idea of what's going on.’

►► Following double page spread:
Vittorio Emanuele II Arcade, Milan, Lombardy, Italy. © R. Ian Lloyd





'I'm very aware that first impressions can be very powerful and I try to photograph early on when I visit a new town to capture that sense of wonder that I think is at the heart of all truly good photography.'

Bicycling in Florence, Italy. © R. Ian Lloyd



Cruise ship and gondolas on the San Marco Canal, Venice, Italy. © R. Ian Lloyd



►► *Following double page spread:*
Piazza della Repubblica, Florence, Italy. © R. Ian Lloyd



Sunrise near Montepulciano, Tuscany, Italy.
© R. Ian Lloyd



►► *Following double page spread:*
The Duomo, Florence, Italy. © R. Ian Lloyd



'I think the nature of travel photography has changed a lot over the past few years. Destinations are accessible to most travellers, digital cameras and camera phones have eliminated technical barriers and once mighty magazine clients have slowly disappeared.'

►► Following double page spread:
Santa Maria Assunta, the Duomo, Pisa, Tuscany, Italy. © R. Ian Lloyd







►► Following double page spread:
The Colosseum, Rome, Italy. © R. Ian Lloyd



‘A two camera setup saves me from changing lenses often and introducing dust on the sensors but can look a bit serious at times. This could be seen as a target for thieves but throughout Italy I have felt safe.’





►► *Following double page spread:*
San Miniato, Tuscany, Italy. © R. Ian Lloyd





►► Following double page spread:
Riomaggiore, Cinque Terre, the Ligurian Coast, Italy. © R. Ian Lloyd



*The Explosion of the Cart Festival (Scoppio del Carro),
Easter Sunday, Florence, Italy. © R. Ian Lloyd*



►► *Following double page spread:
Piazza Navona, Rome, Italy. © R. Ian Lloyd*



‘When I’m on the road I’ll probably have done almost a half day’s work by 9:30 am. The first couple of hours of the day are intense but it’s all about preparation, knowing where I need to be.’



The Grand Canal through metal latticework, Venice, Italy. © R. Ian Lloyd

Paul ALSOP

Wet plate wonders

Paul Alsop is a young and genial family doctor based in Papamoa, in the Bay of Plenty of New Zealand. He's also a rare and unusual creature, a wet plate collodion photographer who first hand built his own 11x11 inch camera from mahogany and brass and then converted the family garage into his darkroom. That was followed a couple of years later by his creation of a fully mobile darkroom, within the shell of a 1970s caravan – now beautifully restored and dubbed 'Rubylith', named for the red filter used in darkroom safelights.

If this is sounding a tiny bit like a story about someone pottering about with obscure alchemies and processes in a garden shed, let me quickly correct this impression. Paul is, first and foremost, a deadly serious portrait photographer creating stunning images. Secondly, the somewhat archaic wet plate process which he uses creates starkly modern portraits – yet these are deeply imbued with many of the qualities of images from a bygone era. In an age when photography is child's play and inextricably linked with the most modern and portable of devices, the road Paul has sought could not be further removed from the

paradigm. The process is arduous, the chemicals are unpleasant and dangerous, the technical challenges are not easily overcome – yet he persists with such enthusiasm and commitment. An obsession or an affliction? You be the judge.

'When I am not at work, I am either thinking about and spending time with my family, or wet plate collodion photography. I have been a photographer for the past 16 years, I don't have any romantic stories of falling in love with photography when my grandfather let me look through the viewfinder of his twin lens reflex Rolleiflex, instead, I am self taught with a digital camera and mainly shot landscapes initially. Landscapes were interesting, they got me out of the house at every godawful hour of the day, but they were not compatible with the hours I need to keep in my day job.'

Paul is quick to observe that even the title of this magazine seems like a contradiction where his work is concerned, as very rarely would he have enough light to allow an exposure of f11 with wet plate, which has an ISO of 0.5 to 2 ISO. Every exposure is, to some degree, a time exposure requiring a wider aperture than our namesake. ▶



*Amy Portrait - Tintype - Rodenstock 210mm f5.6 -
Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera. © Paul Alsop*

His story is a long and interesting one, best told in his own words, and we asked Paul to take us along for the ride:

Evolution of a Photographer and Inspirations

'In 2010 I moved to New Zealand from Newcastle upon Tyne in the North East of England and I began experimenting with portraiture as I found this much more interesting than landscapes. I enjoyed the interaction with the subjects and attempting to capture the story as well as the face. I was making monochrome portraits mainly, as I enjoyed concentrating on the form of the face without the distraction of colour profiles. However, I became frustrated with my monochrome digital images especially after seeing Richard Avedon's 'In the American West' series, I wanted to make portraits like he did. The first step to do this was to move away from digital capture and back to film. I was smitten by Kodak T-Max and Tri-X 400, they were perfect and even more exciting when I shot on an acquired Mamiya RB67 medium format camera. I was coming along quite nicely as a self taught film photographer and silver halide printer, however frustration set in again. At the time, I was working as a doctor in a hospital in the small town of Thames on the Coromandel Peninsula. As it often is with kiwis, the hospital staff were very generous and actually gave me a darkroom to work in, for approximately 3 years! Getting back to the frustration, I had the space, the enlarger, the camera, however, the disposable stuff was difficult to come by, I could not simply walk into the local camera store and pick up some film or developer as there were no local camera stores, the closest being in Auckland, 90 minutes away by car. I was always having to think months ahead and stock up on film and chemicals, usually in bulk from an Auckland supplier or sometimes even abroad from a supplier such as Adorama.

At the end of January 2012, simultaneously, as my interest in portraiture grew, my confidence with a home studio setup became greater and

my frustrations with the limitations of film consumables increased, I came across the work of Chuck Close, in particular, a diptych nude of Kate Moss. The image was absolutely captivating, not only was it naked from the perspective that she had no clothes on, but it was just raw, you could see every detail in her skin, it just blew my mind away and I decided right there that I needed to make portraits like that.

However, there was a slight flaw in my plan, in that the Chuck Close images were Daguerreotypes, and Daguerreotypes use Mercury vapour to develop them. Although I did love photography very much, I was not willing to risk my life for photography with potential Mercury poisoning. This was the driving force for me to look further into the history of photography, something which I hadn't done before. It was fascinating, and it was here that I stumbled upon the Wet Plate Collodion Process, as invented by Frederick Scott Archer in 1851. This was a perfect compromise, although the process was completely foreign to me I couldn't see the word 'Mercury' anywhere (and I guess I just glossed over the words 'explosive' and 'Potassium Cyanide'). I was attracted to the process as it is very interesting, involved and involving for the sitters. However, I always stand by the fact that it is not the process that makes a photograph interesting, it is the final aesthetic and some of the images I was seeing were breathtakingly detailed and unique. The work at the time of Ian Ruhter was particularly inspiring.'

What is Wet Plate?

'The process is one of the most archival photographic processes to date, images from the American Civil War and portraits of Billy the Kid and Abraham Lincoln have lasted long beyond the faded albumen and silver gelatin prints, which are long faded. Then there is digital, which we all know struggles to have the longevity of the analogue methods, maybe not from a technical perspective, but certainly ►



Adam Portrait - Tintype - Schneider 150mm f5.6 -
Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera. © Paul Alsop

from a nostalgic point of view. One of the attractions of the process is knowing that my images will (hopefully) be around long after I have gone. However, I am not so interested in being a flame keeper of the past. There are those who do this, who have kept the process alive through the onslaught of the more user friendly methods of making images, and I am grateful for them keeping the process alive for us to enjoy now. I have embraced the 19th Century technology and now I use it with 21st century methods to create unique, one off images.

We live in a fast food society of social media, where many excellent images are overlooked within milliseconds, passed by with the flick of a finger. When I make a wet plate image, it satisfies me to see the sitters and anyone else around, spending alot of time with the single image, examining it, looking at it from different angles and in different lights. I'm yet to have anyone not interested in the final aesthetic.'

The Cameras

'Large format photography in New Zealand isn't that easy, there is just not that much second hand gear about. I salivate when I look at the auction sites of the UK and USA, it is there in abundance, but too expensive for me to import. I was stuck, I knew the process, but had no camera to make images, so I decided to build one from a huge block of mahogany. I ended up with a camera capable of making 11 x 11 inch plates. My workhorse camera is a 4x5" Toyoview monorail technical camera, I love this thing, I picked it up from a market when I was back in the UK.'

The Caravan

'To make wet plate collodion images, you need to be within running distance of a darkroom. I had been using a hydroponics tent as a dark tent, but this was quite flimsy and difficult to use in windy weather. I had a garage darkroom when I used to own a house, but we sold up

and are currently renting. The benefits of a static darkroom are that you can walk in whenever you want to without having to set up a tent or get all the chemicals out and put them away again. However, the limitations are that you can only make images within a 5 minute radius. Also, the process is very messy, the silver stains pretty much everything and anything it comes into contact with. At the risk of not getting our bond back on the rental property, I had to get creative. I looked at a whole bunch of options, from a shipping container, to converting a mobile home, ambulance or truck - to caravans. The caravan was perfect, it doesn't have an engine to maintain, and it can remain static for as long as I wish, or I can hook it up to my towbar and off we go to make images. I got to a point where it was looking unfavourable to get any sort of vessel to house me and my photography, I was getting very disappointed that I may have to give up on the wet plate process, which I had come to love so much, then in March 2015, I saw a 1970's caravan on a NZ online auction site come up. It had been refurbished on the outside, but the interior needed alot of work. This was perfect, as it was structurally sound and a blank canvas for me to make a darkroom in by ripping out the furniture and starting again. The caravan darkroom was a labour of love, as I failed wood work at school (not all of my benches are straight), I had no knowledge of 12 volt electrics (and yet I managed to install a 12 V system) and worst of all, I had never towed a vehicle of any kind before - not to mention, our car didn't have a tow bar!'

The Process

'At the risk of boring your readers, I will truncate it, there are lots of Youtube videos that show the process step by step. **Here's one!**

First you start with a substratum, which is either a highly cleaned and polished glass plate, or a piece of sheet metal. A chemical called 'collodion' (which is gun cotton, dissolved in alcohol and ether) is then flowed over the ►



*Brookiey side portrait - Tintype - Rodenstock 210mm f5.6 -
Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera. © Paul Alsop*

plate, by pouring it on and flowing the liquid (you need a steady hand). The plate is then dropped into a silver bath for 3 mins where a chemical reaction occurs to turn the non-photosensitive silver nitrate into silver halide (or film). Under the red lights, the plate is removed from the silver bath and placed into a plate holder. The plate holder is then taken to a large format camera which is focused upon its subject. Once the focus is acquired, in a swift and methodical manner, an exposure is made, whether this be by artificial light (such as strobe) or continuous light (such as day light), the latter requiring a timed exposure of 5 to 30 seconds, in which time the subject has to stay (or be held) perfectly still.

Once the exposure is made, then the plate is taken back to the darkroom where is developed with a mixture of iron sulphate, glacial acetic acid and 96% alcohol, a negative image appears. At this stage the image is no longer light sensitive and all that remains is for the image to be 'fixed' which means the unexposed silver is washed away leaving behind a direct positive image. Start to finish you can make about 1 image every 20 mins, and if the plate dries out in that time, then it is rendered useless. The last part of the 'process' is to varnish the image, to protect it from oxidation and physical damage, some people use a gum from an African tree, I prefer to use either a gum from a New Zealand tree (Kauri) or the effluent from a female 'lac-bugs' bottom (Shellac) and Lavender, which acts as a plasticiser.'

Why Wet Plate?

'It certainly slows me down, making one image every 20 mins. I make a lot of images with studio lights, so the process gives me an opportunity to really concentrate on the light and what this is doing. Making a simple mistake is costly when working with liquid silver. Probably for me, as a portrait photographer, the joy is the interaction with the sitter, they get really involved and it is not unusual to hear a few swear words of

astonishment when the final image develops, I've also made a few grown men cry with emotion (positive). The other thing is it gets you back to the hands on craft, taking you away from the computer and actually making, rather than taking photographs.

The limitations are numerous, if there were few, everyone would be doing it and it would cease to be unique, but to name a few; initial cost (although it is comparable to a full frame DSLR set up with a couple of decent primes); and it is time consuming. My life literally revolves around it. When I get a few spare minutes, I can be found making chemicals, filtering chemicals, cleaning plates etc etc.'

On subject matter

'I certainly do not find sitters at work, although as a GP I see lots and lots of interesting faces! However, I have a strict personal code of ethics, in that I do not allow myself to approach patients to ask for a portraits, as they may feel I will 'treat' them differently if they decline. I look for interesting faces to photograph first and foremost, then the second thing I will look for is an interesting story, if I can match the two up then I am a very happy photographer. I mainly source sitters for portraits with social media shout outs for a certain project I am doing or sometimes they find me. The portraits are unlike anything sitters have seen before, not only have they not seen the process, but many have never seen the physical thing that is a photograph, all they have seen are digital images of themselves, and then often retouched. In addition to this, the process is orthochromatic, which means it sees blue very well, but not red. People with blue irises make striking portraits, and people with freckles (red) have freckles show up in places, they didn't even realise they had places!'

On what determines a good portrait?

'An environmental portrait aims to say something very different from a formal studio portrait, however, a good portrait regardless ►



Damian for the Auckland Project - Ambrotype - Kodak Aero Ektar 178mm f2.5 - Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera at Kingize Studios. © Paul Alsop and Luke White

of where it is shot, should capture a viewer's attention for more than a few seconds tell a story of its own as a stand alone image. For me, many of my portraits tell these stories through the eyes, or they leave people asking questions. Any image that makes people think - good or bad - is a good image in my opinion, the worst response a photographer can have is no reaction at all.'

On lighting

'Wet plate collodion has an ISO of between 0.5 and 2, this translates to needing a shed load of light to make an image. I learned the process using daylight, in full harsh shadow, midday sun, you may get away with a few seconds exposure - especially here in New Zealand, where the Ozone layer is thin and the UV light is abundant. However, this gives ugly light and ugly portraits. The next best thing is open shade, however, this increases exposure time to 10-30 seconds. Getting people to sit tack-sharp-still for this time is almost impossible, and you usually get a blurry image. Many people are happy with that and say it 'adds' to the image. I was not happy with that, and resorted to looking into artificial light sources that would let me replicate the power of the sun! I initially used constant light sources, but these were simply too hot and too harsh on the sitters' faces. I then went onto looking into strobe. As you will imagine, to get a flash unit to put out the power of the sun in a fraction of a second, you are going to need more than your Canon 580EXII.

I experimented with old Bowens packs initially, 3,000w/s to be exact. This didn't register an image, and I was very disappointed. Out on a limb, I called Kingsize studios in Auckland to ►

Austin Portrait - Ambrotype - Schneider 150mm f5.6 - Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera. © Paul Alsop



speak to the (now former) manager, Luke White to see if he could help me. I started explaining about the wet plate process and the frustrations with light and portraits, when he stopped me mid sentence and told me he also had done a workshop on wet plate. He was very interested in helping me out. So a few months later, I packed up my chemicals and headed for the big city to use their abundance of strobe units. We made an image with 12,000w/s of light, using Broncolor packs. This was excellent, as the final aesthetic was very pleasing, however, it was also very disheartening as I knew I would never be able to afford a high end strobe unit like one of the Broncolor ones.

As luck had it, they found me, more than one unit and I now have a mix of Bowens and Elinchrom lights and modifiers that I shape light through. In fact, I now have the ability to make portraits with 24,000w/s of strobe in my garage! Keeping in contact with Luke, we have commenced on a collaborative photo project called 'The Auckland Project' where every 6 months or so, I go up to Auckland and we make images at Kingsize with all of their lovely modifiers, including Mola softlights, Broncolor Paras and Chimera soft boxes. The quality of the images certainly shows through with the quality of the gear, however, I'm also not doing too badly in my garage with my Bowens set up and various modifiers - many of which are DIY jobbies! To discuss the detail of the lighting set-ups would take forever, as I design my lighting based on the face I am about to shoot, I always ask them for a selfie before they arrive so I can design a few lighting set-ups the night before, as for me this also adds to the interest of the hobby! Before I started working with the collodion process, I had taught myself the basic lighting techniques and arrangements for my digital work, however, with the expense and labour that goes into one silver image, I have to be super organised and have some ideas way before the sitters arrive using a plastic head model called Barbara (named after my mother

in law). This has led me to research the lighting of iconic studio photographers that inspire me, such as Richard Avedon, Irving Penn and Herb Ritts. Not to mention, non-photographic portrait makers such as the New Zealand artists Gottfried Lindauer and C.F. Goldie.

On Collaborating

'I'm a big fan of collaborations, currently I am collaborating with two people, Luke White who I've already mentioned, is a photographer, ex-studio manager of Kingsize Studio and now running a photo agency called 'Proof'. His wealth of photography knowledge and command of light has had a big impact on my work. The other person is Ani Fourie, a talented artist for Pushinguppixels. She primarily works with paint, but can turn her creative hand to anything, she is my sounding board and helpful hand at my home studio. Collaborations work if you are both on the same page, and when they work, they work great and you can learn a lot from each other as well as being able to spread the workload.'

Final note

'The whole process for me allows me to get back to the thing that is the image as a physical entity, while at the same time, truly crafting an image. When an image is created, I can rest easy that I have built the camera that focuses the lens, I've cut the plates that will form the substrate for the final image, I've built the darkroom and made all the chemicals that will develop the latent image, I've constructed and shaped the light that punches out the portrait. Most of the time a beautiful silver object is created that will withstand the test of time, although sometimes it doesn't work and it's very embarrassing.'

No artistic endeavour always runs smoothly so Paul should take a great deal of comfort from the fact that we are by no means the only ones to recognise and celebrate the work he's so passionately creating with this process. ►



Elizabeth for The Auckland Project - Tintype - Rodenstock 210mm f5.6 - Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera at Kingize Studios. © Paul Alsop and Luke White

These portraits are growing into a collection of note, one that will highly likely outlast both Paul and his enthusiasm for the trials and tribulations of a wet and smelly darkroom process. Only time will tell. ■

TS

www.paulalsop.com

<https://www.facebook.com/silversunbeams/>

https://www.instagram.com/silver_sunbeams/

<https://vimeo.com/134596304>

<https://vimeo.com/134596304>

<https://vimeo.com/146741540>

<http://petapixel.com/2015/07/06/how-i-turned-a-caravan-into-a-mobile-darkroom-for-wet-plate-photos/>



Rubylith, a very mobile darkroom © Paul Alsop

▼ *Paul holding one of his wet plates. Note the requisite safety equipment. © Paul Alsop*



Hamish Decembeard Project - tintype - Rodenstock 210mm f5.6 - Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera. Part of an ongoing project to make portraits of beards, while raising awareness for 'Decembeard' the hairy face of the New Zealand Charity Bowel Cancer New Zealand. © Paul Alsop

Heath Portrait - Ambrotype - Schneider 150mm f5.6 -
Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera. © Paul Alsop



‘One of the attractions of the process is knowing that my images will (hopefully) be around long after I have gone. However, I am not so interested in being a flame keeper of the past.’



*Naomi Jr Portrait - Tynytp - Rodenstock - 210mm
f5.6 - Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera. © Paul Alsop*



Jess portrait - Tintype - Schneider 150mm f5.6 - Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera.
© Paul Alsop



VJ for Decembeard Project - Ambrotype - Rodenstock 210mm 5.6 - Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera.
Part of an ongoing project to make portraits of beards, while raising awareness for 'Decembeard'
the hairy face of the New Zealand Charity Bowel Cancer New Zealand. © Paul Alsop



Jess Portrait - Tintype - Rodenstock 210mm f5.6 - Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera.
© Paul Alsop



Matt Decembeard Project - Tintype - Rodenstock 210mm f5.6- Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera.
Part of an ongoing project to make portraits of beards, while raising awareness for 'Decembeard'
the hairy face of the New Zealand Charity Bowel Cancer New Zealand. © Paul Alsop



Natalie for The Auckland Project - Tintype - Kodak Aero Ektar 178mm f2.5 - Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera at Kingize Studios. © Paul Alsop and Luke White



*Justin Portrait - Tintype - Rodenstock 210mm f5.6 - Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera.
© Paul Alsop*



*Naomi Portrait - Tintype - Rodenstock 210mm f5.6 - Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera.
© Paul Alsop*



Sal for the Auckland Project - Tintype - Kodak Aero Ektar 178mm f2.5 - Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera at Kingize Studios. © Paul Alsop and Luke White

'We live in a fast food society of social media, where many excellent images are overlooked within milliseconds, passed by with the flick of a finger. When I make a wet plate image, it satisfies me to see the sitters and anyone else around, spending a lot of time with the single image, examining it, looking at it from different angles and in different lights. I'm yet to have anyone not interested in the final aesthetic.'



*Brookiey Portrait - Tintype - Rodenstock 210mm f5.6 - Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera.
© Paul Alsop*



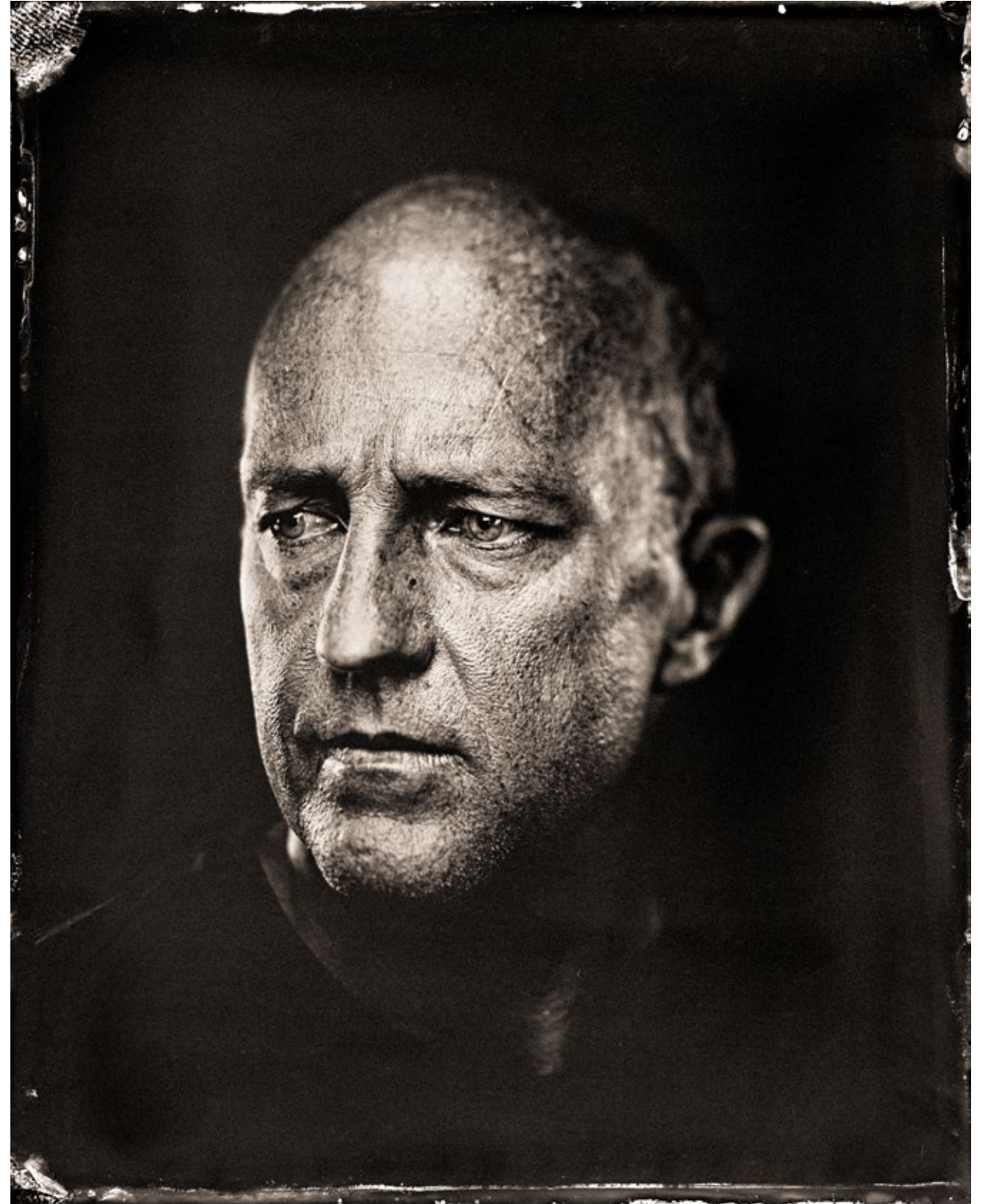
Chris for The Auckland Project - Tintype - Kodak Aero Ektar 178mm f2.5 - Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera at Kingize Studios. © Paul Alsop and Luke White



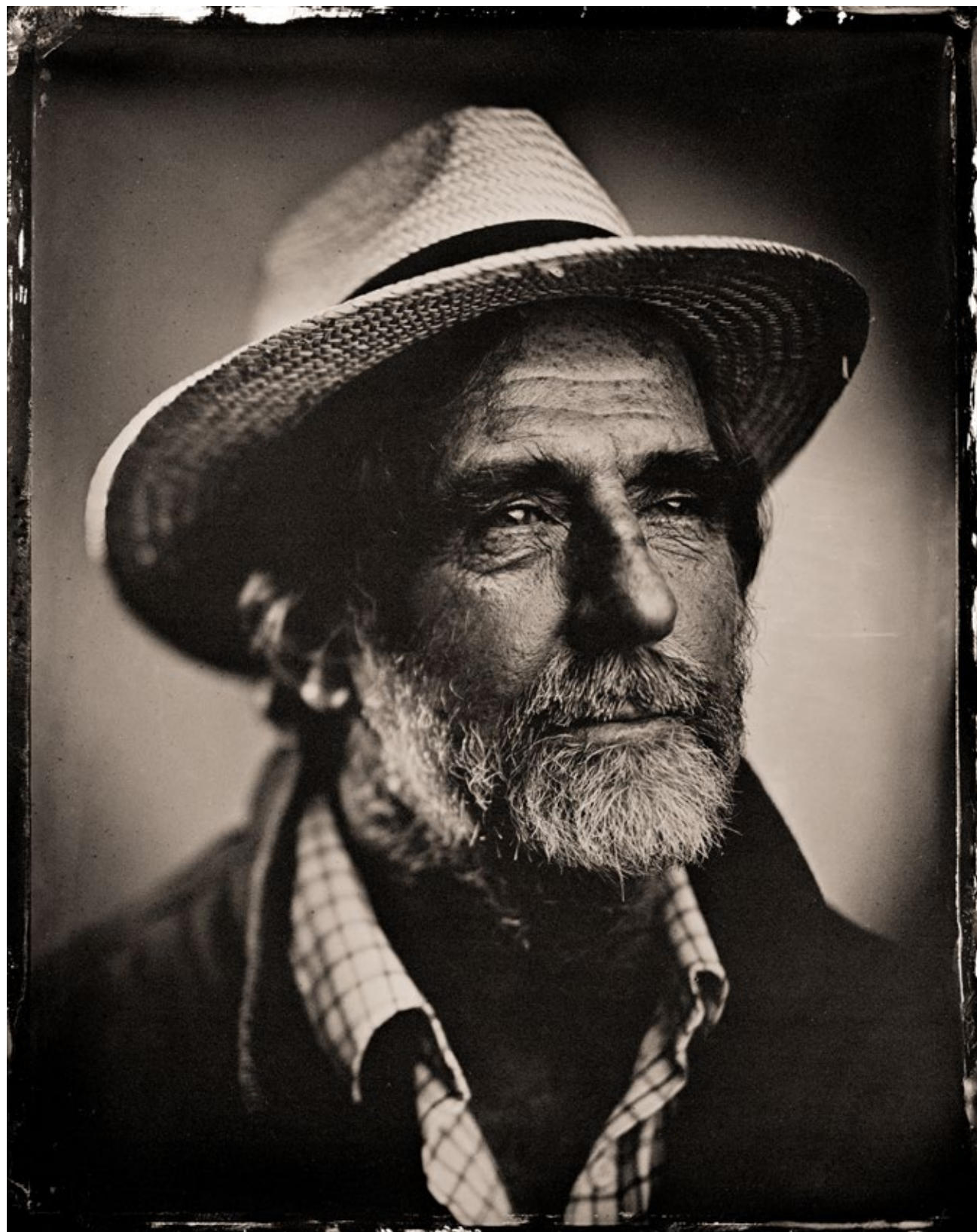
*Mischa Portrait - Tintype - Rodenstock 210mm f5.6 - Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera.
© Paul Alsop*



Thomston for The Auckland Project - Tintype - Kodak Aero Ektar 178mm f2.5 - Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera at Kingize Studios. © Paul Alsop and Luke White



Colin for The Auckland Project - Ambrotype - Rodenstock 210mm f5.6 - Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera at Kingize Studios. © Paul Alsop and Luke White



*John for Decembeard Project - Tintype - Rodenstock 210mm f5.6- Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera.
Part of an ongoing project to make portraits of beards, while raising awareness for 'Decembeard'
the hairy face of the New Zealand Charity Bowel Cancer New Zealand. © Paul Alsop*



*Sophie 2 year old portrait - Tintype - Rodenstock 210mm f5.6 - Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera.
© Paul Alsop*

'...the process is orthochromatic, which means it sees blue very well, but not red. People with blue irises make striking portraits, and people with freckles (red) have freckles show up in places, they didn't even realise they had places!'



*Jade Portrait - Tintype - Rodenstock 210mm f5.6 - Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera.
© Paul Alsop*

'The whole process for me allows me to get back to the thing that is the image as a physical entity, while at the same time, truly crafting an image. - Most of the time a beautiful silver object is created that will withstand the test of time, although sometimes it doesn't work and it's very embarrassing.'



*Jade turn portrait - Tintype - Rodenstock 201mm f5.6 - Toyo-view monorail 4x5 camera.
© Paul Alsop*

Michael HUDSON

Circumambulations

Michael Hudson has been a professional photographer since 1989, and has worked in the commercial and fine art fields. He was born in Sydney, and grew up in Australia, the United States, and England. He currently lives near Chicago.

His fine art images have been published on book covers, websites, magazines, and collected by private and corporate art collectors. He has built relationships with several fine art poster publishers for more than fifteen years and sold over 10,000 posters in that time, and was a featured photographer in *COLOR*, a magazine for collectors of fine art color photography. In 2014, he published his first e-book, 'The Photographer's Guide to Acadia', for photographers venturing into Acadia National Park in Maine (USA). Then, in 2015 he self-published his first coffee table photography book, 'Under October Skies', with images from his ten years of photography in Acadia.

'I got my start in the world of professional photography when I photographed Princess Diana and the British Royal Family during the late 1980s. That experience taught me how to think fast, work in difficult situations, compose quickly, and above all, to be patient, which has been of enormous benefit when working in landscape photography.

I often look for large, bold areas of color in my images. Years ago, when I was starting out, I worked with black and white film almost exclusively; color printing was expensive and difficult to do correctly. Today though, far more of my images are made in color than black and white. But, thanks to my monochrome 'upbringing', I still create all my images very selectively – there has to be a good reason to work in color.

Photography literally means 'light drawing' and without the right light, a photograph usually fails. I've been known to hike endlessly for hours, not eat all day, or to return to a scene year after year to capture it in the best light. Light is crucial to the landscape; it defines the land. The right light can transform a mundane scene into something extraordinary, if only for a few moments. And when, sometimes, it seems like you're the only one to have witnessed that light, it's truly awe-inspiring. ►

Crabapple tree in Spring. Pentax 645Z with SMC 75mm f2.8 lens. 28 layers. © Michael Hudson



I'm interested in capturing emotions or feelings, rather than all the details in a scene. I've been inspired by many artists, and not just photographers. Painters such as the Impressionists, Monet and Renoir, and photographers like Robert Farber, David Ward, Nick Brandt and Michael Kenna have also inspired and taught me. I was also very influenced several years ago by the work of renowned English landscape photographer, Charlie Waite, whose book, 'The Making of Landscape Photographs', taught me to slow down, study the composition, and pay attention to every element before I committed to making a picture.'

Michael talks in some detail about the series we're sharing here:

Tree Circumambulations

The theme of Beauty runs through all my images. I'm particularly inspired by the quiet beauty of the landscape. In most of our 'normal' lives, we're surrounded by traffic, noise of every kind, and a thousand other things that command our attention. My life is no exception. But when I escape my four walls and a roof and begin creating images with my camera, the busyness fades away— leaving the simple beauty of the landscape in front of me. It revitalises my soul.

Trees symbolise life, energy and shelter, and for me they're a world apart from the busyness of life. Trees are some of the most beautiful elements in nature, and there's no shortage of images of them. Artists have been making pictures of trees since the beginnings of photography, but a couple years ago, I was looking for a new, unique way to photograph them.

My 'Circumambulations' series was born.

To circumambulate something means to walk around it. Often this has a religious or spiritual context, where adherents attach special meaning to the object they are circling around, or to the journey of walking around it— in Catholicism a priest might walk around a

venerated saint's shrine, Muslim pilgrims walk around the Kabaa in Mecca, and for Hindus and Buddhists, it is a meditative and integral part of their faith. In this series, I don't associate a religious or spiritual meaning to the images, but I've gone beyond objective portraits of trees and have photographed them in a way that I believe few other photographers are currently doing. My intention is not to make a literal image of a tree, but to photograph the energy and life emanating from the tree — revealing something of its true essence.

When I'm photographing these trees, I take a picture every few paces as I walk around them, sometimes making up to fifty images of one tree. Then I combine all the pictures into one final image to create a unique portrait of that tree. By photographing a tree in the round this way, it separates the tree from a factual depiction and becomes a metaphor of itself, intensifying the life and energy within.

I use a Pentax 645Z camera to create the images and with its 51 megapixel sensor, you can imagine how large some of the files can be once I begin layering each series of images, especially since I'm working with 16-bit uncompressed images. When I first started the process, I would flatten the image several times, then add more layers since Photoshop has a size limit for saving TIFF files. Then I learned that by saving the image as a Large Document Format image in Photoshop, I could save files that were several gigabytes in size. Typically, I take 12-18 photos of a tree, process the raw files in Lightroom, then open a new master file in Photoshop, to create a ▶

*Backlit Maple. Pentax 645Z with SMC 75mm f2.8 lens.
10 layers. © Michael Hudson*



single, multi-layered file of all the images. It's a time consuming process but by playing with the opacity of each layer, the tree becomes an 'impressionistic' version of itself – it's still a true photo of the tree, but nothing like the standard image people would expect.

The beauty of using a medium format camera is the very high quality of the image files. I've enlarged some of the tree images up to 30x45 inches (76x114cm) on metal, canvas and paper and the results are stunning. People aren't sure whether they're looking at a painting, a pencil sketch or a photograph. When I see viewers studying the images, poring over all the thousands and thousands of leaves and branches, and becoming absorbed into the image, I know I've done my job – it's a very satisfying feeling.'

f11: Welcome to f11 Michael, thanks for answering some of our questions.

MH: Thanks for the opportunity to be featured in the magazine.

f11: These images are quite painterly, were you ever tempted to take up a paintbrush instead?

MH: I used to like drawing as child, but I've never been a painter. I like the idea of knowing how to paint, but have never put in the effort to learn how. But I do like the idea that I can use my camera to create an image that blurs the lines between photography and painting. Not that I'm trying to make my images look like paintings; they just come out that way. I studied art in college and really liked the way the Impressionists moved away from creating literal art to painting the impressions of what they saw. I suppose in a way, you could equate what I'm doing to Impressionism.

f11: What was your first real exposure to photography as a creative process, and at what point did the bug really bite?

MH: I guess it goes back the first time I shot a roll of black and white film, when I was about seventeen or eighteen. When I got the film back,

I remember being awed by how the pictures looked. Maybe it was just because they looked different from all the colour pictures I'd taken to that point, I don't know. But I think the creative side of my photography began with that roll of film. Once I learned how to work in a darkroom, I loved being able to control my images - lighten them, darken them, or use dodging and burning to draw attention to certain elements within the image. I experimented a lot with different film types, becoming proficient in black and white and infrared film, and even doing a lot of hand coloring of my black and white prints.

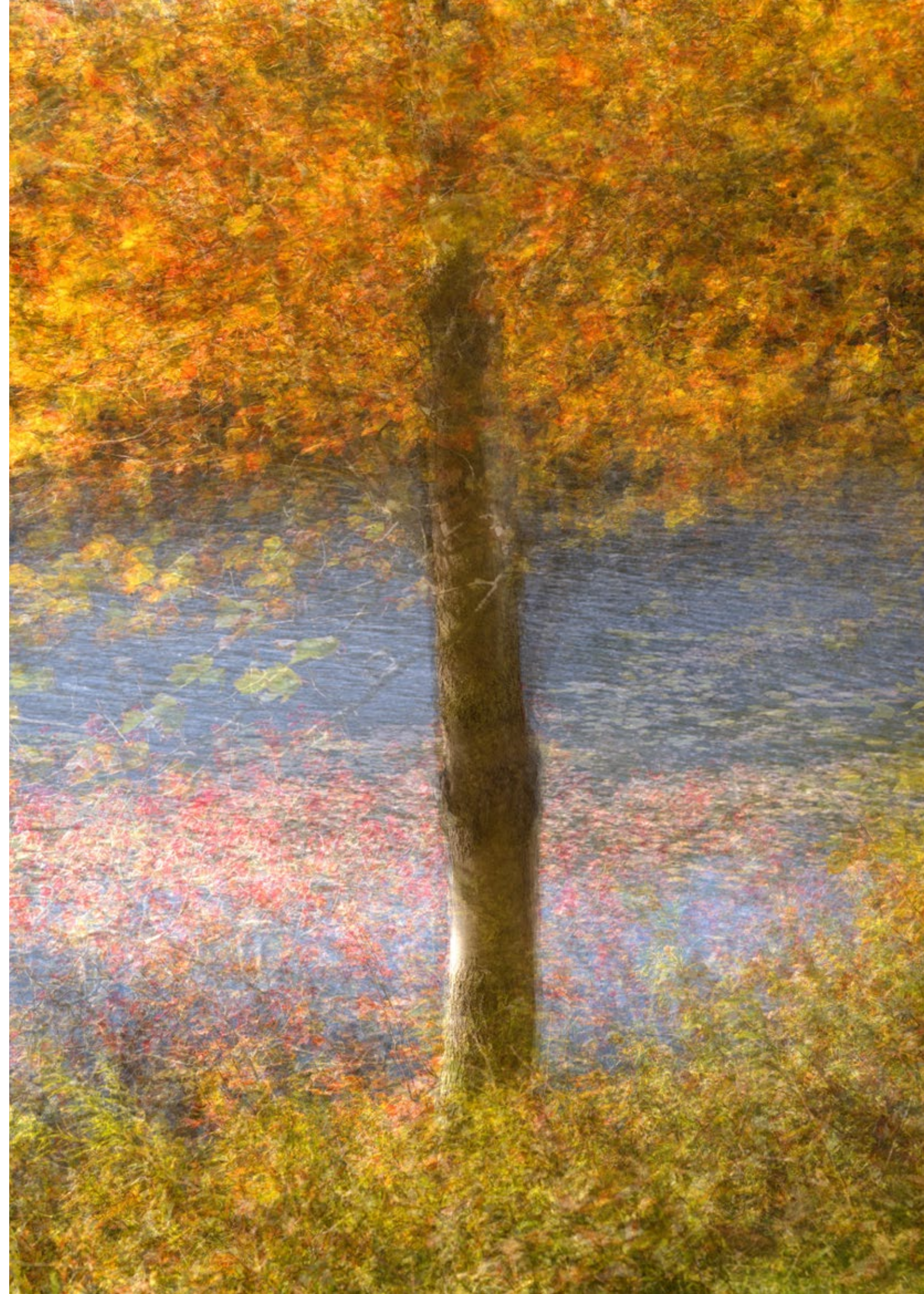
f11: Were you formally trained in photography, or did your pathway to the profession wind a different way?

MH: I studied art in college, eventually getting a degree in Studio Art, with a concentration in photography and video. But the degree was largely a lot of art history. Most of the photography I learned by experimenting myself or when I assisted other professionals and observed how they worked.

f11: In what context did you photograph the British royal family, and what circumstances placed you there?

MH: In the mid-1980s, I was going to college in the US, and coming home in the summers to live with my parents in England. I found out by reading the papers when members of the Royal Family would be visiting a school, ▶

*Autumn, Little Long Pond, Acadia, Maine, USA.
Pentax 645Z with SMC 75mm f2.8 lens. 12 layers.
© Michael Hudson*



opening a new hospital, or doing a walkabout. I'd load up my camera and see what sort of pictures I could get. Eventually I had an agency interested in my images. At the end of one summer, after shooting dozens of engagements covering almost every member of the extended Royal Family, I called the agency to submit my images. It was then that I was told that they needed my slides within a day or two of the event, and the photos were too outdated to use. Obviously, with today's digital technology, now they'd need them the same day. Fortunately, because I never sent the slides to the agency, I still have all my pictures, and today it's a nice record of a different age. In 2011, I went back to England and spent a night on the streets, holding a great vantage point near Buckingham Palace to see William and Kate's wedding. My patience was rewarded with some great pictures. I did that just for fun, but the pictures have paid dividends as I've gotten commercial photography jobs from clients who were impressed with the fact that I photographed a royal wedding, even as a member of the public.

***f11*: What sort of equipment immediately preceded the Pentax 645Z you're using now?**

MH: I've used Canon cameras since the early 1980s. I still do for most of my commercial work (mostly a 5D MkII and a 1D MkIV). I used a pair of Pentax 645's in the 1990's and never got rid of them. A couple of years ago when the 645Z came out, I was able to purchase it, and I still use some of the Pentax lenses I had bought twenty years earlier.

***f11*: As far as the Pentax is concerned, what criteria were key in your selection of this system and what lenses make up your working kit?**

MH: It's not an inexpensive camera, but the fact that I was able to use my older lenses was a big factor in making the decision to buy into the system. And the digital 645 works similarly enough to the older film 645, which helped ▶



*Autumn Beech tree. Pentax 645Z with DA 28-45mm ED AW SR lens. 13 layers.
© Michael Hudson*

in getting familiar with the system. I love the dynamic range of the camera, the way it operates and the full set of features. It's a really well designed camera; probably the best camera I've ever owned. I've added the superb 28-45mm f/4.5 lens to my kit in the last year and plan on adding more new series lenses as funds become available.

***f11:* What's the Pentax like to use, and what are the best and worst things about the system?**

MH: I found it to be very intuitive right away. It's a very well thought out camera. Even so, the first time I took the camera to Acadia National Park for a week of shooting, I brought the instruction manual with me in the camera bag. It has so many features, it was a little overwhelming, and still is sometimes. The menus seem a little haphazard and it can take a minute to find what I'm looking for, which would probably be my biggest gripe about the camera. Also, after a week of using it in the field, I find I have a sore thumb from pushing the image review buttons so many times - they're rather small. That's never happened on my Canons. But I love the dynamic range of the camera. I find that I rarely need to shoot HDR images anymore, there's so much detail in the shadows and highlights. There are lots of other little things that together make it a great camera- the tilting LCD panel, the optional GPS unit that helps me locate where I took my pictures, the electronic bubble level, and the sharper lenses - even my older ones - make it my favorite camera.

***f11:* Are you still using smaller formats for any of your other photography?**

MH: Yes, like I said earlier, most of my commercial photography is done with my Canons. I have a lot more lenses for that system and more than one camera body, so if one goes down on a job, I always have a backup camera with me. Having only one Pentax makes me a little nervous about taking it on commercial jobs, though it's been

a really nice camera on a few of those assignments. Apart from the 28-45mm lens, all the older Pentax lenses I have are manual focus, so for me it's been a better camera for shoots that don't require speed - it's been especially handy on some architectural jobs I've done.

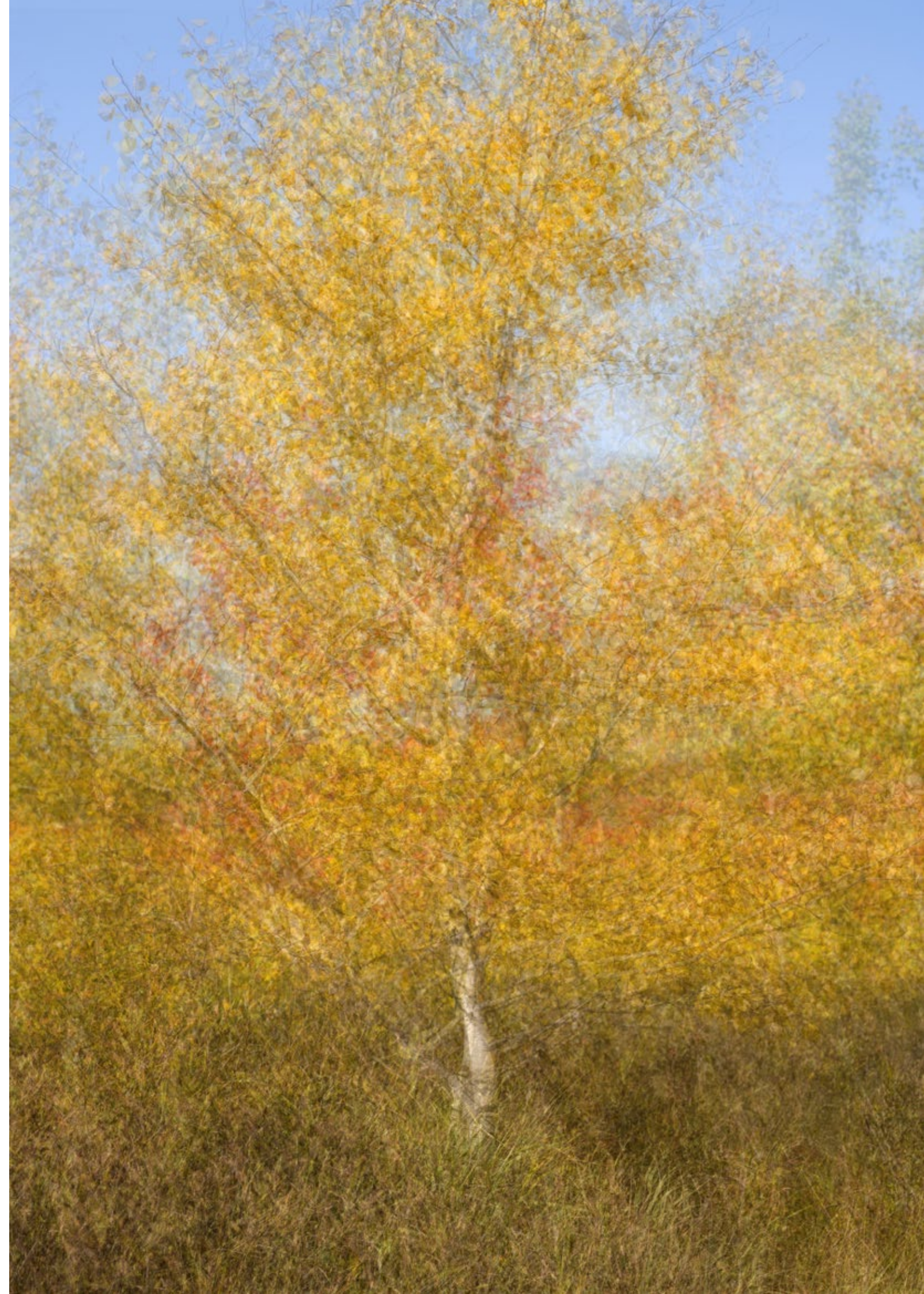
***f11:* You're working with some very large files to merge many images in order to create each of these final pieces. What sort of computer hardware are you using to juggle those huge files? Or do you spend a lot of time watching a progress bar or a spinning wheel?**

MH: I've been a Mac user for over twenty years, but I haven't updated my main computer for 5-6 years, so I'm using a 2010 Mac Pro. Not the fastest machine, but it does have about 20GB of RAM and it's not too bad for speed. Yes, often I do have to wait as files save or load, but it's all part of the process. The nice thing about having an older computer is that when I finally do upgrade, it's going to seem lightning fast!

***f11:* Are you shooting, or considering, other subjects which might lend themselves to the same techniques and process?**

MH: I haven't thought too much about it. Trees really lend themselves well to the technique since you can walk around a tree and use the trunk as your unchanging focal point. Whatever your subject, you need to be able to move around it. I've considered trying it with architecture - maybe skyscrapers, but it takes a lot more effort to walk around a huge building than a tree! But it is something I'm exploring. ►

Autumn Aspen, Acadia, Maine, USA. Pentax 645Z with SMC 75mm f2.8 lens. 8 layers. © Michael Hudson



f11: I understand that you were seeking gallery representation, have you been successful in forging a relationship?

MH: I've been so busy with projects lately that I haven't put the effort into building relationships with any galleries. In the last year, I've self published a coffee table book of my Acadia photography (www.acadiaphotobook.com), which has taken so much of my time (I'm actually visiting Acadia this week to do some books talks and signings), so really putting some effort into gallery representation is one of the next things on my list.

f11: Thanks for being with us, it's been a pleasure.

MH: Thank you; I appreciate the chance to share my images with you and your readers. ■

TS

www.hudsonfineart.com



*Hornbeam Carpinus. Pentax 645Z with SMC 75mm f2.8 lens. 11 layers.
© Michael Hudson*

‘The right light can transform a mundane scene into something extraordinary, if only for a few moments. And when, sometimes, it seems like you’re the only one to have witnessed that light, it’s truly awe-inspiring.’

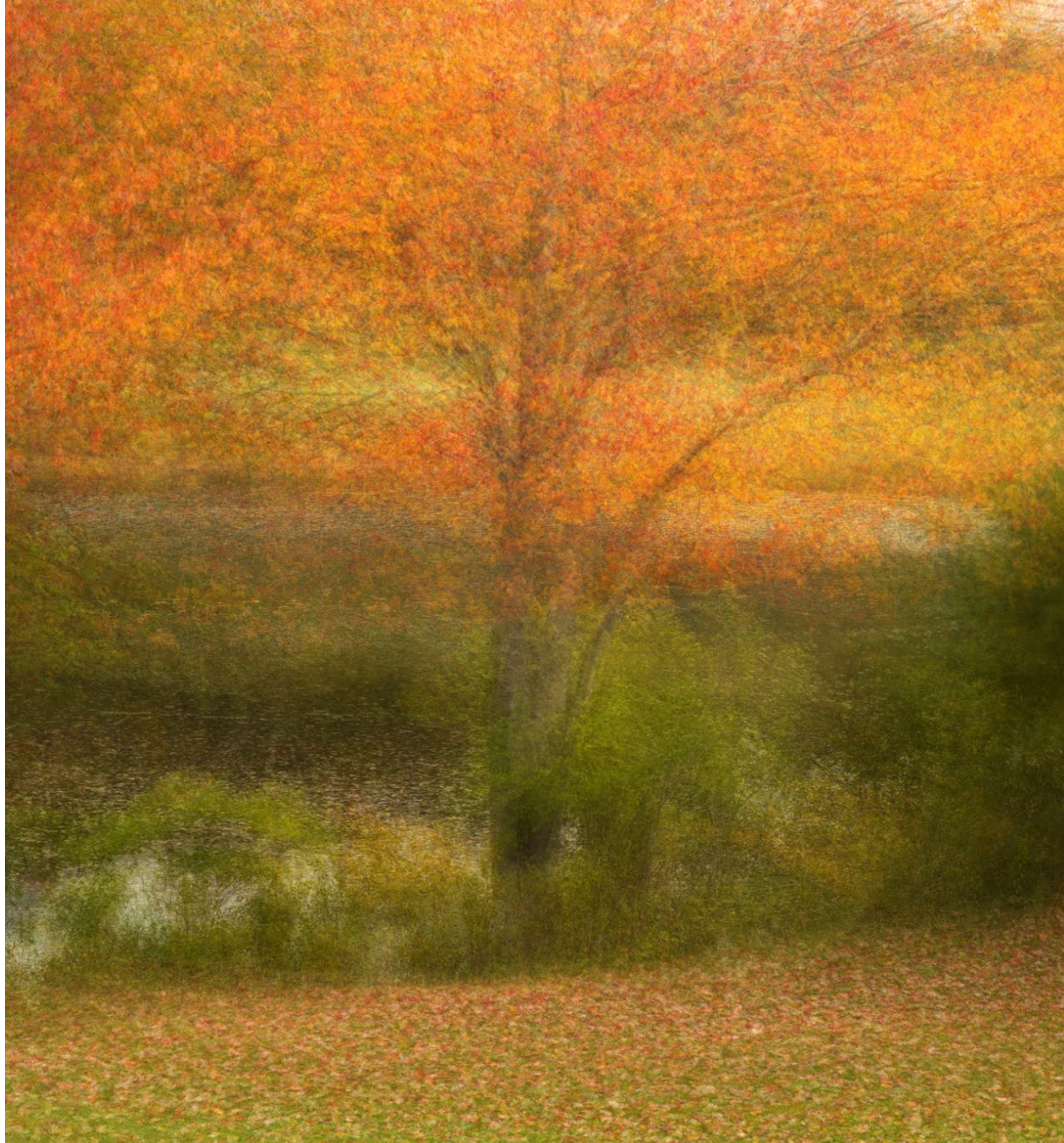


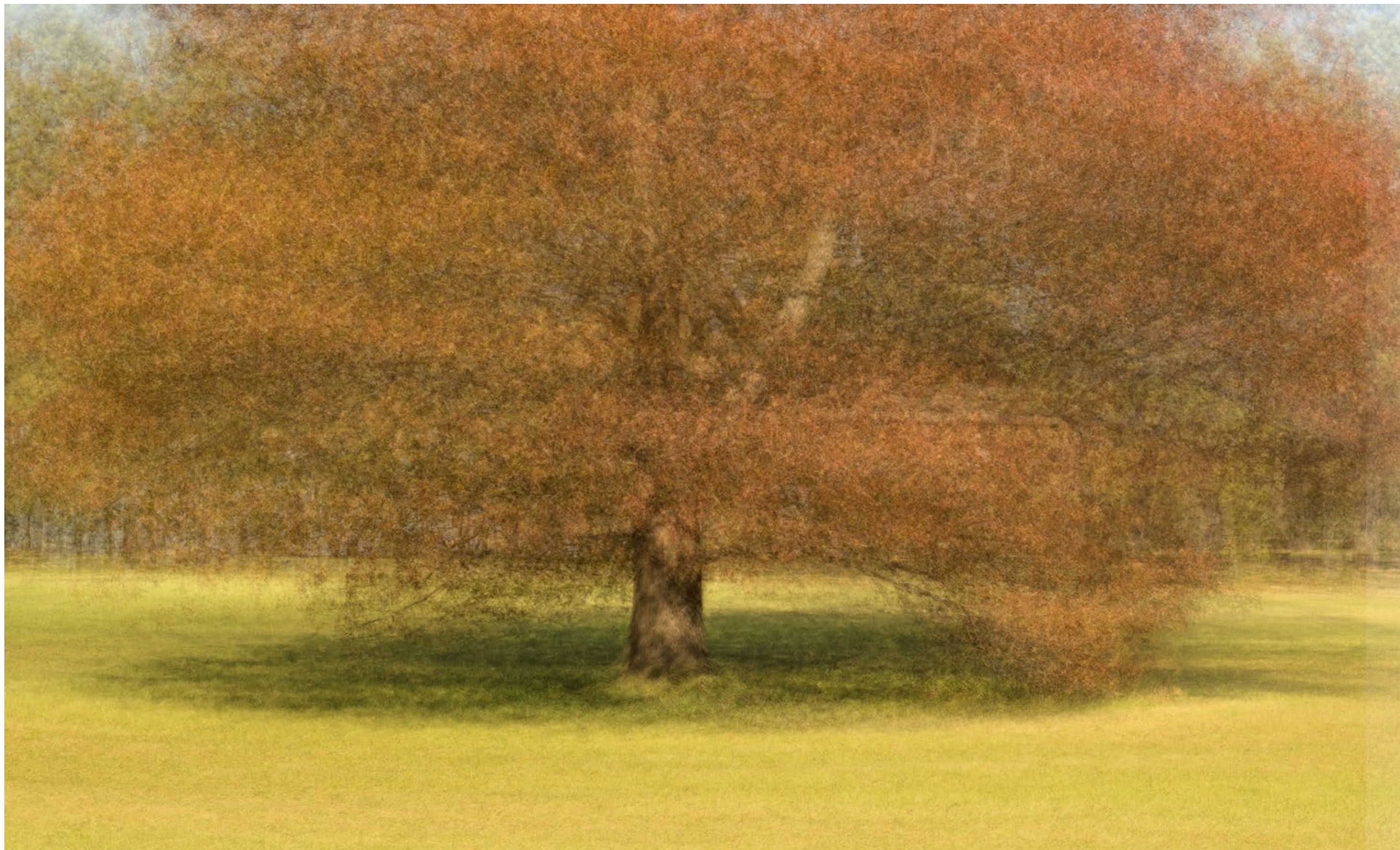
*Yellow Autumn Maple II, Acadia, Maine, USA. Pentax 645Z with DA 28-45mm ED AW SR lens. 10 layers.
© Michael Hudson*



*Impressionist Autumn. Pentax 645Z with SMC 75mm
f2.8 lens. 14 layers. © Michael Hudson*

‘Trees symbolise life, energy and shelter, and for me they’re a world apart from the busyness of life. Trees are some of the most beautiful elements in nature, and there’s no shortage of images of them. Artists have been making pictures of trees since the beginnings of photography, but a couple years ago, I was looking for a new, unique way to photograph them.’





Giant Oak. Pentax 645Z with SMC 75mm f2.8 lens. 18 layers. © Michael Hudson

►► Following double page spread:
Summer Oak. Pentax 645Z with SMC 75mm f2.8 lens. 27 layers. © Michael Hudson

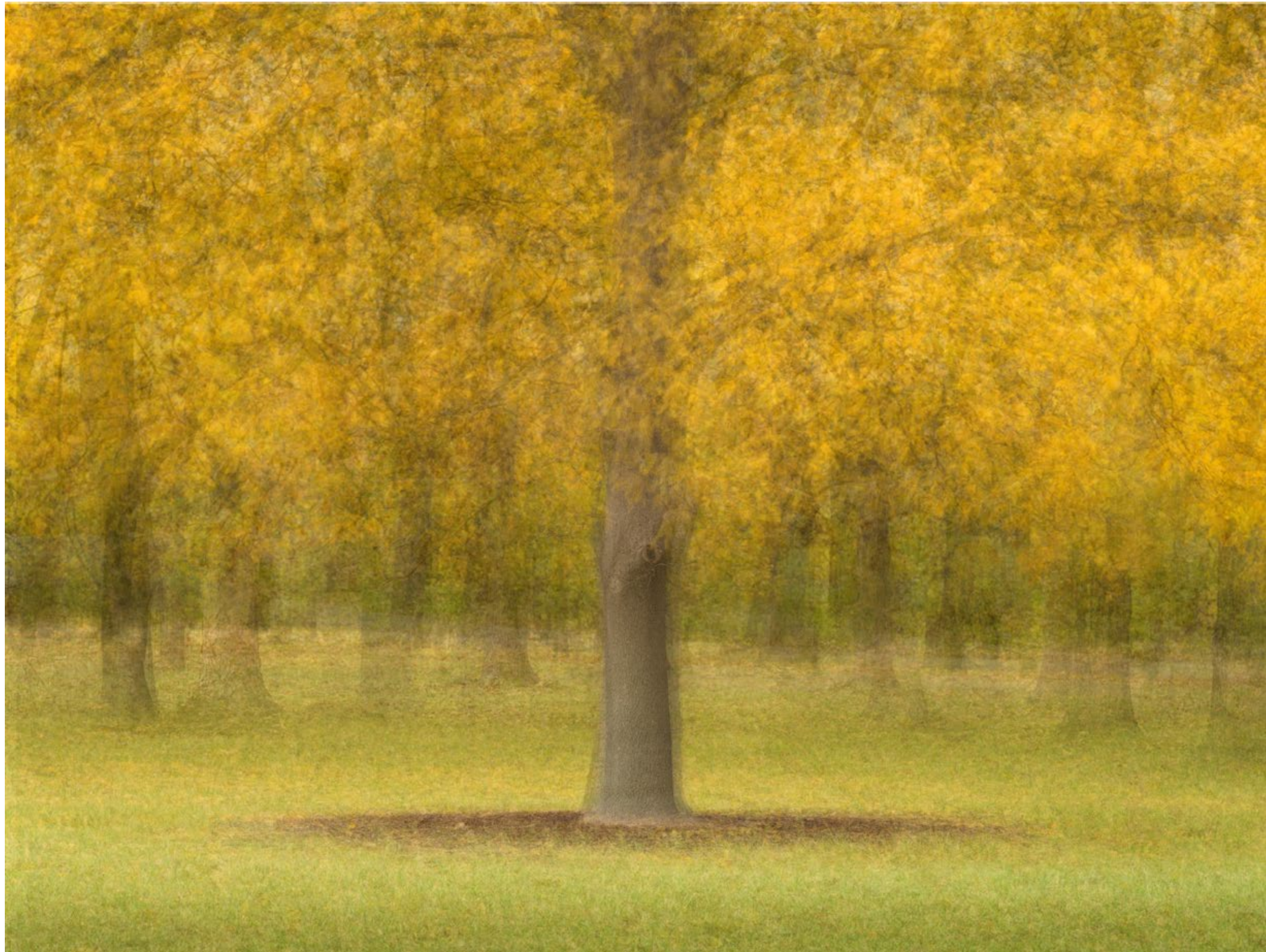




*Backlit Autumn Oak. Pentax 645Z with SMC 75mm f2.8 lens. 18 layers.
© Michael Hudson*

Autumn Walnut. Pentax 645Z with SMC 200mm f4 lens. 14 layers. © Michael Hudson

‘When I’m photographing these trees, I take a picture every few paces as I walk around them, sometimes making up to fifty images of one tree. Then I combine all the pictures into one final image to create a unique portrait of that tree...’



►► Following double page spread:
Farmyard Oak. Pentax 645Z with DA 28-45mm ED AW SR lens. 18 layers. © Michael Hudson





Spread your wings

In another article I mentioned that many people, even when given the chance to shoot any subject, will generally gravitate to their favourite genre whether that be landscape, portraiture, nature or what-ever. I know I do. I have just returned from a five week overseas holiday and 95% of my images are of architecture!

The Australian Photographic Society provides for a great diversity of photographic interests through six Special Interest Groups and by running many competitions and exhibitions. Members can also have a link to their own website, can participate in a range of print or digital folios and engage in social media type discussions via 'The Critique Room'. There is also the opportunity to enter APS approved International Exhibitions.

For those of us who enter competitions perhaps part of the reason for staying with our favourite genre is that we think there is a need to play it safe. But with all the options provided by the APS there is ample opportunity to explore other types of photography perhaps with no intention to exhibit and please judges. Fresh exploration of subject matter can result in a new found freedom and a release of creativity that may lead who knows where. Perhaps it would be a good idea to join a second or third Special

Interest Group or a folio where you would be welcomed and encouraged to expand your skills.

The headlong rush of technological development has given us better cameras with amazing low light capabilities and powerful software that enables the creation of images that were impossible not so long ago. These include photos of the night sky, light painting, drone photography, extreme panoramas, high dynamic range without the ugliness, composite images, focus stacking, wi-fi connected cameras, instant sharing and more.

The repetition of conventional safe images might be branded as variations on a theme or worse, clichéd. Surely the exploration of new image types where there is the opportunity to develop new styles and treatments is an attractive possibility. For example, the novelty of being able to capture the milky way is evolving into more sophisticated images that make use of interesting landscape foregrounds lit with available light or by light painting. I'm sure we will see this evolve further.

Most judges will respond positively when confronted with something different provided it is well executed, so why not spread your wings?

Robert Dettman AFIAP
APS Management Committee Councillor
Digital Division Chair

Diversity in Photography

All this and more is yours for the taking at the Photographic Society of New Zealand's (PSNZ) Central Regional Convention coming up in one of the country's most scenic areas - Porirua and the Pauatahanui Inlet - from 23 - 25 September 2016.

Hosted by the Kapiti Camera Club the organisers have assembled a lineup of outstanding photographers who will deliver a variety of presentations and workshops guaranteed to cover key genres of photography.

From capturing people, to nature or the aerial views captured by the 'Eye in the Sky'; from the architecture of local surrounds, to creating amazing portraits with off camera flash and studio lighting - some of New Zealand's most talented photographers will share their knowledge and technical skills with you.

Held at the modern and bright facilities of Whitireia NZ located at the edge of Porirua Harbour (20 minutes north of Wellington), the organisers are excited to bring you a mix of talented speakers including Professor Geoffrey Batchen, Grant Sheehan, Glen Howey, and Esther Bunning.

Workshops will also be hosted by photographers Nick Servian, David Hamilton, Chris Helliwell, Geoff Marshall and Fiona Foxall.

Wellington creative photographer and Nikon New Zealand Ambassador Esther Bunning will



share her 'whimsical' creative style of that allows her to create the fairytale-like illustrative and award winning imagery she is renowned for.

If piloting a drone is something you are keen to master, then Grant Sheehan is definitely one of New Zealand's master drone photographers and not to be missed. He has spent the past 20 years documenting his travels around the world, and also here in our own back yard.

Nick Servian is a highly creative award-winning photographer with a vast amount of experience in many fields, including advertising, architecture, corporate, people, studio, still life, cars, aerial, travel, and fine art. He runs his business from his own drive-in studio which he's had built in Wellington, "the coolest little capital in the world".

Regional Conventions are a key component on the annual PSNZ calendar and are a time for photographers to come together with old and new friends to learn and expand their technical skills in a relaxed, fun and friendly environment.

Registration is open to all photographers - you don't have to be a PSNZ member - and is a very reasonable \$120.00 for the full weekend.

For more information and registration go to:
<http://www.kapiticameraclub.co.nz/Convention>

Moira Blincoe LPSNZ
PSNZ Vice President & Councillor
for Communications

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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 Hokianga Experience tours:

'Learn about the history and culture of Hokianga from one whose roots are in this area, while discovering places only a local with Māori ancestry will know.'

Bridge on his photography workshops:

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

Come and visit Bridge's new gallery in the Hokianga:

Bridge Gallery
1 Clendon Esplanade, Rawene - on the Twin Coast Discovery Highway, Northland, NZ.

View and purchase Tony's evocative images.
Plus there's often a chance to meet the artist when he's in residence.

Tony's workshops are always 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.

www.thistonybridge.com
tony@thistonybridge.com
+64 21 227 3985



**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.

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

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

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

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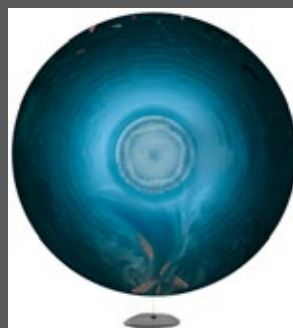
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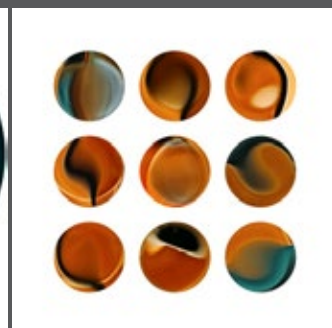
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PRODUCT REVIEW:

Hands On With
The DJI OsmoA steady-cam for
the people.

Being an avid drone enthusiast I jumped at the chance to take the new-ish Osmo for a test drive.

What exactly is it?

In a nutshell the Osmo is a hand held 4K capable video and 12mp still camera that is so well stabilised by the gimbal that it's possible to take time exposures without a tripod! It really is a steady-cam for the people! This kind of technology has never been so easily accessible, a few years ago you had to be a serious athlete to operate a full steady-cam rig, but now almost any enthusiast can achieve smooth tracking shots to their video productions for an outlay just north of a grand and a few hours of practice.

A hand held camera gimbal works in exactly the same way as the one on a drone, but instead of smoothing out the movements of the aircraft it smoothes out the movements of the operator.

For those still trying to get their heads around this thing, this is how DJI describe it:

- Fully stabilised 4K, 12MP camera optimized for ground use
- Slow motion and audio recording
- Tripod-free long exposures
- Remote camera control
- Secure grip
- 6-hour standby time
- 1 hour of video shooting

When it comes to subject matter there are endless possibilities. Any situation where a smooth-as-silk tracking shot would look great is an excuse to shoot with the Osmo. I know of people using it for real estate home walk-throughs, travel video, concerts, action sports, events, even chasing pets and babies around, the list is endless. Searching 'Osmo' in Youtube will uncover a whole spectrum of uses and then some.

**Unboxing**

The packaging and presentation of DJI products is first class, right up there with Apple. On opening the box everything you need to get started is there, well protected and pristine. In their tradition of thinking of everything DJI have even included a soft case for safe transportation. The only thing not included in the package is a smartphone. You will need an IOS or Android smart device meeting the specs outlined in the er, specs...

Assembly

Assembly takes only a few minutes and becomes second nature once done a couple of times. The camera that comes with the Osmo is the same in appearance and function as the X3 that adorns the Inspire 1 quadcopter in it's entry level form, however it has a couple of mods to make it 'land' friendly. The Osmo version of

the X3 camera/gimbal features locking positions for all axis' and it's 20mm (35mm format equivalent) f/2.8 lens is set to focus from less than a metre away instead of around 4m in the case of the aerial version.

So it's just a case of inserting a fully charged battery into the handle, unlocking the camera, attaching an iPhone or android equivalent, and you're almost ready to go.

Your smart device uses the same DJI GO app that the Ronin and all of the drones use to view the footage and take control of the Osmo. They converse by WiFi so your camera needs to be connected to the Osmo via your Wi-Fi settings menu. Once connected the app can be fired up and the Osmo turned on.

Warning - Before you turn the Osmo on you need to place the unit on a firm flat surface while it goes through it's start up gimbal ►

calibration and once complete you will see the live feed on your device. If you’ve used any of DJI’s drones before the interface will be instantly familiar and if not it’ll come easily enough as it’s very intuitive.

Setting up

Without going in to minute detail (this is a rapid review after all) there are a series of menus located around the outside of the picture area that allow control of all functions for both video and stills shooting such as file and video format, frame rate, ISO, white balance, manual and auto exposure modes, and an in depth menu allowing customization of the way the gimbal reacts to the type of motion that is being captured. This can get very involved but thankfully there are three pre-set options – Slow, Med and Fast which I found covered most situations I encountered. Nice to be able to customize to the nth degree if needed though.

Again, too much to go into here but the handle itself contains buttons for shooting stills, recording video, controlling the gimbal etc, and many of the operations available in the app can also be performed using the buttons (or a combination thereof) so you have many options to customize the experience to suit your own preferences.

Hands on

My first assignment with the Osmo consisted of chasing artistic roller skaters around the rink capturing their technique so that it could be analysed by their coaches to improve the routine’s and identify any problem areas. Coaches have always videoed their charges for this purpose but usually it’s wobbly phone footage from a fixed viewpoint and is not always of much actual use.

I was able to follow the skater around a sequence at speeds varying between walking and running pace and still managed to produce steady footage that was very well received ▶



Camera

Model: X3/FC350H

Sensor:

Sony Exmor R CMOS; 1/2.3”
Effective pixels: 12.40M
(Total pixels: 12.76M)

Lens:

94° FOV 20mm
(35mm format equivalent)
f/2.8

Focus: 3.5m (suitable range 1.5m to ∞)

ISO Range:

100-3200 (video);100-1600 (photo)

Electronic Shutter Speed:

8s-1/8000s
(up to 30s when camera is on M mode)

Max. Image Size: 4000 x 3000 pixels

Still Photography Modes:

Single Shot
Photo Burst Mode: 3/5/7 shots
Auto Exposure Bracketing (AEB):
3/5 bracketed frames @ 0.7EV bias
Interval
Timelapse
Auto Panorama
Selfie Panorama

Video Resolution:

UHD: 4K (4096 x 2160) 24/25p
UHD 4K (3840 x 2160) 24/25/30p
2.7K (2704 x 1520) 24/25/30p
FHD: 1920 x 1080 24/25/30/48/50/60/120p
HD: 1280 x 720 24/25/30/48/50/60p

Video Recording Modes:

Auto; Slow Motion(FOV 47°)

Max. Video Bitrate: 60 Mbps

Supported File Formats:

FAT32(≤32 GB);exFAT (>32 GB)

Photo Formats: JPEG, DNG

Video Formats:

MP4/MOV (MPEG-4 AVC/H.264)

Supported SD Cards:

Micro SD; Max. Capacity: 64 GB;
Class 10 or UHS-1

Operating Temperature:

32° to 104° F (0° to 40° C)

Audio Output: 48 KHz; AAC

Intelligent Battery:

Model: HB01-522365
Type: LiPo
Capacity: 980 mAh
Energy: 10.8 Wh
Voltage: 11.1V

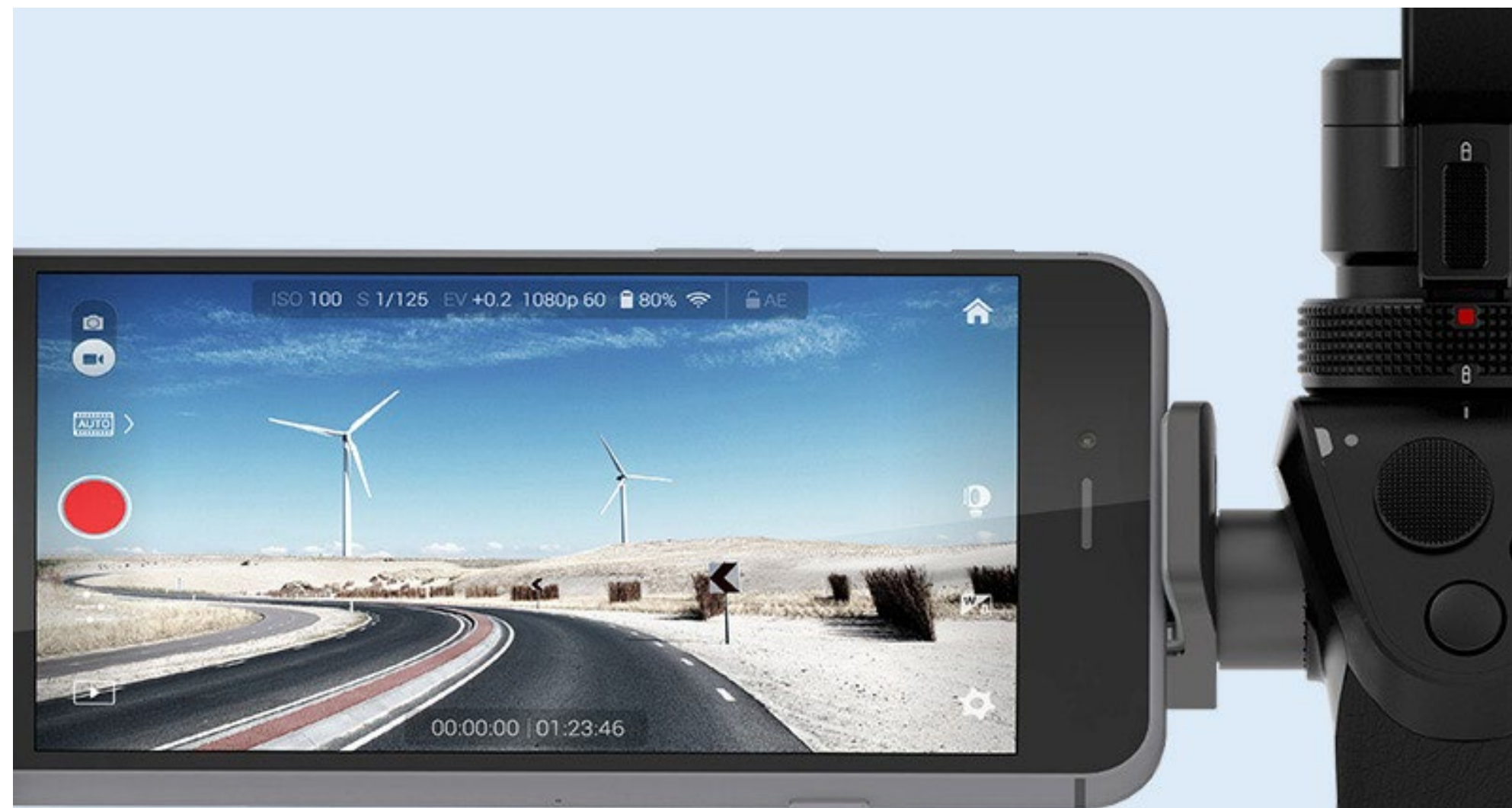
by performer and coach alike. However, I must qualify - this was only once I got my own steady-cam technique under a degree of control. It's not quite as simple as it looks and the little things like keeping the subject centered (top to bottom, left to right) in the frame while trying to move as smoothly as possible took a few hours of practice to get a handle on, and it's given me a whole new respect for 'proper' steady-cam operators.

The rough with the smooth

Nothing in this world is perfect (sorry) but there's nothing too major in the downside department. I have to mention that the battery doesn't last much past 30 mins in the situations I used it in but on the positive side they are cheap so it'd be best to have a few charged up in your bag as you're not going to want to stop once you start shooting with this thing. Also, with enough swooping around the gimbal can get confused and end up quite far from the centered position it started in requiring a bit of contortion to keep it pointed where you want it, but it's simply a case of stopping and holding it level or at a preferred angle between sequences, and pressing the trigger button to allow it to automatically re-center. I was almost always able to get to the end of my shot before having to do this.

The quality of the video footage and stills are actually very good considering the modest outlay, and there are numerous examples out there of Osmo and Inspire 1 footage being integrated into productions shot on far more salubrious main cameras and with a few tweaks in post looking indistinguishable from the rest of the footage in the final output. Of course if you plan to shoot with an Inspire 1 the Osmo footage will blend seamlessly with your aerial sequences.

Taking things to the next (quality) level, if you are fortunate enough to pilot an Inspire 1 Pro or R the Osmo handle kit plus the X5 adapter ►



REMOTE CONTROL

All of these shooting modes can be controlled and triggered by remote control from within the DJI GO app on your smartphone. Mount the Osmo on a tripod, or any of the other available mounts, and take a few steps back to a position from where you can easily overlook the scene then control the camera when you're ready.

is all you need to augment your drone footage with equally smooth footage from the terra-firma perspective. Imagine the possibilities...

Conclusion

Overall this thing is nothing short of revolutionary, and renders a lot of more expensive kit if not redundant, then at least much harder to justify. I say more expensive kit because it literally has no comparable alternative in the NZ market currently. It enables almost anyone to capture high quality steady-cam type footage that was but a dream at this price point less than a couple of a years ago.

Would I buy one? I'd say definitely but it'd be a tough call between the Osmo and stepping up to the full-monty Ronin with my trusty D810 on board... ■

Buzz

gary@f11magazine.com

To learn even more, check out these two excellent reviews:

TECHRADAR
ENGADGET



OSMO

REIMAGINE MOVEMENT



4K UHD Video

12 Megapixel Photos

3-Axis Gimbal

Timelapse

Automatic Panorama

Long Exposure

A SMARTER CAMERA

Motion without blur. Action shots without shake. Perfect video even when you move. Thanks to advanced technologies specifically designed to keep the camera flat no matter how you move it, the DJI Osmo helps you record videos and take photos like never before. It is much more than just a camera, it helps you create with more freedom than ever.

Available at the following
authorised NZ retailers:





*Amazing small
group photo
adventures...*



Visit our website for
more details:

www.worldphotoadventures.com.au

or contact Julia

julia@worldadventures.com.au



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IAN POOLE does PHOTOGRAPHY



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

Are you looking for assistance in any of the following?

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

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

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

+61 0424 727 452 ~ poolefoto@gmail.com

Blog poolefoto.wordpress.com

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



►► Continued from page 146...

However, putting that aside, my first response would be that the judges (male and female) were briefed to find the best photographs showing a documentation of the human condition. Note the requirement to arrive at a winning photograph. All the judges came from different areas of the industry but carried with them skills and abilities to assess and arrive at a conclusion. Some were skilled practitioners in documentary photography, and all possessed that necessary ability to assess, analyse and score a photograph within the constraints of a well-documented and rigorously maintained process. The degree of difficulty argument is not new in the awards system.

The wedding photographer working in the pouring rain, the newborn photographer with the wailing baby, the architectural photographer without a cloud in the sky, the commercial photographer with a rubbish skip in front of a building at 5am, the medical photographer with surgeons and anaesthetists in front of their view - these and many other obstacles are part and parcel of a professional photographer's daily life. To imagine that judges are unaware or unable to acknowledge these challenges is misguided and a sad slight on the skills and experience of the judges who worked tirelessly to ensure that high standards ensued.

Fortunately with some long hours, some diligent consideration, some robust discussion and eventual collegiate agreement, the 2016 NZIPP Iris Awards were a resounding success - congratulations to the Institute and their many workers on a job well done.

Be sure to experience the awards for yourself in the comprehensive coverage which features in next month's issue of this magazine. ■

Ian Poole

Poolefoto.wordpress.com

ian@f11magazine.com

*'The way to art is through craft;
not around craft' - Ansel Adams*

I was reminded of this cryptic comment whilst attending the recent *Iris Awards* held in Wellington New Zealand by the NZ Institute of Professional Photography.

With over 1,200 photographs by local and overseas photographers judged in various categories over three days, this was an event of resounding success. Some great images were viewed, discussed and awarded. With this access to vast riches of both imagery and photographic knowledge, all gathered together in a couple of small rooms, it was an opportunity to absorb creativity beyond compare.

It was not the fact that there was an audience - it was the composition of that audience that surprised me. The judging of the wedding and portrait categories were unsurprisingly a case of a full house at every session. Hardly to be marveled at when the photographic industry is largely constructed on the business of domestic image making. My surprise was that these people disappeared from the rooms when other apparently unrelated categories were being considered.

This is the age where few domestic photographers maintain a formal studio, preferring to work from a home environment, with resulting wedding and portrait images being taken in informal outdoor surroundings. For example the family group in a park setting, or the wedding couple being dwarfed by a large factory wall. These good uses of the natural and urban landscape are part and parcel of the 21st century portrait or wedding photographic experience.

So, I wondered, where were all the wedding and portrait photographers when the Landscape

Category was being judged? Where did they go? There were many entrants in the room but nowhere near the number of practitioners in evidence when the domestic genres were being assessed. Many a time I have observed the plaintive cries of wedding photographers on social media agonising over an upcoming wet weekend and seeking fresh ideas and secret locations to use while documenting their brides and grooms. It occurred to me, wouldn't observing the locations chosen by landscape workers be potentially useful for placing your bridal couples within their context? Or a factory, or some city hall steps, or a strange dark and moody alleyway? These are all locations where I have seen portraits produced for bridal couples working under a photographer's direction.

A further cause for concern for me was the surprising comment by some audience members during the judging of the Documentary Category that men were assessing birth photographs! This ironic observation would have had the potential for humour in times other than the politically correct ones we live in today, but the strength of such comments was a little daunting. The category quite reasonably embraces the idea of the camera as a means of recording (documenting) the human endeavour. A broad ethos at best.

The criticism was two pronged. Firstly that male judges had no understanding of the birth process and that they were unaware of the degree of difficulty involved in this area of photography. This seemed a somewhat sexist approach.

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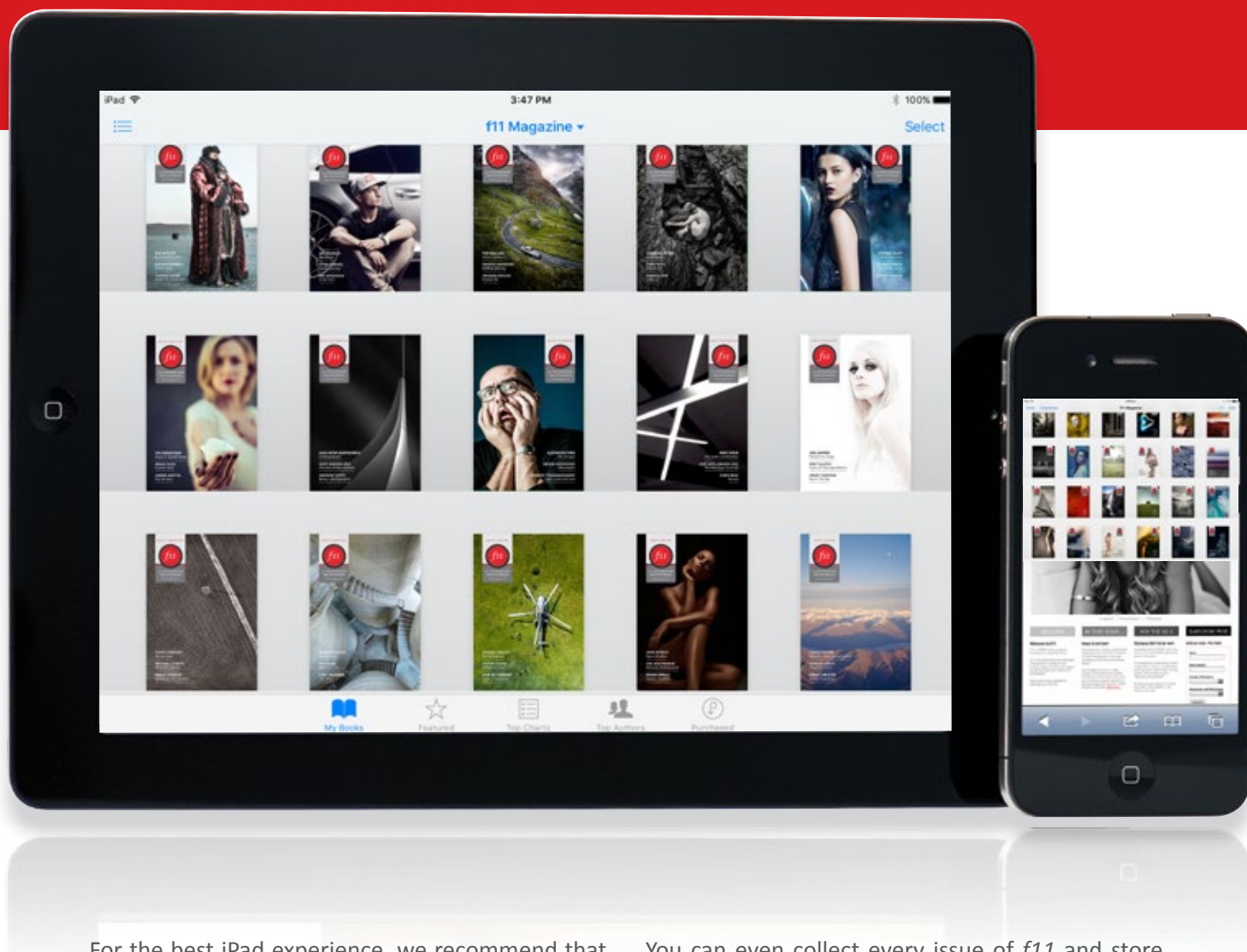
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