

ISSUE 66 | JUNE 2017



for PHOTOGRAPHERS
AND AFICIONADOS

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CHRIS MCLENNAN
Global roaming

PETER DAVIDSON
Life in reverse

GABRIEL HILL
ImPortraits



COFFEE U FEEL

THE HAVANA COFFEE WORKS STORY

BY GEOFF MARSLAND WITH TOM SCOTT



Havana Coffee is a New Zealand institution. This book tells the astonishing story of pioneering Wellington Coffee Baron, Geoff Marsland – a café king, roasting entrepreneur, good bloke and caffeine visionary.



Havana Coffee Works is a visual symphony of cars, cigars, cafes and coffee roasters.

Marsland's biography of a home-grown business success, from its beginnings in Cuba Street, Wellington; importing Cuban coffee; to setting up plantations in the Pacific; to its current coffee empire status, bringing Coffee U Feel to the people, is a heady coffee-powered ride from beginning to end.

It is also a social history of Cuba Street and Wellington over the last three decades, with guts, determination, larger-than-life personalities and turf wars.

Published by Phantom House Books
www.phantomhouse.com

Price: \$50.00
Hard cover & dust jacket



WELCOME TO *f11* MAGAZINE

Welcome to issue 66!

Our photographers this month hail from New Zealand, the United Kingdom and Switzerland.

Chris McLennan is a New Zealand photographer who shoots all around the world, mainly capturing travel and tourism, wildlife and culture. We're sharing images resulting from some of his global roaming, in this instance with particular emphasis on his lifestyle and adventure work. He's a man as much at home below the waves as above, and drone photography is also very much a part of his repertoire of skills. Chris shot our stunning cover.

Englishman Peter Davidson is a former commercial photographer who now shoots for himself, favoring the power of monochrome and delighting in relatively simple kit. He's enjoying the freedom and autonomy of being his own client, and clearly casting his powers of observation on the lives and times of his fellow man.

Gabriel Hill is a Swiss photographer who works commercially, specialising in the portraiture and editorial sectors. The work he's sharing with us is highly personal, as his ImPortraits series documents the plight of refugees by focusing on the single item many of them carried when they fled their own countries. Two companion series also feature here and expand on that central theme in different directions.

Each of these image-makers is a fine example of the power of photography, and the role it plays in all of our lives.

This issue also contains an interesting guest editorial by Australian businesswoman Libby Jeffery, of Memento Pro. Libby has researched crowd funding, a process increasingly being used by photographers as a method of financing and producing photo books of their own. It's a thorough piece of investigation and lends considerable insight into the process.

We hope you enjoy these features, and this significant issue, as it celebrates exactly six years of bringing you *f11* Magazine. ■

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:

ads@f11magazine.com

Design/Layout:

Donna Hoyle and Adela Lee
of Donna Hoyle Design

Web Developer:

David MacLeod

Contributors:

Gary Baildon :: Tony Bridge ::
Ian Poole

Featured In This Issue:

Chris McLennan :: Peter Davidson
:: Gabriel Hill

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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...



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.



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 142** of this issue.

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.



GUEST EDITORIAL: LIBBY JEFFERY Since co-founding Australia's first print-on-demand photo book company, Memento Pro, in 2004, Libby has been a passionate advocate for the antipodean photography community, establishing the Australian and New Zealand Photobook of the Year Awards, and connecting photographers with designers, publishers and distributors, to extend their profile and market locally and internationally. This was a natural progression from communications and media producer roles with the Australian Interactive Media Industry Association (AIMIA), the Australian Society of Authors (ASA) and the ISP, Ozemail. With a Graduate Diploma in Media Arts and Production, Libby also has a soft spot for copywriting and journalism.



'It is always important to know when something has reached its end. Closing circles, shutting doors, finishing chapters, it doesn't matter what we call it; what matters is to leave in the past those moments in life that are over.' - Paulo Coelho, *The Zahir*



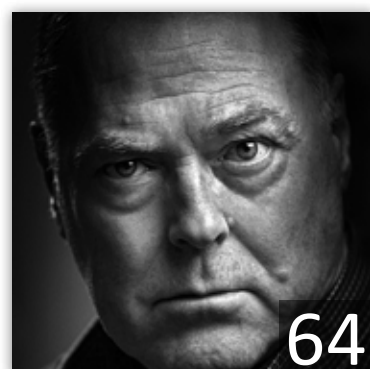
Chris MCLENNAN

Global roaming

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© Chris McLennan



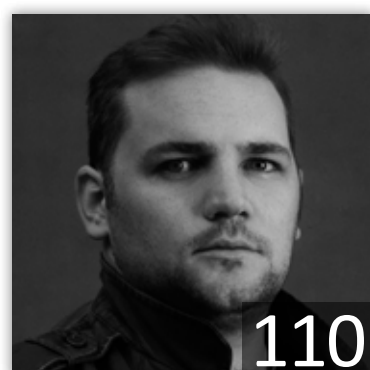
Peter DAVIDSON

Life in reverse

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© Peter Davidson



Gabriel HILL

ImPortraits

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© Gabriel Hill

'I shoot fully digital now and can't imagine going back to film. I know it can provide some fantastic creative options for those who like to create abstract and artistic works. But from a commercial perspective digital is really the only option for me, and I much prefer it.' - Chris McLennan



COVER IMAGE
Native Inupiat lady in traditional costume,
Bering Sea, Alaska, USA. © Chris McLennan
<http://www.cmphoto.co.nz>

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THE INFINITE NOW

Cinematographer Armand Dijcks manipulated original oceanscapes by Australian photographer Ray Collins to create infinite looping images in full motion, then set the results to music performed by trumpeter Andre Heuvelman and pianist Jeroen van Vliet.

studiodaily via Vimeo

CLICK ON THE SCREEN IMAGE TO VIEW THIS VIDEO



CHOCOLATE MOUNTAIN METAL

A New Yorker settles in the California desert near one of the largest active military bombing ranges in the United States. The range supports a community of outlaws and anarchists who dare to scavenge the abandoned missile parts for recyclable metal. A film by Danielle Davis.

Staff Picks > via Vimeo

CLICK ON THE SCREEN IMAGE TO VIEW THIS VIDEO



BUY MY VITARA

When it came time for Eugene Romanovsky - by day, creative director and VFX supervisor at Tel Aviv studio Gravity - to sell his beloved 1996 Suzuki Vitara, he decided to really sell it. The result is this ridiculously epic ad that continuously tops itself, earning viral video status with more than four million YouTube views, and counting...

studiodaily via YouTube

CLICK ON THE SCREEN IMAGE TO VIEW THIS VIDEO

POLAR BEARS OF SVALBARD

Join AIPP Master Photographer Joshua Holko on an expedition above the Arctic Circle to photograph wild Polar Bears living and hunting on the pack ice north of Svalbard.

EXPEDITION DATES AND KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- March 26th - April 3rd 2018 Winter Expedition
- July 25th - August 4th 2018 Summer Expedition
- Strictly limited to maximum of 12 Participants per expedition
- Ice Hardened Expedition Ship 'M.S Origo' with super low decks for photography
- Photographic Instruction and assistance as required
- Dedicated photographic trip for Polar Bears, Walrus, landscape and other Wildlife
- Icebergs, Pack Ice and Incredible Arctic Landscapes



Take your photography to the next level with Joshua Holko
The 2015 Global Arctic Photographer of the Year

For more information please visit www.wildnaturephototravel.com



Generation lost

Our family's photographic history begins with a collection of small contact prints of my grandparents and parents in their youth, and some larger very well preserved prints of the family weddings of the time. These very tactile prints, on what I guess must have been double weight bromide papers, have not only survived

but look as great today as they would have done in the 1930s, 40s and 50s. Lord only knows where the negatives went, as only prints were handed down as our heirlooms.

I'm a baby boomer. So my early childhood, and that of my siblings, was pretty thoroughly documented, originally by good quality simple 1950s and 60s vintage fixed lens cameras. The resulting well printed and carefully fixed rectangular images, on what turned out to be delightfully archival papers, have stood the test of time.

Around my tenth birthday, Kodak 126 Instamatics entered the household, ensuring that our memories from that time and until the late seventies were captured in the form of square format 3.5 inch colour prints. Some have survived remarkably well, but in others colour has shifted. Most have now been scanned, and saved for future generations, as once again nobody knows where those pesky negs are.

Around the time my children, and those of my siblings, were arriving, and thanks to a love of photography, superb quality 35mm single lens reflex and point and shoot film cameras were on hand to lock their childhoods away for posterity. We now have countless albums, boxes of almost perfect but rejected for some reason loose prints,

and both the negatives and transparencies – although it would take months to locate any one image in particular. Of course a flurry of digital cameras followed.

Today, in the digital age, as the first of our children begin to deliver us delightful grandchildren, I'm painfully aware that most family occasions are now captured with the ubiquitous cellphone cameras in the hands of everyone present.

But few of these images are ever printed, and while some of those that are may find a frame, they'll never reach an album. I'm constantly urging 'print, transfer and backup' but I fear two things. My cautions fall on deaf ears, and I'm the only one doing this.

The fashion item status of these cellphones, and their resulting short life cycles, compounded by their frequent loss or demise, mean that many of these images will not survive to be treated as anyone's legacy.

As for the images uploaded to short term cloud sharing applications which don't store the image beyond a day or so, well don't get me started as that's madness.

Is all of this progress?

Maybe not. ■

TS

tim@f11magazine.com
feedback@f11magazine.com

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Document or expression

A fork in the road for photographers

One of the wonderful things about having your own gallery is the people who come in, and especially those who stop for a chat. It is a singular pleasure when other artists (yes, I count myself among their number) stay to talk, because we can find common ground among the bookshelves of art history and practice.

I recently had a visit from an artist who initially trained in London, struggled for 5 years to survive as an artist, and then went off to study and practise criminal law for 15 years or so. She then realised that while law fed her belly, it wasn't doing anything for her soul, so she has returned to her painting. She is ready for it. And life has given her a toolbox of experience to underpin her art practice.

Time and time again I have met people who have studied Fine Art and been so traumatised by the experience that they couldn't go near it

for years. Some have walked away, never to return. Only a very few continue onwards. And for some, like Alice my visitor, it takes time before they are ready to return.

'Your work is really different,' she pointed out, 'Why is that the case?'

So, I shared my own journey.

'You know,' I said, 'until I came to Hokianga, I didn't sell a single work in ten years. However, as the British artist, Damien Hirt says, "you don't stop making art just because nobody is buying". One day, several years ago, I took my work to a dealer gallery in the hope she might be willing to carry it. She was obviously a shrewd operator who had a clear understanding of the market.'

'My God, this work is beautiful,' she said, 'however, I am not going to carry it.'

'Why?' I asked.

'Don't get me wrong,' she said, 'this is outstanding work, but I will never be able to sell it.'

Here is why. Everyone is a photographer, and these are clearly photographs. Now you and I both know that they couldn't shoot work like this and that they probably wouldn't even try. But in their minds, they can, so why would they pay money for it?'

She had a point. So I left, somewhat downcast. I headed for a local bar, to drown my sorrows and reflect. In vino veritas, perhaps.

Then as I reflected upon what she had said, I saw the gift in what she had told me. I was free. Free to follow my own heart and do what was right for me, and what reflected who I was. I had the choice to step away and make work for

me and me alone, to engage in a conversation with myself. I didn't need to win awards and I didn't need to meet any criteria other than those I had determined for myself. And what was the worst that could happen? I might begin to listen to myself, rather than making work to please others.

And then, when I came to Hokianga, my work changed radically. At first I didn't understand what was emerging, then I began to comprehend. Tawhirimātea, the Māori God of The Winds, had blown me home to my ancestral roots. As I explored my family history, I found a line stretching back more than 1000 years to the voyage of the great Polynesian navigator, Kupe and an ancestor who arrived with him on the ocean-going waka (canoe) Matawhaorua. I was surrounded by my ancestors, and in the middle of a very old spiritual tradition, of which I ►



was genetically a part. Finally, after 63 years away, I had come home. My own history was my topic, and that was enough.

I think in some ways we have come to a kind of crossroads with the medium. Actually, it is more of a Y-intersection. We can continue with photography as a medium for documenting, and that is fine, since the medium has its roots in the 'supposedly accurate' documentation of the world around us and there is a long tradition of doing just that. From Timothy O'Sullivan to William Eggleston, the world 'as seen' is topic enough.

What has changed however, is the ease with which it can now be accomplished. Mastery of film takes years; mastering digital can be accomplished in a couple of weekends or at least a few months. Modern smartphones ask us to do only one thing, to look and see. The rest is taken care of for us. At the end of the day however, it is a photograph, and, since everyone is a photographer, the value of this has been reduced to a commodity.

The other path is to use our process as a vehicle for self-discovery and self-expression, to see the camera as a mechanical paintbrush and use it, and all the associated post-production techniques, as the canvas for our work, and our authentic, individual voice, assuming we know what that is. And that is the key to making work that speaks with a new and intriguing voice. We need to put as much effort (if not more) into learning about who we are, if we are to find our own way across the grasslands. When we are focused upon our own journey, then the camera becomes our companion rather than the authoritarian dictator it has the potential to be.

It seems to me that the pathway can be summed up as consisting of 2 possible options.

In the first, the camera-as-document, the camera points outwards, away from us, towards what is before us. As it has traditionally done. We do not have to look into ourselves, rather

to step back from the, perhaps-frightening, prospect of encountering ourselves.

The other pathway is to see the camera as pointing inwards, and offering an opportunity to look inwards. Perhaps then it might truly reflect those understandings in outward and concrete form.

Whichever one we choose, the choice is for us and for us alone. ■

TB

tony@f11magazine.com
www.thistonybridge.com

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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 now offering bespoke tours:

Travel with a friend or a loved one, let us create a bespoke tour together with dates and destinations to suit you. North or South Island.

Limited to two guests, travel with me to discover hidden places and Maori culture. Taking bookings for 2017 and 2018 now.

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





CROWDFUNDING A PHOTO BOOK

Over the last ten years, traditional book publishers have become increasingly resistant to photographic books because they're considered too niche, and a risky return on investment. While more independent art book publishers have appeared on the scene, they generally

have to be creative with their fundraising to subsidise projects that may not succeed on sales alone. So unless you've secured a trade publisher, a generous Arts patron, or you've got a personal savings stash, online crowdfunding is a popular and viable solution to bankroll a photo book project.

To identify the essential ingredients for a successful photo book crowdfunding campaign, we've analysed a series of local and international projects that met or exceeded their financial target, and picked the brains of their hosts.

As the traditional boundaries of book publishing began to blur, New York publisher, Aperture Foundation, first experimented with Kickstarter crowdfunding in 2013 and Richard Renaldi's book, *Touching Strangers*. They raised US\$80,943 from 885 backers, a whopping \$71,000 more than intended. Buoyed by success, they have now underwritten three publications via community funding, the latest being Doug DuBois', *My Last Day at Seventeen*, that attracted \$31,836 from 328 pledgers.

The most successful photo book crowdfunding campaign we could identify was hosted by UK illustrative photographer, Kirsty Mitchell, who in 28 days in September 2015, raised £334,000 at an average of £30.00 per pledge to self publish

her magnum opus, *Wonderland*. This sum allowed her to produce a Standard edition of 2,000 copies, a Limited Edition of 250 copies, and a Collectors Edition of 25 copies. It's important to note that prior to the campaign, she already had a social media base of 300,000 followers, and had enjoyed extensive publicity through major media organisations including Vogue Italia, The Guardian, and the BBC News.

A significant social following and large email database have also been key for antipodean crowdfunders. Sydney photographer, Louise Hawson, credits her blog fans with demanding then funding the production of her second book, *52 Suburbs Around The World*. Hawson chose Australia's homegrown crowdfunding platform, Pozible, to host her 2013 campaigns. 'I crowd funded twice during the project. The first campaign raised funds needed to start the project, and the second covered the expenses associated with printing the book.'

Pozible is based on an 'All or Nothing' model where no funds are collected until enough pledges have been made to meet the financial target. This is the same approach used by the popular US platform Kickstarter, and New Zealand's Boosted and Pledge Me services.

According to the Arts Foundation website, 'Boosted is the only genuinely philanthropic crowdfunding website for arts projects in New Zealand. Donors to Boosted projects are able to claim a tax credit of 33% against their donations.' Photographer Stuart Robertson chose Boosted to raise \$61,455 to photograph 500 subjects and publish his *Peace in 10,000 Hands* book, while NZIPP photographer, Rachel Callander, opted for

Pledge Me, to secure \$80,000 and approximately 1,000 pre-orders for her *Super Power Baby Project* book in 2013.

The alternative to the 'All or Nothing' model is the 'Keep it All' one, where funds are collected as the money is pledged. US platforms, Go Fund Me and Indie Go Go, offer both options, and the AIPP Australian Photographer of the Year 2016, Lisa Saad, is currently aiming to raise \$100,000 for her *Anonymous Man* exhibition and book by the end of 2017, via Go Fund Me.

Haru Sameshima, of New Zealand independent publisher Rim Books, highlights one of the biggest advantages of crowdfunding a photo book, 'Treat it like a pre-purchase tool. Many publishers have done that in the past.' By setting up your Rewards appropriately, the campaign is virtually a vehicle for obtaining pre-orders. It gives real time feedback on the level of interest for your book, and is the perfect indicator for how many books you need, and can afford to produce, in your print run. The hard data may also assist in securing a trade publishing deal.

On that note, many photographers find the beauty of crowdfunding is the level of creative freedom you can achieve with your project, without the input from a publisher. Perth photographer, Robert Van Koesveld, published his first travel photography book *Bhutan Heartland* with Fremantle Press. His next project *Geiko & Maiko of Kyoto* was a niche, art book project. 'As it was very much my own project I was reluctant to give up the degree of control, so I went down the self publishing and crowd funding route.' The use of Kickstarter funded the cost of a commercial print run in Hong Kong and freight.

In a recent article in the *British Journal of Photography*, Alma Haser, creator of *Cosmic Surgery*, also confirmed that she chose to self publish and crowd fund her book via Kickstarter, to have more creative control. 'We (myself and a designer) decided it made more sense for this project to do it ourselves as we weren't going to be producing thousands (of copies),' says Haser, 'and we wanted to have a real say over what it would look like.'

Our review of over twenty successful Australian and New Zealand photo book crowdfunding campaigns hosted between 2013 and 2017, suggested averages of \$19,000 funded, by 211 pledgers at approximately \$120 per pledge. These figures are indicative only. To make your dollar target achievable it is essential that you complete a detailed budget that considers the number of books you want to produce, as well as the materials and postage, as these can vary greatly and impact the cost considerably.

The good news is that creative artists have a serious advantage when it comes to crowdfunding. Pozible Campaign Officer, Elliot Chapple, says that statistics show, 'the most successful projects are for creative arts projects with a great personal story behind the project.' Kickstarter.com cites that, '63% of successful projects in 2016 were in Art, Crafts, Dance, Film, Journalism, Music, Photography, Publishing and Theater.'

The most successful crowdfunding campaign we've identified for an Antipodean photo book is *The Life Of Pikelet* by Calley Bena Gibson. You may not be surprised to learn that Pikelet is a dog! Furry friends are as popular in book form as they are online, because they have broad appeal. In this instance however, *The Life Of Pikelet* had an ►

additional advantage as the book was also a fundraiser for an animal rescue organisation. The combination of an accessible subject, a distinct audience, a story with a strong emotional core, and a campaign with social objectives, resulted in Gibson raising \$107,000 – a sum \$62,000 more than targeted.

Our tip for the best start with your crowdfunding campaign, is to choose a local platform dealing in local currency. We believe that Pozible, Boosted or Pledge Me will also offer more personalised and immediate support at all stages throughout the campaign.

If you want to learn from those who've been there, Stuart Robertson of Peace in 10,000 Hands and Rachel Callander of Super Power Baby Project will be sharing their wisdom at the NZIPP Infocus event in Wellington, NZ on Saturday 17 June, with a panel discussion on the topic 'Crowdfunding Gives You Wings'. ■

Libby Jeffery

Marketing Manager, Memento Pro

My Last Day at Seventeen by Doug Dubois and Aperture Foundation

Touching Strangers by Richard Renaldi/ Aperture Foundation

The Wonderland Book by Kristy Mitchell

52 Suburbs Around The World by Louise Hawson

Super Power Baby Project by Rachel Callander

Peace in 10,000 Hands by Stuart Robertson

Life of Pikelet by Calley Bena Gibson

A snowboarder enjoys the natural terrain at Snowshoe, West Virginia, USA. Nikon D4s with 14-24mm f2.8 lens. © Chris McLennan

A comprehensive feature on Chris McLennan's work follows on the next page. ►



Chris MCLENNAN

Global roaming

Chris McLennan is a New Zealand based travel photographer who works for tourism industry clients around the globe. He has photographed in over 50 different countries to date and has received a number of international photography awards. He is an ambassador for camera brand Nikon and computing giant HP. He also holds endorsement relationships with Lexar, Lowepro and AquaTech.

Actually to call him a travel photographer is something of a misnomer, as Chris works across travel related genres such as lifestyle, adventure, wildlife and natural history with equal aplomb. The fact that all of these necessitate travel – because his clients and shoot locations are spread all over the globe – is perhaps the strongest link. In this feature, we've chosen to focus on his lifestyle and adventure imagery.

Spending any time on his website and blog certainly leaves the viewer with the impression that Chris must spend a good portion of his life in hotel rooms, and he will almost certainly have developed the ability to sleep on airliners. ▶



Competitor during the SUP event at the Noosa Festival of Surfing in Australia. Nikon D810 with 400mm f2.8 lens.

© Chris McLennan

Chris grew up in the rural farming community of Riversdale, not far from Queenstown in New Zealand’s picturesque South Island. Chris began his photography career in 1988 running a wedding and portrait studio out of Invercargill. But it wasn’t long before his love of skiing and the magic of the Southern Alps pulled him to the bright lights of Queenstown, where he set up shop and pursued commercial clients in the adventure tourism sector.

He has worked on commercial shoots in over 50 different countries to date and his stunning travel imagery has been recognised with a string of international awards. Chris markets his images through a stock library and has a range available for sale as prints through his website.

In addition to shooting commercially, Chris provides guidance and inspiration to photography enthusiasts globally through a range of Photo Tour workshops on offer each year which have seen him take guests to locations as photogenic and unique as Norway, Alaska, Papua New Guinea, Africa, Fiji and New Zealand.

As we began the process of compiling this feature, ably aided by his wife and business partner Catherine, Chris was in the beautiful Fiji Islands on yet another adventure, returning in the nick of time to help us to gather the necessities. We chatted to Chris about this trip, and his career.

f11: Welcome Chris, what can you tell us about the assignment you’ve just returned home from?

CM: I’ve been in Fiji for a month working for Marriott, who have just opened their first Fiji property, the Marriott Momi Bay Resort, featuring over water bures and a stunning horizon pool. Marriott recently acquired Starwood hotels, which is a hotel group that I’ve worked with around the world for many years now. To shoot for Marriott or Starwood you need to be a brand approved photographer, and there are very specific guidelines and

requirements for the shoot. On this trip I photographed not only the new Marriott property but also updated imagery for the other Starwood Fiji properties as well. 30 days straight with only 3 days off was a pretty tiring month, but at least the weather was great!

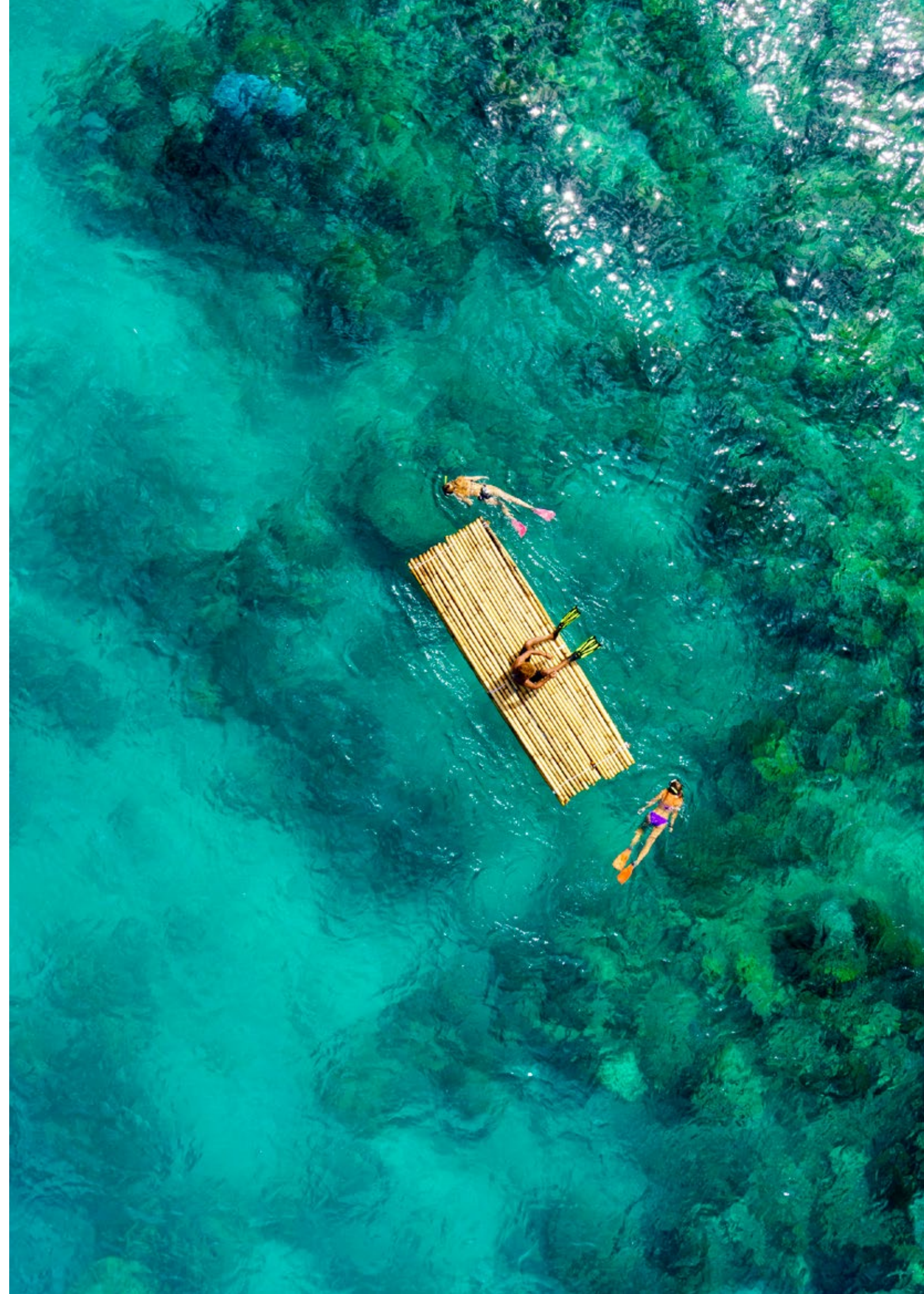
f11: Your wife Catherine is obviously integral to your business, and part of the support structure that makes your busy schedule possible. Can you expand on the way you two work together, and does she accompany you on some shoots?

CM: Catherine and I used to travel together in the early days, as soon as we got married she started working full time for the business and so she travelled with me on nearly every shoot. But over the years – and since having kids – our individual areas of responsibility have changed a bit and of course the business has grown, so now she stays at home and takes care of pretty much all of the business side of things, while I do all of the photography. And that way, when we do travel together it can be an actual holiday, instead of work!

f11: Is there such a thing as a ‘typical’ year for you, and what percentage of the time do you spend travelling on various assignments here and abroad?

CM: My assignments change annually but funnily enough there does seem to be a pattern of sorts. I have a few regular trips each year (the US in February, Alaska in July, Africa in August/September), and quite a few regular clients. So often I’ll have a schedule of sorts planned in advance for each year, and any new work just gets slotted in around that. I also try and take a month off every summer during the ▶

*A billibilli raft floats over the crystal clear waters of Fiji with South Sea Cruises. Aerial drone photo.
© Chris McLennan*



school holidays. So usually I'm flat out from February through November, and hopefully a bit quieter during December and January. Catherine keeps track of the days away each year as this is needed for my travel insurance, and it is usually around 200+ days away from home on average.

f11: We've elected to show your lifestyle and adventure imagery in this feature, but is there any one genre of photography which feels less like work and more like play when you're working within it?

CM: Mostly I love to take photos of anything outdoors, from scenery to wildlife, lifestyle, culture and adventure. So it is less about genre and more about the type of project I'm working on and what that gives me the opportunity to shoot. A commercial shoot that lets me get outdoors – such as my work for Snowshoe Mountain Resort in the US – can be a lot of fun. However over the years I've built up a range of Photo Tour products which now take up around half of my working year, and guiding guests on these tours is definitely a different vibe to my commercial work. It's still 'work', because I work hard to make sure my guests have an incredible experience on the tour, and there is a lot to manage. But creatively it's a wonderful opportunity to share the whole image making experience with others and I get a lot back out of that. So if I had to pick, then these trips would be the least like 'work' and the most rewarding photographically, and from the experience and perspective of helping others. I also get to travel to locations that I choose, so that's a bonus as well. Having said that, a lot of my regular clients around the world have become great friends over the years too, so working with them on exciting projects can make the whole 'work' aspect a lot more fun as well.

f11: What was your earliest exposure to photography, do you remember when this came on to your radar and when exactly the bug bit you?

CM: I can remember using my dad's camera as a youngster, maybe six or seven years old. I got my first point and shoot as a teenager followed quickly by my first SLR. I used that to take photos of my dad who built and raced classic cars. It was when I was taking photos of a street race – the Nissan Mobile 500 – and those photos were published in the local newspaper that I first realised the possibility of taking photography more seriously. I took a night course in photography (literally a few evenings of my time), and it all fell into place after that.

f11: What was your pathway into the sort of professional photography you do now, and how did you transition from working in the wedding and portrait studio where you started?

CM: I knew I didn't want to be doing weddings and portraits, simply because I was far more interested in getting outdoors with my camera and photographing the kinds of adventure activities I liked to be doing. So it was a fairly obvious step to close up my studio in Invercargill and move the business to Queenstown, which was somewhere I had spent a lot of time with my family growing up. Of course I loved the mountains and the skiing and the outdoor adventures offered by this region. I had to start from scratch trying to find clients, so it was a lot of door knocking and networking and going that extra mile to try and secure the work. But over time the results started to pay off and from there, it was really just word of mouth that helped me spread my client base further afield and eventually offshore.

f11: Who were your career influences and mentors, and is there any one person who you feel made the biggest impression on you in terms of your own direction? ►

*Golfer at Snowshoe Mountain Resort, West Virginia, USA. Nikon D4s with 14-24mm f2.8 lens.
© Chris McLennan*



CM: To be honest I was so busy trying to do my own thing I didn't really stick my head up long enough to look around and see who else was out there. I am probably a lot more aware of other photographers now than I ever was back then. Plus, there weren't a lot of us around in those days and the internet and social media didn't even exist. So I didn't have any mentors and I can't think of any specific influences. I am completely self-taught, as I don't think the night course really counts! And even today I still try and figure things out on my own, learning through experimentation, practise and thinking outside the square.

f11: When did you transition from film to digital capture, and are you 100% digital now?

CM: I can't remember the exact date, but I was pretty early into digital as soon as the first 'affordable' DSLR cameras became available. I shoot fully digital now and can't imagine going back to film. I know it can provide some fantastic creative options for those who like to create abstract and artistic works. But from a commercial perspective digital is really the only option for me, and I much prefer it.

f11: You are technically very accomplished and using new technologies in your photography, is that experimentation and innovation part of what keeps the flame burning brightly for you?

CM: Yes definitely, that's a huge part of what I do and when I'm not out there taking photos, I'm still busy thinking of new concepts and ideas in my head and looking for the next opportunity to try something new. Whether it's a client shoot or a personal project, I'll often have an idea I've been waiting to try, or a new way of photographing a subject or topic I've photographed before... I can remember back in the early days my brother (who was an engineer) making up brackets and mounting gear for me back when you couldn't buy those kinds of things, because I was always trying to

put my camera in places where a camera wouldn't normally go! I used to fly a parapente when I lived in Queenstown and he helped me make up an extendable arm on a pivot with a mounting bracket, which I used to take photos flying over Queenstown (now used by commercial pilots). I've always tried to think a little bit outside of the box and when I get to put one of those concepts or ideas into action it's a huge buzz and definitely keeps me coming back for more.

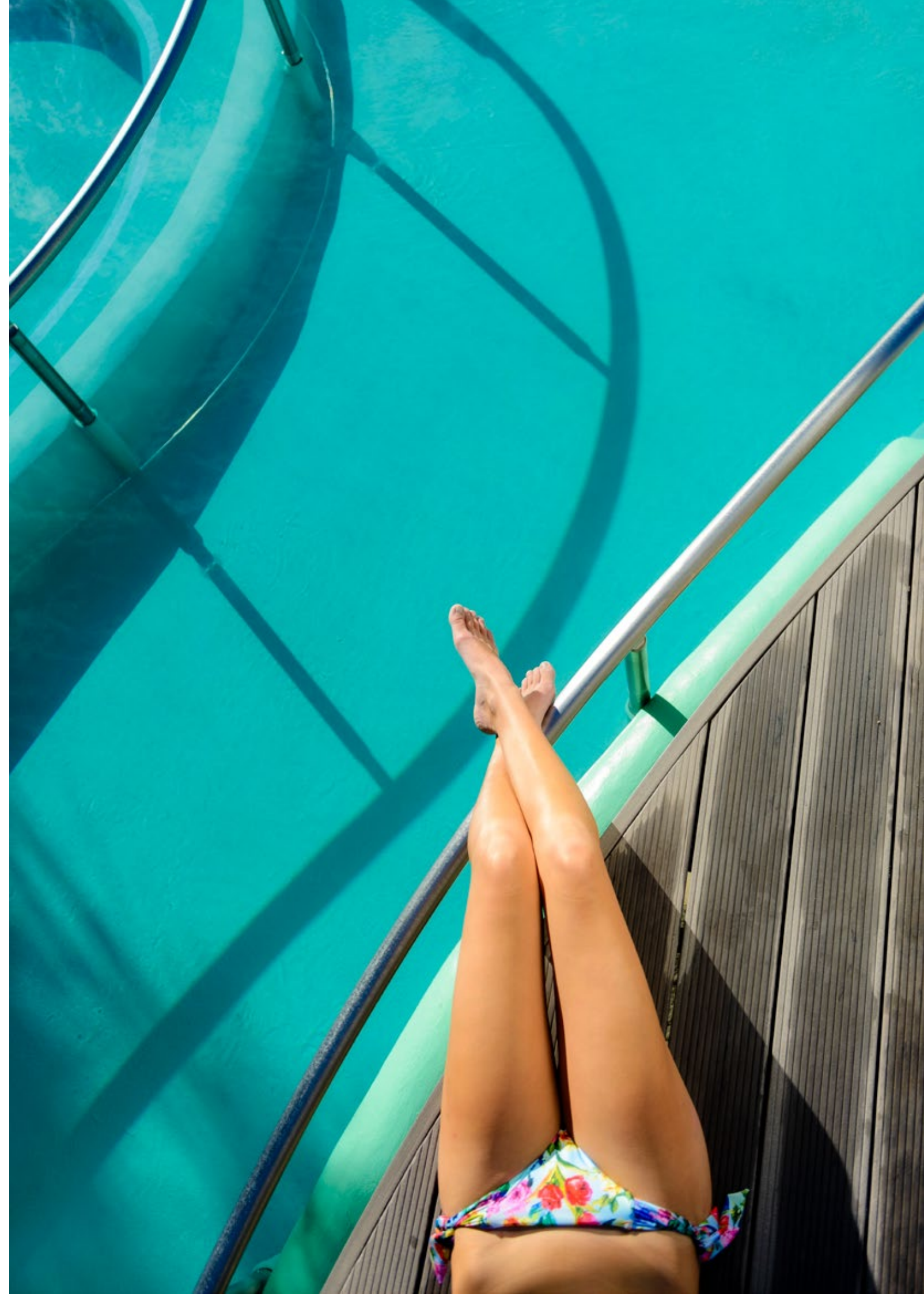
f11: That leads us nicely in to the topic of drones, tell us about your use of these, and are you shooting stills and video for clients?

CM: I started using drones just to shoot high res still images and my first UAV's were rather large customised drones carrying various mirrorless cameras. I never wanted to go down the pathway of the smaller drones with the GoPro style cameras. I was only interested in creating high res quality images that could sit alongside the rest of my work. So it's been a huge process learning about drone technology and the different options to get decent cameras up in the air. Commercially, nearly every client shoot I do now requires some drone photography, and more and more recently they are asking for video as well. I also shoot on the DJI Phantom 4 Pro Plus which is a great portable option, and it's such a buzz to fly!

f11: How much equipment do you typically travel with these days, and what was required for the recent trip to Fiji?

CM: That changes depending on the project, but for Fiji I had a full commercial stills kit (three camera bodies, lenses, speedlites, filters, Quadra lights, tripod and light stands etc), as well as the drone and my underwater kit. So it's a reasonable amount of excess baggage!! ▶

The heated pools at Hanmer Springs, Hanmer, South Island, New Zealand. Nikon D800E with 24-70mm f2.8 lens. © Chris McLennan



f11: Have you always used Nikon equipment, and what has kept you with the brand over recent years?

CM: I started my career on Nikon way back in 1988. When my vehicle was broken into and all my gear was stolen, I transitioned to Canon as that was the most cost effective way to replace my kit at that time. But I eventually moved back on to Nikon gear and absolutely love it. Having used both, I do try to avoid the 'my camera is better than yours' dialogue. As your readers will be well aware, it really is the five inches of brain power behind the camera that makes the difference and the best way to create great imagery is to use the gear that best suits your needs and personal preferences.

f11: Have you played with medium format digital, and is this something you would ever consider for your line of work?

CM: I haven't used it and given the nature of my work and the travel involved, plus the long lenses and equipment required for wildlife photography, it's not something I would consider at this point.

f11: Do you do any post production work while you travel, or is this all done on your return home from each assignment?

CM: It depends on the job. For commercial hotel and resort shoots I will often do the majority of the post production while on site, sometimes sending image files back to the office (via whatever wi-fi connection exists at the location) for Catherine to do the extra touch ups such as removing air conditioning vents, signage and the like. But for the rest of my shoots, I leave the post production until I'm back in the office and do it all then. The only unfortunate element of that is that I have a stack of images from various trips which I haven't even looked at yet! I tend to pick out a few favourites at the time, and often the rest get forgotten until I have time to go back and process them fully. ►



Winter skiing, Snowshoe Mountain, West Virginia, USA. Nikon D4 with 70-200mm f2.8 lens. © Chris McLennan

f11: On the subject of post, what's your typical workflow and what do you use to catalogue your library of images?

CM: I use Lightroom to import, catalogue and process my RAW files, and Photoshop for any additional touchups that may be required.

f11: Are there any trends in photography today that don't sit well with you or align with your personal approach to the art form?

CM: Not really, I'm pretty relaxed about all the various methods and styles out there and other people's approach to photography. It's such a subjective art form and I tend to simply concentrate on my own work, especially when I'm busy with commercial shoots, or coming up with new ideas or projects for myself. In fact if there was one thing that did bother me, it is when I hear photographers critiquing other people's work in a way that is negative or discouraging. I'd rather give positive feedback to encourage others to keep trying to figure out what's right for them and the way they want to approach their photography. Stay true to yourself is the advice I usually offer.

f11: Assuming that these are not top secret, what are your plans for the rest of the year?

CM: Nothing top secret. I'm currently on holiday in the South Island with Catherine and the kids for the school holidays, and two days after we get back I am up to the Bay of Islands for a client shoot, followed by another extended shoot in Fiji for a couple of clients, and then off to the Maldives for stage two of a previous shoot I completed at the Sheraton Maldives Resort. That takes me through to June when I head off to Norway for my Polar Bear photo tour on the MS Freya out of Longyearbyen. I am taking eleven guests on an icebreaker for ten nights and can't wait to get there. I then head to Mexico for a personal trip, followed by my Grizzly Bear photo tour in Alaska in July. I am then in Botswana and Namibia from August through October guiding four more photo tour

groups, followed by a South Island photo tour back here in New Zealand during November. So I only have half of November left for commercial work before hopefully hitting the Christmas holidays in December. Whew!

f11: Can we expect a book from you in the future, is there something you're working towards as a publishing project?

CM: I am always thinking about a book and would love to publish something, but I never seem to find the time. And every time I think I have the right selection of images ready, I go on another shoot and end up with yet another collection of favourites! So it would be hard to be content as the minute I print something I'd find myself wanting to update it!

f11: Thanks Chris, its been a pleasure to feature your work and share part of your story with our readers.

When not travelling the world in search of his next photographic adventure, Chris enjoys family life split between the wild West Coast of rural Auckland and his mountain hideaway in remote Glenorchy deep in the South Island.

We hope you'll enjoy the imagery on display here, and that you might be tempted to take a deeper dive into the significant collection on his website. ■

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<http://www.cmphoto.co.nz>

<http://www.cmphoto.co.nz/phototours/>

Stand up paddle boarding amongst black tip reef sharks, Moorea, French Polynesia. Nikon D800E with 14-24mm f2.8 lens. © Chris McLennan



‘My assignments change annually but funnily enough there does seem to be a pattern of sorts. I have a few regular trips each year’



►► Following double page spread: Hiker, Zion National Park, Utah, USA. © Chris McLennan



Yoga by paddle board, Viti Levu, Fiji. Nikon D800E with 70-200mm f2.8 lens. © Chris McLennan



►► *Following double page spread: Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights), Wiseman, Alaska, USA. Nikon D800E with 14-24mm f2.8 lens. © Chris McLennan*



Heli hiking above Glenorchy with Wildlight Aotearoa, South Island, New Zealand. Nikon D810 with 24-70mm f2.8 lens. © Chris McLennan

‘Mostly I love to take photos of anything outdoors, from scenery to wildlife, lifestyle, culture and adventure.’



►► *Following double page spread: Photographing Okarito Lagoon, Okarito, South Island New Zealand. Nikon D810 with 24-70mm f2.8 lens. © Chris McLennan*



Stand up paddle boarding in the tropics, Fiji. Nikon D800E with 14-24mm f2.8 lens. © Chris McLennan

‘I shoot fully digital now and can’t imagine going back to film. I know it can provide some fantastic creative options for those who like to create abstract and artistic works. But from a commercial perspective digital is really the only option for me, and I much prefer it.’

►► Following double page spread: Skiing, Angel Fire Resort, New Mexico, USA. Nikon D4 with 14-24mm f2.8 lens. © Chris McLennan





The New Zealand designed 'FX Bike' gets air in Glenorchy, South Island, New Zealand. Nikon D800E with 300mm f2.8 lens. © Chris McLennan



►► *Following double page spread: Mountain biker, West Virginia, USA. Nikon D4s with 14-24mm f2.8 lens.
© Chris McLennan*



Snow Angels from a different perspective. Aerial drone photo. © Chris McLennan

‘Commercially, nearly every client shoot I do now requires some drone photography, and more and more recently they are asking for video as well.’



►► Following double page spread: Kiwi climber Sarah Hay hangs out near Queenstown, South Island, New Zealand.
Nikon D5 with 14-24mm f2.8 lens. © Chris McLennan



Point of view, riding snow machine, USA. Nikon D810
wth 14-24mm f2.8 lens. © Chris McLennan

*‘I can remember back in the early
days my brother (who was an
engineer) making up brackets
and mounting gear for me back
when you couldn’t buy those
kinds of things, because I was
always trying to put my camera in
places where a camera wouldn’t
normally go!’*



►► Following double page spread: Snorkelling the coral reefs of Fiji. Nikon D810 with 14-24mm f2.8 lens.
© Chris McLennan



*Romantic picnic at Snowshoe Mountain Resort, West Virginia, USA. Nikon D4s with 14-24mm f2.8 lens.
© Chris McLennan*





Aerial view of watersports at Sheraton Tokoriki Resort, Fiji. Drone photo. © Chris McLennan



Parasailing near Denarau, Fiji. Aerial drone photo. © Chris McLennan

Peter DAVIDSON

Life in reverse

This feature on English photographer Peter Davidson is another pleasing product of our submissions process. Peter wrote to the magazine and revealed a collection of images, prefacing the submission with this statement:

‘My personal photographic journey is physically almost over, yet in a very real sense it has just begun. I graduated photographic college way back in 1972 and, even knowing a thing or two, I’m discovering I know so very little. Despite a lifetime of professional advertising and corporate photography, it’s a medium I still love. When at its most successful, the result is not just a picture, it’s an empathetic view of the human condition, what it is to be alive, be that good or ill. An elusive goal, but free of client wishes and demands. I am, at last, my own client.’

Intrigued by this pitch, and the images, we were hooked. The story is as interesting as the images which accompany it, and best told in his own words. ▶



Snarl. David, 2016. Nikon D90 with 50mm f1.4 lens. © Peter Davidson

‘From childhood, I’ve been an inherent observer of life. Since first I can remember, I’ve always felt a little distant and apart, not fully accepting or accepted. My first camera was a Kodak Box Brownie 127 when I was about thirteen. Now looking back, I suppose this simple box gave me that physical barrier and the distance I needed, as well as a way to socially interact in a way I felt I couldn’t otherwise. So photography became a natural affinity for me, giving me an outlet, a way to express myself.

I’m frankly obsessional with seeing. There’s a lot of luck involved in photography. I don’t consider myself an artist, like a painter or sculptor who can transform their vision into reality at leisure. A craftsman, might be a more accurate description.

More often than not, I have no idea if I have a worthwhile result. I just snap pictures that interest me, that’s really all I do. The quest for deeper meaning is elusive and intriguing. If people can infer any meaning or hidden story from a capture of mine of a moment in time, that’s wonderful. But whatever the image, it should at least hold the eye, intrigue the mind and most of all, be memorable. That’s what I strive for. What a picture means to you, or to me, may be at complete odds. I like that ambiguity. We all see and interpret through the mirror of our own personal life experiences.’

Peter describes the collection of images he shares here, and some of the process behind them.

‘I adhere to a statement which Eve Arnold made: “I don’t see anybody as either ordinary or extraordinary, just people in front of my lens.”

I’m continually drawn to shape and form and the tonality of my work is often dark. That glint of a reflection in a passing bus window or the spark within a glance, hint of secrets within. To this end, I do tend to see the world in monochrome. The light providing nothing more than shape, texture and mood. It’s a much

harder medium to work with than colour, but for me it tells a story better and is ultimately far more satisfying.

The pictures here are all personal, non-commissioned unpublished views of life as I’ve happened upon them. I work with available light in the main because, to quote Eve Arnold again, “By the time you set up lights, the image is gone.” But not always. There is always an exception to any rule.

There are many projects I’d like to turn my lens towards while I still can and I’m always enthusiastically open to any interesting projects people might like to suggest or be involved in. Currently I’m negotiating with my local hospital (which last year saved my life) to document the working lives of the heart specialists working there. There are so many people I admire that are doing wonderful things. People I’d love to be able to meet, and perhaps get the chance to portray. Everyone has a story, you just have to tease it out.’

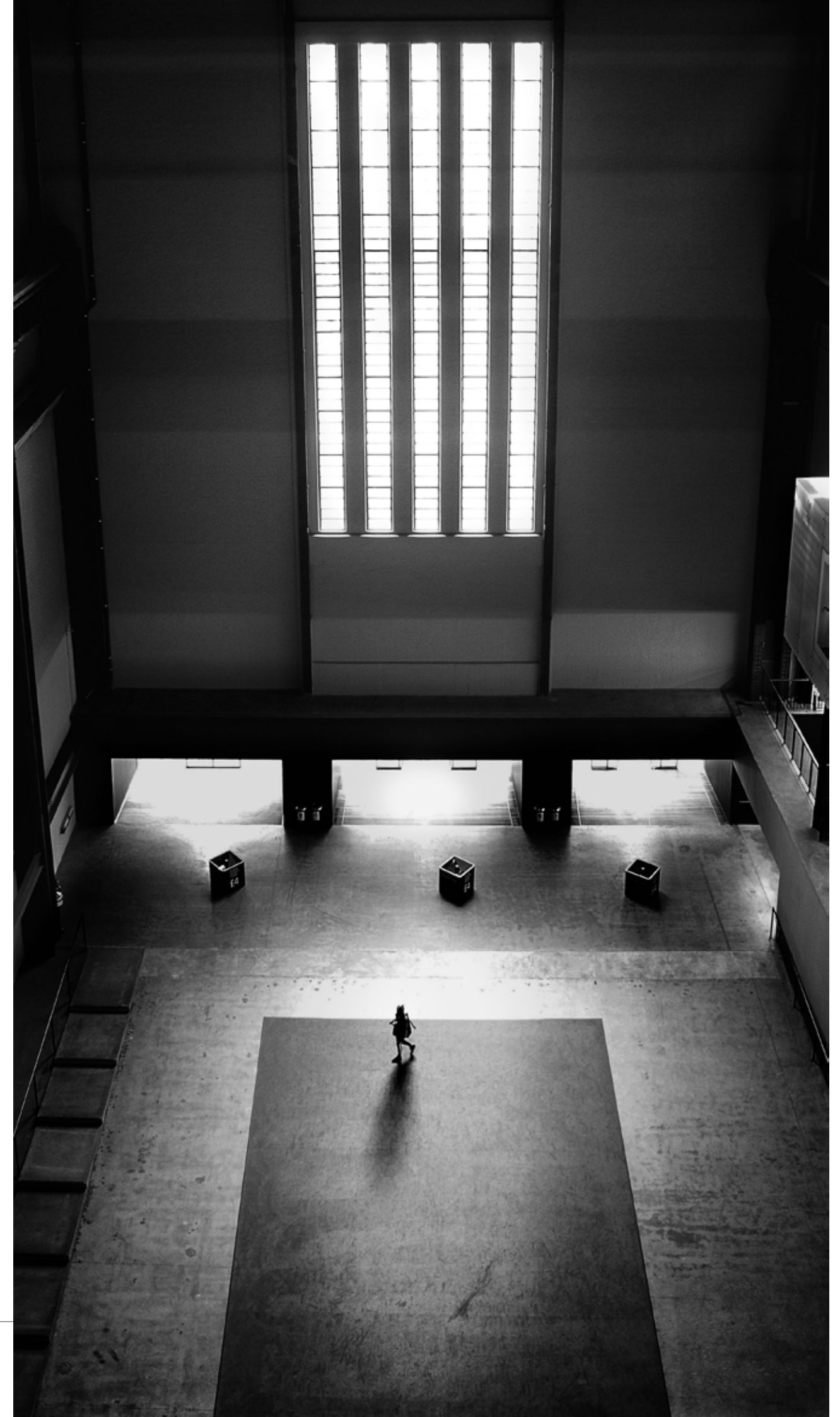
His personal and professional journey makes for interesting reading, so strap in and prepare for the ride.

‘It was 1968, but not the summer of love, at least for not me.

My decision to follow a photographic life came, rather ironically, just as I was thrown out of photographic college.

It was six months after I’d left school, I had just turned sixteen and failed my first year college exams. Growing my hair long, discovering girls and booze and the student life had perhaps distracted me... ▶

*Explorations. The Tate Modern, London, England, 2016. Nikon D750 with 28mm f2.8 PC lens.
© Peter Davidson*



So that summer I found myself a job as a “photographer” working the carnival fairground rides in the northern English seaside town of Blackpool. Given an Olympus half-frame 35mm camera and a big Metz hammer-head flash I was told with a shove in the back and a kick up the backside to, “Stop faffing about being arty lad, and get taking snaps and make some bloody dosh!”

The summer was spent seriously pondering my future. But at the same time I was having fun. Riding alongside the carnies, stepping with cool insouciance off dangerously whirling gallopers and waltzers, snapping the girls, their boyfriends, kids, mums and dads and most importantly, learning to talk the talk with strangers.

In the autumn, I skulked back and enrolled again in the same college of photography, and quietly agreed to the humiliation of starting again back in the first year. Much to my surprise, they accepted me. They had decided that I showed promise and so welcomed me back. It was the sixties summer of love after all.

Learning the fundamentals of photography is always valuable, but the real value of those college years was enjoying the freedom to explore and create my own photographic vision. I found, to my surprise, that I had an affinity towards documentary or reportage work. I looked at images from the likes of Don McCullin in awe and dreamed of being just like him. I desperately looked at ways of buying a ticket out to the Far East and blagging my way around that terrible war zone, and of becoming a famous war reporter. Lack of funds for a camera, never mind a ticket soon scotched that idiotic idea. But people like Capa, McCullin, Penn, Karsh, Stock, Mair and Arnold all fired my passions. Just as Salgado does today. So it was inevitable that I would get a job... in advertising.

I did head down to London with my 'folio, intending to see people and gauge my own marketability. While there, I met with Bob Guccione of Penthouse Magazine infamy, who

encouraged me to bring him back some “good stuff man” for his mag. In the process, I received great feedback and encouragement from many other photographers, and eventually was offered a job as unpaid tea boy/runner in one studio. Which I would have taken, were it not for my being skint, alone and friendless in a big, unknown and expensive city. Despite all that, there is no excuse - I should have taken the job and stayed. Instead, I returned to free bed and board at home. And when a job in Manchester came up that actually paid decent money for actually being a photographer, I took it.

So started my photographic journey in reverse.

Industrial photography sounds dull, but actually isn't. Especially as Health & Safety was unheard of in the early seventies. I was given a car, a boot full of PF60 flash bulbs, a full Hasselblad kit and told to go to various locations around the UK to shoot docks, truck, buses, factories and engineering works. Aged just twenty and on my own, I was organising whole factories in pursuit of a great shot. Using up to a hundred PF60 one-shot flash bulbs, connected by wires snaking over mills, drills and irate workers. When the ensuing blast of light erupted, someone panicked and shut down the whole vehicle production line. I was not exactly flavour of the year, but the shot was cool.

Nothing was too dangerous to attempt. Standing with a tripod at the end of a dock container crane suspended sixty meters over the far side of a ship sounded like a good idea for a shot. And it was... until the crane picked up a container from the hull below and I found myself bouncing on a steel springboard, clinging to the camera and a railing for dear life. I somehow managed not to kill or injure ▶

*Porthole on the world. My grandson taken using my daughters little snapshot camera, 2012. Canon IXUS.
© Peter Davidson*



myself and won an award in the Financial Times Industrial Young Photographer awards. The trip to London for the award booze-up was cool. But I was soon bored with the job.

So I took another working for a mail-order studio. It paid well. Hint: Don't get a job just for the money...

Working with 10x8 plate cameras and shooting mundane merchandise quickly makes a boy photographer turn to booze and parties for consolation.

I lasted two years, gave it up and decided to go AWOL and travel around North America for a few months. I cheekily wrote, on the off-chance, to Yousuf Karsh and he astonishingly replied with an invite to visit him. So I stuck my thumb out and hitch-hiked from Toronto to Ottawa and said hello. He must have been quite taken aback by this young, long-haired scruffy youth from England turning up with a just a backpack. I'm afraid I was too star-struck to make much of an impression, but he was unfailingly polite and generous, showing me his home and studio, chatting with me for an hour or so. I returned to my YMCA lodgings in some converted prison cells feeling inspired and awed and a little depressed. I was then twenty four and felt time was running out.

The mid-seventies in England was the time of the winter of discontent. Strikes, protests, great social change, the Irish troubles. It was a great time to be a documentary reportage photographer. Having no money or camera gear is a problem if you want to do that however. So of course, instead of capturing these momentous events, I gained employment as a lecturer at my old college. Jobs were thin on the ground, and as they said, it's a job. Two years later I saw an opportunity to work in Saudi Arabia and I again jumped ship quicker than a rat down a drain pipe.

The next ten years were spent as a freelance agent dodging being arrested (as photography

and photographers were particularly frowned upon) while photographing Princes and Kings, other very rich men and politicians. In between all that, I was shooting corporate brochures and advertising for most of the world's largest companies and agencies. I was in it for the excitement and money, not the art. My love of documentary had slipped further into the background. Given the locations I found myself in, another series of great missed opportunities.

On the upside, I was having a ball. King Fahad gave me a watery-eyed glower when I came too close, and David Rockefeller was as charming as his henchmen were intimidating. And Sheik Yamani, the Saudi oil minister who had not long previously plunged the UK into a three day week by restricting UK oil, was urbane, friendly and unassuming. Despite Yamani being under house arrest at the time, he tasked me with shooting his son's wedding. A rather interesting three day long affair it was too. Another wedding I covered was spread between Saudi and London, during which I was surprised to be mentioned in the national tabloid press as the "court photographer". I never did get that call from Buck House though...

Photographically, there were many near fatal scrapes as there was no risk assessment or indeed much safety procedure at all. While shooting the finishing touches to a new airport runway being built alongside the original, a 737 jet decided it was open and tried to land. This, despite me standing in the bucket of a huge bright yellow Caterpillar digger parked on the runway with me thirty feet in the air. I wondered why the driver was sprinting away until I saw the plane bearing down. I think the pilot must have seen my frantic waving, as he opened up the throttles at the last minute and went around. I can still smell the fumes of the jet exhaust. ▶

Ageing. Lagos, Portugal, 2013. Leica M9 with 35mm f2 lens. © Peter Davidson



Then there was the time I climbed aboard an ancient WW2 vintage company re-supply aircraft for an ARAMCO oil drilling exploration team deep in the The Rub' Al Khali or The Empty Quarter, the largest sand desert in the world. The DC3 Dakota was filled to capacity, one half with seats, the other with goats and equipment. There was a small gap in the seal of my window and the pilots were retired American servicemen. Indiana Jones would have felt quite at home. We took off, following a directional beacon out to the exploration site, which, if we missed meant we could well be lost and unable to get home. It had happened before, and the poor souls involved had never been found.

Throughout my time there I operated alone, with no health insurance, no car insurance and, of course, no mobile phone. In the first couple of years, even to call the UK required a week's notice to the telecommunications office downtown. It was, as you might say, quite character building. I loved it.

Returning to the UK, Nikon offered me an exhibition in London which was nice but led nowhere. And the process of bringing up a family meant stability and no further risk taking so I opened a photographic mini-lab and family portrait studio and basically settled down to the life of a retailer.'

As to his influences, Peter is quick to catalogue a range of image makers:

'There are so many photographers whose work I admire.

Irving Penn, his shot of Picasso is extraordinary. "Pose and gesture that both hint towards the inner life of the subject". Advice I try to remember.

Margaret Bourke-White sitting precariously with her camera atop the Chrysler building in 1935. Showing that women take their photography just as seriously as men, if not more so.

Yousuf Karsh, an extraordinary portrait photographer of the great and the good.

"Within every man and woman, a secret is hidden, and as a photographer, it is my task to reveal it." and, "Look and think before you open the shutter. The head and mind are the true lens of the camera."

Don McCullin, his shot of the American soldier and his dazed, glazed expression. Haunting.

Portrait of Dennis Stock by Andreas Feininger for Life magazine in the year I was born, 1951. An astonishingly modern picture even by today's standard, and his shot of James Dean, hunched over walking through a rainy street. That feeling and mood, just wonderful.

Robert Capa, his picture taken in the French town of Chartres in 1944 of a female collaborator, her hair shaven and surrounded by a baying mob as she cradles her baby. Just oh, my goodness.

Sebastiao Salgado, his work is astonishingly emotive and beautiful. A modern master. His shot of the gold mine workers of Serra Pelada, the human ants climbing impossible hills with improbable loads.

Vivian Maier, an unknown woman photographer who only found fame after her death. Beautifully seen and captured images of everyday life, wonderful.

WeeGee, (or Arthur Fellig), a man who never gave up looking for that great shot. His picture of kids sleeping on a fire escape, just burns in my visual memory. ▶

*Concorde. One of the last flights into Heathrow England, from NYC, 2003. Nikon 5400.
© Peter Davidson*



Dougie Wallace, his 'in your face' images of people on the street are uncompromising and utterly astounding. His Harrodsburg series is wonderful. And all in colour, which works perfectly.

Tatsuo Suzuki, a Japanese street photographer who only took up photography five or so years ago. A very keen eye and strong images.'

Asked about his equipment preferences, Peter provides some detail:

'As Don McCullin said: "I only use a camera like I use a toothbrush, it does the job."

I concur.

Over the years, I've used just about every camera type appropriate for whatever job was in hand. Horses for courses, but for what I am doing now, it's not really about the camera, it's about the image. And if the image is strong, it doesn't matter if it's noisy, grainy, or blurry, taken on a mobile phone or snapshot camera. Look at Capa's Normandy beach landings. They accidentally boiled all his film and somehow they look even better. I stick with Nikon because I started with a Nikon F (which I still have) and Nikon cameras have never let me down. Through the FE, FM2, F2, and F3. They all just worked. As did the Hasselblad cameras, and Sinar technical cameras which were once my staples.

I no longer own high end 'Pro' gear as I don't need to. My current equipment consists of a modest Nikon D750 and it's just fine, with my second current camera being a Leica M9. That's a bit extravagant perhaps, but it's small form is simple and it's inconspicuous - and as mine is covered in black electrical tape, even more so. Good glass is more valuable than the body it's attached to. ►

*Night train, Camberley Station, Surrey, England, 2015.
Nikon D90 with 50mm f1.4 lens. © Peter Davidson*



My lens choice is small and I don't use zooms, which I find just make me lazy. For the Leica I have two 35 year old pieces of lovely glass, a 35mm f2 Summicron and a 90mm f2.8 Elmarit. Both are small and fully manual. My Nikon glass is a 24mm f2, 28mm f2.8 PC, 50mm f1.4, and a 135mm f2.'

In conclusion, Peter sums up his present situation, and reflects on the journey.

'Now retired, I'm rediscovering what I really loved about photography in the first place. I'm free of clients, their dire advertising demands and grimly repetitive merchandise photography. Hence my sense that I've lived my life in reverse. I'm doing now, what I should have done right at the beginning. I remember feeling time was running out when I was twenty four. It really is the case now, so I'm determined to make the most of it.

How would I describe my current work? Good story telling has tension. So I try and give my pictures the visual equivalent, some hidden story if people care to look and imagine.'

Long may he continue to tell these stories. ■

TS

Blog

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Heading Home. Camberley Town, Surrey, England, 2016. Nikon D750 with 135mm f2 lens. © Peter Davidson

►► Following double page spread: Taking in the sails, Mevagissey, Cornwall, England 2014.
Leica M9 with 35mm f2 lens. © Peter Davidson



*Determined commuters, Siem Reap, Cambodia, 2012.
Leica M9 with 35mm f2 lens. © Peter Davidson*



'I'm frankly obsessional with seeing. There's a lot of luck involved in photography. I don't consider myself an artist, like a painter or sculptor who can transform their vision into reality at leisure. A craftsman, might be a more accurate description.'



World's end, Bristol Channel, England, 2011. Nikon D90 with 18mm f2.8 lens. © Peter Davidson



Monsoon. Ayer Tawar, Malaysia, 2012. Leica M9 with 35mm f2 lens. © Peter Davidson

Night out. My daughter, 2010. Nikon D90 with 85mm f1.4 lens. © Peter Davidson

'...I do tend to see the world in monochrome. The light providing nothing more than shape, texture and mood. It's a much harder medium to work with than colour, but for me it tells a story better and is ultimately far more satisfying.'



*Railway men, Didcot Railway, Oxfordshire, England,
2011. Leica M9 with 35mm f2 lens. © Peter Davidson*





The conversation. Prague city tram, Czech Republic, 2005. Nikon D70 with 18mm f2.8 lens. © Peter Davidson



Inner lives. Prague city trams, Czech Republic, 2005. Nikon D70 with 18mm f2.8 lens. © Peter Davidson

‘Over the years, I’ve used just about every camera type appropriate for whatever job was in hand. Horses for courses, but for what I am doing now, it’s not really about the camera, it’s about the image. And if the image is strong, it doesn’t matter if it’s noisy, grainy, or blurry, taken on a mobile phone or snapshot camera.’



Look! Air show spectators, 2009. Nikon D70 with 85mm f1.4 lens. © Peter Davidson



The look. Prague city trams, Czech Republic, 2005. Nikon D70 with 18mm f2.8 lens. © Peter Davidson

Rest period. Palm oil worker, Malaysia, 2015. Leica M9 with 35mm f2 lens. © Peter Davidson



*Wanderlust. Waterloo Station, London, England, 2015.
Leica M9 with 90mm f2.8 lens. © Peter Davidson*

‘My lens choice is small and I don't use zooms, which I find just make me lazy. For the Leica I have two 35 year old pieces of lovely glass, a 35mm f2 Summicron and a 90mm f2.8 Elmarit. Both are small and fully manual. My Nikon glass is a 24mm f2, 28mm f2.8 PC, 50mm f1.4, and a 135mm f2.’

►► *Following double page spread: Wet night on the Bund. Shanghai, China, 2012. Leica M9 with 35mm f2 lens. © Peter Davidson*





The painter. Artist Alan Brain, 2006. Nikon D70 with 85mm f1.4 lens. © Peter Davidson

‘Now retired, I’m rediscovering what I really loved about photography in the first place. I’m free of clients, their dire advertising demands and grimly repetitive merchandise photography. Hence my sense that I’ve lived my life in reverse. I’m doing now, what I should have done right at the beginning.’





The car. Morgan Car Company, Malvern, Worcestershire, England, 2014. Leica M9 with 35mm f2 lens. © Peter Davidson



*The apprentice. Morgan Car Company, Malvern, Worcestershire, England, 2014. Leica M9 with 35mm f2 lens.
© Peter Davidson*



Metal working. Morgan Car Company, Malvern, Worcestershire, England, 2014. Leica M9 with 35mm f2 lens.
© Peter Davidson



The cobbler. Fred at work in his shop, 2009. Nikon D90 with 18mm f2.8 lens. © Peter Davidson

►► Following double page spread: Making the cut. Morgan Car Company, Malvern, Worcestershire, England, 2015.
Leica M9 with 35mm f2 lens. © Peter Davidson



Home alone. Pet dogs waiting for their owner to return. Fleet, Hampshire, England, 2012. Leica M9 with 90mm f2.8 lens. © Peter Davidson

‘Good story telling has tension.’



Gabriel HILL

ImPortraits

Gabriel Hill is a Swiss photographer who works mainly in commercial and editorial portraiture. Most of his clients are high profile business people, mainly from the Basel pharmaceutical industry, but also include ambassadors, Olympic athletes and show business personalities. However, the work he's sharing here is much more personal. Gabriel has focused his cameras and his energy on documenting the plight of refugees living in Switzerland today, and eloquently tells the story in his own words.

'There are refugees living in the house that sits in front of my studio. So while most of my clients have way more money than the average person, only a few meters away live people who don't have anything. It was this contrast that I always found disturbing, but also fascinating.

Around 3 years ago my Facebook timeline was constantly showing posts from my friends looking for donations for refugees in need. ►

ImPortraits : Ahmed, 23, fled from Eritrea in 2013. 'I got on board of a ship in Libya which had to bring us to Italy. I couldn't take anything with me except the clothes I was wearing and a tiny little piece of paper with the phone number of my family on it.'

© Gabriel Hill



Touched by the refugee crisis, and the selfless help of many of my friends, I began thinking about what I could do to help them.

I noticed that the word refugee was all over the place in the media and that many people were talking about them, but barely anyone had ever seen a refugee or talked to one.

Often times I would read comments like this one on social media, "...it can't be so bad where they come from, as all of them posses a cell phone which means they have to be rich."

As a photographer it was clear to me that I wanted to do something with portraiture but there are already millions of images about the refugee crisis out there. I concluded that most of these images were very dramatic, or showed a large group of refugees so that individuals became lost in the anonymity of the masses.

I didn't want to be just another photographer taking refugee portraits. I wanted my portraits to mean something. I have to be honest, I didn't expect such a huge success with this series but there are some factors that can help in getting a project noticed.

It was some months before my first thoughts of making a portrait series with refugees came to fruition. One of the reasons that I wanted to do this series was, that I wanted to show people living here in Switzerland exactly who those people who came here to seek shelter were, and to gain some insight into the circumstances that had caused their flight.

I felt that these refugees deserved not only a face, but a voice as well. It quickly became clear that some text had to accompany the portraits. Many refugees here in Switzerland face a lot of distrust; even though Swiss people are quick to donate money when it comes to a ▶

ImPortraits : Sejla, 33, fled from Bosnia in 1992.
© Gabriel Hill



catastrophe that happens elsewhere. Basel for example is an area that has quite a high earthquake risk, so people respond to such events in other places generously.

With war it is a different game. War is man made so many people think the refugee crisis is somehow their own fault. With wartime experiences now only a distant memory for some people in Switzerland, I felt that there were Swiss people who struggled to empathise with the refugees on their doorstep. It's hard to empathise with someone without a common thread, or a certain feeling of connection.

With that in mind, I came up with the idea to show the refugees with their most important possession, often a single item that they were able to carry when they fled their own land. I thought that onlookers seeing these portraits would immediately think about what he or she would take with them if they were forced to flee their homes or country. For a split second one is in the same situation as that refugee once was.

Part of the concept was that the portraits would be shown in an exhibition. I wanted to give these people a face and a voice but I also wanted to help them actively. So I decided that I wanted to make a book out of the project and that all earnings from the book would be donated to an organisation that is helping refugees.

We often see images of refugees in camps living in poverty and poorly dressed. I wanted to go a different way, to show them with some kind of pride. So aesthetics was a big thing in this series. I felt that the portraits should be simple and without artificial drama. I had decided to use one of my hand painted backdrops from Oliphant Studio New York that had a very subtle texture and not too much of its own personality. Above all, these portraits should be about the person. Nothing more, and nothing less.

The setup stayed the same for every portrait. The idea was to underline the repetitiveness of

those tragic stories, with just the names, the faces and the possession changing.

I used a Hasselblad digital medium format camera with an HC 50-110mm f4 lens for this portrait series. I knew that I wanted to show the portraits in the exhibition life size and the 40 megapixel sensor would be enough for that. I used a broncolor Move 1200 generator with a large para umbrella and positioned it close to the subject so I would get very soft light. On the other side of the subject I used a large black V-flat with a small white paper stitched to the V-flat to get just a tiny little bit of fill light from that side.

I hoped that the portraits would be formal and timeless, hence the technical implementation was very simple. The strongest design elements were the subjects' pose and their expression.

To be honest, I thought it would be much easier to get refugees in front of my camera. I contacted all the organisations and institutions working with refugees but most of the time I wouldn't even get an answer to my request. Governmental organisations mostly had no personal contact with refugees so they couldn't help me make connections. Surprisingly, NGO's had no interest in helping me as they saw no value in my work. They simply had no time for a photographer.

One NGO working with refugees here is called OESA. It is funded by most of the big Swiss churches and their aim is to help people in need without asking if they are here illegally or legally. When I first contacted them, they had no interest in my project. It is difficult to win someone over with your own ideas by email so I asked them if I could speak to the person in charge with a brief phone call. The person in charge called me, and instead of 5 minutes I talked for an hour with the woman. After that she agreed to let me on their premises so I could ask some refugees if they were willing to be part of the project. From time to time I would go there to see if anyone was willing to come to my studio. Language was a big challenge

as not all of them spoke English. It took a year to get 10 refugees in my studio.

It is completely understandable that most of them had more pressing problems when they arrive here than the desire to feature in a photographer's project. Many of them feared that it would have a negative impact on their asylum application. Sadly, the most common objection was that they were traumatised by their experiences and didn't want to talk about them.

When each person was in my studio, I sat them down at the table and let them tell me their story. From time to time I would ask a question and take some pictures. A connection between the subject and the photographer is essential so I used a remote trigger to ensure I wasn't hidden behind my camera. This was more relaxing for my subjects. I think every photographer knows this situation, one moment you are talking with your subject and everything is very easy and relaxed, then you point the camera at them and everything changes. Using a remote trigger really helps with this problem.

I always work with model releases but if your subject can't read or write, or doesn't understand all these legal terms, this can be quite a challenge. Eventually, I came up with a very practical solution. I just recorded my subjects on video while I was explaining exactly what I planned to use the images for.

As for the name of the series, I decided to go with ImPortraits which is a made up word from the two words, important and portraits. My ImPortraits series is not only about the refugee crisis and migration problems, but also about materialism in general.

From time to time I would contact newspapers to highlight my project but I never got a single reply to my emails. Many of my friends told me to let go of the project as it wasn't going anywhere. I think most photographers have those moments when we question ourselves

and our work so naturally I had some of those moments too. One moment you're excited about an image and the next day you can't stand it.

It wasn't that I thought my project was so great that every newspaper had to write about it. Instead, I felt sad for the refugees I took portraits of, fearing that they might get the impression that no one cared about them enough to display the images and tell their story.

About a year and a half into the project, I received a letter saying that my project was chosen by an international jury of the Swiss photo award as one of Switzerland's 7 best works in photography. I had totally forgotten that I submitted my images to this award so it was a huge surprise, and also gave me new motivation to continue to work on the series.

One day I came across a website called vice.com and saw that they were writing quite a lot on the whole topic of refugees. So I sent them an email to see if they were interested in my project. Two weeks later, I got a phone call from the editor in chief from the Swiss site and he told me that they would be happy to write something about it. That was the moment that basically changed my whole career as a photographer. Two days after the article was published on the Swiss vice.com site it showed up on the UK site and from there on it went on to all the vice sites around the globe. From then on, I received tons of email with media inquiries and I was completely overwhelmed. I had requests for newspaper features, TV interviews, and podcast interviews. So far the series has been published in 50 or 60 countries. I also got requests from photo agencies offering me a contract as a photographer and I am now represented in the USA and UK. I'm still getting requests for the ImPortraits series, and email from people telling me that they were touched by the refugees' stories.

As fast as the whole story went viral, it was over again. What has lasted is that I have lots of ►

media contacts now and when I am doing a new project the chances of it being published are much higher than before the whole thing went viral. I try to use this power for good projects and to highlight some great humanitarian organisations.'

Gabriel's original ImPortraits series was the start of a larger work. The first ten images shown here, on pages 111 to 127, are the ones largely described in this article. The next six images, pages 128 to 133, are from his New ImPortraits series, which asks a selection of Swiss residents what they would take with them if forced to flee their homes today.

The New ImPortraits series was captured on a Sinar P1 8x10" camera with a Schneider Kreuznach Symar-S 6.8/360mm lens using Impossible Project black and white instant film.

'It was always a dream of mine to shoot a project with a large format camera and this series was perfect for it. Instead of shooting in my studio I went to my subjects' homes and took some environmental portraits. The biggest challenge here was that I didn't know what to expect lighting wise at these locations. Good planning was very important for this series as I wasn't able to bring any more equipment than needed. I don't have a car and everything has to fit on my cargo bike.

The Impossible Project film has an ISO of 640 which isn't fast enough if I'm shooting in a small room with small windows and/or bad light so I definitely had to take some strobes with me. Depending on my needs I usually work with a broncolor move 1200 kit or broncolor generators but in this case my 2 Siros 800L flash heads were perfect. Typically, I used one strobe to light ►

ImPortraits : Migmar, 59, fled from Tibet in 1959. 'In 1959 I fled with my father, my mother, my sister and my grandparents from Tibet to India. I was two at the time' © Gabriel Hill



the subject and one to control the environmental light situation. The broncolor Siros outdoor kit was my first investment when I made the transition to being a full time photographer as they were very affordable for a young photographer and, in my opinion, their quality and reliability is incomparable.

Regarding the light modifier, I went with my broncolor Para 133. I work with a lot of different light modifiers but the Para is my “go-to” light modifier when I don't know what to expect at a shoot as it gives me unlimited possibilities to control the light, and the lighting quality. With the focusing tube I can make the light softer or harder, and focus it directly on where I need it, thanks to the parabolic shape of the umbrella.

Working with a large format camera slows everything down and helps focus on working precisely in a very planned way. It was a great experience for me and even though the Impossible Project instant film is a bit tricky regarding quality and predictability I am happy with the result and will continue to build the series.'

Finally, the remaining four images from Gabriel, on pages 134 to 137, are from a companion series called Good People. This collection features those who work with, and support, refugees in Switzerland. The Good People series was shot with either a Canon EOS 5Dsr and a 24-70mm f2.8L II USM lens, or the previously mentioned Hasselblad combination.

'While I was working on my ImPortraits series I got to know many people who work for humanitarian organisations and a few months back I thought, "Why not show the other side of this whole crisis?" so I began portraying ►

ImPortraits : Marie-Therese, 62, fled from DR Congo in 2008. 'I had to leave my home from one second to the other. Unfortunately, there was no time to take anything with me.' © Gabriel Hill



people who stand up for human rights and/or help other people. I've portrayed highly committed individuals who are working with homeless people, University Professors who are doing peace research, Nobel Peace Prize nominees, pastors working in refugee camps and many more outstanding people who make up the Good People series.'

We're privileged to be able to share this work with you, and thank Gabriel most sincerely for making this possible. ■

TS

<http://www.thegabrielhill.com>

'I didn't want to be just another photographer taking refugee portraits. I wanted my portraits to mean something.'

ImPortraits : Farhad, 27, fled from Afghanistan in 2007. '...the smugglers told us to throw everything away. I didn't have the heart to toss out the photo of my mother, so I hid it under my clothes. I haven't seen my mother since I left, so this picture of her is very important to me.' © Gabriel Hill



ImPortraits : Yosief, 20, fled from Eritrea in 2014. 'I kept a small book with phone numbers and a few photos from my childhood.' © Gabriel Hill

'I used a Hasselblad digital medium format camera with an HC 50-110mm f4 lens for this portrait series. I knew that I wanted to show the portraits in the exhibition life size and the 40 megapixel sensor would be enough for that.'





ImPortraits : Mahmoud, 20, fled from Lebanon in 2014. 'A few years ago I converted from Islam to Christianity and a priest gave me this Bible. Here in Switzerland I live in an asylum with predominantly Muslims – my family are the only ones who know I converted. That's why I can't show my face...' © Gabriel Hill

'I felt that these refugees deserved not only a face, but a voice as well. It quickly became clear that some text had to accompany the portraits.'



ImPortraits : Nazim, 26, fled from Afghanistan in 2011. 'The only thing I have left is this little book from the police academy and a necklace my mother gave me.' Gabriel Hill



ImPortraits : Vinasithamby, 64, fled from Sri Lanka in 1984. 'Since I had to leave my family behind, these photos were the only things that were important to me, and luckily I could carry them on me.' © Gabriel Hill

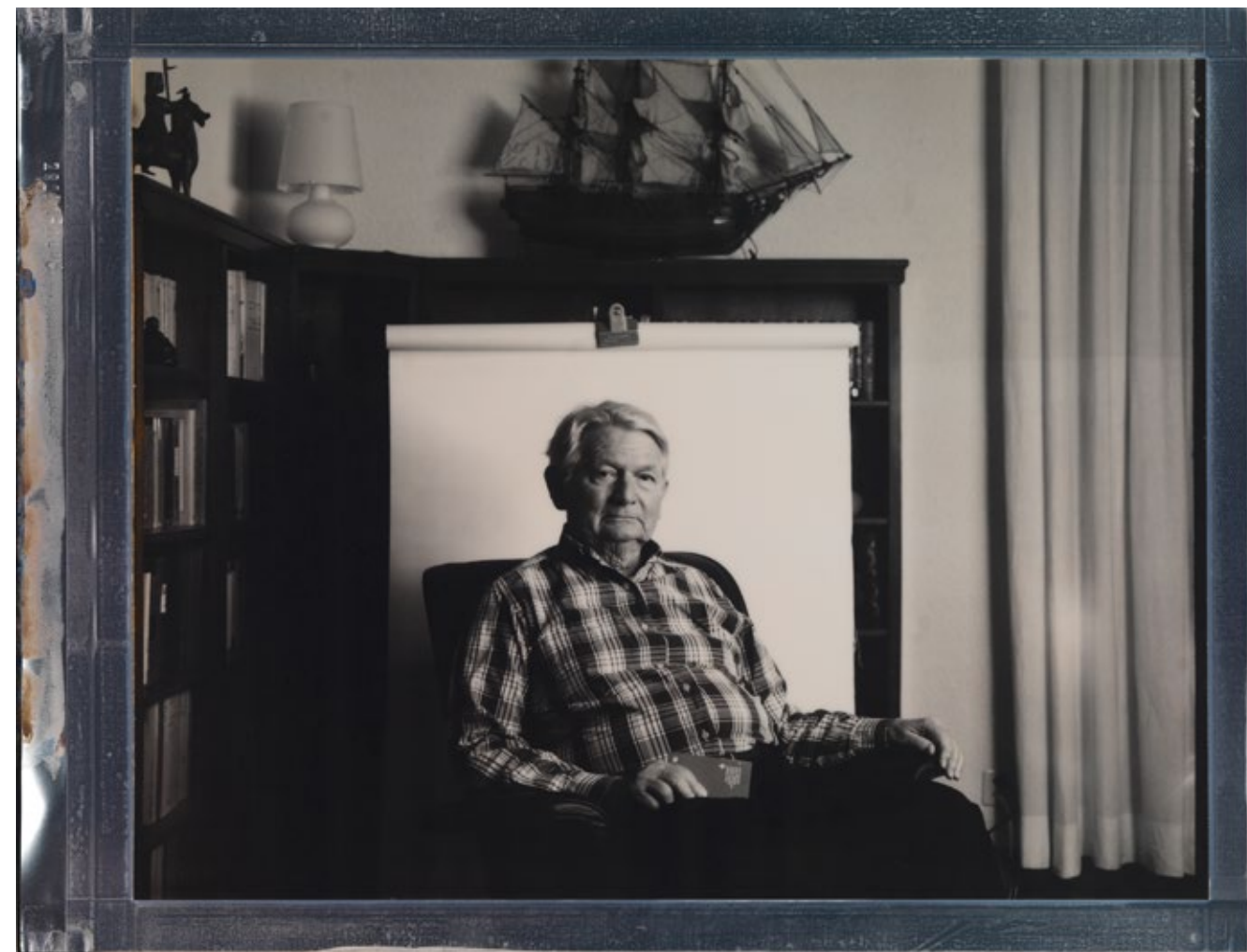
'I hoped that the portraits would be formal and timeless, hence the technical implementation was very simple. The strongest design elements were the subjects' pose and their expression.'



ImPortraits : Suleyman, 18, fled from Afghanistan in 2014. 'From all the things I took with me, only this cell phone is left. My mother bought it just before I fled.' © Gabriel Hill



New ImPortraits : Beatrix, 66, doctor's assistant. 'Playing the traverse flute was a dream I fulfilled at the age of 43. Since that day it accompanies me...' © Gabriel Hill



New ImPortraits : Franz, 78, physician. 'My passport is the most important thing I would take with me.' © Gabriel Hill

'It was always a dream of mine to shoot a project with a large format camera and this series was perfect for it. Instead of shooting in my studio I went to my subjects' homes and took some environmental portraits.'



New ImPortraits : Romea, 6, 'I would take my hedgehog with me. Without him I can't sleep...!' and Laurin, 'My most precious item I would take is this photo book because it contains memories...!' © Gabriel Hill



New ImPortraits : Simona, movement pedagogue. 'I would take these Daruma with me. Japanese Daruma dolls are seen as a symbol of perseverance and good luck.' © Gabriel Hill



New ImPortraits : Anna, 23, college student. 'If I had to flee from my homeland I would take my boxing gloves with me.'
© Gabriel Hill



New ImPortraits : Thomas, 48, primary school teacher. 'I have chosen this Netsuke, a small carved figure from Japan. It's very small so it would fit in my trouser pocket...' © Gabriel Hill



Good People : Esther. © Gabriel Hill

‘While I was working on my ImPortraits series I got to know many people who work for humanitarian organisations and a few months back I thought, "Why not show the other side of this whole crisis?" so I began portraying people who stand up for human rights and/or help other people.’



Good People : Yvonne. © Gabriel Hill



Good People : Mussie. © Gabriel Hill



Good People : Olga. © Gabriel Hill



Communicate, Propagate and Disseminate

For a long time the options available for Australian Photographic Society members to show their work was limited to a handful of competitions and exhibitions mostly related to the attainment of photographic Honours. Non-Honours options available included postal and digital folios and print exhibitions at APSCON but each of these is severely limited in its audience reach. The defunct print publication *Image* only appeared bi-monthly and the member's gallery on the APS website is static.

Recently there have been some exciting developments which have expanded the range of possibilities for members to get their images on show, communicate their thoughts and interact in real time.

The Conceptual Art Portfolio Award (CAPA) is a self challenging project in which a conceptual idea is realised through the creation and presentation of a series of photographs. Success does not rely upon one-off 'hero' images as typically seen in competitive exhibitions. Quite the opposite in fact. The photographer is required to develop a carefully ordered set of photographs illustrative of the creative concept. It is a contemporary form of artistic representation in which a personal idea or concept takes shape without reference to conventional aesthetic principles.

Another development is a Themed Exhibition associated with 2017 APSCON at Forster, NSW. The organisers are looking for members to tell a story in a set of ten images together with an

author's statement of no more than 250 words. The author/photographer's 'theme' and associated images can be on any subject deemed socially acceptable. The bonus for the participants is that their image set will be printed at 18"x12" at no cost for display at the venue. Hopefully this exhibition will be well supported and repeated in future.

The APS has recently opened a couple of new closed Facebook groups. One, Friends of Australian Photographic Society, has now gathered more than 500 members. The APS has half a dozen Special Interest Groups and the Contemporary Group is the first to create its own closed Facebook group. Currently it has 85 members who are very active. While the number of regular participants is relatively small there are many 'lurkers' watching from the sidelines. The flow of images and the vigorous discussion that breaks out from time to time is interesting to watch.

The print magazine *Image* has been replaced by four downloadable newsletters which are published monthly. These are *E News*, *The Printer*, *Monitor*, and *Free Expressions*. *E News* is the official voice of the APS while the other three are produced by Special Interest Groups.

These developments in communication provide more rewarding ways for members to show images and relate to one another than were ever available in the past.

Robert Dettman
Chairman Social Media Sub-committee
Digital Division committee member

PSNZ Exhibitions Open to the Public

At the recent PSNZ 65th National Convention (Photography on the Edge, held at Waipuna Hotel and Conference Centre 6-9 April 2017) two PSNZ supported exhibitions were open to the general public for viewing. The steady flow of visitors and numerous exclamations of appreciation at the standard and variety of the works displayed reiterated the value of sharing these competition events with the general public. Both exhibitions offered PSNZ an opportunity to enhance its profile and to encourage non-members to consider how they might utilise competitions such as these to take their photography to another level.

The PSNZ National Exhibition is an annual event held in conjunction with the National Convention. Open to both PSNZ members and non-members, the exhibition features both prints and projected entries.

1588 entries were received from 360 photographers. A total of 453 awards were bestowed. Full results from the National Exhibition can be viewed [here](#).

The exhibition also featured the 'sets' of those PSNZ members who were successful in gaining their PSNZ Honours (Licentiate, Associateship or Fellowship) and winning sets from several PSNZ Club Salons. The quality of work was at once daunting and inspiring. As Peter Robertson, PSNZ President says 'It is truly inspiring to see the work of photographers who demonstrate their vision, skill and courage to build on



traditional techniques with modern technology to present their creations to us.'

The New Zealand International Salon (NZIS) was also open to the public over the convention weekend. Operated under the patronage of the Federation Internationale de l'Art Photographique (FIAP) and the Photographic Society of America (PSA) this Salon was reintroduced to the international circuit after a hiatus of almost 20 years.

The NZIS received almost 8,000 projected entries from 64 countries. This quantity of work involved six judges over three full and very intensive days to decide upon the 20%-25% selection threshold.

There were some stunning images competing for the 52 awards offered (including the PSNZ gold medal). New Zealand photographers fared exceptionally well gaining 23% of the awards, two of which were presented at the PSNZ National Convention. Full results from the NZIS can be accessed from this [page](#).

Both the National Exhibition and the NZIS will be operated by PSNZ in 2018. The National Exhibition will be linked to the PSNZ 66th National Convention in Dunedin (April 2018) and the NZIS will be timed for September/October so as not to conflict with other Salons and events held at the beginning of the year. As always, PSNZ encourages your participation.

Karen Lawton
PSNZ Councillor for Communications

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Mark will help you create a benchmark for your client experience and give you the tools to build on your business.

Date: June 15
Time: 1:00pm - 4:00pm
Cost: \$75 (NZIPP/AIPA/PSNZ)
\$ 95 (Non-member)
Venue: Shed 6, Wellington

**All the way from NYC..
Chris Knight brings you:**

- Quality skin retouching
- How to liquify
- Colour and tonal adjustments
- How to get the most out of the detail in your image.

Date: June 18
Time: 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
Cost: \$175 (NZIPP/AIPA/PSNZ)
\$ 225 (Non-member)
Venue: Shed 6, Wellington



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and electrifying form of
photography which is
accessible to all ages and
abilities.**

Date: June 18
Time: 6:00 pm - 12:00am
Cost: \$195 (NZIPP/AIPA/PSNZ)
\$ 245 (Non-member)
Venue: Shed 6, Wellington



**Lisa Saad will work through
what it takes to design, shoot,
capture, add production
value, planning and finishing
either an image.**

Date: June 19
Time: 11:00am - 4:00pm
Cost: \$175 (NZIPP/AIPA/PSNZ)
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Near disasters

No it's not a new reality show - perhaps it could be?



In the many years I've been making pictures for a crust I've had precious few 'incidents' on the job. Luckily on the odd occasion something's gone awry it's been down to someone else in the process not me! However there have been near misses...

The missing roll of wedding film

This incident took place in the late 80s at an Auckland studio that shall remain nameless... Of course, at the time there was nothing digital, except my fingers, on this shoot. It was also well before the days where a bride and groom came to expect several hundred images, mostly of dubious worth, to remember their day by. The premium package back then was 80 hand printed final images in a high quality leather album, and to get that final 80 we would shoot up to double that number of exposures.

The camera was a 6x6 Hasselblad 500CM and the film backs were 120 which meant 12 images per roll of film. I set off from the studio with 4 intact bricks (of 5 rolls) and after shooting each roll I religiously put the exposed roll back in the brick to make sure none went missing.

On this occasion, I got back, emptied out the gear bags and the film and went to grab the exposed rolls to put in the fridge to go off to the lab on Monday when I noticed I had 19 rolls on the bench in front of me. I was missing a roll!

I frantically searched the bags, the car and the studio for the missing roll while wondering why it was suddenly so cold, and why time seemed to have slowed down! In the end there was nothing for it but to head back to the locations one by one and search around in the dark.

I found nothing, so I went back the next day when it was light and again found nothing. I stressed for all of the Sunday wondering if I'd lost an exposed or an unexposed roll. Praying of course that it was an unexposed roll...

On Monday morning, in horror, I told my studio partner what had transpired. After an uncomfortable pause in the proceedings, he looked sheepish and then, finally relented, telling me, 'I don't know how to tell you this but I swiped a roll out of one of those boxes for a headshot last week and forgot to tell you about it...' There was blood on the floor.

The very expensive aerial shoot

This story also took place in the 80s. I landed a job for a property developer shooting several sites in Queenstown and Wanaka from a helicopter. This was no tiddler either, it was a Bell Jet Ranger especially rigged for photography with harnesses and no door and it cost a then astronomical \$1500 per hour. Knowing the cost of positioning flights to get me there, plus chopper would be an unnecessary burden on me if I screwed it all up, I had the

cameras serviced (you actually did that in those days) and packed a load of film to eliminate as much risk as possible. My strategy was to shoot every site at least twice, on both cameras, marking the film so that I would take only a quarter of it to the lab - with the rest kept in the fridge as a hedge against something untoward happening.

We flew and I shot and my assistant bagged all the E6 transparency film in four lots and we headed back to Auckland to process at our usual lab. My assistant dropped the film off explaining the importance of the shoot. A couple of hours later I got a call from the lab saying there had been an 'accident' and two rolls had not been properly clipped on to the hanger and had fallen into the first developer. They resembled thick mud to look at and were, of course, unusable.

The lab tech's voice was trembling as she imparted the news and asked if I could come over and talk to the manager. I went over and I have to admit to letting them stew uncomfortably for nearly fifteen minutes. In fact, they were apologising so hard I couldn't get a word in before finally revealing my spare bag of unexposed film. They'd already agreed to process the whole job for free and although I said it wasn't necessary in light of my backup, the film all duly arrived back minus an invoice and accompanied by a very good bottle of scotch!

The model

This one's more recent and all names have been changed to protect the innocent. I took on a fairly straightforward job shooting a series of beauty images for a body product manufacturer for web and print use.

It started well enough, the client and stylist were at the studio when I got there with their fine product and numerous props to be used in the pics. I set about lighting the first shot when the model arrived. I noticed immediately that she had a lot of acne on her face and neck but quietly hoped makeup would cope with it.

I couldn't say much as the client had selected and booked the model.

The makeup was very good and while it didn't quite cover it all I knew with a bit of retouching the images would probably pass inspection. Then, when it came time for her to disrobe for the (utterly tasteful) body shots, that included back, legs and arms in various combinations, it became apparent that the poor girl's skin was literally covered in seriously angry acne.

I took the client to one side and said we have to send her home this will NOT work at any level. She disagreed and insisted that we continue with the shoot as she was on a deadline and felt that her designer could fix it. I knew from experience that only a couple of people would have the skills to properly fix it and told her so but my pleas fell on deaf ears.

I bit my tongue and bravely went where no photographer should have been made to go. I softened the lighting as much as humanly possible but was still very uncomfortable handing the files over as my name was attached to them. The invoice was paid promptly and after another month of not wanting to know, I visited the company website to see if they'd actually been used. To my horror, there they were... A lot of work had been done but sadly the model now looked like a recreation of herself from Madame Tussauds Wax Museum. Luckily that kind of job doesn't involve photo credits...

The beach, the rocks and the Hasselblad

I'm out of space to go into this in detail but I'm sure many readers can imagine how this one goes. Incidentally it's virtually interchangeable with 'The D3X and the spa pool' story. I hasten to add that only one of them involved me...

Be careful out there fellow shooters, and like any good boy scout, 'always be prepared!' ■

Buzz

Gary (Buzz) Baildon

buzz@f11magazine.com

Queenstown Centre for Creative Photography



New Zealand Photographic Workshop Specialists – 2017/18

Jackie Ranken and Mike Langford, both internationally award winning photographers, judges and lecturers based in Queenstown, New Zealand.

Mike Langford Canon Master, Grand Master NZIPP, Australian Travel Photographer of the Year 2013, NZ Travel Photographer of the Year 2012.

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July 13-18	Mt Cook 1
Aug 17-22	Mt Cook 2
Aug/Sep 31-5	Haast
Sept 14-19	Fiordland
Oct/Nov 25-9	Myanmar (Full)
Nov 15-25	Japan Autumn (Full)

Our 2018 Workshops/Tours:

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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
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►► Continued from page 150...

including Australia, would likely class this photograph as child sexual abuse material and Datta would be guilty of producing and distributing child pornography. What further incensed many commentators was knowing Datta's image had been seen by numerous photo editors, juries and curators in the two years since it had been taken and that, seemingly, not one had questioned his judgement or ethics.

A recent visit to Sydney's Head On photography festival offers an insight into local curatorial attitudes towards photojournalism. Walking through the portfolios on exhibit in the Lower Town Hall venue the content included a range of subjects – violence and persecution driven by religion, transgender children, Aboriginal communities, the sexual politics of young men and women – with light-relief celebrities and feel-good hope for the poor thrown in for good measure.

Whilst the Head On curators chose to steer clear of the 'if it bleeds it leads' approach to photojournalism a number of the portfolios certainly had an air of 'trending now on social media'. Certainly populist, and Instagram share-worthy, providing the opportunity for us to stare at someone else's misfortune.

We would all do well to consider the wider implications of a scenario such as this one, unpleasant to contemplate though it is. The production of photographs might usually be for immediate consumption, but these will also very likely come in for due and reflective observation decades, or perhaps even a century or two, later. ■

Ian Poole
(with Lisa Kurtz)

Poolefoto.wordpress.com
ian@f11magazine.com

Email: info@qccp.co.nz | Ph + 64 3 4090272 | + 64 27 6722788

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So this is photojournalism?

With the recent furore surrounding photojournalist Souvid Datta's questionable practices the veracity of photography is back in the spotlight again.

This time it is a double-whammy. Not only did Datta document a child sex-worker being raped (and in doing so has ignored a litany of laws and ethical guidelines) he has since also been outed for plagiarism. In a further act of poor judgment, a popular online photography network used Datta's image to promote a competition it was running. This is undoubtedly not one of photography's finest hours. So how did it get to this?

Speaking in 1964 photojournalist Dorothea Lange stated 'It takes a lot to get full attention to a picture these days, because we are bombarded by pictures every waking hour...' Lange of course had become famous for her Migrant Mother photograph, an iconic image of the Great Depression. If Lange was feeling that pressure fifty years ago in a pre-digital, pre-online world, today's photojournalists are facing exponential pressure in a world where awards and going viral have become the twin measures of success.

In dissecting his own sins Datta points to his need as a freelancer for validation and exposure in a fiercely competitively industry, and denounces his own acts as foolish, abhorrent and irresponsible. For readers who are not fully aware of the circumstances, Datta inserted a

figure from a Mary Ellen Mark photograph into one of his own images. Datta also entered the work of two colleagues into competitions claiming it as his own. Astonishing indeed, and Datta is rightfully being hung out to dry. Previous award sponsors have rescinded titles and prizes and his nomination for Magnum's Graduate Photographer Award has been revoked.

The pressure Datta speaks of, and of course competition not only from fellow photojournalists but every Tom, Dick and Mary with their prosumer DSLR, is such that to stand out from the crowd there is less consideration of measured reflection in the production of photographs, and a reliance on the shock-and-awe value of provocative images. The temptation to make those images more salacious is always there and it is in this context that the Datta story first came to light.

A joint LensCulture-Magnum Photos competition used a Datta image for promotional purposes. That image showed a child sex-worker being raped. The rapist remains anonymous. The image was used to encourage photographers to enter the competition. Human rights activists pointed out that in publishing the image there is a breach of UNICEF's principles which include changing the names and obscuring the identities of children identified as victims of sexual abuse or exploitation. Legislation in many countries,

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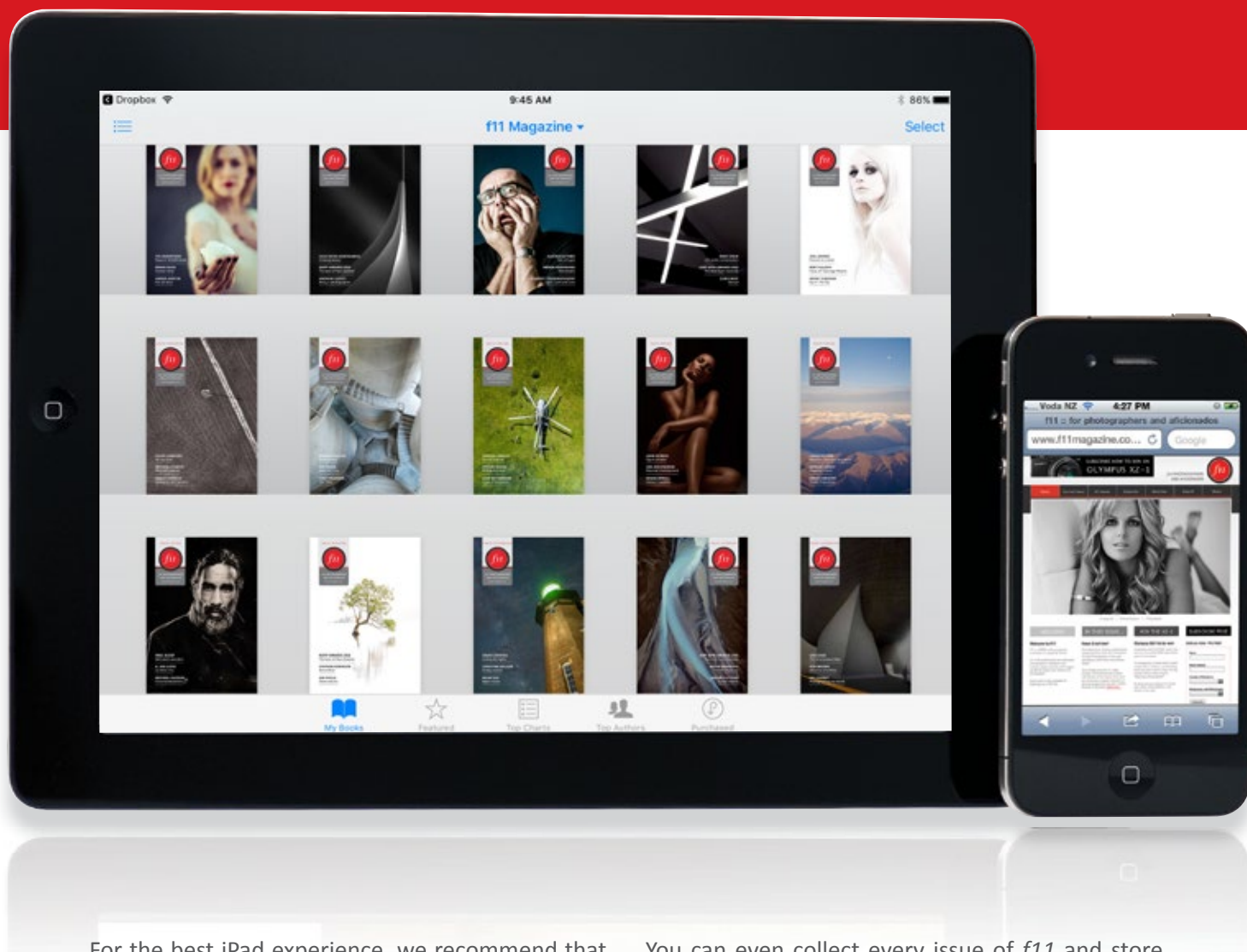
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