

PETER EASTWAY

The New Tradition

On Photography: Methods and Fables



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To Kathie

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Peter Eastway

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What Is This Book All About?

A PHOTOGRAPH IS WORTH a thousand words. But whose words?

Some photographers hope or believe that their photographs don't need further explanation. Surely the content of their photograph says everything that needs to be said?

Unfortunately, I think this is the exception rather than the rule. If photographers present their images without words, without explanation and without context, they leave the photograph open to interpretation by the viewer. This is the photographer's right, of course, but is it then realistic to expect our viewers to write the same one thousand words that we do?

Visual communication is not an exact science. Even the stories behind some of the most famous photographs in history remain contested, decades after they were first seen by the public.

As photographers, I don't believe we can expect our viewers to have the same understanding or connection to our photographs as we do.

If we want our viewers to understand our photographs as we intend, then we should provide a few extra words of our own, or put the images into context so our meaning is clear.

In this book, ***The New Tradition***, I have combined photographs and words intentionally. My background as a photography magazine editor and publisher has given me a strong connection with both words and photographs.

One of my favourite books was *Elements – The Making of Fine Monochrome Prints* by black and white photographer Barry Thornton. Within its pages, he would present a photograph and then tell you how it was captured. Understanding the background behind the photograph and what he was thinking about at the time, enhanced the process of visual communication.

In ***The New Tradition***, I'm also presenting a series of photographs and sometimes I'll explain how the image was taken or the steps involved in post-production. However, just as often I'll simply present a

story, an experience or an opinion on some aspect of photography. Many of them I have told to live audiences over the years and the response has given me some confidence that you will enjoy them too.

This is a book for photographers. It's not for people who use a smartphone to capture memories, but for photographers who are interested in the art and craft of photography itself.

What I hope to do is not only share 1000 or so words with each photograph, but to put into context digital photography in the 21st century.

So, why the 'new tradition'? As a budding darkroom worker, I aspired to the photography of Edward Weston and Ansel Adams. Their work was held up as the epitome of photography technique, but later in my career as a magazine editor, I noticed that more recent photographers were producing work that was even better. Their new approach to image making was more sophisticated and, using new equipment and materials, their craft and technique was also superior.

This is called progress. It happens in all human endeavours.

As photography transitioned from film to digital over the past 20 years, people would hold up these legendary photographers as exemplars of what we should be doing with digital technology. If Ansel Adams did it, then we should too. Or more worrying, if Ansel Adams didn't do it, what gives us the right to do it differently?

Perhaps the most common objection during the transition to digital concerns the use of double exposures or composite images. Ansel Adams didn't do them, so no photographers in the 21st century should either.

But if Ansel had been able to make composite images, would he have done so?

Photographers like Edward Weston and Ansel Adams were pushing both the craft and the art of photography as far as they could. They were trailblazers, entrepreneurs and inventors of their time. They looked around at what was and asked how could they take it further. And they were very involved in ideas, not just craft. Craft and

'modern' materials were simply a means to producing superior images.

But their new ideas came in for a lot of criticism from 'the establishment'. Pictorialist photographers, for instance, wanted photography to be like painting, whereas Weston and Adams wanted photography to be an artform in its own right. They didn't want photography to be a poor cousin to an existing art genre.

This also appears to be a pattern in many human endeavours – established practitioners objecting to new ideas that challenge the status quo.

In the transition from film to digital photography, there were many photographers who said digital wouldn't work or that it had no soul. They took great delight in pointing out all the shortcomings of the new medium – and that was the best thing that could have happened, because over the years, the manufacturers have improved digital photography far beyond what was possible in the days of film.

The period 1995 to 2015 has been the most exciting in the development of photography. And the result is now a new tradition in photography, one that stands on the shoulders of the legends who have gone before us. Without their ideas, without their masterpieces, we wouldn't be where we are today.

But nor would they want us to stop. Unlike the critics of digital imaging who want photography to remain unchanged from the 'golden years' as they see them, Weston and Adams would be pushing the boundaries of digital photography because that's what they were: trailblazers, entrepreneurs and inventors.

So within ***The New Tradition*** are some observations about the transition to the digital workflow, as experienced by a photographer and a photography magazine editor.

In the future when something new is moving photography in yet another direction, photographers may look back on our period as a reference for what photography should represent.

But they will be wrong. For every generation, there will always be a new tradition in photography.

What Is Photography?

Photography has changed in *The New Tradition* – or has it?

SOME PEOPLE BELIEVE photography should be kept 'pure' and not adulterated by digital filters or special effects. They claim photography is what comes out of a camera. You observe a subject through the viewfinder, press the shutter button and the result is a photograph. If you change the resulting capture too much, in a computer or on your smartphone, then the image is no longer pure. It is no longer photography. It should be called something else.

Taking this belief to its conclusion, these people are also stating that the type of photography I have created on occasion is 'impure', a belief to which I strongly object!

Throughout *The New Tradition*, there has been a residue group of passionate photographers who consider themselves guardians of how photography was prior to the introduction of digital technologies. While they accept the digital workflow, they do not accept everything the digital workflow is capable of producing.

Throughout my later career, I have felt the need to defend my creative approach which takes photography beyond what was possible in the darkroom.

I applaud the photographers who choose to produce images 'straight out of camera' as their final representation. Some of their photography is brilliantly captured, but it is no longer representative of photography in *The New Tradition*.

So what is a 'real' photograph?

Lots of people list Ansel Adams as someone who created real photographs, but were they?

Take Ansel Adams' famous photograph, *The Tetons and the Snake River*. Everyone will agree this is a masterful print with amazing technique, but when you next view it, ask yourself if it is what Ansel saw with his eyes, or an interpretation of what he saw. Obviously it is the latter.

Poor Ansel. He must be turning in his grave with the number of people using his name in support of their views on photography – especially the view that photography should be 'real'. One thing that Ansel's photographs are not is 'real', although to be fair, this was an issue that concerned him greatly.

Ansel is quoted as saying, "*A photograph that is merely a superficial record of the subject fails as an aesthetic expression of that subject. The expression must be an emotional amplification, and this emotional amplification relates to point of view, organisation, revelation of substance through textures, tonal relations, and the perfection of the technical expression of all these elements.*"

A camera records what is in front of it. Over the past two centuries, society has come to understand what a camera can do and what a photograph can show. However, depending on how old we are, we might have dissimilar understandings. A teenager will see photography quite differently to his or her grandparents.

When we look at a photograph, we generally have an expectation that what we see depicted is true or real. However, this expectation has some conditions attached to it.

For instance, we accept that photographs have a frame around them, arbitrarily limiting what is shown.

The 'choice' about what to include is often the biggest lie in photography – the beautiful lake with a dirty grey steel foundry next to it, just out of frame.

We also accept black and white photography as being real, even though we see in colour; and we accept the result of long and short shutter speeds, even though these are different to human perception as well. The photograph of a water droplet frozen with a 1/8000 second exposure or a waterfall blurred by an 8 second exposure are accepted as being the result of using a camera and so they are 'real', even though we can't see them the same way with the naked eye.

Similarly, we can add filters in front of our lens to control exposure (graduated neutral density filters), add starbursts (bad taste) or alter the colour balance (standard professional practice) and still have a real photograph. We can even use polarising filters to control reflections and increase contrast without changing a photo's essence.

So, over the decades, we have built up a dictionary of conditions that are acceptable when describing a photograph as being real.

In *The New Tradition*, these conditions are under threat because computers and smartphones can do lots of things to a photograph and the resulting image can be quite different to reality.

So, is it still a photo?

A 'real' photograph is considered by some to be one where the subject being recorded has not been changed from how it appeared in reality. For instance,

combining a photograph of a lake with another photograph of flying swans in the sky to create a 'composite' is not considered 'real photography'. The swans were not flying over the lake when the lake was photographed.

According to this argument, it is not acceptable for a photographer to use his or her imagination and combine these two images in a computer, but you have full permission to camp by that lake for six months, waiting for the swans to fly by. If you then photograph them and produce the same photograph, that is acceptable.

How do we resolve this situation?

My observation is that the photographer who created the composite image is given no credit for his or her imagination, while a photographer who just waited around for Mother Nature to provide something wonderful is given high praise. It seems that spending six months in the field shows dedication and perseverance, attributes that should be applauded, so if the photographer spent the same six months and returned empty-handed, shouldn't we still applaud the photographer? Surely he or she was just as dedicated, but unlucky?

And what about the photographer who spent six months developing his or her post-production skills to a level that allowed the production of a high quality composite? Very rarely is the art and craft of post-production given the credit it is due by 'real' photographers.

Part of the problem is that compositing is so good these days that people don't know what photos are real and what are fantasy.

NEW TRADITION: In fact, when people see an amazing photograph today, the first question they ask is, 'Was this done in Photoshop?'

For photographers who have captured a real scene in-camera, this can be a great offence, while for the public, it is simply a matter of making sure they are not being 'tricked'.

The argument isn't just about composite images and pigs flying in space. It's also about the plethora of special effects that you can apply at the press of a button. Whether you're using Hipstamatic on an iPhone or Nik Software Color Efex Pro on your computer, it is really easy to add special effects and overlays to your photographs.

Thirty years ago, Cokin introduced a series of graduated sunset filters, followed by some stronger 'fluoro' filters. While these filters on one or two photographs may have worked, applying them to all your photographs was simply a case of bad taste.

The same can be said about digital filters today. I think people will look back on the current fad of digital special effects and dismiss them as being cliché.

Is using a digital filter creative?

That's a wonderful question to discuss over a glass of red wine. One could reference Marcel Duchamp entering a factory-made urinal into an art prize (*Fountain*,

1917). He claimed that art could be anything an artist designated it to be. No doubt millions of people today feel they are creating art when they press a button on an app and one of their photographs is transformed into a digital artwork.

So now it's my turn to ask the same question: Is this real photography?

There is a line in the sand for most people, but when you talk about it, you find that line is actually a very wide beach. What is acceptable for me as photography may not be acceptable for others, yet even I draw the line and consider some images aren't photography.

For instance, I think compositing swans flying over a lake is a photograph because it still looks like a photo. Others disagree.

Frank Hurley was in trouble for creating composites in the darkroom over 100 years ago, but most of the people looking at his portfolio never realised some were composites.

Advertising photographers have been using composite techniques for over forty years and we have been comfortable calling them 'photographs'. They, at least, look like photographs, even though their subject matter may be 'fake'!

However, edit photographs with lots of grain, overlays, tints and textures and are they still photographs? They probably are because that's what the image is based on, but I don't have to like them. No, that's not quite correct. I used to like them when they were applied appropriately, but now these effects have become too

common and overused. Their appeal for me is gone. They all look the same and so it's a technique I have removed from my toolbox (for the time being at least).

Photojournalists can be pretty militant when it comes to being 'real'. Swedish photographer Paul Hansen won the World Press Photo 2013 with a photograph of two Palestinian children being carried to their funeral. So-called 'experts' stated the photograph was a 'fraudulent forgery', claiming it was several images combined.

As it turns out, the single-capture image was very 'real', but Paul had lightened and darkened areas of the image to make a stronger photo. He did everything within the rules. He did nothing photographers haven't been doing for hundreds of years. More fool the experts who made the complaint!

Some people think Paul went too far with his dodging and burning, but this is just a matter of taste because others were completely comfortable with his editing. The point is that this requirement for a photograph to be 'real' is creating an awkward hysteria.

LET'S FACE IT: In *The New Tradition*, we will never again know if a photograph is real or not. *Caveat emptor*.

Some photography competitions limit the amount of editing that can be applied to a raw file. It can be no more than could have been achieved in a traditional darkroom, but this is not a very specific restriction and, more importantly, a lot of photographers have never worked in a darkroom, let alone been in one!

However, as photographers, most of us know that lots of creativity went into darkroom work. Darkroom photographers were magicians who used dodging, burning-in, bleaching, texture screens and special developer recipes to create amazing photographs.

Which brings us back to Ansel Adams. He is often touted as being an exemplar of 'real' photography, but if you read his books on photography (*The Print*, in particular), you would learn that Ansel was a great advocate of darkroom work and interpreting the negative. I believe Ansel would have looked at Paul Hansen's photograph and applauded.

Take a look at *Moonrise, Hernandez, New Mexico*, one of Ansel's most famous prints. The original proof print – a photograph made without any darkroom manipulation – shows a light grey sky, in keeping with what our eyes would expect in a black and white photograph.

When Ansel first printed it, he darkened down the sky significantly. My point is that the sky was not real, but it looked great. In later years, Ansel darkened the sky further still, so that it was practically black. I have never seen a black sky at this time of the evening, but wow, the print looks even better.

My point is that Ansel's great photographs were mostly interpretations. He might not have composited images, but he still changed reality so that it looked graphic, interesting and appealing.

That's how we communicate as photographers. And what he produced were most definitely photographs.

In my work, I use composites from time to time, but most of my photos are 'real' in that they are real scenes. However, I am rarely happy with what comes out of the camera because I find the camera representations are lacking.

And when I am taking a photograph, in the back of my mind are hundreds of ideas and approaches that I know will improve or better interpret the photograph, once I open the file on my computer. The computer has become my darkroom.

So, is what I create a photograph? Of course it is!

And if Ansel Adams were alive today, I believe he would be using the same tools and techniques that I do. I might make a colour stronger, he might make a tone darker, but we'd both be working in Photoshop and interpreting our files.

So what is photography? Photography is a language which can be used in different ways. It can be used by scientists, archivists, photojournalists and artists. Their outputs have different purposes, but it is all part of the broad brush of photography.

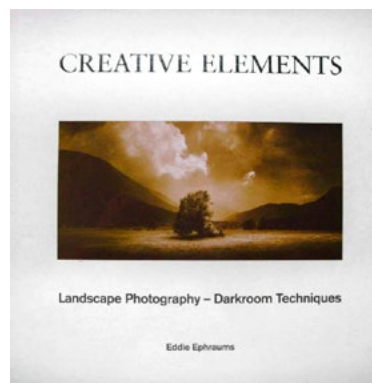
Which means photography can also be as disengaged as pressing a button on a phone and adding a preset filter effect. This approach doesn't give me any satisfaction and so my choice is to explore an image with layers so I can interpret a raw file's many nuances.

And so I come to the conclusion that the only person I can truly make happy with my photography is me.

While I aim to create photographs that others enjoy, there are no guarantees in *The New Tradition*.







Castelnovo

Tuscany, Italy, 1994

Minolta Dynax 7, 100-300mm f4 lens, Agfapan APX 400
1/125 second @ f8, ISO 400, hand-held, no filter

WHERE AND WHEN did *The New Tradition* start?

Australian photographer Doug Spowart's black and white darkroom skills are second to none. I can remember looking at his work in an exhibition at a photography trade show in the early 1990s and being incredibly impressed. I made a mental note that this was the standard to aspire to. The prints had a wonderful depth and clarity, partly due to Leica optics, but without for a moment taking away from his skill in printing and interpreting the negative. Doug was – and still is – the complete photographer and one whose work I greatly admire.

I came away from that trade show with the resolve to master black and white printing. Certainly over the next couple of years I improved my skills, even moving into large format work in the quest for a better quality negative and starting point.

Then I received a book in the mail for review in *Australian Camera* magazine: *Creative Elements – Landscape Photography Darkroom Technique* by Eddie Ephraums. In addition to producing incredible print quality, Eddie opened my eyes as to what

was possible in the darkroom. Instead of being restricted to dodging and burning-in, I was shown toning and bleaching techniques I had never seen before. Maybe that's not quite correct – I was familiar with the techniques, but I had never seen them used his way.

This print of Castelnovo was inspired by Eddie's book. It earned a Gold Award at the 1995 AIPP Australian Professional Photography Awards.

Taken on an overcast afternoon in light drizzle, I made the print relatively dark and sombre. Then, after fixing and washing, I used a solution of Farmers Reducer (a bleach) with a small paintbrush to lighten up each of the buildings, one by one. Farmers Reducer was a common technique, but care had to be taken not to overdo it or you'd produce a colouration in the print. In this situation, the colouration produced was exactly what I was after.

The wet print is taken from the wash bath and placed on a flat surface – I used a sheet of industrial grade plastic. The surface was angled into the darkroom sink – well-equipped darkrooms had large, shallow, stainless steel sinks to hold processing dishes

and print washers – so I could wash the print after applying the bleach.

A very small amount of bleach was prepared (around 5 millilitres) and a fine, sable-hair brush used to paint carefully over the areas to be lightened. The bleach would stay in contact with the print for a few seconds, after which I would use a running hose to wash the bleach away with water. The process would be repeated as often as required, and gradually the area would lighten up to the required density.

It took me over an hour to lighten up all the buildings, so consequently only two prints were ever made.

To finish the processing, the print was selenium toned which darkened the blacks and created a very rich tonal range.

Above left: Another angle of the same small village, with the same drab lighting. A similar technique was applied, but perhaps not as successfully.

Above right: Cover of my copy of Eddie Ephraums's wonderful book, *Creative Elements*.





La Sacre di San Michele

Northern Italy, 1994

Minolta Dynax 7, 28-135mm lens, Kodak T-Max P1600
1/60 second @ f5.6, ISO 1600, tripod-mounted, no filter

THE ITALIAN ABBEY of La Sacre di San Michele perches on an island of land, a promontory overlooking a flat-bottomed valley through which a road and train track wind their way into Switzerland.

We detoured up a convoluted road, hugging the side of a steep hill and arrived just below the abbey in the late afternoon. In addition to the imposing walls and flying buttresses at the top, we were greeted by a symphony of Gregorian chants.

We walked into the abbey, stepping over ancient stone flagging, up a grand stairway and through a series of arches and tunnels, rising rapidly. With each step, the chanting grew stronger and deeper. The sound was simply enchanting and at every turn, we expected to see a choir of hundreds of hooded monks, reverentially singing in harmony.

Higher and higher we climbed until the arches and hallways arrived at an open air courtyard onto which

the doors of the abbey itself opened. But there was no choir. Nor any monks.

Tucked in the corner was a \$50 boom box, its CD set to loop continuously. After all, it was winter and what monks with any sense would stand outdoors in the cold, chanting for hours on end.

Somewhat deflated, I looked for a photograph that would help recreate the atmosphere and mood of this 1000-year-old structure. As is often the case, the best views are not from within the structure itself, but from a distance, so we retraced our steps and followed the winding road a little further up the hill. It ended in a small paddock, freshly ploughed and with dirt soft enough to sink into past your bootstraps – or in my case, my shoelaces.

I found a position that looked over the top of an orchard of leafless fruit trees and watched the sunset. Low cloud meant the abbey didn't light

up as I hoped, but this was easily corrected in the darkroom.

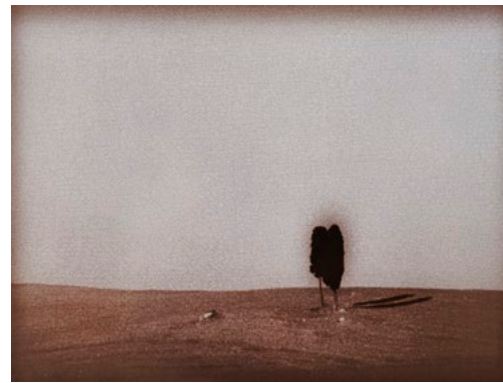
After developing, fixing and washing the print, a solution of copper toner was applied to the abbey using a fine brush.

Only three prints were made, two of which now hang in private homes. When I visit one of them, I marvel at how the copper toning has grown over the years, changing from the soft red you see here to a rich, golden yellow, almost disguising the silver image below.

I think of it as a photo in motion.

Most of my work at this stage was taken on transparency films like Kodachrome, Ektachrome and Fujichrome. The images above were taken in Italy on the same shoot.





Two Tuscan Trees

Tuscany, Italy, 1994

Minolta Dynax 7, 100-300mm f4 lens, Agfapan APX 100
1/125 second @ f8, ISO 100, hand-held, no filter

TEXTURE SCREENS WERE a way for darkroom workers to add another dimension to their prints. My favourite texture design was called craqueline and resembled the cracked effect found on old oil paintings. Today there's a Photoshop filter which bears a poor resemblance to my old texture screen.

I can't remember who made the texture screens, but they were purchased by mail order from an advertisement in an American photography magazine.

Paterson, who made printing and development equipment, also made texture screens, but they were only for contact with the negative, not the print. I preferred the larger texture screens that were in contact with the final print.

To produce a print from a negative, you needed an enlarger. An enlarger was a light source on a column. You put the negative underneath the light source and above the enlarging lens. The higher the negative was above the enlarging paper below, the larger the size of the image on the print – it was an 'enlarger'.

There were two ways you could create a print with a texture screen effect.

A small texture screen (the same size as the negative) was sandwiched with the negative and placed in the enlarger. You could sandwich all types of screens or even other negatives. The problem if the texture screen was in place for the entire exposure, was that you had little control over how strong the texture effect was. The only solution was to make your own textures with different densities (opacities).

One option was to expose the paper twice, once with the negative, and a second exposure with just the texture screen. This allowed you to separately control the intensity of the texture screen over the negative.

However, the bigger the print, the bigger the texture and I didn't like that. I preferred to have textures that were sized in relation to the final print, not enlarged with the negative.

The 'contact' texture screens I used allowed me to make 16x12" (40x30 cm) prints, but importantly, I could control their intensity by removing them from the print part way through the exposure. We essentially do the same now in Photoshop by using the opacity slider.

Texture screens required additional effort and subsequently were not commonly used. You could

almost be guaranteed an extra few points in a print competition if you used an appropriate texture screen. The 'Two Tuscan Trees' was an enlarged section of a negative with a copper tone, a texture screen and a 'definite' vignette – it scored a Gold Award in the 1995 Australian Professional Photography Awards.

When digital began, texture screens became very popular with portrait and wedding photographers, so much so that it seemed every second portrait entered into the professional photography awards had a texture screen! You could even buy sets of different textures and Photoshop actions to put them in place.

This, for me, was the death of texture screens. They were so common, they became cliché. Even so, I still have a soft spot for a well executed texture screen, although today I rarely use them myself.

But perhaps that will change.

A print took approximately 15 minutes to process as a black and white, and after washing for an hour or so, it was followed by the toning process. As you can see, each print is a little different.





Dune 45

Namib Desert, Namibia 1995

Minolta Dynax 7, 300mm f4 lens, Kodak T-Max P1600
1/500 second @ f8, ISO 1600, tripod-mounted, no filter

WE ARRIVED IN the middle of the dunes well before sunrise. When we bundled out of the bus, we didn't know whether to go left or right, so we flipped a coin and walked straight ahead. What followed in the next few hours was the most amazing light show of my life as the sand dunes of the Namib desert came to life.

We spent the day in the dunes and Sossusflei, all now popular tourist destinations. In the afternoon, we headed back along the single road and stopped at Dune 45. Why is it called Dune 45? I'm told because it is 45 kilometres from Sesriem, the closest town.

The black and white photo is what I found in the late afternoon light. It's funny how some negatives or files stand out when you review your images, but I felt there was something there. I printed it over 30 times, struggling to get exactly the right gradation of tones at the top of the dune and in the sky. It was a marathon darkroom effort, but the following morning as I sorted through my prints, I couldn't really tell which was my masterpiece. At least half a dozen looked identical.

The print was part of a portfolio that won me the 1996 Australian Professional Photographer of the Year, but there's nothing like having friends to bring you down to earth.

Upon hearing of my success, one of my fellow travellers on the African trip, John Bazzano, sent me

a copy of an English photography magazine that had been printed a couple of years earlier.

In it was a centre-spread photograph of the same dune and trees from a very similar angle.

There's nothing new in photography, but my mother tells me mine was the better print.

For me, one of the most powerful attributes of Irving Penn's work was the rich, deep blacks in his exquisite portraits. Landscape photographers may wonder what they can learn from portraiture, but I would place portrait photographers as some of my strongest influences.

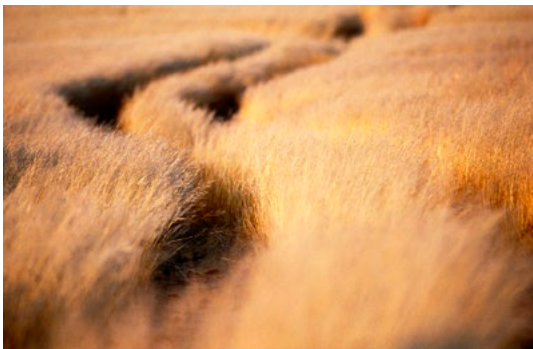
In digital photography, we seem to be scared of using blacks because, technically we are 'clipping' the tones. This might be a valid concern when capturing a photograph, but is not really relevant when post-producing the print. Areas of black are totally valid.

In the darkroom, we would give prints extra exposure (burning-in) to darken areas of the print. After developing and fixing, we would then tone the print in a selenium solution, which further intensifies the richness and depth of the blacks.

Both techniques were applied to this image, the slight colouration coming from the selenium toner.

Above and Middle: Colour views of Dune 45.
Below: Aerial view of the Namib Desert's extensive dune system.





Epupa Falls

Namibia, 1995

Minolta Dynax 7, 17mm Tokina f3.5 lens, Agfapan APX 100
15 seconds @ f11, ISO 100, tripod-mounted, no filter

PHOTOGRAPHY IS AS much about the experience as the photograph.

Many images have ‘baggage’ attached to them that sometimes inflates the success of the image in our minds. And this is perfectly acceptable.

The baggage attached to this image is a little different. It brings back fond memories of a practical joke, albeit childish.

Epupa Falls is on the Angolan border of Namibia and indeed this tree might be in Angola. It is – or was – an amazing place where some 17 small waterfalls tipped over the edge, cascading through deep clefts in a dry land. It was absolutely beautiful and photographing it in a meaningful way was very difficult.

One of the challenges was the bright light above the clefts and the deep shadows within. The contrast was too great for film to capture detail in both areas at the one time and, this being pre-digital, the thought of two exposures hadn’t occurred to me.

The solution was to wait for the sun to set. I was standing there with fellow photographer John Bazzano, discussing nothing in particular, whiling away the time. Our tripods were set at the ready, cameras poised, anticipating just the right time.

John excused himself as nature called and he politely walked a discrete distance away. Now, I’m not quite sure what possessed me, but I walked over to his camera which was fitted with a fine zoom lens, checked the angle he had set so I could return the

camera to this position afterwards, released the tripod head and swung the camera towards John.

The zoom worked remarkably well and I captured him from a three-quarter rear view, mid-stream.

I returned the camera to its correct position and zoom setting and nonchalantly wandered back to my own camera. John returned and appeared none the wiser.

I said nothing more and promptly forgot the incident.

Our trip continued for another few weeks and a couple of months passed. Back in Sydney, I’m sitting in my office at the magazine when I receive a call. It’s John.

“Hello, Peter,” he began, his words very carefully annunciated. “How are you?”

“Fine,” I replied.

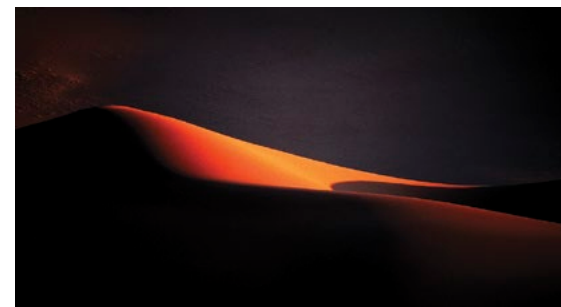
“I’ve been very busy,” continued John, “so I asked my new lady friend if she would like to help me edit my photos from our African trip.”

He paused. “There was one photograph in particular, taken at Epupa Falls. She wondered if you could provide an explanation for it?”

Now I like John a lot, but he’s never been brave enough to go on another trip with me, but I believe his relationship blossomed, so no harm done.

Colour images taken at and near Epupa Falls.





Sossusvlei Dunes

Namibia, 1995

Minolta Dynax 7, 28-135mm lens, Agfapan APX 100
1/60 second @ f5.6, ISO 100, hand-held, 25A red filter

ONE OF THE CHALLENGES for photographers is midday sunlight. While we're told to shoot in the early morning or late afternoon, because the angle of the light is more attractive for the subject, we're not always able to work at these times. So, what do you do in the middle of the day? Do you put your camera away and wait? Of course not!

I am still challenged when shooting with overhead sunlight. In the landscape, I have no control over the angle of the light, except to wait until a different time of day. The light source is incredibly directional, creating specular highlights on shiny surfaces, such as leaves and minerals. These specular highlights diminish the level of detail that can be retained, a problem when you are trying to maintain detail at all costs. And finally, strong sunlight throws harsh shadows, so there are further difficulties in maintaining detail in both the highlights and shadows.

Photographers need to understand exposure latitude or 'dynamic range'. Unlike our eyes which adjust the 'exposure' to accommodate the brightness of whatever we're looking at, a camera has a limited range of tones it can record in a single capture. If you set the exposure to retain detail in the highlights, you can end up with much of the image underexposed and in deep shadow. If you change the exposure to lighten the

shadows, your highlights can be overexposed or 'blown out'. In the digital world, we call this 'clipping' and it is a very noticeable issue when working in overhead sunlight.

Note, there is nothing wrong with strong shadows or blown out highlights, if they are intentional. However, most cameras (and films) have a limited dynamic range, meaning it might not be possible to render an image with detail in both the shadows and the highlights.

So, midday sunshine becomes problematical, especially in the clear airs of the southern hemisphere.

In the days of film, one solution was to shoot in black and white. Photographers would invariably take two or three cameras, each loaded with a different type of film. Usually you had a slow speed colour, a high speed colour (well, ISO 400 anyway) and a black and white.

The advantage of black and white was it allowed you to separate your subject from reality and concentrate on its graphic and tonal qualities.

Three techniques have been used to make the most of the direct sunshine in the image opposite.

The first is to use a red filter which, on black and white film, renders blue sky as a very dark grey or even black. By darkening the sky, the eye is drawn to the

landscape below. However, the red filter also tends to build contrast, enhancing the graphic rendition of the subject. In this particular frame, there is no sky, but the extra contrast is latent in the negative.

The second technique was to darken the image overall. This deepens the shadows and, importantly, maintains details in the highlights. While the photograph comprises a series of strong triangular shapes, I think it is the detail in the sand dunes that creates the interest.

And this is the third technique. Note that because the side of the dune is angled upwards, it is catching the overhead sunlight much like a flat landscape captures early morning or late afternoon sunlight. If I have to shoot under midday sunlight, then working with hills and mountain sides (or sand dunes) allows me to cheat a little with the light.

In the darkroom, a high contrast filter in the enlarger was used to build contrast in the image and a solution of Farmers Reducer was painted onto the dunes with a brush to create the highlights.

The dunes look fantastic in colour, but not in the middle of the day. The photos up top were photographed earlier at sunrise.





Prague

Czech Republic, 1997

Minolta Dynax 7, 100-400mm f5.6 lens, Kodak T-Max P1600
1/1000 second @ f5.6, ISO 1600, tripod-mounted, no filter

ONE OF THE beauties of working in the darkroom, something I can struggle with in the digital realm, was the simplicity with which you could create beautiful, rich, dark, brooding BLACKS.

I think this is what made a black and white darkroom print so special. Certainly it's what inkjet printer manufacturers have been chasing for the past decade. And they have achieved it.

What I struggled with when I first moved to a digital workflow was setting the black in Photoshop. I felt that I wanted to retain detail, no matter how slight, throughout the entire image. And of course, with modern technology, this is quite possible with a little attention and skill.

In comparison, in the darkroom it is difficult to keep the detail in the very dark Zones 2 and 3 (referring to Ansel Adam's Zone System), with barely perceptible detail. It was much easier to burn the hell out of the print and create those rich blacks.

Besides, people loved looking at blacks. It was a crowd pleaser all round.

One of the other techniques I enjoyed exploring was ramping up the contrast in the print and increasing the graininess. This print was made using Grade 5 filtration in the enlarger, which more or less says goodbye to all the tones between white and black, plus increases the appearance of the emulsion's grain structure. Again, back then it was a big crowd pleaser and a lot of fun to orchestrate.

The final touch was a little local bleaching and toning. A drop or two of potassium ferricyanide solution on the end of a small paintbrush allowed me to lighten up the two windows, then after a really good wash, a little copper toner on a different brush (never mix your brushes) added in the colour.

In comparison to computer retouching, there is something wonderfully 'fresh' about the imperfections of the handmade technique.

This print helped me win the AIPP Australian Professional Photographer of the Year Award a second time, but the win didn't feel quite right. In the two years since the first win, my technique had been refined, but I didn't feel I had taken it in a new direction.

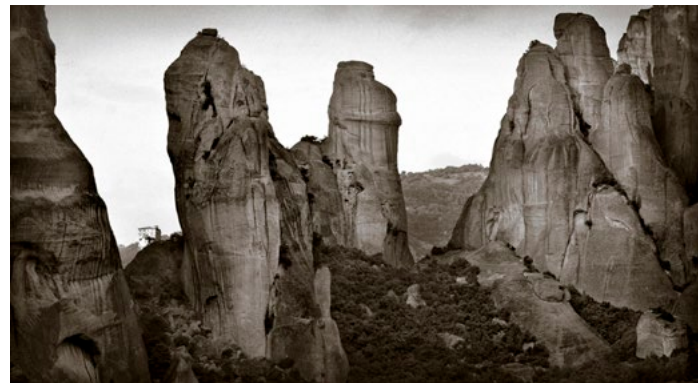
The win was, to my mind, just lucky.

However, over the years I've seen close friends also take out major prizes with an element of 'luck'. There's no doubting their entries were great photographs, but to be selected as the winner by a panel of judges requires a small degree of serendipity as well! So, if you get a win in a competition, take it with humility and gratitude!

The other three prints in my 1998 portfolio. The AIPP Australian Professional Photographer of the Year Award is based on four prints. Two of the prints earned Gold, one a Gold with Distinction (the main photo). So, which one only received a Silver with Distinction? Answer below.

The washing line.





Roussanou Monastery

Meteora, Greece, 1997

Mamiya 7, 43mm Mamiya f4.5 lens, Agfapan APX 100, Pyro developer
1/30 second @ f11, ISO 100, tripod-mounted, no filter

WHEN I FIRST saw the Roussanou monasteries, perched atop these amazing rounded mountains, I wondered how far I would have to walk to photograph them.

Remembering this was before the internet made acquiring information so easy, I researched guidebooks and purchased maps, but I couldn't find anything with a useful scale. Were the monasteries one kilometre away from the nearest town or fifty? Were there paths or roads? Would I have to camp out to get the early morning light?

I needn't have worried. There was a 21-kilometre paved road from Kalambaka, the nearby town, that took the tourist buses on a circuit of half a dozen monasteries!

I drove that road many times in the three days we stayed in Kalambaka, trying hard to capture the mood and atmosphere. It really was a special place, the ancient edifices sitting atop a domed monolith, looking across to another.

One of the challenges with film photography was grain, the fine sand-like texture seen in the image when you looked at it very closely or under a magnifying glass. The film manufacturers were trying to produce an image without grain, something we take for granted these days with digital cameras.

For black and white film photography only, pyro (short for pyrogallol) was an alternative development process that produced grainless results. Essentially it replaced the grain in the film emulsion with a

stain, producing very fine detail and invisible grain. Unfortunately, it is highly toxic and it's probably a good thing that I switched to digital.

Using a negative developed in pyro, I printed the image originally in the darkroom, then repeated the exercise digitally from a scan a number of years later, adding in a little colour to the sky. In both images, Roussanou Monastery was highlighted by bleaching or lightening it.

The main monastery is easily seen, but look more closely and you'll find three more monasteries tucked away.

Other images from the Meteora series and a colour overview of the area.



Maria Island

Tasmania 1998

Leica M6, 50mm f1.0 Noctilux lens, Agfapan APX 100, 1/500 second @ f11, ISO 100, hand-held, no filter

YOU LEARN A lot of things from the people you meet. Richard Bennett is one of the world's leading yachting photographers and has covered the Sydney to Hobart race for over 40 years. Quietly spoken, always polite, his low-key manner belies his strength of character. As a younger man, he climbed the six highest peaks in South America, while in his sixties, he sailed from South Africa to Australia with a 70-year-old crew member. While that is remarkable enough, it is even more so when you learn a little later that the yacht was capsized in rough weather and he was without a radio for over a month. Perhaps his wife Susie needs to be given the medal!

Richard was also the national president of the Australian Institute of Professional Photography and then chairman of the AIPP's Australian Professional Photography Awards for many years. And while he introduced the Grand Master of Photography Award, it is an accolade that unfairly eludes him as it requires five Gold Awards. And this is where Awards systems are not always fair because many of Richard's amazing yachting photographs, which have won international awards and have been published extensively, failed to be recognised by judges lacking the experience to understand what they were looking at. Mind you, this is the same judging system that awarded me Australian Professional Photographer of the Year, so I'd better be careful how critical I am of the judges!

So, how did I get to Maria Island?

My wife Kathie and I signed up for a six-day walk with Richard along Tasmania's South Coast, but as you will be unsurprised to read, the weather prevented us from flying to the head of the trail. So, what do you do with a group of 10 photographers when the whole purpose of your photo tour has been put on hold? Richard picked up the phone and organised a plane out to Maria Island, a boat over to the Freycinet Peninsula, a walk along its pristine beaches and a flight

back to Hobart. It was a sensational few days, if not what we had originally planned.

Maria Island has a number of old buildings from convict times. The manner in which man imposes himself on the landscape has always interested me and, as you will see later in this book, I am not adverse to including a small house or building within the composition.

I think as photographers there are particular subject genres that we find attractive or interesting. I've always had an interest in architecture, which is not something at all remarkable. It's like saying I have always had an interest in Europe and its historical culture – me and a billion other people, I'm sure. However, it explains to me why I still to this day collect photographs of buildings in the landscape.

I also include figures in the landscape. Years ago, a camera club judge suggested to the audience that including a person can give an image a sense of scale and it's an idea that remains with me.

In terms of the technique, by today's standard the vignette is too heavy and too obvious, but in the context of its time, it was seen as different and graphically interesting. Of course, not all the judges liked this 'new approach' to photography – many were openly hostile to the way I and other photographers were presenting black and white photography.

I think about how I don't like some of the new HDR photographs that are out there and have a little laugh with myself – what goes around, comes around. Perhaps in 20 years another photographer will write a book like this and complain about old judges like me not understanding HDR! I certainly hope not!

Buildings in the landscape are hardly new. Even Ansel Adams took them! However, there is something reassuring about a building in a landscape! Other examples taken around the same time on the mainland.







Rathdowney

Queensland, 1998

Canon EOS 3, 100-400mm f5.6 lens, Kodak T-Max P1600
1/1000 second @ f5.6, ISO 1600, tripod-mounted, no filter

EVEN BEFORE DIGITAL photography, there was an expectation that what you saw in a photograph was real.

This is not an expectation I agree with and, philosophically, it's unreasonable. It is easier for viewers to simply accept something as real than it is to question it, but at the same time, people don't like being fooled. So, in the context of a newspaper or a geographic magazine, I think it is reasonable for people to expect a photograph to be real, but in a photography magazine or on the walls of an art gallery, no such assumption should be made.

Rathdowney was inspired by the work of Eddie Ephraums, the way he darkened down an image, only to lighten up a point of interest using bleach on the tip of a fine brush, and a touch of toner as well.

At an AIPP print judging, this photograph scored a Gold Award, a rarity in those days and something that I was very pleased with.

After the judging, the prints were hung on a wall for people to view. I was walking along the walls, looking at all the winning prints, when Robert Billington walked up to me. Robert was one of the judges and he complimented me on my photograph.

Robert is a very accomplished photographer, but at that time, my memory is that he didn't do much of his own darkroom printing. That was handled by an expert printer and, in the world of professional photography, quite a common arrangement. However, I surmise that Robert didn't have detailed knowledge of darkroom techniques, and hence his comment and subsequent disappointment.

"It's great how you captured that beam of light on the hill," Robert said.

"Oh, there wasn't any sunlight there," I answered. "I created that in the darkroom."

I expected additional praise because I had used my imagination to create an image, rather than being lucky enough to be standing in the right spot when Mother Nature turned on a light show.

However, I was wrong. Robert said he would have scored the print 10 points lower if he had known the image had been produced in the darkroom.

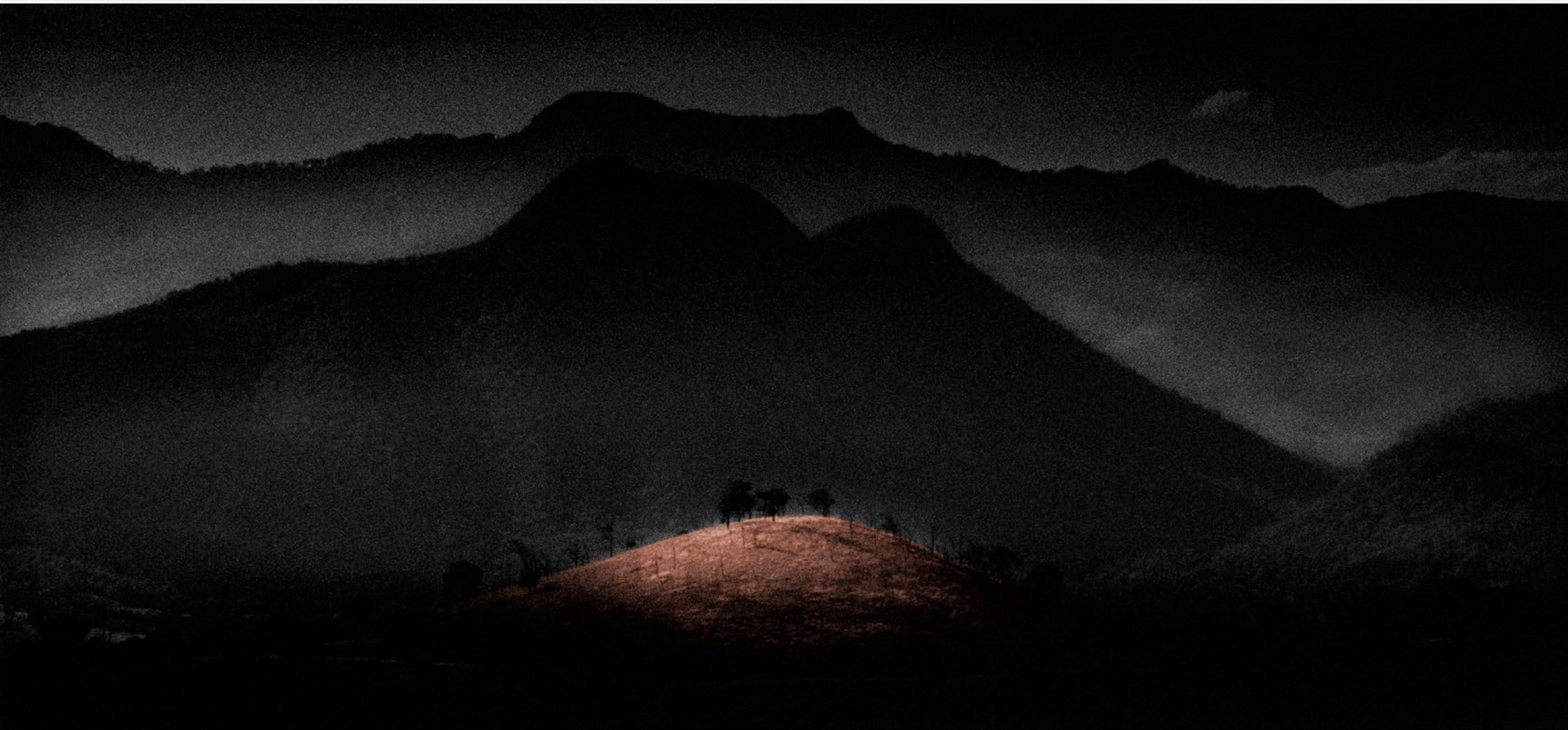
It has taken me a long time to accept that many other people value luck and serendipity more than imagination and creativity. It's something I don't agree with because for me, the only thing that matters is the final image, not the means used to create it.

In Robert's case, I think it was more a matter that he felt fooled at the time. He believed the print to be one thing, only to discover it was something else.

I think that still today, Robert values the moment of capture above all else, but he is also one of the country's most imaginative photographers and I have seen him employ many different darkroom techniques over the years, so creativity is certainly not lost on him.

Except, perhaps, in Rathdowney.

My love affair with backlit hills began in the Flinders Ranges at the age of 20, shooting what I called 'Sugarloaf Hill' in the Hills of Arkaba. I shot in colour originally, but later used the same light in black and white, also in the Flinders Ranges. The image at the bottom is the western side of the Flinders, but I must have been feeling off-colour because it is just standard side-lighting!





St Paul de Vence

France, 1999

Canon EOS 3, 100-400mm lens, Agfapan APX 100
1/60 second @ f8, ISO 100, hand-held, no filter

LIKE SOFTWARE FILTERS today, toning and special development techniques were the filters of the darkroom, but there is a large difference.

Unless you photographed the same subject multiple times, you only had one chance with film development. When it came to making a print from your processed film, you had multiple chances, but each opportunity took a long time and it was difficult (some would suggest impossible) to reproduce a toned result.

You could be as precise as you liked with your technique (the temperature and time a print spent in the toning solution), but it was also the remaining reactivity of the toning solution that affected the final result. The first prints through a toning solution would react more strongly than later prints and so you had to make adjustments to your technique to try and compensate as best you could.

This is the attraction for many darkroom workers, the fact that the final result was a combination of careful technique and serendipity.

However, the development and toning techniques had a purpose: to change the aesthetics of the photograph. Often it was sufficient to make a print that

was different from what was normally expected. This in itself would set the print apart.

NEW TRADITION: In *The New Tradition*, being different is no longer sufficient. Everyone is 'different' when they apply a digital filter, even though many of these applications are the result of a programmer's clever algorithms. Still, it is our recognition of which filters work and which do not that determines the success of our art.

My toning approach started with a processed black and white print. Each print required around 10 minutes to process, which included exposure, dodging and burning under the enlarger, followed by standardised development, stop and fixer. If the resulting print was any good, it would be washed for another 10 minutes for a resin-coated paper or 60 minutes for a fibre-based paper. Only then was it ready for the toning techniques.

There was a range of different toners, but I liked the copper, gold and thiosulphide toners the best, the latter providing a range of different colours. However, you could tone your prints with almost anything, including tea!

Sometimes the entire print would be toned, on other occasions it would be selectively toned. Using a paintbrush, the toner would be applied to small areas (like a hill or a window) by hand. The toner took several seconds to several minutes to apply, depending on the type of toner and the strength of the toning solution.

Some prints also had more than one tone applied to them. Often selenium toner was used after an initial tone to enhance the blacks in the image, giving the print more contrast and depth.

In *The New Tradition*, all these techniques can be replicated within the digital workflow. The main difference when applying these effects digitally is that there is no longer any serendipity: it is all done by the numbers and can be precisely replicated.

Funnily enough, the desire I used to have for repeatability in the darkroom has been replaced with a search for happy accidents in *The New Tradition*. I guess the difference is that you can search through many more permutations and, from time to time, you discover something that's a little different – and really cool!

Additional darkroom processed images from the French and Italian Hill Town series.





Ilonse

France, 1999

Canon EOS 3, Canon 24mm T-SE lens, Agfapan APX 100
1/125 second @ f11, ISO 100, tripod-mounted, no filter

TIM RUDMAN MASTERED lith printing. In fact, Tim is a masterful photographer in all aspects of the art and craft, each of his carefully composed and exquisitely processed prints an invaluable lesson in contemporary photography, whether for the darkroom or the computer.

Tim wrote several definitive books on lith printing and toning. His approach and techniques allowed darkroom workers to produce much more repeatable results, although in my experience, there was still a wonderful degree of variability. Sometimes this variability was a blessing in disguise, but on other occasions merely a frustrating experience!

Lith printing for me was still very variable, meaning I never really knew what the result would be. Used in the graphic arts and pre-press industries to create

tonal dropouts and line art, it wasn't really designed for pictorial photography with shades of grey.

However, if you pulled (removed) the print out of the developer solution at precisely the right moment, you could produce results with remarkable tonality.

Of course, it wasn't quite as easy as it sounds. First you had to mix the developer to the correct concentration. Then you needed to keep it at the correct temperature. And with each print you put through the lith developer, its potency changed, meaning the next print would be a little different.

Pulling the print out at just the right time was a matter of inspection. Under a dim red darkroom light, you would peer into the developer tray as you sloshed the lith developer over the print. Nothing would happen for ages and then suddenly, within a matter

of five to ten seconds, the print would turn black where it had been exposed.

The trick was to pull the print out as the image was turning black, so you kept the mid tones.

The best part about lith printing was that the mid tones weren't grey, they were a range of pinks and oranges, depending on a number of variables.

Today, reproducing a lith print technique is very challenging. It's a part of *The New Tradition* that has been lost unless you do it the old way. Yes, you can create images with a digital workflow that imitate some aspects of a lith print, but nothing I have found to date does it quite the same.

Perhaps that's a challenge for the future.

Additional lith processed images from the French and Italian Hill Town series.









Assisi

Italy, 2002

Canon EOS 1Ds, Canon TSE 24mm lens
1/1000 second @ f13, ISO 800, hand-held, no filter

THE NEW TRADITION was a gradual metamorphosis. Different genres adopted digital techniques at different times and possibly one of the drivers was affordability.

Advertising photographers were among the first to engage. The art directors and creatives at the advertising agencies were always pushing the limits of technology, trying to create new and exciting work to enthrall their audiences. They also had the budgets to access the expensive, high-powered computers that were needed to edit digital files. The Quantel Paintbox comes to mind, although a lot of its work was initially done for television commercials.

However, even before Paintbox, skilled pre-press compositors would merge multiple images together, so when digital arrived, it was really taking over a creative approach that was fairly well developed.

Many people think of digital editing as pink pigs flying through space over an impossible landscape. This is an obvious composite, but what digital editing really allowed was far more powerful and far more subtle. It was allowing photographers a second chance to nail the exposure and colour balance. It was also allowing

them to selectively adjust discrete areas of the image, just as they did in the darkroom.

Looking at the entries in the professional photography awards around the turn of the century, there was a big difference between the work of advertising photographers and that of everyone else. Although Photoshop had been around for 10 years or so, few photographers had the skills to drive it properly.

Advertising and commercial photographs would be beautifully edited with Invisible Photoshop. Admittedly, much of this work was edited by expert digital retouchers, not the photographers, but that's just how the advertising world normally worked.

In comparison, domestic photography entries were poorly finished with lots of rough edges. Awards were given for substandard work because the judges in those categories didn't have the depth of experience to assess the work correctly – they didn't know how good digital editing could be because few of them had noticed what the advertising photographers were doing.

In fact, no one really noticed what advertising photographers were doing in terms of technique

because it was done so well. It was invisible, but their secrets were quickly revealed and it didn't take wedding and portrait photographers too long before they were editing work to the same exacting standards.

Digital techniques have transformed photography in so many ways. At Assisi, photography inside the churches was not allowed, which was a pity because the interiors are absolutely amazing.

However, at the little gift shop, you could buy postcards, slides and CDs depicting those amazing interiors, indicating to my prejudiced mind that the Church was prohibiting photography merely to make a quick buck on the side.

My photograph shows a committee of monks and nuns discussing how much they can put up the prices for their postcards.

I wonder how the church controls photography inside their establishments today?

Left: An overview of the courtyard in Assisi where the photo was taken. Right: Two nuns photographed elsewhere in Assisi and unknowingly pressed into service.





Pontecuti

Italy, 2002

Canon EOS 1Ds, Canon EF 16-35mm lens
Composite image

IS DIFFERENT BETTER? Photographers are like all artists, exploring the medium from a personal viewpoint. Some refer to history, others explore the future, but what is new to one photographer can be old hat to another.

When I released a series of four composite images taken in Italy in 2004, they were different from what most photographers were doing at the time. This could be good or it could be bad in the context of a photography competition.

I really enjoyed creating stories with my photographs. In the image of Pontecuti, there's a mother (unseen), waiting impatiently in the family kitchen, a bowl of hot pasta on the table. Her daughter knows she's late and that she will be in trouble. She runs across the bridge, hurrying home for dinner.

Before entering these photographs in a competition, I showed two people: David Oliver and Graham McCarter, both of whom I greatly respect as photographers. David said he hated them. Graham said they weren't even photographs.

I won the 2004 AIPP Australian Illustrative Photographer of the Year award with the portfolio. So, what happened?

Did the prints score highly because they were different from what judges had seen before? And is being different a good enough reason to give a print a high score? Surely something that's different can also be unsuccessful?

For David and Graham, photography is all about capturing the moment. David is a huge fan of Cartier-Bresson and the Decisive Moment. Graham's passion

is for gritty, documentary portraits. I love the work of both these photographers.

So, when I showed David and Graham my photographs, there are two possibilities. First, the photographs simply weren't any good. Too much colour, too unnatural, too much post-production.

The other possibility is that the photographs are actually okay in their genre, but neither David nor Graham related to them. The photos were so far away from what they were passionate about, this style of photography held no interest for them.

This series established me in some way as a Photoshop expert. The learning process associated with developing the images certainly improved my editing skills, but I think the most important lesson was to be true to yourself.

In photography, there will be people who don't like your work. Don't take it too personally. It's not that your work isn't good, rather that it's taking a different direction to what others believe photography should be. Generally speaking, people are going to respond much more strongly to images they would like to have taken themselves, rather than genres that don't interest them. And that's what makes photography so dynamic and enjoyable.

Different might not be good, but differences of opinion should be treasured and enjoyed.

Especially over a glass of red wine.

Top to Bottom: Background location; location cropped and graded; road resurfaced courtesy of local council; model dropped into position – image of model taken in Orvieto on another occasion when a bribe of ice cream was required.





Santa Maria dei Miracoli

Italy, 2002

Canon EOS 1Ds, Canon 14mm lens, stitched
1/60 second @ f8, ISO 800, hand-held, no filter

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE between plagiarism and inspiration? Plagiarism is when you copy the work of one person, inspiration is when you copy the work of hundreds.

With so many people coming into photography, some of the basic morals and ethics have been ignored, forgotten or perhaps never learned.

While it's acceptable to copy an image on the internet and post it somewhere else, it's not acceptable to pretend it's your own work or idea.

There's a fine line between copying and being inspired. Renaissance artists began their careers copying the work of their masters. Even today, painters can copy the work of masters and call it a homage. I'm not exactly sure why it is acceptable in the contemporary art world. Perhaps it's because to copy a painting you still have to paint it, but forgers go to jail for passing off a work as being something it is not.

So, context is important. A photographer copying the work of another is only acceptable as a learning experience. In fact, it's a great way to develop your skills and is to be encouraged. However, once you have completed your copy, you should never enter it into a photography competition as though it were your own

work. Nor should you post it on the internet, even if you admit it is a copy and reference the original artist. If it's a copy, you are breaching copyright.

So, what's the difference between copying (plagiarism) and inspiration (where you are influenced by another artist's work). Copying simply reproduces what has already been done, whereas inspiration takes your photograph to a new place.

There's nothing wrong with looking at the work of Ansel Adams and deciding to shoot landscapes in black and white. However, to work out where Ansel put his tripod and take the exact same photograph is different. You may argue that the weather or the time of day is different, but how much of the photograph is really yours? What was your intention?

The argument becomes much more complicated when photographing famous landmarks like Uluru or the Sydney Opera House. Thousands of people take photographs from the same standpoint every day, so if we take one as well, are we plagiarists? To be a plagiarist, you need to copy the work of someone else. While your photograph of a famous landmark might look like a lot of other photographs, it doesn't make you a plagiarist. You'd have to go to the landmark with

another photographer's image in mind, intending to copy it.

Santa Maria dei Miracoli is a composite of a stitched background, a new sky and the small girl in the foreground. It won a number of awards around the world and was featured in several magazines.

You can imagine my surprise a few years later when a photograph turned up in a competition with an almost identical treatment, but two small girls in red capes in the foreground.

I was one of the judges, so I gave the print the lowest score possible. Was this photograph a copy? It had two little girls, not one, so it was different. Was that difference enough to make it original? I'm not sure how a court would rule, but in my mind it was a direct copy. Very flattering, of course, but I was not impressed.

However, the other judges were very impressed and the photograph received a silver award. Being a plagiarist doesn't mean you will always be caught out, but it doesn't make it right.

Left to right: Stitch components in position; retouched stitch with sky and girl dropped in; part-way through post-production.





Cappella della Madonna di Vitaleta

Italy, 2002

Canon EOS 1Ds, Canon 28-135mm lens @ 135mm
1/250 second @ f8, ISO 800, hand-held, no filter

WHEN WE ARRIVED in Italy for a two-month holiday with our young family, there were two photographs that seemed to be everywhere we looked. One was a stand of trees in an undulating field near Montalcino, the other a small chapel sitting alone in a field on a hill, and they were on the covers of guidebooks and posters promoting travel within Italy.

Eventually I found them both, having asked every Italian I met if he or she could give me a clue (Google and Google Maps weren't around to help me).

At the time, we were staying in Orvieto and it was around a 90-minute drive to Cappella di Vitaleta. I visited it three times, researching the best time of day and hoping for suitable light.

It never happened.

The weather simply wouldn't co-operate, so I had to resort to a second-best exposure with poor illumination.

On my final trip, the wind was so strong I couldn't set up my tripod outside the car, so I positioned the car on the road and sat in the back seat with the window down and waited. Every few minutes, the wind would drop, the car would stop shaking and I'd press the shutter button. I spent half an hour with a zoom lens exploring different compositions.

Most of the photos I had seen were of the chapel alone with the small cluster of trees around it, but in reality, just to the right was a large farm building. What I had imagined based on the photographs I had seen was a lone chapel in a vast field, but looking back on the photographs I had seen, I could understand

how the framing and composition had fooled me (or perhaps, more correctly, how I had interpreted the scene).

My solution was to remove the farm building.

The first time I processed the print was in 2002 using an early version of Photoshop. I used the clone tool to remove the farm building and adjusted the colours to be more inviting. The drab light had really only left me with varying tones of grey, but I could see the potential for colour in the trees below and the surrounding field.

NEW TRADITION: This is one of the first images in which I explored *The New Tradition*.

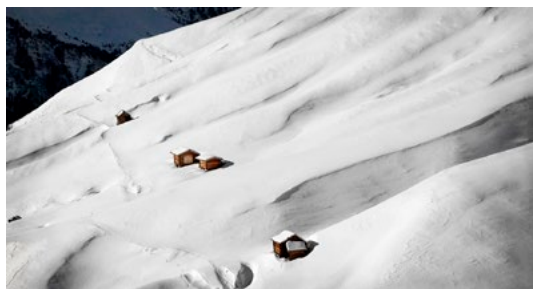
Not only could I process the file shortly after taking it (that night with a nice glass of red), I could transform my camera's capture into something that better represented my thoughts and feelings about the location.

And some 10 years later, I reprocessed the file. This is not something I normally do because once an image is processed, I find it boring to revisit it. However, I needed a larger version of the file for a client and, looking at my original technique, felt I had to finesse it further.

Yet another positive for *The New Tradition*.

Top to bottom: Original frame; farmhouse removed; image part-way through post-production.





Ciamp, Above Campitello

Italy, 2002

Canon EOS 1Ds, Tamron 28-300mm lens zoom at 300mm
1/2000 second @ f8, ISO 800, hand-held, no filter

As a magazine editor, I get to play with lots of new equipment when it is released. In the early days of digital photography, the Holy Grail was a 10-megapixel sensor on a DSLR camera. Sinar already had 20-megapixels for medium format, but you were tied to the studio because of the special hard drives needed to save the files and the cost was prohibitive. Well, it was for me!

In October 2002, a number of things happened. Canon announced a new 11-megapixel camera, the EOS 1Ds. Stuart Poignand was the marketing manager at Canon and he had a spare pre-production 1Ds available for an extended trial. I was visiting Italy with the family for two months.

And so photography as I knew it changed forever.

I had been using Canon's EOS 30D and 60D, but with 3- and 6-megapixels, they were still playthings. For 'real' photography, I was using a brand new Arca-Swiss F-Line 6x9" view camera, plus some extreme and expensive lenses - a 35mm Rodenstock wide-angle and a 1200mm Nikkor super-telephoto. I needed a one-metre rail, a third standard and two bellows to focus the Nikkor, and keeping it still was a challenge unless I used two tripods.

This outfit had cost in excess of \$20,000 and that was at mate's rates through Borg Andersons, the importer of Arca-Swiss at the time. It also came with me and the family to Italy, but in the two months we spent drinking cappuccini and eating gelati, it was used but twice. And even then, I had to force myself.

The problem with shooting film was that I wouldn't be able to process the images for another month or so, whereas the digital files I could process the same night. After the kids went to sleep, Kathie would pull out her sketch pad and I'd sit in front of my computer. We'd both have a glass of red wine.

Even today, these 11-megapixel files work very well. In fact, I messed up the exposure for most of the trip, accidentally exposing all the files at ISO 800. How did such an experienced photographer make such an elementary mistake?

Obviously not such an experienced photographer! While shooting inside the Florence Cathedral, I set the ISO at 800 to cope with the low light. This is something we do all the time now, but in those days I was used to film and once the film's ISO was set, it generally stayed the same for the entire roll of film.

On the way out of the cathedral, my youngest daughter did what two-year-olds do and I found myself putting away my camera and carrying her down 346 stairs. And I forgot to change the ISO back to 100. In fact, because I hadn't read the instruction manual very well, I thought the folder number for the memory card (100) on the rear LCD screen was the ISO and I didn't give it another thought. Even when I felt the shutter speeds were unnaturally high for the light levels, it didn't tweak I had set the wrong ISO, I just thought it must be one of the differences between film and digital. Dumb, dumb, dumb.

This is one of the photos where I clearly remember thinking the shutter speed was remarkably fast, given my experience shooting in the snow. I thought I'd never had it so good!

The Dolomites in Italy are unbelievably spectacular, especially when you put on a pair of skis and go exploring. I spent a wonderful fortnight with the family – and photographing the little barns dotted around the picturesque countryside.

I enjoy shooting series of subjects, creating collections. These are from the Val di Fassa in Italy.





La Gattaia

Tuscany, Italy, 2002

Canon EOS 1Ds, 100-400mm zoom at 275mm
1/1250 second @ f6.3, ISO 800, hand-held, no filter

IS IT A PAINTING or is it a photograph? When this photograph was first exhibited in 2003, people would question its derivation. It also polarised people, challenging some and inspiring others.

As discussed many times in this book, there seem to be two schools of thought when it comes to photography. For some, a photograph should be a realistic depiction of what was in front of the camera. For others, a photograph can be realistic or interpretive – there are no arbitrary limits.

Over the years I have thought a lot about this distinction and why it should matter.

For the people who believe a photograph should be ‘real’, the content of the image needs to represent reality because, in their limited outlook, that’s what photography does. Without reality, there is nothing to photograph. And if you want to create something different to reality, well, that’s what painting is for.

I have never looked upon photography this way. I am only interested in the image as a form of expression. Sometimes the image is realistic, but equally it can be interpretive. Unless I am working for a

client with specific requirements, I don’t see any need to limit myself to one school of thought or another, so when people ask me whether it is photography or art, I guess the only answer for these people is, “It’s art”.

Which is a pity, because realistic photography can be every bit as ‘artistic’ as interpretive work. The ‘art’ of capture, timing, framing and exposure are just part of what a photographer brings to his or her subject. Add the photographer’s influence on hair, make-up, costume, styling, propping, posing, expression, lighting and location, and I believe the act of capturing a ‘realistic’ photograph can be every bit as expressive and artistic as one that is imagined and created with the help of post-production.

To say a photograph should only be ‘captured’ as a record of reality is incredibly limiting and not something that *The New Tradition* can accept. It is also naive because the history of photography has always included images that are the product of the imagination.

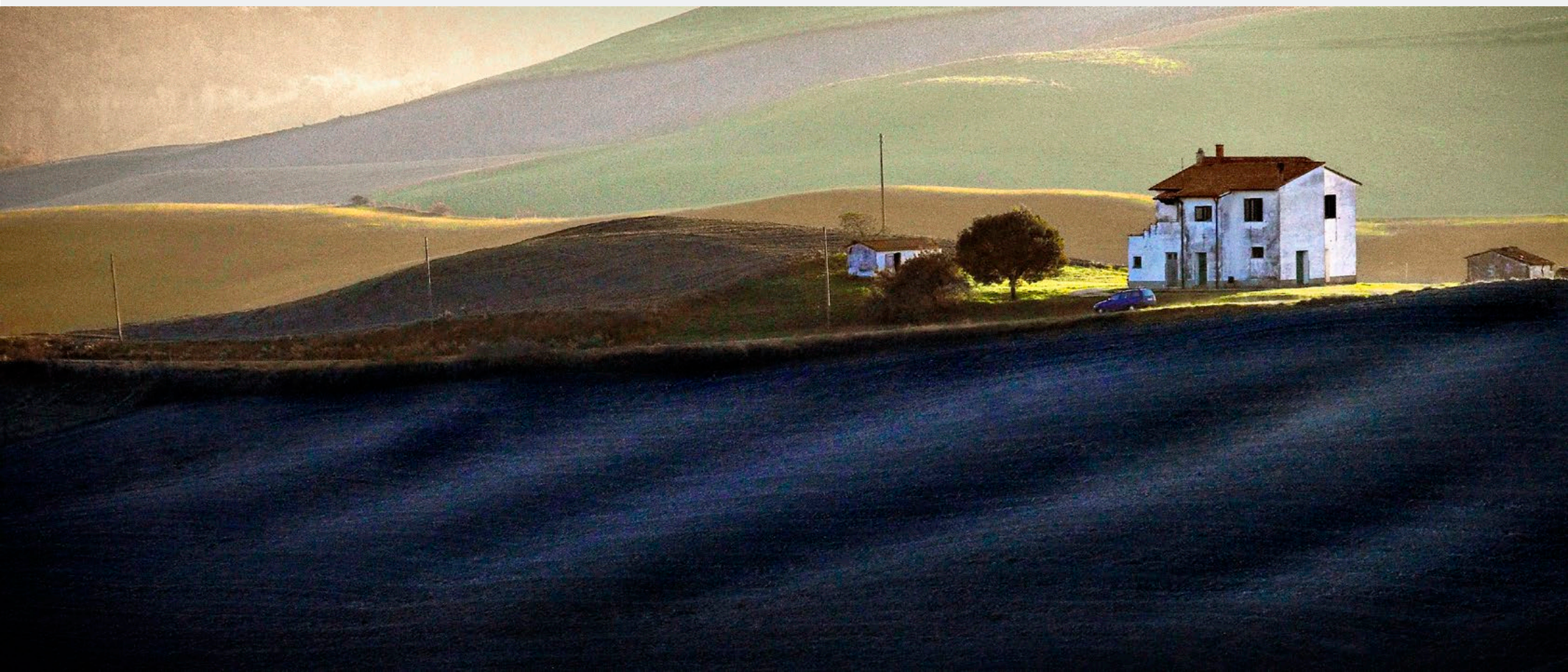
This rural scene in southern Tuscany was ‘discovered’ late one afternoon on a back road. The bare winter

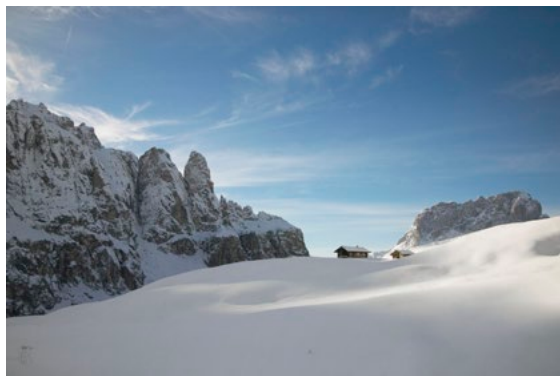
landscape with its recently ploughed fields simplified the shapes, creating the perfect backdrop for the farmhouse. I was a little concerned that the car was too modern, but now some 15 years after it was taken, the car is starting to look a little older and in keeping with the ‘rustic’ mood.

In terms of post-production, the challenge was to balance the foreground with the background. The background has interesting side-lighting revealing the shape and folds of the land, but the foreground lies in shadow and is relatively detailless. The solution was to introduce some light and create the folds in the furrowed field. A curves adjustment layer is added, lightening up the field. A mask is then added to hide the adjustment, then a white brush used to ‘paint in’ the light and shape as required.

An elegant solution in *The New Tradition*.

Early explorations of the file were a little timid as I searched for more detail in the ploughed field. In the end, much more colour and contrast were needed.





Val Gardena

Italy, 2002

Canon EOS 1Ds, Tamron 28-300mm zoom at 28mm
1/4000 second @ f8, ISO 800, hand-held, no filter

JUST BECAUSE YOU can, doesn't mean you should! When desktop publishing first arrived, graphic designers were replaced by editors and journalists because it was 'so easy' to do the layout as they worked.

It was also easy to use 20 different typefaces, 50 different weights, 100 different colours and lots of special effects – and they did! The results were absolutely awful so it didn't take too long for publishers to rediscover the importance of good design and the value of experienced graphic artists (like my wonderful wife Kathie, not that I am at all biased in this outlook).

Photoshop offers photographers a similar experience. When shooting with film we had a limited number of tools to play with, whereas with the introduction of digital post-production, there really were no limits.

The challenge in *The New Tradition* is to know when to stop. How much post-production is enough and how much is too much? The answer is different for every photographer, of course. When judging photography competitions, I see entries which have 'too much' of a good thing, but I also realise that

the photographer is on a path that we all take, learning the language of post-production and how to use it effectively.

This photograph was taken at lunchtime on a ski tour around the Sassolungo in the Dolomites. I loved the small Italian barns that dotted the ski fields and this one was beautifully positioned with the towering peaks behind.

During this period, there was a lot of experimentation going on in post-production, not just by me, but by photographers around the world. We were grappling with the desire to retain a photographic aesthetic, but not wanting to be limited by what was in front of the camera. Some results were more effective than others and naturally I'm only showing you the photographs that were somewhat successful – although I realise this is a matter of opinion.

So, how many adjustments can you see in this photograph? And how many of them were necessary?

1. Exposure darkened to mimic moonlight.
2. Colour balance adjusted to mimic night-time.

3. Fake candlelight spills from the barn onto the snow.
4. Figure of old lady (an olive picker from San Gimignano) dropped in.
5. Mountainside behind old lady lightened to create silhouette.
6. A shadow from the old lady is thrown onto the mountainside.
7. The mountain peak on the left is a dome from the skyline in Venice.
8. A second dome has been added to the peak on the right.
9. And in another version of this image, I added in stars as well.

NEW TRADITION: *The New Tradition* may have fewer technical limitations, but the need for considered aesthetics has not changed.

Creating a night scene from a daylight exposure is essentially a matter of darkening down the file. A blue colour tone can help as well.





Alba

Italy, 2002

Canon EOS 1Ds, Tamron 28-300mm zoom at 71mm
1/25 second @ f5.6, ISO 800, hand-held, no filter



THERE IS A lot of post-production in Alba, more than I would generally do today. I believe we need a balance between spending time behind the camera and behind the computer, so many ideas I have are never followed through because the time needed to do them properly is not justified.

What attracted me in the small ski village of Alba was the barn. Such a simple building in many ways, yet so powerful in others. Now, if you don't share my endorsement of this example of Italian architecture, you're not alone! However, as 'art' photographers we really can't set out to please other people. Rather, we should first aim to please ourselves and then hope others agree with us. (Professional photographers, of course, have to please their clients.)

The challenge with my barn was the busy township immediately behind it. To the eye, it was easy to focus my attention on the structure, but much harder to separate it from the background in a two-dimensional representation. Here's how I approached the image:

1. I joined two images together to create a wider composition. When I find a subject I like, I always

shoot a variety of angles and compositions in case I want to do something later on.

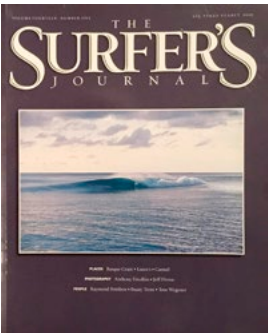
2. Using the clone tool, I extended the snowy foreground and conifer forest over and across the village behind, so the barn was isolated. This was relatively easy to do with the low light and some of my poor technique is hidden in the shadow areas.
3. The Sassolungo mountain range has been defocused – it's been blurred! This is not a result that could be achieved with any normal camera and lens, but it serves to focus the viewer's attention keenly on the barn.
4. A curves adjustment layer or two created a spot of light on the building. A little clumsy, perhaps, but this is during the transition phase to *The New Tradition*.
5. Finally, I added in an accordion player I met in Venice a few weeks earlier. I think this is a good example of not knowing when to stop!

Most of the post-production involved removing the town in the background. Lightening the building on one side created a faux sunbeam effect.









Lance's Right

Mentawai Islands, Indonesia, 2004

Canon EOS-1Ds, 300mm f2.8 with 1.4x teleconverter
1/2000 second @ f5.0, ISO 100, hand-held, no filter

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY SPENT quite a few years in the wilderness, especially in the field of publishing. While the technology was capable, many people were distrustful as they made the change from analogue to digital. For instance, magazine printers warned publishers about drastic loss of quality from low grade digital files and there is no doubt this could happen if the photographer providing the files didn't know what he or she was doing. Similarly, the printers could take perfectly good image files and mess them up during printing if they didn't know what they were dealing with.

I was a partner in *Surfing World* magazine and I managed to score an unpaid surfing charter to the Mentawai Islands with Danny Wills, Dean Morrison, Matt Wilkinson, Jay 'Bottle' Thompson and Mitch Colburn. Tim Baker came along as the writer, along with Hilton Dawes as a second photographer and Mat Graham, the magazine art director. I could write a very entertaining chapter about that trip!

What I didn't foresee was the fear the magazine's editor Reggae Ellis and the art director had of digital photography. I was told in no uncertain terms that my digital files wouldn't be good enough for reproduction as full page or double page spreads and that they

would only be used 'down small'. My experience with *Better Photography* magazine showed them that digital files could certainly be used up big, but no, it was further explained to me, surfing photographs were 'different' and it just wouldn't work. They weren't about to risk the magazine's reputation on technology that was proven to be inadequate.

To be fair to my colleagues, photographers at that stage, in general, had no idea about image quality, capturing JPEG files and providing them to clients uncorrected. I had seen first-hand how poor the quality of digital images could be, so I understood their reticence.

At the end of the trip, I was very happy with the quality of my digital files. Hilton, who was shooting on film at the time, resorted to quite a few black and white shots because the light we had wasn't great for film. On the other hand, the same light captured with a digital SLR was easily enhanced with a digital workflow, if you knew what you were doing. I felt that I did, but I wasn't able to convince the editor. Not that it mattered from the magazine's perspective since we both had some great shots and the only difference was Hilton's went up big and most of mine went down small.

When the magazine came back, everyone was very complimentary about the digital files and how well they had reproduced. I was happy too because I'd made the cover, although the art director had reduced the size of the image to about half a page. Paranoia I'd call it!

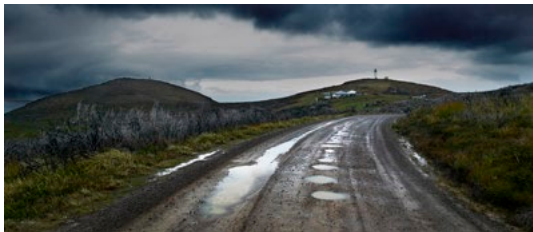
Interestingly, a few weeks later Tim touched base with me and asked if *The Surfers Journal* in the USA could use some of my photographs. I thought they would take much the same approach as we had and just use them down small, so I bundled up the same photos I supplied for *Surfing World* and sent them off.

To my great surprise, *The Surfers Journal* used several of my photographs up big as double page spreads in a 14-page feature (but not for the cover)! Even better, they paid me for the photographs!

NEW TRADITION: It took many years for pre-press operators and publishers alike to come to grips with the benefits of a digital workflow.

A selection of post-production steps between the processed raw file and the final rendition shown on the opposite page, plus the covers of the two surfing magazines mentioned.





Bruny Island Lighthouse

Tasmania, Australia 2004

Canon EOS 1-Ds, 24mm TS-E Tilt-Shift lens
1/15 second @ f5.6, ISO 100, tripod-mounted, no filter

IF I TELL YOU this story, you have to remember it is relatively early in the days of digital photography. Things can happen that you're not expecting. And they can make you feel a little silly as well.

I was down on Bruny Island for an AIPP meeting. Richard Bennett had a block of land tucked away on the island, but at that time he hadn't built anything on it, so we were staying at the only hotel available.

After the meeting, there was time to drive down to the southern tip of Bruny Island to take a few photos. A storm passed over, covering the road with hail, but by the time we reached the end of the road, there were just a few pools of water and an ominous sky. This is when the photo was taken.

With just a little daylight left, we continued down to the lighthouse and walked up the hill to the right, searching for another angle. Looking at the images on the back of the camera's LCD screen, I could see my composition wasn't as dynamic as the previous view, but the clouds looked interesting.

Another storm was brewing, so I bundled my camera into my backpack and ran down the hill to the car before the rain squall hit.

Back at the hotel while waiting for dinner, we all downloaded our files. We loved this digital technology – instead of waiting for a few hours, or days, or weeks (depending on whether you processed film yourself or sent it off to a lab), with digital we could see our photographs immediately.

But there was a problem.

I was anxious to see the last few photos I had taken, so I scrolled through to the end of the images to see what I had – but they were all blank. More to the point, they were all completely black.

I couldn't understand this. I looked back at one, two, three, five, ten, twenty images and they were all black! But I had seen the images on the back of the camera's LCD screen - what was happening?

I sat down and explained the issue to the other photographers. They looked puzzled, but were probably more interested in their glasses of South Australian red. I decided to join them.

After I had calmed down, I looked through the files again. Yes, they were all definitely black. What about the photos I had taken earlier in the day?

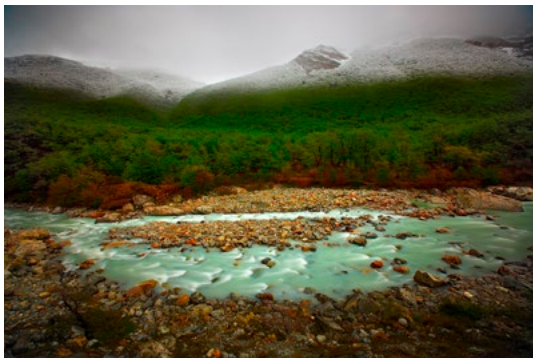
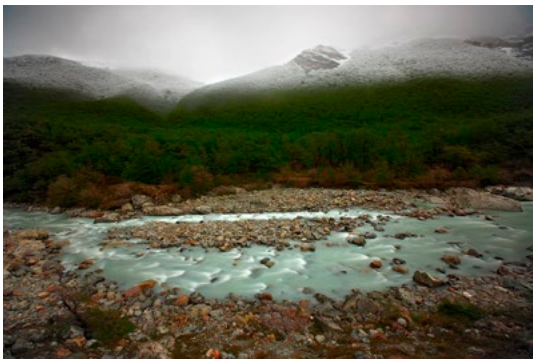
I scrolled further back and suddenly, there were all my files, including my 'missing' files! What had happened?

Then it dawned on me. I had left the camera turned on when I threw it in my backpack and, as I ran down the hill, the jolts were pressing the shutter release. And as it was pretty dark in the backpack, the photos were black.

Lesson learned!

A lot of the post-production steps involve adjusting or refining elements in the image that are already there – such as the clouds and the road reflections.





Rio Fitz Roy

Patagonia (Argentina), 2005

Canon EOS 1Ds Mark II, 24mm TS-E lens
2 minute @ f5.6, ISO 100, tripod, 10x ND filter

SOMETIMES YOU VISIT locations and the light is not optimal. In a perfect world, you'd camp out and wait for the light to appear, but life isn't as simple as this. Often when travelling, you have only one short opportunity to photograph an area and so you have to take what you can get!

Such was the case with Rio Fitz Roy which sits at the bottom of Cerro Torre. This location can be reached in a day from El Chaltren below, but we camped out for a couple of nights so we'd be in place for the morning and evening light.

As an aside, the weather was like this for most of the day. I spent six hours at this and another location nearby, patiently waiting for the cloud to lift. In the end, I had to walk back to camp for dinner empty-handed, but no sooner had I walked into the mess tent than the sun came out! This location was too far away to return before the sun disappeared behind the mountains, so I made do with what I could see from near the camp.

But back to Rio Fitz Roy and the lack of light. While the original exposure was very flat, just being in this location on my own was very special. This is a photograph with lots of baggage, lots of memories, so even though the light is not great, it was an important image for me.

I used a 10x neutral density filter to produce a long, two-minute exposure which blurred the water in the river and, as there was no wind, the surrounding trees remained sharp and blur free. Wind is often a challenge for long exposures because trees and grasses blur while the shutter is open. The solution is to take two different

exposures, one long exposure with the ND filter to blur the water and the clouds, and a second without the ND at a movement-freezing speed like 1/250 or 1/60 second. The two exposures are then merged together using masks in Photoshop.

I took a number of exposures of this scene at different shutter speeds, including two minutes. It was during the two-minute exposure I can remember watching the largest snowflakes I have ever seen drifting down from the heavens above. Apart from the water rushing over the rocks below, there wasn't a sound to be heard – it was a bit like being in a sound studio with deadened walls. The snow flurry only lasted a few minutes, but the experience is etched in my memory every time I look at this photograph.

As photographers, we have no control over what others think of our work. While from time to time people will enjoy our work and compliment our photographs, the only person we can really please consistently is ourself. I think there comes a time in every photographer's career when you become comfortable with your technique and so the resulting expressions are complete.

I like to think after 40 years I have reached a point where I'm happy with my technique and my expression. Is this arrogance? Or experience?

The bright sky was the establishing exposure and then the foreground and middleground were lightened and coloured in sections afterwards.





Glacial Leaf

Patagonia (Argentina), 2005

Canon EOS 1Ds Mark II, 100mm macro lens
1/500 second @ f4, ISO 100, hand-held

I MUST GIVE Darran Leal credit for this photograph. When I visited Patagonia the first time, we spent a couple of hours walking on the amazing Perito Moreno Glacier, just out of El Calafate in Argentina. We visited the glacier a couple of times, watching it calve from a high vantage point that is literally right in front of the glacier’s edge – and completely safe. We then took a boat over to the opposite shore and I remember being told that while the front and middle of the glacier were fairly active, the edges of the glacier are quite stable and safe for walking on.

So we went for a walk and that’s when Darran pointed out these tiny beech leaves. The leaves land on the glacier’s surface and then act like small blankets, using the sun’s rays to heat up the ice underneath. The ice turns to water and the leaves gradually sink into the glacier.

This photograph was taken with a Canon EOS 1Ds Mark II with a 100mm macro lens. I was looking

down a very small hole that was only three or four centimetres deep.

From memory, we had light overcast weather which made these photos a little easier. Bright sunshine can be problematic on ice, but then again, it’s probably not too difficult to shade these leaves while you photograph them, given they are such small subjects. The leaves are no more than two centimetres long.

For the image opposite, the main challenge was to control the bright areas of ice surrounding the leaf. Out of the raw processor (Capture One), I was able to introduce a little more colour to the leaf and then in Photoshop, I used layers to darken down the ice, but hopefully not so much that it deadens it.

A selection of leaves found in the glacier’s ice at various depths.





Monte Fitz Roy

Patagonia (Argentina), 2005

Canon EOS 1Ds Mark II, 100mm macro lens
1/25 second @ f11, ISO 800, tripod, no filter

REALITY ISN'T ALWAYS what people want to see. What they want to see is what they expect to see.

And people expect to see white snow. Even when it isn't really white.

Years ago in the days of film, Kodak and Fujifilm were the main competitors, at least here in Australia (Agfa was very popular in Europe). To my mind, Kodak films were closer to reality, while Fujifilm had enhanced colours. You'd choose the film that was best suited to the job.

Interestingly, both manufacturers claimed to produce natural, true-to-life colours and I think that's because photographers believed they wanted to capture reality.

However, if you compared the films side by side, invariably people would go for the photograph with the richer, punchier colour, even though it was not as realistic. Apple understands this, based on its screens which are rich, contrasty and colourful, everything that reality is not!

The mountain opposite is Monte Fitz Roy, which sits above the small border town of El Chaltren in Argentina. Access to the surrounding national park is relatively easy and you can hire guides and porters to take you up and camp for a few days. In fact, if you weren't carrying a heavy camera bag, you could easily walk up to this location and back before lunch.

So, remote as it seems, we were camping only a fifteen-minute walk away from this lookout.

Most photographers dream of shooting the 'alpenglow', the rich golden light before sunrise that turns mountain ranges into coloured jewels. However, I was quite happy to work with the softer blues and violets, contrasting them with the distinctive red walls of Monte Fitz Roy and its neighbouring peaks.

When I first exhibited the photograph, the snow was a little on the blue side. This is the 'real' colour of the snow from this vantage point and at this time of day, because the only light reaching the snow is from the blue sky above.

However, we all 'know' that snow is white and so when many people looked at this photograph, they expressed their concern that the snow didn't look natural!

Removing the blue wasn't a big problem – a hue/saturation adjustment layer using the blue channel, and a mask to limit the correction to the snow and glaciers, without affecting the sky, was all that was required.

The vignette was added in gradually with a series of layers to disguise the transition. It is stronger than what would be attempted in later years.





Blueys Beach

New South Wales, Australia 2005

Canon EOS 1Ds Mark II, 24mm TS-E lens
120 seconds @ f8, ISO 50, tripod, 10x ND filter

THIS IS A self-portrait.

One of photography’s most challenging aspects is determining what constitutes a good photograph. And the short answer is that there is no answer.

Photography is a language that can be used in many different contexts. Just as we use English to write an invoice, a novel, poetry or a scientific paper, so we use photography for many different purposes.

The most popular use of photography is as a diary. The selfie, photographs of friends and restaurant meals do not profess to be works of art, rather they are memories. And because they are memories, they probably have more value to the photographer than any creative or arty photograph they have captured or purchased.

So, for the world’s masses, a ‘good’ photograph is one in which the subject is recognisable. Photographic ingredients like composition, lighting and exposure are helpful, but definitely not essential. These are snapshots taken by snapshooters, not photographers.

However, if you become an enthusiastic photographer, whether amateur or professional, you step into a world of rules, regulations and expectations.

Of course, these rules and regulations are made to be broken and different types of photographers have different types of rules. Photojournalists, for instance,

must not doctor a photograph, whereas glamour photographers are expected to put as much effort into the retouching as they do into the capture.

There is so much variety in photography that it is hard to find much consensus and so when people ask what makes a good photograph, the answer can be elusive.

Perhaps you can only define a good photograph when you know its purpose. A poor photojournalistic image may be a work of art in a different context. And a photograph overlooked by competition judges may be a personal favourite for the photographer.

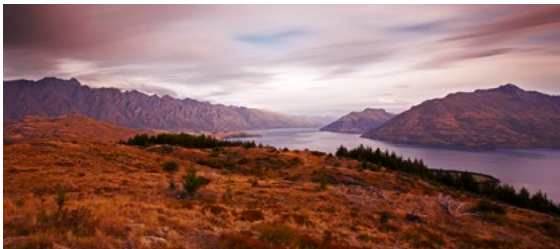
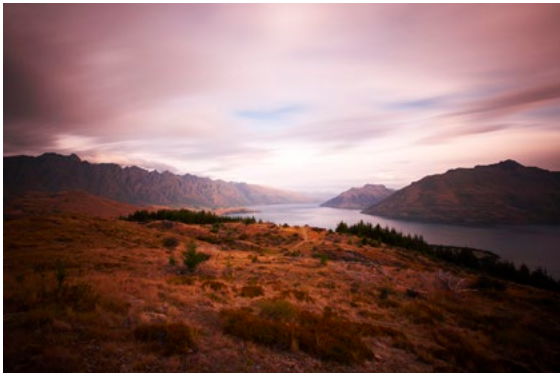
Everyone has an opinion and there are many, many different opinions around. Just look at religion, politics and choice of camera brand!

I think all photographers go through a process of self-evaluation and, if they stick with it long enough, eventually they come to the realisation that they determine what constitutes a good photograph for them.

Have you found me? I am quite shadowy!

The top image shows a standard exposure taken just after sunset when the sunlight had gone. The post-production steps were quite subtle, mainly dealing with saturation and contrast.





Lake Wakatipu

Queenstown, New Zealand, 2005

Canon EOS 1Ds Mark II, Canon EF 16-35mm @ 16mm
120 seconds @ f11, ISO 100, tripod-mounted, 10X ND filter

THAT LAKE ISN'T really green? No lakes are that green.
True. False.

I have never seen Lake Wakatipu on New Zealand's South Island at Queenstown with this colour water, but I have seen other lakes with all manner of green hues.

NEW TRADITION: I guess this is where the 'art' comes into photography, the fact that today we don't have to accept what nature dictates. If we want to change things to make a statement, to make an impression or to just be contrary, it's possible within *The New Tradition*.

I have been inspired by The Renaissance and many of its artists, particularly Sandro Botticelli and his famous *The Cestello Annunciation* (c1489). Painted with tempura on a panel, there are many different reproductions available, but my memory of the original in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence is one of deep, rich colours and a strong hint of green in the sky.

While art historians may have a very good idea of what the colours were originally like when Botticelli painted his masterpiece, it's a little harder for the average person not to react to the colours of what is currently in existence. There is a definite patina over the image and a warm colour overlay, perhaps from the lacquers applied over the panel to

protect it. And today, my memory of Botticelli's sky is definitely green.

How many people have seen a green sky? And how many people have dismissed *The Cestello Annunciation* because Botticelli tweaked his colour palette a little?

Despite many people commenting about the green lake, the image has been very successful. Epson used it for many years to promote its professional inkjet printer range.

If anything, changes like this to images have become more topical in recent times as more people understand what is possible with post-production.

The photograph was taken from up above Queenstown in New Zealand. The colour cast was inspired by the raw file. When you took long exposures with Canon DSLRs, there seemed to be a shift to the red side of the colour wheel. This can be corrected with post-production, but I quite liked the result.

It also reminded me of how film reacted when subjected to long exposures – it was called reciprocity failure.

It's quite a jarring change when the green is first added to the lake, but in the final rendition, hopefully the colour sits more comfortably within the landscape.





Milford Sound

South Island, New Zealand, 2005

Canon EOS 1Ds Mark II, Canon EF 16-35mm @ 16mm
120 seconds @ f5.6, ISO 100, tripod-mounted, 10X ND filter

WHEN I VISITED Milford Sound with Mike Langford and Jackie Ranken, I was told not to worry about the overcast weather or the steady downpour of rain. The Sounds, Mike explained, look much better in the wet.

And Mike is absolutely correct. The photographs and paintings of Milford Sound that speak to me depict fast flowing waterfalls and low, ominous clouds encasing the tops of towering peaks. You need only compare these emotive visions with the bland, blue-sky record shots that adorn every travel brochure for the area.

Milford Sound is one of the most photographed locations in New Zealand and, understandably, most of the photographs depicting Milford Sound look very similar. The tourist hamlet sits inside a small cove, so if you stand on the shore with your camera and want to include the majestic Mitre Peak across the waters, you end up with much the same composition as everyone else. While the weather can make a significant difference, the challenge is to do something that's a little different.

When we arrived, the weather had cleared a little and the tide was out, exposing the sand flats. In the distance out towards the tideline, there were a few

fallen tree trunks. While the background couldn't be changed, the foreground had lots of potential. I spent a good half an hour walking the foreshore, looking for an angle that would have impact.

I positioned the camera height carefully so the tree trunk was below the horizon line and positioned the tree trunk to the side. The tide was returning and within a few minutes there was a lovely sheen of water under the trunk, creating a reflection.

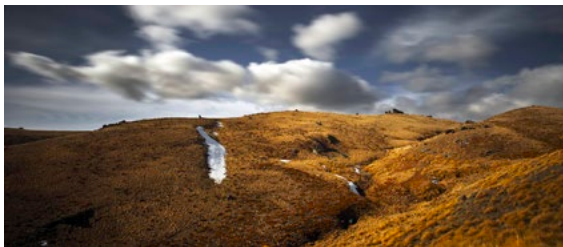
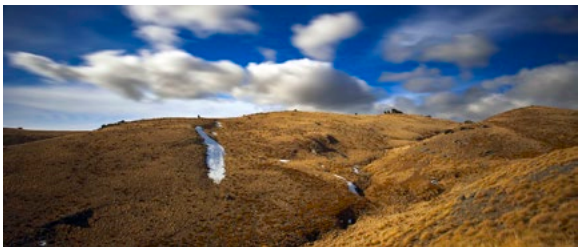
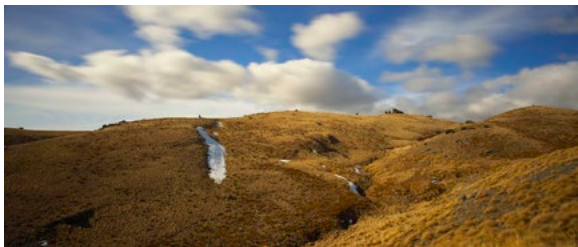
The overall sheen is produced by a two-minute exposure during which time the light reflecting off the slight ripples on the water merges together.

In post-production, the raw file was processed twice, once for the sky and a second time for the foreground. The distant water just below the horizon line was lightened, adding to the feeling of a passing storm with the sun breaking through.

I also warmed up the green seaweed. No reason – I just felt it looked better.

When joining two images, even if created from the same raw file, it's important for them to end up balanced in terms of exposure, contrast and colour.





Nevis Highlands

South Island, New Zealand, 2006

Canon EOS 1Ds Mark II, Leica-R 19mm
30 seconds @ f11, ISO 50, tripod-mounted, 10X ND filter

WHY IS THIS one of my favourite photographs? I’m not sure I can answer this, but it is a great example of believing in yourself and to hell with what other people think.

As you will be reading, this is a theme in *The New Tradition* – that photographers should be aiming to please themselves first.

Of course, I’m not completely insensitive to the thoughts and comments of other people, especially judges who give my best efforts a low score! However, whether we’re entering our work into a competition or hanging it in an exhibition, we don’t have any control over how our audience will respond. None whatsoever.

And for every ‘Like’ we get on social media, how many other viewers simply passed it over without a second thought?

We can choose what to enter or exhibit, making decisions we hope will appeal to our audience. We can choose subjects that are popular, colours that

are appealing and compositions that have historically resonated with the art world. However, this is no guarantee we will be successful.

So, if this is the case, what do we do? What can we do? When it comes to your personal work, the only person you need to worry about is yourself. If you like what you have done, that’s all that matters.

Believe in it. You might as well if it makes you happy!

As we learn the art and craft of photography, it’s great to get advice and feedback from people who are perhaps more experienced, or from photographers whose own work we admire. There’s no doubt a carefully phrased comment or suggestion can have you looking at your work in a completely new light and if this helps you to improve the photograph or your skills as a photographer, that’s a great outcome.

This photograph is unlikely to appeal to everyone. It’s not a ‘bad’ shot, just not a riveting, high kilojoule

image. What I perceive is an understated quietude and no doubt this had something to do with the experience of taking the photograph.

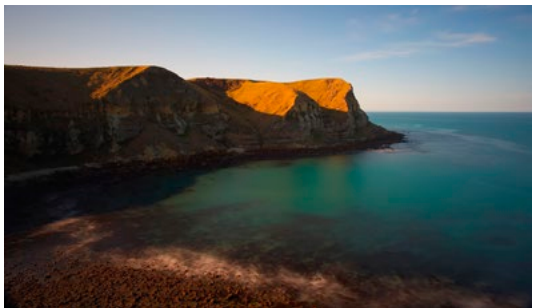
There’s something I like about the balance of the folds in the land and their relationship to the blurred clouds above.

NEW TRADITION: In *The New Tradition*, there are no financial limits on our output. We can invest as much or as little time as we wish, so if images like this resonate with you, I think you need to give yourself permission to explore them.

Not everyone has to like your work. Only you do.

The most important change in this file was to balance the tonality (how light or dark) of the hills across the scene, while keeping the three-dimensionality.





Stingray Bay

North Island, New Zealand, 2006

Canon EOS 1Ds Mark II, Leica-R 19mm
30 seconds @ f11, ISO 50, tripod-mounted, 10X ND filter

Years ago, while shooting The Pilbara Project, I spent an enjoyable afternoon walking through the Art Gallery of Western Australia with Les Walkling. Les, many readers may already know, is well known in educational and contemporary art circles within Australia and around the world. He's also a part of our Ninety Degrees Five (ND5) group. You can read more about Les on his website - www.leswalkling.com.

During our trips away, the conversation is inevitably related to photography, especially the way that modern photography fits into the art world.

There are two camps: those who believe a photograph should look like a photograph, and those who say a photograph can be anything it wants to be.

I appreciate both schools of thought. Both are valid. Of course, there can be a great deal of discussion about the definition of 'a photograph'!

One of the challenges in the digital age has been the use of colour. In comparison to the colours we could capture and reproduce with film, today we can produce much stronger, more vibrant and saturated colours.

Should we?
And this is where my walk around the Art Gallery of Western Australia in Perth with Les was so instructional. We took great delight in looking at the paintings (not photographs) hanging on the wall and observing their use of colour. Talk about out of gamut!

Of course, not all of the works were highly saturated,

but many of them were. Artists, it seems, are quite comfortable with colour in many guises.

But photography isn't art, is it? Perhaps this is better stated that photography isn't always art. Sometimes photography is a scientific record or a historical document. We expect to see natural colours in some photographs, depending on their context.

However, when it comes to using photography as a means of expression, I think we can afford to be a little more adventurous.

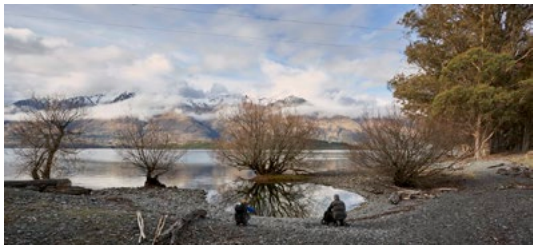
From an early stage, I have enjoyed using strong colour and friends have even called me 'Mr 200% Saturation'! However, I like to think that while saturated in places, my photographs aren't just a matter of dragging the saturation slider to the right. Only some colours are saturated, while others are in fact de-saturated.

In the photograph opposite, the saturation in the water and hills has been enhanced, while the sky has been desaturated and darkened.

NEW TRADITION: Simple post-production adjustments of colour balance can have a dramatic impact on the mood and feeling of an image, a choice photographers can make after capture in *The New Tradition*.

The foreground breaking waves were lightened to match the strength of the sunlight on the headland, creating a degree of compositional balance.





Kinloch Mooring

South Island, New Zealand, 2006

Canon EOS 1Ds Mark II, Canon EF 16-35mm @ 17mm
120 seconds @ f11, ISO 100, tripod-mounted, 10x ND filter

I FIRST EXPERIMENTED with long exposures during daylight hours in the early 1990s. I wasn't aware of anyone using it creatively back then, but I'm sure there were other photographers playing around.

Certainly, pinhole photography was very popular, but pinhole photographs had a soft ethereal quality about everything since they didn't use a lens. What I wanted to achieve was a softness in the clouds and water caused by their blurring during a long exposure, contrasting with the hard, clinical sharpness of everything else in the scene that didn't move.

Using a 4x5" Osaka cherrywood camera and sheets of Kodak Ektachrome film, I walked across the road to the beach one afternoon and photographed the life-saving flags at Collaroy. It was a sunny day with a few white clouds coming in from the sea. I wasn't quite sure what would happen with the clouds, but I knew the motion of the flag in the wind and the breaking waves behind would blur beautifully.

I used three NDs and a polariser from memory, held in a Sinar filter holder, to drop the exposure down to around 30 seconds. Later that night, I processed the transparencies in my darkroom using an automated Jobo film processor. Sheet film was expensive at around \$5 a shot, including processing, but it was even more expensive if you sent it off to a lab.

It seemed like ages before the trannies were dry enough to put on the lightbox and inspect them with a loupe (magnifying glass). And I wasn't disappointed either – there was something magical about the result because the photographs had been made in direct sunshine. They had a clarity that I wasn't expecting.

Other photographs I had of blurred water and clouds were taken before sunrise or after sunset. The light levels were low, requiring the long shutter speeds to achieve correct exposure, but the resulting images also recorded the accompanying soft, muted light.

In comparison, shooting with ND filters in the middle of the day produced quite a different look.

This wasn't the best photo I had ever taken, but it was a start. I continued with my experiments over the years, developing a technique that I was quite happy with, but it wasn't until digital arrived that it became a regular approach to photographing the landscape.

This photograph, taken down the road from Kinloch on New Zealand's South Island, is a two-minute exposure and exemplifies how the technique can transform a scene into something quite ethereal.

I believe the small mooring was carved out of the shore by the local farmers as the wind on the lake can be tempestuous at times. The camera was positioned so the full circle of the little inlet could be included – I don't think the image would be nearly as successful if either side were cropped. We need to see all the shores to appreciate its limited dimensions.

And although on this day the water had great reflections, the long exposure adds in the movement of the cloud, taking the image one step beyond reality.

Top: Original 4x5" transparency experimenting with ND filters and daylight, circa 1993.

Middle: Location photos taken with normal exposures. Bottom: Long two minute exposure which also shows the colour shift that accompanied long exposures with the Canon EOS 1Ds Mark II.





Kinloch Fisherman

South Island, New Zealand, 2006

Canon EOS 1Ds Mark II, Canon EF 300mm
1/640 second @ f2,8, ISO 100, hand-held

ONE OF THE rights of passage for photographers is to exhibit their work. It's true that displaying work on social media or a website is a form of exhibition, but the process of turning a digital image into a physical print is, to my mind, the hallmark of a true photographer. So much photographic potential is lost when you display your work on the internet. The small file sizes are generally over sharpened, the JPEG format loses much of their tonality, the colour space reduces the colour palette and, worst of all, you have no control over how your work is seen by your viewers. Goodness knows what monitor or display they may be using!

Online exhibiting has its place and its distribution is second to none, but I believe the context of a public exhibition of physical prints with controlled lighting is the pinnacle of photographic expression.

One marvellous aspect of an exhibition is that you get to interact with people – and all their

foibles. Normally it is very polite and civilised, but several experiences come to mind, such as with this print of a fisherman on the lake at Kinloch, New Zealand. A woman was very interested in purchasing a large print, but just wanted to get her husband's approval.

The husband returned a few minutes later, took one look at the fish being hauled into the boat and dismissed the photograph as being 'Photoshop' and not worthy of consideration. He dragged his wife away.

I remember this keenly because of all the photographs I had in the exhibition, this had the least amount of Photoshop and the fish was captured in-camera. I think this experience has scarred me psychologically because now when people tell me they can tell if a photograph has been 'Photoshopped' (a term, by the way, which Adobe has actively

discouraged), I wonder if they really can, or if they just think they can.

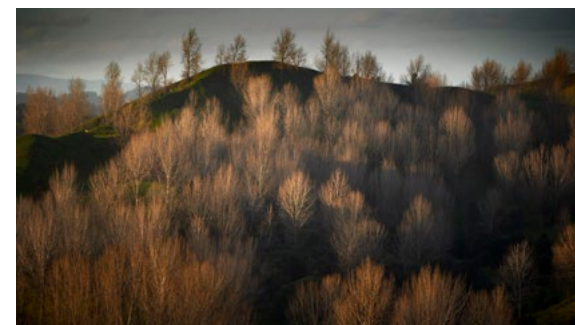
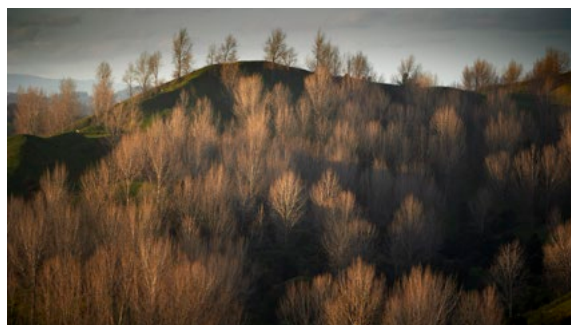
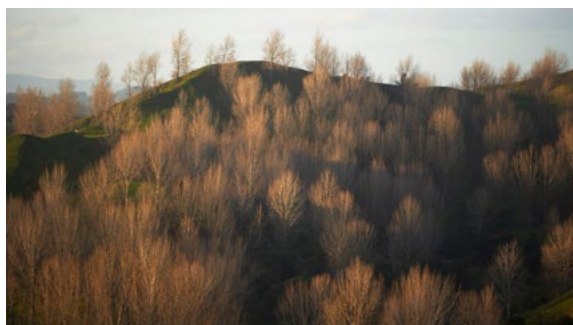
I guess it doesn't really matter because when it comes to selling your work at an exhibition, the only opinion that matters is that of the buyer.

I didn't make the sale.

FOOTNOTE: Some seven years later, the boat sank and the owner was looking for a photograph to remember it by. However, I was told my print prices were too high. I'm sure he simply took a screenshot of my website and put the money he saved towards a new boat – the challenges of making a living as a photographer in *The New Tradition*.

The first frame is my proof the fish really was on the end of the line, the result of good timing rather than expert post-production skills!





Taupo Trees

North Island, New Zealand, 2006

Canon EOS 1Ds Mark II, Leica-R 180mm
1/200 second @ f8, ISO 50, tripod-mounted

ONE OF THE aspects we take for granted in *The New Tradition* is image quality. Our starting point is the photographs we take with our mobile phones, but for many reasons, this is not the epitome of imaging science. I use a mobile phone to take photographs and videos. It is excellent as a communicator and as a notebook, but I choose not to use it seriously for my photography. Why?

The answer is image quality.

My aim is to have as much image quality as I can at the point of capture. Afterwards I can choose how much I keep during post-production. With my cameras, I can create images that replicate shots taken on a phone, but it's much harder for snaps taken on a phone to replicate a DSLR.

In the early years of digital photography, image quality was not as good as what we were shooting on film, but once we got 10-megapixel sensors, photographers started discovering the limitations of their old film lenses.

I was shooting with a 17-megapixel Canon EOS 1Ds Mark II, having upgraded from the 11-megapixel EOS 1Ds. Naturally, I expected great things with the extra resolution, but I was disappointed when I viewed my first results.

The first thing I learned was the importance of seating the lens in relation to the sensor, something the camera manufacturers had also discovered as the new camera allowed me to adjust the focus for each lens. However, even after setting up the focus correctly, I struggled to get really sharp photographs. They were correctly focused, indeed many were shot at f8 or f11, yet the subject was not critically sharp when I enlarged the image to 100%.

Then I worked it out (and obviously I wasn't the only one): the new sensors were outperforming the lenses. I was using a Canon 300mm f2.8 lens (which cost over \$10,000 some 20 years ago and is still a stellar piece of glass) and the images were tack sharp – unbelievably good! Then on the next frame with a different lens, the results were lacking.

At this time, I struggled to find sharp Canon lenses, but I remembered what Leica lenses looked like. I could hold a sheet of 35mm transparencies over a lightbox and tell you which were shot on Leica cameras and which were on Canon, Minolta or Nikon. So, what about putting a Leica lens onto my Canon camera?

The internet was just getting going and I discovered a whole world of lens adaptors which allowed me to fit Leica R-series lenses onto my Canon EOS body.

I purchased at great expense a Leica 19mm and a 180mm. They were 10 or 20 years old, but even back then, Leica's lenses were amazing.

This photograph was taken with the 180mm. Simon Woolf and I were talking at a PSNZ convention in Napier, on New Zealand's North Island, so on a spare day, we took a drive up to Taupo. It was just outside Taupo that we saw these trees in the last light of day, with the sunlight catching the tops of the trees.

The only downside about attaching the Leica lenses on the Canon was that operation became fully manual, not that that's a big hurdle for a landscape photographer putting a camera on a tripod.

Of course, today with mirrorless cameras it's much easier to move lenses around from different camera manufacturers, but perhaps not as needed. All the camera manufacturers have essentially redesigned their entire lens ranges to meet the demands of high quality digital capture.

Only subtle adjustments were needed as most of the structure is already present in the raw file. The main tweak is a darkening of the sky.





Tangoio Beach

North Island, New Zealand, 2006

Canon EOS 1Ds Mark II, Leica-R 19mm
60 seconds @ f11, ISO 50, tripod-mounted, 10x ND filter

OVER THE YEARS I have been accused of using colour. Lots of colour. And it's not a point I can argue as I write this book and review my work. Colour is an integral part of how I work, but I like to think there is a modicum of control over its use.

For instance, Christian Fletcher used to say I used 200% colour saturation, even though the saturation slider only goes to 100 units. Certainly there are areas within many photographs that are highly saturated, but it is generally their juxtaposition to less saturated areas that create the colour pop that so many people react to.

A light area in a photograph only attracts attention if its surroundings are dark. If its surroundings are also light, there's no point of difference to attract the viewer's attention. You can see this principle in the photograph of Tangoio Beach here. On the black sand beach, a patch of stranded seaweed stands out strongly because its tones are so much lighter than its surroundings. It is the tonal difference between the seaweed and the sand that creates a point of difference and gives it its strength as a compositional element.

Similarly, a photograph that is full of super saturated colours may not have the same impact as a desaturated image with smaller areas of super saturated colour. It is

the contrast between an area and its surroundings that creates the impact.

In the photograph of Tangoio Beach, the sea has been enhanced by beefing up the colour saturation, producing very strong blues and aquas. However, if you cover up the rest of the photograph and look at these colours on their own, they are not so unbelievable. The reason they stand out is because the sky above has been desaturated and darkened. Imagine if the sky were a brighter, strong blue – the water would not be nearly as 'obvious' because it would be competing with the sky.

Simplification also helps – a simple design, simple patterns, simple colours. The long exposure achieved with the neutral density filter smooths out the water, turning a complex area of texture into a much simpler one.

NEW TRADITION: Post-production gives us complete control over colour and its role as a compositional device.

Removing the saturation in the blue sky allows the turquoise in the sea to stand out more strongly, without needing to push the saturation sliders too far.





Nevis Tree

Queenstown, New Zealand, 2006

Canon EOS 1Ds Mark II, Leica-R 19mm
60 seconds @ f11, ISO 50, tripod-mounted, 10x ND filter

SOMEWHERE IN MY Sunday School memories is the story of Moses and a burning bush. Whether this memory were instrumental in creating the Nevis Tree, or something I observed afterwards, I'm not sure, but I'm thinking I made the association after I had finished editing the image.

Visiting art galleries, buying photography books and, to a lesser extent, looking at digital versions of art and photography online, are essential for your development as a photographer. Photography is very much a derivative means of expression, as much as it pains me to agree with celebrated photography author Susan Sontag's observation. And as photography becomes increasingly mainstream, it is commensurately more difficult to create images that are different, original or unique. One might say it is no longer possible to be original because someone, somewhere, will have already created an image just like yours. However, that's a depressing thought.

What I like to think is that we can be 'original' within ourselves. In other words, we can take a series of ideas

and influences and create something that is new and different for us.

One of my strong influences was a painting seen in a Korean hotel gallery. To my knowledge, it wasn't a particularly famous artist. The painting depicted a silhouette of a massive tree on the edge of a lake and on the far shore of the lake, the artist had painted a strong, almost white line, the reflection of sunlight on water. It was incredibly powerful and something I have carried with me for many years. In fact, as you flip through the pages of this book, you'll see this device used many times. Sometimes I introduce the light, but often I simply accentuate what is already there.

And I think this is one of the defining points of *The New Tradition*: despite our ability to completely transform an image, photography retains an association with the reality it captured. The majority of my photographs are based on what was already there. Unlike an artist who starts with a blank canvas, my inspiration is what lies in front of the camera. I am

selective in what I choose to photograph and then I work from there.

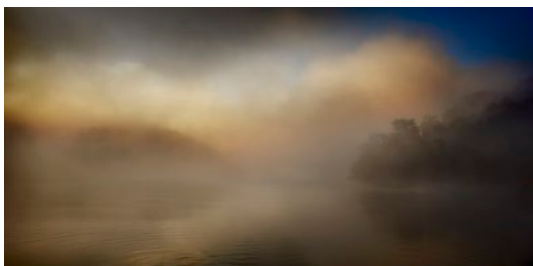
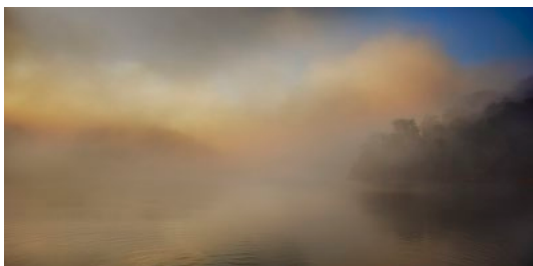
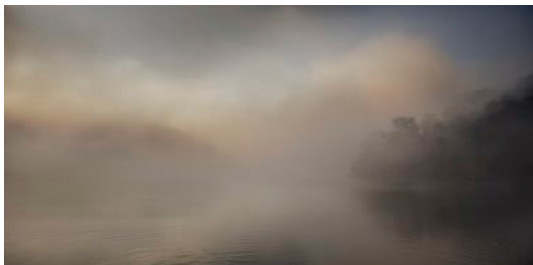
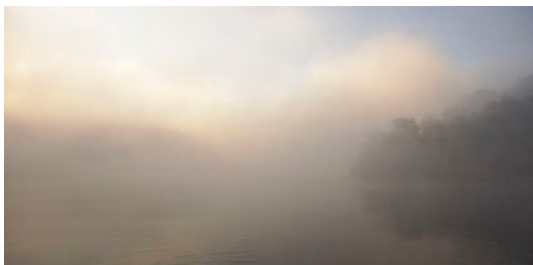
With the Nevis Tree, the highlight of the lake behind the tree was there and no doubt was inspired in part by that painting I had seen 10 years earlier. It was a straightforward matter to lighten it up and give it a little extra colour.

Similarly, the red colouration of the tree is based on the actual colour of the tree. With the back/side lighting, the colour was somewhat hidden in the raw file, but it was easily drawn out with a little judicious post-production.

NEW TRADITION: Many people search the editing techniques of *The New Tradition* for inspiration without success. But this is craft and craft is just the expression of art, while art comes from the heart and the mind.

The initial post-production steps are all about setting up the tonal mapping of the image, how light and how dark various elements will be.





Pittwater Mist

New South Wales, Australia 2006

Canon EOS 1Ds Mark II, 19mm Leica lens
1/160 second @ f8, ISO 100, hand-held

THE NEW TRADITION has allowed us to capture and interpret scenes that were probably never possible with film, or if possible, we didn't know they existed!

One of the least understood tools in *The New Tradition* is the use of contrast. Low contrast scenes captured on colour film remained just that, although we could use different contrast papers or settings in the darkroom to control black and white contrast to some degree.

In the digital workflow, contrast is much easier to accomplish – and also much easier to set incorrectly.

In attempting to create an image with lots of impact, I find many photographers are ramping up the contrast too far and, in doing so, losing detail and creating a 'digital' look. However, the fine control is there and by using layers and masks, you can selectively enhance the contrast in different parts of the image as well.

This photograph of early morning mist on Pittwater is a classic case of using contrast to enhance a scene.

There are two money-pits in life: horses and boats. I'd rather not talk about the first one, but in terms of boats, the best solution is to have a friend who owns one. My nautical friend was fellow photographer David Oliver and we spent many wonderful days out on Sydney's Pittwater in his Bayliner Sierra.

Early one morning before sunrise, David was struggling to navigate one of the narrow arms in dim light and heavy fog. I was supposed to be up on the

bow as lookout, but there was very little to see: the deep green of the channel and the impenetrable grey of the mist. However, gradually we could perceive some light above the eastern shore and, realising the fog was thinning, we grabbed our cameras.

The raw file doesn't show a lot of detail or colour and to be fair, it was a reasonably lacklustre sunrise. However, I can remember being surprised at just how much detail I could extract from the scene by using a curves adjustment.

There are many situations where an increase in contrast can bring up detail that is otherwise invisible to the naked eye, such as aerials, underwater and in very flat light.

The challenge technically is to reveal this detail without blocking up the blacks or bleaching the whites and this is why selective adjustments work so well.

Working selectively with layers and masks allows the photographer to adjust discrete areas of the image without adversely affecting others.

NEW TRADITION: Digital provides unprecedented control over the 'tonal mapping' (the tonality) of our photographs.

One of the most surprising benefits of the digital workflow is how more contrast can be used to transform a low-contrast raw file.





Horseshoe Bend

Page, Arizona, USA, 2006

Canon EOS 1Ds Mark II, 20mm lens
1/160 second @ f8, ISO 100, hand-held

TODAY, I WOULD approach this image quite differently. I find the post-production a little raw and obvious, and I'm not completely convinced about the colour treatment either. However, it was a part of the transition to *The New Tradition*.

Horseshoe Bend, just outside Page, is easy to access and incredibly impressive, but a standard wide-angle lens (like a 24mm or even a 20mm on a full-frame DSLR) won't fit it all in. This image is a three-frame stitch and again, today I would shoot it quite differently.

There are two key techniques involved: colour and tonal mapping. In the darkroom, photographers would use common tea to stain and colour their prints. They also used sodium sulfide or thiocarbamide chemicals which potentially produced a much stronger sepia or brown colour saturation. This print just happened to be made at a time when I was experimenting with colour toning using a digital workflow. It is probably a little strong.

However, what I would retain is the light tonal values on the Colorado River that I introduced. This is an example of 'tonal mapping', of using the tones in the image to direct the viewer's eye to the area that is important to you as the photographer.

Light tones in an image of predominantly darker tones will attract attention, for example. Using an adjustment layer with a mask, I lightened up the river, but this is only part of the process.

To create the silky smoothness of the water, a neutral density filter was placed in front of the lens to reduce the light reaching the sensor, thus requiring a longer camera exposure during which the water's motion blurred the river surface.

The photograph brings back several memories, one I shall embarrassingly share.

I was working quite closely with Panasonic at the time, using its Lumix cameras and capturing images for advertising and marketing. At the other end of the scale, I was also trialling a Phase One P45 medium format back on a Horseman body with a 24mm Schneider lens. And I had my Canon EOS 1Ds Mark II.

The Phase One was set up on a tripod with its legs at its lowest elevation, several metres back from the cliff's edge. There wasn't a breath of wind and I didn't give it another thought as I lay on my stomach, shooting over the edge with the little Lumix compact.

Suddenly a surge of wind came rushing out of the canyon. I closed my eyes as the wind and dust roared past and in the melee I heard a dull thud in the distance. Immediately I knew what had happened and all I could think was how much it was going to cost to replace the \$50,000 Phase One outfit I had borrowed!

Fortunately, the camera hit the rocky ground on its side and there was no damage to either the digital back or the expensive Schneider lens. A small scratch was all I had to own up to and Bruce Pottinger, the distributor of Phase One in Australia at the time, said not to worry about it.

Even so, I thought it only fair to offer him an advert in the magazine as some form of compensation.

The first step shown above is already stitched from three frames and the sky darkened down. The image is now ready for further investigation.









Bryce Canyon

Utah, USA, 2007

Horseman 645SW, Phase One P45 back, 24mm Schneider lens
8 seconds @ f5.6, ISO 50, tripod-mounted, no filter

HAVE YOU BEEN offered a pet dog or cat to take home for the weekend? “Just bring it back on Monday morning,” you are told by the friendly pet shop owner. And by the time Monday morning rolls around, there’s no way you or your family are going to part with that pet!

I think this is what happened to me, except it was a camera.

Or to be precise, a Phase One P45 camera back. Bruce Pottinger, the Australian Phase One distributor, offered me a Phase One to play with in America’s incredible South West. After the Wedding & Portrait Photographers International (WPPI) conference in Las Vegas, photographer Phil Kuruvita and I planned to tour some of the national parks for a week.

This was the first photo I took with the P45.

We decided to visit Bryce Canyon after Vegas. I can remember seeing a wonderful photo of Bryce after fresh snow, but looking at the clear blue skies as we started on our road trip, I discounted that immediately. No chance.

However, later that afternoon as we drove into Bryce Canyon, a snowstorm enveloped the park. It wasn’t much of a shoot in the afternoon, so we hoped for a better opportunity the following morning, but the rational part of my brain couldn’t see how a new storm

was going to clear away in time for a perfect morning sunrise. I went to sleep with hope, but no expectations.

Well before dawn, Phil and I headed back up to Bryce Canyon. There had been so much snow during the night, all the road and location signs were covered and so we had no idea where we were going in the dark. However, up above we could see stars twinkling, so our hopes were very high, if only we could find the right place to shoot from.

In a state of mild panic, we decided we had to stop somewhere and just take a chance. We pulled into one of many car parks, grabbed our cameras and tripods and headed into the woods, our feet crunching through the fresh snow. We had no idea where we were going, except that it was towards the sunrise and hopefully we’d find something.

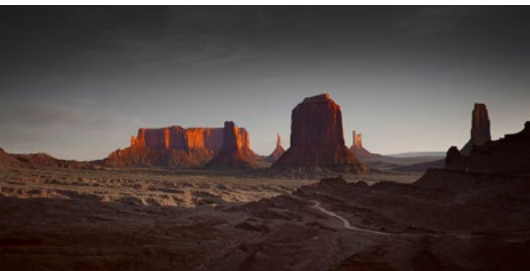
As luck would have it (and it was my birthday), we stumbled onto Sunrise Lookout and next to the fence stood this amazing tree with its exposed roots hanging onto the edge of the canyon for dear life.

Sometimes you can be just plain lucky.

And Bruce didn’t get his camera back, either.

Raw files often look quite different to what our eyes see and minds remember. Steps taken to return the raw file to my memory.





John Ford Point

Monument Valley, USA 2007

Horseman 645SW, Phase One P45 back, 70mm Schneider lens
30 seconds @ f8, ISO 50, tripod-mounted, 10x ND filter

THERE ARE PARTS of the world where the colour is so rich and intense that many people don't believe it is real. For several years I was perplexed why some (normally non-Australian) viewers of my Central and Western Australian photographs accused me of oversaturating my colours. It was only when one or two travelled with me to these locations that I finally worked it out: they didn't believe it was real! They call Australia's 'Red Centre' for a reason.

When shooting these locations with strong colour, I sometimes find I need to reduce colour saturation to bring the colours back into gamut.

Simply speaking, photography offers us a limited gamut (or range) of colours. It is not possible to record and reproduce the full range of colours that we can see with our eyes, although modern photography does a very good job. If we think of all the 'colours of the rainbow' as being our ideal, cameras are very good at capturing 80 or 90 per cent of them. However, computer screens and monitors aren't so efficient, displaying 70 or 80 per cent of the possible colours, while prints and books may only reproduce 60 to 70 per cent. (These percentages are arbitrary for explanatory purposes.)

So, when you are creating a print or a file for reproduction in a book like this, what do you do with colours that cannot be reproduced? Where do the missing colours go?

The missing colours are usually the more saturated colours. For example, the distant mesa in the photo, catching the sunlight in Monument Valley, was incredibly red. My camera had no trouble capturing the

vibrant hues, but when I printed the photograph, the reproduction struggled. First, the reds were not nearly so vibrant. Second, the subtle tonal differences in the red rock face were blocked up with saturated colour. All of the red values that could not be reproduced ended up being a single red value in the print – and it just looked awful!

In Photoshop, you can use soft-proofing to visualise the printed result on screen, but sometimes the only way to really appreciate the issue is to make a print. However, once you have discovered the problem, how do you fix it?

There are software applications like ColorThink that will show you exactly what colours are in your photograph and overlay them on a graph of the colour profile you are printing to. You may see that changing the hue of the colour can bring the colour back into gamut (back within the range of colours that your monitor or printer can accurately reproduce), or more often, reducing the saturation is the solution.

It was this print which really emphasised to me the importance of understanding colour management.

NEW TRADITION: You can get by without knowing how colour reproduction works, but in *The New Tradition*, if you do understand it, it makes solving these visual challenges that much easier.

The reds enhanced in the far mesa ended up out-of-gamut for earlier printing papers and inksets, so care needs to be taken with how much saturation you add.





Totem Pole

Monument Valley, USA, 2007

Horseman 645SW, Phase One P45 back, 24mm Schneider lens
16 seconds @ f5.6, ISO 50, tripod-mounted, no filter

WE WERE LUCKY, or so it seemed. When we arrived at Monument Valley before dawn, the gate was locked. How were we to get in? Then right on cue, a local Navajo guide stepped out of his large transit van and offered us his services. Access behind the gate was only possible with a local guide, he explained.

After paying him the requisite \$80 each (I was travelling with Phil Kuruvita), we jumped into his van. He turned around, away from the locked gate and fifty metres down the road took a side track which we bumped across. No need to unlock the gate at all!

However, we didn't begrudge him the money because his service was fantastic. He had guided many photographers before and knew exactly where we wanted to go, so we hired him for the next morning as well.

This photograph is from the next morning. It would have been challenging to find the right angle in the predawn darkness, so we scoped the location the evening before for the general area.

The image I had in mind was inspired by a 4x5" large format photograph of the Totem Pole by David Muench. It was a photograph that had stayed with me for over 20 years, a simple composition with sand in the foreground and the red rock escarpment, including the Totem Pole, in the top of the frame. Early morning sunlight picked up the windblown textures of the foreground sand in a classic landscape composition.

David Muench is one photographer whose work has had a strong influence on the way I compose, even today. I love the way he uses a wide-angle lens in close to the landscape, exaggerating the foreground and positioning the background up high in the frame. He also uses telephotos quite a bit to stack the

perspective, giving distant objects the appearance of being very close to one another.

And he did all this with a large format camera and sheet film. In the 20th Century, this was cutting edge technology in terms of image quality, even if the cameras themselves were fully manual. While digital capture today is far superior to large format film, there are aspects of perspective and depth-of-field in large format work that I miss.

I took a series of images of the Totem Pole that morning, settling on this slightly more complicated composition as my favourite.

While I was influenced by David's photographs, it was purely as a homage to someone whose work I had admired for many years. It's like visiting the Sydney Opera House or the Great Pyramids of Egypt – you simply have to take your own photographs of these iconic locations.

And while I treated the homages quite differently in terms of colour and tonality, I think photography is all about taking your influences a step further. When you visit these locations, put your tripod in the same holes (if you can find them), but then move around and explore. Look at things through your eyes and create something that is uniquely yours.

What I loved about this location was the silvery shimmer in the predawn glow. I hope in some small way this shows through, both in the composition and the colour palette I've chosen for Monument Valley's Totem Pole.

During the post-production process, a shift from a warm to a cool colour balance helped created the 'silvery' feeling of the predawn light.





Coromandel Dinghy

North Island, New Zealand, 2007

Phase One 645AF, Phase One P45+ back, Mamiya 28mm f4.5 lens
1/115 second @ f7.1, ISO 50, tripod-mounted, no filter

PHIL KURUVITA AND I were over in New Zealand to help with the annual NZIPP photography award judging and convention. On a free day, we hired a car and drove down to the picturesque Coromandel Peninsula.

As is often the case in New Zealand, the weather was inclement – not that inclement weather is a problem. Indeed, some of the most emotive landscape photographs are taken in inclement weather.

The small dinghy on the sand flats at low tide was photographed during a long downpour. We had waited and waited for the rain to abate, but in the end simply got wet. I timed the several shots carefully, wiping the front element of the 28mm lens clear of raindrops in-between.

There is not much colour in the original image. The low clouds and the sands are drab and grey, although the wet sand has a wealth of specular highlights and reflections. Reflections as compositional elements are always useful in creating an image with more interest.

To punctuate the scene, the tree and the dinghy were emphasised with colour.

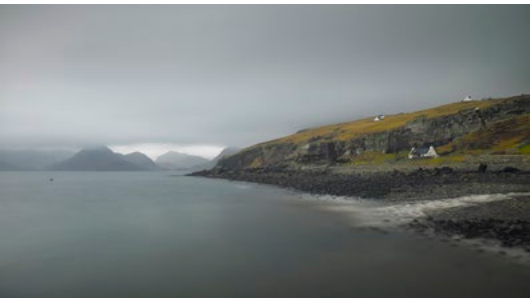
NEW TRADITION: There are many techniques that allow you to change the colour of a compositional element without affecting the rest of the image. It is possible to change the hue, saturation and lightness individually, although generally I stick with the original hue and lightness. Saturation can be added or reduced, depending on what result you're looking for.

Limiting the colour changes can be achieved by using individual colour channels – and this works very well in a situation like this. For instance, the only reds in the scene are in the dinghy, so by increasing the colour saturation in the red channel, the dinghy comes to life without affecting anything else.

However, were there several red dinghies in the scene, this technique would affect them all. Had I only wished to increase the colour saturation of one dinghy, then I'd also need to use a mask to limit the effect.

When looking through the viewfinder, I am always cropping in my mind. The camera's format isn't always the best option.





Elgol

Isle of Skye, Scotland, 2009

Phase One 645AF, Phase One P45+ back, Mamiya 28mm f4.5 lens
30 seconds @ f8, ISO 50, tripod-mounted, 10x ND filter

HAND-COLOURING BLACK and white prints has been a popular technique, more or less since photography began. Of the examples I'm familiar with, most were portraits with skin colours added in 'for realism'. However, some hand-coloured prints were very detailed, almost to the point they could pass for a colour photograph today.

NEW TRADITION: The idea of hand-colouring is still appealing in *The New Tradition* because it allows photographers another means of expression.

If we're unhappy with the colour or hue, we can change it. Or optionally, we may remove all the colour of the original and replace it with hues of our choosing.

The downside of all this control is the time required to do it correctly. Although some photographers have developed a style of hand-colouring where precision is not necessary, if you want to practise the art of 'Invisible Photoshop', time is required.

There are many plug-ins and techniques that offer quick solutions to complex problems, such as re-colouring, but generally I find that when you enlarge the image, you see shortcomings.

Usually the problems are in the transition areas and borders. For instance, if you were going to colour the grasses a different yellow or green, the 'quick technique' leaves the edges unchanged, or partly changed, and

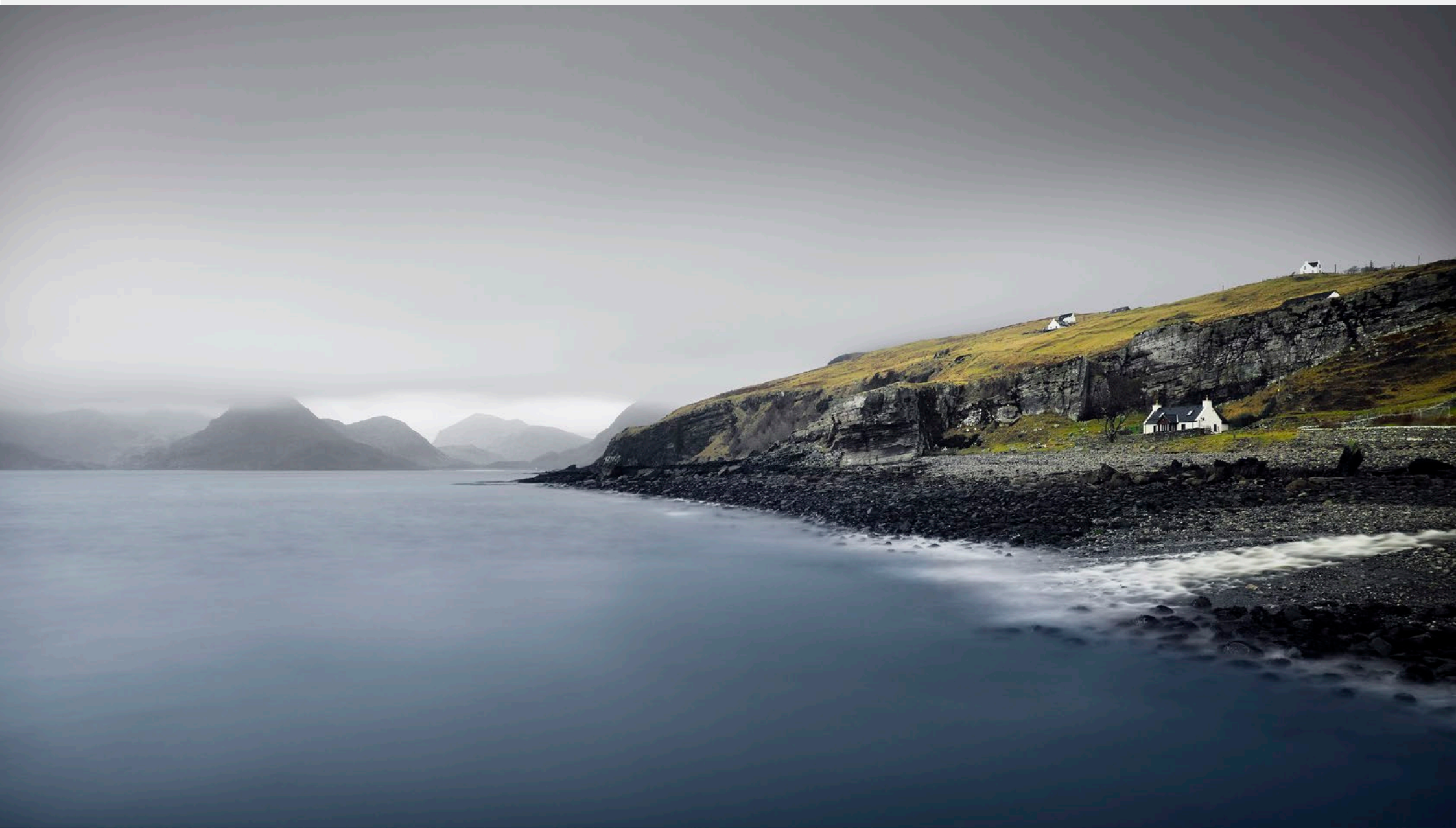
the result doesn't look natural. 'Natural' is possibly not the correct descriptor – perhaps 'complete' or 'finished' better describes what I am looking for in the final edit.

As technology advances and programmers improve their craft, I have no doubt these plug-ins and techniques will improve, but in the meantime, the art of hand-colouring should be approached with plenty of time available, or by choosing your subjects carefully.

Elgol was photographed on a grey old day with very little colour in the raw file. Recolouring the grassy hillsides was relatively simple because these were the only areas of any real colour in the entire image. A hue/saturation adjustment layer could be added and the yellow and red channels adjusted to produce a 'quick' recolouring.

For the water, a colour balance adjustment layer was used to introduce the blues, along with a mask to carefully control the area being changed. A soft brush was used to moderate the change along the shoreline. If you look carefully, there are still telltale signs of the colour being introduced, but Invisible Photoshop will never fool a truly observant photographer of *The New Tradition*.

I was on the Isle of Skye with David Oliver after giving separate workshops in Birmingham. We had a great Devonshire Tea just up the road from here.





Death Valley

California, USA, 2010

Alpa TC, Phase One P65+ back, 23mm Rodenstock Digaron lens
1/60 second @ f11, ISO 50, tripod-mounted, no filter

DEATH VALLEY HAS been photographed to death, but this is no reason not to photograph it. Some locations have become so iconic, so recognisable, that it is almost our duty to add them to our personal collection. And there are a lot of things to photograph in Death Valley, not just the infamous sand dunes.

As far as sand dunes go, Death Valley's aren't really all that impressive. And if it's been busy, you'll find footprints everywhere which tends to ruin that pristine composition with untouched sand ripples in the early light.

My first exposure to sand dunes in America's South West was through Ansel Adams and Edward Weston. Some were photographed in Death Valley, but I think the ones I like the most were not by the side of the main road where the photograph opposite was taken.

On this morning there was a strong wind, which was good (for removing yesterday's footprints), and a lot of cloud, which was not. Nevertheless, I wandered out hoping for a break in the cloud along the horizon where the sun was due.

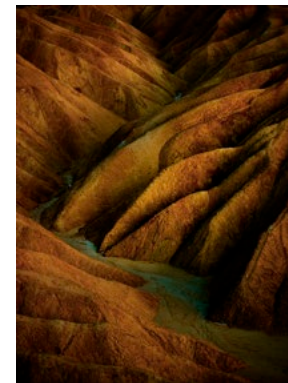
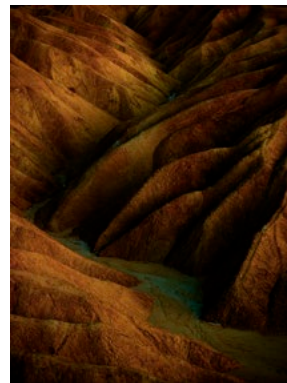
Given the strong wind, I set up my camera equipment before getting out of the rental car – no point covering the sensor with wind-blown sand if I didn't have to.

I used the ultra wide-angle 23mm Digaron (similar to a 14mm on a full-frame DSLR) so I could emphasise the foreground. Then it was just a matter of walking right into the dunes and leaving footprints for the photographers who might follow later in the day.

I set the camera up and framed my composition, and then waited. After around 15 minutes, the sun popped through just after sunrise, but it didn't stick around for long. You'll note in this book that the photographs I show are the ones when the weather co-operated, but I can confess that there are many shoots when the light isn't perfect and no photographs result.

Two telephoto views taken on the same shoot.





Zabriskie Point #1

California, USA, 2010

Phase One 645AF II, Phase One P65+ back, 120mm Mamiya lens
1/3 second @ f8, ISO 50, tripod-mounted, no filter

“YOU’RE TOO LATE!”

It’s not really what you want to hear when you’re running up the hill with a full bag of cameras on your back and a tripod in your hand.

We had driven for several hours and only stopped when we absolutely had to (because the light was so good), but those are the decisions you make. Do you photograph something now and risk missing something later, or do you keep driving with no guarantee there will be anything worthwhile later?

We did a bit of both and fortunately we were bang on time.

Around half a dozen photographers walked down past us from Zabriskie Point Lookout, all with a self-satisfied, knowing little smile on their faces. They were convinced that they had captured the shots we had missed. And there’s no doubt they had photographed the last rays of sunshine because the sun had disappeared just five minutes earlier.

And so they packed up while we unpacked.

Zabriskie Point is an exercise in erosion without restraint. It doesn’t rain very much in Death Valley, but when it does, the erosion must be quick and severe, as evidenced by the landforms surrounding Zabriskie Point. Completely barren and heavily scarred, it’s a moon-like scene of desolation.

And incredibly photogenic.

However, in direct sunlight, the contrast range between the dark valleys and the illuminated summits is huge, especially around sunset. This contrast can be used to good effect and I hope the other photographers got their shots.

On the other hand, after the sun has set (or before it rises in the morning), Zabriskie Point is illuminated with a much softer, more revealing light source. This is what we were after.

The area in the photograph is surrounded by slightly different types of rocks, so to give the impression this landscape goes on forever, I used a moderate telephoto

lens so I could fill the frame with the heavily eroded landforms. I also moved the camera around, testing different angles, both horizontal and vertical, looking for a composition that resonated.

Later, when processing the raw file, I adjusted the white balance to create a warm, golden glow, which is in contrast to a second image of Zabriskie Point which I have left with a much cooler colour balance (see next page).

I have also cropped and squeezed the image to change the shape of the landforms. As there is no external reference, people don’t realise the image has been ‘squeezed’ into what I consider a more engaging form.

It isn’t uncommon to begin with a horizontal frame and, after squishing the pixels together (aspect adjustment), deciding the image works better as a vertical. You lose a few pixels, but shooting with medium format, you can afford to.





Zabriskie Point #2

California, USA, 2010

Phase One 645AF II, Phase One P65+ back, 80mm Mamiya lens
8 seconds @ f8, ISO 50, tripod-mounted, no filter

EXPERIENCE HELPS WHEN you're a photographer.

This isn't about being a Smart Alec. It's just that with experience you learn how things work out.

In the days of film, when shooting long exposures, we learnt that Reciprocity Failure resulted in underexposure and a colour shift, but knowing this you could create some amazing images.

Similarly, just because the sun has set doesn't mean the light show has finished. In fact, some of the best light is after sunset (and before sunrise), especially if you're happy to use some extra contrast in post-production.

When there is no direct sunlight, the illumination is coming from the sky and as a light source, the sky is huge. Large light sources throw a beautiful, soft quality of light, whereas small light sources (relative to the subject) throw much more contrasty light. This is something I learnt through studio lighting and portraiture. Neither light source is better than the other, just different.

However, knowing that after sunset there is a beautiful, soft light source to work with is something you learn from experience. And knowing that this will be a large light source, you also know that the light quality will be softer in quality, with low contrast.

However, compare the light quality on a clear afternoon with that on a cloudy afternoon. If the light becomes too soft, it also becomes muddy. There is a clarity in the light from a blue sky that is lost with a heavy cloud cover.

NEW TRADITION: Sometimes low contrast is exactly what you want, but if it isn't, you can increase the contrast and bring the image to life in post-production. It is remarkable how different an image can look with extra contrast.

I often wonder if this scene would have been better photographed with a slightly wider-angle, but when I have done so, I tend to crop in closer anyway.









Booth Island, Lemaire Channel

Antarctica, 2009

Phase One 645AF, Phase One P65+ back, 75-150mm lens @ 75mm
1/125 second @ f16, ISO 50, hand-held, no filter

WE HAD SEEN zero sunshine in Antarctica and the weather had been poor. However, on our last day when we passed through the Lemaire Channel, we experienced beautiful, still water and amazing reflections. The whole ship was on deck to view the spectacle.

Once through the Channel, we spent some time ashore following penguins and then it was time to re-board and head back home.

Then the sun came out!

A break in the clouds created some directional light on Booth Island. What I found curious was the distinct yellow colouration in the distant clouds, proving once again that truth is stranger than fiction.

At home I would put the colouration down to pollution, but in Antarctica, the air is, if nothing else, super clean and so I told myself it must be the clouds breaking up the visible spectrum, holding back the blues and letting the yellows pass through.

No idea if this is true, of course.

One of the challenges in shooting scenes like this is ensuring there is detail in the snow. While we all know that snow is white, this isn't always the case and even if it were, photographs would look rather boring if snow were reproduced as pure white on the screen or on paper.

However, you can't always simply darken down the file to bring in detail. If you have overexposed your

capture, then that means you have no detail in the highlights to play with, so when the image is darkened down, you end up with areas of flat, detailless tone. This is why during capture I always keep an eye on the histogram to ensure that I am not 'clipping' or overexposing my whites.

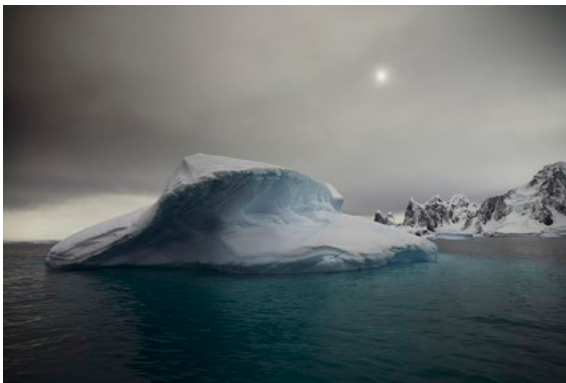
There is a trick to looking at the histogram. Sometimes it appears obvious where the histogram ends, but if you look closely, the graph can 'dribble' along the bottom for a lot further into the highlights. If you drop the exposure further and you can still see the 'dribble', it means you were still clipping.

Most cameras have an exposure warning system where the LCD screen flashes red or black to show the areas in the photo that are overexposed. When the LCD shows the full image, the warning might not appear, but enlarge the preview image and you may find there are indeed areas of snow that are clipping. Sometimes this can be controlled with less exposure, but if they are specular highlights (direct reflection from the sun), exposure alone may not solve the problem.

A polarising filter can help, although there are other issues to consider, such as an increase in contrast.

I shot around 50 more photos of Booth Island at this time, taken with different lenses, at different distances and with different foregrounds. I shoot as many frames as I can, in case I don't get another chance.





Iceberg, Port Charcot

Antarctica, 2009

Phase One 645AF, Phase One P65+ back, Mamiya 28mm f4.5 lens
1/180 second @ f5.6, ISO 50, hand-held, no filter

I AWOKED THIS morning to find strong winds and a choppy, messy sea. It didn't look like we were going to see any sunshine at all on our trip to the southern continent, but the captain was a little more positive as he steered us towards the Lemaire Channel.

Just outside the entrance to the Channel, we found ourselves either in the lee of the wind, or the weather was changing, which meant a 'zodiac cruise' around the icebergs outside Port Charcot was on the cards.

What I still can't get over is the deep aquamarine blues you see in the ice.

Sometimes the blues (and greens) are deep under the water, on other occasions the iceberg has tilted over to reveal the rich colouration.

However, while flat overcast days are good for showing the shape and texture of the icebergs, it really doesn't bring out the colour.

The colour has been helped along in this rendition, but not as you might think. All I needed to do was adjust the exposure and contrast in Photoshop, not the saturation. I processed the raw file to retain detail in the sky, which meant the iceberg and sea were initially

darker than they should be. However, once they were lightened in Photoshop and a little contrast added, the colour is easy to see!

If the colours look a little rich to your eye, believe me, they are not. I still feel I haven't presented the richness strongly enough!

A few years later I am in Iceland when my assistant Kim Valenti gives me a call. Kim keeps the office going while I am away and I would be lost without her.

Kim explains that Apple's advertising agency in California wants to use this photo for a television commercial for their new MacBook Pro, but they need the file yesterday. Oh, and because their production people don't trust me (I'm a photographer, after all), can I provide the raw file?

As you can see, the raw file (top left) looks nothing like the final rendition. And I'm not sure a production technician would create the image quite like the photographer, but maybe I'm being a little egotistical. However, it's likely to be a good sale, so I have no

trouble sending them the raw file. And a flattened TIFF of my final image.

So, I'm in Iceland, Kim is in Australia at the office and the file is on a backup drive at my home. I know exactly where the final edit is, but directing someone to find the raw file will be a challenge.

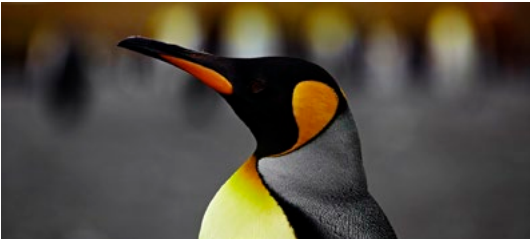
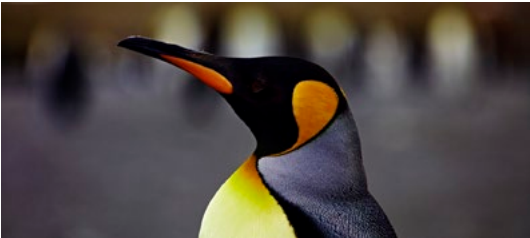
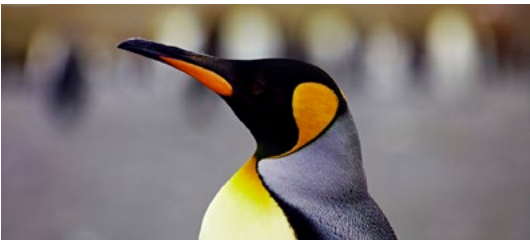
My wife Kathie undertakes the task and I tell her it will be on the 2009 drive, in the Jobs folder, in the Antarctica sub-folder, and in a sub-sub-folder with the name PortCharcot or Lemaire. Along with a little help from my brother-in-law Steve, the file is found and both are dispatched to California. Given the time difference, they can almost arrive yesterday.

When I return from Iceland, I'm told the agency wants to proceed with the photograph and we negotiate a licence fee, but I'm more interested to know how the raw file went.

Suffice to say the raw file wasn't necessary.

The first raw file shows how hidden the colour is, yet to the eye, it was certainly there. When people call me out for enhancing the colour, I explain the photo isn't as rich as reality. That usually shuts them up!





King Penguin, St Andrews

South Georgia, 2009

Phase One 645AF, Phase One P65+ back, 300mm lens
1/200 second @ f6.3, ISO 50, hand-held, no filter

TAKING THIS PHOTOGRAPH was the easy bit. I just sat down on the ground and waited. Eventually, curiosity brought the penguins to me! They are just as interested in us as we are in them.

Our visit to St Andrews Bay and the large colony of King Peguins was only by chance because the location is so exposed to the weather and the seas.

While many of the locations on South Georgia are tucked away in protected bays, St Andrews is open to swells from many directions, so unless the ocean is relatively calm, it can be difficult to land a Zodiac.

The trip into St Andrews was pretty easy. The trip back was more exciting. The waves had increased on the shore and this made jumping back into the Zodiac a matter of timing and luck.

Timing was important because, having knee-high Wellington boots meant protection only so long as the water wasn't more than knee-deep. As a large wave surged forwards, the water level surpassed my knee as it sank into the black sand and I felt a cool wash around my toes.

Once on the Zodiac itself, you're sitting comfortably on the sides, but it's relatively low and if a large wave hits the beach before you push off, you can find the inside awash with water.

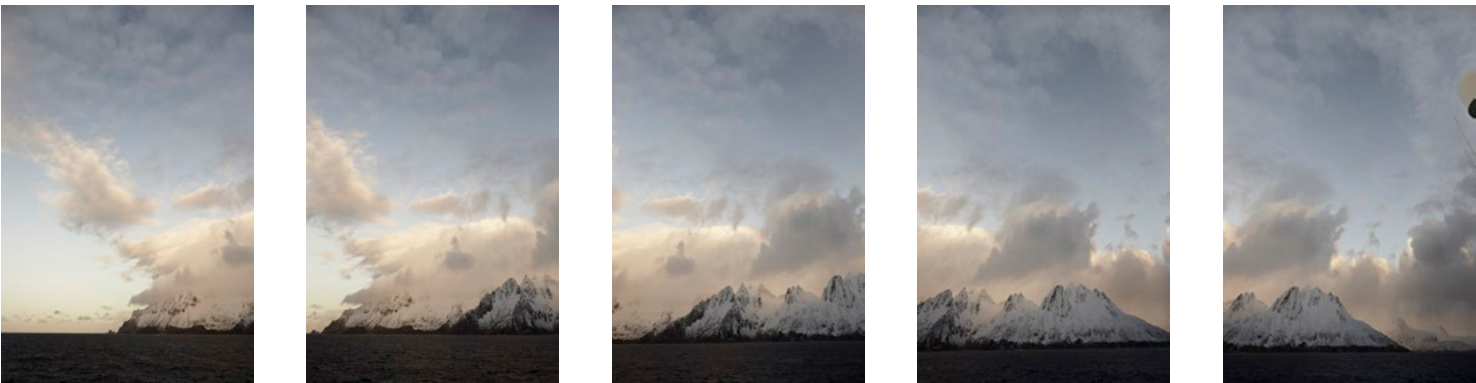
This happened to us as we left St Andrews and I lifted my camera bag up onto my knee so it didn't float around in the Zodiac bath!

And on the way back, the ship would often disappear from view as we dropped into the troughs between waves. This isn't unusual from a sitting position, but when our skipper who was standing also lost sight of the ship, we agreed that the swell was building and it would be interesting transferring from the Zodiac to the gangway on the ship.

The trick for keeping your equipment safe is to put your camera bag inside a dry bag. Often you leave the ship in benign conditions, only to return three or four hours later in what might be considered testing waters.

While you're not allowed to walk within five metres of the wildlife, there's nothing stopping them from walking within five metres of you.





South Georgia Approach

South Georgia, 2009

Canon EOS 1Ds Mark III, 17mm TS-E lens, stitched
1/200 second @ f8, ISO 200, hand-held, no filter

KING HAAKON SOUND is on the north west side of South Georgia. It's famous because this is where Shackleton landed when he 'escaped' from Elephant Island to get help for his men.

It's also where a cruise ship touched bottom a few years previously, so our captain wasn't taking any chances and navigated slowly and carefully into the back of the bay.

South Georgia is nothing short of spectacular. How you can really do justice to it with a camera is beyond me – everyone was left speechless. Towering mountains, covered in the freshest, whitest snow you've ever seen, fall directly into a wild, dark and restless ocean. Clouds come and go, shrouding distant peaks one minute, revealing them and a dozen others the next. And it's cold with a wind that rips through your clothing and chills your bones.

At the end of the sound we could see the deep blues of a glacier meeting the sea, probably one of a

dozen we saw as we crept into our anchorage. We left the ship in relatively calm conditions. The sun was shining and the elephant seals were baking. They hardly acknowledged our existence. A small group of King Penguins seemed lost and we were wary of the one or two fur seals, which can be very aggressive early in the season.

In the afternoon the wind was up and landing at a second location was deemed unwise, so we steamed off toward Salisbury Plains.

Sailing close to the coast, it was difficult to capture the grandeur in a single exposure, so I took several images and stitched them together. The sky was simply amazing that night.

NEW TRADITION: Although I don't feel as though I use this technique very often, it's interesting how many photos in this book have been stitched. It's certainly a great addition to the digital photographer's toolbox.

The stitch was a little troublesome because, shooting from a moving platform, the scene was never going to line up perfectly. The change of angle mightn't be much, but it was enough to prevent the island matching perfectly from frame to frame. Clouds aren't such a big problem because the joins can be fudged more easily.

After stitching, the image was also 'squeezed' a little so the island looked a little taller. In real life, you're on the ship looking up to the top of the peaks, but when you shoot with an ultra wide-angle lens, the resulting perspective doesn't look anything like what you have just experienced. Squishing the image brings back a little of the dramatic perspective.

This approach was repeated with Drygalski Fjord as you'll read shortly.

The five frames from which the final image was created.





Deception Island Vista

Antarctica, 2009

Phase One 645AF, Phase One P65+ back, Mamiya 28mm f4.5 lens
1/80 second @ f14, ISO 50, hand-held, no filter

IF YOU DIG down a few centimetres into the loose, black soil, the ground becomes increasingly warm. Deception Island is, after all, an active volcano.

So did I take off my gloves and dig into the earth?

Not a chance! Although some of the passengers on board took a dip in the bay (it was a few days before they warmed up again), I chickened out and struggled with the weather which was quickly closing in.

In the distance are the remains of Deception Island's whaling station. Behind me is an old hangar, but the one remaining plane had been removed a couple of years earlier. Certainly, flying here seemed an attractive option, weather permitting.

What I remember in this photograph is the sense of atmosphere. I've used a very wide-angle lens and a

moderate shutter speed, 1/80 second, yet the snow is moving so quickly it has streaked across the image. The snow is also creating the 'hazy' look in the distance.

This is what attracts me to shooting in changeable weather – the resulting photographs are so much more involving than those taken on a still, sunny day.

The use of contrast adjustment layers in Photoshop has helped bring the image to life and a few of my fellow passengers have been delicately removed to restore the destination to its normally lonely existence.

One of the advantages of medium format is being able to bring out details in the shadows while maintaining image quality.





Antarctic Storm

Cuverville Island, Antarctica, 2009

Phase One 645AF, Phase One P65+ back, Mamiya 28mm f4.5 lens
1/640 second @ f8, ISO 200, hand-held, no filter

CUVERVILLE ISLAND IS home to many, many gentoo penguins. We floated into an amazing harbour full of broken icebergs (growlers), only to have the weather close in yet again. Visibility was reduced and I'm keeping my back to the wind to protect the front lens element from being plastered with snow.

On several occasions, you could really only shoot in one direction and that was whichever direction had your back to the wind. If I did want to shoot into the wind, I had to be quick because the lens would be quickly covered with snow. I kept a small cloth with me to wipe the front of the lens in-between shots, but it doesn't take long for the cloth to become ineffective and the easier solution is to look for shots with the weather behind you.

In a number of my photos, you can see large snow-flakes in the foreground and sometimes on the front lens element. Rather than retouch these out, I think they add to the mood and atmosphere.

This trip saw me with the Phase One 645, Canon EOS 1Ds Mark III and Panasonic Lumix GF1 in some pretty testing conditions: the temperature is below zero, way below zero when you add in wind chill, with driving snow, yet the cameras continue to operate.

The main problem I have is with the batteries – they don't last as long in the cold weather, so I replace them with fresh ones. When the rechargeable batteries warm up, they regain much of their charge, so certainly the best advice is to have one or two spare batteries with you, kept in a warm pocket next to your body, especially for longer outdoor shoots in these types of conditions.

NEW TRADITION: Given digital cameras are electronic, extreme weather conditions can render them useless if they get wet or stay outdoors for too long. It's a challenge that is unlikely to change without a water housing!

Was it really that bad?
When I returned to the ship, I was amazed at how bright and clear my photos were! While shooting, the viewfinder and my spectacles were both so fogged up, I was often framing and hoping based on blurry shapes.

It is difficult to operate any camera with mittens, so my mittens with a flap to reveal fingers were a great help when needing to work quickly. Of course, with

a bit more time (or when it was really cold) I could operate all cameras as long as I didn't mind taking a few stabs at the relevant button!

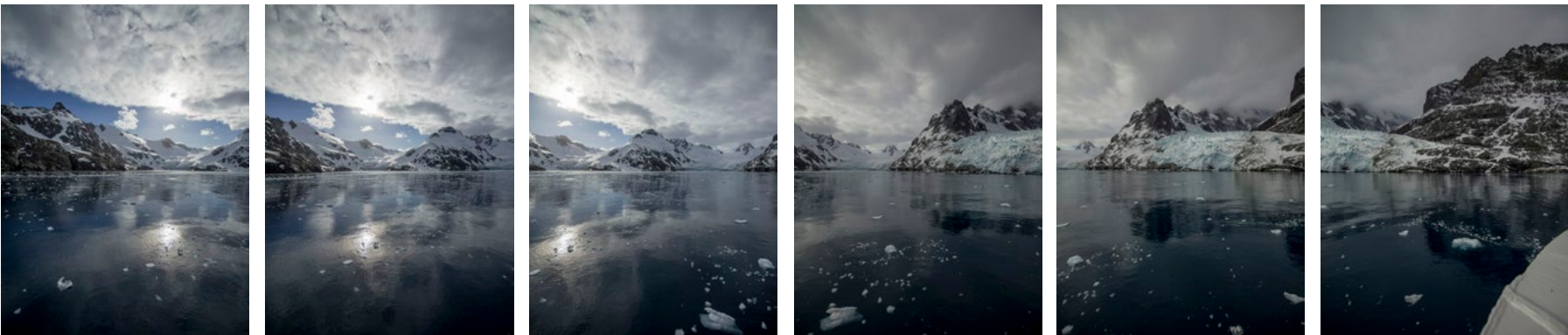
So, what about the hoary issue of condensation on your cameras? When you take a warm camera out into the cold Antarctic conditions, condensation isn't a problem. When you bring your cold camera back inside the warm ship, condensation happens quickly. If you then take your camera outside again, the remaining condensation can be a problem.

When returning to the ship, I'd leave my cameras in the camera case and allow them both to gradually come up to room temperature, and by keeping the camera case closed or zipped, warm air wouldn't condense on them.

Condensation can happen outside when you breathe on your camera (hence the viewfinder fogging up), so a chamois, handkerchief or even a cotton t-shirt become useful for removing unwanted water from your equipment.

It can be challenging to describe what it's like to be in poor weather conditions in Antarctica, so the inclusion of snow flakes helps.





Drygalski Fjord

South Georgia, 2009

Phase One 645AF, Phase One P65+ back, Mamiya 28mm f4.5 lens, stitched
1/640 second @ f11, ISO 100, hand-held, no filter

ONE OF THE discussions I greatly enjoy revolves around the ‘reality’ of photography. Australian landscape photographer Ken Duncan says the photography he loves the most is ‘real’ or ‘pure’, meaning (I assume) the image should come straight out of the camera with minimal editing and manipulation. Ken even started a photography competition around this idea, believing ‘real’ photographers had little chance of winning in an open competition against composited and heavily edited images.

Ken and I are good friends, but we have quite different approaches to our photography – and we both think that’s a good thing!

However, I can’t help but wonder what Ken would think of images taken with a tilt-shift or perspective control lens? Used ‘incorrectly’, these lenses can distort our reality by turning a set of lowly hills into a mighty mountain range. While this approach would be within the rules of ‘straight’ photography, because it is all done ‘in-camera’, I’m not sure if it would be within the intention of the competition rules.

On the other hand, any photograph taken with an ultra wide-angle lens distorts reality. Standing on the stern of our ship in Drygalski Fjord, South Georgia, I was looking up at the towering peaks surrounding us. The tops were at 11 o’clock and 1 o’clock to either side, if that makes sense. However, my photograph had them at around 9:30 and 2:30. To fit everything into the image, a wide-angle lens compresses what it sees and that can diminish the rendition of the subject.

So how is that real? My experience in Drygalski looked nothing like the photographs I had taken. The towering mountain tops were anything but towering, so in post-production, I squished them slightly extending their height and regaining some semblance of what I felt to be there.

However, I understand what Ken and other ‘realists’ are talking about.

As a society, we believe in the veracity of a photograph. Looking at this photograph of Drygalski, there is an expectation that were you to visit there, it would look somewhat similar.

I believe this photograph would be very recognisable. I don’t think the photo quite measures up to the natural grandeur I experienced, but nor do I think my post-production has divorced it from reality.

So, while it may be within the rules of a straight photography competition, I probably wouldn’t enter it as I feel it is a long way from what my camera captured.

NEW TRADITION: The digital workflow gives us the ability to enhance the files captured by our cameras to better reflect what we saw and felt. I don’t think this should be labelled as ‘impure’.

However, even in the days of film, this has always been the case – it’s just the general public didn’t know what photographers were up to!

The six frames from which the final image was created.





Water Boat Study #2

Deception Island, Antarctica, 2009

Phase One 645AF, Phase One P65+ back, 80mm lens, stitched
1/500 second @ f5, ISO 50, tripod-mounted, no filter

THE WEATHER REALLY colours how you feel about a place. For us, the sense of desolation on Deception Island was absolute as a fierce snowstorm grew during our short stay on land.

One of the key subjects I wanted to shoot was the water boats decaying on the shores of Whalers Bay.

As with many photographs I have seen of seemingly incredible locations, actually getting there is remarkably easy once you're on board a ship.

Deception Island is an active volcano and its scientific research stations were abandoned after a little too much heat in the late 1960s and early 1970s. However, the water boats are from the whaling industry and a much earlier time than this, from 1900 to 1930-ish.

Fresh water for whaling operations was carried out to the whaling ships moored in the bay using these covered boats and when I visited, there were just two in 'good condition'.

It's interesting that many of the destinations you visit in Antarctica are not 'pristine', but rather remnants of man's inability to settle permanently. Many truly pristine places are simply inaccessible, no matter what equipment you have, so we go to the places where it is sometimes possible to get ashore and find that 'man' has been there before us.

Although the weather is stormy, it is really quite photogenic and creates a much better photograph compared to a bland blue sky.

I love the graveyard of old wooden buildings in the background, only their footings visible above the volcanic floor. However, unless you have been here, you might not immediately notice them.

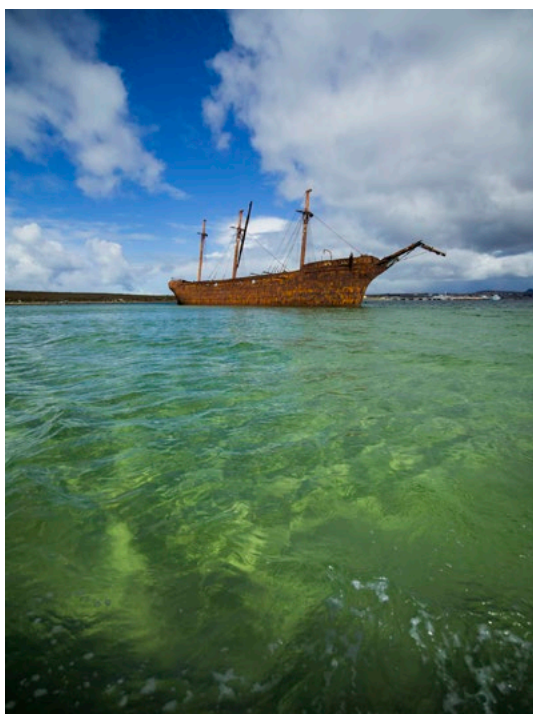
In terms of technique, an 80mm standard lens (roughly equivalent to a 50mm on a full-frame DSLR) was used at f5 and focus was held on the front of the water boat. The relatively wide aperture was chosen so the background was thrown slightly out-of-focus.

While traditional landscape photographers talk about f64 and depth-of-field from the foreground to infinity, I like the fact that the background is slightly de-focused as it ensures the viewer's attention is concentrated on the main subject – the water boat.

The stitching of two frames was hardly necessary, rather the result of changing my mind about the composition. From this camera position, the 80mm didn't allow for much space around the water boat. I tried framing the boat on the left and also on the right. Later, when editing the files, I felt these images looked a little too much like record shots. More space on both sides would give the subject room to breathe and create more of an art piece. The solution was to stitch the two images together.

To create a stronger composition, the scene was stitched together with two exposures. This also produced a larger file and the exhibition print was approximately two metres across.





Lady Elizabeth

Stanley, Falkland Islands, 2009

Phase One 645AF, Phase One P65+ back, Mamiya 28mm f4.5 lens
1/640 second @ f11, ISO 100, hand-held, no filter

THIS ISN'T THE only time in this book that you'll see me colouring a body of water green. And one of the first questions people ask me is, was the water really that green?

My answer is yes, and no.

The Lady Elizabeth is beached at the end of Whalebone Cove in Stanley, Falkland Islands. While most of the passengers from our ship were ashore in port, photographer John Rodsted and I grabbed a zodiac and headed down to the old wreck to take a few photographs. We had been there earlier in the day in bright sunshine and what I had noticed as we cruised around the wreck were the vibrant greens of the water. I'm not sure why it looked so emerald because the shallow sand bottom was white and the rusting hull of the ship a rich red.

However, I was very impressed with the contrast between the two colours and this is what I hoped to photograph at more leisure. Unfortunately (or perhaps fortunately), the weather had changed – which is not unexpected in the Falklands! Instead of a clear sky, a

bank of clouds was moving in and the green waters were replaced by a steely grey. The green water required strong sunshine, which was now absent. Not what I had envisaged, but the sky was pretty dramatic.

I probably shot 50 variations as we floated around the Lady Elizabeth, searching for the perfect balance between subject and background. It's actually a fun way to explore a subject.

During post-production, I was a little disappointed that I didn't have the colours in the water that I remembered, so a series of adjustment layers were employed to create what I had in mind.

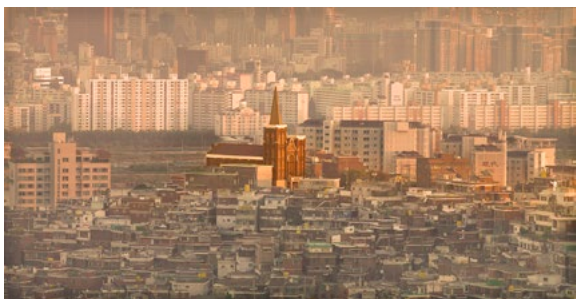
Some people have suggested I'm quite imaginative when it comes to colour, but perhaps it would be more truthful to say that in many cases, I'm just copying Mother Nature.

Two additional views to prove to the sceptical reader that the water was indeed green, despite my proclivity for hue shifting.









Seoul Church #1

Seoul, Korea, 2007

Phase One 645AF, Phase One P45+ back, Mamiya 300mm f4.5 lens
3 seconds @ f22, ISO 50, tripod-mounted, no filter

ONE OF THE things that high quality digital photography does very well is capture detail. We have never before had such sharp, clearly defined images and if you shoot with medium format cameras, the quality takes another step up.

In the days of film, we considered 4x5” and 8x10” large format film to be the ultimate in photographic quality. You never saw finer detail than from a large format tranny or a contact print. And when digital arrived, with every improvement we bemoaned the fact that digital simply didn’t match what we used to have with film.

However, this didn’t last for long.
A few years after purchasing my first medium format camera, I viewed the work of Peter Dombrovskis at the National Gallery of Australia, specifically some of his sub-Antarctic work from Macquarie Island.

While I love this work aesthetically, I was surprisingly disappointed with the technical quality of the prints.

The image detail was soft and indistinct, cloaked by grain. As I looked at each exhibition quality print, I realised that technology had moved a long way and that what we used to admire for technical excellence, no longer made the grade.

Please don’t read this as being in any way critical of Dombrovskis’ work. I am a big fan, not only for what he achieved with his photography (e.g. Island Bend and the Western Arthurs), but his composition and understanding of light. He was a great Australian photographer and I have no doubt that were he alive today, he’d be shooting with medium format as well to get the most he could out of the current technology.

So, what has this to do with a congested skyline in Seoul, South Korea?

Looking out from my hotel window, perched high on a hill overlooking the capital, all I could see were countless dwellings and apartment blocks for as far as the eye could see.

It was a photograph made for medium format quality where each window, each doorway would be clearly resolved.

NEW TRADITION: Lots of pixels mean you can make large prints without sacrificing image quality.

Interestingly, Seoul seems to have an abundance of Christian churches on prominent hills. In post-production, I used colour and contrast to highlight this particular religious edifice, feeling it was swamped by the mass of humanity surrounding it.

And by excluding the horizon from the frame, I hope the image gives the viewer a sense that just possibly those dwellings and apartment blocks continue on forever.

A selection of post-production steps between the processed raw file and the final rendition shown on the opposite page.





Seoul Church #2

Seoul, Korea, 2007

Phase One 645AF, Phase One P45+ back, Mamiya 300mm f4.5 lens
1/60 second @ f11, ISO 50, tripod-mounted, no filter

WHETHER USING MEDIUM format, DSLRs or CSC (mirrorless) cameras, you can be capturing incredible detail. From 30-megapixels upwards, you really have to adjust your technique to get the most out of the new technology.

I'm making the assumption that you want to be able to make big prints with optimum quality and sharpness, at least on occasion. If this is you, then many of the rules we used to follow in the film days are no longer valid.

Let's take depth-of-field, for example. Depth-of-field is the area in front of and behind our focus plane that appears to be in sharp focus. I say 'appears to be' because there really is only one plane (or point) of sharp focus. However, our eyes are limited in the detail they can resolve. Depth-of-field used to be based on a person with average eyesight viewing an 8x10" print at arm's length. If areas in front of or behind the focus plane appeared sharply focused, we said that depth-of-field was extending the area of focus.

However, that was with film technology and making prints from negatives or transparencies. With digital technology, we can see much more sharpness and

detail – and we can also see that an image isn't really as sharp as it could be.

NEW TRADITION: In *The New Tradition*, depth-of-field is much shallower because we can see so much more detail.

If you like taking photographs with selective focus, then digital is a good thing. On the other hand, if you like photographs to be tack sharp from the foreground to the background, you should learn how to focus-stack your images (taking a series of images at different focus distances and merging them together in post-production).

We also used to talk about being able to hand-hold a camera at 1/30 second and keeping everything sharp. However, at 1/30 second, a high resolution sensor will easily pick up and accurately record even the slightest camera shake, so we are much better off shooting at 1/60 or 1/125 second. Of course, image stabilisation will help, so perhaps we can return to 1/30 second after all?

Possibly not! It wasn't always holding the camera that was the problem, rather the subject moving

fractionally during the 1/30 second exposure. Image stabilisation won't freeze your subject and so any subject movement will show up distinctly on our high resolution sensors.

So, what's the solution? It depends on what you want your photographs to look like. If you want maximum sharpness, like I did for this photograph of Seoul, use a tripod or a fast shutter speed. Keep your camera and your subject still while you make the exposure.

On the other hand, if your captures are more about emotions and feelings, then a little subject or camera blur can actually add to the interpretation of your subject.

NEW TRADITION: Not all photographs have to be critically sharp, but if we want critical sharpness, in *The New Tradition* we need to adjust our camera technique accordingly.

Although hand-painting the church in colour, the final image uses the basic hues that can be found in the original raw file, rather than a completely new hue.





Mount Nemrut

Turkey, 2008

Phase One 645AF II, Phase One P45+ back, Mamiya 28mm f4.5 lens, stitch
1/8 second @ f16, ISO 50, tripod-mounted, no filter

MOUNT NEMRUT IS famous for its sunrises and the dismembered stone heads that stand on two flat platforms, just under the peak. To get there for sunrise required a 2:00 a.m. start, a two-hour drive, a short stop for a cup of tea, another drive and a one-kilometre climb from the carpark. Arrival was around 6:00 a.m. for our time of year.

On my first trip, the weather was overcast and the sunrise non-existent. I felt a little disappointed, but three years later when I had the perfect, bluebird morning, I decided that the overcast weather was far more appropriate. In comparison to the sterile sunlight, the mysterious history of the stone heads was much better matched to a little cloud.

The image is a stitch of eight frames encompassing approximately 180°. You can see the small wall upon which I'm standing on the sides of the frame. This allowed me a slightly higher camera angle which helped separate the heads from their background, but because both the heads and the ground they were standing on were very similar in tone and colour, it was a struggle to get the heads to stand out.

I tried to make the heads lighter, but this made them look unnatural. Making the background darker worked far better, but I needed very precise masks if the result were to be at all believable. For each

stone head, I created a very precise mask so I could lighten, darken or add contrast separately. There are 24 adjustment layers, each with slightly differing masks.

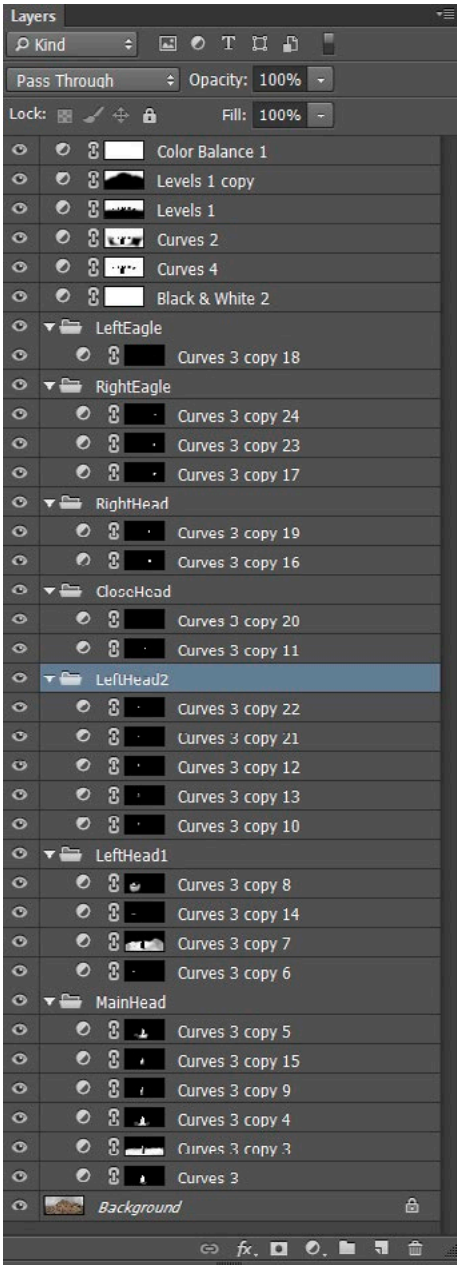
NEW TRADITION: In Photoshop (or other editing programs), be prepared to use as many adjustment layers as needed to achieve your result. It is quite acceptable in *The New Tradition*.

Once the heads were individually isolated, the process became much easier, but I still struggled. It was only when I made the decision to turn the image into a black and white that it started to work.

People ask me how long does it take to create images like this. I spent around three months on this image, not constantly of course. I'd put the photo away for a couple of weeks and think about it. I knew that somewhere in all those pixels, there was a great photograph just waiting to appear.

Sometimes perseverance pays off, but there are many other images in my files that will never see the light of day.

Above: A selection of post-production steps.
Right: The layers panel in Photoshop showing the first layers used to control the image's tonality.







Belmonte

Spain, 2008

Phase One 645AF, Phase One P45+ back, Mamiya 28mm f4.5 lens
1/125 second @ f8, ISO 50, tripod-mounted, stitched

PHOTOGRAPHS CAN Lie and they don't need tricky post-production. This ruined castle seems to be in the middle of nowhere, yet behind the camera is a modern retirement village with hundreds of rooms, and behind and below the castle is the bustling town of Belmonte, Spain.

However, this is also the strength of photography, being able to choose a camera angle to tell a specific story and to keep that story simple by not complicating it with unnecessary information.

NEW TRADITION: Stitching is an essential skill in *The New Tradition*. While photographers stitched panoramas together with film, the technical challenges were extreme and often there were telltale joins in the final print as well.

With digital technology, the stitching process can be invisible, although very often there will be perspectives within the image that give the game away. In this photograph of Belmonte Castle, the curved road in the foreground is actually straight and most experienced photographers would guess that this image has been stitched.

So, why stitch? There are many reasons. Some photographers used to stitch images together to collect more pixels. Rather than taking a wide-angle view, they'd attach a longer focal length lens and stitch several frames together. This produced a larger file with many more pixels, allowing larger prints to be made without suffering unwanted image degradation at the printing stage.

These days with high resolution sensors, image quality isn't such a problem and generally we stitch so we can 'fit it all in'.

To give the impression the castle was all alone in the landscape, I needed to include space on either side. A wide-angle lens helped, but the one I had wasn't wide enough. And I couldn't move further back because there were buildings behind me, so the only solution was to take a series of images and stitch them together in post-production.

While modern consumer cameras and smartphones will automatically stitch images together, it is rare for them to do so without technical errors. You don't see these problems when looking at a small LCD screen, but enlarge the image up and you'll see objects in the subject that don't line up, have been blurred or repeated.

To do a stitch properly generally requires a careful, manual approach. *The New Tradition* still demands that you understand how to use your camera, but no doubt built-in camera software will continue to improve.

In terms of software, PtGUI is considered by many photographers to be the best at stitching images together with a high level of control and input. Simple stitches can be put together with almost any image editing program, but when you start to work with more demanding subjects, a dedicated stitching app may be required.

The four frames from which the final image was created.





Bragança

Portugal, 2008

Phase One 645AF, Phase One P45+ back, Mamiya 28mm f4.5 lens
1/100 second @ f5.6, ISO 50, tripod-mounted

I HAD SPENT an hour in the tiny citadel of Bragança, waiting for the light to change on the facade of the castle keep. It didn't happen and it was looking increasingly unlikely that the light would happen any time soon, so we decided to book into our hotel which was across the valley on a hillside, with great views back to the citadel. As we checked into our room and looked out, a storm approached with a rainbow, but the angle wasn't going to be quite right.

Grabbing my camera bag, I jumped back into the rental car and drove madly up the road, looking for a gap between the trees with a view over the citadel. Large raindrops splattered onto the windscreen and the rainbow grew in intensity. Stopping the car, I worried there was no time for a tripod, so I simply pointed the wide-angle in the approximate direction and pressed the shutter a couple of times. The light was holding, so I pulled out the tripod and took another couple of frames. I checked the focus, the exposure and then the light was gone, replaced by the heavy rain squall you can see approaching.

The original exposure in colour is quite different to the final rendition. In colour, the photograph may have some value as a travel snap, but of more interest to me was the potential of the subject matter. I had in my mind a photograph that was more like an old etching, reproduced or seen under warm display lighting in a museum.

To distort the scene from reality, the image was 'squished' together, as can be seen from the resulting shape of the rainbow. This aspect of the composition seems to cause the most consternation with viewers, many of whom seem unwilling to accept the oval shape, but I am very comfortable with this aspect. For me, it is like the towering arches in a cathedral, encompassing the tiny citadel below.

The original raw file captured a wealth of detail within the clouds, but it required several curve adjustment layers with extreme contrast to bring out the shape and body of the storm cell. And down below the citadel were some modern structures which were removed with the clone and healing brush tools. Telltale signs of modernity were not required.

Finally, the walls of the citadel were lightened up, much as I would have lightened them in the darkroom many years ago using Farmers Reducer and a fine, sable-hair brush.

Many people cannot understand this photograph. However, as we have no control over how people react to our work, it really is up to us to make our own judgements.

I think it's a really good test if you still like a photograph after it has been dismissed by a panel of judges. The first judging panel did not like this image at all, scoring it well below 'award standard', but I had already entered the same photo into a second print competition. Gratifyingly, the second judging panel loved the image, awarding it a gold award.

I agreed with the second judging panel!

This file showed me how far I could push the 'shape' of clouds using curve adjustment layers, which I now generally prefer to clarity adjustments.





Segovia

Spain, 2008

Phase One 645AF, Phase One P45+ back, Mamiya 75-150mm f4.5 lens @ 150mm
1/10 second @ f22, ISO 50, tripod-mounted

WE ALL LOVE photography judges who give us first place, but when our photos slide past unnoticed, well, the judges are simply Philistines. Can't they recognise our brilliance?

There is a part of me that would prefer not to judge photography competitions because all I can offer is a subjective opinion. And often I am asked to provide a comment or suggestion as to how a photograph could be improved or strengthened.

Essentially I am being asked how I would have photographed or presented the image to get a higher score. Should I be doing this?

Recently, I listened to judges discuss one of my prints which had a grainy, black and white finish. One said that he didn't know why I had applied the finish as it wasn't something he would have done – and maybe it would be better without the finish.

This set me thinking: does this judge mean that unless I create photographs the way he does, he won't give me a high score? And if this judge doesn't like grainy black and whites, does that mean he will never score such entries highly?

To be fair to the judge in question, he was trying to be helpful by making a suggestion as to how the image could be improved.

So let me give another example. I am not a big fan of HDR (High Dynamic Range) photographs, but I gave an HDR photograph first place in a competition not so long ago. Personally, subjectively, I didn't like the photograph much, but as an example of its kind, it was superlative.

I think that from time to time, judges have to step aside from their biases and judge the photograph as an example of its kind. Perhaps the judge looking at my photo should have assessed it on the basis that the entrant chose to submit a grainy black and white print: was this a good or bad example of its kind?

So, what's different when I'm critiquing a photograph that I think could be improved? For instance, I find a white sky incredibly distracting, so I would probably suggest that the photographer could have found a different camera angle, crop the image, or somehow darken down the sky to improve it. What's the difference between this advice and suggesting that a photograph would be better if it weren't a grainy black and white?

Context.

In the first situation, the judge seemed to acknowledge that the underlying technique was good,

it was the final finish he didn't like. He didn't say the finish was overdone or poorly handled, just that it wasn't necessary. So perhaps he didn't judge what had been presented, rather he judged what hadn't been presented.

In the second situation, the base photograph with the bright sky was not communicating correctly and a different approach was required. (In my opinion, I know.)

The difference is subtle and it's not always possible for a judge to know if an entrant is investigating a genre of photography or just doesn't know any better. That's the problem with judges – and for judges. Often we just don't know.

So while a part of me doesn't like judging, on the other hand it's something I greatly enjoy. I love being exposed to different styles of work and new ideas. It is incredibly inspirational and so are photo competitions.

The photograph shows the castle and the cathedral directly behind, making the two look even more imposing from this angle.





Cardona

Spain, 2008

Phase One 645AF, Phase One P45+ back, Mamiya 300mm f4.5 lens
2 seconds @ f5.6, ISO 50, tripod-mounted

DISNEYLAND HAS A lot to answer for! It is very hard to look at a castle these days and not compare it with the tall, elegant turrets associated with the Disney interpretation. This photograph of the castle keep at Cardona has been squished to make it taller and more imposing.

NEW TRADITION: It is an easy matter to stretch and compress the aspect ratio of an image with digital tools.

We no longer need to use an anamorphic lens and the digital workflow gives you far more control over the amount of compression or expansion. Sometimes I adjust the aspect ratio to improve the overall composition and balance; on other occasions, I'm

looking to give the subject itself more presence or a point of difference.

Travelling through Spain, we had made a point of staying in some wonderful old castles, but this was problematic for photography. While it was great to be able to photograph within the grounds, it was difficult to photograph the building itself.

My solution was to look out from the building and search for vantage points. I figured if I could see a road or a clearing in the surrounding countryside, then I should be able to see the castle from there. It doesn't always work out quite as planned as there can be distracting backgrounds, but it worked in this case.

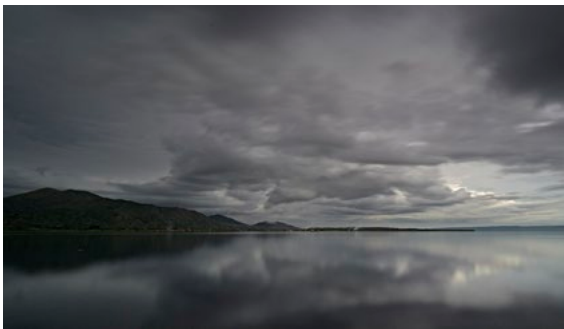
Photographed in the early evening, the light was flat with misty rain over the surrounding hills. In the

foreground there was a road and a couple of modern buildings, so these were retouched out, simplifying the composition and the story.

In post-production, the image was first desaturated, then hand-coloured using precise masks for the edges of the castle walls, with feathered mask edges down the bottom to allow the colour toning to wash out into the untuned landscape below. A slight blue tone was introduced to the background to bring the warm tones in the castle forward.

There wasn't much colour in the original scene, so it was a relatively easy decision to switch across to black and white and then add some colour tones.





Basilica Ruin

Ani, Eastern Turkey, 2010

Alpa TC, Phase One P65+ back, Rodenstock Digaron 23mm lens
Building: 1/250 second @ f11, ISO 50, hand-held; Sky: 2 seconds @ f5.6, ISO 50, tripod-mounted

WHEN YOU'RE TRAVELLING, you don't always have full control over your itinerary. And even when you do, there can be rules and regulations that make it difficult to take photographs at just the right time.

Ani for me was one such location. A listed World Heritage site, it is fenced off and entry is only between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. (or thereabouts). As such, by the time I was walking past this grand old basilica, the sun was high in the sky. No doubt the postcard manufacturers would be very happy with these conditions, but the sparkling acuity of the light wasn't to my mind in keeping with the feeling of age and decay that surrounded me.

So, is it right to visit a location and to force your preconceptions on how you photograph it?

One view is that the travel photographer should walk out with an open mind, receptive and responsive to whatever he or she finds. This is often the approach taken by a documentary photographer and completely valid.

On the other hand, photography is all about interpretation and communication. Reading about

ancient Ani and its scarred and varied history, the clinical sunlight of the morning seemed incongruous. I imagined a more moody, atmospheric light, a site over which ghosts of eras past shimmered. To be dependent on the weather seemed to be the wrong decision to take.

Frank Hurley dropped skies into many of his images in Antarctica. While on the one hand he was there to record what Antarctica really looked like, the films of the day were very blue sensitive and so a photo taken on a blue sky day would end up with a paper white, detailless sky.

Hurley's solution was to print in a second negative of a sky and his skill so was accomplished that most of his viewers didn't realise what he had done.

NEW TRADITION: Dropping in a more appropriate sky is a common technique and while post-production techniques have made it easier to do (when compared to working in a darkroom), the precision with which the composite must be performed needs to be far more exacting to be believable.

And so it should be. In *The New Tradition*, if you're going to use Photoshop to edit an image, your handiwork needs to be invisible.

There are a number of tricks that help. First, use a sky that is taken with the same or a similar focal length lens, and at a similar angle, to ensure the sky looks as though it fits.

Second, observe how the sky in real life merges with the land below. It is important that your deceit is adjusted tonally so that the sky looks natural when compared to the landscape below.

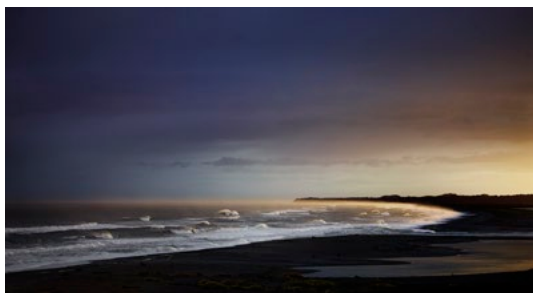
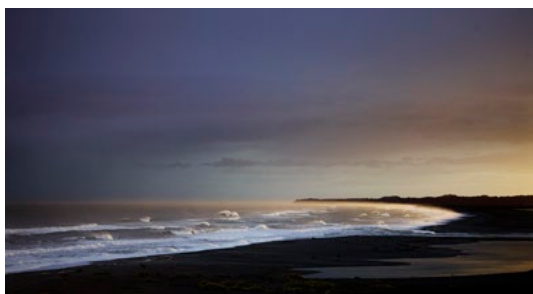
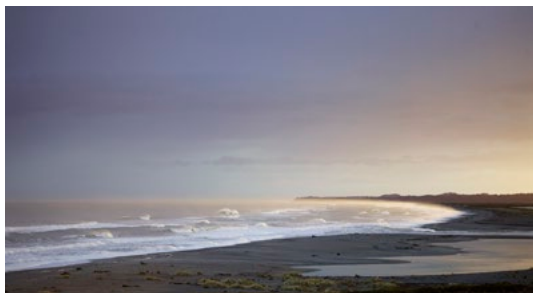
Finally, it can be better to lighten the sky, or maybe the land, a distance away from the horizon line.

You may even use the real sky just above the horizon and merge the new sky with the base sky further up, thus avoiding the inevitable complexities of the horizon line itself.

Any telltale lines or haloes will give the game away.

The original file (left), the sky used (middle) and one of the post-production steps before the final rendition shown on the opposite page.





Okarito Beach

South Island, New Zealand, 2012

Phase One 645DF, Phase One IQ180 back, Schneider Kreuznach LS 110mm f2.8 lens
1/125 second @ f2.8, ISO 50, tripod-mounted, no filter

I DIDN'T HOLD out much hope for the morning light, but I knew there was a nice view from Andris Apse's home in Okarito. David Oliver had taken a great shot from there around 10 years earlier and we had published it in our first book together, *Away*.

However, when Andris and Lynne had picked up Les Walkling and me from Hokitika airport the night before, it was raining cats and dogs! It's roughly a two-hour drive from Hokitika to Okarito, especially in the rain. We couldn't see much at 8:00 p.m. when we arrived. In winter, the sun sets shortly after 5:00 p.m. and doesn't rise until around 8:00 a.m., which makes landscape photography very civilised.

Of course, the downside is it's pretty cold, especially with towering alpine peaks and glaciers just a few kilometres away. So when we hit the sack, I didn't expect to get up until after sunrise, but Andris had other plans.

Andris and Lynne's bedroom looks out over the beach and lagoon, with the mountains in the background. Andris laughs that he often goes to bed with the camera set up on his tripod, ready for the morning light.

At around 7:00 a.m., there was a knock on the gallery door. I had a mattress on the floor behind the sofa and the gallery is closed for the winter. All around me are Andris's amazing landscape prints and it's pretty clear why he is regarded as New Zealand's best landscape

photographer. Not only is his technique exquisite, his choice of location, light and timing are amazing. We will talk a lot about this in the days to come.

"There's a break on the horizon," Andris says. "I'll wake up Les."

I grab my clothes and madly put my camera gear together. Feet and head onto the tripod legs, battery and card into the digital back, format the card and rush upstairs.

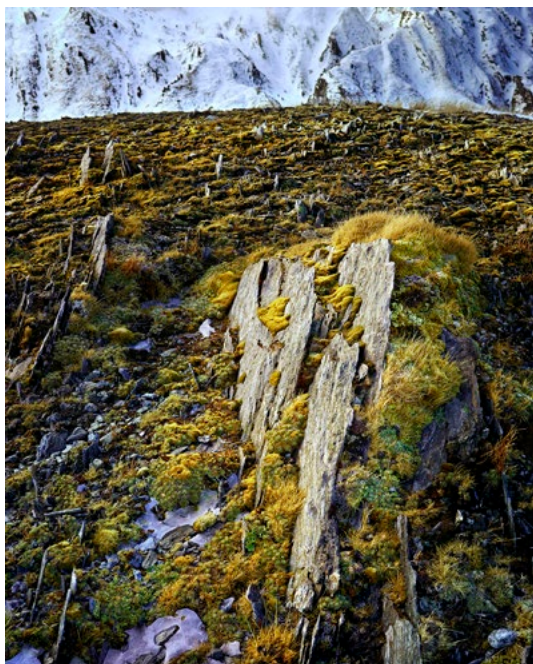
The dawn is still half an hour away and I can see why Andris has woken us. The vista is striking, even though most of it remains in a dark, formless shadow. The lagoon is reflecting the sky where the sun will soon rise and it looks like the low clouds could erupt in colour.

I pulled out my camera to take a few shots and then looked out to sea. There was a strong swell pushing through and the offshore breeze was throwing plumes of spray off the backs of the breaking waves.

Yet while I have watched sunrises over the ocean all my life, I wasn't expecting the light show that happened when the sun finally rose. The sun lit the waves and a long, low cloud of sea spray, while the crescent of the beach produced a beautiful curve on which to base a nice composition.

The moral of the story is to never argue with one of the locals at Okarito Beach – they are invariably correct.





Selfie

Below Mount Adams, New Zealand, 2012

Phase One 645DF, Phase One IQ180 back, Schneider Kreuznach LS 55mm f2.8 lens
1/160 second @ f2.8, ISO 50, tripod-mounted, no filter

I GUESS IT'S not surprising that photographers all gravitate to interesting subjects. Of course, what is interesting to one photographer may not be of interest to another, but when it comes to landscapes, there are generally some things that resonate with many of us. We either like them or we ignore them.

Wandering along a ridge line below Mount Adams in New Zealand's Westlands, I had followed Andris Apse up a steep slope, half covered in snow and the other half covered in spiky plants that were best avoided. We were hoping for a wonderful vista on the other side, but we were disappointed.

We continued along the ridge for a little way, looking for an easier descent when Andris stopped. I looked up and immediately I saw what he was looking at: these wonderfully shaped rocks sticking out of the ground, covered in a myriad of small plants and dusted with ice.

Andris was pretty quick to set up his tripod and stake his claim, so I had no hope of muscling him out of the way. (Of course, the reality was quite different: he just looked around, thought about it and then set up his tripod, but since I'm telling the story...)

I wandered further along the outcrop, looking for a similar or better pattern of rocks, but after setting up my camera in a couple of places, I returned to the outcrop that Andris was photographing.

"About time for lunch," I suggested and if there's one thing that gets Andy moving, it's the thought of food and a hot cup of tea, especially at 2,000 metres above sea level.

As Andris moved away, I quickly located the holes his tripod had made (just kidding, but now it's Andris's turn to tell the story) and set up my camera.

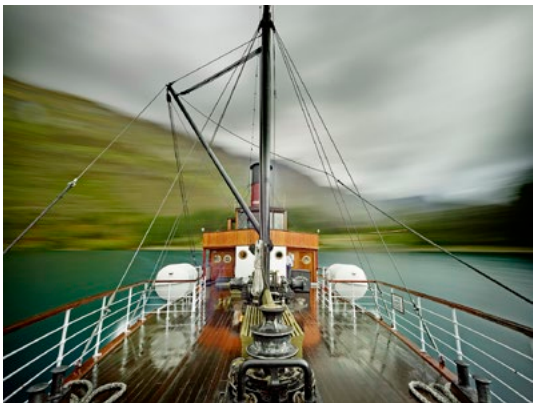
I haven't seen Andris's photo yet, but I am sure mine will be quite different because it was shot with an ultra wide-angle lens, whereas Andris was shooting with a medium wide-angle.

Of interest is that I focus stacked the exposures, but only for the foreground. From the bottom of the frame to the middle distance is tack, tack sharp. I find the detail is simply wonderful. However, I left the flanks of Mount Adams a little blurred in the background as I didn't see the need to keep them in focus. The image, for me, is in the foreground and the angles of the rocks.

And the main image opposite? It's Andris Apse (left), Les Walkling (middle) and me. We are waiting for the helicopter to land and the light was getting better and better. In fact, this is the closest I have ever been to using a file straight out of camera with no further post-production. Sometimes things just happen!

Behind the scenes top to bottom: Andris with his quad bike and trailer; Andris at work; the photo I stole from Andris under Mount Adams.





TSS Earnslaw

Queenstown, New Zealand, 2012

Alpa TC, Phase One IQ180 back, Rodenstock Digaron 23mm lens
9 seconds @ f22, ISO 35, tripod-mounted, no filter

THE FIRST PHOTO (shown bottom left) was a 44-second exposure. I was on a moving steamer which was shaking like a washing machine in its final spin cycle. I knew why the people ended up like blurred ghosts and why the clouds and background were smeared (they moved relative to the image sensor during the long exposure), but it really surprised me at just how sharp the boat and its rigging remained.

When I positioned my Alpa with the IQ180 digital back on a tripod up the front of TSS Earnslaw, I could feel the shuddering and shaking of the ship beneath my feet as its engine motored along. It was so obvious, I thought, that I was going to end up with a really creative 'blur', including the ship itself, but I was prepared to accept this as an explorative exercise. And if the photo were good enough, I could merge a second, sharper image taken at a normal (faster) shutter speed with the blurred file.

However, looking at the files on the back of the camera, they were incredibly sharp. The stays and ropes holding up the masts were crisp and clean and I could see lots of detail in all the woodwork.

How could the image be so sharp, given I could feel so much vibration?

The weather on the way out was bright and sunny, hence the long exposure and neutral density filter, but the return trip was just on sunset, not that we could see it because the weather had clouded over. However, it meant I didn't need the neutral density filter.

So, whether a 44-second or a 9-second exposure, the results were very sharp as far as the ship was concerned.

My only conclusion is that my tripod and camera were vibrating in perfect synchronisation with the ship. Is this right? Is there a scientist out there who can tell me?

I had metal spikes on the feet of my tripod, so while I was worried the captain might kick me off for damaging his wooden deck (no, I didn't dig the spikes into the woodwork), perhaps this in some way worked better than the usual rubber feet?

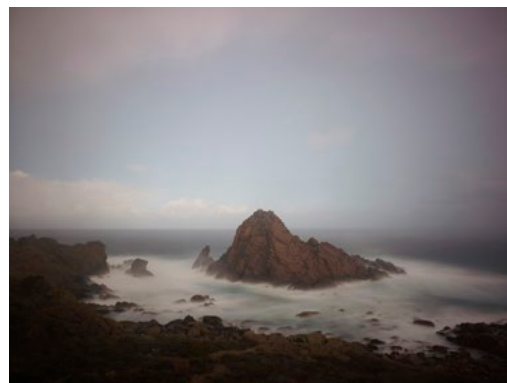
Top: Raw file without further editing.

Below: f11 @ 44 seconds, ISO 35.









Sugarloaf Rock

Western Australia, 2007

Phase One 645AF, Phase One P45+ back, Mamiya 28mm f4.5 lens
30 seconds @ f8, ISO 50, tripod-mounted, 10x ND filter

NEW TRADITION: Digital allows the craftsman to work in many different ways to produce a technically proficient outcome.

WHILE SOME ASPECTS of capture cannot be changed, thinking the problem through with post-production, as additional yet integral steps, becomes the solution.

Sugarloaf Rock is a popular subject for landscape photographers. It sits in Christian Fletcher's backyard and he usually has several versions hanging in his Dunsborough gallery. On this occasion, Tony Hewitt and I were returning from an early morning shoot, but decided to take a detour before breakfast.

The weather over the coast was pretty wild, with strong winds and rain squalls. As we walked up to the lookout, the sun broke through the clouds behind before we were hammered by rain. As we ran back to the car to avoid a proper soaking, I was thoroughly disappointed there wasn't time to capture the photograph. I'd taken a quick snap with a compact camera, but it was so fleeting there wasn't time to pull out the medium format camera.

The weather passed through quickly and so we wandered back to the lookout with our cameras and tripods. The light wasn't the same, but we went through the motions of setting up a few photographs.

And then the unbelievable happened: another rain squall appeared on the horizon.

I had my camera locked down on the tripod and took a few photographs with a fast shutter speed – around 1/250 second. Everything about the image was tack sharp, including the sea and the clouds, but there was no emotion.

The Mamiya 28mm lens had a bulbous front element which made it difficult to attach filters, so the solution was to drop a gelatin filter into a holder behind the lens. This required one to take the lens off the camera, drop in the filter, and then reattach the lens. The complication was that as I was using a 10x neutral density filter, I wouldn't be able to refocus the lens once the filter was in place. So, I needed to pre-focus the lens before inserting the filter, making sure I didn't alter the focus in the process.

Somehow, I managed to get the lens back onto the camera just as the squall hit. Tony held the legs of the tripod while I pushed down on the top of the camera, trying to keep the camera as still as possible for the 30-second exposure. But it wasn't possible.

The 30-second exposure had all the emotion I wanted, but the vibration and movement of the camera had slightly blurred the image. The camera might only have moved one or two pixels while

the shutter was open, but this was enough to blur Sugarloaf Rock.

However, during 30 seconds, the clouds and waves moved so much that a little bit of camera shake wasn't visible in these areas of the image. Using the 30-second exposure as a base image, I superimposed the 1/250 second exposure on top in Photoshop. Then using a precise mask, I painted the sharp areas of rock into the blurred, emotive exposure below.

When taking long exposures with high resolution cameras, it doesn't take much movement to blur the result. Even a little wind or road vibration can cause just a hint of image degradation and so as a matter of practice, I always take a safety shot with a fast shutter speed, so the parts of the image that need to be sharp will be sharp!

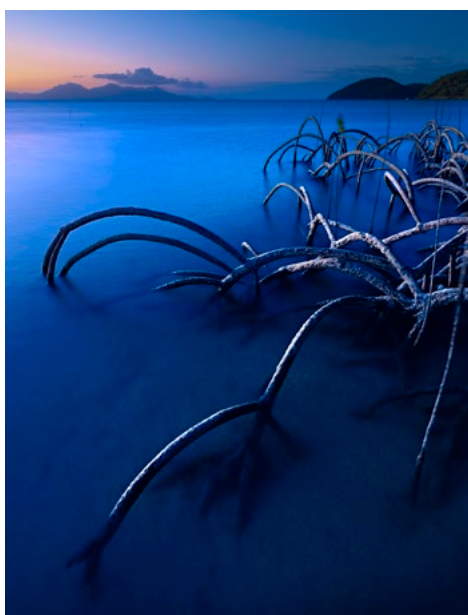
This process requires extra time in post-production, so a sturdy tripod is a superior solution.

And the figure on the shoreline? I tell everyone that's Tony.

The post-production steps involved can be seen in the Workflow chapter at the end of the book.

Left: 1/250 second exposure; Middle: 30 second exposure; Right: Part way through processing with masks and layers.





Orpheus Island

Great Barrier Reef, Australia, 2009

Phase One 645AF, Phase One P45+ back, Mamiya 28mm f4.5 lens
15 seconds @ f16, ISO 50, tripod-mounted, 10x ND filter

ON THE LEFT is a small, poor quality scan of an original 4x5" tranny of a tree.

It's amazing how emotionally close we get to our images. The photo was taken on Easter Island many years ago and was one of my favourites. I had lots of photos of the moai (heads), but it was this lone tree surrounded by a mound of loose stones that I really liked. It was shot in the late evening with a beautiful soft light and I loved it! (The original is not nearly so contrasty as this rendition.)

I entered it into the AIPP National Print Awards, the forerunner of the AIPP Australian Professional Photography Awards. It was one of four entries and while I can't remember what the others were, I clearly remember the score for this one and a judge's comment.

Standing at the back of a darkened judging room, with five esteemed judges and a panel chairman sitting around an evenly illuminated print stand, I held my breath as one by one they stood up to inspect my print. It seemed to take an age before they carefully entered their scores, but I fully expected a tally of 80 or higher – surely this print was a Silver Award?

Well, no. The panel chairman read out the score: 74. He then asked if any of the judges would like to make a comment, to which Ian McKenzie (a past AIPP President and who would in later years become a very good friend) said, "Well, it's just another travel snap".

A travel snap! Couldn't the judges see the print quality, the fact it was shot on a large format 4x5" camera, the luminous nature of the light and the exotic location?

Well, no.

Flash forward five years or so and I am cleaning out my studio. I find a bunch of old prints and, being in a bit of a hurry, quickly flip through them one at a time,

throwing them onto the rubbish heap. Yuck. Horrible. What was I thinking? Many of my old prints simply weren't that good.

And then I picked up my Easter Island tree.

This print, unlike the others, stopped me in my tracks, but not because I still liked it. Gone was the emotional baggage associated with the wonderful trip and the effort required to shoot it. In front of me was a plain, rather boring print and all I could remember were Ian's words: It's just another travel snap.

He was right.

Are the judges always right? I have some other prints that bombed in competitions that I still like. Competitions are great because they put your work into context within the world, but it doesn't have to be the only context.

I think the judges were generous giving my Easter Island tree a 74. And I still have great memories of being at that location all those years ago.

Orpheus Island is quite different to Easter Island. It lies off the coast of Queensland, just north of Townsville. A long thin island, it is home to two resorts, one luxurious and the other spartan.

Spartan it might be, but the James Cook University Research Station on Orpheus Island is very comfortable, wonderfully remote and ideal for the Orpheus Island Printing Workshop which was presented by Les Walkling for many years. I was invited to be a second presenter one year, but secretly I just wanted to listen to Les! What Les doesn't know about photography, Photoshop and printing, doesn't need to be known!

Top: Easter Island Tree. Below: A selection of post-production steps between the processed raw file and the final rendition shown on the opposite page.





Great Barrier Reef

Queensland, Australia, 2010

Phase One 645AF, Phase One P65+ back, 28mm lens
1/1250 second @ f5.6, ISO 100, hand-held, no filter

KEN DUNCAN STARTED it with David Oliver, Bruce Pottinger, Kevin Cooper – and the then Hamilton Island hotels' general manager, Ciaran Handy.

Somehow Ken gave it away and I was invited to join the Hamilton Island photography workshop for around 10 years; four days based on the Island with excursions out to White Haven and helicopter rides out to the Great Barrier Reef.

David, Bruce and I (along with our families) had a lot of fun. The following story about David is from our 2013 Away workshop on Hamilton Island.

Michelangelo (not his real name) was awash. It lasted just a second, but the experience left him wet, damp and slightly uncomfortable. How did this happen? And what does it have to do with Elle Macpherson and a turbo-charged Dyson hand dryer? Read on and all will be explained.

It's an early Tuesday morning and photographers from the Away Hamilton Island Photography Workshop are boarding their boats for a trip to the magical Whitsunday Island. Each vessel comfortably seats around 20 people and on a normal morning, it would take 30 minutes to reach Whitehaven Beach, home of the whitest sand in the world.

However, this was no normal morning. There was a strong southerly blowing and a heavy swell out to sea,

so the only access to Whitehaven Beach would be the long way, around the back of the Island. Even then, the last stretch down to Whitehaven Beach might be too rough for the boats, but the only way to find out was to go and see.

Nearly an hour later, the radio crackled. The captain of the second boat announced he was turning back because he felt the short swell waves were too rough, but the captain of the lead boat replied he would continue a little further.

His reply, however, was cut short as a large green wave crested and broke on the boat's bow, swamping the crew and passengers, a wall of water pushing down the length of the deck, soaking everything in its wake.

Okay, so this is a slight exaggeration, but for Michelangelo up the front of the vessel, it did wet his pants. And his Elle Macpherson underpants.

Michelangelo has a problem with damp underpants. It's unclear whether this was due to a missed career in marine biology or a traumatic childhood experience, but he spent the rest of the trip in silent discomfort.

He longed to be like the rest of the passengers, dry, happy and carefree, enjoying their photography in the remarkable Whitsundays. But all he could think about was changing his underpants.

A couple of hours later, the photography group returned to the architect-designed Hamilton Island

Yacht Club and was invited to rest in the exclusive Members' Library at the top of the stairs. When we arrived, a lone yachtsman was sitting in a low chair, looking out over his iPad at the expansive view up the coast. Unfortunately for him, his sanctuary was about to be disturbed.

The photography group filed in and opened their lunches. Michelangelo quietly retired to the men's bathroom.

Now I am surmising what happened next as I wasn't there. However, after exercising correct hand hygiene, it struck Michelangelo that the powerful Dyson dryer could be used for something else.

Michelangelo quickly slipped out of his trousers and Elle Macpherson underpants. Then, holding the underpants vertically, dipped them in and out of the Dyson hand dryer.

So far so good, but unfortunately for Michelangelo, the lone yachtsman from the library entered the bathroom.

One wonders what he thought when he saw Michelangelo standing half naked next to the dryer.

One could say it was a grand master exposed.

The post-production steps required to turn the processed raw file into the final rendition were quite minimal for this image.





Desert Oak

Uluru & Kata-Tjuta National Park, NT, Australia, 2010

Alpa TC, Phase One P65+ back, Rodenstock Digaron 23mm lens
2 seconds @ f8, ISO 35, tripod-mounted, no filter.

WHEN GIVING PRESENTATIONS and workshops, I have been very flattered when photographers walk up and compliment me on my work, but invariably they also have a question or two about my technique and approach. One common question is where does my colour come from.

I hadn't really given this much thought as surely everyone has the same access to colour? But perhaps that's not quite true.

In an issue of *Better Photography* magazine, I compared Adobe Camera Raw (and Lightroom) with Capture One raw processing engines. I was using Capture One 7 at the time. Both Capture One and ACR have been upgraded many times since, but that is not the point: the observation I made was that each application processes images quite differently.

For instance, Capture One might process a red to look like a fire engine, ACR might process the same red

to look like a cherry. The colour differences might be subtle, but when you multiply these differences by thousands of colours, you can end up with significantly different photographs.

As a test you can try yourself, open up the same raw file in both programs. You can download a free trial of Capture One if you don't use it already (I'm assuming you already own Photoshop or Lightroom). Have both applications open on your screen, side by side, so you can see the same photograph duplicated.

Now, try to process the photo so it is exactly the same in both applications. If you can do it easily, that's remarkable, so try another photo. What I've found is that there are invariably subtle, but important differences.

And so I surmise that these differences help create the colour in my images. Of course, it's the adjustment layers I use that create the colour and the contrast, but these adjustment layers have to start

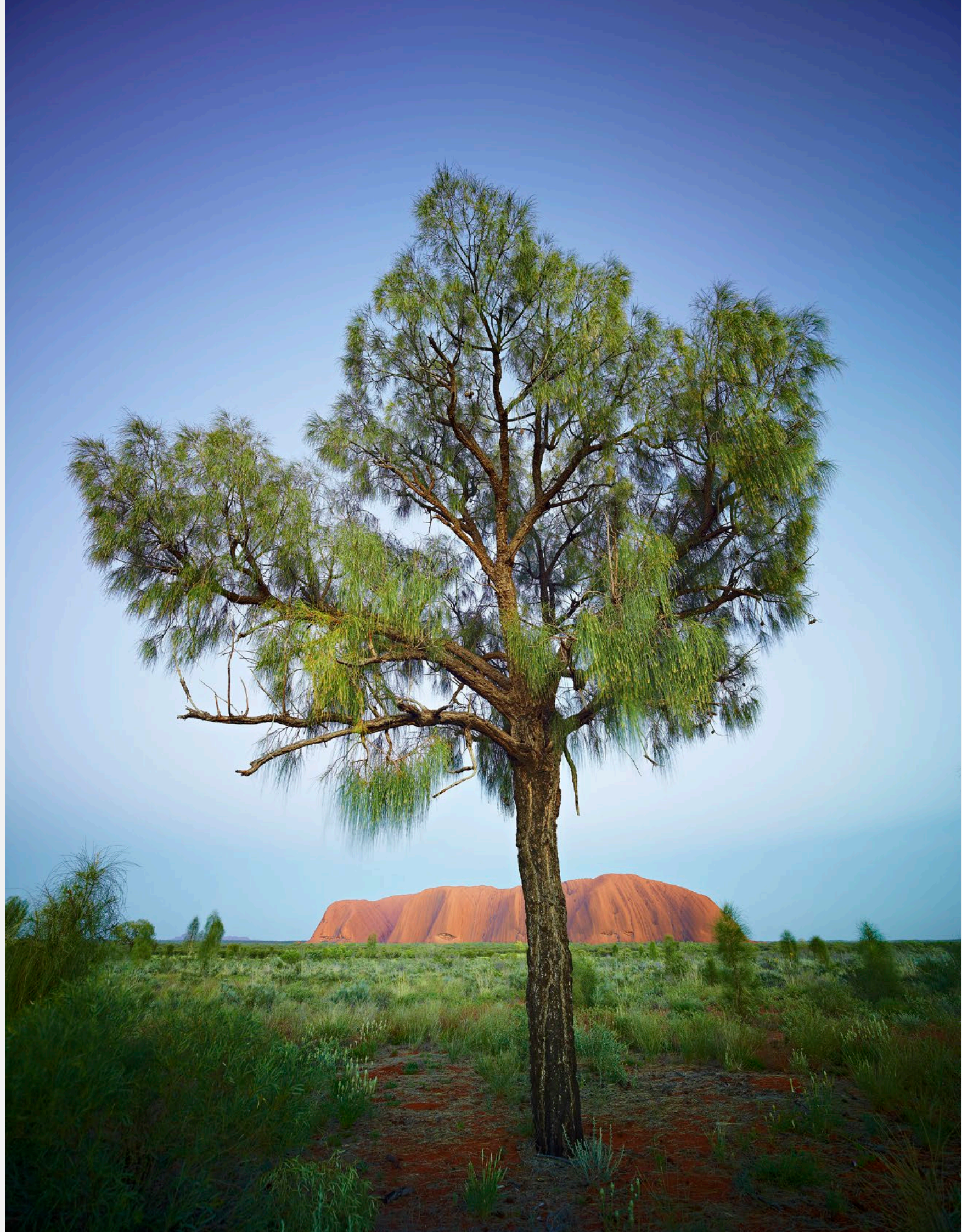
with something and maybe my Capture One starting point is different to the more common ACR/Lightroom raw conversion?

I use Capture One to process not only my Phase One files, but my Canon, Fujifilm and Nikon files as well.

Of course, what I like about Capture One processing doesn't really matter, it's whether you like it that counts.

NEW TRADITION: Behind the scenes, there's a lot of technology going on that can have a significant impact on the end result. We shouldn't just assume something is the best approach for our photography, we should compare and investigate. And it is very easy to do.

A couple of post-production steps between the processed raw file and the final rendition shown on the opposite page, plus the channel mask used in Photoshop to enhance the tree.





Uluru

Uluru & Kata-Tjuta National Park, NT, Australia, 2010

Alpa TC, Phase One P65+ back, Rodenstock Digaron 23mm lens
30 seconds @ f5.6, ISO 50, tripod-mounted, no filter.

WHAT IS A landscape photograph?

If we look at the history of photography, landscapes are anything from straight colour captures through to heavily manipulated black and white prints. They can be of the natural world or the urban environment; they can include the hand of man or ignore it. And aesthetically, they can range from the high colour panoramas by Ken Duncan and Peter Lik to the contemporary art produced by Edward Burtynsky, Andreas Gursky and Bill Henson.

Landscape photography is a widely used currency. It is not a genre that should be limited. It is certainly not only ‘nature photography’.

So it was somewhat intriguing to read a friend’s blog.

My friend wrote, “To my mind at least, the ‘art of landscape photography’ is in the photographer’s ability to see and capture an incredible landscape photograph in the field. Not to create one on their computer.”

I think my friend’s intention was to say that a good landscape photograph should start with a strong image taken in the field. I also know that my

friend edits his images digitally to create his own masterpieces, thus creating the final output on a computer. But I think I know what he is trying to say.

His issue is twofold: it’s about how much digital editing is applied to the photograph and the creation of fictitious scenes and locations. There is no doubt some photographers apply too much post-production. I would also argue others apply too little.

However, I don’t believe we should judge a photograph based on how it was created, rather on what has been created. Is it a good photograph or not? Who cares if a photograph were difficult to capture? Just because a photographer stood on a melting iceberg for 40 days, doesn’t automatically make the capture a good image. And should we be rewarding wealthy photographers just because they can travel to an exotic location that is difficult or expensive to reach?

Skill and degree of difficulty might enable a photographer to capture an amazing image, but the skill and degree of difficulty on their own are not relevant.

Does it matter if it is a composite image, uses HDR, is stitched together or uses focus stacking – all of which take the image away from a straight capture? I don’t think so. If it helps create a better landscape photograph, a stronger landscape image, then why wouldn’t we do it?

And does it matter if the photograph is a representation of a real landscape or an imaginary one? Not to my mind. Some of the most amazing landscapes I have ever photographed were very real and not the result of my fervent imagination.

NEW TRADITION: As long as we are not deceiving people, as long as our photographs are an expression of what we feel or think, I can’t understand why any artist would want to limit his or her creative output.

The New Tradition is still all about the capture. Sometimes there is little need to adjust the file, or just in minor ways.





Pilbara Storm

The Pilbara, Western Australia, 2010

Alpa TC, Phase One IQ180 back, Rodenstock Digaron 23mm lens, stitch
1/125 second @ f8, ISO 35, tripod-mounted, no filter.

10 FEBRUARY 2010. There's an amazing thunderstorm in Western Australia's Pilbara region, en route to Marble Bar, Australia's hottest town. I'm on assignment with Christian Fletcher, Michael Fletcher, Tony Hewitt and Les Walkling, producing an exhibition for FORM to promote culture in Australia's North West. FORM is an independent, non-profit cultural organisation that develops and advocates creativity and artistic practice in Western Australia.

This was the beginning of our Ninety Degrees Five collective.

It was a very hot day. On the road it was definitely 50°C+ due to the heat radiated by the black bitumen, but possibly the official temperature was closer to 45°C or 46°C. Either way, it was hot and in the mid afternoon, I was quite comfortably cocooned in our 4WD with the air conditioning unit running full blast.

As we drove towards the Marble Bar turn-off, we watched a wet season thunderstorm grow and develop. The road seemed to be skirting around the edge of the weather cell and in the distance we could see some willy-willies forming – small tornados of red dust climbing into the black sky above. It was a photographic feast we could not resist.

We found a side road that led to a slightly raised vantage point above the Pilbara plain. Thunder rolled ominously as we walked around the flanks of a small hill in the stifling heat, but heat was the furthest thing from our minds as we watched Nature unfurl a remarkable display of fury.

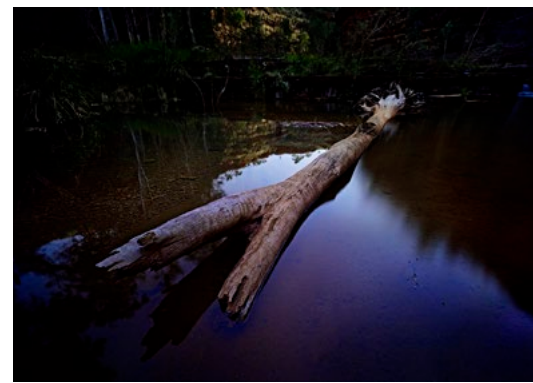
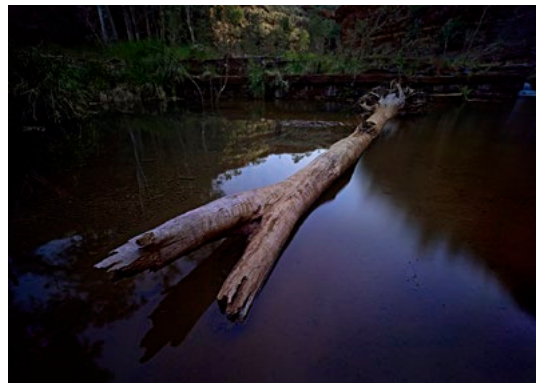
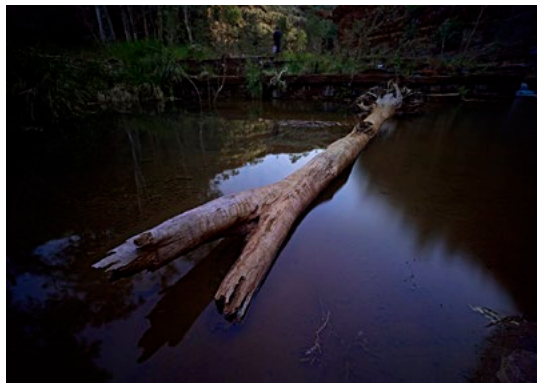
Lightning ripped through the cloud mass, starting spot fires on the grassy plain, and the willy-willies merged into a minor dust storm, picking up red earth in its path. It felt like we were on the edge of a huge amphitheatre.

They say that travelling in the North West during the wet season isn't necessarily a good idea because of the heat and the wet, but after this experience, that little gem of advice has been relegated to the dustbin.

NEW TRADITION: There are many locations in the world that are better shot 'out of season'. While the probability of perfect conditions might not be as high, when you get it right, it is wonderful!

Part of the post-production process required the dark thunderclouds to be remapped to lighter tones, thus attracting the viewer's eyes.





Fallen Tree, Dales Gorge

Karijini National Park, Western Australia, 2012

Alpa TC, Phase One IQ180 back, Rodenstock Digaron 23mm lens
30 seconds @ f5.6, ISO 35, tripod-mounted, 10x ND filter.

THE FALLEN TREE was taken in the middle of Dales Gorge in the late afternoon. The pool of light in the middle is reflecting the sky above, while a 10x neutral density filter has been used to give the shallow water a super smooth sheen.

The question with a subject like this is, where do you focus the lens?

Do you focus on just one spot with a wide aperture and let the rest drift out-of-focus (due to shallow depth-of-field)? Or do you focus in the middle of the scene with a small aperture and hope that depth-of-field will ensure both the front and back are sufficiently sharp?

With the latest DSLR, mirrorless and medium format cameras sporting so many pixels, focus needs to be carefully considered and depth-of-field can't be relied upon to produce enough sharpness if you aim to make a large print.

NEW TRADITION: High resolution digital files can't hide loss of focus like film did and consequently, photographers shouldn't rely on depth-of-field like they used to.

For small reproductions like this one, depth-of-field will cover a multitude of sins. The front of the tree will look as sharply focused as the back of the tree trunk, but they are not equally sharp.

I've chosen to focus on the tips of the trunk because they are nearest the camera and in a prominent part of the frame. When the image is viewed, I want this important area to be tack sharp so you can see the texture in the wood.

In comparison, the roots at the other end of the trunk can fall out-of-focus and this doesn't worry me.

However, given I have my camera set up on a tripod, my usual practice is to take a series of exposures

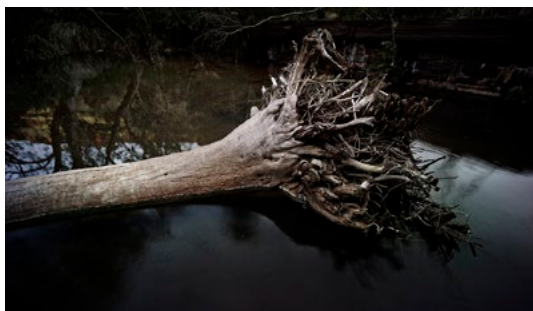
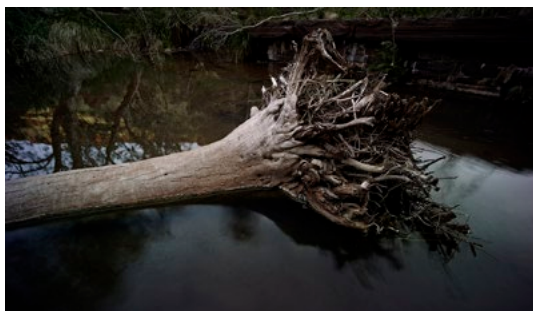
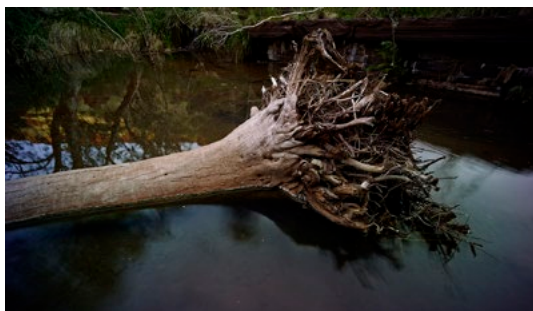
focused on different distances. This allows me to 'focus stack' the files during post-production, producing an image that is equally sharp from the foreground to the background.

When I return from a shoot, I can then choose if I want to spend the time focus stacking, or if I'm happy to use a single capture with less sharpness throughout the image, but with that sharpness in all the right places.

While many photographers already bracket their exposures, think about bracketing your focusing points as well. Sometimes letting the autofocus system do it for you isn't the best solution.

The main adjustments have been to increase the sheen on the water and to return the tree to a steely grey hue. A splash of colour has been added, centre top.





Fallen Tree #2, Dales Gorge

Karijini National Park, Western Australia, 2012

Alpa TC, Phase One IQ180 back, Rodenstock Digaron 23mm lens
30 seconds @ f5.6, ISO 35, tripod-mounted, 10x ND filter.

IT'S FUNNY, BUT without having to take photographs for a client or for a competition, it's wonderful to just explore images without fear or favour. I mean, I'm unlikely to sell this photograph as wall decor because, while people might enjoy looking at it, they probably don't want to live with it! What sort of message does a dead tree on your wall send to the world? A bold one perhaps? Or is it a Buddhist comment on the transience of life?

One of my favourite landscape photographers is Michael Kenna. He is a black and white film photographer who has no real interest in digital because film gives his language everything he needs.

I can understand this. If you've spent 40 years developing your technique in a particular medium, then why change everything around if you don't have to?

What I take from Michael is a very sophisticated way of seeing simply. His compositions are remarkable. They are clever without being smart, balanced without being conventional. And he works only in black and white, another mark of simplicity.

When Michael places a small tree in the middle of the frame, the spacing and tonality are simply breathtaking – I don't know how he does it, but I am greatly inspired.

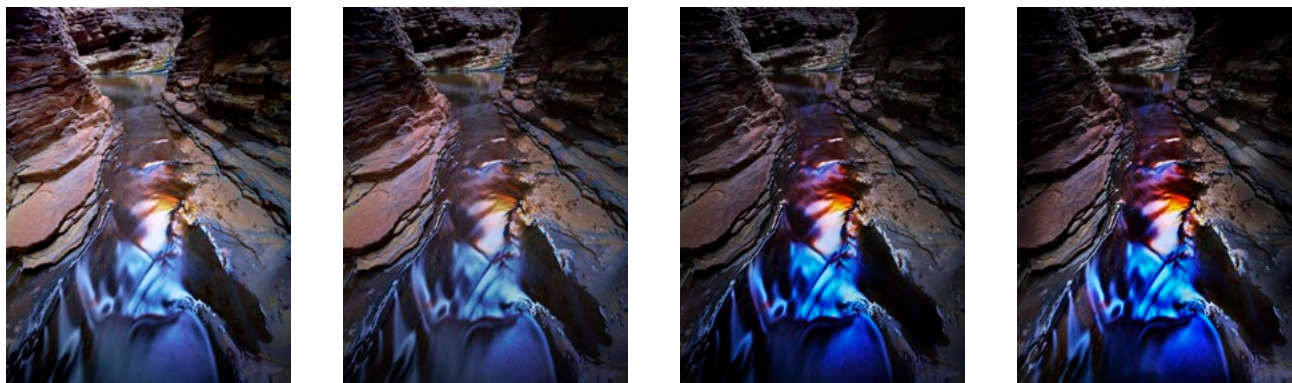
And so to my photograph of the fallen tree in Dales Gorge, Karijini. I spent an hour photographing this log from different viewpoints and towards the end of the shoot, I moved in a little closer, noticing the wonderful reflection. It had taken me nearly 60 minutes to find it!

Although it's not black and white, it has a much more subdued colour palette than many of my other Karijini images. Mind you, this was taken in the late afternoon and so the light was soft and blue, with just a hint of warmth from sunlight hitting the rocks high up on the gorge walls.

My approach was to desaturate the colours, except in the reflections where the hints of red and yellow from the surrounding gorge walls are still visible.

Curve adjustment layers are used to bring out the shape, form and texture of the tree roots.





Weano Gorge

Karijini National Park, Western Australia, 2013

Alpa TC, Phase One IQ180 back, Rodenstock Digaron 23mm lens
10 seconds @ f16, ISO 35, tripod-mounted, no filter.

I TRY NOT to compliment Christian Fletcher too often. As Western Australia's best known landscape photographer (except for Richard Woldendorp, Greg Hocking, Tony Hewitt and a dozen others), I particularly remember a book he shot featuring the landscapes of Karijini.

You can possibly still purchase the book in the Karijini Eco Resort shop, but as it has been around for many years (shot in the days of film on medium format), Christian says he would shoot it quite differently today. Still, even by current standards, the shots are exquisite.

What really caught my eye was the colour found in the reflections off the water in the gorges. Even shooting with film, Christian captured some really vibrant blues and reds, reflections of a clear sky or a sunlit rock face. These colours aren't always immediately obvious as you walk through the gorges, but they are there waiting to be discovered.

So is it cheating to take another photographer's ideas? They say plagiarism is when you copy the work of another photographer, while inspiration is when you copy the work of a thousand photographers. Plagiarism is not condoned, although when you're learning, it's okay to emulate the work of photographers you admire, as long as you don't show the resulting images

publicly – or enter them into a competition as though they were your ideas.

Inspiration, on the other hand, is how we evolve as photographers. I think it's fair to say no artist works in complete isolation. We are all influenced in one way or another, so much so that almost everything we do is 'derivative' in some way.

In other words, we can't be original, at least not in a global sense. Something might be new and original for us, but somewhere, at some stage, another human being has already done something exactly the same or incredibly similar.

So, as photographers we are encouraged to stand on the shoulders of photographers who have blazed a trail before us. The challenge is to take these inspirations and to turn them into something new and different. We must not directly copy the work of others and present it as our own – it's not ethical.

In the world of painting, paying homage to an existing work by copying it seems more acceptable (and I realise this is a somewhat trite comparison). However, if you are a painter, you need to learn and develop your skills with a paintbrush, so reproducing a famous work of art can in itself be an achievement. It's quite different from putting your camera in the same position as another photographer and pressing

the shutter button, which takes very little skill. After all, the achievement is in the idea, not the mechanical execution of capture.

There's also the issue of fame and recognition. Very often, the paintings that are being copied are so famous that everyone will know that the new work is an homage. This cannot be said of photography – there are simply so many photos in the world.

This image was taken in Weano Gorge using an ultra wide-angle lens (equivalent to a 10mm or 14mm on a DSLR camera). The camera is on a tripod and positioned around 25 centimetres above the water.

I took a series of images with different focus points so I could focus stack an image with sharpness right through to the background, but I actually prefer the single frame which is sharp in the foreground, but satisfactorily blurred in the background.

A long exposure – around 10 seconds – has blurred the water sufficiently to make it look like liquid oil, oozing out of the gorge. I'm not quite sure if that is a suitable analogy, but I love the softness of the water compared to the hardness of the rock.

Controlling contrast selectively is relatively easy in the New Tradition. Here it has been dialled up for the water, but held back on the rock faces.





Karijini Drive

Karijini National Park, Western Australia, 2013

Alpa TC, Phase One IQ180 back, Rodenstock Digaron 23mm lens
1/2 second @ f5.6, ISO 35, tripod-mounted, no filter.

HOW DO YOU know you have a photographer at your exhibition? He (usually it's a he) is looking at your image quality from 10 centimetres away, even when it's a two-metre wide print!

I'm the same. I'm fascinated by image quality. It's not just a matter of sharpness, but of detail in the highlights, lack of noise in the shadows, and a post-production finish that cannot be discerned by the naked eye.

As photographers, we know from the style or the look of the image that post-production has been applied, simply because photos straight out of the camera don't look the same. However, there should be no clues as to where a technique or a brush stroke starts or finishes.

I call this 'Invisible Photoshop'.

Of course, it doesn't matter whether you're using Photoshop, Lightroom, Capture One or another editing

program. What's important is that your technique is subtle.

I think my style incorporates the use of vignetting on most images. I vignette because I want to contain the viewer's eye within my composition. If there are light areas on the edges of the frame, these can potentially attract my viewers and potentially lead them out of the frame – and away from my photograph. I realise you may need to stretch your imagination somewhat to understand what I'm getting at.

In the darkroom, my vignettes were very strong. Some people didn't like them back then, but I did. Today, I don't usually vignette as strongly and nor is my technique quite so obvious (I hope).

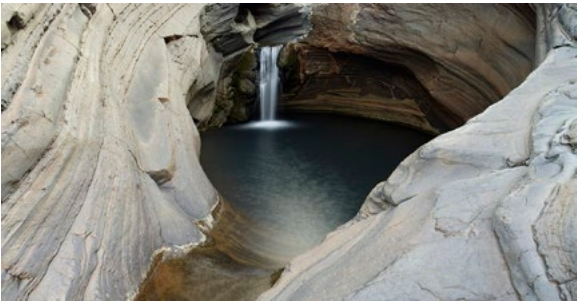
Times and fashions change, as do photographers. The amount of vignetting I apply today is simply based on how comfortable I feel with the result.

So, looking at the tree in Karijini National Park opposite, you can see that the sky has been vignetted. You can also sense that the foreground has been vignetted too, but hopefully you won't be able to see exactly where the vignetting starts. The transition areas are not too clumsy – although it is dangerous to critique your own work because my views may change in the future!

NEW TRADITION: 'Invisible Photoshop' simply refers to my ideal of good post-production technique. Just as camera technique is important, so is post-production in *The New Tradition*.

Ultra wide-angle lenses tend to produce a 'natural' vignette. Due to its symmetry, this isn't always appropriate to retain in the final image.





Hamersley Gorge

Karijini National Park, Western Australia, 2013

Alpa TC, Phase One IQ180 back, Rodenstock Digaron 23mm lens
30 seconds @ f5.6, ISO 35, tripod-mounted, 10x ND filter.

PART OF MY work has included guiding photographers on tours and workshops. For seven years, Christian Fletcher, Tony Hewitt and I took a group to Karijini National Park and, as you can imagine, with a mix of photographers we end up with some funny stories to tell.

We drive to places around Karijini in convoy, leaving a kilometre or so between cars to let the dust settle. The dust isn't a problem if it is windy, but when it's still, a red mantle can hang in the air, clouding the road for ages!

On the way out to Hamersley Gorge, Graeme had a flat tyre – driving Tina's new Jeep no less! When the other students caught up to us (we were in the lead), they reported all was okay and that Tina should be with us soon.

We waited at the turn off for 15 minutes or so, watching the light get better and better, so we

decided to send the other students into the gorge with Christian, while Bruce Pottinger, Tony and I drove back.

Christian climbed out of the driver's seat and Tony took the wheel. It was only 15 kilometres or so until we found the luckless Jeep and Tony pulled over.

Tony left the car running because it was hot and he didn't want the air-conditioned comfort to disappear, but this was just dumb luck because if he had turned off the engine, we had no way of starting it. The key was in Christian's pocket back at the gorge!

Our car was one of these 'new fangled' 4WDs with an electronic key and button ignition. As long as the electronic key is in your pocket, the button will work. But not if the electronic key is 15 kilometres away in someone else's pocket!

I can just imagine it. "Hi Tina, we're here to help. Oh dear, Tina, can you give us a lift please?"

Fortunately we were in no danger. Tina's Jeep was equipped with a small refrigerator and I'm sure there were enough beers to last until Christian returned with the key!

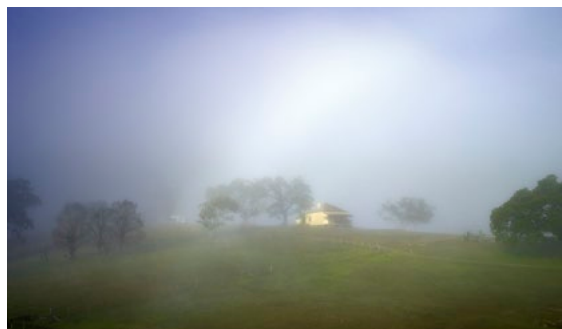
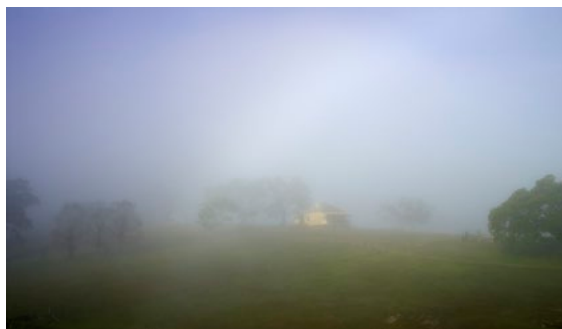
Hamersley Gorge itself is delightful and this little cascade is very popular with photographers.

It is interesting over the years how many people have 'claimed' the photograph as their own, but a look through Christian's photography book which has been on sale at the Karijini Eco-Resort for the last ten years will show that he is one of the first photographers with boasting rights.

Thanks Christian!

Although there is a strong difference between the raw file and the final rendition, post-production is based on colours already in the file.





Villa Maria

Bingleburra Road, East Gresford, NSW, Australia, 2013

Phase One 645DF, Phase One IQ180 back, Schneider Kreuznach LS 55mm f2.8 lens
1/125 second @ f8, ISO 35, tripod-mounted, no filter.

I SPENT A few days on David Oliver's farm up in the Hunter Valley, along with Bruce Pottinger (from L&P Digital Photographics), Paul Burrows (editor of *Pro Photo* and *Australian Camera*), and respective families. The idea was to chill out, eat Cathy Oliver's wonderful food and enjoy a glass or two of local red wine, but this didn't stop the boys (men?) from getting up early and driving out in search of photos.

Our first morning was without mist, but we found some great locations up the Paterson Road. In fact, we're a little lucky to be alive as Bruce had found an open paddock gate and drove straight in, searching for the ultimate photograph.

However, the reason the gate was open (unusual on a farm) was because the farmer had just gone through to quickly check on the stock and within a minute we saw her car approaching us, along with four very agile dogs!

Bruce, in his smart looking RangeRover, with low profile tyres and shiny body work, wound down the electric window to talk to the farmer who had parked her unwashed working vehicle very close to the driver side door. She had a scowl on her face when she heard Bruce's posh accent, but he smooth-talked her (he really was very good) and within a few

minutes her husband was directing us to another part of the property to take photos. This was a much better outcome than the shotgun welcome David was squeaking about from his hiding place on the back seat of our car.

The second morning was misty and a little unexpected. We decided to aim for one of our favourite valley destinations to see if it were also full of mist – which it partially was. However, I think this destination is yet to be photographed at its best. It was good, but could it be better?

On the drive back, with breakfast in mind, we dropped down a hill and into another bank of mist. The farm Villa Maria was on our left and we had noted this on past trips as a potential subject. Well, with the mist lifting and the sun just starting to break through, all thoughts of food disappeared as Bruce brought his 4WD to a screeching halt! We all bundled out.

When you photograph in mist, you kind of think it will last for ever, but it certainly doesn't. I wasn't quite sure how to shoot the farmhouse, but I knew the angle from down the bottom of the hill wasn't what I wanted. I needed an overview that would let me look through the mist across or down onto the farmhouse, so I trotted back up the road (with my tripod).

I shot perhaps 20 frames from four different positions and each frame is a little different, depending on the mist and the sun that is struggling to break through.

In this image, I like the balance of the trees on either side and the fence line which leads the eye up to the house. Compositionally it is a little stretched, but emotively, I think the mist works pretty well.

In post-production, to bring the mist up, I am playing with my raw image processor (Capture One) and Photoshop layers, but the main trick is to introduce contrast. I have done this with curve adjustment layers, but also the clarity slider in Capture One. The problem with the clarity slider is that it affects all of the image, but I only wanted clarity over the farmhouse, not the rest of the scene, so I processed the image twice and used layers and masks to bring out the areas I liked together.

By the way, some three years later, David's son Sean bought the property, so feel free to stop by the side of the road and take as many photos as you like!

To get the right tonality, a good quality monitor like an EIZO makes life a lot easier. Unless your monitor is accurate, how do you know what you're doing?









Danny Wills

Mentawai Islands, Indonesia, 2004

Canon EOS-1Ds, 300mm f2.8
1/200 second @ f2.8, ISO 400, hand-held, no filter

THE NEW TRADITION has had a huge impact in many areas of photography, especially sport. However, the change began not with digital technology, rather with autofocus.

Photographing surfers, for instance, was originally done from the beach and the lens of choice was a 650mm Century telephoto, purchased from the USA. As a manual focus lens, it took great skill to follow focus as the surfer rode the wave towards shore. The best surf photographers spent years refining their technique, so when autofocus was introduced, they understandably felt threatened. Early autofocus systems couldn't match manual focusing, but within a few years technology was outperforming even the best sport cameramen and suddenly, anyone could be a surf photographer.

Digital cameras have further democratised the world of surf photography, to the extent that point-of-view cameras like the GoPro have created a whole new genre of image making, capturing photographs and videos that the early surf photographers couldn't even imagine.

This photograph of pro surfer Danny Wills was taken at HTs, also called Lance's Right, in the Mentawai Islands off the Sumatran coast in Indonesia. Lance Knight, the surfer credited with 'discovering' this break, was also with us on our charter. In addition to our five professional surfers, another boat of leading Hawaiian surfers had joined us, which made surf photography a dream.

Photographs like this don't just happen. They require both planning and an element of luck. First, you need the right conditions – swell, wind direction and light. Next, you need surfers who are capable of surfing the waves. And third, if you have a lot of good surfers in the water, your chances of capturing good shots increases. From my perspective, sitting on the deck of our boat was like watching from the steps of an amphitheatre as the surfers battled with some of the best quality waves found anywhere in the world.

As the afternoon progressed, the waves became better and better. This shot was taken in very low light, something that low ISO film struggled with.

However, on the Canon EOS 1D Mark II, I could increase the ISO and maintain a reasonably fast shutter speed. Although my settings weren't quite fast enough to freeze the movement of the surfer, the light and the wave are so epic that I can forgive myself for this technical imperfection.

NEW TRADITION: And as technical perfection becomes easier and easier to achieve, images with slight impurities seem to take on extra value in the world of *The New Tradition*.

A selection of post-production steps between the processed raw file and the final rendition shown on the opposite page, plus never before revealed enlargement showing minor subject blur.





Taj Burrow

Gold Coast, Australia, 2005

Canon EOS 1Ds Mark II, Canon EF 16-35mm @ 16mm
1/125 & 120 seconds @ f11, ISO 100, 10x ND filter, tripod-mounted.

TAJ BURROW IS a professional surfer. We met because I had a part-ownership of *Surfing World* magazine and we were interviewing Taj, so I offered to take a portrait that might be a little bit different than the standard head and shoulders.

One of the questions I asked photographers when I interviewed them for *Better Photography* magazine was, where do your ideas come from? It's possibly one of the most difficult questions to answer.

Gay Campbell and Denis Montalbetti used to talk about Cosmic Fedex messages and Gay would religiously write them all down in a diary. So, what was a Cosmic Fedex? Ideas and inspirations that would pop into her head or that she would dream about. We all have them, it's just that some photographers are more disciplined about remembering them.

I'm only partly disciplined, or perhaps that should be partially disciplined. However, the idea behind the photograph of Taj was a little more straightforward, if not immediate. Taj was an early exponent of aerial surfing, meaning he would launch himself from the face of the wave into the air and, if he timed it right, he'd land back on the wave and continue riding it.

While a lot of surfers do aerials these days, Taj was one of the forerunners and this is where the idea to have him floating came from.

Taking the concept a little further, we often associate levitation with cross-legged gurus – well, at

least I do – and so I asked Taj to sit cross-legged on the beach. However, to make the scene obviously different, I also wanted to blur the ocean and the clouds behind him.

The technique is essentially the same that I employ for landscape photography. I set up my camera on a tripod and framed the scene that I wanted. Then I asked Taj to sit in position (on the ground) and took a few photographs of him with different expressions and hand gestures.

When I was sure I had a good portrait, I asked him to move out of frame. I attached a 10x neutral density filter and took another shot with an exposure of 120 seconds, using the same aperture so there was no change to depth-of-field. However, during the exposure the clouds and the ocean moved a lot, producing the blur effect.

In post-production, I deep-etched Taj out. As it turns out, I could have shot Taj anywhere and dropped him in, but by shooting him in the same location, it was a lot easier to match the lighting between the subject and the background.

So where do ideas come from?

No idea.

Three of the raw files from which the top two were used to create the final composite.





Harran Sheik

Harran, Turkey, 2008

Phase One 645AF II, Phase One P45+ back, 28mm Mamiya lens
1/320 second @ f4.5, ISO 100, hand-held, no filter

IS THIS A portrait?

The photograph placed in the 2009 Head On Portrait Award, so someone must have thought so, even though we cannot see the subject's face. But why does a portrait have to show a face?

If you follow the work of portrait masters, there are many examples of portraits that don't show the subject's face. My memory tells me there was even one by Yousuf Karsh where the subject isn't in the photograph. Rather the image depicts a room where the subject lived.

There are some aspects of photography that won't change in *The New Tradition*. Whether film or digital, whether landscape or portraiture, we're all investigating new avenues and searching for what are personally new directions.

This photograph does quite a few things that a standard portrait does not.

For instance, it is taken with an ultra wide-angle lens. Typically, portraits are photographed with a mid telephoto (like an 85mm or 105mm equivalent), the argument being they subtly flatten a person's face in a flattering way. However, a telephoto lens doesn't include much of the surroundings and in this image, the environment is fundamental to the portrait.

Photographed in Harran, south eastern Turkey, the tiny town has been inhabited for over 2000 years and is even mentioned in the Bible. The 'sheik' with his back to the camera, is the owner of the residence, a 'tourist trap', showing off the beehive structures that characterise Harran's architecture. Using a wide-angle lens, I was able to incorporate the architecture into the portrait.

Important for me was the sheik's headdress and the shadow he cast on the doorway. The early morning

sunrise created strong, directional light and as the sheik walked back into his dwelling, I followed with my camera. I shot half a dozen photographs very quickly, picking the one with the best compositional balance, to my eye at least.

In post-production, I wanted the texture and detail of the headdress to stand out and to make a statement. Using contrast and sharpening techniques, I hope you can almost feel the fabric in the original clothing.

And while the surrounding colours are strong, they are 'tertiary' with lots of greys in the mix, creating a desaturated palette.

During post-production, care was taken to ensure the shadow on the wall retained some prominence.





Tuk Tuk

Rabaul, East New Britain, 2009

Phase One 645DF, Phase One P65+ back, Mamiya 28mm lens
1/45 second @ f18, ISO 50, hand-held, no filter

THE VOLCANOES OF Rabaul are still active, so much so that most of the town of Rabaul relocated to Kokopo, some 20 kilometres further distant – although still too close for many, I am sure.

I was in Kokopo to photograph a mask festival and, naturally, the nearby volcanoes.

The tourist in the photograph (above) kept walking into my photographs at various locations – I'd be lining up a shot and suddenly she'd wander into the scene. At first I was rather frustrated, as were many other 'tourists' wanting to capture an 'authentic' scene without a European implant, but as the days wore on (yes, I met this woman many times over the course of my stay), I decided not to fight it – why not make her a feature of the photograph instead?

NEW TRADITION: The lady above has nothing to do with the photograph opposite, but she has embedded herself in my memory – and perhaps now in yours!

The headdresses and costumes at the mask festival were sensational and I wondered how I could get some of the dancers out onto the plains in front of the volcanoes. Even though I was travelling with an employee of PNG Tourism, it wasn't to be.

One night in my hotel, I met David Kirkland, an Australian photographer who has made his mark in

the travel field, especially in the Pacific. We introduced ourselves and chatted over a bottle of red wine.

I mentioned to David my idea and he said I was too late! He was already working on just such a photograph and, much as he liked me, he was not going to invite me along. I understood.

David went on to explain that on the following day, he had to meet the clan leaders and be initiated in order to take the photographs. He and his PNG Tourism minder were to undertake the ceremony together.

The following night I met David again and I was keen to hear how he had gone.

He explained that he and his tourism rep had been required to strip down to a basic lap-lap and walk out barefoot into the jungle with a clan of men, all dressed in ceremonial gear.

As part of the initiation, they were to be struck on the back with a cane. David didn't like the sound of this, but after he watched the tourism rep being lightly tapped with a long bamboo cane, he thought everything would be okay.

When his turn came, he walked confidently into position and a few seconds later, gasped and winced in pain. He bore the full impact of the narrow cane across his back.

David explained to me that the tourism rep had provided the chief of the clan with a couple of bottles

of good whisky before the ceremony. David had not – and so any chances of leniency were foregone.

To prove his story, David stood up in the restaurant and lifted the back of his shirt, revealing a huge red welt placed diagonally across his back!

However, the good news is that the following day he took a great photograph of the local clan in their headdresses with the volcano behind.

While David photographed his masterpiece on film, I proceeded with a couple of digital captures and a little help from Photoshop. The scene is not factually correct because, as David explained to me, the dancers that I photographed at the Kokopo festival would never be given permission to stand in front of the volcano like this, because it is not their land. The giveaway is the design and colour of the headdress, but I am hopeful that few viewers of my photograph will be aware of this transgression.

I certainly think that it is a better option than being caned!

Left: My favourite tourist.
Middle and right: A selection of post-production steps between the processed raw file and the final rendition shown on the opposite page.





Fire Dancers

Baining, East New Britain, 2009

Panasonic DMC-GH1, 25mm f1.4 (50mm equivalent)
1/4 second @ f1.4, ISO 400, hand-held, no filter

WHILE I WAS in Papua New Guinea on a job for the magazine and PNG Tourism, I was lucky enough to see the Baining fire dancers.

‘Baining’ is the name of the people who do the dancing, up in the hills behind Kokopo, which is near Rabaul in East New Britain. The performance is at night which made shooting it back in 2009 a challenge, unless you used flash.

The problem with flash is that it can kill the ambience. The problem without flash is that your exposures are too slow and the action is blurred. (The cameras back in 2009 had higher ISO settings, but the resulting noise was objectionable in most cases.)

The only light I wanted to use was the firelight and I felt I was getting some interesting shots with some great blur. I was using Panasonic’s Lumix GH1 camera with a 25mm f1.4 lens, with the ISO set at 400 or 800. This gave me a relatively fast shutter speed, around 1/30 second, but not fast enough to completely freeze the dancers as they rushed through the flames.

There were probably 30 tourists surrounding the dancers and some were unfortunately on the other side of the fire in view of my camera. This basically changed the photo from being something rarely observed and wonderful, to yet another tourist shot taken on a group tour.

Obviously I didn’t want this, although I was happy with an unintended intrusion. In one of my shots, someone else’s flash fired at the same time and it partially lit the dancer and froze the action.

This, I thought, was quite a good shot on its own, especially when I crop out the tourists on the left. But what I remember about the night wasn’t just the dancer bursting through the flames, but all the other dancers with their wonderful headpieces standing around the fire watching, partially enveloped by the darkness.

Since the photo was at night and all my backgrounds were black, I figured it can’t be too difficult to join a few images together, as can be seen in the final image.

I used a little Photoshop to flesh out the edges, alter a few of the repeated dancers and we’re there.

NEW TRADITION: Digital techniques really have allowed us to approach photography in new and innovative ways. If the final image is all that concerns you, it is very liberating.

Some of the steps showing how the final rendition shown on the opposite page was built up from a number of different exposures.





Mournful Man

Sanliurfa, Turkey, 2010

Phase One 645DF, Phase One P65+ back, Schneider Kreuznach LS 80mm f2.8 lens
1/160 seconds @ f2.8, ISO 800, hand-held, no filter

WE MET THIS gentleman on a previous trip to Turkey. I say 'we' because I was travelling with a group and a couple of our lady photographers first made contact with him. They seemed to have a much higher success rate when asking if they could take a photograph than the men, so if you can't beat them, join them.

I simply waited for the girls to finish and, given the gentleman seemed willing, pointed at my camera and asked his permission.

There was very little change in his expression, but a slight nod was received.

I love his dourful looks. Perhaps I'm slightly haunted by him. His eyes hold a real sense of loss and there seems to be little humour in his life. And perhaps this is true because I imagine life in Eastern Turkey would have been very hard in the past.

That's one of the challenges of travelling – you can be enjoying yourself so much you don't have time to think of 'real life' for others.

As a traveller or a tourist, you have no right to intrude into other people's lives, yet with the right approach and a smile, it's amazing how many people will give you the time to take their photograph.

Sometimes a small payment is appreciated, sometimes all it takes is a promise to send some photos to the sitter.

I had actually photographed in this location two years earlier and so on this occasion, I passed prints taken on the last trip around the cafe and this certainly helped break the ice.

In terms of post-production, there are many different ways you can approach a file. Even something as simple as lightening and darkening areas of an image can be achieved multiple ways.

For instance, some photographers use the dodge and burn tools, which refer to the technique of dodging (lightening) a print by putting your hand into the path of the light source, thus reducing the amount of light reaching the photographic paper; and burning -in which required you to use a card with a hole in it or your hands to allow extra light to reach parts of the photographic paper – and darken it. This description assumes we were printing with a negative, of course.

However, the dodge and burn tools within Photoshop are destructive, meaning once you make a change and save the file, there's no going back.

I prefer a non-destructive workflow so I can always make subtle changes later on. This means using layers in Photoshop.

For this image, I was using curve adjustment layers with masks to lighten and darken particular areas. However, rather than using the 'curve' to make the change, I used multiply and screen blend modes.

All image editing is a matter of mathematics and using blend modes is just a different way of adjusting the numbers. However, sometimes when I am struggling to get an image to look just right with an RGB curve, I switch over to blend modes and it just works.

There is no truly logical explanation for this. At least, I don't have one.

NEW TRADITION: Blend modes in Photoshop are lesser known, but very powerful as an alternative to a standard RGB curve.

The 'tonal mapping' of this file has effectively been reversed, lightening up the subject's face and darkening down the background.





Coin Seller

Ani, Eastern Turkey, 2010

Alpa TC, Phase One IQ180 back, Rodenstock Digaron 23mm lens
1/250 second @ f8, ISO 50, hand-held, no filter

THIS GENTLEMAN IS a coin seller. I believe that is his unofficial occupation. I was taking photographs of the old cathedral at Ani in Eastern Turkey when he walked up to me and said hello.

He was very friendly, so I turned around, camera in hand and asked if he would pose for me.

Of course, the camera and lens combination in hand (literally, as you weren't allowed to take tripods into this site without paying a \$175 fee) was not ideal for portraiture. I had my widest angle lens which was great for the buildings and created a wonderful sense of distance.

Fortunately, with a smile and a gesture to the camera, I was able to walk up quite close to him and take a few shots. I also had to guess the distance as, being a completely manual camera and lens, there was no luxury like autofocus or even through-the-lens focusing.

With the photo recorded, the gentleman didn't seem to be in any hurry to move on. Not having much language to communicate with, he pulled a rag out of his pocket and carefully opened it. Inside was a collection of amazing old coins.

'Roman', he said. Well, he actually said quite a few words, but eventually I got the idea that these were authentic Roman coins, found on the site and that for an unbelievably good price, he would allow me to purchase some.

I was tempted – what a great offer!

And then I thought a little longer – it was like being in a national park and picking the flowers or taking home shells. If everyone did it, soon there would be no flowers left. And then another thought occurred to me: I was in an outdoor museum and the fact that the locals grazed their cattle over the land didn't mean that what we found on the ground we could just remove. No, the initial desire to own a real Roman coin quickly passed.

When I explained this to him, that I was an honest man and Australian customs wouldn't let me bring in valuable artefacts from a foreign country, he decided that the coins weren't real after all, but very good copies – just like the real thing.

Well, I countered, if this were the case, how come they were so expensive?

For this argument he didn't have a good answer and so I waved goodbye and continued my stroll over the wonderful plains of Ani.

And I had his photo. Was this fair?

The post-production process is used to lighten up the shadows on the subject and darken down his surroundings.





The Road to St Gregory

Ani, Eastern Turkey, 2010

Alpa TC, Phase One IQ180 back, Rodenstock Digaron 23mm lens
1/250 second @ f8, ISO 50, hand-held, no filter.

WHERE DO FIGURES in the environment come from? Are they legitimate, or do they just mess up a good landscape?

I have always enjoyed figures in the landscape. They give the landscape a centre of interest. They give the landscape a sense of scale. And they often create questions or encourage stories in the mind of the viewer. Anything that helps our viewers to interact with our photography is a good thing.

When shooting with film, the figures were generally really there in the landscape. However, in *The New Tradition*, I first pressed into service buskers and daughters running through the streets of Italy. While the figures were real, they were cut out of their original scene and pasted into something which I considered a little more interesting.

I have continued introducing figures on and off and still enjoy it as a process, as a way of creating something more. Now that everyone is a photographer, we have to work a little harder to create images that stand out from the crowd – and I think this is partly what makes modern photography so challenging and enjoyable.

However, figures in the landscape are hardly new when we look at the history of art. Les Walkling mentioned Romantic painter Casper David Friedrich

to me when working on one of the ND5 projects and I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw Friedrich's work.

There are so many references you can draw between Friedrich's paintings and photography. Not only does he generously employ figures in his landscapes, the landscapes themselves are masterclasses in the use of light, colour and emotion.

When I visited Ani in Eastern Turkey, I was presented with strong, overhead sunshine and clear blue skies. It was hardly the right type of light for a moody, emotional rendition of these ancient ruins, so my thoughts turned to re-imagining the landscape with a figure or two.

The worn path in the grass was the perfect location for an elderly lady to be walking (I borrowed her from Sanliurfa a few hundred kilometres away) and the second figure in the shadow of the church adds to the questions or stories that could be told.

NEW TRADITION: While expert darkroom technicians had been inserting figures into the landscape previously, it is much more practical with a digital workflow.

Sometimes the trick to inserting a figure in a believable way is to insert him or her in a place that already shows footprints – like a path.



Kitava Dancer

Papua New Guinea, 2011

Phase One 645DF, Phase One P65+ back, Schneider Kreuznach LS 80mm f2.8 lens
1/180 second @ f2.8, ISO200, hand-held, no filter



ONE OF THE strangest terms in *The New Tradition* is unsharp masking.

Despite its name, unsharp masking is designed to make images look sharper, not less sharp.

Simply speaking, the 'mask' applied to the image is slightly blurred (unsharp) and hence the name, but the result is an apparent improvement in image 'clearness'.

Unsharp masking was both a pre-press and a darkroom technique. Few photographers were expert enough to use unsharp masking and generally this was left to darkroom specialists. However, as a digital technique, it is just a matter of adjusting the dialog settings (usually amount, radius and threshold) and so anyone can do it.

There are three times that unsharp masking can be applied and there are a number of alternatives to unsharp masking which produce a similar effect.

When you open your raw files or your camera produces a JPEG, a low level of sharpening is automatically applied on most cameras.

This is designed to counter the 'blurring' effect of the low-pass filter which sits on top of most camera sensors. The low-pass filter is a necessary evil in that it improves the colour clarity and rendition in an image, but at the expense of absolute image sharpness – and hence the need to apply a little sharpening when processing the raw file.

Sharpening can also be used for special effects or sometimes (but rarely) to correct a slightly blurred image. And finally, images are sharpened for output, whether for a laptop screen, a projector or a print – and this is where it gets tricky.

As sharpening is an optical effect which doesn't actually add any real image information to your photo, it becomes a matter of matching the sharpening settings to the subject matter, the size of the output and the media or device being used to display the final result.

Different sharpening settings are required for different printing papers, different paper surfaces, and just to make it interesting, different subjects. Even within a single image you can adjust the amount of sharpening used: you might use no sharpening on the sky and clouds, but quite a lot of sharpening on the sand and water in the landscape below, for example.

In addition to unsharp masking, there are a number of proprietary sharpening tools and plug-ins, or you can use filters (like the high pass filter in Photoshop) in imaginative ways to produce images with greater perceived 'sharpness'. But there is no single best answer that you can set and forget.

Interestingly, with medium format files, I often use no output sharpening at all and the only input sharpening would be what Phase One's Capture One automatically applies when processing the raw files.

In the early days of digital, images were often criticised for being too metallic or inorganic, probably because film 'grain' was random while the grid of the digital sensor is completely regular.

There were also issues with the way digital files were processed, but a lot of things have changed. To begin with, we're playing with so many pixels that the regular pattern of pixels has become invisible. In addition, raw processing is far more sophisticated.

This medium format portrait of a young dancer was photographed with a medium format camera and there is ample sharpness in the subject without applying additional unsharp masking.

Rather, using differential focus with a blurred background gives the subject extra presence within the composition.

Not all portraiture post-production lightens the subject and darkens the background, but it's a basic approach that can be successful a lot of the time.





Tufi Warrior

Papua New Guinea, 2011

Phase One 645DF, Phase One P65+ back, Schneider Kreuznach LS 80mm f2.8 lens
1/50 second @ 2.8, ISO 400, hand-held, no filter

IN 2006, I was awarded the title Grand Master of Photography by the Australian Institute of Professional Photography. I must say I am not enamoured by the name, but the sentiment is greatly appreciated.

Working as an artist or a photographer, the question we always ask ourselves is whether our work is valid. Simply speaking: “Are my photos any good”?

On a professional job, there is rarely a direct comparison to be made. You are the only photographer, so as long as you produce something, chances are the client will accept it, but is it any good? How would other photographers approach the same shoot? Are your clients the best judges? There are many different ways you can create photographs that have merit.

Entering the AIPP Australian Professional Photography Awards (APPA) every year since 1984, I have four of my best photographs assessed by five professional photographers. In the beginning, these judges were my mentors; in later years they have been my peers. And while I might not always have agreed with the result, the judging process was fundamental in establishing the quality of my work in my own mind.

Successful prints earn Silver awards and one ‘merit’ point; occasionally, very successful prints earn Gold awards and two merit points. You collected merit points to advance within the AIPP: five merits for Associateship, a further 10 merits for Master of Photography. For every additional 10 merits, you received a Gold Bar.

And if you enter for long enough, eventually they run out of awards to give you and so you are presented with a Grand Master of Photography: 65 merit points. However, within those 65 points there must be at least five Gold awards (90% or higher) and ten Silvers with Distinction (85-89%). So, while the title is a little lofty, the acknowledgement behind it has given me some confidence in the work that I produce.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the AIPP awards process is knowing when to step aside and trust your own intuition.

For photographers in the early stages of their career, APPA is a wonderful benchmark, but it is not the only benchmark in the world.

As you gain experience, you learn what images to enter to APPA and what images to put aside. While styles and techniques change over the years, there is a ‘flavour’ to an APPA award. Once you master this, it’s time to move in new directions – but with the confidence to do so.

This image was never entered to APPA as it is a portrait and I felt I had stronger chances in landscape!

Working with dark skin can be a challenge. Photographer and educator Dean Collins taught me that white skin is all about the shadows, while black skin about the highlights. It has been very helpful advice – and not just with portraiture.





Praying Woman

Paro, Bhutan, 2012

Nikon D800, Nikkor 85mm f1.8
1/400 second @ 2.0, ISO 200, hand-held, no filter



I PAID THIS woman to take her portrait. Should I have? Or have I broken an unwritten law of street and travel photography?

I shouldn't dip into the murky distinctions that separate photojournalism and documentary photography from the rest of the world. Documentary used to embrace many aspects of photography, but today the term has been hijacked by purists who believe that a documentary photograph must be found, not created. But I digress.

When I photographed this woman from the other side of the courtyard before she was aware of me, that was a documentary photograph. However, once I had asked permission, and even worse, paid her, the image was no longer a documentary capture. It became something else – a travel photograph, perhaps.

For travel photographers, asking someone to pose is not a problem. Hopefully we're capturing something of the destination as reflected in the subject's face, clothing and disposition. But should we pay them? Does the act of commerce change the resulting image?

I don't think a small gratuity hurts, but there is a time and a place.

In America, I often find that if I open my mouth, my Australian accent breaks the ice and I can usually take a portrait. In Bhutan, the locals know that tourism is good for their economy (and their happiness), so generally speaking, I didn't pay anyone to take their portrait, but I did promise to send a few prints to my subjects when I returned home.

I wanted to photograph the lady praying. I saw her holding her hands up to her face, but every time I went to take a photograph, she'd change her pose and ask for money. I didn't quite understand at first, so I made donations to the temple, which she saw me do, but no, she was quite adamant. Although we didn't speak each other's language, I was made aware that if I wanted to photograph her, I needed to compensate her financially.

And once I did, she was very helpful. Why didn't I just pay her up front? Because until this point, no one had wanted payment before. It didn't seem to be a part of the Bhutanese culture and after spending a couple of months there, I can confidently say it isn't a part of the culture and this is the only person I paid.

However, I don't have any philosophical problems in paying someone to pose for me. It seems like a fair exchange. Of course, if they ask for a lot of money, I may decide the photograph isn't worth it, but a small fee of a few dollars is most acceptable.

What about young kids? The problem there is if you pay one, soon you have a whole schoolyard in front of you wanting some of the same. That's only natural, so I find I am less likely to pay children than adults.

Hmmm. First I pay people for photographs, then I don't pay children. Is that exploitation? Am I going from bad to worse?

For a travel book or brochure, I probably wouldn't have removed the texture on the wall, but as a portrait, I felt they were distracting.





Lama

Ogyen Cholling, Bhutan, 2012

Nikon D800, Nikkor 70-200mm f2.8 @ 130mm
1/1600 second @ 3.2, ISO 100, hand-held, no filter.

THROUGHOUT THIS BOOK I have justified the use of digital techniques to create images, rather than just capture them.

NEW TRADITION: How long will it be before the general public automatically questions every photograph they see?

In this photograph of a lama, I'm not trying to deceive anyone, I'm trying to illustrate what I experienced. The techniques used are digital, but only because I was not capable of getting exactly the image I wanted in a single capture.

As you travel around Bhutan, you'll see thousands of prayer flags on long poles fluttering in the wind. The flags are printed with prayers which are sent up to heaven as they are moved by the wind.

On our trip, we stayed in a small remote village, Ogyen Cholling. As luck would have it, a visiting lama who was reconsecrating the local temple agreed to officiate a prayer flag raising ceremony.

As part of proceedings, bushes were burnt and the smoke used to scare away evil spirits (and I'm sure this explanation is somewhat simplified). At first, I tried to avoid the smoke as it obscured the lama, but then I noticed that the smoke could look like clouds, giving the impression of the lama floating in the air. And so my idea was born.

I spent ten minutes standing in the billowing smoke, photographing the lama and hoping for a lucky juxtaposition of smoke and lama. I probably took 50 or more shots. Unfortunately, none of the shots had exactly what I was after. If the smoke were ideally positioned, the lama was obscured; and when the lama was clearly visible, the smoke looked lacklustre.

The solution for me was obvious: combine two images in Photoshop to tell the story as I saw it.

Rather than creating a precise mask around the lama's head, which would be problematical given the top lighting, I used a large, soft edge mask and blended the smoke and backgrounds into each other. The result is seamless.

NEW TRADITION: Often the best composites are done where the background can be used to mask the joins, rather than precisely masking the subject.

So, is this a legitimate photograph? Does it depict a real scene? Did this really happen? I think the answer is yes, but equally it could be argued that the split second depicted above never happened – it is a figment of my imagination.

And I guess this is the quandary modern photography finds itself in. Where do you draw the line between a legitimate composite and one that crosses the line of reality? The only practical solution is to ban composites in certain areas of photography where the public demands their photographs to be factual.

The two frames (left and middle) from which the final image (right) was prepared, before producing the final rendition shown on the opposite page.









Iceberglets, Jökulsárlón

Iceland, 2012

Phase One 645DF, Phase One IQ180 back, Schneider Kreuznach LS 55mm f2.8 lens
1.3 seconds @ f11, ISO 35, tripod-mounted, no filter

I FELT A little guilty about taking this photograph. I was on a PODAS – a Phase One Digital Artist Series – and my role was to help the dozen photographers accompanying us. There were three guides, Daniel Bergmann, Steve Gosling and me, plus Kevin Raber and Drew Altdorffer from Phase One, so there were plenty of instructors around.

And I had been helping for quite a few hours, but to be honest, everyone was pretty self-contained.

We were planning to be out all night! By the time the sun set completely, it would be rising up again and we planned to head over to the nearby beach and hope for icebergs being washed up by the waves.

However, there was a problem. There weren't many icebergs on the ocean beach, but quite a few down the far end of the glacial lake, Jökulsárlón. I figured this was going to be my best chance for photos of small icebergs.

I asked a few of the photographers if they wanted to walk down the lake's edge with me, but no one was particularly interested, so I set off on my own. The further I went, the better it looked a little further along. I ended up walking a couple of kilometres until the coast turned around into a small bay and it was here I found these small icebergs. We might call them growlers.

It was a perfect night. The sun had set, but in May it doesn't really get completely dark and you have this

incredibly extended twilight. No need to rush, the light is amazing for hours on end.

I wasn't brave enough to walk into the freezing water with my shoes off, so I perched myself as close as I could and chose a medium wide-angle. Too wide and the icebergs looked insignificant; too close and I lost the senses of place and space. The 55mm (similar to 35mm on a full-frame DSLR) seemed just about right.

In addition to a perfect night, there was also a nearly full moon. Add in the perfect reflections and the perfect light and I felt I couldn't go wrong.

Still, it was a challenge to work out exactly the right composition and I took lots of different angles, with and without the full moon.

At it turns out, simple is best. While the inclusion of the moon might seem to be the obvious choice, I found it complicated the scene. It was additional eye candy which wasn't really necessary.

After all, this scene is simply amazing as it is.

A couple of nights later, we were back and by then the group had seen my initial edits of this scene. They all wanted to walk down the lake with me this time, but the wind had changed and the bergs were nowhere to be seen.

**A selection of raw files with and without the moon.
Which do you think works the best?**





The Road to Stykkishólmur

Iceland, 2012

Phase One 645DF, Phase One IQ180 back, Schneider Kreuznach LS 110mm f2.8 lens
1/80 second @ f8, ISO 35, tripod-mounted, no filter

I HAD TO plead with the driver and the guide to let me stop for this photograph.

Well, let's face it, when you look at the starting point (see the small images on this page), it was a drab afternoon. It was also my second day in Iceland, so I had no idea whether there was just one or two quaint churches sitting forlornly on remote hills, or hundreds.

As it turns out, there are hundreds and many of them are incredibly photogenic. I think I could spend months travelling around Iceland and never get sick of the landscape and its structures.

So, confession time...

As mentioned on the previous page, I was on a PODAS with Kevin Raber, Steve Gosling and our Icelandic guide Daniel Bergmann. Daniel was looking at me quizzically when I asked if he could pull over. Kevin was looking at his watch and wondering when we'd get to the hotel for dinner. I was looking at this scene and thinking how amazing it was with the misty rain, the warm grasses and the hint of the hills in the background.

Australian eyes discover Icelandic beauty.

That's what makes photography such an individual pursuit. I was putting my Australian eyes over a foreign landscape and loving it. Daniel had driven along this road thousands of times before and no longer saw it.

I am the same in Australia. People come to my place in Sydney, marvelling at the coastline and how great it looks, but for me, it's just home.

However, one thing that Kevin and Daniel are is fair. They could see I was serious, so they pulled over and

I jumped out. A couple of the other photographers followed, but I think the general consensus was that I was a bit mad.

So, in the interests of regaining a small amount of my reputation, I'm presenting the finished work, what I saw out of the van window.

The original file was processed in Capture One. There is no other raw file processor that gives me the same file quality; so all my files go through it whether photographed on a Phase One, a Canon, Fujifilm or Nikon. And while I finish most of my art prints in Photoshop, there is a lot you can do to set up the file in Capture One.

In fact, while travelling or on a job, I use Capture One to proof my work and very often this is all that's required.

Some photographers think that processing a file is just turning the numbers into tones and colours, and that one raw processor is much the same as another. This is a bit like thinking one photographer is much the same as another.

There are a myriad of ways to process a raw file and Adobe and Phase One approach things quite differently.

It's worth comparing files directly and seeing which approach you prefer.

The raw file up top shows how dull the scene really was, but with a little imagination, it can be effectively transformed into something more romantic.





Seljalandsfoss

Iceland, 2012

Alpa TC, Phase One IQ180 back, Rodenstock Digaron 23mm lens
58 seconds @ f8, ISO 35, tripod-mounted, 10x ND filter.

WATCHING OR LISTENING to your photographs being judged is a nerve-wracking experience. Even after being involved with photography competitions for over 30 years, both as an entrant and a judge, I am still slightly anxious when my work is assessed by a panel of experts at a live event.

And it can be very hard to take criticism. After all, you don't enter poorly considered photographs into a competition so you can get shot down. Usually these photographs are your pride and joy. You have lovingly edited and printed them, hoping others will share in your enthusiasm.

It doesn't always work out that way and, quite often, the judges will simply not see the image in the same light. However, sometimes their comments can be very useful.

I can't complain too much about how this photograph was treated. It was first judged in New Zealand where it received a gold award, but the gold was a struggle. During a long discussion, one judge was not convinced it was quite up to standard because he saw a darkness in the corner of the frame that looked like poor editing. It wasn't the 'Invisible Photoshop' that it should have been.

Sitting at the back of the judging room, as soon as the judge made this comment, I could see what he meant. There was a distinct triangle of blue sky in the top right of the print. I hadn't noticed it before, even though I had spent hours and hours working on the file.

I agreed with the judge. The print on the wall was deficient in a small way, but luck was on my side and the other judges gave it sufficient marks to earn gold.

When I looked at the layered file a few days later, it wasn't actually poor technique that had created the problem, but of course, if it looks like a problem, then it is a problem.

Listening to judges and other people discuss your work can be a challenging experience, but even if the outcome for a particular print is in the negative, the disappointment is soon forgotten. Importantly, as you work on new photographs, the added experience you've gained from the earlier comments will hopefully help you for years to come.

Seljalandsfoss is instantly recognisable by anyone who has visited Iceland or simply looked at photographs or books of Iceland. A grassy park leads up to the falls and there is a walkway that goes up around and behind the waterfall itself.

Our timing for shooting the waterfall couldn't have been better with the setting sun lighting up the falls. There is a lot of spray and there are places around the falls you simply can't stand without quickly becoming saturated. There is also a lot of spray swirling around no matter where you are standing, so a lens cap in-between exposures was a really useful preventative measure.

Above: Normal exposure. Middle: Raw file from 58-second exposure. Below: Part-way through the post-production process to the final image opposite.





Useless Loop Sunset

Shark Bay, Western Australia, 2013

Phase One 645DF, Phase One IQ180 back, Schneider Kreuznach LS 80mm f2.8 lens
1/500 second @ f2.8, ISO 200, hand-held, no filter.

TRANSCRIPTIONS: SHARK BAY 2016 is an exhibition of aerial photographs over Shark Bay. Photographed and filmed by the Ninety Degrees Five collective (ND5), of which I am a member, we produced a body of work in 2013 that became very successful in both photography circles and the community generally.

The highly coloured, abstract compositions seemed to strike a chord with people who visited the exhibitions in Perth and Brisbane.

I invited Richard and Lyn Woldendorp and Lyn Whitfield-King to the opening of the Perth exhibition. Richard is one of Australia's legends of aerial photography, having produced many books featuring the Australian landscape taken from above. He and I are good friends, but I wasn't surprised when he took me aside and said, "Wonderful compositions, Peter, but the colour! It is much too much."

I think it's fair to say we'd consider Richard a traditionalist when it comes to photography. At over

90 years of age when writing this book, Richard's work matured during the days of film and the technology of the time. I see his aesthetic as being based on capturing beautifully composed images that are realistic and true to the camera. I love his careful compositions and his use of light – I have learnt a lot over the years from reading his books and interviewing him for *Better Photography* magazine.

However, our photos of Shark Bay were intentionally interpretative. Richard and other photographers had already captured Australia from the air so extensively, that it was a natural outcome of our project to interpret it differently. It was especially interesting to see how all four of us responded independently to the sparse Shark Bay landscape, yet in a similar way: abstract and colourful.

Following the exhibition and Tony Hewitt's competition success (four of his Shark Bay images won the 2013 AIPP Australian Professional Photographer of

the Year award), we began to see a lot of photographs taken over Shark Bay, and a lot of aerals interpreted in an abstract and colourful way. There's no doubt that within the small Australian landscape photography community, the Shark Bay exhibition contributed to a growing interest in aerial photography.

Useless Loop is a real place on the edge of Shark Bay. Google it!

NEW TRADITION: The digital workflow allows low contrast images to be enhanced with contrast. Much of the colour in the images is already there, merely requiring adjustments in exposure and contrast to bring them out.

The raw file hints at the blue of the shadows and the warmth of the sunlit areas. Post-production primarily used contrast to bring out the colour and shape.





King Haakon Sound

South Georgia, 2015

Canon EOS-1D X, EF24mm f1.4L II USM
61 seconds @ f16, ISO 100, tripod-mounted, 10x ND filter.

TALES BY LIGHT is a television series following the work of professional photographers in exotic locations around the globe.

Directed by Abraham Joffe, I joined photographers Art Wolfe, Darren Jew, Krystle Wright and Richard I'Anson in the first series which screened on the National Geographic Channel in Australia and then on Netflix worldwide a year or so later. It was produced in partnership with Canon Australia.

I've had many great assignments in different countries around the world, but this must be the best!

Abraham, his wife Jen, second cameraman Blake Castle and I joined a voyage to Antarctica and South Georgia with Aurora Expeditions' *Polar Pioneer*. The brief was pretty straightforward: I was to be filmed and interviewed while I took a series of photographs. How hard could that be? I mean, all you have to do is travel to Antarctica and you're guaranteed good shots, aren't you?

Mine was the last in the series to be filmed, so I was able to see some of the footage from the other five programs before we left for Antarctica.

And it was intimidating!
Not only was the production sensational, the photographs being created by the other photographers were amazing and suddenly I felt the pressure. It might be the trip of a lifetime, but now I really had to create a strong body of work to sit alongside what the other photographers had already produced.

Fortunately, the locations and the weather conditions conspired to produce a series of wonderful opportunities.

I also borrowed a couple of extra Canon lenses which helped considerably. While many photographers look to buy a new camera body, generally an extra lens is a better purchase.

The Canon 200-400mm 1.4x f4 is a large, heavy telephoto zoom, but for capturing wildlife it is hard to beat because while you can zoom out to 200mm, you can zoom into 560mm, giving you a point of difference.

Similarly, the 24mm f1.4 is a wonderful wide-angle lens which, when used in close to your subject, gives a beautiful albeit subtle bokeh (out-of-focus blur) on the background.

For wildlife photography at the time, nothing beat a professional DSLR and the range of lenses available. While mirrorless designs will undoubtedly catch up, a camera is more than a body, it is the system of lenses that accompany it too.

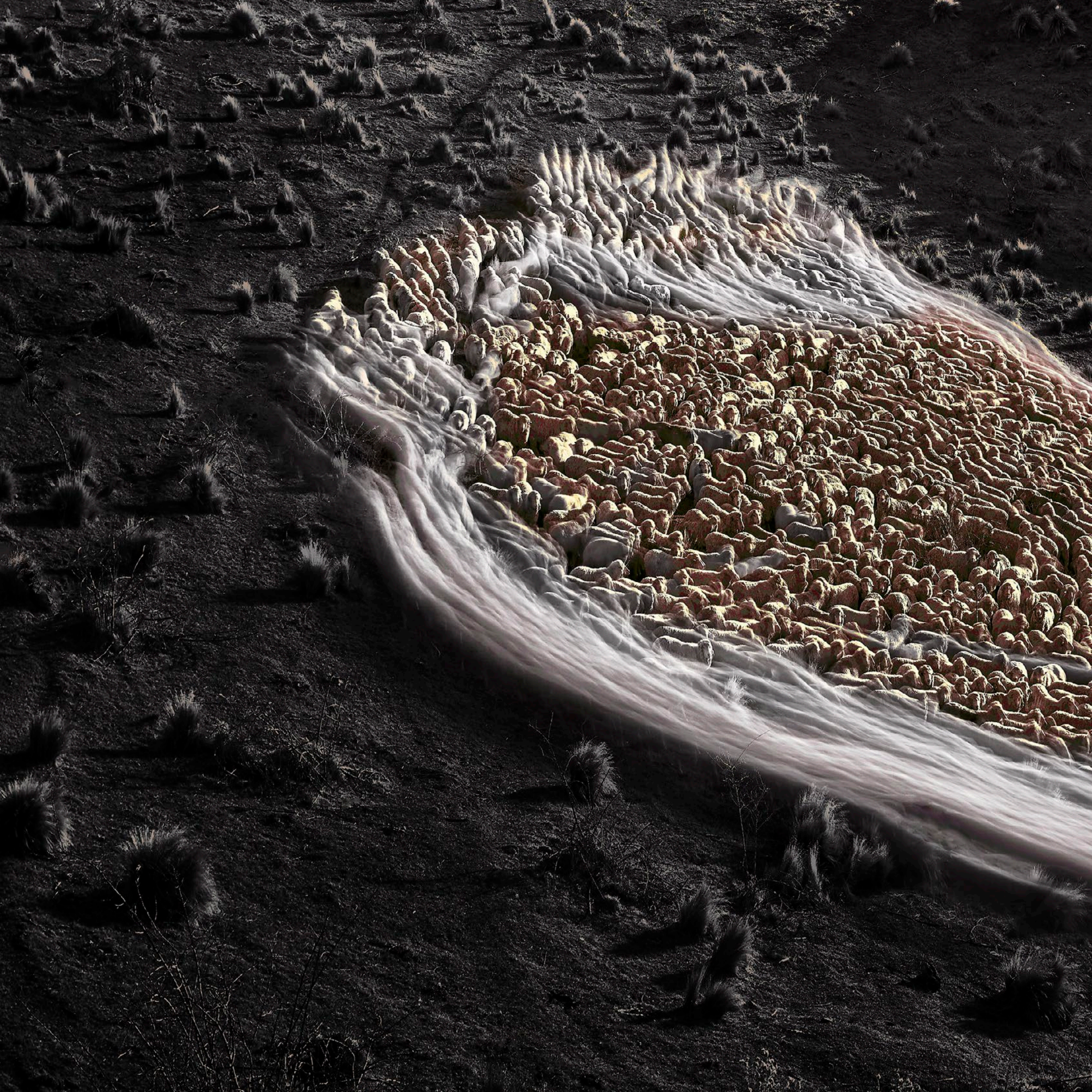
This photograph featured in my *Tales By Light* episode, both in the capture and the later post-production. It is the print on the wall.

King Haakon Sound (or Bay, but Frank Worseley, the pilot who steered Shackleton and the James Caird from Elephant Island to South Georgia, called it a Sound) is on South Georgia's western shore and one of the few places of safety. Its protected waters are surrounded by towering cliffs and a dozen or so glaciers. It's hard to go wrong, but also hard to get exactly the right composition.

I need to go back!

A selection of post-production steps between the processed raw file and the final rendition shown on the opposite page.









King River

Wyndham, Western Australia, 2014

Phase One 645DF, Phase One IQ180 back, Schneider Kreuznach LS 80mm f2.8 lens
1/1000 second @ f7.1, ISO 200, hand-held, no filter.

READING SMALL PARTS of the wider history of art is fascinating. It's not just the intriguing lives that some of the artists led, it's the thought, philosophy and craft that went into creating their masterpieces.

For instance, putting together a group of figures on a canvas would be carefully orchestrated, centres of interest lying on 'lines of power' or the 'armature' of the rectangle (as outlined in Charles Bouleau's book *The Painter's Secret Geometry*).

Given how varied the personal lives of famous artists were, I often wonder where the idea came from that to be a truly great artist or photographer, you need to face adversities? Some people suggest that it has to be a tough road you follow or the results won't be worth it.

It's an interesting belief because if a viewer is only interacting with the end product, the trials and tribulations of its production are likely invisible – although to be fair, trials and tribulations may

produce ideas and concepts in an artist's work that the comfortable artist never encounters.

Still, to my mind, the modern idea that an 'artist' needs to struggle or suffer for his or her art seems unnecessary. While it's true many young artists 'struggle' to make financial ends meet, because they spend their time creating art or photography, rather than holding down a full-time job, this is a choice. It's also a freedom of our age we should embrace.

I've met art photographers who claim to have overcome personal adversities which helped them produce great works of art, but equally I've met others who have had no such adversities and have produced equally great works of art.

There's no doubt that what creates great art is the mind of the artist, but I don't think the artist's mind needs to follow a particular process in order to create art that is great (or at least I hope not)!

There was no hardship involved in capturing the

photo of Kings River. Taken as a part of the North exhibition with the ND5 collective, it is a small example of how the digital workflow has allowed us to control composition and framing.

In the original photograph, the curve of the King River was great in the foreground, but a little lacking in imagination in the background. Using the liquefy filter in Photoshop, the river's curves were adjusted to make a more pleasing shape.

When shooting with film, I used to be envious of artists who began with a blank canvas. With the digital workflow, I am almost intimidated by the lack of limitations. There are no more excuses for not having the image look exactly as you want it. Or as you imagined it.

Sometimes when the colour or light is dirty, the best approach is to turn the image into a black and white, after which it can be toned.





Ragged Ranges

Kimberley, Western Australia, 2014

Phase One 645DFAlpa TC, Phase One IQ180 back, Schneider Kreuznach LS 80mm f2.8 / 23mm Rodenstock Digaron lens, composite
1/500 second @ f11, ISO 50, hand-held, no filter.

WHILE PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITIONS and awards are a great way to determine where your work stands in the scheme of things, eventually it gives you a somewhat distorted view.

Photography isn't only about striking, powerful images with lots of impact, although they are the type of photograph that generally wins a competition. There's a huge library of styles, approaches and genres that are equally valid. So while competitions definitely have their place, it's what happens after you mentally exit the competition mindframe that matters.

For many people, photography once again becomes a solitary assignment, but there is an option, at least as an adjunct to everything you do.

Collaboration.

Working in collaboration with other photographers can be a multi-dimensional dialogue that takes you out of your comfort zone and challenges you to move in new directions.

Perth photographer, the late John Whitfield-King, was a member of Group 10. As I understand it, Group 10 comprised ten photographers from around Australia who would pool resources to meet and talk about photography. They invited and paid for established photographers whose work they admired to join them for a visit – John told me they kicked in \$2000 each to bring Norman Parkinson out to Sydney for a week.

It was all about investing in themselves as artists. I believe that was in the 1970s and early '80s.

In 1997, photographer Eric Victor invited Swiss art photographer Christian Vogt to Australia and I joined him and a handful of other photographers on a drive from Queensland to Victoria 'in search of Ned Kelly'. It was a wonderful learning experience and it had a big impact on many of my views on photography, including collaboration.

For many years, I felt I should create my own group of ten photographers. I even got as far as writing up a list, but the list kept expanding so much that I chickened out. How could I narrow down Australia's most interesting photographers to just ten?

So, when in 2009 Christian Fletcher rang me up and invited me to shoot the Pilbara Project along with his brother Michael, Tony Hewitt and Les Walkling, I jumped at the opportunity. While initially it was just a single project over six months, I had Group 10 in mind and the others were thinking along the same lines.

For the Pilbara Project, we brought together experiences in so many different disciplines that each member could learn something from the others. We enjoyed working together and, importantly, we were secure enough in our own photography to be

comfortable with the influences and directions of the others. It seemed only natural to do further projects together and so the Ninety Degrees Five collective was born.

Many people are surprised that I shoot with other photographers. They think that since we're all visiting the same locations, we'll all come back with the same photographs.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

As Les Walkling elegantly expressed, some people photograph what is in front of their camera, others photograph what is behind.

If you can get your head around this idea, you're well on your way to maturing as a photographer.

The photo of the Ragged Ranges here was taken on an ND5 shoot in the Kimberley one December.

Only mad people travel to the Kimberley in summer!

It is a composite, but both shots were taken in the same area. It's interesting to me that in terms of tonality, I seem to have returned to Ansel Adams' way of working.

So, what does that say?

The original two files (left), plus two post-production steps between the processed raw files and the final rendition shown on the opposite page.





Bryde Island

Antarctica, 2015

Canon EOS 5DSR, EF200-400mm 1.4x f4L IS USM @ 400mm
1/1250 second @ f5.6, ISO 100, hand-held, no filter, composite

I LIKE USING long telephoto lenses for landscapes because they allow me to isolate areas or points of interest. They also have a foreshortening effect, which in a photograph like Bryde Island opposite, can compress lots of atmosphere into something visually tangible.

In-between the ship I was on (the *Polar Pioneer*) and the snow-covered headland, there is a lot of distance, so the camera isn't just recording a single plane of focus, but a depth of area containing wind-blown water, ice and snow.

When using long telephoto lenses (300mm and longer), distant sharp edges can appear distorted, not because of the limitations of the lens, but because of the atmosphere, especially rain and heat. This is not a scientific analysis, merely something I observed as my camera sensors increased in resolution.

My first experience with this problem began with Canon's 100-400mm lens in the days of film. I can remember trying to focus a negative in the enlarger and struggling to get the resulting image looking really sharp. My subject was a castle, which you'd expect to be easy enough to focus on, but it had been photographed through rain. However, it didn't immediately occur to me that this might be

the problem. It perplexed me so much I had the lens checked on an optical bench by Canon itself (and my lens was sharper than the comparison lens they had). Looking back, I think it must have been the rain that limited the sharpness, but of course, there's also the possibility of camera shake or mirror vibration.

Around 2010, I borrowed a Canon 600mm f4 super-telephoto lens. It is a beautiful piece of glass and unbelievably sharp. However, a photograph taken just past Glen Helen Gorge in the Northern Territory proved the effect of atmosphere most conclusively. It was taken late morning when the temperature was well over 30°C. With the naked eye, a distant tree within some folding hills looked quite normal, but reviewing the resulting file at 100% magnification on my computer screen showed the sharp edges of the tree trunk and branches were significantly distorted: you could see the impact of the heat haze.

There's not much we can do about this, except perhaps to try and shoot when the temperature is lower. Or optionally, maybe we can embrace it, which is what I have attempted to do with the photograph opposite.

The image is also a double exposure. The hint of the mountain range in the background has been dropped

in. It's something that we saw many times on this trip, a hint of the landscape behind the weather, but finding a good foreground at the same time was challenging. Hence the solution was to be found in post-production.

NEW TRADITION: What we used to call 'double exposures' are much easier to control with layers in Photoshop, but the main problem still remains: selecting two images that work well when composited together.

Using a mask, the image of the mountain range was appropriately sized and isolated using a soft-edge mask that would blend with the foreground image seamlessly, and then the opacity of the layer reduced to produce the effect: it looks as though the airborne snow is obscuring the view behind.

The print earned Gold Awards in a number of competitions and also generated much discussion among the judges: was it a composite or not?

My question: Does it matter?

Note how the background mountain is too 'strong' in the third shot above. By reducing the opacity of the layer, a more believable 'hint' of the mountain through the spray and clouds is achieved.





Antarctic Peninsula

Antarctica, Near Astrolabe Island, 2015

Canon EOS 5DSR, EF200-400mm f1.4x f4L IS USM at 236mm
1/2500 second @ f5.0, ISO 100, hand-held, no filter.

SHARPENING FILES IS part science, part art. Much of the science is automated these days and members of the digital demigodarchy have sorted out how we sharpen raw files for processing, and then sharpen the finished files for output (such as printing).

In-between these stages are further opportunities for creative sharpening.

Les Walkling gives a marvellous presentation about image sharpening and by drawing references to painting and art, he shows that sharpening can be used on both a macro and a micro level.

NEW TRADITION: In *The New Tradition*, sharpening is usually a technique that is applied almost invisibly to enhance fine details within the image.

When using the sharpen filter in Photoshop, for example, the 'radius' is typically 0.2 to 2 pixels with a larger 'amount' setting, say 200 or 300.

However, by engaging a much larger radius (say 25 to 30 pixels) with a relatively low amount (also 25 to 30), you can introduce a sense of dimensionality

into your image. The result is similar to the 'clarity' tool found in Adobe Camera Raw, Lightroom and Capture One.

Instead of using the unsharp masking tools, many photographers defer to the high pass filter.

The technique in Photoshop is as follows:

- Copy up a new layer that includes all the adjustment layers used so far and desaturate the layer.
- Turn the layer into a smart object (so you can adjust your settings) and then add the High Pass filter.
- For fine detail sharpening, you might use a radius of 0.2 to 2.0 pixels, but for the dimensionality effect, try anything from 20 to 500.
- After saving the settings, change the blend mode of the new layer to soft light.

You can experiment with the radius settings and also the blend mode – hard light can also work well.

However, just as incorrect settings can produce unsightly white haloes around subject edges when sharpening for output, larger radius settings can create even larger haloes and so the technique needs to be approached with care.

This applies whether you're using the high pass filter, the clarity slider or unsharp masking.

I find the main problems occur along strong shape outlines, such as horizon lines, mountain ridges and foreground trees. The easiest way to control errors is to add a mask and paint out the areas where sharpening is not required. Otherwise, you can sometimes use the healing brush or clone stamp set to darken blend mode and carefully retouch the white haloes.

The photograph of the Antarctic Peninsula has had minimal beginning (raw file) and end (output file) sharpening, but has used the high pass filter technique to bring out the texture in the ice.

The main elements of the image (ice, mountain, cloud) have also been isolated and separated a little more, just for compositional balance.

A selection of post-production steps between the processed raw file and the final rendition shown on the opposite page.





Sheep

Middlehurst Station, New Zealand, 2015

Phase One XF 100MP, Schneider Kreuznach LS 55mm f2.8 lens
4 seconds @ f8, ISO 200, tripod-mounted, 3x ND filter.

WATCHING PHOTOGRAPHY BE transformed from the craft of the darkroom to the button press of a smartphone has been both inspiring and frustrating.

The inspiration comes from seeing so many people gain the same enjoyment I do from creating a photograph they are proud of. The frustration comes from the lack of skill and understanding required to create their photographs – but does it really matter?

There are lots of interesting observations to be made. On the one hand, society wants to believe the subject matter of a photograph is true and hence the entire documentary photography debate.

On the other hand, society and photographers were becoming bored with straight photography. For example, some black and white darkroom workers used toning and bleaching techniques to create different effects. Colour film workers would ‘cross-process’ in an effort to create unusual colour effects.

Looked at analytically, toning and cross-processing were just simple techniques applied, perhaps no different to pressing a button on a computer program or smartphone app, which is the way the general public approaches creativity today.

One of the most popular apps for the early Apple iPhones was Hipstamatic. “Shoot beautiful authentic photography and become part of the world’s most creative community” the advertising claimed, but all

you had to do was press one of the many built-in filter effects that were automatically displayed on-screen for your viewing pleasure.

Hipstamatic didn’t remain the only creative community for very long. Instagram soon made being ‘creative’ something that everyone, from a kindergarten student to her grandfather, was capable of enjoying and herein lies part of my frustration.

Are these creative renditions the result of clever computer programming, or the user’s creativity? Once you have taken the photograph, you can open up any of a myriad of image editing apps and ‘select’ a filter effect that looks good to you. Being creative becomes a process of ‘recognition’, meaning you keep scrolling through all the different filter effects until you see something that you like.

So, what’s the difference between my process and one of recognising an appropriate filter on Instagram? If I reference modern art, I need to get over this bias because really, all that matters is the final image.

Now, sitting between this process of recognition and creativity are further sliders and menu options that give the user control over how much or little of a particular effect is applied. If you use the ‘recognition’ process as a starting point and then manually adjust the image to your liking, then I guess there’s not much difference to doing this and toning in the darkroom.

Both involve using a process and both processes allow the user to control the end result.

So this is the resolution in my mind. We should take advantage of technology and one path may involve quickly reviewing different effects as presented by our image editing software. This is no different to referencing popular art and photography in search of inspiration.

NEW TRADITION: Once we have found our starting point, take control of the creative process. After all, this is the most enjoyable aspect of the digital workflow.

So, with my photograph of sheep taken in New Zealand’s high country, was this creativity or just a process I was following? Adding a neutral density filter slowed down the shutter speed so the movement of the sheep was blurred. I then used a series of controls and buttons in Capture One and Photoshop to remove the colour, darken the exposure, blur the background and then reintroduce a hint of colour, a bit like my process of selective toning with a paintbrush in the darkroom.

There are many ways this image could be finished. In some versions, I have added a stronger gold colour to the sheep, but this is the version I like best.





Tone's Tree

Middlehurst Station, New Zealand, 2015

Phase One XF 100MP, Schneider Kreuznach LS 55mm f2.8 lens
30 seconds @ f11, ISO 50, tripod-mounted, 10x ND filter, multiple exposures.

HOW MANY PIXELS is enough? I can remember being green with envy when Sinar introduced a 20-megapixel digital back, yet today a relatively inexpensive DSLR or CSC can offer double this resolution.

Nevertheless, there is something inspiring about a camera that captures a 100-megapixel file.

In late 2015, I took another voyage down to Antarctica. Along with my Canon outfit for wildlife, I took my Phase One XF and a pre-production IQ3 100-megapixel digital back for landscapes. A selection of the resulting images was to be used for the launch of the new back a couple of months later.

I had already played with the 100MP back a few months earlier in Iceland. Drew Altdorfer from Phase One turned up with a 'special' back covered in gaffer tape and said Christian Fletcher and I were the first photographers outside Phase One to use it. Some of the images I took were startling in their quality, but the extra resolution also revealed how dependent the system was on calibrating the lenses to the camera.

Phase One struggled for many years with its Mamiya-based 645 camera bodies. To be blunt, they did not focus well and I found it challenging to focus the lenses manually.

A few years earlier I had shot a project for Phase One, testing all its lenses with an 80-megapixel back,

but out in the field, the camera simply wasn't up to it (unless you worked tethered with a laptop). The lenses focused at fractionally different points each time – as do most cameras, to be honest – but with 80-megapixel resolutions, these differences were critically important and fatal to the project.

Fortunately, all that changed with the introduction of the Phase One XF body and a brand new autofocus system that could be precisely calibrated for all your lenses individually.

With the new 100MP back on the XF, I spent a couple of hours fine-tuning the focus after which using the back was a dream. Of course, it's not just the resolution, but the dynamic range as well, and the new CMOS back offered higher usable ISO settings than the previous CCD design.

So, why do you need 100-megapixels? The main reason is print size. When printing exhibition work, I like to print at 180 ppi (pixels per inch) or higher. Large prints are not generally viewed at close quarters (except by other photographers) and so 180 ppi provides ample resolution and detail.

Roughly speaking, a 100-megapixel file is 12,000 pixels across which translates to a 66-inch (1.6 metre) print. Stitch together a couple of frames and you can go even bigger, but whether you can find people with

large enough walls to hang them is another matter.

No doubt in years to come, the 100-megapixel sensor will be joined by something larger still.

Do we need 200-megapixels?

The photograph opposite was taken on Middlehurst Station in Tone's Paddock. Based on observations a couple of days earlier, we knew the top of the tree would be lit up by the sun around an hour after sunrise, but so would the background mountains and valley, so two exposures were taken, the first with the background in shadow, the second with the tree in sunlight. The two images were then merged together in Photoshop, revealing the areas that worked the best.

And similar to the tree in front of the sand dune in Namibia back in 1995, this tree was lightened using a number of masks and adjustment layers, the modern equivalent of a sable hair paintbrush and a solution of Farmers Reducer.

Full circle.

The original two files (left), plus two post-production steps between the processed raw files and the final rendition shown on the opposite page.









Sugarloaf Rock

Post-production in *The New Tradition*

PHOTOGRAPHY IS A two-step process – capture and post-production.

Of course, how much post-production is up to the photographer. Some photographers are happy with minimal adjustments, others display no restraint. For me, the amount of post-production used is simply what is required to create the image I am happy with.

The New Tradition offers photographers a myriad of opportunities in post-production and there are

often dozens of different ways to achieve much the same result.

The following pages describe how the image *Sugarloaf Rock* was produced. It has a combination of basic and advanced techniques using Photoshop. It gives you an idea of the type of approaches I'm happy to pursue in search of the final image.

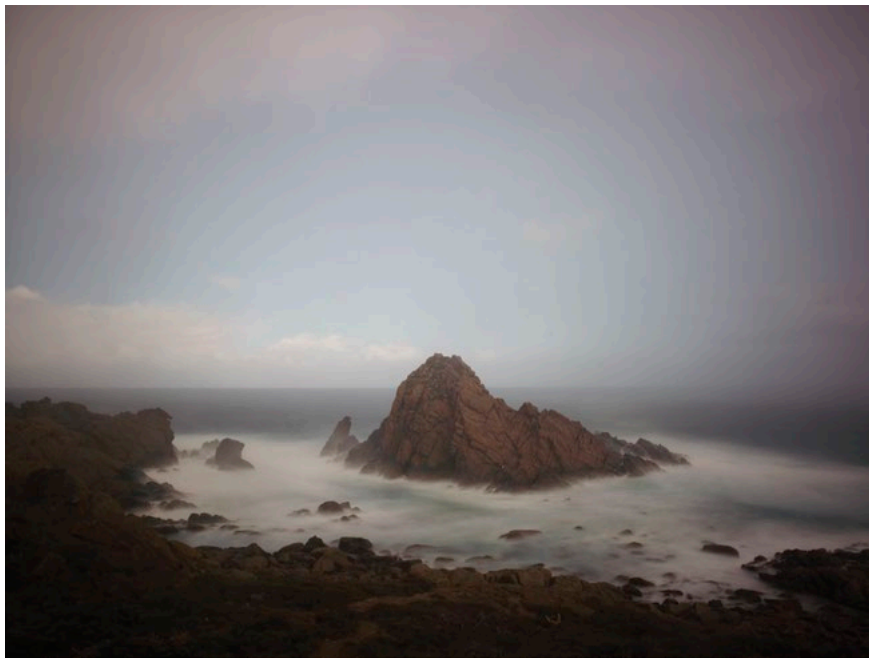
The workflow was originally published in *Better Photoshop Techniques* magazine (which I jointly

published with Robin Nichols and Philip Andrews).

At the time, CS4 was the current version of Photoshop, but it's interesting how few of the fundamental techniques have changed in over 20 years.

There are some aspects of the post-production that would be done differently and some new tools that would allow the result to be achieved more economically, but the basic approach remains the same.

Capture and post-production.



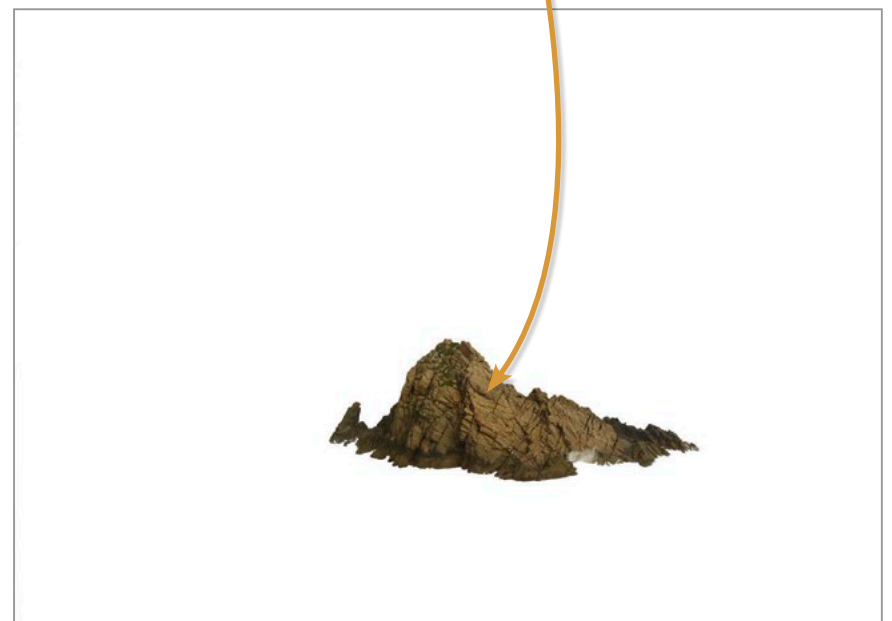
01 Two files were used to create the final image. There was a small amount of camera shake during the long exposure. Although the shake was hardly perceptible (Tony Hewitt and I had done a stellar job in keeping the camera still), it was enough to annoy me, especially for the enlargements I had in mind.

The solution was to use one of the earlier frames taken with a shorter shutter speed. These frames were tack sharp with all the beautiful texture and hardness of the rock retained. In comparison, if there were a little camera shake in the waves and the sky in the longer exposure, well, who cares? You can't tell anyway.

With some of my landscape post-production, I like to work in Lab Color mode instead of RGB. This is because Photoshop has some technical shortcomings when you use curves to make significant tonal changes: not only do you change the tone in RGB, but the hue as well. Although sometimes you can avoid this by changing the blend mode to luminosity, this isn't always practicable (or even a workable solution). So, mindful of Les Walkling's warnings about the limitations of Lab Color mode itself, my first step with this image is to convert to Lab Color.

Note, you can't process a raw file directly to Lab Color, so when you process the raw file, it's important to output it to the largest RGB colour space you're happy with. I use Joseph Holmes' CAM3 colour space, but you can also use ProPhoto (as you would find in Lightroom and ACR). If you want to investigate Joseph's colour spaces, please visit www.josephholmes.com.

The following explanations assume you have a basic understanding of layers in Photoshop.



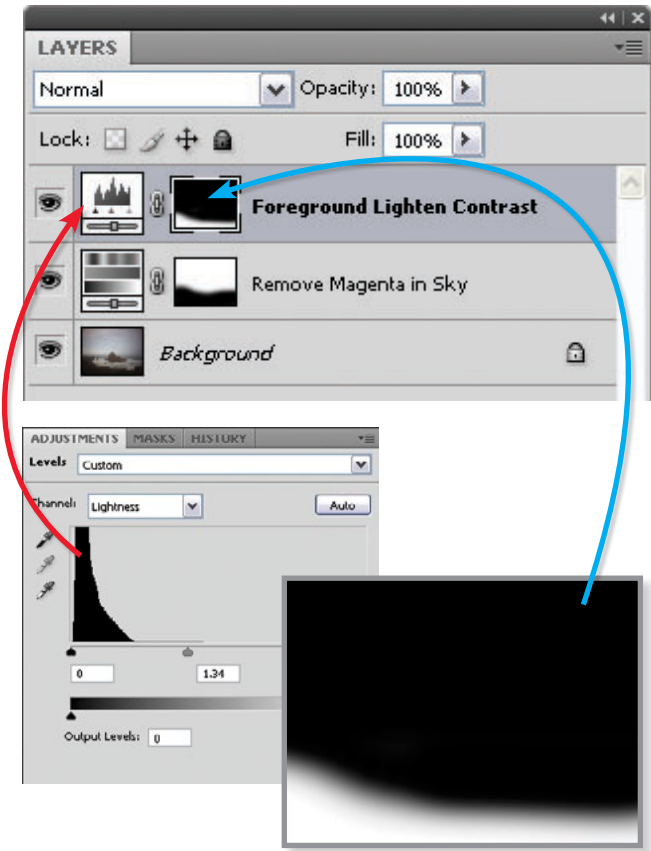


02 You will see the first layer above the Background is titled Remove Magenta in Sky (see Layers panel diagram to the right). I added a hue/saturation adjustment layer and, selecting the magenta channel, desaturated the magenta to remove the excessive pink colouration in the file (a product of the gelatin ND filter used, I believe).

In terms of interpreting the image, the next step was to lighten the foreground, not a lot, but just enough to reveal some detail. The focus will be on the big rock, of course, but I wanted the small path through the foreground rocks to be clearly seen.

To achieve this, a further adjustment layer was added, this time using levels. Although I normally use the curves dialog instead of levels, sometimes I find that levels gives me the result I'm looking for more easily.

As I didn't want to lighten the entire image, I used a large black brush on the mask attached to the levels adjustment layer, blocking the effect from all the image except the foreground (see diagram on right).

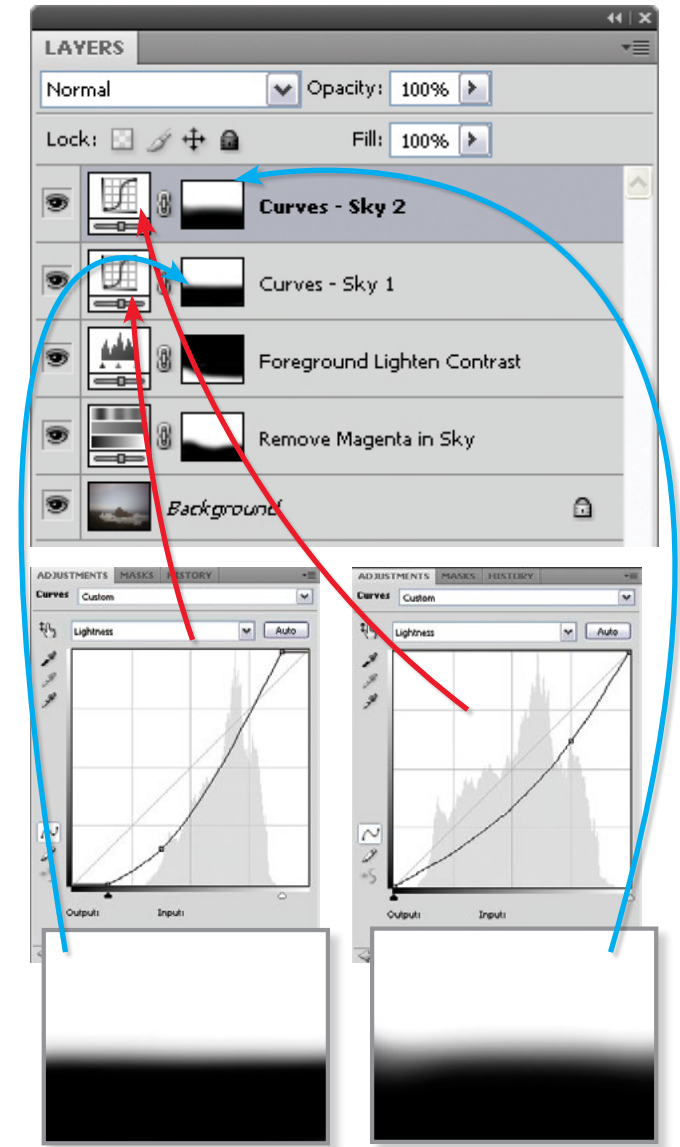


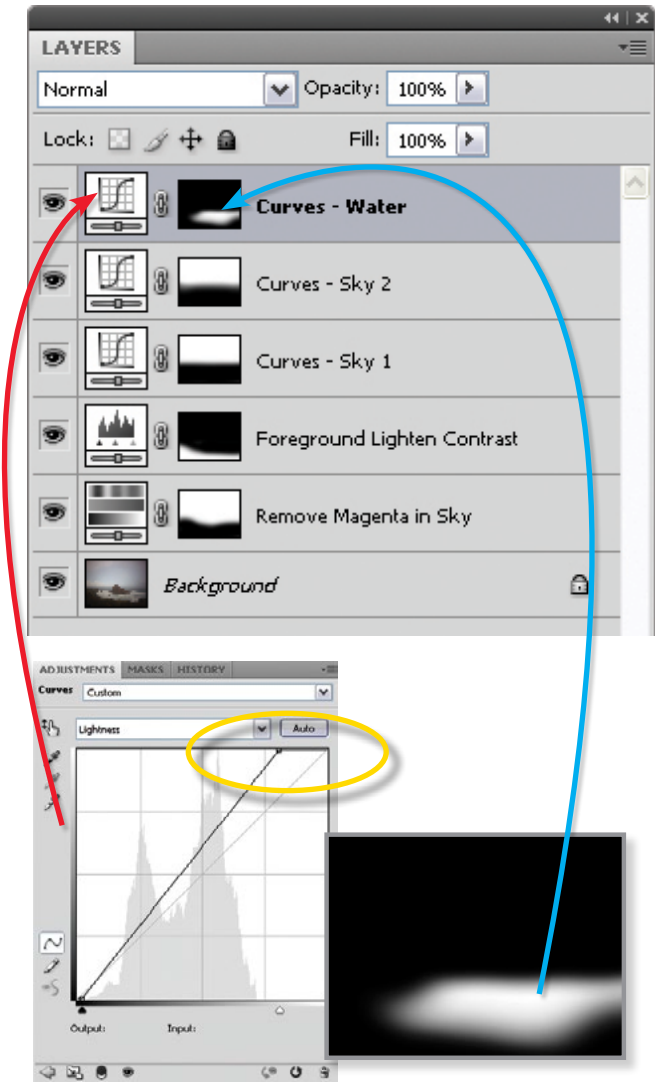
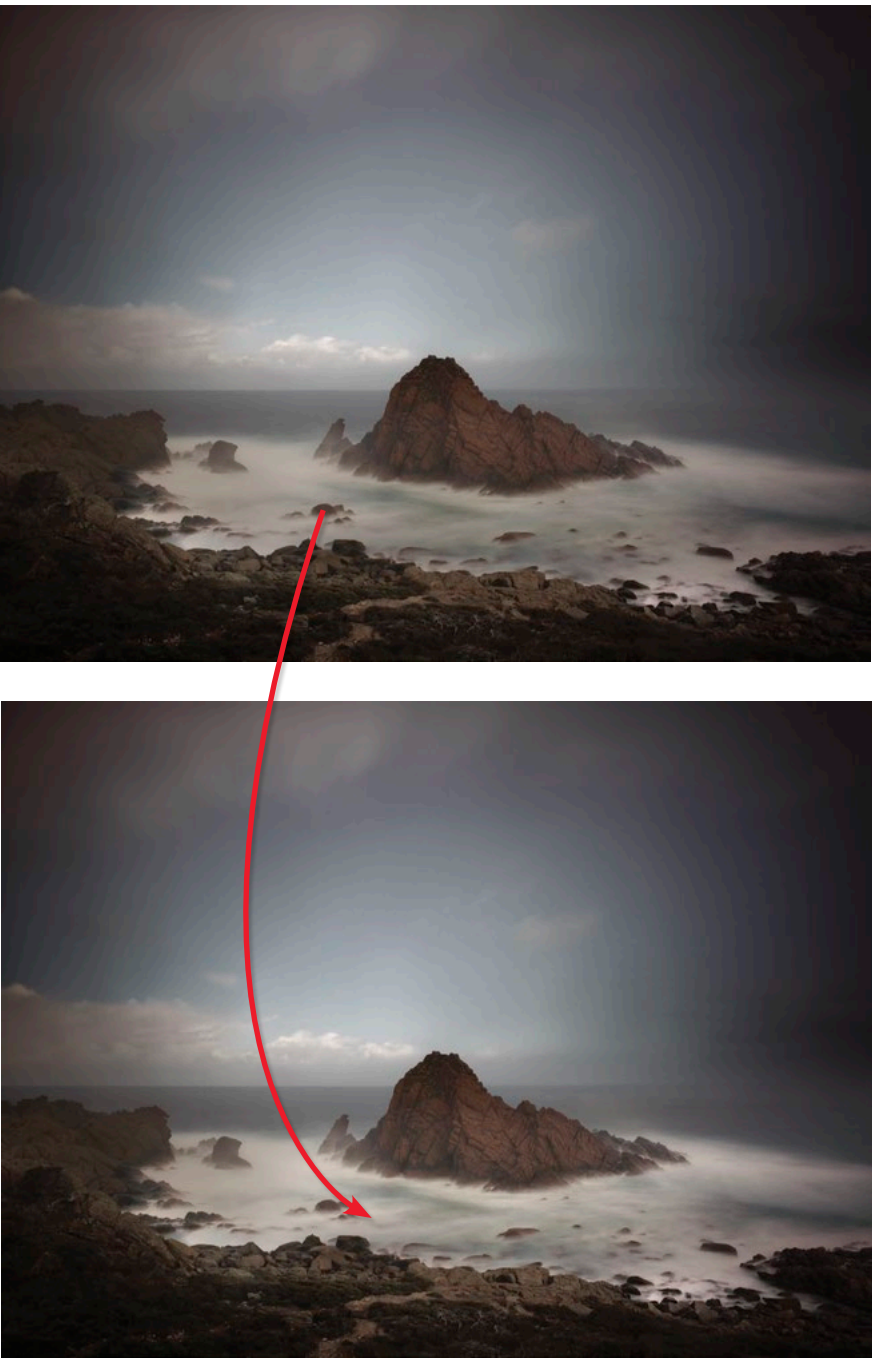


03 In a similar way, I then darkened the sky. I find that working in several small steps rather than one big step produces a more ‘invisible’ result. I like to think of my Photoshop work as being invisible – yes, we all know I’ve done something to the file, but it shouldn’t be obvious where that ‘something’ starts or finishes.

You’ll notice the two curve dialogs show Lightness as the channel instead of RGB – this is the channel you use in Lab Color mode which allows you to change the tonal range of the image without affecting the hue (colour).

You’ll also notice the mask for the second adjustment layer (Curves – Sky 2) has a softer edge, again helping to hide the Photoshop work.





04 Visually, it was important to separate the rock from the shore and there was plenty of white water between the two to accentuate this.

I added a curves adjustment layer and, in the curves dialog, just moved the top right highlight (white) point to the left (see the diagram). As you can see from the curve, this movement lightens all the values, but it lightens the highlights more than the shadow areas.

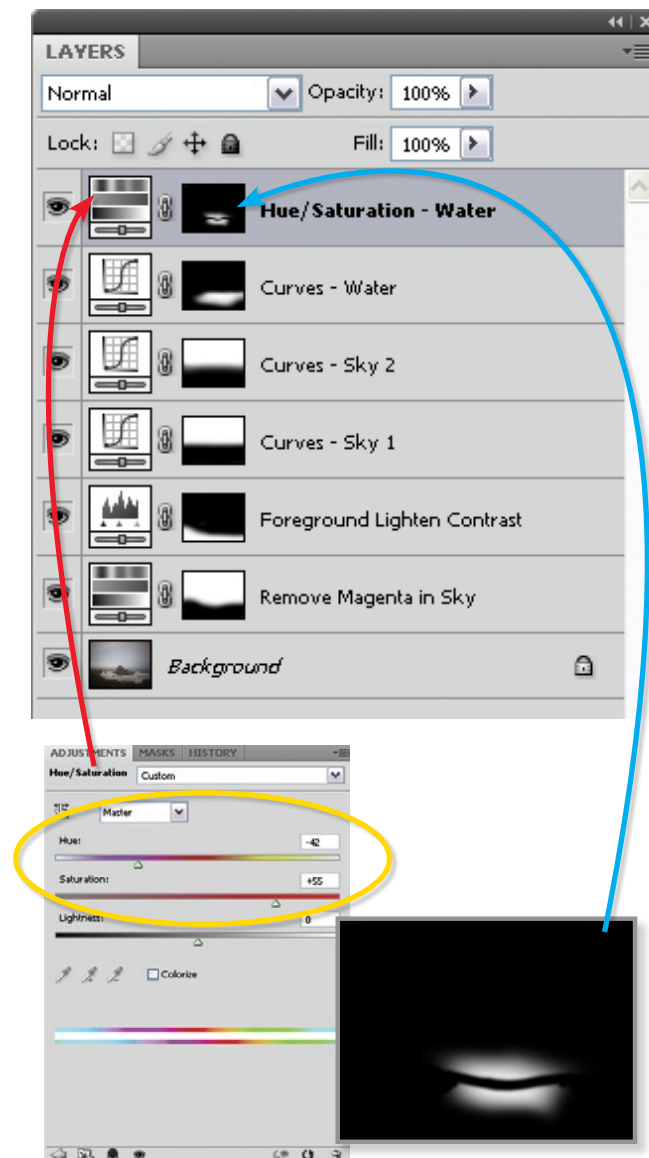
When the layer mask is painted on so that just the water is lightened and not the rest of the image, the result is a brighter, whiter sea surrounding the rock.



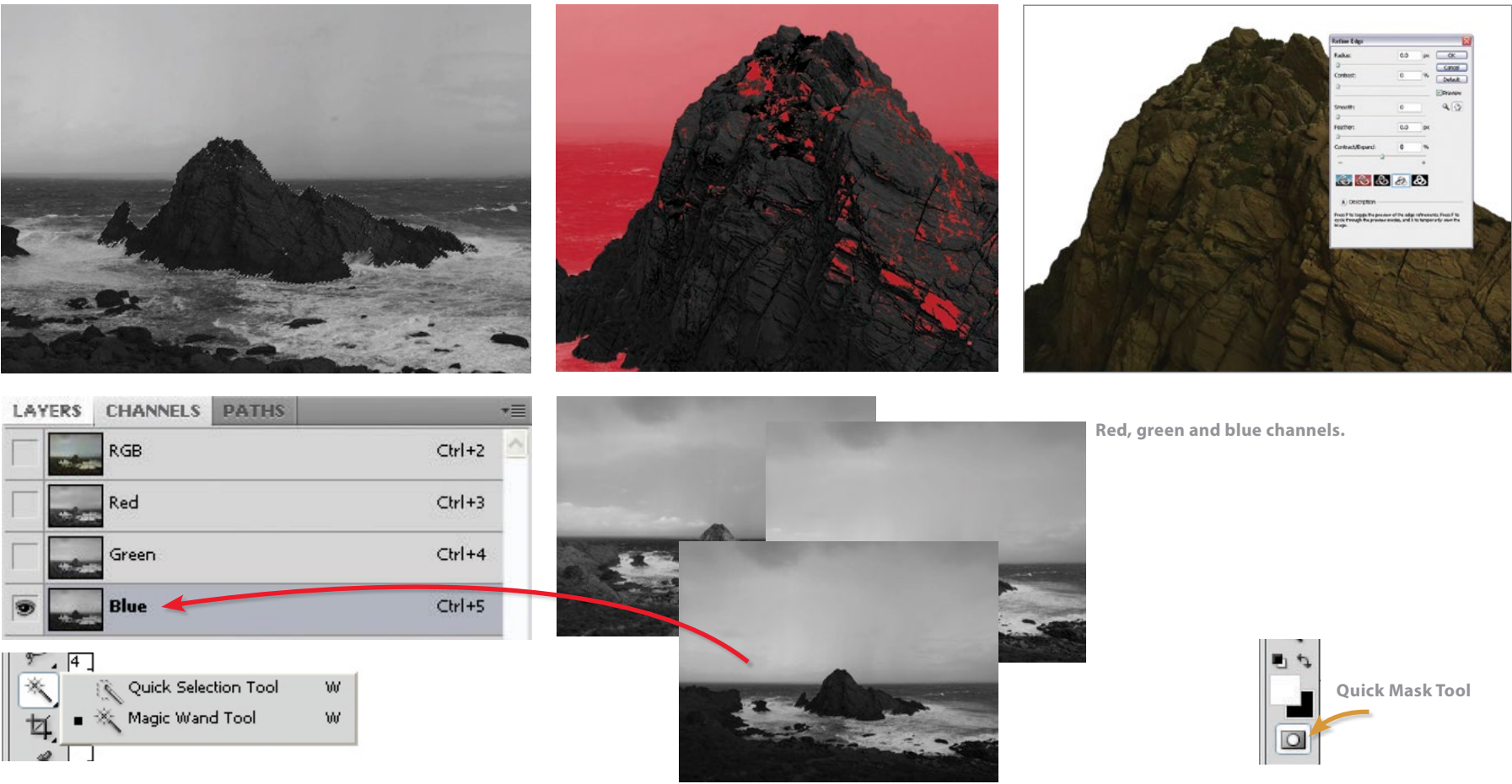
05 In the interests of believability, we need to pay attention to telltales like reflections. By the time I'm finished with the rock, it will be bright red, so I need to have that colour reflected in the water below.

Using a hue/saturation adjustment layer and a mask that just affects the water in front of the rock, and the water spray above the waterline, I adjusted both the hue (to make the area red) and the saturation (to increase the amount of colour) to introduce a pink reflection.

(In practice, this step was done after the following Steps 6 and 7 which colour the rock, but it was positioned underneath in the layer stack for no particular reason – it could have been positioned elsewhere.)



WORKFLOW



06 The next step is to place the sharp rock from the short exposure into position, so I open the other file and leave it in RGB mode. At first glance, it doesn't seem too difficult to cut out the rock from its surroundings because its edges appear sharp. True, but the edge where the rock meets the moving waves is fraught with difficulties – see Step 7!

[When this image was edited, I didn't use channels, layers and masks quite the same way I would today, so the following is a little old school, but the principles remain the same.]

Photoshop offers many ways to cut out objects (make selections). The magic wand tool has been in Photoshop for many years, while the quick selection tool is found in CS3 and later editions.

The magic wand tool selects pixels with similar values. However, different colours can have similar values which tends to fool the magic wand tool, so sometimes it can be useful to go to your channels panel and look at the red, green and blue channels one by one (see images above). Often you'll find one channel more clearly separates your subject, much as a black and white mask or selection would.

In this case, I found the blue channel showed the rock as a much darker tone than its surroundings (see diagram above). I applied the magic wand tool to the channel.

By using a small tolerance with the magic wand tool (from 5 to 15), and using the shift key to add to the selection or the alt/opt key to remove from the selection, I can build up a selection of the rock.

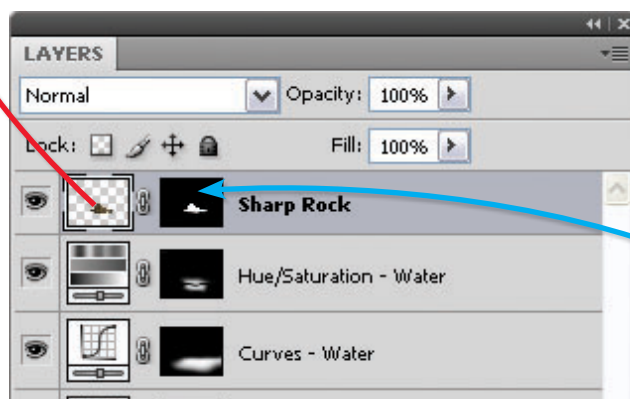
If you have difficulties getting all the areas selected, switch to the quick mask mode (the red overlay screen shown above centre) and use a brush to manually fill in the recalcitrant areas. Click out of quick mask mode and you have your selection back.

Once you have the selection completed, you simply revert back to full colour mode with the selection still in place. (Note I am doing the cut-out in RGB mode – if I were in Lab mode, then I wouldn't see the RGB channels, rather L-a-b channels!)

The quick selection tool works in a similar way, except that it's much smarter and, by setting a low tolerance value, you can produce extremely accurate selections.

Pay particular attention to the edges at high magnifications as any errors you make can show up later as telltale white lines around your cut-out.

When you're happy with your handiwork, delete the rest of the image, convert to Lab Color mode (only necessary because the other image is already in Lab Color), copy the cut-out layer and paste it on top of the layer stack in the main file. Assuming both exposures were made with no camera movement, it will fit perfectly. In this case, some minor nudges were required to perfectly align the two layers.



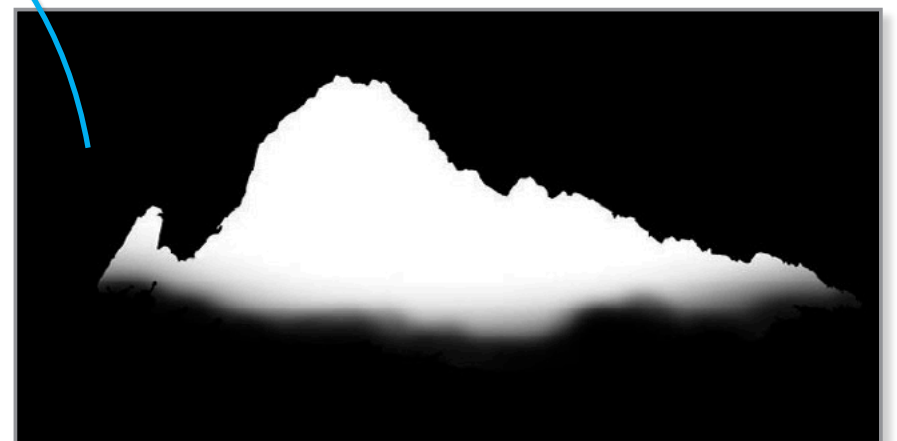
07 If you have done your selection properly (the cut-out rock shown top left), it should sit in position perfectly when pasted into the main image (as shown in the image top right).

However, a closer look at the cut-out on its own (top left) reveals that the bottom of the rock where the waves are surging is just as sharp as the top of the rock set against the sky. When you paste the rock into the main image, it isn't going to look completely believable (see top right again). Your viewers will look at the photograph and instantly know what you've done. It's not invisible Photoshop.

Compare the top right rock with my adjusted version immediately below. Note how the edges of the rock meeting the water are now more believable. As the waves are not sharp, but rather a motion blur, it is appropriate to create a blurred edge for the rock along the waterline as well. This can be done in many ways.

One option is to simply pull out your eraser tool, set with a soft brush, and 'feather' the edges of the cut-out rock. The only problem with this approach is that it's destructive – once the edges of the rock are erased, they are gone forever (or as long as your history lasts). If you find a problem later during post-production, you have to start this part all over again. And believe me, it's amazing the problems you discover as you refine your work!

My preferred option was to add a mask. Since the sharp rock is on a transparent layer, it is easy to make a selection of it (just use the quick selection or magic wand tools, click in the transparent area and invert the resulting selection) and, with the selection active, add a layer mask. In doing so a perfect mask of the background rock



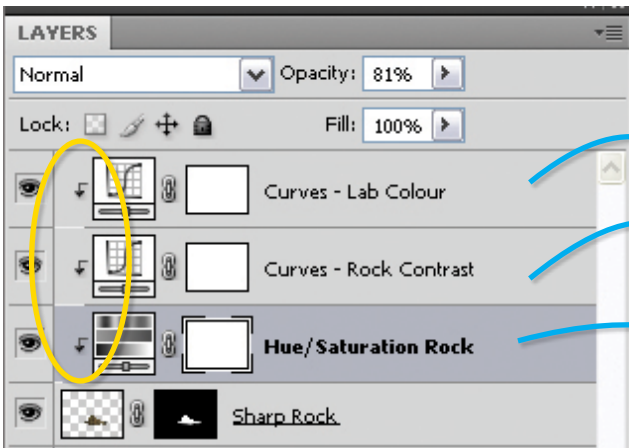
will be added, revealing only the rock itself. Switch to a soft, black brush, click on the mask icon in the layers panel to make the mask active, and brush along the bottom edges of the rock (as shown here above).

[Optionally, I don't need the whole rock masked, just the bottom edge will do.]

Where you soften the edge of the mask, the rock from the main image below shows through, hiding the telltale sharp edge in the cut-out image.

In this way you are using both hard and soft edges in a single selection, adapting the cut-out to what we would normally expect to see.

Another example of invisible Photoshop.



08 The sharp rock is now in position, but its colour isn't what I had in mind. The next three steps use adjustment layers to create the red colour and increase the rock's contrast. You will note in the layers panel above that none of these layers has used a mask. Normally without a mask, the adjustment layer would affect the entire image, but by creating a 'clipping mask' of the adjustment layer, the effect only passes to the layer immediately below. In this case, because most of the layer below is transparent, no change is made. The adjustments only affect the rock.

To create a layer with a clipping mask, first add the adjustment layer in the normal way. Then press Alt + Ctrl + G / Opt + Cmd + G (PC/Mac) or use the menu list at the top right of the layers panel and select 'Create Clipping Mask'. You will know you're successful because the layer will be indented with a small right-angle arrow next to it (see the three clipping mask layers in the layers panel above).

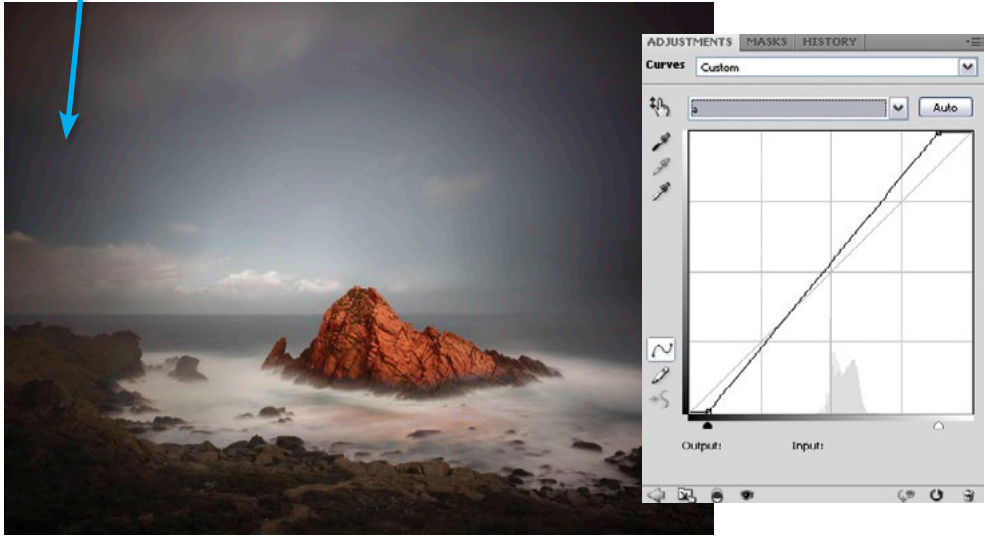
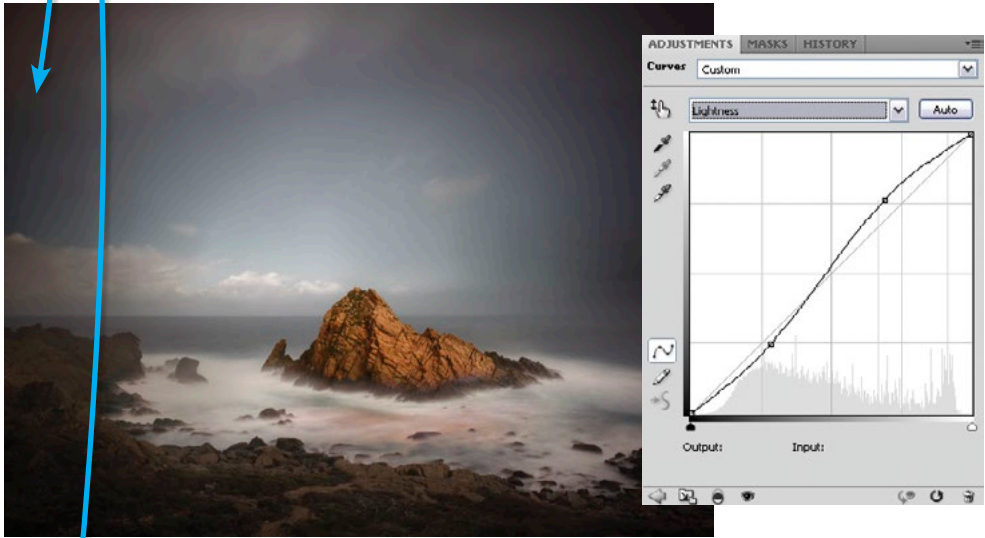
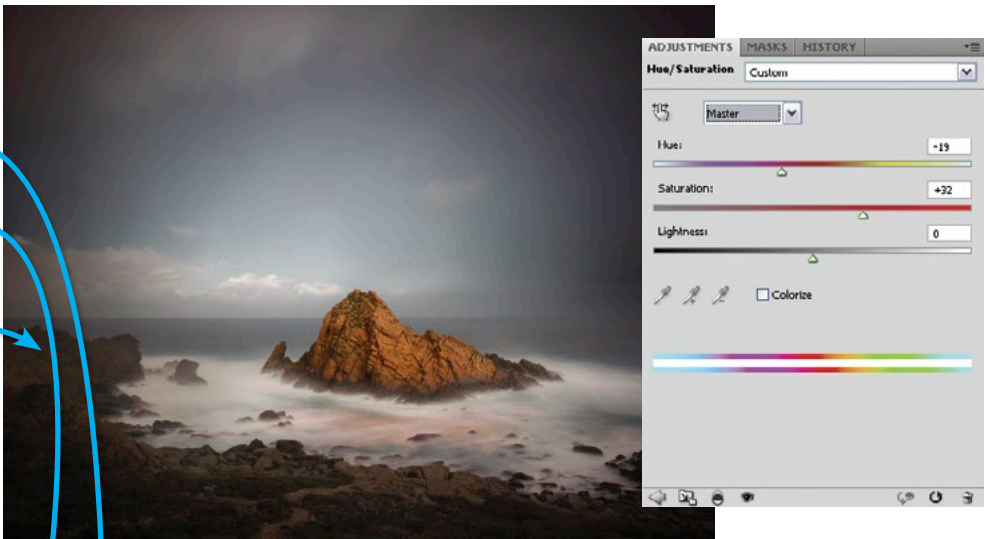
The rock was coloured in three steps.

First, the existing colour was adjusted with a hue/saturation adjustment layer, using the hue slider to make the colour warmer and the saturation slider to increase the saturation.

Second, a curves adjustment layer was added in order to increase the contrast. Increased contrast serves to bring objects forward, while decreased contrast sends them back.

Some people would be happy to leave the rock this more natural colour, but I have never been particularly natural in my approach to landscapes! The third layer uses an aspect of Lab mode which can sometimes create colour shifts that are much more pronounced and more easily created than in RGB mode. However, you have to get your head around the fact that when looking at the 'a' and 'b' channels in the Lab Color curves dialog, the straight line of the curve rotates around the centre point.

Rotate the 'a' line to the left by moving the top right point to the left and the bottom left point to the right, and the colour is increased in saturation; rotate the other way and the colour is desaturated. Do the same thing, but unevenly so the line passes on the left or the right of the centre point and you increase one colour or another over the entire image. The 'a' channel controls magenta/green, the 'b' channel controls blue/yellow. And the steeper the line, the more severe the colour change. With a correctly calibrated colour monitor, you can do this visually. This isn't the answer for every colour problem, but perhaps it's one to keep in mind when all else fails!

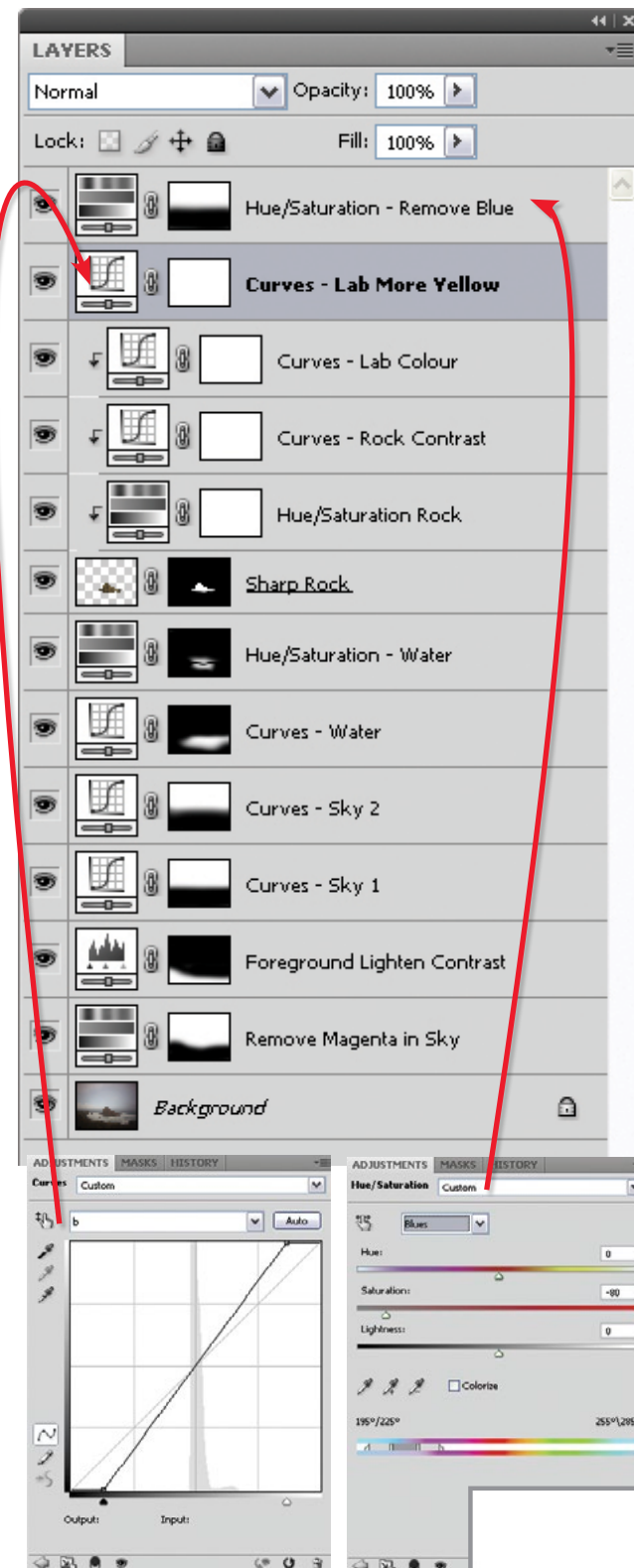




09 A subtle yellow colour cast is added over the entire image, but it has the most effect on the red colour in the rock. This is achieved with a curves adjustment layer, this time playing with the 'b' channel and steepening the curve line.

Colour shifts can also be achieved with a hue/saturation adjustment layer, even in Lab Color mode. The next adjustment layer does exactly this and removes the blue from the sky. A mask is used to ensure that any blues in the foreground are unaffected.

There is no logical reason different adjustment layers were used to adjust the colour. This is just how the image was actually created and I wasn't necessarily logical! You're following a thought process, rather than the quickest way to achieve the same result.





10 The next two steps add some density (darkness) to the top of the image, and to the image overall. It's just a matter of looking at the photograph and darkening down areas that aren't as important as your subject. You don't want the rock to compete against a bright area of sky, so darken it. However, you don't want the sky so dark that the rock looks like it is photographed at night – it's a matter of balance and this balance is very much a matter of personal taste.

The image is saved and put away for a few days, maybe a few weeks. This allows it to be revisited with a fresh mind.

LAYERS

Normal Opacity: 100%

Lock: Fill: 100%

Curves - Darken Shadows

Curves - Top Vignette

Hue/Saturation - Remove Blue

Curves - Lab More Yellow

Curves - Lab Colour

Curves - Rock Contrast

Hue/Saturation Rock

Sharp Rock

Hue/Saturation - Water

Curves - Water

Curves - Sky 2

Curves - Sky 1

Foreground Lighten Contrast

Remove Magenta in Sky

ADJUSTMENTS MASKS HISTORY

Curves Custom

Lightness Auto

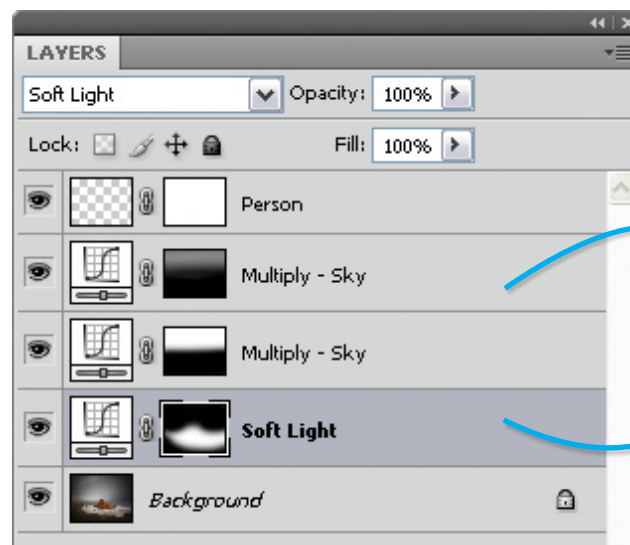
Output Input

ADJUSTMENTS MASKS HISTORY

Curves Custom

Lightness Auto

Output Input



11 To finalise the image, I flattened the file and saved it as a copy. I also switched back into RGB mode so I could play with the blending modes.

Of course, you can play with blending modes in Lab Color as well, but you may remember at the beginning of the chapter that I switched to Lab Color mode so I didn't get any unwanted colour surprises when I lightened and darkened the image.

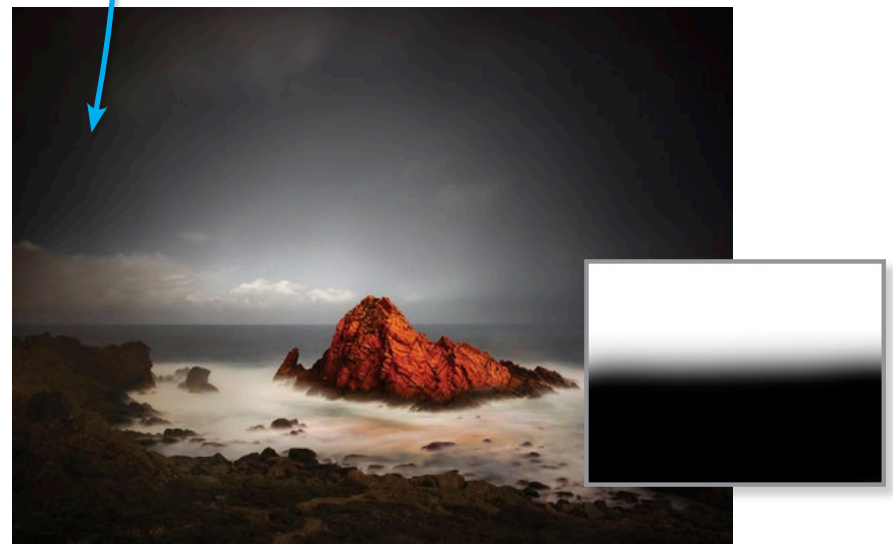
Well, now I changed my mind (as we're all entitled to do on a regular basis). I wanted to exploit how Photoshop can change colours in RGB mode when making tonal adjustments (lightening and darkening or changing contrast). I wanted that rock to really pop!

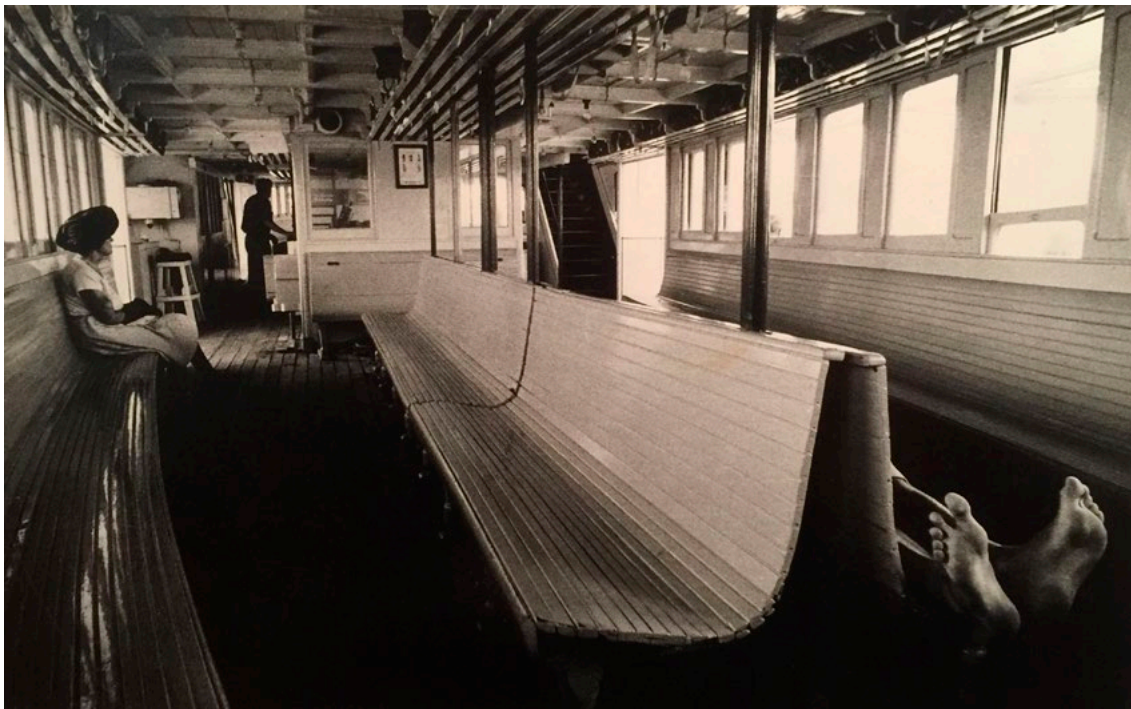
Three curves adjustment layers were added, but the curve was not touched. Instead, the blending mode was changed for each layer and then the opacity of the layer adjusted to control the effect.

The soft light blend mode was used to increase the colour and contrast of the rock and middle ground, controlled by a mask (top right image). Then two multiply blend modes were used to further darken the sky, again using masks to control what area of the image was affected (just the first of these two layers is shown opposite, but by now you get the idea of what is involved).

The final layer adds in a small figure. I couldn't convince Tony Hewitt to stand on the rocks. He said something about being washed away, but I couldn't hear him properly as the squall intensified. I think that's why he volunteered to hold the tripod steady!

So, although Tony is a good friend, I had to resort to some Photoshop skullduggery to get him into position – a simple cut and paste job like the rock.





Photographed on one of the old wooden Sydney Harbour ferries, Kanangra in 1978.
Feet courtesy of Paul Cull. Hatted lady unknown.

Biography

Peter Anthony Eastway

- 1958 Born Melbourne, Victoria
- 1960 Moved to Sydney, NSW
- 1974 First place, Northern Sydney Schools Photography Competition
- 1976 Joined Mosman Camera Club and met Elizabeth Lough
First place, Snap Your Cat, Whiskas pet food photography competition
- 1977 Santa Claus photographer, Neutral Bay
- 1978 Bachelor of Economics, Sydney University
- 1979 First place, Goethe Institute Photographic Competition for Young Australians

Career Highlights

- 1978 First photos published in *Australian Photography* magazine monthly competition
First surfing photos published in *Australian Surfing World Magazine*
- 1979 Author of article on wide-angle lenses published in *Australian Camera Craft* magazine, published by Paul Curtis
- 1980 Became regular contributor to *Australian Camera Craft Magazine*
- 1981 Inclusion in the international *Minolta Mirror*, published in Japan
- 1982 Covered Ski World Cup in Kitzbuhel for *Slope Magazine*
Appointed editor of *Australian Camera Craft Magazine*
- 1983 Opera House surfing story and photographs, *Tracks Magazine*
- 1984 Appointed managing editor, Iris Publishing

- 1988 *Ferry to Mosman* book and exhibition with Paul Burrows and Phillip Ramsden for the Australian Bicentennial Celebrations
- 1992 Published *Profitable Photography* Newsletter, the name was changed to *The Working Pro* and then to the *AIPP Journal* – still being published in 2018
- 1985 Joined Australian Institute of Professional Photography (AIPP)
Treasurer, NSW Division of AIPP
- 1986 Associate of Australian Institute of Professional Photography
AIPP Kodak Achievement Award
National Treasurer, Australian Institute of Professional Photography
- 1995 First issue of *Better Photography* magazine, published with wife Kathie – still being published in 2018
- 1995 Master of Photography, AIPP
First issue of *Which Camera*, published until 2014
- 1998 Purchased *Australian Surfing World* magazine with Doug Lees, Marky Eymes and John (Reggae) Elliss
- 2001 First issue of *Better Digital* magazine, co-published with Robin Nichols, published until 2013.
- 2004 First issue of *Better Photoshop Techniques* magazine, co-published with Robin Nichols and Philip Andrews, then published until 2013.
Surfing World shoot in the Mentawai Islands, Indonesia with Danny Wills, Dean Morrison, Jay Thompson, Matt Wilkinson, Mitch Coleburn, Tim Baker and Lance Knight.
- 2005 Chairman, Australian Professional Photography Awards, held for six years.
- 2006 AIPP Grand Master of Photography
Panasonic Japan – camera range catalogue shoot
Chillfactor Magazine – Niseko shoot

2008 Adobe Lightroom – research trip with Adobe programmers in Tasmania with Mikkel Aaland
Panasonic Japan – second camera range catalogue shoot

2009 First voyage to Antarctica, South Georgia and the Falklands
PNG shoot for Tourism PNG

2012 Apple uses iceberg photograph for Macbook Pro TV commercial

2012 Phase One – produced Capture One 6 instructional video series in Denmark

2006 *Dairy Australia* book project with Ken Duncan

2010 *The Pilbara Project* with Christian Fletcher, Les Walkling, Tony Hewitt and Michael Fletcher. The genesis of the Ninety Degrees Five (ND5) collective.

2012 Australian postage stamp – Farming Australia series

2014 Introduced International Landscape Photographer of the Year Awards with David Evans and Nathan Oxley

2015 Antarctica shoot with Abraham Joffe for *Tales By Light* television series, in partnership with Canon, Nat Geo Channel and (eventually) Netflix.

Selected Presentations, Workshops and Tours

1995 Business Planning for Professional Photographers with Kodak (Australian capitals)
Co-leader of photo tour to Namibia with Ruby Spowart

2000 AIPP – GST workshops for professional photographers (Australian capitals)

2005 Speaker, Orvieto Fotografica
New Zealand, NZIPP

2006 Speaker and judge, Wedding Portrait Photographers International (WPPI), Las Vegas, USA

2007 Speaker and judge, Wedding Portrait Photographers International (WPPI), Las Vegas, USA
Speaker and judge, NZIPP, Auckland, NZ
Lecture tour for Phase One to Hong Kong, Korea and Singapore

2008 Speaker and judge, Wedding Portrait Photographers International (WPPI), Las Vegas, USA

2009 Speaker, FotoFest, Birmingham, UK
Speaker and judge, NZIPP, Wellington, NZ
Hamilton Island Away photography workshop with David Oliver (annually until 2016).
Orpheus Island Print workshop with Les Walkling and John de Rooy

2010 Leader, Karijini Photo Workshop with Christian Fletcher and Tony Hewitt (annually until 2016)
Leader, Central Australia PODAS (Phase One Digital Artist Series) photo tour

2011 Workshop and photo tours around the world become a regular part of calendar

Exhibitions

1979 *Photography for Living With*, Cave Group, Printers Gallery, Crows Nest, NSW
Goethe Institute Travelling Exhibition, West Germany

1981 Festival of Sydney *Photography, A Creative Approach*, NSW

1988 *Ferry To Mosman* - Australian BiCentennial Celebration, Mosman with Paul Burrows and Phillip Ramsden

2003 *Away* - exhibition and book with David Oliver, Gallery Xposure, Rozelle, NSW

2004 *Spirit* exhibition, Neutral Bay, NSW with Joanne Felk, Tania Niwa and David Oliver

2011 *Rockhopper*, Gaffa Gallery, Sydney
The Pilbara Project, FORM Gallery, Perth,
The Pilbara Project, Courthouse Gallery, Port Hedland

2012 *The Pilbara Project: The Photographers’ Cut*, Midlands, Perth
The Pilbara Project, Sofitel Hotel, Melbourne
ND5 Travel Expo, Exhibition Halls, Perth
The Pilbara Project, Oz Fest, New Delhi, India
South West Light, Yallingup Gallery, Yallingup

2013 *At The Edge of the Light*, Australian High Commission, Wellington, New Zealand
At The Edge of the Light, WPPI Exhibition, Las Vegas, USA
At The Edge of the Light, The Digital Show, Melbourne
2016 Shark Bay - Inscription, Lynton & Kay Gallery, Perth

2014 *2016 Shark Bay - Inscription*, Maud Creative Gallery, Brisbane
At The Edge of the Light, Millenium Public Art Gallery, Blenheim, New Zealand

2015 *North + East*, Maud Creative Gallery, Brisbane
Earth Matters, Monash Gallery, Melbourne

2016 *2016 Shark Bay - Inscription*, Denham, W.A.

Major Awards

1995 NSW AIPP Professional Photographer of the Year

1995 AIPP Australian Landscape Photographer of the Year

1996 NSW AIPP Professional Photographer of the Year

1996 AIPP Australian Landscape Photographer of the Year

1996 AIPP Australian Professional Photographer of the Year

1998 AIPP Australian Landscape Photographer of the Year

1998 AIPP Australian Professional Photographer of the Year

2004 NSW AIPP Professional Photographer of the Year

2004 AIPP Australian Illustrative Photographer of the Year

2005 Grand Award, WPPI, Commercial Category

2007 New Zealand Overseas Photographer of the Year

2008 Grand Award, WPPI, Commercial Category

2009 1st, 2nd, 3rd Landscape Category, WPPI, Commercial Category

2009 Kodak Award of Distinction, WPPI

2010 Finalist, International Section, FEP European Professional Photographer of the Year Awards

2010 1st Place, SWPP and BPPA, Natural World Category, UK

2010 NSW AIPP Landscape Photographer of the Year

2010 NSW AIPP Commercial Photographer of the Year

2010 NSW AIPP Professional Photographer of the Year

2011 Finalist, FEP European Fine Art Photograph of the Year

2013 NSW AIPP Landscape Photographer of the Year

2018 AIPP Photography Book of the Year (Middlehurst – Middle Earth)

2019 AIPP NSW Nature Photographer of the Year

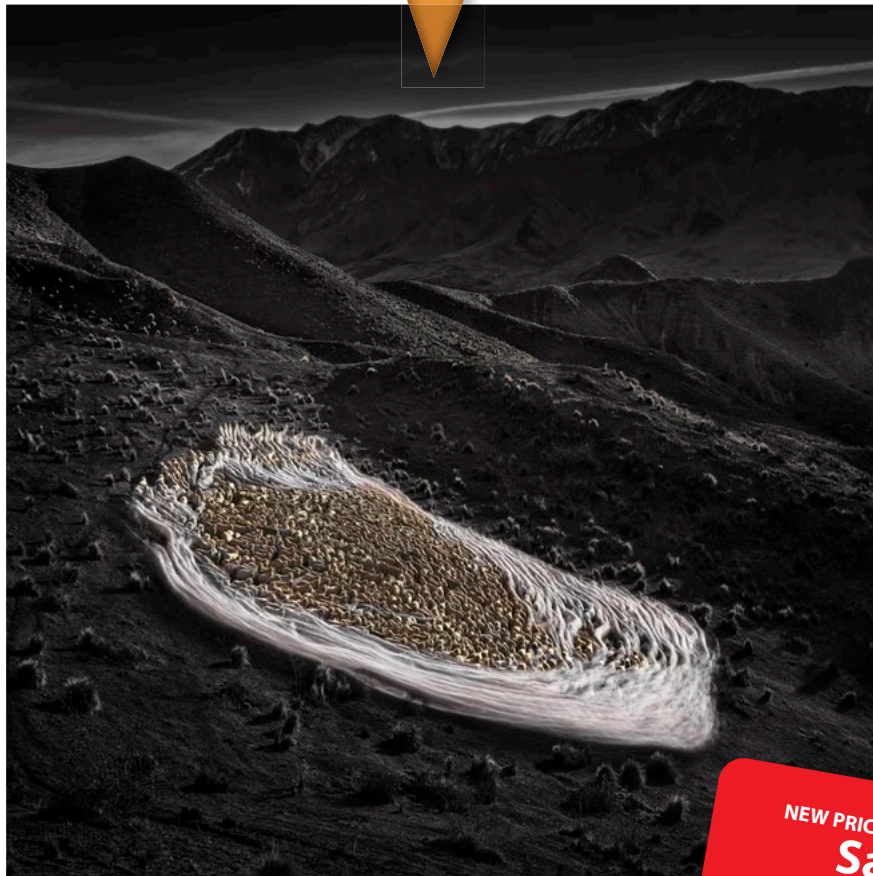
2019 NSW AIPP Professional Photographer of the Year

2019 AIPP Australian Professional Nature Photographer of the Year

My favourite quote is from American portrait photographer, Arnold Newman. The same quote is attributed to Sam Haskins. Both have passed away and neither I nor photography historian Peter Adams can determine whether one copied the other. I vaguely remember Arnold telling me the quote when I interviewed him for the magazine, but I also interviewed Sam! Either way, I love the sentiment.

The story begins at an Arnold Newman exhibition in New York. A socialite invites Arnold to dinner, something Arnold generally tried to avoid. When Arnold arrived at the socialite's home, he was met by his hostess who exclaimed, "Mr Newman. You are a remarkable photographer – you must have a really good camera."

The evening proceeded uneventfully and after dinner, Arnold looked over to his hostess and commented, "Madam, that was a remarkable meal, you must have a really good oven."



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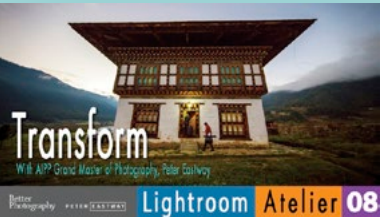
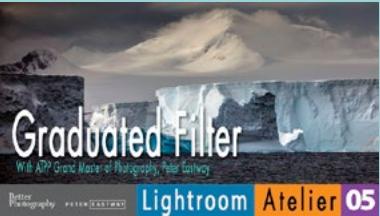
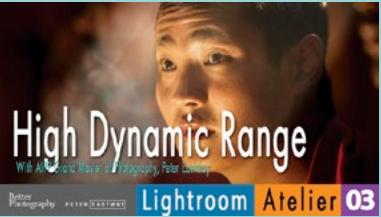
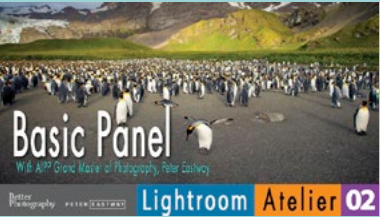
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you'll need if you're happy with the average results that come out of your camera. However, as all creative photographers soon discover, using Lightroom isn't just a matter of sliding controls left or right, it's also an amazing tool with unlimited creativity – if you know how to use it properly. The reason you'll be interested in Peter Eastway's **Lightroom Atelier** is because you like what you see on these pages and you'd like to achieve something similar with your own work. If that's you, check out the free lesson on our website and follow the links ...

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Lightroom Atelier – some of the techniques you will learn





HOW TO WIN PHOTO COMPETITIONS

An eBook & Movie Compendium by Peter Eastway
FAIPP HonFAIPP HonFNZIPP APPL GMPhotogl MNZIPP



I have judged many photo competitions and there are lots of little things that entrants forget to do. If only I could let them know *before* they entered, they could do so much better!

Well, as a judge I'm not allowed to ring up and help entrants, but I can offer to you what I have learnt over the last thirty years that will give you a great headstart.

Of course, no one can give you an iron-clad guarantee that you will read my eBook or view my movies and then win the next photo competition you enter – and I explain why in the eBook.

However, what I can guarantee you is that

if you read my eBook and watch the accompanying movies, you will greatly improve the quality of your photography.

You see, whether you're aiming to win a photography competition or just take a better photograph, the advice is very similar.

And I know that the techniques and approaches I've developed over the years will help you capture and produce better photographs.

My eBook and movie package is called **How To Win Photo Competitions**, 2nd Edition. It's hard to believe I wrote the first edition over 10 years ago!

The eBook begins with a little about me. Why? Well, it's easy enough to write a book about winning photography competitions, but I will gently suggest it's much better if the author has experience, not just in winning competitions, but in judging them too.

Over the years, I've been lucky enough to win quite a number competitions, plus I have a lot of international experience as a judge and competition organiser.

Add in my role as a magazine editor for 30 years and I hope I'm able to communicate my message extremely well.

The 'compendium' comprises four eBooks and a series of movies:

- Your Competition Approach
- Capture Techniques
- Processing Techniques
- Feedback Examples
- Feedback Movie Examples

The eBooks can be downloaded for reading and the movies can be streamed online.

(*Better Photography* subscribers will have seen the Feedback Examples already, but the Feedback Movie Examples are completely new.)

The eBook has lots of photographs and illustrations to explain exactly what I'm talking about and the new movie examples use real competition entries from real photographers.

The compendium is easy to read on a computer, laptop or iPad and it comes with a money-back guarantee. No, we won't refund your money if you don't win the next photo competition, but we will refund you if you're not completely satisfied.

This package has been carefully thought through and presented to give everyone a chance at winning a photo competition. Follow the directions and you'll be surprised at what you can achieve as a photographer!

– **Peter Eastway**

For more information, please visit:

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Peter Eastway's

PHOTO PROCESS

CREATIVE & TECHNICAL ATELIER

Photo Process is a series of video tutorials that shares a wide range of techniques, concepts and processes that I use every time I take a photograph. These processes have evolved over 40 years of photography.

When teaching photography, I find many students have great ideas, but don't know how to implement them. Or they have great technical skills, but nothing to use them on! While I can help solve their immediate problems, the solution is relying on my skills, not theirs. And unfortunately it's not possible to transfer all of my knowledge and experience in a few hours or even days.

I'm also asked, how do I seem to immediately know what to do when I'm faced with a subject? Why do I always seem to have a solution? The answer is my 'database' of skills and influences collected throughout my career. It's my professional experience.

So how do I share this experience? The aim of **Photo Process** is to collect these skills, influences and experiences into a single location so they can be easily shared with photographers searching for their own answers.

It's a knowledge bank of what I use when I create my photographs, so if you like how I work, the answers are in **Photo Process!**

When you join **Photo Process**, you receive:

- Access to the **Photo Process** section of the website with over 80 video tutorials in categories – Capture, Composition, Post-Production, Influences and Output. is a lifetime subscription, so there's no hurry to view all the content.
- A comprehensive portfolio review by Peter – you can submit up to 10 images for critique, feedback and appraisal. The written report will be presented as a PDF.
- A personally printed, signed and embossed A2 print by Peter on Canson stock using archival pigment inks from Epson – and you can select the photograph you'd like printed from his website (www.petereastway.com). The print is unframed and postage is included.

For full details, visit the Better Photography Education website and follow the menu to Photo Process

www.betterphotographyeducation.com

