

Hird About The Place

The Scene by Hird Newsletter.

Edition #28: November 2006

Dear Friends,

We are now settling in to our new gallery in Fremantle after the very stressful move to Perth. We both miss Kalgoorlie already, however we need to push on and adapt to our new lifestyle here. At least the kids are happy, having been introduced to the joys of surf-lifesaving and fishing on the weekend!

“You are still using film?!?!?”

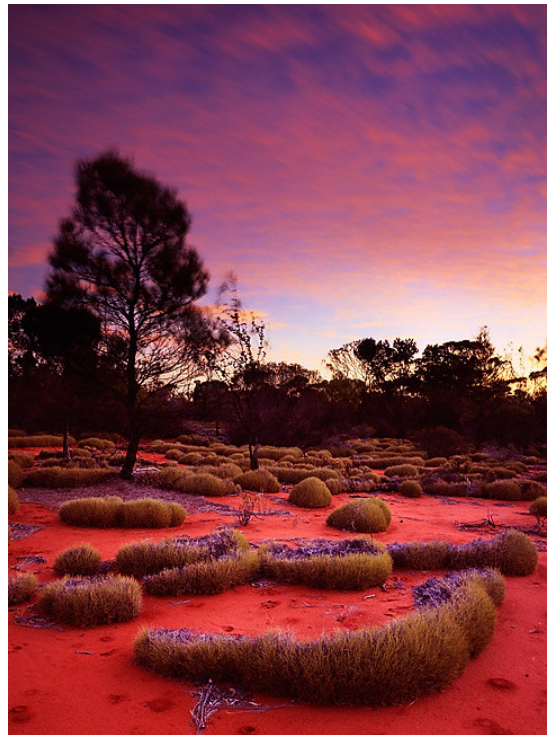
A comment I’m receiving very frequently in the Fremantle gallery is the stunned exclamation: “You’re still using film?!?”

For some reason, visitors in our new gallery are fascinated that film can deliver such vibrant colours and tones. People are now accustomed to seeing the strong colours of digital photographs on their computer screens, colours which are somehow richer than their own film photography of a few years ago. I find that a sad indictment of the quality of prints which were delivered to the general public for many years.

Muddy, unclear colours, fuzzy details, incorrect cropping of the negative. These faults and more are now a thing of the past for the digital photographer. And that’s because the photographer now has control of those aspects of the print/file thanks to software.

If you know which film to use and where to send it for the best results, the colours people are now finding in digital photography are still available to the film photographer – and always have been! The trouble is, companies like Kodak strongly marketed the cheapest

option (ie the one with the highest profit margin). Ironically, their marketing practices drove people towards trying digital photography, a market shift they weren’t ready for. It has now cost Kodak their market dominance. Where once they were the market leaders in consumer photography, they now languish with a much reduced share, surrendering to Canon and Sony.



“Siberia”

In answer to the visitors’ question, I point out that film gives me the results I need. I don’t need rapid delivery of the finished photograph, which I believe is main feature digital capture offers the professional photographer.

While it is true that each photograph costs me money when I shoot with film, the camera is already paid for and will not become obsolete

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in a year or two. To spend upwards of \$6000 on a new digital system (closer to \$50,000 for my ideal system) simply does not make good business sense in my situation.

However, I believe the amazement most visitors express arises from the quality of the prints we display. I guess it demonstrates the truth of the old adage: "If you want something done properly, do it yourself." Since I control all aspects of the print, from image capture to print media, I am able to ensure each image is presented in the very best way (at least to my satisfaction). The best of everything is used to create my final product. Whether the image was captured using film or digital sensor has very little bearing on the appearance of final print.

The Waiting Room

The Easter full moon was rising in Cue on Good Friday last year (*"on cue"*, if you will allow ☺) and I noticed the warm colours it was creating on the high clouds (just as the sun would do at sunrise). It seemed quite eerie to be in the ruins of an old hospital with this spectacle of nature occurring, and I tried to capture my feelings visually in the shot.



"The Waiting Room"

The building was lit by torchlight as I moved around the scene, shining my torch into areas where I wanted exposure to record on my film.

Also visible are star trails, where the passage of the stars during the hour-long exposure has

been recorded. This print is 80x56cm before framing and costs \$650 framed.

"Hey, that's Kalgoorlie!"

Michelle and I have been pleasantly surprised by the number of people who recognise the Goldfields immediately as they pass by the Fremantle gallery's door. I had no idea there were so many Kalgoorlie people in Perth! Great to see – Go the Goldfields!!!!

Where is your favourite WA Location?

I'm now looking for places which our customers consider their favourite places to visit. My reasons are simple: I only have a certain amount of time and I'd rather use your experience to learn from. You people have - collectively - been to many more places than I will ever be able to get to, so I'm hoping you will share your favourite locations with me.

The places I want to know about are your favourite holiday destinations, your secret little spots around Perth and Fremantle, the places you've driven past and thought "that would be an interesting photograph ...". Anything at all, really.

What's in it for you? If I make a shot which is good enough to become a Photo of the Month, I'll send you a free framed print for being the first person to suggest it. I'll write that again: a FREE framed print, worth at least \$300, simply for telling me where to go! (Now there's an offer Graeme doesn't make very often! ... *Michelle*) Should I create a Limited Edition photograph there, you will be offered 50% off the price of any print in the edition, in addition to receiving a free framed 11 inch artist's proof print.

I Love Email!

I received the following email from Piper Thomas, a casual visitor to my web site. I'm always glad to hear my tips have been useful.

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Piper wrote: "I just had to send you a thank you for the great Tech Tips on resizing digital photographs for emailing. I found your site when I Googled "Emailing photographs". I appreciate the easy to understand and thorough explanation included with the video clip. My unexpected bonus was discovering your wonderful work!!! I will share the web address with others who will appreciate your art. As I am in Arizona (USA), I won't be able to pop over to your studio to see all your work in person, but will enjoy everything shown on your web page!!!"

I have been dabbling in photography throughout my life (started at the age of 14, shooting and developing B&W for the school year book; got into photography as an art medium, along with the hours of splendid fun in the dark room, in college; and tapered off to "snap shots" of travels and family events after college). In 2003, I got my first digital camera (5MP Olympus) and have found, as you said, that there are so many bells and whistles that I find myself usually shooting in AUTO! I laughed when I read your comment about this!

My husband and I are preparing for an Eastern Mediterranean trip. I decided to buy a bit more powerful camera. Since my photos will mainly be for personal use (nothing so grand as your professional work), I decided on the Canon A710 IS (7.1 MP in a compact travel-wise camera, with decent zoom capabilities, nice new Image Stabilization feature, and flexibility to use other lenses if I desire in the future). I am committed to using all the different functions at least once, and not get stuck in AUTO mode.

I am inspired by your beautiful photography and will think of it as I am capturing all the sites of Rome, Pompeii, Ephesus, Istanbul, Cairo and the Pyramids. Thanks to your great tips, I will feel confident that I can email

a few pix to friends without blowing their inbox to the moon!

Thank you again,
Piper
Arizona, USA"

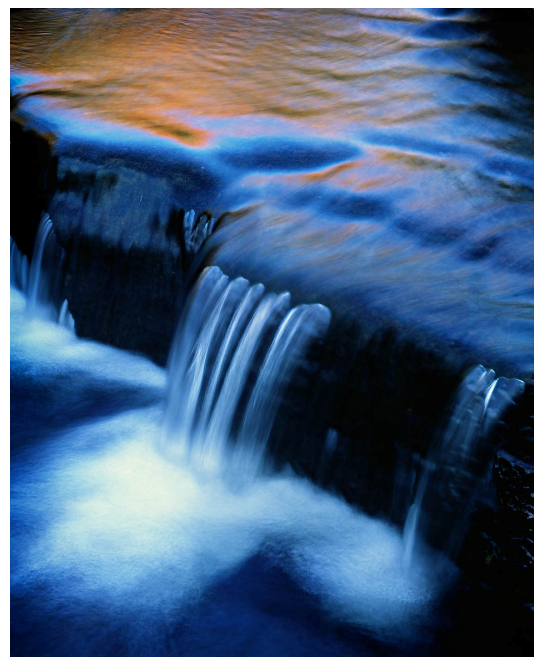
If you would like to see the technical tip Piper was referring to, jump onto my web site (www.scenebyhird.com) and click on the "Techniques" button. Look for "Resizing Photos For Emailing and the Web"

In a follow-up email, she informed me that others had been inspired to grab their cameras and run to their nearest national park after also seeing my web site. All I could say was "Aw - shucks"

Photo of the Month

This month's photo is one I made in Karajini National Park in 2005: it's called "Dale's Gorge". I've been thinking a long time about this picture, and I've decided to release it now as Photo of the Month to coincide with our opening in Fremantle.

It is a Limited Edition print (only 10 will be available) produced on canvas.



"Dale's Gorge": 10 canvas prints only!

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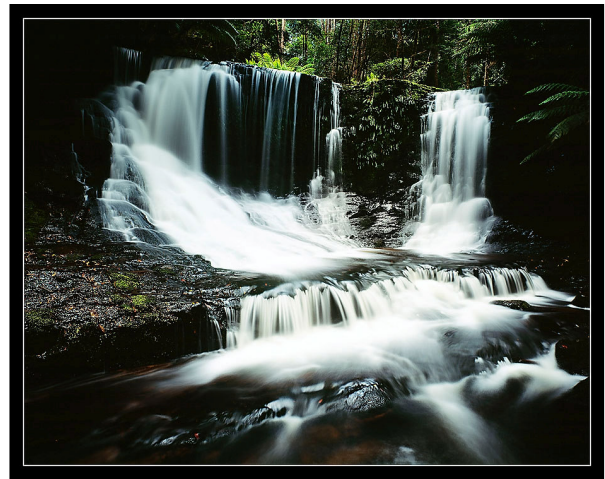
Why canvas? I chose to use the medium because the picture is nearly “pointillistic” in style, looking very much like a painting. I achieved this affect by selecting a shutter speed long enough to show motion but short enough so that not every moving object was completely blurred.

With only ten prints produced, I believe demand for this will quickly exceed production, making the picture a canny investment for those of you who are inclined to buy art with profit in mind.

Print #	Framed Price	PoM price	Saving!
1	\$1,500	\$1,350	\$150
2	\$1,000	\$900	\$100
3	\$1,000	\$900	\$100
4	\$1,000	\$900	\$100
5	\$1,000	\$900	\$100
6	\$1,000	\$900	\$100
7	\$1,000	\$900	\$100
8	\$1,500	\$1,350	\$150
9	\$2,500	\$2,250	\$250
10	\$3,500	\$3,150	\$350

Prices vary within the edition as per the table above. For those of you who are subscribers to the photo of the month, the 10% discount is available until Christmas

But wait: there's more! I'm extending the special offer on October's Photo of the Month (also a Limited Edition) until Christmas too. “Horseshoe Falls” has the same price structure for the edition as “Dale’s Gorge”.



“Horseshoe Falls”: Limited to 10 prints only.

Layby now for Christmas

We are accepting laybys for Christmas now. Creating a layby ensures you do not miss out on the print you want due to a last minute rush: your gift will be in our gallery when you are ready to pick it up. We don’t require large deposits to be made, and no further payments are required until you pick up your print.

Please drop in and see our new gallery in Freo. We are quite proud of the work we’ve done and would love to see you in here soon.

And please keep us in mind when you consider purchasing your Christmas presents this year. (Not that I want you to buy me a present, but that you may like to purchase one of my prints for your friends or family! Of course, you *can* buy me a present if you really like ☺)

Cheers,

Graeme Hird

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