



the**ECLECTIC**photographer

Stuart
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A SELECTION OF FINE ART AND LANDSCAPE IMAGES FROM NZ

Stuart Macdonald

notes about eclectic photography and style

Here are some more or less random notes to help you, the reader, understand my obsession with photography but, in particular, why I choose to photograph in a range of styles.

In this sample of my work you will find a mixture of images encompassing:

- landscapes
- macro close-ups
- fine art
- cityscapes
- buildings, like churches

People have said to me, 'Stuart, what is your style? Love the images but you need to develop your own unique style...'

Over recent years I have thought about this, but I remain drawn to any subject that seems to say something, or just awaken a moment of beauty and thought. I seem to get as much satisfaction out of a well planned landscape (often involving hours of walking and waiting for the right weather—or light!)—as I do from a still life photographed on the table at home.

'Eclectic' is defined in the dictionary as—'selecting what seems best from various styles, ideas and methods'. And—'using a variety of sources...'

So that is my 'style'—to seek the beauty or 'specialness' in whatever presents in front of the camera. Or, to seek this out across a range of possible subjects. So far this has been in the areas mentioned above, but one genre where I have not (yet) gone is portrait photography, and there is no doubt that the beauty and meaning of a face can be quite unique.

As you look through this book, you will find the images all 'mixed up'—although there is a certain logic to the order, and the side by side placing of the photographs. This is a deliberate ploy on my part, to shuttle you between different images and hopefully help you see the 'beauty' in different things...

The larger 'main' images are on the right-hand page as you go through. Each image has a short 'story' which might say where it was taken and how you find the place, or may be about the process involved in getting that 'shot'.

If you like what you see here you can see more on my website : www.smphotoart.co.nz

As I wrote in my earlier short book 'The Obsessional Photographer':

'The techniques involved in obtaining these images vary. For a landscape it is often a matter, having found the site or scene, of waiting for the 'right' light. This is often early or late in the day when the low sun creates a beautiful contrast of colours, but equally, for a bush scene an overcast day might be needed to avoid harsh contrasts of light. This can often involve a lot of waiting for the 'right' light, or for the wind to drop and so on — much patience required — I liken it to fishing!

The still life images in this book, particularly those 'painted' by maglite torch, are an absorbing but time consuming exercise in taking a range of shots, often 30–40 or more, to get the right lighting and effect. The advent of digital photography has reinforced this 'obsession' as the photographer can now experiment endlessly with different angles and settings, review on camera, and try again.'

Prints

Through my website at www.smphotoart.co.nz all these images, and many more, can be obtained as prints, and most are available up to quite large sizes. Large hanging vinyl prints up to 2 meters long are also available. On the website there is also information about photography — for example 'how to' articles that you can use to improve your photography, and catch the obsession for eclectic photography!

You are welcome to email me with any queries you might have: stuartmac@paradise.net.nz

I hope you enjoy these images as much as I have enjoyed the journey capturing them.

Stuart Macdonald

Wellington NZ

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OPPOSITE PAGE

Lake Marian

A short way down the Hollyford Valley road the track up to Lake Marian begins. It is a steep rocky track for the most part, but has some glorious merits – first you go past Lake Marian Falls not far up the track (see page 22) but then after some 2–3 hours you arrive at a most beautiful ‘hanging’ lake suspended between mountain ranges – Lake Marian. Pick a good weather day to go or you will not see much!

Nikon D800E, Samyang 14mm at f8.0 and 1/125 sec.
ISO 100.



LEFT

Camel Grill

The Camel Grill sits just on the edge of Pidgeon Park in central Wellington. The area is usually thronging with people and it took some patient timing to get this shot, with just the owner having a quick break!

Olympus OM-D EM5, 14-42mm at f9.5 and 1/90 sec.
ISO 200. Processed into ‘Dramatic Tone’.





OPPOSITE PAGE

St Pauls Cathedral Dunedin

St Pauls in the Octagon, Dunedin, is one of our most beautiful buildings. As a relatively young country we do not have many old or majestic buildings, but St Pauls, with its high columns and arches is one. On a quiet day, like this one, just standing in the centre and absorbing the place is magical - and spiritual...

Nikon D800E, 24-85mm at f16 and 1 second. ISO 100.
On tripod.

LEFT

Dahlia

This lovely Dahlia was simply photographed using light from the window and a plain background. Converting to black and white and applying a good amount of contrast draws out the flowing symmetry of the flower.

Olympus OM-D EM5, 14-42mm at f9.5 and 1/10 sec.
ISO 200. (Modern image stabilisation, and a steady hand, really helps...)



OPPOSITE PAGE

Two Old Roses

The roses have seen better days but still have some beauty and life left in them - like so many older things...
The image uses natural light from a cloudy day coming in through the window...

Nikon D5200, 40mm macro at f16 and 1/4 sec. ISO 100.
On tripod.



LEFT

Wellington South Coast

This long exposure captures the movement of the waves around the rough rocks of the Wellington south coast...

Nikon D800E, 24-85mm at f11 and 15 seconds. ISO 100.
ND filter plus tripod.





OPPOSITE PAGE

Storm Gathers over Woodpecker Bay

Woodpecker Bay is a few kilometres north of Punakaiki on the West Coast of the South Island. At the southern end of the beach where this shot was taken there are a series of rocky outcrops. The rock in the image is just where the beach starts to merge with the rocks. The place has a bleak exposed beauty on a winters day.

Nikon D800E, 24-85mm at f13 and 1/60 sec. ISO 100.

LEFT

Out of the Mist

I was at Lake Paringa, south Westland, in the early morning intending to catch the autumn mist. As I am watching, a kayaker slowly glides out of the mist, paddle across his kayak.

Nikon D800E, 24-85mm at f9.5 and 1/1000 sec. ISO 100.





OPPOSITE PAGE

Old Man Range

Behind the town of Alexandra in Central Otago looms the Old Man Range. There are many schist rock outcrops along the range as it runs from Roxburgh to Clyde - the trick is to find the right spot early in the morning, when the sun first shines on to the hills! In this case a solid walk up on to the range via Oreo Creek Road leads to an amazing variety of rocky ridges and views over the surrounding countryside. Just pick a fine day as it can get windswept and cold very quickly...

Nikon D800E, 24-85mm at f8.0 and 1/15 sec. ISO 100.

LEFT

Old Workers Union Hall Runanga

'United We Stand'. There is just enough peeling paint left on this old weathered building to tell us that the Miners Hall was opened in 1908. In those days Runanga would have been a thriving mining town... If you look carefully you can see that this is now the community hall for the town.

Nikon D800E, 24-85mm at f11 and 1/45 sec. ISO 100.



OPPOSITE PAGE

Dreamtime 4

This close up (macro) image is of the petals of a flower, and uses a macro lens set at a minimum depth of field (a narrow range of focus) to blur most, but not all, of the picture. This is what achieves the feeling of shapes coming out of nothingness. The depth of the colours helps too.

Nikon D5200, 40mm macro at f4.2 and 1/20 sec. ISO 200.



LEFT

Mist on the Water

Somewhere in south Westland the mist was just starting to lift, and as I shifted my gaze from the lake's edge out into the lake proper this is what I saw. The colours have not been changed - this ethereal scene is as it was...

Nikon D800E, 24-85mm at f16 and 1/125 sec. ISO 100.



OPPOSITE PAGE

Hollyford Valley Bush Scene

It is possible to drive a fair way up the Hollyford Valley. This image is taken just off the road near the river... The mixture of mossy and naked branches entangled with each other attracted me to the scene.

Nikon D800E, 24-85mm at f11 and 1/8 sec. ISO 400.



LEFT

Across Pukaki Toward Aoraki Mt Cook

From the southern shores of Lake Pukaki looking up the lake to the North. Where this image differs from many is that the wind is blowing and the lake is a little rough - combine this with a late sun and the turquoise colours make it special.

Nikon D800E, 24-85mm at f13 and 1/45 sec. ISO 100.

