

# The Art of Photography Richard White

PHOTOGRAPHIC WORKSHOPS ON LINE GALLERY PHOTOGRAPHY ARTICLES HIGH COUNTRY CALENDAR

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Mist, Snow Gums, Mt Stirling

A few weeks ago I returned from teaching a workshop in Tasmania with noted American photographer Bruce Barnbaum. We had a very enthusiastic group of people from both Australia and the US. The interesting mix of the two nations provided some healthy discussions not only on photography, but on the Bush as well. That's the American kind, not the Aussie kind. I would only hope that my proposed trip to Scotland next year will be as entertaining when another two groups from opposite sides of the world get together once again. (More info later in the newsletter)

The mix of film and digital was about 50/50 and most surprising was seeing 5 view cameras set up at most locations. After processing all my film and of course the negatives look pleasing. They always do. It is what happens next that is so disappointing, sometimes. Making contact prints and then seeing how many I do like and how many have actually made it. Someday I would like to have an exhibition only using negatives. Back light them and everyone would be a winner.

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From Tasmania I was home for a few days and then headed off to Perth to open an exhibition and give a talk and workshop at a small gallery in Dalkeith. The name of the gallery is Monart and it is a wonderful space. Mona, who owns the gallery, is so enthusiastic about photography, which is very refreshing. Some of our discussion centered on art in photography, which at the best of times can have mixed opinions. There's no doubt that it is an uphill battle for most to accept photography as an art form. I am sure it is seen by the bulk of people as something that is not that hard to do. When all and sundry have a camera then all things are possible. I've got what they've got so lets do it. The big guns in advertising imply that it is just a matter of which camera you own and the rest will follow.

You don't see the same advertising push applied to a selection of brushes and some canvas. This is why it is a continual uphill battle for photography to be considered a serious art form when, most times the shutter is fired is for either fun or personal social events.

I have been told to my face that "an artist is someone who paints and a photographer is someone who photographs". I don't really have a problem with that, but having art in photography is the hurdle this person cannot scale. I'll leave it up to you. If you believe it possible then shout it from the roof tops if not then take a cold shower.

## **Books of Interest**

In the latter part of last year, which all of a sudden seems ages ago, I purchased a book from the US that I think is one of the best photographic books I have ever bought. Trying to hide my joy I showed it to a few people and asked what their initial reaction was. They all said basically the same thing. Wow!

Now I know that prefacing something with adulation can usually be a death warrant, especially when you are talking about films. You tell someone about a fantastic movie you have just seen, they go, wonder what planet you are from and ignore anything you say for the next decade and a half. Books I think are a little bit different and in most cases you can have a look first. I bought the book wholly and solely based on the images I saw on the internet. Initially I saw an ad in a magazine for the book with one small image. I then went on a search to see more. The book was titled Hong Kong Yesterday by Fan Ho and published by Modern Books. Part of the attraction for me was that I just love Hong Kong so I already was half way there. If you would like to see what I saw then go to [www.modernbooks.com/fanho.htm](http://www.modernbooks.com/fanho.htm)

Last year when Arnold Newman died I found myself in a bookstore a few days later. I was scouring the photography section and came across a book on his life's work. ARNOLD NEWMAN. The price, I thought, was reasonable. It was about \$85. A large book as well. I immediately intensified my grip on the book and called in the body guards, for I knew the word would be out and I would have to fight for my life to keep it. It

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seems when people die the price for things they produce increases. I thought the same may happen with this book, especially if it went out of print which is very possible.

At the register I was given a 10% discount because there were a few marks on the jacket and told “have a nice day”. If I managed to get this home without being ambushed and robbed of my booty, I thought I might. Try Amazon.com. The book cover has Woody Allen on the front.

Good books can sometimes be hard to find and over the years I have been a lot more discerning about what I buy. I love images that are real and speak. Both these books contain a very large vocabulary.

## **Testing Times**

Years ago when I was trying to defend the merits of printing a cibachrome/ilfochrome print over a type C colour print (the type you usually get from a mini lab) I thought I would do an experiment and just see how long each would last. Part of the reason I decided to do it was because I hated the way advertising was handling the debate with what I thought were blatant lies.

I placed a print half of each inside of two separate books so half of the print was exposed and the other hidden. I then placed these books up against a window that received no sun in summer, only reflected light, and only a couple of hours a day in March through to September. I began the test at the start of the year so as I could remember when I had in fact started it. I didn't think to write the date on the back of the print. After 3 months the Type C print was starting to go green and fade. The cibachrome print hadn't altered at all. At 6 months the Type C was the type you should throw in the bin and the ciba was still the same. I felt I had won and just for fun I left the cibachrome in the book for another 12 or so months. When I finally pulled it out of the book I could not find any demarcation line what so ever.

So recently when I found I had to reluctantly buy another desktop printer, I bought one of the better models from one of the better companies that supported the “fantastic” pigment inks that were good for 80 to 120 years of image stability, that is, again according to the advertising.

I thought, like before, I would do my window test and so placed a print along side a selenium toned fibre based black & white print that had already been there since March 2005. This time I wrote the date on the back of the print.

I forgot about it and got on with life. When I finally did remember to check, 3 months later, the print from the desktop printer had disintegrated. The emulsion had peeled off. Close inspection showed flakes the size of bread crumbs, of the image lying on the window ledge. The paper I was using wasn't cheap. It was good stuff and from one of the notable companies that are selling this type of paper.

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My suspicion is that maybe the ink was okay, but the fault was in the paper. Maybe. One thing for sure is that the two combined were a disaster. Oh and the fibre print was just beginning to show signs of deterioration, but I suspect it will fall away a lot quicker now, now that the rot has started. Try the test yourself and see what you come up with. I did it because I had doubts about the claims these companies make.

Although my test is not scientific and it's pretty rough, it is real. I should say that it is no way to display a print, but in a well lit room over a period of a year or two who knows what will happen. I know I want my images to last a little longer and I assume you do as well. Most times I do things like this is because I have a certain distrust for advertising and I find most of it is misleading and even more so in the photographic industry. To me photography is all about quality. Not only in the quality of the image, but also in the product it is going on. I'm just not sure that we, the customer, is getting the whole truth and what we deserve.

## **Another magazine. Subscribe and save.**

Some of you may know that apart from writing for Better Photography magazine I also write occasional articles for the international magazine **Silvershotz**. This is a magazine that is dedicated to not only black & white workers, but also alternative processors. It also combines an interesting cross over between analog and digital. The reproduction is fantastic and the portfolios are very inspiring. If you would like to give it a go then subscribe for 6 issues for A\$88.

**If you mention that you heard about it from this newsletter then the editor will give you a 10% discount.**

Contact [www.silvershotz.com/magazine](http://www.silvershotz.com/magazine) Ph. Brisbane 07 3879 7779 or Email: [info@silvershotz.com](mailto:info@silvershotz.com)  
The web or email is certainly the easiest.

## **NEWSLETTER PRINT OFFER for issue #19      100% guaranteed**

The print offering for this issue is the photograph I have presented at the head of this newsletter:

These photographs are designed to give you the opportunity to purchase one of my photographs at a reduced rate. This will apply **only** to receivers of this electronic mail.

**This offer lasts till May 7, 2007.**

Photographs are usually offered in the image size of 11 x 14" (27 x 35 cm) approximately. The size may vary slightly depending on cropping of a particular image.

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## **About the image**

The image was made in 2000 on Mount Stirling, which is quite close to my home. I was using TRI-X 4 x 5" film with a Linhof Technika. I had been camped on Stirling the night before with a couple of friends and had spent a couple of hours that night trying to unjam my camera which had lost a screw in a particular place and then had lodged itself in the rail mechanism. Anyway we woke to a rather ordinary sunrise (if there is such a thing) and after perhaps 1/2 an hour and not much success I suggested we head down to the Snow Gum forest. It was just bliss. We spent probably 1 1/2 hours having a great time making all sorts of images.

The image will be printed on my dwindling stocks of Kodak Polymax Fibre base paper mounted to rag museum board and over matted ready for framing. As always only the finest materials are used in the production of the image. The print will be over matted to an overall size of 407 mm x 508 mm (16 x 20").

Details relating to the image and print number will appear on the back of the photograph.

## **Cost of Print**

**The dollar value is the same as the country you live. ( Aust. NZ, USA, Canada, UK will be as US \$ i.e.: If you live in Australia A\$300, if you live in the USA, US\$300)**

The normal print price for this size is \$300.

**The 11" x 14" Newsletter Edition Print will be \$250.**

(A\$250    US\$250    Can\$250    NZ\$250)

**The print price is inclusive of post and packing.**

**100% Money Back Guarantee**

I also understand that buying a photograph from a computer screen can cause some to have heart palpitations, so with that in mind if you do purchase a print and are not completely satisfied I will refund your amount in full, provided you return the photograph within 14 days of receipt in the same condition it arrives. This is a 100% money back guarantee.

If you would like a print, send me a note with a cheque, money order, direct deposit or international bank transfer for the correct amount along with your name and address and contact details. Ordered prints will be sent out 4 – 6 weeks later.

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## View Camera and Camera Arts Magazine

An alternative to some of the Australian or British magazines or an addition to what you already get. If you are interested in trying it out then Mainline Photographics in Sydney are the distributors. By being distributed locally it makes it easier to receive and you get it on time. I have tried it both ways. Their web site is [www.mainlinephoto.com.au](http://www.mainlinephoto.com.au) and then look for the subscriptions and books area, quite simple really. View Camera is obviously for Large Format and Camera Arts is for medium format and 35 mm. Both magazines talk freely about all capture mediums. Mainline is also a large format specialist.

## Remaining Workshops for 2007

If you would like a hard copy of the brochure then drop me an email along with your address and I will mail you out one or if you would like a PDF sent then again just email me.

### Daylesford Foto Biennale                  June 2 to July 1    Details: [www.daylesfordfotobiennale.org](http://www.daylesfordfotobiennale.org)

During this month long event I will conduct a one and a half day workshop on the long weekend of June (8th & 9th) entitled: "Finding a Photographic Direction". The workshop will concentrate on having a vision and an intent, whether digital or analogue or a combination of both and how to bring it all together. Also on the same weekend I am giving a talk on the state of photography today. Where does Fine Art Photography fit into the equation? At this stage the workshop is scheduled for the Friday night and all day Saturday and the talk on the Sunday.

Of interest to some of you along with Ellie at Gold Street Studios, (Trentham East) on the first weekend of the Biennale, June 2 & 3 we are planning a **Large Format** get together. The purpose will be to discuss, talk about and photograph with large format cameras. 4 x 5" and up. We have a plan that on the first day we will meet and discuss large format photography in the morning, have lunch, do some photography in the afternoon within the township of Trentham, (beautiful old buildings), have someone develop the film, choose the negs, have someone print them and then exhibit them for the duration of the Biennale. Most who do large format develop and print themselves as I do so if you are worried by this either take 2 negs or just photograph and don't do the rest. Anyway if you are interested drop me an email.

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## **The Fine Print (Advanced darkroom practice) June 22 - 25 2007. Workshop Fee: \$450**

This workshop will begin Friday evening and ends Monday PM to allow plenty of time to demonstrate all the new techniques you will learn. You will be encouraged to print from one or more of your negatives under my watchful eye where we will look at applying some of the new techniques. This is not a workshop for the newcomer in the darkroom, but someone who has either completed one of my introductory Black and White print workshops or has been actively involved in print making for some time. There will be portfolio reviews as usual and lots more. The workshop fee includes paper and chemicals. Limited to 6.

## **The Streets of Melbourne, Film & Digital comparisons August 3 - 5 2007 Workshop Fee: \$350**

We begin Friday evening and finish up Sunday afternoon. This workshop will look at comparisons between the two mediums and how to work with both or a combination of both. Working from a studio in Melbourne we will look at finished prints side by side and explain how the final results were achieved, either via photoshop or via image transfer to light sensitive paper. A field trip around the unique parts of the city will compliment an interesting and thought provoking workshop. Portfolios reviews are covered as well. Co-instructor is John Ingham. Someone who has made the switch from film to digital quite successfully.

## **South Island New Zealand October 13 - 19 2007 Part 1 & October 20 - 22 for Part 2 Workshop Fee Part 1: \$650 and Part 1 & 2: \$ 825**

Another week photographing in the beautiful South Island of New Zealand. As has been the case on our two previous trips the route will be a different one that will deliver stunning views every way you turn. Beginning in Christchurch we will head South to the Moeraki Boulders and then inland through the Mainiototo Plains of Central Otago. Although this would be enough to excite us for a week we will head on to Queenstown and once again discover the beauty of this wonderful area.

The first part of the workshop will begin in Christchurch on the Saturday and conclude the following Friday in Queenstown making it a stimulating week of exploring and photographing in one the worlds most spectacular places. You then have the option to fly back to Christchurch and home or to stay on and make the journey to Milford Sound for a few extra days. The drive to Milford Sound is one of the most spectacular in the world. The mountains will still be snow covered as the spring weather takes hold. We will then return to Queenstown to end part two of the workshop.

Pre booked accommodation at all locations will keep us comfortable and prepared for each day's adventure. Fine food and healthy photographic debate, as well as a thorough review of all work that participants wish to bring will help develop new ways to look at their own style.

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## **The Great Ocean Road Workshop    November 10 – 13 2007 Workshop Fee: \$430**

Based in Port Campbell we will photograph the rugged coastline of Loch Ard Gorge and the Twelve Apostles, parts of the Eastern side of the Otway Ranges and the picturesque waterfalls and awesome Sequoias of the Otway State Forest . Many field trips are planned to the most spectacular places this area offers. Our indoor and evening sessions will as usual be informative and fun as will be my co-instructor Jeff Moorfoot. Such a great place for a workshop.

### **Introduction to the Darkroom - Printing the traditional way**

This workshop will be on demand. To be held over a weekend of either June, July, or August 2007. The workshop is designed to introduce you to the wet darkroom and to make prints the more traditional way.

Through various demonstrations and discussions I will show you how to make adjustments that reflect your vision by maintaining consistency in your negatives so they are printable everytime. How to choose the right grade of paper to begin printing with. Where and how to dodge or burn a print effectively. How to have tonal control over the print in all areas. I will also show you how you can effectively use the computer to print an image in the darkroom, before you have printed it.

Participants will be encouraged to bring along prints for an informative and helpful critique session which offers suggestions, ideas and ways of changing or improving their work. Also the workshop will be tailored to suit your needs. Cost of the workshop will depend on numbers attending. If you are interested contact The Art of Photography Workshops for dates and pricing. Minimum 3, maximum 6.

And finally:

### **Looking ahead to September / October 2008**

#### **The Landscape of Scotland**

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I will team up with noted English photographer and nice guy Joe Cornish to lead a group of adventurous people to the Scottish Highlands to photograph in the area around Ranchoor Moor and the nearby coast. This week long workshop could be part of a longer trip that you plan.

The workshop will take place pretty much in Joe's back yard. He has lived in North Yorkshire since 1994 and has photographed that area and Scotland extensively. The workshop will be rich photographically. You will enjoy the challenging landscape which will in turn challenge you. Your biggest difficulty may be understanding the accent! To familiarize yourself with Joe's work have a look at his web site. [www.joecornish.com](http://www.joecornish.com)

Contact the Art of Photography for more details or stay tuned to the web site.

Till next time.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke underneath.