

EXPOSURE

THE MELBOURNE
CAMERA CLUB MAGAZINE



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My Photography

Julie Ughetti



Grand Prismatic Spring in Yellowstone National Park

Having an arts background, studying ceramics and more recently glass, certainly has given me a sensibility to colour and, I guess, line and form. However, my technical knowledge is zip! And I am always grateful for the words of wisdom I get from fellow photographers at MCC. I have Lightroom but frankly don't know how to utilise it. Over time as the need presents I guess I will learn, but for now most of my images have no or very little post-work done on them.

This image of Grand Prismatic Spring in Yellowstone National Park was taken from the top of a rather steep hill - it is the largest hot spring in the United States and I believe the most photographed. In the channels around this spring are mats of photosynthetic cyanobacteria which

As a novice photographer (I purchased my first real camera less than a year ago), I feel I haven't yet developed a particular "style" as such. My interest in landscapes was fuelled by two recent trips to America with other photographers where I learned much. The first was to Yellowstone National Park predominately and the second to the canyons around the Grand Canyon area - an absolute feast for photography!



Grand Prismatic Spring





Tetons at Oxbow Bend

give the orange shades and sometimes green. The fossilised organisms have been estimated to be the same as those that existed 3 billion years ago. This next image shows the vapour rising from the spring in the background - both were taken on my Lumix DMC-FC100.

The colours of the hot springs throughout Yellowstone change with temperature, pH and chemical composition, as well as seasonal conditions and water fluctuations. At Norris the water temperature is 40-55° C and the algae is Cyandioschzon which is one of the most heat- and acid-tolerant algae known. Many of these springs were reminiscent of



Snow Canyon in Mojave Desert, Great Basin Desert



Bryce Canyon, Utah



glazes I have used in the past on ceramic pots. I think that was a huge attraction to photograph them which was not necessarily a conscious thought at the time!

Before leaving on my first trip to the States I purchased numerous filters which had become obsolete for most cameras. Some were originally \$120 but I paid \$10 each for them. I used one on a tree root on the edge of another thermal pool. These filters do not fit on the lens so I just hold them in front of the lens. I actually purchased five Hoya filters on 18 March 2015 for \$1 each which I will experiment with by attacking them with my dremel and some acid! In this image of the Tetons at Oxbow Bend I tried out one of the pink graduated filters. I like to experiment with different filters depending on the situation. Having a



Bryce Canyon, Utah



small diameter lens on my camera means all the filters fit over the front when held in place.

By the time the second trip to America came around in 2014, I decided it was time to buy a real camera. After much deliberation and consultation I decided upon a Nikon D610 and two Sigma lenses - a 12-24 mm wide-angle which I love, the other 24-105 mm.

Snow Canyon (on previous page) was taken at the intersection of the Mojave Desert, Great Basin Desert and Colorado Plateau and experiences rainfall of 190 mm per year. The vegetation includes species such as creosote bush, narrow leaf yucca, sand sage, blackbrush, scrub oak and desert willow. Blocks of strong colours made for good subject matter.

Bryce Canon (above and previous page) was the ideal location for using the 12-24 mm lens. This was an early morning shoot, with the temperature about 3° C.

Back in Melbourne, interestingly I find the abstract portions of an image fun to take. Some of them are very similar to the springs in America and the glazes I have used in ceramics. Colour is very important to me in an image but in its natural state, not pumped up in Photoshop which I don't use. Here the colour is natural!

I guess at this early stage my interests are learning more technical aspects, using and creating filters, finding interesting abstract forms and chasing natural and strong colours. ■



Melbourne Camera Club *Annual General Meeting*

**The MCC AGM will be held on
Thursday, October 1st, 2015
starting at 8 pm.**

For full details see the MCC website

www.melbournphoto.org.au

My Favourite Place

Phil Marley



Welcome swallow

Did see Sonja Ross' beautiful bird photography talk at the club on 16 July? Wow! What a night of stunning images. And it's stirred me into writing about my own efforts at bird photos and that means writing about my favourite local place for my photography - Trin Warren Tam-Boore, otherwise known as Bellbird Waterhole in Royal Park in Parkville.

Never heard of it? Well, neither had I until around two years ago when I started taking bird photos. I was looking for a local place I could go to practice - a place with plenty of both common and less common species, and where the birds were used to people. It had to be local, maximum of 15 mins drive, otherwise it would be too much effort to go back again and again to learn from past mistakes and try new things.

The Bellbird Waterhole is on Oak Street at the extreme west end of Royal Park, right next to the Tullamarine Freeway, and has a carpark and toilet block. It was created in 2006 as a result of construction of the Melbourne Commonwealth Games village at the edge of the park. The wetland was designed to treat stormwater run-off from the roads, rooftops and gutters of surrounding suburbs, provide a habitat area for wildlife and deliver recycled water for use in Royal Park.

It consists of two linked ponds set amongst mature native trees and shrubs and is a fabulous location for bird photography. The birds are accustomed to having people around them, with walkers and joggers passing by all day every day. They are well within hearing distance of the freeway, so are undisturbed by local traffic along Oak Street or the shouts from the adjacent Ross Straw Field baseball club. And there are lots of birds.

Around 30 common species of birds frequent the wetland and other less common species are also seen. Obviously water birds feature strongly - ducks and herons, but also spoonbills, ibis and egrets. But the flowering gums attract plenty of lorikeets, wattle birds and honeyeaters and galahs love ripping up the turf on the baseball field. And kites and harriers often hover above in hope.



Purple swamphen



Rainbow lorikeets



Chestnut teal

For me the great thing about this spot has been to practice bird photography. I go there every three or four weeks, typically to try a new technical approach to taking my shots. I have also learned the best spots for good lighting and the spots particular birds regularly do things (such as their preferred flight paths and perches).

I have found I take essentially every shot at 300mm on my 70-300mm zoom. I also take almost everything at around 1/1200-1/2000 sec and use servo auto-focus to continuously focus. I set the camera

typically on 400 ISO, but go up to 800 if I have to - I have been disappointed with results at 1600 ISO. I hand-hold everything - mainly because the birds are constantly moving and I need to track them. I now take everything in RAW+jpg, since RAW is essential to capture both the dark and light plumage found on every bird.

My main interest has been birds in flight. I found it essential to start with big birds like herons and ducks, because they move and fly slowly giving you time to set up shots and track the bird as it flies. For in-flight shots, I set the camera on burst mode. I

only recently found out that the burst-rate was limited by the speed of my memory card, so have upgraded to the fastest card compatible with my camera and now things really zip along.

I have tried all sorts of approaches: pre-framing and pre-focussing manually on a spot that birds fly through and snapping the next one to fly into my picture; tracking the birds in flight until they fly into my pre-focussed zone; finding a perch the birds launch themselves from and awaiting their next launch; tracking birds on servo auto-focus and snapping bursts as they get bigger in the frame. They all have pluses and minuses.

And I am still learning to be ruthless with deleting poor shots - I easily take 300 images an hour each time I go to the wetlands and 98% are rejects.

My favourite shots? Well, here are a couple. The welcome swallow flying straight at the camera is probably my most difficult shot technically (and the result of 5000+ images!).

I still have lots to learn and a long way to go and Sonja's talk was simply inspirational. I have now joined BirdLife Australia and I am looking forward to joining their monthly bird photography outings. But the Bellbird Waterhole will remain a favourite spot for me.

What's your favourite local place for your photography?

President's Report

Lesley Bretherton

Dear MCC club members and friends,

Our plans for the heritage restoration and renovations were submitted to Heritage Victoria recently and advertised for the required time. Only one objection was received and the architect has prepared a rebuttal which has been re-submitted back to Heritage Victoria so we hope to go to tender soon.

The building works will stretch our finances so income-generation is high on the board agenda at the moment. If you have any questions about the works or ideas for fund raising please seek out a member of

the Board or the coordinator of the building subcommittee (Bob Morgan) who will be pleased to discuss ideas and answer questions.

A group of members enjoyed a 'Christmas in July' weekend away at Point Lonsdale Guesthouse on 25th and 26th July. The weather was perfect and I hope to see some great sunrise and sunset images submitted in upcoming competitions. Given the success of this event we will plan more weekends away in future so if you have any ideas I would be very happy to discuss them with you.

The introduction to photography course starting on 4th August is fully subscribed and will be coordinated by

Gary Richardson. He will require some assistance for the weekend workshops so please lend a hand if you are able to. I am sure there is a lot of untapped talent in the club so if you have any ideas for future courses then please put a proposal to the Board for consideration.

The annual general meeting is coming up soon so please give some thought to volunteering to come on to the Board; there are several positions which will become vacant and we encourage anyone interested to consider taking up a one of these. I would be very pleased to talk to you if you are unsure of the requirements or time commitment. It is a very collegial group and the club needs enthusiastic new, young and old members to help the club flourish.

Mexico

Susan Brunialti



Sunrise over the Caribbean Sea, Isla Mujeres

Hot deserts, tumbleweeds, enormous cactus plants and sombrero-wearing locals are what we were expecting when we arrived in Mexico. But immersing ourselves amongst Mayan pyramids and ancient ruins overgrown with lush jungle

vines, brightly coloured colonial buildings and grand churches, white sandy beaches and shy, yet warm village people proud of their heritage, religion and their diverse home changed our ideas.

Isla Mujeres (Island of Women), a small island measuring 7 kms in length and only 1 km wide, would be our first taste of Mexico. Off the coast of Cancun, Isla Mujeres is an island surrounded by the Caribbean Sea. We were greeted by the warm, clear blue waters of Playa Norte beach, golf cart and Vespa transport, continuous hot weather and genuinely friendly locals. This would be the ideal location to recover from our jet lag, especially as we were travelling with our three year old son, Jack.

Fairly quickly we learnt travelling with a blonde-haired child in Mexico was advantageous. The local bar maid on Isla Mujeres would serve him personalised mango ice drinks, not listed on the drinks menu. Our tour guides around the ruins would engage in conversations with him about how many steps to the top of ruins, why people no longer used pyramids and how to say hello and goodbye, in Spanish. Life as a three year old blonde in Mexico appeared enjoyable; loads of special attention from



El Castillo (Temple of Kukulkan) Chichen Itza



Colonial Cathedral, San Christobal

charismatic locals, corn chips for lunch and dinner and most days, somewhere to swim. He was a happy little traveller.

After a week on our quiet slice of paradise, we ventured onto the Mexican mainland, hired a car and self-drove approximately 2,000



Thousand year old bas-relief carvings near perfectly preserved, Palenque

kilometres around the Yucatan and Chiapas states. Our first destination would be Chichen Itza, home to El Castillo, (also known as Temple of Kukulcan), a 35 metre high Mayan pyramid. Built in circa 450 AD, Chichen Itza is a listed UNESCO World Heritage Site and, in 2007, named one of the new seven wonders of the world. The uniqueness of Mayan pyramids lies in their difference to Egyptian pyramids. Where Egyptian pyramids were built primarily as tombs, Mayan pyramids were built for places of worship and religious festivals, grouped with other buildings as part of a settlement, with steps on the outside leading from ground level to temples rising from the top of the pyramid. Our hotel, located within the borders of this

ancient city, commanded awe-inspiring views of the ruins from both our room balcony and the hotel foyer.

Navigating around the Yucatan State was relatively easy; well-maintained bitumen roads with visible signage for speed limits and towns. Perhaps this state lulled us into a false sense of security, for when we entered Chiapas, roads were....let's just say they left a lot to be desired. Bitumen roads gave way to large potholes in narrow gravel roads and road signage

was a distant memory. We were en route to San Cristobal, colonial city with cobblestone streets located in a valley in the central highlands, where ancient customs from surrounding hillside villages coexist with modern luxuries. Our drive to San Cristobal was exciting! We had maps but no GPS. After getting lost (on more than one occasion), we were to rely on our very minimal Spanish to communicate with indigenous villagers to request directions. Their response always seemed the same, "Vamos!", with hand gestures for left and right turns. We arrived at San Cristobal just before sunset but not before we had some concerns about where we might be spending the night.

From the colonial town cradled by the central highlands, to the jungle-swathed temples of Palenque, we were again in search of intriguing Mayan ruins plus waterfalls in the jungle of Chiapas. Two detours on the way to Palenque would lead us to spectacular waterfalls - the impressive cascading white waters of Agua Azul and the 35m waterfall of Misol-ha. Our visit to the waterfalls turned out to be longer than expected. Totally my fault, I was experimenting with long exposures and filters for the very first time.

Dusk was approaching as we left the falls. Driving through the jungle the road ahead was blocked. It was a shake down. Our not being able to read the Spanish document explaining the villagers' grievances did not stop them from demanding 50 pesos! We offered double their request, 100 pesos (~7 AUD) as we didn't have anything smaller, needless to say we were waved through without delay.



Brightly coloured buildings within walled streets, Merida



Franciscan Monastery in the heart of the yellow painted town, Izamal

On to Palenque we travelled and explored the ancient Mayan city where howler monkeys swing in the trees above and some of the finest Mayan architecture, sculpture and bas-relief carvings have been found. In 1987, UNESCO recognised Palenque as a World Heritage Site. Part of the charm with the ruins at Palenque is that only 10% of the recorded 1,400 buildings have been excavated, the remaining buildings still covered by jungle. This was Indiana Jones country.

Leaving the jungles of Palenque, we travelled south, returning to the Yucatan Peninsula. We stayed

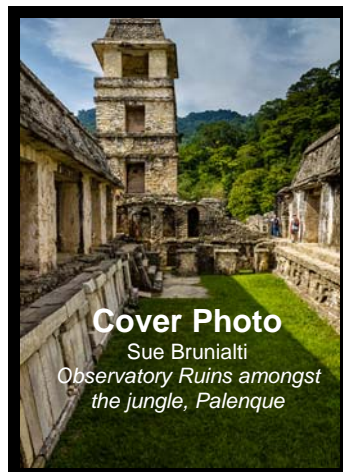
overnight in the walled colonial city of Merida, where we explored the narrow streets and colourful buildings by day and at night, ate in the large plazas that come alive with music, people and dancing.

Heading towards Cancun, we drove east from Merida, to Izamal. An impressive Franciscan monastery with walls painted yellow, stands in the heart of this town. In fact most of the town is painted yellow, brightening walls and practically every building.

On our final leg, we made our way to Playa del Carmen. Our final night was an extravagant stay in a 5 star resort. Approaching the vicinity, we felt we had arrived in Las Vegas, with grand themed resorts on both sides of a four lane highway! Playa del Carmen is rightly famous for pristine, white sandy beaches and crystal clear blue waters. Later that night, we would have a very close encounter with a giant sea turtle busy laying her eggs on the shore. This was the epitome for dissolving all our preconceptions of Mexico. ■



Ruin view from hotel



Cover Photo

Sue Brunialti
Observatory Ruins amongst
the jungle, Palenque

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June mono print of month

Jim Weatherill

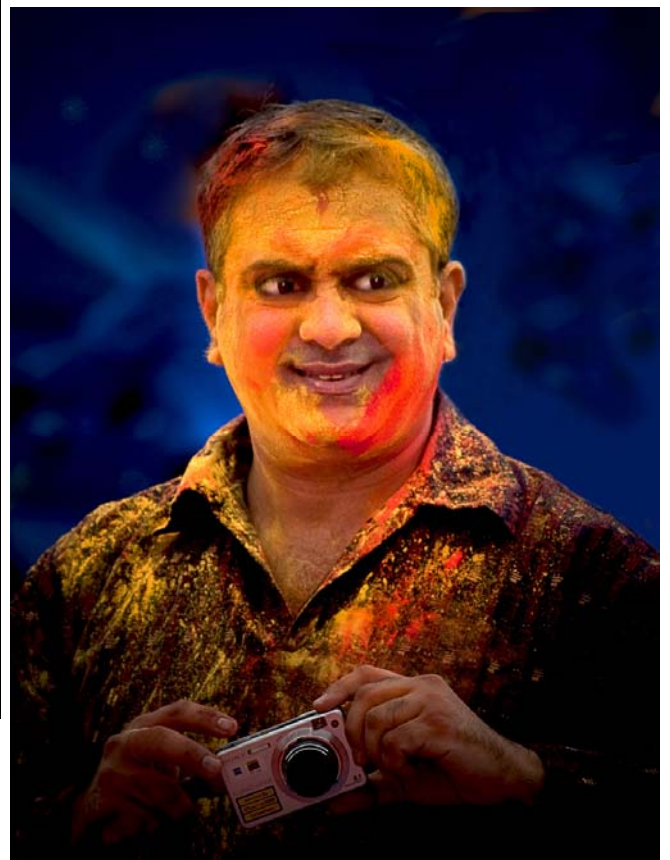
The Wharf



July mono PDI of month

Teng-Tan

Nude study



June colour PDI of month

Ray Papulis

Colour Photo

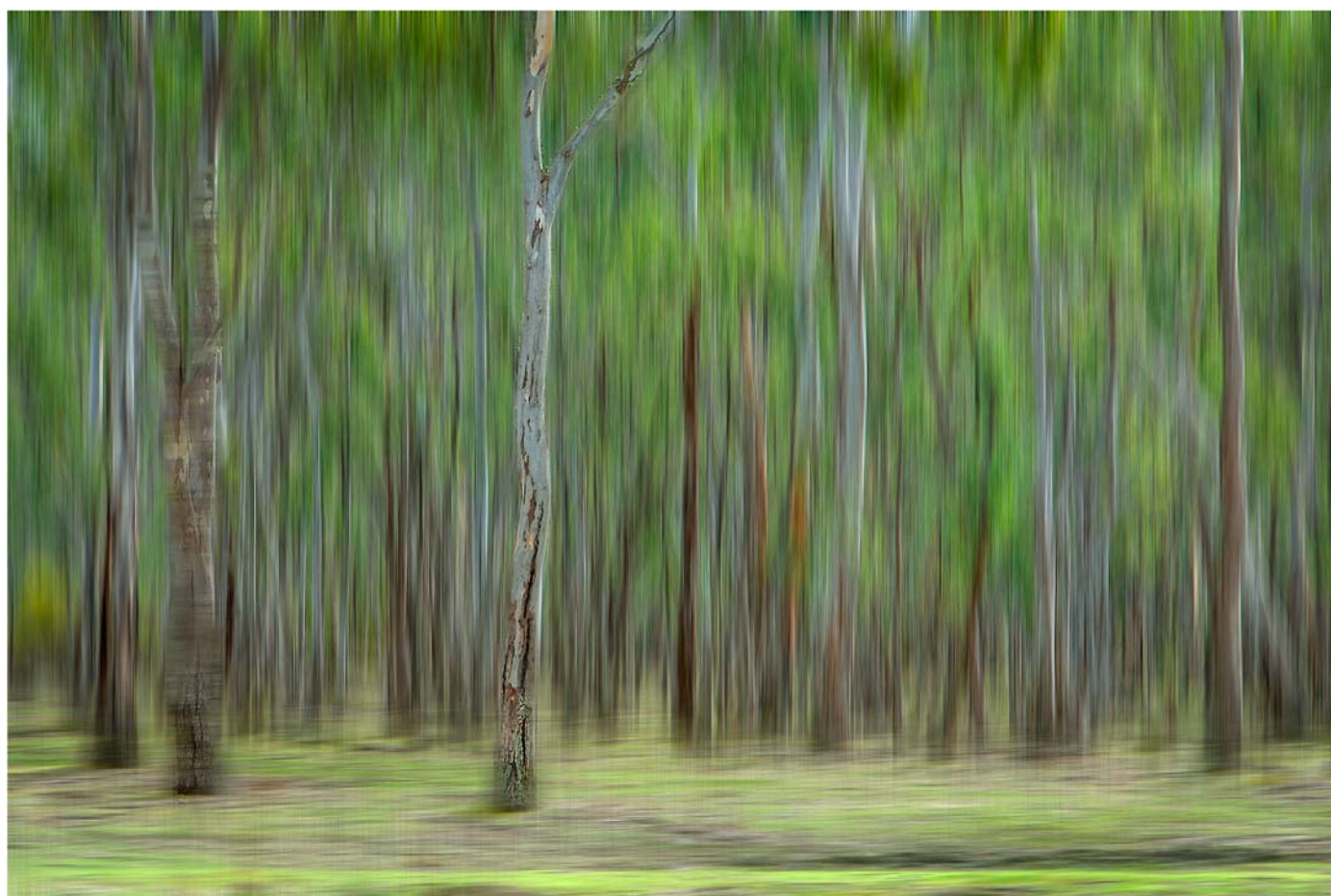
Exposure

September-October Issue

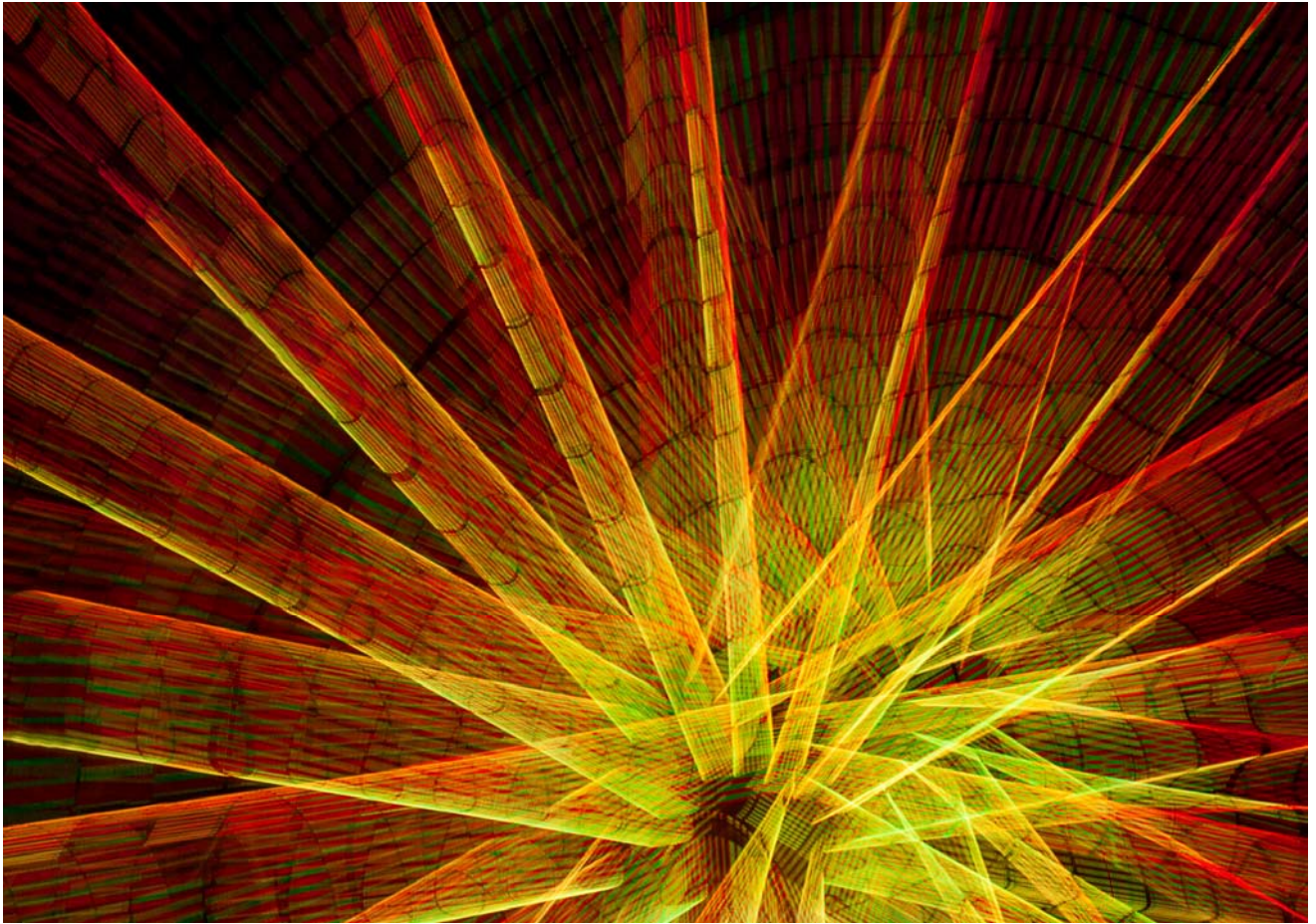
*The deadline for the next
issue is September 28*



June mono PDI of month Marg Huxtable *Mateship*



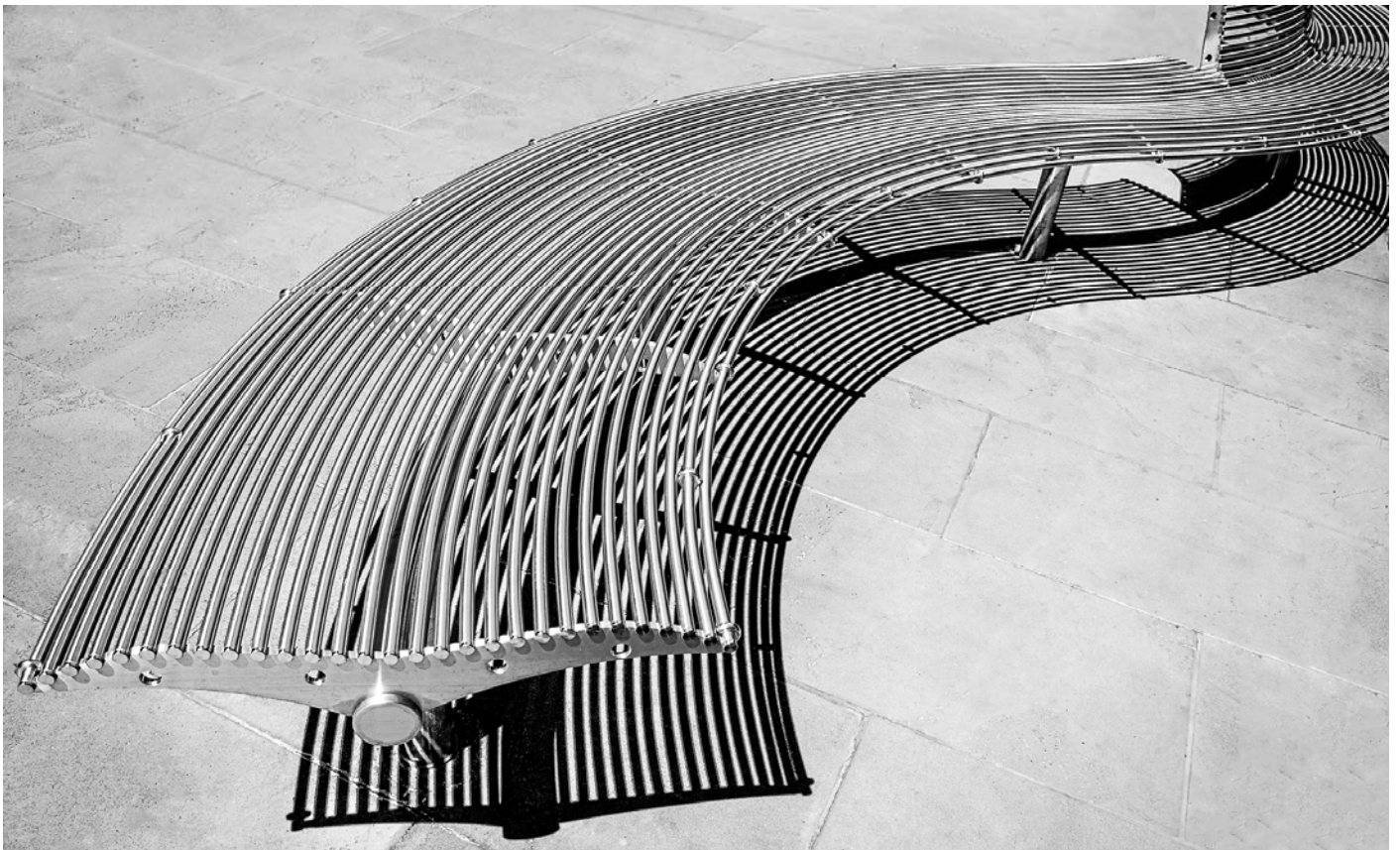
July colour PDI of month Tuck Leong *Forest Impressions*



July colour print of month

Teng Tan

Kinetic radiance



July mono print of month

Teng Tan

Sinuous shadow play