



A tribute to Bill Brandt

at the Henri Cartier-Bresson Foundation
<http://www.henricartierbresson.org>

From September 21st to December 18th, the Foundation will show a rare collection of vintage prints by the great photographer Bill Brandt. It is the first time that this prestigious collection is exhibited in France – in collaboration with the Bill Brandt Archive, London.

Fondation Cartier-Bresson
2, impasse Lebourg
75014 Paris

contact@henricartierbresson.org

Opening hours

From Wednesday to Sunday : 1 PM to 6.30 PM

Saturday : 11 AM to 6.45 PM

Late night Wednesdays until 8.30 PM

Closed on Mondays, Tuesdays and public holidays

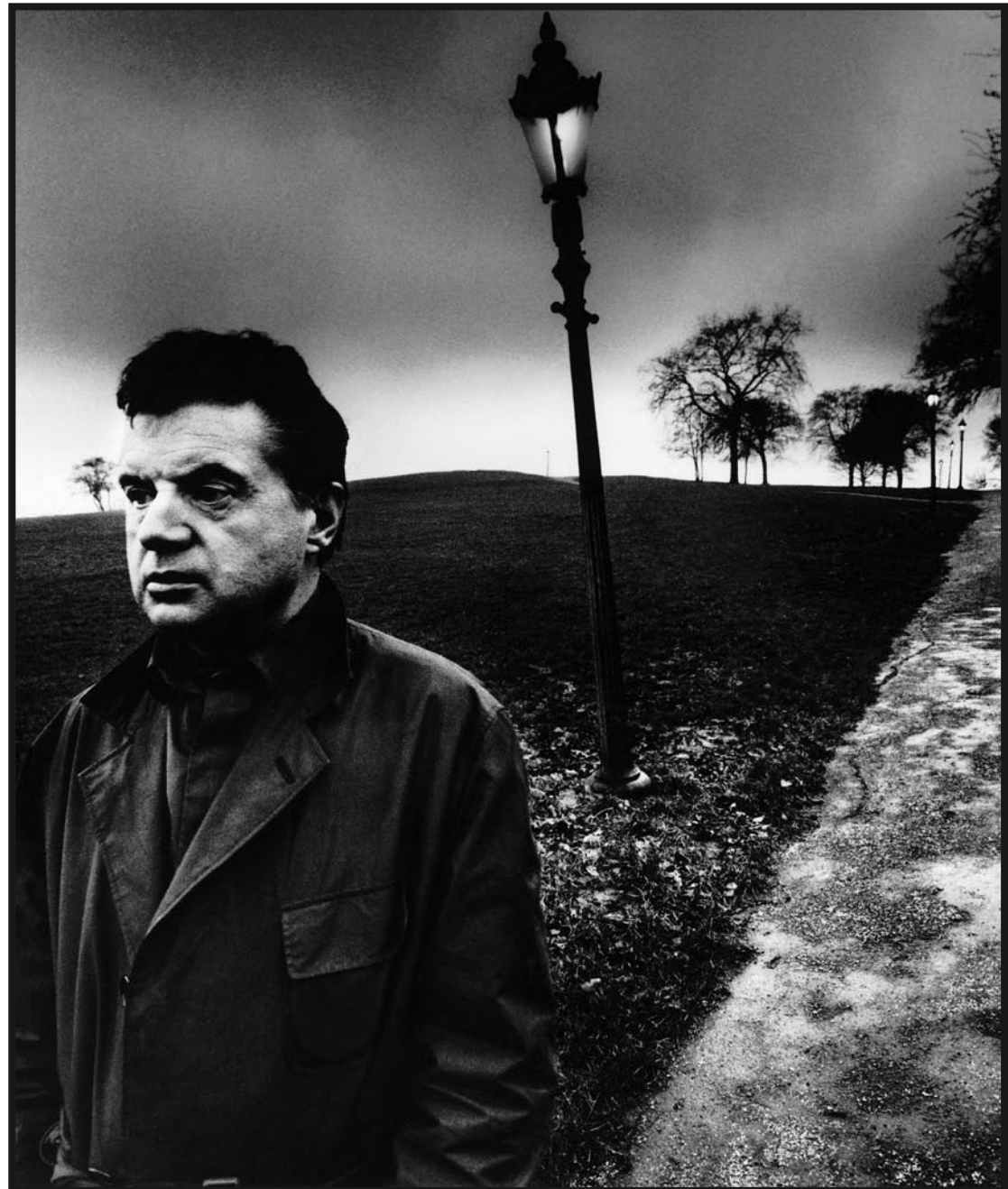
Closed in August, and between Christmas and New Year

Admission

5 € Adults

3 € Students, Seniors and unemployed

Free on Wednesday evening (6.30 PM - 8.30 PM)



Francis Bacon, 1963
Bill Brandt © Bill Brandt Archive Ltd

This issue of webphotomag aims at presenting the spirit and the layout of the magazine. It isn't meant to be an actual issue and if it presents mostly photographs from my good self, it is for the sake of example and to let me convince other photographers that they want their work, rather than mine, in these pages!

The idea behind webphotomag is to provide a space where photographers can present their work to everybody. By everybody, I mean «not just other photographers» and by presenting their work, I mean the photograph as the central subject rather than as an illustration of something else. To photographers, webphotomag is meant to be a showcase of their work, to readers it is meant to be an opportunity to discover images that will please them, question them, shock them (why not?) and hopefully inspire them.

Distributing this magazine electronically is a way to reach more people in space and time. A photograph is not prisoner of a language, it will touch the English, the French and the Japanese the same as anyone from any other country; a digital magazine has the same property: it can reach this same diversity instantly. Further than that, a digital magazine doesn't have a problem with unavailability of back-issues: it is forever available.

Of course, it is also infinitely reproducible at no cost, including on paper. This will make this medium more suitable to amateurs than to professionals, to the unknown rather than the famous. From the reader's standpoint, the bet is that there will nonetheless be quality work to enjoy and talents to be discovered.

Introducing this issue, Francis Bacon as portrayed by Bill Brandt in 1963. One goal of webphotomag is to promote exhibitions and events about photography and will provide space to this effect both in the magazine and on the web site. To illustrate the spirit of the magazine, what better example than this exhibition, where the French meets the British, than this picture where photography meets painting?

The next section will talk about my experience using two very different cameras on the same scene, looking for comparison and finding a rainbow. This «camera test» is there to further stress the point that webphotomag is about photographs rather than cameras.

The space after that will be left to images. I'm presenting only one series, in the format that will be the main content of this magazine. A first page, letting the author introduce the photographs that

will be presented in the pages to follow and concluding the presentation, an interview to know a bit more the photographer and the context. Future issues will present three to four series from different photographers.

Concluding the issue, a quick run through what to expect in the next. Of course, at this time it is still early to know who will participate in issue #1... Maybe yourself?

This is a call for feedback from readers and photographers but also from galleries, exhibition organisers and anyone who wants to take a part in this adventure.

I'm looking forward to reading about your comments, suggestions and to ear about those who want to participate in this project.

Jérôme Muffat-Méridol LRPS
 editor -factotum
 jmuffat@webphotomag.com

Digital poppy field

Jérôme Muffat-Méridol LRPS

<http://www.hypernavigate.org>

It was the end of a sunny afternoon, we were driving back to Paris on a little road alongside the river Loire after having spent several days enjoying the architecture, the landscapes and, of course, the cuisine of this fine region of France. We had encountered fields dotted of red along the trip, poppies were blooming here and there, scattered in smaller or larger groups, making the land look happy. And there it was! A magnificent field of them and just them. Against the blue of the sky, there was an explosion of red, only balanced by the warm colour of the evening about to start.

A few moments later, car parked on the side of the road, I was installing my tripod, heap deep in the red sea of flowers. I felt it also was a good opportunity for me to do a test and shoot this both digitally, on a Nikon D2x, and on medium format film, on an Hasselblad 500C. Lots of colours, lots of detail, a perfect technical test...

I started with the digital camera. Things were falling into place nicely in the viewfinder. The green, the red and the blue were happy together, that tree at the back broke the flatness of the horizon, it felt good. A runner entered the frame, tiny blue point jogging behind the flowers. And a flock of birds took off in the distance.

Click. I knew at once I had it: I could feel jubilation rushing through my body.



Poppy field on film

Jérôme Muffat-Méridol LRPS

<http://www.hypernavigate.org>



The Nikon is replaced by the Hasselblad and the ritual starts. Unfolding the viewfinder, focusing, checking depth of field, fine tuning focus through the magnifying glass. Stand back and look again, scrutinize that reversed image...

Something doesn't quite work. The square format of the film simply isn't getting on with the picture I took before. I let the camera free to rotate on the tripod, exploring other angles, trying desperately to fit that tree when, in what felt like a bold move, I start leaving the tree off the frame. This is when the jet of water appeared to me, wearing a subtle rainbow of colours. I just knew the Velvia film would emphasize that!

The ritual continued, advance the film, remove insert and click. But that jet rotated and was changing color all the time. So, I advanced the film again and stood there, bowing, waiting for the shimmer to be right and... Click. The jubilation started again, strong. I had a second photograph, I knew it. And I also had an answer to my test: the two cameras showed me their difference.

That difference isn't so much in resolving power, colour rendition or technicality but rather in how they made me see the scene and relate to the subject in a completely different way.

Advertising or No advertising

webphotomag can be funded via subscriptions, via advertisement or via a mix of both. This is a call to our potential readers to voice their preferences.

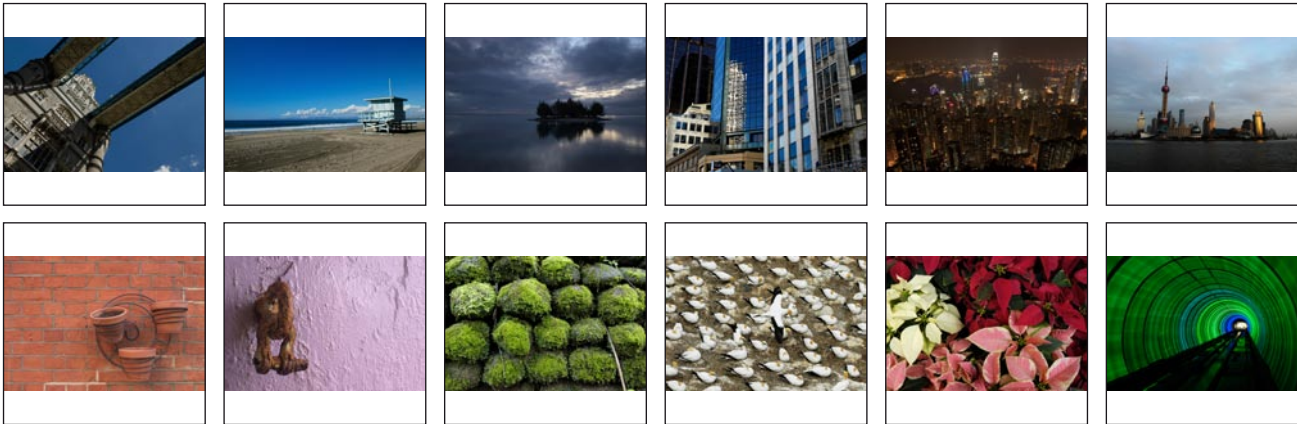
It all boils down to a simple question:

would you be ready to pay a 50€/year subscription?

Whether you're reader, advertiser or just having an opinion: jmuffat@webphotomag.com

Round the World

Jérôme Muffat-Méridol LRPS
<http://www.hypernavigate.org>



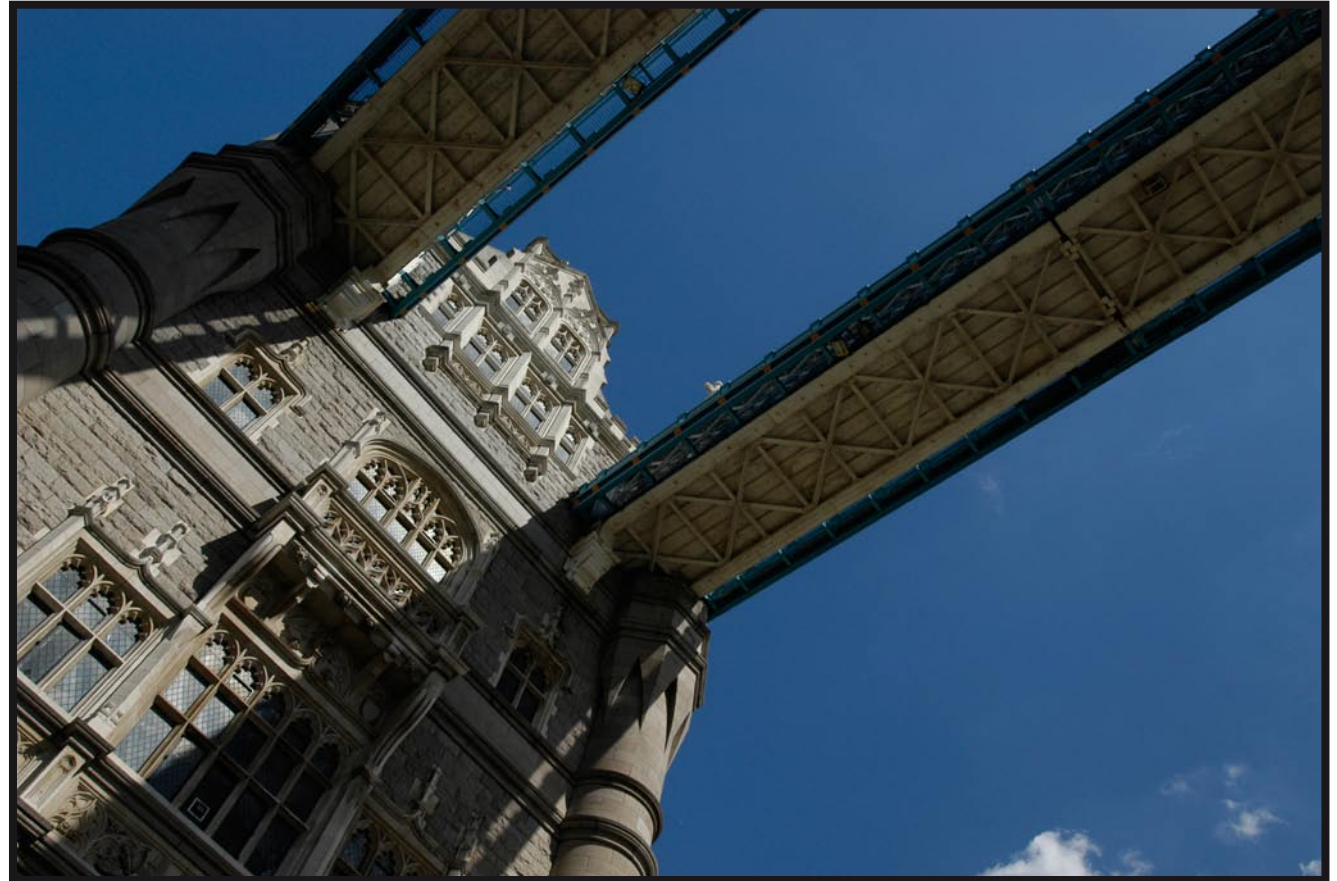
In november 2003, after a year of working hard on a project and never having time for a day off, I found myself with a month worth of holiday to take and so fortunate to have enough money in the bank to go on a very special trip. I got myself a round-the-world plane ticket and started on a trip that took me from London (where I lived) to California, Tahiti, Auckland, Hong-Kong and Shanghai.

Of course, along this trip, I took a large quantity of photographs. Out of these, selection after selection, a set emerged, showing each of the places in two different and very complementary ways. Visual and abstract. An impression and a feeling.

Tower bridge

Jérôme Muffat-Méridol LRPS

<http://www.hypernavigate.org>



It might come as a surprise to some, but the weather in London often gratifies the wanderer with a brand blue sky! It can happen in the morning, the evening or sometimes the afternoon and usually for a completely unpredictable amount of time, the good thing is a pub is never far away where to wait for the magic to happen!

Green

Jérôme Muffat-Méridol LRPS

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Bricks. All colours and arrangements of them. Wall after wall, street after street, infinite variations of the blocks of mud. Sometimes naked, sometimes hidden below a thin layer of colour or vegetation.

How many bricks is London made off?

Baba Yaga in America

Jérôme Muffat-Méridol LRPS

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The ocean, a beach, the mountains in the background (smog allowing), life-guards off-duty: the quiet side of California! The cabin made me think of that part of Mussorgsky's «Pictures at an Exhibition» where we encounter «The Hut on Hen's Legs».

New coat of paint

Jérôme Muffat-Méridol LRPS

<http://www.hypernavigate.org>



Every time I go to America, I have this mixed impression of fresh paint over some less shiny material. This striking contrast between the hi-tech, the brand new and the desirable standing on the worn-out, the tired and the obsolete. Not that this wouldn't exist in Europe, of course, but somehow feels more notable over there and when I bumped into this old wall with its rusted pin, trying to look sexy in pink, I could almost hear Tom Waits starting his song.

Mystic Motu

Jérôme Muffat-Méridol LRPS

<http://www.hypernavigate.org>



Sometimes, in between the beach and the coral reef, an islet emerges, Tahitians call them 'motu'. So, here I am looking at this small island, from a beach on Moorea, itself a small island off Tahiti, itself a tiny piece of island lost in the pacific ocean, thinking of immensity.

Marae Ahu-o-Mahine

Jérôme Muffat-Méridol LRPS

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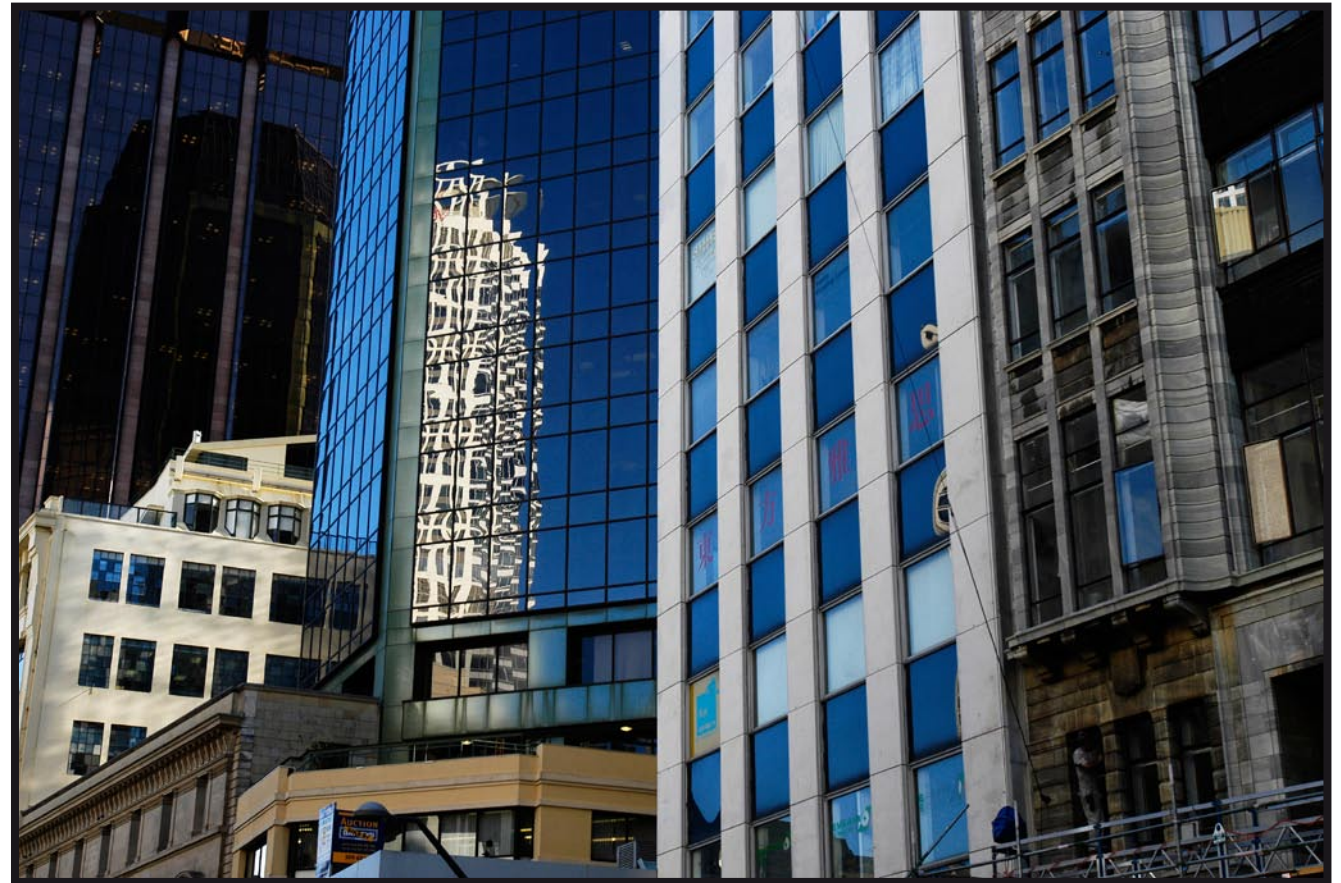


Marae Ahu-o-Mahine was definitely a key encounter in this trip. This antique sacred place, dressed in the vibrant green of the rainy season with the giant trees for a roof, was seeming to extend roots all around the islands and beyond. I came to see a beautiful land and found a powerful culture.

Auckland Mix

Jérôme Muffat-Méridol LRPS

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Difficult to define Auckland. It has a very western feel to it and is also already a bit oriental. Modern buildings are side by side with older ones, we're in a big city and at the same time, we aren't really away from the countryside. It's almost like New Zealand picked from every place in the world and created something original, a mix of convenience and comfort.

Gannets

Jérôme Muffat-Méridol LRPS

<http://www.hypernavigate.org>



For someone who has never seen a flock of gannets, the sight is unforgettable. Hundreds gather and nest in this orderly manner, not very far from the footpath, oblivious of the people around and one can spend hours spotting the different activities going on. I remember New-Zealand like that, as a country very concerned with nature and very orderly, too.

Hong-Kong reaching out

Jérôme Muffat-Méridol LRPS

<http://www.hypernavigate.org>



Buildings in Hong-Kong are high, but the hills around are even higher. So much so that one is called «The Peak», and the views from the top of that hill are breathtaking especially at nights when there is no fog.

Christmas flowers

Jérôme Muffat-Méridol LRPS

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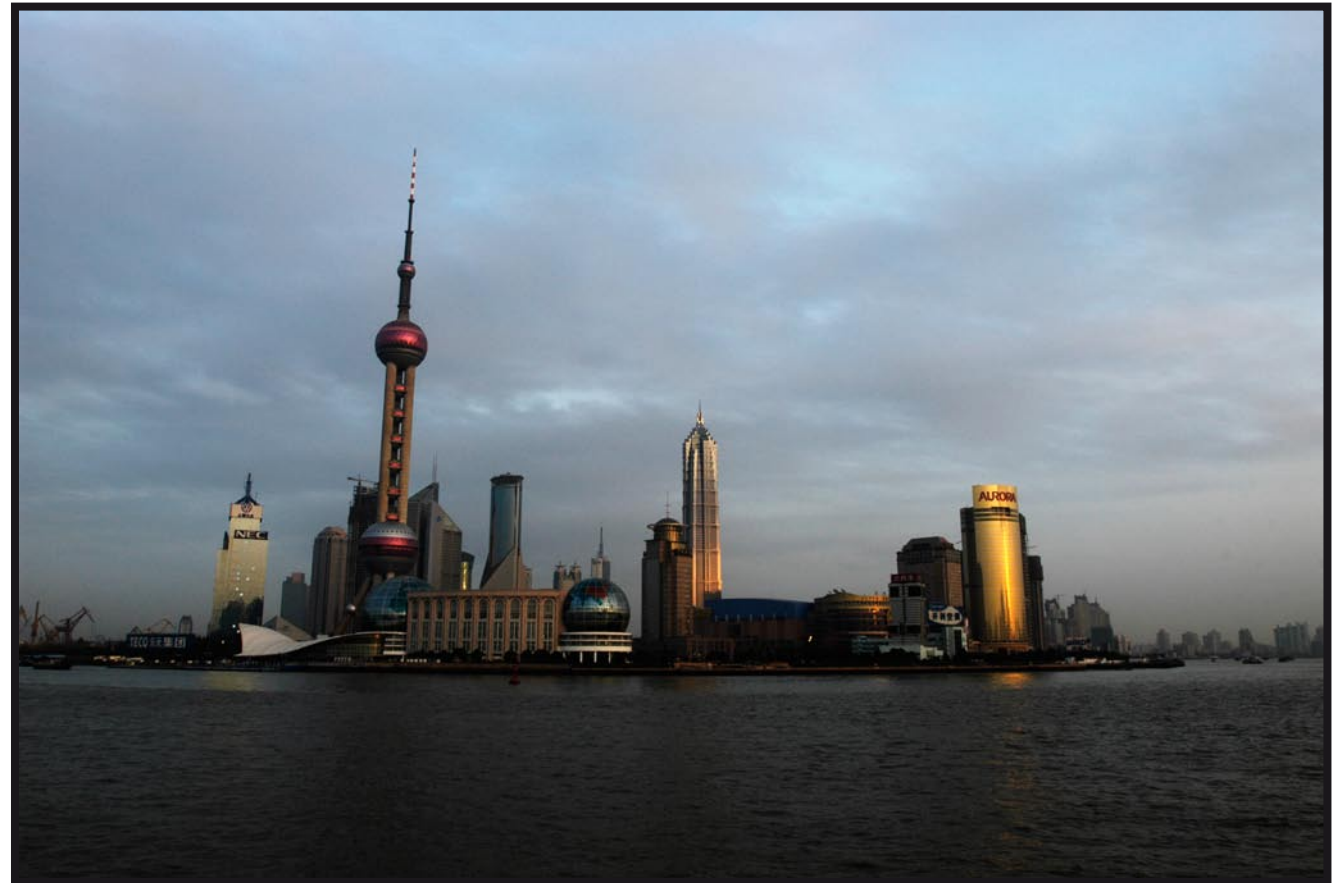


Reaching Hong-Kong in December, I found it preparing Christmas celebrations, which many do by decorating their environment with poinsettias. The place was very red! But only in colour. Hong-Kong's very much like these pink leaves, making the junction between two worlds.

Convergence

Jérôme Muffat-Méridol LRPS

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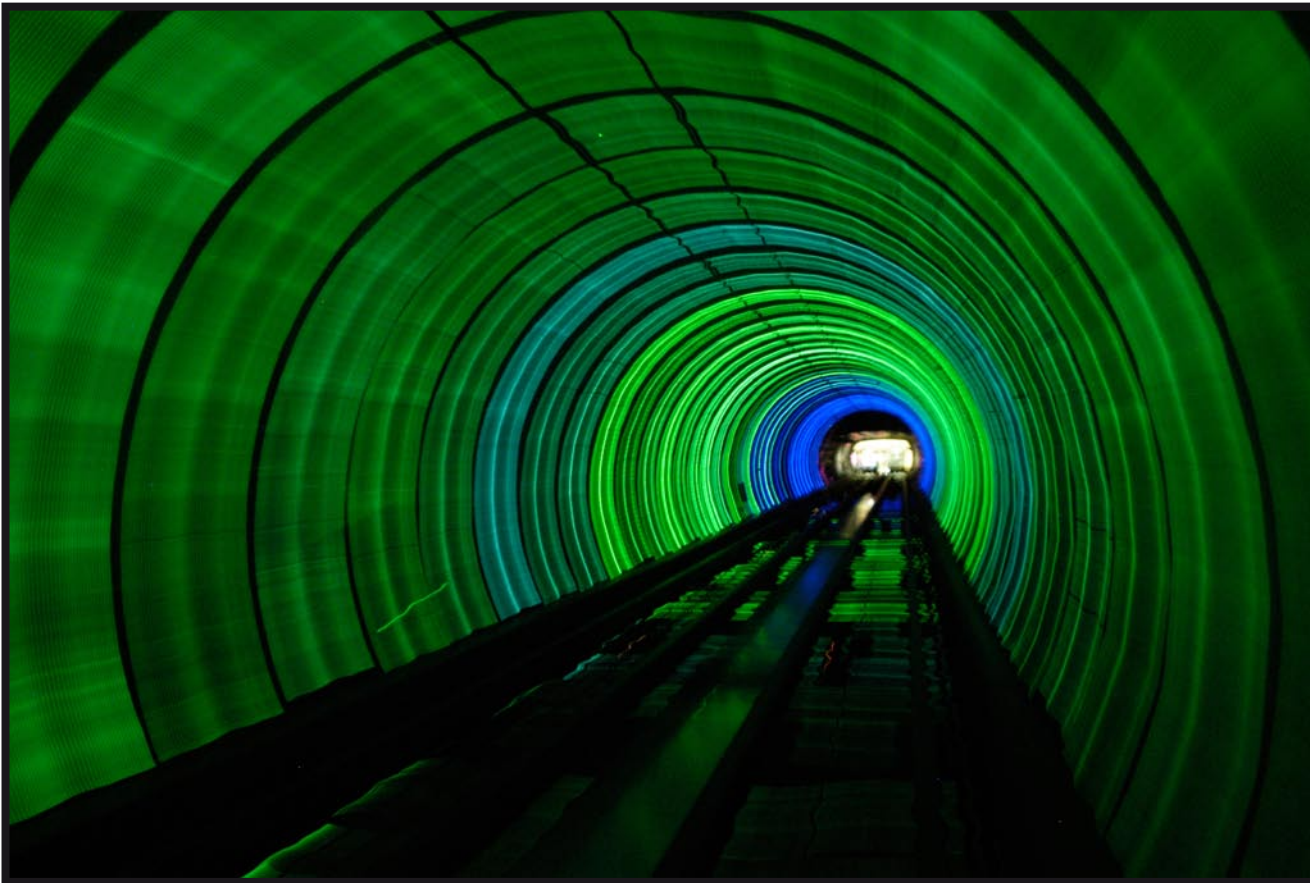


Shanghai was impressive in how much there was a sense of ongoing progress. The rich bits looked very rich, the poor areas looked very poor and the mix felt like a continuation of the city's colonial past. What was even more noticeable was the growth, the way construction seems to be working at full cycle. This view of Pudong from the Bund will look curiously empty in a few years, I'm sure.

Greenlighted

Jérôme Muffat-Méridol LRPS

<http://www.hypernavigate.org>



Connecting the Bund and Pudong, a tunnel wears the evocative name of «Bund Tourist Tunnel». The crossing lasts a few minutes and is done in a small almost individual carriage, with a lights&sound show projected on the tubular shape of the tunnel. It was an extraordinary surprise, definitely artistic and interesting. This is China, embarked on a futuristic trip and about to astonish us.

webphotomag: photography is a word covering a very large scope and, to start off with, can you tell us what is photography in your case: how do you define the photography you do?

Jérôme Muffat-Méridol: it is not the simplest question! I'd even go as far as saying that there are a lot of pictures I take trying to answer this exact question. I guess photography is a means of introspection for me, I go about looking around and will take a quick snapshot here or spend ages on the same single subject, in both cases trying to capture what made me react, to understand why I had a reaction. There is an element of instinct when shooting, but afterwards when selecting and processing the images, there is a lot of introspection. If I say anything with my photography, I think it is about myself rather than my subjects.

WPM: You mention selecting and processing, how important are these?

JMM: Processing is the secret side of photography... What happens in the darkroom? It almost relates to black magic, someone lonely in the dark conjuring images in smoking pots... Nowadays, with computers, things are less dark and less mysterious. I tend to not manipulate my pictures so much, it's not what I'm trying to do. As much as possible, I like keeping the photograph "as-shot", stay close to what initially caught my attention. I

may change my mind later, being a fan of Mario Giacomelli's work, it will have to come from inside, I don't feel the need for that today.

Now, on the question of selection, I think this is a key part of photography, at least for me. I reckon photography is about selection. It starts camera in hand, selecting when to press the release; actually, Frank Horvat puts that very well when he says "The art of not pressing the button". Still, the button will have been pressed too many times. A lot of shots are taken to lead to a photograph and lots of others are shot that only confirm that photograph as the one. Reviewing, selecting and being brutal about it is photography. On the round-the-world trip which led to the series I present in this issue, I shot about three thousand pictures, of which I had made an initial selection of three hundred; this first pass led to a portfolio of only forty. Out of these forty, ten are presented here (to which I've added two for London after the fact): these twelve aren't necessarily the most beautiful or those with the most impact, but they contain a lot of myself. A process not dissimilar to distillation, in a way...

WPM: You mentioned Frank Horvat and Mario Giacomelli, do you have other influences?

JMM: I'm a bit more complicated than that and am often taking the longest possible routes to my destinations. I struggle with my cameras and what I try

to pull from inside and sometimes I come across an exhibition, a book or even an ad and recognize something. You need to understand I'm very humble saying what I just said: I'm not saying they do what I do. *They do what I want to do.* But to recognize what I see, I need to have bumped into the thing myself... I can't think of a photographer's work I don't find interesting and am not trying to integrate in my reflection (and action). I'm very interested in how the work of Yann Arthus-Bertrand renewed the interest of the public, in Martin Parr's serious humour, in Nan Goldin's madness, in Doisneau's almost naïve work and I could go on and on. They all definitely influence me, but I don't want to copy, I want to take the long road and feel each step along the way!

WPM: How does it feel interviewing oneself?

JMM: Very odd indeed! A bit of a crazy experience in split-personality. It is an interesting one for me, getting to write down thoughts forces some structure into them. I'm sure others will have more interesting things to say in these columns and can't wait to talk with the first contributors.

In the next issue...

More photographers... If you're a photographer and want to be featured in these pages, send us a little e-mail!

More features... If you run a gallery or an exhibition and think we can mention your current events, you're right! Send us a little e-mail!

More pages... More photographs to enjoy and universes to discover. If you know about some work you would like to see featured in these pages, send us a little e-mail!

More readers... Let us know what you like, don't like, would like. Tell us what you expect from a magazine like webphotomag!

jmuffat@webphotomag.com

