

Robert Killick
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The Poetic Landscape (black and white photographic imagery)

The choice of black and white photography as a media for my art reflects upon seeking the essence of an image. It reduces a scene to the “bones”. In fact, rather than eliminating colours, it allows us to touch upon a truer colour or heart of an image in its “surprise”, in a way we don't normally view.

My work also tends toward abstract in its elimination of detail, removing what may otherwise become distracting, in a quest for the “feel” of a very personal journey. I often refer to it as a quest for a poem within imagery, rather than the normal approach to photography of being “prosaic” or documentary. As with a poem, it is not important to see with the eye and to cognitively understand it – but to see with the heart and experience it. Consequently I tend not to make a deal out of a common question that seems to be associated with the “normal” comprehension of what photography is - and that is “where is it?”. However, if the two are intertwined, location and “feel”, then that's fine.

Aesthetically my work also plays around with a sense of solidity and flow – an oxymoron of the nature of love or life. The elements of black and white photography, particularly as I relate, are not dissimilar to the interpretations of a Hotere – “it's not about the black but the white coming through”, that is, it meet us where we are at, and speaks of release and hope, or it meets us in prison but may take us on a journey to flight or beauty or rest. The white becomes a revelation through the black.

As an environmental art-image, black and white tends to be “rested” in that it does not invade with its colours - it is “still” and often has an absorbing “depth” on a wall. It allows people to add their own colours as it were.

On the technical aspects, my imagery is totally “old school”, with no digital manipulation what so ever being used. All the images are from a film negative and hand printed silver gelatin/halide prints. The effect and aesthetic is primarily worked at the camera using lighting, a very textural film grain and other pre-digital techniques. I like to feel I'm producing something old and something new to add to a contemporary style. All images are presented to a high standard. They are professionally framed utilising a more expensive deep matte, which not only adds to current interior styles in it boldness, cleanness and “window” effect, but helps to conserve the image. Each image is limited in edition, hopefully allowing a pricing structure that meets a gap for those still wishing to purchase a “special piece” without the expense of an even more unique single canvas.

Two of my images “Trinity” and “Diamond” have both been pictured in Urbis Magazine in one of their “feature” housing designs. A further image has been bought into the Maori Land Courts government collection. Two of my black & white images have been bought for onsale and interior display by MacKenzie & Willis Design Store in Christchurch (non limited prints). I consider my work very much as a Kiwi traveler's story, but I have also recently returned from overseas where I've started making my first inroads in to Paris. My work has been exhibited in a number of shows in galleries in Christchurch, Hamilton and Auckland.

I tend with my pricing structures, not to do solo exhibitions, not because of non invitation, but more because a complementary group can enhance the show, and because of the practical aspects of production budget. I tend to prefer to have two to three images on fairly regular display. My first Christchurch show was with a sculptor – it introduced a lovely walk through dimension to the show, organized in such a way as to have the sculpture and imagery, two different media, “reflecting” each other.

As far as the craft aspects of my art are concerned, I've been photographing keenly since I was 18 (I'm now 44). I have attended an AUT course in order to further my skills in lighting and processing . Some 12 years of my life were within the fashion industry with then, one of NZ's more progressive and regarded design houses. Since that time I have spent some ten years largely in and around the arts communities of Parnell and Christchurch. Currently I reside upon the Sea Bird Coast, Kaiaua, but life is often one of "tents" and travel. I've regularly taken up photographic & design work for galleries and other artists as well as some event management with exhibitions, and some years ago the Parnell Arts Week festival. I'm presently doing freelance photographic and design work for a natural NZ cosmetics company developing Asian markets etc.

However, in as afar as my Art is concerned – it is an expression of a life and a search of the heart, requiring "living" or a journey to complete, as a heart and a life is not learnt or even created – it is found. It is seen in unveiling. Its value is not in CV's, but in a relative association with life or beauty or truth.

A full catalogue of current images is online at www.robertkillick.co.nz in "The Poetic Landscape" section. Editions are limited to 8.

Many thanks

Rob

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