

BRENT MAIL presents...

# PHOTO BOOTCAMP MAGAZINE

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ISSUE 60 | APRIL 2024



IN THIS ISSUE:  
YEARS TOP  
SHOTS

— ★ PHOTO ★  
**BOOT  
CAMP**  
ACADEMY —

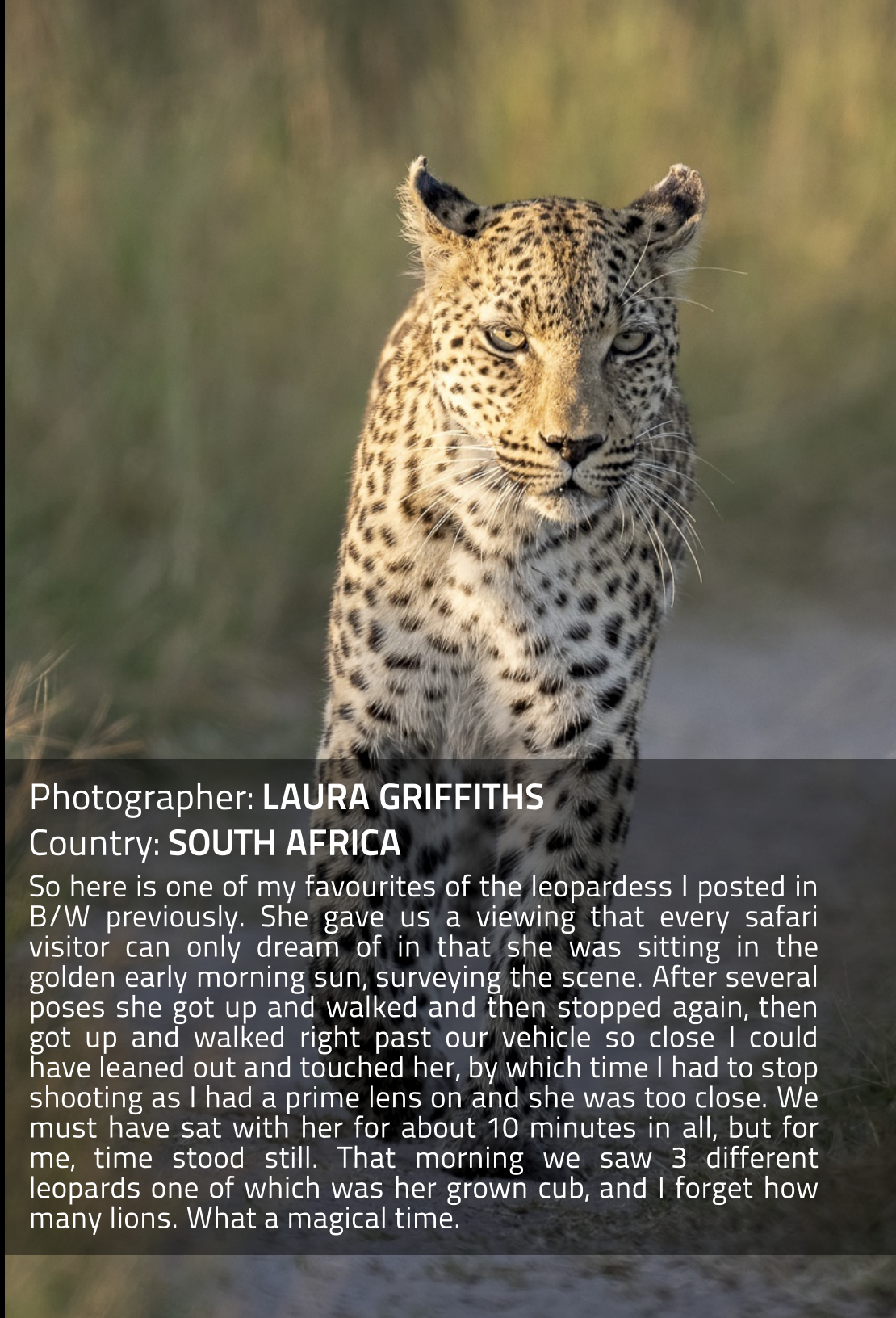


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Photographer: **LAURA GRIFFITHS**  
Country: **SOUTH AFRICA**

So here is one of my favourites of the leopardess I posted in B/W previously. She gave us a viewing that every safari visitor can only dream of in that she was sitting in the golden early morning sun, surveying the scene. After several poses she got up and walked and then stopped again, then got up and walked right past our vehicle so close I could have leaned out and touched her, by which time I had to stop shooting as I had a prime lens on and she was too close. We must have sat with her for about 10 minutes in all, but for me, time stood still. That morning we saw 3 different leopards one of which was her grown cub, and I forget how many lions. What a magical time.



# DRILL INSTRUCTOR'S MEMO

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## WELCOME TO ISSUE 60 OF PHOTO BOOTCAMP MAGAZINE!

In this issue we going to take a look a back at our own visual narratives over the last year. This period of reflection isn't just about patting ourselves on the back (although a little self-appreciation is always healthy!) it's a chance to celebrate our growth, both creative and technical. By revisiting our strongest images we can identify areas we've excelled and pinpoint skills we'd like the further develop.

But more importantly, reflecting on our photographic journey allows is to set the stage for future aspirations. What stories are we yearning to tell next? What hidden beauty awaits discovery in the year ahead? This introspective practice fuels our passion and propels us forward, camera in hand, ready to capture the next chapter in our visual narrative.

Then, we'll jump in and see what our Boot Camp members have been sharing. It's truly inspiring to see some of the unique and creative images our members have been capturing and their growth as well.



*Brent Mail*

**YEARS TOP  
SHOTS**

# YEARS TOP SHOTS

*"Photography is the story I fail to put into words. It captures the moments that words cannot express, showcasing the year's top shots as windows into our shared human experience."*

~ Ansel Adams

# YEARS TOP SHOTS



## Reflecting on Our Photographic Journey

As the year folds into memory, we photographers find ourselves reflecting on our visual narratives. Our top shots not only showcase our technical and creative growth but also highlight the subjects that moved us to capture those moments. It's an introspective practice that celebrates our achievements and sets the stage for future aspirations.

# YEARS TOP SHOTS

## The Power of Reflection: Learning from a Year's Worth of Shots

### Why It Matters

- Reflection: It's about recognizing our evolution, acknowledging how our vision has sharpened, and pinpointing future directions.
- Inspiration: Our best shots serve as muses for future projects, revealing successful techniques and themes.
- Connection: Sharing our favourites connects us with our community, offering a window into our artistic soul.
- Growth: This review is a checkpoint, marking our strengths and areas for improvement.
- Style Evolution: Observing our collection helps us understand the natural progression of our photographic style.

## Identifying Your Pinnacle Works

Choosing your year's best works involves introspection and critique. Look for shots that resonate personally, display technical prowess, and tell a compelling story. Feedback from peers, such as those in the Photo BootCamp Academy, can offer invaluable insights. Leveraging editing software to rate your work and considering the narrative strength of your images also helps in curating your top picks.

# YEARS TOP SHOTS

## Embracing Our Photographic Journey

Reviewing our year's best photographs is more than a ritual; it's a vital step in our ongoing journey as photographers. This retrospective not only celebrates our past year's accomplishments but also sharpens our focus for the future, encouraging us to continue capturing the world through our unique lenses.





# MEMBERS' IMAGES



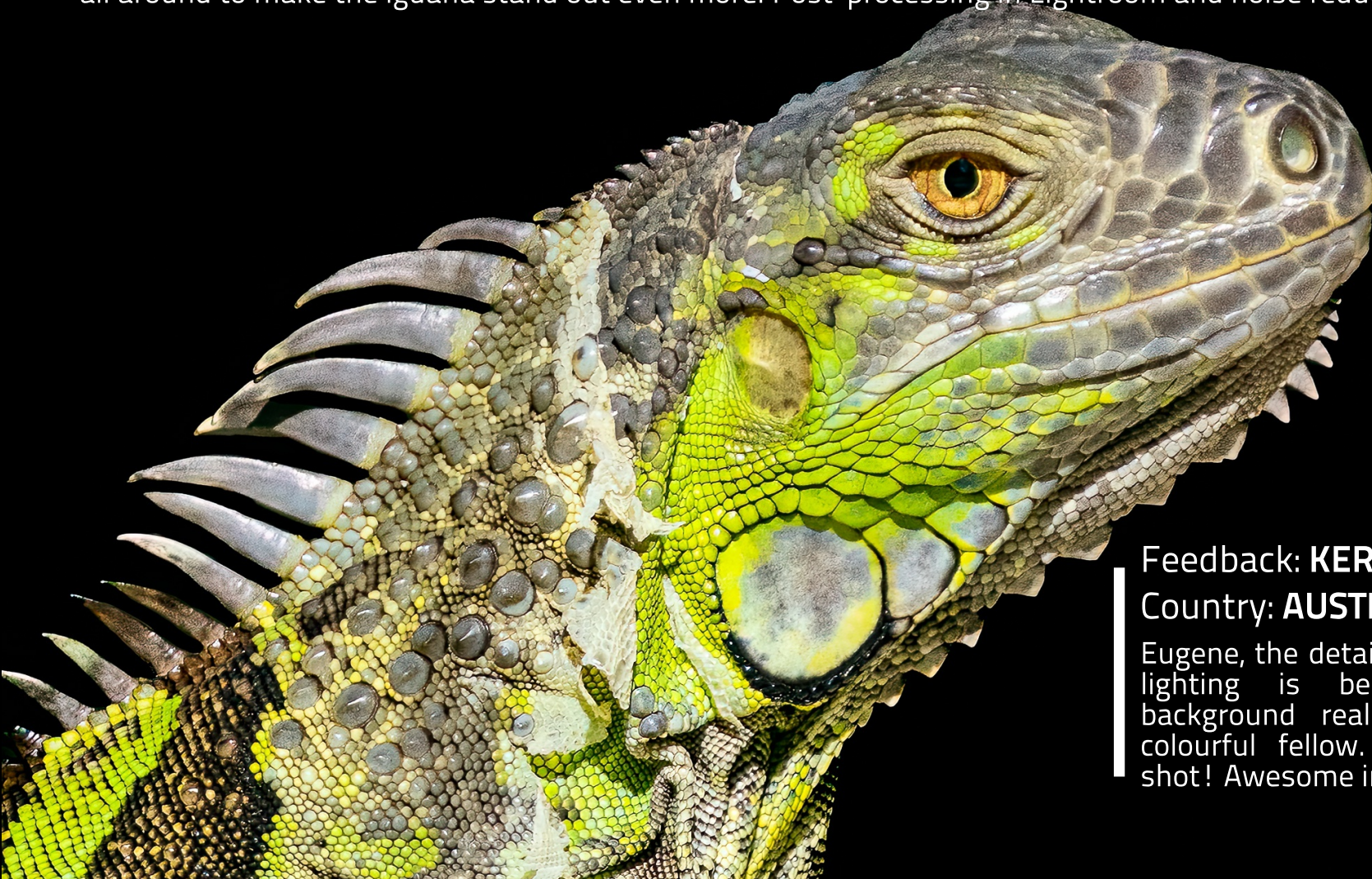
Photographer: **EUGENE BRANNAN**

Country: **USA**

Sony A7R4

f/6.3 1/2000sec ISO800 | 600mm

I have several other favorites, some from my Australian trip in September but wanted to include this image of the Green Iguana. Not that there aren't other green iguanas, but this one seemed to pause and pose. I had been hiking around Fort Zachary in Key West, FL. The fort is surrounded by trees, water, and iguanas. This specimen was probably about 3-4 feet long and had been moving from one tree to another when he paused and posed for me. To get details of the iguana, I zoomed in almost filling the frame with the head and shoulders of the iguana. The gaze and the lighting created the look I was hoping for. In post-processing, I dropped out the background, creating a solid black background all around to make the iguana stand out even more. Post-processing in Lightroom and noise reduction in Topaz.



Feedback: **KERRIE CLARKE**

Country: **AUSTRALIA**

Eugene, the detail is stunning and the lighting is beautiful. The black background really works with this colourful fellow. Could be a studio shot! Awesome image.

Photographer: **DAVE KOH**

Country: **SINGAPORE**

f/8 1/2500sec ISO5000 | 700mm

Managed to get a shot of the Common Kingfisher with a catch after a couple of hours of waiting. Action shots can be challenging with changing lighting conditions and not knowing where it will dive. It has the tendency of coming back to the same branch after each dive, so it is much easier to preset the focus point. Denoised with Topaz.



Feedback: **SARA O'BRIEN**

Country: **USA**

Dave, I love the water droplets! Great patience on your part in waiting and capturing the amazing shot!

Photographer: **PETER BRODY**

Country: **USA**

f/5.6 1/640sec ISO320 | 300mm

This was a photograph I took at our local zoo. I was trying out my telephoto zoom lens. This is a sleepy leopard taken through a glass window. I was practising with the lens in preparation for the BootCamp Safari in May 2024.



Feedback: **LAURA GRIFFITHS**

Country: **SOUTH AFRICA**

Beautiful animal Peter and so well photographed through glass, never easy. You managed no reflections and the glass must have been very clean or you used some wizardry in post. Well done. I think the wild might be easier.

Photographer: **PAUL FULLER**

Country: **AUSTRALIA**

f/10 1/2000sec ISO8000

I went to Hexham Swam to look for Black-necked Stork. Spotted a young fox, this is not what you want to see as the foxes raid the nests...[ high iso because I have a long lens and converter on as most birds are a long distance away].



Feedback: **DAVE KOH**

Country: **SINGAPORE**

The fox is on the alert, as can be seen through the grass. It's amazing to see the furry details on the animal as well. Nice shot, Paul.

Photographer: **NICK ELLIS**

Country: **AUSTRALIA**

f/6.3 1/2000sec ISO400 | 85mm

Late September - early October we went to Namibia, and while there I took one or two photos of sand dunes. Big Mama, in the Sossusvlei region. Why the high shutter speed? I'd been taking photos from a moving vehicle and wanted to freeze the action.

Feedback: **EUGENE BRANNAN**

Country: **USA**

Hi Nick, sand dunes are always awesome to me! Love the capture. I liked the contextual approach you took in the original post, but the adjusted post with the POI being the sand dunes only does create a stronger image, peer pressure or not. The wider feel of the scene makes me want to see what's on the left and right of this massive dune.



Photographer: **KERI DOWN**

Country: **AUSTRALIA**

This was taken on June 25th 2023. I went down to Wellington Point with my headphones to quietly see the day go down on my sister's 4th year of leaving us. I just felt that the wind, the sun and the colour all played out beautifully for a memorable moment.



Feedback: **EUGENE BRANNAN**

Country: **USA**

A wonderful capture! You can add this to your fond memories of your sister, as you reminisce on the shared times in the future. The warm colors and the silhouettes in front of the hazy mountain background add to the serenity of the moment.

Photographer: **RICHARD HUTSON**

Country: **USA**

Leica Q2

f/2.8 1/8sec ISO100 | 28mm

This photograph is part of my 'Viewing Art' series shot last May at the Legion of Honor. The portrait of Cecil Harrison is by J.S. Sargent. I have no idea who the viewers are, but I waited for them to step in front of the painting to complete the tableau for my photograph. Their shadows on the floor are a nice bonus. I got the idea for this series several years ago when I was trying to get a shot of a painting, and suddenly, a woman stepped in front of it, 'spoiling' the shot. After further study, I realized it was a much better, more interesting photograph. The essential elements of the painting were still visible, and the woman's admiration of it brought my photograph to life. I posted it here in the early days of Boot Camp.

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Feedback: **VALERIE WORTHEN**

Country: **USA**

This photo really tells a story and creates some mystery as well. The black and white is definitely a good choice. Nice composition and good detail with the focus on the woman in the photo.





Photographer: **BRUCE PATTERSON**

Country: **USA**

f/13 1/400sec ISO560 | 400mm

My second best is from the air show at the airport next door. The USAF Thunderbirds were the main act. Between arrival, practice day, a special show for the disabled, and their two regular shows I had lots of opportunities. Lots of practice of my panning skills!



Feedback: **PETER BRODY**

Country: **USA**

Bruce, beyond how sharp your focus and composition are, the story told of how amazing these pilots are to fly these jets so close to each other at tremendous speeds is unbelievable!



Photographer: **GREG SKEHAN**

Country: **SINGAPORE**

Canon EOS R6 Mark 2

f/16 1/320sec | 91mm

I was fortunate to visit Japan last month, and on my first full day in Tokyo, I visited Ueno Park on a sunny Sunday when there were many street performers attracting crowds of onlookers. This woman had a large group of people enthralled with her story, using a mask, clever movements and strong portrayal of emotions. It was mesmerizing and a perfect start to a 3-week visit with many highlights.

Feedback: **EUGENE BRANNAN**

Country: **USA**

Nice portrayal of the story! Obviously, it involved the loss of someone close to the woman as expressed by her movements and facial expressions. The shadows of the onlookers put the capture in perspective as they see her emotions. I could see using this image as the basis for a series of 2 or 3, including one that was a closer crop of the woman and the mask, highlighting her expressiveness and sense of loss. Just a thought.

**FEATURED  
ARTIST**



**FEATURED  
IMAGE**

**JOHN SULLIVAN  
AUSTRALIA**



Photographer: **JOHN SULLIVAN**

Country: **AUSTRALIA**

The photo I would like to share is of the SS Maheno which has been lying on 75-mile beach K'gari (Frazer Island) since 1935. I like the photo for the contrast in colour between the ocean, sky, sand and rusted metal.

# GETTING TO KNOW OUR FEATURED ARTIST:

JOHN SULLIVAN | AUSTRALIA

**Brent:** *How did you develop an interest in photography?*

**John:** *I have always been interested in photography from a very young age. Back in the late 70's and early 80's it was photographic images that inspired my love of nature (mountains and surfing), and the ability to capture a moment in time.*

**Brent:** *What does photography mean to you?*

**John:** *It is a form of art and expression, it tells a story. I love nothing better than going through old albums that provide highlights to lives lived and events that form the person you are.*

**Brent:** *From your point of view, what makes a good picture?*

**John:** *Something that stirs an emotion in you or others. Great colour and light can really benefit as well.*

**Brent:** *What is your favourite subject to photograph?*

**John:** *All things nature, including the ocean, mountains, animals and of course family and friends.*



**FEATURED  
ARTIST**

**JOHN SULLIVAN  
AUSTRALIA**

**Brent:** *The sky's the limit, no constraints...What are your grand photography dreams?*

**John:** *I am striving to expand my knowledge in photography, I have always been interested in it, however I am now at a position in life where I can start putting more time into developing my skills. I would love to think that my photography could one day be at the standard where I am at total ease with my equipment capturing shots that inspire and benefit others.*

**Brent:** *Locations and weather conditions are crucial aspects of a successful picture. How do you handle these unpredictable factors?*

**John:** *To be honest I try and take photos in good conditions and just work with natural light. I also own a small waterproof camera that comes in really handy.*

**FEATURED  
ARTIST**

**JOHN SULLIVAN  
AUSTRALIA**

**Brent:** *Since photography techniques and equipment change quickly, it is important to stay up-to-date. What do you do to always keep up with the times?*

**John:** *I talk to other people that are skilled in photography to gain their insights. I also read available literature and seek online resources to learn more.*

**Brent:** *Tell us about this image (the featured image): What was the inspiration behind it? What was your process to get it? How did you do the post-processing?*

**John:** *I was travelling with my wife and brother with the main aim to visit K'gari (Frazer Island). We were on the island for a few days and I explained that we need to visit the Maheno Shipwreck. We were very fortunate on the day as there were limited people around, the ocean was pristine and conditions just right with the afternoon sun starting to fade, the main challenge was the rising tide which affected the time we had on the beach. We looked at the wreck from multiple angles just getting a feel for it and just started taking shots, I was lucky enough to get a couple of great shots and experience the boat with no other people present; it was a great experience. The post processing was all done in Lightroom, and to be honest I did not have to alter the shot that much as I was fortunate with the light due to time of day.*



FEATURED | JOHN SULLIVAN  
ARTIST | AUSTRALIA

John's favorite inspirational quote:


*"Dream as if you will live forever  
and live as if you are going to die  
today"*

- James Dean



# MEMBERS' IMAGES





Photographer: **JUAN ACOSTA**

Country: **USA**

f/2.2 ISO40 | 13mm

I waited months to be able to get a beautiful sky to complement the whole scenery.

Feedback: **LAURA GRIFFITHS**

Country: **SOUTH AFRICA**

Fantastic composition Juan, the sky and its reflection in the water, the leading line of the bridge, the darker textured foreground again leading the eye through to the brighter part of the image. Well worth taking the time to curate and wait for that sky.

Photographer: **LEILA GONZALEZ SULLIVAN**

Country: **USA**

My submission is the beach fence photo I shot this past summer, changed to black and white with some suggestions from the Campers. I've been shooting more B&W lately and finding it pushes my creative view.



Feedback: **LAURA GRIFFITHS**

Country: **SOUTH AFRICA**

Leila this is an amazing photo. The shadows doubling up an already gorgeous scene as well as the composition lines in this photo and the natural beauty of the scene. Great job done here.



Photographer: **PETER DWIGHT**

Country: **AUSTRALIA**

Sony A7III

f/8 1/400sec ISO100 | 28mm

My 2nd best of the year image is from Barcaldine, Queensland, from the sculpture trail along the dirt roads & many sculptures to find & see, I thought this was showing our outback best.

Feedback: **SARA O'BRIEN**

Country: **USA**

People's creativity is such a wondrous thing! You have captured it very well, it seems to jump out of the field.



Feedback: **KERRIE CLARKE**

Country: **AUSTRALIA**

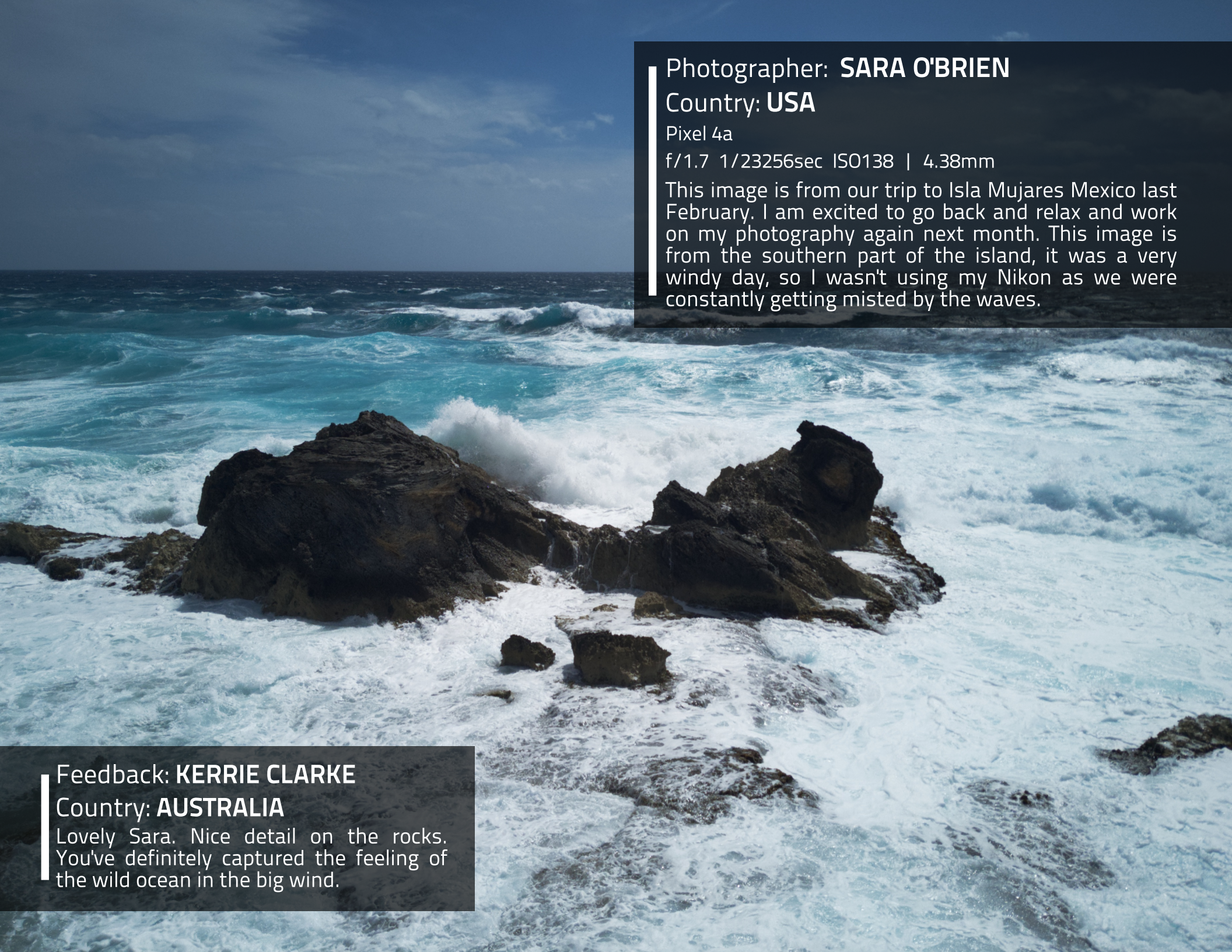
Wow, what a scene, Romy! have always enjoyed the incredible images you capture with your full spectrum camera, and this one is no exception. I really love the pinks and blues, and especially the silvery areas of still water. I'm drawn directly to the white "puff" of steam. Well done.

Photographer: **ROMY VILLANUEVA**

Country: **PHILIPPINES**

f/5.6 1/1000sec ISO100 | 70mm

I had the opportunity to get a shot of the beautiful Taal volcano south of Manila on the way to our annual family reunion last December. Armed with my full spectrum camera fitted with Kolari IR Chrome filter I took a few shots of the restive volcano from the view deck of a restaurant along the crater ridge where we had our lunch. The IR Chrome filter mimics the look of Kodak Aerochrome. The photo is as it came out of the camera with only minor edits (crop and white balance), and no color channel swap.



Photographer: **SARA O'BRIEN**

Country: **USA**

Pixel 4a

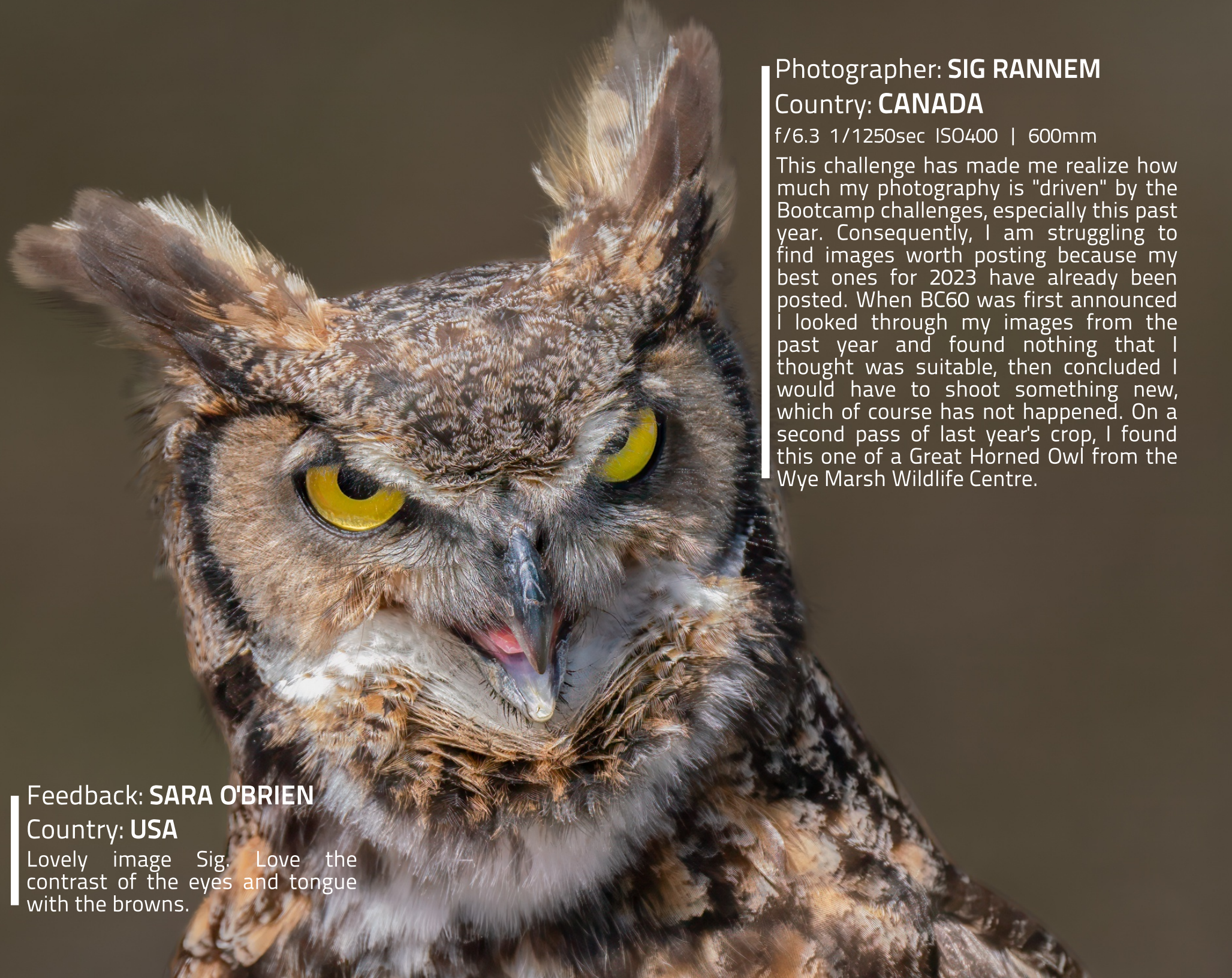
f/1.7 1/23256sec ISO138 | 4.38mm

This image is from our trip to Isla Mujeres Mexico last February. I am excited to go back and relax and work on my photography again next month. This image is from the southern part of the island, it was a very windy day, so I wasn't using my Nikon as we were constantly getting misted by the waves.

Feedback: **KERRIE CLARKE**

Country: **AUSTRALIA**

Lovely Sara. Nice detail on the rocks. You've definitely captured the feeling of the wild ocean in the big wind.



Photographer: **SIG RANNEM**

Country: **CANADA**

f/6.3 1/1250sec ISO400 | 600mm

This challenge has made me realize how much my photography is "driven" by the Bootcamp challenges, especially this past year. Consequently, I am struggling to find images worth posting because my best ones for 2023 have already been posted. When BC60 was first announced I looked through my images from the past year and found nothing that I thought was suitable, then concluded I would have to shoot something new, which of course has not happened. On a second pass of last year's crop, I found this one of a Great Horned Owl from the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre.

Feedback: **SARA O'BRIEN**

Country: **USA**

Lovely image Sig. Love the contrast of the eyes and tongue with the browns.

Photographer: **LEILA GONZALEZ SULLIVAN**

Country: **USA**

I'm going to go ahead and post this image as one of my best this year. This oyster shell creation hanging in a Puerto Rican restaurant kept coming back to mind. Changing the background to black really made the shells stand out and took it out of the environment so it could be seen as real art. I tried a B&W approach but prefer the natural colors of the shells.



Feedback: **RICHARD HUTSON**

Country: **USA**

Leila, Nice work ... I think keeping the very subtle color of the shells created a more interesting photograph.





Photographer: **VALERIE WORTHEN**

Country: **USA**

f/16 0.4sec ISO560 | 24mm

Decided to share one last photo. Taken in the fall with a focus on the changing light, reflection, and colors.

Feedback: **BRENT MAIL**

Country: **AUSTRALIA**

Stunning! Beautiful light and reflections in your image Valerie. I'm in love with those clouds dark and menacing and I also like how you have lightened up the foreground a little to give some detail in those dark areas. Well done.

Photographer: **STEVE DARNELL**

Country: **USA**

One final image I want to share from my 2023 favorites is another iPhone picture from the Camino de Santiago. About a week into the journey we entered the Rioja wine region of Spain. As we transitioned from walking in the mountains to being surrounded by agriculture I continued to be amazed at the beauty of the Spanish countryside. I cropped this image to give it more of a panoramic feel.

Feedback: **KERRIE CLARKE**

Country: **AUSTRALIA**

Beautiful countryside it is. Nice use of leading lines to pull the viewer through to the background mountains and fabulous clouds. The pano crop works really well. Lovely image, Steve.





Photographer: **RODNEY CHARLTON**

Country: **AUSTRALIA**

f/8 1/640sec ISO200 | 18mm

Earlier in the year I took this panorama of the rock ledges at a headland. I shot it from an elevated position about 5m above the sand below and moved as far forward as I could to eliminate the grassy foreground. It is made from 5 vertical photos merged in Lightroom. Another photo that made my top photo collection.

Feedback: **JUAN ACOSTA**

Country: **USA**

The composition is amazing Rodney. You were able to capture the foreground and the whole scene in a unique way. I also like the two people you captured to show the magnitude of the place.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR TEAM

Creator.....**Brent Mail**



Art Director.....**Hazel Rivera**



Writer & Editor in Chief.....**Julie Powell**



### **About this publication:**

Photo BootCamp Magazine was created to showcase the art, skills, and camaraderie of the recruits from the Academy. Each month, Brent leads members in a new drill, teaching them what they need to know to get out in the field and create images using their new skills.

### **About Photo BootCamp Academy:**

Photo BootCamp Academy is a community of like-minded photography students who come together to learn in the fastest, most fun way - how to harness the magic of photography, improve their craft, gain confidence, and sometimes even win awards!

Join BootCamp here: <https://shareinspirecreate.com/join-bootcamp>

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