FROM THE STUDIO

Photography rarely begins and ends with the finished image.

Behind a photograph there may be a story, an unexpected encounter, a journey, an idea, or simply a moment that made it worth stopping to look.

FROM THE STUDIO brings together some of those stories, alongside occasional glimpses into the making, thinking and experiences behind the photography.

Latest Article:

NIGHT & DAY

One objective, two approaches

I walked out of our cosy beachfront hotel to photograph the lighthouse at Biarritz in the middle of a storm. The Bay of Biscay was wild, with wind and rain, and the light was totally unpredictable. My Hasselblad X2D digital camera would hopefully give me the kind of control I needed to capture the nighttime images I was after.

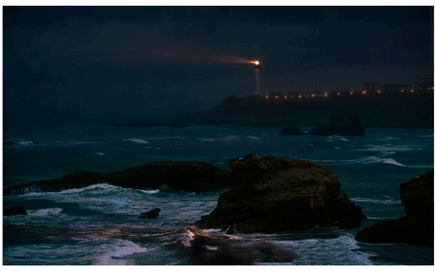
And yes, I got very wet!

By the following afternoon, everything had changed. The storm had passed, the sun was shining and the beaches were busy.

With my objective still in mind, I stepped out with my old Hasselblad 500cm, loaded with black and white 120 film. Two film backs, 24 exposures, and a leisurely walk along the beach wall towards the lighthouse, and whatever else I might find along the way.

The same destination, but under very different conditions, in every respect.

NOCTURNE





PACKAGE

Biarritz on a hot summer afternoon. Looking back towards the seafront, everything seemed to be gathered into one view. Hotels, restaurants, a crowded beach, sea and sand.

The complete holiday package, all in one photograph.

SEAHORSE

One of my first stops along the walk was above a small, sandy inlet. Looking down through the square viewfinder of the medium format camera, I was taken by the diagonal arrangement of people and their shadows stretching across the beach.

But something else had caught my eye. A bright pink inflatable seahorse. Although I was photographing in black and white, it simply had to be included. Not in the centre, but somewhere amongst the sunbathers.

A little beastie on the beach, waiting to be found.



DOG-DAY



Approaching the bridge, with the full sunlight overpowering the scene, there was little to tempt me into making a photograph. But once I had passed it and looked back, the deep shadows began to catch my attention.

My first frame included the entire bridge. Moving closer, I found a more interesting composition amongst the layers of people, sea, stonework, sunshine and shade.

Then I noticed the dog, lying quietly in the shadows below. Resting, but seemingly alert to everything going on around it. I couldn't help thinking it was rather fascinated by all these humans rushing about in the heat of the afternoon.

TATTOO

It began with a little sun tattoo on a woman's back.

Two women sitting on a bench overlooking the beach. Beyond them, the stone balustrade, people on the sand, the sea and an enormous rock rising from the water.

The tattoo first caught my eye, but looking through the viewfinder I found a much larger picture. A collection of elements, each occupying its own place within the square frame.

All because of a little sun.



AXIS MONDI



The lighthouse. My original reason for setting out along the beach wall.

But between me and the lighthouse was an entire afternoon of beach life. People, striped parasols, beach tents, the sea and the rocks.

I kept walking, looking for a way to bring these elements together. One detail became particularly important: a shower pole amongst the people on the beach. I wanted it to align with the lighthouse in the distance.

Eventually, everything came together in the viewfinder. Two vertical elements, separated by distance, sharing the same axis.

The photograph I had walked all that way to make.

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