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Live encounters

FREE ONLINE MAGAZINE FROM VILLAGE EARTH
VOLUME ONE DECEMBER 2019

Tribute to the Troubadours MARK ULYSEAS

COVER IMAGE 'THE TROUBADOUR' © WOLFGANG WIDMOSER



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Live Encounters is a not-for-profit free online magazine that was founded in 2009 in Bali, Indonesia. It showcases some of the best writing from around the world. Poets, writers, academics, civil & human/animal rights activists, academics, environmentalists, social workers, photographers and more have contributed their time and knowledge for the benefit of the readers of the magazine.

We are appealing for donations to pay for the administrative and technical aspects of the publication. Please help spread the free distribution of knowledge with any amount for this just cause.

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

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CONTRIBUTORS

Live
encounters

VOLUME ONE
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Tribute to the Troubadours

Mark Ulyseas

Ulyseas has served time in advertising as copywriter and creative director selling people things they didn't need, a ghost writer for some years, columnist of a newspaper, a freelance journalist and photographer. In 2009 he created *Live Encounters Magazine*, in Bali, Indonesia. March 2016 saw the launch of its sister publication *Live Encounters Poetry*, which was relaunched as *Live Encounters Poetry & Writing* in March 2017. In February 2019 the third publication was launched, *LE Children Poetry & Writing* (now renamed *Live Encounters Young Poets & Writers*).



Jamyang Tsomo: The Modern Day Warrior

Eleanor Moseman

Based in China since 2008, American photographer Eleanor Moseman focuses on social and cultural narratives involving women and ethnic minorities of Tibet and Xinjiang. Striving to create stories that seek resolutions for the oppressed while sharing the voices of the unknown and persecuted. Eleanor has been using her photography and storytelling skills to contribute to the work of anthropologists, historians, conservationists, and activists. Her pictures are often used to supplement work published on the cultural genocide taking place in Xinjiang and Tibet, and the environmental changes occurring on the Tibetan Plateau.



Gadding About At Gadisir

Jill Gocher

Bali based international photographer has spent her life exploring and enjoying Asian cultures. Her work has appeared in National Geographic, Time, International Herald Tribune, Asia Spa, Discovery, Silver Kris and many more. Her books - Asia's legendary Hotels, Periplus, Bali- Island of Light -Marshall Cavendish, Indonesia - Islands of the Imagination. Periplus, Australia - the land down under - Times Editions, Singapore, Indonesia - the last paradise - Times Editions. She has held exhibitions in Singapore, Kathmandu, and Bali.



Cathedrals of St. Petersburg

Mikyoung Cha

Mikyoung Cha is a graduate in Oriental Painting from Hyosung Women's University, Daegu, South Korea. She has participated in a number of group art exhibitions in South Korea and Japan. In 2016 she took up photography - the camera becoming her paint brush. This globe trotting photographer is a regular contributor to Live Encounters Magazine.



Stars and Souls of the Liffey

Barry Delaney

Barry Delaney is inspired by the colour, energy and DIY attitude of punk. He fled the grey Dublin of the early 80s, to travel the world and fell in love with film photography. Eked a living doing various manual and technical jobs. Twenty years later, Barry began taking pictures again. It started on the streets of Dublin, his home town, and has since moved on to Galway and other parts of rural Ireland. In 2008, Barry won the TG4 Irish photographer of the 21st Century. Barry has had 4 solo exhibitions in Dublin, whilst also self-publishing three books



Evolve

Carl Scharwath

Carl Scharwath, has appeared globally with 150+ journals selecting his poetry, short stories, interviews, essays, plays or art photography (His photography was featured on the cover of 6 literary journals.) Two poetry books 'Journey To Become Forgotten' (Kind of a Hurricane Press).and 'Abandoned' (ScarsTv) have been published. His first photography book was recently published by Praxis. Carl is the art editor for Minute Magazine, a dedicated runner and 2nd degree black- belt in Taekwondo



Toscany

Wolfgang Widmoser

Born in Munich 1954. 1973 studied with Ernst Fuchs and Salvador Dali. 1970 he painted still-lives in Switzerland introducing curved mirrors which reflect objects in most surprising ways and led to a proposal for the -elegant Universe. Moving to Tuscany in 1980 landscape and atmospheric effects crystallized to intense, portraits of nature. Since 1984 living in Bali. In his search for the- abstract. Papua New Guinea - Warriors combine the archaic with the futuristic. Wolfgang's motto - aesthetic = ethic - points to places where humans experience the Good, the True and the Beautiful.



Otherworld

Petter Solheim

Born in Norway 1956. Worked in fashion design from 1985 all over Asia. Moved to Bali, Indonesia. 1995 and in 2000 discovered stone sculpting as a new way of expression. Exhibited and sold through galleries in Bali since 2001. Material mostly used is local white sandstone. Earlier inspiration and expression from Yoga poses and minimalist, curving, polished pieces. Since 2017 working on mystic expressions of cyber fantasy creatures with inspiration from old myths and using indigo colours to experiment with new effects.



Spiders of the Bog

Tina Claffey

Tina Claffey is an award winning nature photographer and author of 'Tapestry of Light-Ireland's bogs & wetlands as never seen before' released in October 2017. For almost 10 years, she lived and worked in pristine wilderness areas in Botswana, and this experience awakened in her an appreciation of the natural world of Ireland. Her observations and unique perspective of the flora and fauna of the unspoilt raised bogs and wet woodlands of the Irish midlands are celebrated in her work.



Tuning back to ethical north

Dr Margi Prideaux

Margi Prideaux has written about wildlife, international politics and law almost every day for the past 27 years. As an international negotiator and independent academic, with a Ph.D. in wildlife policy and law, her words have been tuned to inform policy audiences in more than 20 different international conservation processes. Her essay Trading in Bones appeared in Live Encounters, 12 December 2017.



Awe-struck

Donna Mulvenna

Donna Mulvenna is a nature enthusiast, who when not tending to her food forest or canoeing along one of the world's wild rivers is reading from her hammock. A Fellow of the International League of Conservation Writers, Donna's own writing has been published in various newspapers, magazines and online publications.



Living Water

José Truda Palazzo, Jr.

José Truda Palazzo Jr is an environmental activist, writer and explorer who has dedicated himself to the environmental cause continuously for almost forty years. In the 1970's, when Brazil was still under a military dictatorship, he became one of Brazil's leading voices against Japanese whaling in its waters and led a research and conservation project which ensured the recovery of a breeding population of Southern Right Whales in Southern Brazil.



Mark Ulyseas has served time in advertising as copywriter and creative director selling people things they didn't need, a ghost writer for some years, columnist of a newspaper, a freelance journalist and photographer. In 2009 he created *Live Encounters Magazine*, in Bali, Indonesia. It is a not for profit (adfree) free online magazine featuring leading academics, writers, poets, activists of all hues etc. from around the world. March 2016 saw the launch of its sister publication *Live Encounters Poetry*, which was relaunched as *Live Encounters Poetry & Writing* in March 2017. In February 2019 the third publication was launched, *LE Children Poetry & Writing* (now renamed *Live Encounters Young Poets & Writers*). He has edited, designed and produced all of *Live Encounters'* 172 publications till date (December 2019). Mark's philosophy is that knowledge must be free and shared freely to empower all towards enlightenment. He is the author of three books: *RAINY – My friend & Philosopher*, *Seductive Avatars of Maya – Anthology of Dystopian Lives* and *In Gethsemane: Transcripts of a Journey*. www.amazon.com/markulyseas <https://liveencounters.net/mark-ulyseas/>



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NusaBay Menjangan, West Bali National Park, Bali.

MARK ULYSEAS

TRIBUTE TO THE TROUBADOURS

The magnificence of life lies in its hardships. The blood, the sweat and the tears bring an element of truth to that which is being created. And this truth endures even after one has accepted or forgotten the hardships.

I have been on the road for well over a decade - writing, photographing and confabulating with strangers on the vanity of villas and the resonance of post truths.

During the haze of travel and the aftermath of street food *Live Encounters Magazine* was born in Bali in December 2009. From then on I began reaching out to troubadours across the world inviting them to join in this altruist venture on the premise that all knowledge must be free and shared freely to empower all.

Perhaps this was not an original idea. But it needed to be done in a 360 degree format and through a fluid medium of communication to be effective; a medium that had no physical boundaries and could, in a sense, touch anyone, anywhere on the planet with a click of the mouse. And this is why I chose a digital format to circumvent all the hurdles that a publisher faces when it comes to funding hard copies and their distribution.

The trickiest part was that it had to be free in all manner...all submissions were to be without charge, there would be no advertising and further, the online publication had to be free to read and download.

Randhir Khare (Indian poet & writer) and *Terry McDonagh* (Irish poet & writer) have been steadfast in their support for Live Encounters Magazine. Their trust in my belief in Live Encounters was and continues to be, unshakeable. For this I am grateful.

The shingle was hung out on the net and invitations were sent through emails to troubadours from every time zone. Initially there was a lukewarm response to my appeals. But over the years elements from the inner circle of troubadours began responding and contributing original work. The inaugural issue saw the light of day in January 2010.

The two founding contributors; *Randhir Khare* (Indian poet & writer) and *Terry McDonagh* (Irish poet & writer) have been steadfast in their support for Live Encounters Magazine. Their trust in my belief in Live Encounters was and continues to be, unshakeable. For this I am grateful.

Terry McDonagh was instrumental in pushing me to devote a separate edition to poets and writers. Thus Live Encounters Poetry (which was later changed to Live Encounters Poetry & Writing) was launched in March 2016.

In January 2019 the third monthly publication, *LE Young Poets & Writers* was launched. It is devoted to giving aspiring young scribes an international platform to showcase their writings. Students in the US of A, Ireland, UK, Germany and Australia, helped by their teachers, have come forth with some stunning work.

All three monthly editions have taken a life of their own with the support of large contingents of contributors from Ireland, UK, USA and Australia, and backed by smaller numbers from other countries – Canada, New Zealand, Indonesia, Vietnam, China, South Korea, Thailand, India, Afghanistan, Iran, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Greece, Turkey, Albania, Hungary, Romania, Germany, Sweden, Norway, France, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, Portugal, South Africa, Chile, Brazil and Guyana, among others.

The troubadours are not just the poets, writers, photographers and artists but philosophers, academics, rights activists of all hues *et al.* Their *sound of music* transcends the barriers of cultures and embeds itself in the psyche of the reader – the ethereal forms of new thought unsullied by the grubby hands of commercialism.

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Troubadours continue to arrive at the doorstep of Live Encounters to generously share their work with the world. There is an all pervasive enchanting altruism that never ceases to fascinate and enthrall. The words, forms and images swirl through the ether and sometimes play truant on my laptop. But in the end all is well when they are corralled in the next edition, a kind of settling in to roost.

Media today is fast becoming a farce. Social media is an oxymoron. And those part-taking of this fraud are implicit in condoning the burgeoning misinformation and disinformation. A kind of laziness to truth has begun to rise from the depths of society. Unfortunately the educated section is being contaminated by an infectious self-destructive liberal subjectiveness akin to self-mutilation of one's anatomy. It is in this manic jungle that Live Encounters thrives. The troubadours drumming the senses with thought provoking images and writings published outside the confines of surreptitious agendas engineered by backers of the *regular main line* publications.

The free is omnipotent in the freedom of thought. But this has not gone unnoticed for Live Encounters every once in a while faces a road block that appears out of nowhere. Physical threats come and go. In the words of the formidable Irish intellectual, Oscar Wilde, *'I can stand brute force, but brute reason is quite unbearable. There is something unfair about its use. It is hitting below the intellect.'*

Live Encounters in its three avatars is a tribute to the troubadours who have shared their great wisdom with the readers.

We are grateful for their support.

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

Based in China since 2008, American photographer Eleanor Moseman focuses on social and cultural narratives involving women and ethnic minorities of Tibet and Xinjiang. Striving to create stories that seek resolutions for the oppressed while sharing the voices of the unknown and persecuted. Eleanor has been using her photography and storytelling skills to contribute to the work of anthropologists, historians, conservationists, and activists. Her pictures are often used to supplement work published on the cultural genocide taking place in Xinjiang and Tibet, and the environmental changes occurring on the Tibetan Plateau.

<https://www.eleanormoseman.com/>



ELEANOR MOSEMAN

JAMYANG TSOMO: THE MODERN DAY WARRIOR

Five years ago, while on a solo trek on the Tibetan Plateau, I came upon the village of Khana. I met two Tibetan women seated upon freshly tilled soil; the elder insisted I join her and her companion. After one cup of tea, hail and winds chased us into one of the women's home. In the home, I met Jamyang Tsomo; a quiet woman who labored in the shadows and who would eventually show her simple life was filled with hard work, poverty, and trauma.

Jamyang Tsomo is in her mid-30's, unwed, childless, and the caretaker of a household that includes her mother and three brothers.

This project is an ongoing story of a woman that exemplifies dedication and bravery. Yet, it's also about poverty and an alternate narrative to the common mythologized visions of Tibet. Jamyang Tsomo, like other Tibetans, lives in one of the most physically challenging environments.

Eleanor Moseman



Jamyang Tsomo carries a handwoven basket filled with dirt up to the roof of her family's home. After she has removed weeds and stones from the roof, she fills the dips and holes to prevent water leaks or collapse. Besides her mother, Jamyang Tsomo is the only woman in the household, and is responsible for most of the domestic duties.



Jamyang Tsomo greets the camera with a muddy smile after taking a nibble of dried mud pinched from the walls of her family's home. It's not uncommon that many Tibetans enjoy the taste of mud. Fresh fruits and vegetables don't grow at the high altitudes; medical professionals believe this craving is triggered by a lack of vitamins and minerals.



Jamyang Tsomo removes wet blankets that were stored against the interior wall of her home.



Jamyang Tsomo mixes fresh yak dung with a little dirt and presses the mounds onto the stones that form the foundation of the house. These dirt/dung patties will bake under the extreme high-altitude sunshine and once dry, they will be used to start fires in the hearth and to keep the home warm.



Jamyang Tsomo teaches her younger brother, ZhaXi, how to use the hand-cranked centrifugal milk separator that separates fresh yak milk into curds and whey. This device is one of the most common Tibetan household items. The curds will be dried under the sunshine while the whey will be formed into creamy butter. Butter and dried curds are added to tea and mixed with ground barley, called “tsampa”.

Jamyang Tsomo knots up her clean hair after bathing in a stream that serves as her homestead's primary water source. This water comes from high within the mountains and is used for drinking, cooking, cleaning, and bathing.





Jamyang Tsomo listens to Zhaxi's plans to ride motorbikes with friends to the small town of Manigange. Jamyang Tsomo is around 35-years-old*, unwed and childless, and is a mother figure to her 17-year-old brother. It's common for Tibetan families to have eight to ten children and because of the age difference between the eldest and youngest, it's common for older siblings to take on a parental role.

*Jamyang Tsomo's birth was never registered with the government so her mother can only give an approximate age range.



Jamyang Tsomo cuts the stalks of barley with a scythe. The barley grain will be threshed by beating the top of the crop against a hard surface and then collected and milled into ground powder to make “tsampa”. Tsampa is mixed with Tibetan butter and tea or water to create a staple element of the Tibetan diet. Tsampa is also a historically significant cultural food commonly used in Buddhist rituals; practitioners of Buddhism will throw pinches of the flour into the air as offerings to animistic gods.



While lying in a hospital bed, Jamyang Tsomo describes her pain to the mother of a fellow patient. During the barley harvest, she fell off the back of a tractor causing a life threatening injury to her head. After two days of travel, she arrived in the major city of Chengdu where she received a skin graft under the care of Han Chinese doctors. Jamyang Tsomo is nearly illiterate and has a limited ability to speak or understand Mandarin. In order to communicate to the hospital staff, she speaks to other Tibetans who must then translate to the doctors and nurses.



A supportive column of the house is casually decorated with a travel bag for “tsampa” and Jamyang Tsomo’s wig. Jamyang Tsomo returned home from the hospital after a skin graft without her long black hair. Many Tibetans believe hair is connected with prosperity and life and it’s rare to find a Tibetan woman, young or old, without long braids. Jamyang Tsomo will wear a hat or a scarf on regular work days. The wig will be worn for special events such as visiting a Lama or during festivals.



Gayla (right) and her daughter, Jamyang Tsomo, go through a bag of Tibetan beads used for making women's headdresses and necklaces. While Jamyang Tsomo is still recovering, she continues to be a jokester and places a heavy amber stone on her mother's head. These "dzi" beads (black and white), amber and red coral stones can be very expensive. The size, weight, and quality can represent a woman's social and financial status in the community.

A “srung khor”, or protective circle, is a sash worn by Tibetans. The sashes are decorated with “ga’u” (amulet boxes) to hold sacred materials such as religious texts, blessing cords, medicine, and relics. Portraits of Lamas and Rinpoches (high ranking monks and teachers) are also hung off the sashes. Srung khor’s can be worn across the chest, around the waist or neck and carried on pilgrimages or extended stays away from home. Jamyang Tsomo is leaving home and heading to live and work at a nomad camp on a plateau during late Spring. After the barley field accident her family insists she wears her amulets and portraits of Lamas to ward off evil or mishaps.





Jamyang Tsomo applies a little makeup before going outside for her late afternoon work. Makeup has not been a daily routine, but since her accident, she makes efforts towards her personal hygiene and strives towards a standard of beauty. Around 35 years old, she's still single and childless. Her mother says the reason she is alone is because "she's not pretty."



Jamyang Tsomo prepares her horses to ride up the mountains to the nomad camp during late Spring. Tibetans grow up around horses; most women can mount a horse, even while wearing a long skirt, and ride for hours without a saddle. She will spend the next two months among dozens of other women and hundreds of yaks.



The months of May and June is the time for caterpillar fungus harvesting. Jamyang Tsomo lives in a nomad camp during early summer and will spend the hours between morning and evening crawling on the ground searching for “yartsa gunbu”. Caterpillar fungus (yartsa gunbu) is moth larvae that has been overtaken by a parasitic fungus to create a petrified worm. Classified as a medicinal mushroom, it’s most commonly sold and used as traditional Chinese medicine.



Jamyang Tsomo observes her brothers Soma, Zhaxi, and Sangma (from left to right) work on their motorbikes. Like most Tibetan women, Jamyang Tsomo doesn't know how to ride a motorbike. Yet most Tibetan men learn to drive before their feet can touch the pedals. One reason for this gender disparity may be because women are expected to stay near the homestead to attend to their duties or for personal safety.



Snuggled into her bed after a long day of labor, Jamyang Tsomo spends her late-night hours playing games on a mobile phone that belongs to one of her brothers. She rarely leaves the village or ventures out alone so her mother and brothers see no use for her to have a phone.



Flames billow out of the stove after Jamyang Tsomo drops a single match onto dried yak dung patties and juniper branches. The stove will be used to cook dinner for the family and to heat the home until the very early hour of dawn. Jamyang Tsomo usually prepares and cooks the meals for her family, which includes her mother and three brothers. A common dinner consists of vegetables such as cabbage or potatoes with a little yak meat over rice.



After breakfast and early morning chores, Jamyang Tsomo takes a nap. She is the first one to rise in the mornings, well before sunrise, and begins the days by milking yaks and then sending them off to roam. She will labor throughout the day, cleaning and cooking for the family, and will be the last to fall asleep at night.



After finding her sister-in-law's bra, Jamyang Tsomo continues to play her part as the comedian of the household.



Jamyang Tsomo (far right) works alongside women of her community during the barley harvest in Tibet. Women are generally responsible for cutting the stalks of grain while men load the tied bundles onto tractors and horses. During the harvest, the golden fields fill with hundreds of people moving along in line as they cut the stalks. Although the days are long and laborious, the communities see this as a time to share with friends and family, and the valleys fill with song and laughter.

On her way to visit friends, Jamyang Tsomo picks edible plants from the green fields that surround this little Tibetan village. This time of the year provides an abundance of natural resources in comparison to the harsh and frigid winters on the Tibetan Plateau. During late spring and summer, locals can drink from fresh water springs bubbling from ice melt while snacking on wild flowers and berries.





After a June thunderstorm moves through the village of Khana, a rainbow stretches over the fields of purple wild flowers and barley. The village sits on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau where the air is thin and dry. These intense and sporadic downpours are very important for crops and animals that endure intense solar radiation and extreme low temperatures. The plateau also influences the climate of the planet; by acting as a windscreen from the cold Siberian winds and carrying the cold and frozen moisture over the Mahalangur Himal range (Mount Everest) to the lower altitudes of Nepal and India to maintain southeast Asia's wet and mild climate.

Bali based international photographer has spent her life exploring and enjoying Asian cultures. Her work has appeared in National Geographic, Time, International Herald Tribune, Asia Spa, Discovery, Silver Kris and many more. Her books - Asia's legendary Hotels, Periplus, Bali- Island of Light -Marshall Cavendish, Indonesia - Islands of the Imagination. Periplus, Australia - the land down under - Times Editions, Singapore, Indonesia - the last paradise - Times Editions. She has held exhibitions in Singapore, Kathmandu, and Bali. www.amazon.com/author/jillgocher Instagram @jillgocher, @jillgocherphotography, @rajasthanreally

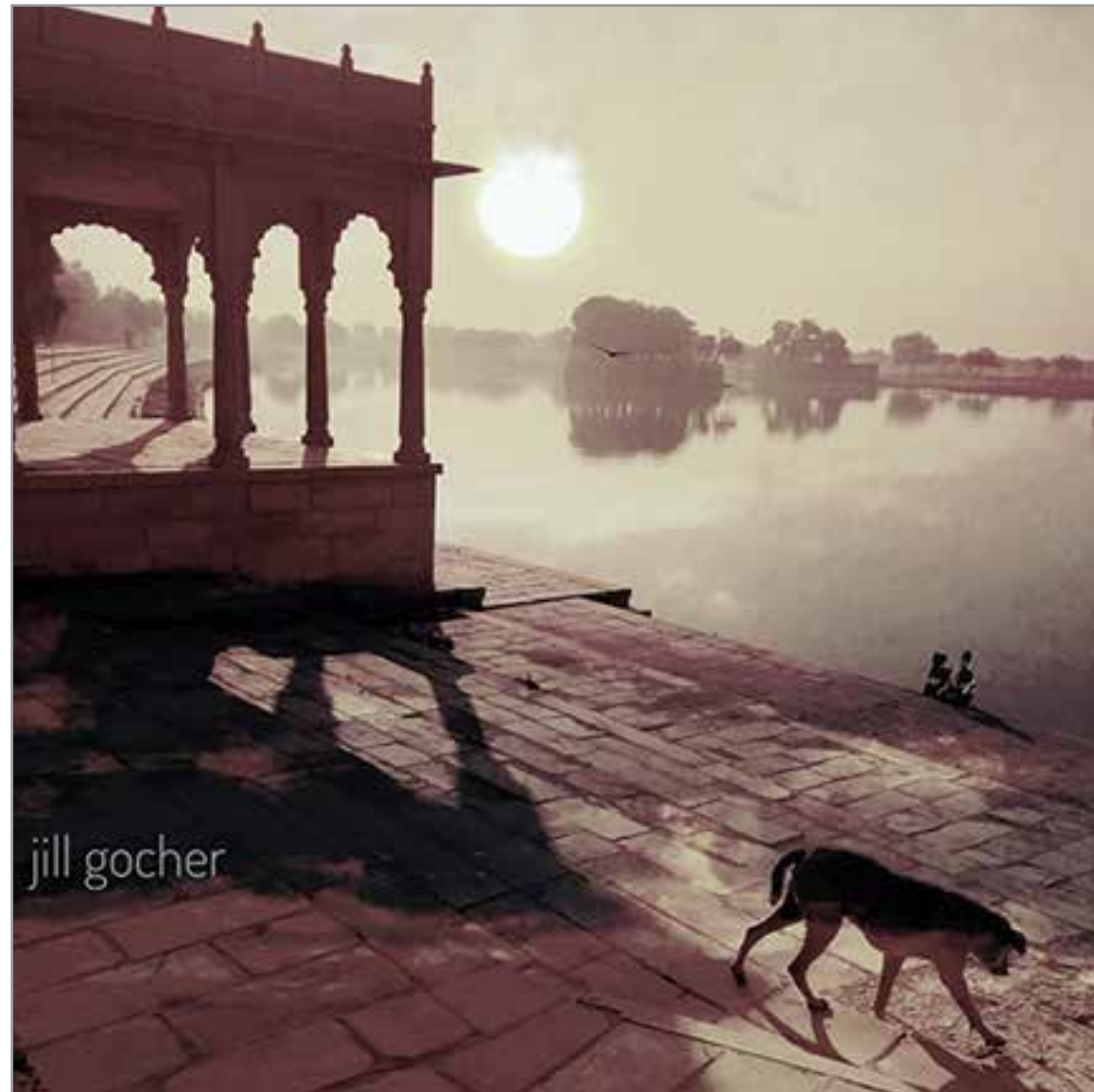


JILL GOCHER GADDING ABOUT AT GADISIR

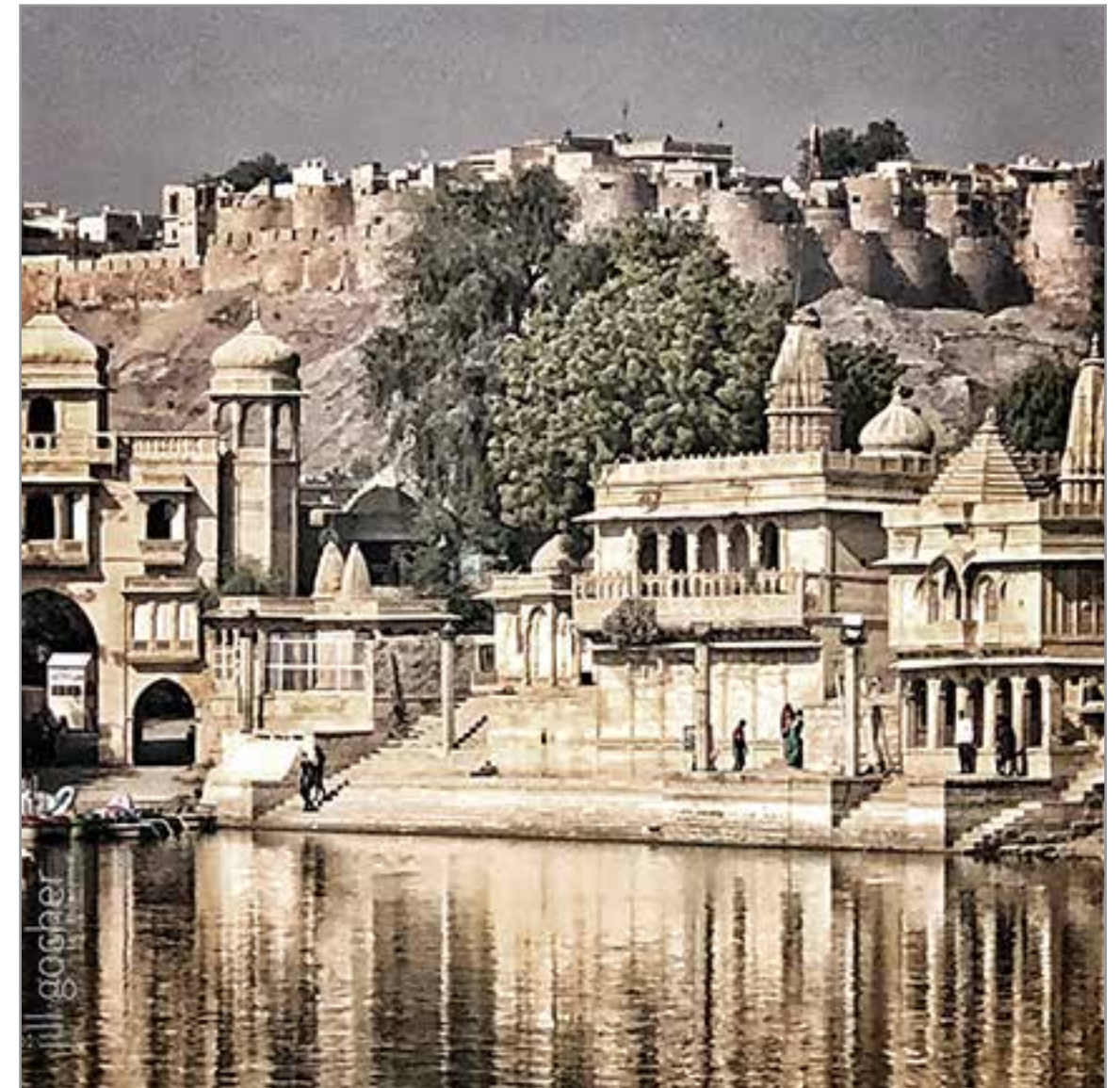
Just at the edge of the desert town of Jaisalmer lies a lake. Surrounded by cenotaphs and beautiful monuments the lake has existed for more than six hundred years since the first maharajah, Raja Rawal Jaisal created it to give his town a water supply. It still works and even in season when the rain seems insufficient, it mysteriously fills. Perhaps there's magic involved, but whether or not, there is a certain magic you can experience by spending time there.

The lake is home to a passing population of sadhus and sweepers, mystics, tourists, and people coming to pray on its holy waters.

For it is a holy lake, and while not as holy as the big five, it draws respect and love from those who step along its shores.



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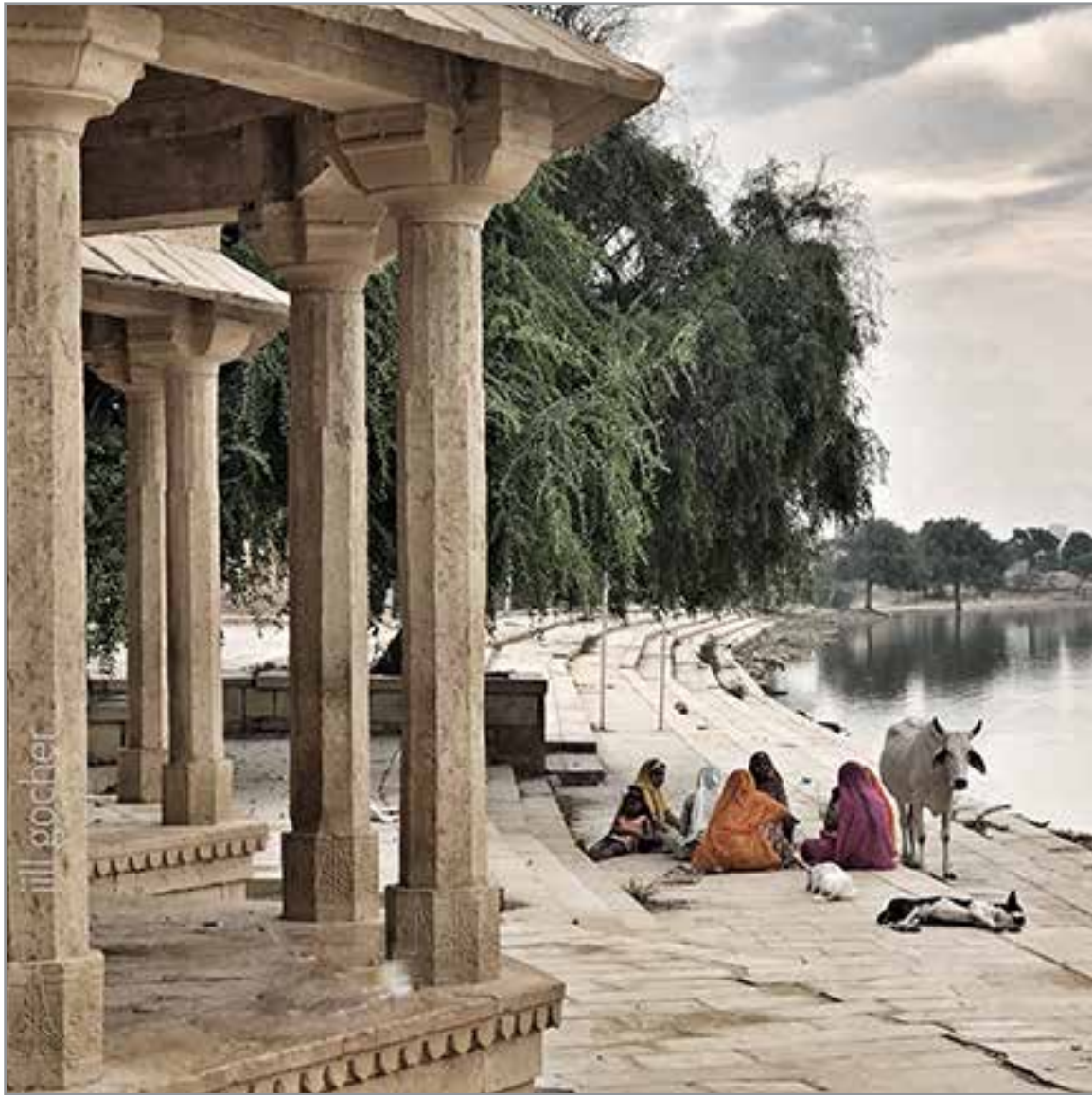
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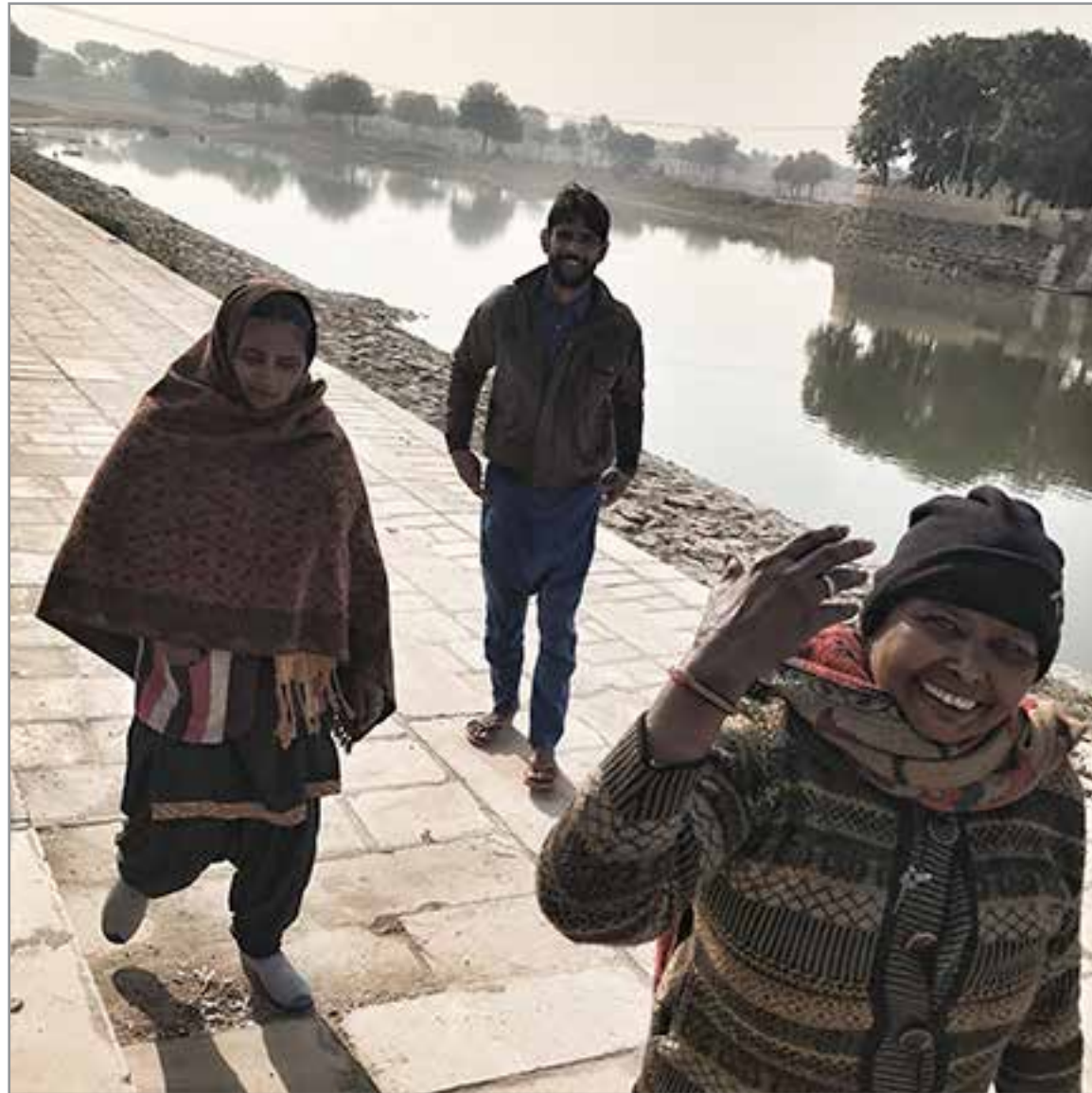
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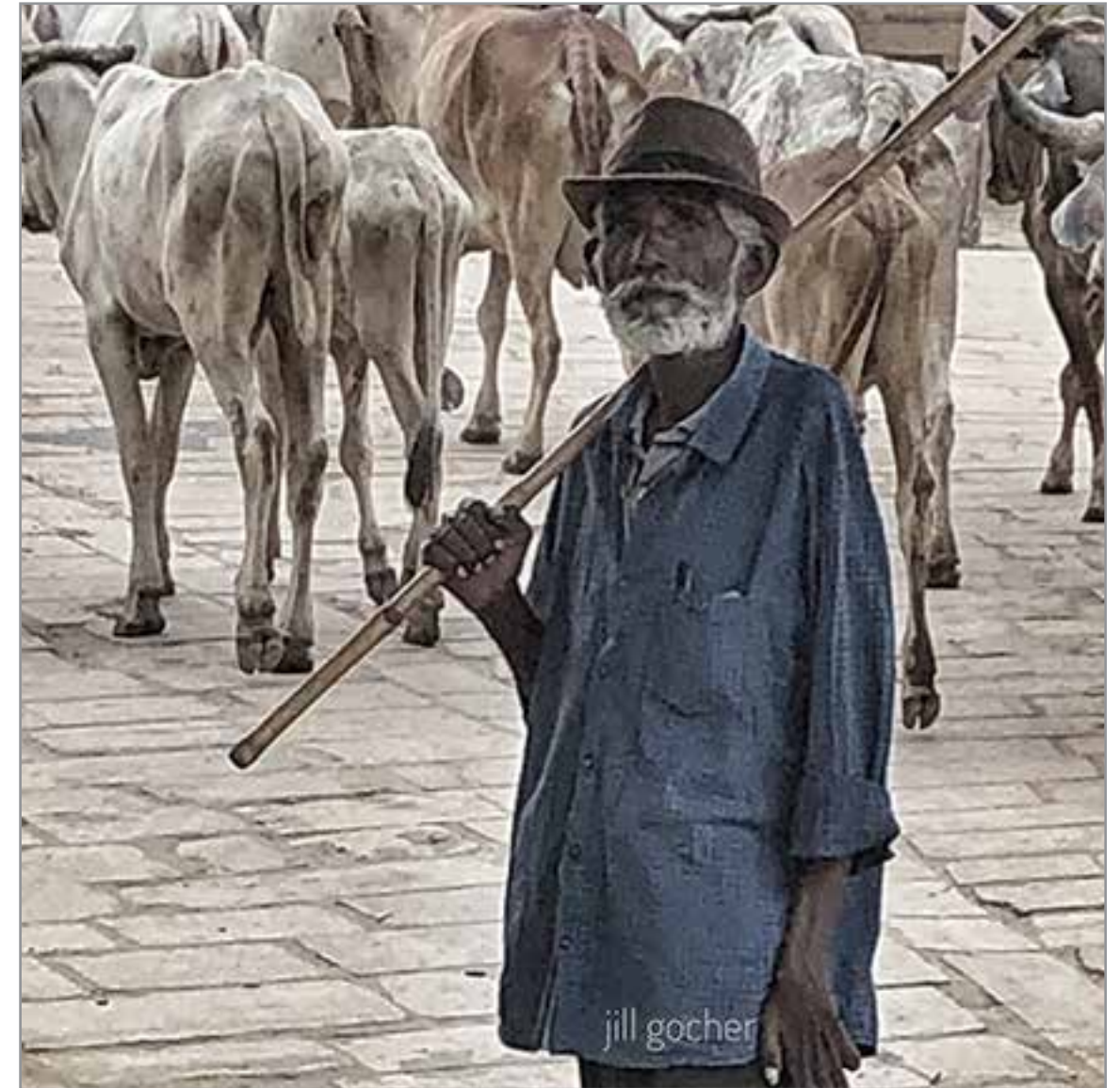
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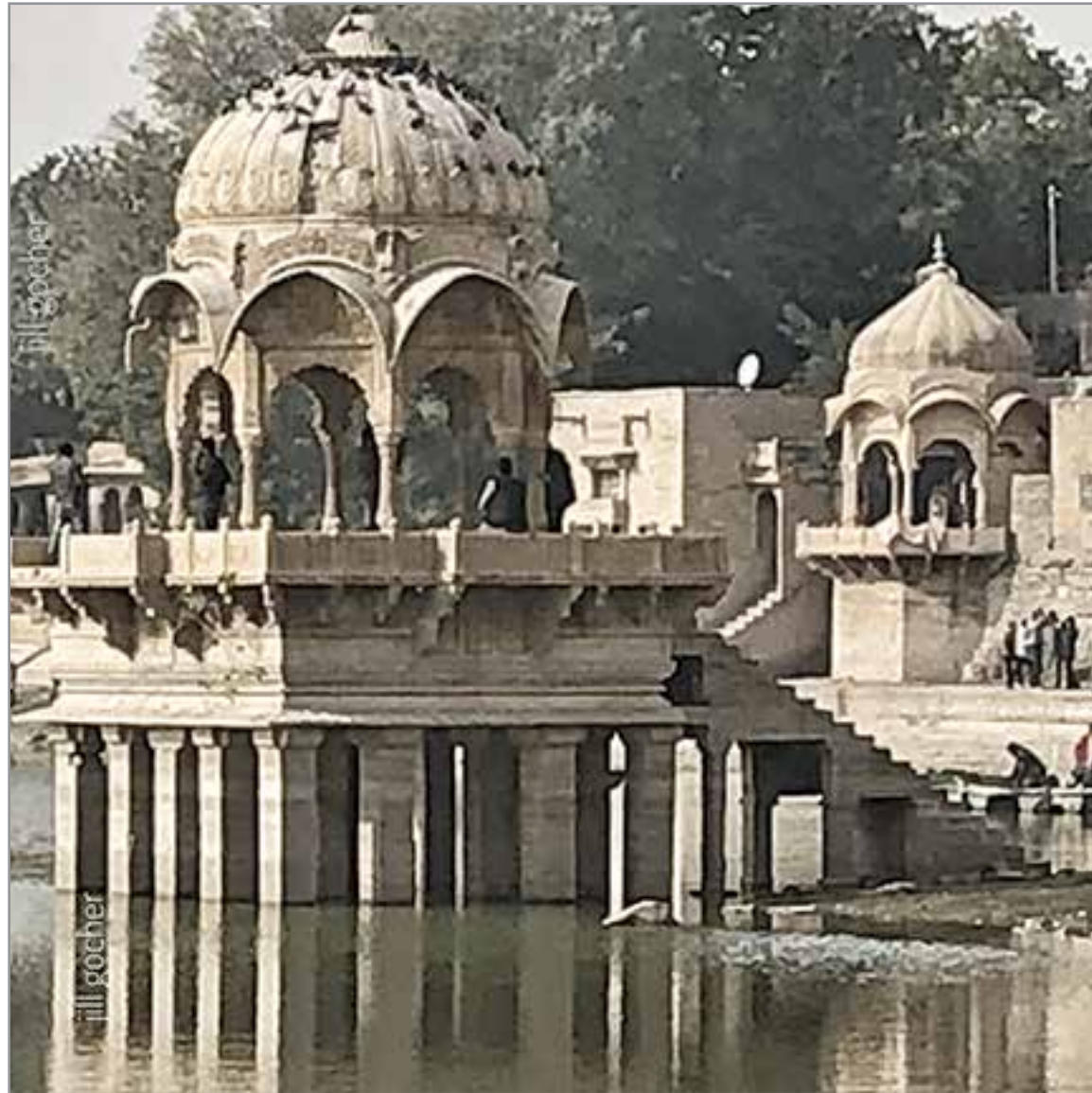
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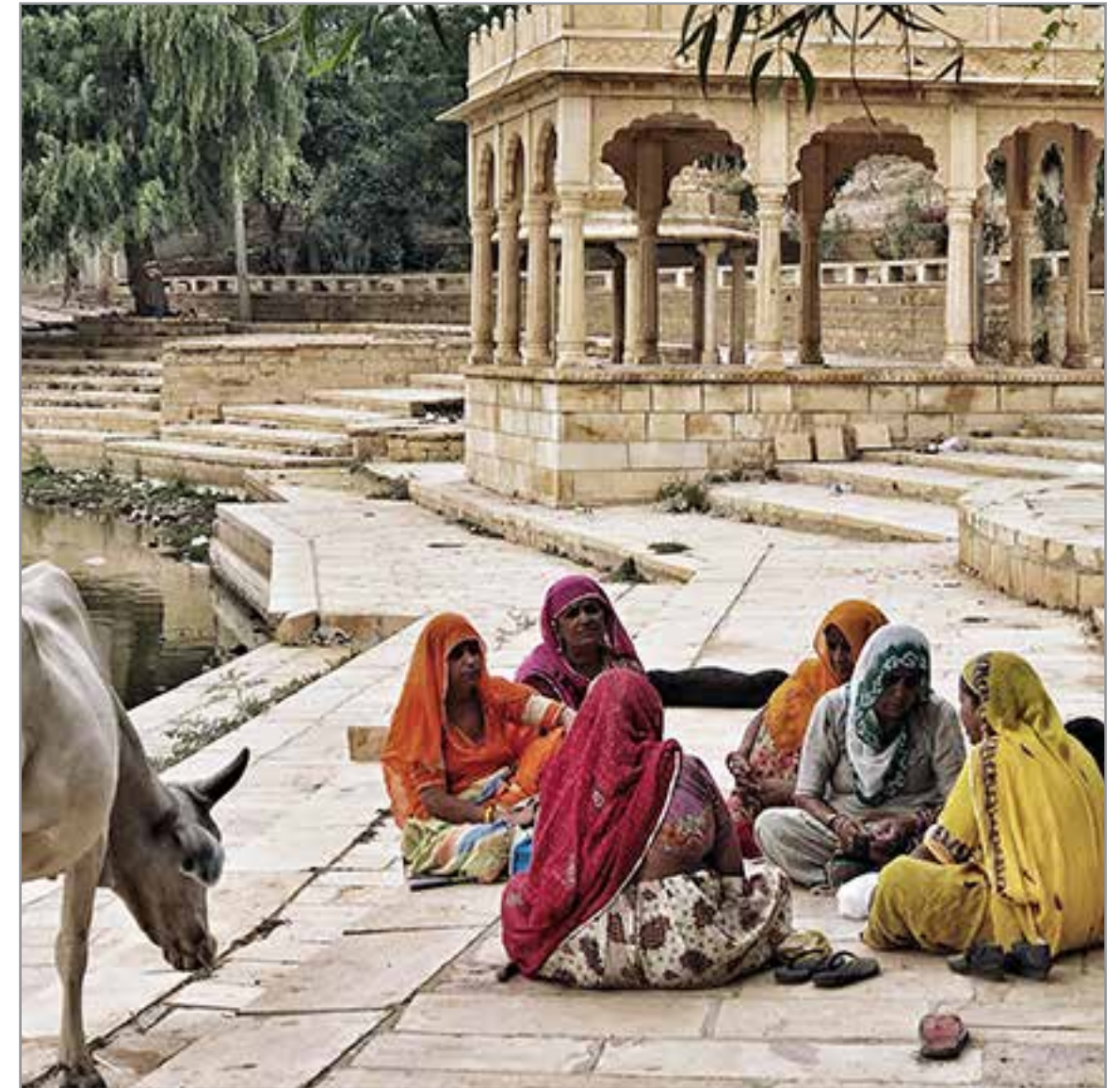
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Mikyoung Cha is a graduate in Oriental Painting from Hyosung Women's University, Daegu, South Korea. She has participated in a number of group art exhibitions in South Korea and Japan. In 2016 she took up photography – the camera becoming her paint brush. This globe trotting photographer is a regular contributor to *Live Encounters Magazine*.



MIKYOUNG CHA

CATHEDRALS OF ST. PETERSBURG

The magnificence of St. Petersburg never ceases to astound visitors. My photographs are of three stunningly beautiful cathedrals that I had the privilege of visiting in this great city in Russia.

**References in this feature are taken from wikipedia and information available on google.*

Mikyoung Cha

Saint Isaac's Cathedral or Isaakievskiy Sobor, is a cathedral that currently functions as a museum in Saint Petersburg, Russia. It is dedicated to Saint Isaac of Dalmatia, a patron saint of Peter the Great, who had been born on the feast day of that saint. The cathedral took 40 years to construct, from 1818 to 1858. It was originally built as a cathedral but was turned into a museum by the Soviet government in 1931 and has remained a museum ever since.

More than 400 kg of gold, 1000 tons of bronze and 16 tons of malachite feature in the interior of St. Isaac's Cathedral.

Auguste de Montferrand, was the main architect of St. Isaac's Cathedral.*



The Last Judgement on the ceiling of St. Isaac's Cathedral.



The sanctuary, seen through the Holy Doors during Bright Week,
St. Isaac's Cathedral.



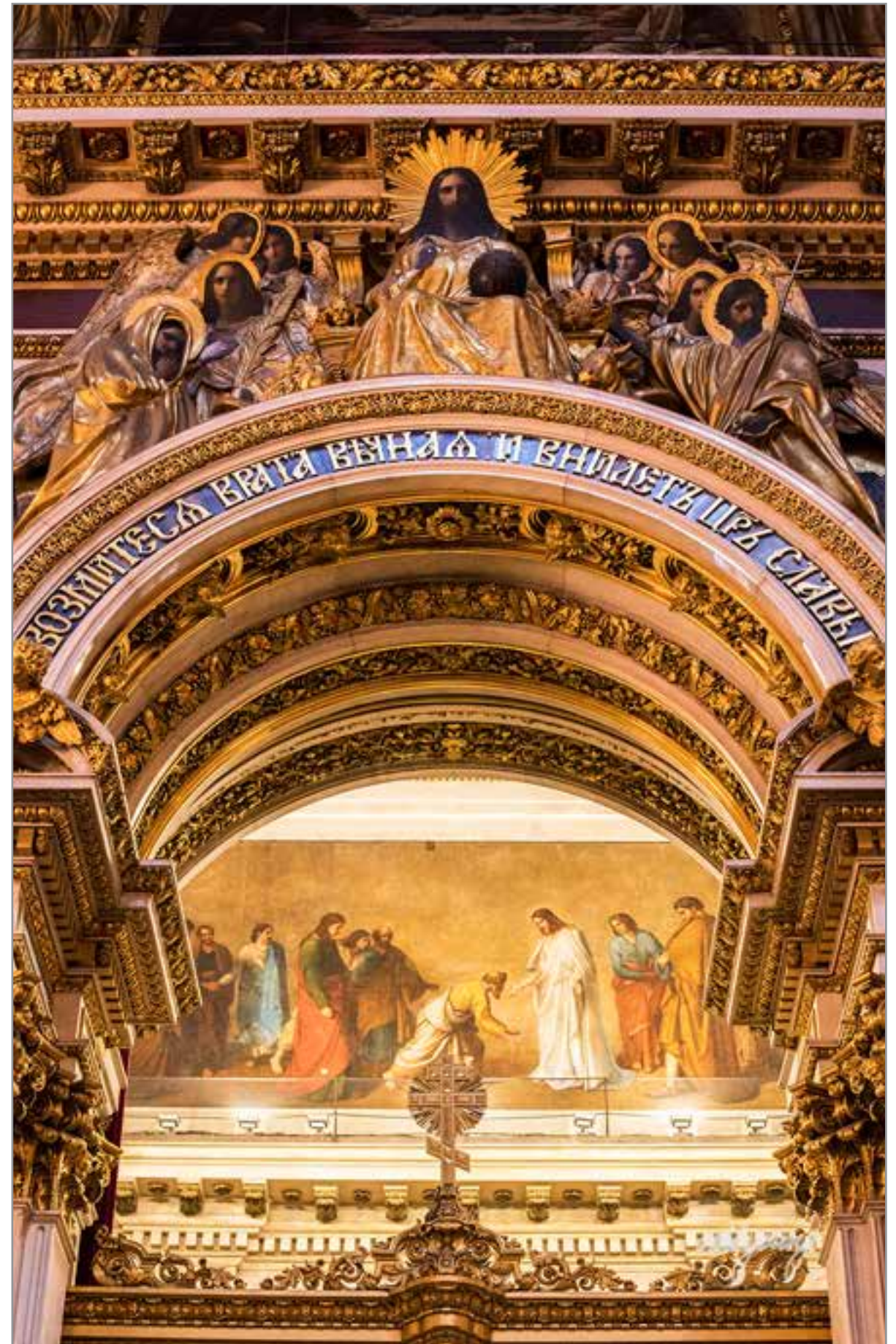


Interior of the great dome, honoring the Holy Spirit, St. Isaac's Cathedral.

'Great is the mystery of godliness: He was revealed in the flesh' is the inscription above the massive bronze Southern doors of St. Isaac's Cathedral.



Over 600 sq. m of wall space is decorated by mosaics and paintings by more than 200 artists, St. Isaac's Cathedral.

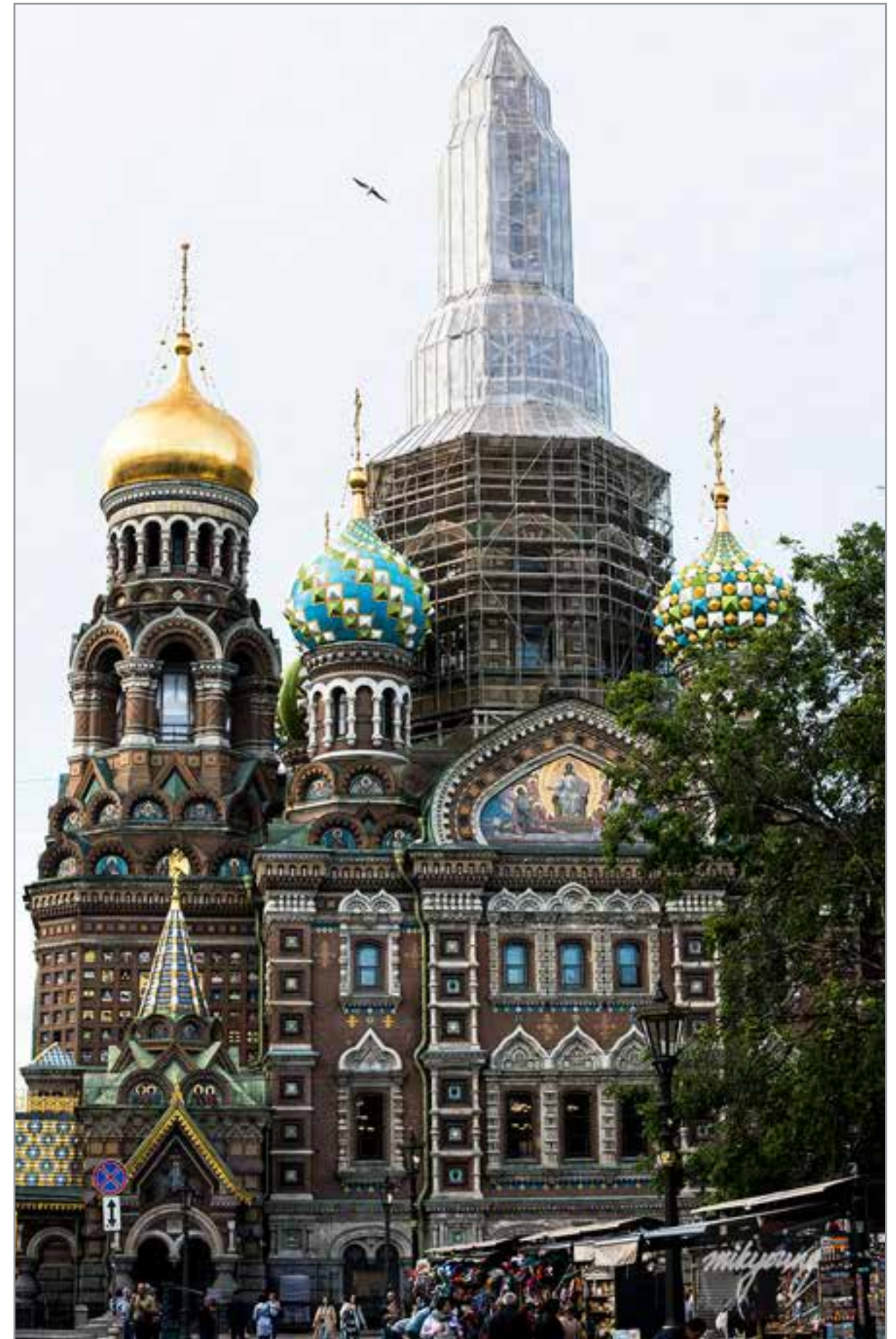


The Church of the Savior on Spilled Blood in St. Petersburg is an Orthodox Memorial Church of the Resurrection of Christ, constructed in memory of Emperor Alexander II who was mortally wounded in an attack at this place on March 1, 1881. The church was constructed between 1883 and 1907. The cathedral was built as a monument to Tsar-Martyr and is located in the historic center of St. Petersburg, on the banks of the Griboyedov Canal near Mikhailovsky Garden and the Konyushennaya Square, not far from the Fields of Mars.

It is also known as the Temple of the Savior on Spilled Blood, and the *Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ*.

The interior is a natural mosaic museum. The total area of all mosaics is 7065 sqm. The mosaic exposition of the cathedral is considered to be one of the largest collections in Europe. Icons for the iconostasis, made in the technique of mosaic, sketches Vasnetsov and Nesterov. - "Savior" and "The Virgin and Child".

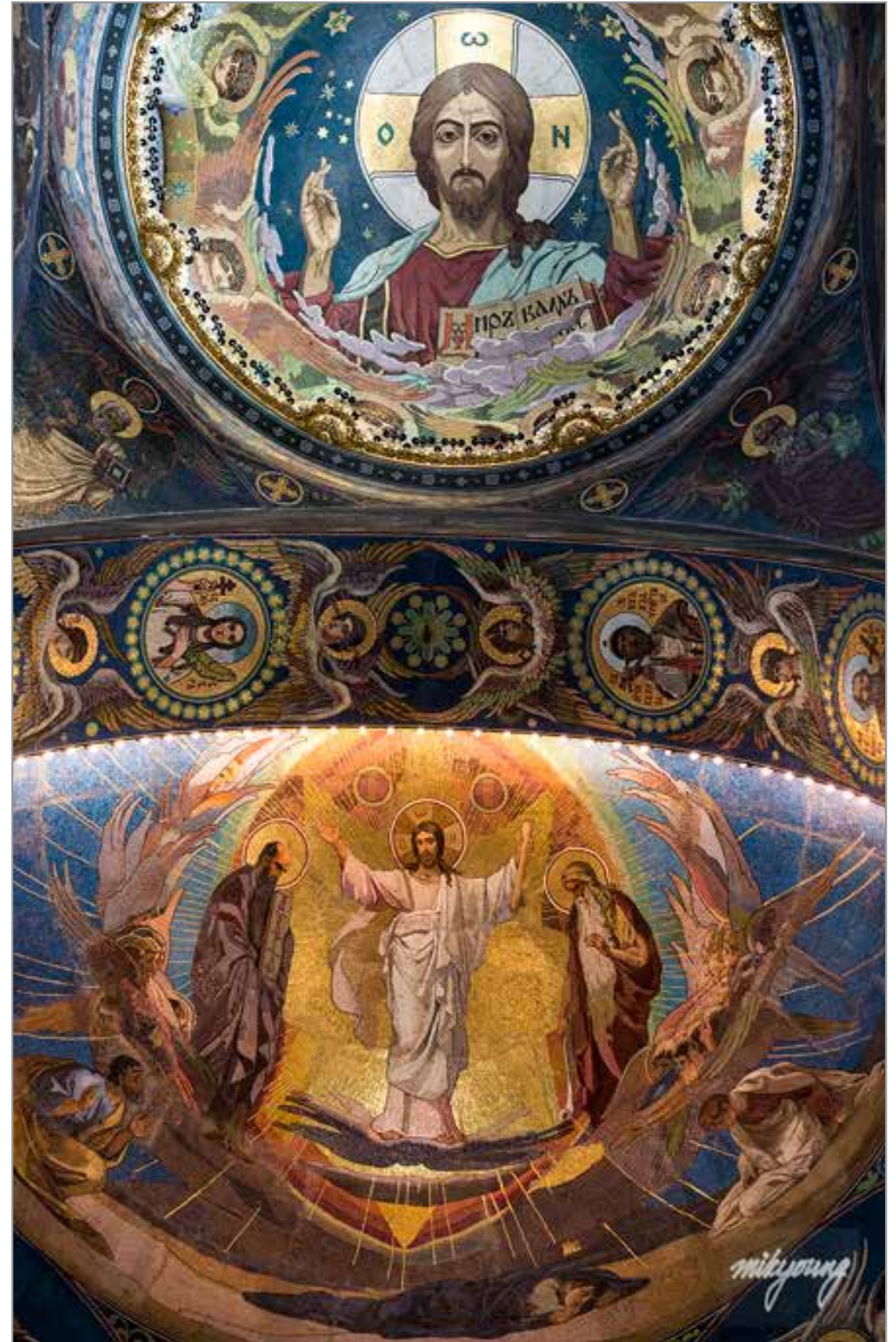
It was designed by Alfred Parland in the style of 16th and 17th century Russian churches.*



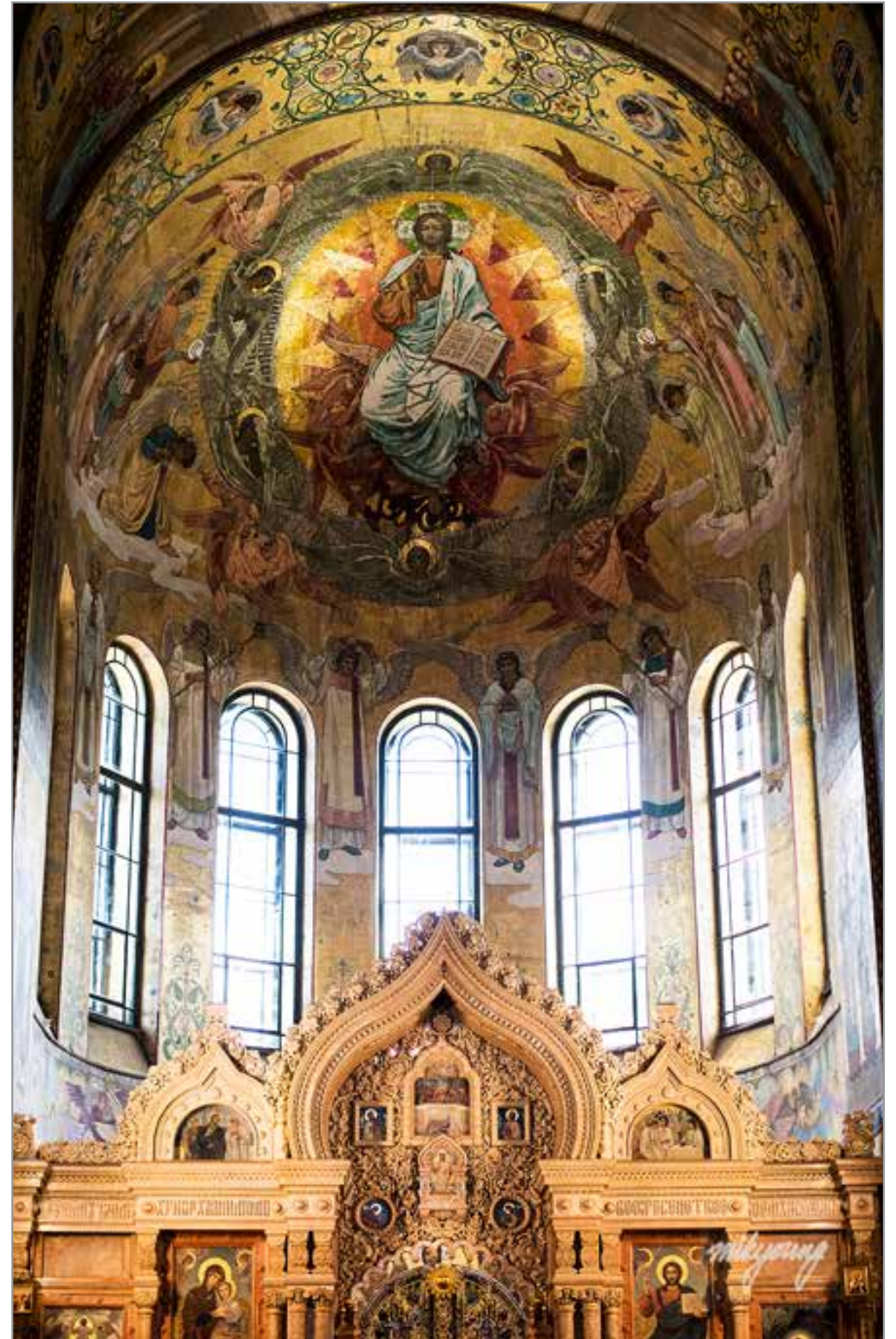


Mosaic of Christ Pantocrator under the central dome of the Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ.

Ceiling mosaics. Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ



(below) The entrance to the altar, richly decorated with mosaics and elaborate entry doors. (above) The intricate mosaic work depicting the Christ Pantocrator. Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ





Fabulous mosaic ceiling. Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ

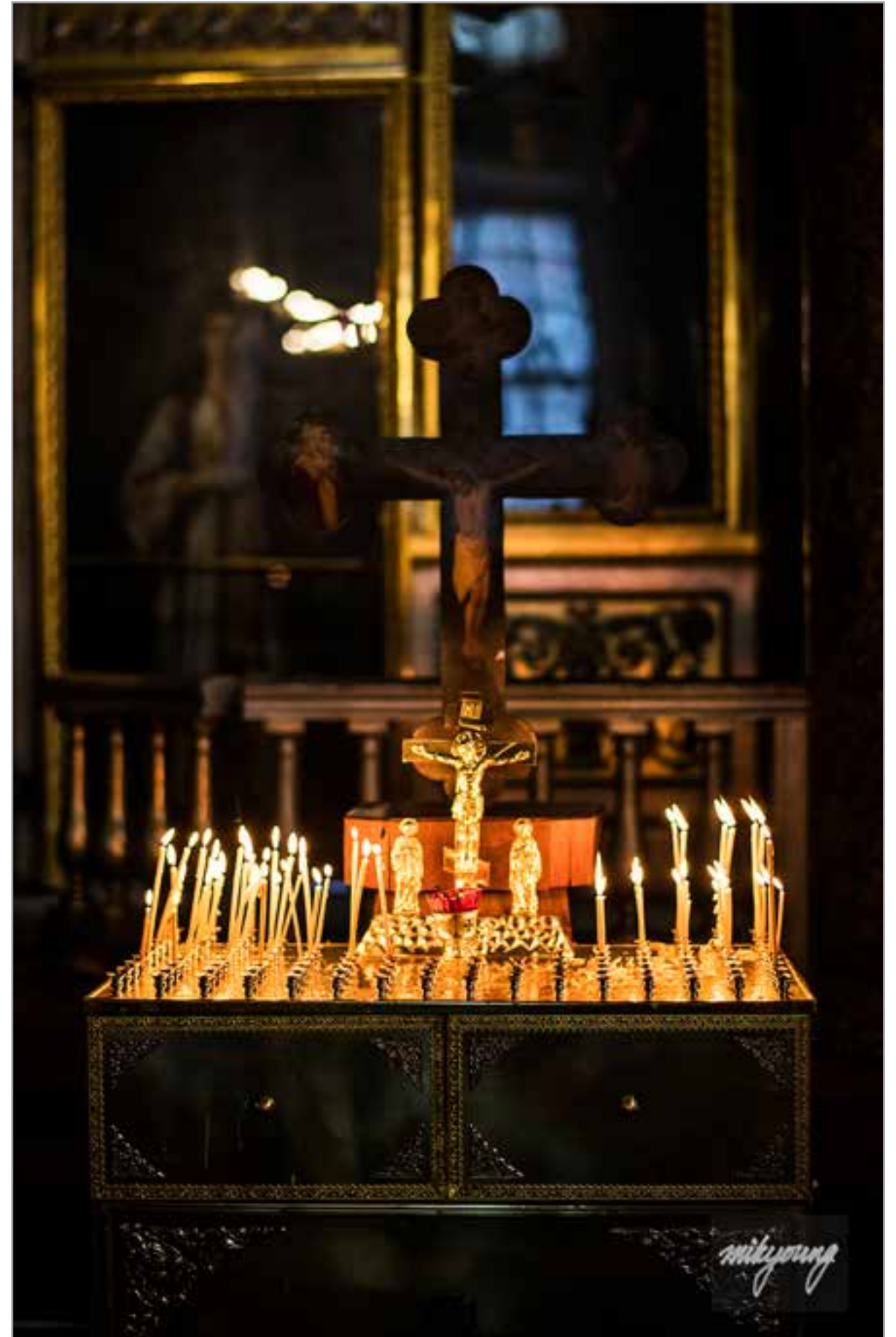


Kazan Cathedral or Kazanskiy Kafedralniy Sobor, which is also known as the *Cathedral of Our Lady of Kazan*, is a cathedral of the Russian Orthodox Church. It is dedicated to Our Lady of Kazan (*Holy Protectress of Russia*), one of the most venerated icons in Russia. Construction of the cathedral started in 1801 and continued for ten years. It was completed in 1811. The architect, Andrey Voronikhin, modelled the building on St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. After Napoleon invaded Russia (1812), the commander-in-chief General Mikhail Kutuzov asked *Our Lady of Kazan* for help. The *Patriotic War* over, Russians saw the cathedral primarily as a memorial to their victory over Napoleon. Kutuzov himself was interred in the cathedral in 1813; and *Alexander Pushkin* wrote celebrated lines meditating over his Sepulchre. In 1815 keys to seventeen cities and eight fortresses were brought by the victorious Russian army from Europe and placed in the cathedral's sacristy.*

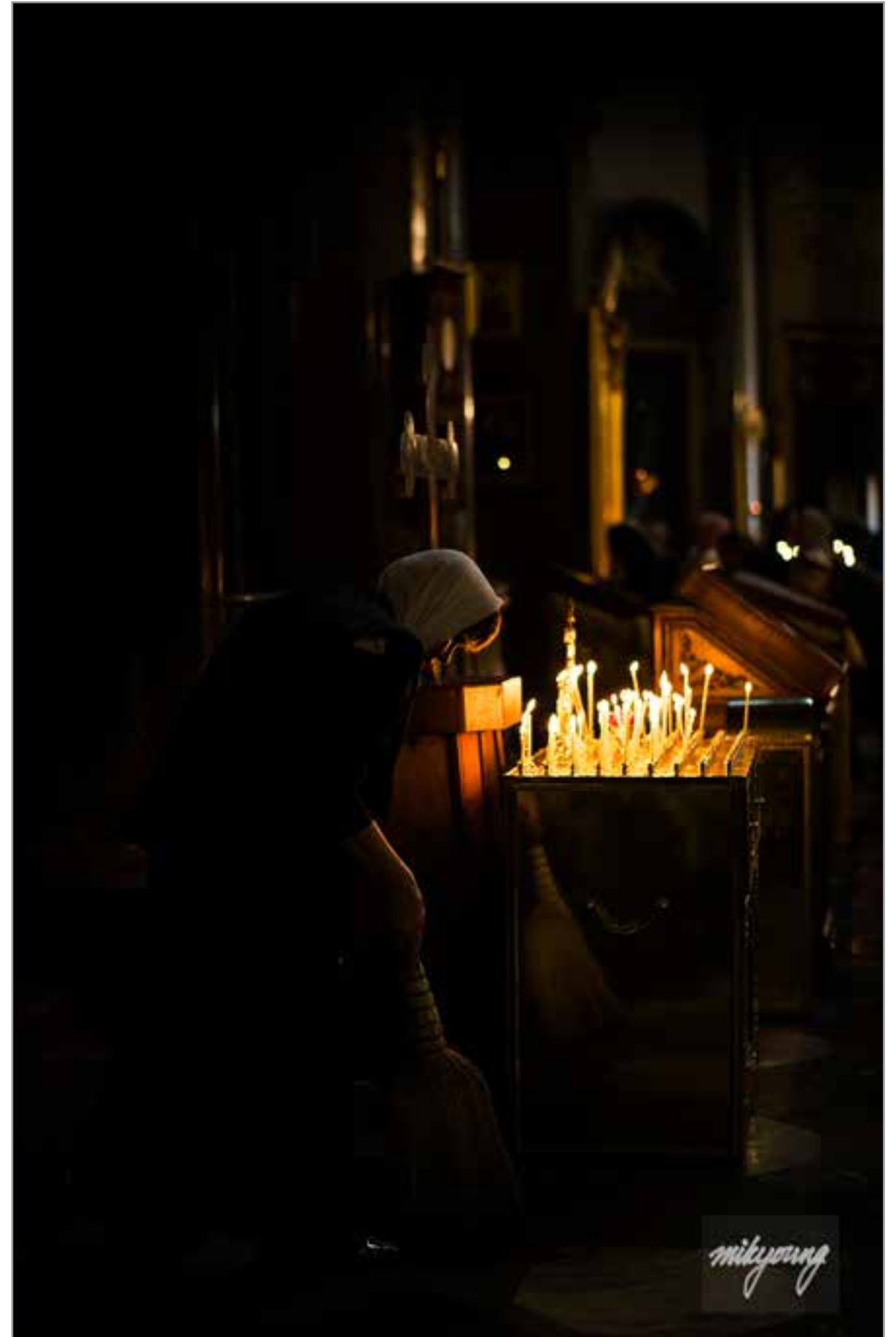


The Icon of *Our Lady of Kazan* in the Kazan Cathedral.

Veneration of the Holy Cross, Kazan Cathedral.



Clearing the candle wax from the floor, Kazan Cathedral.



Barry Delaney is inspired by the colour, energy and DIY attitude of punk. He fled the grey Dublin of the early 80s, to travel the world and fell in love with film photography. Eked a living doing various manual and technical jobs. Twenty years later, Barry began taking pictures again. It started on the streets of Dublin, his home town, and moved on to other parts of Ireland and America. In 2008, Barry won the TG4 Irish photographer of the 21st Century. Barry has had 4 solo exhibitions in Dublin, whilst also self-publishing three books. This year he has just completed a retrospective of his inner city Dublin work in the historic GPO, Dublin. along with his debut Dublin book.

Stars and Souls of the Liffey, Dublin 2006-2016

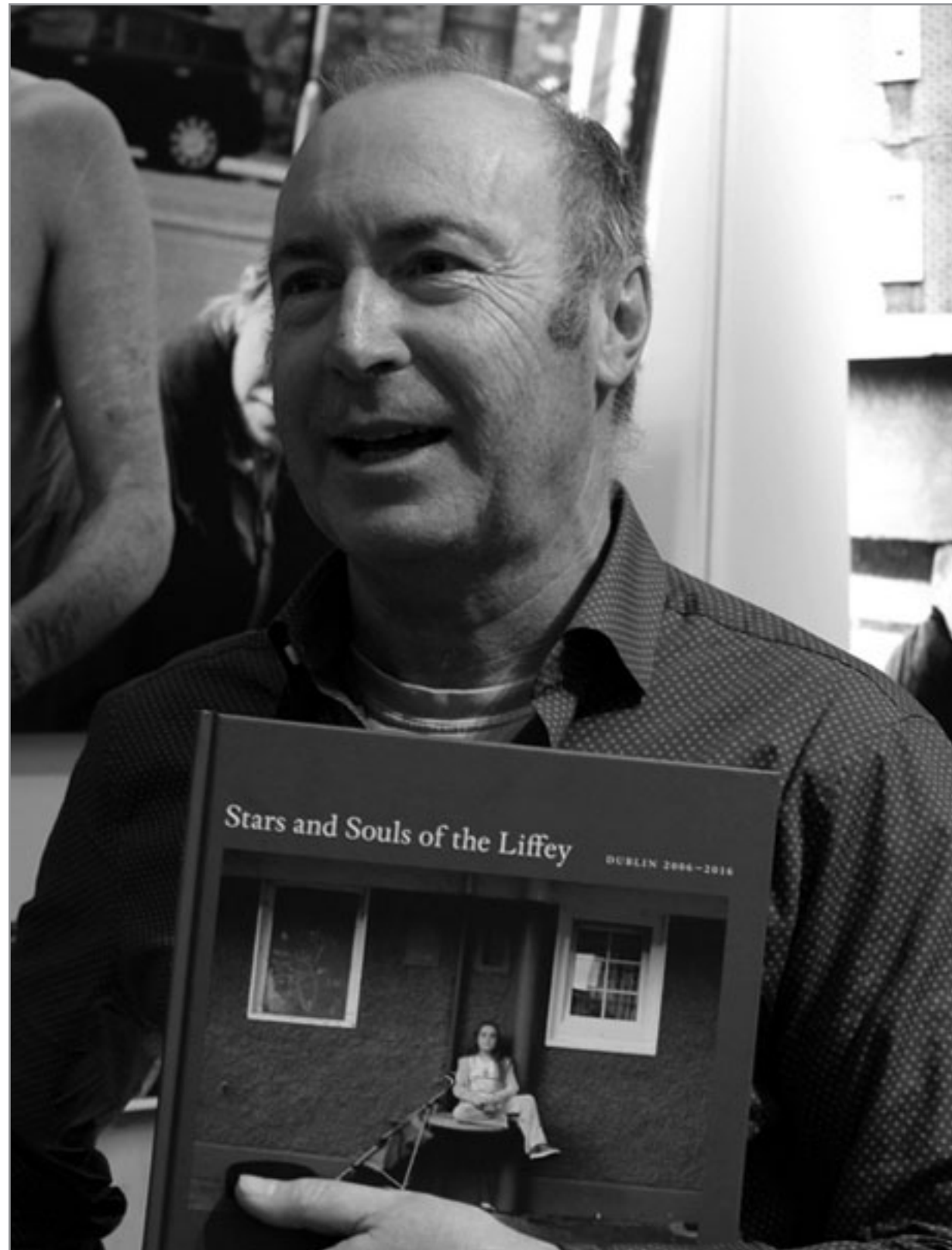
Hardback book available at <https://www.hitonebooks.ie/stars-and-souls-of-the-liffey>

BARRY DELANEY

STARS AND SOULS OF THE LIFFEY

DUBLIN 2006 - 2016

For 11 years I documented life in inner city Dublin, as it went through many changes, boom to bust to boom, focussing in on its people. Much has now changed in these areas today with many of the flat complexes like St Teresa's gardens, Dolphins house and Charlemont Street knocked down and re-generated, but the people and communities remain its very soul, and I as a Dubliner was lucky they allowed me in to document their lives in a rapidly changing Dublin.



Barry Delaney







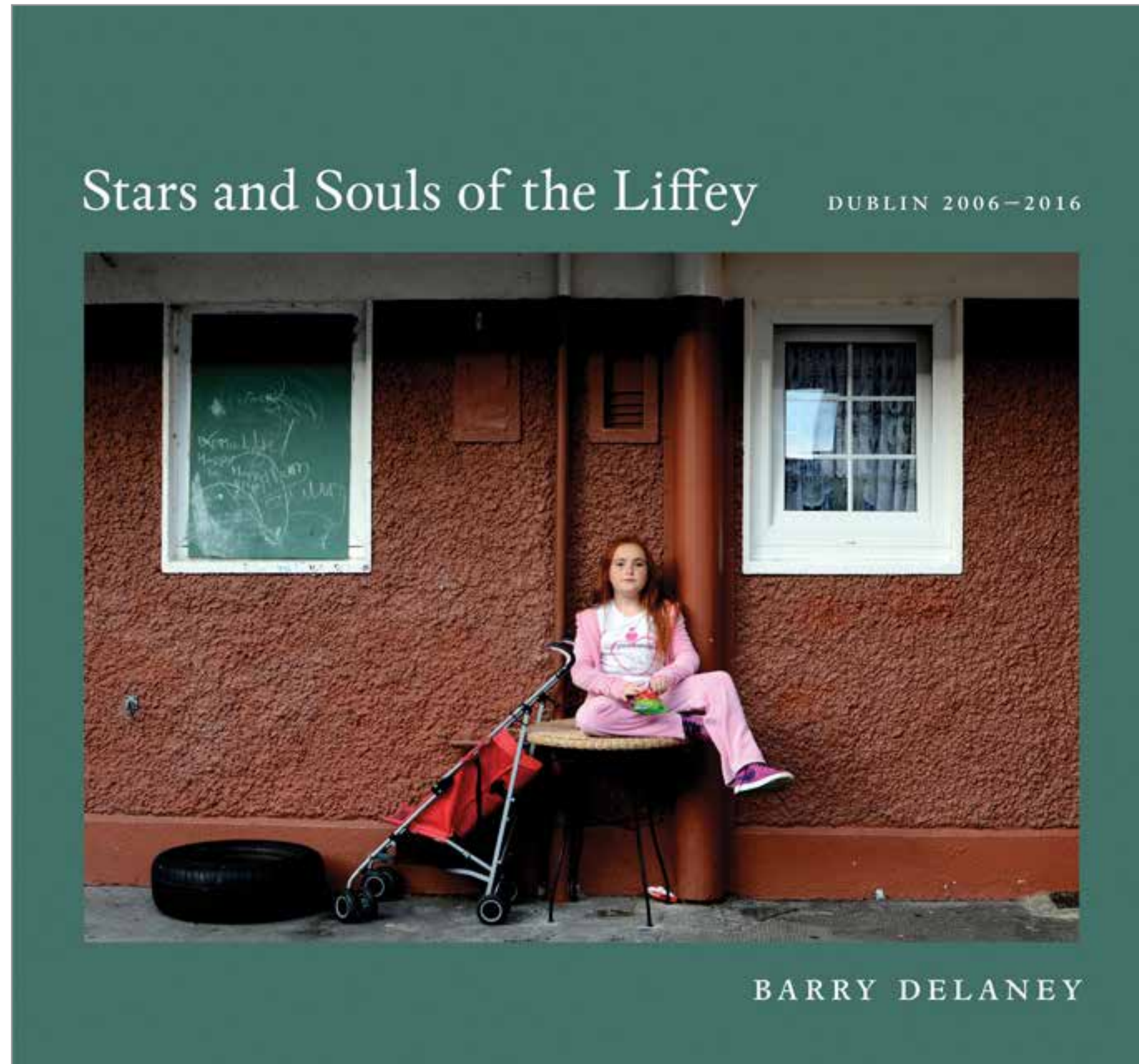












Stars and Souls of the Liffey, Dublin 2006-2016 available at <https://www.hitonebooks.ie/stars-and-souls-of-the-liffey>

Carl Scharwath, has appeared globally with 150+ journals selecting his poetry, short stories, interviews, essays, plays or art photography (His photography was featured on the cover of six literary journals.) Two poetry books 'Journey To Become Forgotten' (Kind of a Hurricane Press) and 'Abandoned' (ScarsTv) have been published. His first photography book was recently published by Praxis. Carl is the art editor for Minute Magazine, a dedicated runner and 2nd degree black- belt in Taekwondo.

CARL SCHARWATH EVOLVE

I use photography as a means of self-expression. The most important quality of a photograph, as in all of art, is to evoke an emotional response. I prefer to capture surrealistic moments when I can, the play of light and colors and unusual situations as they unfold. As a passionate runner, being aware of my surroundings tends to produce some surprise scenes instead of forcing an image of time with my camera. Currently I have been concentrating on collaborations with other poets who interpret my photos with their powerful words creating an art form that compliments each other.



Carl Scharwath

Saluter.



Gravitation.



Sentinel.



Statue Study.



The Scream.





Sunrise.

Born in Munich 1954. 1973 studied with Ernst Fuchs and Salvador Dali. 1970 he painted still-lives in Switzerland introducing curved mirrors which reflect objects in most surprising ways and led to a proposal for the –elegant Universe. Moving to Tuscany in 1980 landscape and atmospheric effects crystallized to intense, portraits of nature. Since 1984 living in Bali. In his search for the- abstract. Papua New Guinea – Warriors combine the archaic with the futuristic. Wolfgang's motto – aesthetic = ethic – points to places where humans experience the Good, the True and the Beautiful.

<http://www.wolfgangjohanneswidmoser.com>

<https://web.facebook.com/wolfgang.widmoser>

<https://web.facebook.com/wolfgangjohanneswidmoser>

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WOLFGANG WIDMOSER

TOSCANY, ITALY

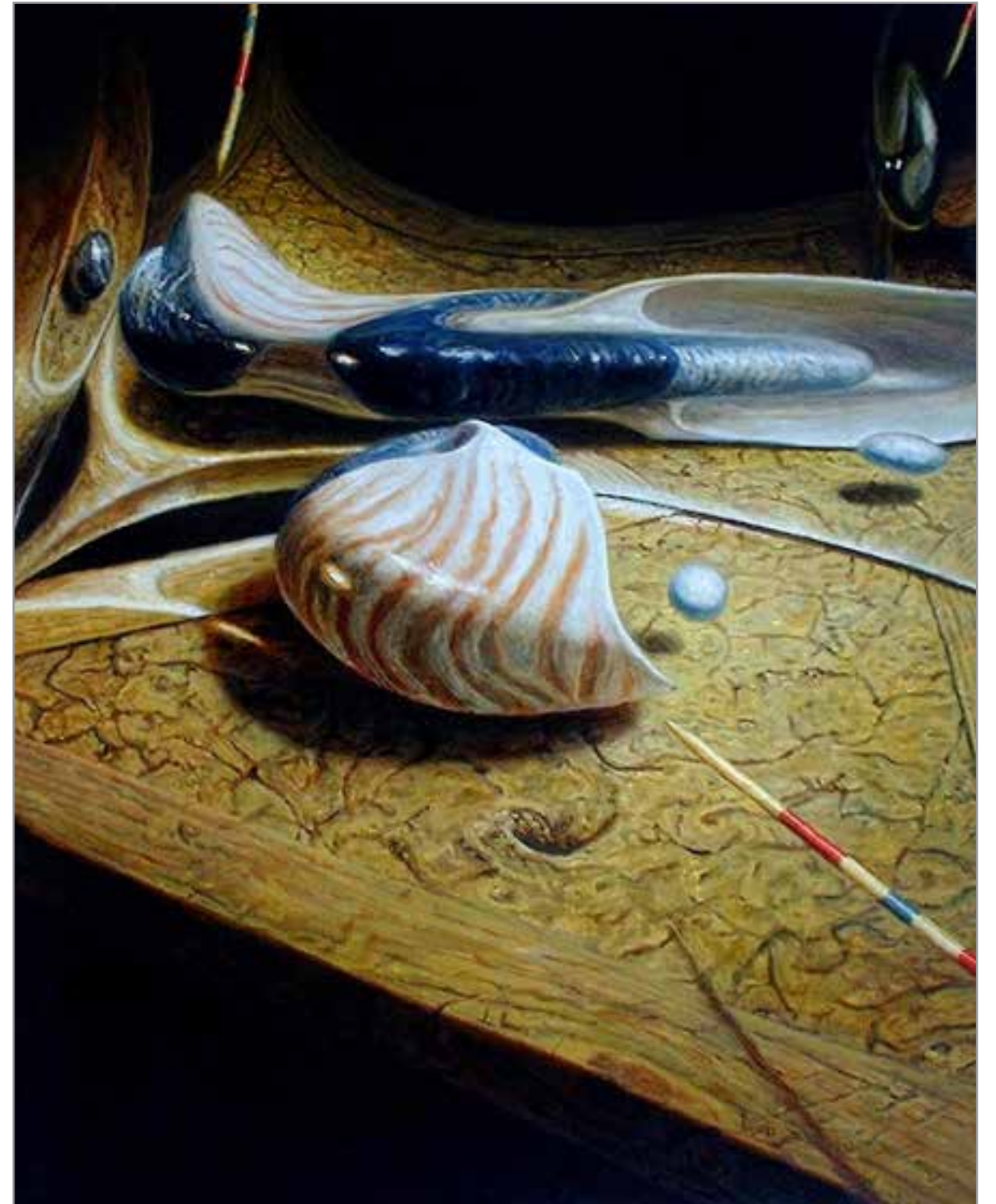
These artworks were created when I lived in Tuscany, when creative pursuits was the very seed that later germinated into art forms that drove me away from *Renaissance* Europe to South East Asia, to the island of Bali. The vibrant ethos of the isle gave me a home. It embraced, nurtured and sustained my spiritual energy. But to travel further into the unknown universe of colour and form one must return to the beginning, to the place and time where my art was born – Tuscany. Perhaps one day I shall physically return home. But for now, I must travel in the ether to reflect on the meaning of art in the metaphysical world.

Wolfgang Widmoser

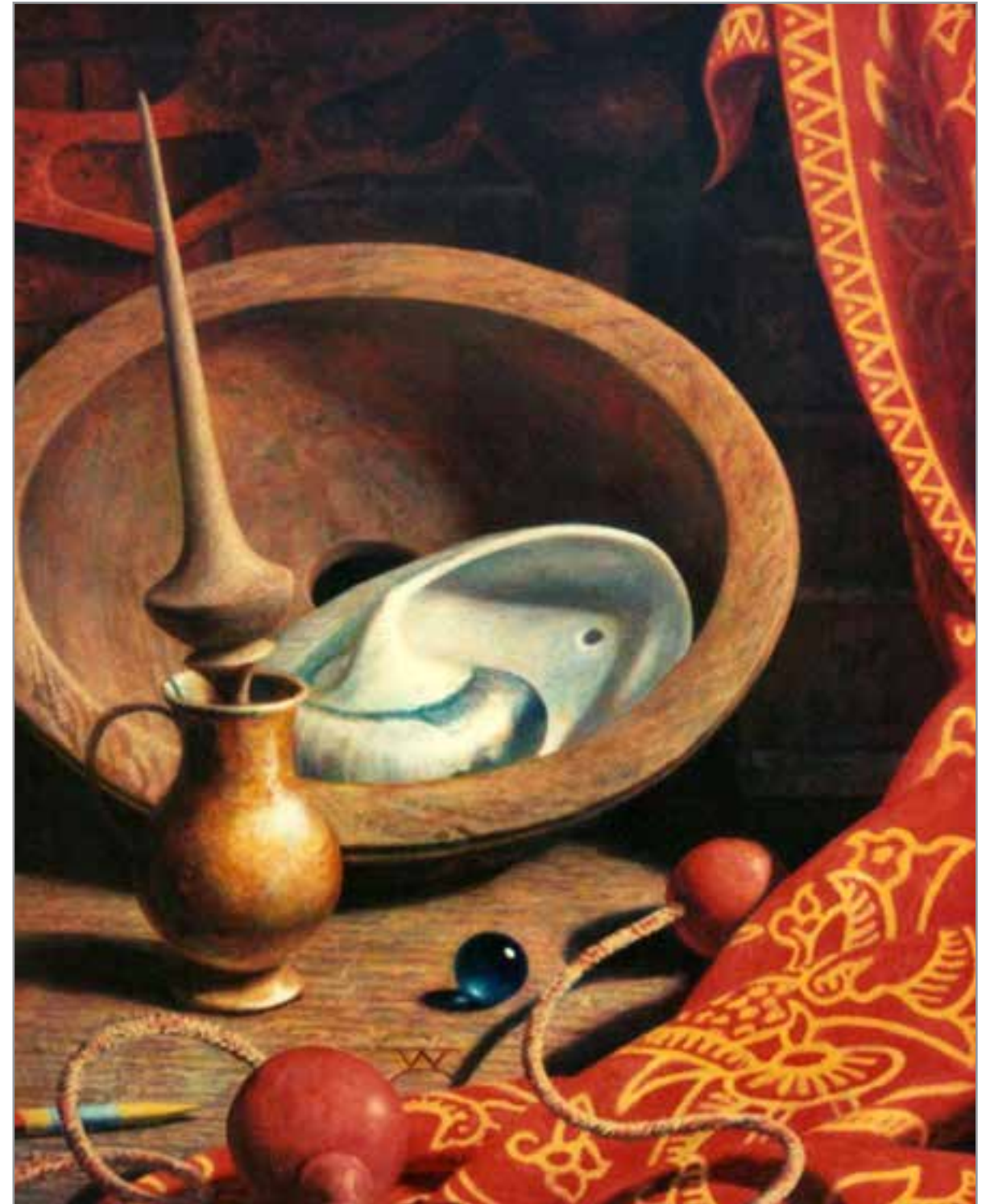
Trochus in Copperbowl - oil on canvas 80 x 100cm.



Nautilus in concave mirror - oil on canvas 80 x 100cm.



Top with Balinese sarong - oil on canvas 80 x 100cm.



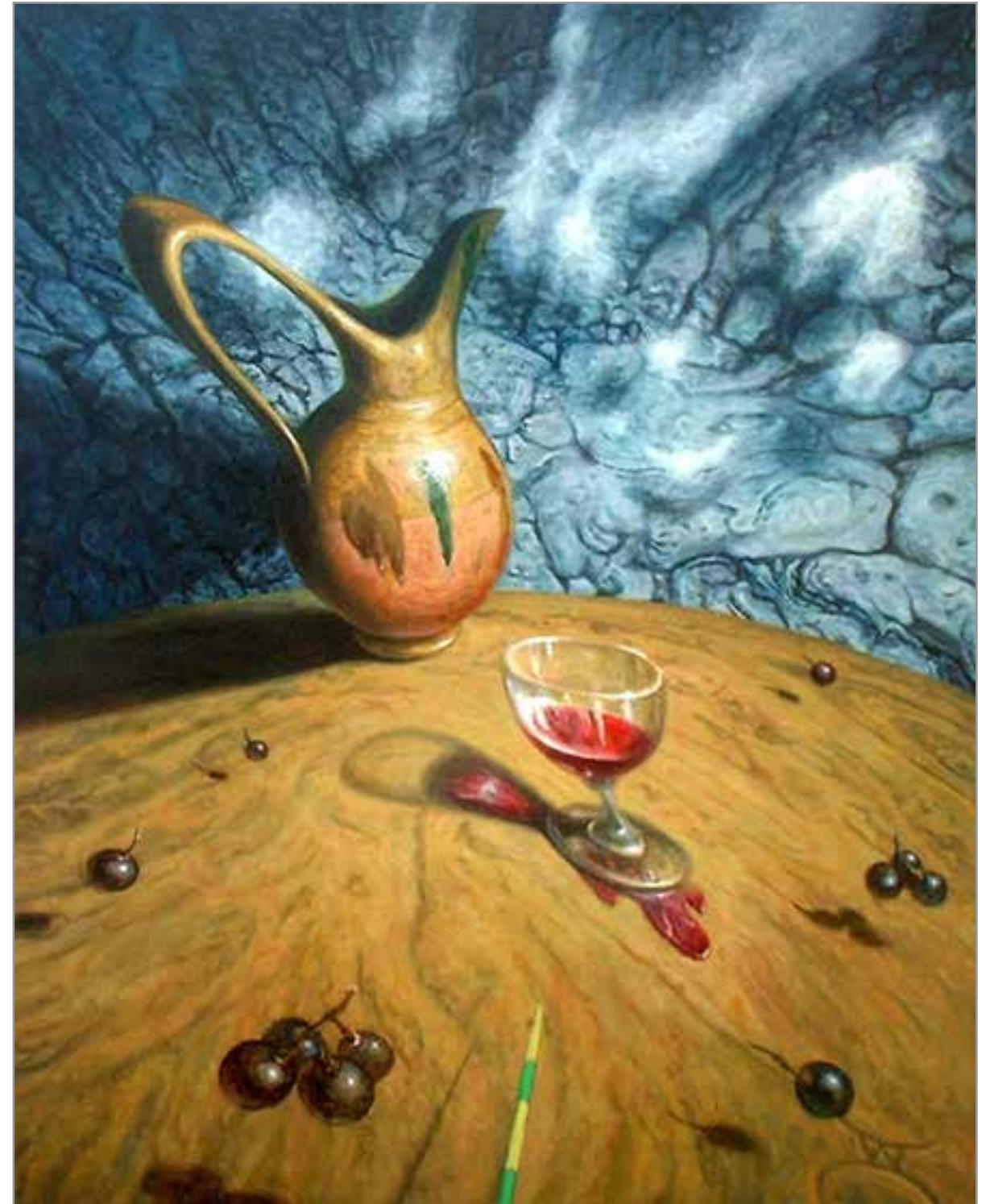
Stillife with Balinese cloth - oil on canvas 80 x 100cm.



The competitors - oil on canvas 150 x 180cm.



Etruscan jar - oil on canvas 80 x 100cm.



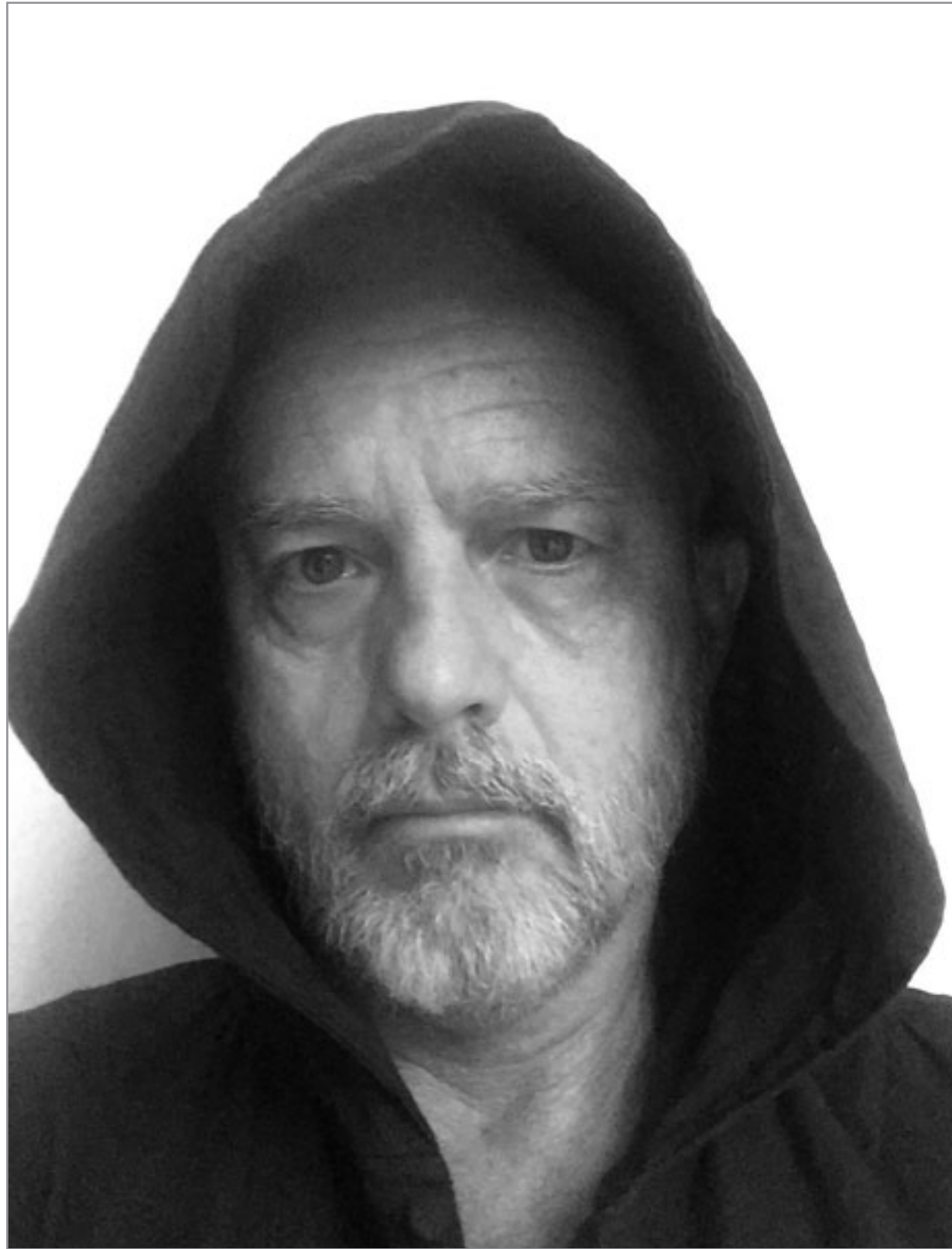


Meditation - oil on canvas 125 x 85cm.



Burning House - oil on canvas 100 x 62cm.

Born in Norway 1956. Worked in fashion design from 1985 all over Asia. Moved to Bali, Indonesia. 1995 and in 2000 discovered stone sculpting as a new way of expression. Exhibited and sold through galleries in Bali since 2001. Material mostly used is local white sandstone. Earlier inspiration and expression from Yoga poses and minimalist, curving, polished pieces. Since 2017 working on mystic expressions of cyber fantasy creatures with inspiration from old myths and using indigo colours to experiment with new effects.



PETTER SOLHEIM

OTHERWORLD

The following are images of my sculptures, which are part of a 'collab' exhibition titled *Otherworld*, with *Wolfgang Widmoser* and *Pepe Arcos* being held at Metis Gallery in Bali.

In our modern world, where everything is measured and explained, the oceans are almost the only place hold promises of the mysteries we crave to excite us! Humans have always used fantasy to create stories, about something different and more powerful than ourselves. In my work of the past 2 years I have been inspired by some of the myths of the ocean. Atlantis, the lost city, mermaids, the sirens who trick sailors and a myth about otherworld and the portal to the other side! Was Atlantis the gateway to a different dimension?

In Greek mythology, sirens were dangerous creatures, who lured nearby sailors with their enchanting music and singing voices to shipwreck on the rocky coast of their island. Or maybe they were underwater guardians of the gateway to otherworld? If you look closely you will see that they are lacking the sacrum, the triangle shaped bone in the lower back. In some Pre-Hispanic Mesoamerican traditions the sacrum represented "portals" or doorways permitting translocation between worlds or levels of the cosmos.

My sirens are strong, beautiful, female cyborgs, who are the guardians of the gateway to otherworld! I have worked on sculptures inspired by this for the past two years. Rubbing natural indigo pigments into my sculptures after carving and sanding helps me to create a feeling of underwater and something outside our daily conception. My unique technique is called "direct carving" where I do all the carving manually, just a hammer and chisel, no small size model first, going where my fantasy takes me!

Petter Solheim

Serenity.





Energy rising.



The blessing.



Legend of the otherworld.



Pathway to the otherworld.

Sren fo the otherworld.





Essence of the otherworld.

Tina Claffey is an award winning nature photographer and author of 'Tapestry of Light-Ireland's bogs & wetlands as never seen before' released in October 2017. For almost 10 years, she lived and worked in pristine wilderness areas in Botswana, and this experience awakened in her an appreciation of the natural world of Ireland. Her observations and unique perspective of the flora and fauna of the unspoilt raised bogs and wet woodlands of the Irish midlands are celebrated in her work. <http://www.tinaclaffey.com/>



TINA CLAFFEY

SPIDERS OF THE BOG

Like much of the flora and fauna of Ireland's bogs and wetlands, the spiders of the bog have adapted and evolved to capture their prey. They are truly incredible to watch and will hunt before your eyes if you stay still and observe them.

The Raft and the Wolf spider are voracious aquatic and terrestrial hunters. They do not spin webs. Instead they use speed and their eight strategically located eyes to catch their prey. Hunting on the water, below the surface, and throughout the surrounding low vegetation, they leave little chance to escape for their targets.

The Crab spider, so named due to its crab like body, is able to change the colour of its body to blend with the colour of its environment. It is an ambush predator that waits patiently unseen in the flowers until its unsuspecting prey of butterflies, bees or flies land to feed on the flower's nectar.

The Four-spot Orb Weaver builds elaborate webs, complete with a funnel shaped retreat to the side where it goes to wait for its prey to become trapped, and to shelter from bad weather. Such a wonderful architect. Adult females can actively change their colour to accurately match their resting surface.

The Nursery web spider is an active hunter and does not spin a web to catch food, instead using a quick sprint to capture flies and other insects. The female carries her large, round egg-sac in her fangs. When the young are about to hatch, she builds a silk sheet among the vegetation to act as a tent, sheltering them until they are old enough to leave on their own.

Tina Claffey

Raft Spider in the Autmn sun.



© Tina Claffey



© Tina Claffey

Raft Spider on Red Sphagnum.

Wolf Spider capture.



© Tina Claffey



Wolf Spider after the kill.

Crab Spider Dance.



© Tina Claffey

Crab Spider in Wild Angelica.



© Tina Claffey

Nursery Web Spider with Egg Sac.



© Tina Claffey

Nursery Spider defending nest.



Four Spot Orb Web Weaver building.



© Tina Claffey



Four Spot Orb Web Weaver building.



Margi Prideaux has written about wildlife, international politics and law almost every day for the past 27 years. As an international negotiator and independent academic, with a Ph.D. in wildlife policy and law, her words have been tuned to inform policy audiences in more than 20 different international conservation processes. She is the author of two nonfiction books, *Birdsong After the Storm* and *Global Environmental Governance, Civil Society and Wildlife*, and co-author of *All Things Breathe Alike: A Wildlife Anthology*. Along the way, her shorter musings have been published online at openDemocracy, Global Policy, Live Encounters, AlterNet, Wildlife Articles and Ecologist.

Excerpt: *Shock and Awe: The Global Assault on Wildlife and Where to find Hope* by Margi Prideaux and Donna Mulvenna. Two authors traverse the wildlife conservation landscape from their two unique perspectives—one as a seasoned activist, academic and negotiator, and the other with eyes opened to nature by a deep connection born in the Amazon. Told through the lens of the seven deadly sins, *Shock and Awe* stimulates thinking and offers hope.

DR MARGI PRIDEAUX TUNING BACK TO ETHICAL NORTH

Our society no longer leans towards respect, care, and compassion. We default to brutality and expediency. How is it that our moral compass points away from our ethical north with such fierce intensity? That is not to say our society is largely immoral. Mostly we are amoral. This is because many people look to others for norms of appropriate behaviour, and emulate that behaviour, regardless of its moral content.

It is socially popular to assume that material gain is the most important quest. It is widely accepted that the cost of feeding the world means that vast tracts of rainforest must be cleared, or that oceans of fish can disappear. Even when we know we are standing on the wrong side of the moral line, social conformity, obedience to authority, and diffusion of responsibility are potent social influences that can make moral action less likely. The latest such excuse I have read surrounds the Extinction Rebellion protests rippling across the world. A new social backlash has asserted that the protesters are making societal change 'less palatable' by their activism; that protest is only ever successful 'if the public is brought along with you'.

Dr Margi Prideaux

Many of the decisions we make each day perpetuate terrible suffering and destruction of the natural world; our actions erode the basis for which our life on the thin blanket around the planet is sustained. When we look closely at the cause and effect, it is clear that we contribute to the amoral, and sometimes immoral, conduct of legal and illegal industries feeding a society set on devouring every resource the Earth has to offer.

In the week when the Australian state, Queensland, passed laws to scupper the Extinction Rebellion protests, Greg Jericho quoted a few comments posted in The Guardian's on-line discourse: 'I'm all for action on climate change, but ...' and 'Don't they realise you catch more flies with honey?' Around the same time the Queensland Premier tweeted that 'Everyone has the right to protest in this state' but then added the caveat: 'It's when extreme protesters using dangerous devices put at risk our emergency services & hinder people going about their daily business that it oversteps the mark.' The Extinction Rebellion movement is not using dangerous devices. At worst they are hindering people going about their daily business, even though that very business is the cause of the climate crisis in the first place.

'Look I get it – it is annoying to have your day disrupted. But don't come at me with arguments that amount to basically doing what has been done for 30 years and expecting anything real to happen,' Jericho wrote. 'The problem is it has been easy to ignore climate-change activism and as a result ignore the issue completely. Nonviolent resistance is about resisting, not just being nonviolent. ... At some point we need to get angry, but if your anger is directed at those protesting rather than at parliamentarians then I suspect you have consigned yourself to expecting nothing to change.'

Adopting a stance of inaction and accusation is far easier than taking personal responsibility. And we can't we assume that feelings of guilt or shame will necessarily prompt people to change. Humans are adept at self-deception. Lisa Shu and her colleagues have studied how individuals conveniently 'forget' relevant moral rules after engaging in unethical actions, even though they were no less likely to forget other more morally neutral information.

Celia Moore and Francesca Gino released an important related study five years ago. Even when individuals are aware of the ethical dimensions of the choices they are making, they may still engage in unethical behaviour if they can find justification for it. Often this is by comparing themselves to or verifying their actions with others; such as justifying buying our favourite cleaning product containing palm oil, because everyone else is consuming at rates that make our own contribution comparatively insignificant.

How strongly we justify our actions depends on how strongly we identify with and have loyalty to a group that shares those actions, or how adept we are at using framing or euphemistic language to deflect our responsibility, by judging our actions as ethical when in fact they are morally contentious or hypocritical. But we quickly shift away from this transgression when we think someone outside of 'our group' is watching us. This suggests we know—we are conscious of—the moral decision or actions we should make. Our inner voice remains pointed at true north.

Research by Francesca Gino, Shahar Ayal, and Dan Ariely showed that a few bad apples in our midst can have a contagious effect, but we are also willing to correct or compensate for our peer's bad behaviour when we believe we are being witnessed.

Clearly the world needs more moral witnesses!

The assertion that the Extinction Rebellion protesters are alienating people deserves to be challenged. People are choosing to self-deceive. That it will be the children who will save the world, is an equally amoral position to take, because it abrogates our personal responsibility, right now. The wave of school and youth marches are wonderful, and empowering, but they are children without enough knowledge about the deep systemic change that is required. And even they, and their parents and teachers facilitating the strikes, need to attend to their personal actions.

Many of the decisions we make each day perpetuate terrible suffering and destruction of the natural world; our actions erode the basis for which our life on the thin blanket around the planet is sustained. When we look closely at the cause and effect, it is clear that we contribute to the amoral, and sometimes immoral, conduct of legal and illegal industries feeding a society set on devouring every resource the Earth has to offer.

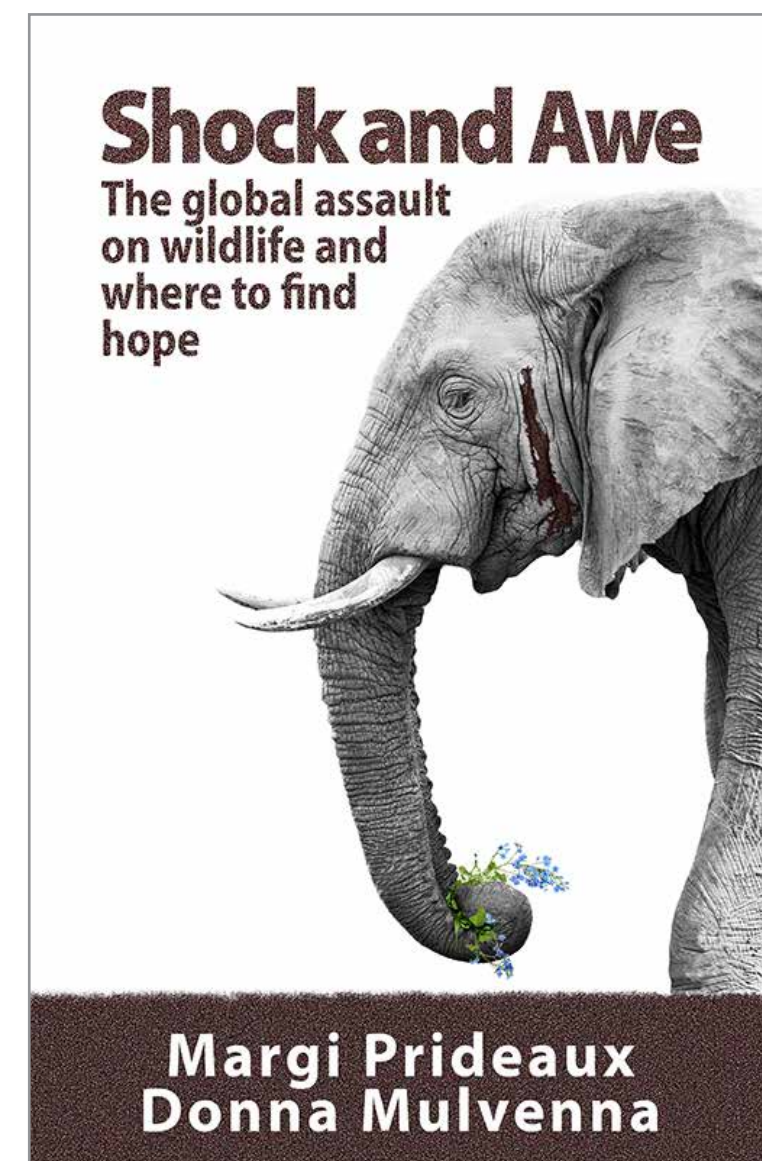
With this knowledge weighing heavily on our shoulders, it is easy to give in to powerlessness and despair. But there is a simple and important step that can be taken to overcome the amoral societal influence and tune to our compass's moral north: tap into the profound promise of Awe, and specifically Awe in nature.

Awe can carry a fear component when we face something perceived as potentially dangerous. It can move us through profound beauty or admiration. It can elevate us by tapping the potential for exceptional morality. And, it can inspire us in ways that we find impossible to explain; supernatural experiences that are difficult to ignore.

In 2003, Keltner and Haidt wrote *'In the upper reaches of pleasure and on the boundary of fear is a little studied emotion—awe.'* They were not the first to consider Awe. Its ability to move the human soul has been known for millennia. But their perspective captures something unique and powerful about where the emotion lies. It has two dimensions, vastness—perceiving sweeping views and understanding a complex theory; and need for accommodation—where our mental frame has to be altered to accommodate new incoming information.

Awe can carry a fear component when we face something perceived as potentially dangerous. It can move us through profound beauty or admiration. It can elevate us by tapping the potential for exceptional morality. And, it can inspire us in ways that we find impossible to explain; supernatural experiences that are difficult to ignore.

What is so crucial about Awe, as well as the emotions of elevation, and inspiration, is that it directs attention firmly outside the self, away from our mundane expectations and immediate needs. It challenges our beliefs about what is possible, focusing our attention not only on what is outside ourselves but also on what is greater than ourselves and beyond our perceived boundaries. In other words, after an experience of Awe we can be moved to evaluate ourselves as forever changed. It's powerful. It can be transformative; triggering deep, radical, and enduring change.



Donna is the author of eco-memoir, *Wild Roots: Coming Alive in the French Amazon*, written from her home in French Guiana where she worked from a platform high in the rainforest canopy. A nature enthusiast, excerpts from her books, along with several other works, have been published in various newspapers, magazines and online publications. When not tending to her food forest, Donna can be found reading from her sea kayak or hurtling along one of the world's wild rivers in a sprint canoe.

Excerpt: *Shock and Awe: The Global Assault on Wildlife and Where to find Hope* by Margi Prideaux and Donna Mulvenna. Two authors traverse the wildlife conservation landscape from their two unique perspectives—one as a seasoned activist, academic and negotiator, and the other with eyes opened to nature by a deep connection born in the Amazon. Told through the lens of the seven deadly sins, *Shock and Awe* stimulates thinking and offers hope

DONNA MULVENNA

AWE-STRUCK

As an urban-raised person, I lacked even a vague concept of the navigation skills of my ancestors, or those of indigenous people who have not abandoned this skill, which made it more foolish to set off on a journey into one of French Guiana's Nature Reserves without a GPS.

The Matoury Nature Reserve rises more than two hundred metres above the city of Cayenne and is covered in thick primal forest—protected as a reserve since 2006—and made more interesting because it rests at the biogeographical intersection of Amazonia and the Guiana Shield. From the deck of my home, on a hillside that overlooks the valley that borders the park, my eyes had often been drawn to the crown of one particular tree—the princess of the forest; a *tabebuia serratifolia*. I thought to myself, 'If I still live here in the dry season, I'm going to visit that tree.'

When I first arrived in French Amazonia, I wouldn't have dreamed of trekking alone through the jungle. I was too fearful of jaguars slinking through dense vegetation or bullet ants transmitting poison directly into my nervous system. But that was before I stood on top of a rocky outcrop deep in the rainforest and Awe—the dense concentration of *all* life—moved me physically and spiritually.



Donna Mulvenna

Although the forest noises I found fascinating closer to home turned threatening the deeper I entered the forest,—monkeys shaking branches to ward off my presence and reptiles slithering in a decomposing world under foot—I believed the jungle and I stood on a more equal footing: I hadn't recently needed an urgent dose of antihistamines and my earlier paranoia of the unknown had given way to curiosity. But a seed of fear had wormed its way into my mind, and for a moment I did weigh up whether to turn back or do as Henry Walter Bates did; proceed as a 'tolerant, curious, uncomplaining traveller'.

My body first sensed the force which caused blood to skyrocket through my veins. It was an intense emotion that blew open the door to all the sadness, bias, and untruth in my mind, gathered them together in a mounting pressure that built up and up in my chest until, as a swelling river bursts its levee bank, spilled from me in a flood of tears. In that moment, my world was changed from cynical matte to one full of sparkling possibility. My thoughts, never one's to be left on the back burner, struggled to catch up. What was this feeling that made me feel so strong and brave, I thought I could ride through the rainforest on the back of a jaguar, and walk away? Nothing could move fast enough, loud enough, or bright enough to stop the thrill under my skin: a raw and wild emotion that I felt inherently belonged to me. Being struck by Awe is a humbling experience. You know it is logically true that Nature doesn't care whether you are part of her surroundings or not, but your mind is opening like a flower, the air is pulsating, and you are pulled into abyss of a tangible energy. Once you have experienced it, it is impossible not to want to jump up and down and shout about it.

What happened to me that day not only changed my view of the world, it changed my belief and understanding of spirituality. It was a pivotal moment that I have thought about, in detail, for the years since.

Following the Awe experience, my mind—which had previously jumped around all over the place—quieted, and all the guilt, inadequacy, and tension I had accumulated over the years, evaporated. The change was so profound and so restorative, I made a vow never to lose my *self* again and to routinely spend time in a place more likely to elicit feelings of Awe: Nature.

Rocket fuel is how poet Lang Leav skilfully illustrates the riot of emotions that epitomises my personal experience of awe:

'She has been feeling it for a while now—that sense of awakening. There is a gentle rage simmering inside her, and it is getting stronger by the day. She will hold it close to her—she will nurture it and let it grow. She won't let anyone take it away from her. It is her rocket fuel and finally, she is going places. She can feel it down to her very core—this is her time. She will not only climb mountains—she will move them too.'

My discovery of Awe was a *rediscovery*, as the great pioneer in the application of Awe-based consciousness Kirk Schneider points out. He suggests fundamental Awe resides in all of us from the time we are born, throughout our childhood and every night we fall asleep and dream of greater things:

'We as human beings experience the world (cosmos, being) as overwhelming, from the moment we are aware, we become aware of our meagerness. From the moment we reflect on ourselves and the world, we sense how hopeless, helpless, and vulnerable we are. And yet, close on the heels of this shuddering despair of ours is a riveting sense of possibility about our lot. As much as we are apart from that which surrounds us, we are also a part of it, partners to it. We are thrilled, enthralled, and exalted by our condition as much as it perplexes and overpowers us. If life is an open sea within which we may drown, then it is also a yielding sea within which we may meld and merge.'

A diligent student of horticulture, I had for years buried my head in textbooks about dichotomous keys, compound leaves and symbiosis. Then, believing I knew *everything* about trees, I chose a speciality; tropical fruit trees. But in my studies, I had overlooked *everything of which I did not know*: trees are sentient divine beings.

The morning of my tree-finding expedition was hot and humid: hot sun scorching my neck and that stifling dense stickiness that precedes heavy rain. I was dressed in a wide-brimmed hat and long boots, long trousers and a long-sleeved shirt; the only thing missing was the pin cushion and a butterfly net. Although the forest noises I found fascinating closer to home turned threatening the deeper I entered the forest,—monkeys shaking branches to ward off my presence and reptiles slithering in a decomposing world under foot—I believed the jungle and I stood on a more equal footing: I hadn't recently needed an urgent dose of antihistamines and my earlier paranoia of the unknown had given way to curiosity. But a seed of fear had wormed its way into my mind, and for a moment I did weigh up whether to turn back or do as Henry Walter Bates did; proceed as a 'tolerant, curious, uncomplaining traveller'.

We do not know how trees see, feel or calculate time: how an ancient tree cut down centuries before can live without leaves for photosynthesis, nor how trees know that jumping the gun in spring can be catastrophic in cold weather. Experiencing the *whole* energy of life, strips us to our basic humanity so we not only understand nature is important; we feel it too. Modern life is not our ruler: it is an agglomeration of people isolated from nature, who without that inner compass turn away from their best; eroding traits such as kindness, compassion and humility.

After an hour more of scrambling over turtle vines and checking my boots for scorpions—during which I chanted the need to slow down and be in the moment—I pushed through a dense patch of scrub into a clearing of old ground that had been opened up to see light again: broken limbs; stranded vines; crushed vegetation; and an uprooted forest giant that had seemingly buckled under the weight of hundreds of waterlogged tank bromeliads. Turning in a wide arc, I assessed the damage, then peered through the tree gap to behold a blue sky... that had been replaced by a crown of golden flowers. I was awestruck. The tree, which I had unscientifically nicknamed Coeden, because I thought her other name of pau d'arco drew too much attention to her inhouse medicine chest, towered thirty metres overhead. The canopy, naked of leaves, was a mass of trumpet-shaped flowers—each one a gold star pinned against a sky-blue background. Coeden stood apart from the other trees, seemingly to preserve her hierarchical space, but I strode straight up to her and put my arms around her waist. I filled the relative silence with my own language; said hello and thanked her for her showy flowers. Then I flattened my ear against her smooth trunk, as elephants do, and listened for her voice; buds forming, sap flowing, and leaves rustling.

Later, knelt in the wet mulch at Coeden's base, I watched leafcutter ants march in a perfectly straight line across the decaying floral swamp while I picked up fresh flowers to thread a daisy chain. When sitting at the base of a great tree, it is clear that trees are more than *just* trees. They have a memory, which speaks of people, history and place; a chemical energy so animal life can grow, and a host of mysterious we can only hope to understand. Peter Wohlleben, a professional forester and the author of, *A Hidden Life of Trees*, has self-admittedly exclaimed that he knows, 'as much about the hidden life of trees as a butcher knows about the emotional life of animals.'

We do not know how trees see, feel or calculate time: how an ancient tree cut down centuries before can live without leaves for photosynthesis, nor how trees know that jumping the gun in spring can be catastrophic in cold weather. Experiencing the *whole* energy of life, strips us to our basic humanity so we not only understand nature is important; we feel it too. Modern life is not our ruler: it is an agglomeration of people isolated from nature, who without that inner compass turn away from their best; eroding traits such as kindness, compassion and humility.

Although it had taken me three hours to find Coeden, the reality was the journey had taken decades. I needed to wait for life events to change me, and for my perception to change towards other living beings before I could be more open to this type of spirituality: a blurring of the boundaries between the usual 'self' and the surrounding environment.

Dusting myself off, I stood and embraced Coeden. Earlier in my working life, I had often heard, 'There is no place for tree huggers here'. That bias has largely vanished today, as activists, conservationists, and ecologists stand as part of a crowd. Although the desire to form a bond with nature—a tree—can be difficult to articulate, hugging a tree doesn't need to meet a purpose other than it just feels good. It is important we know the objects of our affection—their distinct identity, habitat and biodiversity—so we are more likely to protect them.

I laid the *daisy* chain over a waist-high sapling and turned to leave. A gentle gust of wind heightened the rhythm of the forest and a shower of golden flowers rained down on me: nature's outpouring of grace.

José Truda Palazzo Jr is an environmental activist, writer and explorer who has dedicated himself to the environmental cause continuously for almost forty years. In the 1970's, when Brazil was still under a military dictatorship, he became one of Brazil's leading voices against Japanese whaling in its waters and led a research and conservation project which ensured the recovery of a breeding population of Southern Right Whales in Southern Brazil. Currently he serves as member of the International Committee on Marine Mammals and Protected Areas and in the IUCN Marine Mammals and Protected Areas Task Force and Tourism and Protected Areas Specialists Group.

Coming Soon: *Living Water: Marine Ecotourism, Communities and Conservation*
by José Truda Palazzo, Jr. <https://stormbirdpress.com/our-authors/jose-truda-palazzo-jr/>



José Truda Palazzo, Jr.

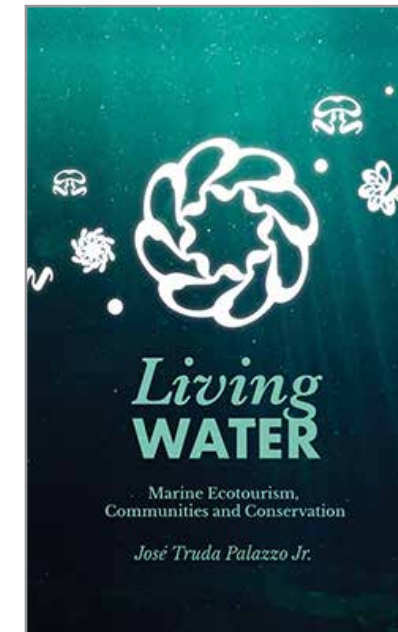
JOSÉ TRUDA PALAZZO JR

LIVING WATER

It has taken some thirty eight hours of travel from southern Brazil, five flights and six airports to be here, underwater, lying low kneeling on the white sand of this lagoon channel drains slowly through my anxious breathing. It is hardly 9 AM, and I arrived at this faraway island in the middle of the violet-blue of the Western Pacific barely five hours ago. It doesn't matter; as soon as the first resident celebrity arrives, all travel hassles and, in fact, your entire life beyond the water surface which is visible above you simply fades away.

She comes with the family, it seems. First one, then three, then seven reef manta rays pass by just a few metres from me, my wife and the other half dozen divers who have come from all corners of the world to see them, for in Yap, one of the many islands in the Federated States of Micronesia, the 100+ resident manta rays are a daily sight to mesmerised visitors, all year round. It was 2007, and my family has been back to Yap several times since then, attracted not only by the mantas, but also by the pristine reefs, incredible marine biodiversity, and some of the kindest people on Earth living in a place where mass tourism hasn't ruined both culture and nature. In fact, Yap thrives on being protective of its natural and cultural heritage. Up to 8,000 visitors per year make the (sometimes gruelling) air journey to enjoy it, leaving behind dollars, jobs, and prosperity for many.

In my forty-three years as an environmental activist, twenty two of these as an avid diver, I discovered that many places around the world have thrived on the protection of their marine heritage, through the development of their non-extractive use for income generation at the local level, defying the global trend—sadly and irresponsibly set by some of the most developed nations on the planet and their heavily subsidised fishing fleets—of mining the living resources of our shared oceans as if there was no tomorrow.



Recreational diving, whale, dolphin, seabird, dugong and manatee watching, and mangrove exploring, all gave rise to a myriad of opportunities to generate quality jobs and income for coastal communities and, in many cases, to replace unsustainable extractive uses which were until recent times the last resort of local people left to their own devices by uncaring governments and a faceless, soulless global consumptive market imperative.

Living Water is an attempt to highlight and discuss some of the most striking examples of how Marine Ecotourism, or the non-consumptive use of marine wildlife and environments, can benefit both local people, economies and the environment itself, by providing much better alternatives for communities than 'business-as-usual' destroying species after species to simply make a living in a harsh world. But it is also a warning on how this amazing potential for good is being hampered or maligned by, first, neglect in developing adequate recognition and protection of these activities and their stakeholders at appropriate public policy fora—especially most Multilateral Environmental Agreements, where extractive use lobbies prevail—and a relentless barrage of attacks by the scientific establishment and even sectors of the environment and 'traditional community' movements on the perceived 'impact' of these activities which, as we shall see, oftentimes are anything but, regardless of sensationalistic headlines and published paper titles to the contrary.

Marine Ecotourism, I dare conclude after my inquiries, is a major force for good, and should be promoted, not unduly restricted under prejudiced views devoid of evidence on its 'impact'. There seems to be a definite difficulty, on the part of certain sectors of academia and government bureaucracies, to acknowledge and apply concepts such as cost-benefit and limits of acceptable change to their analyses, and Marine Ecotourism is often treated by scientists and policymakers as if existing in a void, without any actual consideration given to what would happen to the species and ecosystems being visited if there was no income generated from watching—not eating—they. There seems to be a definite difficulty, on the part of certain sectors of academia and government bureaucracies, to acknowledge and apply concepts such as cost-benefit and limits of acceptable change to their analyses, and Marine Ecotourism is often treated by scientists and policymakers as if existing in a void, without any actual consideration

given to what would happen to the species and ecosystems being visited if there was no income generated from watching—not eating—they. Of course, all tourism, and in fact all human uses of nature, must be sustainable, and all bona fide research which investigates these actual impacts and provides guidance to avoid or mitigate them should always be welcomed and incorporated into management decisions. But by not paying attention to the actual conclusions (or lack thereof) of many papers supposedly addressing 'tourism impacts' and giving too much weight to sensationalistic titles and press releases, we are treating the Tourism sector with much more harshness than the possible predatory alternatives to it. It is time we openly talk about, and correct, this distortion. Non-extractive use stakeholders, from local business owners to divers and whale watchers, must be heard at local, national and international levels, for engaging in decision-making and dispensing regulations, guidelines and funding related to the use and stewardship of our shared marine heritage.

As I write these lines, while my beloved Yap and its mantas populate my mind, just a few hundred metres offshore from Praia do Forte beach where I currently live, the humpback whales that breed in Brazil are nursing their calves in the warm waters off Bahia State, and the first sea turtles that nest here are arriving. They are all, now, a blessing for the people living in this region, as not so long ago they were slaughtered for a meagre gain. I wish to invite readers to travel with me on this extraordinary journey, which might help set the course for healing our oceans while providing for the needs of millions of coastal people around the world. But for that to bear fruit in many more places, we will need everyone on board. We need you.

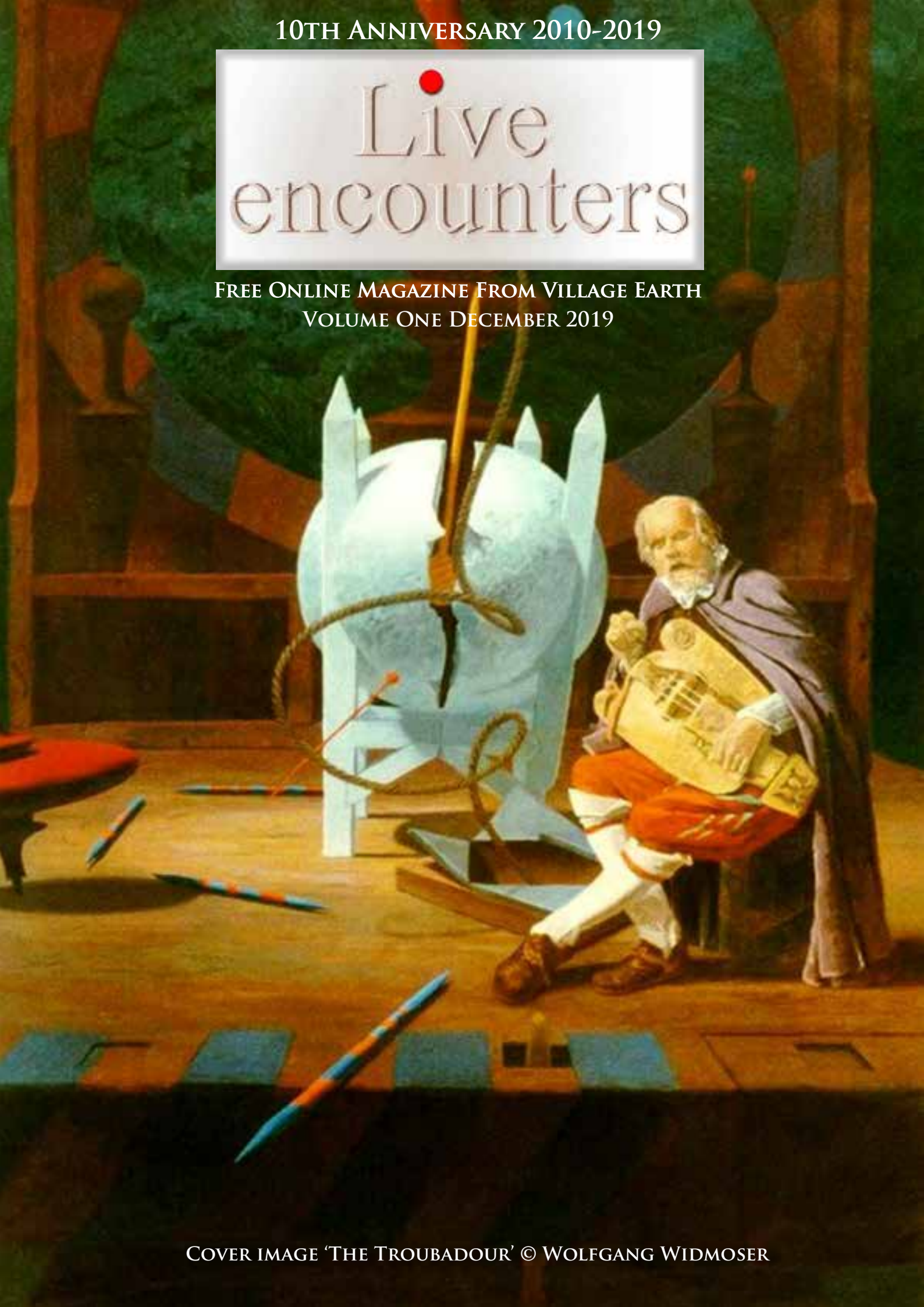
We need a less academic, proactive, local-based approach to acknowledge non-extractive uses and promote their benefits and sustainability.

Living Water is a call to arms for change, so that Marine Ecotourism can fulfil its promise even better and wider.

10TH ANNIVERSARY 2010-2019

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