

# Printagram

A portrait of a middle-aged man with light-colored hair and a serious expression. He is wearing a dark grey polo shirt and has a pair of clear, worn-out goggles resting on his forehead. The background is a dark, textured wall covered in white and yellow graffiti, including various numbers and letters. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the man's face against the busy, graffiti-covered background.

Life In A Dark Tin Shed

The Spirit Of Brooklands

The magazine of Douglas Kurn, photographer





Douglas Kurn photographer



## What's your Story?



Douglas Kurn is a location based photographer who creates environmental portraits and uses reportage photography to provide a strong visual narrative that underlines his client's message. Mostly working with real people Douglas quickly puts them at ease to capture engaging, dynamic images that are used in corporate reports, on websites, in brochures, across social media and on advertising boards.



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*In the office of a dark tin shed*

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Portraits and reportage images of a metalworker in a very dark, and very dirty shed on the site of a former blacksmith's in Surrey.



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An occasionally sentimental look back at a life in photography, this time focussing on the good old days of film and Polaroid



**Handmade racing boats, p.4**



# First Frame



**Time to grab yourself a cuppa again and take a well earned break and have a look through this second, not so instant, magazine, which I hope you'll enjoy.**

**As always please feel free to share it with colleagues, or if you want to keep it for yourself, point them in the direction of my website ([www.douglaskurn.com](http://www.douglaskurn.com)), where a PDF version is available for download.**

**If the magazine format isn't instant enough you can always check out my blog, or see what I am up to on Instagram.**

**W**ell, the response to the first

issue of Printagram was so good that I had to do it again, and this is the result. This issue is a mix of recent and archive material, mostly portrait focussed showcasing some of the fabulously interesting people I've met over the course of the last few years. There's boat builders, coach drivers, brewers, actors, sea swimmers and the chatelaine of a castle, which has the body of a queen buried in it's grounds.

During the course of creating these photographs I visited the coast of Ireland, the Cotswolds, and saw an alternative side to the City of Oxford.

If you fancy a bit of a challenge take a look at page 14 where some actors act out the seven deadly sins - take a look and see if you can work out which sin is which.

Those of you who have known me for some time will be aware I spent four years alone at night photographing a former race track on very long exposure times, and I have included in this issue some of those images and the back story, including what James May (Top Gear and The Grand Tour) had to do with it (very little really) so check out the feature on page 24.

And to finish this issue I return to my favourite four lettered word beginning with the letter "F" ..... film, obviously. The final image in That's A Wrap was a portrait I created on my trusty old Mamiya RZ medium format film camera. What's interesting about this one though is that it was shot on film that expired 15 years ago. Yes it's all a bit washed out, but it still looks fabulous, and it's one less roll of expired film in the fridge.

Well that's all for this time - I hope you enjoy it and let me know what you think.

Douglas Kurn **photographer**



# The New & The Old

Behind the scenes with craftsmen making boats from wood and Kevlar™



Carl Douglas

**I**t's rare yet quite lovely to come across a small business that is based on good old fashioned craftsmanship, yet that's exactly what I found at Carl Douglas Racing Shells on the banks of the River Thames.

In an industry dominated by fibreglass Carl (great surname) and his team have established a reputation for unforgiving quality and exceptional design in the manufacture of rowing boats for racing, which they export all over the world, and all this from a charming old boathouse in Harris' Boatyard at Laleham Reach.

They are so obsessed by quality that rather than buy them much more cheaply they make all of the fittings for every boat. I also discovered that you can have a seat designed and moulded

to fit your bottom for maximum comfort!

One of the fascinating things is how they combine old and new technologies to get the best from both worlds; they laminate wood and Kevlar™ to get unparalleled strength. When I was there they did have boat that was broken in half, but as Carl said in his typically forthright fashion "There's not much we can do if some idiot decides to get in the way of a steamer..."

**“ ...a seat designed and moulded to fit your bottom...**









*Harris boatyard. home to Carl Douglas Racing Shells*





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MARINE ENGINEERS



# The Kingfisher And I

Portraits from the City Of Dreaming Spires



**W**hen you think of Oxford you are probably more inclined to think of the University, the city of dreaming spires, punts on the river, the Radcliffe Camera, Inspector Morse, and you may have even stayed in the old prison which is now a Malmaison hotel.

You would be forgiven if graffiti wasn't the first thing that comes to mind though, but, as I discovered during a recent reccé, there are some

fabulous street art focused projects taking place in Oxford, most notably the Oxford Canal Mural Project initiated by local residents and the Oxford Canal and River Trust, which includes the fabulous Kingfisher mural above created by artist Richard Wilson ([www.richardwilsonartwork.com](http://www.richardwilsonartwork.com))

Inspired by all this artwork I decided to use it as the basis for a recent portrait photo shoot in Oxford using some of the canal side murals, as well as the





*Kingfisher Mural, on the Oxford Canal*

buildings decorated down the Cowley Road in Oxford City. It wasn't without it's challenges though as we got "boat-o-bombed" on the canal, which you can see on my blog!

Whilst I think the initiative and the art in particular is fantastic, I'm not sure Morse would have agreed...





*Left and above, Down the Cowley Road*







# Yesterday, Today

A commission from Historic Houses, showcasing owners at home.



Hand painted clock in the blue room

“

...Katherine Parr ...  
buried in it's  
grounds...

*Lady Ashcome, the owner of Sudeley Castle*

**H**istoric Houses represent the owners of many historic houses, castles and gardens. They're kind of like the National Trust but much less stuffy, and all their properties are privately owned.

Historic Houses recently re-branded and decided to focus on the fact that all their properties are owner occupied, so they sent me to Sudeley Castle in the Cotswolds with the brief to capture anything that you wouldn't expect in a period place with significant historical interest (and Sudeley Castle has the



body of a former Queen, Katherine Parr buried in it's grounds). So dogs on sofas, motorbikes being ridden around the grounds and new ski boots were all not only allowed, but actually and enthusiastically encouraged.

I'm not sure the chatelaine of the castle, Lady Ashcome was all that convinced by the warts and all approach, but despite her agreeing to dress down for the occasion she still managed to emit the aura of natural elegance whenever I photographed her.



**Top: Lady Ashcome's dog on a sofa in the family lounge**

**Centre: Digestive biscuits next to a four poster bed**

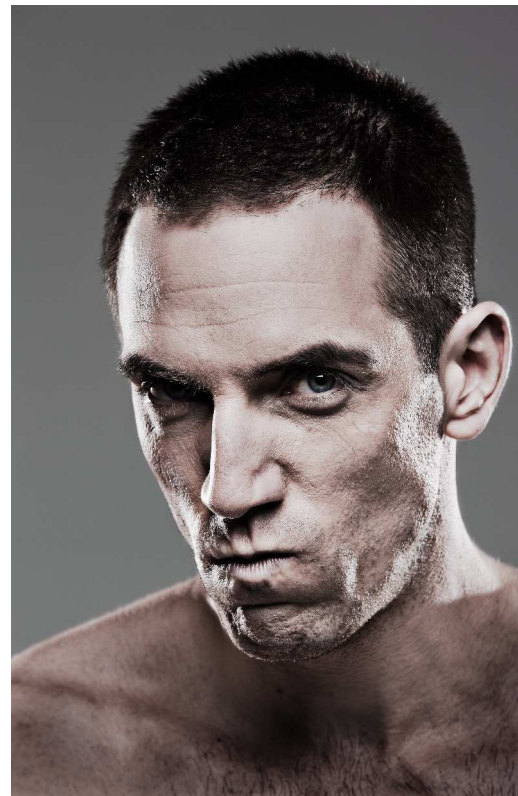
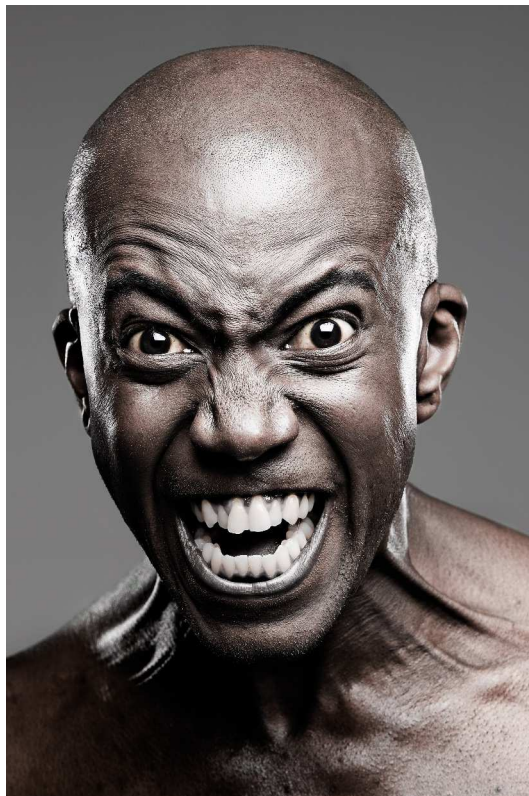
**Bottom: A wooden sink basin with modern day toiletries**





# **The Seven Deadly Sins**





**T**he Seven Deadly Sins was a personal project where I set a bunch of actors a challenge; act out the seven deadly sins using only your facial expression - no styling and no props.

I ended up having way more actors than there were sins but it was great fun and I was amazed how

much homework they had all done; most people can't even name the seven deadly sins let alone know how to act them out!

So how well did they do - can you identify them? To help out the sins are wrath, sloth, greed, pride, lust, envy and gluttony. Answers on a postcard please...



# A Coach Driver's Coach







**I met John Ealson of Ealson Coaches when I was shooting my Portraits Of Runnymede project, for which I photographed different characters within the borough of Runnymede in Surrey.**

At the time his father had recently passed away, and John and his brother had reconditioned the Bedford Coach in this photo to take the family to the funeral ceremony. They also had a Bedford flat bed truck which was used to transport their fathers coffin on the day.

John's an interesting character as he runs a successful coach company despite not being able to read or write. To arrange the shoot I had to call his wife who runs his diary to book an appointment.

John is also a tractor fanatic and has nearly 50 tractors, and he loves taking some of them to the Chertsey Agricultural Show every year.

*John Ealson, owner of Ealson Coaches*



# Life In A Dark Tin Shed







**I**'ve often wandered past an old tin shed located behind some gates, with a load of other gates and metalwork deposited around it's small front yard, and wondered what was inside. One day I bucked up the courage and went in where I met Trevor, the metal worker who has worked in there since the age of 14, which is over 44 years ago.

His father worked there too, up until 4 weeks before he passed away at the age of 94.

With all the welding, drilling and cutting of metal that goes on there is a lot of dust everywhere but Trevor says he is gradually tidying it all up.

Whilst I was there we came across a letter from 1984, although Trevor said that he had found one from the 70's recently!

Doors in the shed also come in handy as notepads for making notes on jobs and customer numbers, and the portrait of Trevor against one of the doors (see the image on the front cover) has been voted for by the public as one of the top 50 portraits portraits in the Portrait Salon competition 2018.

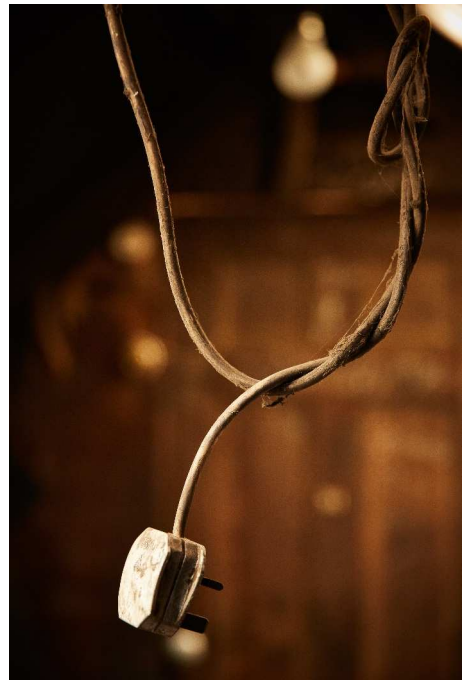
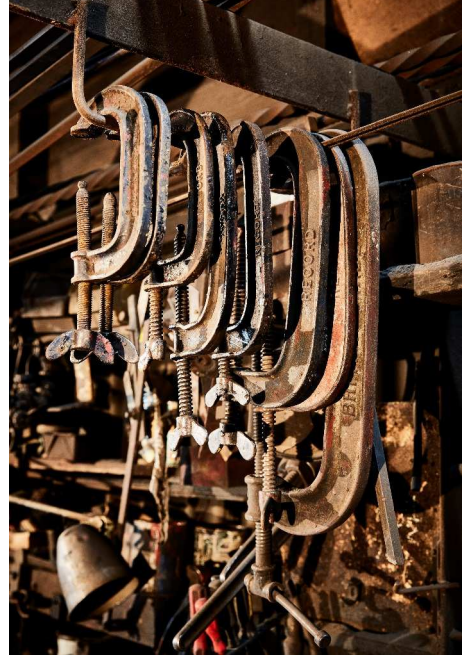
For this shoot I took a lot of older gear and everything got a thorough cleaning when I got home!

“

**...we came across a  
letter from 1984...**

*Trevor in his workshop*





**“ ...Trevor has worked in there since he was 14 years of age...**









*Brian and his Woody Guthrie inspired kettles*

## Oddly In The Thames

**O**r to be more precise beer made in the Thames – well, on an island in the Thames; Platt's Eyot, a former boat builders yard that also made torpedo boats during the second world war.

Oddly is an independent brewery that operates out of one of the old boat yard buildings. Dilapidated and cold

when Oddly first moved in but home to this new and growing brewery.

Brian, the head brewer, had to change the way he worked when he set up a permanent home for Oddly on this fabulous island, access to which is via a small suspension bridge just large enough to take a narrow van. This was Brian's first challenge; how to get the





barrels from the delivery point on the shore to his brewery. A job that took 10 minutes previously now took two and a half days!

As an independent brewer “Dry January” isn’t one of his favourite months, however the independents have responded with Tryanuary, a nationwide campaign to

support independent brewers by encouraging people try different beers.

It was a great shoot and I’ve always been a fan of the odd beer, but now I am definitely a fan of the Oddly beer...









# The Spirit Of Brooklands

Photographing a disused race track at night



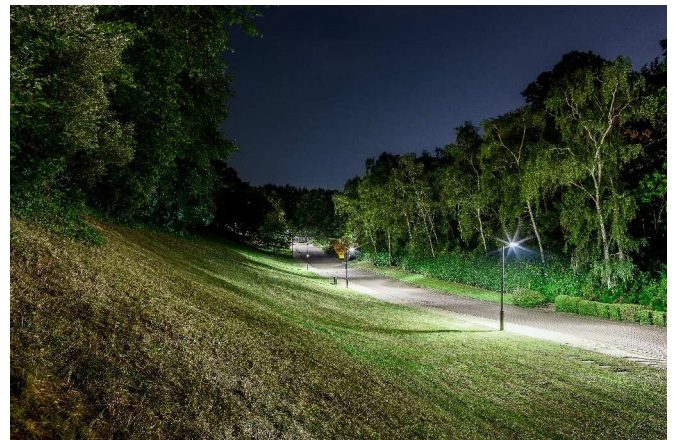
**L**et's be honest, standing around for hours on end at night photographing concrete and weeds probably isn't high on your bucket list, but that's exactly what I did, and it took me four years.

I live near the Brooklands former motor racing circuit. Brooklands was the first purpose built race track in the world and it was designed with curved banking to enable cars to go at speeds in excess of 100 mph which back in the early 1900's was quite some speed.

At the outbreak of the Second World War racing ceased and the site was used to build Wellington bombers. To enable them to take off a section of the banking was removed, which today is the route for a road to Tesco.

After the war it was felt the track was too costly to repair due to the damage inflicted upon it whilst trying to camouflage it from the Luftwaffe, which they had to do as the shape was very distinctive from the air (and still is - have a look for it on your favourite aerial mapping website).

Parts of the track became housing, some a business park, and part even became a cigarette manufacturers headquarters, and, although they removed the concrete from the banking, they did leave the shape and covered it in grass. Despite all this there still remains quite a lot of the original







***The Member's Bridge, crossing the Member's Banking***

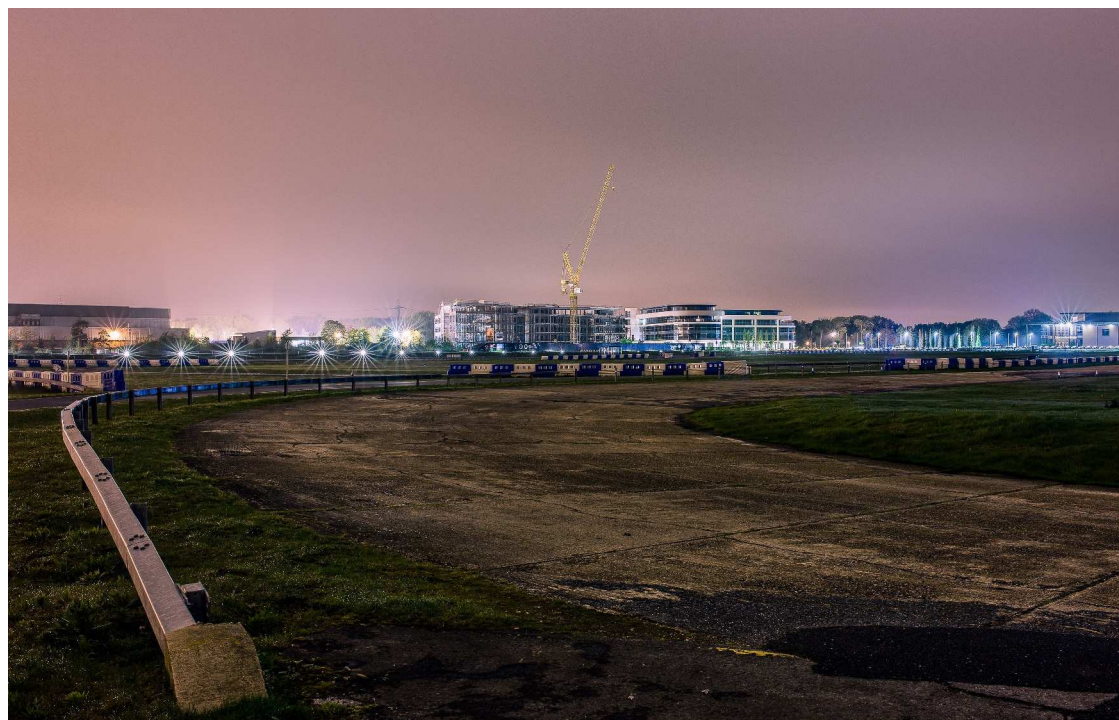
track and the site now houses Brooklands Museum, and with their consent I set about spending long lonely nights after dark on the track.

The track itself is owned by 17 different companies, and it would have been painful getting permission from them all to go on to their part of track to photograph it, except James May (yep he of Top Gear fame - at the time at least!) was recording an episode of James May's Toy Stories, where he set about building a Scalextric track all they way around the old racing circuit and got a group of Scalextric nerds and a bunch of locals to race

some Scalextric cars around the circuit - it's on You Tube if you want to have a look and find out the result. Luckily he needed permission too and his researchers left a list of the names of the people to contact with the museum, saving me the time.

The photographs were all created using long exposures (up to an hour in some cases) and my main aim was to capture the stillness and a calm tranquillity of the disused track, which often meant going back as the wind would pick up, usually somewhere near the end of a long exposure!



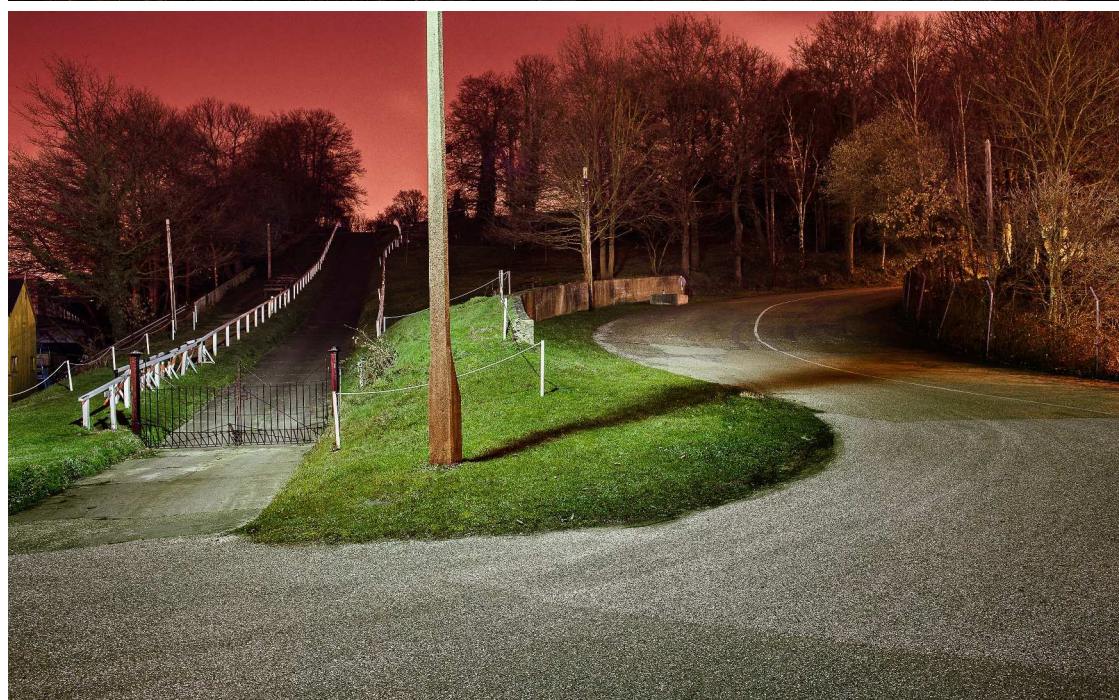


***Top: The Byfleet Banking***

***Centre: The Campbell Circuit  
in Mercedes Benz World***

***Bottom: The Hairpin Bend on  
the Campbell Circuit***

***Overleaf: The Brooklands  
Test Hill with The Heights  
Business Park at the bottom.***















*The Member's Clubhouse, Brooklands Museum*







# Skerries Frosties

A hardy bunch of Irish swimmers



*Thérèse, the provider of tea and cake.*

“...nobody leaves until everybody is back and out of the sea...”

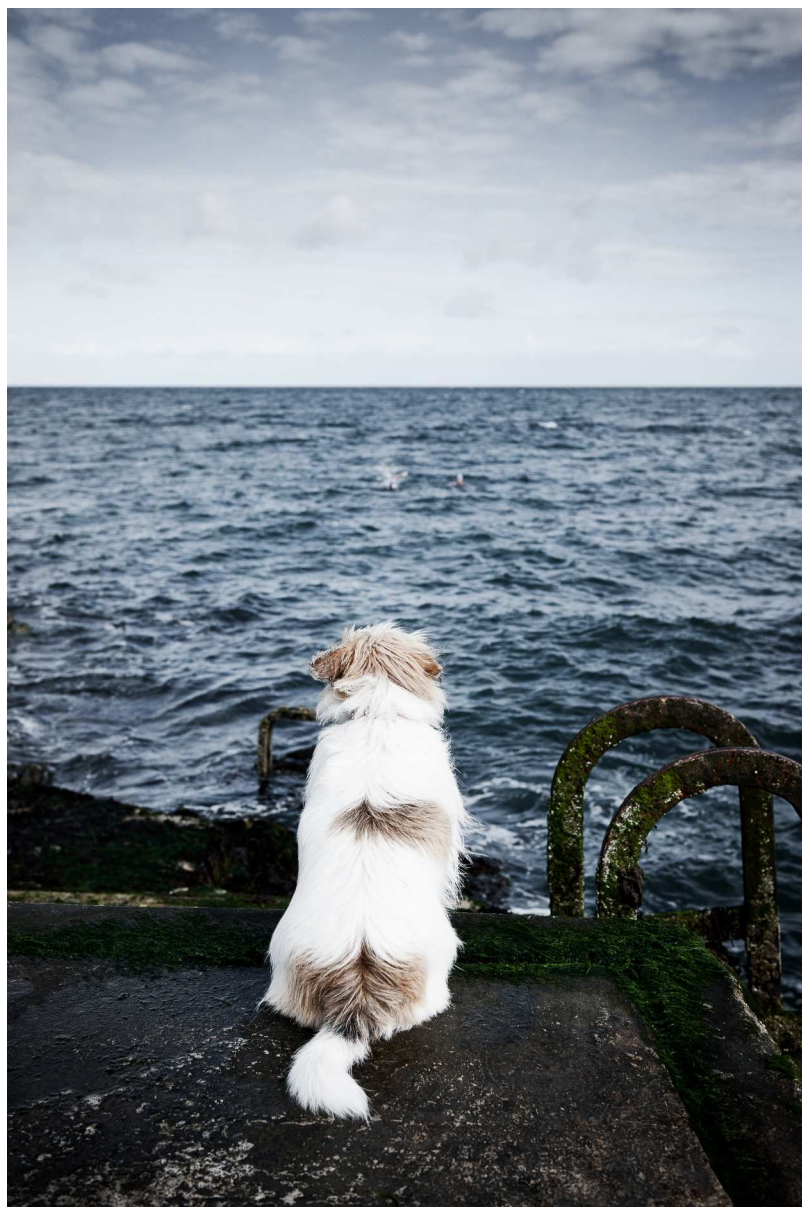
When I heard about the Skerries Frosties I just had to go along and find them and photograph them, which I ended up doing 5 days in a row; because they go swimming every day, in the Irish Sea, which is cold, very cold.

Now when I say they go swimming, I don't mean they jump in the sea, shiver a bit and jump out. Oh no, they go for a swim, and





they keep going until they disappear out of sight. There's then a bit of a wait before you can distinguish some movement on the horizon, which gets bigger and bigger until it can be identified as the returning Frosties, or occasionally it could be seals, as they share the sea with the Frosties.



*Waiting patiently for the Frosties to return*

As you can see from their photos the average Frostie is no spring chicken and indeed one of the Frosties has had a quadruple heart bypass, but that doesn't stop him. Their reward on their return is a cup of piping hot tea and some cake made by the lovely Thérèse.

The Frosties have one rule; nobody leaves until everybody is back and out of the sea.

They did try and persuade me to get in, but luckily my camera gear isn't waterproof...







**“** ...they keep  
going until  
they  
disappear  
from sight...





# That's A Wrap



*Luke Simmons, shot on film 15 years passed it's expiry date.*

**I** cut my teeth on film; my passion for it started watching my Dad develop black and white film and then make prints from negatives in our kitchen at home - it was like magic to me, watching images slowly appear on submerged paper under the glow of a red light. My early years as both a photography student and assistant photographer were spent working with film, and whilst the immediacy of digital is reassuring for nervous photographers and clients alike, I still think film is unsurpassed.

There's something rewarding about the considered pace of a film shoot; everything is checked and double checked; focus - check; exposure - check, framing - check, is the film loaded - check. "Right let's shoot a Polaroid." Wait two minutes, constantly looking over the set; is everything okay, have I missed anything. "Is the Polaroid ready yet? Another minute?" Hmm is this really the best angle? Should we do the zip up on his pocket? "Let's have a look at the Polaroid." Will that fit the crop? "Pass me the cropping Ls." Okay that's fine - should be enough room their for the art director to crop. "Let's put the film back on now. Has the exposure changed? Check it again. Has anything moved? Check the focus again." All good. "Great let's shoot it."

And when the shoot's over you send the film off to the lab, and wait for it to come back - two hours later. "Must be time for a cuppa..."





Douglas Kurn photographer



BP Pagoda, from the series The Spirit Of Brooklands

## What's On Your Wall?



Porto Santo Waves



Sandbags On Portobello Beach



Misty Trees

A range of limited edition and open edition prints are available from photographer Douglas Kurn's print sales web site. Limited editions include The Spirit Of Brooklands, a project to capture the remains of the World's first ever purpose built racing track, shot exclusively in the still of the night.

Douglas can also be commissioned to create images specifically for your own walls.





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