

A photograph of a stone building in a landscape under a cloudy sky. The building is constructed from rough-hewn grey stones and has a dark grey tiled roof. To its right, a smaller structure with a red corrugated metal roof is partially visible. The foreground is filled with tall green grass. In the background, there are rolling green hills and a prominent, dark, rocky mountain peak under a sky filled with large, white and grey clouds.

The Steadings Gallery
All Washed Out
Exhibition 2021

Jain Turnbull
PHOTOGRAPHY



All Washed Out

Photography Exhibition

The Steadings Gallery, Balmacara Square

27th November to 2nd December 2021

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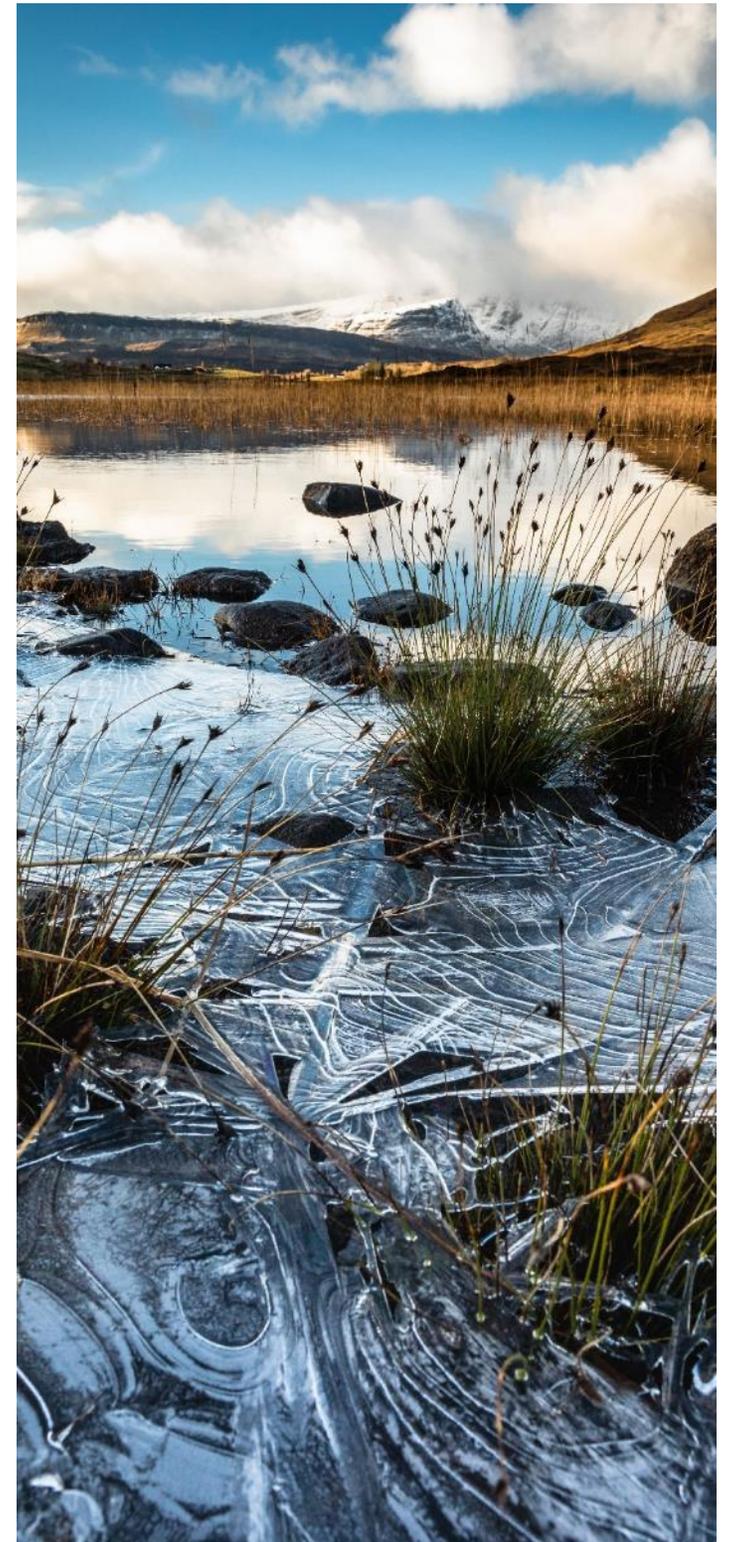
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Introduction

The photographs in this book comprise my selection for my 2021 exhibition at The Steadings Gallery in Balmacara Square, Wester Ross. The exhibition was originally planned for August but due to suspected Covid and my need to self-isolate for a few days just as I was setting things up, I had no choice but to postpone. The result was a collection of mounted images ready to go so I decided to hold the exhibition in early winter instead, perhaps in some ways more appropriately given the theme of this collection.

For the last couple of years, I have been increasingly aware that my image capture and post-processing workflow has produced some lovely but perhaps overly vibrant photographs. This is an easy trap to fall into with the amazing digital sensors on modern cameras and the power of the post-processing tools, and one that is subtle and creeps up on you. Platforms like Instagram which are dominated by over-saturated mobile phone imagery exacerbate this trend and so in reaction to it I have recently developed a workflow that produces more de-saturated images. This style may not be to everyone's liking, and it is certain that my feedback on social media might well suggest that, but I like the results, though not always. Like everything in photography, there is no one rule that applies to all images, so there is a place for this approach, just as there is for more saturated, and for that matter black & white images.

This method of post-processing was developed through a conversion of a colour RAW file into black & white in order to enhance the tone and texture of a woodland shot. However, when I reviewed the monochrome image, I was disappointed that it had not worked. Thus, I experimented with bringing back selected colours into the image and amazingly, the main subject, in this case a Scots pine tree, suddenly jumped out of the frame and the image just worked. So, over the past year and a half I have tried this out on many images, and as I have already said, in some cases it works well, and not so much in others. Anyway, this collection is largely composed of these de-saturated images, which in my mind reflect the often bleak and washed-out palette of the landscapes of the north-west Highlands & Islands of Scotland.

I hope you enjoy looking through this collection.

The Collection

The format of this book is generally one image per page with details of the photograph, where it was shot, the camera equipment and settings used. Occasionally I have grouped a mini collection of images together with a short description of the context of the mini collection. Those of you who are familiar with my blog, which can be found at <https://www.iainturnbullphotography.co.uk/blog> will recognize the style of these descriptions.

I hope you enjoy the photographs.

Iain Turnbull

November 2021

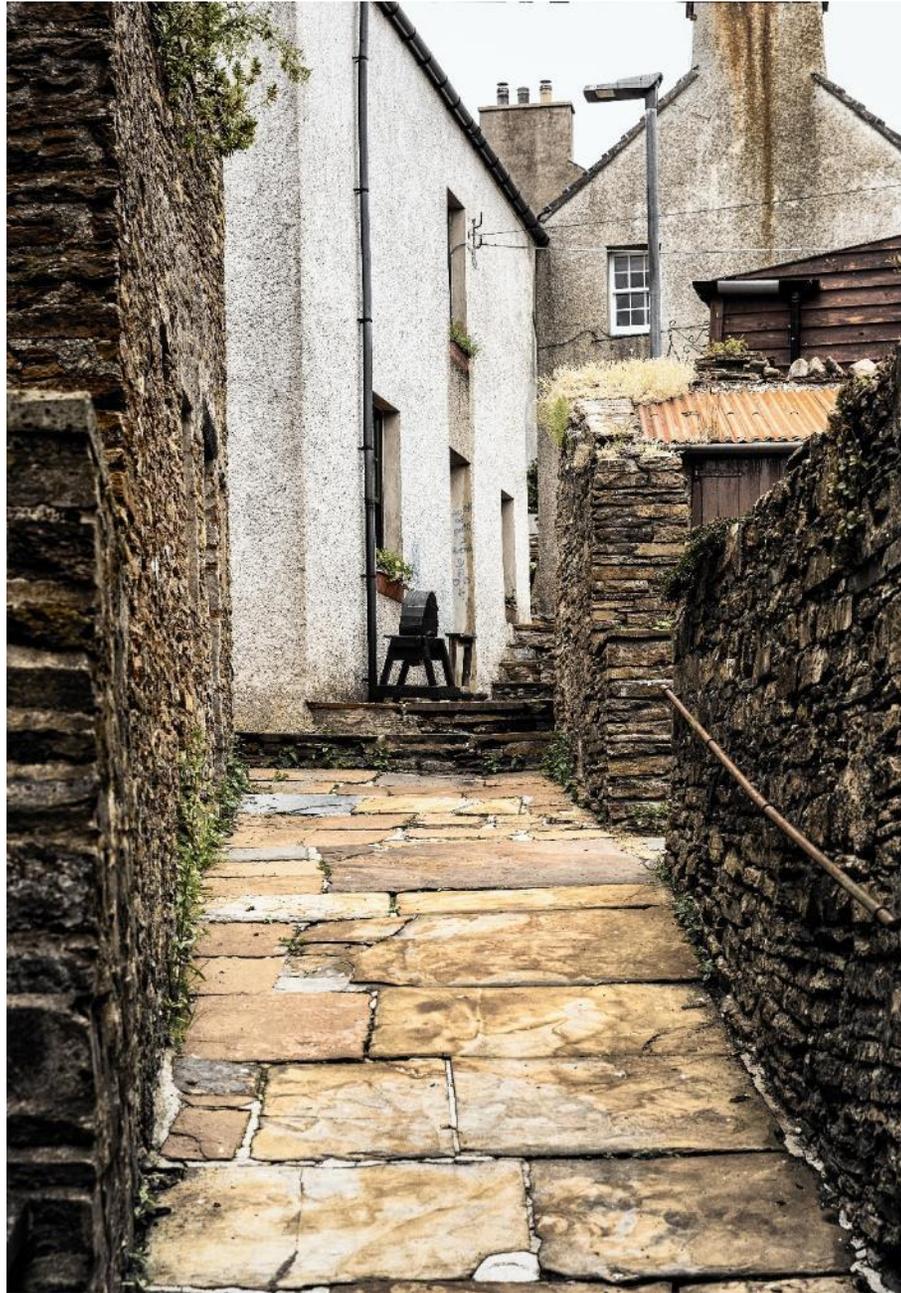
Orkney – July 2021

This summer saw my first ever visit to Orkney and I was really looking forward to exploring a new area with my camera. As it happened, we were not blessed by the best of weather, with low cloud almost the whole week we were there, although it was relatively dry. However, this meant that the light was very flat and not exactly conducive to exciting and dramatic photography of this unique landscape. The result was that I didn't take many landscape shots at all, but I was instead drawn to the incredible range of cultural heritage sites around the main islands. The following images represent my favourites from a larger collection, mostly from historic Stromness, and almost all drawing inspiration from the wonderful stonework of the old buildings and structures.

The first four images are collectively known as 'Stromness Up Close' and consist of a series of images looking up the narrow passageways between buildings, often referred to in Scotland as Closes. I also included a couple of shots looking along the main street in the heart of Old Stromness, which amazingly is still open to vehicles in both directions -a recipe for some reversing practice, I think.

The Peedie (or small) House was an amazing tiny little building, set behind the main frontage of the street, off a passageway leading to the shore. The tone and texture of the stonework is amazing, but the visual attraction lay in the beautiful garden created in raised beds and cobalt blue pots.

The final couple of shots in this grouping are from the farm museum at Kirbister with the most amazing flat stone walls of the houses, barns and beehive-shaped kiln.



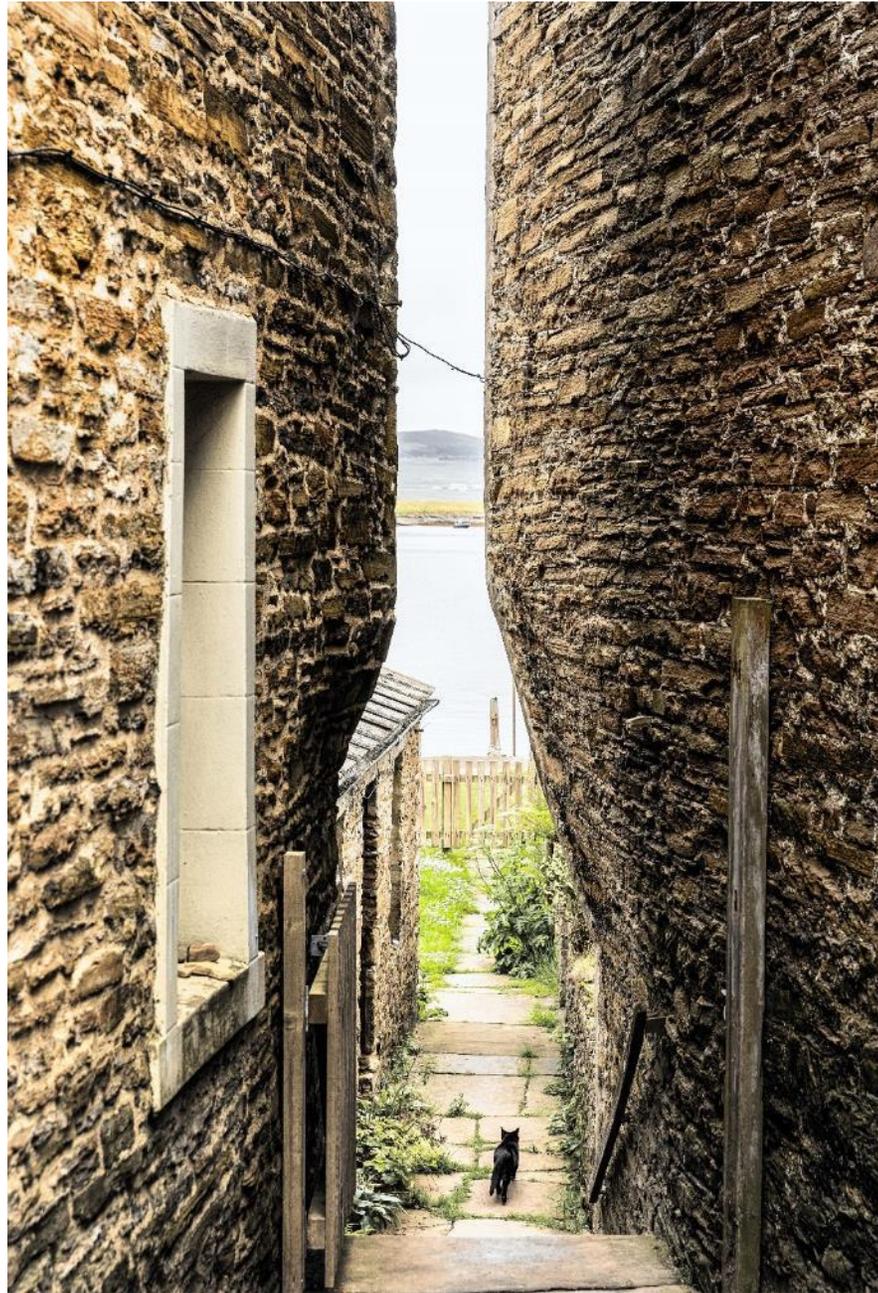
Close 1, Stromness

Shot on 9th July 2021 at Stromness, Orkney
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 61mm,
1/200 sec at f/8, ISO 400, handheld



Close 2, Stromness

Shot on 9th July 2021 at Stromness, Orkney
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 70mm,
1/320 sec at f/8, ISO 400, handheld



Close 3, Stromness

Shot on 9th July 2021 at Stromness, Orkney
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 70mm,
1/80 sec at f/8, ISO 400, handheld



Close 4, Stromness

Shot on 9th July 2021 at Stromness, Orkney
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 50mm,
1/160 sec at f/8, ISO 400, handheld



Old Stromness No.1

Shot on 9th July 2021 at Stromness, Orkney
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 70mm,
1/250 sec at f/8, ISO 400, handheld



Old Stromness No.2

Shot on 9th July 2021 at Stromness, Orkney
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 24mm,
1/400 sec at f/8, ISO 400, handheld



Peedie House, Stromness

Shot on 9th July 2021 at Stromness, Orkney

Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 42mm,
1/250 sec at f/8, ISO 400, handheld



Kiln & Barn Stonework

Shot on 4th July 2021 at Kirbister, Orkney

Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 70-200mm f/2.8L IS USM lens at 95mm,
1/500 sec at f/8, ISO 400, handheld



Yellow Poppies & Old Barrel

Shot on 4th July 2021 at the Farming Museum, Kirbister, Orkney
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 70-200mm f/2.8L IS USM lens at 70mm,
1/160 sec at f/8, ISO 400, handheld

Landscapes

Landscape photography is my favourite genre or style. When you live in the north-west Highlands and Islands it is hard not to be inspired by the truly awesome landscapes. I do take straight-forward landscape shots, but I am particularly drawn to scenes that reflect the history of, and current human occupation and use of the land. I usually avoid the main honeypot locations on Skye for example, due to the commonplace images of these that you find on social media, but mainly because they are just plainly unpleasant to visit with so many folk. However, during the regional lockdown last winter I had the unique opportunity to visit some of these locations with the reasonable expectation of them being quiet. The results are shown in the first couple of images of the Quiraing and the Fairy Pools. I specifically opted for a muted colour palette in development to reflect the winter tones.

The rest of the Landscapes Group are a mix of images, mostly from around Wester Ross, but with a few Skye shots and two from Sutherland included as well. This collection represents the range of colours of Wester Ross at different times of the year from the faded browns and greys and pale blues of winter to the rich ambers and russets of autumn, and occasionally the greens of summer and brighter blue skies too, as well as the brighter warm tones of the frequent sunsets. It is not hard to see where the traditional colours of tartan and tweed come from when you look at these shots.



The View from the Quiraing

Shot on 9th January 2021 at The Quiraing, Isle of Skye
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 24mm,
1/30 sec at f/16, ISO 400, tripod



Coire na Creiche and the Fairy Pools

Shot on 23rd December 2020 at Glen Brittle, Isle of Skye

Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L USM lens at 24mm, 1/2 sec at f/18, ISO 100,

Zomei HD Ultra Slim MD CPL filter, tripod



Red Roofed House Overlooking Loch Shieldaig

Shot on 27th October 2019 at Inverbain

Canon EOS 5D Mark II, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 24mm,
1/160 sec at f/16, ISO 800, handheld



Light on the Sound of Raasay

Shot on 11th July 2020 at Trotternish, Isle of Skye
Canon EOS 5D Mark II, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 70mm,
1/80 sec at f/8, ISO 100, handheld



Wester Ross Light

Shot on 20th October 2020 at Plockton
Canon EOS 5D Mark II, EF 70-200mm f/2.8L IS USM lens at 200mm,
1/160 sec at f/8, ISO 100, handheld



The Bealach na Ba in Snow from Port Ban

Shot on 28th December 2020 at Port Ban, Duirinish, Wester Ross
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 70-200mm f/2.8L IS USM lens at 110mm,
1/8 sec at f/8, ISO 100, tripod



The Bealach na Ba from Gleann Mor

Shot on 8th November 2019 at Gleann Mor, Kishorn
Canon EOS 5D Mark II, EF 70-200mm f/2.8L IS USM lens at 135mm,
1/160 sec at f/11, ISO 400, handheld



Duirinish Crofts

Shot on 20 October 2020 at Drumbuie, Wester Ross
Canon EOS 5D Mark II, EF 70-200mm f/2.8L IS USM lens at 200mm,
1/100 sec at f/8, ISO 100, handheld



Shifting Light on Altanan and the Sands of the Kyle of Durness

Shot on 22nd June 2021 at the Kyle of Durness, Sutherland
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 70mm,
1/400 sec at f/8.0, ISO 100, handheld



Deserted Dwellings at Solmar, Durness

Shot on 22nd June 2021 at Durness, Sutherland

Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 70mm,
1/125 sec at f/8.0, ISO 100, Zomei ND0.6 HD Glass Grad filter, tripod



The Drumbuie Coast

Shot on 11th April 2021 at Drumbuie, Wester Ross
Canon EOS 250D, Sigma 10-20mm f/3.5 EX DG HSM lens at 10mm,
1/80 sec at f/11, ISO 100, handheld



Sunset from Duirinish

Shot on 10th August 2020 at Duirinish
Canon EOS 5D Mark II, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 24mm,
1/320 sec at f/8, ISO 400, handheld



Snowy Track

Shot on 24th January 2021 at Drumbuie, Wester Ross
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 27mm,
1/200 sec at f/16, ISO 400, tripod



Globeflower & Sunrays on Raasay

Shot on 7th June 2021 at Drumbuie, Wester Ross
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 24mm,
1/500 sec at f/16, ISO 1,000, handheld



Marsco from above Sligachan

Shot on 23rd December 2020 at Sligachan, Isle of Skye
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 70-200mm f/2.8L IS USM lens at 130mm,
1/100 sec at f/8, ISO 400, tripod



The Cuillins from the Drumbuie Coast

Shot on 7th June 2021 at Glen Hope, Sutherland
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 24mm,
1/400 sec at f/16, ISO 200, handheld



Skye Bridge & Eilean Ban Lighthouse

Shot on 1st May 2019 at Kyleakin on the Isle of Skye
Canon EOS 5D Mark II, Sigma 70-300mm f/4-5.6 DG Macro lens at 190mm,
1/800 sec at f/14, ISO 400, tripod

Old Buildings

Old, deserted buildings are another of my favourite subjects for my photography. Again, in the north-west of Scotland there is an abundance of these old dwellings and settlements, directly the result of the period of land use change in the 19th century drive by landowners seeking to maximise their profits, usually at the cost of the local residents, referred to as infamous The Clearances.

This small collection is drawn for the past few years from across Skye, Wester Ross and Sutherland. It is somewhat ironic perhaps, that I end this group with an image of the world-famous castle at Dornie. This too was abandoned and nothing more than a ruin before members of the local clan came together to rebuild it, according to the original plans. Now it forms a major tourist draw and is reputedly one of the most photographed castles in the world.

The gathering of a larger collection abandoned houses and settlements is something that I intend to work on for a photobook in its own right, although that is likely to take a few years to complete. Some of the isolated locations really emphasise how many more people lived in this now largely empty landscape and one can only imagine how tough life must have been back then.



Old Houses & Rowan Tree

Shot on 12th October 2019 at Ledgowan near Achnasheen
Canon EOS 5D Mark II, EF 17-35mm f/2.8L USM lens at 22mm,
1/8 sec at f/16, ISO 200, tripod



Old House & Suilven

Shot on 20th June 2021 at Elphin, Sutherland
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 35mm,
1/80 sec at f/16, ISO 400, Zomei ND0.9 HD Glass filter, tripod



Tin House, Digg

Shot on 8th September 2018 at Digg, Isle of Skye
Canon EOS 5D Mark II, EF 24-105mm f/2.8L IS USM lens at 40mm,
1/40 sec at f/22, ISO 400, tripod



Abandoned House, Glen Hope

Shot on 21st June 2021 at Glen Hope, Sutherland
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 47mm,
1/80 sec at f/8, ISO 100, handheld



Eilean Donan Castle in Winter

Shot on 29th December 2020 at Dornie, Lochalsh
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 39mm,
1/4 sec at f/8, ISO 100, tripod

The Uists

The Uists are one of my favourite photography locations, but I do find them a constant challenge to capture the exceptional grandeur and scale of the landscape. The sky is always a massive part, with relatively little by way of hills and mountains it is not uncommon to find images with a thin strip of land in the foreground and a massive sky. This is fine when the sky is doing something fantastic but that is not always the case. This small collection has been gathered over a few years of visiting and working out there occasionally and I feel they capture the key colours and characteristics very well. The strung-out settlements of croft houses, usually sitting on the horizon, with lochs and amazing grasslands in the foreground and dramatic weather adding a sense of movement and constantly changing light.

The constantly changing weather is a real feature here and while it can be frustrating it also means that you never right off a day, well rarely. The last image in the collection illustrates this point really well. It was a wet and windy day with lots of squalls with very little prospect of a decent photograph, when suddenly the sun broke through a small gap in the clouds, illuminating the beach and the turquoise of the sea, set against the dark curtains of rain I feel it is an exceptional scene.

Crofting remains central to the culture and economy of the islands maintaining people as well as nature. There is no better place to go and see birds and the noise of the waders early in the morning is something to behold. The machair is so full of colour when the grasslands are in full flower, a direct contrast to the oft muted colours of this landscape. When I am visiting, I usually find myself dashing around trying to take it all in and one day I hope to spend a little longer there and take my time to try and gather a more representative collection of images.



Cnoc an Torainn

Shot on 13th July 2020 at Cnoc an Torainn, North Uist
Canon EOS 5D Mark II, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 24mm,
1/125 sec at f/8, ISO 400, handheld



Evening Clouds, Cnoc an Torainn

Shot on 30th April 2021 at Paiblesgearraidh, North Uist
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 70mm,
1/160 sec at f/8, ISO 400, handheld



Croft at Paiblesgearraidh

Shot on 15th July 2020 at Paiblesgearraidh, North Uist
Canon EOS 5D Mark II, EF 70-200mm f/2.8L IS USM lens at 170mm,
1/500 sec at f/8, ISO 100, handheld



Looking towards Udal from Traigh Bhalaigh

Shot on 15th July 2020 at Traigh Bhalaigh, North Uist
Canon EOS 5D Mark II, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 24mm,
1/250 sec at f/16, ISO 100, tripod



Rain Clouds & Sunlight

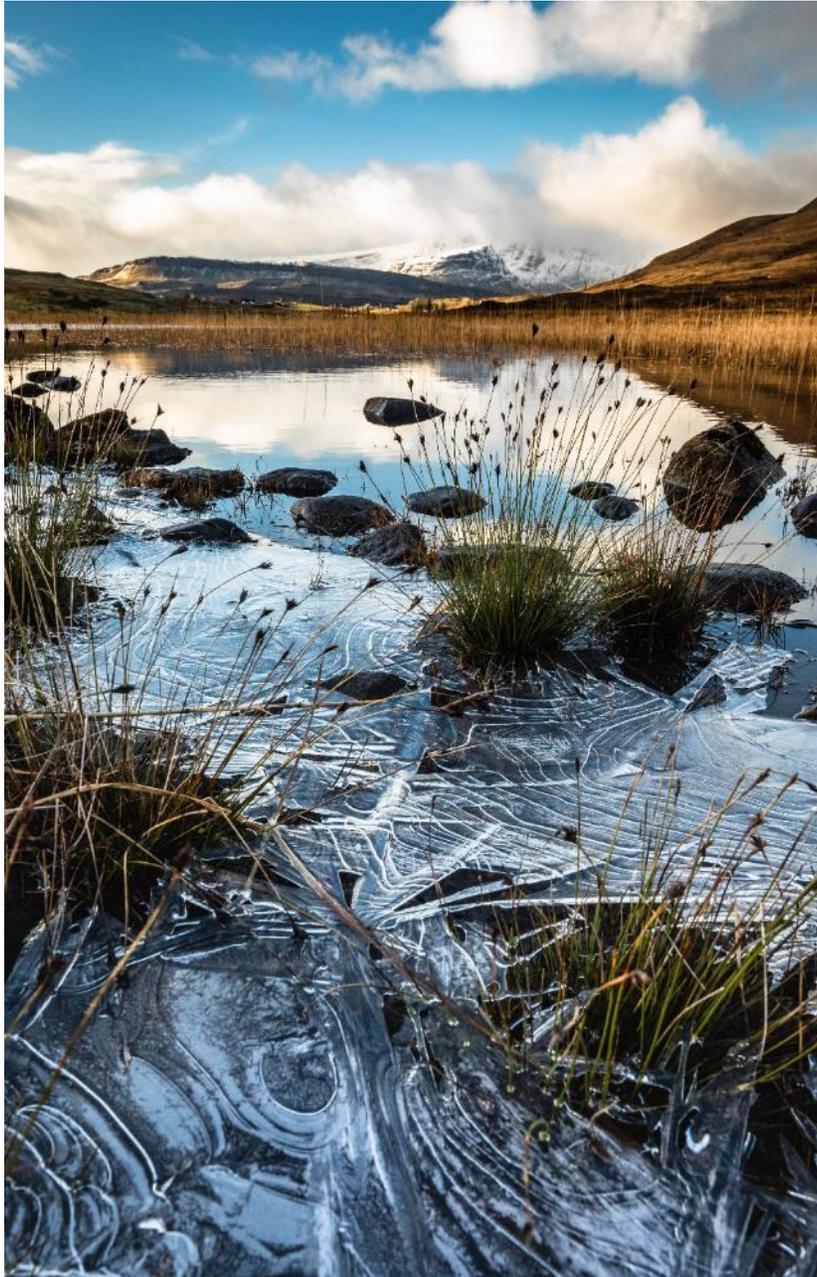
Shot on 1st May 2021 at Ballivanich, Benbecula
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 70-200mm f/2.8L IS USM lens at 90mm,
1/400 sec at f/16, ISO 400, handheld

Beautiful Bla Bheinn

Yet another of my favourite locations for photography, and this time only a short drive from home, is the road from Broadford to Torrinn, and the mountain Bla Bheinn. I always forget how often I find myself on that road, usually when I decide to pop out if the light is looking good. This small collection is from a couple of winter visits and shows the mountain off wearing its winter colours of grey, brown and white from the dusting of snow. The texture of the rocks on Bla Bheinn is amazing, especially when emphasized by the contrasting snow.

I regularly photograph the mountain from Loch Cill Chrìosd which is good at providing smooth reflections, and in the case of the first image was frozen at the edges, providing an unusual foreground with the lines leading the eye into the frame very nicely. The third image is one of my all-time favourites. I just love the composition, with a bit of zoom to focus on the details of the mountain and to foreshorten the distances, really making it so much more dramatic. The light on the middle distance provides contrast and colour and it was all topped off by a Golden Eagle soaring in the far distance (top right). The clouds were constantly changing and at times there was no sight of the mountain at all, but then it would clear a little, exposing the buttresses and crags. I opted for a partial clearance, partly due to the time it took to wait for this shot but also because it was much more atmospheric than it would have been with the whole ridge clear.

The last shot has an almost clear ridge and works well in panoramic format, particularly with the amazing clouds overhead, almost making the hill seem small by comparison. The scale of nature is truly wonderful to behold and the fantastic skies that we get here in the north-west make for a constantly changing perspective – wonderful for photographers.



Ice on Loch Cill Chrìosd

Shot on 30th December 2020 at Loch Cill Chrìosd, Isle of Skye
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 24mm,
1/125 sec at f/16, ISO 800, handheld



Bla Bheinn from Loch Cill Chrìosd

Shot on 28th October 2018 at Loch Cill Chrìosd, Isle of Skye
Canon EOS 5D Mark II, EF 24-105mm f/4L IS lens at 65mm,
1/160 sec at f/16, ISO 400, handheld



Snow Clouds on Bla Bheinn

Shot on 30th December 2020 at Loch Cill Chriosd, Isle of Skye
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 70-200mm f/2.8L IS USM lens at 128mm,
1/400 sec at f/8, ISO 800, handheld



Bla Bheinn from Loch Slapin

Shot on 30th December 2020 at Torrin, Isle of Skye
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 24mm,
1/20 sec at f/16, ISO 100, Zomei HD Glass ND 0.6 Grad Filter, tripod

Miscellaneous

The following three images are slightly different from the rest, so I have included them as a separate sub-group. The two flowers are among my favourite shots of plants. I do take a lot of images of plants, mainly for work purposes but it is not something I have spent a lot of time trying to perfect. This is something I intend to work on though.

The Oxeye Daisy is one of our more visible wildflowers common in our species-rich croft meadows here at Balmacara. They really brighten up the landscape in summer. This one was shot from a low angle, looking slight upwards at the base of the main flower, which was almost transparent against the brighter sky. I wanted a soft feel to the image which I think I achieved but I also managed to retain compete sharpness in the detail, especially on the stem. The yellow of the centre of the flower adds a brightness to an otherwise subtle and muted colour scheme.

The Foxglove is always photogenic but for this one I applied the de-saturated process as an experiment, and I really liked the way it turned out. It looks slightly intimidating and morbid, somewhat relevant to this species which is poisonous. I love the way the detail in the flower heads really stands out.

The final shot could easily have sat in the Landscapes section but for this one I did not use a de-saturated process as the images stands up well on its own, so I didn't feel that it really fitted well with the others in that collection. The view from Strathy towards Skye is fantastic and this evening it was just glowing. The silhouetted foreground frames the image well and the colours of the sky set off against the jagged ridge of the Cuillins is wonderful. I have a large print of this which I shall get frame and it will be going on the wall.



Oxeye Daisy

Shot on 25th June 2021 at Drumbuie, Wester Ross
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 70-200 f/2.8L IS USM lens at 145mm,
1/640 sec at f/10, ISO 800, handheld



Foxglove

Shot on 6th June 2020 at Drumbuie, Wester Ross
Canon EOS 5D Mark II, Sigma 105mm f/2.8L EX DG HSM Macro lens,
1/500 sec at f/5.6, ISO 200, handheld



Skye Sunset from Strathy

Shot on 29th November 2019 at Strathy, near Plockton, Wester Ross
Canon EOS 5D Mark II, EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II USM lens at 70mm,
1/200 sec at f/8, ISO 200, handheld

Arctic Terns

I don't specialize at all in wildlife photography, partly because it requires too much time, and partly because one generally needs to have very expensive telephoto lenses. However, in my normal working life I occasionally have the opportunity to catch the odd shot of a bird or an otter, but rarely do I feel the result does justice to that opportunity. Most of my best bird shots have been captured using a Panasonic Lumix bridge camera with a 600mm zoom equivalent, usually during bird surveys on the Balmacara estate. However, on this occasion I was in Orkney on holiday and these shots were not so much a challenge of the camera kit, more to do with my courage in the face of an angry territorial Arctic Tern.

One of the advantages of these birds being aggressive is that they get up close and personal with you, thus my 70-200mm lens was more than up to the job. The decent light allowed me to use a fast shutter speed of 1/1,000 second, freezing the movement of the wings. I shot a huge number of images to get these four, which I think capture the bird's sense of anger and affront at my intrusion into its territory. I should say that I was on the footpath to some WWII archaeological remains and not actively disturbing these protected breeding birds. The fact that it wanted to challenge me was an opportunity I could not miss though.



Arctic Terns

Shot on 6th July 2021 on Orkney
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, EF 70-200mm f/2.8L IS USM lens at 200mm,
1/1,000 sec at f/13, ISO 800, handheld