

A close-up photograph of a koala sleeping peacefully on a thick, light-brown tree branch. The koala's fur is a mix of brown and grey, and its eyes are closed. A small blue tag is visible on its left ear. Its paws are gripping the branch. The background is a soft-focus green, suggesting a forest setting.

Through My Eyes! Australia

Jerry Grasso

G'day mates!

Welcome to another episode of *Through My Eyes!* coverage of the amazing locations my wife, Jayne, and I have visited around the world. Some of these images are iconic while the majority presented here require a more intimate exploration. This particular ebook is devoted to our travels throughout Australia. My goal is not to present a definitive study of this location, but rather to provide hopefully a tantalizing glimpse to peak your interest! You will find that these images are not just your typical iconic scenes, but also contain some rather different ones as well.

How does one attempt to portray an emotional response to a new and exotic travel location? What does the soul there look like, feel like? My approach was to choose many of these pictures as abstract, intimate versions of elements within each local destination. Many are quiet scenes that may not be noticed while hiking, walking, or traveling throughout this exotic country.

During February, 2010, we visited three diverse areas of [Australia](#): Cairns, Melbourne, and Sydney.

While in Cairns, we had the privilege to visit the Daintree rainforest in tropical Queensland. The Daintree is the oldest on the planet and is estimated at 135 million years with a size totalling over 1200 square kilometers. It is home to 30% of Australia's frog, marsupial, and reptile species; 65% of Australia's bat and butterfly species; and 20% of the bird species, as well as thousands of known species of plants. I also learned that rainforests may still hold vital secrets for humankind, especially, for example, in terms of potential medical cures for AIDS and the yet undiscovered viruses of the future. There is scientific proof that cures do come from rainforests. One-fourth of drugs available today have products that came from rainforests.

This continent is just so - different. Many surprises exist, from the exotic flowers and plants, to the unusual animals and birds.

I hope my pictures will reflect this sense of awe that we felt as we enjoyed our Down-Under adventure!

Oh, and Bob's your uncle!

For an interactive country map with the visited sites referenced within this ebook, please click [here](#). Feel free to do your own exploring!

Explore the many informational hyperlinks included within the ebook!

Any image found within this book or on my website is available as a print purchase. Just email me at jerrygrasso96@yahoo.com, or visit my website at jerrygrasso.com.

Enjoy life!



Here is a view of [Cairns](#), a major city on the east coast of Far North Queensland in Australia. It is the gateway to the Great Barrier Reef and the Wet Tropics World Heritage Rainforest.





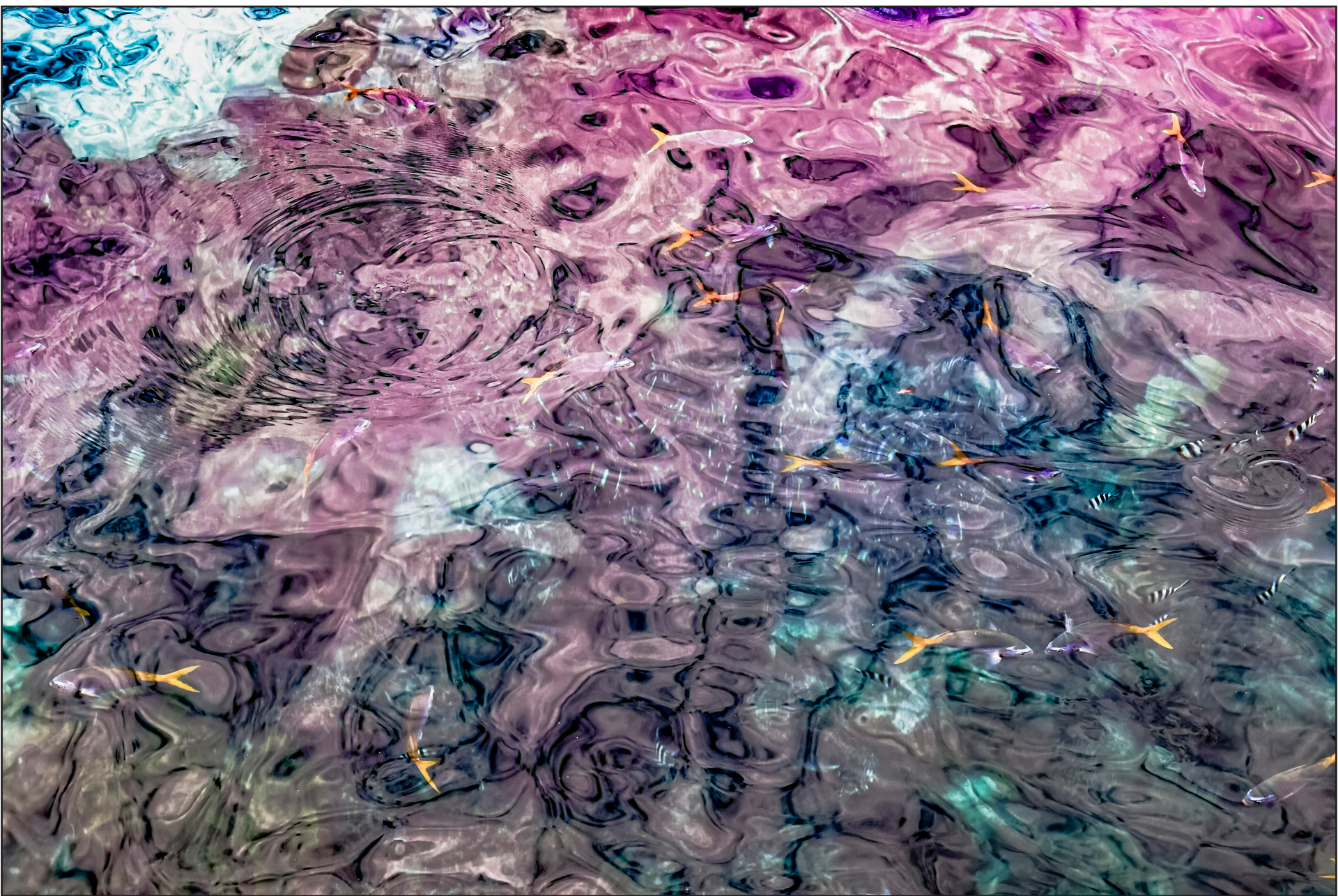
This is how some tourists get to points of interest in the [Great Barrier Reef](#). A visitor to the [Great Barrier Reef](#) can enjoy many experiences including snorkelling, scuba diving, aircraft or helicopter tours, bare boats (self-sail), glass-bottomed boat viewing, semi-submersibles and educational trips, cruise ship tours, whale watching and swimming with dolphins.



This is one of the staging platforms for snorkelling in the Great Barrier Reef.









This is a view from a small submarine for tourists to get up close and personal with the reef without getting wet. The Great Barrier Reef stretches for more than 2000 kilometres (1200 miles) along the Queensland coastline. But a lot of the famous color is gone. A March 2016 report stated that coral bleaching was more widespread than previously thought, seriously affecting the northern parts of the reef as a result of warming ocean temperatures. In [March 2017](#), the journal Nature published a paper showing that huge sections of a 800-kilometre (500 mi) stretch in the northern part of the reef had died in the course of 2016 due to high water temperatures, an event that the authors put down to the effects of global climate change.





Here are some scenes from
around [Cairns](#).









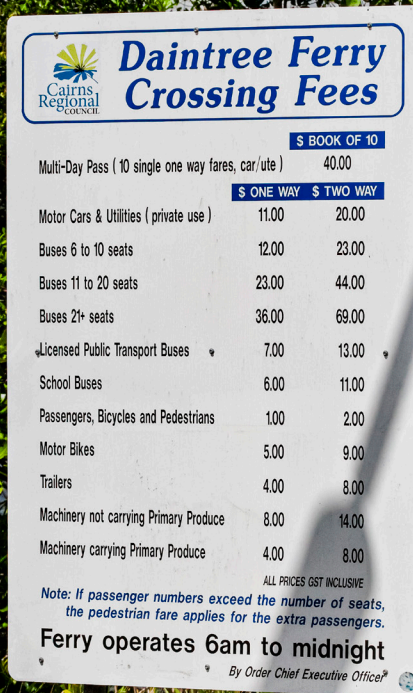
Notice the black spots in the sky in these photos. Yes, those are bats and very famous in Cairns. These are [fruit bats](#) and [flying foxes](#). This [YouTube video](#) says it all!







From one of the many nice bars and restaurants in Cairns. Such a nice way to end the day!



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	\$ ONE WAY	\$ TWO WAY
Motor Cars & Utilities (private use)	11.00	20.00
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Buses 11 to 20 seats	23.00	44.00
Buses 21+ seats	36.00	69.00
Licensed Public Transport Buses	7.00	13.00
School Buses	6.00	11.00
Passengers, Bicycles and Pedestrians	1.00	2.00
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Ferry operates 6am to midnight

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Along theDaintree River.





Cape Tribulation is a headland and locality in northern Queensland, 110 km (68 mi) north of Cairns. It is located within the Daintree National Park and the Wet Tropics World Heritage area and is one of the key sights for the Daintree Reclamation project by Rainforest Rescue.





This is a panoramic of Cape Tribulation.



Many varieties of [spiders](#)!







This creature is a [Cassowary](#), similar to but smaller than an Ostrich. We were very lucky and privileged to see this in the wild. It is [indigenous to the Daintree](#) and is an endangered species. They are ratites, flightless birds without a keel on their sternum bone, like ostriches and emus.





These are a photos from our boatripe on the Daintree River near the Daintree Rainforest.

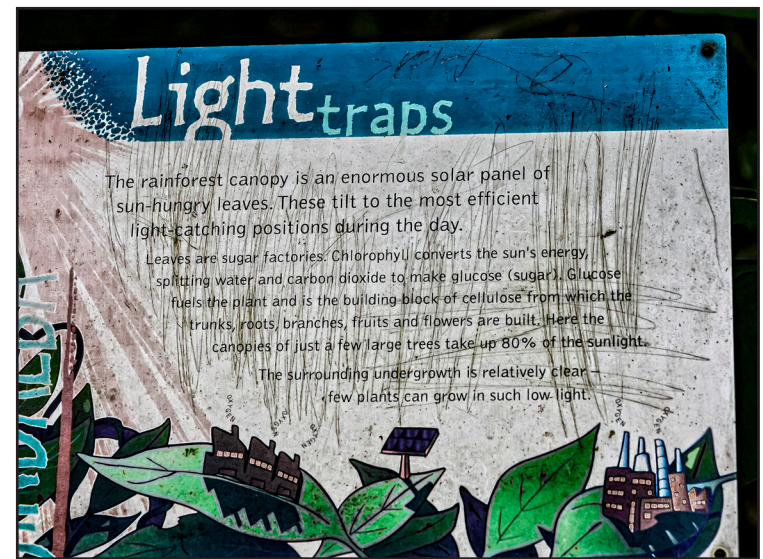


Here is a friend we saw along the way!



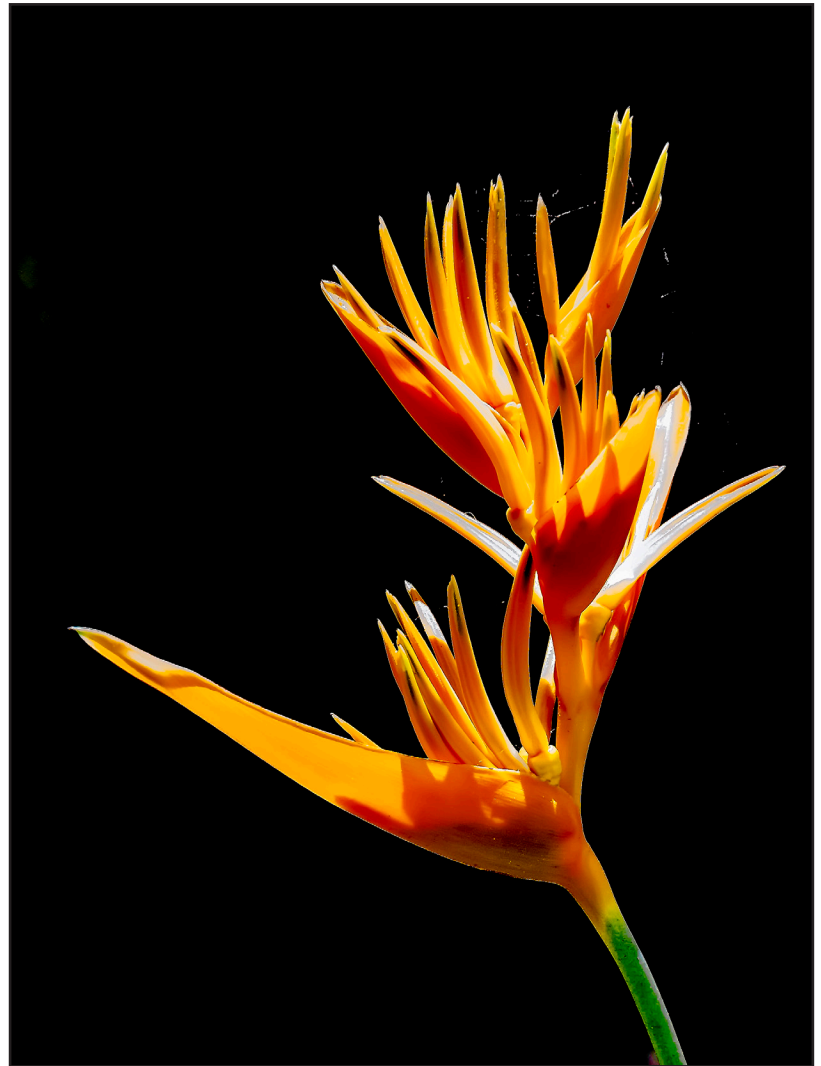


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Sorry. Soapbox time.

My wife, Jayne, and I experienced the privilege of touring [Daintree National Park](#), north of Port Douglas, in the North Queensland [World Heritage wet tropics](#).

“The Daintree Rainforest is over one hundred and thirty-five million years old - the oldest in the world. Approximately 430 species of birds live among the trees, including 13 species that are found nowhere else in the world.”

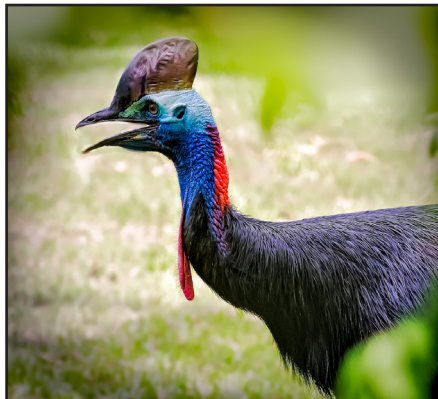
My exposure in the past had been restricted to the global warming and the “save the planet” banners by the many activist groups. I became jaded by images of pollution and human interference in nature. But our visit changed all that for me. I guess there really is nothing like seeing and experiencing the rainforest on your own terms. Our knowledgeable guide related many medical anecdotes regarding aboriginal practices for simple medical cures and symptom reliefs. What I read on the Rainforest Rescue site underscored the unique importance of these rainforests:

“Researchers found a tree from the Malaysian rainforest in 1987 that was totally effective at killing the HIV-1 virus. Unfortunately, they were never able to find the tree again...but they’re still looking.”

I had no idea that medical marvels of this magnitude could be already possible within nature. Clearly, if we were to lose these rainforests, mankind existence would be in jeopardy. And so would the endangered Cassowary.

That is why [Rainforest Rescue](#) initiatives like the Buy Back And Protect Forever project currently underway in the [Daintree](#) are so important. Prior to the creation of the Daintree National Park, a developer purchased a large area of the rainforest from farmers and landholders. They also were able to convert some leasehold land to freehold. This occurred in the 1980's. However, efforts have been underway since July, 2001 to buy back these parcels of land that had been designated for housing development. These buybacks have succeeded in protecting forever 12 of these significant parcels, so far.

You can help, too! Just go to their website and follow the links!

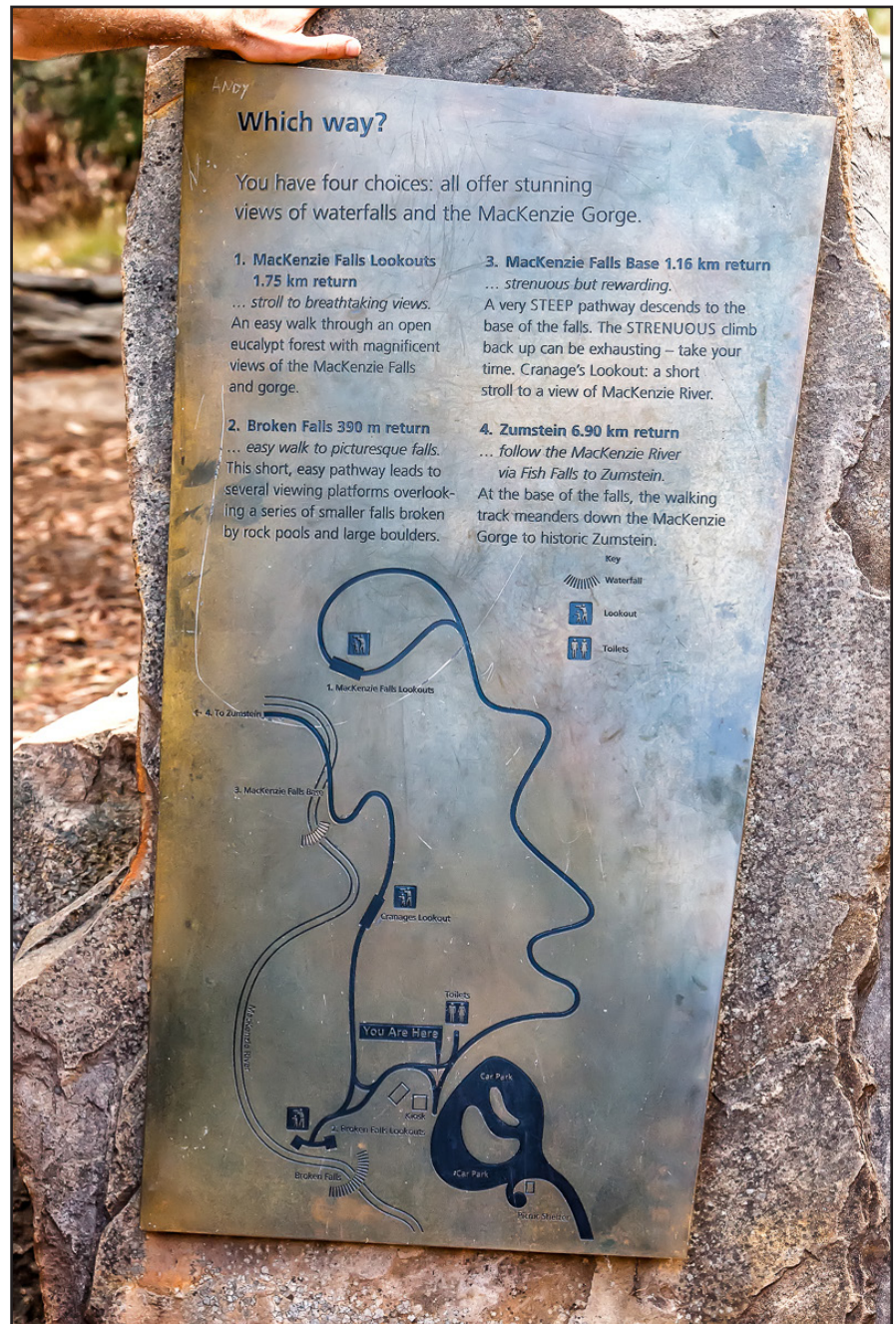




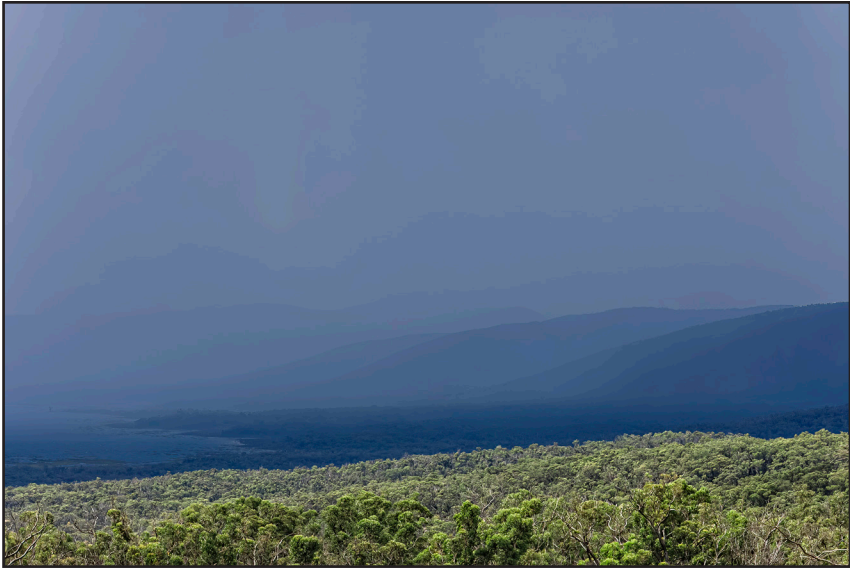
These next few pictures are from the [Grampians National Park](#), commonly referred to as The Grampians. It is a national park located in the Grampians region of Victoria, Australia.



Also within the Grampians, is the [picturesque MacKenzie Falls](#).









On the way to Appolo Bay.





This was a “rest stop” in [Apollo Bay](#), along the [Great Ocean Road](#).





These rain abstract were taken on the tour bus. I was bored and not looking forward to the prospect of having a rainout at Port Campbell National Park. Afterall, being able to shoot the famous “12 Apostles” was the reason I wanted to visit Melbourne. So, I decided to try to make lemonade...





[Port Campbell National Park](#) is a national park in the south-western district of Victoria, Australia. The Port Campbell National Park features an array of sheer cliffs overlooking offshore islets, rock stacks, gorges, arches, and blow-holes. As part of the Shipwreck Coast, it hosts several tourist attractions; including The Twelve Apostles, the London Arch (formerly London Bridge), Loch Ard Gorge, the Gibson Steps, and The Grotto.







Typical countryside with many sheep farms.



This is a vineyard on the way to [Healesville](#).

Here is my wife, Jayne, in front of the entrance to the [Healesville Wildlife Sanctuary](#).







This is an [emu](#)!

HERE'S ONE!

Look closely and quietly in the trees—
there is a koala nearby.

You've heard of the expression
'here one day and gone the next'.
It applies well to koalas.

Koalas travel along the ground at
night between trees in search of
food and shelter.

Koalas have fairly well defined areas in
which they move and feed (home range).
On Phillip Island an average home range
includes a minimum of twenty regularly
used feed trees.

KEEP SEARCHING!!!

'Here one day
and gone the next'



The Koala bear.











The [Tasmanian devil](#). Some of you may remember the old [Looney Tunes cartoon!](#)



The [Kangaroos](#).





This was somewhere on the way to [Phillip Island](#).



This is part of Phillip Island.





This is where the famous [Penguins On Parade](#) takes place on Phillip Island. You really must see this event which happens daily, just after sunset. [Here is a YouTube video](#) sample.

Two of the [Little Penguins](#) (Fairy Penguins) on Phillip Island.

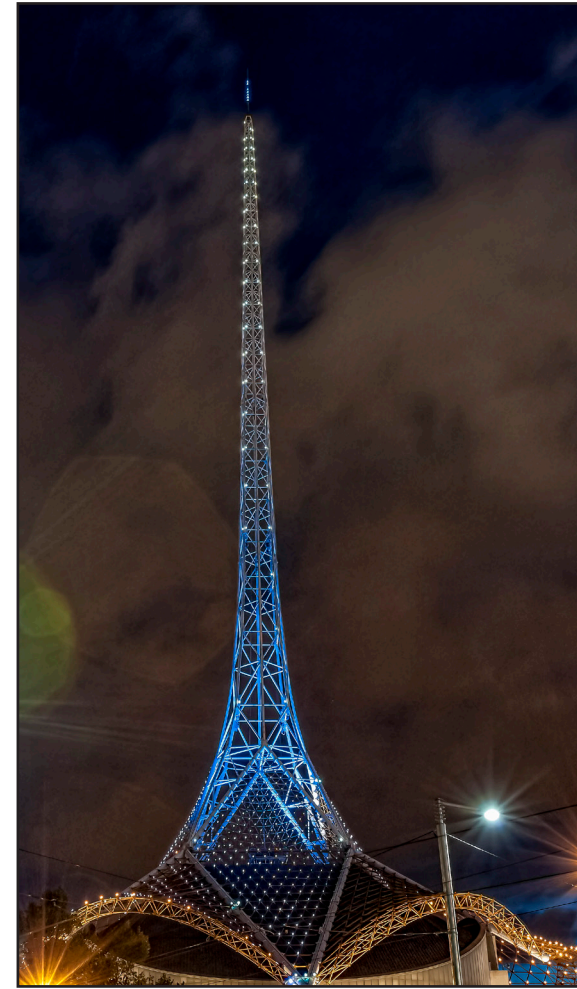






Sunset in [Melbourne](#)!





On to Sydney!









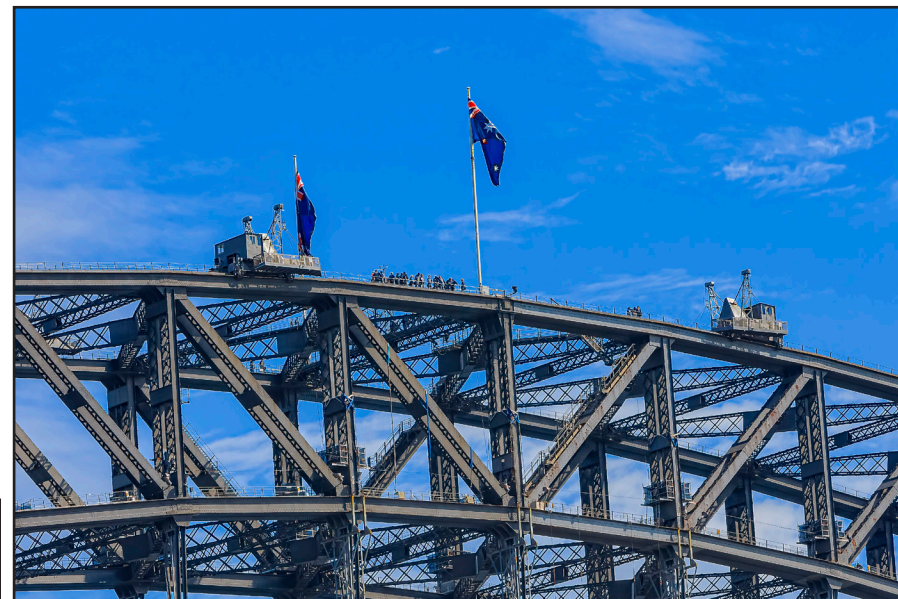


They are prepping for the evening's fireworks display over [Sydney Harbor](#). This happens almost every evening. Very fun.









The intrepid [Sydney Harbor Bridge climbers](#)! These hearty souls took the walking tour that allowed them to literally walk upon and across the great arch girders to the very top of the bridge itself! If you have the nerve, I am sure the views are spectacular!



The famous [Sydney Harbor bridge](#). You may recognize it as the first fireworks scene from around the world on New Year's Eve.



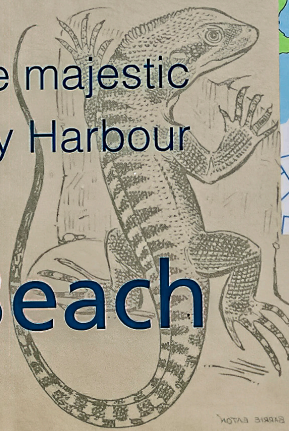


Manly Scenic Walkway



Discover the majestic entrance to Sydney Harbour

Shelly Beach



Points of Interest Shelly Beach

1. Blue Fish Heavy Anti-Aircraft Battery
A WWII installation protecting Sydney from anti-aircraft.
2. Quarry
Quarried to sandstone walls on the headland. Now a hanging swamp providing habitat for frogs and reptiles.

3. Sandstone wall from 1880's
Built to separate land owned by the Catholic church from the quarantine.
4. Cabbage Tree Bay Coastal & Eco-Sculpture Walk
Enjoy unique marine life, plants, animals and history by viewing the eco-sculptures.

Refer to The Manly Scenic Walkway brochure or Manly Council website for more details on the locations below:

1. Blue Fish Heavy Anti-Aircraft Battery
2. Quarry
3. Sandstone wall from 1880's
4. Cabbage Tree Bay Coastal & Eco-Sculpture Walk
5. Manly Pathway of Olympians
6. Manly Art Gallery & Museum
7. Oceanworld
8. Fairlight
9. North Harbour Reserve
10. Wellings Reserve
11. Forty Baskets Beach
12. Reef Beach
13. Crater Cove
14. Tania Park
15. Crater Cove Look-Out
16. Grotto Point Lighthouse
17. Castle Rock Beach Reserve
18. Duke of Edinburgh Reserve
19. Clontarf Beach

20. Sandy Bay
21. Aboriginal Shell Midden
22. Fisher Bay
23. Ellery's Punt Reserve





Manly.





Surfing in [Dee Why](#), a suburb of northern Sydney.

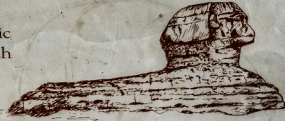




Enjoy incredible views from [West Head lookout](#), regarded as one of Sydney's best in Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park.

Lion Island

It is believed that the person who named Lion Island thought it resembled the gigantic half man, half lion sculpture (Sphinx) which guards the Pyramids in Egypt.



Free from feral animals such as foxes and cats, this eight hectare nature reserve is an important haven for numerous migratory birds and native animals. The ecology of the island is extremely sensitive to disturbance. To protect this vital habitat, public access to Lion Island is not permitted.











Banksia cone.



Now you won't see signs like this in the States! It is just so - *different* - in Australia.







[Galah](#) lovebirds!



Instead of pigeons, they have these guys! [Sulphur-crested cockatoo](#).




A [rainbow lorikeet](#) which is also pretty common in that area.





Biodiversity

The Web of Life



blue mountains
AUSTRALIA

Any bare surface is first colonised by single celled plants called **algae**.


These are visible on the rock surface as red or yellow staining. Once these establish, specialised plants called **lichens** (made of fungus and algae) start to grow. These are greenish and grey.

Lichens produce acids in their rootlets which break up the sandstone. As the lichen grows it catches dust and soil, which when wet allows the **mosses** to grow.


Mosses accumulate more soil, and keep it wet, which further breaks up the rock. Other plants grow in the soil accumulated by the mosses.

Grasses and small shrubs send their roots into the cracks and expand them. Other plants grow on the rocks, including orchids and ferns.


How many different plants can you count in this small garden of delights?




Help!



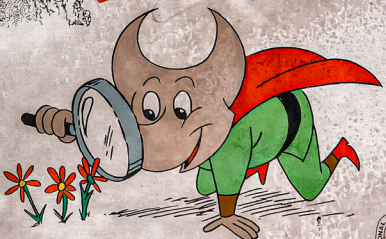
algae




lichen



moss





Promoting Local Tourism



The [Three Sisters](#).





This and the next few pictures are from the [Jenolan Caves](#). The Jenolan Caves are limestone caves located within the Jenolan Karst Conservation Reserve in the Central Tablelands region, west of the Blue Mountains. My intent was to capture a sense of moltenness as seen within the world's oldest known and dated open cave system. These caves are composed of limestone and calcite formations. It is located in the World Heritage Blue Mountains, northwest of Sydney. Many of the strange shapes and forms seen throughout the extensive cave system reminded me a lot of melted candle wax. An [episode](#) from the original [Star Trek series contains a](#) reference.













This the entrance to Sydney Harbor. It is know for its huge [seahorse population!](#)









Nighttime in [Sydney's Darling Harbor](#), located on the other side of the city from the Opera House. What impressed me most here were the many exotic and colorful cityscape reflections cast upon the harbor waters at night. The summer swarm of diners, tourists and party goers gave a rapid pulse to the city's heartbeat as these reflections seemed to dance with their vibrant energy.



The ingenious design of this [World Heritage landmark](#), the [Sydney Opera House](#), by architect Jorn Utzon has been the creative source of inspiration for many artists since it was opened to the public in 1973.

Many architectural elements came together to form the final look of the facility's famous "sails". When completed, 6,223 square meters of glass were used, 350 kilometers of tension cable, and 1,056,005 roof tiles completed the shape. The foundation of the exterior is supported by concrete ceiling beams which were designed to replace the need for columns. Just like the movements within an opera, these change shape as they rise to support the roof.



My most memorable first impressions of the [Sydney Opera House](#) were discovered within the amazing lines, shapes and reflections of its World Heritage-listed architecture. The great windows facing its famous harbor reflected images of the intrepid Sydney Harbor Bridge climbers. The Opera House roof shells and ribbing are abstraction marvels themselves. The lines and shadows created by these shells seem to lead the viewer into a geometric mystery tour.



The fairy-tale adventure Jayne and I experienced, of course, had to come to an end. But we will always carry with us fond memories of these sites and the easy-going and helpful nature of so many of the people we met Down-Under. G'day, mates, and no worries ever!

My Artistic Mission

Child-like wonder and inquisitiveness

are qualities frequently put aside once we become adults. We tend to slowly become sterilized by our right-or-wrong kind of world which too often has too little time to explore the what-if's and the what-could-be's. I believe we all need to re-connect with these qualities to re-enrich our lives. A first glance at a photograph of an onion often reveals the fact that, indeed, it is an onion. But what also lies beneath its surface? We won't know until we peel back its layers.

Animation innovator, Walt Disney, recognized this and tried to bring back the power and importance of imagination. Inspired by his spirit, my mission therefore is to encourage the use of viewer imagination. My work attempts to explore and suggest what often lies hidden within the personalities and mysteries present in the world that was, and the world that is around us.

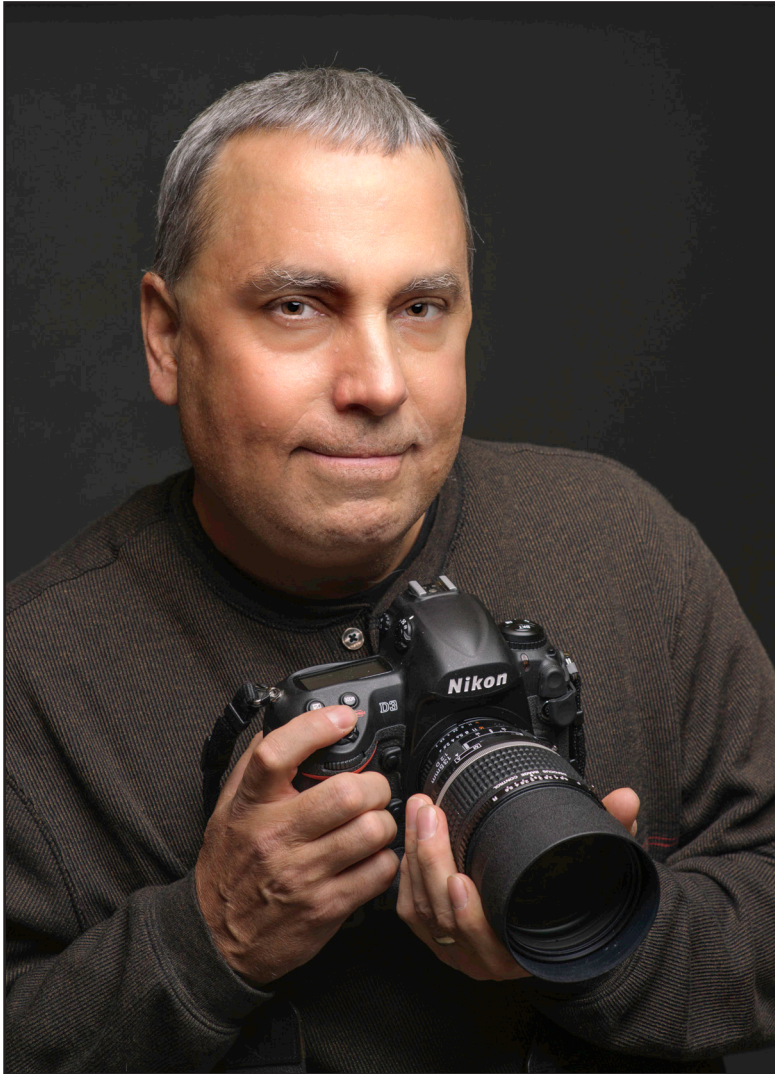
For me, my photography often is not so much about the decisive moment. Rather, it is about creating an awareness of place and a sense of history, with an aura of mystery. It is the starting point for my artistic journey, not the destination. I try to use what I produce

as personal metaphors for my reactions to what I saw and felt. My favorite motivational quote is that "Life begins at the edge of your comfort zone." My works attempt to reflect this as I probe the emotional, mind's eye after-image that was captured by both the eye and the heart, and which often defies logical explanation by the mind.

My goal is that my projects will serve as a springboard into inventiveness and exploration with the hopes of awakening my viewer's inner child. I try hard to show the connections and implications of things that others may not readily see. My hope is that my work may also help viewers discover the beginnings of their attempt to understand and perhaps even learn to tolerate and sympathize with the human condition and the world in which we live. I will try to do whatever I can to make viewers linger longer in front of my works so as to ignite their imaginative response through discovery and inquisitiveness.

Any image found within this book or on my website is available as a print purchase. Just email me at jerrygrasso96@yahoo.com, or visit my website at jerrygrasso.com.

Enjoy life!



JERRY GRASSO has been an award-winning, international fine art photographer and visual artist since 2002. He has mentored locally with photographer, [Mallorie Ostrowitz](#), and then with internationally-renowned visual artist, [John Paul Caponigro](#). Photography is only the starting point for many of his projects. His favorite motivational quote is that “Life begins at the edge of your comfort zone.”

In addition to his travel photography, Jerry specializes in the intimately abstracted architectural photography, the photo essay, and the photo composite series.

Jerry’s mission is to awaken his viewer’s inquisitive inner child by creating an awareness of place and a sense of history, with an aura of mystery.



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