

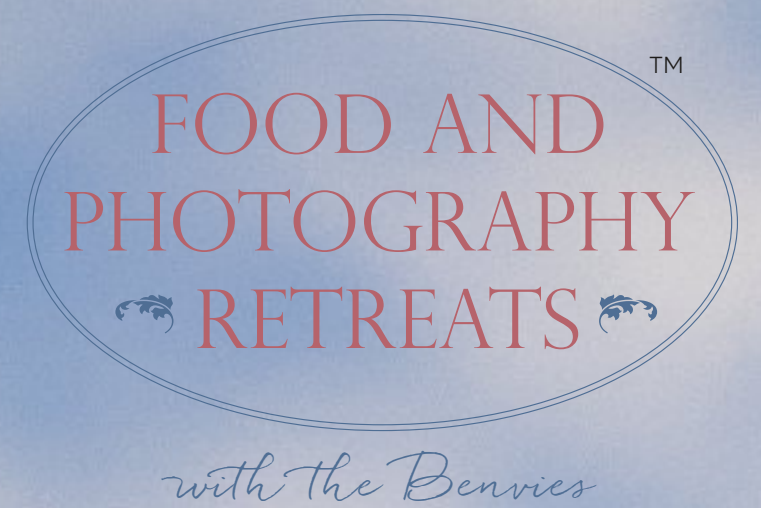
# MENU

NUMBER 17 • DECEMBER 2021

**2022 RETREATS**  
In Scotland,  
France and  
Austria. In style

**CHARLOTTE MAKES  
MINCEMEAT PIE POPS**

*Our first*  
**PRINT**  
*Collection*



**THE MARKET STUDIO**  
**HOW WE MET OUR**  
**FRENCH NEIGHBOURS**

**TECHNIQUE**  
**IN-CAMERA**  
**KALEIDOSCOPIES**



*also*

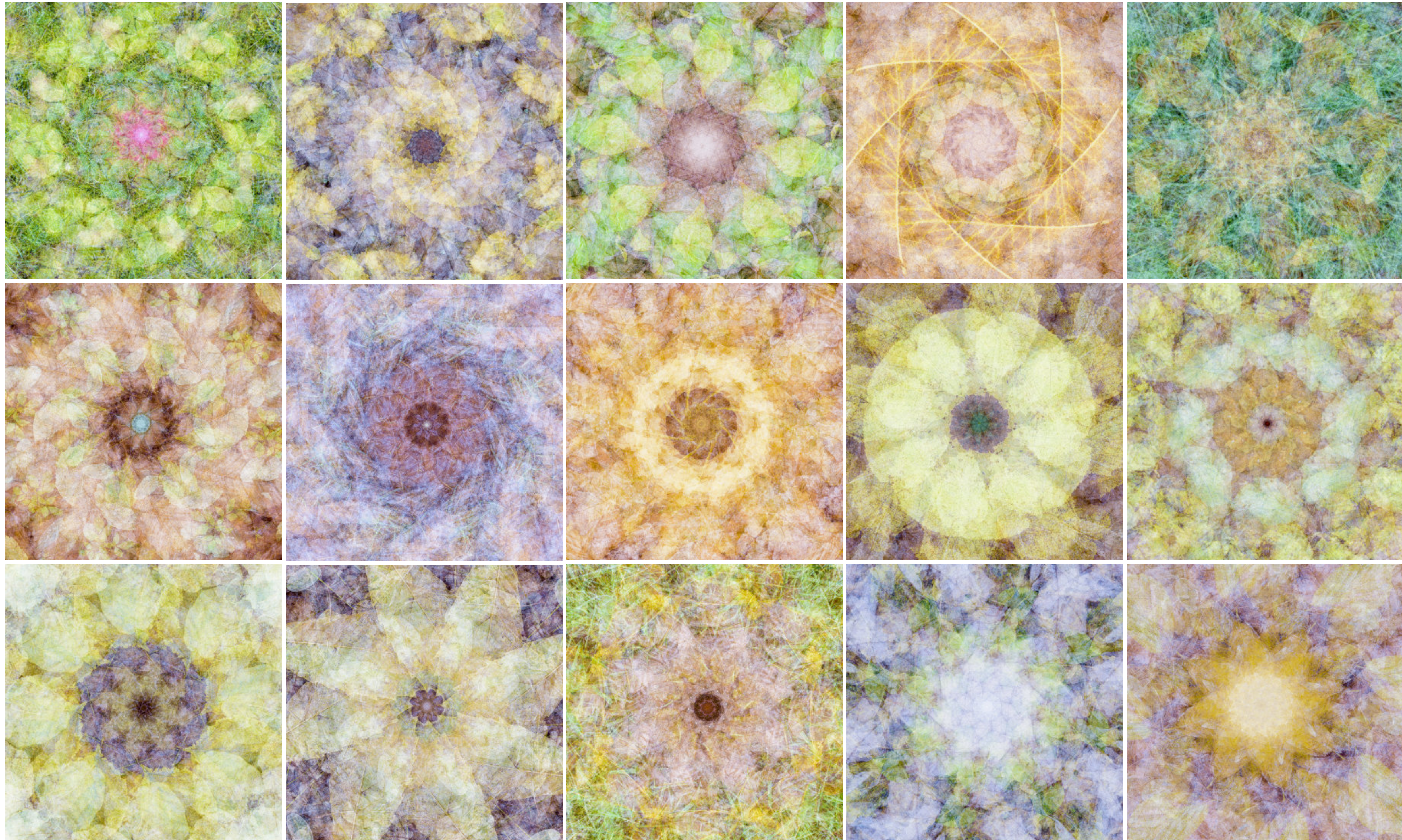
***POETIC STRIPES***—Tabea Vahlenkamp | 50 Objects  
our COVID policy



*home*

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# MORVANDAISE QUILT





## Hello from Charlotte and Niall

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WE MIGHT HAVE BEEN QUIET for the last few months, but not because we haven't been busy! We've run our first Retreats in over 20 months, created a new print website and collection of prints ([www.benvie.art.eu](http://www.benvie.art.eu)), run a community photography project in our local village which brought almost 200 people into our outdoor studio, delivered another series of online classes for Santa Photography Workshops, New Mexico, and Niall has taught classes in-person at the Katholische Akademie, Stapelfeld. And that's not to mention what's been going on in the garden! But best of all has been seeing our family and friends in the UK again after a painfully-long period of time.

It has also been a period of further exploration of our region and deepening our appreciation of what is on our doorstep, both in terms of wild nature and the many good-hearted people we've encountered in the Saint-Seine commune. It has deepened our commitment to running more of our Retreats in this area, offering an experience far-removed from rolling-up at a "beauty spot" and snapping the generic trophy photo. We hope you'll detect, in some of the work in this edition of MENU, the stimulus that the south Morvan—as this region is more properly called—has provided to our ideas and creativity—ideas we're keen to share with you on our Retreats here and further afield.

While the pandemic is far from over, we feel more confident now in planning our programme for 2022, with offers in continental Europe for those reluctant to travel to the UK and others in Scotland for Britons who would rather stay on "the island" until it's all over.

We've restructured our Retreats a little, we think, for the better. In the past, Niall was pretty ambitious in trying to incorporate a lot of formal teaching into each one. One of the lessons of the pandemic is how much more effectively this can be done by Zoom on a one-to-one basis ahead of a Retreat, then practised during the course of it. It also means that only those guests who want to learn that

technique need do so. This frees up time to spend on image review, discussion and critique, things we know that a lot of guests value.

Later in MENU you'll find an introduction to the Retreats we have planned for 2022 and hope that you will join us on one or more of them. Full details are on our site. If travelling remains off the agenda for you for a while longer, there is still lots you can do to extend your creative practice with our on-line lessons and by following the example set by the artist featured in this issue, German photographer and poet, Tabea Vahlenkamp. We're grateful for her inspiring contribution in the form of *Poetic Stripes*.

Charlotte and Niall



## MEETING OUR NEIGHBOURS



HOW DO YOU GO ABOUT meeting your new neighbours when you don't even speak the same language? It was a problem I had thought about a lot before we moved to France but it was a chance meeting one winter's evening in the local restaurant with an actor (who turned out to be a near neighbour) that provided the solution. [Jean-Marc Galera](#) and his wife, Annette Benedetti, organise a number of cultural events in Saint-Seine every year. "Why don't you photograph the villagers? We have an evening market with a performance every fortnight in summer, and you could photograph people who come to that. Introduce yourselves."

So we had a plan, of sorts. We would make an outdoor studio in somewhere shaded (since I wanted to use only flash), close by the market. The gap between the *Mairie* and its neighbouring building proved to be ideal. I made a large, free-standing frame to hang a piece of beautiful Jacquard fabric from as a backdrop, attached a flash with a honeycomb grid for backlighting and used a 100 cm Deep Octa softbox as the key-light. I positioned it to cross light the subject, giving beautifully feathered, directional lighting. People normally don't know what to do with their hands when they are being photographed so I provided the chair to solve this problem. Sometimes people even sat on it.

In truth, Charlotte had the hardest job, dealing with all the French model release forms and re-assuring everyone that this was all *gratis*.

Eventually, over seven sessions, photographed almost two hundred people, at least a few of whom were our neighbours.

Left. Since the evening sun was in danger of over-powering the flash, we set up the studio in the shade of the *Mairie*, letting me put the background far enough behind the sitter so that it was nice and low key. The metal plate, with foot markings, saved me explaining every time where the person should stand.



MEETING OUR NEIGHBOURS



Isaure VIDALIN



Pascal COUTURIER and Agnes GALERA



Jed KAMINDU



PRINT COLLECTION NO.1





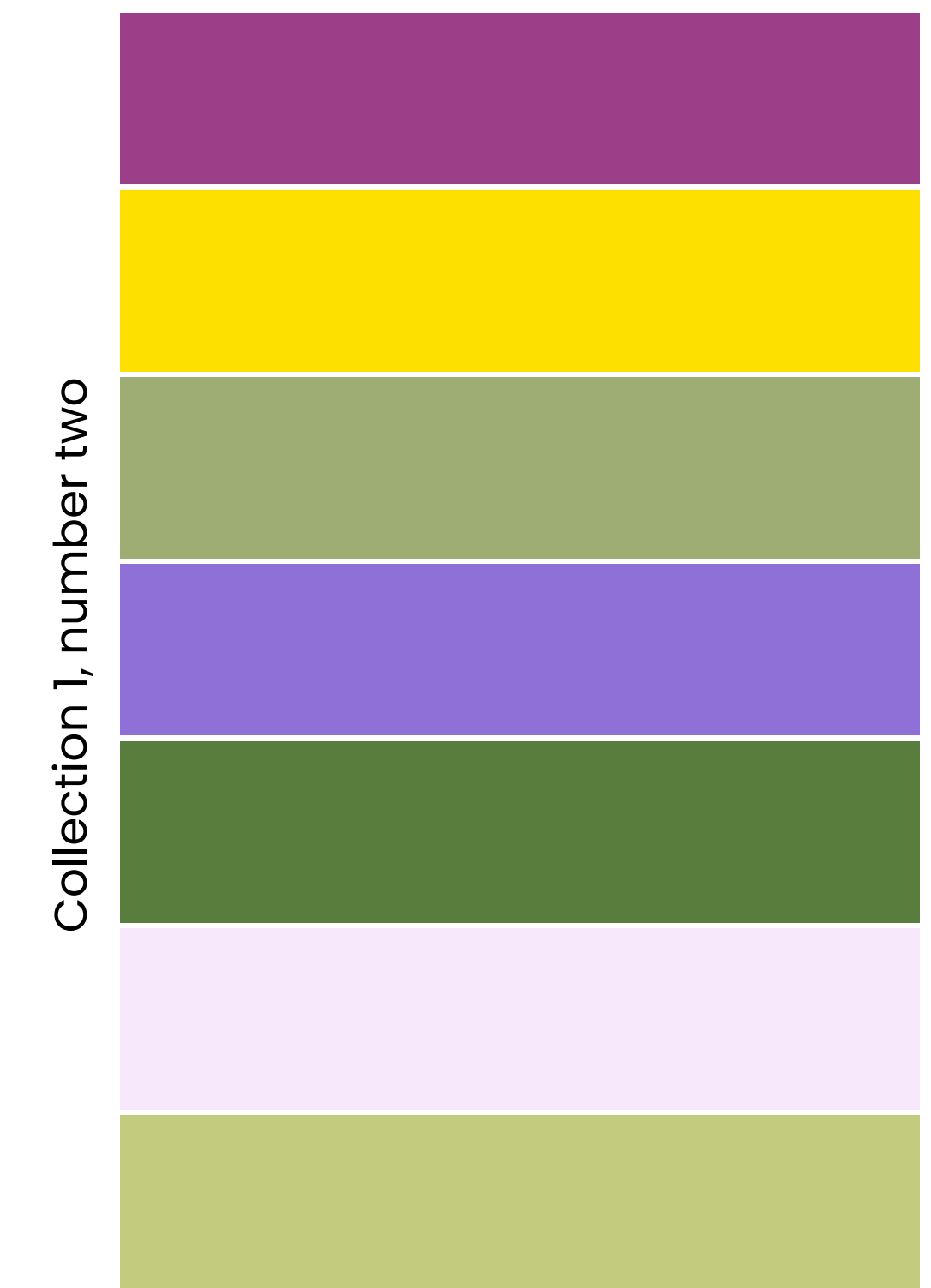
## PRINT COLLECTION NO.1

**B**EFORE OUR ENTRY into the print market this month, I took a long hard look at what others were doing already. It seemed to me that too many photographers offered too many choices with too little focus for collectors. There was certainly scope for making things much simpler for the buyer. So, we decided that each year we will release two themed collections, each containing 12 pictures, supplied unframed, in one size. There is open run and one limited to just 24 copies. The prints are physically identical except that the former have our brand emboss, the latter an emboss, signature and sealed certificate. Why make it any more complicated than that?

We created a dedicated [website](#) to present the work—it's not just a sideline, after all. In truth, producing new work for these Collections is quite an undertaking in its own right and one that keeps us on our toes, creatively. I use the term "us" as the work is more often than not the result of me trying out an idea then Charlotte helping to refine it into something workable. Very little is created in isolation.

One of the unusual aspects of our offer is the ability to download colour swatches for each image so that buyers can check if it matches an existing colour scheme. In the real world, we suspect that more people buy their wall art for this reason than because of its artistic merit.

There is a PDF catalogue for each Collection and if you're interested in having a look at the first, you can download it [here](#).



We produce a PDF catalogue of each biennial collection and on the website it's possible to download colour swatches for each work to see if they match your colour scheme. We're nothing if not realistic about what matters to buyers! We keep the picture names simple too...

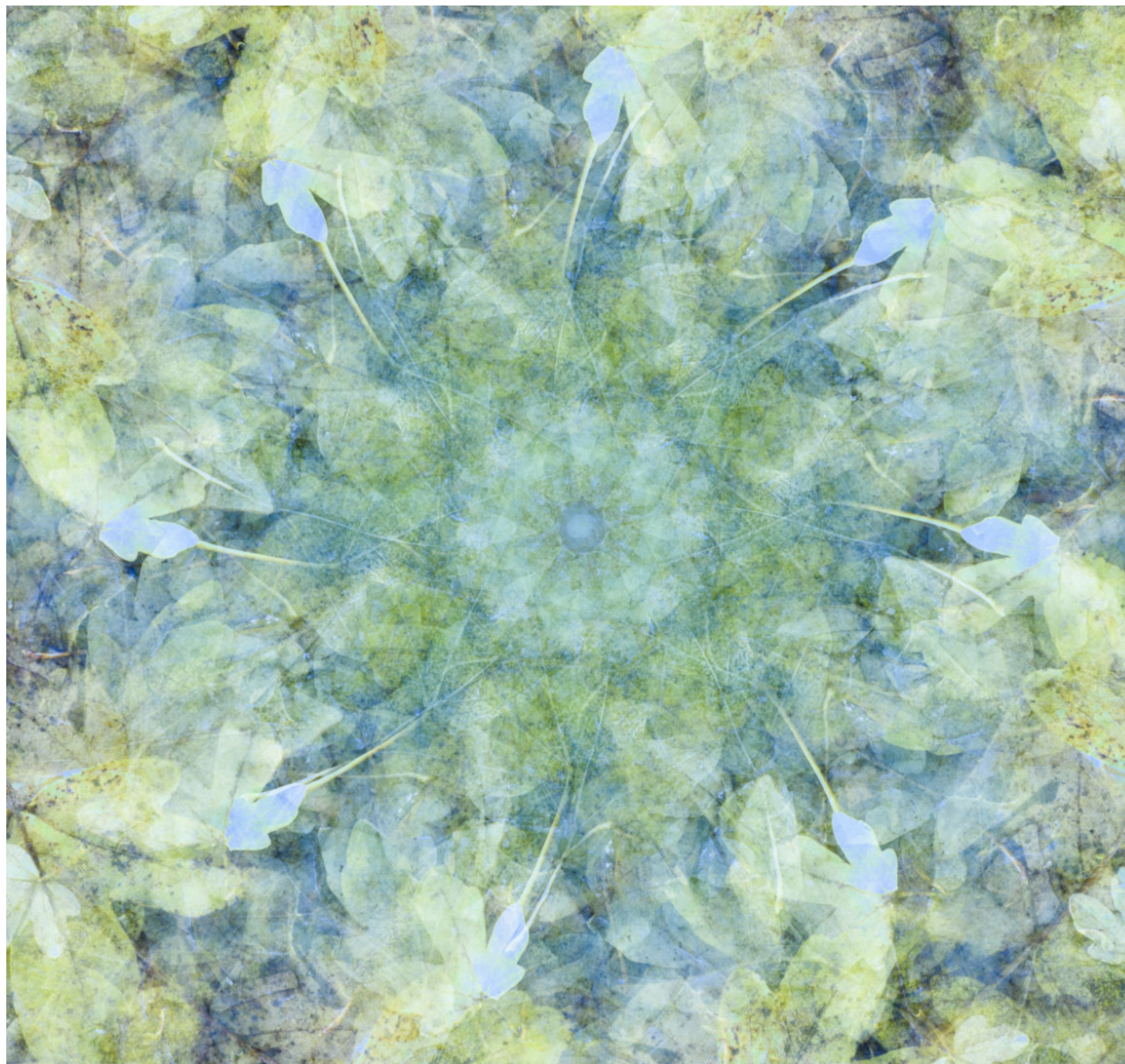


## IN-CAMERA KALEIDOSCOPES

**D**URING THE CAIRNGORMS Retreat in November 2021, our friend and co-leader, [Willi Rolfes](#), introduced me to a multi-exposure technique that, inevitably perhaps, I feel head-over-heels in love with. It involves making eight exposures, rotating the camera 45 degrees between each, around a central point. This is most easily achieved using a lens with a rotating collar. The result is a highly detailed, multi-layered kaleidoscopic image.

Willi is quick to point out that he wasn't the first to use this technique but it does seem to originate, as far as I can determine, from a workshop held in 2016 at the Akademie in Stapelfeld, Lower Saxony, of which he is Director. The well-known German photographer, [Sandra Bar-tocha](#), was working with others to create pictures to interpret a piece of music. One of the participants, [Jane Bley](#), made a series of kaleidoscopic leaf patterns, similar to those in MENU, and that started the ball rolling.

Like any novel technique, the work produced needs a context if it is to be any-



thing other than a visual curiosity. It is easily replicable and without being "about" something, your work will soon disappear in the flood of imitations.

The images, when cropped, reminded me of the squares of a patchwork quilt. I liked that idea that, when assembled in a single piece of work, they represented something both beautiful and comforting. So, the idea of the *Morvandaise Quilt* was born, created from details of the autumn forests where we live. The first piece will feature 48 squares. There is a lot to look at in each one.

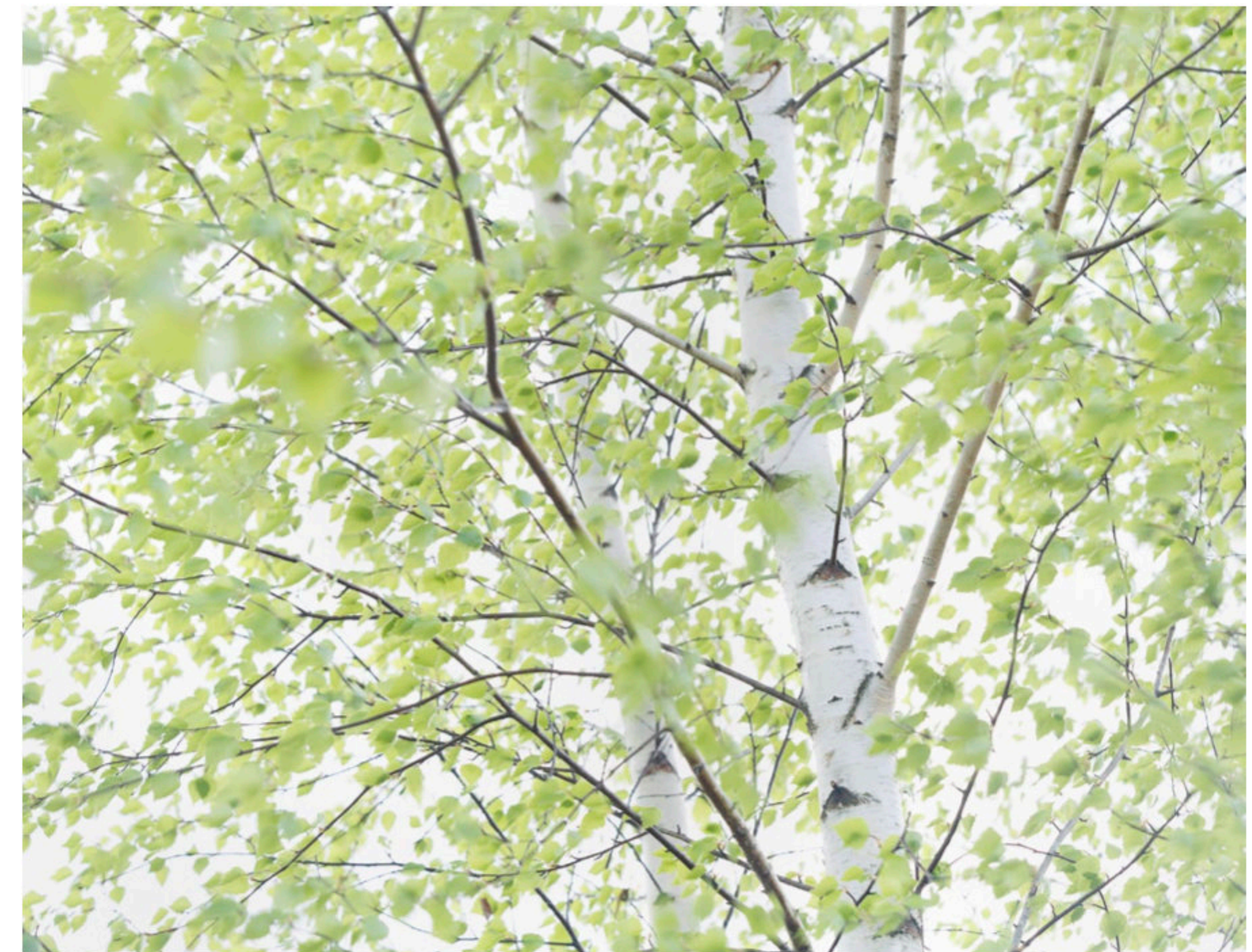
If you want make your own squares, you'll need a camera that can generate a RAW file from the multiple exposures. These images need a bit more processing than usual and a JPEG is ill-suited to the task. If you set the camera to Auto Gain in the multi-exposure settings, the exposure accumulation is taken care of for you. Just set a correct exposure for the first shot then away you go. I use the markings on the lens collar to make a 45 degree rotation between frames. A top tip: look for chaos...



POETIC STRIPES

“ For Poetic Stripes the words, which are usually called upon to paint pictures in the mind, are given a counterpart in the form of a real picture and the colours it contains.

Three lines of small squares of colour form the home for my lyrical pictorial notes. Together they were to "underline" a nature photograph, to represent the subject in a more complete way. ”





## POETIC STRIPES

EVERY PHOTO IS A WORLD. A world of colours or shades of grey, which in their entirety allow us to see the motif depicted. A world that carries stories and transports emotions. In a sense, every picture has two worlds: the world of the photographer and the world of the viewer. My intention is, to create a bridge between the two.

For my Poetic Stripes I took up the basic idea of Niall's colour transects. I think it's great to open up the world of a photograph a little by putting it side by side with the colours it contains. My idea goes a bit further by bringing poetry into play. Fragments of the picture's story meet fractions of its colours and together they create a dialogue. The short poems are individually tailored to each photo.

I have experienced my pictures, I carry within me what I have seen and felt while taking them. Nevertheless, I see and feel the pictures in a completely new way when I work on the words to accompany them. This is how lyrical fragments emerge that either record the

experience in nature in a descriptive way or refer to a mood, a feeling. Sometimes the connection to the image is obvious, sometimes the reader will have to search for it. This is intentional, just as some texts have several "levels" and allow different possibilities of interpretation. The idea is not to force image and text into a unity, but let them complement each other.

Initially, the picture compositions were made for exhibitions. When the idea of a book was born, I saw a new challenge. I couldn't imagine putting two poetic stripes on a double page. That was too crowded for me. It is important to me that each image gets the space it needs. So the task was to design a page as a counterpart that is not empty, but not full either. A page that is connected to the picture, but still leaves a lot of space. A page that has room for the viewer - to encounter the image and the text. I have succeeded in this by using colour squares to create a trace and with that a connection between the two sides.

In a time as fast-moving as ours, it com-

forts me to do something slowly. I enjoyed exploring my pictures, finding words and writing the poems. Even the work of filling each of the squares with colour was very welcome to me.

During an exhibition of the Poetic Stripes someone said to me: "These pictures are 'slow food' for the eyes". That's how it should be! My Poetic Stripes are an invitation to the viewer to take time, to look, to read, to "take a walk" with their gaze and thoughts. My wish is that some will be touched by the dialogue of photograph and poem and find their very own meaning to the combinations I have chosen.

*Words and artworks © Tabea Vahlenkamp, 2021*



You can buy a copy of Tabea's book directly from her website: [www.creatiphoto.de/Angebote/Buecher.htm](http://www.creatiphoto.de/Angebote/Buecher.htm)





POETIC STRIPES



*durchrankt vom gestern*

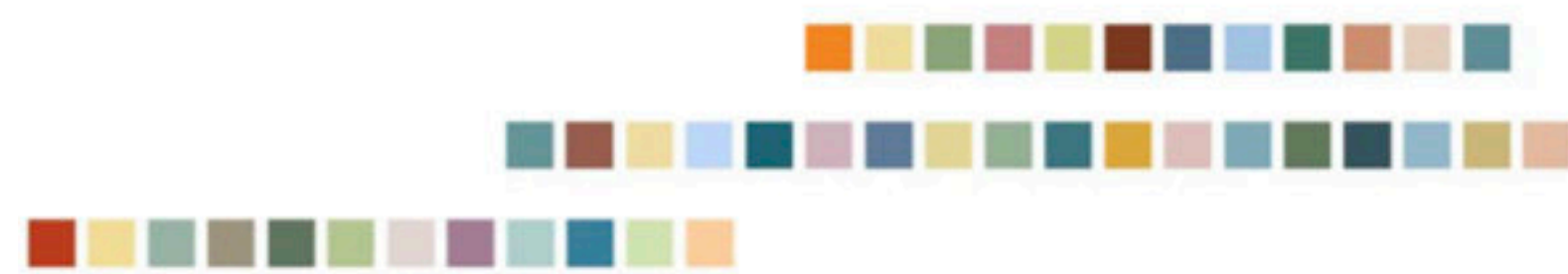
*blühe ich wissend in grün*

*wachsendes morgen*





POETIC STRIPES



die schatten suchen  
zu halten was sich hellt - von  
farben singt der tag



## TETHERING STAND



IF YOU HAVE EVER DONE any food photography or still life work, you'll know that there are a *lot* of adjustments to be made to the lighting and the elements of the composition before everything is "just so". And if you are working in cramped conditions, you'll know just how frustrating it is to sidle to and from the set to make those changes between exposures.

That's why I prefer to shoot with the camera tethered to my laptop, so I can stand beside the set, make the adjustments and fire the camera remotely. And, of course, it makes image review much easier compared to squinting at the small screen on the back of the camera. Tethered shooting is also great for live lessons when it is important for the student to see what I am capturing. Simply share the Lightroom screen and they know what you're doing.

I use a Tether Tools® cable that connects the camera to the laptop. In the File menu of Lightroom, select Tethered Capture then follow the dialogue boxes.

Most tethered shooters prefer to have their laptop on a tripod-mounted table at a convenient viewing height. The Tether Tools® own offer is expensive and poorly designed so I made my own at a fraction of the cost, with greater functionality. This includes: grips for the tethering cable, the laptop's power supply and an external drive that reduce the risk of computer port damage during use; a power strip for the laptop and mobile phone used as a wifi hotspot; holders for two mobiles and space to accommodate an external drive; and retainers to prevent the laptop from falling off the table if the tripod is knocked. If the location permits, I use a ratchet strap to secure the tripod to a 56 lbs weight (a memento of my farming days), for extra security. The table is bolted to a quick-release plate that slides into a Novoflex Q-R clamp attached directly to the tripod.

If you've not tethered before, you'll find it's really worth the small investment in the cable. But do make your own table.



### COVID-19. BOOKING WITH CONFIDENCE

**T**WO YEARS INTO THE PANDEMIC, no end is yet in sight. Vaccination levels remain, even in the developed world, problematically low in many places and it's widely recognised by epidemiologists that until everyone is protected, then no one is completely safe.

Yet attitudes are shifting and weariness with restrictions is increasingly turning into resentment. More and more people who have been vaccinated are questioning why their lives should continue to be put on hold because others refuse to accept the vaccine's protection. Yet, as we know, even the vaccinated can fall ill, albeit normally less severely than the unprotected.

We take the view that it's time to get on with our lives again, while exercising caution around others, whether or not they have chosen to be vaccinated. We *do* require guests on our Retreats to be fully vaccinated and to have had a booster. We want to protect our other guests, as well as ourselves and contractors.

This, we believe, pragmatic approach isn't reflected in travel insurers' eagerness to accept a new, on-going COVID risk. As such, few are willing to offer cover against cancellation caused by personal infection and/or statutory restrictions on travel. During pre-vaccine 2020, once it was apparent that no-one would be travelling anywhere for sometime, we refunded a number of our clients straight away, while others elected for us to retain their payments in our trust account.

We ran three successful Retreats in the autumn of 2021. Yet the emergence of the Omicron variant is once again undermining confidence amongst travellers. We want to explain our approach to this new situation, as a way to offer some reassurance—and encouragement to book.

- In the first instance, we urge you to look for affordable cancellation insurance that provides cover if you have to cancel a trip because you've contracted COVID or because there are severe travel restrictions or bans that make it impractical or impossible to reach your destination. We fully appreciate that many insurers are unwilling to offer such cover.
- Please read our [Terms and Conditions](#) but also be aware that we will look at your case fairly if you've had to cancel because of COVID. If you are unable to attend because you've fallen ill or have failed to meet the destination country's entry requirements through no fault of your own, we don't consider it fair to penalise you further. If you have insurance cover to protect you against this eventuality, make a claim. If you do not, we'll give you the option to transfer your payment to future holiday with us. If we have to cancel the trip, you will always be refunded the money we have received from you.
- We offer this accommodation in the context of the pandemic and other reasons for cancellation must be covered by your normal travel insurance.
- Please understand that in being fair to you, we look for a similar level of fairness on the part of our clients in respect of how they pursue an insurance claim.



### THE SOUTH MORVAN, FRANCE

**P**ERHAPS YOU'RE NOT FAMILIAR with this part of France so just imagine this: the best parts of the English countryside, 100 years ago. Lying at the southern edge of the Morvan Natural Regional Park, the south Morvan—our home territory—retains extensive areas of *bocage* landscape: small fields with Charolais cattle, hemmed in by ancient hedgerows, old oaks that provide shade and marshy field corners alive with amphibians. Species that have declined or disappeared altogether from England and other parts of Europe, such as turtle dove, nightingales, golden oriole, red backed shrike and corn bunting, continue to thrive here and are joined by more exotic neighbours including bee eaters, cattle egrets, hoopoes, woodchat shrikes and white storks. But you needn't be a birder to enjoy this beguiling landscape which we know more and more intimately with each passing season.

It's a landscape of nostalgia—of old farms and abandoned chateaux, enchanting hardwood forests and villages that have, well, seen better days. And in both spring and autumn, there are plenty of misty mornings.

Your base is in a delightful, well-appointed gite with swimming pool, just two kilometres as the back kite flies from our own house. Much of our photography is done within a 30 minute radius of the gite, with a couple of longer trips, such as to Uchon, for its great overview of the Arroux valley (right) [BROCHURE](#)

16<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> April and 15<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2022, 7 nights £2250, includes transfers to and from TGV Le Creusot/Montchanin, all meals, accommodation, guiding, tuition and transport during the Retreat. No single supplement.





### THE ISLE OF MULL, SCOTLAND

THE ISLE OF MULL, at the heart of Scotland's Inner Hebrides, has a wonderfully diverse landscape and wild coastline. In recent years, thanks to TV exposure, it has entered the public mind as the home of sea eagles, surrounded by seas bustling with dolphins and larger whales. Indeed, eco-tourism contributes over £8 million to the island's economy each year. But the island is big enough that you can leave the crowds behind and find your own wild corner to explore and photograph.

Temperate rainforest—a rare habitat in world-wide terms—is found in a few corners of Mull where mosses, lichens and liverworts festoon the low, gnarled oaks, freshly leafed out for our arrival.

One of the highlights of the week, weather permitting, is the day trip to the island of Lunga, one of the Treshnish group that includes Staffa. We normally make a short stop there en-route to visit the basalt columns of Fingal's Cave. The sea birds on Lunga are unusually confiding, earning the island its reputation as "Scotland's Galapagos". At this time of year, recently-arrived puffins are courting and flying around actively while prehistoric-looking shags are already on their nests.

We will have the exclusive use of the lovely, centrally-located [Killiechronan House](#) at the head of Loch na Keal. It is a comfortable, rather grand old country house, within easy walking distance of the sea loch and adjacent woodlands. Each room has its own bathroom.

**6<sup>th</sup>- 13<sup>th</sup> May 2022, 7 nights, £2300.** Retreat starts and finishes at Craignure on the Isle of Mull and includes all accommodation, meals, tuition and transport during the Retreat (the Lunga trip is a supplement of c£90 as it is weather dependent). No single room supplement. [BROCHURE](#)





## HOHE TAUERN N.P., AUSTRIA

**T**HIS RETREAT TAKES US into the high Austrian Alps, home of ibex and marmots, edelweiss and snowfinches. We are fortunate to be partnering once more with respected German photographer [Willi Rolfes](#) (who has transferred from our Mull Retreat to this one) whose close knowledge of the area will prove invaluable.

The [Hohe Tauern](#) is famed as the largest national park in the Alps, extending to almost 1900 sq. km. It boasts more than 300 peaks over 3000 m and rises, at its highest point, to 3798 m at the summit of Glossglockner. There are waterfalls and alpine lakes, pastures and wild-flower meadows.

Our base is in a traditional yet modern [Austrian chalet](#) that sits above the valley containing the picturesque village of Heiligenblut. The setting, as you can see from its website, is breathtaking and most of our locations can be reached within 30 minutes by car. That includes places where we can photograph marmots from very close, as well as ibex and alpine choughs that are also comfortable around visitors.

**11<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> June 2022, 7 nights, £2450.** The Retreat starts and finishes at Mallnitz Obervellach Railway Station, about one hour from our base and you will be transferred from and to there. If you are flying to Austria, we recommend that you go into Innsbruck, take a taxi to the main railway station (Hbf), then a train to Mallnitz. There is also a rail link from München to Mallnitz Obervellach. Includes all meals, accommodation, tuition and transport. No single supplement. [BROCHURE](#).



*photo © Willi Rolfes, 2021*



### THE CAIRNGORMS, SCOTLAND

SCOTLAND'S SECOND NATIONAL PARK, the Cairngorms, is the UK's most extensive mountain environment. The Spey valley retains some of the largest tracts of the pine forest that covered much of the Highlands after the last Ice Age. Its distance from the sea means that the area's numerous lochs and marshes are often wreathed in early morning mist. Snow is less predictable than in the past but if there is going to be any in Scotland, it will fall here first.

Not only is Speyside a refuge of the ancient pine forest and a host of species that have disappeared from much of the rest of the country—such as capercaillie and red squirrels—it is also the setting of exciting rewilding initiatives which are seeing the return of montane scrub and woodland to areas that have not had forest cover for centuries. There is simmering tension between those who'd rather see wide open vistas and those who place biodiversity ahead of visual amenity. So, for photographers interested in creating story-led collections of pictures, Speyside is a rich vein to mine.

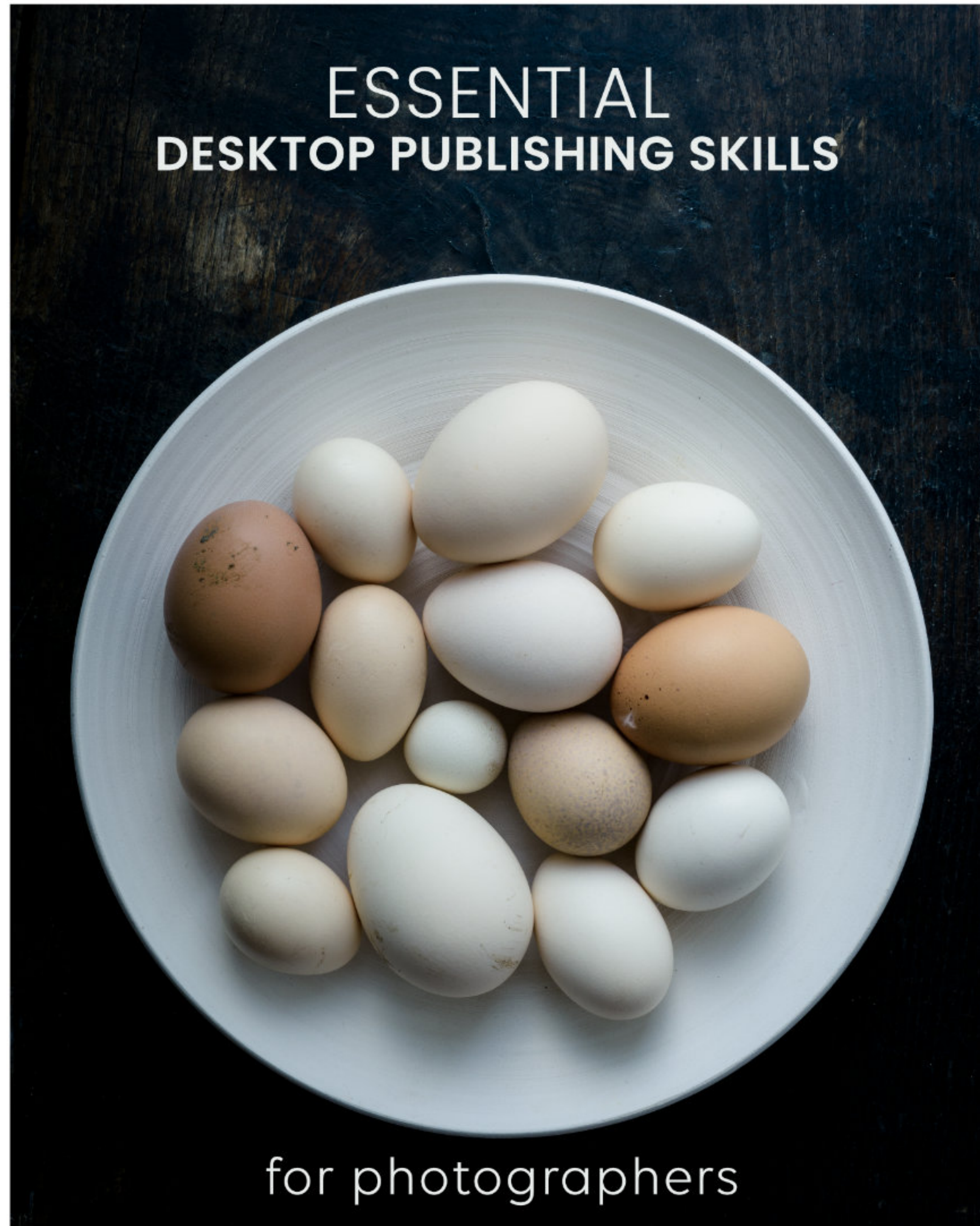
If you are more interested in making simply beautiful pictures, then you'll not be short of subjects, especially since our Retreat coincides with peak autumn colours. From the fascinating woodlands surrounding Loch Garten (right) and Loch Vaa, to the dramatic sweep of Glenmore and still waters of Loch Morlich, you'll have a chance to capture the essence of the Cairngorms, all from the comfortable base of [Ballintean Mountain Lodge](#) in Glenfeshie.

5<sup>th</sup>- 12<sup>th</sup> November 2022, 7 nights £2250, includes transfers to and from Inverness from Ballintean all meals, accommodation, guiding, tuition and transport during the Retreat. No single supplement. [BROCHURE](#).





## AFFINITY PUBLISHER



*If you think that desktop publishing apps. aren't for you, maybe it's time to think again.*

It's all about dressing your photography for its job.

It's like the difference between turning up with your prize prints in a tatty old Aldi carrier bag or laying down an elegant, leather-bound portfolio.

Affinity Publisher is a low-cost, non-subscription professional app. that gives you the tools to present your work at its best, whether in the form of slides or e-books, fliers or newsletters: to see it realised, beautifully. And that is a lot of fun.

**This one-to-one course** is delivered by Niall using Zoom in 3 one-and-a-half hour lessons, with homework and support in between. The cost is £300.

*“It's all about extending your creative practice beyond editing your photos.”*



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## AFFINITY PUBLISHER

# topics

### COMING UP WITH THE CONCEPT

- Your intention
- Your audience
- Colours and what they signal.

### CREATING THE DOCUMENT

- Web or print?
- Colour management
- Other parameters
- Integration with other Affinity apps.

### DEFINING/ CREATING MASTER PAGES

- Figuring out sections and their layout
- Rulers, grids and guides

- Baseline guides
- Establishing a hierarchy of information.

### TYPOGRAPHY BASICS

- Font choice and mixing
- Tracking, kerning and leading
- Good typo. manners: orphans and widows; justification; hyphenation; drop capitals
- Text flowing and hyperlinks.

### IMAGES

- Choice
- Embedding
- Resolution

- Scaling
- Cropping.

### PREFLIGHT CHECKS

- Review of common issues and errors.

### EXPORT SETTINGS.





*Charlotte makes*

# MINCEMEAT PIE POPS





## MINCEMEAT PIE POPS

**T**HE INSPIRATION for these tasty seasonal treats comes from the fabulous Swedish author and photographer, [Linda Lomelino](#). I have substituted mincemeat for the sweeter ingredients in her original version.

### *You will need*

- A flat baking tray lined with greaseproof baking paper (it needs to fit in your freezer for a short while so make sure it will do so. Use two smaller trays if necessary).
- 20 paper lollipop sticks (you can get these online from a baking supplier and they need to be at least 10-15 cm long).
- A fluted round cutter, about 6 cm wide and, optionally, mini shaped cutters such as stars and leaves.
- A jar of mincemeat—bought or homemade.
- For the pastry, you can either buy some ready rolled, sweet shortcrust pastry if time is short or you can make it using the following recipe:

### *Ingredients for pastry*

120 g of plain flour  
25 g of granulated sugar  
¼ tsp of sea salt  
130 g of cold butter (cubed)  
2- 3 tbsp of cold water

### *and for the glaze*

1 egg  
1 tbsp of milk  
A pinch of sea salt  
1 tbsp of Demerara sugar

### *To make the pastry*

Mix the flour, sugar and salt in a large bowl and then add the cubed butter into the mix. Use your fingers to rub in the butter until it resembles a crumble-type mixture. Add the water little by little, using a fork to blend it until you have a dough mix. Work it together very briefly into a dough ball and wrap in clingfilm. Place in the fridge for at least an hour.

### *To make the Pie Pops*

Pre-heat the oven to 200° C/ 180° C fan, 400° F.

Roll out the chilled dough on a floured work surface to about 5 mm depth and cut out about 20 circles (any left-over dough can be used for extra decor such as mini holly leaves or stars or even pastry strips if you decide to be adventurous and make a lattice top).

Place 10 pastry circles on a piece of baking paper, on the baking tray.

Take the mincemeat and place a rounded teaspoonful in the middle of each pastry circle and press down lightly. Brush a little water around the edge of the circle and then push the lollipop stick into the filling. Place another pastry circle on top and press the edges together so they are fully sealed. If you want to add a pastry decoration do this now and stick it to the pie pop surface by brushing it with water. Place the pie pops in the freezer for about 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, make the glaze by whisking the egg, milk and sea salt together and then set it aside.

Remove the pie pops from the freezer, and brush each one with the glaze. Sprinkle the Demerara sugar over them and add a little air hole with the sharp point of a knife. Just a couple of little slits will do the trick.

Bake in the middle of the oven for 16- 18 minutes until the pastry is golden in colour. Remove them from the oven and allow to cool completely before removing them from the tray. Dust with a little icing sugar for a festive look.





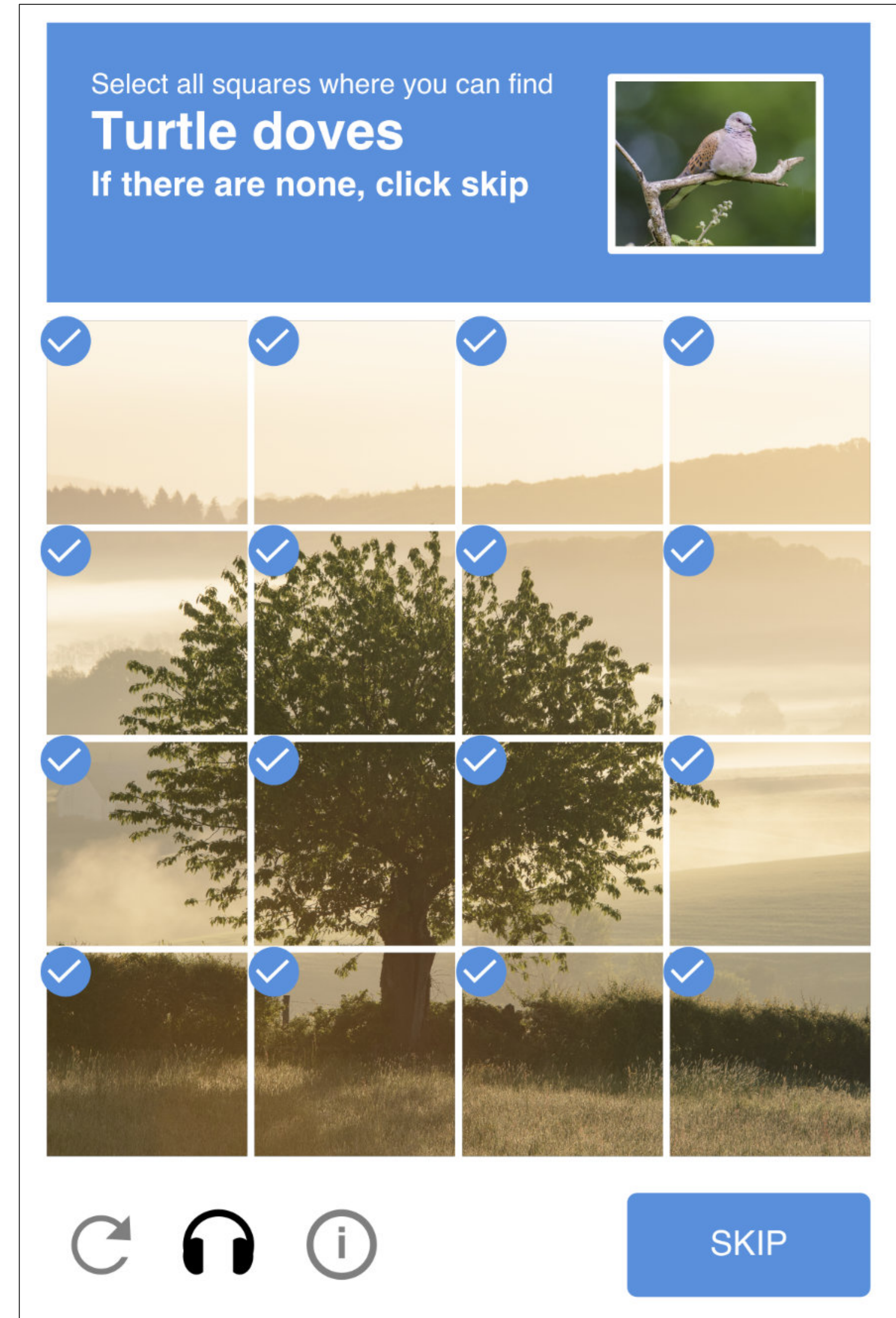
## BIODIVERSITY CAPTCHA

**H**OW DO YOU ILLUSTRATE a place's biological richness in a way that people can easily understand? One way might be to use an existing, familiar form and re-purpose it to make your point.

I'm keen to highlight just how rich in bird life the area surrounding our home in the south Morvan, France, is. So, starting off with some species that have become very rare in the UK, such as red backed shrike and turtle dove, I use the Google CAPTCHA form to represent their presence in the landscape.

CAPTCHAs are normally repositories of the world's bleakest imagery so, ever keen to spread sweetness and light, I substitute pictures of traffic lights and fire hydrants with landscapes that are beautiful and joyful. Progress is limited by how quickly I can acquire pictures of the species I need for this project—and I might need to wait a while before I can make a golden oriole CAPTCHA, even although they are quite common here. No matter, it's one of those projects that can roll on for years to come.

I recreated the CAPTCHA box using Affinity Designer and Publisher and made use of Lighter Colour blending mode to impose the grid over the landscape image. The template I created makes it easy and quick to create new images and to tick the appropriate number of boxes. This is a project where we will never need to press Skip.





# MENU

FOOD AND  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
RETREATS<sup>TM</sup>

*with the Benvies*

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