



The Call of the Ocean

A portfolio of photographic images

This portfolio of my photographs, "The Call of the Ocean" is a part of a long term project, "The Five Sacred Things." The Five Sacred Things being Water, Earth, Air, Fire and Spirit. The former four are sacred elements, found in many cultures, that are said to make up the physical world we live in, while Spirit celebrates the life spirit of humans and other life forms, as the additional 'element' that completes the world.

This portfolio is a part of the "water" cycle of the Five Sacred Things. The ocean is the original 'Cauldron of Life.' The earliest life forms sprang from the sea; the sea calls to us, drawing us with her powers; she is our mother and our playmate. We try to tame the bays and shorelines with our bridges and man-made structures, we mine the ocean for its riches and use it for a dumping ground. Yet Ocean is also a Destroyer; ultimately she reclaims all that stands in her path. She is the Yin of the gentle watery caress and the Yang of violently crashing waves.

In this portfolio, I have selected images that represent these ideas - the power of the ocean calling to us.

For a complete presentation, I write Chinese calligraphy in traditional brush work to complement the photography.

For more information, please visit my website.

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Mirror of Memories Past 2011

My daughter has said that she feels very spiritual close to the sea. The ocean is the original Cauldron of Life. Do the waves speak to us, invoking some kind of racial memory?



Ethereal
2010

A shadow moves across the sand. I look up and see a daytime apparition.



View from the Bay Bridge 2011

Driving out from Treasure Island toward San Francisco, we were suddenly struck by this perfect view: the Golden Gate Bridge in the background, with Alcatraz, Angel Island and the Marin headlands in the front, and fog rolling in. A momentary slowdown in the Bay Bridge traffic made this photo possible.



Three Boys At Pismo Beach 2011

When I saw three boys playing on the beach, the image of “Three Boys at Lake Tanganyika” by Martin Munkacs immediately came to mind. Martin’s photo inspired the famous Henri-Cartier Bresson to give up painting and take up photography full time. This, then, is my humble homage to the giants of photography.



Swallowing the Sun Salton Sea, 2010

There are places that are hard to describe in mere images or words. The slowly decaying Salton Sea is one of those places. The sky was choked by hazy clouds while the seabirds settled lazily down for the night; the salty air was pungent with decay. Remnants of piers and telephone poles whispered that a mere 20-30 years ago, this was a booming community.



No Horizon
Salton Sea, 2010

When the clouds swallow the Sun, there is no edge, no beginning and no end.



Echoes of China Inverness, California, 2011

I was attending a workshop in Inverness with Luiz Delgado one cool February day. Located along the Tomales Bay that flows out to the Pacific Ocean, Inverness has a number of piers with buildings on them. Luiz was an very intersting workshop instructor, but out the window I could see the thick fog rolling in across the bay. As soon as there was a coffee break, I grabbed my camera and bolted outside. The air was chilly, but I had no time to waste to go back and get my jacket.



Waiting for the Sunset 2011

It was the end of a long day of shooting. Tired, I packed up my photo gear, lingering to enjoy the sunset before heading home. Two teenagers took possession of a cliffside bench, cuddling for warmth while waiting for the sun to greet the sea. Waves crashed on the rocky shore. As quietly as I could, I took out my camera again.



Pescadero Beach, California 2011

Dotted along the California Coastal Highway are small beaches. Some of them don't have too much sand (yet), but rather are filled with rocks of varying sizes. The unrelenting force of the waves breaks the rocks down to finer and finer size, eventually turning them into sand. Pescadero and the adjacent Pebble Beach have some of the finest pebbles that you will find.



Water Like Glass
Highway One, Pacific Coast
2011

I had seen these rocks off Highway 1 a number of times. However, they always seemed inaccessible, until one day I saw a photograph of *those rocks* in a gallery. It took me two evenings to find the access route. My final descent was thwarted by a 10 foot drop. Next time maybe I will bring a rope.





Tai Chi, Tide Qi
2011



Walking along the Cambrian bluffs, one cannot help but be affected by the rhythmic sound of powerful waves crashing into the shore, like the breath of the sea. Chi / Qi, or "breath," the life force, is a central concept in Chinese thought. The Qi channels in the human body are known as the "microcosmic orbit", reflecting the relationship between the inner and outer world.



Within A Frame 2011

The south end of the San Francisco Bay is known as “The Baylands”; a strip of land on the outskirts of cities such as San Jose, Palo Alto, and Redwood City. Large industrial salt ponds have now been mostly reclaimed as marshland. Various artifacts remain throughout.



Conversing 2011

The high tide slowly rolls in, waiting for the right conversation to start.



Gateway 2011

The challenge of photographing an iconic landmark is, of course, that there are similar images out there. The sun was setting in this image, as seen by the light and shadow on the tower. I opted for an ultra wide angle panoramic view to capture as much of San Francisco as possible to show that the Golden Gate bridge is part of its environment.



Dreaming 2011

The Taoist philosopher Zhuang Zi once dreamed that he was a butterfly; or
was it a butterfly that dreamed of being Zhuang Zi?





Night Over Cambria 2011

Situated on one of the more beautiful “rocky shores” of the California coast, Cambria is an ideal spot for an extended shot to create the “water like glass” effect combined with the glimmer of lights at night. The headlight glow from cars driving along the streets were an added bonus. I scouted out the area twice during the daytime - which was good, as it was far too cold at night to easily check the framing of the shot, let alone the focus.



Albion Point 2011

At the mouth of the Albion River, Albion Cove opens out to the Pacific Ocean. Albion Cove is also visible from the last operational wooden bridge on the California Coastal Highway. On an early Summer evening, the still and quiet air seems to welcome the sunset.