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✓ Review Completed

Submission Review for Sfumatographies - Nature and its poetry

Art Photography Awards 2026 • January 17, 2026

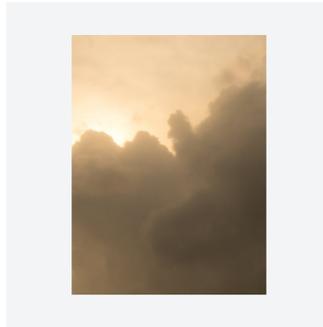
Photos



Look Closer

It shows a halo—an atmospheric phenomenon in which light refracts through the clouds. I've seen it many times before,...

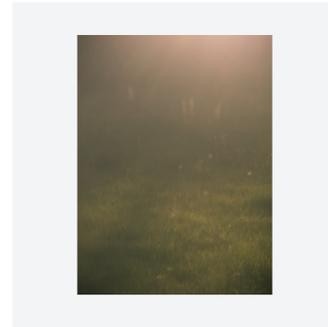
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Longing for Warmth

A sunset where rose-gold light slips behind the clouds. A remembrance of warmth, of softness, of golden moments ~...

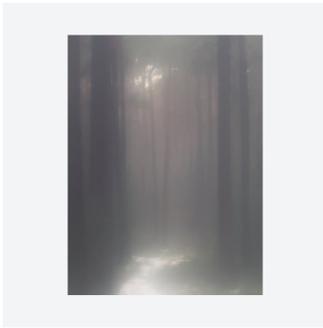
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Received from the Sky

Backlight is an essential element in my photographs - always. I love walking half-blind into the light and catching those...

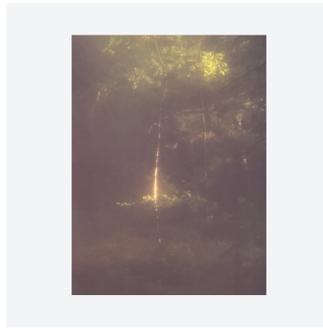
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A Last Trace Then Darkness

The day's final light falls silver through the trunks; on the ground, snow gathers and - through the grease I applied ~...

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Becoming Ember

When light pierces the forest and, like a spotlight, illuminates individual crowns and trunks, the woods become a stage...

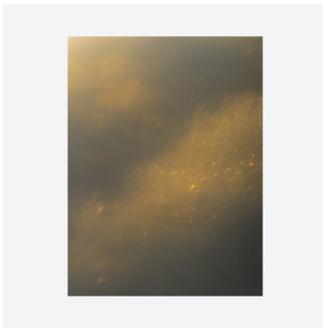
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In the Grass

In this photograph, soft, delicate colors emerge—reddish violet in the shadows, shifting into green and gold across th...

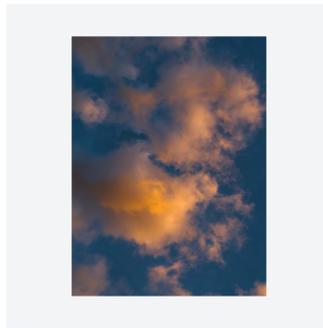
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The Light Knows the Place

An autumn evening in the meadow hollow: golden-orange light settles on the leaves of the trees. It sparkles like golden...

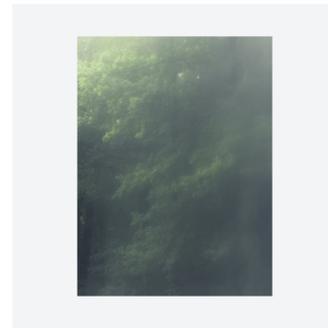
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Great Wings Great Blue

Rarely have I seen a sky in Germany colored like this. Like yolk, yellow pours into the blue; the clouds feel bold...

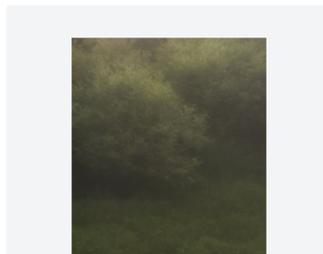
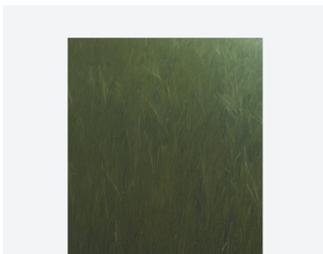
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The Day Drifts Softly

Wind bends branches and leaves into sweeping arcs. The grease emphasizes the blur - individual leaves melting into ...

© Ulrike Pichl





Tell Me About Waiting

Wheat in a field, still fully green, ripening slowly in its own time. A waiting for late summer and harvest - for efforts to...

© Ulrike Pichl



Green Sea

Softness, wildness, tenderness - this image holds them all. Light almost caresses the shrub tops; the deep green below...

© Ulrike Pichl

Portfolio Feedback

Greetings Ulrike,

Before even seeing your project title, the word that comes to mind is poetic to describe your photographs.

Your beautifully capture sfumato read like old renaissance paintings with the soft light, hazel appearance. The depth and quality is so interesting in image 5 like the strongest bit of light glistening like the sun. I'm transported into another era. Images 4 and 7 also possess this strong impression of sfumato.

The color palettes are just right to evoke that feeling. I would encourage you to expand and do a series of your most compelling 5 Becoming Ember as it focuses on a single tree in the forest. It doesn't only have to be trees but more central focused subjects like the tree. Somehow the scale of the tree reminds me of many renaissance paintings where the green landscape and this type of light was so prevalent.

Another subject of nature in your Sfumatographies, are clouds. Also very present in the renaissance paintings and I see the similarity most closely in 2 Longing for Warmth. The warm golden light sets a mood. And the cloud feels ever so delicate. The halo and shape captured at the right timing in 1. Somehow I feel this one could possibly have more contrast like in 8 to bring out the form just a bit. While the work is different you may enjoy seeing this artist series on clouds: Erwan Frotin. <https://artandcommerce.com/artists/erwan-frotin/new-work/flux/flux-atmosphere/>

Your creative use of grease and liquid to evoke dreamlike mood and atmospheric imagery is also truly touching in certain images like 3, 6, 7. These tight vignettes lull me into a meditative state, like wondering through a misty fog. And think because you don't use filters and effects, they do feel spontaneous and unidentifiable. So I encourage you in further experimentation and to push the effects as they feel right to you. The work has a consistency overall (exception of 8) that shows your creative style and vision which is no doubt why it's been recognized and deservingly so.

Your originality shows and the deliberate process helps you achieve that, I enjoy very much the sensitivity. Submitted as singles, it's really about the strongest most compelling images that stand out. The poetic title add to the experience and caption descriptions combine good amount of poetry as well as the process-making from my perspective.

I wish you much creativity in the New Year ahead and on your continued journey with nature!

More links below for inspiration as well:

<https://lenscratch.com/nature-photography/>

Additional Recommendations

Recommendations for Gaining Exposure

- [Lenscratch](#)
- [Hyperallergic](#)

Outlets for Exposure

- [International Open Calls](#)

Photo Business & Practice Resources

- [F-Stop Magazine](#)

Relevant Quotes from Past Jurors

- [""But the most important thing for me is to 'hear' the photographer's own voice. The subject and way of showing should be specific to the artist and their perspective."" — Sujong Song](#)

Photo Festivals & Events (rest of the world)

- [Lenswork List of International Festivals](#)

Portfolio Reviews (Europe)

- [Portfolio Review \(Germany\)](#)

Photographers (nature & wildlife)

- [Terri Wiefenbach](#)

Books (fine art philosophy & criticism)

- [What is a Photograph? \(Carol Squires\)](#)

Other Resources

- [Alternative Process - Lenscratch](#)
- [Photo Place Gallery - Alternative Process exhibition](#)

Photo Festivals & Events (Europe)

- [Eyes On European Month of Photography](#)

Recommended Books & Photographers

- [Soho Gallery - Alternative Process Competition](#)

New Recommendations

- [Point A to Point B: analog explorations](#)

Books (business & practice of art & photography)

- [Alternative Photographic Practices: Crafting Handmade Images \(Brady Wilks\)](#)

Photographers (fine art & street)

- [Alexey Titarenko](#)

Project Statement

I photograph and I write. Nature is the protagonist of my images. I capture its vitality, poetry, darkness, and beauty in my photographs. Since 2019 I have been capturing moments I encounter on my daily walks in the woods, or simply by looking out of the window, and in my garden. Many of my photographs are made in the immediate surroundings of my home, because an often limiting illness means that on many days I cannot leave the house.

I often work with liquids and grease on the lens. In this way I can capture the soft, shimmering glow and the ceaseless movement of nature; forms and colours merge with light and produce a gentle radiance.

This creates a dreamlike, ambiguous atmosphere. In reference to the term sfumato, I call my photographs "sfumatographs."

Visible traces of grease, grainy passages, blur, and smears are part of my work and are deliberately left unretouched. I don't use digital filters or blur effects—the look of my images is created by the grease and the liquids I use.

With my photographs I explore the borderlands between the visible, association, and inner life. The shifts between sharpness and blur created by the grease intensify the perception of colour and make the singular quality of an otherwise fleeting moment all the more vividly apparent.

My images are often understood intuitively for what they are: fleeting, beautiful, truthful moments - dark as well as luminous - within us and beyond us. My photographs are an invitation to open oneself to life.

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