



## Galloway Photographic Collective

*In southwest Scotland, the creative whole is greater than the sum of its parts*

Dumfries and Galloway in southwest Scotland has long been the inspiration for many creative talents: Robert Burns, Thomas Carlyle and James Matthew Barrie were all influenced by this part of the country. The beautiful, rural landscape has also inspired painters such as Archie Sutter Watt, Edward Atkinson Hornel, and Charles Oppenheimer. It is no coincidence that Wigtown hosts one of the country's largest book festivals, or that Kirkcudbright is known as 'the artists' town.' Dumfries and Galloway punches well above its weight in the culture category, with a plethora of artistic gatherings throughout the year.

Historically, photography has been

one of the lesser celebrated arts here. Part of the problem is that photography is an insular art form, with few opportunities for professional photographers to engage with the public at large or to share ideas and seek inspiration. That changed four years ago when several local photographers created Galloway Photographic Collective with the belief that there was more to be gained from sharing opportunities and experiences than from working in isolation across a large rural region.

Today Galloway Photographic Collective is comprised of seven photographers, whose desire it is to promote photography as a major art form, especially to newcomers in the field. The members of the

Collective also inspire and enlighten each other through regular meetings, presentations, internal workshops, and shared excursions.

Interacting with the wider community, Galloway Photographic Collective has its own website and Facebook page, hosts exhibitions, produces a weekly blog, supports local charity events, and runs photography workshops. And there are bigger projects on the horizon as well, including an effort to save a disused historic building through the creation of a major photography centre.

*Let's meet the photographers...*

### Kim Ayres

For Ayres, storytelling is at the heart of his photography. He takes an idea and cranks it up several levels. With photos that move from illustrative to painterly,



vintage to fantastical, detailed to cinematic, he explores how images are created with light, line and composition. For Ayres, studying the techniques of painters and cinematographers is as important as examining the work of other photographers.

He is the first to admit that his photography is less about capturing a moment than it is about creating one. "I have huge respect for those who sit in a hide or on a hilltop for hours until the right combination of light and action coincides, but I've never had the patience for that. I love to construct my images - working out locations, props and outfits, and moving the people and lighting around inside the scene until everything works."

[www.kimayres.co.uk](http://www.kimayres.co.uk)



## Holly Burns

Burns is as conceptual photographer who creates thought-provoking imagery that is often autobiographical in content. She specializes in compositing - the process of layering many photographs in post-production - to create her surreal art. Although it may appear fantastical and dreamlike, her work is based on her own life experiences, imagination and emotions. Burns works with a selection of models, but given the intimate nature of her visions she often creates self-portraits as a starting point. She then blends these portraits with a combination of Scottish landscapes and studio set-ups, imbuing them with layers of symbolism along the way. Although her images are deeply rooted in her own psyche, Burns endeavours, through her use of semiotics, to provide an insight into her subject matter that the viewer can empathize with. "My work provides opportunities for many interpretations that I hope render it relatable to everyone."

[www.facebook.com/hollyburnsphotography](http://www.facebook.com/hollyburnsphotography)



## Tom Langlands

After a thirty-five-year career as an architect, Langlands decided to embrace his other passions of writing and photography. Although he enjoys taking photographs of - and writing about - all sorts of subject matter, he has a particular love of the Celtic nations and Scotland in particular. Throughout his student years he worked during holiday periods in photography shops, and spent many hours fly-fishing on Scotland's beautiful rivers. It was this combination of interests that led him in recent years to pursue his love of nature and wildlife photography. He is never more at home than when he is lying beside a mountain stream or Highland loch capturing those special wildlife moments that so many people never see. Through his wildlife images, Langlands attempts to take the viewer into the world of his subjects, providing a new perspective that raises awareness of the natural world.

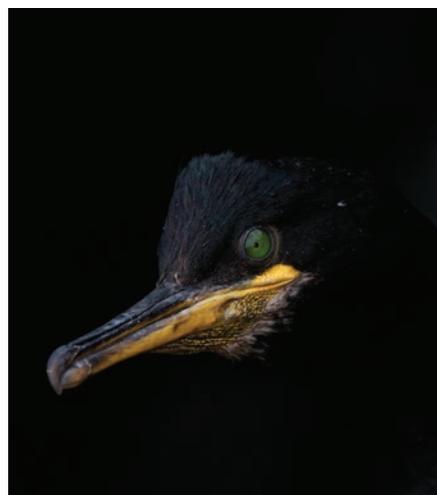
[www.tomlanglandsphotography.com](http://www.tomlanglandsphotography.com)



## Roger Lever

Lever trained in Edinburgh as a veterinary surgeon but, nearing retirement, reduced his working hours to take his lifelong passion for photography on a trip into the unknown. Perhaps unsurprisingly for a vet, wildlife and nature are at the forefront of his work, but he has now extended this to include portraiture, weddings, and more recently, film. Always exploring new ideas he is passionate about his ongoing '1000 Faces Scotland' project: "I travel all around Scotland photographing and video recording all kinds of people talking about themselves and their varied and often remarkable life experiences. I intend to continue this as long as I can hold a camera." He uploads his fascinating social commentary of a nation's people for everyone to enjoy at [www.1000facesScotland.com](http://www.1000facesScotland.com). His personable and unobtrusive approach also makes Lever a much sought-after wedding photographer who undertakes commissions across Scotland.

[www.rogerleverphotography.com](http://www.rogerleverphotography.com)





## Laura Hudson Mackay

Living in a castle in Scotland, and with a base in Morocco, it isn't difficult to understand how Mackay is inspired by both Celtic and Arabian lore. She explains her approach to this cultural overlap as an endeavour to illuminate mysterious secrets from the most ancient of tales. "I explore the connections between past, present and future - seen and unseen, stillness and chaos. In the natural world I search for nexus points - thin places that afford glimpses between our world and otherworld." Choosing to shoot primarily in black and white, Mackay uses both digital and film cameras, and has recently returned to using traditional darkroom processes to create her work. When she isn't running photographic tours of the ancient walled city of Marrakech, the nearby High Atlas Mountains, or the Sahara desert, Mackay spends time in her studio documenting the fine detail of natural objects and paying particular attention to structure and form.

[www.laurahudsonmackay.co.uk](http://www.laurahudsonmackay.co.uk)



## David Moses

The noted portraiture work of Moses peels back the superficial layers of his subjects' appearances to reveal their characters. His project - 'The Scots' - typifies the way he portrays narrative moments in contemporary Scottish life. Placing his subjects in their everyday setting, Moses crafts his images around them. His compositions are sparse and provide only a few clues about the subject, requiring the viewer to fill in the gaps. Moses points out that although some of his images have a similar *feel*, his subjects are not linked. "It is a wandering perspective. The project started at home, worked its way out and collects subjects as it goes. There are no criteria, only a willingness to be photographed. Sometimes it is people who are passed in the street, sometimes an old acquaintance, sometimes someone who has heard of the project." This serendipitous approach allows the project to evolve in interesting and organic ways.

[www.davidmoses.photoshelter.com](http://www.davidmoses.photoshelter.com)



## Allan Wright

Wright has been photographing Scotland's landscape for over 30 years. He has had nine books of his images published, along with hundreds of calendars and postcards. He understands the Scottish landscape intimately, and embraces the vagaries of its weather. "Even on a bad day, Scotland has a depth of beauty I have rarely seen elsewhere in my travels. Its moods, textures and forms are seemingly inexhaustible - there's more than a life's work out there." Wright uses colour and form to generate harmony in his compositions. He spends nearly two years exploring a particular region or theme to generate images that will form the basis of a book, other printed media, or stock library uploads. Current projects include landscapes of the Isle of Skye, as well as his home region of Galloway. When he isn't travelling and taking photographs, he allocates time to developing a program of workshops for aspiring landscape photographers.

[www.allanwrightphoto.com](http://www.allanwrightphoto.com)

You can follow the work of Galloway Photographic Collective on the group's website or Facebook page, both of which provide links to weekly blogs and more information about the photographers.

[www.gallowayphotocollective.co.uk](http://www.gallowayphotocollective.co.uk) • [www.facebook.com/gallowayphotocollective](https://www.facebook.com/gallowayphotocollective)

