

Wildphotos 2011 or Inspiration

On Sunday I received an e mail from Sheilah which read "I have just had a seriously inspiring two days and thought it might be good to include my reasons in the next newsletter". This is what Sheilah wrote:

Wildscreen, a charity working globally to promote an appreciation of biodiversity and nature through the power of wildlife imagery, and the Veolia Environnement Wildlife Photographer of the Year come together annually at the Royal Geographic Society to create Wildphotos. This is 2 days of hearing some of the World's best wildlife photographers talk about their work and gasping at the images they created.

I could hijack Rays newsletter and write in detail about Andy Rouse's animal portraits (and the tips he got from Lord Litchfield) or how I found tears running down my face at Jurgen Freund's images of shark finning (don't get me talking about that subject) or laughed about the short introductory pieces about embarrassing moments in top photographers lives, but as with Benjam Pontinen's prize winning photograph less is more!

Some of these photographs have helped create nature reserves, have changed politician's minds and you can see why, but there was also helpful sessions on getting work published from the editrix of BBC Wildlife Magazine, the wildlife photo editrix of National Geographic and the photo director of the German magazine GEO. A photo agent gave a piece on how to sell your photos and a social media enthusiast showed how to use those sites to promote your work.

The big names mingled with the hoi polli during the breaks, I found myself chatting to Andy Rouse (who greeted me by name to prove he can read) in the queue for tea, Jurgen Freund over lunch & Mark Carwardine as I entered the auditorium. Stanfords had a book stall (and, surprisingly, photographers were available at breaks to sign books), Canon had a demonstration of their products over lunch, photo libraries, clothing companies etc had small stands should you feel inclined to part with your cash.

I found this symposium advertised on a website I visit regularly and booked as 2 days indulgence for myself. I wasn't sure I would enjoy it, but I did, very much so. I don't think I will go next year, but I'm certain I will in 2013. I was inspired, I shall be following work of specific photographers on their websites (if not their Facebook pages) and I shall be spending more time with my camera.

www.nhm.ac.uk/visit-us/whats-on/temporary-exhibitions/wpy/

www.wildscreen.org.uk/news-wildphotos

In a subsequent e mail Sheilah elaborated on the effect of her two days at the symposium.

"I took the most notes from Andy Rouse, but Andrew Parkinson produced such stunning work from on his own doorstep. I have decided that I shall photograph my cat (a challenge I have been scared of because he is black & shiny) and spend some time at home with my camera even if it's only deer & phessies!"

We look forward to seeing Sheilah's images in the future. For those of you on Twitter you can follow Wild Photos on @wild_photos