

# VIEW-FINDERS

## *Conceptual Landscape Photography*

Conceptual landscape photography is an image or series of images based on a thought or idea where this concept is more important than, but integral to, the finished work. Often it is an exploration that becomes both a body of work and the driving force behind it, and stems from a need to communicate that concept to those who see it.

Pembrokeshire with its diversity of light, weather, geographical features and spiritual depth draws many creative people to settle here. This is a short article, and so only three such photographers, each with an image of their work, can be featured. A book may follow, which will expand on this.

**Lisa Gabrielle Whitfield** was born in Poole, Dorset and from childhood has travelled throughout the world. Her siblings are all involved in photography in one way or another. Lisa discovered Pembrokeshire in 2001, when her parents moved here, and, 18 months ago, she took over Celtic Images Gallery at Hilton Court, where other landscape photographers are showcased as well as her own imaginative approach to the genre. See [ww.celticimages.co.uk](http://ww.celticimages.co.uk) or telephone 01437 711 110.

Although Lisa has worked worldwide, she chose to explore this area photographically because she finds it 'exotic'. Her interest in diving led her to a fascination with the idea that what exists beneath the surface is hidden from a casual observer but is as important and interesting as any surface landscape. It is



a hidden world that is not accessible to everyone, but with the correct equipment and knowledge Lisa is able to take others with her to experience this magical element of Pembrokeshire. The image featured here, 'Lily and the Bridge', illustrates this clearly, showing as it does Bosherton Lily Ponds half below and half above the surface. 'The conscious and subconscious world around us ...'

'Lily and the Bridge'

© Lisa Gabrielle

# HEATHER BENNETT *photographer*



'Beating the Bounds'

© Chris Tancock

**Chris Tancock** was born in Devon in 1957. He studied photography at Trent Polytechnic and went on to work for two decades in documentary, and then architectural interior, photography for various magazines. He has been based at Nolton Haven in Pembrokeshire for many years, and since 2003 has worked exclusively as a Fine Art Photographer.

Chris is captivated by Pembrokeshire's ever-changing light and the way it affects the story told by individual components of the landscape. He finds the county full of secrets, particularly the quiet, deserted inland areas. He says, 'I photograph ideas, not the scene' and likens his work to literature where images build into sentences, paragraphs, chapters and, ultimately, novels.

Always seeking to weave a complex relationship between his subject matter and the viewer, he is profoundly committed to long-term projects which map the continual physical and emotional changes taking place around him.

I found him to be a true well-spring of creativity and hope for the Fine Art field.

This image is one from his *Beating the Bounds* project and is a 'sentence' – it is part of a small event in the larger event being photographed over a period of years. Contact him through [www.christancock.co.uk](http://www.christancock.co.uk) or telephone 01437 710 589.

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**Gary Llewellyn** was born in Pembrokeshire in 1978. His father encouraged an interest in photography from an early age, and so when Gary took a Masters in Environmental Education – an element of which relied on photographic evidence – he could call on this knowledge. Returning to the county, he collected a portfolio of local images which he rapidly discarded as ‘chocolate box’, going on to explore and market a different concept. He has now opened Llewellyn’s Gallery in Sovereign House, Milford Haven. See [www.garyllewellyn.co.uk](http://www.garyllewellyn.co.uk) or telephone 01646 697 282 or 07812 996934.



‘Boulder Glaze’

© Gary Llewellyn

After university, Gary was drawn back here by close family and the dream which is Pembrokeshire. He is driven by the need to fit light and content together to make an exact composition. He visualizes an image in its totality before going out into the landscape, but is fully aware of the need to adapt according to time of day, weather and light. One strand of his body of work explores the emotional atmosphere created by images taken at low light, and another the tonal ranges of colour and how they interact. The image shown here is ‘Boulder Glaze’ – a slow exposure with camera held near the ground, creating an emotional response of being connected right to the water and the wet, glowing rocks.

Each of these artists differs in their conceptual approach, but are similar in their desire to explore the boundaries of photography and to push those to a space that communicates not just landscape as a picture but as a way to illustrate how we as humans are connected to the world around us. Lisa takes us below the surface of our world, Chris breaks up whole images – either into a series of works or into a single statement that is more than landscape, lit in a way that is dictated by the subject itself – and Gary fills the frame with ever-expanding images drawing the viewer to become part of Pembrokeshire itself.

**Heather Bennett**