



Phil Hill Photography  
[www.philhillphotography.com](http://www.philhillphotography.com)

2011 • YEARBOOK

Welcome to the 2011 Phil Hill Photography Yearbook, a collection of my best images from the past year.

 **Phil Hill** Photographer

“It took all day, my feet know this more than most but I did it... Second day in and make the crazy decision to go for a nice stroll from Harlem in the north of Manhattan all the way down and across Brooklyn bridge. I urge you to look at a map of the city and then realise the madness, even with my newly developed London legs contrary to the people I see who wait for, and then ride the bus for just one stop. Setting off more or less at the crack of dawn taking in a good amount of sights along the way it was worth it, if only to catch a glimpse of the sun setting over the Statue of Liberty (although in the distance)”

- February 19th, 2011.

Coney Island, New York.



Bethesda Terrace arcade, Central Park, New York.

“An area that once housed the potential of complete and utter destruction is now nothing more than a series of leisure activities, for the locals, and their dogs”

- February 26th, 2011.





“Secretly I have always liked a quick turnaround, disruption of the status quo makes life more interesting. That said I had two weeks notice to go do a shoot in Migori, Western Kenya, which also meant running around sorting all my jabs and tablets too – I had never been to Africa before. It was all hands on deck, I am still not sure if I pulled it off! It felt time passed even quicker once I arrived in Nairobi, overnight from Heathrow, before being bundled into a car for a 7-hour drive to southern part of West Kenya, near Lake Victoria and just shy of Tanzania. Before I knew it, I was heading back up to Nairobi to catch a flight to Mombasa”

- April 10th, 2011.



'Sandman' Bamburi beach, Mombassa.

# Artisans

In Western Kenya, it is a hand to mouth existence. Many locals turn to a toxic environment, searching for any small amount of gold



Down a rocky, rutted, hardly used trail, an aging Land-Cruiser creeks and violently judders its way as our guide Aleshia navigates precariously through the tough terrain, towards the old mine site at Macalder, in the South Western Nyanza region of Kenya. Entering the site a man and woman are busy working next to an imposing derelict concrete structure, left behind from the days this was a vast copper mine, the man digs as the woman takes the soil, pouring it into a makeshift sluice. Shut down in the Sixties, all that remains of the mine are a few foundations and vast open shafts serving as ventilation for the underground network of tunnels.

Much more dominant still is the tailings dam, towering piles of waste material; left over's from the excavations, still full of precious minerals that were unable to be extracted at the time, due to technology and economic viability. At its peak, the Macalder area produced around 1 million ounces of gold between 1920 and 1950. Children play bare-footed between the mounds, stained yellow from Sulphur with air thick with its distinct heavy smell, chemicals leech out into standing water from recent

rains, turning blood red, caused by 'acid mine drainage' which in the past aided extraction of the gold. A process resulting in parts of the nearby river Migori to record PH levels of 3-1 acidity, hugely affecting much of the wildlife that lives there.

The 4x4 can only be driven so far, leaving it next to the ruins we walk the rest of the way. In a scene reminiscent of Sebastiao Salgado's workers series, I witness what is a hive of activity. At the entrance to a large cave a man gestures at us to come over, on the whole everyone seems happy for us to wander around. We walk over, the man who shows us a piece of Gossan stone, optimistic, he hopes it contains enough gold to justify his efforts, "about 2 ounces" he tells Aleshia who then translates it back to me. There are around 200-recorded Artisan prospects in the Macalder area, they work all hours the sun allows, doubling their efforts after any rain, the water makes it easier to sift the soil.

Back in the car, towards camp, we make a stop off at a bore mill, a fairly common sight along this stretch of road and an important part of the gold extraction process.



Artisan miner, Macalder, Kenya.



Mercury refined gold.

Rocks and soil taken from Macalder are brought to one of the many mills on the backs of mules to be crushed and then panned.

A man sits by a concrete pool as he takes a small amount of the crushed material into a metal dish containing liquid Mercury, he no trouble handling this extremely harmful substance, swirling it around in the pan. Mercury binds the gold together separating it from the rest of the soil. Using a piece of muslin cloth he takes the panned gold and draws it between his fingers, drain-

ing off the mercury, I watch as it drips back into the dish. Opening up the muslin, he then tips the contents into his hand to show me, the result is anticlimactic. Expecting to see a fresh, glistening, golden nugget, I am presented with a small, dull, silver lump of metal. A result of the mercury processing I am told. It is a monumental effort for a relatively small amount of gold, Grasburg open pit in Indonesia, the largest gold mine in the world, produced 58,474,392 grams of gold in 2006 , the Artisans are lucky if they get a few...

**View the the rest of the article and images**



Acid mine drainage.



Locals dig for soil and 'sluice' for minerals.



Mercury refined gold.



Union Jack in Southwold, Suffolk, UK.

“I would just like to take this opportunity to congratulate Will and Kate... on the extra bank holiday, it was great”

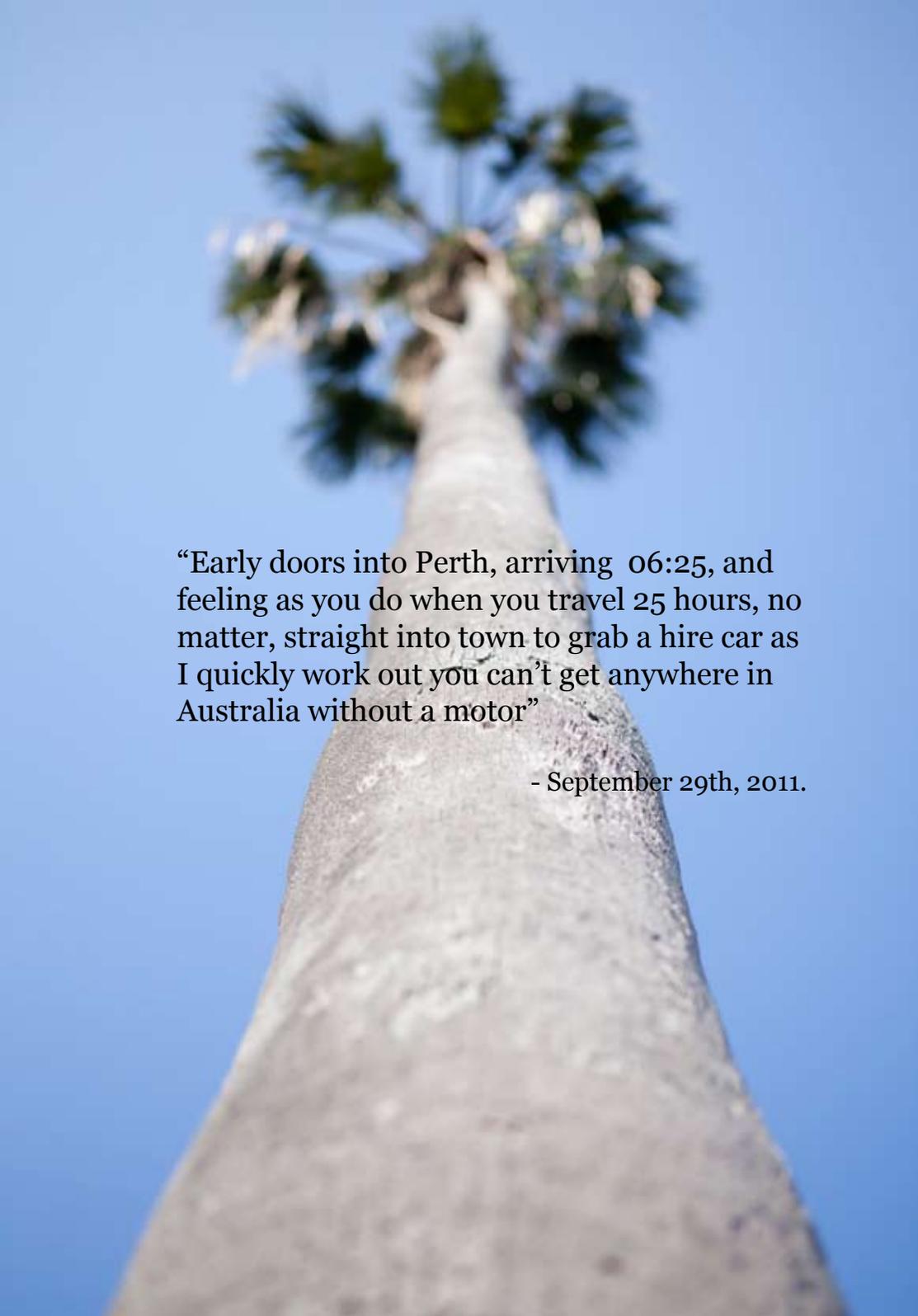
- April 29th, 2011.



Southwold, Suffolk, UK.



Dunkirk, Northern France.



“Early doors into Perth, arriving 06:25, and feeling as you do when you travel 25 hours, no matter, straight into town to grab a hire car as I quickly work out you can’t get anywhere in Australia without a motor”

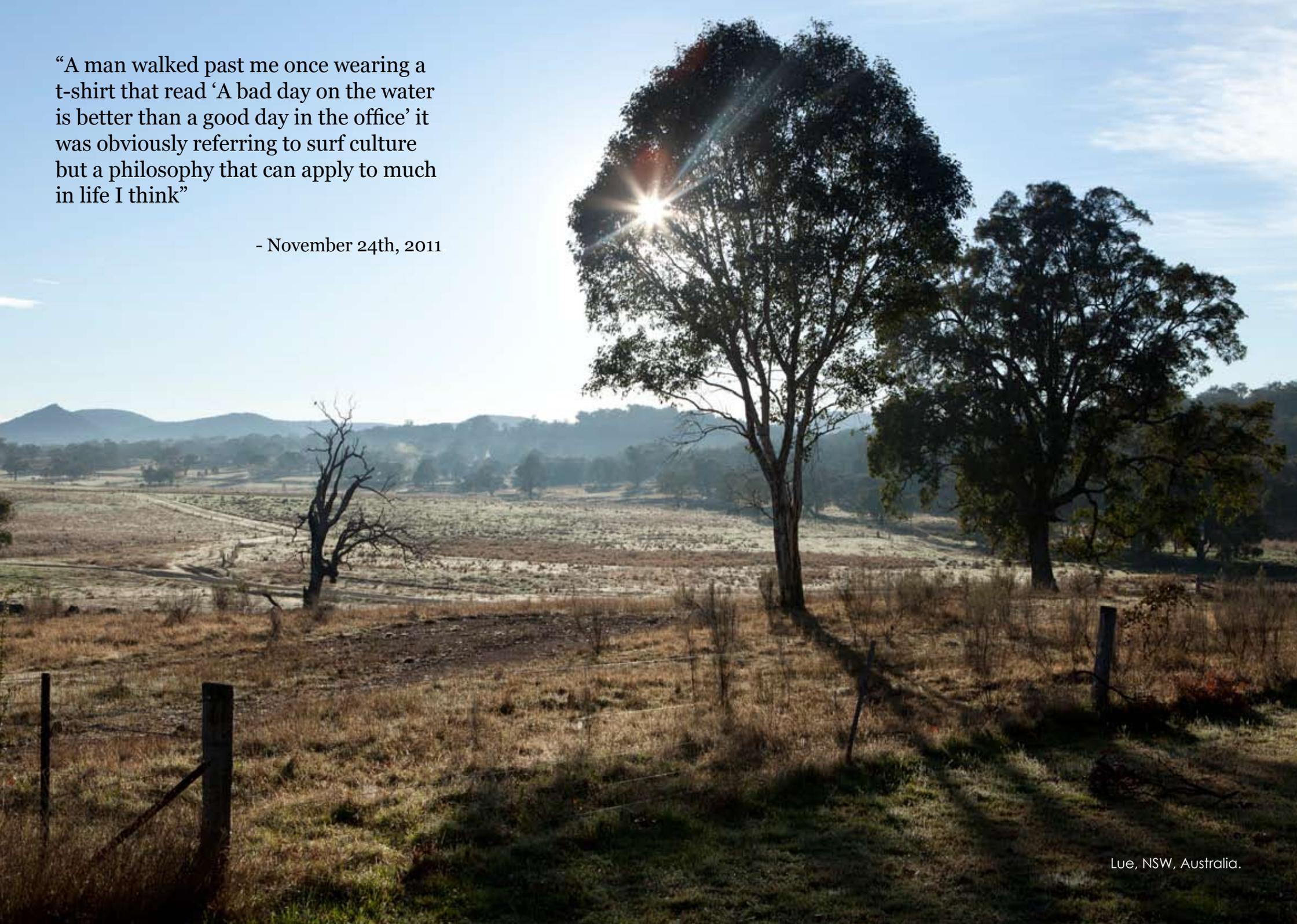
- September 29th, 2011.



Swan river, Perth. Australia

“A man walked past me once wearing a t-shirt that read ‘A bad day on the water is better than a good day in the office’ it was obviously referring to surf culture but a philosophy that can apply to much in life I think”

- November 24th, 2011



# The Brookton Chair *Shufflers*

Driving the Brookton Highway I spotted a small chair with a name written on it in bold marker pen but kept on driving thinking nothing more about it. Then not too much further there was another, 100 yards down the road from that there was another one, then another all in front of trees, all with different names on different kinds of chairs. I decided I had to stop and photograph them. At first I thought that this was a local memorial to the victim of a road accident, there were just too many chairs and surely such a black spot should of been dealt with long ago. With some of the chairs photographed I continued the journey to Wave Rock and finished the trip I had underestimated, vowing to find out more about the mysterious chairs when I got back.

In Perth the following evening I turned to Google and queried the chairs on the off-chance there would be a little more info on them. It would seem that they are a mystery to the entirety of Western Australia, the only coverage was a couple of blog posts dated a few years ago by people who regularly traverse the highway. The only headway made was in discerning that the people behind it are aptly name 'The Brookton Chair Shufflers' due to the chairs moving position, disappearing and reappearing along this stretch of outback road. Claiming that it could be some sort of Art installation, maybe Brookton has their very own 'Banksy'. The chairs remain a bit of a mystery.



Brookton Highway, West Australia.





“I reclined back into my chair in quiet contentment, of all the places I had wanted to visit in my lifetime, Sydney was right up there, and now found myself sat looking at one of the most recognizable scenes in the world”

- December 14th, 2011.

Outside Sydney Opera House, Sydney, Australia.



“Where are you from?, UK, I replied. Ah, welcome, many nations here, many nations”

Water bottle seller, Sydney, Australia.

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