

## NEW Nature: A Photographic Essay

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*"We must, between periods of digging in the dark, endeavor always to transform our tears into knowledge."*

Alain de Botton

Even though writing about photography is like dancing about architecture, there are a few things that need to be said. There always has been a compulsion to explain all types of images. It is a desire to tell what pictures are about, or more importantly, to tell us what the pictures mean. There have always been captions. Sometimes ad-libbed, sometimes integral, but somebody always has a comment. Occasionally even the photographer.

New Nature? It sounds like it is what is left over after we have made a mess of almost everything, and perhaps it is. The jury is still out on that one. Seamus Heaney has written that, "Poetry or great writing of any kind provides a culture with images adequate to its predicament." Most images are about recording. Making evidence. Trying to hold an instant in your eyes. Yet there are other types of image making. Some walk in the land of fantasy. Some dwell in the realm of the macabre, but many exist as questions. The most interesting are those that don't provide answers. Probably we photographers have not the patience for the cumbersome process of change. Hearing and listening are entirely different from seeing.

The images presented here are tools for pondering. They are not about beauty. They are about wondering and wandering. They are questions. And most of them ask the question, "What in the world is going on here?" Occasionally, they provoke smiles, hardly ever do they provide any answers.

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See Gary's work at <[www.garydwyerphotography.com](http://www.garydwyerphotography.com)>. His books are available on iTunes, Lulu, and Amazon.



Photographers have often made images of what we identified as 'Nature' or its destruction. Instead, my interests are those places where environmental and cultural values have collided visually. Of course, much of what we consider as 'Nature' is wrapped up in botany as the representative. But our new concept of botany is much closer to ornamental horticulture than it is to wild and dangerous nature so what we are used to seeing is plants that have been managed and somewhat tamed. Much of the new nature is the new botany. The resulting Images contain duality, irony, and reflection. My images often indicate constraints and isolation and demonstrate the increasing complexity of our relationship with the totality of our environment and are evidence of "The New Nature".

It was thought that 'Nature' was something out there; rocks, trees, and etc. Some contemporary theories believe 'Nature' now, is us. And, now, we collectively inhabit visually saturated and image dominated cultures. A time when our images commonly present disparate, discordant visual elements. And, not surprisingly, also a time of incessant simultaneity. In our actions and our images, the currents and suppositions of contemporary cultures are colliding; crashing in waves of turbulence and confusion. If you think a photograph is a simple truth, you have not been paying attention.



*Two forms of power,  
near Nafplio, Greece.*

*Apartment mural,  
Warsaw, Poland.*



*One storm in front and one behind, Eastern  
Sierra, California.*



*'Nice tree, stay in your box.'*  
Grenoble, France.



*Solo surfer,*  
Kalapana, Hawaii.

*Horse's ass in the rain,*  
San Carlos, Nicaragua.



*School playground,  
Monteverde, Costa Rica.*



*Sun bleach,  
Alsace, France.*



*Palace grounds,  
Menaggio, Italy.*



*Desert Campsite,  
near Las Vegas, Nevada.*



*"Harold, it's time to trim that hedge again."  
Dunedin, New Zealand.*



*Laguna Lake,  
San Luis Obispo, California.*

*Black beach,  
Santorini, Greece.*



*Dust storm, Death Valley, California.*



*The concrete deer has lost an ear,  
San Luis Obispo, California.*





*McMansions bordering the freeway, near San Jose, California.*

*Near the town of Volcano, Hawaii.*



*River trout, Cahors, France.*





*Empty billboard,  
Algarve, Portugal.*



*Inside climber,  
San Francisco, California.*



*Red table,  
Central Indonesia.*