

September 2020

# ICM Photography Magazine

Reimagining the World Through Intentional Camera Movement

————— [www.icmphotomag.com](http://www.icmphotomag.com) —————

# Bruce Peebles

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[www.brucepeebles.com.au](http://www.brucepeebles.com.au)

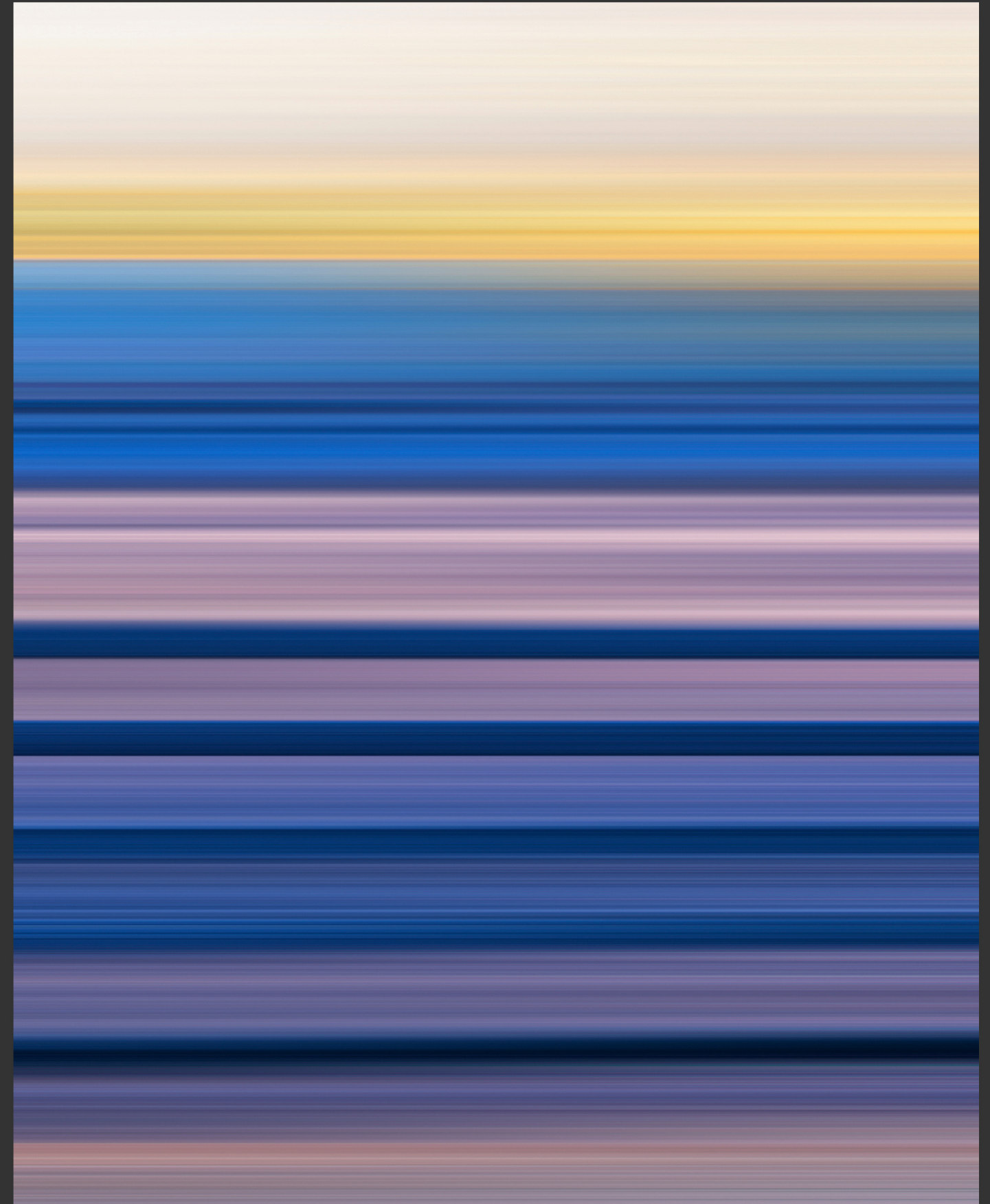
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Rhythm and motion are the driving forces in my art. I choose to photograph elements of the landscape in a simplistic fashion, as I'm obsessed by the exchange between realistic and abstract form.

Using a carefully limited, and often complementary palette, I work to create a sense of energy between the basic substances of earth, water, and air. I draw inspiration from the texture and movement that the first marks make on the canvas. I believe this holds the photograph's soul, so I pursue the character and story contained within.

When making my art, I search for elements, structure, and places that intuitively fit into 'my reality.' This is why I frequently create imagery that is full of rhythms, colors, lines, and most importantly, motion.



~ Across the Divide ~

Looking across sand, water, sand, and water again to a sky colored by the setting sun. Some very slow panning abstracts the image into a wonderful grouping of complimentary colors.

# Primordial Landscapes

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## My Art:

I've always had an interest in the arts and took my first photographs as an 11 year old with my mother's Box Brownie.

The subjects were the cattle and activities around the farm. I remember lying on the ground waiting as the cattle came closer for some low angle shots. Also on that first roll was a staged set-up with the tractor's front bucket high in the air and the driver standing (not sitting) so he became more prominent. On another, I used backlight to silhouette. Looking back, those first black and whites as an 11 year old were quite different to the photo's my mother took with the same camera.

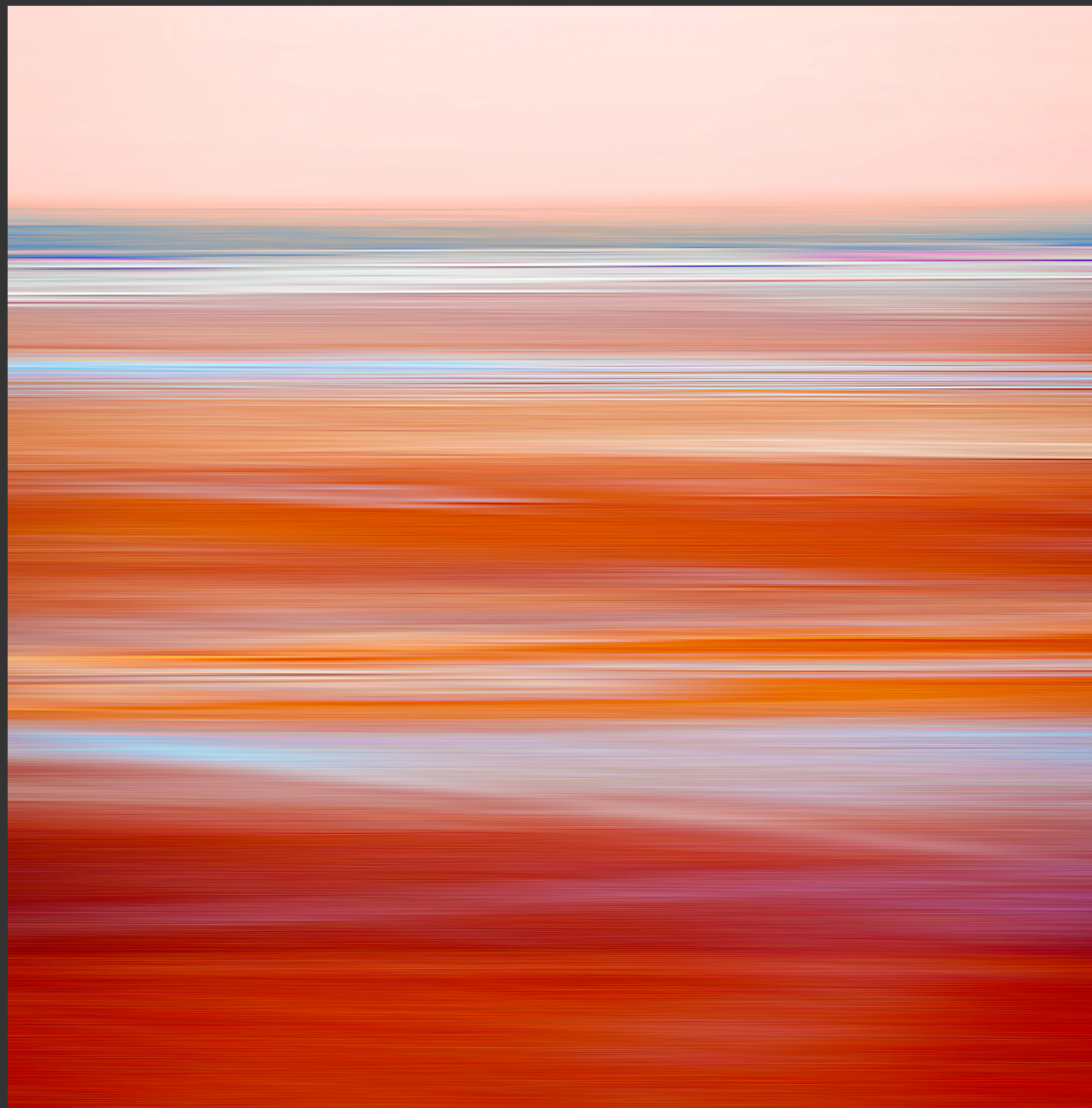
Early on, I began to realise that art has little to do with the materials and equipment used but everything to do with the thoughts and mindset of the artist. This led me to coin the phrase, "*If you can't see it with your mind, you'll never capture it on film.*" I could update that to say: "*capture it with pixels.*"

The good thing about intentional camera movement is that we don't have to get hung up on having the best and most expensive equipment. Any form of capture device will do. Digital technology allows us to experiment, without the high costs of earlier photography methods.

My first group exhibition was at the age of 24, and the series of images was featured on the New Zealand Arts program, Kaleidoscope. These were photographic images created by using Cibachrome color paper and a light bulb. Yes, there was no camera or film involved. They consisted entirely of the light bulb's filament projected onto the paper. Each one was a ground breaking, original, and unique artwork.

From there, I found myself experimenting with removing the camera lens, reversing it, and mounting it into a black painted tube, and then moving it during the exposure. These were my first ICM images. I experimented with infrared, push processing to get super fast grainy film, even alternative and cross processing. I always gravitated towards any process that offered creativity away from the norm.

These days, I'm a photographer, painter, traveler, and artist who finds Australia's natural environment a constant source of inspiration - from the expansive red desert with its azure sky, to the crashing white waves of the surrounding oceans. I often spend several months traveling each year, which allows me to experience the many wonders and contrasts that make up Australia, which I then introduce into my artworks.



~ Across the Desert ~

A low energy image that is best described as calm and reflective. The desert, or aboriginal, people of Australia are interconnected through ceremony, constant travel, and closeness to their traditional country, so in this image I wanted to get a sense of that closeness, distance, and tranquility.

## Creative Process:

I take an abstractive approach to my paintings and photographs, as I like to fill them with rhythms, colours, and motion.

My signature style came about, and is a process, based on my career as a Commercial and Advertising Photographer and then developed through experimentation whilst traveling the rugged coastline of Western Australia. Without realising there was a growing interest in a new photography genre called ICM, I began making a series of images using my version of Intentional Camera Movement. The result is a 'Seascape' series of about 30 square black and white images before progressing into color along Australia's Southern and Eastern Coastlines.

I love using the square format for my art. The square is a perfectly balanced shape encouraging the eye to move around the frame in a circle. The square format is simplistic, there's less room so simplifying the composition becomes a necessity. However, simplifying the composition is much harder than it seems. The trick is to make the subject strong and eliminate as many distractions as possible. I like to centralise the subject for an effective composition and use the empty space around it to emphasise the shape. Negative space is very effective in the square format. For me, the square format works really well with my ICM imaging style.

During my career as an Advertising Photographer, I specialised in photographing high quality jewellery, which required crisp, well structured, and detailed imagery that then appeared in the glossy magazines. My work was almost entirely studio based using large format cameras and specialised lighting. I had no interest in photographing the landscape, until a trip into Australia's interior deserts provided inspiration and awakened my mind to the beauty of this landscape. Utilising my formal training and abandoning most of the rules, I began to see the landscape not as the enemy of studio photography but as an extension of my beliefs as an artist. I set about finding locations, elements, and structures that intuitively fitted into 'my reality.'

I started creating imagery that's full of rhythms, colours, lines and most importantly, motion.

Rhythm and motion are the driving forces in my art. I'm obsessed by the exchange between realistic representation and the abstract form. This is why I choose to photograph elements of the landscape in simplistic fashion.

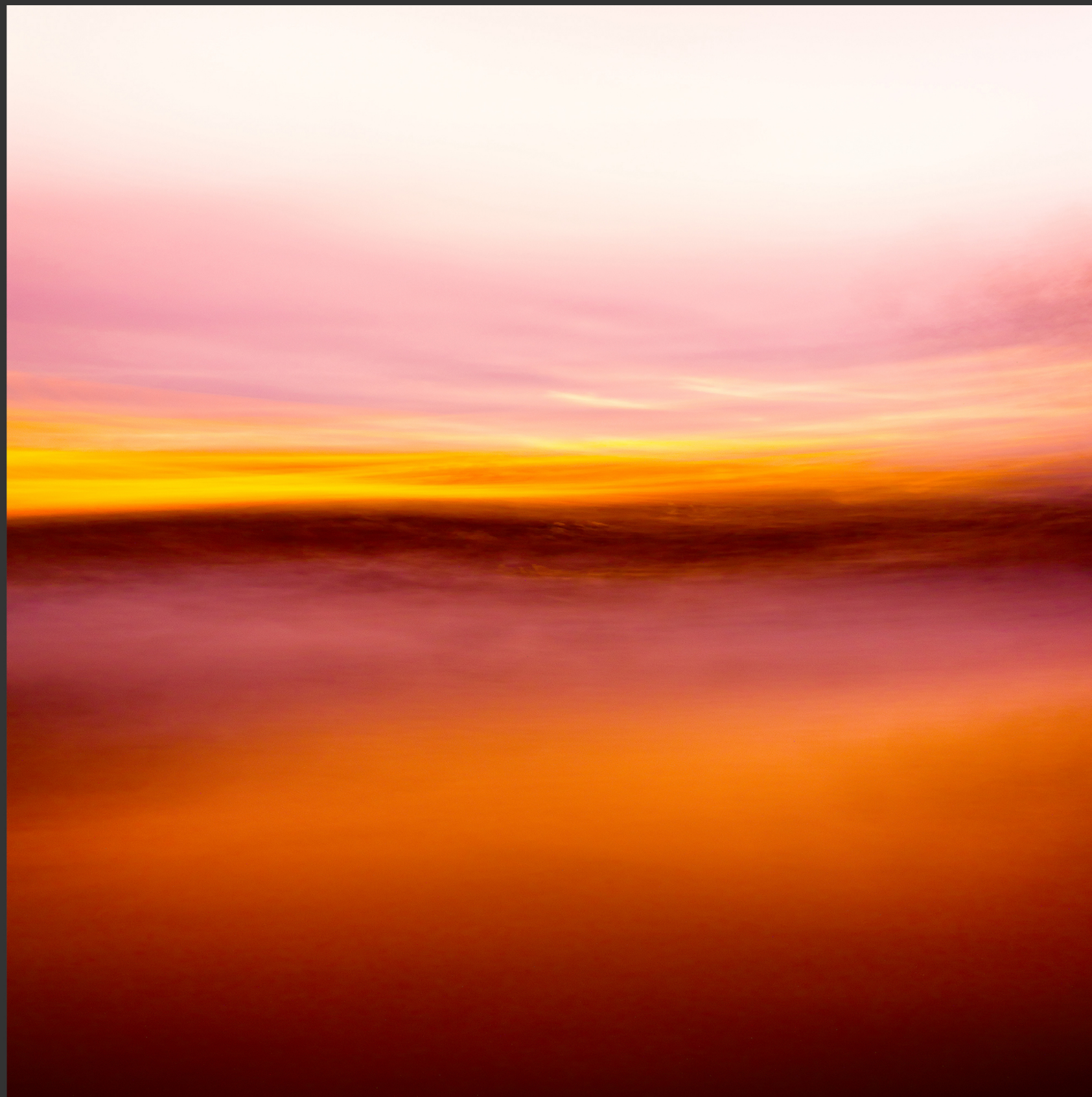
Looking at my work, you might recognise these elements, but at the same time you may perceive these compositions as carefully designed abstractions.

When I study the landscape around me, it reveals some of its soul, yet hides so much more. I'm fascinated by the abstract qualities that I capture and create into what I call 'Primordial Landscapes.'



~ Solitary Sentinel ~

A lone tree stands just above the low tide mark. For how long I don't know, but I suspect that it's seen many thousands of tides and sunrises whilst watching over the eastern coastline of Queensland, Australia. Bearing the scars of its solitary stance, the sentinel welcomes a new dawn with the early light skipping across the shallow water.



~ Mergence ~

Often it is desirable to create an image that combines two or more sections from the landscape into a single part. It's a very primary, very emotional form of communication when we blend or unite gradually, so as to blur each individual identity.

For the series 'Primordial Landscapes,' I photograph the earth's vast seas and lands, producing an extended mediation on the passage of time and the natural history of the earth reduced to its most primordial substances: earth, water and air. Often capturing a moment of absolute tranquillity, I compose the photographs identically, with the horizon line precisely bifurcating each image. The repetition of this strict format reveals the uniqueness of each meeting of land and sky, with the horizon never appearing exactly the same way twice.

The photographs are simplistic yet absolutely precise. They're universal but exceptionally distinctive.

A trip to Eastern Europe and Asia reignited my interest in the man-made environment resulting in a series called 'Lightscapes' which captures the vivid beauty of the illuminated environment. The colors are bright and the movement creates a sense of action. I'm attracted to the bright lights, shapes, and structures of our man-made environment.

#### **Artistic Philosophy:**

My philosophy is that personal expression and careful observation, along with visceral and emotional response to what we see and experience, creates art. When we see and experience the subject in person, we see the form, light, and landscape that surrounds the subject, which creates our experience of being there. Now we have to visualise to see the photograph in our minds before we create it. Take a moment to imagine the finished image in its simplest form. Then take your camera and experiment with the possibilities. Intensify the light, play with the shadows (because they are everything in your image), see the color possibilities, the contrast, the tones and the hues. Move from warm to cool and dark to light. Even though you saw the image clearly in your mind, you have the wonderful opportunity for endless experimentation through digital technology. Have plenty of memory cards and spare batteries because you might not want to stop.

I believe that photography enhances our intelligence and develops sensitivity to the way we see and relate to the world, its peoples, and to nature itself. As photographers, we evolve a sensitivity to seeing color, light, and shadow. All of which is found in nature. So, whilst we can all be artists, it's our relationship and understanding of nature that enhances our abilities to make us good artists.

#### **ICM Genre of Photography:**

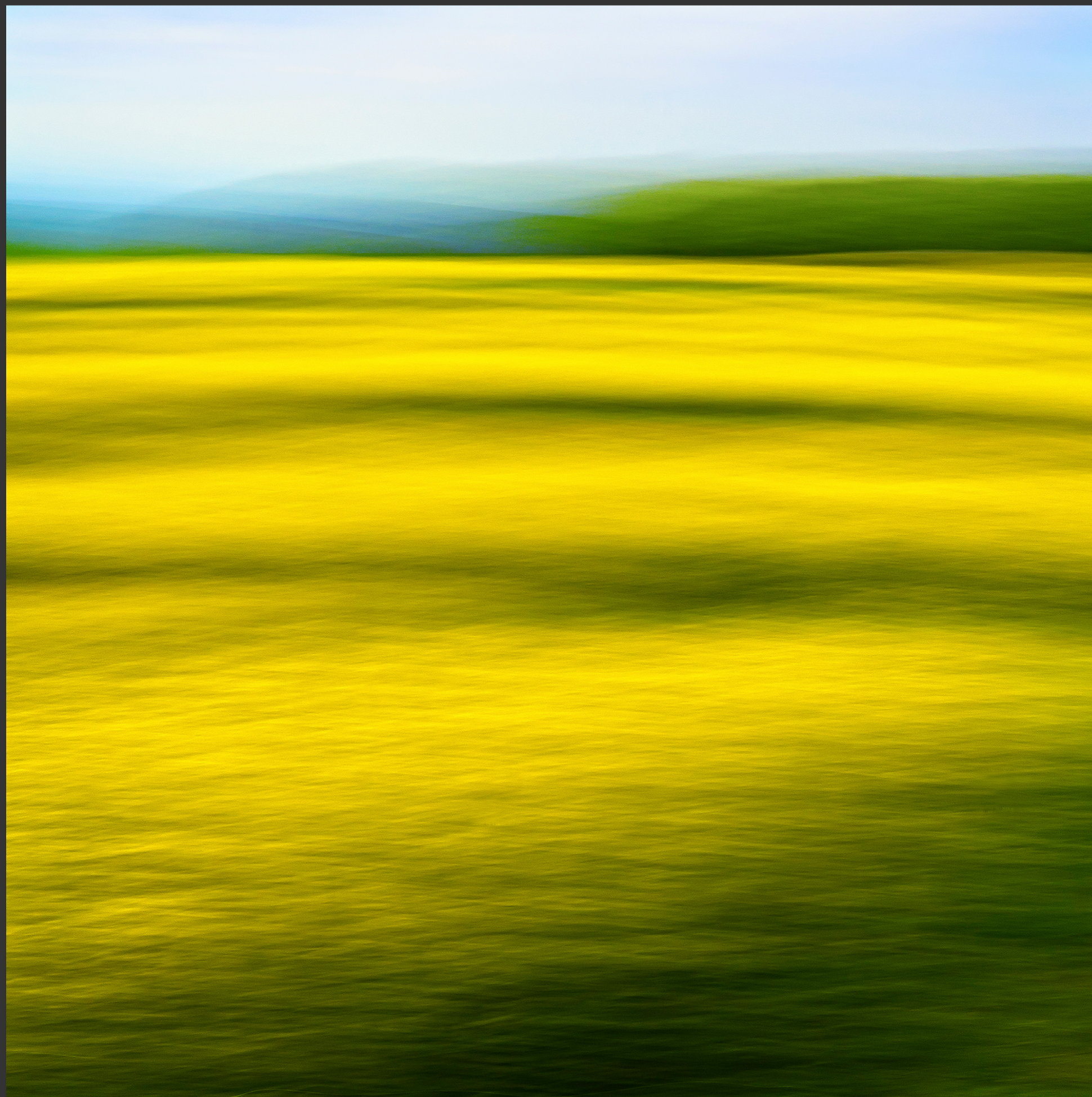
In reality, Intentional Camera Movement or ICM is nothing new, the concept has been around and practiced for decades. However, digital technology has opened up the possibility for anyone with a capture device to experiment with this fascinating genre of photography, and the viewing public are becoming more receptive towards this style of imagery.

Experimentation is the key. Shoot into the light, shoot away from the light, but always look behind you, as that's often where the best image is lurking. Look for structures that will give your images shape, search for contrast and color to give them form, and then as most would say, shoot - shoot - shoot. However, whilst this will give you a better chance at finding success it's more important to edit - edit - edit.



~ The Beach ~

When walking this beautiful beach late in the afternoon, I began to feel a special affinity with this lovely stretch of sand and water. Protected by the Great Barrier Reef, the waves are mostly gentle and calming, but I also got a sense of how that could all change during a cyclone.



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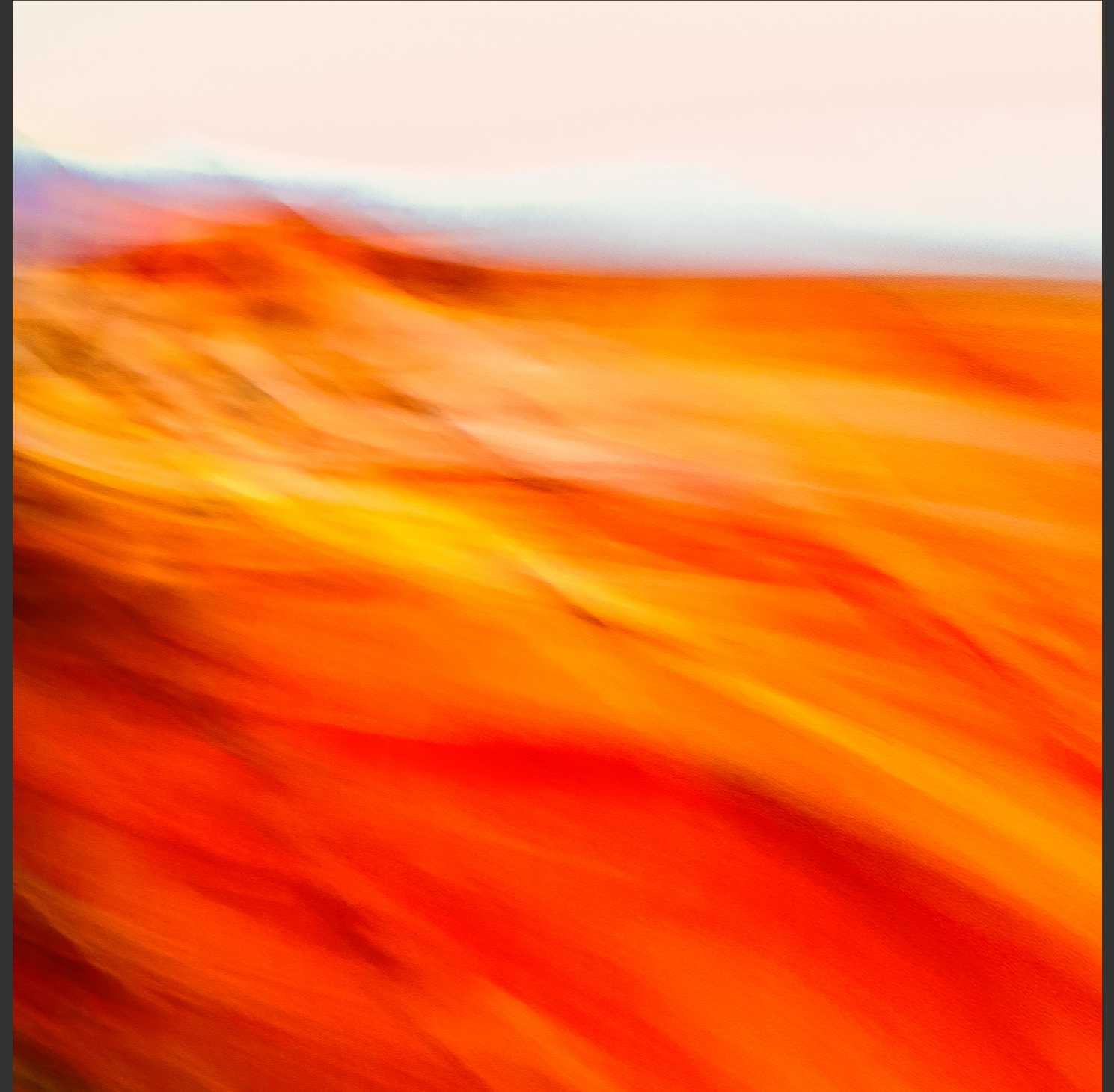
~ Yellow Fields ~

It's May in Romania, and the fields of canola are just starting to bloom. The morning light lends a soft touch to the fields, mesmerizing those who travel by. Stopping the car to observe the phenomenon up close, I noticed that the hills in the distance were blending into the sky with the haze. I walked along the fields to choose an area where the flowers had not yet bloomed, which gives the picture much more depth and prominence.



~ 'Painted Desert 1' and 'Painted Desert 2' Diptych ~

Nature has used rain, wind, weather, and erosion to shape this land over millions of years revealing many different shades of orange, brown, red, yellow, and white. These colors put on a show when they respond to the afternoon light. Overcome by a sense of evolution, I felt that I could see the land changing before me. By using some in-camera movement, I wanted to capture that constant change, along with the bright colors of this part of the Australian desert.



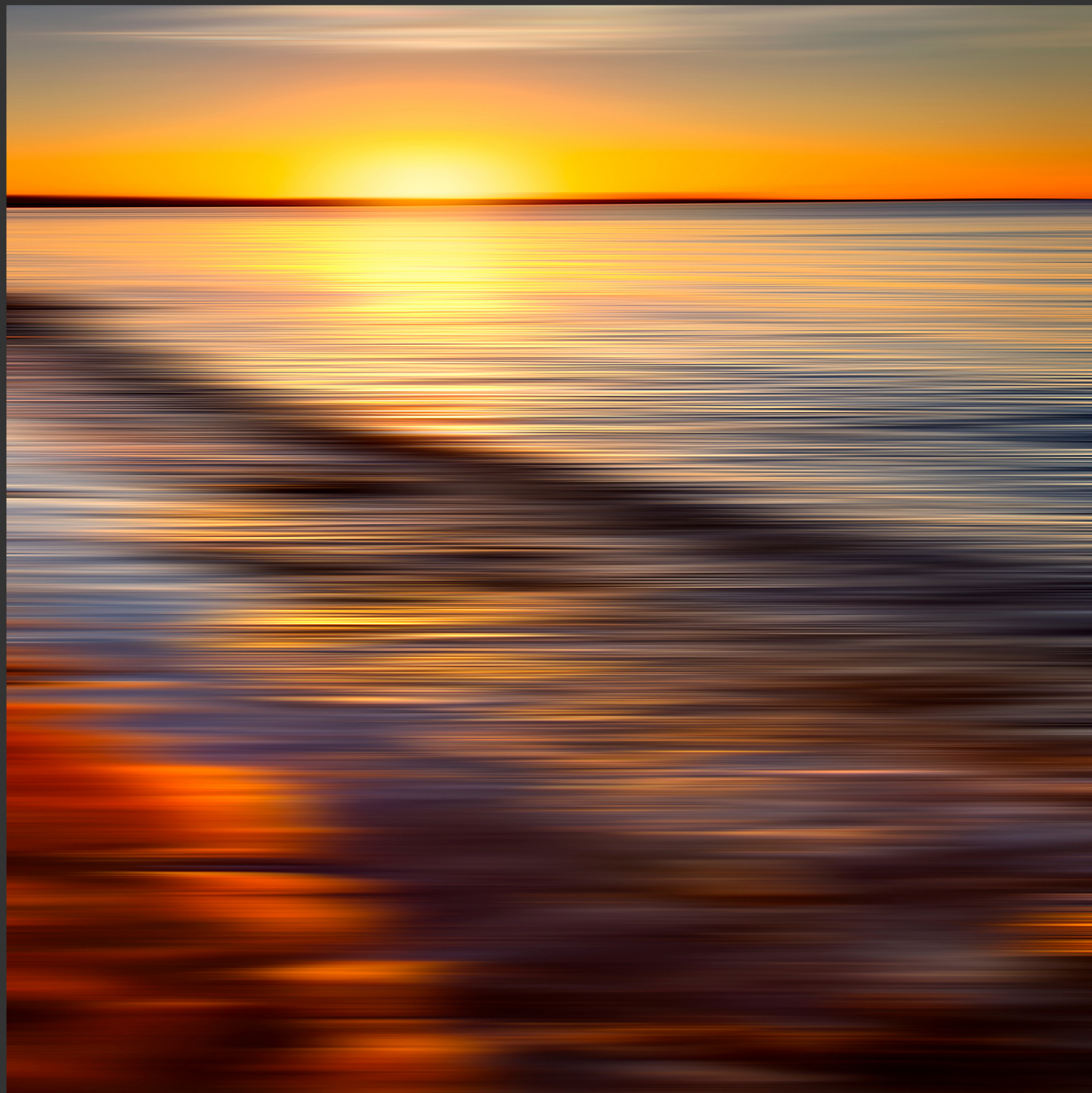




~ Turquoise Water ~

There are two major wavelengths of light that water doesn't absorb, which are blue and green, thus causing the water to appear in a turquoise color.

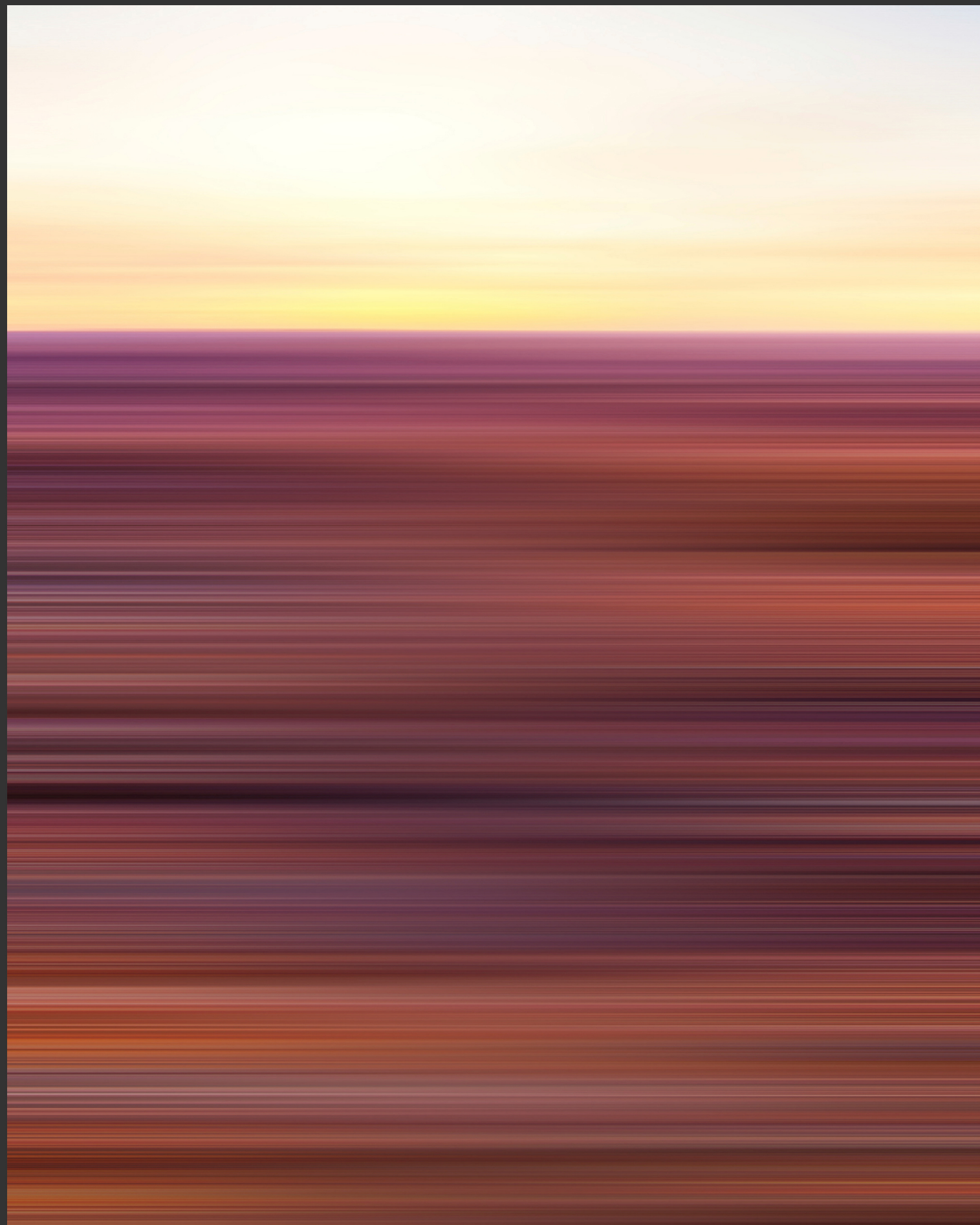
Taken in the river estuary near Denmark in Western Australia, the lighter aqua colors are shallow water where the sunlight is reflecting off the sand near the surface.



~ Kiss to the Night ~

It's a magical time when the sun tips over the edge and the last rays kiss the smooth waters of the bay.

As the earth rotates away from the sun, we get a very short moment when the sun caresses the horizon to herald in the night. The light at this time is always unique, with the last rays highlighting the gentle movement of the water as they dance across the bay to be lost in the encroaching darkness.



### Bruce's ICM Tip

You really have to experiment to find your style. Pick an area that's close by (even your back yard), visit it regularly at different times of the day, and photograph everything in sight, multiple times. Overexpose and then underexpose, once again using manual override. Experiment with light and shade. Look everywhere, as well as behind you.

When you've completely exhausted your ideas in this place, then you've only just started the journey to discover the real shots that exist there.

~ Outback ~

The Outback in Australia is an amazing place, especially at dawn and dusk when the colors come alive. Shot into the sunset with some gentle panning, the light and shadow comes from rocks on the red sand desert floor.