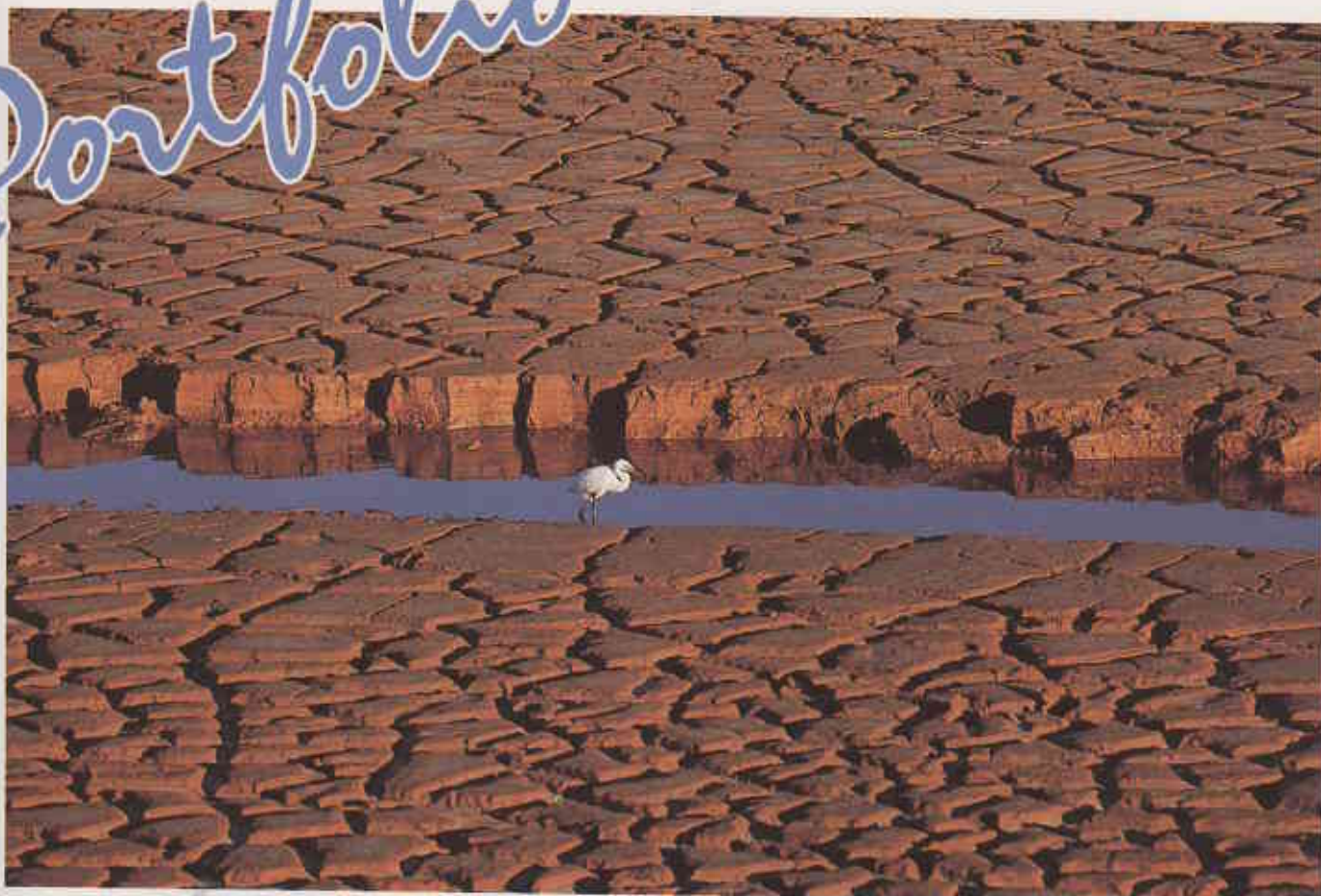


Portfolio



Little Egret, Port Hedland

RICHARD WOLDENDORP

From time to time **Landscape** will feature photographers or artists whose work is intimately bound up with the land. In this issue Sweton Stewart looks at Richard Woldendorp, a remarkable man who turned the outback into an artform by taking his camera to the air.

One does not have to look far to find a Richard Woldendorp photograph. Most bookshops have at least one of his eight books on sale. Besides countless other publications, his work has been seen in most of the major galleries of Australia, as well as in galleries in Britain and America. Closer to home, every room in the new Observation City Resort in Scarborough is graced with at least two of his photographs.

Richard Woldendorp looks a lot younger than his 60 years. After talking with him for a few minutes, it is clear to see that much of his energy and youthfulness is generated from his enthusiasm for photography.

Richard describes his success as a freelance photographer as being relatively easy. In 1950, Richard, then 24, left the Netherlands and started a new life in Perth. Although he had studied commercial art and painting, it was as a house painter that he first made a living.

Four years later he returned to Europe for a holiday. While there, he bought a camera to take snaps. He was quickly hooked on photography, and like most serious amateurs he joined a camera club. (The Cottlesloe Camera Club in this instance).

Within six years he was confident enough to turn professional.

From the outset Richard made a commitment to himself that he would work independently as a freelance. Furthermore, he did not want a studio, but to remain what he describes as 'elusive'.

As a freelance photographer, Richard travelled extensively taking on a wide variety of assignments. His work became more and more respected.

In 1982 the Australian Institute of Professional Photographers voted him the Professional Photographer of the year. The following year he was voted Landscape Photographer of the year.

Journalist Bill Warnock, who has worked with Richard on many occasions, describes him as tough and professional. 'He will climb a 1000 m rockface, walk 10 miles, or drive a 100 to get a shot.'

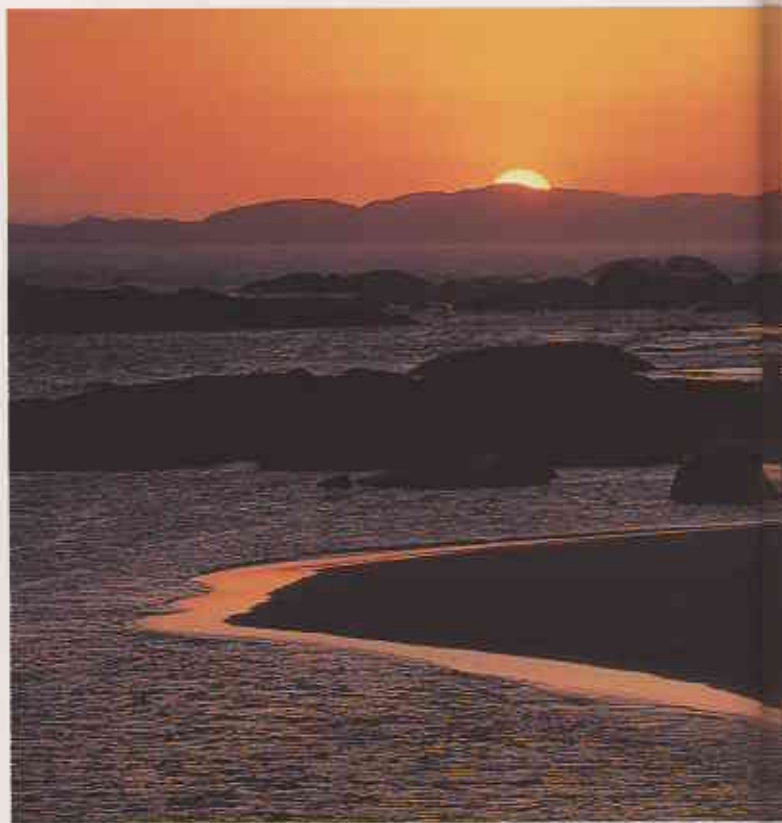
'What Richard captures with his artist's eye is different from the dull perspective seen by the rest of us. He has developed a unique personal insight into the way the Australian landscape looks. He sees it with the eyes of a European. What an Australian might see as matter-of-fact, becomes, for him, something extraordinary.'

Richard admits that he has little interest in the technicalities involved in photography and has proved that formal training is not necessary to become a good photographer.

His photographic equipment is relatively simple, and limited to two 35 mm Leicas which he uses for most of his work. A larger format Pentax 6x7 is used only when it is really necessary. His favourite film is 25 ASA Kodachrome.

Why Landscape photography?

'When I was young, I wanted to be a Landscape artist' is the simple answer. □



William Bay, west of Denmark (right).

Aerial landscape, north-east of Mt Newman (below).

Kimberley landscape — early morning (below right).





Corellas, Kimberley (above).



Reflections (above).



Queens Garden, East Perth (above).



Aerial hay stacks, Northam



Plough patterns on the land

Your letters are welcome. Please address any correspondence to:

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Bungle Bungle Upgrade?

I've just seen for the first time issues of *Landscape* (Vol 2, nos 2&3) and I'm very impressed. Congratulations to all involved on this excellent production. Apart from the many articles that caught my attention I must comment on the articles covering the Bungle Bungle National Park (Vol 2 No 2).

I realise the fine line land management bodies tread when they set out to manage an area, but I think some of the time they're on the wrong track. In talking about the Bungles you state, 'It is this rugged quality that appeals to the adventurous visitor'. Yet, just over the page you begin to talk about the cost of upgrading tracks. Why upgrade the tracks? Don't fall into the trap that the Australian National Parks service has at Kakadu (and others) by upgrading so many tracks that half the allure of visiting the area is lost.

I well remember being on a commercial trip through central Australia (Palm Valley, N.T. in fact) with a number of Americans and one stated 'God, this country is great . . . I love it. Here you are a part of it — you can touch it . . . smell it! Back home a bitumen road leads to a carpark, you get out, look at the view then drive back home!' Is this going to happen in Australia? I hope not.

Ron Moon
Editor, *Action Outdoor*, Australia

Glib Treatment

*It was pleasing to see increasing interest being shown in stromatolites and awareness of their significance. However, the article in **Landscape** (Autumn edition, March, 1987 pp 12-14) entitled 'Stromatolites — Australia's Ancient Fossils' contains statements which give me cause for concern. May I take this opportunity to explain why I believe the **Landscape** article presents a glib account of the studies on the Yalgorup National Park wetland being undertaken by scientists both here at the University of Western Australia and elsewhere?*

There is no question that Professor N.F. Stanley must take all the credit for recognising the significance of the stromatolites and for initiating (through an ARGS funded project) the research effort currently proceeding at UWA into microbial ecology of lakes in the Clifton-Preston lakeland. In the early stages of this project, Professor Stanley often advanced the view that these ecological studies would benefit profoundly from concomitant multidisciplinary researches incorporating geologists, limnologist, hydrologists, groundwater chemists and human geographers at least. Indeed, I gained the strong impression that it was the scope for development for a wide range of multidisciplinary programme investigating fundamental issues relating to microbial-sediment-water interactions, by participants

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COVER PHOTO:

Stark silhouettes evoke the spirit of our remote regions. This photograph was taken near Quairading by Hans Versluis.

EDITORIAL

Public participation in land management sounds like a great idea: the community has a chance to study and comment upon the government's proposals. The scientists and managers can keep their fingers on the pulse of public demand. But sometimes good ideas are hard to put into practice.

Last April the Department of Conservation and Land Management released draft management plans for the south-west forest regions, and a draft timber strategy for W.A. The release of the plans was accompanied by a series of workshops and public meetings, and extensive media releases. Four hundred and thirty-five letters offering briefings and speakers were sent out. Ninety groups responded. Public comment on any aspect of the plans and the strategy was invited.

4070 responses were received. This included 3505 proformas (from 30 organisations) and 565 substantial submissions, some up to 200 pages in length. Many submissions endorsed the plans in their entirety; some rejected them out of hand; others suggested hundreds of minor changes.

How can so many, and such varied, views possibly be integrated simply and sensibly into a final plan? What weighting should be given to the views of different groups or individuals? Who decides what is 'right' when pure value judgements are to be made and values are in conflict? How should one resolve an issue when the views of a large section of the public are quite different from those of a small group of scientists working closely on the problem? These questions represent the sharp end of public participation. It's a relatively new game for W.A.'s land managers, and one in which the rules are still unwritten and ill-defined.

What is certain is that the Department's policy and planning staff have a big job ahead of them, and a job which must be done to the highest possible professional standard. It is important that the final plans for our south-west forests reflect the tremendous thought, effort and interest shown by the community; and it is essential that there are efficient mechanisms for public involvement in conservation and land management, because these processes will be the norm, not the exception in years ahead.

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