

Rachel Warne, Photographer

Faded Glory, her portfolio of pictures of places that await restoration, made her..

..The International Young Garden Photographer of the Year 2010



Talks to Bella D'Arcy Reed.....

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Q: Rachel - last year. 2010. you won the International Young Garden Photographer of the Year Award for your portfolio called 'Faded Glory' - how exciting was that?

A: It was more of a shock! I felt lucky and grateful, and when I went to the Exhibition, and saw how many entries there had been, It was a humbling experience. It gave me a great deal of confidence in my ability and a sense of achievement. My family and friends are proud of me!

Q: What made you interested in photography?

A: I went to Africa with my Dad which was a fantastic experience in visual terms At school I studied art, i wanted to do something art based and discovered photography and then I went on courses - too many courses perhaps. I continued at University. I became an assistant in London.



Q: Why Gardens as a subject?

A: My family were farmers, even though I grew up in London. My Granddad had an allotment there, so I learned about growing things. My mother was a horticulturalist, and when we moved to Lincolnshire, she ran a flower farm, so there were always plant subjects there. At University I saw an advertisement from an image library asking for young photographers to submit photographs to an image library in London, and my boy friend suggested that I submit garden and flower pictures, so I did and some were accepted. I then went on to become an assistant in London doing all kinds of work

Q: and then? how you did become a garden photographer?

A: I was working in fashion at the time and was on a tube train when I saw a woman opposite with some layouts of *Gardens Illustrated*. I waited. she didn't get off, until my stop., when she did! I tapped her on the shoulder and spoke to her - she was Julia Roberts the Editor of *Gardens Illustrated*! She suggested I send some photographs, so I did. Five - and they took three? So I started out without all the angst of sending out and being rejected - so lucky!

Q: Surely not luck - you took the opportunity...

A: Yes I suppose I did! I've been a professional garden photographer for six years now.

Q: The title of your portfolio 'Faded Glory' is very evocative - tell me how this came about

A: I am currently working on a project for Noel Kingsbury - to find gardens have been left to nature. I found many of these in conservation projects, gardens waiting for full restoration. I think garden which are left to nature have a mystery of their own, like old faded photographs. They aren't sad; they are positive and sympathetic. I like to photograph the atmosphere; the way the plants crawl over things, cobwebs inside a shed.



Q: How do you go about finding subjects to photograph?

A: I am often tipped off by garden writers, and I can ring up magazines to see what their plans are. I have used the NGS Yellow Book, but mostly, it's by word of mouth.

Q: Can you talk about how you approach the art of photography?

A: Light is the most important thing. Most garden photographs are taken in the very early morning. Sometimes I take the same spot early, midday and late in the afternoon. The resulting pictures are very different. The subject changes with the differing light. I use a Canon digital camera, and play about with shadows and light sources - as in the picture above..

Q: Has the award resulted in offers of work?

A: Not really - I've had lots of praise and it has raised my profile. Certainly helped with marketing

Q: What are your ambitions for the future?

A: To concentrate on garden photography - I appeared on Gardeners/World last October; a session on garden photography tips, and I would like to do more television work. I would like to diversify: to concentrate on garden photography as an art form.



Website:

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