

The art of science

Is digital photography art? Do science and art have more in common than first thought? And how can art change your home? These are all questions that ALEX JENKINS puts to one East Grinstead artist.

At school science and art was made out as being at the two opposite ends of the spectrum. One based in logic while the other about creativity.

However, a Crawley science teacher is proving it is not always black and white.

"There is a particularly creative element to science," Julian Perry states as he explains the juxtaposition of his two passions – science and art.

The East Grinstead-based resident worked in medical physics and for the NHS before taking a job as a science teacher seven years ago, working now at the Holy Trinity CofE Secondary School.

However, aside from his passion for the subject he has 'always been artistic and creative'.

And this mix of the two is shown clearly in

his digital photography artwork.

"I focus on elements – meteorological, botanical, architectural, coastal, geological. Five domains that on the whole have a lot to offer in terms of beauty and magic," Julian says, explaining how he works under the name ArtElemental.

"What I particularly like about the digital side (of photography) is I have the precision with the digital world but you have infinite ways to express yourself," he says.

It would seem the development of digital is a marriage made in heaven for the scientist.

I am amazed when he shows me some of his art, pieces you would not recognise as the photograph it originally started life as.

"My pictures are on the whole devoid of people," Julian explains, "other people do that very well."

"ArtElemental brings together images that



Julian Perry

Floral structure



Rock Geometry



reflect the natural world and in particular its patterns, detail and textures.

"Very often we miss the beauty and harmony which is all around us and at the heart of the world and which is so often hidden in the detail around us.

"My images seek to highlight this order and beauty and in the process put us in our 'element' - in that space where we feel in touch with our core values, drive and self."

One picture I am particularly drawn to is a blue and brown picture hanging in his lounge.

As I move nearer to inspect it Julian explains it is a close up of rocks.

Yet it is absolutely stunning.

Another inspiring picture is one of the structure of some flowers.

On paper both ideas sound mundane, ordinary. Yet Julian has managed to capture the beauty of both.

Alongside these 'elemental' pictures, the East Grinstead artist also captures local landmarks, with many of his images popular when it comes to postcards.

Recently he has developed an interest in how art can be worked into interiors, whether that be at home or in the office.

"It is like the punctuation in a sentence," he says when describing the importance of art in an interior scheme. "It is a glue that brings together disparate things.

"Art draws the eye and provides a focus that is sympathetic to the ambience and colour scheme of a space.

"Sometimes the image will bring together or pick up colours that are within the room and thereby bring a harmony to the colour scheme.

"Add to this the emotional tone, derived from memories or associations, and a whole room can be lifted and experienced as more 'comfortable' which can have a powerful effect on our mood," he smiles.

"If we are often looking for 'magic' in our lives, and reflecting that in our home and work spaces, then the natural world holds true miracles and pointing towards them can be a positive and uplifting experience."

There is a whole debate surrounding whether digitally-altered photographs count as art or not.

However for Julian there is no doubt in his mind that they do, arguing art is subjective.

"The advent of digital means that the creative process can carry on way beyond the shutter closing," the Gossops Green school teacher says.

"With every pixel up for creative adjustment, many avenues of creative and artistic expression have opened up, even for those who feel they are not particularly artistic or who would once have felt that it was beyond their budget.

"I particularly enjoy exploring the interface between photography and more traditional forms of art and use digital brushes, algorithms and painting techniques to produce the finished article.

"None of this changes the fact that you still need to 'see' the image idea in your mind's eye from the outset or be inspired to find it from among the collection of pieces you have.

"On occasion the process of experimenting throws up exciting new possibilities and something new and untried is born.

"As has been said 'art is not just about what you see but what you make others see.'"

Julian sells his work through Graham Stevens Gallery in Middle Row, East Grinstead, as well as online. To see more or buy his work, visit www.jp-digitalart.com or artelemental.co.uk

Wave Crest



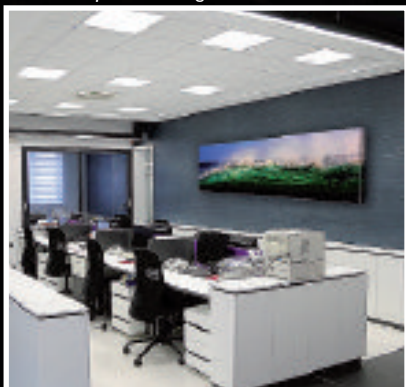
The Paper Boy



Hues



Art in a corporate setting



Art in the home



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