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ctLow, Photographer · Jul 26 · 4 min read

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## Murals and Woodturnings and Art, oh my!

automobiles

Updated: Jul 27

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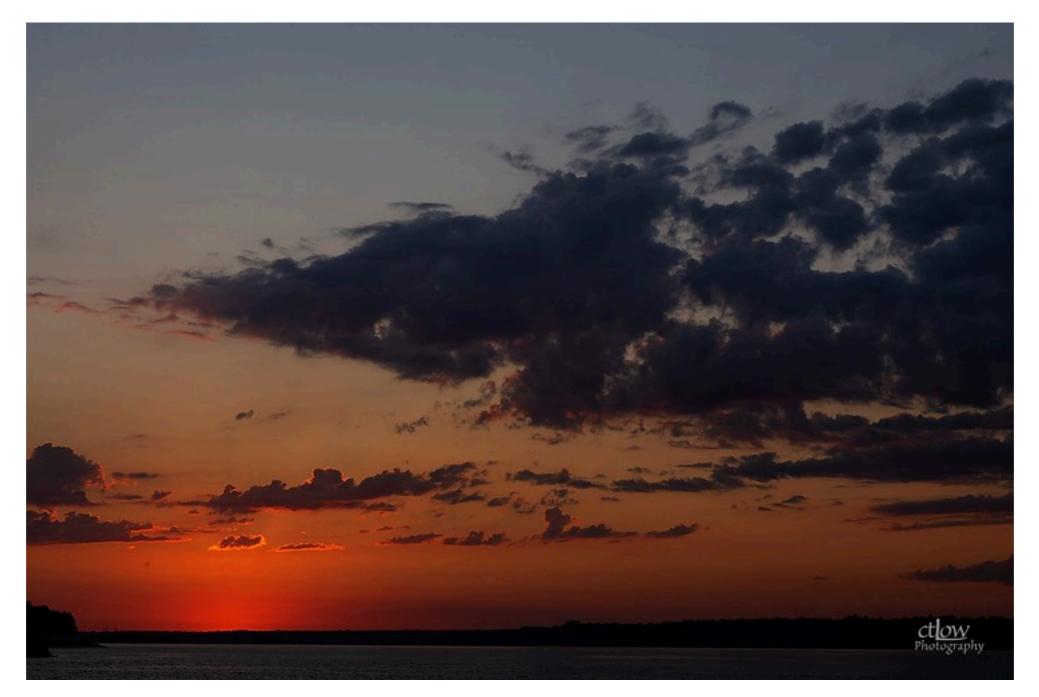
## **Commissions as art, art as art**

I love it when "things happen" (depending on the things), and recently I have continued to produce photographic art, and have been working on commissions.

The message is: hire me to do some photography for you, and/or buy some of my art—details all <u>here</u>.

 Art. Photography for the joy of it continues to call to me, and quite regularly I just go out and find things, often but not exclusively around sunrise.

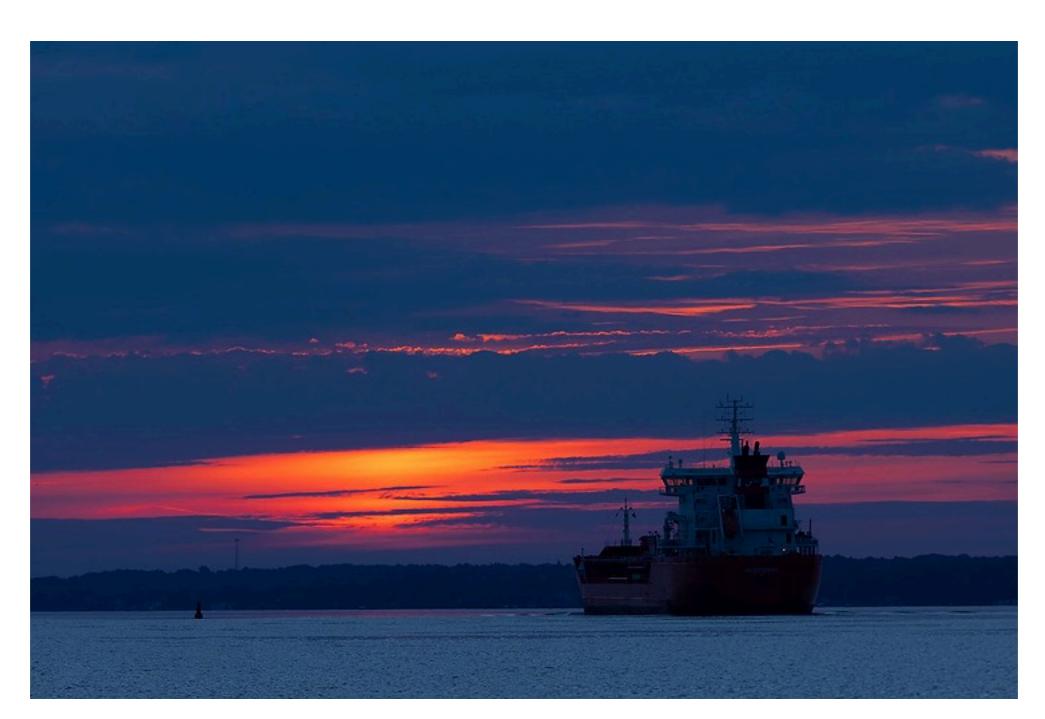




Sunrise imminent over the St. Lawrence River, downstream from Brockville

I may never tire of this kind of scene —the pros and cons of "repetition" discussed in the previous <u>blog</u>.

The St. Lawrence River is also a major seaway, and occasionally I go ship-chasing, but more often just chance across something. I don't think I'm done with this theme either.



Algoterra, sailing into the dawn

As they used to say in school, "show your work", and sometimes I find that interesting too. Apart from having a modicum of artistic sensibility, all you have to know to make a photograph such as the one above is how to choose and control as an only partial list—sensor-sensitivity, colour-balance, aperture, shutter-speed, exposure-value, exposure-mode, focallength, image-stabilization, focus-mode, file-format ... these are among the areas in



The setup

which a photographer can go beyond snapshot photography.

Incidentally, the Brockville Area Photography <u>Club</u>'s summer challenge is "freighters". We always have something on the go. This is a good time to join, with pandemic pricing (i.e. lower), and a good way to grow skills and enjoy camaraderie.

A year or two back, Jess at <u>Hang Ups</u> Creative Picture Framing suggested a location to me (and then they bought a photograph from that <u>session</u>, which you can buy from them—go there and check out the upstairs gallery). I returned there recently, and as often happens, this was not what I was after:



First Baptist Church, Brockville

The church itself is gorgeous, plus (and crucially) I had a really lovely dawn backlight, and then this natural framing appeared before me, from clear across Courthouse Green.

I think it may be the most beautiful building in Brockville, but somehow it's tucked into a corner where it isn't as visible as the other nearby (also architecturally exceptional) churches.

While there, Sally kindly consented to pose for me again.



Sally Grant, atop the provincial courthouse

I just don't think you're going to keep my from the water. This sailboat—mast unstepped had apparently overnighted at anchor, in an almost flat calm.



Sailboat overnighting at anchor, flat-calm

2/ Commissions. I love it when somebody contacts me and asks me to do some photographic work for them. (I subscribe to the Sir Richard Branson philosophy: say <u>yes</u> to opportunities and then learn how to do the job [although I don't think that applies as much to things like neurosurgery].)

First,I heard from Lance Besharah of Turning North, asking me to document some of his incredible woodturnings, and over the course of three sessions, we have about a hundred images.



bowl and lid - highly-decorative

I felt that I had to make a confession to Lance, that I am a bit stuck, in art-appreciation terms, at "two-dimensional". That is entirely my limitation, but having worked with him (building on a foundation laid by others) on three-dimensional art, I think that those shackles have finally fallen. His work is simply phenomenal, every piece unique, some requiring several days to produce, and many requiring organizing the wood to dry for a year or two prior to working it.

As he talked about the process, you would not believe the knowledge-base required, let alone that he demonstrates a superior sense of artistic mastery in his work. I think that his speciality may be <u>burls</u>. (Also look up <u>chatoyancy</u> and <u>spalting</u>.) A woodturner can use a cross-section of a tree, or a longitudinal section, can turn green or seasoned wood, and this can be full- or partial-width, of different types of tree, all of which changes the characteristics of the finished product.



A more conventional(?) bowl, perhaps for salad, although I happen to know that you can't have that one :-)



Second, Bill Gibbons contacted me. I had met Bill the previous year at an open-house at his <u>AOG Gallery</u>, and that is another but completely captivating story.

Bill is an art-collector, or calls himself an art-*enthusiast*. As the family was closing down the Gibbons Family Farm, giving 5,000 maple trees a well-earned rest, Bill <u>commissioned</u> a mural, on the side of his barn, in a graffiti style. Two artists from the Ottawa area—and I had not known nor ever thought about it, that some graffiti artists find a market and go mainstream—came down, talked it through with Bill, who left them largely to their own devices, and from nothing more than sketch in a notepad, produced this in one day, all done by 4:00 p.m. The artists are Robbie Larivière (<u>Falldown</u>) and Steven Whiffen (Snakeboy).



new Gibbons Farm barn-side mural

Astounding. Bill asked if I would photograph the new mural, for posterity. I did one sunrise session and one sunset session. He wanted to show the mural in context, so we did some work on that.





It's a big mural - that's probably a 3-metre-high doorway

If you ever avail yourself of an AOG Gallery open house (when/if this pandemic ever eases enough), then I can assure you of two things:

- you will be astounded by not only the quality but also by the tremendous variety of the works;
- there is no graffiti among them—as far as I know, this is something new for Bill. I like that.

Of note: Bill wants this work seen. Head east from Frankville, turn left at the fork (and there is a literal fork at the fork) onto Leacock Road, and it is the first set of buildings you will come to in about five seconds.

I have a little feeling that there remains a special light waiting for me at that mural; I may return.



Bill and his mural



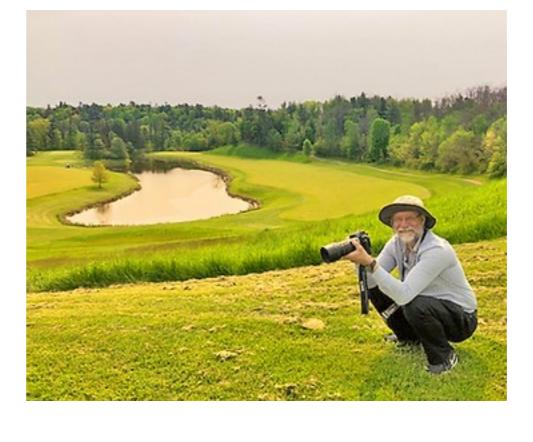
That's enough for today, folks. You know how to get in <u>touch</u>. Thank you all so much for reading, and I hope to see you here again soon.

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Charles T. Low Photographer

102 views



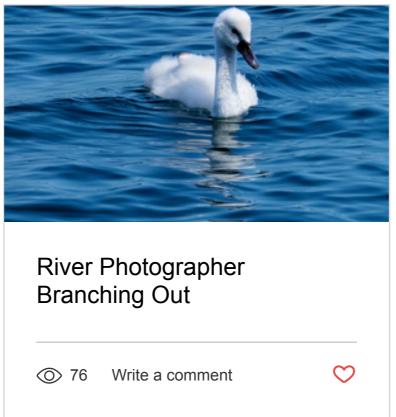
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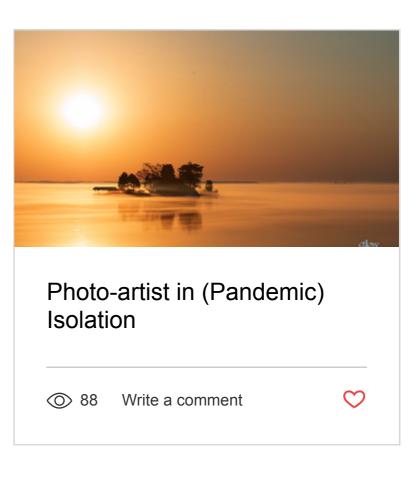
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