

**Constructed Photographs by Dave Green at Schooners Café
Part of the Appledore Visual Arts Festival 2010**



***Kipling's Playground,
Westward Ho! 2008***

Rudyard Kipling was at school in Westward Ho! and used to play on this rocky beach near Mermaids Pool. This image is made up of 92 separate photographs. To successfully stitch it together in Photoshop I had to split it into two halves because the whole image was too large for my computer to cope with.



***Striped Rock, Combe Martin
2009***

I had my first taste of freedom as a three year old, my Mum found me happy, with my tricycle, half a mile from the house at the local shops. From the age of seven I would walk a couple of miles away, across the fields, to the woods, or I'd ride my bicycle to Beacon Hill, enjoying the natural surroundings, watching the seasons, climbing trees and rock faces, finding interesting stones and observing the wildlife. On holiday, in Wales or the West Country, in an unfamiliar environment, it would be the same: On a family hike I would often go on ahead through the excitement of seeing what might be around the next corner or over the next hill, or I would get left behind, looking under stones for slow worms and lizards or finding the best way of crossing a stream that we didn't need to ford. At the beach I would go clambering over the rocks looking for that elusive hidden rock pool teeming with life or being the first person to tread over the sand and discover a cave. Both of my parents had enjoyed a similar childhood to mine, a childhood experienced by very few today.

I have been exploring the North Devon coast for the last five years. My study is of the hidden coast found only through a vertiginous climb down a cliff path or by leaving the sandy beach and trekking over seaweed strewn boulders at low tide. This is a wild coast, unpopulated by holiday-makers, the domain of seagulls that can make you feel quite unwelcome. It is also an historic coast where millions of years can be seen in the layers of strata of an eroded cliff face and the more recent past can be found in smooth rusting ship parts, in memorial of hundreds of wrecks, littering the rocky shore.

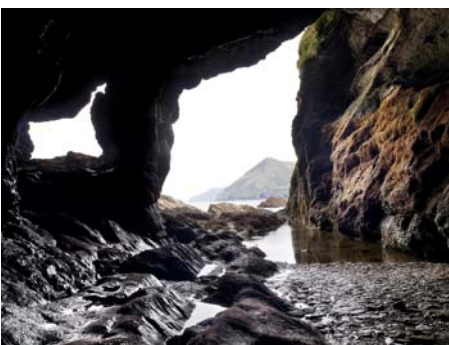
Most photographers will look forward to sunshine, the weekend, or a time of day like sunrise or sunset. I look forward to the full moon and the new moon and note these in my calendar. A day or two after these moons heralds the highest and lowest tides, or spring tides, which occur every fortnight. A spring low tide, which always falls around 1 or 2pm in North Devon, gives me access to places at the waters edge that would be impossible to get to on any other day or time; places which are often totally hidden under the waves.

These photographs have only been made possible through the technology of digital imaging. I have embraced this new medium and challenged it to assist with the documenting of what is seen at the back of a cave.



**Under the Arber Wall,
Smoothlands, Hartland 2010**
(named in acknowledgement of
E A Newell Arber, who explored,
photographed and wrote about the
amazing geology of this North Devon
coast over 100 years ago)

Since photographing the North Devon coast I've seen caves disappear as their roofs have collapsed into the sea. This image is the third of a trio, the first made in the spring of 2006 and the other was the same place one year later. This was an eight metre high tunnel, a passage from a small sheltered bay to the roar of the Atlantic, situated just west of Hartland Point and only accessible at low tide. Now, buried under a huge landslide, it's only entrance is from the sea.



**Great Hangman through Turks
Cave 2010**

This huge cave is very close to the popular Briery Cave at Watermouth near Ilfracombe

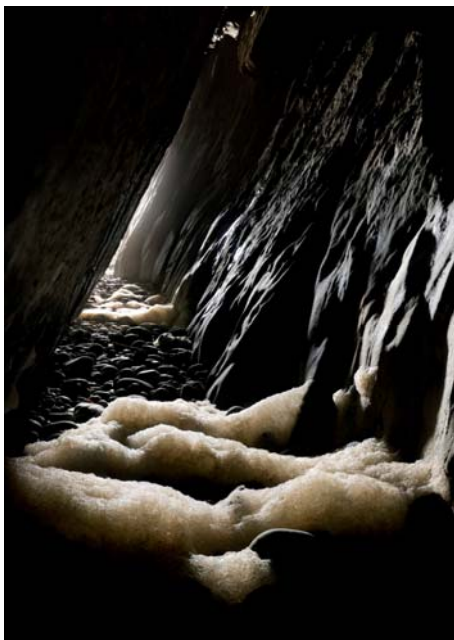
To most, the inside of a cave is black and the bright surface world is pictured through a heavy dark frame; but here we see the glorious true colour and texture through long exposure of the subject.

These images are often made up of in excess of fifty separate photographs, of different exposure, angle of view and framing; to gain the detail from the deepest blacks to the brightest highlights in this extremely high contrast scene. PhotoShop is the computer programme of choice, for stitching the images together. This process can take days to complete and it is not unknown for me to finish a new image a year or more after taking the original photographs.

"It should be said at the outset that the new work is a continuation of those years of production using photo-computer processes and materials as the artist explores and celebrates natural form and landscape in North Devon where he now lives and works. Some changes are apparent however as the artist and the work develops and the recent images finds the artist literally getting inside his subject matter in a fascinating and exciting way which I believe marks a new found sensibility and sensuality in his approach. The recent pieces can be seen as marking an important psychological/aesthetic shift in consciousness towards images that are darker, more intimate, covert and subterranean. Here what is exposed is less obvious, less accessible, that which is waiting to be discovered. In this work the artist takes us inside in a way which suggests a greater intimacy and a stronger recognition and celebration of the feminine, the mysterious, the hidden.

These images, which immediately command our attention, are taken from within caves along the North Devon shoreline with colours that are muted and sombre, mostly blues, browns, black and grey, darker images punctuated at the centre by a startling light from outside. They could be taken as strongly suggestive of birth experiences, of looking out towards the light perhaps from the birth canal. They can also be seen as evocative of (reported) 'near death' experiences where bright, dazzling lights are glimpsed at the end of a dark tunnel. The glittering rich texture of rock inside is lit by the wonderfully strong light from outside. These images could be seen to have strong sexual connotation also and it has been suggested that they represent the female experience of receptivity and of waiting. Certainly there is an echo of the archetype here with the velvety richness, the dark and the intimacy of the female body and its sexual creative function."

- Peter Berry, extract from 'Images from Within' Sept 2006



Turbulent Passage, Baggy Point 2008

I've started to explore some of the more inaccessible coast with Kester Webb. He and his wife Elizabeth, have great knowledge and experience of traversing the North Devon coast through rock-climbing in-between the sea and the cliff top. The baggy of Baggy Point means have or a headland full of (bags) holes and this one which felt cathedral sized in comparison to others I'd photographed here, is right at the end and assessable through a tunnel of fallen rocks that you wouldn't attempt to scramble through unless you had confidence in the reward.



Maiden's Retreat, Marsland Mouth – 2006

I was interested in finding historical and literal context for some of the landscape I was experiencing, Rose Salterne was the naked maiden seeking refuge in a cave.

In only one of these "mouths" is a landing for boats, made possible by a long sea-wall of rock, which protects it from the rollers of the Atlantic; and that mouth is Marsland, the abode of the White Witch, Lucy Passmore... "You be safe enough here to-night, miss. My old man is snoring sound abed, and there's no other soul ever sets foot here o' nights, except it be the mermaids now and then... There's the looking-glass; now go, and dip your head three times, and mind you don't look to land or sea before you've said the words, and looked upon the glass. Now, be quick, it's just upon midnight."

... Rose went faltering down the strip of sand, some twenty yards farther, and there slipping off her clothes, stood shivering and trembling for a moment before she entered the sea. She was between two walls of rock: that on her left hand, some twenty feet high, hid her in deepest shade; that on her right, though much lower, took the whole blaze of the midnight moon. Great festoons of live and purple seaweed hung from it, shading dark cracks and crevices, fit haunts for all the goblins of the sea.

- extract from *Westward Ho!* by Charles Kingsley 1855



Black Church Rock, Clovelly 2007

If Black Church Rock was in the USA there would be a car park at its trail head and an interpretive board explaining its geological history and deconstruction.



Lead Mine and Silver Mine, Combe Martin 2010

The Combe Martin area has a very long history of mining. These two caves, both photographed on the same day in April, were former mines, which probably starting out as caves before they were mined for silver, lead or manganese. They're accessible, like many others, from the beach. The interiors of these ex-mines are often are usually rougher and more textured than a cave which is carved out by the force of waves throwing boulders against it's interior.

The overcast day and wet cave walls helped with the balancing of highlights with shadows. I was forever using bits of my hands as a shield to prevent light flare spilling into my lens, which nearly always points towards the light.



Cave at Wringapeak, Woody Bay, 2010

This is not an easy place to get to, and with Spring rain making the grass cliff edges wet and slippery and no sunshine or wind to dry the treacherous climb down I was glad of a rope and harness. When you're sliding down slimy boulders to the rocky shore you have gravity on your side but getting back up with a tide which has turned can be perilous. This wonderfully shaped, boulder sculpted cave was dripping wet and is more than full with water at high tide.

This brochure is available as a free download from: www.greengallery.co.uk/appledore.pdf

All photographs are limited to an edition of 50 and are printed on archival paper using pigment ink and displayed in oak frames. Prices are:
£74 for a matted print + £36 for the frame = £110

There is also a very limited edition of 20 all of the photographs in this exhibition, printed on archival A3 paper using pigment ink and presented in a black portfolio box. Price is: £300

Dave Green is a fully qualified photographic teacher with over 15 years experience. He will be offering small group workshops on digital photography, landscape photography, and camera skills. To register your interest or to be kept informed of these workshops and future exhibitions, please contact him on:

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