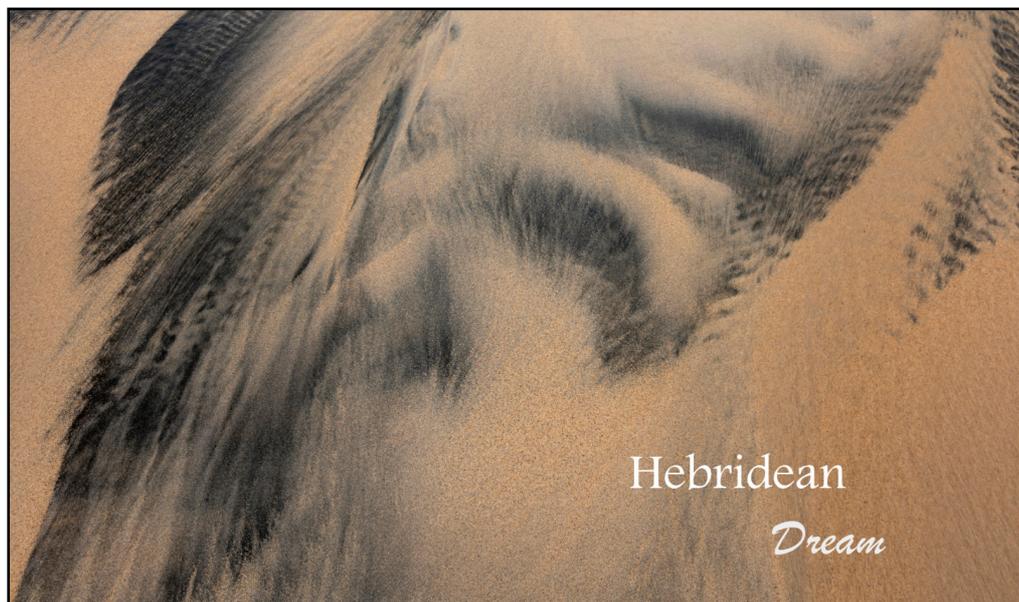


Hebridean Dream

Stephen and Jane Lee's winning AV in the Photo Harmony Section



'Hebridean Dream' was inspired by a trip to Harris in the Outer Hebrides in October 2018. The weather wasn't particularly kind but we managed to take some images in between the many rain storms and gale force winds.

For some time, we had in mind to create an AV from images taken on this trip and then heard a melancholy track by Enya, '*Smaointe*' from the album '*Shepherd Moons*', which we thought would work.

The words were all in Gaelic so we had to look up the meaning and discovered the title literally translated means 'Thoughts' and the song is a lament in memory of her grandparents. It was inspired by events at Maragallen Beach, where a disaster occurred during a service at the church near the beach. A giant wave came in, destroying the small church and its graveyard and all inside perished. Enya's grandparents are buried in the same graveyard and the song describes Enya's childhood memories and her feeling that her grandparents are watching over and guiding her. We believe the importance of choosing the right music for a Photo Harmony AV cannot be under-estimated and we felt the symbolism of this song reflected the sense of calm in our images and determined the pace and mood of the AV.

We both have an obsessive, some might say neurotic, attention to detail. Our focus is good photography so we aim to start with the best images we have for our chosen theme. We spend time thinking about the beginning and ending as we feel it is important to have a structure for our AVs which will bring everything together into a cohesive production.



We check every image for even the most minor distractions, line up every horizon, match colour tones, agree a title and choose an appropriate font and most importantly listen to the music to ensure every change of beat or mood is carefully synchronised with the transitions and individual images. Enya's song includes a 50 second section in the middle where the rhythm changes to a melody with Uilleann Pipes. We felt it was important to recognise this change in mood by using a series of long exposure images of the rocks and the waves which we had taken with an AV in mind. There is a similar change at the end of the song and we chose another shorter sequence of long exposure images from a different beach to reflect this. The opening sequence to 'Hebridean Dream' features images of the sand patterns created by the peaty soil on some of the beaches and we deliberately linked these images to the wider shots of those beautiful beaches. The horizon is deliberately quite high in the frame in most of the images as we wanted the emphasis to be on the shoreline with the distant mountains as an accompaniment rather than being the dominant feature.



We are constantly looking for the opportunity to create third images and continually rearrange images to ensure there is a balance and flow to the AV. We watch the draft AV over and over again, making miniscule and seemingly insignificant revisions before we are finally satisfied and can say we have finished. We put so much of ourselves into our AVs that creating them is an all-consuming labour of love. We cannot 'make them to order' which is probably why we only produce a handful of new AVs a year.

Photography is our shared passion and our AVs reflect our style of photography. We have found that our most successful AVs have always meant something special to us and have been very much 'from the heart'. This makes it so rewarding when other people enjoy them as well.