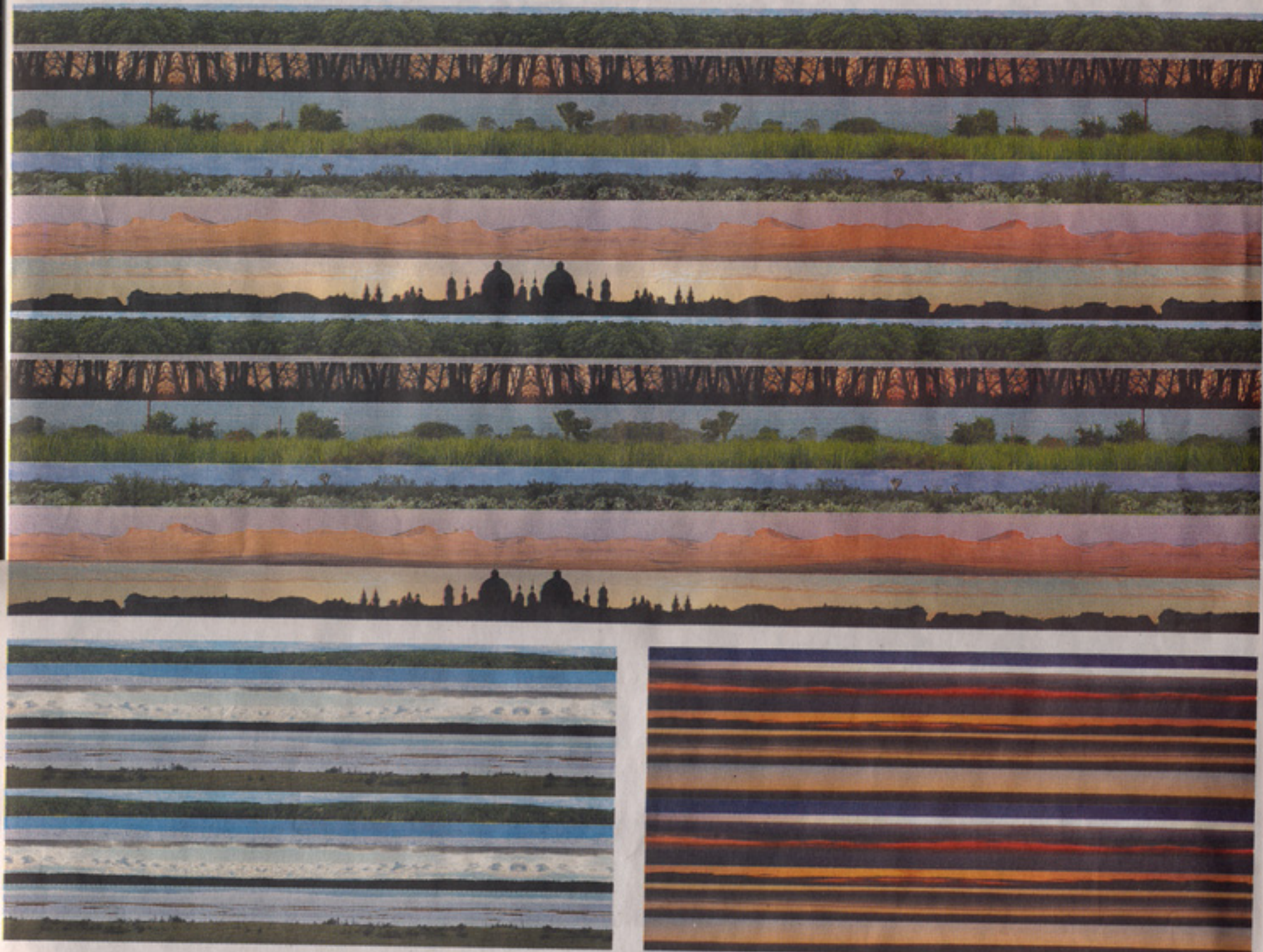


GALLERY PROFILE



Photographer Peter Wilkins has a thing for panoramic horizons. Good thing, then, that the vantage point from the front door of his Conception Bay home affords him nothing but sea and sky.

Vantage point is at the crux of Wilkins' newly launched online photographic exhibit, *Planes, Trains, Oceans and Horizons*. Accessed through his website, the collection of digitally manipulated images captured around the globe are a playful exploration of the abstract and the documentary precision of the camera's lens.

Seascapes, skyscapes and landscapes from as far flung as Czech Republic and as close as this province have been photographed and then flipped end to end to extend and elongate horizons featuring the spires of Prague or the stunted spruce of the Avalon Peninsula. The stretched images are then stacked and repeated, creating a slightly psychedelic visual effect.

"We're very used to photographs, so to make a great photo that stands out is a very special thing," says Wilkins, a native of England who settled in Clarke's Beach with his Newfoundland-born wife five years ago.

"If I take key information from a number of photos and put them together to make an abstract piece from a distance, and then when you get up close to see the visual detail, then you've got what I like to think is the best of both worlds."

Newfoundland Horizons is a pattern of sun-kissed virgin white clouds so indicative of pristine spring days, of late day surf washing over a beach and of the densely treed shoreline of a pond. The ribbons of natural Newfoundland scenes vibrate and hum when viewed as a whole, the individual segments sometimes jarring the eye. The result requires a second and third look, as the viewer adjusts and reassesses what they are really seeing.

Some are more easily visually deciphered, such as *Happy Hours Around the World, Two*, where the red and orange mountains of Hampi, India are immediately recognizable as a land

mass, as are the manmade structures of New Orleans' airport, wavering in the heat.

But others, such as *The 10.57 to London, One*, with its streaks of colour and pulsating motion, might be dabbings in colour theory.

"Part of abstract repetition, it's such an incredibly important process in everything we do, the basic breath is everyday, constant repetition," says Wilkins. "We all search for intangible things, and a good bit of abstract art offers a certain amount of intangible reactions for the viewer. When a person sees an abstract piece, everyone will understand it differently."

"It can be rewarding but not in an immediate, finite way — we can't define exactly why it's rewarding. I like that it reminds me of the time I spilled coffee and it looked really pretty as it ran all over the kitchen floor. It's a weird association; it's not as literal as realism."

Planes, Trains, Oceans and Horizons is an interim project before Wilkins' next photographic exhibit at the Rooms in September, which will feature photographs taken at the Gander International Airport. He is excited about visually experimenting with the 1960s-era architecture.

Meantime, he continues to shoot in and around his home, between wrangling his four young daughters and playing with digital imagery. He says the "idyllic" setting of his family's home is the perfect place to raise children, and also has the ideal photographic conditions to keep his creative appetite whetted. His artistic medium of choice, which he says offers "endless possibilities" for creative expression, is perfectly suited to his environment.

"The magnificent beauty and purity of the landscape is so real. The water contrasting between land and sky, and the light always changing. Living in Clarke's Beach, the light changes constantly and consistently delights me."

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Planes, Trains, Oceans and Horizons can be viewed at Peter Wilkins' website, www.wilkins.ws.



PETER WILKINS
Photographer