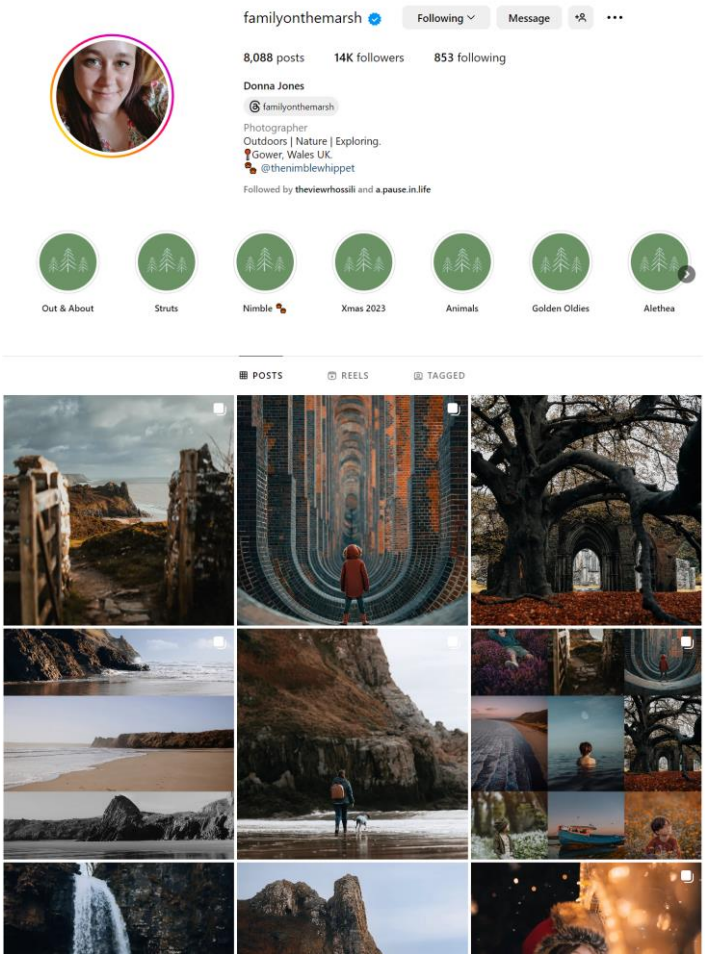
2205239 – Will Steadman - World building Research

Within this module, I have undergone thorough research into the way various artists and creators conduct themselves through the use of the internet. The internet as a platform, acts as a tool for networking with other like-minded people as well as providing a space to display one's work in a way that brings exposure to a larger variety of viewers than through traditional means.

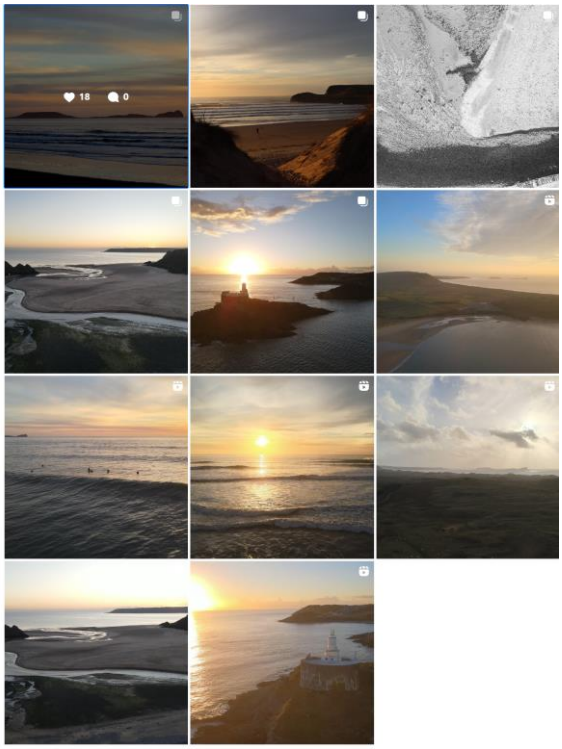
One way the internet can be utilised in order to present one's work is through the expansive variety of social media platforms available. One such platform, that stands out to me as well as the majority of other creators is Instagram. This site can act like a portfolio that puts your work in chronological order. I particularly like this because it can show the development of an artist over the years, and acts as an archive. Due to these advantages, I have created an Instagram to display my practice as a photographer.

When using Instagram as an artist or photographer, there are a few things to consider in order to create a clean, professional profile that draws attention to itself. One thing to bear in mind is formatting. To format an Instagram profile effectively, one should consider the similarities between each post in order to create an overarching theme and consistency throughout the timeline. Colour, being one of the most immediately obvious characteristics of an image, is important to keep relatively similar throughout each post. On my Instagram, I feature mainly the hues of sunsets throughout my work which creates a mostly common colour scheme that makes the page easy on the eyes. This makes the page aesthetically pleasing and will catch a user's eye. It is important to consider these two points as if a page does not immediately display a clean aesthetic and catch the user's eye, they may not explore your work as an artist further, as this can often be the first point of contact.

There are numerous examples of other creators who display this consciousness of aesthetic consistency effectively on Instagram. One example that I believe has been executed well is that of local photographer, Donna Jones (@familyonthemarsh). I discovered Donna's page through mutual followers and my first impression of her page was very positive and led to me following her. I noticed that she displays consistency in colour, shadows and the concepts or themes that she photographs. Immediately I am drawn to her page through her presentation of visually striking images that share a common colour pallet, this leads to a sleek, professional look. She has pinned her most liked work at the top of the page, these tend to be the most visually appealing images and act as an effective first point of contact for users who have not yet encountered her page. She clearly enjoys nature photography, and this is shown through her choice of images on this page, displaying wildlife, landscapes and everything in between. Despite the slight differences between subjects within these images, she still maintains a common colour theme throughout.



After considering how Jones has pieced together her work on her profile, I made some changes to my own. I began by archiving posts that do not fit with my common colour scheme and instead opted to put them into highlights at the top of my page in order to prevent them from clashing. Another thing I learned from her page was that pinning my most liked posts to the top of my page can be an effective means of creating the most visually pleasing first point of contact possible. This will ensure that my most enticing work is seen first and will hopefully encourage further exploration into my practice by other users.

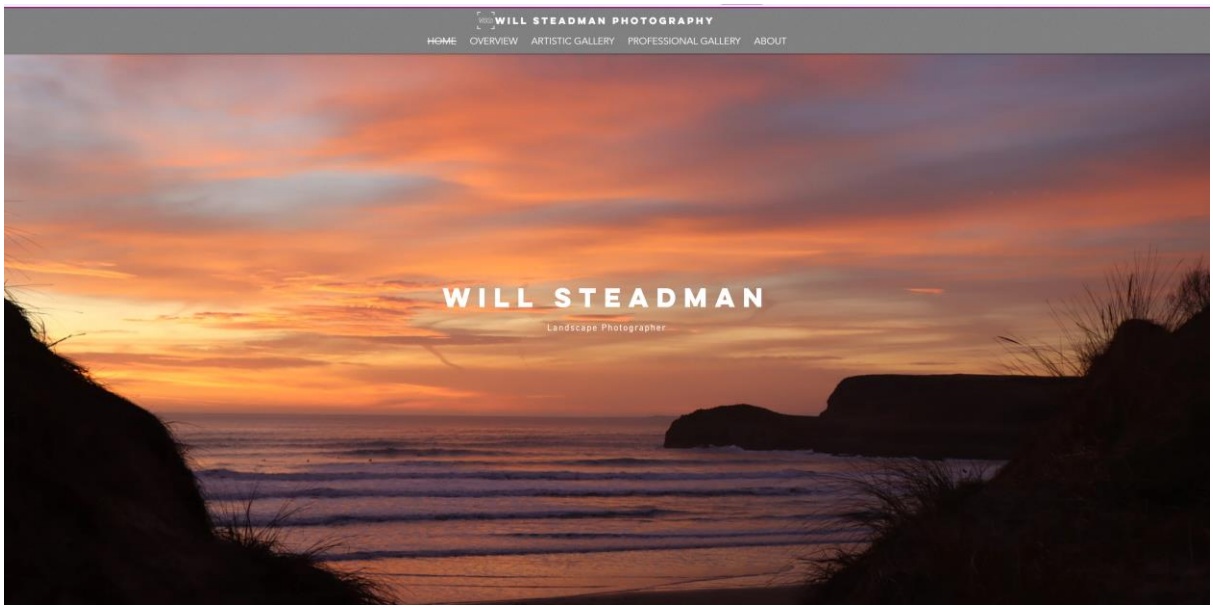


Another way of utilising the internet in displaying your work and who you are as a photographer is through creating a website to present information about yourself and your work. One example of a photographer who has effectively done this is David Ward (www.davidward.photo). Upon my first impression there were several things I noticed. One of which was the striking imagery he displays on his landing page; this visually appealing array of photographs acts as a first point of contact that entices the user to explore the website further. On this landing page he also states his name, as well as the field of photography he practices within. The landing page is crucial to making a website, on first impression, seem well constructed and directly reflects on your work and professional image. After exploring the site further, I found that it was simple in design, and this led to easy navigation through pages using the menu bar. Within this menu bar a 'galleries' section is included and upon clicking this, you are brought to a page containing an array of artistic projects organised into separate sections. Organising his work in such a way makes for easy navigation as well as a clear separation between each project, giving each its own distinct feel. Another feature he has included on his website is a 'shop' section which he uses in order to sell his prints. While in my case this is not the intended focus of my website, this fact is still notable and is useful in giving me ideas on how I can monetise my work in future. It is also of great importance that Ward has included a 'contact' page, in which he provides his email and phone number. This means that contacting him is a simple process and can create work opportunities for him.

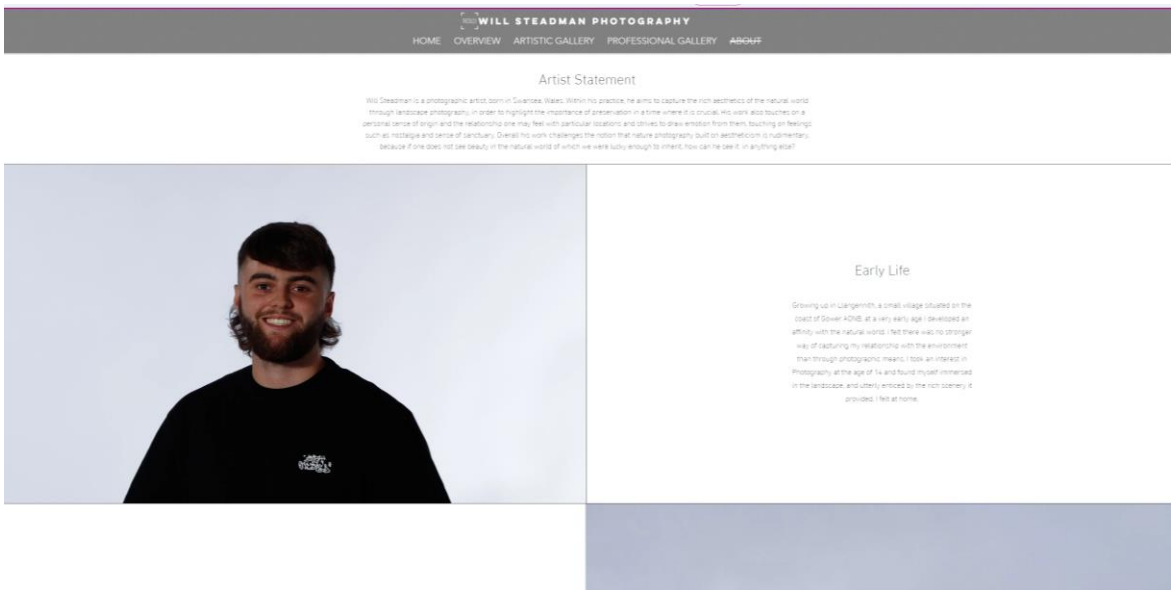
One section on this website that stood out to me most was his ‘about’ section. This page included an array of information about Ward as a photographer, detailing where he is from and how it led him to landscape photography. He includes a portrait of himself which aids in putting a name to a face which makes reading this section feel more of a personal experience. He also opted to include quotations from other photographers and critics about him and his work which provides a certain level of credibility to his work. While at this time I do not have access to this sort of thing about my own work, it is useful to bear in mind as if the opportunity to include this kind of information on my own website arises, it would be crucial to providing credibility to my own work.

Overall, David Ward’s website is very well constructed and sleek, the website itself is aesthetically pleasing while ensuring little focus is taken away from his images, and this is something I am hoping to replicate within my own website.

When creating my website, I took into account what I learned from David Ward’s website and started by creating a sleek base design. I opted to have a simplistic menu bar that stands out from the content within each page. Initially I chose to utilise submenus within my header for each project similar to Ward but after gaining several opinions I decided that the most simplistic and user-friendly way to do it was to have each menu listed out along the bar as its own separate section. After adding a logo and my name, I had completed the header and moved on to the footer. The footer serves a crucial role on my website, the reason of this was because of my decision to not include a dedicated contact page in the same way that Ward did. Instead, I chose to include two buttons, one that opens the user’s email application and inputs my email as well as the subject title ‘inquiry’ for easy access, the other a link to my Instagram that opens in a separate tab. While having a page dedicated to this can be useful, I believe that this way of doing it is better because it is available on all pages, is simple to use and is visually pleasing. Once these were both finished, it was time to add some content to my website. I began by creating my landing page, which included a slideshow of some of my own favourite images, overlayed with my name and preferred field of photography. This page is effective because like Ward’s website, the first impression given to the user is that of high-quality images and professionalism.



Once the Landing page was completed, I moved on to creating pages dedicated to giving context on my work as a photographer. In total there were three pages of this nature. The first page, 'Overview' was a summary of all the work I do as a photographer, including both my artistic endeavours as well as commercial. Each section had a short paragraph of information to explain my connection to each type of photography and a link to the relevant pages including more information was included at the bottom to assist the user in locating them. The second page, 'Artistic Gallery' was one that displayed my various artistic projects in their own sections, including more depth and detail than that of the overview page. It includes a wider array of images from each project, however only my best were chosen, to ensure the sleek, professional look was maintained. The third page I created; 'Professional Gallery' was one that included my commercial work as a photographer. I have had experience in weddings and culinary photography and wanted to make it known that while my main passion is my art, I am available and happy to challenge myself within the field of commercial photography. I decided not to include too many details on this page and instead let the images speak for themselves, however I did include a short paragraph in order to explain that I offer these types of services. Finally, I created the 'About' section, the most important page in my opinion. This page acts as a source of information on who I am as a person and photographer, as well as my qualifications and past exhibitions/collaborations. I included my artist statement which gave an overview of my work and thought process. I also created a section explaining my early engagement with photography and how I came to be enticed by it. I then added a paragraph explaining my current practice as a photographer and what I aim to achieve through my work.



Overall, I believe my website will be a successful way of portraying myself as a professional to the public and will hopefully boost my following as well as giving users an easily accessible way of viewing my portfolio.

Links

https://www.instagram.com/familyonthemarsh/

https://www.davidward.photo/

https://www.instagram.com/willsteadman.photography/

https://photographywillste.wixsite.com/will-steadman