



## ‘Nature's Voice in the Journey’

*Photographic Exhibition by Gaynor Hartley*

Most people would be familiar with the phrase 'don't forget to stop and smell the roses'. The original quote was by the famous American golfer of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Walter Hagen.

*‘You're only here for a short visit.  
Don't hurry. Don't worry.  
And be sure to smell the flowers along the way.’*

We live in a world and culture that demands our attention, all the time.

The beauty of nature is it has no agenda, makes no demands, yet has the ability to speak to us in a way that can change the way we think or act just by its presence.

Take a bouquet of perfumed flowers, a stunning country vista, lying on the ground amongst autumn leaves and looking up at the sky, a row of red poppies standing tall, or even just an old moss covered wooden chair in the garden. All these things can impact our thoughts, our senses and our emotions, often without any conscious thought it is happening.

Walter Hagen's quote was twofold, stopping to smell the roses, and taking time to do it. Being deliberate. All these things are much better experienced with time, the pleasure and benefit for our well being grows in the experience, not in the rush.

Rutgers University psychology professor Nancy Fagley in 2012 carried out a study on 'happiness', her results concluded that it was linked to 'appreciation'. She suggested that people focus on and value what they have, spend time outdoors, and reflect on their blessings and relationships with others.\*

'Life is a journey not a destination' (Ralph Waldo Emerson). We all have a story to tell and a journey that is touched with love, heartbreak, joys, challenges, mystery, and what ifs? Everyone has a purpose, no matter how our culture values 'purpose' we were born to contribute, whether it is raising children, helping in the community, contributing in our workplace, each person has a gifting or ability to make a difference and influence their world. Money or connection will never make the same contribution as us being ourselves and being the best at who we created to be.

Nature reflects that purpose, it germinates, it grows, blooms and at times fights the odds to survive. How many times do you see a weed grow up through the smallest crack in a pavement - tenacity and perseverance - or the regeneration of the gum trees after they have been ravished by bushfires – purpose and destiny. It's DNA is built on function and unique purpose.

This 'Nature's Voice in the Journey' exhibition is about just that. It is a deliberate mix of familiar scenes, images, and an artistic interpretation of plants and flora. The names on the works are from the artist's viewpoint, but everything is open for interpretation. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Things easy on the eye and familiar, and then others that invite the viewer to take a closer look. It is about life, some of the treasures yet to be discovered are in the detail, and in taking the time to find them. The set of (7) Rainbow Australian Native Florii's on the back wall have been created to showcase the wonder of the Creator's own signature design.

Whether you believe in a creator or that this amazing world was a random happening, there is no denying that nature has a pattern and a purpose, it is a silent ambassador for the value of us living and 'being' in the moment, over that of just 'doing'.

Enjoy.

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\*[http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/a\\_scientific\\_reason\\_to\\_stop\\_and\\_smell\\_the\\_roses](http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/a_scientific_reason_to_stop_and_smell_the_roses)