

Wailau Beach Rainbow

Photograph and Text by Jon Cornforth
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Pentax 6x7 camera, 45mm Pentax lens and Fuji Velvia 50 film.*

My image “*Wailau Beach Rainbow*” was created during a sea-kayaking expedition along the remote north shore of Molokai several years ago. Some friends and I spent a week kayaking the uninhabited north shore and camping on beaches surrounded to some of the world’s tallest sea cliffs. On the second day of our trip, we awoke to some rainy weather. It was raining so hard that it was difficult to justify leaving the tent, let alone trying to photograph the sunrise, but at least it was Hawaii and the rain was warm. Shortly after the sunrise, light started to shine through between the rains, and this incredible double rainbow appeared off shore and perfectly complimenting the rest of the scene. I set up my Pentax 67 medium format film camera with the Pentax 45mm lens and Fuji’s Velvia 50 film, along the rocky shore and composed this image while trying to keep my camera dry. Then came the fun part, trying to put on my filters without getting them or the lens wet. Whenever I shoot a rainbow, I use my Singh-Ray Lighter Brighter Warming Polarizer. Rainbows are polarized light, so in order to bring them out, I rotate the filter to eliminate the background glare and make the rainbow “pop”. If I rotate the polarizer too far, it will totally disappear, and why would I want to do that when they are so hard to find? I also knew that I would have to use a Singh-Ray Graduated Neutral Density filter, and metered the scene to calculate that it would require a 1-stop grad in order to balance the ocean, dark lava rocks, sea cliffs, and rainbow. I often use my 3-stop Soft Edge grad when I need to use a 1-stop filter, since the beginning of the transition is approximately 1-stop and I do not need to include the 3-stop top part of the filter.

The summer issue of *Nature’s Best* recently came out and I am excited to report that this image was included in the inaugu-

ral Ocean Views Competition. It was also included in the print exhibit which opened at the Smithsonian Natural History Museum in Washington DC in June. The international competition was open to all photographers, but the images had to have an ocean theme. As you can imagine, having an image selected for this prestigious exhibit from thousands of entries is an incredible accomplishment.

http://naturesbestphotography.com/pages/gallery_oceanviews2008.html

I received some additional publicity from the Ocean Views exhibit on the newly launched website Pixcetera.com, which is part of AOL. In late August, my image was featured along with a 22 other images from the exhibit as a slideshow on Pixcetera’s main page and then on the AOL News home page. I was immediately bombarded by hundreds of emails and image inquiries that was well out of the norm for my website traffic. I soon discovered that the reason was because my “*Wailau Beach Rainbow*” image was the first image in the rotation and people were searching for my website based on my image credit information. It was very flattering to have so much fan mail (and a few hate mails due to people not believing my image was real), plus the many print orders that came in. The last time I checked, almost 1.4 million people had viewed the slideshow. I am working to upgrade my website to handle e-commerce and will be working with Pixcetera to run a feature portfolio of my photography soon.

<http://www.pixcetera.com/pixcetera/natures-best-oceans/29350>