

Title:

Lars van de Goor

Hasselblad Master: Landscape/Nature

Those who are creative in one field often have the ability to neatly side step into another and be equally adept, and so it proved with Lars van de Goor, who started out as a musician and has now become an accomplished landscape photographer. "I first started taking an interest in photography in 2007," he says. "It started out as a hobby and I was completely self-taught. At the time I was living near Amsterdam and I would go out on my bicycle to explore my local area looking for pictures. Near my house there was a long tree-lined canal, and I began to look for some interesting compositions along its banks. People appeared to like the theme, because when I posted my results online I received some good responses. That encouraged me and I started to become more involved.

"Having no formal training was good in a way because I didn't feel limited by any rules, but on the other hand teaching yourself something is a real trial-and-error process. Over time I came away with many over and under-composed and blurry images, and I started to teach myself postproduction skills to try to rescue some of them. Of course there is always a limit!"

The perseverance paid off, however, and by 2010 Lars felt confident enough to enter one of his shots in the Landscape/Nature section of the Hasselblad Masters competition and was placed in the top ten. This time around he's gone one better and has won the category, with a sublimely beautiful shot that he took in the Speulder Forest, one of the oldest and most beautiful parts of the Netherlands. "I took it towards the end of autumn," he says. "Beech trees sometimes hold their leaves for a long time, even until new ones start to grow. I was charmed by the contrast of the branches and the leaves against the misty background."

Hugely excited by his award, Lars, who is now living with his wife and her son in Lochem Gelderland, one of the most photogenic regions of the Netherlands, can't wait to start working with a Hasselblad. "I was a musician who never would have thought that one day photography would completely take over," he says. "I've enjoyed working with the DSLRs that I've used to date, and they've been very well suited to my needs. However, I believe that when I start using the Hasselblad my photography will move on to another level, and it will be as if you could smell and touch the surroundings."

Part 2

Based in Lochem in the Netherlands, landscape specialist Lars van de Goor chose to work close to home for his Inspire project, focusing in on details in his local woodland. It was an opportunity to concentrate on a location that he knew intimately but also a demonstration that if a photographer has the eye they can find great subject matter almost literally on their doorstep.

"I did face a few initial challenges," admits Lars. "Primarily this was down to the light: I prefer a slightly foggy/misty morning with a little sunshine and diffuse light and I only go out shooting when I know conditions are right. Unfortunately in the one and a half months I had to complete my project there were only two days where everything was exactly how I wanted it, and even then I had just a few hours in the morning within which to work.

"That said, I never regretted choosing the project I did, and because Speulder Woods where I was working is my own playground and I know my trees it ultimately worked out really well. It was also good to see the difference in results between the Hasselblad and my other gear. The quality I achieved using the camera was outstanding! When I was editing my images I could work very precisely and at almost 500%, which was a real pleasure. After a while you start to get used to that quality, but the difference was very noticeable when I went back to my older files. The very effective tools in Phocus software, which worked amazingly well with the Hasselblad files, also positively surprised me.

"Looking ahead I'm excited about the introduction of the X1D and I think the new camera will be a great addition to the existing Hasselblad line up. Natural light is changing constantly but the fact that the camera is so lightweight and compact means that the landscape photographer will be able to react to this and to have their gear up and running in a matter of seconds."