

ctLow, Photographer 📷 · Jan 10 · 5 min read



Snow Time for Photography

Updated: Jan 16

How to Beat the Winter Doldrums

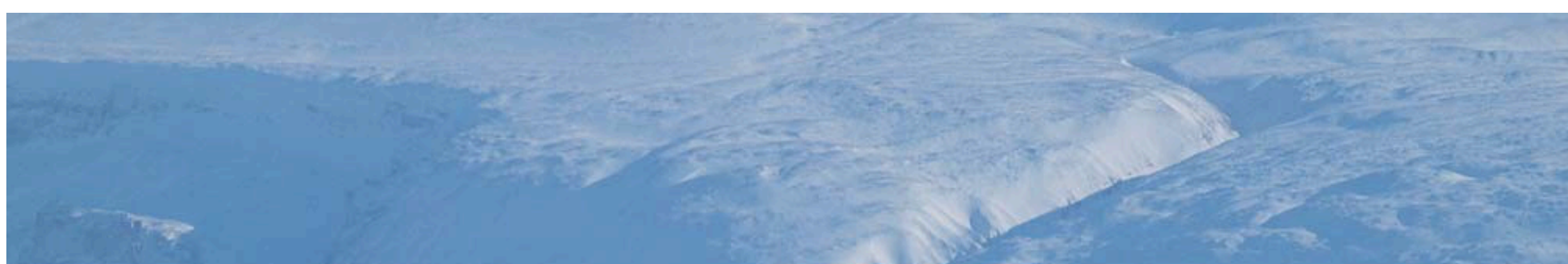
A photographer, to beat the winter blues, obviously needs to keep on photographing.

That said, I'm experiencing a couple of problems, most definitely first-world problems, but problems nonetheless. (I have never felt particularly subject to Seasonal Affective Disorder, and my condolences to those who find otherwise.)

But: i) art-trade slows down in winter (in cold climate-areas - the opposite apparently of [Arizona](#)). Plus, ii) the cold doesn't make things any easier. I wonder if a lifetime of winter weather has damaged my nerves or blood vessels, because my fingers feel very cold this year.

Still: keep on photographing! Read that as my mantra. And what follows demonstrates, for good or otherwise, how that has worked out so far over the last month or so.

The logo for 'ctLow Photography' features the word 'ctLow' in a blue, lowercase, sans-serif font with a red-to-blue gradient. Below it, the word 'Photography' is written in a black, elegant, cursive script.





Ice-locked iceberg, so far north that it makes "We the North" sound pretty feeble, many years ago.

And let me state one thing explicitly: as my art sold, pre-Holidays, I knew that would stop. And buying art requires some self-confidence, especially when buying for someone else as a gift. The recipients of several recent Christmas gifts have written to me, saying how much they love their new art.

This can only warm a photographer's heart.

Naturally, I want to keep selling. So if you have a wall-space which needs filling or whose art needs "rotating", then consider [purchasing](#) a piece. Birthdays, Valentine's Day, anniversaries - any reasons suffices. You know how to [reach](#) me.

My portfolio access-point resides [here](#).

—

Enough advertising. Let's move on to some winter photography.

Visiting some friends in their condo, with a forecast of "some flurries", a major snow-dump blew in quite suddenly, and I simply snapped out the window.





Sudden blizzard, Water St., Brockville, ON

Just trust me that, despite the loveliness of this street, it wouldn't normally warrant a photograph from that vantage. But when it snows, make lemonade!

—

I went out with my new friend, accomplished Kingston photographer [Paul Wash](#), for no other reason than to feed off each other's artistic instincts and knowledge, while practising our craft.

(If you don't find anything of mine which you would like to purchase, you'll for sure find something of Paul's.)

Well - we also started with lunch. I love lunch, and we had a great one at [Peter's Place](#).

We ended up, for quite a few hours, at [Kingston Mills Locks](#), the southern-most set of locks along the [Rideau Waterway](#).

We found the conditions difficult, with too harsh a light, and not enough snow to make it interesting. Much of the property had construction barricades. Grand vistas seemed in short supply.

But, over a few hours of thinking—of actively *seeing*—we each got a few things which please us.





dam guard-buoy



navigation buoy locked in ice

Paul and I like to gripe about the same things, so what better to bond over? I hope to have photographic sorties with him many more times.

—

Some days later, feeling the itch, the weather questionable, I nonetheless headed out, and that day I thought about the [Brock Trail](#), a wonderful local



resource which I find perversely difficult to photograph.

But that day, we had fresh snow, and in fact it continued to snow during my session, and then the sun came out, without stopping the snow (a sun-snow-shower), and it appeared that something might happen. I wandered

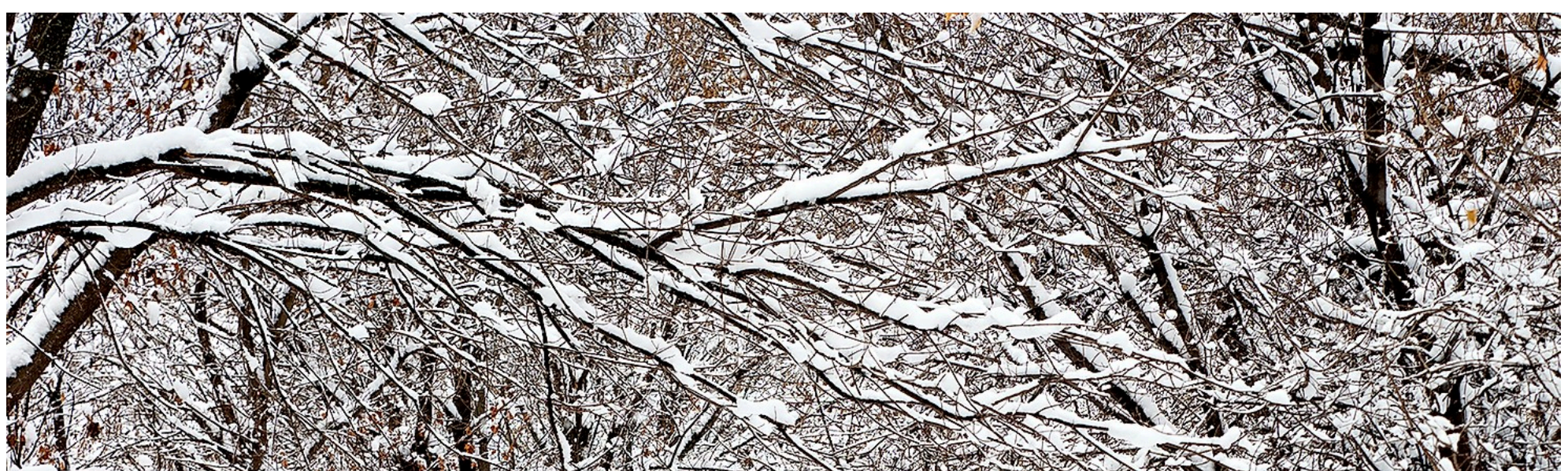
west from St. Paul St., and over more than an hour didn't quite make Beecher (because this involved primarily photography, not walking), but got the following.



The redoubtable Paul Wash



Brock Trail bridge over flowing water, winter, snowy trees





Brock Trail, fluffy snow on branches, bridge—a different bridge from the previous photograph

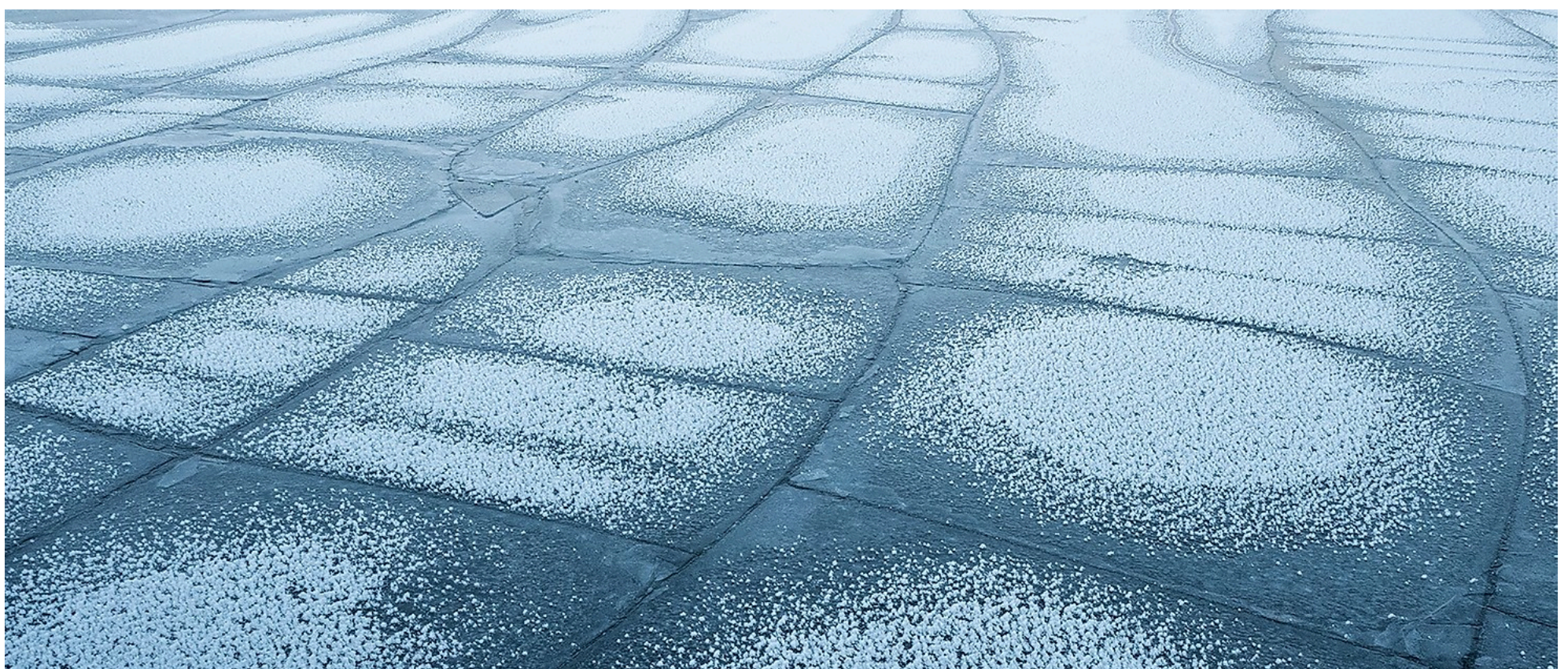
I often tell my students, as faithful readers of this blog will know, that just because something looks nice to the eye ([brain](#)), it won't necessarily make a good photograph, and that applies specifically to the messy jumble of branches which result from shooting into a pretty woodlot.

And then I most contentedly break my own guideline. Fine—"guideline", not "rule". I intend it to [enable](#) us, not to constrain us.

In this case, I personally like the pattern, almost texture, of the white, white snow against the dark, dark branches, and ... the snowy path and the bridge seem helpful components.

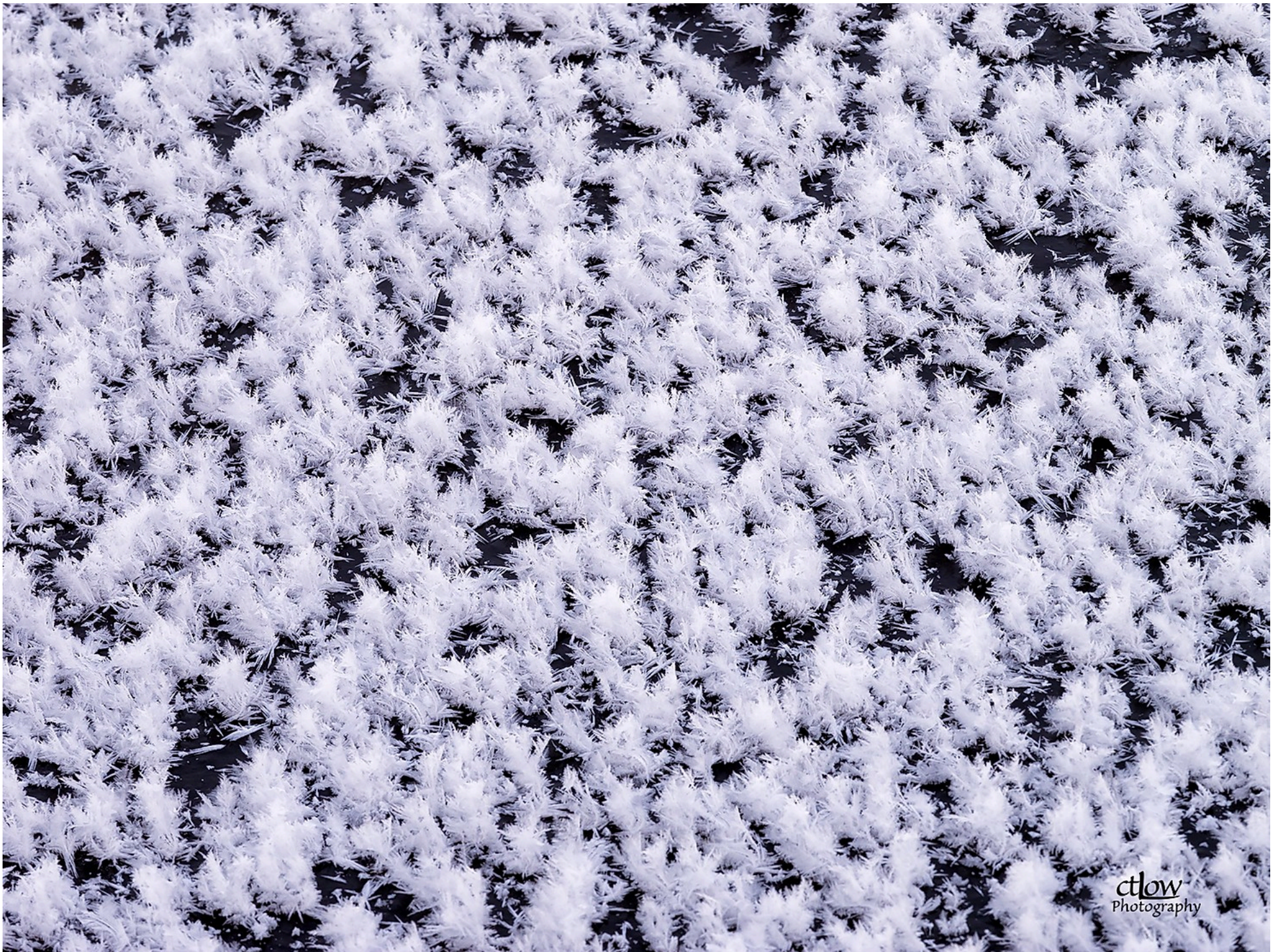
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A few days later, from my recurring vantage of Blockhouse Island, I found this unusual pattern in the ice.





Ice floe pattern inside Tunnel Bay, Brockville, ON



spikey ice detail

Not only the pattern felt striking, but on closer inspection, the details of the ice crystals, quite widespread, intrigued me. I suspect that some exact climatic (not "climactic" -look it up!) conditions of humidity and sudden deep cold came into play.

The next day, the river offered something different, and, nearing the end of the freighter-season, Whitefish Bay hove into view downbound at sunrise from the Brockville Narrows in fog (the type of fog requiring cold air, warmer water [not warm—just warmer than the air], and just the slightest puff of wind). I have never ceased to marvel at these magnificent machines, nor at Mother Nature.



Whitefish Bay freighter in a very cold fog

On Boxing Day, what else would occupy the fertile mind of a young Canadian male than outdoor photography? Conditions did not feel propitious, but buoyed by recent experiences on the trail at the south side of the [Mac Johnson Wildlife Area](#), I returned and experienced quite the rush.





bull-rushes in winter

I spent quite some time there, late in the day, and, of many other photographs, I think that I favour the one above. I do conjecture on the "why", but may I leave it to you to make your own assessment?

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My winter/snow epiphany came to me in northern [Manitoba](#), where I spent a few days surrounding New Year's.

I have reasons, unrelated to photography, to revisit northern Manitoba from time to time.

This year, magic happened. Day after day, around every corner, I continued to say "Wow!", or sometimes feel rendered speechless (and that's saying nothing!). The exact climatic (not "climactic", although one could argue that) conditions for this do not, I suspect, occur every year. It snowed, at just the right temperature for it to cling to branches. Then no appreciable wind occurred. Then, just the right type of snow fell again. Rinse and repeat. After three or more cumulative snows, you will see what happened in the photographs which follow.





snowy trees in northern Manitoba





this may look like ice-encrustation, but it's snow (and all photographers should give thanks for birch trees)

I feel so blessed to have chanced across this spectacle. Whether it takes your breath away depends partly on whether I succeeded in capturing it (because just aiming the camera and snapping did not work, as it rarely does), but I can only tell you that it

continues to awe me.



snowy evergreens at Pisew Provincial Park

This and the following I found at [Pisew Falls Provincial Park](#), an hour or so south of Thompson, Manitoba. I spent only about twenty minutes there, but what a twenty minutes.





Pisew Falls at Pisew Falls Provincial Park

I still feel over-whelmed, and think that I will stop here.

But in summary: thank goodness for winter. It's snow time for a photographer.

While You're Here ...

Reminder: I make photographs and I sell photographs.

Art - Most of the photographs which you see on this web site are for sale. Prices at the time of writing, for example, for an 11x14" fine-art print with a generous white border would start at about \$65, and you can go up or down from there. Check the [rates](#) page. More importantly, check out my [gallery](#). I would love to provide you with a work of fine-art photography, or to discuss a commission.

Portraits - Book a sitting - the right frequency with which to commission formal [portraits](#) is a bit more often.



Anything (almost ...)! Please inquire for photography categories such [automotive](#), industrial, charitable ...

Another reminder: kindly leave a **comment**, or [contact](#) me to sign up for new [blog notifications](#). I will very much appreciate referrals to potential new subscribers. I am very careful and respectful with your privacy.

Thank you so much for reading.

Charles T. Low
Photographer

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