

ARMAND SARLANGUE X HOUSTON VANDERGRIF X MUSTAFA AYDIN



FIREBORN  
TALES FROM THE  
DRAGON'S LAIR



1/1 EDITION BOOKLET

# Fireborn

TALES FROM THE DRAGON'S LAIR

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Mythical beasts of fire, forged from darkest valleys and deepest space. These fierce and powerful creatures have intrigued mankind for as long as time itself. Dwelling in secret places, living in untamed mountains, and flying through starry skies.

Since the dawn of the age, the elements have combined to form earth, mountain, and sky. Have they also combined to form dragons? Winged, horned, scaled, fire-breathing. The descriptions are surprisingly similar. If dragons are purely fictional, why do they appear in virtually all cultures around the globe?

In this project photographers from three continents have combined their skills and expertise to bring the legacy of the dragon to life. These images form the story of the dragon - from the depths of the earth, to the tops of the highest mountains, and into the deepest space.

Through these images the enchanted legacy of the dragon lives. Born of fire and mystery. Strong and powerful, wild and mighty.

Did dragons once dwell among us?

Do they perhaps still...?

## EMERGENCE OF THE DRAGON

Belief. Endurance. Hope for a better future.

Glaciers are ancient living and moving entities. They hold the memory of our planet. They hold the power to critically impact ecosystems.

Before the advent of glacial exploration, glaciers were often the sources of local myths and legends. Inaccessible strength of nature. People looked at glaciers with fear and respect, considering them sacred. In the French Alps, they were compared to dragons because of their overall shape and scale-like Seracs. But the comparison is also about glaciers being dangerous, mysterious, and beyond mankind's understanding.

Like dragons.

As dragons once feared by the inhabitants of the Alps, the myths and beliefs linked to glaciers are widespread throughout the world. In Peru, for example, hundreds of pilgrims visit the sacred glaciers in the region of Cuzco every year during the religious festival of Quyllurit'i.

Ironically, despite all the respect and fascination inspired by these giants, it is mankind's activity that is putting glaciers in danger of disappearing. This image was captured in the Parc National des Ecrins, in 2020. I captured this scene on the last day before hiking down to the civilization. I left the refuge on a foggy night and passed through the cloud inversion level as I arrived at the glacier viewpoint.

After hiking down through a rock landslide to reach the glacier, I found myself in some sort of mystical world made of ice, fog, and light. I proceeded onto the glacier. The moody atmosphere created waves of fog that passed by as I captured this picture. It was a surreal experience – walking on the back of a *dragon*.

Somewhere between the wonderment to witness so much beauty.

And the sadness to see the retreat of the sacred monster.



Image Credits: Armand Sarlangue

### EQUIPMENT

Camera: Nikon D850, 14mm

Location: Parc National des Ecrins, France



## HERE BE DRAGONS

“Beware...for here be dragons...”

In medieval times mapmakers put illustrations of dragons and sea monsters in uncharted areas where potential dangers were believed to exist. Should Mammoth Hot Springs in Yellowstone National Park be marked as such?

Here powerful skeins of steam dot the area, shifting across reflective hot pools. Are these steaming geothermal vents? Or dragons' breath? The smell near hot springs hints of something strong. Is it sulfur? Or is it, perhaps, the scent of dragons?

Unbelievable colors are formed as over 2 tons of calcium carbonate flow into this area daily. It is the largest carbonate-depositing spring in the world. The never-ending flow causes the landscape to be constantly changing. Scientists believe the Yellowstone volcano, located deep underground, provides the heat for the thermal waters. But, maybe the heat comes from a dragon's fire?

I took this image in June 2022, just four days prior to the devastating floods that ripped through this area of the park. The landscape has undoubtedly been drastically and forever changed. So, this image captures a moment in the history of the park that will never be seen again.

In this image, look carefully. What you see behind the travertine falls might be limestone carved by thermal waters.

Or, perhaps, it's the curved back of a sleeping dragon.



Image Credits: Houston Vandergriff

### EQUIPMENT

Camera: Nikon D7100, 55mm

Location: Mammoth Hot Springs, Yellowstone National Park, USA



## FIGHTING DRAGONS OF ARA NEBULA

Fire-breathing dragons fighting in the night sky.

The stuff of childhood dreams? Yes. But also much more.

Legends of dragons have filled many cultures with terror since the beginning of mankind. And, if you think the word, "Ara," sounds like it is straight from mythology, you are right. Ara has its roots in ancient Greek mythology.

Meaning "altar" in Latin, Ara is a small constellation. It is located in the southern sky. In Greek mythology, Ara was the altar of King Lycaon of Arcadia. This constellation also represents the altar used by Zeus. It was used by other Greek gods as well. Before going to battle against Kronos and the Titans, they would swear a vow of allegiance before the altar, the Ara.

Fighting Dragons of Ara Nebula is an emission nebula located about 4,000 light-years away in the constellation of Ara. The dark lanes in the nebula resemble two dragons engaged in a fight.

The nebula is a star-forming region and it is sculpted by the young energetic stars recently born in the region. These young stars with their intense ultraviolet radiation are able to ionize the atoms and make them glow and shape beautifully.

Just like two dragons in the night sky.

The stuff of legends.

And dreams.



Image Credits: Mustafa Aydin / Telescope Live

### EQUIPMENT & EXIF

Takahashi FSQ-106ED

Aperture: 106 mm

Focal Length: 382 mm

f-ratio: 3.6

Mount: Paramount MX+

Camera: FLI ML 16083

Filters (50mm square): Astrodon Ha (3nm), SII (3nm), OIII (3nm)

Observatory name: Heaven's Mirror Observatory

Location: Yass, NSW 2582, Australia

Total 19 hours of exposure

Ha 36 x 600 sec, SII 40 x 600 sec, OIII 39 x 600 sec





**ARMAND SARLANGUE @ARMANDSARLANGUE**

Armand Sarlangue has been a full-time photographer for the past 15 years. Son of a pro photographer, visual arts have always been a passion since childhood and he's had a camera in his hands from a young age. He started working as a reportage and studio photographer in collaboration with his father at the age of 20 and continued to work together for more than 10 years.

After his dad passed away from cancer, he decided to focus exclusively on his true passion: nature photography. He's now a photography educator and workshop leader, as well as NFT artist. Photography is a way for him to tell his own stories about our world, as well as the last connection he has with his dad.

Being in the most remote places and capturing the artistic expression of the natural world is what motivates him. He believes that photography can be one of the best ways to raise awareness on nature conservation, by helping others to connect with the secret beauty of nature.

His landscape images have been awarded dozens of times and exhibited internationally by institutions like the California Academy of Sciences, Exposure Photography Festival, Sienna Photography Festival, and others.

His work can be seen in 5 photo books and have been featured by Natgeo, Geo Magazine, Australian Photography Magazine, BBC News, and many others.

**HOUSTON VANDERGRIFF @DOWNSANDTOWNS**

Houston Vandergriff is a globe-trotting travel photographer based in Knoxville, Tennessee. Houston has a simple vision with his photography: Make the world a better place. By the age of 24, he has traveled to all 95 counties in his home state, to 49 of the 50 United States, to 5 Canadian provinces, and to 26 countries.

Houston has Down syndrome and inspires others, both inside and outside of the disability community. He is a strong self-advocate who uses the universal language of the arts to push for inclusion. He is a social media influencer - using Tiktok, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter to share his story. His clients include Amazon, Tiktok for Good, and multiple brands of photography-related equipment. He has appeared in live events, podcasts, and broadcasts on four continents. He has been called "The Champion of Life" by one of the broadcasters from India. By sharing his gift of photography he is also sharing the gift of hope.

His photography journey has been shared in Newsweek, It's Gone Viral, Spectrum News, and MSN. He and his mom were featured speakers at the 2021 World Down Syndrome Conference in Dubai. His award-winning photography has been displayed in solo and group curated shows, online galleries, and the Inspiration Gallery in Perth, Scotland. He was awarded the 2020 International Photographer in "My Perspective" photo competition in the UK.



**MUSTAFA AYDIN @AYDINMUSTAFAAA**

Mustafa Aydin is an astrophotographer with 8+ years of astrophotography and almost lifelong experience in general photography. He was born and raised in a photographer family that has the 3rd generation of photographers, at the moment, perhaps more to come.

He primarily uses his own equipment, a Meade Instruments 70mm Refractory Telescope, Orion Atlas Pro Mount (Tracker), Nikon D5300 Camera and lots of cables, software and accessories. He also has access to the Telescope Live remote telescopes located in Chile, Spain, and Australia.

He is co-founder and member of Ankara Astronomy Group, and co-founder and co-owner of Stellar Xperiences. He is a brand ambassador for Meade Instruments. He is a judge for monthly astrophotography competitions organized by Telescope Live.

He has had numerous photos published in national science magazine. Several photos of his photos have been selected as astrophotography of the day, week, month from international platforms. One photo was shortlisted in the most prestigious astrophotography contest called "Astronomy Photographer of the Year - Royal Museums Greenwich" in 2020 in aurora category. Several of his photos are being exhibited in Gokmen Space and Aviation Training Center in Bursa Turkey. And, in 2020 Aydin was able to photograph the Comet Neowise, with rare bicolor (red and blue) ion tails.

Mustafa Aydin, Armand Sarlangue, and Houston Vandergriff have teamed together to create this Fireborn NFT project. As photographers from three continents they have combined their expertise to bring the epic tale of the dragon to life.

This 1/1 custom designed book contains all images and tales of the Fireborn collection. It will go to one lucky owner once the 21 editions from this 3-image NFT bundle are fully collected. In this one-of-a-kind project, the enchanted legend of the dragon lives.

**SPECIAL THANKS**

- Book Design Elisa Vandergriff @elisavandy
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- Portraits Juliet Furst @thet21project  
Rudolf Peter Jelen

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## L I C E N S E

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