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NEWS

Surgeon captures award-winning nature photos



Andre Poirier, a surgeon and award-winning photographer, captured this image of the milky way galaxy over the Hopewell Rocks last weekend.

Photo: Andre Poirier



🕒 Published 5 days

ago



Alan Cochrane | Times & Transcript

André Poirier spent more than three hours on the cold mud of the Bay of Fundy last Saturday to capture the image of the Milky Way Galaxy in what he felt was perfect alignment with the flowerpot rocks in Hopewell Cape.

He posted the image on social media over the weekend. It shows the stars of the Milky Way in the skies above the rocks, which are partially covered in snow. In the foreground are the mud flats and the natural light turns the sky yellow on the horizon.

"I always plan everything ahead," Poirier said Monday. "I knew the Milky Way was going to be in just the right spot at 4 a.m., so I had to get there early and wander around to find just the right place and then set up the camera and lights."

Poirer said he shot 70 to 100 digital images of the stars and the rocks, using different focus points and shutter speeds with lights strategically placed for brightness and shadows. The photos also captured the natural light on the horizon from the Dorchester area, which defined the line between the water and the blue sky. He uses specialty computer software to combine the best of all those images into a single high-resolution photo that can be printed more than a metre wide. Poirier said he spends many hours touching up imperfections before they are printed big, but does not add any artificial details.

"The more complex a project is, the more I like it," said Poirier, a vascular surgeon at The Moncton Hospital who has enjoyed photography as a hobby and sideline for several years. He started photography as a way to relax and de-stress, and has expanded on the hobby to the point where he has been accredited as a professional photographer and won several awards for his work. His photos can be found in a gallery on St. George Street, where they are printed on acrylic glass up to eight feet wide and sell in the \$1,200 range.

Last fall, a photo of a seagull flying over Niagara Falls won the Bruce Berry Award for Best Print, and Best in Class in the Pictorial/Floral category of the Professional Photographers of Canada awards (Atlantic) for 2019!

He said that photo was another blend of around 100 digital images taken between 5 p.m. and 8:45 p.m. The images use slightly different shutter speeds and focus points so some details are sharp and others slightly blurry. He waited for hours for the seagull to fly through the perfect spot in the frame. The result is a blend of colours that could be mistaken for a painting, not a photograph.

Poirier and his fiancée, Melanie Caissie, have travelled across Canada, the United States, Iceland, Norway, Italy and France on photo trips. Their next trip will be to Havasu Falls, Arizona.

Poirier said his photo from Hopewell Cape illustrates the natural beauty of the Bay of Fundy.

"This shot is literally taken on the ocean floor, since this place is known for the highest tides in the world," he said in his Instagram post. "It gives you a sense that you are walking on the ocean floor, like Aquaman."

Paul Gaudet, reception manager at the Hopewell Rocks, said people come from around the world to marvel at the natural beauty of The Rocks and the highest tides in the world.

"I do not see the fascination with our site ending anytime soon, although we need to consider our growth and be mindful that it does not go forward in an uncontrolled manner," Gaudet said.

The Rocks, one of New Brunswick's most popular tourist attractions, is officially closed for the season, but Gaudet said some people do venture out at their own risk, since the conditions can be icy and slippery.



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Marvellous to know our Bay is celebrated in such fine fashion

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Absolutely wonderful 👍👍

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Beauty shot! Congratulations deserved indeed! Distinctly New Brunswick and Canadian, but puts into perspective just how miniscule we really are in the Universe.

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Fabulous images - great job.

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