



Myrthe Buijs

- She has represented The Netherlands in horse vaulting and gymnastics at the European Championships in Poland and the World Championships in Sweden.
- She loves music and singing. She believes if she can touch someone's heart, inspire or move someone with a picture or a song, it is the biggest compliment in the world.



➔ Myrthe has submitted her work to several Instagram contests, and has won quite a few of them!

The Light Chaser

Supriya Joshi speaks with South African photographer Myrthe Buijs, and uncovers her world, spilling with light and magic.

Sometimes, some brilliant photographs get lost amongst the rapid, narcissistic ones that get seen and liked by millions of people around the world on Instagram. But somewhere between the thousands of selfies and other insipid self-involved photographs, a beam of light emerges in the images of Myrthe Buijs. I discovered her feed only a few months ago, and I was completely mesmerised. Myrthe's landscape

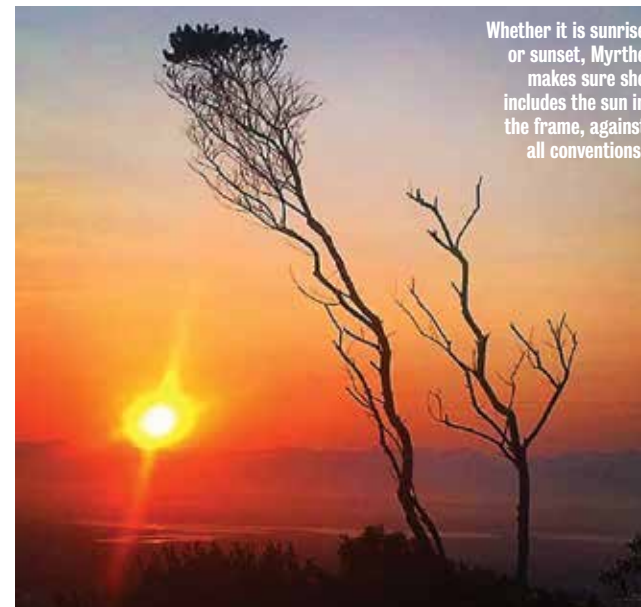
photographs are consistently breathtaking, and I was quite excited to learn how she makes them.

In the Lap of Nature

Myrthe has been a globetrotter ever since she was young. She was born in Amsterdam, lived in Greece for a short while, then in France for a year and she finally settled down in Cape Town, South Africa since 2001. All these places are inherently scenic and beautiful, and

FIND MYRTHE HERE!

- Instagram: @myrthe_buijs
- Website: naturesarte.com



Whether it is sunrise or sunset, Myrthe makes sure she includes the sun in the frame, against all conventions.

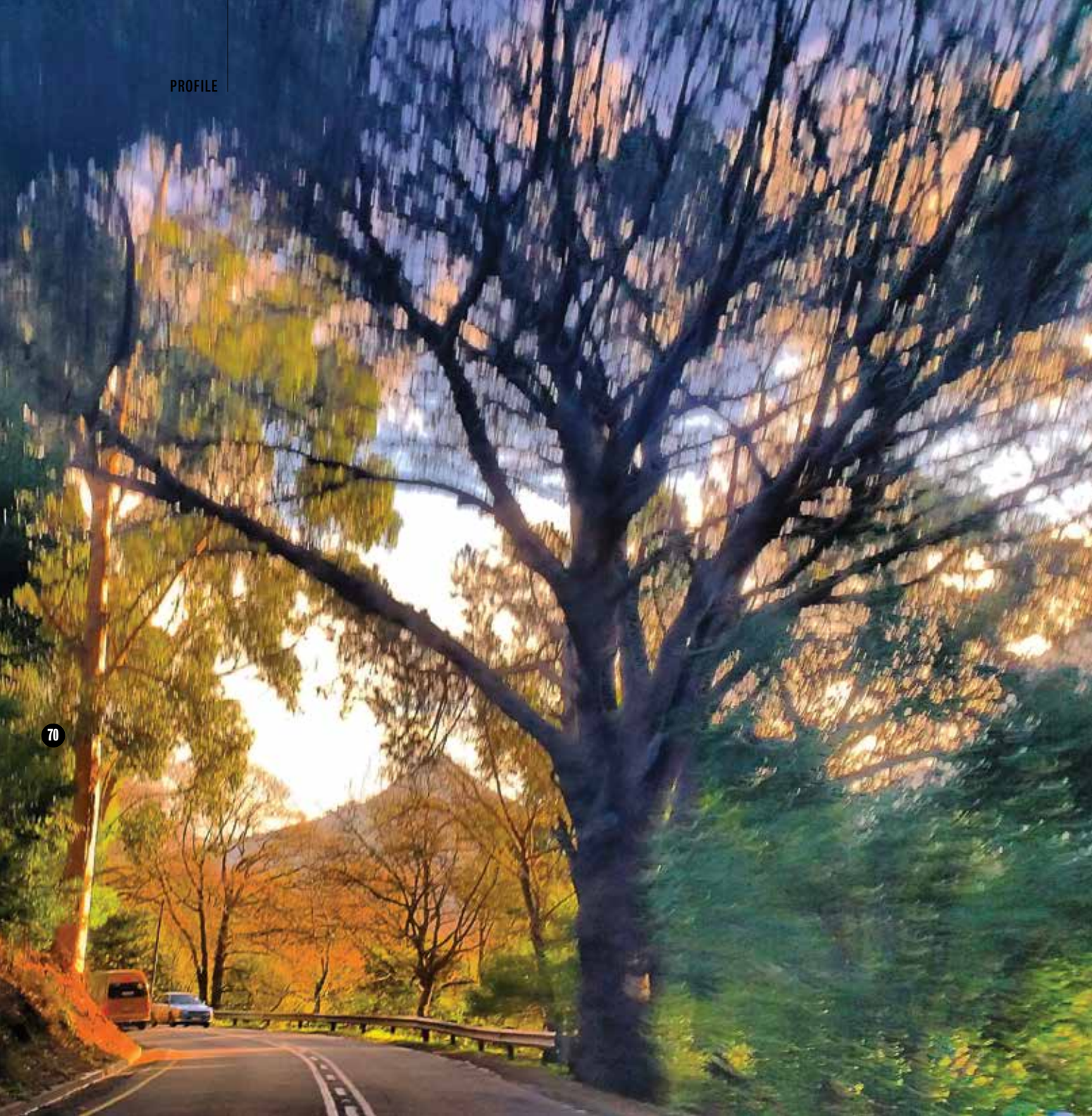
I wondered if that had influenced the way she makes images in any way.

"To this day still, I am amazed everyday by the beauty that surrounds me here in Cape Town. The incredible nature, the powerful mountains, the sceneries, the unique indigenous flora and fauna, the wildlife, the beautiful unspoiled beaches and the African light definitely has some kind of magic," she said. "When beauty abounds you in such a vast manner, making images of my surroundings became an almost natural occurrence.

I can't do without capturing these stunning scenes now."

➔ Her choice of equipment echoes her philosophy of 'less is more'.





Myrthe says:

- **Break Conventions:** Sometimes doing the opposite of what they tell you to can yield great results. Try everything to find your own style.
- **Simplify:** I believe that minimalism is the key. Don't fill your frame with unnecessary elements.

The Old-School Way

Making photographs, however, is not something that Myrthe has just taken up recently. In fact, as a teenager, she used to develop black and white photographs in a darkroom! "I have also worked as a manager in a store where I used to work with large machines and print and process photographs from negatives." Going through her work, one can say that this training in the traditional medium definitely reflects in her work today.

A Non-Traditional Approach

What I was most curious about was why Myrthe chose to shoot landscape images with a cellphone, a Samsung Galaxy S5. It is a genre dominated by DSLR purists, and most don't even consider making landscape photographs with a cellphone.

"I do not see why landscape photography via cellphone should be a problem. Constantly developing technology has greatly improved image quality you can achieve with a cellphone. In fact, I feel that

📍 Her images have a certain watercolour-like effect. The light and the colours are reminiscent of Rembrandt's landscape paintings.



📍 She considers this photo of her daughter flying a kite as one of her most special moments.

my cellphone can capture light perfectly, and I am greatly satisfied with the results. My cellphone camera is almost always set to the HDR function. It makes a big difference."

In Search of Light

Myrthe's close proximity to the ocean has made her spoilt for choice while choosing



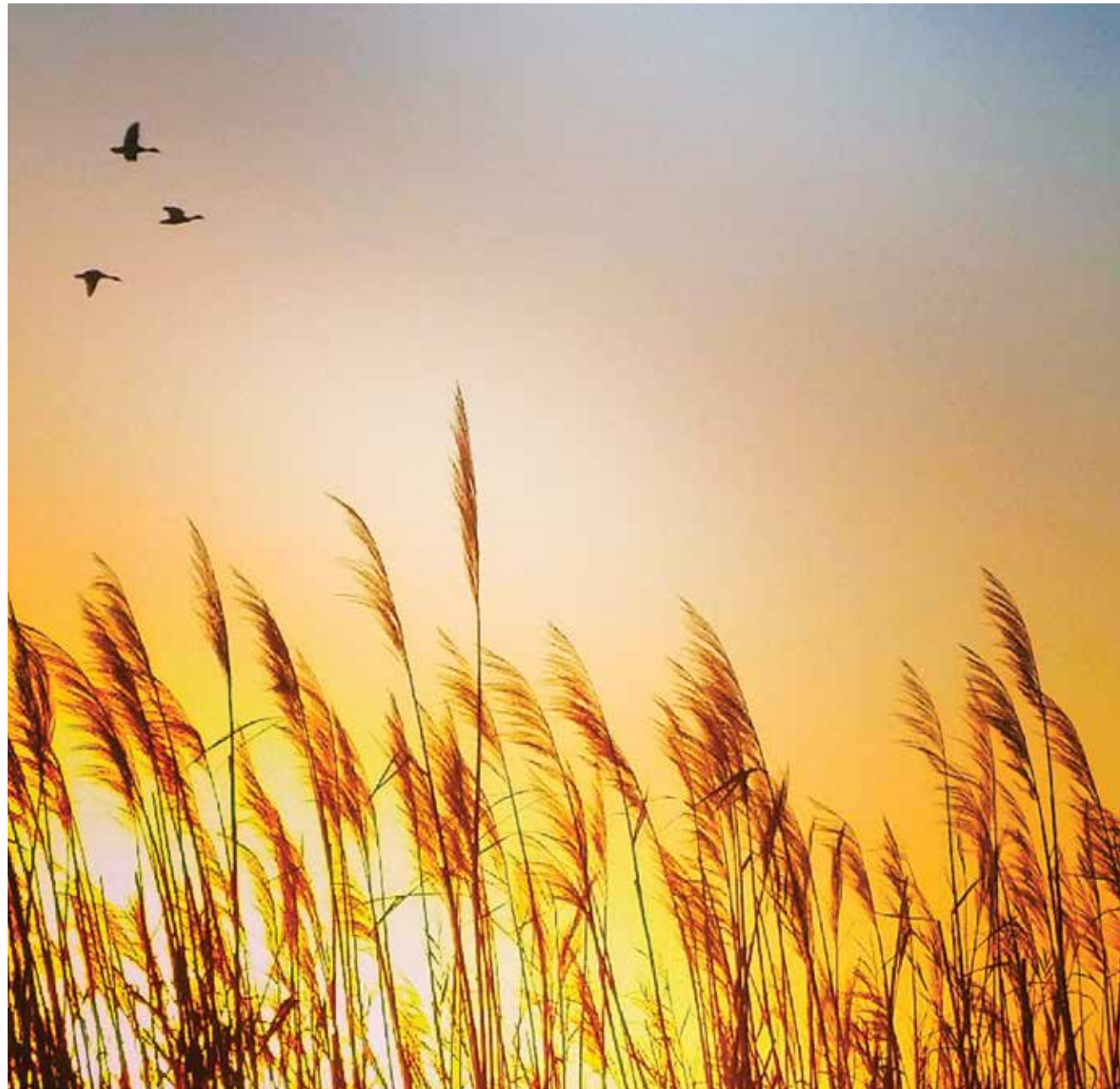
📍 Whether it is the sunlight or the subjects in the frame, her images always leaves the viewer feeling happy.

a location to shoot. "I am fortunate to have a choice of 18 beautiful beaches in my direct vicinity! I spend a lot of time in the car driving over mountain roads and often stop to make shots when I see a beautiful scene. I also tend to hunt for special spots to watch the sunsets and shoot," she said.

"I am an eternal optimist who believes one can choose to see beauty everywhere."



📍 She shoots almost everyday, so light chasing has become part of her everyday routine. Even then, she manages to break free from the usual, to present unique images.



Her frames are simple, yet when you stare at them long enough, layers of meaning begin to emerge.

Myrthe also calls herself an “obsessive snapper”. She makes photographs almost all the time, but prefers to shoot sunsets. “A beautiful sunset, incredible cloud formations or special light can get me so excited that my heart starts beating faster!”

Getting Inspired

Myrthe feels that Instagram has affected the way she thinks about photography in a big way. “I have come across very inspirational photographs with clever out-of-the-box thinking. It is great to look through the eyes of creative artists, as it gives you ideas as well and you start looking at things differently. Instagram has been an incredible stimulation.

The wonderful comments from other photographers are so encouraging, they boost your energy to keep shooting and sharing,” she said.

I asked if she could share some of her favourite photographers and Instagrammers, and she was quick to respond with three of them, “The first is Corla Schöner (@thelittlethings_love), who puts so much love into her photographs. I quite enjoy the macro work of Alvin Eng (@ck_expresso) and the beautiful nature photography of Sharon Kay (@sharonkay99). They have also been wonderfully supportive towards my photography, which is always a boost for my creativity.”

FUN APPS TO TRY

If you're unhappy with standard picture collages, PicPlayPost may be the app you are looking for. In this Android and iOS app, you can combine images with video in any grid form. Best of all, the app is free!

Looking to the Future

I then asked what Myrthe thought about the future of cellphone photography. “I definitely think more photographers will find that cellphones can allow them to make incredible shots and they will start using the cellphone more. It is convenient, you don't have to worry about changing your lens, spend time on settings and in the meantime miss the moment. It has opened doors

for creative people and most importantly, for those who can't afford expensive camera equipment.”

But would she ever consider switching to a camera? “Cellphones have their limitations, especially when it comes to the zoom function, and the battery also drains out quicker. I do intend to invest in a camera some day, but for now, my cellphone is the best medium for my expression!”

Myrthe has trained her vision and framing to such an extent that the medium she uses to make her photos seem of no relevance.

