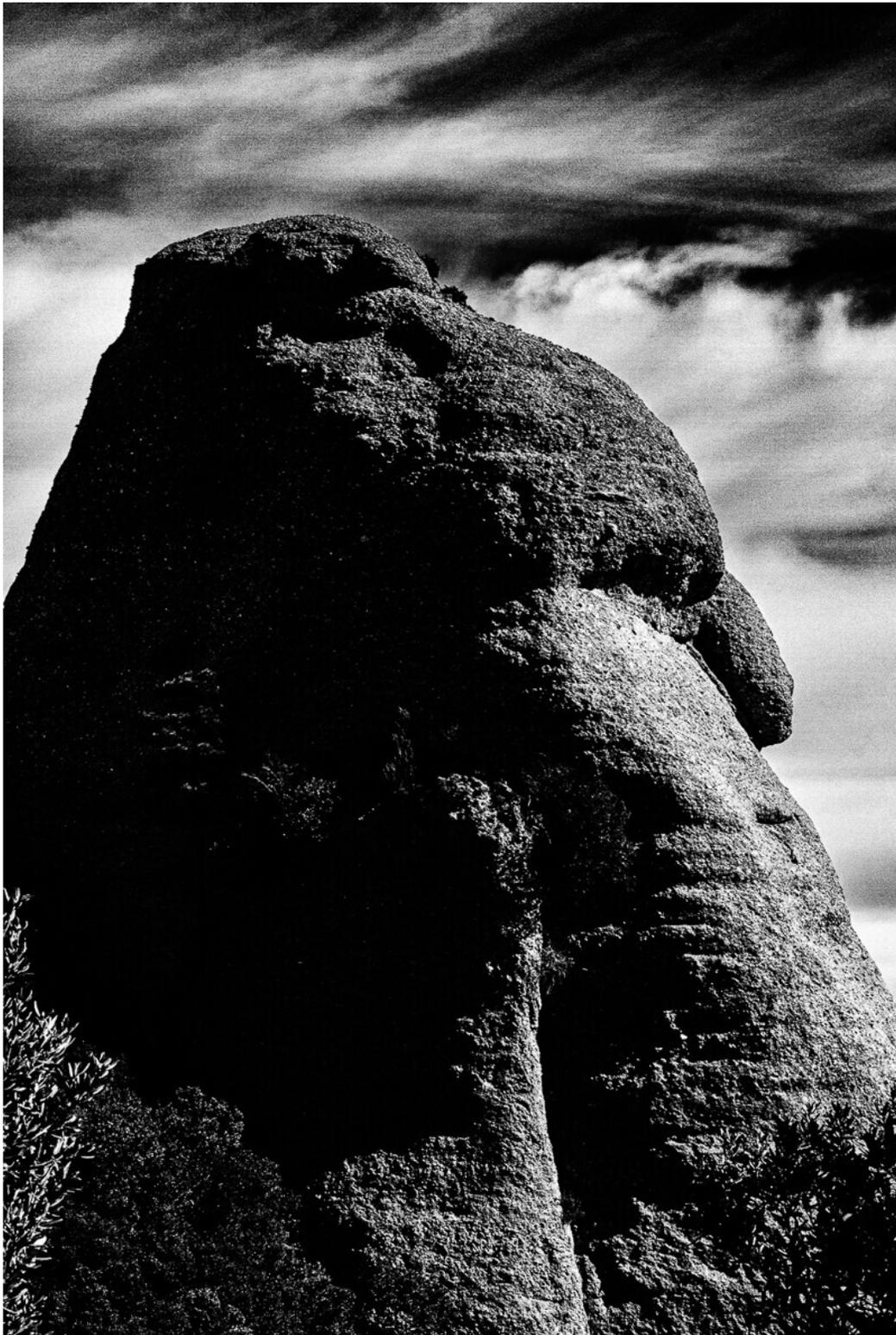




Featured Artist Mark Basterfield

Artist Mark Basterfield blurs the line between reality and fantasy in his dramatic black and white photography. Find more of his work when you visit his [website](#).



"The Giant" digital image, various sizes

My name is Mark and I have a surname that requires a good sense of humour. I come from Birmingham England, and now live in Barcelona Spain along with my wife and best friend Paloma. (My surname is Basterfield, by the way.)



"Battle" digital image, various sizes

I grew up around photography, but my photographic journey did not begin until I fell sick with a life-threatening disease. Once my doctors saved me, I started receiving help for the mental illness caused by having a physical ailment at such a formative age. This is where photography assisted and still assists.



"Fairyland" digital image, various sizes



"Believe" digital image, various sizes

After a solo trip to Austria, I decided to undertake some training to hone my skills. Since then, I have completed commercial projects as well as personal work. However, it's the personal work that I intend to discuss. Photography has encouraged me to show my creative side, exploring my thoughts with growing confidence and finding other ways to express myself through different artistic mediums.



"Light" digital image, various sizes



"The Sphinx and the Monkey" digital image, various sizes

I have tried many times to categorise my personal photos, but have never been fully satisfied. Recently, I decided to view them together as a group, referring to them as *Shapes, Forms and Drama*. The photos cover different genres such as landscape and nature. But what they have in common is all the images are black and white and lie somewhere between reality and a dream world with a whimsical, fantastical feel.



"Despair – Remains of war" digital image, various sizes



"So lonely" digital image, various sizes

They are an attempt to give an insight into what I see when photographing, glimpses of how I allow my mental state to control what I shoot, showing the beauty of the subject. Many of my images involve mountains or locations where I can allow my mind to wander.



"Hidden" digital image, various sizes

I often daydream, inventing stories related to my surroundings. Vegetation, light, and rock textures combine to create magical figures, sometimes monstrous, other times not; but what makes me set the camera and press the shutter button is something more. It's an emotional, mental pinnacle that I reach from observing an area over a period. It could be minutes, hours or involve numerous visits to a location.



"Into the light" digital image, various sizes

I possess a long memory with an inability to let go of things with ease. Memories of loneliness from times past weave their way into the present from the dark depths of my brain, making loneliness a continuous theme in my photos, even if it is unintentional.

Clouds or mist feature heavily obscuring the view of the observer. They hide away the true subject of the images, just as I hide behind a barrier of my own creation, afraid to allow people to see who I really am.

But there is a strong hint of hope. Clouds and mist do not cover every aspect of all the images. There is nearly always something clear for the viewer to see. As light hits certain parts of the photos, it highlights and focuses on something fitting and beautiful, just as the recovery stage of my mental illness has allowed me to do with my day-to-day life.

Artist Mark Basterfield invites you to follow him on [Instagram](#).