

## The Story Behind *Nightflowers*

My inspiration for the *Nightflowers Collection* began in the depths of the Amazon. After completing the photographic essay, *Tropical Gardens of Hawaii*, I spent a day at the Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens in California. The Huntington was featuring an exhibit of paintings from Frederic Church, one of my favorite 19<sup>th</sup> century artists. His realistic images of the Andes and Amazon inspired me to travel to South America and retrace his footsteps.

I spent a week shooting landscapes in the depths of the Amazonian rainforests on the Rio Napo in Ecuador. It's easy to capture beautiful images of nature in such a pristine environment. Early-morning pink skies, placid lakes and lush jungles in every shade of green envelope you. The raucous call of parrots flying overhead, monkeys howling and the occasional splash of an alligator diving into the river are sounds you will never forget. The calming cool of an afternoon shower helps you appreciate the amazing world in which we live. Leaving such a place is not easy.

I returned to Los Angeles and began to review my work. The landscapes were just as I had envisioned: postcard-perfect scenes of jungles and Indian villages. But, after studying my work, I became drawn, not to the photos of vast rainforests, but to the few primitive images I had captured on the jungle floor. Images of small flowers which housed complete ecosystems of insects – predators and prey – mesmerized me. I had spent a week looking at the “big picture,” but now these small botanicals were elevated in status by the close-up detail which I could now see.

I wondered how I could have missed such an amazing display, but it's easy to miss the small details in life, isn't it?

Those few small botanicals in the Amazon inspired me to create a collection of art which show, in the finest detail, the beauty of nature. I spent the next few months collecting exotic flowers from around the world to pose as subjects for my new work. Orchids from Asia, bromeliads from the Amazon, gingers from Polynesia . . .

Unfortunately, technology hadn't caught up with my vision. I wasn't able to capture the extremely fine detail I wanted to show. I wanted viewers to be able to see, like they've never seen before, the extreme detail that only a small insect, like a honey bee, would see in these miniature landscapes.

After months spent researching, I realized I had to develop my own process. Using cutting-edge technology, along with techniques I developed and refined, I was finally able to capture my vision on canvas. The technique I developed is being called *dettaglia* because it captures detail like you've never

seen before. You can literally see grains of pollen on the stamens of a hibiscus in the *Nightflowers* collection. And every flaw in these flowers demonstrates that every beauty has its imperfections.

I am thrilled to release a collection of 25 of my finest images in *Nightflowers*. I believe they show God's hand in nature and in our lives like no other botanical images have before. I hope they will inspire and delight you as much as they have me. When you see the *Nightflowers* collection, I am convinced you will see flowers like you've never seen them before.