



LEICA M | SL

Uiler Costa-Santos

SIZÍGIA

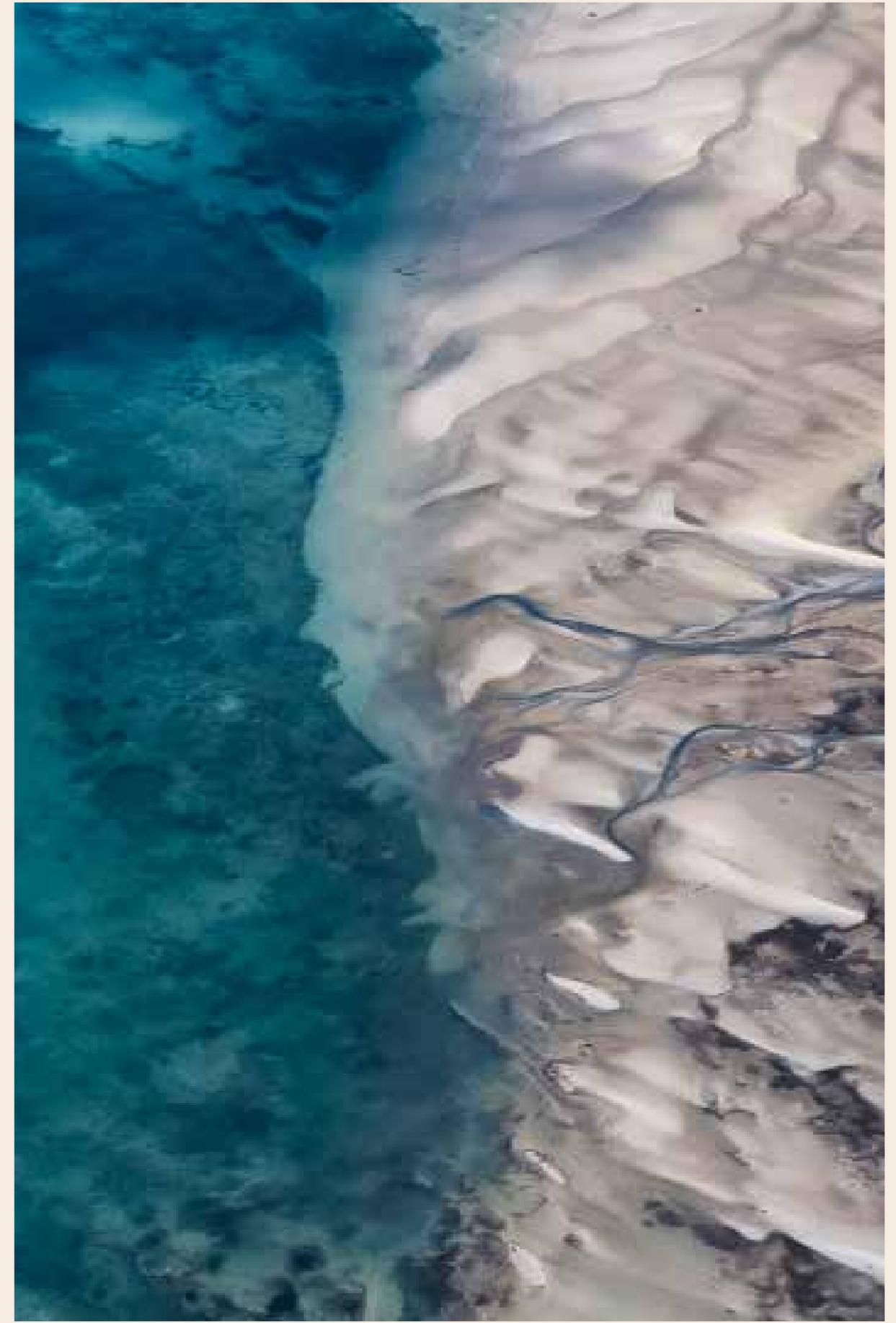
Sizígia – the moment in which things merge to produce new forms: the sea, the soil, and the rivers. The Brazilian photographer captures the movement of the tides in aerial photographs.



The images appear like dream worlds and represent a visual expansion of perceptible spaces. Photographing from a helicopter, Uiler Costa-Santos captures the changes to the coast of Bahia brought about by the tides

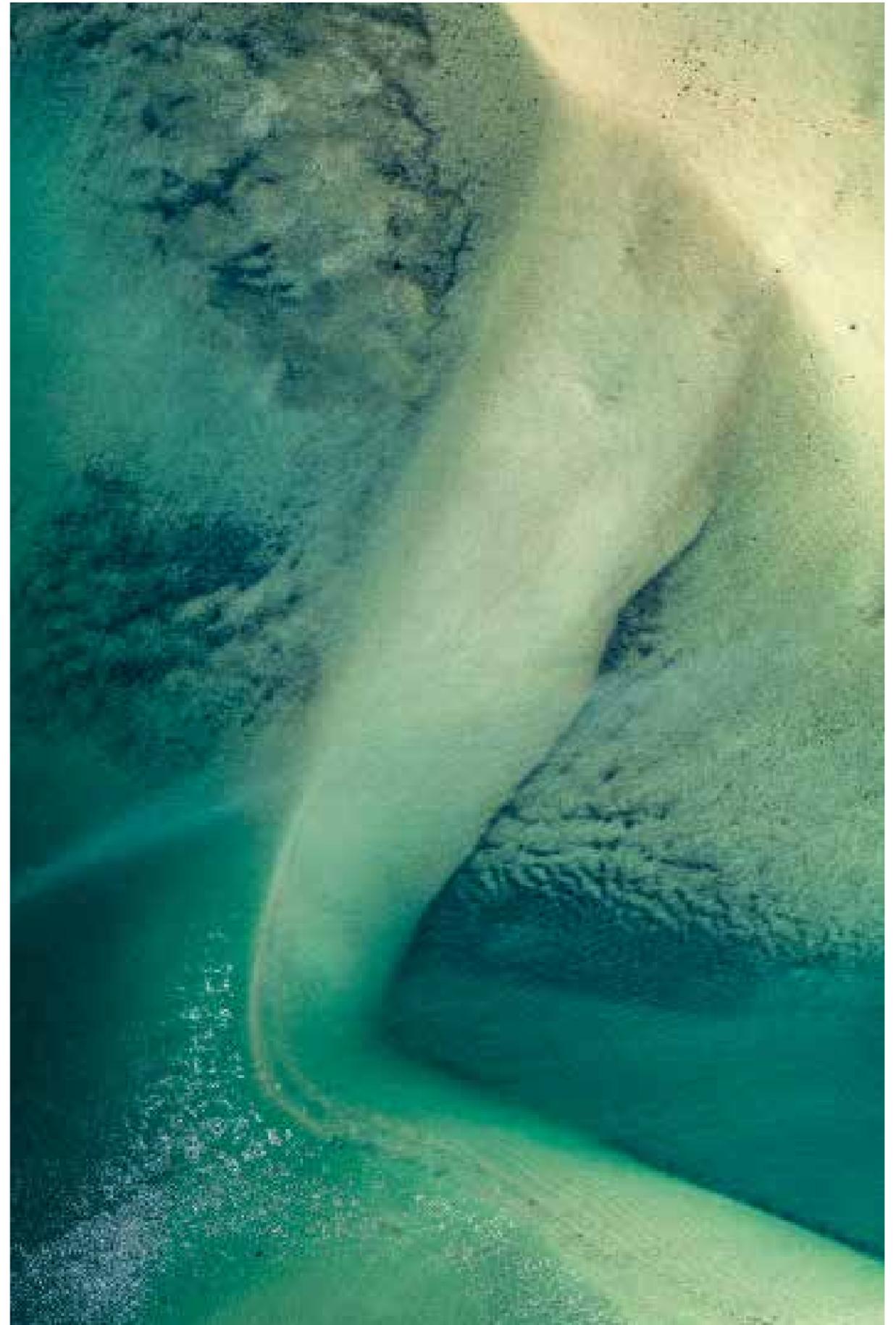
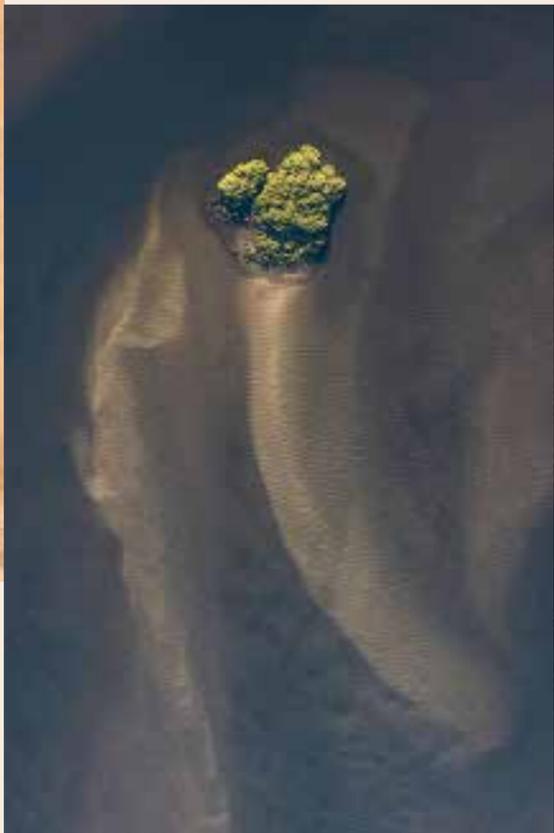








Using abstraction, the photographer constructs a new reality out of the landscapes made up of shapes, structures, and natural colours - impelled by a desire to build a relationship with his surroundings and better understand their dynamics





UILER COSTA-SANTOS

Uiler Costa-Santos (1983) is a visual artist and educator in the city of Salvador da Bahia. He has collaborated with National Geographic Brazil, National Geographic Traveller UK, and the Salvador Tourism Board, among others. He is a guest columnist for the Portuguese blog Fotografia DG and the Iphoto Channel and has been teaching photography courses with an emphasis on technique and poetic research, since 2015.

UILER.COM

LFI-ONLINE.DE/BLOG: BEHIND THE SCENES

EQUIPMENT: Leica M with Leica Summilux-M 35 f/1.4 Asph and Leica Apo-Telyt-M 135 f/3.4; Leica SL with Leica Vario-Elmarit-SL 24-90 f/2.8-4 Asph and Leica Apo-Vario-Elmarit-SL 90-280 f/2.8-4

These landscapes captured by Uiler Costa-Santos are places of mystery and transformation: where once there was sea, there is now sand; where a river once flowed, the banks have now dissolved; where loneliness once defined the expanse, warm waves now rush in. *Sizígia* is a Portuguese word that refers to an astronomical phenomenon that is triggered when three celestial bodies from the same gravitational system align. The Brazilian photographer has adopted it as a symbol for his current project, which documents how the alignment of the sea, earth and rivers results in the emergence of new reliefs and geographic patterns. It is a moment of encounter, of revelation and creation as Costa-Santos explains: “During moments of syzygy, landscapes are transmuted, allowing us to perceive the constant, creative capacity that is a feature of everyday life.”

For the past four years Costa-Santos has dedicated his work to syzygy in the tides, meteorology, humidity, light, and atmosphere. He travels in a helicopter, flying along the coast of the state of Bahia in Brazil, along the Itaparica Canal, and over Todos os Santos Bay, searching for pictures that document changes in the landscapes, and define a kind of dialogue with the surroundings. “The motivation for the series comes from my desire to relate in a new way to my homeland and to understand its dynamics,” he says. “I want to show the importance of nature to our existence and use the potential contained in the images to speak about belongings, land and places in a different way. My photographs are an attempt to expand on reality and the imagination.”

A variety of geometric shapes and structures with diverse, natural and merging colours: each of Costa-Santos’ photographs is a piece of art that captures picturesque dream worlds to immerse the viewer in a sphere that is originally their own but is not normally visible. “From up in the sky we can see that the earth and everything is connected,” the artist explains. “The thing I have experienced through

aerial photography is the possibility we have to co-inhabit in the space that surrounds and makes us who we are.” Before focussing on aerial imagery, Costa-Santos explored different landscapes from the rooftops of buildings. The silence, the scale and the perspectives were the compositional elements that enabled him to consider how to understand existing realities in a different way, and how to find new ways of interacting with nature.

The production of his aerial pictures is defined by the tides, caused by the gravitational pull between the sun and the moon. When low tide occurs between 8 and 11 in the morning or between 3:30 and 5 in the afternoon Costa-Santos tries to make his flights under open skies and when the air humidity is low, conditions that offer the best visibility. At altitudes ranging from one hundred and fifty to three thousand feet, flight routes preferred by the photographer are often circular to make best use of the two hours spent in the air. As for his photographic equipment, a Leica M10 and a Leica SL with four lenses, he is enthusiastic: “I never imagined that I could find such versatile and practical equipment for my work. These cameras function like an extension of my body, allowing me to enjoy the moments I photograph to the fullest. When I started shooting with a Leica, my first impression was as if I had found something I’d always been looking for: a camera that allows me to be in tune with nature and behold the essential.”

This approach can give rise to pictures that are puzzling and allow space for the imagination and for dreams. In a world overloaded with visual impressions, Costa-Santos is moved by a need to create images that create other possibilities for our way of living and feeling. *Sizígia* is a series that introduces a new reality to the existing one. KATJA HÜBNER