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It is now a truism to point out that digital realm gives scope for changing the 'reality' of an image in ways that were unimaginable to analogue photographers. The creative aspect of this – creative in a fully positive sense of the word, the polar opposite of 'fake news' – is the possibility for a digital photographer to reveal a reality that is always around us but one taken for granted and often unappreciated.

The work of Canadian photographer T.M. Glass evokes the still-life flowers paintings of Dutch, French and Italian artists from the 17th and 18th centuries and the artist's digitally arranged bouquets show forth an exquisite intensity of colours that both respect and transcend the genre they spring from.

The photographs of T.M. Glass possess a ceremonial quality and are lit like old-school studio portraits, with black replacing the conventional white background. The beauty of the botanical displays – the result of weeks of hand painting pixels with digital paint – decorously complimented by the precious vases that hold them – valuable items in their own right from museum collections – juxtapose a strictly formal element with dazzlingly photogenic flora.

The images in the large-format, hardcover catalogue of the T.M. Glass exhibition – now on in Toronto – are testimony to the truth of what Glass said when I asked why flowers were a source of fascination: 'At work in my studio for the past ten years, the intention has been to explore and include imagery that is representational, constructed, complex, with an illusion of depth and a quest for beauty.'

This artist's flower arrangements look hyperreal but they are constructions that reveal something important because, as T.M. Glass observes, the imagery of flowers permeates cultures in almost every corner of the globe. 'In our own culture flowers are so important we barely notice that they are with us on all major life events Flowers speak for us saying words of congratulations, condolences, apologies, sympathy and love.' Glass' photographs help us realize that flowers reflect wavelengths of light with a deliriousness that usually escapes our attention.