

Unique aerial imaging – the world from a drone's perspective

13. February 2015



Unique perspectives can be provided with aerial imaging. J.M. Waffenschmidt is a professional aerial photographer and filmmaker, who defies inflationary aerial imaging mediocrity by drawing breathtaking scenes from above. Ascending Technologies (AT) spoke to an expert to find out what is possible.

AT: Mr. Waffenschmidt, you're one of thousands of the so called aerial imaging professionals. Thinking of the masses of aerial images available online you speak of an inflation. Any drone owner seems to be able and willing to share aerial images online. What is your concept to survive as commercial operator?

J.M. Waffenschmidt: Art must withstand that. It is annoying that anyone owning a camera-carrying copter thinks they are an artist. Irrespective of responsibility regards to safety and privacy. It is not as simple as taking-off and photographing. Most pilots do not have a clue of minimalistic design aspects or visual imagery. Well, an expert will recognize the difference, but the masses won't. The use of camcopters or unmanned aerial photo drones for personal use often is not regulated. So as a private person you can buy a toy or even professional drone and do as you please. But in my opinion commercialization starts with posting and publishing images and video clips on any commercial, non-private website. Commercial drone image and service providers will have to fulfill legal requirements such as training certification, take-off permissions and flight system safety standards. A private person will simply ignore these requirements. From my experience this brings drones and my professional drone business into disrepute. Finally it is difficult for me to convince and inspire confident in customers that only see the quality of my artistic aerial images at a glance.

The Iceland Trailer with unique aerial imaging by J.M. Waffenschmidt featuring Christian Schult, the German voice of Robert Redford films:

<http://youtu.be/7R8LJFuXxuU>

<http://youtu.be/21HjSvP4hKU>

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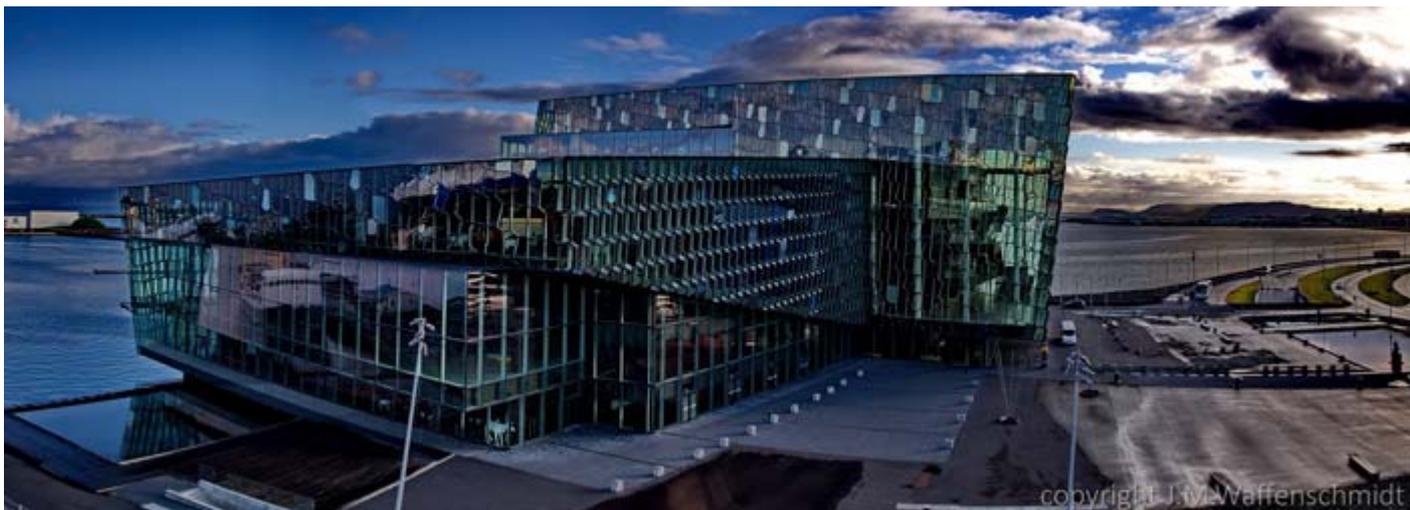
AT: One could say an aerial photographer combines art, craftsmanship and technology. How did you come to this field of technical art?

J.M. Waffenschmidt: I am a self-taught person. Photography has been part of my life for the past ten years. When I came across Ascending Technologies at the Photokina in Cologne, Germany. That was 2012. I was hooked to the amazing technology. Since then I rely completely on the professional drone, mounted with a branded HD camera. I use it like a tripod in the sky. The cameras are easy to exchange so that I can quickly switch between RAW and fullHD format cameras. Moreover the AscTec Falcon 8 enables precise positioning and I can shoot vertically upwards. A panorama function allows full 360° panos – so called little planets – with one click only.

I am photographer, no pilot. I want to focus on photography and the perfect shot, instead of controlling and balancing my photo drone. If I need to adjust settings right away. I can change aperture and shutter speed via the Mobile Ground Station without landing. The concept of a branded camera carrying, compact, lightweight, easy-to-control drone proves to be successful. In short: I need high-tech for safety in the air to conduct my professional art work.

AT: What have been your experiences?

J.M. Waffenschmidt: To achieve the desired result: time, position and subject needs to be considered carefully. And of course my drone must deliver the promised service levels. Finally every second counts for that one moment. Aerial images and films have become more common. What still counts from my point of view is that scenery and daylight melt together in dynamic harmony. Catching the audience to pause and wonder. I have a feeling for real-life images and extraordinary perspectives. And I like combining cinematics meaning – from slow-motion sequences to tracking shot, from ground and from the air.



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AT: You have been in Iceland for 6 months. Will there be an exhibition of your work?

J.M. Waffenschmidt: There will be a documentary film on TV including my aerial footage. Of course I will also be doing an exhibition and performances. Thanks to my flying eye in the sky, I have plenty of footage. Authentic and artificial at the same time. Breathtaking, extreme or as I write on my new [webpage](#): "einzigARTig & neuARTig" (unique & new).

AT: What are your goals and ambitions for 2015? What comes next?

J.M. Waffenschmidt: I will return to Iceland in March. I need to complete the series and artwork by winter scenes. Iceland will be totally different then. I'll try to catch its white glory.

AT: Ascending Technologies would like to say good luck and wishes you great success in Iceland. Thank you very much.

About aerial imaging: Aerial photography, aerial imaging, aerial videography or aerial filming with unmanned aerial vehicles has a long history. Since Alfred Maul constructed a photo rocket and successfully shot first photos from high up in the air. Indeed it was in June 1903 when he patented a "Rocket apparatus for photography of particular sections of terrain". (Find details in a German aviation and aerospace magazine: [Luft- und Raumfahrt – 1/1996](#).) With a timer fuse the camera was triggered and the rocket landed with the help of a parachute.

Today aerial thermal and still imaging is established in various fields like industrial inspection, survey for geological applications, agriculture and crop sciences or for nature and wildlife observation. The patented octocopter AscTec Falcon 8 is proven and tested in many challenging applications. Timer fuses and parachutes have been replaced by fully integrated remotely operated cameras and autopilot technology that enables adaptive flight control. Means an AscTec Falcon 8 with AscTec Trinity technology would stay up in the air physically as long as possible.

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About J.M. Waffenschmidt: Jürgen Maria Waffenschmidt was born in Cologne in 1959. In 2009 he moved to the Allgäu in south Bavaria, Germany. The professional photographer and filmmaker works around the world inter alia with the AscTec Falcon 8 for aerial imaging.

Please note: Ascending Technologies develops and produces UAV, multirotor and autopilot technology, but provides no service. For further information about that professional drone photography and film service, please directly contact J.M. Waffenschmidt:

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