

# Images of the month: November 2014

Pictures from the world of science, selected by *Nature's* art team.

**Daniel Cressey**

05 December 2014

November was, arguably, the month of the European Space Agency's Rosetta probe and its lander Philae. Although it is hard to top a picture from the surface of a comet, there are some valiant efforts at just that in the science images of the month, ranging from beautiful muck in a New York canal to the tiniest human figure ever created.

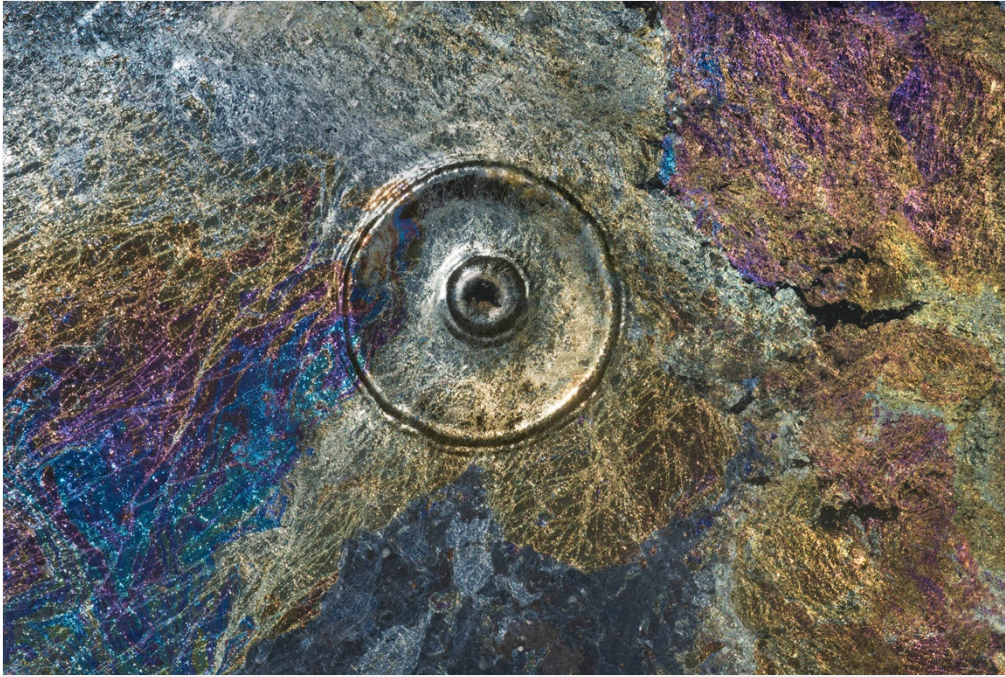
## 'Are you sure you're a penguin?'



*Fred Olivier/John Downer Productions*

Although this robot might not convince you or me that it is a bird, real penguins were more at ease with it than they were with humans getting this close. That could prove useful for researchers who need to approach and identify the Antarctic animals individually, scientists suggested in *Nature Methods*<sup>1</sup>.

## Toxic beauty



*Steven Hirsch, courtesy of the Lilac Gallery, New York*

Cutting through New York's borough of Brooklyn, the Gowanus Canal carries a legacy of years of industrial pollution. In the retouched photographs by Steven Hirsch — on display at the Lilac Gallery in New York — this toxic inheritance is abstracted into beauty.

### Bird Tree



© Jordan Ek

*Bird Tree by Jordan Ek*

This stunning black-and-white image of Lake Wanaka in New Zealand was captured by Jordan Ek of Portland, Oregon. It was named as the people's choice winner in the 2014 Australian Geographic [ANZANG Nature Photographer of the Year](#) competition.

### Philae phones home

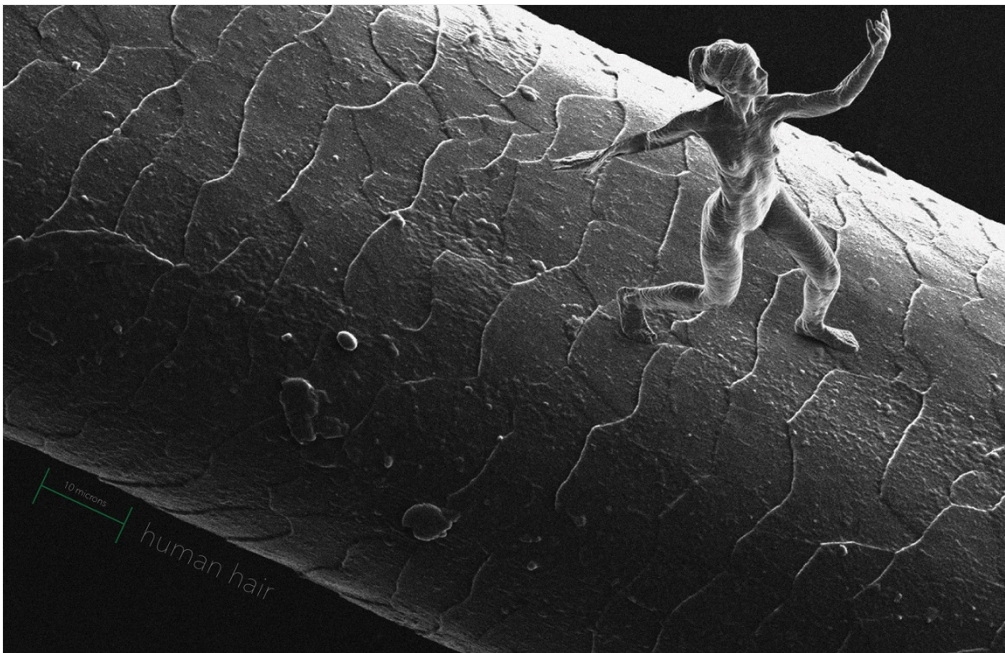




ESA/Rosetta/Philae/CIVA

The Philae probe was captured on camera shortly after its historic landing on the comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko in November. Relive the excitement with [Nature's live blog](#).

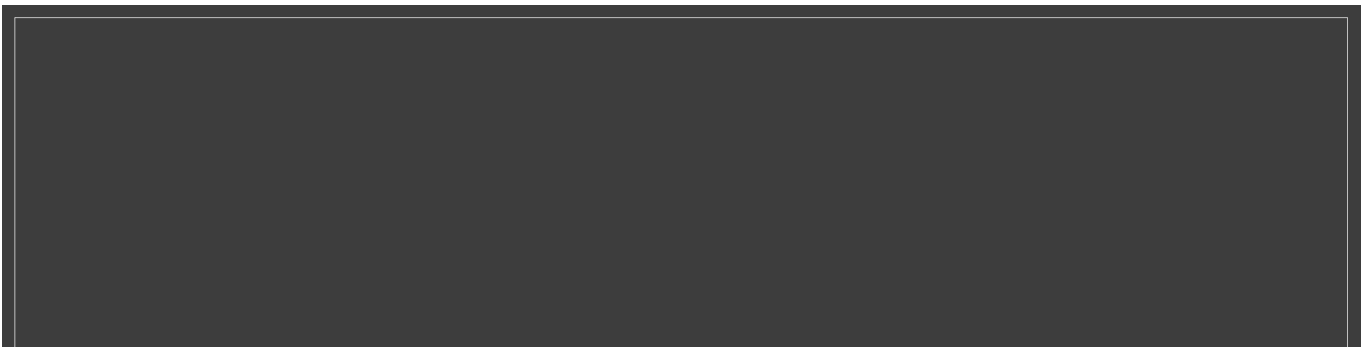
### Tiny dancer



Jonty Hurwitz

This sculpture is small enough to fit through the eye of a needle and was made by [Jonty Hurwitz](#), an artist based in London. It is the “smallest creation of the human form in history”, he says. Hurwitz uses a technique called multiphoton lithography, in which a precisely focused beam of light induces polymerization in a light-sensitive chemical.

### Black stars



### Merging black holes

Pairs of tightly orbiting black holes eventually spiral into each other and collide. With computer models similar to those used to create the special effects for the recent science-fiction film *Interstellar*, astrophysicists produced the first realistic simulation of what this merger would actually look like to an observer.

### Siberian surprise



Vladimir Pushkarev/The Siberian Times

After a mysterious crater appeared in the Yamal Peninsula in Siberia earlier this year, researchers began exploring the inside to see whether it was caused by methane released by thawing permafrost, [as previously suggested](#). In November, Vladimir Pushkarev, director of the Russian Centre of Arctic Exploration, told *The Siberian Times* that his team had reached this lake at the bottom of the crater.

*Nature* | doi:10.1038/nature.2014.16481

### References

1. Le Maho, Y. *et al. Nature Meth.* **11**, 1242–1244 (2014).