

No 7 • Q2 2014 • ISSN 2050-7844

# CAMERACRAFT



# CAMERACRAFT

## CONTENTS ISSUE No 7

Cover *Bronze*. Photo by Catherine McIntyre.

- 267 Thinking Inside the Box  
*Afghan Box Camera is a fascinating visual record and a memorial to a street science and art now departed*
- 268 Cameracraft Update
- 270 Processed or Pure? by David Kilpatrick  
*The narrow line between routine 'effect' treatment of digital images and genuine creative control*
- 276 Small World – Jason Friend  
*It's time to give up your addiction to 'professional' DSLR bulk now that mirrorless cameras are winning the war*
- 282 Déjà View – an Iron Age forest emerges from the sea
- 283 Cameracraft Portfolio – Catherine McIntyre  
*By the author of Focal Press's new book Visual Alchemy, The Fine Art of Digital Montage*
- 291 Minders & Fixers – Michael Yamashita  
*The National Geographic photojournalist has stories to tell us why photography is not just about camerawork*
- 296 The Friedman Files with Gary Friedman  
*Gary's Worst Trip Ever would be a dream destination for most travel and landscape photographers today*
- 300 Painting with Light  
*Richard Kilpatrick discovers the Kick and other lights*
- 304 Rearview – our image gallery

Cameracraft • No 7 • Second Quarter 2014 • ISSN 2042-0234  
Published by Icon Publications Limited  
Per issue: £5 inc. post (UK). For all subscription rates, see web page  
[www.iconpublications.com/cameracraft](http://www.iconpublications.com/cameracraft)

*Editorial and Publisher's Office, Subscriptions Management, Scotland*  
**David & Shirley Kilpatrick, Icon Publications Ltd**  
Maxwell Place, Maxwell Lane, Kelso, Scottish Borders TD5 7BB  
Tel: +44 (0)1573 226032 Mobile: 07971 250786  
email: [editor@iconpublications.com](mailto:editor@iconpublications.com)

*Associate Editor, USA*  
**Gary Friedman**  
8661 Mossford Dr.  
Huntington Beach, CA 92646  
Mobile: +1 (714) 805-8468  
email: [gary@friedmanarchives.com](mailto:gary@friedmanarchives.com)

*Editorial and Web Development Office, England*  
**Richard Kilpatrick, RTK Media**  
The Grange, Pincet Lane, North Kilworth,  
Market Harborough, Leicestershire LE17 7NE  
Mobile: +44 (0)7979 691965 email: [richard@rtkmedia.co.uk](mailto:richard@rtkmedia.co.uk)

Cameracraft is printed by Hi-Tec Print, Units 9/10, Houghton Road, North Anston Industrial Estate, Sheffield S25 4JJ, UK. Telephone +44 (0)1909 568533  
Contact: [enquiries@hitecprint.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@hitecprint.co.uk) or see website, [www.hitecprint.co.uk](http://www.hitecprint.co.uk)

**SURELY** you can't be considering digital montage work for a *Cameracraft* portfolio? That was co-editor Gary's first reaction to Catherine McIntyre's work. Well, of course we can – and it does not mean lowering the drawbridge and raising the portcullis to admit the besieging onslaught of a different type of digitally manipulated images.

It's partly down to the tradition behind a body of work, and you can read a little about Catherine's background at the end of the portfolio section. It's fair to say that if digital imaging had never arrived on the scene, she'd have been creating very similar images by multiple exposure and darkroom methods. If the camera had never been invented, she'd have used pen and ink or paint and brush.

Very few of the easy plug-ins, actions and pre-sets so widely used by professionals and amateurs alike have much value to genuine artists. Future generations will look at the photographic output of this generation and weep. Countless otherwise great records of our lives and the last decade or two of the world as we know it will be seen through the whimsical 'art' of Instagram, Snapseed, NIK, OnOne or out-of-the-camera special effects.

Every period has had its stylised illustrative graphics, visionary fine art, over-the-top decoration or fashions. These have always existed alongside realistic recording however difficult and unsatisfactory it might have been. Photography brought relative ease to realistic portrayal and we have 170 years of photographic heritage most of which is 'pure'. We also have Reijlander, P H Emerson, Man Ray, Angus McBean, Pete Turner and many other landmarks of creative interpretation.

In this edition, I make a case for photographic purity. This doesn't mean abandoning all the wonderful new tools we've been given which go far beyond anything film and darkroom could achieve. All we ask is that you think hard before dragging down a menu to find a funky preset effect.

– David Kilpatrick



Icon Publications Ltd and its agents or associates accept no responsibility for loss of or damage to photographs and manuscripts submitted, however caused. Responsibility for return carriage of equipment submitted for review or test rests with the owner. Views expressed in this magazine are those of the individual contributors and do not necessarily represent the views and policies of Icon Publications Ltd or our advertisers. All technical data and pricing information contained in news and feature articles is printed in good faith. Icon Publications Ltd does not accept any legal responsibility for claims or the quality of goods or services arising from content in this publication. All content including artwork and images created by Icon Publications Ltd and/or its contributors is copyright and may not be reproduced by any means without prior permission. ©2014 Icon Publications Ltd. E&OE.

# Thinking inside the box: 'Afghan Box Camera'

It's a simple idea for a book, collecting hundreds of images shot with one of the last forms of wet-process portraiture surviving in the world. Lukas Birk and Sean Foley rely on the street-photographer prints for pictorial content but add much history to fascinate.

If you place individual portraits as 5 x 4" prints centred on 10 x 8" pages, so much attention is drawn to the two small and isolated faces on each spread that they gain significance far beyond their impact as original artefacts.

This is no new phenomenon, and many contemporary art photo magazines and exhibitions rely on it. Take the images out of the 'frame' created by pages or gallery walls, remove them from their sequence or set, and they can become commonplace.

Then there's the analogue imperfection thing. It's driven the development of apps to convert smartphone snaps into works of template art, and set off a revival in Polaroid and similar one-off, slightly unpredictable processes. The *Afghan Box Camera* is a close relative of the Tintype Camera once used in seaside resorts – probably within the memory of plenty of readers, certainly within the memory of the generation before.

Birk and Foley's introductory chapter is the main text in a book which depends on captions for its narrative thereafter. It's essential to spend half an hour reading the introduction. A single folded sheet of paper with Arabic writing is enclosed in the book, as a sort of imaginary instruction leaflet for a camera which never had instructions. Even this won't tell you the full story.

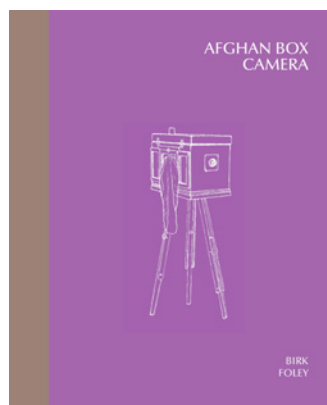
The Box Camera is indeed a box – a box large enough to contain the camera and the darkroom all in one. The size of a tea-chest, the camera takes postcard or similar sized photographic paper negatives. The lens at the front has no

shutter, just a cap. The top of the box is hinged to load up the contents, which include small developing and fixing dishes and a pack of photo paper. Above the dishes, in line with the lens but not at the very back of the camera, there's a rotating disc with a groundglass screen at one side and an open ended rectangular frame to slot in the paper at the other. At the back of the camera, there's a small door which can be opened to focus the image by moving the groundglass and paper holder stage. The whole thing must be aimed at the outdoor subject's sitting position by moving it bodily on a wooden tripod.

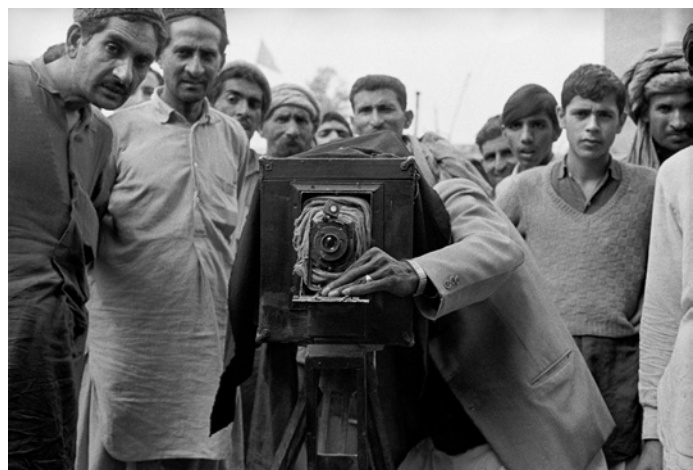
A lightproof sleeve lets the photographer load the paper and move it into position, with the rear door closed. Exposure is made using a lens cap, as the b/w printing paper used has an ISO rather less than 1. No shutter is needed as times can be counted out.

Looking through a small eyepiece in the lid of the box, the photographer develops the negative image by judgment, and fixes it. The rear door, made of red glass, illuminates the interior as a safelight. This is now opened and the negative print removed.

Dried with a cloth but using its remaining moisture to stick it to a flat panel, the negative is then placed in front of the camera with a close-up lens in position, and the photographer repeats the process with a second sheet of paper, rephotographing the negative to make a positive. Where Tintype was a direct positive process, and the major suppliers during the era of the *kamra-e-faoree* actually did make direct reversal papers,



Below: portion of the display frame from the side of the box camera of Muhammad Ishaq of Jalalabad who worked with this camera for forty years. Pakistani actor Shan on horseback (left); a box camera portrait of a customer posing against a stage-backdrop with a pistol and ammunition belt (centre); a portrait of deceased Afghan military leader Ahmad Shah Massoud (right).



*A Pakistani photographer operating a paper-negative box camera near Peshawar, Pakistan.*

this street camera used a unique method. Fox Talbot converted his paper negatives into a contact-printable translucent form by waxing them. The Afghan solution, of rephotographing a negative, removes that step and made the two-minute street identity portrait possible. This was the market which supported the box camera photographers and it only ended when colour identity pictures replaced b/w.

The book reveals many more fascinating aspects of the lives and work of generations of box camera photographers, some of whom were also skilled

conventional photographers. You see the different ways images were hand-coloured, how multiple exposures were used, how costs were saved by copying dozens of portraits at a time for the neg to pos stage, and how a little red colouring could solve problems of dark shadows. It is also a finely produced hardback book, from Dewi Lewis Publishing in their tradition of excellence. At £30 it's something to buy, study, and keep for the future whether you have any connection with Afghanistan or not. ISBN: 9781907893360.

The first quarter of 2014 saw noticeable shift in the acceptance of mirrorless system cameras by all classes of photographer.

The launch of the Sony Alpha 7 and 7R at the close of 2013 created a wave of interest and sales, though it appears to have been fairly short-lived as the reality of a restricted and expensive lens range became clear. Most early adopters of the full-frame NEX had plans to use legacy lenses and many adaptors. The price of specific older lenses on eBay reflected their performance on the A7 models.

Almost at the same time, Olympus really pushed out the OM-D E-M1 as a successor to the excellent E-M5, and followed up with a very small entry level priced E-M10. But as with Sony's A7 models, the OM-D buzz quickly died down.

The reason for Sony and Olympus losing the spotlight of attention came from a competitor whose strengths have been superior sensors and lenses. Fujifilm's range which started with the fixed lens X100 and the mirrorless system X-Pro1 blossomed during 2013 but swept the opposite aside when the X-T1 appeared in late February.

For the first time, all the external mechanical-style controls of the X-Pro1 were present on a body with a vastly improved electronic viewfinder and many other features. There was already a full range of optically fine fast lenses (the same could be said of the Olympus system, but not of Sony) to which Fujifilm rapidly added essential gap-fillers and superstars, like the 56mm *f*1.2 XF that's replacing Canon 85mm *f*1.2 lenses for many professional social photographers as they switch from the bulky DSLR to the nimble Leica-sized X-T1.

We were present at The Photography Show in the UK in the first four days of March, and all three of the mirrorless systems were flying off the dealer stands with Fujifilm X either most popular, or attracted the most enthusiastic converts keen to talk about their conversion.

# CAMERACRAFT UPDATE

*The Fujifilm X-T1 is taking sales from DSLRs*



*New onesies – Nikon 1 V3 with 18 megapixel sensor, no EVF (accessory optional); Samsung NX Mini, carefully avoiding copying the look and feel of Nikon*



*The smallest OM-D, the E-M10, with collapsible 14-42mm pancake kit zoom lens*



That's not a bad word to use, as the *bigness* of DSLRs has been an article of faith in the cults of Canon and Nikon full-frame. Perhaps it's symptom of two changing demographics. The photographers most likely to cling on to needing a big camera and big lenses are in the 30-50 age group. Under-30s are smartphone generation photographers and completely used to the idea that a professional camera can be very small. Over-50s can remember when all SLRs were much neater and lighter

(before AF arrived) and find that cameras like the A7, E-M1 and X-T1 look very much like SLRs did in before 1985.

The popularity of long distance travel and landscape photography in new areas of accessible Arctic, Antarctic, Balkan, African and Asian wilderness has helped to drive sales of lighter more travel-friendly gear.

Some trade commentators have been saying, in early 2014, that the DSLR will be a niche product for a few professionals within three years. The market for medium

format is expected to improve, sub-miniature formats like the One-Inch sensor models pioneered by Nikon and Sony are on the rise too.

## Little and large

At the sub-miniature end, Pentax has increased the physical size of its Q system sensor to the limits of the lens coverage. It's an odd move, rather as if the MicroFourThirds makers decided suddenly to put APS-C sensors in some new bodies but make them compatible with the existing lens range.

The Nikon One system has matured with the launch in April of the Nikon 1 V3, an 18 megapixel variant with many improved features and a new tele-zoom going all the way to 300mm (810mm equivalent).

Sakar attempted to launch a rival interchangeable lens 1" system under the Polaroid brand name, but their first moves into the US market were countered by Nikon legal action as the body design clearly looked similar to the original Nikon 1 J1.

Samsung avoided this mistake and gave their Sony-sensored NX Mini system a distinct look with the lens mounted right at the left hand end of the body. They also came out with a miniature lens mount and adaptor for all existing NX lenses, plus a rather brilliant 9mm *f*2 pancake kit lens sold with the body at only £399. This undercuts Sony's popular RX100 MkII by a long way while providing what appears to be exactly the same sensor, a similar camera size, and a 24mm equivalent super-fast lens or kit zoom choice.

For those who think the wonderful Sony RX10 with its 24-200mm *f*2.8 zoom has the overriding benefit of a sealed body and lens/sensor, we can only observe that ours now has a dust spot. And you can't clean it... Nikon and Samsung, with their removable lenses, at least promise blower-blastable sensor access.

The RX10 has proved to be a superb instrument capable of replacing a DSLR or mirrorless



How Nikon sees the Df design – more 1860s than 1960s, folks...

kit for nearly all common uses. Flash sync to 1/3200th, totally silent operation and hair-trigger shutter timing would all be little use if the image quality was not high. The lens is without any parallel in any other format. The sensor allows clean results to ISO 1600 and only begins to show difficult noise at double that.

This brings us to the other end of the scale – the introduction of a 50 megapixel CMOS sensor, originating from Sony, in medium-format systems. Both Phase One and Hasselblad have taken this on, enabling live view and much higher ISO settings. There are plenty of professionals claiming that the colour and dynamic range of the CCD sensors used so far can not be bettered by CMOS. There are just as many more who know that skilled processing of the raw files will allow the new sensors to match anything from CCD technology.

Sony is rumoured to be working on a mirrorless system, probably not much bigger than a regular Alpha 7 or NEX, using this 'cropped' 645 sensor. This means a Sony mirrorless camera could be a bit like a 'real' Leica S2 – not a Leica S2, but a rangefinder shape body. It could be smaller than the Bronica 645RF or the Fujifilm 645 120 film models. In the meantime they have announced a 12 megapixel A7S with 4K HD video, taking that system in a different direction.

## DSLR retro

Back in the world of conventional reflex cameras, Nikon launched the Df, a retro-styled model with a special

feature of compatibility back to the very first twist-to-set F series lenses. It has a flip-out aperture coupling flange and is properly usable as a full frame 16 megapixel digital body with all Nikon and Nikkor F lenses back to 1959, except those which need mirror lock-up to cope with non retrofocus wide angle design.

Resembling a Nikon FM (slightly) the Df also had mechanical setting dials on the camera top, in much the same way that the Leica M, Fujifilm X-Pro1 and X-T1 have. As a lighter alternative to the D4, the Df quickly gained a following.

Then, within more days than weeks, Nikon announced a new D4S which adds much more to the D4 than the D3S added to the D3. It's got the highest sensitivity of any digital camera yet made, at ISO 409,600 (that's right – four hundred thousand) and although this is not intended for everyday use, the quality at lower ISO settings is also improved.

This gave Nikon users a slight dilemma – the light, compact, retro appeal of the Df versus the professional chunky ruggedness of the D4S with its gigabit ethernet and other strictly pro aspects.

In the end, the price probably determines the choice as much as the weight or specifications.

What has actually happened is that countless Nikon users have said, enough is enough – I can buy a complete Fujifilm X-T1 outfit with all the best lenses I need for half the price of this, and not only that, I can carry two bodies all day without noticing it.

This is almost the story of the start of 2014 – enough is enough!

That is, buyers have had enough of updates appearing every few months on top of entirely new camera models just as frequently. We are all suffering wallet fatigue as it's so hard to choose between the unique qualities of all the new gear. Do you need a Sony A7, or an A7R? Or a (NEX) A6000? Or an RX1R, or an R10? Or an A99? Or all of them – and then, which do you use?

Enough is enough also applies to 'good enough'. After pursuing the ever-increasing megapixel count through 16, 18, 20, 21, 24, 36 it seems that everyone understands that a really good 16 megapixel file is a match for any large file unless you use special lenses and methods.

This is why Olympus and Fujifilm, offering this as their maximum size, have been able to win countless converts. It's why the Nikon Df and D4S are agreed to be perfectly up to any pro or enthusiast task.

We will not doubt see even higher pixel counts in future. The One Inch sensors so far made tell us that a full frame 100 megapixel camera is not going to be impossible, and it will surely come.

## Lens advances

To match this, we need better lenses. Fujifilm shows that good lenses can be made across the whole range.

Nikon introduced a new 18-55mm *f*3.5-5.6 VR II collapsible kit lens with their new D3300 entry level DX format body. This lens, when we tested it, proved to be head and shoulder above the larger non-collapsible lens it follows. In fact, it's one of the best optical designs around regardless of cost and has the kind of resolution the 24 megapixel DX sensor needs. It even seems to have some in reserve for the next step up.

Samyang has continued to attack the market, but still without proper chipping and electronic communications. The latest lenses are a 10mm *f*2.8 fisheye for APS-C



Samyang 12mm *f*2 and Sigma 18-35mm *f*1.8 – speed rules



mirrorless, and a 12mm *f*2 which undercuts the Carl Zeiss Touit 12mm *f*2.8 by a few hundred pounds. Knowing Samyang, it could be nearly as good.

Carl Zeiss in the meantime has extended the range of the Touit lenses to include a 50mm macro. Sony has launched a Zeiss 24-70mm for the A7/R and a 70-200mm is arriving about the time we print this.

Sigma has produced some great new lenses and we've had a chance to shoot with the 18-35mm *f*1.8. It is sharp – pixel sharp – wide open at any focal length centrally. There's not even much fall-off to the corners.

Overall, prospects for top performance at minimal outlay seem good with *photokina* coming up in September. We expect this to be Fujifilm's best *photokina* since the 1980s when they conquered the world with new colour film emulsions. Maybe we'll see you there!



# PURE OR PROCESSED?

by David Kilpatrick

I'm getting old. That's just a fact. When you get old you get generally grouchy about things which used be great but turned (inexplicably) into a steaming pile, while few seem to notice. Most seem to prefer novelty even if it's inferior.

In photography, we've seen a revolution within a decade. Pictures no longer look as they once did and there are many reasons. They are not all connected with digital *capture* as the shift in what we expect images to look like was under way before film bowed out as a popular medium.

The culprit is not *Photoshop*, either, though it's the tool most commonly used to style today's photography. It's a change in what we expect a good image to look like, and it goes back all the way to the era of airbrush retouching.

Post-processing has now taken over at all levels. It's not the same as darkroom control. We have started using methods once employed in reprographics and rarely seen in any photographic darkroom. The results can be described in many ways – Dragan look, HDR Art, High Clarity, Wide Radius Unsharp Masked, High Structure and so on.

What they have in common is an enhancement of local tonal contrast combined with a reduction in overall contrast.

## Chemical origins

The basic concept is not new in any way, and it's important in 20th-century black and white photography.

Willi Beutler is credited with discovering, or researching and describing, an effect where the local exhaustion of developer power in well-exposed areas inhibited further development, but reserves of



*This is a normal capture, a raw file (Sony Alpha 900) converted using standard settings to look like a good in-camera JPEG, or like a colour slide would be. Opposite, you can see just how extreme a change in tones can be achieved using today's monochrome conversion and detail enhancement. I know which version always produces a 'wow!' reaction. Is it any wonder, then, that most photographers steer away from purity and go for processing? Jerome, Arizona.*

unused developing agent in underexposed zones allowed these to build up. At the same time, the exhausted developer by-products spreading out from the denser parts of a negative reduced the development in adjacent 'thinner' areas – while unused developer diffusing over the same boundary in the other direction gave a reciprocal effect. Given two

areas of dark and light with a boundary, the light area would tend to get even lighter just before the boundary and the dark area even darker.

This 'edge effect' or enhanced contour sharpness was known as the Beutler Effect, and could be achieved by using weak developer which exhausted its potency rapidly, and limiting agitation to ensure

that the exhaustion remained local. Agitating the developer would, of course, keep mixing fresh developer with exhausted and ensured this effect never occurred. Limited agitation restricted the effect to a narrow contour zone, and prevent problems like streaks creating by laminar flow of exhaustion by-products over the emulsion surface. The finer effect given this way produced what came to be known as 'acutance'.

The best-known Beutler Effect developer was and is Tetenal Neofin (German) sold in one-shot sealed glass ampoules to avoid oxidation. Geoffrey Crawley, from 1966 onwards, found ways of improving the keeping qualities of liquid concentrate and the result was Paterson Acutol (British). In 1969, Crawley went a stage further with his addition of unfamiliar ingredients and created Paterson Acuspecial, an expensive concentrate used highly diluted to create what he described as 'engraving-like' sharpness.

In the USA, the 'Acu' prefix was used for the name of the Acufine Corporation, whose chemicals were a little more robust and better suited to larger scale processing. The effects were not as pronounced. Acufine developer produced fine grain and high acutance. The sharpest results always came from their two-bath solution, Diafine. Two-bath development involved a strong developer agent soaking the emulsion, followed by an alkaline activator which set it to work. Since only the same amount of developer was absorbed by fully exposed areas as unexposed ones, it could be used up entirely in highlights of the image while





Above, the genuine Beutler-related effect produced by Paterson Acutol developer using Ilford FP4 film in 1972 (Canklow Meadows Miners' Gala, South Yorkshire). You can see the brighter halo round the dark figure, and in fact the shadow tones also deepen towards their boundary. Below, a cleric in Uzès, France, in 2007 photographed digitally (Sony Alpha 100). Top version, a normal monochrome conversion. Bottom version, after applying a maximum radius 50% strength Smart Sharpen unsharp mask process. You can see there is now a similar bright zone round the dark figure giving the print a vintage 35mm film look. This can also be achieved by layer processes, necessary for large file sizes.

the shadows continued to develop.

This effect (in most late 20th century developers for bw films) was called 'compensating development'. Paterson's literature made a big point of the benefits.

Today, the equivalent would be dynamic range processing such as Sony's DRO or Nikon D-Lighting, and the effect is maximum dynamic range.

With many specialist and home-brewed developer formulae on the market, monochrome offered the photographer of the 1960s to 80s a versatile gamut of final results. Some developers emphasised grain and boosted film speed, some lowered contrast and required extra exposure while giving extremely fine grain (low noise).

Despite this great variety in processing, matching by a wide range of contrasts in printing papers and a further choice of paper development



techniques, the overall palette of possible results was surprisingly limited. Unless you employed very unusual and destructive chemical processes all negatives were fairly similar – much as all raw digital files are today. If anything, they had more differences because any chemical effects were locked in and could not be reversed. They were also moderate or subtle. It didn't prevent creative photographers from choosing inappropriate films and processing, or finding themselves stuck with the wrong choice in the camera.

Today, we have something of a luxury – the digital raw file which can be ANY film type and can change its equivalent ISO rating from shot to shot. As long as you shoot raw, you have an accurate record of the image to fall back on. It's an even purer original than the best slide or negative. Current fashion is against pure conversion or 'straight' images so the future needs your raws.

## Tone, noise & sharpness

Some post-processing adjustments are almost identical decisions once made when developing film. These include Contrast, Exposure and Brightness, Sharpening and Noise Reduction.

Digital capture uses a linear scale, normally seen as a 45° straight line contrast graph. This tends to flatten the mid-tones – the eye likes to see more contrast in these while preserving highlight gradations and giving shadows just enough lift over deep black.

Film and chemicals did this naturally, with a 'characteristic curve'. This can be imitated by using what we call an S-curve in raw processing control, and Adobe's industry standard programs *Lightroom* and *Camera Raw* create this shape if you select Medium or Strong contrast in place of Linear. This type of adjustment is necessary for a natural-looking result and doesn't amount to altering anything. It just makes a two-dimension image look more like the dynamically adapted view the human eye and brain create.

Sharpness, Sharpening or Unsharp Masking are all equivalent to Acutance in film development. These processes find contrast boundaries and make them look crisper in exactly the same way that developers like Acutol used to. Similar processes have been used in printed reproduction for almost 100 years, partly because of the coarse dot patterns once used. With modern reproduction like this magazine, it is rarely necessary to use the strong unsharp masking you'll find recommended in books from ten years ago.

We often print without any sharpening at all, as the very fine screen of *Cameracraft* litho print does not need visible sharpening. Today's printing can reproduce subtle and highly detailed images. If you can find any old colour magazine from the 1970s or 1980s – guaranteed to be before even the first glimmers of today's methods arrived – try comparing what you see on the



## FALLING INTO THE URBEX PROCESS TRAP

Urban Exploration – 'Urbex' – usually means finding abandoned or derelict sites and gaining unauthorised access with a camera. Some urbex projects seriously document things which the elements and time, or pilfering, will remove from our unwritten history. Others simply fake up an exaggerated dereliction because it can get you a Fellowship if the judges have been on another planet for several decades and can't recognise off-the-shelf process effects from popular plug-ins.

Drakopoulata's earthquake ghost town, sixty years on, has not been invaded and desecrated too much unless you take a normal wide-angle interior (top) and process it using *Nik ColorEfex 3.0* Bleach Bypass, the standard quick styling for urbex. Right, another Drakopoulata shot processed using rival *onOne Perfect Effects* Bleach Bypass, Contrast and Texture enhancement. It's slightly different but more of the same.





*This image of Canary Wharf station in London gained Sean Batten the UK first place in the Sony World Photography Awards 2014. My first reaction on seeing it was that this station must have been bombed, flooded, or suffered a fire. It became clear for other winners that the judges like detail contrast and unsharp mask effects, and this is simply one such effect. To check up using a similar subject, the ill-fated concrete ceiling of Charles de Gaulle Airport, I took my 'straight' shot and ran it through an appropriate Nik ColorEfx enhancement (below, before and after). Canary Wharf station is not post-apocalypse, but the concrete is now 15 years old and showing some discolouration. The treatment of local contrast has emphasised this in the same way many photographers stylise their urbex work.*

page with this issue. All these processes increase noise levels and tend to destroy fine detail at the same time they increase apparent sharpness. Again, on the printed page you will rarely see any degradation. Extremely noisy and coarsely sharpened digital images can look fine one on a magazine page, and pretty good when inkjet or photo printed to much larger sizes than the recommended dpi value.

## Impact and integrity

We have already shown examples of extreme processed work in *Cameracraft* – Gerry Coe's iPhone art which earned justified multiple Fellowship awards, for example. In his case the art-filtered version is the original. There's no raw and the image is made with a unique intent.

I've also been shown examples of heavily processed work which would make anyone weep. Sometimes the



original image has clearly been a very good one but the photographer has given complete portfolios a 'look' with either desaturated tones or cartoon primaries.

I believe that some of this is done because the original JPEG or raw disappoints. When wedding and portrait photographers found the skin tones from Canon and Nikon inconsistent (and very different) the world changed back to black and white. It solves the problem and customers rather like it.

Fujifilm's X-series is leading a return to enjoying the look of skin colour, but also happens to have a near-perfect film-like black and white style in the cameras. From the X-Pro1 on, we've seen many more 'pure' images which their makers seem happy with without resorting to HDR painting, contrast masking or bleach bypass plug-ins. We're seeing a return to graphic impact with imaging integrity.

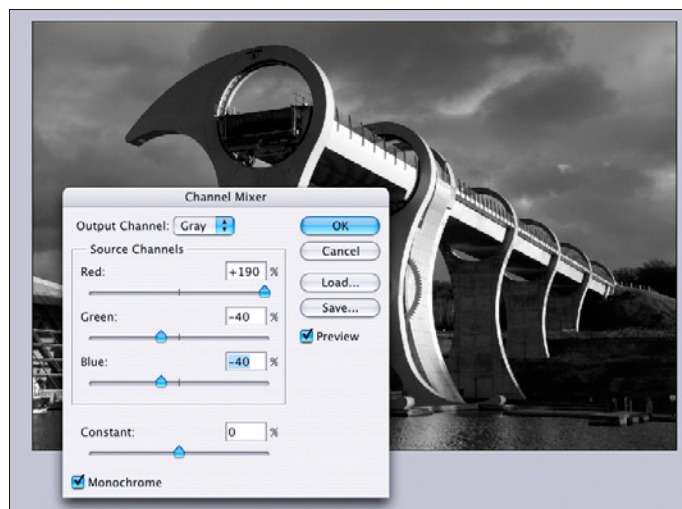


## Poor colour, good mono

When you shoot colour by the wan light of a winter evening or the half-sun of a hazy day there may be a striking 'pure' monochrome shot hiding in the file without resorting to plug-ins. Be warned that hitting 'Desaturate' to turn your colour image into mono in *Photoshop/Lightroom* is a recipe for flat results. So is 'Mode' converting the file from colour (16 or 8-bit) to *Greyscale*.

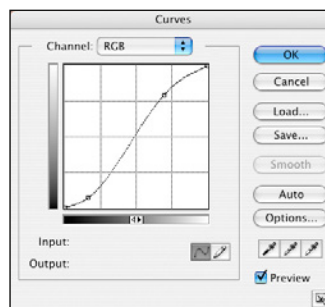
A better method is to open the PS *Channel Mixer* dialogue, and tick the box at the bottom which says *Monochrome*. Whether or not all versions of *Photoshop* behave the same way I am unsure, but historically it has defaulted to 100% Red channel, 0% Green, 0% Blue.

When you do this, you are seeing the same effect on your image as an **8X Red filter** on a super-panchromatic ('red pan') film like T-Max 400. Many textures and contrasts will increase and a fairly flat looking colour original can be made into a printable black and white.



However, by cutting the Blue and Green response to a figure like -40 and raising the Red to almost 200 as seen above (with care to ensure good highlight detail by not going too far) an effect more like an older type panchromatic film, FP4 or Panatomic-X, is achieved. It is possible to take the red even higher and cut both blue and green for truly deep filtration effects.

The image may at this stage be slightly flat overall. To make it resemble a fine hand print,



apply an S-Curve using *Curves*. You can grab a copy of a good standard S-Curve (reproduced above) from the Icon URL below:

<http://www.iconpublications.com/highcurve.acv>

This tone curve is also useful for making normal colour shots look more like saturated slide film such as Fuji Velvia. You are unlikely to need anything stronger and the curve is just an example of one which provides a silver print effect, similar to using a Grade 3 paper on a diffuser enlarger with a normal contrast negative. It's processed – but pure!

My sample picture was shot just before sunset using a Nikon D2X with 17-55mm lens, and shows the Falkirk Wheel canal engineering in Scotland. This black and white 'red filter' version makes more of the interesting sky and eliminates the wintry evening quality of the colour original. It's far more successful as a final image. Black and white is not just for effect; there are many times when it would always have been the better medium for the shot, and now you have the choice – plus every possible colour filter you could need, with no filter exposure factors, infinitely variable.

– DK



# SMALL WORLD

For the last 17 years I have been a Canon owner and user but last month this all changed and I finally switched to using entirely Fujifilm X equipment for my image making. But why did I make the switch? Was I unhappy with the results from my full frame Canon 5D Mark II? Of course not.

To understand why I made the switch we need to step back to 1999, when I embarked on my first around the world trip and first started to make an income from my images. Back in the days of film (and a time when stock photography actually could be quite profitable) the major decision I had to make regarding the choice of camera system and format was based around the usability and

JASON FRIEND HAS BEEN ROUND THE WORLD THREE TIMES WITH HIS CAMERAS - FIRST WITH FILM, THEN WITH DIGITAL. NOW HE'S DROPPED THE BIG DSLR SYSTEM TO TRAVEL WITH A SYSTEM YOU CAN PUT IN YOUR POCKET.

portability of my equipment. I was a keen long distance hiker and explorer, often walking for over a week in some of the most untouched areas of wilderness to be found on our planet. My priorities were the carriage of my camping and hiking gear including my food and water. Whilst a medium format camera would have been preferable, 35mm equipment meant I might actually finish a trip alive.

I might not even be writing this had I tried to take along medium format gear.

My first book *Photographing Wilderness* was shot nearly entirely on modest Canon gear using Fujichrome Velvia as my preferred film stock.

Of course digital changed everything. After my second around-the-world trip, I started to embrace the new technology. A Canon EOS 10D and 20D were used for my

second book *The Cumbria Way* alongside a Hasselblad X-Pan. Results from the early Canon digitals cameras were great, though I still felt film had the edge hence and later carried a Mamiya 7.

But my bag was starting to get too big for safety so before my third trip around the world I purchased the EOS 5D, the first affordable full frame digital camera. It did need good glass to get the most from the sensor. Coupled with the 24-105 L series lens it performed beautifully in Patagonia and later in New Zealand hiking the deadly 'Dusky Track'.

I returned to the UK in 2008 and my camera bag slowly grew as I continued to add L series lenses, so much that by 2013 I had a bag bigger than

*New Zealand, Southland, Fiordland National Park, The setting sun casts a golden glow over the boulders and coastline of Martins Bay, at the end of the Hollyford Track. Canon EOS 5D, 24-105mm L, 2 seconds at f19 and ISO 50, at 28mm. Bottom of facing page: Scotland, Isle of Arran. Glen Sannox, a remote valley surrounded by mountains on the Island of Arran. 5D, 24mm TS-E lens, 1/3rd at f20, ISO 50.*





*Above: New Zealand, Westland, – morning mist lifts from the still waters of Lake Mapourika. Canon 5D 24mm, ISO 50, 1/6th at f19. I would like to say thank you to Canon for producing some excellent equipment, which I have really enjoyed using over the years – and for all of the images on this spread. However, I am now proud to be shooting on Fujifilm X equipment (see the following pages).*





Above left: Edinburgh, Princes Street Gardens looking towards Balmoral Hotel and clock tower with the North Bridge below. Fujifilm X-E1, 35mm  $f1.4$  XF lens, 3.5 seconds at  $f7.1$ , ISO 200. Above right, Birmingham (UK) – abstract shapes of the new, modern Selfridges building, alongside the old St Martin's Church. X-E1, 18-55mm  $f2.8-4$  XF LM OIS lens at 55mm,  $1/400$ th at  $f13$ , ISO 200. Below: view from Newcastle upon Tyne to Gateshead Quayside. The Baltic Exchange arts centre, Millennium Bridge and nearby apartments reflected in the River Tyne. X-E1, 35mm  $f1.4$  XF lens,  $1/320$ th at  $f8$ , ISO 200.





*Sea-smoothed boulders in Embleton Bay, overlooked by the ruins of Dunstanburgh Castle. X-E1, 18-55mm at 18mm, 20 seconds at f14, ISO 200. Below – portico at Seaton Delaval Hall, considered to be Sir John Vanburgh’s final masterpiece. X-E1 with 35mm, 1/200th at f8, ISO 200.*

a medium format kit. My last overnight hike with the 5D2 on the Isle of Arran was more of an endurance test than a pleasure. I simply couldn't continue using the Canon gear and also do overnight wilderness trips like I used to back in the days of film.

My first mirrorless camera was the Olympus Pen EPL1. Little did I know at the time that the Pen was going to change my way of creating images. After a brief period with the EPL1, followed by the EPL2, I found myself owning the Olympus OM-D EM-5. The OM-D is a fantastic camera but the Canon 5D MkII was still my preferred choice of camera for commercial work and stock photography.

It was a commercial commission where everything really changed. I found myself in a dark hotel meeting room taking photographs of a PLC managing director delivering a (heated) public meeting, under the strict guidelines that I could not use flash! I edged my bets (as you do when shooting commercial work)



and I used the OM-D alongside the Canon. To my surprise the OM-D worked far better under dim light and provided better results. It was time to start taking a good look at my equipment and my reasons for using it.

At this very same time, Fujifilm were offering a special lens deal on the Fuji X-E1, which made me start to consider an entire switch of system. I had heard lots of good things about the Fujifilm X-Pro1 and as the X-E1 shared the same sensor, I was sure that the image quality would be perfect for my style of work. So I took the plunge and ordered the camera. After a couple of weeks of getting to know it, I used it for its first commissioned job and have not looked back since. I kept the Canon because of the weather sealing and improved AF.

The X-Trans sensor is only 16 megapixels and APS-C size. But does this really matter? If I had listened to everyone else back in 1999 I would have never used 35mm equipment and would have never visited

the places I did in order to capture my first images which helped to establish me as a photographer. Regardless of the sensor size, the optical quality of the Fujifilm X lenses is staggering and, in my opinion, easily as good as Canon L series lenses. And of course they are far smaller which means more room in my bag.

This Spring, I was amongst the many photographers across the world eagerly awaiting the announcement of the much rumoured Fujifilm X-T1, the latest addition to the X-Series family of Fujifilm cameras. Now it does look like Fujifilm have released a real game changing camera, perhaps a nail in the coffin of the DSLR?

I am now fully committed to the Fujifilm X-Series and have to say that the lenses are amongst the best I have ever used. Another arrival into my camera bag last year was the Fujifilm X100S which now fills the gap left by the OM-D. I use it as a compact walk around camera for family holidays and days out.



See: [www.jasonfriend.co.uk](http://www.jasonfriend.co.uk)



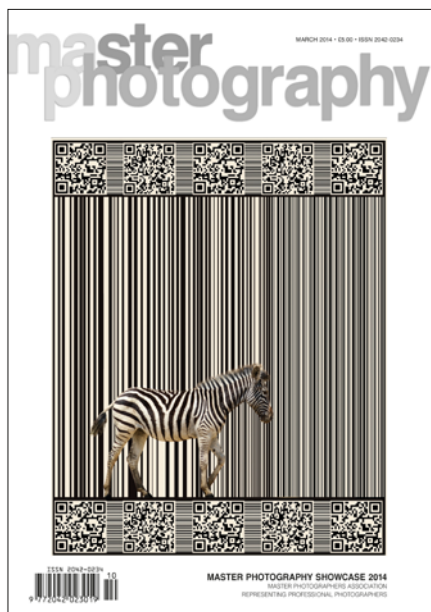
*Above: Tynemouth. Waves crash at the mouth of the River Tyne, during a winter storm. Fujifilm X-E1, XF 55-200mm f3.5-4.8 R LM OIS lens at 86mm, 1/35th at f10, ISO 200.*

Based in Newcastle upon Tyne in England's North-East, Jason Friend is a professional travel and landscape photographer. He has worked with many top names including *National Geographic*, British Airways, Microsoft Corporation, *Australian Geographic*, Hasselblad and Rough Guides. Jason leads photography workshops throughout Cumbria, Northumberland and Tyneside, and undertakes commercial photography throughout the UK. His stock images can be licensed via his own website and also his international agents including Getty Images, Masterfile and Corbis.

*Below, Whitley Bay. Incoming tide engulfs the causeway linking St Mary's Island & lighthouse to the mainland. X-E1, 18mm f2 XF lens, 58 seconds at f8, ISO 200.*



# SUBSCRIBE TO NEW **f2** with extra magazine offer for UK Cameracraft readers [www.iconpublications.com](http://www.iconpublications.com) magazines for photographers



Over the last two months we have been busy at Icon Publications and this edition of *Cameracraft* is two weeks late for our quarterly deadline. On January 24th, we had a telephone call from EC1 Publishing Ltd, who had taken over our original title **f2** magazine back in late 2006. They planned to cease publication. Almost as a snap decision, we asked to have the magazine back on the same terms we had originally passed it to EC1. On March 1st at The Photography Show we unveiled the first of our new editions, with a major upgrade to print quality and a return to a wide-ranging content. The April issue went on sale to the public on March 6th and sold out in most places where anyone could find it.

Although we have not been the publishers for the past seven years, **f2** has a history going back 25 years and started life as *PHOTOpro*, launched by Icon in 1989.

Working round the clock, we completed the first bi-monthly May/June edition to go on sale April 12th before completing this issue of *Cameracraft*. Now we have changed the frequency to six times a year the pressure will be less, as in the first two months of taking the title over, two issues had to be produced to meet exacting deadlines.

**f2** is aimed at those who want to earn income from photography, whether it's a career or a personal interest which needs funding. It's a very substantial magazine almost twice of weight of typical photo magazines with the same 68-page size and has already been praised for the standard of print and presentation.

**M**aster Photography is our magazine produced for members of The Master Photographers Association, the only UK group for photographers recognised as a 'Trade Association'. Today, it mainly represents owners of High Street or home-based studio studios serving the public and local businesses.

In the last few years, wedding photography has changed with a high proportion of weddings held at special venues or destinations, removing the local aspect and giving wedding photography a much higher value. It is now a vital part of celebrations which may cost tens of thousands and take place hundreds of miles from the couple's home ground. The same process is also changing portrait photography, as high value commissions involve full day shoots at special locations. The profile of MPA is moving changing to keep pace with this.

MPA as an association is expanding rapidly in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and (dramatically) in mainland China. The magazine remains focused on the UK market. The content is of general interest to anyone intending to become a full-time photographer, or to qualify as a licensed Master Photographer and progress to the two higher levels, Associateship and Fellowship. It is included with MPA UK membership, but anyone can subscribe directly to the magazine.

After the launch of **f2**, MPA wanted a similar quality product. We have therefore switched this to six times a year and to introduce it to UK readers, we will send three edition free to anyone with both **f2** and *Cameracraft* subs.

## Three-year binder for Cameracraft

Our Cordex magazine binders will hold 12 *Cameracraft* issues, or three years in each bookshelf volume, and are black kraft on board with a silver foiled spine logo. You will want to look back on our editions in the future, and we will not fill your entire house with piles of magazines to do this! See our web page [www.iconpublications.com/cameracraft](http://www.iconpublications.com/cameracraft) for details of how to obtain your Cordex bookcase binders by mail.

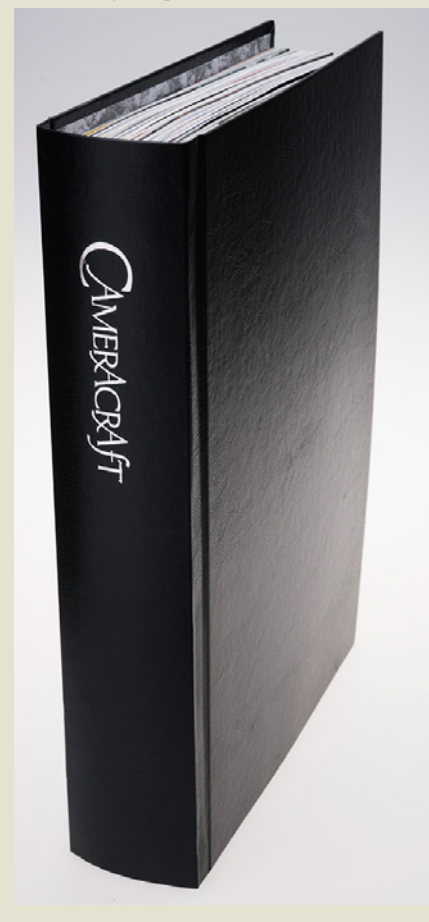
As an alternative to the binder, we offer a digitally printed annual you can order (*Cameracraft* issues 1 to 4, the first year, are now available in this form). It is a 176-page A4 soft-back volume which is printed on demand by Lulu at a cost of £29.27. It's a rather long URL so here is a shortened version:

<http://bit.ly/QF416p>

At the same time, a complete PDF of the first year is now available as a download and as a subscriber you have free access to this:

<http://bit.ly/1fMyEmh>

We also still have back issues of *Cameracraft* Nos 2, 3, 4 and 6 but stocks of #1 have run out and we have very few of #5 remaining. Please email [subscriptions@iconpublications.com](mailto:subscriptions@iconpublications.com) for details of available back issues and costs for your postal area.



# DÉJÀ VIEW



## A FORGOTTEN FOREST EMERGES ON THE WELSH COAST



The isolated coastal village of Borth found itself in the news twice because of freak weather conditions in Wales captured by photographer **Keith Morris**.

Storms, tides and sea surges stripped away the beach shown beyond the sand dunes in the 'old' view taken on slide film by Anglesey photographer **Pearl Bucknall**. Her picture, filed with the Robert Harding Picture Library, was researched from the archives by London News Pictures who paired it up with Keith's iconic misty view of Bronze Age tree stumps emerging from the low tide. The viewpoints are not identical but close enough – and Keith himself

**Wettest winter in history ...and rain's not over yet**

**By Nathan Ross**

FLOODS hit Britain in further Arthurian splendour – in fact from the ancient Roman era.

The Met Office said an average of 88 days of rain has fallen across the country since the start of the year, the highest amount since the previous record of 85 days in 1985.

Wales has seen some of the heaviest rain since the start of the year, with the highest daily rainfall of 115.5mm on 12 January.

South-west and central counties England have seen 85 days of rain, breaking the previous record of 81 days in 1985.

Wales has seen 87 days of rain, breaking the previous record of 84 days in 1985.

**Pitiful**

And more is to come as meteorologists warn of more rain and high tide winds.

The Met Office's Laura Young said: "It will lead to the heaviest rain in January since 1956 and a very early start to the beach season this Sunday. The forecast rain will be as the North Sea retreats part of the winter."

And more is to come as meteorologists warn of more rain and high tide winds.

The Met Office's Laura Young said: "It will lead to the heaviest rain in January since 1956 and a very early start to the beach season this Sunday. The forecast rain will be as the North Sea retreats part of the winter."

And more is to come as meteorologists warn of more rain and high tide winds.

The Met Office's Laura Young said: "It will lead to the heaviest rain in January since 1956 and a very early start to the beach season this Sunday. The forecast rain will be as the North Sea retreats part of the winter."

**6,000-year-old forest rises from sea**

EMERGING early from the sea, oak tree stumps hidden for thousands of years have been revealed by recent storms.

Stumps exposed the sand dunes at Borth in Ceredigion, West Wales, revealing the remains of a 6,000-year-old forest.

A picture of the same spot taken before the storm shows a strip of pebbles and a strip of sand. It is not clear exactly how the change the extreme weather has revealed on the beach.

Other sites identified include Skiffon Harbour in Cornwall, Skiffon, North, and Brownsea Island, Dorset.

**in East Sussex, the spot of the evidence has been "discovered". At Borth in South Wales, storm surges have revealed a strip of sand.**

**The National Trust says other sites including North, and Brownsea Island, Dorset.**

admits he has no stock image taken of the same scene before the beach was scoured by waves. It's not a unique event, but the exposure of the forest has been greater in 2014 and his images were used all round the world. Thousands of sightseers came to the quiet bay to explore the strange landscape.

Days later, storms brought a power line down into the peat bogs beyond the dunes, burying the live cable in the wet peat. It caught fire, creating a line of flames despite the heavy rain as the gasses trapped in the bog burned off. Keith found his images used worldwide once again.

See: [www.artswales.com](http://www.artswales.com)



CAMERACRAFT PORTFOLIO

No 7

# CATHERINE MCINTYRE



THE PERSISTENCE OF VISION



*Five Akua Ba, 2010.*

*Akua Ba figures, also known as Akuaba or Akaba, are made by the Ashanti in Ghana. They are fertility figures carried by women who wish to become pregnant, or tucked into the waistband of pregnant women who wish to have a beautiful child.*



*Córdoba, Spain.*

*This is one of the locations which Catherine McIntyre singles out in her book as an inspiration and influence. Others include the souks of Marrakesh, in general, and Philae Island on the Nile in Egypt.*

*Cloisters, 2012.  
"I visited the  
cloisters at  
Gloucester  
Cathedral just  
two days after a  
wonderful afternoon  
spent getting lost  
in the Forest of  
Dean. The two  
experiences,  
both uplifting and  
energizing, became  
entwined in my  
imagination."*







*Through the Wall, 2010.*  
*"Almost all that remains of this evanescent figure is her shadow"*  
*From a series using the nude and walls in different ways.*



*Remains, 2010.*

*A response to the natural history collection at the University of Dundee, once the largest collection of its kind in Europe, now much reduced and its original buildings demolished.*

# THE PERSISTENCE OF VISION - INSIDE THE EYES OF CATHERINE MCINTYRE

**V**isual Alchemy – the Fine Art of Digital Montage is the title of a long-awaited book by the Scottish artist and photographer, Catherine McIntyre.

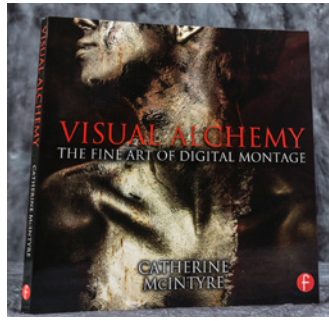
Although the content has all the hallmarks of a retrospective portfolio, it's actually a textbook from Focal Press produced and priced accordingly in their soft-back 230mm square format with a generous 232 inner pages.

Catherine gained worldwide recognition at the turn of the millennium for her digital montage works exhibited in the UK, USA and Europe and considered very good investments by collectors.

Unlike many early adopters of digital methods, she has never lost the vision she developed first as a fine artist and later as a photographer working with film. Our title reflects both the subtle overlay of after-images found in her work – like traces of vision seen after you shut your eyes – and the consistent previsualisation she has applied to her work. The book contains contributions from many other photographers but Catherine's own pictures are easily identified.

Her early work fused living forms with the remains of past lives. Fossils, bones, branches, stones, feathers, leaves, shells and curious finds became part of equine and figure studies. As a collector of old books and prints, she was able to find examples of draughtsmanship and engraving to blend with antiques and beach-combing discoveries.

Photographers have always found broken, worn and weathered objects fascinating. John Blakemore arranged old garden tools and potting shed clutter to create 'framed' arrangements in wooden boxes, recorded as large format negatives and printed using Victorian darkroom techniques. Catherine keeps an archive – "all kinds of boxes and drawers of potential materials" – and a glimpse into this reveals the components she uses to build



*Visual Alchemy – the Fine Art of Digital Montage, by Catherine McIntyre, Focal Press, January 2014. ISBN 978-0-415-81657-1. UK £18.99/US \$34.95*



*Front page of portfolio: Ice White, 2004. A portrait and a photograph of a frozen Scottish puddle blended. Above 'boxes': from Catherine's archive of found objects. Catherine is a member of Adobe's Behance community: [www.behance.net/cmci](http://www.behance.net/cmci)*

Published by *Cameracraft* – see [www.iconpublications.com](http://www.iconpublications.com)

up her complex multi-layered pictures. They are produced in a way which copies in-camera or in-enlarger double or multi exposure and avoids popular digital 'looks'. Her images might well be made using film, paper and chemicals.

If you like the historic work of Man Ray, Angus McBean, and Jerry Uelsmann – or the contemporary images of Vincent O'Byrne, Mark Russell-Hill and Christopher Bradbury – Catherine McIntyre is a name to add to your bookshelf.

In *Visual Alchemy*, the steps used to create many of the images are explained. In 2002, Catherine produced a step by step series for one of our magazines showing screen-shots of stages involved in making several different images from her first book *Deliquescence* (Pohlmann Press, Los Angeles, 2000).

*Visual Alchemy* uses very few screen shots and relies mostly on clarity of explanation. The text has been written with great care over a long period, not unusual for Focal Press titles. Work by other artists is researched and explained, technical aspects are dealt with without overwhelming the creative focus.

The whole work is beautiful, and that's not something you can often say about a textbook.

"Art relays the world through the artist's eye and brain", Catherine writes, "and translates, enhances, transforms. Painters and sculptors always did this. Traditional photographers do it too; by selection, dodging and burning, simple cropping, they are presenting the world as they see it. They are improving on their raw material. If *Photoshop* can improve it further – and it can! – it is simply Luddite to ignore it. Method is not the product; the image is everything. There is now a growing digital art movement producing work that will, soon I hope, join film photography as a serious, eloquent – and collectable – art form".



# MICHAEL YAMASHITA

## MINDERS & FIXERS

It's hard to convey the breadth of Michael Yamashita's accomplishments in a nutshell. He's been shooting for *National Geographic* for 30 years – longer than *any* other photographer. As probably the most prolific photographer of everything Asian he's published ten books on its vanishing cultures.

He's produced several award-winning documentaries on the National Geographic Channel on the nearly forgotten Admiral Zheng He, the Great Wall of China, and even retraced the steps of Marco Polo's famous journey, which produced a documentary and a book which has been selling strong for ten years.

Although every assignment is different, there's a common thread for their execution. Step one is thorough research – not only for how other

### Photographer, Storyteller and Cultural Anthropologist Michael Yamashita talks about his 30 years shooting for National Geographic – with cautionary tales from hard experience

photographers have covered the region but also the culture, region, and history.

He compiles a list of shots he wants to get. When traveling he takes two of everything (because all technology will fail eventually) and hires a "Fixer" – someone who can act as translator, help him gain access to the sites he wants to photograph, carry gear, and help set things right when things go wrong. This they often do in countries

where there is not a free press. There, photojournalists are restricted and if you do get permission to shoot, the government assigns a "minder" to watch your every move and to restrict what you can cover.

"It's a cat and mouse game. It's your job to outwit the minders." He tells the story of when he was retracing Marco Polo's steps, a journey which took him through Northern Iraq. He was given permission because it was believed that

the *National Geographic* story would be non-political (which it was). But since nobody else had shot pictures of that region before, he started shooting wherever he could for possible future stories.

"You can't shoot up high!" said the minder. "Can I go see what it's like from the top of this tower?" "Yes, but no pictures". So he proceeded up a long stairway (with his camera!). The minder started following him but started to fall behind. Turns out he had trouble with stairs and darkness. Michael got the shot of Mosul, a 13th century city (*below*).

Then there was the time he was trying to document remnants of foot binding, an ancient Chinese tradition that started as a status symbol but evolved into a symbol of female subjugation. The practice





Main image: monks in the snow, Labrang, Tibetan China. Above: the practice now abolished for decades, the feet of elderly ladies are sometimes still marked by binding. The shoes on the left, looking like those of a toddler, belong to an eighty-year-old woman. Bottom row of pictures, from left: Afghanistan, Diana Prosthesis Center, mine victim; Troops loyal to Ahmad Shah Massoud, leader of the Northern Alliance, aim the cannon of an old Russian tank. Iraq: battle statue of Saddam stands amidst recovered fragments of a US missile.

was formally banned as long ago as 1912. On a 2003 trip, Yamashita wanted to meet and shoot some of the surviving women who had bound their feet in their youth.

His first minder (yes, they assigned him two!) said in no uncertain terms "You can't shoot that!". The second minder, who couldn't stand the first, pulled him aside and told him of a "little feet dancing troupe" that is well-known around China. On their way to investigate, a brief chat with their taxi driver revealed that his mother was in that troupe! He got the shot.

"They pay me to be lucky!" he says with a smile.

One of his current projects is a story of trains of China, which play a big part of The Big Migration, when 30 million Chinese migrant workers come home for the annual Spring

Festival. During this time, the authorities worry most about crowd control, and since he was shooting in bullet train (it's illegal to shoot on any train if you're a foreigner and they think you're a journalist), there were several instances when he was taken into custody, interrogated, and even thrown off the train on one occasion.

In instances where he is taken into custody, it is the job of the Fixer to get him out. Almost always it required that he sign some sort of a confession. "Just sign it – it's important to say you were wrong!" Getting caught by authorities has happened so many times that he's gotten very good at swapping out his memory card before the camera gets confiscated. "I've found that charm works a lot better than bribes", he says.





Above: music lesson for Labrang's monks using the traditional 13-foot horns. Below: women separate husk used for animal feed from the grain in a rice barn in Soc Trang, Vietnam. Facing page: top left, a sadhu in Mumbai. The hair of these holy men sometimes grows to 12 feet or even longer. Top right, woman of the Yao ethnic group with gold teeth. Bottom: a child sleeps in a hammock. Little has changed since the 13th century.





Looking back on the past 30 years, Michael says he's amazed by how much change has happened since he visited countries the first time.

"Back then, places like Gansu and Yunnan provinces were forbidden for journalists. Tibet is that way still". He was one of the very first photographers to visit these places in the late '90s. "Every place on the Silk Road is a tourist trap now. During my first visit, the Silk Road was a two-lane blacktop with potholes. Now it's a four-lane superhighway with tolls". This point was reinforced when he went back to the sand dunes

to re-shoot the cover of his perennial best-selling book on Marco Polo with his Sony A7r. "Ten years ago you just drove out there and shot. Now you have to pay for it and walk miles to go through the special gate."

Where will he be exploring next? Among his many other ongoing projects, he says he is still obsessed with Myanmar, and he continues to flout the law with the Chinese train project. Oh, and he's leaving for Bali on Thursday...

– GF



[www.michaelyamashita.com](http://www.michaelyamashita.com)



# MY WORST TRIP EVER

Lots of people ask me “Where’s your favorite travel destination to take pictures?”... to which I usually give my standard but truthful answer, “Wherever I am!”.

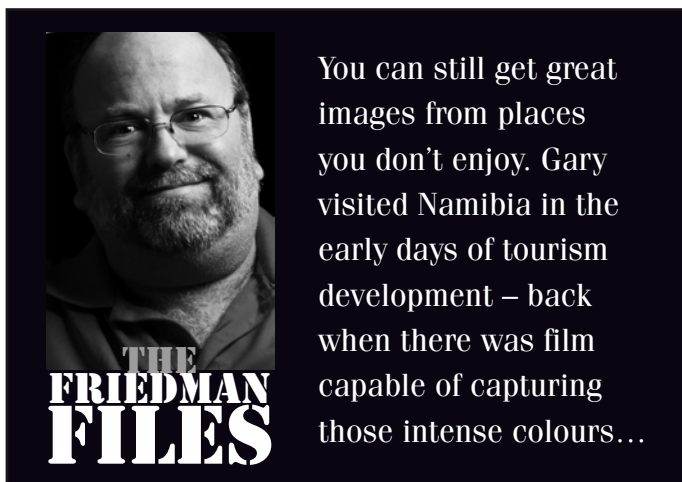
But nobody ever asks me, “Hey, Gary, where’s the WORST place you’ve ever traveled to?”

Well; I’ll tell you anyway. It was Namibia. In the middle of the African continent. And my negative experience had more to do with me than it did with the country I was visiting. I was there in 1997 as part of a cadre of photographers to help document the country just seven years after gaining its independence from South Africa.

My customer was the Namibian government, who would use the pictures to help promote tourism. We were granted access to diamond mines, 5-star eco-tourism hotels (they weren’t called that then, but that’s what they were), and the best of what the country had to offer. But as much as possible we tried to get away from the official tour and hang out with the populace to better learn what things were really like.

Namibia is actually a beautiful country, and like any place that’s different from what you know, you have to develop an appreciation for what it offers. But at the time I didn’t think highly of it at all. My first jarring realization was that although it stopped being a German colony back in World War I, the Germans continued to run the place. German companies owned the gem and rare metals mines; they owned most of the major businesses, they heavily influenced the local education, and they seemed to do their best to suppress the native culture. The politicians were all German, as was the food served at the hotels.

The entire trip I kept thinking to myself, “How dare they rape another country and treat the indigenous people like dirt?”



You can still get great images from places you don’t enjoy. Gary visited Namibia in the early days of tourism development – back when there was film capable of capturing those intense colours...



Lesson #1: What’s worse than being judgmental?

Lesson #2: That was a rhetorical question; the answer is “The only thing worse than being judgmental is being judgmental while imposing a foreign set of standards from another culture. With an arrogant and self-righteous bent.” Yeah, that was me. I’m not proud of it.

It’s not a good way to behave – either as a traveler or as an ambassador, even if my observations were accurate. One of the reasons Americans have developed a bad reputation over the years is their expectation that everywhere they go will be just like America, or everything will be judged relative to what they’re used to in America.

Well, just like pixel-peeping is not a valid way to evaluate picture quality, neither is comparing other, less-well-off countries to your own, either in lifestyle, politics, or values. It is what it is.

The other valuable lesson for me was the understanding that I’m responsible for my own moods – nobody else. This lesson was a result of one of the other photographers I was traveling with. While most of them were outstanding human beings, there was one just rubbed me the wrong way. He was self-centered, verbally abusive, had a short temper, and was very demanding of the native help. His flare-ups made me angry on several occasions and more often than not would serve to ruin the trip for me. Had I been wiser I would have applied Lesson #3, which is “I’m in charge of my own mood – nobody else. I will not give anyone else permission to sour my mood; if it happens then it’s my own damn fault.”

Life for me got much better once I figured that out – you just can’t give other people, especially other strangers, permission to futz with how you feel.

This rule can be extrapolated to, “Happiness is



*Facing page, top: one of the eco-tourist hotels – about a dozen domes in the middle of nowhere. Above: another eco-tourist hotel – Nkasa Lupala lodge in the Namib desert. Facing page, bottom: a family going to town in Hardap. Below: Trees lit by a 25 watt light (10 minute exposure).*



a choice, and I'm completely responsible for my own happiness. My happiness cannot be conditional upon the actions of others. If others are incompetent or in a bad mood then I feel bad for them but that has nothing to do with me."

Later I learned that all the great spiritual teachers herald this in one form or another. Once again, I re-invent the wheel.

The equipment I brought with me was state-of-the-art at the time: Minolta Maxxum 9000 and 7si. And three lenses: Minolta 80-200mm *f*2.8, 24-70mm *f*2.8, and a Sigma 18-35mm. Everything was shot on Fujichrome slides (50, 100, 400 ISO).



*Top right: establishing shot in Windhoek. Centre right: ships in Namdock early morning. Bottom right: mine workers after a long shift.*

*Below: a springbok is nearly invisible against a gravel mountain.*



# FROM THE FRIEDMAN ARCHIVES



*The best travel photos are "environmental portraits" showing a person in the environment in which they thrive. And the best way to get them is to leave your comfort zone and develop a rapport with your subject first. On a trip to Cuba I used the Pocket Sax (an instrument I carry with me always) to break the ice with a musician. He became so excited that he brought me up to his apartment and started going through his old photographs – and there was a picture of him when he was a band leader during Cuba's heyday! Konica Minolta 7D, KM 11-18mm lens, available light.*

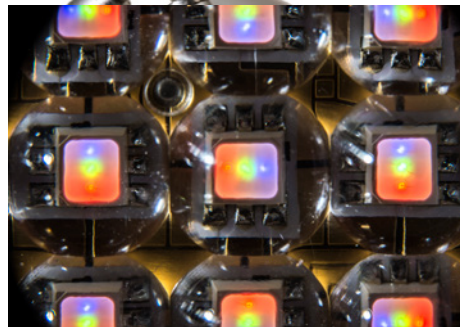
# PAINTING WITH LIGHT

Almost as old as photography itself, light painting and light drawing have become popular diversions for most photographers in the digital age. Without the uncertainty and cost of film, the ability to experiment has created an explosion of products and technologies, as well as images from a new wave of artists combining affordable, kit-built lighting and long exposure with creative vision shaped by the virtual worlds that typified early computer graphics.

As children, many of us will have experimented with the long exposure and sparklers during fireworks displays – using persistence of vision, aiming to create a word or shape on the film before the flame ran out. The inevitable black frames, blurring or just messy results, the waiting for the film to come back and subsequent disappointment undoubtedly discouraged many from pursuing the art of light drawing, or light painting. Now we have reached the point where one interchangeable lens system can show a light painting or other long exposure

**Richard Kilpatrick discovered a tiny LED light source which the makers thought was perfect for video and smartphone snaps. Actually it's perfect for stills too.**

**Flashlights and flash can be useful too...**



*The KICK rechargeable RGB LED light is only the same size as an iPhone (mounted together, above) but its tricolour diodes can light large, difficult subjects like this brewery cellar surprisingly well.*

effect building up in real time – a unique ability of the Olympus OM-D system at present. The freedom to explore, without cost, the many techniques and results available by taking absolute control of light is one that all photographers should try at some stage.

Long exposure techniques for light trails, or even removing moving objects from a scene, seem to fall outside the remit of 21st century light painting. The predictable nature of the former, and the passive approach to light of the latter, perhaps present less of a challenge. The modern style is defined by an array of light sources and approaches, though almost all have roots in the work of experimental artists and photographers from late Victorian onwards.

The three core techniques are generally defined as light painting, where an object is lit and effectively painted into the image, light drawing – where the light itself is the subject – and camera painting, where the illuminated subjects or light sources remain static, and the camera is moved to create the desired effect.



The common elements, as a rule, are longer than normal exposure and a dynamic input into the composition during that exposure.

From a practical perspective, the most useful aspect of light painting is making a small amount of light go a long way. Dressed ideally in neutral, constant colours (black is generally easiest), a long exposure and even a low powered flashgun can be used to illuminate substantial subjects evenly. The beauty of the flash approach is that you gain very easy control over when the receiving medium is exposed to light. When there's no flash, depending on your environment and settings, you can generally assume there are no extraneous illuminated elements.

Continuous lights require more discipline. The most patient operators will begin and find that moment where someone moved, or the angle of the light wasn't quite as anticipated, additional trails and spill will enter the scene. Photographers happy to digitally retouch, or exceptionally skilled in the darkroom, may take such things in their stride, yet if the art-form is to be treated as a discipline there's a great deal of pleasure to be had from that perfect, in camera exposure.

## Scaling up

An innovative smartphone-controlled colour changing LED unit from Rift Labs, called the KICK light, is reviving the art of light painting today. It entered production at the end of 2013 following a successful Kickstarter campaign, and offers exceptional control over white-balanced colour temperature, saturated colour output and overall brightness through the use of RGB LEDs under wide, 60° angle lenses. My first experiments with it assumed the power was only sufficient for small areas, so I used a model car as a subject.

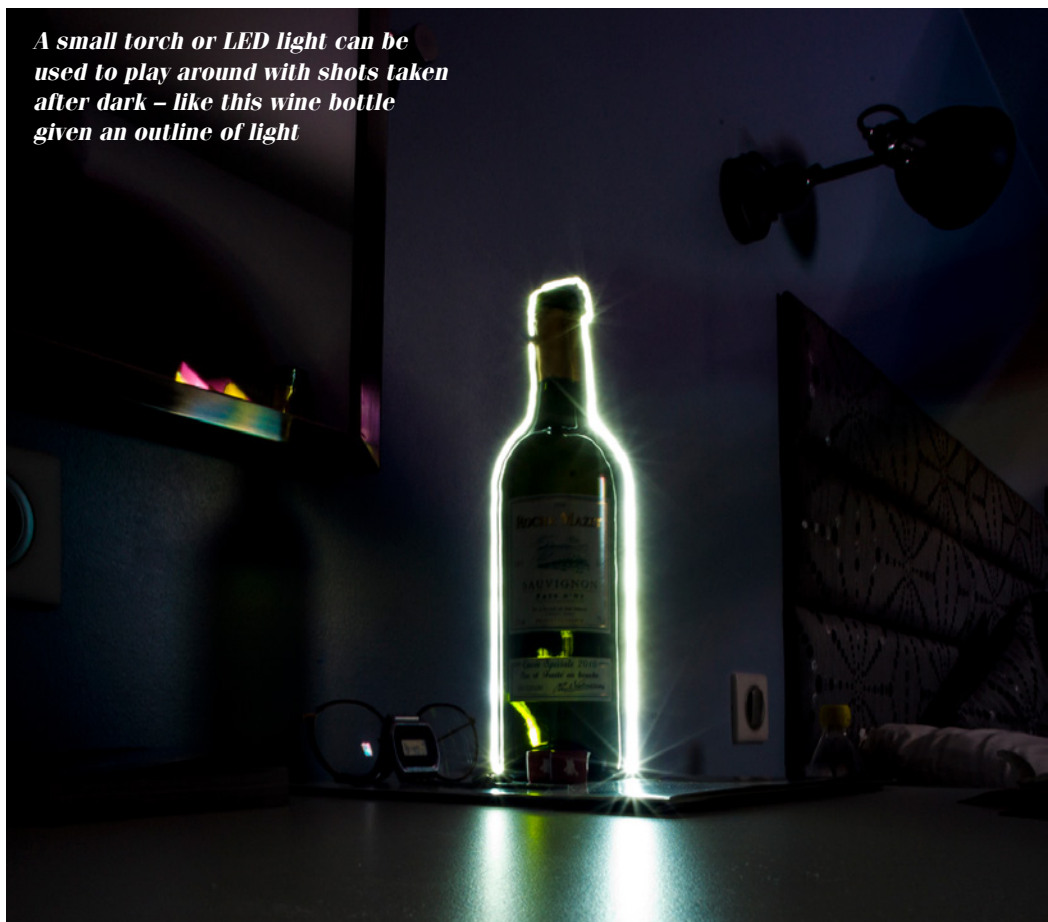
Controlled by iPhone or Android, the little device can output 400 Lumens and cycle through preset colour ranges, sampled from surrounding



## A torch in the bag

*Every camera kit should include a small torch, especially now high-power xenon and newer LED torches are key fob sized. Shirley Kilpatrick always has one attached to every bag. David borrowed it to pick out the lagoon formations on the floor of the Grotte de l'Ombrives, above. The same torch with its very narrow beam left a distinct snail-trail of light when used to paint the cave roof and bulbous stalactite, left. An LED source with a much wider angle would have been preferable – but less acceptable to the tour guide and party.*

*A small torch or LED light can be used to play around with shots taken after dark – like this wine bottle given an outline of light*





Sean McCormick mounted his Canon camera on a tripod using an 18-55 mm kit lens at f8, with the shutter on BULB mode, and ISO at 200. A single 20 minute exposure emphasize the star trails while Sean walked through the scene to paint light over various surfaces so they would show up without his own appearance in the image. He used a vintage Vivitar 283 flashgun with coloured filters.

objects with the smartphone's camera, as well as matching colour balance for ambient light through the same app.

See: [www.riftlabs.com](http://www.riftlabs.com)

The Mercedes AMG C63 shown opposite is my first attempt at lighting a full sized car. Neither of the larger images reflects the car's true appearance – it's white. The yellow was chosen from the palette on the KICK light, and the multicoloured example lit using the rainbow colour-cycling. Aside from exposure tweaks, neither image is manipulated, and experienced (and inexperienced) light painters will spot many errors in the technique where the car is over or under illuminated or a streak from the light appears.

For the straight 'white' shot of the car, the KICK was matched to the output of an Elinchrom Quadra, and the portable flash used to illuminate the bonnet, one of the most challenging areas. The rest of the shot is



First experiments with the KICK light colour cycling were on model cars – after more tests I realised the light was bright enough to be used with full sized cars.

composed as a sequence of light events. During the 30 second exposure (at f22 and ISO 100 on Nikon D4S, with Schneider 28mm PC Super Angulon) the car's locking was activated to illuminate the accent lighting and day running lights, the car was painted with the KICK light, walking around the body and angling the light to highlight or hide elements of the bodywork, particularly the wheels and high-specification braking system. The Quadra

was fired manually when there was the least risk of light spill illuminating the photographer!

Some elements allow for different treatments; for a moody, red illumination behind the car the lights can be activated at the beginning of the exposure, and amber turn signals require several activations to match the brightness of the accent LEDs.

Many automotive photographers will illuminate and capture several images

of a car – either to control reflections, allow focus stacking, or simply to overlay elements to get the most even lighting. It's a time consuming process, and it is entirely possible, with the right technique, to significantly reduce the amount of post-production needed by taking a controlled, dynamic approach to lighting.

## Further options

Applications for light painting are, essentially, as wide as the field of photography itself.

Also used for regular lighting, Jerry Ghionis's Icelight ([www.theicelight.com](http://www.theicelight.com)) is a 150W equivalent rechargeable LED baton (\$499/£399 for a single unit). With colour gel filter tubes and a range of light shapers, this is the source most often used by commercial photographers for light painting today.

Technology has come to the aid of artists, with LED



modules capable of emitting two million colours and programmable light 'wands' such as the kit developed by Mike Ross, but no longer sold:

[www.mrossphoto.com](http://www.mrossphoto.com)

Ross took the Arduino, a hobbyist single-board computer, and bundled it with a multi-colour LED wand and software to interpret a bitmap image and flash it line by line, to be moved and build up an image across the frame.

Drawing with light can be simple affair – the wine bottle



on the previous page, far from perfection, was created after seeing a large print of transparent rulers at Paris Photo, lit with a penlight but with a rather dramatic result. I used a pen with LED torch/laser pointer back at the hotel, with my Leica M9 and 35mm just resting on the table and

restricted minimum focus dictating the framing.

Technology like the KICK and Ice lights – and Olympus OM-D Live Time mode – make light painting more predictable and controllable than it was in the film era. It's time to try it yourself.



*Above: a very small light and a very big car in an even bigger barn. No, it doesn't belong to the author, it was just being looked after in the course of journalistic activities. Though taken on the Nikon D4S, this would have even easier using any of the Olympus OM-D models which show the result as it builds up.*

# CAMERACRAFT REARVIEW

*This photograph by Fuyang Zhou won the top \$120,000 prize in the HIPA awards, an international open photo contest based in Dubai. It has caused controversy with accusations of Photoshop being used to reposition the teacher's arm – though in fact, this was not the case, it's just a slightly odd angle and pose.*

*The classroom is, however, a set-up. It's a photo opportunity which raises funds for the Chinese village involved.*

*"All winning photographs with HIPA pass through several stages of evaluation by our international panel of judges before a final analysis of the (raw file) takes place, to ensure full compliance with all rules and regulations," the organisation said in response.*

*"It is only after these thorough checks of authenticity, that winners are announced at the annual awards ceremony, and their photographs are then shared with international media outlets.*

*"We hope to have more talented photographers take part in our new season of competition, 'Life in Colour'."*

*See: [www.hipa.ae](http://www.hipa.ae)*







# CAMERACRAFT REARVIEW

In keeping with our theme of 'pure' photography – which the controversial picture on the last spread ultimately seems to be – here are three images which use the camera in a straightforward way. Any effects are down to nature (left) and the odd way our eyes interpret two-dimensional views of structures and spaces (right).

Dr Francis Vallely took the Lake District scene of Langdale Pikes on the facing page. Sony Alpha 900, Minolta 24-105mm at 40mm, 1/640s at f6.3, ISO 200. "The picture was taken in the late evening in early June last year", says Francis. "The conditions did not last long, it was a matter of stopping the car quickly and taking as many shots as I could before the whole scene changed – no time to get the tripod out of the boot so the camera was hand held and relying on Sony's Steady Shot. The location was the road into the Langdale Valley just before you reach the Britannia Inn.



Ron White took the two shots on the right, both cropped to square from Fuji 16 megapixel 35mm-shaped images.

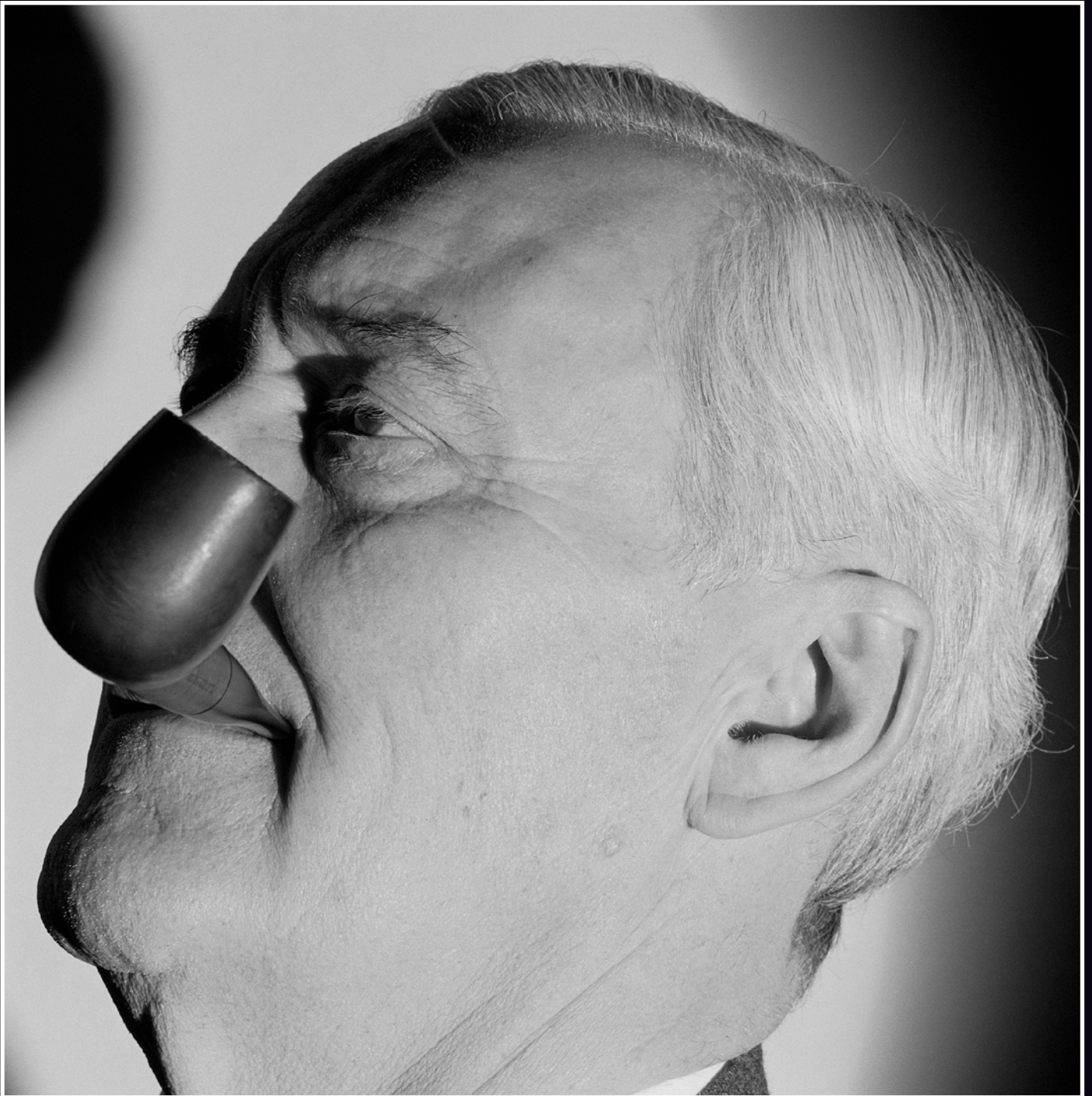
Ron sent these to suit our 'pure' theme. He says, "Both are street scenes, shot black and white in-camera with the yellow filter option, square format. No post effects or filters were applied, just minor adjustments in Lightroom.

"The top image, NY Wall Art, is a shot of mural art in New York City. Fuji X100S, 23mm (35mm equivalent), 1/240th at f8, ISO 400.

"The bottom image, Denver Street Scene is a shot of two posters hung on a pole. Fuji X-E1, 18-55mm lens at 61mm equivalent, 1/105th at f8, ISO 400."

If you would like your work considered for our Rearview gallery, email a web-page link to: [editor@iconpublications.com](mailto:editor@iconpublications.com) or send no more than three email-friendly AdobeRGB or sRGB JPEG (maximum 2500 pixels wide) attached images. We will request a larger file if we need it.





*The British politician Tony Benn continued to promote the centuries-old case for a fair society right up to his death at the age of 88 on March 14th 2014. He was never camera-shy but also managed to avoid the staged photo call. He was happy to be a subject for the candid lens, or the considered portrait.*

*This well-known study, with more than a nod to Dadaism, was taken by the master of lateral seeing, Brian Griffin. "My photograph of Tony Benn was taken in 1990 in the kitchen of his home in Notting Hill Gate", says Brian – and no more.*

[www.briangriffin.co.uk](http://www.briangriffin.co.uk)

# CAMERACRAFT

## REARVIEW

If you would like your work considered for our Rearview gallery, email a web-page link to [editor@iconpublications.com](mailto:editor@iconpublications.com) or send no more than three email-friendly attached images. We will request a larger file if you're shortlisted.