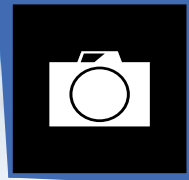


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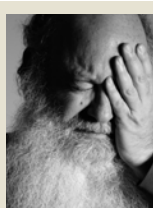
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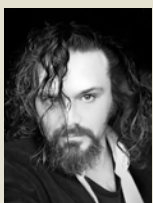
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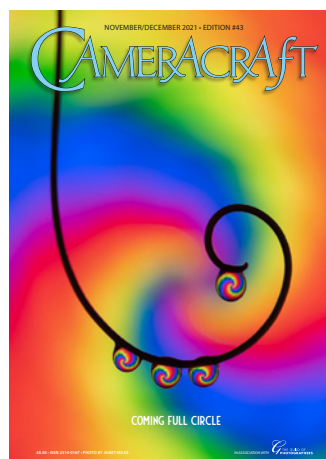
Tim Goldsmith

From analogue
to digital

monarkcameras.com

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Cameracraft comes to you with the valued support of
The Guild of Photographers and the industry.
Please support them in turn and be sure to mention Cameracraft!



New I-series metal lenses for E and L

WITH THE introduction of a super-compact 90mm f2.8, Sigma has made the I-series of high performance full frame mirrorless system lenses match the very best classic kits of the rangefinder era. The I-series lenses are all fixed focal length (primes) and feature aperture control rings as well as fast autofocus with MF/DMF via the lens focusing

barrel. Every component in the lens is metal down to the stepper motor focusing carriage and the mounting of the glass element

The 90mm f2.8 has special attention to chromatic aberration in its design which uses no fewer than five SLD (super low dispersion) elements. We expect to see foreground and

background blur unaffected by colour-bokeh shifts, made very smooth by a nine-bladed aperture and aided by third-stop f-stop setting on the lens or via the camera. The closest focus of 50cm compares with a typical figure around 85cm for most 90mm lenses, and yields a 0.2X (1:5) close-up. This lens accepts 55mm filters and weighs only 295g. It can be teamed up with the 24mm f3.5 and 45mm f2.8 in the same range weighing in at less than 750g all together.

Alongside the 90mm, also available is a faster version of the 24mm at f2 instead of f2.8. It's sure to attract buyers at the same £549.99 RRP UK (\$669 USA) as the 90mm and although it takes 62mm filters and is a little bigger, weighing in at 365g, but it's really part of the f2 I-series which now includes the 35mm and 65mm so well matched there. Focus is down to 24.5cm, 1:6.7 scale.

<https://www.sigma-imaging-uk.com>



Lowepro advances outdoor range

CAMERA BAGS are almost a fashion item, like tents and boots... and Lowepro update regularly.

Now the *PhotoSport PRO* line tops the third-generation PhotoSport for 'adventure photographers who embark on multi-day photographic journeys' (above).

The *Integrated GearUp™* camera insert (below) and accessory strap system bring flexible protection for multiple carrying configurations with an optional *Runabout* pack for explorations from the basecamp. This looks like a hi-viz orange little sibling for the main backpack.

<https://www.lowepro.co.uk>



Manfrotto move in

FOR A FEW years now the engineering near-monopoly of Manfrotto has been the target of Far Eastern competition with copies and look-alikes. Now Manfrotto is striking back by taking on board some of the key changes in a market where gimbals, video mounts, quick-release holders, rig cages and action accessories now dominate.

The *MOVE* range (see brochure front below) springs fully-formed and heavily armed from birth. With the brand's extensive retail distribution and reputation for keeping systems compatible over many years, it's a move to watch.

There are also new bags (as always!) and a new *EzyFrame* background system for studio portraits. For further information on this re-birth of innovation, visit:

<https://www.manfrotto.com>

Move Quick Release

Move your camera seamlessly making changing setup effortless and quick.

360° Q/R
Simply drop-in (and rotate) into the system and enjoy 360° freedom. To release, just twist and lift out.

X LOCK
Thanks to its engineering, an extra twist-lock is available, to make the system even more stable.

ERGONOMIC DESIGN
Precisely engineered technologies mean a lighter ergonomic design, suitable for all configurations (head, sliders, tripods, ballheads, etc.).

UNIQUE, FULL COMPATIBILITY
Designed and manufactured to work with the entire ecosystem. And thanks to its capacity and universal attachment, all other systems too.

Full Agility

Gimbal
The Manfrotto Gimbal allows you to get more versatile and handle use from your Gimbal, making your production values to the next level.

Modular Gimbal 300XM
First modular stabilizer designed to speed your flow on set. It enables you to move from shot to shot faster than ever and to create your favourite configuration with a modular approach.

Gim-Pod
An innovative accessory that allows to create a full 360° gimbal system, integrating monitor and audio equipment to the Gimbal.

Manfrotto
Imagine More

move

www.manfrotto.com

One Stop Shop for the Ultimate Selfie Systems and Print Solutions

TOMORROW'S leisure attractions, social and corporate events will feature robot photographers, improved photobooths and further increase the demand for on-the-spot prints. All the technology is in place from familiar photobooths and Wi-Fi print stations to the Eva Photography Robot which (or who?) can circulate at functions and interact with guests.

Now there is one e-commerce shop able to supply everything from the systems to the profitable supplies, set-ups and later in the year training courses – **Visualis**. Their new Robots and booths are manufactured and supported by the Warrington Group of companies (focused on hospitality and visitor attractions). Systems range from event photographers wanting the fastest and most economical dye-sub printing to permanent studio booths or Eva's engaging presence at major venues. The age of the selfie which never gets printed is over now, it's so easy to set up instant on the spot printing from smartphones. Photobooths and bots will beat the selfie too with great group, family and party shots.

Brands include Citizen, Mitsubishi, DNP, HiTi, The Eva robot, Durico, Photobooths, ID Pro for identity and passport portraiture and later in the year a new concept called Surface Printer.

Check out all the offers and news at <https://www.visualis.co.uk>

Articulated screen and new 33MP sensor in major generation IV upgrade to Sony A7

FACEBOOK groups have been in a flap about the articulated screen on the new Sony A7IV, referred to as 'flappy'. However many will welcome it for more versatile studio shooting in portrait format, macro and technical work, self-videos and more.

The camera has a new 33MP Exmor R full-frame back-illuminated sensor with low noise and new colour science, ideal for low-light conditions with a sensitivity range of ISO 100-51200 and dynamic range of approximately 15 stops. Files can be recorded in raw, JPEG, or the 10-bit HEIF format and the dual slots fit SD UHS-II or I with the master slot also accepting CF Express. With many further enhancements to 4K and HD video, digital sound input (missing

from the A7III), improved touch screen functions despite the articulated design, EV compensation dial lock and a generally improved spec all round the £2,399 launch price seems a bargain and 33MP has real appeal as a set up from 24MP without a low light penalty.

Alongside this new body there's a version 2 of the important 70-200mm f2.8 'pro standard tele' zoom which is around £400 more than existing stocks of Mark 1 and has pretty compelling ergonomic (controls) and performance (AF and optical design). The claims are 'world's lightest

200mm large-aperture telephoto zoom lens, 29% lighter than the previous model; up to four times faster AF, with focus tracking while



zooming improved by approximately 30% when compared to the previous model. See:

<https://www.sony.co.uk>



Samyang step up fully auto range and launch their first ever zoom – a 24-70mm f2.8 E-mount for only £828

DESPITE a market-beating price point it's performance which is the focus of Samyang's claims for their first ever zoom. If you think you've seen older zooms, they were not – once Samyang made low-cost very long manual teles, but they have never made a zoom before. The company marks 50 years with this launch and it's targeted at the next 50 with special attention to video-friendly refinements.

It is Par-Focal, keeping focus distance unchanged when zooming, a feature normally seen on expensive cine zoom lenses.

'Cinematic Video AF' speed is carefully controlled during video recording and focus wobble is reduced.

Linear MF Focus Control gives the focus ring resistance similar to a good manual lens, making manual

refocus during video takes much smoother. A Samyang 'Ciné Kit', consisting of focus gearing, follow focus and tripod mount, is available separately.

With new UK distributors Holdan also comes a version of the acclaimed 12mm f2 AF in Fujifilm X-mount for a little over £400. For information on the range, see:

<https://www.holdan.co.uk/> brand/ Samyang



Catch the wave - be ready for capital commissions

WITH THE economy likely to grow fast you can offer your clients the option to shoot in London in a studio ideal for retail fashion, products, food and drink. The 3Objectives studio in Kennington took special measures to be a useful workspace during Covid restrictions and can respond rapidly to any change. You can put a shoot in your diary with confidence and meet clients, with comfortable meeting facilities alongside 2,000 square feet of high ceiling camera room with a 22 foot lens to subject distance.

The studio has excellent rail, street and transport access and with staff present during working hours can receive deliveries of items to be photographed ready for your shoot. The studio hire comes with 27" iMac, C1 Pro and Photoshop, and lighting – you have the option of a Capture One certified operator, hair and make-up artist and stylist on request.

The 3Objectives studio is two minutes from the Oval tube station (Northern Line). With a corner cove, 12ft background stands and over 25 seamless colours in stock essentials include painted or plain flats, stools, plinths, black and white polyboards, silk scrim screen and more.

As an ec2i facility, you can also benefit from Synergy DAM, the group's digital asset management service which can store, catalogue, proof, deliver and convert almost any format of image, movie, design and print production file – proof against software discontinuation and the pitfalls of popular cloud and NAS solutions.

See: <https://www.3objectives.co.uk>

Enthusiastic turnout for The Photography Show gives the industry hope for 2022

Arriving at The Photo Show for a one-day visit on the Monday, I was able to get close parking very quickly and hit the entrance with its Covid-compliance wardens well before my allocated 10am slot. The show was opening at 9am for the first time, to keep queues to a minimum instead of having everyone ganged up inside the foyer to the hall. It worked really well and visitors arrived as a steady flow without crowding or overloading the airport-style entry maze. The photographer in front of me didn't have a double vaccination certificate or a negative test (clearly had not read the vital information in our last issue!) but he was put through a test rapidly and proved negative.

Into the hall, and the first impression was busy and dramatic with Nikon's excellent stand (top right). This stand didn't just have plenty of staff and product stock, it also had superb giant photo prints and big screens running.

However after exploring aisles and transepts beyond, I bumped into well-known photographer (with a past *Cameracraft* cover to her credit) Stephanie Thornton. We both started speaking at once and paused. I said 'I think I know what you're thinking about the show – there's hardly any...' and Stephanie completed it – '...photography on show!' That was confirmed by walking round all the stands looking to see how many of them gave prominence to photographs, other than shots of gear. Hardly any did. Nikon's stand was a glowing exception. Canon had a busy stand but it looked more a retail or service counter. One professional organisation which in the past used to put all its annual exhibition winners on show alongside big eye-catching examples from members had no indication that its stand was in any connected with photography or photographers.

We couldn't really put this down to budgeting problems,



Rankin's packed house.



Tim Goldsmith chats to vintage film camera enthusiasts on the Analogue Spotlight stage



Colorworld Imaging were the only traditional photo lab with a stand – Nik Proctor takes an enquiry, above. Graphistudio also had a stand with plenty of actual photography to see, below – too many stands had no images.



as the cost of a stand far exceeds the extra which might be spent making large prints or creating digital displays. It had to be that Covid, over 18 months, had so much reduced the flow of good new work it didn't spring to mind during stand design.

In fact there was plenty of good new work to be seen, but it was almost all from demonstrators and guest speakers. The talk by Rankin got a full house (above) with security essential to stop non-ticket-holders wandering in, as the buzz could be felt from outside the special stage zone.

Outside the show, when I was making an excursion back to Resorts World for essential food and a visit to the shops, dozens of people were milling around near the lake pointing cameras loaded with actual film. Prakticas, Exaktas, Pentax, Nikon – you name it. The show had a special Analogue zone and Analogue Spotlight presentation spot. Judging from the activity, there's even more interest in vintage cameras and film technique than ever.

The most interesting film product I saw was the Pinstacamera, a Kickstarter project from novacrylics.co.uk whose MD has designed something any Victorian inventor would be proud of – check Pinstacamera on Facebook.

On the Analogue Spotlight podium, our columnist Tim Goldsmith gave an excellent talk which included a fair coverage of 1960s fisheye attachments.



That was something which partly prompted our theme for this issue. Tim was, as usual, a vital sponsor of the Disabled Photographers' Society stand with its huge assortment of used bric-a-brac raising funds for the DPS. I'm glad I didn't go away without the scruffy but complete first generation Elinchrom Rotalux 130 x 50cm for £20. The diffuser needed careful washing but eventually came up almost a perfect match for my newer 130 x 50cm – and nothing beats having a pair of long rectangular softboxes!

Like many visitors, I was looking for a specific item (the Laowa 7.5mm f2 C-Dreamer reviewed in this issue). It was a long wait at the Wex stand and I should have guessed – there was no way I could try the lens on my camera, Covid precautions meant no product to be taken out of boxes. I could either buy or not. Returning past the cabinet of boxed products I realised the lenses were all the original, Mark 1, without the electronic contacts



Nikon's stand contrasted with Canon's booth by making use of big images. Sony's stand also lacked any sign of the results from their gear, and was a set of black blocks with minimal visual appeal. Kudos to Nikon!

for stabilisation, aperture control or magnified focus functions. I'd have known that immediately if products had been available to try, and very disappointed if I had bought one without realising. At previous shows Kevin Leung from Laowa has had a stand and their very innovative lenses including prototypes could be looked at.

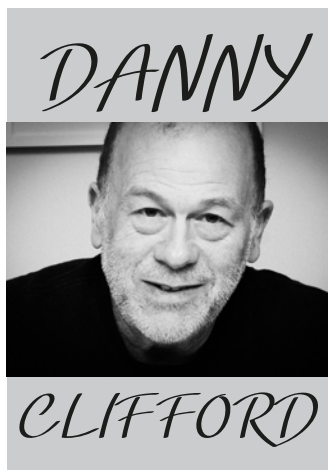
It's not to say that some stands did not have sanitised products

which could be picked up. They did, and each item had to be taken away and disinfected then put into quarantine. Gloves and masks helped, and it was mandatory to wear a mask when approaching closer than 2m to a counter. In the general aisles circulating masks could be removed but a commendable number of visitors kept theirs on all the time. There was a good sense of space, plenty

of air, and despite fears The Photography Show felt safe. It was also a lovely mid-September day with warm sunshine and before returning to Scotland I sat outside with a coffee at 5pm and my jacket and gilet draped over the camera bag – it was T-shirt weather! All in, this September show was SO much better than they were in March.

– David Kilpatrick





The final take – Quo facing the camera for the last time together

When you are in the small shiny steel box of a lift for the 15 seconds it takes before the doors open again... quickly selected ISO 1600 proved be a solution. The result was the last off-stage group shot of all four Quo members together. Nikon D3, 24-70mm at 24mm, 1/100s at f3.2 auto white balance (but processed from raw).

Danny Clifford has a lifetime of music photography under his belt and is now a popular speaker inspiring new generations. See: <https://www.dannyclifford.com>

In 1977 I started working with band Status Quo. I have said this many times before and I will say it again – they are probably the most fun to be around of all the bands and artists I have worked with. I toured quite extensively with them throughout the decades.

The four original members split up in the 1980s and Rick Parfitt, Francis Rossi and newish member, keyboard player Andy Bown, carried on as Status Quo whilst Alan Lancaster and John Coghlan went off in their own different directions. So, when all the acrimonious court cases between them had been settled and finally the animosity had waned, they had a discussion. It was decided that they would have one last tour together with the originals.

In 2013 that tour happened. It went so well, they did it again in 2014. This was to be the final fling. It created an enormous interest. The tour sold out within minutes. When the 2013 and 2014 reunion tours were planned, I was the lucky one who was asked to be the official photographer and had 100% access to everyone and everything.

Now, as all of us photographers know, access is pretty much everything. You can be the greatest photographer in the world (which, incidentally, I don't profess to be) but, if you are not in the room you won't get the shot. So, I am

lucky. This last ever Quo tour was coming to an end on 12th of April 2014 in Dublin. A few days before, in Wolverhampton, I swiftly left the gig at the end of the show and raced south.

I met up with another client who wanted me to head to Spain to shoot the stills on their music video. We jumped aboard their private jet at Northolt airfield in West London and flew to Southern Spain. We landed and got shooting. As soon as my job was done, I rushed to the airport and caught the only flight left that day to the UK. It was on EasyJet. What a contrast from my private jet flight down there! Saying that, I love EasyJet.

The only flight available was to London City airport, the opposite side of London for me. I rushed out of the airport and caught a taxi to my home which was in Chorleywood, Hertfordshire, at the time. I arrived home rushed in asked my wonderful wife if she could shortly take me to Heathrow Airport. Charged batteries, cleared cards, jumped in the shower, repacked clean clothes and left. I have a feeling I spent a few minutes too long in the shower. After all, I was exhausted. I do my best thinking whilst standing in a relaxing shower (there is no need for a visual here!).

We arrived at BA's T5. Quo's management had booked me on

the last flight to Dublin. I kissed my wife goodbye, ran into the terminal to check-in. But I was too late. By only two minutes. I thought, why such a long hot shower? The BA staff were lovely and very apologetic, but, it was closed. I tried my best schmoozing, including bribery with Jaffa cakes etc, but failed. I called my Lyn and asked her to turn around. I booked and paid for a ticket on the first flight out the next morning. I hoped that I wasn't going to miss anything on this Friday night in Dublin. After all tomorrow's gig was to be the final gig ever, with the original band.

Up early the next morning, got to the airport and flew to Dublin. I arrived at the venue early. Luckily, I hadn't missed anything worthy of a photo. Rick, Francis, Alan and John had all spent the night travelling over from England on their tour buses. I don't blame them, as the buses were extremely luxurious. My friend and big Quo fan, Ian Woods from Sky News, had brought a TV crew from London to interview the band and film part of this historic event. We were all having quite a jolly time backstage.

During the sound check I stood on the stage whilst Rick, Francis, Alan and John checked their sound and made sure all was perfect. I loved it that Francis broke into one of my favourite Quo songs, 'Don't Waste My Time'. The sound check





finished we headed back to the dressing rooms and chilled for a few hours.

I was sitting with Francis in his dressing room and I asked him if he and the band would turn around to me at the end of the gig. When they bow to the crowd, just turn to me and I will be on the drum riser. He said "No way, I am not turning my back on the fans". I said "Don't be daft, you do it all the time throughout out the gig". He just replied "No". Suddenly Glen the tour manager said "let's go". We all marched out of the dressing rooms and to the elevator taking us down to two floors to the stage.

As the band and I got in, I said quick, everyone, look this way. We only had about 15 seconds as the lift was descending. I quickly moved my ISO to 1600 and grabbed a few shots of the band. Little did I know that these would be the very last shots off stage of these four legends, EVER.

The show was sold out and amazing. On the very last song of their encore, I crept into the stage, up onto the drum riser as the band took a bow.

They went to walk off the stage and I signalled to my mate Rick Parfitt "turn around" he stopped grabbed the band and faced me. Francis looked up at me as if to say



you bugger or words to that effect!

So, that was also the last shot of the band, but this one was on stage. With warm towels around them, they were rushed onto their respective tour buses and off they went in separate directions. That was the end of the amazing Frantic Four as they were known. Sadly, since then we have lost two of them – Rick Parfitt and most recently Alan Lancaster. I am so glad and honoured that I managed to document that tour and got those historic shots.



Top, turning to face the lens; above, the fans beyond. Below, wrapped in warm towels – like boxers leaving the ring, facing the TV cameras.





The classical portraiture studio set-up with four lighting heads.

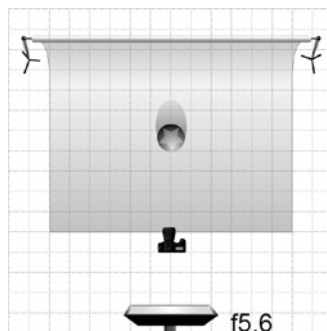
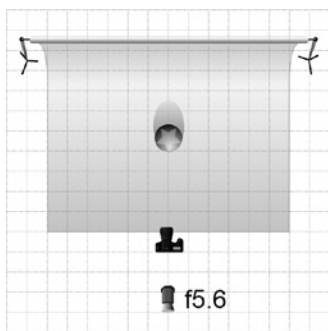
Part Two of our series on lighting fundamentals

Kenny is currently one of the most successful One 2 One Business Consultants and has lectured on both photography and business matters in over 16 countries.
Photography Website: kennethmartinphotography.com
Training Website: thestudiadoctor.co.uk

If anyone would like to find out more about Kenny's TCMP program please pop an email to info@kennethmartinphotography.com to arrange a no obligation totally confidential chat!

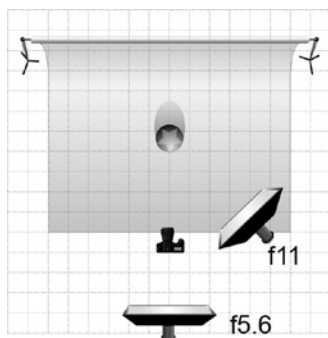


The step by step images show how the lighting for this portrait was built up.

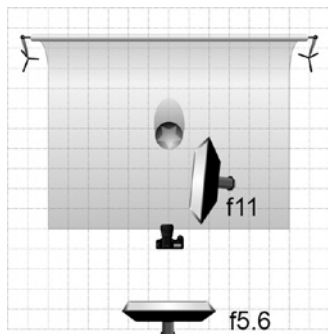


Two ways to create the flat fill light (shadow level) – left, a bare bulb head metered at $f5.6$ (incident, from subject position) aimed at a white back wall; right, the largest soft box you can get, positioned high directly behind the camera. Also metered to $f5.6$. Exposure is at $f11$ to show the intended brightness level relative to the lights added next.

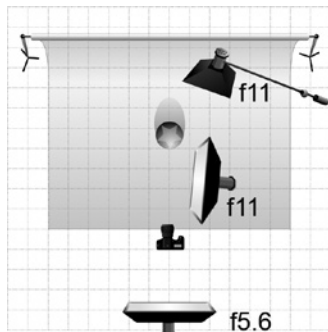




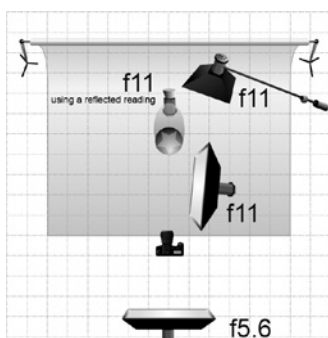
Fill light plus main light: add in the main light, a 1m square softbox. Position at 45° up and 45° round to create loop nose shadow and 2 o'clock catchlights in the eyes. Incident reading and exposure, f11.



Now feather the main light angle to give a softer light on the face, larger catchlights and a deeper more saturated background (a simple white paper roll). Exposure still set at f11.



Adding a hair light will just lift the hair a little, giving a bit more shape and detail along with separation. Position above sitter on same side as main light, meter f11 for darker hair, f8 for blonde, shoot at f11.



The background light can be a snoot, or dish reflector with or without a honeycomb grid, to give separation of subject from background. Use a reflected light reading to adjust tone – here, f11.



In the last article we touched upon classical lighting, I truly believe that this is a skill every portrait photographer should have, it is the core of almost everything we do. It may seem old fashioned to some but there has been a resurgence of 'Fine Art' portraiture and these techniques are right at the core of this style. It was the staple lighting for most photographers of a certain vintage and continues to be the building block of almost all lighting whether modern or traditional.

In the past everything was achieved in camera – softness, vignette, perfect exposure. In many ways the advent of digital has diluted these core skills as it is so easy to achieve all this in post-production. By using this simple setup we can easily move from full face to, two-thirds looking off, and perfect profile lighting. Once these are achieved and you can set up the lights and perfect the shots every time you can move on to more contemporary looks like butterfly, sandwich, porcelain, spot, and beauty. We will cover the more contemporary approach in the next article – for now let's look at how to achieve the beautiful 45° classical set up with four lights.

- Main light (80cm - 120cm square or rectangle soft box depending on size of group)
- Fill light (biggest soft box you have OR preferably a light coloured back wall)
- Hair light (some people use a small dish reflector but I prefer a small strip soft box as it's more natural in the finished shot and spreads across a group more effectively)
- Background light (dish reflector or snoot with a honeycomb to direct the light straight on to the background and create separation)

Firstly before we start off there is one main rule – all the light should be positioned on the same side of the main light and never on the opposite side as this just counteracts the main light, remember we are trying to achieve a replica of natural light in the studio and the sun only comes from one direction!

We start off with the fill light, this light needs to be the biggest, softest, most non-evident light you

possess. I see so many photographers using a silver or gold umbrella or a small soft box as the fill light, this is wrong it needs to be the largest soft box you have available but simply taking a bare flash head and pointing it at the intersection of the back wall and ceiling of the studio will give you the best fill light ever. It also saves space and it means you don't have to worry about moving the light around as it's a dedicated fixed studio fill. This gives the biggest spread of light and in fact the incident meter reading across the studio from wall to wall and floor to ceiling is very consistent.

Remember all we are doing with the fill light is 'filling' in shadows, by turning it up and down you will alter the appearance of the image from very flat to more evident shadows. If we take the scenario we looked at last time, set the fill light to read f5.6. If you then take a photograph at f11 (our final main light setting) you will see the flat, dull, non-evident light on the subject – all we are doing is filling the shadows.

I like to explain the relationship between the fill light and the main light like this, imagine you are painting a seascape – first you apply a blue wash across the entire canvas, this is the equivalent of your fill light. Dabs of paint create the details in the picture, this is achieved by your other lights for the photographer. I think this explains the process in a clear and understandable way.

Much depends on the size and colour of your studio; many studios are white all over and do not even need a fill light, as all you will do it once again flood the scene with flat light. The fill light is positioned directly behind the camera whether big soft box or bounced off the back wall.

Now we have set the fill properly we can position the main light – most likely a soft box around 1m square, placed at 45° above and to the side. If the client is looking directly towards the camera that is 0° – directly to the side is 90° and directly overhead is 90°. You simply need 45° around and 45° up. This is the perfect position, you will know when it is right as the catchlight in the iris and pupil of the eyes will be either two o'clock

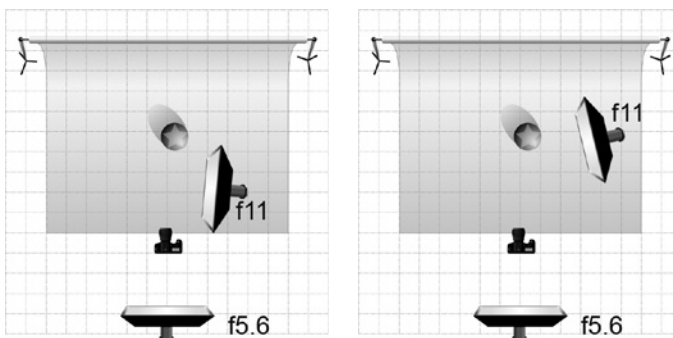
or ten o'clock depending on what side your main light is on. There will also be a little loop shadow at the side of the nose.

For groups place the light far enough back to light the whole group and for smaller groups or individuals have the light much closer. The rule here is to have the main light as close to the sitter without it actually appearing in the shot – the closer the light to the subject the softer and more beautiful it will appear. Remember we are metering our main light for $f11$. Now you have the shot in the bag it is time to fine tune the image by 'feathering the main light' – move the soft box around to face more towards camera so the edge of the light spread just skims the ear of the subject. Move it in even closer to the sitter.

This has three fundamental benefits over the light pointing directly at the subject from further back – it softens the light dramatically on the face removing hot spots, it gives an even bigger catch light which draws the viewer into the face and it gives a deep saturated background as no light spills on to it. Meter the main light for $f11$ using an incident reading and this should now show good definition between the fill light and the main light maintaining shape on the face. One of the biggest problems for photographers trying to get great studio lighting is the fill light being too powerful and counteracting the beautiful main light.

The next light we add is the hair light – this can be a snoot, dish reflector or a small strip soft box (my preference). I usually find that the harder light sources create too much of a harsh light on the hair which can be a distraction from the face. The strip box should be positioned behind and above the sitter with NO spill on to the clients face. Using an incident reading, set the power for $f11$ if the subject has dark hair, $f8$ if the subject has light hair. DO not use a hair light with a bald man! This gives a natural look and creates a bit of definition on the hair and good separation from the background.

The last light to add is the background light, a snoot or dish reflector with a honeycomb grid



Looking off camera (two-thirds angle) and moving the main light. The left hand example is wrong and produces too flat and broad a light on the face, with a central eye catchlight. Remember to move your main light to 45° to the subject's nose to maintain the shape of the lighting. The right hand example gives a slimmer face with a more three-dimensional modelling, and a better positioned catchlight on the iris of the eye.

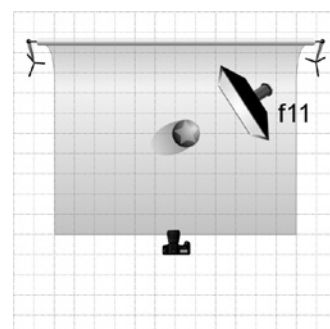
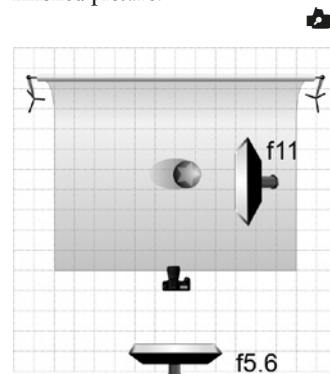


To get perfect specular crisp profile lighting you need once again to move the main light to 45° from the subject's nose. The top left image is flat as the light has not been moved (1st diagram), the top right is more defined as the light has been moved. The bottom image is I think the best, with the fill light switched off (final diagram).

positioned (and hidden) directly behind the sitter and pointing at the background aimed directly between the shoulder blades when viewed from the camera position. This is the only light to be metered by a reflected reading, remember the meter has no idea if the background is pure white or black velvet, so if we want to see the light appear in the image we need to allow for the reflectivity or saturation of the background being viewed. Black velvet for instance will soak up around three to four stops of light, so if you set the power using an incident reading you'll get black but put more power on to it and you can change the tone. Positioned and metered correctly this will give a fantastic separation from the sitter to the subject.

Now we have our perfect 45° full face portrait we can now do 'looking off' and 'profile'. The secret here is to ALWAYS have the main light at 45° to the client's nose, so as the client moves the face to a looking off camera position the main light must always move too – when the face is in profile the light is behind the sitter at 45° giving a beautiful rim light on the face. I prefer the fill light to be switched off for this angle for maximum impact.

All demonstration images are straight out of camera, except the finished picture.



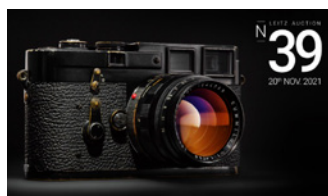
Dealer's Digest

Going... going... gone up into the stratosphere as far as values go. Auctions are pushing some vintage cameras and lenses into the same class as rare Rolexes and Ferraris.



In the UK we have a fine selection of very good auction houses – including Chiswick where the photographic sales are run by a friend of mine and fellow contributor to this magazine Mr Tim Goldsmith who is a veritable mine of information on collectible cameras and a big fan of Wrayflex!

Other notable auction houses are SAS and Flints both based near Newbury, Berks. Both have a number of dedicated photographic auctions each year.



In Europe two of the major players are Leitz auctions, owned by Leica (*next auction, no 39, November 20th*), and Wetzlar Camera Auctions (WCA) based in the birthplace of the Leica camera, Wetzlar in Germany.

It is what has been happening in the most recent auctions at WCA which has caught my interest and I hope will catch yours too.

The co-owner of WCA is Mr Lars Netopil. He is quoted as saying: "The collectibles market in general has become significantly stronger during the pandemic especially in regard to brands such as Leica."

The following is just a small selection of the lots that have sold. As you will see the majority are Leica and the prices attained are breathtaking.

Top slot goes to a **Leica M4** camera in Nato olive green paint marked Bundeswehr, for the German military – one of only 31 made and delivered in 1970. Price? €450,000...

A prototype for the first **Summilux 35mm f1.4**, marked Summarit 1:1.4/35 and dated to 1959 sold for €187,500.

A **Leica 111d** made €49,700 and previously an Olive green **Leica M3** sold for €93,200.

Other notable items sold included a **Canon EF 1200mm**

f5.6, one of around 20 made to special order in the 1990s costing new about US \$90,000. It recently sold for €500,000 (yes, half a million euro!) setting a new record for the highest price ever achieved at auction for a lens.

There is at the moment a buoyant market in rare early Soviet Leica copies and this was borne out when a black lacquered **FED 1** dating to approx 1934 fetched €50,000 and a Soviet **GOI** (marine) camera rifle from the WW2 period saw the hammer fall at €250,000. Other Leica copies of various makes made up to €80,000.

The first Leica copy made by the soviets was in 1932 and it was an exact copy of the Leica 1A. It was made in the Dzerzhinsky labour commune in the Ukraine. FED is named after the founder of the Soviet secret police Mr Felix Edmundovich Dzerzhinsky.

For those seeking detailed information on Leica copies I can highly recommend the book of the same name authored by HPR – it dates to 1994, published by classic collections with an ISBN of 1 874485.05.4. I have never found a better reference book on this fascinating subject.

As eye watering expensive as these prices are they do not compare to a **Leica O** series serial number 122 dating to 1923 which has the honour of being the most expensive camera ever sold. On the 10th March 2018 at Westlicht Photographic auction in Vienna the hammer fell at a figure which in sterling equates to £2.13 Million pounds! These markets do not seem to have upper limits for when a select few battle it out on the auction floor for ownership priced paid have little connection to its value.

As a comparison to other luxury items cameras are still a poor relation.

For example: The most expensive Rolex watch sold at auction was Paul Newman's Rolex Daytona, price sold US \$17.8m. In cars the Ferrari often leads the way

– in 2018 a 1962 Ferrari 250 GTO by Scaglietti sold for US \$48.4m and still holds the record. Thirty-six Ferrari 250 GTOs were built, which adds greatly to its rarity as with the previously mentioned Leica M4 Olive.

I contacted David Stephens the owner of Leica store Manchester, one of Leica's top UK dealers, for his thoughts on the current market and what he saw as potential future classics. He said that sales of both new and used Leica especially anything M were very strong. There is a pride of ownership in Leica which is a major part of their success with a loyal customer base. In terms of investments Leica recently launched a James Bond 007 **Q2** camera in a limited edition (250 pieces) for £7,100. An example was just seen on eBay at over £12 thousand!

Again, not long ago Leica

released a Heritage version of its famous original Noctilux 50mm f1.2 lens, in Black Chrome for £6,700. However, 100 were made in Silver Chrome for select dealers and customers at about £14k. These are now selling for £65-£75,000 each.

Older lenses such as the steel rimmed first production Summilux 35mm f1.4 from 1960 have risen hugely in value. The original M10 Monochrome with the CCD sensor is gaining ground along with many others. Please feel free to contact David for his expert advice, or me: paul@commercialcameras.co.uk

A lot of these rare and fine pieces often go to a strong middle and far east market where they seldom if ever surface – a different world but one I find intriguing and fascinating.



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The popularity of spherical image fisheye lenses may date from the 1960s and plenty of vintage glass with no modern equivalent is out there to be found. However, there's been a boom in such lenses in the mirrorless era and it can probably be traced back to the introduction of Virtual Reality and concepts like 360° walk-through.

A few years ago the range of lens profiles from Adobe (used in *Photoshop* and *Lightroom*) included several for action cameras which could be 'de-fished'. Today we could only find two, the for 'Go-Pro FUSION' and for Sigma's 4.5mm f2.8 EX, which can turn a circular 180° (or greater) image into a frame-filling one with relatively (!) straight lines. There are many plug-ins and filters such as *PT Lens* which can do the same, and Adobe's 'Merge to Panorama' can also modify image projection.

There are two categories of fisheye, as there always seem to have been – full frame where the image format sits within the circle, and full circle sitting on black. For

COMING FULL CIRCLE

by David Kilpatrick

From an amateur accessory to applied specialist pro lens of the 1960s and 70s, circular image fisheyes are back on the market, and can do more thanks to profiles and 'de-fishing'.



E-M1 MkII with Laowa 4mm and Meike 6mm

24 x 36mm full frame, the circle sitting inside normally needs a lens focal length between 6mm and 8mm and the angle of view can be from under 180° to around 220°. It's not predictable from the focal length alone. A fisheye lens can squeeze the image scale greatly as you get towards the periphery, or minimise this. Aspherical moulding and new glass types have made very small designs possible compared to the huge vintage Nikon 6mm f2.8 and similarly mushroom-shaped 7.5mm f5.6.

For the frame to sit inside the lens coverage, lenses from 14mm to 16mm have been the norm for years. There were a few curvilinear rendering wide angles with a semi-fisheye effect in the past, like Pentax's 17mm and Minolta's 18mm in the 1960s but for the last 50 years the effect has been a bit stronger and the lenses a touch shorter. Some, like the Canon 15mm f2.8 EF and the Sony (Minolta) 16mm f2.8 AF, have survived from earlier designs right through to now. You just don't see many pictures taken with them.



Left: Laowa 4mm on MFT, de-fished here to fill the frame.



Left: Meike 6mm on MFT and the de-fished result, from as close a position as shadows and rain allowed.

Sensor matching

Because digital mirrorless cameras have sensors ranging from 13.3 x 17mm (MFT) through 14.8 x 22.2 (Canon APS-C) and 24 x 16mm (Nikon DX and other APS-C) to 24 x 36mm (full frame) and beyond into medium format it's possible to use some lenses once intended to fill the frame as circular image fisheyes. It's also possible to go half way, and have the image circle cut off on two sides.

Full circle can't be done with lenses that have built-in lens hood wings – and that applies to a surprising number of full frame fisheyes around 16mm. They could easily be adapted on to a 33 x 44mm or larger medium format digital body but the hood would have to be machined off or removed to allow a clean circle. It also applies to a good few fisheyes made for APS-C or MicroFourThirds.

And then – we find there are some which don't have hood wings, and project a clean circle even if it's not going to be used.



Above: taken with Sigma 8mm fisheye on APS-C, my shot here was used by Ordnance Survey as a map cover. Below: Philippe Halsman was an early experimenter with a fisheye – Salvador Dali signs books in 1963.



These are versatile lenses which may have escaped your attention and they can be surprisingly inexpensive.

MFT adaptability

Generally you can't adapt MicroFourThirds lenses to use on bodies like Sony E-mount even if you buy an adaptor. Autofocus, manual focus (often electronically controlled) and aperture setting may be impossible. You can end up with a lens stuck out of focus at full aperture. If the MFT lens is completely manual, it's a different story. You can put it on something like a Fotodiox adaptor and use it on Sony, Fuji X, Canon R or Nikon Z as they all have much slimmer bodies than MFT.

Since a fisheye is really a novelty lens – something to use for effect unless you have an application like recording a building interior as a VR image – we looked for something low in cost to experiment with. A Meike 6.5mm f2 for MFT came up in London Camera Exchange's secondhand pages at under £70, so was sent for. WEX had a used Laowa 4mm f2.8 at about £100 less than the new price which is only £249, and that was ordered too, as the Meike was already known to be a full circle lens only on APS-C and the Laowa is designed for MFT.



The tiny Laowa 4mm needs tolerances in mount register which are hard to achieve.

Well, one thing learned immediately was that tolerances for such short focal lengths are of a different order! A few microns and infinity focus can be impossible to achieve or end up at 10cm on the focus scale. AF lenses made for Olympus don't have fixed infinity stops. They all go past the position needed and the AF or MF-by-wire,

without a focus scale, self-calibrates. Manual focus lenses do have a hard infinity stop, and with both these lenses, there's already a very wide zone beyond infinity and an L-mark which indicates the ideal position but allows for variations.

On our E-M1 MkII body both the 6.5mm Meike and 4mm Laowa needed to be focused closer to be on infinity. The Laowa focus scale was more accurate, but at $f2.8$ the sharpness was poor if consistent from centre to circumference. The Meike was easier to focus thanks to the $f2$ aperture and larger image scale, and sharper centrally though with more fall-off and CA to the rim of its circle unless stopped down.

Laowa lenses are usually very good but this one didn't deliver. Checking on a Sony E-mount body with a Fotodiox adaptor, the tolerances were so far out that the Laowa couldn't be focused and the Meike was far out on its distance scale. This is because the adaptor isn't the right thickness. When focused, the Meike made a neat circle within APS-C and at $f11$ an image good enough to de-fish from raw using Adobe's Go-Pro FUSION profile. There's little point in doing so but it was interesting to compare with a proper ultrawide for the format, the Laowa 7.5mm $f2$ C-Dreamer Auto which you'll find written up next (and which fully redeemed Laowa's reputation).

Lens choices

Meike also sells as Opteka, and offers a 3.5mm $f2.8$ for MFT and an 8mm for mirrorless and DSLRs. Laowa is also branded as Venus Optics, and you'll find a whole series of lenses from 7.5mm to 15mm but they are not fisheyes – their unique selling point is the rectilinear correction, so whether you buy a 9mm for APS-C or an 11mm (or even 9mm) for full frame it's an extreme wide angle. Only the 4mm seems to be a circular fisheye in the current line-up.

When buying lenses from other makes the situation is not much clearer. There's an SLR Magic 8mm true wide angle in MFT mount, and the 7Artisans 7.5mm $f2.8$ MkII is a fisheye for APS-C which has a close equivalent in



Chillingham Castle – 12mm Samyang $f2.8$ full frame fisheye, top, and bw conversion using Sigma EX DG 15mm $f2.8$ Adobe profile to de-fish. Not all Adobe profiles offer rectilinear correction from a 180° full frame fisheye.



The 10.5mm fisheye adaptor used on Sony's 16mm $f2.8$ E-mount lens is by no means optically weak. Above, a subject which suits the distortion.



Goth beauty art Whitby, by Richard Kilpatrick using a Sigma SD-14 DSLR with the 8mm fisheye which nearly fills the 1.7X factor sensor.

the Samyang 12mm $f2.8$ ED AS NC for full frame. This has less of a curved rendering than many 14–16mm designs, and without using a full lens profile the geometry can be corrected to be almost perfect. It then matches the coverage of a wide-angle like the Sigma 12–24mm when set to 12mm. Samyang offers a range of fisheyes including both 7.5mm and 8mm for mirrorless mounts, and 8mm with or without a removable hood for DSLRs.

All of these lenses, unlike the more expensive choices from the camera makers themselves such as Olympus's 8mm $f2$ or the Nikon and Canon 8–15mm designs, do not have electronic connections. Tokina's 10–17mm and Sigma's 15mm do. There are benefits to using a lens with some kind of chip even if the aperture and focus are manual – the camera will be told the focal length and can use this to control in-body stabilisation and how programmed exposure shutter speeds are limited. If the chip carries information about the lens model, raw processing software may be able to load a matching profile; if it is loaded with a complete lens profile itself, both the camera's processor and external raw processors should be able to apply corrections.

The Nikon 10.5mm $f2.8$ G IF-ED AF DX is a uniquely well internally profiled lens. Although it's designed for use with optical viewfinder DSLR bodies, if the built-in profile is applied the in-camera JPEGs can be straight line corrected, Nikon's *Viewer NX* software or the Adobe profile also 'de-fishes' the results. This profile, like the Go-Pro FUSION profile, can be applied to other raw file types in *Lightroom* or ACR and can correct full-frame fisheye images with varying degrees of success.

In Adobe applications only, the profile for **Sigma DC 4.5mm $f2.8$ HSM** (one of the best fisheyes) can be used with a wide range of percentage distortion control to make circular fisheye images fill the APS-C frame.

Since Adobe profiles are updated regularly and will change, it's worth checking out every make and every appropriate-looking lens profile and to use the distortion control (from 0 to 200) to fine



Using 360° fisheye action cameras like GoPro Fusion or Ricoh Theta mounted on a simple monopod or pole held above your head it's possible to create 'tiny planet' orb images. Rob Gray found a viewpoint of Abbotsford House to record an event which features a circular terrace, almost concentric with the perimeter of the view showing Sir Walter Scott's baronial money-pit balanced on top.

tune. It's surprising what can be pulled out of most fisheye circular shots.

Spherical imaging

Immersive wrap-round panoramas are easily created with dedicated cameras like the Ricoh Theta, which has two 190° fisheye lenses mounted back to back on a slim body. The front and rear views are combined using Mercator's Projection, familiar from flat maps of our spherical world. They can be shared on-line in a format which allows the viewer to drag the

all-round panorama round.

The latest VR technology comes from Canon, with a stereo pair of 5.2mm f2.8 fisheye lenses in a single housing to fit the mirrorless R mount. Several shots are taken and when these are processed a viewer wearing a VR headset can look round a three-dimensional scene just by turning their head. We haven't yet tried it!

Another way of getting the fisheye look is to use a lens ball – a glass sphere – and we look at this on page 24. You can also get clip-on lenses for smartphones.



Canon's new 5.2mm f2.8 RF-S-L lens for stereo virtual reality shooting.



They who have lost confidence can lose nothing more...

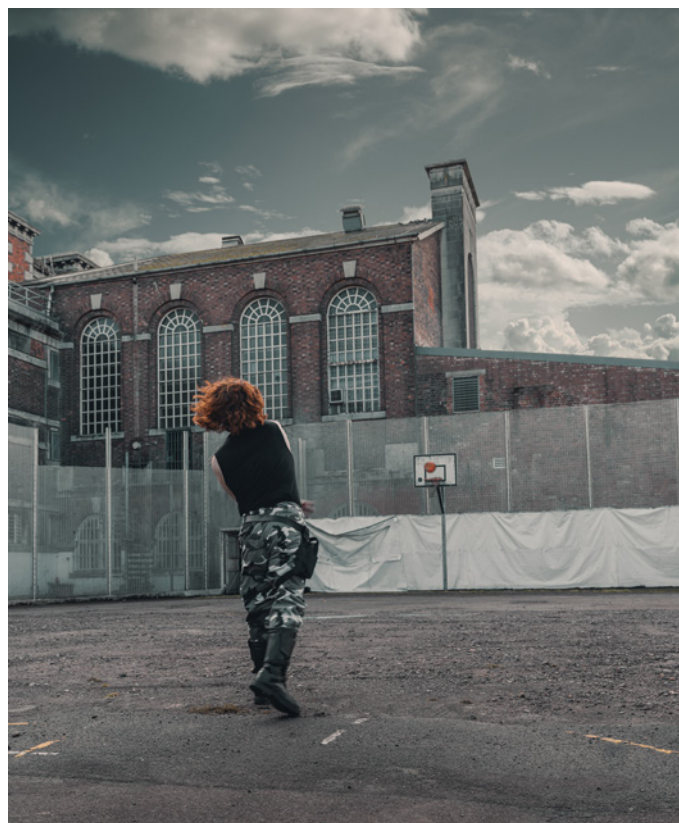
So recently I was invited to a cosplay event which was marketed as a 'secret con', with the idea been to bring together like-minded people who loved cosplay at a secret location only revealed to those who got the invite and committed be there.

The build-up to the event was as you would expect – people sharing ideas, discussing the venue linking with other creatives. The photographers in the group started sharing their work to attract cosplayers to work with them.

During the sign-up process I was asked if I would hold a seminar for other people who were attending. I have been a firm believer in giving back, so I jumped at the chance. I noticed that the group had a few new photographers, so I felt the best way forward was to explain how I get the best from the people I work with.

The day was looming, and I was told quite a few people had mentioned their interest – one calling me a Guild legend, which made me feel a little uncomfortable. I have always struggled with self-belief in my work and what I create usually doubting what I create.

Well the day arrived I had stayed the night before to make the actual day less stressful, and something happened to me that has not happened before – I started experiencing feelings of self-doubt, I started to doubt why I was even here, I was worried that what I had to say to these new photographers



would not be welcome or wanted, or my work wouldn't even hold up to some of the other talent in attendance.

Where these feelings came from, I don't know. Needless to say a dark cloud seemed to hover over me. I started to perceive the whole day negatively. I panicked and began retreat in myself – I didn't know what to do, as I was surrounded by so many options for creativity and the world just felt uninspiring. I then decided to focus on getting my talk out of the way, hoping this would help jumpstart my creativity.

I was calmly setting up for my talk, running over what I wanted to say in my head... and with that I headed to the stage only to have my worst fears realised. Only three people in attendance! I slumped to my lowest point of the day but managed to force myself through the talk to a very grateful audience of three (shrunk to two by the time I had finished). I left the stage deflated and feeling worthless.

After my talk I decided to walk the venue with another photographer, ex-Guild member Andy Smith from 1982Media, to see if I could shake off my mood or draw some



Iain K Poole is a semi-professional photographer specialising in cosplay and landscape, and has won many awards over the last few years and is a Master Craftsman of the Guild of Photographers. Iain is based in the seaside town of Hornsea in rural East Yorkshire. <https://www.iainpoole.com>



Pictures from the 'secret con' – cinematic grading included. Below, cosplayer John from a low angle making use of a seasonal puddle. Getting back on track after a long spell of not much happening does help.



inspiration but all I could do was see other photographers running around shooting knowing what they wanted to create and I was drawing a complete blank.

I walked around under my dark cloud of despair until a little ray of sunshine in the guise of a cosplayer John who goes under JPRCosplay on Instagram, who I had worked with four years ago ran up to me and said 'Iain we have to shoot, it's been ages' – I didn't want to let him down but still felt overwhelmed by the venue and what was happening around me, it wasn't till I walked around a corner and noticed a small puddle of water... with the sun coming in from the left. I finally

felt that twinge of inspiration, a small nugget which pulled me out of myself and allowed me to enjoy the event for what it was a chance to create amazing images with other like-minded people. My only competition was myself.

What I hope I conveyed here is that we are vulnerable to these feelings of self-doubt and loss of confidence, and sometimes need a little external nudge to help us back on track. We need a little guardian angel to say 'It's OK, you got this'.

As we are all getting back to work we will encounter these feelings, just remember you are not alone. Be sure to reach out.





Come again another day! I welcome what rain brings to my world

If you ask a natural world photographer what their favourite season is the chances are the answer will be either the fresh colours of spring or the golden colours of autumn. Winter is usually the least favourite season but I love it. Living on the south coast those idyllic snow scenes are very rare, occasionally we may get a bright frosty morning, but more frequently its rain. For many a rainy day is an editing day but it's definitely worth getting out there. Some of my most successful images have been taken in the most challenging weather conditions!

Of course, rain does bring a few 'issues' with it. I've heard others say it doesn't matter if you get wet as long as your equipment is dry. To some extent that's true but if you're out all day it's absolutely no fun if you're soaking wet and ultimately freezing cold. It's important to look after yourself as well as your equipment.

Good planning for both the climate and the environment, including being prepared for the

100% waterproof. I strongly advise that you check your camera manual. The Canon R5, which I use, states on page 23 of the manual that the camera is not waterproof, but is designed to be dust and drip resistant. When shooting near the beach salty damp air can be a problem so it really is important to keep your equipment protected. There are some excellent waterproof fabric covers that range from a few pounds to a few hundred pounds but a 'bin bag' and a few elastic bands will also do the job!!

- A disposable poncho for me. These can be purchased for a few pounds from most supermarkets and are ideal if you get caught out in a sudden downpour!

- A sturdy rubble bag – great to use for sitting on wet ground and won't tear easily

- A small umbrella – basic protection, especially if you're staying in one spot for some time.

- A cloth to wipe the camera, and more importantly the lens which invariably gets rain drops on it!

- My Tilley hat – this goes most places with me. It stays on in windy weather, is a great sun shield and more importantly is waterproof.

- Waterproof overtrousers – even if the rain has stopped the ground will still be very wet and quite often with wildlife photography it's important to lie low for a length of time. Keeping dry and comfortable will always enable you to stay out longer.

If you're after wildlife and the idea of sitting outside in the rain doesn't appeal to you there's always the option of sitting in a hide. A dry, comfy seat, a hot cup of coffee watching the wildlife going about their daily routine without being disturbed offers the best of both worlds! There may not be as much activity as animals like to shelter from adverse weather too but generally they will make an appearance.

Capturing landscape images during adverse weather offers immense possibilities. When photographing waterfalls in the Brecon Beacons during a heavy downpour the torrent of water was spectacular. Safety was paramount as the terrain was very tricky but to see the waterfall so fast flowing was an incredible experience.

Soft rain or drizzle can give a gorgeous ethereal image, but if you're aiming to capture streaks of heavy rain a slow shutter speed is needed. Remember, though, this will only work for wildlife images if the animal or bird you're photographing remains still. It's important to experiment to achieve the effect you're looking for. Start at about 1/60 and nudge up as necessary – any slower than this and the rain streaks will become too long and less effective. You may need a tripod, but the image stabilisation on many new mirrorless cameras is awesome and will allow fabulous results handheld.

Also, if it's possible, shooting into the light against a dark background will also help to define the rain streaks.

In the words of a certain TV show that I've never watched 'Winter is coming....'

Be prepared for the rain, wrap up warm, go out and sing, splash in a few puddles and enjoy the rewards.

Kingfisher in the rain – Canon EOS 5DmkIII, EF 500mm f4 IS II USM lens plus 1.4x TC, 1/60 at f8.0, ISO 800.



After 35 years working in education Jayne now enjoys spending time outdoors, photographing wildlife and nature as an amateur enthusiast, constantly learning and striving to achieve better. Jayne has achieved Craftsman status with the Guild of Photographers.

<https://www.studiomlino.co.uk>
Facebook – studiomlino
Instagram – studiomlino

unexpected, will always lead to a more comfortable, and hopefully, more successful day.

A few things I always keep in my camera bag are:

- A rain/dust cover for my camera. A good rain cover for your camera doesn't need to be expensive. I know there are those who trust that their camera is weather sealed but don't be fooled. Weather sealed does not mean

There are also a few items of clothing I couldn't be without. Of course I can't endorse any of these brands, they just happen to be my choice but there are many similar items to choose from.

- Waterproof gloves – I really feel the cold in my hands so my Sealskin waterproof gloves with fold back finger and thumbs keep my hands warm and dry and allow dexterity to operate the camera.





Brecon Beacons – Canon 1DXMkII, EF 16-35mm f2.8L II USM lens, 0.6sec at f16, ISO 100.



Red Deer, Canon 1DXMkII, EF 100-400 f4-5.6L IS USM lens, 1/400 at f5.6, ISO 3200

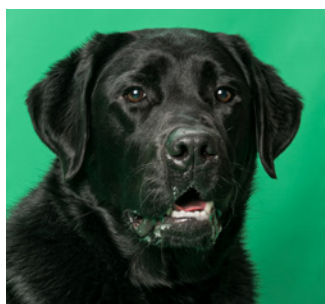
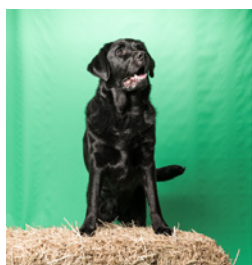
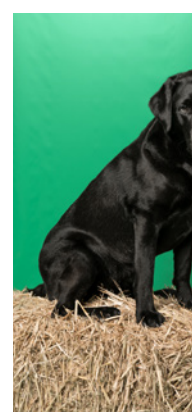
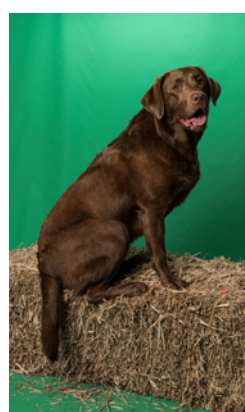
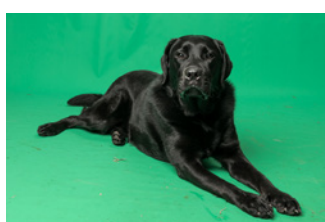
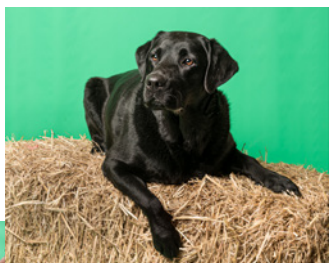
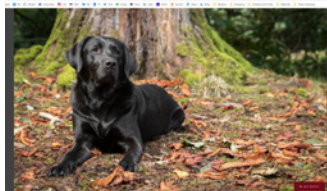
PICKING UP THE LITTER

Before lockdown 2020, a litter of black Labrador puppies, together with their parents Jupiter and Guide, were supposed to get together for a group photoshoot, but lockdown – as with many things – put the kybosh on that. Tragically, during the lockdown Jupiter had an incident and never recovered. Back in December 2020, a friend of mine, Helen Carly – who knew my composite work with school ‘year’ photos – asked if I could photograph all the dogs and composite them together to make it look like a group image. Of course, I said yes, subject to a suitable image of Jupiter.

We were very fortunate to find that a fellow Guild Of Photographers member, the lovely Caro from Workingline Images, had photographed Jupiter shortly before his passing and was kind enough to supply me an image (woodland shot, below) from which I could try to match the light. This was a little trickier than it might have been as Jupiter was photographed outside and the only way I was going to get all the other dogs looking similar was to shoot them with an identical lighting set-up in a studio. So using a large 32-inch Octa as key, and a strip light behind to light the

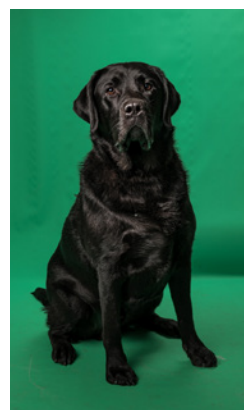
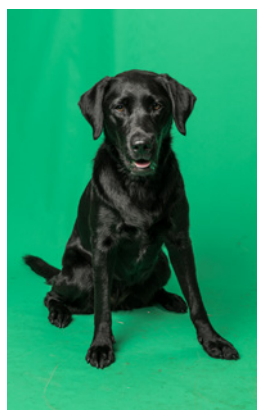
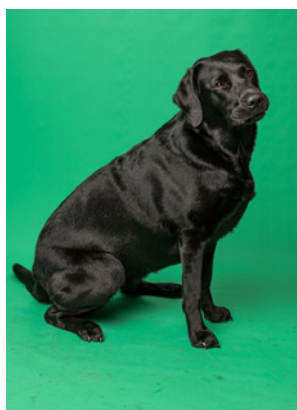
green screen backdrop, I set about photographing the dogs who came sporadically over a three month period from May to August, often with a second dog as I offered each owner a portrait of their dogs alongside the final composite (see handling shot in studio). I shot each one in a variety of poses on and off a straw bale that Helen had kindly dropped in. The bale was used to add height to the image as ten dogs would otherwise have made a very wide image. The only drawback was the amount of sweeping up after each shoot!

When it came to compiling the final image, all the dogs blended together well except Jupiter who had a slightly different colour-cast to the rest, having been photographed outside. To correct this I masked him and used a photo-filter to warm his tone a little. I also had to use legs and body parts from some of the other dogs as Jupiter was photographed lying in grass and a lot of his lower body was missing. I’m very pleased with how it all came together though – and all of it at a time when I really needed something to focus on. And I’m glad to report that the final image went down very well with the breeder who burst into tears on receiving it.



Left: two shots of Cooper, one used for his body and the second for his face. Above: black Labradors are not always black!

Simon Newbury's multi-shot compositing skills created a Labrador litter portrait from individual images when all eleven could never have been gathered together



It is indeed difficult to get so many dogs in a row. Guide, the litter dam, is next to the outdoor shot of sire Jupiter by Caro Dell of Sheffield's Workingline Images, <https://www.workingline.co.uk>
Bexhill-based Simon Newbury has been featured in Cameracraft before for his school year and special event composite groups. see Simon's website <https://www.simonsart.co.uk>

HAVIN' A BALL!



Taken by @tommi_lehto (also below left). "With the crystal ball I can see things and places from new angles and hopefully it adds an interesting element to the picture."

One of the biggest challenges for landscape photographers is to convert a beautiful place into a beautiful image. Good landscapes still require a subject, often located according to the rule of thirds. But sometimes that's just not possible. Enter the crystal sphere, which becomes the subject and still conveys the beauty that's around you. It's *become a thing* now.

Normally when assembling portfolios it's wise to advise not to use a visual gimmick too often (fisheye lenses, for example). Some Instagram photographers are taking the opposite approach – repetitive use of this technique comprises their entire portfolio.

The spheres themselves are easily available and portable (USD \$44 at <https://www.lensball.com>; price is proportional to size), and they are guaranteed to elicit a "Wow!" from your viewers. Photos with comments from their makers.



By Sarah – @iviaggidisarah. "I like these shots because they are enclosed in a lensball and are original."

Gary Friedman selects some fun shots reflecting (or rather refracting) a gimmick which has matured into a community of crystal ball gazers.



Taken by Mona Rundqvist @LensBallView: "Lensball photography is so versatile, and you don't really need to use other props. Nature in itself is so full of beauty, and the lensball makes the viewer focus on it."



Above: these two images were taken by Anne Koerber (Instagram: @anne_koerber and @anne_koerber_photography). "To me it's like magic crystal ball that reveals beautiful things. And I can get really creative and abstract with it as well! I love art and I think it works well in the ball, but I also take photos of landmarks, theatres, and whatever has an interesting story to tell because after all, photography is all about telling stories, isn't it?"

Below: by Tsukasa Maeshima @lionking0825 – "The reason why I like to use a crystal ball is because I like the fantastic view of the world reflected in the crystal ball."





Nature's photo spheres: the tiny free alternative

THE WORLD can also be seen inverted in drops of water and even these can be moved into position for a composition. These two examples are from Kathy Conzelman –

<https://simplykmcphotos.com>

Kathy writes about these water drop images here:

"Capturing splashes and water drop refractions/reflections was introduced to me as a photo club assignment. I found it to be a fun challenge and it offered me some new ways to be creative and maybe bend some rules. I enjoy finding natural droplet images when out exploring with my macro lens, but the real fun for me is creating them indoors.

"The rainbow is a single shot image created in front of my computer screen. I had taken the rainbow image previously (gathering assets!) and thought it would be an awesome background for a droplet image. I used my Samsung NX1 with a 60mm macro lens on a tripod. Settings were f/32, and a 5s exposure at ISO 100. I

stacked some books and a flat rock on my desk in front of my screen. I turned off all ambient light so the scene was only lit by the screen.

"The biggest challenges were:

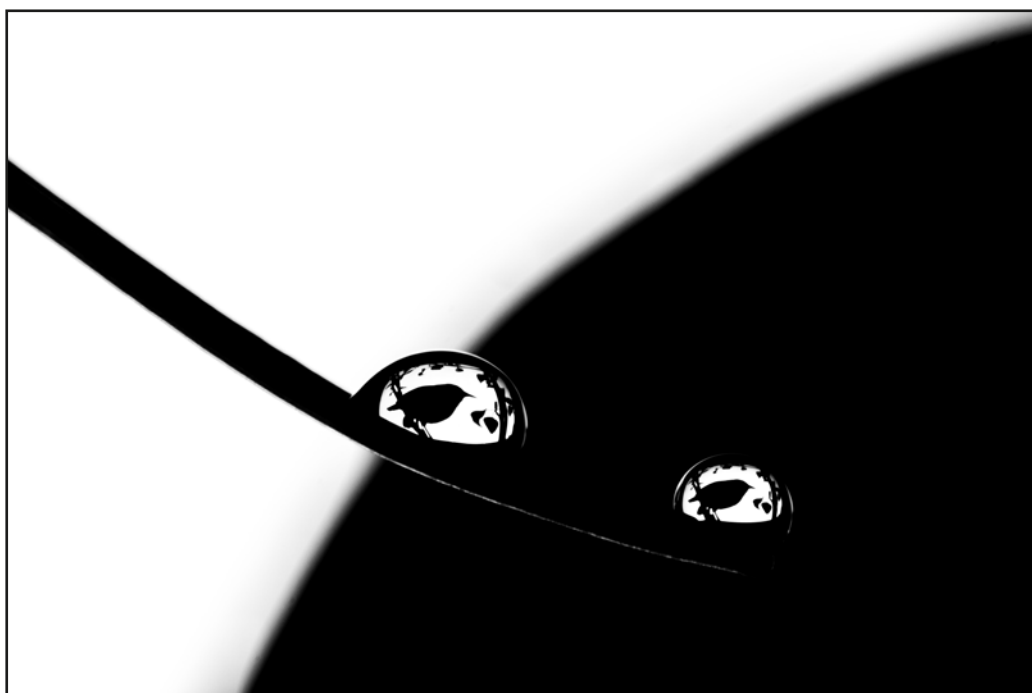
- Draping the computer screen with black cloth so the reflection in the drop would look good.
- Getting the correct distance

from the screen for a good sharp reflection.

- Getting the water drops just right with the syringe and getting the dandelion clock to stay upright (I used poster tack)

- Keeping everything still during the exposure. Any little vibration disturbed the scene.

"The black and white image I submitted for photoclub and to the Washington State Fair in 2018 and won the Fair Photo Salon Medal for Originality. It was done in the same fashion as the rainbow, but I flipped the image on the screen so the birds would be right-side-up."



Tears for spheres

Waterdrop photos taken with a macro lens with a distant object clearly visible through the drop is a classic genre. But how easy are they to take? Is it just a matter of gallivanting about on a dewy morning looking for just the right conditions?

That might be a way. But as a magazine writer I had a deadline. So I scavenged for some excellent examples and studied them to figure out how to duplicate them. Here's what I learned:

First of all, such shots are extremely difficult. Even in a controlled environment such as a studio. The best shots are where your background subject is just a foot or two behind the water drop. So I set up a large monitor and displayed some colorful flower pictures I had in my stock library.

Next was the challenge of getting everything in focus, which is difficult because you want to focus on the water drop (and the blade of grass it's sitting on) as well as the virtual image that's formed within the drop itself. They're placed at two different distances from the camera, and not even stopping down all the way will get them both in focus. You have to use a technique called focus stacking, where you take several images each with a different part of the image in focus, and then you merge just the parts that are in focus using *Photoshop* – details follow.

Next, those water drops don't just hang there. They fall just as quickly as you can deposit them. And you can't freeze a nice droplet in place using a flash because of the focus stacking requirement mentioned above. Switching from using a toothpick to deposit the drops to using a syringe gave me a better chance, but still a steady drop that could stay there long enough for multiple exposures was elusive. I tried various clear hand sanitizers that had a higher viscosity, but those wouldn't gel into a sphere before the alcohol

Gary decided to experiment with water drop photography – the macro cousin of glass ball shooting – and found that it's a great deal harder than expected. Maybe the answer is *not* water?



component would evaporate leaving an irregular blob. Clear liquid hand soap didn't work either.

My savior was glycerine, the same stuff that's in a snowglobe that slows down the snowflakes. The same stuff that's sprayed on to food to make food photography so appealing! It was so thick that the syringe couldn't suck it in, so I went back to carefully depositing drops using a toothpick.

It took about a hundred tries before I got a drop that hung in place for about 20 seconds, long enough to get my shots. I took a total of four pictures using manual focus aided by the camera's Focus Magnifier function: one on the leaf, one on the surface of the drop, and two of the virtual image in the drop. I couldn't get one position where all of the flower was in focus.

Coming back to *Photoshop*, I did the following:

FILE>SCRIPTS>

LOAD FILES INTO STACK

and then selected the four files I wanted to merge. This feature takes the files you select and opens them with each selected image in its own layer. When doing this it's important to check the *Attempt to Automatically Align Source Images* box, which corrects for the "Focus Breathing" which changes



Using the macro and high resolution of the Sony A7RIV. Top row, a focus stacked image left, and two different focus points used in production. Next, three focus points merged as described. Below, another example stacked.



the magnification of the image as you move the focusing ring.

Then I selected all layers and did an EDIT>Auto Blend Layers... and checked the boxes for *Stack Images*, *Seamless Tones* and *Colors*, and *Content Aware Fill Transparent Areas*. This function goes through all the layers and masks out the unsharp parts of each layer, leaving only the sharp parts showing through.

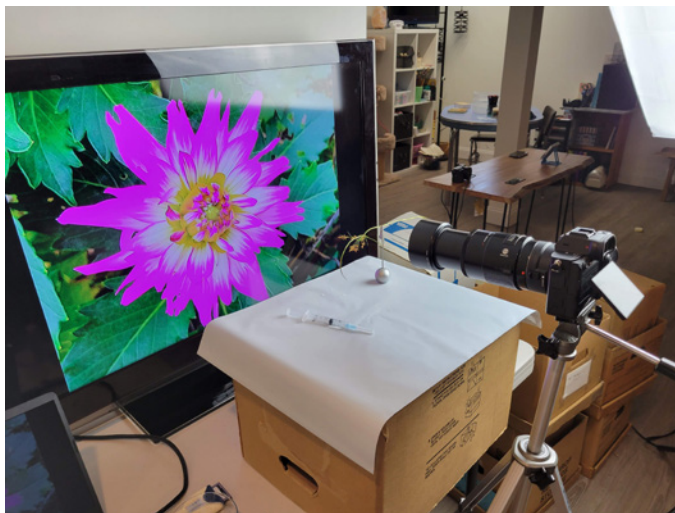
In order to save the results as a .jpg, you have to do a

FILE>SAVE A COPY

and then choose .jpg. You can't just do a *Save As...* any more. You can thank Adobe for arbitrary user interface changes that no one benefits from.

The image top center of page shows my setup: A large monitor, a blade of grass supported by an alligator clip, and an adapted Minolta 100mm macro on a Sony A7RIV.

The composition (right) for a large print is 37 megapixels but the crop below, at 300dpi, shows what that 25 inch print would look like in detail.



Winter bonus

Editor David Kilpatrick adds this – betting that having relocated from south of Los Angeles to north of Boston, I will find outdoor droplet photography becomes practical if not comfortable.

“Early morning dew just melted from frost on leaves or grass is the best water droplet subject, followed by near-freezing mist or fog, with rain as the least likely to give drops which stay put.

“As water approaches freezing point, it gets more viscous – actually thicker. Anyone who has fished a Scottish river in different seasons knows that cold water flows slowly but is harder to move through. Droplets which have just thawed from frost, or are so cold they are about to freeze, form the best spherical shapes and stay put. Very cold water also has a higher refractive index than warmer water so it's more like glass in effect. The winter months will give you a chance to find drips clinging to icicles – or the end of your nose!”



SELLING THE SEASONS

Allan Wright created his own niche Scottish calendar market in the face of weel-kent competition – now he's running his own art and photography gallery in a Border town. Every year he provides thousands of images for editors to create his signature calendar range, and his photo library reflects worldwide wanderings.

Few landscape and travel photographers manage to create successful businesses, and few businesses based on the creative output of one individual have a value beyond the collected works. Allan Wright has beaten the odds on both counts and found the freedom for new ventures and the travels with camera which founded his fortunes.

Note 'fortunes' not 'fortune', as Allan seems never to have been in this for the money. He founded Cauldron Press Ltd in 1994, in county town of Galloway Castle Douglas. It was a beautiful location where local valuations allowed him to acquire a large property with



Allan spotted this a rare phenomenon he's only seen two or three times in his career. One was a moonbow. He calls this a mistbow – "a sweet moment which lasted about 90 seconds" at Jedderfield, Peebles. His Australian expeditions captured many other photogenic weather conditions, like the view below of The Bay of Fires, Tasmania.

space for work and storage, and he began to publish postcards and calendars featuring Scottish scenes in all seasons. It was the right time and place. His 'Lyrical Scotland' brand could soon be found in newsagents, post offices and gift shops everywhere and internet opened up direct sales all round the world.

Although he employed up to four staff, he realised eventually that he was a photographer not a trade distributor. By 2010 his stock, including cards and books which sell for years, had occupied landings and overflowed into the double garage. He had already arranged most distribution to





Above, St Mary's Loch in winter.

Below, a favourite location of Allan's in Galloway – twin oak trees on a hill. They are a subject he has photographed through all the seasons.





Allan has settled – for the while – in the town of Peebles, seen above in one his many views from daily walks. His gallery, below, is on the busy High Street and represents five artists in paint and graphic media as well as his own photography. His signature calendars, bottom, are best-sellers in Scotland.

be through Lomond Books, an established name in the trade with the resources and ‘handle on the business’ as Allan puts it. He decided it was time for a change in life and work, and offered them his stock, customer base and goodwill – effectively the imprint and the ongoing series of 20 calendars.

The deal struck gave Allan a rolling five-year contract to supply the pictures for calendars and cards, a small matter of providing over a thousand photographs a year for Lomond’s editors to select from. He has to cover most of Scotland, but travelling and



exploring has been his great love. He’s the man you find on top of a Munro with a camper van down in the glen, hiking from sunrise to sunset before wandering round a scenic town or village the next day. In due course he’ll upload 150-200 pictures of each region to a cloud storage server, not all from the latest expeditions. The client checks against past use, selects and edits.

He’ll have done ten years of this contracted dream job by 2022, and in the meantime he’s found time to move from Castle Douglas to the Tweed valley town of



Peebles, start his own High Street art and photo gallery Zenwalls, and spend serious time on the road in Australia. Recently he's spent four winter months each year there. In the gallery, generally four or five different artists are featured in thematic exhibitions which change with the four seasons. Viewing these artworks and his photographs, the zen in Zenwalls becomes clear. He's deeply connected to the landscape, the light and the seasons. He's not the kind of landscape photographer who lugs heavy tripods and bags of graduated filters round and waits half a day for a preconceived shot – he takes a more portable kit, recently moving from Nikon to Sony with the Tamron lens trio covering 17mm to 180mm, and shoots hand-held more often than not. He moves quickly to catch the changing weather and light from the best viewpoints.

Settling in Peebles after his last antipodean odyssey, during lockdown he made a point of walking as many of the hills and forest trails as possible. Some, like the Glen House Estate by Traquair, he



A rare example of black and white printing from Allan – Highland cattle on the island of Rum.

returned to repeatedly – getting to know how they changed through the year and in different conditions and light. He's not the first to do this, but there is a big difference between selling A4 prints at craft fairs and putting superb 120 x

80cm wall art in the window of a gallery passed by hundreds of shoppers, tourists and commuters daily.

He already had many images of Tweeddale in his library but expanded his local coverage with

new high resolution (36 megapixel and now 60) views. Understanding how galleries work, and how photography relates to this market, he rented the shop initially with a business partner then took it over entirely. His artist manager

'Piscean Reeds' was the winner of 2020 Scottish Nature Photography Awards Abstract Category. "I'd always thought the serendipitous arrangement of reeds suggesting Pisces symbols and curious zen-like hieroglyphics was special. I had recently printed this image at A0 (120x85 cm) and saw it had an impact more powerful in the flesh than at screen size". Location: Woodhall Loch, Galloway.



Katy Swift is qualified in socially engaged art. She looks after the gallery's 'stable' which involves the delicate task of liaising with artists. Around half the gallery space is devoted to paintings.

Although it's a rented unit, Allan ploughed the equivalent of a year's rent into fitting out the space. It's been economically done, with a good basement for print and frame handling and walls in the retail area lined with pegboard covered in hessian. There are no expensive hanging-wire systems, but prints are easily pinned into the walls without damaging the cloth. He believes any future tenant would want to buy the fixtures and fittings rather than see them removed.

"One of the best things I've done is to put in LED lighting", he said as we looked at the mini spotlights. "It's so economical the window can be lit at night". This is a town with many pubs and restaurants, and it really pays to have his often very colourful large prints highlighted this way. He keeps 100% of the profit on photo sales, but less than half that on the artists' work. "Today we've had almost £1,000 in sales", he tells us



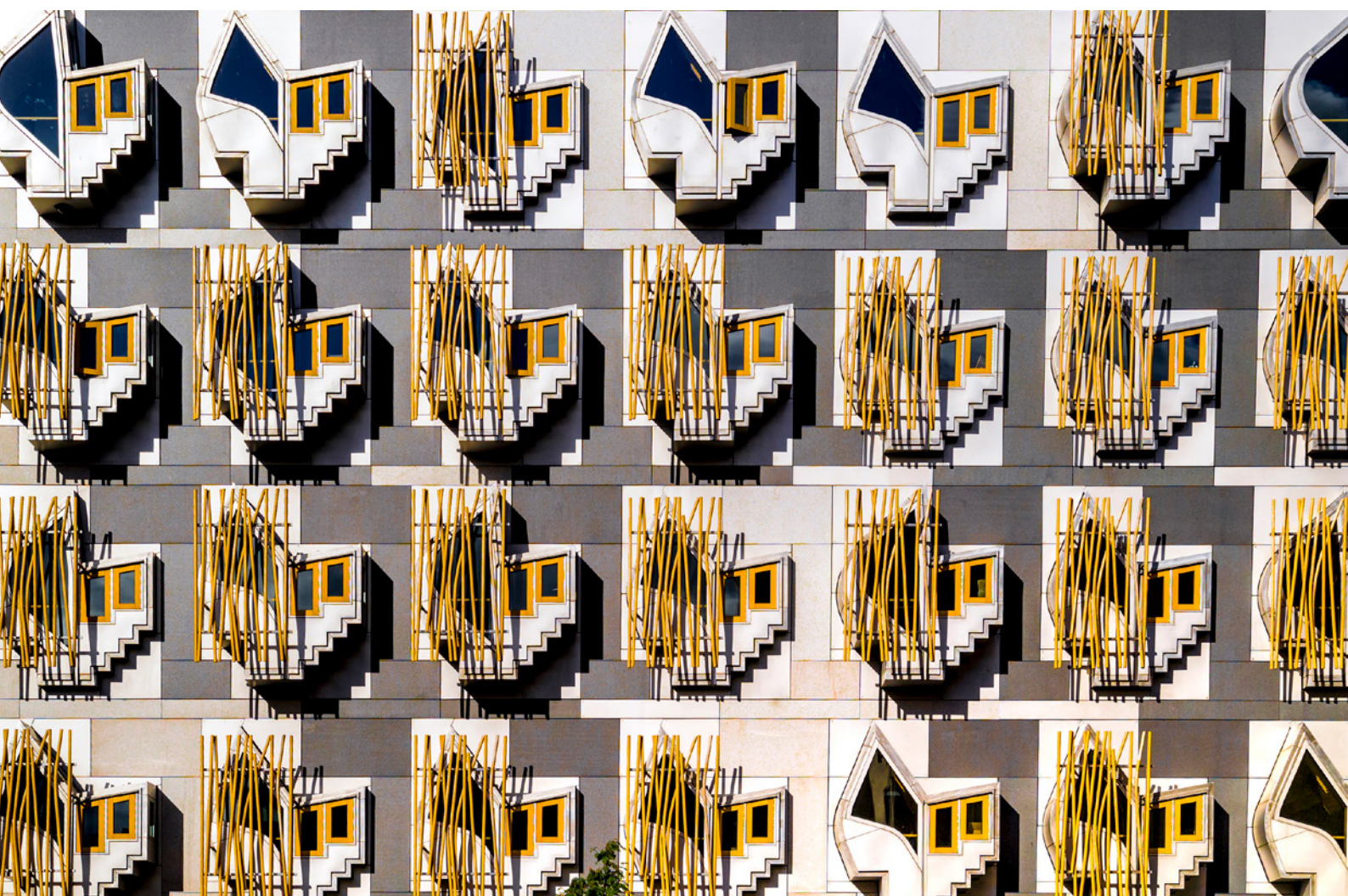
From the Edinburgh book, and also popular print sales – the Forth bridges, and below a straight shot (this not a composite of multiple images – one careful camera composition) of the Holyrood Parliament building.

at the close of a regular off-season weekday. "Two paintings for £800, and one photograph for £150..." – it's just what the public are willing to pay for different media, and he accepts that.

At the same time, coach trips produce card sales and he has a good stock of his signature

edition Lyrical Scotland calendars. He hands over three to be photographed for the magazine. They are really well packed, clear sleeved with a good envelope and also a robust separate card stiffener. At 30cm square, priced at just £4.99, they are exceptional value. All the images are shown

as thumbnails on the rear sheet to help buyers pick, but £4.99 is a compelling sales point when his greatest rival in the Scottish signature edition calendar market offers the same size less completely packaged for £8.79. People buy calendars for many family members for Christmas and that





Top, 'Edinburgh' with poems by Gerda Stevenson; above, *Vintage Tractors*, a book mostly created from a series of pictures Allan had already taken over the years. Below, Allan in the gallery with framed prints. See – <https://www.zenwalls.co.uk> & <https://www.allanwrightphoto.com>

£3.80 difference matters. Those calendars may feature what seem to be much more routine shots. “What I do for a living is take classic Scottish images – hopefully with a wee bit of an edge – and that is what pays the bills. The more esoteric ones don’t sell as well, but on every trip a few moments just shooting for myself makes it all worthwhile. I do maybe twenty to twenty-five thousand miles a year in my Vivaro mini camper van – it drives like a car. I’ve been doing it for thirty years, and I know places I can park up at 10pm and be up at 6am, spending six or eight weeks on the road in warmer months.

“I can stop when I see an opportunity – light, landscape, graphic shapes. It’s become instinctive for me and I get absorbed in the process. I previsualise and translate what my eyes see into the end use before I take the picture.” We touch on the North Coast 500 and Allan’s comment is “it’s carnage!”. Thoughtless owners of big motorhomes block what it is a single track road and often end

up in difficulties. His little camper van is ideal for getting around the Highlands and Islands (and much of the Border landscape too).

He rarely converts to black and white, but knows when a subject will look better mono. He looks for graphic images which are better for the gallery, and for competitions, than for the calendars. One example is ‘Piscean Reeds’ taken at Woodhall Loch in Galloway one winter, which won the Abstract category of the Scottish Nature Photography Awards in 2020.

“I look at the pictures and ask myself – could this be anywhere? If the answer is ‘yes’ it changes the market destination.”

But the photo art market is one he’s only beginning to explore. “In Tasmania, I saw large format photo prints selling framed for £800 or £900. “I was inspired to open Zenwalls by visiting dedicated a number of dedicated photo galleries selling landscape prints, in the High Street at impressive prices, three or four times the usual for Britain. I thought, these guys are doing OK, why can’t it be done



back home?”. He reckons £395 is a practical ceiling for photo art purchased off the gallery wall but hopes to improve on it once conditions improve. “It’s been a bad two years”, he admits, “and book sales have been down”.

Why should book sales matter?

That is his second string. In a new publishing venture, he has put out a collaborative book with Gerda Stevenson writing poems in English and Scots to accompany his views of ‘Edinburgh’ – the title was not hard to decide! He worked with a book designer and it was printed in Poland while UK limited was still in the EU.

Returning to book publishing, he was urged by a friend to put one of his personal projects into print. The result is a rather good

photo book on *Vintage Tractors*. This is not a small market, it’s amazing how many people worldwide maintain and love their small tractors and antique agricultural engineering – Allan’s region even has a club and an annual show devoted to them.

Book projects may feature more in future plans, along with continuing the calendar series. As for the gallery, it’s something he expects to part with in two or three years, simply because he likes to move on. If he wasn’t a photographer he’d be doing something which took him into the world round him and looking for change. Changing journeys, changing seasons, changing light, changing viewpoints and ever moving on.





What comes around...

With a thirty-five year history in photography, from a schoolboy freelance for local newspapers all the way to covering international sports for media and picture agencies. His photographic areas of expertise focus on news, sports and events.
robgrayphotographer.co.uk

Finding a new start or starting again is never easy. What gives you a challenge one day, the next will be a brick wall and a barrier to your creative flow.

As this year closes, the spectre of the last two years has still to leave us totally and the business model for most photographers has changed, each finding new skills throughout what has been a tough time both mentally as well as in the search for work. Hopefully many of us have found a way through.

Moving round in circles or finding a way to regenerate, it's all about making the work and keeping the lights on... the camera manufacturers again tempt us with the latest high-tech offerings, a super new model, that you must have! But must you really?

Yes, you may... Nikon, Canon, Sony, and Fujifilm please feel free to send me the latest kit to review, I will drool over the teaser videos and the amount of hype that the latest and greatest advances in sensor resolution and active

tracking autofocus. It's not all about technology, try and remember the basics of where you came from.

Business has started to return, and clients have started to book again. That blackness that covered a lot of features and projects halted by the recent crisis has started to ease, we are not shooting at f11 yet but the need to see everything through the wide open f1.2 has passed.

Clients are seeing the benefits of booking and using photographers again and it will develop, excuse the pun, into a brighter outlook. We have all learned in the past how to deal with the challenges the industry throws at us, and whether it is the dilution of the skill-set but the proliferation of easy-to-use cameras and the dreaded smartphone, or a global pandemic that shuts everything down.

As we come to the end of my first year writing a column for a magazine that I looked at so many years ago as a beginner in the field

of photography, I have learned to write. I have been given the chance to be part of a team that encourages and hopes to show off some of the best in photography and images.

Not a full circle yet, as I feel I still have lots to learn. I have challenged and passed the requirements to enable my drone photography to get off the ground! I have overcome the desire to rush out and buy the latest and greatest model of camera available – photography is about seeing and aiming higher and to be better, almost exactly what it was like forty years ago when I first lifted a camera to my eye and made that first “snap”. Everyone can learn and get better, try to remember each challenge is one that you have probably faced before, and you worked through it.

We learn and grow even if we keep going round in circles but don't spiral out of control.

Let's keep going!



No crop circles to be found! Just a horse passing by as the harvest is gathered. Getting certification for drone photography has lifted Rob's photography off the ground.



BOUGHT AND SOLD FOR AUTUMN GOLD...

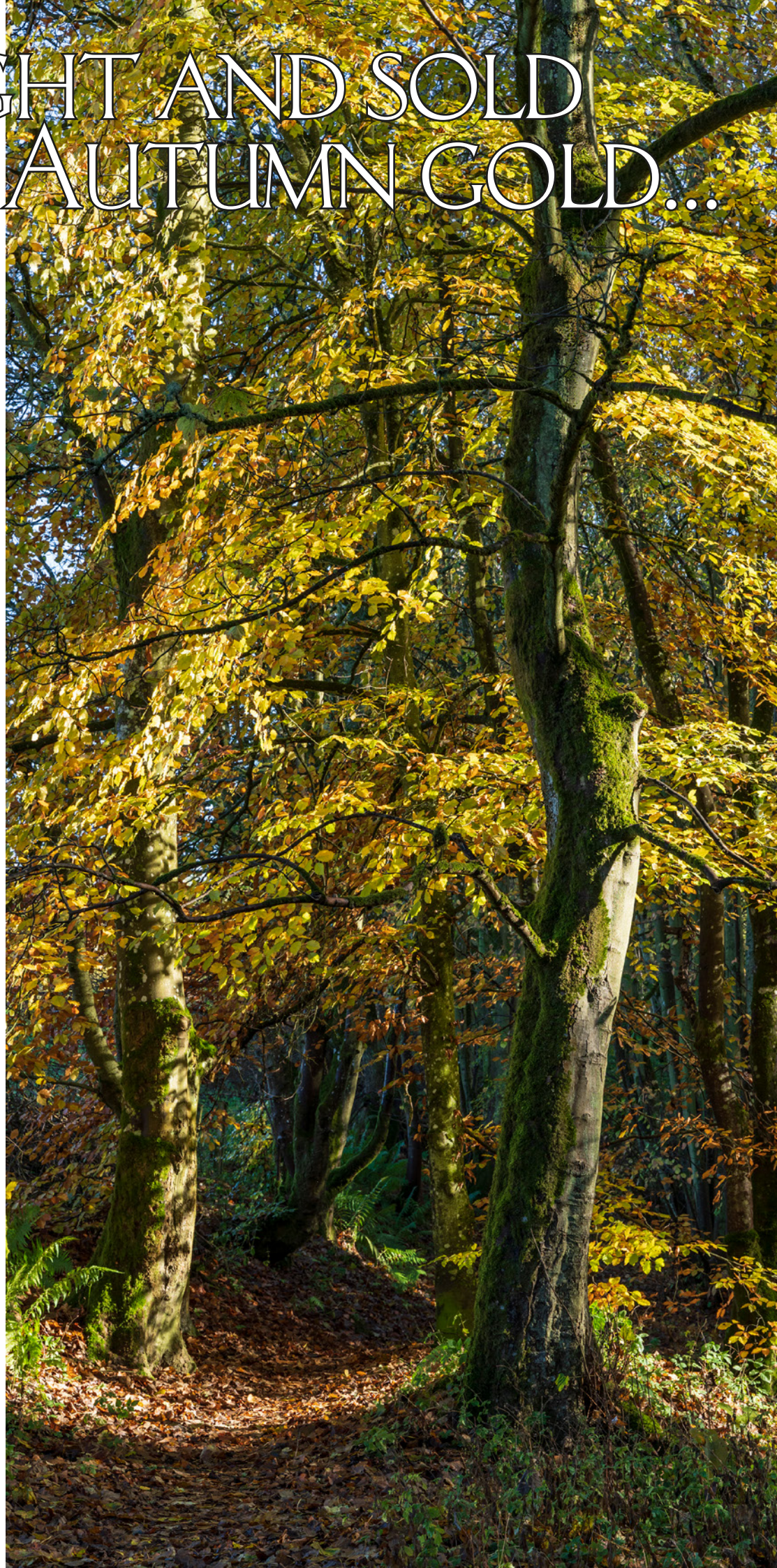
Three years ago this was the scene which confronted my camera on a quick drive out to test a couple of lenses. It could have been 'ours' but that was not to be...

by David Kilpatrick



On November 2nd 2018 I took the then-new Tamron 28-75mm f2.8 and Voigtlander 21mm f3.5 Sony FE lenses for a very short drive to a lane which leads off the A68 coming north out of Jedburgh. It's only a few miles from home and office, and I had often seen a sign saying 'Woodlands For Sale' but never ventured over the stile. You often see these signs woodlands.co.uk signs all round the UK. Most are for small scale commercial forestry not protected or amenity woods. This looked different and the seasonal colours were just beginning to reach peak in the south of Scotland.

I'd only intended to take one or two shots but ended up walking most of the small glen of Towerburn Wood. I returned keen to process the raw files and also wondering what the wood might cost. It was up for £40,000. I didn't have £40,000 but showed my wife Shirley the pictures and



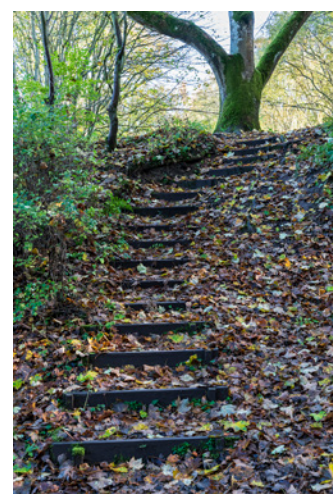


she agreed that if we'd had that to spare it would be a lovely thing to buy and preserve, even if it was in a neighbouring town and not on our home patch. I showed local friends and immediately got offers – "I can put in ten thousand if you can find three or four others to join us", said one. We talked about its potential for photo walks and natural history teaching. One or two friends knew the wood and said it was exceptional.

The next day Shirley was not feeling well, and had not been for some weeks, with a swelling later identified as cancer. Though we drove to the wood she couldn't leave the car to walk. We never went back there. Treatment over her last eight months did give back her mobility and there were many other places visited. That treatment also removed any thoughts of my getting a woodland consortium together.

But three years later, it's worth looking at the light and colours I found at the beginning of November. The Sony A7RIII was used at ISO speeds from 100 to 3200 for these pictures, and produced great colour with no visible noise. Both lenses delivered



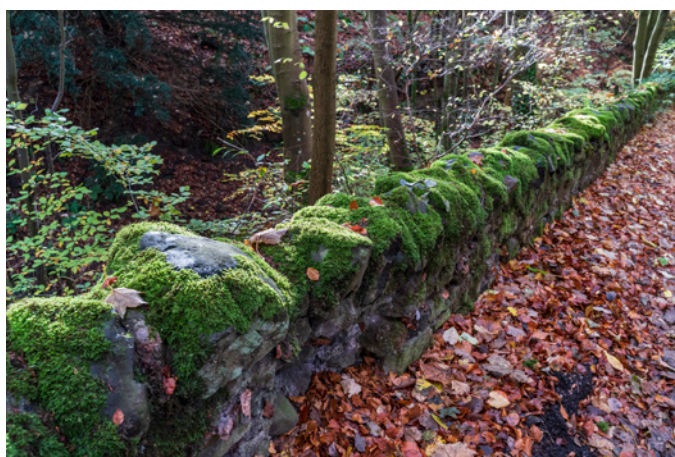


sharpness even though hand-held, mostly set at f8 for depth of field. I processed the results using the *Adobe Landscape* profile, often with a graduated adjustment to handle the extreme contrast along with highlight level reduction and shadow brightening, both of which really snap to life with a moderate Clarity setting. Straight pictures, on film or digital, would not look the same but the latest AI built in to smartphone image processing could well match or better them in dynamic range handling.

When I decided to write this, I checked on the woodland sale website and found that Towerburn



The wood glen lies on the other side of the mossy wall, below. The untrodden fallen leaves above needed ISO 3200. The sun and shade, left, needed a strong adjustment in Adobe Camera Raw (21mm Voigtlander).



Wood was still listed – but listed as SOLD with a price of £52,000. This shouldn't make any difference if you want to visit it. It is a short walk from the Jedburgh Woollen Mill tourist stop, past the beautiful reed sandstone cliffs of the Jed Water which most people drive past and never notice). It is freely accessible for walking and photography, and I'm sure there are many more potential shots to be found there.

Here is some of what the Woodlands.co.uk sales page said about the wood – “a fascinating hidden gem with great historic interest, set in a shallow valley of a quiet corner of Jedburgh.

“The wood was originally part of the Hartrigge estate and was used as a water source and for recreation. It was once owned by the Scottish Lord Chancellor and was indeed visited by... Queen Victoria herself. She... recorded her time in the woods in her diary.

“More recently an historic pathway has been expanded and improved to the benefit of the wood. Wooden steps climb the steeper slopes and duckboards

cross small water courses.

“The wood supports an extremely unusual variety of broadleaf species; many of these are not normally seen in this part of the country.

“The wood has several level areas that have been used for picnics, barbecues and camp fire stop overs. A small waterfall on

the burn is a delight to behold and much frequented by resident dippers. Water features within a woodland are tremendously valuable resources for the inhabitant wildlife. Buzzards are regularly spotted above the canopy, while sparrow hawks hunt through the boughs and woodpeckers hammer industriously at standing dead

wood. Deer, badgers and hedgehogs are nocturnally active.

“Two private wooden stiles give pedestrian access to the footpath off a quiet public road.”



Jedburgh Woollen Mill: TD8 6EB
Wood – Grid Ref: NT 6650 2120
X/Y co-ords: 366509, 621205
Lat/Long: 55.48350143,-2.53149844

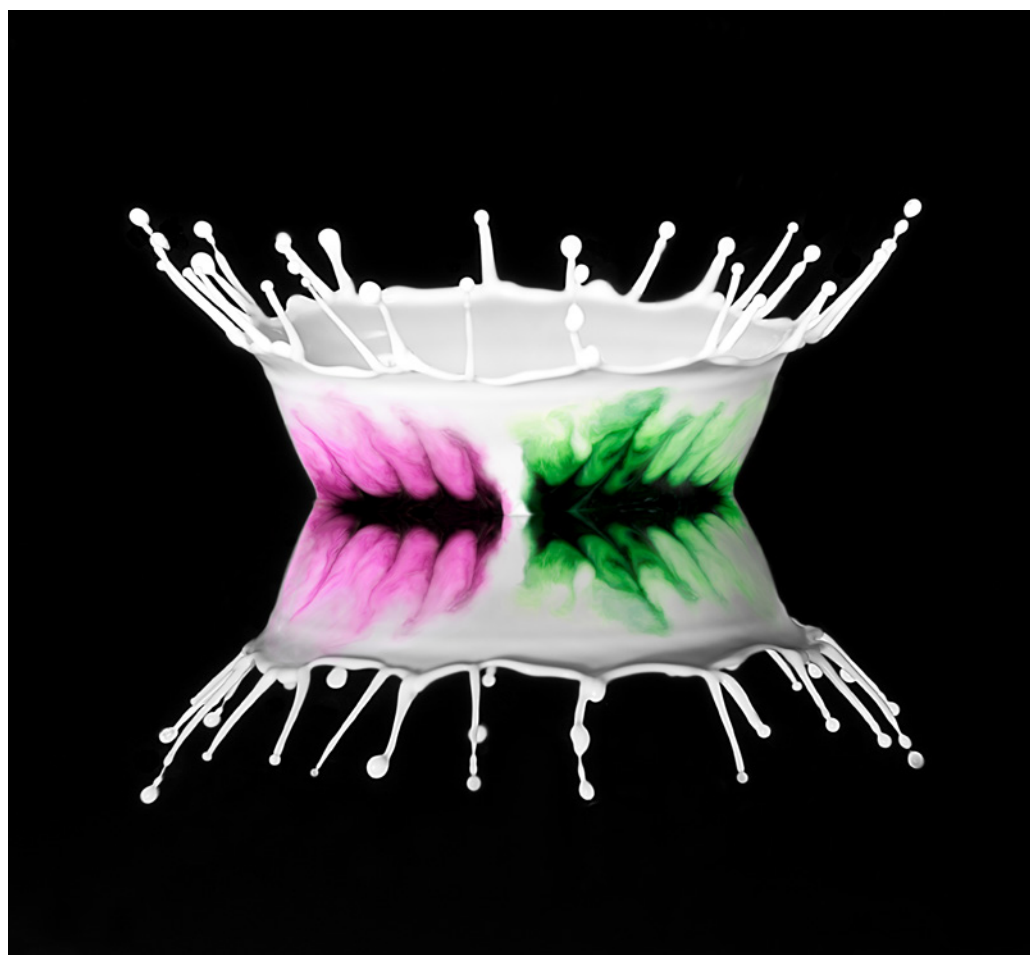




Warm wet circles... how to capture milk 'Dairy Crown' splashes easily



Ian Knaggs, a UK based advertising and product photographer specialising in studio product photography, is a popular instructor in studio set-ups and lighting, digital processing and Photoshop.
<https://www.ianknaggs.com>



There are many things in this world that happen far too fast for us to see clearly. Unless we know to look for these phenomena, they simply just pass us by. However, as photographers we have the amazing action-stopping power of flash photography to freeze time.

Who could have imagined that you could capture the natural circular beauty of using something as simple as a drop of milk falling onto a surface? At one time, the use of action-stopping flash required expensive high-end equipment. However, this technology is now easily within the reach of every photographer using readily available budget speed

lights from manufacturers such as Godox, Neewer and Yongnuo. Of course, higher-end equipment can be used but these lights are perfectly adequate.

By design speedlights, when used on low power produce incredibly short duration pulses of light that are as short as 1/10,000 of a second. These short durations along with standard flash camera shutter speeds of only 1/200 second can freeze the fastest of motion. As long as there are low ambient light levels the only light lighting your splash will be from the flash.

So if you would like to have a try, here's the recipe for you to cook up your very own Dairy Crown images:

1. Take your camera fitted with a macro lens and mount it on a tripod.
2. Place your speed light off to one side and set to low power.
3. Use a stand to hold your 'pipette' (you can simply use a straw).
4. Use an object placed upon the 'drop site' to focus the shot, then switch to manual focus mode.
5. Dip the end of the straw into a small container of liquid and place your finger over the top

of the straw. When you release your finger the liquid drops out. Manually press shutter.

6. Wipe the surface clean and repeat.

Yes, you will have a lot of missed splashes. However, the rewarding part is that you will also be able to capture some amazing shapes as the splashes form and then collapse.

In these examples I used milk, but there are all sorts of different liquids that you can try such as cream, or emulsion paint.

Once you get the hang of the timing, there are many other possibilities that you can investigate; such as using a reflective base such as a mirror or a sheet of plexiglass to produce a mirror-like reflection. You could also add food colouring to the surface to add colour to the circular splashes. The end result will always be unique as no splash is ever formed the same.



Laowa G-Dreamer 7.5mm f2

If you think there's no need to put a chip and a contact array into a manual focus lens, you're wrong. It's fine to use old manual lenses and adapted lenses that way, but there is no reason any competent manufacturer should omit the basic chip which tells the camera the focal length of the lens.

Laowa go several steps further. The electronics in the latest **C-Dreamer 7.5mm f2** (15mm equivalent) for MFT also control the aperture setting from the camera body, meaning manual focusing is always at f2 even if you've set f16 for extreme depth of field. It gets better because the focus barrel is wired up to invoke magnified manual focus when you turn it slightly – on my Olympus E-M1 MkII, that's a 14X zoom in on the selected focus point. This means critically accurate MF is easy to get, and it actually does make a difference even with such a short focal length. The 'magnify when nudged' control is not so sensitive that it causes problems.

But now consider the rest of this amazing lens's specifications! First of all it is tiny. It seems to be based on Laowa's acclaimed Zero-D 15mm f2 for DSLRs, and the scaling down by 50% all round



Close focus at f8 gives the same depth of field as a full frame camera with 15mm lens at f16. Manual magnified focus works automatically when you adjust the focus barrel. Left, the contact array which makes this new version the one to buy (retail box for reference). Below, with lens cap and hood.



Manual focus with full electronic coupling updates the widest straight-line prime for MicroFourThirds

means it has a mere 46mm filter thread (matching many Olympus lenses), 50mm barrel diameter and 55mm length. It weighs only 170g and the lens hood is tiny – it's hardly necessary to remove it to get ultra-close to subjects with the 12cm minimum focus. The front element is just 24mm in diameter and well shielded. I sourced a 46mm to 62mm step-up ring from SRB Photographic to use the same polarising filter I have for the Olympus 12-40mm f2.8.

In my bag the same space which this Zuiko Pro zoom takes up fits the Laowa 7.5mm, Zuiko 30mm f3.5 Macro and Sigma 60mm f2.8 DN Art in lens wraps.

In my full frame Sony kit I jump from 17mm (short end of Tamron) to 10mm Voigtlander and really miss the 14-15mm length. The 7.5mm on MFT does that job well, though the whole MicroFourThirds system is sadly lacking in extreme wides – there's no rectilinear 4.5mm or 5mm to match the 9mm and 10mm lenses available now for both mirrorless and DSLR mounts. The only way to get wider than this 7.5mm and retain architecturally accurate drawing is through the 7-14mm zoom choices from Zuiko and Lumix, all far more expensive, larger and f2.8 at the best. The M.Zuiko Pro of that aperture has a huge curved front element and needs a custom filter holder and 100mm filter system.

So this little lens is a definite winner for travel, and entirely competent for professional work. It can actually get closer and create perspectives a large sensor format lens of the same angle can't achieve.

As for performance, it's very sharp indeed and by f8 even corners beyond the depth of field are clean. With some wides like this a close-up foreground can be sharp but distant corners never sharpen



No polariser



Polariser – but not really needed

up even at f16. There's no auto or installable Adobe profile yet, but the profile for the Zero-D 15mm f2 works well if you want to remove the fairly strong loss of brightness to the outer field. For most subjects it is best left, the vignetting 'holds the picture in' the way we used once to burn-in slightly all round the edge of prints.

The 7.5mm worked well with the polariser but the 110° angle of view already produces deep blue sky and the filter can overdo it. For around £500-600 it's a great buy but beware those selling to Mk 1 version (dumb, no chip!) and not this latest one. It's stocked by WEX and UK Digital.

– David Kilpatrick

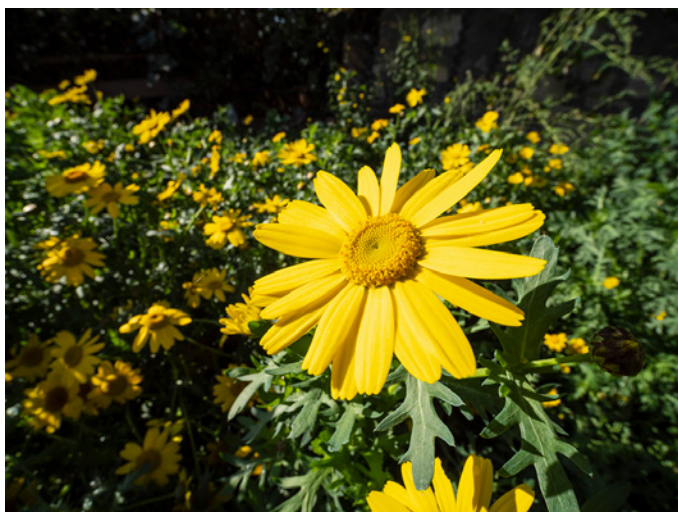


Zero-D 15mm profile applied

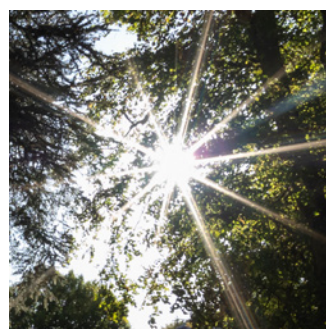


No profile used in Camera Raw

The closest focus is 4.7 inches or 12cm, below. Because the lens is so small, and the lens hood easily removed, you can get close to subjects without casting a shadow but the wide angle means the scale is only 0.11X.



Full aperture means some background defocus in close-ups but where it's in focus it's very sharp. Taken at 1/30s and ISO 1600. The Laowa lens had an error on the E-M1 MkII during this shoot, disabling the camera – this is a common problem with third party firmware. Removing the lens and fitting a Zuiko restored operation and the 7.5mm worked perfectly when refitted.



Flare is hard to induce and when it happens, not very attractive. The iris sunstar, however, is neat.



What goes around, comes around... fishing out two 180° solutions from the past



The Soligor Fisheye converter fitted to a 50mm f1.2 Nikkor on Olympus, above; the Peleng 8mm, right.

Tim Goldsmith has spent much of his working life in the photographic industry. From working in a central London studio straight from school, to marketing manager at Paterson and full time camera dealer. He is currently a self-employed photographic auction consultant. Tim is a long-time member of the Photographic Collectors Club of Great Britain (PCCGB) and the Stereoscopic Society and is a trustee of The Disabled Photographers Society. You can reach him at info@cameravalues.com or on Facebook as Monark Cameras <https://www.monarkcameras.com>

At some time in our lives, I expect many of us have been told by our friends, parents or partners something along the lines of "If you wear those trousers/shirts/shoes much longer, they will come back into fashion". And of late, it's the same with some cameras and lenses. I seem to have a cupboard full of old items that suddenly everyone wants – they can't have them as I am starting to use them again!

One of my favourite vintage lenses for use on modern cameras is my Peleng 8mm f3.5 fish-eye, which on a film camera or a full-frame DSLR gives a completely circular image in the middle of the frame, with black edges. The image is a full 180° wide (and that is so wide that two shots I took for this article had my foot at the bottom of the frame and two had my fingers on the edge!) When used on a DSLR with a crop sensor however (*as seen top right*) the image fills a lot more of the frame, albeit with some vignetting at the extreme corners.

Made in Belarus in the mid 1990s, the Peleng 8mm lens with its pre-set diaphragm and clunky, but positive click-stops, bears all the hallmarks of a basic Soviet lens of the era. That said, I did



occasionally have trouble with the loose "Lock-Unlock" ring for manual setting of the diaphragm, but for the low-light shots at a local visiting fair I was shooting wide open at 800ISO, so in this situation it wasn't a problem. My version of this lens came with an M42 screw-mount fitting, which looked like an interchangeable T-mount.



Peleng on Canon APS-C (1.6X crop), top; and Soligor on Nikon DX, above.



Soligor converter plus 50mm on MicroFourThirds – a 7.5mm frame filler.

But it's not – so when I tried to swap some of the mount parts with a cannibalised Nikon T-mount, I couldn't get it all to fit correctly. This meant I had to dig out an old Canon DSLR for which I have a M42 adapter. These lenses occasionally turn up on-line in the £150-£200.

If you can't justify buying a dedicated fish-eye lens then how about the Soligor conversion lens? This unusual accessory screws into the filter thread of any prime lens from 30mm up to 200mm. A scale on the side of the lens is interlocked with the built-in apertures which run from f3.5 right down to a tiny f90. In use you set the camera lens wide open and the aperture is linked to a focal

length adjustment which moves the converter position.

On my Olympus OM-D Micro 4/3rds or my Nikon D7000 with a 50mm f1.2 AIs lens, I found that by selecting a longer lens than I was using, I could reduce the size of the resulting image, from one similar to that of the Peleng 8mm lens to a full 180° circle. If you can find one of these on the secondary market (usually for around £40-£50) then snap it up. If you can live with its cumbersome design some of the effects you get are amazing and for the price, I can't think of a better, or cheaper way to get the equivalent of a 7.5mm lens (with a 50mm lens) on full frame digital.



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SQUARING THE CIRCLE

The Kodak No 1 pre-loaded box camera which arrived in 1888 used the first flexible roll film (initially emulsion-stripping paper!) to capture 100 negatives, processed by Kodak and contact printed as 70mm circles on white, mounted in a brown card. The No 2 which followed made 90mm circular images and competing photo labs offered higher grade mounts, often resembling cabinet photos with gold embossed trim. Despite this many prints survive cut down into actual circles, probably because circular photo frames were made to fit them.

Though not managing to mark the centenary of the Kodak, Polaroid launched their Round Frame instant print material for the 600 series cameras. This is almost a modern colour version of the No 2 print. Although it may seem an odd choice to crop permanently instead of putting a circular overlay on to a regular print, it's been a success in the seven years since introduction.

In late Victorian wedding albums the pages usually accept standard carte and cabinet prints but can have a range of shapes with arched tops and ovals but rarely circular. Fast forward to the 1970s heyday of the slip-in leaf albums it was not so different – ovals ruled. You can still find circular mattes for square album pages from specialists in traditional albums like **Marlwood** of Tipperary in Ireland (marlwood.ie). If you want circular images most album brands like **Graphistudio** need you to design a page where the circle is on a larger page.

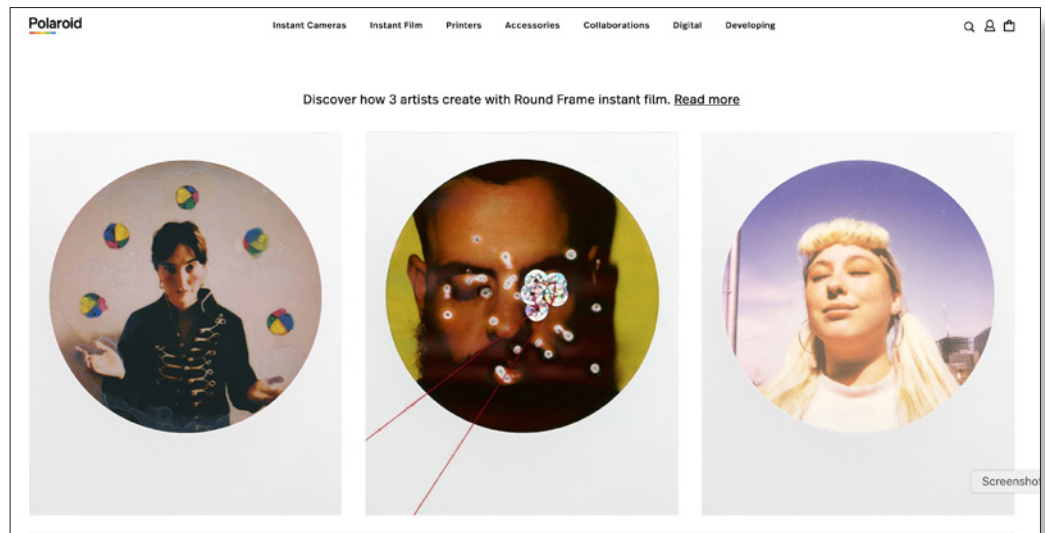
Orbs and spheres

It's easier to source circular display print products, including some low grade photo souvenir printed plaques (using the same UV technology that prints smartphone cases). At the top end, a few labs have much larger wall prints often in acrylic or Dibond

The eye, and the photographic lens, sees a circular field of view. Photography was first popularised by Kodak with circular prints – but we are never likely to see a circular digital sensor.



Kodak 1888 or a little later (US National Media Museum). Below – web page promoting Polaroid Round Frame, introduced in 2014.



aluminium – it's not easy to make a circular canvas print.

UK Midlands lab **One Vision** offer Halo Circular Photo Products, two of as pure circles and the third as a framed print with wood or white mouldings. Sizes are from 16" to 24" diameter and aluminium Chromaluxe starts at £77. **SIM Lab** do circular gloss acrylic prints from 10" to a huge 40" which will set you back £240.

Looking to see whether **Loxley Colour** do circular prints, we found a completely different Loxley (loxleyarts.co.uk) which makes circular and other shapes of stretched artists' canvas. There are probably flatbed photo printers which could use these but no mention of that! But the familiar Glasgow photo lab actually has a large range of circular wall products including acrylic and metal with the widest range of surface finishes and sub-mounting - 'metal, wooden and acrylic orb photos'. Orb is a term widely used to describe circular prints.

Newcastle's **Digitalab** use the word 'Sphere' instead and offer regular prints on birchwood mounts, or acrylics. They clearly find the circular format popular as it's a Sphere example they show to promote their overall acrylic service.

DS Colour Labs offer all their Fujifilm paper finishes on 6mm thick wooden circular wall mounts, in 12", 18", 20" and 24" diameters. These are hand finished

with a natural birch ply edge and a hanging system fitted, from £47.99 to £83.99.

Whitewall class their circular prints along with a whole range of other shapes, mostly polygons, and their ordering site lets you specify round, six, eight or twelve-sided prints with a variety of finished and mounting (<https://whitewall.com/uk/round-photo-prints>).

Printing your own

There are no circular photo paper products as far as we can find out. If you own a **Canon ZINK** printer designed to make instant prints from smartphones, there's the option of a roll of circular stickers but they are only 1.3" in diameter on 2 x 3" paper. That's really a badge size and nothing else. You can also get a slightly larger die cutter to make 53mm circular identity photos from any type of print. We're just not sure anyone has seen a circular ID photo!

The best choices for making circular prints are probably roll fed paper for minimal waste, or **Fotospeed's** unique Square papers. You can now get Platinum Baryta 300, Platinum Etching 285 or PF Lustre 275 in the 12" and 8" square sizes we reviewed when the idea was first launched

But how do you cut a perfect circle? The labs have it nailed and it is significant that they go for Dibond and acrylic products. As with wooden mounts, circle cutting needs production machinery. Look for circle cutters on-line and you'll find mostly the same few flimsy crafts-targeted compass type marker/cutters. For woodworkers who own a router, affordable circle cutting jigs start around £25 to handle 67cm diameter and these could probably be adapted to hold a paper cutting blade. The main problem is that most circle cutters assume you can drill a hole on the axis to mount the jig, which rather spoil a print or mount.

To cut circles from 12" or smaller paper, the best solution is probably to **Olfa CMP-2** at £31.99 – it's designed to use snap-off craft knife blades and will cut mounts and even plasterboard up to a 30cm circle. When buying a circle cutter, be aware that craft products mark the radius arm in diameter



One Vision Imaging call the circular range 'Halo' prints, and they come as Chromaluxe or Aluminium Dibond floating wall art as well as in frames.

results. If you have a 30cm maximum circle cutting size, the cutter arm will have 30cm marked at its very end but will only extend 15cm from the centre.

Provided you can get a circle cutter with a sharp enough blade, and work on a cutting mat so firm pressure can be exerted, it's

best to mount a print on board or foamcore before cutting. Sadly, the **Ilford Galerie** pre-mounted papers are now discontinued as these were a good solution for anyone with a printer able to handle flat-fed mounted media (such as the Epson 3800 series).

Permajet mountboard is just

the right weight for cutting with a print mounted – a pack of five sheets 400 x 500mm for under £6.

Given that cutting a circle may not be a clean process, a high grade frame could complete the job and there's one round frame specialist – **Soho Frames** – making unusual real wood circles up to 1m diameter. They recommend fitting your circular mounted print into the frame themselves rather than have the frame made and shipped to you. They are based in central London, and can also make frames in almost shape – triangles, polygons, sets of shapes which hang together to form a wall display. However, this is a premium service and the frames are up there with cabinet making and luthiery in terms of wood selections and finish! See:

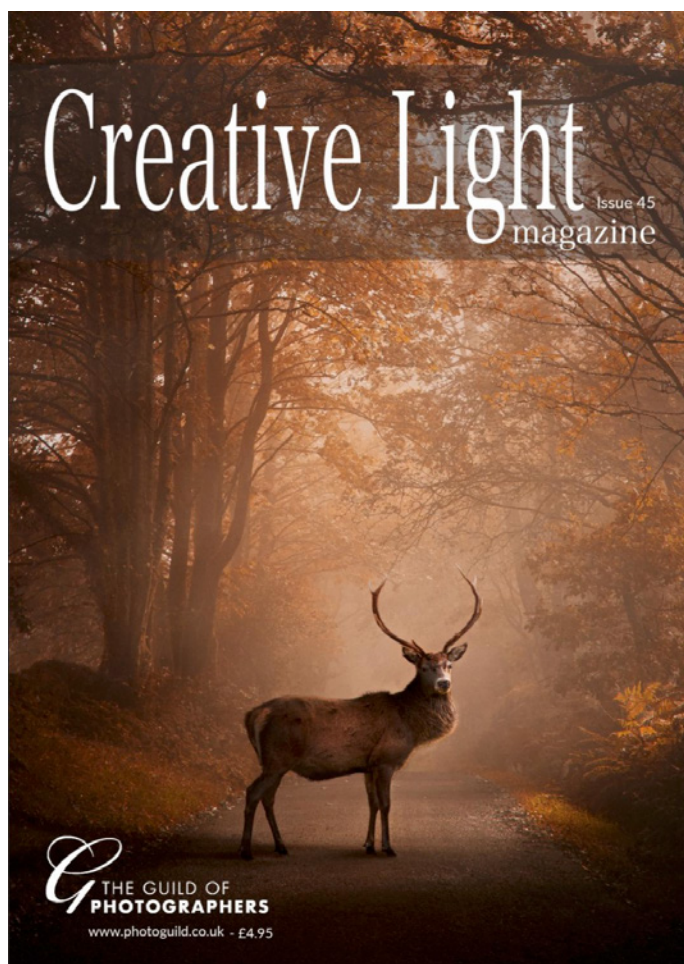
<https://www.sohoframes.co.uk> and take a look at the 'Unique Frames' as well as the round frames – there's enough inspiration there to transform your window display and attract the wealthiest of clients!

Ultimately you're probably going to waste less time and money using lab services if you want circular mounted prints! All we really need is a supplier of pre-cut circular paper and matching mounts...



A different kind of circle – wrapping a panorama inside a drum

This exhibit outdoors in Cologne in 2014 was created by the city of Shanghai to promote Chinese photo manufacturing – a large format 360° rotary panorama was printed about 3m high and wrapped inside a drum-shaped wall, like a circular room with the top open, with a door and a viewing gallery inside.



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IF YOU USE gas or electricity, which most of us do, you've probably already wondered whether it would be cheaper to charge up a huge battery now or acquire your own gasometer and fill it at 2021 prices before 2022 kicks in at double the cost or worse.

Sadly, private gas storage is not an option but those using oil for heating have already tried to beat future rises by keeping their tanks full at the best rates they can find.

Industry and commerce, on commercial energy contracts as many of our readers will be, face a future with no price cap. Suppliers will be trying to bring in as much from commercial and variable contracts as they can, to cope with potentially terminal losses incurred from domestic price-capped supply.

This means that many products and services we use as photographers are going to increase in price in 2022 at a rate we have not seen recently – first letter of warning received already.

Though I've not been able to find out more as the industry really doesn't want to think about it, it seems certain that the costs for this magazine's printing will go up and I've got contingency plans in place for any needed change of print format – or the ultimate transition to a digital edition with an option to order printed copies. Other publishers are thinking the same way. However it's not actually printing which has impacted costs over the last decade, it's the cost of postage. There's always another printer willing to quote a competitive price but for our kind of personal direct mailing all over the world there's either no competition, or little variation in cost. Even printing abroad saves nothing as UK print prices and postage now compete with almost anywhere. I can buy paper in advance for a full year and have it stored, and pay today's price. But I can't buy postage that way – even if it used to work that way with 1st and 2nd class stamps remaining valid many years after prices had quadrupled.

I believe that papers used for photographic and inkjet printing will rise in price when existing stocks are sold. Any prudent photographer making prints should consider stocking up now on their favourite papers. Global supply and shipping problems could force changes to formulation as well as price and availability. Inkjet papers have a very long life.

Paper products are impacted in a big way by gas and electricity costs. Paper uses a huge amount of water in production, and processes requiring heat. It's hard to exactly what will happen to the price of things like seamless paper studio background rolls – they are difficult to store so you probably can't just buy in a few more for future use.

In 2020, like many businesses we took out a Covid BounceBack Loan with an interest rate of 2.5% which kicked in after the first year of interest-free repayment. I'm glad we have chosen to pay under £40 a month in interest to keep that money available, rather than paying it back on the anniversary. Using it wisely now might save as much again in the coming year.

At the same time, I've been thinking about issues I've been aware of since the 1970s when I worked on environmental publications and newspaper sections. COP 26 has focused attention on how and why we do many things. As a publisher, I've never lost sight of the need to be 'green' but always loved the printed page as a physical object which can survive hundreds of years and be rediscovered without needing any technology.

As for the gas and electricity for heating, my first proper studio had a coke-fired boiler in it and we had to keep feeding it during shoots most of the year. I'd better sign off now and put another log on the fire like so many will be doing this winter...

– David Kilpatrick, Publisher



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From raw file to refined image with new PortraitPro v22

You might think that Anthropics' *PortraitPro* is just there to iron out blemishes, makes necks and shoulders more elegant and take a few pounds off a sitter's perceived 'photographic weight gain'. It will do all this, but can also make precise corrections to lighting and expression problems which are difficult to retouch manually.

I apologise to Euan Burton, double bass player and master of live and recorded sound with the Siobhan Miller Band, for using him as an example. This is a good way to show how *PortraitPro* v22, the latest incarnation, instantly finds and rapidly maps out even one fairly small face in a larger view – wearing glasses, bearded, lit by stage lights and at an angle.

The greatest auto adjustments made in this shot improve the detail in Euan's hair, the light on his face and especially the clarity with which his eyes are rendered. To test this version, an ISO 6400 Sony A7RIV 61 megapixel raw file was used. *PortraitPro* is updated frequently to use new raw processing routines, and while this camera is a couple of years down the line it's not the friendliest raw format. At this ISO it has very high noise levels, which *Adobe Camera Raw* or *Lightroom* tackle acceptably. Even the maximum high ISO noise reduction in *PortraitPro* v22 didn't match Adobe's NR but it also didn't destroy any detail (or the hair and eyes would have been blended to mush). While it would pay to process in *Photoshop* and use the *PortraitPro* Plug-in (which runs natively with *Photoshop* on M1 Macs) you don't actually need *Photoshop* at all to process

<https://www.anthropics.com/portraitpro>

The versions, for Windows or Mac OS:

PortraitPro Standard: Standalone software for photographers working with JPG or 24-bit TIFF files.

PortraitPro Studio: For photographers who work directly with RAW files or want the higher quality of 48-bit colour, supports conversion between different colour spaces, and provides JPEG/TIFF embedded colour profile support. Offers Batch dialog.

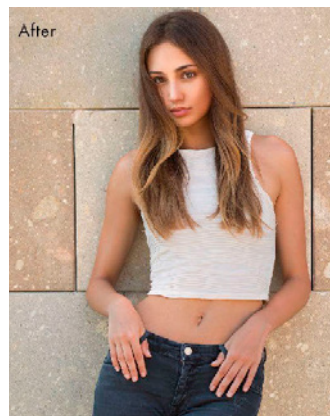
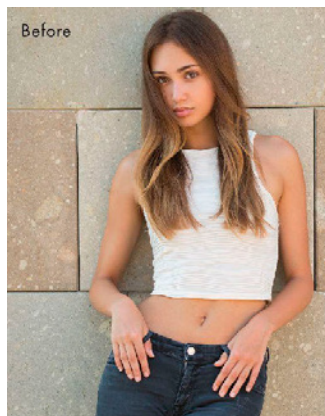
PortraitPro Studio Max: For professional photographers or those working with lots of images. Full Batch mode to speed workflow greatly.



raw images. The stand-alone applications run under *Rosetta* with M1 and natively with Intel. *Studio Max* which we installed can tackle batch retouching of groups and sittings, opening multiple images and identifying the faces. It costs £139.95 with 50% download discount (plus any special code discount), with the option of two lower cost versions. There are savings when upgrading from earlier or 'lower' versions as well.

PortraitPro v22 has many new and improved functions – these include **Hairline Correction, Neck and Shoulder Slimming, Chin Slimming and Shadow Control** (we'd call it refining not slimming!), **Body and Face Lighting, Neck Lengthening, Eye-Widening, Lip Colour** improvements and the ability to select "only conventional" colours, improved skin/hair finder technology, and general UI and speed improvements. There are also new NEW tutorials from *PortraitPro* creators, videos you can watch on phone or tablet to get a feel of how this could help you before downloading a trial version.

If you decide to buy or upgrade to v22, there's extra savings using *Cameracraft's* code **CC112**. Go to:



For influencers as well as portrait photographers, the ability to re-light a portrait taken in flat conditions is more than valuable. It's something which is already making smartphone selfies look better than they should. *PortraitPro* v22 is aimed squarely at the professional user, and does not alter the appearance of subjects artificially. It corrects and enhances finely.

CAMERACRAFT

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FOR THIS Rearview Gallery we've
picked two images to inspire
you for darker days, and two
with a point to be made about
composition.

Although branches are bare
now, garden birds can be seen
more easily and will come to
wherever there's a hope of berries.

Sue Dudley caught this finch in
a very natural setting and earned
a Guild silver award. It's no light-
weight shot, as a Canon 1DX MkII
with 500mm f4 was used at full
aperture, 1/640s at ISO 640 and
an almost uncropped full frame.

Below, exactly the right time
for fading daylight gave **Tom
Ormerod** this atmospheric light
trail shot. Olympus E-M1 MkIII
with 40-150mm f2.8, 30 seconds
at f8 and ISO 200 at 60mm. Also a
winner of a Guild of Photographers
monthly competition silver award.

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REARVIEW





These two images paired up show similar use of overhead viewpoints and diagonal composition top right to bottom left (the most powerful). Above, by **Jayne Adams** and a silver winner – a drone shot, so without data. Below, a gold winner by **Carl Simpson-Smith**, and again a drone shot.

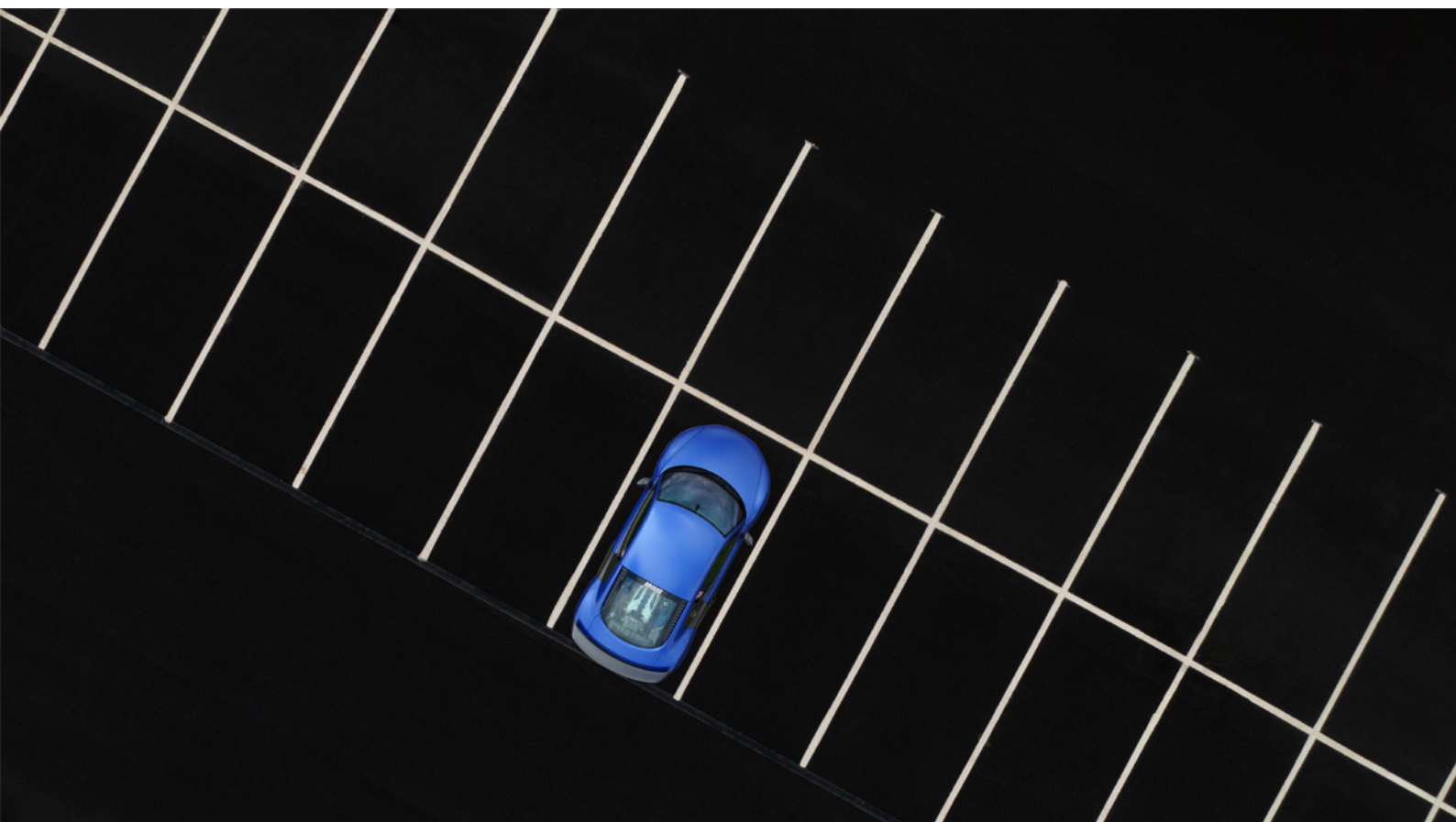




Photo Ken Hubbard: 150-500mm | 500mm | F/6.7 | 1/2500 | ISO 800

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ability to shoot close-ups, especially with a shallow depth of field. All lenses in this series also feature a moisture-resistant construction and amazing coatings to keep them protected from the elements. Who says great things can't come in small packages?

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