

MARCH/APRIL 2022 • EDITION #45

# CAMERACRAFT



THE THERAPEUTIC  
LENS: VISION TO MEND  
THE MIND AND BODY

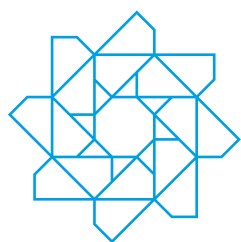
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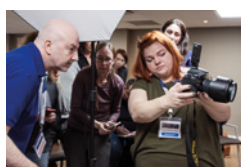
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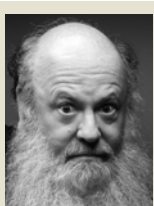
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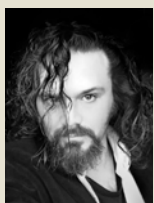
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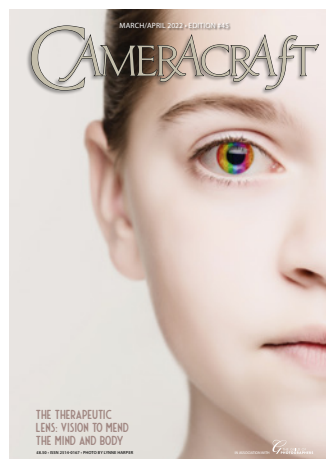
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From analogue  
to digital

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## CAMERACRAFT No. 45 – MARCH/APRIL 2022

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<https://www.cameracraft.online>



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### GUILD OF PHOTOGRAPHERS

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## COVER

By Lynne Harper – a Gold award winner in the Guild of Photographers Image of the Month. Reflecting, we thought, the healing power of the camera's vision – part of the theme of this edition.

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Part 4 gets us back outside as the days get brighter and longer, but still need that light getting under control.

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### LENS REVIEW: TAMRON 35-150mm f2.0-2.8 Di III VXD

It's the fastest zoom ever made with this range, though only in Sony E mount. Can it do the same job as a 35mm f2 and a 70-200mm f2.8 in one lens?

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## New Flash Centre Birmingham showroom

**TFC BIRMINGHAM** has opened its doors to a brand-new store. To celebrate they have launched the first in a new series of monthly photo competitions. Each month there will be a £100 TFC voucher up for grabs for the image that best expresses a set theme. The first month's theme was New Beginnings. To enter simply tag your image #TFCphotocomp and @FlashCentre on Facebook etc.

The new Flash Centre is at Unit 3, WD Boxhub, Cakemore Road, Rowley Regis. Call Kevin Treadwell or Brian Collier on 0121 327 9220; Rowley Regis station and M5 Junction 2.

<https://www.theflashcentre.com>



## Sigma's 20mm f2 DG DN for E and L, trio of fast primes for Fujifilm X mount



Right hand image – all metal body, before coating.

**THE NEW 20MM f2 DG DN** Contemporary lens for full frame E and L mounts from Sigma will sell for under £650 in the UK from February 25th and extends their compact, metal barrel prime 'l' series range which includes f2 models in 24mm, 35mm and 65mm focal lengths.

It also offers a filter-friendly alternative to the very large and heavy 20mm f1.4 Art lens, accepting 62mm filters, weighing 370g and measuring just 72.4mm in length (much the same as the 24mm f2). It has a magnetic lens cap and all metal construction, including the supplied bayonet lens hood. A second plastic clip-in lens cap is also supplied. The design with a physical aperture ring is similar to Sigma's high-end ciné lenses.

It uses three high-precision glass-moulded aspherical lens elements, one SLD element, and one FLD element to suppress aberrations for clear and sharp images even in the extreme corners of the frame. By focusing on the suppression of sagittal coma flare, which is difficult to correct in post-processing, accurate reproduction of very bright points of light makes the 20mm f2 ideal for night sky.

Sigma have also introduced their first lenses for the Fujifilm X mount – three well-proven high speed primes, the 16mm f1.4 DC DN (£359), 30mm f1.4 DC DN (£289) and 56mm f1.4 DC DN (£379) – all highly competitive prices for primes of this quality, though they do rely on high-end Fujifilm bodies for sensor based stabilisation. The trio is already produced in Sony E, Leica L, MFT and Canon M. And – if you own any of these mounts, the Sigma mount conversion service can change lenses to Fujifilm X now.

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



## Nikon's new 400mm f2.8 is two lenses in one...



...and can be converted to go even further

**THE NIKKOR Z 400MM f2.8 TC VR S** is the first Z lens to use Nikon's new Silky Swift Voice Coil Motor (VCM) focusing system with optical ABS encoder: autofocus is faster and quieter, with spot-on subject acquisition and tracking. It's also the first Z lens to feature Nikon's new Meso Amorphous Coat, which offers the highest anti-reflection performance in NIKKOR history. This new coating employs particles smaller than nano particles to confer maximum control over ghosting and flare.

This lens not only has a built-in 1.4X teleconverter, moved in using a switch on the right hand side of the lens, it's also compatible with both 1.4X and 2X add-on Z-mount teleconverters. In combination, a full kit offers 400mm f2.8, 560mm f4, 800mm f5.6, 784mm f5.6, and 1120mm f8. In-lens Vibration Reduction gives a 5.5-stop advantage even when shooting with the built-in teleconverter activated. Synchro VR is available when this lens is paired with the Z 9.

The Nikkor also offers a lightweight build, and it is fully sealed around all moving parts. Its centre of gravity is towards the rear for more stable operation on the mirrorless bodies. Controls can be customised by assigning functions to the lens's FN ring. It has a removable tripod collar and a Kensington security cable slot, and takes drop-in filters.

Rob Harmon, Senior Commercial Lead, Nikon Northern Europe says: "This is the first S-line super-telephoto prime to join the NIKKOR Z family and it opens up new possibilities for pro sports, wildlife, and nature photographers. It's packed with new, innovative technology that takes focusing, image clarity, and adaptability to the next level."

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

*Sigma is still developing its potentially game-changing full frame three-layer Foveon image sensor. In a message from Kazuto Yamaki, their Chief Executive Officer, the roadmap for prototype small area version testing and scaling up if successful was revealed. To check up on progress of this project visit:*

<https://www.sigma-global.com/en/news/2021/02/19/12739>



# Dealer's Digest

It's all about the passion – whether inventing the world's greatest cameras, using them or selling them. Paul Waller muses on the loss of friends and of so many shops.



**D**anger to life, red warnings are in force as I write this... yes, late for the deadline, I know... with high winds and rain battering the country.

I'm working from home following advice to travel only if necessary, difficult for those whose jobs necessitates being outdoors – another financial hit as jobs are cancelled for the self-employed, AGAIN!

It is also two years to the day that my last house flooded, not an experience I'd wish on anybody.

After going to press, I was due to be in Surrey at the funeral of Martyn Rees, whom I have mentioned in a previous article. Martyn was the owner of Harper's Photographic in Woking; it was where I first started working at the tender age of 17 and he has been my friend ever since. Harper's has been in existence for 95 years, but I fear its future is very uncertain. It will be a great loss to the local community should that happen. Many fine tributes have already been posted online and on social media. *Portrait of Martyn, below.*



Another camera shop, Longworth Photographic in Farnborough, has just closed after many years, the owner having retired. Jessops have closed their branch in Bromley (Kent or Greater London – I get confused). I really hope we don't lose too many more, in the mid 1970s there were approximately 3,500 camera shops in the UK. I am uncertain of how many are still in operation today, but I fear not many.



The shop window at Harper's in the mid-1970s was always a wonder to me, full of exotic looking cameras such as Nikon F and F2, Pentax 6x7cm, Hasselblad 500C/M, various Leicas and so much more, all outside of my financial reach.

They drew me in, and just to handle them and listen to the shutter thrilled me (it still does).

We need the shops to inspire hopefully more little me's who stay in the trade and enjoy this most fantastic of occupations.

I must also pay tribute to my good friend Paul Fullegar, who I first met in the late 70s as the Braun rep. He later went on to be the Hasselblad area manager for the south of England. A true gent and one of the nicest people on the planet, his help and friendship to me was beyond measure. I shall miss him greatly. Paul bravely battled cancer for the last eight years, but sadly lost his fight a few weeks ago.

The old trade is getting smaller each year. I can't remember the last time I heard of a new camera shop opening, as I guess if 'Dragons' Den' star Peter Jones as owner of Jessops is finding it difficult you can understand why. You need a huge dose of passion, coupled

available to me when I was his age. I'm following the course with him to see what I can learn. I have not come across anything yet that deals with emotion, passion and commitment.

Last night I was reading more on the early days of Victor Hasselblad and his passion for protecting the wildlife he loved. He was an early evangelist for conservation and an avid ornithologist. The Hasselblad camera system was born partly as a result of him wanting the best quality photographs he could obtain, using a system designed by him and his team – a system we still love today and that I'm proud to sell.

"We are such stuff, as dreams are made on; and our little life is rounded with a sleep" – Shakespeare, *The Tempest*.



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# Creating the conditions for a virtual darkroom

**M**y old friend and contributor to past magazines (and Focus shows!) Les McLean was talking with me about the way I was viewing some of his images (used in this issue) to adjust them for repro if needed – against a *white* background in the *Photoshop* frame. Just a few days later I heard a respected judge and teacher of photography advise viewing on a *black* background to be able to see shadow detail. In my experience this leads to final images which may be too dark to look good in print but look great on screen.

Les agrees<sup>1</sup> – he always edits, for *printing*, against a white workspace.

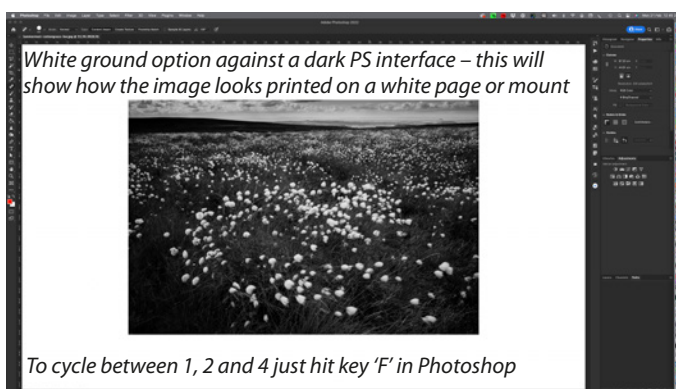
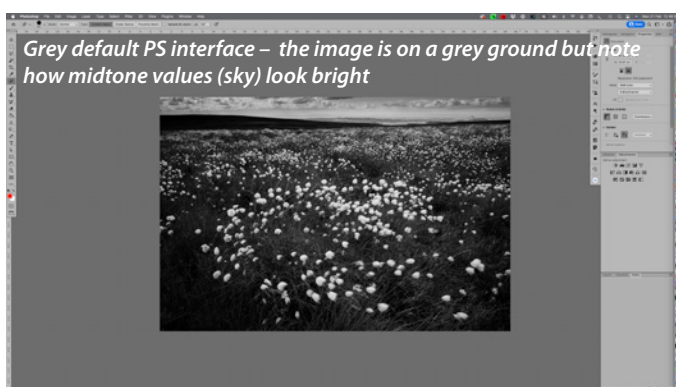
After much experiment with three different monitors and two laptops, I concluded it's very useful to check your image against white (or nearly white), mid-grey and black but that can be time consuming going to the *Photoshop* View menu.

## A single keystroke answer

A bit of digging found **F** as a *single keystroke shortcut* to let you view images against white, black or grey very quickly.

First, go into *Photoshop* prefs, Interface. Don't worry if you like a dark frame default – it's the background to the image, inside the frame/rulers etc, I'm talking about. Under *Appearance*, set 'Standard Screen Mode' to Custom, and adjust that to be pure white (or just a hint of tone, especially for 27 inch Mac screens where a large area of white can be uncomfortable). Now set 'Full Screen with Menus' to Default (which is a grey). Then set 'Full Screen' to 'Black' (which is pure black).

Open an image in *Photoshop* against white will give you the best visual idea of its density and gradation when printed. Now just tap the key **F** – although it's not shown as a shortcut in the menu commands, this will toggle through Standard, Full Screen with



Menus and Full Screen. You will see the background/surround colour to your image change from white to grey to black and back with repeated **F** presses.

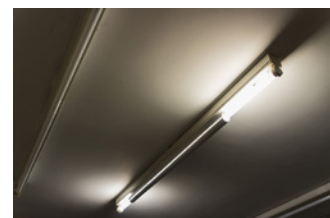
You can then assess your image, its shadow and highlight values, for printing (whether lab

or your own), web/screen viewing and use on TV, iPad or phone. Tip: if you have a mainly dark picture, when viewed on Black you should just be able to see the rectangle of the image – the shadows should not be so black they merge into the Black surround. Mainly white

like a snow scene, you should see a hint of tone the same way against white.

For photographers who sell by showing proofs and finals on a large TV or computer screen, all pictures tend to look much better against black, especially if they are colour not mono. But processing to make them look right in that environment may lead to disappointingly heavy printing. Since you don't want to reprocess files and have two different densities, the best answer may be to control viewing conditions.

Setting up screen profiling in my workroom, I was surprised at how low a light level the Spyder 4 recommended for ambient light. It demanded a room lighting level needing a 1/30s exposure at f1.4 and ISO 100, which was achieved by using central heating pipe foam tube lagging to partially wrap a single 180cm fluorescent tube leaving only 50cm exposed. My



optimum light in that room for general work (not on screen) is four 180cm tubes – about fourteen times as bright! However the dim room lighting agrees with the conditions used for the first repro calibrated screens I encountered 30 years ago in labs and print works. They looked very dark until the room lighting was switched over to working mode. We're all used to extremely bright displays now, as any visit to Currys will confirm – not just bright TVs but highly saturated.

Ideally, you should be able to display an image, and match a print under the Grafilite or similar viewing-light. It will never be identical but should be close enough to compare critically – against any background.

– DK





# Macs, monitors, memory and more

For any reader who has not yet scrapped physical, spinning hard disks for solid state (SSD) equivalents we've got a message. This one change is simply the greatest upgrade you are likely to give any PC or Mac, desktop or laptop, of any age from the last fifteen years or so.

There are other upgrades which go with this, such as putting a fast USB3.1/3.2 card and faster WiFi or networking into any machine which can be customised. You can also use an e-GPU (external graphics card) on some MacBooks which don't have much built-in to power a larger separate display, and with tower systems using any OS you can find very fast and powerful replacement or additional graphics processors. Compatibility can be an issue and it's not something to tackle without some know-how or the help of an experienced technician.

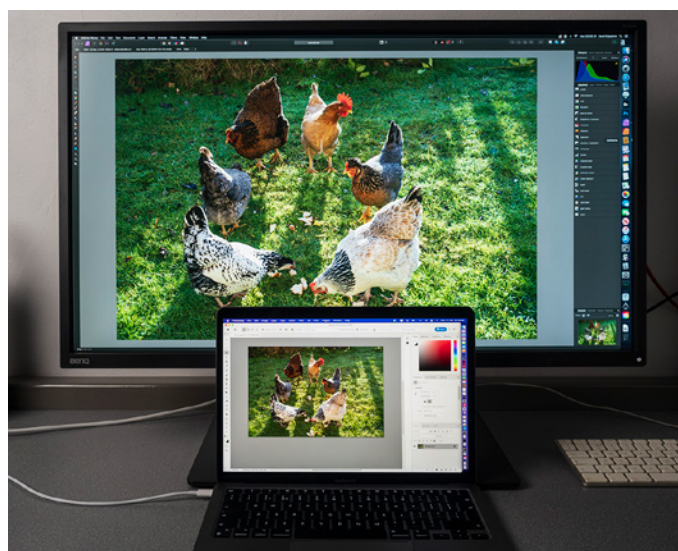
At *Cameracraft* we have a responsibility to try to keep up with new tech. It's becoming very strained, as the days when manufacturers would send out samples are long past and we can't afford to keep upgrading. The costs would exceed any possible margins on publishing the magazine – they almost do in the case of cameras and lenses, let alone IT equipment. Yes, of course we can get test kit but apart from a few things like the latest memory card or maybe a new tethering cable it always is on loan and has to go back.

That's not a problem with cameras, lenses, lighting and many accessories. It's a real problem with software and computer hardware. So many things need to be installed, configured or updated that merely trying out something different is impossible. Too many procedures are irreversible and have consequences.

We found this when Mac OSX finally left behind all 32-bit code. Several vital programs became non-functional, and a whole load of worthwhile but non-essential software which had all cost good money went with them. Plug-ins



32" BenQ PD3200U screen and print using Grafilite for checking – the Spyder 4 recommended brightness for the screen is lower than the light level on the print. Below, the same setup with an M1 MacBook Air 13" M1 shows how relatively 'hot' the Mac is – bright, saturated and warm compared to the calibrated BenQ (Photoshop on the laptop, Affinity Photo



and printer or scanner drivers were not updated, screen calibration and profiling devices became obsolete, and in the biggest single 'hit' for our company the library of Postscript fonts which had cost many thousands from the mid-1980s onwards will become incompatible with Adobe programs in 2023. At present the programs just warn you, and there are a few utilities which will clumsily convert PS Type 1 to OpenType or TrueType. You lose familiar keystrokes to switch into italics or bold and in some cases all the special characters go wrong.

The *Cameracraft* logo, designed using AT Classic Roman, depends on the original Macintosh glyph mapping. We have, of course, invested in *Affinity Photo*, *Publisher*

and *Designer* – Serif's software may be the future if Adobe leaves users behind. Affinity programs map characters to Unicode and when our cover is opened into *Affinity Publisher* from an *InDesign* original (one of the great strengths of the Affinity program) the magazine title ends up badly scrambled.

## Generation game

To overcome problems, we have multiple legacy Macs. The oldest is a 1999 Powerbook which runs *Colorshop* and the Colortron spectrophotometer. It's an ancient pre-USB, pre-WiFi machine. But it's not slow because the original small HD has been replaced by an adaptor to accept a 4GB CompactFlash memory card. That

is now its hard disk and it boots up in flash. Far more substantial is a 2010 MacPro 5.1 running OSX Mojave and many 32-bit programs and utilities. It also runs the appropriate legacy-capable version of Adobe *Creative Cloud* suite (not 64-bit or Apple Silicon compatible), the Serif *Affinity* suite, and some audio and video programs. That's because the 5.1, though it only has a single 6-core Intel Xeon 2.93GHz processor, also has 64GB of RAM and a Radeon RX580 8GB graphics card. It already has fast WiFi and USB 3.0 was easily installed. With a 1TB Crucial SSD system disk, this 12-year-old machine boots almost instantly and runs a 32-inch BenQ (PD3200U) UHD Professional Designer screen. For £699 or less that's an sRGB certified equivalent to the £1599 professional photo version.

It's a luxury although it cost very little to put together the MacPro, as the screen simply proved too big to sit in front of all day. It will be sold with regret to restore the bank balance, if only partially. We found a good second user iMac 27 inch i9 8-core 3.6GHz (2019) with 1TB SSD and upgraded it to 64GB RAM. No doubt the M1 Apple Silicon version will run rings round it on paper when that appears, but it will be twice the price and even less compatible with so much we rely on.

## Is M1 Mac essential?

To check out M1 Silicon, our MacBook Air 13" (2015 model bought new in 2017) was passed down the chain of command, and a basic M1 equivalent (256GB SSD, 8GB RAM) bought new at the best price to become the 'on the road' solution. It's nice enough, superb screen, but needs accessories to handle SD cards, Ethernet, most external displays and regular USB (like memory sticks).

From Amazon, what looked like a very clever dock offering all this quickly turned out to be very poor industrial design. The connector for USB-A (the usual big type) was

so stiff that when a USB cable was pulled out, the entire dock came away from the MacBook's USB-C ports despite fitting into both at once to rely power input and connectivity. When that happened, the SD card in the reader naturally got disconnected too. It looked a very convincing design matching the Mac's steel-graphite grey but all the ports, for USB or SD card, were inferior with a tight fit but limited entry. The SD card slot wouldn't allow a UHS-II card to go in far enough for both rows of contacts to be in the slot, which did not matter as it was a UHS-1 slot only, but just felt wrong.

As it happens, the camera systems we have in use (OM and Sony) plug in to the USB-C of the MacBook Air M1 and the last Air generation and work as well as a card slot. The Sony cameras also charge when connected, and the new OM-1 is the first Olympus-legacy model to offer the same. Many users will be transferring images by tethering to USB-C or using WiFi/NFC whether directly to a laptop, to a tablet like an iPad Pro (same processor as the M1 Air) or via a phone.

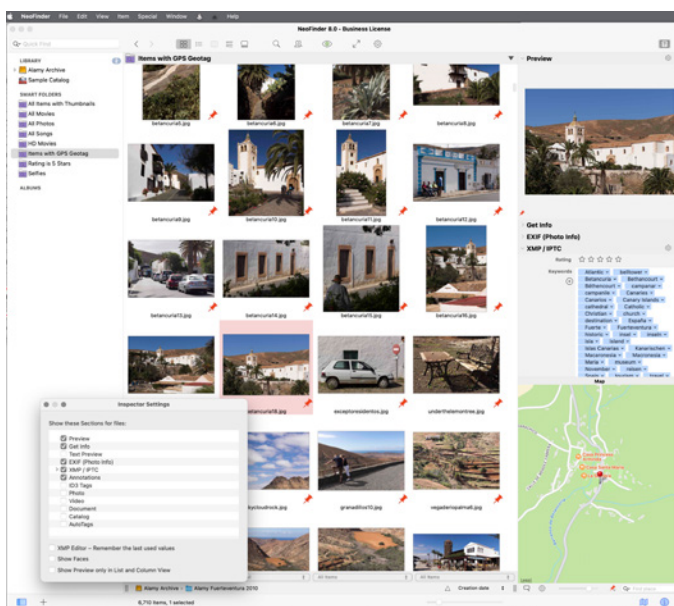
While 256GB SSS had seemed fine on the outgoing MacBook Air, it proved to be a poor choice on the new M1 version. But this laptop was bought to be a functional host for the Adobe *Creative Suite* when travelling – at least to run *Photoshop* – at the lowest cost.

Far better, for general professional location work, to get the 14 inch Pro with a higher end M1 processor, 16GB or more RAM, and at least 1TB SSD. It has the SD card slot, it's fast UHS-II compatible and can transfer very large raw files rapidly, it has other physical interface benefits, larger screen and more. But specified as we would like, it's over £2,500 rather than under £800.

When using the older MacBook Air or our regular MacBook Pro 16" which has excellent dual graphics processors the standard USB sockets offered a way to carry all essential files and work easily in the form of a single 128GB SanDisk Cruiser FIT (now Ultra FIT). This is



Left – this Zmuipng dock from Amazon looks great as a fit for the M1 MacBook Air, but it's got very tight connectors for cables and a loose fit for the dual connection to the laptop so removing a cable tends to pull the dock off instead. It's also only UHS-1 for SD cards. Below, the Leef USC-C memory (left) compared with 128GB of SanDisk plugged into a MacBook. Bottom, NeoFinder is a good DAM solution.



the drive which is about the size of a peanut, externally, when plugged in. It does not stick out far enough to risk being knocked and fits into the sleeve or bag compartment safely.

When deciding to buy a laptop with only USB-C connectors, this was a part of working set-up which was overlooked. Yes, you can get USB-C to USB-A adaptors (look on the facing page, two were given free with the fake SSD drive). But they stick out far enough to be vulnerable, and not ideal to hold something like that 128GB drive permanently. USB-C simply does not allow the chip to be built in to the connector, which is how they keep the USB-A micro memory sticks almost flush with the host machine.

That's one reason we suggest getting as much internal SSD as you can budget for – and that would apply to new Windows laptops as well. Nothing will ever be faster than your main internal SSD, *Photoshop* and the operating system will both want to use it for scratchdisk and virtual memory – and you also need it for storing working files from raw through to however many versions or layers you may create. If you shoot 40MP or larger raws you will be transferring gigabytes at a time from your card or camera for even a minimal professional shoot. Lightroom will create catalogues, Bridge will create (and cache) large previews.

A few years ago we put a 480GB SSD in a 2009 MacBook Pro and it

transformed it with rapid startup and shutdown, no fan coming on and no excessive heat which had both been a nuisance when it had the original 250GB HD. Needing to do some work using discontinued software, this was retrieved from a cupboard and a new battery ordered for £34. That made the old laptop properly usable despite having only 8GB RAM. It proved able to handle today's much larger file *Photoshop* work well enough using the Adobe CS6 still installed. The surprising thing was how fast CS6 seemed compared to today's versions but that is probably down to it being a much simpler program.

This old MacBook can not install the latest operating systems or software but it will not be forgotten. It's done the job of making a few days' work easier on the eye, keywording and captioning over 500 pictures using the old *Microsoft Expression Media* successor to *iView*. After Phase One took over the program and made it into *Media Pro* (RIP), they changed the fonts and the interface colour so instead of fairly clear well-formed text black on white there was smaller, badly rendered reversed out text incompatible with Retina displays.

After working with several legacy machines, along came the discovery of *NeoFinder*. For business it's a \$59 two-seat licence, and it does everything that *Media Pro* stopped doing, clearly and legibly on new systems. It also does everything and more that Adobe's memory-and-CPU hogging *Bridge* does, and when time permits, will be configured to replace *Bridge* and see how that goes.

Surprises along this road have been just how little 32GB extra memory cost to take the 2019 iMac up to 64GB (under £100) and how much any 2TB or larger SSD costs compared to 1TB or smaller. This led to intrigued interest in some apparently impossible low-priced SSDs popping up in Facebook ads, eBay and Amazon. And as you'll see – they are indeed impossible...





# The fake SSD drives which could cost you everything

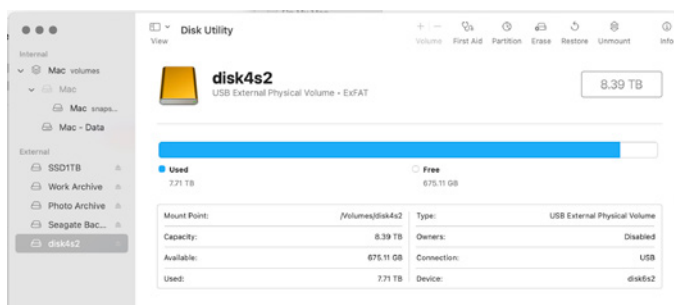
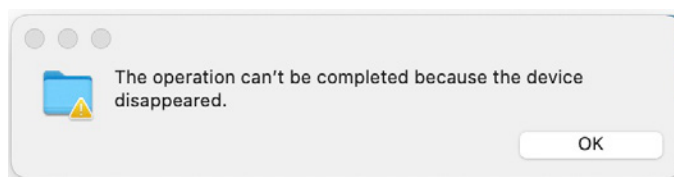
They look good and you can find them on Amazon, even Amazon Prime – fraudulently ‘fixed’ external solid state memory drives which resemble bona-fide items such as Samsung’s T7 and T5 designs, and appear to share exactly the same casings.

Given the way prices of media cards, computer RAM, portable hard disks and USB memory sticks have all fallen dramatically with ‘off brand’ products often half or less compared to trusted names, you may not find the idea of an \$89.99 import from China claiming to be an 8TB SSD impossible (found only via Facebook advertising) and a 2TB SSD for £65 (Amazon) seems just possible. In fact, it’s equally impossible for the price and if you do find any products like this you may be buying something worth nothing at all. A reliable Samsung T7 is around £120 for 1TB.

We decided to check out a Facebook ad for 2/4/8/16GB SSD drives (16GB really does push credibility) and to order the 8TB anonymous ‘Portable SSD’ using Paypal payment, which offers a reasonable degree of refund security if not the same watertight returns policy as Amazon.

The drive came from Shanghai Pinliang Network Technology Co., Ltd – though the sale was first identified as through Russian site Yandex, from Syntonia-UP, with an email confirmation from mzcustomerservice.com. On the delivery packet (Tracked 48, apparently UK posted) a return address in Southall UB2 5LF was shown.

Needless to say, the drive was not 8TB. Without breaking it open, it was possible to get past the firmware fakery making it report 8.39TB on Mac OSX *Disk Utility* and diagnose that it contained between 16GB and 24GB of slow (12MB/s) memory either reclaimed or repurposed from USB 1 memory stick production. Anyone transferring small files on to it might not notice that it did not live up to claims of 550MB/s USB 3.1



despite its neat USB-C connector. But once the files copied got to a certain limit – which appeared to be 16GB – the drive would just abort completely, unmount itself and ‘disappear’. The *Disk Utility* screen shot above shows that after copying this amount (in large raw files) 7.71TB of ‘space’ had been used and 675.11GB remained. An OS alert said the final raw file being copied could not as 458.25GB more was needed. It was a 120MB uncompressed Sony A7RIV raw.

The disk directory reported that there were entries beyond the physical addresses of the media. It’s a bit like putting an index for a thousand pages in a book with ten pages – 990 of the pages will

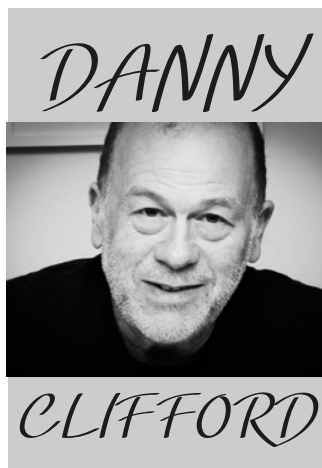
just not be there at all. Some kind of boot sector data, or firmware (generally suggested in reviews of these fake drives) makes the fraudulent product appear to be the full stated capacity.

The vendor, when told that we wanted a refund, first offered a 20%, then 40%, then 50% discount and effectively refused a return and full refund (saying the UK address shown was not able to accept returns). They then asked for further details of the order and tracking and payment method, so we dropped direct communication and simply reported the fake product to Paypal. However, we held little hope of getting a refund as these drives have been widely

sold, and often reported – there are *YouTube* videos and adverse reviews even breaking them open to show memory-stick parts glued inside. But they are still being sold. Researching reviews, I conclude that modest 2TB drives sold with names like ‘Genser’ and ‘XRayDrive’ by Amazon should be *treated with caution*. Buyers say they have similar very slow data transfer, and I doubt many are willing to do hours or even days of copying large files to find their true capacity. Many must be waiting as time-bombs, unreliable backup from phones and other devices.

The final outcome of our request for a full refund from Paypal – which included terms like fake and fraudulent in my reasons – was a full refund within a few days of reporting the fake product. Hopefully they also acted to prevent future advertisements but I doubt that is possible. Full marks to Paypal, zero to Facebook for their advertising policies.

– DK



## In on the makings of an album with 'DSB' – no diva!

*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>*

I hadn't worked with her before, but had been warned that I must only address her as either 'Dame Shirley' or 'DSB'. Suffice to say, when in 2007 I was asked to document the making of her album, 'The Performance' (released in 2009), I was expecting it to live up to its name. In fact, there were a few moments where it could have been even better titled, 'Walking on Eggshells'. But I have worked with all shades of diva in my career, so the occasional hairy moment was nothing I couldn't handle. Having said all that, aside from a couple of minor tantrums in Ireland and backstage at Glastonbury, DSB couldn't have been more lovely, extremely funny and laid back.

It was in Ireland that Shirley revealed how down-to-earth she could be. While telling me stories of her friendship with Elvis Presley including one very interesting night in her Las Vegas dressing room with Elvis after her show. I asked her if there was anything in her glittering career that she hasn't already done, seen or accomplished. She took a moment to think. "You know what I really wish I could do?", she said with a longing expression. "I want to be behind the bar, pulling pints in





'Eastenders'. I'd love that!"

A few months earlier, I was in a Hampstead, North London recording studio, on a bank holiday Monday, with a nervous Gary Barlow (Take That), David Arnold (James Bond) and a couple of others, eagerly awaiting Dame Shirley's arrival.

Gary had written her a song, called 'This Time', and this would be the first time she heard it. "I bloody hope she likes it." He said anxiously. Gary had written it specifically for her new album in mind. With that, DSB showed up.

After the usual greetings and kissing of cheeks, Gary sat down at the grand piano and started to perform the song and I mean, really perform. He played and sang like he was on stage at Wembley. He didn't hold back at all and was quite brilliant.

Dame Shirley was standing next to him with her MD, Mike along with producer, David Arnold. I slowly and very quietly crept down to the end of the piano and when Gary hit the big loud notes, I took a few shots. I only shot when he was playing or singing loud. I needed to be very discreet and as silent as possible and very 'fly on the wall'. Back then, in 2007, I was using Nikon D3 bodies and they were, like all other cameras, a little noisy. Now I shoot mostly on

Nikon Z7II mirrorless and they are silent if need be. Thankfully, Dame Shirley loved the song and the relief in the room was palpable.

With Gary's song a success, we all stood around chatting about various things, many of which were extremely funny. Gary told us that Sir Alan Sugar had wanted to hire 'Take That' for a private party. They couldn't do it as they were already on tour. Sir Alan found a substitute tribute act called 'Take VAT'. We all thought that was very funny. Then Dame Shirley told us, in slight outrage, about a tribute act she had recently seen in a bar abroad, called 'Surely Bassey.' "She was very good, this woman. But she kept doing this with her mouth..." She enacted an exaggerated gurn, wobbling her bottom lip and twirling her outstretched fingers. "I don't do that!" She said, doing it again. There she was: Shirley Bassey, doing an impression of a Shirley Bassey impersonator, doing an impression of Shirley Bassey. And it was quite convincing! "Ridiculous," She continued, "I don't do that. Do I do that?" The room went quiet. Looking directly at me, she asked again. "Do I do that Danny?" ... the room turned and looked at me expectantly.

"Absolutely not." I said.



## NEWS

### Free entry to London photo show with 100-plus exhibitors, March 16th-18th



**FREE** entry to the SWPP Convention's London photo show has been extended for *Cameracraft* readers right up to the day it opens, from the original deadline of February 28th. They told us that with nearly all visitors now registering on-line, and the process being so quick and reliable, it was possible to give free entry to accredited applications (the fact that you get *Cameracraft* puts you in the right category) and the £10 fee would only be charged if you turn up at the show without pre-registering.

There are over 100 trade exhibitors at the three-day event, which includes a packed programme to learn from by watching and listening to leading photographers. Superclasses, which are limited to 15 delegates, must be booked in advance. There's a schedule of paid workshops and seminars (Business School, Masterclass and Presentations) and a full timetable of free demos and seminars which you can't book – so register early to get information on these. Use the **CC10** code to get 10% off all paid classes. The show is at the Hammersmith Novotel London West, and accommodation is discounted if you quote The Societies' Convention, call +44 (0) 208 741 1555. The free Trade Show opening times are:

Thursday 18th March 2021 – 10:00–17:00

Friday 19th March 2021 – 10:00–17:00

Saturday 20th March 2021 – 10:00–16:00

See: <https://www.thesocieties.net/convention/>

### Special awards given by the Guild



**IN RECOGNITION** of contributions to photography, the Guild of Photographers makes awards which are announced at the annual dinner. Our columnist **Danny Clifford** was one of this year's recipients (on screen in the photo above quickly grabbed by assistant editor Diane on phone camera). He was not able to attend but delighted to find out he has been given a Special Contribution Award for his lifetime in the field.

An award was made to **David Islip**, well-known as a judge and mentor in other organisation as well as the Guild, with over 2,000 weddings under his belt and many successes in the WPPI competition. The third award was given to **Gavin Prest**, who has inspired many with his style and technical mastery, mentoring and judging. Gavin's role during the pandemic was pivotal as he created webinars which established him as a fine interviewer – a 'Michael Parkinson' for the hundreds of Guild members who logged in.





## Taking control of natural light in outdoor settings

Part Four of our series takes you outdoors into natural light as the days brighten up

**“To the dull mind all nature is leaden. To the illuminated mind the whole world burns and sparkles with light”**  
– Ralph Waldo Emerson

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](http://kennethmartinphotography.com) Training Website: [thestudiadoctor.co.uk](http://thestudiadoctor.co.uk)

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



I love natural light. In fact, the vast majority of my portraiture is undertaken with God's own light. On a commissioned job I always have flash and continuous lights with me but most of the time after my initial reconnaissance I end up finding some beautiful pockets of existing light, whether from a window, doorway or a nice top shade location outdoors.

Having taught photographic lighting in all its guises since 1989 (I started with Kodak Masterclasses at my studio in Innerleithen) it is evident that a lot of photographers struggle to see the light – literally to see the light. On a workshop, we go on location and when I ask the delegates to show me where they would shoot the image, it's normally a pretty area with a nice background they choose rather than the area with the most beautiful light.

One of the joys of the job is when they do finally see the light – that eureka moment when they understand that light is simply the most important aspect of the image – it is magic to observe the response when it happens. Once you grasp the fundamentals you never forget it. Ugly backgrounds and of course foregrounds can be rendered out of focus by using a wide aperture (the default setting for most of my portraiture). Remember portrait photography is about capturing the face, not the scene.

*Above: outdoor in the open on the left. Note the brightness of hair versus skin tones, and the slightly closed eyes. Right (and larger repro on the facing page) moving under top shade changes this balance – and allows an easier open gaze without discomfort.*

Some photographers struggle to get the studio lighting right, and that is just a simple job of moving a light in or out or up or down or indeed in and out from the sitter. Shooting on location, either indoors or outdoors using natural light is much harder to get just right, the light is fixed, you can't move it, you must instead move yourself and move your sitter to 'find' the perfect position to achieve the look you want.

Once you master the formula and understand the positions required it makes shooting on location a breeze, much quicker and more beautiful (in my opinion) than setting up lights. How many wedding photographers end up finding a lovely room to shoot the bridal portraits in and then reach into the bag for their 'security blanket' flash to bounce off the ceiling... and end up flattening the image and ruining the shot?

There is one aspect of lighting by using window light that gives a slightly different feel to shots taken with flash, a window is usually not a flat surface at an angle of 45 degrees which flash with a soft box often is. This gives a slightly different aspect to the finished shot which gives a more natural appearance to the finished image, equally beautiful in my view. If it is a full-sized window or door the light can be directed more by blocking the bottom with a black screen or diffuser and lighting the subject using the top only.

### Take cover outdoors

This article looks at shooting outdoors. No matter if it is bright unbroken sunlight or a dull grey day, the same results can be achieved if you have some top cover. This is the key to getting your outdoor portraiture consistent and beautiful.

Top shade is vital, especially as the brighter the day the more the light will be hitting directly on to the top of the heads and not the face. I have seen three or four stops more light coming from above on a bright day and one or two stops even on a duller day. Using unshaded light will give ugly shadows on the face creating 'panda' eyes.

How you correct this on groups, couples or individuals is simply to move them just under some top cover – trees, building, overhang or whatever it is. There is a very old analogy which I was taught back in the late 80s which actually works – 'The First Tree in the Woods' – so what does that mean? It simply means take your sitters and move them under the first overhang, not too far so the light disappears and not in far enough so that the top light is still hitting them. Just enough, if you get them to go in backwards you can physically see the change on their faces as they come to life as the light changes.

Once you see this and realise how easy it is you will never shoot in any other way. I know that there will be those who say that not every venue or location has top shade and that is true of beaches for instance. You can deal with it and by adding fill-in flash or a reflector. I'd say 90% of locations I





Above, the natural light in the left-hand shot is slightly to the left and above as the catchlights in the eyes show. It's like a classical studio set-up. Right, moving the camera position retains this quality for different angle. Below, 'the first tree' top cover creates glowing frontal light for this wedding group.



Extra tip: note that Kenny has shot this in backlight – the tree casts its shade on the lawn. If direct sun was shining on the grass the reflected light would produce a green cast. Because the grass is in shade, the skin tones are pure.



have shot at have some sort of top cover.

So how do you achieve different lighting patterns when using outdoor lighting?

We are talking smaller groups and individual portraits here as a big group would normally be shot with frontal light. But it is possible to get split, profile, beauty, 45 degrees looking off camera and looking at camera images by simply moving shooting position.

The ideal lighting scenario is to find a 'pocket' of light at approximately 45 degrees from the subject's nose when they are looking at the camera. That's the same position as we set up the soft box in the studio (see previous articles). As you are walking along the edge of a wood this can often be easily found, take a meter reading from the subject's face towards the light, exposing for the highlights. This will normally give you beautiful studio quality lighting.

To then achieve the other lighting patterns, move around the sitter and shoot, as you have taken the exposure for the highlights the results will be very consistent throughout all the images. So, for flat beauty light move your position so that the a clearing in woods is directly behind you. For profile, move to a position so the light is coming from 45 degrees behind the subject's nose.

This sounds quite complicated, but I can assure you that the results are spectacular and repeatable and once you learn this technique and can see the light it is so easy. Like a musician with perfect pitch who can name individual notes and chords instantly on hearing a song, with a bit of practice you can see all the lighting possibilities in any given scene instantly.

I especially like shooting on days where the sun is unbroken and intense. The important thing



*Top right: taking the previous setting through to full profile lighting by shooting at 90° to the frontal view. Above: photographer friend Simon John in shadow with a bright Prague sky providing studio quality lighting. Right and below: top cover outdoor light is ideal for child and family shoots.*





to remember is to get your sitter to look towards the main light source, it is almost impossible to get a successful image with the subject looking at the camera in this scenario but try some new things and some very exciting results await. Remember that incident light metering for the highlights, from the subject position directly to the sun, is vital. If you use camera metering, you may need a minus EV compensation and bracketing. Learn to use a separate light meter if you can.

The other thing I love to do is shoot with backlight and expose for the faces. Just let it do its own thing, blast out the background and really make your subjects glow.

The next article in the series will explore shooting with natural window light indoors.



*Two right hand examples: using hard direct sun can suit some subjects and shooting styles. Below: exposing for the faces in strong backlight transforms Edinburgh's Princes Street.*





# Tamron 35-150mm $f2.0-2.8$ Di III VXD

It's the middle of a dark winter and the new Tamron super-fast 'group to portrait' zoom has been doing the rounds of dealers, and we get the chance to use the lens for a good test period just as the days are getting longer. It's 3pm and it looks like 4pm with heavy cloud. A quick exposure check says why this lens will be a priority purchase, in a hurry, for wedding photographers. Fortunately the days get brighter and longer during the time trying out this versatile lens.

So many weddings have been postponed due to earlier Covid venue restrictions. To get 1/125s shutter speed, which is very much needed to ensure expressions and fairly small movements are not motion-blurred, it was ISO 2500 at  $f2.8$  on the day the lens arrived. Between this and the end of useful daylight that changes rapidly to ISO 6400 and beyond, and eventually to 1/30s. Any sensible wedding photographer would now be digging out the  $f1.4$  lenses, firing up the battery flash kit and hoping the indoor setting works well.

However, there's a zoom now for Sony full frame users which can cover most weddings or outdoor portrait sessions on its own, replacing a fast 35mm and 50mm and most of the range of a 70-200mm  $f2.8$ .

The new Tamron 35-150mm manages to hold its widest aperture of  $f2$  from 35mm to just short of 40mm, and doesn't drop to  $f2.8$  until 80mm.

|        |             |
|--------|-------------|
| $f2$   | 35 to 39mm  |
| $f2.2$ | 40 to 59mm  |
| $f2.5$ | 60 to 79mm  |
| $f2.8$ | 80 to 150mm |

This is good, as so many zooms with a fast minimum focal length lose a third or half a stop with a mere nudge of the ring – those 17-35mm  $f2.8-4$  lenses made for SLRs were often  $f3.2$  at 18mm! With studio flash you might set  $f2$  and start work at the short end of the zoom, but with so many systems studio or location now being TTL



The Tamron 35-150mm is 155mm long and 90mm in diameter – seen on Sony A7RIV.

and high-speed sync of one kind or another this probably doesn't matter. Set the lens to  $f2.8$  or any smaller aperture, and it acts as a constant aperture zoom

How about the chosen focal length range? I'd argue that 28-135mm, with similar aperture benefits, is more useful because there's a chance of never needing to change lenses. There's a quick way to check what matches 35mm for groups, using just the long side of a landscape frame. It's almost the same as the 36mm dimension of the sensor, with an angle of  $55^\circ$  covered horizontally. If you've got an APS-C sensor it matches 23mm, on MFT 17mm, on Fujifilm GF and other popular 50MP medium format models it's 44mm, on the biggest like Hasselblad HD6-100C it's 53mm.

This angle of view works well because many rooms have Golden Ratio dimensions, not unlike this A4 page. Stand near one end of a 5 x 7m room, put a group at a



Above left, 35-150mm seen next to Tamron 70-180mm  $f2.8$ . Lens front element with very effective coating. Below, Custom switch, buttons, AF/MF button; USB-C port for Tamron Lens Utility customisation.



Below, the lens hood with single bayonet release button.



comfortable distance away from the opposite wall, and you'll cover it well with some of the side walls visible. In a square room, you can just take in the opposite wall with no sides visible. The working distance gives scope for bounced flash, there's no distortion of body or face width towards the ends of a group even if it's tightly composed.

In fact having the wide-angle end limited to 35mm may improve your group photography and weddings in particular by making you keep that little bit of extra distance.

However, the real world sometimes throws difficult spaces and camera distances at you. This new Tamron is not an all-in-one outfit. It's almost essential to have a 24mm, or a zoom such as Tamron's 17-28mm or Sony's 16-35mm.

The optical performance of the 35-150mm is well above expectations for an  $f2-2.8$  design. It's better than any past attempt at  $f2.8$  on a similar range, and this is down to mirrorless versus SLR body thickness. You can use it wide open at any focal length and be sure of sharpness in the plane of focus, and that is pretty flat corner to corner despite considerable pincushion distortion growing from 50mm to 150mm. The built-in and Adobe lens profiles are essential but not identical – while in-camera JPEGs are very well balanced across the frame, the default Adobe vignetting correction is much too strong.

Without correction this lens loses between one and two stops of light in the outer field when used wide open, with a central zone of around 20mm diameter representing the nominal aperture. The lens profiles boost the gain to compensate and if you set the Sony A7RIV to its ISO invariant optimum of 400, faces at the extreme ends of a group may be recorded as if ISO 1600 was used. For the best results, shoot raw and don't underexpose (no need to follow the expose to the right mythology though). If you use the Adobe Lens Profile,





The statue of Sir Alec Douglas Home at The Hirsle estate, Coldstream, is a rare example of a life-size bronze standing on a soap box height plinth. The versatility of the 35-150mm range and the fast aperture is demonstrated here – above, 35mm and f9 for the depth of field; right and far right, both at 150mm and f2.8 from different distances, showing the bokeh pattern; below left and right, both at 35mm and f2, showing how a wide angle and closer viewpoint can yield great differences between shots. The Hirsle estate has excellent walks, crafts shops and tea-rooms, and is now open.





adjust the vignetting to minus 60 for full aperture shots if you want to remove the effect. If you stop down to  $f5.6$  it's pretty much gone anyway.

There's a strong case for just letting the wide aperture vignetting be – don't correct it at all. Many pictures will look better, including landscapes, portraits and most street shots. The distortion correction, on the other hand, is worth leaving turned on. Because the lens has pincushion rather than barrel distortion over most of its range, the corners don't get stretched, it's the centre of the image which is expanded slightly. As this is the sharpest area the correction tends, if anything, to even out the finest detail rendering over the frame unlike barrel distortion correction which degrades the corners visibly in many cases.

When Sony's 90mm G macro was constantly being called the best lens ever, I tried three examples and all fell short of the standard expected. Just for interest I set the Tamron 35-150mm to 90mm (actually reported 91...) and shot a series from wide open to smaller apertures, on the same architectural distance subject I'd used for the Sony. Despite being on 60MP not 42MP the Tamron zoom was clearly much sharper across the frame than the Sony.

But – it's a fast superzoom. Plenty of expert voices on Facebook will assure you it can not possibly be as good as a modest range zoom or an acclaimed macro prime. Don't take their word for it, try the lens. And now we need to look at the downside of such an ambitious superzoom – it's a large and heavy lens, it uses an unusual internal and extending hybrid zoom design, and it doesn't focus into the semi-macro range like most other Tamron and competing lenses now do.

My first step was to replace my slim camera strap with an extra wide heavy duty neoprene Optek – the springy shock-damping handled almost 1.9kg of combined camera and lens round my neck well enough. Often I hold my camera in my right hand ready to lift to the eye and shoot, and don't let the weight hang on a strap. It was like having a 70-200mm  $f2.8$



*Vignetting: top, 150mm  $f2.8$ . below 35mm  $f2$  – left hand, uncorrected, right hand with Adobe Profile (too strong at 35mm). Sharpness: left, 300dpi sections from centre of each frame, 53 x 80cm print actual size detail.*

to handle and many users are happy with that all day. I'm not that keen on the 82mm filter thread, but that's what it has to be. The lens hood has a single bayonet release button set in its rim, and you need to get it the right way up to fit. It's very secure once on.

Then you come to the advanced aspects – this is a very fast focusing near-silent voice coil drive (VXD) design, and has three control buttons plus zoom lock, AF/MF and a three-position Custom function switch. With the aid of USB connected software (no dock needed) the lens can be customised for aspects like focus barrel direction/speed and even function (change to control  $f$ -stop), and two preset focus points via the buttons.

The zoom ring is placed near the body with the focus ring being the main much deeper front barrel. This is the opposite to existing Tamron zooms and takes some getting used to, but it's practical with the size and weight of the lens.

With minimum focusing of 85cm at 150mm to 33cm at 35mm, the subject scale is 1:5.9 and 1:5.7 respectively – that's a field around 9.5 x 14cm, so not in the wedding ring shot class but fine



for flowers, hands and many other close-ups. The 9-blade aperture creates a very attractive smooth defocus and if there are lights or candles in the background this lens gives full aperture bokeh discs, not clipped ellipses, at focal lengths from 35 (f2) to 60mm (f2.5) and with only a hint of cat's eye shape at the extremes of the shot at 80mm (f2.8). Longer than this and you'll see some degree of this effect though using an APS-C or smaller crop cuts out the more visibly ellipsoid highlight bubbles. Depending on the light source you'll see some 'orange peel' texture which is typical of zooms using moulded aspherical elements – there are many ways to remove this from finished edits. There are no 'onion ring' effects which are much harder to remove and occur with lenses using older aspherical moulding methods.

As for real cat's eyes, the lens behaves perfectly with Sony's animal and human face detection and eye AF and even managed to keep up with the most impossible close range movement of chickens – fine for eye sharp focus if not for the shutter speed.

This lens has a USB-C connection (no cover, it's a waterproof port) and the *Tamron Lens Utility*, on 64-bit PC or Mac, can customise functions. After thinking the utility was not working (on three different systems) because it said *Lens Not Connected* when it was, I found you ignore this and click on the *Start* button for the functions you want to modify – like changing the 1, 2 and 3 positions of the Custom switch to alter the behaviour of the focus ring (direction, linearity, use as aperture ring) or lens buttons (AF/MF, A-B Focus, Preset Focus, Assign Function from Camera, or Clear Settings). All three lens buttons do the same, which might be missing some useful tricks such as two focus points assigned to different buttons. A-B focus and Preset distance have selectable focus speeds, and are strictly Movie functions (you have to press the Record button in Movie mode to program the distances, then use the lens buttons to activate the focus change during filming). The lens is fairly silent in focusing but an external microphone is



At 150mm, looking down a row of statues outside The Haining, Selkirk, a former private mansion now arts centre and public park owned by the town. At f2.8 (left) only one figure is sharp, but very well defined against the trees. At f11 (right) the figure beyond is just acceptably sharp, but the background is now distracting.



desirable. It has almost no focus breathing regardless of the focal length set, though use at full aperture will produce some shifts as the bokeh expands and contracts – the real angle of view remains very constant from close-up to infinity.

This lens costs £1,599 so you need to *know* you need it to invest. It hardly came off the camera in six weeks partly because of the convenience of not having to change lenses, and just carrying the camera and this one lens.



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

Bokeh Airey discs, above: top pair f2.8 150mm and f2.8 107mm; second row f2.8 82mm and f2.5 60mm. Below, 150mm and f2.8, Animal Eye AF, and not just the eyes are sharp – it's not like shooting at 200mm and f2.





# Paying it forward or giving it back? Two of our columnists look at the dilemma of working for 'free'.



## Stepping stones to new paying clients

**W**hy would I ever give away my work for free? Is there a benefit? Well, not if you undersell your work and devalue what you have built up over years. Don't just throw it all away.

How many times has the phone rung or that email arrived... "we are a business running an event, a charity trying to get some pictures to help us in a campaign, we have no budget to spend on photography, BUT if you take photographs for us, we will mention your name and it will be good for you!" Well, I can't spend your "good for me" promotion and goodwill on camera gear or in the local food shop!

I am sometimes guilty of being harsh – "You will be getting paid



has become more and more clear.

In 2021 I was commissioned to produce video content from set up and staging with filming to final delivery, a challenge that opened my skills to several potential new clients, as well as giving me the possibility to take an idea I had been working on, well on a blank sheet of paper, just scribbling, from that page into a reality.

How can you turn a single commission into an avenue for income? After a long consideration on projects that I wanted to work on for my own benefit and some research into self-publishing and documentary projects, I approached all the companies involved in the video project with an offer to build a photographic record and documentary library of their history, using video and still imagery. This would build into an archive, a free project, a chance for me to "give back" to my local community.

Then how do I turn this "freebie" to my advantage? By building in a set of guidelines for use and asking each subject of the images to agree to a model release form, giving me the possibility of turning the whole project in to an exhibition or display later. Each company would be required to credit me fully and would not be permitted to use any image commercially without paying a licence fee. All those being models or as subjects will be offered the chance of prints for personal use at a reduced price and the organisation being able to use the images in archive with suitable credits.

I am not a photographer who likes to work for free but considering the recent changes this potentially opens an avenue to make an extra income, initially from the print sales to the subjects, secondary from the "free" advertising of my services from the credit required with the online use of images. In this I would hope to find some feedback, and positive response.

The final boost could be the ability to create an exhibition of the images and work toward a potential publishing of a complementary book or print run that would be able to raise my profile and income further.

So is "working for free" a good business model? Most definitely NO, but does using the potential costs to your business to develop some work, possibly, with so many people using mobile phones and wanting to use cameras to photograph anything and everything for free and post via social media, card dumps without edits.

By taking the skills we have, and trying to find avenues that have the potential to yield clients, sometimes it is worth giving just a little back, paying it forward, and sharing some of our hard-learned skills, and abilities.

But remember there is no value in a free business model – keep striving to be your best but just now and again think about what benefits can be gained by opening a new door and taking that step to help someone.



*Rob's photographs on this page all connect with his local community. The gin is an intro to still life work and a new distillery. The house is a community owned arts centre, illuminated for Armistice Day. The horse – that's at the core of Selkirk's Common Riding annual traditions. [robgrayphotographer.co.uk](http://robgrayphotographer.co.uk)*

for everything you do, why would I do a freebie for you?"

Maybe the recent pandemic and all its associated stress and changes has made me soft, or maybe just maybe the chance to "give something back" and look at the possibilities that it may bring







IAIN POOLE

## Help yourself by helping others – for your state of mind and state of your business

When choosing the path of the photographer whether you want it or not, you inevitably end up in a very privileged position. As we are asked by our clients to capture unique and sometimes very personal moments, more than often these times can not be recreated and more than often are out of our control. While we may be able to control light and our composition some events leave us at the mercy of other factors, and it is our responsibility as creatives to ensure we capture those moments.

Being a creative can sometimes be a solitary path and this can, at times, make it hard for you to interact with the wider community. It can hinder your growth as a photographer should you wish to transition into another genre which is out of your comfort zone. I am fortunate to live in a lovely rural community by the sea which helps drive my creativity. I'm also conscious that with it being small I need to engage with the community to find new clients.

A community is only as strong as the people who are part of it, and not every deed should require remuneration, but it does help. That been said, more than often the act of giving back will not only be better for your mental well-being but also your business.

Over the years I have always tried to give back to the community as much as I can with my photography by photographing local events, such as capturing the energy of the Hornsea Carnival.

More recently I have taken things further and I have become involved with coaching children's rugby, namely under eights – yes you have read that correctly, a parent with two grown children is choosing to give up their Sundays to coach other people's children for free!

You may ask how all this links into any photography business; well, this is where giving back allows you to move forward. As children develop in their chosen sports parents wish to record their

child's progress. While every family member may have a camera in their pocket the results are never the same as those a professional photographer can produce.

Offering an hour or maybe two are your local sports club to photograph the children while they play, and allowing the club to showcase your work on their social media or websites with links to your business, gives you a wider audience and access to people who may not have been your clients previously. This allows your business to reach a wider audience organically with only a small investment of time from yourself

Social circles in clubs are also very tight knit. Once you become known to the club, you'd be surprised how fast your name and your business will be mentioned to others and more than often this will lead to new clients and new work.

And yes, I love coaching these children – what they have given me back far outweighs the time I have given to them. In addition it has also secured me various commercial commissions from the local area, and all while I was 'giving back'.

The images of the rugby for this article have been provided by another local photographer, Carl Wiles – I asked Carl to attend and capture some images... as it is hard to do that while coaching!

Remember to move forward we sometimes have to give back.



*Iain K Poole is a Master Craftsman of the Guild of Photographers based in the seaside town of Hornsea in rural East Yorkshire. Left: Iain always covers the annual Hornsea Carnival.*

<https://www.iainpoole.com>



Rugby photographs by Carl Wiles – Iain volunteers as a coach.







## A new life starting on the shore – birth of a beach baby

Several years ago, I was lucky enough to stay in a cottage on the Lincolnshire coast with private access to part of the beach not accessible to other members of the public. It was a few miles along the coast from the Donna Nook National Nature Reserve and at the far end of the area used by the Ministry of Defence as a bombing target range. Of course, that meant there were two things to be mindful of – the wellbeing of the seals and the red flags, which clearly meant no beach access at that time.

On this particular day, the 13th November, having checked it was safe, we decided to venture down to the shoreline. There were just a few seals scattered along the beach, all at a good distance, but even so it's important to keep a watchful eye as seals are not only protective of their young they are also inquisitive and will sometimes move closer to check you out!

As we walked along the beach, we were conscious of a couple of female seals to our right. They seemed quite settled and uninterested in our movements, but we kept as close to the waters edge as possible in order to keep a good distance between us.

At that moment a Chinook helicopter flew overhead. It caught our attention, and I instinctively pointed my camera upwards to grab a few shots. As we watched it disappear over the sea, I suddenly heard what I can only describe as a strange 'swooshing' sound on the sand and, as I turned around I saw the most incredible sight – a tiny newborn seal lying in a pool of blood! I quickly signalled to the two friends I was with, and we immediately dropped to the ground. It was so important that we lay still as the pup was just starting to lift its head and wriggle around.

Mother and pup bonding is crucial in those first few moments

so we didn't want to do anything to create the slightest distraction. It was a totally awe inspiring sight to witness. As I lay there, my camera on the ground in front of me I was able to grab a few shots but focussing was difficult with limited movement. The most I could do was to slowly nudge the camera and bulky 500mm lens along the sand. No award winning shots, but a witness account of a new born seals first hour of life. A second female adult close by seemed quite interested but didn't pose any threat to the new mum and her pup. We lay on the ground for an hour during which time it was fascinating watching the change in appearance as the pup's fur dried out and fluffed up. Once the pup had suckled and we were confident that mum and baby were settled, we slowly moved on and left them alone. It was a truly remarkable experience.



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



Series taken in the space of 35 minutes. Canon 1DX MkII, EF 500mm f4 IS II USM lens set to between f4 and f5 at ISO 1250 to 3200.







Photo Shannon Wild: 150-500mm | 369mm | F/6.3 | 1/1250 | ISO 400

# 150-500<sub>mm</sub> F/5-6.7 Di III VC VXD

With its lightweight and compact design, the 150-500mm F/5-6.7 Di III VC VXD (model A057) is ideally suited for Sony E mount cameras. The built in VC image stabilisation gives you even more confidence when shooting handheld, which combined with its high speed and precise VXD focussing motor, offers great versatility for a variety of subjects including wildlife, landscape, sports and action photography.



## TAMRON





# UNFORGOTTEN

Gary Friedman talks to volunteer groups on both sides of the Atlantic who help honour and remember the shortest of lives

Maddux Achilles Haggard was born on February 4, 2005, with a condition called myotubular myopathy, which prevented him from breathing, swallowing, or moving on his own. The following six days, his parents Mike and Cheryl Haggard sat by his side with questions that had no answers.

Cheryl tried to create memories of their time together using her own digital camera. "Every time I tried to look through the viewfinder, my vision was blurred by tears." In reviewing the pictures she captured, Cheryl said, "I saw our tear-stained cheeks, our red swollen eyes, our forced smiles, and the fear in our faces as we looked into the camera." She also saw the background of the sterile inside of a hospital room.

On the sixth day of Maddux's young life, his parents made the excruciating decision to remove him from life support. But Cheryl also knew she wanted professional images of Maddux that she could hang on her wall alongside the portraits of her other children – ones that did not look like poor-quality snapshots in a depressing place.

"Maddux deserved that space on our wall. I could not comfortably hang those raw color pictures I had taken. The color images bring back the reality of that day. I wanted heirloom portraits as a way to remember and honor our son," said Cheryl. "This is what we needed to bring healing to our hearts."

## The start of something

It was then that her husband called photographer Sandy Puc' to take black-and-white portraits of them cradling their son. Sandy created the most incredible images of Maddux while he was still alive, and also took sensitive images after he had died peacefully in her



Above, two of the photographs of Maddux taken with Mike and Cheryl Haggard by Sandy Puc'. Below and facing page: NILMDTS's work continues.



arms. "That night was the worst night of my life. But when I look at the images, I am not reminded of my worst night. I'm reminded of the beauty and blessings Maddux continues to bring to our lives", said Cheryl.

Those tender photographs inspired Cheryl Haggard and Sandy Puc' to create *Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep* in 2005 as a nonprofit organization. NILMDTS exists to give bereaved families the gift of free professional heirloom portraits to bring healing and comfort. The organization is now well-established in hospitals within the USA, with a small presence also in Ireland, South Africa, and Canada. Currently they provide these services to about 5,000 families a year in the USA, about one-fifth of the estimated need.

## Volunteers worldwide

"Our photographers don't fit any particular demographic – we have young moms and dads with kids, attorneys, business owners, career people... it runs the gamut", remarks Burt Rich, one of the organization's Volunteer Coordinators and Area Coordinator trainer. "We even get a lot of retired people who are seeking to do something good and worthwhile".

Burt's story about how he joined the organization mirrors that of most volunteers interviewed: his family had suffered a tragedy, and he wanted to give back. His high-school-aged grandson, T.J., was an outstanding athlete in high school – one of the top 500 junior football players in the nation. Two years later he had died of cancer.

"Not long after that, my wife was reading an article about an organization that does photos for families who never get to take their baby home from the hospital." Having been an amateur photographer most of his life, it



sounded interesting, so he called the area coordinator for Huntsville Alabama. It turns out they knew each other through his church. “I was in your children’s choir!”, she said. He took that as a sign.

“Everything happens for a reason”, he says, starting to tear up. “I never guessed it would be as fulfilling as it is. But I tell you, when I walk out of the hospital, I don’t have any problems.”

## The screening process

Anyone wishing to volunteer their services must pass through a Membership Application Committee first – these are generally master photographers. They evaluate the images that the applicants submit, then there’s a rubric of 1-20 of five traits, including focus, composition, and lighting. If one or two skills are in need of improvement they’re coupled with a mentor for awhile. “We don’t want to hear how you *can* shoot in low light, we want to know *how* you use light”, says Burt Rich. “We teach off-camera lighting, be it a reflector or a light or large window. We don’t tell photographers what they need to use.” Other than that, bring your standard portraiture technique and a good dose of empathy.

## Remember My Baby

The biggest obstacle to getting more photographers to sign up is the perception that the responsibility might be too emotionally overwhelming. “A lot of people say that” says Cheryl Johnson, co-founder of the *Remember My Baby* organization, which has been doing similar work in the UK since 2014, and is supported by The Guild of Photographers (*as Gary found out after coming forward with the proposal to write about NILMDTS – Ed.*).

“Our photographers are normally confident with what they do with their camera. It’s the interaction with the families that’s the problem: ‘What on earth do I say when I walk in that room? You can’t just say ‘Hi, how are you doing?’ That’s what they’re scared of – the human contact aspect.”

Here’s where the training really helps. “To this day I take a big

**nilmdts**  
Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep



*Photographs courtesy of Now I Lay Me Down To Sleep, with permission of those involved to allow use in this publication.*



breath, and I walk in and I introduce myself” says Ms Johnson. “And I would normally say something like, ‘Hello, my name is Cheryl, and I’m here today to take beautiful pictures of Baby Charlie’. And I always call them ‘Mum and Dad’ because they are – especially if it’s their first baby. Normally that evokes a reaction – ‘Oh, a stranger just called us ‘mum and dad.’ And someone other than the midwife just used Charlie’s name. Out loud!” That helps them relax.

“Then I tell them a little bit about what I’m going to do. Normally they’re in a daze and they won’t remember half of it. Sometimes they can’t even remember if it was a man or a woman who came. It’s from lack of sleep, it’s from grief, sometimes the mother has a lot of drugs.”

## Practical aspects

A typical photographic session lasts between 30-45 minutes, and is comprised of standard newborn poses and family portraits. And it’s perfectly OK to capture the parents crying during the shooting – you want the portraits to be honest and truthful. Often photographers have the additional challenge of shooting around I.V. and intubation tubes. The trick there is to concentrate on other parts of the body, such as just the hands or feet.

Another big help is to have a photographer’s assistant help with your sessions, a service available to NILMDTS photographers. “Assistants do many useful things – hold reflectors, pose the baby (so you don’t have to take gloves on and off 20 times) and help in countless other ways”, says Mr Rich. “But to me, the nicest part about having an assistant is that once the session is over, and you walk out those two swinging doors, you’ve got somebody you can talk to and unpack that session with who was there. Having an assistant can really help you emotionally.”

The volunteering experience doesn’t have to be disruptive to your life. “I’ve been doing this coming up on two years” says Tricia Smith, who volunteers with NILMDTS in Tulsa, Oklahoma. “I happen to work at a newborn nursery at a hospital. And so I see







the medical side of what these parents go through as they're grieving. Knowing that I could potentially help alleviate some of that by giving them photographs that will last a lifetime and give them something to look back on and know that their baby was real and was here for a moment in time.

"The most valuable part of the training was how to interact with the families. In terms of ways to approach them about things, and what to say, what not to say. Treat the baby like she's a live baby. Talk to him or her. Call him by his name. All of those things that make it a personal experience for the family. They also teach the importance of portrait lighting – whether it be LEDs, off-camera flash, or light from a large window."

"You don't have to be on call every day", she says. "They just want you to live your life. Only accept the assignment if you're available. If there's no photographer available, the parents can always have hospital staff take pictures and then send the photos to volunteer retouchers. There's three of us in the Tulsa, Oklahoma, region and we'll text each other



*Hands and feet are remembered in their own right. Top, from NILMDTS, above from RMB. Details may also be easier to handle emotionally than pictures which are a portrait of very premature or miscarried babies, like the examples below from Remember My Baby volunteers. Cheryl Johnson has been awarded the British Empire Medal for her work creating RMB, and in February the group handled its 5,000th assignment.*

to see who can make the call. But there's no guilt involved if you turn it down."

How many calls a month can a volunteer expect? "We frame that question differently", says Burt Rich. "We ask volunteers, 'What was your expectation when you joined us? Did you expect to do 1 session a month? Two a month?' Then we try to meet that expectation. We don't want to burn people out."

Any advice for someone considering it but aren't sure about the emotional weight of the assignment? "You're probably stronger than you think you are", says Tricia Smith. "And although it might be emotionally difficult to see the parents going through such a painful time, the reward that you get knowing that you are giving them something that will help them through the grieving process makes it considerably less difficult."

Or as Cheryl Haggard, NILMDTS's founder, succinctly puts it: "Each life, no matter how brief, deserves to be honored."



*Left: two approaches from members of the UK's Remember My Baby group. Right, a gathering of their photographers produced a distinctive collective circle. Far right, an affiliation identity card for a volunteer with NILMDTS.*



If you would like information on the organizations in this article, or would like to volunteer as either a photographer, a photographer's assistant, or a digital retoucher, please visit:

<https://www.nowilaymedowntosleep.org/>  
<https://remembermybaby.org.uk/>





# Reaching across the void



At the Guild of Photographers Awards in February, Neil Bremner entered an excellent print of the image on the right into the print competition and critique. The tiny hand retouched into place was hardly noticed until the audience and judges studied the shot. Afterwards, Neil explained its significance – it is a motif used in all the pictures he has made to support parents of miscarried or still births.

“Some have never managed to carry any pregnancy to term”, he writes. “Some have suffered one and others have suffered multiple miscarriages; some miscarried in the first trimester and others have had the trauma of a still birth. One couple had suffered a miscarriage just four weeks before sitting for me and for some it’s been many years – but regardless of their story, each and every parent here has a common bond.”

The idea for the tiny hands – posed by four different



*Shelley Rigden: “I sadly have lost five babies but I am truly blessed to have five beautiful children that I get to hold every day. I lost my first baby at 17 due to domestic violence, then another when I was 22. I then lost three more in my 40s. The support that was available was non-existent, which was the hardest thing to cope with.”*

babies – came from words in Ed Sheeran’s song *Small Bump* – “You can wrap your fingers ’round my thumb”.

Neil took the project forward during lockdown, and the 20 parents he photographed did not know the hand would be added in until they saw the final results. His self-portrait (*left*) is included, and like the others has a short statement to go with it – “My wife and I suffered our first miscarriage 12 years ago; however this would not be our last. The final miscarriage happened when our eldest was three and because we didn’t want to tell her what had happened, we started trying to get pregnant again within a few days. The grief finally hit me 10 months after our second daughter was born and I broke down. We both agreed that after our second daughter, we couldn’t deal with any more potential losses and so our family is now complete.”

From this project, Neil created a section of his Made Portraits website titled “You Were Our



*Neil discusses his print with judges Panikos Hajistilly and David Islip.*

Baby” (see [madeportraits.com](http://madeportraits.com)). He also published the series using Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. It drew the attention of local media and gained coverage on radio.

Neil’s business focuses on social photography from his barn studio near Glastonbury, but he’s best known for his carefully styled and lit product photography (especially of sunglasses) which he demonstrated in a workshop at the Guild’s event.







*Above: this photograph of Lizzie Power was featured in the national press (Metro): "I lost my first baby, during my first pregnancy. No one tells you when you get pregnant, that it could go wrong, that one in four pregnancies end in miscarriage. I remember very clearly going to the toilet and seeing blood. Fear and panic set in, as I instinctively realised and knew that something was very wrong. Our bean was nicknamed 'Tiny' from the time we knew we were expecting, and was due January 17th. Thoughts of baby Tiny, come and go all the time, but that date is etched in my memory and always hurts. When you miscarry you go through a grieving process, not just for the baby you lost, but for the future you had planned that is also lost."*

*Left, Rob Ayers: "My wife and I are due to have what people refer to as our first baby in the summer of 2020. After losing five babies in the past, it's hard to see it in this way but sitting for this project has finally allowed us to acknowledge that the pain we felt and still feel is fine. The anxiety in this pregnancy due to all that has happened before has been very hard on both my wife and I and we still can't believe that we may actually have a baby to hold in the near future."*

*A happy postscript from Neil: "I am delighted to say that Lizzy and Rob went on to have the most beautiful little baby boy during the 2020 lockdown."*





## Life, death and in between – or after...

When I was told that a general theme for this issue involved life and death, for some reason my brain started at the death end. Regular readers of this column will already know that I collect a wide range of cameras, but I am also interested in the images they produce. After all, that was the reason they were made in the first place.

Although it may sound gruesome to us today, premature death was a common family event throughout the early history of photography and, in Victorian times especially, it was not uncommon for people to have images made of their deceased family members. Depending on where you look, the infant mortality rate in Victorian England in the mid to late 1800s shows that between a third and possibly up to a half of children didn't make it past their fifth birthday. It was just a fact of life that most families experienced the death of a child and often sought ways for them, as well as older family members, to be remembered.



Victorian Post Mortem photography – images courtesy of Ron Cosens, <https://www.cartedeviseite.co.uk>



Above: two examples of 'Spirit' 3D photo pairs where 'guardian angels' hover around a child's bed. Courtesy of Alan Judge of Vintage Collected Photography.

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](mailto:info@cameravalues.com) or on Facebook as Monark Cameras <https://www.monarkcameras.com>

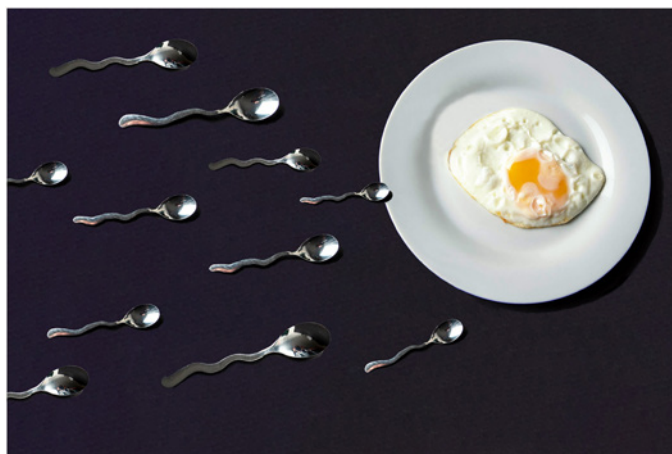
Although some subjects were photographed in their coffins, often a "post mortem" image of an adult can be difficult to differentiate from the living as, until the early part of the 20th century, exposure times were so long that the subject had to stay perfectly still for anything up to 30 seconds or the picture would be blurred. But with babies and small children, who by their very nature don't often want to stay still, identification of a "post mortem" image can be easier, although to the untrained eye the child may just look like they are asleep.

When I got to thinking about the "life" part of this theme I was really lost. Obviously "life" is pretty much what all photographs are about, so I wondered about images



depicting the first moments of life. After going through lots of images of babies growing in the womb I felt I was going to end up all "2001" with a giant foetus floating through space, so I shelved that idea.

Sometimes inspiration comes when you are not looking for it, and so it was that, when browsing results of the quarterly competition for the Disabled Photographers' Society, I spotted an image by James Ball LDPS (below) amusingly





titled "Egg and Spoon Race". The photograph, set up in a home studio with minimal equipment (plus a bit of help from *Photoshop*), shows a group of bent spoons heading for a fried egg, imitating the moment a sperm fertilises an egg. I present this as a depiction of the true beginning of life!

With "life" and "death" covered, I felt there was some middle ground that needed exploring and ghosts and the spirit life seemed to fit the bill. Many Victorians were obsessed with life after death, including Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (who also believed in fairies). Thanks to the thriving Victorian spiritualist movement, there were plenty of unscrupulous people, including photographers, ready to take advantage of the gullible. While at a séance a spiritualist might have to employ a whole range of tricks to make their customers think a spirit had appeared, it was much easier for the photographer. A simple double exposure and there was the "proof" that the spirit was real.

When stereo (3D) was at its height there were several stereo cards produced with a protective spirit or "guardian angel" hovering over a child's bed, but my favourites by far are from the sub-genre of Diableries images. These were very popular in

France in the early 1860s and 70s featuring model skeletons, devils and monsters and so on, set out in allegorical tableaux meant to warn sinners of what might happen to them in hell if they didn't mend their ways.

When seen through a stereo viewer these scenes appeared to be in 3D, but it didn't end there as these views were originally made as tissue-types. As the name suggests, instead of being mounted on solid card, these were printed on thin, semi-translucent paper. When viewed through a stereo viewer they looked like a normal 3D image but thanks to some basic colouring, when back-lit the scene was transformed into a night scene and in colour. In this way special effects could also be employed. These included pin-pricks in candles to make them appear lit, or in the eyes of some skeletons which then looked really piercing in 3D.

The card shown is from my own collection and is titled *Diable D'argent\**, in English The Money [Silver] Devil, by Pierre Adolphe Henneier. Not quite the same as today's virtual reality 3D, but dead impressive for 160 years ago!

\*See "*Diableries: Stereoscopic Adventures in Hell*", *The London Stereoscopic Company*, (2013). p194.



*Below: the Diableries stereo pair mentioned above, where illumination from the front or through the back changes the tissue-printed photographically reproduced pictures of sculpted scenes.*



# Creative Light

Issue 47

magazine

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# HEALING LIGHT

Les McLean is best known for his fine art black and white darkroom work. His digital colour skills gained him a residency to document the exceptional use of light and colour in a US hospital designed to improve life for staff and patients alike.







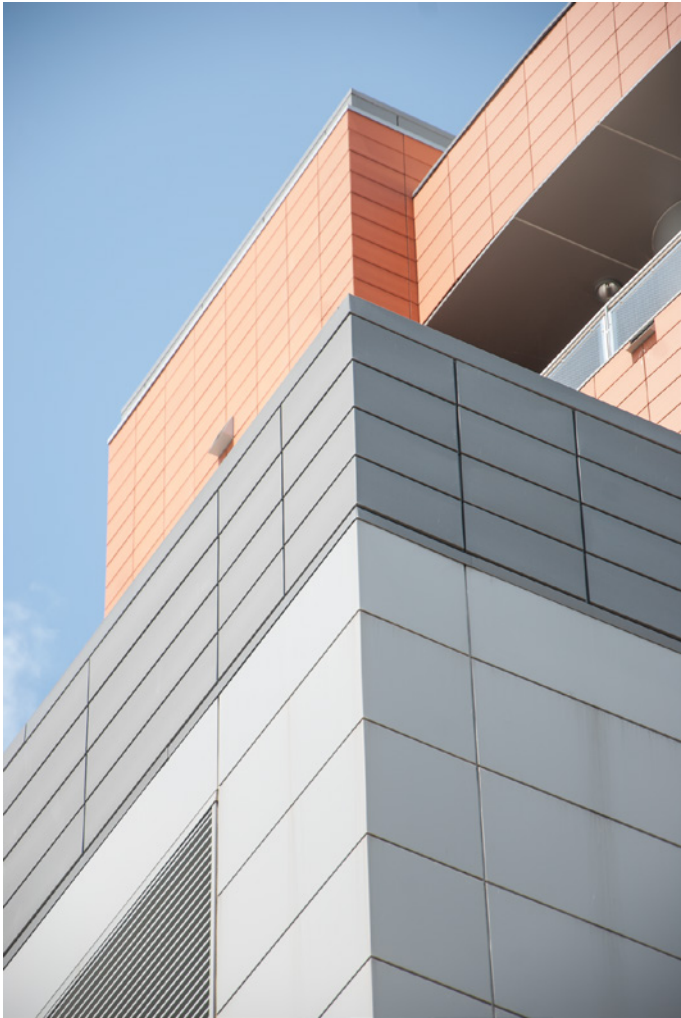
*Facing page: Fort Belvoir Hospital exterior (see story overleaf). Lower images: scanners which require the patient to spend time in a daunting situation have photographic images displayed as a sky (these are part of the hospital design). Above and below: two views of how the exterior light affects interior space.*







Above, a detail shot cropping in on a wall which also featured in its entirety. “There’ a dark side to me too”, Les jokes about this treatment.



Exterior and interior views shares a similar colour palette and Les controlled the exposure to emphasise their light, bright look.





For someone obsessed with the quality of light, Les McLean has spent more time than most of us in the dark. His adult life started at just 14 years old, as a miner down Ashington pit north of Newcastle. But his life away from the light of day didn't last long. "I got crushed", he says in a down-to-earth way familiar from former miners.

It was music, not photography, which drew the teenager to take his first steps up a ladder of diverse jobs and responsibilities. First he worked in a record store and played in a rock'n'roll band – they hit the road doing gigs before he went to college to catch up missed education.

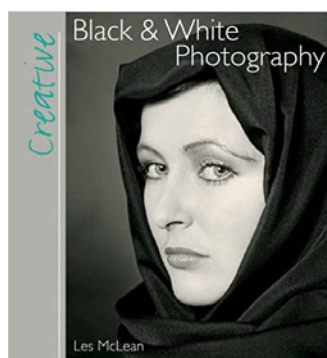
At Bellway Homes he learned accountancy as assistant to construction director. Visiting all the many construction sites, he realised each project manager had used a different approach. Les persuaded the company to let him set up consistent site management processes.

Though this may not seem to have much to do with photography, there's a link between this analytical and methodical approach and his later rise to be one of the most highly-regarded darkroom printers and teachers of the art. The last 25 years of the 1900s (yes, it does sound Victorian but it's the fin of the most recent siècle) were a high point for darkroom printing thanks to legends like Gene Nocon, Adrian Ensor and Ilford's Mike Walden. Les continued his self-taught progress and followed the work of key black and white fine art photographers including John Blakemore.

In early 1994 Les joined the team of contributors to



*PHOTOpro*, the magazine which eventually became *Cameracraft*. He soon became Darkroom Editor, and continued throughout the whole five year life of *Photon*, the name the magazine changed to when it became both a website and a printed title. After *Photon* was sold in 1999, Les moved to the new *Freelance Photographer* title for a few issues but the new millennium saw him writing for more specialised markets and in 2001 his book *Creative Black and White Photography* (David & Charles) was commissioned. It was published in October 2002, ISBN 978-0715312803.

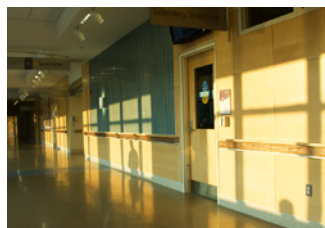


They approached Les and he wrote a synopsis, then went to Devon to discuss the project and agree on the printing quality would be required. "I said, if it's not acceptable I'll just walk", Les remembers. "I left them a 20 x 16 print and they did a trial run – the proofs were excellent. When it came to the the production book, the standard was not the same. I enjoyed working with editor Richard Collins on the text and the book."

By now Les was demonstrating for Ilford and other big names, lecturing, exhibiting and doing one-to-one and group workshops. He went to Namibia with a client



A spread from the book.



during the writing, and after return ended up in the regional general hospital – he'd contracted malaria, complicated by pneumonia and septicaemia, but recovered and kept in touch with the editor. There were no more books, and some of Les's best photo essay work remains little known. He spent time in Belfast, where his neutrality and practical approach made the streets and bars relatively safe for him.

Although Les has always been based close to our offices, we ended the regular darkroom section around that time and moved into digital. It turns out we missed something, as his technical control skills translated readily to fine art inkjet printing and his photography in colour as well as trademark monochrome gained a following. After 2003, Les gravitated towards digital photography and having got his first darkroom through a generous transfer long ago, he's passed on the same in parting with his final one.

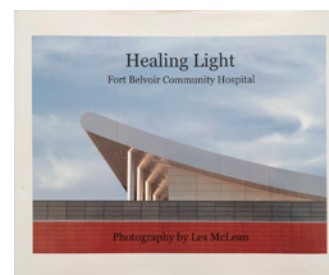
It was now very much about light – where the black and white darkroom work often featured rich shadow tones, the colour studies moved to the other end of the scale.

When working in the USA, his close friend Col. Dr Charles 'Chuck' Callahan helped Les secure the first Artist in Residence term with a newly-built military hospital at Fort Belvoir in Virginia. Chuck not only knew Les's work and the way he used and saw light, he was passionate about the value of light in healing. "From the Greek god Asclepius to Florence Nightingale, the benefits of exposure to natural light and to nature to improve health and well-being

has been recognized", he wrote in an introduction to a limited run digitally printed book produced from this residency.

The new hospital had been designed to maximise the use of daylight and the variety of effects of light and shade round the clock, "to improve patient and staff outcomes by design". This is certainly evident in the photographs Les produced. As prints, they also help create an understanding and appreciation of what the architects aimed for.

Les went to meetings and surveyed the hospital, pointing out the areas he wanted to work in – "look at that light". But this was not to involve patients or staff (except for one glimpse of a leg giving context to movement on wheels) and some areas were off limits. "I approached the delicate colours with deliberate overexposure", Les says, "and I lightened the colours in post as well".



The book has inevitable shades of William Eggleston without ever being as deadpan – Les is more selective, often cropping right down to a section of much larger architecture, and in the book some images are grouped to emphasise the way the light is used. Some are even dark, but only dark to reveal the effects of reflected light and more of a nod to Weston or Kertész, especially the latter with his many studies of modern architecture and its response to sun and shadow.

The pictures were not intended to be therapeutic in themselves, but the project was a record of a therapeutic exercise in building design, exterior and interior surfaces, glass, space and reflections.

Every visionary new building should have an artist residency for a photographer – or more than one.

– David Kilpatrick





# SMALL WORLDS

Landscapes are probably the most popular subjects for photographers. Indeed many organisations understandably use them as the basis for their business – whether that be trips to the varied types of landscape that can be found in locations around the world, or as the main category for many competitions.

The frequently-held view is that a landscape result should encompass the grand vista of a wide panoramic view, from mountains to seashores. However, I have always enjoyed looking at what lies right in front of my feet and considering what has appeared. These are sometimes known as inner landscapes or intimate landscapes and I have gained inspiration from one well-known advocate of the genre, David Ward.

There have been several locations that I have found particularly rich in these aspects. Northumberland is particularly notable for the variety of possible subjects. Spittal Beach near Berwick is one area where erosion



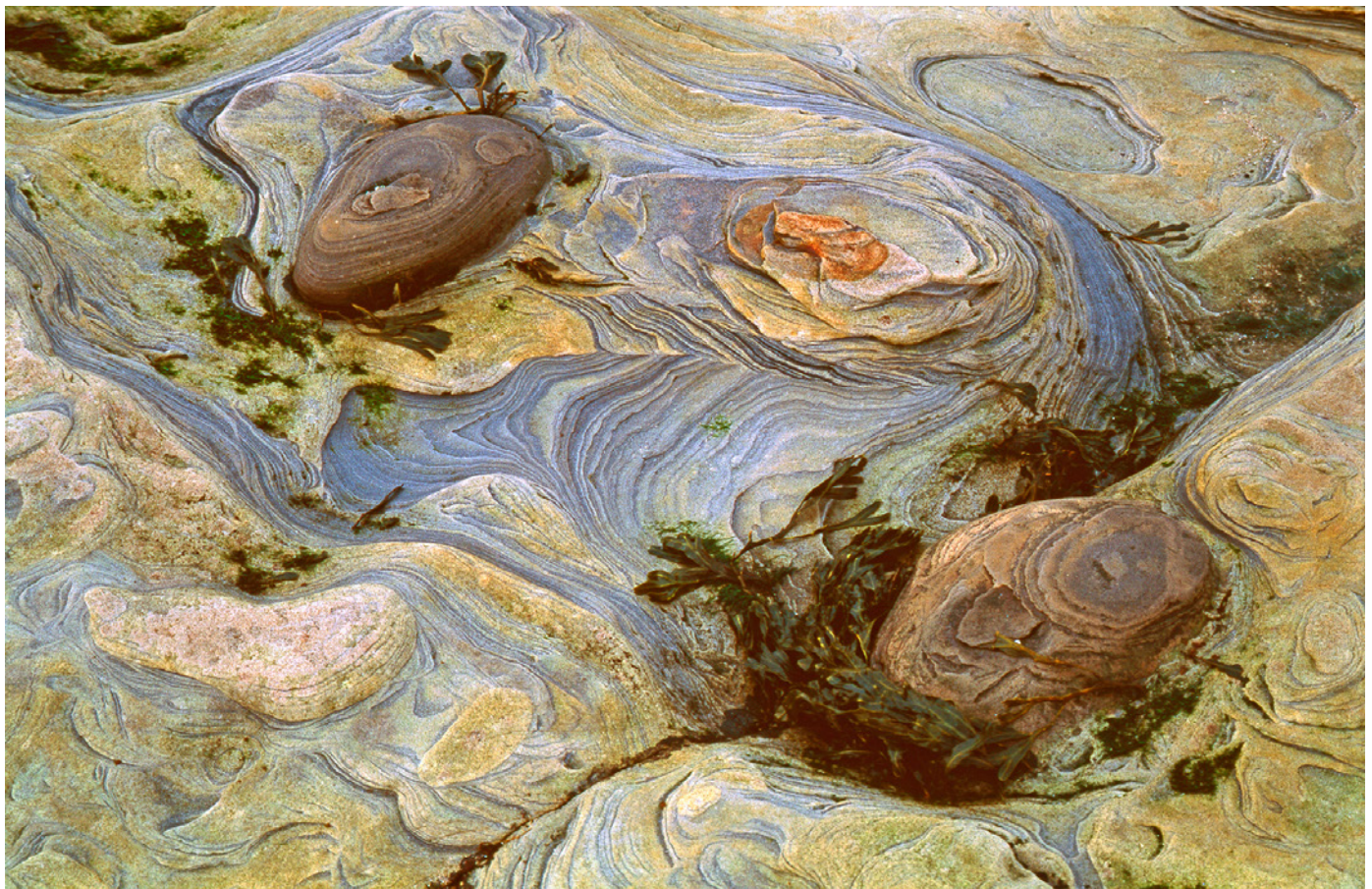
## Peter Karry contemplates 'inner landscapes' to shoot at any time of year

has shaped sedimentary rocks into bizarre and beautiful miniature landscapes. The subject matter is just lines, curves, and textures, with colour playing a supportive role. There is no well-recognised version of what a "standard" image should look like, as a point of reference, as there would be with, say, a portrait. The exercise is to make these semi-abstract images into an arresting result and is a

good discipline in composition. Another place I have been introduced to is Cocklawburn Beach, is a stunning sand and rock strand backed by grassy dunes between Berwick and the Lindisfarne National Nature Reserve. Here one can find a rich variety of fossils on the beach and thus enter into the ancient world recorded in the rocks here. In this beautiful place it is possible to find the fossilised

remains of ancient sea-creatures from the earlier tropical seas, where there lived a wide variety of sea creatures including crinoids, brachiopods, corals, orthocones, fish and trilobites. Their shells and bones in their millions sank to the bottom of the sea to form lime rich layers. Over time these were turned into the hard limestone layers which delimit Cocklawburn Beach, and the remains of the sea creatures can easily be found if you look.

I have also found the Outer Hebrides and Durness to be suitable locations you can explore without having to travel abroad. In Northumberland I used Hasselblad/Fujifilm XPrm film cameras with Fujichrome film, frequently set up on a tripod. In rocky and frequently wet areas this was often to prove tricky. A small lens aperture was appropriate so that the close nature of this work was not inhibited by a falling off of sharpness, and I also used a remote release.





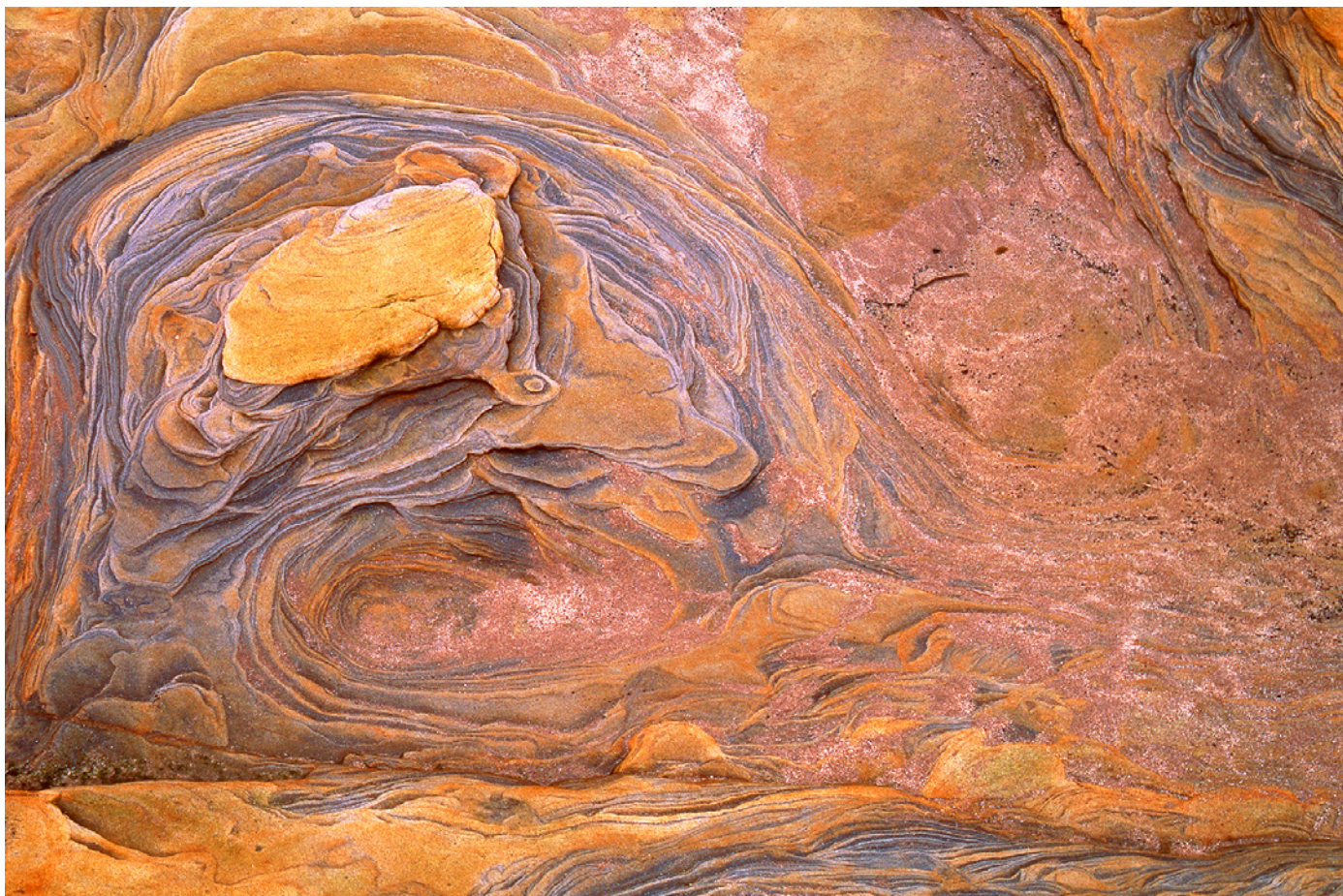


*Above – Spittal Beach.*

*Facing page, top – Durness*

*Facing page, bottom – Cocklawburn Beach.*

*Below – Cocklawburn Beach.*







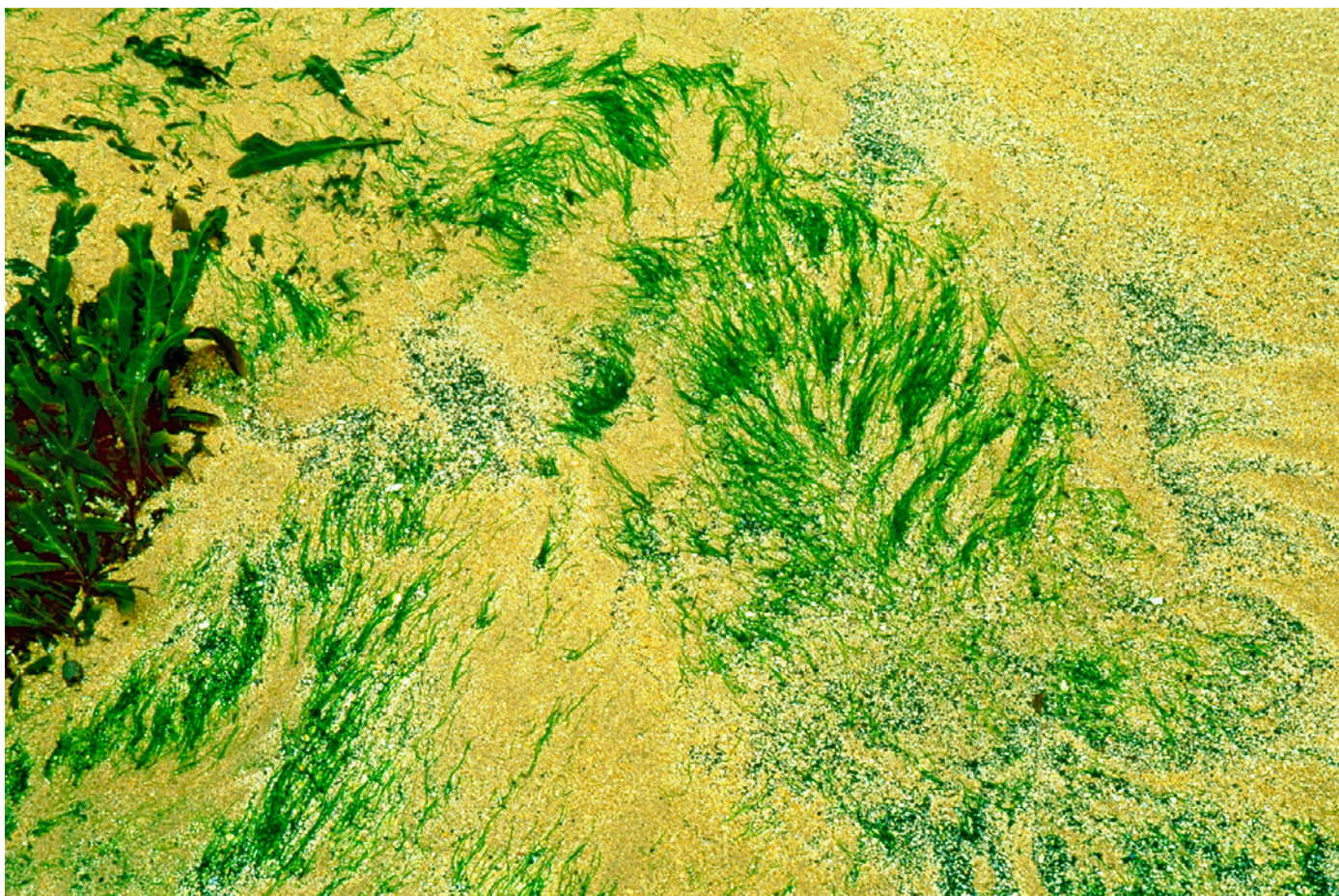
*Above – Cocklawburn Beach. Below – Spittal Beach.*



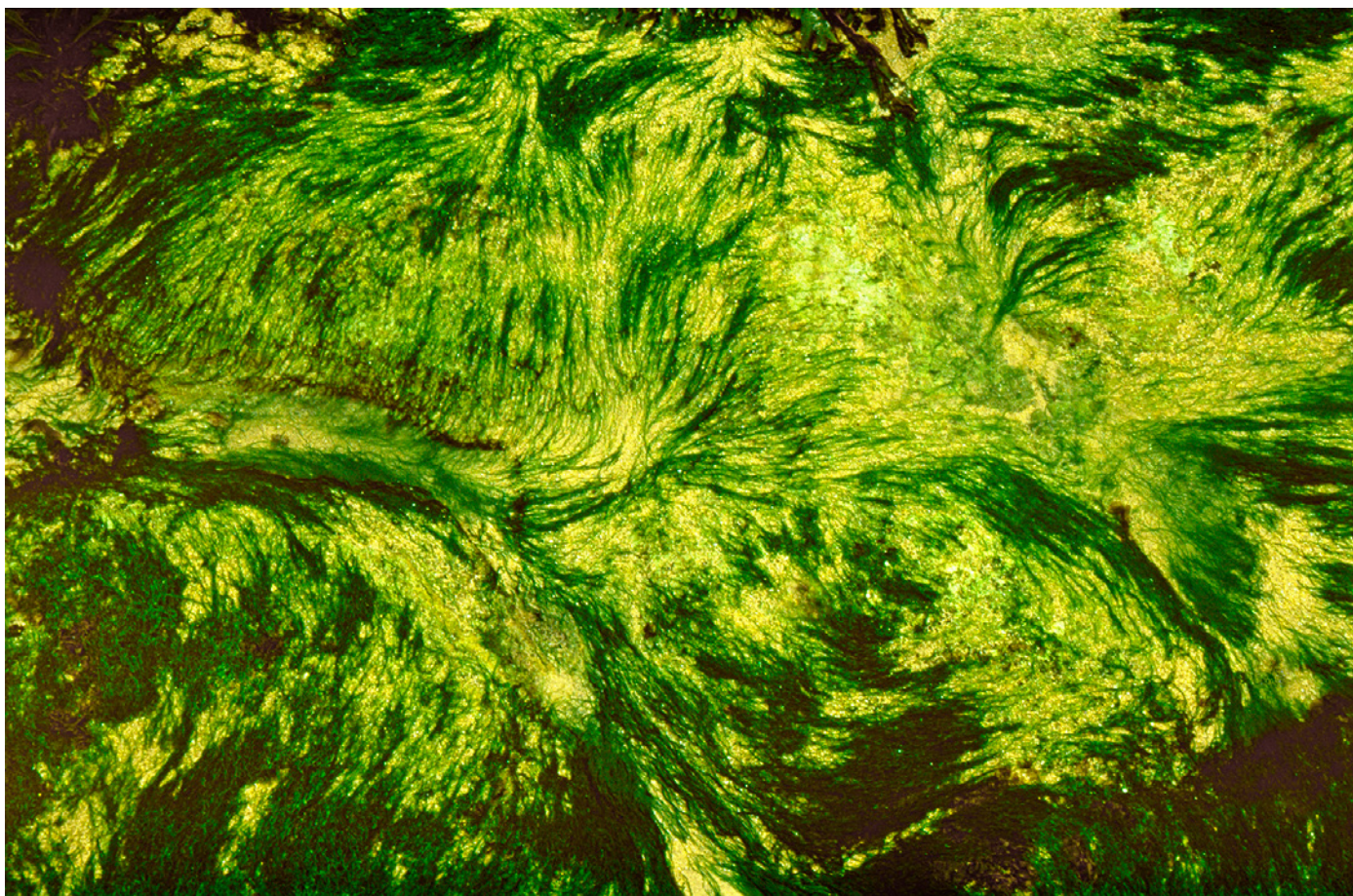
*Below, Hebridean granite rock with quartz crystals and seaweed.*







*Studies with seaweeds – on Cocklawburn Beach.*





# Elinchrom's ONE could be the one flash you need

The first question many will ask about the portable off-camera flash Elinchrom has launched at £799 will be how you're supposed to rely on a location flash with its battery sealed into the weatherproof body. Let's deal with that one first. The ONE is charged up using a 65W USB-C mains adaptor which takes 1 hr 40m to fill the 41.04Wh lith-ion (fast charge to 100%). The flash can also be used normally during charging. It can also be charged from Elinchrom's own 18W 20Ah Power Bank in 2hrs 15m, and once again you can shoot while this is happening. The Power Bank holds enough to charge the head fully 1.5 times. The fully charged head can give 725 full power bursts and the Power Bank can do 1100 during Active Charging.

Unlike a spare battery for many cheaper alternatives like Godox, the Power Bank can also recharge phoned, tablets or laptops – and the ONE charger can charge your M1 MacBook, or your USB-C in-camera charging with models such as the Sony mirrorless range.

Already you can probably see how even a single ONE head kit with a Power Bank and the mains adaptor will see you through full day shoots. Its full power is a nominal 125Ws, a equal to the ELC 125 mains head. In practice it's about the same as 160Ws of earlier Quadra or ELB power as there's no cable to reduce the output, it is as efficient as any monobloc head always has been relative to pack-cable-head rigs. The ONE has a price tag around half that of the entry level Profoto B10X, which is the most directly comparable location battery monobloc, which gives twice the power at 250Ws but only half the stamina at 400 full power pops.

If 125Ws doesn't seem much, you are probably living in the past. The power can range from 7Ws upwards, controlled by the very clear illuminated panel and simple controls on the back, by a Skyport trigger, or by an app and wifi. It's

*The ONE has an illuminated logo on the sides which changes colour*



*The barn door accessory is a push-on fit*



*The reflector with umbrella hole is an optional extra*



*The Power Bank gives 1100 full power flashes or full recharge in 135 minutes*

*Below: the ONE has a weather sealed internal battery*



*The rubber EL accessory adaptor can be pushed further down the body of the flash for secure fit with larger light-shapers or to change light distribution*





also a TTL head when used with the correct Skyport trigger. All this means that you are highly unlikely to be using it at full power – many assignments will need fill-in or wide aperture flash levels with a yield of literally thousands of pops from a charge. The use of high-speed sync, regular duration or action duration flash (no need to swap heads or entire units) and the versatile colour-tunable modelling light will affect battery life.

With the ONE head, you can probably do without an LED video light – it is named appropriately, as one flash head may just be handle to almost all your lighting needs. The bi-colour LED modelling lamp (2700 to 6500k to match from domestic tungsten to outdoor sun) has a 3000 Lumen output and colour rendering index of 95. It makes food and faces look that much better than LED modelling which is only there as a guide – it can be used for continuous light still photography and also for video.

The ONE comes with a rubber adaptor ring which pushes firmly on the front rim behind the small reflector, and accepts Elinchrom EL accessories. This meant we were able to try it with a selection from the studio, some almost as old as the Elinchrom system. It proved a bit too easy to get the ring a bit crooked (as in the outdoor photo with rain on the left). This head is clearly targeting the Profoto B10 form factor but does not go as far as to have markings on the side for 'zooming' the accessory.

The design of the ONE flashtube, Pyrex cover, reflective ring behind the tube and diffuser dome is different. The tube is placed slightly forward of being flush with the front edge. The LED is slightly recessed. Profoto place both recessed, behind a flat frosted diffuser. The Elinchrom design would be more versatile if the Off Camera Flash diffuser dome could be used *with* the adaptor ring in place, inside a reflector or softbox – or if a frosted Pyrex cover could be fitted in place of clear. But it's either/or – OFC Dome, or accessory mounting adaptor.



*The ONE can also be fired by older Skyport triggers like the Speed used on an Olympus OM-D E-M1 MkII here – firing at 10fps, 0.2 power, 1/6700s duration, ISO 100, 12-40mm f2.8 lens at f4. Ice cubes dropped by hand with right hand. during burst (left hand on shutter button). Portalite Softbox, black glass sheet with flash reflected entirely in the glass. The E-M1's 18fps electronic shutter mode (Hi) won't trigger flash – a pity!*

So, while it is certainly not a clone of the B10, it's a better form-compatible choice than many low cost Chinese heads. We don't have any Godox AD200 (etc) gear to compare it with as after a year or as that was sold – it was just too fiddly with double mounting for softboxes, many different parts, swapping flash for LED head and so on. The ONE is so much more compatible with the D-Lite heads we use in the studio and Quadra/ELB portable pack and head kits.

The 1.5kg ONE is claimed to be 'more compact' than a 70-200mm f2.8, but that's an outdated comparison with older SLR glass. It is 230mm long, 105mm in front diameter and 165mm maximum where the rear panel flares out to form a round-cornered rectangle. The Nikon Z 70-200mm is 220mm x 89mm but nearly as heavy at 1360g. The Canon RF is only 146mm x 89.9mm and weighs just 1070g. Though not 70-200mm, the f2.8 Tamron 70-180mm we use is 149mm x 81mm and a mere 810g. Even so the ONE is small enough to place behind a portrait subject's head and with no cables can be

used for impressive backlight when concealed this way. It is also small enough to get very close to the ground or place inside industrial cabinets, interior furnishing, machinery and so on.

On the bottom side, a standard 1/4" tripod thread and two locating pins fit the tilting stand mount with umbrella tube (a special 16cm reflector at £50 has a matching hole). No camera bracket or pistol grip is offered in the standard accessory range, both should be added – it's not too big or heavy to use that way. It's hard to find anything to do that job but Manfrotto components are the best bet. Accessories available include the clamshell case, OCF dome and EL adaptor (all provided in the kits), optional barn doors, Power Bank and two-head backpack. Tested within the limits of a short time with no live assignments, the ONE proved very easy to use because of familiarity with past Elinchrom digital interfaces. The touch screen and buttons work well, so much that it's easier to tap to control than mess around with the Skyport Pro to get

a quick modelling light.

If you wonder what that 3000 lumens means, it's 1/60s at f2, ISO 400, 2 metres direct light in a standard reflector. It's half the brightness of a 150W halostar modelling lamp, and ten times as bright as the first LED modelling found in battery location flash. That's at 5600K Daylight setting which looks the brightest visually, but changing the colour temperature actually didn't change the exposure (Minolta Flashmeter IV, incident light reading).

Flash full power, at 2m and ISO 100, gave f13 with a standard reflector, f8 'bare bulb' using the diffusing dome, and f7.1 with a Portalite softbox. The recycling time of 0.9s to full power checks out, and at very low powers with high speed durations (to 1/7000s) it's effectively instant. You get a clear bright illuminated display of the duration and a single touch screen option to switch from Standard to Action.

Setting the power to 1.0, the Sony A7RIV at 8fps firing via Skyport Pro managed 60 frames without a glitch, every frame identically exposed. At 10fps, it captured 29, 19 then 20 – one black frame between those bursts with maybe one frame hesitation in firing speed too. In a small studio (12 x 14ft) there was enough output from the single ONE in Portalite to have allowed f5.6 at ISO 400 2-3m from the flash.

It's worth noting the ONE has no sync cable socket, though it does have an optical slave. You can't plug in a third party receiver. It uses Bluetooth for direct control via *Elinchrom Studio* software or the Elinchrom iOS/Android App, and is the first head not requiring the Elinchrom Bridge (£113) hardware to do this. If you already use Elinchrom and have a range of light shapers and Skyport (ideally Pro or Plus HS), the ONE could be a great solution for a wide range of location work especially as a two-head kit. If you don't – welcome to Elinchrom!

– David Kilpatrick



<https://www.theflashcentre.com>





## Kichen cupboard creation

Every life starts somewhere and I'm pretty sure that we know the ins and outs of how this process works. The challenge this month was to create an image celebrating life and I decided to do this using simple household ingredients. On top of this, I wanted to make this accessible to all and show that a single light is all that is necessary to achieve a great results.

This is another great example of when a little lateral thinking and creativity negates the need for reliance upon lots of equipment. The secret to this image is a base that is made simply from compressed plain flour. When compressed, the surface of the flour appears smooth. As objects are gently pushed into this this base, the flour is displaced and cracks appear around the object.

Obviously, the egg is used to create its own indentation and cracks. However, anything can be used to make these indentations and you can let your creativity run wild. In this case a sperm shaped template was cut from foam-core board and a simple wire handle attached to the top.

This template was pressed into the smooth flour surface to make indentations.

The lighting principles here are simple; a single light source is used low down and off to the left. This leaves the undisturbed surface looking smooth whilst, at the same time highlighting the cracks and imperfections in the flour. In addition, this simple lighting highlights the spherical nature of the egg adding depth to the composition.

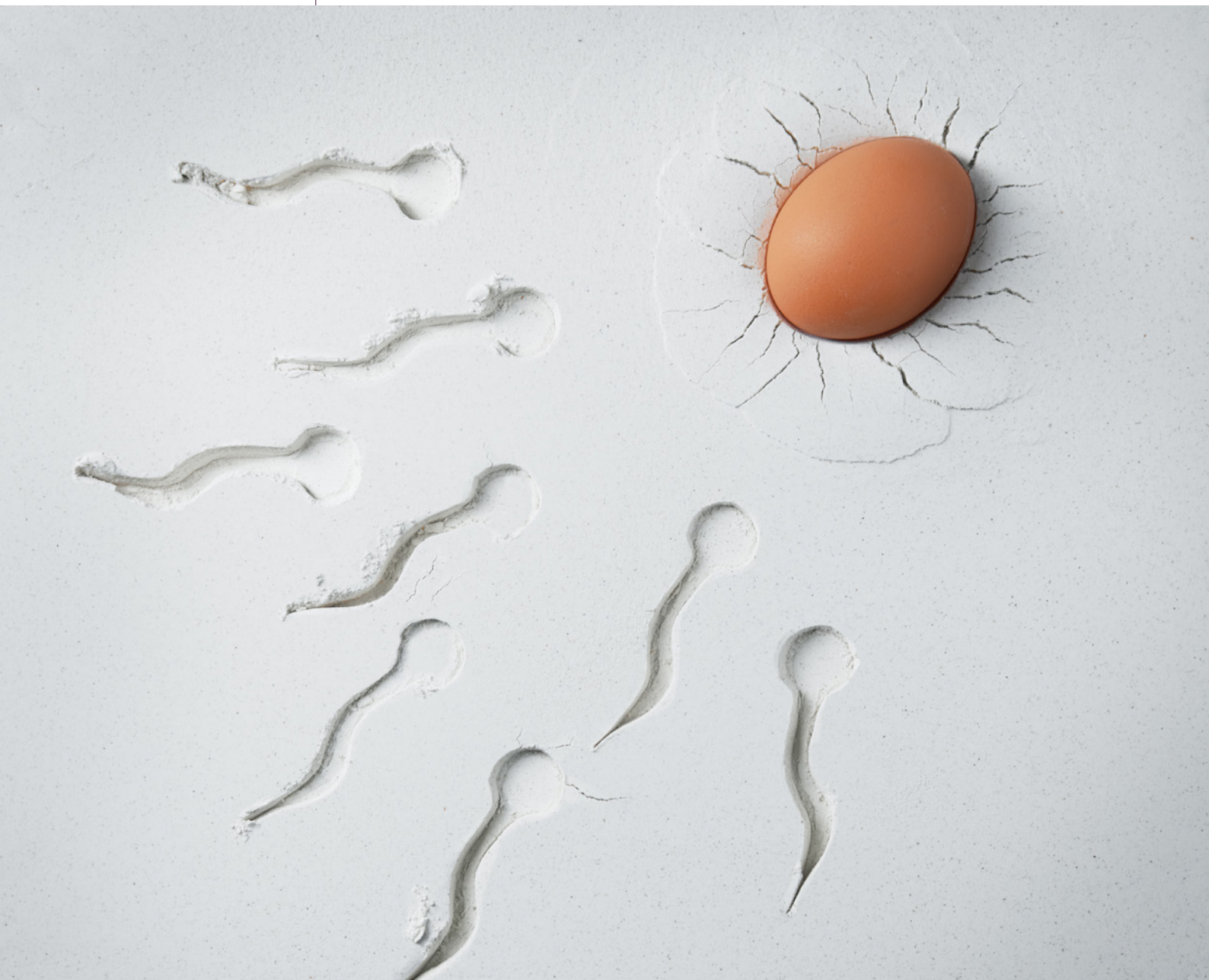
Keeping in mind the bare-basics approach here, this light

source doesn't even have to be a studio strobe or speedlight, it could simply be a desk light. The light source is not the important thing, it's the positioning that is important. Too high, and the definition in the cracks are lost and there is no depth to the imprints and cracks. Too low, and the shadows are too prominent.

Now you know the basics, get creative with your ideas, scour the kitchen cupboards and get creating some cracked flour images...

<https://www.ianknaggs.com>

*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.*





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*The Guild's website, both the public facing and members' areas, has been completely redesigned and went live in February with major changes.*

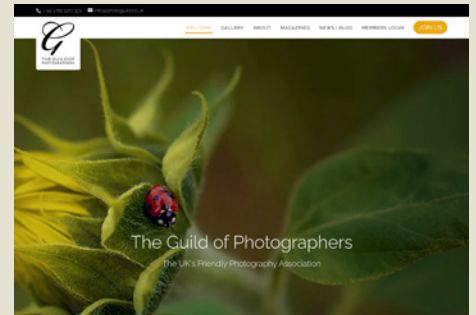
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# Winning and learning at the Guild Awards and Photohubs training days

At the beginning of February, a carefully managed large event was held at Cheshire's Crewe Hall Hotel – the annual Guild of Photographers awards, combined with a total of three days of workshops and small group training under the Photohubs banner.

The first day saw Chris Chambers leading a select band of wedding photographers through the nightmare of turning a very functional working mens' club into something looking better as a wedding venue. Chris continued on the Friday with more wedding demonstrations in the Hall's setting, while the programme of open workshops continued through Friday and Saturday.



*It's not all about sunglasses! Neil Bremner brought along subjects to photograph – the iconic sunglasses are seen in the top photograph with the group of members keenly studying his methods. Another subject was a set of headphones, to feature a smoke effect and mid-air suspension virtually all achieved in camera and not by retouching. This was a key to Neil's approach, that the shot should be as close to perfect as possible leaving only minor work such as the removal of the fishing line supporting the headphone set. All photographs on this page are by assistant editor Diane Redpath.*



*Here Gemma Sains shows a screen of examples by New York portrait photographer Leland Bobbé. She demonstrated her own techniques for caricature and character portraits, with examples on screen and also as prints. The lively group discussion continued 'past time' – naturally!*



*More use to waiting in hides for wildlife, our columnist Jayne Bond was one of the members absorbed by Michelle Szpak's location lighting techniques for motorcycles. The Elinchrom hi-sync flash with shutters speeds up to 1/8,000s eliminated all unwanted light and reflected room details.*



These opened with Karen Riches presenting 'Poochy Portraits' – about our four-legged friends and how to photograph them really REALLY well.

This was followed by Callum Harrison on 'Adventures of a Master Craftsman Panel' – he stepped back in time covering a monumental event.

Your reporters were not there for the Friday programme, so missed David Conway's 'Honey I shrunk my subjects!' macro photography.

To close this day's talks Saraya Cortaville and other Guild Panel members held an open discussion about what makes a great image and what makes a great judge.

The Photohubs events at Guild awards always cover a couple of days (the 'sh\*t venue' workshop from Chris Chambers was an extra day – and these group workshops, with models and using locations are a paid option in addition to the main programme covered by the event's day passes).

Saturday started with Gemma Sains presenting 'Injecting Personality into your Portraits', something she has been featured in this magazine for. Her work is certainly unique and great fun, and attracted a lively discussion as she discussed her influences and development.

A workshop was given by Neil Bremner covering a set of still life set-ups which would normally be tackled with all the little bits and pieces found in his studio. In a hotel conference room, he nevertheless had brought with him all of the necessary clamps and supports, light shapers and backgrounds (superb use of basic

sheets of coloured paper you can buy for art and crafts uses). Neil is well known for his shots of sunglasses and was very generous in letting his select audience in on the secrets of his work.

In another room Michelle Szpak set up a beautiful motorcycle supplied by a local dealer. The room was distracting, with ceiling lights and carpeting reflected in chrome, and no kind of background for high-end shots of the bike. Using Elinchrom portable flash and high-speed sync, Michelle showed how even in a daylight showroom she can have complete control over lighting on bikes and eliminate unwanted reflections and highlights.

Travel photographer Ivan Trotman titled his talk 'Never mind the ISO, Taste the Spiders'. He has certainly been to the top of the world and back, with an emphasis on mountains and very much long-haul destinations. Ivan made his adventures seem almost routine though most of his audience may never have a chance to shoot in such dramatic and often inhospitable terrain.

Heather Burns presented 'The Good, The Bad and (how to avoid) The Ugly!' showing how to blend found images and textures, architectural detail and objects to create works of fantastic imagination and quality. Finally, there was a Live Judging Print Competition with Panikos Hajistilly and David Islip talking through their critique of fourteen prints. This was a low entry (it's free with the day pass to submit a print) reflecting the times – but it allowed the judges to go into detail which was much appreciated by the audience.



At the evening awards dinner, Andrew Ford (example above) was named at the Guild's Photographer of the Year having obtained the highest score in any Image of the Year category. Rob Howarth became All Round Photographer of the Year with the highest combined score from any two categories. Rob is receiving a Loupedeck editing console and Andrew a printer from Epson (prizes worth around £1500 in total). David Conway – Wedding Photographer of the Year Anneka Lewis – Maternity, Newborn & Baby Photographer of the Year Jayne Bond – Natural World Photographer of the Year Andrew Ford – Open Category Photographer of the Year Rob Howarth – People Photographer of the year.

All these have received generous product credits from either nPhoto, One Vision Imaging or Digitalab.

The Image of the Year category winners were Rob Howarth (Animals / Avant Garde Portraiture / Commercial), Alison McKenny (Baby & Toddler / Children's Portraiture), Nick Lancaster (Birds), Sinead Bunn (Classical Portraiture), Emily Edean (Creative & Digital Art), Sharon Bolt (Equine), Lorraine Degraff (Events, Sports & Action), Lorraine Dale (Flora), Molly Hollman (Insects), Eva White (Maternity), Anneka Lewis (Newborn), Jackie Eke (Pets), Scott Williams (Pictorial Landscape), Karl Simpson-Smith (Urban), David Conway (Wedding). All these received awards courtesy of InFocus Insurance.

From all these the Judges' Choice Award went to Sinead Bunn, and the Members' Choice to Rob Howarth (both images are on the following pages). They received display products showing off their winning images, courtesy of One Vision Imaging.

The Founders Cup winner was Nikki Goodeve who received an amazing calibration tools from Datacolor, and runner-up Emma Campbell received a Best Business Plan Award from 3XM.

During the evening too many other awards were presented, and qualification successes acknowledged, to be listed here.



Judges Panikos Hajistilly and David Islip with print competition winner Jayne Bond, and runner-up Magda Bright. See also page 28, Neil Bremner.







# The Guild of Photographers Awards – a selection from the 2021 competition



Suffolk PR, Press and Commercial professional Rob Howarth joined the Guild just a year before the February 2022 awards, at which he learned he had won the All-Round Photographer of the Year title with the highest combined score from any two categories. The chimpanzee photograph won the Picture of the Year in the Animal category, and the picture above won the Avant Garde and Contemporary Portraiture category; the portrait on the facing page was part of his consistent entry into the competition which won him the All-Round title.





Above, *Creative & Digital Art Image of the Year*, by Emily Endean.  
Below, *Insect category Image of the Year*, by Molly Hollman.







*The Image of the Year in the Guild of Photographers Awards 2021 Pets Category – by Jackie Eke.*





*Above, one of the shots which gained Jayne Bond the title of Natural World Photographer of the Year.*



*Above, Maternity Image of the Year, by Eva White.  
Right, Newborn Image of the Year, by Anneka Lewis.*







Above, Classical Portrait Image of the Year, and also Members' Choice winner, by Sinead Bunn.  
Below, Flora Image of the Year, by Lorraine Dale.



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**Cameracraft** is published six times a year Mar/April, May/June, July/Aug, Sept/Oct, Nov/Dec, Jan/Feb

ISSN 2514-0167

This issue: Cameracraft #45, Vol 7 No 1

Printed in Britain by

**Stephens & George**

Newport, Gwent

UK subscription: £8.50 per edition.  
Cheques to the publisher's address made payable to 'Icon Publications Ltd'. See discounted Paypal and international subscriptions at <https://www.iconpublications.com>  
Back issues and archive of free to read, searchable articles from all Icon's titles  
<https://www.cameracraft.online>

Also included with The Guild of Photographers membership:

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