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THE GUILD OF
PHOTOGRAPHERS



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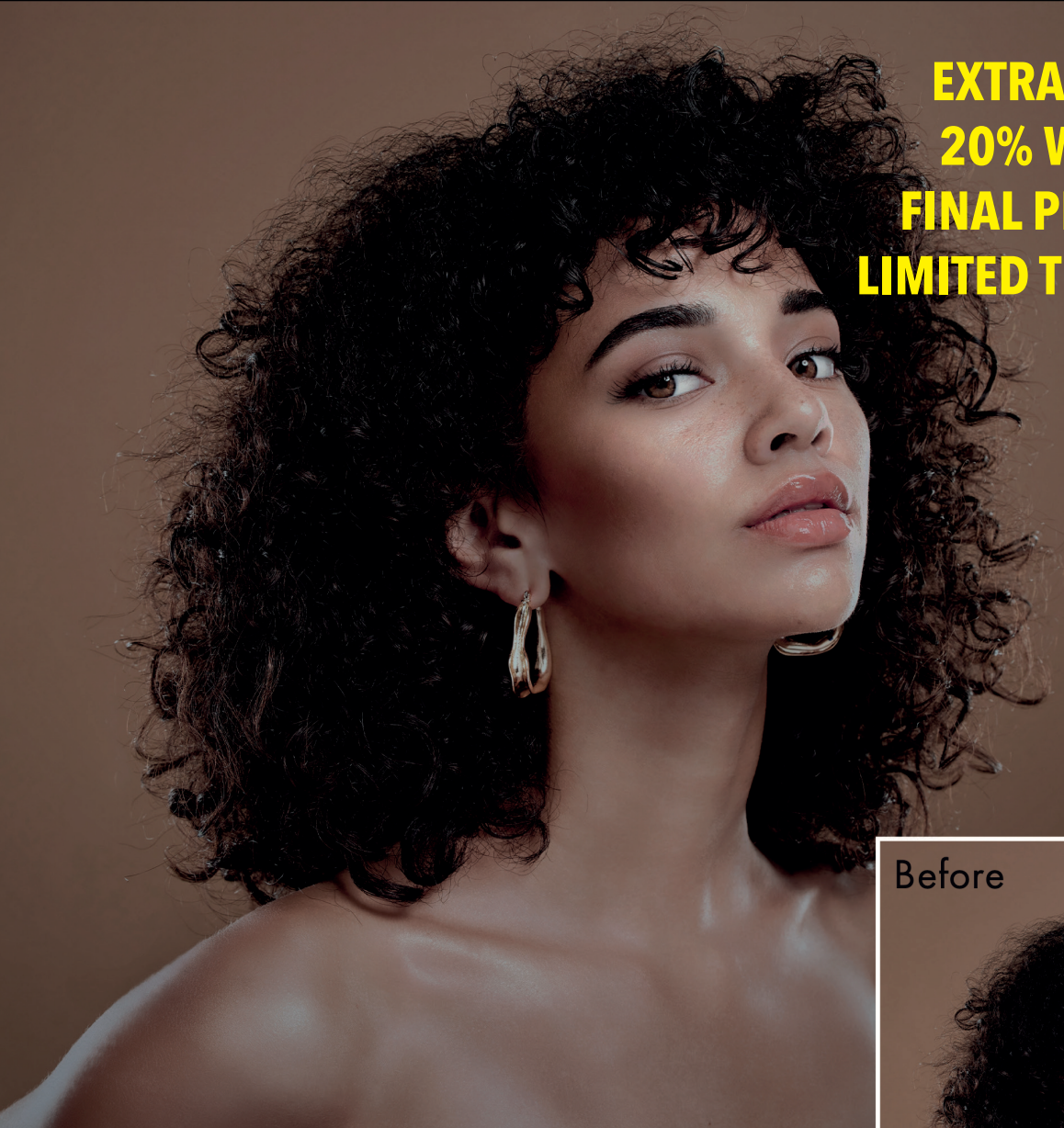


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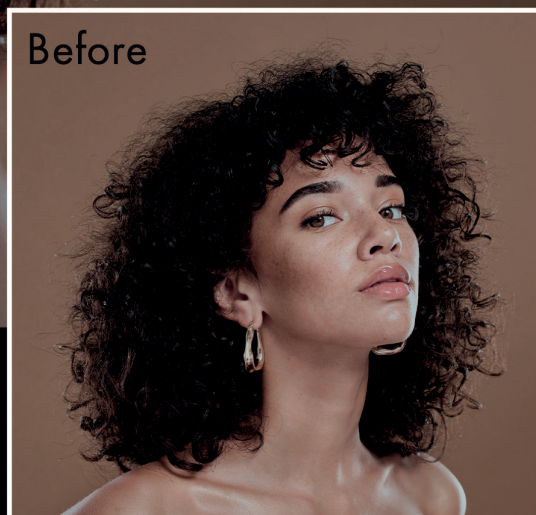
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TAMRON



The Societies of Photographers



PHOTO MAGAZINES which once repeated seasonal articles every year probably no longer do, as their market has changed. It became a running joke that a certain weekly mag would wheel out the same basic article as 52 weeks before with a quick rewrite and some new pictures from the endless stack of envelopes which arrived. Now it's probably not even a full email inbox, as most photographers simply do not or can not select from their own work and submit what they consider the best to an editor.

Instead, anything and everything finds its way to web pages or social media and very few 'curate' their collections unless there is a commercial imperative, such as a print sales system or a specialist Meta Business page.

It's a good thing that when we decided, for once, to go down a seasonal landscape-based avenue we found that the two 'fall' subjects chosen for this issue both have many specialists and a good proportion exhibiting and selling work. Fall in the autumn sense, and falls in the waterfall sense, gave a couple of core features here.

Needless to say we thought about some other aspects of the word 'fall' and Tom Hill provides a sobering and entertaining take on the dangers of falling. What we didn't get round to for reasons of space and time (the foundations of our universe!) was the subject of equipment falling. It happens.

Kitfalls

A good example from one of our previous magazine titles was an early digital test, that first Ricoh GR compact fixed lens model with its 28mm view gaining an enthusiastic user base especially in travel and street photography. The test camera went to Tenerife, where it produced a few really high quality views before a wrist strap accident let it drop from hip level on to a stone floor. It didn't seem to be a big impact, the camera was externally undamaged, but all it could produce from that impact onwards was a vaguely recognisable purple-pink monochrome.

Back in the days of film, I bought a superb (used) 50mm f1.4 Super Takumar for my first Pentax. I placed it on a substantial metal press room desk in the newspaper's basement local office and forgot that typewriters attacked in haste can shift even one of those. It hit the concrete floor. Nothing seemed damaged, it all worked well and continued to do so until left on a rock near Baslow. It had gone when I headed back to retrieve it.

My wife's 50mm f2.8 Jena Tessar (for Praktica L) actually rolled down a Lake District hillside visibly bouncing as it went back in 1972. The aluminium lightweight barrel had a few tiny marks but the lens worked perfectly – no decentering, simple manual focus all fine. Today if you let almost any AF DSLR or mirrorless lens take flight the same way it would not.

One day we'll publish impact resistance info from drop tests on different cameras. In the meantime the worst I hope my own kit ever gets is a gentle roll off the seat into the carpeted footwell of the car. I try to remember what neckstraps and headrests are for to avoid this!

– David Kilpatrick, Publisher and Editor

IN THIS ISSUE

Pako Dominguez, Jeff Folger, Gary Friedman, Tom Hill, Tim Goldsmith, David Kilpatrick, Richard Kilpatrick, Ian Knaggs, Jon Rees and not enough (or any) women contributing, which will result in the usual complaints, but it's photographs we look for not photographers. We find the photographers through the work, not the other way round.

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NEWS & PRODUCTS

Tamron's 17-50mm f4 first for full frame



TRANSCONTINENTA UK LTD has announced development of a Tamron **17-50mm f4 Di III VXD (A068)** for Sony E-mount, the world's first 17-50 mm wide-angle zoom lens for full-frame mirrorless cameras. With a constant f4 aperture it is claimed to achieve excellent optical performance throughout the zoom range, and uses the fast VXD linear motor focusing. The physical length of the lens does not change when zooming, and from the photograph you can see that with the same 67mm filter thread as other lenses in the series, it's not very much larger than the 17-28mm f2.8. It can focus down to 0.19m at the wide end and 0.3m at the standard end.

At the same time, there's news of an updated **70-180mm f2.8 Di III VC VXD G2** for E-mount with VC optical stabilisation, refined optical performance and a radically improved close focusing ability. The new model is still only 156.5mm long and 855g in weight, taking the same 67mm filters, with focus down to 0.3m at 70mm and 0.85m at 180mm.

For Nikon Z system owners, Tamron has added one of the most acclaimed lenses for weddings, portraits, news, concert and stage photography. The **35-150mm f2-2.8 Di III VXD** for the Nikon Z mount (model A058z) will be available from the end of September at £1799.99 (UK).

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



Nikon's 180-600mm and f2.8 70-180mm – convertible dreams

THE NEW 70-180mm f2.8 for Nikon Z mount, almost certainly made for Nikon as a special version of the Tamron, can accept the Nikon Z-TC2 and 1.4X rear converters, which the design of Tamron's Sony original rules out. The lens is now on sale at £1,299.

Ideal to pair with this lens and the converters, Nikon's new **Nikkor Z 180mm-600mm f5.6-6.3 VR** was expected to go on sale in August at £1799 but stocks were still showing pre-order when we went to press on August 28th. This lens can focus down to 1.3m and the Z AF system can focus even with the 2X, a 360-1200mm f11-12.5 combination. See: <https://www.nikon.co.uk>



ThinkTank XP 26L backpack



THE BACKLIGHT XP 26L continues ThinkTank's commitment to protecting camera gear even in the most extreme conditions. This limited-edition Backlight backpack is constructed using X-pac® Sailcloth, which is lightweight yet incredibly durable. The Backlight features a back panel opening that enables access to all your gear without taking off the pack, so the shoulder harness stays clean and dry. And with its added daypack capacity, the Backlight offers nine litres of space for personal gear, including separate dedicated compartments for a 10" tablet and 16" laptop. It is claimed to fit two standard-size camera bodies and 4-7 standard zoom lenses plus a flash. Exterior dimensions are 29x51.5x20cm, interior main compartment 26x49x15cm and it weighs 1.8kg. The US cost is \$274. See: <https://www.thinktankphoto.com>

Societies September roadshows

THE SOCIETIES of Photographers hit the road mid-month with three roadshow dates for the southern and eastern counties – Tuesday 19th in Crawley (convenient for Gatwick Airport and south of M25), Wednesday 20th in Stevenage with good motorway and rail links to the north, and Thursday 21st at Holkwood Hall, Brandon, Norfolk. Each day offers free admission whether or not you are a member of SWPP or its associated societies. All three have the same keynote seminars by Gary Hill, Helen Bartlett and Maria Michael and an extensive list of trade exhibitors including Aaduki Insurance, Canon, Camera Centre UK, Click Props, Fujifilm, Godox flash, GraphiStudio albums, Loxley Colour, and Sony. For admission pre-register using the Eventbrite links at:

<https://thesocieties.net/roadshows>

Foto Fest 2023 – 10th September at the University of Bath

FOTOSPEED has once again organised a Fotofest day, and say they are "really excited have curated such an incredible line up of photographers to share the experiences from their diverse backgrounds with you."

Starting at 9:30, the day includes presentations by Jack Perks, Paul Sanders, Amy Bateman and Nigel Danson ending with a Q&A session with Sam Gregory before the day closes at 16:30.

The event is at The University of Bath, The Edge Building, Bath BA2 7AY and you should call Fotospeed on 01249 714 555, email fotofest@fotospeed.com, or see <https://www.fotospeed.com> for this imminent and other future Foto days.



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The Societies of Photographers Roadshows

Photographic Roadshows for professional and aspiring photographers



The Societies of Photographers' Roadshows are the perfect opportunity to catch up with the latest products and services from the trade and gain education from a series of talks.

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2023 UPCOMING EVENTS

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Stevenage - 20th
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TOM HILL

Don't step back and become another legend of the fall...

Tom Hill is a travel writer, copywriter and sometime photographer living in the Scottish Borders in the UK. He can be contacted via his website at bigfrogsallpond.co.uk



When folks say 'pride comes before the fall' it often happens quite literally. Falling off high buildings, mountain paths and all manner of structures when trying to make 'selfies' or indeed take photos of friends and relatives is a fairly regular occurrence.

In August US news media outlets reported a 13-year-old boy's lucky escape from the jaws of death when he fell approximately 100 feet (30m) from the Bright Angel Point trail, which runs alongside the North Rim of Arizona's Grand Canyon.

Fortunately for Wyatt Kauffman, he fell onto a ledge, rather than plummeting 3,000 feet straight down into the Canyon's deepest abyss. Accordingly, rescuers were able to abseil and save the lad, who sustained injuries included nine broken vertebrae, a ruptured spleen, a collapsed lung, concussion, a broken hand and a dislocated finger. Apart from that, he was just fine.

In Wyatt's case, he wasn't even trying for a picture of himself nor his pals. Apparently, he moved to one side when he saw someone else taking a photo of a group and was merely being polite so as not to intrude into the background. He said he was "holding onto a rock" which somehow "suddenly seemed to be moving away from him". The next thing he knew, he woke up in a

helicopter on the way to the nearest hospital's emergency room.

You can see from this holiday snap I took in 2007 that there are many sections of the Grand Canyon that are completely unfenced, from whence most falls occur.

Even though tumbles into the Grand Canyon only number in single figures each year, they are nearly always fatal. According to official statistics, an average of 12 deaths occur annually, although only about three of these are from people falling – and even then, they're mostly because people were drunk or making daredevil jumps near the edge, rather than trying to take photos.

Of the dozen annual average deaths, around nine tend to occur in hired helicopters and light aircraft taking tourists on aerial viewing trips. In fact, one horrendous mid-air collision between two aeroplanes diverted for sightseeing in 1956 resulted in the deaths of 128 people onboard both craft. The incident was a catalyst that led to the formation of the USA's Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) a decade later.

Don't get shafted

And of course it's not only the Grand Canyon that causes people to fall to their deaths when taking photos. There have been fatalities and serious injuries in Yellowstone

National Park in the USA, from people disappearing into boiling sticky mud or from being severely scalded when getting too close to geysers, which erupt without warning, as a detail from this warning sign in Japanese illustrates.



Another place to keep your wits about you is Coober Pedy, an opal mining town smack bang in the middle of nowhere, some 600 miles northwest of Adelaide, on Australia's Stuart Highway.

Coober is the site of more than 250,000 unfenced opal mine shafts, simply dug into the desert floor by prospectors, then left abandoned. Most of the holes are around 30 feet deep and wide enough to admit a man with a bucket and pickaxe. It's definitely not a place for a game of

Continued on Page 9



Shedding light on big images from small spaces

Ian Knaggs will give a workshop on this subject at Oxford and Peebles Photohubs – see pages 10 and 11.

Light; it's the one thing that all photographers need to create their images. Without it we'd be, quite literally, in the dark. When using studio lights there is a huge variety of modifiers that can be used to influence the look and feel of an image. When shooting still life images you have a great benefit that, because the subject is usually relatively small you can utilise studio spaces that are significantly smaller than would be required for a portrait session. In addition, you can use lights that are significantly larger than those practical for portraits. This increases creative flexibility and your control over the look of an image. In the world of portrait photography, there is often talk about the use of 'large' light modifiers that are used to create soft light that is flattering whilst also creating a feeling of depth and three dimensionality to the subject. When using umbrellas and softboxes anything over 1.3m in diameter could be classed as large and these can sometimes be as large as 2m in diameter. However, whilst these

modifiers may seem 'large' they are no where near as 'large' as the 0.9m x 0.2m stripboxes that I use in my studio.

Confused? Then let me explain... the important factor is that it is not the physical size of the light, but the relative size between the light and the subject that makes a difference. If we consider a full-length portrait being lit using a 'large' 1.5m diameter umbrella/softbox/octabox, the ratio between subject and light is approximately 1:1. Compare this to a studio still life image where the average subject is 10cm high which is being lit by a 90cm stripbox, then the subject to light ratio is now 1:9 – the light is nine times larger than subject. In portrait photography terms this would equate to using a 13 metre softbox! Using these relatively, huge lights in a small space there is real scope for creating super soft shadows and smooth gradients on the subject of an image. These are exactly the techniques used to give still life subjects depth and highlight their textures and details. If these

massive lights are not enough, the effective size of the lights can be increased even further by placing a sheet of diffusion material between the softbox and the subject which increases the subject to light ratio even further to around 1:20 (for a 2m long diffuser).

As still life subjects are often small, the use of macro lenses can further expand your ability to shoot in small spaces by keeping the camera-to-subject distances small. When assessing the size of set required, one consideration that must be taken into account is the shape of the subject. Flat-sided, cuboid objects means that the set size can be minimised. However, cylindrical and spherical subjects or those with convex curved faces will often require more space as they reflect light from all around the set.

Another trick for creating big images from small spaces is to make use of image compositing techniques. Starting with a vision of the final image, numerous elements are shot separately. Using smaller elements, it is possible to minimise

Red Bull can and battery composite



The can shot set up



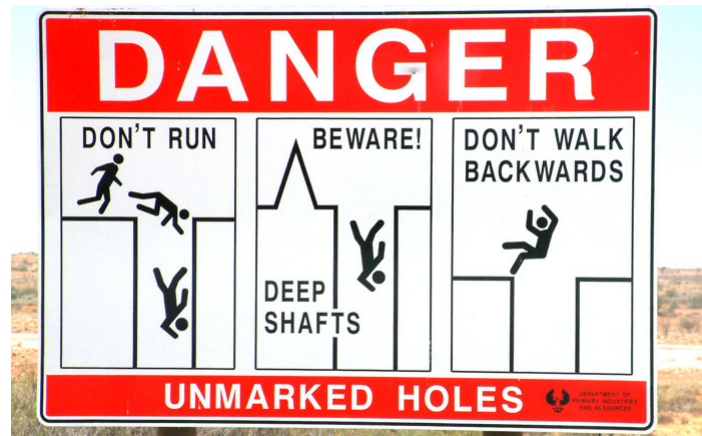
the set size required to shoot. These are then combined in post-production to create the final image. There are several things to consider when using this technique, the most important of which is to ensure that the relative camera position is consistent when shooting the individual elements. This ensures that all elements will fit together realistically when composited together. Lighting must also be relatively consistent but there is usually some scope for making small adjustment to light positions to

allow precise control of reflections and shadows. Using these techniques and armed with your 'massive' small lights, it is possible to comfortably shoot images in spaces that are as small as 2m x 2m and still have space to walk around the set to make adjustments to modifiers, reflectors, bounce cards and flags/gobos. This makes it possible to shoot in many household rooms or garages with comfort, making the creation of these images within nearly everyone's reach.



The battery shot

Tom Hill continued from page 7



blind man's bluff. As you can see from the image of one of the dozens of signs all around the entrance roads to the area, walking backwards with a camera to catch a great shot of a sunset isn't recommended.

Incredibly, since records began in the 1960s, only two deaths from falling into the mineshafts have been known, but many people with broken bones and fall-related injuries are regularly taken from the desert pits by mine rescue teams.



Coober is a town with a real 'frontier' atmosphere. You can see from these photos of the 'free' abandoned car and welcome message that the place has something of a 'Mad Max' feel about it. That's probably because *Beyond Thunderdome* was shot there on location in 1985. The population of around 1600 people live in 'dugouts', partly due to the summer temperatures, which often exceed the mid 40s Centigrade, and also because when residents dig for opal, they furnish and decorate the underground cavities they created, converting them into dwellings. A prospector only has to find enough opal to cover the cost of digging, and hey presto, you have another free-of-charge extension to your troglodyte home!

Dying to take a selfie?

It seems that researching into how people have died when using cameras reveals some very interesting facts. Somewhat unsurprisingly, the number of people killed whilst trying to take photos of themselves and/or their friends has increased exponentially since the invention of the camera phone. Try a simple search on Wikipedia for "selfie-related injuries and deaths" – it reveals some breath-taking (or rather breath-stopping) incidents. Fatalities are by far the most prevalent in India and vary from electrocution on train tracks, to simply being run over by trains.

But the most common Darwin Award recipients for photographers killed in the line of selfie seeking has to go to those posing with wild animals. Figures show that the most regular incidents are from trampling by elephants; they get annoyed unless you get their best side, apparently...

In another case, a guy in Nabarangpur, India, sat next to a wounded bear for a selfie. The irritated ursine clearly objected to the man's impudence and mauled him to death. But possibly the most bizarre fatality from posing with animals was the Chinese tourist at a wildlife park in Rongcheng, Shandong province, who was drowned by a walrus after taking several selfies and videos with the creature. A zookeeper was also drowned in the same incident after attempting to save the man.

So there you have it, photography can be a hazardous activity; so stay safe out there, all you snappers!



Look out for news of Tom's forthcoming book in these pages.

PhotoHubs



Join the Guild in Oxford or Scotland for top training days, full days of talks only £12.50, and free trade show

This month the Guild of Photographers Photohubs training and events arm has two-day dates for your diary in both England and Scotland. The first event is very close to our mailing date, on **September 10th and 11th** in Thame on the London side of Oxford:

Oxford Belfry Double Tree by Hilton, Thame OX9 2JW (above left) and the second one is **September 27th and 28th** in Peebles, between Edinburgh and Glasgow in the Tweed valley.

Peebles Hydro Spa, Peebles EH45 8LX (above right)

Each event starts with a full day of paid-for small group workshops which must be individually booked, followed by a day where further workshops are joined by a free Trade exhibition, talks (requires day pass) and demonstrations with admission on a single ticket for the day.

It's an opportunity to listen to some inspirational speakers, take part in workshops, photograph a Cosplay model, grab photography and business mentoring opportunities, meet some great suppliers and socialise with like-minded people all in one place or hub.

A ticket to meet the Trade on Day Two lets you photograph the Cosplay model, and even grab a mentoring session which is totally FREE (but must be pre-booked). Plus, there are some great free gifts to be had, and the

exhibitors will be demonstrating new products and ideas throughout the day. The attending suppliers on the 11th September in Oxford include Fuji, Epson, Loxley Colour, CEWE, Click Props, The Guild of Photographers, Hand Painted Backdrops, SIM Imaging, Digitalab, One Vision Session Days (with cosplay model 'The Joker') and Wilkinson Cameras (who are bringing the 'Pro Master' range of equipment). At Peebles the roster is Fuji, Epson, Loxley Colour, Click Props, The Guild of Photographers, Hand Painted Backdrops and Wilkinson Cameras.

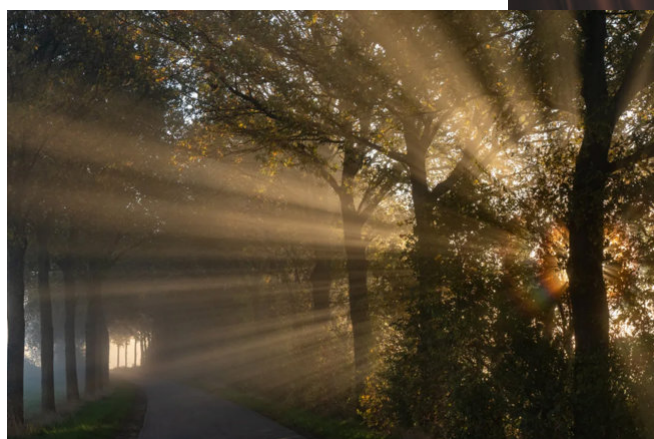
The trade day, which just requires advance free registration, benefits from an early start and the opening times are 08:30 – 16:00 (last entry 14:30). A free Goodie Bag potentially worth over £95 is included when you book a day pass for the talks as well. It includes a Pro-Master Camera Care Kit (worth £24.97), a voucher for a Premium Photo Poster from CEWE (worth up to £35), a voucher worth £20 to spend at Sim Imaging and a set of paper samples from Loxley Colour. Plus, the first 50 to book either a Speaker & Trade Day Pass or Workshop will also get a free wireless wi-fi charger from Epson and a copy of the acclaimed *JRNY* travel magazine.

For full information and booking, see:

<https://photohubs.photoguild.co.uk>



Paul and Sarah Wilkinson (left and bottom left) can be seen at Peebles along with Charlotte Bellamy (centre). Gary Hill (bottom right) speaks at both venues.



OXFORD PROGRAMME

Monday September 11th talks:

10:00 Ian Knaggs – Creating Extraordinary Images From Ordinary Things. Ian will share the process of how he creates the extraordinary from everyday items you will have in your home so you can go and do the same. This is thinking out of the box!

11:30 Natasha Ince – The Importance Of Connection & Empowerment. Natasha is a firm believer that connection and the feel good factor lead to better imagery. She will share her ways of she does this with her client.

13:15 Jo Bradley – Push Your Photography To The Next Level. Competition Tips and Image Critique from an experienced Judge. Jo will share some priceless tips and advice for competition and to improve your photography in general. Suitable for all genres of photography and ability levels.

14.30 Gary Hill – Keep Your Creativity Alive. An inspiring talk dedicated to Nurturing and Sustaining your Creative Spirit in Photography. Discover how to embrace challenges, experiment fearlessly, and keep your artistic vision alive in the ever-evolving world of photography.

Sunday September 10th workshops:

9:30-12:30
Paul & Sarah Wilkinson
Mastering Off-Camera Lighting – £120

9:30- 12:30
Rachel Sloan
Master Parents & Prop Shots – Newborn Photography – £90

13.30-16:30
Gary Hill
Mastering The Portrait Fundamentals – £90

13.30-16:30
Jeff Brown
How To Build A Photography Website That Works – £90

Monday September 11th workshops:

9:30-12:30
A Masterclass with **Gary Hill**
Advanced Lighting – £90

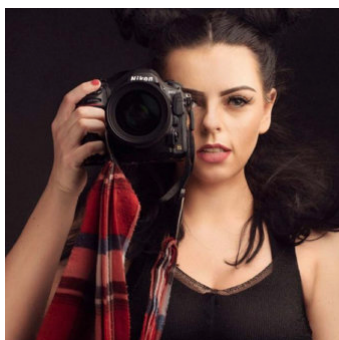
9:30-12:30
A Masterclass with **Jo Bradley**
Creative Newborn Photography – £120

13:30-16:30
A Masterclass with **Ian Knaggs**
Big Images from Small Spaces – £100

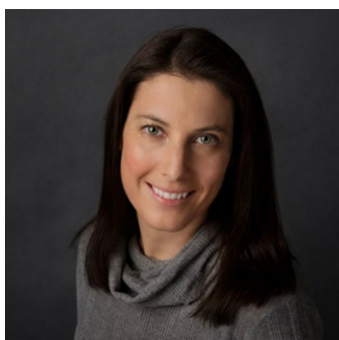
13:30-16:30
A Masterclass with **Natasha Ince**
Perfecting Maternity Portraiture – £120



Ian Knaggs



Natasha Ince



Jo Bradley



Gary Hill, above: Rachel Sloan, below



PEEBLES PROGRAMME

Thursday September 28th talks:

10:00 Jeff Brown – Understanding the Power of LinkedIn for your Photography Business. Jeff will advise how to build a network of your ideal clients on the World's biggest professional networking platform.

11:30 Charlotte Bellamy – The Power of Personal Projects. Working on personal projects can invigorate your creativity and elevate your photography, whether you are a pro or photograph for a hobby but where do you start? Charlotte will help you identify opportunities and make it an experience that builds skills and provides self-satisfaction.

13:15 Ian Knaggs – Creating Extraordinary Images from Ordinary Things. Ian will share the process of how he creates the extraordinary from everyday items you will have in your home so you can go and do the same. This is thinking out of the box!

14.30 Gary Hill – Keep Your Creativity Alive. An inspiring talk dedicated to Nurturing and Sustaining your Creative Spirit in Photography. Discover how to embrace challenges, experiment fearlessly, and keep your artistic vision alive in the ever-evolving world of photography.

Wednesday Sept 27th workshops:

9:30-12:30
Gary Hill
Mastering Portrait Fundamentals – £90

9:30- 12:30
Jessica McGovern
Seeing the Result: Outdoor Pet Portraiture Shot Spotting – £120

13.30-16:30
Jeff Brown
How to Build a Photography Website that Works – £90

13.30-16:30
Jessica McGovern
Retouching Pets – The Essentials for Stunning Results – **£??**

Thursday 28th Sept workshops:

09:30-12:30
A Masterclass with **Ian Knaggs**
Big Images from Small Spaces – £100

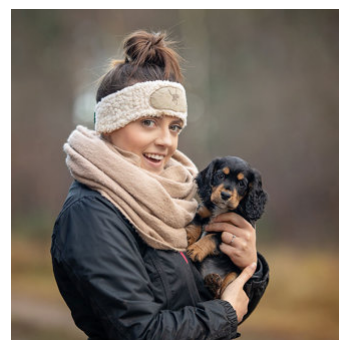
9:30-12:30
A Masterclass with **Gary Hill**
Advanced Lighting Masterclass – £90



Jeff Brown



Charlotte Bellamy



Jess McGovern



Paul and Sarah Wilkinson

13:30-16:30
A Masterclass with **Sarah & Paul Wilkinson**
Mastering Available Light – £120

13:30-16:30
A Masterclass with **Charlotte Bellamy**
Jump Starting Creative Projects on Location – £120

Full details and updates can be found on the Photohubs web page along with links to all the speakers' own website, and details of how to book for the Workshops and Masterclasses, admission to the programme of talks, or admission to the free Trade show. Also check the site for Guild Awards and Photohubs, February 2nd and 3rd 2024.
See: <https://photohubs.photoguild.co.uk/>

JON REES
WATERFALL FALL

Autumn visits the woodlands and rivers of the Brecon Beacons





Facing page: Ffwdgrech Upper Falls. Sony A7iii, Sony 16-35mm f4 at 17mm and f11, Kase polarising filter, ISO 100, 0.6secs.

Above: Sgwd Ddwli Uchaf in Autumn. Sony A7iii with Sony 24-70mm f4 at 29mm and f8, Kase polarising filter and 3 stop ND filter, ISO 50, 13 seconds.





There are places which become centres of attraction for photographers and sightseers because of their concentration of scenic views and the quality of the natural environment. One such region is Bannau Brycheiniog (the Brecon Beacons) in South

Wales, close to the English border and within 'day out' distance of Cardiff and Bristol.

The many waterfalls are the main draw with two marked trails, and the autumn season offers a promise of the best light and colours. One of the photographers

specialising in this area is Jon Rees. Jon describes himself as "a relatively new convert to landscape photography, having bought my first really decent camera (the Sony A7iii full frame mirrorless) in April 2018." He upgraded to the Sony A7iv in early 2022.

Left hand page: Sychryd Autumn. Sony A7iv; Sony 16-35 f4 at 16mm, Kase magnetic polarising filter, 3LT Winston tripod, ISO 100, 0.4sec at f10.

Above: Sgwd Isaf Clun-Gwyn. Sony A7iv, Sony 16-35mm f4 at 26mm, Kase polarising filter, ISO 50 1/2s at f8.

Jon has been successful in the UK Landscape Photographer of the Year competition, with three images shortlisted in 2020 then one highly commended, one commended and three more shortlisted in 2022. He's a full-time NHS doctor, a partner in a large GP practice in Somerset, as well as having a specialist role in Urology.

"My interest in landscape photography really started approximately five years ago, and became more serious in the last two or three years", he says. "Photography has proved to be an excellent escape from a busy work and family life – a time to slow the pace and immerse myself in the activity. It has always been as much about the process of being out in nature taking photos, as it has been about the images themselves (although getting good images, that I am personally happy with, has become ever more important).

"I had walked in 'Waterfall Country' in the southern Brecon Beacons (now renamed Bannau Brycheiniog) before I was really interested in photography, but in September 2019 I made my first trip there with camera and tripod, having seen images online from the various falls. It was the first of many trips and I now go as often as I can when conditions are right.

"The falls are approximately 90 minutes away from my home in Bristol, but perfect to visit during wet weather and in overcast conditions when many landscape photographers are cursing their luck.

"I mainly visit the falls around the small village of Pontneddfechan in the Vale of Neath. There are two trails – the **Elidir Trail** and the **Four Waterfalls Trail**.

"The falls are different every time you visit – some falls work better with high water, some when there is lower water – and they are worth a visit in all seasons as again they will look very very different. Autumn is of course the highlight for most photographers, although I am colourblind which limits my appreciation of autumn colours over other seasons! My personal style has evolved over the last three years of visiting the falls. My aim with my photography is always to go beyond the simple 'record shot', so I'm always looking for something extra".



Jon in January at Sychryd Isaf Clun-Gwyn – crossable on foot in low water.



Sychryd Falls in spate – one of Jon's favourite locations, also seen in the autumn image with much lower water flow.

Jon sells prints on line and ten percent of this revenue supports his charity work.

"I have been a trustee of the Health Improvement Project Zanzibar (HIPZ) for over 10 years. It's a small charity that manages two hospitals on the small island of Zanzibar off the east coast of Africa. Our work reaches over 350,000

people on the island and covers everything from primary care, hospital care and a progressive mental health service. See the website, <https://hipz.org.uk/>".

The trails

"The Elidir Trail starts in Pontneddfechan (or you can start from the small car park at the top of the trail,

but this is usually closed during summer months as the approach road is narrow and cannot cope with any volume of traffic). This trail consists of four main falls: Sgwd Gwladys (Lady's Falls), Sgwd Ddwli Isaf and Sgwd Ddwli Uchaf (Lower and Upper Gushing Falls), and Sgwd-y-Bedol (Horseshoe Falls).

"These trails are busy in holidays and at weekends – ideally if you can visit early mornings on a weekday, you will often have the waterfalls to yourself – if you visit during the day on an autumn weekend, expect to have competition! My personal favourite of these falls is the Upper Gushing Falls, Sgwd Ddwli Uchaf, as it has a fantastic overhanging tree that in early autumn adds incredible colour over the falls (page 13). This tree is renowned however for shedding its leaves early, so it's not one to wait until late autumn, or you may find it sadly disappointing.

"Four Waterfalls Trail is usually approached from two carparks higher up the valley. I usually park at the 'small car park' on the main road, but you will have no hope on an autumn weekend unless you arrive early. This is popular particularly for Sgwd-yr-Eira – the 'waterfall you can walk behind'! It is usually very busy at weekends but again, if you can manage an early morning visit during the week, it will be quiet. Sgwd y Pannwr and Sgwd Isaf Clun-Gwyn (page 15) are also excellent for photography, and when water levels are reasonably low, you can walk across the top of the latter, to get images from the opposite bank.

"I also love to visit Sychryd Falls (page 14 and left) – probably my favourite waterfall and quite possibly my favourite place for photography – there is something so magical about these falls, particularly as they are topped by a picturesque bridge that adds so much to your images. You may have to contend with outward bound groups as it is a popular location for gorge walking. Park at Dinas Rock, in Pontneddfechan to visit these falls – follow the path up that starts on the left side of the car park as you approach – it's about a 10-15 minute walk to the falls."

–DK

More information on the Elidir Trail here:

<https://exploresouthwales.com/explore/elidir-trail/>

And on the Four Waterfall Trail here:

<https://exploresouthwales.com/explore/four-waterfalls-trail/>

For more of Jon's photography and print gallery see:

<https://www.drjonreesphotography.com/> and Instagram @drjonrees





When prices fall – and when they resist falling

In the last issue I wrote about the prices of some cameras going sky-high, so I thought I should redress the balance and mention the reverse, the prices that have fallen.

As they say at the bottom of any printed financial advertisement, or in a voice-over rattled through at machine-gun speed in TV and radio ads, the value of your investment may fall over time. With cameras and other photographic equipment this is usually due to a number of factors.

As with just about everything except houses, the longer you own something the more its value can drop. When I was a full-time camera dealer, sellers offering me their equipment were often surprised at the hit they had to take when selling their two or three-year-old digital camera. Most entry-level or enthusiast models were updated every year or so by the manufacturers (or even discontinued altogether) and sometimes



The Ilford Witness – Britain's competitor to Leica and Contax, peaking at £15,000 value but probably worth no more than £7,500 today.

enjoyment out of their camera, just as I had with my car.

A major change in technology can often be the reason why prices fall. A generation or so ago any pre-owned lighting equipment seen at a camera fair was snapped up in a flash (sorry). It was the same story with enlargers, especially those models that could handle medium format negatives, with many selling within the trade before the doors even opened to the public. Now, although certain small darkroom accessories are on the up, it's a buyers' market for enlargers as their supply is much greater than the current demand.

History has shown us that things tend to get even worse when a totally new photographic format is introduced, be it in film, like when APS replaced many basic point-and-shoot 35mm compacts, or when 4/3rds digital cameras were replaced by Micro 4/3rds and mirrorless SLRs. Often these replacements decimated the values of the previous systems due to improved performance and being of a smaller, more manageable size.

The value of some professional equipment is often only heading in one direction, usually due to the amount of use it gets. The working photographer has been making their living from the equipment and, as a tool-of-the-trade, it would have paid for its self many times over.

Although professional photographers often seem reluctant to part with items they know they really don't have any further use for, that cluttered storage cupboard of old equipment might still contain a few interesting items of value.

The collectible camera market can be the most fickle beast. Just a handful of years ago an early 1950s Ilford Witness would have set you back £15,000 or more, always supposing you could find one (the exact production number is unknown, but certainly less than 500 examples were made). The last Witness sale I know of achieved £10,000 but other recent sales have been at barely half the all-time high figure. You can find some historic Witness sales figures (as well as those for many other cameras) at <https://collectibleblend.com/Cameras>. Just be aware that the prices quoted could be up to 20 years old, so don't use them to get to a current market value.

But it's not all bad news. I recently sold a duplicate Wrayflex II camera from my own collection for £300 while keeping the slightly better condition model that I had bought for £500. Still, the one I sold only cost me £100 as a 'non-runner' as I knew a simple (£20) repair was all it needed. Occasionally, even falling prices can still show you a profit.



The Wrayflex II – £100 as a repair job, £300 in working order, £500 in a better condition. But will it go up or down in future value?

their replacements were of higher specification, or were cheaper – occasionally even both!

People couldn't quite understand that they were going to be lucky to get back even half what they had paid for their camera when new, so I had to resort to my 'new car' analogy. I would simply say that when I bought my car it cost me over £16,000. Now, nearly 10 years and 80,000 miles later, I will be very lucky to get £2,000 for it. The penny usually then dropped. I would sometimes add that at least they have had a few years use and

From working in a central London studio to marketing manager at Paterson and full time camera dealer, Tim Goldsmith is now a self-employed photographic auction consultant. He is Chairman of the Photographic Collectors Club of Great Britain (PCCGB) and a member of the Stereoscopic Society. You can reach him at info@cameravalues.com or on Facebook as Monark Cameras <https://www.monarkcameras.com>

By 1992 I was already making a living through photography, working as a lab-technician and photographing events in Buenos Aires, Argentina. I got there mostly because it came easily to me. And then I took a Creative Photography class that helped me decide that I wanted to be a photographer. I discovered the Master of Photography, and the work that shaped photography as an art. The styles or approaches that felt closer to me, and the ones I didn't agree with. In this regard, it was a photo taken in Peru by Brazilian economist and French photographer Sebastiao Salgado that I didn't like which was the trigger for this journey.

Actually, the photograph was perfect, as was most of Salgado's work. What I didn't like was how the observer would read it – See Salgado's Peru 1977 collection, an image called 'The Couple'. The photograph shows some tenderness, but what it screams is poverty. It is the view of someone who comes from a highly developed western perspective looking down at the subject of his photograph. That photo motivated me to work on my own vision of life in the Peruvian Andes.

I went to Peru and spent a few months in Cusco and travelled around. I got a library card at the Centro Bartolomé de Las Casas and read as many books and articles as I could. I was also allowed to use the photo lab of the Fototeca Andina for developing and printing my own work. I stayed at my friend's Gabriela Valdez's house, where they made me feel part of her family.

I went from one side of the Sacred Valley to the other, and through the south and central Andes.

Parties, festivals and burials.

I ate and drank things that I didn't even know existed. These photographs are a sample of what I learned about native Peruvian people and mestizos during those challenging times. I saw the same poverty Salgado witnessed, and more, and different. And I saw joy and hard work and traditions and all those things that build the Peruvian culture.



Pako Dominguez has been a long-time reader of *Cameracraft* and its predecessors back to *Minolta Photoworld* and *Image*. He works for US photo company Adorama.

LIFE & BEYOND IN THE ANDES

PAKO DOMINGUEZ

Life can be richer than images of poverty so often featured in reportage. Even death can have a richness when community, ceremony and tradition honour it. Pako took his camera out thirty years ago to record traditions of both in the Peruvian Andes. During lockdown he revisited his negative files – and ended up with an exhibition in New York, where he is now a photo lab manager, at the Peruvian Consulate.



I arrived to Abancay to change buses a couple days after the Easter Carnaval. This brotherhood was celebrating the Yunsu, in which they decorate a tree with gifts, dance around it and chop with an axe until it falls. I was welcomed and invited to the party. Below: July 28th is Peru's Independence Day – parades are organised in every single town and city. I went with friends to Jimbe, a couple of hours away from the coast but 1209m above sea level. The kids from the primary school dressed up as military officers and this girl, dressed in white, was meant to carry the Peruvian flag.





In the Andes, communities control plots of land in various parts of the region, trying to cover as many ecological zones as possible. That way, they can get a wide range of products and distribute the work throughout the year. The area is known as the "vertical archipelago". At peak times, families organise to work together, instead of hiring workers. Above, farmers thresh wheat in Poroy, in the Sacred Valley north of Cusco. One of the traditions inherited from the Inca times is the Minka, communal work based on reciprocity. It can be for the harvest, building a new house or in the case below where the family reunited to sort through and wash in a mountain stream the belongings of an elder who had passed the previous week. They will burn anything too old or worn, and distribute everything that is still good to use.





One morning, my friend Fernando Pancorbo, in charge of the Fototeca Andina at the Centro Bartolome de las Casa in Cusco, called me: one of the eldest members of his cofradia (dance troupe) had passed. A fine singer, she was well known within the pilgrim community that goes every year to the Ausangate mountain for the Qoylluriti festival.

Below: A close friend of the deceased woman sits on a rock, taking in the service, waiting to walk back home with the rest of the family when it is finished. There are still echoes of her practical traditional dress in the young girl, right.

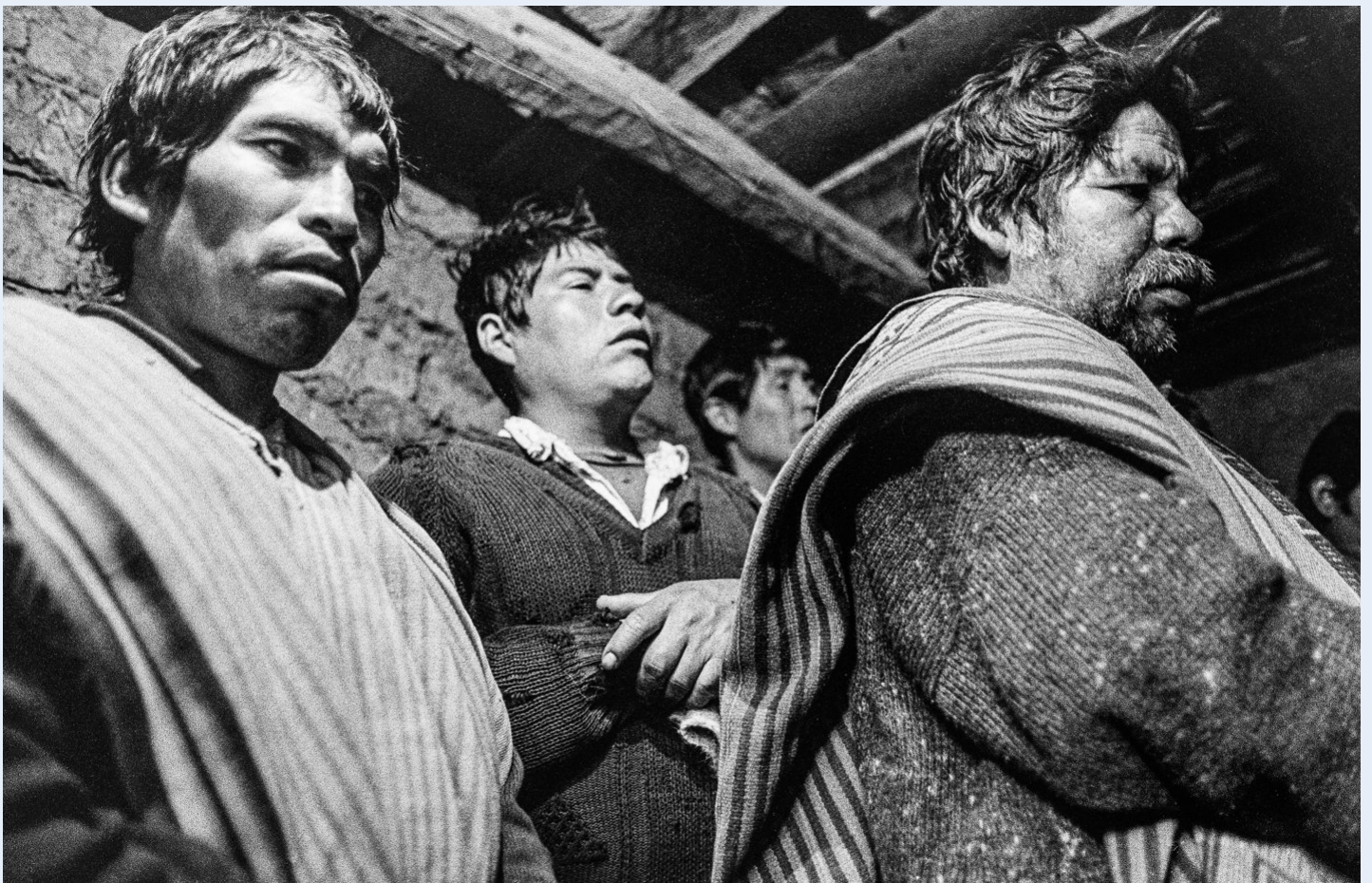




All the members of the dance troupe along with family and friends came in procession from the family house to the Cusco Cemetery for the last goodbye and to bury the coffin.

The morning after the Yunsa party, I had time to kill before my next bus to Ayacucho. I was recommended to go to a lake not far from the city of Abancay. I found mostly women and kids taking care of the livestock, some cattle but mostly sheep. This young girl had been helping her mother with some chores then paused, looking behind her into the distance.





Above: after washing the clothes of the deceased, the family will gather for a wake around the clean belongings, standing to remember and pray, the menfolk chewing coca leaves and drinking white rum or pisco.

Below: The town of Paucartambo is a port of entry into the jungle, located east of the city of Cusco, on the way to Manu National Park. Every July 16th, pilgrimages take place in honour of the Virgen del Carmen. Parades and festivities are held over three days, to celebrate and express devotion to the Virgin Mary. The statue is carried on honoured shoulders which have no doubt also borne the weight of coffins.





Above: Easter celebration is one of the most important in the city of Cusco, where they carry in procession the Señor de los Temblores – the Cristo Negro – from the Cathedral to visit the main churches in the city. People flock from the countryside and the small towns around Cusco to witness the event. Civil, religious and military authorities find front row places at the parades. It is, without a doubt, one of the oldest expressions of syncretism, the mixing of Andean culture and Spanish Christian beliefs.

Below: Dance troupes caricature different periods from Peruvian history. The Majeño troupe parades on horseback representing the wine dealers and muleteers of the early Republic.



THE NEW ENGLAND FALL GUY

Almost everyone who's had the goal of "Let's go to New England to see the peak fall colors!" has had the same questions: "Where should we go? What is the best time? Any good hotels and local businesses worth supporting while you're there?"

Since 2006, Jeff Folger has been an online resource to answer those questions.

<https://www.Jeff-Foliage.com> is an almanac on everything a traveler would need to know – there are even links to live webcams so you can see how certain places look right now. "Some would say I'm passionate about photographing New England's fall foliage", which is certainly an understatement. "My editor at *Yankee Magazine* started calling me, Jeff Foliage, and so the nickname stuck."

Also noteworthy about his website is the link to his online gallery <https://vistaphotography.pixels.com> where people order prints and canvas enlargements and the usual assortment of accoutrements such as mugs, t-shirts, and the occasional jigsaw puzzle.

He's been posting regular updates and foliage-related articles on the website since 2011 and has amassed a total of 100,000 followers by his estimate, all by word of mouth. "I was on *CBS Sunday Morning*, and before that, I had maybe 8,000 followers on my one *Facebook* page and overnight, it shot up to like 10,000. The next day it was at 12,000. And over time it has grown to 40K and that's just for *Facebook*. So getting national TV recognition a good thing."

He has so many followers that occasionally the recommendations he makes can have a negative impact on the area. "Sometimes people love these things a little too much. And I feel a little guilty in those cases." He cites an example where he directed people to a farm in Barnard, Vermont. "The family who owns the farm has put out a

It's the one region photographers travel to from all over the world to capture autumn colors – where Jeff Folger has built his reputation as 'Jeff Foliage'. Gary Friedman found out how he got there.



"Road Closed" sign down below their farm so people might not drive up. The farm owners didn't like all that traffic or all the people photographing the farm. Jeff understands. "Frankly, I probably wouldn't care for it either. But many of my posts end up supporting the eco-tourism in the area, and to me, that's the upside." He even keeps a list of small businesses worth supporting on his website, publicity he doesn't charge the businesses for.

Having so many followers leads to the question of whether he can monetize that audience effectively. "Oh, if I had that kind of power, I'd be a lot better off. For me, my goal is to try and help people because leaf peeping can be expensive. We go out, stay overnight, and pay that hotel fee because the hotel fees have gone up astronomically from a few years ago when we used to be able to go get a room at 90 bucks, but you can't anymore."

His online poster and canvas enlargement sales do pretty good too. "I've found that people don't go buy my artwork because I tell them about it but if I capture something that resonates with them, they will think about it for a time and maybe come back and purchase it later."

Beginnings

Jeff recalls how it all started. "Toward my final years in the Air Force, I would take my vacation time between Sept and October. Since most of my family lived in New England, I would come home to Massachusetts or New Hampshire to visit and see the fall colors. I would only be home for a week or so and usually ended up being disappointed at not finding peak fall color during my New England travels.

"After I retired in 2003 and as the summer progressed I started to think about the pending fall season. I bought a *New Hampshire Gazetteer* (a local map and atlas guide to the area) and started planning to visit NH and VT. When September arrived I would take off for places like Conway NH or White River Junction and wondered where the fall colors were. I traveled around

Top: Sleepy Hollow Farm, Vermont (October 16th). Canon 50D, 24-105mm at 40mm. Right: Hudak's Farm, Swanton, Vermont (Oct. 1st). Canon 10D, 28-135mm at 28mm.



*Above: New Hampshire Fall Foliage. Canon EOS 50D, 24-105mm at 50mm (October 14th).
Below: A Steeple among the Maples. Canon EOS 80D, 24-105mm at 105mm (October 18th).*



the countryside and I eventually found websites where I learned that I was heading out too early. I learned how the color mostly flows north to south and higher elevation to lower, except in swampy areas where red maples or striped/swamp maples turn in late August to early September.”

Soon after that he discovered *Yankee Magazine*’s fall foliage website. “I started asking questions in their foliage forum and learning from others, that fall I started posting hundreds of fall images. By the next year, people were asking me where to go.” The next year *Yankee Magazine* asked him to be a forum moderator. “My proudest moment was a couple of years later when *Yankee Magazine* asked me to be their first foliage blogger and tell everyone where I was finding peak fall foliage in my autumn travels or more importantly NOT finding it.” This eventually became a paid seasonal gig. In 2011 Jeff went his own way getting his travels out on his own blog, *Jeff-Foliage.com*

An annual pilgrimage

Based for the past 20 years in Salem, Massachusetts, Jeff makes these leaf-peeping journeys annually starting mid-September going through late October, traveling several days a week and taking lots of stills and video.

“Sometimes we stay up north and do a real thorough job. Sometimes, like this year I may just go up, do a big loop, passing through Vermont, up over New Hampshire, maybe come down through Maine and back home, and then pass out”. That passing-out part was a joke referring to his age – he’s now 64 years old. Despite being retired with full benefits, he still has a day job, offering exceptional customer service at a call center. “I was a retired master sergeant, which is not bad pay-wise but it’s not like being a retired officer, which is a lot more money.” Hence the day job.

“The company allows me to take two days of vacation per week in October which allows me great flexibility. I’m off four days a week all through the month of October, and each week I try to place myself where I think the best chances of being centrally located.”

Top: Walking the Afternoon Path. EOS 50D, 100-400mm at 100mm (November 15th). Bottom: Row of Maples, EOS 10D, 75mm (Oct. 13th).





Climate change impacts

Has he found that climate change has affected the general timing of leaf peeping? “It definitely feels like it has. I mean, after 20 years, we can say that I can see climate change because year to year that’s just weather. But the season, in general, has moved later, not more than a week on average, but it used to be that around the 1st of October, I could find glorious peak color in a lot of places. And last year it was really the fifth, through the eighth between New Hampshire and Vermont. And it really seems to me that based on my pictures of what I’m capturing, I would say it’s about a week later than it has been in the early 2000s.”

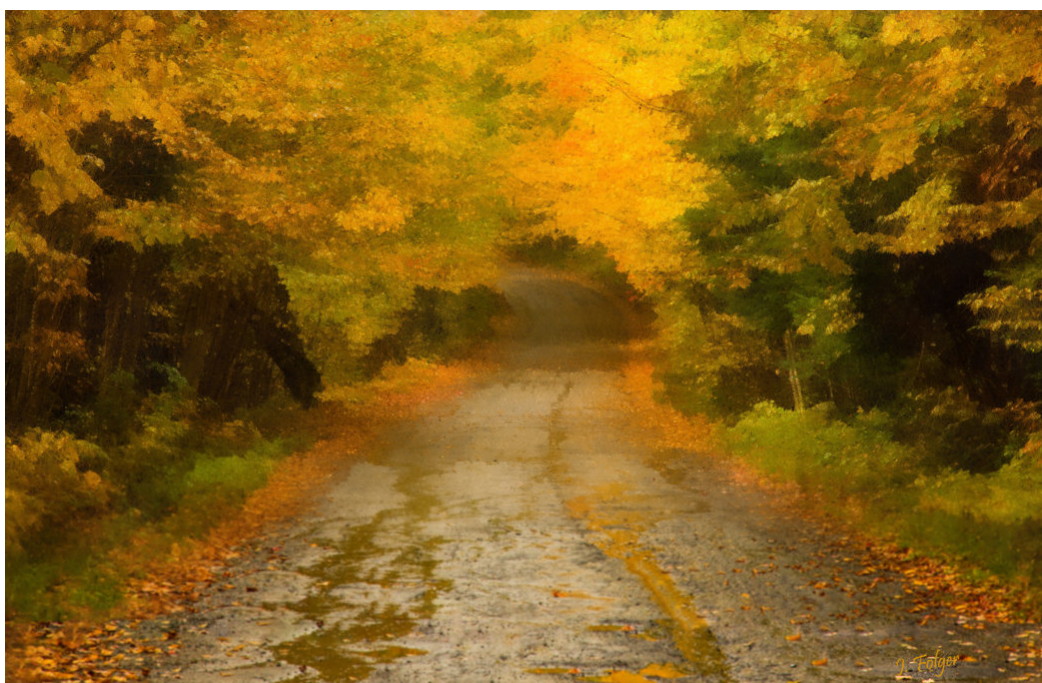
Gear

Jeff has made his images using his Canon EOS 80D DSLR with 24-105mm IS II. “That’s my preferred lens. It’s super sharp and I love it.” He also shoots videos/stills with his DJI Mavic III Pro drone. Accessories include a couple of polarizers, a graduated filter, and a Lee filter “Big Stopper” ND filter. “My polarizer filters take the edge off a bright sunny day, give me those white puffy clouds and blue sky.

“I use *Lightroom*, *Photoshop*, *Premiere Pro*, and a fair number of *Topaz* tools for sharpening or getting rid of noise, if I need to. And for the most part, anything I do in post, I try for realistic fall colors, I try very hard not to enhance things too much because I want to give them a fair representation of what’s really out there.”

But whatever you do, don’t ask him about people who are focused on posting unmanipulated autumn images online (straight from the camera). “I don’t believe in straight from the camera. I’ve seen what comes out of my camera and it’s uninspired. It’s just bland. It doesn’t have any ‘pop’ but some feel the images are only true without modifications.”

Now 55 years since he first started taking pictures and 30,000+ miles of chasing peak color, he reflects, “You know, I’m a better photographer now. I’m out on the road more than I was



Top: Route 113, Evans Notch, Maine. EOS 80D, 10-18mm at 10mm (October 18th). Bottom: Rainy Day Road, digital art post-processed for printing.



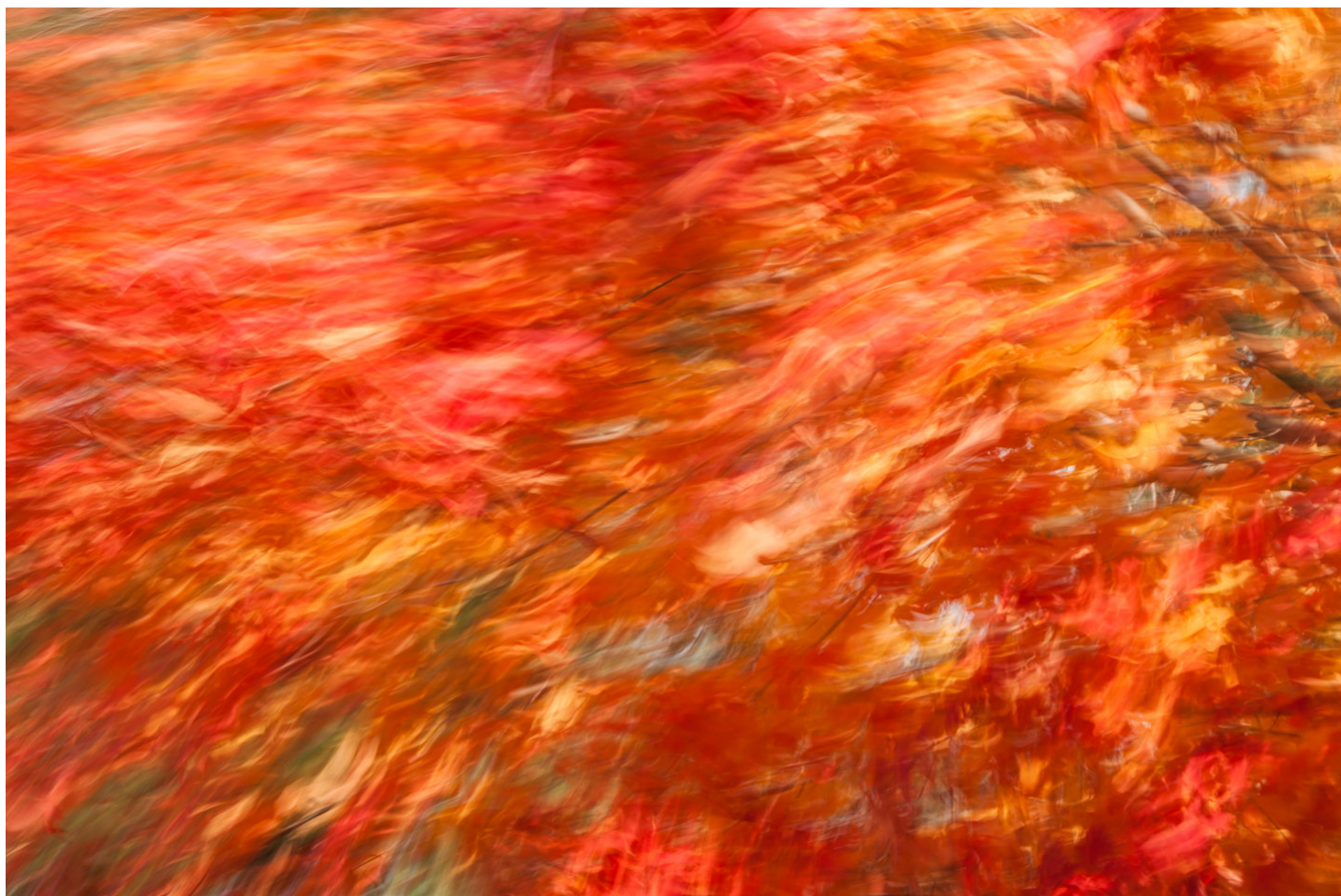


*Above: Cabin in Vermont Fall Colours. Canon EOS 50D, 24-105mm at 105mm (October 2nd).
Left: Sandwich Notch RD Waterfall, New Hampshire. Canon EOS 80D, 10-18mm lens at 18mm (October 12th).
Below: Lake Chocorua in Fall Foliage. Canon EOS 50D, 70-200mm at 200mm (October 5th).*





*Above: Joe's Pond in Autumn Fog. Canon EOS 50D, 24-105mm at 28mm (October 3rd).
 Below: Bradford, Massachusetts. EOS 50D with 17-85mm at 50mm (October 23rd).
 Top right: Last of the Fall Colours. Samsung Galaxy S9 (November 18th).
 Bottom right: Red Fall Leaves on Blue. EOS 50D, 17-85mm.*





when I was in the early 2000s. More effective at it because I've learned so much over the years. I can be a little more surgical in where I go, what I do, and how I do it. Also, so many of these roads are like old family friends to me now."

So after twenty-plus years, why

does he still do it? What keeps him motivated to help people to find New England's fall colors? "I like helping people. You know, it's part and parcel of who I am. So this, gene that causes me to emphasize 'Service before Self' worked well in my career in the Air Force and

continues today, whether it's in my customer service job or through my blog, it's who I am. I like doing that."



More resources:

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/jeff_foliage/

Facebook foliage page: <https://www.facebook.com/NewEnglandFoliage/>



PRECIPITATION!

It's not all lost when rain falls

THESE images from Guild of Photographers members show why it's worth working with water. On this page, two reminders why rain should not stop play on a wedding shoot, both from **Chris Chambers**. They show Chris's expert use of location flash to bring out the couple while retaining the feel of the weather – enough to make most feel happy they didn't have just another sunny shoot! On the facing page, surface tension creates perfect spheres for **Anoushka Lind**, top left, while city night and a rainy bus stop made a Gold winner for **Steve Collins**. Nature's own monochrome with the heavens opening over the hills was captured by **Mark Harris**. At the bottom of the page are two contrasting and complementary rain on plant studies by **Angela Gisby**. If it's wet you may stand a chance of much better images than on a dry day – rainfall is your friend!





CAMERAS

OM-Systems OM-5 and 12-45mm f4 kit

No matter how many times I try to shake off MicroFourThirds and persuade myself that an investment in full frame kit must be justified by never using anything else, MFT comes back.

It comes back when I find travel is on the horizon and bulk and weight are just not desirable. Having parted with my OM-D E-M1 MkII outfit after getting Sony's A7IV to partner my A7RIV, I really missed having an everyday camera kit with a wide focal length range and no appreciable weight on the shoulder or neck. That kit included the 12-40mm f2.8 Pro MkII, a 30mm macro, the 75-300mm MkII, and the remarkably good Laowa 7.5mm f2 AE (the harder to find version with electronic coupling, EXIF and stabilisation enabled, and magnified manual focus triggered by turning the focus barrel).

With an expedition to the Abruzzo region ahead – going with four friends and their partners, invited to stay and perform at a music festival – my hold baggage was destined to be a guitar with BA's really generous cabin and hand bag allowance to handle all the rest.

While BA Edinburgh to London and London to Rome legs have the same allowances with the grade of



ticket I bought, the large cabin bag 56 x 45 x 20cm matches hold checkin weight at 23Kg but must not contain ANY cameras, laptops, lithium batteries of valuables. This is because they reserve the right to put that bag in the hold. Such items have to go into the hand bag 40 x 30 x 15cm, which can rather amazingly also be 23Kg. I flew BA to the SWPP convention in London and took a box of *Cameracraft*, and I can assure you that 23Kg in a small bag is difficult and also something you really don't want to lug around with you at airports or on the tube!

Despite the generous weight allowance, that 16 x 12 x 6" is rapidly eaten by a full frame mirrorless kit when there's a minimal laptop, chargers and

cables to add. The offer of a very good promotion and discount on the newish OM-5 (successor to the E-M5 MkIII) as a kit with 12-45mm f4 Pro lens hooked me. While the aperture of the 12-40mm f2.8 has appeal, it was not a lightweight lens and the MF/AF clutch ring was a constant nuisance, along with its very badly designed lens hood. The 12-45mm f4 is every bit as good optically, has that 24-90mm equivalent range instead of 24-80mm, and focuses closer at 45mm giving 1:4 scale which is equivalent to 1:2 on a full frame. One of the first things I did after getting the kit was try this extreme close up ability, and then the hand-held Hi Res multishot mode. This is something which my E-M1 MkII lacked, tripod only. My Sony models with sensor shift multishot



The OM-5, introduced at the end of 2022, resembles the E-M5 MkIII and is the first to carry the OM SYSTEM name not Olympus. It is a compact model weighing under 700g with the 12-45mm lens including battery, the body measuring 125 x 85 x 50mm.

Hi Res not only needs a tripod, but tedious processing of multiple raw files by Mac or PC. The OM-5 does the 16-shot computational work in-camera, taking a few seconds to create a regular raw .ORF format file right there on the memory card. The normal resolution of the OM-5 is the usual 20MP of all recent higher end Olympus MFT including the latest OM-1, and the hand-held high resolution is 50MP, not far off a match for my A7RIV's 61MP standard res.

It only took an hour or so to find that both the close focus and the hand-held Hi Res really work well. You can also do hand-held focus stacking. To achieve this all calls for a 7-stop sensor stabilisation capacity which also enables short time exposures, LiveMOS composite shots, and simulated 16X (four stop) ND long exposures with a high rate of hand-held success.

Of course, you can also pack a table-top tripod, using a walking pole with camera mount, improvise a bean bag and do all kinds of things to ensure even better chances of ridiculously fine detail.

To this kit I added a replacement for the Laowa 7.5mm f2 AE I had sold only six months earlier, really missing that lovely lens which is not much bigger than a 35mm film canister, and a Zuiko 40-150mm f4-5.6 R regular consumer grade tele zoom which cost less than my little Billingham Hadley Digital bag does now. Mine is a few years old but it's Billingham



The OM-5 kit is Packaged in very environmentally Aware minimalist Fashion but includes a real printed manual.

The BLS-50 is small but easy to fit in a spare corner – the in-camera charger is much bigger even without the USB-C cable



so it looks as good as new. It fits the camera, three lenses, my sunspecs, two extra batteries (they are a small and neat design) and a 58mm Hoya REVO circular polariser with a 46mm adaptor ring for the 7.5mm. This bag is black but for travel anywhere hot one of the lighter colours is better. My camera is chrome, not black. That is also better for keeping cool. The 58mm filter is common to both Zuiko lenses, and the deep petal lens hood for the 12-45mm is also a perfect fit on the bayonet of the 40-150mm.

Better – with limitations

The small 'S' series body has changed very little since the last Olympus branded model, under the new OM-System label (that's one difference). It happily accepted my deeper eyepiece surround, it will also take the older series battery grip. Although this body is a small one the space between grip and lens is good and the shape of the handgrip with rear thumb moulding gives a very firm hold. The rear and front (round shutter release) controllers have a smooth action and can be customised to control shutter and aperture and \pm EV depending on the PASM (P_tAvTvM for the Canon-accustomed), Auto, Movie, Scene or Art mode selected on the push-toggle lockable dial. The Movie button (red dot on top) is well placed on the top plate right hand end, not on the camera rear and the addition ISO, EV compensation, AEL/AFL, Menu, Info and four-way controller all have familiar homes on the top and back. The depth of

A strong appeal of the OM system since early days has been the twist/turn screen which is easily reversed to protect it and make the camera handle more like film.



The battery compartment seals with an O-ring Gasket and the body is IP53 rated

The rear touch screen is 3 inch with 1.37m pixels – it's enough, that's all.



One raw file HDR processing – taken at 12mm, 1/1250s at f8. ISO 200. Photoshop Beta, Camera Raw v15.5.0.1595



OM-5 20MP raw quality – ISO 6400, 1/400s at f4, 12-45mm at 32mm. Camera Raw AI Noise Reduction 60. Above, at 240dpi (16 x 20" print size).



'Queen Rocks', with Italian X-Factor finalist Andrea Prestianni, at Intro Sounds 2023 festival, Introdacqua, Abruzzo, in August

field stop-down EVF preview, a small button lower right of the lens mount, is unique to MFT which has the faster true aperture stop-down mechanism of all systems. It is partly the instant 'FAD' iris which allows this body to shoot at 6fps with full AF/AE for each shot. It can also shoot at 10fps with these locked at the first frame, and with a silent electronic shutter and the ProCapture setting, at up to 30fps. These modes are not intuitive and study of the operating manual (provided for once) combined with plenty of testing is the best way to learn how to get the right setting quickly when needed.

For the Pro Capture mode you need a Pro rated M.Zuiko lens, which the 12-45mm is but my 7.5mm manual focus and budget 40-150mm R are not – they are also not weather sealed to the same very high IP53 standard, meaning that in the rain I'd only use the body with the 12-45mm. The OM-5 also had slightly lower high speed specs. Thanks a new back illuminated stacked sensor, the OM-1 achieves 50fps with AE and AF on pro lenses. The older sensor type redeployed for the OM-5 only manages 10fps with no AE/AF. It also only pre-records 14 frames and shoots at 30fps for ProCapture compared to options for 20, 50 or 120fps.

There are limitations to the OM-5 which are surprising. It has very advanced autofocus, again needing study and some setting of preferences through menus and controls. But it entirely omits tethered shooting which the last E-M5 models offered – the option is just omitted from the camera firmware – while majoring on use as a webcam.

The retention of Micro-USB instead of changing to USB-C, for the cable connection, is frustrating as hardly anything now uses this standard and it means having another anonymous-looking cable in the kit instead of the ubiquitous C to C link. It offers in-camera charging, which only makes this even harder to explain, and the kit comes with no external charger. However a sub-£20 kit of USB-C fed dual charger and two clone batteries which seem to work well solves that problem.

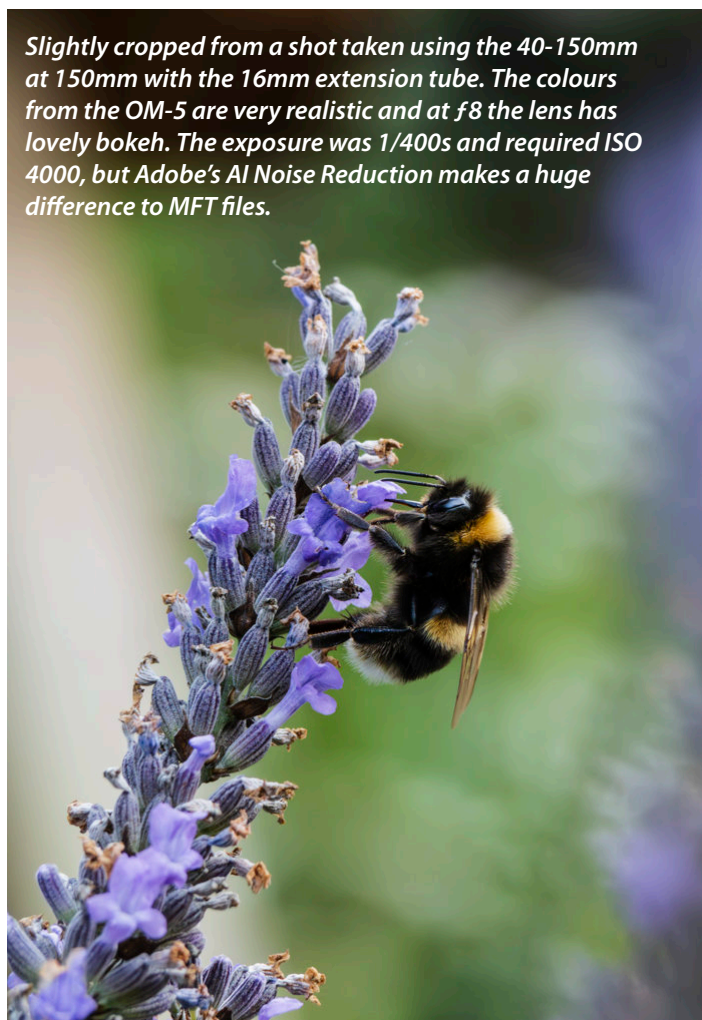
It's well enough specced for video. In addition to regular 4K it can record C4K – 'cinema mode' which is 4096 x 2160 rather than the usual 3840 x 2160, more widescreen. Its optimum format is regular Full HD, 1920 x 1080, with the option of shooting at a wide range of frame rates from 24p to 60p. However there is no limit on movie recording time, and there's a mode to shoot vertical videos for



With only the 12-45mm, the fishers and swan were too far away – but at 45mm, with Adobe's AI Enhanced Resolution, the section pulled out is over 4000 pixels width.



The 12-45mm at 45mm, and not at its very closest focus – 1/160s at f9 at the base ISO 200. No extension tube used.



Slightly cropped from a shot taken using the 40-150mm at 150mm with the 16mm extension tube. The colours from the OM-5 are very realistic and at f8 the lens has lovely bokeh. The exposure was 1/400s and required ISO 4000, but Adobe's AI Noise Reduction makes a huge difference to MFT files.



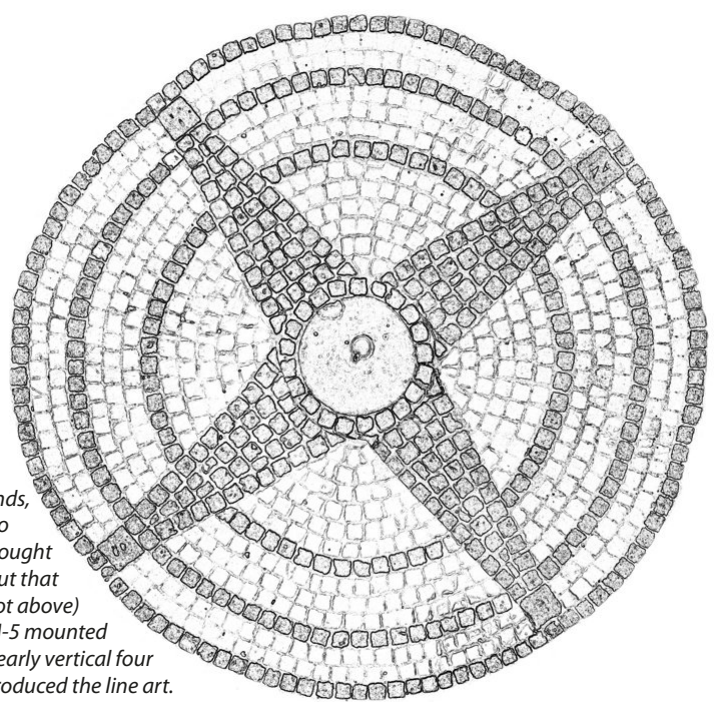
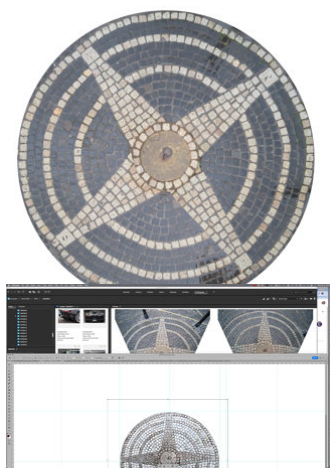
JJC MFT extension tubes

The 12-45mm has an impressive close-up function and for very little outlay this can be extended to real macro. There are many extension tube brands on Amazon, Meike may be the best with its all-metal mounts but the JJC set is slightly more lightly build and under £30. Set to 45mm, even to 10mm tube brings the subject so close you risk touching the front element but the sharpness and AF are all first-rate. In my bag I only carry the 10mm not the 16mm.



The tubes are well packed, with front and rear caps and a padded pouch, and instructions.





To make T-shirts and stickers branding the informal folk-pop band I'm in with friends, known locally as the Cobbles Band because of the pub we are based in, I wanted to use the circular compass mosaic of setts marking the bull ring in Kelso square. I thought a perspective-corrected shot taken standing on a bench to one side would work but that was too extreme. I then tried four wide-angle views taken from around (screen shot above) corrected and montaged but getting a good circle was impossible. Finally, the OM-5 mounted on a 13ft pole stand with composition and shutter firing from iPhone enabled a nearly vertical four shots which stitched to form a fair 'copy stand' result. 'Find Edges' in Photoshop produced the line art. Rain – no problem for the OM-5 – really helped the contrast. The light weight and easy remote control were vital.

social media. A special setting enables High Speed Movie at 1080p, shooting at 120fps with playback encoded for slo-mo from 24fps (0.2X speed) to 60fps (0.5X) using the 25, 30 and 50fps options for finer control. This playback can be to your TV via the camera's Micro HDMI port.

A cautionary note on photo and playback – do NOT enable 'Quick Erase'! I let a friend flip through photographs just taken. But told to use the left press of the controller, he used the left button below it. Yes, it has a Trash symbol on it... but was set to Quick Erase and appeared to scroll through the images, to him. In fact it was losing them all for good. I'd enabled it to handle high speed sequence sets where dozens need erasing. It will never be enabled again...

As with previous Olympus models, the sound recording quality is excellent – few cameras are a safer bet for tackling loud gigs and festival stages or subtle acoustic when relying on auto levels and built-in mics. There is a stereo mic socket. But... it has no headphone socket for monitoring or playback, relying entirely on the HDMI connection.

The kit purchased also contained no flash unit, unlike the last E-M1 MkII kit I had. The FL-LM3 costs £69 and runs from the camera's battery

Without these small omissions, the OM-5 might be too close to the

OM-1. You still need to buy the premium model to get full functionality.

The *OI.Share* app on iPhone works well. Its ability to register and then remember the camera (usually a QR code setup) combines with a simple menu of choices to take pictures remotely (as I was able to test with the camera mounted on a high pole stand, see above), import existing files from the camera, and embed GPS data either in real time or by recording a track log and applying this to the files in the camera(s) later, saving battery power during shooting. A GPS symbol is clearly displayed when embedding during shooting is active, as well as both Bluetooth and Wi-Fi symbols for connection when active.

Real performance

One thing I learned from the upgrades to Sony's RX100 series is that while phenomenal data transfer speeds can be achieved with the newer BSI and stacked sensors, this does not translate to lower high ISO noise. The actual sensel component – the bit which traps those photons – isn't changed, just the speed of transfer and analog to digital conversion. Since the OM-5 and OM-1 17.5 x 13mm sensors have followed much the same development route as those smaller 1" types, I'm not too concerned that opting for the entry

level camera will have great disadvantages.

The small sensor has a surprising dynamic range, and at the base ISO 200 setting can record bright sky and direct lights without colour clipping when the highlights and exposure are pulled down in Adobe Camera Raw. It's actually better than Sony's full frame sensors in this respect. Shadow levels are not as generous but it's still possible to pull up an ISO 200 shot underexposed by five stops and get a very clean result. Even the extended 25,600 setting retains plenty of detail. The standard 6400 is good with default raw conversion noise reduction (Luminance 50, Colour 25) but amazing with the new Beta AI Noise Reduction which takes just 8 seconds on a Mac Studio Max. Given that MicroFourThirds lenses are designed to be used two stops wider than full frame – you get the same effective depth of field and many of the Pro lenses are built for this – never assume the OM-5 or its cousins can't handle low light or fast shutter speed action.

As for the other aspects of the OM-5, it's got not just the 'older' sensor similar to the E-M5 MkIII but also the lower resolution EVF compared to the OM-1. It's still comparable to Sony's A7C as an example, and in practice the finder is much sharper and clearer than the A7C – it has superior quality eyepiece optics, which makes as

much difference as the OLED EVF display itself.

EVF resolution doesn't matter as much with functions like *Starry Sky AF*, which will focus perfectly on the night sky, a bonus with this model. The sheer number of clever computational photography modes, a process which started many years ago with LiveMOS allowing you to see how fireworks or light trails built up in an image in real time or make real film-style multiple/double exposures, makes this one of the most versatile cameras you can find with a body price only just into four figures.

Personally, I like the twist and turn rear screen and I normally have this reversed to operate more like a traditional film SLR and avoid anything lighting up. I also like the position of the lens mount release button (Sony's E-mount is really bad for cramped awkward lens changing). My only problem with this kit is that I may use it too much and neglect full frame.

If you Google for OM-5 you may find yourself viewing the DJI drone/action camera with the same model number, or an older Olympus website which lists the OM-D but has not been updated for the OM-5 – OM Systems has not been good at updating on-line resources and seems to be doing so bit by bit. The 'explore' site given below is the best one to visit.

See: <https://explore.omsystem.com>



Curtis Moldrich shot the same car using two contrasting approaches. Top, with controlled panning at 182mm focal length, and a shutter speed of 1/125 at f9 to get the right amount of background blur to convey speed without the risk of blue on the car and below at 300mm wide open at f6.3 to get a shutter speed of 1/1000s and freeze action without panning. Note the absence of vignetting at f9 but fairly strong vignetting at full aperture and full zoom – if cropped to adjust composition, this could be corrected in processing from raw. Focus accuracy and sharpness are excellent, and were in the whole series shot by motoring photographer Curtis on his Nikon Z6-II.



The 70-300mm is a small and light weight tele for Nikon Z (photo: Tamron UK)

LENSES

Tamron 75-300mm f4.5-6.3 Di III for Nikon Z

The plethora of mirrorless systems has resulted in matching levels of third-party glass, but in terms of volume most of it is manual, prime and lower-end. Particularly where the Nikon Z is concerned, where full-frame, autofocus zooms are something of a minority. A minority of one, until Tamron's recently announced 35-150mm f2-2.8 RXD reaches shops.

That lone option is the 70-300mm f4.5-6.3, comfortably less than £1,000 and featuring weather sealing and full-frame coverage (Sigma's three Z-mount primes are APS-C only). Thanks to the relatively slow aperture and external zoom extension, the 15-element, 10-group lens has a 67mm filter thread and weighs just 580g, making it a remarkably pleasant walk-around zoom if you're hiking or prone to looking up at the buildings when exploring.

A substantial zoom ring is easy to grip and support the lens with enough resistance to support the lens and camera handheld without shifting; aside from the narrow focus ring the only other external feature is the USB-C port for Tamron's firmware software.

The electronic viewfinder has moved on considerably since the first mirrorless cameras, and the Z7-II's liquid-smooth refresh and pin-sharp clarity can rival the best ground glass for clarity and 'snap'; the kit lens, for example, can make the viewfinder sparkle on fabrics. With the Tamron, that happens less often suggesting full aperture might be a little softer and lacking in contrast. The results say otherwise; sharp wide-open with strong differentiation of focal plane and background.

Focus is quick and as close to silent as you can reasonably expect, and though the lens lacks stabilisation the Z system's stabilised sensor provides enough leeway for most handheld situations – particularly given current standards of noise and dynamic range at higher ISO.

Even with a full-frame sensor and 46MP to crop from you wouldn't necessarily think of a 70-300 as a walkaround, general lens but a couple of hours in Nottingham yielded many opportunities for street shooting. The relatively small dimensions of the camera and lens were not as indiscreet as wandering about with a fast paparazzi-style weapon. Close focus of 1.5m at 300mm is a little distant, but it falls to 0.8m at 70mm.

Distant subjects against sky are crisp and clear, delivering detailed, immersive cityscapes and landscapes. Details resolved on higher resolution sensors allow useful crops and isolation of subjects that make a teleconverter irrelevant; paired with the higher-end Zs Tamron's glass comes to the fore, and the lack of chunky/heavy build that comes part and parcel with professional/high-end zooms really does not seem to matter that much.

For sports and trackside the 70-300 is a light and easily managed lens with accurate tracking and excellent clarity. In terms of Z-mount glass, there's nothing that can compete on price and package.

However, the Nikon 70-300 f4.5-5.6 AF-P VR is close in terms of spec and optical performance, it's ready to drop onto the FTZ adaptor and costs remarkably little from reputable used dealers (the new RRP is only £629, after all). It's a bulkier combination, of course, but it does add in-lens VR.

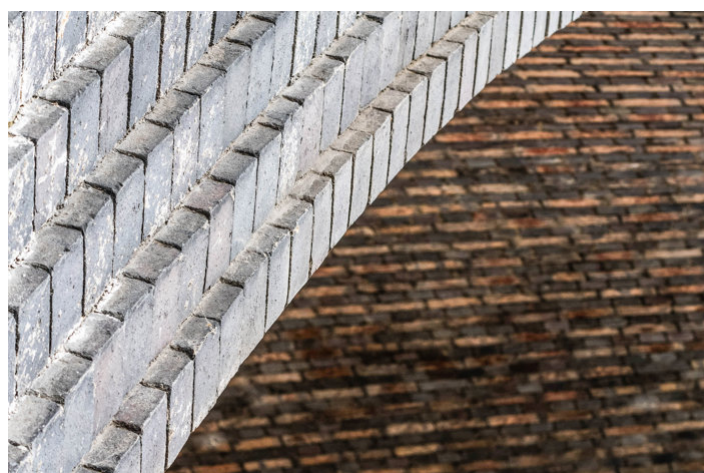
The biggest issue for this Tamron is the existence of the Sony E version. Same lens, same optical combination, and it's £529 from most retailers compared with £699 in Nikon Z. Given the number of Z users who would want or own an FTZ adaptor, the temptation of a warranted, pre-owned Nikon AF-P and an adaptor for less outlay is hard to resist. Yes, I'm as tempted by that. But if this Z-mount Tamron falls to the price of the E-mount version it will be a no-brainer.



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



Richard shot this Nottingham canal bridge scene first at 70mm then at 300mm. The light on the group is reflected from the water and barge roof. The close-up of the brickwork is at 70mm. All at f8 and ISO 500 on Nikon Z7-II.



Below and bottom right: street photos from the same shoot, both at 300mm showing the value of a long lens in the urban environment.



Apple Mac M2 Studio Max

It's always hard to know when to upgrade especially if you use Macs. I've got Macs dating back 24, 18, 14, 11 and 1 year as well as brand new (as I write) and one 10-year-old iMac 27 doing well in family hands. The reasons are simple, needing both a laptop and a desk machine and also a print room Mac and a file server, plus a couple kept because vital software was not updated to newer processors or 64-bit.

All either came with an SSD system disk (or Apple Fusion, which is not really as good) or have been retrofitted, the earliest 1999 PowerBook running from a 4GB CompactFlash card replacing its tiny-in-all-senses hard drive. I've become experienced in opening up everything, including the MacBooks, to replace drive or battery or expand memory, and I remain impressed by the speed that a 2010 MacPro tower with a 2.93MHz Xeon 6-core and 64MB of memory can shift image and movie data through its 8GB Radeon display card and GPU.

If all this is just meaningless techspeak to you, buy whatever you need whether Mac or PC from an expert new or used seller and not, ideally, a high street retailer. You'll find plenty of advice through Facebook groups including The Guild of Photographers for members, who also get selected Apple discounts.

But, being a hurry to upgrade before my midyear business year end, I ordered a new Mac M2 Studio Max (to replace my excellent 2019 i9 iMac 5K) from John Lewis as they do very good deals and warranty. First setback was that 'my' machine was damaged in their warehouse (how?) so delayed. It turned out to be the local Currys who could have one in the next day, and with a real phone operator, volunteered £50 off the John Lewis price.

The only issue was that no-one in the country, not even Apple themselves, could supply the 36GB memory model with an SSD larger than 512GB. I'd been used to a 1TB system disk, and these beautifully



Neat enough, above, but needed a separate SSD 'pod' and the back is busy

made minimal machines are *not* user or dealer upgradeable. A little consultation and examination of the outgoing system indicated this would be enough if some fast SSD external storage was added, on top of my two separate 1TB SSD portable drives, 8TB *Time Machine* dedicated Seagate HD, 14TB WD Elements long term archiving drive, and 6TB WD Thunderbolt 2 (with adaptor) short-term archive. To this I can add a 16TB Drobo which is only fired up when a big archive transfer is convenient, as it eats the watts if left running all the time.

I was not well informed. First of all, no matter whether it costs £200 more for 1TB instead of 512GB – there were no 1TB machines on sale unless you went for an Ultra at twice the price and more of the Max, and no upgrades, though this was literally just two weeks after the June 13th launch of the new Studio models. Second, you can't add SSD storage inside the Studio later, although it has a second slot. Special SSD storage is required which mates with Apple's proprietary controller.

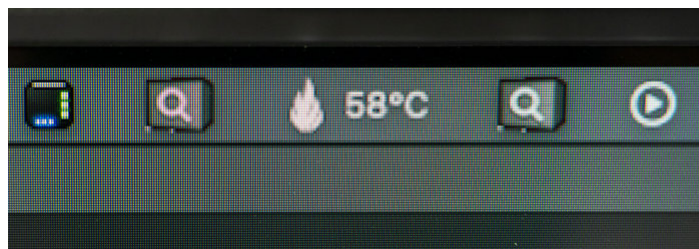
External SSD barriers

My idea of adding fast external SSD storage was fine in theory, but nothing added this way is going to match the speed of the built-in storage. A USB 3 Crucial 1TB (tiny, portable) managed around 900MB/s where the internal SSD came close to 4GB/s. A Samsung T5 1TB hit 400MB/s and my legacy Thunderbolt 2 6TB WD Studio used for storing infrequently used data no better than 100MB/s. The 14TB WD Elements USB 3, a low-cost alternative to using the unpredictable Drobo to store 'everything from everywhere', did better at 170MB/s.

If you use SATA external storage the speed will be limited to around 500MB/s. An affordable Crucial MX500 4TB SSD (around £170) can go into a hub casing (around £60). I ordered a Quality Addicts model which matches the Studio (or Mini) stacking footprint, promising four USB 3 ports and a superfluous extra card reader, but using one of the Studio's four USB 4 ports in the process. When tested the USB ports didn't show up as 2X USB 3 and 2X USB 2, all four reported USB 2. It was returned to get a Satechi hub (the original designer of these Mac-matching devices) which could be trusted for specs, and a 4TB M.2 SSD.

Here I ran into barriers. The fast Crucial PS Plus PCIe 4.0 4TB M.2 NVMe SSD would not fit the M.2 slot of the Satechi, which only works with slower SATA memory sticks to a maximum of 2TB. None of the other Mac-style storage and hub housings, even those with dual M.SATA and M.2, would accept PCIe and I felt their claims for interface speeds might be false. In the end I decided to keep the Satechi hub and put a 2TB WD SSD into it, moving the very fast 4TB into a sub-£20 Orico casing (they make many and identifying the right one was not easy). I was trying to avoid using all the interface connections and having stuff dangling off the back of the Studio or littering the desk.

Surely my storage was already more than ever needed? Maybe, but the instant startup of the Studio and many functions



A free Mac utility called Hot puts a temperature reading in the top bar of the screen. The M2 Studio Max generally runs at much lower temperatures than its Intel i9 iMac predecessor.

including searching for specific files are slowed down greatly by any external HDs even if these are rarely used. 6TB of SSD storage is more than enough for all my actively working photo and publication files, allowing all the slower HDs to be switched off and disconnected.

Drop Dropbox!

Why is 512GB not enough on the system disk? With its blistering speed often a hundred times as fast as a spinning hard disk and ten times as fast as most external SSDs, it's by far the best choice as the primary *Photoshop* scratch disk. Other programs also swap memory and temp files on the system disk by default, and the M2 architecture even with 32GB of RAM uses it for super-fast memory swapping. I try to keep 300GB free space just for these invisible functions.

When the Studio Max arrived and was set up and my outgoing iMac migrated to it, all seemed well. The next morning the computer would hardly function at all. Overnight, the free space had dropped from 450GB (I still had some programs and data to install or move) to 1.4GB. My *Time Machine* backups were disabled due to 'lack of space on the system disk'.

It took me a day with help from Apple to track down the problem, and it was my own troubleshooting not Apple's infantile suggestions (that I should delete emails and clear browser and email caches) which found the cause. *Dropbox's* latest version was storing a copy of everything locally, and had started defaulting to making backups – I only use it to back up websites from my servers, or transfer files to and from magazine contributors. I had never chosen otherwise to back up more than one single current working production folder.

To find the *Dropbox* local data file, I opened my home (user) folder while pressing Command+Shift and setting the View to calculate all folder sizes. Apple's tech support should have asked me to do this, but didn't. I then saw the 450GB invisible *Dropbox* local database, wiped it and removed Backups entirely from *Dropbox*. Even so, the program always tries to grab any inserted media or attached storage and there's no setting to make it stop doing so.

Having invested in a system where the really fast data, program, VM and scratch space is all on that 512GB SSD it will now be a priority to avoid filling it up.

Terabytes vs decibels

In the first week with the Studio it was so obvious that having very large HDs attached overloads the system's indexing, and once through that, they still cause delays in navigating to files even if those are on fast SSDs. With only the 4TB in place, Apple's flexible APFS volume system allowed me to transfer all my current work, all important stored stuff and also my raw files back to 2020 and still have 3TB left to work with. My 3TB+ of older raw files can be accessed by plugging their drive back in.

At the same time I was looking for some images from 2002 and one day's shoot was missing. Plugging in a few HDs which had been stored, far too many simply didn't work. Two 3TB WD Studio Firewire 800 drives that worked OK three years ago were now dead, and the same for a few other USB drives. Over the years I've copied and backed up all of them and have dozens of copies of some directories.

So while much of my local storage has been mothballed I'm not sure it can just be left for years then plugged back in. This data

might well be safer on memory sticks. However, it still all needs backing up as when an SSD fails, it's curtains. More than one HD is needed to do that safely.

As soon as most HDs were powered down, I noticed just how quiet my little office became. Only an 8TB Seagate Backup+ drive, used as *Time Machine*, was still rumbling away. I got the right 2TB NVMe PCIe module to fit the Satechi hub, and once connected, switched to using that for *Time Machine*. All spinning HDs are now only connected if needed and the silence is SO good. My career started in a big daily newspaper office full of clattering typewriters, in a city centre, a couple of floors above the huge printing presses. With darkroom processors, studio lights with fans, line and dot matrix printers, huge hard disk cabinets and more I may never have had such a calming and focusing environment in fifty years of work. I'd have done this years ago if I had realised how much of a noise 'floor' my bunch of hard disks created.

Eyes and ears

The second great benefit of the change has been in visual comfort. The iMac Retina 5K screen is wonderful in many ways, vivid and pin-sharp, bright and colourful. The **BenQ PD3200U** monitor is very different. It's full sRGB certified, not AdobeRGB unlike my smaller 24 inch BenQ, and at its 4K resolution the 3840 x 2160 res gets a huge amount on screen. Unlike the Retina, rescaling produces no significant aliasing or softening and a setting of 3008 x 1692 (courtesy of *DisplayMenu* app) proved the best of many choices.

The better quality of text, and its larger default scale, has been one big improvement. The rendering of photographs from deep shadow to highlight is the other. This monitor is so much better at revealing the tones in the bottom quarter of the histogram. Sometimes it can look a bit flat, like a print lacking d-Max, but that's because it only shows maximum black when it's 0-0-0 RGB, unlike the Retina which has intense 'black' even when levels are in the 1 to 20 range. The BenQ has also been much more revealing of any

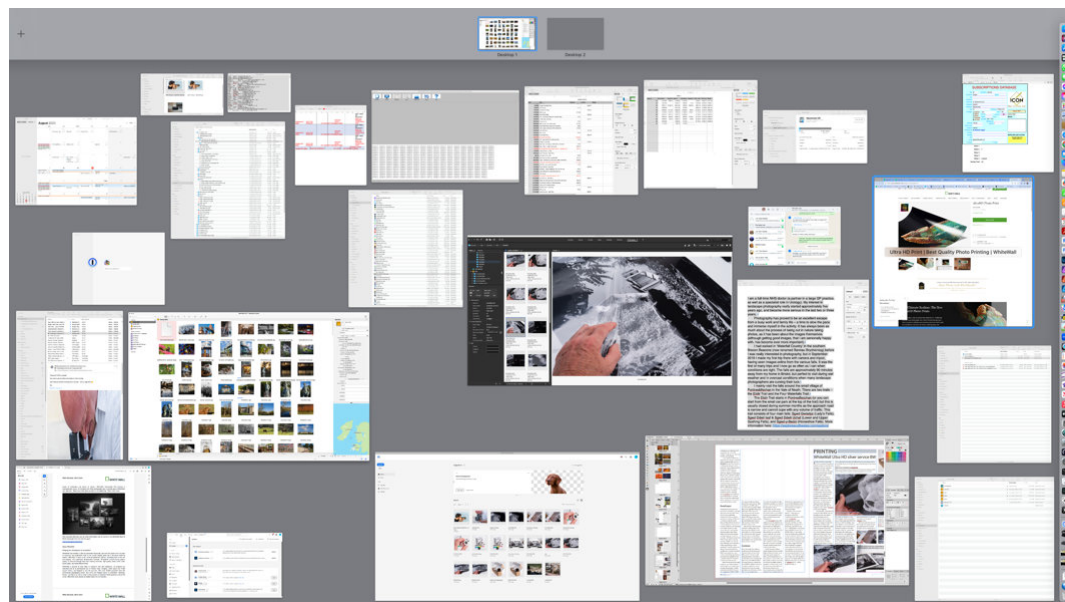
unsharpness, any dust spots and noise levels. This 32 inch 4K monitor is making me re-assess my workflow and standards.

It's not the Photo (SW31C Pro) version but the Designer model, for which the latest model number is **PD3205U**. But the Photo version is £1,700 and the Designer version only £600. For my purposes a good rendering of sRGB is all that's needed, as I work entirely for printing or display on typical sRGB devices. I don't need 99% of aRGB or Delta E <2 and all the other key aspects of the Designer monitor fit the bill. It does not come with a shading hood but the matt screen causes none of the problems of Apple's highly reflective glass. It has a very poor built-in speaker, no comparison at all with Apple's superb sound, but a relatively cheap soundbar placed behind it solves that problem. The Studio Max still sends alert sounds to its built-in speaker, I just turn on the sound bar for video or music.

Overall impact

Making the transition from the second most powerful 27 inch Intel iMac ever made to the M2 Studio Max has been worthwhile. Combined with the switch from working off a mixture of SSDs and HDDs to just SSDs the speed doesn't really need benchmarking to prove anything. It's not instant to open a 61MB raw into *Photoshop* from Adobe *Camera Raw* with many adjustments and settings, but much quicker than before, while most actions like opening existing images are instant. For example, a 159MB panorama stitch .PSD file took roughly a second, opening a 61MP uncompressed Sony .ARW into *Camera Raw* from Bridge was effectively instant, opening this into *Photoshop* took about a second and saving the resulting Level 10 JPEG was instant. When many adjustments, spot removal and healing, sky masking and grading are applied the time to get the image into *Photoshop* can be two or three seconds.

Most will not work on individual images, as I do. Using *Lightroom Classic* (which is not slowed down by using cloud services), a folder containing 50.85GB for 1122 raw files ranging from 24MP to 61MP



The 32 inch BenQ monitor running at lower than its full UHD resolution, using 3008 pixels wide instead of its native 3840 pixels. It's still big enough for a baffling mix of windows revealed when using this Mac OSX view – the kind of view which sends Windows users running for safety, though it really serves no purpose except to show the user any windows which might be hidden under others.

was exported without resizing, using all the crops and local edits contained in the .XMP sidecars created in ACR, to quality 85 sRGB JPEGs with metadata and location information. The source and destination were both the same disk, because two volumes in Apple's APFS format share their space on one SSD flexibly, running at a real 500GB/s read and write. The resulting 14.91GB of JPEGs took 16 minutes to save.

This would be comparable to a 1000-shot wedding export after spending a day culling from the usual 5000 or so shots the average pro wedding now seems to need. I used to do it on one Hasselblad with five rolls of 12 shots and two 35mm bodies with a couple of rolls each, but times change!

I had modified my Mac OS X Plist settings to give very large thumbnails in Finder views. At first I just saw icons, but realised the system instantly shows the large thumbnail on mouseover.

With no need to process any serious movie files, I processed a minute-long clip at 4K from the OM-Systems OM-5 to create a file with title and credits, at full 4K res. This took 15 seconds to render in *iMovie* and with many other programs open (with or without active or background tasks).

Conclusion

Is the Mac M2 Studio Max (without stretching to double the price for

the higher all-round spec of the Ultra) worth it? I'd say yes, with reservations about connectivity. Finding that a useful matching hub able to take both SATA and NVMe SSDs simultaneously required two of the USB/Thunderbolt ports to do so made me realise that four of these ports may not be enough, and having the two USB-A ports in the back line-up brought equal limitations. Fortunately, the right HDMI cable was able to run the 32" monitor at the same resolutions as the DisplayPort cable on Thunderbolt 4, but the monitor needs a separate USB upstream connection which eats one USB-A. The monitor's powered hub then does a good job replacing and adding to this.

The neat Satechi storage/hub added uses one Thunderbolt port as USB 3.1 and effectively moves it to the front while adding three USB-A's next to it, but like the two front-facing USB-C 3.1 ports on the Max all these rely on the CPU's power supply and can't accept peripherals which need a high current for operation or charging when connected. In any case, I don't want lots of cables dangled from the front of the neat Studio box and would have liked more and better at the back.

Everything works well but Apple's design, shoehorning what might be better in a larger casing with larger power supply and better powered connectivity, is a limiting factor in the standard and

Max variants. So far there has been no overheating, it takes a load of programs running at once to shift the temperature above 62°C, fans never come on and the only recurring annoyance was the repeated absence without leave of the Touch ID (fingerprint) function on a £189 RRP extended wireless keyboard, inexplicable when the same function on my laptop is stable and reliable.

Only time and use will tell whether it's all as good an investment as the 1999 PowerBook bought used in 2018 to run my Colortron spectrophotometer, 2004 MacBook, 2009 iMac 27", 2010 vintage MacPro bought in 2019 and greatly upgraded via eBay, 2012 i7 Mini bought in 2022 to run legacy MediaPro software, 2013 and 2017 iMac 27" Macs which remain in use between myself and son Richard who has found new uses for two of them. If you wonder *why so many Macs?*, the answer lies in OS and software upgrades which are so often designed to render older peripherals or programs useless when there is either no new equivalent, or one priced at more than the cost of keeping or even acquiring obsolete kit. At the same time I need to have the latest spec for work with the latest programs from Apple, Adobe and Affinity. In daily work I now use just one M1 Macbook Pro 14" and the Studio Max with 32".

– David Kilpatrick



PRINTING

WhiteWall ultraHD – silver service BW

It's difficult to show what a high end monochrome printing service looks like, within the constraints of a magazine or even on a web page. WhiteWall's new ultraHD BW, launched only at the end of August, uses high resolution imaging on to Ilford silver halide photographic paper. Using a high-end custom laser printer, it's an imaging method far finer than the majority of scanning, light valve or digital lab processes we are used to. I'm generally perfectly happy with minilab prints and I know the resolution is limited now by the 'writing' process more than by the resolution of my digital cameras – and that optical prints from a negative or transparency, where no raster comes between the source and final art, are unaffordable as well as very hard to get made. WhiteWall already offer ultraHD sharpened colour prints on Fujicolor Crystal Archive Maxima.

I sent three files to WhiteWall for a test of the ultraHD BW printing on both the gloss and matt PE-based Ilford paper and the substantial fibre-based natural gloss unglazed. The finest detail was in a 24 megapixel studio shot (ARSAT 80mm f2.8 lens with movements) of a hippo skull, upper right. A landscape (below) had contrasts likely to respond well to the ultraHD sharpening process which gives these prints a look 'beyond analogue'. Finally, a 9 x 6" darkroom print rephotographed on 42MP (bottom right) was compared directly to an Epson P3200 FB photo inkjet, to see how

There is much more to say about the difference between this process and how you probably see your own images right now, and the best place to find the info is on line –

<https://www.whitewall.com/blackwhite>

Right: the packaging for delivery of the prints from Germany, generously rolled around a tube, protected by foils and interleaving paper, in a sturdy box.



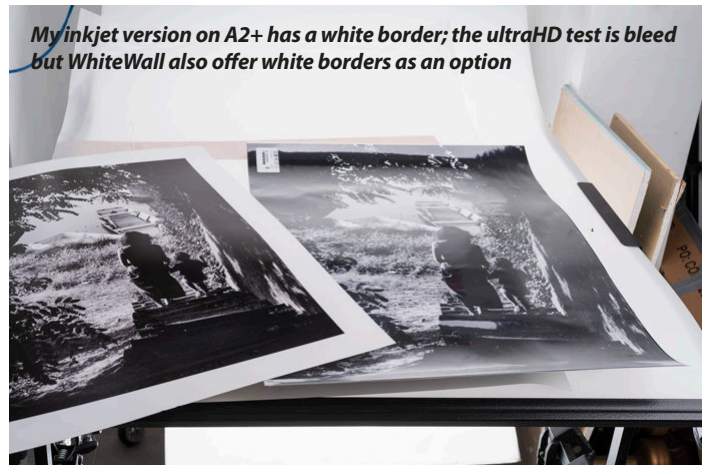
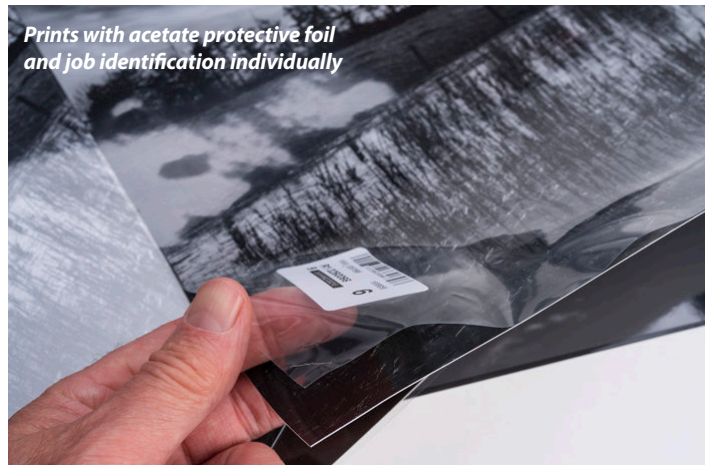
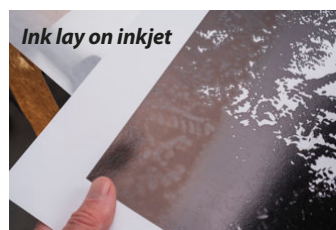
Extremely sharp fine detail, doubleweight base, and natural gloss unglazed on FB

the visibly recorded grain of the 1979 negative and the very subtle deep shadow responded. While the Epson print did have slightly more open shadows close to solid black, it also had ink lay or bronzing issue (left hand example on the right) and this simply can't happen with WhiteWall's silver halide prints. They will never pick up light in the wrong way when exhibited. The finest detail (right hand example) and also highlight gradation were both much better on the WhiteWall prints. As for d-Max, you're not

going to get better than this from any inkjet or chromogenic (minilab) process.

Why have I said 'silver service'? Well, it's like posh dining. You get your gourmet prints served up perfectly. Each is covered with an

acetate foil, and being a silver image the image is never going to stick to it if stored. For archival prints, this goes better than any giclée can offer. As for cost, you'll be pleasantly surprised. – DK



CAMERACRAFT

REARVIEW

Kevin Wilson has appeared in these pages regularly, and last year provided a write-up of the Sigma 105mm f1.4 ART lens after hunting down an L-mount example down for his Leica SL2s. "I have no regrets on that purchase," he says, describing the lens as "brilliant" after we spotted this superb portrait in Kevin's Facebook feed. You can count the stubble on the farmer's chin and the feel of the image is absolutely traditional darkroom quality.

Kevin shot at f1.4, ISO 1250 enabling a shutter speed of 1/200s. Available light was enhanced by a reflector placed to the left. See: <https://www.kevinwilson.co.uk>





Above: working on a series documenting the zone where the Atlantic hits the lava shores of Tenerife around his home in Playa San Juan, Irish photographer Phil Crean made several exposures at different shutter speeds with this rock and the colourful sea bed below it. This was our favourite, with just the right level of transparency in the water and enough movement without being a mist or a disruptive frozen rush. He used a Canon EOS R5 with 70-200mm f4 lens at 200mm, exposing for 2 seconds at f8 at ISO 100. See: <https://www.philcrean.com>

Below: a feel which could be autumn or spring with that slight mist and quality of light – in fact it was taken in late May by Tim Burgess. Tim used a Sony A7RIV with 24-105mm f4 lens at 105mm, exposing for 1/100s at f8 at ISO 400.





What better to end this issue than a shot from behind a fall? **Paul Campbell** did have to wait for a clear moment with tourists queuing to reach this position, but it's actually a composite. Seljalandsfoss in Iceland last November 3rd, Nikon D850, 16-35mm f4 at 16mm, 1/200s at f10, manual, handheld. Entered into Guild 'open' category and awarded Bronze. "The sky was unimpressive against this wonderful spectacle so I opted to swap out for a sky I took at Reynisfjara (Black Sand Beach) a couple of days later (hence the reason for entering it into the open category). At this time of year the ground can be quite slippery as the spray freezes on the pathways up to and behind the waterfall, so you have to be careful. Tripod was not an option – I had to lean against the back wall to steady myself, avoid people who needed to pass, and wait for a quiet moment."

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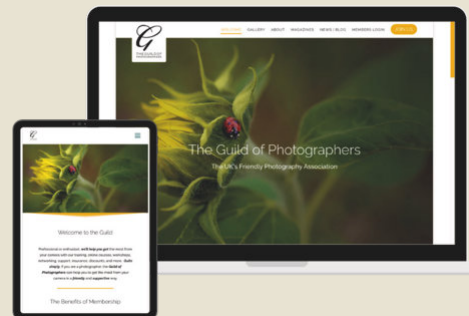
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