

# CAMERACRAFT

MARCH/APRIL 2024 • EDITION #57 • £10 • ISSN 2514-0167

 THE GUILD OF PHOTOGRAPHERS



FLORENCE MONTMARE



HELENTRUST



MITCHELL KANASHKEVICH

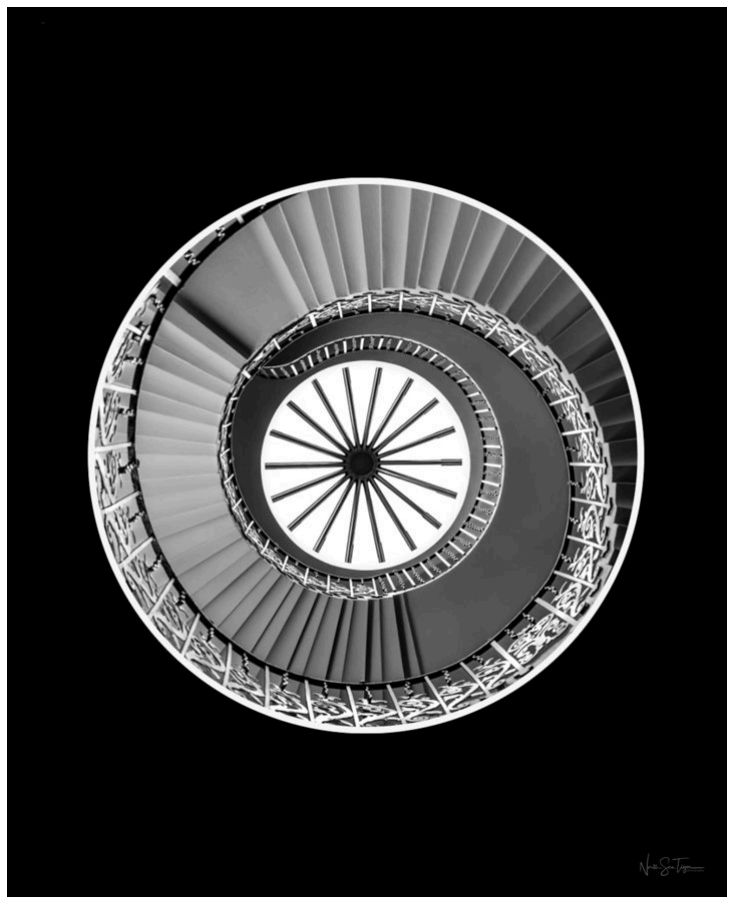


## Black and white

At The Guild of Photographers Awards for 2023 (presented in February 2024) only six black and white images made it through to the Finalists book. Although it did not win a major award, **Paul Wilkinson's** portrait above (a Silver Image of the Month candidate in the Classical Portraiture category) stood out for its unashamedly pure photographic values.

In a judging on the Awards day, which always features a print contest where digital submission is not part of the process, the 20 x 16" masked to show a staircase with a white border on a pure black ground gained a surprise accolade as a Platinum for **Ryan Hutton** – scoring 96 points. The Image of the Month entries are rated unplaced (below the minimum standard expected), Classified (often with advice from judges on how to improve), Bronze, High Bronze, Silver and Gold. Below: live judging.

CEWE gave a £100 voucher to the winner (The Guild gave champagne to the winner and runners-up).



**HOLLYWOOD** film directors and TV lighting cameramen have a little monocle-like aid. Well, technically more lorgnette-like aid as it usually has a handle to hold it up to one eye. It's a Black and White Viewing Filter, which looks a bit like a strong neutral density filter and effectively removes colour when you look through it. These filters were once popular with still photographers in and out of the studio, as they give a good idea of what areas of shadow may need more light and simplify the impression of details as well as colours. This all makes for stronger compositions and better lighting.

Reviewing a few contemporary black and white portfolios – with origins in digital raw capture – I realised that these viewing filters would be a good investment for many photographers now. Too many 'black and white' images were little more than ordinary colour shots with the colour removed, and had clearly depended on colour contrast. The key to B&W is lighting contrast helped along by tonal contrast in some subjects.

Adobe has made photographers (or some of them) familiar with the L\*a\*b\* colour space, where L\* stands for Luminance. Print designers thinking that red on blue or orange on green would mean a poster with a headline which stands out soon learn that if the *luminance* of these apparently contrasting colours is similar, they don't have much contrast at all. Such colour-contrast driven design whether in art or photography also short-changes the 8% of men and 0.5% of women who are colour blind, and the far higher proportions who have reduced colour discrimination.

Human colour vision is so variable it helps explain the enduring popularity of B&W photography. We all see the same image.

In this issue there are two or three features which explore this, including one using what we now rather clumsily call analogue film processing. It is not impossible to emulate the impact of film by converting digital colour to B&W, but real film does it differently when scanned or rephotographed, and differently again when printed optically using an enlarger.

## Trends in monochrome

At the Guild of Photographers' annual awards, I thought I counted just one B&W image shown on the screen but checking carefully through all the images in the beautifully printed (Loxley) Finalists 2023 book I got 167 colour images and 6 B&W.

This can only reflect a general trend away from B&W. I thought I'd find a couple of older yearbooks to check. In 2013, the Master Photographers Association with Claire Louise at the helm showed a count of 33 B&W to 74 colour. Further back to 2008, the British Photography Awards which were joint MPA and British Institute of Professional Photography with Vinnie O'Byrne and Simon John their respective presidents yielded 61 B&W against 72 colour.

This has nothing to do with methods or the state of film versus digital – there's probably more B&W darkroom photography now than either of those years. The B&W included a good proportion of sepia or monochrome in a colour tint, rarely seen now. It was almost all in the portrait and wedding categories, indicating that the public favoured black and white, while the Guild's entries cover more landscape, flowers, birds, insects, animals and nature where B&W is not as appropriate. It's all down to aesthetics, trends, the entry habits of those looking to gain awards, and the choices made by judges.

One well-known photographer, Paul Wilkinson, made into all three of these annuals – with black and white. And... the Guild's Print Competition, judged live on February 3<sup>rd</sup> before the awards dinner, resulted in a very rare Platinum for Ryan Hutton's 20 x 16". Maybe colour-only creators are missing out?

– David Kilpatrick, Publisher and Editor

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#57, Vol 9 No 1  
MAR/APR 2024

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

ISSN 2514-0167

Printed in Britain by

**Stephens & George**

Newport, Gwent

UK subscription: £10 per single copy sent by post. Cheques to the publisher's address made payable to 'Icon Publications Ltd'. Annually renewing subscriptions from £40 p.a. (UK). Create your Paypal UK or international subscription at <https://www.cameracraft.online> Back issues and searchable archive of free-to-read articles from many of Icon's specialist photographic titles.

Cameracraft is also included with The Guild of Photographers membership:

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

01782 970323

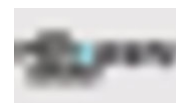


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**Anthropics**



## Sigma superfast full frame fisheye and 500mm for E and L mounts

WITH A useful  $f5.6$  maximum aperture, Sigma's new DG DN Sport 500mm for E and L mounts will sell for £2,799 SRP and is an alternative to their  $f4$  design, cutting the shoulder weight from over 3.3kg to under 1.4 while reducing the length of the lens from 380mm to 235mm. The lens offers a range of professional features, including weather-resistance, a Focus Limiter switch, a de-clickable and lockable aperture ring, a detachable tripod socket and a Custom Mode switch.

The ART 15mm  $f1.4$  fisheye is a curved rendering lens designed mostly for Astro full night sky recording with high levels of correction, and creative shooting. It



will retail for £1,859 and has unique features including rear filters and a lens heater retaining ring, essential for cold night-long sky shooting, <https://www.sigmauk.co>

## Sony 24-50mm $f2.8$ G FE

SONY has released a new compact FE 24-50MM  $f2.8$  G standard zoom. The dimensions have been kept compact with a filter diameter of 67 mm, maximum diameter 74.8mm, length 92.3mm, weight approximately 440g. The full frame lens uses four aspherical lenses and two ED elements, with an 11-blade circular aperture. The minimum shooting distance of 0.19m (AF) at wide-end gives a magnification of 0.3 at 50mm.

Two linear motors add high-speed AF, and it's capable of continuous shooting with AF/AE tracking at up to 120fps with the Alpha 9 III, and when shooting 4K 120p or FHD 240p movies. In-body Active Mode image stabilisation gives steady shooting while walking. It is also compatible with the video focus breathing



compensation on specific camera bodies. Controls include a customisable focus hold button, aperture ring, aperture click ON/OFF switch, and focus mode switch and the lens is dust and moisture proof with a fluorine coating to the front element surface.

It will be available in May for approximately £1150.

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

## Fujifilm's stabilised 40 megapixel X100VI

DESPITE never really needed stabilisation because of its rock solid metal body and leaf shutter lens, the latest X100 model – VI – adds sensor based 5-axis 6 stop IS and the 40.2MP sensor similar to the X-T5, along with its X-Processor 5 giving subject detection AF to accurately track detected animals, birds, cars, motorcycles, bicycles, airplanes, trains, insects and drones. This has added slightly to the size and weight of the camera. The ISO range now extends down to 125 with full dynamic range, and 6.2K/30P movie recording with advanced AF tracking is offered. The film simulations include REALA ACE. The X100VI has [Frame.io](https://www.frame.io)



Camera to Cloud wifi connectivity to upload shots as they are taken. It accepts the standard X100 series wide and tele converters, filter and lens hood attachments. The cost is only £1,599 and we'll be printing our test report in the next *Cameracraft*.

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

## Hasselblad's 100MP all-rounder

HASSELBLAD has launched the 907X and CFV 100C, upgraded with a new 100-megapixel back-illuminated sensor, doubling the resolution of its predecessor, the 907X fitted with CFV II 50C.

They claim this makes "the smallest and most powerful medium format camera in the industry", compatible with all XCD, HC/HCD, and Xpan lenses. "The CFV 100C breathes new life into Hasselblad V System cameras, such as the 500 and 200 series. Photographers can use their beloved film camera with the powerful CFV 100C sensor to produce the same picture quality of the digital age while also providing the unique experience of shooting at waist level. The CFV 100C keeps a classic timeless in every sense of the word."

The 3.2-inch touchscreen display has 2.36 million dot resolution. The



viewfinder can be tilted upward from 40° to 90°. With a 16-bit colour depth and an ISO sensitivity as low as 64, the 15-stop dynamic range is preserved in raw files or saved as JPEG in-camera. Phase Detection Autofocus (PDAF) offers 294 zones across 97% of the field of view with face detection

1TB of built-in storage saves 4,600 raw images directly on the camera. The Hasselblad 907X with CFV 100C has an MSRP of USD \$8,199 excluding lens. It is now available to order online.

See: <https://www.hasselblad.com>

## Between the Lakes and Scotland



A photo store in a photogenic spot



IF YOU are visiting Carlisle, within a very short walk from the station or city car parking (free disc or very reasonable charges), Wilkinson Cameras' new store is well worth a visit. The carousel was running outside when we dropped by. They have dedicated sections for all major makes and a large upstairs studio and demonstration room – watch out for events there from Elinchrom, Fujifilm and others. For Guild members there are exclusive offers.

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

## A celtic challenge invites entries

THE Ballybunion Bi-Lingual Arts Festival Photography Competition, County Kerry, Ireland opens Monday 1st April and closes Sunday 30th June. The head judge is Stephen Power, former Associate Editor of *Cameracraft*. The theme is 'Narrative Photography – Telling a story about Celtic Culture'. 1st Prize: €200 and winning photo, printed & framed (Large A2).

2nd: €125 and winning photo, printed & framed (A3). 3rd: €75 and winning photo, printed & framed (A4). A selection of Highly commended will images will be displayed virtually and the photographers will receive a certificate. Prize giving will be on opening night at the festival on 18th July 2024 in Ballybunion. More information: <https://www.ballybunionartsfestival.ie>





TOM HILL

## Are black and white the most effective colours of photography?

Robert Frank was a Swiss born photographer, whose seminal 1957 book *The Americans* depicted ordinary US citizens living their daily lives. The work defined a pictorial standard of Americana that has rarely been equalled. Frank once said:

*“Black and white are the colors of photography. To me they symbolize the alternatives of hope and despair to which mankind is forever subjected.”*

Maybe that’s a bit pretentious, Mr Frank allowing the reflectance indices of black and white surfaces to variously become symbols of depression, suffering, joy or innocence. But he had a point. Since the advent of colour photography, and especially since the arrival of digital capture and editing software, people have used black and white (B&W) representation to ensure that colours don’t distract from the messages they’re trying to convey.

B&W images might not necessarily represent juxtapositions of positive versus negative, but they certainly ensure that we look at a picture’s metaphors and messages without the complication of colour.

### Black hats vs White hats

Movie directors also use this colour/B&W device to great effect. In early silent westerns, baddies wore black hats and the good guys’ headgear was white, simply so that audiences could keep tally during shoot outs!

Technology has since allowed such techniques to become more sophisticated. The powerful feature of a young girl’s red coat, digitally picked out from the rest of the black and white horrifying scenery in Spielberg’s *Schindler’s List*, served to highlight in a cart of dead bodies a poor innocent child murdered by the Nazis. She had been similarly emphasised earlier in the movie in the same-coloured garment, walking through the streets of a ghetto looking lost and terrified.

Scorsese’s raw, highly contrasty B&W boxing sequences in *Raging Bull* serve to exemplify how protagonist Jake La Motta’s (Robert De Niro) fights would have appeared under stadium lights on 1960s black and white TV sets. The later scenes in subdued colour, portraying La Motta’s middle-aged

overweight and sad character, reduced to stand-up comedy in near-empty nightclubs, speak volumes.

### Getting in the zone

To get more technical, in terms of film, especially large format, the Zone System (ZS) was formulated empirically to create a workflow that would allow total control of tonality in negative and print creation. Invented in around 1940 by Ansel Adams and Hollywood portrait photographer Fred Archer, the ZS would ensure that the contrast range of any B&W image would be within tolerance of the materials and chemicals used by the photographer.

A perfect ZS negative would require, in theory, no burning in or ‘holding back’ when printed on a designated contrast grade of photographic paper. There would be detail in the darkest of shadows and the brightest of highlights. By using the ZS, one could photograph a person wearing a black coat under the shadow of a tree, surrounded by crisp virgin snow in full sunlight, and the rendition would not lose



Scan from original 6 x 6cm Velvia above, and the simplest Photoshop one-step conversion, right. See page 32 for a look at the many other options Photoshop provides for B&W output.



Tom Hill is a travel writer, copywriter and sometime photographer living in the Scottish Borders in the UK.

His 116pp book produced in conjunction with Paul Hill MBE and Simon Hill, President of the RPS, is available from early March 2024.

Details at his website:  
[bigfrogsmallpond.co.uk](http://bigfrogsmallpond.co.uk)

detail anywhere. The trick was to always use the same film, paper and chemistry, keep temperatures highly accurate and the workflow consistent. Many people calibrated their light meters, thermometers, cameras, lenses and enlargers to an obsessive degree. Those who were very successful at the process, like Adams, created stunning prints.

For people with limited time resources, fortunately there are ways to hack a 'quick and dirty' zone system on any B&W film. First off, I would simply halve the ISO rating of whatever film I was using. So if I had loaded Ilford FP4, I'd rate it at 64 ISO. If it was a sunny day, I'd set the shutter speed to the amended film speed rating and always use *f*11 (so in this instance, 1/60s at *f*11) so long as the light source was behind the camera.

In the darkroom, I'd then reduce the manufacturer's recommended standard development time by 20% and back off slightly on the agitation in the chemistry. That would always guarantee that high-lights wouldn't be bleached out and negatives not overcooked.

Electronic flash made things even easier; you didn't need to know your ASA from your elbow! For example, the image (*top right*) of a young woman in her ball gown and black velvet gloves was scanned from an Ilford Multigrade 8" square fibre-based print. I'm pleased with the detail in the blacks and the lovely 'porcelain' skin tone. As I wasn't using colour film, the use of overhead fluorescent light plus a 240V studio flash head meant that I didn't need to worry about mixed colour temperature of light sources and any resultant casts. One incident flash meter reading later, and if I couldn't get that contrast range right, it would be time to pack it all up and go home.

### Zone system at a click

In the left hand column you can see a zingy and saturated 6 x 6cm colour pic of a California desert highway water reservoir for road maintenance crews. This was scanned in 2001 from a Fuji Velvia transparency. I think it's quite strong and I've sold a few stock image versions of it. But that same photo processed via *Image > Adjust > Black and White* in *Photoshop* can produce a tonal range



in a monochrome greyscale that Adams would have eaten his hat for. Less saleable, but more arty. Are such B&W pics converted from original colour images to be seen as 'ersatz'? No, they're just another example of what can be produced with contemporary technology.

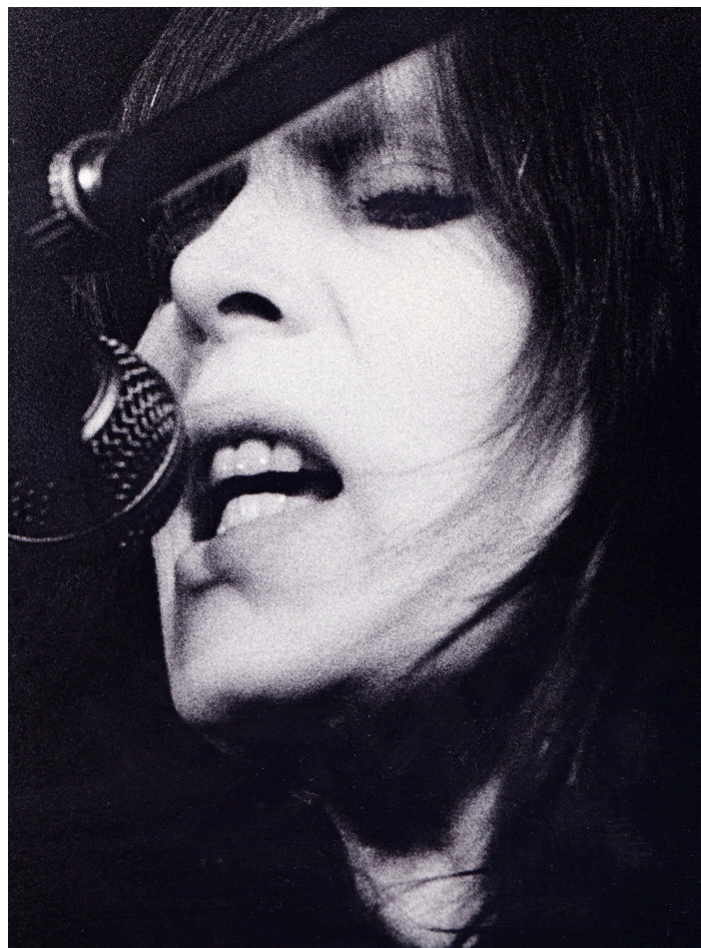
### Going against the grain

Finally, there are ways to get creative with B&W film by inducing excessive grain, which even photo-processing software would struggle to mimic. I took this image in 1984 of Nico (ex of The Velvet Underground) in a club with such poor lighting that I pushed HP5 film to 6400 ISO and developed it in a chemical solution almost too hot to stick a finger in. I think it might have been the best blag I ever made; a bit of rock-doc rawness married with an arty creativity that now looks quite deliberate.

So next time you're looking at an image you created, maybe try making a B&W version. You might be pleasantly surprised at what you can achieve, and how a new and different audience can be reached..



*Results on film ranged from textbook tone control as above, to pushing the limits, below. Both would be just routine for today's colour sensors.*



# WHEELS OF FORTUNE

Life on the road supported by photography is an ambition few realise.

Mitchell Kanashkevich started solo on two wheels, explored half the planet and now he's on four wheels with a family and still a nomadic freelance after 20 years.

**M**y journey began in a country which doesn't exist anymore. I was born in the former USSR.

My father was a dreamer. He got the chance to travel outside of the USSR to see family in nearby Poland and later on for work. This was a privilege very few got to experience in those days. It made him very curious about the world outside of the iron curtain. As things started to look hopeless economically in the early 90s, he dreamt of leaving. When the U.S.S.R. collapsed, through some twists of fate my father was able to take our family to Australia.

This very first big trip of my life, and the subsequent journeys to visit my family planted the seed and the love for travel. Keep in mind too, that until the age of 10, I did live in a country that was incredibly isolated from the rest of the world. My father's curiosity was contagious. He'd encourage it in me through the books he'd read to me when I was a child, through gifting me a globe and a pocket-sized atlas. So... even from a very early age, I had an incredible sense of curiosity about the world, about different people and cultures, just like my father.

So, the desire to travel, the desire to explore the world, came to me much earlier than photography. But I have always been a visual person too. I'd draw entire comic books as a child. When we got a VHS camera, I'd experiment with video. A few circumstances had to align for me to get into photography, but once I did, I fell in love with it and never looked back.

Just a little after I started photography, I started to travel independently, as an adult. Photography became the natural medium to document my journeys and to share with others, what I was seeing. Of course, this world was very different to today's, where we're bombarded with photographs from virtually every corner of the planet. To travel



Above – three pictures from Mitchell's early encounters with India in 2008 and 2009, taken on Canon 5D. Top, Dwarka, the most western point of India. Walking on the ghats when the man and his dog ahead sent the pigeons flying.

Centre, elephant with an elephant trainer at a festival in Thrissur, Kerala. Bottom, in Jodhpur city, Rajasthan. She was taking the stuffing out of mattresses. It would go into some sort of a cotton recycling machine.

Facing page – two shots from his stay on Vanuatu in 2010, using the 5D MkII. This was a time when stock photography could provide some income, but Mitchell rapidly moved on to earning from his on-line presence helping others improve their digital photography with tutorials and presets.

and to bring photos from places that few had seen was much more possible back then. I think this was a big part of the attraction to travel photography for me. I believe, it's still part of the allure and that's why I travel where I travel and do it in the way that I do.

## Indian enlightenment

My first trip that was dedicated purely to photography was like that of many aspiring photographers of that time and before me. I went to India. First it was for a short trip. Then for a longer one, and later I traveled with my future wife around the entire country on a motorcycle. My main goal was to explore, to grow as a photographer – and to get together some kind of portfolio.

My India photos were noticed. They got me contracts with a couple of stock agencies, and started to open up other opportunities. India helped me become a photographer. It was my real-world classroom.

I started to apply the things that I learned in India to other places that I traveled to. Whether it was Indonesia, the Philippines, or Belarus, now a separate country since the breakdown of the USSR, and the place where I was born.

During all of these trips, the main subject that interested me was always people, their cultures, their connection to the land, the way they lived, celebrated, worshipped.

As I amassed quite a large body of work, made it into various publications and won a few competitions, I started to gain a bit of a following online. Everybody would ask me questions about how I make my photos. So, eventually I decided to get into photo education, to share what I'd learned from dedicating myself to photography and travel.

When many of the print magazines started to become less attractive from the point of making enough money to keep doing this work, it felt like this was the best move. If I would succeed, I'd have



more financial freedom, which meant more traveling and more creative freedom than ever before. I could also stop being a starving artist, which was starting to wear me down, after about seven years of traveling and struggling to break even after my journeys.

Thankfully things did work out. I began to generate a solid income from my educational content. This indeed gave me more freedom to travel, but also to travel in new ways. As well as to countries that might not have been on my radar before, like the small, remote Pacific nation of Vanuatu, where I got some of my most memorable images at that time.

Wherever I traveled, and whenever it was possible, I always wanted to have the freedom to explore with my own transport. To stop where I wanted. To get deeper into rural areas that were seldom explored by any other photographers. The most practical and affordable option was always a motorbike. I would usually buy motorbikes, travel for months and sell them afterwards.



## Africa and four wheels

My last big motorcycle trip was again, with my wife, around Ethiopia. We stayed in the country for months and managed to get to some truly remote corners. This trip gave me a taste of Africa. For a photographer and an

adventurer at heart, Africa was everything I could dream about. Countless cultures, stunning landscapes and, the sense of adventure and unpredictability around every corner.

Ethiopia also gave birth to a completely new idea on how I could

travel. At one of the hotels we stayed I met an American man, he was traveling in a car, which wasn't too unusual. The unusual part was that his license plate came from Pennsylvania! He shipped his open Jeep from the US and had been traveling Africa for six years when we

met. I never even knew that such a thing was possible. It was right there and then that I decided – this is going to be the way we'll travel from now on.

In 2012, I researched where in Europe a foreigner could buy a car and ended up buying a Land Rover Defender in Spain. We crossed over the straight to Morocco, explored the incredible desert landscapes and nomadic cultures of Mauritania. The plan was to go as far and as long as we could. A few months into the trip, we entered Senegal, but our journey would have to stop there. We learned that we were having a baby.

The upcoming birth of my daughter Mia didn't put out the desire to travel. We would just have to travel differently. There was a change creatively too. The birth of my daughter kind of forced us to travel slower, to spend more time in places, and in turn, this allowed me to take a closer look at some subjects that I overlooked before.

So as we went for further trips back to Belarus, my friends and my family became my photographic subjects. Everyday life that seemed so mundane and uninteresting when I was a child was taking on a new light.

Since our Land Rover was parked in Europe, on a friend's farm in Bulgaria, I figured that I could drive it all the way through Turkey to other parts of the former USSR. I wanted to see how the ideas I had of those countries when I was a child, looking at my illustrated atlas, aligned with reality. We traveled extensively around Georgia and Armenia, in the same Land Rover that once took us to Africa.

These journeys kept changing my approach to travel photography. A big key through these trips was the language. In all of the former Soviet republics people of around 30-40 years and older speak Russian, my mother tongue.

No longer did I need translators, fixers or guides. I could drive around, stop whenever I'd see a potentially interesting scene and, I could talk to my photographic subjects. I'd listen to their stories. Sometimes, I'd be tipped off where else there were photographic opportunities. This was a different way of photography for me. It gave more room to chance, to organic developments and it





Left – a nomad festival camel race in Oulatta, Mauritania. Above – Lalibela, Ethiopia. Pilgrims at their encampment. The African experience persuaded Mitchell to buy a Land Rover. Below – returning to his childhood homeland of Belarus. Left, through a car window, Mitchell's cousin's daughter looks out. Right, farmer Yosef, 82, pours glasses of hot tea on a freezing day, welcoming rare visitors.



landed us in some fascinating places. From seasonal shepherd settlements by an extinct volcano in Armenia, to forgotten mountain villages in Georgia.

To get to these places and to stay there, the Land Rover became a vital tool. The car had a rooftop tent and we modified the cabin seats to convert into a bed.

## Driven south

Our grand goal, now with our daughter was to travel in this Land Rover all the way to Mongolia. However, I miscalculated one thing. I forgot about how cold that part of the world gets during late autumn and winter. The car wasn't equipped for that. So one winter, I decided to change course and left for South America.

I'd been dreaming of South America since my university days, where I learned Spanish. Somehow I never made it during all the years of travel. This was the right time. My first journey was to Colombia. It was without my wife and daughter, nevertheless, I absolutely fell in love with the country, the people and eventually, the continent.

Once again, I bought a car, a secondhand beaten up Toyota Land Cruiser, apparently very popular with the narcos, hence there were many of them for sale, though most often in questionable condition. I drove this Toyota all the way to Chile.

The first months were without my girls. I was on my own. After Colombia, which is pretty densely populated, there were many solitary moments. Often, I found myself in really remote places without my favorite photographic subjects – people. But, I did have some of the most dramatic scenery in the world in front of my lens. So, here again, my photography kind of diverged, or evolved. A drone became a major tool for my work and it remains vital to both my photography and my videos today.

Eventually my family joined me. By this time I was in Peru, in my opinion, the most culturally vibrant and fascinating of all the countries that I've visited on the continent so far. We explored parts of Peru, went to Ecuador, back to Peru, and it seemed that we achieved this amazing flow. There was no shortage of the kind of photographic subjects



*In Armenia. Above, Ashot sells smoked fish by the roadside near Lake Sevan. Below, at the Tatev Monastery in 2017. For this trip Mitchell used the Panasonic micro fourthirds system.*

that I love in the Andes, adventures were everywhere. My photography career, the educational content that I was making, everything was perfect.

## Time stood still

And then... COVID hit. We were in a small village in the Sacred Valley of the Incas, in the Peruvian Andes when the first lockdowns began. Like most people, I thought that the whole thing would last two weeks, a month at most. Little did I know that we would stay in the same house for eight consecutive months. The longest time that I stayed anywhere

in any one country at a time as an adult.

COVID brought a lot of realizations to many of us, and for me, it was that if we were to travel again, I knew that we would have to travel differently. I came up with the idea to travel in a home on wheels, I found a camper for sale, which wasn't easy in Peru. And so, I used almost all of my savings and exchanged the Land Cruiser for a Toyota Hilux with the little camper on the back. This would serve as our home on wheels, my office and would open up even more opportunities for exploration, adventure

and photography in some of the most remote places.

Over the past three years. We've explored almost all of Peru, a part of Bolivia and much of Argentina. South America has become an ongoing photographic project for me. The truck and camper setup was allowing me to explore beyond many of the limits of regular travel. For a photographer it's crucial to be at these beautiful places at just the right time, to capture the light, to not have to leave when things get interesting.

And so... after traveling for a bit more than 20 years, one might ask



South America is Mitchell's current home – a whole continent to explore. Above, an iconic setting featured in his short film on leaving Peru. Right – the Fiesta of Santiago in Peru, dancers and bonfire. Bottom right: a grandmother in the Sacred Valley of the Incas.

the question “Do you ever want to settle down?” I don’t know. I definitely don’t want to right now. In theory, I should have been wanting to slow down after reaching 40, but I feel like my desire to explore new places, to get to know new cultures is stronger than ever before.

We travel differently now. The camper life is something hard to describe for those who haven’t experienced it. It’s amazing to have an office on wheels and to be able to edit my photos virtually anywhere. But also, simple things, like waking up in beautiful places to the sound of the ocean or birds, or monkeys. Having a million dollar view for free right at your doorstep. This is special beyond words. By comparison, everything else kinda feels like it’s been desaturated.

This life definitely isn’t for everyone. You do feel like a foreigner almost all the time, keeping in

touch with friends takes effort, stability is impossible and there probably will be a time when my daughter will want to attend a regular school. We’ve also had to overcome various obstacles. In fact, as I’m writing this, our camper and home on wheels was accidentally destroyed by a mechanic in Brazil. It’s only thanks to the help of the little community I’ve built around my work that we’re on our way back. *(Editor’s note: visit his website to help get the wheels rolling).*

But, when all is said and done, while I still have this curiosity and hunger to explore, I’ll continue. I’ll adapt to my daughter’s needs as she grows up. My wife will eventually want to take a break too. I might not travel for years at a time, but I will always find ways to keep going, photographing, as long as I can keep going myself.



See: Instagram – @mitchellkphotos for many more superb images. Support Mitchell's journey: <https://www.photographic-process.com>



# DREAM JOURNEY

Mary Ellen Mark's camera strap dangled from Florence Montmare's Nikon D850 as she was shooting a portrait of a random person she met in Newark, New Jersey. He was homeless, jobless, and his girlfriend just recently drained his bank account and split. Despite all that, he agreed to have his portrait taken and sign a model release (*Christian, bottom left*). In California, an African-American woman shared her story about being stopped and frisked without cause – a common occurrence in the United States (*Michelle, bottom right*).

This was just one of hundreds of random encounters that Montmare had on her trip back and forth across the United States after approaching complete strangers and asking them to pose for her and to share their stories. "I came to this country over 25 years ago," she recalls. "I always used my camera



Florence Montmare decided to follow her dreams a long time ago – from traversing the US to find portraits to staging performance art cinematography

as a passport. Walker Evans, Richard Avedon, Robert Frank... they all photographed America. I wanted to take a new look at the country. After a long time of isolation, get out on the road..."

The idea of such a trip came to her in the middle of the pandemic. "I was going stir-crazy in my tiny NYC apartment while finishing up my position as Head of Culture and Public Affairs at the Consulate General of Sweden. I'd been working with projects connected to democracy, human rights and cultural diplomacy. The tragic death of George Floyd led to protests

around the country and people took to the streets near my New York apartment. The walls were shaking. I just wanted to get out and break free, and the manifestation of that was hitting the road."

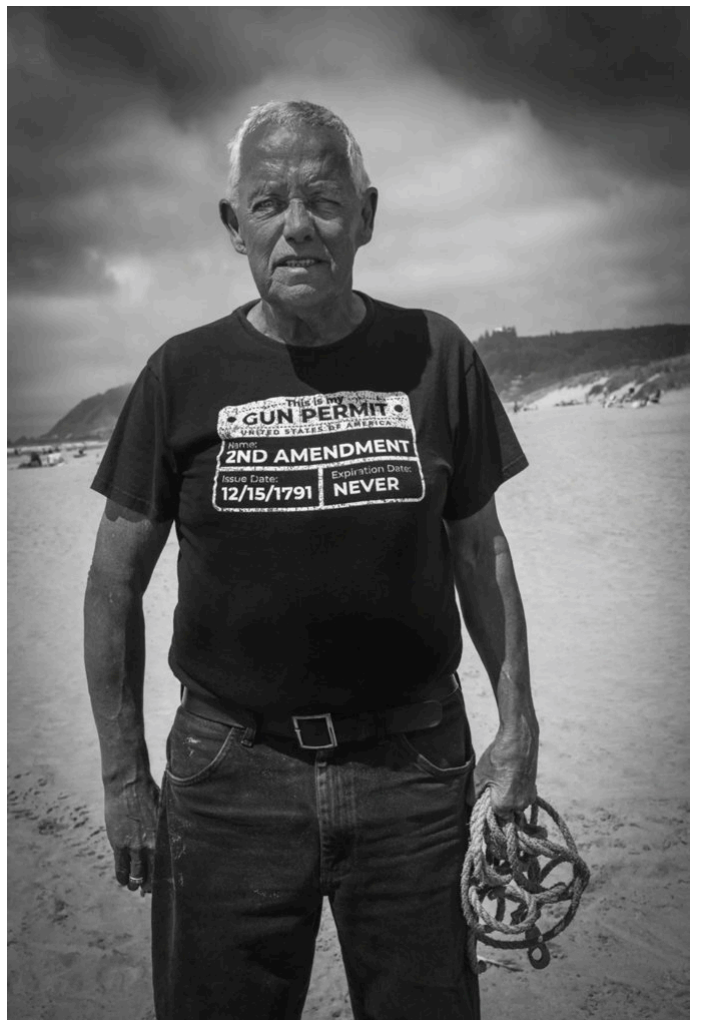
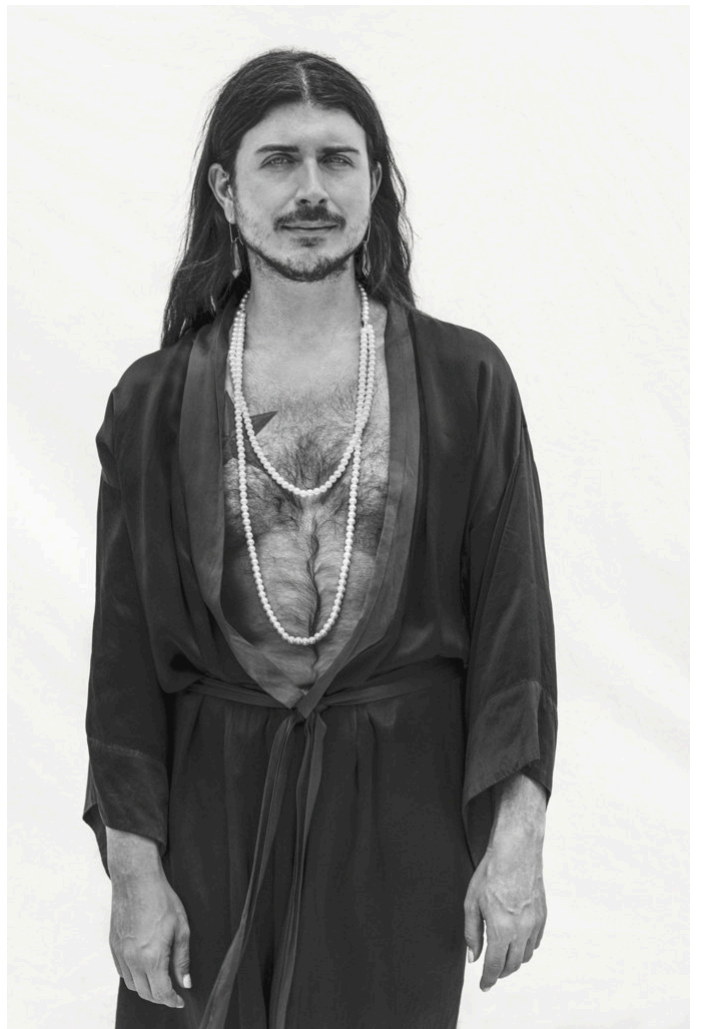
On vacation in Oregon she picked up her camera for the first time in a year to capture some of the locals. This sparked the beginning of a cross-country portrayal of America, a popular theme that few female photographers have explored. She remembers a situation when a strange person approached her in the car. "I was uncomfortable because I've been

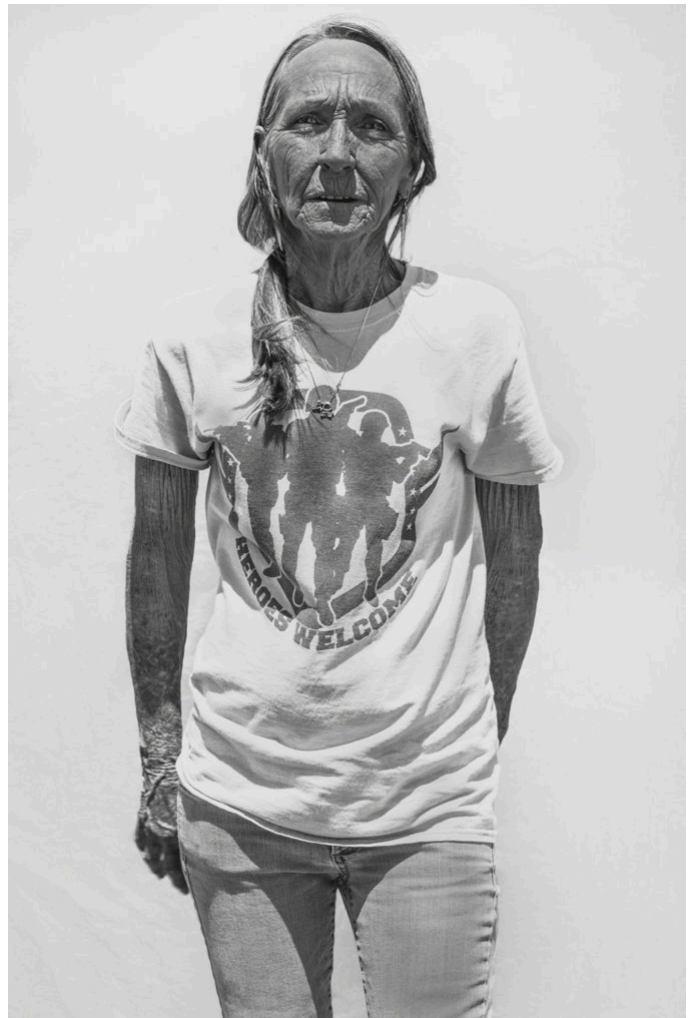
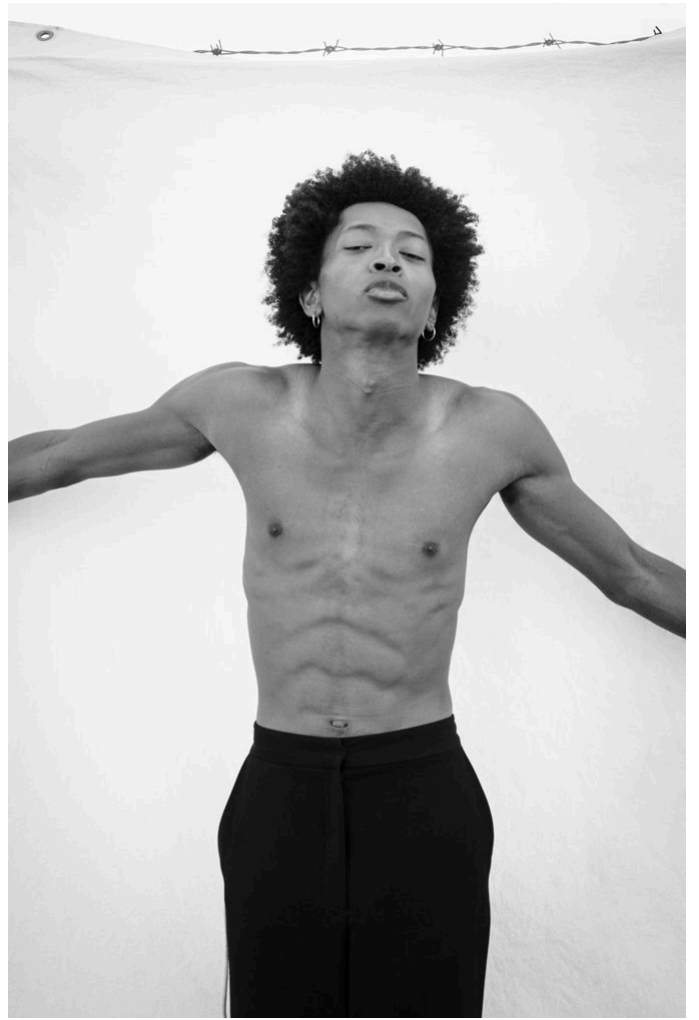
assaulted in the past. I am sure this has happened to many women. I think in one way or another, that's the world we live in, unfortunately. Perhaps that's why not so many women have done this type of work, in which you make yourself quite vulnerable."

In Oklahoma she met Nona, a social worker for the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes, whose job is to find safe in-tribe foster homes for children who needed them. "She was the only one in the whole state of Oklahoma doing this, and she told me about the intense workload and the lack of tribal homes. Many of the children are placed in non-native homes, which means they're being cut off from their own roots and culture."

The end result of her 7000-mile journey is *America Series*, which was recently published by Damiani Books. The monograph includes stories, experiences, and political









Above: from 'Illuminations: Previous pages – page 14, Chris, Michelle. Page 15, top left Vida; top right, Osun; lower left, Red Sky Hawk with the flute; lower right, Second Amendment enthusiast. Facing page, Eva, Katriel, Sue, and Sunny from America Series. As part of the book, the portraits are accompanied by quotes from the subjects. You can read these in the on-line presentation by visiting her website below.

You can purchase a signed copy of her book, *America Series* at <https://www.florencemontmare.com/shop/americaseries>  
To see more of Florence Montmare's work, view her portfolio at <https://www.florencemontmare.com/>

perspectives of the people she met across the country. "The work gives voice to people, who are not usually heard in the United States, and it is now being made into an exhibition."

Born in Vienna and raised in Stockholm, Montmare started in the corporate world, working as a communications and business intelligence consultant for an energy company, before earning her Masters in Business degree. She came to New York with \$200 in her pocket, and founded an ad agency with a business partner. Later on she graduated from the International School of Photography, and transitioned into becoming a full-time artist working in photography, text, film, performance and installation. Her work has been exhibited in galleries at Fotografiska New York; Ivy Brown Gallery, New York; Casino Luxem-bourg Forum d'art Contemporain; Bergman Center and Gotlands Konstmuseum, Sweden – among others.

She starts to show me snippets of her earlier work, comprised of some very unusual self-portraits. "This is *Lullabies*, with C-Prints, inspired by film noir and the video

piece *Nocturne*. *Phantasme* is a collaboration I did with another artist about media consumption and notions of beauty, and how media distorts us physically and mentally. And this next one is an overnight long exposure in an olive grove and speaks about roots and territory."

*Illuminations* (images above) is a project she did in her twenties, inspired by both impending loss and a dream-like vision. It was an installation exhibiting a series of all-night-exposures, depicting the restless blurs of her and partner's last nights together. As the series went on, the viewer is able to see increasing amounts of motion; correlating with the decaying state of the relationship.

"I was using art to transform something painful, while trying to stay mindful as the moment was unfolding. In a way, I was setting up a game with myself, trying to stay in bed and completing the long exposures and looking into the situation with curiosity." The last image was her sleeping on her own; which she says comes full circle as it matches the exact inner vision she once had years earlier.

## Fårö Island

In 2015, Montmare was invited to be an artist in residence at Ingmar Bergman's estate, on the remote and isolated Swedish island Fårö. Almost instantly she was overcome with a feeling of peace and serenity. Ever since, she has produced many projects there, and returned as often as possible.

A project she's currently working on is called *Scenes from an Island*, and depicts the cinematic landscape of Fårö, Bergman's mise-en-scene. "Growing up in Sweden, I was influenced by his psychologically ambiguous dramas such as *Persona*, *Cries and Whispers*, and *The Rite*. I think of Bergman as someone who created his own artistic universe.

"The exhibition and work are about notions of home and metaphors of transience, two themes I keep revisiting. I staged different scenarios: images of landscapes and figures transitioning through them." You can get a feel for the upcoming *Scenes from an Island* project by visiting her project page at [florencemontmare.com/scenes-chapters](https://www.florencemontmare.com/scenes-chapters)

## The Refugee Project

One thing that permeates all of Montmare's work is the theme of displacement and memory. "I am interested in exploring the world that resides between a dream and a wakeful state. A realm of images, sounds, and fragmented tales, without the necessity of an obvious narrative."

While in residence at the Bergman Estate, she conceived one of her most fascinating projects. Together with refugees from Syria and Afghanistan and dancers, she explored how movement can be a catalyst to memories and release suppressed emotions.

"We created a workshop to explore the notions of home, identity and fear. In collaboration with choreographer Joakim Stephenson, designer Marie Bergman, and professionals from the Stockholm Royal Opera, we used dance and movement to open up and connect. It's all about trust and how you can go about feeling safe. Experiences are stored in the body, and by listening to it one can release memories. Some of the participants recalled how they fled everything they ever



knew. This is still relevant now with everything that's going on in the world, with the conflicts and human crises and sacrifice."

From the workshops she created a live performance during Bergman week, and is currently making a documentary film about the process, titled *Hemkomst*, which she hopes to finish soon.

To reach Fårö from Stockholm, Montmare has often traveled through Visby, the capital of the large nearby island of Gotland. On one visit, she discovered that a distant relative, Marta Berglund, had been a professional photographer there in the early 1900s. She put on display a huge archive of her photographs which were rescued from the city dump in the 1970s. "I am currently making a film about Marta, which explores her artistic vision and how women are not represented in the history of photography."

See [florencemontmare.com/martasstudio](http://florencemontmare.com/martasstudio)

## Dreaming while awake

It seems Montmare approaches her art differently from others. While many people try to influence how we see the world through painting,



sculpture, or stories, she's more interested in dream states, especially the kind that one can experience while awake.

"I have a strong meditation practice", she says. "I've always been very interested in dreams and have studied some kabbalistic techniques, which have to do with dreaming while awake. It makes me think about how I operated when I was a child, how my images came to me." She credits her meditation practice for the inspiration for some of her filmmaking visuals.

"Some artists are creating the same image over and over again, and it's so important not to get stuck in that. I noticed that during

my career there is consistency in my work, but I still want to reinvent and do new things. To think completely new, to dare for the work to be unlike anything else you've done before, this is perhaps the hardest part. Art is synonymous with creativity, but creativity is also innovation, right?"

## America Series Epilogue

"One last thing about mindfulness, and the meditation practice: while I charged the electric car on my cross-country trip, I also meditated,





*Inspiration on Fårö Island: above, "Midway in life, I find myself standing on the shore, a wild and rocky pile of land, facing the Baltic Sea. Barren, wind-swept tangled vegetation that grows close to the roots. Still looking for mine."*

*Below, 'Identity Piece' with dancers from Syria and Afghanistan. Facing page shows Florence at work on location with the dancers for outdoor still-and moving images on the island. Facing page top, from 'Fux in Heels /Black Postcards' from Scenes from an Island.*

and sometimes shared the techniques with my subjects. I think it brought presence to the moment, and perhaps also a feeling of safety. They opened themselves to me, even though I was a stranger. The great reveal of this was that there really is no separation. From thinking of America being such a divisive country, to a feeling of unity, this is what I want to bring out into the world."

At the end of our conversation, Montmare pulls out an image of a woman she photographed as part of the series. "I went to go find her when I was in California last week," she says. "I gave her a fine art print of her portrait from two years ago. She flipped out when she saw it and that her picture appeared in *The Guardian*." (top left, page 15).

So, what's the story behind Mary

Ellen Mark's camera strap? "She was one of my guest teachers at ICP, and I was invited to her Christmas party, where she set up to photograph my Italian Greyhound Pony. At one point I also interviewed to come work for her. Mary Ellen was a very funny and intense, talented photographer. When she passed, I received a call that they were selling off some of her gear. I got a

couple of strobes and modifiers and among the things on the studio floor was her strap. Having it around my neck has proven to be positive mojo time and time again."

— Gary Friedman



See Florence Montmare's on Instagram — @florencemontmare  
Follow Gary's blog at <https://www.friedmanarchives.com>



Helen Trust's photographic journey started with landscapes, but very early on she started using time exposure or intentional camera movement with filters, focusing on a minimal approach wherever possible. Her techniques were so successful in competitions and popular on Instagram that Formatt Hitech gave her Ambassador status. "I have a love for the square format in all genres", she explained. "Despite shooting most of my images in landscape or portrait format I'm always shooting with a square crop in mind, or even several crops from a single image. I post a square image every day on Instagram and have done for over seven years."

For this feature we're focusing on Helen's architectural work. It has a different look to her earlier landscape, but she still uses those ND and grad filters – "anywhere the building is around water, or has a sky present".

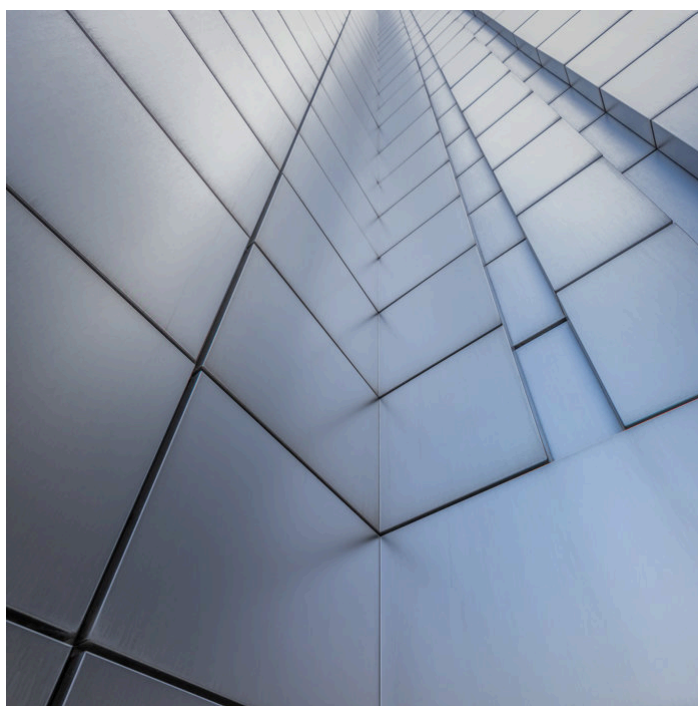
"I always like to soften any water in the scene and if there are moody clouds it adds to the drama of a cityscape", she says, "my NYC Manhattan skyline shots (*successful in the Guild's Image of the Year awards for 2019, when she joined*) for example were taken with Big Stopper ND filters enabling cloud and water movement to be softened, and with some ICM experimentation.

"Shots taken in the Oculus building and Grand Central station also used a Little Stopper to show

# HELEN TRUST

## MINIMAL FORMALITIES

Architectural design meets camera composition in the carefully balanced vision of Somerset award-winner Helen



movement in the people or sometimes remove them altogether. Panning is always fun on the streets of New York and London."

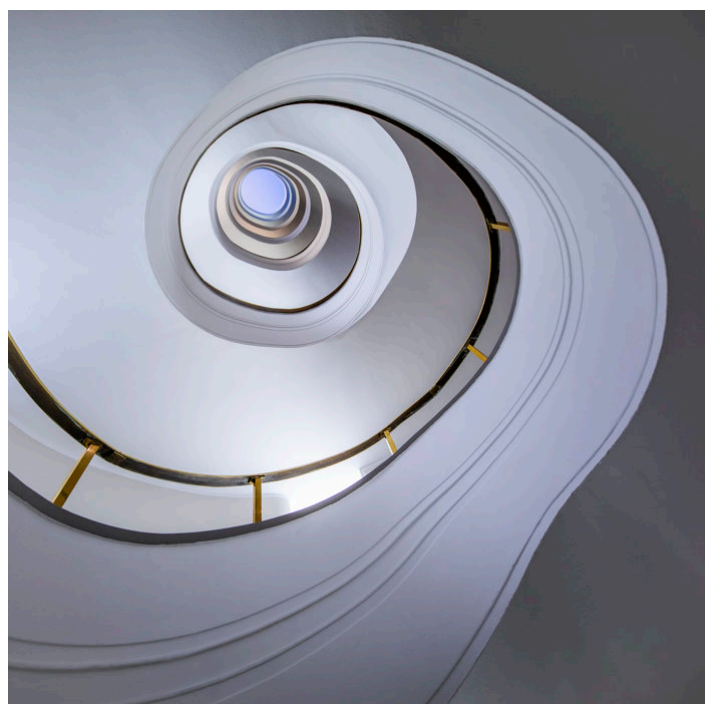
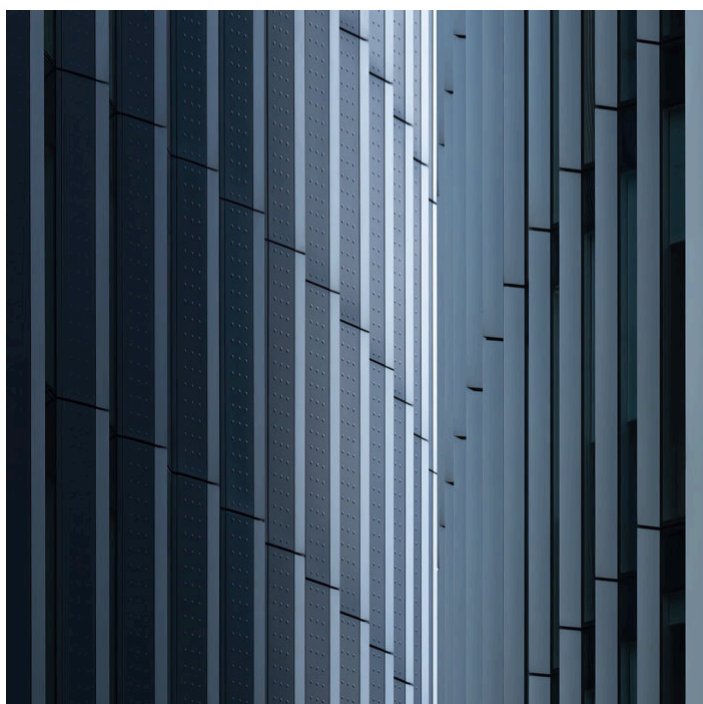
Helen explained that how her work as a travel industry contract project manager fitted in with the photography. "For fifteen years I had taken six to ten month contracts then traveled with my camera for the remainder of the year. Basically worked hard and earned the money to travel with my camera.

"Covid did hit my travel. I finished a contract in October then was flying back from Iceland that February when we went straight into lock down. The contract I had lined up for March was cancelled so I was out of work for ten months living on my own in a tiny flat.

"I couldn't get out much and there were no trains into London for a few months so I was going a bit crazy, but I won a 150-600mm lens and the birds at my window really saved my sanity! I lived in a small town with no real architecture to speak of so wildlife it was.

"As soon as we were allowed to fly again, I hit the cities with my camera once more – Venice (my favourite!), Valencia, Berlin and of course London which was amazing for a few months with no overseas tourists."

Helen always uses a tripod for external architecture shots where she can, and without fail when using a filter. Paradoxically, the interior architecture shots she tends to



Facing page: top, Broadgate, London; bottom left, Lime Street, London; bottom right, Hotel Bristol staircase, Berlin. Right: Brahm's Kontor staircase, Hamburg.





*Überseequartier U-Bahn, Hamburg.*





Elizabeth line  
← Westbound platform B  
Heathrow ↑  
M Maidenhead  
Reading

Elizabeth line  
← Westbound platform B





Elizabeth line  
Eastbound platform A →  
Abbey Wood

Elizabeth line  
Eastbound platform A →



Marie Elisabeth Lüders Haus Parliament Building, Berlin.

tackle hand-held with a fast lens – her favourite go-to is the Canon EF 16-35 f2.8 L II USM.

One of her trademarks is the inclusion of figures, or a single person very well placed and timed. “Sometimes I will spend hours waiting – sitting at the back of the Valencia City of Arts and Sciences, for example. Early in the morning you have the place to yourself except for the park staff and commuters passing through the park on their way to work... hours of fun!

“Inside busy stations where tripods aren’t really possible I try to lean the camera on a banister or handrail when I want show

movement in the people. I’m not very good at removing stuff in post editing so I tend to wait for another opportunity, but I have been known to remove people or limbs intruding into the frame if clean to retouch.”

As for hardware, Helen has a DSLR kit she’s very happy with and confident using. “My entire life I have shot with Canon, purchasing the first Canon 5D MkI back in 2005 for Wedding photography,” she says. “I upgraded to the 5D MkIII in 2017 when the mirror dropped out of my 12 year old MkI! I now shoot with two Canon 5D MkIV bodies and really have no intention to upgrade to mirrorless. I love the 5Ds and I’m so used to how they

work I’m not really interested in anything else. I was contacted by someone at Canon to discuss an ambassador role but they soon lost interest when I said I didn’t want to change from the 5D series! I’m gutted they have stopped making them so I guess I will need to make the change some day

“I also take a Sony RX100 Mk7 pocket camera with me everywhere. It’s a great back-up when in the city shooting architecture and underground stations with its 24-200mm zoom and SLR-like features, and it fits in my pocket. It has done me proud in Iceland and Lofoten – when it’s stormy I can grab quick shots without risking the DSLRs.

“My favourite lens is that 16-35mm. I use it for all my minimal landscape work and architecture. For street photography when I can only take one lens with me I prefer the EF 24-105mm f4.5. The Canon 70-300mm f4 I absolutely love for architecture and people shots where you need a little more reach, but it’s not very inconspicuous! I also have the Sigma Contemporary 150-600mm f4.5 which I always use for wildlife, won in a round of the Amateur Photographer of the Year competition, the lens which stopped me going stir crazy during Covid confinement. My lounge window looked out over oak trees, so I used to stand on a stool in my

pjs with the big lens resting on the open window and shoot the birds in my trees. It was an absolute lifesaver.”

Helen’s images are always immaculately processed and precisely aligned and cropped, as proficiently as many architectural photographers expect to achieve with medium format digital or large format film. Because she shoots using the Canon’s optical viewfinder, she relies on its indicators. “I just have the arrow markers at the top of the view,” she says. “When shooting in live view I have the gridlines and horizon indicators on but I always check them in post processing to ensure I got it right. Eyesight is starting to fail me so don’t always rely on the green line!”

Helen always shoots in RAW, and uses process in *Photoshop* and *Adobe Camera Raw* which offer geometry controls. “I mainly use these just to check I have the lines correct – sometimes I use the crop grid to check as well.”

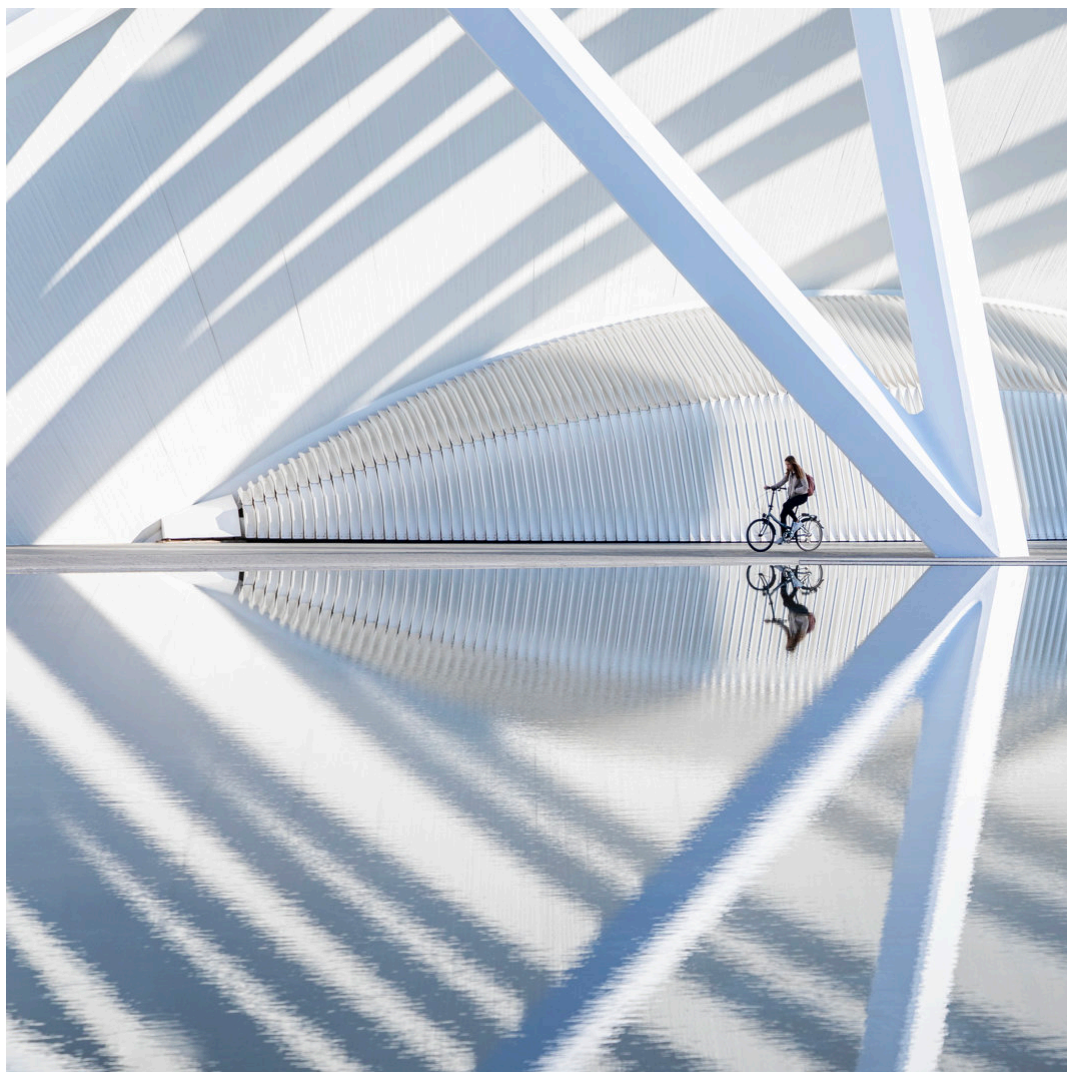
Given the quality of her work, we were surprised to learn that she makes no commercial use of it. “I do nothing with my images except for posting that image a day on Instagram (*helen\_trust*) and entering on-line competitions. I am working on pulling together a small portfolio of images with the aim to sell prints on-line but it’s still work in progress,” she explains.

This means she does not have prints from her images often. “When I do, I have used Loxley’s mounted printed service and I am looking to expand on this if I do ever get into sales.”

Then we had to ask the key question – how do she get away with setting up for shots in underground stations in UK and abroad, and for some the architecture on private land?

“In London I tend to wing it”, she admits, “but there are certain stations that will just move you on if you are seen with the SLR kit so that’s when I use the Sony. For Berlin I emailed ahead to most of the buildings I wanted to shoot and got permission – most replied ‘no problem’, others didn’t even reply but I never had difficulties when shooting.

“Subways in Germany don’t seem to have a problem either. I



*Above and below – City of Arts and Sciences, Valencia.*

don’t use my tripod but I have been known to ride entire lines and get off at every stop shoot for 20 minutes then pop on another train to the next stop.

“For spiral staircases or interior shots in private buildings I always ask security and assure them it’s for personal use only and competitions. Often people ask me what I’m photographing and when I show them, they are amazed as they have taken those stairs for years and never noticed the geometry when looking up or down! I try always to tag the architect where I can.”

Helen has been successful in competitions, with Golds from the Guild’s Image of the Month rounds, a top twenty place in the APOY leaderboard, an honourable mention in the Minimalist Photography Awards and a shortlisting in the British Photography Awards all recently. She’s also going to see her work on display at The Photography Show through the SheClicks and CameraJabber awards.

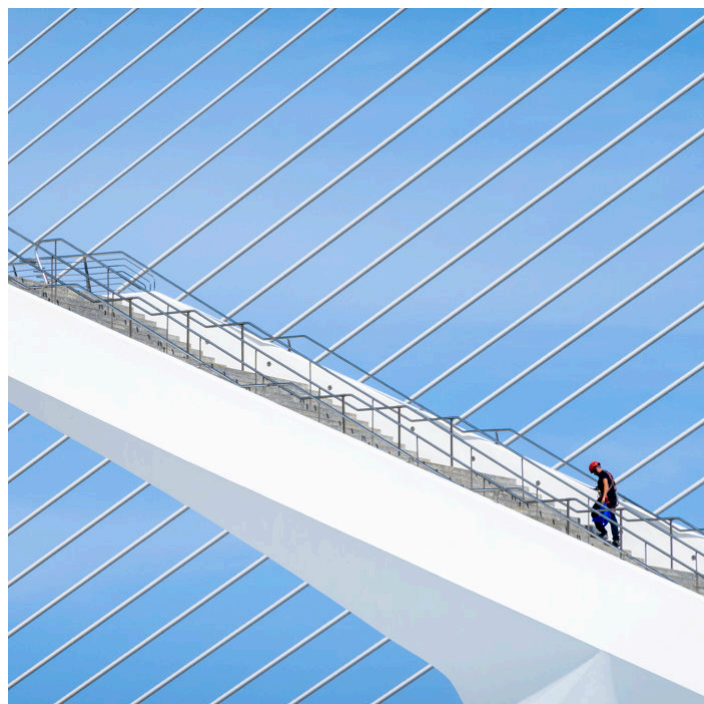
Though her subjects are often

very fixed, Helen keeps moving. She’s just returned to her Somerset family origins after thirty years in the Home Counties and London, which she visits regularly, and as we went to press had ventured far north – to the Cairngorms in

Britain, and to Hokkaido in Japan. Munich and Prague were beckoning her for a springtime sortie.

– DK

See: [helentrustphotography.com](http://helentrustphotography.com)  
Instagram @helen\_trust



# LENSES

## AstrHori 25mm $f2.8$ 2-5X & JJC Macro Arm Light

If you want a dedicated macro lens, you probably don't want anything as powerful as some of the options coming from the Chinese new-era lens makes

The 'probe' lens from Laowa is a surprising 24mm  $f1.4$  and the objective lens sits at the end of a long tube. It has a complex 28-element design to relay the inverted and re-inverted image to the sensor with an option to use a 90° periscope tube instead of the usual straight one which is almost 40cm long.

With a fixed 2X magnification and focus distance of 2cm from the front glass, the Laowa can be poked inside spaces and into liquids. It also costs north of two grand!

Bearing a slight resemblance but no mosquito-like proboscis, the AstrHori 25mm  $f2.8$  macro needs only 10 elements and has a focusing helicoid going from 2X (with a 45mm working distance) to 5X (37.5mm). The front glass is set in a fairly generous rim, so it can not be poked through a tiny hole, but that rim has been engineered with a bayonet (not yet used) that will presumably make fitting a ring-flash or similar attached lighting possible. This lens is purely manual, no EXIF data or aperture control from the camera, no matter which mirrorless system it is bought for. We tested it in **Sony E** mount but it works exactly the same way on **Canon RF, Nikon Z, Panasonic/Leica L** and **Fujifilm X**.

It's got a manual aperture in full stop clicks down to  $f16$  (with a half stop between 2.8 and 4), and the all-metal mount and lens barrel certainly inspire confidence at over 470g. AstrHori is a brand of Bozhendao (Shenzhen) Technology Co. Ltd and in 2023 introduced 18mm  $f8$  (APS-C) and 28mm  $f13$  2X probe lenses costing under \$1000, competing with Laowa. This lens is very different – you can buy it delivered in a few days to the UK for just \$249 including shipping. As usual with new Chinese products, it is superbly packaged thanks to digital printing and computer



Focus distance at 2X



Focus distance at 5X



*The AstrHori lens is very solidly made from metal, and superbly packaged. It has a metal lens cap, a bayonet on the front rim, an interior rear light baffle, and knurled focus and aperture rings which have a smooth action. The soft clicks for  $f$ -stops are at full intervals except between  $f2.8$  and  $f4$ . No exposure increase guide is marked on the repro scale.*



aided box design. Even the foam insert which cradles the wrapped lens looks to have been digitally printed or fabricated in CAD-cut layers.

Instructions are minimal and what is really missing is a clear indication of true working aperture. At 2X we can assume that 25mm  $f2.8$  really means  $f5.6$  and the stopped-down range is *pro rata*, as a 25mm  $f2.8$  should have an 8.9mm diameter aperture and that's just what we see here.

That is certainly how it seems when testing with ambient light or flash. At 5X with the magnification achieved by barrel extension the working aperture should be about  $f13$ . Checked out the difference between 2X and 5X is about 2.5 stops as expected.

So, you simply can't work on the basis that this is an  $f2.8$  lens. Some conventional macro lenses do not lose aperture much – the 60mm  $f2$  Tamron made for APS-C DSLRs is an example. They have internal focusing, fully or partially, so the focal length changes and this helps keep the aperture wider. This lens does not, the optical unit stays fixed.

The good side of its design and use on today's mirrorless bodies is that even with the lens set to  $f16$  you can view and focus – good light will be needed, and for the exposure flash is definitely the best option. However, all macro ring-flash units now cost far more than this lens – typically into four figures to get a good one for Sony, as they discontinued them fifteen years ago and the best options are rare and go for high prices. Newer Godox and similar alternatives are manual-only and not a real dedicated match. Also, the lens has no adaptor ring to hold ring or macro twin head flash.

Having a couple of older macro flash units around, from Minolta and Delta, we tried Sony's hot shoe adaptor which should in theory have worked. The old Minolta macro light only fires at full power and would need ND16 filters over its four flash tubes. The Delta,



The JJC Macro Arm Light. Subject positioned for demonstration only, in practice subjects need to be parallel to lens and have minimal depth.



Fuse at 2X, one Macro Arm LED only, 30s at f22; grains of white rice, two LEDs used, 2X needed 0.7s exposure and 5X 2 seconds both at f11.

designed for a later generation DSLR, simply didn't fire at all.

One of the solutions is the Adaptalux flexible arm LED and flash macro studio system, which costs from around £200 up. Even with this, the physical size of some light shapers is not ideal for the extremely close positioning needed. You can find details of all their unique variations on this UK designed invention at <http://www.adaptalux.com>

But there's a much lower cost LED macro light with flexible arms just the right length for this AstrHori lens, made by JJC which is a trusted brand (many years of screen protector, lens hood and similar products behind them). Their Macro Arm Light with two plain white LEDs, independently controlled for off/half power/full, mounts in the camera shoe for convenience only (no connection, no flash) and uses two CR2025 lithium batteries. For £15.99 (Amazon) you also get four of the fairly expensive cells included, two installed in the unit (pull tab out to

use) and two replacements. While the power is fairly low, the LED heads have condenser lenses and produce a defined beam.

You absolutely can not use sensor based stabilisation – there is no focal length setting on manual which will work, even if setting 120mm at 2X to around 300mm at 5X might be theoretically useful. It is a lens where the best stabilisation is a tripod. Hand-held shooting is possible if you hold steady and use a fast shutter speed. It's a good thing that the latest sensors are low in noise even at ISO 6400.

The depth of field is close to zero, and focus stacking needs a very high precision focus rail preferably motorised. My focus rail allowed precise adjustment and framing for one shot, but the act of changing focus and locking it again was unpredictable and enough to shift composition. But when I need 2-5X magnification I can now achieve it.

– David Kilpatrick



Ammonite at 2X propped up to be parallel to the sensor, lit by Macro Arm with two LEDs. Sony A7R1V, 1/8s at ISO 640, f11.



Hand-held shots in natural window light are possible with care. Below, grooves of an Edwardian photograph cylinder at 2X, f8, 1/160s, ISO 800.



# FILM CAMERAS

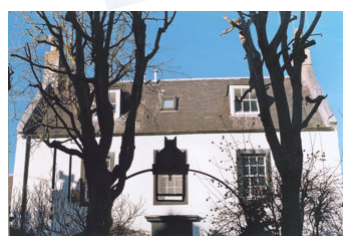
## Re-foaming a 40-year-old Minolta XG-M

This article isn't really about replacing the foam light seals on an old camera even if it may help you decide whether to do this yourself. It's more about the value of the very last generation of 35mm SLRs before autofocus arrived and made most of them ugly.

It happens to be a Minolta XG-M, which was the 1981 precursor of the more comprehensively automated X-700 and X-500 which offered TTL flash metering, and the basic X-300 which lived on in various Chinese-made generations including a Seagull branded variant. It's not the purest manual camera as it only works at all with two LR44 batteries installed, but has a decent centre weighted aperture priority Auto, manual metering using the viewfinder LED shutter speed scale, a cloth horizontally run focal plane shutter speeded 1-1/1000s+B, X sync at 1/60s and metering ISO manually set from 25 to 1600 with  $\pm 2$  EV over-ride mechanically limited. That means you can't set *plus* anything when using ISO 25, or *minus* anything at 1600. It accepts a 3.5fps motor drive.

Because it's right at the end of a generation, there's no DX-coding for film cassettes (it will not try to auto set a film speed) and no window in the back to view cassette info. Instead you tear the end off your film box and pop it in a rear holder. The advantage of this pre-DX set up is that there are also no light seals to break down round that cassette window.

The vital foam seals where the back closes are almost guaranteed to be perished in Minoltas of this age. They used a foam in many things, including their lens and filter cases, which has either turned to dust by now or soon will. This has produced an industry making new foam seal kits for all the main film camera models from many makers. The camera was otherwise in remarkable condition, effectively with mint (as photographed here) with an equally mint 50mm f1.4 MD Rokkor 49mm filter thread lens, at £120. I gave £100 to the dealer expecting to spend that on new



Lab scanning is convenient for prints, one reproduced above left. But camera scanning (A7RIV with Pentax M42 bellows slide copy rig) with adjustment of the inverted curves in Adobe Camera Raw (right) offers more control.

foam, which came from an eBay seller in Germany trading as OldCameraFuchs. The kit with minimal but clear instructions arrived quickly. As a generic kit for Minolta XG series, it included two

extra back sealing strips not present on the XG-M, and a new foam mirror damper strip. Since it's very easy to damage the focusing screen or get foam debris into the darkchamber, and the existing mirror strip was not



Cleaning out old foam with a small screwdriver and cotton bud with isopropyl alcohol. The re-foam kit is shown below.

causing problems, that was set aside for possible future use. The camera has a perfect focusing screen – not a single speck of dust on it or between the screen and prism – and I wanted it to stay that way.

The perished foam was removed with careful scraping from a small screwdriver, cotton bud swabbing with isopropanol and a cocktail stick. The new foam strips needed care to insert in the channels of the body and then press home using a modified ice-cream spoon provided. If you want to do this make sure you can thread a needle or paint an Airfix model first as these would be basic tests to judge your aptitude!

Once the self adhesive strips are in place, the camera back closes against a reassuring slight resistance suggesting the light-seal will be good.

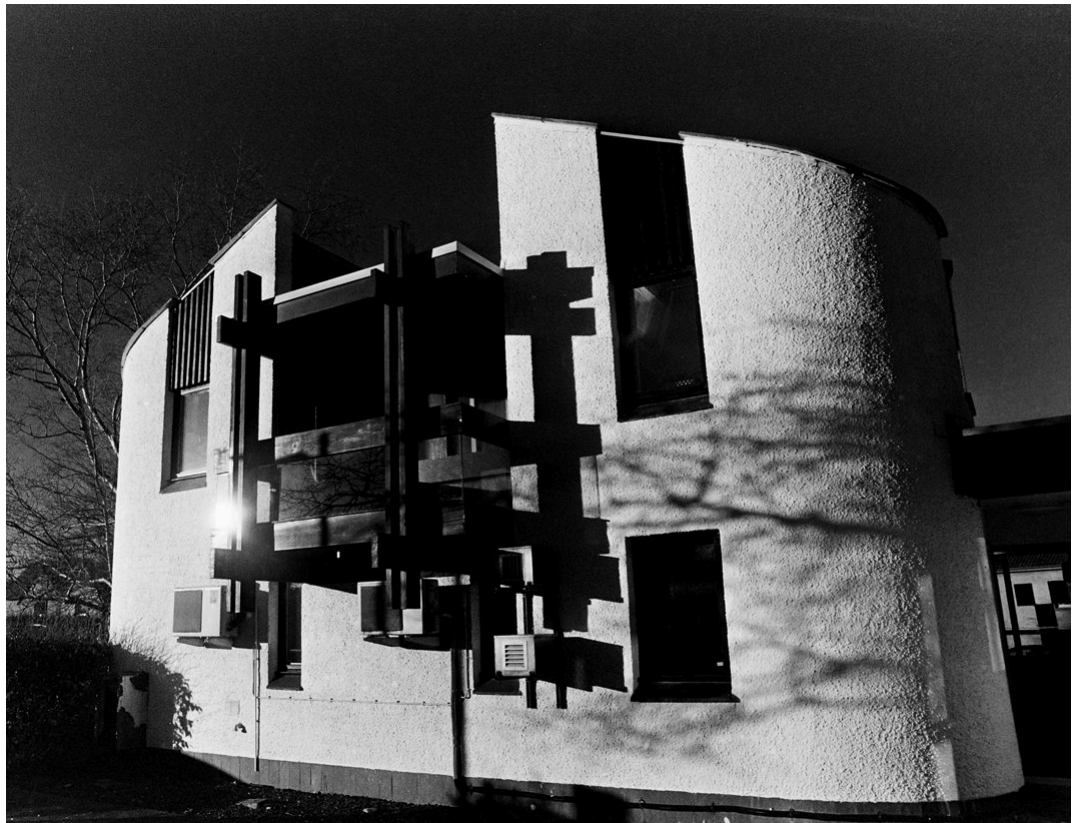
The next task was to test the camera and lens. No-one can really afford new film for a first test but my drawers and cupboards have



Above, a lab enprint from very old Kodak T400CN lacked contrast but all the film proved printable.

yielded a decent harvest of reasonably sound out of date stock. Some Konica Centuria 200 colour negative expiry 11/2005, and Kodak T400CN chromogenic black and white dated 5/2005, had been in fridge or freezer or cold store rooms most of the time.

Since Centuria was a consumer film, it was made to survive bad storage including seasons unsold in kiosks in warm climates. Even so I exposed it generously, half to one stop over on rating. The Kodak is a professional film and was intended



Above, the C41 process Kodak stock when camera scanned only needed work on the S-curve (in Adobe Camera Raw Curves) to yield a strong image from the shot taken with a 24mm lens and 8X red filter. The slide copier did not crop the shot as much as a machine print, so allowed re-composition.



for refrigerated storage, and could have fared worse so was rated at ISO 200 and generally overexposed. Being chromogenic, it was always able to take up to 5+ stops rather as Ilford XP2 can. When buying vintage films it's worth remembering that everyday Kodacolor, especially the Turkish and similar variants, was formulated to last years in bad storage. Get a roll of badly stored professional Vericolor and 20 years past its date may mean barely usable. Find some ordinary Kodacolor or Fujicolor Superia, particularly if the regular 100 or 200 speed choices, and it may behave well.

I found it interesting just how memory functions with old tech. I instinctively loaded the films the way I used to, tightening the rewind lever slack to make sure the film had taken up and was winding-on. Rewinding, I did it slowly and steadily and left the leader sticking out of the cassette even though I was not going to process these myself. I tore the short tongue off, again just a solid old habit which prevented accidentally reloading an exposed cassette when the leader was left out.

Fortunately, I have C41 film processing on my doorstep from the long-founded family business of Hector Innes in Kelso. When I commented on how good the prints from their Fujifilm processing and scan/print system looked, Alastair Innes just told me to look at the fog levels on the films! The old Konica stock was really pretty good and need not even have been given any extra exposure. The Kodak was so fogged it looked like an ND8 three-stop filter, if slightly uneven!

To finish this test I then found a roll of Paterson Acupan 200, left over from a test conducted in 1996, expiry date 2000. I processed it for 11 minutes rather than the 8 normal for a medium speed film, in Adox FX-39 II 1+9. To my surprise the film had very little fog and the exposure was just about right, erring toward extra density. The negatives are very grainy, but scanned well and should print well if I manage to get an enlarger set up again. This film was not even refrigerated, it was in a succession of cupboards for 28 years! It was made for Paterson by FOMA – re-FOMAing that SLR...

– David Kilpatrick



Left: XGM, 24mm Sigma f2.8 Macro MD, 4X orange filter, Paterson Acupan 200 from a 'first production run' tested in 1996, expiry date February 2000, shot February 2024. Exposure 1/125s at f8 rated at ISO 100. Negative rephotographed using macro bellows slide copier, inverted using Curves.

# CONTRAST FILTERS

## Can coloured glass make a difference?

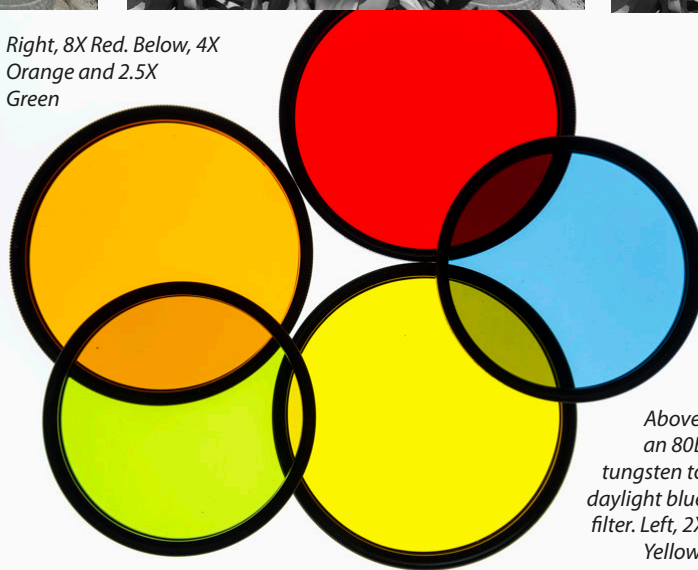


In theory the wide colour sensitivity and sheet dynamic range of today's digital sensors should make the use of any coloured filter – the types used historically with black and white films to enhance contrast in the greyscale rendering of different colours – pointless.

In practice, post-processing recipes and presets which create monochrome from raw files and simulate the popular filters don't really match the effects given by shooting on real film. Some approaches are better than others, but first it's worth looking at why an RGB file remains desirable even when saturation is down to zero.

On this page you'll see two black and white reproductions of the same colour shot. One is from the method we prefer, to work from an RGB file, and the other is from a Greyscale file. The difference – which applies to most printing processes including digital photo books – is that an RGB image is printed in CMYK using all four process inks, but a Greyscale file is only printed using K (Black). This can also apply to inkjet printers though it's a little more complicated as the best photo inkjets will print Greyscale using black and grey pigment inks of

Right, 8X Red. Below, 4X Orange and 2.5X Green



Above, an 80B tungsten to daylight blue filter. Left, 2X Yellow.

different density so it's more than just a single ink laid down.

Imagine you have an image where the CMYK conversion would result in 100% ink density for all four inks (this does not happen as press and printer profiles prevent it to avoid getting a slather of wet ink all over the place). If the black had maximum density and went on last as the top layer, the colours would be pointless since only that top black coat would be seen.

In practice, a single black ink is rarely the maximum density a press or printer can yield. You get a much richer black and more dynamic range if some of the other three or more coloured inks are laid down

in a neutral mix under it. When four inks are used as in this magazine, the overall density is restricted to 300% – if black is solid, no more than 66% density each of C, M and Y can be used. Even that would be very heavy and press systems warn if we have large areas of very heavy inking. When we reproduce pages with large very low key or high contrast images, we ignore the alert because a deep rich black is what we want.

To reproduce a solid black panel, it's normal to add between 20% and 40% of Cyan and Magenta but omit Yellow. That's because if the printing process varies a bit, Yellow is the worst ink to over-ink

and the hardest to detect. It can also produce the most unwanted colour cast, yellowish or greenish neutrals.

Despite the pitfalls and the potential for our black and white repro to be slightly warm or cool, we work with desaturated RGB files rather than greyscale.

But if you use *Lightroom* and *Adobe Camera Raw*, and pick a Black and White profile from their wide range of conversions (shown right), you end up with a Greyscale file. It forces this on you. Since it looks identical on screen to a zero saturation RGB file, it is easy to forget Adobe has done this. At *Cameracraft* we have to remember to convert any of these Adobe recipe greyscale images to RGB. The pictures on this page should tell you why (with luck). The result from RGB has the density and range we want in a photographic magazine – the Greyscale result is much better today than it would have been twenty years ago, before 'computer to plate' litho printing or digital presses became universal, but as long as the RGB monochrome is well balanced to neutral, it beats it.

There's one minor snag – this magazine is best viewed with a high CRI 5200-6500K light source.



Adobe's current Black and White raw conversion profiles

Warm domestic LED lighting, 3000K or under, may make neutrals look too warm if they are CMYK but stay neutral if they are just black ink. That's because the C, M and Y inks don't have an equal response when the colour temperature of the viewing light is changed. Black ink and grey halftones do.

### Contrast filters

You may also see that both black and white results are lacking in impact and tonal range. There are two reasons. We are used to fine art black and white, especially darkroom prints, having a distinct S-curve which deepens the darkest shadows, puts more contrast into the important mid-tones, and flattens out bright highlights. No S-curve has been applied to these colour conversion or the black and white versions. *On the previous spread using camera scans from B&W negatives, a strong S-curve emulating a Grade 3 to 4 silver halide paper has been applied.*

The second historic reason was the use of contrast filters with panchromatic black and white film. Orange and red filters have a strong effect deepening blue sky tones, and lightening yellows and reds. Because of the colour content of grass and leaves these may also be lightened. All films were never equal. Isochromatic and pre-WWII panchro films had very limited red sensitivity, and using a yellow filter produced a good tone in skies which otherwise just looked white. Later panchromatic films from the 1950s to 70s didn't need a 1.5X or 2X yellow so much.

In the 1980s, 'red pan' became normal and films like Ilford Delta and Kodak T-Max gave very balanced greys from a wider range of colours. Ilford's unique SFX film extended the red sensitivity to near infrared, so blue sky tones recorded with some depth even without any filter. With this film, a 4X Orange filter does not need a full two stops extra exposure but also doesn't have such a strong effect. The extra IR sensitivity allows deeper red filters to be used and these can give a dramatic rendering.

You can use a blue filter – like the 80B shown – to get results which resemble 19<sup>th</sup> century plates and film. There don't seem to be any digital presets for this!

### Digital monochrome

Digital sensors have been, by their nature, highly sensitive to far red and even infrared, so the glass covering of most sensors in the 1990s included a strong IR-cut filter. The desaturated muddy colours of early digital images are often down to dilution of R, G and B by infrared. Today's sensors have effective infrared suppression, minimal crosstalk and a generally well-balanced response. Combined with once unthinkable dynamic range they produce a raw file which has none of the qualities of film – it has an extended linear response, and needs an S-curve applying for a pleasing shadow, midtone and highlight rendering.

The raw files have enough information for Adobe to have created a whole set of Black and White conversions, often cryptically named BW01, BW02 and so on. In the latest software generation they added more understandable Red Filter, Green Filter and so on. You do not find these under 'Adobe Monochrome' which is one fixed conversion. They are in a separate menu item 'B&W'

### B&W in-camera

In some camera makes, notably Fujifilm, you will find JPEG output B&W looks which include similar 'filters' Yellow, Orange, Red, and Green (once used for portraiture to deepen skin tones, though Fujifilm says it's to lighten foliage in landscapes – it never was). If you record a raw file, it will allow normal colour processing. No actual filter need be used, and the EVF will show a B&W image including the selected filter effect.

In other makes such as Sony selecting B&W gives a B&W screen and EVF image, and if you use those old glass filters on the lens, you see the effect they have on the sky and other tones. If you opt to record a raw file as well, it won't be much use if you ever want a colour version of the shot! Current OM-System models work differently again, recording a B&W JPEG and a colour raw file, but staying colour in the EVF so you don't get to compose your shot with B&W preview. The way Olympus/OM files handle bit depth makes for very effective B&W.



The raw files from Olympus/OM-Systems cameras like the EM-1 MkII used for this shot taken with the 7-14mm zoom don't use such a flat linear conversion as cameras with a higher real bit depth. They tend to look more film-like and respond well to contrast filter simulations.

# Z-SYSTEM LENSES

## Tamron 150-500mm f5-6.7 Di III VC VXD

One of the great things about the dominance of mirrorless camera systems is the portability, the lightness, the great reduction in size and weight of the kit. Unless, of course, the lure of full frame has met the need to capture something you need to keep at a distance.

Plenty of cameras have sufficient resolution to crop rather than zoom, but why did you want full frame if you're going to scrap the resolution, dynamic range or DoF advantages? When it comes to the Nikon Z, there are relatively few third-party options without adding a bulky FTZ adaptor, and for anyone looking for quality that supports a high-resolution sensor, modern optics are leagues ahead of the legacy and lower-cost glass of DSLR days.

Tamron's new range of Z-mount lenses is, by and large, migrating to the Nikon via Sony's E-mount ecosystem, and pleasingly the 150-500mm has a street price comparable with the Sony of under £1,000 despite the RRP of £1,249. A subtle change in bespoke switch functions for each mount the lens is offered on; in the case of the Nikon, the focus operation can be switched between linear and non-linear movement. Further customisation can be done with Tamron's USB-connected Lens Utility, and there are focus limit switches for trickier subjects.

Starting out with a compact 212mm long package at 150mm, weighing under 2kg, the lens has an external zoom extension and paired with a Z7-II feels quite heavy, which is emphasised with a twist of the zoom ring and some old-fashioned physics. No tripod? It's an easy zoom to hand hold with optical stabilisation and the clever Flex Zoom Lock which holds a given focal length with just a click-forward of the zoom ring. A bold white mark indicates locked zoom.

A 7-blade rounded diaphragm and variable f5 to 6.7 aperture hints at the compromises made to achieve the size, weight and cost balance, but with higher ISO now



Using the 150-500 at 500mm, at the polar bears' lake. Richard's tattoo is of Wojtek, the Syrian brown bear adopted by Polish soldiers in WWII, who helped carry ammunition at Monte Cassino and retired to Edinburgh Zoo. The lens extends considerably to 500mm.

taken for granted and bright EVFs, there's little utility lost for the reduced brightness. At 150mm it can focus down to 60cm though, for a 1:3.1 reproduction ratio – another plus point for the nature photographer.

Image quality certainly appears up to scratch, with our rather contrast-challenged overcast winter day leaving few opportunities to really see how the lens performs given some clarity and detail to capture; you can't fault the detail of the polar bear's fur and water-drop splashes – though the Nikon 600mm f4 TC VRS at £15,999 could well have kept the Z7-II in a less noisy ISO range with a faster shutter speed and better output detail.

Bear with me though... when

you add up the length of Nikon's super-affordable 70-300mm AF-P f4 and the necessary FTZ adaptor you're carrying a package not much smaller or cheaper than the Tamron. The extra reach is worth the small premium over the RRP of even that Nikon lens, and adaptor if you don't already have one.

Tamron's Z-mount lens range is looking more appealing with each new release, though the 150-500mm feels like a special-purpose lens rather than a more versatile walk-around type. For sports, nature and travel in more open landscapes this lens is neither too expensive, nor compromised in quality. It's just right.

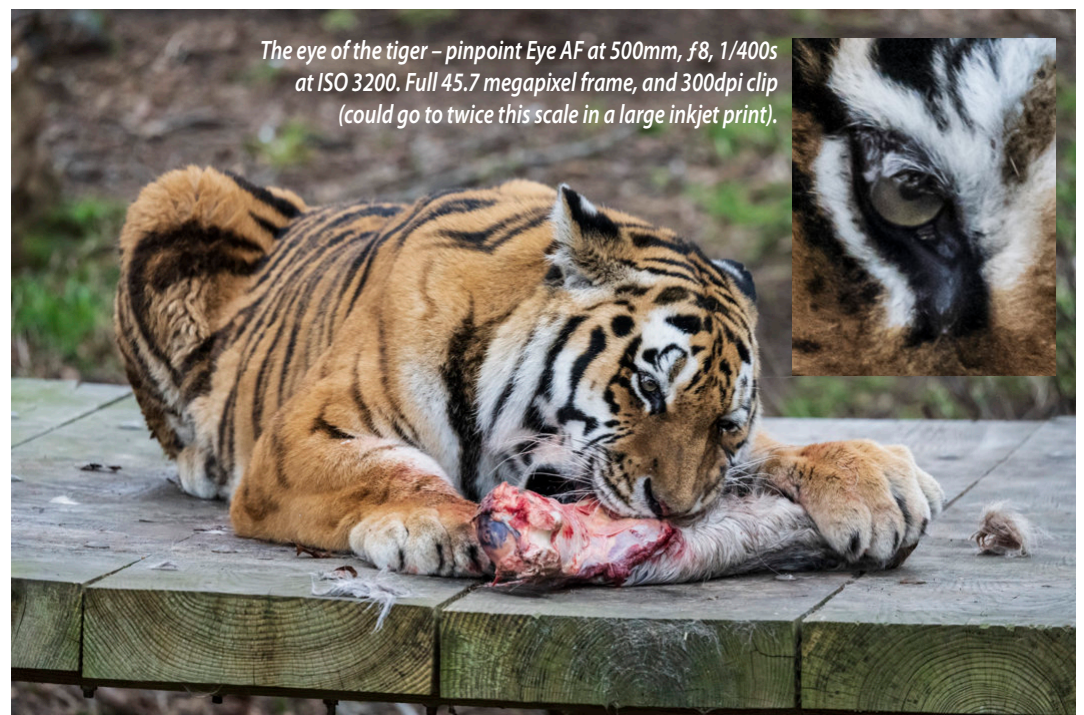
– Richard Kilpatrick



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



The rear of the long lens looks able to accept a converter, but there isn't one officially compatible.



The eye of the tiger – pinpoint Eye AF at 500mm, f8, 1/400s at ISO 3200. Full 45.7 megapixel frame, and 300dpi clip (could go to twice this scale in a large inkjet print).



Above, a 14 megapixel crop from a Z7II frame taken at 500mm wide open at f6.7, ISO 3200 and 1/500s. Any softness is down to a layer of water covering the polar bear's fur. The 500mm maximum zoom was needed on almost shots in this wildlife park due to the distances involved. The test shoot was at the Yorkshire Wildlife Park near Doncaster, which had most animals safely locked inside due to high winds... but no reduction in the £29.79 entry cost! Cameracraft tested the 150-500mm Tamron Sony mount in the July/August 2021 issue – download a PDF of the report here: <https://cameracraft.online/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Tamron150-500.pdf>

## Long lenses slim down in the mirrorless era

With **Sigma** introducing a mirrorless-only lightweight compact 500mm *f*5.6 at around £2,800, it's worth looking at the choices users of Nikon Z, Canon RF, Sony E, Leica L and also Fujifilm X and the MicroFourThirds have for long lenses. Some will say that it's time to consider the Fujifilm GFX and Hasselblad medium format digital mirrorless systems as well, with 100 megapixel sensors offering a potential team-up with long lenses on adaptors and a cropping potential to match the highest resolution full-frame sensors.

However, one system currently stands out for true pixel-level telephoto capture and that's **Fujifilm** with their APS-C 40 megapixel sensor. Remember that for telephoto power it is not the size of the sensor which really counts, it is the pitch of the pixels. When a 61 megapixel full frame sensor is cropped to APS-C, you get about 26 megapixels and that's much the same as regular APS-C sensors have offered for the last ten years. By going to 40MP with the their latest sensors, Fujifilm make the X-mount version of the Tamron 150-500mm zoom match 225-750mm on 40MP full frame in practical terms.

If their 40MP sensor architecture was used to cover full frame, the result would yield 100MP. APS-C is a little smaller than half frame, and full frame has 2.5X more pixels at the same density. So you'd need to have a 100MP FF camera to get the same subject scale from the same focal length.

It's easy to forget that apparent increases in pixel density like 61MP versus 45MP, 36MP and even 24MP do not translate to image scale as sensor megapixels are an AREA figure, where crop factors like 1.5X and focal lengths like 600mm versus 300mm are a LINEAR measurement. So to get 2X the subject scale from a sensor you need 4X the pixel count. The difference between Sony's A7IV and A7RIV, 33 versus 61 megapixels, is only 1.35X. You will

*Nikon's 180-600mm *f*5.6-6.3 VR is moderately priced for the brand At £1,799*



*Canon's new RF 200-800mm *f*6.3-9 IS USM takes advantage of the mirrorless ability to autofocus and view despite a restricted maximum aperture.*

get a more detailed wildlife image, give or take the A7IV's lo-pass filter, by adding a 1.4X tele converter to the same lens, rather than shooting with the higher resolution body.

Then you get the problem – there's only one 1.4X converter made for the system, it's Sony's own, and it is restricted to just a few high end Sony long zooms and telephotos, at a price.

The **OM-Systems** range, with its 20 megapixel sensor equal in density to an 80MP full frame and 2X crop factor, benefits from very light and compact long zooms like the consumer grade 75-300mm but also has a high-end fast prime 300mm *f*4 IS PRO, and the top offering of a 150-400mm *f*4.5 TC1.25. This has a built-in switchable 1.25X tele converter and covers the equivalent of 300 to 1000mm in 35mm full frame terms. It can also be used with 1.4X and 2X converters.

**Canon's** solution has been easy. They simply made advanced prime tele lenses with surprisingly limited apertures, knowing that the

electronic viewfinder and on-sensor autofocus would make these work as well in practice as much larger fast telephotos had done on SLRs. Not only that, they added teleconverters which create apparently 'unusable' combinations such as a 1600mm *f*22. With optical stabilisation and the dual pixel AF technology even this can auto-focus within the limits of a fairly slow STM (stepper motor) drive.

The 600mm *f*11 and 800mm *f*11 RF lenses use diffractive optics, a Canon patent others can not copy, which reduce the mass of key lens elements and allow a much shorter physical design. Added to this, the lenses collapse for storage and cost a quarter of the price you might expect, while weighing in around the kilo mark not the two or three expected at focal lengths like this. Without using this technology Canon has released a new white RF 200-800mm *f*6.3-9 IS USM which has an extending zoom design and a reasonable price around £2,300.

Canon does make faster and larger more conventional long teles for the RF mount, including 400mm *f*2.8, 600mm *f*4, 800mm *f*5.6 and 1200mm *f*8. You have a choice – £830 for a 600mm *f*11 which may well go everywhere with you, or £14,200 for a 600mm *f*4 many times the size and weight. This is a difference not entirely down to mirrorless but probably never going to be duplicated in the old DSLR EF mount.

**Nikon**, always equally strong in the fast sports and news telephoto field, has Z mount models including a 100-400mm *f*4.5-5.6 VR at £2,599; a 180-600mm *f*5.6-6.3 VR at £1,799; a 600mm *f*6.3 VR S at £4,999; a 400mm *f*4.5 VR S at £3,079; 400mm *f*2.8 TC VR S at £13,499 and the top place, 600mm *f*4 VR S for £15,499.

**Sony**, in updating their range, have put a physically large but fairly light and low cost 200-600mm *f*5.6-6.3 FE in place at a little over £1,000.

While we have a great respect now for the new generation Chinese optical workshops, the practicality of low cost manual focus alternatives like the TTArtisan 500mm *f*6.3 at around £400 is limited when so much telephotography concentrates on moving targets. Much updated compared to those 500mm *f*8 tubes you still see in junk shops, it has a closest focus of 3.3m. Consider that Canon say this of the 600mm *f*11 RF – "It is perfect for animal portraits and casual wildlife photography even in your back garden thanks to its short (4.5m) closest focusing distance." We know plenty of back gardens which won't let you get 4.5m away and plenty of small birds which really need something like the Tamron 150-500mm's 1.8m minimum.

Well-matched autofocus and good high ISO performance, combined with an EVF rather than optical finder, have transformed this whole field.

# A Photo Safari in Kenya!

- \* November, 2024
- \* Designed for the Unique needs of Photographers
- \* Hosted by Gary Friedman

[FriedmanArchives.com/safari](http://FriedmanArchives.com/safari)

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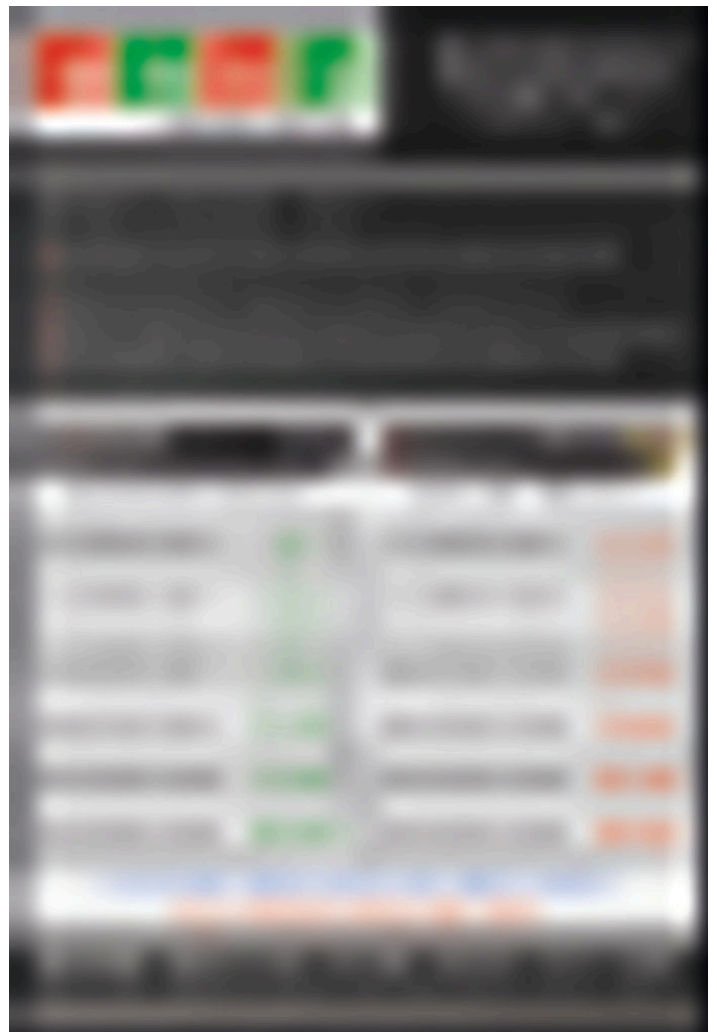
## Creative Light

Issue 59  
magazine



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# THE GUILD OF PHOTOGRAPHERS 2023 Awards

The presentation of awards for the 2023 Guild of Photographers Image of the Month competition was held at the Etruria Doubletree by Hilton hotel in Stoke-on-Trent in February.

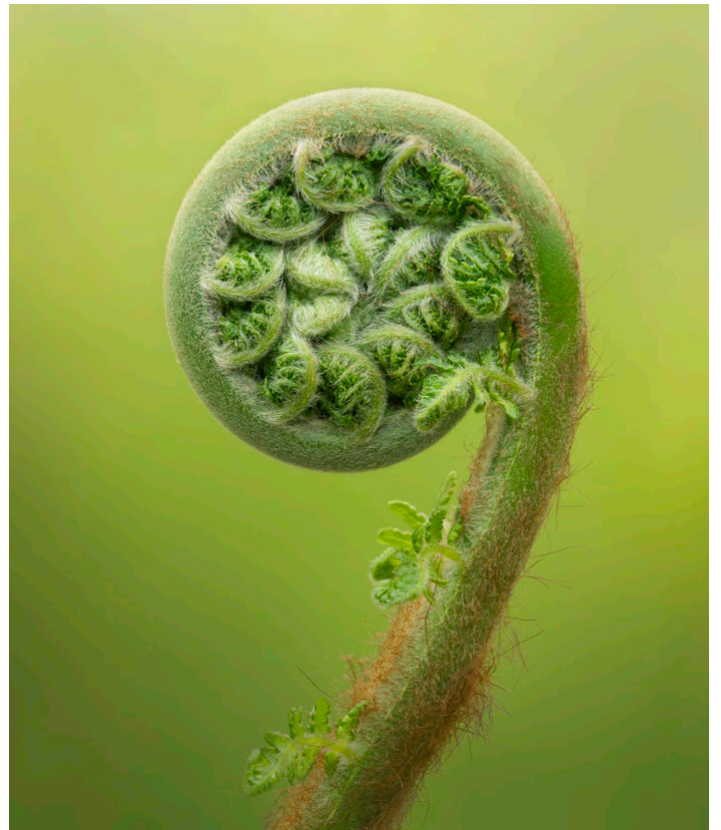
Above: the Judges' Choice Overall Image of the Year winner from Jodie Painter, which won the Image of the Year in the Pets category. Jodie also had wins in other categories, see page 45.

Right: by Emma Pope, who took the Pet Photographer of the Year title.



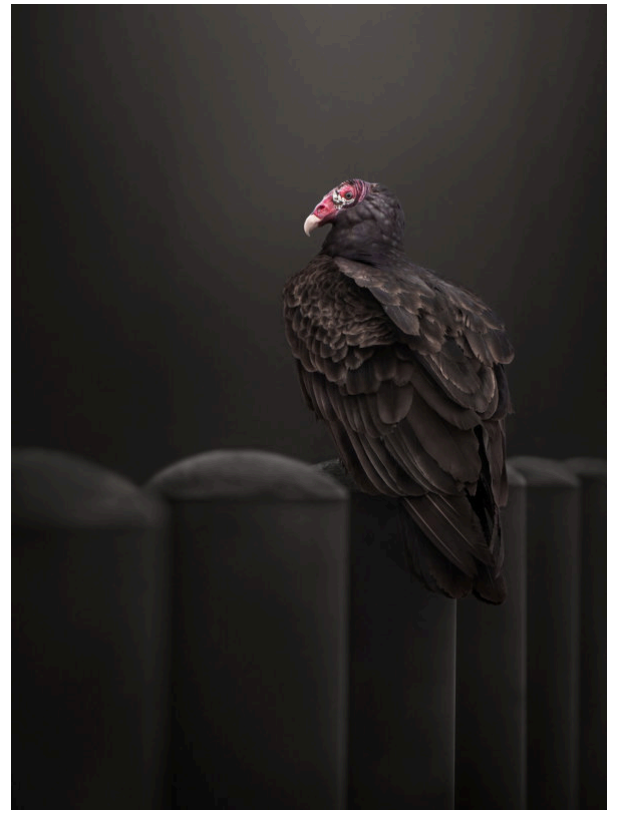


Above, winner of the Insects image category by Nigel Proctor, one of the few black and white works featuring in the finals. The categories in Guild awards can change each year depending on the popularity of those categories. This year, for example, Astro photography was popular enough to merit an Image of the Year award.



Molly Hollman won the Flora category Image of the Year title with her unfurling young angiosperm above (fern or bracken – Molly will certainly know). Below, another image including an insect and Molly's signature soft focus colour which helped her take the Natural World and also All-Round Photographer of the Year titles.





More category-winning images: above left, Astro by Katie Hughes. Above right, Birds winner from Katie Brockman, who is based in the USA. Below, Newborn Image of the Year by Marietta Balassa. Top right, Urban by Morag Forbes. Bottom right, Nature and Wildlife winner from Sarah Dowdall.







Two winners from David Conway – above, from his Wedding Photographer of the Year accumulation and below, his Wedding Image of the Year.





In the Overall Image of the Year, the Members' Choice went to Gary Neville (above). Gavin Duncan won Pictorial Landscape Image of the Year, below.





Ian Knaggs had multiple successes within the competition. The unmistakable studio still life work top and above left took the Graphistudio Open Category Photographer of the Year title, with the matchstick message taking Creative & Digital Image of the Year and the headphones Commercial Image of the Year.

Magda Bright was awarded Maternity, Newborn & Baby Photographer of the Year sponsored by Digitalab for her entries including the print on a print, centre right.

Jenny Higgs won the Baby & Toddler Image of the Year, right.

The Image of the Year competition is sponsored by InFocus Insurance, Loxley Colour and One Vision Imaging.





Jodie Painter's successes in the awards including scooping the Classical Portrait Image of the Year with the study above, unusually composed in landscape format. She chose a square format with a circular motif for the black and white colour winners below. Left, People Category Photographer of the Year sponsored by One Vision Imaging; right, Avant-Garde Image of the Year.



# Guild Awards 2023 winners

Sponsored throughout the year by One Vision Imaging, Loxley Colour and Infocus insurance, the Guild's Image of the Month Competition attracts up to 1,500 entries a month.

The Image of the Year Winners for 2023 were:

Astro Category (a new one for this year) – Runner-Up: Graham Hazlegreaves. Winner: Katie Hughes.

Avant-Garde Category  
Runner-Up: Julie Herbert Adams.  
Winner: Jodie Painter.

Baby and Toddler  
Runner-Up: Laura Spence.  
Winner: Jenny Higgs.

Bird Category  
Runner-Up: Katie Brockman  
Winner: Katie Brockman (USA)

Classical Portraiture  
Runner-Up: Eva White.  
Winner: Jodie Painter .

Commercial  
Runner-Up: Ian Knaggs  
Winner: Ian Knaggs.

Creative and Digital Art  
Runner-Up: Ian Knaggs.  
Winner: Ian Knaggs.

Flora  
Runner-Up: Molly Hollman.  
Winner: Molly Hollman.

Insect  
Runner-Up: Jo Tresidder.  
Winner: Nigel Proctor.

Nature & Wildlife  
Runner-Up: Helen Otton.  
Winner: Sarah Dowdall.

Newborn  
Runner-Up: Magda Bright.  
Winner: Marietta Balassa.

Pets  
Runner-Up: Amie Barron.  
Winner: Jodie Painter.

Pictorial Landscape  
Runner-Up: Gavin Duncan.  
Winner: Gavin Duncan.

Urban Category  
Runner-Up: Steve Collins.  
Winner: Morag Forbes.

Wedding Category  
Runner-Up: Jaine Briscoe-Price.  
Winner: David Conway.

From all the above winning images, the Judges then had the task of choosing the Guild's overall Image of the Year.

The Judges' Choice  
Two Runners-Up: Jodie Painter and Morag Forbes.  
Winner: Jodie Painter.

Members also get to choose their Image of the Year from all the Gold Awards. "Being chosen by your fellow photographers is a fantastic accolade", commented Guild director Steven Thirsk.

The Members Choice Runners-Up for 2023 were Steven Lambert and Katie Hughes.

Winner: Gary Neville  
These winners received valuable display prints from Loxley Colour and One Vision Imaging respectively.

## POTY title winners

The monthly competition entries gather points, and those with the highest scores each year become Photographer of the Year in each category. It's a year-long title chase based on 24 entries – an incredible and unique challenge pushing people to the limit.

The winner from each category received a £200 voucher to spend on a product of their choice from the sponsors of each class, and the Runners Up a £100 voucher.

WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR sponsored by GraphiStudio.  
Runner-Up: Robert Carter.

Guild of Photographers Wedding Photographer of the Year for 2023: David Conway.

MATERNITY, NEWBORN & BABY PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR sponsored by Digitalab.  
Runner Up: Clare Perry.

Guild of Photographers Newborn & Baby Photographer of the Year for 2023: Magda Bright.

NATURAL WORLD CATEGORY PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR Sponsored by One Vision Imaging.  
Runner-up: Gary Neville.  
Guild of Photographers Natural World Category Photographer of the Year for 2023: Molly Hollman.

OPEN CATEGORY PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR Sponsored by Graphistudio.  
Runner Up: Morag Forbes.  
Guild of Photographers Open Category Photographer of the Year for 2023: Ian Knaggs.

PEOPLE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR Sponsored by One Vision Imaging.  
Runner Up: Claire Osborne.  
Guild of Photographers People Photographer of the Year for 2023: Jodie Painter.

PET PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR Sponsored by One Vision Imaging  
Runner Up: Nika Kuplenk (Slovenia).  
Guild of Photographers Pets Category POTY: Emma Pope.

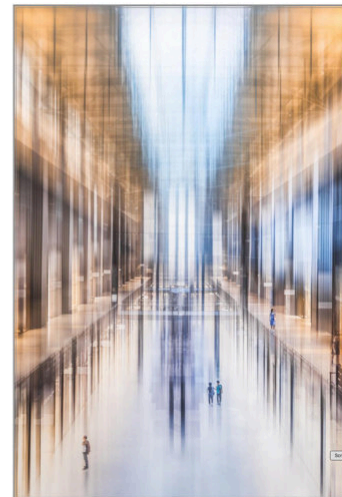
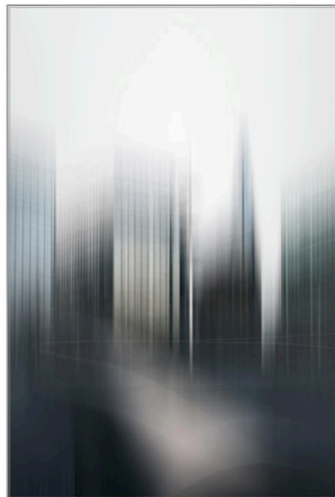
OVERALL PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR The highest individual scorer in any category, winning the Surecolor SC-P900 professional printer from Epson worth in the region of £1000. Guild Photographer of the Year for 2023: Magda Bright.

"ALL-ROUND' PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR The highest combined score from any two sections of the competition. Sponsored by Click Props Backdrops who give a unique three-day VIP pass to Click Live, which includes two Masterclasses of choice and entry to both 'Evening With' events, together worth almost £1000. Two Runners-Up get a £250 voucher for Click Backdrops.

The Guild of Photographers 'All round' runners-up are Jo Tresidder and Gary Neville. The 'All-Round' Photographer of the Year is: Molly Hollman.



Above, Magda Bright's Overall Photographer of the Year Award presented by Dominic Gurney of Epson UK. Below, Molly Hollman awarded All-Round Photographers of the Year by Steve Thirsk Guild CEO.



The Founders Cup sponsored by Datacolor recognises members without previous national wins or Craftsman or equivalent grade, submitting a mini portfolio of three images. The runner-up receiving a Spyder Checkr Photo and a Spyder Checkr Video (together worth around £250) is Jenny Higgs. The winner, who receives a Spyder X2 Print Studio worth over £500, is: Helen Simon (entry above).

## STANDARD MEMBER

£10.75 a month, £28.25 quarterly or £99.00 annually.

Includes:

- Access to qualification and on-line mentoring programmes
- Specially discounted insurance cover and other great discounts (including up to 10% off at the Apple Store) UK only
- Priority data recovery service
- Guild private members' network and personal support
- Monthly competitions
- Bi-monthly Creative Light on-line magazine, Cameracraft mailed to you bi-monthly, and regular email newsletters
- Guild webinar library now includes dozens of brilliant new Zoom webinars, created specially for members during Covid-19 restrictions and recorded
- Use of Guild logos
- Free downloads (e.g. contracts)



# THE GUILD OF PHOTOGRAPHERS

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBER

£13.25 a month, £35.75 quarterly £129.00 annually

Includes all standard features plus the following great business-class additions:

- Debt recovery service
- Contract dispute and mediation cover
- Loss of earnings protection
- Tax Investigation protection (worth £150)
- Personal access to a confidential Legal Advice helpline available 24/7
- Personal access to a confidential Tax Advice helpline
- 'Crisis cover' – 24/7 access to PR expert advice with up to £10,000

to tackle negative publicity or media attention

- Compliance and Regulation (including Data Protection) cover
- Employment Protection
- Free access to a Business legal services website with over 100 documents to assist you with day-to-day business

The Guild's website [photoguild.co.uk](https://www.photoguild.co.uk) has full information of the benefits of joining and links to all the activities and services offered. [photohubs.co.uk](https://www.photohubs.co.uk) is the event-staging arm of the Guild.

• Up to £10,000 worth of PR support if the PR helpline feels the situation needs it

• Plus much more, including legal costs and expenses cover in the case of identity theft, and legal defence against any motoring prosecutions

Some of these features are also available to members outside the UK – the Guild office will be happy to advise. All for just £2.50 a month extra!

To join the Guild now visit: <https://www.photoguild.co.uk>



## Guild Trade Partners offering membership benefits

*Trade discounts/offers are subject to change*

### ALAMY

The leading online photographic library for stock images. Guild members earn the first £500 commission free. <https://www.alamy.com>

### APPLESTORE

Save up to 10% in store or online, as well as on refurbishes and offers. [www.apple.com/uk](http://www.apple.com/uk)

### CEWE

The largest European producer of photobooks is now available in the UK pro market. Guild members get an exclusive 20% off any CEWE photobook and wall art. <https://www.cewe-photoworld.com>

### DATACOLOR SPYDER

Computer display colour calibration solutions. Guild members receive 20% savings. <https://www.spyder.datacolor.com>

### DIGITALAB

Digitalab deliver high quality printing, frames, albums and presentation products. Guild members – 50% OFF any sample products. <https://www.digitalab.co.uk>

### EPSON

One of the largest manufacturers of printers, projectors and much more. <https://www.epson.co.uk>

### GRAPHISTUDIO

Handmade wedding albums, books and prints. <https://www.graphistudio.com>

### GURUSHOTS

Join the daily photo challenges, improve your photography and get rewarded. <https://www.gurushots.com>

### HANDPAINTED BACKDROPS

Suppliers of stunning bespoke made backdrops, discounted for members. <https://handpaintedbackdrops.co.uk/>

### HAHNEMÜHLE FINEART

The oldest paper company in Europe that lives and breathes paper. 10% discount for Guild members. <https://www.hahnemuehle.com>

### HANDEPAY

Guaranteed savings on card processing fees. Discounted quotes for Guild members. <https://www.handepay.co.uk>

## INFOCUS PHOTOGRAPHY INSURANCE

Unique savings for Guild members with this highly respected insurance company. <https://www.infocusinsurance.co.uk>

### LOUPEDECK

10% off THE Photo and Video Editing Console for photographers and videographers, for faster and more creative editing. <https://www.loupedeck.com>

### LOXLEY COLOUR

Scottish professional imaging lab with a worldwide reputation. <https://www.loxleycolour.com>

### nPHOTO

Special deal exclusively for Guild members of up to 60% discount. <https://www.nphoto.co.uk>

### ONE VISION IMAGING – 30% OFF FIRST ORDER

30% discount off your first order, and special offers for Guild members. <https://www.onevisionimaging.com>

### PIXSY – ACT AGAINST COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENTS

Special Guild Member offer worth £350 a year. <https://www.pixsy.com>

### PHANTOM FLIGHT DRONE SCHOOL

Brilliant Guild discounts of up to 20% off Drone courses, lessons and holidays. <https://www.phantomflightdroneschool.co.uk>

### PHOTO-SENSORY

A new pre-school education service which offers five different class types. Guild members can be official photographers to these. *Contact Guild HQ.*

### SIM IMAGING

Guild Member only discount 10%. <https://www.simlab.co.uk>

### UK PRINTED PENS

Special discount for Guild members of 20%. <https://www.ukprintedpens.co.uk>

### VISION MEDIA DESIGN UK

Websites that work for you. Guild members save £95 on all websites. <https://www.creativedesignagency.uk>

### WILKINSON CAMERAS

Large range of photographic equipment and Guild member's exclusive retail offers. <https://www.wilkinson.co.uk>

### 3XM

Guild Members receive double points on every product order. <https://www.3XMsolutions.com>

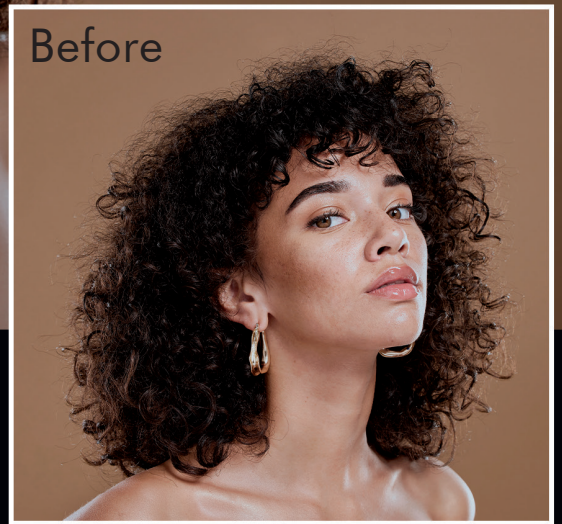


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