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CAMERACRAFT

Photograph by Paolo Prisco

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Would you put letters after your name if you had distinctions or qualifications? Fifty years ago after earlier being locked out of the possibility by minimum age requirements of the Institute of Incorporated Photographers (now the BIPP) I found myself appointed editor of their magazine. Somehow an unqualified photographer, not even a member, had been given the role of selecting and presenting the work of prominently qualified professionals.

I didn't have an inferiority complex though it is fair to say one of two of the editorial committee and council definitely had a superiority complex. Some of this came from their history, often as serving members of the armed forces who had access to some of the best photographic training at 'demob' and came from a hierarchical culture where your rank and your service medals meant a great deal.

It was second nature for them to create ranks and medals within organisations and to give these a fairly rigorous set of standards. By the 1960s it was clear that photographers could become internationally famous yet fail on many of the criteria which professional bodies had established – many simply did not join any 'clubs' because of this. If your work was published in *Vogue* or the new Sunday colour supplements, there was no need to make 20 20 x 16" mounted prints to be judged. Your 'book' more likely contained tear-sheets, contact sheets and 10 x 8s.

Some in that position were awarded honorary distinctions, and even occasional medals, in later years when their patronage and reputation could benefit the an association. But you'd never see a magazine byline, outside the house journals of those associations, saying 'By David Bailey CBE Hon. FRPS Hon.PhD' even though he's been entitled to those for a wee while now!

During my editorship of *The Photographer* in 1976-7 I had met and interviewed many Associates and Fellows and seen their studios and encountered their lifestyles as well as their work. I decided to move from being a photojournalist (a qualified journalist but unqualified photographer) to a mix with more commercial and advertising photography. When pitching for jobs with companies, government departments and many old-school managed potential clients qualifications could be listed on tenders or applications. In 1979 after a year or two mixing reportage and environmental documentary with some industrial and product shooting I reckoned I had enough to submit for Licentiate and join the IIP. I had wanted to join when I first started freelancing at 18, only to find that the minimum age was 21 or that three years in employment was needed. I can't find anything to confirm this.

A few years later I joined the Master Photographers Association as well, starting with Licentiate, and progressing to Associate in 1986. At this time I still found the 'letters' valuable when making proposals for work contracts, as I had no qualifications after A-levels except NCTJ's Proficiency Certificate in Practical Journalism which was viewed more like a trade apprenticeship. In 1991 the BIPP awarded a Fellowship to me and in 2008 the MPA conferred an Honorary Fellowship.

One distinction (not qualification – there's a difference) I never sought was anything from the Royal Photographic Society. I had never been a member and there was a limit to how many subs I could pay every year! With the demise of the MPA, absorbed as a group into the RPS, came the option to submit evidence of my qualifications to be given an Exemption for Associateship. Finally, last month I decided to apply although I'm wary of unearned letters. The RPS has a wonderful history and if time permits I'll try to be involved. I doubt I would pass a Fellowship as my pictures are not showpieces, but I feel at ease using ARPS. And that's why I have added it to *Cameracraft's* masthead information.

– David Kilpatrick

Email: editor@iconpublications.com

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Cameracraft was published in print six times a year from March/April 2018 after dropping the f2 from its title, added after merging the original *Cameracraft* (2012-2015) with f2. Since May/June 2025 it has been published as a high resolution PDF edition for subscribers and magazine platforms, with a low resolution page-turn version available free. A small run of print copies is made, and subscribers are authorised to order digital printed copies (see page 17). Through previous titles *Freelance Photographer*, *Photon* and *PHOTOpro* it is the latest in a line of photographic magazines published from Kelso by David Kilpatrick since 1989.

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BACK ISSUES: because Maxwell Place is up for sale, most back issues have now been disposed of as they occupied a room. In future, though it takes more time than can be found now, a downloadable archive will be put on the website and print-on-demand copies enabled. .

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Sony A7V advances sensor functions and processor power

SONY'S NEW A7V has been pretty much the only important news since our last issue. Nothing much is changed in terms of the basic body design and ergonomics from the A7IV, also marketed as a 'hybrid' body balanced between stills and movie requirements.

The controls are also identical to the A7RV, with Sony now using the same approach Canon did in the early years of the EOS film and digital ranges where at any given level new models could be picked up and used without a learning curve.

Important changes include the removal of the anti-aliasing filter, meaning that the camera should really be called A7RV... ah, we see the problem, that name is taken! So it's a non-R body with a R type sensor, the same size as the A7IV. The A7IV has a weak AA filter, the A7V has none.

But the sensor itself is new one, a 'partially stacked' version of the back-side illuminated CMOS which adds a second layer of processing under the existing processor which forms a kind of margin or frame to the active sensels. It allows the charge to be read and processed from the sensels faster, giving reduced rolling shutter or jello effects in video and enabling 30fps blackout-free full frame raw capture. From this the silent electronic shutter option must be used, with its range up to 1/16,000s. Pre-capture is also offered for the first time thanks to an all-resolution 30 frame (one second) buffer. Capture rates and functions may demand the use of high end Sony FE lenses and may not work at all with third party lenses.

The card slots are now identical to the A7RV, both dual-purpose CFExpress Type A or SD III, working at the full speed available and not limited if a slower SD card is used alongside CFExpress.

It also enables 4K/60p UHD uncropped where the IV only achieved this in cropped Super-35 mode, adds 4K/120p cropped. Many video functions are improved including auto framing (a slight crop, corrects for inaccurate framing when following a subject hand-held), and for both stills and video the sensor stabilisation is improved to 7.5 stops from 5.5 stops (the A7RV claims 8). For the first time Sony quotes central IBIS as a stop more effective than at the edges of the frame – this has always been the case, especially with wide-angles, but makers normally just stated the higher on-axis effectiveness.

The A7V same sensitivity range as the IV, of 100 to 51,200 expandable to 50/204,800. However the new Bionz XR2 processor with integrated AI unit, helping with many things from subject recognition and tracking to exposure and colour balance, promises improved results and the dynamic range is now claimed to be over 16 stops.

Other improvements include significantly better battery life, dual USB-C ports (tether and power supply simultaneously), and reducing overheating with extended 4K video takes.

The A7V can do hi-res multishot (199MP) or high speed multiple raw capture to create a single raw High Dynamic Range or a Noise Reduced raw from high ISO capture, using Sony Imaging Edge desktop software.

Finally, the 'flippy' rear screen is improved to allow hinging from the top, bottom or side, and well as 270° rotation. This does increase weight by 36g and overall body thickness by 1mm.

Updated kit lens

Given the mixed reputation of the original 28-70mm f3.5-5.6 FE it's a surprise to find a new kit lens, at a slightly increased RRP, with exactly the same form factor and specifications. It will no doubt cost less bundled with the body, and a WEX had a 10% off code on launch.

Apart from having 'II' after the name on the lens barrel, the upgrade is all invisible – a (new) 9-element, 8-group design with three aspherical and one ED glasses, a new linear motor AF with higher speed (120fps burst mode on A9III included). The old lens had poor geometry and flat field correction. Sony make a point that this design corrects that, presumably eliminating zonal variations in sharpness over the frame. It uses the same OSS stabilisation which works in tandem with Steady Shot Inside, and has the usual 7-blade circular aperture.

The A7V costs £2,799 body only. The 28-70mm FE II costs £429.
www.sony.co.uk



Sony are one of the exhibitors at the Societies' Convention and will be showing the A7V

Last call for London photo show Jan 15-17

THERE IS STILL TIME, as this magazine goes out on January 1st, to register for free admission to the Societies of Photographers' trade show which is held on the final two days of the group's Convention which starts on the 14th. Although registration has officially closed, our readers can use the code **CCFREE** and sign up for free entry until January 12th. This saves a £10 on the door entry price. Our other code, **CC10**, gives 10% off all the chargeable classes. Societies members are offered 20% off. The sheer range of activities and exhibitors at the this show can only be appreciated by downloading the 36-page catalogue from thesocieties.net/convention

It is possible to join the Societies with 18 months of membership for the price of 12 – see <https://thesocieties.net/18for12/>

There are many specialised groups for enthusiasts and professionals within the Societies' umbrella. The Convention and show are at the Novotel London West convention centre 1 Shortlands, Hammersmith International Centre, London, W6 8DR, United Kingdom. The nearest tube station is Hammersmith.

Diary dates – Photohubs and NEC show

THE GUILD of Photographers annual awards and PhotoHubs event is held at the Stoke-on-Trent Doubletree by Hilton Etruria Hall, **February 6th and 7th**. For details including the free admission trade show and bookable PhotoHubs training see photohubs.co.uk/guild-awards-photohubs-2026/

THE PHOTOGRAPHY and Video Show 2026 is at Hall 5, National Exhibition Centre, from **March 14th to 17th**. Standard entry is £18.95 per day. Free entry is offered for industry/professionals, and students on 16th and 17th. See www.photographyshow.com/welcome/tickets



TOM HILL

Who are you looking at? Navigating the moral maze of street photography

So there I was strolling past the entrance to Amsterdam's Central Station, when I happened upon a young man sitting on a concrete bench. His back was facing me. He had no idea I was there. I had no idea who he was.

The lad was wearing an interesting jacket emblazoned with the words "Chaotic System - transformation is a process of a journey of discovery". I thought it would make an interesting photograph, so I snapped the image you see here. If you look carefully, in the top RH corner of the photo, you can see a couple of Hi-Viz jackets worn by two station 'officials'. The highly reflective material has picked up the fill-flash I used to add a little punch to the image.

The flash must have alerted those jobsworths to my activity, because as I wandered off towards the ferry terminal, they made a beeline for me.

They asked me if I'd just taken a photo of the man in the jacket. I replied that I had. They then admonished me saying that I was on railway property (I wasn't – I was on the public pavement outside the entrance) and that I shouldn't take photos of people without their permission.



What bollocks. Clearly these people had nothing else to do and thought they might as well harass an innocent member of the public. I wasn't breaking any laws (unless in The Netherlands there is extreme privacy legislation of which I'm unaware) and I had done absolutely no harm to anyone. I guess I was highly 'visible' because I was holding a large Canon DSLR camera with a hefty lens attached. When the Speedlite atop the camera went off, I guess it gave out a different

Tom Hill ARPS is a semi-retired photographer/copywriter living in the Scottish borders



'message' to passers-by and self-important dickhead authoritarians, than if I'd simply taken a photo on an iPhone. I guess I'd ticked someone's box of 'subversive politico' as opposed to 'everyday tourist'.

Over my many years of being challenged by police and other officials when taking snaps, I've learned to simply become apologetic. In the past I would have started my retort: "Oh, so you're a media law specialist are you? What's your name, I'm going to write to...". But nowadays, very quickly, the CS spray and handcuffs can come out.

Instead, I take the 'arty' route. Anything for a quiet life.

"I'm really sorry", I said "I'm a university lecturer in photography (lie) and street photographer (true) creating a project on urban clothing (complete lie) and the juxtaposition of garment representation within a postmodern context in order to exemplify the concept of political messaging within contemporary fashion norms (what?!).".

It worked. They buggered off scratching their heads. The great thing about having an MA in photography is that once you've got the letters after your name, you might still be a mediocre-standard snapper, but you don't half learn to bull-shit with panache.

In that instance I was doing absolutely nothing wrong; especially as I always try to practice my own moral checklist of photographing strangers in public. I ask myself these questions:

Is it legal to photograph someone in this location?

Does the person being photographed have a **reasonable expectation of privacy** in that

place? (If yes, don't hit the shutter release).

If I don't ask their permission (I often do) **does that person know they're being photographed?** If yes the outcome of the shot will almost certainly be a portrait rather than a 'candid' photo.

Common decency check – **why am I taking the picture?** Is it voyeurism, social comment, ridicule, celebration of the situation, personal like or dislike of the subject matter.... etc.

It's all about the 'morality of viewpoint', as the editor of this magazine succinctly expressed during one of our recent conversations.

This got me thinking about the personal pains I sometimes inflict upon myself when taking into account the moral position of many of my own street photographs. I don't want people to think (or perhaps realise?) that I might be 'mocking' my subjects. Sometimes, I'm not even sure if I am myself. I'm ashamed to admit that there have been occasions when that WAS my intention – when someone or something just ached to be photographed at a definitive moment. A few such images languish in my personal portfolio, but I've only shown them to friends.

Ridicule or representation?

Look at a couple more of my pictures here. At the top there's one taken on Scarborough Beach in August 2022. It shows a middle-aged woman with tattooed arms, wearing a Fred Dibnah style cloth cap. She seems to have no teeth, and looks like she's generally had quite a hard life. Juxtapose her with the slightly out of focus, healthy looking, young, slim couple, to the

upper-right background. He with his neat new white trainers and pristine T-shirt.

Why did I take that photo? I guess it's because as a kid who was brought up in the 1970s, the media at the time bombarded us with glossy magazines and TV adverts featuring slim, attractive young women in bikinis, advertising beach holidays in pleasant sunny destinations. The person here in the cloth cap represents the antithesis of that concept. But many people looking at that photo might reasonably think I was mocking the subject by taking the picture in the first place. After all, how can they know my motivation and thought processes? To an extent I'm guilty, because a part of me was thinking 'Jeez that person is unusually rough-looking, you don't get to see that sort of thing every day'. Anyone familiar with 'Viz' magazine's *Profanisaurus* could probably find a few apt descriptions of the featured person therein.

Then there's the picture of the two sunbathers, he with his legs akimbo and the cheap straw hat over his face. It screams to me the 'inelegance' of the typical British tourist abroad. I'll bet no self-respecting Italian would have displayed themselves in such a fashion. Yes, this time I intended the shot to be light-heartedly mocking, but the people aren't recognisable so all bets are off. But which of these two images are questionably 'worse' in their commentary of how I see the world?

The black and white picture I took on 35mm Ilford HP5 back in the early 1990s, is of a slim young woman in a spotted dress outside a church wedding. I took it because I loved the pattern of the spotted dress, against a dreary background. I showed the picture to a couple of students at an A level photography course a couple of years later (in reference to contrast ratings when developing B/W film). Many of them said they thought I was trying to mock the large lady to the attractive woman's right. I hadn't even noticed her when I took the shot. Or did I, subconsciously?

Maestro or mockery?

This led me further to reflect upon the sad death recently of **Martin Parr**, and by extension, my thoughts on his work. Parr was a



genius portrayer of people and their everyday 'real' lives – warts and all. I imagine he also had his share of run-ins with the Hi-Viz cretinati.

Mr Parr was sometimes accused of mockery and 'class tourism' in his work. But I feel in his case, that isn't justified. For me, that's because he was even-handed, he took photos of the working class at leisure in some of the roughest looking destinations imaginable, and also featured intimate portrayals of posh types letting their hair down, his gaze for me held no judgement in either respect. Also, the use of powerful flash ensured

that his subjects must have known they were being photographed. I'd be interested to learn whether or not Parr engaged and chatted with his subjects before photographing them, or just walked along the prom looking like a regular enthusiastic amateur photographer.

Parr's seminal work *The Last Resort*, created between 1983 and 1985 in New Brighton, just north of Birkenhead near Liverpool, showed working class tourists, garishly lit with overfill-flash. (<https://www.dewilewis.com/products/the-last-resort>). In the book you'll find a couple in their late 60s eating chips

from paper, while sitting in a bus shelter. Next to them is an overflowing bin, the floor covered in chip papers, litter and trash. It's gaudy, and to many people, probably not the representation of their ideal holiday destination.

But the title of Parr's work *The LAST Resort* (my emphasis) sort of implies, and I equally infer, a negative connotation – i.e. 'the last place you'd ever want to be'. Or, was Parr intimating that the place was one of the *last* surviving cheap and cheerful holiday destinations for affordable B&Bs and no frills weekend breaks? Maybe a bit of both?

As an experiment, I showed a non-photographer friend, in her early 60s, some examples of *The Last Resort*'s images. She had never heard of Martin Parr, nor does she have any sort of background in the photography world. I deliberately gave no clue as to what I expected of her to think about the photos – I simply sent her a Magnum Photos web link and said that I was writing an article mentioning a recently deceased celebrated photographer. Simply, what did she think of his work?

It's interesting to note that she grew up in the town of Fleetwood, near Blackpool. She lived there for many years. That's a town that has also become extremely deprived, with a very high proportion of residents on various benefits.

My friend's first thoughts on *The Last Resort* were:

"I like the photos – they're grim, but it was very much Grim Up North in deprived/poorer areas where the main forms of income had been lost, even by the seaside. Just like other Northern seaside towns, New Brighton went into decline and decay. We went there as kids once on a day out, but that was before this and nothing like the photos portray."

"Having grown up in the 80s the fashion is immediately recognisable – especially the white shoes worn by the women – I had some myself! Also the standard stuff – beauty contests – including ones for children, smoking inside in a caff, chippies, and rubbish strewn around from gulls going for food out of the bins."

"I like the colour saturation (which Parr said was to bring cheer to the photos) and I felt

MARTIN PARR THE LAST RESORT



without this, the photos could be viewed as being too negative or even derisory and mocking...

"The colour does add cheer, but also makes you look at the photos properly..."

"It also shows the resilience of the – dare I say it – working class, who, despite the tattiness and decline of the area, are still determined to enjoy themselves on a day out to the beach or Lido. Even if it meant sitting or lying on a towel on concrete because there wasn't any sand and or deckchairs. It could have been Blackpool or Fleetwood at some stage... but at least we had sand!"

Interesting that my friend, with absolutely no prior knowledge of the photographer, hinted at potential derision and mockery, but she didn't feel it was present. In fact, she even said that the images celebrated the resilience of the working class.

Dench doesn't do dreary!

I feel in a similar way about **Peter Dench's** work. Peter was once accused by a Guardian picture editor of his work being derivative of Parr's. I don't think it is. Sure, his use of over-flash is as effective as Parr's technique, but I think that's where the similarity diffuses.

Dench's work shows people at their worst – often when they are extremely drunk. But many of Peter's images simply display unbridled hedonism amongst those you might expect to be more prim and proper. See the image of a young debutante at Ascot being less than demure, for example. There's a simple (effective and positive)

detachment in Dench's photos that I find missing from Parr's work.

It's as if Mr Dench is saying: "This is what usually civilised people get up to when the situation 'allows' it - I'm just here to record the chaos..." My feeling is that his images are less 'personal' than Parr's, but neither better nor worse for it. For me, these men's images differ as in the taste of Burgundy and Barolo, both excellent experiences, just subtly divergent.

In the eye of the beholder

All the above philosophical blether leads me to the conclusion that any 'mockery' contained in photographs is probably in the eye of the

beholder. In short, if you're the sort of person who looks down their noses at other people, then seeing images like the ones discussed here will simply reinforce that opinion.

Contrarily, if one has a positive view of the underdog, then such images could celebrate the subject's tenacity or whatever in the face of hardship. There may also be an element of the public's perception of the photographer's 'class status' – I didn't know Martin Parr, so I've no idea if he seemed a bit posh or whether he came across as a lad from working class roots.

Certainly the work of someone like **Jim Mortram** (smalltowninertia.co.uk) is a portrayal of people

who live very close to Mortram himself in the town of Dereham in Norfolk. He's one of them. He describes himself as "a carer in my family home". Posh he definitely ain't. If you look at Mortram's photos via the web link, it's social documentary of the highest order, empathic while portraying people in difficult situations who retain their dignity.

Now look at those photos again, and imagine for a moment that they had just been announced as having been taken and published by former Tory MP Jacob Rees-Mogg. Would that alter your perception of the photographer and his subjects?

That's food for thought!



Above and bottom of page: @ Peter Dench – with kind permission.



Winter Waters

A typical British winter climate tends to alternate between cold snaps lasting a few days to perhaps a couple of weeks, before warmer, often rainy conditions return, only for a similar pattern to repeat a few weeks later.

These wild swings provide us with a never-ending subject: the weather.

When many people see the forecast predict storms, be that wind, rain or snow, their hearts may sink. For weather photographers such as myself however, storms mean plans to be made, timings to consider, and forecasts to pore over again and again as the event approaches. For me, it's a time of anticipation. There is something magical about a winter landscape that stirs the soul and inspires us to try to capture such scenes. Yet beyond the artistic, there is also a serious message to communicate that helps to inform the public about weather events via the media.

David Forster has some of Britain's most impressive waterfalls close at hand and regularly sees his winter weather pictures in the national press and TV. Ice, frost and the glassy flow of near-freezing rivers offer great subjects – even on the 'worst' days.

There is often significant media interest in severe weather events. While a dramatic shot of a frozen waterfall may be chosen by editors, including someone in the frame often attracts more attention due to the human element, as in the shot of Summerhill Force, where the person in a pink jacket provides both a focal point and a sense of scale. That said, images of blizzards, snowploughs, blocked roads and people and animals battling the elements remain my most popular licensed news imagery.

Photographing on bright sunny days can be problematic, especially if part of the scene is in deep shadow, such as in a gorge. Exposing for the highlights and then over-exposing by a stop or two helps maintain some shadow detail, but direct sunlight on ice and snow can be more challenging. Sometimes it isn't possible to obtain a balanced exposure without resorting to manually bracketing exposures or using the camera's HDR function. The use of neutral density and polarising filters is also a

consideration and one I often use, but as much of my weather photography is shot with the news media in mind, some of the above techniques are more suited to stock images or prints.

Shots which tell the truth

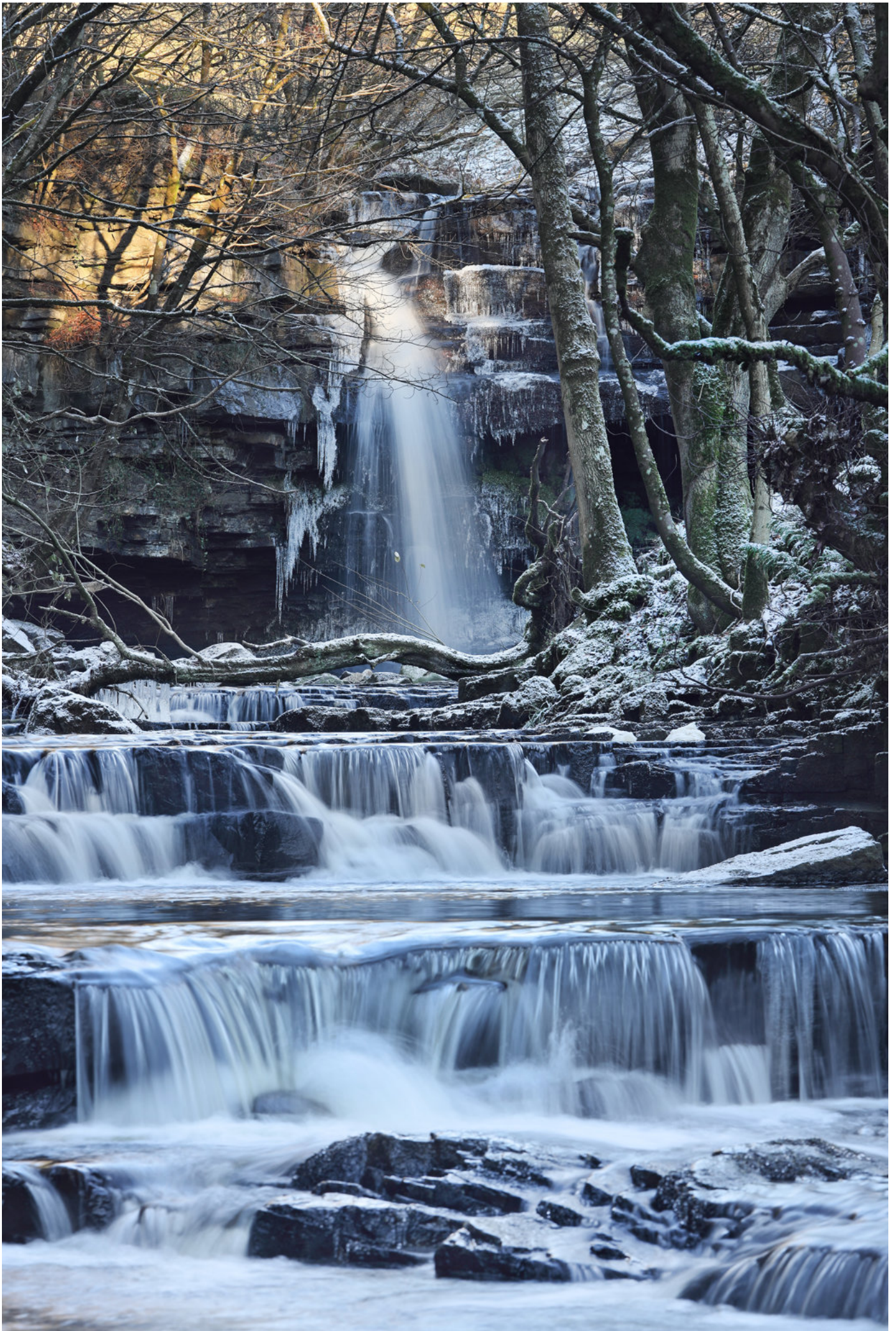
Fortunately, the dynamic range of today's digital cameras allow plenty of scope for adjusting shadows and highlights during post-processing, meaning I can adhere to the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO) guidelines of accuracy and image integrity when supplying news outlets.

Basically, images should be representative of the scene with minimal post processing. Minor adjustments to contrast, saturation, shadows and highlights and the occasional levelling of horizons, or the removal of dust spots is acceptable as long as the integrity of the image is not compromised. The only exceptions to these processing

The Lake District – a frozen tarn with Helvellyn beyond







A different viewpoint for Summerhill Force





Two views of one subject – Brothers Water in Patterdale, Cumbria, seen from its shore and from high above on Rough Edge

guidelines, are for privacy reasons. For example, to protect the identities of children, witnesses and victims.

A useful technique for photographing partially frozen waterfalls, such as the shot of Demesnes Mill on the River Tees, is to use a slow shutter speed to blur the water. The blurred water blends with any snow and ice, enhancing the wintry atmosphere and simplifying the scene for the viewer. From experience, a shutter speed of between 1/3s and 1 second tends to give good results, although I often

capture the same scene with a faster shutter speed to freeze the action. On balance, I tend to prefer the softness created by a slower shutter speed.

Not every picture needs to be of the wider landscape. Close-ups of icicles and frost patterns, utilising colour, shape and texture, can tell their own story. The shot of the partly frozen stream surrounded by icy fallen autumn beech leaves hints at that time between autumn and early winter. In this case the cold snap only lasted a couple of days, and the leaves were soon washed

away as the stream rose after heavy rain. The transient nature of such scenes, are part of what attracts me to weather photography. I can visit the same place many times during a season yet come away with a completely different set of images each time.

Light, of course, is transient too. In winter, a snowy landscape on overcast days can create a monochromatic, often stark quality to a scene, while clear skies can create a blue colour cast that enhances the feeling of cold, as in my image of Summerhill Force with the series of

cascades leading towards it. The warmer hues of sunrise and sunset create their own majesty, as in the shot of Demesnes Mill and the River Tees, where the late afternoon light gives the sandstone buildings and falls a warm glow.

Staying safe

With a background in mountaineering, nearly 20 years of which were spent in Mountain Rescue, I am very conscious of just how easily things can go wrong in the outdoors. I am no longer involved in Mountain Rescue, but my experiences during

Desmesnes Mill, Barnard Castle, makes a perfect postcard in midwinter snow though the river is not frozen





An unusual viewpoint from under the waterfall of Ashgill Force, Garrigill, Cumbria

Until the late autumn leaf fall is swept away or rots down, Bowlees Beck in the North Pennines has vivid colour to offer





Moving in closer, David found these ice formations on a branch overhanging Bowlees Back

An even closer study of ice from water frozen on to grass at the side of the stream





Above, spray from Summerhill Force coated twigs, giving a close-up alternative to a regular waterfall view. Right, frosty rime on a bracken leaf

Below, crystals of ice forming on a river make a strong subject against the background of dark water



that time very much inform my approach to outdoor photography.

Photographing close to frozen waterfalls and rivers requires an element of safety awareness. Carrying enough layered clothing for the conditions is perhaps obvious, as is the risk of slipping on icy paths. Less obvious is that spray from waterfalls can create an invisible film of clear ice called *verglas*.

In such situations the ground may simply look wet, or the ice may even be hidden under snow. The first you know about it is when you slip and if that happens above a drop, or you fall into the water the consequences may be serious. To manage such risks, I always carry a pair of microspikes that strap onto my boots to provide security on ice and snow.

For more technical locations, such as in the mountains or on steep ground, the more aggressive grip of crampons and the security of an ice axe, along with the skills to use them correctly, may be necessary.

In winter, shorter daylight hours often mean heading into or out of the hills in darkness, particularly if you want to capture sunrise or sunset light. A map and compass, along with the ability to navigate, are essential, as is a torch and spare

batteries. Navigation apps also have their uses but should not be relied upon as a sole means of navigation.

In the mountains, the difference in conditions between the valley and the summits can be considerable. For every 100m of height gain, the temperature drops by around 1°C, and if it's windy the wind chill effect will make it feel much colder. Wet or damp clothing will intensify the wind chill significantly.

With such risks in mind, being what Mountain Rescue England and Wales refer to as "adventure smart" is a good idea. Ask yourself three questions before you set off:

Do I have the right gear?

Do I know what the weather will be like?

Am I confident I have the knowledge and skills for the day?

Gaining the skills and knowledge to work safely in the outdoors in all weathers takes time, but there is nothing more satisfying than photographing in difficult conditions while knowing you have the skills and equipment to keep you safe. Your photography will also benefit if you can focus on your craft rather than on how uncomfortable you feel.

A year-round quest

Beyond the gentle winter photography portrayed here, my work covers anything weather-related. Named storms, flooding, drought

and climate change are all in demand by the media. Sometimes it is uncomfortable covering such stories, particularly where there has been significant damage to property, or where there have been injuries or lives lost. Even so, I have always been welcomed by those involved, and some people have invited me to cover their story despite their ordeal.

One story of the summer flash flood that hit farms in Arkengarthdale, North Yorkshire, which swept hundreds of sheep to their deaths, will remain with me forever. I will never forget the farmer who, despite the devastation, invited me to go with his son across the floodwater in their tractor to record the damage done to his farm.

I am never sure whether my work, be it stills or video imagery, makes a big difference in highlighting that extreme weather events do seem to be more frequent. But despite the sad nature of such events and the effects on people, I feel it is important to capture newsworthy images in such conditions as a historic record too.



See:

www.david-forster.com

www.instagram.com/davidfimages

www.youtube.com/user/davidbspro



Summer rain and floods can be as dramatic as winter's conditions, and call for the presence of your camera – as here in Arkengarthdale Holme Farm in 2019.



How to order a printed copy of this magazine:

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It's very important to pick exactly the right specification.

For example, just changing the paper weight in the UK – whether to lighter or heavier paper – bumps the cost up well above a basic (which has increased from £8 in May to £10). Selecting the wrong size or binding, or number of pages, or requiring rapid delivery will also increase the cost or introduce problems.

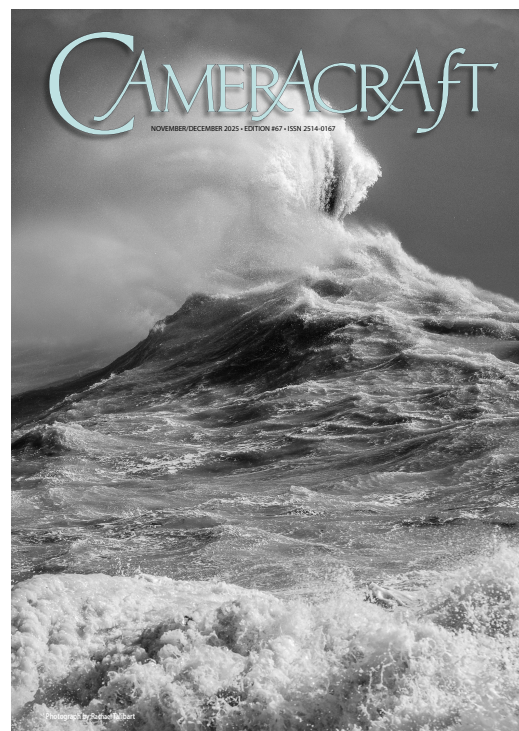
For *Cameracraft*, the correct choices are Magazine printing, Colour, Portrait orientation, A4 size, 130gsm Silk paper, stapled, 48 pages, no additional cover. The screen shot (right) shows this set up. It was made on April 29th and would, if a copy had been ordered then, have had a May 7th delivery date. The quality of print is identical to earlier printed editions.

Simply go to the UK or USA Mixam website, upload your high res digital PDF download and get a printed copy at any time.

If you use the links on this page there's a small margin on the basic cost, which also applies to the annuals below, and helps fund the magazine.

Go buy the book!

By far the best way to have printed copies of *Cameracraft* is to take all six issues from a year and make them into a book. We've done this for **2024** and now for **2023** as the combined file is tricky to assemble – it's necessary to find a day or two to get into the old documents and convert them as needed. We hope to add earlier 'annuals' the same way in future.



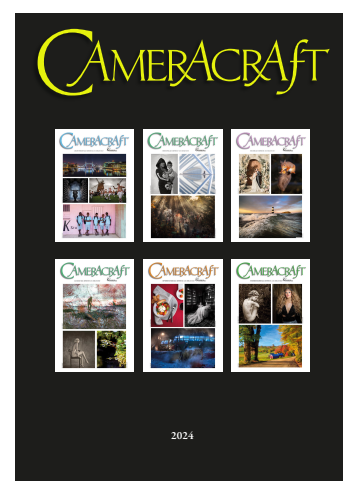
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The 2025 volume will be available later



You can order copies using our **PrintLink** directly from Mixam UK., for around £35 plus post.

This is a perfect-bound gloss laminated paperback (cover above). We first had one of these made – at much greater expense in the early days of digital print on demand – for the *Cameracraft* first series issues, 2012–2015. It takes up a fraction of the bookshelf space used for binders and for our archives all the past editions will be reprinted in this form.

PAOLO PRISCO

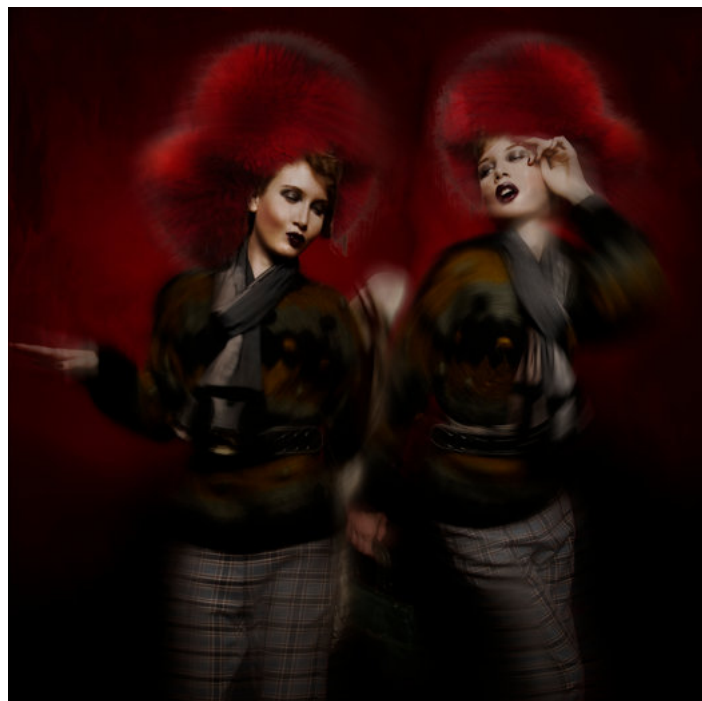
Dynamic movement blur and fashion poses combine with colour themes in the photographer's series of fine art prints

The fine art prints of Paolo Prisco evolve from what he calls a 'surreal duet' where "figures, suspended between reality and dream, surge through colour and light as if the screen itself is breathing. The longer exposure blurs their forms into ribbons of vitality, revealing the energy that animates fabric, hair, and skin. I approach the scene with a hands-on, tactile method: soft key light to sculpt faces, backlight to carve edges, and deliberate colour shifts – warm amber for tenderness, cool blue for mystery. The result is a surreal duet of presence and illusion, inviting viewers to step into a space where movement outpaces language and feeling takes centre stage. This work is a meditation on freedom – from glossy conventions, toward a personal, dreamlike truth.

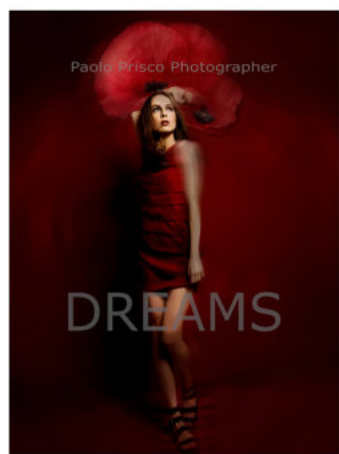
"When I talk about a surreal duet of presence and illusion, I mean the tension between a real person in front of my lens and their gradual disappearance into movement and color. I start with very tangible elements – faces, bodies, gestures – then let them dissolve through long exposures and motion. I'm interested in that unstable zone where a figure is still recognisable but already slipping into abstraction. The viewer oscillates between "someone" and "something." That shifting perception is where my work lives.

"My process is very physical, but still fully rooted in digital photography as my medium. What I avoid is AI – I want images born from light and time, not from generative software. I work with long exposures, handmade lighting setups, gels, and objects in front of the lens. The studio becomes a stage where I'm almost painting with light in real time. The painterly textures and ghostlike figures are not added in post; they are the direct result of this physical negotiation with movement and exposure.

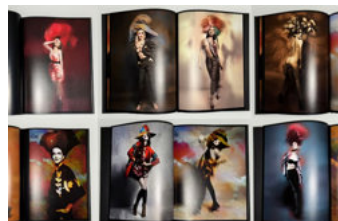
"The lighting is cinematic and



Paolo has created sets of prints called *Pirouettes* and *Minuetto*, and also a series called *Mirrored prints* – as above, combining two views into one.



painterly, designed to sculpt form while amplifying mood. A soft, diffuse key light from the model's left gently wraps the subjects, creating subtle highlight on the cheekbone and a delicate falloff that reveals textures in fabrics. A secondary, cooler backlight adds separation from the backdrop, giving a slight halo along the edges of the models' silhouettes. Fill is kept minimal to preserve contrast and a touch of mystery. Colour temperature shifts between warm ambers and cool blues across the scene, enhancing the dreamlike, surreal atmosphere.



In addition to large fine art prints, Paolo has produced a coffee table book.

The motion blur from the long exposure enhances velocity and fluidity, while controlled strobe accents punctuate the figures with crisp highlights at the apex of movement. Overall, the lighting emphasises elegance, contrast, and a sense of otherworldly motion."

Paolo offers gallery prints for collectors on Hahnemühle Photo Rag Ultra Smooth 310gsm, priced at €150 for a typical size of 56 x 75cm including 3cm white border, delivered unframed by postal tube for international buyers. He has also produced a 40-page coffee table

book printed on Photo Paper Inapa Galaxi Art Samt (170gsm), 20.5 x 27cm.

"The book matters to me because it restores slowness and touch", he says. "On a screen, images are consumed in seconds. In a book, you feel the paper, control the rhythm, and physically inhabit the work. I see the book as another stage for the images. Layout, paper, and pacing all shape the experience. In this book I chose not to show backstage fragments, but to accompany the images with short, poetic texts. They don't explain the photographs; they extend their atmosphere, offering a few words as an echo or a whisper rather than a caption." Paolo is based in the south east of France on the coast near Monaco, a centre for art collectors and also a region with a photographic heritage. "Fashion and theatre taught me about body language, staging, and the drama of light", he says. "Over time, I became more interested in what lies beneath the surface: identity as something fluid, emotional, and unstable. Visually, I'm drawn to movement, blur, and artists who distort the figure. Philosophically, I moved away from fixed, "perfect" portraits and toward images that acknowledge impermanence. Fine Art became the natural space to explore that—where the figure is less a model and more an embodiment of a passing state of mind.

"To new collectors, I'd say: don't approach my work as a riddle to decode; approach it as an atmosphere to live with. Let your choice be guided by the image that sticks with you, even if you can't explain why. My hope is that the work evokes a quiet, haunting beauty – like witnessing a person and a dream at the same time. If, over the years, the piece continues to reveal new moods and meanings as you live with it, then the 'surreal duet' is doing its job."

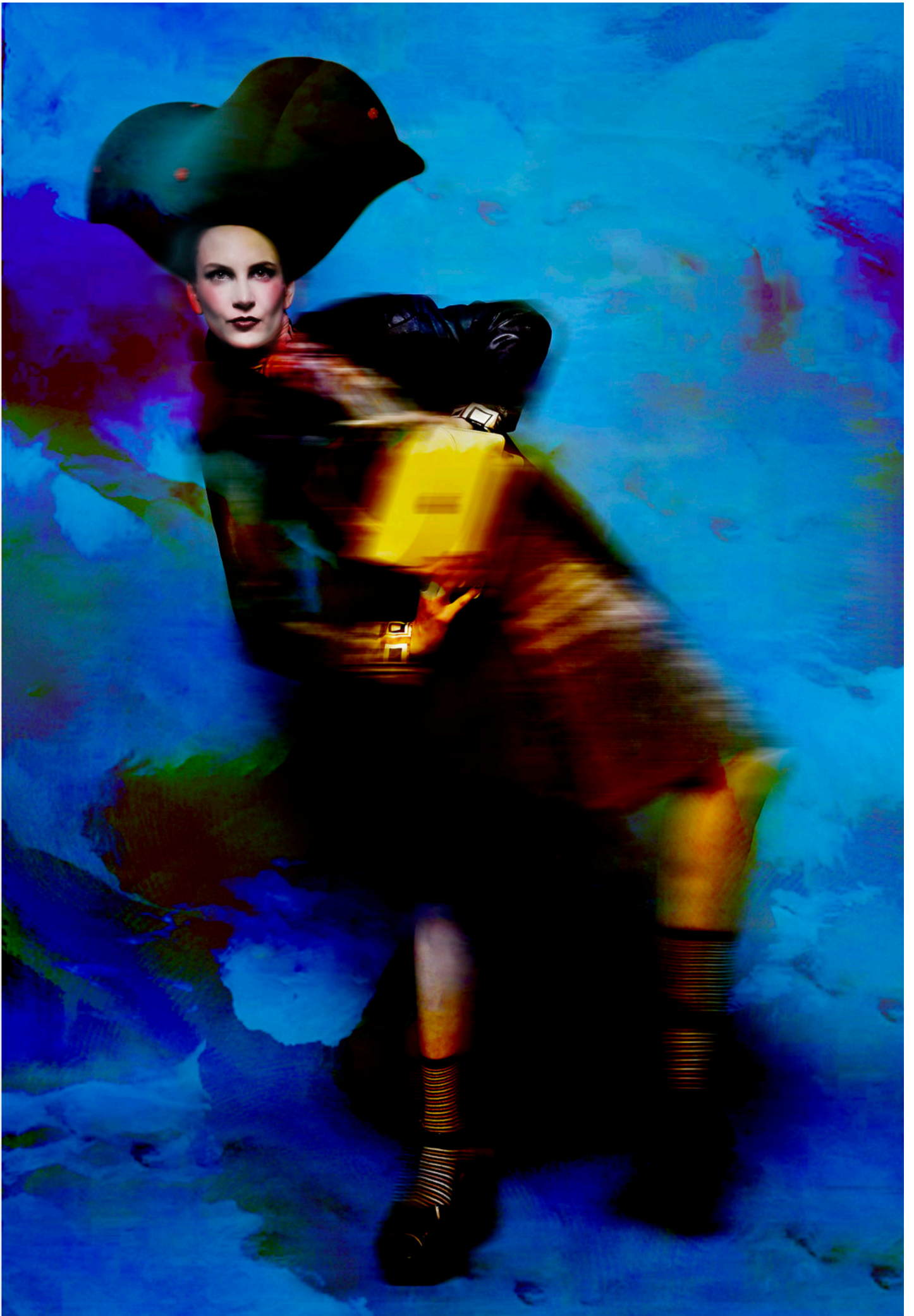


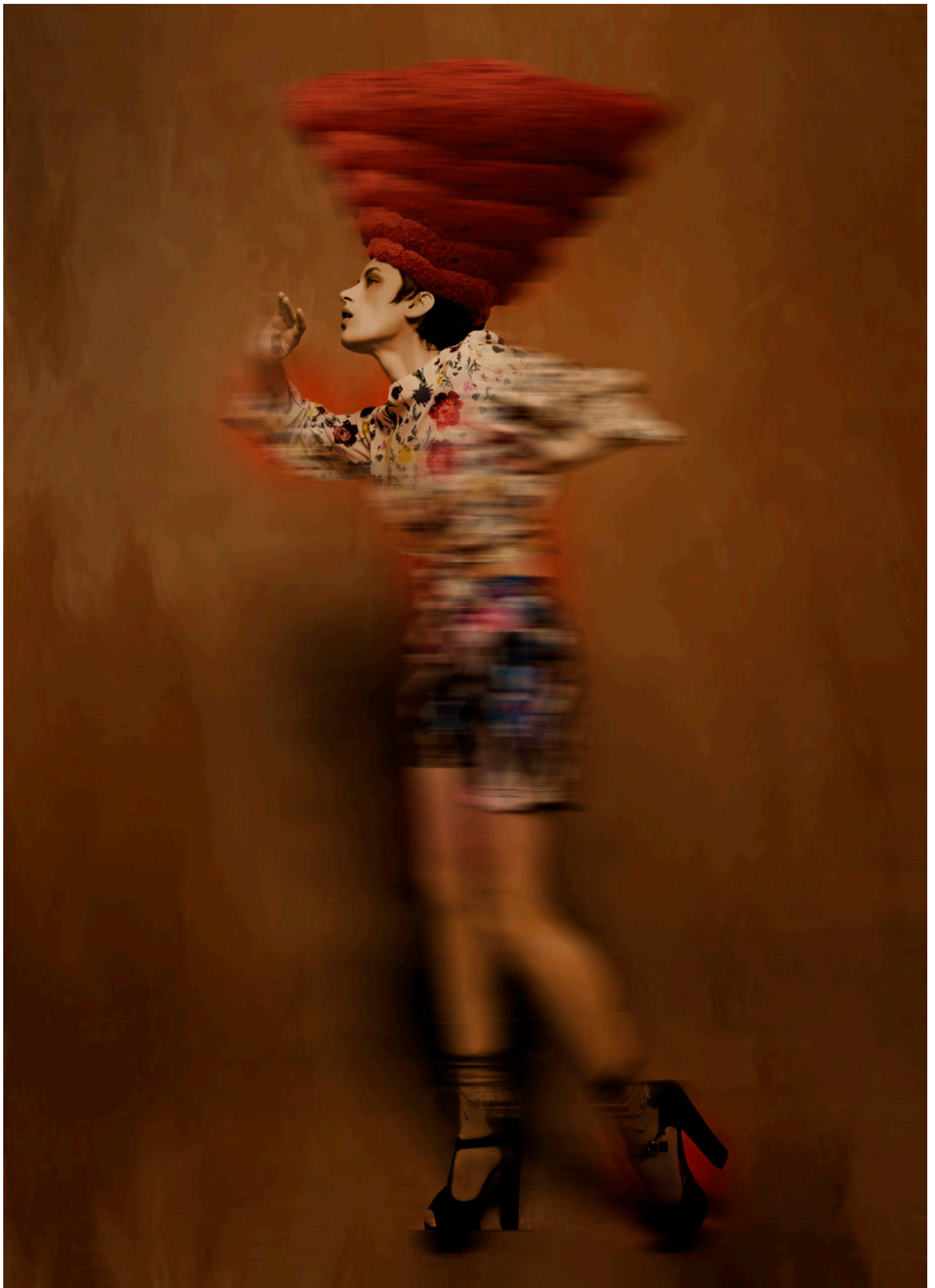












All photographs © Paolo Prisco. To view all the prints and the book, visit his gallery website at:
<https://www.priscophotographer.fr/>

JOHN HENSHALL: SHOOTING STARS

With plenty of autobiographical personal history alongside an account of his employed, freelance and entrepreneurial career, John Henshall has somehow managed to make over 150,000 words and over 1,500 images form a fascinating large book.

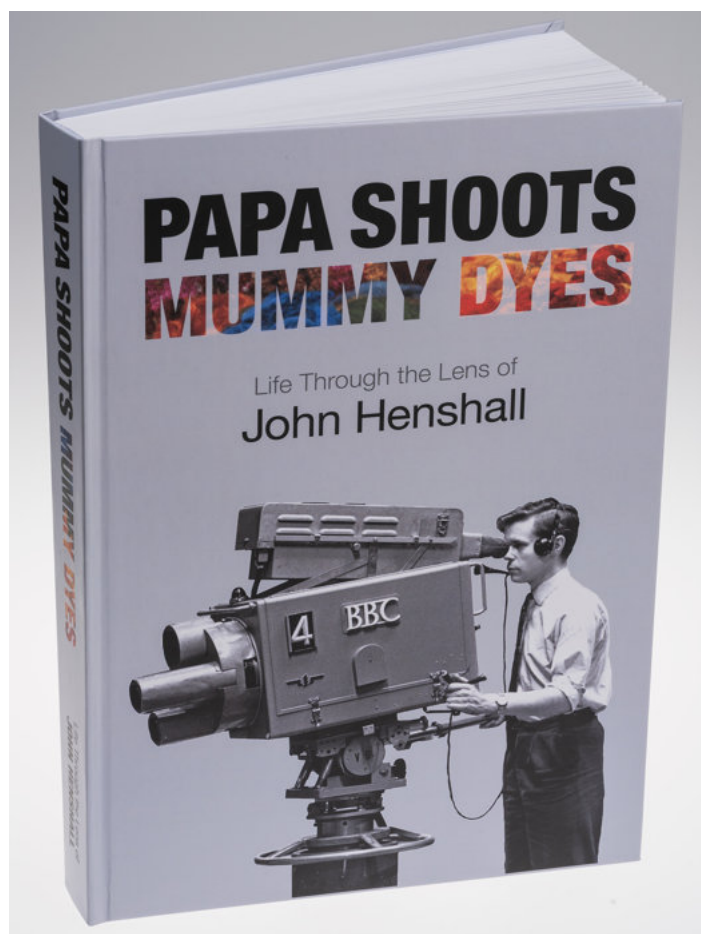
Icon Publications Ltd, publishers of *Cameracraft*, have been able to publish this 448-page A4 full colour hardback thanks to the digital printing service we use for on-demand printed copies of the magazine. The company first worked with John in 1990, when David Kilpatrick took on the editorship and production of *The Photographer*, the magazine of the British Institute of Professional Photography. John Henshall, a Fellow of the Institute and the Royal Photographic Society, became President of the BIPP with three decades of television and movie expertise behind him.

He was determined to expose the mostly traditional still photography professionals of the BIPP to the future he knew was coming with digital imaging. Television, video-based electronic imaging, was also on the brink of this seismic event in the shifting tectonics of photography. As one of the industry's leading 'lighting cameramen' his skills were on a level with the largest industrial and commercial studios in the advertising world or the film production units of cinema world. John has been a sought-after director and consultant and devised many special effects. Here we have reproduced edited extracts from the book, which can be ordered from Mixam directly from this link:

bit.ly/PSMDBook

The retail price of £49 is reduced to £39 + carriage for readers ordering directly.

We look inside the autobiography of the Guild of Television Camera Professionals president, technical innovator and pioneering evangelist for electronic imaging. And creator of the "sunburst" filter!



The result from John's first home-built fisheye attachment.

Long before digital effects were available, the camera-mounted optical effects I designed from the 1960s onwards were very popular with producers and directors, particularly on programmes such as the BBC's *Top of the Pops* and other light entertainment shows. Some of them were also used on dramas and on programmes such as *Tomorrow's World*.

My camera-mounted effects were hired by all the UK broadcasters through Teleflex, initially run by family members and colleagues, then finally by my company Televisual Limited after I left the BBC in 1976.

The First Fisheye Lens

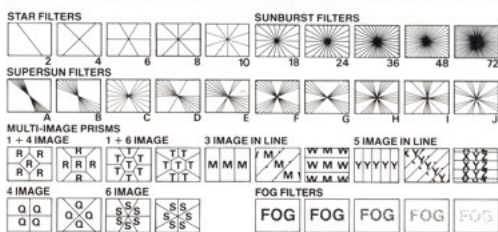
It all started in 1962, when I upgraded my stills camera from an Agfa Silette to an Asahi Pentax S1 single-lens reflex. Although it offered interchangeable lenses, I could not afford any additional lenses and was restricted to the 55mm f2.2 Takumar 'standard' lens which came with the camera.

In the extended time off we had at the BBC, I turned to experimenting with ex-government lens elements from Proops in Tottenham Court Road. Applying a little of what I had learned at BBC Evesham about reverse telephoto lenses, I made a fisheye effect supplementary for my Pentax and it worked quite well.

The BBC had a real Pentax fisheye lens in Studio G at Lime Grove for *Top of the Pops*, on which I was working with Senior Cameraman Ron Green. It was mounted on the spare camera, which had a specially-selected sensitive image orthicon tube fitted because the lens was so insensitive to light. All other lenses, and the iris motor, had to be removed from the turret, though parts of the front of the camera still

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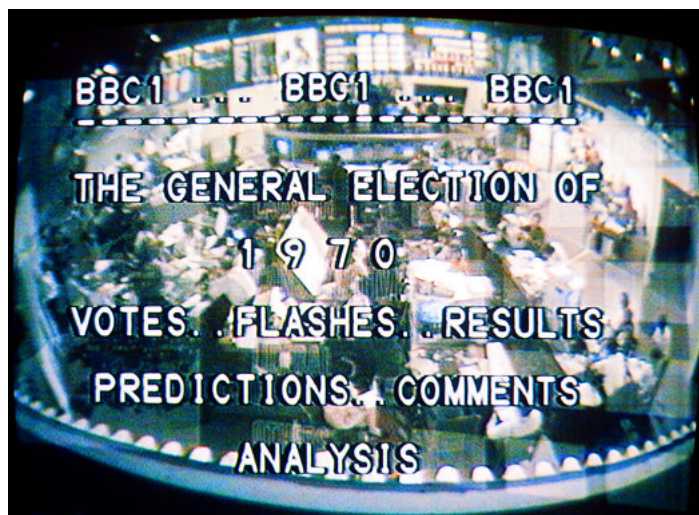
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A publicity leaflet for the Telefex attachments offered for hire by John's company Televisual. Main image on front – with Supersun J filter.

appeared in shot. Having a full 180 degrees angle of view, it got everything in shot – including the camera mounting and the lights – and the subjects appeared tiny in the frame unless you were virtually touching them. It was almost useless and was rarely used.

I tried my supplementary fisheye at the BBC, unofficially, in the tea break. Pushed into the front of a standard 2-inch (35 degrees angle of view) lens. It worked like a dream. Not only could you change lenses but vision control had full iris diaphragm control via the 'host' lens. Best of all, the extension forward meant that none of the other lenses on the turret appeared in shot. *Top of the Pops* producer/director Johnnie Stewart saw me experimenting and loved the effect. We used the lens on the programme that very evening. Its angle of view was about 120 degrees – great for the fisheye effect and great for not getting too many unwanted lights and cameras in shot.

Excited by my development, I spoke to Gwilym Dann, the



The early fisheye use for the 1970 General Election coverage on BBC 1 – a monitor screen photographed during the broadcast,

manager responsible for providing such special facilities and explained the advantages. He was not interested as he already had a fisheye if a director requested one.

We used my lens unofficially for weeks until it got dropped by my colleague Dave Pattison and the front element broke. It turned out to be one of the biggest favours Dave did for me.

The Birth of Telefex

"Where's the fisheye this week?" asked Johnnie Stewart.

"Got broken last week, Johnnie."

"Make a new one."

"Can't afford to, and the office isn't interested in it as a 'technical suggestion'."

"Get your wife or someone to make it – and charge us a fiver a week for it."

I didn't want to do it that way but BBC middle management left us no alternative.



The revised fisheye attachment with better lenses, in a custom engineered aluminium bayonet mount.

I bought new and better lenses and had them mounted into a custom-made black anodised aluminium mount which bayonet-fitted into the front of a 2-inch lens, in place of the lens hood. One of the boom operators, who ran a printing business on the side, printed a few dozen invoice blanks.

And that's how the firm Telefex – short for 'Television Effects' – was born. Years later, I got the name registered as a trade mark with the company registered as Televisual Limited.



Kate Bush's second single, *The Man With The Child In His Eyes*, was shot in Blandford's W10 Studio in Ladbroke Grove on 25 April 1978.

Unlike dramas, music videos do not have scripts which dictate the location, mood, time of day and so on. You could pretty much do whatever you wanted and be as outrageous as possible in order to get the 'wow' effect.

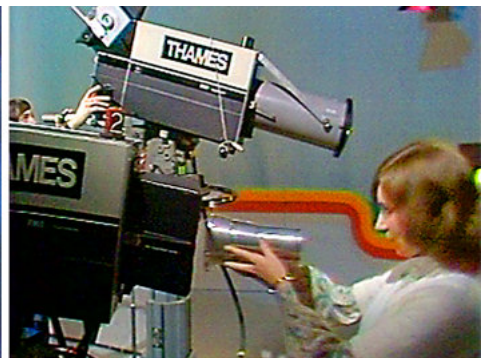
We placed the teenage Kate, wearing a tight gold leotard, on an eight feet by four feet opal Perspex box. I lit it from within, underneath Kate. Heavy fog filters added to the mysterious effect of her apparently floating on a cloud.

The opening shot, from above, started as a totally white frame, achieved by opening the camera's lens iris fully. As the song started with the words, 'He's here, he's here ...' Kate was revealed in the foetal position. Mixing to a frontal closeup, her key light was a large soft light – rarely used as a key light in those days. The cyclorama background started as light blue, changing to magenta, then warm yellow. These changes would've been easy on the computer dimmers at the BBC but in Blandford W10, my assistant John Beecroft and I used all our fingers to move the individual faders manually. It worked.



Multiple mirror images of Kate in the background were produced by re-wiring the three tubes of one of Trillion Video's Philips PC80

cameras so that they were scanned right to left, instead of the normal left to right. There were no digital effects in those days.



John gives an account in the book – worth reading in full – of how the Teleflex kit fell out of use in towards the end of the 1990s, and ended up stored in his cellar until a director of photography asked to borrow it for a production being made in the style of the 60s and 70s.

When this was finished, through contacts and discussions all the hardware ended up being transferred to the National Museum of Photography Film and Television. However, John had assumed the collection would be on loan for exhibition. He later found that the museum 'did not accept loans' and has assumed it was all donated. They were also storing it in disused aircraft hangar. With legal help, John was able to recover it, and it remains in his own safe keeping now.

There's a lot more to this saga but you'll need to read the book to follow it. Extracts follow here.

In January 2015 I was interviewed on television by 'Diddy' David Hamilton, who wanted in particular to discuss my recording of David Bowie's *The Jean Genie*, recorded in 1973 but which the BBC had since wiped. Fortunately I had kept it. What could be a better time to show my own actual Teleflex Fisheye 3 lens – the one that I used on the camera

that day to shoot David Bowie's iconic performance? (still, right) I could even demonstrate to the many viewers and enthusiasts how it worked by holding it in front of a camera.

(John then spent six months recovering the collection).

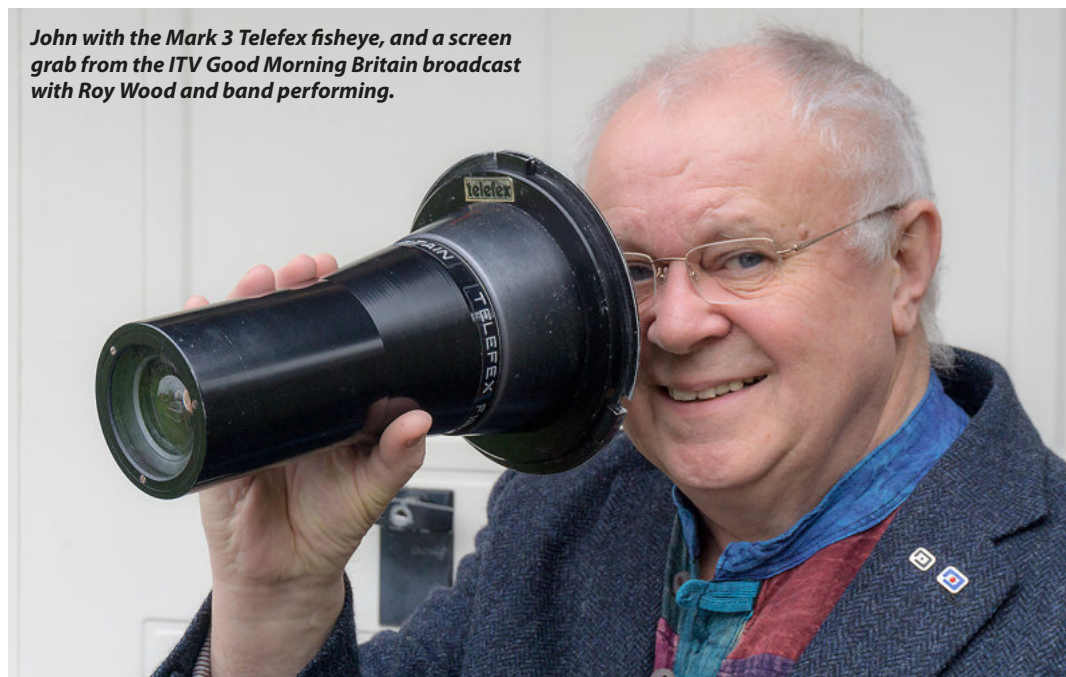
On 6 July 2015 I requested of the Trustees of the Science Museum group that all my equipment be returned to me. I am pleased to say that this request was granted.

ITV Studios' Senior Cameraman Darren Bramley asked if a Teleflex Fisheye 3 might still be used on camera. Vitec's Mel Skiggs made an adapter for the lens, which was used on Christmas Eve 2015 *Good Morning Britain* for Roy Wood's performance of *I Wish It Could Be Christmas*.

And so a fifty years old effects lens is still alive and working. That can not be said for much other broadcast television equipment.



John with the Mark 3 Teleflex fisheye, and a screen grab from the ITV Good Morning Britain broadcast with Roy Wood and band performing.





Digital Imaging

In March 1994, the BIPP published *Digital Imaging Plus – DI+* – as a supplement to *The Photographer*. One of the new articles we featured was *Serial killer/Apples first Camera: QuickTake 100*.

Apple's engineers loved this description of their first digital camera when they won an award at Seybold and presented me with a treasured example of this 640 x 480 pixel gem which could store only eight images before it got 'digital constipation' and the memory had to be 'relieved'. The price was expected to be £535.

Also featured was my restoration of a smashed Autochrome glass plate of Alvin Langdon Coburn from 1908 in the Royal Photographic Society's collection (*before and after, above*).

I also published my specification for 'HandiCam' – *A Camera for the 21st century* – incorporating features which the future might hold. In fact this was a 'crystal ball gaze' concept I developed to take the blinkers off at a Royal Television Society meeting in 1984 – ten years earlier. Many of the features have been incorporated into cameras since. I predicted one camera for both still and moving images, a flat screen colour display, digital zoom, variable sensitivity on a shot-by-shot basis, variable colour balance, automatic picture levelling and integral image storage. None of these features were available back then. I even had a design mock-up made by model maker Peter Seddon.



There is a full chapter in the book devoted to the history of digital imaging, starting with the 1980s where video-based cameras yielded file sizes little over one megapixel but scanners could be used to digitise originals, to the true digital era from the early 1990s on. The portrait of Alvin Langdon Coburn, top, is an example of a scan which John expertly restored using the very first generation Photoshop. The Apple QuickTake 100, above left, did produce 3 megapixel files. John's own 1984 'concept camera' is seen in model mockup form to the right. Below, into the 2000s, John helped HP enter the large format inkjet printer market with demonstrations – and the output of a Z3100 in his studio.



...and collecting

I have always been a collector or, as some friends call me, a 'hoarder'. They have to be real friends to get away with using that word. True, I have lots of 'stuff' but the main reason is that I am always so busy that I haven't time to sort it all out. And none of it is rubbish.

It wasn't an obsession to have everything, rather it was an interest in the history and development of things. Owning some of these items seemed to give me more of a connection with their history and put the present and future into perspective.

I was particularly fascinated by early slide and 35mm home movie projectors, the lamps of which were powered by oil lights.

Early film cameras were a fascinating combination of optical and mechanical devices, starting with early Leica cameras, the first to use 35mm film.

After I had made my own crystal radio set and marvelled at the reception of radio stations without any power – mains or battery – I found a beautiful commercial crystal set made by Ericsson and bearing the BBC initials for British Broadcasting Company Limited, as it was known from 1922 before it became the British Broadcasting Corporation in 1927. Broadcasting history indeed.

John has also collected maps (becoming an expert and editing a magazine on the subject), coins, model trains and cars, optical and scientific instruments, early sound recordings including cylinder phonographs and 78s, later 45s and LPs, vintage and modern cameras including the Leica 1 he wrote about in *Cameracraft* last September, publications, and much more.

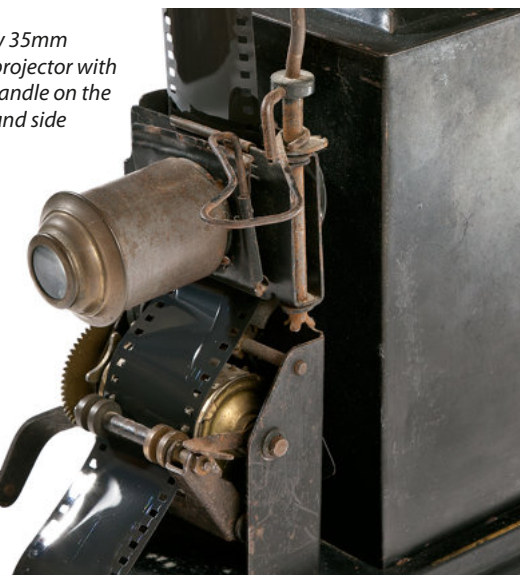
The book benefits from many reproductions of timetables, tickets, passed, and the kind of documents which few people keep in perfect order for life. Because he has done this, the book is a time capsule.

The title 'Papa Shoots, Mummy Dyes' is explained, of course. But not until page 438...

– DK



An early 35mm movie projector with crank handle on the right hand side



Lantern slide projections used oil lamps

The film uses the same sprocketed strip which modern 35mm photography inherited



Victorian and Edwardian lantern slides could include hand-operated 'animation' and offer a full colour show



An early BBC-approved crystal set, an appropriate collectible from an era before my time there



FRIEDMAN ON AI

Generative bridges the generations – just...

Ever since I wrote the first overview of Generative AI for *Cameracraft* January/February 2023, I've been kind of obsessed with the ideas and started following the industry closely, waiting for the tools to reach a certain level of maturity.

Some of my favorite experimental videos from other people include shorts that portray Elvis Presley in various pop-culture roles: as Matt Dillion from *Gunsmoke*, as Dr. Who, in the movie *Jaws*, auditioning as Han Solo in the original Star Wars movie, and as the Captain of the Enterprise.

This is the future of filmmaking. One person and a keyboard. But how is it done?

So in my spare time (ha!) I've been exploring becoming part of the problem by toying with the emerging field of generative AI, as evidenced by a blog post from last May. In that blog post I had created an image of me and my Grandfather (who died when I was 2) in a boat fishing together. Quality time I never had. It was an interesting experiment, but the likenesses weren't quite right.



And this is one of the biggest problems with generative AI – it's a very hit-and-miss proposition. For every great image you may see online, there were probably 100 failed attempts to get there. You're at the mercy of the algorithm, and you generally have little control over the fine details of the final image.

But there are tools that offer you more control than just typing a prompt. One of the most important ones is something called *ComfyUI*, a stable diffusion front-end that



Gary's wife Carol and her late father reunited in 2024 (top) and 2025 AI versions created by Gary, who explored many variations before reaching what seems a more realistic result.

gives you lots of control, providing fields (called 'nodes') for both positive and negative prompts, specifying which models to use, *ControlNet Nodes* for image conditioning, *Utility Nodes* for image manipulation, and various *Custom Nodes* for advanced features. It's so complex that it reminds me of the analog Moog synthesizers of the 1960s (in fact they're wired up similarly!). It's not easy but the process gives you unprecedented control.

After much experimentation, I think I've got this down to a science now, using a combination of not one but THREE different tools to get the facial likenesses just right. Have a look at some of the memories I've been able to create.

Top photo, left

The "Before" image: This was last year's attempt to create an image of Carol and her father (who died in 2010). The likenesses are awful and it looked like it was made with AI

Lower photo, left

Here's the new version, created using my new methodology. It looks like a real picture instead of an AI image. These tools are finally ready for prime time!

We had two cats over the years who have since died. They never met each other.

Top of the next page is an image of Carol holding them both and a mockup of a retail framed print concept. The likenesses are amazing.

AI goes to the dogs

But check out the shot below it. The source images maybe do not have the best information to create different angles on each pet. For a memento of all pets (or family) over many years, some older prints scanned in may be poor. Some recent digital pictures may be better. No AI that I know of can handle this many image uploads and still retain likenesses.

Who might most benefit from this novel art form?

Parents with grown children who want a "snapshot" of how their kids have aged through the years.

Parents who have lost children can have an up to date family portrait showing, which includes updating the visible age of the participants. See my remembrance photography article, *Cameracraft* March/April 2022, to learn about how valued such images are to the families.

Widows and Widowers can smile a little when they see themselves reunited with their spouses.

Pet owners who wish to be "reunited" with their best friends.

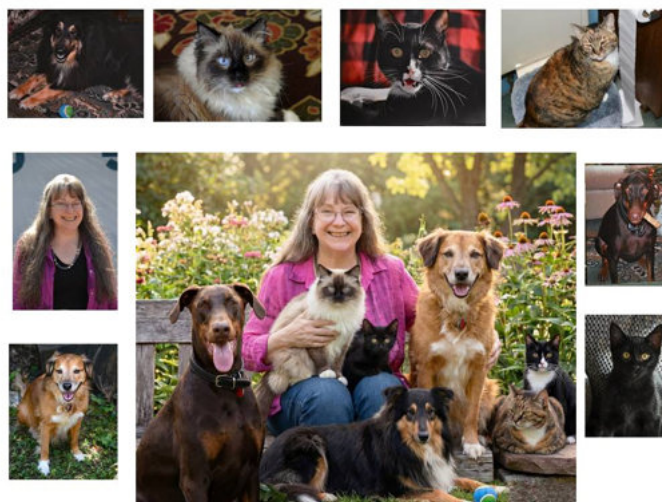
Large family reunion composites can be created.

It can bring some comfort to families with military members who are POWs or MIAs.

Bottom of page: Gary himself at all ages! Ed: "Fans of Heath Robinson's *Professor Branestawm* books will relate immediately to the album of old photos of the professor as a baby and child which comes to life..."

I believe there's a market for this, and in fact I'm going to pursue this next year. I'm going to offer this to my blog followers at a discount!

The five ages of Gary, AI recreated.



Pre-emptive Strike

I floated these on Facebook a couple of months ago and got a ton of interesting reactions. Two of the most articulate –

"I think some things should be left to what they are, sweet memories, instead of juggling your ancestors to appear in your blockbusters. What's next? Your grand children will probably bring you in physical form to have thanksgiving together... It's scary whichever way you think! On technical side, it's a job well done!" – *Navid Q.*

"I see nothing wrong with this... I've seen extreme photo edits with blaring sunsets, out-of-context placement of animals, dramatic repositioning of subjects in unsurvivable situations and removal of components necessary to fully explain the image (such as wires suspending a costumed fairy above the ground). We know these aren't real but we accept them as a form of artistry. They can be both moving and beautiful. As is this particular image." – *Brenda T.*

Are there ethical issues associated with this? Of course! But nobody cares. Recall that once upon a time I was so concerned about the erosion of the photo's credibility that I actually patented a solution to the problem (which Nikon and Canon stole – the world didn't care). So I think I'll give this a try.

For the sake of history all of my output will have a watermark (both visible and embedded in EXIF) so future generations will know that what's depicted never actually happened. .

– Gary Friedman



For Gary's monthly blog and updates on progress see:

friedmanarchives.com/blog

For everything else including details of photo books, just see

friedmanarchives.com

Gary is currently working on a user guide e-book for the new Sony A7V after taking delivery of one of the first pre-orders

CAMERAS

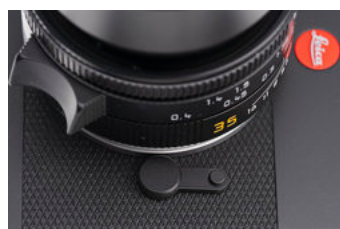
Leica M EV1 and 35mm f1.4 Summilux-M ASPH

Like cars, rangefinder cameras have faces. No radiator grille and headlights to look like a smile and two eyes but the two windows of the viewfinder and rangefinder above the nose formed by the lens. When Leica made lenses which needed viewfinder wide, tele or close-up optics adding the resulting lenses with a twin window attachment were called 'spectacle' versions.

The familiar face of Leicas continued in the digital era as they retained the range-viewfinder. It became the inspiration for the design of Fujifilm's X100 models and many of the X series. So when a Leica M body arrives which has no eyes, just a blank metal front except for a small rectangle echoing the former rangefinder window, it looks unusual and a bit odd. That little panel is just a cover for the electronic self-timer LED.



So there's no way the EV1 could reprise Andreas Feininger's famous Leica 'face' portrait as seen on last year's 75th anniversary Jubilee Edition of *Leica Fotografie International* above – which is sadly now out print, sold out. But tradition matters and you'll notice the Leica EV1 dedicated flash shoe is offset slightly from the lens centre just like the shoe on the Leica III – and you could still attach an optical finder though it would be rectangular.



There have been Leica M bodies without viewfinders before. The MD/MDa is an M film body without viewfinder intended for use on microscopes or telescopes, recording instruments and for special general applications such as ultra-wide work with a Hologon or similar lens and finder. It's not to be confused with the M-D 24

megapixel digital body which has a regular range-viewfinder but no rear screen for reviewing shots. That's a 2016 design intended to mimic the experience of film shooting, recording only raw .DNG files.

M11 transformed

The EV1 has all the features of the M11, with a 60 megapixel Sony sensor offering down-sampled 36MP or 18MP sizes, .DNG raw format and JPEGs. The processing is entirely different from Sony's comparable mirrorless models, especially when it comes to white balance and colour rendering. Dynamic range and highlight recovery are similar to the Sony A7RV, but the base ISO is 64 rather than 100 and empirical comparison says that noise levels are much better at the most commonly used higher settings from 800 to 6400.

Because it is an EVF model, it can be set to record black and white JPEGs, with the .DNG files appearing as BW previews only until *Lightroom* or *Bridge* promptly replaces these with the camera profile set. The EVF is then in BW and many will prefer to use it this way to help concentrate on light and composition.

It's a bit disappointing that Leica chose to use a 5.76 million pixel EVF rather than the 9.44 found in the A7RV and Fujifilm GFX 100 II but resolution is not the whole story. In Sony's implementation the EVF can look pretty jaggy if for example Flicker Reduction is enabled, even if the jaggies only appear with a half-press on the shutter release. The Leica EVF is much more stable and seems to simulate final image contrast and colour slightly better.

Comparing it to the Sony again, it's been suggested that most mirrorless models including Canon and Nikon with focus peaking are just as good as the Leica for manual focus relying on

The EV1 is a classic M design. The eyepiece has no shield or eyecup, and the rear screen is fixed. The small lever next to lens changes crop to 1.3X 39MP or 1.8X 18MP. The Summilux lens has a focus shift optimised iris blade geometry.



The abbey at night using the Summilux wide open, 1/125s at ISO 3200 – details are sharp. Dolls from Paphos, the larger face is 35mm high, using the 40cm close focus of the lens, 1/160s at f9.5, ISO 500. Below, 1/125 at f9.5, ISO 80. All three use the EV1's auto white balance without adjustment from raw.



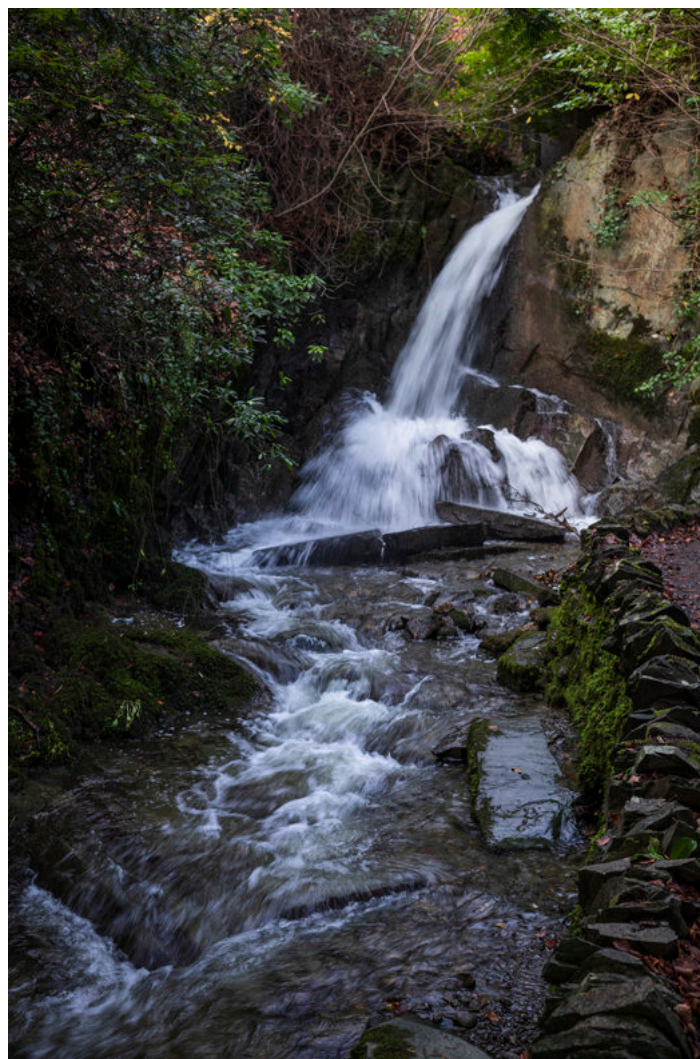
the coloured highlighting of sharpest focus details and outlines. Leica's focus peaking looks very different because the lens is at working aperture! If you are shooting at $f/8$ or maybe even $f/16$ with something like the 35mm Summilux sent for our brief test period (on the excellent Leica trial hire scheme) many scenes will be a mass of peaking obscuring the subject. You must open the aperture manually to have useful peaking which shifts in the depth of the subject as you focus. Either that, or only use it when at a wider aperture, say $f/4$ with the 35mm.

The iris diaphragm is not perfectly circular at medium apertures. This is presumably classic Leica lens design where the 'averaging' which results reduces focus shift on changing f -stop around $f/2$ to $f/4$, relative to wide open. Go past $f/4$ and depth of field removes the issue.

The focus assist functions on the EV1 are not limited to focus peaking, which is a function of the sensor and processor. The camera also has the rangefinder focusing cam bearing on a switch which detects the slightest movement of the focus (if you opt for this) and brings up a magnified section in a position you can preset, to a magnification you prefer. The downside of this compared to peaking is a noticeable lag, with microseconds taken to invoke the zoomed-in detail, and a preset time allowed to fine tune focus. If you haven't nailed it a nudge on the focusing ring starts the zoom-in again. If you get it right, you must use first pressure on the shutter or wait briefly to get your finder view back.

Fast or slow?

I found this whole process to be the opposite of a Leica optical viewfinder with coincident image ranging – that's one of the fastest and most positive fine focus methods ever devised. Magnified digital focus is one of the slowest and least certain. When used with focus peaking, the plane of focus never seemed to match because of depth of field with roughly one-third of the peaking zone closer and two-thirds



The park waterfall was, predictably, flowing well in winter rain but also full of debris. Taken at 1/15s and $f/5.6$, to test how well I could hand-hold the M EV1 with 35mm lens and no stabilisation. I made longer exposures as well, but 1/15s was the longest with acceptably sharp pixel level detail. I can almost guarantee a 'tripod-sharp' shot at 1/2s with any stabilised equivalent.

behind the actual focus point. Understand this, ignore it, don't use both focus assists together and you may begin to work as fast as with an M11. But it's a simply fact that a similar lens on an AF mirrorless (I used the Sony 35mm $f/1.8$ FE) with a small central or movable focus point will get there much faster.

To check how well things worked, I tested AF with the Sony and MF with the Leica with both set to $f/1.8$ ($f/1.7$ on the Summilux as that's the closest stop). The results were such that I decided to compare the lenses and concluded that my Sony wide open was every bit as good as the Summilux at the same aperture in terms of sharpness. There is something about the Summilux rendering, its balance of contrast and colour and resolution, which may justify the £5,000-plus price tag verses the FE lens's £500-plus if you're using

that Kodachrome 64 filmspeed on the EV1, but the once you get to ISO 800 it's an even contest.

Because the EV1 uses an EVF, the close focus restrictions of older Leica M lenses are frustrating. Popping the Summilux on the helical focusing M adaptor for the Sony, the result was insanely close focus. But it's designated as a CF lens, so goes down to 40cm rather than the modest 70cm possible with optical rangefinder. This is usefully close and it's how new Leica lenses are specified.

With an adaptor, SLR macro and extreme tele lenses can be used on the EV1 with eye-level viewing rather than the need to rely on the rear screen. There's no simple sensor-based stabilisation which works perfectly with such lenses – the best systems used in-lens optical stabilisation for long lenses and true macro. The EV1 has a solid metal body which

helps damp down any vibration, and the electronic (silent shutter) mode can be used too. But if you like to hear a focal plane curtain sound, use the mechanical shutter. It's not quiet and it also clunks when turning the EV1 on, even though the shutter does not close when the camera is turned off (as you should do when changing lenses).

Overall the EV1 is about as fast to use as a Q-series, definitely not as fast to turn on or shoot with as a rangefinder digital Leica M. The main problem is the time it takes to switch on, a matter of seconds before the camera has an operational viewfinder and is ready to shoot. Waking up from sleep – many users set a two minute sleep activation – takes about a fifth of second and a touch longer in 'Eco' mode which saves battery life with a deeper sleep mode. It's a good idea to form a habit of touching the shutter release as you start raising the camera to your eye.

But even a digital M has a delay of over 1/10s from shutter press to capture compared to 1/50s for a film M and between 1/30s and 1/15s for the fastest SLRs, whether film or digital.

Ergonomics

One thing which remains more or less constant is the feel and fit of the Leica M body in the hand, even with the added thickness needed for the digital generation.

Would it have been better for Leica to have kept the body as slim, back to front, as a III series or a film M? The only thing required would have been an extension of 5mm between a 33.5mm thick body (original M) and the EV1 at 38.5mm. Instead, as with all digital Ms, the entire body is 5mm thicker and the radius of the rounded ends corresponds. I love the fit of a vintage III series which has a 30mm thick body.

Leica could do much worse than to make a digital sensor body with M mount but IIIg looks and dimensions. It's all about the feel of the camera and the way your hands wrap round it and the shutter finger falls in the right place.



Pre-focusing works as well on the EV1 as any Leica and familiarity with which direction to nudge the focusing lug helps fine-tune shots. This is a classic 1/125s at f8, ISO 200. The sunstar from the Summilux reflects its multi-blade iris.

However, the M digitals including the EV1 are as close as you can get to thinking you have a film Leica in your right hand. Few of these cameras were made to be left hand friendly and often they have not been ideal for vertical holding. The EV1 has no grip moulded, just a very slight contouring of smooth metal to take the thumb close to the rear thumb wheel. I often wear headgear with a brim and find shooting with my hand below the vertical camera, because of the left-hand end position of the viewfinder eyepiece, not ideal given the overall size and weight of the EV1 (139 x 80 x 38.5mm, 484g with battery). It's 14mm longer, 8mm higher and actually 1.5mm slimmer than the 445g Fujifilm X-E5 reviewed later in this issue but that is just much easier, secure and shake-free to hold for vertical shots with my right hand on top. Like that Feininger Leica portrait...

Value

Where a film Leica retains a certain value for decades and a few increase, digital Leicas have



The LED lighting in a large room demanded 1/25s at f4, ISO 3200, using a 50mm f1.1 lens. Given the conditions, the Leica colour quality is unmatched. This .DNG conversion used the M11 Profile for Adobe Camera Raw. Thanks to (first?) great-grandson Oakley and his mum Brittany for posing!

not. This is mostly down to improvements in sensors overtaking earlier CCD or CMOS and cover filter packs. Most users

now find 60MP is too much for everyday shots and the EV1 may have a much longer working life. It's most likely to be superseded

by a better EVF, faster response and dual card storage, or perhaps in-body stabilisation which is the major difference between this and other full-frame mirrorless.

Noise control is already better than Sony's own used of the same sensor, connectivity and geotagging are as reliable as any other make, colour rendering and white balance are best in class, battery life is OK (250-300 shots, and can run from an external power bank). The price is £6,840 – over £1,000 less than the M11-P.

Compare that with £2,800 for Sony's A7CR which has the same sensor, some very advanced AI autofocus and bells/whistles but a much lower resolution, smaller EVF. Then factor in the earlier lens price comparison, and remember that the G Master 35mm f1.4 costs £1,429 and could well outperform the Summicron. The Leica kit I tried out costs £12,000. Some will buy and be very happy indeed with ownership and with the results obtained.

– David Kilpatrick

www.leica.co.uk



LENSES

Newyi 50mm $f1.1$ full frame for Leica M



The Newyi focuses to the usual 70cm but a helical adaptor (above) was used for the close-ups below and top right. The K&F plain adaptor, centre, is more accurate. The lens has wells, left, which allow Leica M coding to be added using a black pen.

Why look again at a lens design which is at least six years old and has already been featured in *Cameras*?

One possible reason is that in 2019 when I picked up a **7Artisans 50mm $f1.1$ Leica M** at £225 from an eBay seller the only intention was to use it on Sony E-mount with an adaptor. There was no similarly fast 50mm made for full frame E mount. This year a slightly lower cost and brand new import of a very similar lens under the unknown brand name 'Newyi' appeared, and with the Leica M EV1 due to be with me for a couple of days, I decided it would be worth checking it out. These can be found for little over £175.

It should have been photographed on the EV1 body but that was never done! However, before using the EV1 this very fast manual focus lens was fitted with a Fotodiox helical close focusing adaptor for my Sony A7RV for a week's break in Tenerife where it saw use at night, often in restaurants. The bokeh and rendering make it a great lens for food shots at around $f2.8$ to $f5.6$, though $f2$ and $f1.4$ are usable if zero depth of field is acceptable.

It got minimal daytime use but I did find the manual focus and aperture setting appealing. There's an argument that anything which slows down photography tends to improve results... but it can also result in lost shots.

On the Leica EV1 the auto-invoked magnified focus with peaking on the EV1 made life much easier and faster with no need to press a button to get this. The perfectly engineered Leica body showed that the helical adaptor on Sony is not very good at keeping the lens perfectly parallel to the sensor. I bought a K&F E to M adaptor with no such close focus ability and the focus across the field then matched the Leica. The lens correctly hit infinity just before the limit of focus on this, allowing for variations in camera body calibration and temperature, where wide open even the slightest touch on the helical could put focus out.

The K&F also has much smoother but still firm and slop-free bayonets. They do this premium version and a cheaper one. It's definitely worth paying more to get the latest design.

On the Leica, infinity was reached bang on without leeway. To hit infinity the most distant horizon had to be the focus target. The sub-£200 Newyi and the Leica matched up well. While the lens is pre-machined for easy six-bit coding on its M mount, out of the box it reports just 'R-Adapter M' as the identity with $f1.4$ as the widest aperture, and no focal length. The default on Leica rangefinder bodies is 50mm anyway. The Newyi mount

has its six machined wells for encoding, left as bright metal. The code for the 50mm Noctilux $f1.0$, the closest match, is 011111. To do this I filled five with black Stabilo 166P Fine spirit pen (as shown).

When stopping down, the Leica EV1 does try to calculate what aperture has been used because that's how the Leica digital EXIF estimation works, as explained in my review of the camera. At best it's within a stop of matching what was actually set. This beats the Sony where the EXIF defaults to recording $f1.0$, and also no focal length or working aperture at all, despite entering 50mm as the manual stabilisation setting.



f2.8



Above, very low light light in a restaurant – 1/60s, f2.8, ISO 3200. Cat close-up, f1.4, 1/60s ISO 800. Below, from raw ISO 160 file, 1/60s at f8, with conversion using Adobe BW01 profile and Strong Contrast curve with sky burned in -1EV (the mist over the river is mist, not dodging).

But how about the lens itself? Well, there are several generations of 50mm *f*1.1 from China, in M-mount, often looking very similar with Voigtlander-style white and red markings. The 7Artisans from 2019 didn't have anything like the same smooth bokeh which makes this lens lovely to use, and it was not as critically sharp centrally at *f*4. At *f*8 on the Newyi that's corner to corner and the focus transition from middle to far distance or foreground remains smooth and clean.

You can induce some LoCA green background and magenta foreground at the wide apertures but it's no worse than regular non-apo 50mm *f*1.8 designs. It does not have veiling or flare spots, but light sources at night can have strong chromatic outlines and point sources in the outer field wider than *f*4 show complex coma and chromatic signatures – it's not a lens for night sky shots! It's purely traditional spherical construction though its modest size and weight point to high refractive index, low dispersion glass. And it does black and white with character.



You may find a similar lens marketed as 'Mr Ding' (Chinese minor brand names are not created by Western marketing experts), Syoptics and others. However, there are clues that the designs differ. One is if the unusual click stopped aperture scale (missing *f*11) runs in the reverse direction. All are Sonnar-type asymmetric lenses, not Planar based, and this has enabled the rear element to be close to the focus plane while also small enough in diameter to fit within the M mount. It also gives them a rendering which many prefer to Planars.

For optical view and rangefinder Leica use, these lenses allow adjustment of the focusing cam. If you're using with an EVF there is no need to worry about that aspect.

The Newyi 50mm *f*1.1 M is just 5cm long 6.5cm maximum diameter, all metal, takes 58mm filters and weighs 391g. Be careful not to confuse with 50mm *f*1.1 APS-C lenses also found on eBay in the £135-150 range!

– David Kilpatrick



CAMERAS

Fujifilm X-E5 and 23mm XF f2.8 R WR

Rangefinder style cameras with electronic viewfinders make sense – the OLED displays viewed through the lens of the finder eyepiece are tiny. The whole EVF doesn't need the pentaprism shape found on Fujifilm's X-T series, or the full frame Sony, Nikon and Canon mirrorless models. There's no need for the finder to be centred over the lens, it can be placed at the left-hand end of the top where your right eye can get close without your nose pressing on the rear screen.

The Fujifilm X range started 14 years ago with the X-Pro 1 having a large Leica-like optical finder in that position. The fixed lens X-100 series has always had the same design. However it's economical to dispense with the hybrid optical/electronic finder and just have a regular EVF even if only 2.36m dots and 0.62X view. The mid-2025 X-E5 does this with a 40 megapixel sensor similar to the highly prized X-100VI, and 2026 kicks off with the body only price down to £1,199. To add the new XF 23mm f2.8 R WR, a very slim weather sealed 35mm equivalent with fast silent autofocus, costs £200-300 depending on the deal.

This combination is one f-stop slower optically than the X-100VI which can now be found for £1,500 after the initial demand-driven highs of over £2k. However, for much the same price as the 23mm f2.8 you can get the 23mm f2 design which is also an XF R WR specification. You lose the pocketability with this larger glass.

The X-E5 may seem to be a budget choice but all the key aspects of Fujifilm tech are built in – the mechanical focal plane shutter with a real top dial running to 1/4000s and electronic extension to 1/18,000s, an exposure compensation dial with $\pm 3\text{EV}$ in third-stop clicks, a finger-lever able to crop the 40MP for effective 1.4X and 2X as well as a high speed electronic shutter shooting 1.29X if 20fps is needed. The regular mechanical shutter at

Field test review by David Kilpatrick



The X-E5 is 125 x 72 x 40mm and weighs just 445g, the 23mm f2.8 non-extending pancake lens adding only 90g. It has a typical top plate with shutter speed dial. The double tilt hinged 3" touch screen is a 1.04m dot LCD.



full resolution and coverage allows 8fps. With the electronic shutter, pre-capture is available for sequence bursts and in this cropped mode 24MP files are recorded.

Film simulation

A new feature on the top plate is a window, with a rear thumbwheel to the right of the finder window, in which Fujifilm simulations of filmstock can be selected. Modifications like choice of filter require menu selection. It's possible to create in-camera JPEGs to match films like Astia and Velvia E6, different qualities of colour negative, or the much-lauded ACROS 100 black and white along with its contrast filter options. This changes the EVF too, so if you

shoot ACROS with a Red filter, you see the effect of this filter on blue skies in the finder. If you shoot raw, Adobe Camera Raw and Lightroom will also initially read a similar JPEG preview embedded in the .RAF file – but very quickly over-ride this by creating a colour preview for thumbnails and monitor-size, using whatever camera profile you have chosen as default. Adobe also has 'camera maker' profiles which take a bit more trouble to invoke but do very closely match the Fujifilm version.

What they don't always do is match the sheer quality of in-camera JPEGs. Colour management and JPEG conversion are things which Fujifilm has done better than any other maker ever since the opening years of the 21st century.

As you can record raw and JPEG simultaneously, it's no effort to have a Fuji-created JPEG for reference even if you plan to process from raw and use other recipes.

However, the X-E body series unlike the more professional X-T only has one SD card slot. Raw and JPEG are saved in the same folder. That card slot lives under the battery compartment cover and extracting or inserting the card is best done with the battery removed. Given the excellent ergonomics of the body as a whole, this is a consumer-grade aspect you just have to accept to get the very neat body.

Operational speed

There's one aspect to the X-E5 which fails to live up to the optical viewfinder models. When the EVF function is disabled, the X-100 and original X-(1, 2 or 3) designs allow a shutter response very close to film rangefinder use. Autofocus may add a small delay, but the camera especially when left switched on is able to grab a shot when rapidly lifted to the eye.

This is not the case with any EVF camera though some take little longer to adjust the EVF – responding to the auto exposure more or less as the AF happens. The X-E5 feels a little quicker on the draw than the Leica EV1 but it's still able to go to sleep and take noticeable time to wake on a first press of the shutter. Going 'live' when switching on from the Off position on the shutter release collar, which gives maximum battery life, takes about the same time of one full second.

If the camera is left switched on, the default for auto sleeping is five minutes though you can customise this down to as little as 15 seconds. When left to the default as I did initially, I found the X-E5 remarkably easy to fire accidentally. It's clearly a response to a very brief touch of the shutter, as these accidental exposures were normally not accurately focused



Tenerife's Crab Island natural bathing, where four swimmers drowned three weeks later. ACROS+R, the EVF view helping concentrate on composition, light, and the decisive moment – 1/160s at f8, ISO 125. The raw file allowed local shadow and mid-tone adjustments but the bright sea burned out past recovery level.

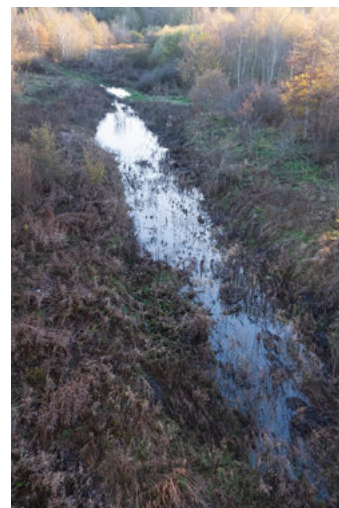
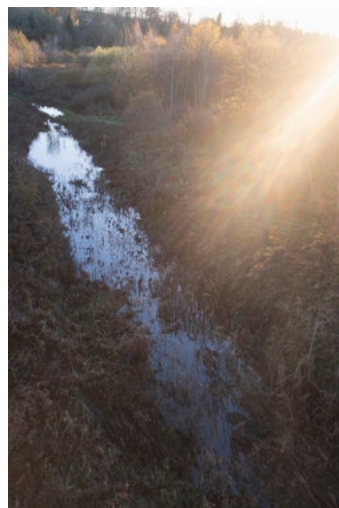


Fujichrome Velvia simulation JPEG, left, and ACROS+R, right.

and sometimes wrongly exposed. Most just were of the ground and happened when walking. I've never had any camera fire as many accidental shots – this was not my experience with the X-100VI, or with the very different Fujifilm X Half which I was carrying at the same time as the X-E5.

For the best exposure and AF, take a careful first pressure on the shutter button when watching the

EVF or rear screen response. It's a very sensitive shutter release travel (with a threaded centre for a regular cable release!) and easy to fire a bit early. Switching to the pre-capture sequence shooting mode is likely to work better with the X-E5 than some of the many cameras which are now using this continuous buffering to allow retrospective selection of 20 frames (one second) when first



With no lens hood, the 23mm can flare badly. A slight change of angle cuts it.

pressure is held, then up to 135 frames of continuous shooting with the release fully depressed. This is a very useful advanced function in a camera at this price point and it's mostly down to Fujifilm prioritising EVF quality and frame rate (at the 1.29X crop and 24 megapixel size).

The hybrid electronic and mechanical shutter is one of the most advanced and automated. It

can handle times from 15 minutes to 1/18,000s in Program or Manual modes, with switching between purely mechanical, electronic first curtain and purely electronic according to the exposure time. 'Bulb' allows up to 60 minutes. How this works can be customised via the menu system and setups saved to recall.

While the electronic shutter is not global so very first sync speeds

are out, the APS-C sensor size allows 1/180s mechanical X sync. The $\pm 3\text{EV}$ dial exposure compensation extends to 5 stops either way set on the screen (touch operation can be enabled).

Movies can use from 1/24s (the slowest movie frame rate) to 1/4000s and can be shot at 6K as well as 4K and Full HD 1080p. Motor drive (sequence shooting) can be at 20, 13, 10 or 8.9 frames per second and even when using Uncompressed Raw 18 frames of the full 40MP can be recorded at 13fps. There's only a marginal gain over this to 20 frames by using 8fps mechanical shutter.

Quality control

The base ISO level of this sensor is 125 as opposed to the 200 we are used to from Fujifilm X models, and extended range goes down to 64. Dynamic range, with 14-bit raw and the option to save HEIF 10-bit as well as regular JPEG 8-bit alongside .RAF with many compression options, gives good highlight and shadow recovery though as usual you may want to shoot underexposed raw for sunsets and bright sun in sky or on water or snow.

The high ISO range normally runs to 12,800 with extension to 25,600 for movies and 512,000 for stills. In the standard range, Bracketing can include ISO. There's also regular AE bracketing able to shoot up to nine frames, and Focus bracketing. As for noise levels, even at 3200 which I set as my maximum no special NR was needed for perfect results. In fact 3200 off this sensor proved as good as 800 off the Sony A7RV when comparing similar forest shade shots at 200%. It could have a two to three stop advantage over that particular 60MP full frame despite 40MP APS-C having a significantly smaller pixel pitch of under 3 microns versus 3.76 microns. The Fujifilm sensor's X-Trans RGBG pattern is combined with back-side illumination in this generation of cameras. You will be hard pressed to find any other APS sensor recording this level of detail with low noise at high sensitivity.

The sensor-based stabilisation claims 7-stop effect on pitch, roll and yaw shake. In practice, lacking any long lens to check, I found it



I asked if I could take this picture as the artist worked. The Astia setting here gave the best highlight detail and colour – processing to Velvia gives over-the-top pink. 23mm at f2.8, ISO 800 (no noise at all), 1/75s with +0.33 compensation. Below, not identical but same location and time, the Fujifilm X-Trans 5 HR sensor has superior high ISO noise control.



comparable to Sony APS-C but not as good as the medium format Fujifilm GFX 100S II – or indeed, as the little OM-Systems OM-5 which I've almost left unused this year.

The new 23mm is very neat and claims to suit 40MP capture but it is not as bitingly sharp as the X-100V's 23mm. There are many choices of Fujifilm X-system lenses now and also some options from independents such as Viltrox with a newly-announced sub-£200 9mm f2.8 AF (13.5mm equivalent). This

lens on its own renders X-E5 ownership more attractive even if it's unlikely to match Fujinon EBC specs. Nor does this 23mm as far as flare resistance goes – it takes 39mm filters, no official lens hood appears to be available. The pictures on the previous page show why one is needed.

Until an X-Pro 4 arrives, the X-E5 is the lowest cost entry to the best X-Trans sensor yet made.



www.fujifilm.co.uk

CAMERAS

The Fujifilm X HF-1

It's an odd concept reviving the handling and feel of 1960s half-frame viewfinder cameras while adding clever new functions

We nearly titled this and the next article a game of two halves! The

Fujifilm X Half is almost a *game* on its own. It shares some of the qualities which have made Fujifilm Instax cameras a success, and were it not for a price-tag of £699 might well appeal to buyers under 20.

At the end of 2025 even though only on the market for six months the price was cut to £549 and at the same time it was appearing in droves on MBP's used camera list.

Why?

First, it's a one-inch sensor model producing 17MP files in portrait (vertical) 4:3 ratio – 3648 pixels wide by 4864 high. It does this via a fixed 10.8mm f2.8 lens which stops down in full steps on its barrel to f11. It's equivalent to a 29.16mm on full frame if you use the normal 2.7X factor but claimed to be similar to a 32mm, as the 4:3 is an effective crop from 3:2 35mm-format picture dimensions.

It is much wider than the actual 32mm (standard) lenses once found on 35mm half-frame cameras, which it retro-reprises.

It has AF/MF and pretty close focus too which helps, and auto exposure with an impressive $\pm 3\text{EV}$



Very simple controls and surprisingly good lens.

compensation dial. This is set above a 'lever wind' though the camera does not need winding. On the back of the camera there's an equally retro 'film cassette window'. This displays the Fujifilm film simulation – Velvia, ACROS, colour negative and slide and mono choices. If you use the lever wind as instructed, each shot you take on one 'film' is recorded as if on a roll. With the lever pushed back in, other pictures can be taken not in this virtual roll of film album. Winding for a shot, then for another, assembles two half-frames to make a single 34 megapixel landscape format file with the two vertical shots. If you want them to

appear side by side as seen from the camera position, you have to shoot the *right hand side first* and the left second.

It only produces JPEGs. They are very good JPEGs – it is after a Fujifilm X model and that's what they do better than anyone else. But you can't get a raw file, and it is the quality of the raws which makes 1" cameras like the Sony RX10/100 so useful.

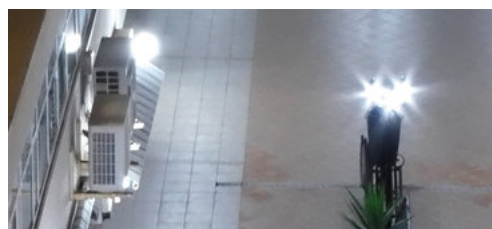
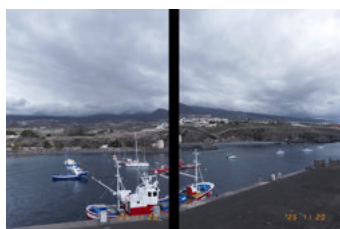
Where the Half excels is in its smartphone-like touch screen interface with swiping, pinching and taps. It has connectivity able to link the 'film' rolls to phone storage, record geotagging, create a record of activity including this, and

generally share images whether online or as hard copy prints at home or from Fujifilm shop labs.

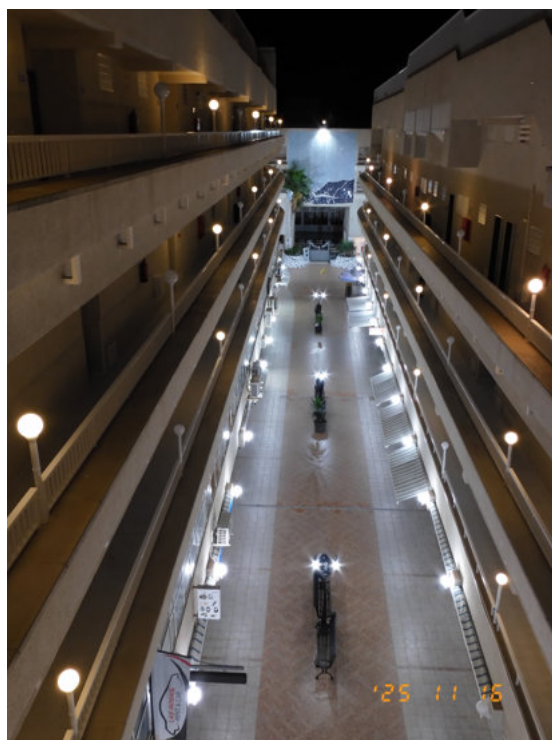
The truth is we used it very little as every picture saved as a 17MP JPEG is a picture lost when you're in a pro or semi-pro domain. That demands larger images and more control than the basic AF/MF, exposure, film simulations, \pm or other bracketing. Above all it needs raw files. Failing to spot that a date imprint setting had been enabled out of the box didn't help though AI 'remove' can fix that. With .RAF added the Half would be a great buy. Without? Not for us!



Facebook group: [fujifilmxhalf](#)



Left, the two frames as one file function top, and a 6342 pixel wide panorama from these. Right, 1/125s at f4, ISO 800, pin-sharp with no IS and no noise. 300dpi clip above. Maybe raw files are not needed?



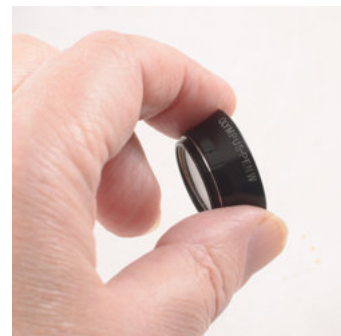
RETRO HALF

Half frame with a wider view

Tim Goldsmith finds the vintage Olympus-Pen W a versatile film shooting companion

As readers of past issues may know, I have always been interested in the more unusual cameras as well as the more common ones. At the last count I had around 850 cameras, although some of them are VERY small as sub-miniatures are my favourites. But the problem with most sub-miniatures that it's really difficult to use them as film is almost impossible to find, and even more difficult to process!

I have several "wide angle" cameras ranging from panoramic models like the Russian Horizont, to several with fixed wide lenses like the Rollei Wide, so "wide" cameras are a feature of my collection. Last year however I decided I really should be using some of them so, instead of the usual big selection box of chocolates, I asked my sister-in-law for a selection box of film from Analogue Wonderland (<https://analoguewonderland.co.uk>). Sure enough, a mix of film types in various formats came my way.



The 1964-5 Pen W is one of the rarer Olympus half frames. It's unusual filter holder lens hood, above, is even harder to find.

I had treated myself to a half-frame Olympus-Pen W a while back but, like most of my cameras, it just sat on the shelf or in a display cabinet. This model has a 25mm f2.8 lens, equivalent to a 35mm.

First out of the box was a 36 exposure roll of Ilford FP4+ (which is why I didn't use a more practical 24 exposure roll) and took it with me on a long weekend trip to Hastings.

I really enjoyed shooting with the Pen W and with so many shots available I could afford not to be

too choosy with subject matter and often shot a few slightly different compositions of the same scenes. As I am used shooting with full frame film and digital cameras, it took a while to get used to the viewfinder image always being in portrait format when brought up to the eye. To shoot in landscape format one has to turn the camera sideways – counter-intuitive to normal shooting.

At just 110mm x 70mm x 45mm and weighing in at 370 grams, the Pen W is small enough fit in a shirt

pocket, let alone a coat pocket, and if left with the focus pre-set at 15 feet pretty much everything from 7 feet to infinity is within acceptable focus, making it real point-and-shoot compact film camera.

My camera came with the original box, Skylight filter and the correct, elusive (and crazy expensive) lens hood and it's become my go-to camera when heading out for the day.

Follow collector and vintage camera guru Tim on Facebook as **Monark Cameras**.

Back to origins – the Pen D

David Kilpatrick's first 35mm camera was a 1962 Olympus Pen D bought secondhand in '68

Seen next to the Fujifilm X Half digital, note the portrait orientation of the Pen D finder. The X Half looks as if it has a landscape finder but actually matches the Pen. The superb 32mm f1.9 F. Zuiko is equivalent to a 45mm on full frame and the brightline finder frame with basic parallax marking is conservative, seeing more a 50mm field.

Unlike the Pen W, the D had a selenium exposure meter with an EV readout by needle, and its shutter speeded 1/8s to 1/500s plus B mates up with non-clicked apertures to f16 via an EV scale. You can change f-stop and shutter time without changing exposure by gripping both rings simultaneously. However, doing so tends to shift the left hand lug operated focus (2.6ft to infinity) and careful checking is needed. Once set and accurately focused –

at 15 I had a rangefinder previously used with a 16-on-127 – the D is very fast to use with a minimal zip of the film-wind thumb wheel between frames. The rectangular shutter button with its cable release thread is very small but smooth. It's an easy body design to hand hold without shake.

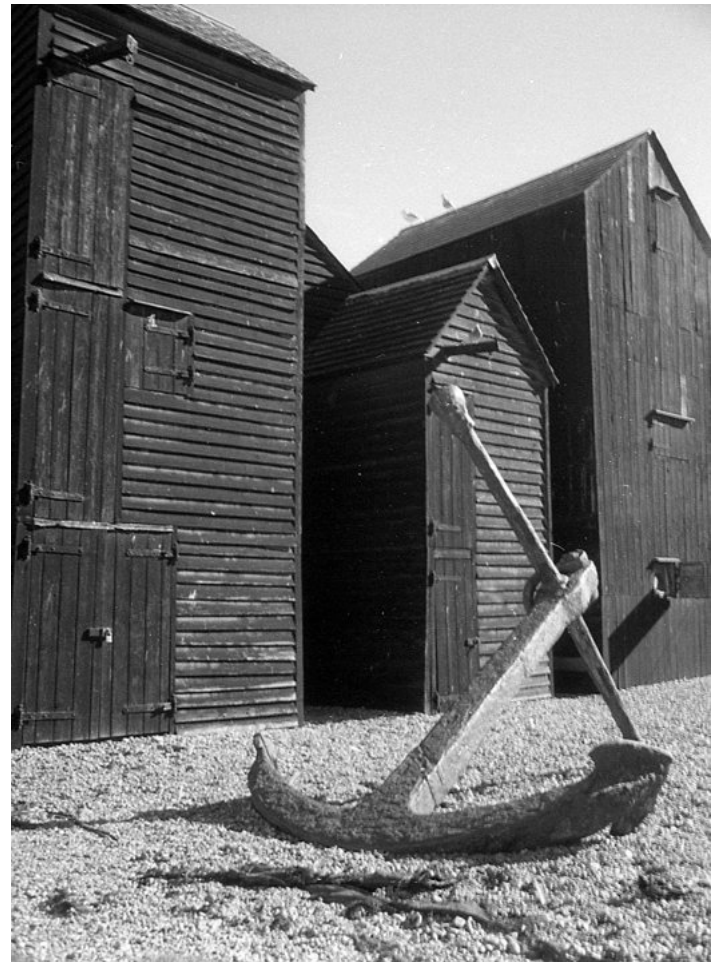
After a likely sixty years, the meter works adequately, as

selenium needs no battery and this camera had been kept in a leather pouch reducing photovoltaic fatigue.

I put 24 exposures of new Kodak ColorPlus 200 through it, processed and scanned on a Fujifilm Frontier system for 24 6 x 4" prints each with two shots. Differences in negative density and colour conditions make this a poor

compromise, if low cost. Even so film and processing came to over £18. The Frontier can't print from 18 x 24mm negatives (maybe a custom mask could be made but not by my local photo shop). But the prints show just how good that Zuiko lens is. One day I'll run some Pan F or KB14 through and make prints with my Leitz Valoy enlarger – just like 1968!





Tim Goldsmith's black and whites above and left show how half frame can work well. The compositions are tight, subject filling the frame, and the prints from individual negatives make a 5 x 7" equal to regular 10 x 8" in quality.



The colour from a Fujifilm Frontier scan and digital enprint is good enough in the image above and in the pair of shots bottom right where the exposure happened to be much the same in both 'halves' of the 24 x 36mm scanned area. But as the small (and very crudely adjusted) result from a negative copier camera shot of the negative shows, the picture has more at the bottom and on both ends. The digital contact sheet provided by the Fujifilm system, above right, explains why – the exposure measured by the



scanner for each frame is not optimal. All the negatives are within the latitude of the film but only half the print pairs are correct. Half frame needs home developing and printing or a specialised service.



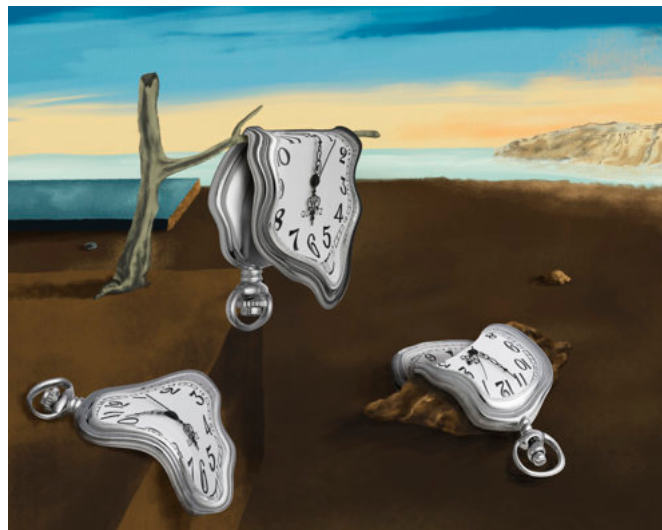
CAMERACRAFT

REARVIEW

Our images are selected from judgings of The Guild of Photographers monthly awards. These run from January to October every year, ten entry deadlines, and the judging of individual and cumulative successes is revealed at their annual awards dinner, with Photohubs workshops and talks plus a trade show area. This year it is at the Stoke-on-Trent Doubletree by Hilton Hotel, February 6th and 7th, and is open to all photographers (no need to be a Guild member to book for the Photohubs programme, and the trade show on the Saturday 9am to 3pm is free but must be pre-booked). Paid workshops are also offered with Gavin Hoey, Magda Bright, Natalie Martin, Heather Burns, Martyn Norsworthy, Emma Shaw, Simon Burfoot, Ian Knaggs and Gary Hill.

See photoguild.co.uk for details of membership and the monthly awards.

See photohubs.co.uk/guild-awards-photohubs-2026/ for details of the awards event.



Above left, Gold from **Louise Farrell** (teltailsphotography.com). Above right, homage to Dali from still life product specialist **Ian Knaggs** earned Silver (ianknaggs.com). Ian gives a full morning workshop at the Guild event on Saturday February 7th (£95). Below, city lights, mystery metalwork, reflections and silhouettes from **Helen Simon** ([@helensimonphoto](https://www.instagram.com/helensimonphoto)), Silver.





Cars in motion – above, a wedding in style captured by **Carl Simpson-Smith** (simplygreatshots.co.uk). Below, spot the name check... moving or not? **Simon Newbury**'s mounted camera does not need speed to convey the impression (simonsart.co.uk)! Both achieved Silver.



CAMERACRAFT

REARVIEW



Andra Toom closes this issue with a suitably wintery Golden Retriever portrait, a Bronze winner with The Guild. Andra is based in Estonia with plenty of Baltic winter snow, and specialises in dog photography – [instagram.com/andraportrait](https://www.instagram.com/andraportrait)