

DIGIT

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY DIGITAL IMAGING GROUP

Number 93 2022 Issue 2

UPCOMING DIG EVENTS

Details of all DIG events are available on the Group's website at tinyurl.com/sxzl487



Digital Imaging: Online

Saturday 2 July 2022
Online



Ross McKelvey

Photoshop Processing
Tips & Tricks

www.rps.org/DIGONLINE34

Digital Imaging: South East

July to October 2022
Online



Celia Henderson

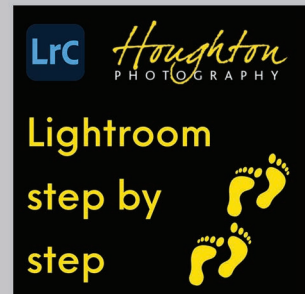
ByteSize

90-minute • interactive • hands-on
online Photoshop workshops
(limited availability)

www.rps.org/SECELIABS22

Digital Imaging: South East

July, September & October 2022
Online



Joe Houghton

Lightroom Step by Step

#2 Organising Images #3 Finding your images
#4 LR Settings #5 The Develop Module
#6 The Hidden Powerhouse

www.rps.org/SEJOESBS22

RPS DIGITAL IMAGING 2022 PRINT EXHIBITION

'Kite Flyer' by Dr Ray Hems ARPS, winner of the 2022 Gold Medal



A date for your diary

The travelling RPS Digital Imaging Print Exhibition is back! The Exhibition will be on display in York between 9th and 28th August 2022

at
York Theatre Royal
St. Leonard's Place
York
YO1 7HD

Opening times
Tuesday to Saturday, 9am-10pm

For further information

- rps.org/digexhibition
- yorktheatroyal.co.uk
- digyorkshirerps@gmail.com

Although event programmes are no longer disrupted as a result of COVID-19, we have been unable to use the RPS website's event system during an indeterminate period up through early June while it develops a new CRM system. But rest assured that our programme of online events is continuing, accompanied by a new programme of online workshops. If you wish to be kept up-to-date on our events available for booking, you can visit the Digital Imaging listings on the RPS website (tinyurl.com/sxzl487) or sign up for the Digital Imaging events mailing list (bit.ly/RPSDIEvents). That way you will know when normal service resumes.

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Cover image: **meditative spirit of dreams**
by Annemarie Hoogwoud

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FROM THE CHAIR



When Martin Parr did an online talk at the end of March for the RPS Documentary Group one audience member asked him, 'Do you think camera

clubs do more harm than good?' Parr's reply was interesting in two respects. He began by talking about 'camera clubs like the Royal Photographic Society'. Now that's a subject for some confusion, as there are those who maintain that the RPS is not a camera club at all. But more importantly, Parr spoke about the value of amateurism in photography. The RPS membership (and camera clubs' membership) is made up largely of amateur photographers. Parr did not consider 'amateur' a derogatory term. It derives, after all, from the Latin word for 'lover' (amator). Amateurs are people who engage in a pursuit for pleasure rather than on a professional basis.

We're here because, one way or another, we love photography. We've witnessed the dawn of digital and the subsequent development of small, light and powerful mirrorless models. Lenses have become better than ever, with unbelievable autofocus and zoom ranges. Smartphones are catching up to DSLRs in many ways. Thanks to the tools at hand, photography has never been so accessible.

Of course, it's not just about getting a camera and using it to document anything you come across. The process itself becomes a new means of experiencing the world. You see things all around you that you never would have noticed and enjoy moments that would otherwise pass you by. And the better able you are to make images that express your experience, the more enjoyable it becomes.

EDITORIAL



As usual it is with pleasure that Gary Beaton and I have put together this Issue 93 for you. We both enjoy our roles and take pride in upholding the DIGIT high standard. Those really observant of you may have noticed that we have changed the printer to Mixam's. The DI Competition Catalogue Editor, Ian Thompson, used Mixam's for the prior catalogue and we were all very impressed with both the quality and prices. So after further research and committee consideration the decision was made to leave Lings, from whom we have had excellent service over many years. By moving to Mixam's we felt we could maintain the quality and save some money - we hope you agree.

Content though is always king. Without our wonderful

Many of us join the Royal Photographic Society because we want to improve our own photography and our appreciation of photography. While in many ways photography is a solitary activity, many of us not only benefit by learning from others and by sharing what we know, but we also enjoy doing so. The society of other photographers enhances our enjoyment of photography.

As a special interest group within the RPS, the purpose of Digital Imaging is 'promoting the art and the craft of digital imaging'. We aim to accomplish this through a variety of initiatives and activities, ranging from publications through traditional exhibitions and competitions to online talks, workshops and small critique and processing groups. We are a group of amateurs, people passionate about photography, and we are all volunteers.

We know that members of Digital Imaging appreciate the many benefits of membership. But we won't be able to continue to maintain them, much less improve upon them, without the support of more volunteers. For example, in pre-pandemic times we had an annual print exhibition on show at a few venues around the UK. Unfortunately, the volunteer exhibition co-ordinator had to step down. Now we have three prospective venues (and volunteers to stage the exhibition in them), but no-one to co-ordinate between them. And there are other big jobs to fill - Deputy Chair (Chair Designate), Social Media Manager - and many other, smaller ways we could use a hand.

Why not join us? Contact digsecretary@rps.org for more information.

Then go forth and make hay while the sun shines. Enjoy your photography!

Rex Waygood and Deborah Loth

contributors we wouldn't have DIGIT. It is always a pleasure to work with them and to share in their delight at being published. This issue we have one lady for whom this is a 'first'. It is always a thrill to see your work in print and being appreciated by others, but never more so than that first time. Thank you to all our contributors. Each issue we aim to achieve a balance of different genres, some informative articles and others to inspire you. If you feel you have something to contribute then do get in touch with us by e-mail at digchair3@rps.org. Use the same email if you have a suggestion of an individual you would like us to feature or something you would like to see covered. It is your magazine, so tell us what you want.

Janet Haines



WHEN THE SOUL IS AT PLAY

ANNEMARIE HOOGWOUD

Annemarie was born and raised in Amsterdam. Many years ago, she discovered her love of the landscape of Friesland in the northern Netherlands. She has now lived and worked in Friesland for over 20 years and can often be found out in the landscape with her camera, which is where she feels most at home.

I am inspired by beauty as I experience it through the visual arts, novels, poems and music. I use the camera in search of the essence of what touches me and what I see and experience. I take the time to discover what it means to me.

Truly creating from what drives me is often challenging for me. 'Taking the time' is a common thread in my work: 'By taking time I will see more and look differently'.

Beginnings

I discovered my love for the camera through my neighbour, a passionate landscape photographer. I was then 15 years old. It was only years later, in the mid-90s, and after a

different career, that I started to focus seriously on photography. I was following an analogue course at the time and established myself as a professional photographer in 2000. Broadly educated, I initially did all types of photography, from weddings to funerals and from products to portraits.

In 2003, I returned to where my heart lies, to the landscape. During this time, I got a commission from the government to photograph the layout of the landscape. Everything began to fall into place.

For several years, I photographed the landscape in the classical way. One of the characteristics of my photographic work at the time was

showing the beauty, the emptiness, the simplicity, and the silence of the landscape. And looking at my work now, after all these years, I see that those are still my starting points.

Searching

Yet, I started to search. Searching for what drives me when I am in the landscape.

Searching for what kind of landscape photographer I actually wanted to be.

Afterwards I saw that the reason for this was that I never felt completely at home in the world of classical landscape photography. I love looking at beautiful landscape photos, but the drive to take



a light exists in spring

them myself has faded into the background.

In this search I came across Charlie Waite's book *The Making of Landscape Photographs*. That immediately felt like coming home. One of his approaches is to ask what the landscape has to say to you. That, and his spiritual approach to the landscape, really appealed to me.

On Charlie's advice, I followed my heart and intuition more and more. My photographic heart remained with the landscape, but in a different way, more detached from

the technique, which has become second nature to me and on which I can rely.

My images changed. Even more tranquil, serene, and more focused on simplicity than before.

I was becoming more and more aware of the connection I have with the landscape and the world we live in.

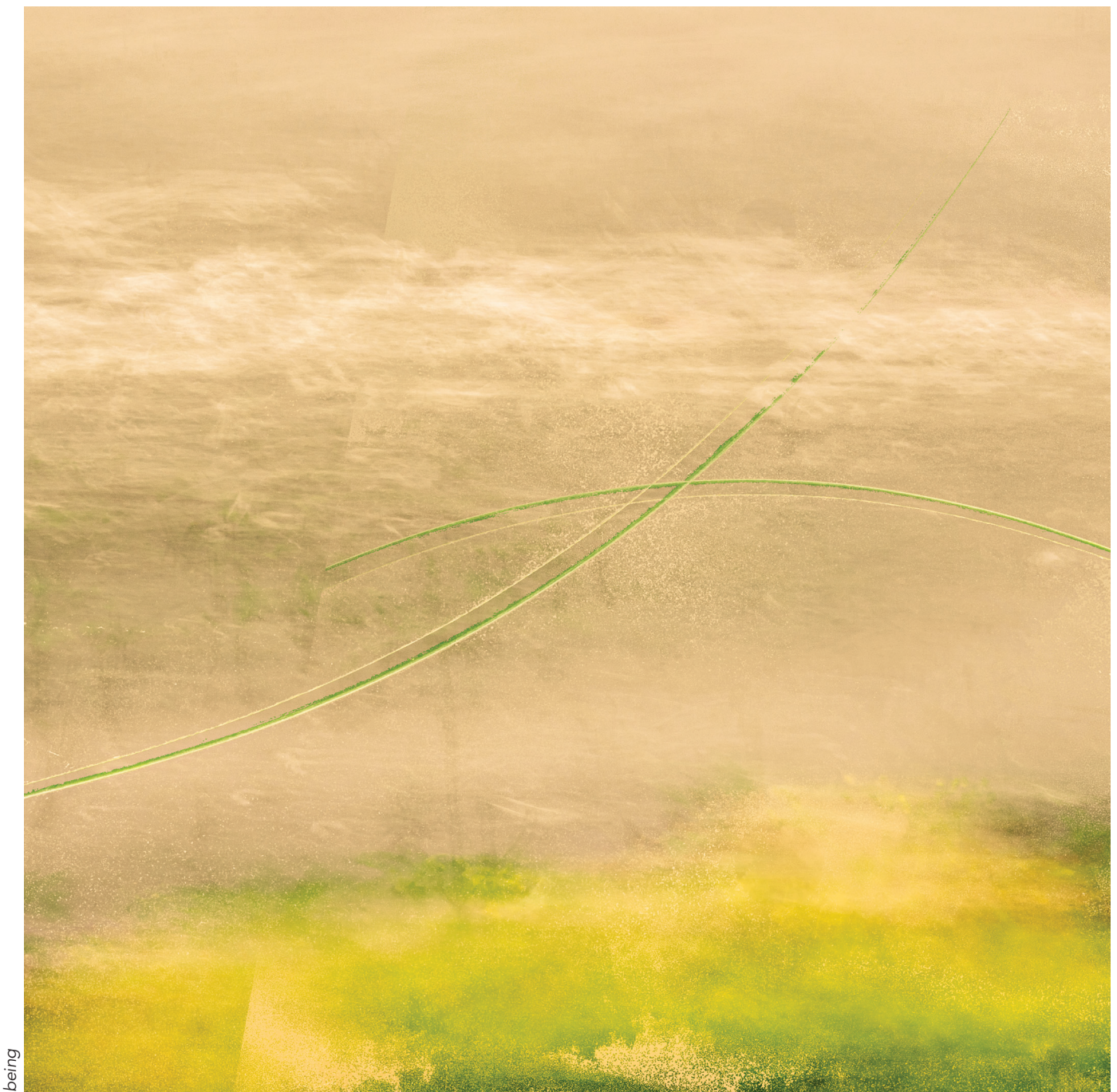
Projects

In 2015, this focus led to the start of two long-term photo projects that turned out to be the prelude to the next creative step in my work.

The first project was an assignment to capture 40 years of spatial planning, and in particular the dilemmas within it, in five images. I saw myself taking the first steps towards a more artistic way of photography. I captured the dilemmas by combining images. This technique arose intuitively, it was only later that I discovered that it is called multiple exposure (ME).

"The images are necessary so that we are able to tell the story," the client said when presenting the images. A great boost for any artist.

The other project was to fulfill my



being

long-standing dream to depict the novel *Night Train to Lisbon* by Pascal Mercier. A novel that touches me deeply on the first page, doesn't let go and of which I know 'I want to imagine this'. Without knowing why, I start, again I follow my heart and intuition. In 2018 this leads to my photo book *The Quest* with a foreword by Charlie Waite, a beautiful exhibition in Amsterdam and an incredibly beautiful review by the author of the novel. Here too I used a technique that I only get to know in full later; I moved my camera during the recording of the image. It turns out to be intentional

camera movement (ICM).

As mentioned, both projects lead to my first serious ME and ICM photography. I notice that this freedom suits me well. I will move more and more, intuitively, with my camera, merge images. A new world unfolds before my eyes. A world that awakens my curiosity and again asks me to search.

A new phase

The search for the depth in this way of photographing I find with Valda Bailey and Doug Chinnery. It will be the second time of coming home to my creative life. I am learning more

and more to work in series, fed by a theme. The biggest discovery I make with them is that the themes, almost automatically, come straight from my soul.

A new phase begins. A phase in which I can show in a different way what occupies me, what moves me. A phase in which I am challenged to visualize my inspirations on several layers. And a phase in which I challenge the viewer to look at a different level. Not 'what is it' but 'what do you see' and 'what does it do to you', becomes the challenge when looking at my work.



a loving guide



silent optimism

It is during that period that I actually experience how my work changes.

When the soul is at play!

Working from a theme and in series, based on what touches, inspires, and motivates me, has become my new way of working. The series have their origins in a poem, a discovery about my own life or what

moves me in the world around me. In other words: the series arise in my soul.

By working this way, I get to the essence, and I can show the full extent of the story that wants to be depicted and expressed. At the same time, I also see more abstraction emerging in my work. Two developments that go hand in

hand.

Several series follow: 'Landscapes of the Soul', about my search for what 'home' means to me, 'Join the Unknown' about what it means that our world view has changed since 2020, and 'Forever is Composed of Nows' about the relationship between the now and the future, inspired by a beautiful poem of

Emily Dickinson.

Unusual images arise. Images that tell a story, images that ask to take the time, images that call for reflection.

Looking back over the past more than 20 years, I can see how I was mainly concerned with recording the design of the landscape; I photographed from the outside in with an accurate portrayal of what I saw as a goal. Gradually that starts to change, and I started shooting more and more from the inside out, using the landscape as a means of expressing how I see and feel about it.

This gives the poetry and abstraction more space in my work. It is liberating when the soul is actually at play.

In the words of the Greek philosopher Aristotle, 'The aim of art is not to represent the outward appearance of things, but the inwardness...that is the real reality.'

I see it in both my own work and in the work of others who I admire and in which I am touched. There I experience that there is a connection from the interior of the artist, the inner essence, with the inner essence of the outer world. In my case the landscape.

I would like to say, in an extension of Aristotle, that it is the interior of the artist that is depicted.

What I hope is that in this hectic, restless, and hard world my art will inspire you to stand still, evoke an emotion and invite you to reflect on what is seen. With the stories that arise, we inspire each other, we give each other hope and perhaps renewed energy. Art is healing, a lot has already been said and written about it. It is also my experience, and the experience of visitors to my exhibitions. Some of the wonderful responses from visitors include, 'your images tell a story and therefore make me more aware of what I feel', 'they caress my eye' and 'your images show me the way'.

In my photography I have always



song of life

sought desolation, emptiness and loneliness. Sometimes I deviate from that for a while, but always, after having made some more complex images, I notice that I long for those more silent images of the beginning, only now more abstract, for me the poetry of photography, a portrait of a feeling.

Over the past 20 years I have given my thread 'taking the time' step by step more space. This is and remains a constant challenge at a time when everything must be done quickly, when economic growth seems more important than personal growth and a time when attention and care for the world we live in often loses out. For me, 'taking the time' is essential, to discover, see and experience

what is happening inside and outside of me.

Fortunately, I also see a different world slowly emerging. A world in which the focus is more on 'taking care of', in the broadest sense of the word.

If my art can contribute to that, and I see that slowly developing, then I am a happy person.

The Soul is at Play, I wish this to everyone ●

DISCOVER MORE

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IS THERE ART IN THE SELFIE?

CHRIS HILTON LRPS

Chris Hilton LRPS travels the world, continually on the lookout for visual absurdities to add to his collection. He also likes hats.

It all started with the Venetian glass blowers in those hot, sweaty, secretive workshops where men toiled to turn sand into glass...in acts that must have seemed more akin to conjurers than to craftsmen they eventually managed to turn that glass into mirrors. And the artists loved them!

During the Italian renaissance there was an explosion of artists using this new fangled technology to look at themselves, and some would say, to look into their own souls.

Rembrandt was one of the most prolific with almost ten per cent of his work being self-portraits. But does that mean he was obsessed with his own vanity? Only if we look at that body of work through the Instagram-tinged eyes of the twenty-first century.

Rembrandt was, indeed, looking into his own soul. It was part of an artist's training. Great artists could reflect not just a face, but emotion, they could look at what was going on 'behind' the eyes. And the

self-portrait was a good way to practice...and an even better way to advertise what you could do. Think of it as a calling card writ large. Of course, that's not the whole story. You should never underestimate an artist, the use of self-promotion in these 'practise pieces' was *de rigueur*. By making sure the cut of his jib was similar to Titian or that his pose was reminiscent of Raphael he was, not so subtly aligning himself with the greats that had come before.

IS THERE ART IN THE SELFIE?

To a great degree, the 'art' of the self-portrait has been lost in the modern age. It's much less about self-exploration and more about self-aggrandisement...the self-promotion bit is still very much front and centre. All that primping and preening, posing and pouting, it's about being a slave to the 'like' button. I once met a young woman in south east Asia who'd been travelling for three weeks, a prolific photographer she'd amassed twelve thousand images, but they were all of her! If you allow for eight hours sleep per day, that means she took a picture of herself roughly once every one hundred seconds! I've often wondered if you are that busy taking pictures of yourself then when would you be able to make time to actually look at them all? Better, surely, to just walk around with a mirror glued to a stick?

There is, of course, another form of selfie. Not cropped quite as tight as to be a self-portrait but rather wider, showing some of the environment. There is a rather iconic painting that springs to mind, the *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog* by Caspar David Friedrich. You'll have all seen it, we view the back of a lone figure gazing out into the majesty of nature.

Sublime, serene, the lone figure is in awe of all he surveys. There is mystery surrounding the figure. It raises questions. The figure appears youthful yet they have a walking stick, and if they needed a walking aid it speaks of the struggle the figure had to get to his lofty position. It's about the relationship between man and his environment and quite different from the way these images are constructed today. In the modern, photographic selfie we no longer see the subjects back. The figure is facing the camera (and therefore the viewer), it's obvious who it is and why they are there. Sometimes it's just a box ticking exercise. Here I am at the Eiffel Tower or in the case of the young woman we talked about earlier; here I am in the Killing Fields of Cambodia, which I found



unfathomable. But mostly it's about looking at a view and thinking 'How can I improve that? I know, I'll put 'me' in it. It epitomises everything I've come to despair of in the social media world, photography, the 'me' culture and narcissism in general. So it came as quite a surprise when I was asked to write about my selfies...I take selfies? Well, I've had a look and much to my surprise it turns out that I do!

Of course, in the early days of my photographic career, I knew I was taking them. Back then I still hadn't made my mind up as what kind of photography I really liked, so I was

trying it all, and as for portraits, friends and family were getting fed up with me looking at them through the lens so I trained it upon myself.

In fact, at one point, I had a bit of a project going. One self-portrait a week for a year and in the noble tradition of the Renaissance artists; it was a learning exercise, though not for me the lofty ideals of capturing emotion. If I managed at any point to relay some kind of response from behind the eyes, it was purely accidental. For me, the learning curve was that insurmountable behemoth, Photoshop. Each weekly portrait

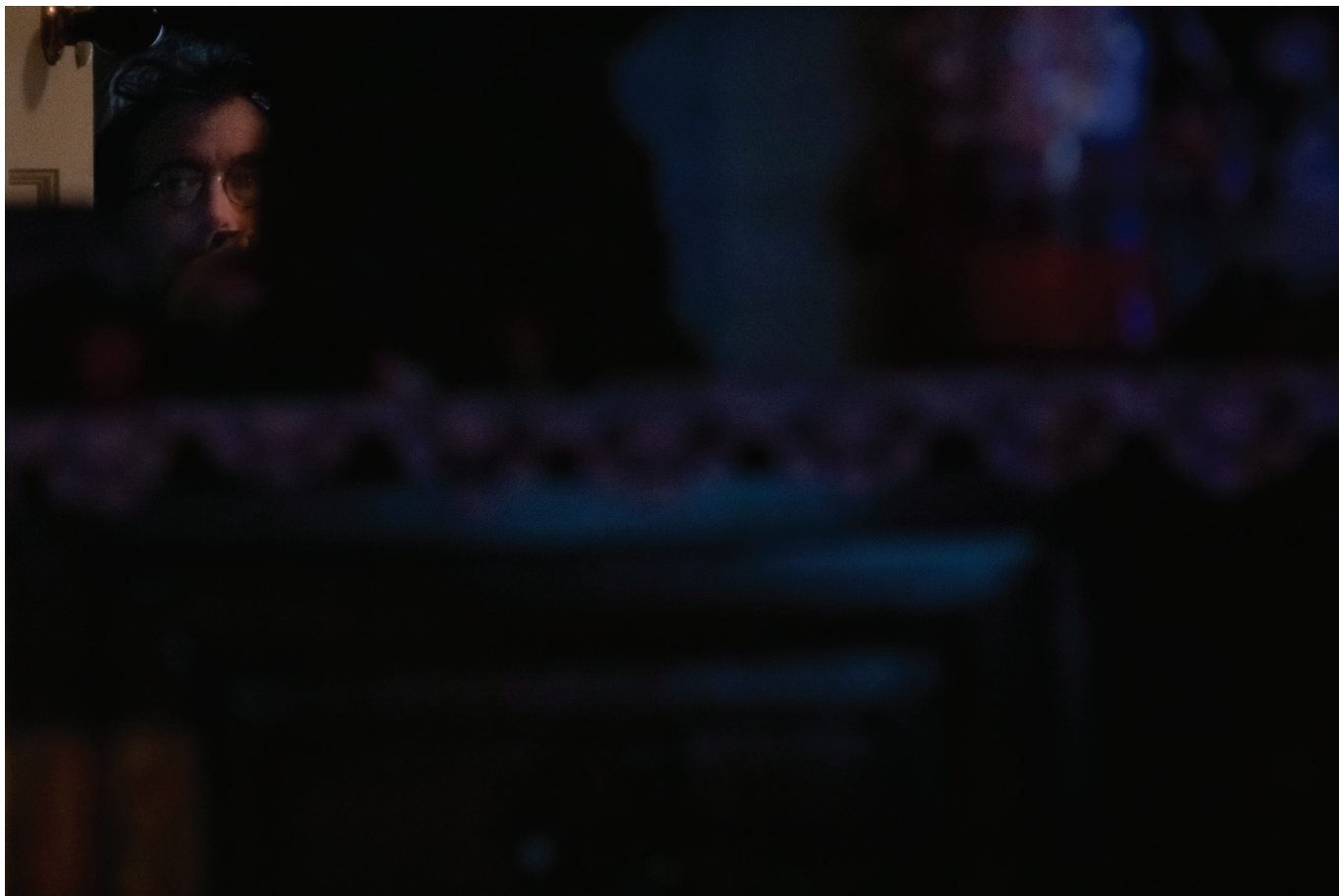


had to be manipulated in a different way. Over the course of that year I cast spells, I held balls of fire in the palms of my hands, I shot it from my fingertips. I levitated, I had skin made from newspaper, I strode across the Cobb at Lyme Regis like a colossus, I played tennis with myself and ended up as a zombie. Back then, before it was fashionable, I also made an image that commented about the addiction to social media. I set myself up as a photographic busker and the caption read 'will photograph for stars and likes'.

There have been many projects since, most of them are ongoing but one I'm particularly attached to is 'Things I Saw Today'. Again, it was a learning curve and this time I was learning about what sort of photographer I am. I knew what kind of photographer I thought I was. Obviously, I was Nick Hedges, Chris Killip and Brassai, all rolled into one! I loved that rich monochrome and gritty subject matter. I'd strived to emulate it, I even won the amateur section of *The Documentary Photographer of the Year* with my gravelly portrayal of farming life...but... when I didn't have a specific task my photography was very different. It was much lighter, quirkier, humorous even. So I set myself a task and weirdly it started with no plan!

I set out to be entirely visceral. To just react to the things that drew me, no plan, no reason, no thought for if the photograph would even be any good. To just react to what I saw...be that a colour, a shadow, a sparkle...it didn't matter, if I looked at it twice, I photographed it without question as to why, not even bothering to understand what attracted me to it in the first place. The hope being that over time, patterns and themes would start to emerge...and from those patterns and themes I would start to see the stories...the real ones, the ones that were already in my subconscious, the stories that kept me up at night, the ones I needed





to tell, not the ones I felt I 'ought' to be telling.

I'll put aside for a moment those rather in-depth conversations that are to be had about the relationships between subject, theme and content and concentrate on what first began to emerge. It seemed I was taking pictures of shadows, lines, reflections, visual absurdities and things that made me smile. During the course of which, particularly with the shadows and reflections, I took pictures of myself. I'd never really considered them as actual selfies as the 'self' part of it was completely irrelevant. It was just an innate reaction to what I saw in front of me. But looking at them now, I would have to say that the best kind of selfie is one where a Dugong is hanging out of your face.

Things I Saw Today is a project without end. It is a useful tool, a barometer, a measure of things, although I did reach the point where I almost knew what to expect but then, gradually, it began to change. Something else began to

creep in...something with a sense of separation, of loss, something that was almost 'looking on'...

I kept these images to one side (the inevitable selfies amongst them) and as they grew in number, I began to realise that it was my subconscious documenting my slide into illness. I have been suffering pain, crushing fatigue, pins and needles in my hands and feet, shortness of breath, and chest pains.

I've never had a career, I've never defined myself by my work, I've only ever been a glorified navy but now I was beginning to realise that I've always defined myself by my physicality, by what I could do. And I was documenting how I felt about not being able to do any of that quite so easily.

Six years on from starting *Things I saw Today* and it turns out that the story that keeps me awake at night is me...quite literally...the story that my self-conscious wants to tell, is all about me ... me, me, me. Have I been obsessed with my own

vanity? Should I just go the whole hog and get a mirror on a stick and gaze upon myself like a modern-day Narcissus? Perhaps I've been kidding myself and it was just self-aggrandisement all along!

But wait, it's also ten years on from that first self-portrait session and now I'm capturing an emotion. That elusive quality that means the pixels you commandeer are not just showing the surface of things but the 'meaning' behind them.

Maybe now the real work starts. Perhaps this is the beginning of learning the difficult stuff, the stuff that goes beyond mere composition and technique. There really has been something in this self-portraiture lark all along and you know what they say about practise...and if it was good enough for Rembrandt ... ●

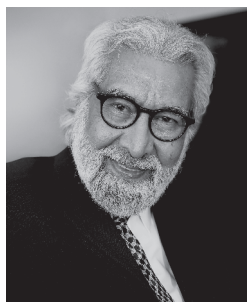
DISCOVER MORE

visuallycuriousphotography.com

Anterior segment image of a metastatic deposit on the iris



Courtesy: Bob Tapper, Royal London Hospital, London, UK



CLINICAL PRECISION

PROFESSOR AFZAL ANSARY ASIS FRPS

It may be a little-known discipline, but clinical photography plays a huge role in medicine and its teaching, explains Professor Afzal Ansary

Today, visual documentation of patients is integral to healthcare in the UK. But even these days many patients ask why they're being photographed. There is a lack of understanding, it seems, among some patients as well as the public at large, of the role of clinical photography in healthcare.

Application of photography to medicine is almost as old as photography itself. Soon after photography was invented, French neurologist Duchenne de Boulogne documented facial expressions triggered by electric

stimulation to study 'physiology of emotion'. Duchenne was convinced that the 'truth' of his pathognomic experiments could only be effectively rendered by photography, the subject's expressions being too fleeting to be drawn or painted. 'Only photography,' he wrote, 'as truthful as a mirror, could attain such desirable perfection'.

In the early days patients were photographed either by the high street portrait photographer or the doctor treating the patient, but these days most large

university teaching and NHS Trust hospitals have a department of medical illustration, providing a variety of services including clinical photography. The types of skills required to take these photographs have also moved on. Besides being a technically competent photographer, clinical photographers are required to have a basic knowledge of radiological orientation, human anatomy and physiology, pathology, surgical procedures and medical terminology. They need to have an understanding of the sort of work done in specialist areas of medicine,

surgery and pathology - from ophthalmology and paediatrics, to neurosurgery and immunology - as well as of the terminology clinicians use. The wide range of diseases and conditions a clinical photographer may come across requires an arsenal of techniques; some specialised, for example the use of a ring flash, retractors and dental mirrors in intra-oral photography.

Despite the technicalities, however, the clinical photographer's most useful tool is the ability to put patients at ease, ensuring they are calm, comfortable and cognisant of the consent needed to have their photographs taken. When asked by the patient as to why he/she is being photographed, the clinical photographer should be able to explain this in a simple language without discussing the patient's diagnosis, prognosis, aetiology or management of treatment. The important consideration in clinical photography is the patient and the paramount purpose of any hospital is to provide care and treatment.

While the in-hospital studio, with its consistency of lighting

and background material, is the preferred location for clinical photography, there will be many cases where the photographer is required to work elsewhere – in wards, clinics, the intensive care unit (ICU), mortuary, isolation wards, laboratories and out-patient department. This range of locations demands a good understanding of the Health and Safety at Work Act, and of regulations regarding handling of infectious material, culture plates and specimens. Infection prevention and control is a very serious issue in all hospitals and so is the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH). All members of staff, including clinical photographers, are given training on these issues. To work in an operating theatre requires strict protocol rules to be observed as it is a sterile area and any contamination can cause harm. Again, strict rules apply when working in the autopsy room during post-mortems being performed by the pathologist or forensic pathologist.

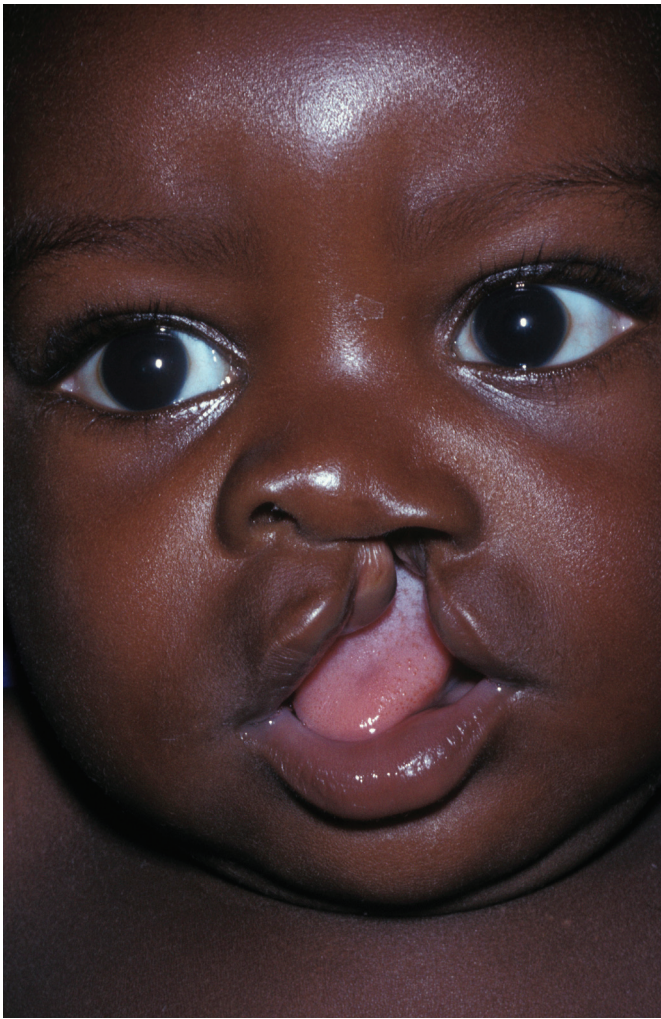
In many cases, the photographer might need to take images several times at various intervals - the

essence of his or her work being the accurate and repeatable pictorial documentation of patients, throughout various stages in the history of disease. The object, in most cases, is to assist the clinicians in assessing progression or regression in the condition of the patient, so accurate anatomical standardisation is important. The resulting images will often go further than the clinic itself, providing material for teaching, research and publications. Clinical photographs may also be used for medico-legal purposes and produced in a law court as evidence. Therefore, these have to be authentic and accurate in scale.

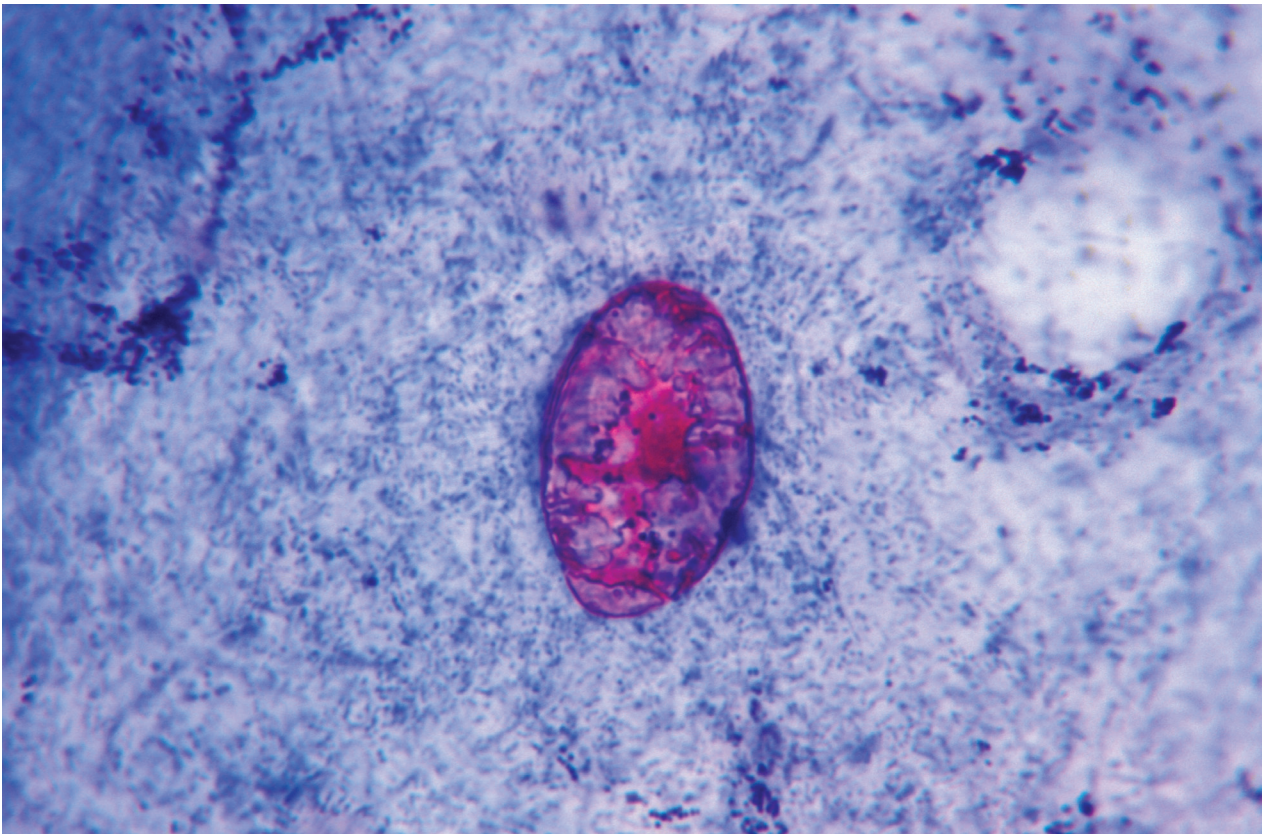
In research terms, the application of imaging in medical research is vast and varied - for clinical research photography, visible and invisible sections of the electromagnetic spectrum can be used to record what can and cannot be seen by the human eye. Many different techniques are used including, for example, high-speed video recordings to analyse the biomechanics of the human body in sports medicine, and time-lapse ▶



Tonsil hypertrophy: Enlarged tonsils of an HIV positive patient.



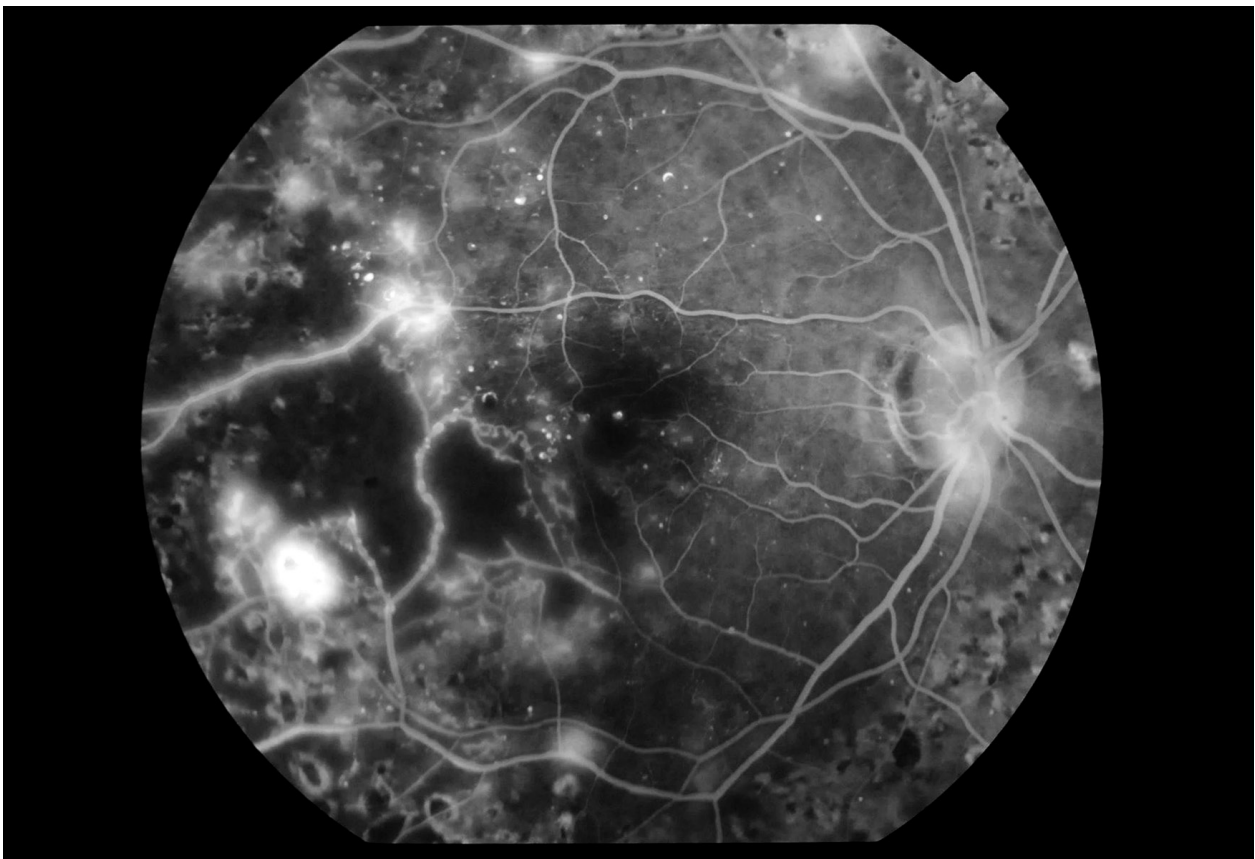
Face of a baby with a cleft, or hare, lip (left). This is a birth defect caused by a failure of the face to fuse together correctly during the embryonic stage of development. The image on the right shows the same patient after surgical repair.



Light micrograph of a *Cryptosporidium* sp. protozoan found in the diarrhoea of a patient with slim disease, a complication of AIDS.



A human foetus after eight weeks development, surrounded by an intact, fluid-filled amniotic sac. The end of the eighth week marks the point at which an embryo becomes known as a foetus.



Fundus fluorescein angiogram showing proliferative diabetic retinopathy

video recording to study the growth of bacteria in microbiology. In the mid-sixties, for example, Dr Peter Cardew of St. Mary's Hospital Medical School in London devised equipment that was attached to a 16mm cine-camera to carry out direct and indirect cine-laryngoscopy for the examination of the larynx (vocal chords) in patients with myxedema.

As innovative imaging techniques in medicine are being developed, the old ones are finding new applications. For example, *The Telegraph* reported (telegraph.co.uk - 17 May 2013) on how Professor Simon Fishel, one of the world's leading fertility specialists, used time-lapse imaging to help predict which embryo had the greatest chance of a successful birth. There are a number of applications of photography in medicine such as micro and macrophotography, ultraviolet (UV) and infrared (IR) photography, time lapse and high speed, fluorescein angiography and Ocular Coherence Tomography (OCT), retinal photography, dermatoscopic imaging. These provide visual data for patient-care and research.

Future health professionals, too, benefit from the images taken by clinical photographers. Clinical photographic database is a crucial resource for the teaching medicine at undergraduate, postgraduate and continuing medical education (CME). Visual aids are used to support medical teaching, and a teacher may, for example, include medical art, graphics, still images and motion media in developing their teaching materials – for example, a surgical procedure such as kidney removal (nephrectomy) may be best illustrated in video format. At senior level, a clinical photographer may also play a role in the design, development and evaluation of the material, to ensure it meets its objectives.

Medicine is a very visual subject and will always need images and imaging. Pick up any medical journal and you will be hard pushed

to find articles without images. 3D imaging is already finding innovative use in planning of surgical procedures. Virtual reality (VR) is using images to find more and better applications in medicine, including the teaching of keyhole surgery. With the availability of digital imaging tools and techniques the taking of pictures has become much easier and instantly viewable. Often doctors may take photographs themselves using special equipment – a gastroenterologist, for example, would take pictures during an endoscopic examination, using a camera that allows sight inside the Gastro-Intestinal Tract of the patient. Similarly, a pathologist may take pictures through a

microscope during the examination of normal and abnormal cells, and other material. As time goes on, the application of imaging will only expand and it will need active, innovative and imaginative collaboration with the clinicians, clinical scientists and educators to take it forward. Therefore, it seems that highly qualified and experienced clinical photographers will have a place in medicine in the future. However, they will need to expand their skills beyond taking clinical pictures and harness new media such as information technology and digital communication to provide for the demand of the client and the challenges of medicine and its teaching ●

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Accredited Senior Imaging Scientist Professor Afzal Ansary ASIS FRPS has more than half a century's experience in medical and scientific photography and has been awarded six Fellowships in his field including two Honorary Fellowships. Former Chair of the Medical Group, he is a member of the Science Committee and Chair of the Imaging Scientist Qualification Board, and established and co-ordinated the first ever International Images for Science Exhibitions in 2011 and 2013. He is also the Chair of the Combined Royal Colleges Medal Awards Committee. He won the RPS Medical Group Lancet Award in 1990, and in 2013 was awarded Fenton Medal and Honorary Life Membership of The Society. In 2020 he was awarded the President's and Trustee's Commendation Award for his meritorious service to the RPS. He is an Honorary Professor at the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, India, and also an Honorary Professor at the University of Nottingham, UK.



Gears

Richter's Garage, Yoakum, Texas
1994

He said, "There ain't nothin' to takin' 'em apart." Then he looked at me from the corner of his eye and smiled a knowing smile.



CRITIQUING CRITIQUES: SOME THOUGHTS ON GIVING AND RECEIVING FEEDBACK

BROOKS JENSEN

Publisher and editor of LensWork magazine, Brooks Jensen shares his thoughts about offering critique of photographic works which was an editorial in a recent issue of LensWork

Those of you who are members of *LensWork Online* perhaps have seen the section called *Voice of the Masters* - a project that I started years ago to convert all the cassette recordings I've gathered over the years from lectures, interviews, workshops, and critique sessions. I'm now in the process of converting all of those archive recordings into MP3 files and posting them at *LensWork Online*. That's the background for this *Editor's Comments* about critiquing critiques.

Part of the reason that I made all of these audio recordings over the years was so that I could re-listen to the comments that workshop instructors made about *my* work, knowing that in the moment of receiving the critique, my mind is racing and probably missing important points. Sometimes, in my naive youth, I'd be defensive in my response to their comments, or sometimes busy thinking about

what they'd said, and so miss what they said subsequently. I knew by recording these critiques on audio cassette and re-listening later, I'd probably hear subtleties and make connections that I wasn't able to make in the moment.

Having your work critiqued is a learning opportunity unlike any other. One of the things that is very interesting to me as I've gone back and listened to these recordings now, sometimes 30 or 40 years later, is listening for *how* the instructor conducts a critique. After listening to a lot of these recorded critiques, I've observed that nine out of ten instructors doing critiques offer the same kind of feedback, that is to say, they make comments of a *technical nature* about the work. They'll say, "Well, this one's a little dark; this one needs more contrast; with this one it's too bad you don't have more on the top." Particularly in the 1980s and 90s when I was experimenting with

toners, there were a lot of comments about the brown toner I used - all technical discussions.

I learned from one of the best photography critique instructors of our generation - David Bayles - that those are not necessarily the comments that are going to drive the project forward. They may drive the technological interpretation of a project; they may drive our knowledge about craft and technique; but they don't necessarily help with the *content* of a project.

Content and critiques

Bayles never talked much about craft or technique in his comments. It's not that he would ignore it, but if there were technical issues with the printing or he had comments about negative development, he definitely offered those- but that wasn't the *limit* of what he offered. It was the limit of nine out of ten critiques that I've observed over the years.

Here's a good example. I offer this because I know a lot of you are involved in teaching workshop programs, or you're part of a photo group of peers where you're making comments about each other's work, etc. I offer these comments about critiques because I'm hopeful that they may contribute something that will improve your experience in not only conducting these critiques, but receiving critiques from other.

I was having a critique done of the *Made of Steel* work that eventually became my book about greasy machine shop guys, their tools, and places where they worked. By way of background about the project, I explained---and you can hear this on the tape--- that I was engaged in this project primarily because of my grandfather. He was a machine shop guy, one of these greasy tool people. He made such an impact on my life that I felt I wanted to do this project partly because of my relationship with my grandfather and partly because I saw this way of life disappearing. I wanted to capture it photographically and tell their story. This eventually led to the use of image and text --- part of the story told visually, and part of it verbally.

As was so often the case, the workshop instructor was commenting on the brown toner, the relative values of light and dark, contrast and cropping, and the obligatory comments about composition. "Too bad you didn't

move to the left here a little bit, burn down on the right side here" etc. Not once did he ask me about my grandfather; not once did he ask me about the ideas I was trying to get across in the project that was inspired by my grandfather; not once did he ask what I might want the audience to take away after they've seen the work and read the text; not once was it discussed about what I might want them to take away about these guys or their way of life. As I've been converting these old cassette-recorded critiques, I've found a couple dozen critiques of this work in various settings. Not once did *anyone* ask any questions about the *content* of this project.

In my way of thinking, the content of a project is the most important part of any critique! The content of my project is not the brown tones that I used or how I printed on gelatin silver paper. It's not the fact that I used text to supplement the images. All of that is only the *media* I was using to try to say something about these guys, and their disappearing way of *life*. It's their life that, to me, was the content. We all know that *content is king*, but few make comments about content in a critique.

Offering comments on someone's work in a critique session - formal or informal - should explore technique in a sort of reverse engineering way. *Does this technique make the content visually stronger?* The 90%

that is the meat and potatoes of a critique is ... *Are you getting across in the images what you intend to get across?* That is to say, what is the core idea, emotion, or content that you're trying to express? Can you distill that into its essence and then analyze whether or not that is actually coming through in your photograph or project?

I'm a fan of the critique technique where you simply express *in one word* what you get out of the project. What is the emotion? What is the feeling? What is the mood? What is the question that you have when you look at a body of work? If you can distill that to one word, or maybe at most one sentence, then the creator of the work has the opportunity to distinguish for themselves whether or not what you received is what they intended. Or did you receive something that didn't have anything to do with what they intended? Or did you get the wrong message about what they intended? That, to me, is the true function of doing a critique in a workshop or a teaching session.

Yes, a critique is an opportunity to learn about technology and about post-processing decisions, but *in relationship to what end?* I tend to think that all processing decisions, all cropping decisions, all subject decisions are a function of what the objective is, what the content is, what it is that you want to say, and how can you determine if you've said



Standing drill bits

Ellensburg, Washington
1986

Two weeks after I photographed this metal shop, it burned to the ground. Welding sparks splattered on the wooden floor, they said.



Joe Sasak

"Oh, dat. I don't t'row dat away. We use dat yet. We can still make sump in' outta dis guy. You can make a collar outta dis one yet - bore the t'read out - cut dis flat - maybe cut deese here corners off yet." He thought some more during a pause, "I could make a smaller nut outta dat yet, too. Never t'row anything away," he advised, you never know when you might need it." There was another thoughtful pause after which he added, "Or if you'll be able to find it".

it correctly, powerfully, convincingly, persuasively?

If you don't have any idea what it is that you want to say, the first thing that has to be explored in a critique session is *what is the photographer's intent?* Does that come through? And if it does, what elements of the images or the project are the strongest ones that bring that content through? And can we find ways to do more of *that* in a project to make it stronger and more powerful and more communicative? And if there are elements of the project - as it exists in the critique phase - that are *not* enhancing that intended outcome, then how can we change those in order to make them stronger?

Reverse engineering

I don't think you can answer questions like, *Is brown tone the right tone for this project?* unless you first know what it is you're trying to communicate. High contrast, low contrast, cropping tightly, cropping loosely, black-and-white or color, shallow depth of field, large depth of field - these are all decisions that have to be made in the technical aspect of creating a photographic image or project that are a function of what the final outcome is hoped or intended to be by the creator. If you don't know that, how do you proceed? There's no way you

can possibly reverse engineer a project in terms of post-processing decisions or media decisions or any of that until you first have an idea of what the project or image is all about. And if a photographic project isn't about some content, some message, some emotion, mood, questions, theory, dream - if it doesn't have some content that drives all other decisions you'll just flounder around the edges, dabbling with technical options without direction.

Intentions

In the making of a photographic image or project, it can't be good or bad except in relationship to what it is that you're intending to do. So the first thing to figure out in any critique session is what is the photographer intending to do? That's more difficult than it sounds, because most of us who are photographers are not particularly verbal people. That's why we're involved in photography - we're *visual* thinkers. When you ask a photographer *"What do you want me to walk away with after looking at your work?"* most of the time, in my observations, they'll have a difficult time answering. Explaining that requires verbal skill, something that not all of us have because, as I say, we're visual people.

The first challenge when leading a critique session is to try to help

the photographer flesh out in words what it is that they're hoping to accomplish. That's a talent possessed by all the best workshop instructors or teachers. Their role is in leading, guiding, coaxing, nudging, trial ballooning ideas so that the photographer can become more aware of what their intentions are for the image or the project. Intentions exist, but uncovering them is a challenge.

Then, once the intentions are firmly established (which is most of the work in my way of thinking), then the question simply becomes *Are the techniques employed and the result produced consistent with that objective?*

This is my mission when I do portfolios reviews like at Houston FotoFest or Photolucida. I'll talk with the photographer and learn what it is that they're hoping their body of work accomplishes. Then I try to give them feedback about what I see is possibly a *disconnect* between what they've said they want the work to accomplish and what the work feels like it actually accomplishes.

My role as a reviewer is to try to show them the strengths in the project as it is produced - or as it has been produced up to this point - relative to what they've said they want to accomplish. Every project or image is a result of those decisions



Cash register

Sedalia, Indiana
1989

He looked like Custer with long, flowing white hair and moustache. The register was empty. He kept all his money in his pocket.

the artist has made. Those decisions either enhance the content they were hoping to communicate or detract. Knowing these consciously in relation to their (often unstated) goal, they can maybe do more of those things that enhance and let go of some of the ideas that aren't working so successfully.

There's an art to doing a critique. Whenever I find the workshop instructor or the teacher is focused primarily on the technical aspects of producing the image, that tells me that individual is not in touch with the content of the work. Perhaps they just don't 'get it.' Or maybe their personal process is so focused on processing images and all of the technical steps involved in photography that they just don't take the time to develop the sensitivity necessary for effectively commenting on another's work. I might even go so far as to say the reviewer lacks the *compassion* to understand what it is that the photographer is wanting to accomplish with their work.

A lot of times, by the way, this can become complicated because the photographer can be resistant to the idea that they're trying to communicate anything. It's become somewhat fashionable in the art world to deny the idea that there is intent in the artist. Instead, any way you want to interpret their work is

fine with them. Hogwash. I just don't buy that. If the artist puts up that kind of a resistance and says that they don't have an intent then the challenge of the workshop instructor is to be clever enough to try to coax the intent out of the *unwilling* photographer who may not even be aware that they have an intent!

The bottom line is this: all of us at some point in time in our photographic life have been given the opportunity to make comments on people's work. This request to offer comments on someone's artistic process is a tremendous responsibility. We should try to help them in the most meaningful way. The most meaningful way is not going to be technical expertise about dodging and burning, contrast or color balance. All that kind of stuff can be learned on YouTube with a gazillion different training courses and videos.

Developing the ability to have something to say, and then thinking through the ways to say it most powerfully and most effectively - those are much more difficult things than mere technical excellence. This is where as a workshop instructor or as a teacher - or even just as a photo buddy making comments on your friend's work - we can really make a serious contribution to the photographer's process and to their progress and growth as an artist.

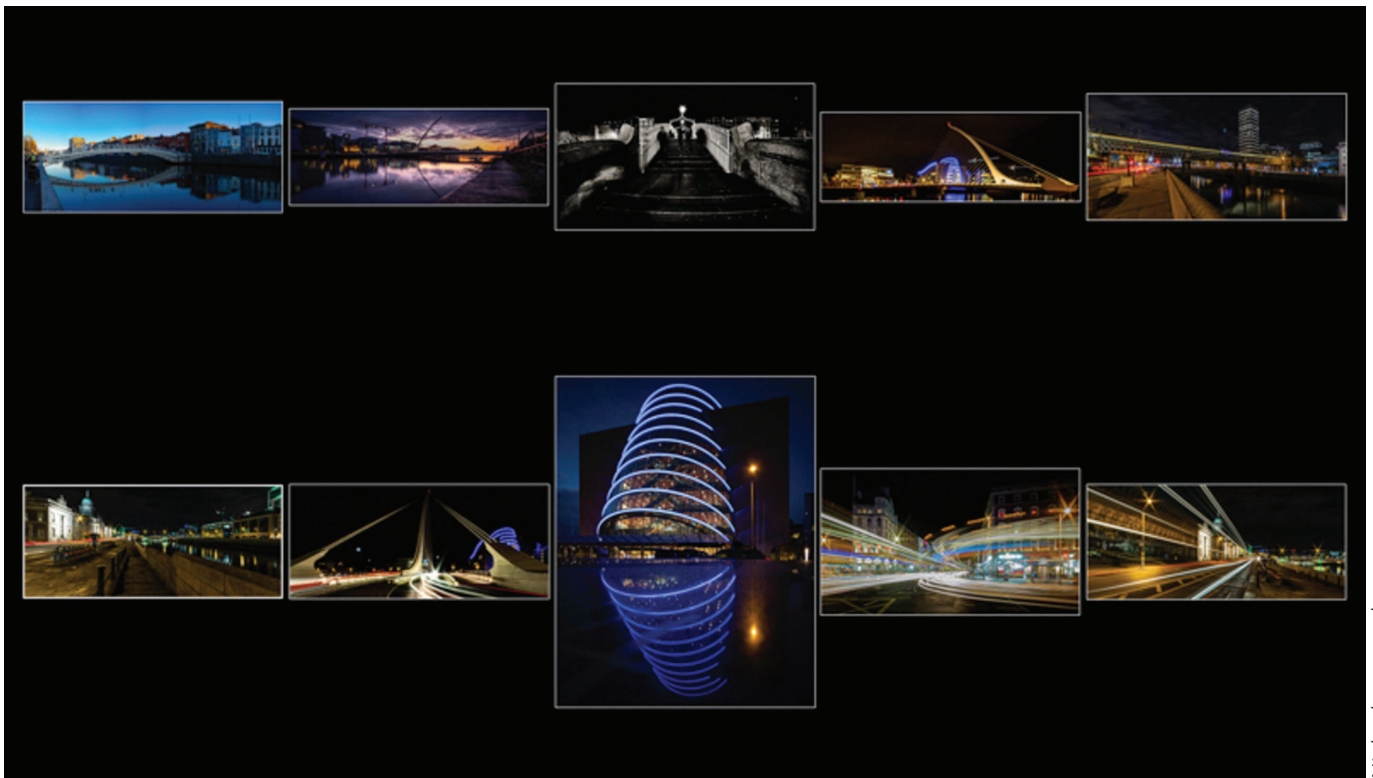
Critiques can be a lot more than technical training, but can clarify why a technique is best to be used or best to be avoided. It's not the *how*, but rather the *why*.

Critiques are about learning how to think and communicate - and how to get in touch with the deeper aspects of your work. The more you do that, the easier it becomes and the more you figure out how to do it. That can have a tremendous impact on future work and makes it easier and easier to do better and better work. Isn't that a nice contribution you can make in offering comments about someone's artwork?

Those are some of my comments about how to do critiques and how you can make a positive contribution in a critique. If you're one of these people who tend to focus critiques on technical aspects like cropping and dodging and burning and all that kind of stuff, maybe I've given you something to think about that you could add to your commentary that will be even more useful and more compassionate to the photographers who entrust you with making comments about their work ●

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Night shoot panel



PANELS AND PROCESS – NOT JUST FOR DISTINCTIONS....

JOE HOUGHTON

Dublin-based Joe Houghton takes many great shots, but that's just the starting point for producing a great panel of images.

Are panels a part of your normal creative expression with your photography? Or are they something you primarily associate with 'getting your L' or other distinctions? Are they a 'dark art' you haven't really explored as yet - something that you maybe see more advanced photographers doing but which seem a bit of a challenge?

If you'd like to come along for a few minutes with me today, I'd like to share my image making process, and explore the idea of using panels as an added step to our normal workflow as photographers, of any experience level, when making our images. An added

experience which - I find - adds another dimension to my thinking and appreciation of the images I make.

For many years now I've made it a practice to become more conscious of the process and flow of making my images. Perhaps as I get older and appreciate time passing more, this is a natural progression?

Kit choice

The first stage of this process for me is planning for a shoot, and by shoot, I mean any kind of photographic outing, be it a walk in the park with Penny and the children, a day out to the coast for long exposure work, a night walk

with students or even a client shoot. What lens(es) will I take, what kind of images do I plan to make today? I almost never leave home with more than 2 lenses anymore - gone are the days when I loaded up a heavy backpack with all my gear 'just in case'. But I may need my tripod, some filters and a remote release for instance, or I may not. Nowadays I find myself being far more intentional and accepting of the constraints that my choice of lens and equipment bring to the shots I can capture. I find that my inner eye is more sharply focused when I have self-imposed constraints such as shooting with just a 50mm prime, or a wide angle 12mm.

Mornington vista – Fujii X-T2, 25secs, f/10, ISO 200



Mayfly Fujii X-T2, 27mm, 1/250th, f/4.5, ISO 500



The shoot

The next stage of the process is being out actually shooting. I strive to 'see' the scenes around me with the focal lengths in mind of the lens I have mounted, mentally processing the views and seeking compositions which will work within the field of view of the lens. And even if I'm using a medium or long lens, there's always the possibility of shooting a panorama series if a particularly enticing vista opens up, that needs a wider angle than I brought. *Mornington vista* (top) is a panorama of 11 vertical 27mm shots taken handheld with a 1/3 overlap then stitched together later

in Lightroom.

And the same goes for close-ups - zooming with your feet is an under-used skill these days for many used to superzooms. The mayfly (above) image from last year was shot with a 27mm lens - not what you would go out with if planning to shoot such tiny creatures. Being aware of the possibilities in the next stage of the image making journey also allows you to be creative when out with your camera.

Post-processing

And that next stage is of course, post-processing. I'm one of those people who loves post-processing,

which is probably why a good number of the talks I give to clubs around the world are on Lightroom and other software. It's really useful to understand the capabilities of the various programmes we have access to these days, be it Lightroom and Photoshop - the workhorses of most people's processing - or newer tools like Affinity, Luminar, NIK and Topaz.

Knowing what these tools can bring to your post-processing enables you to make decisions when capturing the shot so you can then take maximum advantage of the post-processing.

One example of this is shooting big buildings. Leaving more space around them than you might initially want to is a good practice. If your verticals are keystone - as is often the case - the process of applying the verticals corrections in post means that you tend to lose areas from the outside of your frame as the image is distorted. In my shot in Notre Dame (next page, top) that I took in 2009, notice how we lose the chandelier on the left once the columns have been made vertical.

I can almost hear the purists grumbling about 'getting it right in camera'! But I don't have a tilt-shift lens, and perhaps only have a few minutes here on a day out with the children, so shooting wide, knowing



Notre Dame interior 2009 - original shot (left) and after post-processing (right) Nikon D300, 18mm, 1/30th sec @ f/4, ISO 3200

I will have the ability later to crop or fix means I get a shot that otherwise I wouldn't.

I went out on a hide shoot last November. Ireland in November is generally pretty dark, and so to get acceptable shutter speeds to capture birds in flight or jumping

pine martens you have to use ISO settings of 6400 or even higher, certainly with my relatively slow Tamron 150-600 f/5.6-6.3 lens. Bringing these images back into Lightroom, you might initially think - too noisy, no good, and consign them to the bin.

But advances in software in the areas of noise reduction, sharpening and upsizing have been significant in the past couple of years. Topaz, OnOne, DXO and NIK all offer excellent options for improving and resizing images, which mean that your 'unusable' shots now have far

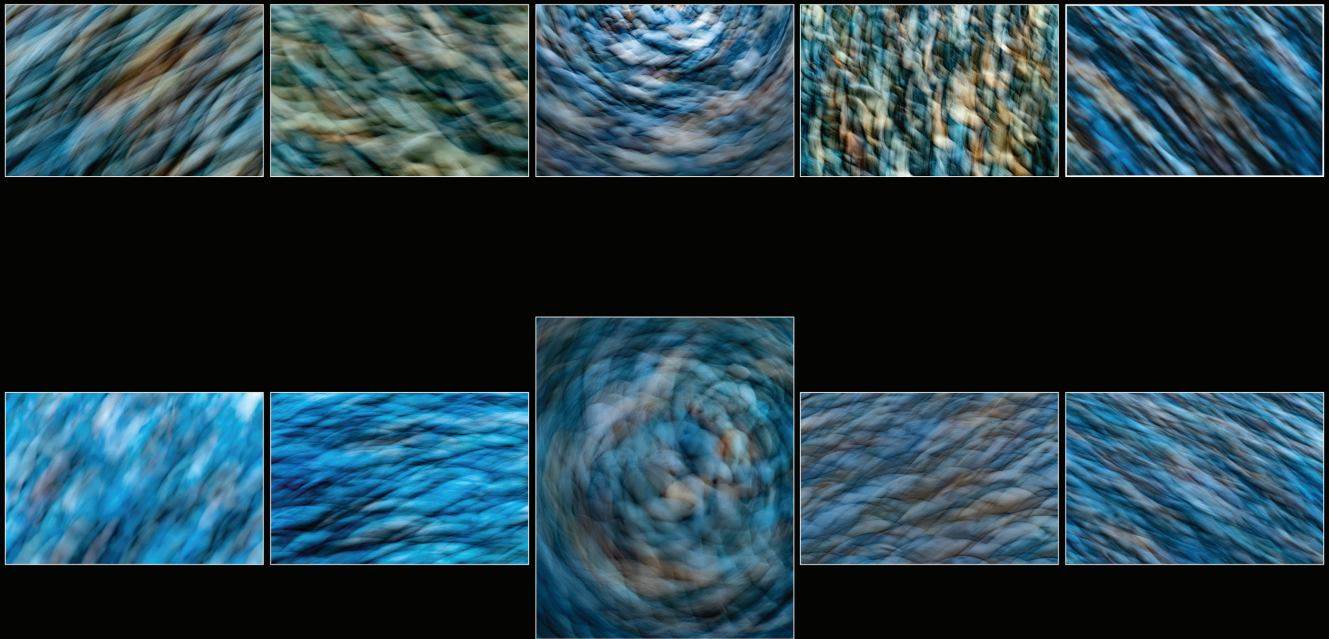


Pine marten leap - note the noise
Nikon D810, 1/2000th @ f/5, ISO 8000



Pine marten leap after Topaz AI Sharpen and Resizing
Nikon D810, 1/2000th @ f/5, ISO 8000

Pebble textures panel



greater potential for being made into final images of a high enough quality for club or competition entry. I've even created a new talk on the whole process using that hide shoot set as the basis for the evening, showing the whole workflow from import, choosing candidates and then editing using Lightroom and Topaz to produce clean, noise free images.

And this is where most people's workflow ends, with their finalised individual images, which are then consigned to the vaults of their hard drive, or perhaps used as club or competition entries or more likely, social media posts. How many images these days end up in physical form as prints, or photo books I wonder - probably very few?

Creating a panel

I'd like to persuade you to add another stage to your workflow. Assemble the 'keepers' from your shoot - the ones you have marked as 'good'. They may have been processed, or not - sometimes images come out of the camera perfect - they don't all need manipulation!

Why?

Let's start with the why before I take you through the how...

In my Pebble textures panel (above), the individual images are wonderful. They are your expression of that moment, that scene, and each stands alone as a fragmentary memory.

A panel can be more than this. Because a panel consists of multiple images - it could be 3 (a triptych), it could be 15 or even more - you can convey more. More story perhaps, or more depth of detail. A deeper exploration of a theme, or a feeling, expressed in multiple images which together sit and cohere. I like to think of the final panel almost as an image in its own right - and many of my panels are added into my rotating screen-show on my computer, so when it kicks in, they appear, reminding me of the day and the varied scenes I found myself in.

A panel can - as in the case of the distinction panels - show that you are capable of achieving a level of work across a number of images, but that is by no means the only

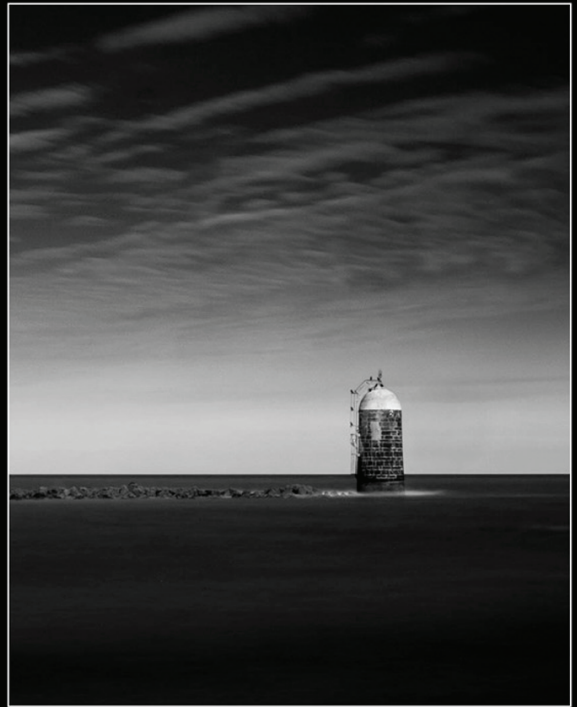
reason to put one together. Many times I create a panel to tell a story - of a party, or a walk, or a day in a special place. I can mix different format images, even colour and mono, and offer a deeper representation that any single image might do alone.

And mentally, the act of creating a panel gives me the chance to spend time with the individual shots assessing them in a different way. Sometimes my 'best' image doesn't make it into the panel because it doesn't fit well with others from my collection. I am able to reflect on the whole shoot experience, to meditate on the coherence and flow of the images as I attempt to present a set pleasing to the eye. This is, for me, one of the highlights of my whole process.

How?

This next bit is how I organise my panel in Lightroom. You could also print out small versions of your images and do this on a tabletop - that also gives a lovely, tactile sense of your photos which can be a wonderful feeling too. But for speed and efficiency, I normally do ▶





Mornington beach panel



Halloween panel

the following in Lightroom.

First select all of the 2-star images in the folder. I use the stars to rate images in the folder - 1 star is an image I like which may be edited up. 2 stars is an edited (or not) 'finished image' that I'm happy with. 3 stars and up are club, salon or portfolio standard.

So, I select all my 2-star images - the ones which I'm happy with from the day. There may be a handful, there may be many more - it depends on the day. I create a collection in Lightroom and add all these images into it. A collection allows me to re-arrange the images into whatever order I want - generally the images in the import folders can't be organised in this manner.

Next, I go into the collection and highlight all the images (Ctrl/Cmd+A). Then I go into Survey mode. This places all the selected images on screen together. Maximise the screen area that the images have to sit in by closing other windows and turning off other Lightroom elements. Press the L key twice to close Lightroom elements (press L again to bring them back, Shift + TAB restores all your panels).

I now have my images all showing on a black background, each with a narrow white border. I can drag them around, trying different positions to see what works best. I can also remove an image from the view by hovering over the image and pressing the 'X' which appears in the bottom right-hand corner. That doesn't delete the image, or remove it from your collection, it just takes it out of the selected set that you are arranging into this panel.

Re-arrange and remove until you have a set of images sitting together in a panel order that you are happy with.

My last stage here is to take a screenshot of my panel and save it with the panel images.

Job done!

Conclusion and further explorations...

Panels are a wonderful means to presenting your work, which for many, don't seem to be an integral part of the normal workflow. I hope that my musings might encourage you to try a panel or two - maybe from an existing set of images you already have.

The RPS DIG South-East region has kindly allowed me to run several series of workshops where 10 people at a time come on a 3 x 2hr set of online sessions each 2 weeks apart to go through this process. Sharing and exploring your images in the company of like-minded people has proved to be a very rewarding and illuminating journey for all concerned in the three sets we've run so far - do contact Melanie Chalk at digse@rps.org if you would like to join one of these or be put on a waiting list for future sessions ●

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Joe Houghton is a member of the RPS, Edinburgh PS in Scotland, Palmerstown CC in Ireland, the HCPS in South Africa and a founding member of MyPhotoClub.co.uk. He delivered Nikon's training in Ireland for 12 years, and now offers camera club talks around the world via Zoom on many topics. His website and details of all his talks and 1-to-1 tuition via Zoom can be found at houghtonphoto.com.



AFFINITY VS. PHOTOSHOP

CELIA HENDERSON LRPS

Are you thinking about changing your image editing software from Photoshop to Affinity? What are the considerations, what will be the same, what will be different, what might I gain and what might I lose?

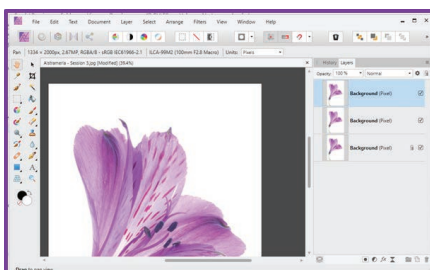
I'm sure you will have heard of Affinity Photo and Photoshop. Both are raster-based photo editing applications (in other words, they work with pixels). The cost of anything these days is a big consideration - Photoshop is subscription based at around £10 per month, whereas Affinity is a one-time purchase of about £50.

Neither application has a dedicated photo file manager - Photoshop users will often use Adobe Lightroom or Adobe Bridge for these organisation tools, whereas Affinity users will need to rely on third party photo management software.

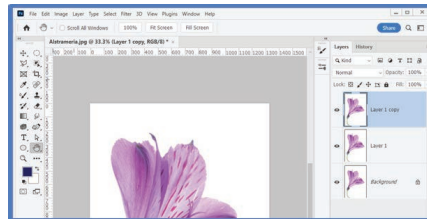
Throughout this article, note the coloured borders to identify **Affinity** or **Photoshop** screenshots.

Interface

First impressions when opening Affinity and Photoshop are that they have a similar interface and workspace. They both have menu options, a customisable toolbar on the left and panels on the right. When any tool is selected both Affinity and Photoshop display either a Context or Options toolbar at the top of the interface. Affinity does however have an additional customisable static toolbar below the menus.



Affinity interface with static toolbar



Photoshop interface

RAW Processing

When it comes to RAW processing, both applications can process RAW files, although the workflow differs - in Photoshop when a RAW file is opened, it is loaded into Camera Raw before the file is opened in Photoshop and we have the option to save the raw edits as XMP sidecar files alongside the original files. When opening a RAW file in Affinity the application will open the Develop Persona workspace. This workspace allows you to make edits on the RAW image in readiness for further editing. My research suggests that processing raw files in Affinity can be slower than the Adobe Camera Raw plug in.

The tools

Let's start with the tools down the left-hand side. Photoshop users will immediately notice that by default, the Foreground and Background controls are missing from the Affinity tools. To display these, select View | Customise Tools... this shows all tools available to be dragged into the Tools. However, the Foreground and Background control will only be displayed by setting the Number of Columns for the toolbar to 2 and exiting from the customise tools. This control now works in the same way as Photoshop by triggering the Colour Picker when clicked on.

That main toolbar across the top

can also be customised.

The panels

In Affinity, the panels are known as Studio Panels and are also accessed from View | Studio. Those of you who have spent years customising your Photoshop workspace to open with all the tools and panels in just the right place, you can achieve this in Affinity by creating your own workspaces from View | Studio Presets ...

Personas

But there is a difference with the workspaces - Affinity uses Personas. Five personas to be precise - accessed from the top left of the toolbar - Photo persona (for image editing); Liquify Persona (squidding, squashing, meshing and distorting); Develop Persona - for developing RAW files; Tone Mapping Persona (when working with HDR) and the Export Persona (for outputs and exporting to other file formats).



Affinity Personas

As you select a different Persona, Affinity will change the display of the current workspace so tools, toolbars, panels and menu options will change.

I'll take you on a walkthrough in just a moment but want to point out some of the tools in Affinity which I really do like.

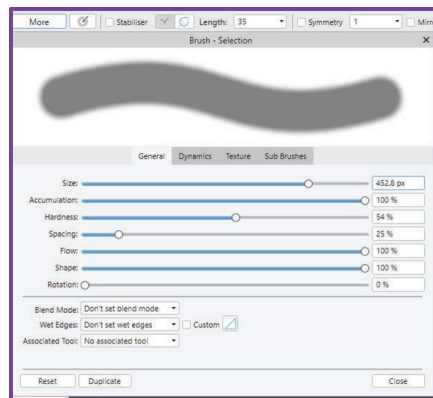
Save the history

When you save a file in Affinity you can save the history and all the editing steps - although this makes the file size larger, it is a great way

to be able to continue editing an image, just select File | Save History with document. Affinity also has a history branching option - if you go back through the history panel to a point in time and then add another action, the step in the history panel will display a branching symbol, thus enabling multiple variations of the editing process.

Live Brush preview

And anyone that knows me will know I love brushes - Affinity has a great selection of brushes and of course you can import more brushes, including Photoshop brushes, but the best bit is Live Brush preview – so you can see what the brush stroke is going to look like before you apply it. And the Brush tools and settings are all in one dialog box. Just click the More button on the Brushes context toolbar ...



Affinity Brush Controls and Settings

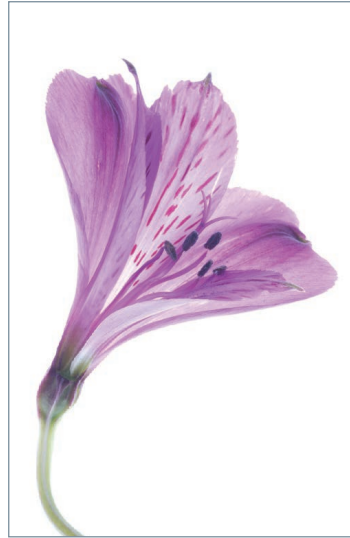
Walkthrough

And now I'll take you on that walk through to demonstrate the comparison between the two applications. When I'm running Photoshop workshops I do an exercise called 'The Alstroemeria Challenge' whereby we start with the 'before' image, modify the canvas size, work with multiple layers, apply rotation transforms, add layer masks, change the layer blend mode and do a bit of cloning to achieve the 'after' image. These are the steps we will follow:

- Open the RAW file, make basic adjustments and load the file into the image editing processor.
- Increase the canvas size.

The Alstroemeria Challenge

Before



After



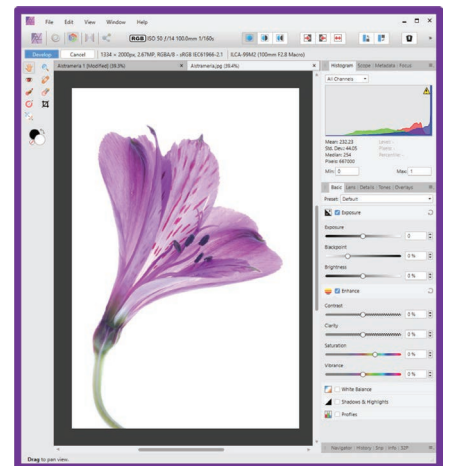
- Create duplicate layers.
- Apply rotation transforms.
- Adjust layer opacity.
- Add layer masks.
- Create a Stamp Layer.
- Apply a touch of cloning.
- Embed a second image with a texture.
- Blend two layers.
- Save the output.

Open the RAW file, make some basic adjustments, and load the file into the image editing processor

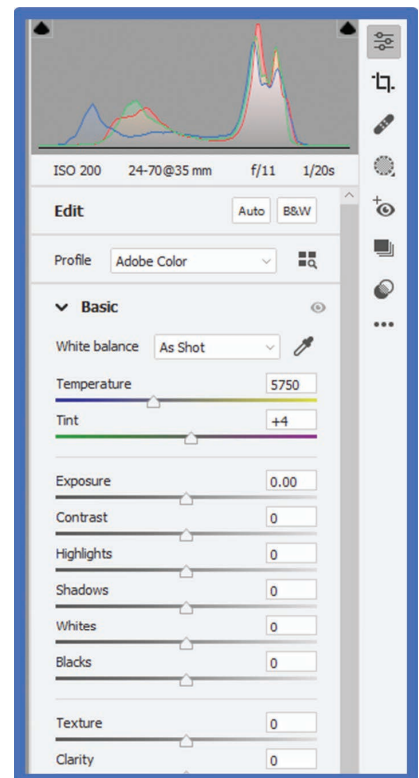
Opening a RAW file directly within the application is the same in both Photoshop and Affinity. Select File | Open or (Control+O) and locate image. This is where you encounter the first difference. Affinity loads the image into its Develop Persona; Photoshop loads the image into the Adobe Camera Raw workspace. Both offer tools and panels dedicated to processing RAW Files.

Once the edits have been completed, exiting the RAW processor is slightly different - Affinity requires you to commit your changes by clicking the Develop button in order to exit the Develop Persona and load the image into the Photo Persona to continue making adjustments.

Photoshop's Adobe Camera Raw offers four choices - Open, Open as (Smart) Object, Open as Copy and Done. All 'Open' options load



Affinity Develop



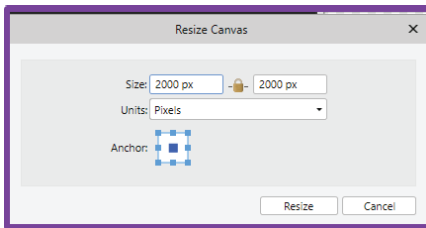
Photoshop ACR

the image into the Photoshop workspace.

Increase the canvas size

Both applications offer Crop tool with Context/Options bar where standard ratios, rule of thirds overlay grid and straighten options can be selected.

If you use the Image | Canvas size command in Photoshop the equivalent is found in Affinity under Document | Resize Canvas ... where the anchor point and measurements can be entered



Affinity Canvas Resize

What I did miss was the option to be able to set my Canvas extension colour and there is no Content Aware Fill choice on the Crop context toolbar.

Content Aware Fill is achieved with the Affinity InPainting tool - similar to Photoshop, it is found on the Edit menu in both the Fill command and as a separate command.

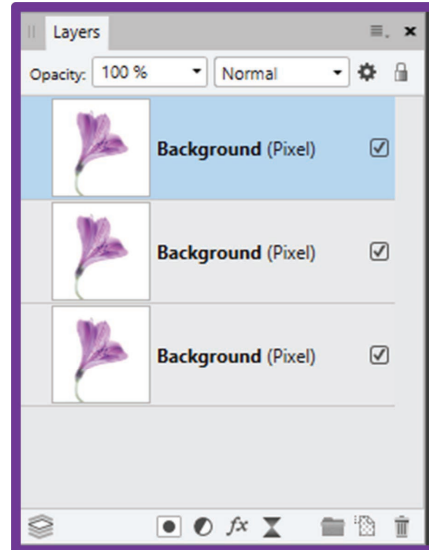
I did consider using the Magic Wand tool to fill in the transparent pixels created due to the canvas extension - the Magic Wand tool is known as the Flood Tool in Affinity.

Create duplicate layers

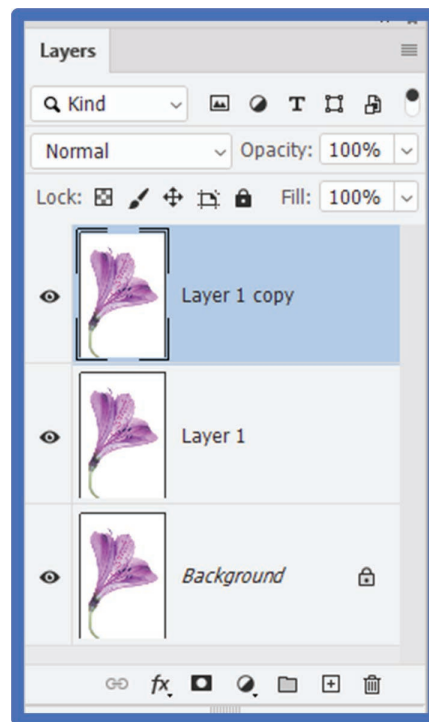
The object of the exercise is to create several layers of the same image, each layer is rotated by a few degrees to the left or right and the opacity of each layer reduced. This creates the illusion of petals with transparency. So, my next task is to duplicate the Background layer twice - Control+J keyboard shortcut is the same, or a right click on the layer and select Duplicate. The Layer panel has checkmarks instead of visibility eyes to toggle visibility on and off. Layers are also clearly shown as pixel or image layers (shown in brackets) - the Layer mask, Adjustment layer and Layer

effects buttons are the same, as are the Grouping, add new transparent layer and Delete layer buttons.

The two new buttons are going to be useful - Live Filters and Edit all Layers



Layers in Affinity

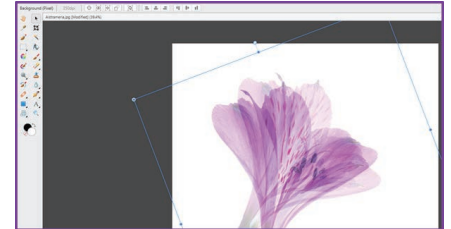


Layers in Photoshop

Apply rotation transforms

Now we have the multiple layers, we are ready to rotate the layers. In Affinity there is no equivalent Free Transform (Control+T) in fact Control+T brings up the character panel. Affinity have combined the move and transform tools together. Click the Move Tool and the Context Toolbar displays both

transform and alignment tools. The selection area displays handles to guide resizing, rotation, skewing. Rotate the top layer a few degrees to the left. Rotate the middle layer a few degrees to the right. Set the opacity of each layer to 60%.



Affinity Move tool Controls

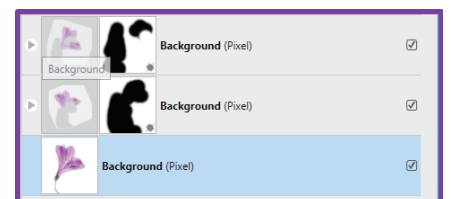
Adjust layer opacity

Adjust the opacity of the fill layer is still above the layer's panel - just the blend modes and opacity sliders have been switched.

Add layer mask

Rotating the layers will create the effect, but it will be necessary to mask out the duplicated stems and the centre of the flower. Adding layer masks is similar to Photoshop - select the layer and click the New Layer Mask - but now we have some differences - firstly the layer mask is added as a 'Child Layer Mask' - it is a child of the parent layer.

Also the layer mask displays a mask symbol in the bottom right hand corner (I found that distracting as it looks so similar to a brush mark on the mask). Painting on the mask with the brush tool and the foreground set to black does as expected and reveals the pixels of the layer below. The Brush works in Live Preview mode so you can see exactly where you are about to paint and if the hardness of your brush is set to 0% it is easy to see the feathered area of the brush.



Layer Mask symbols

And how about multiple masks - in Photoshop to create more than one

mask on a layer requires nesting masks inside Groups - with Affinity it is possible to select the layer and continue applying multiple masks, thus making this non-destructive tool very useful.

Create a stamp layer

I was delighted to find my favourite keyboard shortcut Control+Shift+Alt+E still creates a new stamp copy layer (a combination of all visible layers).

A touch of cloning

The clone tool in Photoshop has its own Panel so that the destination can be scaled and flipped - all these commands are available in Affinity and are found on the Clone Brush context bar. Photoshop has the option to use five clone stamp tools all with their settings saved, this does not seem to be available in Affinity.

Use the clone stamp tool on the top layer to clone plain white pixels over the bottom of the stem to create the illusion of a floating flower.

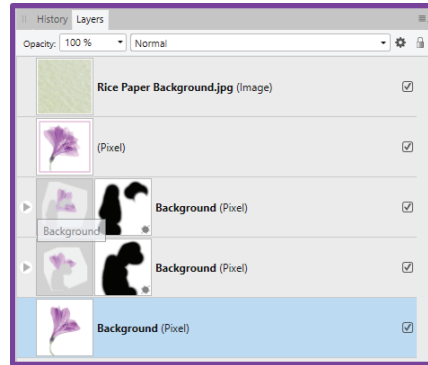
Embed a second image with a texture

Now to blend a texture with the image. In Photoshop I would use the File | Place Embed command to place another image document into the Alstroemeria. This method places a 'flattened' version of the embedded file on a new Smart Object layer. Smart Objects have the advantage that if you double click the Smart Object the original image is opened with all its layer structure intact for editing, any changes that are applied are then updated and reflected in the embedded layer. Another advantage of Smart objects is that a right click on the Smart Object layer enables the image to be replaced with another.

Although there is no equivalent Smart Object in Affinity, the same behaviour is there - images can be placed by selecting File | Place. A new layer is automatically created and the context toolbar displays tools to replace, edit, align and

resize the placed image.

In Photoshop to directly edit the embedded image requires the Smart Object layer to be rasterised and the same applies in Affinity - right click the image layer and select the Rasterise option.



Affinity Image Layer

Blend two layers

And now my final step is to blend the texture image with the Alstroemeria. I will use the Multiply blend mode on the newly imported texture image - the layer blend modes are located in both applications at the top of the Layer Panel - in Affinity they are on the right and in Photoshop they are on the left. Photoshop has 27 blend modes whereas you will find 32 in Affinity, with Average, Negation, Reflect, Glow, Contrast-negate and Erase being extras and Dissolve not on the list. The application and behaviour of the blend modes is identical.

What is different though is the amazing Blend If feature in Photoshop has an even more powerful equivalent in Affinity - accessed from the settings cog and called the Blend Range, located to the right of the blend mode drop down and offering a very controllable and powerful method for blending two layers.

File formats and saving the output

Affinity is compatible with Adobe and can import .PSD files, import Photoshop brushes, use most Photoshop plug-ins, and edit from Lightroom. It also has many templates to choose from,

organized by output. However, Affinity files can only be opened with the Affinity program.

Photoshop files can be opened in a variety of external programs. CorelDraw, Krita, GIMP, and many Adobe applications can all open .PSD files.

Affinity can output to JPEG, TIFF, BMP, EPF, GIF, TGA, HEIF, HEVC, CMYK, PSD, PSB and of course its own default, '.afphoto'.

Saving files in both Photoshop and Affinity can be found under File | Save As or File | Export will give you all the export options. Further export options in Affinity are found using the Export Persona ●

WORKSHOPS

If you would like to learn more about the crossover between Affinity and Photoshop or you are new to Affinity and would like an introduction to this application, head to the Virtual Workshops page on the RPS South East region web page - rps.org/regions/south-east/bytesize/ where you will find a variety of short sessions focussing on different aspects of these key applications scheduled for October.



DOUBLE SMOKE

CLAUDE TREW LRPS

I am a member of Horndean Camera Club in Hampshire. The club has a couple of subgroups, one being the Creative Group. Once a month we are challenged with a photographic project. One of them was on the topic of 'Smoke'.

For me this was a very interesting project. Following the instructions given, I soon started taking some smoke photos. The results were very variable as it was more challenging than I first thought, but I eventually managed to capture some images I felt I could carry on working with.

The shoot (in darkness)

The instructions given were as follows (written by the Group Tutor, Mike Parry).

1 Camera (preferably on a tripod) set to manual exposure of $f/11$ at $1/250$ s' with an ISO 100 and camera

on manual focus. If possible, save as a RAW file to allow greater control of the final image,

2 Fix flash gun at right angle to the smoke and connect by a flash cable or remote flash trigger. (I used a Godox remote flash trigger).

3 Ensure a black background (card) covers the likely drift of the smoke.

4 Manual focus camera on the incense stick prior to taking shots. (I preferred a normal candle as it produced more smoke). A table lamp opposite the flash may assist in focusing on the incense stick. Auto focus could be used first and then switch off.

5 Set flash to $1/16$ th power, or similar, to prevent over exposure.

6 Check first result for sharp focus and correct exposure on the camera LCD.

7 Modify camera settings, plus

distances between camera and smoke, flash and smoke and background to find the combinations that works best for you. But keep a small aperture (for greater depth of field) and a low ISO.

8 Take lots and lots of images, the smoke trails will change constantly and the focus will not always be right.

9 Take a break from the fumes and try reshooting on subsequent sessions.

Editing the photo(s) in Photoshop

Once I was happy with the results, I was asked to choose one (or more) of my best photos and to finesse it to create a final image. I tried a variety of techniques, for example, by adding false colours, making

montages with other images, experimenting with more than one photo using various blending modes, flipping the photo to create two or four symmetry or whatever I could think of. Also, I had to ensure that the background was entirely black using levels or curves.

For the photo chosen for this article, I decided to keep it in black and white, to duplicate and flip it once to have two heads looking at each other.

I know that everyone will see something different in the same image but for me the smoke image looked like a fish head.

Here is the process I used in Photoshop for the final image.

- Crop the image into a square format.
- Delete the candle and some of the smoke I didn't want.
- Darken the back background using Levels.
- Run Topaz Denoise as the image was very noisy due to the dark room.
- Create a new document in Photoshop with a black background twice the size of the squared original image.
- Duplicate the image (control or command J), then free transform (control or command T), flip it horizontally and reposition it so that the two 'noses' were levelled and nearly touching.
- Use the black brush (set to a soft edge) to tidy up the line between the two images.

I was very pleased with the final image ●



The original smoke image



The shooting set-up



The editing process

SEE MORE

claudetrew.com



Nikon D850, 24-120mm f/4 lens, set to 44mm at f/6.3, ISO 100

HARDWARE CITY

EDDIE LORD

After taking on the Chairmanship of Crawley Down Camera Club, I thought it was time to seriously extend my portfolio, and perhaps work towards a distinction.

Being interested in table top photography, I decided to build on an idea I had some years ago, which involved using a large box of old copper coloured staples, recreating the feeling of a simple cityscape.

The brief was simple enough: set up the staples in a way to represent a cityscape, and include an appropriate reflection, replicating a city built next to a large body of water. However, it soon became apparent that staples alone did not do justice to the variety of building shapes seen in a modern city. Different shapes were required: solved by raiding the garage for spare parts, and purchasing boxes of cheap hardware.

For the reflection, the local tile

shop produced a very large glossy black floor tile, making a suitable reflection possible.

The next challenge was to build the set and add some lighting, using an old studio flash light and soft box, positioned to give mainly side lighting, representing a low sun in the sky. The background was grey paper which was slightly warped, which I hoped would give some 'out of focus' texture to the 'sky'. This was lit by a standard flashgun and diffuser on the floor, where different coloured gels could be fitted. All the flashes were triggered by a wireless trigger fitted onto the camera hot shoe. Foam board was used as a fill light.

The first trial images were taken, and it was obvious that depth of field would become a problem as additional hardware was added to the set. To overcome this, the camera was tethered to my laptop

running the Helicon Focus suite to stack the images.

Helicon controlled the camera throughout: automatically focusing the camera and taking photos prior to stacking. A short delay was added between shots to allow the flash lights to recycle back to full power.

This delay produced unforeseen side effects, as moving about the room whilst the process was under way, allowed for small movements of the tripod, giving slight problems during stacking. Extra weights added to the tripod helped dampen any movement.

Close examination of each result meant a continuous shuffling of the hardware to improve the separation between the different elements. BluTac was my initial idea to stop things falling over and creating a cascade of falling dominoes. This proved to be unsatisfactory due to

the fact that the taller / heavier bolts would slowly lean out of vertical.

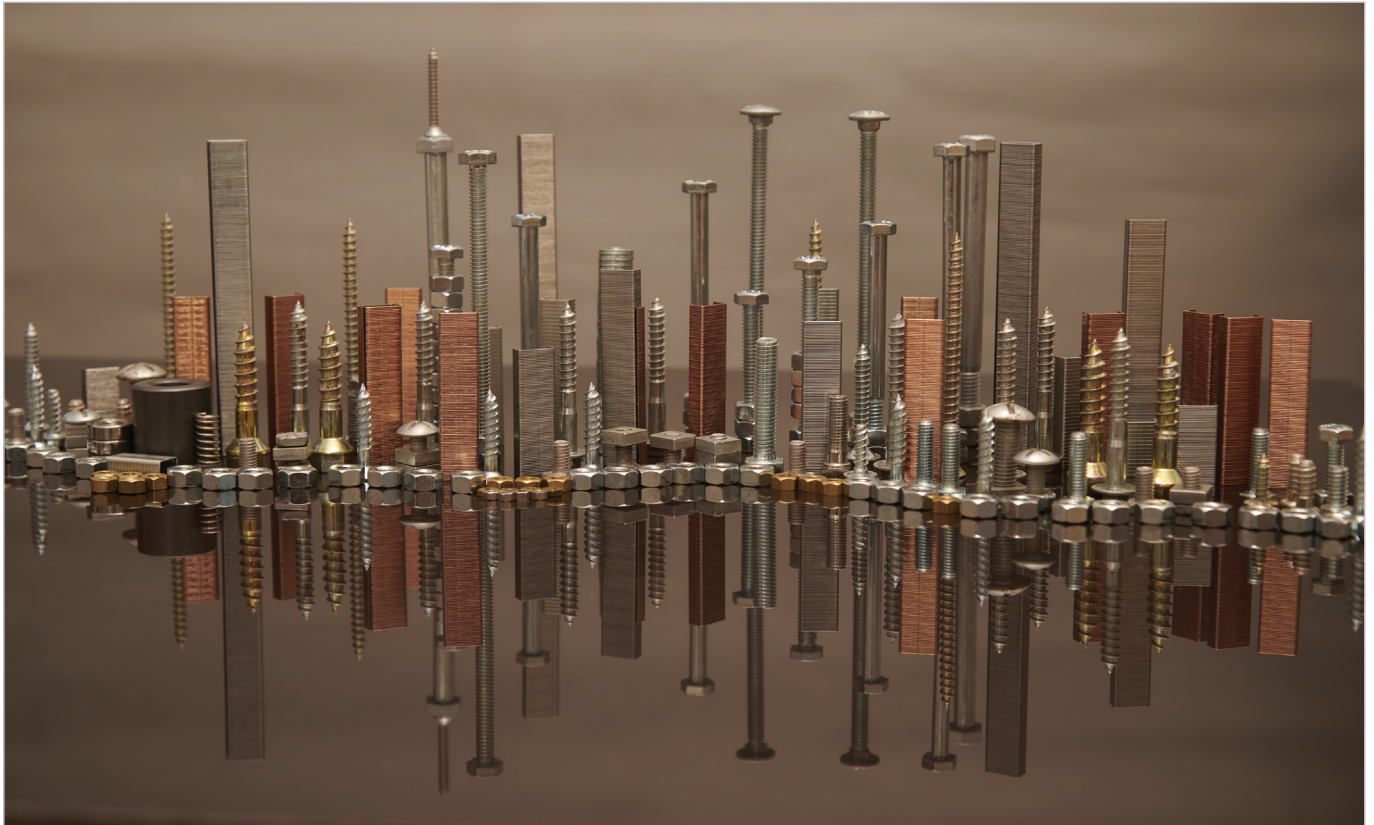
Various push sticks were employed to very carefully slide them around, but at the expense of using more space, exacerbating the depth of

field problem.

Over 400 images were taken using different light settings, coloured gels, and exposures, but the best images were taken, when a can of compressed smoke was used as

part of the background. Helicon was somewhat confused by all the smoke, and it took some time to get this right.

Processing was completed in Capture One Pro ●



First trial image, no corrections



Test shot with a plain blue background

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All previous issues are available from the Digital Imaging Group magazine page of the Group's website at rps.org/digitarchive



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Members Annual Projected Image Competition



Projected Image Competition 2022 Free to enter - Digital Imaging members only

Three classes - Open Colour; Open Mono and Altered Reality. Up to 6 images with a max. of 3 in any one class

Open for entries: August 1st. 2022

Closing date: August 31st. 2022 at midnight BST

Selection: Saturday, 17th September 2021, 10:00 a.m. BST

The selection and presentation of awards will be held in the theatre at RPS House, Paintworks, Bristol.
A limited number of seats in the theatre will be available for members to attend and view the event.

Our selectors this year are

Holly Stranks FRPS
Cathy Roberts FRPS
Trevor Yerbury FRPS

The competition will be open to view by all DI members in real-time using Zoom video-conferencing software. Registration for viewing the event and for theatre seats (first come, first served) will be required. Details regarding registration will be distributed soon. Entries can be submitted by logging in at www.rps-dig.org after the opening date. You will need your RPS membership number to log in.

Full information and rules, etc., will be found at

www.rps.org/digpicomp

