

Image © Tom Owens ARPS from the forthcoming exhibition **Contradictions**



Its good to see plenty of activity in the sub groups. The East Anglian group are holding their forthcoming exhibition in May and June (details in this issue). The North West Group will by now be closing their exhibition but we can look forward to a review of this in our next issue. The North East Group is already in discussion about producing a photobook representing the work of its members.

I would like to thank this month's contributors. I sincerely hope more of our members will send in items about their work - even if its only one image and a paragraph!

Christine Pinnington
LRPS
Editor



Image © Lyn Newton
(See NE Group Report)

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Tony Bramley FRPS

on

Suprematism

Tony Bramley is a professional photographer and recently gained his FRPS in the Conceptual and Contemporary category. His panel was seen in the March issue of the RPS Journal. Here Tony tells us about his work in more detail.

Suprematism

My portfolio relates back to the Suprematist work of the Russian avant-garde artist Kazimir Malevich (1879-1935) at the beginning of the 20th century. Paintings were highly geometric abstracts that pioneered the future of abstract art.

In the summer of 2014 for the first time in the UK, Tate Modern brought to London a major exhibition of Malevich's work. The first visit had a major impact on me and within a couple of days I knew what I should be doing and how to bring it into photography. I revisited the exhibition on two further occasions to develop the technique and theory, alongside Malevich's ethos and ideals of the art movement.

Bringing Suprematism into Photography

With this, I wanted to bring Suprematism in its purest form, into photography. I now had my direction, and possibly something unique that was potentially moving boundaries. Malevich keyed a phrase called zero point in art. I wanted to get to the same point in photography, at the very edge of photography and the boundary of conventional abstract art. This brought about my term "Transitional Photography".

My compositions are abstractions from a single photograph and celebrate the existing geometry around us in light, form, colour, line and space, within a new dynamic environment that I create in the Suprematist style. They remove 'the truth' and free the form of the image, leaving only an essence of the original image. Creativity from within me is more important than what the natural world readily provides. Technically I look at my work in two key parts that are highly reliant on geometric content and composition.

Firstly the purity of the abstractions; shape, colour, line and importantly (as with all photography) the quality of the light. Light becomes an interesting crossover. I cannot paint my images as I photograph them however, the term we all know so well, 'painting with light' becomes a very important part of my work. Light really is key to my palette, producing colour and texture as if applied by a fine brush.

Secondly the principles and elements of art become critical to the final images produced. Technically I think all photographers should understand these more, in all work. As photographers we tend to latch onto the regular views of thirds, negative space, leading lines, maybe balance. However



Suprematist Composition No 3



Suprematist Composition No 6



Suprematist Composition No 11



Suprematist Composition No 15

there is so much more in our photographs that can go unnoticed and not always be recognised.

When a photograph breaks 'the rules', generally the image works because of an underpinning of other principles and elements in art. I encourage any photographer to look these up and put them into their thought process.

Creativity and Composition

Creativity is an interesting place at this point. Effectively I destroy the original image to create a Suprematist composition. I only value the existing geometry and what it can offer to the final composition. I also have to detach myself from the original image and develop what is left into a completely new image (Malevich's creativity from within).

I enjoy the visual and spatial movement that can be induced and varied from composition to composition. The beauty of colour also shows through in its own purity, something that I think works best in print form.

Also the work provides a creative freedom that is hard to find in photography. I can use space, colour, line and form to provide tension or unity in my compositions. Everything is intentional in the final composition.

Abstract will always take you deeper into an image and make you ask different questions from pictorial work. The use of white space, as with Malevich, is a representation of space and infinity and contributes to drawing the viewer into the composition and beyond. If you can get to a point where you are absorbed by the compositions, the dynamics can take over and "elements can provide; lightness, weight, flow, rise, fall, float, cluster, advance and recede. A concept of 'static motion' prevails" (SOI).

If you can get this feeling, then some may get close to Malevich's 'spiritual feelings'. Being non-objective work and the lack of 'clutter', allows a purity to exist that enhances this state. Abstract work is a personal visual journey that can take you to your own places. Participation can be rewarded with new views on creativity that lay outside of regular photography.

The work has become 'e'mbedded into my blood and became an obsession. This I believe is what takes work to a higher level. I am sure if you ask anyone who has achieved Fellowship, they will have an unmatched drive and passion that took them to that point.

What next

I am currently working to gain commissions from large companies for display in boardrooms, receptions etc. in the London area. My panel is on tour with the RPS until December, so in the New Year I hope to exhibit the panel locally. Medium to long term I would like to get representation in a gallery. I have been looking at options on how to display my work for commercial use and last month settled on a float mount option behind glass that shows the work at its best.

Personally with my Suprematism work, I am continually developing and have a lot more work I want to do. There are many ideas I have for the future and as I get more time available I want to develop these. I aim to produce one piece a month where possible, although for the next two years this may be slower during the summer wedding seasons. From 2019 wedding work will no longer be a necessity in the business and I can devote more time to art and commercial photography.

Tony Bramley FRPS



Suprematist Composition No 19

Statement of Intent.

Transitional Photography through Geometric Abstraction - Suprematism

Suprematism was a highly geometric style of early 20th-century non-objective abstract painting, ignoring the familiar appearance of objects, developed by Russian avant-garde artist Kazimir Malevich (1879-1935).

In purest form, images are very geometric, against a white background, disclosing shape, line and colour, producing energy and dynamics.

My Compositions:

A single scene is selected, photographed and reduced, to its geometry, through rejection & separation, producing a photographic abstraction that has independence of form. Everything else is insignificant and of no artistic value.

The abstracted elements ; geometry, colour (including white), lines, and space, form the basis of a 'new' composition that provides it's own energy and dynamics. New states of harmony, order, tension and volume are achieved, enhancing the original photographs raw dynamics. These new elements can provide; lightness, weight, flow, rise, fall, float, cluster, advance and recede. A concept of 'static motion' prevails.

The exclusive use of "white space", representing infinity, enhances the dynamics and a state of equivalence. Colours take on an enhanced prominence and new visual beauty.

Reality has now gone, only an 'essence' of the original image remains. Devoid of coherent meaning, conventional forms of expression are now abandoned, subjectivism and ambiguity prevails.

The loss of literal representation opens up viewer participation. Creation from within is achieved, not just from the author but also for the viewer.

Photography is now close to zero point and at it's purest and most creative; light, colour, shape and the viewer.

The abstracted elements celebrate a photographic purity that was masked by 'other things', crossing a boundary into a domain of new creative possibilities to produce extremely original images.

Photography has surrendered to art.

Tony Bramley FRPS

See also RPS Journal March 2016

Photobook Bristol 10-12 June 2016

Southbank Club
Dean Lane
Bristol BS3 1BD

Speakers include:
Ken Grant :: Mark Power :: David Solo
Laura El-Tantawy :: Amak Mahmoodian
Dragana Jurisic :: Martin Parr :: Krass Clement
Yumi Goto :: Ivars Gravlejs :: James Barnor
Mariela Sancari :: Ania Nalecka.

For more details.
e: photobook.bristol@gmail.com
<http://www.photobookbristol.com>

Gathered Leaves: Photographs by Alec Soth

22nd April - 26th June 2016

Bradford Media Museum
Little Horton Lane, Bradford BD1 1NQ

This exhibition presents his four signature series – Sleeping by the Mississippi (2004), Niagara (2006), Broken Manual (2010) and the most recent, Songbook (2014) – and highlights his remarkable career and distinctive vision.

This exhibition was reviewed by Brian Steptoe in the October newsletter.

<http://www.nationalmuseum.org.uk/plana-visit/exhibitions/AlecSothGatheredLeaves/about>

North East Contemporary Group Meeting

19th March 2016

Report By Graham Low

The NE Contemporary Group met again at the Royal Oak pub in York on 19 March 2016, from 2-5 pm. Nine members took part (12 sent their apologies). It was an enjoyable meeting with only one small incident when the curtains fell down!

The session began with a discussion on the usefulness for much contemporary work of small, light four-thirds cameras. Graham Evans thanked Family Matters York for the free loan of the laptop and projector, and, it being a very worthwhile registered charity (No. 1088274), those attending had a whip round to support them; this resulted in £16.90 being raised.



Jane and Christine repair the curtains.
Graham carries on regardless!
© Neil Wittman ARPS 2016

Getting down to discussing and displaying ongoing work, Avijit Datta reported that he currently had an exhibition at York Hospital of photos on explosions of colour at the Spring Festival of Holi (see Concept, March 2016, "Exhibitions"); and noted that when the meeting finished he was due to drive to Hull to take more pictures of the Holi festival there.

Three sets of work in progress were then discussed. The first was a set of black and white Polaroid prints by Christine Pinnington, which was taken as an exploratory try out for an A panel. They were primarily part of a project to record selective preservation (i.e. old and new) at Scarborough's South Beach (with one extra print of the new Kings Cross station building). The idea of using a Polaroid camera came from finding her mother's old camera and establishing that film could still be bought. The inevitable vignetting, blots and staining artefacts, combined with being in black and white, gave the prints an appropriate dark, even seedy quality. The prints were mounted (pasted) on black card, either singly, or as small panels of two or three pictures, such that the black surfaces against the white rims created varying positive and negative effects. The group was very positive about the possibilities that Polaroid pictures had for this project.



The Bathing Hut
© Christine Pinnington LRPS

The second group of pictures, by Lyn Newton was an exploration in photographing and processing pictures of the same event in two different ways: the first in black and white, such that there were few clues as to the location or the nature of the event, the second in colour, where the details made interpretation (Venice and festival time) much more obvious. Although the group tended to be more excited about the black and white photos, with their black (or slightly toned) edging contributing to a slightly ominous and less celebratory look, it was agreed that a way of matching colour and black and white pictures would get over the intended contrast better: perhaps as pairings of one colour picture against one B&W picture on facing pages of a book, or run as alternating series on a upright free-standing concertina-ed sheet of paper, or failing that, presented as a series of postcards. There was some discussion of whether these alternative formats would be acceptable for an ARPS panel.



Both images © Lyn Newton



Top: *Hold that Thought* © Neil Wittman

Lower: *Falling Down House* © Neil Wittman

The last set of photos discussed was presented by Neil Wittman. Neil had created composite pictures of houses or architectural structures, by rotating his camera (hand held) twice or three times round a single point and blending the results in camera, such that light areas like skies took priority over dark areas. While he did this using a Canon 5Diii, similar blending effects can be achieved in Photoshop using Lighten and Darken modes. One picture had an element (a graffiti eye) flipped, so that a seemingly coherent pair of eyes would result. In some others, the result was a colourful kaleidoscope effect. It was generally agreed that the results were spectacular, but also surprisingly varied and able to impart psychological as well as artistic impacts of looking at a building. It was unsurprising that Magnum were enthusiastic about them when Neil had shown them to a representative at a recent workshop. There was a discussion about ways in which the concept of rotation composites could be developed. One suggestion was that using black and white might result in very different effects and Neil himself noted that as the camera would blend up to seven pictures, it might be worth exploring what could be achieved using more than three.

The meeting ended with a discussion led by Patricia Ruddle. This took two forms. The first was a response to queries by some of those attending the meeting as to the nature and scope of the term 'Contemporary' in Contemporary Photography; it was pointed out that the term could encompass many if not all of the topics focussed on by the other RPS groups and it was argued that this was more of a liberating advantage than a problem. To aid the discussion, Patricia examined and passed around copies of old Contemporary Photography journals and the 2007 exhibition catalogue. The second part was a short report of Patricia's recent week-long trip to the University of Navarra (Spain) aided by a bursary from the Historical Group. The trip's purpose was to research the work of Jose Ortiz Echaguë (1886-1980), who was many things in his long and successful life (entrepreneur, industrialist, pilot, photographer ...), but who for the purposes of the project, documented traditional Spanish life, customs and pride in an artistic (aka pictorial) way. Patricia's aim is to produce a book in English about his photographic work, hopefully as an FRPS submission. This report led to the suggestion that the Contemporary Group should produce another book, reflecting the foci of the different group members' work, rather than different views of the same object (like a building), or different 'takes' on the same theme, so that the editing could be more communal. Christine offered (or was persuaded) to take a lead and agreed to send round an email.

The next meeting of the NE Group will be on the 21 May 2016, again at the Royal Oak Pub in York, 2-5 pm; there will not be any projection facilities, so the focus will be on prints and books.

North West Contemporary Group



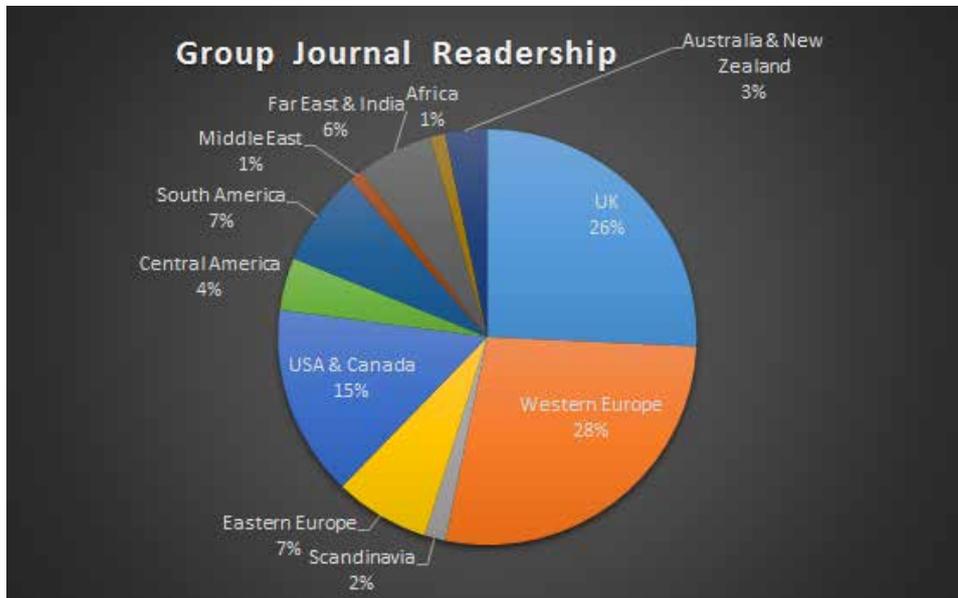
The North West Contemporary Group's exhibition has just come to a close. The exhibition was held at Lytham Heritage Centre. You can read a review of the exhibition in the next issue of Concept.

Top Left: Left to right John Corbett LRPS, Keith Launchbury FRPS and Alan Cameron LRPS

The Contemporary Journal and Issuu

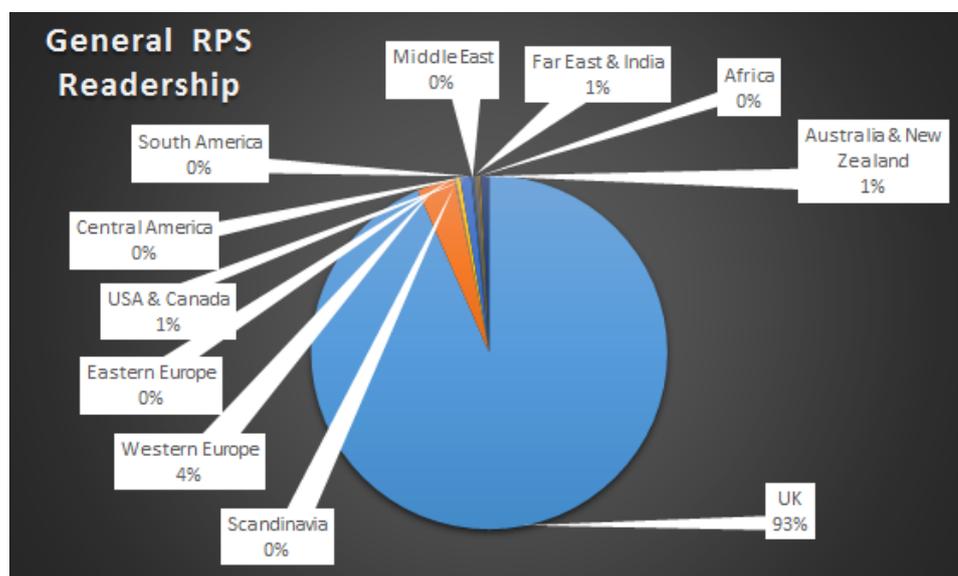
Analysis of the Winter Issue of the Contemporary Group Journal readership by geography on issuu.com, also allowing for Group member readership of printed copies, shows a wide distribution across the world. 26% of the 2000+ readers are from the UK.

If we look at the geographic spread of readership of all the other RPS publications uploaded to issuu.com, with a similar total readership well over 2000, there is a major difference, with 93% of the readers being from the UK.



It is clear that the Contemporary Group Journal has a global audience which is predominantly from outside the Society.

Brian Steptoe FRPS



Scottish Contemporary Group

If you are a Scottish Contemporary Group Member and don't receive a personalised e-mail concerning the meetings, please send your e-mail address to davidfells111@gmail.com

The Scottish Group covers a very large area and Scottish Group Organiser David Fells is looking for someone who would be willing to organise a meeting in the Aberdeen/Inverness area. David is willing to help with organisation, emails etc.

If you are interested or able to help please contact David at the above email address.

Interview with Paul Morris

Two photobooks well worth a look at are 'Further West' and 'Central Europe' published by Paul Morris.

Paul is a photographer based in Cheshire, England, and has been an active photographer since his late teens, working in both monochrome and colour, using traditional film-based technologies. His two books *Further West* and *Central Europe* are published on Blurb and can be previewed on Paul's website.

His work has been published in many photographic magazines, journals and websites, including the *The Journal of the Royal Photographic Society*. His successes include various group exhibitions, The Royal Photographic Society Visual Art Group Print and projected Image Exhibitions; The Royal Photographic Society Members' exhibition; The Royal Photographic Society 2013 Biennial and many more. His prints are held in several private collections.

As a photographer do you have a personal statement about your work?

My attempts in the past to write a proper artist's statement have always resulted in long-winded, rambling purple prose, so this time I have restricted myself to a haiku:

Carry a camera.

Cultivate a Beginner's Mind.

What happens?

Your success in publications and exhibitions covers a wide range of subject material. Do you have a preference for what you photograph?

I used to. Ten or fifteen years ago, I concentrated entirely on landscape and places, and always tried very hard to exclude people from my photos. Then when I visited the U.S.A. for the first time in 2006, something changed in me and I started to loosen up on this, allowing people in my images as an element of the composition. An obvious example is the cover image of 'Further West', which features my wife!

Do you have a different approach to producing different types of photography?

Although I vary the equipment I use a bit, my broad approach is actually very consistent. I carry the minimum possible amount of equipment (one camera, one lens, maybe a tripod), as I find that the restrictions this places on me stimulate me to solve compositional problems more creatively than I otherwise would. Also, I like to find images rather than construct them; it's very much a case of carrying the camera and trying to remain open and receptive to whatever catches my eye. The only exceptions to this are my family portraits.

How do you feel your photography has progressed over the years?

I've moved from photographing obviously attractive places to seeking beauty and interest in more ordinary everyday scenes, although I still like to make the odd landscape image. I've become more interested in trying to produce images that are both quieter and more complex; images that might take a little while to appreciate, but which offer sustained interest and depth.

Have other photographers influenced your work?

Yes, absolutely. Encountering Raymond Moore's work for the first time, when I stumbled across a copy of 'Murmurs at Every Turn' in my local library, had a huge effect on me. It turned over all my previous notions of what made a good photograph. I now have my own copy of 'Murmurs', and have never grown bored of it. Charlie Waite was a strong early influence on my colour work; I couldn't make successful colour images until I saw his book 'The Making of Landscape Photographs'. I met him a few years later (he's a lovely chap), and was too shy to tell him what I've just told you; I regret that. More recently, books by Sam Abell and Fred Herzog have again opened me up to new ways of seeing the world.

You use traditional film based techniques in your work, does digital feature as well?

I bought a digital camera in late 2012 (a Sony RX100), and I use it quite a lot now. I'm not a gear-head by any means, so I tend to use the same cameras for a very long time, and need a really good reason to change, but I felt that digital technology had reached the point where it could offer some useful possibilities. I still use film a lot though.

What influenced the choice of a photobook to present your projects Further West and Central Europe?

I like the idea of something physical you can hold in your hand and keep in your home; something you can spend time with and come back to again and again, that would live on after me. I think a well produced and sequenced book is one of the most effective ways of presenting photos. It has occurred to me as I've been answering these questions that my most revelatory experiences of other people's photography have nearly all come from books.

Did you have a particular concept for Further West?

On my first visit to the USA, in 2006, I just wanted to take lots of photos, because I was so excited simply to be there. I consciously set out to photograph both attractive scenery and more mundane details. It wasn't until I started to scan the films that I thought I might have material for a book, looking at America on scales from the epic to the domestic. When I returned to the States in 2010, I consciously tried to produce more work fitting into this concept.

Was Central Europe approached in the same way?

No; Central Europe was planned in advance as more of a landscape/travel type book. I had a list of countries to visit, and it took me about 6 years, planning my holidays accordingly, to shoot.

What influences your choice of black and white against colour when producing your images?

It's very hard to say; I just intuitively choose whatever feels right at the time. Sometimes I will simply decide to use only one or the other for a few months; this comes from the same place as my practice of carrying minimal gear and embracing the restrictions it brings.



Is there any advice you would give to photographers approaching their first photo book?

I have no design training, so I designed the book by sitting down with a bunch of other people's photo books, and picking a mixture of my favourite design ideas from them. It's probably obvious to say this, but a simple design is generally the most desirable. Spend a lot of time sequencing the images, as this will hugely influence the overall feel of the book, and how the images are perceived. You are ideally aiming for each image to seem like a logical progression from the previous one, although it can also be good to have the occasional disjunction, to give the sense of starting a new paragraph or chapter.

Do you think photobooks lend themselves to contemporary photography in particular?

Yes; especially as they're a good way to present an extended portfolio. Also, in the context of a book, images don't always have to have an instant impact; you can put in quieter and more contemplative images, and they will be 'supported' by their more impactful neighbours.

Do you see more of your work moving in this direction?

I will certainly be making more books. I'm planning a retrospective book of the 35mm monochrome work I've done over the years, and at some point there may be a book drawn from the 'Diary' series.

How has being a member of the RPS and Contemporary Group benefitted your work?

Mostly in the ability to see a range of varied high-standard photography and to discuss it with fellow photographers, plus the opportunities to exhibit my own work and contribute to journals etc. I also enjoy participating in the Contemporary Group's Facebook page.

Do you have anything new planned for a next project?

Not as such, apart from the further ideas for books I mentioned earlier. However, it can be interesting sometimes to just take a lot of photographs and see what themes naturally emerge. For example, my eldest daughter's school has a garden which we're quite heavily involved in, and I tend to take my camera whenever we go to work there. Without any initial intention, the photos I've taken there are starting to coalesce into a series.

Thank you Paul

Paul Morris was interviewed by Christine Pinnington Images © Paul Morris

Website - <http://www.morrisp43.fsnet.co.uk>

Published books - <http://www.blurb.co.uk>



31st July 2016 !

Don't Forget - the closing date is drawing nearer!



OPEN INTERNATIONAL PHOTOBOOK EXHIBITION 2016



CALL FOR ENTRIES

CLOSING DATE 31 JULY 2016

Short-listed books and winners will be exhibited at the Espacio Gallery, 159 Bethnal Green Road, London E2 7DG from 18-23 October 2016, at the Impressions Gallery, Centenary Square, Bradford, BD1 1SD on 12 November 2016 and at St Saviours Hall, Barbican, Plymouth, PL1 2NN in conjunction with Fotonow CIC

- see over

Entry requirements

- Self-published, photobook dummies, artist's and handmade photobooks.
- Produced by on-line digital print services, by offset printing or any other processes.
- No commercial book trade publications.
- Only one book per entrant. The book must be the author's own work, (however books containing found images may be used, provided their source is stated).
- Books must have been created between 1 January 2014 and the closing date for entries of 31 July 2016.

Entry Fee – per person is £25.00, £10 for 25 years old or under entrants.

Books are returnable where return postage is supplied.

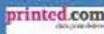
Selectors - David Company, Lucy Kumara Moore and Dewi Lewis

Full details and Entry Form - see www.rps.org/photobook

Awards:
Winner award £1000 and RPS medal
Second - RPS medal and Bob Books token value £150
Third - RPS medal and Bob Books token value £100

facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/RPSPhotobooks
General enquiries:
Rod Fry ARPS, rod@rodfryclipse.co.uk

With thanks to our sponsors



including winner prize contribution of £500 printing cost of catalogues Fotonow CIC held in Plymouth

CONTRAD DICTIONS

Photographers

Peter Ellis LRPS

Keith Locke ARPS

Tom Owens ARPS

from the RPS East Anglian Contemporary group

Present a chapter in a long term collaborative project photographing the ever changing aspects of the docklands of the Orwell.



Beyond the Image Gallery
13 Red House Yard
Thornham Magna
Eye
Suffolk
IP23 8HH

27th May - 19th June 2016

FREE ENTRY
Open 1100 - 1600
Friday - Sunday
& Bank Holiday Monday



email:info@beyondtheimage.co.uk

What's on

21st May 2016

Contemporary North East Meeting.

2pm. The Royal Oak, York.

Contact Patricia A Ruddle ARPS.

patriciaruddle@btinternet.com

tel: 01904 783850

(Please note that there will not be any projection facilities this time, so the focus will be on prints and books).

31 May 2016

Contemporary North West Meeting

19:30 - 20:00, Days Inn

Charnock Richard Services, Jct 27-28

Northbound

Contact Ian Maxwell

mail@ihmaxwell.com

tel: 01524 770278

19th June 2016

Contemporary South West Meeting

10.30am, Carnon Down Village Hall, Truro
Cornwall.

Contact Rod Fry ARPS.

rod@rodfry.eclipse.co.uk tel: 01803 844721

All CG and RPS members welcome.

Eye Spy - a solo exhibition by Nigel Tooby FRPS

20 April 2016 - 29 April 2016, 11:00 - 18:00

The Magic Gallery

Charing Cross Underground Arcade, London WC2N 4HZ

Photography exhibition by Nigel Tooby that is part of the April 2016 season of exhibitions looking at different aspects of homelessness.

<http://www.rps.org/events/2016/april/20/eye-spy---a-solo-exhibitioin-by-nigel-tooby#sthash.y7MJwCii.dpuf>

Deadline for contributions for inclusion in the May issue is 20th May 2016.

News, reports, reviews, publicity, profiles, images, in fact anything of interest in the contemporary world. If you have any contributions you would like to have included, please email to:

photopinni@btinternet.com

Christine Pinnington LRPS

Editor, concept

the e-newsletter of the RPS Contemporary Group

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