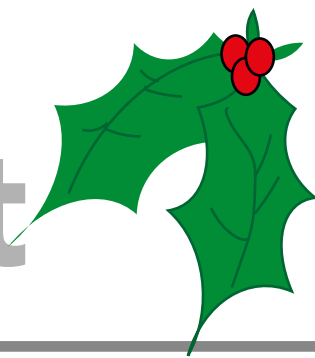


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THE **RPS**
ROYAL
PHOTOGRAPHIC
SOCIETY

CONTEMPORARY
GROUP

Hi folks

As Contemporary members we are lucky to have a great group of people working away behind the scenes forging strong and supportive networks of like-minded photographers. We at Concept have decided to turn the spotlight on our volunteer organisers and we've asked them to share with us their roles in the group and a little bit about themselves as photographers. In this edition it is the turn of the Chair of the Contemporary Group, Avril Harris, Deputy Chair Peter Ellis and Web Administrator Sean Goodhart.

We are also proud to be able to pay tribute to Douglas May as he leaves his role as Chair of the Conceptual and Contemporary Panel. Douglas is much respected and has been a stalwart of the RPS. He has promised to keep in touch and he will be sharing some of his thoughts in our February edition. At this point we are very pleased to hear that Tessa Mills FRPS will take over the chair from Douglas and we wish her a warm welcome.

While our officers are a vital part of the organisation, the involvement of you, the membership, is what it is all about. We would really welcome your contributions, big or small. If you know of an exhibition or interesting event in your area, please let us know. If you have an individual image or a panel you are proud of and you are willing to share it, please contact us. It is great to share!

We hope you enjoy this December edition. Our very best wishes to everybody for Christmas and the New Year.

Lyn Newton
Editor

Christine Pinnington
Design and Layout Editor

Contributions and comments to:
lynconcept@btinternet.com

Santa, Rudolph and Blitzen

Selfie by kind permission of
Rudolph

e-newsletter

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Selfie Illustration by
© Christine Pinnington

Avril Harris ARPS

Chair, Contemporary Group



My role as Chair of the Contemporary Group is made much easier by virtue of having an excellent committee who know what they are doing and do not require me to interfere in their work. I feel that the key to a successful committee is to have people who are loyal to the ethos of the Group and are confident in their own abilities.



I am required by the RPS to travel within the UK to attend Group and wider Society meetings, events and training. There are many more requirements by the Society but those I attend as and when. I am responsible for the AGM and for committee meetings. Meeting and talking with members is one of the most enjoyable aspects of the job and one of the reasons why I enjoy the weekend events so much. It's great to meet people from one year to the next to catch up with what they are doing and to know they are still enjoying their photography and I see some wonderful work.



As event organizer I contact speakers and arrange contracts etc and I try to have as balanced a programme as possible. I keep a record of those attending and am on call for any queries attendees might have regarding the weekend or day events. I work in close conjunction with Brian Steptoe who will locate venues and arrange hiring and the catering arrangements. All of this takes a considerable amount of time and it is disappointing when turn out is not as high as projected, which in turn has a knock-on effect for pricing of future events.



As far as my own photography is concerned I am still using film and working in the darkroom. Colour doesn't interest me particularly, so I have never been tempted to use digital photography and I still experience a buzz when the image emerges from the developer, I enjoy the slow approach to my work and have photographed many subjects but not people. I prefer the landscape, buildings and still life. I have always worked with sequences, as that was how I was taught at college, therefore the Contemporary Group was a natural home for me. I have been on the committee for the past twelve years.

Avril R Harris ARPS



Peter Ellis LRPS

Deputy Chair, Contemporary Group

The Job

The function of the Deputy Chair is fundamentally to support the Chair, take on any job overload and stand in when required. The Deputy is also the 'Chair in waiting' and by shadowing the incumbent is in a position to provide a seamless handover and thus maintain the core Ethos of the Contemporary Group.

Well that's the official description... in addition to this I also look after the group's Facebook page and organize the mailing of the group Journal. To be honest the Facebook page now seems to have a life of its own with regular contributors prompting some very good discussions on various aspects of our chosen type of photography. It is an open group designed to both disseminate our views on image making and attract new members. As such, discussions include views from both inside and outside of the RPS and keep pace with modern developments in photographic practice across all genres.

A big thank you goes out to my fellow members of the East Anglia Contemporary Group (EACG) for their help in packing envelopes and sticking stamps when mailing the Journal. We are now also joined by Paul, the new Editor who lives just down the road...

My Photography

My style has been described in the past as 'Idiosyncratic' so I fit right in with the ethos of the group... after a sojourn in camera clubs I moved to membership of LIP – London Independent Photography, where I enjoyed the informal, non-judgmental meetings discovering the joys of working on projects that have a meaning, that are 'About' something. Even after moving to Suffolk I retain my membership and enjoy the regular fLIP magazine.

Since my move I have been working on several projects as part of the EACG, we have a joint long term project based on the effects of the Ipswich Waterfront development and are working on personal contributions towards a planned exhibition in 2018.

Projects

- Ipswich Waterfront – Fragments
- Ipswich Waterfront – Gipping Navigation
- Shotley Gate – HMS Ganges development
- 2018 Exhibition – Watch this space!

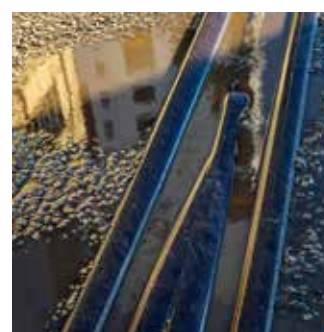
I was also invited to join the 'Beyond the Image' Gallery, based in Thornham Magna in Suffolk which is a not for profit organisation. We are a group of photographers who run an exhibition space and hold a themed exhibition which changes every three months. We also have guest exhibition spaces for all types of Art and provide the community with photoshoot days and training.



Three sets of Diptychs



Waterfront Abstract 1



Waterfront Abstract 2



Fragments – White Chain



Fragments – Yellow Steps



Fragments – Circular Mooring Ring



Fragments – Oval Mooring Ring

Web Administrator, Contemporary Group



I volunteered as Web Administrator for the group. This isn't strenuous work. I create the event entries for the group and, with plenty of notice, these magically appear in the printed Journal as well as the rps.org events pages. I also prepare the occasional blog piece, typically based on my observations and gallery visits on adventures around the world for work. I'm very happy that Committee members also draft blogs from time to time. One of the more interesting parts of the role is to browse through the members' galleries on rps.org looking for sets of images that fit the "about" brief of the Contemporary SIG and to prepare a "showcase" gallery linked to the Contemporary SIG microsite <http://rps.org/special-interest-groups/contemporary/about>. I'm very happy when people bring interesting work to my attention - I love to learn.

I bought my first 35mm SLR in a junk shop when I was a student in the 1980s. I returned to photography around 2010. I use many cameras, ranging from my original 35mm SLR, medium format, "toy" cameras (all film), together with digital SLR, compact and mobile phones. My photography subjects are varied with architecture and observations of people and places, when I'm travelling for work, forming the main body of my non "family snapshots" images.

I like to capture the culture of the places I work around the world. There could be some crossover here with travel photography.



The Players, Benicassim, Spain



Fiesta, Benicassim, Spain



Fiesta, Benicassim, Spain

I also like to capture the grittier side of life:



Home Comforts, Serradal, Spain



Self Assessment, Chicago, USA

An example of a personal project related to my travels is in the galleries on rps.org:

<http://www.rps.org/member/gallery/sean-goodhart/A-year-of-travel#>

Douglas May FRPS

Chairman of the Conceptual and Contemporary Panel

I was in Bath for the Fellowship Board and discovered that my time is up as chairman of the Conceptual and Contemporary Panel. It has been a great privilege to sit on the panel, initially as a member and latterly as chairman. It has been encouraging that over the ten years I have done so to see the growing respect and appreciation of the Fellowship Board and panel members in other categories for the successful work presented in our field. This has been in no small measure due to the outstanding submissions that a number of applicants have made. The intellectual dimension to the work has given it a depth which is not apparent elsewhere.



The distinctions department have told me how much they enjoy doing our assessments and listening to the informed comments of the panel members. Ben Fox the deputy manager has also told me of the high regard he holds the Journal. I should also mention that I have been really lucky with the quality of my Fellow panel members which has ensured that each application is given proper consideration.

I have been co-opted to the committee by virtue of my chairmanship of the panel. Thus I think that it is appropriate that I resign from the committee as I no longer hold that office. Although unable to be an active member of the committee my membership has enabled me to realise all the good work that has been done in promoting contemporary photography within the Society. The group and the panel complement each other as the two elements in the Society attempting to engage members in contemporary photography. I feel sure that this will continue and that I will continue to enjoy my membership of the Group and in particular the postal portfolio.

Douglas May.

From the Chair

Douglas felt that his successor should write the piece for Concept but in view of the years he has given to the Contemporary Group I felt his role should be acknowledged and I can see no better way than to repeat his remarks in Concept.

We all appreciate his dedication to the Conceptual and Contemporary panel, it is also acknowledged that Douglas has not always been in a position to attend either meetings or the AGM every time but he has always been available to give advice when we have asked for it.

On behalf of the committee and the Group as a whole I would like to thank Douglas for everything he has done.

Avril R Harris ARPS
Chair & Event Organizer
Contemporary Group RPS

The Making of 'An Elizabethan Progress'

Brian Steptoe FRPS

Much has been written about Alec Soth's *Sleeping by the Mississippi*. First published in 2004, it was a landmark publication in the Magnum photographer's career, which propelled him to international recognition. First editions of the photobook are highly prized items today. At a talk in London recently, in conversation with Sean O'Hagan, Soth reflected on the work, almost 15 years on, and how he began to make what would eventually become the tightly-edited tome, *Sleeping by the Mississippi*.

Alec Soth, "I drove from location to location, going from one thing to another, with a list of keywords for things he was interested in taped to his steering wheel; Soth's aim was to stop his car as soon as something caught his eye, but he found that what had captured his attention was not necessarily the stuff of pictures he wanted to make. "Often these are photo clichés, things that look like work by another photographer," he says. He first needed to weed out these well-trodden tropes in order to find the personal, the things that would allow him to honestly carve out his own meaning and make pictures."

In London and on the BBC, the creation of Crossrail, the largest construction project in Europe, gained public attention with three TV programmes on this 15 Billion Pound project. The section of the route across central London was all tunnelled. An RPS London photo project was proposed by Brian Steptoe early in 2017, which would follow these tunnelled sections, mainly on the surface, but with links to Crossrail below, along the lines of Soth's book with its links to the river and sleeping mattresses.



Tunnelled sections of Crossrail

With support for the project from Regional Officers Judy Hicks and Neil Cordell, twenty volunteers signed up to participate. All were given project business cards as an aid if required for explaining reasons when meeting people. Nine female and seven male photographers became the active participants, with four dropping out. All were asked to submit their images to a private group on Flickr set up for the project. Brian Steptoe would edit these down to a suitable selection for a photobook, based on established photobook design practices. Photos were submitted from early Spring 2017 and by July book layouts were created as PDFs and as printed book dummies at monthly intervals. At end-October 2017 1850 images had been submitted and four successive book dummy layouts created. The final book has 116 pages and 111 photos, most at one per page. Clearance was obtained from Crossrail management for the book in September, with a few changes made to text and photos.



Three 'dummies' of the book

The idea behind the project was to give the participants freedom in what they chose to photograph, but to have tight definitions on where to take photos and what they should be about; happenings on the surface and links to Crossrail. This made the project very different from the more open themes chosen by the London Region for major projects.



Books for research

Suggestions for research before and during the project were to visit the many links on www.crossrail.co.uk, to see the three BBC TV programmes (also available on Youtube) and look at Platform for Design and other books published by Crossrail.

Points arising during the project included the need to feature people; the purpose of having Crossrail being to Books for research move people around London. After a few months it became clear that there needed to be more coverage of the east, 40% of the tunnel lengths being east of Whitechapel and there was need for representative inclusion of London's ethnic mix, particularly photos of Muslims. The very sad and distressing Grenfell fire event was too significant to miss out and just had to be included as a 'happening' even though it was a little further from the nearest tunnel portal at Royal Oak than the original 1/4 mile guideline from tunnels.

Creation of a photobook calls for two stages of editing of images; a selection to best fit the subject of the book, followed by an edit to firm up on images that work together in context across page spreads. All this with some moving in and out of images with changes of mind plus constraints of total book page numbers. Images were all to be from project members, without any of Brian's being used in the main body of the book.

The final book follows the sequence of *Sleeping by the Mississippi*, beginning with a text, then a short quote on a page and, at the end after the images, notes on some of the photos. For those with eagle eyes, there are two photos in our book with very similar content to Soth's: an open-armed person and



The final book cover



Several of the team members look at the book.
l to r: Deepika Mistry, Philip Brown, Mo Greig, Susi Luard,
Wendy Nowak, Michael Turner.

- *Sleeping by the Mississippi* has been republished in a new edition by MACK in September 2017.
- An Elizabethan Progress has been published by the RPS. See www.rps.org/shop/publications/an-elizabethan-progress
-
- A video of the book is on YouTube, see bit.ly/anelizabethanprogressvideo.
- Print exhibitions of the project during 2018 are being planned. A first 'taster' exhibition is at Whitechapel Library on 8-31 January and a full exhibition at Greenwich in April 2018.

a mystery door not leading anywhere. Luck, as often the case, plays a part.

It was so nice to partake in this project - when we started I had no idea about where the line started and where it would end, for me it was fun to partake meet everyone and see the progress, during the process I got to visit parts of London I hadn't explored ... **Anila Hussain**

I have really enjoyed working on the Crossrail book, which has taken me to places I would never have seen otherwise and made me feel a very small part of a monumental endeavour. I have particularly liked the loose but focussed framework which has taken me above and below ground, challenged my sense of direction and introduced me to a very angry tattoo lady. I think the project has made me better able not only to follow a brief but to peel away some of the layers to see what lays behind it. So I look forward very much to the next one! ... **Val Straw**

I was delighted to be selected for the RPS Crossrail Photographic Project as I was looking for an opportunity to work as part of a team on a focused photographic project which would provide me with new challenges.

At the kick off meeting in July, Brian Steptoe set out well-defined project objectives and throughout the project continued to provide very clear direction. He told the team that he was particularly keen for us to take photographs that featured people and conveyed their emotions. Initially, I felt out of my comfort zone asking complete strangers for a photograph, but I became more confident as the project progressed. I feel that this experience has changed the way I think about images and my photography.

From my own explorations and research on Crossrail, I feel that I have gained a deeper appreciation of the significance of the new Elizabeth Line to the communities in London. In particular, I became fascinated by the artwork and design of the new stations.

The project has provided an opportunity to work with others. On a number of occasions, I teamed up with Michael Turner. We travelled to many new and unusual locations, such as the Limmo Peninsular and Pudding Mill Lane, that previously I would not have considered. I enjoyed working with a photograph buddy, as I felt we learnt from each other about how to approach various photographic challenges.

Brian has kept us regularly updated on the progress with the photobook. As it evolved, I felt that I was able to observe a master at work. Overall, I have greatly enjoyed the experience. The project has been a brilliant learning opportunity and I believe it has helped me develop as a photographer. I hope there will be more opportunities like this in the future ... **Philip Brown**

When I originally saw the brief for the project I immediately thought what a great idea and wanted to be a part of it. The photographic work I most enjoy involves my walking the less travelled byways and taking photographs of forgotten corners. I already had an idea of the enormous changes that Crossrail was bringing to some of these areas, especially to the east of the City, and so wanted them to be represented for the record. My photography walks are generally solitary so it felt good to be able to contribute to a group goal and discuss the work with others. Brian's insights and guidance was invaluable. I totally underestimated the scope of the work however. What we were attempting was to capture the essence of London! I decided to try and stick as closely as possible to following above ground, the exact route underground, as the opportunities for making pictures along either side of the route was so great. What we have managed to capture is just a fraction of what could have gone in - although the essence of the City and our progress through it has, I hope, been caught ... **Anne Roache**

I'm a flaneur by nature with a Fitbit that counts my steps and nags me to keep walking and an overactive mind that keeps composing photographs wherever I look and even when I'm not looking. This project has given me yet another excuse to get out there to make use of whatever camera I have with me taking photographs as close as possible above the Crossrail route over London, my favourite city, from east to west. I made the choice to use my lightest most versatile cameras - Fujifilm X-T1 and Iphone 5.

Brian Steptoe has been the perfect project leader taking the project to a conclusion on track (pardon the unintended pun). He has been so generous at so many levels in contributing his photobook design and production skills, time, effort and so much more.

This project has made me understand that this is a Photobook as opposed to a Book of Photographs. I've enjoyed the project so much, the meetups, and most of all I'm so glad I made

even more friends along the way ... **Susi Luard**

What a very worthwhile and engaging project this has been. I hope my passionate approach to photography, which is hard to contain, hasn't overwhelmed. Thank you for absorbing my response to provide project photographs. I always felt informed in advance and was able to go forearmed and yet still accommodate found shots and try to be as creative as conditions allowed.

Reading into the subject and talking to others helped create initial ideas over the impact of Crossrail construction in Hayes to the west, where the new rolling stock was already running although this location was dropped on initial advice, through to Plumstead in the east where work beyond the tunnels came within scope allowing for a walk along the Ridgeway between Plumstead and Abbey Wood and within distance of the whiff from Crossness. It was amusing to find that several of us had photographed the same tethered gypsy horse, building graffiti and construction site detail around Abbey Wood. I loved a short trip on the Woolwich Ferry.

An enduring aspect of the project has been cultural with wanderings on foot along Stratford – Pudding Mill Lane – Bow – Stepney – Whitechapel with revisits to Whitechapel and subsequently Brick Lane and Shoreditch now spreading out to Dalston.

Style has been important as the project meant I could practice very fast reaction photography using borrowed mirrorless super zoom equipment. In contrast I was also able to spend much needed time to work any given subject. For anyone with me at those times thank you for your patience.

Teaming up and engaging with another photographer was a positive part of the experience, from that small group that set off to Carnaby Street on 3 June, through multiple meet ups with Philip and the honour of an afternoon shooting with Brian. I had a habit of staying on afterwards for a solitary walk following the tunnels and a couple of times I returned home after midnight. Some say, photographing in groups can be challenging as you trip over each other for the same shot. Yet setting this aside, my experience is that you can have a great deal of fun indeed. In fact, a degree of distraction can be created allowing better access for candid shots. Some of my most enjoyable times were inside churches (Jury and St Botolphs), even if light there can be variable. There was time to escape into work for a personal portfolio, which is always inspiring to do.

There were many memorable encounters. Some were straightforward to weather, whilst a couple of terrorist incidents, one on London Bridge the other at Parsons Green clashed with shooting and were potentially a bit more worrisome.

I loved reviewing the photographic stock we have on Flickr, and did so quite often in awe of the work our photographers produced. I may not have clicked likes very much but such a lot of the work is of a very high standard. I have been through it all, even revisiting for further inspiration.

My style is on a rebound from this project and I'm enjoying slowing down and shooting fully in manual including manual focus in order to get creative ideas flowing, hoping for good technical results whilst communicating something of interest or with empathy, with mood, an atmosphere or simply a specific idea or thought ... **Michael Turner**

My pictures were taken mostly on a tour of the new Farringdon station. As we descended further and further down into the depths below ground and moved through harshly lit cavernous spaces, it was impossible not to be awed by the magnitude of this project. Everywhere was a state of incompleteness. The skin and flesh of the place was seemingly stripped away, with pipes and wiring revealed to view, escalator mechanisms suspended in place, squads of engineers working on discrete tasks. But the roof of the entrance hall with its diamond motif was now in place and the elegant roof cladding was taking shape in the tunnels and platform areas so it was possible to imagine what would be. I've tried to capture this: to home in on the poetry of the random structures, the steel and the concrete, the moulded plastic, a gradual process of coming together, frozen in time, the evolving and complete side by side. It's been a privilege to have been allowed to play a part in recording this and to have seen a little bit of history in the making ... **Romney Tansley**

I remember reading the description in the newsletter and proclaiming, 'That's me! That's right up my street!'. On volunteering, I was wholeheartedly welcomed into the group of other like-minded people. Participating in the project has allowed me to look at London in a different way. It has given me the opportunity to research and delve into its past and explore hidden areas which I never knew existed; the Smithfield Tunnels being a prime example.

It has allowed me to practice what I like doing the most, the opportunity to think outside of the box and find that other angle! ... **Deepika Mistry**

THE LADY IS NOT RETURNIN'

I set out to witness and record a most unusual historic event – a funeral with protestors. It was an event I felt could not be repeated and that gave me the impetus to create this body of work. I also liked the limited timescale (just over 4 hours) for a small personal project.

Margaret Thatcher died of a stroke at The Ritz Hotel in London on 8 April 2013 at the age of 87. Planning for her funeral began in 2009, code-named 'True Blue'. Details of the funeral had been agreed with Mrs T in advance. She had chosen the hymns and had vetoed the idea of a state funeral. Her reasons were cost to the country, parliamentary deliberation, and any suggestion that her funeral should have a similar status to Churchill's, a point she disagreed with. Instead, with her family's agreement, she received a ceremonial funeral, including military honours, a guard of honour, and a service at St Paul's Cathedral. The arrangements were similar to those for the Queen Mother and Diana, Princess of Wales.

It was estimated that the cost to the taxpayer would be up to £10 million and this was criticised by public figures including the Bishop of Grantham, Lord Prescott, and George Galloway MP. In fact, the total public spending was £3.6 million, largely incurred by the costs of police and security. Anticipating possible protests and demonstrations along the route, police mounted one of the largest security operations since the 2012 Summer Olympics.

Thousands of professional photographers and major television companies would photograph the funeral. Millions of people would record the spectacle using their mobiles, iPads, and cameras. My interest lay in the protestors and what would possess someone to protest at a funeral. A few hundred people turned up to protest, some shouting and many turning their backs on the passing hearse.

I found a subtle political humour in the No U Turn signs that were visible on the many traffic lights surrounding the protestors. The title Lady Is Not ReTurnin' came from a banner carried by protestors.





North East Contemporary Group Meeting

18th November 2017

Report by Avijit Datta FRSA FLS



Elaine Gosal shows the Kintsugi image of a former homeless man who now helps the homeless © Avijit Datta

8 members of the RPS NE Contemporary Group met at the Wakefield studio of Nigel Tooby FRPS and Elaine Gosal-Tooby

Nigel and Elaine discussed a sound installation which they are planning to add to Nigel's touring "Eye spy" exhibition which centres on the viewpoint of homeless people. The exhibition is planned to tour Durham University, York St. John University and the London Chartered Institute of housing – topical in view of the Government's proposals to increase house building. In contrast to the documentary photography of Lee Jeffries, who photographs the homeless in detail accompanied by vignettes of life stories, Nigel's contemporary approach endeavours (successfully) to get into the mind-set of someone who was living rough on the streets. He portrays life through the eyes of the subject to accurately re-create the feelings of vulnerability and despair brought about by sleeping rough every night.

The last image shows a former homeless man who now supports the homeless in Southampton. The Kintsugi image, printed on glass is broken, but the cracks are filled with gold. This Japanese artform originates from the Japanese philosophy of wabi-sabi, which calls for seeing beauty in the flawed or imperfect. It is also derived from the Japanese feeling of mottainai, which expresses regret when something is wasted, as well as mushin, the acceptance of change and is an appropriate artform to depict resilience in the face of adversity.

Peter Bartlett LRPS showed his photobook on Holmfirth's shops (<http://www.blurb.co.uk/b/8162214-holmfirth>). The Yorkshire textile town of Holmfirth became notable as the home of James Bamforth, maker of lantern slides, silent comedy films and perhaps more famously, saucy seaside postcards. Then, from 1973, the long running BBC comedy series "Last of the Summer Wine" was filmed at locations in and around Holmfirth generating a modest tourist industry. The town has a strong sense of community that is reflected in its high street with townspeople keen to promote and support local business and trade, which Peter photographed. He discussed how this edition was produced, in part, for saleability to the shopkeepers, but after feedback at the RPS contemporary group AGM, he is producing a new edition which follows his original artistic intent more accurately, which we look forward to seeing.

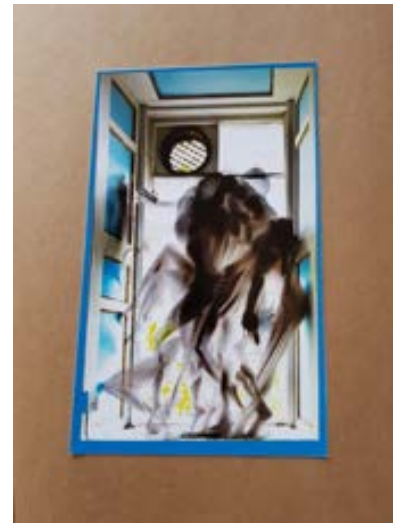


Peter Bartlett shows images of forests following Australian bushfires
© Avijit Datta

In addition Peter showed some monochrome images of the Australian outback following bushfires which he planned to put in a future book.

Neil Wittman ARPS presented his photobook "Torment ". The book is composed of multiple images of a draped model in a bay window). As a result of low perspective, each image is an asymmetric polyhedron, pasted onto a plain brown page.

Graham Evans LRPS showed his photobook "Kemnat A small town in south Germany " composed of photographs that he had taken there over 15 years whilst visiting family. Some of the older pictures were taken on film, while another showing an election poster for a young Angela Merkel, emphasised the timeless quality of some of these small southern German towns.



A page from Neil Wittman's photobook "Torment" © Neil Wittman



Graham Evans showing his photobook "Kemnat" © Avijit Datta



Images of Kemat© Graham Evans



Paul Anderson showed images of his work "The writing's on the wall ".

This phrase harked back to Nigel Tooby's earlier work " The Price of Money " via Jonathan Swift's 1720 poem:

*A baited Banker thus desponds,
From his own Hand foresees his Fall;
They have his Soul who have his Bonds;
'Tis like the Writing on the Wall "*

Paul's images were of street signs, in Hull and London. Many had an ironic message when taken in the context of their environment.



Street Signs © Paul Anderson



Finally, **Avijit Datta** showed his images of Kandylakia (Figs. 9 & 10) – shrines of remembrance to the departed on the Ionian islands including Ithaca , accompanied by Cafavy's 1911 poem on Ithaca, recited by Sir. Sean Connery. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1n3n2Ox4Yfk>). The images were inspired by Avijit's fellow crewmate, Louisa Young. Her book : "YOU LEFT EARLY: A True Story of Love and Alcohol " on her late partner, the composer Robert Lockhart, will be published by Taylor and Hudson next year.

On a positive note, Fig. 11 shows a Kandylakia beside the winning yacht on a four day charity regatta. As the Danish author Karen von Blixen-Finecke wrote "The cure for anything is salt water: sweat, tears or the sea "



Kandylakia beside a Levkada boatyard © Avijit Datta



Kandylakia beside yachts on Meganissi © Avijit Datta



Sunrise through the windows of a Kandylakia on Ithaca © Avijit Datta

The next meeting is on Sat Jan 20th 2018, in the meantime Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

South West Contemporary Group Meeting

Carnon Downs, Truro
Sunday 8th October 2017

Rod Fry ARPS reports

Introduction

Eight members were able to attend, with apologies from a further 6 who were not able to make it. We had a short meeting to catch up on Contemporary news.

1. Contemporary Group AGM Avril Harris has agreed to continue as the Group Chair; Paul Ashley has been elected as editor, Lyn Newton as Concept editor, Peter Ellis Vice Chair and Kate Wentworth as Secretary. All other committee posts remain the same.
2. RPS Council and Michael Pritchard are keen that the CG hosts another International Photobook Exhibition in 2018-2019. If anyone is interested in volunteering to help with this event could they please contact me in the first instance?
3. Financial, the CG made a loss of £1,300 this is set against a strong reserve.
4. The SW Group is keen to explore hosting a day of photography with CG and outside speakers to be held in the SW. The aim is to promote the RPS and CG to non-members by canvassing local camera clubs. This Celebration of Photography would be run by the SWCG but not promoted as a CG event to attract as wide an audience as possible. I said I would check with the CG committee to gauge their reaction and perhaps liaise with Tim Sanders the new SW RO.
5. It was agreed that we should invite Tim to our next SWCG meeting, which would be on the 11 February 2018 to be held at Dartington.
6. If you are visiting London the Stephen Shore, American Surfaces Exhibition can be seen at Tate Modern.

There being no other business the group moved on to the main part of the day looking at peoples work.

Vivien Kennedy Howse started proceedings by showing the group a 1932 Voigtlander Brilliant TLR 120 film camera. She used this camera for a project entitled "Hedge Veg", or unmanned roadside fruit, veg and egg stalls in Cornwall; principally on the Lizard Peninsula. The black and white images have a timeless quality and hark back to a simpler time. Mind you there were signs asking people not to steal the stall. She then scanned the images and toned the scans. On balance the group preferred the original black and whites.

Viv went on to explain that she and Martin were members of NADFAS (National Association of Decorative Fine Arts Society) they had both worked on a joint project to accurately photograph the artefacts in a Church near Falmouth. The highly technical prints have been used to illustrate a lavishly bound book a copy of which now sits with the V&A. The work has been painstakingly undertaken by Viv and Martin for a number of years and is a fine achievement.

Lesley Treloar then showed us some of her work with Polymer Photo-Etching and the local Print Studio. She explained that selected photographs were made into print positive acetates. Etchings are then made from the acetates by exposing them to a light sensitive plate, which is developed and cured before inking and printing to make the final image. She carefully took us through each stage of the process with examples and her final prints made with a deep Prussian blue ink, which were very much admired.

She also brought along her book of Sorrento and the Amalfi Coast. Her images were full of charm and gave a real insight into the character of the place. Her "sexy pasta" was a great talking point! Later in the day she showed the group her photographs of pub regulars made on an old i-phone 4 and given an in camera hipstamatic treatment. The portraits of pub characters made a fine body of work.

Martin Howse took us to his local boatyard with a series of well-observed photographs. He used a 35mm camera with a 35mm lens and took us around the yard, which had recently gone into bankruptcy. The fine prints were a joy to behold. He then showed the group a sensitive set of images made of Muriel Somerfield's pottery shed. Cobwebs, pots, an old kiln, hand tools were all lovingly photographed in a series of atmospheric still life photographs captured on medium photographic equipment. All thought that these images would make an excellent theme for a book.

Rod Fry. I passed round three books for the group to look at and pass comment on. One was a book of photographs made on a recent trip to Jersey, the next was my Bus Pass Folk project and the third was a book recording the view from a train window at each of the 18 stops on a journey from Paignton to Exmouth.

Sandra Shaw showed the group her images she has been working on. They were black and white with a strong urban edgy theme. The group felt that the simplified images of the dog in the road, and the single table etc worked particularly well. All agreed that she is developing a good seeing eye.

John Evans Jones then showed us his images of the Camel trail at Wadebridge. Often cyclists or walkers would pass him on the trail, and he would over hear snatches of conversation. Some phrases were to do with the trail, others had nothing to do with the trip and the last section, were made up from John's imagination. He placed speech bubbles over the digital projected images and we had to guess which phrase belonged in which category. This simple project enthralled us as we tried to work them out.

Ken Holland introduced his talk by saying that Dawlish and Teignmouth Camera Club had started a Contemporary Group. Their first group project to work on the lines of a song by Fishermen's Friends Ken's line "Factories and Offices kiss them all goodbye". Ken hooked up his i-phone to a wifi speaker and played the music to a set of images of factories and offices that fitted the bill. The final project could well take the form of a book and all were keen to see how the Club project develops.

The date of the next meeting was provisionally agreed on the 11th February 2018 in Dartington subject to Carol and Grahams confirmation.

Contemporary NW Report

Samlesbury War Memorial Hall

Meeting 11th November 2017

Alan Cameron LRPS

Six people attended, and general impressions of the new venue were positive. The room had plenty of space with comfortable seating and we were able to spread ourselves and make use of a large table at one end. There is a screen and projector, though the projector only has 100 x 768 resolution and has VGA input. I struggled to get my Mac to talk to it, but we had more success with Nigel's PC and an adaptor. I will bring my projector to future meetings.

The room cost us £20 for the afternoon, considerably cheaper than Days Inn. The hall is close to the motorway and even though it is further up the M6 than Charnock Richard, members felt that the advantages outweighed the extra travel. The kitchen is free to use, and I will try to remember to bring tea, coffee milk and sugar to the next meeting.

Exhibition

The exhibition entitled, "Revealing the Landscape" will be held from April 10th to 29th 2018 in Lytham Heritage Centre. After some discussion it was agreed that those intending to take part should bring some images to the next group meeting. Final frame size is up to the contributor, but as a guide 40cm x 50 cm is the standard mount size for competitions. That is not, however, a stipulation as people showed much smaller and much larger images last time.

Discussions of work

John Corbett, Ken Rowlatt, Nigel Richards, Arnie Whittle and Alan Cameron brought work to share.

John Corbett brought us his successful ARPS submission - "A room with a view," based on his experience of staying in hotels, where, in the mind's eye, the window will provide an exceptional view, when it is seldom so good. John's images included views of air conditioning plants, the back of modern office blocks, some scaffolding overlooking Edinburgh and rain speckled windows looking out from a Turnberry hotel towards Ailsa Craig. The images were all taken with a specific viewpoint to include curtains as well as the window frame so, though the image here is typical of the view it didn't quite make it into the final panel.



John's hotel views were sometimes not so scenic.
© John Corbett ARPS

Ken Rowlatt brought along a photo-book that he produced recently as a result of an approach from a local market. His aim was to capture the life of the market as it is now, including the changes brought about by migration into the area. The hope is that in times to come the book will provide a useful reference for a style of commerce that is disappearing quickly. It is possible, for instance that the entire market may close or change out of all recognition.

Arnie Whittle brought several pieces of work. Two of his images were semi-abstract works created using a modified flatbed scanner to which he had added a homemade lighting kit to enable him to counteract a scanning artefact. There was some debate then about whether images created using a scanner were photographs, and the consensus was that of course they were in that they use a lens

One of Ken's views of "Heywood Magic Indoor Market." The whole book will become a historical document in years to come. © Ken Rowlatt LRPS



system to create an image on a light sensitive medium, and can be printed out or displayed digitally as any other non-film photograph. Arnie also brought some recent work created from scanned negatives and then "solarised" in computer.

Nigel Richards. We looked at three aspects of Nigel's work. He brought two small books of previous work, one a small-scale reprint of his "View from above" series while the other was his scans of cut up vegetables. He then shared two sets of PDIs. The first images were taken after dark in the streets of Sandbach and were a reportage take on the town in the hours when the bustle is gone. His last series were shots of a hotel complex in Puglia, given an ethereal feel by shooting in Infra-Red.

Alan Cameron. I shared the musical sequence I have developed for travelogue shows of a cruise my wife and I made from Amsterdam to the Black Sea, plus a few days in Transylvania. My aim is to avoid boring sequence of, "We did this on Monday," followed by, "And on Tuesday we went...." I have collapsed the whole three weeks into 11 minutes so that in the rest of my talk I can concentrate on themes such as castles and churches.



Arnie's film based landscape given a solarisation treatment in software.
© Arnie Whittle ARPS.

The next meeting will be **13th January 2018 from 13.00 to 16.00** at Samlesbury War Memorial Hall. The room has been reserved. As stated above the focus will be on the exhibition to be held in April. People should bring work to share and discuss even if they have no prints at that time.



Nigel's after dark view of a chippy in Sandbach complete with a passerby who decided to act and pose for the photographer. This is another potential historical document of the streets of a northern industrial town.
© Nigel Richards ARPS

Group Meetings Coming Up

Contemporary Group North East Meeting

Saturday 20th January 2018 13.30-17.00

Third Floor, Suite 4,
13 Bull Ring
Central Buildings
Wakefield WF1 1HB

Patricia A. Ruddle ARPS
patriciaruddle@btinternet.com
07572 124 290

Contemporary North West Meeting

Saturday 13th January 2018 13.00 to 16.00

Samlesbury War Memorial Hall
Cuerdale Lane
Samlesbury
Preston PR5 0UY

The focus will be on the exhibition to be held in April. People should bring work to share and discuss even if they have no prints at that time.

Alan Cameron LRPS
alan.cameron@me.com
07825 271344 / 01253 829114

Exhibitions

When We Were Young: Photographs of Childhood from the National Galleries of Scotland

On until 15 April 2018

Featuring daguerreotypes from the 1840s to digital prints from 2017, the exhibition is sure to delight visitors young and old (It delighted me).

Admission free

Scottish
National
PORTRAIT
Gallery



Futureproof 2017 Street Level Photoworks

25 Nov 2017 - 04 Feb 2018

Futureproof, the annual showcase of graduating new talent from Scotland's photography courses.



Image: © Katariina Yli-Malmi

Deadline for contributions for inclusion in the next Issue is 12th February 2018.

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: lynconcept@btinternet.com

Concept The e-newsletter of the RPS Contemporary Group
Lyn Newton LRPS, Newsletter Editor
Christine Pinnington LRPS, Design and Layout Editor

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