



© JON MARTIN

Submissions

The copy date for submissions to the next newsletter is Friday 8th January 2021. Please note that it may be necessary to hold some submissions for a future newsletter.

If you have an idea for an article, please send a brief synopsis of the purpose and content of the piece.

Please submit your images as jpeg attachments, sized to 72 dpi with 1200 pixels along the longest edge and borderless.

Do not embed images in an email.

Please send all submissions to:
landscapenews@rps.org

CONTENTS

3. Editorial
6. Chair Chat by Richard Ellis Landscape SIG Chair
7. Keep On Trying And You Might Just Get Lucky by Jon Martin
12. Christmas Greetings and an Announcement about a new initiative starting in January
13. Little-known Photoshop© Selection Techniques For Landscape & Architectural Photographers
17. Learning to See The Natural World on a Smaller Scale by Simon Turnbull
21. Events
24. Quick links to our pages on the RPS website

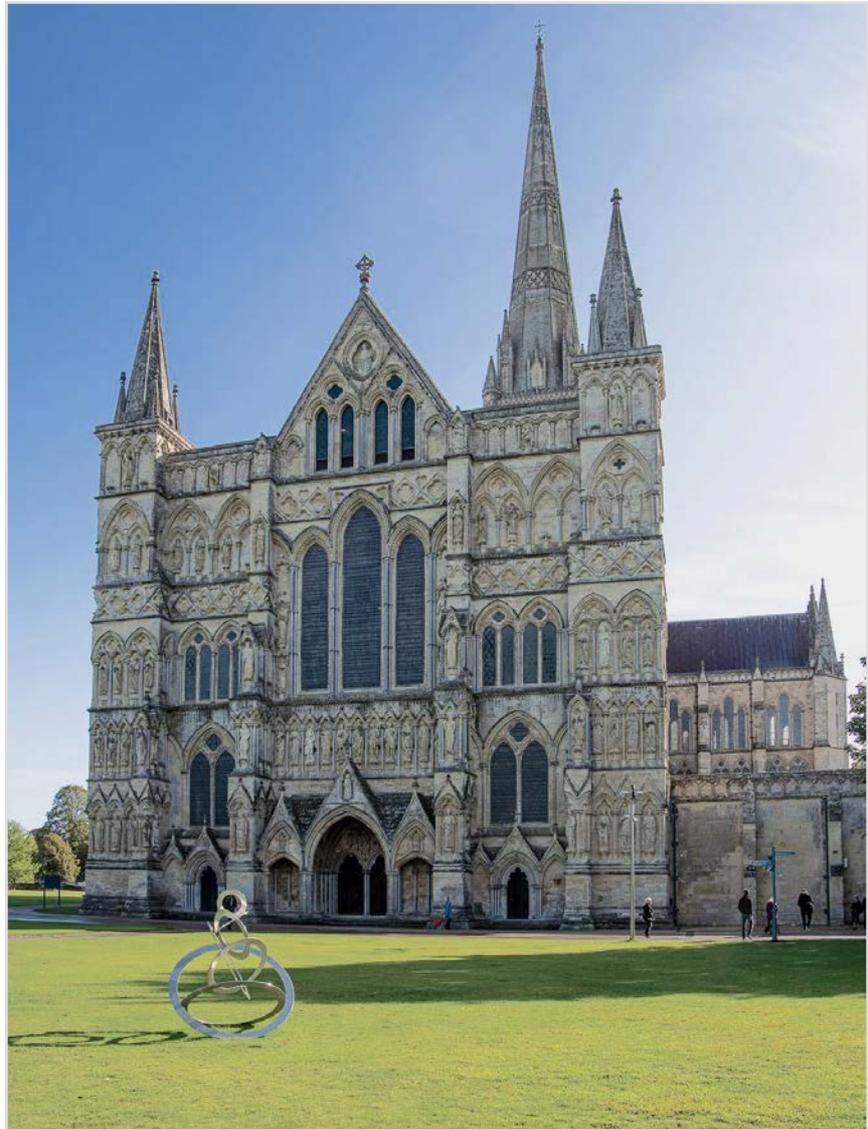
EDITORIAL

Nikon, like most of the major camera makers has been having a tough time in the global market place but has produced a flurry of new cameras and lenses, mainly in the mirrorless market. Recently the Company has announced the Nikon Z7 II and the Nikon Z6 II the major upgrades to the full frame mirrorless cameras that it launched in 2018. Whether this list of new products launched or about to be launched will rescue the Company remains to be seen but it is in nobodies interest for Nikon to fail. As a very satisfied Nikon owner for the last 20 plus years I admit that I may be too old a dog to switch camera brands not to mention the cost. However as my grandmother always told me - it will all come out in the wash.

On another matter the Covid-19 cases are rising again but the growth in infections is not uniform it being centred in the North East and the North West. However in the last month when the

cases have gone up over 30%, deaths have only risen by 4.5%. We are clearly in for a difficult winter, quite what restrictions we will all have to endure, and exactly how that might affect our photography is completely unknown. However better times will come perhaps next summer.

In the meantime our photography will be limited by Covid-19 restrictions. We may be allowed only limited travel for example like in Melbourne where people are restricted to 5 km. from their home. Team sports could be restricted more than the current no spectators rule and theatres and live performances are likely to continue to be banned. Just these measures alone represent a big curtailing of photographic opportunities. On a personal level, last year I



managed 7 photographic trips - 5 in the UK and 2 in Europe. In 2020 I only managed 2 trips, both in the UK, 1 in September and 1 in October.

At the time of writing (late October) on the night of Saturday 24 October British Summertime ends and the long dark winter evenings start to creep up on us. This will affect our photography. There will be more opportunities for dusk and nighttime shots, more use of tripods and higher ISO ratings and speeds and wider apertures.



The Way To Go

If your lenses and camera bodies have vibration reduction/IBIS your ability to hand hold at slower speeds is enhanced. Nikon for example claim their IBIS gives you five stops more capability and while this may be an optimistic forecast, it means that instead of using a speed of 1/1000 you could get away with 1/30 giving you a lot more flexibility. The Winter months are a time for experimentation and new approaches, trying new things and vibration reduction expands your possibilities.

A sad thing happening is that camera clubs are meeting on zoom rather than face to face. Zoom does mean that more distant speakers can be hired because they don't have to travel. In my camera club we have had speakers from Ireland and Europe as well as all over the UK. However I have not met anyone from the club since March. I used to look forward to chatting with other club members, discussing new equipment we might have bought or places to go to get interesting pictures.

BOTH PHOTOS © PETER FORTUNE

On competition nights all the images are electronic of course so I also miss the prints round and I expect when we do get back to meeting in person there will be fewer people submitting prints for judgement but we will see. It won't be before New Year since the club committee has taken the decision to stay with zoom until Christmas even in the unlikely event that Government restrictions make face to face meetings possible before then. There is talk in the club of using zoom for some meetings even when restrictions are lifted, just as some employers, PWC for example, are considering closing offices and having employees work from home and holding meetings on zoom. This could lead to a fundamental change of culture but we will see when the dust has settled!

Truly, in Bob Dylan's words, "Times, they are a changing!"

I should like to wish all readers a happy and safe Christmas and a prosperous 2021

CHAIR CHAT

By Richard Ellis, RPS Landscape SIG, Chair

Over the last few days the change in seasons has become very apparent, the leaves are turning gorgeous shades of red and yellow, there is dew on the lawn and the mornings are punctuated with mist. It is a fabulous time to be a landscape photographer and a great opportunity to get



out an enjoy the countryside. I have been out shooting at Burnham on Sea and at Clevedon. As well as enjoying some lovely light it was also really nice to bump into members of the Landscape SIG also out enjoying their photography.

For those of you who enjoy curling up at home as the winter approaches we have some interesting talks coming up on zoom and a chance to explore very different climates. In November we will be off to Nova Scotia to enjoy the coastal scenery and in December to South Africa to enjoy the coastal and interior landscapes. I hope you will be able to join us and further details can be found on our [events page](#).

It was really nice to hear that there that were successes at Associate and Fellowship level for the Landscape genre. In particular, congratulations to Ade Gidney who has become the first FRPS in the Landscape genre.

This is the last newsletter for 2020 so I wish you all a merry Christmas and a healthy and prosperous 2021.



BOTH PHOTOS © RICHARD ELLIS

KEEP ON TRYING AND YOU MIGHT JUST GET LUCKY

By Jon Martin

Am I ever going to take a decent photo again? That was the disturbing thought rattling around my head as my wife and I left our holiday cottage near Wast Water. I was reflecting on what had been a disappointing three weeks in the Lake District. At best, the autumn colour during our trip in October and November 2018 could be described as patchy. It had been particularly poor near our accommodation at Buttermere, Keswick and Wast Water. The colour had been impressive when we visited Coniston Water and Tarn Hows, but that was pretty much it. To make matters far worse, there had been very little frost, lots of plain skies and an abundance of hazy sunshine. I had put in a fair amount of graft for an out of shape old-ish bloke and barely had anything to show for it. In truth I was uncharacteristically disheartened by it all.



Fortunately, we still had a week left in the Lakes, based at Pooley Bridge at the north end of Ullswater. On the way there, we stopped at Keswick to pick up some food. I took the opportunity to pop into Stuart McGlennon's tiny photographic gallery/shop, which a fellow photographer had recommended. It wasn't too busy and as well as admiring the prints on display, I was able to have a long chat with Stuart, which rather boosted my flagging enthusiasm.

After we arrived at our holiday cottage, I made a short trip to check out a viewpoint over Ullswater. The weather was typical for this holiday, mild with very hazy sunshine and once again there were no keepers from the session. When I returned to my car after sunset, I realised that the temperature had dropped substantially during the hour or so I had been out walking. There was no wind and the conditions were promising for a cloud inversion the next morning. Of course I had thought that many times before, only for the temperature to rise overnight or the wind to pick up.

Returning to our cottage I checked the weather forecast on a few websites, none of which were promising. But these forecasts hadn't reflected the drop in temperature that I had witnessed and I reckoned that I might have a better insight into the micro-climate around Ullswater. I decided to go to Yew Crag for sunrise the next morning. I had been there once before and thought that it would be a good spot to observe a cloud inversion over Ullswater, should one occur. I cleaned my lenses and filters, laid out my clothes and went to bed early.



The next morning, I had a quick breakfast and headed out at about 05.45, slightly ahead of schedule. After driving a few miles through the darkness, I could just make out a blanket of mist ahead, suspended over Ullswater. I started to get a little bit excited. On reaching the car park near Aira Force, I changed into my walking boots, donned my head torch and headed off in anticipation.

I walked through the woods and onto the southern slopes of Green Hill. I climbed steadily, adjacent to a massive cloud inversion on my right. I had my usual kit with me: a Canon 5DSR with 16-35, 24-70 and 100-400mm zoom lenses, ND grads, a polarising filter and carbon fibre tripod. I walked steadily until I was in position at Yew Crag shortly after 07.00.



The mist formed a huge wall, completely obscuring the view over the lake. I would have to wait before the sun rose above the hills to the east and started to burn off the mist. I sat and ate my second breakfast of the day.

When I eventually started shooting, I used the full width of my 16-35 lens to get a composition. I set the aperture to my usual f11, small enough to produce a starburst effect around the sun and shot using different exposures. These images could be blended in Photoshop to control the high contrast scene. A while later and the mist started to clear in

patches to the north-east. I isolated a group of trees using the long end of the 100-400 and took a series of images as the mist swirled around the trees. I shot another set when an obliging crow flew past.



When the mist started to lift and move more quickly, I kept looking around to see where the best photo opportunities arose. I noticed that the only tree to have retained its golden autumnal colour occasionally emerged out of the mist. I pressed the shutter whenever this happened, adding a polarising filter to enhance the colour. The mist then started to clear rapidly in the distance and I needed a wider view.

To avoid wasting time changing the lens, which would risk missing the shot, I zoomed out and took a panorama of two vertical shots to squeeze in the desired composition. The mist soon disappeared altogether to reveal clear skies. The photo opportunities had evaporated along with the mist, or so I thought. I started to walk back towards the car park, pausing only to admire the classic view towards Glenridding, as the first Ullswater Steamer of the day made its way up the lake. I took no photos of this scene today though. As I reached the woods around Aira Force, I decided to make a short detour to see the waterfall, but again I took no photos in what was now quite harsh light.

I hadn't walked much further when I noticed a big, bald oak tree set against a wonderful background. I don't do much black and white work, but I figured that even I would be able to make these limited tones work in mono. I took a three shot horizontal panorama with the big lens.



I returned to Pooley Bridge, very glad that I had persevered in spite of my photographic dry patch of the previous three weeks. With some good fortune, I had come away with a bunch of images that I thought were, by my own modest standards, not too shabby at all.

If you take only one thing away from this story it should perhaps be 'if at first you don't succeed.'

ALL PHOTOS © JON MARTIN



Announcement

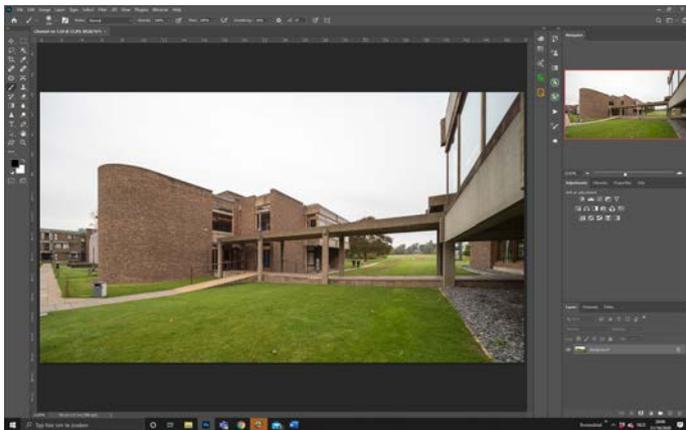
Starting in the January edition, a new section is being introduced to the Newsletter. For some time a number of members have joined together on Instagram, in circles where they critique each others images. The new section will be entitled “From the Circles” and will give news of what is going on in the Circles.

Little-known Photoshop© Selection Techniques for Landscape & Architecture Photographers

By Noel Baldewijns

I. Selections based on channels

II. The blend if slider



I.1 Selections based on channels known as channel masking

1. To select the sky use the channel in the channel panel, that, after selected, brings us the most extended contrast in B&W and duplicate it. In this case it is the blue channel. Duplicate it.

2. Select the duplicate and change the white and black point using the `<images\adjustments\levels>` filter.

3. Use the sliders to change the view to an entirely black (RGB 0,0,0) and white (RGB 255, 255, 255) view. For the parts that are not entirely black or white use the brush and paint.

4. Once complete, you should see that the contrast between sky and foreground is high, which will make it easy to select the sky using a copy of the blue channel. To create the selection, click on the “selection icon” at the bottom of the channel panel and then select the RGB channel.

Now let's do something a little more advanced

I.2. Combine channels in different versions of your image based on separate colour modes

In this example we work with channels from two separate colour modes, the RGB and the CMYK one. When looking at this image, seeing the histogram, we know the sky is showing every detail. To fully express this sky we have to select it first, then darken it and finally blend the dark sky into the original version. We can see that the edge of the cliff will complicate things, so it is really important that we create a good selection of the sky.



1. Determine which the channel in the channel panel delivers the best contrast, in this case the blue one.

2. Duplicate the image. In the copy change the colour mode and use `<Image\mode\CMYK>`



3. In the duplicated image, in the channel panel, determine which channel has the nicest contrast. In this case, the yellow one does.

4. Go back to RGB image and then use `<Image\calculations>` to bring up the calculations screen. You have 4 things to define:

- a. Source 1: is the RGB image, layer is “background” and channel is “blue”
- b. Source 2: is the CMYK image, layer is “background” and channel is “yellow”
- c. Blending option, feel free to choose one, in this case I used multiply.
- d. Result “ new channel” and click “ok”

5. An Alpha channel will be created. The copy of the image can be deleted.

6. Select this alpha channel and again change the Black and white point using the levels filter:

`<images\adjustments\levels>`

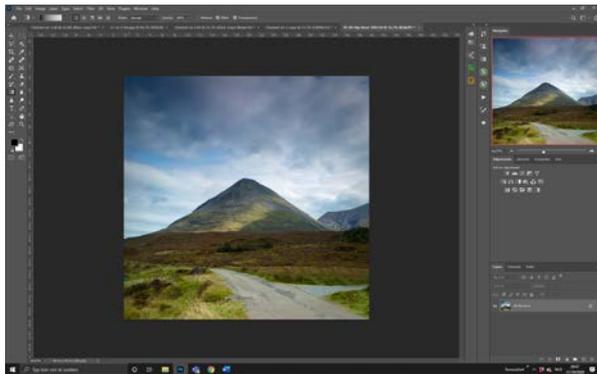
7. For the parts that are not entirely black or white use the brush and paint.



- Once complete, select the alpha channel, create the selection by clicking on the selection icon at the bottom of the channel panel. Go to the RGB channel and then to the layers panel. Save your selection

You have now an exact selection of the sky.

You can apply the same procedure in an RGB image using 2 different channels or twice the same channel. Try the different blending modes to get a better more contrasting view of the alpha channel.



Now duplicate the BG-layer and name it “dark”. On that “dark” layer go to <image\adjustments\curves> and darken the image while keeping an eye on the sky.

Once satisfied, create a black mask. Select the sky and, with the help of a linear gradient, bring the dark sky in the original image.



II. The blend if option

To select the sky, we will make it transparent with the “blend if” option.

- Duplicate the BG-layer. You have now an unlocked layer.
- Uncheck the original BG-layer



- Double click on the duplicate layer and the layer style screen will pop up.
- In the third area in the middle you will find the “blend if” area.
- There is a drop-down menu where you can choose the channel you want to use (Gray, Red, Green Blue)
- For this image we choose the blue channel

7. Move the sliders and you will see the blue gets transparent. You will notice that when you push the sliders too far, other areas which include blue will also start to be
8. for. What only few people know is that you first must change the layer in a smart object to make your selection!
9. To convert the top layer, right and “select pixels”, and save as “Sky”. You now can delete the top layer
10. Go to channels, select the “sky” selection and then paint black and white.
11. Press the “selection“ icon at the bottom of the channel panel, and select the RGB channel. Change to the layers panel.

About Noel Baldewijns

The city, like any landscape, can be a photographic safari! I am an architecture photographer based in Belgium, Flanders but I am a world citizen. I took up a camera after my retirement in 2012 and created a full portfolio. Taking photographs is easy, but creating your own artistic interpretation is something different! You can browse through my portfolio on my website www.noel-baldewijns.com.

If you want to learn more, sign up to one of the online workshops that will become available on the RPS website soon and where Noel will teach you the techniques he uses.

LEARNING TO SEE THE NATURAL WORLD ON A SMALLER SCALE

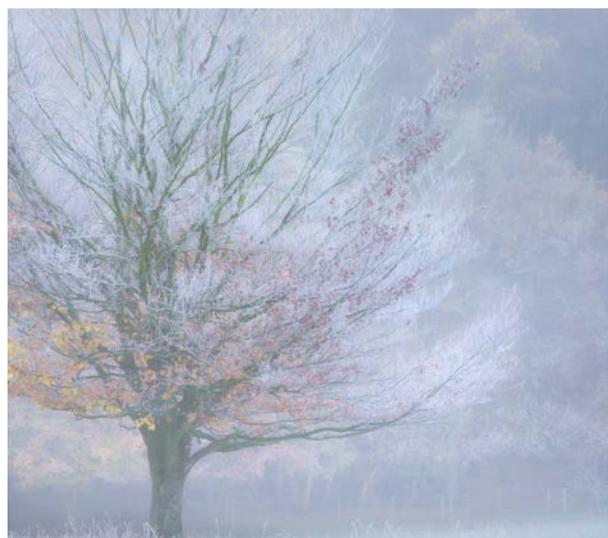
by Simon Turnbull

We're all bombarded with gloriously 'epic' images and I've certainly spent my fair share of time attempting (and failing) to emulate them. You know the ones: a lone stag standing on the ridge of a highland mountain, its breath caught in the frosty morning air. Or a weathered lighthouse with a monstrous wave crashing into its side as the thunder gods wreak havoc in the sky. I especially envy the shots from the Lake District, a place very close to my heart, of a glorious atmospheric sunrise, perhaps a cloud inversion, a gnarled old tree clinging to a crag.



If I'm being completely honest I still would love to have these shots in my portfolio. It's always nice to receive a "oh wow, that's amazing" comment from someone. They're crowd pleasers and rightly so.

But I remember thinking to myself: why can't I get these shots? Why am I failing? Then the simple truth dawned on me: it's because I'm not there. It occurred to me that the chances of me being in such a location at just that right moment are tiny to non-existent. Those glorious Lake District photos are mostly taken by those living in the area, spending many hours on the fells when the conditions are just right. They're



Fire and Ice: A sharp frost in my local woods.

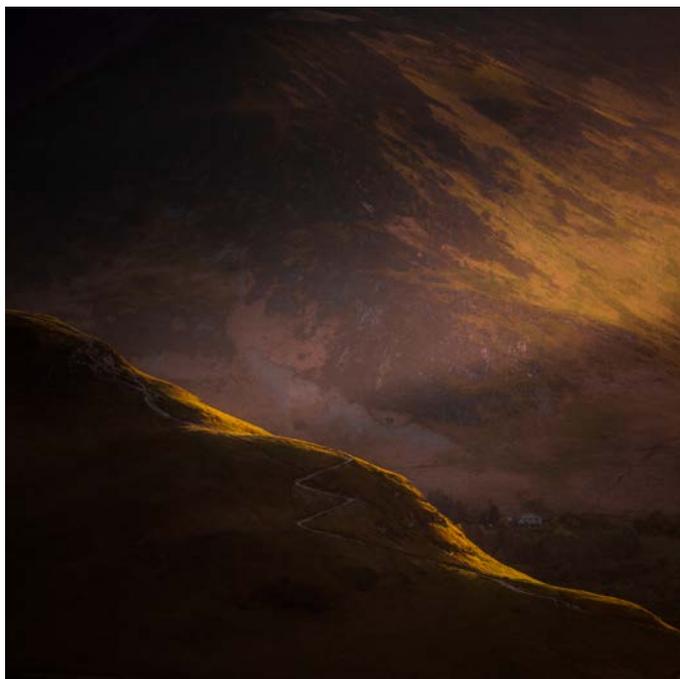
able to try and try again and know exactly where to go and when. I live in Hertfordshire, about as far away from the coast as it's possible to get on this island. And while the landscape is beautiful it isn't "epic".

I also have other responsibilities, a young family, an office job etcetera - setting an alarm for 3am and disappearing every weekend isn't going to happen. My quality time out with the camera is extremely limited so I felt I needed to find a way to improve my chances of getting shots I'd be proud of in my limited time windows. I suspect I'm not alone in facing these constraints.

It needed a mind shift to avoid the continual disappointment which is when I started to look at more intimate landscapes. If I was going to stop seeking those wide vista images then I should start to see what is right in front of me. A new world then started to open up. I didn't need an epic sky because the sky wouldn't be in most of my shots. I started to see and truly appreciate the splash of colours as the first signs of Autumn emerged. It didn't matter where these shots were taken because they weren't about location but



Sharp Edge: A close up shot of a puddle which reminded me of a classic mountain ridge-line.



Last Light on Catbells - The image was all about the day's last light dancing on the fells.

about subject matter, ie the natural world. For me a simple little leaf clinging to the edge of a small waterfall holds just as much fascination.

These narrower views might not always be close-up, they could be about the contours of the land, often lost in the clutter of a wide angle landscape. I find them every much as interesting and perhaps even more rewarding. The scenes often take a fair amount of composing, smaller movements left and right, up and down to come away with a satisfying shot. I can easily lose myself in crafting these shots.

The resulting shots are often more abstract and in a sense more artistic. Certainly not everyone's cup of tea but rewarding on a personal level which is surely what it's meant to be about. I know that they get far less interest on social media but often receive some of the kindest comments - someone out there will really connect with the shot and take some time to tell me about that and that's far more rewarding than a 👍.

What's more, I found those shots had far more meaning to me. I can head to the Lakes where I grew up and come away with pictures no-one else has, showing it's quieter side I know so well. The conditions matter less. Or I can explore much more locally, taking huge enjoyment in a local reservoir looking out for interesting reed reflections. This new approach lifted the photo pressure and I've found my enjoyment for landscape photography has grown enormously.

Better still I've discovered that even without the camera I'm far more observant. I'll notice some pretty weeds nestled between paving stones on my commute to work. Or some reflected light dancing on my living room wall. I just didn't notice these before and I firmly believe my life is much richer as a result.

Don't get me wrong, if I'm stood on the edge of the Grand Canyon at sunset then I'll pop on the wide angle and shoot away. It's a great record of the moment and will make for a lovely image of which to be proud. But perhaps it might be noticing a smaller scene that nobody else has seen that really means more personally which I think can be more enriching. We are all part of nature after all and I feel that looking a little closer will only deepen that connection that is perhaps often lacking.

So I hope this resonates and gives a few ideas. A few tips to finish off:

1. **Use a long lens:** My 70-200mm rarely leaves my camera these days and helps to compress and isolate scenes.
2. **Try using a viewing card:** This can help the eye declutter the scene (an idea borrowed from the superb Paul Mitchell FRPS). **Square crops can work nicely**, especially with more abstract shots - I often set this in-camera to aid visualisation in 'Live View'.
3. **Show a series in a panel:** Combining 3 or more shots together can better help show the creative intent behind the shot.
4. **Show a series in a panel:** Combining 3 or more shots together can better help show the creative intent behind the shot..
5. **Zone out.** It sounds silly but if I look too hard I often see nothing. Just going for a nice walk usually ends in a scene jumping out when I'm least expecting it



Flow: Detail shot from a river in Borrowdale

All photos © Simon Turnbull

instagram: [simonturnbull_photos](https://www.instagram.com/simonturnbull_photos) www.simonturnbullphotography.com

EVENTS

We have changed the way we show events. Listed below are the events not sold out or cancelled/postponed at the time of writing. If an event catches your eye you can go to the Landscape Events page of the RPS website by clicking [here](#). You can search by date for the event you are interested in.



Rye harbour and Camber Sands
On location workshop
6th November 2020



The Landscapes of Newfoundland and Labrador
Online Talk
19th November 2020



Your Landscape Your Way; Dark Nights
A hybrid online / on-location workshop
20th November 2020



Your Landscape Your Way, Inclement
A hybrid online / on-location workshop
7th December 2020



Landscape Photography in Southern Africa
Talk
17th December 2020



Highland Winter; a week in Assynt
Weeklong Workshop
17th January 2021

QUICK LINKS

Easy links to our pages on the RPS website

[Landscape Group Homepage](#)

[What we do](#)

[Events](#)

[Publications](#)

[Committee](#)

[Resources](#)

The Landscape Newsletter always welcomes articles with pictures. If anyone can put together an article on a place visited, a photographic technique or a piece of equipment that they value, we would like to hear about it. Articles should be at least 500 words and pictures should be 1200 pixels along the longest side and at 72 pixels per inch resolution. Images should not be embedded in an e mail but can be sent in a zip file. Please send material to me Peter Fortune at landscapenews@rps.org

The next newsletter will be in January 2021 so send anything as soon as you can. See the front page of this Newsletter for full details.