

In this edition DIG members share their creative ideas

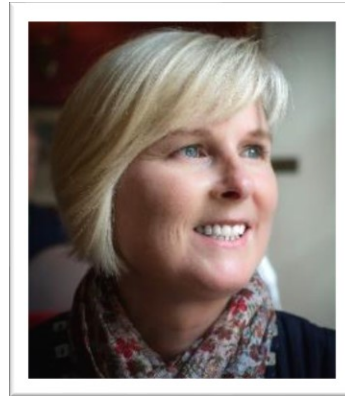


ACCOLADE 4

Celebrating the Distinctions awarded to DIG Members **2019**



Simon Street ARPS



Holly Stranks LRPS

Welcome to our fourth Edition of DIG Accolade from Holly and Simon. We have:

- ✓ 11 Distinction success stories – 2 ARPS, 9 LRPS. (There are many excellent ARPS panels coming in Edition 5 too).
- ✓ A theme this time on Creativity – we asked our successful Members to share their most creative images and how they made them.
- ✓ Andy Moore (RPS Distinctions Manager) gives us a News Update – key innovations being delivered during the 2019 Summer to the Distinctions process.

Some of you have already seen the 2019 Special Edition made in print format (for example to support Advisory Days). Demand has been very high. Readers can purchase the Special Edition through the RPS Online Store at £3 (UK including postage) or £5 (Overseas including postage).

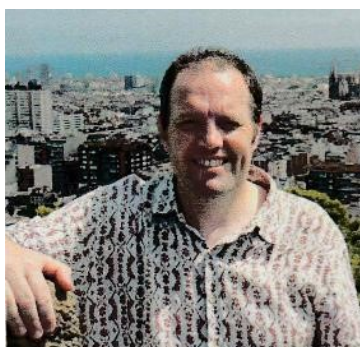
Here is the cover of the 76-page Booklet, all printed in high resolution:



You will recall the excellent ARPS journey Blog that Eric Begbie provided us with for the first three Editions. If you are starting your LRPS or FRPS journey and would like to contribute three Blogs in 2019, do please contact us.

At your request, in Edition 3, we started to include full page hanging plans in the last pages to be able to view them in more detail. In this Edition, we have asked all our contributors to provide higher resolution images to continue to improve the viewing quality for you. Please give us your feedback at digaccolade@rps.org.

To magnify an image in the ISSUU software, move the slider in the bottom right of your screen from '-' to '+'



Distinction News Update

Andy Moore LRPS, Distinctions
Manager

Hello DIG Members,

Distinctions cannot afford to stand still and we have been working hard with the Distinctions Committee and the Board of Trustees to stay relevant and attract more applications.

Our intention is to make Distinctions more accessible because they offer fantastic opportunities for photographers to improve their skills and develop an understanding of photography by applying for one of the three levels.

To this end, we are currently working on clearer definitions and guidelines. We are also planning to produce a series of videos which will be available on YouTube to explain clearly what is needed to apply. The idea is to cut down on the amount of paperwork and make things much easier to understand. We are also keen to remove as many barriers as possible and are planning major changes, which will be announced in July 2019, to all members.

We recently introduced a requirement that portfolios need to be with us at RPS House 14 days before an Assessment. By numbering each submission, we are now able to inform applicants where they are in the assessment process and give them an approximate time. Hopefully, this will take some of the stress off the day! Feedback so far has been extremely positive.

It is vital that we listen to members, so we will be introducing questionnaires over the next couple of months for applicants and observers to fill in after Assessments and Advisory days. Your views will then inform our decision making, which needs to be evidence-based.

There is one innovation I can reveal now: we will be using technology to provide a better service. Software like ZOOM (video conferencing) will enable us to ensure that applicants can obtain personal advice on their images regardless of where they live in the world.

The above are just some of the many innovations we are introducing. Together with a new HQ, a fantastic auditorium and a first-rate exhibition space, there are exciting times ahead!

Have a wonderful summer. Best wishes,

Andy



Success story 1

Name: Brian Mitchell

Location: Verwood, Dorset

Successful Licentiate Panel Mar 19

I claim not to specialise in any particular field of photography, but through constructing my panel, I have noted a strong leaning towards architectural images. You live and learn!

I wanted to retain the orange balloon image (below) because it enlivened the panel, but the strength of colour proved difficult to balance. This led to the only image taken specially for the panel.

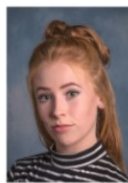
After succeeding, I felt profound relief, as did my wife!



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Brian's most creative image

I was undertaking a small project on feet! I was about to take an image similar to others I had taken, when I remembered past experiments with ICM and took this one shot. 'Moving' was in my original panel, then relegated to back-up but reinstated at an Advisory session.



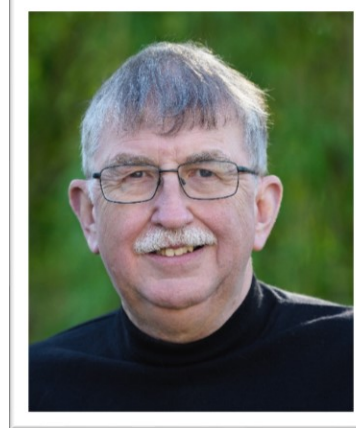
Brian's one that got away

The Moving foot image displaced what I felt was a safer image (below - Autumn Light at Kingston Lacy) and a central part of the panel. With hindsight, I agree it would have weakened the panel, as it was another architectural shot and did not demonstrate a difference in approach from others in the plan.



Brian's top tip

Advisory day guidance on my eagle image was that the sky needed improvement and I should go back to the RAW image. That would have been hard work. I found a shot taken on the same occasion and replaced the sky and it was fine. My tip is: think about alternative approaches.



Success story 2

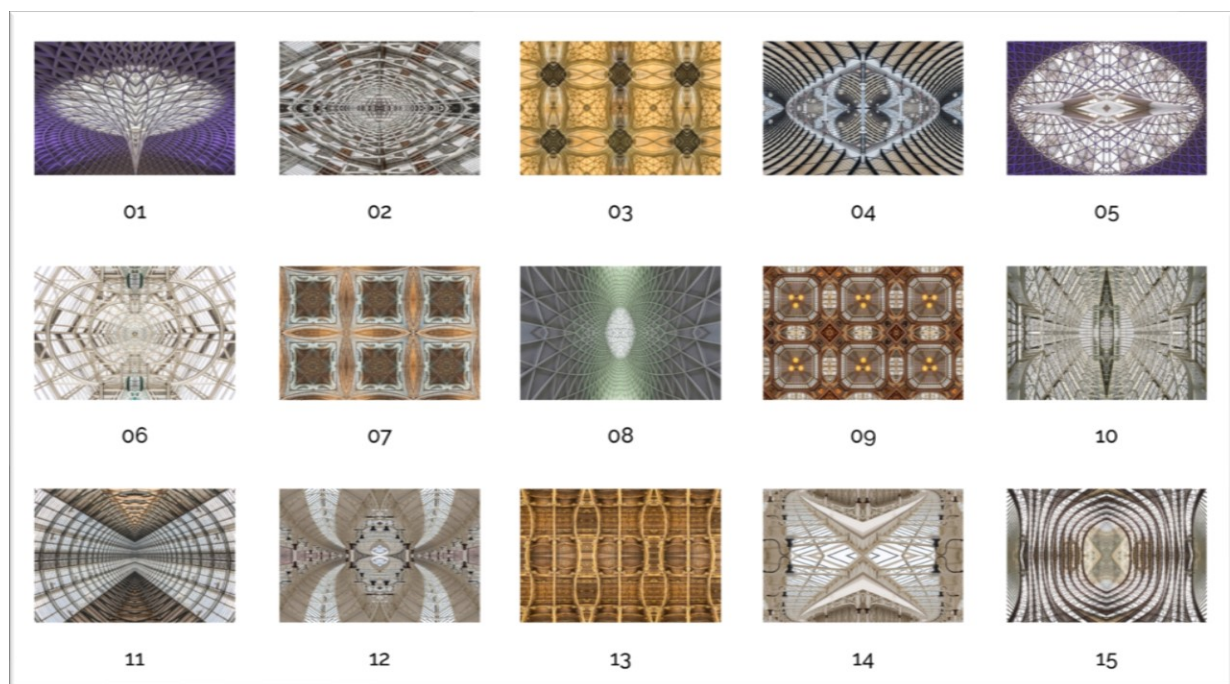
Name: Dave Balcombe

Location: Wymondham, Norfolk

Successful Associate panel in Fine Art, March 2019

I like architecture and patterns so my panel was of roofs and ceilings with strong geometry that I then flipped and

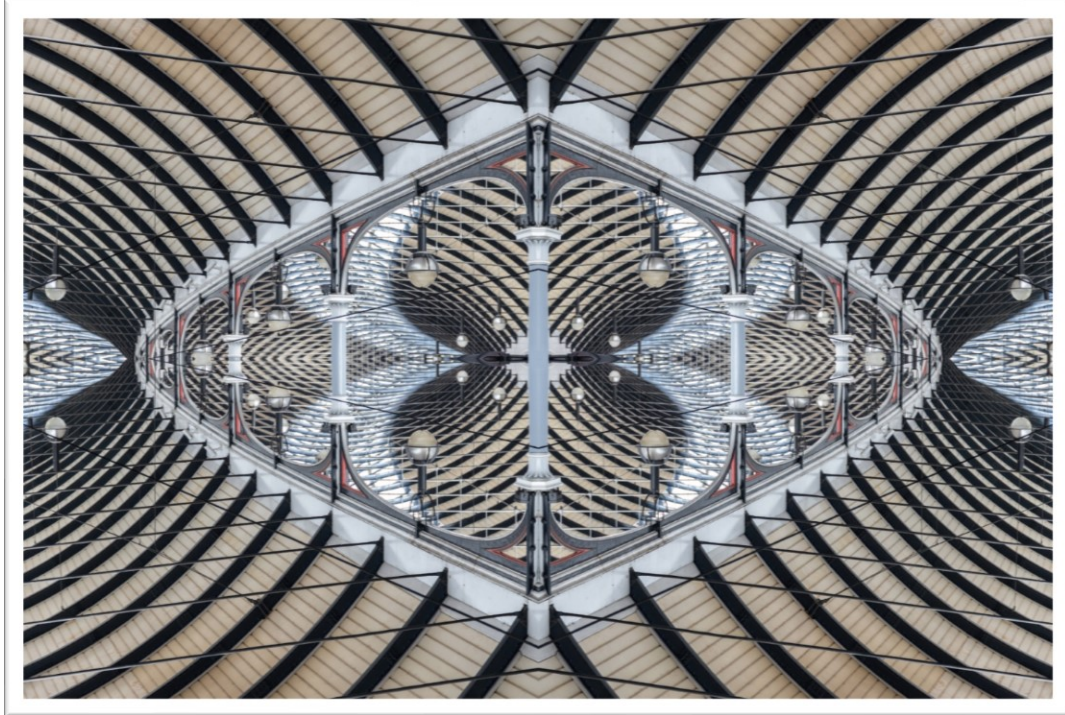
mirrored to create new symmetrical patterns. Initial feedback from other ARPS holders was encouraging. Following my Advisory day, I reprinted all the images larger and included a different style of tiled patterns to avoid repetition. I changed from 3/5/7 to 5/5/5 layout and balanced pictures based on colours and shapes and created a diamond and triangle within the panel.



Dave's most creative image

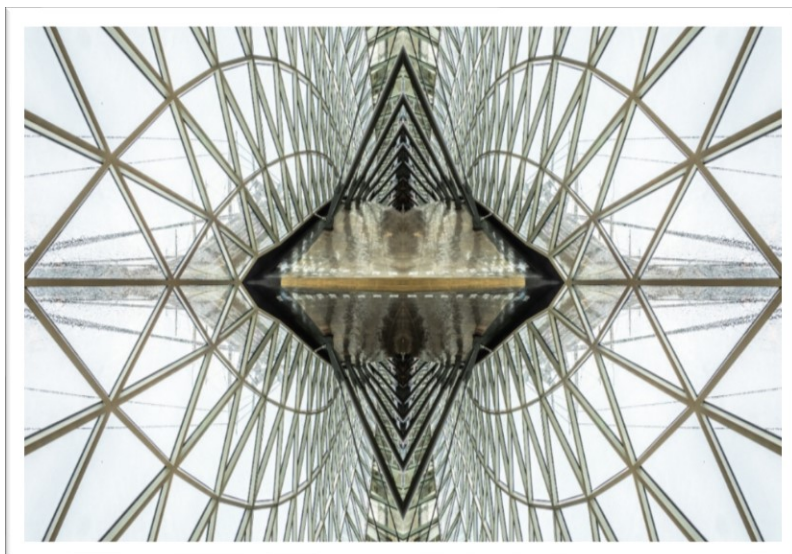
This (*Ed: also see our cover!*) was the image that inspired my panel. It is the roof of Newcastle station. I had to crop-out the top of a train in the foreground, then tried flipping and mirroring, and generated a totally new pattern. The technique then became the basis for the other images.

This was shot on a Canon 7d mk2 but I switched to Olympus OMdEM1 mk2. 1/40th sec f5.6 ISO400 at 75mm.



Dave's one that got away

There were lots of photos that had the full process and got printed but not included. This photo from under the Cutty Sark was one of my favourites, but in the end, it did not fit the panel. This was a shame as it took a lot of processing to remove distracting detail and ensure the rain showed on the glass.



Dave's top tip

Work hard on print quality: I used Permajet Portrait paper and printed all the images myself. Attention to detail was essential as any distraction is repeated multiple times. There was a lot of cloning-out to remove chromatic aberration. If in doubt, reprint it!



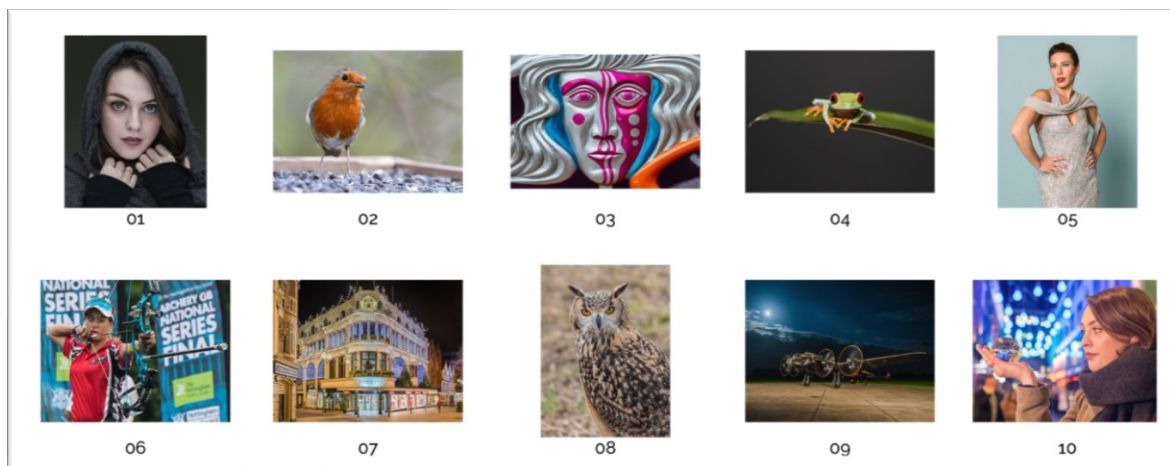
Success story 3:

Name: Derek Sizeland

Location: Norwich

Successful Licentiate Panel Nov 18

Most of my current photographic work is portraiture and sport, but I have explored many different styles. For the panel, I chose to show a range of different techniques and styles, including models, wildlife, macro, sports and night. Pretty much the only thing missing is landscape. Getting the right mix and where to put them was the hardest part.



Derek's most creative image

The most creative shot in the panel is the one where the model is holding a Lens Ball.

It was taken in Soho with the Christmas lights. The model was lit with two LED lights.

A lot of bright clutter was removed from the background. Fun to take with the crowds of shoppers bustling past.



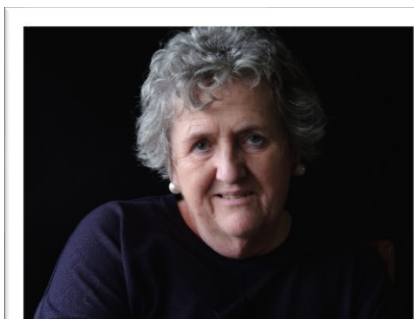
Derek's one that got away

There were a couple of pictures that I felt were weaker than the rest, particularly the mask in the middle of the top row. My alternative was of a stately home, but it was not strong enough for that central position, so the mask won.



Derek's top tip

Do not over process. Look very carefully at 1:1 to ensure there is no fringing and the image is sharp. When selecting your panel start with the 'possibles', then reduce down to the 'probables'. Once you have the 'probables', then find ten that will make a cohesive panel. The first impression of the complete panel is very important.



Success story 4

Name: Sue Hutton

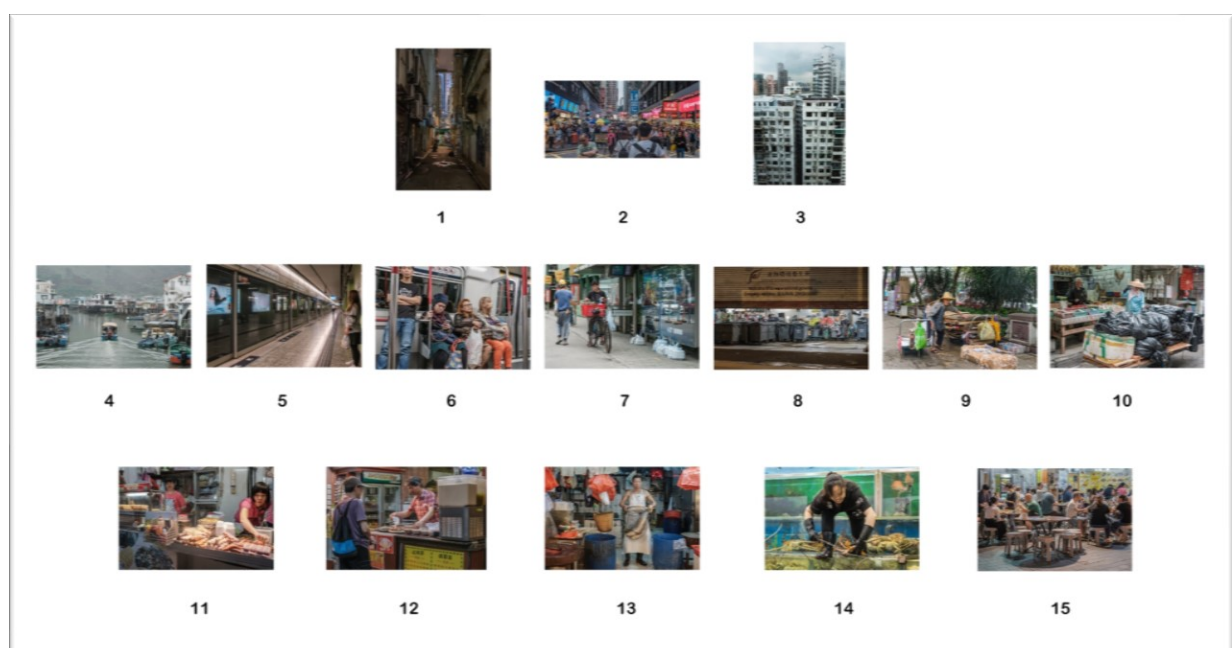
Location: Leicestershire

Successful Associate Travel, Mar 19

Like an iceberg, most of Hong Kong is submerged beneath the surface of its glamorous façade. The majority of its 7.5

million inhabitants live and work in shabby surroundings earning little. Nonetheless, food plays an important part of daily preoccupations. Housewives often like to see their food live before putting it on the table. Thus, I focused on a documentary treatment of the daily environment and provision of food on the streets.

When I learned that I had been awarded the ARPS, I felt both relieved and elated. Elated, obviously, because I had achieved the distinction. Relieved, because it had taken six years and a previous unsuccessful attempt, which I had found very humiliating, to get to my goal.



Sue's most creative image

Kowloon Alley is, for me, the most creative in that it required a camera capable of capturing a large dynamic range without losing highlights or darkest shadows, aided by post-processing in Lightroom. I had seen photos of the

original Kowloon slums. This alleyway, at night, reminded me of them. Kowloon is still traversed by narrow, high alleyways. The puddle, the A/C units and the motorbike all added welcome foreground interest.

Fujifilm XT20 with 35mm 1.4R lens, 1/100 second, 2.8 (Est), ISO 3200. (I might have selected a priority setting).



Sue's one that got away

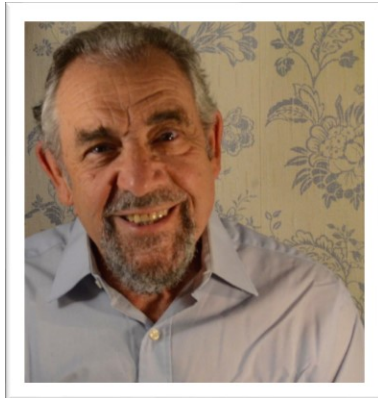
The Happy Fishmonger is my 'one that got away,' and a lesson in not being so attached to an image as to be able to exclude it when you realise it will not work. She was in the traditional fish market at Shek Kip Mei and gave me a radiant smile when she realised I was about to take her photo. The suggestion of movement in her right hand works for me although purists might want to see no movement at all. Her face is not quite sharp enough. And just look at those bright white lights! Tut-tut.



Sue's top tip

Have a plentiful repository of photos to choose from. I had almost 2000 but in the end, the fifteen I chose could not have been bettered. Be very precise in writing your

Statement of Intent. Some people can get away with very few words but my experience has been that you are safer describing exactly what you set out to do.



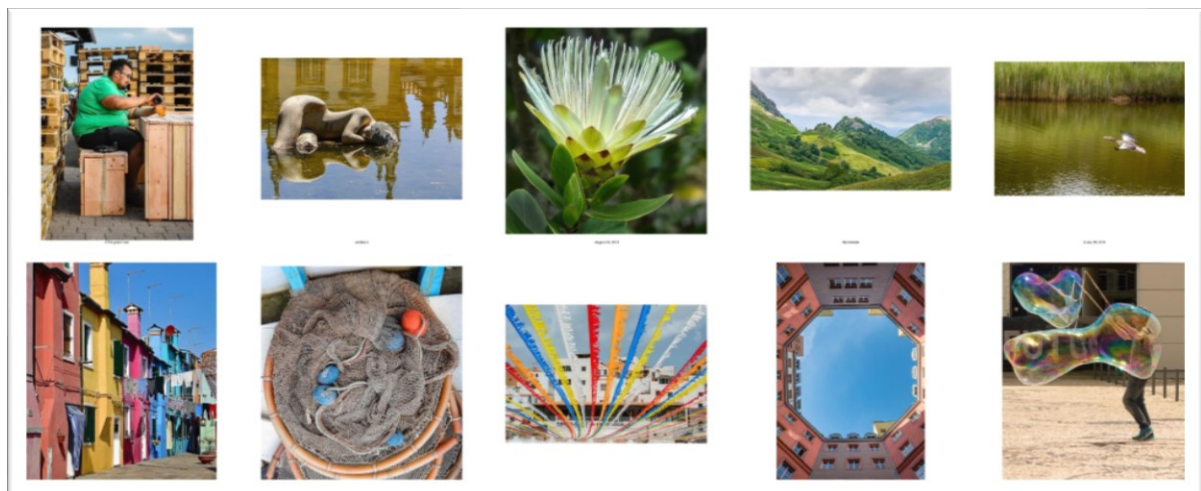
Success story 5

Name: Gerry Phillipson

Location: France

Successful Licentiate Panel Oct 18

I wanted a panel that showed variety of both subject matter and technique using different lenses. I had read colour would be appreciated. Images of different sizes made the balance of the panel problematic. The top right image needed a portrait format. Added to which, I thought the wings of the goose might be blown-out. Unable to get to an Assessment day, I expected to be referred and was very grateful to catch the judges on a good day!



Gerry's most creative image

Getting and maintaining the hand-held camera in position was difficult. I took many photographs trying different apertures and lenses but I missed a flight of ducks! In post-processing, exposure and shadows were adjusted, clarity and dehaze tweaked. I was going to focus-stack but the image was sharp enough.



Gerry's one that got away

In an earlier version of the panel I had placed an old and a young woman in juxtaposition. It was apparent in

cropping this photograph that I was never going to get the sharpness the portrait needed. The image would have failed because of the softness. Learning to let a favourite go was an important lesson.



Gerry's top tip

1. See the photograph you want to take before taking it. Give considerable thought to your selection for the panel (let your darlings go!) and ensure the mounting does justice to the quality of the image. 2. However advanced you think you are, the LRPS assesses basic skills; concentrate on aperture, shutter speed and ISO. Get advice wherever you can.



Success story 6

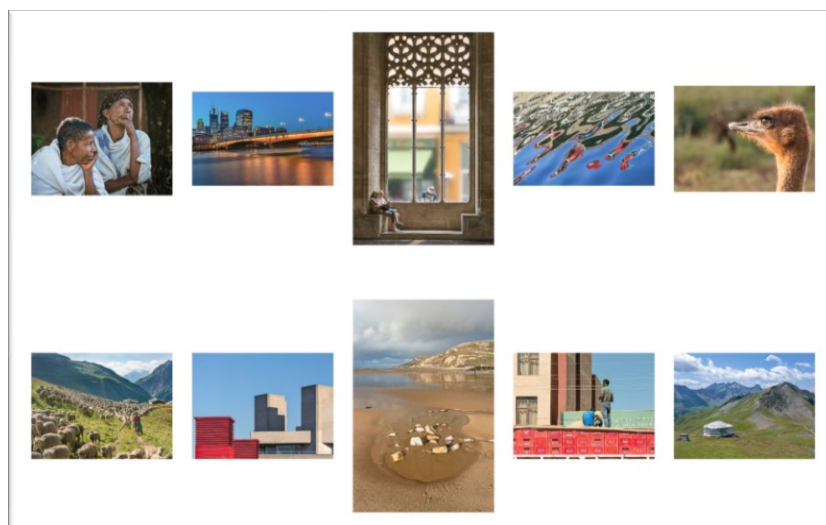
Name: Kathryn Alkins

Location: London

Successful Licentiate Panel Dec 18

After an initial discussion with an experienced Fellow Member, I ruled-out lots of potential photos because of very dark shadows or large areas of white. I then thought about what might be missing and decided to shoot some night shots which was new for me.

Eight of the pictures I chose originally ended up in my final panel, although some went and then came back, and also moved around. I also spent a long time choosing a couple of images to balance with ones I really wanted to include. I made various collections in Lightroom and kept looking to decide which layout I preferred. I was pleased when I got the result as it has given me confidence.



Kathryn's most creative image

I was drawn to the reflections, of the white fence, grey concrete sides of the culvert and blue sky, in the water. I had to play around with the settings, viewpoint and lenses before achieving a good depth of field, and fast enough to freeze the shapes. Although it was very cold, I then waited until a DLR train went past to add the red. I did not need to do much post-processing although at the Advisory day, I was asked to remove some leaves using Photoshop to "clean up the image".

1/80 sec, F10, ISO 400, 50mm using a Sony mirrorless 4/3 sensor camera.



Kathryn's one that got away

I really liked the photograph of a modern building reflected in Deptford Creek. I thought it made a nice central image but it just did not balance with the rest of the panel. The image also did not add anything eg. different light conditions or wide angle compared to the eventual central images.



Kathryn's top tip

I really wanted to include the ostrich "portrait" but initial feedback highlighted a problem with the background

which was a bright patch of sky. Fortunately, I had just completed an introduction to Photoshop course and had several goes at extending the mottled scrub behind the ostrich's head, which made for a much better photograph.



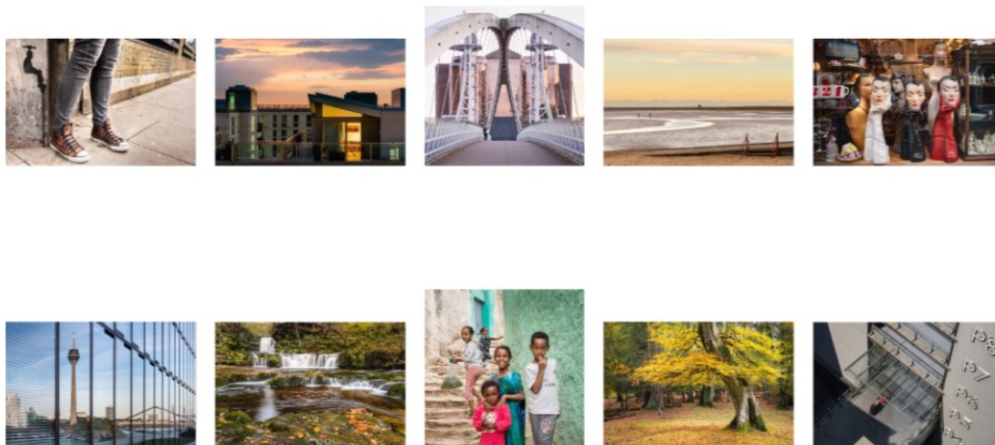
Success story 7

Name: John Sanchez

Location: North Thoresby, Lincs

Successful Licentiate Panel Mar 19

A quick glance at my hanging plan will give a good indication of my interests to date - rural, coastal and urban landscapes with a dash of travel portraiture. I very much enjoyed working with a set of images to create the panel, finding it a change from the usual focus on single images for competition. I started by identifying two, balanced central images and then looked to create right and left-handed flow with the remaining eight.



John's most creative image

There are so many images these days, it is difficult to find anything new. I enjoy trying to create quirky images and feel that 'Tap Shoes' meets this brief!

It is not the most technically difficult image, and may not be to everyone's taste, but it makes me smile and I think that matters.

34mm, 1/30, f6.3 iso100



John's one that got away

Evening Light is one of several images that did not make the final cut. I am guessing that I may not be the only one who is guilty of grabbing a shot, not getting it right in

camera, and then working the RAW file to death. Sadly, the weaknesses then become evident in the print!



John's top tip

I would offer three technical tips from my own experience:

1. If you feel you are pushing a RAW file too far you probably are.
2. Check your prints for colour cast in good daylight or with daylight bulbs.
3. Check your prints carefully for flaws, put them down for a while and then check again.



Success story 8

Name: Malcolm Balmer

Location: Sherborne

Successful Licentiate Panel Mar 19

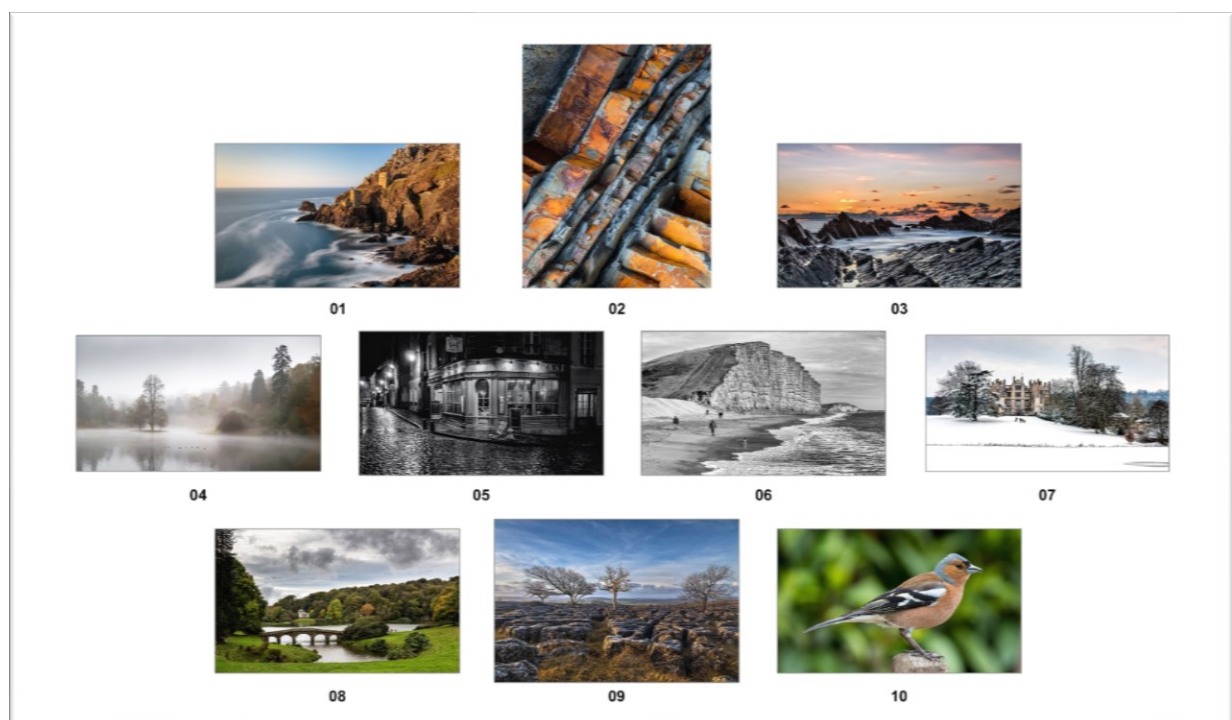
My preferred subject to photograph is coastal landscapes but I knew I had to include a variety of subjects in my Panel. I rejected quite a number of good images that did not work due to the subject, overall colour or aspect ratio.

I spent many hours in Lightroom playing with different layouts. My first prospective Panel went for Online Assessment which provided very valuable feedback and allowed me to finalise my submission.

The first Assessment day at Bovey Tracey resulted in a referral, with one image being sub-standard. It took me

quite a while to settle on a replacement image that fitted well in the Panel. On a shoot in south Cornwall, I knew as soon as I took the image of Botallack, that this was the one!

My Panel was accepted in March this year at the new RPS HQ in Bristol. My initial reaction was one of great relief and not wanting to go through that again! However, I am now seriously considering what theme might work for my ARPS.

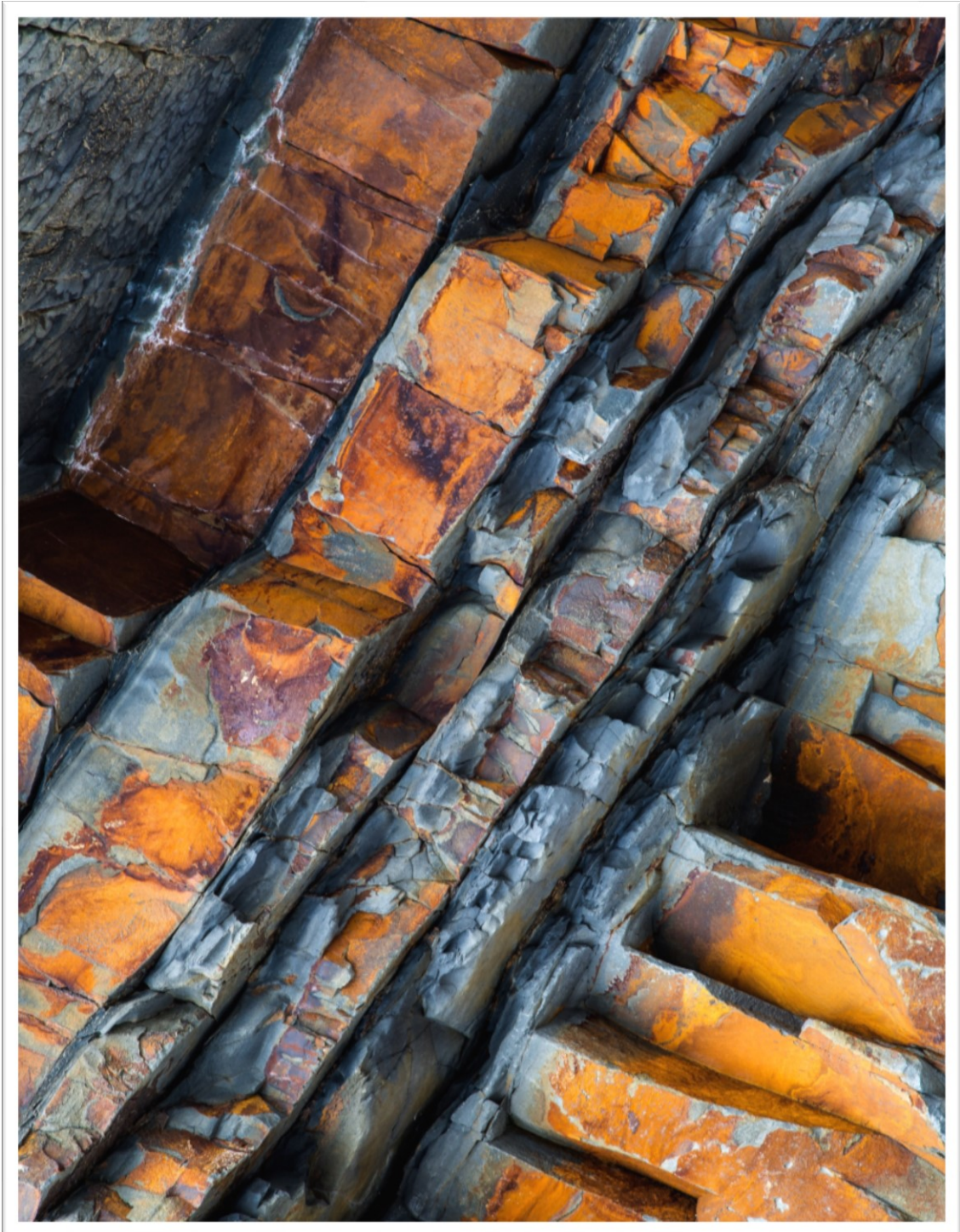


Malcolm's most creative image

02 Rock Strata, Sandymouth Beach: Whilst visiting Sandymouth beach in Cornwall, I was drawn to the rich orange and grey colours in the rocks. I thought this would make a stunning abstract image. The light on the day was subdued which resulted in softer shadows. Using a medium telephoto zoom I focused in on the amazing

textures within the rock strata. I really love the bold colours. In post-production I have rotated the image to give a pleasing diagonal aspect to the image.

ISO 100, 96mm, 1/8s at f11



Malcolm's one that got away

Trebarwith Strand at sunset. This image was considered below standard at my first Assessment for several reasons: not enough shadow detail on the cliffs and rocks; plus evidence of some haloing around the cliffs. I did try to rectify the image but decided on balance that a new image was required. The lesson here is not to be too blinkered in selecting an image that is special to you but does not stand up to scrutiny.



Malcolm's top tip

My top tip is to give a lot of thought to the selection of paper to really show your images at their very best. I used the same fine art paper for all of my prints. One assessor suggested a mix of papers to suit the subject may have worked even better.

To ensure optimum print quality your screen monitor must be colour-calibrated and the printer correctly profiled for the chosen paper. Use the soft-proofing option to optimise the image prior to printing. Watch out for subtle colour casts and any signs of haloing.



Success story 9

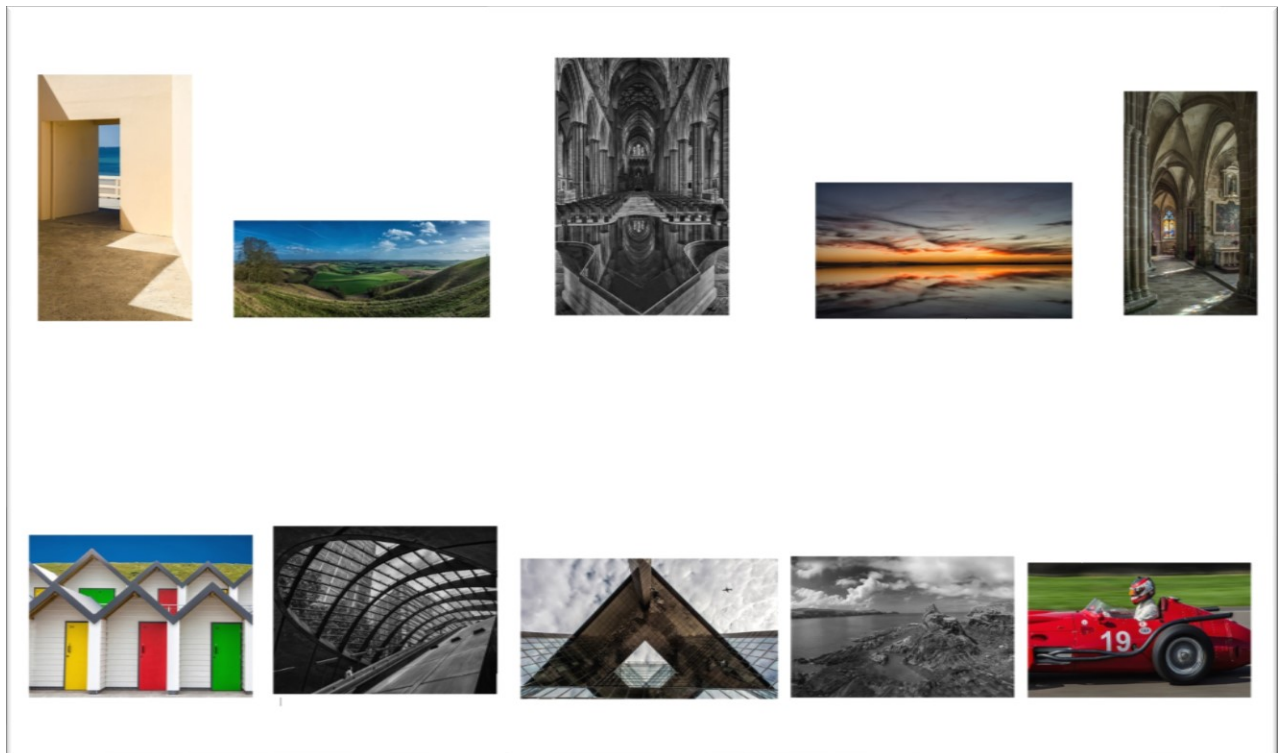
Name: Mick Miller

Location: Burghfield Common, Berks

Successful Licentiate Panel Mar 19

Eclectic is probably the best word to describe my Licentiate Panel, and my general subject matter. The oldest picture is my Salisbury Cathedral monochrome which dates from April 2014. This is when I felt inspired to work towards a distinction.

The panel evolved from my skyscraper shot taken on the South Bank. The strong arrow shape pointing up, it fitted well below the cathedral's font, which pointed down. It really takes time to find the right pictures that balance in every respect. I found the process very rewarding and a steep learning curve.



Michael's favourite/most creative image

The seascape of Aberiddi is my favourite. I enjoy making as strong a composition as I can from the world around me, and particularly enjoy working in monochrome. It was taken on a full frame Nikon, originally as a panorama, and then cropped down.

Getting the tonal range as I wanted it took some time. It was important to balance the tones of my three monochromes within the panel.



Michael's one that got away

I wanted to include a picture of Corfe Castle, which is from a project where I attempted to catch the light at dawn, and in this instance at dusk.

I used the Photographer's Ephemeris App to discover when the light was at its best. In fact, the setting sun lit the castle for all of 4 minutes. The result was a rather moody picture which proved difficult to print, and really did not fit in the panel after all.



Success story 10

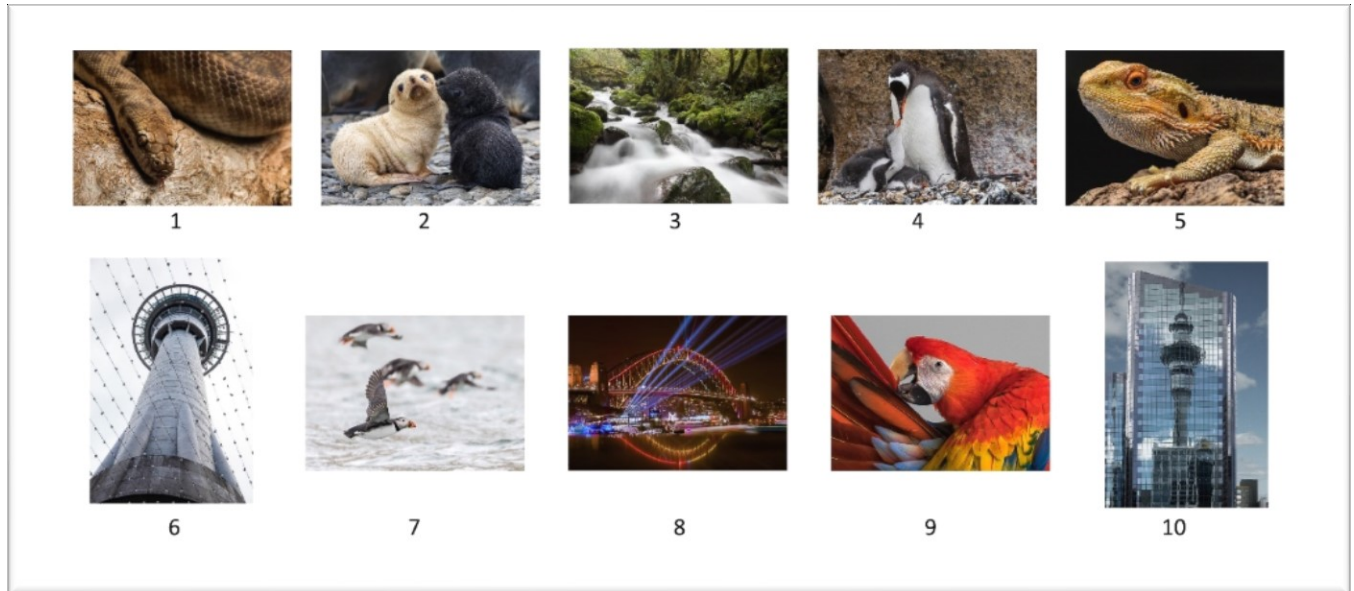
Name: Jocelyn Edwards

Location: Sydney, Australia

Successful Licentiate Panel Dec 18

My panel is weighted toward my favourite subject, wildlife. In order to diversify, I selected some photos that showed a capacity to 'see' objects in a different way. I had patient and invaluable guidance in panel layout and submission quality from DIG Chair Janet Haines. The greatest challenge, however, was printing, which many

will appreciate is an art of its own! To hear that I was successful was a fantastic relief.



Jocelyn's most creative image

Photographing the Sydney Harbour Bridge from different aspects is challenging so I am happy with this one (below) taken during the 'Vivid' light festival.

It is taken with the bridge reflected in a polished wall surface. Moving beams made it challenging to avoid overblowing the highlights while still getting enough light in the darks. Jostling crowds made an added degree of difficulty!

Photo details: ISO 200, 64mm, f8, 15/sec



Jocelyn's one that got away

This penguin was a more sentimental choice than objective. Penguins have perfected swiftly changing direction to avoid their many predators. I was proud to capture this movement.

However, it was snowing, the light was terrible and I compromised on shallow depth of field. Tight cropping

meant losing detail and I reluctantly had to accept that good was not good enough.

Photo details: ISO640, 252mm, f/5.6, 1/2500 sec



Jocelyn's top tip

I learnt to be careful with over-processing. The temptation to over-sharpen or clarify easily introduces 'halos' around the image that can be difficult to see and the more you look, the more you start to question it!

Have a large enough portfolio of quality photos to prevent you having to pull more out of an image than is there. Stay objective.



Success story 11

Name: Nigel Norris

Location: Hampshire

Successful Licentiate Panel Mar 19

Although my main interest is landscape photography, I wanted some variety in the panel. I created a shortlist of images that I felt good about and were a fair representation of my photography. I do not take many people pictures but there were three that made the final panel and helped show another dimension.

The assessment day was quite tense as several panels were rejected before mine, so I was happy and relieved to be recommended.



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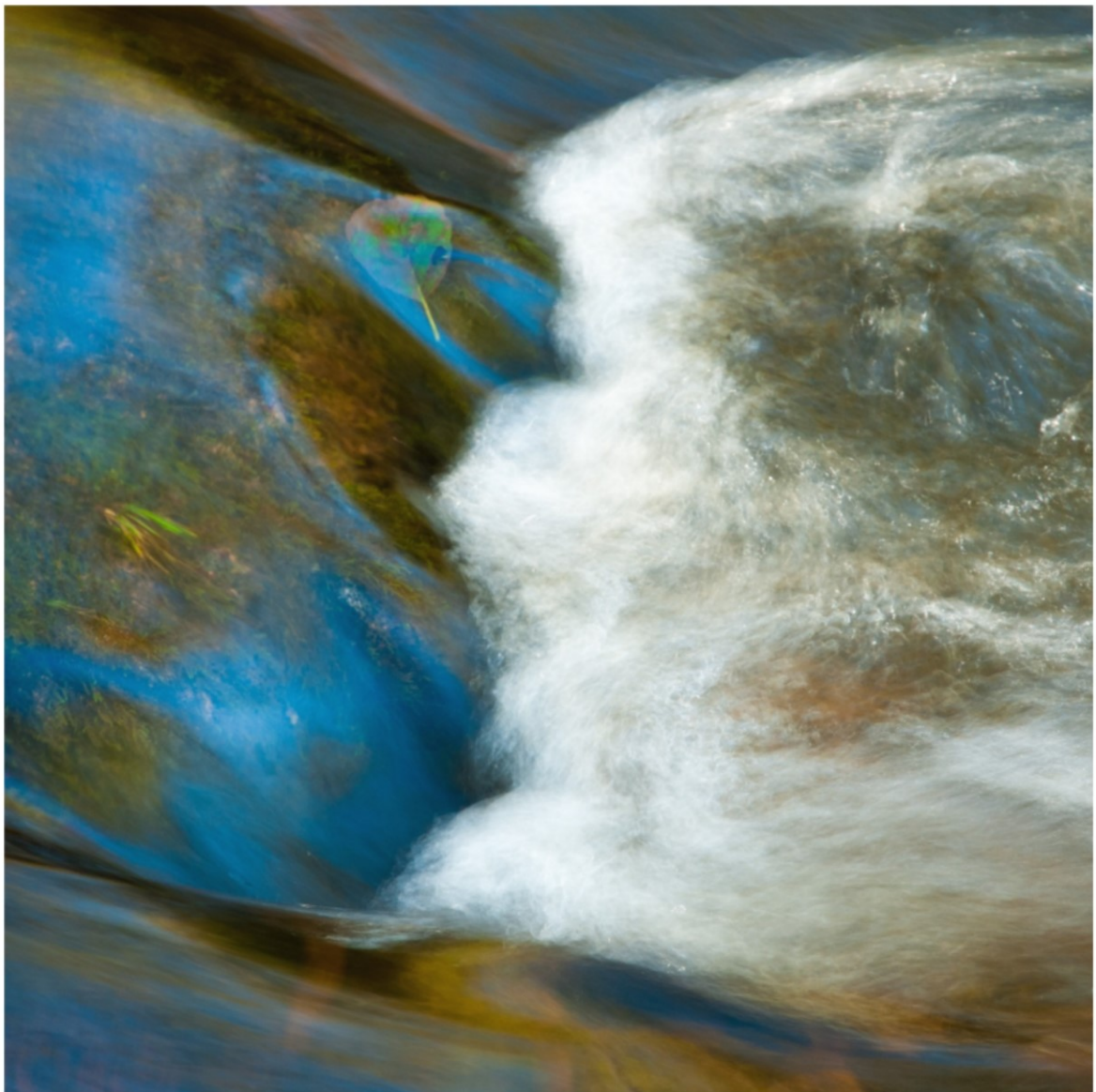


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Nigel's most creative image

Water is the creative force in this image. Here water is a colourless, transparent liquid that shows colour transmitted from the stream bed and reflected from the sky and trees. Laminar flow creates form on the left; turbulent flow creates textures on the right. I was just happy to capture it.

Nikon D300S 1/5 sec at f/5.6 18-70mm lens at 62mm



Nigel's one that got away

This is an image that tells a story for me, but maybe not for others. I had some very helpful advice from a fellow club member when putting the panel together. He forcibly pointed out that the panel members would not get the story and the image would be far too prominent.



Nigel's top tip

When photographing water, choice of shutter speed is the critical decision. The speed with which the water is moving and the effect you want are the main factors in the choice, but some trial and error is usually necessary.

If your submitted images have technical faults, they will be noticed. Leave time for a final check and rework if necessary.



HELPFUL LINKS

Paste the following into your Web Browser. This list is just our first go. Let us know any additions or improvements!

DIG tutorials to be found in: <http://www.rps.org/special-interest-groups/digital-imaging/about/links-to-tutorials>

RPS Distinctions page: <http://www.rps.org/distinctions>

LRPS, ARPS & FRPS guidelines & booking forms:
<http://www.rps.org/distinctions/apply-now>

Advisory days: <http://www.rps.org/distinctions/advisory-days>

Assessment Dates: <http://www.rps.org/distinctions/events>

LRPS Examples: <http://www.rps.org/distinctions/distinction-successes/lrps-galleries>

ARPS Examples: <http://www.rps.org/distinctions/distinction-successes/arps-galleries>

FRPS Examples: <http://www.rps.org/distinctions/distinction-successes/frps-galleries>

RPS workshops: <http://www.rps.org/learning>

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ACCOLADE 4

Celebrating the Distinctions awarded to DIG Members 2019

Hanging Plans for more detailed viewing

Brian Mitchell LRPS



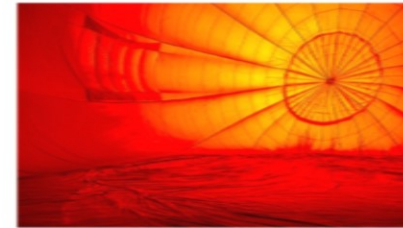
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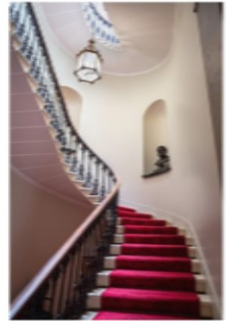
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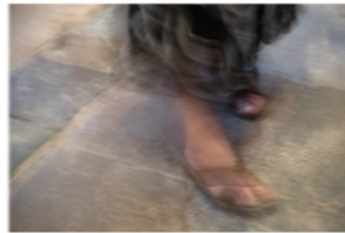
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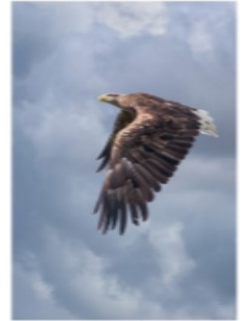
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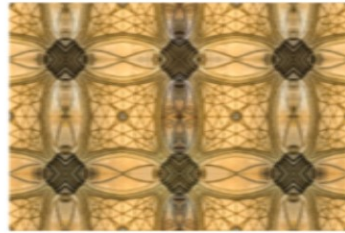
Dave Balcombe ARPS



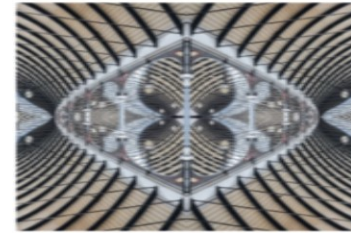
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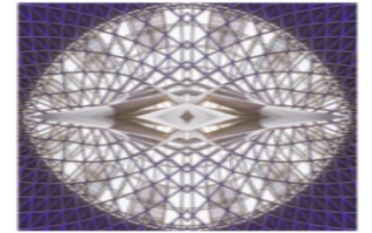
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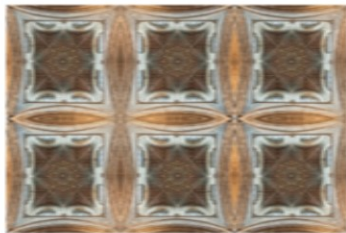
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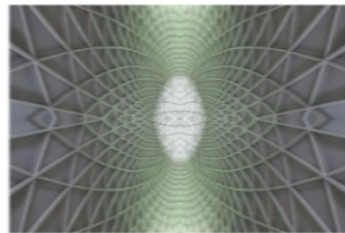
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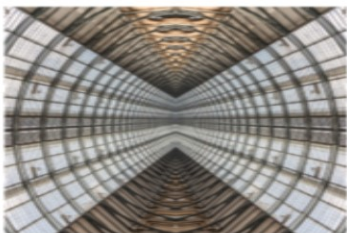
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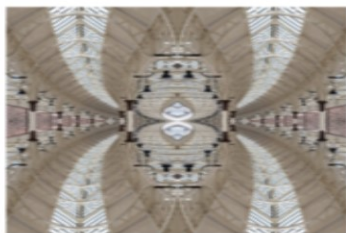
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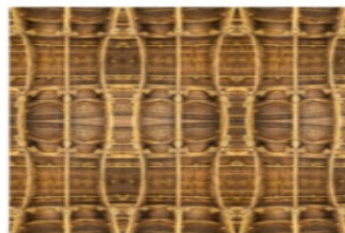
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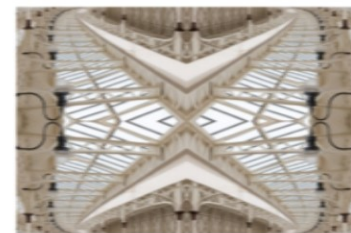
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Derek Sizeland LRPS



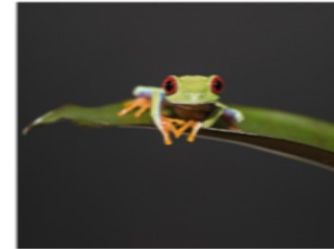
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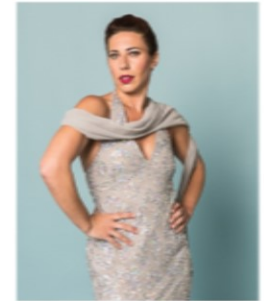
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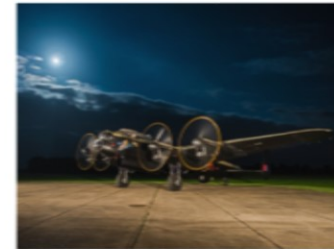
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Sue Hutton ARPS



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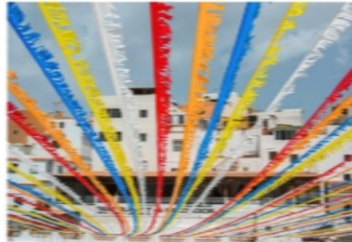
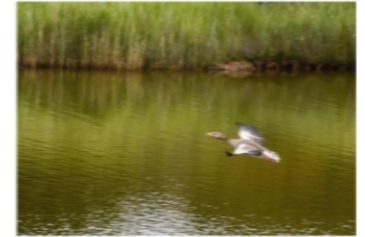
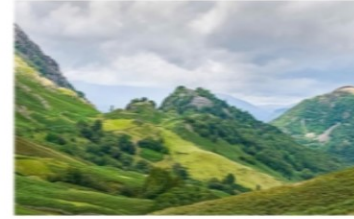


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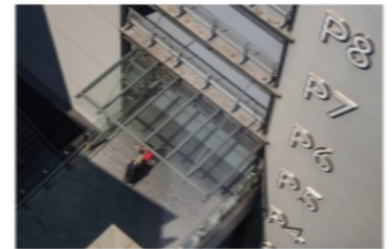
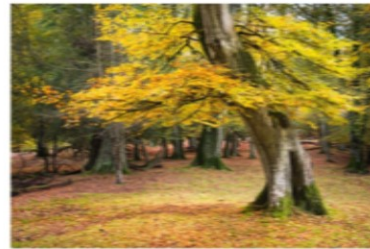
Gerry Phillipson LRPS



Kathryn Alkins LRPS



John Sanchez LRPS



Malcolm Balmer LRPS



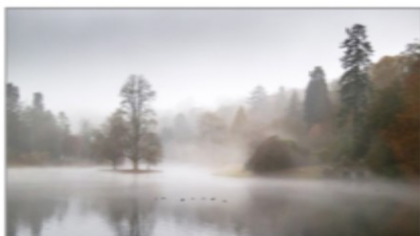
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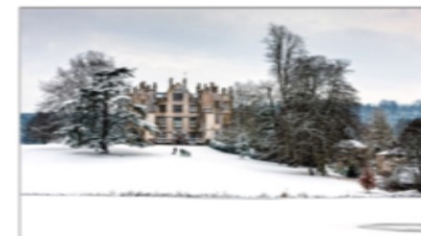
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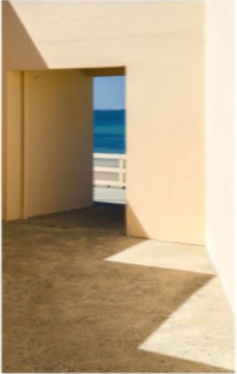


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Mick Miller LRPS



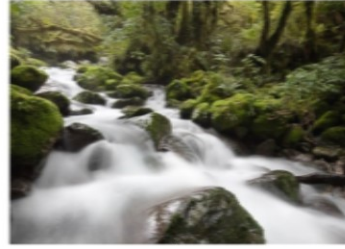
Jocelyn Edwards LRPS



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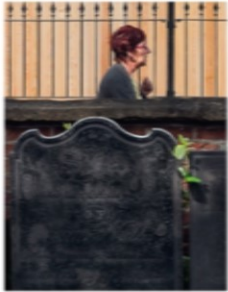


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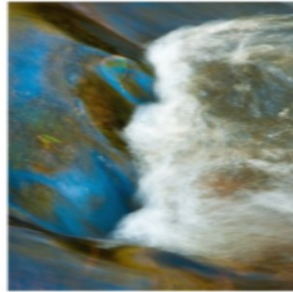


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Nigel Norris LRPS



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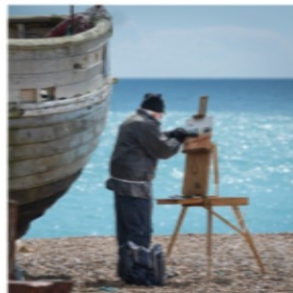
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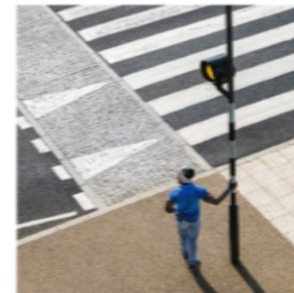
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