



25th April and 26th April 2013

Two days of Fine Art Nude Photography with Graham Whistler FRPS and Simon Walden

Film Photo Studios, Enterprise Way, Cheltenham, GL51 8LZ

**£75 per day or £140 for both days for DIG members,
£85 per day or £160 for both days for non-members**

THURSDAY 25th APRIL:

You will learn how to :

- Use studio lighting
- Pose a model for best effect
- Light and shoot a high-key nude
- Light and shoot a low-key nude
- Light and shoot a mid-key nude

FRIDAY 26th APRIL:

You will learn how to

- Use studio light
- Pose a model for best effect
- Light and shoot a dancer
- Light and shoot creative nudes
- Light and shoot abstract nudes

With only 16 attendees in 2 groups of 8 you will have lots of shooting time.

You will be working with two leading trainers, four professional nude models and one of the largest studios in the South-West.

These are interactive working days - you do all the photography.

You will go home with some stunning work and lots of new skills.

All model images are released for competition and portfolio use.

**For more information please contact Graham Whistler FRPS
Tel: 01329 847 944, email: graham@gwpmultimedia.com**

Digital Imaging Group 2013 Special Presentation Tour

Richard Curtis

**Digital Imaging Specialist at Adobe
UK**

**During 2013, Richard will be giving a
series of talks for the DI Group in
various locations in the UK**

The first two talks are:

24th March 2013 at Clyst St Mary, near Exeter
EX5 1BG

14th April 2013 Wokingham, Berkshire RG41
3DA

For more information, see the EVENTS
listing on Page 4

17th March 2013

Clive Rathband FRPS and Joan Ryder Rathband FRPS 'A Few of Our Favourite Things'

Woosehill Community Hall,
Emmview Close, Wokingham,
Berkshire RG41 3DA

For more information see the EVENTS
listing on Page 4 or contact:

Roger Norton

Email: info@rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk

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DIGIT

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FRONT COVER IMAGE

Lines and Circles By Elizabeth Restall ARPS

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EVENTS



Details of all DIG events are available on the group's website at: www.rps.org/group/Digital-Imaging/events

17th March 2013

Clive Rathband FRPS and Joan Ryder Rathband FRPS "A Few of Our Favourite Things"

Woosehill Community Hall, Emmview Close, Wokingham, Berkshire RG41 3DA

Time: 10:00AM - 3:30PM

Cost: £10.00, Members' Rate: £6.00

Contact: Roger Norton

Email: info@rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk

Phone: 01628 622279

The talk is very instructive, including lots of hints and tips and, if time permits, some simple Photoshop adjustments Clive and Joan use. They will show a selection of their favourite images, which they describe as "some successful and others not", but describe why they like them and how they came to be made. They will also bring along some of the equipment and gadgets (often inexpensive or homemade), that they use in their photography.

They have a great deal of experience in Wildlife Photography, primarily in Africa and will be able to give guidance and advice. Both Joan and Clive have been producing Audio-Visual sequences for over 30 years and hope to end the day with a sample of their latest digital A-Vs.

24th March 2013

Richard Curtis – Digital Imaging Group 2013 Special Presentation Tour

Clyst St Mary Village Hall, Clyst St Mary, near Exeter EX5 1BG

Time: 10:00AM - 4:00PM

Cost: £5.00, Members' Rate: £3.00

Contact: Janet Haines ARPS

Email: janet.haines@btinternet.com

Phone: 01308 428219

For this special event we are moving from our normal venue to Clyst St Mary as we want to invite as many of our photography friends as possible to enjoy hearing Richard give a presentation on Elements, CS and Lightroom. There will be the three sessions throughout the day PLUS we shall have a couple of trade stands and a members print display for everyone to enjoy.

Adobe will be offering us a special price voucher, so if you are thinking of buying new software then hold off and take advantage of a discounted price.

Teas/coffees only available. No lunchtime catering for this meeting.

For more information on Richard Curtis please see 14th April event.

14th April 2013

Richard Curtis - Photoshop/Lightroom Master Class

Woosehill Community Hall, Emmview Close, Wokingham, Berkshire RG41 3DA

Time: 10:00AM - 3:30PM

Cost: £10.00, Members' Rate: £6.00

Contact: Roger Norton

Email: info@rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk

Phone: 01628 622279

This Photoshop/Lightroom Master Class is designed for both beginners and intermediate users. Richard will be looking at both Photoshop and Lightroom and how we can use both Adobe packages to improve our images before printing or publishing.

This Master Class will also help distinguish between where both solutions overlap and when to use which and why. Within Lightroom, we shall look at how to manage a large catalogue and optimise your time spent in the library module. We shall also look at when to use the new development 2012 profile as well as the Develop module and the Raw conversion engine as opposed to Photoshop, including the enhanced highlights, shadows and clarity, as well as the more powerful adjustment brush and gradient filter. About Richard Curtis: Richard is head of Business Development for Digital Imaging at Adobe in the UK. He is a keen technologist and a photographer for over 20 years, with a focus on travel and portrait photography. Richard is striving to combine digital techniques with traditional wet photography. He practices printing digital images through the Platinum and Palladium printing process, which was developed in the 19th century. See his web site.

14th April 2013

A Creative Experience with Jeff Morgan Foxton Village Hall, Cambridge, CB226RN

Time: 10:00AM - 4:00PM

Cost: £10.00, Members' Rate: £5.00

Contact: John Margetts LRPS

Email: events@rpseasterndigital.org.uk

Phone: 01223 700 147

Jeff is a keen observer of the world around him. His photography reflects his fascination with dynamic light and his love of the natural world. Observing and capturing edges--light to dark, day to night, land to sky and water, and urban to rural--is a key element in his work.

As a photographer with over 30 years of experience, Jeff's knowledge base

encompasses film and digital technology. He was an early adopter of digital photography tools, and he first started using Photoshop Version 2 in the early 1990s, so he has a lot of photographic expertise to share. His commitment to the craft pushes him to remain on the cutting edge utilising a wide range of tools and techniques to keep his skills and creative eye sharp.

Jeff started his photography company, Elm Studio, in 2002 and initially focused on architectural and location photography. He employs a range of creative technologies, such as high dynamic range imaging, light painting, infrared and panoramas, to produce compelling work. His images and articles have been published extensively in PhotoPlus Magazine and have also appeared in Practical Photoshop, Digital Camera, TechRadar and other publications in Europe, USA and China.

Sharing his knowledge and encouraging others to strengthen their photographic skills are some of Jeff's enduring passions. His ability to explain clearly complex technical concepts is appreciated by students, and he has helped many photographers enhance their skills through his workshops, seminars and tutorials.

For more information on Elm Studio please see their website at: www.elmstudio.com

25th and 26th April 2013

Fine Art Nudes Workshops Film Photo Studios, Enterprise Way, Cheltenham, GL51 8LZ

Two days of fine art nude photography with Graham Whistler FRPS and Simon Walden. For more information please see the Advert on page 2 of this issue of DIGIT or contact Graham Whistler FRPS, Telephone: 01329 847 944, email graham@gpmultimedia.com

19th May 2013

DI Group Thames Valley: Ken Scott & Thames Valley Centre PDI Competition Woosehill Community Hall, Emmview Close, Wokingham, Berkshire RG41

Time: 10:00AM - 3:30PM

Cost: £10.00, Members' Rate: £6.00

Contact: Roger Norton

Email: info@rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk

Phone: 01628 622279

Morning: Ken Scott will do an interactive print critique and a judging advice session. Afternoon: Annual Projected Digital Image Competition. Judge: Ken Scott



IN MY VIEW

SHOULD WE ALLOW LARGER PRINT SIZES INTO THE DWINDLING NUMBER OF PRINT EXHIBITIONS?

Let's recap and recall how in recent years, in club photography, the detailed information in a printed or projected image, has reduced.

Back in the 70s beautiful monochrome prints with an image size of 20x16 inches were being produced requiring compositional and technical skill in the taking on a medium format camera and considerable craft skill in the printing of the image.

Prints produced on what was becoming the more popular size of 35mm cameras could not match the resolution of medium format and images were printed smaller and matted to make the size up to 20x16 inches (50x40cm). With colour printing image sizes in general became smaller still; Cibachrome standard sizes were 8x10 inches or 10x12 inches. With the advent of inkjet printing, prints were from scanned 35mm transparencies and the size of A4 became popular. The first digital cameras were 4-6M pixels; there was no point in printing larger than A4 and the results were blocky even then. The solution to this lack of resolution was to print soft or even to blur the image. This began the phase of what I can only call painting with pixels. Some of these images look very arty and stunning from a distance but can fall apart if examined closely. Close inspection did not arise, because in print competitions the images are viewed from several feet away.

The painting with pixels style of image was also ideal for projected images where digital projectors were replacing slide projectors. Slide projectors may not be as bright but they do project a colour balanced continuous toned image in a reasonable size colour space. The digital

projectors that were replacing them were of 1Mpx resolution, had a restricted colour space, low contrast and a very unreliable colour balance. Even today digital projectors are only 1.5Mpx, only the very expensive have colour spaces larger than sRGB and no two projectors are set up with the same brightness, contrast and colour balance. Resolution is not an issue as the image is viewed from many feet away where any greater detail cannot be resolved by the eye. The fact is that for the rapidly growing popularity of projected image exhibitions a camera with a few Mpx resolution has more than sufficient resolution.

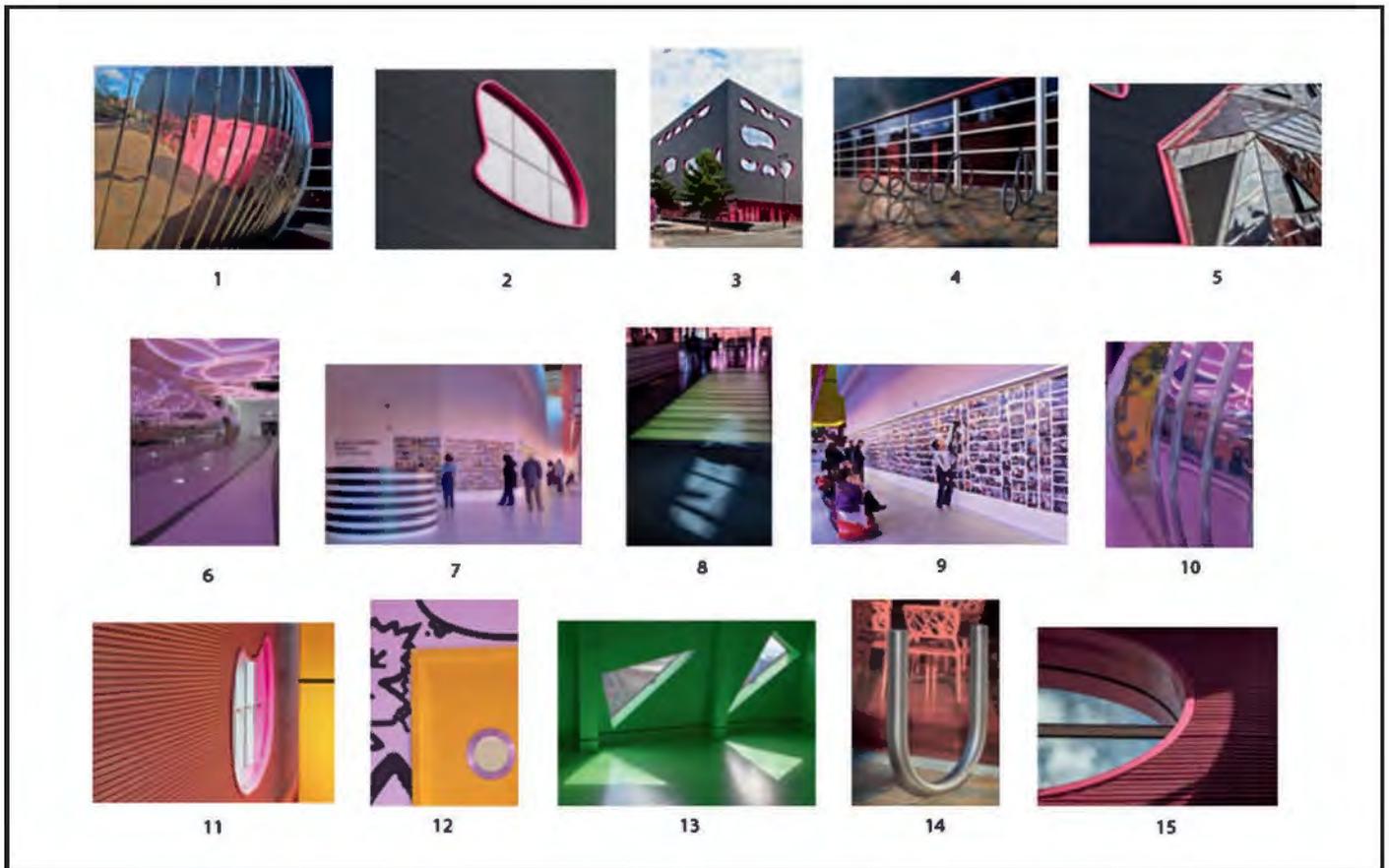
There are many genres of image-making with a camera as a starting point that can be called visual art. Small prints can work well and low resolution images suit some genres. However, I find it a great shame that the growth of the projected image inevitably is excluding one specific genre, that of the high resolution image that apart from de-mosaicing and tonal adjustment is produced within the camera. Even some print exhibitions are making selection based on viewing the projected image.

Digital cameras have now grown up, full frame 35mm cameras are readily available capable of high resolution images of 24–36 Mpx. A number of these have no anti-alias filter to blur the recorded image deliberately. To get the best resolution out of these cameras is not easy; ideally it means using a heavy tripod, mirror lockup with exposure delay and the very best lens, optimally a prime lens. It means composing the image in the camera to minimise cropping. However, to realise the benefit of this resolution it is no good printing

A4; a 36Mpx camera can print a 20x16 inch image at nearly 360ppi. The beauty of a print this size is that it looks good from a distance but the closer one gets the more is revealed; it draws the viewer into the image. Unfortunately, borderless inkjet prints are damaged very easily and need a mat for protection, which also sets off the print. For this genre, to re-create the beauty and detail of the original scene, no in-camera pixel smearing or in computer smudging and minimal cloning are used. Note that precise merging of images to achieve wider dynamic range or greater focus depth does not lower the resolution. To be judged as visual art the personal input of considerable contrast and colour adjustment may be required, but the majority of this can be done at the time of development of the RAW image ensuring minimal damage to the pixels.

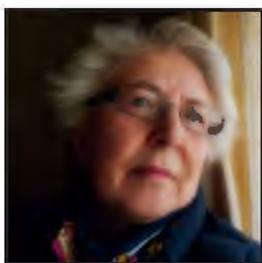
The RPS International Print Exhibition, which is a show case equally for professional and amateur photographers, has a maximum image size of 20x16 inches and a frame size of 24x20 inches; acceptances are very limited which means the prints can be nicely presented. It would be good if the RPS Special Interest Groups followed this standard for their own exhibitions. Prints could be submitted un-mounted and made to the standard size to fit a standard mat. Hopefully camera clubs would then follow and we would not see the end, in club exhibitions, of one of the oldest genres of photography.

Bob Pearson FRPS



The Hanging Plan

IT ALL STARTED AT 'THINK PHOTOGRAPHY'



Elizabeth Restall was intrigued by the photographic opportunities offered by 'The Public', a community arts centre in West Bromwich, which she visited to help on the DI Group's stand at Think Photography. After taking a number of photographs, she realised that this might just provide the elusive theme for a prospective Associateship panel. Her journey had begun.

In 2010, the RPS organised the second weekend event of its type at a multi-purpose venue and community arts centre named "The Public", in Sandwell, West Bromwich, and I went along on both days to help man the DI Group's stand.

Saturday morning started inauspiciously, with my fellow Committee members, Alex and John, chatting so much on the motorway that Alex forgot to exit at the junction required to collect me. Rather than have them drive back, I followed to the next junction, found somewhere safe to park the car, and then joined them for the rest of the journey.

Loaded with prints from the exhibition to

display and spare copies of DIGIT to hand out, we entered the building through enormous pink doors which then slid closed behind our backs, leaving us in semi-darkness until our eyes adjusted to the dim light. Everything looked mauve or pink. On the ceiling above were meandering coils of neon tubes emitting soft light, hence the dimness. On the way to the lift, a reflective protuberance mirrored the lighting and twinkled as we passed, and that was just the toilet block (Figure 1).

I knew beforehand that the building might offer some good photographic opportunities and already I was rueing the fact that I had with me only a Canon G11

and not my DSLR camera. Nonetheless, during my lunch break I roamed around, inside and out, photographing a variety of colourful, unusual design features in the hope of finding some images suitable for camera club competitions. Particularly pleasing was a photograph of a group of decorative circles at the rear of the building, complete with back lighting and strong shadows (Figure 2). On display at the same time as the RPS event was an exhibition of hundreds of small prints taken by Martin Parr, FRPS, of people and local events in the Black Country, which was an added interest to visitors, as they were invited to select their favourite images (Figure 3 and



Figure 1



Figure 2

Figure 4).

The following day, for a reason which now is unfathomable, I took the compact camera again. I suppose it can only be that, at this stage, the thought of producing a panel of prints had not occurred to me. Again, during breaks from the stand, I took a lot of photographs and found myself becoming more and more intrigued with the graphic shapes I was finding throughout the building. Over the next few weeks, my thoughts kept returning to The Public and I realised that its modern design and quirky features had made a strong impression upon me, so much so that I began processing the images in earnest, with dawning recognition that perhaps, just perhaps, they might provide that elusive theme for a prospective 'A' Panel. The body of work which was accumulating looked promising, but, clearly, was not sufficient. If I were to take this really seriously, I needed to shoot more



Figure 3

Statement of Intent:

These images of The Public, a community arts centre for all ages in Sandwell, West Bromwich, represent my interpretation and impressions of dynamic shapes, curves, lines, and strong, vibrant colours, which illustrate the design and exuberantly colourful interior of a unique modern building conceived specifically to stimulate, inspire and encourage an interest in the arts.



Figure 4



Figure 5

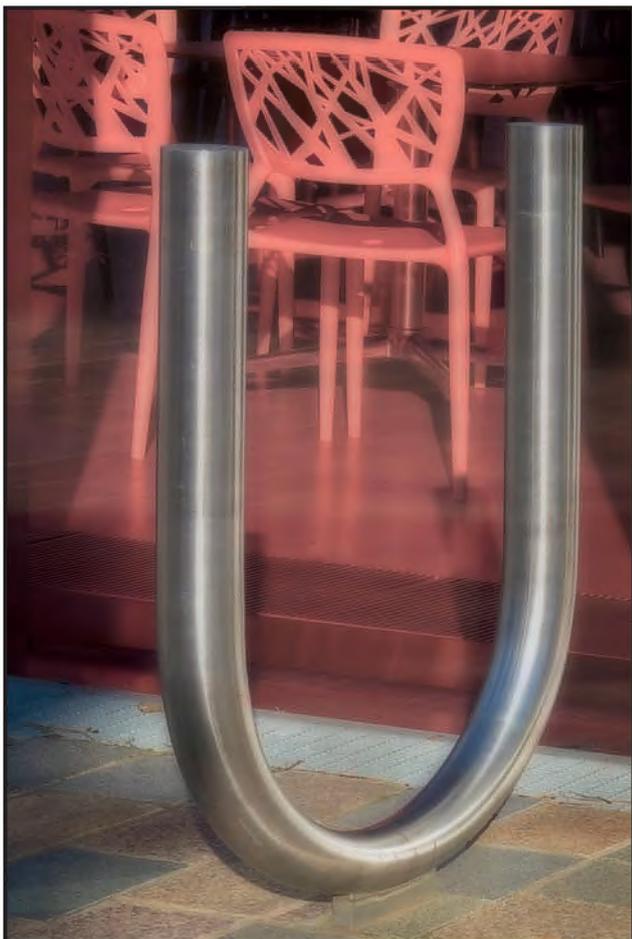


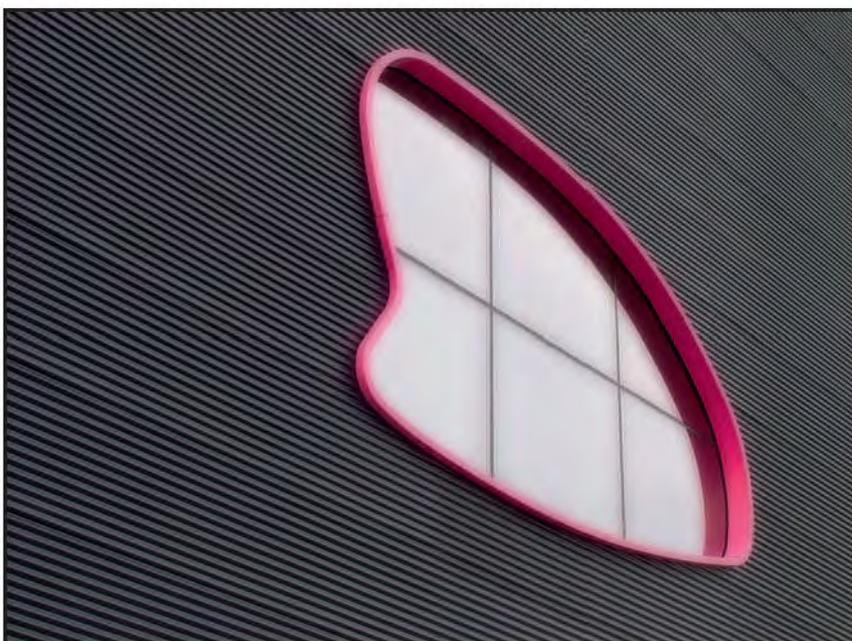
Figure 6

photographs. So, almost a year from the date of my first visit, I returned to The Public one Sunday, armed this time with my DSLR camera and clearer ideas about what I wanted to photograph.

I obtained permission to photograph without any problem and chatted for a while with the gentleman receptionist. Later, I sought his help. I had discovered from images on the internet that there was a “green” area which had eluded me previously and I wanted to find it. However, to my disappointment, this area was on a floor not open to the general public. When I approached him about this he said he could take me there for five minutes. And five minutes it was, no more, no less, but, thankfully, there was just enough time to take one photograph, of triangular shaped windows, which fitted well into the panel alongside other graphic images and window shapes (Figure 5). Outside, I discovered more reflective protuberances at the rear of the building, and had fun playing around with those. The pink theme continued there as well.

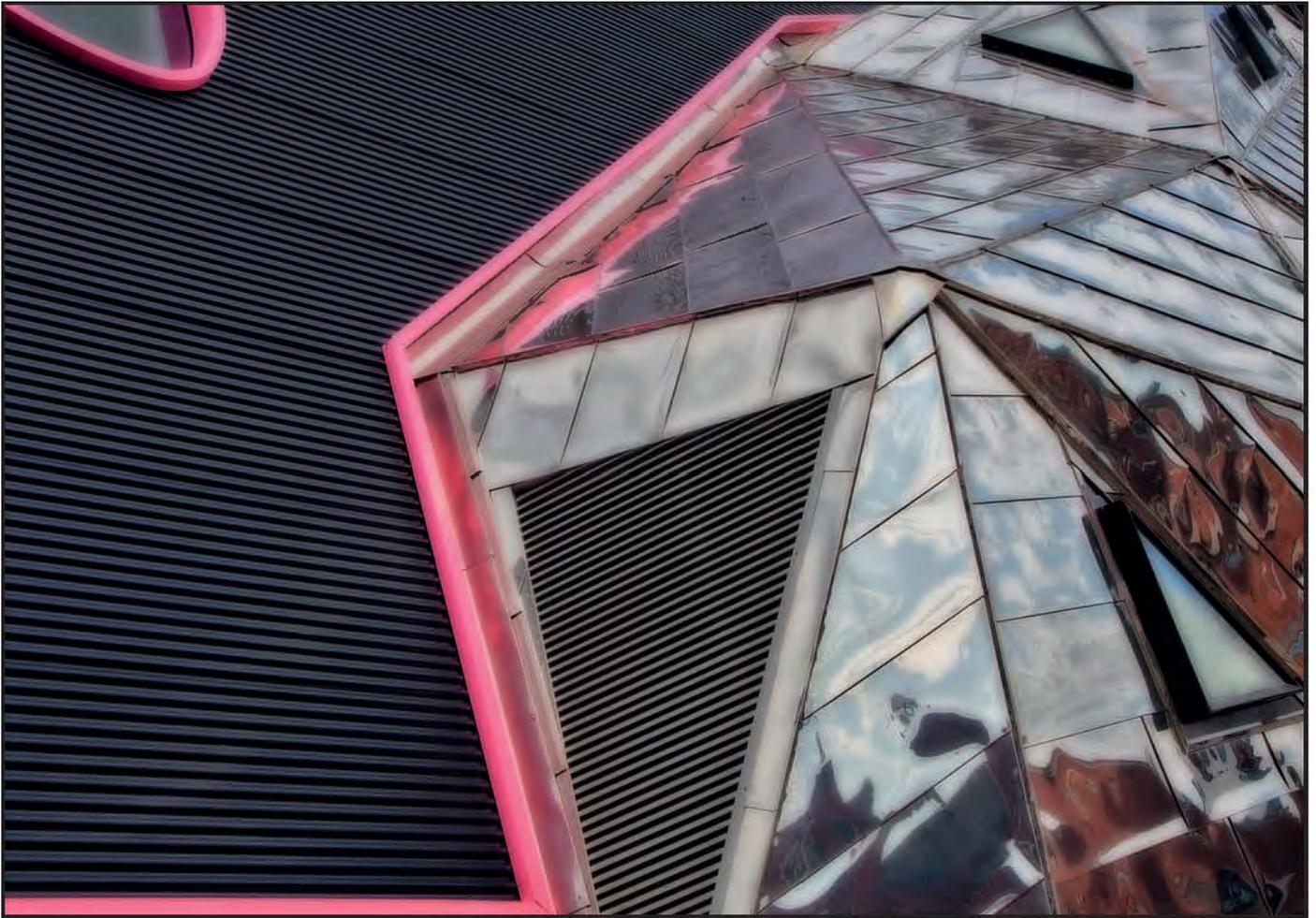
The day’s photography was fruitful and I added new images to the collection. Even so, the eventual panel contained seven photographs taken with the Gill.

I settled on fifteen images and laid them out on the bed in the spare room, looking at them each day for weeks and weeks, until I was so tired of them that I had to put them away. Months later I decided to ask a friend from my camera club, whose photography and judgment I respected, to have a look and tell me if she thought the images were good enough to submit. Without hesitation, she said yes. Nevertheless, one or two photographs were moved around, one was selected



from the pile of spares as a definite inclusion (Figure 6), and it was suggested that a stronger image be found for the centre of the middle row. Fortunately, I was able to produce a more appropriate “middle” image not considered previously, and, without further ado, the application form was filled in and posted.

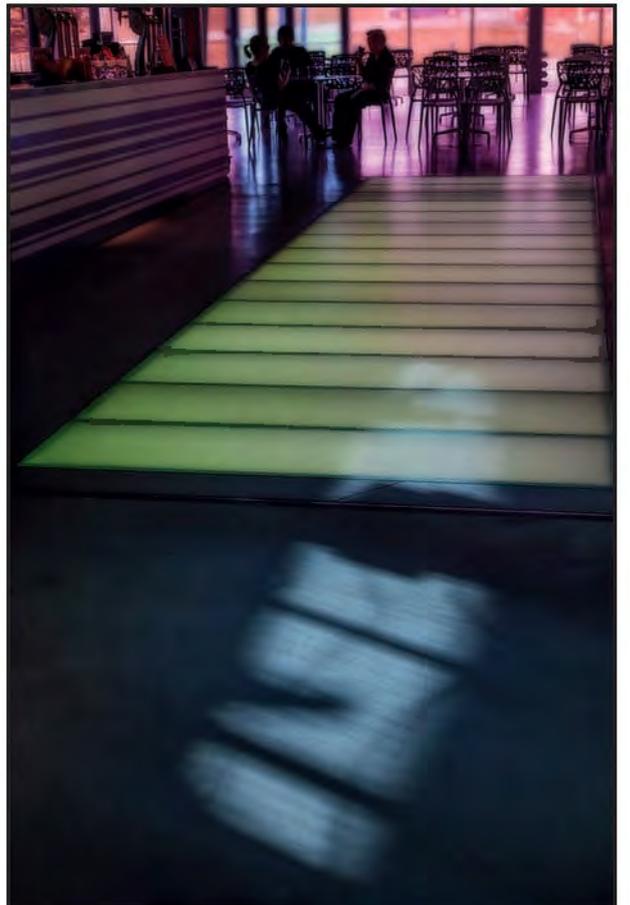
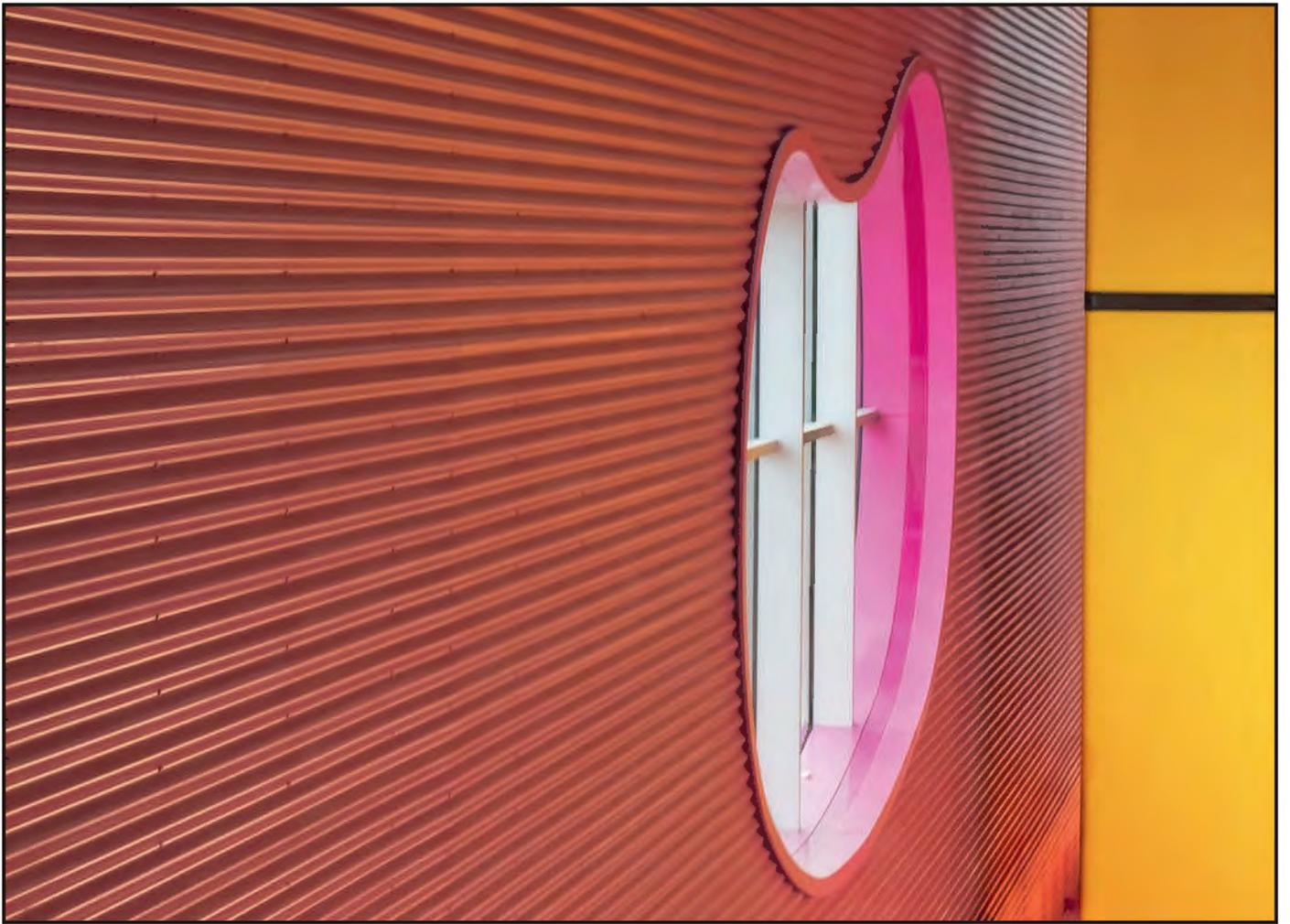
One piece of crucial advice from my friend, for which I was immensely grateful, concerned the mounting of the prints. Thank goodness she mentioned it, because, left to my own devices, each print would



have been mounted as an individual image; it would not have occurred to me that the bottom side of each mount for every print had to be of the same depth so that they looked uniform when displayed.

Not all of my prints were of equal size and it took some working out, but I managed it. And the actual cutting, five each in three sessions, went without a hitch. The Public is a building which needs to be visited: to photograph or to enjoy its varied artistic attractions and events. It is about 2 miles from Junction 1 of the M5 and has huge car parks across the road from its entrance. Parking is free on Sundays. When I volunteered to help at "Think Photography" two years ago, little did I know that this building would trigger in me such a fascination for its modern design; inspiring me to photograph its unique graphic shapes and vibrant colours and, ultimately, setting me on the path to an Associateship.







Avebury Trees Wiltshire – January 2012 (24mm Lens 1/20 f16 100 ISO Tripod)

TEN TRUTHS OF PHOTOGRAPHY – THE TRUTH REVEALED



Andy Beel thinks that there is a lot of hype surrounding photography particularly now that we are in the digital age. In his article, he presents his Ten Truths of Photography and comments on each one. It is illustrated with digital Lith images which he has created.

Have you noticed how every photography “how to” book title must include the word digital? For those of you who want to understand photography as opposed to the digital button pushing I suggest you read John Blakemore’s book “Black and White Photography Workshop”. This book is based on black and white darkroom techniques but is still very relevant to all photographers of whatever persuasion. Henri Cartier-Bresson wrote in 1952 that

technology had changed but for him photography had remained the same. Photography would therefore appear to be more than just digital pictures on a wide screen monitor.

This is my take on the ten truths of photography and the surrounding hype posted on my blog in 2011. Have a read through and see if you agree with me.

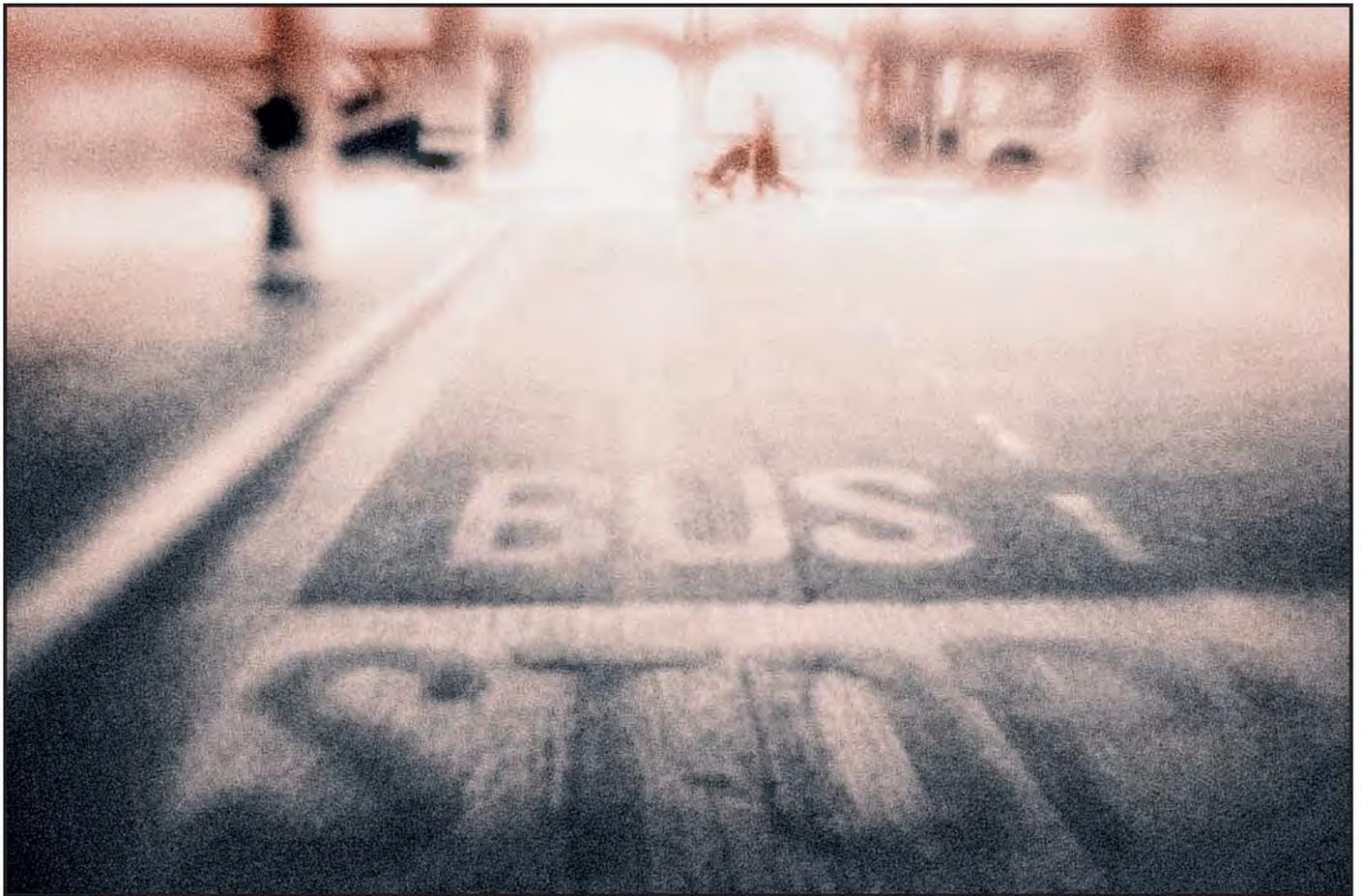
1 More pixels and expensive technology equals the best image

This is marketing spin to entice us to

give money to equipment manufacturers. The latest, most expensive, equipment will not help in the hands and mind of someone with no or limited ability to observe, decide what is significant and express that significance in a satisfying visual design. As the old saying goes “it’s not what you’ve got but how you use” that’s important.

2 Sharp clear pictures tell the whole truth

There is a quote from Richard Avedon



Blackpool Bus Station (50mm Lensbaby 1/180 f2.0 100 ISO handheld)

that says “a photograph is accurate but it’s not always truthful”, which is a good way to sum up how I feel. See www.richardavedon.com if you have not heard of or seen his work. His style in the project and book called “In the West” was a very factual portfolio of portraits against a white background.

3 Photoshop has an automatic “fantastic photo” tool hidden in the Filters menu.

This was a 100% spoof; hopefully you haven’t been looking for it.

4 Photoshop automatically fixes poor seeing and lack of attention to detail at the taking stage

Fortunately, post production gives us the opportunity to re-interpret our work, but it’s not automatically carried out by software. When processing files, the same critical judgment is required as when behind the camera.

5 Computers know everything

Computers are completely stupid. I think it was the French philosopher and writer Voltaire who said that a man who knows all the answers is a fool. The important and clever part is knowing the right question. Computers know all the answers, but they don’t know the questions.

6 Cameras know your innermost thoughts

I thought that now some cameras have “intelligent auto” this is a true fact. (Beware of the double bluff).

7 Instant impact in a picture is vital

Instant impact in a picture is vital in a news picture to tell a story with truth and accuracy to sell newspapers. For me, the pictures that are interesting and will stay with me are those that I have to engage with and think about and which don’t necessarily have instant impact.



Stanley in Accrington – September 2011 (50mm Lensbaby 1/2000 f2.0 100 ISO)



Going East – Bournemouth 2009 (200mm 1/250 f2.8 50 ISO (Deliberate de-focusing)

8 The use of the “Rule of Thirds” in composition is imperative to your development as a photographer

Freeman Patterson writes that the rule of thirds should only be used if all other compositional arrangements do not provide a satisfactory rendering of the subject. See www.freemanpatterson.com for his wonderful books and workshops. The photographs you produce are about you just as much as the subject. To quote Ansel Adams “there are two people in every portrait” the sitter and the photographer. See www.anseladams.com for his black and white landscapes. Sorry, it’s mandatory that every article in any publication must have a quote from Ansel Adams.

9 Entering photo competitions will make you a better photographer



Shopping Expedition Torquay - July 2009 (50mm f185 1/250 ISO25600 Pinhole Lens)

Entering photo competitions will teach you to produce a style of photography that wins or attempts to win local, national or international prizes. This type of endeavour will not teach you to become a distinct photographer reaching your own highest individual photographic potential.

It depends who your photography is for, the part of you that wants the oxygen of praise from your peers, or the part of you that seeks the best and highest potential that you can achieve.

Those who follow the crowd, have to act like the crowd.

10 Digital photography is cheap, quick and easy

The photographic digital revolution has democratised photography for the masses. The masses have vastly benefited from cheap compact cameras and A4 printers that are cheaper to buy than a new set of inks to put in them. The ability to be able, very quickly, to produce an A4 print from a file taken on a digital compact camera is great. The colour balance, brightness and contrast might not be everything you’d hoped for but it’s a lot cheaper, quicker and easier than was going to the local chemist or photo retailer.

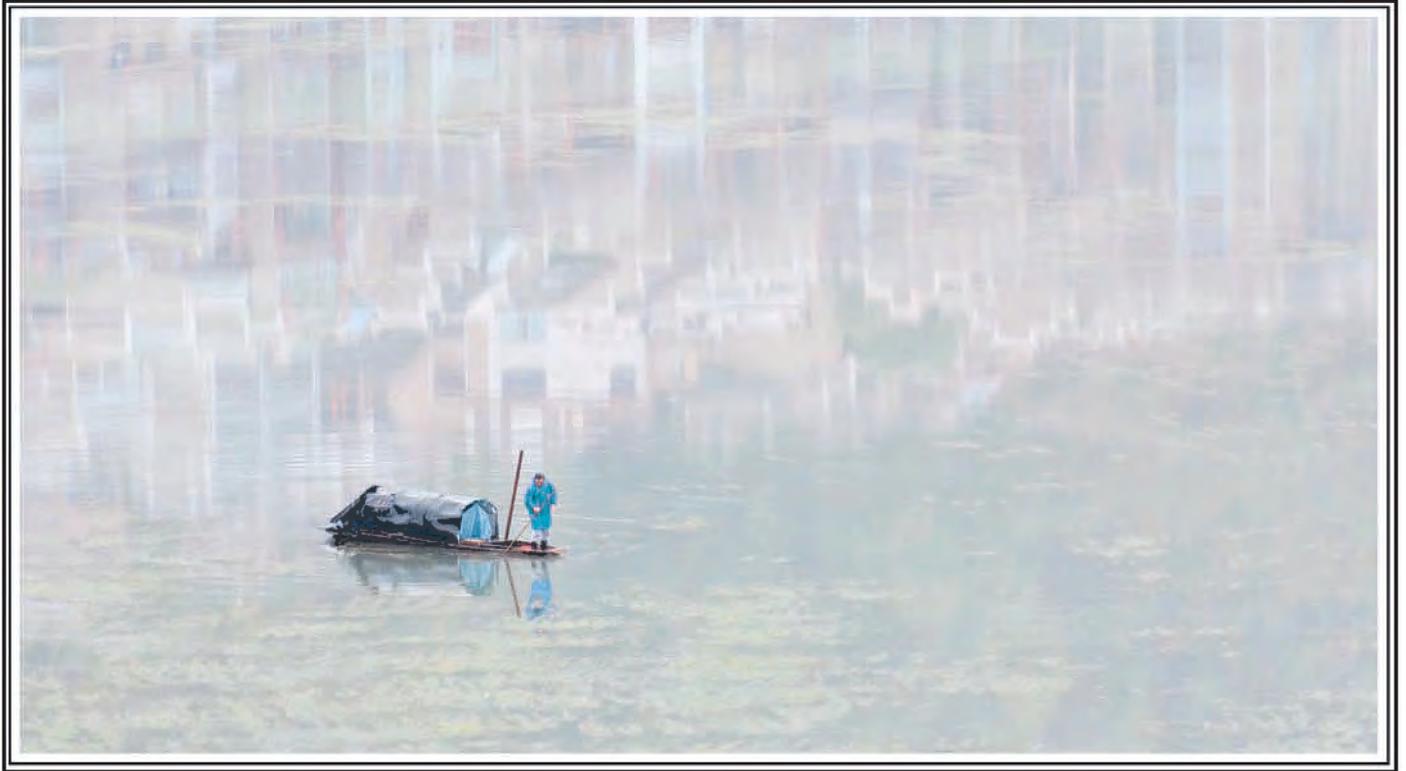
If you are looking to make a large accurate print from a digital SLR with a huge file size then costs spiral for cameras, lenses, computers, software, printers, paper, ink and mounting.

For those of us who pour our heart and soul into photography to do whatever we do, then we still need the same amount of dedication, skill, knowledge and judgment as our predecessors had in the colour or black and white darkroom. This means that for us, unlike the masses, digital photography at the highest level will not always be cheap, quick or easy. For us the photography is about the art and craft of making a picture that satisfies the maker and communicates to the viewer.

All the pictures in this article are examples of digital Lith Prints. The Lith Process is a black and white darkroom technique that offers the photographer a great deal of latitude in the appearance of the print. The basic premise is that the highlights are a warm tone of smooth contrast with no grain, and the shadows are a contrasty cool tone with grain. See my Blog at <http://andybeelfrps.wordpress.com> for more of my photography.

THE DIGIT CHALLENGE

This time we have four images from DIG members who explain how they created them. I hope you'll find these interesting and helpful techniques to use in your own photography. If you do, why not join in and send some of yours to me at: davidfcookearps@gmail.com.



Fisherman Guiyang

Fisherman, Guiyang by David Eaves ARPS: The original image was taken during a journey through China in 2011 organised by Wendy Wu Tours. It was not a specifically photographic trip but we did visit many areas of photographic interest albeit many sites were over-run by tourists and the weather tended to be dull and rainy – not unlike the UK! In the town of Guiyang we were lucky to have a hotel room with balcony overlooking the river. On the morning before we left I noticed the fisherman with reflections of the buildings adjacent. The light was reasonable if dull and the river was still so I took several shots (Nikon D300, Nikon 70-300 lens at 210 mm, 1/80 @ f5.6). The original raw image was opened in Photoshop CS5 Camera Raw and minor adjustments made to produce the basic starting point as shown. The image was lacking in contrast and the reflections I thought were rather dull. I wanted the fisherman to stand out against a light pastel

background and the process to achieve this was: - Duplicate the image on a second layer (Control /Command J). Call this layer Reflections and the lower layer Fisherman. Ensure Reflections layer is selected and apply a levels adjustment layer. Forgetting about the fisherman, adjust the background reflections so as to achieve a light pastel effect. In other images it might have been necessary to use a hue/saturation adjustment but in this case the colours were suitably subtle without colour modification. Pin the adjustment layer to the Reflections layer (press Alt/Opt key, hover over the junction of layers and then left click). Select the Reflections layer and apply a layer mask (click on symbol at bottom of layer palette). Ensure layer mask is selected and paint on the layer mask with black to reveal the fisherman below. Select the lower Fisherman layer and apply a levels adjustment layer.

Adjust levels to give a full tonal range so the fisherman stands out against the background. This technique allows independent control of the tones in the two layers and can be used in any image where such control is required. I made a slight hue adjustment to the fisherman so his colour matched the background more closely (select the fisherman and use hue/saturation). When the image looked OK, I cropped out the top 1/3 so as to make the reflections more ambiguous and completed the image for printing by putting a thin black line around as a border (expand the canvas first with white and then with black - most of my prints are finished in this way and I have made an action to save time).



The Original Image



Sharon No 94

Sharon No.94 by Roy Davies LRPS:

This picture was taken at a workshop run by Graham Whistler and Simon Walden at Cheltenham Film Studios in

2011. First, let me thank both Graham and Simon for their expert instruction over the two days but special thanks must go to Sharon who is a talented

professional.

The model was lit by a large soft-box placed just slightly above horizontal, which produced the strong highlights.

The original raw file (Figure 1) showed a little promise in that the skin was fairly well exposed but the shot in general was far too saturated. I think this was a combination of the light being a little on the warm side, perhaps some reflection from the orange material and the model's own natural colour. I decided at this point to concentrate solely on the model's face and arm; I wanted to produce a smooth ceramic effect.

So, into the Raw converter. The face was a little over exposed so I used recovery at 21 and adjusted the brightness and contrast. Clarity and vibrance were also reduced (Figure 2), as were orange and yellow in the HSL panel. Again, at this stage I was concentrating purely on the flesh tones trying to get a desaturated glow.

Opened in Photoshop the image looks washed out but let's concentrate on the flesh tones. Working on a copy of the background layer the healing brush was used to remove any blemishes or stray hairs etc. To soften the flesh tones a little more, I used the blur filter to remove the very fine detail in the skin. I copied the Background copy layer, and re-named it Blur. I used the Gaussian Blur filter set to two pixels, just enough to remove the harshness of the pores in the skin. This had now blurred the whole image, so I created a layer mask and filled it with black (CTRL+I/Command+Delete). Using a very soft brush with an opacity of 15%. I painted white into the layer mask revealing the blurred image beneath, but only the plain areas of flesh, leaving the eyes, tip of the nose and mouth. I was happy with what I had so I merged the Blur layer with the Background copy layer and renamed it Skin.

The skin tones now had a desaturated glow which I was about to destroy, temporarily. I needed now to bring up the colour of the hair. I opened a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer and, concentrating on just the

hair colour, pushed the saturation up and adjusted the other sliders to produce the preferred hair tone. Then, as with the skin adjustments, I filled the layer mask with black and painted white into the mask to reveal the enhanced hair colour beneath.

Well, all done? Not quite, the grey eyes needed a lift. This is a really simple technique for anyone who doesn't know it. Open a new empty layer, in this case above the Skin layer, and change the blend mode to Colour. Now paint with a fairly hard brush at 100% any colour you choose over the pupil in the eye, don't worry about the catchlight, just make sure the whole pupil is covered in the chosen colour. Go to > Image - Adjustments - Hue/Saturation, click Colorize and move around the sliders until a natural (or unnatural) eye shade is produced.

The final image (Sharon No.94) was cropped and



Figure 1: The Original Raw File

sharpened for print. I use an action put together by Martin Evening, which sharpens the image using an adjustment layer. The advantage of this method is that the sharpening layer can be deleted once the print has been made.

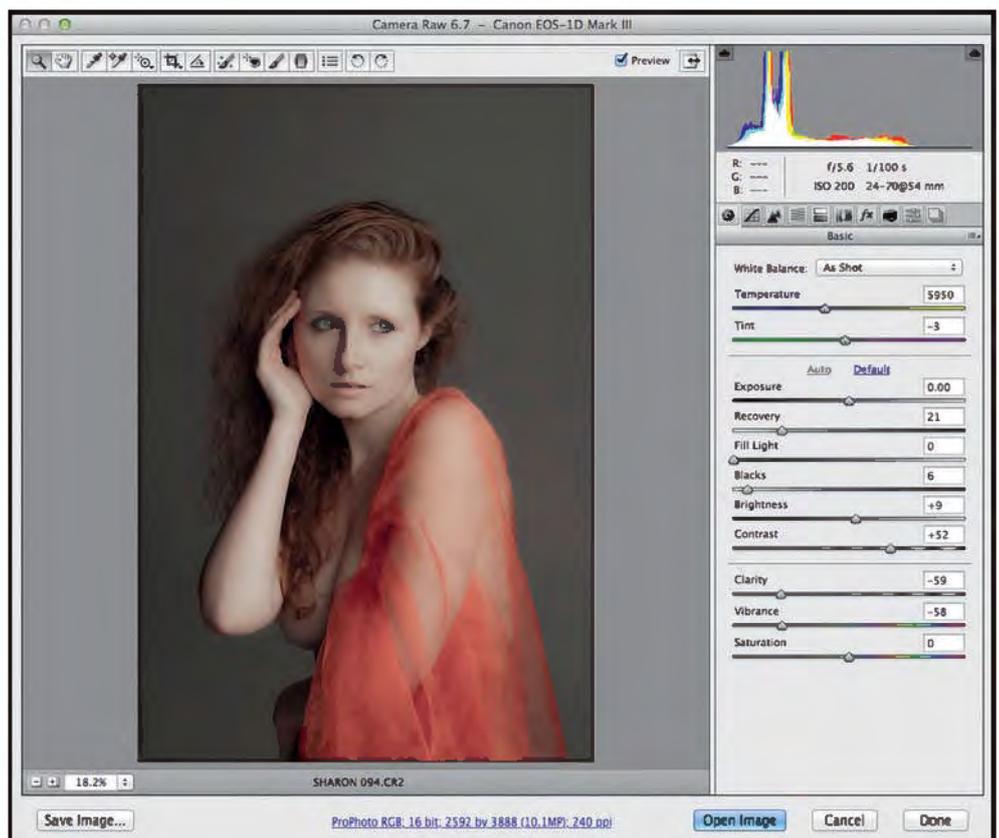


Figure 2: The Camera Raw Convertor



The Sand Travellers

The Sand Travellers by Robert Bracher ARPS: This has been a successful image for me and this is how it was developed. Having seen much of Irene Froy's and Steven Le Provost's work a couple of

years ago, I thought I should like to explore the water colour and luminescent effects so imaginatively achieved by these image makers. I believe that the original image should not have too much contrast and the one

I chose was taken with the sun very much overhead on a Queensland beach. The initial image was taken having "seen" the heat haze and the strollers walking "through it." However, the image did not live up to expectation and I did nothing with it. It stayed in my mind, though, and when I started to think of watercolour effects, I was drawn back to it.

Steven once told me that it could take him hours to produce his images. I only wish I had his patience! I tend to work quickly and not always that methodically. Yes, I can visualise what I attempt to achieve, but sometimes the tools offered in Photoshop do the job and sometimes they don't! Or is it just me?

"The Sand Travellers" was created in a very short space of time and these were the stages.

1. I cropped the original (Figure 1) because I visualised it as a letterbox format (Figure 2).
 2. The file needed to be brought "alive" with an increase to saturation, particularly in the red spectrum (Figure 3).
 3. The figures were then selected and vertical motion blur applied. Then, I inverted the selection and applied further blur, but less so (Figure 4).
 4. The image was copied on to a white layer and the opacity reduced to create luminescence (Figure 5).
 5. Small adjustments were then made to saturation, brightness and contrast to complete the job.
- In conclusion, "maximum return, for minimum effort!"



Figure 1: The Original Image



Figure 2: Initial Crop



Figure 3: Increased Saturation

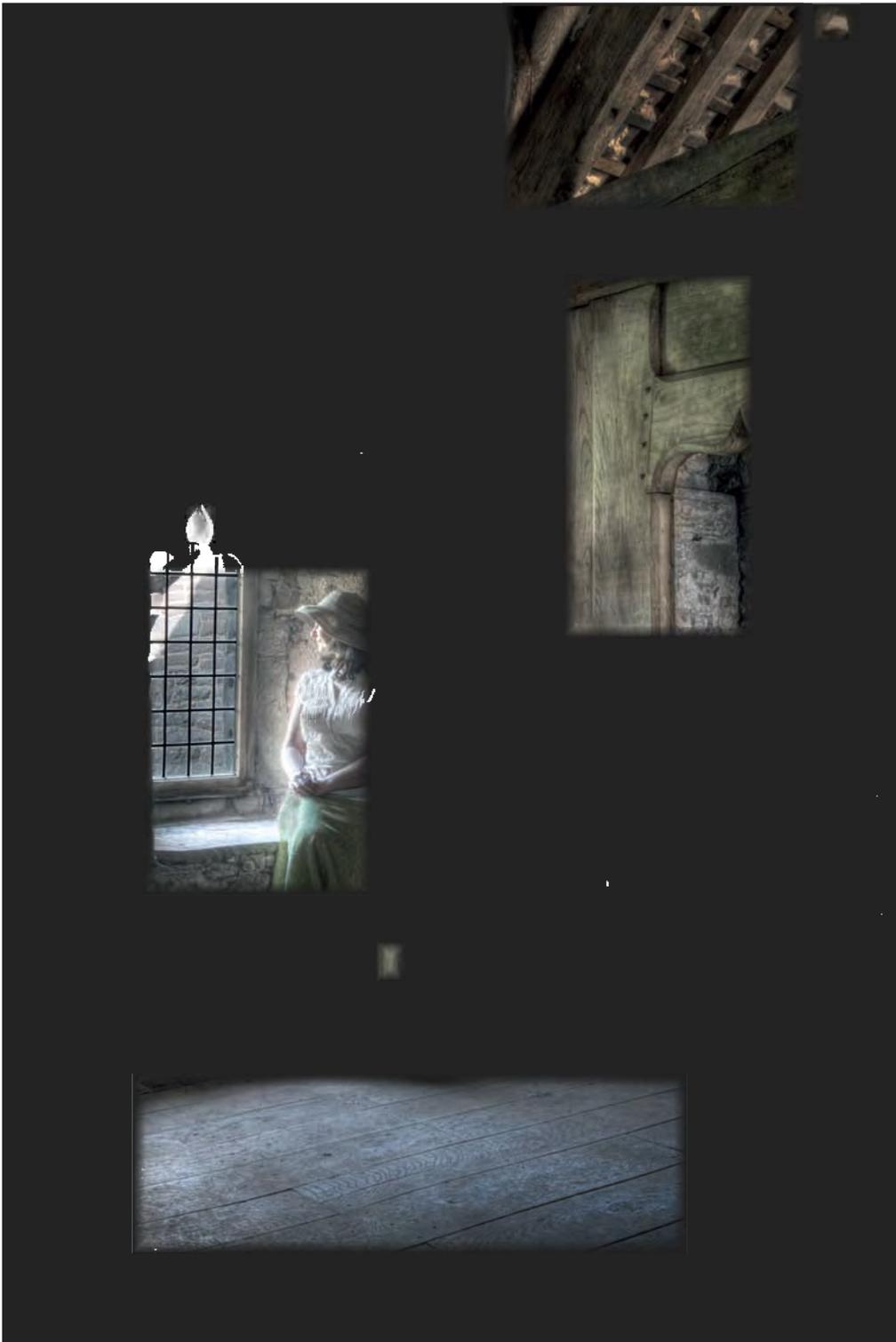


Figure 4: Application of Vertical Motion Blur



Figure 5: Adjusted Opacity on White Layer

RAY GRACE ARPS



A Quiet Corner

A Quiet Corner by Ray Grace ARPS: This photograph was taken on a camera club trip to Tretower Court in South Wales. Knowing that we would be visiting a period building, I ensured that my fiancée, Helen, was dressed in clothing that might work photographically, should an opportunity arise. It did. The window location we found seemed ideal for the image I had in mind. Because the room was so dark and the

outside lighting was bright I knew that the camera sensor would not cope with the extremes of contrast and that a high dynamic range (HDR) image would be required. Initially, I took 3 exposures: the meter reading, -2 stops and +2 stops. However, I could see from the camera screen that the window was still blown out so I took a further image of the window (same position and focal length) at -5 stops. The original

exposures are shown in Figures 1 to 4.

The first three image files were opened in Adobe Camera Raw. Using the metered image, I then made some adjustments without affecting any exposure settings. I checked for blemishes and increased the Clarity slider to bump up the mid-tone contrast. I also increased the Luminance noise reduction to match the default Color noise reduction. (HDR images can be noisy and I have found that adding noise reduction at the Adobe Camera Raw stage can be beneficial). Once my adjustments had been made, I synchronised the three images and applied the settings made on the metered image to the other two. I then clicked the Done button to return the images to Adobe Bridge.

Next, to blend the images into one HDR image, I used Photomatrix Pro. I don't remember the exact settings used within Photomatrix. Every image is different and, because each requires individual settings, I don't keep records of what adjustments I make. I do know that I used the 'Enhance Painterly' preset as a starting point then adjusted from there. The tonemapped image is shown in Figure 5. The tonemapped image was then opened in Photoshop for further editing. The first thing to be done was to replace the burnt out window. The Window image (Figure 4) was opened, a loose lasso selection was made around the window itself which was dragged and dropped into the tonemapped image. With the window moved into position I then applied a layer mask and painted away the extraneous bits around the edges of the window. I noted that, despite using an HDR technique, there were



Figure 1: Metered Exposure



Figure 2: -2 stops



Figure 3: +2 stops



Figure 4: -5 stops

some highlights on Helen which were burnt out. So, I re-opened the -2 stops raw image and reduced the highlights to match what I wanted and then I opened the file. I then made a loose selection around Helen and dragged and dropped that into the original image. As I did with the window. I positioned the selection and then applied a layer mask to paint away the extraneous bits. The result of

replacing the window and burnt out highlights is shown in Figure 6. With the window replaced and the highlights on Helen brought into line, it was time to adjust the rest of the image to add some drama and texture. The first requirement was to add some contrast as I thought the image was a bit flat. This was done with a Levels adjustment layer. This increased the saturation which then

needed reducing. This was done with a Hue & Saturation adjustment layer. That reduced the saturation in the main room satisfactorily but I wanted the stone wall on the other side of the door reduced even further. So, another H&S adjustment layer was added and the saturation was reduced to the required level. Because I only wanted that little bit of the image to be affected, I filled



Figure 5: Tonemapped Image



Figure 6

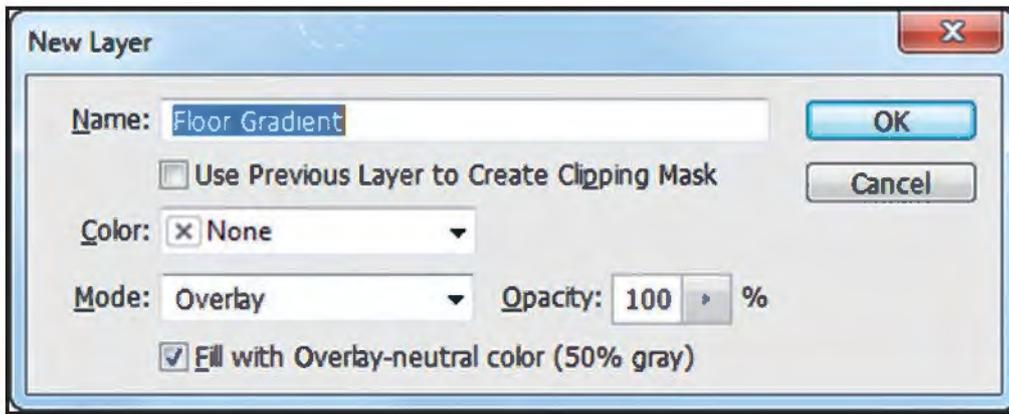


Figure 7

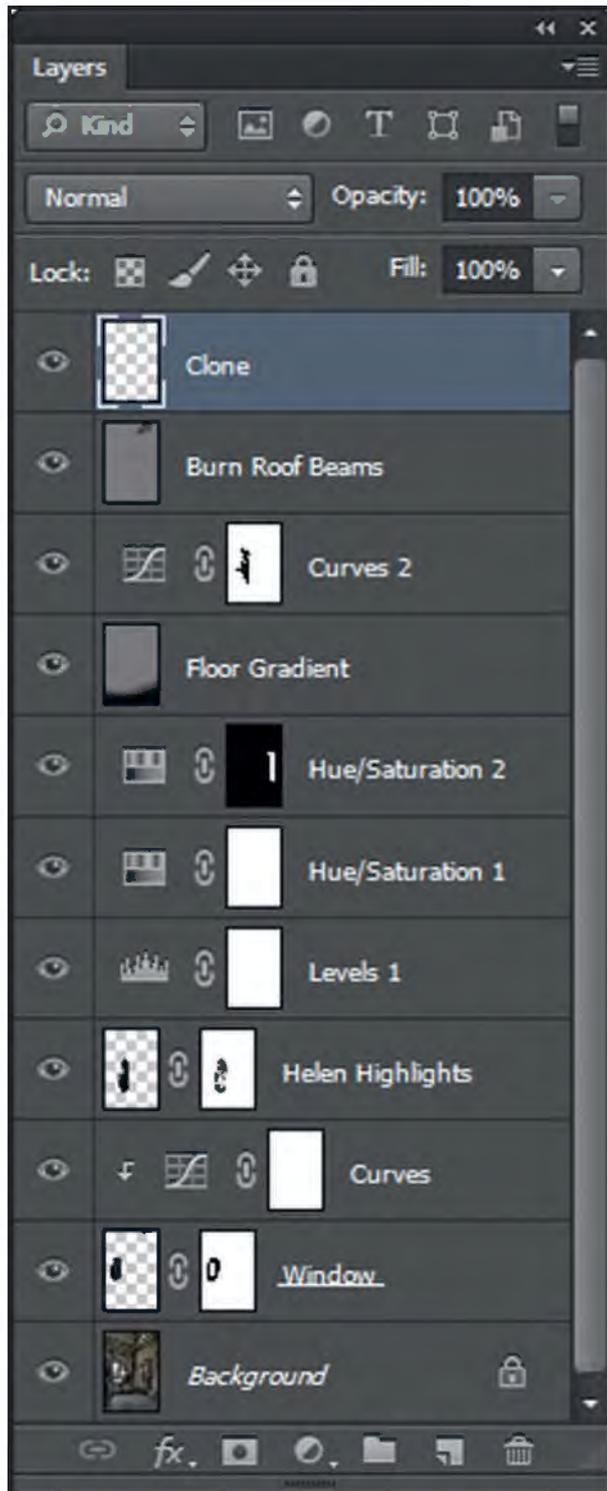


Figure 8

the adjustment layer's mask with black to hide the effect and then painted with white to reveal the wall. Next I wanted to darken the bottom of the floor to emphasise the window area. My preferred method of doing any dodging and burning is to use the 'Overlay' layer method. The method is described here for those who may not know of this gem. Create a new layer by using the shortcut Ctrl/Cmd+N. This will open the dialog box shown in Figure 7. Rename it if you wish. Change the Mode to Overlay. This makes the checkbox underneath available which should be ticked. Overlay is a contrast blend mode that disregards neutral grey. Painting on this layer with black will darken where you paint and painting with white will lighten where you paint. Use a low opacity (15-20%) soft brush initially. Each time the brush is applied the effect of darkening or lightening is increased. Experience will soon tell you what opacity to set your brush at as it will vary with the density of the image. In this case rather than painting, a gradient would be more appropriate. With the Gradient tool selected, I set the options to 'black to transparent' and drew a line from the bottom right upwards and slightly left. I repeated this action from the bottom left upwards to create a second gradient. I then reduced the opacity of the layer to suit the tone I wanted.

The central part of the image was now pretty much how I

wanted it but the surrounding areas were still too light. I applied a Curves adjustment layer and, using the scrubby slider, dragged downwards on the wall to the left of the window until they reached the tonality I wanted. I painted black on the layer mask to bring back the light areas on Helen and around the window area. The final adjustments were finishing 'tweaks'. I applied another 'Overlay' layer and burned in the roof beams at the top right, which were quite eye-catching. An empty layer was created and used to clone in the small white patch just above them. Finally, I thought the highlights on the brickwork just outside the window were a bit too bright so, just above the Window layer, I applied a Curves adjustment layer, clipped it to the Window layer and dropped the highlight end of the curve.

The layers panel is shown in Figure 8 and the final image on page 20. This picture took more work than most images that I make but I feel it was worth it in the end. It has gained me a FIAP ribbon as well as other exhibition acceptances.



Into Battle

HOW MANY DIMENSIONS IN YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY?



A photograph is essentially a captured moment of time and yet, Gwynn Robinson argues, we need to understand that photography is not actually about the moment at all but about communicating the experience to the intended audience.

When was the last time that you were really excited by an image? What was it about the image that inspired you?

A photograph is just a flat two-dimensional facsimile of a multi-dimensional personal experience. The photographer's experience was not just two-dimensional nor was it merely three-dimensional but it included time (the 4th dimension) and hopefully and more importantly, it included emotional impact (another dimension). Capturing a single moment of time freezes the photographer's experience and feelings and reduces it all to just the two

dimensional representation that we later view. A photograph IS essentially a captured moment of time and yet we know that it must be so much more than that.

Emotional impact is the personal result of experience upon us as human beings. It involves time in an odd way as it involves the interaction with others past, present and future (the intended audience). This is an important aspect in an image because it has to be able to transcend immediate time to be relevant and engaging.

Photography is multi-dimensional and yet we have to represent all of that in just

two dimensions. Communicating this is both an art and a skill. It is the real skill of photography. It is this that we have to learn as we also master the technicalities of being able to capture the best image that we can in all circumstances.

As a simple example: imagine a line drawing of a cube on a piece of paper. We can see and understand that what we see in the two-dimensional drawing is in fact a three-dimensional object with length, breadth and depth. However, the image cannot give us the same experience. It is merely a representation where our mind and imagination have to complete the absent parts and



Life and Death

dimensions from the original scene. The creator experiencing and capturing the real object has a much more involved, personal experience than the viewer of the drawing.

The easier we make it for the viewer to understand and relate to our image the better the chances of deeper involvement for the viewer. We must use our

creative skills to succeed in this.

Photography is a creative pursuit. This creativity is not limited to the capture phase. The viewer must also put in his own input to interpret, understand and become involved with the presented image.

A badly drawn line drawing of a cube will lessen the already diminished

experience for the viewer by making it harder to understand the intent, which may result in confusion. If the artist has added or allowed distractions into the drawing then the experience becomes ever more muddled and less satisfying. A parallel can be made with the photographic image. We try to capture the experience that is represented by the inter-relating scene players; light, shadows, colour, etc., but the scene will also hold elements that distract that we have to control. Careful selection of the viewpoint will minimise the distractions and maximise the intended purpose. Different photographers will hold different ideas and purposes from the same scene because of their differing personalities, preferences, knowledge, life experiences, and goals. They will produce different results. In the same vein, different judges will see and respond to the same images differently. This makes the goal of producing winning competition images much more difficult.

If a photographer's purpose is to enter images into a competition then there are other added dimensions to the equation. The photographer has to ensure that there are enough commonly understood



Lytham Light House

elements that point to the purpose and intent of the image. We have to lead the viewer (or judge) towards our intention/experience so that they can understand and share our soul in the image.

This is why some photographs hit a nerve and others are left out in the cold. Perfectly good images may simply fail to connect with a particular viewer (or judge) due to a lack of common experience, understanding or empathy. There is an added twist to the mix, yet another dimension which is constantly growing and it seems on first consideration that there is little that we can do about it. We may fulfil all of the different aspects needed to portray an experience well in an image but if the image is 'old hat' then sheer viewer boredom will ensure that it fails to impress. How often do we hear judges say 'I have seen that so many times before' and then mark a good image down?

It is a conundrum. As we learn our art of photography, it is very unlikely that we will be creating completely new things, especially at the start. We all have to learn the ropes by mimicking and learning from others who have gone before. It is inevitable that judges will unnecessarily dismiss good images and fellow members who have 'seen it all before' but this can be very discouraging and even confusing to all of us who are trying to improve. Yet surely, a good image is a good image is a good image. However, if we stray too far towards the 'new' and experimental then we risk



Just One Slip and...

alienating our audience (judges) too.

There is a balance to be attained.

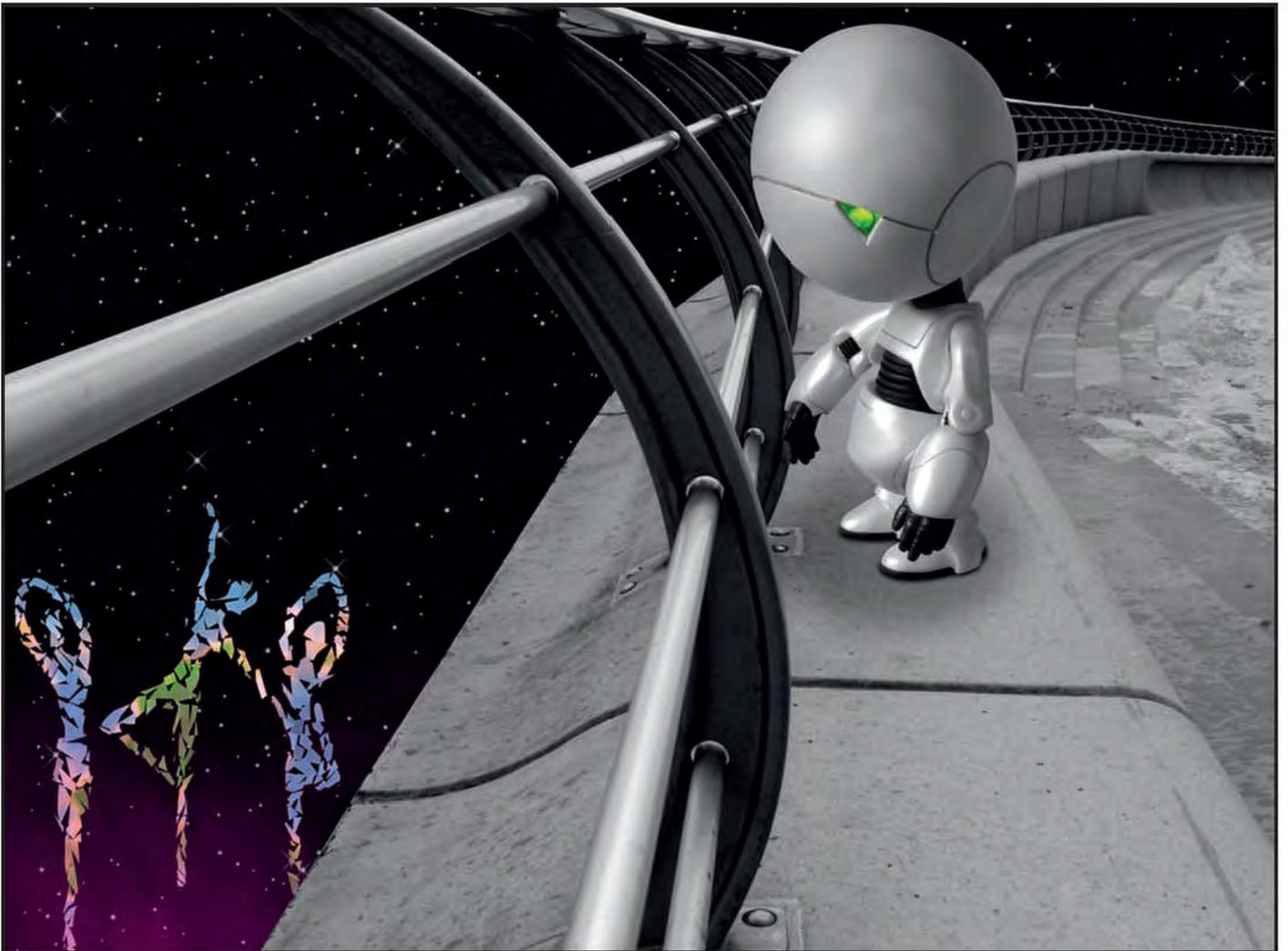
We need to connect successfully and relate to our audience. What can we do to maximise the chances of our images succeeding in this and of them winning competitions?

We need to understand that photography is not actually about the moment at all but about communicating the experience to the intended audience. Simply capturing the moment is really just taking snapshots. We are aiming far above that so we must consider why we are trying to capture the experience and how we

can represent the contained emotion. We must have a purpose. If we have no intended purpose then the images will show this. They will most likely be a random collection of snapshots. Of course, there is no harm in just going out and enjoying taking photographs. We all do it and occasionally/surprisingly obtain some competition images along the way. However, if we want to maximise our competition hit rate then we really need to understand what we are aiming for. Not every image will be a competition-winning image either. A good 'hit' rate



Captured with Love



I Want to be Involved!

for well composed images is 10% of the shoot. From that, the good 'hit' rate for competition images is another cull of 10%, i.e. a reasonable 'hit' rate for most of us creating competition images is 1 in 100.

The hardest type of purpose (especially for beginners) is the 'open' category as basically there is no given purpose other

than winning the competition. We must create our own purpose. Identifying a place to go and organising it will provide a rough purpose. However, the purpose must be melded into final shape by the dynamics of the actual situation when we arrive at the destination.

Although the scene elements will most likely be the same if we were to go to a

location many times, the experience will be different due to the impact of different lighting, clouds, rain, people, season, props, you name it.

On arrival at a location, it is important to assess and to feel the scene. How will it best serve your purpose? Does it help focus your mind towards what you expected or do you have to change tack completely – like when the lighting is too fierce or too bland then sometimes we have to change to aiming at close-ups and macro shots. Sometimes if we arrive at a location and find the skies are dramatic then we may want to concentrate on that rather than the original intended subject.

Photography requires us to think, assess, and imagine constantly. Without these elements then the images will lack soul. More importantly, without these elements, our images will lack 'our' input, our unique style, our personal way of seeing the world.

None of us actually wants to create images that have gone before, identical clones of other people's work, so we must apply ourselves deeply into our



If I Can Do It Then...

chosen art. Our images need the personal touch, which will show itself in our personal style. Style is simply your preferred way of capturing and representing your experiences. Our images must really go beyond personally liking them towards filling others and us with excitement.

How is all of this achieved?

It is all down to isolation, amplification, identification and involvement.

We must select the items we want the viewers to concentrate on by isolating the subject, bringing it out from the rest of the image. This can be achieved in many ways by altering the size (Zoom), position, height, light, colour, shadow, timing etc., of the part of the image that is to be the subject.

The subject must also be amplified by only allowing into an image other aspects that support the subject and do not distract the viewer away or confuse. This can be achieved by careful composition, framing, timing, etc.

Whatever we put into our image must be identifiable by and interesting to the viewer. If the viewer cannot recognise the subject or the supporting amplification aspects then the image will appear as an abstract and it is unlikely to connect in the way we intended.

Lastly, we need to be totally involved in our imagery, at the time of capture, at the time of preparation and at the time of display. We need to get under the skin of the location and any action occurring. We need to know what has gone before and be prepared to go the extra mile to find something new to ensure viewer interest. This takes time at the location, knowledge of the subject and experience in photographic techniques. We must understand what we are trying to represent and communicate, and have insight into how our audience will respond. Finally, we must interpret the scene and the experience into what the camera, and eventually the viewer, really sees.

Not every image that we capture will do all that we need. We have to persevere. We need determination and a willingness to learn from our mistakes. Sometimes this requires us to go back to a location to try again. Sometimes (as with wedding photography) we have to form a team and use the differing approaches and imaginations from different photographers to create the ultimate result. Sometimes we have to learn new techniques or we may have to change the goal due to unexpected circumstances at the location or because of new understandings.

One thing is certain, photography is multi-dimensional, involved, and exciting for us and hopefully for the viewer.



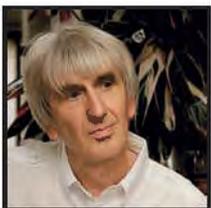
Dreams of What May Be



Finished? Think You've Finished? This is Just the Start!



THE MAKING OF DIGIT



After going through the process of finding new printers for DIGIT magazine, the Editor, David Cooke realised that not many members of DIG are likely to be aware of how the magazine is produced. In his short article, he aims to fill that gap by outlining the process.

The company which has been printing DIGIT for many years, Ian Allan Printing Ltd, ceased trading in the summer of 2012 and it was necessary to find a replacement. Quality was one of the prime considerations in choosing a new printer as, being a

photography magazine, DIGIT's reputation is reliant heavily not only on its content but also on the quality of reproduction of the images. Several companies were considered and, finally, the DIG Committee decided to offer the work to Henry Ling Ltd at the Dorset

Press (www.henryling.co.uk). It struck me that not many members of DIG are likely to be aware of how DIGIT is produced and printed so I thought a short article to explain this would be of interest. Although, as editor of DIGIT, I do

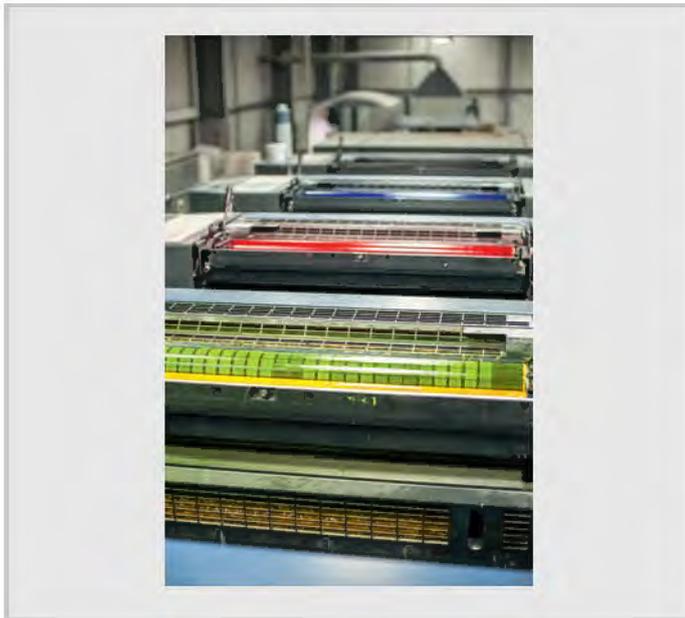




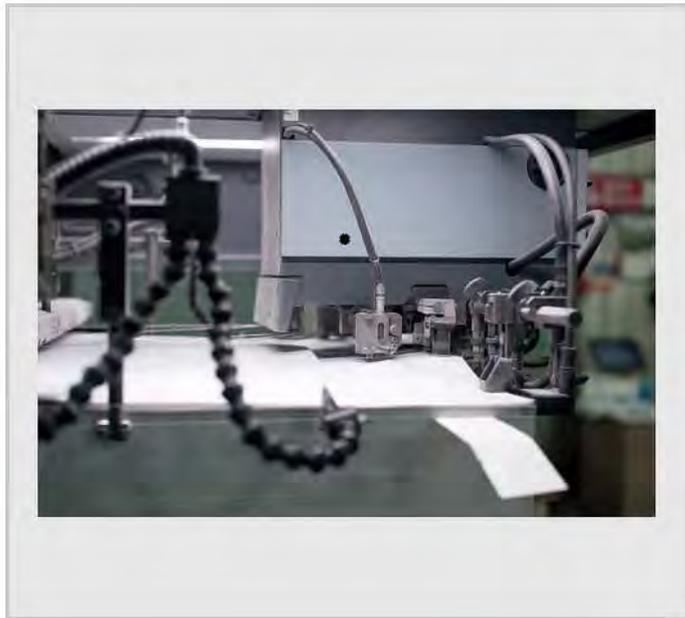
General View of the Factory



Bending the Plate for Press



The Printing Press Ink Ducts



Feeding the Paper into the Printing Press

receive a few offers of articles and other content for the magazine, most of them arise from my asking members for articles which I think will be of interest to members. Work often needs to be started several months before publication, as the process from idea to final print can be a long one. When I approach someone with a request to write an article for the magazine, I give them a general outline of what I am looking for and advice on word length and the number of images required but authors have a good deal of freedom on what they produce. This is because I want the magazine to reflect the views, opinions and feelings of the authors and not be too restricted by detailed requirements and specifications. I offer to see drafts of

articles but more often than not people send me virtually completed articles together with the images they want to be published. After checking these through and clarifying points with the authors, I carry out the technical work required to prepare the article for printing and lay out the draft pages of the article. These are sent to the author for comments and corrections. When any necessary changes have been made and we are both happy with the article, it is sent to proof readers for final corrections before being prepared for printing. High-resolution files are sent to the printers together with a mailing list which has been prepared from the latest database of members from RPS headquarters in Bath.

The printers check those files for any technical issues regarding print specification, and any necessary corrections are made before I sign off the magazine for printing. The printing process itself is fascinating to watch and I hope that the images reproduced here will give you a feel of what happens. This whole process may seem complex at first but, from an author's point of view, it is straightforward. I hope that knowing this will encourage you to consider writing something for the magazine. If you have an idea for an article, please contact me (davidfcookearps@gmail.com) and we can talk it through.



The Printed Sheet in the Press



The Press Control Panel



Checking the Sheet



The Final Check before signing off



Loading Printing Plate



Changing the Plates on the Press



Printed Sheets Drying



Folded Sections Ready for Binding



Feeding Through the Binder



The Folded Magazine being Transported for Stitching



The Cover is applied to the Magazine



The Finished Magazine

IN PREVIOUS ISSUES



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