

RPS Contemporary Group AGM 10.00 March 25th 2023

Minutes (T Hancock reporting)

Held by Zoom

		Vote
1 Welcome and Apologies	Tim Hancock welcomed 22 members to the AGM	
2 Minutes 2022 AGM	Approval without revision	Unanimous
3 Officers' report	<p>In the absence of a Chair, Tim Hancock a brief report to the meeting.</p> <p>Secretary Report</p> <p>The previous year has been a challenge for the committee for two major reasons – firstly the resignation of the Chair of the SIG half way through the year, and the turbulence at RPS Bristol mostly due to the chaotic launch of a new Customer Relationship Management system.</p> <p>Despite these “seismic” challenges to smooth running of a committee, membership has stood up well at about 400, this being one of the largest SIGs in the RPS. The finances of the SIG have only recently become clearer – see the Treasurers report for details.</p> <p>On the very large upside we have continued to hold meetings both face to face and via zoom when regional activities are included. The first national face to face meeting is planned in May “Fens at Risk” in Cambridge. In addition our two publications the printed “Journal” and digital “Concept” have gone from strength to strength and everyone’s thanks go to the volunteer editors Paul Ashley and Suzi Darsa and layout designer Christine Pinnington. It is worth noting here also that the Journal will from now on be produced every four months</p>	

rather than the previous three, partly due to cost reasons.

Brian Steptoe FRPS stepped down during the year from the Committee after many years' service, and I am sure everyone will join me in passing on our thanks to Brian for all his hard work. A formal thanks you to Brian will be sent by email.

The committee has introduced a bursary to support contemporary photography at rural schools and this is currently underway. Thanks are due to the organisers Adrian Hough and Sean Goodhart for making this happen – it was a lot of work.

The RPS website has also proved a headache to manage with regard to posting events and many thanks go again to our webmaster Sean for his expertise and diligence.

Several reports both from the committee and regional organisers are attached for more information. I do just want to highlight the Postal portfolio which does not get many mentions, but is a great opportunity for members to share their work and ideas both by post and online. Anyone wanting to join is welcome to do so by contacting Duncan Unsworth. Meetings are held every month with every other meeting being about a chosen photobook.

With regard to the year just gone I want to put on record our thanks to everyone on the committee and regional organisers for their hard work.

	<p>Now we can move onto next year with the news that we still have a vacancy for the position of Chair, but we do have a new Events team of three – Graham Bridgeman-Clarke , Steven Whittaker and Mike Kitson who will create an events calendar for us.</p> <p>This brings us to near full complement, and together with a hopefully better functioning Bristol we can look forward to a smoother running 2023/24 season.</p> <p>We have several reports submitted by regions and the committee roles, which I will attach to the minutes for your information.</p> <p>Tim Hancock ARPS Secretary</p> <p>Treasurers Report</p> <p>Attached as a separate pdf document.</p>	
4 Elections	<p>Chair : Tom Owens Prop. S Goodhart, Sec. S Hutchinson</p> <p>Treasurer : Alan Cameron Prop. T Hancock Sec. Adrian Hough</p> <p>Secretary : Tim Hancock Prop. A Cameron Sec. M Kitson</p> <p>Rest of committee en bloc</p>	<p>Vote out of 19 18 for, 1 abs.</p> <p>19 in favour</p> <p>19 in favour</p> <p>18 for, 1 abs.</p>
5. Regional reports	<p>Separate reports available.</p> <p>Alan Cameron (NW) noted the difficulty in engaging the region.</p>	
6. AOB	<p>Sean Goodhart noted that the bursary had so far only been applied for by two schools with one month to go.</p>	



Financial Report, 2022

For: AGM on 24th March 2023 convened via video conference.

Introduction

This report covers the calendar (financial) year 2022. This has been another difficult year to manage finances.

The RPS decided to implement a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System which was due to come live in May 2022. Despite warnings from members of your committee that the timeframe was too short the project went ahead and the implementation was chaotic.

The result of the disruption caused by the difficulties experienced in the CRM project was that expected monthly income was not transferred to our bank account for several months from July to December. The monies were finally credited to the accounts in February and March 2023.

Commentary on 2022 Financial Position

When I took over the post I mistakenly understood that all invoices had been paid, but it appears that our print invoices for Contemporary Photography were somewhat in arrears. As a result last year's surplus was overstated and, as the invoices had to be paid in 2022, it appears that we have a loss in this year.

The effect of the implementation of the CRM system resulted in a large portion of our expected income being delayed into 2023. This has now been credited to our bank account and the accounts below show the the position for the year corrected for underpayments.

If the somewhat seismic effects of these unexpected events are excluded, over the past two years we should have had an average surplus of £345 per annum, a total of £690.

I look forward to a more settled year once all outstanding funds have been credited to our bank account.

RPS Contemporary Special Interest Group

Accounts for year ended 31st December 2022

		2022	2021
Revenues			
Income			
Publication Sales			£25
Subscriptions Paid to Group	£5,184		£7765
Subscriptions and other income due*	£3042		
Ticket Sales			£64
Other Income			£85
Total Revenue		£8,226	£7939
Expenses			
Committee Expenses	£155		
Newsletter Postage	£2,609		£3145
Newsletter Production	£4,485		£2939
Events	£98		
IT and Website	£753		£602
Miscellaneous	£0		£4
Speakers' Fees	£495		£189
Total Expenses		£8,596	£6879
Net Income/Loss for Year		-£370	£1060

* Due to issues with implementation of the RPS Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System some income could not be allocated in the year. Credits were made in February and March 2023. Sum includes £15 for publication sales and £3027 Subscriptions for period July to December.

RPS Contemporary Adjusted SIG Balance Sheet at 31st December 2022

Assets				2021
Bank Account Closing Balance	£9,700			£13111
Debtor RPS	£3042			
Total Assets			£12,742	
Liabilities				
Opening Balance		£13,111		£12051
Net Income/Loss for the Year		-£370		£1,060
Total			£12,742	£13,111

Prospects for 2023

After last year's AGM it was decided by the committee that we should support the RPS Strategic Plan and particularly Photography for All. Funds are healthy and I am of the opinion that we should continue with that support.

It was decided to use some of our reserved funds to create a bursary for rural schools in the sum of £1500 and thanks to the work of Adrian Hough ARPS and Sean Goodhart ARPS this has now been launched nationally. Our first application has been received and we expect more before the closing date.

A change of focus with regard to publications means that there will now be three editions of Contemporary Photography each year, thus saving us sufficient money to support the creation of national events. The first of these entitled "The Fens at Risk," is currently being planned for Cambridge in May, with the venue and speakers booked.

All these initiatives will result in a deliberate reduction in our assets. As part of a Charity it is incumbent on us not to hoard funds and supporting Photography for All represents a good use of those funds.

With our current sound financial position I consider that maintaining the subscriptions for the SIG at £20 will be sufficient for our needs in order to provide services to our members.



Dr Alan R Cameron PhD, ARPS

RPS Contemporary Treasurer

E: contemporarytreasurer@rps.org

RPS Contemporary SIG AGM

Contemporary Photography Journal

The journal has been published for many years on a three month schedule, but we are changing the schedule to four months from the next issue onwards. The reasons for this are:

- Increased costs of postage and printing.
- Growing demands on the rest of the budget of the SIG.

We will take the opportunity to refresh the design and layout of the journal, although we do not intend to change its basic purpose, which is to bring to members the best of new contemporary photography from the UK and around the world.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Brian Steptoe for his long service as layout editor. The current layout owes everything to his talent and skills, and he also has contributed many book reviews.

We are very fortunate (and I am very grateful) that Christine Pinnington has been willing to step forward and take over as layout editor.

Paul Ashley, Editor

C.G. Postal Portfolio

The Postal Portfolio scheme continues to circulate nine boxes between two circuits allowing members of the scheme to have their images, including books, critiqued and critique the work of the others.

We also meet regularly online. It allows the members to get to know each other despite their wide geographic spread and is now a regular highlight of the month for many. These meetings alternate between 'standard' meetings when we look at the work and ideas currently being explored by the members and a 'book club' when we discuss the images and ideas of a chosen photobook (available for under £20), such as 'The Image of Whiteness' by Daniel Blight and shortly 'A Book of Days' by Patti Smith.

As always new members to the postal portfolio would be welcome. Please contact: duncan.unsworth100@gmail.com for more information.

Duncan Unsworth

Webmaster report for AGM 2023

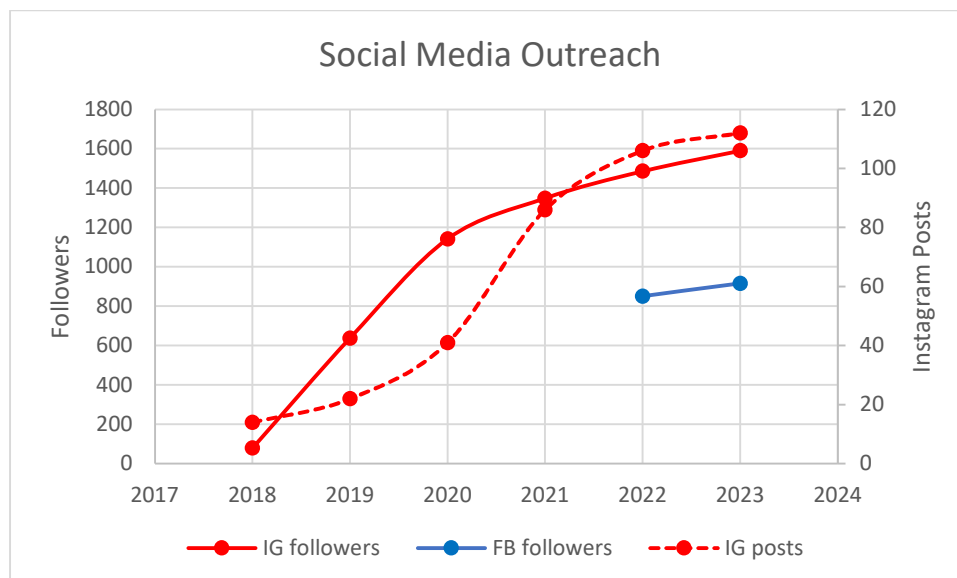
<https://rps.org/groups/contemporary/>

Our microsite on rps.org has grown slowly this year – certainly I’ve not created many blogs under the “news” items. What has grown nicely is the library of recordings of the “in conversation” events <https://rps.org/news/groups/contemporary/2022/march/contemporary-on-youtube/>, the archive of our e-news “Concept” <https://rps.org/groups/contemporary/e-news-archive/> and the group journal “Contemporary Photography” <https://rps.org/groups/contemporary/journal-archive/>. We’ve also grown the regional input to the website with <https://rps.org/groups/contemporary/cn-newsletters/>, <https://rps.org/groups/contemporary/cn-showcase/> from Contemporary North and <https://rps.org/groups/contemporary/cc-newsletters/> from the Central Contemporary/Documentary group.

This year we have finally got to grips with the new RPS events system and can comfortably publish any of our free and paid events in the system. During the last 12 months we’ve used Facebook Events and Eventbrite to publish our events, but were only allowed to put free events in those systems.

Social Media

Our Instagram presence continues to grow, with 112 posts and 1590 followers. That’s up from 106 posts and 1486 followers in February 2022 but shows a slow-down in growth comparing to the increase since March 2021 when we had 86 posts and 1348 followers. The Facebook group has 916 members, up from 851 in February 2022. Unfortunately I’ve not kept the data on how the group has grown over the years and I can’t see how to pull out statistics on posts etc.



Both groups have plenty of posting and discussions, our Instagram tag #rpscontemporarygroup has 2917 posts with incredibly diverse subjects, up from 2161 in February 2022.

These figures speak to the need for someone to join the committee and be responsible for social media.

<https://www.instagram.com/rpscontemporary/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/RPSContemporary>

Central Region Report March 2023 – Steff Hutchinson

Originally set up in lockdown, we continue to meet monthly by Zoom. In the past year we've had our first face-to-face meet-up, which took place in Coventry, to take photographs in the city as it came to the end of its time as the City of Culture. We've also put together our first collective book, "Introducing..." which features the work of 8 of our regular members. This is available online, on the RPS website, and the contributors all have a hard copy of the book. We're at about the right point to embark on a new collective project now.

We have a mailing list of about 25 members, and each meeting sees between 6 and 12 people attending, with the most regular core being the 8 who contributed to the book. We're always happy to welcome new members. At each meeting, those present choose whether they want to share a project. Sometimes these are finished projects and sometimes these are works in progress which their creators want feedback on.

There are a lot of overlaps between Contemporary projects and Documentary projects, but there's also a slightly different way of looking at the world, which leads to some interesting discussions.

Anyone wanting to join us can email me at: info@steffhutchinson.co.uk

EACG annual summary

The East Anglia Contemporary Group has been relatively active over the last year exploring themes that result in on-line exhibitions using the Artsteps platform.

Our next theme which should go live by the beginning of May is interpreting the quote attributed to Emerson;

"Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail".

Numbers of participants have grown and I invite up to 12 people to our monthly Zoom meetings. We average about 8 per session and each session lasts between 60-90 minutes. On balance, given the remoteness of many members of the group, this is the most economical way to meet in both terms of time and costs.

Members have been instrumental in helping set up the forthcoming Fens at Risk event. I'm extremely grateful for their help.

Tom Owens ARPS
East Anglia Co-ordinator

Contemporary and Documentary NW

Annual report 2022

The group was fairly inactive during the year with four meetings taking place.

All meetings were face to face with the first at Samlesbury War Memorial Hall in January. Four members attended.

The meetings in June and September were in Manchester/Salford at the Sebastiao Salgado Amazonia exhibition. Different small groups attended and Alexandra Prescott FRPS, the then Chair, attended in June.

The final meeting was in Liverpool, first to see the Sony World Press Exhibition at the Open Eye Gallery and then to have a walk around the docks area. Six members attended.

Monthly meetings have been set up for the first six months of 2023 with a mix of Zoom and in person events planned.

Alan Cameron ARPS
Organiser
6th March 2023



AGM 25 March 2023

Contemporary North

Our group continues to meet successfully on alternate face-to-face and Zoom meetings, averaging 16 members at each monthly meeting. We've developed into an engaged and lively group of regular members. Our meetings on Zoom have enabled us to meet with members from further afield which gives us the opportunity to share in different projects, different approaches.

At the end of 2022 we began a new way of reporting on our meetings. Instead of the usual article on who said/showed what, *Showcase* has been developed, compiled and designed by Lyn Newton. It provides a platform for participants to display the work that they have shared. Members "curate" their own images and provide accompanying text making this a real group venture. There's no restriction on number of photos or amount of text that can be included.

We enjoyed an outing to the Hepworth Gallery to see Hannah Starkey's exhibition: *In Real Life*. We were privileged to not only attend her talk, but also her exhibition tour afterwards. (See RPS Journal January/February Vol. 163 No. 1 Spring, pp 42 – 53.)

Our group is looking forward to more trips out in 2023 take photos as well as visit exhibitions. Who knows - there's talk of another book in the making.

Patricia A Ruddle