

DIGIT

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY DIGITAL IMAGING GROUP

Number 72 2017 Issue 1



Upcoming DIG events

Details of all DIG events are available on the Group's website at www.rps.org/special-interest-groups/digital-imaging/events



NORTH WEST CENTRE

Simon Watkinson ABIPP
REAL WORLD PROCESSING
WITH LIGHTROOM

Lynne Morrison AFIAL, DPAGB, BPE3*
EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED

Sunday 26 March 2017 ~ Lowton C of E High School WA3 1DU



THAMES VALLEY CENTRE

Paul Sanders
PICTURES ON A PAGE
and
THE MIND'S EYE

Sunday 26 March 2017 ~ Wokingham, Berkshire



EASTERN CENTRE

Permajet

PRINT WITH
CONFIDENCE

Sunday 2 April 2017 ~ Foxton, Cambridgeshire



WESTERN CENTRE

Jane Kearney CPAGB
A CREATIVE JOURNEY
Simple beginnings to
the creation of unique
composite images

Sunday 2 April 2017 Ilton Village Hall, Somerset



SCOTLAND CENTRE

April Meeting

Sunday 2 April 2017 ~ Bridge of Allan, Stirlingshire



THAMES VALLEY CENTRE

Andrew Mills
THE ART OF
PHOTOGRAPHY -
LIGHTING FOR
STILL LIFE

Sunday 23 April 2017 ~ Wokingham, Berkshire



THAMES VALLEY CENTRE

PDI COMPETITION
plus
Presentations
by Members
with prints & AVs

Sunday 21 May 2017 ~ Wokingham, Berkshire



SOUTHERN CENTRE

Adrian Lines MPAGB ARPS
Altered Reality
is Better than the Real Thing
Jane Lines MPAGB BPE5 LRPS
Going Solo

Sunday 21st May 2017 ~ Ringwood BH24 1DW

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Parliament erupted.... by Rob Kershaw ARPS

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EDITORIAL

Gary Beaton



I'm hopeful that no-one will have cause to complain that there is a lack of variety in this issue of DIGIT! From the technicalities of colour printing, through intriguing approaches to portraiture, to tips to get the best from photographic opportunities at outdoor festivals, there is surely something for everyone in these pages. We also have a quick look at the talk from Viveca Koh FRPS that was presented at the AGM, for those who could not get to the event in person.

One thing that stands out for me is the huge creativity we have amongst our members, and the variety of ideas and images that result. It is particularly interesting to see two contributors to this issue, both creating portraits, and using similar techniques to build on a base image, ultimately producing such different, although equally thought-provoking final images. Certainly for me, in addition to enjoying the images that have been created by fellow DIG members, I am inspired to try to extend my own skills by applying the techniques that they have been good enough to share with us.

Just as DIG members have a wide range of interests, we are drawn from all over the world. Fortunately, in this internet-connected world, distance does not present the challenges that it did in the past, and members can communicate and collaborate in many ways wherever they may be located. But those different locations and different cultures still affect the photographs that we take. We get an insight into some of these differences in a short article from André Bergmans who is a member of the RPS BeNeLux Chapter. This is the first in a series of articles where we will see what happens in the various SIGs and Chapters that make up the RPS as a whole.

Please enjoy this latest issue - I hope reading it inspires you as much producing it has me.

FROM THE CHAIR

Janet Haines ARPS



Do you sometimes feel it doesn't matter how fast you run you never seem to catch up with yourself? When I think about this in terms of DIG I see all the things that the DIG has accomplished in the past twelve months and is organising for the next.

By the time you read this latest DIGIT we will have held our AGM and completed our 20th year as a SIG. We will have reported on the energy and enthusiasm of our UK Centres, the success of the two annual competitions and the launch of our new DIG logo. We will have thanked outgoing volunteers and welcomed new ones. More recently it has been very encouraging how members are participating in the new DIG Facebook group. This gives our overseas members one more way to share and engage with other members, wherever they may be.

DIGIT and the exhibition catalogues have both been very well received by the members. The monthly online DIG News seems popular. We estimate about 55% of you are reading it each month – but we would like to know why the other 45% don't (feedback welcome).

So what about looking forward..... In September will be holding our DI Expo 2017. This one day conference is being held near the NEC in Birmingham, with easy access by road, rail and air. The speakers are varied and top quality. For full information and to book your place go to www.rps.org/DIGExpo.

At the AGM we will be announcing a new DIG membership scheme. We will be introducing an online DIG membership at a reduced cost of £8 per year. The only difference between the two levels of membership is that online members will not get the printed DIGITs and catalogues but have access to these online - exactly the same content, just a different and less expensive delivery mechanism. Full information will be on the website from March.

So here's to the Kaizen principles of continuous improvement, and more good things to come for our members' benefit in the next twelve months. Onwards and upwards.



A fresh new look for the DIG

You may have spotted a fresh, crisp, new DIG logo appearing in a variety of places. Here is the fascinating story behind the new logo and its designer.

Like any other organisation these days, it is important that the RPS is easily and clearly identifiable amongst the multitude of other organisations which exist, both in the photographic world and in everyone's computer or phone via the Internet. We will all recognise the Society's logo which is applied across its website and publications. Those with longer memories will also recall its evolution over the years.

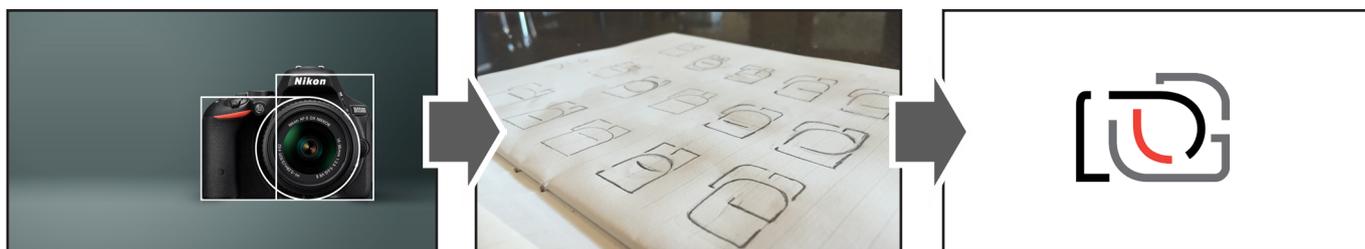
Similarly, the Digital Imaging Group, the largest of the RPS Groups, needs to be easily identifiable – to have a clear brand – for its members. A Group logo, first used in late 1990s, soon after the Group was established, reflected elements that were relevant to digital photographers of the day. Of course, today, digital imaging, in all its various forms, is now mainstream photography and the Committee decided it was time to update the Group's brand.

But some things are easier said than done!

What should the new logo look like? What will make it stand out amongst all of the other brands? What will draw digital photographers together? Should it be modern or traditional..... and what do these things look like anyway? For every question there is a range of answers!

Clearly, the best answer to our conundrum is to ask an expert. And we are very fortunate to have among our members one such expert – Jason Whitworth.

Jason is a professional graphic designer based in Los Angeles, California. His work, for a wide-ranging international clientele, covers far more than simple design. In addition developing art and design, his skills focus on maximizing the benefits of a design for his customers.



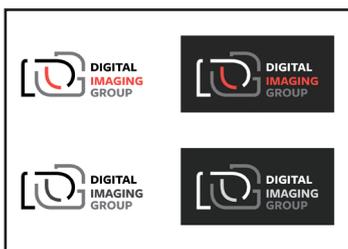
From inspiration to concept....and from concept to logo.

DIGITAL IMAGING GROUP LOGO

The DIG Committee prepared a brief for the new design, seeking an easily recognisable logo which reflects current trends in brand design. Additionally, the new logo needs to be usable for all forms of communication - on web pages, in advertising, in print and in social media. The brief also specified that the logo must be suitable for use in monochrome and in colour, and be scalable to present a clear identity in many different formats and sizes. A tall order, to be sure!

Jason took this brief and developed an idea based on the one thing that is common to all DIG members in one form or another, a camera. This simple, but ingenious, starting point went through many iterations and resulted in a logo which incorporates, in stylised form, both the Group's commonly used abbreviation and the abstract form of the camera.

As Jason points out, we are all influenced by the culture we grew up in, the culture we call home, or the culture we strive towards. For Jason, who, although born and brought up in Cheshire in the North West of England, has travelled widely and is particularly influenced by the UK and the US, where he studied photography.



Drawing on his experiences, Jason applied variations to his concept to enable it to be used in just about any way that we hoped it would

suit....and a number of ways that we had never thought of! The result for the DIG is a fresh new logo which harks back to the earliest days of photography by using combinations of tones in the black and grey, and includes the striking red elements in the colour versions to catch the eye, and represents a contrast with digital imaging today and the future. The design can be used with the Group's name where the viewer may not be familiar with the DIG, and is distinctive enough to quickly pick out in a crowd for members and others who already know what it signifies.



In some ways it's sad to see the old logo - which has been a part of the DIG for so long - disappearing, but you will no doubt agree that our new logo is fresh, distinctive and embodies what the DIG is all about.

Jason has been based in Los Angeles for the last seven years, working as an Art Director on branding and marketing projects using his skills and knowledge in photography and graphic design, so rebranding the DIG came easily in many ways. Reflecting on his recent experience he says "Through my work, selecting and preparing or taking photographs for particular projects, I see there is an increase in pure photography in the digital era, using the natural surroundings and beauty, with the intelligent use of digital techniques or editing to enhance the final aesthetics within the photograph".

"Los Angeles is known for entertainment, celebrities and the glamorous lifestyle though the city has been going through massive changes which has inspired photographers, artists and media designers using photography to impact the future."

British-born Jason Whitworth is an experienced and innovative designer who specializes in graphic design, art direction, visual identity and brand development. His extensive client list includes Starbucks, British Vogue, Bottega Veneta, The Art Institute of Los Angeles and the British American Business Council. Jason is the recipient of the 2016 International Design Award and currently resides in Los Angeles, California.

See more of Jason's work at jasonwhitworth.com.



Beauty of maths in art

STEPHEN SALMON ARPS blends photography and mathematics to create something quite unique. Here he explains what drives his work and the technique he uses.

Many people have asked me why do I create my images this way, but to me art is subjective, it has been said many times that all photography is art, but this is not true. Only those who look at it as art will say so. After my exhibitions in London and Cambridge, I have come to the conclusion that art is a fad, and it comes and goes between us all; sometimes we like landscapes and other times we like the abstract. This I see as good for the art world, because it gives the artist and the viewer scope to look at art, in their life as a whole, rather than just the moment.

Art is constructed, be it an architectural building, a painting or a constructed photograph, and

this is what art means to me. There are some instances of images that were taken straight out of camera and have been called art, but the majority will have been manipulated somewhere along the line, even dodging and burning, in analogue photography, is a form of manipulation. The construction does not have to start after the image has been taken. There are many instances where the image is constructed before the shutter is even pressed, food photography, still life or a portrait to name just a few. Why so many people are dead set against manipulation of images is alien to me. I totally agree, with images that tell a story as truth, that there shouldn't be any

BEAUTY OF MATHS IN ART

additions or subtractions to the image. They need to preserve the integrity of the story, but that isn't art. Painters build layer upon layer of paint to produce their work, and digital work, in my opinion, should be classed in the same way.

This work started four years ago whilst working on light painting techniques. Which became more complex, to the point I started to use a 10" tablet and software that created fractals, to reflect the light. From that point on I decided to make the fractal part of the image.

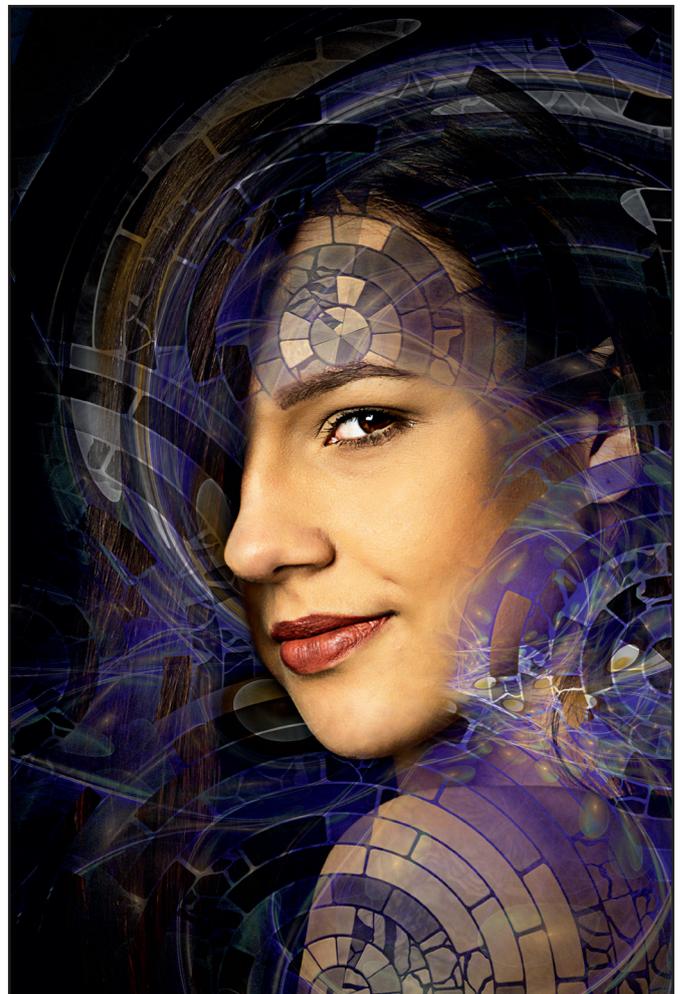


FRACTALS

After some research into fractals, my conclusion was that maths plays a large part in the shape of the natural world, as well as the graphics of art. This is the reason for calling the work 'Beauty of Maths in Art'. I use portraits to show the mathematics in the natural world and fractals are a manipulation of constructed maths.

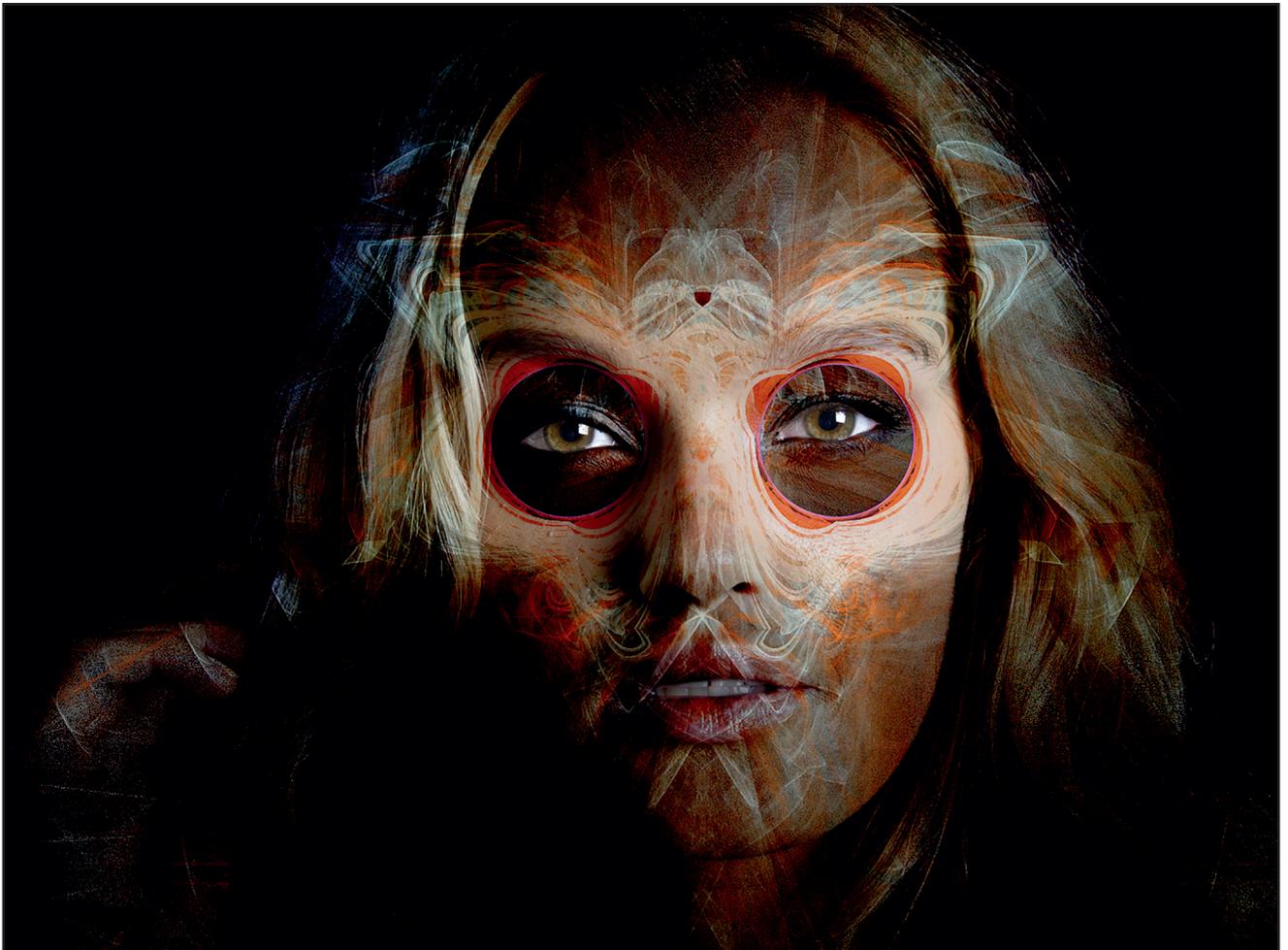
There are several packages to create fractals, but the one chosen was 'Jwildfire' (ver. 3.00). It looks very complicated on initial use, but after a quick tutorial, it gets easier to use. The software creates a random selection of low resolution fractals which can be individually selected to produce a higher resolution version. From there it's a simple choice to select the size and orientation and save

your preferences. So far the catalogue is standing at 800 fractals stored, out of over 5000 fractals viewed. The program does not produce images compatible with all graphic packages, instead you have to compile the file, which is called a 'flame', to a PNG or JPEG file, or you can create a 32-bit HDR image. It will take anywhere from 15 minutes to several hours to compile an image, depending on the complexity of the fractal. A faster system will be available soon that uses the graphic processor, but this is currently work in progress. Thankfully there is a batch procedure, where you select several flames and it will compile them for you. I run this overnight but this will still only compile 7 or 8 images over 8 hours.



Most of my portraits are studio based, so the lighting is well maintained. This helps with the final image because a strong image is needed to blend with the fractal. By strong I mean a clear contrast between the fractal and the facial details in the portrait. Flat or low contrast images will only show the fractal and no definition of the portrait. The object is to create the portrait as a fractal.

The difficult part is selecting the right fractal for



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the portrait. I select several fractals and try to see which one fits or may work; it's all about trial and error. Time is required for this, and for selecting the background fractal, levels and colours. On average, a final image can take as little as a few hours, but some can take several days to produce. It's important to know when to stop editing, or the final image will look over produced, like a bad HDR.



Multiple layers are essential to creating the final images and if you haven't looked into non-destructive processing, I recommend it if you want to create any new artwork. Non-destructive layers will help you adjust your work without having to reproduce the work over and over again.

TECHNIQUE

There are three major layer components to the process:

- the portrait,
- the fractal covering the portrait, and
- the background fractal.

The following steps explain the process I use:

First, select the portrait you would like to use, and then drag and drop onto that layer all the fractals you would like to try as the mixing layer. This will add all the fractals as smart objects and place

them on top of the portrait. Turn off all but one and select it. Reduce the opacity so you can see the portrait underneath. Rotate or position the fractal over the portrait until you're happy with the placement. It helps to keep the eyes in the image. Increase the opacity to 100% and Press Ctrl-A and then Ctrl-C to copy the fractal into the buffer. Select the portrait and make a copy of it (Ctrl-J). Create a mask and then press Alt and click on the mask. This should produce a blank white image. Press Ctrl-V to paste the fractal on to the mask. Turn off the fractal above and you should have the portrait as the fractal. You may want to create a black layer behind the portrait to view all the detail. Do this for all the selected fractals that you have, until you're happy with one.

Now I know I said you should use non-destructive process for all techniques, but this next step cannot be done in a non-destructive way. We



need to adjust the levels to produce a good output of the fractal/portrait on the mask. Adjust the level to give good contrast, without losing too much detail in the fractal or the portrait. Select the mask and press Ctrl-L, and adjust to get the best details. Add a Levels or Curves adjustment layer to the portrait and make sure you create a clipping mask with it.

This will adjust the portrait levels for the final



image. At this point I also add a Saturation clipped layer, as I may want to desaturate the colours of the skin.

Next we need to add backgrounds to the image, and again I select several fractals to find one that complements the portrait/fractal. I find that if the fractal/portrait is very graphic, then using a cloud fractal for the background is often best. This background can be blurred to decrease the detail if necessary. As we dragged the fractal onto the image it should have created the background as a smart object, so changing the blur will be non-destructive. Make sure you place the backgrounds after the portrait. Adding a level and saturation clipped adjustment layer to each background, I tend to adjust the colour of the background to give balance to the portrait. The levels are necessary to ensure you don't overpower the portrait, as a balanced portrait to background is essential. You want the viewer to see the detail, whilst trying to make out the portrait, without blinding them with colour.

Once you have all that in place, it's just a matter of selecting the right combination and adjusting the final output. If you do adjust, don't forget to save your work before going on to another portrait/fractal or background.

When I started using fractals the preferred method was to use blending modes. This worked to a degree, but only looked as if the fractal was painted on to the skin - although this is another useful option to try out. Finding the paste to mask was a complete accident, instead of copying a mask with Ctrl and clicking on the mask layer, I was holding the Alt key instead. This was a bit of

a surprise, but very quickly the artistic possibilities were running through my head. However, there are problems with this technique because the mask is final. Once you paste the image into the mask you can't move, rotate or scale it without changing the image. By changing the opacity, it is easier to place the fractal correctly without too much rework.

There is a lot of trial and error, as you will never get the same fractal twice. There are similarities between fractals, but each one is unique. The likelihood of generating the same fractal twice is very small. This is why it is important to save the flame file (the basic data for recreating the fractal), so you can reload and manipulate the fractal further. I have only just scratched the surface of creating fractals and have not used the extended parameters. For instance, changing the formula, adding images and many other options. There is still a much more I can do with this work and I can see it progressing further, for maybe another four or five years.

Note: The keystrokes described are correct for Windows users. Mac users should replace Ctrl- with Cmd-, and Alt- to Opt-.

Stephen Salmon, BA (Hons), ARPS is a photo artist based in Cambridge, Great Britain. He creates art as a way to express the way he sees beauty.

He is happy to answer any questions about his technique described in this article or his other work when he has the opportunity.

Contact Stephen at art@mindakart.co.uk and see more of his work at www.mindakart.co.uk.

Rex's gamut



REX WAYGOOD doesn't believe everything he sees on the internet. He sets out to find out whether Adobe RGB is the best colour space for his images.

I have always been interested in doing my own experiments to demonstrate the truth or myth of internet wisdom.

One of the perceived wisdoms is that one must always use the Adobe RGB (1998) colour space as it has more colours than sRGB, why would you want to throw away over 30% of your colours? I was not impressed by that logic as I wondered "What gamut do my images occupy?"

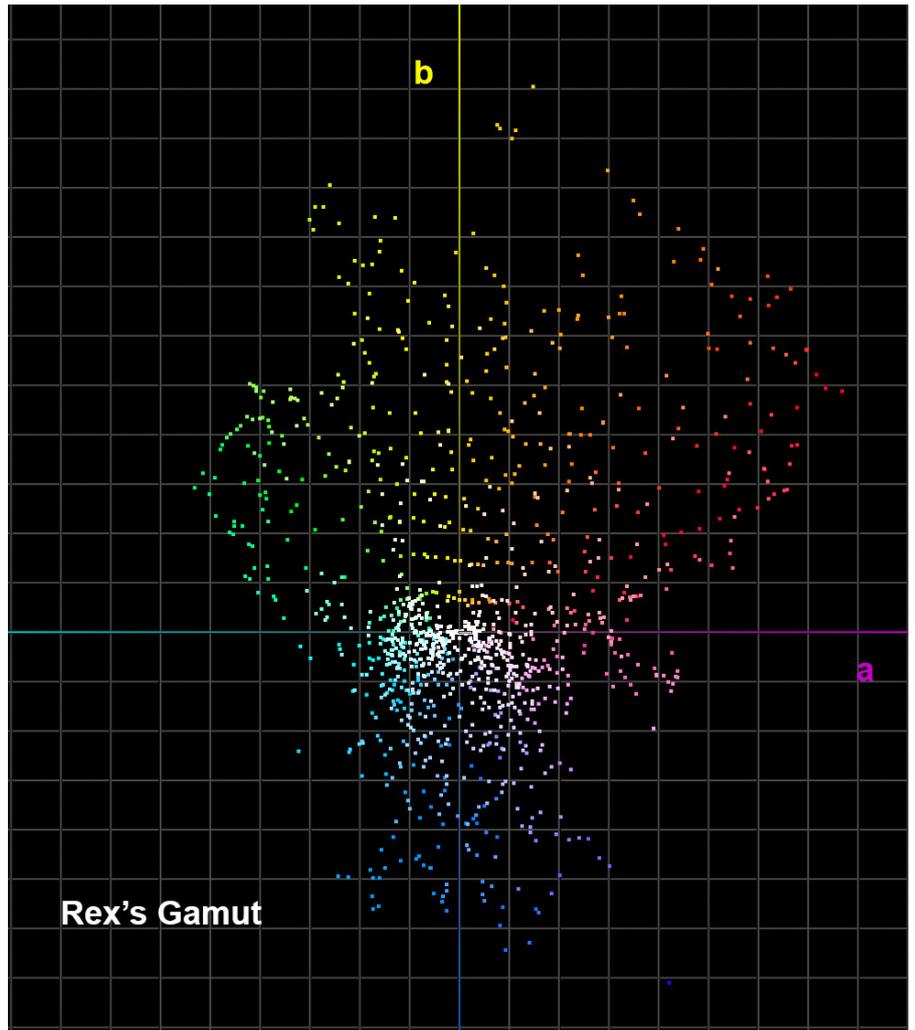
I therefore set out to determine the gamut that my images occupy. I was pointed at a piece of software called ColorThink Pro and an email to the developers made me think I could do the experiment with that software.

Briefly I did the following.

I took 40 of my images that I had used on the web, at my club, on various forums and which were typical of my type of colour work.

I reprocessed the images from RAW to obtain ProPhoto versions by using ACR and the Adobe Standard Camera Profile. I did this without adjusting any sliders.

These were then dropped into ColorThink and each image was uniformly sampled 10,000 times (100*100) giving a total of 400,000 data points from the 40 images.



I chose to use L^* , a^* , b^* co-ordinates as these are easy to use in vector arithmetic and have a relationship to the human visual system. L^* , a^* , b^* is a colour co-ordinate system which encompasses all possible colours.

400,000 data points was an excessive number of data points so I decided to filter them.

I sliced up L^* (lightness) into twenty levels each 5 wide as L^*

is scaled 0 to 100.

Each of those levels had corresponding a^* (-green to +red), and b^* (-blue to +yellow) values which could not easily be sorted. I therefore converted the a^* b^* values into θ (Angle) and vector lengths. Some might ask why I did not use polar co-ordinates directly but as you will see this was a process of discovery and as they say hindsight is very good! I split

each level up into 60 segments of 6° and then sorted the data by θ and vector lengths. It was then an easy task to find the maximum vector length (most saturated colour at any hue) in each segment of each layer. This should have been 20*60, 1200 values but I got 1208 as my logic failed with L*, 0, 0. (i.e. Neutrals)

37 of my original 40 images contributed to my gamut.

Having got the data in a form that was easily visualised in ColorThink it then became apparent that it was going to be difficult to show in a paper.

A question from Dr Tony Kaye got me looking at the volume of my gamut.

Adobe RGB volume 1,207,520; sRGB volume 832,478; Rex's Gamut volume 426,679.

However this does not say much as it was apparent that my gamut exceeds both Adobe RGB and sRGB in some directions, they are just very different shapes!

I compared Adobe RGB and sRGB with my data and discovered 63 data points are outside Adobe RGB and 121 are outside sRGB.

While comparisons of Adobe RGB and sRGB are of theoretical interest, it is far more meaningful to compare the gamut of my images with that of an output device. The output device with the largest gamut that I use is that of my Epson 3800 printer paper (PSPP) and so I set about comparing Rex's Gamut with Epson PSPP (Premium Semigloss Photo Paper). There are 397 Rex's Gamut data points outside the Epson PSPP. PSPP does not

reproduce L* 0-5 and 95-100 so removing those data points leaves 275 data points outside PSPP. NB for my analysis these data points are included.

Having got the images, the points that contribute to Rex's Gamut and those that are outside Epson PSPP were easy to determine.

I therefore ordered the images to see the contribution of each image to Rex's Gamut to decide which images to investigate further.

Title	Image Identifier	Gamut Contribution
Three Bits of Red	1	1
	318	1
	429	1
	471	1
	762	1
	920	1
	89	2
	873	2
	25	3
	483	3
	285	4
	296	4
	617	5
	442	6
	305	8
	424	9
	359	12
793	12	
310	14	
817	16	
993	18	
509	23	
765	29	
506	32	
426	37	
Zorb Ball	10	38
	216	38
	384	39
Stomp	659	41
	295	42
	691	42
	260	81
Zimmer Man	77	106
	708	109
Old Lady	470	120
Brother & Sister	829	132
Billiard Ball	528	175

A feature of ColorThink Pro is that it retains the x,y co-ordinates of the sampled points and I was careful to retain those

in the data even after all the filtering. It was therefore easy to overlay an identifier on the image to show where the Gamut Contribution Points were.

It was a similar exercise to reveal the gamut contribution points that were outside the Printer & Paper Gamut (PSPP) and show them graphically.

Note the grid on the images was associated with the method of revealing the gamut points.

The bright graph points in the images on the next pages are the co-ordinates of the colour pixels that contribute to Rex's Gamut (Left), or to those pixels that are in Rex's Gamut but outside the Epson Printer/Paper/Ink PSPP Gamut (Right).

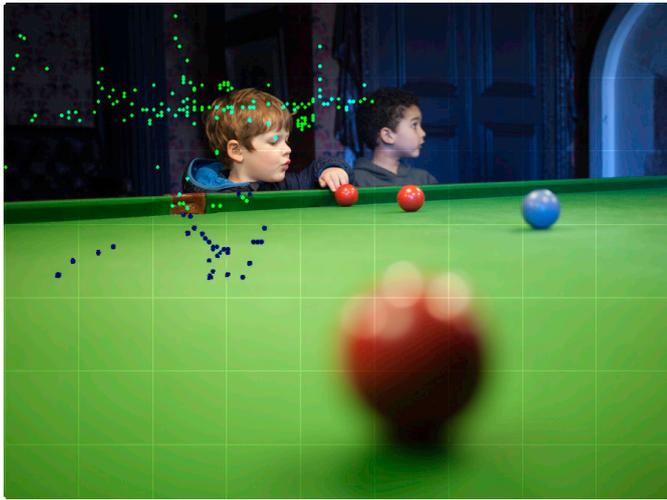
The images demonstrate that most of my gamut points are actually quite ordinary colours and are not points of intense colour. Also many of them are in the high or low L* region.

As my choice of paper has the widest gamut for my printer and inks it would seem that I am not missing any startling parts of any of my images or failing to reproduce the colours in an adequate way. I have compared my paper with that of other manufacturers and not found any significant difference.

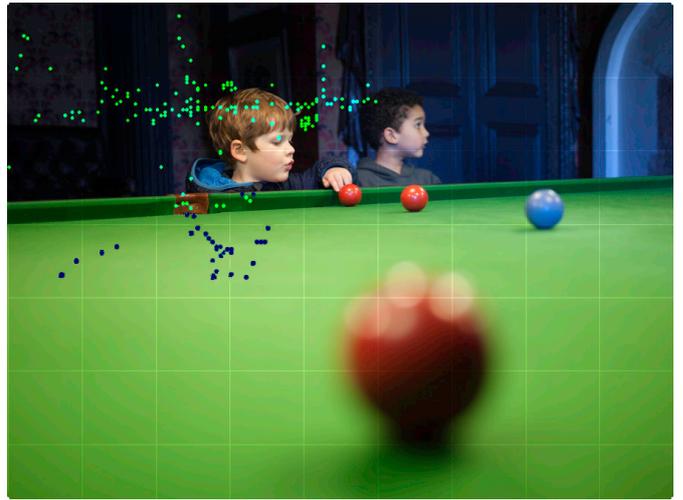
Therefore, to maximize the proportion of Rex's Gamut I can print, I should process my images in ProPhoto.

The gamut volumes of sRGB and Adobe RGB are greater than Rex's Gamut. However, due to their differing shape they include some colours outside the gamut of my printer, however sRGB and Adobe RGB

REX'S GAMUT



Gamut Contribution (175 Points)



PSPP (51 Points)



Gamut Contribution (132 Points)



PSPP (55 Points)



Gamut Contribution (120 Points)

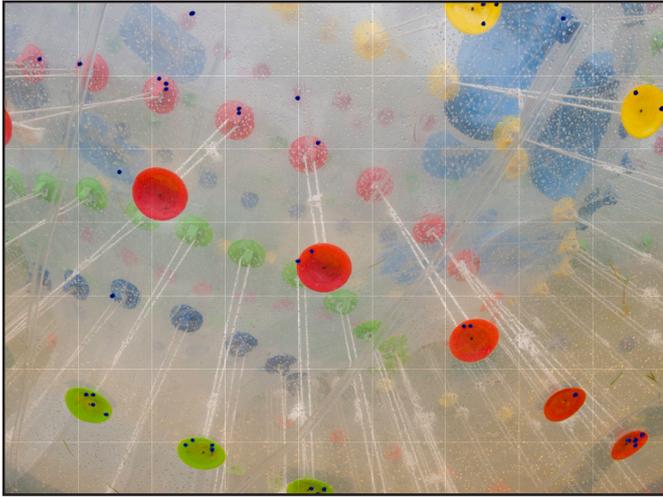


PSPP (27 Points)

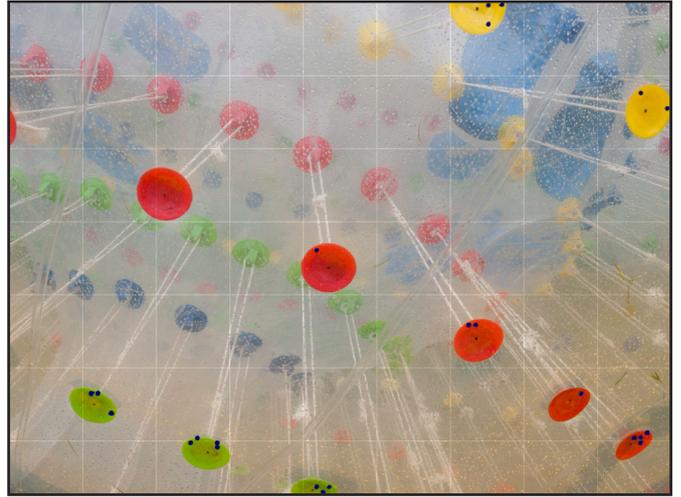
exclude some colours that are within Rex's Gamut and the printer's gamut. Thus to use sRGB or Adobe RGB would limit the range of colours within Rex's Gamut that are printable.

It is key that your workflow is properly managed and there is no danger in losing track of the colour space your images are in. When using ProPhoto the consequences of treating an image in ProPhoto space as if it

was in Adobe RGB or sRGB are very severe with some colours being 40% less saturated! However if you are using sRGB or Adobe RGB the impact of using the incorrect space (sRGB or Adobe RGB) is considerably



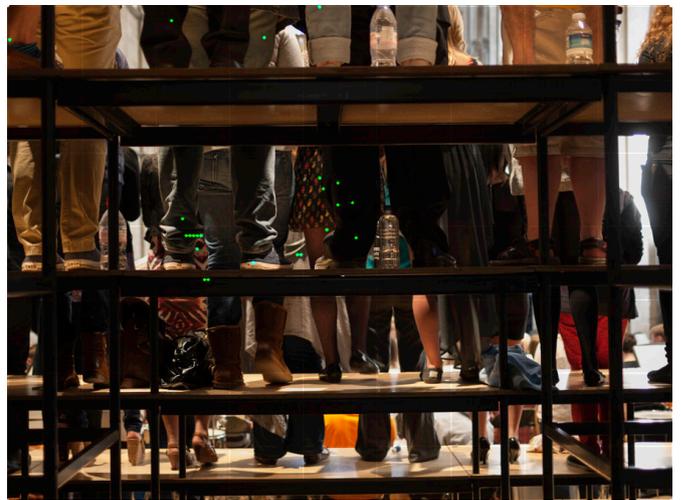
Gamut Contribution (38 Points)



PSPP (23 Points)



Gamut Contribution (120 Points)



PSPP (27 Points)



Gamut Contribution (106 Points)



PSPP (83 Points)



Gamut Contribution (1 Point), PSPP (0)

less, and single stimulus could go largely unnoticed.

Another alternative is to use Lightroom where the working space is a derivate of ProPhoto.

This experiment was an exercise in self-discovery and I was not expecting the result that

I achieved. I was expecting my gamut to remain mainly within sRGB. I cannot claim that Rex's Gamut is anything other than mine. The only thing that may be of use to others is the method of determining your own gamut. However it is not to

be entered into lightly, in fact I cannot recommend it!

The conclusion is that if you have a desire to use the maximum gamut of your wide gamut printer then your working space in Photoshop should be ProPhoto (16 bit).

At the start of the processing the settings in ACR were 'level'. Increasing Clarity, Vibrance, or Saturation (i.e. positive values) would tend to increase Rex's Gamut, thus further reinforcing the need to use ProPhoto.

For those who would like to learn more, go to youtu.be/WfiUT3OJjnl, and youtu.be/rswi0SMh41Q.

I would like to thank Dr. Tony Kaye FRPS ASIS for his support on this path of discovery.

Also thanks to Pat Herold of Chromix who helped my to understand ColorThink Pro.

Colour space and gamut

A colour space allows us to mathematically represent colour. Depending upon how the colour space is defined will influence the range of colours that can be mathematically represented. A working space is the colour space your software uses.

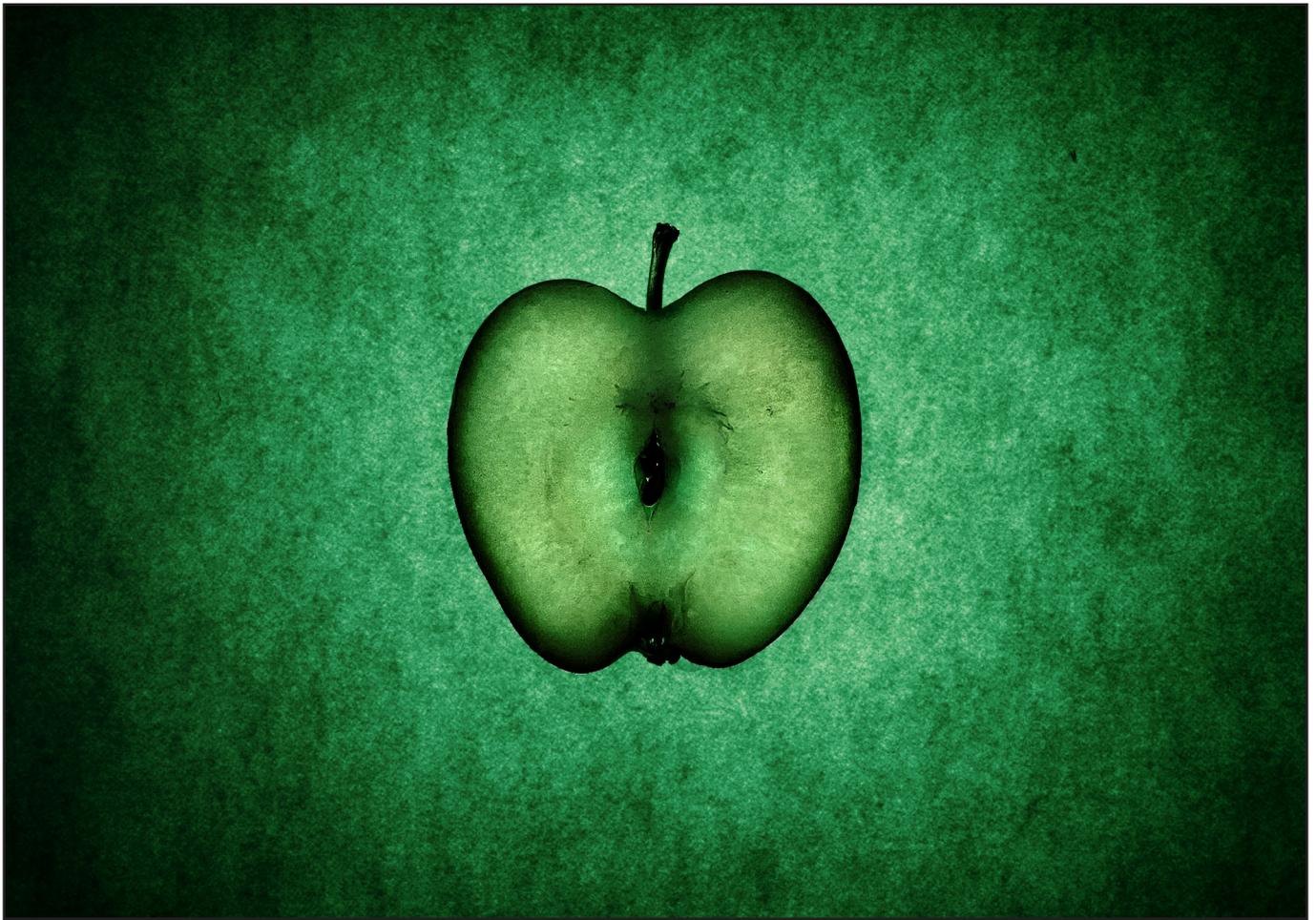
Colour gamut. The term gamut can be used to define the range of colours within your images and the range of colours that can be represented within a colour space. The range of colours within your images is a function of the hardware and software used, plus your scene content. The maximum possible gamut is defined by your choice of working space.

A final thought on Rex's Gamut

It should be recognised which factors led to Rex's Gamut.

- The subject matter and the lighting. What the camera was pointed at.
- The camera's sensor and the lens performance will affect the gamut. Rex's Gamut was created using an Olympus E3 and an Olympus E-M1 using a number of the Pro lenses.
- The method used to go from the RAW image to the rendered image. Adobe Camera Raw (ACR) was used with the Adobe Standard Camera Profile and all sliders left 'Flat'.
- Any processing done after RAW conversion. In the case of Rex's Gamut there was none.

The Adobe Camera Standard profile is lower in saturation than other profiles available within ACR. This, coupled with no clarity/vibrance/saturation increases or any subsequent additional post processing has resulted in Rex's Gamut being restricted compared to the gamut that would have been obtained if additional colour enhancement or a more saturated profile had been used.



Inside Jack's head!



DIG member **JACK HENRIQUES** shares some of his favourite images and talks us through the creation of some of his more unusual images.

I've gone through various different phases with my photography, from macro shots of insects to experimenting with a shots taken using a homemade laser trigger system.

One shot I particularly like (right) may look complex but is actually a single exposure, created using two separate light sources; the sun, and an off-camera flash. I pointed the camera into the sun and set a shutter speed of 1/40 second. I poured water over the flower from a watering can, and the slow shutter speed captured the movement of the water drops. At the end of the exposure I fired the flash, which froze some of the water drops and also froze the flower itself, hiding any motion blur captured from the first part of the exposure.

I've always enjoyed exploring abandoned buildings. Another image that I enjoyed making was taken in the North Wales Hospital, also known as the Denbigh Lunatic Asylum (see overleaf). It's a fascinating place to visit,

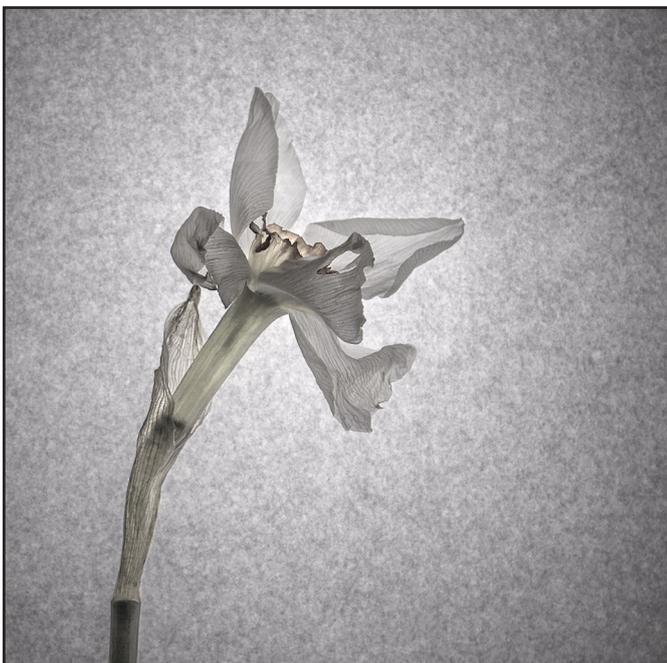


INSIDE JACK'S HEAD



North Wales Hospital

but great care is needed to avoid falling through floors. It's an enormous site - I've been there twice now and spent a total of about 8 hours exploring, and there are still many parts I haven't yet seen. This particular image is created from a tone mapped HDR file, blended with some of the original exposures. I then used various adjustment layers in Photoshop to create the final image.



Another flower image (lower left) was, again, a very simple idea. I took a flower, and laid it on a piece of standard A4 printer paper. I placed the paper on top of an LED floodlight I use for a lot of my work. I positioned the camera directly above the flower, looking down at it. Although the light did actually shine through some of the flower, the technique I used to process it gives it the appearance of being much more translucent than it actually was. I used the 'Black & White' adjustment layer in Photoshop to reduce the saturation as well as increasing the brightness of some of the colours.



I took the picture above at Dunham Massey, a National Trust property near where I live. Again, I used a tone mapped HDR image, but with more extreme settings than I used for North Wales Hospital, which gives a more surreal look. The sky, however, was excluded from the HDR processing. I nearly always take the sky from one of the single exposures in this type of image, as I very rarely am happy with the sky that results from the HDR/tone mapping process. After taking the image, I realised I wasn't happy with the composition - I had cut off the corner of the stream at the left-hand side. I used the Photoshop warp tool to bring the stream further into the image, and the clone stamp tool to fill in the gaps. I also used the clone stamp tool to remove a building in the background I wasn't happy with, and some distracting areas of the foreground.

Much as I enjoyed creating images such as these, recently my greatest satisfaction has come from some of my dark portraits. My wife is disgusted by them, and my mother worries that I've got a dark sinister side to my personality - I haven't at all (as far as I know) - I just enjoy creating images that spark a reaction in people. Some people have asked me how I create some of these images, so I'd like to explain a bit about my workflow.

I'll start with a relatively simple image (below), but

one that particularly interests me; I am intrigued by the reaction to it I get from people, given that it's not gruesome or gory - it's merely a rearrangement of facial features.



When I took the base shots I used for this image, I didn't actually know what I was going to do with them. I had some idea of playing around with facial features but didn't specifically know that I was going to replace the eyes with mouths. I took several shots of my head with different facial expressions, from different angles, but with the same lighting. Ensuring consistent lighting means that the different images can be blended together cohesively to form the composite image.

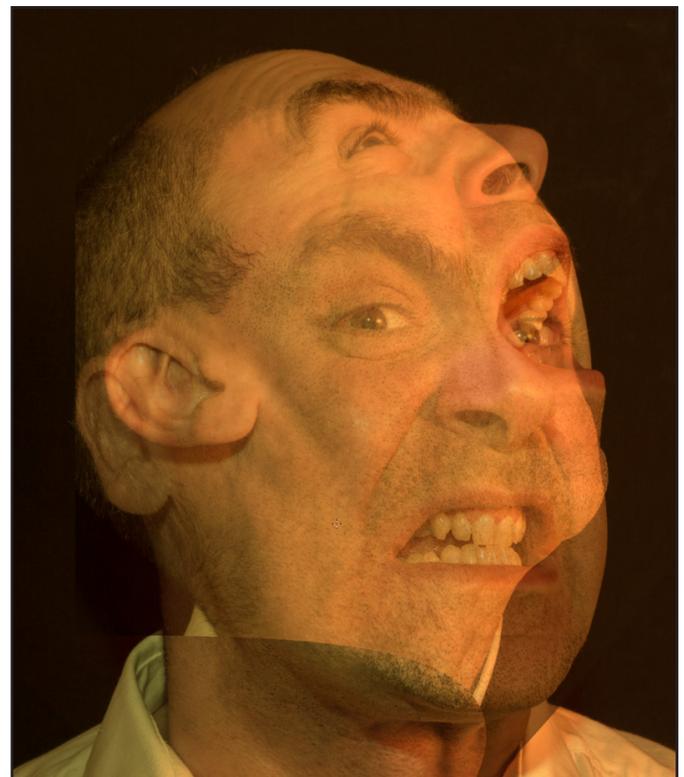
I opened one image (top right) as a smart object in Photoshop, then brought in another one (also as a smart object) with a different facial expression over the top. I set the opacity on the top one to around 50%, so I could see the first image underneath. I moved, stretched, warped and rotated the top image until I came across an arrangement that looked like it had some potential (lower right).

I then set the opacity of the top layer to 100% and added a layer mask. Using a soft brush, I removed the edges of the top layer to form a smooth blend between it and the layer below.

Once I'd replaced one eye with a mouth, I needed to get a shot of my mouth in the correct position to replace the second eye. Having left the lighting



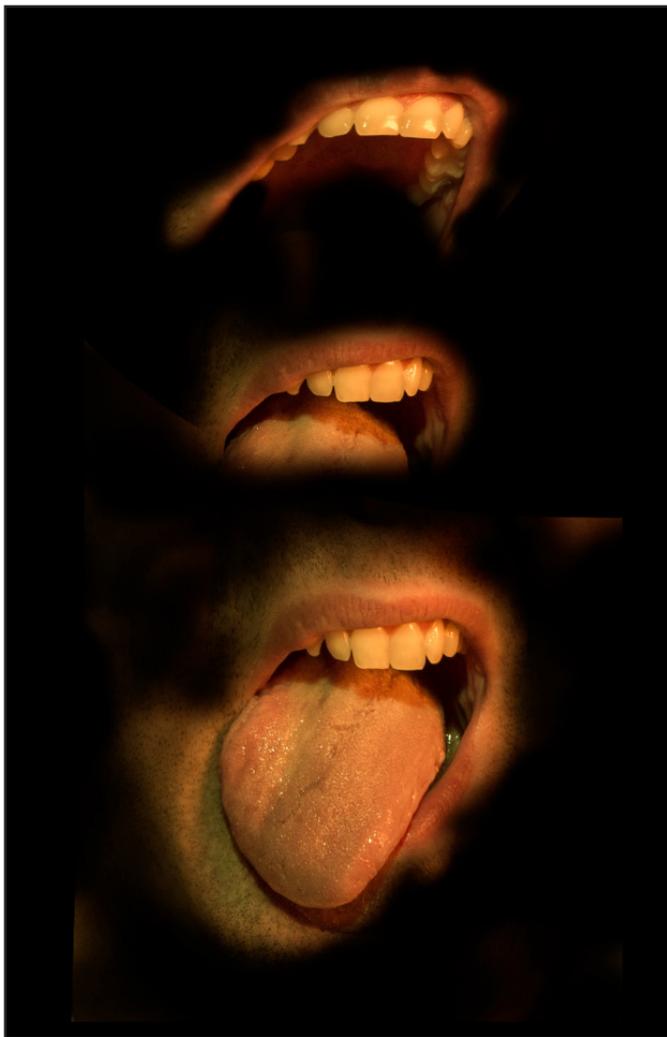
and camera settings unchanged since taking the initial images, I was able to take some more images under the same conditions. I took several images of my mouth in different positions and at different angles, and blended them to form the mouth to replace the second eye. I brought these images into the Photoshop file also as a smart objects, and repeated the same method of manipulating the object, then blending it with the layers below using a layer mask. The second mouth is composed of the three parts of mouths, shown on the next page.



Having replaced both of my eyes with my mouth, I then overlayed a closed mouth over my open mouth on the base image, and warped and blended it to fit.

Once I was happy with the compositing and manipulative work, I turned to the overall look

INSIDE JACK'S HEAD



of the image. I used various adjustment layers to change the overall tone, as well as carrying out some levels adjustment and sharpening.

Another slightly unusual portrait that I enjoyed constructing (top right), required a few props. My local butcher was kind enough to give me a bit of pig skin, and I ordered a plastic skull from the internet. I cut out a piece of the pig skin, put it on a fork, and took the base image (lower right). Next, I positioned the rest of the skin on top of the skull, and took a shot of it at the same angle as the base image, ready for merging. To create the eye socket, I ripped some pieces of meat off the lamb chop I was having for dinner and stuck them onto the plastic skull. I merged the base image, the hole in the pig skin and the eye socket together. I then took another shot of my face with my eye looking upwards, and placed it over the piece of pig skin on the fork. I used a mask to retain only the part of the layer that overlapped the piece of pig skin.

Next I needed to create the effect of blood coming from the cut edges of meat and running down my face. For this, I used an image I took of an old stained wall in an abandoned farmhouse. I've used



this image to create blood effects in many of my creations. It is by far my most-used image. When I took it, I had no idea it would be so useful. To create the blood effect, I place it as a layer over the image and change the blend mode so only the dark areas remain solid, and the lighter areas show the image below. I then move it around until





some part of it falls in a position that looks good. I use a mask to remove all of the layer other than the specific part I want to use. I then repeat this process many times, with different parts of the blood layer in different positions over the base image; in this

case, I used about 35 different copies of the blood layer. Once I was happy with all the blood effects, I used various adjustment layers and filters to alter the tone of the image as a whole. You can see the evolution of the image on this page.

At the moment my plan is to continue with the dark portraits, but also to explore other areas of photography. With a full time job and two young children, finding enough time is always difficult, but photography is something that I hope I will always continue feel passionate about and be excited by.

See more of Jack's work at jackhenriques.co.uk.





Three Wise Men

The Joy of Seeing: Photography My Way



Those at the DIG AGM had the pleasure of seeing the latest presentation from VIVECA KOH FRPS. For those who could not make it, here is a glimpse at what you missed.

“I think I’ve said this before many times - that photography allows you to learn to look and see. You begin to see things you had never paid any attention to. And as you photograph, one of the benefits is that the world becomes a much richer, juicier, visual place. Sometimes it is almost unbearable - it is too interesting.

And it isn’t always just the photos you take that matters. It is looking at the world and seeing things that you never photograph that could be photographs if you had the energy to keep taking pictures every second of your life.”

Saul Leiter

When I read this quote by Saul Leiter it instantly resonated with me, as his words could have been mine. I absolutely love taking photographs - it is the humble details, the mundane and ordinary, the small things and the unimportant that for me make the most fascinating pictures.

I was invited by Janet Haines to speak at the DIG AGM in March 2017, and she asked for a new lecture, in case there were people there who had already heard my previous talks. In this fourth lecture of mine, I return to a subject much discussed in my first lecture and eternally close to my heart - Urban Exploration. A few years ago I became fascinated with photographing derelict buildings and the items within them, and have a considerable



Chip Paper



Riverside Refreshments



Four Beach Huts



Girls Will Be Girls

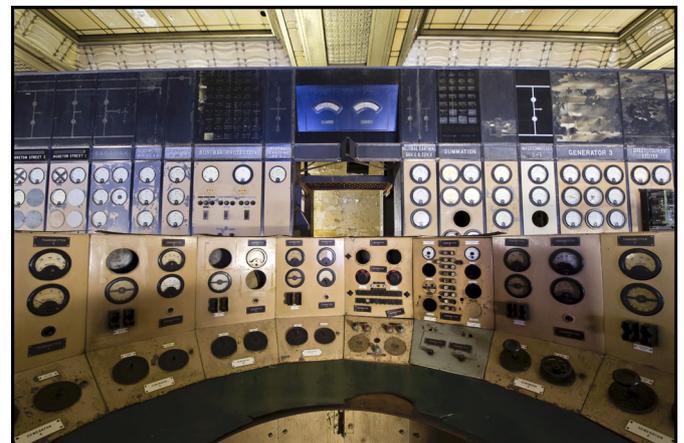
number of images from some of these locations which have never been seen before – until now.

Often one is photographing in buildings where the windows are boarded up, so light can be very limited, and I have a series of images which I have categorised 'In the Shadows'. These photos show extremes of contrast and often the shadow is completely black, containing no detail, but for me this only adds to the mystery and atmosphere of the UrbEx location. Items seem to emerge from the blackness in a way that I find very pleasing.

with one's subject matter, by stilling the mind and placing attention on one's awareness and sense of sight. The resultant images have a certain purity about them which greatly appeals to my visual sense of pattern, shape and colour.



The Choice



Control Panel

In my second lecture I introduced my burgeoning love of photographs taken with an iPhone, or iPhoneography as it is now popularly known. I have now completely absorbed this particular method of taking photographs into my repertoire, so usually show a number of new images taken with my phone camera.

Along the way I have discovered the concept of Miksang, meaning 'good eye' in Tibetan, and found that this form of contemplative photography was something I had been practising unconsciously without even realising that it was 'a thing'. It is all about making a deep connection

I am fond of creating series of images, photographs that have a linking theme, and my latest set is called 'Cafe Life'. I spend quite a lot of time in various cafes drinking coffee, reading books and people watching, so it seemed a natural progression to start photographing my observations. I don't have a huge number of images yet, it is very much a work in progress, but I show a few of them in this new talk.

Finally I finish with a section called 'How I Did It', which shows a visual breakdown of how I created some of my multi-layered textured images in Photoshop. This ties in with the day-long workshop that I now run which details my specific techniques, for people who have seen my lectures and are keen to know how I create my work. I've tried in the past to explain what I do but find it is always easier to demonstrate with pictures – after all, most photographers are a pretty visual lot!



Border crossing



ANDRÉ BERGMANS is a member of the BeNeLux Chapter of the RPS and of the DIG. He explains what the RPS offers to overseas members.

Overseas members can enjoy most benefits that the RPS has to offer as the Chapter has regional meetings and events. It just involves a bit of travelling for some of us.

The Benelux chapter has at least ten different nationalities as far as I could count which brings something extra to the group. This is apart from the fact that many members in the chapter have such a rich experience in photography that I can only learn from them.

The RPS Journal, the DIG



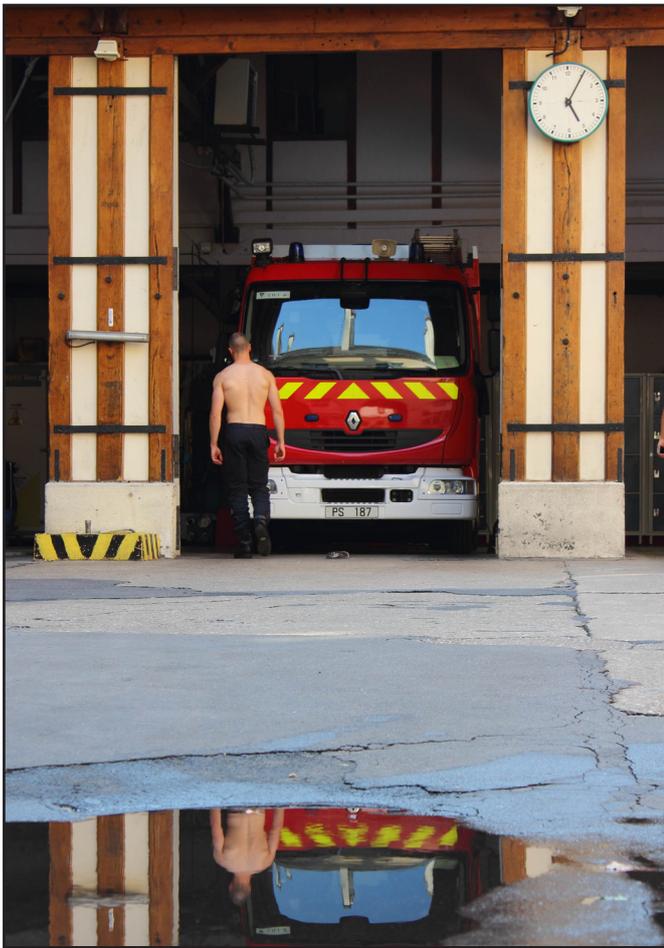
newsletter and the Benelux newsletter are sources of inspirations and new ideas. It is also interesting how others went through the process for a distinction and experience the same as I do. I am working on an LRPS distinction panel but without the support of the Benelux Chapter it might become a lonely journey. The journey as such is worth the effort. Putting your photos in a panel makes you look at your work in a different and more critical way. All of a sudden the images have to 'fit in'. Honestly speaking the RPS in general is far more critical towards the technical aspects that I experienced in the Dutch Fotobond. This is also what I experience when posting images on the panel group of the DIG special interest group. Some of my images were seriously criticised on technical aspects I have never even heard of.... On the other hand, I sometimes ask myself when looking at images: 'What is the message; what do you try to tell me and why did you make this image in the first place?' The latter is a result of years of brainwashing in Dutch photography. A top-photo should have it all I think.

So far I have not developed a special style or even a special field of interest, but it gradually reveals that I prefer working on a fixed topic for a longer period and working towards a series of photos.



There is a preference for photography that is not straightforward but creates a slightly new world by selecting, adding and deleting, combining and altering. This is where the RPS Benelux Chapter photography project 'Rockin' Rotterdam' project nicely kicks in. The aim is to take one creative photo in every street in Rotterdam. My contribution was to make a setup of the database





to do the administration. Besides that, I claimed a postcode which I will explore for the project. In the end it is a nice way to show the work that we have made either in an exhibition or a book.

For me photography is also about meeting people and discovering nearby and faraway places and dig into topics unknown so far. The RPS Benelux Chapter is an excellent group to achieve that goal.

André Bergmans was an amateur analogue photographer in the early seventies and only relatively recently returned to his hobby again. For the past six years he has been a member of the photo club in Heiloo (North-Holland) and the Dutch association of photo clubs, Fotobond. He is an ICT professional for Canon Europe and founder of the Canon Photo Club in Amstelveen, where colleagues meet as photographers. He recently joined the RPS and the Digital Imaging Group to broaden his knowledge and to meet fellow photographers.

This article first appeared in the RPS BeNeLux Chapter eJournal.



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WOMAD Festival Flags

All the fun of the festival

HELEN JONES LRPS and STEPHEN JONES LRPS are regular music festival-goers. But in addition to the music, they offer plenty of photographic opportunities.

We enjoy festivals and they are wonderful for photography - not only the stage acts, but the festival goers, interactive workshops and traders set against a backdrop of vibrant colours ... often, but not always, in fine summer weather. Our favourite large festival is WOMAD (the World of Music, Arts and Dance). We go there primarily for the music, and travel light with small cameras. We are part of the media team for the Purbeck Valley Folk Festival and this is our favourite small festival.

We find that the challenge of photographing music, and capturing the essence of the festival through our images, adds to the fun for us. However nowadays everyone has a camera of some sort - to stand out, you need to look beyond the obvious and develop your own style.

EQUIPMENT

The most useful lenses for our full frame Canon 5D Mk III bodies are the 70-200mm (f/2.8 or f/4) and the 24-105mm f/4. We get interesting results with wide angle (17-40mm) and 50mm prime lenses too, and have seen fascinating images obtained from a fisheye lens. We shoot handheld and do not use flash, working with available light and often including stage lighting in our photographs to add drama. All our photographs are captured as RAW files. We also obtain great images with compact and micro four-thirds cameras – all our WOMAD photos are taken with a Canon G16 or Olympus OM-D E-M5, both of which are easy to carry and perform reasonably well in low light. They are inconspicuous and

ALL THE FUN OF THE FESTIVAL

ideal for candid shots. The important issue is not the camera and lenses you use, but your understanding of how to use them to develop your style.

We think carefully about weight and bulk - festival photography involves a lot of walking and the festival sites can be very crowded. We usually carry a single camera body with just one spare lens in a small, weatherproof bag. In wet weather we rely on weather-sealed equipment only, which does limit the range of photographs we can take.

SETTING THE SCENE

Festivals are colourfully decorated and the flags, signs and lights are fantastic subjects.



Bunting in the Barn, Purbeck

We often photograph wide-angle and emphasise the carnival atmosphere. We make the weather our friend - there is no such thing as bad light. Festival organisers love sunny photos but we also look for the shadows and golden light of a summer evening.



Early Evening Shadows, WOMAD

Back-lit photos or silhouettes can be atmospheric. We make the most of dull, cloudy days when the colours sing out but choose our angles carefully to eliminate flat skies. Night photography

is spectacular, especially if there is a funfair, fireworks or fire-eaters. Mud and rain do not deter festival-goers – the umbrellas go up, the wellies go on, adding to the sense of fun.



Making the Most of Mud, WOMAD

Detail shots can capture the essence of a festival weekend – it's the little things that add character – vibrant clothes and jewellery, decorations on stalls, food and instruments. We get in close and frame tightly to isolate our subject. We have fun experimenting with depth of field to get shots with real visual impact.



Juggling Balls, Purbeck

PEOPLE

Festival-goers make excellent subjects and they love being photographed. Look out for themes, fancy dress days, and at Purbeck, a beard competition. Few of our photographs are formally posed; instead we talk to people first and photograph them later when they are relaxed and natural. We work a double act - one will chat and the other take pictures and we find this way people are less conscious of the camera. We look out for the candid grab-shot - people eating, dancing and relaxing are good subjects. We vary

our eye level to add variety. We find an elevated or low position can be effective, and when children are the subject you need to get down to their level. We often avoid too shallow a depth of field in order to include festival details in the background and set the scene.



Excitement, Fancy Dress, Purbeck

Head and shoulders or group shots can work well, and organisers want these for their own publicity purposes, but we look beyond formal posed portraits, instead capturing natural expressions or spontaneous exuberance. There is power too in a photograph that concentrates on a detail and lets the viewer imagine the rest of the scene. Close-ups of costumes, footwear, beards, tattoos and face paint are compelling festival images and capture the carefree spirit. Be brave and zoom right in, crop tight afterwards, or experiment with a really wide angle.

Audience shots are important. We stand near the front of the stage and look back to get the waving and clapping. We single out a face in the crowd for maximum impact - the rapt expression of someone engrossed in the music.



Cheering Crowd, Purbeck

WORKSHOPS

We try to attend workshops and dance festivals because they give us the opportunity to get close to the action. We seek out events with Ceilidhs and Morris dancing where we crouch down low for swirling skirts and kicking feet.



Dancing Feet, Folk on the Quay, Poole

We vary our shutter speeds for different impressions of movement and focus on the details - ribbons, bells and hats, choosing our apertures for creative depth of field. At Purbeck we love the circus workshop and capture the whirl of the diablo, the whiz of feet on a unicycle, the roll of a hoop and the reaction of the audience.

STAGE PERFORMANCES

Music is central to festivals and most photographers aim to come away with good performance shots. We normally stand in the audience and like to get into position early because it can be difficult to move through a crowd once the performance has started.



The Hot Seats, Purbeck

We usually shoot from the wings and do some preparatory work. Going to a sound check helps us plan our shots: which individuals to photograph, the best shooting angles to avoid stage furniture and microphone, or to capture

ALL THE FUN OF THE FESTIVAL

hands playing instruments. There is no control over lighting and flash is usually not allowed – so we work with the stage lighting and use it to add drama to our shots.

A photo pass will allow you in the photographers' 'pit' in front of the stage, where you will be able to move around freely. We like to get in close and use a wide-angle lens here to capture the action and lighting with dramatic effect.

At smaller festivals we try to chat to the band beforehand to find out the best moments to photograph. With all performance photography, it does help to know your subject as you have to be quick to capture key moments and expressions. We are alert to interaction between band members and the audience. If lighting really is a problem, we forget heads and look for hands plucking strings, fingers on flutes, feet on pedals, instruments on stages.



Ninebarrow Hands Detail, Purbeck

We go to the back of the stage and use the audience as our background or take long distance shots, using the audience as the foreground and including ceiling decorations or stage lighting effects. The band does not need to be in focus.

Finding the correct exposure can be tricky for performers under stage lighting. We find that -1 EV usually works in aperture priority mode, but it is worth experimenting with different values. Manual exposure gives good results if the stage lighting is not too variable. We work with apertures between about f/4 and f/7.1 depending on subject and lighting levels, and then set the

ISO to achieve a shutter speed faster than 1/250 sec. This may mean using the upper ISO ranges of your camera, so it is important to be familiar with both your camera and your post-processing software so you know how far you can go.



Threepenny Bit Ceilidh, from Back of Stage, Purbeck

WORKFLOW

We can easily take 4000 photographs each over the course of a weekend festival and need a fast turnaround. We therefore use Lightroom as our primary tool for selecting and processing our festival photographs - making final adjustments to exposure, then adding clarity and vibrance to produce bright and vibrant (but not over-saturated) photographs. We take additional care with noise processing for high-ISO low-light performance photographs. Photographs taken under stage lighting can sometimes have an unacceptable colour cast and we find that these are best processed as monochrome.

In all cases, we look for immediate visual impact, spontaneity or atmosphere rather than technical perfection and try to capture as much as possible in-camera to minimize work afterwards. We always share - giving out cards, posting online, and sending our photos to the festival organiser.

CONCLUSION

Festivals are great fun and give the photographer the opportunity to take a wide range of photographs - but do look beyond the obvious and create your own vision. Some advance preparation, familiarity with your camera settings and an eye for the unusual will help you develop your photographic style and bring home some fantastic images.



BROTHERHOOD

JAN RUSSELL LRPS

My journey for this image started at Whitby Goth Festival in April 2015. As always, I looked for people who appear full of character and who have good eye contact and rapport with the photographer and captured the image of the monk. On the journey back home, I took a detour to Fountains Abbey with the intention of taking photographs of the cloisters, but at no time, whilst there, did the potential of combining one of these images with that of the monk occur to me. I always try to keep an open mind at the 'taking' stage and do not plan my final image until I am sifting through my photographs, back home.

At home, I could see that the monk in his habit looked promising, so I started thinking creatively about what I could do with it. First, I proceeded to edit the monk in Photoshop in a selective manner. I then left the worked-on image for a few days, checking to see if everything looked good, before going on to look for a background. I like to have a narrative to suit my image.

It was at this stage that images of the cloisters of Fountains Abbey came into play, as I tried to find a background that related to my story line. I eventually chose a cloister shot with a cross at the far end, thinking this would add impact and support my story. I thought the glowing light from the sun outside, penetrating through the window, was also beneficial to the storyline.

So, I de-saturated the image overall, then brought colour saturation back selectively, boosting it most around the window and the cross. After that, I added a small amount of soft focus to add separation from the monk, and only then started to put the composite image together.

Firstly I added the monk over the background to see if it suited the story line. I then adjusted the background, sizing it to fit. I wanted my eye to be led to the window and the cross as this was such an important part of my narrative. Having done all this, as before, I then left the image for a few days, going back several times to see if anything needed altering, until I was happy with its final composition.

This process took 3 weeks to accomplish, but I should add that I tend not to spend more than 2 hours a night on the computer. I usually think about what more needs to be done on an image during the day, only sitting down at the computer in the evening to make the alterations I've thought about. I continue doing this until I am satisfied with the image and it is finished to the best of my ability. Then, there is just one last thing to do - choose a title. The title for this image - Brotherhood - seemed to be apt.



PARLIAMENT ERUPTED.....

ROB KERSHAW ARPS



Having just ordered dinner it was not the best time to notice an interesting twilight sky! Promising my wife that I would be back quickly, I rushed a few hundred yards along the South Bank to see if I could get a good shot of the Houses of Parliament in the short time I had.

Image 1 was the first shot I took and it was not very sharp, hardly surprising at one tenth of a second, even with shake reduction on. In addition, the viewpoint was not really that good with too many distractions in the foreground.

With limited time available I decided on a different approach and chose to try a camera movement effect. I took a few more images varying the amount or speed of vertical movement, all hand held. The last shot was taken 2 minutes after the first and I headed back to the restaurant, arriving just before the first course



Image 2

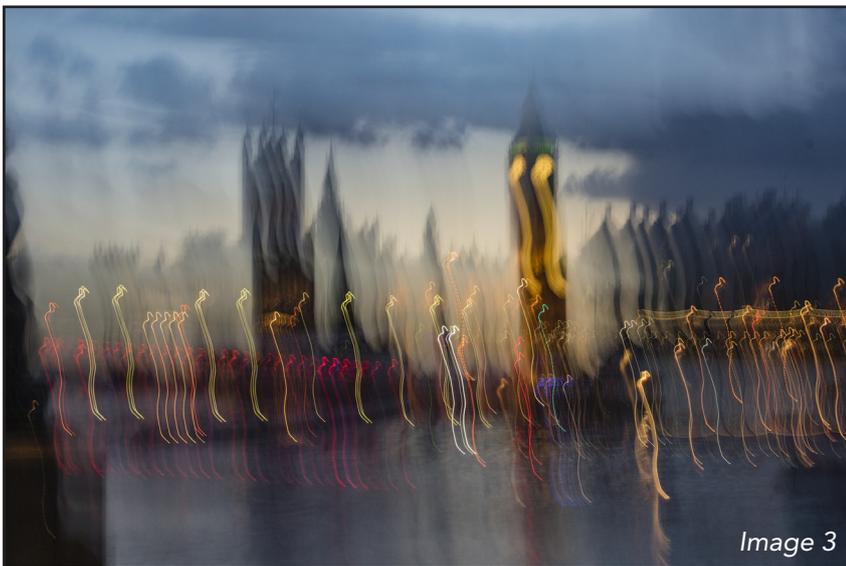


Image 3

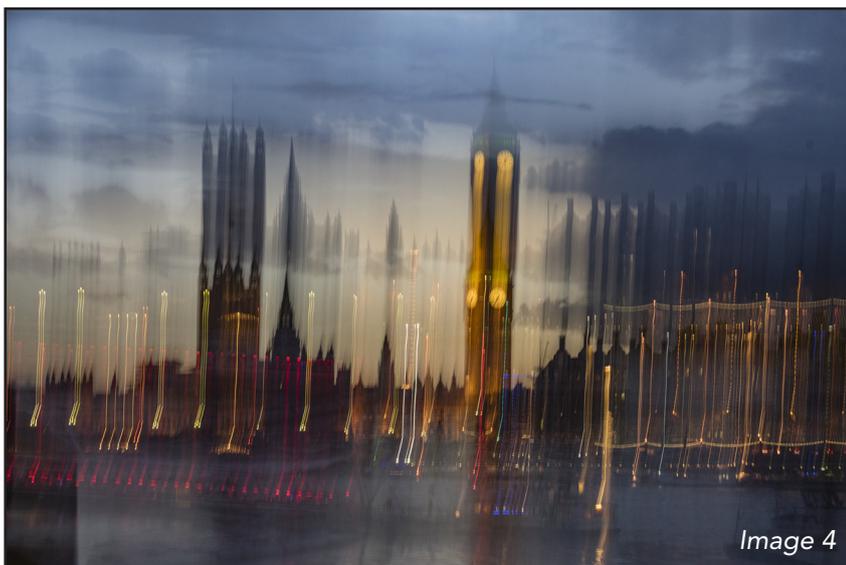


Image 4

was served, though my beer was getting warm.

Once back home I reviewed the shots in Bridge. Image 2 looked more like terrible camera shake than an intentional shot whilst Image 3, although potentially interesting, was too indistinct. Image 4 was more what I had in mind but I felt the original image was better because the movement was mostly vertical.

So, Images 1 and 2 are presented as 'undeveloped' RAW images whilst the others have been 'developed' to the same setting which was the first process in my digital manipulation and one that can make a huge difference to an image.

Having chosen my original shot, it was clear that work was required in Photoshop to create a more focussed image. The left side was heavily cropped and areas at the top and bottom were also removed. In addition, the indistinct form of a boat (bottom right) was cloned out and some cloning was also needed on the left side. The cropped image was then re-sized.

The key changes were now completed in line with my vision but I felt the shot needed more drama and the corners were too light, which reduced the impact of the central image. So, the file was then opened in an OnOne plug-in and a vignette created. The final touch was to add a border from the same plug-in. In retrospect, there could perhaps have been a more cropped off the top and bottom and borders are often a matter of personal taste and so don't appeal to everyone; however, it is as it is.

Taken in September last year thoughts of Brexit came to mind.

I guess the lessons of the story are that if your intended shot is not working try something else, shoot in RAW mode and that within a single image there is always the possibility to craft a better presentation. Last, but not least, don't keep your partner waiting for dinner!

<http://www.robckershawphotography.com/>



'SLEEP' AFTER SALVADOR DALI

BARRIE MACJANETTE

I have always been fascinated by the work of creative artists, particularly the Surrealists. Photography has been a passion for many years and I now find I'm increasingly using images as source material for building compositions from the imagination. Gaining acceptance of such work as art remains difficult, and it's always dispiriting to hear comments such as "Oh - it's just Photoshop".

The challenge to create this image came from my camera club when a theme was set to make an image inspired by a surrealist painter. Looking through my art books for inspiration, I thought I would have a go at replicating Dalí's strange 'Sleep'. Where many of his images are complex and cluttered with elements, this is relatively simple, and - dare I say it - perhaps capable of some enhancement.

The starting point was the huge propped up head. This is a much distorted image of me lying face down over a table, to get the droopy face look. This was then cut out, hair cloned out, 'body' formed by cloning. Don't ask why there is an arm where the ear should be - it just seemed a fun thing to do.

The background and sky were entirely digital. Starting with a plain tone, the ground was graded from warm to cool and from light to dark to create a sense of space. Texture was added which was then faded out with distance. The 'props' were a walking stick with the handle inverted. Dalí often depicted the cliffs above Port Lligat in his images, so I used an image of cliffs on the west coast of Arran, and Bamburgh Castle appears on the distant horizon. I thought Dalí had missed an opportunity to prop up his sky with the very tall prop at the back, so I took a picture of a blue sheet draped over a stick and blended it for colour and texture with the sky. The moon, also known as the 'measurer', is a clock.

To make the whole composition work, it is important to have visual consistency. Lighting, shadows, perspective, colour gradation, all have to be consistent. A discord in these elements quickly undermines the suspension of disbelief so important in enjoying works of fantasy.

You would be justified in wondering what on earth it's all supposed to be about! The strangeness is fascinating, and while there may be no meaning in the image as such, the fact it holds my attention and makes me wonder, entirely justifies it. To be sure, Dalí was an outrageous egotist, obsessed with money and recognition, but in many of his pictures I rather think he was just having fun painting the absurd.

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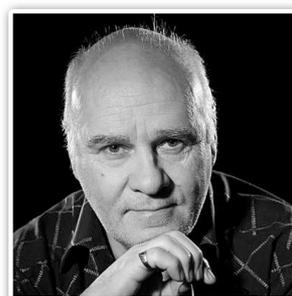


by Eric Beattie, LRPS



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