



THE **RPS**
ROYAL
PHOTOGRAPHIC
SOCIETY

CONTEMPORARY
GROUP

Contemporary North Members' Showcase

February 2023

Issue 3

Contemporary North

(Part of the RPS Contemporary Group)

Members' Showcase

provides a platform for contributors to our monthly meetings to display the work they have shared.

Contributors have curated their own images and provided the accompanying text making this a collaborative group venture.

18th February 2023 — Meeting held via Zoom

Chaired by Patricia Ruddle

Contributors:

- 1) Avijit Datta (from January meeting)
- 2) Barbara Pollard
- 3) Carol Olerud
- 4) Douglas May
- 5) Mike Rooke



12,000 years of Patriarchy in the Middle East

Turkey is a juxtaposition of Asia and Europe, antiquity and modernity, Islam, and secularism.

Some feel that the secularism and libertarian values established by Kemal Ataturk (Ataturk's daughter, Sabiha Gokçen was the first female combat pilot in the world; one of Istanbul's airports is named after her) is being eroded. Recent events in neighbouring countries have brought this into sharp international focus. In Iran the enforcement of the hijab led to the death of Mahsa Amini and international protests. Similarly in Afghanistan, girls' education is prohibited. My photographs show tension between nascent feminism and dominant patriarchy in middle eastern society over 12 000 years.

This work chimes with the work of two female photographers. Firstly Miriam Boulos, the Lebanese documentary photographer and Magnum Nominee who has bravely documented the sexual fantasies of middle eastern women i.e. real life behind the hijab and burqa@myriamboulos.

<https://www.magnumphotos.com/photographer/myriam-boulos/>

Secondly, Hannah Starkey HonFRPS has examined the patriarchy in Britain. Her work was mentioned in the RPS Journal in the context of Association of Photographers Breakfast Club talks during the early days of the pandemic.

Hannah Starkey will speak at the Hepworth Gallery on Saturday 4th March to walk the audience through her work 'In Real Life' with curator Dr Abi Shapiro. She will speak about her practice and processes and her newly commissioned Wakefield works.

<https://hepworthwakefield.org/whats-on/hannah-starkey-in-conversation/>











Barbara Pollard

I've been taking photographs for over 60 years, starting with a little Kodak Brownie camera as a child. For most of that time, those photos always seemed to have something missing. They never showed what I wanted to say.

Around ten years ago I started to experiment with different techniques, using Intentional Camera Movement (ICM), multiple exposures and editing in photoshop. For the first time I began to see pictures that reflected what I felt at the time I took the shots, portraying a sense of moment and emotion that went beyond what was visible in the frame.

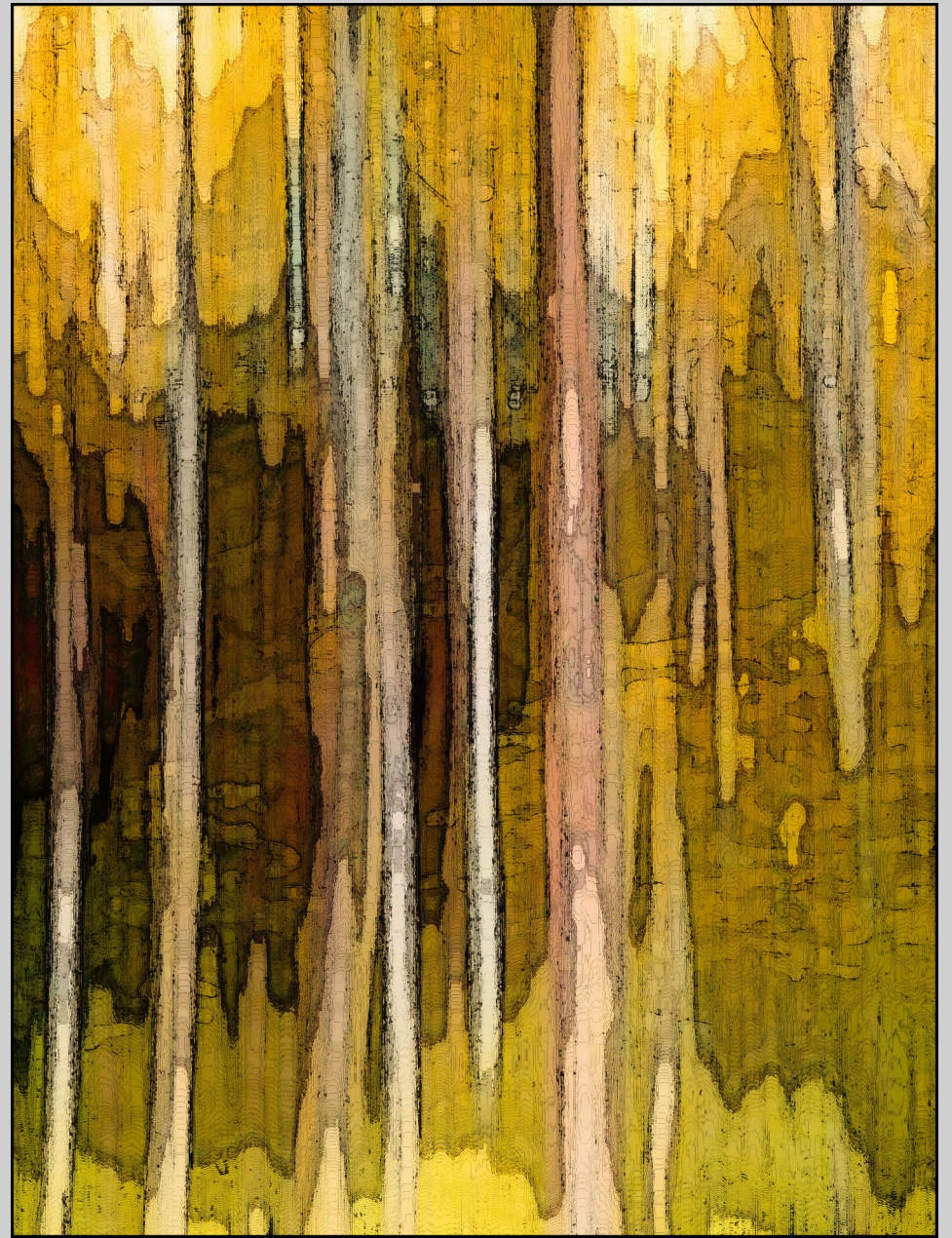
When I'm working on a photograph, I don't start out with a particular outcome in mind. The image seems to evolve as we go along until the interplay of shape, colour and texture just feels 'right'. Because of this, there is no single identifiable style to my pictures – something that worried me for a while, but each image is a unique expression of what I saw and felt in that one particular moment, so I'm now reconciled to the variation.





When I've shown my photographs to people, they've often asked, 'What's your web address?' and I've had to confess that I didn't have a website. My excuse has been that I've been too busy with other things, but I realised that having a website would not only give me a space to display my work, but also act as a motivator for me to make more time for photography. In December 2022, I set about creating my own website, using Wix website builder. It has taken around two months to complete, some of that time learning how to use Wix and quite a lot of time deciding on the choice of images to display. I've always found it difficult to exclude pictures I'm fond of so, in the end, I recruited family and friends to act as curators. The website is finally live www.barbarapollard.uk (and it's still a work in progress). Now I just have to spread the word and hope people enjoy looking at my work.













Presentation By Carol Olerud FRPS

“At Night”



**BENELUX
CHAPTER**

The RPS Benelux Chapter held a Theme – Photographing in Times of Corona

I'm the organiser of this Chapter and we thought a theme like this may help us have something to focus on during Covid-19 when lock-downs and the like predominated our lives.

I decided to go out at 10 to 10pm just before Curfew to see what I could photograph. I had a buddy with me to 'protect' me in case awkward questions were asked.

https://issuu.com/royalphotographicsociety/docs/rps-benelux_chapter_ejournal_-_volum_3a28de51725b02/s/13894376 link to covid-19 article with the results of our challenge

Theme – *Photographing in Times of Corona 2021*

Carol Olerud ARPS – Statement of Intent

Ten to Ten Curfew in my neighbourhood

Going outside just before curfew in the darkness to capture light in homes.

Are people sitting there?

Do they see me?

A bit of voyeurism for sure.

Photographing like this was out of my comfort zone, risking being caught and capturing my mood.

50 words



© Carol Olerud FRPS



© Carol Olerud FRPS



© Carol Olerud FRPS

Following this I became intrigued with night photography. The camera can handle so much now – the sensor copes with low ISO and noise can be removed fairly well in editing programmes. I use LightRoom Classic. I was amazed at the results and decided to go forward.

The theme developed as I went. From Spooky to Creepy to finally At Night. I want the viewer to decide for themselves what they see, they may come up with their own story.

The main thing was to capture the same feeling and atmosphere. I took a few years working on this.





© Carol Olerud FRPS



© Carol Olerud FRPS

After a long time and many versions it was time to put a panel together, or rather a sequence.

This work has been handed in for an assessment with the Royal Dutch Fotobond, so fingers crossed for me.

The jury is currently looking at the work, so I have no idea as yet if I get invited for an interview where I explain myself. I'll know from 25th – 28th Feb if I am. Then I need to show the prints and defend them on 11th March at Hilversum Museum.

The following is a selection from the 12 photos with my end result titled 'At Night':





© Carol Olerud FRPS



© Carol Olerud FRPS



© Carol Olerud FRPS



© Carol Olerud FRPS

The project developed a lot from the very first photos taken in 2020/2021 during the Curfews and lock-downs.

I went further outside of my comfort zone to create images that are blurry, moved and at the edge of technical acceptance. I'm telling a story without directly telling it.

You are given the opportunity to think and feel for yourself.

Thank you for watching

Carol Olerud FRPS

www.carololerud.com

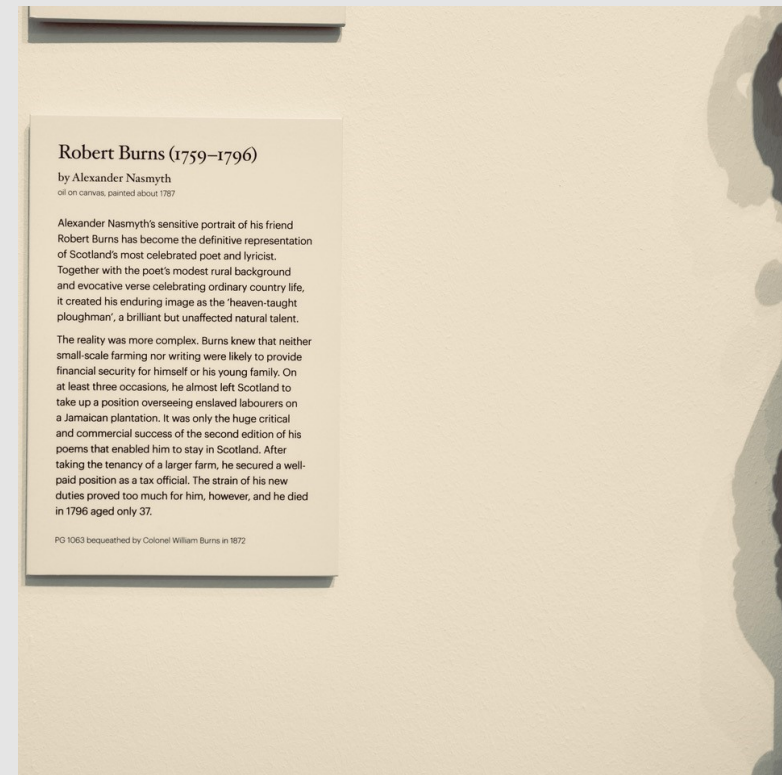
Douglas May FRPS

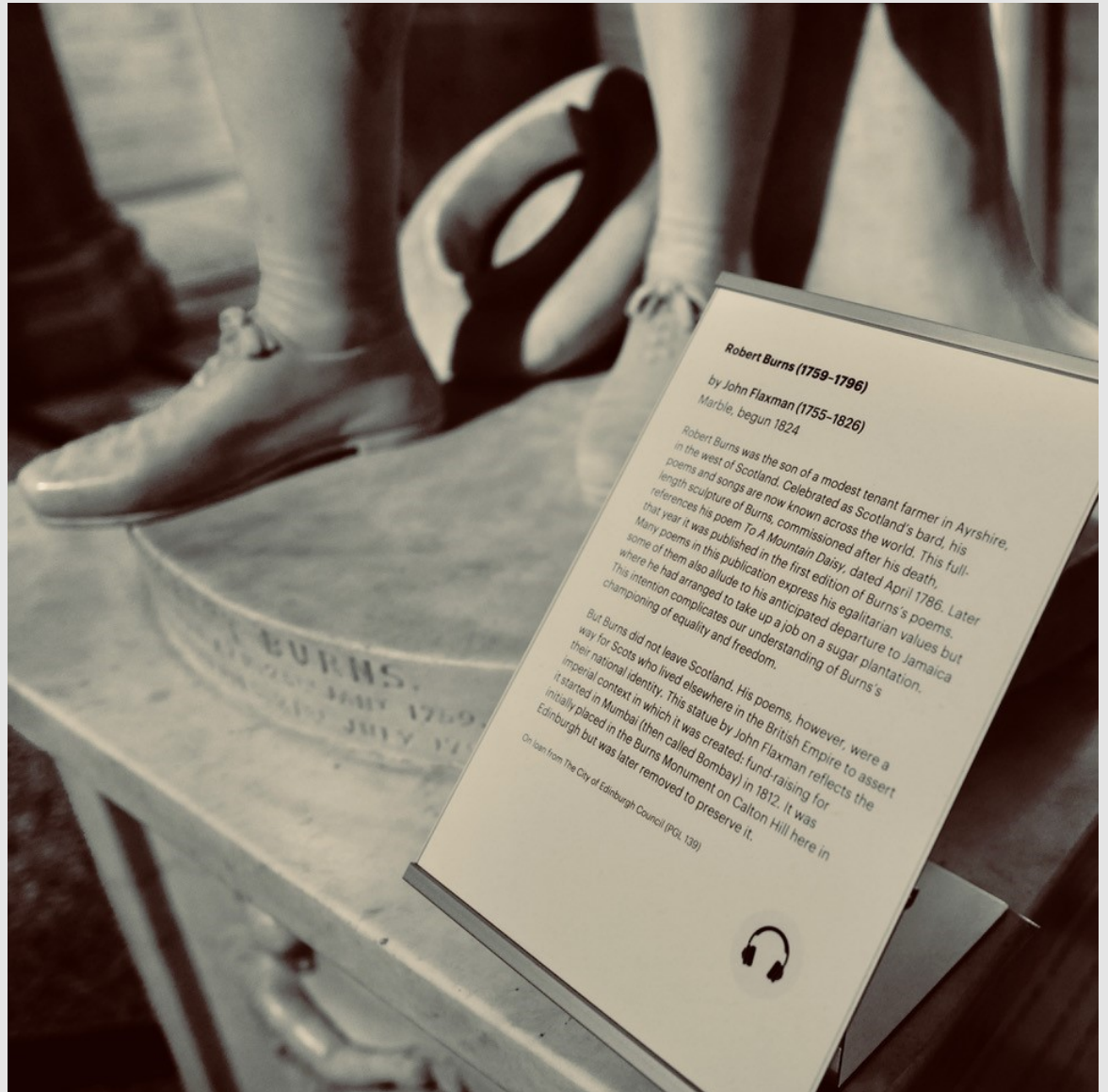
“The Job Application.”

Many cultural organisations have now taken to defining our history and historical figures by slavery and colonialism. The Scottish National Portrait Gallery have sought to define Robert Burns by the application he made to become a slave overseer in Jamaica.

He did not take up the job.

This series explores this. It poses the question as to whether his job application was central to his life and work as the Gallery have sought to do.





Mike Rooke

Winter's Beach

No matter where you find yourself in the world, you will notice that human beings are drawn naturally to water – whether it be a lake, a river, or the sea.

I live by the sea. Holiday makers appear every year in the summer, and then, by October, they have abandoned our beaches and returned to their hometowns and cities.

Before they leave, they often ask, “What’s it like here in the winter?”



The answer is that the winter always returns and reclaims its beaches. Takes ownership of them. Its storms pick up the beach and nonchalantly throw it over the sea walls and on to the roads and pavements. Winter's beach is very different to summer's, yet local people still go down to the open spaces that the beaches offer. Not for a particular purpose, apart perhaps, for walking their dogs, but usually just simply 'to be there'.



The beach is rarely deserted.



My photographs try to capture those quiet mundane moments. These moments are virtually timeless – and repeated every year by every generation.





The building (right), housing a skating rink and an amusement arcade (soon to be demolished), with the young man intently scrutinizing his mobile phone, will perhaps be one of the few things that date this set of images firmly in the 2020's.





