

# DIGIT

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY DIGITAL IMAGING GROUP  
Number 77 2018 Issue 2

# 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](http://www.rps.org/special-interest-groups/digital-imaging/events)



SOUTH EAST CENTRE

Damien Demolder  
STREET PHOTOGRAPHY:  
Light and Life  
on the Streets

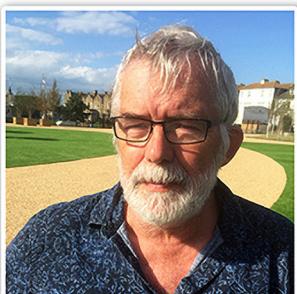
Sunday 2 September 2018 ~ Canterbury, Kent



WESTERN CENTRE

Martin Addison FRPS  
"Looking Outside  
the Frame"

Sunday 2 September 2018 Ilton Village Hall, TA19 9HG



THAMES VALLEY CENTRE

Dave Mason  
"I SHOOT PEOPLE,  
AMONGST OTHER  
THINGS"

Sunday 16 September 2018 ~ Wokingham, Berkshire



THAMES VALLEY CENTRE  
Rachael Talibart  
THE LIMITLESS SHORE  
+ MILLENNIUM CUP  
PRINT COMPETITION

Sunday 21 October 2018 ~ Wokingham, Berkshire



THAMES VALLEY CENTRE

Tracy Willis FSWPP/  
IFSWPP/Masters  
OPEN YOUR MIND  
WITH COMPOSITES

Sunday 18 November 2018 ~ Wokingham, Berkshire



WESTERN CENTRE  
Richard Sercombe  
"Urban & Architectural  
Night Photography  
followed by  
Creative Composites"

Sunday 18 November 2018 Merryfield Village Hall, Ilton TA19 9HG



THAMES VALLEY CENTRE

John Humphrey FRPS  
CREATIVE  
PHOTOGRAPHY

Sunday 20 January 2019 ~ Wokingham, Berkshire

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Cover image: Grass Tuft by Alistair Cowan

Printed by Henry Ling Ltd, at The Dorset Press, Dorchester, DT1 1TD.

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## From the chair

**Janet Haines ARPS**



Participation. A word we all know but do you engage and participate in DIG as much as you could?

Members often complain about the cost of RPS membership and this amazes me as there is so much going on and if one participates then you get really good value for money. Extend that to your DIG membership and for just a few pounds more a whole new world of photographic friends and colleagues are here to help you get the most out of your chosen hobby.

Now that we all do so much online it brings things right to our computer screen or tablet. It doesn't matter where you live you do not need to feel excluded just because you do not have meetings in your immediate neighbourhood. We have an exclusive members only closed user Facebook Group. You can post images and give and receive feedback. A great way to learn and improve.

Our annual PI Comp has online submission enabling everyone to enter. With three classes there is bound to be one to suit your style of work. If your images get accepted then they are printed in the associated catalogue.

DIG News goes out online every month. It has links to tutorials and showcases both Overseas and UK members who live beyond the reach of the 7 DIG Centres we have around the UK, who run 32 meetings p.a.

You can read DIGIT magazine online. Also our new DIG Accolade publication that focuses on Distinctions. Both aim to inspire you and encourage you to improve your work.

The ultimate in 'participation' is to volunteer. DIG runs on volunteers and without them we would flounder. Do you have skills and expertise that could be used in a volunteer role perhaps? DIG Centres need support, with vacancies in Scotland, East Anglia and the SE in particular.

Embrace the Society and get involved. It makes you feel so much more fulfilled to be part of something, than to stand on the sidelines. Participate!

For full information about all things DIG go to [www.rps.org/DIG](http://www.rps.org/DIG).

## Editorial

**Gary Beaton**



As ever, it has been a delight putting this issue of DIGIT together. It is fascinating to learn from our contributors just what it is that tempts them to try different techniques and to see the creativity that exists within the Group. It is disappointing that space is limited, and sometimes I find that it is not possible to include a wonderful image simply because there are others which are equally good!

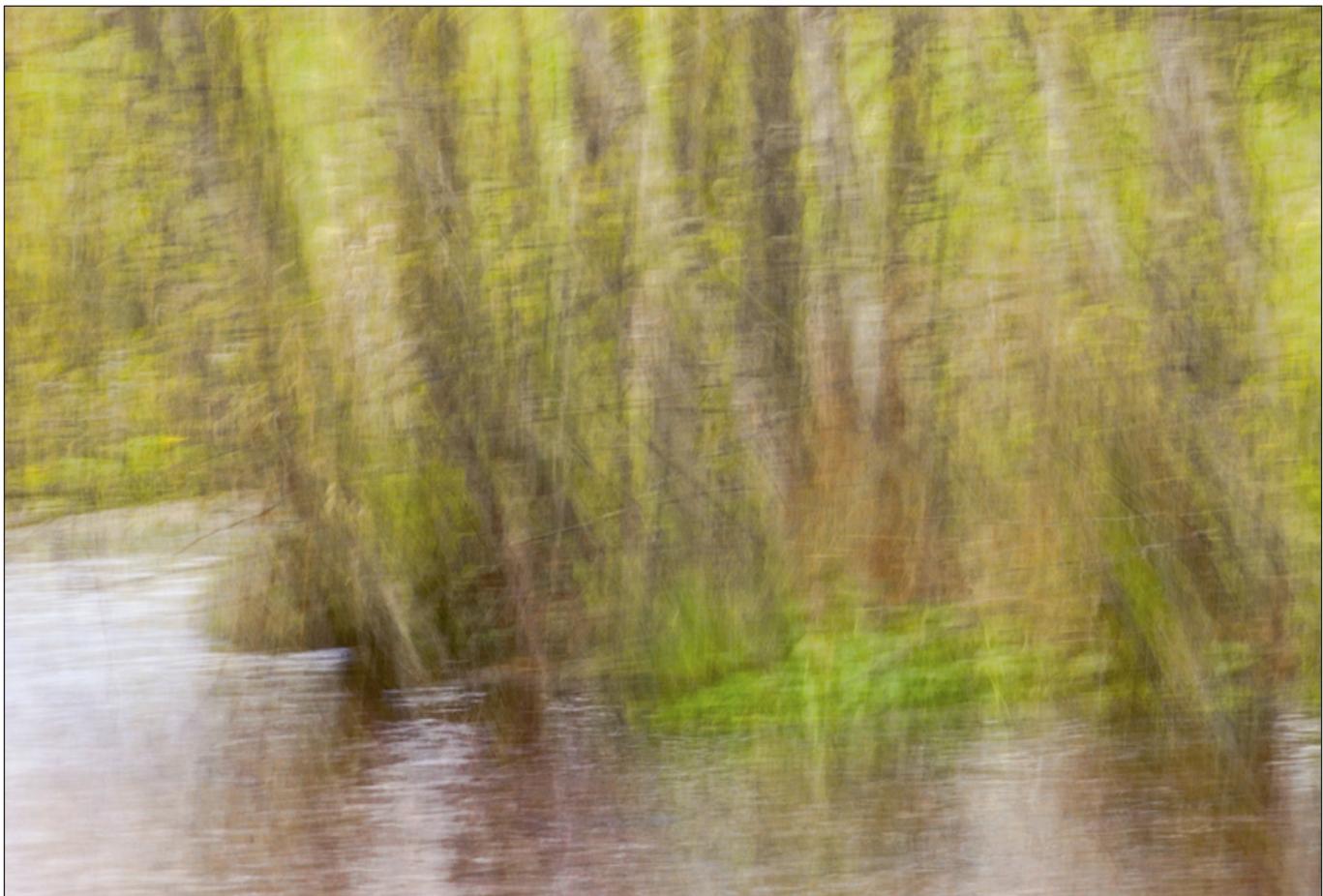
However, it's not just about the images - although these are the end result - and in this issue we have a piece from Ken Scott ARPS in which he describes the way that he chooses what to shoot. Similarly, Mike Farley shares his expertise of capturing images in the infrared spectrum and shows the beautiful, ethereal images that we just cannot see with our own eyes.

We also showcase the work of Alistair Cowan who breaks the 'rules' by quite deliberately moving the camera during exposure, and Paul Hurst ARPS who creates images capturing the beauty of churches and cathedrals, both of whom produce stunning results.

The recent royal wedding prompted Jim Buckley LRPS to look at his archive of images in order to contribute to a commemorative book. He tells us of opportunities that he has had to photograph members of the Royal Family. Hearing his story made me wonder how many other RPS members have similar stories and who have interesting images from the past, perhaps languishing in a box at the back of a cupboard.

We also take a look at the work of fellow RPS members who form the Creative Eye Group and learn how some of our members created their images in the DIGIT Challenges.

So, a truly varied issue, which I hope you will enjoy reading, just as I enjoyed preparing it.



River bend

# On the move



**Whilst many of us might immediately send an image suffering from camera shake to the recycle bin, ALISTAIR COWAN sets out to make images incorporating effects caused by camera movement.**

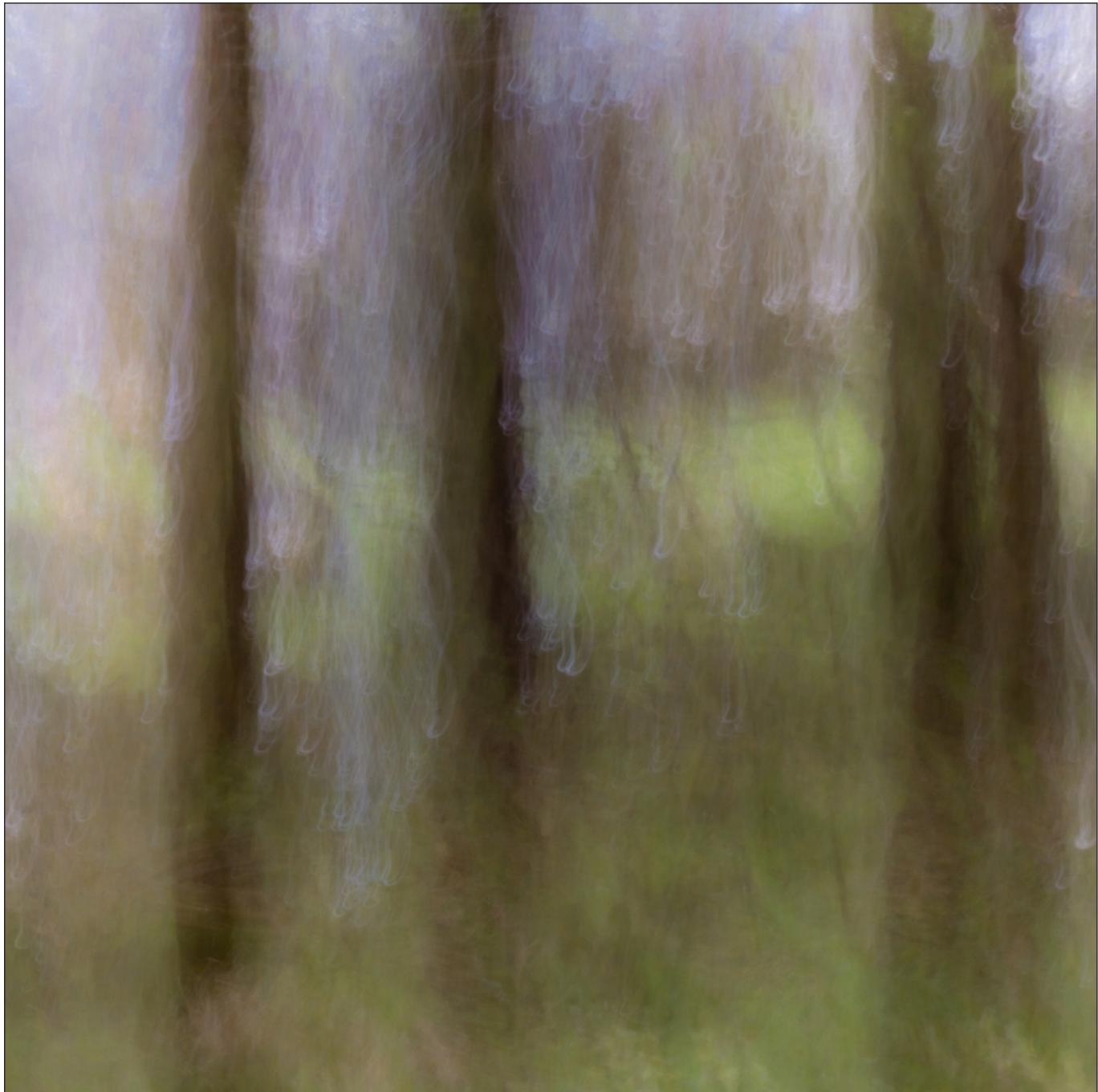
During my working life I was fortunate to travel to many exotic places around the world. I came home with several rolls of film hoping that the local processing shop would give me back wonderful images to remind me of the experience, which was seldom the case. When I retired three years ago, I found that I had time to devote to photography - and it's now an all-consuming passion!

As my skills have developed, both capturing images and processing them, I have been

searching for a style that stimulated me. I decided to review the huge collection of images on my computer to analyse what I had been doing. Was there a particular style that I was drawn to more than others? What did I enjoy shooting and was there potential to build a project around a particular theme?

I was consciously looking for images that excited me. Reflecting on my catalogue made me realise that there were a few areas that stood out more than others. I found that I was drawn to abstract

## ON THE MOVE



*Morning rain*

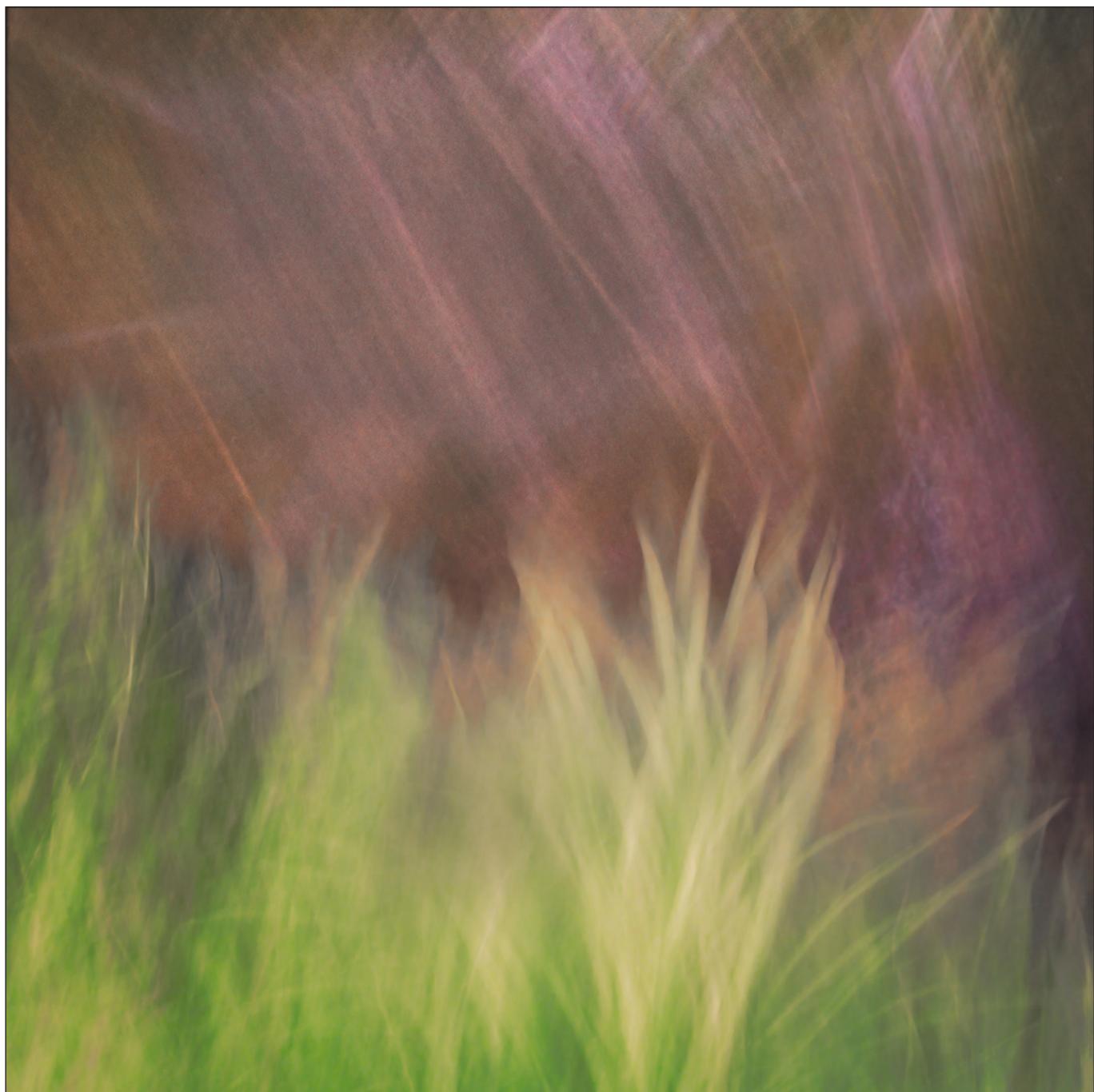
images and subtle colour combinations. I tend to do a lot of post production manipulation to find something different in an image. Although I appreciate other genres, I am regularly drawn back to more abstract creations where the colours and effects are similar to those seen in Impressionist paintings by Turner (use of light), Monet (colour) and Pissarro (natural outdoor settings).

These artists wanted to capture the effect and emotion of a scene rather than labour over refining perfection in minute detail. This took them away from their studios and out into the countryside, capturing natural light and a feeling of space. Brushwork was loose, colours pure

and intense and traditional linear perspective was abandoned. Their aim was to create works that expressed the experience of the fleeting moment.

In my initial photographic work I strived to achieve that pin sharp image, traditional (almost formulaic) composition and perfect tonal balance. That was not enough. I wanted to develop my creative ideas further.

I decided to experiment with my camera to create a 'loose' informal style in my work and search for the photographic equivalent of impressionist painting. ICM (Intentional Camera Movement) fits the bill. Although there are tools



Grass Tuft

in Photoshop that will blur and transform images, ICM blends the light and brings out colours that are not captured in a sharp image - almost like projecting white light through a prism. Certainly abstract, anything but sharp and relying on colour and light to create an 'impression' of the scene.

I am fortunate to live in East Lothian where there is an abundance of old woods, streams and countryside close by. All the images shown here were taken within a 10 minute walk from my home.

I use a Nikon D500 and find that my 24-120mm lens works best for this style. I don't use filters

as woodlands tend to be quite shady and I am looking for locations where there is just enough sunlight coming through the canopy to highlight either tree trunks or ground cover. Early evening is a good time to shoot with the sun lower in the sky and flooding through the boughs. I look for contrasting light and shade and try to find some interesting colour combinations. It's amazing how quickly the landscape changes through the year. In spring, the bare trees and old bracken are soon transformed as primroses, wild garlic and bluebells appear and the trees burst with fresh green shoots. Even the old pine trees take on a fresh blue-green tint.

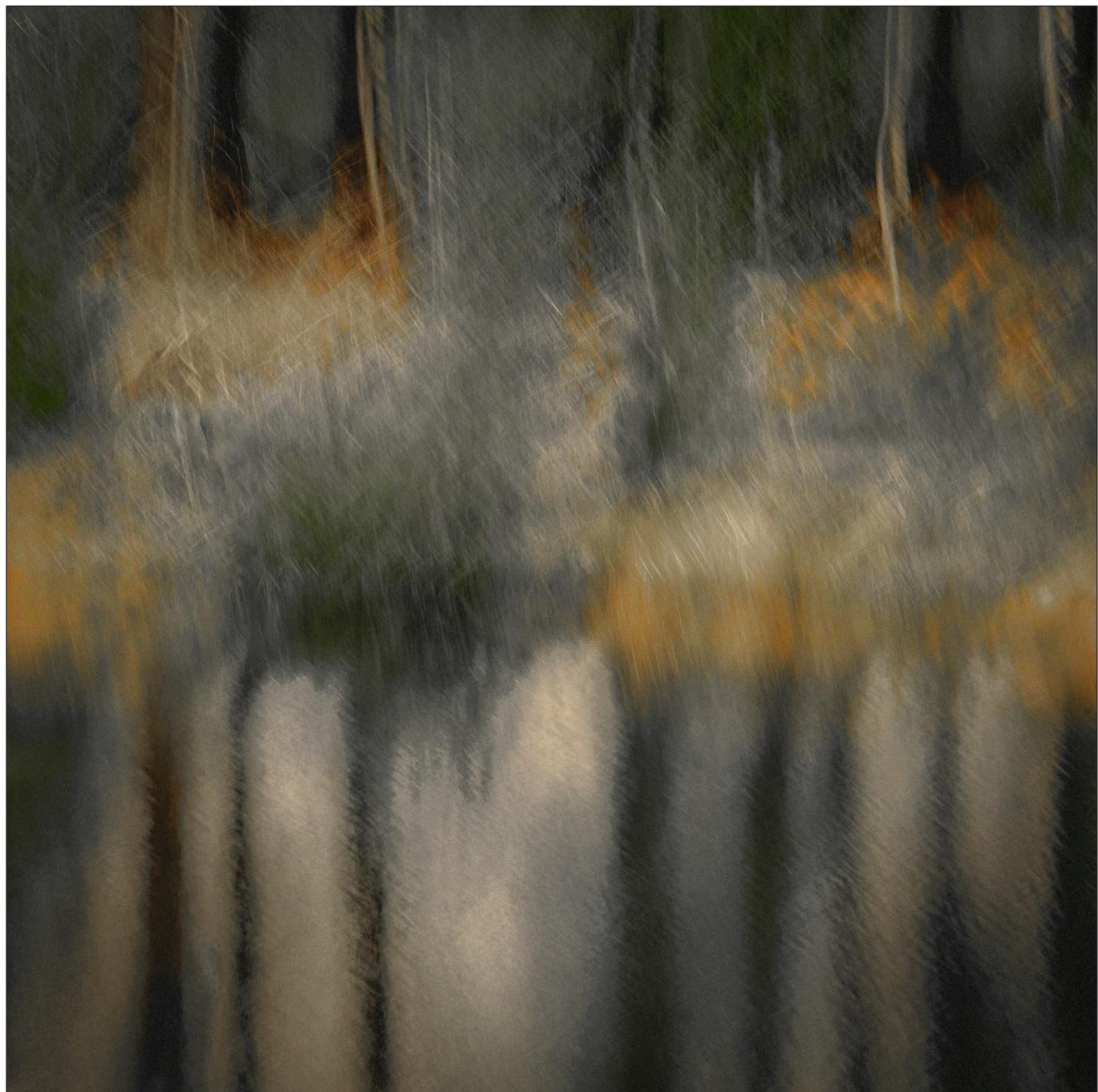
When it comes to capturing images, forget all

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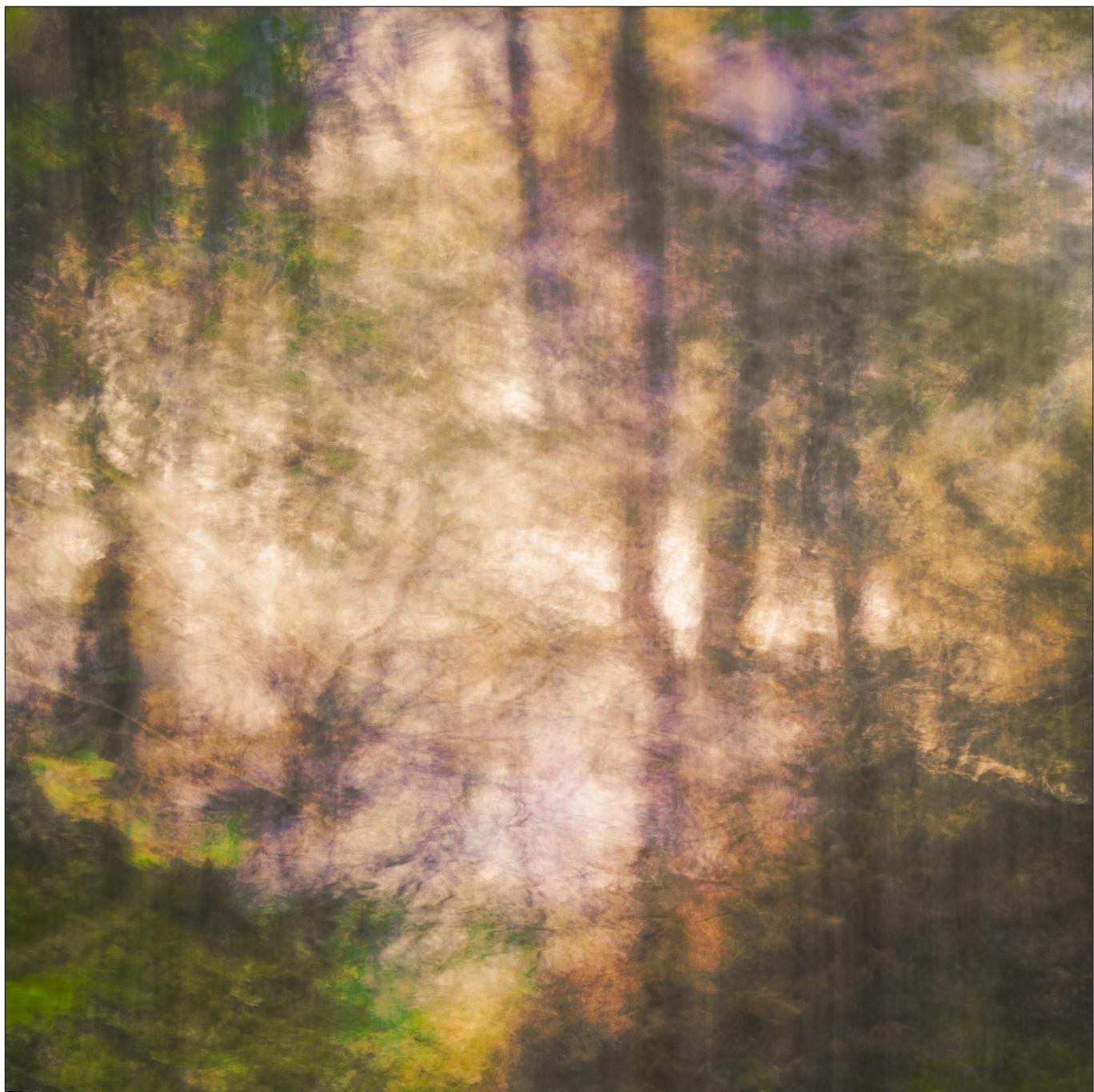
the 'rules'. This is experimental stuff and it's about trying something different and seeing what happens. At least 90% of the shots end up in the bin, but hopefully there will be a few with potential.

I work in RAW, set my ISO to the minimum with f/22 or tighter, and a shutter speed of between 0.5 and 3.0 seconds. I use live view to see the area I want to focus on and then try different movements. Panning vertically works well with trees, but I also move the camera back and forth, rotate slightly, zoom in and out, give a slight wobble or stay still. At 3.0 secs without a tripod I will get some movement and that might just be enough. I don't worry too much

about what the images look like when I view them on the camera screen. It's difficult to tell what I've got until I start processing. However, I don't want everything blown out, or too many white streaks. After a bit of practice I soon learned to judge what works, depending on the light at that location. I tend to take a couple of hundred shots, trying different movements. I will check the first few images as I go along and adjust the shutter speed if I need to. Sometimes very slight movement works well. I want to get enough blur to distort the image without losing the experience of the scene completely. After a few shots I can usually tell if there is potential for some good results and I will spend longer



*Moonlight on the pond*



*Evening reflection*

trying different movements and also try different angles. Sometimes kneeling or getting up higher will add to the image. If things don't look promising then I will move on.

When it comes to processing, I use several software packages: Lightroom, Photoshop, ExposureX3 and Snap Art.

I download the images into Lightroom, go to full screen and work through the shots, deleting the obvious rubbish as I go and marking those with potential with two stars and any favourites with three. I like using the full screen view, as sometimes there may be a small part of an image that interests me and I might miss this on smaller

thumbnails.

Once I have selected a shot to work on, I start in Lightroom with some basic adjustments - setting the white balance and tone and adjusting hue, saturation and vibrance. These first rough adjustments are 'exploratory'. The camera movement blends light and shade. Slight adjustments to vibrance and saturation can reveal unexpected colours. I then focus on refining these adjustments to bring out any subtle hues lurking in the shadows or highlights. I'm not interested in any other Lightroom adjustments (sharpness, noise reduction etc.).

I now export into Photoshop. I decide on the

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crop in Photoshop. I think it is more flexible than Lightroom, and I will also remove any spots at this stage (ICM tends to accentuate any dust spots on the lens or sensor, so it is important to make sure that everything is as clean as possible before starting to shoot). Once I am happy with the composition I export into Exposure 3. This has a wonderful range of presets and effects including split toning that I find more adaptable than Lightroom. Any adjustments I make here I take back to Photoshop and blend or reduce opacity for a more subtle effect. Finally, I export to Snap Art and add either an oil or pastel effect. The former can boost colours, the latter calming them down. Then, back into Photoshop to blend this layer and reduce opacity.

There is a lot of processing with these images. Not all the above steps may be needed - some need relatively little, but it can take time to process one image. Often, I will leave an image for a few days and then return to it. I find being glued to the monitor for a long time affects what I see, so having a gap means I bring fresh eyes to the image.

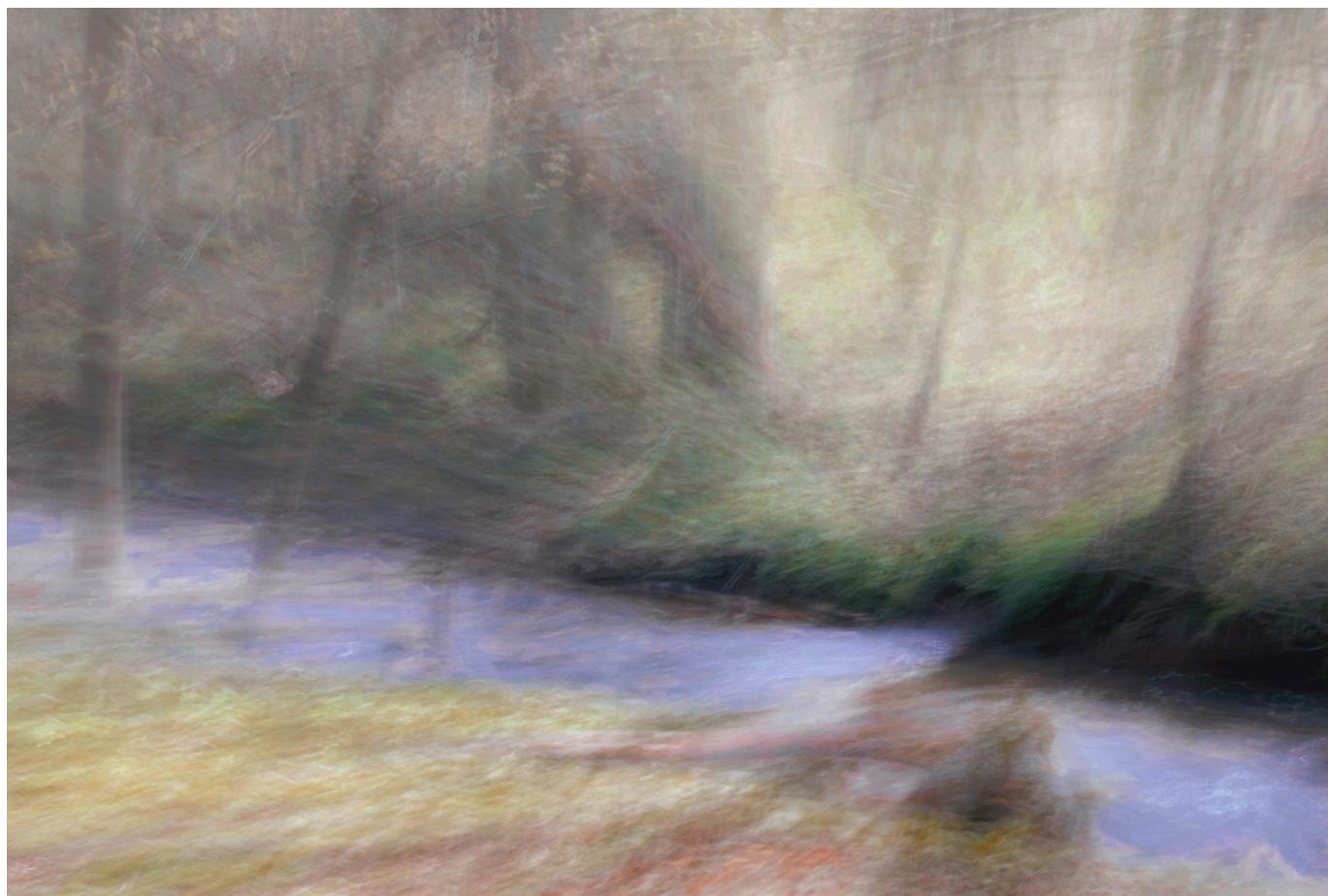
If I find that the initial Lightroom adjustments are not exciting me then I abandon ship and go to

another image. A word of warning. The amount of processing I do results in some huge files (typically 500MB to over 1GB), so it is important to have some self-discipline and delete the poor shots before I fill the hard drive.

So why have I selected the images shown here?

I think each delivers a different mood and fits with the Impressionist ideals of colour intensity and the "fleeting glance" of a moment. The sunlight striking a tuft of grass, the green bank along the edge of a stream, the reflections in the river bend and the moody hues of a woodland walk as the evening sun strikes the trunks of the pine trees, bring a vibrancy to photographs that has previously been the domain of Impressionist painting.

J.D. Sedding stated (although its often attributed to the Scottish architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh), "There is hope in honest error, none in the icy perfection of the mere stylist". I am on a journey with a project that excites me. I am not looking for that icy perfection, but something that expresses my interpretation of the landscape around me. I want to get out there and explore other locations to find the next image.



*The Stream*



Nymans - An example of how false colour can bring out delicate pink hues in foliage.

# Taken As Red



**MIKE FARLEY** takes a look at infrared photography and explains how to create images which reveal our world in a different way.

Photography is unique as an art form in that light is one of its principle raw materials. That our cameras can record a moment in time often leads people to consider it a medium which portrays its subjects realistically. In truth, there is rarely such a thing. Apparently basic decisions such as choice of focal length, aperture and shutter speed can affect the final result. And that counts without the photographer applying their creative input at every stage. The initial capture is usually just the start of the image making process. Even if it is just a simple curves adjustment or the removal of a distracting element, there is always a human desire to embellish and refine.

As Ansel Adams said, "Dodging and burning

are steps to take care of mistakes God made in establishing tonal relationships."

It would be surprising if, in a magazine such as this, other authors do not describe how they have buffed and honed their shots using applications such as Photoshop to achieve the result they want. Neither does that apply solely to those who identify as photographers. As just one example, there are plenty of apps available which allow mobile phone users to enhance their shots.

With infrared photography, there can be no pretence that the depicted scene is anything other than an artifice, rather it offers a different outlet for artistic expression. Certainly, it resembles conventional photography in that it involves the



Dorset Trackway - This shot was taken during my first serious photoshoot with infrared. This country lane is near the coast and the winds have bent the trees into interesting shapes.

use of a camera, but the light captured is invisible to the human eye. It reveals a surreal world unknown to us where there are no colours, just light or dark tones which depend on how much infrared the subject reflects. Nor is a 'straight' infrared image ever possible as the final result is dependent on post-capture processing.

## Infrared Principles

Visible light forms a very small part of the electromagnetic spectrum, which is a continuous range of varying wavelengths. Those with normal eyesight are able to perceive the span between 380 and 700 nanometres (nm), with the human eye sensing the different wavelengths as colour. Blue at the shortest end, red at the other and the remaining hues falling in between. Infrared sits above 700 nm in the spectrum.

Infrared photography has been in existence since 1910, when the first film emulsion which could record it became available. For many years, it was mainly limited to monochrome images, but the advent of the digital era has transformed what is possible. Nowadays there is the option to introduce false colour at the processing stage, albeit those hues are far from accurate.

The most common application is for landscape photography as plants are susceptible to heat and reflect infrared radiation to protect themselves. When captured with an infrared camera, foliage appears pale due to the amount of light given off. The effect is strongest in spring and early summer when leaves are still tender and at their most vulnerable, thus more light bounces off them. Water and sky radiate very little infrared, so become dark. The resulting images exhibit the high contrast tonality which is typical of the genre.

That is all part of the attraction; a depiction of our world which shows an altered reality and opens up new creative potential.

## Equipment

All the methods to create infrared images involve filtration to block light from the visible spectrum and allow infrared to pass. Infrared film, both Ilford SFX (which is not true infrared) and Rollei IR400 remain available, but Kodak's HIE is among those which the company no longer produces. With many films being discontinued, it is unlikely to be a long term solution. It does offer a convenient and inexpensive option as the camera requires no adaptation, the only outlay being for a filter and film.

Digital sensors do not have the same limitations as the human eye and can record both ultraviolet (which is directly below 380 nm) and infrared. It is exploitation of the latter attribute which enables infrared imaging. Non visible light is undesirable for conventional digital photography since it has adverse effects on focus, colour rendition and metering. Consequently, manufacturers fit a filter, sometimes known as a 'hot mirror', as part of the assemblage to block light from outside the visible spectrum. The challenges with digital infrared are twofold; how best to circumvent the filtration built into the sensor and the processing of the subsequent images.

The approach involving least cost is simply to attach an infrared filter to the lens although it comes with a number of disadvantages. Solely infrared light passes through the lens only to be blocked by the hot mirror. The two filters cancel each other out but as the filtration is not 100% efficient, some photons still reach the sensor. The consequence is high ISOs and exposures of 30 seconds or more being necessary. A tripod becomes an essential accessory and any movement in a non static subject, such as foliage, will make it difficult to obtain a sharp result.

Those are not the only issues as the operation of the camera has to change. Infrared has a longer wavelength than visible light and lenses are designed to bring blue light at one end of the spectrum and red light from the other to the same point of focus. That requires a manual adjustment as infinity is reached sooner on the lens' focus scale. Many older lenses have an indication of the infrared focusing point for that reason. DSLR and mirrorless cameras have through the lens viewing systems that could require temporary removal of

the filter to frame the scene. With DSLRs, it might be possible to use live view which would also circumvent the focusing issue.

Since it does not involve any modification to the camera, the filter method is suitable for experimentation or occasional use. Those who intend to shoot infrared frequently will be better served with a camera which has been adapted for the purpose. It involves replacement of the hot mirror with an infrared pass filter. For DSLRs, the conversion usually includes an adjustment to the AF to ensure focus is accurate for infrared. Mirrorless cameras focus using the sensor and focusing adjusts automatically. The benefit is that the camera can be used in the normal way since exposure times fall within the range when handholding is possible. The downsides are cost and that, once modified, a camera cannot be used for conventional photography.

There are four main types of infrared filtration and each gives a different result:

- 590 nm allows some light at the higher end of the visible spectrum to pass and is used to



*Sabrina Mogridge - The saddest sight which I found when shooting at West Norwood Cemetery. An overgrown gravestone which commemorates the untold story of a tragically short life.*



*Tree Roots - I had several attempts to photograph this tree, which is in the woods behind my house. It grows on steep, gravelly ground which has fallen away to expose the roots. Eventually I hit upon shooting close to with a wide-angle lens on an infrared camera.*

create extreme false colour effects.

- 665 nm also permits a more limited amount of visible light and is suitable both for subtler false colour and monochrome images. Used in the right circumstances, it can produce some appealing pink and blue hues.
- 720 nm is used primarily for monochrome images, although false colour remains a possibility. This is the most versatile option.
- 830 nm gives monochrome images with more extreme contrast than 720 nm.

Alternatively, it is possible to install a lower strength filter within the camera and a higher strength on the lens which then takes precedence. In that scenario, it is possible to increase the camera's filtration but not decrease it. With the advent of live view imaging on both DSLRs and mirrorless cameras, it has become feasible to replace the hot mirror with a clear sensor. A filter of the required strength is placed on the lens instead. Either option is useful since it introduces flexibility.

Conversion will require a host camera and many people use an old one rather than selling on when upgrading to a newer model. My own camera is a Canon EOS 450D, purchased at a substantial discount as B-grade stock, fitted with a 720 nm filter. The sensor is delicate and modification is a specialist job except for those confident in their DIY skills. The two main companies offering a conversion service in the UK are Protech Photographic and Advanced Camera Services,

## TAKEN AS RED

both of which guarantee their work. The cost is dependent on the model, but typically is in the region of £300 - £350, including VAT. Alternatively, it is possible to buy pre-converted cameras. It is best to ensure that there is a warranty or, better, a return period to inspect the quality of the workmanship.

### Creating Infrared Images

When shooting in infrared, both camera and lens are being used outside of their design parameters. Lenses are not designed to pass infrared light and hotspots can occur, some being more prone to the effect. I found that while my Canon EF-S 17-55 often flares badly, my EF 17-40L is better. The meter is no longer necessarily accurate; it is best to check histogram when shooting and make any necessary adjustments. White balance lacks an infrared preset and the automatic mode cannot cope which leaves images with a red cast. That is easily corrected in most cameras by creating a custom setting, usually by pointing the camera at grass or a grey surface such as concrete. It is not a necessity, but it makes it easier to assess images on the camera's LCD screen.

Since digital infrared images always require post capture processing, it is preferable to shoot RAW files. The JPEG format discards some of the information captured by the sensor, which is not conducive to obtaining optimum image quality when applying adjustments. I use Lightroom for Raw conversion before opening the image in Photoshop. Image data is mainly in the red channel and I find Lightroom's monochrome conversion is not very effective so use Silver Efex Pro II instead. The technique for false colour is to swap the red and blue channels in the Channel Mixer and tweak the result using the usual colour

controls. The Glow filter can add some diffusion to simulate an effect which is reminiscent of infrared film.

Infrared gives its best in bright sunlight, although that does not mean shadows should be avoided. Landscape photography becomes feasible,



*Wells Tree - Needing a shot for a Photo-a-day project I was undertaking, I looked around the gardens of a holiday cottage the morning we were due to leave. I immediately discerned the infrared potential of this tree and it is my favourite shot from the year I spent on the venture.*

desirable even, in the middle of the day, but that is not the only application. I find it effective for rendering texture, especially in tree trunks. Architecture and cemeteries are among other possibilities. While a lot of my photography involves a conventional camera, I do enjoy creating images which have a different look and feel. Digital infrared capture makes it easy to experiment and I often find myself wondering what something will look like. There is only one real way to find out in any given situation. Try it!

© Text and images Mike Farley 2018 [www.mikefarley.net](http://www.mikefarley.net)

### Creating an Adobe Camera Raw Custom Profile

Some Raw processors will use the camera's custom white balance, but Adobe Camera Raw (ACR) which is used by both Lightroom and Photoshop is among those which do not. Without correction, images have a strong red cast. It is helpful to create a custom profile which can be applied to images, especially if there is an intention to create a false colour shot.

- Convert an infrared Raw file to DNG
- Open the new file in the DNG Profile Editor (a free download from the Adobe website)
- Select the 'Color Matrices' tab
- Move the Temperature slider (found under White Balance Calibration) to -100
- Export the profile, giving it a name of your choosing
- Close the DNG Profile editor (there is no need to save the recipe)
- The new profile will be available the next time Lightroom or Photoshop is restarted



# The Joy of Seeing



**Ken Scott ARPS** takes a different approach to imagemaking which changed his life. He explains why and how, and offers advice so that we can all benefit.

Look anywhere today for ideas on wellbeing and you will likely come across mindfulness.

In a time of unprecedented busyness and distraction, mindfulness can quieten the mind, relax the body and bring us back to the present moment. A growing body of research shows proven benefits in many areas of living including creativity, which, of course, should be of great interest to photographers.

Mindfulness is often associated with meditation, based on its roots in Buddhist practice, and might seem inaccessible. So I would like to share some practical ways in which photographers can use mindfulness, coupled with an alternative visual

language, to see the world with fresh eyes and to expand our photographic repertoire.

Back in 2008, I began a journey of making a photograph every day, a 365 venture that I now call 'Project Infinity' (currently 3800 consecutive days). Mindfulness has been key to its longevity.

A responsive approach in itself was not new to me; I had over thirty years of immersing myself in the mountain experience, photographing light and landscape. But it is easy to become restricted by a specialism. I wanted to expand my seeing beyond the obvious in everyday situations that many people would not notice. Nothing is planned or preconceived in my daily work; I like



to be spontaneous and responsive, to notice what I am seeing.

## What is mindfulness?

Jon Kabatt-Zinn describes mindfulness as “awareness that arises through paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgementally”.

The present moment is here and now; there is nothing else. Essentially, for photographers, if our minds are free of distractions and thoughts about what we should or should not see or do, we open ourselves up to see more freely. When we are relaxed and absorbed in what we are doing, photography happens easily, without effort or sense of time. Most of us know that satisfying feeling of being ‘in flow’.

All it takes to find relaxed attentiveness is to stop, to relax and breathe for a couple of minutes, letting any thoughts pass by. Paying attention to sensations and sounds, and gently scanning our visual field with a soft gaze can heighten awareness and receptiveness. Or, if we wish to, we can develop longer, deeper meditations.

## Barriers to seeing

Being non-judgmental is perhaps the hardest part

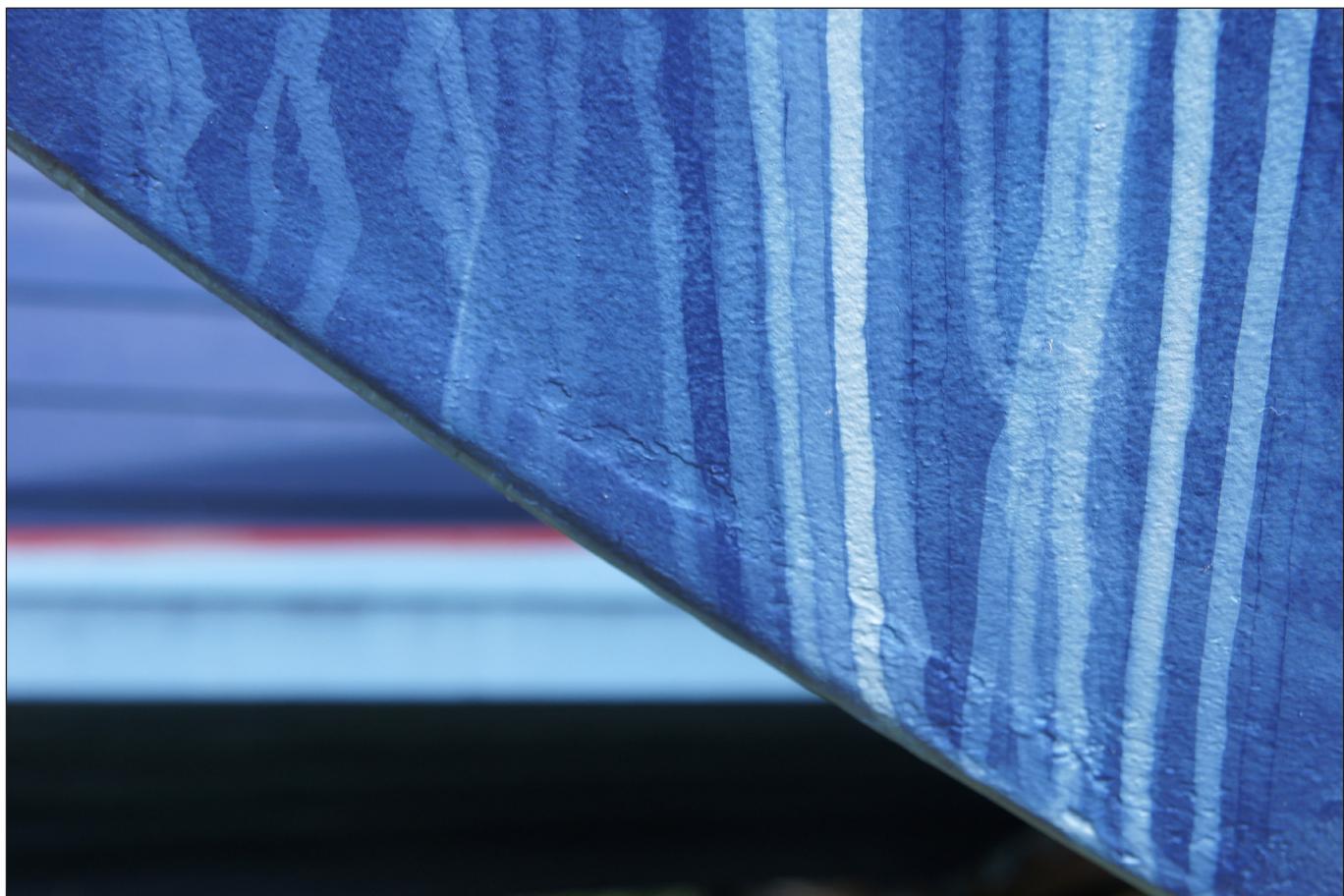
of mindfulness practice.

Billions of bits of information hit our senses every second. Only a tiny fraction makes it to conscious awareness. What we notice – or do not notice – is prioritised by survival and safety and by life experiences and values. These unconscious, conditioned judgments act as ‘barriers to seeing’ and there are many that are commonplace in photography. We often slip into their judgemental grip without knowing.

Our own likes and dislikes are judgements too, and merely considering what someone else might think gets in the way of seeing. The way we see is unique to each of us. Who is anyone else to judge that?

When we make our judgmental habits conscious, with practice we are able to let them go. By training ourselves to see without judgement, we can begin to undo that conditioning and to make more of the world around us visually accessible, and to feel a joy in that.

Judgement is not the same as discernment. We can choose to pass. Even after exploring for some time, we might decide not to make a photograph and to walk away having enjoyed a rich experience.



### **Expectation**

Expectation is a huge barrier to seeing. We see an image of an iconic location in 'perfect light' and we want our own version of that, so we go there but the light is not 'right'. We wish that it was different and so fail to see how the light actually is. Expectation inevitably breeds disappointment. My mantra, based loosely on the old song lyric, says: "if you can't have the light you love, love the light you have..."

### **Looking but not seeing**

Looking is active. Often we look for something specific. In doing so we fail to notice anything else and become frustrated if we don't find the one thing we are seeking. Or we try too hard, looking for things to photograph, searching in vain for the 'perfect image', noticing almost nothing.

I have often said that "the harder I look, the less I see". I never go anywhere with the sole purpose of making photographs. Rather, if I experience fully, photographs come naturally. To experience means to see, hear, feel, sense and engage in every way.

### **Categorisation/Labelling**

As children we learn about the world by giving

everything a name. We know things by what they are called, not by how they appear, so we hardly see them at all. We ignore what we judge to be ordinary, and we fail to see what is familiar.

Claude Monet used to insist that wine was brought to his table without the label, so he could 'taste the wine' with no pre-judgement. By taking the labels away from things we see them as they are for their qualities. We can move away from photographing things and places to seeing pictures.

### **A new visual language**

De-labelling opens the door for a new language of visual qualities rather than object names.

The fundamental building block of visual perception is light. Light interacts with things to create contrasts of tone (brightness) and colour. Those contrasts create lines and shapes and forms. These can repeat to create patterns and textures. Between the things are spaces and relationships, which create perspectives and scale and a sense of dominance or balance.

When we are tuned in to seeing these elements, we can compose them in any combinations. There are no rights or wrongs in composition, only effects. And we can throw away our

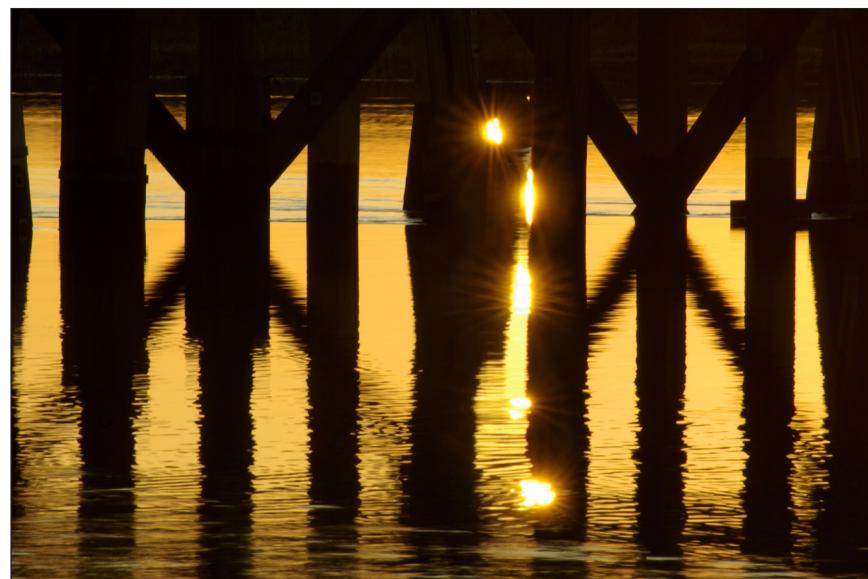


preconceptions of what makes for good photography, taking our observation and image making in new and individual directions.

## Paying attention

Paying attention consciously comes in two forms, each useful in different ways.

Open monitoring is to notice everything that is going on both inside us (feelings, thoughts and emotions) and around us (sights, sounds, physical sensations) in a flexible and unrestricted way.



It can be practised anywhere, anytime, whilst walking, standing, sitting on a bus, whether or not we have the intention to make photographs.

Open monitoring has been shown to be a highly effective way to expand our observational skills. We might start by noticing specifics such as colour. Over time, as more channels open up, we learn to sense flashes of perception regularly, and images often present themselves fully formed in an instant.

Focused attention involves being with an experience for a longer time and more intimately, being curious, fascinated and accepting, exploring light, colour and texture, relationships and spaces from all angles. Focused attention is effective in deepening our appreciation of detail and tightening compositions in camera.

Here is a simple open-monitoring exercise you could try:

Start by letting yourself see a single element, such as colour. A town square is good for this. Stand, relax, breathe. Then turn



slowly through 360 degrees, letting yourself see colour, not coloured things but colour itself. Then, without actively looking for colour, walk around town seeing colour; it will jump out at you from everywhere. Spend half an hour making photographs of colour. Then take a coffee break and repeat with another element, like contrasts, lines or textures. Once each channel opens, it stays open.

You might also try an open brief, noticing what you see most prominently, or perhaps making twenty images from where you are standing, taking no more than a pace in any direction.

### In summary

There is no one style or genre that characterises mindful approaches to photography. However, when we learn to see beyond the obvious and the spectacular, it is probably true to say that images

become more abstracted, unconventional and authentic.

After 500 days of 'Project Infinity' I wrote that '500 days photography can change your life'. Most would concur that it could change your photography, but change your life? Seriously?

What I came to realise was that there are images in everything, and that every moment of presence brings a joyous fusion of experiences, not just of seeing but also of sounds and feelings. The world still appears often as if I am seeing for the first time. I do not even need to make photographs all the time; I can choose to enjoy experience for its own sake, simply to be with it.

There is a great truth in Dorothea Lange's statement: "the camera is an instrument that teaches people how to see without a camera".

### Ken Scott

Ken has been a passionate photographer for nearly forty years. His work grew up as a natural extension of his passions for the mountains and light. His approach to photography is very simple; it is about experiencing, feeling, sensing and responding to whatever environment he finds himself in.

He is based in West Sussex and works as a photography coach, leading group workshops and coaching individuals in mindful approaches to photography.



Norwich Cathedral, taken from the Dean's roof

# God's house



**PAUL HURST ARPS** gives an insight into the stories that religious buildings can tell, and offers tips to photographers to make the most of a visit.

Over the years my church and cathedral photography has taken me into many religious buildings, where I like to observe others visit and see what they are looking at and what attracts them. They may be tourists or even local folk that perhaps have walked past the church for

years and never stepped in. One of my common observations is that we seem to be conditioned only to look at eye level, this may be from the many years we shop in supermarkets and that their clever product positioning is having an effect on us. The odd one will look up but most will miss



*Wymondham Abbey roof, with angels representing heaven*

what is happening above them, which was quite an important part of the building as the roof space has represented heaven in the medieval church.

In medieval times the 'lowerarchy' could not read or write, and so, the message had to be visual. The whole building would have been covered in polychrome, wall paintings, stained glass and roof structure would have had colour.

The priest would use the stained glass or wall paintings as his bible, but one message was strong. Either accept our god and his ways and go to heaven or if you do not hell is the only way; so as you study a medieval church interior read it as a book.

These fundamental images were covered in the roof adorned by angels (representing heaven) or a grizzly scene from the harrowing of hell where they had quite vivid imaginations of what the devil and hell was like.

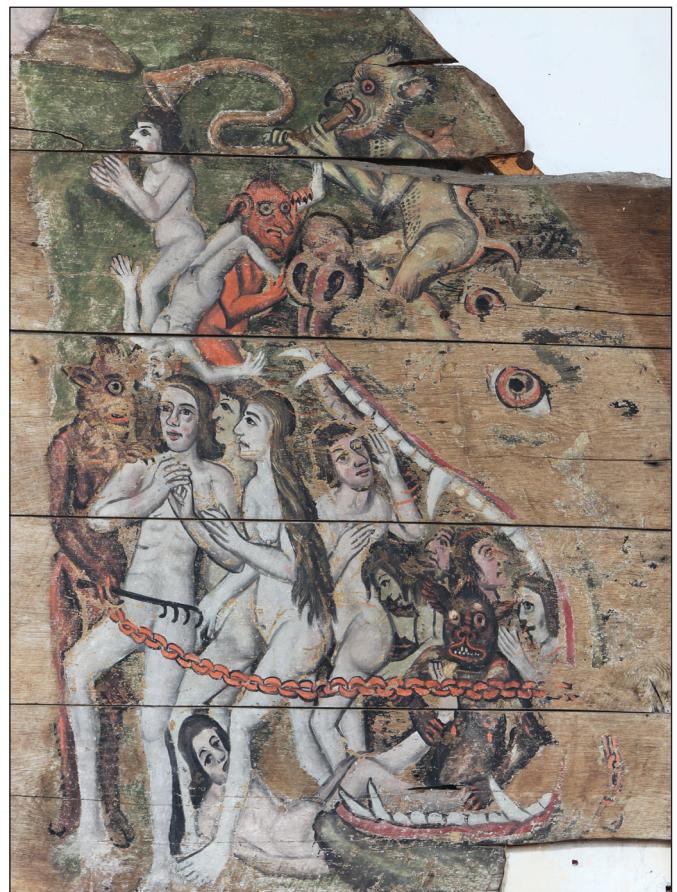
For my part, it's the enjoyment and discovery in this particular field of photography. Having a background in singing professionally in the back rows of Cathedral choirs in my region I have an understanding of how they work, this can be very helpful if you are visiting a church or cathedral to photograph. I shall now pass on to you some of my knowledge and knowhow, hoping that it may assist or help you in your visits to churches and add to the enjoyment of your photography.

### Local Churches

Firstly, when you are sitting at home frustrated by the wet or cold weather and just itching to gather

some JPEGs, remember your local church. It's generally a large space full of architectural treats, even if the Victorians may have carpeted it and given it a not so medieval makeover it is worth exploring as a subject with its light and shade.

The best weather for church interiors is an overcast grey sky! Why, well most churches face east-west, so the sun will cut across the church and burn out the north side. Dull overcast is



*The tympanum at St.Pauls Church, Wenhampton, with its depiction of hell*

## GOD'S HOUSE



The roof of St. Paul's Cathedral, London

ideal and balances out the light, also for the stained glass where it reduces the glare and aids transparency. But many a subject or architectural feature to test out your skills.

If you do not have a tripod, well firstly don't do what I see some photographers doing, lying on the cold floor looking up to capture the image. Just set your camera to timer and lay it on the ground, focus and shoot. Most of the image you can post process to straighten and crop. Use the building to align, columns, arches and floor tiles, all of which give the clue towards how central you are on a given aspect.

Any elevation you can get is a bonus and makes

your image a little different from the others - there may be a bell-ringers gallery or tower to climb, this will obviously require a key. To gain access it can help if you perhaps offer the images for the church's use for post cards, guide books or information boards. The churches are gradually realising the value of media, in particular good photography, to assist their fund raising.

If it's a living church and you feel confident, enquire if they would like you to cover a special service or occasion. This can be of great benefit when you are looking to increase your skills of people events.



St. Stephen's, Walbrook in the City of London, designed by Sir Christopher Wren



*Roof detail at St Vedast, London*

## Cathedrals

It really is who you know and not what you know in these large structures. The cathedral may or may not charge entrance or for a photo permit, but it really adds up to nothing when you can spend hours in the dry just gathering images to process for competition or just to enjoy yourself. Most will have an exclusion to sell images commercially so look for the small print, you cannot begrudge them this when they have to maintain these buildings.

The sacrist or verger is the kingpin in these buildings, they run the everyday show and so if you need to gather an image from somewhere out of bounds to the general public it is worth approaching them first.

The guides are there on hand and if you show some interest in what they are telling you they may show you places or views that are sometimes missed by the visitor.

In overall charge is the dean and chapter, they are the equivalent to the directors of a company and run the religious, educational and commercial side of a cathedral. Should you want to use your images commercially their agreement would be required as you are on private land, most will just ask for an acknowledgement, by kind permission

etc. In my job at Norwich Cathedral I always keep my eye out for scaffolding, with the right permissions I climb and gather unique images, like the shot taken from the Deanery roof (see page 20).

The provincial cathedrals are quite welcoming from my experience. There is always a verger on duty and if you feel brave enough to ask if you can go into an area that looks out of bounds, always ask. I have gathered many a good image from just asking the verger and they often reciprocate with telling you where a great image could be found.

Many of the London cathedrals charge for entrance fees and some will not allow photography at all, but there are many churches of Wren's design, such as St. Stephens at Wallbrook which are just as fine. Westminster Cathedral (not Abbey) is free and a wonderful space to gather images. I did discover last year that St Paul's opens its doors to the photographer in August on some evenings, no tripods and not for commercial use, but there is enough light to gather images and remember to use the floor trick as I previously mentioned a great natural tripod for those upward images.

I hope you enjoy your church photography experience.



The one that got away: reproduced in The Telegraph Magazine

# Crown from the crowd ...and the one that got away



JIM BUCKLEY LRPS tells us about some of his opportunities to photograph members of the Royal Family and of his contribution to the book *Crown from the Crowd*.

Although this little story doesn't have much about digital imaging it wouldn't have been possible without digital technology. I'm a member of the Travel Group as well as the Digital Imaging Group, and through contacts in the Travel Group I heard that two other members had had their brilliant shots included in Photobox's *Crown from the Crowd*, a photobook

of the Royals taken by the public over the years and given to Harry and Meghan as a wedding present. The book is on sale from Photobox with profits going to Help for Heroes, the charity which supports members of the armed services who have suffered injury or illness as a result of their service. As it happens, I also had three pictures selected for the book - and one that got

## CROWN FROM THE CROWD



Prince Charles and residents of Whiteley Village

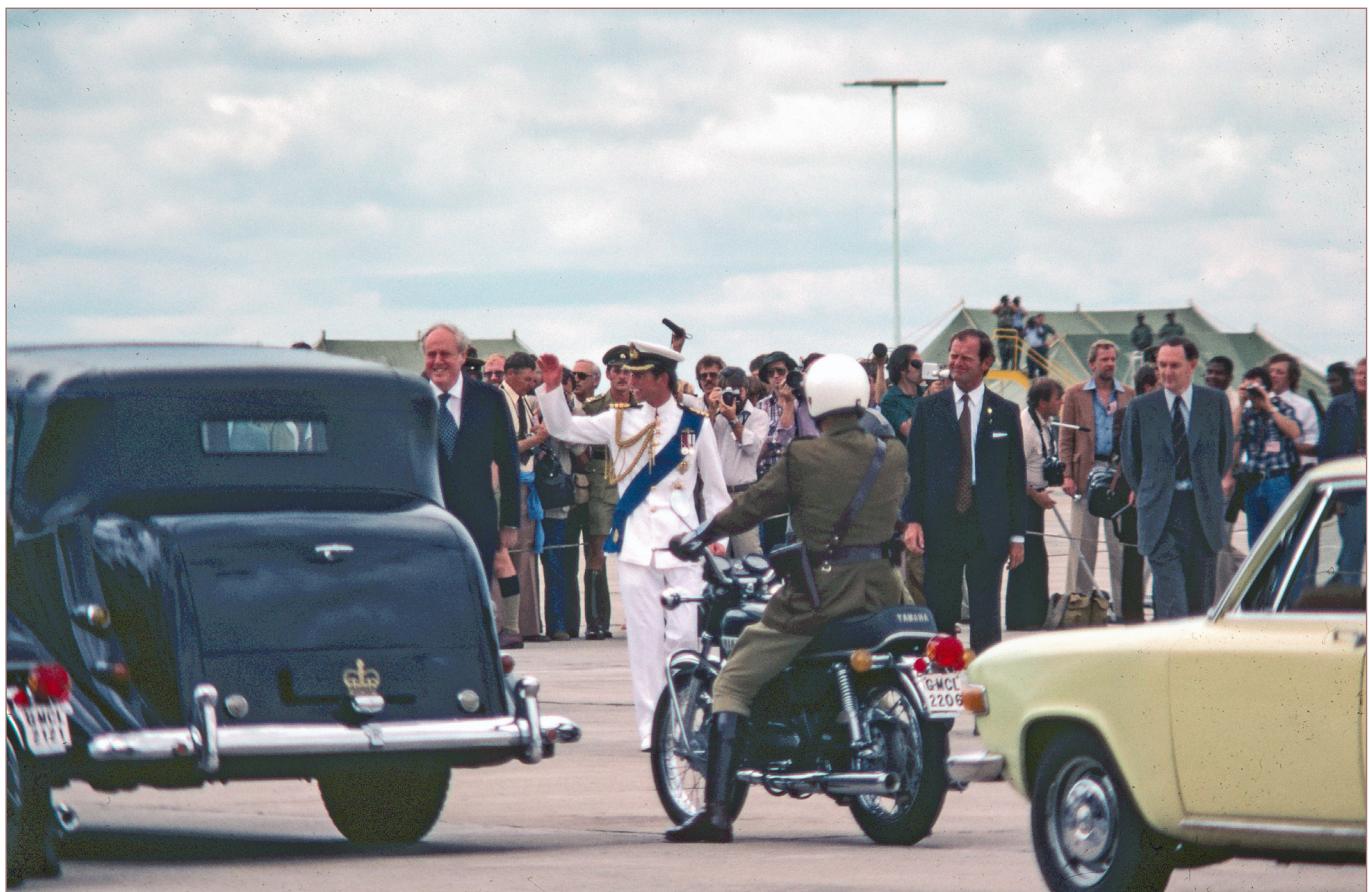
away, but made *The Telegraph Magazine* colour supplement on 19 May featuring the photobook. It set me wondering how many more RPS members had images featured in the



book and what stories lay behind the images?

As for my story...well, when I retired in 2004 I volunteered at Whiteley Village, a unique retirement village in Surrey founded in 1907 with a bequest from William Whiteley. Whiteley owned Whiteleys, the Harrods of the day, in Bayswater. I became the Village volunteer amateur photographer for about a decade.

Prince Charles spent a day at the Village in March 2007 to celebrate its centenary. He was charming and gentle with the elderly residents and very content to pose with them for photographs. They were of course delighted to be photographed with him. But I had photographed a young Prince of Wales 27 years earlier in 1980 in a previous life when I was private secretary to the last Governor of Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), Lord Soames. Prince Charles represented The Queen at the independence ceremonies and I snapped away. When I told Prince Charles about this at Whiteley



Prince Charles arriving at Salisbury Airport, Rhodesia

Village in 2007 he loved the coincidence and remarked on it to several villagers as he chatted to them.

A shot of his welcome at Salisbury (now Harare) airport in April 1980 was included in *Crown from the Crowd*, together with one of Mary Soames, wife of the Governor (and incidentally daughter of Winston Churchill) greeting him at Government House, Harare.

Photobox asked me to help with the publicity and arranged a live interview on SKY News but in the event I wasn't included. They also gave *The Telegraph* newspaper some of the pictures from the book, including one of mine, in advance of the publication to generate publicity and the newspaper decided to run 'a photo-led feature on the back of the nationwide photographic biography of the Royal Family', as they put it, 'in the 19th May Royal Wedding issue of the magazine.' I gave the *The Telegraph* some background and along with other shots it was published on the wedding day. But for whatever reason Photobox must have changed the selection and a different picture of mine was used in the final print of the book. So, three pictures in the book, and the one that got away in *The Telegraph*.



Prince Charles being welcomed by Mary Soames, wife of the Governor, at Government House in Rhodesia



Gone to Seed by David Harris

# The Creative Eye Group

Recently renamed to avoid misunderstanding, the Creative Eye Group aims to encourage imagination and diversity in image-making.

The aim of the Creative Eye Group, formally known as the Creative Group, is to encourage the photographer to think and see that bit differently and, consequently, end up with a more unusual, interesting or thought provoking interpretation.

For many years, there was some misunderstanding as to the type of photography we represented and at the beginning of the year it was decided to change the name from 'Creative' to 'Creative Eye'. The Group has a broad church of thinking and encourages all types of image making and experimentation.

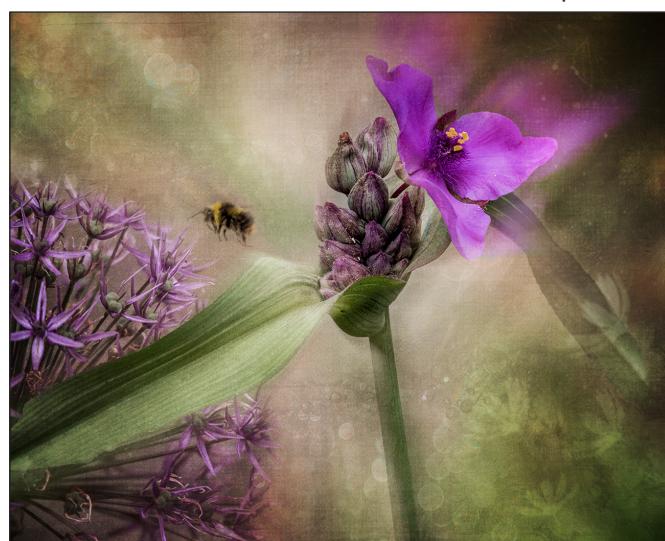
We hold many events each year, which include illustrated talks by leading photographers; joint meetings; workshops; members' open days, where members are invited to present and talk about



Lightning Storm at Port Leven by Bill Spencer LRPS

their work and ideas; discussion group meetings with photography days out, when members enjoy an informal get together. We are now offering field trips to members, with the first taking place in Norfolk in July. David Jordan FRPS will be leading a trip to Kew Gardens in London in October and we hope to organise a few more trips before the end of the year.

One of the highlights of the year is the Members' Print and Projected Image Exhibition. Entries for each section of the Exhibition are 'open', and are selected at the spring meeting each year by an invited judge who awards RPS Gold, Silver and Bronze Medals and Certificates. We take a pride in



Down Amongst the Flowers by Mike Bromley



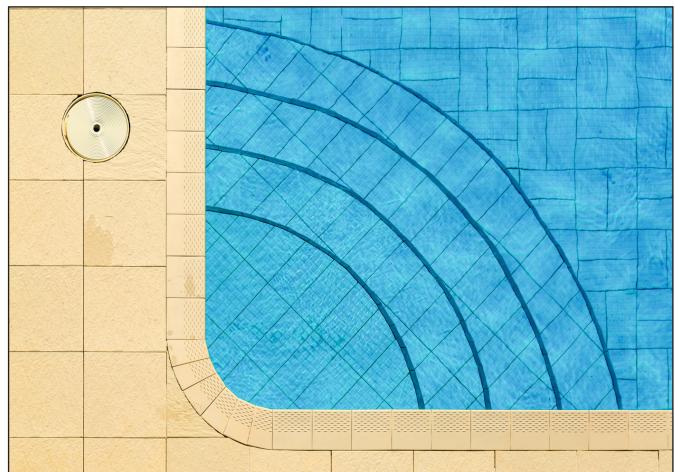
*Thames Sunrise by Jan Harris*

the Exhibition, showcasing it at a number of venues each year, including Wingfield Barns in Suffolk, Smethwick Photographic Society in the West Midlands and the Edinburgh Photographic Society in Great King Street. The Exhibition can also be viewed in the form of a slideshow on the Group's website. We have a small collection of members' prints available to be loaned for display at locations in Britain and overseas.

The Group's full colour magazine the *Creative Eye* is issued three times a year, and is posted to members worldwide. The May edition showcases all the accepted images from the Exhibition, with this year being the largest exhibition on record, having nearly 200 images! The September and January editions concentrate on members' contributions; articles by distinguished photographers; information regarding upcoming events; members' news and photos from recent events. With the benefit of the magazine size being A4, it gives an excellent opportunity to publish and celebrate members' recent RPS distinctions and achievements. The magazine, including previous issues, is available to download from the Group's website.



*CEG Members' Open Day*



*Poolside by Cliff Spooner LRPS*

We are in the process of producing the Group's first eNewsletter, scheduled for distribution at the end of June. We are very grateful to all those members who have submitted interesting articles, and to Steve Varman LRPS who is project coordinator. We are hoping that this initiative will generate real interest for our worldwide membership and prove to be the success we are aiming for.

The Group has an excellent website, with information about upcoming events; a blog with the latest news and images; a guide to inspiration; tips and tuition; the Exhibition images; past editions and the latest edition of the *Creative Eye* magazine; historic and AGM documents. The website has a superb selection of members' galleries and a link to members' RPS portfolios and members' own websites. There is also a thriving Creative Portfolio Group running a monthly online forum.

The very active and flourishing members' Facebook page and Flickr group continues to generate increased participation. I hope this article has gone some way towards generating your interest in what we believe to be an exciting and inspirational group.



*CEG Members' Distinctions Exhibition*



## TENSION

**Dr Colin Close LRPS**

I have photographed the model Jon on many occasions, both in the studio and outside around the Cotswolds. He keeps himself very fit and is active in snowboarding, martial arts, climbing etc. We have used these activities and equipment for some of our previous sessions.

Recently we had a studio session involving nude poses and my thoughts were, in contrast to my previous experience in female nude photography, to use harsher, 'contrasty' lighting and to get him doing something!

I thought along the lines of ancient Greek Olympic games involving running, throwing, jumping etc. Having recently obtained a length of rope, I settled on a 'tug of war' theme. This led to several possible poses (the image that I considered to be the best is shown above, the others are on the next page).

The rope offers variations in composition, and I feel the way the end of the rope is placed and the way he holds it is important. I avoided showing too much rope, which might have led to an untidy tangle at his feet or to a length leading out of the picture. The taking stage and pre-visualisation is very important in this type of photography. The chosen backdrop was black, main light was to camera left and snooted hair light from behind to camera right.

I kept the composition simple, asked him to tense his muscles by actually pulling on the rope at the taking stage. The variety of poses allowed what I consider the best (file 1) to be chosen for post-processing.

The RAW file only required straightforward processing. I tweaked things in RAW converter, subtly adjusting exposure, contrast, white balance, highlights etc. Once opened in Photoshop, I converted to monochrome, emphasising contrast and structure, using Nik Silver Efex Pro software. I cropped as seen and used the levels black dropper to ensure all the background became black, removing some of the visible backdrop light spillage from the studio flash. Further work was done on brightening Jon and the rope. To give him something to stand on I copied a pavement from another picture and brought it in on a separate layer. I applied a mask to this then gradually painted details back in so that it just showed.

In summary, I envisaged the final result, set up a simple studio lighting with black back drop. I took several different poses, of which I have shown some of them here. Post processing was straight forward and took only 10 minutes or so.

I am pleased to have had successes with this picture in both national and international exhibitions, including two awards.





### TIME PASSED

**Douglas Watson LRPS**

This article describes a relatively easy method of enhancing movement in an image that can be applied to almost any moving subjects. It gives the author plenty of choices at the various stages.

The first task is to take a picture of a dancer in mid-movement (right). For that I used a main light at 45 degrees to the left and forward of the subject and a fill-in light in the same position on the right.

The dancer counts me in and then takes the pose and starts to fall forward holding her body position – my task is to judge the moment and press the trigger.

I am using fast sync lights and can therefore use a shutter speed of 1/200 sec and a aperture of f/11, this means I can stop the motion and get good focus.



What follows is a series of post-camera stages.

1. The first stage is just standard adjusting and tidying up the image.
2. Then, using the Quick Selection Tool, select and save the selection.
3. Now, using Edit and Paste, you will get a new layer appearing in the layers panel, but this will just be the selection without background.
4. Using Paste again, another figure will appear. Now, using the Move Tool, you can move the figure into the position you want. You can do this as often as you want. I have moved my selection in front of the individual to ensure the shadow overlap comes behind the front image.



5. Select Layer and another layer should appear in the side panel plus another image. Once again using the move tool, move the selection in front and line up as you want.



6. Then, selecting each layer in turn apply a Moving Blur to the desired amount and reduce the opacity also by the required amount.



7. The final stage is to convert to monochrome using your preferred method – mine is Nik's Silver Efex Pro.

The image can now be cropped to form the final image.



### ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH, HINGHAM, NORWICH

**David Ryland ARPS**

I was approached by our Rector, who wanted some photographs of the newly installed heating and lighting in our Church here in Hingham, Norfolk. As I had recently purchased a fisheye lens, I saw the opportunity to explore the possibilities of what this lens was capable of producing.

The day I visited to take the images was bright but overcast, so there was no strong sunlight entering through the large stained glass North window, however the dynamic range of the interior was such that I opted for an HDR approach in order to retain as much detail as possible in the window as well as the shadows.

The Samyang is a stereographic projection lens, which gives a more natural look to the image than by an equal area projection. When the lens is level and straight, anything on the horizontal and vertical centreline remains straight and distortion is progressive toward the corners.

I set the camera up on the tripod with the viewfinder at my eye level and aligned it to the centreline of the aisle. Then made slight adjustments in position to get the symmetry as good as possible. For the exposures, I chose 5 images at -2.0, -1.0, 0.0, +1.0 and +2.0 stops at f/8. The lens is manual focus, so I set infinity at the f/8 graduation for the best depth of focus. This gives a depth of field from infinity to 0.4m. It seems to have worked OK.

When I got home I downloaded the RAW images and using Photoshop CS6 and the NIK Photo merge software, combined the five images and saved the result as a TIFF. I then took the tiff file into CS6 and used the NIK Colour Efex Pro 2 detail extractor to make the final adjustments to the contrast and colour saturation. I used the minimum amount of adjustments as I did not want to create an 'over the top' HDR look.

The final result was resized to A3 at 360dpi for printing on my Epson Pro 3880 printer, using Permajet Portrait White 285 matt art paper. This looked superb. I also printed it on Epson Pro Semi-Gloss paper to see which I preferred. The semi-gloss finish actually seemed to suit the colours and detail well in this instance and as I was framing the mounted image under glass, the matt effect would have been lost anyway.

A searchable, cumulative contents list of previous issues is available from the Digital Imaging Group magazine page of the Group's website at: [www.rps.org/DIGIT](http://www.rps.org/DIGIT)

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