



Contemporary North

A SUBGROUP OF THE RPS CONTEMPORARY GROUP

Report of the meeting, Saturday, 7 May 2022 at Clements Hall,
1.30 – 5.00 pm.

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Coordination and editing: **Patricia Ruddle**

Lay and design: **Alexandra Prescott**

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Experimenting with our photography while enjoying ourselves is key. And we certainly enjoyed this face to face meeting at our old haunt: Clements Hall.

Read on for further details of the day

All members introduced themselves. In discussion, while talking about our photography practices a common theme emerged that we should develop both individually and together, and have fun. The meeting venue for future events was discussed. It was decided (informally) by majority that the Main Hall downstairs has the best facilities. The Art Room upstairs was liked by some members as it was a smaller more intimate room. However, it lacked room and flexibility for more than 15 people to attend. Agreed Patricia should book Main Hall as far as possible into the year, if unavailable then we would book the Art Room or the other Meeting Room (not available yet but again a small room.) An average fee for each member could be £6. In 2023 room rental will be £18 per hour. (But where else can you park for free on a Saturday in York?!)

Christine Pinnington confirmed that *Concept* will be back soon and that **Suzi Darsa** is the new editor with Christine as the designer.

David Leighton began talking about his extensive body of work photographing over 100 plays for Bingley Little Theatre. David talked about how he tried to capture the rich tapestry of the actors' emotions. David described the rich tapestry of emotions and the intense connections between the actors and their audiences.

David has applied for an Associateship in Applied Photography with a portfolio from his photography of the plays. Good luck David for success on 25 May!

Statement of Intent

This submission is from my work photographing the plays of which eight are produced each season from September to June with rehearsals commencing eight weeks before each play week. Each production is for six evenings.

Alongside documenting each production, which is photographed at the final dress rehearsals, portraits had to be produced of each participant for the programmes and publicity purposes as well as creating publicity shots for the press.

From the very beginning, I wanted to produce photographs, which went beyond a record, and to capture the spirit of each production as well as the emotions portrayed by the actors. The available stage lighting is used to capture the action and not as static posed photographs after the rehearsal.

This photography was a great challenge and stimulation and increased my photographic knowledge and people skills. When I moved to digital camera photography my skill with the software increased rapidly.



David Leighton :
Flare Path

David Leighton: The Ladykillers



David Leighton : Present Laughter

Jane Batty presented different photographs from projects she worked on. Jane's opening series was entitled *The Decay of a Dahlia*, a series of six photographs of a decaying dahlia. The translucent geometric abstract form of the dahlia was unexpected in photographing a flower and particularly caught our attention.

Jane Batty: Deceased Dahlia 1



Jane Batty: Deceased Dahlia 2

Jane Batty: Deceased Dahlia 3



Jane Batty: Deceased Dahlia 4

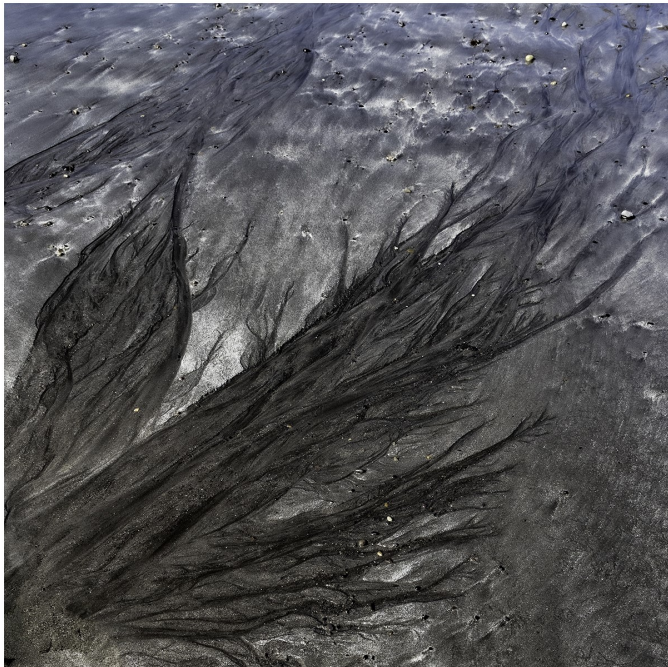
Continuing a theme of looking for what you would not normally see Jane then showed the group a series of photographs, which she described as either falling into a picture or the picture coming out to meet you. Jane often moved the camera outlining the shapes of the landscape she was photographing. Jane described her practice as aiming to depict the experience of being in a landscape and how it felt being there and looking at the landscape often in an abstract way



Lyn Newton showed a series of images taken from landscapes in Oban and the Isle of Mull, depicting stretches of colour in skies fading to night time. With multiple exposures Lyn observed landscapes in uncertain, brooding late night skies.



By moving her camera across the land Lyn found that colours separated and stood out. Rachel and Patricia mentioned their hero **Norman Ackroyd** and his expressive water colours and etchings of the Scottish landscape that seemed to resonate with Lyn's work. A series of photographs of the beach looking at unusual, abstracted patterns mapped in the sand when the sea retreated from the shoreline were also shown.



Lyn closed with a photograph of a local film star – a red phone box with a waterfall framed in the background – the subject of several films and television dramas

Janet Cook. The meeting was amused by a series of photographs with captions of young, ungainly (and rather large and ugly) cormorant chicks waiting for their parents to return with food. Janet described having some fun with these photographs and each image was combined by a caption. The group reacted with comments such as “endearing” or “truculent”! This presentation linked well with the opening thoughts that we should enjoy our photography



Cormo! Where are you?



You'll be in trouble if you don't come



Who's that



I'll tell Mummy



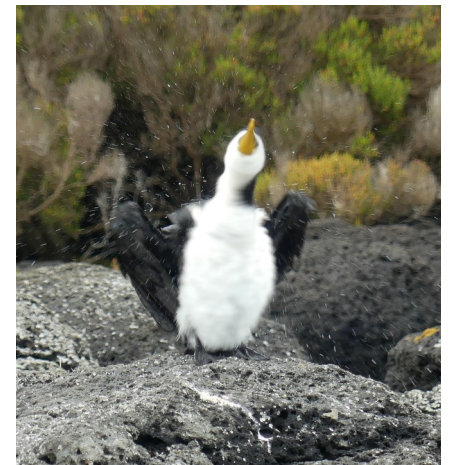
Dinners ready, where are you



Im staying here



My big sister, pretend you can't hear her



Don't care



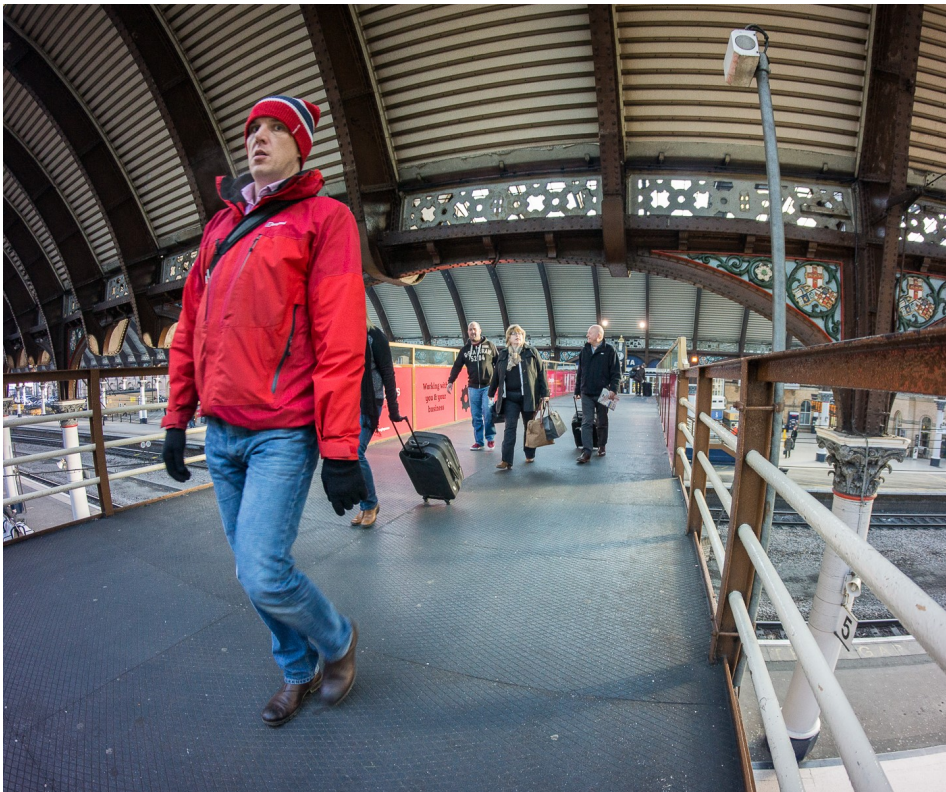
Life can be such a drag when you are a baby Cormorant

Harry Silcox presented a series of street photographs taken in the York Railway Museum and York Railway Station. Harry explained that his tools are usually either a wide-angle lens or a fisheye lens. He doesn't use a zoom lens, occasionally a fixed lens.



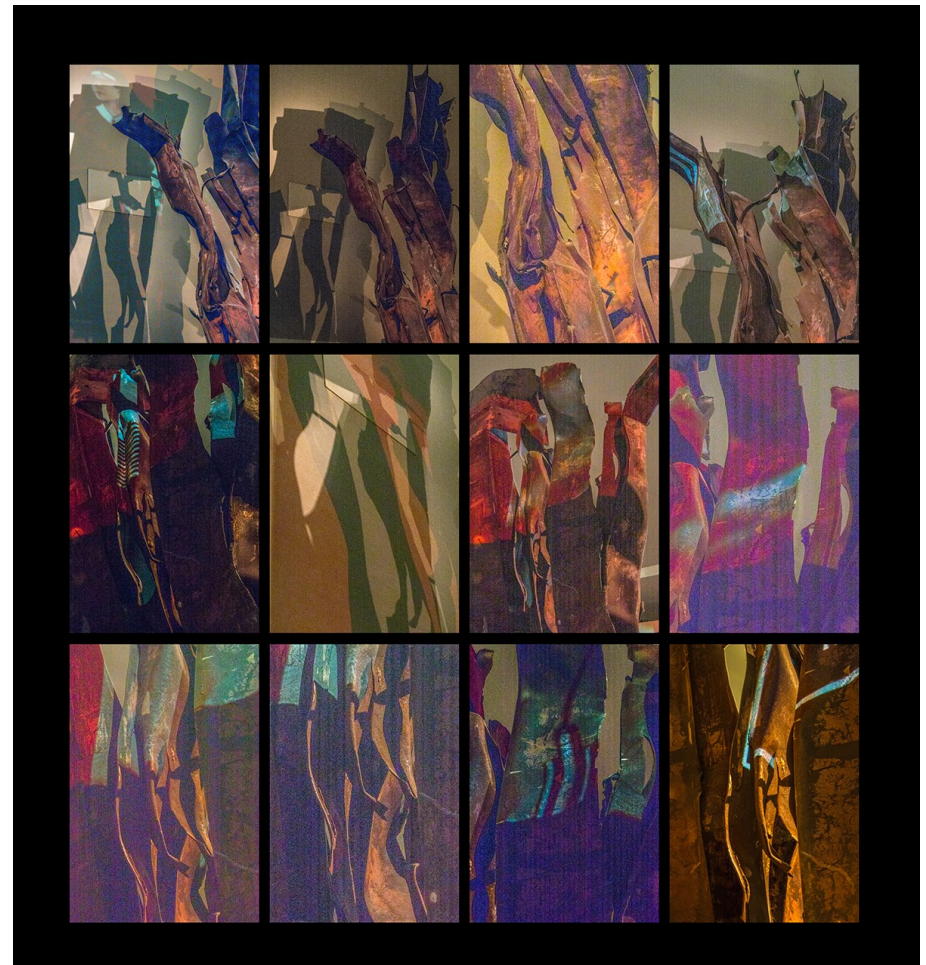
By focussing on an object, for example a clock or railings, keeping his camera low and or carrying a remote control, Harry takes stealth photographs which capture people in their environs. Very few people know they are being photographed by “dastardly” Harry, which helps keep his photographs more objective and self-conscious people unaware. He described the importance of having 2 or 3 parts of interest in his photographs which keeps his audience focussed on looking round his images rather than at one image. Harry is acutely aware and operating at speed, thinking of the composition and every inch of the image, and how the elements may interrelate.

A good example of this is a series of photographs of steps in York Railway station where the diagonal line of the railing leads the eye from one corner of the image to the opposite, while the people moving through the image move the eye in a different direction.

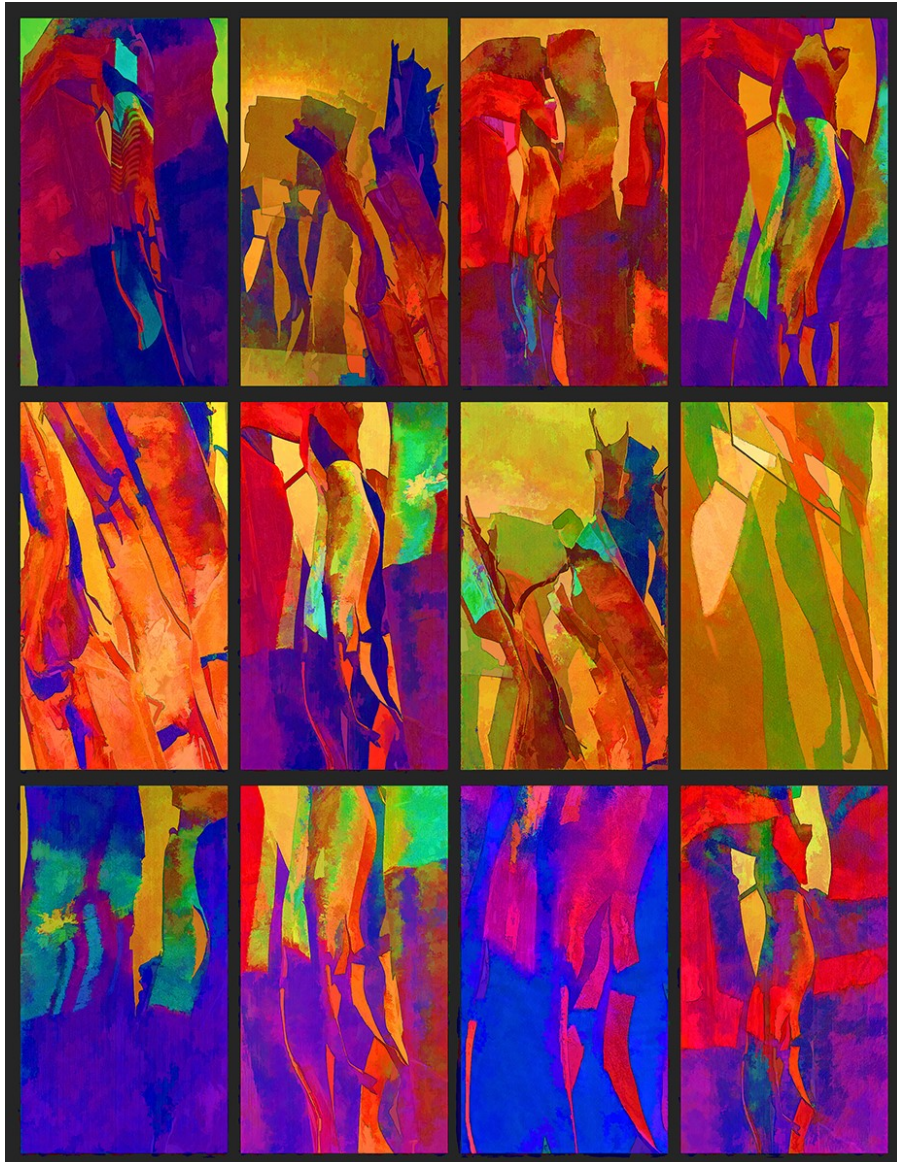




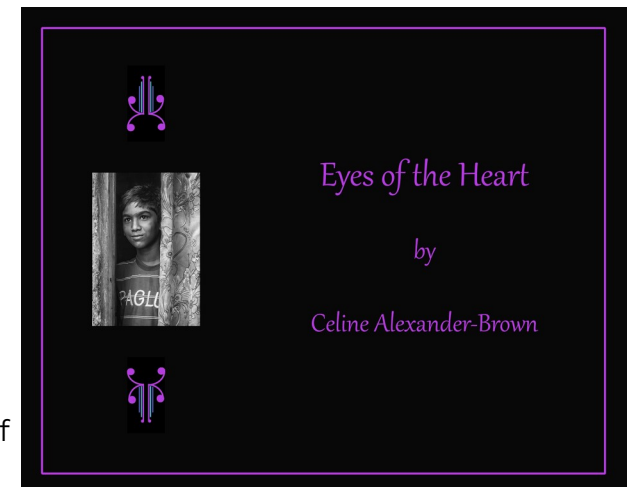
Celine Alexander-Brown talked about her visit to the Imperial War Museum before lockdown. While wandering through the Museum she came upon a huge installation of twisted and rusted steelwork sent from the 9/11 Ground Zero site. This formed an abstract sculpture, with lights and shadows haunting the installation. Celine found the sculpture difficult to photograph due to lack of light and space to set a tripod back from the installation. The only solution was to photograph the installation in sections. Recently Celine, tackled the photographs, (which were not sharp) editing the images *Topaz* to reduce noise and to sharpen the shapes of the installation.



These images were then grouped together and Celine noticed the resulting images were abstracted but the light playing on the surfaces of the girders seemed to reveal screaming faces.



Celine also talked about the latest book that she made *Eyes of the Heart*, published in 2022, designed by **Christine Pinnington** with help and support by **Lyn Newton**. Celine told us that her images were taken in Kolkata in 2016 with the aim of capturing the inner beauty and dignity of the people of Kolkata. Copies of the book are available with a donation for *The Hope Foundation for Street Children*. Contact: eyesoftheheart@gmail.com





Christine Pinnington presented 3 works. The first was a set of quirky images, taken on a walk, and mounted with iPhone frames.

In the second one she made a concertina book of images taken in thick fog. The book aimed to demonstrate the quiet and peaceful atmosphere.

Her third piece consisted of three post-sized collages examining the effect of climate change on sea, sky and land with the message called:

Don't delay - time flies



The Contemporary Sandpit.

A Sandpit is an intense event which has the objective of stimulating progress for individuals. The taking part is the progress facilitator and it is a safe environment for experimentation whatever your degree of expertise. Take six Contemporary images, write a 150-word paragraph about your images and then come and join us. Show your images, read your story and discuss your collection with other photographers. This is not a competition but an opportunity to share and exchange ideas about each other's work. Sandpit meetings will be on Zoom or F2F. All submitted images will be collated into a slide show for on line general viewing. (Subject to photographers' consent).

Theme	Submission Period	Sandpit Meeting Date	Meeting Venue	Notes
Mobile Phone Moments	01/05 - 30/06	23/07/2022	Zoom	Only images taken with a Mobile Phone are eligible
Who I am - Who am I	01/07 - 31/08	15/10/2022	York	Discussion will be part of the F2F Contemporary Meet-up hosted by Contemporary North at York
Dream or Nightmare	01/09 - 31/10	10/12/2022	Zoom	

CONTEMPORARY TALK DIARY June—Dec 2022

Month	Photographer	
June	20/06/2022 Grant Scott	A case for the importance of <i>visual literacy</i> .
July	18/07/2022 Tim Beale	The Right to This City is a body of work documenting Tim's photographic research into housing inequality in Bath, one of the UK's most expensive places to live.
August	15/08/2022 Alan Cameron	F Distinction Journey
September	19/09/2022 Holly Stranks	F Distinction Journey
October	17/10/2022 Christy Lee Rogers.. studio@christyleerogers.com	Exploring Vulnerability
November	21/11/2022 Charlotte Johnson	Contemporary Fine Art
Dec	31/12/2022 Jo Bradford	Mobile Phone & Camera-less Images)

Peer 2 Peer

The next FRPS P2P Support Group meets on Zoom. June 14 at 7 pm for Contemporary, Applied, Portraiture and Documentary Distinctions. This is an unofficial group who get together to support each other and offer thoughts on the journey we are all going through.

Contact aprescott_3@yahoo.co.uk

Volunteers

This is a call to help with the production of the Contemporary North Newsletter- specifically taking Notes and preparing the Layout. With 24+ attendees on average – If you volunteer just once to do both jobs – at different times – that's one voluntary session a year! Please help to spread the load as it is hard on the same people who offer each time.

The next meeting will be held on Zoom **21st May**, 1.30 – 4.00 pm (UK Time)

We will then meet in the Main Hall of St Clements, York on Saturday **4th June**, 1.30 – 5.00 pm