

concept

abstraction image conceptualisation notion thought
impression theory view conception idea hypothesis

THE **RPS**
ROYAL
PHOTOGRAPHIC
SOCIETY

CONTEMPORARY
GROUP

e-newsletter

Welcome back to Concept after a Summer break.

It is good to see the sub-groups meeting again after their Summer break with reports from 3 of those in this issue. Their activities are certainly showing a commitment to contemporary photography. Thank you to this month's contributors.

By the time you read this the Photobook Exhibition will have finished but there is still the opportunity to see it as it goes to the Impressions Gallery at the Bradford Media Museum. For those who are unable to attend there is more information in this issue.

Sadly the lack of response has meant that the proposed sub-group for the London, Thames Valley and Nearby Regions will not be going any further at the present time. Our thanks to Gareth Hughes for efforts in proposing a new group.



Strawberry Tea © Alan Cameron LRPS

Christine Pinnington LRPS
Editor



© Lyn Newton LRPS
One of the images shown at the recent NE group meeting

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Congratulations go to Mike Mills ARPS. Mike's panel was successful at the recent Contemporary and Conceptual Assessments at RPS Headquarters in Bath. His panel can be seen in the September RPS Journal and an article about Mike's photography will be featured in the next issue of Concept.

Contemporary North West Meeting

26th September 2016

Alan Cameron LRPS Reports

Images © Ken Rowlatt LRPS



Eight members attended the meeting at Charnock Richard Services and discussions were wide ranging.

Ken had been to an advisory day and showed the group his panel of images that had received a favourable response. He has captured the modern habit of eating in the street, something that was an anathema to his parents and grandparents generation. In addition he portrayed the impact of continuous advertising aimed at promoting public eating by juxtaposing subjects and advertising. He has submitted the panel for the next Contemporary Assessments to be held.



Keith brought a large number of monochrome prints taken at Cumbrian carnivals. This is part of his continuing interest in the Cumbrian coast. The carnivals are dwindling in number, scale and popularity - in part due to the ban on drinking leading to many fewer pub based "acts." He was keen to discuss how we should bring out something of ourselves when we talk about our images. In his case he feels that it's his wry sense of humour. He told us that he is open about his photography and generally stands where he thinks something will happen until his presence is noticed. Then he can capture fleeting moments that capture the essence of the event.

In a separate discussion Keith encouraged us to look at the work of Tom Kidd and the late Chick Chambers who captured life on Shetland and Orkney respectively. This work was done in the 1970s and unknown to each other. Tom Kidd is part of *Document Scotland* and his work can be viewed on www.documentscotland.com. Tim was thinking about his photography and decided to create a book to see how it fitted together. The book was passed around for interest and comment.

Alan produced his first book on Fylde Café Culture, covering Fleetwood and Cleveleys. He wanted to show the traditional cafés in a positive light and to give the owners their chance to add the words. Each cafe has a two page spread with the café outside on the left hand page and several photos on the other of the people and features of the café and what it serves. Other members commented that the view was very positive and not the expected one of the depressed area that is the Fylde. Keith felt that Alan's positive outlook of the cafe owners came across well.

Mike had two different topics to discuss. First he produced an untitled book that he uses to break the ice when capturing people in his street photography. He feels that it is a non-threatening way to introduce himself and this helps his subjects to relax. He then projected a number of IR images where he felt that the results were not as expected. The group all commented and Nigel provided pointers to get better and more predictable results. The files were dropped into Lightroom and some adjustments made so that the images, when processed, were more as expected.

Finally, Ian shared some more of his 'Unpromising Landscapes' from New Zealand, Australia and Europe. We discussed how each image could be interpreted by the viewer to fulfil their own imagination.

Next meeting: 5th December 2016 (see What's On for details)



Plaza © Alan Cameron LRPS

Experience of the Portfolio Box Scheme

The RPS Contemporary Group Postal Portfolio Box scheme has been running for over 25 years which is a testament to its success. The Portfolio Boxes go round their circuits each member puts in their work, which is usually up to half a dozen prints or a book of a new or ongoing project, together with a brief statement. Importantly each member also critiques the work put into the box by the other members.

Douglas May FRPS tells us about his experience with the scheme

I have been a member of the postal portfolio for about sixteen years and find it one of the most worthwhile photographic activities I do. It has three attractions.

Firstly, it provides me with a critical audience for my work. From the comments of the group I can gauge whether the ideas behind a single photograph, a series of photographs or a small photo book have communicated themselves to others. Sometimes the answer is disappointing but on other occasions is very rewarding, such as in the response to a photo book I did on my childhood stamp album and how it informed me about history. That work resonated with the others in the group and provoked a lively discussion. Sometimes there is a surprising personal reaction. A photo book I did on the 2015 Open Golf Championship disclosed the aversion of one of the members has to golf as her father spent all of his time playing it.

Secondly, I have the pleasure of looking at the work of the other members and getting to know their photographic interests, enjoying their exploration and development over time. One member often uses photographs of nature to comment on political and social issues. Another entertains us with the adventures of two very elderly women. Yet another displays an extraordinary empathy with the subjects of her portraits.

Thirdly, it makes me write about photography. As each entry has an introduction by the author so it is necessary for me to articulate what I am seeking to convey with my own photographs. It also turns me into a critic of the work of my fellow members. That means more than a quick response as to whether I like the work or not but really looking and reacting with concise and pertinent comments. The comments of all the members are added to a sheet of paper. If you are the first to receive the box with a new entry you kick off the discussion otherwise you are able to make comments informed by the views of others. Reading the views of others is particularly valuable, as this often give me a different perspective on what I am viewing and sometimes recording a change of mind when the work reaches me on its second circuit. (Each entry circulates twice)

Membership does require a bit of effort but I do not find it burdensome. There is nothing more pleasurable than spending an evening working through a box. We also have a journal in each box in which the members debate photographic issues, share our reactions to exhibitions and generally chat to each other.

Douglas May FRPS

For further information

on the Portfolio Box Scheme
contact Duncan Unsworth

duncan.unsworth100@gmail.com

07740 051519



South West Contemporary Meeting

Images © Rod Fry ARPS

2nd October 2106

Rod Fry ARPS Reports

The day started with a brief meeting, to enable the group to catch up on the planned Plymouth Photobook Weekend (regrettably cancelled) and the recent Advisory Board Meeting, then followed with a review of member's work.

Carol Ballenger showed the proofs of her new book shortly to be published by Halsgrove Publications. Called *Route 66* it is a collection of John Powl's poems and images collected from Google Earth and Google Street View, selected, edited and reworked by Carol. The book will be launched at an event on the 1st December at the Devon Guild, Bovey Tracey. The event starts at 6.30pm, there will be a buffet, and the show will run from 7.30pm to 9.15 pm tickets are from £9.50.



Anna Goodchild then showed us her latest course work, which consisted of the press reaction from around the world on the day the "Brexit" result was known. She enlisted people on Facebook from around the world to send her a selfie holding a paper dated 24th June 2016. The work was put together in the form of a concertina book. There will be a full article on Anna Goodchild's project in next month's issue of Concept.

Rod Fry had two books to show the group, one was based on his experience of attending Simon Gomery's funeral. At his funeral he learned of the many facets of his life, which he felt moved enough to capture in photographs. The other was based on the art installation, 19240 Shrouds. This ran from the 1st to 7th July at Northernhay Gardens to commemorate the Battle of the Somme.

Graham Hodgson, carefully selected 174 images of Venice from Google Earth. The photographs were then made into a map.

John Evans Jones showed us how he had consciously or otherwise taken repeating images over the many years he has been an active photographer.



Graham Hodgson continued with a warm gentle humour and showed the group a journey along the A66, using Google Earth and Street View he set about to show us UK's answer to Route 66.

Ken Holland kept us entertained with a whole series of photographs of stencilled fish that had been painted next to drains in the centre of Teignmouth. Their significance was a mystery until Ken revealed that they indicated which drains discharged straight into the sea and were placed there so people would not put rubbish or pollutants down these drains.



Finally Carol Hodgson showed us a video installation made on a train journey from Paddington to Devon. Shadows, movement and the passage of time were all perfectly captured in this piece of art.

Vacancy

Editor Contemporary Photography

The Quarterly Journal of the Royal Photographic Society's Contemporary Group

After 6 successful years our current editor has decided to step down after the Spring 2017 issue.

An opportunity now arises for a new editor to take our Journal forward and propose new ideas.

With support from the Journal Editorial Committee, this is a prestigious and rewarding position within our group. We are looking for an editor who is able to uncover less well-known contemporary photographers working in all genres, particularly across the span ranging from personal documentary to art photography. The Journal's aim is to provide articles with a value and purpose, mainly seeking such contacts within and outside the RPS and often outside the UK. Researching to identify such potential contributors would therefore be a key activity. The Journal also has an important role in the encouragement of new members to the Group.

Contemporary Photography is a quarterly well respected journal which encompasses the ethos of the Contemporary Group – photography that conveys ideas, stimulates thought and encourages interpretation; photographs 'about' rather than 'of'. All Contemporary Group members receive printed Group Journals, giving them a permanence. As well as the current circulation through the RPS, the Journal is currently featured on issuu.com where it has a worldwide following particularly in North and South America, and in Eastern and Western Europe, with an on-line readership of up to 3000 per issue and over 370 named followers.

If you are interested in becoming the new editor and would like to discuss this in more detail please contact:

Avril Harris ARPS

Chair

Contemporary Group

avrilharris@blueyonder.co.uk

Tel: 07990 976 390

North East Contemporary Group

17th September 2016

Peter Bartlett LRPS Reports

The North East Contemporary Group held their regular bi-monthly meeting in Wakefield for the first time, hosted by Nigel Tooby and Elaine Gosal-Tooby at their studio in the city centre. The new location proved to be a great success providing plenty of space for informal discussion and for showing work. We are grateful to Nigel and Elaine for making the studio available to us. Eleven members of the group attended with six bringing work to share.

Peter Bartlett brought along his book, "Various Covered Vehicles", which is based upon a project entitled "Under Cover" that had been discussed several months ago. The collection of images features a range of vehicles either wholly or partially covered by tarpaulins. Peter explained that the inspiration for the layout of the book had been the small photobooks produced during the 1960s and 1970s by the American artist, Ed Ruscha. Peter's book can be viewed at <http://www.blurb.co.uk/bookstore/detail/7298736-various-covered-vehicles>. Whilst the book was being passed around, Peter also showed a number of new images from his ongoing project based upon Manchester's Northern Quarter and a lively discussion took place on the merits of several of the images.



© Peter Bartlett LRPS

Lyn Newton showed a collection of mainly monochrome images from her project based on Country Fairs. She commented that she had realised that many of these events are now dominated by corporate influences and she was keen to capture the "local" aspects of the events before this side of things are lost. Her photographs concentrated on the participants, rather than the attendees or spectators and included both informal and unposed portraits as well as wider scenes covering young people showing animals. She also showed a few coloured images in which she had attempted to capture movement by using blur.



© Lyn Newton LRPS

Christine Carr's series of images focused on small buildings in Scotland. Initially Christine's attention had been caught by the large number of small rural structures with corrugated iron roofs and others with a greater proportion of their structure consisting of this material. The collection had been extended to include a range of other rustic structures made of other materials including barns, agricultural outbuildings, cabins and sheds. Some of her images were tightly framed around the buildings whereas in others the composition showed how the buildings sat within the wider Scottish landscape.

Christine Pinnington has shown some images from her "Blackpool Series" before, but today the presentation was very different. Using some of the original images and adding some new, Christine produced two hand-made artists books using alternative methods of construction. The books use a mixture of monochrome and colour images and in each, careful consideration had been given to the sequencing, with photographs of



Both images
© Christine Carr LRPS



dilapidated areas of Blackpool juxtaposed with images of the brash seafront and entertainment facilities that the town is famed for. Some discussion took place about the methods used to create the two handmade books and members were especially impressed with the colourful fabric book covers.



Christine Pinnington's handmade books 'Wish You Were Here'

Mike Nolan likes to create and manipulate images in Photoshop and he brought with him several prints in which he had used multiple components to create and or modify landscapes. In two of the images he had used images of folded fabric to create the textures of the landscape - Mike had shown these images on a previous occasion but he explained how he had developed them further since the earlier meeting. In another image Mike had used a photograph of a way marker stone to "pave" a curving path that leads through a moorland scene - he had two versions of this image to show and explained his thought processes around the development of the second image from the first.

Finally, Stephen Griffiths presented a collection of high contrast graphic monochrome prints. Mike had used Nik Silver Efex Pro 2 to convert the images to monochrome, but what made the prints of considerable interest was that instead of printing them on photographic ink-jet paper Stephen had used artist's acrylic paper. The use of this paper, and in particular its texture and finish, gave the resulting prints a unique quality. The meeting was then brought to a close.



Facing Time © Stephen Griffiths LRPS

Next meeting: 19th November 2016
(see What's On for details).

Congratulations go to Stephen Griffiths of the North East Contemporary Group. Two of his prints "White Stillness" and "Facing Time" were accepted and are exhibited at the Open Art Exhibition, Doncaster Museum & Art Gallery.

The Open Art Exhibition runs from 15th October - 11th December 2016 and brings together the best in arts and crafts from artists and makers working across the Doncaster Borough.z

Hania Farrell at the National Portrait Gallery

The Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize
17 November 2016 - 26 February 2017

National Portrait Gallery,
St Martin's Place,
WC2H 0HE, London, UK

The Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize is the leading international competition celebrating and promoting the very best in contemporary portrait photography from around the world. The exhibition opens November 17th, featuring Hania's recent piece Helix (from the series: Helix) and is amongst the 58 portraits included in The Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize 2016.

<http://www.npg.org.uk/whatson/twppp-2016/exhibition.php>

The RPS International Photobook Exhibition took place, as part of East London Photomonth, 18-23 October 2016.

Alongside the exhibition was an accompanying 'print with photobook exhibition' by 14 invited RPS members.



Over 80 guests attended the Private View of the exhibition on the evening of 20 October at the Espacio Gallery, London. 25 photobooks were short-listed for exhibition, submitted from a total of 155 from 23 countries. Some attendees had flown in from Germany, Spain, The Netherlands and Brazil and all were full of praise for the organisers and for the RPS for putting on an exhibition reflecting this very popular form of photography of the 21st century.

The exhibition would not have been possible without the many hours of volunteer work by the team. We give a big thank you to Brian Steptoe FRPS for leading the team and to team members Rod Fry ARPS, Avril Harris ARPS, Tom Owens ARPS and Kate Wentworth LRPS. We particularly thank Avril for giving up large

parts of her home to collect, unwrap, store, re-wrap and mail books for return. We also thank others who have volunteered to help as stewards during the exhibition: Rossella Pagano, Gareth Hughes, Lizzie Brown, Peter Ellis, Chris Gravette and Liz Benjamin.

Winner, second and third awards were presented to their respective book authors by the sponsors Bob Books and RPS medals for these were presented by Society President, Walter Benzie.

Short Listed for Exhibition were

Winner

John MacLean, UK

Second

Arnaldo Pappalardo, Brazil

Third

Thom and Beth Atkinson, UK

Hon. Mention

Jeff Hutchinson, UK

Short Listed

Carlos Alba, UK,

Liz Benjamin, UK,

James Berrington, UK

Rossella Castello, UK

Ana Paula Estrada, Australia

Alysandra de Gonville Morrison, UK

Chris Gravett, UK

Kacper Kowalski, Poland

Antoine Leblond, France

Alexandra Lethbridge, UK

Beata Lyky, Germany

Aimée Mae, UK

Mieke Klein Obbink, Netherlands

Max Pinckers & Quinten De Bruyn, Belgium

Rick Pushinsky, UK

Mafalda Rakoš, Austria

Robert Zhao Renhui, Singapore

Nicolas Silberfaden, France

Kiki Streitberger, UK

Nat Urazmetova, UK

Mo Verlaan, Netherlands

Hometowns (photobook dummy)

Entre (photobook dummy)

Missing Buildings (self-published)

Five Days in Northumbria with Doris, (artist book)

The Observation of Trifles

Grey

The Place of Home

Sonder

Memorandum

London-Holyhead A5

Gravette The Heart of Hometown America

Side Effects

ressha ga kimasu

The Meteorite Hunter

Protected View

Please don't call me Vodka

Recollected

Lotus

Songs of Innocence and of Experience: A Study Guide

I want to disappear - Approaching Eating Disorders

Christmas Island, Naturally

738

Travelling Light

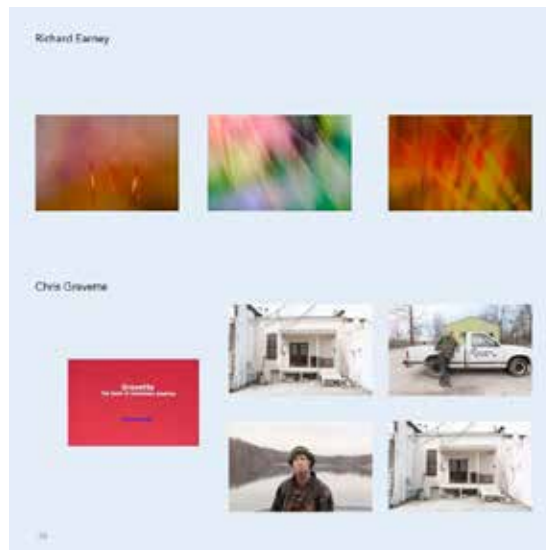
The Persimmon's Fruit

Resonance

The selectors were

David Company, writer, curator of exhibitions and teacher at graduate and postgraduate level.
Lucy Kumara Moore, director of the world-renowned photography and fashion bookshop Claire de Rouen.
Dewi Lewis, publisher of photography books since 1994.

The exhibition can also be seen at the Impressions Gallery, Centenary Square, Bradford BD1 1SD on 12 November 2016.



Print with Photobook Exhibition exhibitors

- Ángel Amero
- Robert Bedson
- Elizabeth Brown
- Antoinette Castro
- Richard Earny
- Chris Gavett
- Robert Herringshaw
- Mark Kelly
- Keith Locke
- Tom Owens
- Chris Roche
- Siegfried Rubbe
- Brian Steptoe
- Neil Wittman

For a full version of the catalogue
www.issuu.com

<http://www.rps.org/regions-and-chapters/regions/headquarters/blogs/2016/october/rps-international-photo-book-exhibition-private-view>

Photographers wanted for Sky Arts programme 'Master of Photography'.

Many of you may have watched the programme Master of Photography on Sky Arts - a search to find Europe's best photographer. 12 photographers were each given an assignment, their images judged, and each week one left the competition. The judges were Oliviero Toscani, Rut Blees Luxemburg and Simon Frederick.

The programme is now looking for photographers for the next series. All you have to do is submit a portfolio of 5 images from a set of genres and a 2min video to be considered. To enter and for more information, or if you missed the series and want to catch up go to www.masterofphotography.tv

What's On

19 November 2016 The Contemporary Group North East

14:00 - 17:00
Central Buildings
13 Bull Ring, Third Floor, Suite 4
Wakefield
United Kingdom
WF1 1HB

Contact: Patricia Ruddle
patriciaruddle@btinternet.com
07572 124290

- See more at: <http://www.rps.org/events/2016/september/17/the-contemporary-group-north-east---wakefield#sthash.FyNRwfMz.dpuf>

5th December 2016 The Contemporary Group North West

19:30 - 22:00
Days Inn Charnock Richard Services
Jct 27-28 M6 Northbound
Chorley, Lancs
United Kingdom
PR7 5LR

Contact: Alan Cameron
email: alan.cameron@me.com
tel: 07825 271344

(Please note the date as the room is not available the previous week.)

Photobook Exhibition 2016 12 November 2016

10:30 - 16:30
Impressions Gallery
Centenary Square
Bradford
United Kingdom
BD1 1SD

Winners and short-listed entries for the RPS Open International Photobook Exhibition 2016 will be exhibited
<http://www.rps.org/events/2016/november/12/international-photobook-exhibition>

Photobook Exhibition 2016 29th and 30th October 2016

St Saviours Hall, Barbican
Plymouth PL1 2NN.

Please note due to unforeseen circumstances this exhibition has been cancelled

Contact Rod Fry ARPS
rod@rodfry.eclipse.co.uk

FRPS and ARPS Conceptual & Contemporary Photography - Print & Images for Screen Submissions Assessment

19 April 2017

<http://www.rps.org/distinctions/events>
Tel: 01225 325733

Deadline for contributions for inclusion in the November Issue is 20th November 2016.

News, reports, reviews, publicity, profiles, images, in fact anything of interest in the contemporary world. If you have any contributions you would like to have included, please email to:

photopinni@btinternet.com

Christine Pinnington LRPS
Editor, concept
The e-newsletter of the RPS Contemporary Group

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