



**Report of the RPS Contemporary Group North Meeting
held at Clement's Hall, York**

Saturday 4th June 2022 1.30 - 5.00pm

Group Organiser - Patricia Ruddle
Co-ordination and editing - Patricia Ruddle
Text - Robert Harris
Layout and design - Christine Pinnington



The meeting provided an insight into what our members are doing.

One of the benefits of having introductions is finding out what is inspiring each of us now. It was also good to have two visitors, **Stephen Crossland**, the new Yorkshire Region Organiser and **Chris Russell**, a Digital Group Northeast committee member. A new Contemporary Group member, **Andrew Hersom** joined us for the first time.

We had a good variety of photography styles among both new and old members. The style ranged from bookmaking, prints, DPls and 'exploding books', more about that later. The style of photography varied from fine art, to work that reminds us of a modern version **Bernd Becher and Hilla Becher** and everything between.

We have members who want to create long exposures on the move and others who wants to hold the camera still as possible for long exposures. Industrial to street, film and digital were all covered. The group provides a wide range of activities that can inspire the new and rekindle old thoughts with new ideas.

After the introductions we were treated to a variety of presentations



Looking at a variety of different books



Describing how to make a round book

Jane Batty: Where's Issac?

Jane showed us how photography can communicate to others. Pipe cleaner Nanna spent Easter 2020 in lockdown looking for her grandson Issac. Before quarantine he would have been visiting his grandmother for an Easter egg hunt. Pipe cleaner Nanna subsequently helped with many happy hours over the next 17 months, connecting via ALEXA, creating a digital adventure. The images demonstrated the ability of photography to tell a story, breaking down barriers during the pandemic.



Wendy North: Rain - Luskentyre i, ii, iii

It is more dark than light.

*A Chinese painter's brush of deepening grey
moves in a subtle tide.*

(extract from the poem *Rain - Birdswald* by Frances Horowitz)

Wendy began sharing three images of Luskentyre, Isle of Harris, that she had submitted to the annual exhibition of the Yorkshire Photographic Union, of which, Luskentyre II, was awarded the cup for best Landscape image.

Wendy showed us other intimate landscapes as well as the red paint splatters on a container standing in a farm yard, the details of the wooden sleepers that supported the crash barrier and the sand patterns on the beach.

Although we had been introduced to Wendy's project about the Huskar Pit Disaster in previous meetings, this was the first opportunity to show us the actual concertina books.



Wendy also had time to share a few composite images that she had put together following her most recent trip to Mull, and showed us collaged in-camera multiple exposure images taken on various beaches, plus a variety of close-up images, e.g. rust and rocks, juxtaposed against one another.



Luskentyre Rain i



Luskentyre Rain ii



Luskentyre Rain iii

She thinks that arranging images in this way can communicate more to us than a single image ever could, something she feels is particularly important when working within contemporary photography. This brought her to the story told through the images taken in the weaving shed. Something that needs to be told through a set of images, but only something that can only ever be partially told because of the one-off nature of her visit.

Wendy concluded her sharing session with her visit to Iona, especially the Cloisters evoked memories of her deceased partner who had belonged to the Orthodox Church. The founding community of the abbey would have been Orthodox in practice and belief which made Wendy wonder why they had never contemplated visiting the island together.

This quote, photographed on the wall of an entrance porch particularly moved her,

... a thin place where only tissue paper separated the material from the spiritual.

George MacLeod founder of the Iona Community, describing this holy site.

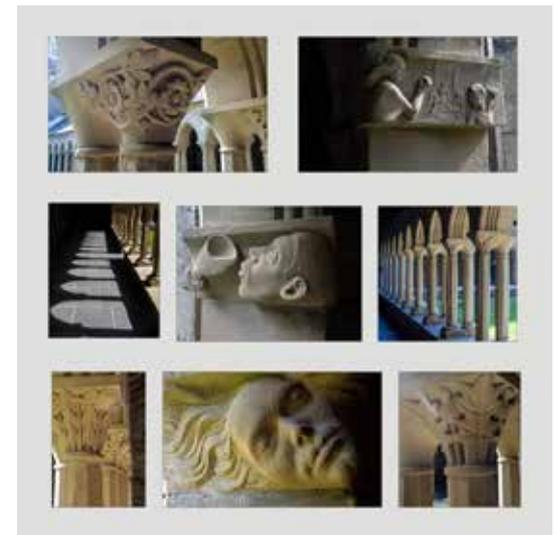


Mull Sand Patterns



Mull Sand Patterns

Iona Abbey





Rocks and rust, Mull



Crash Barrier, Mull



Weaving Shed, Mull

Robert Harris: The Me-World of Mobile Devices

Robert showed some of his degree work, this time looking at archive pictures when he followed the Tour of Britain cycle race for over ten years. The images looked at the growing emergence of the use of mobile phones to record an event. Members of the public would raise their hands, with mobile, looking at the scene, not caring whether others could see. Views were blocked by arms and hands.

The images had Me emojis replacing the faces of people using their phones, while a second set used colour blocks to replace the person who was stepping out to get their photo. The resulting images created a discussion on what is happening at events when you use a digital camera. It's often the case that the photographers actually don't 'see' the event because they're photographing it.

Robert queried, "when does the picture become more important than the event?"

He became accustomed to taking people instead of watching the race, without realising that he had collected a series of images about his frustrations.



All images © Robert Harris



Books and Journals!

There followed discussions on book making

Christine Pinnington: Round Books

Vivaldi and The Four Seasons

The World at my Feet (Fisheye and other interesting lenses)

As part of a design course Christine decided to attempt making a round book. The first was a 'dummy run' a collection of images taken with different lenses. The second about Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* in the shape of a CD. This book examines the relationship between music and imagery. It included split images from the time of the music with images of contemporary times representing the same four seasons.

Both were prepared and cut by Christine and included interesting uses of typefaces. The finish was impeccable for such a difficult subject. The book demonstrated what we can do to make a book.



*Spring, Summer, Autumn
and Winter from Vivaldi
and the Four Seasons*



*The World at my Feet,
Vivaldi and the Four Seasons*
© Christine Pinnington

Patricia brought a book, *West Road* by **Bob Gates** which was made as a zine using the online company Mixam.

<https://mixam.co.uk>

Patricia also brought her new toy – a big stapler! She brought a book *Words are Mundane*, by **Don Harris** as an example of a little panoramic book saddle-stitched with such a stapler, along with a template for a book case.



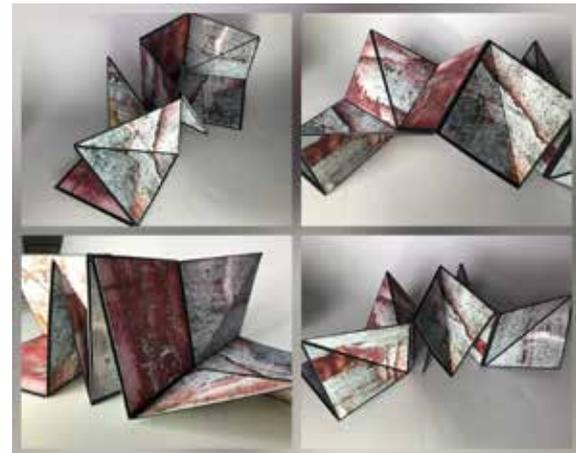
Book by Don Harris with slipcase template



Admiring Patricia's new toy!

As part of her presentation **Wendy North** had some images that had been sitting on her hard drive until she came across the idea of creating 'explosion books' on the website of the **Curious Printmaker**. These are a fun, origami way of presenting images, which seemed a perfect form for showing these semi-abstract images.

<https://thecuriousprintmaker.co.uk/explosion-book-display-prints/>



Explosion Book by Wendy North



Patricia looks at all the books

The meeting concluded with a discussion on how we develop our vision, use software and how project work is good for getting you out and engaging with what is around you.

Have a good summer and we will see you in September for the start of our Autumn program.

There will be a Summer walk-about with Alexandra Prescott in Newcastle, on 16 July. Meet 10.30 at the train station Costa. Please email her if you plan to attend, and include mobile number.

email Alexandra:

contemporary@rps.org

**The next Zoom meeting will be on
17th September 2020, 1.30 – 4.00 pm (UK time).**

**Full information will be sent out a later date
See you soon!**

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