

concept

abstraction image conceptualisation notion thought
impression theory view conception idea hypothesis

THE **RPS**
ROYAL
PHOTOGRAPHIC
SOCIETY

CONTEMPORARY
GROUP

Victoria Quarter Shopping Centre
© Martin Drury



This month we have another excellent ARPS panel to give our members some more inspiration.

The images that appear on the front page are normally chosen individually. However the two images appearing on this page work well together, showing two very different aspects of the shopping spectrum. More about these images in the North East Group report.

There are details of the Dumfermline Event in this issue and this looks to be a very stimulating meeting and don't forget the Contemporary Group Conference on the 8th April. There is limited space so you are advised to book early. Further details in this issue.

As you will see from the vacancy advert, I will be stepping down as editor shortly. I've enjoyed my time as editor - it's been really interesting and I am sure the next editor will gain as much from this position as I have. Full details on the next page.

Christine Pinnington LRPS
Editor



Holmfirth ©
Peter Bartlett LRPS

e-newsletter

In this Issue

Concept Editor Vacancy

BeNeLux Chapter Journal

Nigel Corby ARPS

NE Group Report

Impressions Gallery

Whats on

Dumfermline Event

Herts Foto Forum '21'

Contemporary Group
April Conference

South West Group Meeting

North East Group Meeting

North West Meeting

Distinction Assessment Dates

New Concept Editor

As you all are probably aware our Contemporary Group is run by volunteers who give up some of their valuable time to provide our members with a variety of support. This includes our internationally acclaimed 'Contemporary Photography Journal', regular seminars with renowned speakers, assistance for local sub-groups and, of course, our monthly newsletter 'Concept'.

Our current Concept Editor, Christine Pinnington, is taking a well earned break from the position to work on her own photographic projects. She has done a sterling job keeping us all up to date with group news and provided an excellent new layout design when Concept was re-launched.

We now need another volunteer to carry on Christine's good work. The new incumbent will receive the full support of the Committee, the new Journal Editor and our Webmaster. Templates are available for the layout and distribution is handled by RPS staff at Bath. A full job description will be supplied to those interested.

We are looking for someone with the enthusiasm and ability to carry this forward with a keen interest in Contemporary Photography that is all "About" something and certainly 'outside the box'.

If we have piqued your interest please send a short resume of your photographic and any editorial/writing experience to me at wordsnpicsltd@gmail.com

Peter Ellis LRPS, Deputy Chair
RPS Contemporary Group

RPS eJournal BeNeLux Chapter issue 4 Winter 2017 issuu.com



Many thanks to Armando Jongejan FRPS of the BeNeLux Chapter who has kindly brought our attention to their e-journal. The latest issue of journal contains material which should be of interest to our Contemporary Group members (pages 18 - 38).

The journal is available on
https://issuu.com/armandojongejan/docs/benelux_chapter_issue_4_20170117_de

Well worth a read

Nigel Corby ARPS

Following his recent successful Conceptual and Contemporary ARPS Panel, Nigel Corby discusses his photography

I live in the north-east of Scotland. Around ten years ago I bought a camera to photograph the upland landscape while walking in the hills. My photographic interests then widened to include other environments. I now take most of my photographs in urban and semi-urban settings, both with and without people. My photographs show how I see my surroundings but taking photographs has deepened my perceptions of those surroundings. I can see more clearly now.

I joined the Royal Photographic Society because I felt that working towards the distinctions would provide a structured framework within which I could improve my photography. I also hoped to benefit from criticism, support and assistance provided through the Society's advisory processes. I was not disappointed.

Producing a panel for my Licentiate'ship concentrated my attention on improving the technical side of my photography and, for the first time, I had the satisfaction of presenting my work as prints rather than as digital images. Obtaining the "L" also provided me with a boost to my confidence.

I have developed an interest in photographing everyday aspects of the built environment. I look for ordinary places and details which many people regard as mundane, unremarkable and undeserving of the attention of a camera. I have also become interested in how we perceive places which are close to home and with which we are very familiar. I feel we often fail to appreciate such places because barriers to seeing have been erected by the very familiarity of what we are looking at. For my Associateship panel I decided to combine those two interests - the mundane and the familiar. I also decided to take "close to home" to an extreme and limit myself to what was within the four walls of my own home. My house is warm, dry and comfortable but it possesses relatively little by way of distinctive character. There is not much to make it stand out from hundreds of thousands of similar houses across the UK – and for me this was the attraction. I had never before considered the house as a subject for photography but I now felt it might be an interesting place for a study of my newly found fascination with the mundane and the familiar.



Obviously, I am delighted to have been granted my Associateship but I am even more pleased with the improvement which I saw in my photography while I was working on the panel. This came about partly through the discipline of producing a coherent body of work but I was also helped by the encouragement and the robust but constructive criticism which I received through the Society's advisory processes.

As I was writing this I glanced towards my bookcase. Among the books which I repeatedly pick up are those containing work by William Eggleston, Stephen Shore, Robert Adams, Harry Callahan, Jem Southam and Jan Töve. My most recent purchase was Gregory Halpern's book ZZYZX.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

THE FASCINATION OF HOME

The panel is a study of a small house in which I have lived for a long time.

It is said that travel broadens the mind and, for many years, I have travelled around the world in search of new and interesting places. But I am coming to realise that there is also considerable interest in everyday places closer to home which I had previously rejected as being mundane or had overlooked because of their familiarity.

And you cannot get closer to home than home itself. My house in the UK had always been a place to which I paid little attention. However, in the same way that I have been interested in other countries and their cultures, a curious visitor to the UK from a distant country would likely be fascinated by my small and simple house. I realised that I had been inhibited from seeing what was actually there by the very familiarity of my house.

So I took time to look carefully at the house while being mindful of how a stranger might see it. I found that examination through a camera lens with a fresh gaze revealed facets in the everyday which I had missed. I gradually discovered an abundance of interest within the simplicity of the house. The panel shows some of the discoveries from my exploration of the inhabited space which is home.

We should not let familiarity become a barrier to fascination.



Hanging Plan for 'The Fascination of Home'. All images in this article © Nigel Corby ARPS

NE Contemporary Group Meeting, Saturday 28 January 2017

Wakefield

Report by Avijit Datta FRSA

Patricia Ruddle convened a meeting of the RPS NE Contemporary Group at the Wakefield studio of Nigel Tooby and Elaine Gosal-Tooby. Seven members presented work, and Nigel Tooby took photographs during the meeting. The benefits deriving from the presence and participation of all members, irrespective of whether they presented, was emphasised.

Paul Ashley, the editor-elect of the RPS Contemporary Journal was introduced to the group by Patricia Ruddle, current editor. She also mentioned that Kurt Tong had an exhibition entitled " The Queen, The Chairman and I " and Yan Wang Preston also had a forthcoming exhibition on the Yangtze, entitled " Mother River " both at the Impressions Gallery, Bradford. (See end of article for full details).

Martin Drury gave the first presentation to the group on the construction of the Victoria Quarter Shopping Centre in Leeds. The images, taken over a period of eight months using both analogue (Nikon F100 with Delta 400 film) and digital photography show the construction of shops containing aspirational items, the destruction of buildings and the effect on existing shops which are either closing or changing usage. Importantly they show the relation between building, shopping and people. These are different in character to the large format photographs of shopping centres presented by Fergus Heron at the RPS Contemporary AGM, shot with special permission while empty. Martin showed over 40 images and a discussion was held as to how best to display them, ranging from showing a spectrum from monochrome to colour to serially displaying the above three categories.



Victoria Quarter Shopping Centre © Martin Drury



Dungeness
© Christine Carr

Christine Carr showed her first photobook, entitled "My Visit to Dungeness - 5 January 2017 " (Blurb ; ISBN: 978-1-36-648578-6). She had added text to some of the images. Photo-manipulation of some of the images within Photoshop had created a painterly effect. Patricia mentioned that Derek Jarman, artist, author and film director lived at Prospect Cottage near the Nuclear Power station before his premature death in 1994 (although the cottage was not photographed by Christine).

Celine Alexander-Brown showed images taken of acid burn victims in New Delhi during a visit with a medical charity. She had shown some images of street life in Delhi from a previous visit at a meeting on the 21st May 2016. This time the images were of acid burns victims both before and after surgery. They were accompanied by Aled Jones singing Westlife's " You raise me up ". Victims and international volunteer staff are shown smiling. This rather emotive depiction of both male and female victims is in stark contradistinction to those in the recent " InVisible " project of photographs of Indian women by artist Ann-Christine Woehrl (funded by the German cultural foundation Stiftung Kulturwerk / VG Bild-Kunst). These latter images show in a very cold manner, reconstructive surgery for (mainly female) burns victims, including acid attacks. Victims who must confront more than just a changed face in the mirror, are ostracised from their communities and families and unable to continue working at their old jobs. A discussion ensued about privacy and the necessary permissions that are required for these images and the accompanying music.



Holmfirth ©
Peter Bartlett LRPS

Peter Bartlett showed his charming images of the West Yorkshire town of Holmfirth, the location for the television series, " The Last of the Summer Wine ". In contrast to nearby town centres, there are very few empty shops and most are privately owned rather than being part of a chain. In addition to images of shop fronts devoid of people, Peter also took photographs of the shopkeepers and the shop interiors using flash with a diffuser, following the style of Martin Parr.

Jane Batty gave another emotionally laden presentation. She introduced it by saying that she decided to focus on photography after becoming widowed eleven years ago. She dislikes "chocolate box" photography and uses Photoshop to manipulate images to reflect her emotions. Her images are at times dystopian, showing bluebell woods, monumental statues and a half dead tree. She also showed images of narrow alleyways in her home town of York, termed snickelways. She knew that some of her ancestors lived in the slums of York, containing some of these snickelways so it is ironic that these snickelways have now been cleaned and lead to tourist attractions.



© Jane Batty

Avijit Datta showed images around the theme of Emergence which he has assembled for a book. The first image shown was lighting 60 candles to commemorate six million Jewish dead during the second world war. Images of the plight of Syrian refugees and homeless were then shown as an example of a contemporary Holocaust. The existential philosophy of Viktor Frankel (The Third Way) developed within

a Nazi concentration camp leading to empowerment of the dispossessed was discussed, followed by the existential philosophy of Denis Diderot (L'espirit d'Escalier) accompanied by images. Pairs of images showing the same scene accompanied by divergent emotions were then shown.



Ruins and Resurgence
© Avijit Datta

Lynn Newton showed her photographs of poor people in Kolkata, taken during a Nikon Photography School trip with Mark Seymour and the Hope Foundation (a charity which runs a hospital, pharmacy, homes for children and support for children at school). The images gave an impression of the resilience of people who have few material possessions. It was noted that the Hope Foundation now charge individuals to take photographs. A discussion on privacy, intrusion and permission to photograph ensued. The card " Know your Rights" regarding UK law (sent with the RPS joining pack) was mentioned.

Christine Pinnington announced that the planning meeting for the group book, to be held in February, was postponed to give more time for contributors to submit work.

The meeting closed. Our thanks to Elaine and Nigel for the use of their studio.

Avijit Datta FRSA

Impressions Gallery Centenary Square, Bradford BD1 1SD

Views from China, a special six month programme of exhibitions and events at Impressions, taking a fresh look at Chinese culture and the long standing links between the UK and China.

16th Dec 2016 - 18th Mar 2017

Kurt Tong

The Queen, The Chairman and I

An exhibition marking the twenty-year anniversary of Hong Kong's return to Chinese sovereignty from British rule, a fascinating journey into the entwined histories of China and the UK, traced through the family history of photographer Kurt Tong.

31 March and 24th June 2017

Yan Wang Preston

Mother River

Mother River is a photographic odyssey taking the viewer on a journey along the entire length of the Yangtze, often known as China's Mother River. This new exhibition, commissioned in partnership with Gallery of Photography Ireland, offers fresh perspectives on China, where traditional landscape clashes with present-day development.

What's On



SCOTLAND

Dunfermline Weekend May 20th-21st 2017

This is one of the best ways to meet other photographers, relax and enjoy excellent talks from a wide range of speakers.

We are lucky to have **Dan Hartman, Laura Pannock, Tom Stoddart HonFRPS, Roger Reynolds HonFRPS** and **Walter Benzies HonFRPS** on Saturday 20th May. **Dougie Wallace, Alexandra Fazzina, Faye Yerbury FRPS, Trevor Yerbury FRPS** and **Dan Hartman** are on Sunday 21st May.

Dan Hartman has obtained many special images of elusive wildlife. Through years of patience and careful, quiet and respectful observation, they have proved rare wildlife can be photographed in their natural habitat, without the use of game farms. The Hartmans, which also includes his wife, Cindy and two daughters Kelly and Cassie, have operated their Silver Gate Gallery for the past eighteen years and have sold thousands of prints and posters. Dan and Cindy have also been widely published including National Wildlife and National Geographic.

Laura Pannock is a London based Photographer. Her work has been extensively exhibited and published both in the UK and internationally, including at The National Portrait Gallery, The Houses of Parliament, Somerset House, and the Royal Festival Hall in London. In 2010 Laura received First prize in the Portrait Singles category of the World Press Photo awards. She has also won and been shortlisted for several other awards including The Sony World Photography Awards, The Magenta foundation and Lucies IPA. She was recently awarded the Vic Odden by The Royal Photographic Society.

Tom Stoddart HonFRPS has a long and varied career in which he witnessed such international events as the war in Lebanon, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the election of President Nelson Mandela, the bloody siege of Sarajevo and the wars against Saddam Hussein in Iraq. In 1997 Tony Blair gave Stoddart exclusive behind the scenes access to his election campaign. More recently he documented Prime Minister David Cameron's daily life at 10 Downing Street. His work on the HIV/AIDS pandemic blighting sub-Saharan Africa won the POY World Understanding Award in 2003. In the same year his pictures of British Royal Marines in combat, during hostilities in Iraq, was awarded the Larry Burrows Award for Exceptional War Photography. A year later his book iWITNESS was honoured as the best photography book published in the USA.

Roger Reynolds HonFRPS was the Society's President from 2003-2005. He has been involved with the Society's distinction process for more than 20 years. He was the first chair of the Travel Panel in 2000 and also the chair of the Natural History Panel. He has been a member of the Royal Photographic Society Fellowship Board for more than ten years and the Distinctions Advisory Board since 2007. As chair of the RPS Distinctions Advisory Board, he will be presenting the recent Fellowship panels from the past year.

Dougie Wallace grew up in Glasgow hence his moniker, Glasweegee. Internationally recognised for his long-term social documentary projects and a distinct direct style of expressive street photography. His books include Stags, Hens and Bunnies, A Blackpool Story and Shoreditch Wild Life, Road Wallah, and his latest series Harrodsburg is due to be published in January 2017. Road Wallah was short-listed for the 2015 European Book Publisher's Award. 'Harrodsburg' won the inaugural 'Magnum Photography Award 2016'

Alixandra Fazzina worked as a photojournalist throughout Eastern Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Her reportages have been published in the British and international press and her photographs exhibited worldwide. Her book "A Million Shillings: Escape from Somalia" was shortlisted for the Pictures of the Year International Best Photography Book of the Year Award. A selection of the works has been shortlisted for the Prix Pictet global award in photography and sustainability. In 2008 she was the recipient of the Vic Odden Award from the British Royal Photographic Society. In 2010 Alixandra was recognised as the winner of the highly prestigious UNHCR Nansen Refugee Award.

Trevor Yerbury FRPS and Faye Yerbury FRPS. Trevor came back into social and wedding photography in the mid 90s and earned him the title of "Kodak UK Wedding Photographer of the Year" in 1997 & 1999. Their work in photographing the female nude has been recognised internationally. Trevor holds a total of 14 Kodak European Gold Awards. Faye joined Trevor full time in 1996 and on 3 occasions she has won the title of "Kodak UK Child Photographer of the Year". She also holds a Kodak Gold Award and, like Trevor, is a Fellow of the Society of Wedding and Portrait Photographers. Her recent SWPP awards are for UK Architectural Photographer 2006.

Walter Benzie HonFRPS is the RPS President for 2015-2017. He is the Society's sixtythird President since it was formed in 1853. He describes his photographic interests as 'eclectic' ranging from digital photography to photographic history. He a judge on the Southern Photographic Association circuit and sits on the Society's own Licentiate distinctions panel.

There is a meal on the Saturday, which is a great opportunity for members to chat with each other and the speakers.

We are staying at the Carnegie Conference Centre in Dunfermline as this is convenient for as many members as is possible and has good on-site facilities. They have always been supportive of the weekend. There is accommodation at the onsite Holiday Inn Express, and to allow flexibility, I am asking members to contact the Hotel directly (01383 74822) to make bookings.

Beyond Words are again providing a book stall as well as the RPS stall.

Members' Print Exhibition

Please bring up to 2 mounted prints for an exhibition that will rotate during the weekend.

Booking - <http://www.rps.org/events/2017/may/20/dunfermline-spring-weekend-2017>



Herts Foto Forum '21'

16th March to the 29th March 2017

Nude Tin Can Gallery, 125 Hatfield Road, St. Albans, AL1 4JS

www.nudetincangallery telephone 01727 569 291

An exhibition of work by several members of HFF including eight who are Contemporary Group/RPS members to celebrate twenty one years of existence.

The Contemporary Special Interest Group's April 2017 Conference

**Saturday 8 April 2017,
Copthorne Hotel, Paradise Circus, Birmingham B3 3HG**

10.00 (for 10.30 start) to 17.00. £50, including teas/coffees and buffet lunch. RPS members and non-members welcome.

The conference will feature presentations on the River Yangtze by Yan Wang Preston and the River Lea by Polly Braden. Attendees may also bring prints for review.

- 10.00 - 10.30 Meeting and greeting, tea/coffee
- 10.30 - 12.30 Presentation by Yan Wang Preston
- 12.30 - 13.30 Lunch
- 13.30 - 15.15 Presentation by Polly Braden
- 15.15 - 15.45 Tea/coffee break
- 15.30 - 17.00 Discussion and review of attendee prints (up to ten max. per person)

Yan Wang Preston is a British-Chinese photographic artist whose landscape work is about challenging myths and revealing hidden complexities behind the surface of the landscape.

The Yangtze is China's Long River. Yan Preston will talk about her project *Mother River*, photographing locations from the river source to the sea at exactly 100km intervals, regardless of the difficulty; 63 locations in total.



Y25 2,400km from the river source. From 'Mother River' series (2010-2014). ©Yan Wang Preston

www.yanpreston.com
www.motherriver.info

Polly Braden is a documentary photographer who works on self-initiated projects as well as undertaking commissions for international publications.

Polly Braden and David Company have been photographing the River Lea in East London since 2004 and this work has recently been published as a photobook entitled *Adventures in the Lea Valley*. Polly Braden will present this project in the afternoon.



Inflatable Santa, New Year's Day, 2005, Upper Lea Valley © Polly Braden and David Company

www.pollybraden.com/work/adventures-in-the-lea-valley

To book see

<http://www.rps.org/events/2017/april/08/tales-of-two-rivers>

When booking, please also inform the event organiser.

Contact: Avril Harris, avrilrharris@blueyonder.co.uk, tel 07990 976390.

12 March 2017

10.00 - 16.00

Contemporary Group South West Meeting

Carnon Downs Village Hall
Carnon Downs
Truro
TR3 6GH

Contact: Rod Fry ARPS
Email: rod@rod Fry.eclipse.co.uk
Tel: 01803 844721

18 March 2017

14:00 - 17:00

Contemporary Group North East Meeting

Third Floor, Suite 4
13 Bull Ring
Central Buildings
Wakefield WF1 1HB

There are limited places for this meeting, if you wish to attend please contact the organiser

Contact: Patricia A. Ruddle ARPS
Email: patriciaruddle@btinternet.com
Tel: 07572 124290
See more at: <http://www.rps.org/events/2017/january/28/contemporary-group-north-east--january-meet#sthash.59Z0ZHdJ.dpuf>

27 March 2017

19:00 - 22:00

Contemporary Group North West Meeting

Days Inn
Charnock Richard Services
J27-28 M6 Northbound
Mill Lane, Charnock Richard
Chorley, Lancs
PR7 5LR

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

<http://www.rps.org/events/2017/march/27/contemporary-north-west-march-meeting#sthash.bWSO9I3U.dpuf>

19 April 2017

10:30 - 16:30

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

See more at: <http://www.rps.org/events/2017/april/19/arps-conceptual--contemporary-assessment--print--images-for-screen-submissions#sthash.VHCNgMXO.dpuf>

FRPS Conceptual & Contemporary Photography Assessment

See more at: <http://www.rps.org/events/2017/april/19/frps-conceptual--contemporary-assessment#sthash.tvPcIU6d.dpuf>

Tel:01225 325733

Deadline for contributions for inclusion in the March Issue is 20th March 2017.

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*

Note: The copyright of photographs and text in this issue belongs to the author of the article of which they form part unless otherwise indicated.



Find us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/rpscontemporary>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/RPSPhotobooks>