



# Members' Print Exhibition 2014

Closing date for postal entries:

Thursday 13th February 2014

Full details and an application form are available from the Downloads (Exhibition Information Section) of the Group's Website at:

[www.rps.org/group/Digital-Imaging/downloads](http://www.rps.org/group/Digital-Imaging/downloads)

23rd February 2014

10:30am

## 2014 DI Group Annual General Meeting and Print Exhibition Selection

Smethwick Photographic Society Clubrooms, The Old Schoolhouse,  
Churchbridge, Oldbury, West Midlands  
B69 2AS

The Annual General Meeting will be followed by the selection of prints for the 2014 Exhibition. Talk by Rikki O'Neill FRPS during the afternoon.

Full details and Committee nomination forms are available from the Downloads (Documents) Section of the Group's Website at:

[www.rps.org/group/Digital-Imaging/downloads](http://www.rps.org/group/Digital-Imaging/downloads)



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# DIGIT

NO 58: (2013 ISSUE 3)

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## FRONT COVER IMAGE

Parking Up The Wong Tree, Brian Beaney FRPS

RPS DIGIT Magazine 2013 Issue 3

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# EVENTS



Details of all DIG events are available on the Group's website at: [www.rps.org/group/Digital-Imaging/events](http://www.rps.org/group/Digital-Imaging/events)

## 12th January 2014

### **Eddie Ephraums on Many Ways of Seeing and Time and The Language of the Print**

Wooshill Community Hall, Emmview Close, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG41 3DA

Time 10:00AM - 3:30PM

Contact: Laurie Pate

Email: [info@rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk](mailto:info@rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk)

Phone: 07785 256692

Cost: £10.00, Members' Rate: £6.00

Note: the ticket price shown above against "Members' Rate" is the rate that applies to members of the Digital Imaging Group only. It does not apply to RPS members who are not DI Group members.

Morning: Many Ways of Seeing.

Following on from his series of the same name for B&W Magazine, Eddie looks at the way that different camera types, formats and media (both digital and film) affect our relationship with the subject and, ultimately, the way we take our pictures. The talk is illustrated with examples of his own work and promises to be a thought-provoking session that will challenge our ideas and get our creative juices flowing.

Afternoon: The Language of the Print.

This talk expands on the ideas Eddie outlined in his Language of the Print series for B&W Magazine. Drawing on examples of his own work he will address questions such as what makes a print 'speak?', how do we develop our own style of printing?, what can we learn from looking at the printed work of other photographers?, has digital photography made us better printers?

Free tea, coffee and biscuits throughout the day. Bring a packed lunch.

About Eddie Ephraums: Eddie Ephraums is a regular contributor to B&W Magazine. Using his own work as examples, Eddie's monthly features aim to inspire photographers to think more deeply about their photography and to reflect on how they can develop their own unique photographic voice. He co-runs the Open Studio Workshop centre in the beautiful wilds of NW Scotland, where he leads workshops with fellow photographers Joe Cornish, David Ward, Paul Gallagher and Paul Wakefield. Eddie also mentors photographers, working with many well-known names, and he produces high quality, art-based photography books for photographers through his own Envisage Books imprint. Eddie is a judge for the B&W Photographer of the Year, in which he draws on his experience as a photographer, printer and editor.

## 16th February 2014

### **Glyn Dewis: 1. Successful Shoots...Guaranteed! 2. Portraits Packed Full of Character 3. Photoshop Fast & Furious**

Wooshill Community Hall, Emmview Close, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG41 3DA

Time 10:00AM - 3:30PM

Contact: Laurie Pate

Email: [info@rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk](mailto:info@rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk)

Phone: 07785 256692

Cost: £10.00, Members' Rate: £6.00

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Morning: Successful Shoots...Guaranteed!

Imagine if there was a guaranteed way to get the very best results from each and every photo shoot. To get exactly the shots you wanted, the best out of your model, make the best use of your time and ultimately add great images to your portfolio - well there is! Join UK photographer, retoucher and trainer Glyn Dewis for this session as he shows you the photography tips, tricks and techniques that will ensure each and every photo shoot is a complete success!

PLUS: Portraits Packed Full of Character  
In this session Glyn will show you everything from the photo shoot to the full retouch using Lightroom and Photoshop tips, tricks and techniques to see how he creates his signature "Character Portraits"

Afternoon: Photoshop Fast & Furious

A 1 hour Photoshop Quick Fire Photoshop session where Glyn will show tips, tricks and techniques for portrait retouching, compositing, special effects, workflow and more. Followed by Q&A.

Free tea, coffee and biscuits throughout the day. Bring a pack lunch.

About our speaker: Glyn Dewis is an International Photographer, Retoucher based in the UK. His client list sees him working with physique athletes and musicians through to large commercial clients such as Air New Zealand. A member of the Photoshop World Dream Team of Instructors and Kelby Training Instructor, Glyn teaches at Seminars and Workshops around the World. In addition to his own series of workshops teaching photography, retouching and compositing using Photoshop. A regular contributor to Photography/Photoshop magazines in the UK, Europe and USA, in 2012 Glyn was also featured in the New York Times highlighting his Photographic techniques.

## 23rd February 2014

### **2014 Digital Imaging Group Annual General Meeting and Exhibition Print Selection followed by a talk by Rikki O'Neill FRPS**

The Old School House, Smethwick Photographic Society Club Rooms, Churchbridge, Oldbury, West Midlands B69 2AX

Time: 10:30AM - 4:00PM

Contact: Janet Davies ARPS

Email: [digsecretary@rps.org](mailto:digsecretary@rps.org)

For more details please see the group's website at: [www.rps.org/group/Digital-Imaging](http://www.rps.org/group/Digital-Imaging)

## 16th March 2014

### **Emily Hancock FBIPP ARPS: Equine Photography and Business**

Wooshill Community Hall, Emmview Close, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG41 3DA

Time 10:00AM - 3:30PM

Contact: Laurie Pate

Email: [info@rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk](mailto:info@rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk)

Phone: 07785 256692

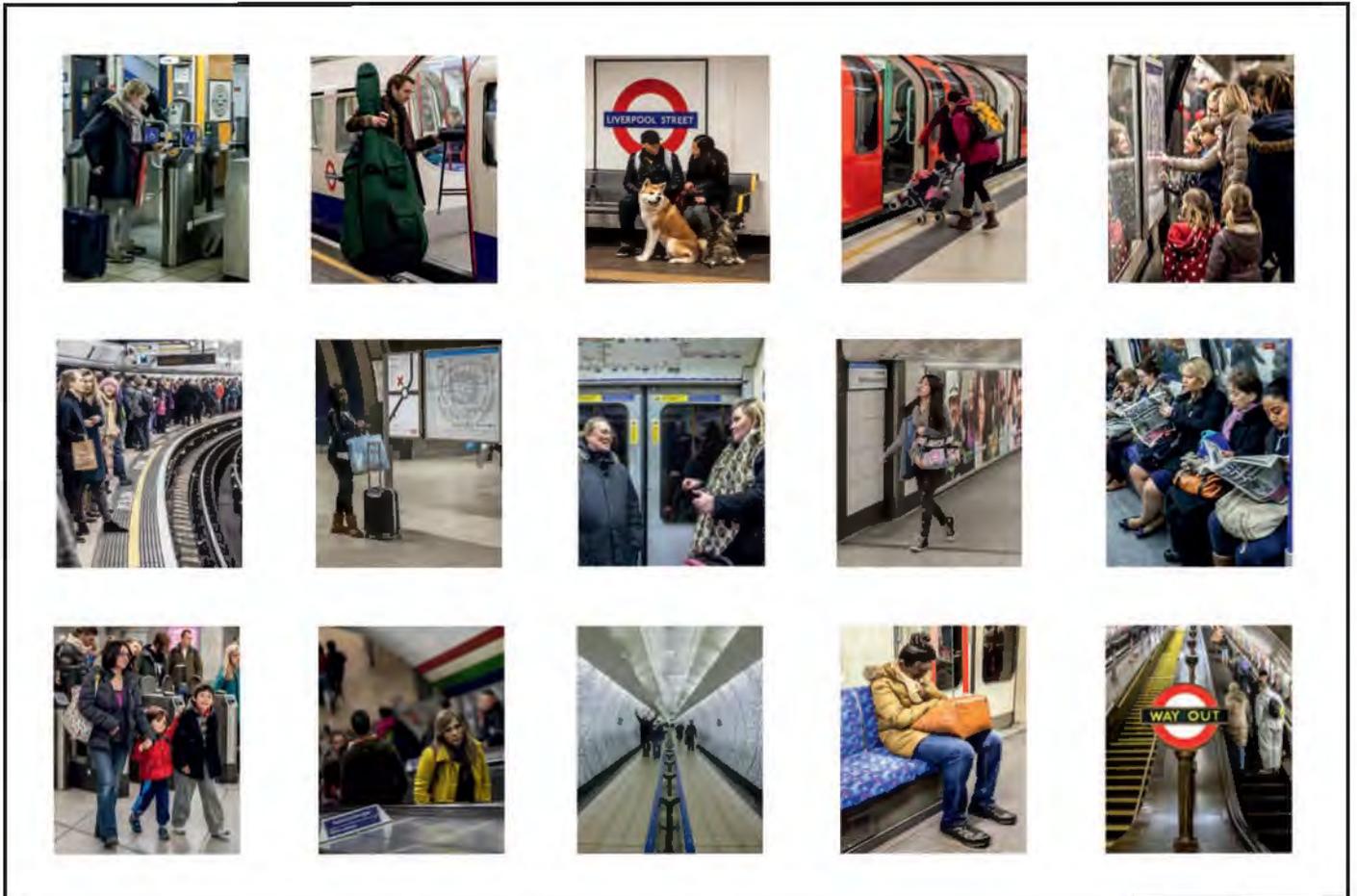
Cost: £10.00, Members' Rate: £6.00

Note: the ticket price shown above against "Members' Rate" is the rate that applies to members of the Digital Imaging Group only. It does not apply to RPS members who are not DI Group members.

Free tea, coffee and biscuits throughout the day. Bring a packed lunch.

An overview of the equine market and how Emily runs her photography business in this niche area. How she went about her qualifications.

About our speaker: Emily Hancock is a classical portrait and wedding photographer based in the heart of the New Forest. With over a decade of commercial experience, she has quickly become renowned for her beautiful photography and desirable fine art pieces. Her most recent equine series has been awarded the highest possible accolade of a Fellowship distinction by the British Institute of Professional Photography and featured on the BBC. Inspired by her childhood passion, Emily has also become one of the UK's leading equine photographers, where she has photographed many stars of the equestrian world including Olympic British dressage rider and winner of two gold medals, Charlotte Dujardin. Emily is also a highly regarded photography trainer, "I enjoy my work so much and my biggest reward is passing my expertise and knowledge onto the next generation of photographers".

*The Hanging Plan*

# FIRST CATCH YOUR HARE: MY ASSOCIATESHIP JOURNEY



After getting his Licentiate'ship, John Margetts went through a number of ideas on what he might do for his Associateship and decided to base it on the diverse use of the London Underground system. In his article, he tells us how he progressed from the initial idea to his successful panel.

## Statement of Intent

In 1863 the first Metropolitan Line trains ran from Paddington to Farringdon setting the foundations of today's London Underground system, so this year it is celebrating its 150th anniversary.

From the outer suburbs where, during the day, there are few passengers, to the inner city where the carriages are always crowded, the Underground, (also known as the Tube), has continued to be developed and has served London well for 150 years.

The stations with their wide diversity of architectural styles together with the different types of rolling stock are all part of the rich fabric which makes up what is, in my opinion, the best underground system in operation, in one of the world's greatest cities.

But, as the London Underground carries more than 3.5 million people every day; it is the people who really make the story of the Tube come alive. So my aim is to show how some of these people use the world's oldest underground transport system.

These people come from all walks of life; they are workers, shoppers, day trippers and tourists; they are young and old; and from many ethnic backgrounds. They all have their reasons for being on the Tube; but whatever the reason they form a visually rich and varied band of fellow travellers, who merge into a common stream getting on at one station, getting off at another, and probably, never to see each other again.

They spend their travel time waiting for the next train; chatting to friends; using their mobile phones; listening to music; reading the Metro; or just sleeping.

I am attempting to capture just a few of the fleeting moments as people travel on their 'Tube' journey.



It matters not that Mrs Beeton did not write the phrase ‘First Catch your Hare’ but it still serves well as one of the best opening lines. As far as I know it has absolutely nothing to do with photography but the idea it expresses has a lot to do with planning. But what, I hear you ask, has that to do with getting your Associateship? Well it starts with planning and getting a clear idea of what you want to photograph. Following on from obtaining my Licentiate I went through a number of photographic ideas on what I might do to achieve my Associateship. And from talking to many other people in the same situation it seems to be a common occurrence. Most of my photography is done for fun and not to please some judge or to put it up for public scrutiny. However, I recalled a conversation I had with a friend some time before this all started. He had said then, “Why don’t you concentrate on photographs of the people? Because that’s what you are good at”. Without knowing it, he had found the spark that would really fire me up and, as Mrs Beeton would say, I had caught my hare. I have always had a Love Affair with London. Although I have visited many other cities, none has the same appeal for me as London. It goes almost without saying that, if one enjoys London, the fun of being in amongst large numbers of



people naturally follows. Therefore, when finally choosing a subject for my Associate submission, London was, for me, an obvious place to choose. However, London is a city that is so vast and full of contrasts that trying to condense it down to 15 photographs seemed an impossible task. More by luck than judgement, 2013 is the year that the London Underground is celebrating its 150th anniversary. This gave me the idea of recording some of the diverse use of the Underground system in this very memorable year. So now having some idea of my subject and the location, the next issue was my statement of intent. There seem to be two schools of thought about your statement. The first is to take and collect loads of pictures and then try to write a statement to match your photographs. Whereas the second is to get your idea written down as a draft statement and then take the photographs that in some way match that statement. That way it almost becomes a mission statement and gives a clear and positive framework to work to. This second method was the one I chose to work with and, for me, it worked well. Therefore, it was on a cold January day that I started my journey; it also happened to be the day after the actual anniversary date. As the first underground journey had been from

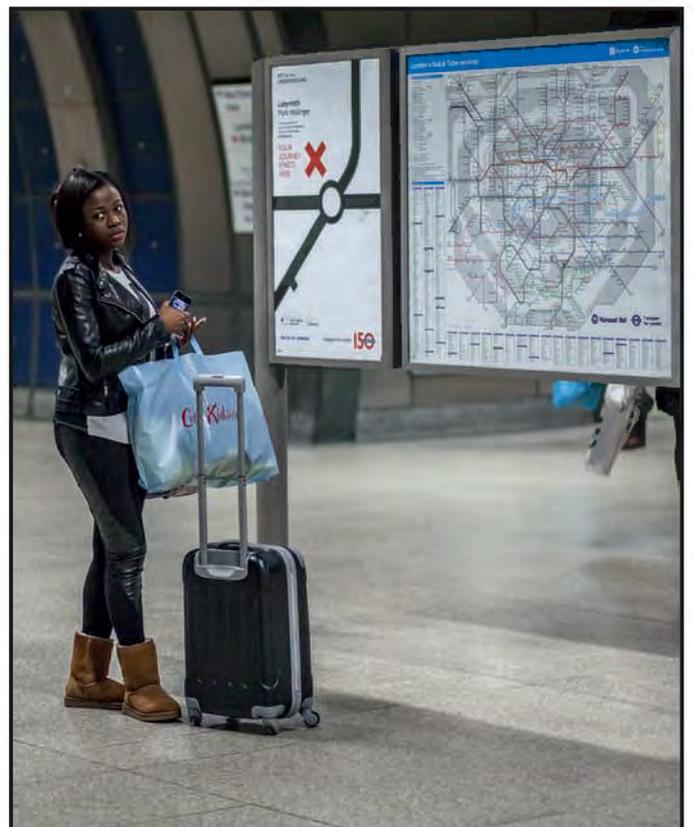




Paddington to Farringdon, I thought it would be a good idea to get some pictures that matched that journey. I was in for a big disappointment; when I arrived at Paddington, the station was not at all photogenic. I asked one of the staff about the anniversary celebrations and he told me that there had been some stuff put up yesterday but it was all gone now.

It seemed as if a big re-think was in order but, not too disillusioned, I decided to continue my search. Back on the 'tube' I started taking pictures of the carriages, the stations, the escalators and the passengers. I travelled the whole length of the Central Line from Epping to West Ruislip and ended up with about 300 photographs. At home I started to go through them and, at the same time, re-read my statement. I began to realise that not only had I taken the wrong photographs but that my statement needed to be revised. In reality, from the 300 or so photographs from my initial journey about 40% were of people travelling on the 'Tube' and in fact one of them did end up in the final panel of 15 photographs submitted.

So there I was having spent one whole day in London and with the possibility of just one photograph to show for it; obviously not good enough. At this rate, it would take me another 14 trips and



some 4,200 photographs to get my panel completed. Some serious planning was called for. At that stage I had not rejected the idea of getting one or two photographs of the stations, including Farringdon, into the final selection. My next journey into London was better planned and I did concentrate much more on the people who were sharing my journey. At first I was a little apprehensive about photographing people without asking permission but I quickly settled into a comfortable position and was just taking pictures of whatever took my eye. Not once did I get stopped or questioned nor did anybody object, although some people did turn away. This second trip was much more productive producing another three or four possible pictures which may be of an acceptable standard. Once again, these came from a high number of pictures taken. On this occasion I took another 325 pictures. One of the problems when shooting on the Underground is the very low light levels; you are not allowed to use flash or tripods on any of the stations or platforms. This meant using much higher ISO values than normal. On one or two occasions, I was up to ISO 3,200. Even with some very careful post processing most of these were virtually unusable due the high noise levels. The other major issue I encountered when





taking pictures on the train was the motion, especially when I was not able to get a seat. By the time of my third trip, I was feeling much more confident and at ease with taking photographs of my fellow travellers and also better prepared for the low lighting conditions. By this I mean that I was thinking more about what I could use as some sort of support for the relatively slow shutter speeds in use; sometimes down to 1/20th of a second. At the same time, I was getting very good feedback from the people I was photographing, some of whom reacted very favourably and were almost posing for me. This was not something I wanted but it was nice just the same.

All in all, I ended up making six day trips to London in order to get the photographs that I felt I needed. I had been up and down many escalators and on and off many trains and had accumulated more photographs than I could ever use. Most of the images I took were the ones I had planned to take. By this, I mean that I knew the type of shot I wanted. However, some were just fortuitous and I managed to catch that moment of serendipity. It had been a time consuming process knowing the picture I wanted and then having the patience to wait for someone to come into frame and match my vision. The challenge now was to get them into the final selection process and this proved harder than I had imagined. After all, all I had to do was choose 15 photographs which told my story. Easy really? Having too many photographs to choose from is quite difficult. There were many which could have fitted into the panel. On scrutiny, however, they did not quite tell the story the way I wanted it to be. This process also took more time than I had planned but I managed to get it down to 25 pictures. After a number of different layouts, I had this down to the final 15. They were all of people going about their normal daily journey.

All I had to do now was to choose an image size and which paper to print on. I had been given some good advice about not making the prints too big, as often smaller is better. So I settled on an A4 image printed on A3 paper. Again following a recommendation, my choice of paper was Permajet Smooth Art Silk 300; an absolutely beautiful paper which brought out all the colours in perfect detail. In my opinion, both bits of advice were very good and something I would pass on to others who are venturing along the path towards their Associateship.

My statement had emphasised the 3.5 million people who daily use the London Underground system and how, for me, they make the story come alive.

I wanted the viewers of my work to be able to empathise with me and for them somehow to feel engaged with the people whose images they were viewing. I hope that I have been successful in achieving my objective.





*World Class?*

# THE WRONG THINKING, THE RIGHT THINKING



We can all learn, grow, and do more, says Gwynn Robinson, but some people are stuck and don't achieve what they might in their photography. That, he says is a result of the 'wrong thinking' and breaking out of it requires the 'right thinking'. His article, discusses what he means and how to move from one to the other.

**D**o you really see the things that are around you? Do you have thoughts / misgivings / aspirations in your life? Do you wonder about things and why they are or are not? Do you have an opinion or a view on things? Do you have dreams? Do you have something to say to the world or the universe?  
If so, then it is down to you to make your camera capture your feelings and express how you feel through the resulting image. If not, then what can you, and what will you, express with your camera?

If the 'real' you feels totally exhilarated and inspired by a moody, stormy Turneresque landscape, then a sunny day capture 'will not do' no matter how interesting the scene, sky or light. Not that the images might be bad images but they will have bypassed your soul and thereby it is unlikely that you will have put your best into the capture and even more unlikely that you will have achieved the best feeling for 'you'. Does it matter as long as an image is a good one, whatever that means? Well that depends on why you do photography

at all. Is it a case of 'capture no matter what' or is it a case of your photography being an extension of yourself? Is it a view into your mind and inner being? Is it an expression of the artist within you? Is it a revelation of how you see and fit into, or otherwise, the world around you? There are as many styles of photography as there are people even though there are only a few genres, like landscape, portrait, sport, etc. Everyone will see, feel and capture their images in a different way, personal to themselves.

But what if a group of people all descend upon the same static scene? What then? The majority will capture images that are very similar as most people are of the same culture and general mindset and most people will have learned the same techniques. A few may go beyond what is set before them to visualise something new, and their images will/should reflect this deeper thinking/feeling.

It seems obvious to say but how many times have you or I gone somewhere because it seemed like a good idea? There were bound to be good photographs there, wherever, if we just sought them out and had put in more effort. But if we were not really connected to the place or event and did not get 'involved' then the results were

probably poorer than we wanted. We blame the camera, the lens, the weather, the light, the location itself and perhaps forget that we may not have truly engaged with the place. Michelangelo said, about his sculptures, 'I merely reveal what is already there in the stone'. Deeply involved. Seeing beyond what is there to reveal what is beneath the surface. Portraying something new. This is true of photography too.

If we are deeply involved then photography will always be interesting, fun, exciting and possibly even successful. It will always be new as we ourselves learn, grow and see more. Amazingly and rather beautifully, our thoughts, understandings and feelings change as we age and so our

photographic journey, even to the same places, inevitably will change too. Added to that, the changing world around us both physically and spiritually (culturally?) leads to our appreciation of our way of seeing and expressing growing and changing across the ages. It seems that to get the best out of photography we need to be more involved than others, see more than others, capture more than others and express more than others in a way that they can understand and appreciate. This involves many skills that we must master.

Identifying some skills is straightforward: seeing, composing, and post processing (normal adjustments). Other skills are much more difficult to pin down: Visioning, courageous



*In Bits*

compositions, wilder adjustments.

Visioning is far harder than seeing. In seeing, we recognise what is laid out before us. In visioning, we see beyond into the story, the message, the concept, and the consequences.

Quite often, we are presented with a 'can't do' attitude thrust upon us. Perhaps we are told that our images are poor, or that we are not good at photography, or more subtly: never winning any competition, failing to gain any accreditation, etc. There are many negative pressures which may make us 'shy' in revealing our art.

I have a saying that I use often that has stood me in good stead over the years: 'People will always become what you expect them to be', or closer to home, 'You will become what you believe that you are'.

If you believe in your heart that you are a poor photographer, hopeless at Photoshop, an insignificant artist, then without your own belief in yourself how can you possibly put in the effort, involvement and thinking required to master those skills needed to show that actually you are good, perhaps even great, and have something worthwhile to say.

So many people start from there. 'My photography isn't very good'. But that is the wrong thinking. Photography is merely a tool that we use to express ourselves and how we see the world around us. The right thinking should be 'Right now I cannot express myself well enough using my present photographic skills'.

What often happens is that people get stuck at the 'learning how to use the technology to obtain the best image' stage. This is hardly surprising. Just as we gain a skill, technology moves on forcing us to re-learn and develop a new set of strategies and



*Contentment*



*City Girl*



*Another City*



*Rare Discovery*

methods just to be able to do what we could already do before. It can be frustrating and defeating.

We have no choice but to learn how to use the newer technologies so that we can continue to be the artist that we are, expressing ourselves freely.

The defeat often comes from a half-truth. Whilst we are on our journey or just starting our journey of photography our skills are weak and results less than perfect. Seeing the way forward can be difficult. The truth is that we can all learn and grow and do more – if we can be inspired to do so and understand how to do so.

Sadly there are many people who seem to be defeated by their lack of 'success', the inevitable lack of praise whilst learning, the frustrations in getting to grips with the latest advancements in technology.

As an example: Photoshop does seem complex at first. But getting to grips with Photoshop is a similar journey to learning to use a camera. There are buttons on the camera just as there are buttons in Photoshop. What we have to do is see beyond the basic functionality

of the buttons and understand how particular combinations of them and their associated settings can get us to a desired result. This is not as simple as reading the instruction manual. We have to build up our own personal methods and techniques that will move us closer to the result that we need. We have to increase our skills with practice and thereby develop our own unique style.

Take a simple example of this. If I wanted to create fiery text on an image then there is no single button to do that in Photoshop, although it can be done, just as there is no single button on a camera to set up and capture a motorcycle whizzing past you at the finish line, if that is what you want to do. We have to gain the understanding of what we need to do to fulfil our vision with the tools that we have by using the appropriate functions in the right way.

Learning these skills takes time and practice but the reward is freedom.

Freedom to express our inner selves.

Freedom to explore new truths, to us, or to reveal something that is

meaningful or new.

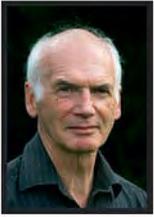
You are unique and therefore you will have a special view of the world that will interest others but only if you move past mimicking others and move into expressing your inner self to create something new. The problems that you face in becoming able to express your uniqueness are the same for everyone. So you are not alone, except in your thoughts and feelings. There, you are King of all you survey. But how big is your kingdom? Is it limited just to your own mind? Do you allow others also to visit your kingdom through your images?

Stand up and become Sovereign Ruler. Become more deeply and personally involved. See beyond the here and the now. Get to grips with the skills that you know that you need so that you can be the artist that you really are. Enjoy learning how to reveal your inner self to a world that looks on with curiosity.



*Sovereign*

# FOCUS STACKING



Making a 'quality' image of close-ups of flowers or similar macro subjects is not as easy as it might first appear. The technique of 'Focus Stacking' provides a solution. David Eaves explains the process.



Figure 1: Tongue Orchid using Focus Stacking

**W**e have all taken close-up images of flowers or similar macro subjects, fascinated by their practically infinite variety of colour and shape, but most of us will have realised quickly that obtaining a 'quality' image of such subjects is not as easy as it may at first appear. If a 'quality' image is defined in this context as one where the subject is sharp in all important features and is presented suitably isolated against a pleasingly diffuse background, then the difficulty comes down mainly to finding a suitable compromise between large aperture/high shutter speed (to stop subject/camera movement and defocus the background) and small aperture/low shutter speed (to give sharpness throughout the subject). Other



Figure 2: Tongue Orchid

things to consider in arriving at the best aperture/shutter speed compromise are ISO settings (high ISO for faster shutter speeds but at the expense of increased noise) and lens performance (small apertures above f16 or so can result in loss of sharpness due to diffraction effects). Camera movement can be eliminated by use of a tripod but this obviously will not prevent subject movement – it is surprising how even the slightest breeze can cause flowers to sway about in the viewfinder! Small apertures will increase depth of field to ensure all essential parts of the subject are sharp but then the background will be more defined and obtrusive. Selecting and blurring the background in Photoshop may give a more pleasing image but the selection process is often very tedious and the technique is unlikely to be acceptable for submissions to Nature competitions. Some photographers carry around an artificial (painted) background which can be placed behind the subject but, again, this may not meet the acceptance criteria for Nature competitions. The ideal solution is to find a subject where the background is some distance away so that a

small aperture can be used without undue intrusion of the background but often the best subjects do not offer this option.

The technique of 'Focus Stacking' provides a solution to the problems outlined above. It is not a new technique and was practised (with considerable difficulty) before the digital revolution, but in recent years focus stacking software has become available which makes the process much more accessible. Such software is obtainable as freestanding programmes (see later) but is also incorporated in recent versions of Photoshop (CS4 upwards). Essentially, a number of images are taken whilst progressively moving the focus from the nearest to the furthest point of the subject. The number of images required depends on the depth of the subject, the aperture used, and the magnification. Flower photography requires typically between 5 and 20 images to cover the whole depth with adequate sharpness: microphotography may need up to 100 or more. The images are processed and then stacked and combined in the chosen software to produce the final image. For example see Figure 1, an image of a tongue orchid (Small Flowered Serapias) which is a focus stacked combination of 9 images taken with a Nikon D300 and Sigma 105 mm macro lens using a shutter speed of 1/640 and aperture f4. Compare this with Figure 2, a single image of the same flower taken using settings of 1/25 and f20. Although both images show similar sharpness throughout the subject, note the more intrusive background in Figure 2.

In more detail, the focus stacking process using Photoshop is: -

- Take several images of the subject with a tripod mounted camera and remote release. Check and set exposure to 'manual' so this does not change between images. Set focus also to 'manual' and then use the focus ring on the lens to change the focal point between exposures (or better, use a focussing rail) ensuring that all required parts of the subject from front to back are covered. For Figure 1, I used 9 exposures but different subjects may need more or fewer as indicated previously.
- Open in Photoshop CS4 or above. If taken in RAW (who uses anything else?!) open all images together in the RAW converter (in Bridge, select all images required, R click on one of them and then in the pop-up box click 'open').
- Make any necessary tonal and other adjustments to one of the images. Then click on 'select all' in the panel on the L showing all the images and then click on 'synchronise'. A box appears asking what features are to be synchronised – I leave this as the default which is pretty much everything! Click 'OK' and then, at the bottom of the RAW converter window, click 'done' (not 'open images')
- Back in 'Bridge' you will find all the required images are now marked to show they have an adjustment attached. Ensure they are all still selected and then go to 'Tools' on the menu bar



Figure 3: Bee Orchid

and navigate to Photoshop>load files into layers. This produces a Photoshop layer stack and obviates the long way of doing this (which is to open all files in Photoshop and then drag and drop each into one stacked file).

- Select all layers (click on top layer, hold shift and control key and click on bottom layer).
- Go to 'auto-align' on the Edit menu. In the pop-up box Photoshop asks what 'projection' – leave as 'auto' and click 'OK'. Photoshop will then sort out any minor subject/camera movement occurring between exposures and also the small changes in magnification as focus is altered.
- Go to 'auto-blend' on the Edit menu and select 'stack images' Ensure that the check box is ticked for 'seamless tones and colours'. Photoshop will work its magic to produce an image which would otherwise have been impossible! Each layer will have a layer mask which can be



Figure 4: Pasque Flowers

modified to reveal/hide underlying layers if any areas are not quite right but I have never found this to be necessary.

Figure 3 - Bee Orchid, and Figure 4 - Pasque Flowers, show further examples of focus stacked images produced as above and processed in Photoshop, and of course the method can be extended to a wide range of subjects ranging from microphotographs to landscapes.

Other focus stacking programmes which are available to download if you don't have Photoshop CS4 or higher are: -

- Zerene Stacker – [www.zerene.com](http://www.zerene.com): \$89 for personal edition, 30 days free trial. Other versions also available.
- Helicon Focus – [www.heliconsoft.com](http://www.heliconsoft.com): \$115 for Helicon Lite or one year licence for \$30. Other versions also available.
- Combine ZP – [www.hadleyweb.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk](http://www.hadleyweb.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk): free

All these sites have further image examples (mostly highly magnified insects) and more information on use of the technique.

Focusing rails, which allow a more precise change in focus between images are worthwhile and can be purchased for some £30 upwards. I use a Manfrotto 454 micro positioning plate. If you get very serious you can invest in equipment which will do the whole job – accurate reproducible incremental change of focus together with automated image taking. Such equipment produces an image stack very quickly such that it is possible to consider working with live subjects – see [www.cognisys-inc.com/stackshot/stackshot.php](http://www.cognisys-inc.com/stackshot/stackshot.php) for information on the 'Stackshot' system and some images of live spiders.

One last comment – are such images acceptable under the definitions of 'Nature' used for Exhibitions? John Bebbington in his useful book 'Insect Photography' warns that use of the technique may be prohibited for Natural History Exhibitions and advises a careful reading of the conditions for entry. In the UK these usually quote PAGB and/or FIAP definitions which state that 'manipulation or modification must be limited to minor retouching and must not alter the truth of the original scene'. The RPS Nature Group offers similar guide lines, excluding radical changes and additions but allowing removal of minor blemishes or distractions. I consider that focus stacking emphasises the truth of the original scene rather than alters it and since all images are of the same subject, taken on the spot at the same time, subsequent combination of essentially the same image is not manipulation or modification. However, focus stacking is not specifically named by any of these bodies as an acceptable technique. The PSA provides a more comprehensive definition of Nature which excludes adding, removing or copying picture elements but specifically allows focus stacking (and HDR), regarding them as methods of enhancing the presentation without changing the content. My own view is that focus stacking is an acceptable and useful technique but it would be helpful if the PAGB and FIAP (and RPS) clarified their guidelines, preferably in line with the PSA so we are all 'singing from the same hymn sheet'! Until then the best advice is – if in doubt, check with the Exhibition organisers!

# THE DIGIT CHALLENGE

This time we have two images from DIG members who explain how they were created. I hope you'll find them interesting and that it gives you helpful techniques to use in your own photography.

**From the Mists of Time by Reginald Clark LRPS:** One area of photography I really enjoy is creating scenes from my imagination using multiple source images. Over the last few years I have built up a library of images to use in such ventures. I work intuitively and so my processing of the image is often inefficient but what matters is that I end up with the result I want. More often than not, I will return to an image a week or so after it was created and add further modifications. For this image I selected a shot I had taken of smoke from an incense stick (Figure 1). I noticed that it had a likeness to a Pterodactyl and I saw its potential for use in a composite image. Initially, I applied a neutral density filter to the smoke image in order to even out the exposure and used this modified version as my starting point. This layer was duplicated and, by using the puppet warp tool, I was able to modify certain areas of the smoke to make it look more like the Pterodactyl I had envisaged. In order to create room for the image of the girl, I expanded the canvas to the right, infilling with black.

The shot of the girl (Figure 2) was taken in a studio using a professional model. I asked her to imagine that she was fending off something frightening / unpleasant. I copied the image of the girl onto the canvas and sized and positioned her using the move tool. Then, I added a layer mask to her layer and painted out unwanted areas of her image to blend her into the scene. Next, a saturation adjustment layer was used to remove a blue tint from the girl layer.

I used the 'stamp visible'



*From the Mists of Time*



*Figure 1: Smoke Original*



*Figure 2: Model Original*

command to unify the elements onto one layer. The 'darken/lighten centre' filter in Nik software Color Efex Pro 4 was then used to modify the image and draw attention to the girl and the foremost part of the smoke figure. Again, a layer mask was used to refine the effect. A levels layer adjustment was then used to brighten specific areas of the smoke. Having consolidated the image once more, a further levels adjustment layer was used to darken down the girl's hand as it was too prominent. Her hand still seemed too large, so it was selected using the rectangular marquee tool and then reduced in size using the transform controls of the move tool. A final consolidation was made and key areas lightened further with a levels adjustment layer.



*Smoke Dance*

**Smoke Dance by Ron Holmes ARPS :**

I do not claim anything original; this has been done by others.

The layout is a background of black non reflecting material. The joss stick is placed in front with a small flash gun under it. A card prevents direct flash hitting the camera lens.

Manual focus is used and, when framing, it is useful if the tip of the stick is at the bottom of the image, to provide a reference. My lens was about 90mm (35 mm equivalent) some 12 inches from the stick.

The shutter should be open for 2 to 5 seconds and, during this time, the flash can be fired. Note that the flash is triggered independently of the camera.

A torch is useful as the exposure needs to be made in darkness.

I made a number of exposures at different aperture settings and checked the histograms; f/11 at ISO 100 suited.

Any movement or draughts should be avoided. Make a number of exposures as the smoke rises. This is not previsualised photography - rather a blind "machine gun" approach. I had no idea of results until I viewed the card. Watch the recycle bin fill! I also tried burning several sticks together. Amongst the considerable amount of dross, some useful images were seen. Figure 1 shows a few. I found one (Figure 2) which attracted my attention. First, I separated the two figures (Figures 3 and 4). Using the clone tool, resize and eraser tools, I worked towards the desired effect. I changed the lady to a more suitable colour and combined the two for the final image. Once you have the "genie" more ideas are soon forthcoming.



Figure 1: Useful Images



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

# DIG AGM AND PRINT EXHIBITION SELECTION 2013

Below is an edited version of the minutes of the Digital Imaging Group's 17th Annual General Meeting which was held at the Smethwick Photographic Society Clubrooms at 10.30 am, Sunday 10th March 2013. The full minutes can also be found on the DIG website at: [www.rps.org/group/Digital-Imaging](http://www.rps.org/group/Digital-Imaging)

## 1. Introduction

The Chair, Dr David Cooke ARPS, opened the meeting at 10.30 am. He welcomed the members present and thanked them for attending.

## 2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received from: Committee – Tony Healy. General Members – John Burtles, Jim Buckley, Roger Norton, Denis McConnell, Clive Haynes, Martin Addison, Dave Miller, Peter and Stella Chance, David Eaves.

## 3. Formal adoption of the minutes from the previous AGM

Proposed – Barry Senior. Seconded – John Margetts. Approved by a show of hands.

## 4. Matters arising from the previous minutes

None.

## 5. Chair's Report

### Introduction

We maintain our position as the largest Special Interest Group within the RPS, with just over 10% of the total membership of the Society belonging to the Group. We had 1082 members in February this year, an increase of 2% on last year.

### Print Exhibition

After this AGM, we will have the selection process for this year's members' print exhibition. The 2012 Exhibition was as popular as ever, and the touring Exhibition organised by Alex Dufty was a great success. The work involved in organising both the entry and selection process and the touring exhibition itself is enormous and requires dedication, skill and diligence. Alex has all these qualities and the Group is very fortunate to have him to fulfil this role.

The exhibition was complemented by a slideshow, produced by Barry Senior, which is compatible with both PC and Mac computers. I know that this is used as the basis of club meetings and is a really good vehicle for publicising the DI Group and its work.

As usual, all accepted images were also published in DIGIT, together with an article by the author of the winning image, and comments on the winning images by both authors and Selectors.

### Digital Projected Image Competition

The Third Group Digital Projected Image Competition was held in 2012. For the first time, there were two sections for members to enter, Open and Creative. On-line entry again proved to



*The Audience at the AGM*

be very popular with only two entries being submitted on CD. It also saved an enormous amount of time and allowed entrants to get their individual scores within days of the selection.

In 2012, there were 741 images from 151 members. 122 images were accepted in the Open Section and 97 in the Creative Section. Nearly 15% of our members entered. All the accepted images will be presented in the next issue of DIGIT, together with articles by the winners of each section and comments on the winning images by both authors and selectors.

An electronic slide show of all the selected images, again produced by Barry Senior, will be published soon on our website and an email will be sent to all members for whom we have an email address when the slideshow is available for download. The Competition seems, certainly from the number of people who entered, to have been very popular and a great success. There have been several emails saying how useful the feedback on individual scores has been. Thank you so much to everyone who contributed to the success.

### RPS Website

The New RPS Website is currently being developed and it is intended that it will be launched later this spring. This will give us significantly enhanced facilities, which the committee intends to use to the full, to give a better service to our members. When the new website is operational, we intend to launch the eCentre, which the committee has been working on. This will allow us to launch many of the facilities, which were suggested in the recent DIG member survey. The speed of progress on this is dependent on the volunteer time available for its development but, hopefully, you will see some of them being launched in the next few months.

### Centres

Our Group Centres maintain contact successfully with our membership on a regular basis with programmes of events, meetings, demonstrations and lectures. We are most grateful to all Digital Imaging Group Centre Organisers and to everyone who helps behind the

scenes. Our DIG Centres provide a valuable service to the Group and its membership. Most of our Centres continue to thrive and the Eastern Centre, organised by John Margetts, is now firmly established and very successful. The Western Centre, which was threatened by closure, is now also thriving and running a series of successful events. We are most grateful to Janet Haines who worked hard to prevent the Centre from closing and is now Centre Organiser. Maureen Albright, who has been organising both the Wessex and South Wales Centres for a number of years has, most unfortunately, had to retire because of ill health and the future of these Centres is now in doubt. I should like to thank Maureen, on behalf of the Group, for the dedication and hard work she has put into the Centres over a number of years and to wish her a speedy return to full health.

We should also like to have Centres in areas not currently covered, but it is proving difficult to find members to run them. Without such people the Centres cannot operate. It remains to be seen if the Wessex and South Wales Centres can be saved and if any new centres can be started successfully.

#### **DIGIT**

In 2012, the company which has been printing DIGIT for many years, Ian Allan Printing Ltd, ceased trading and it was necessary to find a replacement. Quality was one of the prime considerations in choosing new printers as, being a photography magazine, DIGIT's reputation is reliant heavily not only on its content but also on the quality of reproduction of the images. Several companies were considered and the DIG Committee decided to offer the work to Henry Ling Ltd at the Dorset Press. I am delighted to say that the quality of printing is excellent and has been very well received.

In my role as Editor of 'DIGIT', I am delighted that the magazine continues to be so well received and I hope that it will continue to meet the needs of our membership. It is well respected both within the RPS and outside, and it provides valuable publicity for the group and the photography of its members.

I am grateful that so many people are keen to have their work published in the magazine. Without the high-class articles, which we are able to publish, the magazine would not have the following or maintain the respect which it has.

#### **Proposed 2014 International Symposium**

During 2012, the committee did a considerable amount of work in investigating the possibility of running an international symposium in 2014. The development of this was co-ordinated by Andy Beel and members' interest in this was one of the areas explored in the recent membership survey. Unfortunately, when we had all the information we needed, economic modelling showed that the risks of losing money were very high and the idea had to be dropped.



*Recording the Event*

I am most grateful to the committee but particularly to Andy Beel, Janet Haines and Barry Senior for the hard work they put into this and I am very sorry that it did not prove to be possible to bring it to completion.

#### **Members' Survey**

A survey of members' views on the group and on their wishes for future developments was carried out late last year. Some 324 people responded. This is approximately 30% of group members and represents a good rate of reply for such a questionnaire. It has provided valuable information for the Committee and Centre Organisers to guide them on the services we should offer to our members. A summary of the survey results will be published in a future issue of DIGIT.

#### **Members of the Committee who are standing down**

Two members of the committee are standing down at this AGM, Janet Haines and John Long.

Janet has been the Group's Secretary since 2011. She is extremely enthusiastic in the role and, as well as fulfilling her core role, has worked hard to ensure that new members of the group are supported fully and that they take full advantage of the support for their photography that we offer. I am sure that the increase in our membership is, in no small part, due to her work. I have already mentioned other work Janet has been doing for the Group earlier in my report and I am pleased to say

that, although she is stepping down as Secretary, she will continue to act as Centre Organiser for the Western Centre and I am sure that, under her leadership, the Centre will thrive. John Long has extensive experience and knowledge of the RPS and has served the Group and its members well over many years. I, for one, am extremely grateful for the sound advice he gives and this has been a great influence on the development of my own photography. John has been the Group's representative on the RPS Advisory Board for many years, and he also looks after publicity for the group, and moderates our private forum. We are all very fortunate that he has been willing to give so freely of his experience and knowledge and he will be missed greatly on the Committee.

We shall be coming back to John's retirement from the Committee at the end of this AGM.

#### **The RPS Staff**

Finally, I should like formally to thank all the RPS Staff for their hard work in supporting the DI Group. They are few in number and have many demands on their time but I have always found them extremely helpful in answering our queries and giving information. We thank them sincerely for this support, without which the successful running of the Group would be much more difficult.

Now it is time to hand over to Elizabeth for the report on our finances. As Group Treasurer, Elizabeth continues to keep our



*Barry Senior and John Long show John's retirement Gifts*



*The Selectors considering a Print*

income and expenditure in good order: she is always vigilant and from time to time alerts us to any problems that arise or trends that look unfavourable.

### **6. Treasurer's Report**

Every year when I come to write this report and then read it to you, it seems to me to be terribly dull; and I was going to say that this year is no exception. However, there is some good news, which will affect us from this year and beyond, but I shall come to that at the end. If we look at the Balance Sheet for 2012 (Figure 1), for Income first, you will see that Life Membership subscriptions, are missing because the money was not received until January; this totalled £794.60, and will appear in next year's balance sheet. Similarly, with the bank interest for the 4th quarter; this came to £81.48.

Sadly, the Yorkshire DI Centre ceased to function and its remaining funds were transferred to the Group's funds. Money from the Western DI Centre, which was held by its former treasurer in cash, was moved to the Group's account for the interim period before a new treasurer was in place and a bank account set up. Those funds have been returned to the Centre.

Turning to Expenditure, expenses' costs were higher due to the increased mileage allowance set by the RPS, and postage costs increased quite considerably. The charge by the RPS for medals and ribbons for the DPIC was deducted from the account only last month and explains the gap here. The cost of producing DIGIT has remained stable despite having to find new printers. We have continued to maintain a small surplus of income over expenditure and the balance is very healthy. The remaining six Centres also have good working balances.

Now for the good news: For some years now the Treasurer of the RPS has been in protracted negotiations with HMRC over how it should account for VAT on its income and expenditure. This has been resolved and, overall, it is positive news for the Society. All subscription income now becomes VAT free, which means that, from 2013, the Group's subscription income will be paid in full without any deduction for VAT. If this had been applied in 2012, for example, the Group would be better off by £1,322.33.

According to the Finance Manager, Nick Rogers, there will be a number of other lesser changes as well concerning VAT on expenditure, some positive, others not, but clarification is needed on the details. This could mean that Groups and Regions will need to provide information on a more regular basis. Once everything is known, Nick will write to me to explain and to offer advice.

This concludes my report on the Group's finances for 2012, and I hope you will give the accounts presented your full endorsement.

**Questions Arising:** Member Walter Brooks asked for an explanation as to why, given the stated increase in membership in the last 12 months, the income from membership had not increased proportionally? A few ideas were suggested including the fact that first year memberships are free. But the committee assured the meeting that they would investigate further. Bob Bracher asked what the mileage allowance now was. David Cooke confirmed it was 45p per mile. John Margetts asked if the new VAT refunds as mentioned in the Treasurer's report would be applicable at DIG Centre level. Elizabeth Restall advised that she does not have that level of detail at present but that as soon as she has Centres will all be informed.

Adoption of Accounts and Chairman's report: Proposed – Graham Whistler, Seconded – Barry Senior: adopted by show of hands,

### **7. Election of Officers**

David Cooke advised the meeting that of the current committee John Long (member) and Janet Haines (Secretary) were standing down. Two nominations had been received and endorsed for Janet Davies (Secretary) and Alan Cross (general member). As the two new nominations filled the two vacancies, subject to approval of the AGM, the new committee would be as follows

David Cooke (Chair), Janet Davies (Secretary), Elizabeth Restall (Treasurer). Members: Dr Barry Senior, Alex Dufty, Andy Beel, Tony Healy, John Margetts, Alan Cross.

The list was read out to the meeting and a proposer and seconder requested so that the committee nominations could be accepted en bloc. Proposed - Margaret Salisbury, Seconded - Don Langford. An overwhelming show of hands accepted the new committee.

### **8. Any other relevant business**

a. James Foad asked why members had not received an Exhibition CD in 2012. David Cooke explained that these were now downloadable slideshows, available for both Mac and PC, from the DIG web site. Members had been informed when they went live on the DIG web site.

b. A member raised the problem of the email announcing the Art Nude workshops and reported that his filter system read the word 'nude' and therefore treated it as SPAM. He asked if there was some other way of describing the workshop that could avoid the word and subsequent filter problems. The

committee will give this due consideration.

c. John Long's retirement. Barry Senior made a speech to inform the members of the many years of service John had given to DIG more or less since its inception. Primarily, in a publicity and web forum moderator role, but also representing us on the RPS Advisory Board. John has also hosted the committee meetings and provided drinks and biscuits for many years. John has been a great asset to the group and will be sorely missed. As a small gesture of our appreciation for all this work, John was presented with two framed photographs for his Hall Gallery wall (work from Roy Robertson and Fiona Senior). John responded saying DIG had been a big part of his life and thanked us for the gifts.

d. Guy Davies thanked the committee and especially David Cooke for producing the best magazine in the RPS.

### 9. Date of the next AGM

Sunday 23rd February 2014 at Smethwick, when the key-note speaker will be Rikki O'Neill. Janet Haines explained that the reason the date had been bought forward in 2014 was to try to overcome the complaints that it was too close to Focus and clashes with Arena. By bringing the date forward, the Committee will need to revise the closing date for entry to the Print Exhibition in 2014.

**Selection of Images for Exhibition.** Immediately after the end of the official meeting, David Cooke introduced the selectors for the Members' Exhibition: Mark Mumford FRPS, Margaret Salisbury FRPS and Graham Whistler FRPS.

Selection took place and everyone was able to look at members' prints as the selection was made.

In the afternoon, Mark Mumford FRPS, gave a presentation called "The Vital Spark".

### Members' Exhibition Awards

The Award winning images are shown on pages 26-32, other selected images are shown on pages 33-47.

*There is a short video which gives a flavour of the annual AGM day on Youtube at: <http://bit.ly/1bsK4Kp>*

*All images, both here and in the video, audio and presentation of the video by Ria Mishaal Photography, [www.riamishaal.com](http://www.riamishaal.com)*

1. Income and Expenditure			
INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
Subscriptions	£13,327.80	Committee Expenses:	
Life Membership		Travelling/Subsistence	£2,571.25
		Postage	£463.08
		Stationery/Printing/Sundries	£290.61
AGM: 2012:		AGM 2012:	
Fees	£570.00	Room/Projector Hire and	
AGM Lunches	£150.00	Beverages	£114.00
AGM Return Postage	£141.50	Lunches	£172.50
Funds from Closure of		Lecturer & Judges Expenses	£490.00
Yorkshire DI Centre	£550.59	Medal and Ribbons	£16.00
Bank Interest:		DPIC 2012:	
1st quarter	£74.82	Judges Expenses	£121.85
2nd quarter	£80.14	Lunches	£52.80
3rd quarter	£81.86	Medal and Ribbons	
4th quarter		DIGIT:	
Holding Funds from		Issue 51	£1,843.53
Western DI Centre	£220.05	Issue 52	£2,236.34
		Issue 53	£2,098.75
		Issue 54	£2,362.04
		Return funds to Western	
		DI Centre	£220.05
		Engraving	£18.98
<b>Total</b>	<b>£15,198.46</b>		<b>£13,063.79</b>
2. Balance Sheet			
	2010	2011	2012
Brought Forward Previous Year	£10,026.44	£13,574.04	£18,363.59
Income	£18,562.70	£17,634.48	£15,196.46
<b>Total</b>	<b>£28,589.14</b>	<b>£31,208.52</b>	<b>£33,560.05</b>
Expenditure	£15,017.10	£12,844.93	£13,063.79
<b>Balance</b>	<b>£13,574.00</b>	<b>£18,363.59</b>	<b>£20,496.26</b>
Balance comprises:			
RPS Account	£13,776.72		20,982.95
Unpresented cheques	-£202.68		-£486.69
<b>Total</b>	<b>£13,574.04</b>	<b>£18,363.59</b>	<b>£20,496.26</b>
3. Regional Centres - Account Activity			
Region	Income	Expenditure	Balance c/fwd
Western	267.48	£329.15	£1,115.38
Western	948.75	£277.24	£671.51
Thames Valley	£2,207.04	£3,746.59	£3,144.20
Midlands	£1,167.00	£1,101.00	£2,820.07
Southern	£1,504.52	£1,016.49	£986.99
Eastern	£1,216.36	£1,526.42	£357.76

Figure 1: Balance Sheet for 2012



Looking at the Exhibition



Brian Beaney FRPS receives the Gold Medal and Chairman's Cup



Mark Mumford gives his Talk

# PARKING UP THE WONG TREE

BRIAN BEANEY FRPS



**Robert Albright FRPS:** This image moves into the realm of pure fantasy. The title includes an element of humour which invites you to look more closely at the picture. The tilted sign, 'Wongs for the best Szechuan and Cantonese Food to Take Away' is associated with a dilapidated house in the distance. The cars, which have been shipwrecked in the tree, are, over time, being reduced to organic forms in blue and red marked by the anchor to locate them. Here is a commentary on the ephemera of existence reduced to nothing. It is a reflection on mortality.

**Mark Mumford FRPS:** I just love this image, the title and the mastery of composition and Photoshop skills. The atmosphere, the brooding sky is just sublime, one could almost do without the cars and knotted wood and manage with just the old house with the smoking

chimney in the background. But we are given more to look at to try to get our heads around. We see two old cars tangled in what looks like drift wood. Personally, I don't think we need the section of drift wood above and to the left of the blue car but it is there and it works. The anchor and the sign are also a nice touch; in fact the sign is vital to the title of the picture. There are a few issues regarding the contradicting shadows and direction of the lighting but then I'm being over critical of a very fine image, good stuff.

**Margaret Salisbury FRPS:** This strange image has an amusing title but even without this it immediately makes me smile and wonder at the imagination which can produce something as strange as this. The more you look at it the more you see. Even the wooden "post" is a creature like a Lizard which is

"walking" towards the captured cars with a puzzled expression on its face. The tangle of dead tree capturing the wrecked cars implies, for me, nature eating up the man-made objects left to rot in the abandoned land. The "smoke" coming out of the chimney spreads out to a dark dramatic sky. The old building, where once men could buy Take away food at "Wongs", is another part of a story which could be about the "end of the world" as no signs of life except the few grasses and bushes are left in this dead land. A brilliant image which will be long remembered.

*Editor's note: Unfortunately, Graham Whistler FRPS was unable to provide comments on the Gold Medal image and those he gave ribbons to. I am extremely grateful to Robert Albright FRPS for stepping in and providing his views on the images.*

# A MOTHER'S THOUGHTS

JOHN COOKE ARPS



**Mark Mumford FRPS:** I have always found the combination of black and white images with a splash of red to be a winning combination in a photograph. Here we have an excellent example of such a combination, a fine black and white image of a beautiful pregnant lady draped with a strong red and black scarf. I like very much the contrast of the light gray straight vertical strips on the right and the way the light passes through and is transformed into the curved strong shadows on the young woman's pregnant belly. The curves of the shadows are

echoed in the woman's hair. A fine memorable image I enjoyed very much.

**John Cooke ARPS:** When approached by this mum-to-be to photograph her towards the end of her pregnancy, I knew this would be a sitting that I needed to get just right. The intimacy shared with the viewer requires a sensitive approach; pregnancy is a transient condition, so there would be no second chance. I wanted to capture the nurturing woman, who is contemplating what lies ahead for her as she changes from being a woman to becoming a mum. I felt that it should

convey the feeling of comfort and warmth, but also a hint of trepidation at this life changing experience. By standing "mum" next to the window the natural light gave warmth, and the shadows cast by the blinds settling across her body emphasized the contours, without the need to take the shot in profile. This left little to do post processing as all the definition was natural, the pop of colour to the scarf added richness to the image.

# AN OLD TESTAMENT

JOHN SHOTTON



**Mark Mumford FRPS:** Although, at first sight, this is just another infrared landscape there is a surreal quality to the images and I do love surreal. We have a typically British cathedral or abby set against a black sky highlighted with the white cirrus clouds. The building sits on a plain field of grass. On the horizon are white trees contrasting heavily with the black sky. Sitting in the field on the bottom right is a beast from the African savanna which, although it looks like it belongs in the scene, it obviously does not. A very subtle and enjoyable bit of surrealism and competent Photoshop work.

**John Shotton ARPS:** I never have any idea how an image of mine will eventually look, but I do work on the principle that it has to end up as an image as opposed to a snapshot; the difference being that a discerning eye will ignore the snap but will be held by the image. In the Photoshop editing, the image seems to have as much say as I do. It seems I am only allowed to be persistent. So, I'm not trying to portray anything. Out of the imagery, as in all other forms of art, we subconsciously take what pleases us or we reject it - it's subjective. But there's hardly ever a story, and with me, never.

'An Old Testament' is a montage. The Cathedral is Durham's, as is the ox and sky. The field is in the Lower Pennines and the trees are from all directions. All were converted from colour images then made high contrast (infra-red). Each item is selected and placed on separate layers. Half a dozen skies were tried, as were three oxen, other trees, cropping, etc. etc. The spacing, one with another, was examined. The image was to pester me now and then for months when either I held onto my integrity and listened, or I didn't. I listened.

# A LONG ROAD

ANDY BEEL FRPS



**Margaret Salisbury FRPS:** Simplicity is often the key to success, which for me is shown in this image. The mountains are devoid of detail and shown as dead black but in this image it works really well. The eye is drawn into the picture the white lines leading me over the hill and along the winding road up to the building. The white vehicle alone on the road tells the story and is in exactly the right place, just about to disappear but my imagination tells me it will reappear at the top of the hill in the foreground. The colour in the sky, reflected in the road, implies the "fires of hell" and gives drama, impact and shock value. An

unusual image which had an immediate appeal, fully justifying the award.

**Andy Beel FRPS:** This picture was taken in Iceland at the end of a two-week circular tour. It may have been taken just before getting back on the plane to return to Blighty and impending volcanoes with unpronounceable names erupting four days later.

I don't really remember taking the picture. It sat on my hard drive for a couple of years being completely ignored. I only noticed it when I was looking for pictures for my blog to process as digital Lith.

So the important thing for me when

processing the picture was to remove extraneous shadow detail in the blacks and create low contrast warm highlights and detailed mid-tones. This was done in Lightroom. The split toning was also done in Lightroom but it is a quad tone print i.e. I've used four colours to make up the warm tone by using this the Split Tone tool and the adjustment of the red and blue curves in Lightroom.  
[www.andybeelfrps.co.uk](http://www.andybeelfrps.co.uk)

# EYEWITNESS

BRIAN BURROWS



**Margaret Salisbury FRPS:** This image had immediate impact and lasting appeal. Clever use of one sharp masked face and hand appearing as "reality" with the background of scary staring eyes in faces from the world of fantasy. I particularly liked the way the eyes of the man are looking away to the right but the background faces eyes seem to follow you from whichever angle you view the image. Clever use of strongest highlight on the man and using the vibrant colour red to draw attention to the lips and the rose. As you look around the image you keep seeing more faces which command attention. This fascinating image is one

which will be hated or loved but for me works brilliantly.

**Brian Burrows:** My first visit to the Venice Carnival in February 2012 was an eye opener in many senses for me and I was amazed at the rich variety of costumes and masks which were worn during the Carnival, which takes place yearly in this uniquely historic city. I took the picture of the clown in St. Marks Square and, although he is not a typical masked Venetian character, I felt he was interesting and endearing so I was anxious to use him in some way. The eyes in the background consists of a pattern of repeated masked demon faces

which eyeball the viewer in a somewhat disconcerting manner. These were taken from a portrait of two masked demon figures and created using a split prism effect filter. The result was then cut in two, one half flipped horizontally and then joined to the original to create some overall symmetry. I then tried various effects and filters at different opacities to tone down the background until I felt it looked right.

'Eye Witness' is the product of my imagination and I leave it to the viewer to form their own opinion of what it means to them.

# I DREAMT I COULD DANCE

JANET HAINES ARPS



**Robert Albright FRPS:** The main subject is posed in a way which reflects the dream of the title whilst still illustrating the dance motif of the picture. The limbs of the model are angled carefully so the relationship between the images forms a compelling and harmonious design.

This design element carries across all three images in the composite to create a narrative. Selecting a reduced opacity in the background figures completes the story in a subtle but clear way.

**Janet Haines ARPS:** Kayleigh is a ballet dancer and photographic model whom I work with in the studio fairly frequently. I particularly like working with her as together we create great work. We begin by me going into the studio with the ultimate image in mind and I describe this to her. As we shoot, we are thinking about the scene we are creating.

Back in Photoshop I then use layers to pull the various elements together. The chosen sky needed to be the right colour and the streaky clouds worked well with the feeling of movement in the dance shots.

This one came together really quickly and easily, which is a sure sign that it works well. If I struggle with a montage then it often means the output is not working. This could be that colour, tones or textural elements are jarring. But get it right and the result is very rewarding.

# THE KITCHEN WINDOW

JOHN LONG ARPS



**Robert Albright FRPS:** 'The Kitchen Window' by John Long is an interesting exercise in colour and form. The bottles seem to be of the Kilner type invented by an ancestor of Top Gear presenter Jeremy Clarkson. The greens are most apparent in the window glass; perhaps these are picked up from a tree outside the room. This colour is deepened in the bottom of two of the bottles which fall on the right

third and centre areas of the image. The control of light is handled with sympathy and the textural subtlety of an Old Master still life painter.

**John Long ARPS:** Whilst on holiday in the Isle of Man, I visited the heritage village of Cregneash which is part of the Isle of Man Folk Museum. In one of the cottages there were seven bottles and one jar in a window which I

photographed and, as usual in such places, the bottles couldn't be moved. I decided to 'liven up' the plain glass bottles and tried several filters, but eventually settled on Adobe Pixel Bender. Then a few other adjustments in Photoshop CS5 gave me what I wanted.



*Bergen Warehouses, Philip Antrobus FRPS*



*Winter Keep Fit Centre, Vic Atfield FRPS*



*Tangled Creek, Nick Ayers ARPS*



*Teak Bridge - Myanmar, John Baker ARPS*

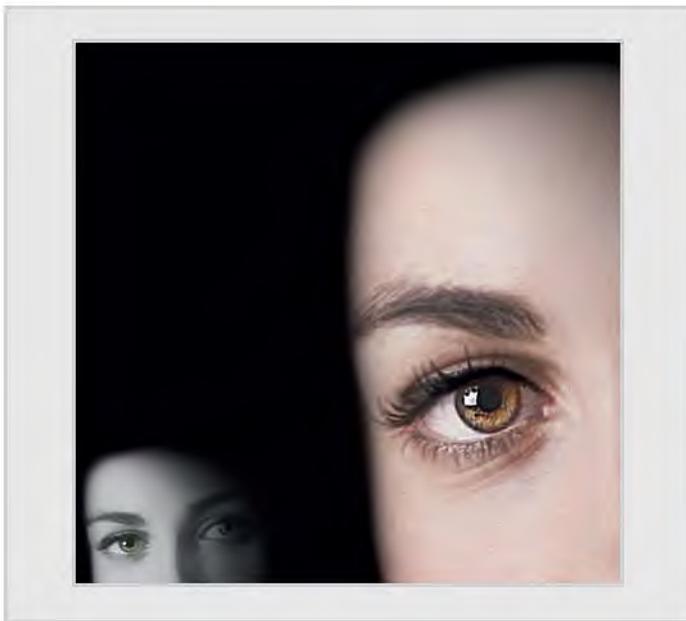


*A Juicy Problem!, Jeffery Bartlett ARPS*



*Past Encounters, Geoff Bicknell LRPS*

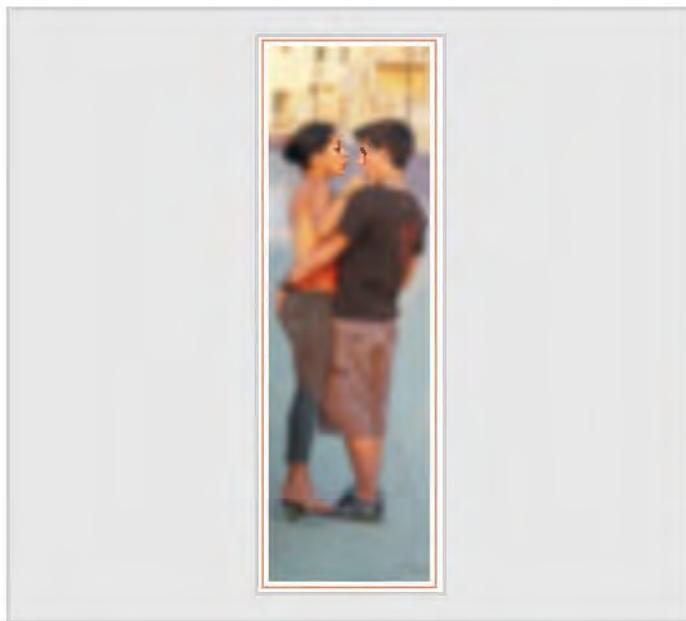
OTHER ACCEPTED IMAGES



*The Eyes Have It, Robert Bracher ARPS*



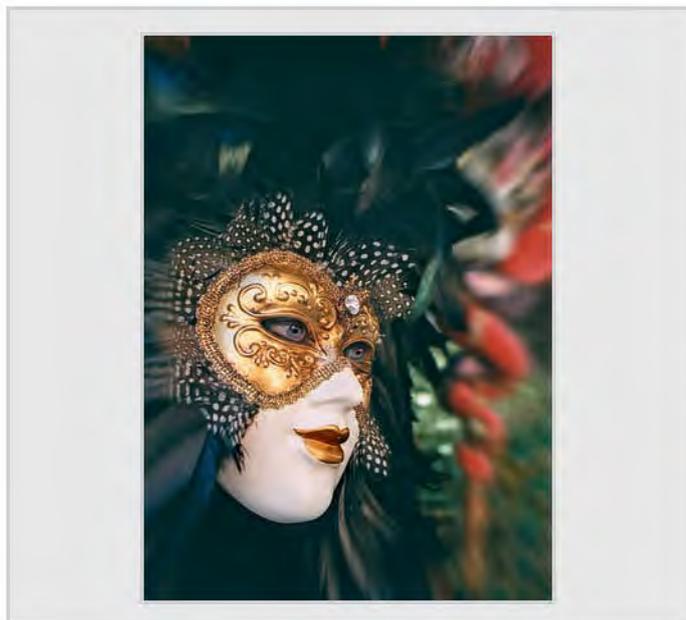
*Concorde over New York, Dave Britton*



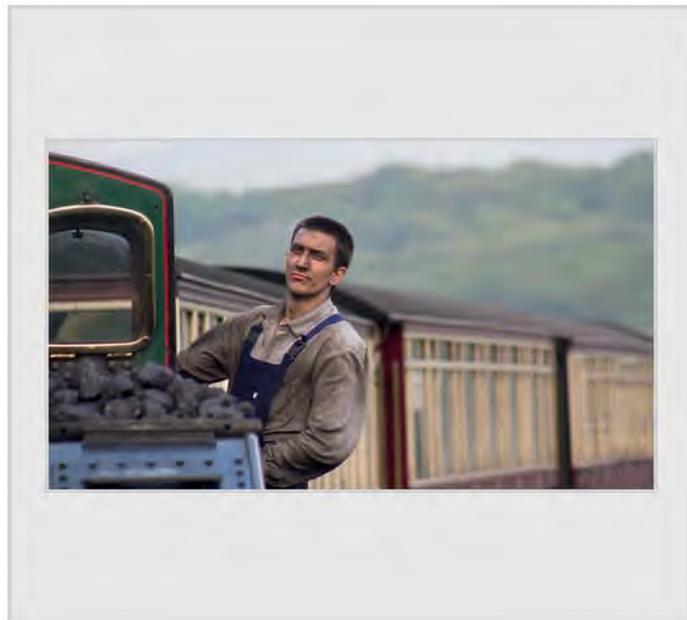
*Only Have Eyes for You, A Brochwicz-Lewinski ARPS*



*Trouble in Toy Town, Clifford Brown LRPS*



*Carnival Mask, Jim Buckley LRPS*



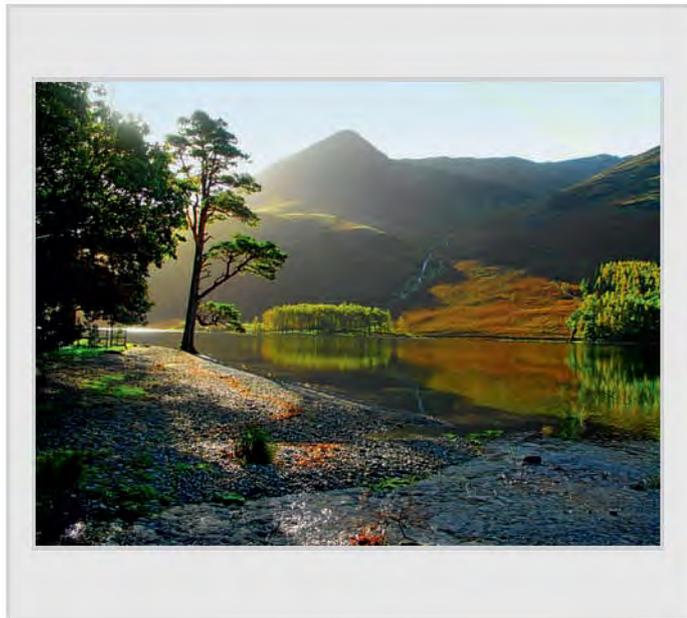
*Fairleigh Engine Arriving at Porthmadog, John Bull LRPS*



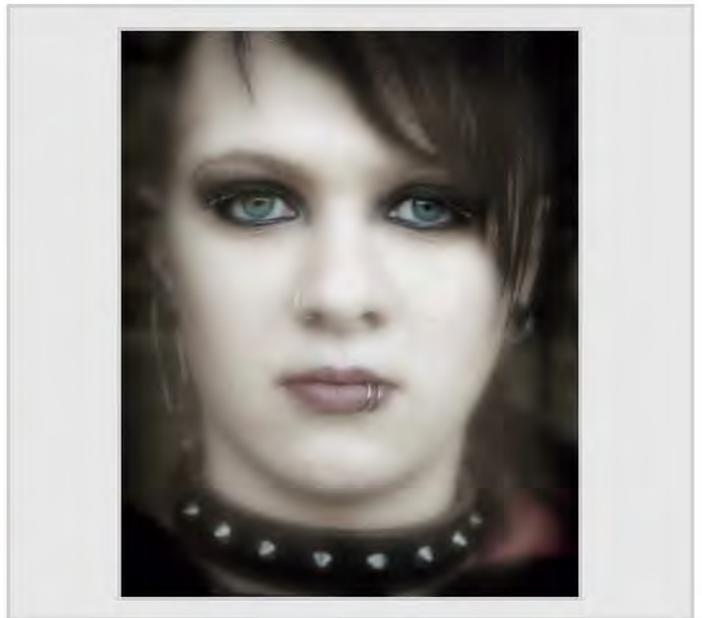
*Mists of Time, Alison Cawley ARPS*



*Digital Tiger, Martin Chapman ARPS*



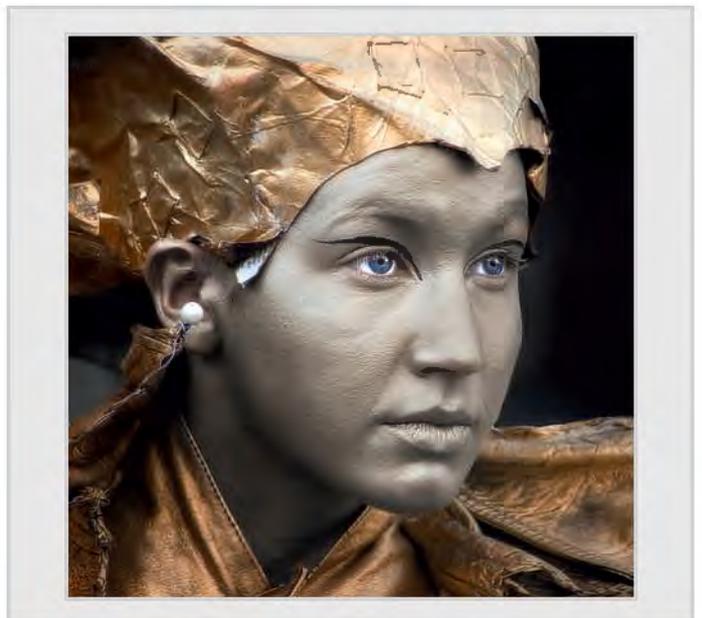
*Buttermere, Eric Cleavelly LRPS*



*Studded Collar, Gerry Coles ARPS*



*Art Deco Symmetry, Prof. Brian Cooke ARPS*



*The Woman in Gold, Dr David F Cooke ARPS*

OTHER ACCEPTED IMAGES



*The Reaper, Melvyn Crow ARPS*



*Ice On The Lake, Olga Davidge LRPS*



*Scent Bottles, Peter Davidge LRPS*



*Out of Season, Guy Davies ARPS*



*Poppy Seedheads, Paula Davies FRPS*



*Florentine Street Artist, Len Deeley FRPS*



*Light in the Forest, Derek Dorsett FRPS*



*The Lake, Alex Duffy LRPS*



*Derwentwater, David Eaves ARPS*



*Tuk Tuk Transport, Mike Feldman FRPS*



*The Supreme Graffitiist, Prof. Chris Flood LRPS*



*Head of Common Darter - *Sympetrum striolatum*, James Foad LRPS*

OTHER ACCEPTED IMAGES



*Sleeping Beauty, Palli Gajree Hon.FRPS*



*Lone Rock, Adele Gibson LRPS*



*Filigree, Ray Grace, ARPS*



*It's in the Bag, Doreen Haines LRPS*



*Twisted Spiral, Dennis Hancock LRPS*



*Gateshead Bridge at Night, Sheila Haycox ARPS*



*The Meadow Yosemite, Tony Healy ARPS*



*A Commission from the Academy, Peter Hemment LRPS*



*Moldavian Nuns restoring a Monastery, Adrian Herring ARPS*



*Victoria Pendleton, Roger Holman ARPS*



*Dance, Ron Holmes ARPS*



*I have my Lucy back, Bert Housley ARPS*

OTHER ACCEPTED IMAGES



1926 Bentley 3 Litre, Paul Johnson LRPS



Dancers with Camelia, Diana Keane ARPS



The Waders, Malcolm Kitto ARPS



Daisy, John Lacey ARPS



Dining Table, Christine Langford LRPS



Olive Trees, Don Langford LRPS



*The Returning, Reg Law LRPS*



*Conducting the Choir, Ian Ledgard LRPS*



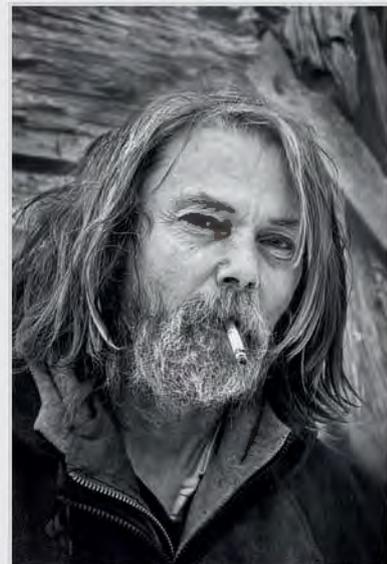
*Duke of Gloucester at Rew Devon, Eric Leeson LRPS*



*Moondance, Carole Lewis ARPS*



*Detail in Milliner's Shop, Ironbridge, John Lewis LRPS*



*My Choice, Tony Luxton LRPS*

OTHER ACCEPTED IMAGES



*Avenue Acer, Jim Marsden FRPS*



*Just The Two Of Us, Martin McCormack LRPS*



*Pink Lilly & Tulip, Graham Miles ARPS*



*The Venetian Lighthouse, Xania, Angus Nisbet*



*Beach Huts, Roger Norton LRPS*



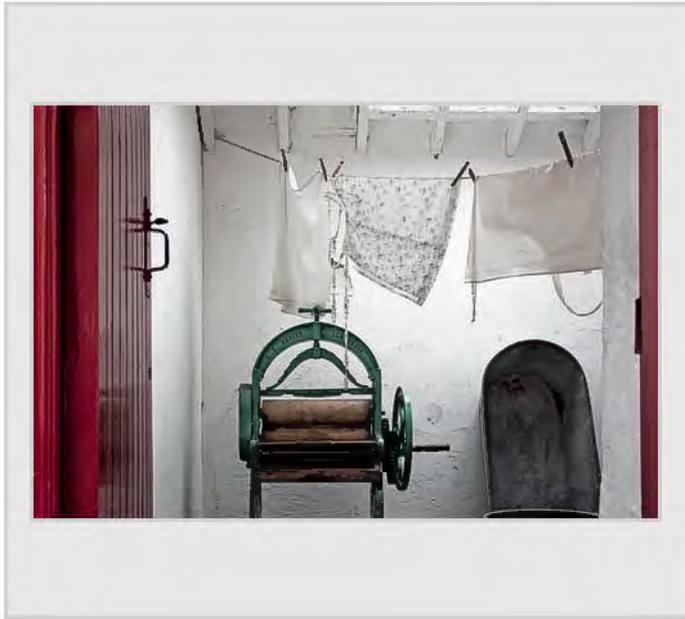
*Approaching Storm, David Oldfield FRPS*



*The Snail, Rikki O'Neill FRPS*



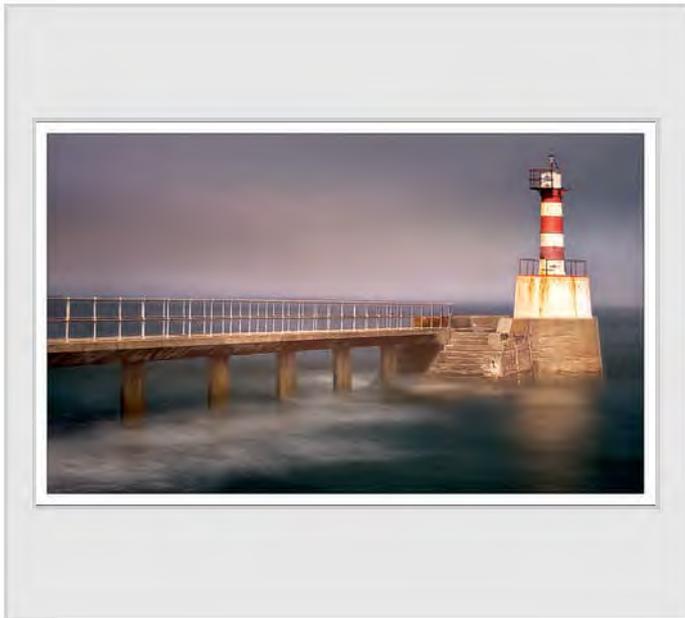
*Yellow Submarine, Katerina Panagiotopoulou*



*The Wash House, Janice Payne LRPS*



*Shy Foxglove, Chris Perfect ARPS*



*Amble Lighthouse, Norma Phillips LRPS*



*Body Moulding Parlour, Roger Poole LRPS*

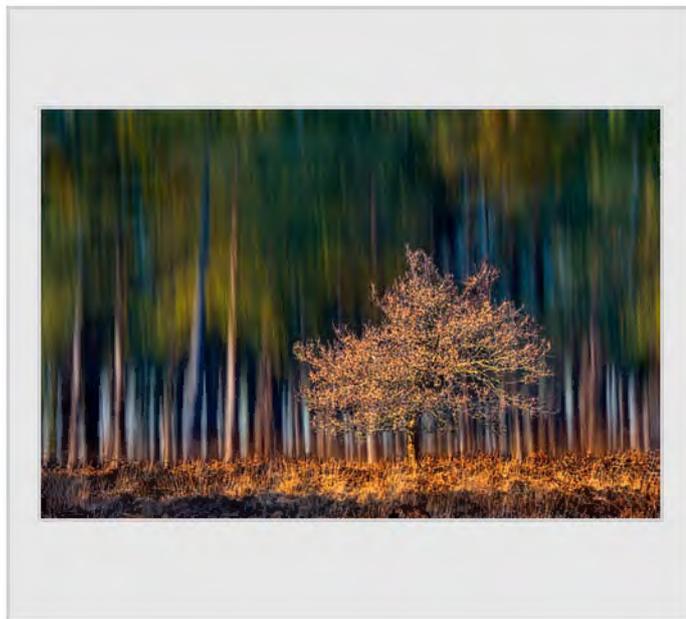
OTHER ACCEPTED IMAGES



*In A Squall of Rain, Elizabeth Restall ARPS*



*Scallop Shells, Shelagh Roberts FRPS*



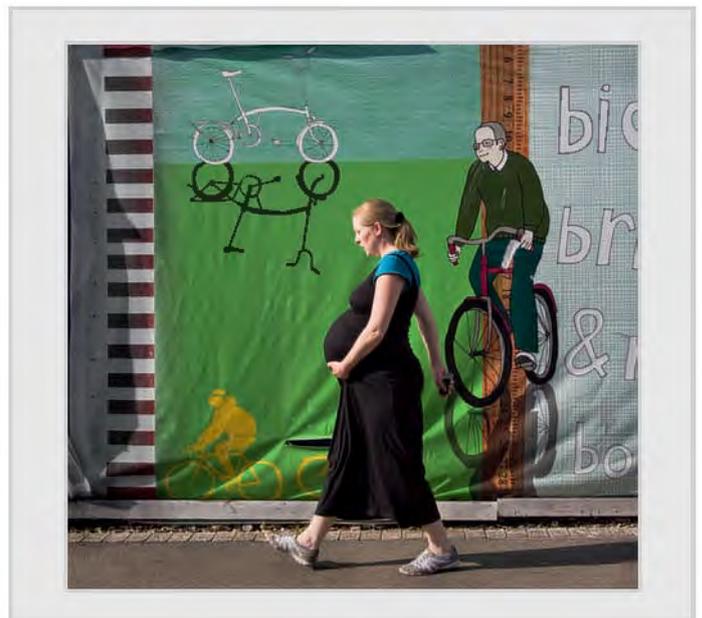
*Autumn, Dr Barry Senior Hon FRPS*



*Hot Line for Noodles, Fiona Senior FRPS*



*Long Way from Home, Gina Socrates ARPS*



*Bicycles and Bump, Patsy Southwell ARPS*



*Heron at Roath Park Lake, Mel Stallworthy LRPS*



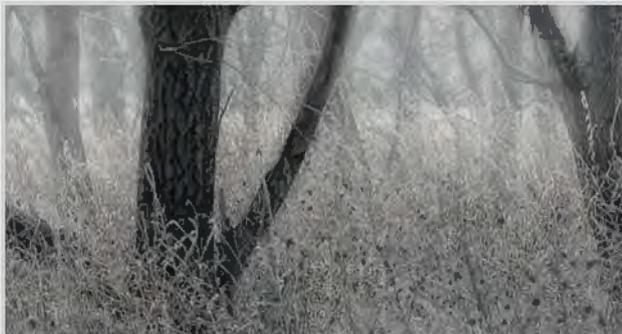
*What was I Saying?, Peter Stevens ARPS*



*Some People Notice, Others walk by, Peter Stickler ARPS*



*'Bee' My Friend, Gerald D Thompson LRPS*

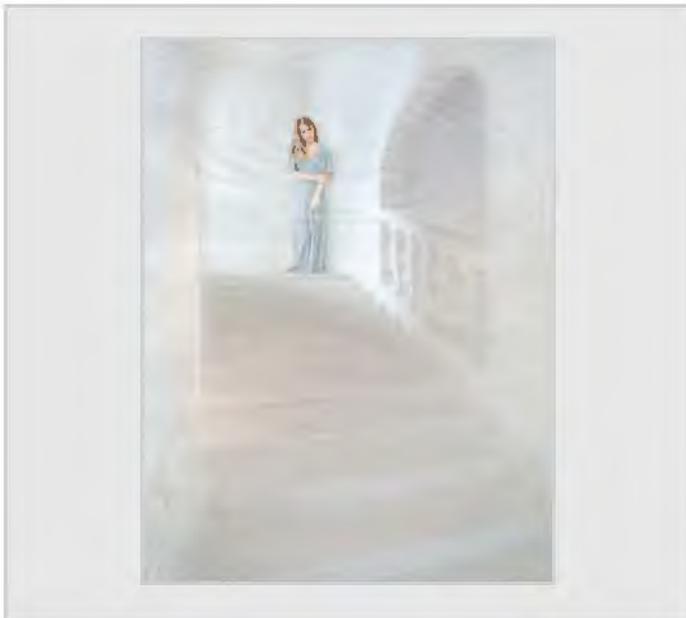


*Misty Trees, Chris Thurston LRPS*



*Bed And Chair, Richard Tickner ARPS*

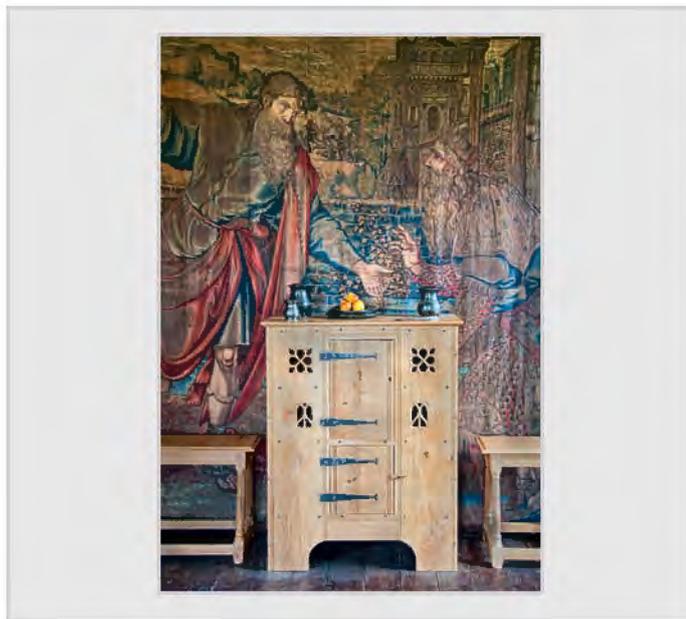
OTHER ACCEPTED IMAGES



*Alone, Dee Wareham*



*The Singer, Graham Whistler FRPS*



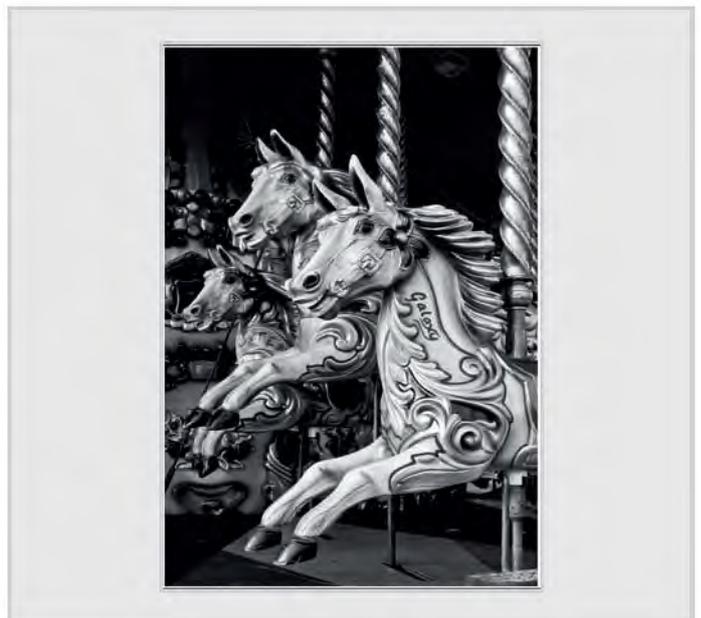
*Please Help Yourself, Carol Wiles ARPS*



*Firebird, Norman Wiles LRPS*



*Abandon Hope, Ian Wilson ARPS*



*Galaxy & Friends, Baron V Woods FRPS*



*Homeless, Graham Worley LRPS*

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