

THE **RPS**  
ROYAL  
PHOTOGRAPHIC  
SOCIETY



# DIGIT

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY  
DIGITAL IMAGING GROUP NO. 64: 2015 Issue 1



MIKE McNAMEE

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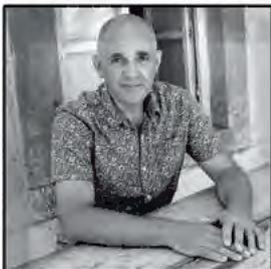
*"It's all about knowledge"*



JOE CORNISH



STEVE CAPLIN



EDDIE EPHRAUMS



DAVID MALLOWS



Joe Cornish



Steve Caplin



Eddie Ephraums



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# DIGIT

No 64: (2015 ISSUE 1)

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# EVENTS



Details of more DIG events are available from the DIGIT Group Magazine page of the Group's website at: [www.rps.org/DIGIT](http://www.rps.org/DIGIT)

**THE RPS**  
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The University of Warwick

Sunday 20 September 2015

[www.rps.org/DIGExpo](http://www.rps.org/DIGExpo)



Projects and Assignments  
of a  
Photojournalist  
David Shaw

Digital Imaging Group  
Southern Centre

## FilmPhotoAcademy.com Workshops with the RPS Digital Imaging Group

We have been running courses for the RPS DIG group for some time and we are pleased to announce our new spring schedule and a **massive 15% savings** on any bookings from DIG members. *Use the code at the bottom of the page to save on any purchase.*



**Drama and Nudes in the Boat Graveyard – 17<sup>th</sup> May**  
£145 £125 – Nr Gloucester, max 8 – Ivory Flame & Ella Rose

The dream team of pre-Raphaelite models shooting dramatic fashion styling amongst wrecked boat skeletons. A great opportunity to combine learning and shooting in a fascinating location



**Nude in the Woods – 28<sup>th</sup> April**  
£95 £85 – Nr Cirencester, max 6 – Carla Monaco

Shooting dramatic fashion nude styling in secluded woodland. Working with Carla Monaco, much sought after fashion and nude model. Woodlands with natural paths and spaces. Gnarly and gritty roots for more textured backdrops.



**Fashion on Location Workshop – 29<sup>th</sup> April**  
£95 £85 – Cheltenham, max 6 attendees – Carla Monaco

Carla Monaco looks like a film star even when she is not trying! You will be shooting her around iconic and dramatic locations in Cheltenham. The focus will be creative fashion and dramatic cinematic style images..



**Urban Decay Nudes Workshop – 23<sup>rd</sup> May – EXTRA DATE!**  
£145.00 £135.00 – Birmingham, max 6 attendees – Maja Stina

A model with an amazing, unique look - working in an equally distinctive shooting space. Result AMAZING AND UNIQUE IMAGES! This multi-floor, multi-room location has all the grot, grime and urban decay you could ever want. Maja Stina is a shaven headed model – for a very special look and style.

**RPS DIG MEMBERS SAVE 15% on all bookings**  
use offer code "RPSDIG15"

To book your places please go to [www.FilmPhotoAcademy.com](http://www.FilmPhotoAcademy.com)  
or call 01242 255 000 for more information

## DI Group Scotland Centre April 2015 Meeting

Sunday 19 April 2015

Bridge of Allan Parish Church, Keir Street, Bridge of Allan, FK9 4NW  
Malcolm McBeath ARPS - will talk about some of his images and how he goes about his work.

Doug Berndt ARPS - will demonstrate his use of Lightroom for image management and processing and invite audience participation.

Image Sharing and Discussion - bring Prints or DPIs

**Time:** 13.30 - 16.30

**Contact:** Doug Berndt ARPS

**Email:** [digscotland@rps.org](mailto:digscotland@rps.org)

**Cost:** DIG Members £7, RPS Members £8, Non RPS Members £8

## DI Group Southern Centre – Projects and Assignments of a Photojournalist, Lecture by David Shaw

Sunday 19 April 2015

Greyfriars Community Centre, 44 Christchurch Road,  
Ringwood, BH24 1DW

David specialises in investigative reportage creating in-depth photo essays and articles focusing on human rights and social issues. His work has taken him around the world to places such as Gaza, Lebanon, India, Nepal, Egypt and Greece. He also completes assignments for Non-Government Organisations and charities internationally. He continues to investigate important unreported stories with the goal of informing an audience through visual and written journalism.

### Be Famous for 5 Minutes

Bring images on a USB stick to show in the afternoon

Bring a packed lunch, Tea and Coffee available.

**Time:** 10.00 – 16.00

**Contact:** Barry Senior HonFRPS

**Email:** [digsouthern@rps.org](mailto:digsouthern@rps.org)

**Cost:** DIG Members £6, Students £6, RPS Members £8, Non RPS Members £8

## DI Group Western – Infra-Red Photography – Chris Rourke

Sunday 17 May 2015

Merryfield Village Hall, Ilton, Nr Taunton TA19 9HG

This event is not to be missed! Chris Rourke will demonstrate some of his IR photography techniques. He will be showing dpi and print examples and will process some IR RAW images demonstrating how embedded colour parts can be brought forward. This promises to be a very informative and stimulating day which aims not so much to convert us to IR photography but to highlight its potential.

The afternoon session will be our usual "Show and Tell" with Prints or Digital images from attendees.

**Time:** 10.00 – 16.00

**Contact:** Glenda Colquhoun

**Email:** [digwestern@rps.org](mailto:digwestern@rps.org)

**Cost:** DIG Members £5 RPS Members £7, Non RPS Members £8



# EDITORIAL



Last year, when I took over as Editor, I introduced a series of articles under the heading of 'Back to Basics' because I believe that it is important to aim for the best quality work that we can achieve. So we need to understand some basics of digital imaging before we start, regardless of whether we produce 'straight' images or more creative ones; for example, correct colours are essential in natural history work and in portraiture.

During 2014 we had several technical articles in DIGIT: 'Jaggy JPEGs or RAW Smoothies' (the pros and cons of each), 'Creating Light Rays' (in Photoshop), 'Expose to the Right' (to retain highlight detail in RAW files), 'The Gentle Art of Compositing' (for creating montages in Photoshop) and in the last issue we had 'Perfect Capture' (practical tips about colour accuracy and focusing techniques).

Continuing with this theme of basic information, there are two new articles this time. Several people have requested information about digital workflow and so I have written an article about how I organise

my workflow. I appreciate that this is not the only way to work and that other members may not agree with what I do. If you have a totally different way of working, then send me an email and maybe we can feature your method in a future edition.

Secondly, following on from my general overview of what workflow means, John Lewis has written about some important factors to consider in your workflow: which colour profiles and workspaces to use.

In addition to several articles by members, the remaining Creative Images from the Members' Projected Images Competition 2014 (PIC 2014) are included in this issue.

To help me with the heavy workload of preparing DIGIT, Peter Hemment has volunteered to assist with some of my email correspondence, so some of you may receive messages from him on my behalf.

On the subject of heavy workload, may I request that, before preparing entries for the annual DIG Members' Projected Image Competition and the annual DIG Members'

Print Exhibition, the rules for each one should be read carefully. We ask that images are submitted in particular formats, including colour space, file type (e.g. JPEG or TIFF) file size and with the correct titles. The rules for the recent print exhibition were very clear, giving the precise requirements needed for publication of the accepted prints as digital images in DIGIT, but a large number of people seemed to ignore them. It takes a lot of time and effort to correct the numerous mistakes. You may not fully appreciate it but all the committee members of the DIG and other helpers work as volunteers, often giving up many hours of their time each week for the benefit of the Group.

The next issue of DIGIT in June will be a special edition focusing on the forthcoming DIG Expo. It will include articles written by some of our speakers for the Expo and it will feature images of the accepted prints from our recent DIG Members' Print Exhibition 2015; these prints will be also be on display for a closer look at the Expo on 20 September 2015.

Carole Lewis [digiteditor@rps.org](mailto:digiteditor@rps.org)



# FROM THE CHAIR

I am sure it won't have escaped your notice that we are organising a national DIG event for you at The University of Warwick on Sunday September 20th. You will find the ad within this issue of DIGIT and more info on the web site, including a short video that gives you a succinct overview of all that is on offer. But I thought you might like some background to this event.

Those of you who have been members for a few years will recall that DIG has held national meetings at Rugby in the past, where they had some excellent speakers and trade stands etc. This became untenable when Jessops, who were the main sponsors and organised the trade for us, withdrew. But many of you kept asking for more or similar events to be organised. So rather than keeping the same format and just finding a new venue etc we set about giving you the new improved DIG national meeting.

The speakers and venue were chosen having assessed your feedback from last October's members survey. We have booked speakers to meet most of your interests. We considered your stated travel distances and ticket price thresholds, put it all into the mixing pot and came up with DI Expo 2015.

It is being staged primarily for you, our DIG members, but will of course be open to RPS colleagues and non RPS folks also. Epsom are our event sponsors. The day will be split up into 6 sessions but there are 14 different options to choose from, so you book your own personal programme according to what you want to see and hear. You can even book to do your LRPS Assessment that day, using the other half of the day to enjoy the Expo. We will have a live Bowens studio and a variety of 12 traders there to entice us to spend. Many will have show offers

so bear that in mind as, if you are planning some purchases, then you could even save the cost of your entry ticket by taking advantage of their prices.

Unlike the big NEC shows this is containable and less stressful. There will be minimal walking and we can cater for wheelchair users.

We particularly want DIG members to get their tickets ordered early so as to not be disappointed if the more popular sessions are sold out. We are also offering you the opportunity to bring along your partner for the same DIG special ticket price of £25 p.p.

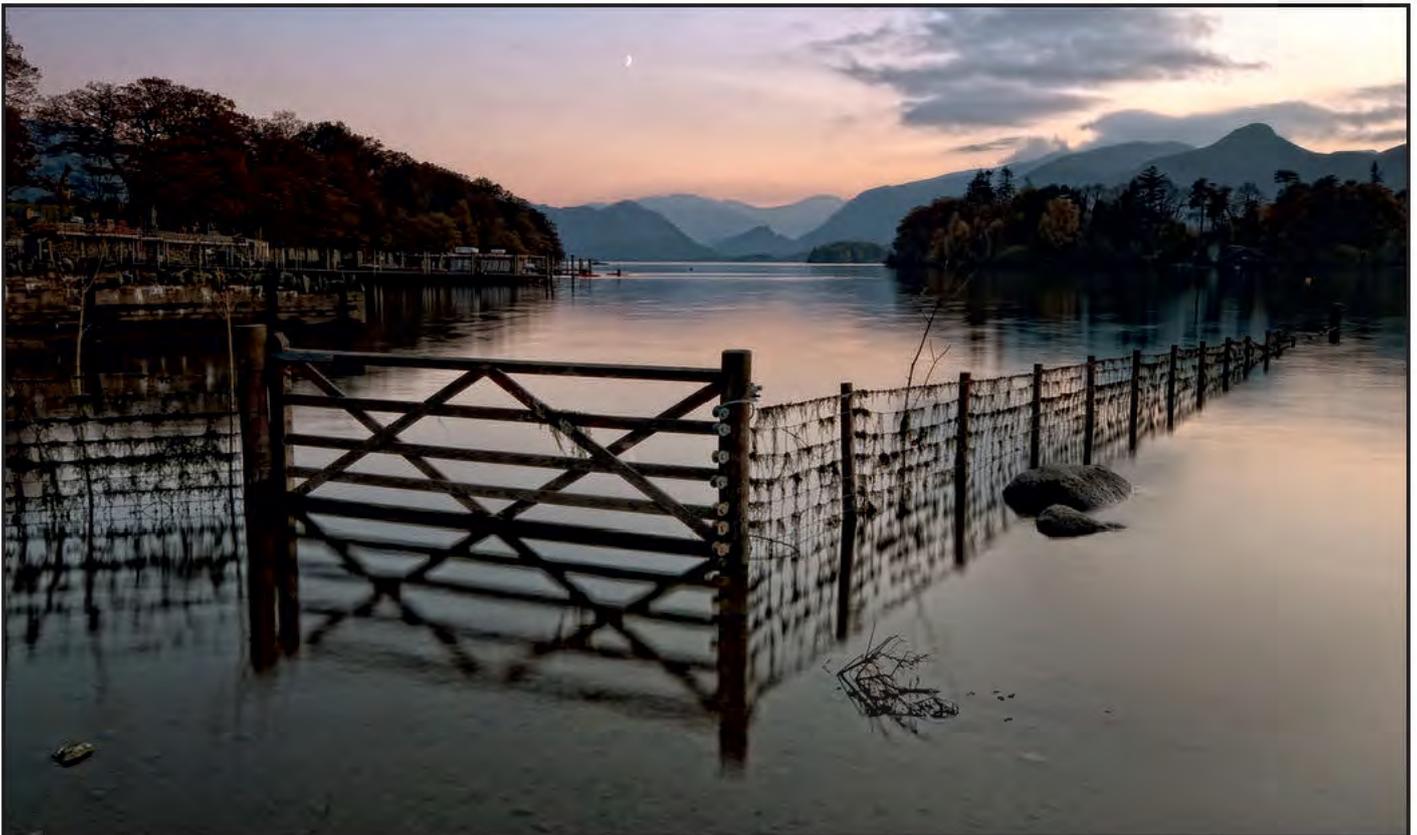
So do read all the info and get booking. It really is going to be a great event.

Janet Haines ARPS [digchair@rps.org](mailto:digchair@rps.org)

# MY PHOTOGRAPHY



Chris Thurston, winner of the Creative Gold Medal in the Members' Projected Image Competition 2014 for his image of 'Olive Trees in the Mist' shown on page 9, gives us a fascinating insight into his photographic journey that started at the age of 4. His later membership of camera clubs inspired him to take a variety of pictures, some of which are illustrated here.



Gateway to Derwentwater

Well, I don't know about you, but I prefer reading to writing and, very much above both, I prefer taking photographs to see if I can get them to somewhere like what I thought they could be when I took them. Obviously, I guess like for all of us, a fair number fall by the wayside, not being quite what I intended; and for every success there seems to be varying degrees of frustration and, dare I say it, failure. Probably, in my case, more than its share of both!

Still, I persevere in trying to create images that I like, that maybe come out of nowhere, but more likely come from the deep recesses at the back of my mind in a stream of consciousness that have been inspired by the many wonderful, high quality photographers before and around me whose work I have always sought out and

enjoyed. From that I try to create a range of images with no particular connection other than that they are randomly thoughtful, a bit quirky, quite interesting, or at least not too boring, and express different aspects of my character and imagination.

I first became a serious photographer at the age of 4. Serious? Well, it was at this age I first discovered the magic. I remember being fascinated by seeing the upside down image of what I aimed my Dad's Box Brownie at, and the way the mysterious grid moved on through the tiny window when I turned the knob that wound the film on. I was also intrigued by the reaction of people when a camera was aimed at them. "Say cheese!" was the optimum phrase apparently. Shortly after this peculiar behaviour there would be major excitement when the prints appeared. There in black

and white were those happy moments recorded forever in print, and even more mysteriously on some strange plastic material but looking extremely odd and alien. This, it transpired, was a negative. All in all, one huge box of tricks. I was hooked. As time went by I had another big magical moment when, for my 12th birthday I was bought my own camera, the latest big thing – the Kodak Instamatic. This was an amazing piece of kit to me. I could now take colour pictures. I also had an incredible piece of technology called a flash. This thing was a square box object that held 4 flashes. When fixed on top of the camera it would turn after it fired its flash ready for the next go. High tech indeed. This led to another magical development: I no longer had to rely on having the sun over my shoulder to take a picture, as per Kodak's helpful hints. I could take them in the dark. I also



Cosette from Les Misérables

discovered another new trick – slides. The pictures I took wouldn't be seen as prints, but had to be projected in a darkened room, to be seen – with the aid of another exciting piece of kit, a projector. All in all, it was a fascinating process. Well, time has moved on and now it's all bells and whistles and the digital age. Photography has evolved incredibly and is so much more accessible. Images are captured daily by the million (billion?) on phones and cameras and instantly accessed to social network sites. It's all so simple and straightforward and yet, still not so simple to achieve quality. The rules of photographic skills for composition still apply. The cameras and phones may appear to remove the need to think about the 'how' but the old film rules still apply. Timeless.

Anyway I was happily tiptoeing around, taking photography more seriously, until the age of 41. Then, by a strange quirk of fate, or Darren Norton by name, I was dragged kicking and screaming into my local camera club in Stevenage (SPS). Then everything changed. My whole world turned upside down. I discovered a purpose. However, I also discovered pretty rapidly that I wasn't naturally gifted. Just keen and there was a lot to learn.... and I was a long way off from where I wanted to be. Life must be so much

easier if you're born with a gift. Oh well, no way round it. With not much to go with except keenness, the only way was forward and it was going to take an awful lot of hard work and perseverance. It has; and, well, 18 years later I have at last achieved a little success! A massive help in this whole process has been my partner, Adele Gibson, who I met when I joined SPS and as a very keen photographer herself we are able to share so much together. I do sympathise with people who don't have backup around them, who are made to feel uncomfortable because they've stopped when they've seen a photo opportunity but must get it completed in 30 seconds otherwise they're getting nagged. What a nightmare.

I did get the massive privilege of getting the image from Derwentwater shown opposite on page 6 into the RPS PORTFOLIO 2 book and I was beyond chuffed with that. It is also my favourite place. This was just one of a number of pics taken on this gorgeous warm September evening when life doesn't get better. Getting up for dawn shots does give spectacular results but I'm still always in a daze when I'm doing it, wondering why I'm not in bed. I'm definitely a night person. I can go all through the night working on pics in Photoshop easily, but a dawn shoot has to be forced! Which

leads me to thinking: what do I get out of photography? Why do I do it? It's now such an in-grained daily ritual that I don't really analyse it – it has just become a way of life. Working through my own pics, looking at other people's work through magazines, up to London for exhibitions, other club's in competitions, TV programmes, on the web, adverts. Anywhere and everywhere there are images that are astounding and I just really enjoy the whole thing with a passion. In that mix I produce my own efforts and I hope sometimes, someone, somewhere is getting the enjoyment out of my pics that others give to me. I don't have a particular style. It's all a bit haphazard and random. I don't think that's a particularly good way to go. Much better to have a direction, get some cohesion, but for me I think I've learnt a lot by having a go at everything. Getting into set projects, though, is something I need to work on.

I have the good fortune to photograph local amateur stage shows and the one above is from last year's show. The astonishing effort put into the productions makes it very rewarding when I can reciprocate by giving them images worthy of their shows. It's always extremely challenging as I shoot the productions live at their final dress rehearsal, so I'm going in not knowing what will be happening. That's entertainment!



Fitness



Going to Church

A massive help recently has come about by joining Ware & District PS and having the extreme good fortune to have become friends with Hugh Milsom and his partner, Pat Broad: two very experienced photographers. Hugh has inspired us for years with his pics when we didn't know who he was but regularly saw his work in exhibitions. He has an absolutely astounding body of work and is still producing top quality. As I write, Hugh is a week away from celebrating his 80th birthday. His partner

Pat has the most incredible ARPS panel I have ever seen. The two of them have shared much knowledge, entertainment and inspiration and have made me see my pics with an even more critical eye. It's absolutely crucial to be as critical of your own work as you can possibly be. Put the effort in. The difference is priceless.

Another stroke of good fortune. Through my photography I'm friends with Yasmin Khan who is a fitness instructor and competes in

national body-building competitions around the country. As you can see above, Yasmin is a fine subject to shoot and at least I get to set up my own mobile lighting!

On holiday in the Lake District last year Adele and I came to this spot at Buttermere. I just saw this opportunity for a pic. It was twilight, dull and miserable and the fading light emphasised the dramatic scene of the church and road.



Little Red Riding Hood



Olive Trees in the Mist

A couple of years back I finally took my turn to the annual pilgrimage that is Whitby Goth Weekend around Halloween. I shot a young lady amongst the church graves but thought she would suit this image of a watermeadow more and once I had turned

her black cloak red, I had Red Riding Hood as in the picture above. But no basket or wolf. Oh well. The crows and the old cottage added a bit of atmosphere.

Driving around Umbria on a misty dawn

shot trying to find photogenic moments, I turned the wrong way from Adele's directions. We were up too early to concentrate, and we turned into fields of poppies and an olive grove in the mist. It was spectacular and we could have missed it so easily.



Red Damselfly



Strength

We have a pond in the garden and I took the opportunity to try out my macro lens on the damselfly in the picture at the top above.

Jay, a friend of Yasmin's, volunteered to be photographed with her in my home studio set-up, but I took this of him on his own. I obtained an underground

sign pic at Earl's Court, downloaded the London Underground font and substituted something more appropriate.

This is another image from the Goth weekend. Just messing really as I had this character I shot at the church but I thought he would look better down on the pier. I called it 'The Bank Manager' for some reason. Maybe its how I see Bank Managers....?! A more forbidding sky would have been more appropriate in hindsight, though.



The Bank Manager

A few friends and I hired a model and went to the Windmill Studios where I took this. I like the challenge of thinking on the hoof to make a shot and this worked well. I called it 'The Basket Girl'.



The Basket Girl

Near to where I live are the much photographed Therfield rolling fields but nobody shoots the lone tree alongside. I thought it deserved some attention.

I enjoy setting up still life pictures. I think you can learn a lot about lighting and composition this way.

So that's the story so far. What of the future? Well, I have had a little dip into the FIAP pool and I will look to achieve more success there, but my big challenge is towards attaining the ARPS distinction.

For me, it is important to have projects to pursue as it gives a sense of purpose and drive to continue developing my photographic and artistic skills.



Lone Tree



Fruit Study

# PORTRAIT OF DREAMS



"I like nonsense, it wakes up the brain cells.  
Fantasy is a necessary ingredient of living.  
It's a way of looking at life through the wrong end of a telescope,  
allowing you to laugh at life's realities."

*Dr Seuss*



Tears of a Clown

As the saying goes, a lot of water has flowed under the bridge since I first started my photography, but the water is still flowing along and hopefully no chance of drying up.

My 'real interest' in photography came by chance in the early eighties. I had treated myself to a state of the art SLR camera: the OM20, as a replacement for my Kodak Instamatic. Perhaps the reason for the change was simple - it would look good carried over the shoulder!

Even with my Instamatic I had always tried to be creative. These photographic shoots were restricted to holidays and the usual family gatherings. Then something changed: I wanted a camera that could take 'really good pictures'. Sadly, this belief still holds true for some!

One particular reason for change was my desire to use photography as a means of collecting subject reference material for my work as an Illustrator.

Most of my working life I have been creating cartoons, caricatures of life, illustrations of cute bunnies, dogs and children, whether it be on greeting cards or in children's books, so it was no surprise to me that at sometime throughout my photographic career I would try to bring these elements back through my own photography.

I have always had an avid love of children's books and I am a great admirer of children illustrators, many of whom have inspired me to move forward with the belief that



Meeting Peter Rabbit



The Guardians



Butterfly Garden



Sea Lady

I could produce the concept of fantasy photographic illustration.

The images displayed here were the beginning of that exploration. Images that take you back to the world of Fairy Tales and Nursery Rhymes whether it be the sugary sweet and nice or towards the macabre and frightening.

Talented illustrators such as Nicoletta Ceccoli, Dilka Bear and Camilla d'Errico provide massive inspiration because of their

childlike approach, bringing dreams to life through their illustrations – illustrations that take us into a fantasy world of light and dark but still give us the belief that they are real and beautiful.

Maggie Taylor and Alexander Jaanson add a more adult approach to their images and their influences can be seen in many of the photographers of today.

Just like them I don't feel I am an adult, my other inner self, portraying images from

my field of dreams, a much wider field of vision.

Just as they have done, proportions are changed: large heads, large eyes, small mouths, rearranged faces all attached to whatever bodies I can create; a model shoot, street acts, the additions of mannequins, toys and clothes from children's museums all created photographically and altered using Photoshop tools.

The additions of textures and a Photoshop



The Gift



The Sea Queen



Mermaid



The Wedding

plug in treatment contribute towards the finished image.

My images have sometimes given reason for some to ask the question: "Is it photography or art?"

Art has never just arrived out of nowhere. Every artist/photographer needs visual, intellectual and emotional stimulation. Realistically there is nothing new but each artist will bring about their own unique outlook and experience to their work making it their own.

Being influenced by others whether it is photographers or artists can help you understand your own aesthetic sense and preferences. The analysis of their images can help you to develop qualities within your own work allowing you to move forward and embark on photographic explorations of your own. It is about the potential around you.

I know in my own way I have added that little bit of difference to club and salon photography. Some fellow photographers have said that they have been very influenced by my approach to photography,

which for me is a great honour. It is very exciting to know that I have been part of their image creativity. It is more important to me that these photographers are producing images that are now influencing me!

"Is it photography or art?" The question will remain.

Creative photography is a love, a fix; from the early days of my simple still life images to wide-angle portraits, hand colouring a black and white print, painting and



The Flight



Valentine



Snow White



The Escape

burning slides, to the present day where digital photography has overcome all; this has allowed me to become even more experimental.

The evolution of photography from heavy, large format glass plates to today's digital work has raised some serious questions regards digital imaging as a medium of expression.

The traditionalists still cry out that it isn't photography, that it is slick and dishonest and not a valid art medium but digital

manipulation must be the most exciting new medium available to photographer/ artists since the invention of oil paints. If Photoshop can improve images further then surely it is simply Luddite to ignore it; why bury your head in the sand? It is not about the product, it's about the image. It has given us the freedom of expression and an opportunity to make dreams viable.

The digital medium is our world today. I believe that everything that is happening in photography is a serious, wonderful enhancement – not a replacement. I will

continue to take images to be creative, try to keep moving forward and hopefully continue with the success that I have experienced for many years.

One thing is certain, the love of taking the photograph, the love of creating the image, together with the excitement of seeing the finished print or digital image will always be at the forefront of my photography.

It is something I cannot be without, so the exploration continues and I hope yours will too.



The Offering



Together



Mary Mary



Fruit Cocktail



Hey Diddle Diddle



The Bride



The Fly, The Doll and The Spider



Falling



Paradise



Cat Girl



The Scheme



The Butterfly and The Moon

# MY ARPS – HOW I GOT THERE



David Pearson has been interested in photography since about the age of 10 and enjoyed his black and white darkroom and colour processing work. After retirement from the computer industry he avoided computers until digital photography came along. He explains his journey to his ARPS panel. The technical details of these images will be explained in a DIGIT Challenge in a future issue.



**T**hough you would never believe it now, I won my first camera, a Kodak Duaflex, in a handwriting competition at the age of about 10. For the next 50 years I enjoyed taking photographs, never very seriously, mainly holiday snaps. For a while I had a black and white darkroom and later on tried colour processing. That's when I more or less gave up, finding colour printing far too difficult and frustrating.

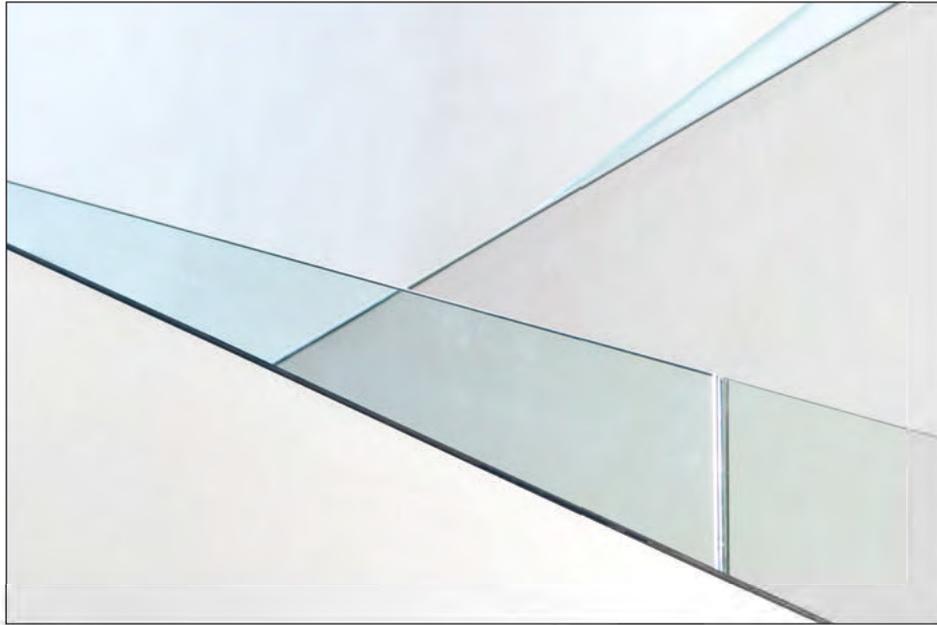
Soon after that I retired from working 40 years in the computer industry and vowed never again to touch a computer. But then along came digital photography. Photography and computers came together and I got hooked. I joined Amersham Photographic Society and started taking the hobby seriously, gaining my LRPS in 2007.

An ARPS was an obvious next step but I struggled to think of a theme, let alone a personal style, and dropped the idea for several years.

On my first visit to the newly renovated Ashmolean Museum in Oxford I was bowled over by the internal architecture – the pure white walls, the stark geometrical shapes and curves of the staircase, with details of stainless steel and green tinted glass. I took many photographs to try to capture the character of the place and one in particular (bottom left on Page 19) did rather well, gaining acceptance in the London Salon and several international exhibitions. That was encouraging but, at the time, I still thought of them as entries for monthly competitions.

A couple of years ago Amersham PS started the PIC (Photographers in Camera) group. This was an attempt to do something different from producing single images for monthly competitions and to encourage members to work on bodies of work. It was not only for those working towards distinctions but also for personal projects, books, and experiments or just for enjoyment. After a couple of meetings I realised how satisfying it could be to work, over a period, on a whole panel of images rather than a series of ephemeral one-offs. I floated the idea of an ARPS submission based on my Ashmolean pictures and was encouraged to go ahead with it.

The first thing I had to do was decide exactly what I wanted to show – the germ



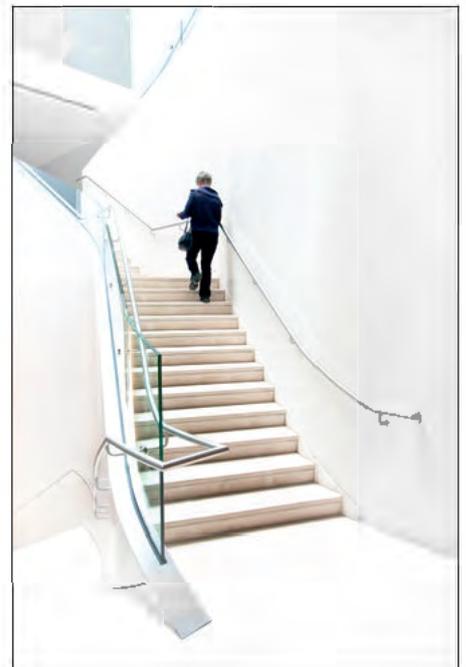
of the 'statement of intent'. I wanted to show the feeling of light, the preciseness of the lines, the clean overall whiteness and the muted tones of the details. It was to be the essence of what was there with all distractions removed but nothing creative added. However, because of the difficulties of the location, perspective and lighting in particular, what came out of the camera was very different. More work on the computer was needed.

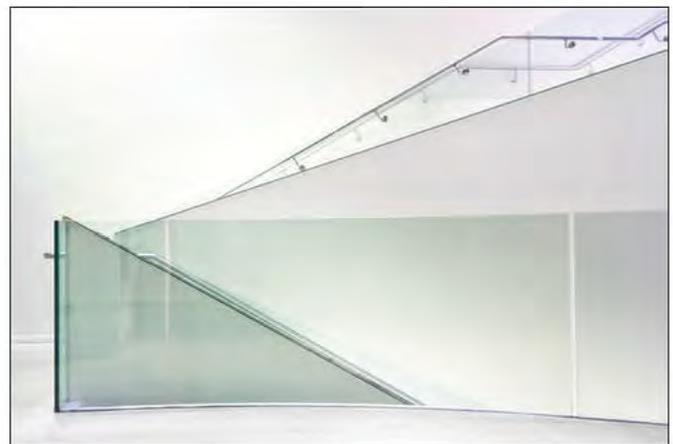
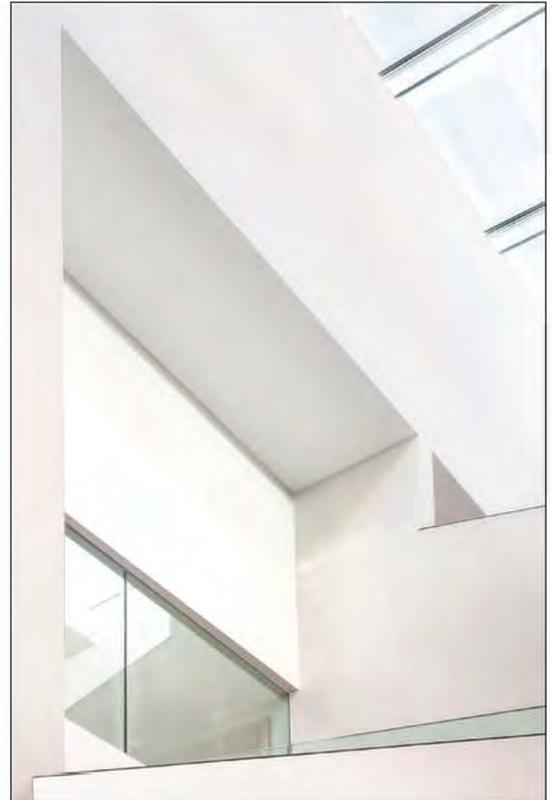
Although my earlier prints had all been produced in a similar high key they had all

been made as single images. Now I had to develop a consistent look and feel for the whole panel. This involved reprocessing all the work I had previously done but now, at least, I could put together fifteen images that started to look as though I was moving in the right direction.

The hard work starts when trying to assemble a cohesive panel of fifteen images. They must all work together; while they must all belong to a theme, there should be none that are too similar. The panel should be balanced and it should look good when

viewed as a whole. It then becomes obvious that some images will never work; others have potential but are not quite right; new ones are needed to balance existing ones. That's when you realise that, out of the fifty-odd images on file, you cannot find fifteen that work well enough together. Time for another visit to the Ashmolean. But this time I was not taking random pictures but knew what I was looking for – a different angle on this one, a particular shape to balance another, a good symmetrical centre piece, etc. In practice, two more visits were necessary before I had all that I wanted.

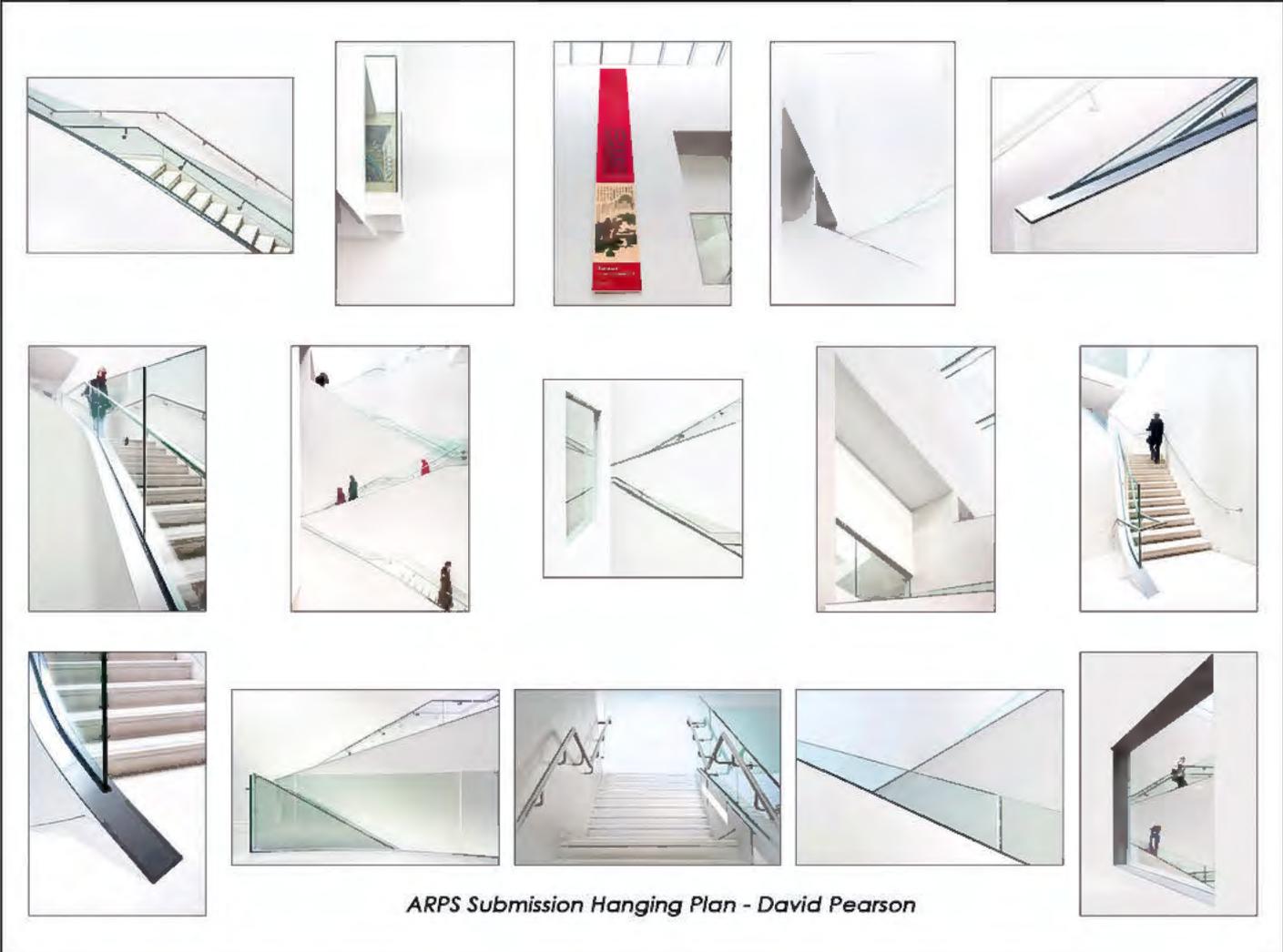




Even then, finalising the layout was a significant task. At home it involved lots of shuffling around of small images on the computer and of unmounted prints on the lounge floor. But this is where membership of the Amersham PIC group again showed its worth. We have a stand where three rows of mounted prints can be displayed before an audience. This makes it much

easier to view the panel in the same way as the assessors will see it and to move prints around to try different layouts. And, of course, comments from other members are invaluable. Coming fresh to it, they will often spot problems that you, through over familiarity, have failed to see. Two of the members work as distinction assessors, so their advice acted as an advisory day.

There were differing opinions on whether the top centre image (see Hanging Plan on Page 21 opposite) should be used. Several people thought it was too different from the rest of the panel, that it destroyed the overall cohesiveness and should be replaced by something quieter. In the end I decided, "it's my panel, I like it, so it stays". Luckily the assessors liked it also.

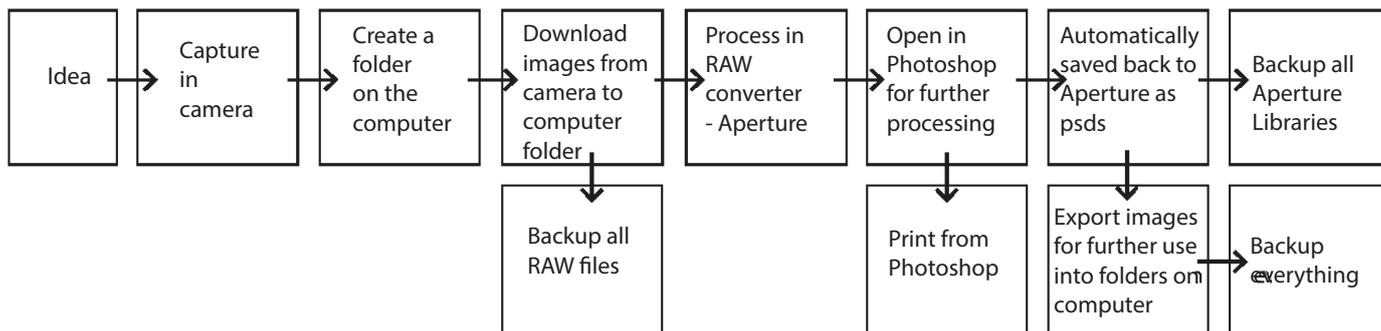


ARPS Submission Hanging Plan - David Pearson

# MY DIGITAL WORKFLOW



Have you ever tried to capture an idyllic scene on your camera only to be disappointed with the resulting projected image or print after processing? If so, maybe your workflow could be improved? Here is an overview of a suggested workflow that might help.



My own workflow is shown above.

Digital workflow can be described as a consistent system of working with digital images from capture to final production of prints or images for digital projection or web use.

I believe that it is important to work consistently. I'm going to write in very general terms about my own workflow. It is not intended to be totally comprehensive but rather an overview. It may not suit everyone, so you must find your own 'best practice'. There is no single perfect workflow. I recommend that you listen to other people's ideas, do research on the Internet if necessary and then adapt everything that seems useful to suit your own needs.

### Initial idea and Image Capture

Depending on the subject you are going to photograph, you will need to set your camera accordingly. Before using a new camera for the first time, it needs to be set up so that the preferences suit you. If in doubt, read the instructions carefully – something that many people forget to do.

When shooting, I usually use Aperture Priority – Av mode to give me control over the depth of field for landscape and general street shots. If I am shooting moving subjects then I switch to Tv mode and choose an

appropriately fast shutter speed. For studio work the settings will be determined by such factors as flash sync speed etc.

ISO setting is another consideration. If I am outside, without a tripod, with light conditions that vary, I will often use Auto ISO. Many people may disagree with this but I find it is better to capture a shot that is sharp because the camera has chosen an appropriately high ISO to enable a sufficiently high speed, rather than have an image that is unsharp because of camera shake. Modern cameras produce extremely good images at high ISOs. If I am working outdoors on a tripod, I will try to use a fixed low ISO setting if the subject is not moving or if I want to be creative.

I believe that the ideal setting to give the most control over image quality is to capture the images in RAW, so my camera is set up to shoot in RAW. Then I use the exposure compensation setting to make sure I retain detail in the shadows i.e. 'expose to the right' to keep the histogram on the back of the camera over to the right. On my Canon EOS 7D, that often means that I set the Exposure Compensation setting to +2/3 but it can change considerably from shot to shot. I don't worry too much if parts of the image on the back of the camera have flashing highlights because I know that my camera will allow me to recover highlight details in images overexposed by

up to 2 stops. This may not be the case for other cameras, so you need to experiment to find out how far you can go.

RAW images take up more storage space but they provide much more control over the final product for print or projection. If your camera only shoots in JPEGs or if you choose to shoot in JPEGs for a particular reason, then you should try to capture the images as accurately as possible because there is far less information available in JPEG files. You should not overexpose in the same way that you would for RAW because it will be considerably more difficult or even impossible to recover detail in the highlights. If I shot in JPEG I would set my camera to use Adobe RGB 1998 as my colour profile, large JPEGs and, in most instances, automatic white balance (AWB) although there is a case to use the daylight setting because, in film days, that is what we used. In the case of RAW images, white balanced can be altered in your RAW converter, so it is not critical to set it in the camera. I usually leave mine on AWB.

### Download to computer

I have always used Macs because I find them considerably more user friendly than PCs (and I don't have to worry about installing anti-virus software). For example, programs like Excel are written differently for Macs and I find they are easier to use and more versatile than on PCs. I work with many

programs open at once; it is very easy to switch between them on my Mac.

I use a card reader to transfer my images from the memory card in my camera to my computer. This could be done directly into software such as Aperture (for Macs) or Lightroom (for all computers) but I prefer to store my images in folders.

It is important to decide on a consistent file system on your computer: I prepare named folders for each shoot e.g. labelled with the place, date, etc. and store all my RAW files together in them. Then I backup all these folders in a different location, e.g. on a separate external hard disk. I store my RAW files separately from the images that are processed later.

Before working on your images, make sure that you calibrate your monitor regularly. It is worth investing in a good quality monitor. Many people will spend a lot of money on their cameras and lenses but forget about viewing their images to best advantage. If your images on screen don't represent what they are really like in respect of colour, contrast etc. then the final print or projected image you produce may be disappointing to you. I use a large monitor for my desktop because I like to see my images and palettes clearly in Photoshop. I know that many people prefer to have 2 monitors so that they can put their palettes etc. on their second screen.

#### **Import into Aperture (or other application)**

I always import my RAW files into Aperture rather than just referencing them. This serves 2 purposes: if I accidentally move or lose my RAW files, I have not lost them from my Aperture library. And it gives me an extra copy of the files as a backup. My Aperture Libraries are stored on separate hard discs and backed up regularly.

The first thing I do to my images when they are in Aperture is to adjust the Exposure in my RAW converter to bring back the highlight detail that might have been lost. I use a Mac and I have used Apple's Aperture to date as my RAW converter and for cataloguing my files. I have found that the RAW engine in Aperture is better than that in Lightroom and Photoshop. Support for Aperture has been dropped. Apple will bring out their new program to replace it (possibly by the time this magazine is published) but I understand that 'Photos' will support my existing Aperture Libraries (and also iPhoto Libraries that may have been created). I just hope it retains the same RAW engine.

I don't do any other adjustments in Aperture

because I prefer to take my images into Photoshop for processing as PSDs. The resulting PSDs are then saved back to Aperture automatically.

#### **Process the RAW files**

Before using any new version of Photoshop or other program for the first time, check the Preferences to ensure it will behave the way you want. I set my preferences for workspace to Adobe RGB 98, (see the article by John Lewis about colour profiles and workspaces on page 32) and I use Adobe Bridge to synchronise the colour settings in all my programs. That means that I have the same colour settings for consistency between all the programs that I use, such as Photoshop and Adobe InDesign.

Don't forget that, unlike analogue images, digital RAW images need post-processing because of the way that camera sensors work; RAW images are naturally flat and unsharp, so they will always need sharpening and adjusting for contrast.

#### **Further image post-processing**

I use Photoshop for working on my images but many people use Photoshop Elements. Photoshop gives me more features that I use frequently compared with Elements, such as Curves, Actions, Channels etc. However you can buy a 'plugin' that will give you some of these features in elements because the code is there but it is hidden.

I make all my adjustments on layers on my PSDs so that I have complete control if I want to make any changes later. Although file sizes may be large, I never flatten my images – storage space is relatively cheap and I would rather have the ability to go back at a later date.

It is possible to do some post-processing in Aperture or Lightroom but I prefer to be able to see, in Photoshop, all the changes that I have made without going back into another program.

When you work on your images in Photoshop to make your adjustments, remember to save frequently; there's nothing worse than working on an image for ages and then have your Photoshop crash and lose your hard work. Or use the auto save function in Photoshop, although this might slow down your computer.

When I have finished working on my images in Photoshop, they are saved back into Aperture as PSDs.

#### **Exporting images**

The next stage depends on whether I need to produce prints or images for digital

projection or images for web use.

If I need prints, then I export them into Photoshop and print from there. If you don't print your own photos then you need to check with the company you use to find out in what format they need the images e.g. TIFFS in Adobe RGB or JPEGs in sRGB.

If I need digital images I can export them very easily from Aperture in the required format. This can vary considerably, for example for various competitions in camera clubs or international exhibitions. I export them into previously prepared folders named with the exhibition or whatever they are needed for. At that point, if necessary, I rename them (in the Finder Window on my Mac) according to the requirements in the rules of the exhibition. A tip – before sending images using your mail package, check the mail preferences to make sure that images are not being compressed or having their colour profile changed during sending.

#### **Checking images**

Before I send off my digital images, I check the file info in the Metadata tab in Adobe Bridge to make sure that all the titles, sizes etc. of my images are correct. I suspect that many people don't check their images before sending them, judging by the number of incorrectly prepared images that are sent to our DI Group for entering in competitions and exhibitions.

#### **Backing up files**

If you have ever had a computer crash or a hard disk fail, you will know how devastating it would be to lose all your images. So it is important to consider how to back up your images before you start and also to decide how often you are going to do it.

It is advisable to have at least 2 backup copies of all your files in different locations. They should be backed up regularly. I use a RAID system onto external hard disks, which only saves any *changes* to the files on the backup disks, mirroring rather than saving a new copy incrementally of everything, every time, which would take forever. I have separate backups of my RAW files and my Aperture Libraries and I also backup the hard disk that has all my competition entries etc. I back up daily in the evening, rather than all the time when I am working, which would slow down my computer.

If you take images on other devices such as mobile phones, have you thought about backing those up also? Treasured photos could be lost for ever if you don't have backup copies.



An Imaginary Lens - Bath 2014 by John Law ARPS



Aquilegias by Moira Izzard



Arrival by Allan Mason-Jones



Autumn by John Elvin LRPS



Beach Assault by Frances Underwood LRPS



Bert the Baker by Roger Hance FRPS



Carnival Girl by Norma Phillips LRPS



Cats Cradle by Valerie Duncan ARPS



Cosette from Les Miserables by Chris Thurston LRPS



Dancer No 1 by Richard Cherry ARPS



Dancing Through Time by Reginald Clark LRPS



Death of Innocence by Jim Duncan ARPS

## DIGIT CHALLENGE: TEACUP GALLERY

There are three 'DIGIT challenges' this time from DIG members who share their techniques with us. More challenges will be featured in future editions, so if you have any images that you would like to show us and explain how they were created, please send them to me at [DIGITeditor@rps.org](mailto:DIGITeditor@rps.org)



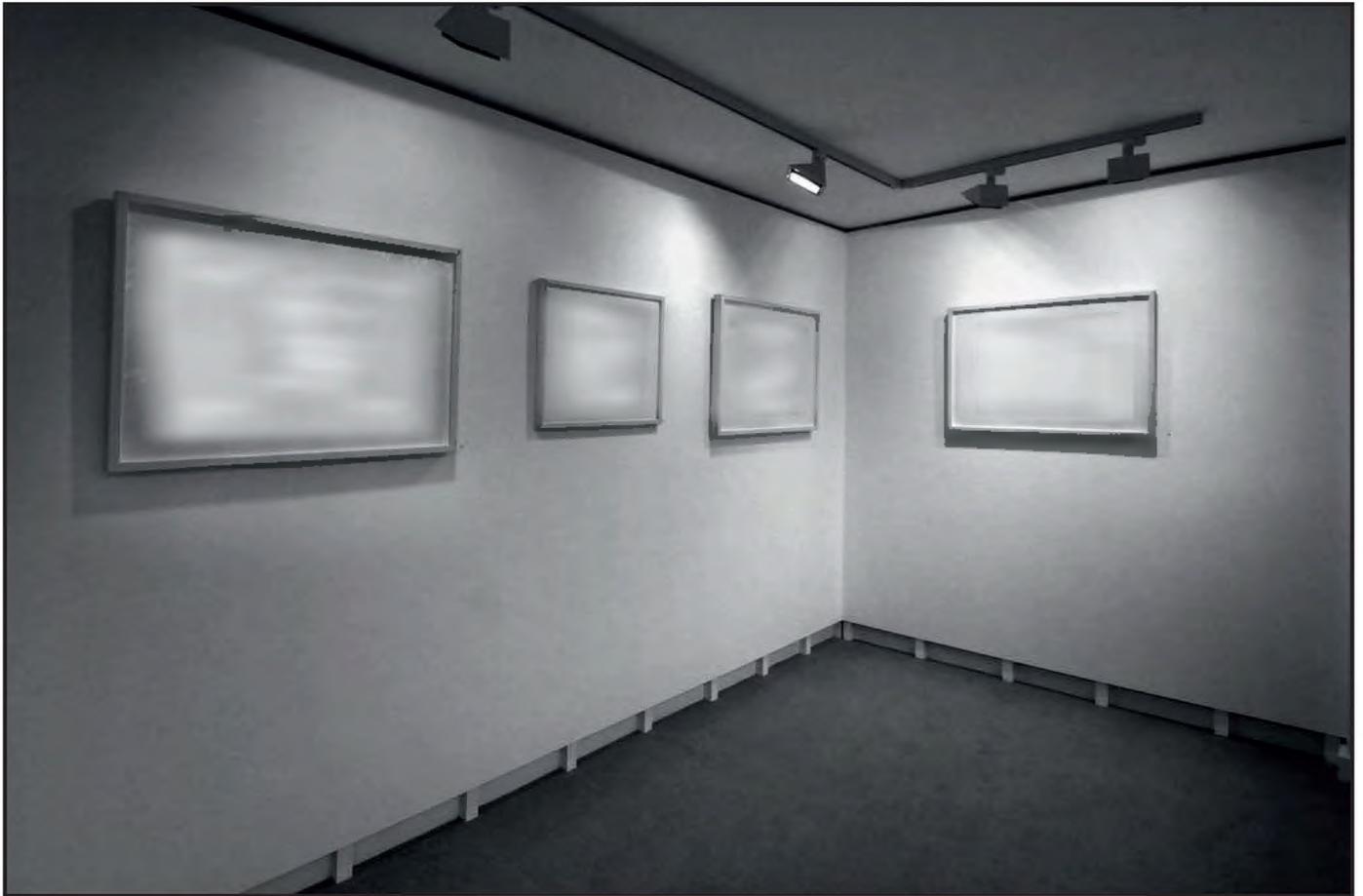
Teacup Gallery

The original photo was taken in an Art Deco house on the Dartington Estate in Devon. The property was taken over by the National Trust, but they closed it shortly afterwards due to lack of visitors. The original image was taken in one of the small rooms used as an art gallery.

It looks as if a lot of work has been done to the original but the final image was quite quick and easy to produce. I initially toyed with the idea of creating a mirror image so copied the background and flipped the layer. Before doing anything else, I decided to experiment with the various blending modes. Darken worked reasonably well but

lighten was brilliant, creating what looked like a mirror image.

I wanted the image to be as minimalist as possible so I cloned out a few bright highlights and dark patches on the ceiling, and changed the triangle at the base to white.



Original image

A friend of mine collects small cups and saucers of every shape and colour and I had numerous images saved in my 'cutout' folder.

I selected each of the cups and saucers using the magnetic lasso tool and copied and pasted the selection onto the background. It was far too large so I used the transform tool to reduce the size, and then moved the cup and saucer into a picture frame and then transformed it again to fit the shape of the frame.

I had seen the blue chair in Venice some years ago and knew it would come in handy some day! I think the most difficult part of the image was adding a natural looking shadow. I tried various methods but the one that worked best was creating the shadow gradually using the burn tool set to highlights and 5% exposure.

Somebody commented that it is "some else's art". Well, no, it is all mine.



Teacup

## DIGIT CHALLENGE - PAINT SCULPTURE 59



Paint Sculpture 59

I call these 'Audio Activated Fluid Pictures'. I have seen examples of this done by others who have stretched a balloon over a speaker, so I developed my own equipment for doing this. It is called LAFFAD (low audio frequency fluid activation device).

I happened to have a spare 12 inch Peerless, bass speaker unit and a bass crossover so I built an enclosure for it out of plywood. About 25mm above the speaker is a thin black polished sheet of perspex with an airtight seal around the edge. When the

speaker is activated, the movement of the cone is transferred by the enclosed air to the perspex. This movement of the perspex causes the paint to leap about.

I use a signal generator on a PC (which

controls my whole system) so that I can vary the frequency to give the best results. I find that low frequencies give the greatest height to the fluids placed onto the perspex sheet. I have created a switching device which turns the signal to the amplifier on and off, according to the sketch (a program code) running on an Arduino mini computer. The duration of the sound signal is about 200 milliseconds, which minimises splatter.

The lighting in some instances is just from the front, but in Paint Sculpture 59 on page 28 there are three speedlights positioned behind a frosted perspex background, and three at the front. In front of each of the rear speedlights there is a coloured gel. This part takes quite a bit of setting up so that the light from the background and its reflection in the black acrylic sheet appear seamless.

The fluids are poster paints slightly diluted and they are applied to the perspex sheet with a syringe.

The system works like this:

Coloured fluids are placed onto the acrylic sheet. The sketch for the Arduino is run, activating the camera first and then the LAFFAD. The signal to the camera goes via a delay unit to release the shutter on the camera, which fires the flash, and takes the picture at the correct time. The timing is critical and it is altered with the delay unit to give the best results.

A PC using Remote DSLR controls the camera settings. I have the exposure set at 1/200 sec at f/16, though the actual exposure is controlled by the speed of the speedlights. These are set at 1/128<sup>th</sup> power, which gives a flash duration of about 1/30000 sec. This is necessary to freeze the action. The camera is a Canon EOS 1Ds Mk2, and the lens a Sigma f/2.8 105mm macro. The results are seen immediately on the PC screen.

More details and images can be seen at [www.ramigrafx.com](http://www.ramigrafx.com)



Paint Sculpture 7



Paint Sculpture 16



Paint Sculpture 85

## DIGIT CHALLENGE - ADELIE PENGUIN



Adelie Penguin: ISO 500 190mm f5.6 1/1000 sec

**M**y Adelie penguin was photographed on a trip to the Antarctic in January 2013. This picture was one of many taken from a small inflatable dinghy, which was constantly moving, posing the risk of ending up swimming in the icy cold water. There were around half a dozen Adelie penguins right at the top of the iceberg but due to the iceberg's size the boat was unable to get very close. Over a period of time the penguins would launch themselves down the side of the iceberg into the water.

The Antarctic is the coldest, windiest and emptiest place on Earth, but it has to be one of the best places I have travelled to for photography.

The journey started from Ushuaia, better known as 'the end of the world'. My home for the next two weeks was an old converted Russian spy ship, the Akademik Ioffe, chosen not only for its suitability to the harsh environment but also for its small size. It could negotiate the small islands and, as it accommodated less than 100 people, this meant that time ashore was not limited.

My final destination was the Antarctic Peninsular. The first two days were spent crossing the Drake Passage. Here the convergence is known for its turbulence and when the ship crossed this point the temperature dropped and we sailed into thick fog.

The Peninsular is a major mountain system with rock, glaciers and several islands. The surrounding sea and straits are littered with blue icebergs and bobbing 'bergy bits'. (Yes, that's the technical name for them!).



Akademik Ioffe: ISO 400 70mm f5.6 1/4000 sec

When the ship entered calmer waters the photographic opportunities for wildlife were endless. January is the perfect month for photographing penguin chicks and every time I look at one of the images it reminds of the stench of the rookeries. The porpoising penguins and fluking whales were certainly a challenge to photograph, but the whole experience was amazing.

As well as the wildlife, the landscape presented wonderful photo opportunities too. My image of the old Whalers' Hut seems to capture the strange and unworldly feeling surrounding Deception Island. The bay is spooky. History oozes from the battered wooden huts of the abandoned British Antarctic Base buildings. There is evidence of the volcanic eruptions nearly 50 years ago and the reminder of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century slaughter of whales in the bay.

A polarizing filter helped tone down the sometimes-harsh light and, although I left home armed with my tripod, it never left the ship. My lens of choice was a 70–200 mm, which was used for all these images that were subsequently cropped to an aspect ratio more suited to the individual image. I also used a 100mm macro and a wider 16–35 mm.

The Snow Petrel image was taken adding a 1.4 extender. I also needed to be able to control the camera's metering system to enable me to capture texture and detail, with the camera settings adjusted to achieve around one stop of over exposure. This image was probably the most challenging, and once again was taken from a small inflatable dinghy.

Finally on the return route the opportunity arose for a night's camping on the ice. So armed with a sleeping mat, sleeping bag and liner, and with my camera safely tucked on board ship, I settled down to a totally sleepless night. A fitting if not relaxing end to a memorable trip.



Snow Petrel: ISO 800 235mm f5.6 1/5000 sec +1 exp comp



Gentoo Penguin on Nest: ISO 400 185mm f5.6 1/200 sec



Whalers' Hut: ISO 400 85mm f9 1/320 sec



Leopard Seal: ISO 400 200mm f5.6 1/500 sec +1 exp comp

# COLOUR PROFILES AND WORKSPACES



John Lewis explains which colour profiles and colour workspaces he uses and gives the reasons for his choices. He illustrates the relative sizes of the some colour workspaces, the consequences of the colour workspace you might choose and the need for consistency in your workflow.

I am constantly being asked in my camera club: "What is an icc profile? Why is it important? How do you know if an image has a profile?" and "When do you give an image a profile?" Ideally all images should have an icc profile such as Adobe RGB (1998) attached (embedded) in them so that the software e.g. Photoshop, knows how to interpret the colours within that image. This means that an image without an embedded profile may not display or print as you intended when you pass that image onto someone else. Some software does not read embedded profiles as they are not 'colour managed' so images may not display or print correctly; similarly web browsers. As far as I am aware, at present only Safari and Firefox are 'colour managed' browsers.

So is it important? Yes, if you want to get the best out of your images and for others to see them at their best. Is it easy to ensure you have the correct profile embedded? Yes and No. It is easy but you must start at the beginning and ensure that your workflow from start to finish is colour managed and you are in control. If you follow some simple rules then you will not have a problem; just think before you deviate. Stick to one workflow for everything and then, when you have the final image, make any necessary changes on a copy of that.

**What do I mean about Workflow?** Before you take a picture, decide what Colour Space you are going to work in and stick with that every time you open that image on your computer. This means that every piece of software you own for editing an image must have the same Colour Space (Workspace). Is this easy? Yes and No. It is easy once you have decided what you are going to use and have set your preferences so that your imaging software uses the same Colour Space. If not, then every time you open that image in a different image editing software you stand a chance of changing the embedded profile. Similarly, when you save an image, make sure that the embedded profile is saved with it the one you want and only different to the one you use if that

file is being given to someone else who wants a specific embedded profile.

## What are Colour Profiles/Workspaces?

Everyone should have heard the terms Adobe RGB, sRGB and possibly ProPhoto RGB. What do they mean? Which should I use? There is no right or wrong answer but, as with most things, even if one is better than the others, it may not necessarily be the best for you. The Internet is littered with Pros and Cons and "I use this" but the only person who can decide which is best for you, is you. I will tell you what I use and why but it is only my opinion (even though it is the right one!).

**Colour Workspace.** ProPhoto RGB is the largest colour space by far, with Adobe RGB next, followed by sRGB. Based on this we should all be using ProPhoto RGB: right? No! Although ProPhoto RGB has the largest colour space it still does not encompass all the colours in the visual spectrum but, more importantly, actually exceeds it in the greens and blues which means it produces colours which we can neither see nor reproduce. Also if you use ProPhoto RGB you need to use 16 bit files to prevent banding and posterisation. However the feeling is that 8 bit files contain more colours than the human eye can see. Another can of worms! What is 8 bit? One bit is 2 shades e.g. Black and White. An 8 bit image gives us  $2^8$  shades i.e. 256 shades of grey from Black to White or, in colour, 256 shades of Red, 256 shades of Green and 256 shades of Blue, giving a grand total of 16,779,216 colours. A 16 bit image is  $2^{16}$  shades = 65,536 shades of each colour = 281.512 colours (281 trillion). So where do we go? Why use ProPhoto RGB and 16 bit if we cannot see the colours or reproduce them?

The industry standard is sRGB so why don't we all just use that? If you just take JPEG pictures, do minor corrections in an image programme, on a cheap monitor and print on a cheap printer or send out to a lab then you probably should.

**"Why" you may ask?** Because your workflow

here is probably not managed, you have no control from the time you press the button to the print you produce, even if you have calibrated your monitor and printer. There are numerous places for something to go wrong.

**Does it matter?** That depends on you.

Do you want to produce the best image you can, with colours you like and others admire or an image that is just OK? For most people sRGB may be the best choice, for a few ProPhoto RGB is their choice. Some switch between all three, but as I said, to avoid mistakes, decide on one and stick with it throughout to the final image until you have mastered Colour Workflow. Once you have that image, then convert a copy of it to whichever workspace you need. The only caveat is that the conversion should be from ProPhoto RGB to Adobe RGB or sRGB, and Adobe RGB to sRGB, not the other way round. You cannot improve or create colours when going from sRGB to Adobe RGB to ProPhoto RGB because the information is not there in the original file. But if you work in sRGB you have no choice but to convert if someone wants an Adobe RGB file.

That leaves us with Adobe RGB. It is my choice so it must be the best? No: it is my choice at present and I have no reason to change; it is what I have used since I first started in digital photography in the late 90's when I didn't know any better (and ProPhoto RGB wasn't available). It is not necessarily the best for everyone. You have to decide. See the screenshots showing colour spaces. The grey areas are the larger colour space with the specified coloured colour space superimposed on top (inside).

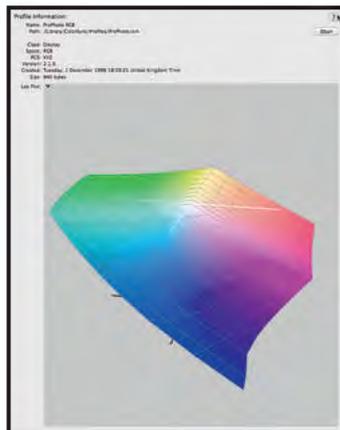
The top row on page 33 opposite shows the difference in size between ProPhoto RGB, Adobe RGB and sRGB colour spaces.

The second row shows how much bigger ProPhoto RGB is than Adobe RGB, Adobe RGB is to sRGB and how much smaller sRGB is than ProPhoto RGB. The third row compares my Dell U2711 monitor to each colour space. This monitor is low to mid

range for a 27" monitor and cost me £600 (rrp over £800). As you can see it cannot reproduce the ProPhoto RGB colour space but is larger than the Adobe RGB colour space in most colours. The sRGB colour space fits well within its colour space.

The bottom row shows my Apple 23" Cinema display which was considered a good monitor in its day. It is now over 8 years old and is used as a second display. As you can see it reproduces sRGB very well except in the blues/reds and better in the greens and yellows but cannot reproduce all the Adobe RGB colours.

**Workflow.** We start the choice of Colour Workspace at the beginning with the camera. If you are shooting JPEGs you have little choice. JPEGs are lossy files, which means that data is compressed by throwing away some of that data, based on an algorithm. You have no control over which data is lost. In the camera your only control is over how the information is processed before saving as a JPEG e.g. using the Picture Styles and whether it is Adobe RGB or sRGB. All files will be 8 bit. If you chose sRGB, or have no other choice, your workflow will be sRGB from start to finish. However, once you get that image into your photo editor and start 'creating' colours with filters and plugins, then use Adobe RGB. I suggest that if possible you shoot in Adobe RGB to maximise the colours you capture and use Adobe RGB as your workflow Colour Workplace. You can always convert an image to sRGB at a later date. The main advantage of a JPEG is that if the exposure is spot on then you will have an image, which only needs minor tweaks and sharpening to produce a finished image. The disadvantage is that any exposure error could be difficult to correct; it may have a colour cast and your



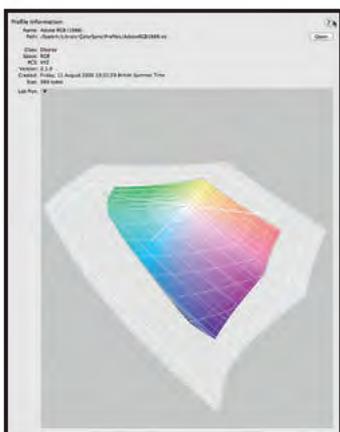
ProPhoto RGB



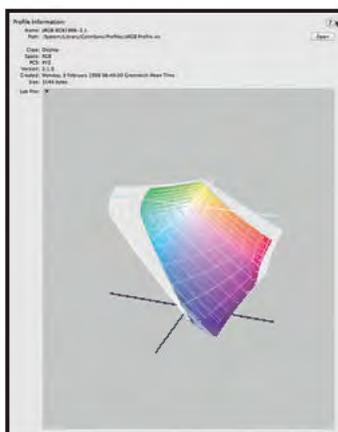
Adobe RGB



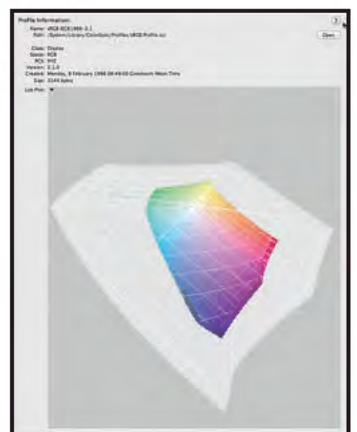
sRGB



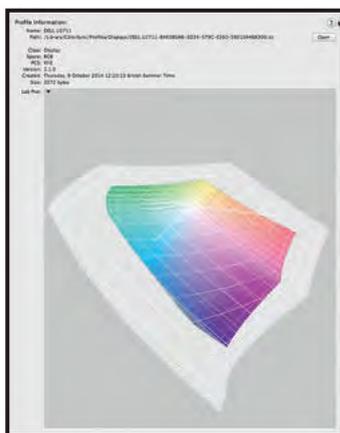
Adobe RGB inside ProPhoto RGB



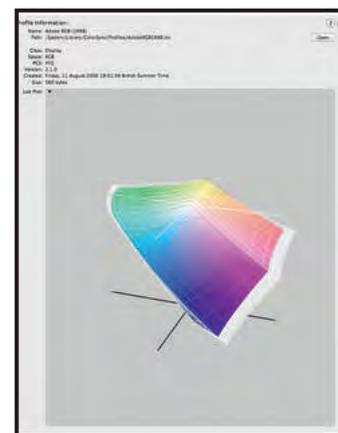
sRGB inside Adobe RGB



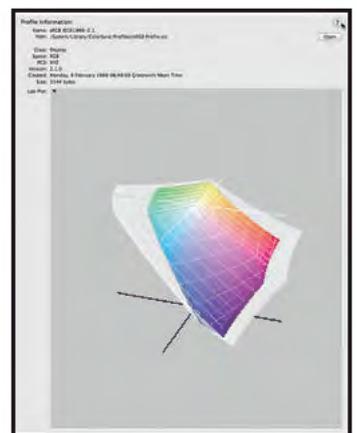
sRGB inside ProPhoto RGB



Dell U2711 inside ProPhoto RGB



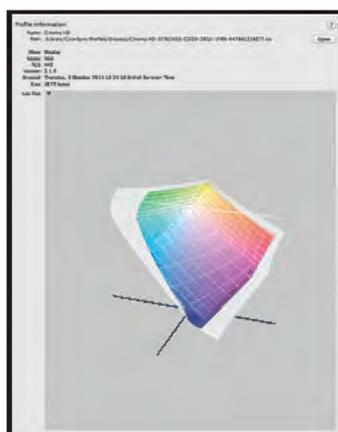
Adobe RGB inside Dell U2711



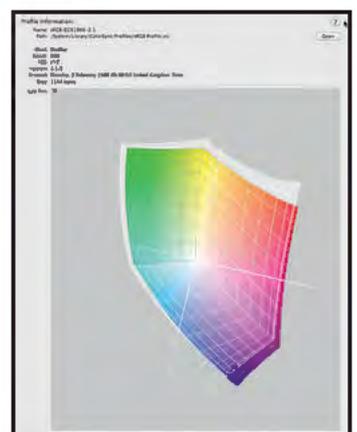
sRGB inside Dell U2711



Apple 23" Cinema Inside ProPhoto RGB



Apple 23" Cinema Inside Adobe RGB



sRGB inside Apple 23" Cinema

choice of Picture Style may not be to your taste after processing.

If your camera captures RAW files then you should be capturing all your images as RAW files. I know they are bigger files, slow down your camera if using a motor drive and need work to obtain a 'basic' image because you cannot use the image straight out of the camera, but it is the only way to get the best quality. Also most mid range cameras capture images in 10 to 14 bit e.g. Canon 7D captures 14 bit Raw Files. Some high end cameras now capture in 16 bit. This means you have far more information to play with. If you shoot in RAW you do not have to decide which Colour Space to use as you can choose once you have downloaded the images to your computer. However I suggest you choose Adobe RGB so that if you decide to shoot JPEGs one day or RAW + JPEGs then you are in the best colour space available for viewing and processing your JPEG images on the computer.

We have therefore now established that you should start with your camera set to capture images in Adobe RGB and as a RAW file. Next the computer ...

**What do we have to do here?** Nothing really, as the computer just processes the information. However the computer is important because, if you have a very old and slow computer with little RAM and hard disk space, then you are going to be limited by the size of the files you can process and the time it takes. A 16 bit image is going to take considerably longer to process than an 8 bit. Not just twice as long; remember 8 bit is 16 million colours, 16 bit is 281 trillion colours, so *much* more information to process. As with everything in this world, 'disposable' seems to be the norm. That means every time you update your OS (operating system) and/or software to get new features, or the latest camera with more pixels, it appears that your computer gets slower and you feel the need to buy a new computer. Who said "digital is cheap because you have no film costs"?

However you must tell the computer how to process the images and then it is all down to the operating system and software you use. I still recommend Adobe RGB and RAW though because you will probably not process all that many images (how many 20's and exhibition pictures do you take?). If you want to produce a lot of pictures for an AV, 6x4 in prints or the web, then export the RAW files and batch process as 8 bit JPEGs and save. No need to process as 16 bit files in ProPhoto RGB for that type of work.

**Software.** This is where it starts to go wrong for most people. If you do not know what

colour space your software is working in, then how can you expect to produce work in the correct colour space with the correct colour profile embedded and the correct colours? For simplicity I will only deal with Photoshop, Elements, Adobe Lightroom and Apple's Aperture.

Adobe Lightroom is very popular with photographers on Mac and Windows PCs. Its Mac-only equivalent is Aperture. (There is also Capture One for both Mac and Windows, as well as other software.) Both are software applications that act as an image library and, although they are different in how they work, both are similar in how they treat RAW files. Neither specifies what colour space they use to display the images. Both leave the choice of colour space until you output the image. This means that what you see on screen is dependent on what your monitor will display and any changes you make to the image will again be dependant on your screen. This means that if your screen only displays sRGB at best, then those are the only colours you will see. When you then come to output that image as either a print or a PDI JPEG or a TIFF or PSD file, then this is where you decide what colour profile to embed to produce the final output.

As the files are RAW files then the colour information can be huge, so again you have no idea of what the image will look like until you have produced the final file and can view it in a colour space that will show the colours at their best. To get the best out of Adobe Lightroom and Aperture you need a good calibrated screen, which will ideally reproduce the Adobe RGB colour space, otherwise you cannot see what you are producing. This means that if you use Lightroom or Aperture to produce your final image then when you decide to produce a file of that image to send to a printer or to be viewed on a projector or someone else's screen, you must embed a colour profile. Even if you have embedded a colour profile you are still dependant on the printer (inkjet or commercial lab) or projector/screen having a colour-managed environment to show your image to its best. If the printer or person receiving your file asks for a sRGB embedded colour profile then it is pointless sending an Adobe RGB or ProPhoto RGB file because their workflow will convert your file to sRGB and you may be disappointed with the results.

**What do I do?** If you are using Lightroom or Aperture remember that your images/files do not have a colour profile embedded/associated with them unless they are an imported TIFF, PSD or JPEG. When you export those files you must ensure that an embedded file is associated with that file.

### **Summary: Where do I go from here? What do I need to do?**

1. Decide on which Colour Space you are going to produce your final images whether PDI or print. For me that is Adobe RGB (1998).
2. Set *that same* Colour Space as your preferred Workspace in Photoshop/Image manipulation software.
3. Set *that same* Colour Space on your camera.
4. Ensure that when you open up your RAW files to be edited in Photoshop (or other image manipulation software) that they open in Photoshop with the correct embedded profile e.g. Adobe RGB (1998) in my case.
5. Purchase a decent monitor. Ideally one that shows 100% of the Adobe RGB (1998) colour space. If you cannot afford that, buy one that shows at least 100% sRGB (not all do that) and at least 70 to 80% Adobe RGB (1998). I purchase a monitor based on a good magazine review that tests and measures colour workspace not on a magazine test that says it looks nice and has nice colours.
6. Calibrate that monitor. An expensive monitor should already be calibrated straight out of the box, but you can often improve that.
7. I recommend the use of an image library application such as Lightroom or Aperture. You can manage all your images from within these applications and ensure that when you produce an image it has the correct colour profile embedded and you are working in the correct Colour Workspace. Then, from within this application, you can export the image to whatever file format you want, at the image size you want and with whatever colour profile embedded in the file. I use Aperture for creating all my files for PDI competitions and Exhibitions and currently have about 10 presets for exporting PDIs. This is because different Exhibitions have different requirements from Adobe RGB to sRGB, JPEG and/or TIFF, 1024 x 768, 1400 x 1050, some 2500 max length, some specify 300 pixels per inch (ready for printing), others maximum file size e.g. 1 or 2 MB, some print dimensions e.g. to fit with 20 cm x 20 cm. I only resize in Photoshop when printing, never for PDI competitions.
8. However I do not encourage people to use Aperture/Lightroom etc. to do any image manipulation. That is my choice because I only use Photoshop to do any editing on my images. In Aperture I turn off Sharpening and only use Exposure, and occasionally alter the colour balance before going into Photoshop. Nothing else, but what you do is your choice.
9. Printing. I do all my printing from within Photoshop and rarely use Aperture (and although I have Lightroom I never use it).

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