



Season's Greetings to one and all!

2018 draws to a close with group organisation beginning to settle down with the installation of a new Treasurer, David Grimshaw and a new Secretary in Howard Fisher who has also taken on the organisation of a new Regional Contemporary sub-group in the Midlands area. So if you are in the Midlands be sure to support Howard and attend the local meetings – details in his report.

We still have a shortage of volunteers with posts that need to be filled. I am standing in as temporary Editor for the Concept bi-monthly newsletter and would welcome someone to take over on a permanent basis.

Also due to a change in my personal circumstances I need to relinquish my job organising the distribution of the Group Journal each quarter. This job is fully supported by the Group and mailing expenses are provided in advance, transport is necessary to carry the packed envelopes to your local post office. It does require someone who is fit or has help – eg we have combined a packing session with our regional meetings. This does need to be filled asap and can be located anywhere on the mainland UK and would suit perhaps members of one of our local groups.

Elsewhere in this issue there is a piece from Paul Ashley about his hard work for our forthcoming involvement with the Format Photo Festival. This is a fantastic opportunity for the Contemporary Group to promote our Ethos and spread the word 'About' our type of photography. To make the most of this opportunity Paul needs help from our membership – and that means you...

It's good to see that our local groups are prospering and I want to remind you that if you would like to invite a particular speaker and require help then please just ask – we would like to help.

Best wishes for the festive break and the New Year!...

Peter Ellis
Deputy Chair

e-newsletter

December 2018

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**Preferred format for submissions
to Concept:**

Images as jpegs (approx 1Mb)

Text as Word files

Thank you.



From the Regional Groups

News from the East

And lo a star shone in the sky leading some (wise) old men bearing heavy cameras to unknown vistas.

This year, we have been very busy in the East of East Anglia with showing before and after PhotoEast 2018 as an official fringe event of the growing International event in May and again after the show closed in July.

Things are a little like those biblical stories here with some of us deliberately wandering in the deserted hinterlands of our locales in search of inspiration and deeply moving subject matter. I plough my solitary furrow, but I have not made a serious large format image since June due to the impossibly bright summer and more recently, building work.

We mostly get together to stuff the envelopes for distribution of the Contemporary Journal but I even missed the last event of that.

The biggest single challenge we face here is the lack of young(er) members. We operate as an open group, but we don't meet up in a club sort of way or with any regularity and I wonder what we must do to encourage people at least 20-30 years younger than our average age which is about 64.

I continue to promote Photograd as a platform that rejoices in graduate photography and I need to sound out some of the more persistent photographers that have graduated from the University of Suffolk to see if they will join us. I've just been lucky enough to have been selected to exhibit on the Photograd Open 2018 show at London Metropolitan University as part of London Photomonth.

Getting exposure in these shows is a great thing but the organisation that it takes is phenomenal. Our next scheduled show will be in 2020. We have nothing planned for 2019 but never say never.

Enjoy the season.

Tom Owens ARPS

Eastern Region

RPS Contemporary North East Meeting

Saturday 17th November

The latest meeting of Contemporary North was held at Clements Hall, York on Saturday 17th November. As usual, members offered a wide range of images and interests for discussion.

First to present was Christine Carr, who spoke about her idea for a new project, with the working title 'Tempus Fugit', about clocks. Walking around Newcastle, Christine made a number of images of clocks and realised she had many more in her archives. A brief discussion followed as to the possible scope and direction of the project.

Graham Low's presentation was titled 'Crumbling Coast', a collection of work made on the East Yorkshire coast over the last few years. Images featured included the impact of coastal



erosion on the coast, the various ways in which people enjoy the coast and debris washed up on the beaches.

The coast was also the subject of Jim Souper's images. For some 250 years Margate was a leading coastal resort, before falling into decline as people began to take holidays abroad. Jim's images, made in February 2017, show the impact of that decline on Margate's Lido.

Celine Alexander-Brown discussed a series of images made on a recent visit to the National Arboretum near Lichfield, Britain's year-round site of remembrance. Her images reflected both the importance of remembrance to the nation the personal connections which inspired the visit.

Janet Cook gave the group a fascinating insight into the work of Dayanita Singh. Janet is interested in how Singh experiments with alternate forms of producing and viewing photographs and spoke of Singh's use of the "book-object," a work that can be a book, an art object, and an exhibition. Janet explained that her most recent work had taken the form of a book museum. More information about Dayanita Singh's work can be found at <http://dayanitasingh.net>.

Before a tea break, Christine Pinnington briefly introduced a couple of books she had brought along for members to look out – both found in her local library! They are:-

50 Contemporary Photographers, Heine F and Finger B. Published by Prestel. ISBN 978-3-7913-8259-3

One and one is Four: The Bauhaus Collages of Josef Albers, Sarah Hermanson Meister. Published by Museum of Modern Art, New York. ISBN 978-1-63345-017-2

The next session provided the opportunity to congratulate Peter Bartlett on achieving his ARPS. Peter's images of Manchester's Northern Quarter were submitted as a travel panel, succeeding at the second attempt. Peter showed the prints from the panel and shared the thinking behind them. He also commented on the value of attending the initial assessment a year ago, rather than relying on written comments.

Jane Batty had attended the recent 'Meeting of Minds' conference organised by 'On Landscape' magazine, where she had been responsible for the live streaming of the conference. Jane drew attention to two of the speakers, Sandra Bartocha (<https://www.bartocha-photography.com>) and Thomas Joshua Cooper (<https://www.inglebygallery.com/artists/75-thomas-joshua-cooper/overview/>), who she felt could be considered both landscape and contemporary photographers.

Jim Souper had also attended the conference and has a number of books by Thomas Joshua Cooper, which he agreed to bring to the next meeting on Saturday 19th January.

Last up was Patricia Ruddle who showed the group cyanotypes, two of which had been exhibited in "Rebel Daughters Revolution: prints by members of the York Printmakers in response to 100 years of the woman's vote." at the True Story Café in York.

Jim Souper



Contemporary North West Report

Meeting 10th March and Exhibition April 2018

Meeting 3rd November 2018 Samlesbury War Memorial Hall

Six members attended; Alan Cameron, Arnie Whittle, Nigel Richards, Ken Rowlatt, Richard Barrett and Brian Williams.

Apologies were received from John Corbett, Frank Balaam, Andy Biggs and Tim Hancock.

Despite it being a rather dull day those members who came had our usual congenial meeting.

Alan apologised to Richard for not including him in details of the September meeting. The sad news of Ian's death was discussed with all present who knew him commenting on how much he will be missed and how vital his work for the group had been during his time as organiser.

Brian shared with us two sets of photographs, first were taken on behalf of a big band in performance. Brian had to ensure that everyone in the band featured in the images and he had some more forceful members of the band to deal with. His second set concerned a magician/illusionist and his assistant preparing themselves to go on stage and later on stage itself. The process they went through to apply their make-up and costumes was fascinating.

Nigel talked about the Australian GP in 2016 when he was in Melbourne for the event. Although he wasn't in the stands with a good (expensive) view he was able to get photos on many of the drivers who are required to go through the public areas and talk to the spectators. Nigel had shots of People such as Lewis Hamilton, Daniel Ricciardo and Sea Vettel, though the latter's security guard was a bit of a pain. Next he showed us shots of cars attending the Swiss Classic British Cars event. This series was happenstance at its best as Nigel found out about the event by looking out his bedroom window in a hotel he was staying in. Those of us with great or small petrol heads had great fun spotting marques and models.

Ken discussed a new project that he's started working on in Manchester. As our cities develop and new tower blocks are thrown skywards, old buildings are left behind and this is particularly true of city pubs many of which are closing. These buildings are sometimes plain and sometimes architectural gems and Ken showed us images from outside and inside the buildings. There was a discussion about how he should approach presenting exterior shots, the consensus being inclined more to ensuring that the context of each pub should be shown, for example some are hemmed in by high rise buildings, others are in open ground and a few are on busy roads. We await the results with interest.

Richard was congratulated on getting his L and entertained us with two projects one of which might become an A panel. The first was "Old guys on bikes," a monochrome essay on a group of friends who go out riding near Chester. This work is ongoing but was a fascinating study of biking outings and the behaviours of the group. The second series looked back a little towards his found images in container years, in being concerned with the stark architecture of modern tower blocks. These images provoked animated discussion, the patterns inherent in the architecture seeming to dominate the figures in them.

Finally, Arnie brought along two books for discussion. The first was New Deal Photography, a collection of the, often famous, photographs taken on behalf of the Farm Security Administration in the USA by the likes of Dorothea Lange, Walker Evans and many others. It is always good to review the classic images and others, the book being described as How the FSA introduced America to the Americans. Arnie's other book was an Aperture Collection of the



works of Diane Arbus, again great to review such individualistic work. I pointed out that a friend of ours in the US was from the Bay Area of California and as children he and his siblings were taken to the local photographer to have their portraits taken. The photographer - Diane Arbus.

I produced Repeat Images, one of our themes for the day. These were taken in two days when he was down in London at the Contemporary Group AGM and also the V&A and its new Photographic Centre. Inspiration for the two series came from a group of prints in the V&A called 27 photographs in 5 Minutes by Dieter Meier. Meier's images were taken of the traffic on two benches outside the museum. Mine were of the courtyard and people's reactions to a sculpture of Frieda Kahlo and a second set of the fountain in Queen Mary's Garden in Regent's Park. Both sets were taken over a period of 5 to 10 minutes.

Here are four of my shots from Regent's Park. Everyone seemed oblivious of my camera - a Canon 5d MkIV with 24-105mm zoom so not small.

These two shots are Mother and Child Reunion. The elderly woman and her son walked past me, then split up and re-met on the other side of the fountain.



These shots are The Lovers. They stopped to kiss and I turned very slightly to get them in the frame. They then obligingly walked right past me.



Our next meeting will be on 5th January at Samlesbury.



East Midlands Contemporary Group

This new sub-group will hold its first meeting on Saturday, 26th January 2019 from 2 to 5 pm. The venue is the Methodist Church Hall, Selby Lane, Keyworth, Nottingham, NG12 5AH. The hall is fully disabled accessible and car parking is in the Keyworth Village Hall car park on Elm Avenue, Keyworth, NG12 5AN. Elm Avenue is off Selby lane and the car park about 100m from the meeting venue

This group's meetings will be held in conjunction with the East Midlands Documentary Group which should allow us to see a variety of approaches and subject matter in our photography.

Whilst the events will provide a place for us to show and discuss our work for mutual encouragement there will be an occasional speaker. For the 26th January we will be visited by Mark Phillips ARPS, Chair of the Documentary group and also a member of our Contemporary Group who will talk about his personal work including his current project based in Africa. There will also be time to look at some attendees work after Mark's talk and time for us to start to get to know each other.

There is a charge of £5.00 per meeting to cover expenses which will include a welcome hot drink on arrival with biscuits as well as at a mid-way break.

Please let me know if you will be attending, Howard Fisher, (01159372898) or email at handjaf@virginmedia.com and I will send venue details with a map.

Our following meeting will be Saturday 30th March, same time, same place.

Off-Centre – Nottingham's first Independent Photo Festival

This event took place from 27th October to 11th November in Nottingham and was very well supported.

There was a series of exhibitions where the photographs were selected from 350 submissions with 100 photographers shown in 10 venues across the city.

The festival developed from Nottingham Photo Social which is an informal group of photographers meeting monthly at The Photo Parlour in Nottingham. Photo Social offers a platform for local photographers to meet, exchange ideas and receive mutual support in developing their personal work.

In addition to the various exhibitions there was a series of talks, all free, based in either the Creative Quarter in the developing Sneinton Market area or at the New Art Exchange in Radford, Nottingham.

We attended three talks on 3rd November in a canvas geodome in Sneinton market followed by a fourth in the afternoon at the New Art Exchange. All were very well supported and informative covering various aspects of personal photographic development, and were free to attend though pre-booking was required.

Whilst we were unable to visit all ten exhibitions those that we saw were good, mainly with local subject matter but we felt that the organisers had opted to allow representation of as many photographers as they could thereby limiting the number of prints per person. Some that we viewed left us wanting to see more of the subject; perhaps in future years a more complete representation of the projects of at least some photographers could be provided. Having said this, it is understandable that for the initial event a limited selection per chosen photographer was made so as to encourage as many as possible to enter.

For an initial event, it was well organised, though some aspects will undoubtedly be changed and improved in future years.

Howard Fisher



Water Towers in the Landscape Rod Fry ARPS

In 2007 the Contemporary Group Exhibition "Still Life Revisited" was put together and in 2009 I helped hang the Photographs at Plymouth University. I found Bill Jackson's work of old buildings in Suffolk very powerful, especially the one of four Silos. It reminded me of the work of Bernd and Hilla Becher.

The Becher's toured Europe and the USA photographing old industrial plant, and water towers in the post-industrial era. They were artists who decided to use the medium of photography to create their images. They grouped the work into grids of similar structures, though this body of work was ground breaking, for me it lacked any reference to the environment in which these structures were found.

Looking at the work of Lewis W. Hine, Walker Evans and Margaret Bourke White they photographed the birth of the modern industrial era giving a heroic strength to the Structures by setting them in the landscape in which they were found.

With the onset of Autumn I started to notice structures in the Devon Landscape in particular Water Towers. Very often they are screened off by trees but in winter they become visible. I have started to photograph these Towers but unlike the Becher's I am keen to explore the environment in which they are found and see how they relate to their surroundings.

In searching out these water towers I find myself going to different parts of the country, I would not normally visit, which I find totally refreshing from a photographic point of view. I try to work with soft lighting, which works well with the subject matter. If you know of any water towers near you then please do get in touch. rod@rod Fry.eclipse.co.uk

Rod Fry



A Name a Day Brian Steptoe FRPS

The male-to-female ratio on most degree courses on photography is around 40:60, but when applied to those photographers earning their living by their work, the ratio is about 80:20. Where do all the women go? Combining this lack of female representation with the centenary of women (some, not all) first obtaining the vote was a stimulus for the RPS setting up the 100 Heroines project in mid-2018. Nominations from anyone across the world were sought (with reasons) for names of living practising women photographers. When nominations closed in September a total of 1292 names had been put forward. At the time of writing, the jury were working on making the choice of 100, to be announced mid-December.

This note is about my own efforts, having been inspired to nominate a name a day; 73 in all. Starting was easy, with all the women that had been speakers at our Group conferences, a list that included war photographer Jenny Matthews and Yangtze River adventurer Yan Wang Preston. Then there were those whose photobooks I have: Laia Abril, Monica Alcazar-Duarte, Rinko Kawauchi and others. Looking through the list of members and nominees for the Magnum Agency gave a few (but very few) more.

Now it was getting harder. Some names were identified from the several circulation lists I subscribe to. There were strokes of luck, such as when I discovered Firecracker, a website specifically of women photographers. The circulation list for Visura led to the 'wall' of prints exhibited in Dumbo, Brooklyn, one showing the US/Mexico wall. Blogs were put together for Laia Abril, Monica Alvarez-Duarte and Juno Calypso. Laia has since won a photobook award at Paris Photo-Aperture and is one of the four nominees for the 2019 Deutsche Borse Award. Juno is on the RPS 2018 Awards list.

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Chloe Dewe Mathews, Naftalan Sanitorium, Azerbaijan, from 'Caspian'

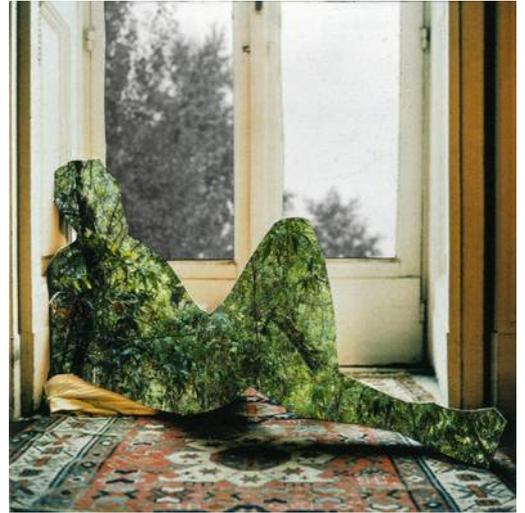


Liz Hingley, Line 8 Shanghai Road





Marketa Lusacova, Girls in the playground, Holland School, 1988



Melinda Gibson, Nowness



Natasha Caruana,
from the series Fairytale for Sale



Yan Wang Preston,
Y25, 2400km from the River Yangtze source, from 'Mother River'



Congratulations to CG member Hania Farrell on her recent Exhibitions:

haniafarrell

Art Saves Lives
Fundraising events & RCA

Oum El Nour -Fundraising Auction
Alternative Art Space -Platform 39 Fasouh -Beirut-Lebanon
(15 November 2018)

Roads For Life - Fundraising Auction
The Yacht Club , Beirut , Lebanon
(18 November 2018)

RCA Secret 2017
Dyson Gallery - Royal College of Art, London
(30 November-3 Dec 2018)



Hania Farrell: Awakening



Hania Farrell: Under My Wing



Contemporary Photography Journal

The journal continues to be published quarterly, aiming to introduce to the Group the best of contemporary photography from the UK and around the world – including, of course, the work of our own members. The journal is a collaborative effort between myself as editor, Brian Steptoe for design/layout, and Peter Ellis and colleagues for distribution. I welcome offers of contributions for future journals from members, though I can't promise to accept them!

Paul Ashley, Editor

FORMAT19 Call for volunteers

The Group is preparing to take part in FORMAT, the UK's foremost contemporary photography festival, which is held in Derby every other year (<http://formatfestival.com/>). FORMAT19 will be held between 15 March and 14 April, and we are looking for members who can help with organising and running our contribution, particularly with setting up and staffing an exhibition running through that festival. If you can offer help for some of that time, particularly if you live near Derby, please contact me. I look forward to hearing from you!

Paul Ashley paultheashley@gmail.com

