

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2018 • £8.25

# CAMERACRAFT

**NOT SHY...  
AND NOT  
RETIRING!**

GORDON McGOWAN  
VINNIE O'BYRNE  
MAZ MASHRU

**ANTHONY  
KAREN**

FRIEDMAN INTERVIEW  
WHITE SUPREMACISTS  
& THE KKK

**CHARLOTTE  
BELLAMY**

LOW COUNTRY  
LANDSCAPES

**FORMAT  
FACTS**

DOES SIZE MATTER?

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

 **THE GUILD OF  
PHOTOGRAPHERS**

SONY A7RIII FIRST LOOK  
TAMRON 18-400mm f3.5-6.3  
SIGMA 16mm f1.4 DN  
VOIGTLANDER 40mm f1.2 NOKTON FE  
SAMYANG 35mm f2.8 FE  
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COVER PHOTOGRAPH: THE HUNGRY GRASS, BY VINCENT O'BYRNE





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# CAMERACRAFT

Incorporating Master Photography & f2 Freelance Photographer



## COVER

By Vincent O'Byrne of Dublin –  
*The Hungry Grass*. "Anyone who  
knows the history of this island will  
understand the picture", he says. See  
page 66.

## 4 NEWS

## 8 ESCAPE THE VAT TRAP

Your future may lie above, or below,  
a post-Brexit VAT threshold. Keep  
records, and make plans now.

## 12 A GREEN AND PLEASANT LAND

Showing as you get this issue, the  
Tower Art Gallery in Eastbourne has  
some real classics to see.

## 14 AQUA: LORENTZ GULLACHSEN

An exhibition project in 2017 which  
ran and ran – how to get seen.

## 16 WHICH FORMAT?

We look at how today's digital  
sensor formats relate to past film  
sizes. Not a lot.

## 18 FRIEDMAN: WHY ONE INCH IS ALL YOU NEED

He's at it again, proving that things  
don't work as you think they do.  
Sony RX10 series and more.

## 22 SONY A7RIII FIRST LOOK

We got one. It will never pay for  
itself, but we have to keep up to  
date.

## 24 LIFTING THE VEIL

Gary Friedman interviews **Anthony  
Karen** about his disconcerting  
body of work with Americans who  
seem perfectly at ease with their  
own views.



## 32 STOCK INVESTMENT

David Kilpatrick passes \$100,000 in  
Alamy fees – and explains why that  
A7RIII will never pay for itself...

## 36 LENS REVIEW SECTION

We look at:  
Voigtlander Nokton 40mm f1.2 FE  
Sigma 16mm f2 DC DN  
Tamron 18-400mm f3.5-6.3 VC Dill  
Olympus M.Zuiko 25mm f1.8  
Samyang 35mm f2.8 FE

## 46 PORTFOLIO

The lowlands of Holland prove  
their landscape value for **Charlotte  
Bellamy**.

**54  
NOT SHY – AND NOT RETIRING!**  
Stephen Power interviews three  
photographers at that time of life  
when the hoe beckons. No, not that  
kind of hoe. The garden one!  
With:  
Gordon McGowan  
Maz Mashru  
Vincent O'Byrne

**73  
PORTRAITPROBODY 2**  
Fix arms, legs, tummies and pecs.

**74  
REARVIEW GALLERY**  
A semi-seasonal selection of  
inspiring photography.

**78  
PHOTOHUBS & AWARDS**  
Richard Kilpatrick reports on the  
November Photohubs training  
event, and we provide the  
programme for February 2nd and  
3rd with the Guild Awards to round  
it off.

**81  
GUILD OF PHOTOGRAPHERS**

**82**  
How attending pro seminars and  
meetings almost weekly at 23  
years old helped create a career  
and business for your editor –  
without any formal photographic  
education.

Next issue: out March 1st.

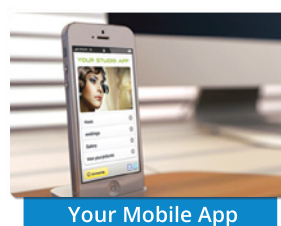
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## DIARY

**January 10th-14th 2018**

The Societies Convention.  
London.

See page 7 for full details.

**January 12th-14th 2018**

The Societies Trade Show  
Industry exhibition.  
London.

See page 7 for full details.

**BE SURE TO REGISTER FOR  
FREE ADMISSION TO THE  
TRADE SHOW BEFORE  
JANUARY 6th**

[swpp.co.uk/convention](http://swpp.co.uk/convention)

**January 29th-**

**February 5th 2018**

Photo Training Overseas.  
Madeira.

See [pto-uk.com](http://pto-uk.com)

**February 2nd & 3rd 2018**

Photohubs Training two-day  
event at Crewe Hall, leading up  
to The Guild of Photographers  
annual awards evening.

See page 79 for details.

[www.photohubs.co.uk](http://www.photohubs.co.uk)

**February 3rd 2018**

The Guild of Photographers  
annual awards night, from  
6.45pm at Crewe Hall, Weston  
Road, Crewe, Cheshire CW1  
6UZ. See page 79.

[www.photoguild.co.uk](http://www.photoguild.co.uk)

**February 24th-28th 2018**

WPPI Conference.  
Mandalay Bay, Las Vegas.

See [wppiexpo.com](http://wppiexpo.com)

**February 26th-28th 2018**

WPPI Expo.  
Mandalay Bay, Las Vegas.

See [wppiexpo.com](http://wppiexpo.com)

**March 17th-20th 2018**

The Photography Show.  
National Exhibition Centre  
Coventry-Birmingham.  
See [photographyshow.com](http://photographyshow.com)

## Leica in multiple new product launch



**THE NEW Leica Noctilux-M 75mm f1.25 ASPH** is "set to become a legend in its own right with its incredibly shallow depth of field in combination with exceptional imaging performance, and a uniquely soft bokeh". At over £10k it should!

Its optical design allows precise, detailed isolation of subjects from their background to create images of unique character. With a focal length of 75 mm, it is intended for the creation of portraits with a natural look. It is a "lens for M- and SL-Photographers who are seeking something truly special and know how to make best use of creativity in their imagery" according to Leica, and is available now.

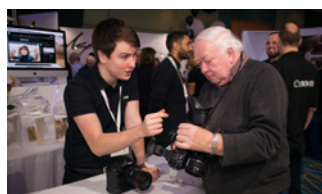


The **Tambar-M** is a recreation of the classic soft focus 90mm f2.2. Introduced in the mid-1930s where only about 3,000 units were produced; the new issue has the same optical design but a modified exterior and new coating. The lens produces the same soft focus look of the original. It uses a 20-blade iris and a special centre blocking filter which uses a secondary aperture scale. Made in Germany, it comes with a metal lens hood, centre filter, lens cap and a hard leather case in vintage brown. It costs around £5,000.



[www.leica.co.uk](http://www.leica.co.uk)

**LEICA CL** is a Barnack-inspired APS-C body using TL series lenses, with a 2.36 million pixel electronic viewfinder featuring ultra fast refresh rate EyeRes technology. A 24MP APS-C sensor feeds a Maestro II series processor; fast autofocus offers 49 metering points; 4K video at 30fps is enabled. Its WiFi offers files transfer, remote viewing and capture. Compact and fast lenses are available from 17 to 200mm. The L-Bayonet mount is shared by the Leica TL- and SL-Systems, full frame SL-Lenses can be used directly, Leica M- and R-Lenses with adaptors. The black version of the Leica CL is available now for around £2,250 body only.



## Bowens users in a fix can rely on Fixation

**PHOTOGRAPHERS** using lighting equipment from recently liquidated Bowens International have been thrown a service and repair lifeline by Fixation, the market-leading central London-based camera repairs, sales and rental company.

Fixation UK (part of Wex Photo Video, the UK's biggest photo retailer) has set up a dedicated team of lighting equipment experts to deal with all Bowens kit repairs and service requirements.

The new repairs service will include full service on all supported products; flash tube replacements; technician's inspection for insurance needs; replacement of failed components and free estimates within two working days.

Stewart Fielder, Fixation UK sales director, said: "There will be many photographers out there using Bowens – we hold the largest range of Bowens spares and our team of in-house technicians is ready to ensure continuity for any photographer using Bowens lighting."

More details at:

[www.fixationuk.com](http://www.fixationuk.com)

## Quantum takes to the air with CoPilot



**THE QUANTUM CoPilot** sets lighting ratios on the fly, right from the camera, wirelessly. Simply turn three controls on the CoPilot to instantly adjust lighting ratios. CoPilot controls remote Qflash TRIOs or T5dRs. And it commands any combination of non-Quantum flashes connected to a **Quantum FreeWire** receiver. CoPilots' infrared Auto-Focus Assist helps the camera focus in low light. It's all dial set – no complicated LCD displays or keypress navigation. The system is available for Canon, Nikon, Sony (pictured) and MicroFourThirds.

[www.flaghead.co.uk](http://www.flaghead.co.uk)



Visit London this month for The Societies' annual convention – a photography show run by a photographic body, for photographers



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[FUJIFILM-X.COM/X-T2](https://www.fujifilm-x.com/x-t2)



## New distributor for Aussie Crumpler brand photo bags



**INTRO 2020** – the distributor for brands including Tamron, Samyang and Hoya – has become sole UK distributor of Crumpler Photo Bags.

Crumpler was founded in Melbourne, Australia in 1995. A bunch of gritty bike messengers realized they needed messenger bags that could live up to their tough line of work and started designing bags themselves. Known for their good looking, colourful designs plus their exceptional product quality, each Crumpler bag carries a 30 year guarantee!

Intro 2020 has been appointed distributor of the Crumpler photo range of bags, which includes small camera pouches, camera straps, a selection of shoulder bags and backpacks in various colours. The range includes bags to suit most tastes and budgets with suggested retail prices starting from £19.99 for a camera pouch and rising to £199.00 for the largest backpack.

[www.crumpler.eu](http://www.crumpler.eu)

## Maxing out your airline carry-on rolling camera kit



**THINK TANK PHOTO's** new *Airport Advantage Plus* rolling camera bag is designed for traveling photographers, complying with international carry-on requirements and only 6.9lbs. (3.1kg). Its dedicated laptop pocket fits up to a 17" laptop in a padded sleeve. It also holds one gripped DSLR with lens attached, one ungripped DSLR with lens attached, plus five to eight additional lenses, and a 17" laptop. It can hold up to a 200–400 f4 detached (hood reversed) lens and a very large mirrorless outfit.

It has a user-replaceable retractable handle, wheels, wheel housings, and front foot. A seam-sealed rain cover is included and zips can be fitted with locks.

Interior Dimensions: 13.4" W x 20.5" H x 4.9 – 6.4" D (34 x 52 x 12.4–16.3 cm). Exterior Dimensions: 13.8" W x 22" H x 7.3" D (35 x 55.9 x 18.5 cm). Laptop Compartment: 13" x 17.6" x 2.9" (33 x 44.7 x 7.4 cm)

[www.thinktankphoto.com](http://www.thinktankphoto.com)

## London launch for #WexMondays

**WEX PHOTO VIDEO** is set to run a unique exhibition of winning work from over 17,000 images entered throughout 2017 into its hugely popular weekly #WexMondays photo competition.

Photographers across the UK have been tweeting their best images on any theme they choose, using the #WexMondays hashtag. Judges will confirm the winner of the coveted **Wex Photographer of the Year 2017** award at a special event at the company's new Whitechapel store on January 11th – and a selection of winning work from shortlisted photographers will run at the Commercial Road E1 venue (near Aldgate East tube) from January 12th until February 25th.

Matt Devine, Wex Photo Video head of content explained: "This weekly competition has proved a massive hit with photographers in recent years with total annual entries now soaring over the 17,000 mark. Our rules state that photographers can enter a single image per week but any photo submitted must have been captured during the previous seven days.

"Our judges draw up a shortlist based on technique and creativity and choose a winner and two runners up. Points are accumulated across the year and the top scoring photographer is presented with the prestigious Wex Photographer of the Year title, plus a Wex Photo Video voucher worth £1,500."

[www.wexphotovideo.com](http://www.wexphotovideo.com)

## PortraitPro Body 2

**ANTHROPICS** have released version 2 of *PortraitProBody*, following the successful launch of *Portrait Professional 17*. The software helps photographers in the difficult task of modifying clients' photographed body contours to match their 'in the mirror' perception. The developers say, for example, that just slimming down the upper arm can be enough to change an unflattering photograph to a seller – and it can be done in minutes without affecting the rest of the image. Discount code F2CCBP secures 10% off at [www.portraitprobody.com](http://www.portraitprobody.com)

## Build a baby business which grows up fast!



**PHOTOGRAPHERS** have the same fear of failure as any other business when setting up a new studio, or going self-employed as a career change. But many also worry about their skills once the photographs are taken. Processing the images, and then obtaining orders, can frighten off new entrants.

Taking a franchise with Photography for Little People takes away these worries completely. In addition to training you to achieve better camera and studio skills, all the post-processing can be handed over to their expert 'lab' team. Editing down the shoot, processing the images for the best and most consistent look, Photography for Little People delivers a 'reveal' set which the client will love.

Training in sales presentation and order closing gives confidence and the range of printed, mounted and framed newborn and baby products can be demonstrated with samples guaranteed to match the final work.

Fear of failure is replaced by confidence in success and your newborn, baby and family photography business will grow with the support of Photography for Little People.

To learn more about how to join Jan and Melanie, the brand's founders, on this journey to an independent future as a valued and trusted photographer in your community, email:

[jan@photographyforlittlepeople.com](mailto:jan@photographyforlittlepeople.com)

## Books – maximum profit for photographers



**WITH NEW** digital printing making anything from one-off books to limited editions and short press runs practical, photographers worried about possible VAT changes can future-proof their profit margins by becoming their own publishers.

Books carry zero VAT, so if there's a change in two years to bring thousands more small businesses into VAT registration, you can avoid a sudden 20% cut being taken from your prices to the public by switching from reprints, wall art, digital

file delivery or traditional albums to digitally printed books.

Norfolk print lab 2MProfessional, with the only Canon Dream Labo 5000 system in the UK, makes books worthy of any library coffee-table to a resolution six times finer than regular offset litho and a colour gamut which exceeds CMYK press inks. These highly detailed books, with an archival life to last many generations, make investment in high megapixel capture pay off.

[www.2Mphoto.co.uk](http://www.2Mphoto.co.uk)

## Shaping your future – Profoto Academy

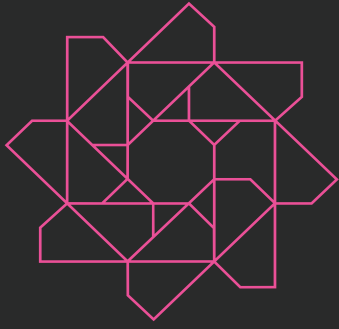
**PROFOTO ACADEMY** is a series of online video courses designed to educate and inspire the talented photographers of tomorrow, providing them with the tools they need to grow and develop their craft and helping them take their image creation to the next level.

"If you're at the beginning of your journey in photography and curious about how to use light more creatively, you can choose a course series from these popular fields of photography: Fashion, Portrait and Wedding", they say. "And we will be adding more courses in the future. Ultimately, it's about providing aspiring photographers with a comprehensive understanding of how to control and shape light and the confidence to take their creativity to the next level."

<https://profoto.com/uk/academy>



**HURRY...PRE REGISTER FREE TICKETS UP TIL JAN 6**



## The Societies of Photographers Convention 2018

Europe's Largest 'All-Welcome' Photographic Convention

**Full Convention**  
10-14 January 2018  
**FREE\* Trade Show**  
12-14 January 2018  
Hilton London Metropole Hotel

**TAKE YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY TO THE NEXT LEVEL**



### Attend The Societies 2018 London Photographic Trade Show for free\*

All the latest photographic equipment, products and services will be on show, and attendees will be able to watch demonstrations from leading manufacturers on their products. All the major players in the industry will be exhibiting, so it's a good opportunity to meet the key personnel behind the latest photography equipment.

Many of the 150+ exhibitors will also be offering special deals on their products and services, exclusive to the show with Cameraworld and Park Cameras the main supporting dealers.

**OVER 40 HOURS OF FREE SEMINARS AND DEMOS.**

Register today to secure your FREE tickets to the 2018 Trade Show.

**REGISTER  
TODAY FOR  
YOUR FREE  
TRADE SHOW  
TICKETS.\***

*"As an amateur, it is good to be able to see work and facilities at the professional level. It's great for developing my own ideas and aspirations." - Brian Cable*

### What's on

- FREE\* to enter Trade Show
- 4 day of Masterclasses
- Hands-on Superclasses
- Business School
- Location Seminars
- Qualification Assessments
- 20x16" Print Comp Judging
- Awards Dinner
- Welcome Party

### Masterclasses

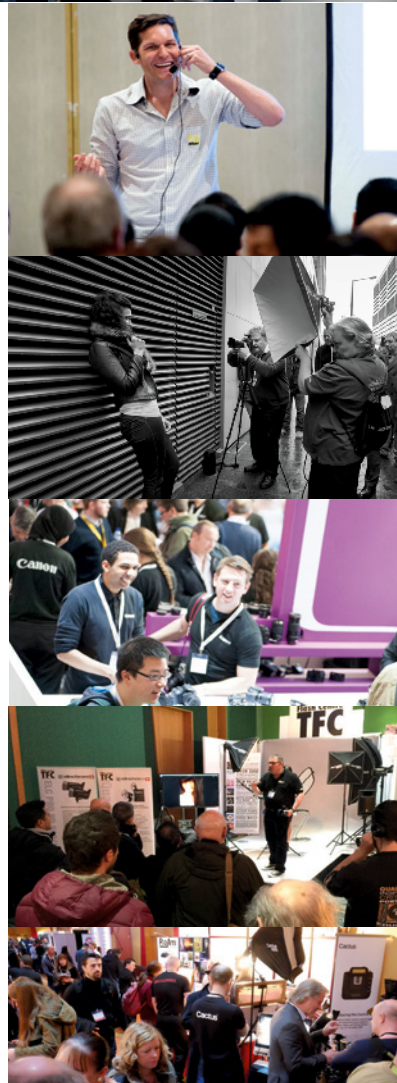
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**REGISTER FOR FREE TICKETS BEFORE JAN 6**  
**[swpp.co.uk/convention/](http://swpp.co.uk/convention/)**

\*Pre-register up til 3pm 6 Jan 2018 to avoid £10 entry fee to Trade show.



# ESCAPE THE VAT TRAP!

Switch now to selling photobooks if you think a future UK VAT threshold change could harm you.

And, if you are a VAT registered photographer, kick grey imports into touch and buy and used equipment on the same 'margin scheme' that dealers use – [www.gov.uk/vat-margin-schemes](http://www.gov.uk/vat-margin-schemes)

**M**any photographers seem happy to buy grey import goods – they are not VAT registered traders, so getting a camera which has been slipped into the UK without duty and VAT doesn't bother them.

However, the UK Chancellor Philip Hammond in deciding not to lower the VAT threshold in November dropped a heavy hint that this was a two-year reprieve. Even though the Breaks-it process will remove the UK from Europe's seamless and now very efficient VAT regime, he's only too aware that self-employed and small businesses in countries like Germany start having to charge and account for VAT at about the same turnover as Britain's puny average wage (which is more like EU subsistence level – the state pension in Germany is higher than their business VAT threshold of €17,500 per annum).

Of course the future UK, or possibly English, government would want to bring our new greatly enlarged self-employed sector into VAT, and no doubt will do so. You can prepare for this.

First of all, switch to Zero VAT products where possible. The Zero VAT on magazines has been greatly beneficial to Icon Publications Ltd over the years as most readers are not VAT registered (yet) and members of bodies like the MPA and The Guild benefit from a large chunk of the annual subscription being zero rated publications. Digital publications are fully VAT rated – the zero deal for printed newspapers, books and magazines helps keep the UK print industry viable. Were it not for this, digital media would by now have closed most down and you wouldn't see magazines at all. This also applies to photographic books – but not to 'albums', which are defined as a cover within which pages or images can be removed, added or changed. A book must have fixed pages, like a Graphstudio Youngbook or Baby Book, or Loxley's Bellissimo product. It does not matter whether the pages use photographic paper, or are 1.5mm thick, or are on paper like this magazine printed on a Canon Dream Labo or an Indigo press.

The Zero VAT rating which applies both to the purchase from the lab or printer, and your re-sale of the book, is based entirely on having a fixed pagination of bound-in, unchangeable pages. You must also invoice the book separately from any fee for photography and you can not bundle photography into the deal (this is a special condition HMIRC insisted on). You can bundle your costs for post-processing or retouching and for designing the book, proofing or previewing it. These are normal parts of book production. If you charge for them separately, they are VAT rated.

Similarly, all digital products whether web galleries, memory sticks, video DVDs or album boxes and covers which replay images and video on a screen are VAT rated. At present, they also carry some unusual terms if you sell digital services to clients in the EU – even if you are not VAT registered in the UK, *you are supposed to register and account for VAT on digital download products in every EU country where you sell them.*

This is why it is better to use a third party such as Online Picture Proofing, Zenfolio, 3XM Solution, theImagefile or agencies like Alamy and Shutterstock. They have all the VAT registrations needed to cover digital file-only sales delivery to EU countries. These laws were introduced to stop software being sold tax-free from the USA and China (mostly) but in the process they caught digital images, video streaming, e-zines, PDF books, website subscriptions and anything else downloaded for payment.

## The margin scheme

Finally, you should right NOW start keeping a spreadsheet of all the used equipment purchases you make from any seller in Europe, along with receipts which must show the actual name and address of the seller. There's no point in trying to find the names of eBay sellers in Hong Kong (etc) as whatever you buy from outside the EU, new or used, will become liable for VAT when sold if you are VAT registered. This includes grey imports. You can buy that Canon for £1100 instead of £1300, but if you're VAT registered, selling it the next day means you must get £1320 to break even or swallow a £183 VAT bill to pass it on at £1100.

We recommend ex-demo, B-stock or refurbished buys from companies like WEX, Wilkinson, Cameracentre UK, Park Cameras or LCE as these are priced to include VAT and work out 16.66% cheaper than either 'private seller' secondhand or new grey imports. Some used kit from dealers may include full VAT if they bought it from a VAT registered seller (often the case with The Flash Centre and other pro dealers).

If you have to register for VAT, your past VAT receipts should enable an agreed refund or claim on your first return. If you keep secondhand receipts (UK/EU only), you can use the Margin Scheme, and add only 16.66% VAT to any profit you make on resale (as dealers do). Sell at cost, or at a loss, and there's no VAT to add. But you must add VAT to resale of used items from outside the VAT zone – and also to 'grey' resales.



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# Are you ready for Judgement Day?

Photograph by David Edmonson – 100% score in the Societies Print Competition 2016

## 'Remember, choosing the right paper can make or break a print'

– Richard Walton, judging panel chairman at the Fujifilm-sponsored 20 x 16 Annual Print Competition run by The Societies.

Check out the full range of Fujifilm Original Photo Papers at: [www.originalphotopaper.com](http://www.originalphotopaper.com)

It's one of the most anticipated photographic events in the calendar – the judging of **The Societies' Annual Print Competition\***. It's two full days (Jan 10 and 11) of drama and suspense at the Hilton London Metropole. Aspirational photographers from across the globe submit their best work to panels of hand-picked international experts... to see just how good they are in competition.

And better still, they are proactively encouraged to sit in and watch as judges (in two rooms) observe and critique images across a full range of photo-disciplines and then mark in strict accord with the TEN ELEMENTS laid down by The Societies. Judges award points with the following in mind: impact; creativity; composition; presentation; point of interest; lighting; colour balance; technical excellence; technique; story telling/subject matter.

Chairman of the judging panels, Richard Walton says: "It really is amazing what photographers at all levels can learn in two days sitting in and watching the judging process – more, in my view, than you'd learn during an entire university degree course. And it's completely free."

He adds: "It also enables photographers to rediscover the true joy of printing – not just any old output but high-end printing that displays photography in all its true glory. It's easy to forget these days that a photograph is a piece of paper. We live in a 'here today, gone tomorrow' environment now and most of the photos I take for people only ever get viewed on a screen."

"But print quality and presentation is important in this competition. Standards must be very high and choosing the right paper can make or break a print. Learning about paper is imperative and over the years many (otherwise great) photographs have lost points for poor printing."

Outstanding prints are created of course by outstanding professional labs. One Vision Imaging's Derek Poulston comments:

"The Annual Print Competition is perfect for working professionals – our lifeblood. And with so many categories every photographer has a chance of success. But capturing an image is only part of the process. Ultra-quality through professional printing is the final but equally critical stage – and this is where One Vision Imaging can become the photographer's right-hand man."

He adds: "When it comes to colour saturation and quality there is simply no substitute for true photographic paper – and Fujifilm Original Photo Papers are, in our view, the industry leaders with quality always at the forefront of their product. We only want to work with the best."

Simon Warren, One Vision production manager, says: "Although we do offer a non-colour corrected service we take great pride in the fact that almost every customer opts for us to look after their prints for them. We assess every image for colour, density and contrast. If the truth be told, we also suffer a great deal of waste too, as we're completely obsessed when it comes to quality. If OVI technicians aren't 100% happy the print ends up in the bin."

He adds: "Colour management is a science for sure but calibrating papers can also be a challenge for labs – and Fujifilm are simply the best at helping us with this vital process. So, if we are the photographers' right-hand man – perhaps Fujifilm consider themselves as ours!"

# FUJIFILM

[www.edmonsonweddings.com](http://www.edmonsonweddings.com)

## 'Fujifilm has always been the answer for me'

Multi-award-winning, Dallas-based father and son wedding photography team David and Luke Edmonson (both Convention judges) are energised by the drama and excitement they witness each time they visit the Convention.

States Luke: "This is a world-class event. Running a high-quality competition like this requires several components including smooth, fluid organisation and high level professional backroom work. And the quality of the judges is key. My father's overall winning 'Caravaggio-style' portrait scored a mind-blowing maximum 100% in the 2016 competition... and brought tears to the eyes of judges in the room. I was in that room judging but I recused myself from the panel when my father's image came up. It was very special for me to witness that unique moment."

Adds David: "The winning image had been a couple of weeks in the planning and it was vital the paper used for printing was appropriate to the image. Everything I do is on Fujifilm paper. I know how judges will deduct points when they don't see densities and highlights, so it is very important who prints your work. It is the final area where things can go wrong. Fujifilm has always been the answer for me."

Bournemouth-based photographer Tracy Willis FSWPP, a former nightclub bouncer turned award-winning photographer and Print Competition judge, adds: "The print itself is hugely important. We see so many images that have been printed on the wrong paper – and although in some cases the image might be technically perfect, outputting to the wrong paper ruins it."

Competition judging at The Convention: January 10th-11th 2018, 9am-5pm, free. **Register by January 6th for free entry** to main Trade Show January 12th-14th.  
**Go to: [www.swpp.co.uk/convention](http://www.swpp.co.uk/convention)**



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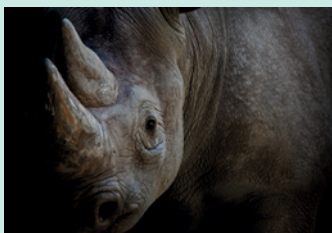
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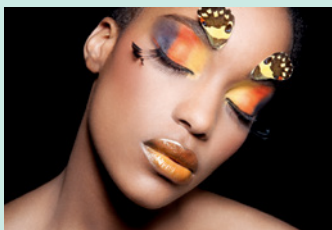
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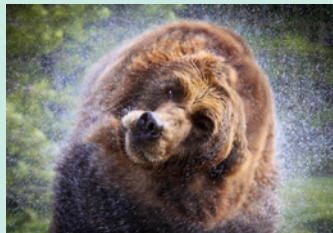
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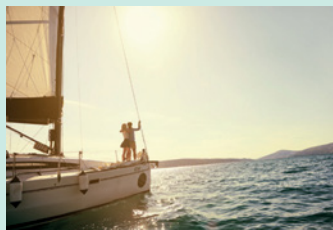
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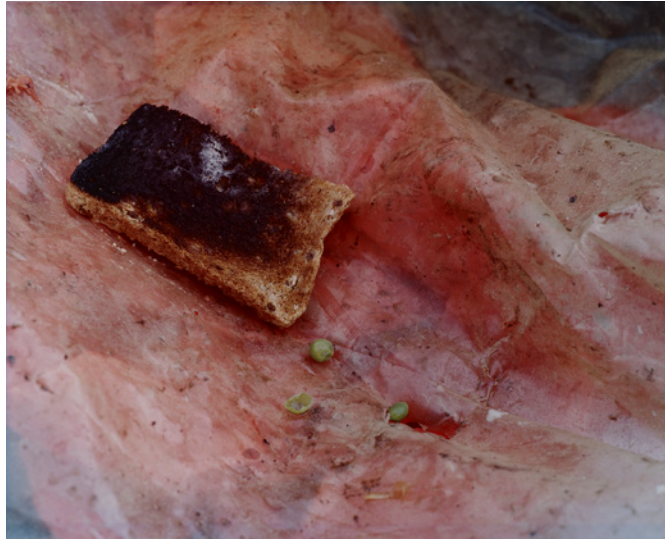
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# A GREEN AND PLEASANT LAND

The awakening of environmental awareness in the 1970s brought a photographic vision to Britain already seen in New Topographical work from the US. Some of the resulting records of urban and rural reality evoke reactions as strong now as then, like Keith Arnatt's visceral visual dissection of landfill sites on this page. Others, notably the black and white work from the Midlands and North, prove almost nostalgic. This Arts Council partner exhibition can also be studied on the gallery's website.



*This page: Keith Arnatt, Untitled (from the Pictures from the Rubbish Tip series), 1989. Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London ©Keith Arnatt Estate. All rights reserved. DACS 2015*

*Top right: Chris Killip, Viaduct Street, Huddersfield. 1972. Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London ©the artist*  
*Centre right: Fay Godwin, 1976, Maenserth Standing Stone, Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London ©British Library Board (Fay Godwin)*

*Bottom right: Thomas Joshua Cooper, Ritual Indications, Alton, Shropshire, 1977. Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London ©Thomas Joshua Cooper*





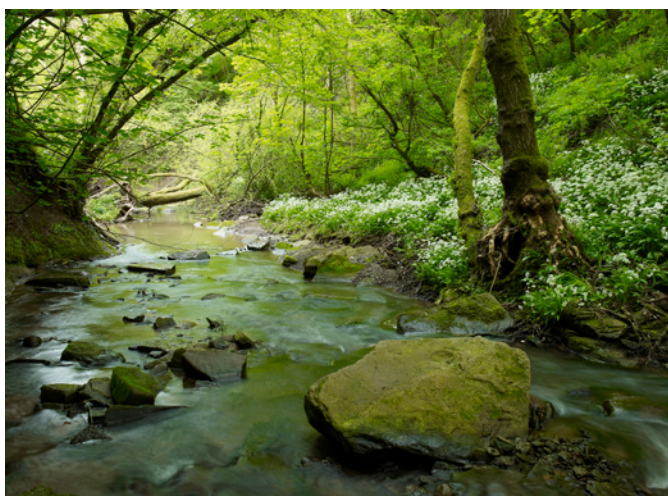


## A Green and Pleasant Land, British Landscape and the Imagination: 1970s to Now

**ON SHOW** until 21 January 2018 at the Towner Art Gallery in Eastbourne (*photograph below*). The Towner Art Gallery hosts one of the most significant public art collections in the South of England and draws over 100,000 visitors a year. It is located at Devonshire Park, College Rd, Eastbourne BN21 4JJ. [www.townereastbourne.org.uk](http://www.townereastbourne.org.uk)







## GULLACHSEN'S 'AQUA'

In the autumn, Lorentz Gullachsen was offered an exhibition in the Stratford ArtsHouse at short notice. He chose to print up one of his favourite long-term subjects, using the title *Aqua – Celebrating Water in many locations in the UK and across the World*. We found his work, mostly on Phase One P45 medium format, an interesting contrast to the *Green and Pleasant Land* retrospective on the previous spread.

"I was grateful for the opportunity to exhibit at the ArtsHouse, a venue where I have taken many portraits of authors and celebrities in collaboration with the Stratford Literary Festival. The exhibition was a great success, extended up until Christmas – the work has been seen by around 9,000 people and has resulted in some limited edition orders.

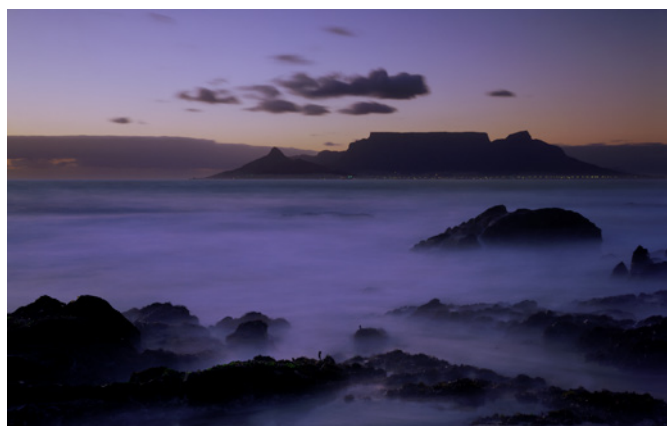
"In October I had the great fortune to win the Association of Photographers Advertising Single image Best in Category, so I had something to communicate to social media and press. I believe that the benefits of such an exhibition continue well after it has finished. My Instagram following has risen greatly and my website has enjoyed a massive increase in traffic – I can definitely attribute one commission due to AQUA and I believe another is in the pipeline."

New 100 x 70cm Epson inkjet prints were mounted on aluminium. Lawrence included some from his 'Venice 30' series printed to A2, and "inspired by early historic miniature prints I saw in the V&A" a small series was included at just 10 x 10cm.

"I have two ongoing projects that shall be completed in 2018 and hopefully one shall be exhibited. However if I am offered another opportunity to exhibit even with short notice I will jump at the chance."



See: [www.gullachsen.com](http://www.gullachsen.com) [stratfordartshouse.co.uk](http://stratfordartshouse.co.uk)





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# WHICH FORMAT?

If not moving up from 35mm full-frame DSLR to Fujifilm GFX – this year's great migration – photographers are switching up, down and sideways between a wider range of useful sensor formats than ever before. But it's not an entirely new thing and some effects are counter-intuitive.

Early in my work for photo magazines, the legendary editor of *Photo Technique*, Jack Schofield, dropped the theme of 'Battle of the Formats' on his small freelance team. It was over 40 years ago (April 1976) and after the meteoric rise of 35mm SLR systems the industry was looking for novelty.

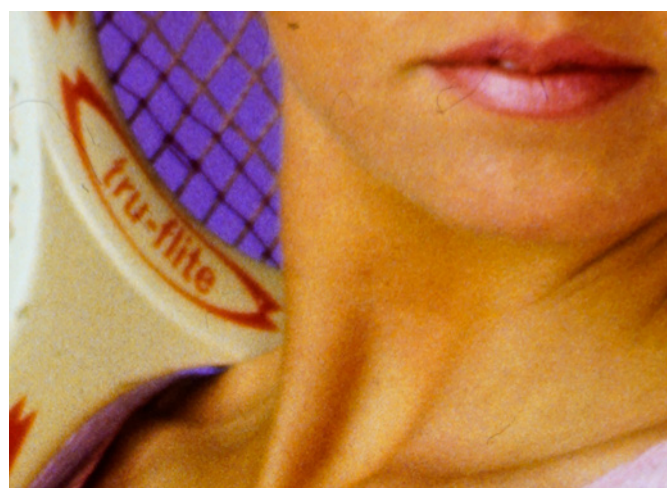
The 16mm-based 110 format was Kodak's bid to update and replace the 35mm-based 126 format, both using plastic cartridges with feed and take-up spool built-in. The Agfa Karat Rapid 24 variation on 35mm film was almost dead, and subminiature was the hobby challenge it had always been. Pentax and Mamiya promoted the benefits of 10-on-120, the 6 x 7cm format which caused so many problems making contact sheets and filing as each film needed five strips of two negatives which wouldn't fit on a 10 x 8 inch contact. Then Mamiya created the 645 system, an almost 35mm-sized SLR making an odd 15 generously spaced exposures of 16-on-120 size.

From rollfilm to large format, the range of choices was extended through 6 x 9cm, 5 x 4", 5 x 7", to 10 x 8" – and there were Polaroid instant formats as well, including sheet film negative. All this gave the magazine a chance to shoot and print comparisons but then – as now – the litho print medium worked well enough to make smaller formats seem better than they were. However, for large format – the equivalent of today's high resolution MF sensors – no-one would ever have worked without camera movements.

Finding a copy of this classic themed magazine edition helped prompt this article when I realised I was shooting, today, on five different sizes of digital sensor even without currently owning any medium format kit.



One of the first major themed magazine issues your editor worked on, as a freelance associate – Jack Schofield's marathon hardware round-up in *Photo Technique* under the theme of 'Battle of the Formats', April 1976.



What was film like compared to today's sensors? Here's a vintage 1986 Fujichrome 50 – the best fine grained E6 slide film – rephotographed using a macro bellows and slide copier on the Sony A7RIII. The clip above is at the native 100% (17 x 26 inch) print size for the A7RII. It's sharply focused as the dust and fibres on the slide show – perfectly sharp. The picture was probably taken at around f8 using the 85mm f2 MD Rokkor, a good lens. Nothing is sharp! The grain is huge. Today's 'full frame' format is like the sheet film of 30 years ago, not like 35mm.



## Grain harvest

In the past, the choice of film formats was just as extreme as our current choice of digital sensor sizes. There was one huge difference. With minor differences in the film base and even less in the emulsions, everything from 8mm spy camera stock to 12 x

15" sheets had the same range of grain sizes.

Film grain is a bit like the pixels of a sensor, but random and more variable. If a film resolves 30 cycles per millimetre, you must multiply by three for the digital pixel density needed to match it – around 90 pixels per mm, or 2160 x 3240 pixels for a 35mm

full frame. This is how we got the early standard that six megapixels, 2000 x 3000, was the minimum needed to match 35mm.

However, only the very first full frame sensors actually had such large pixels. The first popular 6 megapixel DSLRs were APS-C, just under half full frame at around 15 x 23mm. Pocket digitals and bridge cameras could also produce 6 megapixels from a quarter or even an eighth of that size. If the sensor and lens work well enough together, all can produce the same 35mm-film matching quality.

Much misleading information haunts internet. Half of this seems to be about sensor sizes, light gathering power, and depth of field. It's simple enough – you can not use any conventional depth of field tables with today's very high resolution sensors, whether 20 megapixels on one-inch (8.8mm x 13.3mm), 80MP interpolated sensor-shift on MicroFourThirds (13.3 x 17mm), 36MP on 24 x 36mm or 100MP on 37 x 49mm. The size of the print, or the viewing screen, must be factored in. Regular depth of field calculations still hold good if all you ever do is fill a laptop screen with the image or make an A4 print.

The whole point of higher megapixel counts is to enable large prints or close examination



of the image, whether at the 50% view of a Retina or similar screen laptop or 100% view of a conventional display. Focus transitions which would be invisible on the 10 x 8" print standard used to calculate depth of field are obvious when you view something like a 42MP Sony full frame sensor image at this scale. It's like placing a magnifier loupe on the print.

All images with the same megapixel count will display at the same apparent size, but for the same lens angle of view and aperture smaller sensors will give significant depth of field benefits for images where you want more in focus. Large sensors will emphasise differential focus (shallow depth of field). The effect is much the same as using smaller or larger film formats, but at low ISO settings there won't be as much quality difference.

For the right degree of differential focus at different image display size and viewing distance conditions, I've found that things work in reverse. If you want to see any degree of blur on a mobile phone or small handheld display, the depth of field needs to be less than for a magazine page or a laptop screen. If you want to avoid too much of the picture looking soft in a mural-sized print which people may walk past, it needs to be much more.

And this creates the odd situation where a one-inch sensor may deliver the best large scale view and a medium-format sensor the best small catalogue repro or mobile platform look. To get round this dichotomy, users of smaller formats have demanded extremely wide aperture lenses – often  $f1.2$  or  $f0.95$  in standard angle, and  $f1.4$  to  $f2$  for everything from ultrawides to short telephoto. In the meantime medium-format users experiment with solutions like adapting the range of Canon TS-E tilt shift lenses (17mm, 24mm, 45mm and 90mm) to use on the Fujifilm GFX body. With the 17mm this may just be to secure an extreme angle of view, with the longer focal lengths it's about using the tilt more than the shift, to create an angled plane of sharp of the scene or subject.

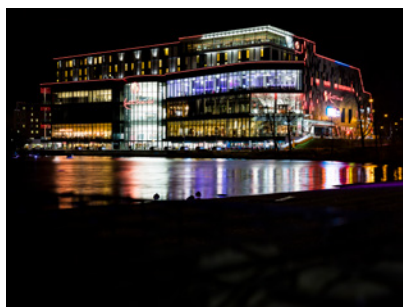
Another solution, again being pioneered by some GFX users in particular, is focus stacking applied to landscapes or still life at non-macro distances. This is already the standard solution for diffraction-free sharp focus in depth with macro subjects on MicroFourThirds, partly thanks to Olympus offering in-camera stacking.



Camera body size does not bear a direct relationship to body size. The Fujifilm GFX, left, is seen here next to the X-Pro1.



The Fujifilm 40 x 53mm sensor packs over 8000 pixels into the width (right). The lenses are good enough for individual people to be recognisable if you know them (300dpi clip above). Given the right lens, Sony's A7RIII can do the same.



In the meantime, practical observation shows that formats like one-inch, MFT and APS-C may be better able to produce 'zoomable' large scale image files and prints than full frame or MF subject to the limitations of diffraction. It's easy to forget that that a frame-filling face photographed on 10 x 8" film is actually a 1:1 macro shot, as is a picture of an egg on typical medium format. For a very small sensor, all the world is distant – infinity starts sooner, though of course it doesn't really. Depth of field increase as sensor size reduces is superproportional.

Anyone who has used a one-inch camera at low ISO with an excellent lens at an optimal aperture already knows how little quality is lost. When extreme telephoto angles are needed, very small formats also win. Few

photographers are going to lug around an adapted 1000mm lens on medium format, but a 400mm lens on a Nikon 1 series body can work well and with new choices like Tamron's 18-400mm (see test review in this issue, page 40) only becomes physically large when extended, collapsing neatly for the time you are walking not shooting.

made to keep lens size and weight down or a full frame lens would be twice the dimensions and four times the weight of Olympus/Panasonic equivalents. Bodies are not treated the same way (except for Nikon 1 and the now mostly forgotten Pentax Q variants). They are designed for typical hand size instead.

## Shifting situation

I've now had a chance to see exactly what the Sony, Pentax and Olympus pixel-shift modes can do. All are very limited as they can't handle action, or be handheld though Olympus makes a brave attempt. What the Sony shift has proved on the first quick tests is much the same as Sigma have showed us with the sdQuattro models. The right lens, with all Bayer pattern compromises removed, can match the kind of detail seen in medium format images. Only the Sigma Foveon dpQuattro range and sdQuattro can do this with live action, flash and almost any low ISO subject – and with image stabilisation, where the lens offers it. All the multi-shot pixel shift processes whether created super-large files like Olympus or super-quality like Sony only work when body and lens stabilisation is disabled.

So, with Fujifilm likely to be the first to offer sensor stabilisation in a future GFX body, medium format will still be the choice for fashion and active portrait work for those photographers who can use its quality to good effect. This has less to do with camera craft alone than with meticulous studio (and location) technique. Dust and marks the eye can not see are rendered with striking clarity in product shots. Hours of retouching may be needed to keep a packshot client happy. The studio needs to become a 'clean room' in a way which simply never applied with film shooting, even large format.

If you do move up in format, in pixel count or adopt ultra high resolution imaging methods you'll find out with your first 100% image viewing. Be warned!

– David Kilpatrick



## Equipment size

The bulk and weight of gear for each format is not proportional. A good example is the Olympus E-M1 body size and the Sony A7 size with a sensor four times the area. The bodies are much the same, and the smallest original A7 is smaller than the E-M1 II. The Fujifilm GFX is larger than the Sony A7RIII but to get the best from the A7RIII a lens like the GM 24-70mm  $f2.8$  is needed weighing 886g and taking 82mm filters, while the GFX 'standard' though wider in angle is to 32-64mm  $f4$ , 875g and using 77mm filters. The Olympus 12-40mm  $f2.8$  weighs only 382g and takes 62mm filters, while the Pentax 16-50mm  $f2.8$  for APS-C is 600g and uses 77mm. As the format size increase, greater efforts are





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# WHY ONE INCH IS ALL YOU NEED

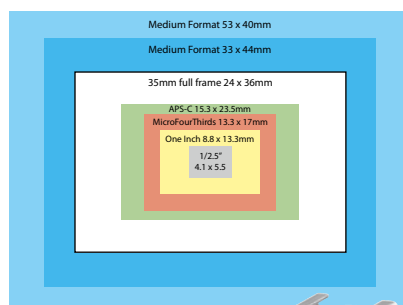
We're at an interesting point in history. As I write this, all of the photo industry buzz is concentrating on the full-frame cameras that are pushing megapixel boundaries. But sometime when someone wasn't looking, the smaller sensors were coming into their own. And while the new flagship cameras such as the Canon 5DS/R and the Nikon D850 now offer more megapixels than most people will ever need, the smaller sensor cameras have suddenly become 'way more than good enough' for even serious and experienced photographers like me.

Today, the term "small sensor camera" refers almost exclusively to Sony's 20.1 megapixel 1"-type sensor, which for historical reasons only measures 0.35" x 0.47" (8.8 x 13.3mm). But let's not get hung up on semantics. This sensor format appears not only in the Sony RX100 and RX10 series of cameras, but also in cameras of competitors: Nikon CX, Panasonic FZ1000, ZS100, FZ2500, DMC-LX10, the DxO 1 (a connected camera for iPhones), and bridge cameras from Canon – the Powershot G3X, G5X, and G7X (I and II), G9X (shocking for a company that insists on making all of its own sensors!). Also the Leica V-Lux (basically the same as the Panasonic FZ1000). That's how good the sensor is.

With good light, images from these cameras are so good that when blown up you'd be hard-pressed to tell which images were taken with my RX100 or my larger full-frame cameras. Many RX100 images grace the [www.FriedmanArchives.com](http://www.FriedmanArchives.com) stock photography website, and more than 60 have been licensed to very happy customers thusfar.

Why even bother making a

Gary Friedman explains how the one inch sensor has changed many photographers' views on format choice – which is now greater than ever before



small sensor when we now have the means to make big ones on a massive scale? The answer has to do with portability. Generally, the larger the sensor, the larger the lens needs to be. Traditionally point-and-shoots have used very small sensors (like the 1/2.5" type sensor, seen in the figure) to keep the entire package small.

But the market for point-and-shoots started to dry up about 2011 when the cameras on smartphones started getting good enough for Facebook. Sony wanted to up the game by creating the world's best point-and-shoot, so they worked with their sensor division and designed

a sensor whose size was just the right balance – larger than traditional P&S sensors (meaning lower noise at high ISOs), but small enough to keep the overall package of a traditional size.

And so the original RX100 was born, and was an instant hit. Every pro photographer bought one for everyday use. Then Sony put a bigger lens on it and created the RX10 line of cameras, which I have slowly fallen in love with as well.

How good are these cameras?

Last year I did an experiment: I took two pictures of a highly-detailed subject up close with two different cameras: the 42 MP Sony A99 II and Zeiss 135/1.8 prime, and an RX-10 II, both in the studio and both with equivalent settings.

Then I blew them up to poster size and asked some seminar attendees if they could tell which camera took which picture. None of them could. The only evident difference between the two was that my chest hairs were also in focus with the RX10 II shot. Read my blog post for more info:

<http://bit.ly/2o7r1Ck>

True, this doesn't mean the larger format sensors are obsolete. Noise at high ISO will still be higher than with full-frame, MFT or APS-C cameras; and of course you can make giant enlargements of only half the size with a 20MP sensor. Fans of shallow depth-of-field will still opt for the full-frame as well. But society has changed; few people even print anymore, and many desire the ability to get great quality images without being burdened by their equipment. Plus, it's so much easier to have both the front and the back row of group shots be in focus! I know that the RX10 IV will be my preferred vacation camera for the foreseeable future.

But the story doesn't end there.

## The Sensor Evolves

In order to stay ahead of the competition, Sony started making improvements to the sensor, and many of these improvements have not made it into competitors' cameras. In the RX100 II, Sony re-engineered the sensor to include a "backside illuminated" structure. That's a non-intuitive label; essentially they changed the electrical design of each pixel element to put the light-sensing element on top (closest to the lens) and placed the supporting electronics behind it (the inverse of how it was done before.) More difficult to manufacture, but it



resulted in about one stop better low-light performance.

The second generation also improved video quality, by offering full-pixel readout before down-sampling and storing as a video file. Most larger-format cameras resorted to something called pixel binning or line skipping to solve the problem of "a video frame requires far, far fewer pixels than what this imaging sensor can capture. What's the easiest way to quickly grab just the pixels we need when shooting video?" Easy to implement but the video purists didn't care for the fuzzy details.

Then a newer version for the RX100 IV was designed that had something called a "stacked" design. In addition to ever-so-slightly better high ISO performance, this new sensor was designed from the ground up to get the data off the chip as quickly as possible, enabling some high-performance features: two kinds of slow motion video (shooting as many as 960 low-res images per second), 16 pictures-per-second, a top shutter speed of 1/32,000s (for your next trip to the Sun), and an electronic shutter which approaches - but doesn't quite reach - the holy grail of a "global shutter" - where all the pixels can be turned on and off at exactly the same time, rather than capturing and reading out one row at a time. This reduced the "rolling shutter" effect greatly. The ability to read the data off the sensor so quickly also improves the autofocus speed. Synergy at its best.

The stacked design also was responsible for adding 4K video shooting with full pixel readout to the mix. That's pretty much the time that professional videographers started adding the RX10 II as a "backup" camera to their field gear; they saw that the 4K video from the small-sensor cameras was of better quality than other still cameras which did video.

For the RX100 V, an even newer sensor was developed, this time they incorporated a very sophisticated autofocus technology called Phase-Detect AF. It's what the big DSLRs use to accurately track Olympic athletes.



*Above: ISO 2500 with the RX10 IV*

And it is responsible for better video focusing with less "hunting" in most circumstances. The RX10 III (which sports a very sharp and compact 24-600mm lens!) was just screaming for this development, since at the long end the contrast-detect AF would just hunt unless the light was very good.

Okay, where are we? The RX-10 IV is now out; with this newest sensor it can shoot a whopping 24 pictures per second at full resolution. And it will do phase-detect autofocus and auto expose between frames! To put that engineering achievement into perspective, Nikon's top-of-the-line D5 DSLR also sports 20 megapixels also but can shoot at only 12 pictures per second with follow-focus. That camera costs \$6K just for the body, whereas the RX10 IV (with that amazing lens) cost just USD \$1,700.

When the camera was first announced, I thought everyone who ever shoots sports teams would want one. I thought this would become as ubiquitous as the RX100 had become among serious shooters of all camera brands. But the day the camera arrived, I discovered one hugely disappointing thing: it doesn't allow you to zoom in or out while you're shooting continuously - an essential feature when you're photographing runners or skiers coming toward the camera. None of the other RX cameras can either, but none of them were born for shooting sports like the Mark IV otherwise was.



*"Above and below, the RX10 Mk IV 24-600mm equivalent zoom in action."*





Is this a big deal? That depends on whether you plan on shooting things that come toward you or not. If not, this will be just as capable as an A9 and provide just-as-publishable shots. But it's a limitation you should know about. Interestingly, the camera CAN zoom while shooting and autofocus when shooting 4K video. Freeze frames from 4K are perfectly publishable at 12.8 x 7.2" @ 300 dpi. So that's a possible work-around.

In all other respects, the RX10 IV is like a Swiss-army-knife – small and light enough to always be with you (thanks to its 1"-type sensor), versatile enough to do just about anything you require of it, with image quality that's visibly indistinguishable from higher-end cameras when printed. In fact, DxOmark.com rated the sensor in this camera as being BETTER than the APS-C-sized Canon EOS 7D Mk III!

<http://bit.ly/1NHTiZO>

It is probably the best travel camera ever made, and no longer will I lament leaving my larger cameras (and backpack full of lenses) at home when I'm traveling.



[www.friedmanarchives.com](http://www.friedmanarchives.com)

*Below, the RX10 Mk IV AF was able to capture this straight-to-camera flight action at 600mm equivalent.*



*Portraits made in the studio (lovely model – Ed.) on the Sony A99II full frame 42 megapixel DSLT, left, and the RX10 MkII one-inch EVF bridge camera, right. Below, photographers attending one of my seminars examine the large prints made from the original files. They were asked to tell which was which. See the story and blog post.*



## Other 1"-type sensor cameras

**Nikon 1** – (bottom left) This was Nikon's answer to Sony's cute NEX camera lineup. Using a 1" sensor made by Aptina, it incorporated phase-detect AF from the first generation, plus different pixels for low and high ISO settings, and used a new lens mount.

**Sony Qx100** – (centre bottom) This was an interesting experiment. It is essentially an RX100 minus the rear LCD and controls. Your smartphone provides the viewfinder and the user interface, linked via Wi-Fi. This resulted in a laggy viewfinder, slow startup times, plus a new level of fiddliness to the shooting experience.

**DxO One** – (top) Similar to the Qx100 in concept but a much better execution: no zoom lens and much less fiddly experience.

**RX0** – (bottom right) Another interesting experiment which is actually kind of cool. Think of a tiny RX100 that can easily mount on a drone; then add the ability for several of these cameras to operate in unison and you have a lot of creative opportunity waiting to be exploited. Like this <https://youtu.be/YeMeET8qldI> and the BTS video

<https://youtu.be/gheufKE6n58>



# SONY A7RIII: FIRST LOOK

David Kilpatrick assesses the upgrade – about a £1,200-£1,500 trade up – against the A7RII

Keeping up with Sony is not cheap, or easy. Taking delivery of the A7RIII I had serious misgivings, placing it next to my A7RII to do the comparison shots. For most subjects that I photograph, it will give me a negligible increase in quality. The 2015 model II is already better than the Nikon D850 or Canon 5DS/R with their slightly higher resolution images, in terms of noise and the general contrast gradient of raw files. Where it lags behind is in battery stamina, speed of operation and action shooting AF, but the main issue which has bothered me has been battery life.

Mark three promises to fix some of this with 10fps, much better AF including phase detection with many adapted DSLR lenses, a faster and better EVF, dual card slots with one fast UHS-II, and a substantial battery upgrade from 7.3Wh to 16.4Wh (shared with A9, though the baseplate profile and side ports are slightly different).

Upgrading from the MkII, the changes make your bagful of £50-ish genuine or £10-ish third party Sony NP-FW50 batteries redundant. There's no battery adapter included in the £3,199 retail box, as there is with the more expensive A9 – and no second battery as with the A7RII. So that means a £75-ish additional NP-FZ100 for which there are not as yet any clone substitutes. My Arca fit L-plate and never-used third party A7II series battery grip were sold with the A7RII. Fortunately though a new L-plate only cost £20.

In the next issue I'll report properly on the A7RIII features like its hi-res multi shot mode which gives true RGB for every pixel, like the Pentax K-1 function we tested early in 2017. At that time, I compared the Pentax sensor shift with Olympus E-M1 MkII multishot and native A7RII. We now use E-M5 MkII and E-M1 MkII as the basis for our travel kit and so far no subject has demanded an 80 or 50 megapixel file.



Comparisons below: A7RII on the left, A7RIII on the right.



For many users one of the biggest benefits of the A7RIII will be that the strap connector has been moved forward, above.

Initially, the setup and all subsequent menu navigation is fast with the help of a much improved rear control wheel which stands well proud of the camera back, and a joystick button. The response speed of the menus and all settings is impressive, but a price has been paid. The faster and more powerful processor has no ability to use Sony PlayMemories camera

apps, a whole layer of BIOS which gives many other Sony cameras unusual functions. Some are free but others are paid for, and you can't just give them away with a camera being sold as they depend on your Sony Entertainment Networks customer account, login and (ultimately) payment details. The apps can be installed on multiple cameras and don't expire once paid for, but now I

only have my little RX100 MkIII able to do smooth reflections, ND graded skies and various other raw file effects. The camera also loses Scene modes but gains three Memory positions in place of two.

Only one app-like function remains, the bluetooth GPS embedding which uses your mobile phone's location data. I believe that since the I/O paths exist within the camera's processor, Sony has left the way clear for a Multi Function Shoe mounted GPS device replacing the input from the phone. Embedding in the image files is now a function of the control architecture, all that's needed is the module and the firmware to acquire from this rather than use bluetooth.

Other upgrades in the MkIII make the loss of apps a fair trade. The MkII, despite getting new Sony batteries during its two year and 8,500 click life, consistently reported battery exhausted after storage when other cameras using the same batteries could sit for weeks turned off and show no loss. Airplane mode didn't prevent this. So, for backup I have an ExPro power pack with dummy battery and lead. The MkIII can be powered directly through its USB 3.0 socket and just needs the right pack and cable (7.2V power using 3.7W), but I may never need it. I'm happier have a battery which will last for a day of light travel shooting or a half-day event coverage. The estimate is 530 exposures using the EVF based on an ambient temperature of 77°F (!) using the 28-70mm f3.5-5.6 OSS lens, which probably imposes the least load on AF of any lens.

The larger body size, partly due to the battery section, is balanced with a new neck-strap position that copes better with larger lenses. Mirrorless is no longer just about keeping it all small, and the premium GM-series fast zooms are little different from DSLR equivalents. More space has been used for the dual SD card module, though as with the A9 I find having Slot 1 at the bottom and



Slot 2 at the top counter-intuitive along with the back to front insertion of the cards, which had been corrected the A7RII design. The finger-recesses of the card unit are the wrong way round, with the deeper-set Card No 2 especially hard to eject as your finger tip falls on the card and your nail into the shaped fingertip well. Card No 1 stands higher in its slot and is easier to get to. The card door does not have the firm rubber sealing effect of the MkII, but a switch to open and Sony's assurance that its fairly light closing action is well-sealed.

The faster processor and card interface have made saving RAW+Extra Fine JPEG possible for the first time ever. I was pleasantly surprised by the quality of the JPEGs I had to rely on before Adobe updated LR/ACR (now done except for handling .ARQ high-res composite raw), and might even consider not using raw for some shoots.

The worst changes have been caused by the USB 3.1 and MicroUSB dual interface. Using both headphone and microphone sockets now requires two of the click-off tethered rigid plastic covers to be removed, and tethering via USB 3.1 needs the HDMI/headphone cover open if you want to fit the screw-secured tethering guide and clamp which is supplied. This has cut-outs to fit the fragile dangling covers, plus mouldings and locating lug and pin to attempt to get it in the right position. I was unable to secure it at all. The clamp supplied with the A7RII is easy to attach with a larger, longer and more robust screw. The new design also means L-plates have an almost complete cutaway, needing a long Arca tripod mount.

The camera is clearly also aimed at movie makers despite the adverse changes to the audio sockets and tether clamp, which seem to have been caused by adding an X-sync socket which very few will ever use now that Godox, Elinchrom and Profoto all have dedicated Sony triggers. The replacement of the Scene settings on the Mode dial with S&Q – a Movie specific Speed and Quality position for producing slow-motion and time lapse video



*Six screw and four screw mounts, above; new big battery, and "rating" key symbol for C3 button custom use, right.*



*A9 or A99-alike back controls, and on the right the oddly inverted dual card slot drive with little obvious weather sealing.*



*One of the first shots, taken at ISO 3200 using the little Canon 40mm STM. A few days of testing showed the III to be slightly better than the II.*

– is entirely aimed at the movie market. As such, the A7RIII has more of a split personality than the II, the S series or the 9.

As for the immediate impression, the EVF is improved but I am unsure if the live view benefits until you activate magnified manual focus – then you really see the difference. The shutter with its claimed lower vibration and longer life has a smooth 'short' sound, but not especially quiet after using Olympus for a month. The camera responds faster in every way from cold start to acquiring AE and AF on first pressure on the shutter. Every control feels better and the six-screw lens mount is rock solid – even just the tightness of the body cap is better. I am sure that some of my cheap Chinese adaptors will be very tight indeed and will take great care trying them. This feels like a camera for professional use and a five-year promo warranty from Sony should help justify its cost.

Next time – performance in practice, including the pixel shift mode.



[www.sony.co.uk](http://www.sony.co.uk)



# LIFTING THE VEIL

Anthony Karen does what photographers should do – he takes the camera where the eyes of the world don't go or are less welcome. Gary Friedman interviewed Karen about his coverage of the Ku Klux Klan and a US neo-Nazi organisation. With world events fuelling right-wing reactions these images may look like a glance into the past but could be a glimpse of the future.

Many people may have heard of U.S. white supremacist groups like the Ku Klux Klan and the Westboro Baptist Church, but few know much about them and even fewer have any means of experiencing life as a member.

Since 2005, Anthony Karen has been spending countless hours with these groups, documenting their lifestyle and culture so that the rest of us can observe vicariously through his work. He has documented cross lightings, blood oath rituals, pro-white civil rights rallies, naturalization ceremonies, and the homes of Imperial Wizards. He's spent time with white nationalists who perpetuate Nazi symbolism and values, and introduces us to *Skinbyrds*.

His work has resulted in two books, won Cliff Edom's New America Award for the Best of Photojournalism, and it formed the basis of a documentary about the KKK with the Discovery Channel.

One look at Karen's work and a thousand questions materialize.

How does he gain access to such closed communities? What does he do to earn their trust, and how do the parties feel about having a photographer document them? How does he remain neutral?

And of course, how does this all play into the current US political environment where President Trump seems to give voice to their distrust of outsiders?

Mr Karen is a Marine veteran and has worked in the personal protection field – he aligns himself with several charities such as Friends in Deed, Smile Train, and The Humane Society. He was gracious enough to answer some burning questions I had about his motivation and his methodologies. His insights follow.



*Smiling for the camera: young skinhead, 2005, above.*

*Right, Pastor Drew of the National Socialist Movement, shortly after a wedding ceremony at the annual skinhead Oi Fest in Arizona. Pastor Drew was the last ordained minister at the Aryan Nations 20-acre white supremacist compound at Hayden Lake, Idaho before it was bankrupted by the Southern Poverty Law Center in a 6.3 million dollar judgement in 2000.*



**GF:** *What motivates you to take on these projects?*

**AK:** Most of us grew up hearing about the Ku Klux Klan, and have seen the cliché images, etc., but I had a genuine curiosity to see things for myself. A few years into documenting the Klan, an opportunity to photograph a Nazi organization was realized, so my interest kept building from there. I have a keen interest in religious ideology and marginalized subject matter.

I prefer documenting long-term stories, because I feel a story can always be improved upon; there's always some nuance that you'll discover with subsequent trips. This methodology has proven helpful as I develop as a photojournalist. The more time and experience I amass, the deeper my self-criticism has become, even in editing, but hopefully always for the better of a project. I find I challenge myself more and always strive to go even deeper.

**GF:** *How did you get access and win their trust?*

**AK:** I wouldn't use the term win, but any trust I've been afforded came for me being honest and wearing my personality on my sleeve.

I think a lot of the credibility I've earned also stems from my basic philosophy that you need to give some of yourself in order to receive anything back. I spend time with people, I listen to what they have to say, and I treat each person as an individual. I don't have to believe what they believe, but whenever I'm in someone's space, I feel I'm obliged to observe without judgment. That's not to say I wouldn't intervene if I felt a situation called for it, but I choose to observe moment to moment and simply take in what I see and experience without presumption or pretext.





Above: A member of the Louisiana-based Dixie Rangers of the Ku Klux Klan displays her custom-made wedding veil as her fiancé looks on. Below: April 23, 2016. Rome, Georgia. Members of a North Carolina based Ku Klux Klan realm begin to form ranks prior to a “pro-white civil rights” rally sponsored by the National Socialist Movement.





**GF:** *How do your subjects react to the ways you depict them? And if they like the pictures, does that worry you?*

**AK:** I've had nothing but positive feedback; they seem to respect my neutrality. No, being seen as neutral doesn't bother me.

**GF:** *Do people accuse you of glorifying them?*

**AK:** Of course, some might argue such work breeds further hate or offers publicity for a group who've centered their entire lives on the denunciation of others. I refute the assessment, alluding to the point that turning a blind eye and embracing "ignorance" doesn't take away from the fact something exists.

These types of stories are often documented in a superficial and sensationalist manner... in addition, the restricted access contributes to an unbalanced perspective. I find the intimate aspects of people's lives to be the most fascinating element. That said, I'm not really concerned with what people have to say about my approach, if they don't like something they have the means to turn the page. Based on my experiences, obviously I can only speculate, but I think many of the groups I deal with see things like this mainstream media as a viable tool to promote an agenda and a possible asset in terms of recruitment due to the larger audience it reaches. Myself being a long-term documentarian "could" be seen as someone preserving an ideology they truly believe in, and doing so in an ethical and unbiased manner. As I've said before, I don't have to believe in what someone else does, but I'm obliged to document the things I see objectively.

**GF:** *It seems that white supremacists might be easy (and tempting to some) to sensationalize. Do you try to avoid that, and if so, how?*

**AK:** That's always been a huge issue for me. I'll submit what I feel the best representation of my experience was, but the editors go for the same cliché images every time. That's why I don't put so much importance on being published anymore; I have no problem telling publications no



A Klanswoman with 'White Power' and the KKK motto 'Non Silba Sed Anthar' (which translates to - Not Self, But Others) tattooed on her hands.



Above: Blood Oath ritual







*Above: at the annual Oi Fest, sponsored by the White Knights of America, Death Head Hooligans and the Sons of Aesir motorcycle club. Arizona.*

*Below: a Ku Klux Klan cross lighting ceremony and Swastika lighting – according to Klan ideology, the fiery cross signifies the light of Christ and also meant to bring spiritual truth to a world that is blinded by misinformation and darkness.*





thank you if I'm not feeling 100% comfortable about the piece. It's not always about the image with the beautiful moody light or in this case the burning crosses, the swastikas or the robed Klansman carrying a rifle. That's one of the reasons I post so many images on my website, I want people to see what I saw, not the perception of what someone else thinks it to be.

**GF:** *Has your work resulted in any lawsuits?*

**AK:** Years ago I had a photo-series go viral on Life.com (an extension of the former *Life Magazine* in digital form). One image in particular had a young boy kneeling besides a cross that his father was preparing for a cross lighting ceremony. It was a side view of the boy, so you couldn't make out his features, even still I asked his father permission at the onset of the gathering. Anyway, the mother saw the image online and lost it, she called *Life* and the leader of the Klan group to the point it got back to me. The leader had my back and said the woman was out of line, but I asked *Life* to pull the image as a courtesy.

The leader of that group wound up banishing the family from his organization. Other than that, no I've never had an issue (knock on wood).

**GF:** *Do you get hate mail, people telling you stop giving them a platform?*

**AK:** Oddly enough, that depends on various factors, which include the publication, audience and even the country where the article was published. Some people try to overcompensate their natural aversion to racism with unproductive anger and maliciousness towards the subjects in images, but for the most part everything I've received has been the highest of praise.

One of the first questions I'm always asked during an interview is how do I respond to those who claim that I'm providing the Klan with a platform... I tell them they should ask the editors that contact me in regards to publishing my work, because otherwise these images would remain on my website. The only real negative



*Candidates wishing to become initiated into the Ku Kloss Knights of the Ku Klux Klan take their oaths as part of a naturalization ritual. Candidates are blindfolded and led through the woods at a sometimes vigorous pace. They are questioned about Klan craft and history, and they swear certain oaths. They are then "knighted" through anointing with sacred waters, a sword touch on both shoulders, and a benediction. The new members are greeted and welcomed by the officiating officers.*

*"Klan cologne" a mixture of Kerosene (or diesel fuel) mixed with a small amount of motor oil is poured onto a burlap wrapped cross in preparation for a cross lighting ceremony. According to Klan beliefs, the purpose of the lighting is to signify the light of Christ and is also meant to bring spiritual truth to a world that is blinded by misinformation and darkness.*



*Below: Cross lighting ceremony, Virginia.*





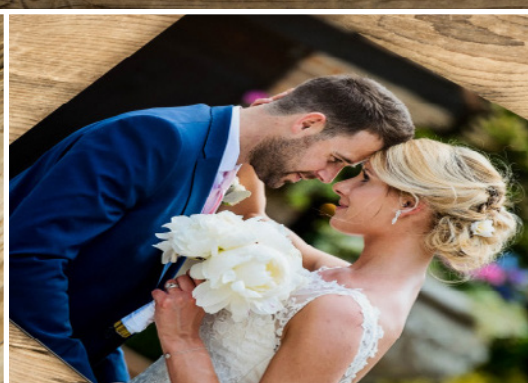


Above: 'Hatchet' displays his skinhead tattoos. Below: Harrison, AR. 10/16/2015.





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feedback I received was when I first published a portion of my work in 2008, but I feel that was a result of poor editing on the writer's behalf.

**GF:** *Is there an overarching message you're trying to convey with your work?*

**AK:** This goes beyond the visual aspect, but I've started to explore how certain life experiences may have a profound effect on an individual's mindset as it pertains to these ideologies. In answer to your question, no, I'm not trying to convey a specific message. That said, as far as an objective, it's to bring the viewer deep inside of a particular way of life in a non-judgmental way. The work on my website is a fair representation of what I've experienced over countless hours with various personalities over the past 12-years, not select images solely based on aesthetic appeal or sensationalistic overtones chosen by a third party.

**GF:** *Has the work been supporting you financially?*

**AK:** Photography is more about the experiences for me, it's my creative outlet and I'm not motivated by money which can often turn a passion into a stressful need to appease someone else's vision. I've turned away a great deal of opportunities because the situation(s) conflicted with my ethical standard. Nevertheless, I've been fortunate in regards to this work basically paying for itself over the years.

**GF:** *What's next for you?*

**AK:** My inquiring mind continues to evolve – for example, two years ago I embarked on a project where I documented crime scenes that took place during the Civil Rights era at the hands of the Silver Dollar Group, a rogue element of the KKK at the time. Currently, I'm exploring how certain life experiences may have a profound effect on an individual's mindset as it pertains to these ideologies.

On the grander scale, I hope my work will be of some historical or sociological importance one day.

See: [www.anthonykaren.com](http://www.anthonykaren.com)



Western Pennsylvania. The workshop of a woodcarver who also happens to be a white nationalist.



Western Pennsylvania. Local White Nationalists from two organizations come together for a silent protest in objection to the Black Lives Matters movement.





# STOCK INVESTMENT

With no intention of retiring, editor David Kilpatrick has still had to focus on the value of pensions and investments. The business's Alamy portfolio just happened to reach the \$100,000 milestone in fees as state and personal pensions kicked in. Has the effort of putting over 25,000 images on line in the last fifteen years been worth it? Here's the answer.

From this month – January 2018 – all employers have to make improved pension provision for all who work for them except on a purely freelance basis. Photographers may become more aware of their own need to set aside a bigger chunk of profits for the future when assistants, sales and production staff start getting more.

The unprecedented period of near-zero interest rates means that recent self-funding retirees have either accepted minimal private pensions or opted for alternatives which keep their savings as intact as possible until conditions change. I've been through this myself, including digging out the old paperwork which predicted my pension on 'retirement' at the end of September.

Fortunately, through all the years of employment, partnership, self-employment and limited company status Shirley and I never let our National Insurance record have gaps, from teenage first jobs onwards. Having full state pensions, even with only a minimal additional entitlement, is now something we are thankful for.

Our saving for pensions has been less consistent, but never absent. There were periods when we simply couldn't afford it, and brief spells of generous contributions, ending in a portfolio of many successive policies. Some of these showed that in the 1980s I was saving for a £15,000 a year annuity-based pension, in adjusted terms about 50% than a good living wage. However, the eventual position was that a mere fraction of today's minimum wage, perhaps a third at the most, could have been secured by handing all those savings to an annuity provider.

There were periods in the 1990s and early 2000s where



*In January 2010 I filed 35 scenes, taken within a few hundred yards of our offices during three days of snow, with Alamy. This one sold in Japan in November 2017. Many images take years to find their first use. Alamy's downloadable reports let us see which have performed best for us.*

things were better, and I have one friend who secured an early pension when the annuity available was 15%. The pension providers took a gamble and so far he's been the winner. Usually, the odds are weighted heavily in their favour – because that's how they make their profits.

## The stock pension

In due course, avoiding the annuity trap and opting instead to 'draw down' a sensible 4% from 45 years of pension savings, I realised this was taxable income just like drawings taken out of our

limited company, but no expenses could be deducted from it.

If we decided to close the photographic business, or stop publishing magazines, we would not be able to claim deductions for equipment, software, insurance and business travel.

That is why very few photographers now just shut up shop and retire. They may decide to stop doing weddings, or to close their High Street studio and work only from home. Most, I think, will keep a reasonable level of photographic work to support home studio and office space, updated kit and computers, broadband

and mobile phones, a vehicle and travel expenses. We no longer travel abroad for a quarter of the year which we did in the peak era of profitable travel stock photography, but we also haven't sat on a beach for many years. Few would consider our travel in search of updated stock material to be 'holidays' – if there's a commission or an editorial feature involved all the better. We only claim identifiable relevant costs against profits.

We have just passed the \$100,000 gross fee mark in Alamy sales over fifteen years, almost entirely from within 50 miles of home, or from travel abroad. Exploring the rest of the British Isles has been too expensive and unpredictable. After Alamy and sub-agent commissions, we have \$54,000 in fees from 1,660 licences. The average annual payment over the last five years has been £2,620. This gives our 25,000-image Alamy collection a value of around £75,000 in 'pension fund' terms – the amount of savings you'd need to hand over to draw down that income from well managed investment. Every shot uploaded is like putting £3 into a 3.5% interest bearing savings account.

It's comparable to our earnings from UK rights collection agencies. After almost 50 years and more than 18,000 copy-right photographs and graphics reproduced in UK magazines and books we can now thank the publishers who wanted 400 step-by-step how-to-do-it photographs or detail pictures of cameras from every angle.

There's no guarantee that the rights collection agencies will continue to distribute funds (musicians, authors and artists face the same uncertainty). Stock sales are a little more certain but have a downward trend in value.





*This famous tree and details of the distant view have both changed with time, in Ravello. Picture buyers still want the same (retouched) eye-catcher.*



*You never know what's going to do well. The Conisbrough Castle 6 x 6cm slide from the 1980s remains our best single fee seller at over \$1100. The Bamburgh Castle view, not the usual lush sunset set-piece, has grossed almost \$900. And the Prague bus stop signs taught us a lesson early on about what to photograph, with fees over \$1000 from a single ad agency.*



I've shown in a recent edition how the true value of licences has declined, making it essential to keep adding new stock. I will comment that Alamy's new image manager, which some don't like, allows existing stock to be updated with new keywords and gives feedback on how well these are likely to ensure work is seen. Steadily going through existing stock improving its captioning and keywording is a good way to keep busy when watching a bit of telly.

## The best sellers

Here I have printed what appear to be the best selling individual images from our Alamy collection. Sorry if they are not exactly stunning – but that is the nature of stock. Set pieces don't always find a market, trivial details do.

I have not reproduced examples from subjects or image sets which have done well, but it's easy to find them. Our highest earning destination seems to be Barbados, but Venice is close second and a surprising number of Venice sales



*Above: a very early Minolta Dimage A2 frame, which licenced for \$290.  
Below: a sign in town was worth \$150 three years in a row*



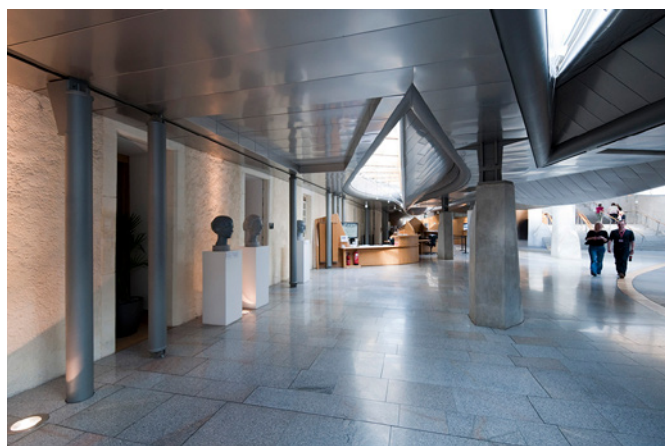
have been from slides taken over 40 years of visits. They just don't date – no cars, timeless carnival fashions and costume, few signs or shop brands and rigorous conservation. All that, and the huge popularity of the city for cruise ship visits and city breaks.

Few subjects do better than half the totals achieved by these two locations, but they can be very specific. The Aktunchen cenote park in Yucatan comes close, on its own, to matching all our sales from Edinburgh subjects. Morocco has done well, but Prague as a single city a little better.

A single September afternoon in Northumberland has earned twice as much as a short stay in Barcelona. But neither come near the total achieved with screen shots of messages on my computer relating to major internet services, or royalties from studio product shots of Canon cameras originally taken for test reports. No brand sells as well as Canon, and in so many cases similar product shots at high resolution



*One scan of washing in Venice has brought in \$379 in gross fees so far. Above, walking to find an optician after breaking my specs at an awards function I saw the potential of this sign to sell. It has made over \$500 net. Below: a picture at the Scottish Parliament earned a \$320 fee.*





can be obtained for free PR reproduction just by asking Canon in the UK, Europe, USA or Japan. My images are unreleased, editorial only of course and this is fine for the specific markets which licence them. I guess they prefer the 'real studio shot' look to the highly lit and retouched official manufacturer product pictures.

Highlights of our stock shooting life have included the thousands earned as a by-product of ordering Spanish churros and tapas, beers and lagers of all varieties, boxes of high-end chocolates, visits to shopping malls, and decisions to detour to specific subjects or pay admissions when travelling. In one case, the Barbados sugar windmill on this page, the location was closed and the light was terrible so the few frames taken were by jumping out of the car for a short walk to check angles. I was not there for more than five minutes, but the resulting silhouette made good fees from an industry marketing campaign.

It has proved worthwhile to unearth travel shoots from the distant past, even the 1980s, and scan them using the Minolta Scan Multi Pro we have been able to keep running right into the era of Mac High Sierra thanks to Ed Hamrick's *VueScan* software. A few selected timeless images taken during a 1986 tour including India, Thailand and Japan have grossed \$570 and will probably sell for ever. We have never bothered to scan those from Hong Kong because they do not show the city which is there today.

While I don't often delete older photographs on Alamy and have been cautious about putting dates into captions for some time as it's amazing how fast ten years can pass, I do amend captions when I know the image is no longer time-neutral. There is a tree in Ravello which is vital to one composition the travel industry always wants. Older pictures show it before storm damage so sell preferentially, but the distant scene now has more development. So many libraries have vintage images of this view. Should we really withdraw it from sale – or just identify the issue in captions?

## Keep right on

Like many contemporaries, we can't afford to retire. Photography is a way of life and it can pay for itself leaving your pension to cover more important essentials.

Add a modest photographic turnover to any pension for as long as you are able to sustain it and you can also continue with reasonable expenditure. Projects which you may not have had time for become possible. You can plan for this decades in advance.

I rather regret dismantling and selling a purpose-built darkroom, as in semi-retirement the time to enjoy real film and make excellent prints could be there once again. It's still a legitimate business activity, not a hobby, and the chances are that the work would be far more valuable and saleable at craft fair to gallery level.

The cost of current cameras, lenses, lighting and computers is now so high that a new 'solo' professional kit comes to more than a year's pension, or minimum wage. If you drop out of photography getting back into it may be beyond your future means. Apart from that, we see excellent work which bears no relationship to age. We really don't want you to stop!

Later in this issue Stephen Power talks to three professionals who seem committed to 'non-retirement' whether that age is imminent or already passed. I hope our (mostly younger) readers can learn something from this.

We also hope that whatever is now being put aside by our readers for the future into pension plans becomes worth far more than it has proved in the last few years.

If we had not been teenage home owners 45 years ago, and run our business with offices and studio attached to the three houses we've owned in the last 40, you would not be reading this magazine now. We bought property right from start which was unfinished, part derelict, neglected and needed work. What's left still does and stock sales help pay the bills.

Now what's this about Bitcoin?

— David Kilpatrick



*The Morgan Lewis mill in Barbados was closed and the sun behind clouds, but a quick stop produced an image able to secure \$750 in fees. Below, the classic view of Ronda from the path down the gorge, photographed hundreds of times a day by visitors but still worth a \$400 travel guide fee.*





## VOIGTLÄNDER NOKTON 40mm f1.2

The first lens we received for review in this issue – which has turned into a bit of a lens special – was the Voigtlander 40mm f1.2 Nokton Aspherical FE. I don't rush to get into the blogosphere with first pictures or first reviews, though we often have products before some of the autopilot bloggers.

In the case of the Nokton, the sample was so early that the EXIF connection didn't report the aperture properly. Even so, I took a good set of samples and some video footage at f1.2 because it was easy to remember when the lens was only used wide open. The results were as good as we expect.

A second, perfectly functional production lens arrived to replace it and the optical performance was identical, which is a good sign. The performance was also very different from the other Nokton we own, a 40mm f1.4 Classic MC in Leica M fit. This lens was in my opinion rather better than the Leica Summicron 35mm f2. The FE mount f1.2 Nokton goes a set further.

There is a version made for Leica M but it's not the same lens design. The focus register is not the only difference, the FE seems to be designed to make the best of current Sony full frame sensors. Where the Leica lenses whether little f1.4 or new f1.2 tend to vignette strongly wide open, confirmed by an early buyer of the VM, the FE lens has surprisingly little vignetting. This means that videos don't show the disturbing effect a heavy vignette can produce when panning. The wide aperture and super-smooth big focusing barrel make for effortless focus pulling single handed without rigs, you can see the transition so clearly.

Our main interest should really be for stills, though the fact that the lens has a click-stopped aperture ring that can be de-clicked by rotating the index

With two aspherical elements in a relatively simple eight-element design, Voigtlander's version made for the Sony FE mount is bright from corner to corner wide open.



ring indicates that Voigtlander have video in mind.

The 10-blade diaphragm has a good circular shape at the wider apertures where an attractive bokeh may be expected. The manual focus activates the magnified view on the A7RII/III very quickly indeed – one difference between all electronically coupled manual lenses is how much focus ring travel is needed before the MF magnification kicks in. Too sensitive, and you can't touch the lens without the magnification jumping in even when you were not intended to focus. The reverse, and you turn the lens out of focus before you get the magnified view. The 40mm f1.2 has it just right, no unwanted activation, and no overshooting.

However, the experience is not as good as with the 65mm f2 macro (similarly built). The 40mm is not apochromatic, and it's only an eight-element six-group design – two aspherics keep it simple. That produces a

very high contrast

flare-free image thanks to fewer air to glass surfaces and a good multicoating, but it does not fully correct longitudinal colour at apertures wider than f2.8. This is magnified when you focus (unless you turn off the focus magnifier and trust the EVF and peaking).

Seeing the colour fringe enlarged, and shifting from green to magenta on the edge of sharp contrasts as you focus, is the one negative aspect of the lens. Get the raw files into LR/ACR, and you will never see the colour fringes, the lens has a profile and what this does not fix can be tuned out easily. But the camera EVF can't do this so you will see the CA.

However, having f1.2 does not mean working wide open to focus. The aperture is manually set on the lens, even though it reports the setting to the

camera. This is not a lens where the aperture has an electronic control to close it. If you set f11, you focus at f11.

Surprisingly, the magnified view shows that a 40mm at f11 still demands fine focus control. There is a depth of field scale but with a range down to 0.35m taking under half a turn the first markings are for f4 and even f22 (the minimum aperture) is a tight grouping. Depth of field scales are almost useless with today's high resolution sensors, but fine if you want to know what will look sharp on an A4 print.

The Nokton has beautiful colour and contrast as well as interesting bokeh. It has an advanced coating, doesn't flare up into the light like vintage f1.2 lenses when used wide open, and gives high contrast. If you stop down and shoot into light sources, reflection from the aperture blades can create veiling flare and with sources right at the image edge some rays. This is removed by opening up the aperture, which might sound counter-intuitive – the best flare resistance is from f2 to f1.2, diaphragm stars form from f11 to f22.

Sharpness, on the A7RII 42MP sensor, is on a level Leica or Zeiss would be proud of. Combined with the luminous quality, colour and the subtle differential focus even at medium apertures the result is an exquisite rendering. It's enough to make routine test shots, not intended to be 'good' images and just taken to confront the lens with difficult conditions, fascinating to study on screen.

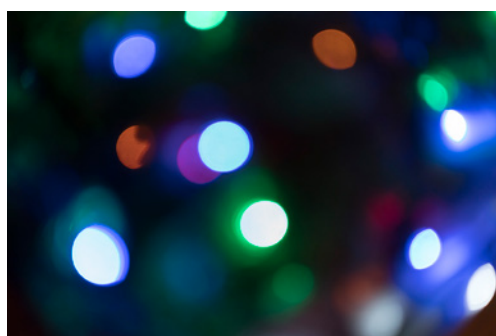
Because the electronics report the focal length to the camera, Sony in-body stabilisation works without using menu entries. With no aperture mechanism and no AF, the response time of the camera is the fastest possible and if you can do without stabilisation it's down to 1/50s with the electronic first curtain shutter. This also removes all mechanical shock. Care should be taken to check light sources, and overall performance, with silent shutter







Top, full aperture, hand-held ISO 3200 at night; above, a typical Nokton look, strong colour and contrast, 1/500s at f11, ISO 100. The bokeh is well-mannered even at this aperture.



Above, testing for flare with the sun just out of the frame top. At f1.2, none at all on the left; at f22, a soft image and visible flare with rays. Left, bokeh discs at f1.2 defocused. Right, f1.2, top, shows no vignetting perhaps thanks to the built-in profile. It is not any worse than f2.8, below.



(purely electronic) as this setting doesn't play well with lenses faster than f1.8 and many types of LED or fluorescent stage and commercial lighting.

At a £749 this is a typical Voigtlander FE – much the same as the 10mm f5.6 Hyper Wide-Heliar and the 65mm f2 Apo Macro Lanthar. Is it such an essential lens? The 10mm is the widest full frame lens made. The 65mm is the sharpest lens made. The 40mm is not the fastest, as Voigtlander has the designs already to put an f0.95 into the FE system. It is not a wide-angle, nor is it really standard. As many rangefinder film camera users found, it is a perfect compromise for street shooting whether as a fixed 38mm to 42mm found on many leaf-shutter models, or the classic 40mm f2 of the Minolta and Leica CL/E series, or the later Contax T.

Not everyone will want a fairly large, heavy metal 40mm manual focus lens but anyone who buys this will find it attached to the camera against their better judgement. I'd rather walk round a city or explore the landscape with this lens than my 55mm f1.8 Carl Zeiss Sonnar T\*. It's not going to give me ugly ragged bokeh or odd focus plane effects, and for that it's worth living without AF. All AF lenses these days are a compromise, even the best. Some rangefinder lenses are also a compromise as the small Leica M throat and relatively deep body constrain design options, especially for faster designs.

Voigtlander's manual focus lenses for the Sony FE mount are not a compromise. The mount allows the best design possible as it has so few physical constraints. When you add to this the pixel-perfect focusing at the working aperture, provided by the live view with magnification, you have about the most reliable basis for the sharpest pictures you have ever taken. That's only of use if the lens is able to deliver, and this one is. Here at *Cameracraft* we have no hesitation in recommending the Voigtlander Nokton 40mm f1.2 FE Aspherical.

– David Kilpatrick

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# SIGMA 16mm f2 DN DC

Some lenses in the Fujifilm X system have been objects on envy for others, unattainably limited to that system. One such lens is the Fujinon XF WR 16mm f1.4, one of the higher-end range with its own aperture ring and weathersealing, and a price close to £900.

Olympus has offered a small and excellent 12mm f2 for a long time, while Panasonic fills the 24mm f1.4 equivalent slot with a Leica DG Aspherical Summilux 12mm. However that comes at a cost (£1,200). But the Sony system has no 16mm prime lens except for the very basic pancake f2.8.

Now Sigma has a DC DN contemporary 16mm f1.4 which comes in at about half the price of Fuji's role model and like the Sigma 30mm f1.4 is available in both MFT and E-mount, which can be factory switched for a charge between the two – and perhaps one day if Sigma ever moves into the Fuji X market, to that too.

On MFT it is, of course, a 32mm equivalent which is a rather odd spec. DSLR users like the 24mm f1.4 as an environmental portrait, photojournalism, commercial and landscape choice. This is also what the Sigma 16mm will do well on E-mount. We're not using APS-C right now, as tests showed that the file quality of the A7RII (or III) when cropped to 18 megapixels APS-C delivers about the same level of real detail as the 24 megapixel A6500. If you don't need the speed benefits of the A6500, the cropped A7RIII in particular makes full use of the better EVF.

Naturally, I always check out the performance of APS-C lenses on full frame, and the Sigma delivered a rewarding surprise. Most f1.4 lenses, at this angle of coverage, have a sudden death image circle. This does not. Sigma claims that the lens leverages software correction (presumably for distortion and vignetting) to deliver superior sharpness.

Well, it's impossible to check, but the raws and JPEGs alike had good straight-line geometry and selecting or deselecting Adobe

A 24 or 32mm f1.4 equivalent which can switch its mount in future between MicroFourThirds and E-mount, Sigma's new fast wide-angle also has the potential to cover APS-H.



*A one-off quick snap at f1.4 – perfect AF, very sharp, great bokeh*



*The lens is shown here on a Sony A7RII body although it is an APS-C lens. The camera can be set to crop (as above) for an 18MP image.*

*The Sigma 16mm f1.4 is 26mm longer than the Fuji XF WR, but half the price and with especially good suppression of flare and control of distortion and vignetting.*



profile corrections had no effect. Built-in profiles sometimes invoke something you can adjust or disable. Not with this lens.

As for performance, it's strikingly good. The aperture mechanism has to obey Sony's stepping-down slow actuation, but does it almost silently and faster than most Sony originals. AF simply hit the mark every time, and without hunting. A while ago I sold my 24mm f2 Carl Zeiss Distagon ZA, which was a fine lens but never inspired. This Sigma may have the same angle of view and a similar effective aperture on the smaller format for depth of field, but it rises well above the Distagon.

Then, there's the circle of coverage. It gets a slightly sharper edge when stopped down but it's just fine at f1.4 to cover 24mm square of the full frame sensor. This is top quality coverage too. It covers APS-H, not C, and the square crop is a dead match for the classical Hasselblad SWC 38mm Biogon only three and a half stops faster.

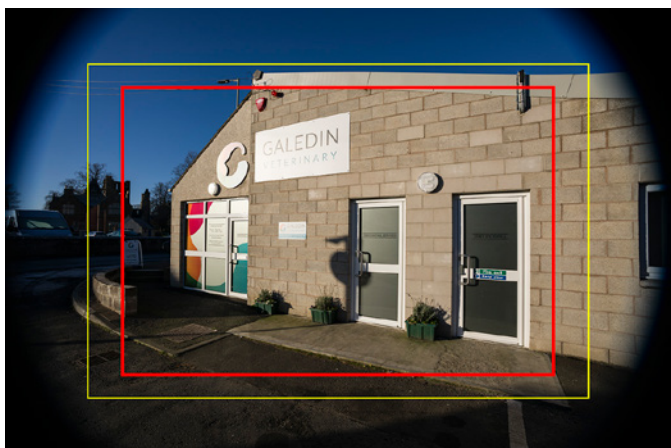
The nine-blade iris creates 18-ray stars from light sources when stopped down to f11, and flare patches which can be thrown up by including the sun in certain positions are faint and large, not small and blobby. Generally it's good into the light, the advanced coating works (as well as resisting muck, going with the weathersealed barrel).

The whole lens feels good; it's very plain with the entire ribbed barrel used for manual focus. It is 97mm long, uses 67mm filters, and weighs 405g. The Fuji is 73mm long, takes the same filters, and weighs 375g. Relative to Olympus bodies this is a big lens, even for Sony it is a better match in size to full frame bodies. But it costs well under £500 retail, it's hard to fault for sharpness corner to corner wide open, and the Sigma 16mm f1.4 will be a lens by which others are judged.

– DK

[www.sigma-imaging-uk.com](http://www.sigma-imaging-uk.com)





Above, a full frame capture overlaid with the maximum useful 2:3 ratio crop (exactly 24MP of the camera's 42MP frame) in yellow, and its official APS crop (below) in red. Use for 'shift' – or to equal a 20mm lens angle.



Above, the distinctive sun star created by the nine-blade aperture at f13. You can just detect a large green flare patch bottom right, but repeated tests into this bright sun showed that this is invisible (the ground has a +1.5EV grad and the sky has -2EV in raw processing). Left and below, a 24mm square crop from full frame gives a wider view than a Hasselblad SWC.



A hood is supplied.



# TAMRON 18-400mm f3.5-6.3 VC Di II

The difference between 300mm and 400mm is only 1.33X, a mere third extra in magnification. Full frame users can get 1.5X with any focal length just by getting a suitably high resolution APS-C camera body to use their existing lens. They usually get more real gain, as the bodies are almost universally 24 megapixels and that's a bit higher pixel resolution (finer pitch) than a crop from any full frame now made.

It's amazing how many do not take this route, but buy large lenses like the Tamron 150-600mm. This is also popular on crop frame, of course, when a 900mm equivalent is demanded.

Against the choice of powerful tele zooms which start between 70 and 180mm and go up to the 400 to 600mm range, the choice for dedicated crop-format users has been more or less fixed. The 70-300mm options are full frame but many use these on APS-C. There are a few 55-300mm and similar zooms limited to the small sensor, but they are often of poor quality.

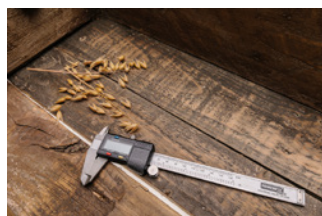
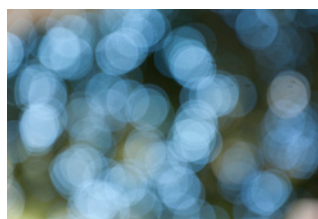
Now there is a dedicated APS-C lens which not only goes to 400mm, but does it from 18mm – a superzoom not a tele-zoom. The Tamron 18-400mm f3.5-6.3 Di II VC HLD sets a new record in range (22.2X), equal to a 27-600mm (Nikon) or 29-640mm (Canon). It has a new focus motor, HLD (High/Low torque-modulated Drive) which responds to the focus speed needed to save battery power and balance the speed of focus change at different focal lengths and distances, to improve AF. It can be hooked up to a dock for firmware updates.

In contrast with the Tamron 16-300mm, a lens we have used without noticing its size as it's actually smaller than earlier 18-250mm designs, the 18-400mm is substantial, taking 72mm filters and 124mm long when collapsed at the lockable 18mm setting. It weighs 705g which is not excessive. Bear in mind that recently tele-zooms have been

Thanks to new Hyper Low Dispersion glass and aspherical elements, the longest reach ever for an APS-C superzoom comes with fewer penalties than you would expect. David Kilpatrick tested it.



Above, VC/AF switches and handy size: comparison to Nikon 18-200mm: 400mm extended size. Right, 300mm f6.3 bokeh sample. Oats and micrometer 'solo' at 400mm, together at 18mm – closest focus.



much bigger and heavier – Sigma's 120-400mm Apo DG OS which at f5.6 is half a stop faster at 400mm weighs over twice as much, takes 77mm filters and is 204 x 93mm. It also only focuses down to 1.5m, and that's how lenses achieving length have been for years.

In contrast, the Tamron 18-400mm focuses down to 0.45m at all focal lengths. This is nothing special at 18mm, in fact it's not really a close-up, but as you zoom in to 50mm it matches the close focus of typical prime standards, by 90mm it's twice as close at typical portrait lenses, by 400mm it is a semi-macro scale at 1:2.9 on APS-C, which equals more than half life size on a full frame lens.

Focus breathing means you are not still at 400mm when you get so close, the focus mechanism could never cope with moving the lens if it was conventional – internal focusing solves that. The barrel itself extends dramatically to 400mm on triple sleeve telescopic tube (left), and if you think you are carrying something which looks a bit like a 135mm f2 collapsed, it looks like a 400mm when extended. It *never* looks like an 18mm, and the size makes on-camera direct flash cast a distinct shadow even without the supplied lens hood.

The balance, operating feel and fast silent focusing of the Tamron 18-400mm inspire confidence. It's claimed to be dust and moisture resistant, from the lens coating to the zoom construction, though there will be no way to stop particles entering with the air-pump effect.

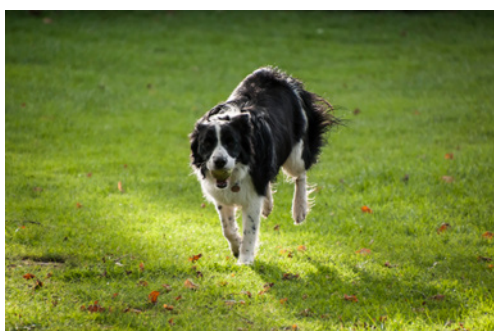
As for results, you'll be surprised, though the vignetting at 18mm wide open needs correction unless you like the effect. Close-ups at 400mm in the studio have a lovely quality. Focus tracking with a running dog, zooming, using a Nikon D300S, proved better than expected. Flare resistance is much better too.

The show what an 18-400mm lens can do to perspective and portraits, I photographed the celtic art skull which is about half

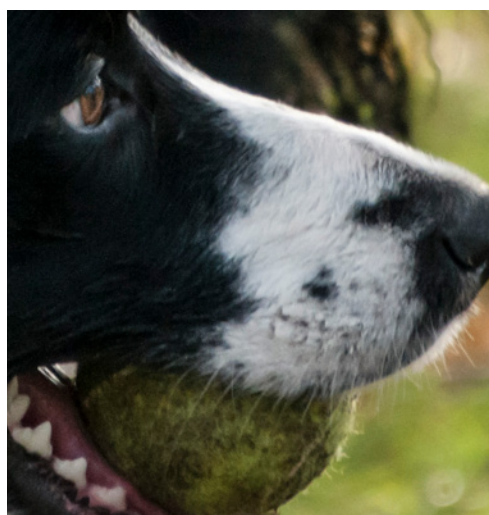




Moving from 35mm to 400mm our pseudo-celtic friend similarly positioned and scaled shows apparent face/head shape change with the perspective. 18mm could not be matched due to the 0.45m focus limit. Right, taken directly into very bright light off the water – the lens showed great resistance to flare, with this and other tests, but the sensor of the Nikon D300S creates some 'bleed' streaks from massively oversaturated highlights.



The first and last frames in a full aperture, 400mm continuous H AF sequence. Not all were sharp on the Nikon D300S but the hit rate was good when the central focusing zone was on target.



scale. At 18mm the 45cm close focus left it too small to include for comparison. From 35mm up, I tried to keep the eye sockets about matched in scale. You can see how the apparent shape of the 'head' changes dramatically from 35mm to 400mm, and exactly the same effect will apply to human faces. It's about baby head size...

This lens is a good match to the highest resolution sensor – Canon's 24.2MP 1.6X factor – to get the best reach. There is very little softening at 400mm, and at 300mm it's much sharper than typical superzooms at 300mm (they are usually better at 200mm). The VC (IS) works well and makes the lens hand-holdable, first shutter pressure activates it.

At around £650, it's fairly priced. It's got to be the one single lens to take on safari or a day at the races. Another world first, and a good one, for Tamron.

– DK

[www.tamron.co.uk](http://www.tamron.co.uk)





# OLYMPUS M.ZUIKO 25mm f1.8

After many years of ignoring the standard lens – the 47° angle of view, 50mm on full frame – like so many owners of mirrorless systems I rediscovered it for the same reason that early SLR users did. It's often quite simply the best lens in the system without being the most expensive.

The Carl Zeiss 55mm f1.8 for Sony FE and the Fujinon XF 35mm f1.4 and f2 choices for Fuji X can be used wide open without worry and greatly improve the speed and accuracy of on-sensor focusing whether using contrast or phase detection.

Recently, using the Sony A6000, I discovered the least-known star of Sony's regular E-mount system, the 35mm f1.8 OSS. Fast and compact, it is also an impeccably mannered lens with a 47.5mm equivalence and instant precise AF. Using it during a week's travel shooting, the images when processed were consistently excellent in sharpness and also in colour rendering.

So, on moving over to use the Olympus E-M1 II in place of APS-C Sony, the M.Zuiko 25mm f1.8 Premium was a natural choice to do the same job. The 12-40mm f2.8 Pro is an exceptional lens and on the camera most of the time. It focuses down to only 20cm with 0.3X scale, a subject field of 58 x 44mm and equivalent to a 35mm format 24-80mm lens with 0.6X macro. Most 24-70mms don't manage better than 0.13X.

For the sake of little more than one stop gain in speed, and the loss of the zoom range, could a fixed 25mm f1.8 focusing to 25cm and achieving only a 0.12X image size be worth the £259 promotional price (November 2017 with WEX discount from SRP, and Olympus cashback)?

In short, yes. Like Sony's 35mm f1.8, this is a really well-behaved lens in terms of how it renders colour and tone. If it has a failing it's the same as with the 45mm f1.8, a trace of chromatic aberration which can show itself as a purple fringe on extreme contrast sharp edges or

While enthusiasts want nothing less than the new f1.2 25mm and 45mm designs from Olympus, the f1.8 series 17mm, 25mm, 45mm and 75mm remains the most popular prime selection.



Sunset, 1/125 at f2.8 ISO 400; night meter, 1/60 at f1.8, ISO 3200. E-M1 MkII.



a very slight magenta to green focus bokeh shift. However, raw processing with the built-in lens profile eliminates this.

Where the M.Zuiko betters the similarly priced Sony design is in its coatings. The Premium grade designation ranks below the Pro series with their strong weatherproofing, but includes the Zero coating on an advanced 9-element, 6-group design. The 25mm can be used right into the brightest light sources, at night or at events like concerts with sources aimed at the camera. It's almost completely immune to flare or ghosting, though if stopped down some small flare marks appear by f11 probably as a result of aperture blade reflections, along with a soft 'star'. It's hard to induce a deliberate star or general flare. If you want that vintage look, faking it is the best way with this glass.

Because of this flare resistance

and maintenance of full contrast in almost any lighting, the 25mm focuses in conditions where the 12-40mm and 7-14mm f2.8 Pro designs run into trouble. I have been able to walk round with this lens at night, using the ISO 3200 performance of the E-M1 II, and take pictures as quickly and surely as if it was daylight.

At only 137g, with a 46mm filter thread, it's a tiny lens on the same scale as the 12mm f2, 17mm f1.8 and 45mm f1.8. The largely synthetic construction is no issue. After all, it was Canon who proved in 1976 that polycarbonate and other plastics could be more precise and stable than metal for lens construction – and Minolta who in their Vectis system twenty years later gave all-plastic construction twice the precision of their A-mount conventional SLR range. So the hybrid metal bayonet and plastic barrel of the M.Zuiko Premium is most likely

to be the best solution, not a cost saving.

In terms of performance, the entire frame is up to 20 megapixel performance at f1.8 with just a hint of softening evenly in all four corners and no other fall-off from the centre to edges. Stopping down to f2.8 brought the corners up to standard and increased high resolution contrast enough to make full use of the camera's 80 megapixel Hi Res multi shot mode, which was also the only way to see slight softness at f1.8. It is a strikingly sharp, ultra-high MTF lens capable of resolving what would be the equivalent of 320 megapixels on full frame.

In terms of field flatness and linear distortion, it is once again hard to fault this lens – no great wonder with its complex, advanced Sonnar-derived asymmetrical design using two aspherical elements. Though the iris has only seven blades, they form a fairly circular aperture and the position ensures defocused bokeh shapes do not become too lenticular in shape towards the frame edges at f1.8.

The lens is supplied complete with a decoration ring to hide its bayonet lens hood fitting. This is removed to allow the hood to be fitted, or stored reversed. There's little need to use the lens hood given the flare resistance of the lens, so you could opt to leave that stored away and fit the ring.

Panasonic offers a simpler 25mm f1.7 which is half the price, with a less advanced coating (tends to flare against the light). For Olympus owners, it can not be used with Pro Capture mode so the choice is clear.

On the very first day using this lens I encountered a great sunset, stopped to catch it fast before it changed, and made it into The Telegraph Pictures of the Day selection ((small repro, top).

The M.Zuiko 25mm f1.8 Premium lens has an SRP of £349.99.

– DK



[www.olympus.co.uk](http://www.olympus.co.uk)



# SAMYANG AF 35mm f2.8 FE

**R**eports that Samyang's neat little ultra lightweight 35mm f2.8 FE autofocus lens for Sony puts the identity of a Zeiss 35mm into file metadata were not born out by the two samples we have tested. They show up as Samyang, rightly.

Though the Zeiss Sonnar is no doubt the lens Samyang wanted to replicate at half the price (even a third of the price depending on markets) they also wanted to improve some aspects. It's under 109g rather than 120g, it is 3.5mm shorter physically, but the designs are very similar and use slightly different computations of seven elements in six-groups. The Samyang rear element and exit pupil sit a little closer to the sensor. Both lenses focus to 35cm and give 0.12X image scale.

Both use a concave front element, increasingly popular now that retrofocus design is used to optimise the lens for digital sensors and not film. Otherwise, the front of a fairly slim 35mm lens would not be 52-55mm way from the focal plane. If there's a downside to this type of design, it is that flare 'chains' into the sun are often replaced by more general veiling. The Zeiss lens has T\* coating, the Samyang has Ultra Multi Coating which seems a little less effective.

At the front, both use compact lens hood bezels to aid the multicoating and reduce the risk of flare. The Samyang variant is a simple circular reducing disc, bayoneting over the 49mm filter thread and accepting 39mm filters and lens cap. It's not as efficient, or odd, as the Zeiss near-rectangular masking hood. We removed this and fitted a regular 49mm hood.

Shooting into the light revealed that flare can be generalised and prominent, though hard reflections are absent. The design is not especially high contrast. Focus is fast enough, but Sony's very slow aperture control protocol (closing lenses like this down by stepping in 1/3rd stops making a distinct sound) favours working wide

It's a direct alternative to a popular lens which has been in the Sony A7 full frame system from day one, the 35mm f2.8. Samyang's is more compact and lighter in £s and lbs.



*Feather mask: f6.3 achieved best sharpness balance. Skateboarder: 10fps, AF, and the name on the wheels of the board legible...*



open if you want to catch action. Good use is made of the camera's advanced AF functions (replicating Sony native behaviour). In contrast, a 40mm Canon STM lens on an adaptor had much faster shutter response at aperture like f8 or f11 due to avoiding the stepper-motor iris control, but slower AF and many instances of settings (like Flexible Expand Point) being unavailable.

As for performance, the Samyang is very even across the frame with an excellent flat field but slight pincushion distortion. This appears to be fully corrected by the built-in lens profile, in-camera and in Adobe software. Vignetting is strong wide open, and the in-camera JPEG doesn't have as effective correction as the raw workflow. It's necessary to stop down to f11 to get the best illumination. Some will like the degree of vignetting wide open (just as they do with the Zeiss).

Core images sharpness is hard to fault, even wide open. What happens is that a glow overlays the detail towards the edges at f2.8, again a look which some will like. It can be emphasised by overexposure or backlighting. By f4 the centre is exceeding current sensor resolution, by f5.6 the softening aberrations are almost gone and at f8 it's a lens capable of technical work like copying. On APS-C, a stop wider achieves this.

Not everyone wants an f1.4 35mm, and though this little lens is now rather overwhelmed by the larger and heavier generation of bodies, it's a great way to keep weight down and delivers very much what you expect with good compatibility. APS-C users have Sigma's excellent little primes (19/30/60mm) but full frame users have much less choice. Samyang is best known for fast or wide lenses (14mm f2.8, 24mm f1.4, 35mm f1.4, 50mm f1.4) and this is a welcome budget price street and general photography lens for the full frame E-mount user.

– DK



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CAMERACRAFT PORTFOLIO

# CHARLOTTE BELLAMY



LOW COUNTRY LANDSCAPES



























In 2011 we had only been back in Britain from living in Chicago for two years – and then a change was on the cards. An unexpected career move to The Netherlands for my husband was not quite what I had planned for my equine and human portrait business, and my only knowledge of the country was that it had windmills, tulips, clogs and cheese... and it was flat and brown. But ever the optimist, I decided it would be a fantastic opportunity to restart and rebrand the portrait business and was pretty excited,

Unfortunately I was met with a huge reality check rather quickly; I couldn't take meaningful portrait photographs if I couldn't speak the language. And with that I put my camera down and wondered where on earth to go from there. I'd been a member of the Guild of Photographers for a couple of years at this point and so I gave Steve Thirsk a call and he introduced me to Lesley Chalmers. She turned out to be my fairy godmother, and with one very small statement of "shoot what you want and love, just pick your camera up again" I entered the world of landscape photography.

Roll on nearly six years and I find it hard to believe the array of landscape images that cover the walls of my family home. A country that I thought was flat and brown still inspires me every single day. I can't tell you it's not flat. It's very flat, but you know what that offers... absolutely huge skies full of clouds, just like you see in paintings by Van Gogh and Rembrandt.

I'm actually quite lucky living only a short drive from one of the few hills in the Netherlands. And every August I make at least one 4am pilgrimage to the top of the hill to photograph the sunrise over the heather hills above Arnhem (*on the previous page – Editor*). Dragging myself out of bed with absolutely no idea if the sun will actually make an appearance does not come easily, but it is so worth the effort. Purple hills, sun rise and if luck is with me a little rolling mist. I stand there in the middle of nowhere with my camera and a big grin on my face.

## CHARLOTTE BELLAMY



*Below: in her portfolio documenting a relatively unspoiled landscape, Charlotte has looked west to this tree and the woods beyond in many seasons and lights. It is the focus of many compositions.*



Charlotte's portfolios from The Netherlands include many images taken very close to her home. There are now plans to erect four of the huge wind turbines within half a kilometre, so she has been documenting the landscape.

There have been Dutch windmills ever since the last energy revolution of the middle ages and today these look attractive to us (above). The turbines can be photogenic too (left) but as in Britain, no-one wants them too close for comfort.

The Netherlands (any Dutch person would shoot you if you call it all Holland) turns out to have an extremely manicured and beautifully planned landscape. The majority of roads are dead straight, and where I live there are lines by beautiful trees. All year these inspire my photography. Of course in autumn you have the beautiful colours. But in winter I love black and white photography capturing the skeletal dark branches against moody skies. Talk to any local and they are amazed I am so enthusiastic to photograph this aspect of their landscape; they just don't see it.

As I write this, the rain is pouring down, and The Netherlands is a blur of grey, green and brown. However I only need to look at my tulips album to remind myself of the most amazing and unique floral spectacle that is the Dutch bulb fields. If you want to see fields upon fields of rainbow colours and be intoxicated by the scent of hyacinths then you have to visit in April or early May. Situated in the west of the country, my days of tulip photographing require a fair drive from home. But trying to drag myself away after a day of photographing is a challenge every time. I'm like a kid in a candy shop. I keep putting my camera away in its bag and five minutes after I pass another field; different colour or better back drop! I need to leave the fields about two hours earlier than really necessary to make it home anywhere near a planned time.

I sure got it wrong when I judged the landscape of Holland flat and boring! Every day I am inspired by the landscape here. It's not quintessentially jaw dropping beautiful, and you won't find landscape photography tours being led here by outsiders unless it's to see the tulips. But I am here to beg you to reconsider. A little background research will identify a number of amazing locations, offering a huge variation of opportunities. Of course spring is great to photograph the tulips; but The Netherlands offer so much more if you open your eyes to the possibilities beyond the 'pretty'.



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# NOT SHY... AND NOT RETIRING!

Gordon McGowan, based near Loch Lomond, Scotland has a world-wide reputation as an innovative and imaginative wedding photographer and for creating a quintessential photographic style within the genre. His unique and contemporary approach to shooting weddings has set him apart from his competitors and allowed him to stay at the top of this incredibly competitive field for over 30 years.

His work has received global acclaim and Gordon has achieved the highest qualification of Fellowship in wedding photography from both the British Institute of Professional Photography (BIPP) and the Master Photographers Association (MPA). He has just joined the Panel of Judges for the Guild of Photographers, as a long-standing member and Master Craftsman.

It was something of a surprise to many of his colleagues and former clients to hear that this still highly active 65-year-old was 'retiring' from wedding photography work. However, he has no intention of retiring from photography work generally. "I don't think you could retire from photography" say Gordon.

"The only thing I have given up is the stress of the wedding photography work. I'm doing everything else that I always used to do. I just wasn't enjoying the weddings anymore. People came to me because of my style of work, but, not everyone was willing to work for the result", he explains.

He felt that his decision to move away from wedding work was not a difficult one to make, because he feels strongly about doing the best thing by his clients. "It wasn't fair for me to continue working with couples as it wasn't fair to them.

"I remember going to a seminar by Annabel Williams

Stephen Power talks to three top photographers who know there's creative life after Frame 37... and are old enough to understand that reference!



*A fashion pose in the manner of the environmental wedding style which made Gordon a great influence on professionals worldwide.*

## 1: Gordon McGowan, Scotland



30-odd years ago and the key message I took from it was; if you don't enjoy something, don't do it. That's simply what it came to for me. I was up at the very high end of wedding photography fees and it was only right that I stopped doing it when I stopped enjoying, to be fair to everyone".

Gordon has made a smooth transition from weddings to fashion photography work, something that he had been involved with previously, and to which he is now able to devote more time and energy. "I have always enjoyed the fashion work, even when I was doing off my own bat, having to organise models myself, for example. The creative side comes out in me when I'm photographing fashion". He also continues to work hard as a studio portrait photographer and shoots for bridal magazines, which he really enjoys.

"The portraiture side of the business has always been busy, and I've got a good name in that field, and that keeps me going. The fashion work is mainly if I want to do a shoot abroad, off my own back, for example, it can be arranged. I'm 65 and I want to enjoy my life more by photographing things that I will enjoy".

His fashion clients are usually individuals, who will often find him via his website and social media pages and seek him out for a shoot and pay for a portfolio of the images, at the end of the shoot. Gordon prefers this approach as it allows him to find clients who like his work and want to work with him to produce a creative set of photographs.

Gordon's interest in photography dates back to a three-week spell in hospital in 1961 as a nine-year-old, when his father brought him a gift of a camera. He began taking photographs of the doctors and nurses for fun.

"When I came out of hospital,





*In contrast, recent fashion and portrait work by Gordon has used colour and composition in a very different way  
He continues to move on with homages to past masters as well as his own innovation.*





*Gordon has often set himself projects or challenges, to create specific looks whether in the classical tradition (above) or unique to his own workflow (facing page). Cross-processing and false colour featured early in his use of digital, a natural progression from film and darkroom work. He popularised high contrast, extreme wide-angle and fisheye lenses which when combined with the drama of the baronial and gothic architecture of Scottish venues and the effects of weather and light started a trend in the market. Hundreds of photographers, with or without access to similar settings and light, produced McGowanesque examples to sell a new type of wedding art.*





I started photographing landscapes and everything I could think of. The bug really caught me, and I've been doing every since. It's a fantastic thing to do and I'm glad that I've had the

opportunity to spend most of my life in photography".

The wedding photography work came about while he was working for Allied Distillers and some of his co-workers, realising

that he was a photographer, asked him to photograph their weddings. Demand for his work quickly snowballed and Gordon became so busy that he was able to give up the day job and move

full time into wedding photography in the late 1980s.

Gordon cites "being creative" as his main professional motivator. "When I see some of the fantastic fashion photography



on Pinterest, for example, it's just astonishing what can be done and it really inspires me to go and do something like that", he enthuses. "It really is exciting. Some of the fashion work is stunning and it gives me the buzz that I had in the early years of my career".

He enjoys putting his own creative stamp on his images and will work with the model or client and other creatives, such as a make-up artist, to achieve the ideas that he has in mind for the set of photographs.

"I want to create everything that will be in the picture", he explains. "I will tell the make-up team what I want, and they will bring their own ideas too. I will ask the model what they want to achieve and 90% of the time they say, 'I want something different'. We spend time talking about how we are going to create the images – it's just one big mix and a lot of fun. The models that come here always tell me it's brilliant to work in that way."

Getting older has had no bearing on Gordon's work at all, he feels. Continuing to be creative and having a lot of fun are his main motivations. His only concern is that there are fewer "characters" in the industry than previously. He names Carl Ryan, of Black Planet Photography and Trevor Yerbury as two people he really admires currently.

Gordon's love of photography comes across very strongly as a prime reason that this highly acclaimed and very successful lensman is still looking through the viewfinder. "I love photography one hundred percent", he says. "There is nothing better in life than being a photographer. It's given me a good life and I'm so happy that I went down that path."

Keep going down that path Gordon – it's making many others happy, too.



Gordon McGowan Facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/ScottishWeddingPhotographer/>

*This page: exploring different approaches and styles in fashion portraiture.*









Shortly before his 70th birthday, Maz Mashru – probably Leicester's most successful portrait and wedding photographer – added one of the highest honours achievable by a professional photographer, Fellowship of the American Society of Photographers (ASP) to his already long list of awards. He is one of only 120 photographers to have achieved this accolade since its inauguration in 1968.

If proof were needed of the single-minded determination of this dedicated professional, it can be found in the origins of his ASP award. In October 2015, Maz was diagnosed with stomach cancer which resulted in him undergoing four major operations and spending over thirty days in hospital. During that time, he decided to challenge himself to gain the ASP Fellowship, having already achieved most of the other prestigious awards in the photographic canon.

Maz found himself in hospital, thinking about how he might set about achieving the Fellowship. He prepared his paper whilst in his sick-bed and the result was that he not only saw off a life-threatening illness but also managed to gain the degree.

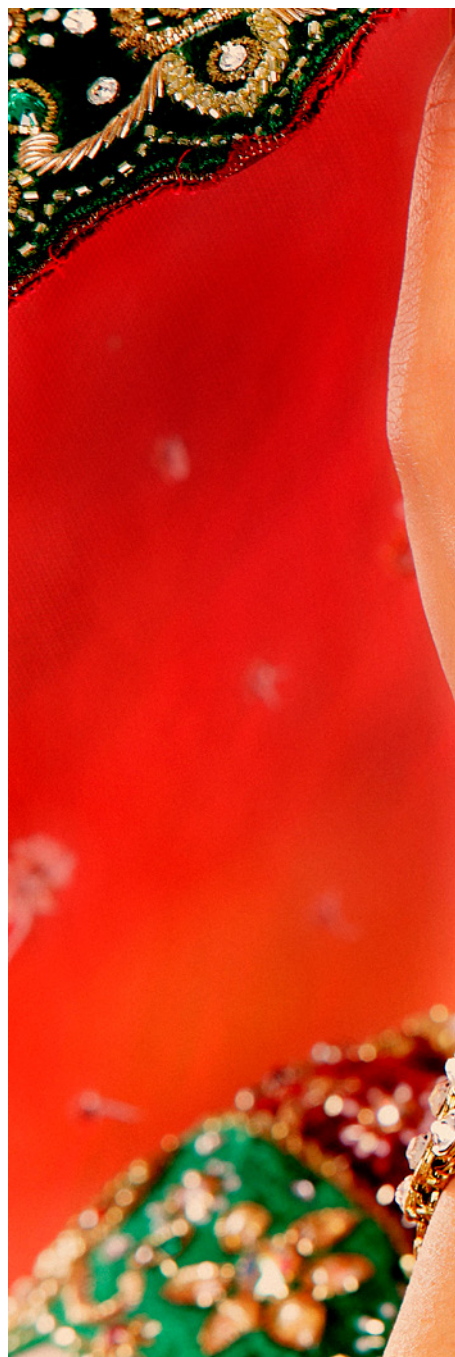
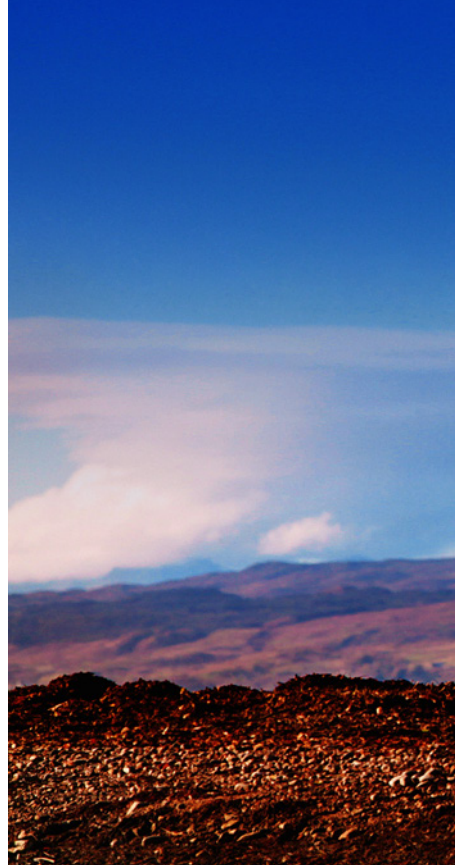
After being released from hospital, Maz's strong willpower helped him to undertake a portrait of John Bercow, Speaker of the House of Commons, and photographs of the Leicester City football team at Number 10 Downing Street, after they won the FA Premiership title, amongst other high-profile work.

To say that he has spent a lifetime in photography would be no exaggeration. "I started my photography career aged nine, back in Uganda. I was the youngest professional photographer in the whole of East Africa", Maz explains. "I was still studying, and doing photography in my spare time. I was the eldest of six children and trying to do what I could to support my parents. As I got older, and needed money for clothes and other things, I took additional work as a photojournalist and started to photograph my friends for extra pocket-money."

## 2: Maz Mashru , England



*These colourful images are from Maz Mashru's Fellowship with the American Society of Photographers. Left, Maz is given his award by Jon Allyn, the Executive Director of ASP. The red in these images can not be reproduced well on magazine pages, and their intensity is best seen either on screen, or in prints made using extended colour gamut inksets such as Epson's 11-colour set. Above, Maz in the studio with Hardik, examining a 72" print of a fashion shoot, from their recently installed Epson P9000 large format printer.*











*From Maz Mashru's portrait and wedding work, showing the range of approaches and quality of lighting and image finishing needed at this level.*

At the age of twelve, he was made the head of his school photography club and produced the school's first photography magazine. Although he had received a scholarship to continue his studies, he decided not to accept it, as he became aware of the difficult financial situation his parents were in. Leaving school to pursue a full-time professional photography career his intention was to support his family, though he feels that his parents would have preferred continued studies and a more traditional career such as medicine.

Maz came to the UK in 1972 as a result of becoming a refugee in Uganda, at the hands of the Idi Amin regime. Even though he had been working as an official photographer for the *Uganda Argus* at that time, he was in his own words "deprived of my profession as a photographer" because he was not able to show a paper qualification.

"In those days", he explains, "getting work as a photojournalist in the UK meant that I had to be a



member of the NUJ and in order to be accepted, I needed to undertake a three-year qualification. This was not possible for me, as I had to settle my young family, so I started work in a camera shop – Wallace Heaton in London."

Soon afterwards, Wallace Heaton was bought out by Dixons and Maz moved to Nottingham. He then learned that there was a vacancy in the Leicester branch and asked for a transfer. He was made head of the department and worked there for around three years. "Unfortunately, I was told that, due to the colour of my skin, I would never be promoted above that level and so I decided to start working for myself, as a photographer in 1974, during the three-day working week of the coal-miners' strike".

Maz began working from home but quickly found himself at odds with the local council, who prevented him from running a business from his house. "I rented a studio and the landlord soon increased the rent, as I was becoming busier, so I moved on",









*Two of Maz's painterly-effect art renderings which use textures and control of colour to produce effective canvas-like prints.*







*As a working studio, not everything can be fine art even if that is an ideal – but it can be good traditional photography. Above, mother and baby in monochrome, and the Speaker of the House of Commons, John Bercow. Below, a colourful commercial ‘fairy’ child portrait promotion example.*

he says. “Being Indian, I based my business in a predominately Indian area of Leicester, the ‘Golden Mile’, thinking that if nobody else would use my services I would have some clients from the Indian community. Nevertheless, I decided to use a generic name for the business in those day; calling it ‘The Photo Centre’, to avoid identifying myself as an Indian.”

It was not long before Maz’s work began to be seen widely and his wedding and portrait business began took off. He won awards in the USA and a Kodak Blue Riband for his wedding photography, which generated a lot of publicity – as a result, as he puts it, “things changed”. In all, he has won seven fellowships and a number of Kodak Gold awards.

Maz has stayed in Leicester throughout his long and highly successful career and he has been working in his original premises for much of that time. “We have also recently acquired further premises of around 6,000 square feet”, he says. “The family has a successful events business and I’m probably the highest qualified photographer in Europe. Today. I have a Master’s degree, a Craftman’s degree, European



qualifications and now the ASP Fellowship. I may be the only active Fellow in the ASP. There were two others, but they have hung up their cameras”.

This prompts the question why, after all his incredible success and given that he is in his 71st year, he has never hung up his own cameras? “Art will never die”, says Maz. “The true artist will always be evergreen. Yes, we may have to make some changes but there will

always be a demand for fine art. Everything we do should be about improving the art of photography, not to destroy it.

“I always look at photography as art. Every year I enter competitions and often score very high marks. My aim in life is to produce the world’s best photograph. I don’t know if I will be able to achieve it, but my aim is to be on the top of the photographic equivalent of Mount Everest. At the

moment, I’m at the foothill of it. This is what keeps me motivated, the determination to be the very best”.

To those of us glimpsing our photographic Mount Everest from the streets of Nepal, it might seem that Maz Mashru is way beyond base camp and heading straight for the top, with a camera-shaped flag in his hand.

See: [imagesbymaz.com](http://imagesbymaz.com)





Vincent O'Byrne, 61, is a highly successful commercial photographer based in Dublin, who also creates stunning fine art work. His long and impressive list of photography awards and achievements date back to the 1980s and include a Fellowship distinction in Professional Advertising Photography with the Irish Professional Photographers Association (FIPPA). He was the first Irish Professional Photographer to achieve the much sought after Master Qualified European Photographer accolade with the Federation of European Photographers (FEP). He is a Master Craftsman of the Guild of Photographers.

Vinnie has been an international judge, at the highest levels of professional competition and qualification for over 20 years and has co-written a book on professional judging, aptly titled *The Book of Judges – the Judging Handbook for Professional Photographers*.

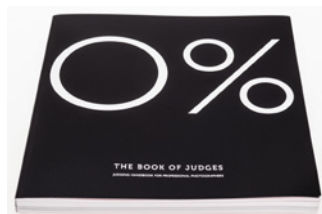
He is widely sought-after for seminars and workshops on lighting and fine art fantasy image creation and has absolutely no intention of retiring, any time soon. "I gained my Fellowship in Commercial photography, but it's ironic that I'm best-known for my fine art work".

Vinnie took up photography initially as a hobby at the age of 21, setting up a darkroom in a converted attic in his home. "Along with my girlfriend, I processed one roll of black and white film and printed it and thought to myself 'what's next'..."

A week later, his darkroom was fully equipped with a colour enlarger and colour film and print developing chemicals. Vinnie very quickly began shooting negative and transparency film stock and developing and printing them himself.

He was working in architecture when "the bottom fell out of the industry in 1986". Vinnie soon found himself in new employment with the prestigious fashion magazine *Irish Tatler*, for whom he photographed products, interiors, and architecture. "I was thrown in at the deep end with them, they were producing four magazines a

### 3: Vincent O'Byrne, Ireland



Vincent's work is well known partly because of his work ethic – projects are planned and rarely small. The pictures which follow in this profile all feature one model, very much his muse of the last few years. With co-author Henk van Kooten, and the help of Graphistudio, he produced *The Book of Judges* in 2013. In 2006, his series of irreverent Irish 'postage stamps' (below) assured his worldwide fame or notoriety, especially in Italy if not in the Vatican City. Bottom of page, 'Contemplation' (2014); facing page, 'Evil' (2013).















*Opposite page, top: 'Putin on the Ritz', 2017 and 'Spin Doctors', 2013.  
This page, 'Chasing Penrose', 2016*





*'The A-Frame', 2017*

month and I stayed with them for over a year", he explains.

Following his experience with *Irish Tatler*, Vinnie set up his own photographic studio in Dublin and set about looking for commercial work – which proved very fruitful. He gained many awards and accreditations with bodies such as the IPPA. "During this period, I continued shooting nudes and fine art images and I still do that today", he says. "I'm still shooting for commercial projects but I'm

also doing my own work alongside it.

"The sheer beauty of form and the way the light plays upon it, is what keeps me motivated", he says. "Lighting is the secret to good photography. I look at a lot of movies, especially what is going on in the background to see how its lit, for example. I've produced some videos on lighting faces and lighting nudes and I believe lighting is the secret to quality photography".

Vinnie's fine art work requires a high level of expertise with *Photoshop* to create the finished image. This is a skill he has developed over many years and which has roots in his early photography career.

"I made many photographs years ago that involved multiple printing techniques in the dark-room. Three or four negatives would be involved in making the final print, and I became very adept at that technique.

"Then computers came along, and I was scared that I wouldn't like it", he explains. "But, when I saw the potential that *Photoshop* offered to make me fully realise my vision, I completely embraced it". Vinnie knew an art director who offered him the opportunity to have a series of short lessons on *Photoshop* with one of his assistants. "He told me that I would love it, and he was right".

One direct consequence of becoming older as a photographer,





*'VW Zero Emissions', 2015*

says Vinnie, is that the work gets thinner on the ground due to the fact that networks diminish as colleagues leave the industry. Also, as he explains, “the guys I grew up have retired and there is younger blood in the advertising agencies who give work to their mates from school, but that’s just the way it goes”.

There are also many positive consequences to having spent a long time in the profession, for Vinnie. “A lot of people I work for

like the idea that I can ‘polish’ the image completely, and that it’s not over-cooked, just nicely handled. Knowing when to stop is very important.”

He has no plans to stop what he is doing – “I’ll just keep going. I’ll bop ‘til I drop. There was a massive crash in Ireland a few years ago, when the ‘Celtic Tiger’ (the epithet for the booming Irish economy) collapsed. Pension funds folded, I just have to keep going”.

Vinnie’s advice for other photographers, young and old, is to take the work while you can get it, and do the best you can. “Never send out half-finished work regardless of the pressure of deadlines”, he says. “Polish it off during the night, if it’s wanted for the next day. Bear in mind that your last image is your best image.

“You’ll be remembered for the one that you got wrong, not all the ones that you got right, especially in the commercial world.”

There’s a lot to be said for the discipline and commitment to top-quality work that comes with age and experience. Vincent O’Byrne has it all down to a Fine Art.



See: [www.vincentobyrne.com](http://www.vincentobyrne.com)

Associate Editor Stephen Power interviewed our three featured photographers. Stephen is based in Valentia Island, Ireland – see [www.stephenpowerphotos.com](http://www.stephenpowerphotos.com)



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# NEW – PORTRAITPRO BODY STUDIO 2

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The ladder in the company's own example on the right shows how well its new warp correction function works. You draw a brush line where the straight edge should be, and any wavy distortion snaps back to it.

For the dancer wearing Turkish costume, the full functions of *Body 2* were not used (it handles full length, arms, legs, torso, face enhancement and all). As only the eyes are visible, the new *Lite* mode was told where the face is, and that the left arm was hidden. The red auto skin masking was refined (below), and strong skin smoothing used which proved right for both the eyes and a non-epilated arm. This worked well, and some reshaping of the body added a more elegant line. The arm is very slightly



slimmed by the auto enhancement. Exporting the image we took it into *Portrait Professional 17* for background replacement, a Turkish silk rug consistent with the colours in the original studio shot. A slight blur was applied

to this. The eyes and skin colour were further enhanced – note how the face becomes more visible under the veil. A natural result was achieved very quickly. Version 2 can act as a Smart Filter in *Photoshop*: the Studio version can batch process and has a PS Plug-In. Overall speed and accuracy

are improved all round. Whether you shoot dancers, athletes or larger figures *PortraitPro Body 2* is an ideal companion to *Portrait Professional 17*.

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# CAMERACRAFT

## REARVIEW

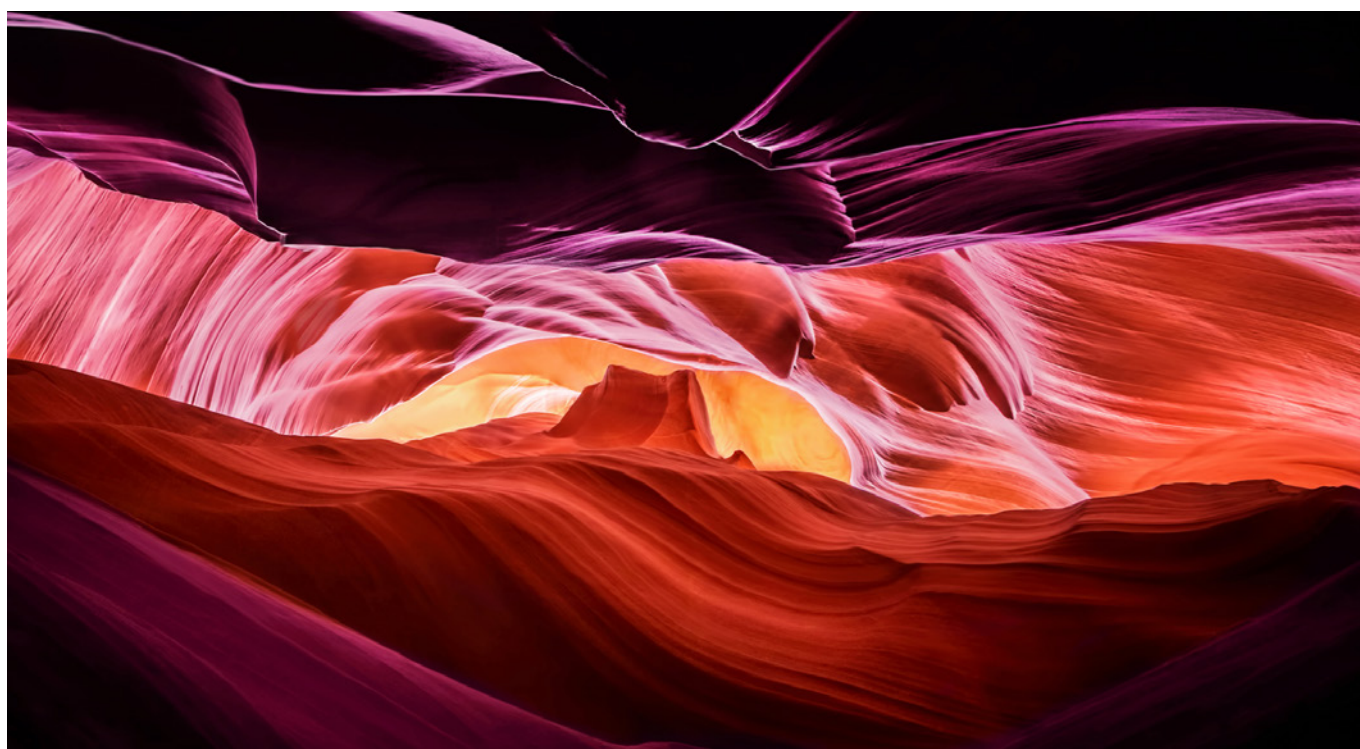
Selecting pictures for a winter edition is never easy as so many great pictures from the summer and autumn arrive in galleries and competitions just at the time they are least appropriate.

By going back through the 2017 entries to the Guild's Image of the Month competition, we can find a suitable selection but the months they pop up in are not predictable. Quite rightly, summer judgings do not rule out snow scenes.

Please remember that our Rearview Gallery is not only for Guild member work. It remains, as before, an open gallery without submission fee – just email no more than three JPEGs around 6 megapixels size to [editor@icon-publications.com](mailto:editor@icon-publications.com) with 'Rearview Gallery' as the subject.



Above: robin in snow, as seasonal after Christmas as before. By Tracey Lund: Canon EOS 7D MkII with EF 300mm f2.8 L II USM and 1.4X MkIII converter, 1/20s at f5.6, +1EV. Below: by Chris Chambers. Canon EOS 5D MkIII, 24-105mm Sigma at 24mm, 1/30s at f13, ISO 1000.







*In winter, or in bad weather at any time of year, the resourceful wedding photographer uses the conditions to advantage.*

*Above, by Karen Holt. Canon EOS 5D MkII, EF 28-300mm f3.5-5.6 L IS USM lens at 210mm, 1/200s at f9, ISO 800.*

*Below, by Stephen Bradshaw. Canon EOS 5D MkIII, Tamron SP 15-30mm f2.8 Di VC USD at 30mm, 1/60s at f3.5, ISO 2000 with on-camera flash and remote wireless flash backlight.*







*Guild photographers create some memorable portraits. Above is an example by Joan Blease, who is one of the speakers at the Photohubs days in February at Crewe Hall (see page 79). Although the picture has been processed for effect, it's still a single underlying camera shot – Nikon D3X with 24-70mm f2.8 set to 28mm, 1/125s at f5.6, ISO 200.*

*On the facing page is a Guild Silver winner which has been awarded Creative Portrait of 2017 in the Sue Bryce Portrait Masters competition ([suebryceeducation.com](http://suebryceeducation.com)). The photograph, taken in October and styled after Vermeer, features the daughter of one of Pip's friends doing the time travelling. Pip used an Olympus E-M1 with the new 25mm f1.2 M.Zuiko lens set to f2.8, and an exposure of 1/250s at f2.8.*







Pulling photographers together is often a tricky task that seems exceptionally easy. Competitive businesses all looking for an edge, their hopes pinned on some new information... and all in the same room. What drives this market, where so many other industries would lock their doors?

The key seems to be community. The Guild's training arm, Photohubs, reflects this with the approach of multiple seminars across a couple of days. Not that this is unusual in itself, but if Coventry's event in November is any indicator, there's a very different ethos and feel compared to the more formal trade or qualification driven events we've attended previously.

Hosted at the Welcome Centre in the heart of Coventry, a better venue would be hard to envisage. The substantial stage was in a wide-open space with room for exhibitors all around, meaning the trade got to be involved – and entertained – throughout the two day event. The line up of speakers included Damian McGillicuddy, Ana Brandt, Dave Wall, Paul Callaghan, Andrew Appleton, Nina Mace, Gary Hill, Gavin Prest and Linda Johnstone.

Immersive training with babies and dogs is valuable in itself – Ana Brandt's careful, soothing lectures held a rapt audience, for example – but where Photohubs stands apart is in the residential element. Good training? Yes, seen that before. But community? I've only seen and felt this level of energy and enjoyment at the legendary Photo Training Overseas events.

Some crossover of photographers, speakers and of course, friendship underlines that feel. Meeting The Guild's team, however, suggests that the crucial element is how you view the photographers you're providing the training and space for. When it comes to UK-based events for UK-based photographers, there's too often a feel of cutting costs, compromises, trying to go for 'bang for buck' in the headlines, without thinking about the overall package.

A venue with affordable hotel, but excellent event catering and

# PhotoHubs



Richard Kilpatrick dropped in to the Photohubs event in Coventry in November to get a flavour of how The Guild's community interacts and how their planning and management makes a better experience for all involved



wonderful hosts in the very aptly-named Welcome Centre does not come cheap, but it does work incredibly well for the clients. As does the technology provided – from a second screen allowing the speaker to view their slides while focusing on the audience, to wireless microphones that actually *work* and sound levels set for audible, but not overpowering speech. Polished presentation is an inspiration in itself; so many 'professional' organisations would be happy to let a broken audio lead and crashed Keynote stand.

As the final demonstrations wound up, with Gary Hill gathering delegates together for a family portraiture demonstration that felt more like a masterclass in miniature, and the ebullient Nik Proctor enticing audience participation, it was a shame to leave!

Even heading into Coventry's concrete landscape, I felt a spark more associated with workshops in warmer climates was burning.

–RTK



[info@photoguild.co.uk](mailto:info@photoguild.co.uk)

*Photos – Ana Brandt on the big stage (iPhone ©Steven Thirsk)*

*Gary Hill on points of fine detail in portraiture, left. Below, points being taken... bottom, Ana Brandt with a wee subject (Fujifilm X-Pro1 ©RTK).*





Following on from the success of The Guild of Photographers 2017 awards night at the magnificent Crewe Hall, a grade 1 listed Jacobean mansion in the heart of the Cheshire countryside, we have decided to return there this year. Not only is it stunning but it's equally accessible from the North or South (it's about 90 minutes from London to Crewe by train, and about three hours by car from either Kent or Glasgow).

A tree-lined drive takes you to the majestic building where you will find stunning marble fireplaces, intricate carvings and stained glass windows and a contemporary wing boasting a high quality spa – an utterly stunning venue befitting a unique event to celebrate success and friendship.

For the Saturday February 3rd awards evening, we have arranged a fabulous meal with wine in the Continental Suite, after which our Photographer of the Year results will be announced and awards presented to the Top Ten in each genre, as well as to those who win our new Image of the Year awards. After that will be music and a party, which will no doubt carry on into the early hours for some. The awards evening is now sold out but it's possible to be notified on a reserve list (this is already a long list too).

Partners and guests are, of course, welcome. Everyone attending the Awards night will receive a FREE copy of The Guild's 2017 Yearbook (worth £17.50) kindly supplied by Loxley Colour!

## Two days of training

For many attending it's not the awards night, but the good company of all those coming, and the training on Friday 2nd and Saturday 3rd (during the day).

The speakers have now been confirmed and bookings are coming in!

**Carola Kayen-Mouthaan**, whose work featured in the September/October edition of this magazine as a cover and portfolio, has agreed to fly over from The Netherlands and reveal some of the secrets of her 'Dutch mastery'.

# PhotoHubs

## AWARDS PLUS TRAINING DAYS

### CREWE HALL CHESHIRE

### FEBRUARY 2nd & 3rd 2018



#### Friday 2nd – talks in the main room

10.00am – Chris Chambers

'Using Speedlights Creatively'

11.30am – Stuart Bebb

'The Power of Personal Projects'

1.30pm – Joan Bleasdale, 'Bad Start – Great Finish'

3.00pm – Jaine Briscoe-Price, 'The Importance of Customer Service'

#### Friday 2nd – three-hour workshops

9.30am – Jaine Briscoe-Price, Boudoir

3.00pm – Chris Chambers leads a shoot around the venue and grounds

#### Saturday 3rd – talks in the main room

10.00am – Carola Kayen-Mouthaan

'Creative Ideas from Concept to Creation'

11.30am – Karl Bratby

'Simple yet Impactive Lighting'

1.30pm – Panel Members

'Tweaking your Work to Create Award Winning Images' (with live demos)

3.00pm -- Print Competition, with live judging led by Kevin Pengelly

#### Saturday 3rd – three-hour workshops

9.30am – Gavin Preset, Creative Photo shoot

Admission to talks and workshops may be pre-booked.

All details given here are E&OE subject to change.



**Jaine Briscoe-Price** is going to speak on Friday 2nd. In the morning – she is going to run a live Boudoir shoot, and in the afternoon will be speaking for an hour on 'The Importance of Customer Service'.

There will be other live subject demonstrations, and the live judging of the print competition on the Saturday should be entertaining and very informative.

Day passes will shortly be available from the Guild, the smaller group workshop 'menu' pricing is being worked out now and the emphasis is on value.

## Staying at Crewe

Rooms can be booked direct with Crewe Hall and we have arranged a special Guild members rate including two-night breaks so you can take advantage of the Spa facilities there alongside and the training we are scheduling. The rooms cost from just over £50 per night subject to availability -

- 1 x night stay on Saturday 3rd from £135.00 bed & breakfast (based on double occupancy).

- 2 x night stay for Friday 2nd & Saturday 3rd from £230.00 to include dinner on the Friday & breakfast on both mornings (based on double occupancy).

- 2 x night stay for Saturday 3rd & Sunday 4th from £215.00 to include dinner on the Sunday & breakfast on both mornings (based on double occupancy).

The railway station is only about five minutes from Crewe Hall by taxi (approx cost £5-£6) and there is a Premier Inn closer than the station and a Travelodge which is about the same distance away (plus there are some very close independent hotels such as the White Lion).

Guild members travelling from other parts of the country are already arranging shared transport, networking to form parties to attend events is just one of the many benefits of membership. The Guild is known as the most friendly photographic association for good reasons!



Contact: call 01782 970323 or email [info@photoguild.co.uk](mailto:info@photoguild.co.uk)





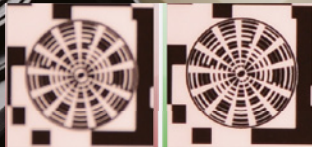
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"When I got home I got out my 24-105, the lens I hadn't been able to use for about a year as it was so unreliably soft, and I was amazed. It was pin sharp!!"  
Leah Roberts



"All I can say is wow! I thought it would make a difference but just how much difference is astounding. The clarity and sharpness coming out of the combination lens/body compared to before calibration is astounding."  
Peter James Morgan



"I have just received my cameras & lenses this morning, excellent courier services - amazing job and the difference with my kit is incredible!"  
David Linford



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If you are a member, or considering joining the Guild of Photographers, the next big date is the **Guild Awards** on February 3rd 2018.

The Guild's Image of the Month competition forms the basis for annual awards, unlike the approach taken by most associations which ask for a restricted number of entries by a set date. The Guild had an entry of over 12,500 images spread over ten entry months in 2017. There are ten on-line entry windows closing with the last minute of the month from January to October, and the results from each one are shown on-line. The entry is closed now for 2017, start entering soon in 2018! Those achieving Silver or higher count towards the annual awards total. There are many categories, and a good way to learn about the process is to look at the 2016 results:

[photoguild.co.uk/2016-awards](http://photoguild.co.uk/2016-awards)

The 2017 judging took place in December and the short-listed images are now known and notified. We are will not use them before the awards in *Cameracraft* and there is one picture we planned to feature which we'll hold off until the next issue – sorry, you know who you are, the last round Gold winners have been featured in *Creative Light* e-magazine so no need to repeat here. After the awards we can tell the stories behind the winning images, to appear in our March/April issue which will be the one we have on sale at The Photography Show in March.

## Supporting the trade

Right now, our trade colleagues are fighting reduced visibility – Facebook is throttling 'reach' and sending almost hourly demands for advertising or boosting posts, Google is tuning searches so that only those who pay are guaranteed to be seen. The internet, which has been almost free for a decade of maturity as part of the world media, is being monetised. So please visit the web addresses shown in this page, share them, post about your good experiences – beat the system!

– Editor

# CAMERACRAFT

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- Priority data recovery service
- Guild private members' network and personal support
- Monthly competitions
- Bi-monthly *Creative Light* online magazine, *Cameracraft* bi-monthly, and regular email newsletters

• Use of Guild logos

• Free downloads (e.g.

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Some of these features are also available to members outside the UK – the Guild office will be happy to advise.

*All for just £2.50 a month extra!*





Between 1974 and 1981 I turned myself from an inexperienced professional photographer into a successful one. At 22 I was an evening newspaper sub-editor. This was a non-Union career path at the time, the NCTJ indentures and proficiency test together with a one-year full time college introduction providing the further education for a Senior Journalist. That's not to say there were no journalism degrees, a couple existed and were popular with those aiming for the morning papers, nationals and fields like financial journalism.

It was the same for photographers. My photographic colleagues included pressmen drawn into it without any training at all, and others with a solid photo-technical and business grounding like Eric Willoughby who founded Propix and Peak Processing during that period.

But I was a successful contributor to photo magazines, widely published, shooting and selling mostly black and white feature stories every week as soon as I had left the unionised employment which banned me from using my camera. What I was not, in truth, was a *professional photographer*. Most of the commissions I got from local businesses were the very first time I'd ever done anything like it. I cut my studio lighting teeth (and fingers) on Ernest Bennett's circular saw blades and learned that cleaning and checking the subject is eighty percent of the job doing a weekly batch of used buses and coaches for single-column reproduction in a sales listing sheet.

Surely at that size it didn't matter? It was only 35mm negative. Then display prints were needed, and I moved up to rollfilm. Today it's easier as almost any good digital camera of 16 megapixels or more can handle it.

What really changed my approach was not this slow learning process that I needed larger formats, better lenses, pro materials and pro lab printing from Leach (now One Vision – or part of it!). It was getting a position as editor of *The Photographer* for the IIP.

They sent me to almost every trade show, seminar and

# CAMERACRAFT

## If you want to get to your destination, catch the training!

I would not have become a professional photographer without the seminars, trade shows, workshops and lectures I went to before going into business.



*Gary Hill in action during The Guild Photohubs event in Coventry in November. Smartphones have made recording and learning from seminars so much easier now! Photo: Richard Kilpatrick.*

conference during the course of the 13 issues I lasted. Since my publisher didn't pay expenses, just a fixed fee each month, I ended up stranded in my unreliable car several times and got the train so early in the morning to reach southern events cheaply that I slept past Sheffield Midland Station on returning home. But I listened to, and met, some great photographers – Rocky Gunn, Don Fraser, Len Dance, Michael Walters, Brian Ollier, Ian Coates, Paul Yaffé, Jason Jones, Michael Frost and more names you probably don't know unless you are retired!

By the end of that year, when the *Telegraph Colour Magazine* picture editor Tom Hawkyard took over from me, I had already set

out my stall as a commercial and editorial photographer. This was a time when wedding and portrait photography was either a grade below this, or superb – there was no big decently-paying market in the middle. The top social photographers had custom-built studios and reception galleries in the best parts of city centres and affluent commuter towns, especially in the North West. I could not possibly afford that, and did not want to do the grind of registry office wedding calls.

All the seminars and events I had been obliged to cover had taught me a huge amount. I learned from experts in every field from medical to aerial, police and military work to in-house industrial. Usually it was just a

half-day at the most for any any demonstration. Being the IIP, the technical aspect was always up front. Then you saw the creative results, but much of that could remain a guarded secret. I had the benefit of visiting many photographers, in their studios, and learning some of the things they did not reveal in lectures to 50 or more competitors.

By 1979, I had joined the IIP and qualified as a Licentiate, then went into partnership with a former staff industrial photographer IIP Associate who lived on the next road in our housing estate. We were lucky and very hard-working, and in around 18 months we had made enough to go our own ways, my share covering the move to a farmhouse property with just the right derelict cowsheds to create a bigger, better home with attached studio, offices and darkroom. By 1981 I was also an LMPA. I had always worked with sales-orientated clients, whether in computing or home improvements or commercial vehicles so it was natural for me to blitz all businesses within reach with a sales pitch. When we employed our first staff photographer, it was to take each job from first contact to meetings and final delivery.

This was all because of the business seminars, sales training, technical tips and overall immersion in 'this is what a photographer does' I had encountered a few years before.

So ever since then I have advised all aspiring photographers to go to every possible training or demonstration event they can.

I don't say 'get a mentor' because of the danger they will then call themselves a 'mentee' (one US academic has campaigned to get this awful word replaced by a 'a Telemachus'... as Mentor was a person, not a job or an action).

I do say get help and advice from as many sources as you can and also go outside your chosen field. I learned much from social photographers which I used in industrial photography, and plenty from studio photographers that I used on location. I'm still learning and will never know enough!

– David Kilpatrick





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